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Jerome on the Attack:

Constructing a Polemical Persona

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is of my own composition, and that it contains no material previously submitted for the award of any other degree or professional qualification.

Nicole Cleary

Signed:

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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that Jerome's polemics against Helvidius, Jovinian, and Vigilantius were tailored to boost Jerome's status within the Christian community, and were carefully constructed pieces of abusive rhetoric, rather than the result of his famed curmudgeonly character. These treatises are studied in light of both the ancient rhetorical tradition within which Jerome was trained, and modern theories of abusive rhetoric. This thesis is demonstrated in six chapters. Chapter 1 demonstrates that past scholarship focused on 'Jerome the man', his self-invention, and his academic and spiritual qualities, without giving adequate attention to how Jerome used these qualities in his compositions. Chapter 2 focuses on ancient and modern theories of rhetoric in order to set out a methodology of abusive rhetoric that highlights Burkean identification. In addition, this chapter studies how rhetoric can define and challenge social hierarchies. Chapter 3 discusses Jerome's awareness of social standing through discussion of his interactions with three of his contemporaries: Augustine, Rufinus, and Ambrose. It examines how Jerome altered his rhetoric to reflect his perception of the relative social status of his correspondents.

Part 2 studies three of Jerome's treatises in light of the conclusion of Part 1. Chapter 4 analyzes Jerome's *Adversus Helvidium*, and argues that Jerome's rhetoric serves to contrast himself with Helvidius, whose heretical, fame-seeking character illuminates Jerome as a humble and conservative Christian. It argues that Jerome's rhetoric in this treatise aimed for episcopal authority. Chapter 5 studies Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum* and argues that the polemic sought to extend Jerome's views on asceticism to a wider audience, and potentially secure favor for himself following his expulsion from Rome. He presents Jovinian as a deceptive sinner with a dissolute lifestyle, and himself as an authoritative savior. Although Jerome attempted to connect to the elite in the Christian community, his tract was a failure due to an inability to identify successfully with the audience on the topic of virginity. Finally, Chapter 6 discusses Jerome's *Contra Vigilantium*. Jerome presents Vigilantius as a boorish Gallic innkeeper, in contrast to himself as an urbane, albeit snobbish, orthodox Christian. Jerome's rhetoric carefully identifies himself with upper class Christians, as well as the Emperor, apostles, and martyrs, thereby claiming their agreement with his view of orthodoxy. In sum, I argue that Jerome's rhetoric served to construct a polemical persona that he attempted to use to further his Christian career, and shape his own image. While this was not entirely successful in his own day, Jerome's rhetoric did ultimately succeed in crafting an image of himself as an orthodox and authoritative father of the Church.

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ABBREVIATIONS

All ancient authors are wherever possible abbreviated according to the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* system, with the exception of those listed below. All texts used are those of the *Packard Humanities Institute Latin Library*, the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae,* and the *Patrologia Latina*, with the following exceptions: for Jerome's *Contra Vigilantium*, I have followed the text of Jean-Louis Feiertag's *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* volume 79 C, published in 2005; for Jerome's *Apologia contra Rufinum*, I have followed the text of Pierre Lardet's *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* volume 79, published in 1982; for Rufinus' *Apologia contra Hieronymum*, I have followed the text of Manlius Simonetti's *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* volume 20, published in 1961; for Jerome's letters I have followed Isidor Hilberg's text and numbering in the *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* volumes 54-56, published in 1996; and for Sulpicius Severus' *Dialogi*, I have followed Karl Halm's text found in the *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* volume 1, published in 1866. All translations are my own, unless otherwise stated.

Frontispiece: Jean de Limbourg, *St. Jerome Tricked into Wearing Female Dress to Matins*, 1408-1409. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Cloisters Collection, 1954 (54.1.1).

Jer. *Adv. Hel.*	=	Jerome's *De perpetua virginitate beatae Mariae adversus Helvidium*
Jer. *Adv. Iov.*	=	Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum*
Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.*	=	Jerome's *Apologia contra Rufinum*
Jer. *Contra Vig.*	=	Jerome's *Contra Vigilantium*
Jer. *Ep.*	=	Jerome's *Epistulae*
Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.*	=	Rufinus' *Apologia contra Hieronymum*
CIL 4	=	Zangemeister, C. and Schoene, R. (1871), eds, *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum IV. Inscriptiones parietariae Pompeianae Herculanenses Stabianae,* Berlin.
CSEL	=	*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*. 1866-. Vienna.
PL	=	Migne, J.P. (1844-1864), ed., *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina*, Paris.
PLRE	=	Jones, A.H.M., Martindale, J.R., and Morris, J. (1980-1992), eds, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire,* 4 vols., Cambridge.
TLL	=	*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. 1900-. Leipzig.

Part 1

Chapter 1. Introduction

Oderunt eum haeretici, quia eos inpugnare non desinit,
oderunt eum clerici, quia uitam eorum insectatur et crimina:
sed plane eum boni omnes admirantur et diligunt:
nam qui eum haereticum esse arbitrantur, insani sunt.

Heretics hate him because he does not cease attacking them.
The clergy hate him because he censures their lives and their crimes.
But all good people wholeheartedly admire and love him.
Those who consider him a heretic are insane.
- Sulpicius Severus *Dialogus* 1.9

Eusebius Hieronymus, or Jerome, the exegete, scholar, letter writer, ascetic monk, and polemicist, has been the source and inspiration of much scholarship from the Middle Ages to today. His literary productivity, including saints' lives, commentaries, translations, and polemical writings, is astounding and has provided scholars with a window into a period of ancient history in which Christianity had achieved a central place in the Roman Empire. While much work has been done on Jerome, a detailed study of his polemical works as a unit within the context of his life with an emphasis on his abusive rhetoric has yet to be completed.

This thesis will undertake such an analysis, examining Jerome's polemical works aimed against a variety of opponents. It will then fit these works into the larger context of Jerome's life to consider his choice of abusive rhetoric. Such a study will illuminate the potential value of using invective in order to establish authority – in Jerome's case, ascetic and orthodox authority. Just as a panegyric attempted to celebrate a positive image of its subject,

inversely the technique of invective has the potential to construct an authoritative persona by destroying the authority of the victim and bestowing it upon the author. Within contemporary rhetoric a persona refers to a role that 'authors create for themselves in written discourse given their representation of audience, subject matter, and other elements of context'.[1] In other words, a persona is a specific role that can be constructed for persuasive purposes.[2] Jerome uses this technique in order to create an orthodox literary persona for himself. While Jerome's self-production has been considered within the prefaces to his commentaries and translations,[3] as well as within his letters,[4] a more holistic examination of his polemics, which spotlights important controversial periods of his life, will demonstrate the usefulness of invective, which has long been disregarded due to a lack of academic interest in the social role of the technique.

To this end, this thesis is composed of two parts. In the first half I discuss the historiographical tradition of Hieronymian studies and set out a methodology of abusive rhetoric. The first chapter argues that past scholarship has focused on 'Jerome the man', his self-invention, and his academic and

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[1] Cherry (1988), 268-269.

[2] See Cherry (1988), 259-262, on the tendency of those working on rhetorical theory and literary criticism to conflate *ethos* and persona: e.g. Gibson (1969), Odell and Goswami (1982), Odell, Goswami, Herrington, and Quick (1983), and Myers (1985). Cherry discusses how the two concepts have developed through different traditions and their varying approaches to self-representation. In short, an author's *ethos* is connected to the views or positions an author holds to gain credibility, while the persona is the overall self-constructed role. They do not exist independently, but rather interact with each other. See also Couture (1998), 160. *Ethos* is discussed in Arist. *Rh.* 1.2.4 as a necessary component of persuasive rhetoric.

[3] See Favez (1958) on Jerome's self-portrayal as 'le savant', 'le lettré', 'l'écrivain', 'le polémiste', 'le satirique', 'l'ami', and 'le chrétien'.

[4] See Cain (2006), 505-506, on Jerome's letters following the tradition of the 'epistolary genre of reproach,' common in the works of Cicero, Pliny, Basil, and Sidonius.

spiritual qualities, without giving adequate attention to how Jerome *used* these qualities in his engagement with other Christian writers. Moreover, this chapter argues that there has been a tendency in scholarship to overlook the importance of Jerome's rhetoric in his polemical works. In Chapter 2 I focus on ancient and modern theories of rhetoric in order to set out a methodology of abusive rhetoric. I will show that ancient theoreticians emphasized persuasion, and provided only limited guidelines for invective within rhetoric. However, as we will see, modern theories on rhetoric, such as those of Burke (1969), Booth (2004), and Chin (2008), view rhetoric more broadly, which allows us to question the rhetor's motives. In this chapter I will also discuss the role of rhetoric in defining social hierarchies, and the potential of abusive rhetoric to reshape them. Chapter 3 will consider the question of Jerome's concern for and awareness of social standing. I will discuss his interactions with three of his contemporaries: Augustine, Rufinus, and Ambrose. This chapter will examine how Jerome altered his rhetoric to reflect his perception of the relative social status of his correspondents, which will in turn help us to understand how and why Jerome chooses the targets of his abusive treatises.

Part 2 will study three of Jerome's treatises in light of the conclusions reached in Part 1. In Chapter 4 I analyse *Adversus Helvidium,* and argue that Jerome's rhetoric is composed to highlight the differences between Helvidius and Jerome. The rhetoric presents Helvidius as heretical and fame-seeking which contrasts noticeably with Jerome's more conservative, humble, and orthodox persona. I argue that this presentation positions Jerome for episcopal consideration. Chapter 5 will examine Jerome's rhetoric in *Adversus Iovinianum.*

I argue that the rhetoric in this treatise aimed to present Jerome's views on asceticism positively to a wider audience and secure approval after his unwilling departure from Rome in 385. We will see how Jerome rhetorically positions himself in line with the apostles and high-ranking Christians to construct an authoritative persona. Chapter 6 will focus on *Contra Vigilantium*. I will demonstrate that Jerome presents himself as a Christian champion, while Vigilantius takes shape as a boorish Gallic innkeeper. I argue that Jerome's rhetoric allows him to identify with the upper classes of the Christian community, as well as the Emperor, apostles, and martyrs, thereby ensuring their agreement with his view of orthodoxy. The aim throughout all these chapters is to show that Jerome's rhetoric served to construct a polemical persona that he attempted to use to further his Christian career, and shape his image.

1. SURVEY OF MODERN SCHOLARSHIP

Before we can begin a discussion of Jerome's abusive rhetoric, a survey of the relevant scholarship will be useful. This will enable us to understand better the academic studies that have already been undertaken on Jerome's polemics and literary persona.

Jerome's exegetical and theological oeuvre has received a great deal of scholarly attention. These studies, however, fall outside the scope of this thesis and in any case would require a separate study to do them justice. My principal interest lies in the scholarship that concentrates on three different aspects of Jerome and his work: first, that which deals with Jerome the man and his self-

invention; secondly, works focusing on the relevant controversies that Jerome embroiled himself in; and lastly, those that consider Jerome's use of invective and satire in his polemics. Previous studies of Jerome and his polemics seem to fall into one or a combination of these categories, which are by no means mutually exclusive. Nonetheless, the scholarship often fails to consider the polemics as a body of work in itself. In this regard, in-depth work has been done on individual controversies, which, while useful, fails to examine the polemics as a corpus that conveys a dialogue between Jerome, his enemies, and his supporters. Moreover (and quite unsurprisingly), much of the secondary scholarship to be discussed naturally falls in line with the historiographical trends of its time.

1.1 Late Antiquity and the cultural and linguistic turn

Over the last forty years, classical scholarship has witnessed the popularization and development of the concept of 'Late Antiquity.' Academics began to take a broader view of scholarship that had previously been categorized as either theological or medieval studies. Thus, a relatively new discipline began to develop. The 1970s, 80s, and 90s fostered changes in classical and theological studies: not only did the historiographical approaches change, but also previously disparate disciplines gradually began to gain awareness of other fields that yielded collaboration and progress. No longer were political, social, and economic discussions self-contained and segregated from theological studies. Scholars began to study cultural, theological, and political issues together instead of viewing them as distinct from one another. The patristic and historical studies of this period of transition were no longer segregated due to

the innovative work of scholars such as Peter Brown, who began to synthesize the fields of history, classics, and theology, reassessing the Late Antique world and offering new interpretations of its development.[5] Other scholars such as Averil Cameron and Elizabeth Clark responded, and furthered this approach to the expanding field.[6] Late antique studies gradually underwent a series of developments.

Social and cultural history were prominent features in the development of this new field. As Late Antiquity witnessed the emergence of Christianity, theological studies provided a central area of study. However, the study of early Christianity was no longer viewed from a purely theological standpoint, or considered a discipline suitable only for theological colleges. As Peter Brown wrote in *The World of Late Antiquity* in 1971:

> No one can deny the close links between the social and the spiritual revolution of the Late Antique period… Often, the historian can only say that certain changes coincided in such a way that the one cannot be understood without reference to the other. A history of landlords and tax-collectors would give as colourless and as unreal a picture of the quality of the age, as would an account

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[5] Brown (1971a), *The World of Late Antiquity*; (1978), *The Making of Late Antiquity*; (1988) *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*; (1992) *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire*.

[6] See, for example, Cameron (1989), *History as Text: The Writing of Ancient History* and Clark (1992), *The Origenist Controversy*. Cameron's collection of essays by various scholars concentrates on the issue of textuality in ancient history. The work shines light on literary and cultural theories of approaching textual evidence. Clark uses social science methods in evaluating the alliances and disputes of the fourth-century controversy over the works of Origen. Cameron (1993), *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity, AD 395-600* [second edition with an end date of 700 published in 2011] follows on from Peter Brown's *The World of Late Antiquity* in using literary and material evidence to challenge the preconceived notions of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. However, this challenge to the 'decline and fall' has itself encountered resistance during the past decade or so. See, for example, Liebeschuetz (2003) and Ward-Perkins (2005).

devoted only to the sheltered souls, to the monks, the mystics, and the awesome theologians of the time.[7]

Scholars saw the value of studying patristic texts in order to gain historical, social, and cultural insights. With this development came an interest in social and, subsequently, cultural history.[8] Martin has recently discussed what he called 'the cultural turn' in Late Antiquity in reference 'not to one particular theoretical or methodological innovation, but to a broad shift in textual and historical analyses of a newly defined field of study'.[9] He explains that what he calls 'late ancient studies' have benefited from the influence of a variety of theories and methods appropriated from poststructuralism.[10]

Clark has discussed 'the linguistic turn' of the early twentieth century, calling attention to the relationship of language to history.[11] Clark surveys an exceptionally wide range of contemporary literary theories in order to assert her point that premodern studies could greatly benefit from theories developed from late nineteenth to early twentieth-century discussions in the fields of philosophy, history, and critical theory.[12] Clark calls for acknowledgement of the epistemological issues that concern the link between language and history. Indeed, despite past arguments that attempt to disassociate history from

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[7] Brown (1971a), 9.

[8] Martin (2005), 5-6, discusses Brown's (1971b) article 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', which makes prominent use of anthropology, as well as Clark's engagement with sociological and anthropological approaches beginning in a National Endowment for the Humanities seminar in 1977.

[9] Martin (2005), 9.

[10] Martin (2005), 9.

[11] See Clark's (2004) *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn*.

[12] Clark focuses on the Anglo-American (detailed in chapter 2) and French (detailed in chapter 3) discussions.

literature,[13] she argues that early Christian studies, because the sources are largely composed of texts of a 'high literary, theological, or philosophical status,' fall more easily into the category of 'literature' than those categories used by social scientists and structuralist historians, and therefore are 'ripe for rhetorical and ideological analysis'.[14] Clark observes that thanks to engagement with the social sciences, late ancient Christian studies have evolved from their position as a 'subbranch' of 'theology,' but comments that attention to theoretical issues and language in particular has been lacking.[15] This acknowledgement of a need to reassess premodern studies, especially considering the 'rhetorical and ideological nature' of the sources, is an important development in Late Antiquity.[16] These innovative approaches have yielded studies that blend new methodologies with more traditional approaches. Along with the field of Late Antiquity, Hieronymian scholarship has likewise benefited and evolved. Some discussion on the legend that built up during the centuries following Jerome's death may first be useful in order to understand how Jerome's image emerged in modern scholarship.

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[13] See Clark (2004), 64, where she discusses Langlois' and Seignobos' desires to modernize approaches taken to history in France during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Both call for a change away from history's 'origins as a form of literature' (64). Vessey (2005), II, 343, discusses the risk of de-theologizing the study of patristics, but at the same time the need for a 'genuinely *literary* history of early Christian writing.'

[14] Clark (2004), 3, 8. Vessey (2005), II, 352-353, calls for attention to 'the relations between one text and another'. Within the developing scholarship he predicts 'special interest in the interaction between the aims of Christian edification and the aesthetic norms of late classical culture', consideration of 'the achievements of individual patristic writers in formulating and illustrating the principles of a specifically Christian literary activity, and the influence exerted by their works and personalities on later generations of *literati*', as well as studies that 'will seek to establish significant links between the forms of Christian literary practice and the social, political and material circumstances of their exponents.'

[15] Clark (2004), 8.

[16] Clark (2004), 170.

1.2 Hieronymian legend

The earliest records following Jerome's death on 30 September 420[17] include two anonymous works: *Hieronymus noster*,[18] and *Plerosque nimirum*, both composed sometime before the middle of the ninth century.[19] While these works attempt to provide accurate information about Jerome gleaned from his letters and his own writings, they also endeavor to present Jerome in the best possible manner and simplify his life to fit into the standard hagiographical narrative.[20] These rather reductive accounts were followed by subsequent artists and scholars.[21] As Rice comments,

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[17] Prosper of Aquitaine *Epitoma chronicon* 1274. See Chapter 3, 7.6 on Jerome's age.

[18] Rice (1985), 23.

[19] Rice (1985), 23-24, also discusses the accounts of Jerome present in the works of the twelfth-century biblical scholar Nicolò Maniacoria (*Vita sancti Hieronymi collecta ex tractatibus eius ac sanctorum Augustini, Damasi, Gregorii, Gelasii, et aliorum partum sanctorum*), thirteenth-century encyclopedist Vincent of Beauvais (*Speculum historiale*) and the Dominican friar and archbishop of Genoa, Jacobus de Voragine (*Legenda sanctorum*).

[20] Whatley, Thompson, and Upchurch (2004), 104-105. See, for example, Jerome's two sojourns in Rome reduced to one. *Plerosque nimirum* recounts how Jerome became a cardinal shortly after arriving in Rome (*Sanctuarium* 2.31.31-36, edited by Bonino Mombrizio [1910]), while *Hieronymus noster* tells the story of how Jerome was waiting to be declared bishop of Rome (see *PL* 22.175-84 or *Biblioteca Hagiographica Latina* 3469**)**. Moreover, *Plerosque nimirum* ascribes Jerome's unwilling departure from Rome to the Arian controversy (*Sanctuarium* 2.32.9-14), *Hieronymus noster* to greedy monks, thus entirely removing the blame from Jerome and ignoring the evidence found in his letters (*Ep.* 45). The need to find alternative reasons for Jerome's departure from Rome continues well into the Middle Ages. Often these stories discredit negative opinions of Jerome as attempts to besmirch his powerfully virtuous character. For example, a legend originating in the twelfth century is recounted in full in the *Legenda aurea* by Jacobus de Voragine, who writes that Roman clergymen, hostile towards Jerome, who had attacked their vices, planted a woman's garment near his bed: '[h]e got up one morning to go to matins, as was his custom, and found at his bedside a woman's gown, which, thinking it was his own, he put on and so proceeded into the church. His adversaries, of course, had done this in order to make it look as if he had a woman in his room' (*Legenda aurea*, 597-602, trans. Ryan (2012), 598, based on Latin text published by Graesse 1969). Rice (1985), 24.

[21] See Rice (1985), 23-84, on various portrayals of Jerome in both literature and art.

Other elaborations of the record reflect less the wish to fill gaps or add verisimilitude by concrete imaginary detail than the need to meet the community's rising expectations about the qualities, behavior, character, and rank of so venerated and holy a person.[22]

These works seem to foreshadow much of the Hieronymian scholarship that would follow. Jerome was celebrated for his academic and spiritual qualities, two of the key components typical of saints.[23] But these accounts, *Hieronymus noster* and *Plerosque nimirum*, were likely written several hundred years after Jerome's death, and their skewed versions of Jerome offer anachronistic portraits. It was only after Jerome had died, and the legends around him had sufficiently built up – legends that drew attention to his erudition and austere lifestyle, perhaps to an even greater extent than he did himself – that Jerome was canonized. Indeed, Bede, the seventh-/eighth-century monk, refers to Jerome merely as 'presbyter'.[24] Jerome came to be considered a saint when 'he became the object of a public cult organized by the church', and therefore 'when the authors of martyologies included his name in their lists.'[25] Sainthood is, very

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[22] Rice (1985), 30.

[23] Coleman (1987), 214, discusses the tendency of saints to posses the following qualities: that of being an 'exemplary model', 'extraordinary teacher', 'wonder worker or source of benevolent power', 'intercessor', and 'possessor of a special and revelatory relation to the holy'. He continues to discuss the 'teacher quality' of the saint, a qualification common not only in the Christian tradition but also in Hinduism and Confucianism. However, it should be noted that although Christian saints (e.g. Thomas Aquinas, Augustine, and Jerome) were considered erudite teachers, 'exceptional teaching ability was by no means understood as a prerequisite for sainthood.' Head (2000), xiv, describes saints as 'demonstrating their holiness through their actions, whether it be in the willingness to accept martyrdom, in the rigors of extreme asceticism, in the wise exercise of episcopal office, or in the heroic defense of their virginity.'

[24] See Lifschitz (2000), 192, for translation of Bede's *Martyrologium*. See *PL* 94.1058B.

[25] Rice (1985), 31-32. During the first centuries, bishops, priests, and monks were referred to as *hagioi* or *sancti*, 'saints' or people 'belonging to Christ' (31). The concept gradually came to be associated with the cult of martyrs. The church began to honor Christians as martyrs, not only for dying for the faith but also for painstaking adherence to Christian doctrine. Martyrs were celebrated by 'a public cult sanctioned by custom, tradition, and ecclesiastical authority' (31).

much, a social construct. A body of believers and the sanction of an ecclesiastical authority is necessary for canonization. Jerome was honored as a saint by the seventh century and the martyrologies of the eighth and ninth centuries proceeded in revering him as such while celebrating his learning and holiness.[26] The mythology surrounding Jerome the man assisted in developing his status within the later church and the development of his cult during the Renaissance.[27] His own literary and spiritual achievements undoubtedly acted as the inspirational catalysts for the development of such cults, but viewing Jerome as a saint, 'church father,' or 'doctor of the church,'[28] when discussing his works, as well as his achievements and failures grants too much importance to legends and inevitably distorts historical evidence. However, scholars with

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The first significant Latin martyrology was composed during the fifth-century by an unknown author in Italy. This list of martyrs was organized into a calendar and was mistakenly attributed to Jerome by a preface composed of a selection of correspondence between Jerome and bishops Chromatius of Aquileia and Heliodorus of Antinum. This has been referred to as the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*. The oldest extant manuscript dates to the early eighth century and is a revised copy from a Gallic manuscript dating to around 600. These two manuscripts include Jerome in their lists of saints. See Lifschitz (2000), 169-170, for the development of these martyrologies.

[26] Rice (1985), 32, discusses the martyrologies of Florus of Lyons, Rhabanus Marus of Fulda, Wandelbert of Prüm, Ado of Vienne, and Usuard that revere Jerome as a saint.

[27] See Rice (1985), 49-83, on the cult of Jerome and the pseudographs (documents attributed to Eusebius of Cremona, Pseudo-Augustine, and Pseudo-Cyril) celebrating Jerome that became popular during the fourteenth century. Whatley, Thompson, and Upchurch (2004), 106-108, discuss these documents and how they worked to further Jerome's cult in the late Middle Ages.

[28] At the end of the sixth century, Bishop Licinianus of Cartagena when writing to Pope Gregory, referred to certain Christian writers as 'fathers,' 'doctors,' and 'defenders of the church.' These figures tended to include: Augustine, Hilary of Poitiers, Cyprian, Ambrose, Gregory of Nazianzus, Pope Gregory, and Jerome. Gregory, Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome, however, were singled out by the eleventh century and associated with the four major prophets, evangelists, and cardinal virtues. See Rice (1985), 32-33 and n.31, for the official decree of Pope Boniface VIII on 20 September 1295 that declared Jerome a 'father' and 'doctor of the church'.

ecclesiastical backgrounds generally regarded Jerome, despite his failings, with the reverence due to a man who was canonized.[29]

1.3 Historiographical trends

Early and mid-twentieth century works on Jerome largely took more methodologically uniform approaches; studies tended to concentrate on Jerome's theology.[30] Additionally, Jerome's contributions to Christian scholarship were seen as Jerome's grand achievement, often in spite of his 'unoriginality' and coarse temper.[31] During this period, studies of Jerome were largely undertaken by theological scholars who read Jerome's work from a religious perspective. Francis Murphy's edited volume published in 1952, *A Monument to Saint Jerome: Essays on Some Aspects of his Life, Works, and Influence*, provides a significant example of this period of scholarship.[32] The collection begins with a foreword by Cardinal Tisserant, Bishop of Ostia, Porto, and Santa Rufina, who relates the instruction he received to read Jerome's *Letters* when studying theology in Jerusalem in the early twentieth century.[33] Cardinal Tisserant's narrative demonstrates the lasting impact that Jerome has had on education and the church even into contemporary times: he comments on many

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[29] See Murphy (1952), 10-11; Cavallera (1952), 19; Burke (1952), 145-146.

[30] Jerome's, as well as other 'church fathers'' appropriation of secular sources provided another focus point: Grützmacher (1901), 1.113; Pease (1919); Hritzu (1943); Duckworth (1947-48); Ellspermann (1949); Laistner (1951); Basabe (1951); Eiswirth (1955).

[31] Murphy (1952), 10, comments that Jerome's irascibility should not be 'be taken as an indication that the man was not a saint.' He describes Jerome as a 'relentless ascetic who practiced mortification incessantly, who lived in the realm of the supernatural, and who helped to form a truly Christian mind in hundreds of his friends and followers' (10).

[32] Murphy himself was a member of the *Congregatio Sanctissimi Redemptoris* (C.SS.R.).

[33] Tisserant (1952), ix.

positive aspects of Jerome — his classical Latin, his remarkable reputation, and the unquestionable influence he exerted in the West.[34] The fact that Jerome was viewed as a saint by the seventh century has undoubtedly influenced how scholarship has received him.[35]

Murphy's compilation of essays on Jerome also provides a central example of the type of scholarship common before the so-called 'cultural turn'. A survey of the contributors illustrates what was prevalent at the time: a majority of the contributing scholars held theological positions at universities often with religious affiliations;[36] few were predominately historians.[37] In contrast, a more recent collection published in 2009, *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings, and Legacy*, edited by Andrew Cain and Josef Lössl, indicates the shift in methodology now used by scholars when approaching Jerome. The combined efforts of two institutions is indicative itself of the changes that had

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[34] Tisserant (1952), x.

[35] Cardinal Tisserant (1952), x, comments that Jerome's love of Christ, was 'the love proper to a saint.' See Lössl (2009), 237-238, who comments on the fact that studies on Jerome originated from traditions that were concerned with the 'generation and preservation of memory', more than the 'study of history'. Lössl argues for the need for scholarship that is aware of the forces that shape the tradition of Hieronymian studies. For Vessey (2009), 229, Hieronymian studies are currently in a state of development as they attempt to avoid what he calls the '*jeromanesque*', or, '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.'

[36] Bardy taught positive theology at the Grand Séminaire de Dijon; Burke, dogmatic theology at Catholic University; Cavallera, theology at the Institut Catholique de Toulouse; Skehan, sacred scripture and oriental languages at Catholic University; Hartmann was a chairman of the Commission for the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine's translation of the scriptures into English. See Martin (2005), 3-5, on the development of Religion as 'a historical, social, and cultural phenomenon', worthy of being 'studied in its own right' (3).

[37] Laistner, Palanque, and Quain held positions in humanities departments.

taken place:[38] the book is a result of a collaboration between the Cardiff University Centre for Late Antique Religion and Culture, and the Department of Classics at the University of Colorado at Boulder. The contributions to this volume by scholars such as Neil Adkin, Andrew Cain, David Hunter, Stefan Rebenich, and Mark Vessey demonstrate the synthesis of approaches and the now prevalent interchange between the departments of theology, classics, and history. The methodology used by these scholars is indicative of the 'cultural turn' referred to above. The book is divided into two parts: 'Part I: Hagiography, Letters, Heresy, and the Man' and 'Part II: The Science of Scripture: Philology, Exegesis, and Translation', but both incorporate textual and historical analysis when inspecting Jerome's personal and theological writings.

Following the development of this 'cultural and linguistic turn,' scholars have embraced this intellectual movement when studying Jerome and his works. As we will see, the transformation of historiographical trends is apparent when scholarship is viewed collectively. The following thematic overviews will be, to a certain extent, schematic, and will not be entirely comprehensive. However, their purpose is not to be exhaustive, but to delineate how studies of Jerome have evolved since the mid-twentieth century, as well as to identify how past studies have underestimated the value of a detailed examination of Jerome's rhetoric.

2. SCHOLARSHIP ON JEROME THE MAN

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[38] Vessey (2009), 225, comments, 'however the proceedings of this conference may be received, they will not easily be mistaken for another "Monument to Saint Jerome."'

Scholars have long been interested in studying the personality of Jerome and intent on making sense of his radically different representations: as a learned exegete and devoted ascetic monk on the one hand; and as a verbally aggressive, ambitious presbyter and 'spiritual seducer of aristocratic women'[39] on the other. Furthermore, the longevity of Jerome and his corpus within the context of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Reformation is without question.[40] However, we must exercise caution when distinguishing between the historical Jerome and the representations, or what Vessey calls 'effigies' of him, as Jerome had a propensity for self-production.[41] Many studies evaluate Jerome the man, and examine his life and notorious confrontations. The following will provide a survey (inevitably selective) of the studies in this category that are germane to this thesis. We will see that typically commentary on Jerome's personality has been linked either to broad overviews of his life, or to specific key events in his career. Scholarship that dates to the mid-twentieth century, as will become clear, is unduly focused on Jerome's mordant personality.[42] It has not been until recently, undoubtedly as a result of the

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[39] Rebenich (1997), 360.

[40] See Rice (1985), 137-144, on views of Jerome during the Reformation, especially with regard to Erasmus, who championed Jerome and his dialectical skill, Martin Luther, who seemingly held Jerome in less high esteem, and John Calvin who believed that Jerome was overzealous when it came to promoting virginity and deprecating marriage. See also 152-160, where Rice discusses the reemergence of interest in Jerome's life and republications of his works after 1517, when Luther published his 95 Theses, and the Catholic desire to stress the 'consonance of Jerome's doctrinal views with contemporary Catholic orthodoxy' (152).

[41] Vessey (2009).

[42] Murphy (1952), Favez (1958), and Wiesen (1964) [with reference to Jerome's satire] are discussed within this chapter. These views are representative of the typical approach taken to Jerome at the time. Murphy (1952), 4, comments on the difficulty of ascertaining an accurate biography of Jerome as it is 'studded with controversy. Scholars and writers of the Renaissance and the Reformation – from Erasmus and Basnagius to Cave and the Bollandists – indulged in

growing influence of social science and cultural anthropology on the fields of theology and classics, that scholars have consciously embraced the centrality of language and begun to home in on Jerome's use of rhetoric when analyzing how he presents himself. Such discussion, as we will see, has provided very useful insights into Jerome's self-presentation.[43] For the sake of organization the survey within this section will be divided between studies that take comprehensive views of Jerome and those that narrow down the discussion to critical points in Jerome's life. We will begin with the broader views of Jerome.

2.1 Jerome's life

Jerome has been the subject of several relatively recent biographical studies. As discussed above, these investigations have either provided valuable comprehensive overviews of Jerome's life or have singled out key stages in his life worthy of note. The first category of analysis is best exemplified by Kelly's seminal biography published in 1975, *Jerome: his Life, Writings, and Controversies*, which provides helpful insight into the controversies that are of interest to this thesis;[44] however, this study, while comprehensive in detailing Jerome's career, neglects to consider fully the rhetoric involved in Jerome's productions. Kelly does, nonetheless, celebrate Jerome's literary contributions to both the Christian

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the most vitriolic of polemic when discussing St. Jerome… In the nineteenth century, likewise, opinion favoring Jerome or belittling him ran full current.'

[43] See Cain (2006), (2009a), (2009b).

[44] Other important modern biographies include: Grützmacher's (1901) *Hieronymus: Eine biographische Studie zur alten Kirchengeschichte* (3 vols.) and Cavallera's (1922) *Saint Jérôme: sa vie et son œuvre*. Grützmacher claims that a comprehensive biography of Jerome had not yet been undertaken due to the unpleasant character of its subject (1.vi). Cavallera focuses on Jerome's literary temperament and psychology, commenting that Jerome's impulsiveness and bluntness when combined with his rhetorical education fostered his ability to exaggerate and caricature.

and secular genres, commenting:

> Whatever genre he took in hand – satire, letter-writing, polemical pamphlets, romantic lives of desert heroes, even Scripture commentaries – he was supreme as a literary craftsman, deploying the Latin language with an expertise and a flexibility, and a sense of colour and cadence, which recalled, and sometimes surpassed, the giants of the classical era. The renaissance humanists were quick to recognise this, but since their day until quite recently scant justice has been done to him in this regard.[45]

Since Kelly's publication, scholars have further examined Jerome's letters and commentaries. However, and in keeping with Kelly's methodology, the rhetoric found in his polemics has largely gone unstudied. An appreciation of Jerome's skill in this area and an analysis of several of these texts as a unit is necessary in order to fill this hole in the scholarship. As Kelly writes, 'The deeper springs of his psychology elude us and for all his readiness to talk about himself there is an unsolved enigma about the real Jerome.'[46] The 'real Jerome' is shrouded by centuries of history and legends, not to mention Jerome's own shaping of his self-presentation. We must, therefore, exercise caution when attempting to discuss the 'real' person, as such an endeavor is likely to be unsuccessful. While the skeleton key to Jerome may not necessarily be found within his abusive rhetoric, such a study will allow further insight into Jerome's motivation and life, and help to demonstrate the social role of invective and its use as a rhetorical technique.

2.2 Jerome's social circle

In a more recent work, and the first of two wide-ranging studies, Rebenich

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[45] Kelly (1975), 335.
[46] Kelly (1975), 336.

(1992) approached Jerome's life from another angle, undertaking a prosopographical and social-historical work that studies how Jerome's circle of friends helped his success as a biblical exegete and literary scholar. Rebenich was certainly considerably influenced by the methodological approaches to Late Antiquity that developed in the late 1970s and 80s.[47] His approach blends social science with classical studies, as he examines Jerome's travels to various cities (Rome, Trier, Aquileia, Antioch, Constantinople, and again to Rome) and the relationships that evolved along the way. Each city presents an important stage of development in Jerome's career. But more importantly, Rebenich discusses the evolution of the ancient patron/client relationship, now a Christian relationship, that allowed Jerome to look to wealthy, devout Christians for ideological and material support in order to further his literary ambitions. With Jerome's career initiatives in mind, Rebenich reassesses Jerome's long-celebrated stay in the desert of Chalcis, providing a more nuanced analysis and convincingly arguing that this period in Jerome's life was not as solitary as modern scholarship has interpreted it. Jerome highlights his reclusive lifestyle as such a presentation allowed him to promote himself as an orthodox and highly ascetic monk.[48] The issue of Jerome's self-presentation and desire for recognition of theological orthodoxy and ascetic authority is further discussed within his correspondence. He found support from the Christian literati by

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[47] However, Clark's (1996) review of Rebenich's work notes that 'he was not yet familiar with social network theory, which would have provided him with theoretical support for his social-historical portrayal of Jerome's friends and the functions they served' (696-697). Clark uses this methodology in her monograph published in 1992, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate.*

[48] Jerome's correspondence betrays close interaction with Evagrius of Antioch as well as details of a well-equipped library and scribes who undoubtedly assisted in Jerome's literary production.

recommending himself as the ideal ascetic, endowed with the essential language skills and ascetic desert credentials. Rebenich demonstrates how Jerome combined those advantages at his disposal – his education and his circle of friends – in an endeavor to achieve literary fame and a reputation as a champion of asceticism. Indeed, Rebenich credits much of Jerome's success to his social circle:

> Für den nachhaltigen Einfluß des Hieronymus als eines christlichen Schriftstellers und Übersetzers der Heiligen Schrift waren seine personalen Bindungen zur römischen *nobilitas* und zu weiteren Aristokraten, Bischöfen und Klerikern der lateinischen Christenheit grundlegend…. denn erst durch ihre materielle und ideelle Unterstützung vermochte er sein ambitioniertes literarisches und theologisches Programm zu verwirklichen und sich der Bedrohungen seiner Widersacher erfolgreich zu erwehren.[49]

However, dismissing Jerome's influence as the result of his network of friends potentially devalues the importance of the rhetoric within his work. The study undertaken in this thesis will demonstrate the significance of Jerome's rhetoric of abuse and how it attempted to assist in propelling his career forward and was reshaped depending on Jerome's position in the Christian community. Such a study of Jerome's rhetoric will allow him to reclaim some of the credit for his continuing influence instead of solely attributing his success as a literary scholar to his network of friends.

2.3 Jerome's roles

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[49] 'Jerome's personal ties to the Roman *nobilitas* and other aristocrats, bishops, and clergy of the Latin Christendom were fundamental for his lasting influence as a Christian writer and translator of the scriptures… It is only through their material and spiritual support he was able to realize his ambitious literary and theological program and to defend himself successfully against the threats of his opponents.' Rebenich (1992), 301.

In his second similarly broad account, Rebenich (2002) presents Jerome in his various roles as 'novelist', 'theologian', 'chronographer', 'epistolographer', 'satirist', 'biographer', 'biblical scholar', 'literary historian', 'translator', 'controversialist', 'threnodist', and 'ascetic expert' in his contribution to 'The Early Church Fathers' series, *Jerome*; but overall, this work aims to focus on Jerome's position in fourth- and early fifth-century Christian society. Through a discussion of a representative selection of texts, Rebenich aims 'to reflect upon and revise some elements of the traditional portrait of Jerome that even today determines his representation across various denominational and ideological borderlines.'[50] The study discusses several of Jerome's less familiar works, including a polemical treatise considered in this thesis, *Contra Vigilantium*. But as the purpose of the book is to introduce readers to less well-known texts, and to re-examine the roles played by Jerome while revealing some of the decisive factors that brought him success in his literary and theological endeavors, the rhetoric of the texts goes unexamined. It seems that this reluctance to assess Jerome's rhetoric in detail is typical of the wide-ranging studies; moreover, as we will see next, when scholars have focused on specific texts and situations in Jerome's career, rather than making a sweeping analysis of his life, they have nonetheless eschewed a detailed study of the function of the rhetoric within each work.

2.4 Jerome in the Origenist Controversy

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[50] Rebenich (2002), ix.

The Origenist controversy presents an example of a key period in Jerome's life that has been examined in detail. At the turn of the fifth century, the teachings of the third-century Alexandrian theologian Origen were called into question. Theologians were subject to scrupulous criticism and accused others, in turn, of following the teachings of Origen, who was now deemed a heretic. Jerome found himself in the middle of the controversy, and in danger of losing his orthodox reputation. This episode has been discussed by Clark in 1990 as an important issue in Jerome's literary production. In her article 'New Perspectives on the Origenist Controversy: Human Embodiment and Ascetic Strategies', she considers Jerome's involvement in the debates over Origen. One of Clark's main points involves Jerome's preoccupation with the issue of 'the hierarchy of merit'.[51] He believed and taught that otherworldly rewards were granted according to ascetic practice. Virgins would receive the greatest rewards, followed by widows, and lastly the married. Clark posits that this concern arose during the ascetic debates of the 380s, and came to a head during Jerome's theological battles with Jovinian in 393, later resurfacing during the outbreak of the Origenist controversy.[52] It is significant that Clark highlights Jerome's interest with a strict hierarchy on earth and in heaven: this same preoccupation is present in Jerome's abusive works and becomes more apparent when the treatises are viewed collectively. His fixation on hierarchy, especially within his abusive rhetoric, is a point that will be developed at some length within this

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[51] Clark (1990), 161. Hierarchy plays an important role in Clark's study. She writes of the new sociological approach she found fruitful when tackling this theological controversy: 'social scientists sought an approach that better lent itself to the consideration of societies and relationships characterized by hierarchy, asymmetry, and inequality, without reverting to an individualistic, psychological analysis' (17).

[52] Clark (1990), 162. Also see Clark (1987), 165-167, on Jerome's use of hierarchical imagery in his letters following his altercation with Jovinian in 393.

thesis. While Clark's argument centers on the biblical passages used by Jerome to demonstrate the levels of merit in heaven, I argue that this same interest in hierarchy is present within his abusive rhetoric and functions to assert Jerome's orthodoxy and position in society.

Furthermore, Jerome's involvement in the Origenist controversy seems to have fueled many of his polemical responses. Clark's 1992 monograph on the Origenist controversy presented a detailed analysis of the late fourth/early-fifth-century disputes that occurred concerning the works of Origen.[53] Her work demonstrated the potential of discussing social history in Late Antiquity using social science methodology, thus following and furthering the developing historiographical trends of the time. While, to an extent, the arguments that arose during this period were a result of conflicting ideas on the Trinity, creation, eschatology, and asceticism, the important point that Clark makes is that 'many arguments between pro- and anti-Origenist forces centered not on theology at all, but on personal alliances, hatreds, and jealousies that were carried on across three continents.'[54] Clark analyzes the social networks of the period, detailing the alliances and animosity that provoked the controversy,

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[53] Clark's monograph highlights the social networks involved in the Origenist controversy with specific focuses on Evagrius Ponticus, Epiphanius of Salamis, Theophilus of Alexandria, John of Jerusalem, Jerome, and Rufinus. She explores how these social circles, and the social and moral hierarchies they believed in, impacted how Christians formed opinions about the body and asceticism. The work builds on her article discussed above which homes in on religious questions — e.g. concerns of the body, the image of God, reproduction, and hierarchy in the hereafter— that she understood at that time to lie at the root of the debate. Clark (1990), 146, writes, '[t]hree years' study of the numerous texts pertaining to the controversy, however, has convinced me that religious issues *do* underlie the debate, issues lending coherence to the otherwise bewildering assortment of charges and countercharges.' In her monograph two years later Clark moderately revised her opinion.

[54] Clark (1992), 6.

thus revealing another aspect of the historical context and contending that while religious issues do lie at the basis of the conflicts, these connections helped to influence stances on theological issues. Clark's study has proved valuable in illuminating the potential of using social science to analyze history, as well as situating and understanding Jerome's personal interactions and compositions during this period. The Origenist controversy forms a key moment in Jerome's career, forcing him into a precarious situation: as Jerome felt his orthodox reputation was in danger, the battles he chose, the allies he invoked, and his use of abusive rhetoric can help us gain insights into Jerome's methods of self-promotion. The polemical treatises examined in this thesis fall before and after the critical dispute. Jerome's rhetoric will be analyzed to discern the changes that occur in Jerome's abusive rhetoric depending on his social position and keeping in mind Clark's social networking theory.

2.5 Jerome in Constantinople

The Origenist controversy is not alone in having been focused on as a key stage of Jerome's life. Rebenich (1997) concentrates on a different period that he considered to be important: the years Jerome spent in Constantinople (380-382). Rebenich addresses the question of how Jerome was able to be successful 'as a literary exponent both of the ascetic movement and of Nicene orthodoxy, as a translator and a commentator of the Bible, and as a mediator between eastern and western theology.'[55] He concentrates on what he calls Jerome's 'historical relativity' and points out that scholarship often focuses on analysis of Jerome's

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[55] Rebenich (1997), 361.

personality traits, but overlooks asking *how* Jerome managed to make the name for himself that he did. It was Jerome's methods of literary production, Rebenich proposes, in which he promoted himself as a highly literate, multilingual exegete, author, and translator, well-versed in ascetic and monastic literature, with the ability to appropriate Greek works for the Latin West that allowed him to lay the foundation for his successful literary career. Going beyond the traditional portrayal of Jerome conditioned by ecclesiastical art and literature, as well as modern scholarship, Rebenich questions *how* Jerome promoted himself in the Christian community. Plotting Jerome's travels and his literary transmission of himself produces a survey that details how Jerome attempted to gain a following. Such a study hints at the importance of exploring how Jerome manipulates his texts and composes his rhetoric in order to achieve his desired outcome. Indeed, the manner in which Jerome achieved distinction for his work provides an interesting question. As we will see, past scholarship has engaged with this question, analyzing how Jerome manufactured a literary persona for himself. Jerome's personality has long been factored in; but it is only in more recent studies, and in keeping with methodological developments, that scholars have looked beyond Jerome's notorious mordant reputation.

2.6 Jerome's persona

Scholarship dating to the mid twentieth-century tended to focus on Jerome's short temper and disagreeable nature. Murphy's rather outdated edited collection mentioned above, *A Monument to St. Jerome*, contains several essays concerned with Jerome's character and self-portrayal: Cavallera writes that Jerome was greatly irascible, 'exaggerated petty incidents', and held long-lasting

resentments.[56] But his passionate and 'faithful' character can be gleaned through his letters to friends such as Paulinus of Nola and Heliodorus, as well as in those to noble Roman women.[57] Cavallera proceeds to discuss generally Jerome's tendencies to exaggerate in his work and comments on his propensity to '[mix] himself in controversies and ecclesiastical affairs not necessarily concerning him.'[58] What Cavallera, and others, have not yet considered is *why* Jerome engaged in the verbal sparring that he did, and how this reflects back on his literary output. In the past there has been an overwhelming tendency to attribute Jerome's engagement in polemical affairs to his volatile character.

Furthermore, Jerome's self-presentation is discussed in Favez's 1958 work, which explores how Jerome painted himself in the prefaces to his translations and biblical commentaries. Favez shows that Jerome portrayed himself as scholar, writer, reader, polemist, friend, satirist, and Christian.[59] Yet, perhaps owing to the work's brevity, and by no means comprehensive nature (Favez seeks only to introduce the reader to the portrait of Jerome),[60] Jerome's abusive rhetoric, while mentioned, is dismissed as a cover on Jerome's part for

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[56] Cavallera (1952), 17. Cavallera does not include specific references, but likely is referring to Jerome's interactions with his erstwhile friend Rufinus (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 1; *Ep.* 127.10), his veiled references to Ambrose (see Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.25-28; Jer. *Ep.* 69.9; Jer. *De viris illustribus* 124; Hunter (2009)), and perhaps Jerome's uncomfortable relationship with some Roman Christians (*Ep.* 45).

[57] Cavallera (1952), 17. See, for example, *Ep.* 53 and *Ep.* 58 to Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 14 and 60 to Heliodorus, *Ep.* 27 and *Ep.* 38 to Marcella, and *Ep.* 39 to Paula.

[58] Cavallera (1952), 19. Hunter (2007), 231, discusses the possible reason behind Jerome's involvement in the Jovinianist controversy, i.e. that Jerome saw an opportunity to advance his name in society.

[59] Favez (1958), 5.

[60] Favez (1958), 5, '…je désire seulement, comme l'indique mon titre, présenter aux lecteurs le portrait de Jérôme, tel qu'il l'a fait lui-même dans ses Préfaces, sous des aspects particulièrement révélateurs de l'homme'.

lack of real argumentation and subsumed within the discussion on Jerome's 'caractère irascible'.[61] A nuanced discussion of Jerome's abusive rhetoric would allow for a more in-depth evaluation that goes beyond simply attributing Jerome's choice of rhetoric to his supposed fractious nature.   More recent scholarship has deviated somewhat from this tendency to focus on Jerome's quick temper in conjunction with his compositions and self-portrayal.

Jerome's self-presentation is but a small part of Brown's influential work of 1988, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, and while his approach is not concerned with textuality per se it is nonetheless worth mentioning.   This innovative study on sex, the body, celibacy, and abstinence in Christian communities in the late Roman Empire briefly discusses Jerome's tract against Jovinian,[62] commenting that it 'acted as an inspiration and as an irritant throughout the Latin world.'[63] Brown also considers a developing problem that Jerome was beginning to face following the publication of this treatise: the Origenist controversy was becoming heated and Jerome, who, Brown argues, had thus far modelled himself on Origen, was forced to abandon the teachings and works of his spiritual teacher.

Without realizing it at the time, Vessey (1993) developed a similar idea connecting Jerome's self-presentation and Origen in his article: 'Jerome's Origen: The Making of a Christian Literary *Persona*'.[64] Vessey argues that Jerome carefully crafted a persona for himself that is clearly seen in his

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[61] Favez (1958), 54.

[62] See Chapter 5.

[63] Brown (1988), 377.

[64] See Vessey (1993), 145 n.29, for acknowledgement of this.

correspondence and prefaces to his biblical commentaries and translations. More specifically, Jerome fashioned his Christian literary persona after the likes of Origen. Vessey focuses on Jerome's correspondence with Marcella, highlighting his tendency to draw parallels between himself and the Alexandrian scholar in order to validate his claims of superiority over other exegetes and thus expand his Christian readership in Rome. In the period from 387 to 392, preceding the Origenist controversy, Jerome's self-presentation fashions himself as a 'latter-day or Latin Origen'. It is only following 393 that Jerome seeks to distance himself from his former inspiration. The prefaces and Jerome's correspondence, it seems, have received a fair amount of scholarship; however, the polemics, where Jerome often appears at his most explosive, have yet to be examined in reference to Jerome's self-portrayal.

More recently, in 2009, Rebenich returned to the question of Jerome's self-presentation. Yet again, Jerome's polemics were passed over in favor of his other works. Rebenich provides a new evaluation of Jerome's self-fashioning and discusses the reasons behind the composition of one of Jerome's biographical works: the *Vita Pauli.* He argues that with this work Jerome was attempting to supplant Athanasius' *Life of St. Antony,* to strengthen his status as a biblical scholar endowed with access to eastern scholarship, and to advertise the superiority of asceticism. Jerome uses secular and Christian examples to appeal to an educated Christian audience in an attempt to entertain, educate, and encourage his readers to imitate the actions of the saintly ascetic hero. Additionally, Rebenich asserts that the composition cemented Jerome's place as the author of the ascetic movement. While some of Jerome's other works have

received attention in connection with his self-presentation, it is Jerome's letters that have been subjected to closer scrutiny.

2.7 Jerome and rhetoric

Cain's 2006 article '*Vox clamantis in deserto*: Rhetoric, Reproach, and the Forging of Ascetic Authority in Jerome's Letters from the Syrian Desert' is an important development in Hieronymian studies. This attention to Jerome's rhetoric is an aspect of his work that has long been overlooked. Despite the developments in studies of language over the past thirty years, it has only been in the past decade that Jerome's rhetoric has fully come under inspection. During the late 1980s and 90s, scholars began to give more careful consideration to how ancient writers used language and stylization to achieve certain rhetorical objectives.[65] The importance of language has become a primary concern as scholars have begun to treat it as the '"given" by which human reality is constructed in any meaningful way', having realized that they are not able to 'sail past the "epiphenomenon" of language to arrive at the "real stuff" or "phenomena" behind or below language'.[66] History is comprised of language and therefore the language itself is part and parcel of understanding history and those that write it.

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[65] See, for example, Jacqueline Long's 1996 study of the invective found in the compositions of the late fourth- early fifth-century Alexandrian poet Claudian: *Claudian's In Eutropium, or, How, When, and Why to Slander a Eunuch*, especially part 1 'The Literary World of *In Eutropium*', 15-146; and Mary Whitby's 1998 edited collection, *The Propaganda of Power: The Role of Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, which contains several studies on the theory and techniques of panegyric and its antithetical fraternal twin, invective. Studies of rhetoric began to develop noticeably during the 1960s and 70s: notable are the works of Burke (1962), *The Rhetoric of Religion*; (1969), *A Rhetoric of Motives*; and Booth (1961), *The Rhetoric of Fiction;* (1974) *The Rhetoric of Irony*.
[66] Martin (2005), 8.

The integral nature of rhetoric and the functionality of its techniques have been recognized by scholars such as Averil Cameron and Elizabeth Clark.[67] In 1991 Cameron pointed out that despite new attention to 'orality', 'the significance of writing', and a growing interest in rhetoric within the field of history, rhetoric within early Christian discourse had been largely ignored: '[i]t has barely been noticed as yet what an extraordinarily suitable field early Christianity provides for this kind of enquiry.'[68] While Cameron is using rhetoric in the more modern sense of the term, her point is not diminished.[69] About a decade or so later, Clark similarly commented on the importance of language analysis. She writes that 'although many older philological studies detail the rhetorical devices and style of patristic writings they did not often explore the *work* that these literary devices perform.'[70] Analyzing how Christians endeavored (and succeeded) in shaping their empire with persuasive language has the potential to illuminate the power of language in society.

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[67] Cameron's *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse*, published in 1991, focuses on Christian discourse and departs from writing history from the 'historical point of view focused more on its social and institutional dimensions than on its modes of expression' (2). Cameron uses literary theories, sociology, and the work of Foucault (1984) when questioning how early Christian texts can be used in relaying Christian thought and how they reflect on the general culture of the late Roman Empire. She writes, 'My concerns are twofold: to show that a large part of Christianity's effectiveness in the Roman Empire lay in its capacity to create its own intellectual and imaginative universe, and to show its own literary devices and techniques in turn related to changing contemporary circumstances' (6). See Clark (2004) discussed above.

[68] Cameron (1991), 3.

[69] Cameron (1991), 13, notes: 'I do not… use it in its technical sense, but rather in the current, far looser sense it seems to have acquired, by which it can mean something like "characteristic means or ways of expression"; these modes may be either oral or written, or indeed may pertain to the visual or to any other means of communication.' Cain's work (2006, 2009a) discussed below follows this same modern definition of rhetoric.

[70] Clark (2004), 173.

Recently, Jerome has also become an area of interest in this regard and scholarship has followed this broader historiographical trend of using a combination of approaches. No longer do scholars automatically congratulate Jerome on his use of Ciceronian Latin; instead, they have begun probing the language to ascertain its purpose and method. As mentioned above, it is Cain's work in 2006 that has begun to sharpen focus on Jerome's use of rhetoric.

Cain departs from the widely accepted view of Jerome's letters that follows a psychological reading. His important analysis goes beyond seeing these letters for only their chronological, prosopographical, and theological values. Cain cites Grützmacher (1901), Cavallera (1922), Kelly (1975), and Rebenich (1992), who have all studied these letters but failed to see their rhetorical nature. He writes that the psychological interpretation these studies have followed have 'vastly [underestimated] the multiple layers of rhetorical obfuscation at work in the correspondence as well as the rich literary traditions within which Jerome was working.'[71] Scholars have too often taken the letters at face value and thus labeled Jerome as a 'neurotic curmudgeon who was bitter and resentful about being snubbed'.[72] Cain's article escapes these psychological restraints and reassesses a series of Jerome's letters (*Ep*. 6-9, 11-13, 16) composed during his time in the desert of Chalcis (*c.* 375-377) in which he complains about his correspondents' lack of timely contact. Cain argues that contrary to the prevailing view put forward by Kelly (1975), these letters are not merely demonstrative of Jerome's volatile personality, but rather fit into what he calls the 'epistolary genre of reproach' and furthermore were important pieces that

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[71] Cain (2006), 503.
[72] Cain (2006), 500.

were included in Jerome's published book of correspondence that publicized him as the 'consummate hermit and hero of desert asceticism.'[73] Cain goes beyond the psychoanalysis of Jerome which he states has become 'fashionable' over the past thirty years, and instead turns to the rhetoric within the letters in order to understand further the strategies behind Jerome's self-fashioning. Jerome's 'stylish'[74] use of rhetoric found in his letters betrays a man who was concerned with his self-portrayal, but whose self-awareness with regard to his reputation lends itself convincingly to the argument that his rhetoric held purpose. Cain cogently argues that scholars must go beyond using psychoanalysis to make 'moralizing judgements on Jerome's motivations as a writer' and instead view his work against the backdrop of the rhetorical tradition in which he was operating.

Cain's concentration has remained on Jerome's rhetoric and he has further examined Jerome's self-presentation in his monograph on Jerome's correspondence: *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity.*[75] Following the work done by Rebenich and Vessey, this study focuses on the time Jerome spent during his second trip to Rome and his years in Bethlehem and engages with the 'propagandistic dimension of the correspondence'.[76] Cain argues that Jerome's two collections of published letters, *Epistularum ad diversos liber* and *Ad*

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[73] Cain (2006), 500.
[74] Cain (2006), 500.
[75] Cain's article (2009b), 'Rethinking Jerome's Portraits of Holy Women,' in A. Cain and J. Lössl (eds), *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings and Legacy*, is largely a condensed version of chapter 3 of his book that chooses to focus on specific letters (*Ep.* 24 to Asella and *Ep.* 127 to Marcella).
[76] Cain (2009a), 197.

Marcellam epistularum liber, were carefully selected and published by Jerome to serve as a type of résumé in order to launch his future career and secure his reputation as an ascetic virtuoso. Using now prevalent theoretical approaches, influenced by literary theories and poststructuralist methods, Cain carefully deconstructs Jerome's rhetoric throughout a selection of letters to prove his thesis that Jerome's self-image is a rhetorical construction designed to promote him in Roman society. He also discusses Jerome's controversial position in Christian circles and posits that it was not the clergy who advocated his unwilling departure from Rome,[77] but Paula's aristocratic family. Cain's concentrated analysis on Jerome's rhetoric and his investigation of Jerome's position in society is valuable. He comments:

> Modern scholars tend to explain his apparent bravado cynically, in terms of a character defect or of rhetoric gone awry. This interpretation is too reductive, for it trivializes the complexity of his motives and makes the *a priori* assumption that he lacked self-awareness.[78]

This tendency to reduce Jerome's works to overzealous rhetoric needs to be remedied. As Cain remarks, Jerome's aptitude for self-portraiture is apparent in his letters along with his prefaces, but I would add that his polemical works and the abusive rhetoric they contain are also worthy of examination with this in mind.[79] While Cain has taken a key step in deconstructing the rhetoric of Jerome's letters, therefore going beyond the tendency to attribute Jerome's rhetoric solely to his pugnacious nature, his other works await examination in a similar manner. This thesis will continue in this vein of thought, demonstrating

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[77] See Duval (2009) on *Ep.* 18 and *Ep.* 43, which demonstrate, he argues, that Jerome held an idealized view of leaving Rome and settling in Bethlehem.
[78] Cain (2009a), 198.
[79] Cain (2009a), 202.

that the rhetoric itself is an important aspect of the polemical works that brings to light another angle of Jerome's self-portrayal and establishes the social function of invective as a rhetorical tool.

While Cain has begun an inquiry into Jerome's use of rhetoric in his letters, his polemics and heresiological works have remained largely uncharted territory in terms of rhetorical content. Cameron has begun the discussion on this general topic in her article 'How to Read Heresiology', published in 2003. Her study is focused on heresiology in Byzantium and her critique of heresiological scholarship is directed towards studies on heresy in the Greek East, but the larger ideas that highlight the importance of this overlooked area are worthy of note. Cameron comments:

> Our starting point, it must be emphasized, is the almost total lack of rhetorical or literary interest shown for this type of writing in late antiquity and Byzantium; indeed, one might even say that it is usually treated with a degree of repugnance and embarrassment.[80]

'Our modern liberal prejudices', she comments, make heresiology a largely ignored area of study. Scholars such as Jean Gouillard have concluded that heresiology ushered the way for 'stylized, defensive, and limited ways of describing heresy, and to a lack of originality and a superficiality which impedes accurate description.'[81] Scholars must begin to look at these texts, Cameron argues, as 'performative or functional texts' as opposed to seeing them purely as sources of information.[82] While scholars have generally dismissed the

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[80] Cameron (2003), 471.
[81] See Cameron (2003), 473, discussing Gouillard (1965). Such comments are reminiscent of those directed at Jerome's polemics as well. See section 4 below. See also Chapter 2, 2.2.
[82] Cameron (2003), 474.

fourth-century heresiologist, Epiphanius of Salamis and his compilation of heresies, the *Panarion*, unsympathetically as unoriginal and clumsy,[83] Cameron highlights the fact that Epiphanius 'set a definitive pattern for the rhetorical treatment of heretics in Byzantine literature.'[84] How late antique writers wrote about and combated heresy, and the manner in which they adapted to different conditions, presents issues worthy of consideration.[85] Cameron raises a number of questions about Byzantine society that she posits can only be answered by analyzing the texts, 'especially in terms of their rhetorical techniques'.[86]

I will next discuss the relevant scholarship on Jerome's polemical works. While the above section has called attention to preliminary examination of Jerome's self-fashioning rhetoric, discussion of the rhetoric found specifically in his works against heretics remains unsatisfactory. As we will see (and as Cameron has rightly pointed out in general), scholarship has typically neglected to undertake an in-depth study of Jerome's use of rhetoric in these works. This is partly due to the lack of diverse theoretical approaches at the time of inquiry, the dismissal of heresiological works as superficial, and an underappreciation for invective as a rhetorical tool.

3. SCHOLARSHIP ON JEROME'S DISPUTES: HELVIDIUS, JOVINIAN, AND VIGILANTIUS

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[83] Cameron (2003), 475, on Young (1982) and Young (1983), 133.
[84] Cameron (2003), 476.
[85] Cameron (2003), 484, writes, 'I suggest that one ought to read these compositions, so strange to our minds, as part of Byzantine pedagogy and the Byzantine sociology of knowledge, self-perpetuating constructions that helped to formulate thought and underpin social norms'.
[86] Cameron (2003), 484.

The second area of study germane to this thesis is Jerome's involvement in several of the theological disputes of the late fourth and early fifth centuries, a subject that has piqued the interest of many scholars.[87] What follows below is a brief survey of those works that deal with the polemical texts discussed in this thesis: *Adversus Helvidium, Adversus Iovinianum,* and *Contra Vigilantium.* As we will see through the following discussion, the majority of scholarship on these three treatises has privileged the theological content and context over the rhetoric deployed, and its connection to the immediate historical context.

3.1 *Adversus Helvidium*

Jerome's treatise against Helvidius, written in 383, has been the topic of discussion in connection with Jerome's views on asceticism and marriage as well as the prevalent opinion at the time on the issues of Marian theology, specifically Mary's *virginitas post partum.* Joussard (1944) discusses the character of Helvidius and attempts to infer from Jerome's extant treatise who Helvidius may have been, his origin, theological convictions, and methodology in conveying his argument against Mary's perpetual virginity. Joussard's goal is to shine light on the shadowy figure of Helvidius who emerges as a

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[87] The Arian controversy started in the early fourth century and was an ongoing debate over the nature of the Godhead. See Kelly (1958), 223-343, on the development of theological conflicts in the East, especially with reference to the nature of the Godhead and Arian doctrine. The Origenist controversy, which escalated around the turn of the fifth century, debated the works of Origen, above all his views on creation, reproduction, the Trinity, and eschatology. Debates arose that rethought past contentious theological issues: for example, Gnostic ideas were considered to be reborn in Manicheaism; and the controversy over the incorporeality of God within the Trinitarian debates was reignited in Origenist issues of 'Anthropomorphism'. Participants in the Origenist controversy were also concerned with ascetic practices and beliefs. Ascetic influences on issues of marriage, creation, and eschatology divided proponents of asceticism.

'controversiste redoutable' quite different from the portrait of him painted by Jerome.[88] Hunter (1993) uses Jerome's polemical treatise while concentrating on Helvidius' views on the issue of Marian doctrine and asceticism, and argues that Helvidius (and Jovinian) held beliefs that were actually in accordance with earlier Christian views: as Mary's *virginitas in partu* was not a commonly followed doctrine in the early tradition of Christianity (Hunter discusses the biblical apocrypha — The *Ascension of Isaiah* and *Protoevangelium of James*), such a belief deviated from tradition and demonstrated Helvidius' concerns about battling heresy. Rocca's 1998 monograph does not deal with an analysis of Jerome's exegesis in *Adversus Helvidium* but rather studies the structure, figures involved, and issues at stake before situating the treatise within the history of asceticism and Mariology of the fourth century. In 2007, Hunter returned to the topic and briefly studied Jerome's treatise against Helvidius further in conjunction with the theological issues prominent in the Jovinianist controversy. He focused on the similarities found between Helvidius and Jovinian's beliefs, and their goal of arguing that the celibate and the married have equal merits. In each study, the theological stratagems were the focal point, and the rhetorical stratagems employed by Jerome overlooked.

3.2 *Adversus Iovinianum*

The Jovinianist controversy, which raised the questions of Mary's *virginitas in partu*, the equal merits of virgins, widows, and married women, the difference between abstinence and receiving food with thanksgiving, and the value of

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[88] Joussard (1944), 156.

baptism, has likewise sparked scholarly theological interest. However, as we will see, interest has been focused on the person of Jovinian rather than the extant works. Haller, a student of Adolf von Harnack, undertook the first major study focused on Jovinian in 1897, promoting him as the first Protestant.[89] Valli responded to Haller in 1953 from a Catholic point of view.[90] He argued that Jovinian's main argument centered not on works, but on faith and grace. Valli pointed out that the equality of Christians due to baptism was the central point of Jovinian's teaching. He took Jerome's treatise at face value, giving credence to his rhetoric and labeling Jovinian throughout as the heretic.

More recently, Hunter (1987) reexamined Jovinian's theology and raised the possibility that Jovinian had more orthodox aims than hitherto considered. He argued that the ascetic ideals that Jovinian railed against could be linked to the Manichees and Priscillianists; Jovinian was not necessarily disputing Christian virginity or asceticism.[91] In 2003 Duval contributed another monograph that concentrated on the Jovinianist controversy. This study reexamines the chronology of the dispute; studies Jovinian's doctrine and subsequent condemnation as well as the surrounding social and theological context; and discusses Jerome's response to Jovinian's teachings as seen in his

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[89] Hunter (1987), 47. Indeed, Jerome's beliefs and works seemed to hold little weight for Protestants during the Reformation, who believed that scripture was the only true authority and favored the Greek and Hebrew texts, more recent Latin versions, or vernacular translations over Jerome's Vulgate. Additionally, Jerome's central teachings and principles were incompatible with Protestant doctrine: Protestants condemned monasticism; supported marriage; allowed priests to marry; disapproved of relics, the worship of saints, and the Virgin Mary; and censured the primacy of the see of Rome. See Rice (1985), 138-144, especially on views of Jerome during the Protestant Reformation.

[90] Valli (1953).

[91] Hunter (1987).

Adversus Iovinianum. Duval also considers the influence of Jovinian's ideology as seen in the works of Augustine, Pelagius, and Julian of Eclanum.

Hunter's 2007 work on Jovinian, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity: The Jovinianist Controversy,* is the only thorough modern study of Jovinian in English. Hunter discusses the relevant historical context, highlighting the social issues that came to light during the Jovinianist controversy, namely the problems with the ascetic rejection of marriage. Such a dismissal offended the aristocracy, who placed a high value on matrimony: marriage allowed the upper classes to maintain the family's wealth and status. The last section of Hunter's book 'Jovinian and his opponents' is particularly relevant to this thesis, as he explores Siricius', Ambrose's, and Jerome's criticisms of Jovinian. Hunter calls attention to Jerome's differing opinions on the clergy from that of Ambrose and Siricius, as well as his desire to bolster the standing of the ascetic monk. Hunter writes:

> Jerome's conflicts with both Siricius and Ambrose reveal something of Jerome's own marginal status within Western Christianity in the 380s and 390s. His vociferous attack on Jovinian, along with his snide digs at Ambrose and Siricius, suggest a man deeply insecure about his own place in the literary and theological context of his day.[92]

Hunter comments that Jerome was mistaken if he believed that this treatise would 'establish his pre-eminence as a teacher of ascetic and scriptural orthodoxy', but the remainder of the work, while it discusses the reception of Jerome's treatise, does not focus on the failing rhetoric of Jerome's treatise or consider *his* subsequent reaction. Hunter concentrates the discussion on

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[92] Hunter (2007), 242.

marriage and celibacy in Western Christianity and the apparent favoring of a more moderate view of marriage and celibacy, therefore downplaying the importance of Jerome's rhetoric, and his efforts to respond to the reception of his work.[93]

3.3 *Contra Vigilantium*

In contrast to the *Adversus Iovinianum*, much less scholarship has been devoted to Jerome's later treatise against Vigilantius; nonetheless the same scholarly focus can be found in works dedicated to this treatise. Hunter (1999) concentrated his discussion on the relationship between Vigilantius' opposition towards relics and asceticism and the development of the church in Gaul in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. His article discusses Vigilantius' anti-ascetic polemics as gleaned through Jerome's treatise and argues that his views were in accordance with Gallic clerical opinion at that time. If we believe Jerome, Vigilantius was following those heretical views of Jovinian, and had disputed the value of virginity, celibacy, and solitary monasticism. Hunter reexamines Vigilantius' career considering the contemporary Gallic context, specifically highlighting the sympathy with which Vigilantius' opinions seemed to be received there. Hunter briefly discusses the interactions between Jerome and Vigilantius, commenting on the role Vigilantius plays in Jerome's disputed orthodoxy, as well as the chronology, but a close inspection of the rhetoric of Jerome's attacks is missing.[94]

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[93] Hunter (2007), 242.

[94] Jerome wrote *Contra Vigilantium* in 406, but he had also written a letter (*Ep.* 61 in 396), which attacked Vigilantius for gossiping about Jerome's support of Origen.

As we have seen, it is generally the theological character of Jerome's opponents or doctrinal importance that is studied in detail in Jerome's polemical treatises.[95] The rhetoric that Jerome uses is often overlooked. Moreover, several of these studies take Jerome's statements as straightforward fact, failing to consider fully how Jerome's polemical works were rhetorically influenced. This neglects to take into account Jerome's scholastic background, and the potential of his invective as a rhetorical tool. Unpacking Jerome's use of language may help expose another aspect of Jerome's self-presentation and bring to light the social role of invective. The next section will consider the scholarship on Jerome's polemics and satire, which have also been focal points in Hieronymian studies.

4. Scholarship on Jerome's Polemics and Satire

There have been several contributions to Hieronymian scholarship that have focused on Jerome's polemics.[96] Analytical examination of these vitriolic works,

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[95] Apart from this brief consideration by Adkin: in a move away from considering the specifically theological issues in these treatises, Adkin (2000a) has studied Jerome's treatise against Vigilantius to add to the rather scanty evidence that aims to determine whether or not Romans wore underwear under their nightclothes. From Jerome's abuse Adkin determines that it seems uncustomary for people to have worn undergarments, as following a late night earthquake, Jerome criticizes Vigilantius for forgetting to put on his tunic, not for 'failure to retain any underclothing at all' (620).

[96] Jeanjean's (1996) article on the same topic of Jerome's heresiological works is fully expanded in his monograph in 1999, *Saint Jérome et l'hérésie*. Jeanjean (1996) highlights the satire and irony within Jerome's caricatures of Helvidius, Jovinian, and Vigilantius, which tend to focus on their moral failings, making them different from Jerome's other five polemical works. There is often a correlation between the heretic's moral failings and his theses. Jeanjean makes a point of stating that even though Jerome is widely recognized as a polemicist, scholars are more reluctant to call his works heresiological. Jeanjean presents several examples where Jerome uses puns and

however, is often subsumed into general studies on Jerome, and therefore scholarship devoted to the topic tends to be less common. The few studies discussed below explore Jerome's polemical works either within the context of the satirical tradition or within the polemical tradition of Cicero's oratory. It is worth noting, however, that older scholarship on these works has largely been very polarized, either discussing Jerome with adulatory tones or chalking up his polemical treatises to his inability to control his explosive temper, which we saw above. A more moderate discussion that seeks to discover not only how Jerome used the technique of abusive rhetoric, but also for what purpose, will be the central focus of this thesis.

Brochet's early work on Jerome, *Saint Jérôme et ses ennemis,* has been called by Cain the 'classic study of Jerome's polemics'.[97] Brochet studies Jerome's defense of his work (most specifically with reference to his debates with Rufinus), but Jerome is largely idealized, viewed as the empowered victim whose enemies endlessly attempt to stifle his voice which rages against 'une morale indulgente aux défaillances de la chair et aux vanités du siècle'.[98] Jerome is the soldier fighting against vice and folly, with enemies who are largely jealous of his religious devotion and literary skill. Rather dramatically, he uses polemics and invective in order to defend himself against 'Une machination terrible… montée contre lui'.[99] But Jerome's defense of himself and his works,

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ridicule to demean the moral character of his enemy, but such techniques also engage the typical themes of heresiological works, such as fraudulent imitation of the church. Brochet (1905), Wiesen (1964), and Opelt (1973) are discussed below.

[97] Cain (2006), 501.

[98] Brochet (1905), 482: 'a morality that is indulgent towards the weakness of the flesh and towards the vanities of the secular world'.

[99] Brochet (1905), 480: 'a terrible conspiracy … mounted against him'.

Brochet believes, seems to have been tempered by his Roman rhetorical education; Brochet even calls him 'the most careful and most delicate of scholars'.[100] This seems a surprising statement to make considering the rhetorical tradition of invective, a technique that indelicately inveighs against opponents in order to enhance the persuasiveness of the argument. Nevertheless, Jerome's portrayal as a meticulous scholar is a reasonable assessment; his abusive rhetoric was skillfully tailored in the hopes of meeting the approval of his audience and thus gaining their support while solidifying his orthodox reputation. However, it seems unlikely that Jerome's rhetorical education would have assisted in moderating his use of abusive rhetoric. If anything, his education would likely have introduced him to the potential of the technique, which he chose to use at great lengths throughout his career.

Wiesen's (1964) view of Jerome's abusive rhetoric is markedly differently from Brochet's. Jerome is hardly glamorized as Wiesen considers how he fits into the satiric tradition. His insights into Jerome's works against his personal enemies are relevant to this thesis; however, Wiesen concludes his work arguing that the exhaustive examples he has presented illustrate Jerome's derivative nature and monotonous style in writing invective. Wiesen submits that it is only when Jerome writes about someone he has had face to face contact with that he 'succeed[s] in creating brilliantly trenchant satire based on his own

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[100] Brochet (1905), 483, writes: '[c]e moine austère, fougueux et rigide, fut aussi le plus élégant, le plus scrupuleux et le plus délicat des lettrés', 'this austere monk, fiery and rigid, was also the most elegant, the most careful and most delicate of scholars.'

perceptions.'[101] But overall, Wiesen's opinion of Jerome's abusive rhetoric is unfavorable. He comments that

> Jerome's opponents parade through his writings, an incredible band of monsters, ignorant, debauched, foul, ugly, malodorous. He calls upon every one of his many verbal tricks to lampoon them, from cutting irony to the most uncontrolled exaggeration.[102]

But to diminish Jerome's rhetoric to 'verbal tricks' and to devalue it because it seems to follow previously established lines of secular satire is to miss the point. What this thesis will demonstrate is that Jerome's rhetoric, although perhaps at times repetitive, was carefully sculpted with the intention of securing favorable opinion with those whom he needed to impress, and with the hopes of claiming a position of orthodoxy for himself when he needed it most. The value of abusive rhetoric as a tool for maneuvering in society has been overlooked, and Jerome's use of the technique relegated to an element of Jerome's '*saeva indignatio* and *invidia*' towards his opponents.[103]

In contrast to the works cited in the section above regarding specific treatises, Opelt's (1973) valuable work *Hieronymus' Streitschriften* engages with Jerome's seven polemical treatises (*Dialogus contra luciferianos*, *De perpetua virginitate beatae Mariae adversus Helvidium*, *Adversus Iovinianum*, *Contra Ioannem Hierosolymitanum*, *Apologia adversus libros Rufini*, *Contra Vigilantium*, and *Dialogi adversus pelagianos*), analyzes the structure of each work, catalogues the various terms of abuse that Jerome uses, and systematically categorizes the tactics that

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[101] Wiesen (1964), 245.
[102] Wiesen (1964), 245.
[103] Wiesen (1964), 245.

Jerome uses in defeating his opponents.[104] The majority of the book provides relevant overviews of the seven treatises, but Jerome's technique of rhetorical abuse, while discussed, is not given sufficient treatment. The work, additionally, ignores contemporary reactions to Jerome's polemics and how this may have influenced his subsequent productions. It also neglects specifically to trace Jerome's use of abusive rhetoric and its development throughout the different points in his life. The failure to address these aspects, and the reluctance of other works to engage with the rhetoric at all, has left a number of unanswered questions about the treatises: what is the rhetorical relationship between these polemical treatises; how do they affect one another; and how does the rhetoric change depending on Jerome's position and motivation? This thesis aims to provide answers to these questions, overlooked by the works noted above, through a close reading of the texts, an analysis of their reception, and Jerome's subsequent reactions.

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[104] Opelt (1973) breaks down Jerome's method of polemics by examining: the analysis of the opponent's writings; the selection of battle images; the elements of affected stylization; the portrait of the opponent; phenomenology of forms of argumentation; Hieronymus as an exegete; and digressions.

Chapter 2. Abusive Rhetoric and Jerome

1. INTRODUCTION

Jerome tended to engage in abusive rhetoric when his orthodoxy or reputation was threatened. As we will see in the next chapter, Jerome aimed to preserve his reputation, and was cognizant of the status of each of his opponents when responding to their criticism.[1] If an opponent was too far above him in the clerical hierarchy, and recognized by the church, Jerome attempted to disengage from the conflict, or at least veiled his attacks. Part 2 of the thesis will be comprised of three case studies to substantiate how Jerome uses abusive rhetoric to secure and advance his position. However, before we discuss his interactions with Helvidius, Jovinian, and Vigilantius, it will be useful to give a theoretical overview of Jerome's abusive rhetoric.

This chapter will study the theoretical approaches to abusive rhetoric, both ancient and modern. This will entail analysis of ancient works on rhetorical theory and will assess to what extent these works deal with how abusive rhetoric should be used and what it should include. Such a survey will lend insight into how Jerome, having completed a rhetorical education, approached the composition of his polemics. It will also focus on the relationship between writer and audience, noting the importance of similar educations and curriculums, thus resulting in a shared culture for educated Romans. The ancient works discussed will be Aristotle's *Ars rhetorica*, Cicero's

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[1] For an example of similar rhetorical moderation in Cicero see Van der Wal (2007). When Cicero was presented with cases in which friends were running the prosecution (*Pro Caelio* and *Pro Murena*), Van der Wal argues that he respects his opponent's *dignitas* but, although not directly engaging with invective, still uses several of its techniques.

De oratore,[2] the handbook attributed to Menander Rhetor,[3] and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*. In addition, contemporary theory will assist in ascertaining how Jerome used his abusive rhetoric to secure his position as a figure of orthodoxy and scholarly authority, and help to determine how successfully Jerome shaped the persona that is apparent in scholarly works about him. As will be discussed further below, the most important element that I wish to draw out in this thesis does not center on Jerome's actions, movements, or associations, but rather Jerome's language: as Burke (1969) comments 'the most important and most accessible *facts* about human beings are not to be found in what they do, or in their biologies and chemistries… but in their language, and in what they *say* about what they do' (his emphasis).[4] How Jerome attempted to present himself to others rhetorically will give us some insight into the use of abusive rhetoric and allow us to look beyond the surface to discover how Jerome was operating in the cultural milieu of late antique Christianity. This chapter will present a rhetorical framework in which we can assess how Jerome's unspoken meanings, motives, and methods helped to structure his treatises, which he hoped would assist him in situating himself in the Christian community.

Before we begin looking at Jerome's education and the role it played in shaping his abusive rhetoric, it may be helpful to outline briefly some of the

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[2] Frazel (2009), 23, argues that Cicero owed his rhetorical training to the *progymnasmata*: 'Cicero's very approach to rhetorical practice as a life-long process represents the ideal commended by the progymnastic writers themselves: they also testify to the great benefits of the common-place for rhetors, of writing for rhetorical practice, and of the exercises for writers throughout their lives'.

[3] See Heath (2004), especially chapter 4, and Russell and Wilson (1981), xxxix-xl.

[4] Simons (2004), 154, quoting Burke (1969).

relevant key terms within rhetorical discourse. We will first look at how the ancient and modern definitions of rhetoric differ, as well as the status of rhetoric in scholarship, before outlining a series of terms that will be useful when discussing abusive rhetoric in particular.

<div align="center">2. ANCIENT AND MODERN RHETORIC</div>

2.1 Ancient rhetoric

Rhetoric became a subject of formal study in Greece during the fifth century BC. The Romans then further developed it by formalizing it in rhetorical handbooks of their own.[5] Classical rhetoric falls into three classifications: epideictic, deliberative, and judicial. Its theory came to be guided by five canons: invention, arrangement, and style are relevant to both written and oral works, while memory and delivery pertain to the orator.[6] Each part contributes to the persuasiveness of the argument. But let us first consider how the ancients defined rhetoric.[7] Aristotle interprets rhetoric as 'speech designed to persuade', or rather more specifically, how 'to find out in each case the existing means of persuasion'.[8] Cicero, within his discussion on invention as part of rhetoric,

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[5] The written Greek word *rhêkorikê* first appears in Plato's *Gorgias* (*c.* 385 B.C.) (453a2). See Kennedy (1999), 1.

[6] Respectively: *inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria,* and *pronuntiatio. Rhet. Her.* 1.2.3; Quint. *Inst.* 3.3.11.

[7] Booth (2004), 4-5, has compiled a list of some of the better known pre-modern definitions. Kirby (1997), 13, comments: '[t]he word "rhetoric" is commonly used in both a stricter sense, that is, having to do with *theory about* (or *the study of*) discourse, and a looser, that is, as synonymous with discourse itself, or "oratory"' (his emphasis).

[8] Arist. *Rh.* 1.1.14. Trans. Freese (1975). See Kennedy (1994), 3-10, for an authoritative summary of the development of the term 'rhetoric'.

states that an argument can be made persuasive in three ways. First, that which is being defended can be shown to be true; secondly, the favor of the listeners can be procured; lastly, the feelings of the audience can be compelled to turn in the direction of the desired cause.[9] Rhetoric, then, becomes the ability to educate, to charm, and to move.[10] Quintilian tells us that 'rhetoric' is itself a Greek term and that the closest Latin term is *eloquentia*.[11] But he follows Cicero's example, and continues to use the Greek term Latinized as *rhetorice*. According to Quintilian, rhetoric consists of three parts: the art, the artist, and the work.[12] The definition of rhetoric is complicated and, as will be discussed further below in this chapter, ultimately depends upon whether one believes that morality should factor into the skill of an orator.[13] Quintilian believes that rhetoric works in tandem with virtue.[14] However, others classify rhetoric as a 'power' (*vis*), 'area of knowledge' (*scientia*), or a 'skill' (*ars*).[15] When one divorces rhetoric from virtue, then the definition emerges that rhetoric ultimately is the power of persuasion.[16]

The ability to persuade and to create a work that demonstrates skill and eloquence has meant that rhetoric has remained an important component of written and oral texts. The importance of rhetoric has been acknowledged, as

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[9] Cic. *De or.* 2.27.115.

[10] Cic. *De or.* 2.27.115, 121, and 128.

[11] Quint. *Inst.* 2.14.

[12] *Igitur rhetorice… sic, ut opinor, optime dividetur, ut de arte, de artifice, de opera dicamus* (*Inst.* 2.14.5).

[13] *Prima atque praecipua opinionum circa hoc differentia, quod alii malos quoque viros posse oratores dici putant* (*Inst.* 2.15.1).

[14] Quint. *Inst.* 2.15.1.

[15] Quint. *Inst.* 2.15.2. Quintilian includes a discussion of many different ancient definitions of rhetoric: *Inst.* 2.15.1-38.

[16] *Est igitur frequentissimus finis, rhetoricen esse vim persuadendi* (Quint. *Inst.* 2.15.3).

we saw above, by ancient writers; however, modern scholarship has not always regarded rhetoric as a subject worthy of inquiry. Before we examine modern theories of rhetoric in particular, it would be useful to consider briefly more modern views of late antique rhetoric, as this category includes the rhetoric of Jerome.

2.2 Modern views of late antique rhetoric

Scholars working during the eighteenth century and up until the early twentieth century often dismissed the literature of the late Empire. Epideictic works, panegyrics in particular, were singled out as a characteristic of Late Antiquity that was 'symptomatic of courtly decadence and cultural decline'.[17] Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, judged that the increasing number of panegyrics, filled with exaggeration and flattery, during the fourth and fifth centuries to be an indicator that the Roman sense of style was deteriorating.[18] Works of praise or abuse that seemed laden with rhetorical embellishment were considered overly showy and bejeweled.[19] However, it was not only epideictic

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[17] Rees (2012), 4. See Rees (2012), 16, who cites Syme (1958), Seager (1983), and Morford (1992) harshly critiquing Pliny's *Panegyricus*. Also see Rees (2002), 26, on Alexander's (1944), 37, and West's (1993), 296, scathing views of the *Panegyrici Latini.* MacCormack (1981), 2, remarks that they have been 'treated…. as a singularly unfortunate amalgam of preciosity and propaganda' and have 'suffered a fate reserved for the study of propaganda in most periods'. For a foundational study on ancient epideictic see Burgess (1902).

[18] See Garrison (1977); Gibbon (1901), 2.522.

[19] Nixon and Rodgers (1994), 14, comment that those authors whose works are contained in the *Panegyrici Latini* 'despite the affinities for silver Latin… do not on the whole exhibit the striving for epigrammatic effect that one finds, for example, in Seneca or Tacitus.' They note, however, the fact that 'even apparently barren and historically meaningless topoi and formulae may be instructive' (34). Whitby (1998), 2, argues in favor of imperial panegyrics and observes that it is 'a genre which proved as enduring as epic and equally flexible in adapting to the demands of a changing world.'

works that were faulted. Roberts, in his sympathetic work on the poetry of Late Antiquity, begins by highlighting the critical views of Gibbon, Rose, and Hadas towards the fourth-century poet Ausonius:[20] Hadas was scornful of Ausonius' rhetoric in particular: '[f]or writers like Ausonius, who is after all *the* poet of the fourth century, it is too generous to attribute their classicizing emptiness to anything but rampant rhetoric'.[21] Roberts focuses on the aesthetic nature of late antique poetry; however, I would suggest that there is a need for the reappraisal of the rhetoric found in late antique prose as well. Late antique poetry and epideictic alike were condemned due to the rhetoric they contained.

The inverse of panegyric, invective, has also been characterized as unworthy of study.[22] Recently, Richard Flower has attempted to refute this with his work on the fourth-century Roman imperial invectives of Athanasius of Alexandria, Hilary of Poitiers, and Lucifer of Cagliari.[23] He draws attention to the fact that the polemical works of these authors 'have received less attention, often being dismissed as unworthy' when compared to their theological compositions.[24] As has already been discussed above in Chapter 1, during the mid-twentieth century Jerome was viewed as an irascible man with a short

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[20] Roberts (1989), 1; Gibbon (1901), 3.134 n.1; Rose (1936), 529; Hadas (1952), 381-382. Roberts (1989) overall argues that late antique poetry must be considered on its own terms without measuring it against earlier classical aesthetics.

[21] Hadas (1952), 381-382.

[22] In the context of church polemical pamphlets see Flower (2013), 7, who cites Setton's (1941) and Hanson's (1988) unflattering views on abusive works such as Athanasius' *History of the Arians.*

[23] Flower (2013) argues that late antique invective has been developed to fit into its new Christian context and can be interpreted as the inverse of panegyric.

[24] Flower (2013), 7.

fuse.[25] The abusive rhetoric contained in his polemical works was often dismissed and blamed on Jerome's cantankerous attitude. Specifically, Grützmacher's study remarks that no one had previously undertaken a biography due to 'der unerfreuliche Charakter des Mannes'.[26] This character, in Grützmacher's view, had been heavily influenced by the 'decline' of Late Antiquity.[27] A strong concern for the aesthetic quality of the language therein seems to have often generated contempt, and obscured the value of the study of late antique works, and in particular abusive rhetoric.[28]

However, scholars such as Whitby, Heath, and Puertas have highlighted the functionality and social role of late antique rhetoric.[29] To ignore the rhetorical makeup of late antique works diminishes the importance of the continuation of rhetorical traditions and fails to consider why the varying forms of rhetoric could fail or succeed.[30] Those who attended a school of rhetoric would have benefitted from a shared culture that influenced how arguments

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[25] See, in particular, Murphy (1952), Cavallera (1952), and Favez (1958).

[26] Grützmacher (1901), 1.vi.

[27] Grützmacher (1901), 1.2-3.

[28] Famously, Marrou's 1938 doctoral thesis on the work of Augustine criticized the bishop's writing capabilities. However, he later recanted his opinion in 1949 claiming that he had been influenced by the prevalent opinion at the time that Late Antiquity was a period of decline. See Roberts (1989), 3.

[29] See Whitby (1998), 12-13. Heath (2004), xiv, notes that several other studies focus on 'rhetoric's role in social formation and self-definition': Gleason (1995), Swain (1996), Schmitz (1997), and Kaster (2001). See Puertas (2013) on the importance of *actio* (which he considers to encompass acts of martyrdom and asceticism) in the creation of Christian orthodoxy. He argues that homilies and speeches must be delivered in such a way so as to distinguish Christian speakers from the likes of actors or sophists. On the connection between rhetoric and authority see also Kaster (1988), Brown (1992), and Lim (1995). It should be noted that an improvement in social status, potentially achieved by abusive rhetoric, is likely to be accompanied by an increase in power and authority.

[30] Whitby (1998), 12, argues that panegyric and invective can play as important a role as historiography in understanding contemporary reactions more fully.

were presented, and whether they were considered valid and convincing. By following the blueprints that had become part of a long-standing tradition these rhetoricians were attempting to deliver a specific message to a particular group of people. Rhetoric was firmly fixed into the core of Late Antique society.[31] By situating these works into their historical context, therefore, we can move beyond the dismissive attitude that in the past has hindered understanding the social role of abusive rhetoric.

The value of heresiology, which can be viewed as a Christian development of abusive rhetoric, has gone unrecognized as well.[32] Averil Cameron has emphasized 'the almost total lack of rhetorical or literary interest shown for this type of writing in Late Antiquity and Byzantium; indeed, one might even say that it is usually treated with a degree of repugnance and embarrassment.'[33] Heresiological texts are often deemed unimaginative, unoriginal, and superficial; 'merely utilitarian, or worse, a kind of scholastic exercise.'[34] The tradition of heresiology seems fundamentally connected to the

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[31] Heath (2004), xvii.

[32] See Chapter 1, 2.7. For a general summary of the main strains of Christian heresy and the resulting orthodox opposition see Christie-Murray (1989). O'Grady (1985), 5, notes that '[it] was not until the great controversies of the fourth century that the derogatory meaning of the word "heresy" became finally fixed'. See Simon's (1979) discussion of the use of the word 'heresy' by early Christian writers to include variations on several different Jewish and Christian sects as well as Greek philosophical schools. Bauer's (1971) influential *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* argues that 'certain manifestations of Christian life that the authors of the church renounce as "heresies" originally had not been such at all, but… were the only form of the new religion – that is, for those regions they were simply "Christianity"' (xxii).

[33] Cameron (2003), 471. Bauer (1971) examines the polemical material from two anti-Montanists from the late second century that have been preserved by Eusebius (132-141) and concludes that 'both of the books… are hardly more than abusive satires' (141). Cameron (2008) has acknowledged a growing scholarly interest in heresiological works.

[34] Cameron (2003), 473.

phenomenon of invective, as the refutation of a heretic is, in some ways, similar to the manner in which vitriolic works attack their targets. Just as classical examples of abuse isolate the subject with the terminology of the 'other', heresiological works also impose a similar status on their targets, singling them out for their minority views.[35]

We may consider here a few key examples to demonstrate the point. Irenaeus' late second-century *Adversus haereses* is arguably the earliest extant Christian heresiology. The work aims to prove the heretical nature of Gnosticism, and in particular attacks the teachings of Valentinus. Irenaeus' method is genetic: he traces the line of Valentinus' heretical thought back to his 'ancestor', Simon Magus, who is purportedly the originator of all heresy.[36] He uses the rhetorical tactic of irony (1.4.3) to mock the Valentinian view of creation.[37] Furthermore, he parodies the account altogether (1.4.4).[38] Negative comparisons made to mythological creatures appear in both works of abusive rhetoric and works of heresiology.[39] Irenaeus exaggerates the madness of the

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[35] Henderson (1998), 1. For more on 'the theory of the other' see Smith (1985) and Green (1985). Smith suggests that otherness 'is a matter of relative rather than absolute difference. Difference is not a matter of comparison between entities judged to be equivalent, rather difference most frequently entails a hierarchy of prestige and ranking' (15). Corbeill (1996), 8, presents several categories of late Republican invective that focuses on the isolation of the opponent, who is treated 'as someone who stands at odds with acceptable Roman notions of the role of the self in society'. See Inglebert (2001) on the connection between heresiological genealogies and Greek *paideia*.

[36] Irenaeus *Heresies* 1.23.1-4; 1.27.4; 2.*praef*. Grant (1997), 12.

[37] See Haury (1955) on invective and irony in Cicero.

[38] See also Irenaeus *Heresies* 1.11.4. On parody and pastiche in Irenaeus see Osborn (2000), 157-159.

[39] Consider, for example, Claudian's *In Rufinum* 1.90 where Rufinus is exaggeratedly called worse than the hydra. Irenaeus uses the same exaggerated hydra imagery (1.30.15) to emphasize the multifaceted nature of heresy.

opposition (1.16.3; 2.26.3), as do other works of abusive rhetoric.[40] Supposed

heretics were not entirely grouped together as their beliefs varied; however,

their deviance from the dominant orthodoxy of the time was their common

trait.[41] Presented as the antithesis of orthodoxy, heretics fell to playing the part

of the 'other.' The tactics of stressing lineage, exaggeration, and mockery are all

used in order to strengthen Irenaeus' case against the Gnostics.

Similar tactics can be found in Epiphanius of Salamis' *Panarion* or

Adversus haereses, composed in the late fourth century.[42] In fact, in this work,

which outlines and refutes eighty different sects, Epiphanius often quotes the

Adversus haereses by his predecessor Irenaeus.[43] The same heresiological

conventions are present: the heretical sects are compared to wild animals,[44] and

Epiphanius writes that his 'chest of remedies', the *Panarion*, will act as an

antidote for any who have fallen prey to such creatures (Proem I 1.2). He too

will ensure that the origins of the heretics are known: Epiphanius writes that he

is confident that his studies and discussions with others will allow him to

discuss the origin of the sects accurately before he continues to refute them

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[40] See e.g. Claud. *In Rufinum* 259-269; Cic. *Pis.* 20; Cic. *Cat.* 1.

[41] Osborn (2000), 151.

[42] Williams (1987), xvi, and Pourkier (1992), 47-51. Epiphanius' *Panarion* was followed by works such as Filastrius of Brescia's *Diversarum hereseon liber,* Augustine's *De haeresibus*, the anonymous *Praedestinatus,* and Gennadius of Marseille's *Adversus omnes haereses* to name a few. Flower (2011), 71, maintains that although Irenaeus was a source for Epiphanius, Epiphanius' *Panarion* is the first example of a Christian work of heresiology owing to its organization and comprehensive nature.

[43] See Epiphanius *Panarion* Proem 1.1.1; 31.33.1-2.

[44] On animal imagery see Dummer (1973), Pourkier (1992), 78-80, Cameron (2003), 176, and Flower (2011), 82. Richlin (1992), 100, comments that Cicero's use of animal names as abusive epithets is rare, but they do occur (Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.126; *Pis*. 19.23.37).

(Proem II 2.4; II 3.1).[45] Indeed, much of the *Panarion* is spent linking various sects together.[46] It is not uncommon for Epiphanius to dismiss the beliefs of varying sects as being characterized by insanity, stupidity, or silliness (φρενοβλάβεια, ἄνοια, ἠλιθιότης). [47] Embellishment to emphasize the supposed heretical nature of the sects is also prevalent. Consider, for example, his treatment of the Gnostics, who are likened to 'a swarm of insects' bringing 'diseases, smelly eruptions, and sores'.[48] He presumes that they are lax in their sexual morals and even accuses them of practicing cannibalism as a solution to unwanted children.[49] They are presented as overindulgent in all things – food, baths, sex, and drink.[50] Epiphanius acknowledges his use of harsh language, but justifies it by stating that his choice of words is intended to protect his readers and prove his disagreement with the heretical sects.[51] Rhetorically, these techniques serve the same function as when used within works of abusive rhetoric – to reinforce division.[52] The rhetoric uses binary opposites to convey the alien nature of the victim of the abuse or the supposed heretic.

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[45] Flower (2011), 72, comments that 'the self-confident and aggressive tone of Epiphanius' text should be regarded as performing an important literary function, promoting the author's theological agenda and constructing his authority in the minds of his readers.'

[46] See Flower (2011), 73-77, on the temporal and hereditary nature of those heresies discussed by Epiphanius. Epiphanius compares the chain of heresies to a chain of scorpions (*Panarion* 31.36.4-5).

[47] See e.g. against the Samaritans for φρενοβλάβεια and ἄνοια (9.3.6) and against the Pharisees for ἠλιθιότης (16.3.3).

[48] Epiphanius *Panarion* 26.1.1. Trans. Williams (1987).

[49] Epiphanius *Panarion* 26.3.3; 26.4.3-5.5.

[50] Epiphanius *Panarion* 26.5.8.

[51] Epiphanius *Panarion* Proem 1.2.3-4.

[52] While Irenaeus claims to have no knowledge of rhetorical tactics (1. *praef*. 2-3) and denounces heretics for their use of rhetoric to persuade people towards heretical beliefs, such a statement demonstrates the exact opposite. See Grant (1997), 47. Epiphanius likewise claims to lack pleasing rhetoric and eloquence (66.2.1-2).

While heresiology sets out to condemn certain religious views and declare some sects of Christianity superior to others, secular works of abuse undertake a similar endeavor in condemning specific groups and developing a genealogy (either real or imaginary) of the offender in order to validate the superiority of another group or individual. Both undertakings involve concretely establishing the identities of the attacker and the target.[53] As contemporary standards of orthodoxy dominate how heretics are portrayed, heresiological works are not altogether accurate in their depiction of the opposing side.[54] Moreover, those works that had taken the opposite view would not generally have survived.

I would argue that the manner in which orthodoxy depicts heresy is similar to the way abusive rhetoric portrays its target. The comparison can be valuable when analyzing the strategies involved. Indeed, both are agonistic rhetorics, and parts of heresiology (such as the focus on heretical ancestors, and its tendency to exaggerate) can be viewed as falling within the umbrella category of abusive rhetoric. We see in Jerome's works strands of abusive rhetoric and heresiological concerns knitted together. Jerome's classical education granted him the pattern with which to construct rhetorically convincing defenses that would conceivably resonate with the appropriate members of the Christian community. But Jerome's intent was, moreover, to present himself and his views as orthodox and viable Christian practices and his opponents as heretics. His heretical adversaries were guilty of promoting dissension and (supposedly) innovative views, while Jerome emphasized his

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[53] See Iricinschi and Zellentin (2008).
[54] Henderson (1998), 1.

classical education and traditional affiliations with the apostles Peter and Paul. A charge of heresy was one to be taken seriously, and a '[matter] of life and death'. [55] A thorough understanding of 'orthodoxy', 'heresy', and the construction of heresy became important tools (and potential weapons) of a well-educated Christian. Now having dealt with the modern views of late antique literature and the developing world of heresiology, let us turn to the modern definition of rhetoric in general.

2.3 Modern definitions of rhetoric

Modern approaches to rhetoric have, of course, been influenced by the ancient handbooks discussed above.[56] However, what becomes apparent is that the modern view of rhetoric is more elastic than its ancient predecessor. While the ancients viewed rhetoric largely as a specific discipline divided into five canons that would have been studied in school, modern theorists see rhetoric around us at all times.[57] In his seminal monograph, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, Burke writes that

> [Rhetoric] is rooted in an essential function of language itself, a function that is wholly realistic, and is continually born anew; the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols.[58]

In this work Burke shows how human motivations can be gleaned through their linguistic expression – what people say or write. Influenced by Burke, Booth

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[55] Henderson (1998), 8.

[56] See Vickers (1988), 22-22, on the rhetorical manuals that continued to be written in the nineteenth century based on their ancient predecessors.

[57] See Booth (2004), 7-8, for a selection of modern definitions.

[58] Burke (1969), 43.

comments in his *Rhetoric of Rhetoric* that rhetorical territory is 'after all undefinable, since it includes almost every corner of our lives.' He continues,

> Rhetoric is employed at every moment when one human being intends to produce, through the use of signs or symbols, some effect on another – by words, or facial expressions, or gestures, or any symbolic skill of any kind.[59]

Booth's 'universalizing' definition of rhetoric is certainly broader and opens up rhetoric to include any form of communication. Rhetoric is no longer relegated to a certain genre or category, or necessarily governed by canons. Nor is it a superficial manipulation of facts and argument with the purpose of being persuasive. Booth argues that '[it] can in itself be a mode of genuine inquiry.'[60] All communication and symbols are rhetorical, and it is up to us, as the 'rhetorician' ('the student of such communication')[61] to determine what the 'rhetor' ('the communicator, persuader or understander') [62] intends to communicate with his audience. To sum up, Andrea Lunsford's definition conveys the point well: '[r]hetoric is the art, practice, and study of [all] human communication.'[63]

Such a broad definition of rhetoric can, therefore, be used to analyze the motivations and goals of the rhetor. How does the rhetor endeavor to communicate with his audience effectively, what is he trying to communicate, and has the audience received the communication as it was intended? This successful communication must occur within what Booth refers to as the 'rhetorical domain.' The rhetorical domain indicates 'the community that

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[59] Booth (2004), xi.
[60] Booth (2004), 8.
[61] Booth (2004), 11.
[62] Booth (2004), 11.
[63] As quoted by Booth (2004), 8.

preaches and practices rhetorical standards that contrast sharply with the standards embraced by those in other domains.'[64] The rhetorical domain encompasses a certain group of rhetors and their audiences who share a form of culture and standards. There will be more discussion below on how the rhetor operates within the rhetorical domain using what Burke calls the process of identification.[65] Within this wider definition of rhetoric, we can ask the question not only why such rhetoric is persuasive and succeeds, but also *what* rhetoric achieves by being persuasive. Before we explore this question, it will be useful to begin our investigation with a look at the Roman education system and to consider subsequently the role that rhetoric played in the studies of a Roman schoolchild, in this case, Jerome.

3. RHETORIC AND HIERARCHY

3.1 The function of a Roman education

Typically, a student would begin studying with a *litterator*. After a rudimentary education, he would continue on with a *grammaticus*, and then finally with a *rhetor*.[66] If we follow Quintilian, the *grammaticus* gave his students a grounding

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[64] Booth (2004), 18. Others have used the terms 'scene', 'culture', or 'discourse community'.

[65] See below 4.2.

[66] For a concise summary of the structures of a Roman education see McNelis (2007). Henri-Irénée Marrou's (1948, 1956 translated into English) *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'Antiquité* and Stanley F. Bonner's (1977) *Education in Ancient Rome from the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny*, although now somewhat dated, have been accepted as influential works on Greco-Roman education. However, they have recently been criticized by modern scholars (see Lamberton (1999), 89) as being 'overconfident'. Lamberton writes: '[t]heir literary sources in any case at best depict an idealized, optimal education that in practice was accessible to a very tiny portion of society. For a broader, less class-biased view of the realities of ancient education, we must turn to the papyri' (89). Cribiore (2007), 6, argues that the papyri seem to correspond with the

in poetry, [67] while the *rhetor* focused more on history and prose. [68] The *progymnasmata* ('preliminary exercises') by Quintilian's time were part of the instruction of both the *grammaticus* and the *rhetor.*[69] By the sixth century, however, those duties seem to have shifted solely to the *grammaticus.*[70] The *rhetor* would also teach declamation: such exercises gave students the opportunity to practice attacking or defending a given argument and undoubtedly would have been useful if a student later found himself in a law or civil service position. Quintilian argues for the use of declamation in a rhetorical education.[71] He believed that an orator's education would produce a well-trained and skillful candidate – one who could adroitly manage both public and private affairs, counsel well, and strive to improve his country with justice.[72] Such a literary course of study would have been viewed as training for an administrative job or public career.[73] Cribiore comments: '[t]he few male students who reached the summit of rhetorical instruction were not necessarily

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evidence gleaned from the works of Plutarch, Quintilian, and Libanius, whose works span from the first to fourth centuries AD, from Greece, Rome, and Syria respectively. See Kaster (1988) on the importance of the grammarian in the mid third to sixth centuries and his social role as a 'guarantor of social [and] cultural continuity' in elite society (ix).

[67] See Quint. *Inst.* 10.31-130 on the uses of poetry in a rhetorical education. Cribiore (2001), 226-230, discusses the problematic issue of whether teachers of rhetoric during Late Antiquity were teaching poetry to their students.

[68] Quint. *Inst.* 2.4.2. See book 1 of the *Institutio oratoria* on what precedes rhetorical schools and book 2 on the rudimentary elements of rhetoric. Cribiore (2007), 2.

[69] The Roman education system seems to have largely followed its Greek predecessor. See Marrou (1956), Russell (1983), Innes and Winterbottom (1988), and Morgan (1998a). On the *progymnasmata* see *Rh. Al.* 28.1436a25 and *Rhet. Her.* 1.12 and 4.56-57.

[70] Enos (1996), 562.

[71] Quint. *Inst.* 2.10.1-6.

[72] Quint. *Inst.* Pr. 10.

[73] Such a path stemmed back to Republican times: see Millar (1984) on the importance of oratory in politics in the Roman Republic. See Heath (2004), 277-294, on the career options available to one with a rhetorical education. Sen. *Contr.* 1.2.22, 1.3.11 and 9.4.18 contain various examples of consuls, praetors, and senators having learned from rhetors.

the intellectuals, but those who craved certain positions in law and administration.'[74]

Jerome's route through school follows this path: after his primary school education in Stridon, he attended grammar school in Rome. He proudly mentions studying under Aelius Donatus.[75] Following this, Jerome attended a school of rhetoric.[76] The course of study would likely have included learning the structure and delivery of effective public speaking, and methods of persuasive speech.[77] The schools of rhetoric seem to have been designed with a focus on how to deal with the presentation of facts and the art of persuasion.[78] Even during the sixth century, several hundreds of years after the composition of the various rhetorical handbooks that will be discussed below, Cassiodorus Senator (writing on behalf of Athalaric, King of the Ostrogoths, to the Roman senate) comments on the skills necessary for a job in the imperial government; those imparted by the grammarian and rhetorician were still held in high esteem.[79] Cassiodorus urges that an education that focuses on grammar and rhetoric should be valued at Rome as it is a source of honor and knowledge for young people:

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[74] Cribiore (2001), 3. See Tac. *Dial.* 8.3 on the rhetors Vibius Crispus and Epirus Marcellus, whose rhetorical skills were recognized by the emperor Vespasian.

[75] *Commentarius in ecclesiasten* 1.9, *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.16; *Chronicon Eusebii* s.a. 354.

[76] See Kelly (1975), 15, who suggests what kind of exercises Jerome may have done during his schooling.

[77] Kelly (1975), 15. See Cribiore (2001), 220-244, on Greco-Roman rhetorical education in Egypt, and (2007), especially chapters 4-6, for education in Antioch. Although Cribiore's work focuses on Roman Egypt and further east, she maintains that Latin school exercises would have been fundamentally very similar (2007:1-2, 5-6).

[78] Parks (1945), 92.

[79] See Kaster (1988) on the social role of schools in situating grammarians during Late Antiquity. See Long (1996), 78- 90, on the teaching and use of rhetorical invective in the fourth century.

> For the school of grammar has primacy: it is the fairest foundation of learning, the glorious mother of eloquence, which has learnt to aim at praise, to speak without a fault (Cassiod. *Var.* 9.21).[80]

He entreats the senators of Rome to continue funding the salaries of grammarians and rhetoricians, as he believes the benefits are well worth the cost.[81] Even in Late Antiquity, value was placed on a rhetorical education when it came to imperial governmental duties. Despite a deep-rooted suspicion of rhetoric,[82] a liberal education that included a foundation in rhetorical skills was considered an integral part of ancient culture.[83]

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[80] Trans. Barnish (1992), 122-123.

[81] Cassiod. *Var.* 9.21.

[82] A mixed appreciation and suspicion of rhetoric is apparent from the Republic through to Late Antiquity: see Quint. *Inst.* 2.16 and 3.11 which argues that rhetoric is not useless and deceptive. See also Suet. *Rhet*. 25.2 for the censors' edict that attempted to banish teaching Latin rhetoric in 161 BC as well as a disapproving account of Roman rhetors in 92 BC. McNelis (2007), 285, comments that the banishment was ultimately ineffectual, but it still displays a distrustful attitude towards rhetoric. See also Kennedy (1999), 100-101. Cameron (1991), 85, comments on the complicated relationship between late antique Christian discourse and classical rhetoric: '[a]t times it was useful to emphasize the difference, to stress the 'simplicity' of Christian literature over the conceit and trickery of rhetoric'. Rhetoric has continued to have a difficult reputation from the seventeenth to the twentieth century: see Vickers (1988), 25, who cites the negative opinions of John Locke and Immanuel Kant towards rhetoric. Booth (2004), viii, relates a relevant anecdote: '[i]n 1960, I was at a post-lecture reception in Oxford. Chatting over drinks with a don, I asked him what subject he taught. "Chiefly eighteenth-century literature. What is *your* field?" "Basically it's rhetoric, though I'm officially in 'English.'"… "Rhetoric!" He scowled, turned his back, and strode away'. See Hesk (2000), 202-241, on the rhetoric of anti-rhetoric as a recurrent theme in Greek oratory.

[83] See the fifth-century Latin writer Martianus Capella's personification of the goddess Rhetoric who attends the nuptials of Philology and Mercury (*De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* 5.426-427). As Cribiore (2001), 238, comments, '[t]he ultimate and most valuable aim of knowledge was its capacity to be incorporated into the cultural habits and mindset of the educated adult.'

From the Roman Republic on attendance at a school of rhetoric was considered a necessity for law or magistracies.[84] Not only did a rhetorical education prepare students with regard to their spoken and written skills, it also prepared them for an active public life in which they would hold a keen interest in matters of the state and people.[85] A liberal education helped develop a common culture and cultivated an appreciation for literary style.[86] To a certain extent, this shared core literary background allowed this group to join the circle of literary elite. The importance of this continuum of rhetorical studies has been commented on at length. Kaster, for instance, argues for the persistent social importance of the grammarian in Late Antiquity: '[p]roviding the one experience that all members of the elite would share, his school was a source of continuity and stability, and was not least important as such in the empire restored and renewed after the troubles of the third century.'[87] This latent quality could be tapped into by a good rhetor when attempting to identify with his audience.[88]

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[84] Parks (1945), 19. See Corbeill (2013), 9-10, on elite rhetorical educations in the Republic, and on Cicero's in particular. Caesar considered education so important that he gave citizenship to those rhetoricians, grammarians, and philosophers working in Rome (Suet. *Iul.* 42.1). Dio Chrysostom exhorts a man in the early Empire to complete a rhetorical education so that he may enter into public life: *Or.* 8. McNelis (2007), 289-290, points out that Quintilian is perhaps one of the best examples demonstrating the potential power rhetoric had for propelling someone up in public life. Although see Juvenal's satirical comments on the 'benefits' reaped by teachers of rhetoric (7.150-215) and grammarians (7.216-243). Financial and social success as a teacher is all a matter of luck according to him: *si Fortuna volet, fies de rhetore consul* (Juv. 7.197). It has been proposed that this reference alludes to Quintilian: see Scarcia (1967), 167-168, and Cova (2003), 84.

[85] See Morgan (1998a), 190-192. Corbeill (2013), 16, points out that Caesar's rhetorical education came into use for his 'grander ambitions' and contributed to his 'political promotion and self-preservation'.

[86] This appreciation for secular literature would later haunt Jerome: *Ep.* 22.30.

[87] Kaster (1988), x.

[88] See below Chapter 2, 4.2.

3.2 Rhetoric's uses in the ancient world: reinforcing the hierarchy

With this basic understanding of a Roman rhetorical education and its importance in attaining a position in the imperial bureaucracy, let us consider rhetoric's relationship with social hierarchies. I rely here on the work of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu: Bourdieu studied the methods by which pedagogy preserves the distribution of cultural capital, maintaining that the resultant social structure allows 'society to [reproduce] itself mechanically, identical to itself, without transformation or deformation, and by excluding all individual mobility'.[89] In this theoretical model, culture is used as a means of capital, the transmission of which perpetuates the system of power.[90]

Such a theory can be (further) applied to the late antique world: Catherine Chin has used these ideas to consider how ancient pedagogy connects to the development of social and cultural identities. This tradition of secular pedagogy shaped how late antique Christians developed their concepts of religion and how they fitted into a unified cultural tradition; the authority inherent in the classical tradition was not eliminated, but rather adapted to fit the Christian context.[91] In particular, late antique Christians were heavily influenced by the already existing practices of secular education. Chin discusses texts from the earlier empire, which examined approaches to grammar and

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[89] Bourdieu (1990), vii.

[90] Bourdieu (1977), 187, points out that 'academic qualifications are to cultural capital what money is to economic capital.'

[91] Chin (2008).

rhetoric, and helped to solidify traditions of pedagogy that were appropriated during the Late Antique period.[92]

The appropriation of such texts assisted the continuation of certain ideological frameworks, which perpetuated the division of the elite from the non-elite by making pronouncements on correct 'linguistic behavior'.[93] For example, Quintilian, when writing about the rules of customary language, comments that they are decided and agreed upon only by educated men, i.e. the literary elite.[94] Literacy was an advantage of the political and social elite from early on in Roman history.[95] While it was not unusual to encounter someone from a lower class who was literate, it would have been 'bizarre' to encounter an illiterate elite male in the ancient world.[96] Access to literary works and an advanced education was an elite privilege.[97] Those men properly educated to the appropriate standard would have been the minority.[98] For example, Cicero's dialogue, *De oratore*, features, among others, Lucius Licinius Crassus and

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[92] See Chin (2008), 1-10.

[93] This is not to say that individuals were incapable of movement in society, but rather that the idea of hierarchy, and the qualifications necessary to participate in such a hierarchy were perpetuated by pronouncements on linguistic behavior.

[94] *Ergo consuetudinem sermonis vocabo consensum eruditorum* (Quint. *Inst.* 1.6.45).

[95] Harris (1989), 30. Chin (2008), 4, 35, discusses how 'an elite Latin reader' must demonstrate *latinitas* as well as a quality of masculinity. See also Richlin (1997 and 2003) on the link between masculinity and rhetorical style.

[96] Harris (1989), 125. See Christes (1979) and Kaster (1988) on the modest origins of grammarians. Chin (2008), 40, comments: '[l]iterary knowledge was construed as (and was, in many cases) the standard accompaniment to elite social standing'.

[97] See Dix (1994), 282, on books as a resource available solely to the aristocracy in Rome. Cribiore (2001), 102-123, discusses how some elite parents went to great lengths investing much time and money so that their children would be well educated. If we go back to basics, i.e. literacy, Harris' (1989) seminal work argues that literacy was an advantage of the elite, while the lower classes largely relied on oral communication and memory. On ancient literacy see also Humphrey (1991), Bowman (1991), and Bowman and Woolf (1994).

[98] Chin (2008), 4.

Marcus Antonius: the dialogue's participants all belonged to the aristocracy. Students studying this work would be encouraged to follow the rhetorical theory that emerged from the exchanges between members of the elite. In short, the education system provided a solid cultural structure that perpetuated class division.[99] If we follow Quintilian, when defining proper word use, the reader should not assume that the majority rules; the correct approach to language will be determined by the educated few.[100]

It would be this minority that would perpetuate and develop these traditions of pedagogy. Late antique authors could use these texts that originated in the authoritative literary tradition to create their own narrative. This narrative relied on the authority of the texts that preceded it, and by doing so, also continued to reinforce their influence. The authority vested in these texts had become inherent, and elite authors, by using these sources, could strengthen the bonds between respected works of longstanding tradition and their own contemporary contributions. This allowed late antique writers to identify with this literary culture, while adjusting aspects of it to allow for the increasing influence of Christianity.[101] Chin comments in particular that

> the practice of grammar formed a technology of the imagination that allowed its users to understand themselves as part of a coherent cultural system, one specifically oriented toward the valorization of an idealized past.[102]

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[99] See Bourdieu (1977), 188-192.

[100] To drive home his point, Quintilian says that depilation, adorning one's hair in layers, and excess drinking may find favor in the majority, but are not considered customary practice (Quint. *Inst.* 1.6.44). Cribiore (2001), 9, observes that ancient education was always a means by which 'social, cultural, and political continuity' could be maintained. A common liberal foundation helped to maintain the 'hierarchical status quo'.

[101] See Chin (2008), 72-109.

[102] Chin (2008), 7.

This idealized past brought with it a regard for certain attributes that were considered vital to an orator as well as an upper class man. We will now turn to these qualities that orators strove to embody.

3.3 The necessary qualities of an orator

Jerome's concept of an ideal orator would have been shaped by the texts he studied as a boy. As seen above, the ancient handbooks are for the most part in agreement as to the definition of rhetoric. However, several of them also argue that a moral element is essential for an orator to produce effective rhetoric. One of the distinguished participants of Cicero's dialogue, Marcus Antonius, recounts the time he spent in Athens before traveling to Sicily as proconsul. He comments that certain 'thorny and feeble' sentiments (*spinosa quaedam … exilis oratio*) about orators floated in Athens at that time: that they were nothing but 'workers with quick and trained tongues.'[103] No one but the wise man who was endowed with the virtue of eloquence could be considered a true orator. They posited that he who possessed one virtue, possessed them all and was therefore wise (Cic. *De or.* 1.18.83). Eloquence and virtue then were joined as a pair.[104] Quintilian also focuses on rhetoric as being a skill desirable in a good, virtuous

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[103] Cic. *De or*. 1.18.83.

[104] See Quint. *Inst.* 2.20 on whether or not rhetoric should be considered a virtue. Cicero's Lucius Licinius Crassus remarks that certain moral principles must be learned thoroughly by the orator (Cic. *De or*. 1.15.69). Cato the Elder famously wrote: *vir bonus*, *dicendi peritus* (*De rhetorica* 14). Quintilian quotes him in *Inst.* 12.1.1.2. Later, Augustine would disagree with this definition. While he believed that an orator's Christian works were ultimately more significant than eloquence, he concedes the possibility that a good orator can be found in a bad man (August. *De doctrina christiana* 4.29.62).

man; eloquence is paired together with a strong sense of morality. [105]
Quintilian's concept of rhetoric combines morality and practical skill; successful
rhetoric will not only be persuasive, it will also convey the virtue of the man.[106]
Aristotle similarly argues that an orator's persuasiveness is largely a result of his
moral character as manifested in his speech. But it must be the speech itself that
inspired moral confidence in the orator; any preconceived notions of the orator's
character should not be a factor. He writes: 'for it is not the case, as some
writers of rhetorical treatises lay down in their 'Art,' that the worth of the orator
in no way contributes to his power of persuasion; on the contrary, moral
character… constitutes the most effective means of proof' (Arist. *Rh.* 1.2.4).[107] All
of these definitions focus on the power of words when convincing someone to
do or believe something. But in order to be convincing, the orator's virtue must
shine through.

In addition to virtue, Cicero's definition in his *De oratore* highlights how
important it is for an orator to exhibit expertise in various forms of knowledge
(1.7-23).[108] Indeed, the challenge of oratory is that it is a combination of many

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[105] *Oratorem autem instituimus illum perfectum, qui esse nisi vir bonus non potest* (Quint. *Inst.* 1.Pr.9).
'I conclude that a man cannot be an orator unless the man is good' (*Neque enim esse oratorem nisi
bonum virum iudico* (Quint. *Inst.* 1.2.3). See also Quint. *Inst.* 12.1.3-13.
[106] *Inst.* 2.15.1.
[107] Trans. Freese (1975).
[108] Quintilian agrees, stating that a good orator should be schooled in subjects beyond literature
(*Inst.* 1.10.2) and have a firm grounding in precedents (12.4.1). Cicero's Antonius also comments
on the useful characteristics of an orator: he should have a gentle voice, a modest countenance,
politeness of expression, be good natured, frank, mild, and responsible. He should not appear
greedy, insatiable, severe, stubborn, or quarrelsome (Cic. *De or.* 2.43.182). Quintilian comments
that while anyone who has an interest in speech should know a thing or two about
distinguishing characteristics of words, it is the orator whose knowledge will be the best (Quint.
Inst. 1. Pr. 16-17).

branches of knowledge.[109] Cicero writes, 'in fact, knowledge of the greatest number of things must be understood, without which [oratory] is an empty verbal flapping that should be ridiculed' (*De or*. 1.5.17).[110] An orator must know what he is talking about, or else, Cicero maintains, his pretense of knowledge is worthy of derision. Moreover, he must have mastered a reserve of respected historical examples.[111] Cicero emphasizes the importance of knowledge that has been fully processed and can be easily manipulated:

> What shall I say about the treasure-house of all things, memory? Which, unless it has been put to use as a guardian for those thought-out discoveries, matters, and words, we know that all of them will go to waste, even if they were the most remarkable for the orator (*De or*. 1.5.18).[112]

Exhibiting one's learning that has been solidified in memory is noted down as a prerequisite for a successful orator.[113] This is exhibited also in Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, which contains specific and strict specifications regarding the necessary education of a would-be orator.[114] He should benefit from careful instruction from childhood: his nurse must speak properly;[115] both father and

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[109] *Sed nimirum maius est hoc quiddam, quam homines opinantur, et pluribus ex artibus studiisque collectum* (*De or*. 1.4.16).

[110] *Est enim et scientia comprehendenda rerum plurimarum, sine qua verborum volubilitas inanis atque irridenda est* (*De or*. 1.5.17).

[111] *Tenenda praeterea est omnis antiquitas, exemplorumque vis* (*De or*. 1.5.18).

[112] *Quid dicam de thesauro rerum omnium, memoria? Quae nisi custos inventis cogitatisque rebus et verbis adhibeatur, intellegimus, omnia, etiam si praeclarissima fuerint in oratore, peritura* (*De or*. 1.5.18).

[113] Quintilian also remarks on the importance of memory: *Inst*. 1.1.36; 11.2.1. See Hall (1994), 221. Heath (2004), 326, comments, '[i]n a society in which status influenced one's treatment under the law in a variety of formal and informal ways, the evidence of high status provided by a display of advanced education is likely in itself to command respect and strengthen a speaker's authority. When addressed to a judge who shares that education it will also foster a sense of solidarity.'

[114] Quint. *Inst*. 1.1.8-11. The treatise attributed to Menander Rhetor focuses on how to manipulate the qualities of the subject of praise or blame and the appropriate forms to compose; the orator himself is not the subject of discussion.

[115] Quint. *Inst*. 1.1.4.

mother ideally should be as highly educated as possible;[116] and even the slaves (*paedagogi*) should be well educated.[117] Memorization of literary works should begin early, as this is when the memory is the most retentive.[118] A strict educational plan that instructs the student so that he is later able to demonstrate his erudition with a storehouse of examples and knowledge is central to training a successful orator. Cicero vouches for the success of such a line of literary study and cites his rhetorical training as having a positive effect on the success of his oratory.[119] Quintilian sums it up well: 'therefore, let an orator be such a man, who is truly able to be called a wise man; he is not excellent only in character… but even in knowledge and each skill of speaking, such as perhaps no one hitherto has been' (*Inst.* 1. Pr. 18-19).[120] Thus far, the qualifications of an orator include exhibiting eloquence, which ultimately is argued to derive from a virtuous character, and an erudite and exceptional nature brimming full of examples to help make one's case. These moral and intellectual qualifications that were encouraged in the rhetorical handbooks were part and parcel of being a successful orator. While reverence for these qualities was not necessarily a result of the education system, it nonetheless contributed to a developing ideology as to what being a successful orator entailed.

Authority became attached to rhetorical handbooks, the qualities detailed within them, and the education system of which they were a part. The elite,

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[116] Quint. *Inst*. 1.1.6.
[117] Quint. *Inst*. 1.1.8.
[118] Quint. *Inst*. 1.1.19.
[119] See Frazel (2009), 34-35, on Cic. *Div. Caec.* 39-40.
[120] *Sit igitur orator vir talis, qualis vere sapiens appellari possit; nec moribus modo perfectus… sed etiam scientia et omni facultate dicendi, qualis fortasse nemo adhuc fuerit* (Quint. *Inst*. 1. Pr. 18-19).

who had access to an advanced education, could draw on this authority. Consequently the authority vested in these texts and this rhetorical education could be used as a means to navigate within social hierarchies. Rhetoric's authoritative past, therefore, could be seen as connected with social hierarchies. An elite male had the advantage of being able to use his education as cultural capital when situating himself within this established and growing literary tradition. He would then play his part in maintaining the existing social structure, perhaps by allowing his son the same opportunities or teaching other elite children. In this way, participants of ancient pedagogy controlled the manner by which cultural capital was distributed. An uneducated male would find himself socially immobilized and unable to make his way into the upper levels of the social hierarchy, which remained closed off without the passkey of a rhetorical education. Such an education would function as the basis from which he might seek further advancement should opportunities present themselves. While this cultural system constantly reinforced itself through education, there was the potential for late antique Christians to tap into it when considering how to create and navigate their positions within the social hierarchy. The education system became a lasting part of the cultural system that contributed to the division between the elite and the non-elites. In this way, the indoctrination of rules of grammar and rhetoric played a key role in maintaining social divisions.[121]

Jerome appears to have mastered and enjoyed the rules of grammar and rhetoric and refers to himself as a young boy burned by the studies of rhetoric

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[121] This is not to deny that the educated non-elite or sub-elite males could access the benefits afforded to those with an education, as we will see below.

and learning (*calentibus… rhetorum studiis atque doctrinis*).[122] Moreover, studies under the tutelage of a grammarian and rhetorician provided him with the potential to fit in with those members of the Christian community who had undergone a similar schooling. As we will see in Part 2 of this thesis, he recognized his strengths and often homes in on a lack of a proper education to belittle and attack his opponents in his polemics.[123] When pointing out the rhetorical failings of others (such as Rufinus) Jerome finds ways of needling his former schoolmate by highlighting his own expansive reading undertaken during his youth.[124] But before we see in detail how Jerome tried to overcome his adversaries with his abusive rhetoric, we should consider the potential of using such a weapon. In this next section we will go beyond the role that a rhetorical education plays in reproducing elites, and focus on how one particular form of rhetoric can instead assist in restructuring social hierarchies.

3.4 Abusive rhetoric: defining and reshaping the hierarchy

Following Bourdieu and Chin, this systematized form of ancient learning that we see in rhetorical educations can be argued to perpetuate divisions in society. But while a rhetorical education may reinforce this structure, I would argue that a specific variety of it could also present the potential of *reshaping* this hierarchy.

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[122] Jer. *Ep*. 52.1. It would be impossible to recreate accurately the structure of a rhetorical education. The sources provide no coherent description, and the training undertaken in the Latin West and Greek East varied. See Heath (2004), 217-254.

[123] Morgan (1998a), 79, argues that grammar could be used as a means of competition. Cribiore (1999) calls this 'questionable.' She maintains that 'education in antiquity was governed by tradition', not competition.

[124] *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.16; 1.30.

Before I expand upon this point, it would be useful to define abusive rhetoric as well.

Under the subheading of abusive rhetoric, I include what the ancients broadly considered abusive rhetoric – *psogos*, *vituperatio*, and *invectiva*.[125] While ancient handbooks delineate categories either of progymnasmatic exercises or rhetorical classifications, which tend to include a (limited) section on how to blame, there is no cohesive and definitive definition of blame as a genre.[126] Compositions that contain a large amount of abusive rhetoric are generally considered part of the blame subcategory of epideictic oratory since praise and blame are paired as inverses of one another in the rhetorical handbooks.[127] However, the focus of the discussion generally remains on those qualities that can be praised – descent, education, wealth, kinds of power, titles to fame, citizenship, friendships, agility, strength, beauty, health, wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance – those that are blameworthy are not explicitly stated.[128] The reader is meant to infer what these may be by inverting the positives. Quintilian's treatise similarly focuses on the correct way to praise, while the section devoted to denunciations (*vituperatio*) is significantly less detailed.[129]

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[125] Novokhatko (2009) writes that *vituperatio* is the Latin word for the Greek oratorical technique of ψόγος, 13. The noun *invectiva*, as we use it today meaning abuse, was not used in Classical Latin. Ammianus Marcellinus in the fourth century AD uses the adjective *invectivus* (Amm. Marc. 28.1.20; 21.10.7). See also *TLL* VII.2, 125 s.v. 'invectivus'.

[126] See Nixon and Rodgers (1994) and Rees (2002) on late Roman panegyric.

[127] Cic. *De or.* 2.85.348-349.

[128] *Rhet. Her.* 3.6.

[129] Quint. *Inst.* 3.7.19-22.

Literature of the late Roman Republic commonly features violent personal attacks that have come to be known in classical scholarship as 'invective.'[130] These attacks seem to disappear from extant evidence following Octavian's gradual accrual of power.[131] Much scholarship has been done on these passages of abuse, but the definition of the term remains problematic and imprecise. It is sometimes characterized as a genre, but Powell (2007), engaging with several of Cicero's forensic speeches, has argued that the evidence is too limited to justify this characterization. Considering these various ancient categories, I understand abusive rhetoric more widely to include any form of communication that seeks to insult or disparage another with the intention of persuading the audience to form a specific opinion. Therefore, bearing in mind Powell's argument that 'invective in the proper sense is not only a direct attack but also, at least to some degree, a declaration of open enmity; one does not typically deliver invectives against *amici* ('friends') or neutrals',[132] I consider

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[130] Corbeill (1996) discusses the use of invective as a rhetorical device in the late Republic, but focuses mainly on Cicero. The Roman attitude towards verbal obscenity, which relates to abuse, has been explored within late Republican and early imperial works by Richlin (1992). More recently, Arena (2007) has produced a useful chapter outlining the presence of invective in Republican literature. See also Hawkins (*forthcoming*), on Republican patterns of political invective and the development of popular invective during the early imperial period due to a strong connection between the imperial regime and spectacle architecture. Invective in Late Antiquity has received considerably less attention. However, Long's (1996) work on Claudian's *In Eutropium* is a valuable examination of the structure, content, and purpose of one specific attack.

[131] Hawkins (*forthcoming*), notes that 'Cicero's *Philippics*, delivered during 44-43, represent the last extant outburst of robust Roman oratorical invective, and Antony's assassination of Cicero underlines the danger of using republican strategies to influence triumviral politics.' He points out that invectives against living emperors are hard to come by and problematic: 'the move toward the principate curtailed the old elite game of vying for status via invective poems and slogans. Once the figure of the emperor had fully emerged, preeminent status was no longer a matter of debate, and intra-elite invective became a dangerous game with fewer tangible benefits'.

[132] Powell (2007), 2.

invective to be only a specific type of abusive rhetoric. I therefore use abusive rhetoric as an umbrella term that includes the various ways in which ancient works refer to harsh or disparaging language.[133] Powell's definition of invective is very narrow and eliminates more subtle methods of detraction among a wider group of participants.[134] However, a broader understanding of abusive rhetoric including any form of communication – whether subtle sarcasm or outright slander – opens up discussion for a wider view of rhetoric's objectives.[135] By going beyond only invective (what Powell understands as 'direct personal attacks') and opening up analysis to abusive rhetoric more generally, I hope to gain a broader understanding of how the abusive rhetoric constructs an authoritative persona.

With that broad understanding of abusive rhetoric in mind, I will next examine how it can be used to reshape ideas of social hierarchies. When considering abusive rhetoric, it is important to note that some form of gain is an outcome of rhetorical works. Indeed, as Burke has highlighted: 'among the marks of rhetoric is its use to *gain advantage*, of one sort or another.'[136] Abusive rhetoric can exploit the connections built between those who share a certain education or cultural background to maneuver within societal hierarchies. Thomas Conley's *Toward a Rhetoric of Insult* introduces various dimensions of

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[133] Cribiore (2013), 77, rightly notes that what she calls the 'oratory of blame' should not be strictly identified with a 'discourse of *psogos* (invective)'. In her chapter on 'The Role of Invective' she also understands 'blame' more broadly to include examples of blame, slander, and satire found in Libanius' orations and goes beyond formally composed examples of *psogoi*, examples of which are few.

[134] Powell (2007), 2.

[135] See Hawkins (*forthcoming*) on examples of invective such as the Eleusinian *gephurismos* and Horace's *Satire* 1.4, which he states 'all featured licensed invective notionally devoid of insult.'

[136] Burke (1969), 60.

insult, one of which is the 'scenario.'[137] Each scenario or situation of abuse can be considered in 'horizontal' and 'vertical' terms. The horizontal dimension considers insults exchanged among equals. For our purposes of establishing the use of abusive rhetoric within social hierarchies, we are concerned with the vertical dimension. The vertical dimension of abuse (which will be discussed further below)[138] considers the relative social relationship between parties: whether the exchanges occur between equals, or between purported superiors or inferiors, affects how insults are managed and received.[139] Abusive rhetoric opens up the potential of navigating within the social hierarchy. A successful verbal challenge of the orthodoxy or scholarship of a figure above one's own station could increase one's own social clout and standing – this would be the gain referred to above by Burke.[140]

Abusive rhetoric, therefore, has the potential to be used as a weapon to carve out one's place in the Christian community and create a reputation of orthodoxy.[141] I will argue that this is the case for Jerome, especially when we consider his historical context. With the expansion of the imperial bureaucracy, the growth of Christianity, and the development of asceticism, the fourth century provided a more fluid world that could be capitalized on by those who

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[137] Conley (2010), 3.

[138] See Chapter 2, 4.3.

[139] Conley (2010), 3. Hawkins (*forthcoming*) emphasizes that when evaluating invective, social contextualization is key.

[140] See Dugan (2013) on the connection between Cicero's rhetorical theory and political influence. He argues that Cicero's use of rhetoric 'both presents a view of the global importance of oratory for Rome and defends his own career against attacks from rivals' (26).

[141] For texts as weapons see Cameron (1994), 200, and Flower (2013), 7.

may have come from provincial backgrounds, but were endowed with the right education.

3.5 Abuse and social mobility

The fourth century was not a static society, but rather one that was in flux. Socially the empire was changing: the senatorial elite had grown significantly in the first half of the fourth century. A significant part of this growth was a result of the formation of a senate in Constantinople and the conferment of senatorial status on a larger selection of officials. [142] Moreover, the growth of the army, and the development of the Christian church, meant that there were further opportunities for arrivistes. [143] Heather comments on this trend by which 'senatorial status ceased to designate so much a body of men marked out by descent and wealth (although this element never disappeared, especially in Rome).'[144] Instead, membership of the senatorial elite had become the highest distinction that one could attain while undertaking an imperial career path.[145] While senatorial status could be achieved more easily, the rank itself was broken down into different layers by Valentinian I; the *clarissimi* were effectively now at

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[142] See Them. *Or.* 34.13 on the expansion of the senate, which reputedly reached 2,000 members by 385. Heather (1994), 12-21, provides a summary of the growth of the senate at Constantinople. See also Heather (1998) on the growth of the bureaucracy. See Chastagnol (1970) who looks at the shift in the senatorial order from the third to the fifth centuries to study the transformation of the upper parts of the social pyramid.

[143] See Brown (1971a), 26-33, on the growth of the imperial bureaucracy and the influx of military and Christian influences on the upper classes of the Roman Empire. On the growing influence of Christianity in the Empire see Herrin (1987) and Brown (2003). See *Cod. Theod.* 14.9.1, which seems to indicate that an advanced education was requisite for a place in the imperial administration.

[144] Heather (1994), 13.

[145] Heather (1994), 13.

the bottom of the senatorial pyramid, with the *spectabiles* and *illustres* respectively ranking above.[146] This limited the possibilities that social mobility offered, since it was still those born into the uppermost class of senatorial rank who, in general, wielded the greater power. These developments, however, encouraged social mobility, as entrance into certain classes was no longer exclusive. As we will see, Christianity and, by extension, asceticism came to provide opportunities as well.

While A.H.M. Jones argued in 1964 that the statuses and occupations of those that lived during the late Empire were part of a 'caste system' largely dictated by birth, he also asserted that the caste system was 'not rigorously enforced' and that 'social mobility was greater in the later Roman Empire than it had been under the principate'.[147] Scholarship from the 1960s and 70s has encouraged this view that lower echelons of society benefitted from a more fluid social structure.[148] Hopkins views the socially mobile nature of Late Antiquity as a process of status dissonance: he argues that

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[146] See Grig (*forthcoming*). This is not to say that all elite individuals could and did become part of the senate, but rather that access to this honor was widening. Ammianus (21.16.1) recalls the good qualities of Constantius II, stating that higher positions were allocated sparingly, no additions were made to administrative positions, and military officials were kept in their place. However, see Jones (1964), 142-145 and 527-529, on rank inflation during the reign of Valentinian: e.g. from the 350s onwards praetorian prefects were being referred to as *clarissimi et illustres*, proconsuls as *spectabiles*, and the *comites consistoriani* and the *comes domesticorum* as *illustres*. See also Heather (1998), 190-191, on distinctions within the senatorial class.

[147] Jones (1964), 418. He engages with much in the way of legal evidence from the *Codex Theodosianus* and *Codex Justinianus,* which attempt to immobilize groups of people within their inherited rank and position, but proposes that the overwhelming presence of these laws 'reveals the volume of the movement which they were intended to check and goes far to prove that they failed' (418).

[148] Hopkins (1961) considered the evidence in the works of Ausonius. He tracks Ausonius' heritage, highlighting Ausonius' self-acknowledged middle class upbringing (20.1.34) and career developments (position as Gratian's tutor, praetorian prefect, and consul). He also puts

social mobility, whether upwards or downward, by its very nature confounds these expectations of inherited status and straddles the formal system of stratification. It can be usefully seen as a process of status discrepancy or dissonance, that is a situation in which people rate highly on one or more dimensions, but not on others.[149]

Late Antique society was no longer solely dictated by birth and wealth; other factors such as skill, talent, and ambition could help secure an upward trajectory. The expanding imperial bureaucracy provided a means of advancing oneself through governmental service. Positions were no longer limited to certain ranks, but instead culminated in the conferment of them, albeit with the restrictions noted above.[150]

The benefits of a good education were also tangible: adroit literary skill could be used to benefit one's career, whether it was secular or ecclesiastical. In Gaul, for example, Allen Jones comments: '[l]iteracy was an attribute that Gallic aristocrats so admired, they perceived it to trump low birth and to confer an element of social respectability.'[151] Epigraphic evidence from Late Antiquity

forward a list of teachers given by Ausonius, who fails to mention the social origins of each example. Hopkins interprets the omission to mean that they must have had low origins. See MacMullen (1964), 50, on fourth-century laws that were enacted in an attempt to curb social climbing. On increased social mobility see also Hopkins (1963; 1965), Brown (1971a; 1971b), Mazzarino (1974), Van Dam (1985), 70-78, and Marcone (1998), 364-366. Mathisen (2003), 114, comments on the movement within all aspects of society: '[t]he established orders were in transition: new men were making their way into the ranks of nobility, barbarians were usurping much of the privilege and status of the old Roman aristocracy, and careers in the church were coming to be as important as, or more important than, secular careers.'

[149] Hopkins (1965), 14.

[150] MacMullen (1964), 50. See Smith (2011), 134-145, on the expansion of the 'senatorial order'. Heather (1994), 14.

[151] Jones (2009), 339. Jones presents a study of the growing social mobility in late antique Gaul. He develops a social model that is more fluid with both sides sharing a common culture and each side taking advantage of the various possibilities of social advancement. See Mathisen (2003), 11-41, on the focus on literary studies in elite circles as part of the 'aristocratic ethos'.

supports this view that literary attainment was a part of aristocratic self-representation, which focused on broadcasting literary achievements.[152] The metrical inscriptions of Late Antiquity, for example, no longer announce completion of various stages of the *cursus honorum*, but instead publicize virtues of the deceased, in particular, those involving scholastic accomplishments.[153] The epigraphic evidence suggests an appreciation for literary attainment.

A classical education was something to be esteemed and could play a vital role in helping to establish a career. Hopkins, focusing on evidence found in the works of the fourth-century teacher of rhetoric and poet, Ausonius, ultimately establishes

> a picture of an achievement-orientated status group, whose members were often geographically and socially mobile. Their position inside the group and group's position inside society were not directly correlated to the usual criteria of status: birth and wealth. Finally, the teaching profession functioned as a well-used channel of social mobility.[154]

Jerome would not be unusual in attempting to better his circumstances by utilizing the more fluid social mobility that potentially characterized the Late

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[152] Recently, Grig (*forthcoming*) has demonstrated the relationship between inscribed and written texts in Late Antiquity, focusing in particular on how metrical epigraphic self-presentation demonstrates the cultural values of the elite during the late Empire. She argues that while verse epitaphs tended to be used by the lower classes such as freedmen and women during the late Republic and early Empire, they regained their cultural capital and become prominent among the elite during the fourth century. See also Cameron (1976; 2004) on the importance of poetical literary knowledge in elite culture in Late Antiquity.

[153] Grig (*forthcoming*), writes that that it is a 'familiar list of moral and political virtues: *nobilitas, auctoritas, prudentia, humanitas, eloquentia, honor…* In addition, a number of honorific inscriptions praise specifically literary virtues, going so far as to present the claims to literary culture … as a crucial and inherent part of his *nobilitas*.'

[154] Hopkins (1961), 247.

Antique world.[155] Parallels can be drawn, for example, between Jerome and Rufinus. Born in Concordia to a little-known family, Rufinus also left to study in Rome before joining an ascetic community in Aquileia and eventually securing the patronage of Melania the Elder and living on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.[156] Augustine, too, who would become one of the most influential writers in the Christian West, came from an obscure family of limited means in the small town of Thagaste in northern Africa.[157] A literary education was necessary for success and Augustine writes of his father, Patricius, and his patron, Romanianus, sacrificing much in order to put him through the essential schooling.[158]

Even so, despite this social mobility that scholarship has emphasized, Augustine did not have an easy time obtaining his position.[159] In addition to his provincial upbringing, Augustine struggled with learning Greek.[160] Brown has

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[155] On Jerome's social position see Clark (1979), 61-64. Clark (1992), 121-151, discusses Jerome's dissociation from Origenist beliefs after 396 and his shift of the accusation onto his former friend, Rufinus, in order to save his own reputation. Cain (2009b) examines Jerome's attempts to increase his status by appropriating the achievements of his ascetic pupils Asella and Marcella.

[156] See Clark (1992), 11-42, who identifies the 'elite networks' who associate with Jerome and Rufinus in relation to the Origenist and Pelagian controversies. Palladius *Historia Lausiaca* 46.1 informs us of Melania's renowned lineage and marriage; 46.5 on her associations with Rufinus.

[157] August. *Conf.* 2.3.5.

[158] August. *Serm.* 356.3; August. *Conf.* 2.3.5; August. *Conf.* 3.3.6. See Brown (1967a), 9, and O'Donnell (2005), 21.

[159] See Brown (1967a), 19-20, who comments on Augustine's sheer determination.

[160] See August. *Conf.* 1.13.20 and 1.14.23 where Augustine recounts the torments he endured when trying to learn Greek. Brown (1967a), 24, comments that Augustine would have embarked 'pathetically ill-equipped' and would have been regarded by 'a cultivated Greek audience' as 'a dumb fool'. O'Donnell (2005), 126, calls Augustine's Greek 'pathetic'. In an attempt to better his see at Hippo, Augustine requested that Jerome send along translations of Greek commentaries, in particular those of Origen (August. *Ep.* 28.2.2). More on this particular letter will be discussed in the following chapter.

commented that Augustine lived as a 'cosmopolitan *manqué*'.[161] When challenged by Julian of Eclanum, a supporter of Pelagianism, on the issues of original sin and Manichaeism,[162] Augustine attempted to showcase his Greek theological knowledge, but the attempt was ultimately superficial.[163] However, it is the social contrast between Augustine and Julian that is worthy of note for our purposes. Julian's family boasted several ties to the episcopate: both his father and father-in-law were bishops,[164] and he himself would become bishop around 416.[165] Moreover, he came from a rich noble family.[166] Brown discusses Julian as being a part of a 'new clerical dynasty', while Augustine's background was, as discussed, much humbler.[167] Although Julian found himself exiled from Italy to the Greek East following the condemnation of Pelagianism in 418, he seems to have been comfortable there, knowledgeable as he was of Greek.[168] Julian was 'cosmopolitan', and considered Augustine perpetually as *Poenus*, 'the African', and 'patron of donkeys'.[169] Julian attracted an intellectual audience,[170]

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[161] Brown (1967a), 271. Augustine was forced to rely on translations of Greek works, when he could manage to get hold of them. Brown comments that Augustine's lack of thorough engagement with the Greek Christian authors was 'the great lacuna of [his] middle age' (271).

[162] See August. *contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 1.1.3. On Julian and Augustine's dispute see Brown (1967a), 381-397, and Lössl (2001), 251-273. See also Lamberigts (2000) on Julian's critique of Augustine's views on sexuality and original sin.

[163] Brown (1967a), 381, calls Julian of Eclanum 'the most devastating critic of Augustine in his old age'. August. *Ep*. 224.2 demonstrates the extent to which Augustine was working to refute Julian's arguments. For Augustine's engagement with Greek see e.g. August. *contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 1.5.18, where Augustine admits to reading Basil's *Sermon* 1 in translation, but states that he prefers to engage here with the Greek. See also 1.6.26; 1.6.22; 5.2.5-7.

[164] See Paulinus of Nola *Carmina* 25, which was written as an epithalamium to celebrate the marriage of Julian and Titia, daughter of Aemilius, bishop of Beneventum.

[165] On Innocentius' ordination of Julian see Lössl (2001), 259-260.

[166] See Lössl (2001), chapter 3, on Julian's social background.

[167] Brown (1967a), 381.

[168] Brown (1967a), 382. See Gennadius *De viris illustribus* 45.

[169] Brown (1967a), 382-383. See August. *contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 4.46; 6.18. O'Donnell (2005), 282, writes that the latter appellation was indicative of Julian's 'upper-class disdain' for

while Augustine marketed himself as more run-of-the-mill and accessible.[171] But despite coming from a less distinguished background than Julian, Augustine saw himself and his work as part of a 'professional caste', which boasted authoritative figures such as Ambrose of Milan.[172] Overall, although advancement was possible, social mobility had its limitations: while those with less prestigious backgrounds quickly glossed over their origins, their elite counterparts were happy to help jog their memories.[173] We should also consider that opportunities were more accessible for those who already possessed the traditionally accepted criteria, i.e. wealth and ancestry. O'Donnell puts it well: '[o]nce an aristocrat, even a petty provincial one, always an aristocrat in those days'.[174] Augustine serves as a case in point of social mobility's limitations. A more nuanced view of this social fluidity may perhaps be necessary.

Recently, Alexander Skinner has argued 'against theories of decisive upward mobility', stressing that the mobility was contained within the 'traditional aristocratic stratum'.[175] He maintains that the movement within governmental offices was limited to the lesser aristocrats and that the movement

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Augustine. Augustine writes of having been criticized for his African accent: *De ordine* 2.17.45 and *De doctrina christiana* 4.65-66.

[170] August. *contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 5.1.2.

[171] Brown (1967a), 385, argues that Augustine portrayed Julian as 'a secular dilettante whose work could be understood only by those who had enjoyed the luxury of a university education'. See e.g. August. *contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 6.20.64. For Augustine's concern for substance over style see August. *Ep.* 117.

[172] Brown (1967a), 386.

[173] Heather (1994), 11.

[174] O'Donnell (2005), 20-21.

[175] Skinner (2013), 19. See also Salzman (2002), 107-137, on the different career paths available to aristocratic men.

should be referred to as 'political mobility', not 'social mobility'.[176] Skinner does not deny the possibility of lower ranks improving their status, but stresses that it has been exaggerated in the past: 'men from relatively modest backgrounds who were on upward trajectories were likely to run into strong competition from the scions of wealthier or more highly esteemed families'.[177] While 'social mobility' may, therefore, be a term to be used with care, there was still in the Late Antique world the opportunity, in certain situations, for improvement of one's station, be it politically or ecclesiastically. Indeed, the 'traditional aristocratic stratum', as Skinner termed it, could itself be part of the framework within which ascetics furthered their own ecclesiastical and, to a lesser degree, social mobility.

3.6 Asceticism and social mobility

As we have seen, a classical education could provide a way of advancing one's career, and the fourth century also witnessed the growth of asceticism.[178] Asceticism opened up a different avenue that could be exploited for one's gain. The tenets of asceticism created a hierarchy completely distinct from the conventional methods of asserting authority that accompanied lineage, wealth,

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[176] Skinner (2013), 20. He comments: '[s]o far as 'mobility' is concerned, the most that this material… can be taken with confidence to demonstrate is that it was possible – sometimes, and controversially – for the highest imperial dignities to be achieved by lesser members of the provincial aristocracies' (32). See also Salzman (2002), 97-106, on the origins of new men in the fourth century.

[177] Skinner (2013), 44.

[178] See Cameron (1986) on the connection between the state of Roman society in the fourth century and the growth of asceticism, and Cooper (1996), 74-80, on the rise of asceticism in the fourth century. On the ascetic ideal, specifically with reference to Augustine, see Chadwick (1985), 1-23.

or office. Rigorous practices of chastity, fasting, worship, biblical study, labor, and humility allowed ascetic Christians to underscore their faith and duly receive recognition for their achievements.[179] Asceticism provided an alternative means of obtaining authority that ultimately challenged those who held civic power.[180] A new hierarchy that placed a premium on virginity opened up alternative avenues to gain authority.[181]

For aristocratic women especially, asceticism was a way to move beyond their traditional domestic place in society.[182] Indeed, Jerome seems to have initially supported this division as he writes to young Eustochium exalting virginity and encouraging an attitude of *sancta superbia* ('holy arrogance'). 'Know that you are better than them!' (*scito te illis esse meliorem*), he wrote.[183] As

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[179] See Clark (2004), 62-77, on the impact of philosophical teachings on the development of asceticism.

[180] Cooper (1996), 81, comments, '[e]ssentially, the competition was transformed from a fictional competition… to a collision in earnest between authority systems'. See Rapp (2005), on the role asceticism played in securing a bishop's position as a symbol of authority. She argues that asceticism was the basis on which a bishop's spiritual and pragmatic authority was built.

[181] Jerome comments on the supremacy of virginity over marriage in his vignette that presents a housewife who is run off her feet with no time for prayer (*Adv. Hel*. 20). This view is furthered in *Adv. Iov*. 1.9. He later attempts to temper this view given in *Adversus Iovinianum* in *Ep*. 49 to Pammachius. This will be discussed further in Chapter 5. In contrast, in Augustine's *De bono coniugali* and *De sancta virginitate* (composed *c*. 400-401, following the Jovinianist Controversy) he warns virgins not to believe that their virginity makes them superior to other Christians. See Cloke (1995), 40-41, on Jerome's reply to Jovinian, which attempted to save him from accusations of heresy. See Hunter (1992; 1999a) on Ambrosiaster's more moderate views on sex and marriage, which he interprets as a response to Jerome's ascetic teachings.

[182] Clark (1986), 180-181, calls this ascetic lifestyle 'house monasticism.' On the new freedom asceticism granted aristocratic women see Clark (1986), 193, Cameron (1989a), Clark (1993), 98-105, and Cooper (1996), 86-87. For an overview of the rise of asceticism in the fourth and fifth centuries and its impact on Christian women see Cloke (1995).

[183] *Ad hominis coniugem dei sponsa quid properas? Disce in hac parte superbiam sanctam, scito te illis esse meliorem* (Jer. *Ep*. 22.16.). Jerome supported marriage to the extent that it produced more virgins (*Ep*. 22.20). See also Jer. *Ep*. 54.4 to the widow Furia, extorting her to remain continent, and to scorn a life of marriage. For a narrative of Jerome's interactions with Marcella, Paula, and

ascetic living encouraged women to remain chaste and virtuous, this left whatever energy and financial means they had at their disposal to benefit the church, or indeed, other ascetic communities. An aristocratic woman could do more than marry well and bear children, and ascetic Christians, such as Jerome, write praising women for their ascetic efforts towards scholarship, chastity, and fasting.[184] Their roles as ascetics took precedence over their traditional positions as mothers or wives.[185] These women demonstrate a new form of freedom and a method of gaining authority in the Christian society that went beyond the traditional methods.[186] As we will see, while these elite women had no need to climb the social ladder, others in less favorable conditions could use the skills, connections and money of these women to their own advantage.[187] Jerome commends the young Demetrias,[188] daughter of Anicia Juliana and Anicius

Eustochium following his exile from Rome in August 385 as well as his staunch ascetic views, see Brown (1988), 366-386.

[184] For example, Jerome's *Ep*. 108.14 to Eustochium: he describes Paula's pilgrimages, enthusiasm for modest accommodation, and her desire to help fellow ascetics. He also comments on how important monks and bishops are eager to make her acquaintance. For other examples of ascetic women see Jer. *Ep*. 23.2 on Lea, *Ep*. 24.3 on Asella, and *Ep*. 127.4 on Marcella.

[185] Clark (1986), 175. Paulinus, for example, writes exalting Melania the Elder above her consular relations (*Ep*. 29.6).

[186] Cloke (1995), 55, comments: '[a]bstinence was by no means the only commitment incumbent on the devout woman but it signaled the degree by which her commitment might be known: her sexual condition dictated her rung on the ladder of the church hierarchy'.

[187] Clark (1986), 145, suggests that a woman's social status was made more complicated by gender: '[t]he same woman could perceive herself as both low-born and high-status depending on context. If her position was subordinate to that of other, male age-peers within her family ranking, in the world beyond the family her claim was that of rank and not of gender.'

[188] Demetrias was a member of the rich and noble Anician family (*PLRE* 2 s.v. 'Demetrias'). Brown (2012), 302-303, notes the fuss and importance paid to the veiling of Demetrias in Carthage due to the awkward nature of the survival of the Anician women following Alaric's sack of Rome. He points out that 'the very safety of the Anician ladies suggested that they had struck a deal with the barbarians' (303). In *Ep.* 130.5.4, Jerome notes that Demetrias was likely to have a difficult time finding an appropriate marriage after having fled Rome for Carthage. See Brown (2012), 304-307, on Pelagius' letter to Demetrias that stated she had innate 'spiritual riches' and therefore had no need to rely on God. This led to Augustine writing to express his

Hermogenianus Olybrius, who has taken a vow of virginity: 'as the bride of a man, only one province would have known you; as Christ's virgin the whole world has heard [of you]![189] While this is a bold claim by Jerome, asceticism had the potential to open up new opportunities for the chaste women as well as their spiritual mentors.

This new practice of stressing moral superiority, and specifically, virginity, jarred with the views of conservative aristocrats.[190] A life devoted to virginity completely contradicted the traditional expectations of Roman aristocratic women: to marry (potentially securing property or political alliances) and produce heirs, who would in turn inherit the family fortune.[191]

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concern to Anicia Juliana (August. *Ep.* 188.2.5). Brown (2012), 306, highlights the fact that 'for Pelagius, earthly nobility was not the antithesis to Christian nobility: the one could lead directly to the other. Demetrias had transferred her excellence; she had not left it behind' (306). But for Augustine and Jerome, the nobility of the Anicii was a worldly qualification that was ultimately insignificant when it came to assessing the soul.

[189] *Quam sponsam hominis una tantum provincia noverat, virginem Christi totus orbis audivit* (Jer. *Ep.* 130.6). See Cloke (1995), 68-70, on how a reputable virgin could further ennoble an aristocratic family.

[190] In *Ep.* 127.5 Jerome describes the Roman aristocracy's negative views of asceticism. See Rut. Namat. 1.439-452 for a critique of monks and 517-526 for an account of an aristocratic man who had withdrawn from society, forsaking his family, wealth, and marriage. Famously, Jerome's young follower Blesilla, the daughter of his patroness Paula, died from fasting (*Ep.* 39.6), and provoked outrage from the community. For further discussion on this incident see Chapter 5. Later in his life, Jerome, perhaps having learned from the case of Blesilla, warned Demetrias not to go overboard with fasting (*Ep.* 130.11). See Hunter (2007), 58-63 and 74-80, on the hostile reactions to asceticism. See also Brown (2012), 265, on Jerome's 'high-pitched advocacy of total ascetic seclusion'. Jerome also encountered disagreement from Roman clerics: see Hunter (1992), 460-463, on the more moderate views of Ambrosiaster.

[191] Chrystal (2013), 38-53, provides an overview of Roman marriage during the Republic and Empire. See Cloke (1995), 47-56, on expectations of married women. Cooper (2007), 38-44, goes beyond considering the issue of inheritance and the traditional role of Roman women, discussing the practical problem of holding on to land and wealth in a politically unstable period punctuated by barbarian invasions. Brown (2012), 264, argues that Jerome 'wished his [female] correspondents to turn their entire palaces into ascetic fortresses, closed against the

Jerome highlights the position of the opposition: 'nobles will rise up and the patrician mob will thunder against my letter, shouting that I am a magician and a seducer and that I should be sent away to the ends of the earth.'[192] Although cognizant of the distress that asceticism could cause a well-off family, Jerome persists in encouraging his ascetic protégées, all the while recognizing that he is putting his hand into the fire.[193] While writing to the nobly connected Furia,[194] encouraging her to remain chaste after the death of her husband, Jerome comments that she does not need to worry about any ancestral wealth – she will leave it all to Christ.[195] He continues: 'your father will be saddened, but Christ will be joyful. Your family will grieve, but the angels will rejoice.'[196] In a letter to Eustochium that eulogizes the life of her mother, Paula, Jerome remarks that others had commented that Paula had gone mad (*insana*) and needed to seek treatment (*cerebrum… confovendum*) due to her ardent passion for ascetic virtue.[197] Some members of the Roman aristocracy, it seems, could not fully understand why these women would want to renounce their position and wealth and subscribe to this alternate form of authority.[198] This new measure of

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outside world.' This went entirely against the traditional view of a noble Roman house as a public place complete with large courtyards and reception areas.

[192] *Consurgent proceres et adversum epistulam meam turba patricia detonabit, me magum, me seductorem clamitans et in terras ultimas asportandum* (*Ep*. 54.2).

[193] *Ep*. 54.2.

[194] For Furia's patrician family see Jer. *Ep*. 54.6. *PLRE* 1 s.v. 'Furia'.

[195] *Cui dimittis tantas divitias? Christo, qui mori non potest. Quem habebis heredem? Ipsum, quem et dominum* (*Ep*. 54.4).

[196] *Contristabitur pater, sed laetabitur Christus; lugebit familia, sed angeli gratulabuntur* (*Ep*. 54.4).

[197] *Novi susurronem quendam – quod genus hominum vel perniciosissimum est – quasi benivolum nuntiasse, quod prae nimio fervore virtutum quibusdam videretur insana et cerebrum illius dicerent confovendum* (*Ep*. 108.19).

[198] Hunter (2007), 63, rightly warns us that Jerome's complaints about the opposition to asceticism present these ascetic women as martyrs, and may be a literary topos. However, he concedes that 'the numerous and varied complaints about the monastic life… indicate that there must have been some social reality behind Jerome's rhetoric' (63).

social ranking paid no mind to the traditional methods of establishing power. Moreover, there was no means of monitoring it.[199]

However, it was not only women who could benefit socially from a life dedicated to asceticism.[200] Asceticism was publicized by its advocates as a noble and glorious lifestyle for men to boot: Pammachius, for example, is called 'great among the great, first among the first, commander-in-chief of the monks'.[201] An approach of commending men by highlighting ascetic endeavors over illustrious ancestry began to develop. Ascetic men could garner authority by adopting an ascetic lifestyle that would secure their reputation.[202] They could also associate themselves with devout, ascetic women, who would not only provide them with reputable connections, but also with the financial resources to further their pursuits.[203] These ascetic women provided the 'traditional aristocratic stratum' referred to above,[204] within which some ascetic proponents

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[199] Cooper (1996), 83.

[200] Cooper (1996) has demonstrated that there was a significant shift in Late Antiquity: a new rhetoric that celebrated ascetic behavior began to compete with the longstanding rhetoric that emphasized the importance of aristocratic marital relations. Stressing ascetic acts became a way of asserting moral superiority: analysis of the ancient Greek novel and the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles leads her to she suggests that the idealization of virginity allowed female protagonists to function as a way of measuring male morality.

[201] *magnus in magnis, primus in primis, ἀρχιστρατηγὸς monachorum* (Jer. *Ep*. 66.4).

[202] See Brown's (1971b) influential article on the growing importance of the holy man in the fifth and sixth centuries.

[203] See Cloke (1995), 6, who points out that '[one] common and unifying fact about these patristic church writers … Augustine, John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Palladius, Rufinus, and most conspicuous of all, Jerome – is that they were surrounded and supported by women'. Clark (1986), 146, emphasizes that rhetorically the virgin held influence: '[i]t may be argued that the Christian writers of antiquity introduced the ideal of the virgin precisely because of her paradoxical quality: as a rhetorical figure, she invoked the conservative values of the hearth while in fact legitimizing social change.' On Jerome's relationship with his patrons see Williams (2006), 233-260.

[204] See Chapter 2, 3.5.

found a way to better their circumstances and advance their religious views. Jerome's relationship with the wealthy Marcella[205] is a case in point. Not only did Marcella help expand Jerome's circle in Rome and provide the necessary finances,[206] Jerome also calls attention to her dedicated humility and erudition. However, he is careful to mention that Marcella, with typical feminine modesty, gives *him* credit for her accomplished biblical scholarship.[207] This self-effacing behavior allows Jerome to emerge appearing doubly as successful: his patroness is not only an impressive scholar (due to his instruction), she also conforms to the traditional model of a modest Roman woman. Thus, men had multiple methods of demonstrating their orthodox authority, which could, in turn, be used as a means towards securing sway in the Christian community. These issues of asceticism and hierarchy will be key points to bear in mind for this thesis; we will return to Jerome's relationship with them in Part 2 with the case studies on Helvidius, Jovinian, and Vigilantius.

3.7 Why abuse?

I have now outlined how the Roman educational system helped perpetuate social hierarchies, but have also explored abusive rhetoric's potential to reshape hierarchies. In sum, we have seen how rhetoric can be used both to solidify and to challenge social hierarchies. In particular, we have considered Jerome's historical context, in which there was room for social advancement through both

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[205] *PLRE* 1 s.v. 'Marcella 2'.

[206] Brown (2012), 265, comments that Jerome's staunch advocacy of asceticism, as seen in his letters 'was to ensure that the widows and their virgin daughters closed the doors of their palaces against an outside world that was eager less for their bodies than for their money'.

[207] Jer. *Ep.* 127.7. See Cain (2009b).

ascetic and scholarly prowess. Before we turn to how abusive rhetoric actually achieves its aims, some final comments on abusive rhetoric's specific function, as well as on the lack of guidance given in the ancient handbooks regarding such rhetoric, will allow for clarity when later considering how it achieves its goals.

While the function of rhetoric in general aims to convince the reader or listener as discussed above, here we must consider the function of abusive rhetoric specifically. If we consider those enumerated by Menander Rhetor, the reasons to praise are numerous: to celebrate a ruler, an arrival, a departure, a wedding, a consummation, a birthday, a consolation, a funeral, and an invitation, to name a few.[208] But the reasons for blame are much more vaguely specified. According to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, one may resort to blame for several reasons: first, it could be a result of the speaker having suffered some maltreatment. Secondly, it could be undertaken for the greater good – by censuring another, the speaker advocates virtuous behavior and thus makes an example of the condemned party.[209] There is, therefore, a certain understood functionality and purpose behind abusive rhetoric.

Ancient rhetorical handbooks, however, at times failed to demonstrate the practical use of abusive rhetoric. These works tend to divide up rhetoric in general into various subcategories. Aristotle, for example, imposes the divisions of political, forensic, and epideictic (*Rh.* 1.3). While these divisions may come in

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[208] See Men. Rhet. 3 on a speech for an arrival; 5 for a departure; 6 for a wedding; 7 for a consummation; 8 for a birthday; 9 for a consolation; 11 for a funeral; and 14 for an invitation.
[209] *Rhet. Her.* 3.6.

handy when producing a rhetorical textbook for students, they seem to create artificial guidelines for what is, and what is not rhetorical, and each division's purpose is separate and distinct.[210] For example, epideictic oratory is segregated from 'the practical side of oratory', as such works are composed solely for the purpose of delighting the audience.[211] While the function of epideictic oratory is to amplify something that has already been accepted, the function of deliberative and judicial oratory is to demonstrate something that is contested.[212] However, the two at times seem to overlap. With regard to abusive rhetoric, Quintilian points out the practical uses of both praise and blame, noting, in particular, funeral orations and the speeches of Cicero.[213] These examples may contain elements of praise or blame, but they serve an underestimated practical purpose in addition to having been designed to display.

Moreover, the ancient handbooks do not deal in depth with how and why to abuse someone. According to ancient sources there are a limited number of standard rhetorical ways to praise.[214] However, there seem to be a wide variety of ways to abuse that are not specifically set out. It is modern

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[210] The handbooks tend to state that rhetorical works, particularly epideictic ones, keep to a stringent order: *ordinem hunc adhibere in demonstranda vita debemus* (*Rhet. Her.* 3.7.) See Cameron (1970), 22-23, and 253-260, on Claudian's understanding of the rules laid out in third- and fourth-century rhetorical handbooks.

[211] Quintilian points out that epideictic has been separated by Aristotle (*Rh.* 1.3.5-6) from the business part of oratory and relegated only to display (Quint. *Inst.* 3.7.1). Cicero's Antonius in *De oratore* comments that panegyric falls into a different class of oratory – one that the Romans generally do not practice very often (2.84.341).

[212] Heath (2004), 220.

[213] Quint. *Inst*. 3.7.2; 28.

[214] *Rhet. Her.* 3.6.

scholarship that has collated the various *loci* susceptible to abuse.[215] Heath comments:

> It is relatively easy to codify the topics relevant to each type of epideictic situation (for example, those likely to be relevant at any wedding). But it is not possible to list the topics likely at a murder trial… since the underlying structure of the dispute in different murder cases may vary.[216]

Within abusive rhetoric, therefore, there seems to be a wide range of options open, but also the potential to err. If we want to appreciate the full range of Jerome's rhetorical endeavors, we will need to turn to modern scholarship further below, as the ancient handbooks do not deal extensively with this topic. It is important to bear in mind, however, that the ancients may not have recognized these modern categorizations of rhetoric. If Jerome seems to follow the guideline set out by the ancients, and yet his rhetoric still manages to fail, perhaps modern theory can help ascertain where he went wrong.[217]

We should keep in mind Quintilian's point discussed above on the overlap of categories.[218] The divisions of rhetoric are less rigid than the handbooks would have us believe. It has been argued recently that Menander Rhetor, renowned for his treatises on epideictic oratory, was additionally skilled in judicial and deliberative oratory – as indeed, such knowledge would have

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[215] See Craig (2004), 190-191, which incorporates the lists given by Süss (1938), 245-263, and Nisbet (1961), 192-197.

[216] Heath (2004), 221.

[217] Although Conley (2010), 2, highlights the lack of modern scholarship on abuse as well: '[i]f you look around for systematic examinations of what it is that constitutes an insult, you will find that insult or insulting behavior remains one of the most overlooked (although not unnoticed) and underexamined features of everyday social interaction.'

[218] Cicero makes a similar point about the overlap: *De or.* 2.81.333.

been generally useful for any rhetorical pursuits.[219] The treatises considered in this thesis do not fit neatly into only one of these categories. Jerome's abusive treatises against Rufinus, Jovinian, and Vigilantius were not meant simply to divert his readers. They had another purpose: to influence contemporary views of orthodoxy and propel Jerome upwards in the Christian community. The fact that Jerome's polemics attempt to persuade others of the orthodoxy of his views, exhort them to follow certain Christian practices, and often condemn the teachings of others, suggests that they belong in the realm of judicial/deliberative more so than epideictic. But Jerome's use of abuse seems to indicate that it was indeed an attempt at display – a display that would convince others of his scholarly prowess and Christian orthodoxy. Kennedy helpfully amends the somewhat limited definition of epideictic rhetoric put forward by the ancient handbooks: '[p]erhaps epideictic rhetoric is best regarded as any discourse that does not aim at a specific action but is intended to influence the values and beliefs of the audience.'[220] A broader definition such as this takes into consideration the potential of epideictic rhetoric. For Jerome's purposes the above definitions and functions of rhetoric are apt. As we will see in Part 2 of this thesis, his compositions were tailored to the intention of assimilating himself to those important and educated members of the Christian community who had the potential to help further his career.

4. SUCCESSFUL RHETORIC

4.1 The goodwill of the audience

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[219] Heath (2004).
[220] Kennedy (1994), 4.

Now that we have examined the ancient and modern definitions of rhetoric and discussed the purpose of abusive rhetoric, the means by which rhetoric is successful will be considered. Cicero comments that securing the goodwill of the audience is paramount to successful rhetoric (via Antonius):[221]

> Nihil est enim in dicendo… maius, quam ut faveat oratori is, qui audiet, utque ipse sic moveatur, ut impetu quodam animi et perturbatione magis quam iudicio aut consilio regatur.

> Indeed, there is nothing more powerful in speaking than for the listener to favor the orator and to be affected in such a way that he is governed with a certain impulse of the soul and emotion rather than by judgment or deliberation (Cic. *De or*. 2.42.178).

The reason, Cicero maintains, is that men are more often governed by their emotions than by a logical rationale.[222] It is power over the mental emotions that will ultimately help an orator win his audience.[223] Quintilian states similarly:

> Atqui hoc est quod dominetur in iudiciis, haec eloquentia regnat… Ubi vero animis iudicum vis adferenda est et ab ipsa veri contemplatione abducenda mens, ibi proprium oratoris opus est … probationes enim efficiant sane ut causam nostram meliorem esse iudices putent, adfectus praestant ut etiam velint; sed id quod volunt credunt quoque. nam cum irasci, favere, odisse, misereri coeperunt, agi iam rem suam existimant; et, sicut amantes de forma iudicare non possunt, quia sensum oculorum praecipit animus, ita omnem veritatis inquirendae rationem iudex omittit occupatus adfectibus; aestu fertur et velut rapido flumini obsequitur.

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[221] Cic. *De or*. 1.31.143; 1.53.227.

[222] *Plura enim multo homines iudicant odio aut amore aut cupiditate aut iracundia aut dolore aut laetitia aut spe aut timore aut errore aut aliqua permotione mentis, quam veritate aut praescripto aut iuris norma aliqua aut iudicii formula aut legibus* (Cic. *De or*. 2.42.178). See Cribiore (2013), 89-95, on Libanius' use of emotion in his rhetoric.

[223] *Et omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoscendi; quod omnis vis ratioque dicendi in eorum, qui audiunt, mentibus, aut sedandis, aut excitandis expromenda est* (Cic. *De or*. 1.5.17). See Konstan (2006 and 2007) on the relationship between emotions and rhetoric.

> Still it is this [emotional power] that controls the courts, this eloquence rules…
> But, when force must be applied to the minds of the judges and their reason
> must be led away from the very consideration of truth, there is the particular
> work of an orator… Of course, evidence may certainly ensure that the judges
> think that our case is better, [but] emotions are preferable, so that they also wish
> it so; but what they wish for, they also believe. For when they begin to get
> angry, to favor, to hate, to pity, they think that their own affairs are being
> decided; and just as lovers are not able to judge [their lover's] beauty, because
> the heart instructs the perception of the eyes, so the judge busy with emotions
> lets go of all plan of examining truth; he is carried off by passion and yields as it
> were to the swift river (Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.4-6).

Emotions, therefore, are key to securing the good opinion of the audience. Facts
and evidence are useful to make a point, and indeed exhibiting an exhaustive
command over information relevant to the argument will assist, but it is passion
that opens up the audience to persuasion.[224] Convincing rhetoric, therefore,
must be in tune with its audience. An orator 'should feel the pulse of every
class, age, and rank, and taste the thoughts and feelings of those before whom
he is discussing anything' (Cic. *De or.* 1.52.224).[225] The organization of a written
or spoken piece is also a matter to consider: Cicero writes that while placating
words should be present throughout the entire work, the introduction and
conclusion are also of prime importance to create a receptive audience.[226] After
all, the audience is the most attentive when they are awaiting the entirety of the
work and are, additionally, more receptive in the beginning (Cic. *De or.*
2.79.323).[227]

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[224] Cic. *De or*. 2.42.178-179.

[225] *Teneat oportet venas cuiusque generis, aetatis, ordinis, et eorum, apud quos aliquid aget… mentes sensusque degustet.*

[226] Cic. *De or*. 2.79.322-323. See also Diodorus 5.1.1-2 on the importance of judicious arrangement when writing a variety of matters ranging from business to history.

[227] *Attenti tum maxime sunt cum omnia exspectant et dociles magis in initiis esse possunt.*

Quintilian also highlights the importance of winning over the audience. He cites Aristotle (*Rh.* 1.9) and comments on the significance of the character of the audience: the opinion of the general public must be taken into consideration.[228] Quintilian observes that the audience's attitude will be clear to the speaker prior to his oration. He should, therefore, be sure to praise his audience often, as it will make them more favorably inclined towards his cause.[229] The orator's job, therefore, requires careful research in advance. Failing to recognize the sentiments of the audience prior to the delivery of the work can only result in failure. Understanding the audience's general opinion will allow the speaker to create a sense of camaraderie. Aristotle reminds us that the main object of rhetoric is, above all, to provoke judgment – whether adverse or favorable. And while he writes with deliberative and judicial proceedings in mind, his point can be extended to include all forms of rhetoric: 'it is not only necessary to consider how to make the speech itself demonstrative and convincing, but also that the speaker should show himself to be of a certain character and should know how to put the judge into a certain form of mind' (Arist. *Rh.* 2.1.2).[230] Rhetoric can only be successful if the orator is able to develop an affinity with the audience and thus successfully sway them. Antonius, in Cicero's *De oratore*, reminds us that there are a number of ways in which rhetoric can fail. In order to avoid the disapproval of the people, one should steer clear of harsh, insolent, shameless, or vulgar comments.[231] Such

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[228] *Nam plurimum refert, qui sint audientium mores, quae publice recepta persuasio, ut illa maxime quae probant esse in eo, qui laudabitur, credant, aut in eo, contra quem dicemus, ea quae oderunt* (Quint. *Inst.* 3.7.23).

[229] Quint. *Inst.* 3.7.23-24.

[230] Trans. Freese (1975).

[231] Cic. *De or.* 2.82.339. Cicero writes in his *Pro Caelio,* highlighting the importance of finessing insult: *sed aliud est male dicere, aliud accusare… maledictio … nihil habet propositi praeter contumeliam*

comments will not always help to persuade as they can alienate and fail to gain the goodwill of the audience. The task of composing successful abusive rhetoric, therefore, can be problematic.

In sum, the ancient handbooks of Aristotle, Cicero, Menander Rhetor, and Quintilian have shed some light on the qualities deemed necessary for a successful orator as well as the function of rhetoric and abusive rhetoric in particular. As discussed above, an orator should be eloquent and virtuous; the two are seemingly inseparable. For in order to be eloquent one must be virtuous, and if one is virtuous then eloquence will naturally follow. A meticulously guided education and mastery of knowledge is also a necessary qualification. All these accomplishments will then assist the orator in composing successful rhetoric and convincing the audience. As has been considered, securing the goodwill of the audience is of the utmost importance when attempting to persuade. An audience will be more receptive when the orator plays close attention to the general character of his readers/listeners, and is sure to place those passages pleasing to the audience prominently and tuck away those that are contentious. As we have seen above, the ancient rhetoricians attempted to create and exploit bonds between speaker and audience. But the ancient sources can be quite restrictive in their definition of abusive rhetoric and vague in their discussion of how it may be used. In order to realize fully what practitioners of abusive rhetoric achieve by employing it, we must turn to the modern theorists. The more recent works on rhetoric will

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quae si petulantius iactatur, convicium, si facetius, urbanitas nominatur, 'but it is one thing to insult, another to accuse… slander has no purpose other than to abuse. If it is thrown about impudently it is considered an object of shame; if cleverly, it is called wit' (Cic. *Cael.* 6).

allow a broader understanding of abusive rhetoric both in terms of definition and end result.

4.2 Audience and identification

Within Burke's definition of rhetoric discussed above, he highlights the importance of the audience, pointing out its '*addressed*' nature. Inherently persuasion must require an audience.[232] An analysis of rhetoric has the potential to help demonstrate how various groups or individuals can be at variance with one another.[233] Identification and division go hand in hand; therefore, identifying with and thus winning over the audience can be done through stressing division and similarity.[234] Burke proposes:

> A speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identifications; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish a rapport between himself and his audience.[235]

In Jerome's case, he uses the technique of identification when assimilating himself to his audience. Throughout his polemics, we will see that not only does he align himself with those whom he wishes to convince, he also attempts to align other participants of the rhetorical domain – whether readers of his treatises, or secular and Christian figures of authority — with himself in the

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[232] Burke (1969), 38.

[233] Burke (1969), 22.

[234] See Hawkins (*forthcoming*) on the connection between architectural structures, such as Pompey's theater, and forming and expressing group identity, as well as on anthropological studies that have established the potential of invective to help foster friendships and connections in certain social contexts. Consider, for example, the African American practice of 'playing the dozens', which consists of participants insulting each other in turn. On this see Wald (2012) and Conley (2010), 3 and 87-91.

[235] Burke 1969, 46.

hopes of cementing his orthodoxy and gaining a reputable following. The concept of identification is key to his rhetoric.

In order to identify successfully with the audience, a rhetor must discern the appropriate viewpoints, tones, and vocabulary. Burke develops this idea of identification: '[y]ou persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, imagine, attitude, idea *identifying* your ways with his'.[236] As Socrates comments: 'it is easy to praise Athenians among Athenians'.[237] Furthermore, Burke maintains that a series of oppositions arranged in a pattern will compel the audience to agree to the set pattern and subconsciously continue to finish it.[238] The choice of language, therefore, plays a key role in both linking or dividing speaker and audience. This rhetorical relationship created by the speaker factors in to the success of persuasion, and more specifically in this case, the abusive rhetoric.[239]

4.3 Abuse and identification: the vertical dimension of abuse

The concept of identification can further be used to understand the efficacy of abusive rhetoric. Similar to Booth's 'rhetorical domain' discussed above, Conley (2010) uses the term 'moral universe' when discussing the success of an insult. He maintains that if one does not 'get' the insult then it is a result of the speaker

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[236] Burke (1969), 55.

[237] Pl. *Menex*. 235 D. The same point by Socrates is recorded by Aristotle (*Rh.* 1.9.30).

[238] Burke (1969), 58.

[239] Cohen (1999) demonstrates that humor (which can be a component of abusive rhetoric) is a social transaction that can only be successful when the speaker of the joke and his audience have a shared knowledge and background.

and audience living in different 'moral universes.'[240] Again, it relies on the process of identification being completed on both sides. Interestingly, Conley points out that no term is inherently abusive.[241] It is the context surrounding the term, the specific scenario, the involved parties and relative statuses that create the abuse and the insult, and help determine how each party reacts.[242] If the audience fails to understand the insult, they have failed to grasp the context and the speaker has failed to identify successfully with his audience.

Conley also considers another scenario where the one doing the insulting has insulted one of a higher status. He maintains that these situations result in the harshest responses.[243] His explanation is as follows: 'this is because insulters arrogate to themselves superiority, and those of actual higher status – hence, with more power – do not hesitate, in the interests of maintaining the hierarchy, to assert that status.'[244] Such a power struggle instantly brings to mind Jerome's interactions with Augustine, which will be discussed in the following chapter, along with his relationship with Rufinus. The hierarchies at work are complicated and overlapping but a look at each participant's rhetoric will help to explain how each viewed their own status in the Christian community as well as that of their opponent.

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[240] Conley (2010), 29.

[241] Conley (2010), 8, comments: '[t]here is… no lexicon that will tell you that a given behavior is inherently or situationally insulting, since most of what is considered insulting (or, for that matter, acceptable or laudable) behavior is so deeply rooted in a host of social and cultural practices and competencies as to defy explanation, much less easy interpretation.' Opelt (1980) has catalogued a list of abusive Latin terms found in Christian Latin literature from Tertullian to Augustine and Lilja (1965) those found in Roman comedy.

[242] Conley (2010), 25. He refers to the dimensions of insult as: 'scenario', 'intensity', and 'vehicle' (3).

[243] Conley (2010), 124.

[244] Conley (2010), 124.

As discussed briefly above, a profitable outcome is key when considering abusive rhetoric. I argue that Jerome's use of abusive rhetoric is a case in point. When considered from the vertical dimension of abuse, Jerome's methods and targets seem to follow a pattern that aims to suppress those whom he considers to be his social and intellectual inferiors. Jerome gains by furthering his own career and securing his intellectual and orthodox prowess. Using Conley's discussion of the vertical aspect of abuse, if we imagine a ladder to represent various social rankings in the Christian community, Jerome seems to choose targets on a lower rung. He is selective about the subjects of his more abusive treatises, as Jerome has clout to gain and maintain by verbally overpowering them. We should keep in mind this vertical dimension of abuse when later analyzing Jerome's treatises against Helvidius, Jovinian, and Vigilantius.

Jerome attempts to climb the social ladder by using a variety of methods at his disposal: his continued emphasis on his academic ability, his associations with wealthy Christian women, and a forceful personality that inveighs against those who challenge his orthodoxy and intellectual productions. Jerome's polemical treatises demonstrate the potential of using abusive rhetoric. Conley argues: '[w]hen one seeks to assert or attain status in one's community, insults provide a means by way of put-downs of one's opponents in the scramble for recognition.'[245] Abusive rhetoric can be used as a means of competition and garnering authority in a socially mobile world.[246] Jerome uses a form of rhetoric

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[245] Conley (2010), 122.

[246] Abuse's opposite, praise, can go beyond the ceremonial category and can also be used for advantageous purposes. Consider, for example, Pliny the Younger's panegyric for Trajan,

that simultaneously seeks to assimilate and divide, while associating himself with the conventional and accepted rhetorical models of the elite. These rhetorical models have been associated with displaying *paideia*, which allows one to emphasize 'social distance'.[247] We will see that Jerome uses abuse in this manner in the hopes of yielding a profit: recognized Christian orthodoxy and intellectual prestige. Confirmation of both of these qualifications could be used for the purpose of upward social mobility, or at least to gain esteem.

5. CONCLUSION

This chapter has set out to do several things: first, I have discussed the definition of rhetoric by both ancient and modern standards. The ancient definition of rhetoric and the qualities imperative to an orator (virtue and erudition) are necessary to keep in mind when examining how Jerome would have approached his rhetorical endeavors and how he understood rhetoric to be effective. Moreover, the ancient approaches to rhetoric help to delineate the group that would have made up Jerome's 'rhetorical domain'. Jerome, naturally, would have aimed his rhetoric at those members of the Christian community who shared a similar scholastic background. The modern definition, which is, overall, quite broad, and expands rhetoric to all form of communication, is of use when analyzing the motives of the rhetor, in this case, Jerome. These two definitions will help in Part 2 of this thesis when ascertaining

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which was delivered as a means of thanking the emperor for having bestowed the consulate upon him in 100. Such a flattering account of Trajan can undoubtedly be considered to have enhanced Pliny's reputation with Trajan. See Morford (2012), 133, on the connection between Pliny's style and purpose. For varying theories of Pliny's reason for composing the *Panegyricus* see Moles (1990), 302-303, and Fedeli (1989), 492-497.

[247] Brown (1992), 39.

how Jerome attempts to communicate effectually with his audience using abusive rhetoric, and what he hopes it will achieve.

Secondly, I have commented on the importance of rhetoric's relationship with social hierarchies. As a rhetorical education is a part of this cultural system that has been argued to reinforce itself perpetually and maintain class division, if we consider rhetoric broadly, it can be used as a means of navigating within the social hierarchy: the cultural capital attached to a rhetorical education could be used to better one's social status. But when we consider abusive rhetoric specifically, I have argued that it does not always reinforce this hierarchy, but rather can seek to reshape it. When we consider Jerome's historical context – the growing influence of asceticism, and the developing social fluidity – it was not only abusive rhetoric that could be used to help improve one's place in the Christian community: asceticism, with its new hierarchy that placed a premium on virginity, also opened up a new approach to asserting one's authority. Ascetics, such as Jerome, now had multiple methods of demonstrating their Christian authority: through scholarship and ascetic devotion – two qualifications that could be further fortified by the use of abusive rhetoric when taking on opponents who challenged one's orthodoxy. Moreover, their connections with aristocratic women of repute provided an otherwise inaccessible route into the 'traditional aristocratic stratum.'

Thirdly, the ways by which rhetoric can achieve its goals have been considered. In particular, identification with the audience is paramount. The rhetorician must have his finger on the pulse of his readers or listeners to ensure that his rhetoric will be successful. In this way, the rhetor would be better able

to persuade his audience of adopting his own views by presenting them in terms agreeable to the reader/listener. Jerome would certainly have been influenced by the qualities that his learned predecessors had stated were necessary for an orator. Part 2 of this thesis will demonstrate that Jerome emphasized these qualities (and their opposites) in his abusive rhetoric, which seeks affirmation of his orthodox and scholarly authority. As the problem of orthodoxy was an extremely controversial issue with no real definitive resolution, we will see that Jerome struggled to create bonds using the shared property of the literary canon. He therefore engaged with abusive rhetoric in a bid to carve out an orthodox niche for himself and his scholarship and gain a foothold that might allow him to navigate further up the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Chapter 3. Jerome's Contemporaries

1. INTRODUCTION

Jerome's desire to assert his status is uncontested. As discussed in Chapter 1, scholars such as Brown, Vessey, Cain, and Rebenenich have made cases for Jerome's desire to make a name for himself among the Christian *litterati* of the Western Empire.[1] Jerome's success has long been attributed to his prodigious literary output and ascetic devotion, as well as his unfailing self-promotion.[2] However, when we step back and look at Jerome's interactions with his contemporaries throughout his life, patterns begin to emerge that reveal a savvy man who, despite having a reputation as a curmudgeon and verbal bully, made a name for himself far beyond that. Indeed, future generations would refer to him as the Christian Cicero, based on his eloquence, diction, and rhetoric.[3] To an extent, it seems that his shameless self-promotion succeeded. Vessey points out that Augustine had been taken in by Jerome's self-fashioning, as his reference to him 'is impressive not least for its conformity with the terms of Jerome's own self-presentation.'[4] Jerome, to a certain extent, seems to have successfully manipulated his reputation.

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[1] Brown (1988), 377; Vessey (1993), 145 n. 29; Cain (2006), 500-525; Rebenich (2009), 13-27.

[2] Rebenich (1997) focuses on Jerome's literary production and his self-promotion within his works.

[3] See Hritzu (1943), who discusses the similarities between the rhetorical figures used by both Jerome and Cicero.

[4] Vessey (2009), 235. He continues: '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.'

While Jerome's name has become inextricably linked to scholarship, translation, and the Vulgate, he is equally notorious for his trenchant personality.[5] These qualities often overshadow his shrewd nature, which can be inferred by analyzing his careful selection of verbal battles and his networking expertise. Such abilities are often overlooked in favor of focusing on an easily criticized flaw.[6] Indeed, scholars have tended to see limited value in Jerome's polemics, commenting that his polemics lack innovative thinking.[7] But this assessment fails to consider Jerome's ability to tailor his rhetoric socially. In order to bring to light Jerome's talents in these areas, this chapter will develop a social map in which to place Jerome and a selection of his contemporaries. In order for Jerome to have a successful persona he needed an audience as well as an image.[8] This social map will consider a select audience with whom Jerome elects to engage, their social positions, and how he adapts his rhetoric in an attempt to fit the situation. Jerome's opinion of his own status did not necessarily align with how his contemporaries viewed him. The relative status of each man was fluid and changing depending on context and perception. Such a study will present a broad canvas context of Jerome's standing in society. It will subsequently allow me to chart the changes and reactions to the treatises discussed later in this thesis (*Adversus Helvidium*, *Adversus Iovinianum*, and *Contra Vigilantium*) as well as his contemporaneous career changes. How does

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[5] It was not until the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century that Jerome's version of the Bible was formally called the 'Vulgate' (*Biblia Sacra Vulgatae Editionis*). For more see Brown (1992), 87 n.1.

[6] See Chapter 1 on scholarship of the mid twentieth century, which tended to focus on Jerome's disagreeable nature. Ebbeler (2007), 316, comments that in regard to Augustine and Jerome's fractious correspondence 'there is a general tendency to blame Jerome's infamously prickly personality for the difficulties'.

[7] Esler (2002), 1171.

[8] Vessey (2009), 227.

Jerome sit on the map at different points with different people? When does Jerome mask his hostility? When does he engage in invective? And why might this be the case?

As a devout ascetic Jerome had equally committed supporters and enemies. The matter of orthodoxy was hotly contested and Jerome's unwavering position on controversial issues of virginity, baptism, and methods of translation attracted followers and detractors alike. The accusation of heresy was not a charge to be taken lightly. For a parvenu like Jerome, such an allegation had the potential to ruin the career and reputation he had forged for himself through his literary production. How some of these contemporaries react to Jerome undoubtedly influenced how he rhetorically shaped his replies. Thus, this chapter will consider Jerome's relationships with several of his well-known contemporaries: Augustine, Rufinus and, to a lesser extent, Ambrose.

I will begin by examining Jerome's relationship with Augustine, the bishop of Hippo, in tandem with his relationship with Rufinus, his erstwhile friend, later turned adversary. Augustine, despite beginning his correspondence with Jerome as a presbyter, had been baptized by an established bishop, Ambrose, at Easter of 387 and seemed to be enjoying an upward trajectory towards the episcopate while Jerome remained a presbyter.[9] Rufinus

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[9] August. *Ep.* 24.4. See Vessey (2012), xl-xli, for a brief chronology of Augustine's life: he was appointed in 384 at the recommendation of Symmachus as a teacher of rhetoric in Milan (August. *Conf.* 5.12.23); in 386 he converted to Catholicism. Kelly (1975), 217, comments that following Augustine's baptism he was 'a priest clearly marked out for advancement.' Augustine would go on to be ordained as a presbyter of Hippo Regius in 391 and made bishop of Hippo around 395 (Vessey 2012: xli). For Augustine's ordination and appointment to the episcopal office see Possidius *Sancti Augustini Vita* 4.2 and 8. Ebbeler (2012), 63, comments that

and Jerome, however, were in many ways too alike: they enjoyed similar educations in Rome; they followed comparable lifestyles; they associated with ascetic groups in Aquileia; they traveled East – Jerome to Syria (371/372) and finally Bethlehem (386),[10] Rufinus to Egypt (370/371);[11] they endeavored to increase accessibility to Greek theological works in the West; they strove to achieve acknowledgement as ascetic leaders; and each found financial backing from a patroness.[12] Brown calls Rufinus a 'mirror image of Jerome' and Vessey refers to their lives as 'parallel'.[13] These similarities fueled a competition between the two men, as will become evident from analyzing their apologies against one another. I will then analyze the criticism Jerome faced from Augustine and Rufinus before considering Jerome's replies to these men.

Jerome's guarded interactions with Ambrose will be considered last. Descriptions of Ambrose, an established bishop in Milan, depict a man keen on

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Augustine seemed marked as an 'influential voice in African Christianity' following his endorsement by Aurelius, the bishop of Carthage, who allowed him to give the plenary address to the bishops who had gathered at Hippo, despite the fact that Augustine was still only a priest.

[10] See Clark (1992), 20, and Kelly (1975), 46. See Rebenich (2002), 12-20, on the evidence of Jerome's stay in the desert of Chalcis: he raises doubts concerning the image that is put forward by Jerome (e.g. *Ep*. 22.7), and subsequent Hieronymian scholars (Grützmacher, Cavallera, Kelly) that Jerome's short stay was marked by solitude in the wilderness.

[11] Jer. *Ep*. 3.

[12] Gilly (1844), 122. See *Ep*. 3.4 where Jerome writes to Rufinus about their school friend Bonosus. See Kelly (1975), 18-24, on Jerome's schooling at Rome and 25-35, on his time spent in Trier and Aquileia. It was in Aquileia that Rufinus and Jerome met again while living in monastic communities. See *Ep*. 3.3 where Jerome indirectly refers to the sudden break up of their ascetic society in Aquileia, while trying to convince Rufinus to leave Egypt and visit him in Syria. Kelly (1975), 195, comments on the differences in temperament: '[l]earned and greatly respected, Rufinus was less brilliant and versatile than Jerome, but also more cautious, more deliberate, more steadfast. Jerome's was a much more passionate, impulsive, egotistical disposition, sensitive to the point of morbidity.'

[13] Brown (2012), 276, and Vessey (2010), 323.

emphasizing and developing the authority of a bishop.[14] Ambrose's recognized position and authority undoubtedly affected Jerome's interactions with him, as he endeavored to avoid direct confrontation. These three men have been chosen because of their varying relations with Jerome, their different positions in the Christian community, and the issues that arise during their interactions with Jerome. Additionally, the extent of independent information on Jerome's interactions with each of them allows for ample discussion. The respective status of each man, as well as their position on the social map, will be taken into account when analyzing how Jerome altered his replies accordingly. For the purposes of this chapter, I wish to draw out the fact that Jerome felt more at ease verbally combatting an opponent, such as Rufinus, who shared a similar social standing. Augustine and Ambrose, on the other hand, presented a problem. The analysis will obviously not represent a full picture of Jerome's peers but will demonstrate one approach by which we may observe Jerome's social awareness: attentive as he was to the social statuses of his correspondents and critics, Jerome adapted his (at times) abusive rhetoric to reflect the recipient's social role as he perceived it. Furthermore, this will shed light on the manner in which Jerome competed for ecclesiastical and academic authority in his polemics, which will be discussed in Part 2 of this thesis.

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[14] See Paulinus *Vita* 6-9, on Ambrose's gaining the episcopal see, as well as Liebeschuetz (2005), 9-10, and McLynn (1994), 42-52, who attempts to reconstruct the events that led to Ambrose's appointment. McLynn (1994) discusses the social network Ambrose developed within the Christian community at Milan. See also Ramsey (1997), 15-43, on Ambrose's societal maneuvering and interactions with imperial rivals – specifically his relations with Valentinian (26-29), Valentinian II (30-33), and Theodosius (32-37). See also Brown (2012), chapters 7 and 8, which trace the development of Ambrose's growing stature as bishop and his impact on the subsequent church. Liebeschuetz (2005), 43-46, comments on the efficacy and innovation of Ambrose's letters: he concludes that the 'modern view of Ambrose… is based precisely on Ambrose's own publicity' (46).

2. Jerome's Interactions with Rufinus and Augustine

2.1 Jerome and Rufinus

Scholarship has attributed Jerome and Rufinus' falling out to the charges of Origenism that were hurled from both sides.[15] The arguments between the two can be divided up into two phases: the first phase began when Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, accused John, bishop of Jerusalem, of Origenism in the mid 390s. Jerome sided with Epiphanius, Rufinus with John. Jerome was especially irritated following the circulation of his translation of Epiphanius' letter to John of Jerusalem about the works (and errors) of Origen, which he had intended for a private audience.[16] He accused Rufinus of having had one of his followers disseminate the work in an attempt to stir up trouble.[17] The two managed to reconcile their differences temporarily in 397.[18] The second phase, and the one that created irrevocable differences between the two, will be focused on in this chapter. Rufinus chose to translate Origen's *On First Principles*. Without including Jerome's name, Rufinus wrote that he had been inspired by Jerome's original effort in undertaking the work. Rufinus' purpose of forcing Jerome into

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[15] See Gilly (1844), 123, and Clark (1992), 13-17, for brief overviews of the conflict between the two men.

[16] Jerome and Rufinus had already clashed before when the monk Atarbius was sent in early 393 by Epiphanius to ascertain Jerome and Rufinus' support of Origen. Jerome quickly condemned Origen, while Rufinus refused even to see the monk. This caused a rift between the two, which was eventually grudgingly reconciled (Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.18; 3.24). See Kelly (1975), 198.

[17] See *Ep*. 57.1-3, in which Jerome refers to a *pseudomonachus* who stole the private translation Jerome had made for Eusebius of Cremona, who could not read the Greek version of Epiphanius' letter to John. Jerome accuses Rufinus of having instigated the dishonest acquisition of the letter (Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.23).

[18] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.33. Clark (1992), 13-14.

an (unwilling) position of literary patronage, and Jerome's reaction, will be discussed more in detail below. Jerome composed two books against Rufinus, and after Rufinus wrote a letter advising that he drop the argument, Jerome responded by composing a third.[19] Scholars going back to Erasmus have interpreted Jerome's verbal abuse of Rufinus in one of two ways: as an indicator that either Rufinus really was as Jerome described, or that Jerome was a harsh slanderer.[20] But this oversimplifies the relationship between the two men. It is not enough to say that Rufinus may or may not have been guilty of some of these shortcomings, or that Jerome was a slanderer. As we will see, the social rankings of both men are integral to their interactions and rhetoric.

2.2 Jerome and Augustine

Conversely, Augustine and Jerome shared a much less intimate acquaintance: they never met face to face.[21] Their correspondence began in the mid 390s.[22] Augustine was at that point still a presbyter and relatively unknown:[23] while in

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[19] See Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.1; 3.21; 3.41, which references Rufinus' communication to Jerome.

[20] *Certe cum Hieronymus illum [Rufinum] talibus pinxerit coloribus, infantiam, imperitiam ac stuporem hominis ubique ridens et insectans, aut talem Rufinum fateamur oporteat, aut Hieronymum sychophantam faciamus (*Erasmus *Hieronymi Stridonensis Vita* 873-876). See Brady (1992), 44.

[21] Jer. *Ep.* 56.1, 6; 104.2.

[22] See *Ep.* 56. This letter is generally dated to between 394 and 395 by most scholars: see De Bruyne (1932), 234, and Kelly (1975), 217. See White (1990) on the full correspondence between the two men.

[23] See above Chapter 3, n.9 on his ordination. *Ep.* 104.2. See Ebbeler (2007), 317-318, who theorizes what little Jerome may have known about Augustine during the initial stage of their correspondence. She concludes that 'Augustine had a lot to gain by establishing an epistolary relationship with Jerome but Jerome would benefit little, beyond adding Augustine to his roll-call of young men eager to flaunt a relationship with the famous scholar' (318). See Humfress (2012), 324, on Augustine's involvement in various controversies during his career: she includes a useful and extensive dated list of Augustine's polemical treatises against individuals since his

Rome in 383-384, Augustine had gained some modest distinction through his teaching (August. *Conf.* 5.12.22), but even by the time he gained employment in Milan in 384 he was still a fairly insignificant personality. He wrote to Jerome concerning a variety of subjects that will be discussed below. *Ep.* 56, which begins the correspondence, contains much to allow us to deduce that Augustine already viewed Jerome as a man of authority and knowledge.[24] Indeed, by the mid 390s Jerome had already composed a sizeable corpus of work. If we believe his account of himself found in *De viris illustribus*, he had written the *Vita Pauli*, published several books of correspondence to promote asceticism, continued and translated into Latin Eusebius' *Chronicle*, and translated 28 *Homilies of Origen on Jeremiah and Ezekiel* and *Two Homilies on the Song of Songs*. He had also written *Against Helvidius*, composed three books of *Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*, written three books of *Commentaries on the Epistle to the Ephesians*, one book *On the Epistle to Titus*, one book *On the epistle to Philemon*, *Commentaries on Ecclesiastes*, one book of *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, one book *On Places*, one book of *Hebrew Names* and translated into Latin Didymus' *On the Holy Spirit*. Moreover, he had composed 39 *homilies on Luke*, written *The Life of Malchus* and *The Life of the Blessed Hilarion*, translated the New Testament from Greek[25] and the Old Testament from the Hebrew,[26] written two books on

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ordination. Augustine's career as a controversialist does not begin until around 394 – around the same time when he was beginning his correspondence with Jerome.

[24] Augustine writes to recommend several people to Jerome's instruction: brother Profuturus, who is later made bishop (Jer. *Ep.* 104.2) as seen in *Ep.* 28.1; and later Paulus in *Ep.* 67.8. See Ebbeler (2007), 301-302, on letter writing and how it was used among aristocratic Romans to contend for social status and for further bibliography on this topic. See Rees (2007), 149-168, on letters of recommendation.

[25] Jerome's translation of the Gospels is traditionally dated to when he was working in Damasus' clergy (382). Whether Jerome actually completed the whole New Testament seems unlikely: see Kelly (1975), 88-89.

Explanations on Micha, two books *On Habakkuk,* one book *On Zephaniah,* and one book *On Haggai*.[27] Additionally, he had worked with bishop Damasus in Rome while establishing contacts with ascetic and aristocratic Roman women.[28] It was these connections to aristocratic women, however, that had led to Jerome's unwilling departure from Rome.[29] Augustine wrote to Jerome in Bethlehem, initially approaching him with respect and caution; his reasons for doing so will be discussed more in detail below. What is interesting to note is that despite both men attempting to flatter Jerome and remain cordial, and the fact that Augustine's and Rufinus' criticisms of Jerome at times overlap, Jerome responds very differently in both style and content to each man. The interactions with Augustine are restricted to personal letters, while the interactions with Rufinus erupt into polemical apologies. We will start by looking at how Augustine approached Jerome.

3. FRIENDSHIP FRAMEWORK

3.1 Augustine's epistolary friendship with Jerome

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[26] See Kelly (1975), 159 and 161, on Jerome's tendency to exaggerate the depth of his work on the Old Testament at this point in time: '[w]e know that it was not until 405/6 that he reached his goal' (161).

[27] See Jerome's entry on himself: *De viris illustribus* 135, which enumerate his works up until the time of publication, 392/393. See Rebenich (2002), 92-100, for a commentary on and English translation of Jerome's catalogue of famous men and his chapter on himself. Vessey (2010), 318-319, comments on the usefulness of *De Viris Illustribus* in ascertaining Jerome's literary career, but warns us against the 'risk [of] overestimating the ease with which this author took his place in literary history.' Furthermore, Vessey (2010), 322, reminds us that when Jerome published this work Rufinus had yet to achieve literary fame, so he fails to appear in it.

[28] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 2.20.

[29] See *Ep*. 45 and Kelly (1975), 104-115. Jerome's departure from Rome in 385 will be discussed at length in Chapter 5.

Augustine, as mentioned above, had never met Jerome. When he wrote to him initially (Jer. *Ep*. 56), he wanted to begin a discussion with Jerome of a New Testament passage, Galatians 2.11-14. However, as has been convincingly argued by Ebbeler (2012), Augustine's method of befriending Jerome *in absentia* was somewhat innovative: as we shall see, instead of following the traditional conventions of ancient letter writing closely connected to *amicitia*, Augustine attempted to engage Jerome in a 'corrective epistolary' correspondence.[30] He expected his correspondents, including Jerome, to accept his criticism, correct their supposed error, and gratefully write back. As will be discussed below, this deviation from epistolary norms seems to have irritated Jerome. Letters between friends were typically amicable exchanges that avoided overt criticism.[31]

3.2 Epistolary conventions

Epistolary etiquette was well established by this point in antiquity.[32] Letter writing was used as a means of building and continuing friendships, often

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[30] Ebbeler (2012), 10. For more on the conventions of epistolography see Ebbeler (2009; 2010); Matthews (2010), chapter 10; Morello and Morrison (2007), specifically Gibson and Morrison (2007), 1-16; Trapp (2003), 12-26; Malherbe (1988); Thraede (1970); O'Brien (1930). See Cain (2006) and (2009a), 27, on the classical epistolary genre of reproach for not receiving a timely and adequate reply. For an example of such a letter, see Jer. *Ep*. 7.2, where Jerome complains to his friends Chromatius, Jovinus, and Eusebius about receiving a brief letter from them. For earlier examples of the reproach topos see: Cic. *Fam*. 5.6; Plin. *Ep*. 2.11. See Carriker (1999) and Fürst (1999), 145-166, on the conventions of friendship between Augustine and Jerome.

[31] Ebbeler (2012), 8. She comments on the precedents of criticism in ancient letter writing found both in scripture and Stoic philosophy (28-62) and emphasizes that it is not the rebuke found in the letter that is innovative, but rather Augustine's 'desire to establish an ongoing correspondence in which he manages the correction of his correspondent's error' (29).

[32] Gibson and Morello (2012), 76, comment on the 'astonishingly varied genre' of letters and the difficulties involved. Van Waarden (2010), 30, reminds us that for a long time letter-writing was

between important members of the aristocracy, government, or church.[33] As they encouraged social networking, letters provided a means of both gaining and maintaining influence and power.[34] Examples of this can be found in the correspondence of e.g. Libanius, Symmachus, Sidonius Apollinaris, and indeed, within that of Jerome.[35] This form of communication was governed by certain conventions and etiquette: for example, responses were expected to be as prompt as circumstances permitted;[36] the length to suit the importance; and the style of each letter to reflect appropriately the education and social standing of both the correspondent and recipient.[37] To an extent, each side of the correspondence was expected to fulfill a specific role in order for the

a practical part of social interchange, and therefore was not considered a literary genre. For a review of the various categories of letter types see Trapp (2003), 1-47. Ancient theory estimated between 21 and 41 different types of letters: Pseudo-Demetrius of Phaleron approximating the former, Pseudo-Libanius/Pseudo-Proclus the latter (van Waarden 2010: 30 n.69). For epistolary conventions see Sykutris (1931), Thraede (1970), Schröder (2007), and White (2010), 67-86. See van Waarden (2010), 31-34, for essential characteristics of late antique letters, with a focus on Sidonius Apollinaris. Controversial topics were also governed by specific rules of etiquette: Humfress (2012), 326, comments, '[c]ontroversy was a natural part of elite interaction and was governed by particular codes of etiquette in specific contexts.' See Malherbe (1988), 1-6, on epistolary theory: he discusses the gradual progression of epistolary theory into the rhetorical handbooks of e.g. Julius Victor, Pseudo-Demetrius of Phalerum, and Pseudo-Libanius. See Liebeschuetz (2005), 30, on bishops following the conventions of secular correspondence.

[33] Concerning the correspondences of Cicero, Pliny, Symmachus, and Augustine, Ebbeler (2012), 25, comments, 'They were creating texts that, in many instances, demonstrated a keen and sophisticated understanding of epistolary idiom and convention.' See White (2010), 18-29, on the importance attached to face-to face contact in Cicero's correspondence and letters as 'a substitute for live conversation' (21).

[34] See Liebeschuetz (2005), 28-30, on 'Letter-writing in Late Antiquity'.

[35] For studies on the correspondence of Libanius see Liebeschuetz (1972a), 17-23, and Bradbury (2004); Matthews (1974) and Salzman (2011) on Symmachus; Van Waarden (2010) on Sidonius Apollinaris.

[36] See Chapter 3, n.30 above on the topos of reproach.

[37] Salzman (2011), xlvi. See van Waarden (2010), 31, on the connection in Late Antiquity between *amicitia* and literary styles in epistolary correspondences.

communication and friendship to proceed successfully.[38] Ebbeler sums it up: 'it was imperative that each correspondent play by the rules and, especially, perform his prescribed part (e.g. student, teacher, doctor, patient, father, son).'[39] In short, letters that followed the appropriate etiquette were used as a means both to convey and acquire personal influence.

3.3 Authority through letters

Gaining authority through letters could be accomplished in several ways. First, those exchanging letters could develop a relationship, recommend others for positions, and further widen their social circle.[40] But influence could also be gained by publicizing the correspondence in order to prove one's connections, or perhaps, as we will see below, one's superiority. This raises the question of privacy: to what extent were letters meant to be kept private between sender and addressee?[41] As we will see, Jerome became angry because several of Augustine's letters to him were made public before he had received them; to his mind, Augustine had failed to adhere to the established rules of epistolary

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[38] Indeed, Cicero compares a letter exchange to partaking in a conversation with a friend (Cic. *Att*. 8.14). See Gibson and Morello (2012), 139-141, on specific 'markers of friendship' found in the letters of Pliny the Younger. They note that 'aspects of enmity… seem carefully contained in letters to Pliny's closest friends' (140).

[39] Ebbeler (2007), 302.

[40] For more on patronage between, for example, wealthy bishops and their dependents within epistolary correspondences in the West in Late Antiquity see Grey (2004).

[41] Salzman (2004), 81, discusses the practice of the letters of Symmachus being read aloud: '[a]lthough written as private correspondence to specific individuals, each of Symmachus' letters, when received, was read aloud to the members of the household and to friends; typically, the confidential bits of information or controversial views on public affairs would be conveyed by the letter carrier in private, oral conversation.' See Salzman (2004), 81 n.1, for references to relevant letters of Symmachus. Cicero specifically mentions the division of public and private letters (Cic. *Flac.* 37). White (2010), 12-18, discusses the issue of arranging the delivery of private letters within Cicero's correspondence.

etiquette.[42] Allowing someone besides the addressee to have access to the correspondence, in this case, was seemingly unacceptable. Jerome interpreted this as Augustine's attempt to criticize and attack him publicly – an attack made all the worse by the fact that Augustine had failed to follow the rules of the epistolary medium. But while Jerome and Rufinus exchange apologies and Jerome and Augustine letters, there is some overlap between the two genres. Like apologies, letters were very often written with the intention of being widely publicized.[43] Thus, just as apologies were meant to be consumed by the public, letters themselves were not always wholly private. Nonetheless, as will be discussed below, it was precisely Augustine's motive for publishing his letters that Jerome questioned.

3.4 Augustine's motive and method

Augustine's motivation behind this corrective correspondence can be interpreted in two ways: he himself says his criticism is fraternal and he sees himself as acting as God's mouthpiece, responsible for helping other Christians.[44] Furthermore, his correspondence with Jerome could be publicized

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[42] See Jer. *Ep*. 105.1 and 105.5.

[43] Jerome's *Ep*. 84, for example, was circulated by Pammachius. Jerome refers to this letter as *epistola publica* (Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.12). Jerome's *Apologia contra Rufinum*, dedicated to Pammachius and Marcella, was circulated by Jerome's backers in Rome just as his public letters had been disseminated. See Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.3 where Jerome writes directly to Pammachius, demonstrating that the apology was, in essence, a reply to the letter (*Ep*. 83) in which Pammachius urges his friend to respond to Rufinus' criticism. In the beginning of the second century Pliny the Younger published nine books of letters with the intention of self-presentation (Plin. *Ep*. 1.1.1). Cameron (1965) comments on the precedent Pliny set of publishing letters for late antique writers such as Jerome, Ausonius, and Sidonius Apollinaris. See Liebeschuetz (2004), 95-107, on Ambrose's self-presentation in the publication of his letters.

[44] See, for example, Jer. *Ep*. 56.1; 104.5.

in order to set a public example for the greater good: Jerome would be shown to be in need of correction, and Augustine as his valuable peer. If even someone as learned as Jerome could stand to be corrected, others would follow this model of humble Christian correction. But as will be discussed below, Jerome believed that Augustine had begun this corrective correspondence for less honorable reasons, namely self-promotion; his resistance to partake in such a relationship is obvious throughout the first portion of their correspondence. Augustine seems to have anticipated Jerome's reluctance: his initial letter is full of praise for Jerome's efforts of translating the Greek commentaries on scripture into Latin in order to mitigate the criticism.[45] Such warm approval demonstrates to a certain extent the acknowledged power dynamic between him and his correspondent. While he expresses concern about Jerome's use of the Hebrew texts, he moderates his critique, proposing that the issue could be researched more thoroughly.[46] Moreover, Augustine sends along some writings of his own for Jerome to critique, and begs him for sincere and fraternal criticism.[47] Just as he will evaluate Jerome's work and send his honest judgment via letter, he expects Jerome to do the same; the correspondence would ideally be reciprocal. Augustine attempts to make a connection with the older monk, acknowledging Jerome's propensity towards criticism,[48] but maintains that this will not put him

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[45] Jer. *Ep*. 56.2.

[46] *Sed hoc intellegentiae relinquo tuae. Admota enim lectioni diligentiore consideratione multo id fortasse facilius videbis quam ego,* 'but, I leave this [issue] to your intellect. For having applied more diligent consideration to the reading, perhaps you will understand it much more easily than I have' (*Ep*. 56.4).

[47] *Sinceram fraternamque severitatem* (*Ep*. 56.6).

[48] This reputation for being belligerent would follow Jerome around: see Chapter 1 for scholarship on Jerome's confrontational reputation. Jerome is the older and more experienced thus far of the two: the reality of the age gap between Augustine and Jerome will be discussed

off.[49] Augustine foregoes forceful language in the hope that Jerome will accept this criticism amicably, realize that Augustine holds him in high esteem, and respond as a friend and knowledgeable colleague. His deferential tone allows Jerome to remain on top with regard to social order.[50] But the flattery does not change the fact that Augustine was attempting to befriend the slightly senior Jerome in an unconventional manner.[51]

3.5 Rufinus' friendship with Jerome

Rufinus' friendship with Jerome, on the other hand, went back to their days at Rome and Aquileia. Despite (or possibly due to) similarities in their career trajectories, the friendship had started to unravel around 393 when Jerome condemned his former friend for following Origenist doctrine. The two had reconciled by 397, but Rufinus' translations of Origen's *On First Principles* sparked further controversy.[52] Ostensibly, Rufinus had intended to flatter

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later in this chapter in 7.5 and 7.6. It is enough to note here that the gap implied in the correspondence between Augustine and Jerome is not as great as it first appears.

[49] *Quia magis amat obiurgator sanans quam adulator unguens caput*, 'because one who rebukes for the purpose of correcting loves more than a flatterer anointing the head' (*Ep*. 56.6).

[50] *Ep*. 105.5. Ebbeler (2012), 118 n. 48, notes that although Augustine usually addresses Jerome as *frater* and *compresbyterus*, he inverts the hierarchy when he greets him as *dominus* (e.g. *Ep*. 56; 67; 101; 104).

[51] Augustine does not follow the traditional course of action when beginning a new correspondence of soliciting a letter of introduction from a mutual friend (see Cotton 1984: 409-425, on formulas found in Latin and Greek letters of introduction and recommendation). Instead, he tells Jerome that he and brother Alypius are essentially one and the same. Because Alypius and Jerome are already acquainted, there is no need for a letter of introduction since Augustine feels as though he knows Jerome already though his conversations with Alypius (*Ep*. 56.1). For more on Augustine's omission of a letter of recommendation see Ebbeler (2012), 77-78.

[52] See *Ep*. 81.1 and *Apol. contra Ruf*. 3.33, where Jerome refers to his reconciliation with Rufinus. See Kelly (1975), 208-211, on the reconciliation between Jerome, Rufinus, and Bishop John of Jerusalem.

Jerome with his mention of Jerome's translations as precedents for his own.[53] But as will be discussed below, Jerome saw these blandishments in a different light. Rufinus writes in his apology that he had intended to compliment Jerome on his Greek and through his imitation of Jerome's translation of Origen's works; seemingly, he was endeavoring to sustain his friendship with Jerome. Yet, Rufinus reports that Jerome did not take his praise well: *neque, ut ait, verberanti dexteram maxillam offert alteram; sed palpanti et leviganti maxillam, morsum improvisi dentis infigit*, 'it is not, as he says, that he turns the other cheek to one striking the right; but to one stroking and smoothing his cheek, he fixes a bite of his unexpected teeth' (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 1.3). The supposedly friendly compliment of literary imitation set Jerome off to compose several apologies against Rufinus. Rufinus claims that he only wrote highly of Jerome, but Jerome does not reciprocate. Rufinus writes: *cum enim nos in eo et eloquentiam ac studium laudaverimus, in interpretando dumtaxat ex Graecis, et fidei eius numquam derogaverimus, ille in nobis utrumque condemnat*, 'although indeed I had praised him for his eloquence and devotion in his translating precisely from Greek, and I never disparaged his faith, *he* condemns me on both accounts' (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 1.3). In this case, it seems as though the praise had come from the wrong direction for Jerome, who did not want to be grouped together with Rufinus, nor connected to the works of Origen. The two men already shared similar backgrounds; Jerome did not want to be further linked with Rufinus and his Origenist scholarship. Interestingly, Rufinus states that it was not on

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[53] Ruf. *Origenis de principiis, praef.* 1.5-20.

account of any slander but because of his praise and compliments that his former friend turned on him.[54]

4. A LITERARY SLIPSTREAM

4.1 Augustine's ambition

What becomes apparent in both of these encounters is Jerome's sensitivity to his reputation. In a competitive literary arena where orthodoxy was a key concern, social positions, backings, and associations were of crucial importance. While Augustine claims that he is engaging in a corrective epistolary conversation in the hope of assisting his new friend *in absentia*, as well as the greater public, Jerome interpreted Augustine's questioning as an attempt to use him as a stepping-stone towards literary fame.[55]

Indeed, Augustine seems to have been cognizant of the fact that he needed influential backers early in his career.[56] Although writing about a period in his life prior to his conversion, baptism, ordination as presbyter, and eventual consecration as bishop of Hippo, even then Augustine had noted the importance of powerful connections. He reconstructed his thoughts at the time in his *Confessions*:

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[54] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 1.3

[55] *Ep*. 102.2.

[56] Tomlin (2012), 59-60, discusses Augustine's comments in his *Soliloquia* on the status of his desire for wealth, marriage, and high office. Brown (1967a), 195, writes, '[a]ltogether, Augustine started with none of the advantages of a born aristocrat; and he will establish his position, over the course of years, by fighting hard for it.'

> My students keep me busy in my morning hours; what am I to do with the rest? Why do I not do this? But when do I visit my powerful friends, whose support I need? When do I prepare what my students can buy? When do I revive myself by relaxing my mind from the concentration of my worries? (*Conf*. 6.11.18).[57]

At that point patronage was important for the young Augustine who did not yet have the financial or social wherewithal to make a name for himself. His decision to move from Carthage to Rome similarly betrays what Brown calls Augustine's 'careerist' ambitions.[58] Moreover, his acceptance of Symmachus' recommendation to take the position as teacher of rhetoric in Milan, and his subsequent interactions with Ambrose, also indicates that Augustine was ambitious as a young man.[59] By the time Augustine made contact with Jerome he was already established as a presbyter; nonetheless, he remained concerned with maintaining his reputation. His focus, however, had shifted. He was no longer concerned with achieving a secular career but, as is made manifest by his literary output, with becoming an authoritative voice within the Christian community.[60] We see in his *Confessions* his admitted desire for praise, admiration, and acknowledgment of his accomplishments.[61] What Jerome

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[57] *Antemeridianis horis discipuli occupant: ceteris quid facimus? Cur non id agimus? Sed quando salutamus amicos maiores, quorum suffragiis opus habemus? Quando praeparamus quod emant scholastici? Quando reparamus nos ipsos relaxando animo ab intentione curarum?* The conventional dating of Augustine's *Confessions* is to around 397 (Brown 1967a: 161) meaning that this was a few years after he was appointed bishop. This passage, however, refers to a time when Augustine, not yet thirty, was teaching pupils in Milan and still on the lookout for a way to increase his prestige.

[58] Brown (1967a), 57. See *Conf*. 5.8.14.

[59] August. *Conf.* 5.13.23.

[60] Possidius comments that Augustine's works were so numerous that no student would be able to read everything (*Sancti Augustini vita* 18.9). See Brown (1967a), 205-209, on Augustine's adjustment to his 'life of authority' following his ordination as a priest and then as bishop.

[61] August. *Conf.* 10.36.59-10.37.61.

viewed as ambition may have been Augustine's assertion of his own Christian authority.

4.2 Augustine and the palinode

However, while Jerome insinuates that he suspects Augustine to be a social climber, scholars have failed to reach a consensus on exactly what angered Jerome so much about Augustine's inquiries.[62] Notably, it has been pointed out that the rhetoric of both men has been overlooked.[63] Jamieson has suggested that specifically it was Augustine's unfortunate request that Jerome sing a palinode in *Ep.* 67 that provoked Jerome's hostility.[64] She bases this on 'the tenacity with which Jerome returns to the requested palinode'. [65] She convincingly argues that there was a connection between Jerome's response and his very recent dispute with Rufinus: Jerome had used the same phrase calling for a palinode in his first apology against his erstwhile friend in 401.[66] Jerome urges Rufinus either to deny that he ever translated a work that supported the beliefs of Origen, or to sing a palinode, as he is 'not of such fame or authority that [he] would be ashamed to have been wrong.'[67] Contextually, the phrase indicates Jerome's supposed intellectual and societal superiority over Rufinus and emphasizes Rufinus' insignificant reputation.[68] Jerome would then receive

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[62] *Ep.* 102.2; 105.2. Wiesen (1964), 235-236, attributes Jerome's anger only to the fact that Augustine was questioning his scholarship. For more see Jamieson (1987), 355.

[63] Jamieson (1987), 355.

[64] Jamieson (1987), 355-367. See also Fürst (1999), 132-133.

[65] Jamieson (1987), 356.

[66] See Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.10.

[67] *Nec erubescas de commutatione sententiae: non es tantae auctoritatis et famae ut errasse te pudeat* (Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.10).

[68] Jamieson (1987), 362.

Augustine's *Ep.* 67 using the same phrase around 402.[69] Jamieson points out that: 'Jerome assumed from the call for a palinode that Augustine thought himself intellectually superior and considered Jerome's reputation negligible.'[70] It is Jerome's desire that the Christian community recognize both his orthodoxy and his scholarly authority that prompted his hostile reactions. We can read Jerome's reaction two different ways: either, as Jamieson suggests, Jerome was angered because he saw Augustine as assuming superiority over him while calling for a palinode; or, Jerome was irritated that Augustine would dare to use Jerome's intellectual status in order to further his own.[71]

4.3 Rufinus and Jerome's literary slipstream

A similar phenomenon of an anticipated literary slipstream occurs in the case of Rufinus. Rufinus' prologue to his Latin translation of Origen's *On First Principles* is riddled with allusions to Jerome's translations of Origen's works. Rufinus never states outright to whom he is referring; he only ever mentions his model's patron, Damasus, former works, elegant writing, and stylistic brilliance.[72] But this is enough information for his audience to deduce exactly

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[69] *Quare arripe, obsecro te, ingenuam et vere Christianam cum caritate severitatem ad illus opus corrigendum atque emendandum et παλινῳδίαν, ut dicitur, cane* (*Ep.* 67.7). Jamieson (1987), 359.

[70] Jamieson (1987), 362.

[71] Ebbeler (2007), 318, follows O'Donnell (1991), 14, in claiming that Jerome was a famous scholar at this point. However, we should be careful when studying Jerome's status, as much of what we know about his prestige stems from his own writings and self-promotion. See Cain (2009a), 33-34, in particular on Jerome's embellishment of his status, especially during his time working for Damasus. Cain (2009b), 47, also emphasizes that 'in his own lifetime, Jerome never came close to enjoying the widespread acclaim that accrued to him posthumously.'

[72] *Scio quamplurimos fratrum, scientiae Scripturarum desiderio provocatos, poposcisse ab aliquantis eruditis viris et Graecarum litterarum peritis ut Origenem Romanum facerent et Latinis auribus eum donarent. In quod etiam frater et collega noster ab episcopo Damaso deprecatus, cum homilias duas de*

whom he means. Considering that the orthodoxy of Origen's works had already been called into question, one must wonder why Rufinus chose to translate *On First Principles.*[73] It seems plausible that Rufinus recognized Jerome's intellectual clout and hoped that making an unmistakable reference to Jerome in his preface would lend some prestige. If he presented his work in such a way that it appeared he was continuing the learned exegete's work, then perhaps it would be more positively received.[74] One could make the case that both Rufinus and Augustine seemed to be trying to follow in Jerome's social and literary slipstream.

4.4 Avoidance of rivalry

Rufinus and Augustine largely tried to remain on an even keel with Jerome; each one contacted Jerome within the context of friendship, either former or anticipated. Neither one was looking for a verbal sparring match. Allowing for obvious differences in genre, both Rufinus and Augustine wrote to Jerome from a fraternal standpoint. Augustine was determined to engage Jerome in a corrective epistolary correspondence that presented Jerome with an opportunity to revise his scriptural interpretation for the benefit of not only himself, but also

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Cantico Canticorum in Latinum transtulisset ex Graeco, ita in illo opere ornate magnificeque praefatus est, ut cuiuis legendi Origenem et avidissime perquirendi desiderium commoveret… Nos ergo rem ab illo quidem coeptam sequimur et probatam, sed non aequis eloquentiae viribus tanti viri ornare possumus dicta (Ruf. *Origenis de principiis, praef.* 1.1-20).

[73] Origen's works were notoriously controversial. Jerome writes highly of Origen, but admits that he has been condemned by many (*Ep.* 33.5). See Kelly (1975), 233-234, on Rufinus' motivation for including this reference to Jerome in his preface. Rufinus never justifies why he published his translation of *On First Principles* and included Jerome in the prologue.

[74] See Kelly (1975), 232-233, who does, however, acknowledge that it seems odd that Rufinus would neglect to include some mention of Jerome's adamant anti-Origenist views following Atarbius' visit at the behest of Epiphanius (See Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.33).

the wider Christian community. Rufinus stresses his surprise at Jerome's response to his admiration and imitation of his works on Origen.[75] From Rufinus' standpoint, his old friend should have welcomed such enthusiastic praise. He further comments on Jerome's inability to stifle his abusive tendencies.[76] Rhetorically, this presents Jerome with the opportunity to prove Rufinus wrong. When discussing Jerome's responses later in this chapter, we will see that this was not to be.

Despite the fact that both men use this framework of friendship and arguably were aspiring to use Jerome's position to further their own reputation, their interactions were also laden with criticism. It is to the critical content of these interactions that we will turn shortly. Augustine called into question Jerome's use of Hebrew and challenged his interpretation of Galatians 2.11-14. Following Jerome's condemnation of his translation endeavors, Rufinus responded casting doubt on Jerome's suitability as a teacher of religion and questioning both his translation abilities and his use of Hebrew. While at times the details of the criticism overlap, Jerome reacts differently to each man. I will first examine the details of the criticism before analyzing Jerome's responses. Throughout, it should be borne in mind that both men were aiming to maintain a friendship with Jerome.

5. AUGUSTINE'S CRITICISM

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[75] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 1.14.

[76] *Hoc ergo eloquentiae genus ab ipso requiratur, qui ad culpandum seu vituperandum levi rumusculo commotus, velut quis censor accurrit* (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier*. 1.3).

5.1 A complicated correspondence

Before beginning discussion of Augustine's critical comments aimed at Jerome, some preliminary details explaining the complicated nature of the correspondence between the two men will be useful. Communication between Augustine and Jerome suffered due to unreliable carriers, delayed responses, and letters crossing paths. Jerome's correspondence with Augustine is generally divided into two phases: the first phase dates from 394/395-405 and includes six extant letters from Augustine and five from Jerome. The second phase dates from 415-419; three extant letters survive from Augustine, five from Jerome.[77] The following will briefly outline the paths of the letters that concern us in the first phase of Jerome and Augustine's correspondence. The relevant content of the letters will be discussed further below.

Jerome and Augustine's Relevant Correspondence (394/395-405)

Letter no. (Jerome Edition)	Estimated date of composition	Direction of correspondence	Estimated date of arrival	Response to letter / notes
Ep. 56	394/395	Augustine to Jerome	*c.* 402	
N/A	395-397	Augustine to Jerome		Kelly (1975: 218) theorizes that a postscript on a letter, possibly of Alypius, must have reached Jerome.
N/A	395-397	Jerome to Augustine		Kelly (1975: 219) theorizes that Jerome jotted off a quick reply to Augustine on the controversial aspects of

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[77] The table below presents a chronological outline of the exchange of letters between Augustine and Jerome. To avoid confusion, I have throughout referred to all the letters as they appear in Jerome's correspondence. Ebbeler (2012), 19, reminds us that 'the dates assigned to Augustine's letters are often less secure than we might like.'

				Origen's teachings.
Ep. 67	*c.* 397/398	Augustine to Jerome	*c.* 402	
Ep. 101	*c.* 402	Augustine to Jerome	402/403	
Ep. 102	*c.* 402/403	Jerome to Augustine	End of 403	(Quick) reply to 101 and 67.
Ep. 103	Difficult to date.	Jerome to Augustine		
Ep. 104	403	Augustine to Jerome	Late 404 [written before A. received 102]	
Ep. 105	End of 403	Jerome to Augustine	404 [written before J. received 104; arrived after A. wrote 110 (404) or 405?]	Reply to 67, 101 and (a lost letter?)
Ep. 110	404	Augustine to Jerome	J. received after sending 112 (404).	Reply to 102
Ep. 111	404	Augustine to Praesidius	?	
Ep. 112	Close to 10 years after *Ep.* 56 - 404	Jerome to Augustine	405?	Reply to 56, 67, and 104
Ep. 115	Late 404 or early 405	Jerome to Augustine	405?	Reply to 110
Ep. 116	405	Augustine to Jerome	?	Reply to 105, 112, and 115

Augustine's first letter to Jerome (*Ep.* 56) dates to between 394-395.[78] It contains a mixture of criticism and flattery that will be discussed below. An African priest, Profuturus, had been entrusted by Augustine to carry the letter, but found himself busy after being ordained bishop, and then died shortly afterwards (*Ep.* 67.8; 104.2). Consequently, this first letter did not arrive into

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[78] De Bruyne (1932), 234, dates *Ep.* 56 to between 393-395, Kelly (1975), 217, to 394/395. See Ebbeler (2012), 80, who argues that Augustine realized that the letter had never made it to Jerome, as he was present at Profuturus' ordination.

Jerome's hands until 402, almost ten years after its composition date. It was delivered along with Augustine's next letter *Ep. 67* – written around 397/8 – which, similarly had difficulties finding its recipient. Augustine's appointed letter carrier, Paulus, failed to reach Jerome at Bethlehem[79] and according to rumors the letter spent nearly five years circulating around Rome, until a priest named Sisinnius delivered it to Jerome in around 402.[80] It should be noted that from *Ep. 67* onwards, Augustine was writing to Jerome as the newly ordained bishop of Hippo.[81]

It seems likely that after sending the first letter (*Ep.* 56), Augustine, eager for some contact with Jerome, who had yet to reply, also sent a postscript on another's letter.[82] This addendum questioned Jerome about the controversial aspects of Origen's teachings. Jerome, in turn, jotted off a quick reply to Augustine. While both these letters are now lost, references to this brief exchange can be found in the subsequent letter (*Ep. 67*).

For the next four years there was silence between the two men. Finally, tired of waiting, Augustine wrote to Jerome again in 402 or 403 (*Ep.* 101).[83] He had learned that Jerome had received *Ep. 67* and that rumors were circulating

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[79] Kelly (1975), 219-220.

[80] *Ep.* 101.2; 105.1.

[81] See Chapter 3, n. 9. *Ep.* 56, which will be discussed at length in this section is the only letter that Augustine sends to Jerome as a presbyter.

[82] Kelly (1975), 218-219, theorizes that Augustine attached a note to a letter from Alypius, one of his friends from North Africa, who had stayed with Jerome in Bethlehem (*Ep.* 56.1).

[83] Kelly (1975), 264 n.24, suggests 'late 402 or early 403' and comments that it 'must date from after 401, for Augustine sends regards to Jerome's brother Paulinian, who returned from Stridon to Bethlehem in that year'. De Bruyne (1932), 237, argues for *c.* 402.

that he had written a book against Jerome and sent it to Rome.[84] Augustine was eager to correct this gossip.[85] *Ep.* 101 made it successfully to Jerome who responded quickly with *Ep.* 102, which while polite displayed Jerome's irritation.[86]

Before Augustine received Jerome's *Ep.* 102, he wrote again (*Ep.* 104) in 403.[87] *Ep.* 104 was delivered by Cyprian in late 404 and included copies of several of Augustine's previous missives to Jerome, as he was still unsure exactly what information Jerome had in front of him.[88] However, letters would again cross paths: towards the end of 403, before Jerome received *Ep.* 104, he replied somewhat harshly to Augustine's comments with *Ep.* 105.[89] At this point, Jerome had received copies of *Ep.* 67 and 101 and had been informed (via Augustine's non-extant letter) about the delays of *Ep.* 56 and the original *Ep.* 67.[90]

Again letters crossed paths: Jerome's *Ep.* 105 did not arrive in Augustine's hands before he wrote back with *Ep.* 110. In this letter, sent in 404,[91] Augustine attempted to assuage Jerome's irritated response (*Ep.* 102) to the criticism included in his previous letters. Additionally, he sent a copy of the

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[84] *Ep.* 101.2.
[85] *Ep.* 101.2.
[86] Kelly (1975), 264, dates *Ep.* 102 to 402/403, De Bruyne (1932), 237, to *c.* 402. Jerome includes his *Apologia contra Rufinum* 3, which dates to *c.* 402 (Kelly 1975: 265). See discussion of Jerome's reply Chapter 3, 7.1 and 7.2.
[87] Kelly (1975), 266, and De Bruyne (1932), 239.
[88] Kelly (1975), 268-269. The attached letters are not clearly identified. Kelly (1975), 266 n.30, hypothesizes *Ep.* 56 and 67, or *Ep.* 56, 67, and possibly 101 or an additional lost letter.
[89] De Bruyne (1932), 239.
[90] Kelly (1975), 267.
[91] De Bruyne (1932), 240.

letter to the Numidian bishop Praesidius (*Ep.* 111),[92] asking to be informed if there was anything in his letters worthy of Jerome's hostile replies. If there was, Augustine stated he would be happy to apologize. In order that the bishop would understand the context, he also included *Ep.* 67 and 102.[93] He asked Praesidius to forward the current letter to Jerome as long as he found it inoffensive.

As mentioned above, Cyprian finally delivered Augustine's *Ep.* 104 in late 404. Jerome replied (supposedly within three days) with an extensive letter (*Ep.* 112)[94] in which he indignantly addressed the issues and criticisms found in Augustine's letters included with *Ep.* 104 (perhaps *Ep.* 56, 67, and 104). Jerome seems to have received Augustine's mollifying *Ep.* 110 *after* sending off *Ep.* 112. Somewhat apologetic, in 405 he responded with *Ep.* 115,[95] which while written in a more conciliatory tone, nevertheless placed the blame upon Augustine whom Jerome saw as having provoked the argument.[96]

The last letter of this phase dates to 405.[97] Augustine, having finally received all of Jerome's letters (his acerbic *Ep.* 105 and *Ep.* 112, and calmer *Ep.* 115), replied with *Ep.* 116. In this letter, Augustine respectfully recapitulates his stance on Hebrew scholarship vs. the use of the Septuagint, and the question of

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[92] See Kelly (1975), 268 n.35, on the identity of Praesidius.

[93] Kelly (1975), 268.

[94] De Bruyne (1932), 240. Kelly (1975), 269 n.36. See *Ep.* 112.1 where Jerome comments that he has a mere three days to answer Augustine's many questions.

[95] De Bruyne (1932), 241.

[96] *Et si culpa est respondisse – quaeso, ut patienter audias - multo maior est provocavisse* (*Ep.* 115.1).

[97] De Bruyne (1932), 241, dates *Ep.* 116 to 405.

Paul's rebuke to Peter in Galatians 2.11-14. *Ep.* 116 would end this phase of their correspondence.

Augustine remained determined to engage Jerome in correspondence despite the many obstacles that stood in his way. Not only were his carriers occasionally unreliable or slow, but Jerome himself also proved to be difficult to engage as he delayed replying and denied that certain critical missives originated from Augustine.[98] The inaccessibility of his correspondent, however, did nothing to dissuade Augustine from doggedly pursuing the theological and scholarly issues he had in mind. We will now turn to these issues and to the criticism that he showered on Jerome.

5.2 *Ep.* 56: Augustine on Jerome's scholarship

Although Augustine's initial letter was congenial and full of hope that he and Jerome might become exegetical correspondents, it also was critical and resolute in tone.[99] As mentioned above, his criticisms partially centered on Jerome's use of Hebrew: Augustine appeals to Jerome to cease using the Hebrew when translating the Old Testament and instead consult the Septuagint, which Augustine believes is the utmost authority.[100] Augustine carefully argues that it seems highly unlikely that Jerome should have found anything new in the

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[98] See Chapter 3, 7.1.

[99] Kelly (1975), 219, comments that this was 'not the sort of letter Jerome was likely to read with relish.' Humfress (2012), 324, correctly argues that the difference between Jerome and Augustine's use of rhetoric 'lies … in Augustine's remarkable determination to portray himself as a man who never seeks out trouble, but labors under a duty to respond when trouble comes looking for him.'

[100] *Ep*. 56.2. See Scheck (2010), 34-37, on Augustine's reaction to Jerome's interpretation.

Hebrew manuscripts that could have eluded so many expert translators.[101] Additionally, he raises the point that because the scriptures can be obscure in meaning, it is possible that even Jerome himself might have made a mistake.[102]

Augustine's other main criticism focuses on the issue of Paul's rebuke to Peter in the Epistle to the Galatians.[103] Paul criticized Peter for acting in accordance with Mosaic Law. Jerome believed that because the apostles had encountered problems diverging from Mosaic Law, they were pretending to have a difference of opinion in order to showcase that such law was not required for salvation. Augustine questions whether or not it was possible for an apostle to partake in deliberate deception. This is out of the question for him, as the entire integrity of the Bible would be called into question once someone accepted that any part of scripture was fabricated.[104] So while Augustine's initial letter was friendly, its intention was also clear: to clarify several issues about which Augustine believed Jerome was incorrect. This critical approach was bound to upset the hierarchy to which Jerome believed both men ought to adhere. Especially considering their relative positions in the Christian community at the onset of the correspondence – Augustine a relative unknown, and Jerome a published exegete – Jerome arguably believed that Augustine should be following epistolary etiquette more closely.[105]

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[101] *Satis autem nequeo mirari, si aliquid adhuc in Hebraeis exemplaribus invenitur, quod tot interpretes illius linguae peritissimos fugerit* (*Ep*. 56.2).

[102] *Si enim obscura sunt, te quoque in eis falli posse creditur* (*Ep*. 56.2).

[103] See Scheck (2010), 31-34, on Jerome's interpretation of Paul's rebuke of Peter.

[104] *Ep*. 56.3.

[105] See Humfress (2012), 323, on the importance of eloquence as a 'display of elite socio-cultural status'.

5.3 A scriptural precedent

Moreover, Augustine's decision to focus on the question of Galatians 2.11-14 is noteworthy as the example of Paul's rebuke of Peter parallels the situation between Augustine and Jerome. Such a scriptural precedent lent authority to Augustine's notion of a corrective epistolary exchange in which hierarchy was inconsequential.[106] Augustine hoped that Jerome would accept the analogous case and, like Peter, respond humbly.[107] Simply by using this comparable example, however, and indicating that Peter corresponds to Jerome, and Paul to himself, Augustine politely acknowledges that Jerome is the figure endowed with more authority. Augustine's tone is also an acknowledgement of their social relationship: by addressing him in this deferential manner, Augustine initially reaffirms their assumed relationship.[108] Based on age and literary production, Jerome is the more senior figure in their correspondence. Augustine does not want Jerome to think that he is challenging him in the hopes of competition or social advancement. In a later letter, he reassures Jerome that he is not attempting to usurp his exegetical prowess and pedagogical authority: 'nor indeed should you be taught by me!', *neque enim a me docendus es* (*Ep*. 67.4).

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[106] See Ebbeler (2012), 6.

[107] See Plumer (2003), 145. Augustine in his *Commentary on the Letter to the Galatians* 7-13 writes that it is out of 'steadfastness', 'love', and concern for the entire flock that Peter was willing to face such a rebuke from the younger Paul. *Nam erat obiurgatore suo ipse, qui obiurgabatur, mirabilior et ad imitandum difficilior. Facilius est enim uidere, quid in alio corrigas, atque id uituperando uel obiurgando corrigere quam uidere, quid in te corrigendum sit, libenterque corrigi uel per teipsum nedum per alium, adde posteriorem, adde coram omnibus*, 'for he who was reproached was himself more astonishing and harder to imitate than his reproacher. Indeed, it is easier to see what you would correct in another, and by blaming or scolding to correct, than to see what should be corrected in yourself, and willingly be corrected even by yourself, still less by another, moreover an inferior and moreover before all!' (August. *Epistulae ad Galatas expositio* 10).

[108] See, for example, Jer. *Ep*. 67.3.

Instead, he acknowledges Jerome's usual keen insight into scripture and wonders by what deceit Jerome could have been led astray.[109] We will see, however, that this power dynamic changes.

5.4 *Ep. 67* and *Ep.* 104: Augustine's continuing criticisms

In the following letters (*Ep.* 67 and 104), Augustine's positive comments to Jerome are mixed with criticism on theological and scholarly matters. Augustine once more raises the issue of Jerome's interpretation of Paul's epistle to the Galatians (*Ep.* 67.3). Augustine strongly implores him to recant his views: *quare arripe, obsecro te, ingenuam et vere Christianam cum caritate severitatem ad illud opus corrigendum atque emendandum et* παλινῳδίαν, *ut dicitur, cane,* 'therefore, I beg you, seize your noble critical sense, truly Christian in its charity, correct and emend that work, and sing a palinode, as they say' (*Ep.* 67.7). Thus, the proposition is bluntly put to Jerome to retract his (mistaken) views. This unfortunately phrased exhortation, as mentioned above, has been considered central to Jerome's irritation. Furthermore, although he thanks Jerome for his brief letter, which addressed the topic of Origen, Augustine pointedly informs him that he has taught him nothing new: *de Origene autem quod rescribere dignatus es, iam sciebam non tantum in ecclesiasticis litteris sed in omnibus recta et vera, quae invenerimus, adprobare atque laudare, falsa vero et prava inprobare atque reprehendere,* 'moreover, that which you condescended to reply back to me concerning Origen – I already knew to commend those things, which we find virtuous and true, and to reject and to censure those things truly false and perverse, not only in

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[109] *Ep.* 67.4.

ecclesiastical writings, but in all writings' (*Ep.* 67.9). Augustine is starting to find Jerome's lack of engagement with the issues that he wishes to discuss tiresome. He continually refers to Jerome as one he can learn from, but Jerome's responses thus far do little to earn Augustine's praise. What he is truly interested in is pinning down exactly which parts of Origen's teachings Jerome finds heretical: *sed illud de prudentia doctrinaque tua desiderabam et adhuc desidero, ut nota nobis facias ea ipsa eius errata, quibus a fide veritatis ille vir tantus recessisse convincitur,* 'but that which I desired from your prudence and learning, and which I *still* desire, is that you make known to us his actual errors, on what topics that great man is clearly proven to have moved away from the belief in the truth' (*Ep.* 67.9). As we do not have Augustine's original question or Jerome's brief reply it is impossible to say to what extent Jerome avoided the question, but Augustine seems to have begun to realize that he would not get clear-cut answers from Jerome.

Augustine's fourth extant letter to Jerome (*Ep.* 104) demonstrates the main issues for which Augustine has taken Jerome to task: namely, his translation methods and use of Hebrew when translating the book of Job.[110] Augustine points out there already exists a translation from the Greek with useful notations which call the reader's attention to the differences between the Greek and the Hebrew; Jerome's new translation seems to lack this exactness: *non eadem verborum fides occurrit* (*Ep.* 104.3).[111] Augustine expresses his

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[110] As Origen had supported the practice of consulting the Hebrew version of the Old Testament, such practices could be easily linked to charges of Origenism. See Jer. *Hebraicae quaestiones in libro Geneseos, praef.* 1.22-2.15 for Jerome's response to Origen's use of Hebrew.

[111] See Hennings' (1994) examination of the translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew (131-217).

confusion at Jerome's inconsistent scholarship and further raises the potential problem that Jerome's insistence on consulting the Hebrew manuscripts could result in a division in the church between the Latin and Greek versions of the Bible, as the Greek church would continue using the Septuagint (*Ep.* 104.4). Furthermore, Augustine recounts to Jerome an incident in which a bishop in Tripoli, having consulted Jerome's version of Jonah, used a term unfamiliar to his audience: instead of using the word for 'gourd' which was familiar to the audience, Jerome used the word for 'ivy'. The congregation broke out into such chaos that the bishop was forced to correct the word as if it were a mistranslation, in order to restore order. Augustine concludes: *unde etiam nobis videtur aliquando te quoque in nonnullis falli potuisse,* 'from this it seems to me that even you sometimes could have been mistaken on some points' (*Ep.* 104.5). Moreover, this incident enforces Augustine's point that he is writing to Jerome in the hopes that Jerome's realization of his error will be for the greater good. Augustine simply cannot understand why Jerome persists in promoting the Hebrew version; his time would be better spent undertaking a Latin translation of the Greek Septuagint especially since there are so many differing versions of the Latin text circulating. Augustine comments that the Septuagint commands authority and is, in fact, the one that the apostles used, and has been commended by Jerome himself.[112] Augustine concludes his letter by once again begging Jerome for an answer. It is Jerome's inconsistent scholarship and unwavering regard for the use of Hebrew that Augustine finds most worrying. Similar concerns appear in Rufinus' apology against Jerome.

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[112] *Neque enim parvum pondus habet illa, quae sic meruit diffamari et qua usos apostolos non solum res ipsa indicat, sed etiam te adtestatum esse memini* (*Ep.* 104.6).

6.1 Similarities to Augustine's Critiques

Despite Rufinus' and Augustine's compositions falling into two different genres – the former writing an apology against Jerome, and the latter letters – they fault Jerome for similar failings: Rufinus' criticisms focus on Jerome's misuse of Hebrew as well as his propensity to use 'pagan' classics.[113] Furthermore, Rufinus attempts to illustrate Jerome's capricious nature when it comes to Origen's works; such an inconsistent attitude demonstrates, in Rufinus' opinion, unsuitability as a spiritual instructor. Some discussion here will call attention to the similarities of Augustine's and Rufinus' critiques of Jerome's work.

6.2 Rufinus on Jerome's use of Hebrew

Just as Augustine expresses concern about Jerome's use of Hebrew, Rufinus is eager to draw attention to that aspect of Jerome's scholarship as a major shortcoming. He tells us that Jerome ridiculed his apparent lack of distinguished teachers but he himself is puzzled at why Jerome would choose to pull at that thread.[114] Rufinus defends himself by emphasizing his humility, and informing his readers that this accusation is groundless. He writes that although he has been in the company of many distinguished teachers, he has

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[113] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.36; 2.4-8. Chadwick (2001), 444, points out that 'there were issues in which Rufinus was echoing criticism widespread in the west. It was uncomfortable that Jerome was critical of the Septuagint and regarded the Hebrew text as primary and superior'. Others criticized Jerome on these practices, but it is to Rufinus that he responds publicly.

[114] Ruf. *Apol contra Hier.* 2.15.

'nothing worthy of either their instruction or their teaching' (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.15). [115] Rufinus then enumerates several of his teachers before commenting that none of these holy Christian men are the type of teacher that Jerome has in mind. Rather, Jerome studies with the likes of his Hebrew teacher, Baranina, whom Rufinus refers to as Barabbas. Rufinus comments scornfully, *ignosce mihi pro hoc quod malui ante inperitus et indoctus audire, quam Barrabae discipulus dici*, 'forgive me for this, that I prefer to listen, ignorant and unlearned, rather than be declared the student of Barabbas' (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.15). Rufinus goes even further, contrasting Jerome's adherence to Baranina to his own devotion to Jesus: *conviciis eius et iniuriis non respondeamus; lacerationibus eius… non obviemus. Ad haec enim Iesus noster, non Barrabas magister silere nos docuit*, 'let me not answer his insults and abuse, nor will I meet his searing comments. For our Jesus, not the teacher Barrabas, taught us to be silent in [matters like] this' (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.16). Rufinus states that he will not rise to the occasion and engage in abuse as Jerome does; however, he cannot refrain from pointing out Jerome's connection to a Jewish teacher. Furthermore, Rufinus condemns Jerome's tendency of privileging the Hebrew bible over the Septuagint. He comments on Jerome's industrious efforts to circulate his translations around Christian communities and wonders how they should react when presented with translations that are supposed to be 'truer' (*veriora*) than those recommended by the apostles.[116] Rufinus is incredulous that Jerome could assume sway over the seventy translators; their version is surely worthy of

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[115] *Et miror hoc eum dicere voluisse, cum maiorem in me et veriorem haberet obtrectandi materiam, quod magis inter multos et praeclaros magistros diu moratus, nihil dignum eorum vel magisterio vel institutionibus habeam.*

[116] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.36.

greater authority than a translation of one man influenced by Baranina.[117]
Towards the conclusion of the second book of his apology against Jerome,
Rufinus emphasizes Jerome's use of Hebrew and relationship to Baranina as
being integral to his predilection towards censure as well as his contentious
attitude towards fellow Christians.[118] Rufinus accuses Jerome of inflicting brands
upon Christians (*notas infligere Christianis*), writing impious things about every
rank of Christian (*de omni Christianorum ordine… nefanda conscribere*), disturbing
the peace (*turbare pacem nostrum*), and creating a scandal in the church (*scandala
Ecclesiae generare*).[119]

Jerome's adherence to Hebrew originals in his translations opens him up
to further criticism from Rufinus. Just as Augustine raised the issue of Jerome's
translation of a word found in Jonah, Rufinus brings up the same error. He
sarcastically suggests that burial epitaphs should be changed so that everyone
knows that Jonah sat in the shade of an ivy plant (*hederae*) instead of a gourd
(*cucurbitae*).[120] Jerome, a couple of years later would defend this translation in
response to Augustine's criticism (Jer. *Ep*. 112).[121] He argues that the translation
stems from the Hebrew manuscript; had he used the word for 'gourd' he would
have strayed from the Hebrew text. While the Septuagint used the word for
'gourd', other versions used the word for 'ivy.' Both plants grow in similar
manner, and both words occur in translations. Jerome believed his choice was
consistent keeping in mind his adherence to the Hebrew (*Ep*. 112.22). For

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[117] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier*. 2.37.
[118] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier*. 2.41.
[119] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier*. 2.41.
[120] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier*. 2.39.
[121] *Ep*. 112 dates to around 404. See Chapter 3, n. 94.

Rufinus and Augustine, Jerome's use of the Hebrew created a break with the traditional use found in the Septuagint. And as Augustine stated, this could bring about further divisions in the church.[122]

6.3 Rufinus on Jerome's inconsistency

While Jerome displayed consistency in his loyalty to the Hebrew texts, Rufinus found him inconsistent on several other matters: for Rufinus, Jerome's scholarly fluctuations were the most frustrating of his shortcomings. Because Rufinus has endeavored to follow in Jerome's literary slipstream with his translation of *On First Principles*, he is vexed that Jerome is now distancing himself from Origen's works. As Rufinus envisions himself as a successor in the line of scholars following Origen, he argues that the blame ought to begin with the origin of the error, in this case, Jerome: *si hinc me aliqui culpandum putat, quare omnino aliquid de Origene interpretatus sum, si hoc culpatur, ego in hoc opere postremus sum, et necesse est ut culpa a primis incipiat*, 'if anyone thinks that I should be blamed for this – that I have indeed translated something of Origen's – if this is to be condemned – I am the last in this work, and it is necessary that the blame should start with the first' (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.32). Not only does Jerome waver on the topic of Origen depending on the ongoing controversies, but according to Rufinus, he also uses secular literary allusions whenever he can despite his vow not to.[123] Moreover, he also insists that he has read works that, according to Rufinus, do not even exist.[124] Enumeration of such authors is meant to increase

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[122] *Ep.* 104.4.
[123] *Ep.* 22.30.
[124] I.e. Pythagoras (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.7).

Jerome's prestige, but fails miserably in Rufinus' estimation, as he considers it a smoke and mirrors act.[125] Such laughable claims and inconsistencies further illustrate Jerome's erratic and unreliable scholarship and construct an unbecoming portrait of a spiritual instructor.[126]

6.4 Rufinus on Jerome's competitive nature

Despite claiming that he will avoid personal attacks, Rufinus comments on Jerome's disposition.[127] In Rufinus' opinion, his former friend uses his rhetorical skills honed at school to strengthen his case and abuse, but there is no concern for truth or faith, no thought of religion or judgment.[128] It is rivalry, according to Rufinus, that motivates Jerome: *sed sola male loquendi ac lacerandi fratres exercita libido versatur in lingua, sola humana in corde contentio, sola invidia et livor in mente*, 'but only the practiced desire of speaking with ill intent and of slandering his brothers lives in his tongue, only competition with men in his heart, only spite and envy in his mind' (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.33). This is the Jerome that Rufinus wishes to expose to the Christian community: a polemical rhetorician who is continually on the lookout for a way to further his reputation. Rufinus comments towards the end: *evidenter ostendimus ex more huic esse ut bonis omnibus deroget*, 'I have revealed clearly that it is habitual for this fellow to disparage all good men' (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.47). Moreover, he claims that Jerome looks

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[125] *Iam vero Chrysippum et Aristiden, Empedoclen et cetera Graecorum auctorum nomina, ut doctus videatur et plurimae lectionis, tanquam fumos et nebulas lectoribus spargit* (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.7).

[126] For sarcastic mentions of Jerome as a teacher or model: Rufinus addresses Jerome *o magister* (*Apol. contra Hier.* 1.22); Jerome is referred to as a *vere bonus magister* (1.32); Rufinus scornfully refers to Jerome as an example (*forma et exemplum*), whose actions do not correspond with such a title (2.41).

[127] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.16.

[128] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.33.

at these opportunities for detraction as a way to promote himself.[129] Rufinus very clearly states that it is rivalry and competition that goad Jerome into behaving and writing this way. For Rufinus, such behavior contradicts the appropriate methods of criticizing and helping a fellow Christian.

6.5 Rufinus on corrective correspondences

Furthermore, Rufinus indirectly displays his support for Augustine's concept of a corrective correspondence in his apology against Jerome. He reminds Jerome, and his readers, of the tract against Jovinian: in 393 Jerome had written a treatise that argued against Jovinian's teachings on baptism, virginity, marriage, fasting, and rewards in heaven. The treatise, possibly due to its strongly ascetic viewpoint, was not well received.[130] Jerome's friend Pammachius[131] had taken several copies of the aggressive treatise out of circulation.[132] Rufinus draws parallels between the reaction to his translation of Origen's *On First Principles* and the public outcry against Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum*. He hypothesizes how Jerome could, and perhaps should, have reacted when he learned of Rufinus' translation of Origen's work: Jerome could have recalled how he himself felt when Pammachius reported the backlash that resulted from his dealings with Jovinian. He could have sympathized with the fact that Rufinus' readers had interpreted the composition differently from how Rufinus had

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[129] *Et in hoc se putet aliquid esse, si opinatos quosque viros et qui aliquid nominis in litteris habuerint, reprehendat* (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.47).

[130] Jer. *Ep.* 48.2; 49.2. See Chapter 5 below.

[131] Pammachius was Paula's son-in-law (*Ep.* 66; 77.1.10; 108.4), Marcella's cousin (*Ep.* 48.4), member of the *gens Furia* (*Ep.* 66.6), Jerome's fellow-pupil (*Ep.* 49.1; 57.13; 66.9), and proconsul, possibly of Africa. See *PLRE* s.v. 'Pammachius'.

[132] *Ep.* 48.2.

intended.[133] Jerome could have acted as Pammachius had done, and returned the composition to Rufinus, apprising him of what he and others found offensive in the work, and thus given Rufinus the opportunity to clarify and correct his meaning. [134]   Importantly, Rufinus comments that *nec occasio derogationis Christianis captanda est, sed emendationis utilitas inquirenda*, 'an occasion of disparaging Christians should not be seized upon, but rather we should seek the usefulness of correction' (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier*. 2.42). If we take Rufinus at his word, he would have been pleased to be corrected helpfully by Jerome – following the example of Augustine; but instead his work was sent to the East by Pammachius 'to incite the tongue of that man who did not know how to control himself.'[135]

6.6 Rufinus on Jerome's abuse

Rufinus wonders who Jerome will possibly praise as he seems to bow to no man's authority.   According to Rufinus, no one seems to escape Jerome's criticism: *cui iam iste deferat? cui parcat?*, 'to whom will that man now yield? Whom will he spare?' (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier*. 2.34).   Rufinus continues to tell us that even some of the martyrs are targets of Jerome's abuse and should be scorned (*spernenda*). All the Greek writers of the church have erred in his eyes. And Latin writers of the church both old and new he similarly disparages

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[133] *Nondum dico quae sit illa aut qualis epistola: tamen quoniam viri nobilis Pammachii continet nomen, quid fuisset absurdum, si ei tale aliquid respondisses? Frater, non est temere de alterius opera iudicandum. Nam et tu ipse nosti quid feceris, quando adversum Iovinianum Romam misi libellos, cum eos quidam aliter intelligerent, quam ego me dictasse memineram* (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.42).

[134] *Sicut enim meos libros mihi remisisti, ut a me emendarentur, ita et ad illum suos remitte, et quod culpabile videtur, insinua, ut ipse se, si in aliquo erravit, emendet* (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.42).

[135] *Sed ad Orientem mitteret et instigaret linguam eius hominis, qui eam temperare non noverat* (Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.48).

(*deroget; carpat*).[136]   With hyperbolic language Rufinus expresses his amazement that no one seems to escape Jerome's vitriolic pen. Not even those who die for their beliefs can redeem themselves in Jerome's opinion. But such a statement is, of course, far from the truth. Jerome is careful about who he chooses to feud with and tailors his rhetoric according to status and position.

6.7 A similar approach

We have seen above two of Jerome's contemporaries who, to a certain extent, used similar approaches when dealing with Jerome. Of course, apologies, by their very nature, are harsher than letters, even those letters that stray from epistolary norms. But in spite of this, to a certain extent, both Augustine and Rufinus expect Jerome's reply to be the same: rhetorically, Augustine anticipates that Jerome will agree to this corrective epistolary relationship and, after correcting his errors, write back gratefully; Augustine does not expect animosity.   Rufinus' composition points out Jerome's tendency to condemn other Christians unreservedly to such an extent that it is a failing indeed. Similarly, the invitation here is for Jerome to prove Rufinus wrong and respond in a more composed manner. However, both men engage with Jerome within the framework of expected or historic friendship. Both find fault with Jerome's attachment to Hebrew scripture and inconsistent scholarship. Despite the similarities in the substance of the criticism, Jerome's replies to each man differ. The next section will consider Jerome's responses to each of these critics and endeavor to explain why he alters his replies.

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[136] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier*. 2.34.

7. JEROME'S REPLY TO AUGUSTINE

7.1 Jerome's view of the social map

Jerome's replies to Augustine are not what we would expect. Denial and suspicion cloud the letters as Jerome attempts to delay making a real response to Augustine's critiques. The first extant letter we have from Jerome to Augustine (*Ep.* 102) replies to *Ep.* 101 discussed above. Jerome informs Augustine that he had not heard the rumor going around that Augustine had written a book against him, which was circulating in Rome.[137] He has, however, managed to obtain a copy of the letter in which Augustine suggests that Jerome sing a palinode.[138] Jerome's response is to deny its validity.[139] Based on the fact that he has only seen a copy, Jerome decides that he will err on the side of caution, as he does not want to upset Augustine unnecessarily with his reply.[140] This statement makes Jerome's stance very clear from the beginning: should he take this letter to be authentic, and respond as he would normally, Augustine will be *laesus*, wounded or harmed in some way. Jerome reminds Augustine of his place:

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[137] *Ep.* 102.1.

[138] *Ep.* 67.

[139] Ebbeler (2012), 116, argues that Jerome knew that the letters were actually from Augustine and that his denial of their validity can be understood as 'nothing more than another strategy for deferring a response.'

[140] *Ego simpliciter fateor dignationi tuae, licet stilus et ἐπιχειρήματα tua mihi viderentur, tamen non temere exemplaribus litterarum credendum putavi, ne forte me respondente laesus iuste expostulares, quod probare ante debuissem tuum esse sermonem et sic rescribere* (*Ep.* 102.1)

Ceterum optime novit prudentia tua unumquemque in suo sensu abundare et puerilis esse iactantiae, quod olim adulescentuli facere consueuerant, accusando inlustres viros suo nomini famam quaerere.

Moreover, your prudence knows well that everyone overflows with his own opinion and that it is juvenile bragging, what once young men used to do, to strive for fame for their own name by accusing distinguished men (*Ep*. 102.2).

Jerome delicately denies that this criticism could possibly originate from Augustine, as Augustine is too knowledgeable to do something as puerile as attempt to gain recognition by disparaging a more prominent figure endowed with both intellectual and exegetical standing.[141] Jerome reminds Augustine of where each man stands on the social map: by gauging intellectual contributions to the Christian community, Jerome views himself ahead of Augustine. But by offering these criticisms, Augustine has attempted to invert the social order. Jerome's response is mild at first – a reminder of their positions as he attempts to redraw the boundaries – but then becomes more forceful. Further, Jerome uses three 'personalized adversarial metaphors'[142] to make his point and coerce Augustine into silence: the first morphs both him and Augustine into athletic runners; the latter in the prime of his life while the former is destined for rest.[143] The second metaphor takes the form of a literary battle, while the third wields another literary flourish: *ne solus mihi de poetis aliquid proposuisse videaris, memento Daretis et Entelli et vulgaris proverbii, quod bos lassus fortius figat pedem,* 'lest you alone might seem to have displayed to me something of the poets, remember Dares and Entellus and that common proverb, that the tired ox treads

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[141] Ebbeler (2007), 319, comments: '[w]hereas Augustine had attempted to frame the correspondence in terms of Christian fraternity, Jerome pointedly refuses to see Augustine as a spiritual *frater* mutually in pursuit of scriptural understanding'.

[142] Jamieson (1987), 356.

[143] *Ep*. 102.2.

with a firmer step' (*Ep*. 102.2). Jerome trumps Augustine's literary allusion with two examples: one referring back to the *Aeneid* and the other recalling a proverb.[144] Both put Jerome in the seat of power: either as the powerful boxer, favored by the gods who overpowers youthful, bold Dares, or as the proverbial old, yet deliberate ox. Jerome has indirectly outlined Augustine's fate should he pursue this line of inquiry. Despite his old age, Jerome's prominence and stature dictate that he will be victorious in this contest. Jerome prides himself on his contributions to Christian scholarship and his self-confidence is evident through these metaphors. Augustine's criticisms, therefore, raise several contentious issues.

7.2 Jerome's qualifications

Jerome is immediately sensitive because Augustine has called into question two qualifications around which he has built his reputation: his prowess as a translator and exegete, and in particular his familiarity with Hebrew. As will be discussed in detail in subsequent chapters, Jerome took great pride in his language abilities and translations. He referred to himself as a *vir trilinguis* and highlighted not only his language acquisitions, but also those of his students.[145] Jerome used his academic capabilities and linguistic proficiency as intellectual capital, which would help assert his status. By threatening these qualifications, Augustine is casting doubt on Jerome's self-proclaimed superiority. Jerome's

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[144] Verg. *Aen.* 5.394-396. Entellus, despite being beyond his prime, enters the boxing match. While Entellus may be slower and weaker, he realizes his own strength and ends up victorious; Dares is left a bloody mess. Aeneas believed that the gods favored Entellus over the younger Dares.

[145] *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.6. See Moretti (*forthcoming*) who discusses Jerome's appraisals of Marcella and Paula and their quickness at picking up Hebrew.

response exposes his attempts to reaffirm that he believes his relationship with Augustine should be based not only on age, but also, more importantly, on academic achievements and exegetical experience. The qualifications that Jerome values and prides himself on are the same as the qualifications that Augustine has chosen to criticize. This does not sit well with Jerome, as these are the achievements and skills that he believes warrant Augustine's deference. After evoking the bloody image of Dares that surely would have emerged in the former rhetoric teacher's mind, Jerome writes that he has dictated these words with sadness and wishes that they might embrace each other, and teach and learn together.[146] But as the metaphors indicate, Jerome has no intention of learning from Augustine. This ostensibly amicable line serves only to remind Augustine of the roles that should be assumed – Jerome as the teacher, Augustine the pupil.[147] Jerome closes the letter by referring to Augustine respectfully as *sancte ac venerabilis papa* – a greeting that convention would demand.[148] He assures his affection for the bishop which can be proven based on the fact that he is not willing to respond until he has proof that this letter is genuine. For, had the letter been from anyone else 'less important,' Jerome would have responded with a severe rebuke.[149] With this letter Jerome hopes to coerce Augustine into dropping the topic. It is laden with warnings under a veneer of politeness. As Ebbeler has pointed out: '[i]n terms of ecclesiastical rank, Jerome the presbyter is the son to Augustine's father; but under no

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[146] *Tristes haec dictavimus; utinam mereremur conplexus tuos et conlatione mutua vel doceremus aliqua vel disceremus* (*Ep*. 102.2). Ebbeler (2007), 319-220.

[147] For more discussion of Jerome's pedagogical persona see Chapter 4.

[148] *Ep*. 102.3. In *Ep*. 105.5, Jerome addresses Augustine in a similar manner. Following Augustine's ordination as bishop, the formulaic address is prevalent.

[149] *Vide, quantum te diligam, ut ne provocatus quidem voluerim respondere nec credam tuum esse, quod in altero forte reprehenderem* (*Ep*. 102.3).

circumstances will Jerome concede intellectual authority to Augustine', especially on aspects of his scholarship that he prided himself on.[150]

7.3 Jerome on fame, rank, and reputation

Indeed, fame, rank, and reputation are topics that recur in Jerome's replies to Augustine. Learning that Augustine's letters have arrived in public view, Jerome immediately worries about his reputation and voices his dismay at others procuring his mail before he has even seen it. In his subsequent letter to Augustine (*Ep*. 105), he continues to deny the authenticity of Augustine's missives, and expresses how shocked he is to learn that one of Augustine's critical letters that never reached him in Bethlehem has ended up circulating in Rome and throughout Italy (*Ep*. 105.1).[151] Jerome indignantly informs Augustine that a fellow brother has told him that he found it five years ago among Augustine's other published works on an island in the Adriatic.[152] In Jerome's eyes Augustine has broken the etiquette of letter writing: although he may have ostensibly sent the letter to its recipient alone, it ended up in public circulation. While Jerome is concerned that his reputation is in jeopardy because of Augustine's criticism, he simultaneously suggests that Augustine's motives were not entirely genuine:

> Nonnulli familiares mei et vasa Christi, quorum Hierosolymis et in sanctis locis permagna copia est, suggerebant non simplici a te animo factum, sed laudem atque rumusculos et gloriolam populi requirente, ut de nobis cresceres, ut multi

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[150] Ebbeler (2007), 322.

[151] *Ep*. 67 had been in the possession of Paulus who, afraid of the sea (*Ep*. 105.1), had been unable to make it across to Bethlehem.

[152] *Ep*. 105.1.

cognoscerent te provocare, me timere, te scribere ut doctum, me tacere ut inperitum et tandem repperisse, qui garrulitati meae modum inponeret.

Several friends of mine and vessels of Christ, of whom there is a very great number in Jerusalem and in the holy places, were suggesting that this had been done by you not without dissimulation, but because you were seeking praise, idle talk, and a little bit of public glory, so that you might grow at my expense, so that many might know that you challenged me, that I was afraid, that you wrote like a man of learning, that I kept quiet like a man of no experience and had at last discovered a man who could set a limit to my babbling (*Ep.* 105.2).

It seems clear from Jerome's hostile reply and defiant tone that he believes this suggestion that Augustine was aiming for celebrity. This fame was to be gained through Jerome's public academic humiliation. In this statement, Jerome not only asserts his own authority by informing Augustine of his extensive network in Jerusalem, he also again reminds Augustine of their statuses: Jerome as a man of academic distinction, already endowed with reputation and a following, and Augustine who has yet to achieve distinction. He stresses the perceived differences between them when he comments that he will not censure anything in Augustine's writings as he has never bothered to read much of his work nor does he keep them in his vast library.[153] This disparaging comment trivializes Augustine's work and reminds both of them of Jerome's literary achievements.

7.4 Established hierarchies

However, Jerome encounters a complication when writing to Augustine at this point. We must remember that from *Ep.* 67 onwards, when considering church

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[153] Jerome claims not to have any of Augustine's writings with the exceptions of the books of *Soliloquies* and commentaries on some of the Psalms (*Ep.* 105.5). For more on Jerome's extensive and valuable library see Williams (2006), 133-166.

hierarchy, Augustine wrote as the bishop of Hippo to Jerome, a presbyter. Such established hierarchy creates problems for Jerome, who, while he will not relinquish intellectual superiority and dominance, must recognize Augustine's ecclesiastical authority. He writes, *deinde illud cavebam, ne episcopo communionis meae viderer procaciter respondere et aliqua in reprehendentis epistula reprehendere, praesertim cum quaedam in illa haeretica iudicarem,* 'and so I took precautions lest I might seem to answer to a bishop of my communion impudently, and to censure anything in the letter of one censuring me, particularly since I judged certain things in that letter heretical' (*Ep.* 105.2). In the same breath Jerome obliquely threatens Augustine with a charge of heresy and informs us of the added difficulty he faces when countering a bishop. Jerome's passive aggressive behavior of denying the authenticity of the copies of Augustine's letters, combined with his acknowledgement that he is wary of challenging a bishop, lend credence to the argument that Jerome was acutely aware of each adversary's social position and thus was tailoring his response accordingly. Although Jerome would like to put Augustine in his place with his usual mode of sharp response, he never directly does. While Jerome attempts to correct the balance of their relationship which Augustine has thrown off kilter, the manner in which he tries to evade discussing the issues tacitly acknowledges that due to Augustine's promotion, the relationship is not exactly as Jerome assumes it should be.

7.5. Jerome's solution part 1: an elderly persona

In order to solve this dilemma Jerome stresses two things in his replies to Augustine. The first is his age; the second is his position as a monk, which will

be discussed further below in 7.7. Augustine's position as bishop is prominent throughout the remainder of *Ep*. 105 and is directly contrasted with Jerome's self-portrayal as a monk, who is above all old and very tired. Jerome tells Augustine *senem latitantem in cellula lacessere desine*, 'to stop provoking an old man, hiding himself in his monastic cell' (*Ep*. 105.3). If Augustine is insistent on picking fights then he ought to select adversaries from Rome who are *iuvenes et disertos et nobiles,* 'young men, both eloquent and noble' (*Ep*. 105.3). Such adversaries are not afraid of combat and entering into discussions about scripture with a bishop.[154] In contrast Jerome stresses his position as a retiree. He may have once been a soldier but he calls himself a 'retired veteran' (*veteranus*) and 'old man' (*senem*) – one who does not have the patience to act as the audience to Augustine's displays of learning.[155] Ostensibly, Jerome attributes his avoidance of the issues to his old age. He writes that at this stage it is more fitting for him to praise those victories of Augustine and others than to fight them with his worn-out body.[156] He dismisses Augustine's plea for honest criticism, insisting that Augustine is instead challenging with a 'honeyed sword' (*litum melle gladium*) an old man who longs for peace and quiet.[157] And similarly, as he did in *Ep*. 101, Jerome masks his hostility with a metaphor. He tells Augustine that if he persists in demanding a reply, he will be forced to call to mind the example of Quintus Maximus who crushed the brash and immature Hannibal with his endurance.[158] Quintus Fabius Maximus, hailed as *Cunctator*,

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[154] *Qui possint et audeant tecum congredi et in disputatione sanctarum scripturarum iugum cum episcopo ducere* (*Ep*. 105.3).

[155] *Ep*. 105.3, 5). *Sin autem tuam vis vel ostentare vel exercere doctrinam…* (*Ep*. 105.3).

[156] *Ego quondam miles, nunc veteranus et tuas et aliorum debeo laudare victorias, non ipse rursus effeto corpore dimicare* (*Ep*. 105.3).

[157] *Ep*. 105.2.

[158] *Ep*. 105.3.

or 'The Delayer' was famed for his patience and ultimately weakened Hannibal's forces with his strategy of attrition.[159] Again, Jerome forecasts his victory over Augustine. But he never fully engages with Augustine – he holds the bishop at arm's length, emphasizing his retirement status and hoping Augustine will stop sending letters.

Jerome overstates his old age (an issue that will be discussed further below) as an excuse to avoid answering Augustine's questions. Arguably, it is due to the established hierarchies discussed above in 7.4 that Jerome must resort to emphasizing his age and decrepitude. It is impossible to know how old Jerome believed Augustine was. He may have been overemphasizing the age gap because he was simply estimating Augustine's age based on what Jerome knew of his career thus far. The problem of Augustine's status as bishop and Jerome's focus on his age is apparent in the close of *Ep*. 105: 'farewell, my very dear friend, my son in age, my father in official office.'[160] Indeed, Jerome seems to have resented the incompatibility of a younger man with an officially recognized position of power criticizing him. Jamieson (1987) has accepted Jerome's rhetoric and elderly persona in this case, and acknowledged that Jerome as a mere presbyter 'is hesitant to become embroiled in conflict with the eloquent Bishop Augustine.'[161] She briefly comments that it was less dangerous

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[159] Ebbeler (2012), 126, comments that not only would this parallel have contrasted Jerome and Augustine as aristocratic Roman savior-general, vs. Carthaginian terrorizing-general, but it also would have been interpreted as an 'ethnic insult.' This analogy perhaps would have emphasized the fact that 'Augustine famously spoke Latin with an African accent.' For more on this see O'Connell (1979), 346. For Augustine's accent see Chapter 2, n. 169.

[160] *Vale, mi amice carissime, aetate fili, dignitate parens* (*Ep*. 105.5).

[161] Jamieson (1987), 362-363. Kelly (1975), 272, however, seems to attribute Jerome's lack of engagement to Augustine's lack of importance. He comments that 'Jerome could not be

to engage with Rufinus, but neglects to develop further the social hierarchies at work here. We must also wonder what would Jerome have gained from entering into a public argument with Augustine? Jerome seems to have assessed it as a risky business: he does not want to be seen challenging a bishop – he includes a disclaimer that should he, an old man, write anything, it will be done in 'self defense' (*defensione mei*), 'so that the blame will be on you, who provoked, not on me, who was compelled to reply' (*ut… in te culpa sit, qui provocasti, non in me, qui respondere conpulsus sum*) (*Ep.* 105.4). If we consider Jerome's main polemical works, the only treatise he composed against a bishop was that against John of Jerusalem during a controversy in which he was supported by another bishop, Epiphanius. Jerome tended to pick his opponents with care, hence his hesitation to engage with a bishop baptized and supported by Ambrose as discussed above. When confronted with a critical, promising (and younger) bishop, Jerome's solution is to shine a spotlight on his old age – the one aspect in which he may hold seniority over Augustine. But should we believe Jerome's reasoning that he thought himself too old to be competing with younger exegetes?

7.6 Jerome's age

Scholars remain uncertain on Jerome's birthday. Prosper of Aquitaine dates Jerome's birth to 331 and his death to 30 September 420, giving him a lifespan of

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expected to view [Augustine] as the towering figure to which later generations, with the hindsight of history, look back.'

about ninety years.[162] A later biographer, writing between the sixth and eighth

centuries has dated Jerome's death to 419 instead.[163] Kelly has largely followed

these dates.[164] More modern scholarship, however, has convincingly argued for

Cavallera's date of 347 as Jerome's year of birth.[165] If we take 347 as Jerome's

birth year, and Augustine's, which has been widely accepted, as 354,[166] then

Augustine and Jerome were only about seven years apart.[167]   Jerome's

exaggerated portrayal of his dotage, as well as Augustine's youth, does not

coincide with a mere seven year age gap. The excuse of infirmity seems weak

for Jerome, especially when we know that he continues to engage in

controversial issues after these exchanges with Augustine.[168]   Being old,

seemingly, was part of Jerome's persona. However, it is not only old age that

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[162] See Chapter 1, 1.2. Prosper of Aquitaine *Epitoma chronicon* 1274. Kelly (1975), 331, and Williams (2006), 268, comment on the unreliability of the source.

[163] *Hieronymus noster* (*PL* 22.184).

[164] Kelly (1975), 331-332, following Hamblenne (1969), 1113.

[165] For argument in detail see Cavallera (1922), 2.3-12. He argues for this date based on Jerome's years at his school of rhetoric coinciding with the Emperor Julian's edict that prohibited Christian teachers.   Jay (1973), Booth (1979), 346-353, Rebenich (1992), 20, Rebenich (2002), 4 n.3, and Williams (2006), 268-269, all argue for 347, or at least sometime during the mid-340s. Williams (2006), 269, rightly points out that the date of 331, while allowing for Jerome's education during the 340s, leaves a large gap in the 350s, which Kelly is unable to explain.

[166] For Augustine's year of birth see Brown (1967a), 19, and Vessey (2012), xl.

[167] Ebbeler (2012), 118, seemingly following the dating of Prosper of Aquitaine, posits that Jerome is about 'fifteen years Augustine's senior'. See also Ebbeler (2007), 319, where she estimates the age difference being 'only a decade and a half'. While this dating seems to overestimate the age difference and succumb to Jerome's rhetoric, she is correct in commenting that 'Jerome consistently portrayed himself as a wise but tired *senex* to Augustine's impudent *iuvenis* in his correspondence' (Ebbeler 2012: 118). Augustine himself follows Jerome's lead when he writes to him later in the second phase of their correspondence: he comments that he is consulting Jerome because he is much older (*quamquam enim te multo, quam ego sum, aetate maiorem, tamen etiam ipse iam senex consulo*) (*Ep.* 131.1). Even when Jerome writes about himself as a student, he creates for himself a pedagogical demeanor: *iam canis spargebatur caput et magistrum potius quam discipulum decebat,* 'by now my head was sprinkled with gray hairs and it was befitting more a teacher than a student' (*Ep.* 84.3).

[168] Consider, for example, Jerome's three books that make up the *Dialogus contra Pelagianos* penned around 415 (for date see *Ep*.134.1).

Jerome uses as an excuse. As briefly mentioned above, he also stresses the distinction between Augustine's position as a bishop and his as an ascetic monk.

7.7 Jerome's solution part 2: monasticism

In a further letter to Augustine that responds in detail to his interpretation of Galatians 2.11-14 and his use of Hebrew, Jerome highlights his and Augustine's differences of situation:

> Neque mihi inperitorum plebeculam concites, qui te venerantur ut episcopum et in ecclesia declamantem sacerdotii honore suscipiunt, me autem aetatis ultimae et paene decrepitum ac monasterii et ruris secreta sectantem parvi pendunt, et quaeras tibi, quos doceas sive reprehendas.
>
> And do not stir up against me the rabble of the untrained, who revere you as a bishop and receive you with the respect due to a priest as you orate in church, but think poorly of me, at the end of my life, almost worn out, keeping to the hidden places of the monastery and the country, and seek out for yourself those whom you may teach or rebuke (*Ep.* 112.18).

Snippily, Jerome advises Augustine to mind his own business and avoid exciting the *inperitorum plebeculam* ('congregation of ignorant men') against an old monk. Tellingly, Jerome draws a comparison between the esteem due Augustine's episcopal office and that due him as a monk. Although Jerome focuses on his modest lifestyle in a monastery, we must wonder if he is insinuating that the respect he has earned is due to his exegetical work, translations, and ascetic lifestyle. In other words, Jerome's reputation is a result of his intellectual prowess, while Augustine is perfunctorily granted respect due to his ecclesiastical title, therefore making the esteem shown him somewhat superficial. Jerome is not the sort of person Augustine should be seeking to instruct – he is too old and moreover, too learned: Augustine's audience is,

instead, the 'ignorant'. This contrasts greatly with Jerome's cultivated audience of aristocratic ascetic women.[169]

While Jerome is sure to acknowledge Augustine's position as bishop, it is not without a hint of sour grapes. His main argument – that he is too old to be engaging in these sorts of arguments – provides the main thesis of Jerome's rationale in deferring Augustine's queries, but Jerome is always sure to include his take on Augustine's seat of power and stress his own monastic lifestyle:

> Tu, qui iuvenis es et in pontificali culmine constitutus, doceto populos et novis Africae frugibus Romana tecta locupleta. Mihi sufficit cum auditore vel lectore pauperculo in angulo monasterii susurrare.

> You, who are young and have been appointed to the prominent position of pontifical rank, teach the people and enrich Roman homes with the new fruits of Africa. It suffices for me to mutter in a corner of a monastery with some pauper either as listener or a reader (*Ep*. 112.22).[170]

Augustine, the young bishop on the rise, is always in contrast to Jerome, the austere monk on the decline. While Augustine has broadened his influence – his audience is not just in Africa, but in Rome now as well – Jerome exaggerates his audience as having shrunk to include a solitary person huddled in the corner studying with him. In a sense, Jerome is forced to succumb to the hierarchy established by titles. He does so, to an extent, and simultaneously emphasizes his own humility. Augustine is the *episcopus in toto orbe notissimus* ('the most well known bishop in the whole world')[171] while Jerome is the solitary monk *in*

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[169] See Cain (2009a), on Jerome's presentation of Paula and Marcella as his ascetic disciples who came to him for spiritual instruction. These letters were published not for a select audience, but rather for wide Christian readership.

[170] See Cameron (2011), 442-445, for the practice of reading out loud to check for errors.

[171] *Ep*. 112.5.

parvo tuguriunculo cum monachis, id est conpeccatoribus meis ('in his tiny little hut with the monks, i.e. fellow sinners').[172] Jerome attempts to convince Augustine that his fame is already sufficient; there is no need for him to continue trying to engage Jerome on exegetical questions in order to better his standing. As a bishop, he should embrace his wide audience, and leave Jerome, a mere aging monk, to his own devices. But despite Jerome's emphasis on his limited circle and reclusive lifestyle his concern for his reputation at Rome was obvious.

7.8 Jerome and Rome

Jerome's fixation on the city of Rome and his standing in that city is apparent in his letters to Augustine. As Jerome had been forced to leave Rome amidst slanderous rumors, he was particularly sensitive to how his name and reputation were faring in the city. After having worked hard to secure bishop Damasus as patron,[173] as well as wealthy aristocratic Roman women like Paula and Marcella, being dismissed from Rome was a slap in the face.[174] If Augustine's *liber contra Hieronymum* truly had been making the rounds among Roman Christians, it would have grieved Jerome greatly.[175] This is especially so, since, as I argue in this thesis, he was particularly attentive to aligning himself with the Roman aristocracy (in so far as he could given his ascetic adherence). Moreover, bearing in mind his recent falling out with Rufinus,[176] if he wished to avoid being the topic of another public scandal in Rome, he would have to

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[172] *Ep*. 112.5.

[173] See *Ep*. 15 and 16. Damasus seemingly ignored the first letter. For more on this see Kelly (1975), 53-54.

[174] *Ep*. 45. See Chapter 5, 8.

[175] *Ep*. 105.1; *Ep*. 112.18.

[176] Commented on by Augustine (*Ep*. 110.6; 110.8; 110.9; and *Ep*. 116.1).

manage a courteous reply to Augustine. Jerome continually seems to have viewed the Roman public as an important component of his audience.[177] Despite his forced departure from the city, he looks back on Rome fondly and seems proud of his Roman links.[178] Although Jerome's feelings towards the *Urbs* were often conflicted, he is continually interested in its evolution into a Christian city.[179] His own role in this transition is naturally of some importance to him.[180] As demonstrated above, Jerome's disappointing expulsion from Rome influenced his future interactions: from Bethlehem, estranged from Roman society, Jerome bitterly makes a distinction between Augustine's audience as bishop, and his more modest company as a monk. But this does not change the fact that Jerome was attentive to his reputation in Rome. After patronizingly stressing the age gap in *Ep.* 105, Jerome concedes Augustine's ecclesiastical status but not without pointedly reminding him that he wishes to see his mail before the entire population of Rome does, a final reminder of the importance Jerome attaches to his public repute.[181]

As we have seen above, abusive rhetoric comprised of direct personal attacks is missing from Jerome's replies to Augustine. Despite the fact that Augustine has criticized Jerome's scholarship and use of Hebrew, and probed him on his use of Origen, Jerome abstains from outright abuse. He has, instead,

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[177] See Grig (2012), 130-132, and Cain (2009a), 171-178, on Jerome's defense of his Hebrew scholarship to the Roman audience.

[178] Grig (2012), 130 and n.30, points out that Jerome specifically referred to himself as a *homo Romanus*, and 'liked to recall "when I was at Rome"' (*Ep.* 15.3; *Commentariorum in epistulam ad Galatas, praef.* 331C; 1.19, 354D; *Commentarius in ecclesiasten, praef.* 249).

[179] As demonstrated by Grig (2012).

[180] For more see Cain (2009a), chapter 2, on Jerome's efforts to make his biblical scholarship essential to Christian Romans.

[181] *Et hoc a me rogatus observa, ut, quicquid mihi scripseris, ad me primum facias pervenire* (*Ep.* 105.5).

resorted to dilatory tactics, denying that the criticism can possibly originate from Augustine, the esteemed bishop of Hippo. He acknowledges the differences of rank, at times, overemphasizing the social distance between the two of them: he is a lowly, aging monk who is unable to take part in such verbal sparring, while Augustine is a young, promising bishop. Such additional dilatory tactics also serve to heighten Jerome's Christian humility. But while conceding ecclesiastical rank, Jerome refuses to grant Augustine intellectual superiority. As Brown has pointed out, 'when at last Jerome offered to bury the hatchet, … [it was] with considerable restraint, given his taste for invective'.[182]

8. JEROME'S REPLY TO RUFINUS

8.1 Context

Before we briefly discuss how Jerome responded to Rufinus' criticisms, it would be useful to review those events that led up to Jerome's reply.[183] These events are, in some ways, more important to understanding the social context and social map on which Jerome and Rufinus were maneuvering. After Jerome learned that Rufinus had translated Origen's *On First Principles* and, more importantly, had indicated that he was following in Jerome's footsteps,[184] Jerome composed his own literal translation to defend himself against the potential accusation of heresy.[185] It was sent to Pammachius and Oceanus at Rome along

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[182] Brown (1967a), 275. *In scripturarum, si placet, campo sine nostro invicem dolore ludamus* (*Ep.* 115.4-5).

[183] See also Grützmacher (1901), vol. 3 chapter 10, and Cavallera (1922), 1.193-227.

[184] Jerome received news of Rufinus' translation via a letter from Pammachius and Oceanus (*Ep.* 83), as well as an unfinished copy of the work. Kelly (1975), 236, dates this to around the end of 389.

[185] Kelly (1975), 237, dates this to the winter of 398 or the beginning of 399.

with an apologetic letter intended for a public audience (*Ep.* 84).[186] Importantly,

Jerome simultaneously sent a private letter to Rufinus (*Ep.* 81).[187] While it was to

the point and made Jerome's opinions on Rufinus' translation and Origen clear,

it refrained from being a violently critical missive.[188] Unfortunately for Rufinus,

the letter ended up in the hands of Jerome's friends in Rome. We learn that this

supposed note of reconciliation was *intentionally* never delivered to Rufinus.[189]

Jerome tells us that his friends in Rome intervened in order to protect his

reputation.[190] Upon hearing that Pammachius was circulating Jerome's public

letter of defense (*Ep.* 84) around Rome, Rufinus, concerned about his own

reputation in Rome, set to composing his *Apologia contra Hieronymum*, finally

completing it in 401.[191] The work took Rufinus several years to complete.

Indeed, Jerome pokes fun at his former friend, snidely commenting on the

length of time it took him and the quality of the result.[192] Rufinus seemingly

attempted to keep his work private, circulating it only around his circle of

supporters.[193] Jerome's friends in Rome, however, got wind of Rufinus'

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[186] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.12. Kelly (1975), 239, comments on Jerome's initial defense (*Ep.* 84) that 'The fact was, [Jerome] was more concerned, in this letter, with restoring his public image than with being fair to Rufinus'.

[187] Jerome follows conventions of friendship initially, keeping the correspondence private: *haec apud te potius amice expostulare volui quam lacessitus publice desaevire,* 'I prefer to remonstrate with you as a friend rather than to rage publicly, provoked as I am' (*Ep.* 81. 1).

[188] Kelly (1975), 240, comments that 'this was a sharp, even stinging note, but the indignation and reproof were kept in tight control.' He further aptly describes it as a 'guarded eirenic message' (240). I would argue that such a description could be further applied to those missives sent to Augustine as discussed above.

[189] Rufinus refuses to believe that such a letter ever existed, but Jerome insists it to be the case (Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.11-12; 3.38).

[190] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.38.

[191] Addressed to Apronianus. Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 1.1; 2.38; 2.44.

[192] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.10.

[193] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.1; 3.3; 3.5.

apology, and noting the crucial arguments, sent word of it to Bethlehem.[194] Additionally, Jerome's brother Paulinian, who had been traveling from Italy to Palestine, memorized sections of the work to recount later to his brother.[195] So when Jerome composed his *Apologia contra Rufinum* in 401, he had not actually read Rufinus' treatise.[196]

When Rufinus received Jerome's apology against him, he was encouraged by Chromatius, bishop of Aquileia, to make peace.[197] Rufinus then wrote a private letter to Jerome, which unfortunately has not survived.[198] In it, Rufinus supposedly threatened to air Jerome's dirty laundry in Rome, especially those events surrounding Jerome's reluctant departure from Rome in 385.[199] He also enclosed a copy of his *Apologia contra Hieronymum* so that Jerome could see the document in full without having to bribe secretaries to obtain it.[200] In 402, in response to Rufinus' letter and now having read the apology in full, Jerome

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[194] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.1; 1.4.

[195] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.21.

[196] Cavallera (1922), 1.272-273, dates the treatise to 401-402 and Grützmacher (1901), 1.101, to 402-403. Kelly (1975), 253, writes: 'a rapid summary of its contents conveys little idea of its ferocious tone and polemical brilliance. Written with a passion that is all the more effective because controlled, it abounds in coarse abuse and contemptuous sneers, in wounding caricatures of Rufinus's stupidity, self-indulgence, and avarice – even of his wrinkled forehead, knitted eyebrows, and ponderous gait – in mockery of his clumsy Latinity and pretentious learning'. Clark (1992), 140, comments that '[o]ur knowledge of Jerome's charges against Origen is surprisingly little advanced by his *Apology against Rufinus*… "surprisingly," because this treatise is by far the longest statement from Jerome pertaining to the Origenist controversy. The function of the work, however, is to remove from Jerome any taint of Origenism and to pin Origenist charges on Rufinus instead'.

[197] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.2.

[198] Jerome refers to this letter in his third book against Rufinus (Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.4; 3.6).

[199] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.22.

[200] Jerome quotes a section of Rufinus' non-extant letter (Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.4).

retaliated with yet a third book against Rufinus.[201] This last treatise silenced his former friend.   According to Jerome, Rufinus continued to criticize Jerome amongst his followers, but it was not done publicly.[202] Seemingly, Jerome had won the argument.   However, despite his statement to Rufinus that he would keep quiet if Rufinus ceased accusing him, Jerome continued to put down his old rival publicly, referring to him as 'the Scorpion' or 'Grunnius' ('the grunting pig').[203]

8.2 Jerome's reputation and Pammachius' interference

Such were the events that led Jerome to compose his three books against Rufinus. I wish to draw upon three things in detail in the next few pages: the first is the important issue of reputation; the second is Pammachius' interference; and the last is the significance Jerome attached to public vs. private communication.   Jerome became involved with Rufinus' work after Rufinus attempted to force Jerome's literary patronage and assumed support for his translations of Origen. It is Jerome's concern for his reputation and orthodoxy in Rome, as discussed above, that compelled him to become entangled in these affairs.   Throughout Jerome's apologies against Rufinus he emphasizes his existing acceptance and support in Rome.[204] Additionally, he stresses his

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[201] Kelly (1975), 255, comments '[i]f anything, this third book was even more insulting and violent than its predecessors'.

[202] *Ep*. 119.11.

[203] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf*. 3.9. See *Ep*. 125.18 for reference to 'Grunnius'; *Ep*. 127.10 for Rufinus as the scorpion.

[204] See Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf*. 1.8 (Jerome translated works of Origen, but no one ever questioned them); 2.2 (Rufinus' plummeting reputation at Rome); 2.24 (Jerome's friends in Rome); 3.7 (Jerome hears reports from Rome, Italy, and Dalmatia of Rufinus writing against him); 3.21 (Jerome on how Rufinus' translation caused all Rome to tremble and Rome's judgment); 3.36

connections to aristocratic figures such as Pammachius, a former proconsul and Paula's son-in-law. Pammachius' concealment of Jerome's cordial letter is crucial to Jerome's and Rufinus' decisions to carry on the argument through the medium of apologies.

Indeed, I would argue that Pammachius is critical to Jerome and Rufinus' falling out. Assuming that the amicable letter sent Rufinus by Jerome actually existed, why did Pammachius decide to withhold it? Jerome tells us:

> Multi Romae eius exemplaria habent, ante hoc circiter triennium, qui tibi eam mittere noluerunt, scientes quae de meo nomine iactitares et quam indigna proposito christiano ac nefanda confingeres… Illi non reddiderunt ei quem inimicum noverant, parcentes et meo errori, et tuae conscientiae.

> Many men at Rome have copies of this letter for nearly the past three years. But they refused to send it to you, knowing what you were constantly saying about my reputation, and how unworthy of Christian commitment, and how wicked, were your fabrications about me… They did not deliver it to one, whom they knew to be an enemy, sparing both my error and your guilt (Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.38).

Jerome seemingly believed that Pammachius withheld the letter because Rufinus was an enemy unworthy of reconciliation. But as a Christian, Pammachius should have favored restoration of friendly relations over grudges and ill will. What is unspoken here is the result that Pammachius must have assumed would occur: Rufinus would learn that Jerome's alternate letter (*Ep.* 84) was circulating around Rome, and would attempt to defend himself publicly. This would provoke Jerome into continuing with an apology. As a supporter of

(Jerome on how distinguished Christians at Rome wrote to him demanding that he answer Rufinus' charges); 3.37 (Jerome on how all of Rome was said to have been turned upside down by Rufinus' translation' and everyone requested that Jerome contribute the remedy); 3.38 (On Jerome's friends in Rome and how they wanted to protect and preserve Jerome's reputation).

Jerome, Pammachius must have assumed that Jerome would come out victorious in the controversy if he were to suppress a private letter that was intended to reconcile the two; he would have no reason to wish to see Jerome humiliated.[205] Events may have unfolded very differently had Rufinus received Jerome's letter. Perhaps, Rufinus would have embraced the opportunity to resolve their differences in an exchange of letters as Augustine had attempted to do. But by withholding *Ep.* 81, Pammachius forced the argument into the public sphere.

8.3 Letters made public

As we saw in Jerome's correspondence with Augustine, Jerome was sensitive about letters addressed to him ending up in the wrong hands and being circulated publicly. There is a division between those works that Jerome wished to go public and those intended to be kept private. Personal correspondence, especially that which involved him, was something that he expected to be kept confidential.[206] Jerome's initial reaction to learning of Rufinus' translation was to compose one public (*Ep.* 84) and one private letter (*Ep.* 81). After the private letter failed to reach its recipient and Jerome received no reply, he could have endeavored to maintain the private conversation, trying to reconcile their differences out of public view (as Augustine had persistently done); but he does not choose this course of action. Instead, Jerome's friends fuel his anger even further by informing him of Rufinus' (privately circulated) apology. Jerome

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[205] We must remember (as discussed above) that Pammachius also took Jerome's stringent works against Jovinian out of circulation because he was worried they would further upset Roman Christians (*Ep.* 48.2).

[206] *Ep.* 105.1.

elects to go public with the first two books of his apology; this escalates the feud openly and publicly.[207] In an attempt to return to a private reconciliation, Rufinus attempts to contact Jerome via letter, but Jerome's reply is only to add a third public book to his growing manuscripts against Rufinus.

8.4 Similarities to Augustine's interactions with Jerome

In several ways, the interactions with Rufinus and Augustine are comparable – both criticized Jerome on his use of Hebrew and his approach to scholarship, as discussed above. Additionally, Jerome believed they had both publicly called into question his reputation and orthodoxy. As we saw earlier, Jerome's concern for his reputation is evident in his correspondence with Augustine; this is clear in his apologies against Rufinus as well.[208] And yet, despite the public appropriation of Augustine's critical letters intended for him, Jerome never forced the argument beyond aggrieved personal correspondence. In short – although he believed that the Roman public had read Augustine's critical letters – letters that hinted at the heretical nature of some of Jerome's teachings – Jerome never forced the issue to continue under the public eye. In the case of Rufinus, Jerome escalated the affair to a battle of polemical apologies publicly circulated; despite the fact that Rufinus had begun the argument not by criticizing Jerome, but rather, as we have seen, by praising Jerome's work. This praise would earn him three scathing replies in the form of apologies. It is to the details of Jerome's response that we will now turn.

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[207] Jerome was certainly capable of writing abusive letters: see for example *Ep*. 40 to Marcella on Onasus and *Ep*. 61 to Vigilantius, but he does not choose this option for Rufinus. For more on letters of rebuke see Ebbeler (2012), chapter 1.

[208] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.11; 1.12; 3.3; 3.7; 3.22; 3.36; 3.37; 3.38.

8.5 Jerome on Rufinus' style and education

For the purposes of this chapter and in the interest of space, I will focus mainly on book 3 of Jerome's *Apologia contra Rufinum*. As Jerome composed this book after actually reading Rufinus' apology, it is more of a direct response to Rufinus' composition than the previous two books.[209] Jerome was no longer working only from hearsay and sections memorized by his brother. A few key examples will demonstrate the difference in tone and illustrate that, while Jerome continued to be respectful and evasive when encountering difficult points of discussion with Augustine, he is far more antagonistic when combatting Rufinus.

Jerome's snide tone towards his old friend is evident throughout the treatise. He comments that he will not bother criticizing Rufinus' writing style, as it is so clumsy that he does not need to.[210] He sarcastically refers to Rufinus' 'religious modesty' (*sancta verecundia*), 'Christian edification' (*aedificatio christiana*), and his modest and humble nature (*sic modestus es, sic pudens…*) that drives crowds to Jerome to tell him of Rufinus' abuse (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.3). There is no attempt to distance himself from the battle, or to delay the fight: Jerome bears the 'shield of truth' (*clipeo veritatis*) against Rufinus' 'javelins of deceit' (*iacula falsitatis*) (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.3).[211] While Jerome denigrates

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[209] *Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.1; 1.4; 3.3; 3.5; 1.21.

[210] *Non tam stultus eram ut reprehenderem, quam nemo potest fortius accusare nisi tu ipse dum scribis* (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.6).

[211] Jerome later refers to the two of them as engaging in a gladiatorial conflict (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.9).

Rufinus, calling him an 'uneducated writer' (*scriptor illitteratus*) who judges effrontery as eloquence and universally slandering everyone as a sign of a good conscience, he claims for himself the upper hand in the social hierarchy (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.6).[212] Rufinus himself, with his praise of Jerome, and his desire to follow in his literary slipstream, has already acknowledged his old friend's superiority – literarily and socially.[213] But even though Jerome holds the superior position in this situation, as accepted by both sides of the battle, Jerome refuses to be Rufinus' teacher: *nec tibi, ut dicis, ferulas adhibeo, neque ἀθηνογέροντα meum scutica et plagis litteras docere contendo*, 'I am not, as you say, going to employ the rod on you; nor will I attempt to teach my aged student his letters by means of the strap and blows' (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.6).[214] Rufinus is too old to learn any better, and, Jerome adds sneeringly, exhibits such eloquence, teaching, and talent that simple lecturers (*tractatores*) such as himself must seem slighted by the sharpness of Rufinus' talent.[215] Indeed, the reverse is true, and it is Rufinus' apparent desire to engage Jerome as an unwilling patron, sharing in his literary reputation and skill, that Jerome has an objection to.[216]

8.6 Jerome on Rufinus' desire for publicity

Moreover, Jerome accuses Rufinus of writing the books against him to show off. While Rufinus claims that only he and his friends had access to them, Jerome

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[212] Jerome also claims for himself the moral high ground: he is the austere monk while Rufinus has grown rich in the East (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.29).

[213] *Simulque admiror qua temeritate contra tantarum artium virum audeas dicere* (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.6).

[214] See *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.10; 3.16; 3.26 for more on Rufinus' faulty style.

[215] *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.6.

[216] Jerome stresses Rome's rejection of Rufinus: *innocentem te vocas, ad cuius interpretationem Roma contremuit; absentem, qui accusatus respondere non audes. Et tantum romanae urbis iudicium fugis ut magis obsidionem barbaricam quam pacatae urbis velis sententiam sustinere* (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.21).

has heard of them circulating around Rome, Italy, and the islands off the coast of Dalmatia.[217] Jerome confronts Rufinus:

> Et audes dicere te non ad ostentationem, sed ad aedificationem quasi christianum loqui, qui de sene senex tanta confingis quanta non diceret de latrone homicida, de scorto meretrix, scurra de mimo!

> And you dare to say that you are speaking as a Christian not to show off, but for edification; you, an old man, who about an old man, fabricate such things that a murderer would not say about a bandit, nor a prostitute about a harlot, or a clown about a mime (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.3)![218]

Jerome views Rufinus' efforts as an attempt to curry favor in Rome at his expense. While Jerome had heard similar rumors of Augustine's letters circulating around Rome and the Adriatic, he writes that his *friends* have suggested that Augustine is searching for public glory – the accusation is indirect and Jerome's supporters are the source of the suggestion, not Jerome himself.[219] Indeed, Jerome tells us, while discussing his private letter from Rufinus, that Rufinus wanted to write to him in an attempt to impress forcibly upon him (*ut me commoneas*) and to correct him (*et emendatum velis*) (Jer. *Apol. contra* Ruf. 3.7). This is not dissimilar in intent to Augustine's wish to engage Jerome in a corrective epistolary conversation. Yet, as we see, Jerome's reaction is very different.

8.7 Maintaining an old friendship

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[217] *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.3.

[218] See also *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.25 on Rufinus' *popularitas*, or courting of popular favor.

[219] *Ep.* 105.2.

Jerome found himself in a difficult position when composing his apologies against Rufinus. He had to defend his orthodoxy and reputation while attempting to adhere to the guidelines of friendship. He clearly presents himself in the apologies as taking friendship seriously.[220] But Jerome now had two different sides to take into account: his boyhood friendship with Rufinus, and his friendships with advantageous contacts in Rome. Jerome's concern for maintaining these friendships is apparent:

> Tu discipulos vocas qui me tuum condiscipulum suspicantur. Et quia parcior fui in refundendis laudibus tuis, putant me tuum esse συμμύστην. Hoc mihi praestitit prologus tuus ut plus me amicus laederes quam inimicus.

> You call 'students,' those who suspect me, your fellow student. And because I was rather sparing in flinging back your praises, they think that I am your fellow initiate! Your prologue brought it about that you injured me more as a friend than as an enemy (Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.35).

When forced to choose, Jerome's choice was obvious: in order to maintain his literary reputation he had to ensure that the 'students' supported his orthodoxy in order to maintain their social and financial support. Jerome's orthodoxy was important not only to himself, but also, by connection, to his supporters, who essentially force Jerome into the public argument requesting him to reply, not only for their benefit but for all of Rome.[221] If compelled to remain loyal to either Rufinus or his Roman supporters, Jerome is quite honest: *si … amicus tuus esse non possum nisi et haereticorum amicus fuero, levius tuas inimicitias quam illorum amicitias sustinebo*, 'if I am not able to be your friend unless I am the friend of heretics, I will more easily put up with your hostility than the friendship [of

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[220] Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.33; 3.34; 3.35.
[221] *Ep.* 83.1.

heretics] (Jer. *Apol. contra Ruf.* 3.37). The social context makes Jerome's reaction seem pragmatic.

8.8 Influence of status on Jerome's replies

When presented with an opponent whom he had never met and who was, moreover, a bishop, Jerome undertakes an evasive strategy. Even when Augustine exasperates Jerome with incessant letters, questions him on the contentious issue of Origen, and supposedly allows these critical missives to end up circulating publicly, Jerome refrains from responding publicly, and the harshness of the exchange is muted and indirect. Indeed, Augustine frankly challenges Jerome's authority and orthodoxy, while Rufinus in his prologue only affirms it, albeit by attempting to use it to better himself. One wonders, if Jerome and Rufinus had not shared a rung on the social ladder, whether Jerome would have reacted as strongly. As acknowledged by Jerome, both men try to slipstream in different ways – Augustine by entering into combat with Jerome as an established figure, Rufinus by assimilating himself to Jerome.

We have seen above how Jerome reacts in two different cases. I suggest that the key to understanding Jerome's varying responses lies in each man's relative social status. In Augustine's case, Jerome took an evasive course of action. As Ebbeler has suggested,

> Augustine was just the sort of contact Jerome liked to cultivate: someone with ecclesiastical authority but who was sufficiently removed from Bethlehem. Jerome surely hoped that Augustine would facilitate the circulation of his books in Africa.[222]

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[222] Ebbeler (2012), 115.

But instead of befriending Jerome in his letters and offering to disseminate Jerome's work, Augustine instead criticized him, probing him on questions of orthodoxy and Origenism. In order to avoid the Christian community developing an interest in his disagreements with Augustine, Jerome is controlled in his replies; the exchange never goes beyond Augustine's (failed) attempts to engage in a corrective epistolary correspondence and Jerome's restrained annoyance tempered by evasion. On the other hand, in Rufinus' case, it was not long before Jerome took the offensive. Their situations were far too similar for Jerome's comfort: their shared desire to translate Greek theology for Western consumption, their ascetic lifestyles, their educations, their affiliations with, and indeed reliance on, aristocratic women. Jerome was not a unique case. If we additionally consider Jerome's financial circumstances, despite his adherence to an ascetic lifestyle, his literary interests were costly. These expenditures could only be obtained successfully if aristocratic women selected him as their exegetical and spiritual guide. As Brown has pointed out: '[t]o heighten his profile as an expert, [Jerome] talked down as many as possible of his contemporaries.'[223] Rufinus was no exception. It was a pragmatic move on Jerome's part to enter into polemical battles with the likes of Rufinus, but not Augustine. Moreover, it is interesting to note that Jerome's response to Augustine was much more favorable once Augustine agreed to follow the conventional epistolary rules, succumbed to Jerome's view of the social hierarchy that dictated their relationship, and addressed him as a teacher

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[223] Brown (2012), 261.

figure.[224] When Augustine and Jerome's versions of the social map aligned, the two men encountered fewer problems.

9. Jerome's Interactions with Ambrose

9.1 Jerome's relationship with Ambrose

To take Jerome's management of rhetorical battles one step further, I would finally like to consider briefly the case of Ambrose. How does Jerome react when he encounters a figure already firmly established in Christian society?[225] Scholars have long been interested in Jerome's interactions with Ambrose, bishop of Milan. Several have pinpointed Jerome's allusive hostility to the bishop and others have attempted to identify the reason for Jerome's animosity: Grützmacher (1901) and Wiesen (1964), for example, chalk up Jerome's oblique references to jealousy.[226] Building on work done by Paredi (1964b) and Nautin (1972-1973), Oberhelman (1991) and Hunter (2009) have argued that Jerome's negative comments about Ambrose stemmed from Jerome's expulsion from Rome: Oberhelman posits that Ambrose must have either directly refused to defend Jerome, or was part of the *pharisaeorum schola* ('senate of Pharisees') that Jerome refers to in the preface of his translation of Didymus' *De spiritu sancto*.[227]

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[224] See Ebbeler (2012), 148, on Augustine's new role, not as a rival, but as Jerome's student about a decade after their last exchange (*Ep*. 115; *Ep*. 116). See *Ep*. 131.9 and *Ep*. 131.10 where Augustine implores Jerome to teach him. Ebbeler (2012), 150, comments that within this second phase of correspondence 'Augustine's studious deference is matched by Jerome's effusive flattery'.

[225] See Chapter 3, n.14 on Ambrose's status as bishop.

[226] Grützmacher (1901), 2.76. Wiesen (1964), 244.

[227] Oberhelman (1991), 389. Hunter (2009), 177. Jer. *Liber Didymi de spiritu sancto, praef.* Oberhelman's case is highly plausible: he determines the end of 384 as being the turning point of Jerome and Ambrose's relationship as Jerome was complimentary to Ambrose until then (see, for example, *Ep*. 22.22 where he instructs Eustochium to consult Ambrose's eloquent treatise on

For the purposes of this brief section, I am not concerned with Jerome's reasons for hostility,[228] but rather the manner in which Jerome manages his relationship with Ambrose.

9.2 Jerome's veiled attacks against Ambrose

As discussed briefly above, Jerome's enmity against Ambrose during his lifetime tended to be veiled.[229] Some of Jerome's attacks were so indirect that commentators have misconstrued them as compliments.[230] Indeed, Rufinus even points out Jerome's hostility towards Ambrose in his treatises against Jerome in order to make the references more explicit.[231] Up until Ambrose's death in 397, Jerome's negative comments about the bishop and his work are obscured by metaphors; Ambrose is never named – he appears as a crow, or his work is subtly alluded to, but there is never explicit mention by name. For example, in the preface to the translation of Didymus' *De spiritu sancto*, which Jerome composed following his expulsion from Rome, he famously refers to

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virginity. Although Adkin (1993b), 365-366, argues that this too was a slight on Ambrose and hints towards charges of plagiarism.). Further complimentary references to Ambrose can be found in *Ep*. 15.4 and Jerome's *Chronicon Eusebii* 47.247, which both date to before 385. Oberhelman determines 386/387 as beginning Jerome's disparagement of Ambrose and finds evidence of Jerome's hostility in his prologue to the *Commentary on Ephesians*; he disagrees with Paredi and Nautin, who take the prefaces of the translations of Didymus and Origen as Jerome's earliest attacks (393). Nauroy (1988) has argued against 385 as a turning point. Similarly, Cain (2005) has argued against a correlation between Jerome's negative remarks about Ambrose and his unwilling departure from Rome. Adkin (1993b), 365, argues that Jerome was hostile to Ambrose before 385.

[228] See Hunter (2009), 175 n. 3, who has collated the scholarship on this topic. More recent scholarship includes: Layton (2002), Adkin (1997), Davidson (1997), Oberhelman (1991), Adkin (1993b), and Testard (1988).

[229] See for example *Ep*. 22.22.

[230] Hunter (2009), 177.

[231] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.25.

Ambrose as a 'misshapen little crow' (*informis cornicula*),[232] who showcases himself in another bird's colors – insinuating that Ambrose has plagiarized from Greek authors. Moreover, he condemns his translation, which began as good Greek but morphed into far less stylish Latin:

> Malui alieni operis interpres existere, quam (ut quidam faciunt) informis cornicula alienis me coloribus adornare. Legi dudum cuiusdam libellos de Spiritu sancto: et iuxta Comici sententiam ex Graecis bonis, Latina vidi non bona. Nihil ibi dialecticum, nihil virile atque districtum, quod lectorem vel ingratis in assensum trahat: sed totum flaccidum, molle, nitidum, atque formosum, et exquisitis hinc inde odoribus pigmentatum

> I preferred to step forth as a translator of another's work, rather than, as certain men do, as a deformed little crow who adorns himself with another's colors. A little while ago I read the little books of a certain man concerning the holy spirit: and to quote the Comedian's saying, 'from good Greek, I saw bad Latin.'[233] There was no logic, nothing manly and engaging, which actually compels the reader even against his will to agree: in truth, the entire coloring was all feeble, soft, but also polished and beautiful, and adorned with fragrances sought out from all over (Jer. *Liber Didymi de spiritu sancto, praef*.)

When Jerome means to criticize Ambrose, he is circumspect concerning his subject. The bishop is never specifically mentioned, but there is enough information to piece together to whom Jerome is referring.

Further indirect negative references to Ambrose can be found in Jerome's preface to his commentary on Ephesians;[234] his translation of Origen's homilies on Luke;[235] *Ep*. 52 to Nepotian; *Ep*. 53 and 58 to Paulinus of Nola;[236] and *Ep*. 69 to

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[232] An echo from Hor. *Ep*. 1.3.19.

[233] Ter. *Eun*. 6-7.

[234] In Jer. *Commentariorum in epistulam ad Ephesios* 26.469D-70A Jerome indirectly comments on the pompous, rhetorical nature of Ambrose's style.

[235] See Jer. *Origenis Homiliae in Lucam, praef*. where Jerome refers to 'the croaking raven' (*corvum … crocitantem*) after informing his readers that he has undertaken this work because Paula and

Oceanus.[237] In each case, Jerome is wary enough to omit his subject's name. If we look at *Ep.* 69, for example, it seems highly plausible that his pointed remarks were aimed at Ambrose's credentials to be bishop of Milan. Jerome, after outlining the necessary qualities that a bishop or a priest should embody, turns to commenting on the current lax nature of appointing bishops: *heri catechumenus, hodie pontifex; heri in amphitheatro, hodie in ecclesia; vespere in circo, mane in altari; dudum fautor, nunc virginum consecrator,* 'yesterday a catechumen, today a bishop; yesterday in the amphitheater, today in the church; in the circus in the evening, in the morning at the high altar; a little while ago an admirer, now a consecrator of virgins' (*Ep.* 69.9).[238] Such a caustic comment seems to refer to Ambrose's quick transition from priest to bishop.[239] But again, Jerome is guarded in his criticism: Ambrose goes unnamed.

9.3 Jerome's avoidance of names

Jerome has veiled his criticism of targets other than Ambrose. *Ep.* 40 written to Marcella contains a scathing account of one 'Onasus'. The fictitious name seems to suggest a combination of the Greek ὄνος and the Latin *asinus*, both meaning 'ass', as well as a play on the word *nasus*, appropriate as Jerome highlights the

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Eustochium were dismayed at a translation they had read of Origen's *Homilies on Luke*. Adkin (1997), 10-14, argues that here Jerome was mocking Ambrose's lack of Hebrew.

[236] On *Ep.* 52, 53, and 58, see Testard (1988), who discusses how Jerome uses specific terminology found in Ambrose's *De officiis* to expose Ambrose's admission that he was unprepared for the episcopal office (Ambrose *De officiis* 1.3-4).

[237] On *Ep.* 69 as a response to Ambrose's *De officiis* see Paredi (1964b), 193, and Davidson (2001), 677.

[238] Furthermore, in *Ep.* 69.9 Jerome focuses on Ambrose's failure to learn properly before he begins to teach.

[239] Ambrose *De officiis* 1.3-4.

subject's deformed nose.[240] Rebenich also suggests that Jerome is sarcastically playing upon the surname *Onesimus*, meaning 'the helpful'.[241] It seems likely that Jerome chose to disguise the identity of the man he lampooned. Scholars have suggested that 'Onasus' may have been an influential man whom Jerome met while in Rome.[242] Moreover, Jerome is also alluding to Cicero's *Verrine Orations*, which includes discussion of a wealthy, prominent nobleman named Onasus (Cic. *Verr*. 2.5.120). By using such a name, Jerome insinuates that his subject too may have been a man of rank. Here we have another case of Jerome obscuring the name of an opponent he may have considered too dangerous or well connected to name directly.[243]

9.4 A possible reply

Up until recently, scholars have agreed that Ambrose did not ever reply to Jerome's veiled attacks. Oberhelman comments that Ambrose would have 'quite correctly' considered it the 'buzzing of a fly' coming from a disgraced and isolated monk.[244] However, Hunter has recently argued that Ambrose was aware of the negative remarks and responded in his *Epistulae extra collectionem* 14.78.[245] In this letter Ambrose writes to the church of Vercelli in order to support his choice of a monk named Honoratus for the episcopal election against an affluent landowner supported by the people. Hunter points out that

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[240] Wiesen (1964), 203-204. *Ep*. 40.2.
[241] Rebenich (2002), 82.
[242] Rebenich (2002), 82; Nenci (1995); Grützmacher (1901), 1.281.
[243] Jerome also calls Onasus a crow (*corniculae…garrienti*) (*Ep.* 40.2). See Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.29, where Rufinus accuses Jerome of also expunging the elder Melania from his *Chronicle.*
[244] Oberhelman (1991), 383.
[245] Hunter (2009), 181-189.

Ambrose's letter seems to respond to the oblique criticisms of Jerome found in *Ep*. 69 in several ways: both letters comment on the issue of clergy who remarry; both raise Ambrose's qualifications to be a bishop; and both include a metaphor involving ravens.[246] If Hunter is correct, then it strengthens the case being made that Jerome's oblique references above were aimed at Ambrose.

9.5 Jerome's direct references to Ambrose

When Jerome does name Ambrose directly in 392/393 in his *De viris illustribus*, he refrains from stating exactly what he thinks of Ambrose, claiming that he will be criticized either for engaging in flattery, or for telling the truth.[247] It clearly follows that Jerome did not hold Ambrose in high esteem at this point: while he permits himself to use Ambrose's name, he is still careful to keep his opinion implicit.[248]

It is only after Ambrose dies in 397 that Jerome's criticisms become more forthcoming. For example, in *Ep*. 84 to Pammachius and Oceanus while Jerome defends his use of Origen, he includes Ambrose in the list of scholars who have worked with Origen's corpus. But Ambrose is no longer referred to as a misshapen crow – instead Jerome boldly writes: *nuper Ambrosius sic Exaemeron illius compilavit, ut magis Hippolyti sententias Basiliique sequeretur*, 'recently

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[246] Hunter (2009), 181-182. He comments that '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' (182).

[247] *De viris illustribus* 124.

[248] As Wiesen (1964), 240, notes: '[i]t is significant that most of Jerome's open and explicit references to Ambrose are complimentary.'

Ambrose plagiarized [Origen's] Six Days' Work in such a way, so that it followed the thoughts more of Hippolytus and Basil.'[249] Direct accusations of plagiarism do not occur while Ambrose is alive.

Examples, such as those given above demonstrate that Jerome could show restraint when dealing with an established bishop, even one whose scholarship and methodology he did not support. Ambrose, as Jerome's superior in terms of ecclesiastical ranking, was unlikely to be a target of overt abuse. When it came to intellectual endeavors, Jerome may have disagreed with Ambrose's approach, but he was not bold enough to challenge the bishop of Milan openly. As discussed above, Jerome himself states: 'it is juvenile bragging…to strive for fame for [one's] own name by finding fault with distinguished men'.[250] Following his own advice, Jerome seems to bear this in mind when choosing to enter into verbal battles: he selects opponents at or below his social standing – men he judges he will be able to outmaneuver and use in order to make his position more secure.

10. CONCLUSION

This analysis has demonstrated that Jerome was cognizant of and influenced by the social ranking of each of his acquaintances. Previous studies have underestimated Jerome's attention to social situations, rank, and power. This awareness of status would have naturally influenced whom he targeted in his abusive treatises and whom he chose to avoid. Jerome pulled no punches when

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[249] *Ep.* 84.7. See Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.185.4 for a different, yet still negative use of *compilavit*, where Cicero attacks Verres for plundering various temples of Sicily.
[250] *Ep.* 102.2.

presented with an opponent whom he considered either an equal or one of lesser renown and authority. But when a confrontation arose with an upstart possessing significant social backing or with an influential bishop, Jerome uncharacteristically leaves out names, or avoids the abusive rhetoric he showers on others. This allows us to see with clarity how Jerome situated himself and aimed to better his position on the social map: he targeted his abuse at those near him on the social ladder, and tried to avoid openly irritating those who held recognized ecclesiastical positions.

This rhetorical pattern demonstrates the role played by relative social status and its perception in Jerome's interactions with his contemporaries. When combined with the broader rhetorical framework discussed in Chapter 2, it will provide an important aid for understanding how Jerome's polemical works against Helvidius, Jovinian, and Vigilantius fit within Jerome's careful navigation of his social landscape. It is to these treatises that we will now turn.

Part 2

Chapter 4. *Adversus Helvidium*: Jerome the Teacher

1. INTRODUCTION

Jerome wrote *Adversus Helvidium*, also known as *De perpetua virginitate beatae Mariae adversus Helvidium*, and *Adversus Iovinianum* in order to argue for the superiority of virginity over marriage. While these two treatises discuss the same issue they contain different forms of rhetoric chosen to suit Jerome's varying needs. Jerome uses strident language to attack his opponent in both treatises, but the nuances of his abusive rhetoric become apparent upon closer inspection. The earlier *Adversus Helvidium*, written around 383,[1] focuses on the figure of the Virgin Mary and attempts to disprove Helvidius' claim that Mary gave birth to children after Jesus. *Adversus Iovinianum*, written about ten years later in 393, ostensibly singles out and condemns one man who supported the belief that virgins, widows, and married women were of equal merit.[2] Both treatises, *Adversus Helvidium* and *Adversus Iovinianum*, include important reminders to his readers that Jerome does not wish to cast aspersions upon marriage.[3] But the techniques of abusive rhetoric in each one differ, as do the outcomes and responses to each treatise. Jerome's modes of attack in defending the superiority of virginity over marriage can be traced through these two

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[1] See Cavallera (1922), 2.24, Kelly (1975), 104, and Rocca (1998), 22, on the dating of the treatise.

[2] For the date of the composition of the *Adversus Iovinianum* see Nautin (1974), 253-255. Jovinian's four main beliefs stated that: 1) virgins, widows, and married women, who have all been baptized and are otherwise equal, are of equal merit. 2) Those who have been baptized cannot be defeated by the devil. 3) There is no difference between abstinence from food and receiving food while giving thanks. 4) There is only one reward in the kingdom of heaven for those who have maintained their baptismal vow (*Adv. Iov.* 1.3).

[3] *Adv. Iov.* 1.3, 8.

treatises as well as several letters written to various ascetic supporters or followers.[4]

Jerome's position in society guided his pen and his rhetoric of abuse was tailored in the hopes of securing the support of influential members of society. However, Jerome's success rate varied along with contemporary reactions to each of these treatises. I will argue that Jerome's rhetoric in *Adversus Helvidium* (when examined alongside his contemporary situation in society) potentially positioned him for an episcopal position. As we will see, Jerome's focus on Helvidius' shameless desire for fame and the failings that accompany such an appetite allowed Jerome to present himself in a much more favorable light, a light that would brightly illuminate his own episcopal qualities. As will become evident in Chapter 5, despite addressing the same issue – virginity over marriage – Jerome's rhetoric changes drastically when combating Jovinian. I suggest that such a shift is reflective of his position outside society and away from Rome.

In this chapter I will analyze the tactics used by Jerome when writing against Helvidius and his views on virginity and marriage in order to show how Jerome maneuvered for authority – authority that could be gained by affirming his reputation for vigorous orthodoxy. This chapter will first examine the structure of Jerome's treatise against Helvidius, determining the placement of his most abusive passages against Helvidius. I will then consider how Jerome depicts his own standing within the Christian community in this treatise. From

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[4] See Jerome's famous *Ep.* 22 to Eustochium, *Ep.* 107 to Laeta on her daughter Paula's upbringing, and *Ep.* 128 to Gaudentius on the topic of his daughter Pacatula.

there, I will discuss Jerome's attitude towards fame, humility, learning, and innovation within his abuse of Helvidius and how these themes of abuse serve to delineate the stark differences between Jerome and his opponent. We will see that Jerome takes on the role of the traditional teacher, and Helvidius the errant student. Jerome's rhetoric appeals to precedent and tradition, while Helvidius' views are portrayed as innovative and heretical. Overall, this chapter will demonstrate how Jerome's rhetoric concerning Helvidius allowed him to construct a persona for himself that contrasted with that of his opponent and presented himself as a potential episcopal candidate. The little we know of Helvidius and a summary of the work may prove useful to begin with.

2. HELVIDIUS

Sometime around 383 after having read a pamphlet distributed by a monk named Carterius (and arguably in response to the asceticism that gained Jerome influence in Rome), Helvidius wrote a work, which promoted the idea that Mary led a traditional married life following the birth of Jesus and went on to have several other children with Joseph. Helvidius' treatise on the perpetual virginity of Mary is no longer extant, so we must rely on Jerome's account of his opponent. This is somewhat problematic as Jerome himself admits that he never met Helvidius.[5] The only images he grants us of Helvidius portray him as a snake slithering away as Jerome defeats him with scripture, and as an uneducated bumpkin who flaunts deliberately provocative views in order to

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[5] *Adv. Hel*. 16. Kelly (1975), 106.

achieve fame.[6] According to Jerome, Helvidius is an ignorant lout, a layman who fancies himself a priest.[7]

The only other information we have concerning Helvidius provides a different account and comes to us from the presbyter and historian Gennadius of Marseille, who in the late fifth century published a continuation of Jerome's *De viris illustribus*.[8] Gennadius delivers a slightly better account of Helvidius: he informs us that he was a student under Auxentius, the 'Arian' Bishop of Milan, and wrote with religious devotion.[9] Assessing Helvidius based on the reconstruction of his argument produced by Jerome, scholars have since judged his work favorably and have argued that Helvidius was a capable controversialist.[10] Indeed, Helvidius' views, which we learn about through Jerome's treatise, would have been contrary to those of prominent individuals such as Damasus and Ambrose of Milan.[11] More pertinent to this discussion, however, is the fact that by refuting Helvidius' treatise Jerome would have been asserting the views of such figures and assuming their support. This support would have been useful to Jerome when positioning himself for authority. Both his abusive rhetoric and his important connections in society suggest that Jerome was concerned with establishing himself as a person of influence.

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[6] *Adv. Hel*. 14; 16. Such a presentation of Helvidius would fall into line with the heresiographical tradition. See Henderson (1998), 85-95. *Consecutus es quod volebas, nobilis es factus in scelere* (*Adv. Hel*. 16).

[7] Or vice versa: *laicus et sacerdos* (*Adv. Hel.* 1).

[8] Painter (1999), 214.

[9] *Scripsit quidem religionis studio* (*De viris illustribus* 32 / *PL* 58.1077).

[10] See Joussard (1944), 150, 156; Kelly (1975), 105; and Painter (1999), 214. Joussard (1944), 142, suggests that Helvidius may have been using Symmachus as a model. Hunter (2007), 189, does not comment on the quality of Helvidius' alleged work, but states that none of Jerome's arguments were 'entirely persuasive'.

[11] Kelly (1975), 105.

Helvidius may not have been a prominent figure in society, but Jerome presents himself as such. Indeed, despite the fact that his strong ascetic convictions and sharp critique of Roman society tended to provoke exasperation, his rhetoric creates the persona of an authoritative individual in the Christian community. It is likely that Helvidius may have received support from those in Rome who were concerned by the growing trend towards asceticism and the emphasis placed on the superiority of virginity over marriage.[12] Despite Jerome encountering opposition to his ascetic views, he rhetorically presents himself as being the more traditional and the more empowered of the two. Such a statement may be apparent; however, it is important to observe the manner in which Jerome contends for power. Such considerations may help illuminate the work performed by Jerome's rhetoric and help to demonstrate the power of invective as a rhetorical tool. Before engaging with the rhetoric of Jerome's treatise in detail, it will be helpful to offer a schematic review of the structure of *Adversus Helvidium*, and to comment on the overall structure.

3. STRUCTURE OF *ADVERSUS HELVIDIUM*

1 – 2	Introduction - Jerome claims that he has been asked by brethren to reply to Helvidius' pamphlet. He worries that writing the refutation will bring unmerited attention to Helvidius. He invokes the Holy Spirit, Jesus, and

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[12] See Chapter 2, 3.6. Hunter (2007), 130-170, after considering the contemporary reactions against asceticism argues that Jovinian actually had more in common 'with other fourth-century polemicists and was closer to the mainstream of Christian opinion than his opponents would have allowed'. For the increasing popularity of asceticism: see Van Dam (2011), 232, who comments that the emperor Valens' order during the 370s (Jer. *Chronicon Eusebii* 375) for monks to be drafted into the army is indicative of the growing number of monks. See also Lenski (2004) on cudgeling and conscription of monks as a means of social control. Rousseau (1978), 10, comments on the growing resistance against monks by pagans such as Eunapius and Libanius as well: see Libanius *Oratio* 30.8-11; *Oratio* 2.32; Eunapius *Vitae sophistarum* 472; Amm. Marc. 27.3.14. Rousseau states that problems arose because '[ascetics] appeared to reject that prized inheritance of the classical tradition, the culture, commerce, and government of cities' (10).

	God to defend Mary's virginity. Jerome claims that he will not use rhetorical tactics but only scripture.
3 - 4	Discusses Helvidius' first proposition which deliberates on Matthew 1.18-20. Jerome discusses the terms *desponsatam* 'betrothed' and *commendatam* 'entrusted', and the nuances of using the preposition 'before'. He argues against the idea that Joseph and Mary had marital relations after the birth of Jesus.
5 - 8	Jerome discusses the use of the words *donec* or *usque*, 'until'. He relates Helvidius' argument, which is that if one uses these words it implies that that something, which has not yet happened, will inevitably occur. Jerome uses scripture to argue against this, saying that quite often examples occur where the preposition implies neither time limit nor necessity of occurrence.
7 – 8 (*PL* 23, 193 [201])[13]	Jerome continues to argue about the use of 'before' and 'until'.
9 – 10	On the topic of the firstborn son. Jerome contradicts Helvidius' suggestion that in order to be called the 'first-born', one must have siblings. He argues that 'first-born' indicates only that none came before that child, not necessarily that more followed.
11 -13	Engages with Helvidius' proposition that the Lord's siblings are demonstrated in the Gospels. Jerome gives examples of some of the passages that Helvidius cites, and then presents his own argument which focuses around the idea that individuals can have varying names in scripture and that Helvidius has mistakenly read Mary the wife of Cleophas (Mary's sister) as Jesus' mother Mary.
14– 15	Jerome then attempts to show that the Lord's aunt Mary's sons (i.e. Jesus' cousins) can be called brethren of the Lord. He argues that in scripture there are four types of brethren: those by nature, by race, by family, and by love. Examples of each category follow.
16	He then launches into the main attack on Helvidius' ignorance. He accuses him of attempting to gain fame by questioning the virginity of Mary. He comments on Helvidius' lack of style and quality of soul.
17	Jerome lists others who support his argument while commenting again on Helvidius' ignorance.
18	Jerome produces an image of pregnancy and the birth to emphasize everything Jesus had to endure and which all should be thankful for.
19 – 21	He proposes that not only Mary but also Joseph remained a virgin. This leads him into his comparison between virginity and marriage. He concludes that marriage presents a woman with too many distractions that can be detrimental to her faith. While there may be no commandment concerning virginity, according to Jerome it achieves the highest reward.
22	Conclusion – Jerome acknowledges that he has become rhetorical in his

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[13] The text of the *PL* has an additional section 7 and 8.

	treatise and blames Helvidius' insistence that marriage and virginity are equal in glory. He preempts Helvidius' response, hypothesizing that the truth will prove too powerful for him and he will have to resort to slander and abuse.

3.1 Positioning of abuse

It is worth noting where Jerome places his main abusive passage against Helvidius. It occurs in chapter 16 where Helvidius is accused of being hungry for glory and attempting to gain importance by questioning the eternal virginity of Mary. The abuse is concentrated in this section; up until this point Jerome has remained relatively restrained in his language. He may include a disparaging comment towards Helvidius occasionally, but overall, the treatise remains focused on the topic at hand: Mary's perpetual virginity. But within chapter 16 we see the potential of Jerome's abusive pen. He critiques Helvidius' craving for celebrity and then paints him as a risible figure. The reader is now adequately prepared to read on and rally behind Jerome. Helvidius has been ridiculed, and Jerome has already emerged as the victor: an educated, humble Christian, eager to adhere to tradition. It is only *after* this exposition of Helvidius' character that Jerome launches into his argument on virginity vs. marriage (*Adv. Hel*. 19-20). I suggest that Jerome recognized that this was likely to be the most contentious part of his treatise. The best position for this topic would therefore be in the shadow of a highly rhetorical section that placed Jerome in the best light.[14] Jerome, a staunch ascetic, who never deviated in his support of virginity, would have been sensitive to the controversial nature of his statements; he even begins this section by stating that he has no intention of

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[14] See Chapter 2, 4.1.

disparaging marriage with his extolment of virginity (*Adv. Hel.* 20).[15] Therefore, the structure of Jerome's treatise and the precision with which he incorporates his abusive passages allow him to include his contentious, highly ascetic views on virginity to his advantage. It is to these abusive passages we now turn.

3.2 Helvidius and heresiology

While the main point of Jerome's treatise is to emphasize the superiority of virginity over marriage, the general tone of the work is disparaging towards Helvidius as well. As mentioned above, one of the passages that focuses closely on condemning Helvidius discusses his desire for fame (*Adv. Hel.* 16). It is this trait that is the central point of abuse. Jerome condemns Helvidius for striving for fame in the most inappropriate manner and judges him unworthy of the attention of the Christian community. It is this supposed desire for celebrity that propels Helvidius to put forth his heretical ideas about the Virgin Mary and thus causes him to expose his ignorance, gaining him a place as an innovator of heresy.[16] The dichotomy between Jerome and Helvidius is threefold: while Helvidius aims at celebrity and is guilty of self-aggrandizement, Jerome is more diffident about his career goals; while Helvidius shows himself to be uneducated, Jerome is knowledgeable in scriptures and languages; and while Helvidius presents this new form of blasphemy, Jerome retains his conservative views and upholds traditions of the past.[17] As Jerome concentrates his abuse of

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[15] *Et quia de comparatione virginitatis et nuptiarum sum aliqua dicturus, obsecro lecturos ne me putent nuptiis detraxisse in virginum laude.*

[16] *Quis, te oro, ante hanc blasphemiam noverat, quis dupondii supputabat* (*Adv. Hel.* 16).

[17] This is, at least, how Jerome presents himself. See Chapter 2, 3.6 on the problematic nature of asceticism for the Roman aristocracy. See Hunter (2007), 72, on Jerome's opponents who

Helvidius in these three areas, he simultaneously casts himself in a very positive light. Although the focal point of Jerome's abusive rhetoric is Helvidius' coveted celebrity, the rhetoric is also used to reveal Helvidius' (supposed) ignorance and innovative heretical views. Jerome's abuse comes full circle as both of these qualities contribute to Helvidius' desire for fame.

To an extent, Jerome's abuse falls in line with the tradition of heresiological works that we discussed earlier.[18] We saw that the patterns of refutation used by antiheretical writers are not dissimilar from the topoi found in late Republican and early Imperial passages of invective. Likely exaggerated accounts of a subject's dissolute habits illuminate similarities between Christian and secular techniques of abusive rhetoric. Jerome draws on his rhetorical training, denouncing Helvidius as a heretic, while also incorporating arguments and allusions that would have resonated with an educated audience through the process of identification.[19] Moreover, as we will see below, Helvidius' disregard for precedent and tradition comes to the fore as one of his major failings and Jerome is quick to shine a light upon this weakness in order to strengthen his own position. As heresiologists tended to portray heretics as divided even among themselves, and orthodoxy as a unified body of thought,[20] Jerome embraces this schematization and rhetorically presents himself as a traditional figure united with established figures of power.

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supported marriage. Jerome later complains of Jovinian, another anti-ascetic proponent, as being accepted among monks and other members of the clergy (*Ep.* 7.4). Augustine comments on Jovinian's views successfully encouraging ascetics to abandon celibacy and marry (August. *Retract*. 2.22).

[18] See Chapter 2, 2.2.

[19] See Chapter 2, 4.2 and 4.3.

[20] Henderson (1998), 117. Robinson (1988), 6.

As I will discuss below, the concept of innovation, which by definition lacked precedent and deviated from tradition, would have aroused concern even in a non-Christian audience. The Romans had long held tradition and precedent (the *mos veterum*) in high regard.[21] Exemplars added gravitas to an argument. Helvidius, as a heretic instigating a new strain of heresy, would therefore be an easy subject of abuse – reprehensible not only for his heterodox beliefs, but also for his irreverence towards tradition. Such tactics would permit Jerome to appear more traditional and thus allow him to align himself more closely with orthodoxy than his ascetic beliefs would have normally allowed him to do. To start, however, Jerome sought to define Helvidius' initial failure, and the one from which all his subsequent crimes followed: his desire for fame.

3.3 Jerome's standing

Jerome begins the treatise against Helvidius by worrying whether such a work ought to be attempted. He claims that after having been asked by the brethren he put the task off for a while: *non quod difficile fuerit hominem rusticanum, et vix primis quoque imbutum litteris, super veri assertione convincere; sed ne respondendo dignus fieret, qui vinceretur*, 'not because it was difficult to refute a yokel, who has scarcely been given initial instruction in reading, with statements of truth; but

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[21] See Barclay (1959), on the importance of the *mos maiorum* or *veterum*, the customs of the ancestors and tradition within Roman education. Children were raised to revere, uphold, and *continue* these traditions based on the precedents that had been set before them. See also Miles (1997), 111-118, on the *mos maiorum* and the *auctoritas maiorum* as integral parts of Latin discourse especially within the works of Livy.

lest by answering [Helvidius] become worthy of being defeated' (*Adv. Hel.* 1).[22] Thus, the scales begin in Jerome's favor with (outwardly) inadvertent self-aggrandizement. Jerome is immediately portrayed as the learned scholar who has not only been requested by the holy brethren to counteract Helvidius' heresy,[23] but who also *already* has enough clout that by undertaking this task he may bring Helvidius unwarranted publicity.[24] Jerome never explicitly states it is his reputation that will bring Helvidius fame; the reason for this subtlety will be discussed later in this chapter. This raises an interesting power dynamic within works of abuse: to an extent, the quality of the person making the attack implies the quality of the subject of the attack.[25] Therefore, Jerome, worrying that he will put Helvidius on the map, by the same token implies that he himself is a notable figure. Jerome mocks Helvidius who, despite allegedly lacking the rudimentary education necessary to be a clergyman, fancies himself *laicus et sacerdos*, '[both] layman *and* priest' in an attempt to give himself more esteem than he deserves (*Adv. Hel.* 1).[26] Moreover, Jerome emphasizes Helvidius' hunger for recognition: *accepta materia disputandi, amplius inciperet blasphemare, et quasi de sublimi loco in totum orbem ferre sententiam*, 'having received fuel for his argument, he would begin to blaspheme more and as if from an elevated

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[22] On the undesirability of sounding like a rustic see Cicero *De or.* 3.44. A country-man was considered to have a harsh quality (*asperitatem*), while a city-dweller spoke with 'a smoothness of expression' (*lenitate vocis*) (3.43). The Roman accent sounded in no way provincial and was considered by Cicero to have nothing offensive or displeasing about it (3.44). See also Cicero's invective against Clodius (*In P. Clodium et Curionem*, fr. 22) for the juxtaposition of the *rusticus* and *urbanus*. See Feldherr (2007), 94, on Catullus' use of *rusticus* in his invective. On the use of *rusticus* as a pejorative see Lilja (1965), 62.

[23] *Nuper rogatus a fratribus, ut adversus libellum cuiusdam Helvidii responderem* (*Adv. Hel.* 1).

[24] In 383, Jerome worked with Damasus (*Ep.* 49.18), but Cain (2009a), 33-34, has argued that Jerome exaggerates this connection.

[25] See Chapter 2, 3.4 and Conley (2010), 3 and 113, on the vertical axis of insult.

[26] Joussard (1944), 139-156, argues against Helvidius' position as a mere layman. See Rocca (1998), 55-56, on varying interpretations of Helvidius' status.

position, to speak his opinion to the whole world' (*Adv. Hel.* 1). This is, by all accounts, what Jerome wishes to avoid. However, due to his loyalty to the brethren, he fulfills their request.[27] This is the most obvious immediate interpretation, but Jerome's apparent *humilitas* deserves more discussion.

4. *Humilitas*

4.1 The Christian concept of *humilitas*

When compared with its usage in the period of Late Antiquity, the concept of *humilitas* has very different associations in early Roman ideology.[28] As the word naturally stems from *humus* meaning the soil, ground, or earth, the word had originally meant a lowness or meanness in the sense of humbleness of rank, lineage, or influence.[29] In this context, the quality of *humilitas* would not have been something that one would have striven for; it was much more likely a state

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[27] *Verum quia hae omnes tam iustae silentii mei causae ob scandalum fratrum, qui ad eius rabiem movebantur, iustiori fine cessarunt* (*Adv. Hel.* 1).

[28] *Humilitas* was categorized along with conditions like slavery, exile, and illness. See Cic. *Tusc.* 5.10.29, which identifies evils that can plague good men (*boni*). *Humilitas* features in this list along with *paupertas* (poverty), *ignobilitas* (obscurity), *solitudo* (loneliness), *amissio suorum* (losing one's property), *graves dolores corporis* (serious pain of the body), *perdita valetudo* (loss of health), *debilitas* (infirmity), *caecitas* (blindness), *interitus patriae* (ruin of one's country), *exsilium* (exile), and *servitus* (slavery). Jerome was a self-confessed avid reader of Cicero's works: see *Ep.* 22.30 and Kelly (1975), 11-16, on Jerome's Roman education. Additionally, both men were parvenus who had the benefit of a rhetorical education and a penchant for invective. It is for these reasons that I turn to Cicero on the concept of *humilitas* in the late Republic.

[29] See Cic. *Off.* 2.13.45 where Cicero discusses *humilitas* when considering how one can achieve glory. While some may come from wealthy families, others on account of their lowness of birth (*humilitas*) and obscurity (*obscuritatem*) will have to work harder to achieve glory. *Humilitas* could also refer to self-abasing behavior. See Cic. *De or.* 1.53.228 which relates an anecdote about Publius Rutilius Rufus' critique of Servius Galba's use of emotional tactics and theatrical behavior to secure his acquittal. Rutilius says that he would rather face banishment or death than engage in such self-abasing behavior (*huic humilitati*).

that one would be born into. *Humilitas* was associated with helplessness, and lack of position and authority in society.

With the growth of Christianity, humility became a more desirable quality.[30] Although writing about 30-40 years after the treatise under discussion in this chapter, Augustine in his *De civitate dei* emphasizes the importance of *humilitas* over all other virtues previously encouraged in Roman ideology. Augustine believed that all the virtues demonstrated by secular Romans to show their piety were done without humility and therefore were closer to vices than virtues.[31] He realized that such a view differed from the conventional secular view that overlooked humility when enumerating honorable qualities. He considered it his goal to illuminate the strength and excellence of humility.[32] Moreover, Augustine writes of the *civitas piorum*, which is distinguished by *humilitas*.[33] The opposite of humility, that is, pride, for Augustine is equivalent to *impietas*.[34] Humility was a critical virtue within a Christian mindset – that would ultimately lead one to heaven.[35] Augustine writes to encourage a change

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[30] Maxwell (2011) brings to light the paradoxical nature of bishops and highlights the desired aspect of humility. She writes, 'the bishop should start off wealthy and educated and then volunteer to become poor and downplay his pedigree' (450). Maxwell focuses on the bishops Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus and the inconsistencies between their 'elite identities' and their 'promotion of Christian humility' (452).

[31] August. *De civitate dei, praef.* Bobb (2010), 67, points out that Augustine acknowledges Roman Republican and Imperial attainments, but simultaneously 'argued that even the most outstanding Roman accomplishments were based upon a false foundation. Thus their accomplishments were falsely prized.'

[32] See, for example, his laudatory account of Theodosius' *humilitas: quid autem fuit eius religiosa humilitate mirabilius* (August. *De civitate dei* 5.26).

[33] August. *De civitate dei* 10.19; 14.13.

[34] August. *De civitate dei* 14.28.

[35] *Tutam veramque in caelum viam molitur humilitas, sursum levans cor ad dominum, non contra Dominum* (August. *De civitate dei* 16.4).

from the previous disposition that allowed authority to be controlled by those born into fortune and position. *Humilitas* was rebranded as a new Christian virtue that allowed both rich and poor to demonstrate their potential in the world. In other words, *humilitas* permitted Augustine (and other Christians) to ignore the historical ranks of nobility and level the playing field; in theory, there was no distinction between rich and poor, learned or unlearned when it came to the quality of humility.[36] Ambrose, earlier in the late 380s, wrote in his *De officiis ministrorum* urging *humilitas* and *verecundia*.[37] Kuefler comments that such qualities would have been considered unmanly and unfitting for a public figure by late Republican standards.[38] Ambrose it seems was redefining Christian manliness as well as those virtues critical to a successful society. This new emphasis on humility assisted in creating a new Christian ideal that went beyond the ancient concept of an exemplary Roman public figure.[39] It was no longer necessary to be of the right class and lineage, piety and humility now factored into the assessment of one's worth as well.

The quality of humility was also sought after in episcopal candidates.[40] Contenders who disparaged the love of glory and earthly distinctions were

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[36] Kuefler (2001), 152, notes that it is by using this 'language of humility… that the men who became bishops found a new source of social superiority.' Paradoxically, even though this new criteria did away with old hierarchies based of nobility, wealth, and means, it only served to create a new hierarchy that evaluated different criteria.

[37] Ambrose *De officiis ministrorum* 1.5.19; 1.18.67. See Davidson (2001), 3-5, on the difficulty of dating of *De officiis*.

[38] Kuefler (2001), 159.

[39] Kuefler (2001), 158-159.

[40] Humility was a desired trait for various ranks of ordination: see Kim (2011) on the 'improper ordination' of Jerome's younger brother Paulinian (Jer. *Ep*. 51.1.5-6). This incident presents one example of the seizure and struggle of a humble, 'unworthy' candidate who was 'forced' to

celebrated. Cyprian writes of the bishop Cornelius, who never aspired to become bishop nor 'thrust himself into it, unlike others whose self-importance is swollen with arrogance and pride'.[41] Cornelius' inherent humility (*humilitas*) and modesty (*verecundia*) are strongly praised and he is also honored for having accepted the episcopate unwillingly and with hesitation. Martin of Tours also became bishop very grudgingly.[42] Ambrose was reputed to have engaged in behavior that would have been unseemly for a bishop, ostensibly in order to diminish his chances of being ordained: he ordered criminals to be tortured and openly invited a group of female entertainers into his home.[43] Moreover, upon discovering that he had been elected he became agitated, resolved to become a philosopher, and even attempted to run away twice.[44] Augustine is reported to have deliberately avoided churches that were seeking bishops, as he also had no desire to fill the position. Moreover, it was thought that he sobbed upon his appointment.[45] The reluctant bishop may have been a literary topos used in hagiography to accentuate the *humilitas* of the candidate, but it nevertheless

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become a deacon. In 399 Jerome wrote to Theophilus concerning his brother and stated that Paulinian viewed clerical office as *non honorem… sed onus* (*Ep.* 82.8.1)

[41] Kuefler (2001), 147. Cyprian *Ep.* 55.8.

[42] Sulpicius Severus *Vita sancti Martini* 4.9.1.

[43] Paulinus *Vita Ambrosii* 3.7. Paulinus' account of Ambrose was written fifteen years after the bishop's death; see Barnes (2011), 53-58, who contests the veracity of these events and cites von Campenhausen (1929: 26-28) who has viewed Paulinus' account with a critical eye. See also Maxwell (2011), 450, who states the same view as Barnes; however, see also McLynn (1994), 44, for the opposite view. Whether the accounts are true or not is irrelevant for my purpose, which is to stress the fact that episcopal reluctance and humility were circulated as the primary qualities to be demonstrated by episcopal candidates.

[44] Paulinus *Vita Ambrosii* 3.7-9. See Barnes (2011), 58, on the likelihood that Ambrose did, in fact, leave the city for a time in order to await permission from the emperor to leave his post as governor of Aemilia and Liguria: '[t]o that extent, and to that extent only, his show of reluctance was genuine.'

[45] Possidius of Calama *Sancti Augustini vita* 4. Kuefler (2001), 148, points out that appointing a reluctant bishop may not have only been a literary topos as 'a decree of the emperor Majorian in 460 forbade such an action' (*Novella Maioriani* 11.1).

supports the importance attached to the quality.[46] Bishops were seemingly using the 'language of humility' to disguise their aspirations for prominence and authority.[47] If we return to Jerome we see that he similarly plays into this culture of humility indirectly: calling negative attention to Helvidius' craving for fame simultaneously gives insight into Jerome's supposed humble nature.

4.2 Fame

Helvidius' desire for fame serves as the framework for the rest of the abuse. Jerome likens Helvidius' situation to an episode from Greek history: a man believed that he would be unable to achieve fame for good deeds, so resolved to gain notoriety for criminal ones instead.[48] He set the temple of Diana on fire but the incident went unnoticed.[49] Subsequently, 'it is said that the man appeared in public, shouting that he had exposed [the temple] to fire.'[50] Upon being asked by the leaders in Ephesus why he should wish to do this, the man responded that since he could not become known for good deeds then he would be known for bad ones.[51] The parallels are obvious: Jerome believes that Helvidius is attempting to gain a following by promoting marriage and Mary as a model for

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[46] By the late fifth century episcopal humility had become codified in the law: see *Cod. Iust.* 1.3.30, dating to 469, which states that only one who is ordained unwillingly is worthy of the priesthood.

[47] Kuefler (2001), 151.

[48] Jerome is referring to the man Erostratus (Herostratus), who around 356 BC set alight the temple of Diana in order to achieve fame and thus preserve his memory. This is recorded by Valerius Maximus: *Facta et dicta memorabilia* 8.14.5. According to Plutarch, this event happened simultaneously with the birth of Alexander the Great (Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 3.5). Plutarch notes that the goddess was too busy assisting in the birth of Alexander to save her temple.

[49] See *Acts of the Apostles* 19.23-29, 34-37, which relates the hostile reaction of Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines for Diana, and the local crowd, who believed that Paul and his disciples had called the worship of Diana into question.

[50] *Fertur ipse in medium processisse, clamitans sese incendium subiecisse* (*Adv. Hel.* 16).

[51] *Adv. Hel.* 16.

married women (not only virgins). His heretical teachings are analogous to the act of setting the temple of Diana on fire. Diana, renowned for her virginity and staunch refusal to ever marry, serves Jerome's point well.

Jerome continues, however, to heighten the severity of Helvidius' offence: 'you set on fire the temple of the body of the Lord, you debased the shrine of the Holy Spirit.'[52] It is this act that is meant to propel Helvidius into the limelight. Disregarding the content of Helvidius' teachings, the very desire for acknowledgement itself would contradict ideal Christian methods of achieving distinction; fame should never be directly targeted. As already discussed above, the manner in which bishops, as the most exceptional of all Christians at the top of the ecclesiastical *cursus honorum*, received their appointment would be the best example to demonstrate this point. Claudia Rapp has discussed the combination of pragmatic, spiritual, and ascetic authority aspired to by monks and the common occurrence of a monk refusing ordination: '[t]his rejection is occasioned by the notion that ordination is a confirmation of personal virtue and thus should not be coveted by a truly humble person.'[53] A truly worthy candidate should exhibit modesty and never voice a blatant desire for fame (and arguably with it authority). It would be evident if one was worthy of the episcopal office, but a career path with specific goals was unthinkable. Indeed, John Chrysostom states that those who openly aspire to offices will later be prone to flattery and bribery, and desirous of promotions; therefore, they are

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[52] *Tu vero templum Dominici corporis succendisti, tu contaminasti sanctuarium Spiritus Sancti* (*Adv. Hel.* 16)
[53] Rapp (2005), 20.

disqualified.[54] Paradoxically, a candidate who shows aversion towards the episcopal office exemplifies one of the prime qualifications necessary to procure it.

As we have seen above many examples of this paradoxical behavior occur.[55] While it is impossible to tell whether the protestations that many episcopal candidates made were genuine or not, the point is that one was expected to aspire to modesty – genuine, if possible. The obvious desire for distinction, which Jerome accuses Helvidius of ostentatiously displaying, exploits a character unfit to disseminate religious guidance and an easy target for abuse.[56]

5. Helvidius and Jerome: the pedagogical relationship

5.1 Jerome as a teacher in his correspondence

We have seen that Helvidius' desire for fame was, in itself, a failing worthy of attack. Jerome also criticized Helvidius for the manner in which he sought fame, through characterizing him as an uneducated and errant student, speaking incorrectly and out of turn. According to Jerome, because the brethren had been so offended by the content of Helvidius' treatise, he was at last compelled to

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[54] John Chrysostom *On the priesthood* 3.10.36. See also Rapp (2005), 141.

[55] See Rapp (2005), 144, for more examples: 'some people try to avoid the see: Ammonius cut off his ear and threatened to cut off his tongue next… Nilammon willed his own death… Pachomius hid from Athanasius of Alexandria'. She also discusses a similar ritual of hesitation (*cunctatio*) that tended to preface a new emperor (144).

[56] Rapp (2005), 145, comments that objections to the position and even attempts to flee 'have become ritualized gestures that followed the election, confirmed it, and preceded ordination.'

respond to the heretic's claims.[57] The goal of the piece is clear: Jerome will use scripture to destroy Helvidius' argument, *ut discat aliquando reticere, qui numquam didicit loqui,* 'so that [Helvidius] who never learned to speak, will finally learn to be silent' (*Adv. Hel*. 1). In prefacing his point by point refutation of Helvidius' teachings, Jerome uses several words related to instruction, teaching, and learning.[58] Helvidius' supposed lack of education is the topic of much of the abuse and Jerome exposes several opportunities to showcase himself as a teacher. It is not only Helvidius' oratorical skills, but also his interpretation of scripture that Jerome faults. These are two areas that Jerome prides himself on: his secular training as a youth made him well versed in rhetoric and oratory, and his ascetic endeavors and textual study gave credence to his knowledge of scripture.[59] The basic framework of Jerome's rhetoric is aggressively didactic as he aims to instruct the heretic Helvidius on the appropriate way to make an argument as well as the 'correct' interpretation of scripture.

Before we begin discussion of the specific rhetoric in this treatise, it may be useful to note Jerome's tendency to depict himself as a teacher or mentor

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[57] *Verum quia hae omnes tam justae silentii mei causae, ob scandalum fratrum, qui ad eius rabiem movebantur, iustiori fine cessarunt* (*Adv. Hel*. 1).

[58] For example: 1) *Imbutum* (*Adv. Hel*. 1), 'somewhat instructed, imbued, initiated, trained'. For other examples see Cic. *Phil*. 10.10.20; Cic. *De or*. 2.39.162; Cic. *Off*. 1.32.118; Cic. *Tusc*. 1.7.14; Cic. *Mil*. 4.10; Liv. 5.2.13; Quint. 1.2.16; Suet. *Gramm*. 4; Hor. *Ep*. 2.2.7. 2) *Didicit* (*Adv. Hel*. 1), 'learned'. See Plaut. *Aul*. 4.1.9; Cic. *Rep*. 4.5; Sall. *Iug*. 101.6; Quint. 11.2.45; Hor. *Ars P*. 326; Caes. *B.G.* 7.54. 3) *Intelligat* (*Adv. Hel*. 2), 'to perceive, understand, comprehend'. See Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.15.38; Cic. *De or*. 2.14; Cic. *Off*. 1.41. 4) *Legere* (*Adv. Hel*. 2), 'to read'. See Cic. *Verr*. 2.5.43; Plin. *Ep*. 9.13.1; Plin. *Ep*. 7.9.15; Quint. 12.11.17; Quint. 1.1.6. 5) *Cognoscere* (*Adv. Hel*. 2), 'to become thoroughly acquainted with, learn, recognize, understand, learn'. See Cic. *De or*. 1.51.222; Caes. *B Gall*. 1.19; Sall. *Cat*. 51.16.

[59] See *Ep*. 84.3 on Jerome's passion for learning. Chapter 3 discusses the qualifications that Jerome does not wish to be challenged by Augustine and Rufinus.

figure in his correspondence. In his letters to Marcella especially, Jerome's role is noticeably that of a teacher of ascetic Christianity.[60] Cain has commented on Jerome's desire to portray himself as the 'trusted scriptural and spiritual mentor' of elite Roman women.[61] Jerome presents his students as idealized examples of ascetic women:

> By taking charge, first as (presumably) their spiritual mentor and then as their publicist, Jerome was able to praise these women as his precocious disciples whose spiritual successes were the direct result of his mentoring. His aim was not only to make literary tributes to women he obviously admired deeply but also to present them as reputable public faces for his controversial brand of piety. In a similar but far more complex way, he portrayed Marcella as his star pupil with whom he enjoyed a close-knit and intellectually stimulating relationship.[62]

If we believe Jerome, Marcella excelled under his tutelage. Despite the fact that she had chosen an ascetic life prior to meeting Jerome,[63] he never fails to ensure that the readers identify him as the authoritative figure.[64] Even after Marcella's death, Jerome paints her as his dedicated pupil.[65] His collection of letters also includes several examples of advice to young Christian girls. Jerome's *Ep.* 107 to Laeta instructs her on how to bring up little Paula (Paula's granddaughter). *Ep.* 128 provides similar directions on how to bring up a virgin daughter dedicated to God. While these examples present idealized views of how an ascetic student

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[60] See Cain (2009a), chapter 3 on the 'propagandistic dimensions' of Jerome's *Ad Marcellam epistularum liber*. In *Ep.* 53.2-3, 6 to Paulinus of Nola, Jerome emphasizes the importance of a teacher (*doctor*) as well as proper instruction.

[61] Cain (2009a), 9.

[62] Cain (2009a), 78-79.

[63] Marcella had already begun to live a continent life devoted to biblical study before Jerome's arrival in Rome in 382. See *Ep.* 127.2; 127.4-6. Jerome does not enter into the letter's narrative until 127.7. See also Cain (2009a), 37.

[64] When discussing Marcella coming to him for help with questions about Hebrew, Jerome refers to himself as the 'judge and mediator of the quarrel' (*arbiter et litis sequester*) (*Ep.* 29.1).

[65] See Cain (2009a), 93, on *Ep.* 127.7.

or girl dedicated to virginity ought to behave, they nonetheless demonstrate Jerome's desire to be viewed as a pedagogical authority – he is a figure whom Christians will approach for advice and instruction.

5.2 The pedagogical image

This faultless (ascetic) image that Jerome puts forward, however, arguably stems from the idealized Roman pedagogical relationship which can be seen in Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria.* This handbook calls for a superlative, vice-less teacher – a figure who will be a firm disciplinarian while still commanding love and respect from his students.[66] The idealized teacher should keep control of his temper while correcting his students, provide a moderate amount of praise, and avoid sarcasm and abuse, as such comments will prompt the student to stop trying.[67] The ideal teacher will be an eloquent and sensible man who will moderate himself *ut velocissimus quoque, si forte iter cum paruolo faciat, det manum et gradum suum minuat nec procedat ultra quam comes possit*, 'so that even the swiftest walker, if by chance he is making his way with a tiny boy, may give him his hand, reduce his own step, and not proceed beyond his companion's ability.'[68] In other words, the idealized instructor will be able to teach students of all levels with ease and consideration.

The Roman educational ideal is clearly visible in Quintilian's theoretical treatise; however, other evidence presents a different, and arguably more

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[66] Quint. *Inst.* 2.2.1-8.
[67] Quint. *Inst.* 2.2.5-8.
[68] Quint. *Inst.* 2.3.7-8.

realistic view of pedagogical figures. Horace, Ovid, Martial, Juvenal, and even much later, Jerome comment on the use of corporal punishment in schools: Jerome writes that, just as Juvenal says, he, too, managed to escape from the ferule despite having a liberal education.[69] Beatings and verbal abuse seem to have been common occurrences. Martial addresses the 'wicked schoolmaster' (*scelerate magister*) before relaying the image of the schoolmaster thundering around roaring savagely and administering lashings, 'a figure hated by both boys and girls' (*invisum pueris virginibusque caput*).[70] Martial's humorous epigram exaggerates the schoolmaster's brutal and deafening presence: he writes that a struck anvil or the applause from the amphitheater pale in comparison to the racket struck up by the savage schoolmaster.[71] But the vehement teacher had become proverbial.[72]

5.3 Teaching Helvidius

While Jerome presents himself and his ascetic followers as idealized self-disciplined scholars as discussed above, polemical treatises work towards a different purpose.[73] Polemics, by their very nature, will not fulfill this idealized view of the student-teacher relationship; rather they will be more severe and critical. The pedagogical relationship is no longer idealized: Helvidius is not the perfect student, and even Jerome, failing Quintilian's high standards, finds

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[69] Hor. *Epist*. 2.1.70; Ov. *Ars am*. 1.13.17; Mart. 9.68, 10.62; 14.80; Juv. 7.210; Jer. *Ep*. 50.5 commenting on Juv. 1.15.
[70] Mart. 9.68.
[71] Mart. 9.68.
[72] Barclay (1959), 164. See also Plutarch's descriptions of the Lupercalia, in which he describes matrons putting out their hands to be struck like children do at school (Plut. *Vit. Caes.* 61.1).
[73] *Ep*. 29.1; 127.1-6.

himself unable to keep his temper and his word (as he fails to keep his promise to refrain from using rhetoric).[74] The didactic nature of the treatise functions as the structure that Jerome uses to deliver his critique and frame his attack. The stereotypical pedagogical relationship between teacher and student allows Jerome to stress that Helvidius, as the student, is less knowledgeable, reliant on him, the teacher, and prone to make mistakes. Jerome no longer employs idealized rhetoric as he does regarding his ascetic pupils; the rhetoric is instead agonistic. Careful study of the various occurrences of Jerome's efforts to 'teach' Helvidius will demonstrate the rhetoric.

In the first instance, Jerome dismisses Helvidius as an adequate opponent after pedantically discussing the nuances of using the word 'before'. Jerome writes: *sed iam satis docendi magis quam respondendi studio disputatum est*, 'but already enough has been discussed, more in keenness to teach than to respond' (*Adv. Hel*. 4). Helvidius is not a worthy enough opponent for Jerome to engage with in an intellectual debate; he still has much to learn. Jerome seems to be implying that he would welcome an educated discussion with Helvidius, but such a venture would be impossible. Jerome is instead forced to assume a pedagogical capacity to point out Helvidius' many blunders. The result is a polemical treatise that engages with Helvidius on a didactic level: Jerome finds himself compelled to *teach* (*docere*) rather than to answer (*respondere*).

Jerome's 'instruction,' however, is influenced by his polemical purpose. He sneers at Helvidius' lack of adequate argumentation and knowledge of

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[74] *Adv. Hel*. 24.

scripture. After commenting on Helvidius' first proposition which considers Matthew 1.18-20, Jerome compares his opponent's case to that of a hopeless blindfolded gladiator in the arena:

> Et ad hoc approbandum congerit de scripturis exempla quam plurima, more andabatarum gladium in tenebris ventilans, et linguae sonum ad confodienda sui tantum corporis membra concutiens.

> And to prove this, he amasses from scripture as many examples as possible, shaking his sword in the dark in the manner of blindfolded gladiators, and brandishing the sound of his tongue to stab only the members of his own body (*Adv. Hel*. 5).

Helvidius grasps at scripture in order to make his case, but his efforts are in vain. They only serve to betray his ignorance further and leave him open to attack. In response Jerome says that he will use scripture to refute Helvidius. He has understood it correctly, unlike Helvidius, who has read it, and nonetheless misunderstood:

> Ipsa scripturarum verba ponenda sunt: ipsis quibus adversum nos usus est testimoniis, revincatur, ut intelligat, se et legere potuisse quae scripta sunt, et non potuisse quae roborata sunt cognoscere.

> The words themselves of scripture must be stated: let him be conquered by that very evidence he used against us, so that he may understand that he could read what had been written, yet could not recognize what has been reinforced (*Adv. Hel*. 2).

Without Jerome's guidance and refutation, Helvidius will never understand his error. Jerome will present the same evidence that his opponent has used, and present it in such a way that Helvidius' mistakes will become apparent. His instruction serves to underscore Helvidius' blunders, while showcasing himself as the learned instructor and refuter.

5.4 Jerome on translation

This implied academic contrast between Jerome and his subject is obvious elsewhere. Jerome adopts the role of a teacher, and Helvidius that of a lackadaisical student. He points out with disdain Helvidius' disregard for the Greek manuscripts:

> Licet tu mira impudentia haec in Graecis codicibus falsata contendas, quae non solum omnes paene Graeciae tractatores in suis voluminibus reliquerunt; sed non nulli quoque e Latinis, ita ut in Graecis habetur, assumpserint.

> Although you with remarkable shamelessness assert that those things in the Greek manuscripts are falsified, which not only have nearly all the Greek writers left behind in their works; but even several have adopted in Latin, just as it is in the Greek (*Adv. Hel.* 8).

Jerome prided himself on his ability with languages.[75] Since the study of Greek had declined significantly in the Latin West, knowledge of it would have been valued.[76] Therefore, his later acquisition of Greek (as well as Hebrew) and his translation skills were something of an accomplishment.[77] Jerome's translations of Greek and Hebrew texts into Latin was arguably a symbolic method of mastering the 'other.' He was, therefore, able to assert his authority in practice by translating these materials, and also intellectually by pointing out that (unlike him) others were unable to learn and work with multiple languages. Jerome believed that the teachings of the Greeks and the Jews held worth; the act of translating allowed him to appropriate foreign knowledge thereby using

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[75] See Chapter 3, 7.2.

[76] Jacobs (2011), 32. Augustine complains of the difficulty of learning Greek (August. *Conf.* 1.13.20, 1.14.23).

[77] See *Ep.* 84.3 for Jerome's learning Hebrew. For Jerome's knowledge of Greek see Courcelle (1969), 58-89. In *Ep.* 107.9 Jerome recommends that little Paula learn Greek. On Jerome's acquisition of Greek and translation of Eusebius' *Chronicon* see Jacobs (2011), 36.

it as a form of cultural capital.[78] This act of appropriating foreign knowledge is implicitly gendered by Jerome. He viewed his translations as virile works when compared with those translations that did not adequately reflect the quality of the Greek sources. Other works he dismissed as they lacked 'philosophical reasoning' (*dialecticum*) as well as 'manly' (*virile*) and 'strict' (*districtum*) qualities.[79] Jerome comments that there was nothing in them that 'draws the reader unwillingly into agreement.'[80] For Jerome, it seems that a good translation required an assertive, tenacious, almost rhetorical quality that would argue with and perhaps even convert the reader. Translating for Jerome was a way for him to express Christian *virilitas* while at the same time continuing with the rhetorical tradition of using gender terminology as 'rhetorical ornaments'.[81] Towards the end of the treatise, Jerome comments that he believes Helvidius will find the arguments against him too strong and will have no choice but to resort to disparaging Jerome (*ad detractionem vitae meae et ad maledicta converti*) in the manner of weak women (*mulierculae*) who retreat to corners after having been put down by their masters (*victoribus dominis*) (*Adv. Hel*. 22).[82] That is the last image we are left with in the treatise: that of Helvidius as a defeated woman whispering bitterly about his master Jerome.

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[78] Jacobs (2011), 39.

[79] Jacobs (2011), 36. Jer. *Liber Didymi de spiritu sancto, praef.*

[80] *Lectorem vel ingratis in assensum trahat* (Jer. *Liber Didymi de spiritu sancto, praef.*).

[81] See L'Hoir (1992), 1, on gender terms as rhetorical embellishment in late Republican and early Imperial works such as those of Cicero, Sallust, Livy, Pliny, Petronius, Apuleius, and Suetonius.

[82] See Manwell (2007), 113-119, on charges of *mollitia* in the Republic; Connolly (2007), 199-203, on Cicero and 'effeminate oratory'; and Richlin (1992), 85-93, on effeminacy as a topic of Republican invective. Wray (2001), 58-59, discusses delivering invective as a component of manhood in the poems of Catullus. Gleason (1995) discusses the importance of rhetorical skill as a 'definitive test of masculine excellence' and how 'rhetorical style and self-presentation' became gendered (160).

Helvidius, moreover, is portrayed as unable to deal with the original texts. Jerome attacks Helvidius for trusting the translations over the original texts themselves.[83] He compares the works and translations to a stream of water, the originals being the spring and the translations the rivulets that run off from it:

> Nec necesse est nunc de exemplariorum varietate tractare, cum omne et veteris et novae Scripturae instrumentum in Latinum sermonem exinde translatum sit, et multo purior manare credenda sit fontis unda, quam rivi.

> Nor is there need now to discuss the variety of copies, since the entirety of the Old and New Testament has been translated since that discussion into a Latin document, and it must be believed that water of the source flows much more pure than [that] of a stream (*Adv. Hel.* 8).

It seems obvious to Jerome that the original text must be regarded as being of more worth than the versions that stem from it. No matter how closely a translation intends to keep the meaning of the original, it will never be as clear as the source itself. This relates to the argument about Christian *virilitas* as briefly discussed above. Jerome implies his superiority over Helvidius through his virile ability to use (and dominate) multiple languages – even when discussing virginity. Meanwhile Helvidius, as seen above denies the veracity of the originals and seems to lack a familiarity with the necessary scripture.

5.5 Helvidius' scholarly failings

We see that Jerome is eager to showcase his ability to draw on Greek and Hebrew sources, but he was also keen to demonstrate his sheer breadth of

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[83] This topic would develop into a bitter argument with Rufinus who also put less stock in the value of Greek sources. See Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.31.

knowledge compared to Helvidius. He accuses Helvidius of disregarding a wide range of evidence: *imperitissime hominum, ista non legeras, et toto scripturarum pelago derelicto, ad iniuriam Virginis tuam rabiem contulisti*, 'you most ignorant of men, you had not read those things, and having neglected a whole sea of scripture, you used your raving madness to insult the Virgin' (*Adv. Hel.* 16).   It is not only because Helvidius lacks the literary skills to do so; the fault lies in laziness and dishonesty.[84] This habit of neglecting selections of scripture is yet another failing heresiologists would denounce.   This partial understanding of the truth disrupted the unity supported by orthodox thinking. Partial truth would mutate into error and from there heresy.[85]

Therefore, Helvidius' ideas stray from orthodoxy since they lack the appropriate sources; and yet they allow him to achieve notoriety. Although Jerome seems worried about Helvidius' potential influence, he reduces his importance by critiquing him like an errant student unaware of his faults throughout the treatise. In this same chapter 16, Jerome comments on the lack of attention Helvidius has given to his choice of words, phrasing, and eloquence:

> Praetermitto vitia sermonis, quibus omnis liber tuus scatet. Taceo ridiculum exordium. O tempora! O mores! Non quaero eloquentiam, quam ipse non habens in fratre Craterio requisisti. Non, inquam, flagito linguae nitorem, animae quaero puritatem.
>
> I pass over the faults of your speech, which gush forth in your whole book. I say nothing about your ridiculous introduction. Oh the times! Oh the *mores*! I

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[84] When discussing the women who were present at Jesus' crucifixion, Jerome comments that Helvidius deliberately leaves information out because he realizes that it will go against his argument: *ignoscerem nescienti, nisi viderem consulto reticentem* (*Adv. Hel.* 13).
[85] Henderson (1998), 139.

> do not demand eloquence, which, as you yourself do not have, you sought from [your] brother Craterius. I do not, I say, require brilliance of language; I require purity of the soul (*Adv. Hel*. 16).

Of course, Jerome has not ignored Helvidius' style. He has pointed it out in a very Ciceronian manner alongside every other flaw he observes in Helvidius: his impure soul (*Adv. Hel.* 16); lack of education (*Adv. Hel*. 1; 8); deceptive nature (*Adv. Hel*. 13); unchristian desire for recognition (*Adv. Hel.* 16); and innovative teachings (*Adv. Hel*. 16). All of these failings combined with Jerome's abusive rhetoric cast Helvidius as Jerome's subordinate pupil and Jerome as the learned (albeit strict and far from ideal) instructor. Helvidius is referred to as never having learnt to speak (*Adv. Hel*. 1); Jerome states that he is instructing rather than answering an opponent (*Adv. Hel.* 4); and Jerome points out all the works that Helvidius has failed to read (*Adv. Hel*. 16).

5.6 Ecclesiastical traditions

Despite all these apparent failings as presented by Jerome, Helvidius has the audacity to argue that marriage outranks virginity and that Mary gave birth to multiple children. Following the main passage of abuse concerning Helvidius' desired fame (and preceding Jerome's contentious appraisal of virginity over marriage), Jerome appeals to the ecclesiastical tradition and episcopal authority of his predecessors to prove his point further. He is relatively concise in citing other authors to assist in refuting Helvidius:[86]

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[86] Based on their extant works Courcelle (1969) comments on the unlikelihood that Jerome actually had first hand knowledge of the works of Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, and Justin (91-100). Kelly (1975), 107, calls Jerome's list of orthodox fathers 'a dishonest smoke-screen typical of his debating style' and states that 'it is doubtful whether they held the views he attributed to

Numquid non possum tibi totam veterum scriptorum seriem commovere: Ignatium, Polycarpum, Irenaeum, Justinum Martyrem, multosque alios apostolicos et eloquentes viros, qui adversus Ebionem et Theodotum Byzantium, Valentinum, haec eadem sentientes, plena sapientiae volumina conscripserunt.

Am I not able to refute you with a whole succession of ancient scriptures: Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and many other apostolic and eloquent men who against Ebion and Theodotus of Byzantium and Valentinus, holding these same views, wrote volumes full of wisdom (*Adv. Hel*. 17).

Jerome is candid about his methodology in refuting Helvidius at this point. He has amassed his instruments of refutation: first, the ancient scriptures; secondly, his own connections to tradition; and thirdly, the subsumption of Helvidius' ideas with those of other accused heretics.

Not only are Helvidius' views intertwined with those heretical figures of the past, much to Jerome's disgust he has also neglected to read the requisite works of those figures mentioned above. In a rather harsh pedagogical manner albeit veering from the educational ideals discussed above, Jerome further discredits Helvidius by sharply rebuking him for not having read them (*Adv. Hel*. 17). As far as Jerome is concerned, Helvidius is unqualified to partake in the conversation. Jerome rhetorically boasts his lineage of orthodox fathers that he purports validate his claims over Helvidius'. We can assume that Helvidius endeavored to do the same, as Jerome writes that Helvidius cited the works of

them.' Painter (1999), 215, points out that while Jerome claims that all these figures supported his position against Helvidius, Jerome had either mixed up his facts or deliberately done so. That Ignatius agreed with Jerome's proposition on Mary's eternal virginity has been disproved by Lightfoot (1890). As Painter comments, 215, '[t]his careless use of sources to his own advantage gives no confidence in Jerome's appeal to others on this issue.'

Tertullian and the third-century bishop Victorinus of Pettau as proof.[87] Jerome dismisses Tertullian, saying he was not a man of the church.[88] This implies that Jerome acknowledged that Helvidius was correct in laying claim to Tertullian's support.[89] He discounts Victorinus on the grounds that Helvidius has misinterpreted his views and that Victorinus, in fact, agreed with Jerome on the relationship between Jesus and his brethren (*Adv. Hel.* 17).[90] While both men contend to legitimize their position by appealing to earlier traditions, Jerome rejects Helvidius' claim and further solidifies his own. Helvidius is portrayed as a delinquent student indiscriminately desirous of fame whether notoriety or stardom; tradition is of no matter to him so long as his end goal is achieved. In this way Jerome's rhetoric uses an established technique of appealing to precedent and tradition.

6. PRECEDENT AND TRADITION

6.1 Precedents in rhetorical works

The esteem that Romans placed in tradition and long-established virtues empowered the use of precedents in rhetorical works.[91] Indeed, appeals to

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[87] *Sed quoniam iam e cautibus et confragosis locis enavigavit oratio, pandenda sunt vela, et in epilogos illius irruendum, in quibus sciolus sibi visus, Tertullianum in testimonium vocat, et Victorini Petabionensis episcopi verba proponit* (*Adv. Hel.* 17). See Jer. *De viris illustribus* 74.1 on Victorinus.

[88] *Et de Tertulliano quidem nihil amplius dico, quam ecclesiae hominem non fuisse* (*Adv. Hel.* 17).

[89] Painter (1999), 215. Lightfoot (1890), 279, notes that such support from an ascetic would have been noteworthy.

[90] The works of Victorinus are lost and we are, therefore, unable to conclude whether he would have agreed with Helvidius or Jerome. Painter (1999), 215, comments that Jerome fails to deal satisfactorily with Helvidius' arguments. He ridicules Helvidius and asserts that many shared his own view of the perpetual virginity of Mary but does not adequately combat Helvidius' view.

[91] Clarke (1996), 76.

tradition were used often in the oratory of Cicero, for example. In his book on the orator dedicated to Brutus, Cicero comments that history was a useful tool to use when providing examples to either emphasize or demonstrate a point.[92] Moreover, in his *De oratore,* while discussing the requirements of an orator, he remarks that history and the ways of the past are very useful.[93]

Cicero followed his own advice and often used precedents when making a case. In the well-known exordium of his first speech against Catiline, Cicero cites several historical precedents that lend credence to his argument. Using the familiar rhetorical technique of *praeteritio*, Cicero remarks that he will pass over examples from history that are too old and then proceeds to relate the historical precedent of Gaius Servilius Ahala before mourning the lack of *virtus* that in the past would have motivated men to check a traitor.[94] The evocation of precedents from the past and the supposed decline of *virtus* are meant to spur the men into action. While prosecuting Verres for his activities in the Roman province of Sicily he again comments on the increasing decline of moral standards at Rome. Greed and injustice are prevalent and Cicero admits that if anyone is brought to trial, he or she will not struggle to find precedents for their crimes. Moreover, the Republic will find itself in danger if these criminals are set free based on the precedents set by these morally unsound people.[95] In this passage Cicero illustrates the importance placed on precedents and setting

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[92] Cic. *Orat*. 120.

[93] Cic. *De or.* 1.60.256.

[94] Cic. *Cat.* 1.2-3.

[95] *In eius modi re ac moribus si is qui erit adductus in iudicium, cum manifestis in flagitiis tenebitur, alios eadem fecisse dicet, illi exempla non deerunt: rei publicae salus deerit, si improborum exemplis improbi iudicio ac periculo liberabuntur* (Cic. *Verr.* 3.207).

suitable ones. He acknowledges their use in settling law cases declaring that the law will respond accordingly and set people free who are able to present a case with similar circumstances.

Furthermore, in his work against Verres, Cicero remarks that in such an important case listeners expect to hear *exempla ex vetere memoria*, *ex monumentis ac litteris*, *plena dignitatis*, *plena antiquitatis*, 'examples from [our] ancient history, from [our] monuments and letters, full of dignity and full of the virtues of the good old days' (Cic. *Verr*. 3.209). Indeed, such examples are welcomed by the audience as *haec… plurimum solent et auctoritatis habere ad probandum et iucunditatis ad audiendum*, 'these usually provide plenty of authority to convince and are the most charming to listen to' (Cic. *Verr*. 3.209).   Cicero follows this by sarcastically questioning the defense whether they will be relating the deeds of a great Scipio, Cato, or Laelius and stating that they have set a precedent for Verres. If not these men, perhaps more modern precedents, perhaps the elder Catulus, Marius, Scaevola, Scaurus, or Metellus, all of whom, similar to Verres, held provinces and had control of the grain supply. Cicero reflects that he will not be able to fight the authority that these men provide.[96] Such a statement illustrates the power of precedents in Roman ideology that continued on into Late Antiquity.[97]

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[96] *Quamvis res mihi non placeat, tamen contra hominum auctoritatem pugnare non potero* (Cic. *Verr.* 3.209).

[97] Kennedy (1994), 115, comments that 'Roman law was heavily dependent on precedent and thus what an orator successfully argued in a particular case could influence the development of the law'. Consider, for example, the popularity of Valerius Maximus' *Facta et dicta memorabilia* in the first century AD which preserved Republican values. Walker (2004), xxi-xxii, comments on the continuing popularity of Valerius Maximus' work. See also Nixon and Rodgers (1994), 24, on Pacatus' use of Republican exempla in fourth-century panegyric.

Examples from history were widely used by rhetoricians besides Cicero to make a compelling argument. Quintilian acknowledges the advantages of using historical precedents and remarks that the arguments found in precedents lend credibility to the argument, as they are free of prejudice and biases.[98] While the initial decision may (or may not) have been free from partiality, using it to evaluate future occurrences removes a degree of prejudice; making a similar decision follows a previously made judgment. Using a precedent provided a vetted decision, one that had been made by learned and respectable men of the past. The previous rhetorician, therefore, had already earned the trust of his audience. That vetted trust became a form of currency that could be used to strengthen a case in the form of precedents, and they remained an important rhetorical technique.

While Cicero often cites the authority of *maiores nostri*, Jerome uses a similar rhetorical tactic and cites biblical texts along with bishops and apostles.[99] Both are appealing to outside entities of authority which they believe rhetorically will enhance their own argument. Jerome creates a context for Helvidius in which he falls out of line with tradition and instead finds his way into the public eye by becoming an innovator of heresy.

6.2 Helvidius the innovator

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[98] Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.34.
[99] While Cicero at times is noted for having included 'stock examples from the rhetorical schools' (Clarke 1996: 77) this does not diminish the point – Cicero (and Jerome) are following rhetorical traditions.

According to Jerome, Helvidius is the first person to promote the idea that Mary gave birth to multiple children. He presents Helvidius as a typical heretic, ushering in new ideas that have not been sanctioned by the church:

> Quis te oro ante hanc blasphemiam noverat, quis dupondii supputabat? Consecutus es quod volebas, nobilis es factus in scelere. Ego ipse qui contra te scribo, cum in eadem tecum urbe consistam, albus, ut aiunt, aterve sis, nescio.

> Who, I ask you, before knew this blasphemy? Who gave tuppence for it? You have obtained what you desired, you are famous for your crime. I myself who write against you, although I exist in the same city with you, I do not know, as they say, whether you are white or black (*Adv. Hel*. 16).

This passage directly follows Jerome's anecdote concerning the man in Ephesus who burned down the temple of Diana in an untoward attempt at fame.[100] Helvidius is accused of achieving his unchristian goal of distinction with this action.

While Jerome succeeds in depicting Helvidius within the expected representation of an innovative heretic, the rhetoric here goes beyond the standard commonplaces found in anti-heretical works. He follows by questioning whether Helvidius is *albus* or *ater* 'white' or 'black'. This adage has been used to mean that the person in question is of little matter.[101] Jerome and Helvidius may both live in Rome,[102] but with this nonchalant comment, Jerome conveys his indifference towards Helvidius. It is not until he raised his opinion about Mary that he has appeared on Jerome's radar. We find this same phrase

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[100] See Chapter 4, n.48 and 49.

[101] See Otto (1962), 11, for collected examples: Catull. *Carmen* 93.2 (cited by Quint. *Inst.* 11.1.38); Cic. *Phil*. 2.16.41; Apul. *Apol.* 16; Plaut. *Pseud*. 1196; Hor. *Ep*. 2.2.189. Otto interprets this proverb to mean that the speaker does not know what the subject looks like, nor does he want anything to do with him; the speaker is completely indifferent.

[102] See Joussard (1944), 142, on Helvidius' origins.

in Catullus' *Carmen* 93, where he writes that he has no desire to flatter Caesar, *nec scire utrum sis albus an ater homo*, 'nor do I wish to know whether you are a white or a black man' (Catull. *Carmen* 93.2). With this phrase Catullus pithily conveys his indifference to Caesar. It occurs yet again in Apuleius' *Apologia* when Apuleius defends himself against the charge of using magic. Apuleius addresses his accuser, Sicinius Aemilianus, and says that until recently he had no idea if Aemilianus was 'white or black', and even now he does not know much about him (Apul. *Apol*. 16.26).[103] What follows is an account of why Apuleius is unfamiliar with Aemilianus: *id adeo factum, quod et tu rusticando obscurus es et ego discendo occupatus*, 'it is because you are obscured by your rusticity and I have been occupied with [my] studies' (16.28-29).[104] Apuleius, much like Jerome to Helvidius, calls his prosecutor an uneducated yokel, and both accusations assist in contributing to his obscurity.[105] What might seem like an offhand phrase in each of these situations is actually much more. In each instance, this expression showcases a person who poses a threat to the stability of the person making the statement. Apuleius claims that he lacks adequate knowledge of this little-known bumpkin who has made accusations against him, but the two clearly have a prior relationship. Catullus may claim that he does not wish to be acquainted with Caesar, but as we see in *Carmen* 29, Catullus had opinions about Caesar that he needed to make known.[106]

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[103] *Ea res est: praeter quod non sum iurgiosus, etiam libenter te nuper usque albus an ater esses ignoravi et adhuc <h>ercle non satis novi.*

[104] See Chapter 4, n.22.

[105] *Adv. Hel*. 1.

[106] See Scott (1971).

Each of these examples illustrates the writer attempting to maintain an unconcerned sense of composure when presented with a troublesome situation. According to Jerome, Helvidius wants nothing more than acknowledgement and is attempting to obtain it with an innovative approach to religion. Jerome indicates that he and Helvidius move in very different circles in Rome: he associates with the likes of Damasus and his group of ascetic women, while Helvidius is apparently unheard of. This dismissal of Helvidius' position in the Christian community is a direct snub. However, Helvidius, with his supposed unprecedented views on the Virgin Mary, has now gained a place in the spotlight.

7. JEROME'S REACTION

Helvidius' heretical teachings and unchristian desire for fame have pushed Jerome to the limit. He even admits that he has been baited by the situation and transformed into an orator:

> Rhetoricati sumus, et in morem declamatorum, paululum lusimus. Tu nos, Helvidi, coegisti, qui iam Evangelio coruscante, eiusdem vis esse gloriae virgines et maritatas.

> I am being rhetorical, and I have dallied somewhat in the manner of the declaimers. You, Helvidius, have compelled me, who now with the Gospel shining, you want virgins and married women to have the same glory (*Adv. Hel.* 22).

Jerome considered it his duty to combat Helvidius, but he has been troubled enough by a meddlesome student to slip into rhetoric, which he claims in the beginning he will avoid. It possible that Jerome was wary of being seen as excessively rhetorical and insufficiently concerned with doctrine. He therefore

sought to disarm this accusation by openly acknowledging his descent into rhetoric while at the same time blaming Helvidius for his rhetorical outbursts, thus clearing himself of the accusation that his use was deliberate.[107]

He also ends by claiming for himself the authority of the Virgin Mary. Jerome hypothesizes that Helvidius will resort to making disparaging comments about him, but declares that Helvidius' abuse will be a mark of distinction for himself. Mary has been disparaged by the same lips so he will experience the same 'snarling eloquence' (*caninam facundiam*) as the Lord's mother (*Adv. Hel.* 22). While he calls himself *servus Domini*, in relation to Helvidius Jerome still rhetorically positions himself and Mary on the same level. The treatise against Helvidius is offered as a humble work of a *servus* but a *servus* endowed with pragmatic, spiritual, and ascetic authority.[108] These three forms of authority as discussed by Rapp function as the foundational qualifications for a bishop.

8. JEROME'S FAME

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[107] *Non campum rhetorici desideramus eloquii, non Dialecticorum tendiculas, nec Aristotelis spineta conquirimus* (*Adv. Hel.* 2). Jerome makes a related comment in *Contra Vig.* 3: he says that Vigilantius will accuse him of showing off his rhetorical and declamatory powers in his refutation. See also *Ep.*22.2 to Eustochium where Jerome assures her not to expect any showy rhetoric (*nulla erit rhetorici pompa sermonis*). Jerome also acknowledges that his *Ep.* 14 to Heliodorus was highly rhetorical in *Ep.* 52.1 to Nepotian, Heliodorus' nephew. He attributes this to his youth (*sed in illo opera pro aetate tunc lusimus et calentibus adhuc rhetorum studiis atque doctrinis quaedam scolastico flore depinximus*, *Ep.* 52.1). See also Grig (2012), 132 n.42: 'Jerome was well aware of his satirical reputation (or, indeed, *persona*), and played upon it at times: see *Epistulae* 50.5, quoting Persius, Juvenal and Horace, and *Epistulae* 117.1, quoting Horace's description of Lucilius. In invoking Lucilius, Jerome is clearly laying out his satirical genealogy.'
[108] Rapp (2005).

In order to understand why Jerome may have tailored his rhetoric for his audience it becomes necessary to consider the contemporaneous salon culture that had become popular in Rome. In 382, a year before the composition of *Adversus Helvidium*, Jerome had secured the favor and friendship of bishop Damasus, who used his position to become a prominent member of society and a man of some wealth.[109] He was a favorite among women of means,[110] and assisted Jerome in becoming acquainted with groups of aristocratic women along with a community of ascetics including the aforementioned Marcella, Paula, and her daughters Blesilla and Eustochium.[111] During his three years at Rome, Jerome enjoyed paying these women frequent visits and guiding their biblical studies.[112]

Marcella came from an aristocratic Roman family and Jerome boasts of her lineage of consuls and praetorian prefects.[113] After the death of her husband, Marcella had no desire to remarry and instead converted her mansion in the wealthy area of the Aventine hill into a nunnery, and there adhered to an ascetic lifestyle. Paula was also an heiress and allegedly traced her lineage back to the Scipios and the Gracchi.[114] She had five children (four daughters and one son) by Iulius Toxotius, who, Jerome liked to imagine, had the blood of Aeneas and

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[109] See Amm. Marc. 27.3.11-14 on Damasus' rise to power and the luxury he enjoyed.

[110] Damasus was given the nickname *matronarum auriscalpius* (the ear-pick of ladies) (*Collectio Avellana Ep*. 1). See Rebenich (1992), 178.

[111] See Chapter 2, 3.6 and Chapter 3, 7.8.

[112] See *Ep*. 30.14 concerning Paula's study group.

[113] *Ep*. 127.1.

[114] *Ep*. 108.1, 3. Clark (1992), 26 n. 29, comments that Jerome's noticeable attempts to connect Paula's family to the Scipios, Gracchi, and Agamemnon are examples of 'bogus genealogy' and 'may indicate Paula's family was *nouveau riche*'. Cameron (2011), 3, comments that 'Jerome fantasized that his aristocratic groupies were descended from Camillus and the Scipios.'

the Julii running through him.[115] Jerome had made important connections and wanted to emphasize them. As discussed earlier, he paints several of these wealthy women as his ascetic protégées in his correspondence:[116] the rhetoric contained in these epistles conveys the sense that Jerome's influence and pedagogical nature guided these women of renowned ancestry (and wealth) to become ideal examples of female ascetics and allowed Jerome to claim responsibility for their success.[117] Despite the desire for wealth, luxury, and prestige being at variance with the principles of asceticism, such contacts still mattered to Jerome. As we will see, his ambition to incorporate himself within this upper level of the Christian community is further indicated by the manner in which he flatters his audience in *Adversus Iovinianum*. Although this salon culture afforded Jerome several friends and colleagues, his associations with these ascetic women tended to provide fodder for gossips.[118]

Sensitive to this fact, Jerome tailored his abusive rhetoric to highlight his positive achievements and incorporate his qualifications while attacking his opponent. Helvidius is criticized for aspiring towards fame in an unsuitable manner; moreover, his intellectual failings and innovative notions, when paired with his desire for fame, demonstrate that there is more to the rhetoric than first meets the eye. Logically, when these qualities are inverted they present the correct combination necessary to achieve acknowledgement in the Christian hierarchy. Jerome has subtly cast himself through his rhetoric as suitable for episcopal authority. By demeaning Helvidius, Jerome hopes to publicize his

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[115] *Ep.* 108.4.
[116] See Chapter 4, 5.1 and Chapter 1, 2.7. See also *Ep.* 24 (to Asella) and *Ep.* 127 (to Marcella).
[117] Cain (2009b), 57.
[118] *Ep.* 45.2; 3.

own positive traits:[119] his scholarly persona, language capabilities, asceticism, humility, and his ties to notable members of society.

While Jerome never explicitly states that he aimed as high as the see, it could be argued that he was establishing himself as a qualified candidate for episcopal authority during his time in Rome. In terms of rhetoric, Jerome highlighted several qualities that would have made him an attractive candidate: his erudite persona, linguistic ability, and committed asceticism demonstrated his pragmatic, spiritual, and ascetic authority. Additionally, his proximity to Damasus and connections to women of birth and wealth ought to have recommended him highly. The number of bishops had increased greatly with each major city gaining its own bishop. Scholars have estimated that there were about 2,000 by the fifth century.[120] Nonetheless, Jerome's efforts remained overlooked. Many years later when recounting his time in the desert, Jerome writes that he exemplified the appropriate attitude towards the bishopric; that is, he had no desire for the episcopal office: *neque enim ambimus sacerdotium, qui latemus in cellulis; nec humilitate damnata episcopatum auro redimere festinamus,* 'indeed we who lie hidden in our cells do not canvass for the episcopate; nor having condemned humility do we hurry to buy the see with gold' (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 1.32).[121] But Jerome's lack of episcopal ambition only recommended him further for the position that he never achieved. When Damasus died on 11

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[119] See Rebenich (2009) on Jerome's ambition and self-presentation in the composition of his *Vita Pauli*, and Cain (2006) on Jerome's use of published letters to further his reputation as an ascetic virtuoso in society.

[120] Eck (1978), 567. Rapp (2005), 172-173.

[121] Jerome writes this in 402, a number of years after he was passed over for Damasus' position in Rome.

December 384, his successor was not Jerome, but Siricius.[122] Jerome bitterly writes to Asella after having left Rome in the summer of 385 commenting on his supposed glowing reputation in Rome prior to his growing intimacies with Paula's family:

> Totius in me urbis studia consonabant. Omnium paene iudicio dignus summo sacerdotio decernebar; beatae memoriae Damasi os meus sermo erat; dicebar sanctus, dicebar humilis et disertus
>
> The whole city resounded with enthusiasm for me. I was declared worthy of the highest episcopate in nearly everyone's opinion. My speech was the mouth of Damasus of blessed memory.[123] I was called holy; I was called humble and eloquent (*Ep*. 45.3).[124]

Throughout his extant correspondence Jerome's desire for an episcopal position goes unmentioned. This indirect statement that suggests that everyone *else* believed him worthy of the appointment is divulged only when Jerome has unwillingly left Rome under tense conditions that will be discussed more in

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[122] See Kelly (1975), 82-87, and Rebenich (1992), 144-145. Wiesen (1964), 111, notes that '[a] man of powerful ambitions, Jerome had imagined that through championship of the increasingly influential monastic movement he might win high ecclesiastical position. It is perhaps significant that unlike Ammianus Marcellinus (27.3.14), Jerome never attacks the sensuality of the popes, on whose favor the hopes of an ambitious churchman might depend.'

[123] Rebenich (2002), 36, translates this section as: 'I was the spokesman of Damasus.' Williams (2006), 50-51, as 'my speech was the mouth of Damasus of blessed memory.' Cameron (2011), 316, as 'I was the spokesman of Damasus of blessed memory'. Brown (2012), 262, as '[m]y stylish pen gave voice to Damasus himself.' Grig (2012), 129 n.20, as 'Damasus had me always on his lips.'

[124] See Cain (2009a), 110 n.53, on relevant scholarship that follows Jerome's implication that he was being 'groomed as Damasus' successor': Cavallera (1922), 1.116; Kelly (1975), 111; Nautin (1986), 305; Adkin (1996), 25. Cain refers to this possibility as 'preposterous' (110). See also Rebenich (1992), 144, and Williams (2006), 50-53. Brown (2012), 262, comments on the turning point in Jerome's life following Damasus' death: 'Jerome was fair game to his enemies. The issues raised by Jerome's relations with noblewomen emerged immediately. He became the object of sexual innuendos.'

detail in the following chapter concerning Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum*, which once again highlighted the superiority of virginity over marriage.

In this context, it should be noted that Jerome always makes a special point of stating that he does not wish to disparage marriage. He writes, 'and since, in some way or another, I am about to make a comparison between virginity and marriage, I beg my readers not to think that I detract from marriage in praising virginity' (*Adv. Hel*. 20).[125] Outwardly, the treatise against Helvidius was not meant to discredit marriage, but instead to put things into perspective. Jerome wanted to ensure that marriage and virginity were valued in the appropriate order.

9. CONCLUSION

Jerome's *Adversus Helvidium* demonstrates his capability to manipulate a text, ostensibly concerning a religious dispute, into one that presented the author as a capable and suitable candidate for an episcopal see. Moreover, the treatise provided Jerome with the opportunity to explore his interpretation of the relative merits of virginity and marriage in what he hoped was a rhetorically convincing manner. It seems that Jerome realized that his ascetic views on virginity and marriage might have agitated some. In part, the structure of Jerome's treatise against Helvidius betrays its goal: as he realized his overwhelming support of virginity might endanger his potential to rise in the Christian community, Jerome purposefully placed that debatable content directly after a rhetorical section that contained the most vicious comments

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[125] *Et quia de comparatione virginitatis et nuptiarum sum aliqua dicturus, obsecro lecturos ne me putent nuptiis detraxisse in virginum laude* (*Adv. Hel.* 20).

about Helvidius. Helvidius becomes Jerome's tool in constructing his authorial persona: Helvidius is a dunce, a bumpkin, nearly illiterate in the necessary scripture, and yet still aspires unabashedly for the limelight. The logical inverse of this character takes shape in the form of Jerome. A linguist well versed in Christian texts, apparently well connected to the holy brethren, traditionally minded, and still humble to boot, Jerome's rhetoric concerning Helvidius allows him to create a mirror image that portrays himself as being a prime candidate for an episcopal see. While in one aspect Jerome may have succeeded (Helvidius disappeared and we hear no more about him), his construction of authority seems to have failed, as despite his connections and qualifications he is overlooked for an episcopal position, and not long after leaves Rome amidst controversy. It is about eight years after this disappointment in his career that Jerome returns to the subject of virginity and marriage in his *Adversus Iovinianum*. The differing rhetoric employed in that instance is the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter 5. *Adversus Iovinianum*: Jerome the Soldier

1. INTRODUCTION

Jerome wrote his treatise against Jovinian in the spring of 393.[1] The treatise followed in the wake of Jerome's embarrassing departure from Rome after the untimely death of Paula's daughter, Blesilla. In the period after Jerome's withdrawal, Jovinian had spread controversial doctrine that promoted his claims about baptism, virginity, marriage, fasting, and heavenly rewards. Jovinian had four main points: 1) virgins, widows, and married women, who have all been baptized and are otherwise equal, are of equal merit; 2) those who have been baptized cannot be defeated by the devil; 3) there is no difference between abstinence from food and receiving food while giving thanks; and 4) that there is only one reward in heaven for those who have maintained their baptismal vow. These opinions presented a direct challenge to the fervent ascetism that Jerome advocated, causing him to respond in a long, abusive treatise. He uses several techniques in order to secure support for his own views. Throughout the treatise Jerome subtly presents himself in a position of command backed by apostolic authority while Jovinian is cast as a sinner worthy of condemnation. Such a rhetorical presentation allows Jerome to rework the reoccurring topics of abuse typical of classical works to fit within a Christian context.[2] Assuming the role of a savior amassing authority and

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[1] For the date of the composition of the *Adversus Iovinianum* see Nautin (1974), 253-255.

[2] The combination of Christian and non-Christian references is characteristic of the period as secular works were still considered necessary for a rudimentary education. Chin (2008) has observed that employing the 'classical' tradition to create a literary heritage was a common practice of both Christians and non-Christians during this period. See Pease (1919), 163-164, and Cameron (1991), 25, who argues that 'Christian discourse… made its way in the wider world

prestige behind him, Jerome contends for ascetic and orthodox authority, which as a provincial priest ordained by a schismatic bishop he was eager to secure.[3]

As briefly discussed earlier, works of heresiology led to the development of a stock portrait of the 'heretic.'[4] As we saw, the repetitive themes that focus on immoral activity have striking similarities to topoi that are prominent in earlier passages of secular rhetorical abuse. These abusive works that date back to the Republic expose inadequacies such as drunkenness and stupidity as failing to live up to Roman social *mores*. In this treatise, we will see that Jerome uses the same topics after recasting them as sinful behavior.[5] Such similarities illuminate a link between the heresiological tradition and the literary tradition of invective. The reoccurring classical topoi found in Jerome's characterization of Jovinian will be discussed in connection to Jovinian's tendency to sin, the unmasking of which Jerome uses to undermine Jovinian's claims against asceticism. The explicit character of Jovinian illuminates the implicit character of Jerome. Furthermore, the last sections of this chapter will discuss why

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less by revolutionary novelty than by the procedure of working through the familiar, by appealing from the known to the unknown.'

[3] Cain (2009b), 48, points out that Jerome was not only ordained by a schismatic bishop, Paulinus of Antioch, but was also 'officially pronounced a miscreant *twice* in one decade by the high-profile sees at Rome (385) and Jerusalem (394).'

[4] See Chapter 2, 2.2 and Chapter 4, 3.2. Hunter (2007), 232. Jeanjean (1999) provides a detailed study on how *Adversus Iovinianum* fits into the tradition of heresiology.

[5] See Corbeill (1996) on how abusive rhetoric can be used to determine what is expected of a proper Roman citizen, especially 131-135 which comments on the Roman link between gluttony and 'ineffective self-management'. Note Cicero's critique on Gabinius as a glutton not fit for praise and glory (Cic. *Pis*. 41). See 18-19 on Cic. *Pis*. 99 where Corbeill comments on Cicero's use of abusive rhetoric to mark Piso as 'unfit for human society'; and 79-80 which discusses the improper nature of Clodius' decision to dress in drag in order to enter the Bona Dea festival rites exclusive to Roman matrons (Cic. *In P. Clodium et C. Curionem* 25).

Jerome attempted to use these strategies to contend for authority and acceptance in Christian society, as well as why on this occasion they failed.

Jerome's adherence to the tradition of rhetorical abuse displays his erudition. But his abusive rhetoric is useful for several other reasons, and should not be dismissed as mere artificial depictions or hyperbolic statements. We should think back to Chapter 2, 4.2 on audience and identification.[6] Jerome's negative portrayals of his enemies shed light on the shared values and mechanics of group cohesion of the fourth century; they can be used as a method of vying for power and status, and as a means for us to understand societal expectations and aversions. We will see Jerome using identification to assimilate himself to orthodox Christians, and to create distance between them and Jovinian. Furthermore, while abusive rhetoric can influence public opinion against a person, Jerome also uses it to expose the 'true' nature of his subject: Jovinian is revealed as a fraud who attempts to conceal his sinful nature.

Just as in the late Roman Republic when insults had come to be accepted as an integral part of the prosecutor's argument, Jerome showers Jovinian with insults to justify writing his treatise.[7] Such a tactic was called the argument *probabile ex vita*: if the defendant was presented as being of poor character it would seem more likely that he was, in fact, guilty.[8] The truth of the accusation does not necessarily matter: a palatable untruth is more effective than an

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[6] See Burke (1969) on identification.
[7] Arena (2007), 155.
[8] Cic. *Inv. rhet.* 2.32-37.

unpalatable truth.[9] As has been discussed above in Chapter 2, 4.1, understanding and catering to one's audience is important: a virtue agreeable to the audience will always be more well received.[10] Similarly, the key is to present the situation in such a way that the audience will believe it likely to have happened.[11] While such character assassinations were used in order to make a case, it should be remembered that by comparison they were also intended to augment the reputation of the orator making the attack. This is applicable in the case of Jerome's polemics.

2. STRUCTURE OF *ADVERSUS IOVINIANUM*

The following pages will examine Jerome's negative portrayal of Jovinian to discover the contrast he creates between himself as a surrogate of Jesus and Jovinian as a sinner who has gained a following through deceit. An outline of the text can be found below. The work consists of two books; the first comprised of 49 chapters, the second of 38. We know very little about Jovinian besides what we learn from Jerome's rebuttal. It is possible, however, to reconstruct the outline of Jovinian's work from *Adversus Iovinianum*, as Jerome claims that he will go through his opponent's arguments one by one in order to discredit them.[12]

Book 1

1 – 4	Introductory passages: Jerome discusses who has charged him with the task of engaging with Jovinian, why he is undertaking the feat, and what makes him qualified to do so.

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[9] Burke (1969), 54-55.

[10] Arist. *Rh*. 1.9.30-31.

[11] Arist. *Rh*. 2.19.16-25.

[12] *Adv. Iov*. 1.4. See Hunter (2007), 15-50, on reconstructing Jovinian's treatise.

3	Presents Jovinian's four main beliefs that Jerome will argue against: 1) Virgins, widows, and married women, who have all been baptized and are otherwise equal, are of equal merit. 2) Those who have been baptized cannot be defeated by the devil. 3) There is no difference between abstinence from food and receiving food while giving thanks. 4) There is only one reward in the kingdom of heaven for those who have maintained their baptismal vow.
4	Transition into the main body. Jerome declares Jovinian the common enemy, already assuming his audience on his side, and informs the reader that he will accept the challenge of defeating him using not only scripture, but also evidence from secular literature.
5 – 11	Against Jovinian's beliefs on marriage and abstinence using evidence from the Old and New Testaments. Jerome focuses in detail on Paul's teaching to the Corinthians. The apostle says that man shall have a wife due to fornications; marriage is not better than virginity, but it is preferable to burning (*Adv. Iov.* 1.7; 1 Cor. 7.9). Jerome's main argument centers on the apostle's statement that there is diversity in God's gifts: marriage and virginity are both gifts from God, but the rewards of each are different. Marriage is, essentially, second best, as marriage is itself not absolutely good; it is only better than burning. Jerome does not strive for a lesser evil; he strives for the absolute good, i.e. virginity.
12 - 13	Refutes Jovinian's beliefs on virginity, again using the authority of Paul. Jerome concedes that there is no commandment on virginity as such a commandment would condemn marriage and therefore forbid mankind to procreate (thus prohibiting the production of virgins). As there is no specific commandment, only certain people will choose to remain virgins. Therefore, the apostle states that Christ loves virgins more because they voluntarily give what was not commanded. Consequently, virginity has a greater reward after death.
14 - 32	Concerns second marriages. Jerome discusses Jovinian's examples of biblical marriages: many are scorned as being poor examples, and Jerome points out the flaws in detail (*Adv. Iov*. 1.19, 20, 23, 24, 25).
33 – 34	On the differences between married and virginal women who have been baptized. Jerome states that if baptism cleanses everyone equally then there is no difference between prostitutes and virtuous women following baptism; all would be equal.
34 – 35	Comments on the expectations of the clergy and the nepotism he believes occurs when selecting members of the clergy. The central argument is that chastity is the most important attribute that must be present in all members of the church.
36	Centers on the rarity of virginity, which, according to Jerome, is why virginity secures a greater reward.
37 - 39	Restates many of Jerome's previous points, which are once again reinforced with passages of the letter to the Corinthians that remark on purity and abstinence. Chapter 39 ends forecasting the tirade against Jovinian.

40	Jerome's tirade against Jovinian makes up the entirety of chapter 40.
41 – 42	After denouncing Jovinian, Jerome argues using secular examples and relates stories of 'worldly' virgins who demonstrated the importance of maintaining their maidenhood.
43 – 46	Focuses on the negative reactions of married non-Christian women to the prospect of second marriage.
47 – 49	Jerome concludes the first book exploring the question whether a wise man marries. After weighing selective historical and literary evidence, Jerome comes to two important conclusions: that a wise man does not marry and that purity is a woman's most important virtue.

Book 2

1 – 4	Concerned with Jovinian's second proposition that the baptized cannot be tempted by the devil. Jerome argues is that it does not make sense for Christians to have Christ as an advocate if post-baptismal sin is impossible (*Adv. Iov*. 2.2). Moreover, it seems illogical that people ask for forgiveness if they are incapable of sin (*Adv. Iov*. 2.2). There are falls even in heaven; it seems implausible that there could be no falls on earth (*Adv. Iov*. 2.4). He cites the authorities of David, Job, Peter, and James to validate his argument (*Adv. Iov*. 2.2, 3, 4).
5 – 10	On the moral difference between fasting and receiving food with thanks. Jerome contends that all living things were put on earth by God to serve some function for man (*Adv. Iov*. 2.5). Yet, while he maintains that all creatures serve some purpose for man and allows for cultural differences in eating, burial, and marriage, he asserts that when dealing with new births, the consumption of flesh and wine leads to lust (*Adv. Iov*. 2.7). Jerome argues that the senses are likely to succumb to vice and it is absurd to believe that we are free when we live surrounded by sensual temptations; it is best to control the bodily senses and partake in simple diets that do not whet the appetite or spur on gluttony (*Adv. Iov*. 2.8, 9, 10). By doing this one may retain one's virtue and reason.
11 – 14	Provides secular examples of famous historical, literary, or philosophical figures, who attest to the superiority of a simple diet that either avoids satiation or embraces fasting.
15 – 17	Presents evidence from the Old Testament that supports the benefits of fasting, i.e. that it is possible to return to paradise by fasting (*Adv. Iov*. 2.15).
18 – 20	Discusses Jovinian's fourth proposition, which states that there are two groups: the saved and the damned (*Adv. Iov*. 2.18). The saved will inherit the kingdom of heaven with no differentiation of reward. Jerome argues that as interpretation of the Gospel's parable of the sower reveals, there will be levels of salvation (*Adv. Iov*. 2.19). Jerome accuses Jovinian of manipulating scripture in order to fit his own purposes.
21	Second abusive description of Jovinian.
22 – 34	Reviews Jovinian's arguments one by one and provides examples from the Bible of subgroups of categorizations to demonstrate that there must be

	different levels of salvation. The apostle Paul is cited as humbly declaring himself to be 'the *least*' of the apostles which supports Jerome's argument that there is a likelihood of there being multiple ranks (*Adv. Iov*. 2.23). Jerome maintains that there are different levels in the kingdom of heaven as is put forward in Jeremiah: if scripture describes the believers as being of 'the greatest' or 'the least,' then all ranks cannot be equal (*Adv. Iov*. 2.27). The varying ranks of priests in the temple of God as cited in the Old and New Testament support Jerome's claim as well (*Adv. Iov*. 2.28). Jerome points out Jovinian's use of assorted vocabulary to refer to Christians as bride, sister, or mother, arguing that such variety of terms is unnecessary if the Church only admits one rank into heaven (*Adv. Iov*. 2.30). Jerome then refutes Jovinian's claim that there is no difference between sins and highlights the fact that Christians are all working towards different futures (*Adv. Iov*. 2.31, 32, 33, 34).
35	Recapitulation of Jerome's argument.
36 – 38	Concludes the treatise: Jerome reviles the number of supporters Jovinian may have and in sharp language condemns Jovinian's luxuriousness and teachings which reward the immoral (*Adv. Iov*. 2.36). The treatise is concluded with a direct address to Rome, exhorting her to embrace virtue, return to her prior excellence, and beware Jovinian (*Adv. Iov*. 2.37, 38).

While abusive language is naturally prominent throughout the polemical treatise, it is the main focus of book 1 chapter 40, occurring nearly midway between the two books. Jerome does not begin in an outburst of anger; he justifies his character assassination along the way until it culminates in chapter 40. Jerome follows a similar pattern in his second book. He does not rush headlong into the abuse; as discussed in Chapter 2, 4.1, placement is important. He carefully works up to it in 2.21, which focuses on another pejorative description of Jovinian. Jerome returns to his usual method of arguing using the authority of scripture until the final chapters of the work. 2.36 and 2.37 add little that is new to Jerome's argument against Jovinian, but instead provide a crescendo of anger. Chapter 38 is short and Jerome pulls in the reins on his abuse. In a calmer manner, he addresses Rome directly and implores her to return to the virtue she once knew. Jerome does not want his sections of abuse to be dismissed as outbursts of personal enmity, so the treatise is evenly

balanced with biblical and secular examples to provide more concrete proof. His abusive passages fulfill the purpose in the treatise of providing peaks of anger that succeed in negatively characterizing Jovinian and commending Jerome; Jovinian is portrayed as a heretic and Jerome, therefore, an arbiter of orthodoxy.[13] We will first discuss the various techniques that Jerome uses to attack Jovinian, Jerome's self-presentation as a Jesus-figure, and Jovinian's deceptive behavior that conceals his sinful behavior. I will then move beyond the contrasting presentations of the two men and consider Jerome's rhetorical domain.

3. JOVINIAN'S DUPLICITY

3.1 Jovinian as a deceiver

Jerome begins his treatise recasting the standard topos of portents found in abusive works.[14] Jovinian is compared to a wounded snake (*debilitatus coluber*) that spews forth nonsense.[15] This is the first of many instances where Jerome accentuates Jovinian's disingenuous nature: to an educated person like Jerome, Jovinian's ideas are incomprehensible and untrustworthy. He writes that only a Sibyl would be able to read Jovinian's writings; the task would require divination.[16] Jerome addresses the reader directly: *rogo quae sunt haec portenta verborum?* 'I ask, what are these portentous words?' (*Adv. Iov*. 1.3). Jovinian's treatise functions as the rhetorical omen that Jerome must soldier against. Jerome will not rid the world of Jovinian the man; he will instead contend with

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[13] Hunter (2007), 234.

[14] See e.g. Cic. *Har. resp.* 10.24.62; Cic. *Dom.* 47.12; Cic. *Pis.* Fr. 1.2.; *Verr.* 2.1.40.5; *Phil.* 14.8.13.

[15] *Adv. Iov*. 1.1.

[16] *Has quidem praeter Sibyllam leget nemo. Nam divinandum est* (*Adv. Iov*. 1.1).

Jovinian's blunders, which could have a detrimental effect on the Christian community. Yet, Jerome cannot make sense of Jovinian's ramblings; it is all confusion and madness (*Adv. Iov.* 1.1). The reason, Jerome would argue, is to confuse the reader into praising marriage and disparaging virginity.[17] This is the beginning of Jovinian's deceitful character.

Jovinian's duplicity, apparent in the passages above, is a central theme that is prominent from the beginning of the treatise. While Jerome repeatedly describes Jovinian's beliefs as being foolish, confused, and the result of madness, there is also something bewildering and deceitful about them.[18] This emphasizes Jovinian's flaws, but also distinguishes Jerome as the more honest and intelligent of the two. Jerome declares Jovinian one who speaks in riddles (αἰνιγματιστής), 'whose books are much more difficult to understand than to refute,' mainly because they are nonsensical and shrouded in flowery rhetoric (*verborum floribus ornatus*) (*Adv. Iov.* 1.1).[19] Despite rhetoric being a useful subject that Jerome himself studied, Jovinian has misused the technique. This has resulted in Jerome being unable to respond to the absurdity of Jovinian's work (*eorum ineptiis*), as he was not able to understand it at all (*Adv. Iov.* 1.1).[20] It is not because Jerome is unintelligent; the fault lies with Jovinian, and to emphasize the distinction between himself and his subject Jerome flourishes his literary muscle and quotes the words of Virgil: *dat sine mente sonum* (*Adv. Iov.* 1.1).[21]

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[17] *Quae res mihi aliquam suspicionem intelligentiae dedit, velle eum ita nuptias praedicare, ut virginitati detrahat* (*Adv. Iov.* 1.3).

[18] *Adv. Iov.* 1.1, 3.

[19] *Cuius libros multo difficilius est nosse quam vincere.*

[20] *Quos cum legissem, et omnino non intelligerem.*

[21] Verg. *Aen.* 6.10.

Jovinian emits noises without thinking, thus misleading people; Jerome on the other hand, began *revolvere crebrius, et non verba modo atque sententias, sed singulas paene syllabas discutere*, 'to turn [them] over again and again, and to break up not only the words and sentences, but almost every single syllable' (*Adv. Iov.* 1.1). Thus, Jerome's nature is to scrutinize persistently his opponent's words in order to make sense out of the mess for the benefit of his audience, while Jovinian's nature is to vomit nonsense.[22]

3.2 Jovinian as a serpentine portent

We should return to Jovinian's treatise as a portent mentioned above. Jerome's task of defeating the portent is made all the more difficult because it consists of ideas and is not a concrete being. Jerome, therefore, vividly personifies Jovinian's ideas as snakes that must be dragged from their pits, exposed, and their heads crushed.[23] Jovinian's nonsensical teachings possess venom that Jerome is eager to extract and destroy. Following in the vein of secular works of abuse, Jerome states that whatever is discovered to be harmful (*noxium*) will be crushed (*conteri*): he will destroy the serpentine portents that threaten Christian thought (*Adv. Iov.* 1.3).[24]

Similar serpentine imagery is found in the book of Genesis after Adam and Eve have been found to have eaten the apple: *et ait Dominus Deus ad serpentem… Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem et semen tuum et semen illius;*

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[22] *Et ne lectorem longius traham, cuiusmodi eloquentiae sit, et quibus verborum floribus ornatus incedat, secundi libri eius monstrabit exordium, quod hesternam crapulam ructans, ita evomit* (*Adv. Iov.* 1.1).
[23] *Adv. Iov.* 1.3.
[24] See Claud. *In Eutropium* 1.20-23 for the necessary destruction of Eutropius and Claud. *In Rufinum* 1.22-23 for the inevitable fall of Rufinus.

ipsum conteret caput tuum, et tu conteres calcaneum eius, 'the Lord God said to the serpent, 'I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel' (Genesis 3.14-15). The imagery here presents Adam's progeny crushing Satan who is represented by the serpent. In parallel, Jerome is likened to the prototypal man, Adam who is presented as being at odds with Satan. The metaphor holds as Jerome and Jovinian engage in similar combat. In the Gospel of Luke, Christ gives his disciples authority specifically stating that they will have the strength 'to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt [them]' (Luke 10.19).[25] By using biblical imagery combined with the classical topos of portents, Jerome attributes the spiritual authority and power of Christ to the individual he believes capable of combating Jovinian: himself.

3.3 Jovinian as a shape-shifter

In book 2 Jovinian has shape-shifted and is presented by Jerome as both the antichrist and the rhetorical portent.[26] Jerome writes: *his et huiuscemodi divinarum Scripturarum testimoniis, quae ad perversitatem sui dogmatis callidus disputator inclinat, quis non tentetur etiam electorum Dei?* 'Who even of God's chosen ones would not be tested by this and similar evidence from the divine scriptures, which the crafty disputer bends to the perversity of his own doctrine?' (*Adv. Iov*. 2.21). It is Jovinian's inconsistency and duplicity that are most worrisome; he presents himself as knowledgeable and a proponent of

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[25] *Ecce dedi vobis potestatem calcandi supra serpentes et scorpiones et supra omnem virtutem inimici; et nihil vobis nocebit.*

[26] See Claud. *In Eutropium* 1.1-23 for the eunuch Eutropius as a portent.

Christian doctrine, yet Jerome will demonstrate otherwise. While rhetorically positioning God's chosen, potential readers, and ascetic sympathizers together with himself (which will be dealt with further below), Jerome accuses Jovinian of deliberately misinterpreting scripture in order to support his own ideas.

Jerome is amazed how the slippery snake Jovinian, whom he dubs 'our Proteus' (*Proteus noster*), changes himself into many different kinds of portents (*Adv. Iov*. 2.21).[27] Jerome's use of Proteus is fitting as he is famed as being the mythological 'Old Man of the Sea' who had the ability to take on various shapes in order to escape his pursuers. Proteus appears in Virgil's *Georgics* as a problematic shape-shifter who will yield to nothing except rough force and chains.[28] Jerome's harsh verbal treatment of Jovinian is literarily justified, as he takes on the role of rural deity, Aristaeus, roughly chaining up Proteus in order to find out why his bees have unexpectedly died.[29] This allusion also casts Jerome as Menelaus in the Odyssey who managed to catch Proteus after he has changed into a lion, serpent, leopard, boar, water, and finally, a tree.[30] Such a reference is appropriate, as Menelaus went in search of Proteus specifically to find out the truth, which is exactly what Jerome hopes to extract from Jovinian's confusing work. Just like Proteus, Jovinian misrepresents the truth. And like Menelaus, Jerome hopes to catch Jovinian out and compel him to confess his

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[27] *Simulque miror, quomodo serpens lubricus et Proteus noster, in variarum se mutet portenta formarum.* Jerome seems to be following in the heresiological tradition of drawing parallels between heretics and pagans (Hunter 2006: 233). For example, Jerome calls Jovinian the 'Epicurus of the Christians' (*Adv. Iov*. 1.1; 2.36) and implies a connection between the names Jovinian and Jove stating that the former name is derived from that of an idol (*Adv. Iov*. 2.38). For the tradition of assimilation of heresy to paganism see Le Boulluec (1985).

[28] Verg. *G*. 4.398-400.

[29] Verg. *G*. 4.532-534.

[30] Hom. *Od*. 4.415, 455-460.

true nature.[31] Presenting Jovinian as a portent allows Jerome to display his literary knowledge and evokes biblical and classical imagery that likens him to Jesus, Menelaus, and Aristaeus.

3.4 Jovinian's guise of knowledge

Jovinian's deception is like that of the false prophets: he speaks proudly and induces others to follow him into sin and luxury while leading them to believe that they are already saved. After discussing the flawed reasoning behind believing that the baptized cannot sin, Jerome uses the words of Peter concerning false prophets, and indirectly comments on Jovinian's propensity to trick others into sinning (*Adv. Iov.* 2.3). He refers to those who repeat their sins and also induce others to overindulge in food and sex.[32] Jerome does not state that he is referring to Jovinian, but the implication seems clear. Naturally, Jovinian would support the idea that one who was baptized could not sin; such a concept would allow him to partake freely in the hedonistic lifestyle, which Jerome paints him enjoying in specific passages of abusive rhetoric that will be discussed below. Jerome focuses on Jovinian's duplicitous nature in order to illuminate the foolishness in adhering to his teachings which, when studied closely, demonstrate that Jovinian is nothing but a pleasure seeker masquerading as a monk.[33]

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[31] While this reference works on one level, it is also somewhat flawed as Homer refers to Proteus as being νημερτὴς - unerring, infallible, sure to speak truth (Hom. *Od.* 4.349). One of the main failings of Jovinian, according to Jerome, is that he is unable to discern the truth from the scriptures, even after he has been 'caught' by Jerome (*Adv. Iov.* 2.3, 37).

[32] *Adv. Iov.* 2.3.

[33] Jerome also satirizes other groups: see e.g. *Ep*. 22.27 on fake nuns, 22.28 and 125.16 on false monks. See Wiesen (1964), 67, 74, 86-87, and 89. See also *Ep*. 22.16, 22.28, and 40.2 for Jerome's

Deceit is further found in Jovinian's use of biblical examples. Jerome is scornful of his opponent's presumption to assume a learned stance. For example, Jerome derides several of Jovinian's examples of biblical men who were married, drawing attention to both Jovinian's foolishness in including such examples as well as his deceptive nature.[34] Jovinian's mistakes are apparent to Jerome 'although Jovinian with his usual stupidity did not see this' (*quamquam hoc ille solita stoliditate non viderit*) (*Adv. Iov*. 1.25). Jerome paints Jovinian as a fool who smirks and refuses to admit his errors while hiding behind guise of knowledge. When Jerome writes concerning the hierarchy of salvation, he indignantly informs Jovinian that ranks exist even in heaven and in the service of God.[35] He instructs Jovinian not to mock the fact that their society also uses rankings to form their infrastructure, although such disrespectful behavior would be in accordance with his usual habit (*solito more*) (*Adv. Iov*. 2.28).

3.5 Jerome vs. Jovinian on hierarchies

Jerome's fixation on ranking ought to be considered in some detail as it is directly connected to his use of abusive rhetoric to assert his authority. Jerome has in mind the levels of asceticism, the most extreme of which embraced the teachings that Jovinian argued against. In Jerome's opinion the ascetic and the secular hierarchies on earth mirror those hierarches that he believes also exist in heaven. Therefore, according to Jerome's model Jovinian's attitude toward

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attacks on the clergy. On Jerome's satirizing of the clergy see also Wiesen (1964), 65-112. See Curran (1997) on Jerome's complex interactions with 'sham-Christians' of Rome.
[34] *Adv. Iov*. 1.25.
[35] *Adv. Iov*. 2.28.

earthly hierarchies also indicates his disdain towards the organization of heaven. Jerome believes that he is justified for believing in varying rewards after death as there is a heavenly precedent found in scripture. He writes that a difference in names is meaningless without a difference in rank and comments on the levels of authority found in the secular world as well:

> Hoc in caelis est, hoc in ministerio Dei, ne nos solito more irrideas, atque subsannes, si imperatores posuerimus, praefectos et comites, et tribunos, et centuriones, et manipulos, et reliquum militiae ordinem.

> This is (how it is) in heaven, this is (how it is) in the service of God, lest you ridicule and sneer at us in your usual way if we station emperors, prefects, and counts, and tribunes, and centurions, and maniples, and the remaining ranks of service (*Adv. Iov*. 2.28).

Jerome defines his world using traditional forms of authority, starting from the emperor and working his way down. He is disgruntled at Jovinian's disregard for not only spiritual levels of authority, but also those levels that provide social structure on earth. We might think that Jerome's preoccupation with secular hierarchy and class jars with his ascetic beliefs. Why should Jerome care about social ranking if he follows strict tenets, which promote a solitary life concerned only with spiritual matters? Jerome's desire to follow those ascetic precepts that focus on a reclusive life characterized by modesty and restraint seems contradictory to his concern with distinct social positions that are accompanied by money and property. Jerome's concern with social rankings is an important issue that we will return to later when examining Jerome's desire for popularity.

4. JEROME AS JESUS

We have seen above how Jerome demonstrates his knowledge of scripture while attacking Jovinian's deceitful conduct. Furthermore, Jerome echoes the words

of Jesus to disparage Jovinian and present himself as a savior figure. He relates God's creation of free will and informs his readers that no one is forced to be virtuous or sinful.[36] He then recounts Jesus' advice to the man who has come to him boasting that he has done all things according to the law. Jesus' advice is that if one desires to be perfect then one has to go away, sell everything, and follow God.[37] Jerome continues:

> Quamobrem et ego tibi dicam: si vis perfectus esse, bonum est vinum non bibere, et carnem non manducare. Si vis perfectus esse, melius est saginare animam quam corpus. Si autem parvulus es et cocorum iura te delectant, nemo eripit faucibus tuis esculentas dapes.

> Wherefore, I too shall say to you: if you wish to be perfect, it is good not to drink wine, nor to eat flesh. If you wish to be perfect, it is better to feed the mind than the body. If, however, you are a child and the soups of the cooks delight you, no one is snatching the luscious foods from your jaws (*Adv. Iov.* 2.6).

This makes Jovinian's duplicitous nature as a monk discussed above worse. He is indirectly described as succumbing to his desires for good food with childlike frivolity, and worse, he has chosen to by his own free will. He indulges in honeyed wine and tavern food while pretending to live as an upstanding monk.[38] But Jerome conveys this to his audience indirectly. He addresses the audience as well as Jovinian in his proposition; Jovinian's answer is taken for granted, but there is still hope for the audience to be perfect if they heed Jerome's advice. Jerome is snidely commenting that surely the good Christian audience does not wish to follow Jovinian's sinful path that yields to all sensual temptations.

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[36] *Adv. Iov.* 2.3.
[37] *Adv. Iov.* 2.6.
[38] *Adv. Iov.* 1.40.

Jerome's statement on perfection allows him to assume the role of Jesus. In the Book of Matthew, a man approaches Jesus, addresses him as teacher, and inquires about the path to eternal life (Matthew 19.16). Jesus responds that one should keep the commandments, but additionally 'If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me' (Matthew 19.21).[39] Jerome has cast himself as a teacher figure not dissimilar to Jesus. This biblical echo in direct connection to Jovinian's conjectured behavior furthers Jerome's role as savior and places Jovinian in the deferential role of student.

5. EXPOSING JOVINIAN

Jovinian's character betrays a disingenuous aspect that impedes Jerome's desire to uncover the truth. Jerome uses abusive rhetoric to expose the 'true' Jovinian. He castigates Jovinian for boasting of his righteousness and focuses on his fluctuating image:

> Ante nudo eras pede: modo non solum calceato, sed et ornato. Tunc pexa tunica, et nigra subucula vestiebaris, sordidatus et pallidus, et callosam opere gestitans manum; nunc lineis et sericis vestibus, et Atrebatum ac Laodiceae indumentis ornatus incedis.

> Before you were barefoot, just now have you put on shoes, even fancy ones! Then you were clad in a hairy tunic and dark under-tunic, grubby and pale, showing off your hand callused with work. Now in linen and silk garments, you go along richly adorned in the robes of the Atrebates and Laodiceans (*Adv. Iov.* 2.21).

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[39] *Ait illi Iesus: 'si vis perfectus esse, vade, vende, quae habes, et da pauperibus, et habebis thesaurum in caelo; et veni, sequere me.'*

Jovinian, therefore, is depicted as a hypocrite who has been alternating his attire between a monk's tunic and a silken robe like an actor changing costumes between scenes. It does not seem wise for anyone to follow Jovinian's teachings if he himself does not remain true to his supposed cenobitic lifestyle. Jerome comments that the sin does not lie in the food or clothing, but in the inconsistency and change for the worse (*varietas et commutatio in deterius*) (*Adv. Iov*. 2.21). Jovinian is earlier described sarcastically as *iste formosus monachus, crassus, nitidus, dealbatus, et quasi sponsus semper incedens*, 'that handsome monk fat, shiny, whitened, and always marching along as if a bridegroom' (*Adv. Iov*. 1.40). Jerome declares that Jovinian's actions must match his words. If he truly believes that marriage and virginity are equal, then he too must marry.[40] Moreover, Jerome writes, *certe in tanta diversitate victus et vestitus, necesse est aut hic aut ibi esse peccatum*, 'surely in such diversity of living and dressing, sin is unavoidable either in the former or the latter' (*Adv. Iov*. 2.21). Jerome supplies his audience with this description of Jovinian's luxurious lifestyle to underscore that his decadent lifestyle, as betrayed by his clothes, is an ill match for any good Christian and to condemn Jovinian's false nature. Jovinian's deceitful character can only hide his true nature for so long. Jerome enlightens his readers with further abusive passages that uncover Jovinian's sinful behavior.

6. JOVINIAN'S SINFUL BEHAVIOR

6.1 Jovinian's gluttony

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[40] *Adv. Iov*. 1.40.

Jovinian's dissolute lifestyle is the focus of much of Jerome's abuse. While Jerome's portrayal adheres to several of the classical topoi found in works of abuse, the Christian context of the work presents Jovinian's behavior specifically as being sinful. Jovinian's failings can be directly related to the cardinal sins of greed, pride, lust, and gluttony. Jerome compels his reader to imagine the gluttonous Jovinian still hung-over, vomiting out the introduction to his second book.[41] Later, Jovinian's speech is presented in the most unappealing fashion: Jerome describes his opponent's throat as being so fat (*obesis faucibus*) that suffocated words (*suffocata verba*) scarcely make it out (*Adv. Iov.* 2.21). His gluttony betrays his true character. Furthermore, Jerome tells us that nothing ruins the soul as a full fermenting stomach (*plenus venter et exaestuans*), emitting gases on all sides (*Adv. Iov.* 2.12). He cites Moses who boldly broke the tables because he knew that drunkards are not able to hear the word of God.[42] Food and drink are detrimental to the goal of achieving salvation whereas abstinence can help redeem oneself.[43]

6.2 Jovinian's greed, pride, and lust

Jovinian, however, is not only guilty of gluttony. No good can come of reading his ramblings as he is presented as a pleasure-seeking hypocrite. Jerome addresses his virginal audience, begs them not to listen to the 'most voluptuous public speaker' (*voluptuosissimum contionatorem*) and instructs them to treat Jovinian's words as carefully as they would a Siren's song (*Adv. Iov.* 1.4). Jovinian's prideful behavior is further described by his 'speaking with swelling

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[41] *Adv. Iov.* 1.1.
[42] *Adv. Iov.* 2.15.
[43] *Adv. Iov.* 2.15.

cheeks' (*loquentem buccis tumentibus*), 'balancing his inflated words' (*inflata verba trutinantem*) and 'promising freedom in heaven' (*repromittentem in caelis libertatem*) (*Adv. Iov*. 1.40). The fact, Jerome asserts, is that Jovinian is a slave to sin and luxury (*cum ipse servus sit vitiorum atque luxuriae*) (*Adv. Iov*. 1.40). He claims in public to be a monk and yet he prefers spotless clothing, shining skin, honeyed wine, elaborate meats, baths, massages, and taverns to the dirty tunic, bare feet, coarse bread, and drink of water that are meant to sustain a cenobite.[44] Jovinian's greed, pride, lust, and gluttony are expounded throughout the treatise in order to discredit his teachings on virginity, marriage, fasting, and vigils.

Jerome sneers at Jovinian's defense of second marriage, which Jerome argues also displays his ignorant and salacious nature.[45] He writes, *legamus physiologos et reperiemus turturis hanc esse naturam, ut si parem perdiderit, alteri non iungatur; et intelligemus digamiam etiam a mutis avibus reprobari*, 'let us read the naturalists and we will find out that this is the nature of the turtledove: that if it loses its partner, it does not unite with another and we will understand that second marriage is condemned even by dumb birds' (*Adv. Iov*. 1.30). Jovinian's support for second marriage is marked as being unnatural; even animals realize the importance of remaining loyal to one partner. Jerome rhetorically presents Jovinian's views as contradicting nature and connected with lust and greed.

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[44] *Adv. Iov.* 1.40.

[45] See *Commentariorum in epistulam ad Titum liber* 1.6-7 for Jerome on clergy that remarry. See also *Ep*. 52.16 to Nepotian on second marriages, *Ep*. 79.2, 7 to the widow Salvina, and *Ep*. 123.2 to the widow Geruchia advising to avoid remarrying. See also Laurence (1997), 261, 265, and 277-302; Hunter (2009), 182-183; and Kelly (1975), 183, 191, 210-211.

6.3 Jovinian's physiognomy

As we have seen above, Jerome characterizes Jovinian's beliefs in terms of sins. Moreover, he provides several physical descriptions of Jovinian as 'evidence' to emphasize his sinful behavior. Such characterization illuminates a supposed connection between Jovinian's sinful character and his appearance. Jerome builds on critical portrayals that had been effectively used in the past.[46] Jovinian is described as having red cheeks (*rubent buccae*), sleek skin (*nitet cutis*), fashioned hair on the front and the back (*comae in occipitium frontemque tornantur*), an extended pot-belly (*protensus est aqualiculus*), raised shoulders (*insurgunt humeri*), and a swollen neck (*turget guttur*) (*Adv. Iov*. 2.21). Such a specific description can be interpreted using the ancient practice of physiognomy to determine what Jerome intended to convey about his subject.

Some ancients believed that a person's character could be determined through a study of their facial and bodily characteristics.[47] While the practice has little credibility nowadays, physiognomy continued to be fashionable during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in intellectual studies and in descriptions found in novels.[48] While the original work, Polemon of Laodicea's second-century study the *Physiognomy*, is now lost, the extant versions of his text may be of some use. An unknown writer, Adamantius, who adapted the book

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[46] See Wiesen (1964), 213-218, on Jerome's reliance on imagery found in the Bible, Horace, and Persius.

[47] The concept can be traced back to the *Iliad*: Thersites, a Greek soldier who is bow-legged, lame, with hunched shoulders and a pointed head with badly balding hair is described as being αἴσχιστος, meaning both physically and morally ugly (Hom. *Il*. 2.215-220). See also Corbeill (1996), 31.

[48] See Pearl (2010), 106-112, on physiognomy in nineteenth-century caricatures.

in the fourth century, writes that the entire picture of the subject is important to scrutinize as it is only when all the evidence has been gathered together that the truth about the subject's character becomes apparent (Adam. *Phys.* 2.B1).[49] Several of the characteristics Jerome uses to describe Jovinian are related in the *Physiognomy*: for example, those who have excessively thick, bullish necks are quick to anger (δυσόργητοι), clumsy (σκαιοί), ignorant (ἀμαθεῖς), and swinish (ὑώδεις) (Adam. *Phys.* 2.B20). Jovinian's red cheeks lead to the presumption that he is a drunkard (Adam. *Phys.* 2.B55), while his swelling cheeks referred to above (*Adv. Iov.* 1.40) are indicative of men who talk nonsense (Adam. *Phys.* 2.B27). Adamantius also devotes several sections to the discussion of general characteristics of men of certain humors. Jerome has integrated the characteristics of an 'insensible man' together with those of a 'shameless man' in his description of Jovinian (Adam. *Phys.* 2.B47; 2.B48). Jerome's caricature of Jovinian creates a man who physically embodies all those spiritual and physical shortcomings that Jerome accuses him of; such a description would have resonated with his audience and further justified Jerome's denunciation.

7. BEYOND JOVINIAN

7.1 Targeting Rome

From the characterization of Jovinian as a sinner and a deceiver described above, the target of the Jerome's harsh polemic would appear to be mainly Jovinian. Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum*, however, goes beyond solely discrediting one man. Instead, the blow was leveled at the general culture of Rome that was prevalent at the time. As Wiesen has observed, Jovinian is

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[49] Repath (2007), 487.

described in polemical terms similar to the castigation of old failures to uphold Roman *mores*.[50] Jerome's attack is aggressively specific about Jovinian, but Jerome seems to intend that his critique would simultaneously be interpreted as a condemnation of the declining morals of Rome.[51] Indeed, while the treatise appears to focus on Jovinian, it does not single him out completely. There is a larger group that remains silently behind Jovinian, and must be taken to task as well. Jerome writes:

> Igitur non dimicabo contra singulos, nec paucorum ero passim congressione contentus: toto certandum est agmine, et incompositi hostium cunei, ac latrocinii more pugnantes, instructa et ordinata acie repellendi.

> Nor will I be happy with a few people in combat here and there: therefore I will not strive against individuals: we must therefore struggle with our whole battle line and the battalions of the disorganized enemy, battling like bandits, must be pushed back by a drilled and ordered battle array (*Adv. Iov.* 1.6).

Jerome uses a military metaphor to stress the magnitude of his undertaking. He is not contending only against Jovinian and Jovinian's beliefs, he is tackling the larger problem, i.e. the deteriorating morals of Roman society. This can be gleaned from a closer look at how Jerome describes Jovinian's followers, whom he expects to be among the readers of this treatise, and the manner in which he attempts to placate them.

7.2 Jovinian's followers

Jerome comments on those men whom he believes are likely followers of Jovinian:

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[50] See Wiesen (1964), 52 and 215-218.
[51] Hunter (2007), 72. See *Ep.* 22.28 where Jerome attacks the failings of the clergy using similar language as that found in *Adversus Iovinianum*.

> Quoscumque formosos, quoscumque calamistratos, quos crine composito, quos rubentibus buccis videro, de tuo armento sunt, immo inter tuos sues grunniunt. De nostro grege tristes, pallidi, sordidati, et quasi peregrini huius saeculi, licet sermone taceant, habitu loquuntur et gestu.

> Whatever handsome men I see, whatever men with curled hair, with locks arranged, with red cheeks, they are from your herd; yes, they grunt among your pigs. The sad, the pale, the meanly dressed belong to our flock; and as if foreigners to this world, although they keep silent in speech, they speak by their dress and conduct (*Adv. Iov*. 2.36).

A true Christian monk is taciturn, unassuming, and behaves in an austere manner worthy of heaven. Such attention to appearance and drink, as is indicated by the red cheeks and curled hair, betrays lax morals.[52] A stark contrast is drawn between Jerome and his followers, and Jovinian and his supporters. Jerome further groups Jovinian together with luxurious types: he describes Jovinian, or 'our modern Epicurus' (*Epicurum nostrum*) as standing firm in his delightful gardens wantoning among young men and women.[53] He is supported by the fat (*crassi*), the sleek (*nitidi*) and whitened (*dealbati*) (*Adv. Iov*. 2.36). He further instructs Jovinian to add all pigs and dogs to his group, as well as vultures, eagles, hawks, and owls *quia carnem amas*, 'because [you are] so fond of the flesh' (*Adv. Iov*. 2.36). Jerome defiantly declares *numquam nos Aristippi multitudo terrebit*, 'the rabble of Aristippus will never terrify us!' (*Adv. Iov*. 2.36). Jerome's abusive rhetoric works to solidify the connection he has developed with his readers. It is not only he who rails against the likes of Socrates' associate Aristippus, who was famous for his luxurious lifestyle.

The long-held Roman views on decadence and promiscuity would encourage support against Jovinian's supporters of dandies (*scurras*),

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[52] See also *Adv. Iov*. 2.21 for similar language.
[53] *Adv. Iov*. 2.36.

skirmishers (*velites*), fat men (*crassos*), sleek men (*nitidos*), and noisy declaimers (*clamatores*) (*Adv. Iov.* 2.37).[54] According to Jerome, it is among this sort of person that Jovinian has had the most influence: *nisi enim tu venisses, ebrii atque ructantes paradisum intrare non poterant,* 'indeed, if you had not come, drunks and belchers could not enter heaven' (*Adv. Iov.* 2.37). While Jerome provides no concrete proof that Jovinian is actually a hedonist who supports these kinds of people, he has already rhetorically manipulated Jovinian's opinions on marriage and fasting to construct a believably decadent persona for Jovinian. His principles on fasting are presented in the frame of gluttony; his principles on virginity and marriage in the frame of lust; and the manner in which he presents his ideology in the frame of pride. Jerome presents Jovinian's views as being so extreme that they can be connected to the cardinal sins.

It is the last chapter of the treatise (38) that informs us more specifically who Jovinian's followers are. Jerome directly addresses Rome:[55]

> Sed ad te loquar, quae scriptam in fronte blasphemiam Christi confessione delesti. Urbs potens, urbs orbis domina, urbs Apostoli voce laudata, interpretare vocabulum tuum. Roma aut fortitudinis nomen est apud Graecos, aut sublimitatis iuxta Hebraeos. Serva quod diceris, virtus te excelsam faciat, non voluptas humilem.

> But I speak to you, who with the confession of Christ have destroyed the blasphemy written on your forehead. Mighty city, commanding-city of the world, city praised by the apostle's voice, translate your name! Rome is either the name for strength among Greeks, or the name for height among the Jews.

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[54] See, for example, Persius' *Choliambs,* which comments on the decadence of contemporary literature (Pers. *Prologue*) and the enslavement of humans to basic needs (*Satire* 1); and Juvenal's first satire which deplores the vices that have overtaken society (Juv. 1.149).

[55] See Grig (2012) on Jerome's 'fluctuating picture of [Rome]' (140). See also Roberts (2001), 555-556, on Jerome's representation of Rome.

> Protect that which you are called, let virtue raise you high, not pleasure bring you low (*Adv. Iov.* 38).

He begs the mighty city to maintain her excellence, embrace virtue, and counter the luxury she has fallen prey to.[56] Those followers described above are part of the problem in Rome.[57] Jerome had previously discussed who constitutes Jovinian's admirers: *tibi cedunt de via nobiles, tibi osculantur divites caput,* 'the nobles make way for you, the wealthy kiss your head' (*Adv. Iov.* 2.37).[58] It is these men that Jerome accuses Jovinian of spiritually supporting. Now that Jerome's target has been expanded to include others besides Jovinian, we should consider Jerome's audience or rhetorical domain.

7.3 Jerome's audience

After compiling a list of secular examples of literary and historical women, such as Lucretia, Bilia, and Marcia, who either embraced virginity or shunned second marriages, Jerome writes: [59]

> *S*entio in catalogo feminarum multo me plura dixisse quam exemplorum patitur consuetudo, et a lectore erudito iuste posse reprehendi. Sed quid faciam, cum mihi mulieres nostri temporis Apostoli ingerant auctoritatem; et necdum elato funere prioris viri, memoriter digamiae praecepta decantent!
>
> I feel that in this catalogue of women I have said much more than is permitted in the customary practice of examples, and I may justly be rebuked by a learned

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[56] On Rome's immorality see also *Ep.* 45.4-5. See also Wiesen (1964), 47. On Jerome's references to Rome as Babylon see Sugano (1983), 33.

[57] See *Ep.* 46.10 for Jerome's disdainful opinion on the social culture in Rome; *Ep.* 52.10 for Jerome's scornful view of patronage in Rome; and *Ep.* 22.32 for hypocritical aristocratic charity in Rome. See Cain (2009a), 171-178, on the importance of Jerome's Roman audience.

[58] The action of having one's head rather than hand or knees kissed was a sign of social equality (Amm. Marc. 28.4.10).

[59] Respectively, the famously virtuous wife of Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus; the virginal wife of Duillius, who Jerome tells us was a triumphant Roman naval commander; and Cato's younger daughter who refused to remarry (*Adv. Iov.* 1.46).

reader. But what am I to do, when women of our time throw the authority of the apostle at me, and before the funeral of their first husband has been carried out, they reel off the precepts of second marriages from memory! (*Adv. Iov.* 1.47).

Jerome presents himself at the mercy of his reader by admitting that he may have gone beyond the acceptable standard of providing evidence to make a point. Yet his actions are beyond his control as the current situation cries out for a remedy. He demonstrates his understanding of literary conventions and rhetorically exposes himself to criticism to show his esteem for his audience.[60]

Jerome attempts to draw his audience in, but there is never any doubt as to who is in the right: he decisively delineates who falls on each side of the battle. The audience is assumed to support Jerome. Cast as knowledgeable and discerning, the audience is flattered into taking his corner. He writes that he hopes his treatise will not be tiresome for his readers, as they have no choice but to read Jovinian's 'sick and vomit' (*nauseam eius et vomitum*) due to Jerome's mode of refutation of engaging with his opponent's argument line by line (*Adv. Iov.* 1.4). He continues: 'one will drink Christ's antidote more freely, when the devil's poison has gone before', *libentius antidotum Christi bibet, cum diaboli venena praecesserint* (*Adv. Iov.* 1.4). The contrast is striking: Jerome provides the soothing remedy to the audience weighing through Jovinian's heretical vomit. Jerome continues, *cunctorum in commune Iovinianus hostis est*, 'Jovinian is the enemy of all jointly (*Adv. Iov.* 1.4). This positions Jerome as battling on behalf of all Christians, while refuting Jovinian's arguments on baptism, fasting, and the heavenly rewards of the virginal and the married. Jerome uses these

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[60] See Curran (1997), 223, on the 'pervasive influence of aristocratic *mores*' on Jerome's rhetoric.

propositions as a fulcrum to expose the inadequacies of Jovinian's treatise and to demonstrate the superiority of his own beliefs. Importantly, he contends for support by asserting he already has it. He and the community will rally against Jovinian.

But who make up this community that is reading Jerome's work and nodding along with him? Jerome alludes to his readers when he writes, *dicam aliquid quod forsitan cum multorum offensa dicturus sum; sed boni mihi non irascentur, quia eos peccati conscientia non remordebit,* 'I will say something which perhaps will offend many; but *good men* will not be angry with me, because the guilt of their sin will not nag those people (*Adv. Iov.* 1.34).[61] Jerome then discusses the flawed nature of selecting the clergy, pointing out that bishops will sometimes elect men not because they are better men but because they are more cunning; the simple and innocent are overlooked as they are thought to be incapable. Offices are subject to nepotism and bishops grant positions to those who resort to bribery and flattery.[62] Jerome seems to realize that his treatise would be read by authoritative figures – perhaps those who were guilty of the behavior he condemned. But the quotation above also indicates Jerome's desire to gather support and subtly attempts to placate the audience by suggesting that those who are good Christians will not mind having their sins demonstrated to them. Jerome hopes his audience of upper class Christians will, on the one hand, already consider themselves to be 'good men' or, on the other hand, be

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[61] Hunter (2007), 240, points out that it seems as though Jerome had someone specific in mind: 'Pammachius was considered a leading candidate for the episcopate, even though he was still a married layman and a senator. Moreover, Jerome identified Siricius as one of Pammachius' supporters.' See *Ep.* 48.4.
[62] *Adv. Iov.* 1.34.

persuaded to agree with him as they will not want to be considered one of the guilt-ridden party. It is clear that Jerome intends for his audience to identify and agree with the concept that he presents. Note that Jerome does not say that good men do not sin *at all*; he only says that the guilt will not nag these men. Jerome tries to strengthen his connections within the Christian community by creating an attractive category of 'good men,' among which he himself is a key player.

8. PRESENTING JEROME

8.1 Jerome's authority

Able to understand literary conventions and adept with words, Jerome's self-characterization positions himself for authority. He presents himself as a knowledgeable ascetic and a Christ-like figure worthy of leadership and well versed in both secular and Christian literature. By condemning Jovinian, Jerome attempts to elevate himself further in the eyes of his audience. When reviewing Jovinian's poor choice of examples, Jerome, while offering corrections, pedantically writes, *ei ex superfluo interim concedam*, 'I should, however, grant [something] from my abundance to Jovinian' (*Adv. Iov*. 1.26).[63] His treatise is full of examples from Christian scripture and secular history and literature, which help make a case for Jerome's claim of superiority – both of virginity over marriage and his own intellectual and ascetic dominance over Jovinian. While Jovinian is a deceitful monk who promotes one lifestyle while living another, Jerome rhetorically fashions himself as one who lives a more virtuous life. As he points out Jovinian's errors in using David as an example to support

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[63] See Chapter 4, 5.1-5.6 on Jerome and Helvidius' pedagogical relationship.

marriage, Jerome writes, *nec hoc dico, quod sanctis viris quidquam detrahere audeam; sed quod aliud sit in lege versari, aliud in Evangelio,* 'I am not saying this because I dare to detract in any way from holy men, but because it is one thing to live under the law, another to live by the Gospel' (*Adv. Iov.* 1.24). While Jerome never outwardly states his high opinion of himself, he rhetorically constructs himself as the guardian of virtue. His being commissioned to write this treatise to refute Jovinian is a case in point.

Jerome informs his reader that he has been requested by the holy brothers at Rome (*sancti ex urbe Roma fratres*) to respond to the absurdities of this 'Epicurus', i.e. Jovinian, and suppress them with evangelical and apostolic force.[64] From the very beginning of the treatise, Jerome has shifted the onus of the contents onto the spiritual authorities in Rome. Jerome has been charged with the responsibility of addressing Jovinian's ideas because those men in Rome believed him worthy of the task. We learn that Jovinian's treatise had been brought to the attention of Damasus' successor, Siricius, by 'most faithful, Christian men, lofty in family, distinguished by religion' (*fidelissimis Christianis viris genere optimis, religione praeclaris*).[65] Therefore, Jerome again assumes support of these elite Christians along with the holy brothers in power at Rome. Who exactly requested that Jerome respond to Jovinian's work is unclear, as is whether anyone actually enlisted Jerome for the task. One would speculate that

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[64] *Rogantes ut eorum ineptiis responderem, et Epicurum Christianorum evangelico atque apostolico vigore conterrerem* (*Adv. Iov.* 1.1)

[65] Siricius *Ep.* 7.5. Some scholars speculate that Pammachius was included in this group: Valli (1953), 36; Kelly (1975), 182; Pietri (1976), 434. Hunter (2007), 24-25, raises doubts about the possibility of Pammachius being a part of this group, as *Ep.* 48 and 49 are the earliest remaining pieces of correspondence concerning Jovinian. Hunter concludes that 'Pammachius entered the Jovinianist controversy not only as an opponent of Jovinian, but also as a critic of Jerome' (25).

had important figures requested Jerome, he would have been eager to provide names. But it is evident that Jerome felt the need to state that he had an authority figure behind him.

8.2 Jerome and the apostles

To enhance his authoritative corner Jerome presents himself as a commander who instructs an army against Jovinian and his followers. The audience's support for Jerome is taken for granted, as is that of Paul, who Jerome boasts will be featured in the very front line as if he were the bravest general (*quasi fortissimum ducem*, *Adv. Iov*. 1.6). Paul will defeat the enemy, armed with his own weapons (*suis telis*), that is, his own judgments (*suis sententiis*, *Adv. Iov*. 1.6). It is important, however, that Jerome states that *he* will arm Paul the apostle (*armabo*). Paul is Jerome's tool and must be equipped and placed into battle by Jerome. Jerome, as the commander, embraces the apostle's talents, but should be credited for putting them to use. [66] The military metaphor serves to emphasize the magnitude of Jerome's undertaking and he claims authority over even the apostle Paul, the *dux* of the army marching into battle. In this way Jerome subtly transforms himself into a man of orthodox authority.

The authority of the apostles Paul and John are further used to back up his accusations of Jovinian's sinful behavior. Jerome writes: *putas nostrum esse quod loquimur?*, 'do you think that which I am saying is my own?' (*Adv. Iov*. 2.30). Jerome does not take credit for the description of Jovinian: *descripsit sermo*

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[66] See Bauer (1971), 112, for discussion on how the apostles Peter and Paul became distinctly Roman symbols of authority widely used in polemical works.

apostolicus Iovinianum, 'the speech of the apostles described Jovinian' as being a bombastic, hypocritical monk (*Adv. Iov*. 1.40). Moreover, *Ioannes in eadem verba concordat,* 'John agrees in the same words' (*Adv. Iov*. 1.40). That is, John does not support Jovinian's reputed lifestyle. Jerome then relates John's thoughts on loving only that which is of the Father; to love worldly things is to fall prey to lust.[67] Such corrupt behavior does not belong in heaven and should not attract followers from among Jerome's virtuous readers as discussed below. Jerome strengthens his attack on Jovinian's intemperate lifestyle by using the apostles' authority. When the above is analyzed together with Jerome's provincial background and concerns of status and hierarchy, it seems plausible that Jerome was eager to integrate himself in with those whom he targeted in his rhetorical domain.

8.3 Popularity

Jerome was sensitive to the fact that his ascetic beliefs had previously encountered some resistance among aristocratic Christians because they contradicted traditionally held views of women, marriage, wealth, and society.[68] Moreover, Jerome was not in a position of power: he was not a bishop, but merely a priest who had been ordained by a schismatic bishop, Paulinus of Antioch.[69] His use of abusive rhetoric in *Adversus Iovinianum* can be viewed as an effort to counter this resistance and as an appeal to popularity among the

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[67] *Adv. Iov*. 1.40.

[68] See Chapter 2, n. 190. For other negative reactions to asceticism see Ambrose's indignant letter concerning Paulinus of Nola and his wife Therasia's decision to embrace an ascetic life (Ambr. *Ep*. 58.3).

[69] See Chapter 5, n.3.

aristocracy. It will be useful at this point to consider the historical context to illustrate Jerome's tenuous position with upper class Christians.

Despite enjoying the favor of Paula and her daughters, the unexpected happened in late 384: Paula's eldest daughter Blesilla died.[70] Jerome had been concerned for Blesilla's spiritual well-being after she continued to live a colorful life in Rome despite her husband's death. He had taken the young woman under his guidance and steered her down an ascetic path. To the public, the apparent result of Blesilla's intensive studying and fasting, provoked by Jerome, had been an early death.[71] The public reaction towards Jerome and his ascetic tutelage was not a positive one.[72] And this only served to exacerbate rumors that were circulating that accused Jerome of immoral conduct, based on his relationship with Paula.[73] It seems likely that Paula's family was not keen on her connection with Jerome, especially in light of recent events.[74]

As discussed at length in Chapter 2, 3.6, asceticism provided an alternative way of life for women in the late fourth century. It had the potential to disrupt social hierarchies as well as bloodlines that stemmed back for centuries. In 385, shortly after the death of his patron Damasus on 11 December 384 and under rather tense conditions, Jerome left Rome, or, as he then called it,

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[70] *Ep*. 39.

[71] See Cooper (1996), 68, who attributes Blesilla's death to 'aggravated symptoms of anorexia.'

[72] *Ep.* 39.6.2. See Cooper (1996), 92-115, and Cain (2009a), 102-114, on this incident and the negative reaction to Jerome's involvement.

[73] *Ep*. 45.2-3.

[74] Cain (2009a), 111-114.

Babylon.[75] Siricius had likely played a part in Jerome's dismissal, but a definitive reason for Jerome's departure is unknown.[76] It is possible that he could not take the criticism and feared that such circumstances when combined with a lack of a powerful patron would further endanger his chances to secure popular opinion at Rome.[77]

Following the controversial death of Blesilla, Jerome went east to settle in Bethlehem where he lived out the rest of his life. In an effort to develop his Christian scholarship, Jerome undertook the demanding task of translating the Old Testament directly from the original Hebrew text. He hoped to produce a scholarly, accurate translation that would also indulge an educated Christian's familiarity with classical literature. Jerome attempted to balance Christian ideas with secular literary traditions.[78] His efforts, however, provoked criticism: his use of both Christian and non-Christian works caused people, such as Rufinus, to question and deride the number of works on which Jerome claimed to be an expert.[79] In addition, as we saw in Chapter 3, his contemporaries openly voiced their doubts about Jerome's translation of the Bible. At times, Jerome's desire to incorporate himself into the world of the aristocratic Christians was met with disappointing resistance.[80]

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[75] *Ep*. 45.6. See Grig (2012) for discussion of Jerome's description of Rome. See Cain (2009a), 105-110, on Jerome's departure.

[76] *Collectio Avellana Ep.* 4. Kelly (1975), 112. Cain (2009a), 114-124.

[77] Jerome seemingly did not get along with Damasus' successor Siricius (*Ep*. 127.9).

[78] Rebenich (2002), 54. See Wissemann (1992), Brown Tkacz (1996, 1997, 1999), Adkin (2000) for classical allusions in Jerome's Latin Bible.

[79] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 3.39. See Chapter 3, 6.3.

[80] Ruf. *Apol. contra Hier.* 2.32-37, August. *Ep.* 71.3-5; *Ep*. 82.35. Cain (2009b), 48, comments that 'Jerome's Vulgate translation of most of the Bible into Latin… was with few exceptions rejected by contemporaries, lay and clerical alike.'

In comparison, Jovinian's views were initially well received among the wealthy aristocrats at Rome.[81] His treatise attempted to engage with aristocratic values, used secular literature, and promoted patriotic motivation for marriage.[82] All these things would coincide with the values and culture of upper class Christians. Jerome himself, by describing Jovinian's followers as discussed above, not only provides evidence that they were made up of members of the elite but also that the support was sizable.[83] However, he does his best to discourage Jovinian's initial popularity and undermine the strength that accompanies popular opinion.

Jerome portrays Jovinian's followers as being self-indulgent pleasure-seekers, who, while they may be large in number, do not even truly subscribe to Jovinian's teachings. Jerome writes:

> Quod multi acquiescunt sententiae tuae, indicium voluptatis est: non enim tam te loquentem probant, quam suis favent vitiis.

> The fact that many assent to your opinions is proof of their desire for pleasure. Indeed, they do not so much approve of your speaking, as they are well disposed to their own vices (*Adv. Iov.* 2.36).

Jerome's point is that Jovinian's apparent popularity is not indicative of any righteousness on his part. People flock to him because they have found a way to justify their immoral lifestyles through his teachings. The number of

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[81] Jerome complains of Jovinian as being accepted among monks and other members of the clergy (*Ep.* 7.4). Augustine comments on Jovinian's views successfully encouraging ascetics to abandon celibacy and marry (August. *Retractiones* 2.22).

[82] Hunter (2007), 72. See *Adv. Iov.* 1.4; 1.36; 1.41.

[83] *Adv. Iov.* 2.36; 2.37.

Jovinian's followers supposedly means nothing to Jerome, who tells Jovinian not to boast, as Jesus had only twelve apostles (*Adv. Iov.* 2.36). In comparison, Jerome discusses false prophets who are never lacking in numbers (*Adv. Iov.* 2.36). In harsh language he writes: *et pro magna sapientia deputas, si plures porci post te currant, quos gehennae succidiae nutrias?* 'do you regard it as great wisdom, if many pigs should trot after you, which you would feed for the slaughter of hell?' (*Adv. Iov.* 2.36). Such a statement attempts to frighten readers over to Jerome's side. Furthermore, while Jerome contends that the number of Jovinian's supporters is immaterial, their large number clearly mattered to him. By arguing polemically, Jerome hopes to increase his support by using derogatory characterizations and appeals to values that would resonate with those in his rhetorical domain. Moreover, Jerome strengthens his argument by assuming that his audience supports him, along with historical, literary, and scriptural evidence, sometimes in acknowledged overabundance.[84] Numbers mattered, and Jerome, whose exacting ascetic beliefs could be antagonistic to some, felt this more than anyone.

9. REACTIONS IN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

9.1 Excommunication

Jovinian and his followers, however, had been excommunicated and condemned publicly by a synod of the Roman clergy sometime between 390 and 393 (Siricius *Ep.* 7.6).[85] Pope Siricius had written to various western bishops,

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[84] *Adv. Iov.* 1.47.

[85] Phipps (2004), 105, oversimplifies Jerome's interactions with Jovinian: '[a]fter becoming aware of Jerome's denunciations, Siricius excommunicated Jovinian for the crime of heresy in 389.' The date of Siricius' letter has been the topic of much scholarly debate: Belling (1888), 396, discusses

such as Ambrose, alerting them to these men who presented themselves as pious Christians but were actually tempting true Christians away with their insidious doctrines.[86] Jovinian, along with several of his followers, was specifically named as having promoted ideas that went against Christian law.[87] Siricius writes,

> Unde Apostoli secuti praeceptum quia aliter quam quod accepimus annuntiabant, omnium nostrum tam presbyterorum et diaconorum, quam etiam totius cleri, unam scitote fuisse sententiam, ut Iovinianus, Auxentius, Genialis, Germinator, Felix, Plotinus, Martianus, Ianuarius et Ingeniosus, qui incentores novae haeresis et blasphemiae inventi sunt, divina sententia et nostro iudicio in perpetuum damnati extra Ecclesiam remanerent.

> Proceeding from the teaching of the apostle, because they were preaching differently than that which we have accepted, know that we all had the same opinion; all of us both priests and deacons and the entire clergy, that Jovinian, Auxentius, Genialis, Germinator, Felix, Plotinus, Martianus, Januarius, and Ingeniosus, who were found to be inciters of a new heresy and blasphemy, should remain outside the church, forever condemned by divine sentence and our judgment (Siricius *Ep.* 7.4 / *PL* 13.1171).

Siricius' letter, while it does not detail Jovinian's beliefs, does indicate that Jovinian's teachings had been at odds with the Roman clergy. He first writes that the most faithful Christians of the highest ancestry have informed him of the controversy surrounding Jovinian.[88] Grouping those men with the clergy he writes that while they do not treat the vows of marriage with disdain, they do bestow more honor on the product of marriage: virgins.[89] Siricius writes on

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Jerome's references to Jovinian to construct a timeline. Neumann (1962), 142-154, and Heid (2000), 240, argue for 390. Brochet (1905), 69-71; Palanque (1933), 545-546; Dudden (1935), 397-397; Valli (1953), 30-35; Aldama (1963), 107-119; Paredi (1964a), 355-356; Kelly (1975), 18; and Duval (2003), 11-21, argue for 393.

[86] Siricius *Ep.* 7.3.

[87] Siricius *Ep.* 7.6.

[88] Siricius *Ep.* 7.5.

[89] Siricius *Ep.* 7.5.

behalf of the entire clergy, indignantly affirming that they do not condone Jovinian's views and that while they value virginity they simultaneously do not condemn marriage. Further, he states that Jovinian had been deceitful, worming his way into the church both 'under the cover of a pious name' (*sub velamento pii nominis*) and 'under a religious name' (*sub religioso nomine*) (*Ep.* 7.3 / *PL* 13.1168). He also raises the point that Jovinian has distorted examples of abstinence found in scripture.[90] These are all points that Jerome makes in his treatise: as discussed above Jerome also (in much more vehement language) rebukes Jovinian's use of deception to insinuate himself into the church along with his supposed deliberate misinterpretation of scripture. While Jerome (contrary to Siricius) may have believed that members of the aristocracy and clergy supported Jovinian's teachings, (as I have shown above) he does his best to mollify his audience into believing that he and they are all on the same side against the heretical Jovinian.

9.2 Reaction to *Adversus Iovinianum:* Jerome the soldier

Jerome may have been attempting to re-establish himself in society following his rather embarrassing departure from Rome by contributing to the Jovinianist controversy in a manner that he assumed would be widely accepted. It was not well received.[91] Three of Jerome's letters provide insight into the general public

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[90] Siricius *Ep.* 7.4.

[91] As Hunter (2007), 241, writes, '[f]or Jerome to trounce Jovinian as a 'heretic' would have been a major step towards establishing himself as a giant in the competitive world of fourth-century ecclesiastical and literary politics.' *Ep.* 48.2 to Pammachius discloses that several copies of Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum* have been withdrawn from circulation. On this see Curran (1997), 222-223.

reaction.[92] Jerome's correspondence to Pammachius is the most useful evidence for understanding how Jerome viewed the situation. The general response is clear: Jerome was unable to network his way successfully into the aristocracy despite his use of Christian examples, rhetorical tactics, and strong abusive language to assert his dominance. The main complaint against Jerome's work seems to have been that he was too extreme in his attack against marriage and too excessive in his approval of virginity.[93] Jerome takes this into consideration in his *Ep*. 49. Despite remaining firm in his support of the greater rewards of virginity, and even claiming that the treatise contained many remarks on the topics of virginity, widowhood, and marriage that were made with 'careful moderation' (*cauto moderamine*),[94] Jerome drastically mutes his tone in this apologetic letter (*Ep*. 49.5).   After having realized that his reputation was (once again) on the line, Jerome uses much more restrained language. Quoting himself Jerome reiterates his description of Jovinian as 'jointly the enemy of all' (*cunctorum in commune Iovinianus hostis*), but this time no scathing description of Jovinian follows (*Ep*. 49.3).

Jerome's treatment of the addressee is important: he treats Pammachius as a close friend addressing him as his schoolmate (*condiscipulum*), companion (*sodalem*), and friend (*amicum*), and writes hoping that he can look to him for support (*Ep*. 49.1).   But *Ep*. 49 begins with an acknowledged and restrained silence between Jerome and Pammachius.[95] As discussed earlier in Chapter 2,

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[92] Two are to Pammachius (*Ep*. 48, 49) and one is to Domnio (*Ep*. 50).
[93] *Ep*. 49.2.
[94] *Ep*. 49.11.
[95] *Quod ad te huc usque non scripsi, causa fuit silentium tuum. Verebar enim, ne, si tacenti scriberem, molestum me magis quam officiosum putares* (*Ep*. 49.1).

Pammachius was a member of the Roman aristocracy, whose ancestry stemmed from consuls and senators.[96] Jerome worries that he is overstepping his boundaries and even admits to waiting for Pammachius to make contact first (*Ep*. 49.1). By the end of the epistle, however, Jerome has gained confidence rhetorically and once again assumed the support of the recipient. He does not want to seem untrusting of Pammachius, whom he automatically declares a defender of his cause (*patronum causae meae*).[97] If Jerome can gain support of at least one person of power, influence, and authority, perhaps his efforts will be rewarded instead of condemned. In *Ep*. 48, he flatters the addressee, commenting that he hears Pammachius enjoys the enthusiastic support of the entire city – the bishop and the people.[98] Jerome continues, *minus est tenere sacerdotium quam mereri*, 'it is less (important) to hold an episcopate than it is to deserve one' (*Ep*. 48.4). Jerome appeals to a higher member of society with flattery in order to make use of his popularity; he hopes Pammachius will validate his authority and sway public opinion in his favor.[99]

Following his unwilling departure from Rome in 385 this additional reprimand for his work against Jovinian, must have disheartened Jerome. Although time had elapsed between the two incidents, Jerome's position continued to be precarious, dependent as he was upon the good opinion of

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[96] See Chapter 3, n. 131. For further information on Pammachius see Jerome's letter to him after Paulina's death, where he once again extols Pammachius' lineage of consuls and senators as well as Pammachius' desire to lead a monk's life (*Ep*. 66.6-7).

[97] *Unde ad ea respondere nolui, ne et libelli excedere magnitudinem et tuo viderer ingenio diffidere, quem patronum causae meae ante habui, quam rogarem* (*Ep*. 49.20).

[98] *Ep*. 48.4.

[99] Maier (1995), 53, comments '[i]n a society where relationships were hierarchically embedded, to win a well-placed adherent could alter the circulation of power for or against oneself and one's movement.'

others with greater authority. His appraisal of his detractors divulges his disappointment and uncertainty. The discomfort and indignation with which he receives information of their criticism is tangible:

> Si rusticani homines et vel rhetoricae vel dialecticae artis ignari detraherent mihi, tribuerem veniam imperitiae, nec accusationem reprehenderem ubi non voluntatem in culpa cernerem sed ignorantiam; nunc vero, cum diserti homines et liberalibus studiis eruditi magis volunt laedere quam intellegere, breviter a me responsum habeant: corrigere eos debere peccata, non reprehendere.

> If country-men or men ignorant either of rhetoric or of logic were disparaging me, I would grant pardon to their inexperience; nor would I blame them for the accusation when I discerned not that they desired to blame me but that they were ignorant. Now indeed, when eloquent men and men taught in the liberal arts desire more to wound [me] than to understand [me], let them have a response from me: that they ought to correct sins, not criticize them (*Ep*. 49.12).

Jerome acknowledges that his critics are educated people, and therefore, those of wealth and means. Despite his best efforts to display his substantial knowledge of Christian and secular works, the manner in which he piously forgives the Romans for their sins and the rhetorical device of assuming their support, Jerome is still prevented from becoming a legitimate member of their society.

Jerome desperately wants to be told how to fit in and requests instruction over critique.[100] He bitterly comments that it is much easier to dictate to the soldier how to fight when one is safely tucked away behind a wall and rubbed down with perfume. Moreover, it is unbecoming to find fault with a bleeding soldier (*Ep*. 49.12). Jerome finds it unfair that the upper classes censure his work against Jovinian when they themselves are up in their ivory towers. He is

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[100] *Reprehensores non audio, sequor magistros* (*Ep*. 49.12).

obviously the 'bleeding soldier' (*cruentum militem*) who has endeavored with the treatise not only to contend against heresy, but also to better his position in society. Jerome acknowledges once more that his critics are 'the most learned of men' (*eruditissimi viri*), but again struggles to make *his* position as a learned man accredited and respected:

> Legimus, o eruditissimi viri, in scolis *pariter*, et Aristotelia illa vel de Gorgiae fontibus manantia *simul* didicimus, plura videlicet esse genera dicendi, et inter cetera aliud esse γυμναστικῶς scribere, aliud δογματικῶς.

> Most learned men, we have read in schools *equally* and we have *together* learned those things of Aristotle's or that flow from fountains of Gorgias, namely that there are many methods of speaking, and that among the rest that it is one thing to display, another to instruct (*Ep*. 49.13).

Jerome seems to believe that the manner in which he aimed to persuade followed the conventions of rhetoric, the very same conventions that his critics have all studied. As discussed at length in Chapter 2, these people reside in Jerome's rhetorical domain. By pointing this out Jerome attempts to assimilate himself to the elite.

Jerome further likens himself to those who have condemned him: *respondisse adversario, non **meorum** insidias formidasse*, 'I have responded to my adversary without fearing plots of *my own* party' (*Ep*. 49.20). Moreover, Jerome tellingly writes that it is one thing to interrogate a matter, and another to expound upon that which is already proved. The former requires disputation and the latter teaching.[101] Jerome has fashioned himself more of a teacher[102] and his condemnation of Jovinian seemed to coincide with the opinions of the

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[101] *Ep*. 49.13.

[102] For more on this see Chapter 4 on *Adversus Helvidium.*

Roman and Milanese synods; he was simply expanding upon the issue and therefore does not understand why he is being singled out for being wrong. In 383 Jerome discussed the same controversial topic of virginity in *Adversus Helvidium*. He mentions the support he received from Damasus despite writing in such a way that extolled the benefits of virginity and discussed the problems with marriage. He muses rhetorically, *num vir egregius et eruditus in scripturis, et virgo ecclesiae virginis doctor aliquid in illo sermone reprehendit*, 'did that distinguished man, learned in the scriptures, and virgin instructor of the virgin Church find fault with anything in that discussion?' (*Ep*. 49.18). But as Damasus is no longer present to defend Jerome it does not matter how he attempts to integrate himself into the elite Christian community; he still remains susceptible to criticism.

10. CONCLUSION

This chapter has aimed to explore Jerome's abusive rhetoric in *Adversus Iovinianum* using the methodology developed in Chapter 2, which considered the potential of using abusive rhetoric to maneuver up the social ladder during the fourth century. Jerome, as a social parvenu, was not unique in attempting to exploit his secular education and mastery of scripture in order to achieve recognition and work his way up in the Christian community. As a student, Jerome had devoted himself to the study of rhetoric, which is evident in his adherence to many of the themes that are prominent in classical works of abuse. He cast Jovinian as a deceiver – both in regard to his monastic lifestyle and with reference to his knowledge – thus indicating that Jovinian, despite his initial popularity, had disingenuously achieved social capital and thereby worked his way up in the Christian community. Jovinian was a fraud trying to present

himself as a learned Christian to gain followers and popularity. Jerome, meanwhile, showcased his qualifications as genuine. His extensive use of rhetoric and breadth of knowledge of Christian and secular works ought to have validated him. Moreover, Jerome's support of ascetic practices, which he believed would secure him a place in heaven, contrasted noticeably with Jovinian's teachings and provided Jerome with an opportunity to assert his dominance over Jovinian not only rhetorically, but also spiritually.

Jovinian, however, was merely the straw man. Jerome's mode of attack extended to include the general culture of Rome which he saw deteriorating. He could not help but criticize the decaying morals of the elite, which he viewed as fixated on luxury and wantonness. Desperate to be accepted by the elite, but simultaneously desiring to make his feelings on the degeneracy of the age clear, Jerome attempted to placate his audience of aristocrats by rhetorically assuring his readers that those who were reading his treatise were inherently on his side, along with God and the apostles. '*Good men* will not be angry with [him], as the guilt of their sin will not nag those men' (*Adv. Iov.* 1.34).

But Jerome's endeavor was not to be appreciated nor accepted. Despite his rhetorically crafted stinging characterization of Jovinian as a sinful deceiver and the portrayal of himself as a learned Jesus figure, eager to expose the truth about Jovinian and save Rome from moral degeneration, the aristocratic audience rejected his treatise. Jerome's hopes of developing support for his ascetic beliefs as well as his desire to integrate himself in with the upper classes following his embarrassing exit from Rome were dashed. His abusive rhetoric

had gone too far off the mark. Despite Jerome believing that his abusive rhetoric, which focused on assimilating him to his readers, could be used as a means to gain support, it had done quite the opposite. Jerome realized his error and revised his rhetorical stance, as we will see in the discussion on *Contra Vigilantium* in the next chapter.

Chapter 6. *Contra Vigilantium:* Jerome the Champion

1. INTRODUCTION

Jerome wrote another polemical treatise in 406 in response to a certain Vigilantius.[1] This chapter will undertake a close reading of Jerome's treatise against this opponent keeping in mind its position within Jerome's polemical works discussed in this thesis. We will see how Jerome appoints himself the role of champion in response to the teachings of Vigilantius. Ostensibly, Jerome's work was composed not for himself, but for the sake of other Christians. However, Jerome's purpose is twofold as it also works to benefit his own status within the Christian community. We will see that this piece was written in part as a response to Vigilantius' accusations that Jerome still held Origenist views. This was problematic as Jerome had desperately tried to distance himself from Origenist beliefs. It is his rhetorical endeavor to refute his opponent that we will consider in detail. The differing identifications that Jerome constructs between himself and the Christian community in Rome on the one hand, and Vigilantius and a tradition of heretics and buffoons on the other, illuminate the power struggle between the various denominations of Christianity vying for orthodoxy during that period. In addition, these identifications demonstrate the rhetorical strategies that Jerome employed in this treatise.

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[1] The generally accepted date of this treatise is 406. See Kelly (1974), 286-287; Hunter (1999), 406; Trout (1999), 221; Williams (2006), 197-198; 246; Feiertag (2005), v-vi. See Rebenich (1992), 243, and Hunter (2007), 258-259: *Ep.* 109 to Riparius concerns Vigilantius and dates to 404. Jerome tells us that he wrote this letter two years before his treatise against Vigilantius (*Contra Vig.* 9).

As Vigilantius' writings do not survive, we must gain what knowledge we can about him from Jerome's work.[2] Vigilantius' teachings and beliefs are outside the scope of this thesis; the focus here will be on establishing Jerome's rhetorical modes of argument and ascertaining why he may have chosen such methods.[3] This chapter will once again draw on the theory established in Chapter 2 in order to ascertain how Jerome alters his tactics from those used in his treatises against Helvidius and Jovinian. While this treatise has been called Jerome's 'most venomous invective', his 'most abusive', an 'unpleasant fly-sheet', and 'one of the most crude and aggressive attacks known in patristic literature' by modern scholars,[4] *Contra Vigilantium* takes a more moderate view on virginity than Jerome had previously championed. We must remember his approach in his treatise against Jovinian: Jerome strongly promoted the supremacy of virginity over marriage in a treatise that was significantly longer than his work against Vigilantius (*Contra Vigilantium* consists of one book of 17 sections, while *Adversus Iovinianum* is two books of 49 and 38 sections respectively).[5] Jerome's committed (but controversial) stance on asceticism and

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[2] Massie (1980). See Rebenich (2002), 105-106, for a brief summary of Vigilantius' life.

[3] For a reassessment of Vigilantius' and Jerome's views on the cult of the martyr and how this affected Christian identity see Lössl (2005). For a reexamination of Vigilantius' career within the context of the late fourth-century Gallic church see Hunter (1999) who argues that Vigilantius was 'a conservative spokesman for more traditional forms of authority and community in late antique Gaul' (404).

[4] See Grützmacher (1901), 1.iii, 97; Hunter (1999), 401; Kelly (1975), 289; and Bitton-Ashkelony (2005), 99, respectively. Dunn (2000), 62, has followed the consensus and calls it 'one of Jerome's most vicious polemics'.

[5] See Jer. *Adv. Iov.* 1.5-11 on virginity; 1.34-35 on clerical chastity; and 1.36 on the greater rewards of virginity. It is possible that Jerome did not have enough time to write a full-length treatise against Vigilanius. He says as much in *Contra Vig.* 17, attributing its brevity to the carrier Sisinnius' quick departure for Egypt. On this see Kelly (1975), 290. Jerome had, however, promised to carry out a longer composition in his letter to Riparius written in 404 (*Ep.* 109.4). But we should also consider the rhetorical trope of rapid composition as an offhanded way of appearing modest for the work. Goodrich (2007), 81, claims that Jerome's offhanded comment

virginity is noticeably muted in his *Contra Vigilantium*. It is telling that Jerome's

advocacy of asceticism is not supported by substantial theological arguments.[6]

It is important to recall that the reaction at Rome to Jerome's work against

Jovinian had not been at all favorable.[7] This is significant when we read his

work against Vigilantius and try to understand why he composed it in such a

way. We will see that Jerome relies to a great extent on identification, which

exploits the use of establishing a shared background with the audience. Beyond

that shared background, Jerome constructs an authoritative and largely secular

support network that is based on identification with the Christian community in

order to defend his case.

As has previously been discussed in Chapter 2, a good rhetorical

education had the potential to act as a form of social and cultural capital.

However, this could only be done if the rhetorician was capable of using it well.

We will see how Jerome stresses that Vigilantius does not possess this level of

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was meant to suggest the 'unworthiness of his opponent… as well as to produce awe at his ability to produce a polished work in such a short time.'

[6] Bitton-Ashkelony (2005), 102, argues that Jerome also does not use theological arguments in order to justify his support of the cult of the martyrs. Instead he focuses on the foundations of the practice that have long been authorized by bishops and emperors. Furthermore, she has noted that within this treatise 'Jerome's arguments are based on rhetoric and demagoguery rather than on sound theological reasoning' (102). Trout (1999), 221, somewhat oversimplifies Jerome's reply, deciding that Jerome believed 'Vigilantius's brand of old-fashioned Christian practice was now too conservative and required no reasoned response'. See Opelt (1973), 119, on Jerome's lack of structure in this treatise. See also Lucius (1904), 329, on Jerome's dramatization and exaggeration of facts to warrant his polemical attack. Lössl (2005), 103, thinks that 'target of Jerome's polemics is mostly Vigilantius the person' and not his theology. Moreover, he argues that Jerome's reduction of Vigilantius as a 'critic of asceticism and the martyr cult seems an oversimplification' (108). Jeanjean (1999), 55, points out that Jerome does not focus on the heresiological theme of duplicity so often used during the Origenist Controversy, but uses different rhetorical tactics.

[7] See Chapter 5, 9.2.

education that he himself has achieved. Jerome is capable of navigating within the learned Christian community and garnering support, but Vigilantius is not. In short, Jerome assumes a level of equality shared between himself and his audience, from which Vigilantius is unequivocally excluded. We will begin with an examination of how Jerome presents his own role in the dispute with Vigilantius, before looking at how he constructs Vigilantius as his opponent. Keeping these characterizations in mind, we will finally turn to how Jerome uses identification in this work. Some context of the little we know of Vigilantius may first be useful.

2. JEROME AND VIGILANTIUS

Jerome and Vigilantius first crossed paths when Vigilantius was traveling in 395. Vigilantius had been appointed as a letter carrier and distributer of alms for his friend, Paulinus of Nola.[8] He stayed with Jerome in Bethlehem, but rather abruptly (and mysteriously) decided to cut his visit short.[9] Jerome's interactions with Vigilantius continued a year afterwards: he learned that Vigilantius was gossiping about his supposed support of Origenist doctrine.[10] This could not have come at worse time as Jerome had recently been embroiled in a theological argument between Epiphanius of Salamis and John of Jerusalem concerning Origenism, which had culminated in John's excommunication of

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[8] Jer. *Ep.* 58.11; 61.3. Paulinus of Nola *Ep.* 5.11. Kelly (1975), 193. Hunter (1999), 404-405. Mratschek (2002), 227-228. I follow Trout (1999), 730 n.138, Hunter (1999), 407, Mratschek (2002), 227-228, and Lössl (2005), 106 n.53, in believing that the Vigilantius referred to in these exchanges is the same man.

[9] *Cur tam cito profectus sit et nos reliquerit, non possum dicere, ne laedere quempiam videar* (Jer. *Ep.* 58.11). For possible reasons why Vigilantius had left see Hunter (1999), 405-406.

[10] See Chapter 3, 2.1.

Jerome.[11] Moreover, John had apparently approached Rufinus, the praetorian prefect of the East, demanding the expulsion of Jerome from Palestine.[12] Jerome's orthodoxy could not be seen to be in question: he wrote *Ep.* 61 to Vigilantius in 396, insisting that his view of Origen was critical.[13] He acknowledged that some of the theologian's teachings were worthy of condemnation and that Origen was indeed a heretic.[14] Moreover, he insisted that these issues had been resolved when Vigilantius had visited the previous year.[15] However, this letter seems to have done little to convince Vigilantius of Jerome's professed orthodoxy. Nearly a decade later in 404, Jerome learned from Riparius, a presbyter of Toulouse, that Vigilantius was continuing to espouse what Jerome considered heresy:[16] according to Jerome's polemic, Vigilantius was questioning the veneration of relics, the custom of keeping vigil, the ascetic tradition of fasting, the isolation of monks, and the superiority of virginity.[17] Jerome requested that his informant, Riparius, send Vigilantius'

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[11] See Kelly (1975), 195-207. Kelly theorizes that Vigilantius chose not to stay longer with Jerome because he had been excommunicated by John of Jerusalem following Epiphanius' attempted ordination of Jerome's brother Paulinian to serve within John's jurisdiction in Bethlehem; see *Ep.* 82.10 on John's attempt to exile Jerome. On this see Jeanjean (1999), 55, and Rebenich (1992), 233.

[12] See *PLRE* 1 s.v. 'Flavius Rufinus 18'. *Quis potentissimam illam feram, totius orbis cervicibus imminentem, contra nostras cervices specialiter incitavit?* (Jer. *Contra Iohannem* 43). See Claud. *In Rufinum* 1.262; 2.394-399 on Rufinus as a *fera*.

[13] See Cavallera (1922), 2.45; Kelly (1975), 206-207; Trout (1999), 221. Williams (2006), 245 n.16, acknowledges the difficulty of dating Vigilantius' travels and Jerome's *Ep.* 61. For more see 285-286 n.75.

[14] *Ep.* 61.1-2.

[15] Jerome states that Vigilantius had 'sprung up and stamped [his] feet and cried out [Jerome's] orthodoxy' (*subsultabas et adplodebas pedem et orthodoxum conclamabas*) (*Ep.* 61.3). He theorizes that Vigilantius had visited Melania and Rufinus on the Mount of Olives during the same trip to see Jerome and that his former friend had turned Vigilantius against him (Jer. *Contra Ruf.* 3.19). See Nautin (1973), 231-232 and Lössl (2005), 106-107.

[16] Hunter (1999), 408.

[17] See *Ep.* 109 to Riparius and *Contra Vig.* 1-2.

work to him at once. After he had read it, he would go beyond the limits imposed by a letter and respond as necessary.[18] This is an interesting request, as Jerome had no problem vehemently replying to Rufinus in 401 without having read the whole of the work against him.[19] However, within the next year or so Jerome received Vigilantius' writings from Sisinnius, and in 406, he composed his *Contra Vigilantium*.[20]

3. JEROME THE CHAMPION

In the opening lines of his *Contra Vigilantium*, Jerome introduces his audience to the enemy, Vigilantius, while simultaneously casting himself as a classical hero ready to do battle with yet another mythical beast:

> Multa in orbe monstra generata sunt. Centauros et sirenas, ululas et onocrotalos in Esaia legimus. Iob Leviathan et Behemoth mystico sermone describit. Cerberum et stymphalidas aprumque erymanthium et leonem nemaeum chimaeram atque hydram multorum capitum narrant fabulae poetarum. Cacum describit Vergilius. Triformem geryonem Hispaniae prodiderunt. Sola Gallia monstra non habuit, sed viris semper fortibus et eloquentissimis abundavit. Exortus est subito Vigilantius Dormitantius, qui immundo spiritu pugnet contra Christi Spiritum.

> Many monsters have been produced in the world. We read of centaurs and sirens, howling owls and pelicans in Isaiah. Job describes in mysterious language the leviathan and behemoth. The poets' stories tell of Cerberus and the Stymphalian birds, the Erymanthian boar and the Nemean lion, and the Chimera and the many-headed-hydra. Virgil describes Cacus. Spain gave birth to the three-formed Geryon. Gaul alone had no monsters, but was always rich in brave and most eloquent men. Suddenly, Vigilantius has appeared, [or rather] Dormitantius, who with an impure spirit fights against the spirit of Christ (*Contra Vig.* 1).

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[18] *Ep.* 109.4.

[19] See Chapter 3, 8.1. Jerome gains secondhand knowledge about Rufinus' apology against him from his friends and his brother (Jer. *Apol. Contra Ruf.* 1.1; 1.4; 1.21). Kelly (1975), 251.

[20] Wiesen (1964), 221. Hunter (1999), 406. See *Contra Vig.* 3 on Jerome's receiving Vigilantius' work.

With a flood of classical images, Jerome commences his denunciation of Vigilantius. The concept of the world giving birth to monsters and prodigies is a common topos found in secular works of invective.[21] These creatures are all prodigies, the outwitting or defeat of which produces heroes in classical literature. Hercules' tasks include: dragging Cerberus out of Hades; slaying the Nemean lion, the Erymanthian boar, the Hydra, and the Stymphalian birds. Bellerophon is accredited with killing the Chimera. Jerome's catalogue of monsters is included to establish the enormity of the task and the necessary action that must be taken to conquer yet another 'beast'.[22] To parallel these tasks, Jerome implicitly presents himself as the next hero to take on a monster. Just as Hercules physically killed the Nemean lion, Jerome will verbally triumph over Vigilantius. The contrast is vivid: Vigilantius the monster, Jerome the champion. But Jerome goes beyond the classical references, further casting himself as a Christian champion as well.

Throughout this treatise Jerome presents Vigilantius as an opponent at work not only against himself, but also against the wider Christian community and ultimately against God.[23] About a year after meeting Vigilantius, he writes to him concerning the reported Origenist accusations: *meam iniuriam patienter tuli: inpietatem contra deum ferre non potui*, 'I bore injury to myself patiently: I

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[21] See Cicero on Catiline as a *prodigium* (Cic. *Cael.* 12), Clodius as a *prodigium* (*In P. Clodium et Curionem* fr.21 – Crawford), and Claudian on the eunuch Eutropius' prodigious nature (Claud. *In Eutropium* 1.8-19). This theme continues throughout the ages and is used in theological rhetoric: for example, Lambert Daneau's work written in 1557: *Of Two Prodigious Monsters: An Ass-Pope Found in Rome in the River Tiber in 1396 and a Monk-Calf Born in Freiburg in 1528.*

[22] Jerome later comments: *o portentum in terras ultimas deportandum!* (*Contra Vig.* 8).

[23] Wiesen (1964), 221.

could not bear impiety against God' (*Ep.* 61.4). A similar line of thought appears more substantially throughout the later composed treatise where Jerome comments on Vigilantius' heresy 'which some time ago broke out against the Church' (*Contra Vig.* 8). Jerome makes it clear that he is not composing this treatise only because Vigilantius offends him personally. It is Vigilantius' battle with Christ that causes Jerome to intervene.[24] Jerome strategically condemns Vigilantius and his beliefs on behalf of the entire Church and God, who is tacitly included as having taken Jerome's corner. The argument is fashioned in such a way that it goes beyond a personal attack. Moreover, Jerome indicates that he has been pushed to the extreme of composing such a reproach because the subject called for it: *ipsa materia apertam habuit blasphemiam*, *quae indignationem magis scribentis*, *quam testimoniorum multitudinem flagitaret*, 'the matter itself contained clear blasphemy, which demanded the anger of the writer instead of a large body of evidence' (*Contra Vig.* 17). Jerome establishes that his indignant and strong tone is necessary given the extent of Vigilantius' heresy. Instead of countering Vigilantius with an abundance of evidence, as he had done in his treatise against Jovinian, Jerome takes a different approach, which he himself acknowledges. By combatting Vigilantius he believes that he is doing the church a service.[25] Jerome states that he is unable to pass by unresponsive when the martyrs and apostles have suffered.[26] In fact, Jerome puts himself forward not only as helping the church, but also as attempting to save Vigilantius. In

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[24] *Exortus est subito Vigilantius … qui immundo spiritu pugnet contra Christi Spiritum* (*Contra Vig.* 1). See Jeanjean (1999), 61, on perversion of the church as a heresiological theme.

[25] Wiesen (1964), 270, concludes that Jerome's venom towards personal enemies worked to 'serve the cause of moral improvement' and ultimately Jerome 'believed his harshness served the cause of Christianity in general and the ascetic movement in particular'.

[26] *Dum me cohibere non possum, et iniuriam apostolorum ac martyrum surda nequeo aure transire* (*Contra Vig.* 1).

order to help cleanse his opponent, Jerome gives Vigilantius advice, telling him to enter the basilicas of the martyrs in order to save himself.[27] In this way Jerome presents himself as a champion of orthodox Christianity, counselling not only the general public, but even his opponent.

Jerome's presentation of himself as a champion of Christianity adapts a topos found in classical works of abuse. Cicero often cast his opponents as enemies of the state. We will briefly consider his interaction with Lucius Sergius Catilina here, but similar rhetorical approaches can be found in his works against Gaius Verres, Luius Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus, and Marcus Antonius.[28] These figures are always presented as actively damaging the state. In Jerome's rhetoric, the Roman state is replaced by the Christian church, and Jerome, in a sense, becomes the general in command. The problem in both cases is an internal enemy. In a manner similar to Cicero's first speech against Catiline, who sat present in the senate, Jerome bemoans that Gaul must put up with a homebred, almost servile enemy (*vernaculum hostem*), who can be seen sitting right there in the church.[29] Cicero does not focus on his personal enmity with Catiline – this is passed over quickly (*Cat*. 1.11; 15) – rather, throughout the speech Catiline is framed as the enemy of Rome and a threat to the entire

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[27] *Do consilium, ingredere basilicas martyrum et aliquando purgaberis* (*Contra Vig.* 10). Jerome writes that Vigilantius has been possessed with the spirit of either greedy Mercury, drowsy Nocturnus, or crapulous Bacchus. See Jeanjean (1999), 56, on Jerome's combination of satire and doctrinal morality to guide Vigilantius to orthodoxy. See also Lössl (2005), 114 n.102.

[28] See e.g. *Verr.* 2.5.169 and 179; *Pis.* 15; *Phil.* 2.1.1; 2.50.21. See Jer. *Ep.* 109.2, which references Cicero's *Cat.* 2.1 and see also Rebenich (1992a), 45, on Jerome's use of exempla in his letters, specifically with reference to Catiline.

[29] *Galliae vernaculum hostem sustinent et hominem moti capitis atque Hippocratis vinculis adligandum sedentem cernunt in ecclesia* (*Contra Vig.* 4). See Cic. *Cat.* 1.4; 7.

Republic.[30] Catiline's crimes go beyond harming only the city of Rome; Cicero magnifies them so that they can be seen to harm the whole world.[31] Catiline is the most ruthless enemy of the state, Cicero the state's champion.[32] Cicero offers himself as a general against Catiline – one who will take on the enmity of degenerate men while exposing himself to unpopularity.[33] But the good of the state surpasses any of Cicero's personal worries.[34] Cicero presents himself as sacrificing his personal reputation in order to save the state from a dangerous enemy.[35] Rhetorically, Jerome and Cicero are doing very similar things: each is structuring two distinct groups, persuading the audience to identify with the 'correct' side, and creating a persona for themselves that makes personal sacrifices for the greater good – either for the Roman Republic or the Christian church. Let us consider the model of how to construct an opponent rhetorically followed by both Cicero and Jerome. We will then consider why such a framework ensures that the audience does not identify with the constructed enemy.

4. CONSTRUCTING THE ENEMY

4.1 How to construct an enemy

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[30] Cic. *Cat*. 1.6. Jerome similarly passes quickly over his personal animosity towards Vigilantius: *fieri enim potest, ut rursum malignus interpres dicat fictam a me materiam* (*Contra Vig*. 3).

[31] Cic. *Cat*. 1.3; 1.9.

[32] Catiline is referred to as *importunissimum hostem* (Cic. *Cat*. 2.12). See *Cat.* 2.19 for Cicero's guardianship of the state and 1.8 for Cicero's guardianship of Praeneste.

[33] *Huic ego me bello ducem profiteor, Quirites; suscipio inimicitias hominum perditorum* (Cic. *Cat*. 2.11). See Cic. *Cat.* 1.22-23 on unpopularity.

[34] Cic. *Cat.* 1.27; 2.15.

[35] Cicero is aware that he has critics in his audience and they may look unfavorably upon Cicero should Catiline go into exile instead of Manlius' camp. See Dyck (2008), 107, on Cicero's critics in the senate.

An essential part of rhetorically constructing an enemy is ensuring that certain traits and characteristics are ascribed to the figure so as to encourage the audience to identify with the 'correct' side. Cicero, for example, casts Catiline as a pernicious enemy who has infiltrated the senate.[36] He stresses his opponent's associations with unsavory people – prisoners, thieves, gladiators, adulterers, reprobates, etc. (*Cat.* 2.7). The contrast is made explicit: lazy men plotting against the most brave, the stupidest against the most sensible, drunkards against the sober, and the idle against the watchful.[37] The former in each pair constitute Catiline's associates, while Cicero remains rhetorically on the side of the latter – the *boni* or 'good men' and victims of Catiline's planned attacks. Cicero's condemnation of Catiline includes a comprehensive account of the six types of men that make up his ill-intentioned army.[38] These infamous characters are 'unable to be separated' (*neque ab eo divelli possunt*) from Catiline – with regard to their political actions as well as Cicero's rhetorical intentions.[39] It is not only Catiline that is being censured; the groups are laid out carefully and Cicero rhetorically makes it difficult for anyone in his audience to identify with Catiline's coterie, lest they count themselves amongst the stupid, the lazy, and the drunk. Cicero is explicitly on the side of modesty, chastity, loyalty, piety, consistency, integrity, restraint, and justice. Catiline, in sharp contrast, represents insolence, shame, fraud, wickedness, madness, indecency, and lust.[40]

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[36] Cic. *Cat.* 2.11.

[37] *Hoc vero quis ferre possit, inertis homines fortissimis viris insidiari, stultissimos prudentissimis, ebrios sobriis, dormientis vigilantibus?* (Cic. *Cat.* 2.10).

[38] Cic. *Cat.* 2.17-23.

[39] Cic. *Cat.* 2.22.

[40] Cic. *Cat.* 2.25.

We have seen above how Jerome manipulates his own persona to defend not only his own reputation and authority, but also the entire (orthodox) church. In what follows, we will look at how Jerome creates the corrupted mirror image of himself as the defender of the church in the figure of Vigilantius. We will see Jerome using identification to denounce Vigilantius. Just as Cicero created a stark contrast between himself and Catiline, Jerome widens the divide between himself and his opponent. It is the process of identification that allows both Cicero and Jerome to write compelling cases against their opponents. Similar to how Cicero creates a criminal dossier for Catiline, Jerome relies on a comparable catalogue of shared preconceptions and cultural references with his audience in order to allow them to identify with him over Vigilantius. This is evident throughout Jerome's rhetorical exploitation of Vigilantius' spiritual and historical origins, his profession, and his intellect.

4.2 Vigilantius' spiritual origins

The question of Vigilantius' origin is an essential part of how Jerome constructs his enemy. He goes beyond the classical prodigies discussed above and questions Vigilantius' spiritual origins as well. Jerome groups Vigilantius together with the previously discussed Jovinian, who had questioned the tenets of asceticism that Jerome highly valued: *et quomodo Euphorbus in Pythagoram renatus esse perhibetur, sic in isto Ioviniani mens prava surrexit, ut et in illo et in hoc diaboli respondere cogamur insidiis*, 'just as Euphorbus is thought to be reborn in Pythagoras, in the same way the distorted mind of Jovinian has risen up in this very man, so that with regard to the former and the latter we may be compelled

to respond to the ambush of the devil' (*Contra Vig.* 1).[41] Similar to works of heresiology that link together strands of heresy, Jerome constructs a small-scale genealogy for Vigilantius.[42] Just as Jovinian was condemned by those in ecclesiastical power (which Jerome explicitly reminds us about: *romanae ecclesiae auctoritate damnatus*),[43] so too will Vigilantius be condemned, as befits a successor of Jovinian.[44] Moreover, when it comes to matters of asceticism, Jerome is vehement. He solidifies the categories of those who follow the scriptures properly and exude ascetic fervor versus those, such as Vigilantius (and Jovinian), who lead people astray.

4.3 Vigilantius' historical origins

Jerome builds on Vigilantius' heresiological genealogy by calling attention to his secular ancestry as well. Not only is Vigilantius Jovinian's spiritual successor, he also has links to historical bandits dating back to the time of Pompey:[45]

> Nimirum respondeat generi suo, ut qui de latronum et convenarum natus est semine, quos Cn. Pompeius edomita Hispania et ad triumphum venire festinans, de Pyrenaei iugis deposuit et in unum oppidum congregavit, unde et Convenarum urbs nomen accepit, hucusque latrocinetur contra ecclesiam dei.

> Without a doubt, he corresponds with his own race, so that, he who was born from the seed of bandits and refugees, whom Gnaeus Pompey, after having conquered Spain, hurrying to come for his triumph, brought down from the mountains of the Pyrenees, and collected in this one town, from where the city

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[41] See Chapter 5. See also Jeanjean (1999), 56-58, on the ancient and modern precursors of Vigilantius.

[42] See Chapter 2, 2.2.

[43] *Contra Vig.* 1.

[44] Siricius *Ep.* 7.6. See Chapter 5, 9.1 and 9.2. See Jeanjean (1999), 361-363, on how Jerome combines heresies to present them as a homogeneous threat to the church.

[45] Bandits seem to have played the part of the 'other' in legal constitutions (*Dig.* 49.15.24; 50.16.118). Jerome here categorizes Vigilantius as an 'other.' See Van Dam (1985), 16-20.

takes the name of Convenae, may hitherto act as a bandit against the church of God (*Contra Vig.* 4).

It is seemingly in Vigilantius' hereditary nature to play the role of the villain.[46] Like his ancestors, he will 'attack the churches of Gaul' (*incurset Galliarum ecclesias*).[47] If we believe Jerome, he has descended from brigands who were rounded up by Pompey the Great somewhere between 72 and 71 BC following the Sertorian War in Spain before he rushed off to deal with Spartacus.[48] While such a statement may not necessarily be accurate (Jerome is our only source that states that Pompey was responsible for founding the city and there is no archaeological evidence from the Pompeian period), it serves to demonstrate a method by which Jerome seeks to vilify the character of Vigilantius, amplify his own authority, and demonstrate his own historical knowledge.[49] If Pompey the Great had believed Vigilantius' ancestors to be ruffians, then it is feasible that people will be more likely to believe that Vigilantius is also worthy of scorn and ridicule. Strabo writes of the area as well, noting that the place is so called because of its rabble-like population.[50] Jerome is following in the long established belief that a child's origin affected his/her development, while also demonstrating his own considerable historical knowledge. In this case,

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[46] See Jeanjean (1999), 62.

[47] *Contra Vig*. 4.

[48] App. *B Civ.* 1.119. See Cleary (2008) on the development of identity in the town of Convenae, known during the early Roman period as Lugdunum and nowadays as Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges. Seblayrolles (2005), 131-138.

[49] Cleary (2008), 16-17, points out that attributing Pompey with the credit 'does not serve [Jerome] any particular polemic purpose; so, he may have included it because it was a standard story about the Convenae.' It is equally possible that the story is either a foundation myth or historically accurate. While I agree with Cleary that it should be treated with care due to the nature of the source, I do think that Jerome had a polemic purpose in including the reference.

[50] πρὸς μὲν τῇ Πυρήνῃ τὴν τῶν Κωνουενῶν, ὅ ἐστι συγκλύδων, 'next to the Pyrenees, the country of the "Convenae", that is, "the assembled rabble"' (Strabo 4.2.1).

Vigilantius' physical origins match his mythological and spiritual origins; Jerome makes the most of this by piling ancestral banditry on top of his opponent's heretical and prodigious beginnings.

According to the works of Pliny the Elder and Claudius Ptolemaeus, one's physical origin had a direct impact on the development of both racial characteristics and character.[51] It followed that one's origin could potentially set the stage for all future successes or failures.[52] Cicero in his defence of Sextus Roscius of Ameria, who was accused of murdering his father, makes the argument that Roscius' guilt is impossible because of his rural upbringing; growing up in such surroundings encourages only temperance, diligence, and justice (Cic. *Rosc. Am.* 75). It was a common ideology that a man's character was static and influenced by his birthplace and lineage.[53] The two became intertwined and familiar arguments for the purpose of forensic oratory. However, it would be an oversimplification to conclude that all Romans believed that each person's character was concretely fixed from birth and dependent on location.[54] The Roman emphasis on the importance of teaching social mores and the inculcation of morality and restraint,[55] in addition to the number of abusive works of rhetoric that attack Romans with the proper lineage

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[51] Plin. *HN*. 2.80.189-190; Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.2. See Dauge (1981), 806-810, on ethnogeographic work regarding birthplace.

[52] May (1988), 16.

[53] Ogilvie (1970), 18, comments on the Roman belief in a fixed character and the influence on contemporaneous psychology. See May (1988), 31, on Cicero's use of ethos and Cic. *Off.* 1.150-1; 2.89 for the moral merit of farmers. Also see Polyb. 31.25.2-7 for an account of Scipio Aemilianus who, living in the city, manages to maintain an upstanding lifestyle.

[54] Even during ancient times the concept of the immutability of character is debatable. See Tac. *Ann.* 6.51, for Tiberius' altered character, and Woodman (1989), 198-200, and Gill (1983), 482, for discussion.

[55] See Chapter 2, 3.3.

for unseemly behavior all indicate otherwise. But the concept of a static nature is an idea that is revealed widely in ancient historiography and biography of the late Republic and early Empire.[56] Jerome exposes Vigilantius' origins in order to discredit him further.

4.4 Vigilantius' occupation

Jerome uses a range of classical rhetorical themes to criticize opponents.[57] Building on Vigilantius' spiritual and secular ancestry, Jerome plays to class snobbery and emphasizes his opponent's traditionally disrespected profession several times.[58] In the first section he writes, *iste caupo Calgurritanus… miscet aquam vino*, 'this innkeeper of Calagurris… is mixing water with the wine' (*Contra Vig.* 1).[59] Jerome insinuates that Vigilantius is watering down pure theology with his heretical comments, not to mention cheating his customers.[60] In this one line, Jerome discredits Vigilantius on two levels. First, Vigilantius' actions can be inversely paralleled to Christ's changing water to wine at the wedding in Cana: Vigilantius is the antithesis of a Christ figure.[61] Secondly, Vigilantius' occupation is one that had long been understood to have disreputable connotations.[62] By calling attention to Vigilantius' occupation,

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[56] Gill (1983), 476; Plin. *HN*. 2.80.189-190; Ptol. *Tetr*. 2.2.

[57] Wiesen (1964), 219-220, discusses Jerome's engagement in *Ep.* 61 with Vigilantius' occupation, theorizing that this must have been his father's trade. While Wiesen acknowledges this is an 'essential element of the correctly composed *vituperatio'*, he does not comment on Jerome's rhetorical purpose (220).

[58] *Contra Vig.* 1; 8.

[59] Rebenich (1992), 246-247, argues that Vigilantius was not an innkeeper at all, and that Jerome is using a polemical trope.

[60] Wiesen (1964), 223. Jeanjean (1999), 61.

[61] John 2.1-10.

[62] See Rosenfeld (1998) on the social importance and development of innkeepers in the Greco-Roman world. For the same trope against innkeepers see a graffito from Pompeii that reads

Jerome also draws on a deep well of imagery associated with the profession. Let us consider the conventional image of the innkeeper in antiquity and how this would have impacted Jerome's portrayal of Vigilantius.

Inns and taverns were long considered places of ill-repute, home to intrigue and murder, and run by corrupt individuals. Livy relates the story of the last king of Rome, Tarquinius Superbus, who framed his opponent Turnus Herodinus by planting weapons around his lodgings at an inn and claiming that Turnus was plotting against him.[63] Suetonius narrates Nero's descent into vice and his time spent in Baiae at inns with female innkeepers.[64] Plutarch tells us how the orator Marcus Antonius was murdered due to the fact that an innkeeper betrayed him to Marius.[65] Tertullian complains of the fact Christians are bracketed together with disreputable people (innkeepers, porters, bathhouse thieves, gamblers, pimps), who are compelled to pay money for protection.[66] The *Historia Augusta*, while a problematic source, also reflects these traditions though its accounts of later Roman emperors, such as Gallienus, visiting taverns and associating with pimps, actors, and prostitutes, thus demonstrating that the negative connotations associated with innkeepers continued from Republic into

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'May such lies deceive you, innkeeper! You sell water and drink undiluted wine yourself!' (*Talia te fallant utinam me(n)dacia copo | tu ve(n)des aquam et bibes ipse merum*) (*CIL* 4.3948). For more on abusive Pompeian graffiti see Ruffell (2003), 46.

[63] Livy 1.50-51. Firebaugh (1928) infers that the innkeeper must have had knowledge of the well-planned and executed conspiracy.

[64] Suet. *Ner*. 27.

[65] Plut. *Vit. Mar.* 44.1-4.

[66] *Nescio dolendum an erubescendum sit, cum in matricibus beneficiariorum et curiorsorum inter tabernarios et ianios et fures balnearum et aleones et lenones Christiani quoque vectigales continentur* (Tert. *De fuga in persecutione* 13.5). See McGinn (1998), 260.

the Empire.[67] Jerome uses this ancient stereotype to denigrate his opponent further, revealing his ability to connect to literary traditions in his rhetoric. An educated audience would have recognized, and more importantly, identified with these preconceptions.

4.5 Vigilantius' associates

Jerome continues his exploitation of the traditional topoi surrounding innkeepers yet further when he speculates on the nature of Vigilantius' associates. With disdain, Jerome comments that the sleepy Vigilantius and his followers have the same taste in apocryphal works.[68] One may wonder what sort of people Jerome means. He elaborates and the picture painted is striking:

> Et si tibi placuerit, legito fictas revelationes omnium patriarcharum et prophetarum, et cum illas didiceris, inter mulierum textrinas cantato, immo legendas propone in tabernis tuis, ut facilius per has nenias vulgus indoctum provoces ad bibendum.

> And if it pleases you, read the imaginary revelations of all the patriarchs and prophets. And when you have learned them, sing among the weaving-shops of women, rather I should say, serve them to be read in your taverns, so that with these dirges you may provoke the ignorant rabble to drink all the more easily (*Contra Vig.* 6).

Vigilantius keeps company with the questionable sort of people who frequent taverns and inns. His audience seems to be made up of women and the 'ignorant' (*indoctum*) who are prone to drinking in establishments run by the likes of Vigilantius. Jerome trivializes Vigilantius' beliefs calling the works that

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[67] *Hist. Aug. Tyr. Trig.* 3.4, 9.1.

[68] *Tu vigilans dormis et dormiens scribis, et proponis mihi librum apocryphum, qui sub nomine Ezrae a te et similibus tuis legitur*, 'you sleep while awake, and asleep while you write: and you relate to me an apocryphal book, which under the name of Ezra is read by you and those like you' (*Contra Vig.* 6).

he studies 'invention' (*fictas*), worthy to be sung in taverns to the likes of women and drunks as though they were inconsequential pop songs.

While Vigilantius' associates and audience are illustrated as being inebriated and uneducated, Vigilantius himself is no better off. He is attacked as being unskilled in both speech and knowledge, and rude in diction (*Contra Vig*. 3). Moreover, Jerome scorns his opponent, calling him a 'dumb Quintilian,' as both men share a birthplace by the name of Calagurris, Quintilian originating from Spain and Vigilantius from Gaul (*Contra Vig*. 1).[69] Such an accusation calls into question Vigilantius' education.[70] Jerome's weaving of allusions to both classical and Christian works that we have seen above allows him to be recognized as a man of extensive learning, in implicit contrast with the sleepy and clumsy Vigilantius. Jerome is engaging in snobbery and is drawing on the cultural system that includes a rhetorical education, which generally would have been the privilege of the elite.[71] In this way, Jerome also claims his own right to be part of that system, and connects himself closely to those who share the values he espouses through his careful references when attacking Vigilantius.

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[69] Wiesen (1964), 223. In Vigilantius' case Calagurris is modern day Saint-Martory. See Cleary (2008), 98, who discusses the archaeology of this area of southwest Gaul: '[n]ear the border between the Convenae and the province of Narbonensis was the Calagurris (Saint-Martory)… about which… little is known.'

[70] In *Ep.* 61.3 Jerome comments, 'you have learned from an early age something different, you were accustomed to a different kind of education. It is not characteristic of the same man to examine gold coins and scripture, or to taste wines and to understand the prophets or even the apostles' (*Aliud a parva aetate didicisti, aliis adsuetus es disciplinis. Non est eiusdem hominis et aureos nummos et scripturas probare, degustare vina et prophetas vel apostolos intellegere*).

[71] See Chapter 2, 3.2.

5.1 Christian authority

We saw above how Jerome portrays his opponent Vigilantius so that no educated audience member should wish to identify with him. In the first instance we saw that Jerome presented himself as countering this heretical figure on behalf of the whole church. In what follows, we will see that in addition to constructing a compelling persona for Vigilantius to turn the reader against him, Jerome also creates a rhetorical picture of himself that draws secular and ecclesiastical figures of authority in line with his argument. In this way, Jerome controls the parameters of his rhetorical domain – expanding them to include those with recognized secular and ecclesiastical power – while his opponent Vigilantius clearly falls on the wayside, amongst drunkards, women, and the uneducated rabble. This will show the stark divisions Jerome creates to distance Vigilantius from any right-minded Christian, and how through association and identification he attempts to draw these same figures to his own side.

After Jerome relates a seemingly telling incident in which Vigilantius neglected to clothe himself during an earthquake, possibly due to his being too hung-over from the revelries of the previous night, Jerome closes the section: *tales habet adversarios ecclesia: hi duces contra martyrum sanguinem dimicant, huiuscemodi oratores contra apostolos pertonant, immo tam rabidi canes contra Christi latrant discipulos*, 'these are the sort of adversaries that the church has: these leaders fight against the blood of the martyrs, orators of this kind thunder violently against the apostles. Or I should say, such are the rabid dogs that bark

against the followers of Christ' (*Contra Vig*. 11). Jerome attributes the failings of Vigilantius to *all* adversaries of the church. He clearly delineates the two groups: the supporters of Vigilantius whom he portrays as raging heretics, and those who are true Christians in their support for ascetic and monastic views. Rhetorically, there is no room for middle ground. Jerome portrays himself as 'a stronghold of orthodoxy.'[72]

Jerome creates two options for his audience to identify with: those who support orthodox asceticism and those inferior people who follow the innkeeper's teaching, the *other*. He writes:

> Male facit ergo romanus episcopus, qui super mortuorum hominum Petri et Pauli, secundum nos ossa veneranda, secundum te vilem pulvisculum, offert domino sacrificia et tumulos eorum Christi arbitratur altaria? Et non solum unius urbis, sed totius orbis errant episcopi, qui cauponem Vigilantium contemnentes ingrediuntur basilicas mortuorum.

> Then the Roman bishop is in the wrong, who above [the bones] of the dead men, Peter and Paul – bones that should be venerated according to us, worthless dust according to you – presents sacrifices to the lord, and judges their tombs to be the altars of Christ. And [it is] not only [the bishop] of one city, but the bishops of the *whole world*, who err in scorning the innkeeper Vigilantius, and enter the basilicas of the dead (*Contra Vig.* 8).

Jerome employs the public authority of the bishop of Rome to emphasize further the incorrect nature of Vigilantius' beliefs. Vigilantius, the innkeeper and purported descendant of bandits, is pitted against not only the bishop of Rome, but also bishops of the *entire world*. What is more, Jerome derisively includes Vigilantius' occupation as he believes this information should negatively affect his opponent's authority in spiritual matters. Much more importantly, it

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[72] Rebenich (2002), 105.

suggests he believed it would help to distance Vigilantius from Jerome's audience: Jerome is using elitism in an attempt to manipulate the opinions of his audience members. Simultaneously, he distances himself from certain groups, classes, and beliefs in the hopes of rhetorically connecting with his target audience: wealthy and educated Christians.

5.2 Secular authority

Jerome goes beyond assuming the backing of episcopal authoritative figures. As has already been briefly alluded to above, he also claims for himself the backing of traditional secular symbols of authority, specifically Roman emperors. [73] Using the rhetorical device of apostrophe and addressing Vigilantius (*o insanum caput,* 'oh madman'), Jerome responds to Vigilantius' claim that the acts of worshipping relics and offering prayers to the dead are superstitious.[74] While Vigilantius viewed the cult of the martyrs as having pagan overtones, Jerome saw such cults as traditional Roman practices, supported by long established secular powers:[75]

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[73] See Setton (1941) on Christian attitudes towards secular figures of power, in particular, 24-26 and 192-196, on the Christian views on the origin of the emperor's power. See also Clark (2001), 173, on the late fourth-century bishop Victricius of Rouen's use of 'a standard education in late-antique rhetoric and philosophy' that could be used 'to make relic-cult intelligible and acceptable in a familiar discourse'.

[74] *Contra Vig.* 5.

[75] Bitton-Ashkelony (2005), 102. She comments, 'Jerome's position may be viewed as part of his general attitude toward pagan culture: he saw the qualities inherent in this culture, including the importance of its literary legacy, rather than the danger it concealed' (104). Kelly (1975), 289, remarks on Jerome's 'appeals to tradition and authority.' Clark, G. (1999), 368-369, notes Victricius' use of imagery (chapter 3) typically found in imperial panegyrics used to describe the arrival of the saints in Rouen. Continent Christians 'are the spiritual equivalent of the splendidly dressed and bejeweled grandees who would receive an imperial *adventus*, whereas ordinary Christians are mere extras in the crowd scenes' (372). See 368-372 on Victricius' theological explanation for why relics of the martyrs possess power.

Ergo sacrilegi sumus, quando apostolorum basilicas ingredimur? Sacrilegus fuit Constantius imperator, qui sanctas reliquias Andreae, Lucae et Timothei transtulit Constantinopolim… Sacrilegus dicendus est et nunc Augustus Arcadius, qui ossa beati Samuhelis longo post tempore de Iudaea transtulit in Thraciam?

Then we are sacrilegious when we enter the basilicas of the apostles? Was emperor Constantius sacrilegious, who transferred the sacred relics of Andrew, Luke, and Timothy to Constantinople? ... And must Augustus Arcadius now be declared sacrilegious, who transferred the bones of the blessed Samuel after a long time from Judea to Thrace? (*Contra Vig.* 5).

If Christians are to take their lead from their emperor, then surely Vigilantius is in the wrong.[76] In fact, Jerome comments earlier that Vigilantius puts forward heresy that is condemned by the authority of the entire world (*totius orbis auctoritate damnatur*).[77] Vigilantius is not an accepted part of the secular or ecclesiastical hierarchy. In contrast Jerome appeals to the highest figure of secular authority as a form of Christian authority, increasing the yawning chasm between Vigilantius' supporters and those Jerome implicitly claims for himself.

Jerome continues in a similar line expanding the rhetorical question to include not only figures of secular power such as Constantius and Arcadius, but, rather hyperbolically, *all* the bishops and *all* the people in *all* the churches

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[76] Lössl (2005), 104 n.40, comments that these imperial references were 'meant to emphasise the antiquity and dignity of the practice'. See Stephenson (2009), 258, on the emperor's relationship with the Christian community: beginning with Constantine, the emperor came to be viewed as a general of a Christian army. The chain of command, starting from Emperor and linking down to the bishops, clerics, and congregation, was an important component of ensuring the stability of the church. The bishops under the emperor were meant to act as father figures to their congregations (see e.g. Jer. *Ep.* 52.4). See Clark (2001), 162-168, on the controversial nature of the translation of relics in the mid to late fourth century.

[77] *Contra Vig.* 5.

(*Contra Vig.* 5).[78] The illusory group created by this rhetoric continues to congregate en masse behind Jerome, as Vigilantius stands in his drunken stupor (*ebrius et dormiens*).[79] Vigilantius may purport to have the backing of the biblical King Solomon, but Jerome dismisses this easily by stating Solomon never wrote as Vigilantius claims, and Vigilantius is welcome to continue reading the imaginary revelations of all the patriarchs and prophets.[80] Moreover, Vigilantius' beliefs concerning almsgiving are set against the support of the apostles: his refusal to send alms to Jerusalem are stated to be *contra auctoritatem apostoli Pauli, immo Petri, Iohannis et Iacobi* (*Contra Vig.* 13).[81] Jerome explicitly states that in his treatise he is only conveying what Paul says in nearly all his letters.[82] Jerome gathers support from figures of power – apostles, emperors, and eminent bishops of Rome – to justify his arguments.

5.3 One of us

In this treatise Jerome not only attempts to amass support from recognized seats of power and those Christians who revere and support them, he also argues in such a way so the reader will infer that Jerome himself is on their side. He asks Vigilantius whether those Christians that run to meet the sacred relics are

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[78] *Omnes episcopi non solum sacrilegi, sed et fatui iudicandi, qui rem vilissimam et cineres dissolutos in serico et vase aureo portaverunt? Stulti omnium ecclesiarum populi, qui occurrerunt sanctis reliquiis* (*Contra Vig.* 5).

[79] *Contra Vig.* 5.

[80] *Nam in commentariolo tuo quasi pro te faciens de Salomone sumis testimonium quod Salomon omnino non scripsit, ut qui habes alterum Ezram habeas et Salomonem alterum. Et si tibi placuerit, legito fictas revelationes omnium patriarcharum et prophetarum* (*Contra Vig.* 6).

[81] On almsgiving during the late fourth and early fifth century see Finn (2006). On Jerome's position in particular see 250-257.

[82] *Ego hoc loquor quod beatus apostolus Paulus in cunctis paene epistulis suis loquitur et praecepit* (*Contra Vig.* 13).

foolish. The readers who take an active interest in the issue of reverence of holy relics will see themselves as included in this category. According to Jerome, they are so many that they constitute a crowd of people (*populorum examina*) so vast that they join the great distance from Palestine to Chalcedon.[83] Equally, this multitude of people join Jerome, as he joins them, all echoing the praises of Christ with one voice.[84] Similarly, Jerome assimilates himself to the apostles and martyrs – he and they are always on the same team. He claims that if Vigilantius finds reason to abuse him, then he will find solace in the fact that he is in good company, as Vigilantius has similarly abused the apostles and martyrs.[85] It is this recognized orthodox group and this 'one voice' that Jerome positions himself to be a part of. While Jerome, as demonstrated above, draws people rhetorically in line with his own arguments, he also positions himself in line with them.[86]

However, this approach does not always work well for Jerome. I have already shown that the Roman public were not pleased with Jerome's contribution to the questions posed by Jovinian, and were not eager to extend their support to Jerome's contentious ascetic views.[87] They did not want Jerome speaking for them on controversial ecclesiastical issues. Bearing this in mind, we should consider why Jerome decided to take on Vigilantius and what he had

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[83] *Contra Vig.* 5.

[84] *Stulti omnium ecclesiarum populi, qui occurerunt sanctis reliquiis et tanta laetitia, quasi praesentem viventemque cernerent susceperunt, ut de Palaestina usque Chalcedonem iungerentur populorum examina et in Christi laudes una voce sonarent?* (*Contra Vig.* 5).

[85] *Contra Vig.* 17. See also Chapter 5, 7 on *Adv. Hel.* 22.

[86] With different religious factions and varying beliefs, the situation was, of course, not as black and white as Jerome makes it out to be. See Lössl (2005), 104 n.41.

[87] See Chapter 5, 9.1 and 9.2.

to gain, especially considering the amount of time that had elapsed since their initial encounter. In order to do this, I will first consider the matter of Vigilantius' support and then consider how Jerome approaches his polemic specifically with regard to his stance on asceticism and virginity.

6. WINNING SUPPORT

6.1 Vigilantius' legacy

As we have seen above Jerome creates two groups with which the audience may identify. While the treatise may be directed towards Vigilantius, its message was also meant for a wider audience whom Jerome wished to distance from Vigilantius. Jerome indicates that those who reside in the parishes around Vigilantius' neighbourhood should be concerned for their own spiritual wellbeing, as their presbyters, Riparius and Desiderius, are clearly agitated.[88] Jerome presents himself as being similarly troubled and working on their behalf. Ostensibly Jerome addresses his opponent and associates him with another heretical contemporary, Eunomius. He then questions how terrified Vigilantius must be to be part of such a contingent that speaks out against the church.[89] Eunomius, credited with being one of the fathers of 'Arianism,'[90] had a fluctuating career that ultimately culminated in his works being condemned.[91]

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[88] *Auctores sunt huius dictatiunculae meae sancti presbyteri Riparius et Desiderius, qui parrochias suas vicinia istius dicunt esse maculatas* (*Contra Vig.* 3).

[89] *Nec tali societate terreris, ut eadem contra nos loquaris quae ille contra ecclesiam loquitur* (*Contra Vig.* 8).

[90] Jurgens (1970), 11. See Vaggione (2000), 39-41, on the difficulties of using the term 'Arian.' Arianus Ignotus states that they called themselves *cristiani* although they are falsely called *arrianos* (Arianus Ignotus *Contra orthodoxos et Macedonianos* fr. 6.5.277.4-7).

[91] See Jeanjean (1999), 57 and 156-157, who points out that this may seem an odd comparison as the issue of Trinitarian theology, in which Eunomius was keenly involved, is raised nowhere in

The same general question could be posed to the audience in regard to Vigilantius. We will see that Jerome uses Eunomius as a reminder of what happens to those who rise up against the established authority of the emperor and engage with heresy.[92]

Shortly after he gained the episcopate in Cyzicus in 360,[93] Eunomius gave questionable sermons among which he argued that Mary had given birth to children with Joseph following the birth of Christ.[94] This ultimately led to his being called back to Antioch by Constantius II.[95] Constantius, however, died before formally condemning Eunomius of heresy.[96] Eunomius would find himself formally condemned by the praetorian prefect Modestus,[97] and banished to Naxos where he would spend nearly nine years in exile.[98] Vaggione writes that this point 'marks the end of a process of marginalization which almost

Contra Vigilantium. See Vaggione (2000), 3-8, on Eunomius' family background and relevant bibliography, especially 4 n.25 on discrediting Eunomius' lower class upbringing.

[92] Lössl (2005), 113, notes that Jerome 'does not demonstrate in any way that [Eunomius] held the same or similar views as Vigilantius or that it was these views for which they were condemned.' He recognizes (113 n.98) that Jerome was simply linking heresies together but he does not consider the other connections that could be made and the overall importance of the rhetoric being used.

[93] See Elm (2012), 237, for an account of Eunomius' rise to the episcopacy and the resulting disorder that ensued as Cyzicus' inhabitants had been supporters of Eunomius' predecessor, Eleusius. See Sozomen *Historia ecclesiastica* 4.25 and Philostorgius *Historia ecclesiastica* 5.3 for Eunomius' gaining the see. See (Philostorgius *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.1) on the troubles Eunomius encountered upon entering the bishopric: the Cyzican clergy complained that their new bishop believed that the father and the son were unlike in more than only substance.

[94] Philostorgius *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.2.

[95] Philostorgius *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.4.

[96] Philostorgius *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.5. See Vaggione (2000), 231 n.216, for a potential timeline of the events.

[97] *PLRE* 1 s.v. 'Domitius Modestus 2'.

[98] Philostorgius *Historia ecclesiastica* 9.11.

everything since his ordination had tended to make more pronounced'.[99] Following his return from exile, Eunomius encountered a gradual series of aggressive edicts under the eastern emperor Theodosius, who was determined to promote Nicene doctrine:[100] an edict was passed that outlawed Eunomians from churches.[101] Then Eunomius and his followers were prohibited from gathering or building places of worship.[102] Subsequently, all other dissenters from Nicene Christianity were similarly forbidden to gather or build places of worship.[103] Following that Theodosius passed a decree that confiscated property used for non-Nicene worship.[104] And finally, any dissident clergy were ordered to be exiled, and Eunomius was named first.[105] On multiple occasions, Eunomius had been officially condemned by secular powers.[106] Although Eunomius defended his theological doctrines as the true Christian faith, he did not ultimately leave an orthodox legacy behind him.[107] In this way Jerome predicts Vigilantius' own legacy. But this question posed to his opponent – *nec tali societate terreris* – can equally be seen as an exhortation to his larger audience

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[99] Vaggione (2000), 300.

[100] Van Dam (2003), 37. See Sozomen *Historia ecclesiastica* 7.6.2 on Eunomius' support in Chalcedon, along with Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio* 27.3.15-19, 6.3-12 also *Oratio* 21.5, 42.22 for accounts of his popularity. See Philostorgius *Historia ecclesiastica* 10.6 on Theodosius' concern that 'Eunomian' doctrine had infiltrated his court. Van Dam (2003), 37.

[101] *Cod. Theod.* 16.5.6.

[102] *Cod. Theod.* 16.5.8.

[103] *Cod. Theod.* 16.5.11.

[104] *Cod. Theod.* 15.5.12.

[105] *Cod. Theod.* 15.5.13. See Vaggione (2000), 329-330, and Van Dam (2003) on Theodosius' edicts against Eunomius and his followers.

[106] Indeed, Eunomius' works were also reportedly refuted by a large number of his contemporaries. See Vaggione (1987), xiii.

[107] Eunomius *Liber apologeticus* 2.6-8, 27.29-31. His books were reputedly ordered to be destroyed by the emperor Arcadius (*Cod. Theod.* 16.5.34; Philostorgius *Historia ecclesiastica* 11.5). See Elm (2012), 241. Van Dam (2003), 37, writes: 'as the glitter slowly rusted on his once promising career, Eunomius became a broken-down reminder of the penalties for failed ambition.'

not to follow the likes of Vigilantius and end up in such a position.[108] Rhetorically Jerome is attempting to increase the level of support behind his own views on the reverence of holy relics, honoring the martyrs, sending of alms, and celibacy through the implication that the opponents of his beliefs will inevitably be condemned as heretical.[109]

6.2 Vigilantius on asceticism

The question of clerical celibacy was a controversial issue, in part due to variations in local custom throughout the empire.[110] News had reached Jerome that the local Bishop Exsuperius of Toulouse favored Vigilantius' beliefs and Jerome seems to have been concerned that Vigilantius' teachings were enjoying support.[111] Worried that Vigilantius would expand his following, as we have

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[108] *Contra Vig.* 8.

[109] On Eunomius and opposition to asceticism see Vaggione (2000), 181-192.

[110] Coming to a consensus on sexual codes of practice for the clergy was a problematic issue. The Council of Elvira that congregated in 309 in Spain is reportedly the first to formulate laws that ordered clerics to abstain from their wives (Canon 33). Laeuchli (1972), 89, points out that over forty-six percent of the canons involve sexual offences and are treated severely. Socrates narrates an exchange at the Council of Nicea in 325 where a celibate Egyptian bishop named Paphnutius argues that marriage is honorable and implores the synod not to enforce mandatory continence (*Historia ecclesiae* 1.11). See Phipps (2004), 93, on the problematic nature of this account. Previously, the clergy had been allowed to marry and have children: see Constantius' edict in 357 (*Cod. Theod.* 16.2.14.4). Parish (2010), 59-86, studies how the tradition of clerical celibacy developed in the East and West. Phipps (2004), 81-113, provides an overview of ancient attitudes towards clerical celibacy during the second century to the period of Augustine. See also Stancliffe (1983), 268-277, on the diversity and the problematic nature of ascetic practices throughout the empire.

[111] On the complexity of the debate on asceticism in Gaul and on the maintenance of clerical celibacy see Stancliffe (1983), 283-280. Hunter (1999), 409, theorizes that the bishop in question may have been Exsuperius of Toulouse as documents had surfaced (the *Passio s. Saturnini*) that Exsuperius had delayed transferring the relics of St. Saturninus during his time as bishop. See Griffe (1964-1965), vol. 3, 226-230, who argues that the building of a basilica in Toulouse to St. Saturninus sparked Vigilantius' disapproval. See *Ep.* 109.2 and *Contra Vig.* 2 for Jerome's references to Vigilantius' supporters. Lössl (2005), 102, raises the possibility that the bishops

seen, Jerome looks for any plausible way of discrediting him.[112] The larger issue of asceticism was connected to clerical celibacy, as Jerome believed that celibacy itself was an integral component.[113] His concern in defending the orthodox nature of asceticism is apparent in the treatise. It is notable that the issue of asceticism is framed by Vigilantius' occupation and drinking habits: *ne si inoleverit apud Gallos continentia et sobrietas atque ieiunium, tabernae tuae lucra non habeant et vigilias diaboli ac temulenta convivia tota nocte exercere non possi*, 'lest if continence, sobriety, and fasting grow among the Gauls, your taverns may not make profits, and you may not be able to practice your vigils of the devil and drunken parties throughout the night' (*Contra Vig.* 13).[114] According to Jerome, Vigilantius' views on continence, fasting, and vigils stem from his debauched occupation as an innkeeper. Vigilantius seemingly has a vested business interest in opposing ascetic tenets. Jerome is determined that his fellow ascetics will not succumb to Vigilantius' misguided views, but the very fact that Jerome felt the need to write such a treatise indicates that he was concerned by the growing popularity that such ideas must have been experiencing in Gaul: *nec a suo studio monachi deterrendi sunt ad elinguis viperae morsus saevissimos*, 'the monks

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Jerome refers to might not have necessarily held Vigilantius' views: 'Vigilantius was not a radical reformer, and the fact that he was not acting alone, but commanded considerable support among the Gallic episcopate… should not be mistaken in the sense that these bishops held the positions with which Jerome charged Vigilantius. Rather, it might indicate that Vigilantius held more moderate positions than Jerome said he held.' See Hunter (1999), 419, on the correspondence of Siricius and Innocent of Exsuperius, which he argues demonstrate that 'resistance to clerical celibacy was widespread in Gaul'.

[112] See Rebenich (1992), 209-259, and Cain (2009c), 119-143, on Jerome's attempts to develop his contacts in Gaul.

[113] See Jer. *Commentariorum in epistulam ad Titum* 2.15 for Jerome's high standards in the late 380s for clerical behavior.

[114] Jerome connected food with enticing other senses (*Ep*. 22.8).

must not be frightened away from their devotion toward the most savage bites of a viper without a tongue' (*Contra Vig.* 15).[115]

Jerome is resolute on drawing away support from Vigilantius, but he does so carefully. We have already seen how Jerome's rhetoric presents him as a classical hero and a Christian champion, and how he constructs Vigilantius as the enemy, all the while relying on identification with his audience. Such techniques rhetorically attempt to convince the reader. But we should now consider how Jerome returns to the specific question of virginity. It will become clear that his approach had changed considerably from when he dealt with Jovinian in 393, despite some similarity of the issues. The question of clerical celibacy, which was an important part of Vigilantius' views, was unquestionably linked with wider issues of virginity for Jerome. While we see echoes of his treatise against Jovinian, Jerome is careful not to overstep his boundaries, lest he receive the same negative feedback.[116]

6.3 Jerome's muted advocacy of celibacy

In countering Jovinian Jerome devoted much space to the various levels of heaven, and the corresponding ranking of the virginal and the married (2.22-33, and 2.34 specifically on the clergy). Many of these sections are laden with theological argument and discussion of scripture. When writing against

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[115] See *Contra Vig.* 2 for Jerome's concerns that bishops are following Vigilantius' views. Goodrich (2007), 10-19, provides an overview of the situation in Gaul during the late fourth / early fifth century.

[116] Salisbury (1991), 28, comments that while early Christians like Jerome would have been careful to reassure their readers that they were not disparaging marriage '[i]n reality, their praise of marriage was … weak compared to their strong advocacy of the spiritual realm represented by a life of virginity.'

Vigilantius Jerome's concentration on the ranking of virginity is retrained: *iste quem tu laudas secundus aut tertius gradus est; quem et nos recipimus, dummodo sciamus prima secundis et tertiis praeferenda,* 'that man whom you praise, is in the second or third position; but we accept him provided that we understand that the first must be preferred to the second and third' (*Contra Vig.* 14).[117] Jerome is clear on which order he supports, but unlike his treatise against Jovinian in which he commented in depth on the difference between the married, widows, and virgins, he makes his point briefly and moves on. He echoes the sentiment about virginity that appeared in *Adversus Iovinianum*: *multi vocati, pauci electi* (*Contra Vig.* 15 and *Adv. Iov.* 36).[118] But the argumentation for clerical celibacy in *Adversus Iovinianum* is undoubtedly much more extensive. In that treatise, Jerome recognizes that virginity is rare while the need for priests is great. He compares the situation to an army: if only strong men were chosen, and weak men excluded, the army would not be big enough.[119] He comments that many virginal candidates are passed over for ordination for a range of reasons – greed, pride, their dress, their countenance; in fact, he writes, *multi eliguntur non amore sui, sed alterius odio,* 'many are selected not because they themselves are loved, but because the other candidate is hated' (*Adv. Iov.* 1.34). Jerome continues on to remark that men are prone to elevate candidates who remind them of themselves.[120] And therefore, the church has become full of married men selecting other married men, instead of rewarding the virginal. Pointedly,

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[117] Finn (2006), 252, has noted that Jerome's *Ep.* 130 to Demetrias written in 414 on virginity is considerably 'quieter' and 'more deferential' than his *Ep.* 22 to Eustochium, which was written around thirty years earlier.

[118] Matth. 20.16 and 22.14.

[119] *Adv. Iov.* 1.34.

[120] *Unusquisque suis moribus favet, ut non tam bonum quam sui similem quaerat propositum* (*Adv. Iov.* 1.34).

Jerome continues to state that when this situation occurs, 'they think they themselves are not inferior to virgins, if they give preference to marriage over virginity' (*Adv. Iov.* 1.34).[121] In his treatise against Vigilantius Jerome cannot resist pointing out that there are bishops who insist on ordaining unchaste priests (*Contra Vig.* 2), but this time Jerome frames his concern around the unity of the church. He worries that the division between east and west will harm the church if bishops in Gaul continue to appoint a married clergy while those in the east appoint the continent.[122] He no longer focuses so heavily on the large gap between first- and second-class passages to heaven. While Jerome's support of a celibate clergy has not shifted, the rhetorical emphasis is noticeably different. As Lössl has pointed out 'Jerome's "friends" in the west could hardly have disapproved.'[123]

6.4 Jerome's tempering of position

Jerome further tempers his approach in his treatise against Vigilantius with regard to his presentation of aggressor and target. Despite the fact that Jerome is writing a polemical work, he attempts to position himself as the unwanted recipient of Vigilantius' aggression. Similar to how he responded to

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[121] *Evenit aliquoties ut mariti, quae pars maior in populo est, maritis quasi sibi applaudant, et in eo se arbitrentur minores non esse virginibus, si maritum virgini praeferant.*

[122] *Quid facient Orientis ecclesiae? Quid Aegypti et sedis apostolicae, quae aut virgines clericos accipit aut continentes, aut, si uxores habuerint, mariti esse desistunt?* (*Contra Vig.* 2). Phipps (2004), 95, argues that the advocacy of clerical sexual abstinence in 386 by the council at Rome 'exposes the beginning of what resulted centuries later in the division between Latin-speaking Christians in the Western Roman Empire and Greek-speaking Christians in what remained of the Eastern Roman Empire.'

[123] Lössl (2005), 103.

Augustine,[124] Jerome uses his monasticism as an excuse.[125] He writes that escaping into the desert is a welcome alternative to enduring Vigilantius' madness and hearing or seeing him.[126] Jerome refuses to endure *Vigilantius'* battle (*tua bella*).[127] He positions Vigilantius as the aggressor, assuming that he will want to engage in a polemical exchange: *respondebis: hoc non est pugnare, sed fugere. Sta in acie, adversariis armatus obsiste*, 'you will reply: this is not to fight, but to run away. Stand firm on the battle line, equip yourself and resist your adversaries' (*Contra Vig.* 16). Indeed, Jerome wants to stress that he is *not*, in fact, fighting with Vigilantius:

> Fateor imbecillitatem meam. Nolo spe pugnare victoriae, ne perdam aliquando victoriam. Si fugero, gladium devitavi. Si stetero, aut vincendum mihi est, aut cadendum. Quid autem necesse est certa dimittere et incerta sectari? … Tu qui pugnas, et superari potes et vincere. Ego cum fugero, non vincor in eo quod fugio, sed ideo fugio, ne vincar. Nulla securitas est vicino serpente dormire. Potest fieri ut me non mordeat. Tamen potest fieri ut aliquando me mordeat.
>
> I confess my weakness. I do not wish to fight in the hope of victory, lest at some time I lose the victory. If I flee, I have dodged the sword. If I stand, either I must conquer or I must fall. But what need is there to forgo facts and pursue uncertainty?… You who fight, can both be overcome and can conquer. I, when I flee, I am not conquered in as much as I flee. But I flee, so as not to be defeated. It is not safe to sleep when a snake is nearby. It may happen that he will not bite me. Nevertheless, it may happen that at some time he will (*Contra Vig.* 16).[128]

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[124] See Chapter 3, 7. Jerome's letters to Augustine were written about two years prior to his treatise against Vigilantius. See Kelly (1975), 287.

[125] See *Ep*. 105.3 and 112.22.

[126] *Cur, inquies, pergis ad heremum? Videlicet ut te non audiam, non videam, ut tuo furore non movear, ut tua bella non patiar* (*Contra Vig.* 16).

[127] *Contra Vig.* 16.

[128] Kelly (1975), 290, seems to consider this passage as connected to the issues of virginity and desire: Jerome withdraws as a monk because 'a man is only safe if he is removed from the world's temptations'. However, considering Jerome's antagonistic comments about avoiding battle with Vigilantius that introduce the section, I am of the opinion that this passage involves the verbal conflict between the two.

Jerome's career had not been free from controversy; he was aware that a secure orthodox position was difficult to come by. Paradoxically, in his polemic Jerome presents himself not as the aggressor but as the poor, ill-equipped monk whose job is to lament for himself or for the world.[129] Notably, although Jerome had been irritated that Vigilantius was spreading rumors that he was still an Origenist, nowhere is this mentioned in this public treatise.[130] It is likely that Jerome did not want to give any more publicity to this dangerous accusation. Moreover, he had no wish for this treatise to attract the same backlash as the one he had composed against Jovinian, which had been faulted for being excessive in its praise of virginity and insulting towards marriage.[131] As Lössl has rightly pointed out, concerning the cult of the martyrs, 'Jerome had no reason to assume that Vigilantius had aimed at attacking him, Jerome, personally. It was Jerome who picked the fight.'[132]

7. CONCLUSION

We have discussed Jerome's self-presentation both as a classical hero and as a Christian champion. Moreover, we have seen how Vigilantius takes shape in striking contrast: a debauched innkeeper, with heretical links to Jovinian and a dubious historical lineage. Jerome attempts to win the support of his readers by

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[129] *Monachus autem non doctoris habet, sed plangentis officium, qui vel se vel mundum lugeat* (*Contra Vig.* 15)

[130] See Bitton-Ashkelon (2005), 99, Massie (1980), 81-108, and Stancliffe (1983), 301-311. Wiesen (1964), 224, points out that '[u]p to the end of this treatise almost all evidence of earlier personal hostility between Jerome and the heretic is suppressed. The only indication of a private quarrel is Jerome's account of Vigilantius' ludicrously indecent behavior at Bethlehem.' See Lössl (2005), 107, who queries what put Vigilantius and Jerome on the wrong foot: 'it seems not to have had anything to do with the martyr cult or the ascetic life.'

[131] *Reprehendunt in me quidam, quod in libris, quos adversum Iovinianum scripsi, nimius fuerim vel in laude virginum vel in sugillatione nuptarum* (*Ep.* 49.2).

[132] Lössl (2005), 114.

using identification; he creates two distinct groups, one of which no right-thinking Christian would willingly associate with. Jerome not only aligns himself with those he wishes to convince, he also attempts to align other participants of the rhetorical domain – apostles, emperors, and bishops – with himself in the hopes of cementing his orthodoxy over Vigilantius. This concept of identification is key to his rhetoric. As we saw in Chapter 2, the choice of language is integral in both linking and dividing the speaker and the audience. Jerome carefully builds the whole piece to condemn Vigilantius in such a way that would have resonated with his educated elite audience. He, as their hero and champion, is promoting their cause and helping to protect Gaul from heretical influences. However, at the same time, outwardly Jerome does not appear to be vying for authority – in fact, he seems to renounce it altogether by claiming to be a weak monk who shuns conflict.

This chapter has aimed to demonstrate that Jerome's rhetorical tactics had shifted from those employed in his earlier composed treatise, specifically that against Jovinian. Although Vigilantius seemingly differed in his views on asceticism specifically when it came to virginity – in particular, that of the clerics – Jerome does not debate this issue with the same level of argumentation evident in *Adversus Iovinianum*. The matter of virginity is only framed within the debate on whether or not the clergy should remain celibate. This question proved difficult and unresolved, and had implications for what was considered orthodox or heretical.[133] While Jerome could easily have expanded the issue to fall within the wider question of Christian virginity, his tactics changed

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[133] See Salisbury (1991), 11-25, on the Western 'Church Fathers' and how the difficult central questions regarding sex came to shape Christian understanding of celibacy.

considerably, possibly because his strident support of virginity had caused him problems before. He did not want a repetition of the situation in Rome where Roman aristocrats were sending letters advising him to moderate his opinions.[134] Moreover, unlike in the treatise against Jovinian which appeared more balanced due to Jerome's careful sandwiching of the relatively brief passages of abuse between extensive passages of biblical and secular argumentation, *Contra Vigilantium* contains much in the way to belittle Vigilantius personally in a significantly shorter work. I would suggest that this is one of the main reasons why many scholars are quick to characterize it as one of Jerome's most abusive works.[135]

From a certain perspective, Jerome appears to have been much more successful with this treatise than that against Jovinian. There is no secular or religious backlash against him, and in the long-term development of Christianity Jerome had backed the winning horse: his views prevailed while Vigilantius' did not.[136] The success of this treatise, in contrast to the treatise against Jovinian, could be argued to have been *in part* because Jerome altered his rhetorical methods, and drew on a shared disdain of inferior, uneducated innkeepers to appeal successfully to his intended audience. We do not hear much more about the innkeeper from Gaul beyond what Gennadius of

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[134] *Ep.* 48.1-2.

[135] Trout (1999), 221, comments that *Contra Vigilantium* is 'less an answer to the real questions raised by Vigilantius than satirical invective.'

[136] Kelly (1975), 290, states, '[h]ad he been gifted with foresight, Jerome would have had the satisfaction of knowing that the practices and austere disciplines he was defending, so far from being checked by Vigilantius' critique, were to become the accepted norm of western Catholicism, and were to be officially justified by substantially the same apologetic as he was sketching out.'

Marseilles tells us.[137] In this instance, perhaps, Jerome had picked a suitable target and had correctly adapted his rhetoric. By countering Vigilantius, and promoting a form of worship that recognized the power of tangible objects – relics, saintly remains, bishops, and emperors – Jerome invested authority into these physical items alongside his prized state of virginity. His success in this endeavor is best summed up by Gennadius' comment, some sixty years later: 'if anyone thinks differently, he is to be considered a Vigilantian and not a Christian.'[138]

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[137] Gennadius of Marseille *De viris illustribus* 36.

[138] Gennadius of Marseille *Liber ecclesiasticorum dogmatum* 39.

Conclusion

Jerome's reputation as a curmudgeonly monk has had a lasting effect on Hieronymian scholarship. This reputation has led to an underappreciation both of his polemics and of the potential of his abusive rhetoric for understanding how Jerome sought to construct his persona. It has also led to an undervaluing of abusive rhetoric's importance in defining and challenging status. The fundamental aim of this thesis has been to see beyond this lingering reputation for curmudgeonly behavior and examine how and why he constructed his abusive treatises within his rhetorical and social world. I have argued that Jerome constructed his polemical persona in the hope of boosting his status within the Christian community. In each treatise studied, we saw that Jerome's presentation of his opponent allowed his own positive attributes to shine through. His extensive scholarship, humility, asceticism, language skills, and urbanity created an authoritative opponent. In these polemics Jerome created his own role as a teacher and savior figure, combatting heretics who took the form of dandies, bumpkins, or failed celebrities.

As I demonstrated in Chapter 1, scholarship of the last forty to fifty years has tended to focus on 'Jerome the man' and his self-invention, on the various controversies in which he was involved, and on his use of invective and satire. Hieronymian scholarship has examined Jerome's academic and spiritual qualities in order to assess how he developed his persona. However, this thesis has explored how Jerome used these qualities during his lifetime within his abusive rhetoric in an attempt to assert his ascetic and orthodox authority. I have tried to escape the reductionist tendency of some scholars to assume that

Jerome's unpleasant personality was what drove the abusive portions of his polemics. I have, instead, unpacked how Jerome attempted to use his abusive rhetoric to his advantage and why he believed it would be effective in the manipulation of his public image through three treatises: *Adversus Helvidium*, *Adversus Iovinianum*, and *Contra Vigilantium*.

In order to set the stage for the three case studies in Part 2, the first half of this thesis has set out a methodology of abusive rhetoric — using both ancient and modern theories — from which to approach Jerome's polemics. These rhetorical theories help to illuminate how and why Jerome approached his polemical compositions. While ancient definitions of rhetoric and the rhetorical handbooks allowed us to theorize regarding how the composition of Jerome's polemics relates to his own rhetorical education, modern approaches to rhetoric allowed us to question *why* Jerome presents himself as he does and why he believed such rhetoric would be effective. Jerome's rhetoric betrays the importance of a shared elite scholastic background that crucially would have allowed for reciprocal identification between him and his intended audience. Jerome's desire to influence those within his rhetorical domain by identifying with this shared cultural background is integral to and apparent in his rhetoric.

I also argued that social hierarchies could be reshaped through the use of abusive rhetoric. By challenging another's orthodoxy or scholarly authority with the successful use of abusive rhetoric, one could appropriate that authority for oneself. When viewed within the context of his lifetime – where salon culture had become prominent and patronage competitive – Jerome's efforts to

seek authority through a combination of abusive rhetoric, scholarship, and ascetic devotion become apparent. The late fourth and early fifth centuries witnessed the growth of asceticism, which introduced new methods of asserting Christian authority. Jerome advocated a hierarchy that prized virginity above marriage, and often defended his position with abusive rhetoric to strengthen his argument and reinforce his own orthodoxy. This has helped to reveal the potential that the use of abusive rhetoric held for Jerome to better his social standing and assert his orthodoxy within the Christian community.

In Chapter 3 I called attention to Jerome's awareness of social standing by looking at his interactions with Augustine, Rufinus, and Ambrose. Although Rufinus and Augustine criticized similar aspects of Jerome's scholarship, Jerome's responses differed greatly: while he was antagonistic in his responses to Rufinus, he made excuses to avoid confrontation with Augustine. I argued that this was caused by the fact that Jerome and his correspondents each viewed one another's respective statuses differently. Jerome saw Rufinus as intellectually beneath him, whereas Augustine, a recently ordained bishop, was a more complicated figure to reckon with. I showed further that Jerome was much more guarded with Ambrose. Hostile references to Ambrose were often oblique, presumably so as to protect Jerome from negative repercussions. Jerome had no difficulty in insulting and naming his other targets, but as an established and recognized figure of episcopal authority, any references to Ambrose had to be handled with care.

When viewed all together, Part 1 argued that Jerome, contrary to the scholarship of the past, was not a cantankerous monk who flew off the handle irrationally. Rather, Jerome strategically picked the targets of his vitriolic pen and adapted his abusive rhetoric depending on relative status and position, and we must be aware of this when assessing his abusive treatises.

In Part 2 of this thesis I analyzed three of Jerome's treatises using the rhetorical theories developed in Part 1: *Adversus Helvidium*, *Adversus Iovinianum*, and *Contra Vigilantium*. In Chapter 4 I showed that Jerome's presentation of Helvidius allowed for his own persona to take shape as the polar opposite. While Jerome's Helvidius remained focused on achieving fame through his heretical teachings, Jerome was unassertive and modest. Helvidius was noticeably uneducated; Jerome demonstrated his own learning. Helvidius was innovative; Jerome presented himself as conservative and traditional. While Jerome's stringent views on asceticism and virginity, which deviated from Roman norms, would not normally fit into this categorization, his rhetorical framework allows for such a presentation. These qualities embodied by Jerome were valued by the Christian church, and seem to hint at the possibility that Jerome was seeking episcopal authority.

I also argued that Jerome saw an opportunity in his interaction with Helvidius: while Helvidius' ideas surrounding the Virgin Mary threatened Jerome's authoritative stance on the value of virginity, Helvidius seems to have lacked connections and support. He was someone whom Jerome could trumpet his superiority over to ensure that he was viewed as an authoritative and

orthodox scholar in the Christian community. This was one instance where we saw Jerome positioning himself for power, emphasizing his humility, learning, and traditionalism, especially when contrasted with the celebrity-seeking, ignorant, and heretical Helvidius.

The second case study considered Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum*. I argued that Jerome attempted to make the attack on Jovinian a means to advance his own (debatable) views on asceticism to a wider audience, and potentially secure favor for himself following his unwilling departure from Rome. Because his views had previously provoked dissent, he used the techniques he had learnt in the past to convince: classical rhetorical strategies. In this polemic Jerome denounced his opponent Jovinian by portraying him as a deceptive sinner. Similar to the rhetorical approach used against Helvidius, Jerome's negative depiction of Jovinian allowed for his own favorable characterization. While Jovinian was depicted as a shape-shifting snake who distorted scripture in order to increase his following, Jerome cast himself as Jesus. He focused on Jovinian's dissolute lifestyle in order to reveal his sinful behavior: Jovinian was depicted as unfit to teach others about important Christian issues such as baptism, fasting, and the heavenly rewards of the virginal and the married.

However, Jerome's treatise was not solely aimed at Jovinian. I showed that although the attack ostensibly singled out Jovinian, the wider population of Rome was also under critique, specifically those who put stock in Jovinian's teachings. Jovinian's followers were described as fat dandies more concerned with their looks than with Christian principles. Their shortcomings were linked

back to Jovinian and his teachings: Jerome manipulated Jovinian's teachings to create a believable image of Jovinian and his followers as lousy Christians. But Jerome realized that in critiquing the larger group behind Jovinian, he might in fact be critiquing those whom he meant to persuade. I demonstrated how Jerome represented the audience as well educated and intelligent in order to assuage them. Finally, I argued that Jerome had missed his mark. The negative reaction to his treatise only betrayed further Roman resistance to Jerome's fervent asceticism. Although Jerome had carefully constructed his treatise, using his secular education and mastery of scripture to strengthen his connection to the elite in the Christian community, his tract was ultimately a failure due to an inability to identify successfully with the audience on the topic of virginity.

The last case study considered Jerome's *Contra Vigilantium.* I argued that Jerome again emphasized the contrast between himself and his opponent. His own self-presentation depicted Jerome as a classical hero and a Christian champion, working to protect Gaul from the debauched and heretical innkeeper Vigilantius. Furthermore, I showed that Jerome's rhetoric utilized tactics similar to those used by Cicero. Such rhetorical techniques worked to emphasize two contrasting groups, and encourage the audience to identify with the 'correct' side. I showed how Jerome constructed Vigilantius as the enemy – his contacts, spiritual origins, ancestry, and occupation were also presented in such a way as to discourage any respectable Christian from wanting to associate with him. Essentially, Jerome engaged in class snobbery that drew on shared prejudices

and cultural references in order to gain influence with the upper classes of the Christian community.

Jerome was also concerned by Vigilantius' popularity, as it seemed apparent that his opponent's views would endanger his own controversial support for asceticism. Furthermore, Jerome's advocacy of asceticism and, in particular, the manner in which he presented his position on clerical celibacy had changed since his tract against Jovinian. I demonstrated how he had moderated his position using rhetorical tactics similar to those found in his replies to Augustine discussed in Chapter 3. As Jerome had received criticism for his enthusiastic support of virginity and disdainful attitude towards marriage following his *Adversus Iovinianum*, it seems likely that he had deliberately changed his rhetorical approach in his later treatise against Vigilantius. His restyling was in part successful, as he did not receive any of the criticism that had been leveled against the treatise countering Jovinian.

The arguments in this thesis also open up new avenues for the investigation of Jerome's world. First and foremost, this thesis has demonstrated that abusive rhetoric can help us develop a better understanding of how authors sought to achieve authority, be it secular or otherwise. While the abusive works of the late Republic have received considerable attention, those of Late Antiquity have often been overlooked. This revival of invective deserves more attention. Secondly, I have shown that abusive rhetoric can help us to understand the process of social competition even, and perhaps especially, when the rhetoric is unsuccessful: rhetoric must be studied for how and why it

failed as much as why it succeeded. Future study of rhetorical failures could lead to a better, more nuanced appreciation of the role played by rhetoric in the creation and manipulation of social standing and orthodoxy within the Christian community. Finally, this thesis has shown that Jerome's aggressive and cantankerous rhetorical personality was the result of a deliberate and considered strategy that sought to achieve specific ends within the text, even while at the same time it cannot be denied that Jerome may have been testy and irritable. Other instances of his infamously irascible pen require similar consideration, as do aggressive personae in literature more generally.

This thesis has shown how Jerome constructed his polemical persona. I demonstrated how Jerome fashioned himself as a Christian savior and champion in each of these polemical treatises. His treatises presented him as a devoted scholar and ascetic more concerned with the well-being of Christianity and other Christians than his own reputation. But Jerome was strikingly aware of his position in the Christian community. His interactions with Rufinus, Augustine, and Ambrose show a man acutely cognizant of his opponents' positions within the Christian community as well as his own. The abusive rhetoric within his polemics allowed him to fashion his own image as he wanted others to see him, especially when compared to his adversaries. It is this reputation – as a Christian champion, scholar, and ascetic monk – that has continued throughout history. Jerome's reputation as a 'church father' has been built up around these qualities. I have avoided calling Jerome a saint, a 'church father', or a 'doctor of the church' throughout this thesis, but after careful study of how he presented himself in his own polemics, it is not difficult to see how

this image came to be preserved. As the memory of Jerome's failures faded, what was left to posterity was a body of work that carefully and skillfully constructed an orthodox and authoritative version of Jerome.

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