

Bogoslavni vestnik

Theological Quarterly
EPHEMERIDES THEOLOGICAE

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Glasiło Teološke fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani

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**Letnik 81
Leto 2021**

Glasilo Teološke fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani

Ljubljana 2021

CDXIX **H** XIXWW
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HIERONYMUS NOSTER
MEDNARODNI SIMPOZIJ
OB 1600-LETNICI
HIERONIMOVE SMRTI
LJUBLJANA
SLOVENSKA AKADEMIJA
ZNANOSTI IN UMETNOSTI
23. – 26. OKTOBER 2019

CDXIX **H** XIXWW
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HIERONYMUS NOSTER
INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
ON THE 1600TH ANNIVERSARY
OF JEROME'S DEATH
LJUBLJANA
SLOVENIAN ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES AND ARTS
OCTOBER 23RD–26TH, 2019



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Uvodnik / Editorial

Hieronim si svojega svetništva in slovesa – za razliko od kakega drugega velikega moža krščanske antike – ni prislužil s teološkim udejstvovanjem, saj se v zgodovino ni zapisal z rešitvijo kakšne zahtevne doktrinalne zagate ali z izvorno inovativnostjo svoje misli. Sicer se je srečal s trinitaričnimi spori (konkretno okrog bitke za škofijski sedež v Antiohiji, o čemer priča njegovo *Pismo* 15 papežu Damazu), se pozneje znašel v vrtincu origenistične krize (pri čemer je v svojih stališčih prešel od občudovalca aleksandrijskega učenjaka do njegovega zmernega nasprotnika), nasploh je goreče branil nicejski in konstantinopelski nauk ter ostro polemiziral z nasprotniki, vendar je pri vsem tem, kot je zapisal Stefan Rebenich, eden boljših poznavalcev Hieronimovega dela, Stridončan »cenil bolj polemično posploševanje kot subtilno distinkcijo, bolj konzervativnost nauka kot sveže ideje, bolj retorično razkazovanje kot trdne argumente, bolj učene prisposodbe kot diskurzivno presojanje, bolj dogmatično pomiritev kot intelektualno dovtetnost, bolj avtoritativno odločanje kot neodvisno presojo«.

To, po čemer betlehemeski učenjak slovi še danes, je predvsem njegova predanost Božji besedi. Papež Benedikt XV. mu je leta 1920 v okrožnici Spiritus Paraclitus nadel epitet *doctor maximus explanandis Scripturis*, saj je bil po njegovem Cerкви podarjen zavoljo boljšega razumevanja Svetega pisma, ki mora biti srce vsake teologije. A razmerje med teologijo ter svetopisemsko filologijo in eksegezo ni najbolj enoznačno. To kažejo prispevki številnih avtorjev, ki so oktobra 2019 nastopili na mednarodnem znanstvenem simpoziju *Hieronymus noster*. V pričujoči številki so zbrani članki, ki se *lato sensu* ukvarjajo s preučevanjem Stridončanovega prispevka za teologijo in svetopisemsko eksegezo.

Simpozij je ob 1600. obletnici njegove smrti potekal med 23. in 27. oktobrom 2019 na Slovenski akademiji znanosti in umetnosti (SAZU) pod častnim pokroviteljstvom predsednika Republike Slovenije Boruta Pahorja. Na pobudo zaslužnega profesorja dr. Rafka Valenčiča je organizacijo prevzel Inštitut za patristične študije *Victorinianum* na Teološki fakulteti UL, v sodelovanju z uglednimi domačimi (Odelka za zgodovino in klasično filologijo Filozofske fakultete UL, SAZU, ZRC SAZU) in tujimi znanstvenimi ustanovami (Institut des Sources chrétiennes, Univerza v Cádizu – mednarodna mreža Europa Renascens, projekt DANUBIUS na Université de Lille, Fakulteta Artes Liberales Univerze v Varšavi, Oddelek za srednjeveške študije Srednjeevropske univerze na Dunaju CEU). Povabilu organizacijskega odbora, v katerem je sodelovalo šest slovenskih in šest tujih članov, je sledil nesluten odziv zainteresirane svetovne akademske javnosti, kar je na koncu privedlo do kar 111 aktivnih udeležencev, ki so nastopili z referati. Pri tem so prevladovali mednarodni

strokovnjaki (poleg 22 slovenskih kar 89 tujih sodelujočih iz 17 držav). S tako udeležbo je ljubljanski simpozij dodobra presegel konceptualno podoben kongres, ki je potekal leta 2006 na waleški univerzi v Cardiffu, in tako postal doslej največja znanstvena konferenca za hieronimijanske študije.

Ena izmed glavnih značilnosti raziskovanja Hieronimovega dela je interdisciplinarnost. Med otvoritvenim večerom je v svojem nagovoru tedanji predsednik SA-ZU-ja akad. dr. Tadej Bajd poudaril izjemno vlogo latinskega jezika pri oblikovanju izobraženca, saj spodbuja večjezičnost, ki je tako zaželena v današnji akademski sferi, obenem pa tako omogoča vstop v spoznavanje rimske literature, filozofije, prava, kot tudi pomaga pri drugih znanstvenih panogah, denimo pri računalniških programskih jezikih. Dekan Teološke fakultete UL dr. Robert Petkovšek je ob otvoritvi omenil veličino Hieronimove osebnosti in njegovega dela, ki povezuje in ne deli: vsa zahodna kultura temelji tudi na njegovem prevodu Svetega pisma. »Ni ga in ga tudi ni bilo, človeka v našem izročilu, ki bi vsaj kdaj ne slišal stavka ali besede iz Hieronimovega prevoda. Že v tem se simbolno kaže njegova povezovalna moč, kakor nakazuje že naslov simpozija: *Hieronymus noster*, naš Hieronim. Želim, da bi nas v tam času inflacije besede Hieronim kot *philologos*, ljubitelj besede, navdihoval, da bi v Besedi prepoznali nekaj, kar je ljubezni vrednega.« Dekan Filozofske fakultete dr. Roman Kuhar je podobno ovrednotil pomen Hieronimovega dela v prizmi premoščanja meja, povezovanja narodov in odpira vrata k novim svetovom, pogledom in izkušnjam. »Prevodi so pravzaprav tisto, kar ta svet omogoča in ga poganja naprej; Hieronimov doprinos k temu je neprecenljiv.«

Tematski blok, ki ga sestavljajo izbrani prispevki s simpozija, v svoji raznovrstni celoti seveda ne podaja sinteznih odgovorov na velika vprašanja o vlogi Svetega pisma za teologijo *et vice versa*, saj se avtorji Hieronimovemu delu posvečajo z vidikov, ki so tudi metodološko zelo različni. A po drugi strani ta raznolikost raziskovalnih področij – od razmerja do klasikov, odmevov v liturgični tradiciji, zgodovinskih in arheoloških vidikov meništva pa vse do ožje teoloških in eksegetskih tem – dokazuje pomen Stridončana in njegove zapuščine, ki še po toliko stoletjih vznemirja tako akademske raziskovalce kot širše občinstvo. To so dokazali tudi številni dogodki, organizirani v jubilejnem letu.

Vsem velja povabilo papeža Frančiška, ki ga je zapisal v apostolskem pismu ob 1600-letnici smrti svetega Hieronima septembra 2020, Gorečnost za Sveto pismo (*Scripturae Sacrae Affectus*, zbirka Cerkevni dokumenti 164), da bi ljubili, kar je ljubil Hieronim. Slovenci smo zaradi zanesljive bližine njegovega rojstnega kraja Stridon, katerega natančna ubikacija je vsaj za zdaj še vedno zavita v meglo poza-be, k temu še posebej nagovorjeni.

One of the main characteristics of the research on Jerome's work is interdisciplinarity. In his address on an opening evening, the then President of SAZU, Academician Dr Tadej Bajd, emphasized the exceptional role of the Latin language in the formation of the educated person, as it promotes multilingualism, which is so desirable in today's academic sphere. At the same time, it provides an entry into Roman literature, philosophy, law, as well as helping in other scientific disciplines, such as computer programming languages. Dr Robert Petkovšek, Dean of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Ljubljana, mentioned at the opening the greatness of Jerome's personality and work, which unites and does not divide: all Western culture is also based on his translation of the Bible. »There is not, and never has been, a person in our tradition who has not at least heard a sentence or a word from Jerome's translation. This is already a symbolic indication of his power to connect, as the symposium's title suggests: *Hieronymus noster*, our Jerome. In this time of the inflation of words, I wish that Jerome, as a *philologos*, a lover of the Word, may inspire us to recognize in the Word something that is worthy of love.« The Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Dr Roman Kuhar, similarly evaluated the importance of Jerome's work in the prism of bridging borders, connecting peoples and opening doors to new worlds, perspectives and experiences. »Translations are, in fact, what make this world possible and propel it forward; Jerome's contribution to this is invaluable.«

The present thematic issue of *Bogoslovni vestnik (Theological Quarterly)* encompasses selected papers on St. Jerome *lato sensu* concerning theology and Biblical exegesis, presented at the *Hieronymus noster* international symposium, which took place between October 23 and 27 in Ljubljana, at the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, under the honorary patronage of Mr Borut Pahor, the President of the Republic of Slovenia. Over 110 participants and the scholars present discussed a wide range of topics, from the relations between Christian and Pagan classical literature, liturgy, historical and archaeological aspects of monasticism to the more strictly theological and exegetical questions. While Jerome himself got involved in different doctrinal polemics from time to time (for instance, in the Meletian schism in Antioch or the Origenistic controversy in Jerusalem), he is not primarily known theologian who would have resolved difficult doctrinal questions. As Stefan Rebenich has written, Jerome »preferred polemical simplification to subtle distinction, doctrinal conservatism to fresh ideas, rhetorical display to substantial argument, learned allusions to discursive ramifications, dogmatic reassurance to intellectual receptivity, and the authoritative decision to independent judgment.« Nevertheless, Jerome's weakness as a theologian was more than successfully substituted by his extraordinary work as a Biblical scholar, translating and commenting on the Holy Scriptures. The variety of present papers, now offered to a broader audience, reveals this complicated relationship between theology and exegesis in his work.

In the following, we also present some concluding remarks, *Invitatiuncula*, written by Dr David Movrin as a final summarizing speech of the symposium:

First, I am pleased to announce that we have reached the research goal around which the symposium was organized. The subtler and more perceptive among you may have noticed the hidden tension bubbling under the surface. The fric-

tion between the two prevailing regional orthodoxies involves the ubication of Jerome's birthplace, Stridon – described by Jerome himself as »oppidum Stridonis, quod a Gothis eversum, Dalmatiae quondam Pannoniaeque confinium fuit«, »a town which, before the Goths destroyed it, had been on the border between Dalmatia and Pannonia«. It is an age-old and vexed question, and studies such as the one titled *Natale solum magni ecclesiae doctoris sancti Hieronymi in rud-eribus Stridonis occultatum*, published back in 1752, have barely scratched the surface of its complexity. To make a long story short, there are two local schools of thought. One of them tends to pinpoint this elusive settlement among the hills that we visited yesterday. The competing doctrine claims that the translator of the Vulgate was born further South. It would be unfair and indeed patronizing to look for nationalist motivations in what is surely nothing else but a pure academic thirst for knowledge. However, it is true that by a bizarre geographical coincidence, the proponents of the former camp tend to come from the northern side of the Slovenian-Croatian border, while the adherents of the latter faction tend to hail from its southern side.

It took three days of intense and frequently passionate deliberations – and a neutral scholar from across the pond – to provide a convincing solution. I am happy to report that after centuries, scholarly consensus has finally emerged. In an inspiring lecture, Craig Caldwell pointed out a telling description that Jerome himself provided about his birthplace. Perhaps it makes sense to repeat it for the benefit of those who were at the parallel sessions. In his seventh letter, addressed to Chromatius, Jovinus, and Eusebius, the Stridonian states: *In mea enim patria, rusticitatis vernacula, deus venter est et de die vivitur: sanctior est ille, qui ditior est*. Let me attempt a translation: »My country is enslaved to rustic behaviour, their god is their belly, and the richer you are, the more saintly you are held to be.« We discussed this with a Croatian colleague, and we both realized that Jerome's eloquent and precise description fits, like a glove, both Slovenian and Croatian milieu. There is no need to exclude anybody. Both countries should share the right to own these proud Latin phrases and to use them self-referentially on their promotional materials as they see fit.

Secondly, these last several days made us realize that it still takes a village to raise a child, as the African proverb has it. Even more so if that child is a problem child, such as an academic symposium; it has been almost two years now since we started organizing, and some of you are familiar with the phrase »terrible twos«. We feel indebted to several friends for helping us out with our unruly toddler, even if some of them could not be here today. Among them are Rajko Bratož, Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts; Alenka Cedilnik, History Department, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana; Antonio Davila Perez, Department of Classical Philology, University of Cádiz – Europa Renascens International Network; Laurence Mellerin, Institut des Sources chrétiennes (HISOMA-UMR 5189 research centre); Dominic Moreau, DANUBIUS Project (Université de Lille/HALMA-UMR 8164 research centre); colleagues at the Department of Classical Philology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana; Elżbieta M. Olechowska, Faculty of Artes

Liberales, University of Warsaw; Katalin Szende, Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University, Vienna; Marjeta Šašel Kos, Institute of Archaeology, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana; Miran Špelič and Rafko Valenčič, Faculty of Theology, University of Ljubljana. There is, however, one very young village elder that bore the lion's share of responsibilities and deserves to be mentioned outside of the alphabet. Jan Dominik Bogataj, Victorinianum Patristic Institute, Faculty of Theology, University of Ljubljana, was the symposium's secretary and the unstoppable *spiritus movens* behind much of what we have seen during these days. We hope that this applause will convey some of our gratitude to all of them for their fantastic service.

Speaking of African proverbs, this is perhaps the time to mention the story of Cornelia Africana, the mother of the Gracchi. You all know about her friends who questioned Cornelia about her mode of dress and personal adornment. They were surprised by her lack of jewellery and attire, far more simple and understated than usual for a woman of her rank and station. Valerius Maximus describes how Cornelia calmly pointed towards her children and said: »These are my jewels«. This symposium would not have been possible without our incredible students, who made sure everything ran smoothly. Even more, they did it with flair, panache, and style. I do not dare to mention any names because there were many on several locations at once; my capabilities of bilocation are still limited, and I would undoubtedly miss and forget some. I promise that I will get the list and thank them in person. For the time being, please join me in a particularly warm round of applause and perhaps stomping of feet: as Cornelia Africana would say – *haec ornamenta sunt nostra*.

Finally, we all want to thank you, the participants. It was your extraordinary response that made the experience of these past few days possible, and we felt that you had brought the warmth of community and the light of knowledge. I am not even sure that this is a mere worn-out and hackneyed metaphor. Do not wait for the 1700th anniversary. Send back some of your illuminating research before that – and the next time you will be in the region, do not be strangers. You will always be welcomed with open arms.

Aemonae seu Labaci, 26/10/2019.

Jan Dominik Bogataj, Rajko Bratož, Alenka Cedilnik,
David Movrin, Miran Špelič and Rafko Valenčič,
uredniki posebne številke / guest editors



Jan Dominik Bogataj OFM

PREOBRAŽENI

Zgodnjekrščanska teologija
Kristusovega spremenjenja na gori

Predgovor Gorazd Kocijančič



Jan Dominik Bogataj
**Preobraženi: zgodnjekrščanska teologija
Kristusovega spremenjenja na gori**

V monografiji avtor predstavi grško in bizantinsko umevanje evangeljskega dogodka Jezusove spremenitve na gori in ga umesti v širši grški religijski koncept metamorfoze. Temu doda svojsko latinsko tradicijo na zahodu in z vzhodne strani še semitski element iz sirskega izročila, potem pa predstavi tudi vizijo za sodobno teološko in filozofsko misel. Dogodek in njegovo patristično interpretacijo namreč umesti v tri teološke »poddisciplin«: kristologijo, soteriologijo in eshatologijo. Bogato poznavanje patrističnih besedil in prodorno razmišljanje mu je omogočilo, da je prišel do poglobljenega uvida v zapleteno dinamiko bizantinske, latinske in sirske patristične misli, ki je vredna ne le študija, pač pa tudi umestitve v sodobno miselno avanturo.

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Leszek Misiarczyk

Impassibilitas et impeccantia: Jerome's Misunderstanding of Impassibility and Sinlessness in Evagrius Ponticus

Impassibilitas et impeccantia: Hieronimovo napačno razumevanje brezstrastnosti in brezgrešnosti pri Evagriju Pontskem

Abstract: Jerome understood impassibility like Stoics as a complete lack of any emotion or desire. He mistakenly identified impassibility with *impeccantia* accusing Evagrius of making man a cold stone or a sinless God. Evagrius, however, did not identify impassibility with the state of modern apathy or insensitivity or as a lack of desires and impulses, but as a liberation from the passionate thoughts: gluttony, impurity, avarice, sadness, wrath, and acedia. Jerome did not read Evagrius texts in original Greek and had second-hand information about his teaching, so he misunderstood his concept of *impassibilitas et impeccantia*.

Keywords: Jerome, sin, Stoicism, emotions, *apatheia*

Povzetek: Hieronimovo razumevanje brezstrastnosti (*impassibilitas*) sledi stoiškemu, to pomeni: odsotnost čustev ali želja. Brezstrastnost je zmotno enačil z brezgrešnostjo (*impeccantia*), pri tem pa je Evagrija obtožil poskusa, da želi iz človeka narediti brezsrčen kamen ali za brezgrešnega Boga. Evagrius brezstrastnosti namreč ni razumel v smislu sodobnega pojma apatije ali brezčutnosti, pa tudi ne v smislu umanjkanja želja in dražljajev, marveč kot osvoboditev od strastnih misli: požrešnost, nečistost, pohlep, žalost, jeza in akedija. Hieronim ni bral Evagrijevih besedil v izvorni grščini, ampak je imel o njih zgolj informacije iz druge roke, zaradi česar je napačno razumel pojma brezstrastnosti in brezgrešnosti.

Ključne besede: Hieronim, greh, stoicizem, čustva, apatija

1. Jerome's Polemic with Pelagianism

If we want to understand Jerome's polemic with Evagrius correctly, we should put it into the broader context of his polemic with Pelagianism. Over the centuries, this dispute, known as the 'Pelagian Controversy', has been seen as centrally concerned with the nature of grace (Von Harnack 1899, 170; Evans 1968, 7; Bonner 1972, 1; Rees 1991, 54), while other issues have been put aside. Gerald Bonner has correctly stated that »historians and theologians have too long tended to form their image of Pelagianism by looking through Augustinian spectacles« (1992, 48). As a result of that, 'Pelagianism' has been passed down over time as a centralized and organized movement aimed to deceive Christians on the correct understanding of grace (Brown 2000, 346–349). In recent decades, scholars have begun to realize that in using the term 'Pelagian Controversy', some patristic authors are much more diverse and nuanced than previous generations have allowed. Bonner rightly claimed that »we can no longer think of the Pelagians as a constituting a party with a rigidly-defined doctrinal system but rather as a mixed group united by certain theological principles which nevertheless left the individual free to develop his own opinions upon particular topics« (1970, 31; Teske 1997, 11; Rousseau 2009, 14). Bonner, in 1972, had already distinguished between the theological heresy and the historical controversy: »Dogmatic theologians use the word Pelagianism /.../ to describe the heresy which dispenses with any need for divine grace and denies any transmission of Original Sin.« Instead, as a historical controversy, 'Pelagianism' would be »an ascetic movement within the Christian Church during the late fourth and early fifth centuries, a movement composed of disparate elements which came, over time, to be associated under the name of the British theologian and exegete Pelagius« (1972, 1; 2018; Bugiulescu 2018).

Michael Rackett, in his dissertation entitled *Sexuality and Sinlessness*, rightly pointed out that the central theological principle of the Pelagian controversy was not so much an affirmation of human free will or denial of original sin as it was the affirmation of the possibility of sinlessness (2002a, 251–253). Even if Rackett fell into the same reductionist trap as previous scholars by replacing the central question of grace with the central question of sinlessness, nevertheless, he rightly drew the attention of scholars to the idea of sinlessness. Stuart Squires rightly follows Rackett in affirming that we should recognize sinlessness as one of the most important themes for Pelagius and his followers but refuses to claim that this is the heart of the matter (2013, 8). Even if sinlessness is not a central and crucial issue within the Pelagian controversy, it is still one of the movement's central ideas. Jerome's accuse of Evagrius confirms that sinlessness and impassibility, strictly connected with it, were seen as part of Pelagianism.

We know that Jerome, like Cassian, was one of the essential ascetic writers in the Western Church in the 4th–5th century. However, Elisabeth Clark, claiming that Jerome viewed the Pelagian debate as a »continuation of both the ascetic and the Origenist controversies« (1992, 221), is incorrect. If there is no doubt regarding the fact that Jerome considered Pelagianism as a continuation of the Origenist

controversy, it seems that he did not see this debate as an ascetic controversy. It is surprising that in his *Epistula* 130.16, which is one of his most essential discourses on consecrated life, there is no connection between asceticism and Pelagius. In this text, Jerome warns Demetrias against the danger of Origenism, especially the doctrine of the pre-existence of souls, but does not accuse Pelagius of distorting ascetic teaching (Squires 2013, 85–109). We do not know why: maybe because he did not notice any danger for the ascetic life in Pelagius' writings or because he thought it would be easier to accuse Pelagius of distorting the Gospel by introducing the corrupting influence of philosophy. However, in any case, his ascetic preoccupations are curiously absent. There is no doubt that Jerome detected the influence of Origen on Pelagius as the most important and most dangerous. Thus, when he accused Evagrius of proclaiming impassibility and sinlessness, he did so not because he was convinced that Evagrius as a monk distorted ascetic doctrine with his ideas, but because as an Origenist, he deviated from orthodox theological teaching as did his master. In other words, Jerome's criticism of Evagrius is strangely based not on ascetical principles but theological ones. Now let us start the detailed analysis of Jerome's texts which will confirm that perspective.

2. Jerome's Criticism of Evagrius

Epistula 133 *Ad Ctesifontem* is the third text written against Pelagius in 414, but it is also chronologically the first text in which Evagrius is mentioned. Jerome refutes Pelagius' denial of original sin, pointing out that he has drawn it partly from philosophers and partly from heretics. Quoting Is 14,13-14 he adds that it is the greatest presumption to claim not only likeness to God but equality to Him and so to compress the poisonous doctrines of all heretics which in turn flow from the statements of the philosophers, particularly Pythagoras and Zeno, the founder of the Stoic school. The Stoics affirm that it is possible to root out of the human mind what they call ,passions' (πάθη) – all vice may be destroyed roots and branches in man by meditation on virtue and constant practice of it. To maintain such a doctrine is to take man's nature from him, forget that he is constituted of the body and soul, and substitute mere wishes for sound teaching. Jerome refers to Rom 7,24, where St. Paul affirms that nobody can free man from the body of this death, then to Vergil (*Aen.* 6.733–734) and Horace (*Sat.* 1.3.68–69), who confirms that we cannot escape these feelings. He also quotes Tertullian (*Adversus Hermogenem* 9), who said that »the philosophers are the patriarchs of the heretics«. Jerome draws a powerful argument from Rom 7,19, in which the Apostle tells us that he has no power to do what he wishes. He quotes many different biblical passages affirming human weakness and the impossibility of living without sin (Rom 11,32; 3,23; Eccl 7,20; Prov 20,9). The heretics inspired by Greek philosophers say that a man may be ,without sin' and they describe this state by the Greek word ἀνάμαρτος. After that, Jerome sets forth the names of heretics affirming that doctrine: Manichaeus and Priscillian from Spain. These heretics have affinities with Gnosticism

which may be traced to the impious teaching of Basilides, who insisted that without knowledge of the law, it is impossible to avoid sin. Moreover, in this context, we find the attack on Evagrius:

»Evagrius of Ibera in Pontus who sends letters to virgins and monks and among others to her whose name bears witness to the blackness of her perfidy (that is Melania), has published a book of maxims on apathy, or, as we should say, impassivity or imperturbability; a state in which the mind ceases to be agitated and – to speak simply – becomes either a stone or a God. His work is widely read, in the East in Greek and the West in a Latin translation made by his disciple Rufinus. He has also written a book that professes to be about monks and includes many not monks at all he declares to have been Origenists and have certainly been condemned by the bishops. I mean Ammonius, Eusebius, Euthymius, Evagrius himself, Horus, Isidorus, and many others whom it would be tedious to enumerate.« (Hier., *Ep.* 133.3)¹

Later on, Jerome states that if we would like to trace other masters of this heresy, we should go to Origen, who, commenting Ps 16,7, »My reins also instruct me in the night season«, affirmed that when a holy man has reached perfection, he is accessible even at night from human infirmity and is not tempted by evil thoughts. This is also the second position of Jovinian that »the devil cannot tempt persons baptized with water and spirit« (Hier., *Adv. Iovin.* 2.1). Jerome adds that if the arguments of these people and Pelagius were true, men would have no external need for God's grace to avoid sin. Therefore, there is no need to fast or any other form of self-restraint. The Pelagians argued that if the human will require external support, it ceased to be free will and criticized Christians for destroying the free will. To save human freedom, we must admit that we are no longer dependent upon God. Jerome tried to convince Ctesifont that human free will requires the help of God's grace. If in the Holy Scriptures many are called righteous, at the same time, Scripture clearly says that they have committed a lot of errors and sins before their complete conversion to God.

The same idea is repeated in *Commentary on Jeremiah 4* when Jerome mentions that while he started commenting on the book of the prophet in Bethlehem, there suddenly erupted the heresy of Pythagoras and Zeno regarding ἀπαθεία and ἀναμαρτησία, that is *inpassibilitatis et inpeccantiae*. It has been developed in the writings of Origen, his disciples Evagrius Ponticus, and Jovinian. This heresy became known not only in the East but also in the West and some islands like Sicily

¹ »Evagrius ponticus hiborita, qui scribit ad uirgines, scribit ad monachos, scribit ad eam, cuius nomen nigredinis testatur perfidiae tenebras, edidit librum et sententias peri apatheias, quam nos ‚inpassibilitatem’ uel ‚inperturbationem’ possumus dicere, quando numquam animus ulla cogitatione et uitio commouetur et – ut simpliciter dicam – uel saxum uel deus est. Huius libros per orientem graecos et interpretante discipulo eius rufino latinos plerique in occidente lectitant. Qui librum quoque scripsit quasi de monachis multos que in eo enumerat, qui numquam fuerunt et quos fuisse describit origenistas et ab episcopis damnatos esse non dubium est, ammonium uidelicet et eusebium et euthymium in ipsium euagrium, or quoque et isidorum et multos alios, quos enumerare taedium est.« The English translations are cited according to the Fremantle's translation in the *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* series. Latin text follow the Hilberg's CSEL critical edition.

and Rhodes; it stained many people and has grown from day to day because heretics teach it in secret and deny it publicly (*dum secreto docent et publice negant*) (Hier., *Praef. in Hieremiam* 4).

Finally, Jerome made his total onslaught in *Dialogus adversus Pelagianos* written in 415–419. It is a Socratic dialogue between two fictional characters Atticus (Jerome's voice) and Critobulus (Pelagius' voice), where he developed the arguments presented in *Epistula* 133. Benoît Jeanjean's claim that *Epistula* 133 and the *Adv. Pelag.* »constituent un ensemble cohérent de textes qui présentent un objectif commun - réfuter la thèse pélagienne de l'impeccantia« (1999, 387–388) is not entirely accurate. In fact, in *Ep.* 133 and *Adv. Pelag.* 1–2 Jerome states that one may not be sinless, but in *Adv. Pelag.* 3, probably under Augustine's influence, he curiously departs from his previous statements adding that one may be sinless due to individual efforts. However, he does not allow this sinlessness to remain a permanent state because no matter how strong the will or how few temptations are, one may not avoid sin for the entirety of one's life but only for a 'short time'. Jerome did not allow that in *Adv. Pelag.* 1; 2. This change at the end of *Adv. Pelag.* 3 stems from a rejection of Augustine's position on sinlessness. Jerome read in Augustine's work a theology that he considered too pessimistic about the human condition. He felt the need to offer a theological position that attributed more agency to the individual to counteract the limitations that Augustine placed on the human will because of original sin. In comparison, it may seem to be an exaggeration to call him an optimist, the *Adv. Pelag.* are, by Jerome's standards, relatively equilibrated. This temperate position resulted from his rejection of Augustine on one extreme and, of course, Pelagius on the other (Squires 2013, 95–96). In his *Ep.* 133 and *Adv. Pelag.* 1–2, while he rejected Pelagius' understanding of grace, as Augustine had done, he saw free will as possessing more agency than did Augustine (*Ep.* 133.5).

Jerome's primary weapon of attack on Pelagius' theory of sinlessness was to paint him as an intellectual descendent of heterodox Christians who infected Christianity with non-Christian ideas (Rebenich 1992, 219). In the Prologue to *Adv. Pelag.* he repeats once again the same arguments he presented in *Ep.* 133:

»After writing the letter to Ctesiphon, in which I replied to the questions propounded, I received frequent expostulations from the brethren, who wanted to know why I any longer delayed the promised work in which I undertook to answer all the subtleties of the preachers of impassibility (*apatheia*). For everyone knows what the contention of the Stoics and Peripatetics was, that is, the old Academy, some of them asserted that πάθη, which we may call emotions, such as sorrow, joy, hope, fear, can be thoroughly eradicated from the minds of men; others that their power can be broken, that they can be governed and restrained, as unmanageable horses are held in check by peculiar kinds of bits. Tullius has explained their views in the *Tusculan Disputations*, and Origen, in his *Stromata*, endeavours to blend them with ecclesiastical truth. I pass over Manichæus, Priscillianus, Evagrius of Iborra, Jovinianus, and the heretics found throughout almost the whole of Syria, who, by a perversion of the

import of their name, are commonly called Massalians, in Greek, Euchites, all of whom hold that it is possible for human virtue and human knowledge to attain perfection, and arrive, I will not say merely at a likeness to, but equality with God; and who go the length of asserting that, when once they have reached the height of perfection, even sins of thought and ignorance are impossible for them. /.../ Origen is peculiar in maintaining on the one hand that human nature cannot pass through life without sin, and on the other, that it is possible for a man, when he turns to better things, to become so strong that he sins no more.« (Hier., *Adv. Pelag. Prologus*)²

Jerome mentioned several men whom he held responsible, either directly or indirectly, for attempting to corrupt the Church, such as the New Academics, Peripatetics, Gnostics, Basilides, Priscillian, Evagrius, Xystus, Messalians, Mani, Arians, and Marcion (Hier., *Ep.* 133.1–3; *Adv. Pelag.* 1.1.19–20). He spent much time and worked to link Pelagius with the Stoics, Jovinian, Rufinus, and, most importantly, Origen (3.15; 1.2; 3.19). He felt that if he could connect Pelagius' idea of sinlessness to Origen and then back to Greek philosophy, he would discredit his opponent and win (Elm 1997, 311–318). While all scholars agree that it was absurd of him to link Pelagius with the New Academics, Peripatetics, Gnostics, Basilides, Priscillian, Messalians, Mani, Arians, and Marcion, a disagreement has arisen about the influence that the Stoics (Cavallera 1922, 1; 323; Ferguson 1952, 78; Brown 2000, 368), Evagrius, Xystus, Jovinian (Duval 2003, 284–365; Hunter 2007, 259–268), Rufinus (Kelly 1975, 315–316), and Origen (Bostock 1999, 385–386) had on Pelagius.

Jerome offers a definition of sinlessness that he sees operating in Pelagius' works which, he believes, is rooted in Stoicism (Cavallera 1921, 127). According to the Stoics, he says, every individual experienced passions (πάθη, *perturbatio*) that must be removed through »meditation (*meditatio*) on virtue and constant practice (*exercitatio*) of it« (Hier., *Ep.* 133.1). In *Praefatio in Heremiam propheta* 4 he says that ἀναμάρτητος is a synonym for ἀπάθεια and in Latin *sine peccato*. He associates sinlessness with a pagan philosophical origin (Jeanjean 1999, 395–397; Rackett 2002a, 283–284). We know that the term ἀπάθεια was a philosophical one which later was adapted and used by theologians such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen,

² »Scripta jam ad Ctesiphontem epistola, in qua ad interrogata respondi, crebra fratrum expostulatio fuit, cur promissum opus ultra differrem, in quo pollicitus sum me ad cunctas eorum qui ἀπάθειαν praedicant, quaestiunculas responsurum. Nulli enim est dubium, quin Stoicorum et Peripateticorum, hoc est, veteris Academiae ista contentio sit, quod alii eorum asserant πάθη, quas nos *perturbationes* possumus dicere: aegritudinem, gaudium, spem, timorem eradicari et extirpari posse de mentibus hominum: alii frangi eas, regi atque moderari, et quasi infrenes equos quibusdam lupatis coerceri. Quorum sententias et Tullius in Tusculanis disputationibus explicat, et Origenes ecclesiasticae veritati in *Stromatibus* suis miscere conatur, ut praeteream Manichaeum, Priscillianum, Euagrium Iberitam [Al. Hiboritam et Hyperboritam], Jovianianum, et totius pene Syriae haereticos quos sermone gentili διεστραμμένως Massalianos Graece Εὐχίτας vocant; quorum omnium ista sententia est, posse ad perfectionem, et non dicam ad similitudinem, sed aequalitatem Dei humanam virtutem et scientiam pervenire, ita ut asserant se ne cogitatione quidem et ignorantia, cum ad consummationis culmen ascenderint, posse peccare /.../. Illud autem Origenis proprium est, et impossibile esse humanam a principio usque ad mortem non peccare naturam: et rursus esse possibile, cum se aliquis ad meliora converterit, ad tantam fortitudinem pervenire ut ultra non peccet.« (Hier., *Adv. Pelag. Prologus* [PL 23,517–519]) The same idea is repeated in 1.26; 2.6; 3.3; 3.13.

and Evagrius (Grovec 1973, 312; Nieścior 1996–97; Stewart 1998, 41; Driscoll 1999, 157; Tobon 2010). Jerome is convinced that Pelagius received his understanding of sinlessness from Evagrius, but modern scholars rightly point out that he did not understand what Evagrius meant by ἀπάθεια (Hier., *Ep.* 133.3). Driver, for example, claims that his »description of apatheia is little more than a caricature, and his supposed reliance on the ancient philosophers shows that Jerome had little understanding of their views« (2002, 303; Bell 1987, 148; Kelly 1975, 315; Rackett 2002b, 231; Somos 1999, 372; Colish 1990, 78; Casiday 2002, 370–372). Although the relationship between Pelagius and the Stoics has yet to be explored, Driver rightly rejected his argument of the equivalence of *sine peccato* and ἀπάθεια.

Furthermore, even if Jerome had quite a clear understanding of the Stoic definition of ἀπάθεια, he did not know the writings of Evagrius well enough to realize how the monk of Pontus had adopted the term for Christian usage by making it a means towards the end of a prayerful connection to God. At least, Cassian understood Evagrius better than Jerome (Rebenich 1992, 67–71). Both Cassian and Jerome rejected Pelagius' idea of sinlessness, but they did so from opposing positions. Cassian stood firmly on an Evagrian foundation while Jerome rejected Pelagius from an anti-Evagrian position. For Cassian, Pelagius was, we can say, »not Evagrian enough«, while Jerome thought that Pelagius was ,too Evagrian' (Squires 2013, 141–143). It was irrelevant that Pelagius may never have read Evagrius. What was of central importance was their relationships with Greek philosophy and the Christian appropriation of that philosophy. These relationships coloured their rejection of Pelagius. Cassian, with his dependence on Evagrius and his praise of the ascetic practices of the Egyptian fathers, constructed a definition of sinlessness that echoed the σκοπός of the desert monks. With his scorn for the monks of Nitria and their appropriation of Greek philosophy through Origen and Evagrius, Jerome constructed a definition that (indirectly) assailed those he had once praised. Furthermore, Jerome's equation of sinlessness with Stoic ἀπάθεια was just as misleading. Although Pelagius most likely had been influenced by certain aspects of Stoicism, Jerome's unfairness assumed that Pelagius, Origen, and Evagrius understood sinlessness through a Stoic perspective.

In the context of a dispute with Jovinian and the Pelagian controversy, Jerome understands the Greek term ἀπάθεια either as a state of complete absence of any movements in the human soul or as a kind of the divine state (*ut simpliciter dicam, vel saxum vel deus est*). In contemporary research on Evagrius, thanks to the discovery of many of his texts preserved in Greek under the name of Nil of Ancyra and a Syrian translation of his writings, we can reconstruct (probably better than Jerome himself) his understanding of impassibility, which was quite different than what is attributed to him by Jerome.

3. Impassibility and Sinlessness, According to Evagrius

Evagrius saw the spiritual life as πρακτική, and γνωστική (Bunge, 1996; Misiarczyk 2007, 117–184). The first stage is the fight against eight principle λογισμοί: glut-

tony (γαστριμαργία), impurity (πορνεία), avarice (φιλαργυρία), sadness (λύπη), anger (ὀργή), acedia (ἀκηδία), vainglory (κενοδοξία) and pride (ὑπερηφανία) (Stewart 2005; Misiarczyk 2007, 185–375; Brakke 2013, 213). Impassibility is the state of the soul reached after the victory over the first five λογισμοί, and it is at the exact moment the gate to γνωστική, the stage of the knowledge of God when the monk is attacked by vainglory and pride. Evagrius, from one side, defines impassibility as uprooting or removing all passions from the soul, from the other as just limiting their impact. Scholars proposed then that when Evagrius talked about uprooting or removing all passions, he had in mind the monastic life and speaking to beginners; he invited them to limit their impact (Joest 1993; Nieścior 1996–97; 1998; Driscoll 1999; Tobon 2010a; 2010b). Therefore, impassibility would not mean an absolute lack of passionate thoughts but a short and harmless time of staying in the soul without any consent of the will. This, however, clearly stands in contradiction with other texts of Evagrius, in which he defined impassibility as total liberation from the passions. The category of moderation and gradation can explain Evagrius' apparent ambivalence in the definition of impossibility. For the monk of Pontus, passion is the immoderate use of impulses, desires, or pleasure in general. The first degree of impassibility is to be free from this immoderate and incompatible use with their nature. This is the negative aspect of the whole process, i.e., freeing oneself from the improper use of an ontically good sphere, and this state would be an imperfect impassibility.

On the other hand, the second degree would be reserved for those advanced in spiritual life. It would include a positive aspect of the process, i.e., using impulses and desires in the right way, i.e., according to the measure determined by the ontic and moral order established by God as well as the individual choices of man, and following their nature, e.g., lust as a desire for virtue. Here we find the first fundamental difference between Evagrius and Jerome, who identified impassibility with the complete lack of emotion or desire in the Stoic sense. As we have already seen earlier, Jerome saw the sources of both Arianism and Pelagianism in Origen, and he interpreted the teaching of Evagrius about impassibility from the perspective of these assumptions. He mistakenly identified impassibility with *impeccantia* or *impassibilitas*, accusing Evagrius of wanting to make a man a cold stone or a sinless God (*vel saxum vel deus est*). As we have seen, Evagrius did not identify impassibility with the state of modern apathy, insensitivity, or - psychologically speaking - with denial or repression of feelings and emotions. If he claimed that love is the daughter of impassibility, he assumed that there was still some emotional component in that state. According to Evagrius, impassibility consists in freeing oneself from the passion because it is impossible to free oneself from the desires and impulses which belong to human nature. Either Jerome did not understand this subtle distinction, or the teachings of Evagrius had already reached him in some changed form since he identified impassibility with a will to free oneself from these natural desires and impulses.

While on the one hand, the lack of distinction between desires, impulses, and passions led to the identification of impassibility with indifference, i.e. an attempt

to make a man of stone; on the other, the identification of passion with sin led to the understanding of impassibility as sinlessness, i. e., a divine state. It is worth remembering that Jerome used the term *impeccantia*, which, as noted by G. Bunge in his time, meant the Pelagian teaching about the possibility of achieving a state of sinlessness on man's strength alone without the help of God's grace (Bunge 1986). Therefore, he applied the Pelagian ideas to the Evagrius concept of impassibility, seeing in it the influence of Origen and the sources of the Pelagian heresy. The absurdity of this accusation becomes evident if we remember that Evagrius in his teaching on impassibility was inspired more by Clement, not Origen, who used the Greek term ἀπάθεια very rarely. Jerome emphasized it, not fully understanding the teachings of Evagrius on this subject, mixing it with the Stoic ideal of dispassion and the Pelagian doctrine of sinlessness. Pelagians themselves, by identifying ἀπάθεια with *impeccantia*, created much confusion so that the later Christian authors such as John Cassian avoided it at all costs, replacing it with *puritas cordis* (Nieścior 1996; 1997; Joest 1993; Driscoll 1999; Stewart 2003). In the spiritual doctrine of Evagrius, however, impassibility meant neither the Stoic lack of any desire or insensitivity nor sinlessness understood in a Pelagian way. There is no doubt that, according to the monk of Pontus, ascetic practice, although it is a spiritual method of purifying a passionate part of the soul, remains ineffective without God's grace. Impassibility, according to Evagrius, would be a liberation from evil passions, i.e., from the use of desires and impulses against their nature and not their lack at all. Evagrius defines such a state as »the health of the soul« (*Practicus* 56), and if we were to describe the use of desires and impulses contrary to nature, impassibility would be a liberation from such improper use. Such a state is possible for man here on earth, but it is never absolutely permanent. This impassibility, however, is not achieved by shortcuts or voluntarism but by slowly and gradually fighting the first five passionate thoughts. It is a state, or better-said process, subjected to a specific gradation that develops parallel with the ascetic efforts. Different degrees of impassibility is achieved after victory over each passionate thought.

As we have seen, Evagrius' concepts of impassibility and sinlessness are more subtle than what Jerome attributed to him. Different theological and historical contexts, and also a polemical attitude influenced Jerome's interpretation of ἀπάθεια, one of the essential ideas of early Christian monasticism and sowed the seeds of distrust on it in later Latin Christianity.

Abbreviations

Adv. Iovin. – *Adversus Iovinianum*.

Adv. Pelag. – *Adversus Pelagianos*.

Aen. – *Aeneis*.

CSEL – *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*.

Ep. – *Epistula* [Hilberg 1996].

PL – *Patrologia Latina*.

Sat. – *Satirae*.

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Monografije FDI - 25

Christian Gostečnik OFM

regulativna relacijska paradigma ✕ psiho-organski prenos ✕ integrativni model



Nevroznanost in relacijska družinska terapija



Christian Gostečnik

Nevroznanost in relacijska družinska terapija

Relacijski družinski model predpostavlja, da posameznikovi zgodnji odnosi s starši in pomembnimi drugimi, zelo radikalno vplivajo na vse kasnejše pomembne odnose v posameznikovem življenju. Vedno znova si bo izbiral, predvsem intimne partnerje, na osnovi teh zgodnjih izkušenj, ki so globoko vtisnjeni v njegov nezavedni psiho-organski spomin. Relacijska terapija zato skuša, ravno na osnovi sakralnosti intimnih odnosov v sedanosti, preoblikovati stara, še tako travmatična izkustva v odnose, ki osrečujejo.

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Rebecca J. Keller

Jerome, Vigilantius, and the Cults of the Saints

Hieronim, Vigilancij in kult svetnikov

Abstract: While the publication of a new critical edition of Jerome's *Contra Vigilantium* in 2005 has renewed interest in recent years, there remains much work to be done on several issues concerning the text. The argument that Jerome was tacitly endorsing Vigilantius's theological perspective because Jerome did not respond with a clear explanation of his position is not entirely convincing, not least because this argument fails to take into account the genre of the text. Because Jerome's purpose was primarily to attack and undermine the position of Vigilantius, Jerome's doctrine is veiled beneath his scathing rhetoric. This study provides a close reading of *Contra Vigilantium*, considering the genre of the text, Jerome's rhetoric, and its implications. It also examines how Jerome's other works and letters provide insight into Jerome's position in *Contra Vigilantium*, and his understanding of the cults of the saints and relic practices.

Keywords: relics, saints, Jerome, theology, Vigilantius, Victricius

Povzetek: Čeprav je objava nove kritične izdaje Hieronimovega dela *Contra Vigilantium* leta 2005 obnovila zanimanje zanj, ostaja veliko vprašanj v povezavi z njim še vedno odprtih. Argument, da je Hieronim potihem odobral Vigilancijev teološki pogled, ker naj prvi ne bi jasno izrazil svojega lastnega prepričanja, ni povsem prepričljiv, saj premislek te vrste ne upošteva zvrsti besedila. Hieronimov primarni namen sta bila napad in spodkopavanje Vigilancijevega pogleda, zato je svoj nauk zakril pod ostro retoriko. Prispevek ponuja podrobno branje dela *Contra Vigilantium*, pri tem pa upošteva zvrst besedila, Hieronimovo retoriko in njene implikacije. Analizira tudi, kako druga Hieronimova dela in pisma pomagajo k razumevanju *Contra Vigilantium* in na sploh njegovega pojmovanja čaščenja svetnikov in relikvij.

Ključne besede: relikvije, svetniki, Hieronim, teologija, Vigilancij, Viktricij

1. Introduction

1600 years after Jerome wrote his *Contra Vigilantium*, allegedly in a single night in Bethlehem, a new critical edition of the text was published (CCSL 79C, vi.).¹ Of all Jerome's works, the *Contra Vigilantium* has been deemed his rudest, most abusive, most violent, and least structured polemic (Lössl 2005, 100). Thus, it seems hardly a credible source for reconstructing the position of Vigilantius. Nevertheless, the text has been used to promote a view of Vigilantius as a true Christian, a proto-Protestant, over and against the 'paganising' medieval, vulgar Catholicism' of Jerome (100). Of course, this is too simplistic by far, even if one ignores the disparaging use of terms.

Since the *Contra Vigilantium* is the only known source for his thought, much of the scholarly attention given to the text has been focused on recovering the beliefs of Vigilantius. Jerome's position has received little consideration by comparison, and though his *vitae* of the saints Paul, Hilarion, and Malchus have been examined at length, there is little in the scholarly literature that discusses Jerome's doctrine of the cults of the saints specifically.² In his analysis of the *Contra Vigilantium*, one notable scholar argued that Jerome was tacitly endorsing Vigilantius' position because Jerome did not respond with a coherent explanation of his doctrine of the power of the saints or their relics.³ The genre of the text, however, needs to be taken into account. Jerome is not writing a primarily theological treatise, but a personal polemic, an invective, meant to attack and undermine the position and person of Vigilantius, such that Jerome's position is veiled, as it were, under layers of vituperation.⁴

Nor is Jerome engaged in a systematic theology of the cults of the saints.⁵ Jerome is not concerned with defending his own or the Church's beliefs as he is concerned with excoriating Vigilantius. His numerous personal insults make this clear: Jerome calls Vigilantius »insane (*insanum caput*)« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 5), »drunk and drowsy (*ebrius et dormiens*)« (5), »from the stock of tramps and bandits (*de latronum et conuenarum natus est semine*)« (4) »a living dog (*canis uiuens*)« (6), »an inarticulate viper (*elinguis uiperæ*)« (15). He says that Vigilantius »vomit[ed] up [his text] while snoring between hangovers (*quos inter crapulam stertens euomit*)« (3) and even implies that demons possess Vigilantius himself (5).

In order to recover Jerome's thought, we must begin by prying back some of these layers by digging underneath the name-calling and classical allusions.⁶ Then

¹ Translations are based on the work of Amy Oh (2013), with few modifications.

² For Jerome's hagiographical works, see, for example, Coleiro 1957; Gray 2017; Šubr 2014; Weingarten 2005.

³ Indeed, Lössl states, »Jerome reveals little of a positive teaching of his own« (2005, 103) in the *Contra Vigilantium*, and that Jerome »has no real alternative theology to offer to explain this new martyr cult« (2005, 115).

⁴ This is not to say that the *Contra Vigilantium* is Jerome's only polemical work, or that his taste for rhetoric isn't evident in his other writings. Yet it is surprising that Jerome's own doctrine of the cults of the saints as presented in this text has not been the focus of concerted scholarly attention.

⁵ For more on the development of the cults of the saints in Late Antiquity, see Brown 1981 and Wiśniewski 2019.

⁶ For an excellent analysis of the numerous classical allusions Jerome employs throughout the text, see

Jerome's own opinion does emerge, and it looks very different from the opinion he accuses Vigilantius of holding. Jerome's rhetoric carefully identifies himself with apostles, martyrs, and even emperors, thereby claiming their agreement with his orthodox views. In contrast, he paints a portrait of Vigilantius as the heir of a multitude of heretical figures, including Eunomius (8; 10), Montanus (8), and Jovinian (1). In this reconstruction of Jerome's doctrine of the cults of the saints, drawing on the *Contra Vigilantium* and other texts from his vast oeuvre, I shall focus on a few main points, all of which were contentious vis-a-vis Vigilantius: the honor due to saints and martyrs, the location of the souls of the dead and their intercession on behalf of the living, and the efficacy of the relics of the saints.

2. Jerome's Thought on the Saints in *Contra Vigilantium* and Other Works

A letter to Riparius, a presbyter in Gaul, dated 404, gives a preview, as it were, of some of Jerome's rhetorical flourish in dealing with Vigilantius: »You tell me that Vigilantius (whose very name ‚Wakeful‘ is a contradiction: he ought instead to be described as ‚Sleepy‘) has again opened his fetid lips and is pouring forth a torrent of filthy venom upon the relics of the holy martyrs; and that he calls us who cherish them ‚ashmongers‘ and ‚idolaters‘ who pay homage to dead men's bones.«⁷ Jerome proceeds to address the distinction between veneration or honour and worship. To worship (*colere*), to adore (*adorare*), and to serve (*servire*) are inappropriate verbs to describe the glory due to the saints. Rather, Jerome states, »We honour (*honoramus*) the relics of the martyrs in order to adore him whose martyrs they are; we honour the servants so that the honour of the servants may overflow to the Lord.«⁸

This distinction is also found in the *Contra Vigilantium*. In what seems to be a direct quotation from Vigilantius' work, he hints none too subtly that the honour given to the relics of the saints is crossing over into worship: »Why is it necessary not only that you honour (*honorare*) with such great honour, but also that you worship (*adorare*) that ›I don't know what‹ which you revere (*colere*) while carrying it around in a bit of vessel? /.../ Why do you kiss and worship dust wrapped in linen?«⁹ Further, Vigilantius states, »We see that a virtually pagan rite (*ritum gentilium*) has been brought into the church under the pretext of religion.«¹⁰

Oh 2013, 75ff.

⁷ »Ais Uigilantium, qui /.../ hoc uocatur nomine - nam Dormitantius rectius diceretur - os fetidum rursus aperire et putorem spurcissimum contra sanctorum martyrum proferre reliquias et nos, qui eas suscipimus, appellare cinerarios et idololatrās, qui mortuorum hominum ossa ueneremur.« (Hier., *Ep.* 109.1) English translation based on NPNF2.

⁸ »Honoramus autem reliquias martyrum, ut eum cuius sunt martyres, adoremus, honoramus seruos, ut honor seruorum redundet ad dominum.« (Hier., *Ep.* 109.1) See also Oh 2013, 190.

⁹ »Quid necesse est tanto te honore non solum honorare, sed etiam adorare illud nescio quid quod in modico vasculo transferendo colis?... Quid puluerem linteamine circumdatum adorando oscularis?« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 4)

¹⁰ »Prope ritum gentilium videmus sub praetextu religionis introductum in ecclesiis.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 4)

Jerome's response is clothed in his castigation of Vigilantius: »Who, you insane man, has ever worshipped (adoravit) martyrs? Who considered a human being to be God?«¹¹ Jerome's rhetorical tool here serves to render his opponent's arguments ridiculous. He cites the apostolic examples of Paul, Barnabas, and Peter, who refused to be worshipped as gods since »honour was being given to them when it was owed to God.«¹² Jerome further accuses Vigilantius of desiring worship for himself »so that Vigilantius alone, drunk and drowsy, may be worshipped.«¹³

Jerome goes on to defend the practice of relic translation by appealing to the tradition of the church. He mentions the translations of the relics of Andrew, Luke, and Timothy by Emperor Constantius; and the translation of the relics of the prophet Samuel by Emperor Arcadius (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 5). While Jerome's view of Constantius is ambiguous, the point he makes is not: if the emperors treat relics with such honour and respect, how much more ought ordinary people reverence the saints. The people who celebrated the translation of Samuel were worshipping Samuel instead of Christ, Jerome dismisses out of hand with characteristic irony, rendering Vigilantius' claims farcical.¹⁴

Jerome also addresses the location of the souls of the apostles and martyrs, stating, »You say that the souls of the apostles and martyrs have come to rest either in the lap of Abraham, or in a place of refreshment, or under the altar of God and that they are unable to leave their tombs and be present where they wish.«¹⁵ Vigilantius objects to the notion that the souls of the saints could be »multiplied and travel at will along with each fragment of their bodies« (Hunter 1999, 425). Again, Jerome answers with sharp rhetoric: »Will you set down the laws for God?«¹⁶ Quoting Scripture, he refers to the apostles and martyrs, »Of them, it is written: ›They follow the Lamb wherever he goes.‹ If the Lamb is everywhere, then those who are with the Lamb must be believed to be everywhere.«¹⁷ This is one of the most significant positive formulations in the whole *Contra Vigilantium*: Here, Jerome states outright his belief that the saints can be present in places other than those mentioned by Vigilantius. Saints can be present with their remains, and indeed, seem-

¹¹ »Quis enim, o insanum caput, aliquando martyres adoravit? Quis hominem putavit deum?« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 5)

¹² »... sed quod sub gentilitatis errore honor eis deo debitus deferretur.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 5)

¹³ »ut solus Vigilantius ebrius et dormiens adoretur.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 5)

¹⁴ »Are the people of all churches foolish, who went to visit holy relics and received them with as great a joy as if they were seeing a living being in the flesh so that crowds of people might be joined together from Palestine all the way to Chalcedon and resound in one voice in praise of Christ? It *must* have been the case (*videlicet*) that these people adored Samuel instead of Christ - Samuel who was Christ's Levite and prophet.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 5)

¹⁵ »Ais enim uel in sinu Abrahae uel in loco refrigerii uel subter aram dei animas apostolorum et martyrum consedissee nec posse suis tumulis et ubi uoluerint adesse praesentes.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 6) The *sinus Abrahae* and the *locus refrigerii* seem to be synonymous for Jerome.

¹⁶ »Tu deo leges pones /.../?« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 6)

¹⁷ »/.../ de quibus scriptum est: ›Sequuntur agnum quocumque uadit.‹ Si agnus ubique ergo et hi qui cum agno sunt ubique esse credendi sunt.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 6)

ingly without their remains, »everywhere (*ubique*)«. Jerome does not linger on this point, perhaps because it is pretty radical, but it is a point to which I shall return.

Vigilantius also doubts that the dead can intercede on behalf of the living. Jerome writes, »You say in your little pamphlet that while we live, we can pray for one another reciprocally; after we have died, however, one's prayer on behalf of another cannot be heard.«¹⁸ Jerome again points out the absurdity of this position: if the apostles and martyrs can intercede on behalf of the living while they are living, will they not be able to do so once they have achieved »their crowns, their victories, and their triumphs?«¹⁹ »Will they have less power after they have begun their life with Christ?«²⁰ Jerome's defence of this argument is a bit weak here, but the same point can be found in his other works. Throughout his consolatory letters, the Hieronymian position is that the saints are not only present with Christ, but they are also reigning with Christ (O'Connell 1948, 88–89). Indeed, the saints are better able to intercede on behalf of the living now that they are no longer solicitous for themselves.²¹ Another example of this is found at the end of Jerome's account of the life of Paula: for Jerome, Paula is united to Christ by her faith and works, such that she may »more easily obtain« what she asks for (Cain 2010, 128).²² Of course, Paula will ask for petitions on behalf of the living, seeing as she has already attained her reward.

Another critical point, and one that appears not to have been examined in the scholarship on this text, is Jerome's firm belief in the efficacy of relics. Vigilantius seems to object to the signs and miracles occurring at the basilicas of the martyrs because they are superfluous. Where the people are already Christian believers, what need is there for such signs and wonders? »/.../ as if the critical question to answer is for whom they occur, not by what miracle«, Jerome huffs in reply.²³ Turning Vigilantius' own words against him, Jerome answers: »tell me how in the vilest dust and ash, the ›I-don't-know-what‹, there is such a significant presence of signs and power.«²⁴ Jerome dares Vigilantius only to enter the basilicas of the martyrs, where the presence of the saints will cleanse him of the demons which are prompting his attacks on these pious practices.²⁵

¹⁸ »Dicis in libello tuo quod dum uiuimus mutuo pro nobis orare possumus. Postquam autem mortui fuerimus, nullius sit pro alio exaudienda oratio /.../« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 6)

¹⁹ »Si apostoli et martyres adhuc in corpore constituti possunt orare pro ceteris quando de se adhuc debent esse solliciti, quanto magis post coronas, uictorias et triumphos?« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 6)

²⁰ »/.../ et postquam cum Christo esse coeperint, minus ualebunt?« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 6)

²¹ See, for example, Hier., Ep. 75.2 to Theodora on the death of her husband Lucinius: »Sed gaudeas regnare cum Christo /.../ Ille iam securus et uictor te aspicit de excelso et fauet laboranti et iuxta se locum praeparat eodem amore et eadem caritate /.../« »rejoice as well that he now reigns with Christ /.../ Victorious now and free from care he looks down on you from on high and supports you in your struggle, nay more, he prepares for you a place near to himself; for his love and affection towards you are still the same /.../« See also O'Connell 1948, 76.

²² See Hier., Ep. 108.33: »Fides et opera tua Christo te sociant. Praesens facilius, quod postulas, inpetrabis.«

²³ »/.../ quasi nunc hoc quaeratur, quibus fiant, et non qua uirtute fiant.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 10)

²⁴ »/.../ sed responde quomodo in uilissimo puluere et fauilla nescio qua tanta sit signorum uirtutumque praesentia.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 10)

²⁵ »ingredere basilicas martyrum et aliquando purgaberis.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 10)

Jerome confesses his trepidations in defence of the power of relics: »Whenever I am angry and think something evil in my mind, and a phantasm deceives me at night, I do not dare to enter the basilicas of the martyrs.«²⁶ Though Jerome does not elaborate here, it seems that he believes the power and presence of the saints to have a connection with their relics, such that he fears not the evil thought or the phantasm in the night but entering those places where the saints are most efficacious.

How is this reconcilable with Jerome's earlier statements that the saints are with Christ wherever he is and can be everywhere?²⁷ Jerome does not answer in this text, so we must look to his other writings. In a letter dated c. 405 to Theophilus, Jerome praises Theophilus's treatise on the Eucharist and the accompanying liturgical ephemera. Jerome indicates that not only is the Eucharist itself to be honoured and revered, but that »the sacred chalices, veils, and other accessories used in the celebration of the Lord's passion are not mere lifeless and senseless objects devoid of holiness, but that instead, from their association with the body and blood of the Lord, they are to be venerated (*ueneranda*) with the same awe as the body and the blood themselves.«²⁸ Christ in his divinity is not confined to a specific place, and nevertheless, the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is different somehow, and that presence extends to all of the accessories used in the celebration of the mass.

The saints are also not limited in their power by the location of their earthly remains. At the end of the *Vita Hilarionis*, after describing the theft of Hilarion's body from Cyprus, where he died, and its relocation to Palestine by one of his disciples, Jerome describes the 'strange dispute' (*miram /.../ contentionem*) between the people of Palestine and Cyprus, »the one contending that they have the body, the other the spirit of Hilarion.«²⁹ »And yet«, Jerome closes the life, »in both places great miracles are wrought daily, but to a greater extent in the garden of Cyprus, perhaps because that spot was dearest to him.«³⁰ This notion can also be seen in Jerome's letter to Julia Eustochium, where, in encouraging the latter to the life of virginity, Jerome exhorts her: »Rarely go abroad, and if you wish to seek the aid of the martyrs, seek it in your own chamber.«³¹ One need not go on pilgrimage to faraway places because the aid of the saints can be sought in any place.

If there is a contradiction here in Jerome's thought on the presence of the saints, it ought not to be surprising. The saints may be present everywhere, and

²⁶ »Quando iratus fuero et aliquid mali in meo animo cogitauero et me nocturnum phantasma deluserit, basilicas martyrum intrare non audeo.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 12)

²⁷ This is another of Lössl's critiques: that Jerome is inconsistent in his argument on this point (2005, 112).

²⁸ »Mirati sumus in opere tuo utilitatem omnium ecclesiarum, ut discant, qui ignorant, eruditi testimonii scripturarum, qua debeant ueneratione sancta suscipere et altaris Christi ministerio deseruire sacrosque calices et sancta uelamina et cetera, quae ad cultum dominicae pertinent passionis, non quasi inania et sensu carentia sanctimoniam non habere, sed ex consortio corporis et sanguinis domini eadem, qua corpus eius et sanguis maiestate ueneranda.« (Hier., *Ep.* 114.2)

²⁹ »Cernas usque hodie miram inter Palaestinos et Cyprios contentionem, his corpus Hilarionis, illis spiritum se habere certantibus.« (Hier., *V. Hilar.* 47 [PL 23, 53])

³⁰ »Et tamen in utrisque locis magna quotidie signa fiunt, sed magis in hortulo Cypri, forsitan quia plus illum locum dilexerit.« (Hier., *V. Hilar.* 47 [PL 23, 53–54])

³¹ »Rarus sit egressus in publicam: martyres tibi quaerantur in cubiculo tuo.« (Hier., *Ep.* 22.17)

yet their bodily remains, their clothing, and the locations of their earthly lives have a specific other power to work miracles. Jerome does not define how these phenomena are reconcilable, just as he does not define how Christ's presence in the eucharist differs from Christ's presence in all creation. He also does not echo the more radical thought of Victricius of Rouen, who argues that »the relics of the saints are, in effect, consubstantial with God« (Clark 1999, 365–399; 366).

Victricius of Rouen, in a sermon dated 396, gives a much more robust, if still unsystematic, theological explication of the saints.³² Jerome agrees with Victricius on many points, including that the saints can be present everywhere and yet are present in their relics in a more substantive way. Addressing the martyrs, Victricius states, »I knew that you are everywhere by the merit of your virtue: heavenly brilliance is not cheated out of any place on earth.«³³ Victricius believes in the efficacy of the relics of the saints to heal,³⁴ and he acknowledges the relationship between the living and the dead.³⁵

Victricius takes his theology of the saints much farther than Jerome, however. He gives a fuller explanation of how the saints are everywhere, arguing that they are joined to the divinity of Christ by adoption.³⁶ The saints are »entirely with the Saviour in his entirety.«³⁷ Therefore, the saints are joined to the Trinity itself, such that the only difference between them and the three trinitarian persons is that the saints have an 'acquired' (*indemptam*) divinity, while the persons of the Trinity are divine by nature: »You see then /.../ that the Father and the Son have by property of nature what the saints have by the unity of the gift they have received.«³⁸ For Victricius, the saints are the same (*idem*) as the »ineffable substance of the godhead« (*inenarrabilisque substantia deitatis*), though by gift and by adoption rather than by nature and property.³⁹

³² As Clark rightly points out, Victricius' argument is »unusually difficult to follow« (1999, 368), both because of the genre of the text and because of his penchant for rhetorical flourish.

³³ »Merito uirtutis ubique uos esse noui: nullo enim terrarum spatio caelestis claritudo fraudatur.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 1)

³⁴ »If the hem of the Saviour's garment cured when lightly touched, it is beyond doubt that the dwelling places of the martyrdoms will cure when we take them into our arms.« »Nam si curauit adtacta leuiter fimbria Saluatoris, procul dubio curabunt amplexata domicilia passionum.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 2)

³⁵ Victricius calls the saints 'advocates' and holds that they have a say in the judgement of souls: »Adsunt aduocati, delictorum nostrorum gesta oratione pandamus. Fauent iudices, possunt mitigare sententiam /.../« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 12)

³⁶ »/.../ it follows that we should believe, by a similar argument, that for those who live in Christ and the church there is one substance of flesh and blood and spirit, by the gift of adoption.« »/.../ sequitur ut in Christo et in ecclesia uiuentibus pari argumento unam beneficio adoptionis et carnis et sanguinis et spiritus credamus esse substantiam.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 7)

³⁷ »/.../ toti cum toto sint Saluatore.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 7)

³⁸ »Uidetis itaque /.../ hoc esse Patris et Filii per naturae proprietatem, quod est sanctis per suscepti muneris unitatem.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 8)

³⁹ »Dico idem esse per beneficium non per proprietatem, per adoptionem non per naturam.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 8)

It is possible that this teaching prompted Vigilantius to speak out against the saints' cults.⁴⁰ Vigilantius is deeply concerned about the proper worship of God and sees the honour being given to the saints as pushing the boundaries of worship inappropriately, even to idolatry. Vigilantius sees martyrs' veneration as a reintroduction of 'pagan' cultural manifestations into the Christian liturgy (Force 2003, 18). Jerome, strikingly, does not refute this. Instead, he argues that it is possible to begin from a place of idolatry or error and be transformed by the Christian message: »Because we used to worship idols, we should not worship God now, because we may seem to worship God with a similar honour once given to idols? That was done for idols and should be detested; this is done for martyrs and should be accepted.«⁴¹ For Jerome, the outward manifestations might look the same, but God rewards each individual according to their faith.⁴²

3. Conclusion

Jerome certainly does not give such a radical explanation of how the saints are efficacious, as does Victricius. Nevertheless, this is not to say that Jerome and Vigilantius are on the same side of this debate.⁴³ Jerome is forced by Vigilantius to think theologically about the cults of the saints, to go beyond his epistolary and hagiographical writings, and deal with some thorny issues: the relationship of the soul and the body, the connection between the living and the dead, the nature of the presence of the saints, and the efficacy of their relics (Force 2003, 24). Vigilantius was not a minor heretic to be dismissed; he was »an active member of an influential group in the western church« (Oh 2013, 36). Indeed, Vigilantius seems to have been in the majority of Gallic clerics in his critiques of the cults of the saints and the increasingly ardent asceticism of those who championed such cults.⁴⁴ While Jerome's desire to be influential in Gallic affairs and his success in such influence is a matter of debate (Mathisen 2009), it is clear, at least in this regard, that Jerome's position won out over his opponent.⁴⁵ Gennadius of Marseilles, in his *Liber ecclesiasticorum dogmatum* written around the year 470, includes this

⁴⁰ This point is debated in the scholarship on Victricius and Vigilantius. David Hunter sees Vigilantius's articulation of his critique of the cults of the saints as responding to both the practice and theology of Victricius (1999, 423). However, according to Paul Force, following Élie Griffe, Vigilantius was responding to the development of the cult of St. Saturninus in Toulouse and the attitude of Bishop Exuperius (2003, 20–21).

⁴¹ »Et quia quondam colebamus idola, nunc deum colere non debemus, ne simili eum uideamur cum idolis honore uenerari? Illud fiebat idolis et idcirco detestandum est, hoc fit martyribus et ideo recipiendum est.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 7)

⁴² »/.../ secundum fidem suam habent mercedem.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 7)

⁴³ For more on the relationships between Victricius, Vigilantius, and Jerome, see Force 2003, 24; Hunter 1999, 409–413; Trout 1999, 200–209.

⁴⁴ »Vigilantius's opinions were received with sympathy by many Christians in Gaul, especially within the ecclesiastical hierarchy.« (Hunter 1999, 403)

⁴⁵ Feiertag offers some tantalizing hints of the ways the Jerome's thought and language are used and promoted by Gallic figures (1985 [CCSL 79C], x–xix).

entry: »The bodies of the saints and especially the relics of the blessed martyrs are to be honoured *as if they were the actual remains of Christ* [...] If anyone thinks differently, he is to be considered a Vigilantian and not a Christian.«⁴⁶

Abbreviations

- C. Vigil.** – *Contra (Adversus) Vigilantium* [Feiertag 2005].
CCSL – Corpus Christianorum Series Latina.
CSEL – Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.
Dogm. – *Liber ecclesiasticorum dogmatum*.
NPNF – Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.
PL – Patrologia Latina.
V. Hilar. – *Vita Hilarionis*.
Victric. – *Victricius Rotomagensis*.

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⁴⁶ "Sanctorum corpora, et praecipue beatorum martyrum reliquias, ac si Christi membra sincerissima honoranda...Si quis contra hanc sententiam uenit, non christianus sed Vigilantianus credatur." (Gennad., *Dogm.* 39 [CCSL 79C, xviii]) Emphasis added.

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Jerome and Victorinus: A Complex Relationship Between the Compatriots

Hieronim in Viktorin: Zapleten odnos med rojakoma

Abstract: The paper is based on an analysis of the adjective *noster* as an attribute to the proper name; its use by Jerome in a short note found in *De viris illustribus* serves to broaden the otherwise scarce information on his compatriot Victorinus. In Jerome's other references to Victorinus, too, a friendly bias can be noticed, as Jerome, otherwise highly critical and anti-heterodox turns a blind eye to Victorinus' millennialism. Jerome criticises Victorinus only for his stylistic shortcomings and linguistic imperfection and tones this down further by praising Victorinus' command of Greek. Jerome's judgments also say something about Jerome himself: although he broke away from his homeland early and became a true cosmopolitan, he nevertheless retained a special connection to his native land and its inhabitants.

Keywords: Jerome, Victorinus of Poetovio, millennialism, Latin exegesis

Povzetek: V članku izhajamo iz analize svojilnega pridevnika »noster« kot epiteta k lastnemu imenu. Iz njegove rabe pri Hieronimu skušamo poglobiti razumevanje kratke notice o Viktorinu iz Hieronimovega dela *De viris illustribus*, v kateri nam daje sicer skope, a dragocene podatke o svojem rojaku. Tudi pri drugih Hieronimovih omembah Viktorina zasledimo prijazno pristranskost, saj sicer zelo kritičen in proti heterodoksnosti nastrojen Hieronim tukaj zamiži na eno oko in spregleda Viktorinov milenarizem – očita mu le slogovno nedodolanost in jezikovno nedovršenost, pa še to omiljuje s pohvalo njegovega znanja grščine. Hieronimove sodbe povedo nekaj tudi o njem samem: čeprav se je zgodaj odtrgal od domače dežele in bil pravi svetovljan, je do domače dežele in njenih prebivalcev vendarle ohranjal poseben odnos.

Ključne besede: Hieronim, Viktorin Ptujski, milenarizem, latinska eksegeza

Whenever Jerome wanted to show special kindness to someone, he gave them the attribute *noster* 'our'; a few times, he even paraphrased this pronoun with the form *meus et tuus*, 'my and your'. He often treated his friends in this way; only sometimes, however, he qualified people from the past with this attribute. Those

were, without exception, Christian authors. Within Jerome's rather extensive opus with many names mentioned, only Hilary of Poitiers and Victorinus of Poetovio are given this kind of attention three times.

The present paper aims to point out some links that may have contributed to a particular relationship between Jerome and Victorinus, and explain the reasons behind it. We started our research simply by analyzing all the occurrences of the possessive pronoun *noster* applied to personal names and later all mentions of Victorinus of Poetovio in Jerome's writings.¹ We found three occurrences that belong to both lists, and we think that is rather meaningful.

1. Jerome's Usage of the Adjective *noster*

Jerome was not always an easy character. On the one hand, he was extremely polite and courteous towards his friends, but on the other, he was even able to call his opponents names (Opelt 1965, 1973). One of his frequent courtesies was the possessive pronoun *noster*, and two of his contemporaries who enjoyed that privilege were Nepotianus and Blesilla. The former had been his correspondent, and both are mentioned in his letters to other people,² and both were deceased; it is in their epitaphs, full of admiration, that Jerome uses this pronoun so frequently. Both these letters, 39 and 60, are in some way unofficial canonization of the mourned persons. They are full of respect for Nepotianus' virtuous life or Blesilla's profound conversion. In short, we can define their literary genre as a true Christian apotheosis.

The second group that receives this type of treatment is Christian authors from the past; only two of these are Greek writers, the majority of them are Latin writers (*Ep.* 49.19). They are listed here in alphabetic order: rather pagan Ausonius (118.7), Cyprian of Carthage, Hilary of Poitiers (20.1; 34.5; 49.19), Lactantius, borderline orthodox Novatian, Tertullian of the same sort (36.1), and, finally, our Victorinus of Poetovio. In this last case, 'our' may simply refer to 'Latin' or may pertain to Victorinus being a companion in Christian literary effort. Or, perhaps it has some deeper meaning.

Jerome sometimes uses the analyzed pronoun *noster* in a geographical sense since we find it used twice with the place of his residence, *Bethlehem nostra* (58.3; 65.1).

When Jerome uses the possessive pronoun *noster* with the name of his exegetical forerunner Victorinus, he surely refers to his sanctity, which Victorinus gained through his undoubted martyrdom. Here, he is joined by Nepotianus (60.1; 60.8; 60.11; 60.19) and Blesilla (38.2.5; 39.3; 39.7). Furthermore, Victorinus is also one of the respected Latin Christian authors, the first to give us exegetical writing, so

¹ All Jerome's mentions of Victorinus have already been collected by Haussleiter (1916, VII–XIV). See also Micaelli 1995.

² To Nepotianus *Ep.* 52, Epitaph of Nepotianus in *Ep.* 60 to Heliodorus. Blesilla mentioned in *Ep.* 38; Epitaph for Blesilla in *Ep.* 39 to Paula, her mother. For the Latin citations from Jerome's letters, the Hilberg's CSEL critical edition is quoted.

he belongs to the group of the other Church fathers.³ Moreover, Victorinus may also be *noster* through the geographic vicinity of their homelands: Poetovio being *colonia Pannoniae*, and *Strido* (or *Stridonae*) *oppidum, quod Dalmatiae Pannoniaeque confinium fuit* (*De vir. ill.* 135).

2. Jerome's Attitude Towards ,his' Victorinus

Victorinus of Poetovio gets average attention in Jerome's *Illustrious Men*; he is neither overlooked nor overexposed.⁴ Besides the admittedly incomplete list of Victorinus' writings, we are informed of his bishopric in Poetovio, of his blessed death as a martyr, and we get one single literary evaluation: about his not-perfect knowledge of Latin. However, at the same time, this criticism is toned down by two instances of praise: his command of Greek (*non aequae Latine ut Graece noverat*), and the importance of his work (*opera grandia sensibus*). The general impression that Jerome conveys is relatively positive. Without neglecting or minimizing Victorinus' shortcomings, Jerome praises him.

Victorinus is one of the few Latin Christian authors who deserved praise in Jerome's quotes. In letters 58 and 70, Jerome gives an abstract of his *Illustrious Men*, but with slight modification. Thus, in *Ep.* 58, he tells of Victorinus' martyrdom and his inability to put into words all he knows (*quod intellegit, eloqui non potest*). In *Ep.* 70, Jerome clearly defines the reason for Victorinus' weakness: his lack of erudition (*licet desit eruditio, tamen non deest eruditionis voluntas*), which he hoped to improve on, but obviously failed to do so due to his situation and different circumstances. Again, Jerome's criticism is not merciless but relatively gentle.

He mentions Victorinus as one of many Origen's translators into Latin (Hilary, Eusebius of Vercelli, himself). In *Ep.* 61 and 84, he praises Victorinus' writings, not as mere translations, but as authorial works (*nec disertiores sumus Hilario nec fideliores Victorino, qui tractatus eius non ut interpretes, sed ut auctores proprii operis transtulerunt*). He parallels Victorinus to Origen, saying that their exegesis is similar in specific points.

Jerome admired Victorinus as the only Latin interpreter of Isaiah. Nevertheless, again, Jerome could not resist a slight criticism regarding Victorinus' style, but he softens this by drawing a comparison to the apostle Paul, whose autobiographical remark he uses for the Pannonian bishop, praising his knowledge.⁵

³ See Hier., *Ad Gen.* 27,27: »Hippolyti martyris verba ponemus, a quo et Victorinus noster non plurimum discrepat.« (cf. also Id., *Ep.* 36.16); Id., *Ep.* 18.6: »Victorinus noster duodecim Apostolos interpretatus est.«

⁴ Hier., *De vir. ill.* 74: »Victorinus, Petavionensis episcopus, non aequae Latine ut Graece noverat. Unde opera eius grandia sensibus, villiora videntur compositione verborum. Sunt autem haec: Commentarii in Genesim, in Exodum, in Leviticum, in Isaiam, in Ezechiel, in Abacuc, in Ecclesiasten, in Cantica Cantorum, in Apocalypsim Ioannis, adversum omnes haereses, et multa alia. Ad extremum martyrio coronatus est.«

⁵ *In Isaiam* prol.: »... etsi imperitus sermone, non tamen scientia.«

3. The Question of Millennialism and Victorinus' Exegesis of the Apocalypse

However, what is truly astonishing is Jerome's tolerance towards Victorinus' millennialism or chiliasm. Jerome has been known for his low tolerance of heterodoxy, to which millennialism belonged in his times; however, this belief seems to enjoy a special place in Jerome's judgments. Millennialism was commonly believed in by very authoritative persons, such as Justin, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. One of them is also our Victorinus. As Jerome could not criticise Irenaeus, he also did not reproach Victorinus for his millennialism. He nevertheless mentioned it a few times and did not simply ignore this view by Victorinus.

Another reason for such careful treatment seems to be that millennialism was not so strong or maybe not even present anymore in Jerome's time.⁶ So it did not present any real threat to orthodoxy, as did Arianism, the remains of which may have persisted at the time.

Jerome's mentions of Victorinus are most commonly found in the lists of Christian authors. At least eleven of them can be attested. Three times he is mentioned as part of a group of those who explain the Apocalypse in a millennialistic manner (e.g. Hier., *De vir. ill.* 18; *In Ezech.* 11). Four times Victorinus is one of the two authors who are compared in one way or another.

The rest of the occurrences are characterizations of Victorinus as a translator of Origen (three times), a martyr with a pleasant temper (*nulli molitur insidias*) (Hier., *Adv. Ruf.* 1.2); there are two further mentions of Victorinus' exegesis by Jerome.

The two authors came closest when Jerome decided not to write his own commentary on the Apocalypse or to do it only later, time and circumstances permitting. The fact is that he never did. Instead, he just revised Victorinus' work. In our opinion, he tried to conceal his discomfort at avoiding this challenging task by writing in the preface that he was only answering a question posed by his friend Anatolius inquiring about his opinion on Victorinus' interpretation, which had been sent to him. Nevertheless, Jerome ended up doing more than he was asked to do, not only writing a review but also correcting the text where it had been, as he supposed, made faulty by the scribes and, above all, replacing the final chapters. In the preface, he explained these reasons and his methods, especially with regard to Victorinus' millennialism. Jerome also promised to replace the last chapters, which were impregnated by millennialism.

To make absolutely clear where his own text begins, Jerome makes the sign of the cross there.⁷ Thus, Jerome's care for orthodoxy led to the loss of Victorinus' basic millennial text since all the surviving copies bear Jerome's *finale*. However, we are incredibly fortunate that at least one manuscript containing Jerome's introduction

⁶ The millenarian error was first closely linked to Biblical exegesis (Rev. 20), as well as to eschatological rhetoric. See also Krašovec 2020 and Avsenik Nabergoj 2020.

⁷ Hier., *Pref. In Apoc.*: »A principio libri usque ad crucis signum quae ab imperitiis erant scriptorum vitata, correximus, exinde usque ad finem voluminis addita esse cognosce.«

lacks his replacement of the comment of the last chapters and includes Victorinus' original text instead. So, since Hausleiter's edition in CSEL 49 of 1916, we can observe directly what type of millennialism Victorinus pursued. (Dulaey 1993)

As we mentioned already, we are amazed by Jerome's meek attitude towards Victorinus. He could have ground him to dust, and Victorinus could not have answered back. Jerome could have signed his own name under the corrected version, but the Stridonian (i.e. Dalmato-Pannonian) respected the authorship of the Pannonian. Perhaps there was at least a hint of patriotism and loyalty to his homeland that made Jerome judge Victorinus more mildly than he would otherwise have done.

Curti, in his article, concludes that Jerome tolerated Victorinus' millennialism and paid respect to him because he mitigated those eschatological views with allegorical exegesis; but Jerome remained a harsh opponent of *iodaizantes* and literalists. (Curti 1998, 202)

4. Conclusion

Victorinus and Jerome never met in earthly life since half of the century had elapsed between the death of the former and the birth of the latter. There were many differences between them. The former, who could not afford classical education, still experienced persecution and was martyred; the latter, well trained in Classics, enjoyed the freedom of religion, witnessed the golden age of patristics and got his star on the ecclesiastic 'walk of fame' soon. Though he may have travelled widely, the former ended up staying in a relatively secluded town, Poetovio, at the edge of the empire. The latter crossed roads and seas from one lime to another, made himself quite at home in Constantinople and Rome, and towards the end of his life, wrote letters all over the world from Bethlehem. The former lived in an era of establishing orthodoxy and stabilizing the canon. The latter was a contemporary and colleague of Epiphanius, the heresy-hunter, and received the heritage of the first two ecumenical councils. However, they were both scrutators of the Bible, and through their literary and exegetical efforts, they transmitted the Word from one context to another. Moreover, both were also geographically close to each other.⁸

Jerome could have judged Victorinus much more severely, not only on the grounds of his literary weakness and lack of formal education but rather on the grounds of his questionable eschatological belief. Nevertheless, he treated him with unusual kindness and sympathy. Two possible reasons for this can be assumed. The crown of martyrdom assured Victorinus of an unquestionable place in heaven, so Jerome did not hesitate to lean on him, regardless of millennialism, which was no longer a threat in his time. Maybe Jerome, who was so reserved

⁸ The importance of this wide but well connected geographical area is also demonstrated by Jerome's familiarity with of the work of Bishop Fortunatianus of Aquileia, which was only rediscovered in 2012 after fifteen centuries in oblivion. See Bogataj 2020; Bogataj and Špelič 2020.

with positive expressions about his homeland, gives at least some praise to his compatriot, granting him this attribute of honour and neighbourliness: *noster*.

Abbreviations

Adv. Ruf. – *Adversus Rufinum*.

CSEL – Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.

De vir. ill. – *De viris illustribus*.

Ep. – *Epistula* [Hilberg 1996].

Pref. In Apoc. – *Praefatio In Apocalypsin*.

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The Interpretation of the Parable of the Prodigal Son by Two Latin Patristic Authors, St Jerome and St Peter Chrysologus

Razlagi prilike o izgubljenem sinu dveh latinskih patrističnih avtorjev, sv. Hieronima in sv. Petra Krizologa

Abstract: In this paper, a comparison is made between Jerome's and Petrus Chrysologus' interpretations of the parable of the prodigal son. In *Letter 21*, written in 383/384, Jerome responds to a request by Pope Damasus to clarify specific questions about this well-known parable. After an introduction in which the specific questions are mentioned and briefly discussed, he continues with a verse-by-verse commentary of the Lucan passage, followed by a short conclusion. Petrus Chrysologus (c. 380–c. 450), bishop of Ravenna, delivered five sermons on the parable of the prodigal son, of which the fifth sermon offers a spiritual interpretation. A comparison between the two different approaches to the parable highlights Jerome's usual exegetical method. There is a sharper focus on Jerome's letter, and in comparison with Chrysologus' work, the unique character of Jerome's approach is underlined. An essential aspect of Jerome's commentary is his identification with the contents of the parable and the fact that he uses this work to promote himself as a biblical scholar and exegete.

Keywords: Parable of the prodigal son, sermons, Peter Chrysologus, letter, St Jerome, self-presentation of St Jerome

Povzetek: Prispevek primerja dve razlagi prilike o izgubljenem sinu, Hieronimovo razlago in razlago Petra Krizologa. V *Pismu 21* iz leta 383/384 odgovarja Hieronim na prošnjo papeža Damaza, da bi razjasnil nekatera vprašanja glede te slovite evangeljske prilike. Najprej v uvodu omenja in analizira različna podrobna vprašanja, nadaljuje z razlago vrstic odlomka Lukovega evangelija, na koncu sledi kratek sklep. Peter Krizolog (ok. 380–ok. 450), škof v Raveni, je pripravil pet govorov o isti priliki, med njimi peti ponuja duhovno razlago. Primerjava med dvema različnima pristopoma do razlage prilike poudari Hieronimovo značilno eksegetsko metodo, ki skozi primerjavo postane še bolj jasno razvidna

kot izvirna. Pomemben vidik Hieronimove razlage nastopi, ko v vsebini prilike označi samega sebe in ko to uporabi za identifikacijo sebe kot bibličnega strokovnjaka in razlagalca.

Ključne besede: prilika o izgubljenem sinu, govori, Peter Krizolog, pisma, Hieronimova predstavitev

1. Introduction

This article aims to compare St Jerome's and St. Peter Chrysologus' interpretations of the parable of the prodigal son. In *Letter 21 (Ep. 21)*, written in 383/384, Jerome responds to a request by Pope Damasus to clarify specific questions about this well-known parable. After an introduction in which the specific questions are mentioned and briefly discussed, he continues with a verse-by-verse commentary of the Lucan passage, followed by a short conclusion. Peter Chrysologus (c. 380–c. 450), the bishop of Ravenna, delivered five sermons on the same parable, of which the fifth sermon offers a spiritual interpretation of the parable. Because it is impossible to make a detailed comparison between these works in an article, the idea is to summarize the two authors' work on the parable and identify similarities and differences between their approaches. There is a sharper focus on Jerome's letter, and in comparison with Chrysologus' work, the unique character of Jerome's approach is underlined.

2. Background

Jerome, the older of the two, was born in Stridon, near Emona c. 347 and died on 30 Sept 419 (420?) near Bethlehem. He spent time in several important centres, like Rome, Trier, Aquileia, Antioch, Constantinople, and Bethlehem. During his second stay in Rome from 382–385, he became the protégé of Pope Damasus I, for whom he performed specific administrative or secretarial duties and who commissioned him to revise the Latin text of the Gospels according to the Greek original, which led to several other revisions and translation of biblical texts. Jerome was recognized as an outstanding biblical scholar and received the unique distinction of *Doctor Ecclesiae*. Rebenich describes the variety of Jerome's literary output by referring to him as a novelist, theologian, chronographer, epistolographer, satirist, biographer, biblical scholar, literary historian, translator, controversialist, threnodist, and ascetic expert (2002, 61–136).

St Peter Chrysologus was born at Forum Cornelia (Imola) c. 380 (406?) and died in his hometown c. 450. He was ordained bishop of Ravenna in 433 and served in that position till shortly before his death. He had a good relationship with emperor Valentinian III and his mother, Galla Placidia, and Pope Leo the Great. He got the name *Chrysologus* (Golden word) based on his oratorical abilities and was declared *Doctor Ecclesiae* by Pope Benedict XIII in 1729.

3. The Sermons of Peter Chrysologus

Chrysologus delivered 59 sermons on the Gospel of Luke, and 5 of them deal with the parable of the prodigal son.¹ The first four sermons offer a literal interpretation, while the fifth one provides an allegorical explanation. Almost all his sermons followed the exegetical pattern, and he uses the terms *sermo* or *tractatus* to refer to his sermons. The basic structure of the sermons consists of a short introduction, followed by a verse-by-verse discussion of the specific biblical passage, culminating in a short paraenetic appeal to the congregation. The conclusion is ordinarily concise, often doxological.

It is impossible to discuss the sermons in detail,² and therefore, a summary of the five sermons on the parable of the prodigal son is provided.

The first sermon deals with Luke 15:11-16. The introduction to the first sermon also serves as an introduction to the series of sermons. It, therefore, describes it as a parable about the love of the Father, the jealousy of the Jewish race, and the penitent return of the Christian people. After the introduction, he immediately commences with the verse-by-verse explanation of this passage; about the request of the younger son to get his inheritance, his departure, the wasting of his inheritance, and the terrible consequences of this decision. This is followed by a paraenetic appeal to stay with the Father, the Church, and fellow Christians.

In conclusion, he announces the themes for the next sermons in the form of the following questions: »Who is the father so ready to forgive, and readier still to welcome back his son? Who is the brother grieving over his brother's return? Who is the younger brother, foolish in his departure but most wise in his return?« (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 1.7)³

The second sermon deals with Luke 15:17-19. In the introduction, he refers to the first sermon, which discussed the prodigal son who deserted his father. He then announces the happier theme of the second sermon as the return and repentance of the lost son. In the verse-by-verse explanation, he then treats the son's decision to stand up and return home, his intention to confess his sins, and his request to be treated as a hired worker. In the paraenetic appeal of this section, Chrysologus emphasizes the relevance and purpose of the message. He warns his congregation against the devil's cruelty and appeals to them to stay with the father. In the conclusion of the second sermon, he promises to get to the deeper meanings at a later stage.

In his third sermon on the parable, Chrysologus focuses on Luke 15:20-24. In the introduction to this sermon, he refers to the previous two sermons about the prodigal son's departure, return, guilt, and repentance and announces that this sermon is

¹ Olivar's critical edition (CCSL 24) was used.

² Unfortunately, this description of Chrysologus' sermons doesn't do justice to his eloquent style. Even though he states in his conclusion that the simple and uncultivated parable forced him to unfold and explain the allegorical and lofty matters rather than to declaim them, his sermons are not presented in a simple style, but abound in figures of speech, word play, sound play, et cetera. For a detailed analysis of Chrysologus' sermons on the parable of the prodigal son, see Kritzinger 1998.

³ The English translation used for all the quotations from Chrysologus' sermons is that of Ganse 1953.

about the Father meeting his son, his goodness, and his mercy. In the verse-by-verse explanation, he describes how the father welcomes his son back, embraces and kisses him, how he orders his slaves to bring him the best coat and a golden ring, and to kill the fattened calf for his son who has returned. The paraenetic appeal has a dual purpose. On the one hand, he calls on the congregation to stay with the Father.

On the other hand, he encourages those who have left the Father, squandered everything, and come to utter ruin to stand up and return to such a father, inspired by such an example. The conclusion refers to the literal interpretation of the story and hints at revealing the hidden mystery, but it has to wait to describe the grief and envy of the older brother first.⁴ He thus refers to the literal interpretation of the first three sermons and the allegorical interpretation of the fifth sermon, which has to wait until he has dealt with the literal interpretation of verses 25-32 in the fourth sermon.

The fourth sermon then deals with Luke 15:25-32. The introduction refers to the previous sermon's description of the return and safety of the younger son and announces the theme of this one, the envy of the older brother. The verse-by-verse explanation discusses the older son's reaction, who does not want to join the feast. His grievances are mentioned as well as the reaction of his father. The paraenetic appeal of the fourth sermon first provides a digression about envy and ends with the following exhortations: »Let us by vigilant faith and the Spirit's light drive and keep away the foul tricks of envy. Let us suppress this envy with all the force of heavenly arms. For, just as charity unites us to God, so does envy cut us off from Him.« (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 4.1) However, another paraenetic appeal is addressed to the older brother, in which he is asked to bear with his brother's return to the father and the father's welcoming reception of his son. The father also requests him to share his present possessions with his brother to share in any future possessions. Finally, he calls on the elder brother to rejoice because his brother has been found so that he, too, may be glad that his (elder) brother has not been lost. In the conclusion of the fourth sermon, the bishop says that the literal interpretation or narrative sermon should now be brought to an end to reveal the mysterious, more profound meanings.⁵

The fifth sermon provides an allegorical or spiritual interpretation of the whole parable and therefore deals with the entire passage. The introduction refers to the preacher's earlier promise to raise the historical sense to a mystical and extraordinary sense. An allegorical explanation of the whole parable is then offered in the verse-by-verse explanation. There is no clear paraenetic appeal in this sermon. In conclusion, the preacher mentions his inability to thoroughly discuss such extensive matters within a sermon's scope. He finally expresses the wish that the plain and uncultivated parable may be welcomed, a simple message that has forced him to open up and explain allegorical and lofty matters rather than declaim them.⁶

⁴ »Historiam loquimur adhuc, et iam cogitamus arcanum nudare mysterium. /.../ Sed differendum est, ut senioris dolorem vetustum, vetustiore fratri invidiam prosequamur.« (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 3.5)

⁵ »Sed iam sermonem historicum concludamus, ut postea quae sunt mystica, quae profunda, Christo revelante, pandamus.« (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 4.5)

⁶ »Non sit ingrata, simplex et inculta conlatio, quae nos res mysticas et excelsas non narrare, non declamare, sed aperire compulit et explanare.« (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.8)

4. Jerome, *Letter 21 to Damasus*

Letter 21 of Jerome was written to Pope Damasus in 383/384 (Cain 2009, 53). It contains Jerome's reply to specific questions of Damasus about the interpretation of the parable of the prodigal son. Jerome gives a complete exposition of the whole Lucan passage in his reply, and this letter can thus be regarded as a commentary on the parable. *Letter 21* has a straightforward structure: an introduction with the request of Damasus (*Ep.* 21.1); an explanation of the parable's context and the fundamental issue that Jesus addresses here (21.2–3); a verse-by-verse commentary (21.4–41); a short conclusion (21.42).

Jerome's *Letter 21* then responds to the following questions of Damasus: »Who is the father? Who are the two sons? How does the younger one squander his inheritance with prostitutes? What does it mean that he was sent to look after the pigs and that he ate their pods, that he returned to his father, received a ring and a robe, and that the fattened calf was killed for him? Who is the older brother, and why is he jealous of his brother on his return?« (21.1.1)⁷ These questions almost cover the interpretation of the whole parable. After the general questions, Jerome again quotes Damasus, describing and discussing the problems of identifying the older brother with the Jews and the younger brother with the gentiles or the righteous and the sinner. These questions of Damasus confront Jerome with different interpretations of the parable and introduce the difficulties that accompany these interpretations. A fundamental principle of text analysis is introduced here: to ask the right questions to the text, guiding the exegete in his interpretation.

Jerome does not immediately reply with straightforward answers but first makes a remark about methodology. He says that he usually asks why the parable was told if it was not explained by Jesus Himself. With this question, Jerome puts the parable in context. He first refers to Luke 15:1-2 and quotes from Matthew 9:10-13 and says that Mark 2:15-17 agrees and uses the same language. Jerome refers to the envy of the scribes and the Pharisees and explains the reason behind it: »Therefore, all their envy has this source: the question why the Lord did not avoid speech and intercourse with those whom the precepts of the law condemned.« (21.2.2) Jerome concludes that this whole issue arose from the law and then expands on the contrasts between law versus mercy and forgiveness versus punishment. This is a crucial part of the letter in which Jerome summarises the gospel's central message, namely that God has sent his Son to save sinners whom he called to repentance and »tempered the severity of the law by the grace of the gospel« (21.2.3). He says that Jesus has told these three parables to refute the accusation of the scribes and the Pharisees. He clarifies that the three parables (on the lost sheep, on the lost coin, and the lost son) serve the same purpose but focus on the third one. The main theme of the parable is thus identified as an issue about 'law versus grace', and this identification directly results from his di-

⁷ The English translation is that of Mierow 1963 and is used for all the quotations from *Letter 21* in this article.

scussion of the context. An additional but still prominent theme is also addressed here, namely the theme of ‚envy versus joy‘.

Jerome’s verse-by-verse commentary, which follows the introduction, provides us with his allegorical interpretation of the parable. Chrysologus’ allegorical interpretation corresponds to Jerome’s to a large extent,⁸ but Jerome discusses it more fully and provides elaborate reasons for his interpretations. He also provides alternative interpretations in some cases. Concerning the identities of the two sons, he suggests that the older and younger brother could represent either the Jews and the Gentiles or the saints and the publicans and sinners, respectively. It is difficult to summarise this section, but a few examples of Jerome’s allegorical exegesis of this passage are presented, and where it differs significantly from Chrysologus’ interpretation, his interpretation is also mentioned.

Both authors agree that the parable’s father refers to God the Father and explain why God is sometimes likened to man (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.1; Hier., *Ep.* 21.4). The two sons are generally understood as two peoples, the Jews and the Gentiles, but as indicated above, Jerome also argues the possibility of the two sons representing the Jews and sinners in general, respectively (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.2; Hier., *Ep.* 21.4; 39–41). Jerome explains in great detail how the words and attitude of the older brother can also be applied to the saints. He offers this as an additional possibility but does not choose or indicate a preference for a specific interpretation.

After discussing the identity of the man and the two sons, Jerome continues with a creative interpretation of the substance of God (*substantia Dei*). He describes it as follows: »Everything is the substance of God: life, reason, thought, speech. This is the gift God has bestowed upon all alike, and in equal measure.« (Hier., *Ep.* 21.5)⁹ However, after referring to the Greek equivalent of the Latin *substantia*, he states that it is expressed more vividly in the original Greek and says that the Greek word refers to man’s free choice.¹⁰ Chrysologus has a different and exciting explanation for the substance of God. At first, he mentions similar things as Jerome: human character, speech, knowledge, reason, and judgment, belonging to the law of nature. However, he contends that the elder son got a different share, namely the five Books of the Law, which make their inheritance equal in number, but unequal in value (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.3).

Both authors describe the son’s departure to a far-off land as a spiritual departure. Jerome says: »It is not by spatial distances but through affection that we either are with God or depart from Him.« (Hier., *Ep.* 21.7.2) Chrysologus explains

⁸ There is, however, no indication that Chrysologus has seen or made use of Jerome’s commentary in this letter.

⁹ »Substantia Dei est, omne quod vivimus, sapimus, cogitamus, in verba prorumpimus. Haec aequaliter universis et in commune largitus est.«

¹⁰ »In the Greek, the reading is more vivid: διεῖλεν αὐτοῖς τὸν βίον. That is, he gave them free choice, he gave their hearts’ desire, that each might live, not in accordance with God’s command, but to please himself; that is, not out of necessity, but by free will, in order that virtue might have its place, so that, like God, we have the privilege of doing what we wish, differing in this from all the other animals.« (Hier., *Ep.* 21.6)

ins it in similar terms: »It (the Gentile race) sojourned into the foreign country of the Devil more in the spirit than in place,« and »For, this younger son was in his Fathers presence, yet he lacked this Father; although he was in his own house, he did not feel at home.« (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.4)

After the younger son has wasted his inheritance, according to Jerome, by worshipping idols and leading a life without virtue, there came a famine, which indicates a place without God: »Every place in which we dwell without the Father is a place of famine, penury, and want.« (Hier., *Ep.* 21.10)¹¹ Chrysologus indicates that the son has wasted his substance through his desire for secular eloquence, through the brothels of the (philosophical) schools at the meeting places of the philosophical sects, and through his conjectures, he corrupted his portion of speech, knowledge, reason, and judgment. This resulted in an immense need and severe hunger to know the truth (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.4). In his second sermon, Chrysologus describes the famine as an involuntary hunger and compares it to fasting: »Hunger calls back him whom abundance had exiled. Hunger enabled the son to understand his father, whereas abundance had caused him to recognize only a sire. If even involuntary hunger did all this, try by experiment how beneficial a voluntary fast can be.« (2.1)

The younger son then joins one of the country's princes, referring to the devil, who sent him to feed the swine, i.e., the demons. According to Jerome, the pods of the swine, or food of the demons, are drunkenness, luxury, fornication, and all the vices. Nevertheless, it can also be interpreted as the songs of the poets, secular wisdom, and the display of rhetorical language, things which cannot still hunger for truth. For Chrysologus, the pods of the swine refer to »the sinfully sweet pleasures of the body« to which the Epicureans are devoted (5.6).

Both authors interpret the approach of the Father to meet the son as a reference to the incarnation. Jerome describes the father's hurried approach as follows: »Before he returned to his ancient father by worthy works and true repentance, God, with whom all future events are already past and who knows beforehand all that is to be, runs forward to his coming and by His Word, which took flesh by a virgin, anticipates the return of His younger son.« (Hier., *Ep.* 21.19) Chrysologus explains this as follows: »But the father runs out, he runs from afar. ›When as yet we were sinners, Christ died for us.‹ The Father runs out, and He runs out in His Son when through Him He descends from heaven and comes down upon the earth.« (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.6)

Both authors also see the falling upon the son's neck as an image pointing to the incarnation.¹² Jerome complements this interpretation with a statement that refers to the light yoke which Christ placed on the younger son: »So He placed upon the younger son (by grace rather than because of merit) His light yoke, that is, the easy precepts of His commandments.« (Hier., *Ep.* 21.20)¹³

¹¹ »Omnis locus quem patre incolimus absente, famis, penuriae et egestatis est.«

¹² »Incubuit super collum ipsius, id est, corpus sumpsit humanum.« (Hier., *Ep.* 21.20); »Cecidit, cum per Christum divinitas tota nostra decumbit, et incumbit in carne.« (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.6)

¹³ »Ita et jugum suum leve, id est mandatorum suorum facilia praecepta, ex gratia magis quam ex merito

For Jerome, the best robe refers to »that robe which Adam had forfeited by sinning, the robe which in another parable is called a wedding garment, that is, the covering of the Holy Spirit, without which no one can attend the banquet of the King.« (21.23) Chrysologus also mentions the robe Adam lost but explains it as the eternal glory of immortality (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.6).

While the ring signifies to Jerome the likeness to Christ (*signaculum similitudinis Christi*) (*Ep.* 21.2), Chrysologus describes it as »[t]he rings of honour, the title of liberty, the outstanding pledge of the spirit, the seal of the faith, the dowry of the heavenly marriage« (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.6).

Both Jerome and Chrysologus link the shoes to the preaching of the Gospel (following Isa. 52:7, Rom. 10:15, and Eph. 6:15), but Jerome also refers to the shoes as an indication of the dignity of a bridegroom and the readiness to celebrate the Passover (Hier., *Ep.* 21.25; Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.6).

According to Jerome, »[t]he fatted calf, which is sacrificed for the safety of penitents, is the Saviour Himself, on whose flesh we feed, whose blood we drink daily« (Hier., *Ep.* 21.26).¹⁴ Chrysologus likewise mentions the daily sacrifice: »He is the calf who is daily and continually immolated for our food.« (Petr. Chrys., *Sermo* 5.6)¹⁵

4.1 Jerome's Self-Presentation in *Letter 21*

Although the comparison between the verse-by-verse commentary of Jerome and the fifth sermon of Chrysologus shows that there are no significant differences in their allegorical interpretations, there is one crucial aspect in which the two works differ significantly and which illustrates the unique character of Jerome's letter. This aspect concerns the self-presentation of the author in the specific work. While the sermons of Chrysologus reveal almost nothing about the preacher himself, Jerome's letter seems to be a document of self-promotion in which he presents himself to Damasus (Cain 2009, 43–67), the first addressee, but also to other readers as an erudite exegete.

In the letter's introduction, Jerome presents himself as the 'adviser' of Pope Damasus, which means the authority to whom the Pope turns to clarify exegetical questions (Kritzinger 2019, 2–3). The letter starts by complimenting Damasus for asking the right questions (presumably, to the right person).¹⁶ He uses this letter to present himself as a biblical scholar and theologian. He follows the main exegetical principle of explaining one biblical passage by referring to other passages where the same issue is discussed or seems relevant to the commentator.¹⁷ He emphasizes the importance

super juniorem filium collocavit.«

¹⁴ »Vitulus saginatus qui ad poenitentis immolatur salutem, ipse Salvator est, cujus quotidie carne pascimur, cruore potamur.«

¹⁵ »Hic est vitulus qui in epulum nostrum cotidie ac iugiter immolatur.«

¹⁶ »Beatudinis tuae interrogatio, disputatio fuit: et sic quaesisse quaerendo viam est dedisse quaesitis. Sapienter quippe interroganti, sapientia reputabitur. (The question of Your Beatitude was a theme for argument, and to have posed questions thus is to have opened a way for a reply. Indeed »wisdom will be ascribed to one who questions wisely.«) (Hier., *Ep.* 21.1)

¹⁷ Lawler lists more than 150 references or quotes to other biblical passages in the letter.

of the context of the specific passage and describes it exceptionally well. He further pays attention to crucial theological issues such as law and grace, free will, original sin, and the justice of God (Hier., *Ep.* 21.2; 21.6; 21.39–41).

Jerome is first and foremost known for his abilities as a translator of the Bible and his advocacy for the original biblical languages, especially the *Hebraica veritas*, the original Hebrew version of the Old Testament. He preferred the Septuagint, the Greek translation. Jerome refers on three occasions to Greek words and their meanings and three times to the meaning of Hebrew words in this commentary. He explains the meanings of ‚*Naid*‘ (*quod interpretatur ‚fluctuation‘*), ‚*Babel*‘ (*id est ‚confusion‘*; Hier., *Ep.* 21.8), and ‚*meleth*‘, which is referred to when he explains the meaning of the Greek word *συμφωνία* and its Latin equivalent *consonantia* (Hier., *Ep.* 21.29). He mentions the fact that some Latin interpreters mistakenly think that a symphony is a kind of organ. He, as an expert, can correct them. This letter gives him an ideal opportunity to promote himself as a biblical language expert (Kritzinger 2019, 3, n. 17).¹⁸ He also uses the opportunity to advocate his ‚*non /.../ verba, sed sensus*‘-principle, which he uses elsewhere to describe his approach to translation, but here to indicate the priority of meaning over words or style (Bartelink 1980, 46).

Jerome sees himself also as a defender of the orthodox faith when he refers to and criticizes Tertullian’s interpretation in paragraph 3 of the letter. He differs from Tertullian’s opinion that the publicans and sinners mentioned here were not Jews and argues his case with arguments from the Bible.

In a long digression on pagan poetry, philosophy, and rhetoric, Jerome defends his eclectic use of the pagan classics. He refers to a passage from Deuteronomy (21:10-13) where certain precepts are given to any Jew who wants to take a Jewish woman as a wife. He prefers to see the figure of a captive woman as a type of secular wisdom and interprets it allegorically.¹⁹ He applies this to himself and seems to identify himself with the prodigal son. In *Letter* 11, Jerome compares himself to the lost son and the lost sheep (Hier., *Ep.* 11.3). If Jerome sees himself as the younger son, it might further imply that his opponents are branded as the elder brother, the envious, ignorant son who does not understand the basic message of the Gospel and the Father’s grace.

5. Conclusion

Although a comparison between a sermon (or, in this case, a series of sermons) and a commentary (or a letter containing a commentary) is problematic and works of different genres are compared, the comparison reveals the unique character of

¹⁸ Jerome refers to himself as *vir trilinguis*: »Ego philosophus, rhetor, grammaticus, dialecticus, hebraeus, graecus, latinus, trilinguis.« (Hier., *Apol. c. Rufin.* 3.6)

¹⁹ The theme of Jerome’s use of the classics is also addressed in his famous *Letter* 22, where he is accused in a dream of being a Ciceronian, rather than a Christian.

Jerome's approach. While the sermons of Chrysologus have a moralistic and pastoral character with a solid paraenetic message to his congregation, Jerome treats the questions of Pope Damasus more scholarly, providing a detailed interpretation of the parable of the prodigal son and succeeds in addressing the most critical issues raised in the text. However, he also uses the opportunity to promote himself and strengthen his authority as a biblical scholar. His identification with the parable's content is an essential aspect and offers a new perspective on this letter.

Abbreviations

ANC – Ancient Christian Writers.

CCSL – Corpus Christianorum Series Latina.

CSEL – Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.

FC NT – The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation.

Ep. – *Epistulae* [Hilberg 1910].

Apol. c. Rufin. – *Apologia contra Rufinum*.

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Jerome's Interpretation of the Transfiguration in the Light of Some Recent Patristic Discoveries (Origen, Fortunatian, Chromace)

Hieronimova razlaga Kristusovega spremenjenja v luči nekaterih nedavnih patrističnih odkritij (Origen, Fortunacijan, Kromacij)

Abstract: This paper synthesizes and analyses Jerome's interpretation of Christ's Transfiguration event, described in the synoptic gospels (Matt 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36), to which he paid special attention in his works *Tractatus in Marci evangelium* (CPL 592) and *Commentarium in Matthaeum* (CPL 590). The second part of the study is dedicated to comparing Jerome's interpretation with three recently discovered Patristic works: Origen's *Homiliae in Psalmos*, *Commentarium in evangelia* of Fortunatian of Aquileia, and the works of Chromace of Aquileia and Victorinus of Poetovio. Based on this confrontation, it is possible to understand better Jerome's interpretation and the development of the Patristic exegesis of this critical episode in the life of Jesus in general.

Keywords: Transfiguration on the Mount, Victorinus of Poetovio, Patristic exegesis, Christology, Scripture

Povzetek: Prispevek sintetizira in analizira Hieronimovo razlago Kristusovega spremenjenja, opisanega v sinoptičnih evangelijih (Mt 17,1-8; Mr 9,2-8; Lk 9,28-36), ki se mu je Hieronim posebej posvetil v delih *Tractatus in Marci evangelium* (CPL 592) in *Commentarium in Matthaeum* (CPL 590). Drugi del študije je namenjen primerjavi Hieronimove interpretacije s tremi nedavno odkritimi patrističnimi deli, to so: Origenove *Homiliae in Psalmos*, *Commentarium in evangelia* Fortunacijana Oglejskega in dela Kromacija Oglejskega ter Viktorina Ptujskega. Na podlagi te konfrontacije je mogoče bolje razumeti Hieronimovo razlago, pa tudi nasploh spremljati razvoj patristične eksegeze te pomembne epizode iz Jezusovega življenja.

Ključne besede: Kristusovo spremenjenje, Viktorin Ptujski, patristična eksegeza, kristologija, Sveto pismo

1. Introduction

When Jerome in 386 wrote from Bethlehem to Marcella, describing the charms of the Holy Land and urging her to leave Rome, he also mentioned mount Tabor: »We shall make our way to Tabor and see the tabernacles there which the Savior shares, not, as Peter once wished, with Moses and Elijah, but with the Father and with the Holy Ghost.« (Hier., *Ep.* 46.13)¹ After Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Cyril of Jerusalem (Baldi 1955, 318–321), Jerome was among the first Christian authors who identified Tabor as the Mount of Christ's Transfiguration.²

The purpose of this paper is to examine Jerome's interpretation of the Transfiguration. However, although Jean-Louis Gourdain compared Jerome's *Tractatus in Marci ev.* 6 with Origen's *Comm. in Mt.* in his insightful article (1994), a study encompassing and systematizing Jerome's interpretation of Christ's Transfiguration still has not been made.³ Therefore, the first section of this paper will present a synthesis of the two works in which he discussed this Gospel narrative. In contrast, the second part is concerned with Jerome's interpretation with some recent Patristic discoveries to present some new insights on the exegesis of the Stridonian.

2. Jerome's Interpretation of the Transfiguration

The Transfiguration account is discussed in two of Jerome's exegetical works: *Tractatus in Marcum* and *Commentarium in Matthaem*.

2.1 *Tractatus in Marcum* 6: »In pectore meo tabernaculum facere«

This work is a rare example of the early Christian exegesis of Mark's Gospel. The homily *Tractatus* 6, dedicated to the Transfiguration account in Mark 9:1-8, is the most essential and theologically rich among other homilies of *Tractatus in Marci Euangelium*, since it includes many examples of spiritual interpretation and allegorization.

Germain Morin attributed to Jerome a corpus of various homilies as recently as the 19th century: besides his famous *Tractatus in Psalmos* and other works, are there also ten homilies on the Gospel of Mark (CCSL 78). They indeed belong to Jerome's Bethlehem period, but it is challenging to determine the exact date. Morin proposed the years between 401 and 410, but Gourdain, confronting it with the second phase of Origenist controversy, asserts that they can be dated between 397 and 402 (Gourdain 2005, 12–15).

¹ This article was written as a result of work within the research programme P6-0262, which was co-funded by the Slovenian Research Agency.

² »She made the ascent of mount Tabor whereon the Lord was transfigured [*scandebat montem Thabor, in quo transfiguratus est Dominus*].« (Hier., *Ep.* 108.13) For the Latin text of Jerome's letters Hilberg's CSEL editions are used.

³ A part of the otherwise more extensive transverse study is also devoted to the discussion of Jerome's interpretation of the Transfiguration of Christ (Bogataj 2020b, 234–241).

After the spiritual-moralistic reading of the verse Mark 9:1 – about those who will not taste death until they have seen the kingdom of God –, Jerome proceeds to the interpretation of Christ's Transfiguration. He briefly describes the literal sense of the account (*historia*) and harmonizes the divergence between Matthew's version, which speaks about the 'eighth day' and Mark's version, which describes the 'sixth day', by saying that the first counted the first day and the last, whereas the latter reckoned only the time between. Quickly, Jerome passes on to the spiritual interpretation: »We are not denying the historical event, but prefer a spiritual explanation [*Non historiam denegamus, sed spiritalem intellegentiam praeferimus*].« (Hier., *In Marci ev.* 6 [CCSL 78, 479]) The phrase »after six days« (Mark 9:2) for Jerome represents the eschatological setting of the event: »Not until this world shall pass away – that is the force of the six days – shall the new kingdom appear.« Afterwards, our scholar from Stridon introduces etymologies for the names of all three apostles present on the mountain.

Another important hermeneutical insight presented by Jerome is the difference between those who remain at the bottom of the mountain (*litteram sequuntur* / following the letter) and those who ascend the mountain (*spiritaliter intellegere* / reading Scriptures spiritually).⁴ Jerome states that to this very day, Jesus is down below for some and up above for others: for those who read Scriptures spiritually, Jesus is instantly transfigured (*statim commutatur*), and his garments – an allegory of the Scriptures themselves – shine exceedingly.

Explaining the fullers, who cannot make garments as white as those of Jesus, Jerome surprises his audience with an unusual interpretation. He confronts Scripture with some of the finest authors of the classical literature – Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, and Epicurus –, but convincingly states that they could not make garments, i.e., their writings, as white as those of Jesus, »because they were on the earth, their treatises are all about earthly matters [*quoniam super terram erant, totum de terrenis disputabant*].« (6 [CCSL 78, 481]) For Jerome, no arbiter of secular literature (*disceptator saecularis litteraturae*) could fashion garments such as Jesus possesses on the mountain.

Establishing a similar contrast, commenting on the presence of Moses and Elijah on the mountain, Jerome mentions Jews who follow only the letter that kills and cannot see Jesus transfigured. However, the conversation of these two significant figures with Jesus symbolizes harmony between the two covenants.⁵ Jerome regards Peter's proposal for pitching three tents as separating the Law, the prophets, and the Gospel, which cannot be done. Thus Jerome asserts that he wanted to build in his heart a tabernacle (*volo in pectore meo tabernaculum facere*) for Christ,⁶ the Law, and the prophets, by saying: »It was Peter's miscom-

⁴ »Iesu, donec deorsum est, non transfiguratur; ascendit, et transmutatur.« (Hier., *In Marci ev.* 6 [CCSL 78, 480])

⁵ For an exegetical discussion of Christ as the fulfilment of messianic expectations, see Celarc 2019.

⁶ »Ut quorum sit una divinitas unum sit et in pectore tuo tabernaculo.« (Hier., *Comm. in Mt.* 17,4 [CCSL 77, 148]). See also 17,5.

prehension when he proposed three different tents conferring honour upon the servants equally with the Lord. Unless they dwell together, they cannot be in harmony [*nisi simul habitauerint, non possunt habere concordiam*].⁷

When interpreting the cloud that overshadowed them instead of the tents, Jerome regards it as the grace of the Holy Spirit, and this Trinitarian reference serves to illustrate with great precision his most important hermeneutical principle:

»See the mystery of the Trinity, according to my power of understanding, at any rate. Everything that I perceive, I want to understand in Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Father. Unless I understand in the Trinity that will save me, no understanding can be sweet to me.

[Vide mysterium Trinitatis, secundum meam tamen intellegentiam. Ego enim omne quod intellego, sine Christo et Spiritu Sancto et Patro nolo intellegere. Nisi intellexero in Trinitate quae me saluabit, dulce mihi non potest esse quod intellego.]« (6 [CCSL 78, 483])

Understanding for Jerome does not consist of a mere gathering of knowledge, but it is related to the divine operation, which is not only theoretical but, first and foremost, experiential, practical, and soteriological.

The culmination of the homily is the Father's voice affirming Jesus' divine identity. Commenting on that, Jerome echoes post-Nicene Trinitarian theology: »This is My Son, of My nature, of My substance, abiding in Me, and He is all that I Am. This is My beloved Son [Hic est Filius meus: de mea natura, de mea substantia, in me manens, et totus quod ego sum. Hic est Filius meus carissimus.].« (6 [CCSL 78, 483]) After this, the homily ends with Christ alone remaining on the mountain, demonstrating his divine nature, uniqueness, and elevation above the other two. »I may even say: in One, they find three. Moses, in fact, and Elias, too, are more apt to be found if they are brought together in one with Christ.« (6 [CCSL 78, 484]) Once again, Jerome is presenting his hermeneutical position in the harmonization of the two testaments.

Unsurprisingly, Jerome relies on his interpretation of Origen's *Commentary on Matthew* (*Commentarii in Matthaeum* 12.31–43 [GCS 40, 150–170]). Gourdain, who compared these two texts, maintains that despite the different similarities, Jerome was independent and that there is no direct relation to Origen (Gourdain 1994; Cerami 2008, 53 n. 152). Nevertheless, it is difficult to speak about Jerome's originality because he explains commentaries as compilations and collections of many existing interpretations to offer the reader the opportunity to make their own decision.⁸ However, on the other side, as Gourdain emphasizes (1994, 369), there is some originality present in Jerome's work, one that is more methodological. Due to the pedagogical adaptation or simplification, Jerome can develop his

⁷ The idea of the unity of one Trinitarian tent is present also in Jerome's *Comm. in Mt.* 17,4: »Sed fac tria tabernacula, immo unum Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.« (CCSL 77, 148). Cf. also Hier., *Ep.* 46.13.

⁸ See, for example, Hier., *Apologia contra Rufinum* 1.16 (SC 303, 44–46).

original explanation. In the cited passages, he demonstrates some of his most critical exegetical principles: insufficiency of the letter, a necessity for the spiritual understanding, unity of both Testaments, the light of the Spirit of Christ, and the Trinity itself. It is more a process of (indirect?) appropriation from Origen and not mere copying. If Origen only stated that in the spiritual experience, the garments of transfigured Christ are the words of the Scripture (Scognamiglio 1998, 385–393), Jerome makes this idea central to his homily, continuing this allegory and applying it to the whole process of reading Scriptures.

2.2 *Commentarium in Matthaem 17:1-9: »Transformatio splendorem addit, faciem non subtrahit«*

Jerome's interpretation of Christ's Transfiguration in his *Commentarium in Matthaem*⁹ is much shorter. He wrote this work to fulfil Eusebius of Cremona's promise in 398, stating that the interpretation will be only literal. Fortunately, he does not stick to this intention strictly, but this text is much more concise than the *Tractatus in Marci ev.* 6, with only a few allegorizations.

Jerome contextualizes the Transfiguration account in the eschatological announcement after Jesus' first declaration of his future death and Resurrection (Matt 16:21-28). Christ's Transfiguration on the mountain has, for Jerome, a consolatory role for his disciples: »Seeing in advance that they could make such objections, then, the one who knows secrets compensates for their present fear with an immediate reward [praevicens ergo occultorum cognitor quid possent objicere, praesentem timorem praesenti compensat praemio].« (Hier., *Comm. in Mt.* 3. 16,27 [CCSL 77, 146]) Transfiguration reveals already in the present what is to come: »He appeared to the apostles in the form in which he will appear at the time of judgment [qualis futurus est tempore iudicandi].« (3. 16,27 [CCSL 77, 147])

Proceeding to the interpretation of the Transfiguration itself (Matt 17:1-8), Jerome points out the physical reality of Christ's body even during Transfiguration:

»But as for what it says: »He was transfigured before them,« let no one think that he lost his original form and appearance [*nemo putet pristinam eum formam et faciem perdidisse*], or that he lost the reality of his body and took up either a spiritual or an airy body [*vel amisisse corporis veritatem et adsumpsisse corpus uel spirituale uel aereum*]. On the contrary, the evangelist shows how he was transformed when he says: *And his face shone like the sun, and his clothing became white like snow.*« (Hier., *Comm. in Mt.* 3. 16,27 [CCSL 77, 147])

We can detect an echo of anti-Origenist polemic (McGuckin 1986, 270, n. 68) since Jerome asserts that Jesus' body, even at the moment of the Transfiguration, did not cease to be physical, or either only »spiritual [*vel spirituale*] or ethereal [*vel aereum*]«. He uses Mark's allusion to an earthly fuller to emphasize that the

⁹ Latin text is quoted from D. Hurst and M. Adriaen's critical edition (CCSL 77, 146–150), whereas the passages translated in English are from T. P. Scheck's translation (2008, 197–201).

glory of Jesus appears in is entirely visible to mortal sight. Jerome seems to exclude here the notion found in Tertullian that the vision of the Transfiguration is comparable in any way to the imaginary mechanisms that produce dreams. (Anthony 2014, 232–233; McGuckin 1986, 270, n. 68)

Christ's substance is not changed; only the glory is different – he appears in more extraordinary splendour. While it changes in glory, the Son of God remains the same.

»When the splendour of the face is shown, and the brilliance of the clothing is described, it is not that the substance is removed, but the glory is changed [*non substantia tollitur sed gloria commutatur*]. »His face shone like the sun.« Surely, the Lord was transformed into that glory [*transformatur in eam gloriam*] with which he will come later in his kingdom. The transformation added splendor; it did not make his face disappear [*transformatio splendorem addidit, faciem non subtraxit*].« (Hier., *Comm. in Mt.* 3. 16,27 [CCSL 77, 147]).

The main point Jerome wants to emphasize seems to be the physicality of Christ's body. He is once more arguing against over-spiritualization.

»Let it be that his body became spiritual. Were his garments also changed, which became so brilliant that another evangelist said: »Such as a fuller on earth is not able to make them?« Well, what a fuller on earth cannot do has to be something bodily and tactile [*corporale est et tactui subiacet*], not something spiritual and airy that deceives the eyes and is seen only as an imaginary representation [*non spiritale et aerium, quod inludat oculis et tantum in fantasmate conspiciatur*].« (3. 16,27 [CCSL 77, 147]).

The second mention of the *corpus uel spirituale uel aerium*, emphasized with two other expressions (Christ's body was still physical, tactile, and did not become a *fantasma*) shows evidently that Jerome here is introducing anti-Origenist rhetoric. Jerome's position on embodiment in the Origenist controversy is well-known (Clark 1990, 154, 159–162).¹⁰ Even though he does not mention the Alexandrian explicitly and also that Origen had a subtle and often misunderstood or erroneously interpreted understanding of the 'spiritual body' (Clark 1992, 93; Eichinger 1969, 63–119), otherwise away from Docetic doctrine, this argumentation can be proved by a reference to the *Liber adversus Iohannem Hierosolymitanum* (25–26), where Jerome presents his understanding of Origen's doctrine about the negation of the Resurrection of the body. Although Christ did eat, drink, and was clothed after the Resurrection – according to the doctrine of Origen as presented by Jerome – he did not conceal the spiritual and aerial nature of his body (*non dissimulat naturam aerei corporis et spiritualis*), since he also passed through the closed door (PL 23, 378C).¹¹ Cruzel claims that Jerome did not conceive the

¹⁰ For an interesting philosophical reflection on creation and corporeality, see Esterbauer 2019.

¹¹ Cf. »Transfigurabit Dominus corpus humilitatis nostrae, conforme corporis suae gloriae. Quando dixit

difference between *aerei* (deriving from *aërius*) and *aetherei* [*corporis*] and that Origen certainly talked about the latter (1980, 258–259, n. 67). Air is, however, one of the four essential elements. Henceforth, Jerome is wrong to regard Christ's transfigured body as purely spiritual or ascribe to him only the aerial dimension of the everyday earthly existence, which would be again an over-spiritualization.

Another peculiarity found in Jerome's *Commentarium in Matthaeum* is the three reasons for fear of the three apostles (Matt 17:6). They were frightened either because they recognized that they had erred because of the bright cloud or the Father's voice. »Human weakness cannot bear the sight of greater glory [*humana fragilitas conspectum maioris gloriae ferre non sustinet*].« (Hier., *Comm. in Mt.* 3. 17,6 [CCSL 77, 149]) This is why Jerome scolds the apostles: »In proportion to how much someone seeks what is more, to that degree it falls to what is lower if it fails to recognize its own measure [*quanto quis ampliora quaesierit, tanto magis ad inferiora conlabitur, si ignorauerit mensuram suam*].« (3. 17,6 [CCSL 77, 149])

Summarizing his interpretation in the *Commentarium in Matthaeum*, we can assert that Origen undoubtedly influenced Jerome. Marie-Anne Vannier affirms that »Jerome s'inspire d'Origène mais pour donner une interprétation personnelle du récit de la Transfiguration« (2014, 55).

The Stridonian himself, however, named precisely all the works he read in preparation for writing his *Commentarium in Matthaeum*: the interpretations of Hippolytus the martyr, Theodor of Heraclea, Apollinaris of Laodicea and Didymus of Alexandria among the Greeks, and Hilary of Poitiers, Victorinus of Poetovio and Fortunatian of Aquileia among the Latin authors.¹² In the first place, though, he mentions Origen, but Jerome seems to be distancing himself from the Alexandrian owing to the recent controversies about Origenism.

3. New Aspects on Jerome's Work from Some Recent Discoveries

To enrich the knowledge on Jerome's perception of the Transfiguration, we can now discuss some recent Patristic discoveries, which will shed some new light on the early Latin tradition of the interpretation of Christ's Transfiguration on Mount Tabor. Origen's *Homiliae in Psalmos*, discovered in 2012, open a new chapter

transfigurabit, id est, μετασχηματίζει, membrorum, quibus nunc utimur, diversitas denegatur. Aliud nobis spirituale et aethereum promittitur: quod nec tactui subjacet, nec oculis cernitur, nec pondere praegravatur: et pro locorum, in quibus futurum est, varietate mutabitur.« (Hier., *Liber adversus Iohannem Hierosolymitanum* 26 [PL 23, 378A–B]). What Jerome is mentioning here, referring to the Phil 3:21, is the transformation of our bodies and conformation of them to Christ's glory. Cf. also Origenes, *HomLc* 17 (GCS 9, 104).

¹² »Legisse me fateor ante annos plurimos in Matheum Origenis viginti quinque volumina et totidem eius omelias commaticumque interpretationis genus, et Theophili Antiochenae urbis episcopi commentarios, Hippolyti quoque martyris et Theodori Heracleotae Apollinarisque Leodiceni ac Didimi Alexandrini et Latinorum Hilarii, Victorini, Fortunatiani opuscula, e quibus – etiam si parva carperem – dignum aliquid memoriae scriberetur.« (Hier., *Comm. in Mt.* Praef. [CCSL 77, 4–5])

in our understanding of the relation between Origen and Jerome; Fortunatian of Aquileia's *Commentarii in evangelia*, found in 2012 as well, are also very closely related to Jerome and, finally, an essential fragment of Chromace of Aquileia, discovered in 1978, could reveal to us a glimpse of the interpretation of the Transfiguration by Victorinus of Poetovio.

3.1 Origen's *Homiliae in Psalmos*: Christ's Body at the Transfiguration and Ps 15:9-10

In May 2012, in the *Codex Monacensis Graecus* 314 of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Marina Molin Pradel identified 29 of Origen's homilies, the Psalms of which only a few have been preserved in Latin translation. As one of the most significant Patristic discoveries over the last decades, it caused much interest since it shed new light on the person and work of the great Alexandrian scholar and many other Patristic works.

Apart from Origen's influence on Jerome's commentaries on the Gospels of Marc and Matthew, discussed above, we now find one interesting typical detail about the nature of Christ's body at the Transfiguration in both Origen's and Jerome's homilies on Psalm 15. Before Pradel's discovery, Jerome's authorship of 74 homilies of Psalms (*Tractatus lix in Psalmos* – CPL 592 and *Tractatum in Psalmos series altera* – CPL 593), written probably in 401, was convincingly challenged by Vittorio Peri, who claimed that Jerome only translated and did some minor redaction work of Origen's homilies on Psalms (Peri 1981; Coppa 1993, 13–32). Now, with the critical edition of the original 29 homilies of Origen (GCS NF 19), a reexamination of the corpus of Jerome's homilies can be done in order to elucidate Jerome's role.¹³

When commenting on Psalm 15, »My body, too, abides in confidence; because you will not abandon my soul to the nether world, nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.« (Ps 15:9-10a), Jerome asserts very clearly that this verse refers to Christ's descent to the dead with the confidence that he will rise again directly. This allows our exegete to introduce a discourse on the Lord's body and soul, addressing the union of Christ's perfect body (*caro perfecta*) and perfect soul (*anima perfecta*). He refutes here the heresy of Apollinarism, which – based on the Platonic triad of body, soul, and spirit –, argued that Jesus had an average human body, but with a divine mind, instead of a regular human soul.¹⁴

In Jerome's polemic against the Apollinarians, besides citations from the *Letter to the Oriental bishops* by pope Damasus, unambiguous use of Origenist themes is noticeable (Rondeau 1982, II, 145–156). Commenting on Ps 15:9-10, Jerome maintains that before his Incarnation, the Lord existed not as a composite but in a

¹³ In her doctoral dissertation, Elena Orlandi (2013) compared Jerome's and Origen's homilies on Psalms in a general prospective, arguing for a fair amount of Jerome's originality, whereas in her recent article (2018) she concentrated properly on their interpretation of Psalm 15.

¹⁴ Cf. also Jerome, *Hom. in Ps.* 108,31. Jerome uses the well-known Patristic soteriological axiom, *Quod non est assumptum, non est redemptum*, for expressing the sensitive soul (*sensus*) of the incarnated Logos and emphasizing Christ's liberty in accepting the passion as Father's will.

simple form (*simplex et incompositus*); only because composite man (*homo compositus*) was unable to bear the simplicity of God, he assumed our human composite nature (*venit et ipse compositus*). The idea of a human soul in Christ, separated from body descended to hell to save the souls separated from the bodies, has Origenist roots. Origen's expression »σύνθετόν τι χρῆμα« (*Contra Celsum* 1.66 [GCS 2, 119]) according to the Aristotelian and Stoic anthropology, describes the unity of Christ's soul and body, though without falling into the Apollinarian heresy.¹⁵

What Jerome stresses is that the body of Christ was the same when he suffered, died, and rose from the dead.

»If that same body arose from the dead in the Lord, how do some come to a conclusion that, though it some sort of wonderful and spiritual flesh, yet not like ours [*spiritalē quādam et magnā et non nostrā carnem*]? We are not saying that we deny the body of Christ assumed that glory that we believe we also are going to receive as saints, for then, indeed, this corruptible body will put on incorruption, and this mortal body will put on immortality (cf. 1 Cor 15:53).« (Hier., *Tractatus de psalmo* 15.9 [CCSL 78, 381–382])

Then is proceeded by a mention of the event of the Transfiguration:

»Just as before the Lord suffered His passion, when He was transformed and glorified on the mountain, He certainly had the same body that He had had down below, although of a different glory, so also after the Resurrection, His body was of the same nature as it had been before the passion, but of a higher state of glory and more majestic appearance.

[*Sed quodmodo ante quam pateretur transformatus et glorificatus in monte eandem utique carnem habuit quam habuerat et deorsum, licet alterius gloriae;*¹⁶ *sic et post resurrectionem eiusdem naturae in eo caro fuit quae ante passionem fuerat, sed glorificationis augustiorisque conspectus.*]« (15.9 [CCSL 78, 382])

By comparing Jerome's homily on Psalm 15 and Origen's newly discovered ho-

¹⁵ Jerome echoes Origen's doctrine on this problem very clearly. »Quia animae absque corporibus apud inferos tenebantur, quae in sua natura sunt simplices, et ipsa derelicta carne, non Deus Verbum, non homo compositus, sed anima descendit ad inferos.« (*Tractatus de psalmo* 15.9 [CCSL 78, 382–383]); »Deus filius, Deus Verbum quamdiu in caelis fuit, et homines non tantum peccauerunt ut ad eos ipse descenderet, simplex et incompositus cum angelis thronis dominationibus ceterisque uirtutibus morabatur. Quando uero descendit ad homines, eos uidelicet qui ex anima et corpore compacti erant, uenit et ipse compositus, ne compositi simplicem ferre non possent.« (15.9 [CCSL 78, 382]). Cf. »Μόνη ἡ ψυχὴ εἰς ἄδου καταβέβηκεν, ὅπου μόνον ψυχαὶ ἦσαν. Εἰ καὶ ἐνθάδε ψυχαὶ μόνον ἦσαν καὶ μὴ ἦν τὸ ζῶον σύνθετον, οὐκ ἂν ἐηλύθει ἐνθάδε σύνθετος. Ὅθεν πλανῶνται οἱ λέγοντες ὅτι οὐ σύνθετος ὁ σωτὴρ ἐπιδηδήμηκεν, ἀλλὰ ἀναλαβὼν σῶμα ὅμοιον τῆ ὑπερεχούσῃ τοῦ αὐτοῦ λόγου οὐσία, μᾶλλον δὲ ταῦτόν τῆ οὐσίᾳ τοῦ λόγου, καὶ ὅτι ἡ ψυχὴ ταύτῃ τῆ οὐσίᾳ τοῦ λόγου ἦν. Οὗτοι δὲ ἀθετοῦσι τὴν χρηστότητα αὐτοῦ ἐνδυσσαμένου τὸν σύνθετον ἄνθρωπον «καὶ» λέγοντος· ἡ σὰρξ μου κατασκηνώσει ἐπ' ἐλπίδι, οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχὴν μου εἰς τὸν ἄδην. Ὅπου οὖν γυμναὶ ψυχαὶ ἦσαν, ψυχὴ μόνη καταβέβηκεν· ὅπου οὖν σύνθετον τὸ ζῶον ἦν, ὁ σύνθετος ἦλθε μετὰ ψυχῆς.« (Origenes, *H15Ps* II 8 [GCS NF 19, 108–109]).

¹⁶ Cf. Jerome's expressions: »Gloria comutatur.« (*Comm. in Mt.* 3. 17,2 [CCSL 77, 147]); »Sed mutare eam gloriam, non mutare naturam.« (*Commentarium in Ionam* 2,7 [PL 25, 1136])

mily II on Psalm 15, it becomes evident that the Stridonian took the reference to the Transfiguration from the latter but developed his interpretation according to the Apollinaristic polemic regarding Christ's soul and body, emphasizing the oneness of Christ's body even at the event of the Transfiguration. Origen, however, in his newly discovered homily also explores the meaning of Christ's Incarnation through Transfiguration:

»If by descending came down also to the angels – he came from the heights of the heavens – perhaps he was formed according to the place. And so as in this life he was transfigured in front of those who ascended together with him to the mountain and revealed himself gloriously (Matt 17:1-8), so as well when he came from the Father.

[Εἰ καταβαίνων καταβέβηκε καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἀγγέλους – ἦλθε γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀκρωρείας τῶν οὐρανῶν –, τάχα κατὰ τόπον ἐμορφώθη. Καὶ ὡσπερ ἐν τῷ βίῳ τούτῳ μετεμορφώθη ἔμπροσθεν τῶν συναναβεβηκότων αὐτῷ εἰς τὸ ὄρος καὶ ἐνδοξότερος ἐφάνη, οὕτως καταβαίνων ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς.]« (Or., *H15Ps* II 8 [GCS NF 19, 109])

The difference is that Origen composes his interpretation by discussing epistemological problems, arguing for the s.c. *polymorphic epistemology*, by which everyone perceives the Lord in their way since He reveals himself in different forms,¹⁷ and Jerome, on the contrary, continues explaining why the Lord had to assume our human composite nature, despite possessing the more straightforward divine nature.¹⁸ The fact that both Origen and Jerome introduced similar references to Christ's Transfiguration, when interpreting an otherwise very different passage from the Psalm 15, clearly supports the strong influence of the Alexandrian on Jerome and these findings became possible only after the discovery of Origen's lost homilies on Psalms. Although they accentuate different aspects, the relevance of Origen for Jerome's understanding of the Transfiguration is thus even more firmly established.

¹⁷ »Ἐπεὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος, καταβαίνων ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς οὐκ ἔμεινε ὁποῖος ἦν πρότερον ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν· οὐ γὰρ ἐχώρουν αὐτὸν οἱ κατώτεροι, ἀλλ' ὡσπερ ἐμοὶ γέγονεν ἄνθρωπος, οὕτως παρ' ἄλλοις ἄγγελος καὶ παρ' ἄλλοις θρόνος, κυριότης, ἀρχή, ἐξουσία· καὶ ἐκάστῳ γίνεται τι ὁ κύριος, ὅπερ ἕκαστος δύναται αὐτὸν χωρῆσαι. Τί λέγω τότε; Καὶ σήμερον ὁ λόγος μεταμορφοῦται. Οὐχ ὁμοίως αὐτὸν βλέπει Παῦλος καὶ Τιμόθεος· ἔνδοξον, μεταμορφούμενον ἐπὶ τὸ θεϊότερον, βλέπει αὐτὸν Παῦλος μᾶλλον ἢ Τιμόθεος· ἔλαττον αὐτοῦ τὴν δόξαν βλέπει Τιμόθεος. Κἂν ἐλάττονα ἐκείνου νοήσης, ὅπει ἐλάττονα μορφὴν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ τῷ ἐλάττοτι ἐμφαινόμενου. Ἐὰν δέ τις ἦ πάνυ ἁμαρτωλός, ὁλως οὐ βλέπει τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ βλέπει αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔχοντα εἶδος οὐδὲ κάλλος, ἀλλὰ τὸ εἶδος αὐτοῦ ἄτιμον ἐκλείπει παρὰ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων· ἄνθρωπον αὐτὸν βλέπει, ἄνθρωπον οὐκ ἀπλήγα ἀλλ' ἐν πληγῇ. Ἐὰν ἦς ἐν πληγῇ, ἐν πληγῇ αὐτὸν βλέπεις· ἐὰν ἦς ἀπλήγης, ἀπλήγα αὐτὸν ὄψει· ἐὰν ἦς ἄμωμος, ὅπει αὐτὸν σοὶ ἄμωμον ἑαυτὸν ἐπιδεικνύοντα. Οὐχ ὅτι αὐτὸς ποτε μεμώμηται ἢ ὅτι αὐτὸς ποτε πέπληγε· τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν φέρει καὶ περὶ ἡμῶν ὀδυνᾶται, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐλογισάμεθα αὐτὸν εἶναι ἐν πόνῳ καὶ ἐν πληγῇ καὶ ἐν κακώσει. Ταῦτα διὰ τὸ οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχὴν μου εἰς τὸν ἄδην. Ἐδεῖ γὰρ παραστήσαι, ὅτι γυμνῇ ψυχῇ πρὸς ψυχὰς γενένηται.« (Origenes, *H15Ps* II 8 [GCS NF 19, 109–110]) See also a recent study of Leoni (2021).

¹⁸ Curiously, Jerome states also his conviction that only Christ's soul descended into hell, not his body and not the God-Word, what appears foreign to Catholic belief, since it has been accepted *cum fide*, that the Word of God descended to hell simultaneously with the soul of Christ. Cf. also Theophilus of Alexandria, *Easter Letter of the year 402* (98.7), translated by Jerome. See Ewald 1996, 35, n. 107.

3.2 Fortunatian of Aquileia's *Commentarii in evangelia*

In October of the same year, 2012, Lukas Dorfbauer discovered the work *Commentarii in evangelia* (CSEL 103) and ascribed it to the Fortunatian of Aquileia, African bishop of this northern Italian Roman city. In Codex 17 of the Archdiocesan library of Köln from the beginning of the 9th century, he identified a commentary on the Gospels, which had been anonymously lying in oblivion for around 1500 years. However, he proved to be probably the oldest preserved Latin Gospel commentary, written in the middle of the 4th century.

The relation between Jerome and Fortunatian is complex and very intriguing (Bogataj 2018; 2020a). Jerome certainly knew at least Fortunatian's *Commentary* and maybe even the man himself in person.

Fortunatian's work is generally transmitted only in part and, unfortunately, does not include any reference to the Transfiguration account. In the form as it is preserved, there are also some other remarkable lacunae: there is no commentary on the Lord's Prayer, Fortunatian remains silent on a section as long as Matthew 21:42–23:22, his account on Jesus' crucifixion and burial (Matthew 26 and 27) is both lacunose and relatively cursory, and he does not devote a single section on Matthew's concluding chapter 28 narrating Jesus' Resurrection.

As opposed to the discovery of Origen's homilies, which shed new light on Jerome's interpretation of the Transfiguration, Fortunatian's commentary offers us new evidence only *ex silentio*.¹⁹ Without falling into hypothetical speculation, can the question – Why is the comment on the Transfiguration not included in Fortunatian's work – offer at least some different considerations? On the level of textual criticism, the whole text may just not be transmitted in the manuscript tradition. Was there no interest in specific passages, or may there be some correlation with the needs of the commentary's original audience that we fail to see? Was the original author unable to provide an interpretation, or are the omissions indebted to the lack of the appropriate sources? Could there have been some redaction of the text, eliminating the Transfiguration account on behalf of some doctrinal polemics? We suppose, for example, that Augustine abstained from emphasizing this Gospel narrative because the Manicheans over-emphasized it.²⁰

No firm answer to these questions is possible, and perhaps, until further evidence emerges, we can do no more than speculate. Nevertheless, Dorfbauer (2015) demonstrated that the North Italian preacher living in the 5th or 6th century, whose works are gathered in the collection of the so-called *Epiphanius Latinus*, was well acquainted with the work both of Fortunatian (and Chromace) (2015), it is possible to suggest that in Epiphanius' *Interpretatio Evangeliorum* (CPL 914), sermons 29 and especially 47 (Erikson 1939, 49, 113–118), encompass some kind of 'North Italian (maybe Aquileian)' interpretation. For Epiphanius, the Transfigura-

¹⁹ For some insights regarding this topic I am indebted to Lukas Dorfbauer.

²⁰ Although Pintard (1972) and Louth (2000) do not explicitly mention this theory, and the issue would require further research, it is nevertheless true that the Transfiguration did not have the same significance for Augustine as it did in the East.

tion of Christ is vital, especially as evidence of Christ's divinity. In both sermons, the author emphasizes Christ's glory and Moses and Elijah as testimonies, and this part of the comment follows Chromace's exposition almost *verbatim* (Dorfbauer 2015, 101).²¹ However, Chromace, a couple of decades after Fortunatian, wrote a long and vital treatise on this great mystery of Christ's life.

3.3 Chromace of Aquileia and Victorinus of Poetovio

Only seventeen treatises on the Gospel of Matthew and one homily on the eight beatitudes by Chromace of Aquileia were known until Henri Lemarié in 1969 discovered and published another thirty-eight sermons. In the following years, he found three more texts in a 12th-century homiliary (Codex 8) of the abbey San Silvestro de Fabriano library in central Italy, which he attributed to Chromace (CCSL 9A Suppl.). Among them, *Tractatus in Matthaem* 54A – in the homiliary it was intended for the first Saturday of Lent and, interestingly, attributed to Jerome –, contains an interpretation of the Transfiguration event (Matt 16:28–17:9). Lemarié presented this treatise at the Oxford International Conference for Patristic studies in 1979 and comparing the text with that of other similar works, including both Jerome's *Commentarium in Matthaem* and *Tractatus in Marcum*, demonstrated the originality of Chromace as well as some literary influences, but not the one of Jerome (1980, 213–222).

However, even of greater interest is a tiny detail, one word precisely, in Chromace's explanation of the three tents (Matt 17:4).²² In assigning three different meanings to them – heaven, paradise, and earth – Chromace refers to an older source: »maiores intellexerunt«. This is the only example of this word in his work and could, according to Lemarié, derive from a millennialist author, presumably Victorinus of Poetovio (CCSL 9A Suppl., 635; Lemarié 1980, 220, n. 17). After the discovery of Fortunatian's *Commentarii in evangelia*, although we are well aware of Chromace's heavy dependence on the work of his predecessor in Aquileia,²³ we know that, though he could have been among Chromace's *maiores*, he probably was not (unless the passage on the Transfiguration disappeared from the work during the transmission of the text).

A strikingly similar interpretation of the three tents can be found in the work *De arca Noe* of Gregory of Elvira – preserved for centuries under the name of Origen and only in 1909 attributed to Gregory by A. Wilmart –, where the Iberian bishop delivers a very similar commentary on the three-chambered ark, cit-

²¹ Cf. Epiphanius, *Interpretatio Evangeliorum* 29; 47 (Erikson 1939, 49; 115) and Chromatius, *Sermo* 22.2 (CCSL 9A, 101).

²² »In tribus autem tabernaculis de quibus ait Petrus ad Dominum: »Domine, si uis, faciam tria tabernacula, tres mansiones, id est caeli, paradisi et terrae significatas maiores intellexerunt, quae per uniuersis credentibus tam per Moysen, id est per legem, tam etiam per Heliam, id est per prophetas, quam etiam per ipsum Dominum, id est per euangelicam praedicationem, pro qualitate meritum a Domino repromissae sunt.« (Chromatius, *Tractatus* 54A.10 [CCSL 9A Suppl., 635])

²³ After Fortunatian, and before Chromace, Valerianus was bishop of Aquileia. For the relations between Fortunatian and Chromace, see CSEL 103, 51, n. 142.

ing the same biblical verses as Chromace (John 14:2; Isa 40:31; Matt 13:8).²⁴ As Lemarié suggested, there would have been one common source of both Gregory and Chromace, and the probabilities direct us to Victorinus' unfortunately lost *Commentary on Matthew*.

4. Conclusion

By examining Jerome's interpretation of Christ's Transfiguration, we can prove the importance of this Biblical event for Jerome and his exegesis. It has become clear that, despite the fact of its absence from Fortunatian's *Commentarii in evangelia*, the event of Christ revealing his divine glory on Mount Tabor had an essential role in the early Latin Biblical interpretation.

Why did the event of Transfiguration not become a central point for understanding Christ in Western theology as it has in the Eastern Greek tradition? One conclusion can be drawn from our investigation since Jerome did accept from Origen the great importance of the Transfiguration, but Augustine, on the other hand, did not. The role of Jerome's work is, therefore, of much importance since it represents some echoes of the Origenistic theology in Latin.

²⁴ Cf. »Ideo etiam dudum arca in similitudine ecclesiae tricamerata fieri iussa est, ut illic quoque ipsa mansio-
nem diuersitatem ostenderetur, de quibus scriptum et apud Esaiam inuenimus, ubi dicitur: *Volabunt sicut
aquilae*, id est hi quibus caelestis mansio debetur. Et addidit: *Currunt et non fatigabuntur*, hi scilicet qui in
paradisum transferentur; *ambulabunt et non esurient*, hi utique qui in terra, renouato mundo, regnabunt.
Quod id ipsum etiam tripertito fructu terrae illius optimae, id est in centesimo, sexagesimo et tricesimo,
significatum potest intellegi.« (Chromatius, *Tractatus* 54A.10 [CCSL 9A Suppl., 635]) »Quod autem bicame-
rata et tricamerata arca fuisse refertur, mansionum loca et habitationem qualitates, quae sanctis in regno
dei sunt praeparatae, euidenter ostendit. In una etenim camera paradisi figura est, in altera terrae nouae,
– ubi Ierusalem caelestis est descendura, /.../ –; in tertia camera caelorum regnum. Inde est quod et salu-
ator noster ac dominus in euangelio dicebat: *Multae sunt habitationes apud patrem meum qui est in caelo*.
Sic autem de caelorum regno scriptum est: *Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam, quia ipso-
rum est regnum caelorum*. De paradisi autem mansionem ipse utique dominus probat cum dicit: *Vincenti*,
ait, *dabo edere de ligno uitae, quod est in paradiso mei*. Terrae autem nouae mansionem similiter manife-
stat, cum dicit: *Beati mansueti, quia ipsi possidebunt terram*; sed et Salomon: *Sancti*, ait, *relinquentur super
terram, impii autem expellentur ab ea*. Harum itaque tripartitam rationem mansionum sanctorum etiam et apostolis
suis in euangelio dominus per parabolam manifestasse dignatus est dicens: *Semen, quod cecidit in terram
bonam, faciet*, ait, *fructum centesimum*. Centesimum itaque fructum facient, qui in caelum habitationes
accipiunt, sexagesimum, qui in paradiso habitare merentur, tricesimum, qui in terram nouam futuri sunt.
Vnde iam planum uobis esse debet arcam istam tricameratam ecclesiae, ut saepe dixi, catholicae imaginem
perspicue indicasse, cuius tripartita habitacula, id est caeli, paradisi et terrae nouae, retro olim a domino
monstrabatur.« (Gregorius Illiberitanus, *De arca Noe* 15–20 [CCSL 69, 151–152])

Abbreviations

- CCSL – Corpus Christianorum Series Latina.
 CPE – Connaissance des Pères de l'Église.
 CPL – Clavis Patrum Latinorum.
 GCS (NF) – Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller (Neue Folge).
 PL – Patrologia Latina.

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Marjan Turnšek
**Zakramenti uvajanja v skrivnostno življenje
cerkvenega organizma**

Delo posreduje in uveljavlja nekatera nova spoznanja na področju zakramentov uvajanja, predvsem pa odpira nove vidike za praktično, to je pastoralno področje. V cerkveni pa tudi v ekumenski medkrščanski prostor monografija prinaša doprinos v smeri krepitve dialoga in zблиževanja v teološkem razumevanju zakramentov. V najširšem smislu monografija prispeva h krepitvi kulture samovrednotenja človeka kot osebe pa tudi k poglobljenemu razumevanju in ustvarjanju pristnih medčloveških odnosov.

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Chris Synodinos

Jerome's *Contra Johannem* and ps.-Basil's *De consolatione in adversis* on resurrection and disability

Hieronimov Contra Johannem in ps.-Bazilijev De consolatione in adversis o vstajenju in telesnih okvarah

Abstract: This paper concerns disability and bodily resurrection, the latter being a topic that has bemused Christian theologians from the beginning. Specifically, this paper concerns Jerome's treatise *Contra Johannem*, directed against John of Jerusalem, a putative Origenist, and *De consolatione in adversis* attributed to ps.-Basil. The author of *Cons.* was concerned with the nature of the resurrected body regarding a particular class of disabled people, viz., an audience of lepers, whereas Jerome focuses on the resurrection of the flesh in general. There is some evidence to suggest *Cons.* is somehow linked, even if implicitly and indirectly, to the Origenist controversy, which primarily concentrates on the nature of the resurrected body. The two prevailing related themes in *Cons.*, to wit, leprosy, and the flesh's resurrection, relate to the body. It is interesting that the only two codices containing this work also contain Jerome's epistle *Contra Johannem*. These two works occur again in the *editio princeps* (Paris 1528). The significance of this thematic connection remains to be explained, and St. Jerome's influence clarified.

Keywords: affliction, leprosy, redemptive suffering, the resurrection of the flesh, spiritual body, Origenism, resurrection body, garment of glory, garment of brilliance

Povzetek: Članek obravnava temo telesne okvare in telesnega vstajenja, pri tem pa je telesno vstajenje področje, ki je krščanske teologe zaposlovalo že od začetka. Natančneje, ta članek zadeva Hieronimovo razpravo *Contra Johannem*, ki je usmerjena proti Janezu Jeruzalemskemu, domnevnemu origenistu, in proti delu *De consolatione in adversis*, pripisano Ps.-Baziliju. Avtor *De consolatione* se ukvarja z naravo vstalega telesa glede na razred telesne okvare, namreč gobavcev, medtem ko se Hieronim osredotoča na vstajenje mesa na splošno. Obstaja nekaj dokazov, ki kažejo, da je *De consolatione* povezan, tudi če le implicitno in posredno, z origenistično polemiko, ki se ukvarja predvsem z naravo vstalega telesa. Obe prevladujoči povezani temi v *De consolatione*, gobavost in

vstajenje mesa, zadevata telo. Zanimivo je, da edina kodeksa, ki vsebujeta to delo, vsebujeta tudi Hieronimovo pismo *Contra Johannem*. Obe deli ponovno nastopata v *editio princeps* (Pariz 1528). Pomen te tematske povezave je treba še pojasniti, razjasniti pa kaže tudi vpliv sv. Hieronima.

Ključne besede: bolezen, gobavost, odrešitveno trpljenje, vstajenje mesa, duhovno telo, origenizem, vstajenje, oblačilo slave, oblačilo sijaja

This paper concerns disability and bodily resurrection, the latter being a topic that has bemused Christian theologians from the beginning. Specifically, this paper concerns Jerome's treatise *Contra Johannem Hierosolymitanum ad Pammachium* (= *Contra Johannem*), which is directed against John of Jerusalem, a putative Origenist, and *De consolatione in adversis* (= *Cons.*) attributed to ps.-Basil (PG 31, 1687C–1704B). The latter treatise, a work transmitted in Latin, was the subject of my doctoral dissertation, in which I argued that St. Radegundis of Poitiers (c. 520–587) was the author (Synodinos 2010). The author of *Cons.* was concerned with the nature of the resurrected body concerning a particular class of disabled people, viz., an audience of lepers, disabled, whereas Jerome focuses on the resurrection of the flesh in general. There is some evidence to suggest *Cons.* is somehow linked, even if implicitly and indirectly, to the Origenist controversy, which primarily concentrates on the nature of the resurrected body. The two prevailing related themes in *Cons.*, to wit, leprosy, and the flesh's resurrection, relate to the body.¹ It is interesting that the only two codices containing this work also contain Jerome's epistle *Contra Johannem*. These two works occur again in the *editio princeps* (Paris 1528). The significance of this thematic connection remains to be explained, and St. Jerome's influence clarified.

The preacher of *Cons.*, a sermon in the diatribe style, is confronted with a composite task: an audience of lepers needs to be comforted and guided, but above all, it needs to be set straight on the involvement of Providence in their suffering. Moreover, this audience must be corrected in their distorted speculations on the state of their resurrection body as conditioned by their dreadful disability. This audience see in their suffering a penalty of sin, a retribution occasioned by their conduct, and construe their affliction not only as a mark of divine judgment but of divine abandonment as well. In addition, they compound their misfortune by taking it a step further to the level of resurrection and everlasting life, apparently maintaining that the affliction under which they labour in the present life will somehow prevail beyond death and condition the state of their resurrection body as well and that they will rise as lepers on the appointed day for all eternity (*Cons.*, PG 31, 1700A). Notwithstanding, there is always the possibility that they qualify the view they entertain on the kind of resurrection they expect for themselves – viz., that they will rise as lepers in everlasting life – that they hold it to be valid only if the resurrection is construed as resurrection in the flesh, and that accordingly, on account of this qualified belief, they have already endorsed a different type of resurrection theory by the time they are being addressed. However, this may be,

¹ For an excellent general reflection on suffering related to flesh, see Mensch 2019.

detecting this subliminal meaning cued by the audience's sentiments of profound dejection and arising from it, the preacher endeavours earnestly in her sermon to maintain a balance between alleviating pain and eradicating implicit disbelief.

It is unclear how the lepers concluded by endorsing such a grim prospect for their resurrectional future or by whom or what they were prompted to do so. Nonetheless, two preliminary relevant facts can be gleaned with relative certainty from the preacher's address. The first is that their distorted perception of the resurrection seems alarming enough to warrant the preacher's intervention in matters of redemptive significance. The second fact is the vague reference to some party whom the preacher implicates in her audience's endorsement of contorted eschatological principles:

»Non te ergo dilectissime, corporis damna contristent, sed quidquid dominus miserit, gratulanter et viriliter suffer /... / Novi enim quosdam – maxime eos qui leprae macula fuerint corde asparsi – in tantum disperationem pro hac plaga venire, ut putent se omnino destitutos esse a domino.

[Let not afflictions of the body grieve you, then, beloved, but whatever God has sent firmly and joyously endure /... / For I know that some—clearly those who are dear to me, tainted as they with their taint of leprosy – have fallen into such despair on account of this misfortune that they think the Lord has completely forsaken them.]« (1698A–B)²

Here, *dilectissime* presumably refers to the audience, while *quosdam* appears to involve a different group. The relation and interactions between the audience and the unnamed party, which the fantastic interlocutor represents,³ are not specified. True, when lashing out at the fantastic interlocutor in brisk, typically diatribe style, indicting him on charges of arbitrary, scripturally unfounded eschatological interpretation of the resurrection, the preacher may by gently censoring the audience as well by indicting it indirectly on the same charge. Nevertheless, the imaginary interlocutor here is more of an interlocutor *in absentia* than an imaginary one, since, despite the indefinite pronoun in the apostrophe *quisquis ille es*, »whomever you may be,« with which the fantastic interlocutor is addressed, the preacher has in mind a particular group of people, possibly other than the audience, some party she knows of with whom the audience share the same affliction and with whose aberrant tenets they have blurred their belief in the resurrection.

Conversely, the unnamed party here typified by the fantastic interlocutor may, for all practical purposes, stand for the audience, whom the speaker advisedly

² All translations are mine unless otherwise stated.

³ The diatribe has been generally defined as a hybrid between declamation and dialogue. The most fundamental feature of the diatribe's dialogic element in its fully developed form is the imaginary, or fantastic, addressee, a fictitious interlocutor who interrupts the speaker's disquisition, in general as the mouthpiece for the common opinion, and may have a succinct dialogical exchange with the speaker. As a rule, the interruption of the fictitious interlocutor amounts to an objection or a false conclusion, stated in conformity with a set of formal features. The speaker's reply to the fictitious interlocutor likewise follows similar formal patterns.

does not name out of compassion and courtesy in a kind of politeness strategy. From the meagre facts presented in this homily, complicated as they are by the preacher's diatribe style, the relation of the two parties cannot be conclusively ascertained. What matters, however, is the twisted eschatological ideology here revealed: the preacher is likely aware of the fact that the corollary of such extravagant dogmatics may be for the audience to persist in the idea of the resurrection per se while dropping that of the resurrection of the flesh in the long run—that is, if they have not done so already as previously stated. For the lepers must realize that the possibility for the disease to spill over into the life to come can potentially be afforded only by its clinging on to flesh—in this case, to flesh made eternal—in other words, by encroaching on the fleshy materiality of their resurrected bodies.

Neither is it clear whether they hold their views unconditionally or consider them by qualifying them somehow. The preacher's entreaty, *ne velis*, etc. (1699A), indeed allows for both of these alternatives. As regards the second of the two, the audience may, for instance, have already opted for some spiritual bodily resurrection after being convinced of their resurrection in leprosy if belief in the resurrection were to be construed as the resurrection of the flesh. The possibility of such reasoning on the part of the audience may again be detected in yet another of the preacher's attempts at allaying her audience's resurrectional fears by urging them to suppress their *mortiferam suspicionem*, their »spiritually deadly notion, laden with mistrust« (1700A). It is evident that in the audience's terrified minds flesh made eternal could somehow be represented as affording a chance – however slim – for the disease to spread into life everlasting by feeding on their fleshy limbs in their resurrection status; and that the nervous shock sustained in consequence of this dreadful prospect could easily lead them to reject the resurrection of the flesh unreservedly altogether. Accordingly, it would somehow seem that in this audience's case, the spillover of the disease into the next world hinges upon the fleshy materiality of the body and that this spillover could be checked by removing the flash from the picture altogether.

Nevertheless, the survival of the body in its fleshy materiality after attaining to a resurrection status is a highly-charged, controversial issue that plagued Christian dogmatics during the Origenist crisis; and the question is if the extravagant beliefs entertained by the disabled audience of the current sermon are somehow connected with Origenist views, as seems to be indicated at least at the corollary level. If this is so, and if the affinity claimed between Origenist doctrines and this audience's set of beliefs is tenable – as seems to be the case in light of the implications of such beliefs for the audience in the manner previously analyzed – then some contextual relations tentatively identified between this sermon and some of the literature involved in the Origenist controversy would appear to stand on more solid ground. One such instance worth investigating would be the case of affinities between *Cons.* strategies and ideas and those occurring in Jerome's *Contra Johannem*. And this possible connection between *Cons.* and *Contra Johannem*, at any rate, would tend to indicate that the coincident occurrence of both these works in the extant witnesses, MSS Tours 281 and Caen 34 (373), may be the result of a

deliberate decision made by some party involved in these witnesses' production based on the common ground these two pieces share in certain aspects. Such a claim is undoubtedly attractively plausible for MS Caen 34 (373) for one in that Caen is already a selective apograph of Tours, the oldest extant witness, but it can certainly be true of Tours itself as well and possibly of some antecedent witness or witnesses reflected in Tours. Furthermore, to say that Radegundis of Poitiers was likely reading the *Contra Johannem* among other sources of inspiration in composing this sermon seems to imply that the preacher herself may have detected Origenist overtones in her audience's interpretation of and outlook on the resurrection of the flesh.

Of all the scriptural figures summoned into action in the course of this sermon, Job is the most prominent concerning his importance in exemplifying the circumstances and ideas that the preacher has set herself the task to get across. Job pre-eminently typifies and embodies the suffering of the righteous, almost in a Stoic fashion, as *vir philosophicus* (*Cons.*, PG 31, 1694A), and scriptural segments of exchanges between Job and his wife are used to cast them both in character roles of lively, diatribe-like sketches. Regardless of the audience's unknown actual choice of a resurrectional model at the time they are being addressed, that this choice is conditioned by their understanding of the resurrection of the flesh as it pertains to them and that, accordingly, their cacodoxy consists precisely in that understanding is manifest from some of the preacher's appeals (1702B). Job is assigned an essential role in the preacher's endeavour to refute this cacodoxy. He is called upon to attest to his belief in the resurrection, which he construes as resurrection in his flesh (1701B). Because he bears witness to his conviction while he is entirely in thrall to the disease and his flesh is infected, the preacher infers that he hoped to rise again healed and cleansed of his affliction and that it was precisely this expectation that sustained him in his ineffable suffering (1701A).

However, the same strategy of citing this very passage and explicating it by way of drawing the very same inference to the advantage of the argument at hand likewise occurs in Jerome's *Contra Johannem*, in the section arguing the resurrection of the flesh (*Contra Johannem*, PL 23, 373C–389A). Nearly two-thirds of the ten scriptural passages cited in treating the *Cons.* variation of the same topic in the dedicated portion of this work, including the three longest ones and critical to the treatment of the resurrection of the flesh in *Cons.*, namely, Job 19,25-27; 1 Cor 15,35-38, and 1 Cor 15,42-44, occur in *Contra Johannem* as well.⁴ Of these, 1 Cor 15 is a crucial text, fundamental to establishing doctrinal realities respecting the resurrection of the dead. It »contains the fullest treatment of the resurrection /... / found anywhere in the Bible« (Hoekema 1979, 247). The fourth section of 1 Cor 15,35-50, from which the passage cited in both *Contra Johannem* and *Cons.* is derived, contains ideas that had admitted from the outset of manifold interpretations, on which fed the folly of all heretical sects in their disputes with the Church

⁴ Two Matthew passages that appear to be implicitly mutually linked with reference to the common ground *Cons.* and *CJ* share in treating the resurrection body will be discussed in more detail later. Cf. also Scobie 2011.

on matters of resurrection, on Irenaeus's evidence (Swete 1908, 93). Thus, it does not come as a surprise that 1 Cor 15,35-38, occurring in *Contra Johannem* and in *Cons.*, is used in both these works in response to what is perceived as a doctrinal perversion of the parties addressed.

Moreover, as regards the particular citation of Job's passage in both works, Job is styled as *athleta Ecclesiae* in *Contra Johannem* (PL 23, 382A), while in *Cons.* he is said »to strip naked for his contest as is the custom among athletes« [*mos enim est athletarum ut ad certamen nudi procedant*] (1694B). Besides Job, Jerome enlists help from Enoch and Elijah, who were assumed while being still in the flesh, to support his argument against the purported Origenism of John of Jerusalem. Enoch and Elijah are said to be presently »inhabitants of paradise« (*paradisi coloni*) (*Contra Johannem*, PL 23, 381B), while in *Cons.*, in a moving appeal to the *frater*, viz., the audience collectively addressed, the preacher urges him to become *paradisi colonus* by suffering patiently in this life (1699A). True, Enoch and Elijah do not feature in *Cons.* to suggest that, like *athleta* in Job, the designation *paradisi colonus* may imply an additional possible link between *Cons.* and *Contra Johannem*. However, the case of such link between these works is bolstered if the occurrence of the designations mentioned above in the *Cons.* diction is not regarded as a mere accident but as a silent incident of subconscious recollection of Jerome's text, peripheral to what appears to be the conscious borrowing of nearly the entire Bible of *Cons.* (1700A–1702C) from *Contra Johannem* for the reasons previously submitted. So far, then, we have discussed Job 19,25-27, and 1 Cor. 15,35-38, the two of the three longest Biblical quotations, which *Cons.* contains and shares with *Contra Johannem* regarding the resurrection of the flesh. In both works, we have posited that the Pauline passage and Job's testimony are solicited to evince the ultimately established doctrine of the Church on the resurrection of the dead, which is properly construed as the resurrection of the flesh. Accordingly, *Cons.* and *Contra Johannem* may be said to share: 1. common doctrinal challenges respecting the resurrection of the flesh; 2. the same strategy in using Job 19,25-27 and 1 Cor 15,35-38 to address issues arising from their respective challenges; 3. the same end aimed at, namely, resolving eschatological distortions and ambiguities concerning the resurrection body in conformity with the ultimately established view of the Church.

In *Cons.* the lepers are promised to »put on a heavenly body« (*caeleste corpus induere*) (1702A–1702B), with the diction picking up on the outfit imagery of the Pauline passage – much like in *Contra Johannem* (PL 23, 381A). This 'heavenly body', however, that the preacher promises her lepers in *Cons.* is not a new body, but – to judge from the Bible cited – their very same body, which, as understood in Job's statement, »I shall be wrapped with my own skin and with my own flesh« [*circumdabor pelle mea et /... / carne mea*] (1701B), is shaped or transformed for the better: »in id ipsum corpus /.../ in melius conformari.« (1701A). It is called 'heavenly' in that it reflects the state proper for it to enter the 'heavenly kingdom' (*regnum caeleste*);⁵ but it is indubitably its old self – extinct flesh, desiccated bones

⁵ 'Heavenly body' (*corpus caeleste*) seems to be a term suggested by 1 Cor. 15.40, cited in both *Cons.* (PG

and all (1702B) – revived to be converted, viz., to suffer a dramatic, enhanced qualitative change: *in melius transformari* (1702B). This change is manifested in the qualitatively new attribute of its resurrection state, viz., its ‘heavenly splendour’, *claritate caelestium*, an attribute also said to ‘be worn’, *immortalis splendorem induere* in everlasting life (1701B). The body that undergoes these changes in the resurrection is consequently time and again explicitly said in *Cons.* to consist of skin, flesh, and bones, modified for the better (1701B; 1702B). As regards the clothing trope referred to, *immortalis splendorem induere*, it must be observed that *splendorem induere* comes immediately next to *immortalis* – a predicative adjective indicating the state in which the transformed person will ‘put on’ their new corporeal attribute, to wit, their brilliance: »you will wear this brilliance when you are immortal.« The textual proximity of the two notions, ‘immortality’ and ‘brilliance’, suggests mutual concomitance, as if one is accessory to the other; or better still, as if this brilliance is the outward appearance of the idea or state of immortality embodied. Accordingly, the ‘splendour’ which is metaphorically ‘put on’ must be the ‘splendour of immortality’. The attire imagery in *Cons.* is undoubtedly suggested by 1 Cor 15,53: »corruptibile hoc induerit incorruptionem, et mortale hoc induerit immortalitatem« – »for this corruptible must put on incorruption: and this mortal must put on immortality,« cited in it as well as in *Contra Johannem* (*Cons.*, PG 31, 1702A–B; *Contra Johannem*, PL 23, 381A). In *Cons.* the resurrection body is invested with the splendour of immortality or puts on brilliance in its immortal state; in *Contra Johannem* it wears the garment of immortality, which bestows glory on it (381A). Notwithstanding, a close conceptual affinity in imagery and key terms which is found between these two works in their respective explications of 1 Cor 15,53 cannot, as regards *Cons.*, be explained by a coincident or spontaneous eagerness of the author to continue along the lines of the imagery of the common Pauline source – at least not entirely. Rather, in *Cons.*, even if to some extent, this affinity needs to be considered in light of the other points of common interest that *Cons.* shares with *Contra Johannem*, as previously detailed. However this may be, a note should still be taken of the fact that in *Cons.* the term used to name the one property mentioned about a body clad in immortality as peculiar to it is ‘brilliance’ (*splendor, claritas*), while the related term in *Contra Johannem* is ‘glory’ (*gloria*). However, although ‘glory’ in the *Contra Johannem* exegesis of 1 Cor 15,53 is a choice consistent with the Latin translation of Paul’s Greek term δόξα in 1 Cor 15,42–44 (378A), ‘brilliance’ or ‘splendour’, which occurs in *Cons.* instead, is not an inconsistent surrogate term for it – especially in light of the general tenor of Jerome’s text.

The distance between the *gloria* of the resurrection body in *Contra Johannem* and the *claritas* of the same in *Cons.* is but a step. The *claritas* of the body in the

31, 1702A) and in *Contra Johannem* (PL 23, 379B). But the interpretation of *corpora caelestia* in *CJ* differs considerably from that found in *Cons.*, except in one place in *Contra Johannem*, where Jerome’s reference seems to be to an implied »heavenly body« construed in a way kindred to that found in *Cons.*; see *Contra Johannem*, PL 23, 381B, where Jerome’s refers to the resurrection body as »*domicilium* [viz., *corpus*, supplied from *Contra Johannem*, PL 23, 381A] *nostrum, quod de caelo est*. [our dwelling which is from heaven]«

latter work is implicit in the *gloria* of the former work. No further details are provided in 1 Cor 15,42-44 respecting the δόξα of the resurrection body. Paul offers a better glimpse into the body's δόξα yet to come, however, by specifying in Phil 3,21 that our bodies will be transformed in conformity with the body of the Lord's δόξα (1 Jn 3,2). Thus, practically in the same context, the self-same term δόξα is used, now regarding the Lord's body (Phil 3,21), now about everybody else's (1 Cor 15,43). As previously stated, Jerome selects *gloria* for the Greek δόξα in his Latin rendition of 1 Cor 15,43. This is the δόξα of our future resurrection bodies.

Notwithstanding, in Phil 3,21 he renders the self-same δόξα of the original Greek by *claritas*. This is the δόξα of the Lord's body, to which our bodies will conform. Clearly, in Phil 3,21 Jerome takes δόξα as applied to Christ's body in its sense of 'dazzling radiance' or 'glaring splendour'. Thus in Jerome's understanding and terminology, the glory (δόξα) of the resurrection bodies of the righteous is not their own but the glory (δόξα) of the Lord's body, viz., a glory manifested in brilliance (*claritas*), to which every resurrection body conforms. Then, since the resurrection body conforms to the glory of the Lord's body – which glory is brilliance (*claritas*) – the glory of the resurrection body must be likewise construed as brilliance (*claritas*). Accordingly, the *gloria* of the resurrection body in *Contra Johannem* and the *claritas* of the same, spoken of in *Cons.*, amount to the same property or state. Moreover, Jerome construes the brilliance which the δόξα of the Lord's body is taken to be in Phil 3,21 as selfsame with the dazzling splendour of the Transfiguration; for albeit this brilliance, to which the glory (δόξα) of our resurrection bodies conforms, is not further qualified in Phil 3,21, in *Contra Johannem* the glory of the resurrection body is likened to the glory of the Transfiguration; to wit, to the glory of the Lord's body, which Jerome construes as brilliance in Phil 3,21 and which is manifested as such par excellence in the Transfiguration episode. To be more specific, immediately following his discussion of 1 Cor 15,53 in *Contra Johannem*, Jerome goes on to rehearse questions touching the Transfiguration in its connection with the glory of the resurrection body. In so doing, he links the two transformations – that of the Transfiguration and that of the resurrection body – by way of a comparison involving the link-word 'glory' («Sic et Dominus noster in monte transfiguratus est in gloria» [»in like manner, our Lord was likewise transfigured on the mountain«] *Contra Johannem* PL 23, 381A). The comparison is likely intended to take the connection to a deeper level, viz., to imply that the glory attending the Lord's transfigured body and clothes on Mt. Tabor is selfsame with the glory clothing the resurrection body upon the latter's investiture with the, garment (*indumentum*, or *vestmentum*) of immortality'. Jerome did hold that view, as documented in his commentary on Matthew: »Qualis futurus est tempore iudicandi talis apostolis apparuit /.../ certe transformatus est dominus in eam gloriam qua uenturus est postea in regno suo.« (Hieronymus, *In Mt* 3 [PL 26, 121D–122A]) The likely reason for Jerome to construe the δόξα of the Lord's body in Phil 3,21 as *claritas*, and specifically as the *claritas* of the Transfiguration – viz., the radiant brilliance to which our resurrection bodies conform—is possibly the fact that Phil 3,21 finds ideal application in the Lord's assurance that the just will

shine as the sun (Mt 13,43). In his promise, the Lord foretells a state of dazzling brilliance for the righteous, and if Phil 3,21 specifies that their bodies will conform to the δόξα of the Lord's body, that δόξα, whatever else it may be construed as⁶ it must be likewise construed as dazzling brilliance. For it is to the body of the Lord, whose »facies fulgebat sicut sol« (Mt 17,2), that need to confirm the bodies of those who »fulgebunt /.../ sicut sol« (Mt 13,43). Thus, Jerome's dazzling brilliance is not primarily understood as that which shone on Paul on the road to Damascus⁷ but that which attended Christ's body when transfigured.

The first of these two Matthew passages just cited occurs in *Contra Johannem* (PL 23, 381B: »Et facies eius, inquit, fulgebat sicut sol«), the second in *Cons.* (PG 31, 1700B: »Tunc, inquit, iusti fulgebunt in regno Patris sui, sicut sol«). They are both cited in the context of the discussion involving the glory of the resurrection body, a context that both works share. Although not cited together in the pertinent sections of either work under discussion, these two passages are mutually evocative and complementary in the context shared by *Cons.* and *Contra Johannem*, as illustrated by discussing the term *claritas* regarding *gloria* in the latter work. This being the case in Jerome, it is reasonable to assume that these two passages should be likewise mutually complementary in *Cons.* and that although only Mt 13,43 is cited in it, Mt 13,43 is somehow evocative of Mt 17,2. In that sense, Mt 13,43, which is cited in *Cons.*, seems to be an indirect reference to Mt 17,2, viz., to the splendour of the Transfiguration. The *Cons.* section discussing the bedazzling transformation experienced by the resurrection body is resplendent with such marvellous luminosity that one can think of no other episode more splendid in transcendent radiance to inspire and serve as a model (*Cons.*, PG 31, 1700B: »iusti fulgebunt /.../ sicut sol«; 1701B: »immortalis splendorem induere«, the resurrection body, said to be clothed in brilliance in *Cons.* 1701B) – even if tacitly – besides the Transfiguration. Moreover, this uniqueness is that in a sermon in need of highlighting the changes suffered by the resurrection body in its transformation, the Transfiguration is the only scriptural epiphany that provides a glimpse into a mechanism of change witnessed and applicable to the transformation of the resurrection body.⁸ Such a tacit reference would account not only for the *gloria* and *claritas* connection in the context under discussion; it would likewise explain the ease with which someone aware of Jerome's terminology in *Contra Johannem* could shift to that found in *Cons.* and substitute *claritas* for *gloria* concerning the resurrection body as if these two terms were interchangeable. That they were so by the time the preacher of *Cons.* was delivering her sermon is documented. At least they were so in Hilary of Poitiers,⁹ who occupies a prominent place on Radegundis's reading list along with

⁶ Kennedy, for instance, observes that δόξα in Paul »is always the outward expression of the spiritual life« (1897, 463).

⁷ Kennedy identifies this dazzling brilliance with that »which shone forth upon Paul from the risen Christ on the Damascus road« (Kennedy 1897, 464).

⁸ The episode involving Paul on the road to Damascus, for instance, would not meet these requirements.

⁹ Fierro states (1964, 86): »Hilario identifica prácticamente ,gloria' y ,claritas' en muchas ocasiones. Traduce con ambas indistintamente los mismos textos bíblicos. Recurre tanto a una como a otra en expre-

Jerome on Venantius Fortunatus evidence (Venantius Fortunatus, *Carm.* 8.1.54–60). In his commentary on Mt 17,2, Hilary qualifies the Lord's clothes as ‚garments of glory‘ (*habitus gloriae*) or ‚garments of brilliance‘ (*habitus claritatis*), interchanging the terms ‚glory‘ and ‚brilliance‘ indifferently.

In line with the references to individual body parts, their impairments, deformities, and their restoration following the resurrection – thereby implying retention of the body's complete anatomical structure in its risen state – and as a type of complement to the scenes from the Book of Job, the preacher appends the episode of Dives and Lazarus in arguing her case (*Cons.*, PG 31, 1700C–1701A). The citation of the dialogue between Abraham and Dives (1700C–1701A), the latter's request for a drop of water to cool his tongue, and the reference to the tip of Lazarus's finger, using which this drop is to be provided, also serve as a reminder that our bodies' anatomical integrity is not compromised in the life to come. However, although the preacher's definition of the resurrection body is entirely in line with Jerome's as expounded in *Contra Johannem*, her definition of the ‚spiritual body‘ is not. Jerome defines the resurrection body in constitutional terms, to wit, about its makeup, as does Origen (*Contra Johannem*, PL 23, 378A–B), whose understanding of the risen body's constitution Jerome needs to denounce while accusing John of Jerusalem of endorsing it. In his rebuttal to Origen's claim, Jerome offers a contrary contention but always along the lines of a compositional principle (382B). With Jerome, the *corpus spirituale* that rises in the resurrection, the resurrection body, is not spiritual in a sense Origen construes it, namely, ethereal, like to the breath and the breeze; it is fleshy in its structure and composition. Jerome has the full support even of Rufinus (Swete 1908, 95–96). The term »resurrection of the flesh« *carnis resurrectio* (89–92), is neither a scriptural term nor a phrase coined by Jerome but one that was inevitably appropriated by the Church in her effort to outwit the ‚sophistries‘ of the Docetic Gnostics »in order to safeguard Scriptural truth« and »to protect another fundamental doctrine of the Catholic faith« (89–92). In the same context, Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis* 63 (94), asserts »resurget igitur caro, et quidem omnis et quidem ipsa et quidem integra« [The flesh, therefore, will rise again, and indeed the whole, and indeed itself, and indeed unimpaired]. Jerome is therefore replying to what seems to be Origen's novelty in applying Paul's form of words *corpus spirituale* to define the makeup and constituent properties of the resurrection body within the context of the broader challenge the Church faced in forming her doctrine on the nature and composition of that body.¹⁰

siones equivalentes: ‚habitus gloriae‘ o ‚habitus claritatis‘. Las escribe dentro de un mismo contexto, si dar indicios de que alguna de ellas tenga peculiar significado. Las sitúa a menudo en paralelismo estricto, y emplea indiferentemente los pleonasmos ‚gloria claritatis‘, y ‚claritas gloriae‘.

¹⁰ Origen's use of Paul's phrase *corpus spirituale* to define the resurrection body with respect to the constitution of the body seems to have arisen in light of an urgency forced upon him primarily by the pressure of non-Christian and heretical parties to determine the nature of the risen body; see, for instance, his discussion with Celsus on this subject (Swete 1908, 93); as regards deviant Christian views and grossly simplistic opinions commonly entertained by members of the Church on that issue, see *Contra Johannem* (PL 23, 375C).

Jerome does not object to or question Origen's reading of *corpus spirituale* in constitutional terms; he merely answers based on Origen's definitional presuppositions in order to refute his opponent's conclusions; which conclusions had been reached in part by a strictly qualified, if not fanciful, interpretation of the term 'spiritual' applied exclusively to the makeup of the resurrection body against the tradition in which Jerome stood along with Tertullian and possibly also with Clement of Rome (89–91). The approach in *Cons.* is entirely different on this point. As previously stated, although in all other respects *Cons.* fully abides by the tradition in which *Contra Johannem* and Jerome stand for the nature and makeup of the resurrection body, it approaches the application of Paul's phrase 'spiritual body' to the risen body from a completely different perspective. Either indirectly calling into question this phrase's application strictly to the resurrection body's makeup or by way of merely offering a different interpretation, *Cons.* does not construe 'spiritual body' in structural or makeup terms but interprets it with a quickening or enlivening principle in mind, namely, the Holy Spirit; it reads: »our present body is a soulish body, to wit, a body that depends on the soul, thanks to which we stay alive in our present existence; but that which rises again is a spiritual body because it is reborn through the Holy Spirit.« (*Cons.*, PG 31, 1702A) This is not an unprecedented interpretation of Paul's *corpus spirituale*. It occurs in later patristic literature, both Eastern and Western, and John the Evangelist already points out the enlivening power of the Holy Ghost according to the Lord's statement (Jn 6,63: »It is the spirit that quickened: the flesh profited nothing«). St. John Chrysostom speaks in like manner, stating that even in its present existence, to wit, in this present life, the body is to some extent spiritual on account of the Holy Spirit's dwelling in it; but that it is not presented consistently so because the Spirit's activity within it is blocked on account of sin so that although the Spirit is present, the life of the flesh is still conditioned by the soul (*Homiliae XLIV in epistolam primam ad Corinthios; In epist. I ad Cor. homil. XLI*, PG 61, 359). However, the earliest reading in resurrectional literature disputing the legitimacy of Origen's understanding of 'spiritual body' in makeup terms seems to occur in Methodius of Olympus' *De resurrectione* and with that reading of 'spiritual body', the corresponding one in *Cons.* shows striking affinity.¹¹

In summary, *Cons.* is a sermon that belongs with the resurrectional homiletic tradition, since its central theme revolves around the question of the resurrection body to comfort a particular class of disabled people who seem utterly mystified, confused, and deeply tormented about their resurrectional future. *Cons.* appears to be occasionally laced with verbal echoes, such as forms of words and phrases, as well as with units of textual structural components, such as scriptural passages, textual features, and keyword themes, bearing a suggestive affinity – now more palpable, now more subtle – to kindred works, primarily to Jerome's *Contra Johannem*. It is common knowledge that Jerome's *Contra Johannem* mainly engages what St. Jerome claimed to be Origen's misconceptions on the nature of the resurrection body.

¹¹ For the fact that St. Radegundis of Poitiers was highly likely *perita utriusque linguae* and that she could read Greek in the original as well, see Synodinos 2010.

Additionally, the affinity which the present study alleges between *Contra Johannem* and *Cons.* reveals the latter's alignment with Jerome's presuppositions on the resurrection of the flesh. In that sense, St. Radegundis of Poitiers, the author of *Cons.*, may be said to solicit support from anti-Origenist resurrection literature in arguing her case against the overly bizarre views that her disabled audience of lepers entertained on the resurrection body when it came to the resurrection of their own. It is, therefore, distinctly possible that the preacher implements this strategy alarmed at some concrete *mortiferam suspicionem* she entertains, some affinity or connection she detects, or is aware of, between the convictions of her audience and a kind of mitigated Origenism. Such an affinity or connection is not explicitly stated or spelt out in so many words either because concrete evidence is lacking or for some other reason.

Abbreviations

Cons. – ps.-Basil, *De consolatione in adversis* [Synodinos 2010].

GCS – Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller.

MGH AA – Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Auctorum Antiquissimi.

PG – Patrologia Graeca.

PL – Patrologia Latina.

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Adulter Vs. Moechus: Jerome's Use of Terms for Adultery in Vulgate

Adulter Vs. Moechus: Hieronimova raba pojmov za prešuštvo v Vulgati

Abstract: Traditional marriage morality of the modern Western civilization has been greatly influenced by the Christian teaching on marriage, which sees adultery as a significant threat to a marriage bond. Christian marriage morality was shaped primarily during the 4th century when the Church allied with imperial institutions, rose to power, and Christianity spread at an extraordinary pace. Jerome revised the existing Latin translation of the gospels and translated the Old Testament from Hebrew to Latin. The Vulgate soon became the referential and most frequently used version of the Bible. It has for centuries influenced the content, style, and vocabulary of European literature and Romance languages. Due to its importance and the social, historical, and cultural circumstances under which it was formed, the Vulgate text is of the most significant relevance for exploring the terminology of adultery. The author investigates the terms for adultery used by Jerome in translating *Old Testament* (members of lexical families derived from the words *adulter* and *moechus* as a translation of Hebrew forms derived from the root *na'aph*) and endeavours to explain his motivation for choosing different Latin terms. The author also compares the vocabulary of adultery in the *New Testament* books of the *Vulgate* and explores Jerome's intervention in the Latin text of the *New Testament*.

Keywords: Jerome, *Vulgate*, *adulterium*, *moechus*, Latin language, adultery

Povzetek: Krščansko učenje o zakonu, ki razume prešuštvo kot glavno grožnjo zakonski zvezi, je v veliki meri vplivalo na tradicionalno razumevanje zakonske morale sodobne zahodne civilizacije. Krščanski moralni nauk o zakonu je bil oblikovan predvsem v 4. stoletju, ko je Cerkev skupaj s cesarskimi institucijami prišla do moči in se je krščanstvo neustavljivo širilo. V tem času je Hieronim posodobil obstoječi latinski prevod evangelijev in prevedel Staro zavezo iz hebrejščine v latinščino. *Vulgata* je kmalu postala osrednja in najpogosteje uporabljena različica Svetega pisma. Kot takšna je skozi stoletja vplivala na vsebino, slog in besedišče evropske književnosti in romanskih jezikov. Zaradi njenega pomena in tudi zaradi družbenih, zgodovinskih in kulturnih okoliščin, znotraj katerih je nastala, je besedilo *Vulga-*

te izjemno relevantno za raziskovanje besedišča prešuštva. Avtorica se posveča preučevanju izrazov za prešuštvo, ki jih je uporabil Hieronim pri prevajanju Stare zaveze (leksikalna družina okrog izrazov *adulter* in *moechus* kot prevedkov različnih oblik hebrejskega korena *na'aph*) in skuša razložiti njegove motive za različno rabo latinskih izrazov. Prispevek tudi primerja besedišče prešuštva v Novi zavezi *Vulgate* in pojasnjuje obseg Hieronimovih posegov v latinsko besedilo Nove zaveze.

Ključne besede: Hieronim, *Vulgata*, *adulterium*, *moechus*, latinščina, prešuštvo

1. Introduction and Methodology

In Western society, adultery is considered a serious threat to the stability of marriage and, consequently, family and society as a whole. In all ancient societies, a patriarchal view of adultery prevailed, based on the fact that only female sexuality was restrained. Adultery was considered extramarital sexual intercourse of a married woman; a married woman and her lover could only commit adultery. A husband who engaged in out-of-wedlock relationships was not considered an adulterer, and his actions were not subject to social or legal sanctions. A man's sexuality was restricted only when, as in intercourse with a married woman, his actions threatened another man's integrity. (Evans-Grubbs 1999, 94–102, 203–205; 2002, 83–87)

Christianity brought a great novelty in sexual morality: equal standards for both sexes. A man was expected to confine his sexual activities to marriage, and his unfaithfulness was condemned.¹ This paper shows how these cultural changes reflected on the Latin language, explore Jerome's method of translating the Old Testament and examines the range of his interventions in the New Testament.

At the instigation of Pope Damasus I (366–384), Jerome revised the existing Latin translation of certain New Testament books and, later, translated the Old Testament from Hebrew (or Aramaic). This Bible version, known as *Vulgate*, soon became the authoritative version of the Scripture in the Latin West. It has shaped the content, style, and vocabulary of Romance languages and European literature for centuries. Its text was formed at a crucial moment to develop Christian marital and sexual morality when the Church, allied with imperial institutions, rose to power, and Christianity was spreading at an extraordinary pace.

The traditional marriage morality of the Western world, which has its roots in Christian teaching on marriage, has been facing several challenges lately. Sexua-

¹ The idea that both genders are equal was sporadically present among pagan thinkers of the 1st century, but Christian ethics systematically adopts this idea (Joksimović 2016, 23–47). In *Ep. 77.3* Jerome speaks of Fabiola, who left her adulterous husband, so corrupt »that neither a whore nor a slave would put up with it« [*non scortum quidem et vile mancipium ea sustinere posset*]. In Jerome's opinion, she acted in accordance with Jesus' teaching that divorce is justified in the case of adultery, for what is true of a man is true of a woman. In this, Roman laws differ from divine laws: »Aliae sunt leges Caesarum, aliae Christi: aliud Papianus, aliud Paulus noster praecipit. Apud illos viris impudicitiae frena laxantur: et solo stupro atque adulterio condemnato, passim per lupanaria et ancillulas libido permittitur /.../ Apud nos, quod non licet feminis, aequae non licet viris /.../«

lity is no longer confined to marriage, and the need for marital sexual exclusivity is questioned regularly. By examining the terminology of adultery at the roots of Western marital morality, we hope to understand marriage better as we still know it today and identify its place in this rapidly changing world.²

This paper presents part of the results from the author's doctoral dissertation *Terminology of Adultery in the Vulgate and its Social, Historical and Cultural Context*³ (Joksimović 2016) in which Latin terms for adultery, namely, lexical families based on the words *adulter* and *moechus*, have been diachronically examined in several textual corpora: Pre-Christian Latin⁴, Christian Latin⁵, the Vulgate (Stuttgart edition), the *Vetus Latina* corpus, that is, Latin biblical translations other than Vulgate⁶, and Jerome's other works.

The first part of the paper presents Jerome's translation of the terms for adultery in the Vulgate Old Testament books. In the second part, the Old Testament vocabulary is compared with the vocabulary of the corpora as mentioned earlier in those aspects in which Pre-Christian and Christian Latin differ most.

This analysis comprises the works from the beginnings of Latin literature until Pope Gregory the Great (590–604). When the Lombard invasion of Italy (568) swept away Justinian's reconquest achievements, and Latin began to be vulgarized rapidly, the time of this Roman bishop is considered to be the actual end of late antiquity by many scholars (Löfstedt 1959, 9).⁷

2. Pre-Christian Latin

A specific Latin feature is two lexical groups for adultery: one based on the word *adulter*, and the other gathered around the word *moechus*. They are partial synonyms and differ in tone and connotations.

**Adulter* is originally a Latin word and *vox propria* for adultery. These are neutral technical terms, typical for high style, prose, and legal texts (Joksimović 2016, 146–147; 148–151).

Moechus is the Latinized form of the Greek *μοιχός*, 'seducer of a married woman'. The noun *μοιχός* was first adapted in spoken Latin and then passed over into the language of

² The views on this fundamental global social, cultural and religious changes have been summarised recently (Bahovec 2020).

³ In dissertation the author explores terminology of prostitution, fornication, mistresses and concubinage, as well.

⁴ Based on the *Packard Humanities Institute* database, containing Latin texts prior to 200 AD. Texts of unclear dating and commentaries on ancient works were not analyzed. *Digests* have been examined, as they contain older legal texts. Works of later pagan authors such as Ausonius were also explored.

⁵ Based on the *Patrologia Latina Database* containing works of Christian authors from Tertullian to 1216.

⁶ Based on the *Vetus Latina Database* containing Latin quotations of biblical verses other than *Vulgate* and references to them.

⁷ For the sake of brevity, an asterisk by a word marks entire lexical group, gathered around it (**adulter*, **moechus* ...), and Old and New Testament are abbreviated to OT and NT, respectively.

comedy. Such history determined its further destiny; thus **moechus* became a mocking and offensive term, appropriate for lower style and poetry (103–108; 108–117).

The differences in tone reflected in the frequency of the mentioned terms. In Pre-Christian Latin **adulter* occurs 11 times more frequently than **moechus*. Late Latin **adulter* prevailed in the language of the educated, while **moechus* disappeared from literary use but was preserved in spoken Latin (Adams 1983, 351–353).

The patriarchal view of adultery influenced the semantic content of the terms for adultery. Pre-Christian Latin has words to describe extramarital affairs of married women, that is, with them, but there is no term for an unfaithful husband and his actions. The term *adultera* (rarely *moecha*) denotes an unfaithful wife, verbs *adulterare* and *moechari*, and the noun *adulterium* refers to the adulterous wife and her lover (there is no corresponding noun from the **moechus* group). *Adulter* and *moechus* do not refer to an unfaithful husband but a seducer of a married woman.⁸ Such linguistic disproportion reflects the dual standard of sexual ethics.

3. Vulgate – Old Testament

In the OT, adultery is relatively often mentioned in the primary and figurative sense. In the basic sense, the patriarchal concept of adultery is described – the extramarital relations of a married woman and the seduction of married women. In this way, adultery is mentioned primarily in the Pentateuch as a rule within the verses which legally sanction sexual relations. A marital bond is a general symbol for a relationship between the Jewish people and God (Krašovec 2019, 880). In the prophetic books, however, adultery usually appears as a stylistic figure (allegory, metaphor, comparison) which describes the betrayal of an unfaithful wife (the Jewish people) and her falling away from her husband (God).

In the OT **adulter* and **moechus* are predominantly translations of the basic Hebrew terms for adultery, derived from the root *na'aph* (נָאֵף)⁹. Jerome consistently translates **na'aph* by the nominals from the **adulter* group (*adulter*, *adultera*, *adulterium*) and by the verb *moechari*. As will be shown, he departs from this practice for the sake of clarity, for stylistic motives, and, less frequently, to preserve the vocabulary of older Latin translations.

3.1 Nouns *ni'uph* and *na'aphuwph*

Two nouns meaning 'adultery': *ni'uphim* (נִיּוּפִים) (Strong 1890, 5004) and *na'aphuwph* (נִיּוּפִיּוּפִים) (Strong 1890, 5005) are translated by the word *adulterium* in the plural. There is no correlation with the *Septuagint*, where we find *μοιχεία* (singular, 2) and the participle of *μοιχεύω* (Table 1).

⁸ Only once *adulter* (Cic., *Scaur.* 8.2) and *adulterium* (Sen., *Ep.* 94.26) denote unfaithful husband and his actions; in Late Latin *adultera* can denote a mistress of a married man (Joksimović 2016, 162–163). For semantic content of **moechus* and **adulter* see Joksimović 2016, 111–132, 154–170.

⁹ ‚To commit adultery‘; figuratively, ‚to apostatize‘. (Strong 1890, 5003).

	<i>Vulgate</i>	Greek	Hebrew
Os 2:2	<i>adulteria</i>	μοιχείαν	<i>na'aphuwph</i>
Jer 13:27	<i>adulteria</i>	μοιχεία	<i>ni'uph</i>
Eze 23:43	<i>in adulteriis</i>	ἐν τούτοις μοιχεύουσιν	

Table 1: *ni'uph* and *na'aphuwph*.

3.2 Non-finite Verbs

Jerome translates participles (functioning as nouns) and infinitives of **na'aph* mainly by nouns *adulter*, *adultera* and *adulterium*, or the adjective *adulter*. Verb *adulterare* occurs only twice, in infinitive and participle form.

3.2.1 Feminine Participles

The form *adultera* always translates feminine participles: *qal* participles (7) by the noun, and *piel* participles, always combined with the noun 'ishah (ἡ ἴσαῃ), 'woman' (3), by the adjective (*mulier adultera*). The *Septuagint* has noun μοιχαλῖς (5) and passive participles of the verbs μοιχεύω and μοιχάομαι (Table 2).

	<i>Vulgate</i>	Greek	Hebrew
Prov 30:20	<i>mulieris adulterae</i>	γυναικὸς μοιχαλίδος	<i>piel</i>
Os 3:1	<i>mulierem ... adulteram</i>	γυναῖκα ... μοιχαλῖν	
Eze 16:32	<i>mulier adultera</i>	ἡ γυνὴ ἡ μοιχωμένη	
Le 20:10	<i>adultera</i>	ἡ μοιχευομένη	<i>qal</i>
Eze 16:38	<i>adulterarum</i>	μοιχαλίδος	
Eze 23:45	<i>adulterarum</i>	μοιχαλίδος	
	<i>adulterae sunt</i>	μοιχαλίδες	

Table 2: *Feminine participles of na'aph*.

3.2.2 Masculine Participles

Masculine participles are mostly (7/9) translated by the form *adulter*. In Os 7:4 we find participle *adulterantes*, and in Le 20:10 the noun *moechus* (Table 3).

	<i>Vulgate</i>	Greek
Le 20:10	<i>moechus</i>	μοιχεύων
Job 24:15	<i>adulteri</i>	μοιχοῦ
Prov 6:32	<i>adulter</i>	μοιχὸς
Is 57:3	<i>adulteri</i>	μοιχῶν
Ps 49:18	<i>adulteris</i>	μοιχῶν
Jer 9:2	<i>adulteri sunt</i>	μοιχῶνται
Jer 23:10	<i>adulteris</i>	-
Os 7:4	<i>adulterantes</i>	μοιχεύοντες
Mal 3:5	<i>adulteris</i>	μοιχαλίδας

Table 3: *Masculine participles of *na'aph*.

Os 7:4 belongs to an obscure section on idolatry.¹⁰ It is quoted in the translations of Origen's works¹¹ and referred to in the verse *omnes adulterantes, quasi clibanus corda eorum*, which is a compound of Os 7:4 and 7:6 in the form found in older Latin translations.¹² This compiled verse became widely known in the 4th century with the struggle against numerous heresies and Origenism and often occurred in the works of Jerome¹³ and his contemporaries,¹⁴ containing almost exclusively participle *adulterantes* (cf. μοιχεύοντες in the *Septuagint*). Jerome presumably preserves the vocabulary of existing Latin translations, established by frequent references to the mentioned verse.

Le 20:10 prescribes the death sentence for adulterers: »Si moechatus quis fuerit cum uxore alterius, et adulterium perpetraverit cum conjugē proximi sui, morte moriantur et moechus et adultera.«

In the original, **na'aph* occurs four times.¹⁵ Jerome translates the same finite verb form (*yin'aḇ*) by *moechari* (*moechatus fuerit*) and by the construction *adulterium perpetrare* (*adulterium perpetraverit*), while masculine and feminine participles are translated by the nouns *moechus* and *adultera*. This is the only occurrence of the noun *moechus* in *Vulgate*. The use of the terms from different lexical families is a peculiarity of Jerome's translation. In the *Septuagint* we find forms of the verb μοιχεύω in all four places.¹⁶ Jerome's translation is probably motivated by style; this is indicated by his use of *uxor* and *conjunx* as a translation of the word ,wife', ,woman' (*'ishah*) in the same verse. The reason may be stylistic: parallelism is the primary stylistic tool in Hebrew literature¹⁷ but can be redundant in Latin; Jerome may have, therefore, opted for different terms: »moechatus fuerit cum uxore« – »adulterium perpetraverit cum conjugē« – »moechus« - »adultera«.

3.2.3 Infinitives

Jerome translates the infinitive of *na'aph* by infinitive *adulterare* (1) and noun *adulterium* (2). In *Septuagint* we find the noun μοιχεία and infinitive and participle of verbs μοιχεύω and μοιχάομαι (Table 4).

¹⁰ Hier., *In Os*. 2.7.5 *sqq.*: »Obscurus locus et attento lectoris sensu indigens ut historiam cognoscamus.«

¹¹ *Adulterantes*: Orig., *In Matth.* 13.4 (PG 13,1103–1104); Iulian. (Ps.-Rufin.), *In Os*. 2.7; cf. Hier., *Jer*. 5.67. *Moechantes*: Rufin., *Orig. in Lv*. 5.5.

¹² Hier., *In Os*. 2.7.4–7: LXX 7.4: »Omnes adulterantes quasi clibanus ardens ad coquendum /.../«; 7.6 »Quia succensa sunt quasi clibanus corda eorum /.../«

¹³ Hier., *Ep.* 22.17; *In Eph.* 3.6; *In Eccl.* 1071a; *In Soph.* 2.3–4; *In Matth.* 3.6.16 *adulterantium corda*; *In Ezech.* 9.28; 11.38; *In Mich.* 2 *adulterantes a Deo...*, 3 *adulterantium corda*; *In Nah.* 2.3; *In Ioel.* 1.19–20; *In Is.* 8.27.5; 16.58.13; 17.64.8*sqq.*; *Ep.* 130.10.4; *In Ier.* 1.24; 3.81; cf. Ps.-Hier., *In Iob* 26.28.

¹⁴ Caes. Arel., *Serm.* 43.2 (=Ps.-Aug. 289); 189.4; 43.5; Eucher., *Form.* 7; Hesych., *In Lev.* 5.18; Ps.-Hier., *Brev.* 104; 107. Gaudent., *Serm.* 13.29: *fornicantes*.

¹⁵ אִישׁ אִשׁוֹ יִשָּׁב אֶת זְכוֹר מִנְשִׁבָּי אִשָּׁה תּוֹעֵבָה עָשׂוּ שְׂנֵיהֶם מוֹת יִמְתּוּ דְמֵיהֶם בָּם

¹⁶ "Ἀνθρωπος ὃς ἂν μοιχεύσῃται γυναῖκα ἀνδρός ἢ ὃς ἂν μοιχεύσῃται γυναῖκα τοῦ πλησίον θανάτω θανατούσθωσαν ὁ μοιχεύων καὶ ἡ μοιχευομένη."

¹⁷ On foundational literary forms in the Bible, and particularly on the parallelism see Avsenik Nabergoj 2019; on parallelism and synonyms and their translation in the *Septuagint* and the *Vulgate*, see Krašovec 2018, 490–495.

	Vulgate	Greek	Hebrew
Jer 7:9	<i>adulterare</i> ¹⁸	μοιχᾶσθε	qal
Jer 23:14	<i>adulterium</i> ¹⁹	μοιχωμένους	
Os 4:2	<i>adulterium</i>	μοιχεία	

Table 4: *Infinitives of *na'aph.*

3.3 Finite Verbs

3.3.1 Masculine Subject

Jerome translates finite verbs, whose subject is a man, by the verb *moechari*. The exception is Le 20:10, where he uses the syntagm *adulterium perpetrare* for stylistic motives (*supra*). Jerome avoids the verb *adulterare* (in Le 20:10 he uses *adulterium perpetrare*, not *adulterare*). In *Septuagint*, we find finite forms of μοιχεύω and μοιχάομαι (Table 5).

	Vulgate	Greek
Ex 20:14	<i>non moechaberis</i>	οὐ μοιχεύσεις
De 5:18	<i>neque moechaberis</i>	
Le 20:10	<i>si moechatus quis fuerit cum adulterium perpetraverit cum</i>	ἂν μοιχεύσῃται γυναῖκα
Jer 5:7	<i>moechati sunt</i>	ἐμοιχῶντο
Jer 29:23	<i>moechati sunt in</i>	36:23 ἐμοιχῶντο τὰς γυναῖκας

Table 5: **Na'aph: finite verbs with masculine subject.*

3.3.2 Feminine Subject

The finite verbs of *na'aph*, whose subject is a woman, appear only in the prophetic books and are inconsistently translated with terms from three lexical families: **adulter*, **moechus*, and **fornicatio*. Jerome's translation is not correlated with the *Septuagint*, where we always find μοιχεύω or μοιχάομαι, or with the use of particular conjugations in the Hebrew original (Table 6).

	Vulgate	Greek	Hebrew
Jer 3:8	<i>moechata esset</i>	ἐμοιχᾶτο	<i>piel</i>
Jer 3:9	<i>moechata est cum</i>	ἐμοίχευσεν	<i>qal</i>
Eze 23:37	<i>adulterae sunt</i>	ἐμοιχῶντο	<i>piel</i>
	<i>fornicatae sunt cum</i>		
Os 4:13	<i>adulterae erunt</i>	μοιχεύσουσιν	
Os 4:14	<i>cum adulteraverint</i>	ὅταν μοιχεύωσιν	

Table 6: **Na'aph: finite verbs with feminine subject.*

¹⁸ *Clementina*: »adulterari«.

¹⁹ *Clementina*: »adulterantium«.

When translating Jer 3:8-9, Jerome preserves the vocabulary of older translations while altering the construction of the verse: »quia pro eo quod moechata esset aversatrix Israēl, dimissem eam /.../ et /.../ praevaricatrix Juda /.../ abiit /.../« (Jer 3:8); »/.../ et moechata est cum lapide et ligno« (Jer 3:9).

In the Septuagint and Origen's translation, Jer 3:8 has the imperfect ἐν οἷς ἐμοιχᾶτο, corresponding to *in quibus moechabatur* in Jerome's and Rufin's translation of Origen.²⁰ In the Vulgate, Jerome uses the pluperfect conjunctive *moechata esset*. In Jer 3:9, aorist ἐμοίχευσεν²¹ was translated in old Latin translations and Jerome's other works by perfect or imperfect, followed by the preposition *in* (*moechata est*²²/*moechabatur*²³ *in+acc./abl.*). In the Vulgate, we find the perfect *moechata est*, but with the preposition *cum* (*moechata est cum*).²⁴ Jerome, thus, innovates with syntax and morphology but not with vocabulary.

In Os 4:13-14 *adulterae erunt* and *adulteraverint* are a translation of the same verb form (3 pl. *tānā'āpnāh*): »Ideo /.../ sponsae vestrae adulterae erunt« 4:14: »non visitabo /.../ super sponsas vestras cum adulteraverint« (Os 4:13). There are two relevant older Latin translations of these verses: »Propterea /.../ sponsae vestrae moechabuntur, et non visitabo /.../ super sponsas vestras cum adulteraverint/.../« (Hier., *In Os.* 1.4.14 LXX);²⁵ »Moechabuntur/.../« (*Cod. Wirc.* Os 4:13) and »Et non respiciam /.../ super nurus vestras cum moecat« (*Cod. Wirc.* Os 4:14).

In Os 4:13, we find the future *moechabuntur* in both translations, corresponding to the future μοιχεύσουσιν in the *Septuagint*. In Os 4:14 in *Cod. Wirc.* we find the present *moecat* (active!) and in *In. Os. adulteraverint* as in the Vulgate (in Septuagint present conjunctive μοιχεύωσιν). The translation in Jerome's commentary on Hosea is almost identical to the one in the *Vulgate*, but *Cod. Wirc.* differs in: *respiciam* (Vulg. *visitabo*) and *nurus* (Vulg. *sponsam*). There are no other references to Os 4:13. When citing Os 4:14 (before and after the translation of the Book of Hosea c. 393), Jerome always uses *adulteraverint*, but alternates *nurus* and *sponsa*, which indicates that he was familiar with translations like *Cod. Wirc.*, containing *moechari* in both verses.²⁶ Nevertheless, Jerome uses terms from the group **adulter* in both verses.²⁷

²⁰ Hier., *Hom. Orig. in Ier.* 14.1.5; Rufin., *Orig. in Rom.* 7.18.

²¹ LXX: »/.../καὶ ἐμοίχευσεν τὸ ξύλον καὶ τὸν λίθον.«

²² Cyr., *Ep.* 63.18; cf. Ps.-Aug., *Alterc.* 237 (44); Ps.-Hier., *Pachom. Reg.* 159 (61.9) *moechatus est in*; Rufin., *Orig. in Ios.* 7.5: *meretricabamur*; Euseb. Emes., *Serm.* 26.3 *fornicabatur ad*. Faust. Rei., *Grat.* 2.10 gives up the metaphor: *lignum adorat et lapidem*.

²³ Gaudent., *Serm.* 8.37; Hier., *Hom. Orig. in Ier.* 14.1; 14.6; *moechabuntur in*: Hier., *In Os.* 1.4.10 sqq.; *In Is.* 16.3 sqq.

²⁴ Ita Hier., *In Ier.* 1.3.6 sqq.

²⁵ Latin version of Origen's recension of *Septuagint*.

²⁶ *Sponsas*: Hier., *Quaest. Hebr. in Gen.* 9.4; *In Is.* 17.63.18-19; *nurus*: *In Is.* 1.1.5; 6.13.11; 7.19.20sqq.; *Ep.* 140.15.3; *Hom. Orig. in Ier.* 2.5.

²⁷ Cf. Hier., *Hom. Orig. in Ier.* 2.5: »non uisitabo /.../ super nurus vestras, quando adulterant (al. adulterantur).«

In Eze 23:37, the same verb form *ni'êpû* is translated first by the construction *adulterae sunt* and then by *fornicatae sunt*: »Quia adulterae sunt²⁸ /.../et cum idolis suis fornicatae sunt /.../.« It is unclear why Jerome chooses words from different lexical families or opts for the verb *fornicari*. In both places we find ἐμοιχῶντο in the *Septuagint* and *moechabantur* in *Fragm. Sang.*²⁹ In the commentary on Ezekiel, Jerome quotes translation as in the *Vulgate* but uses *moechari* instead of *fornicari* in the paraphrase.³⁰

Maybe the Hebrew text Jerome translated differed from the one known to us, which was the basis for the *Septuagint*. As we have seen before, the reason may be stylistic: Jerome opts for different terms to avoid the redundancy of Latin words caused by Hebrew parallelism.

3.4 Jerome's Self-initiated Use of *adulter

In the OT **moechus* appears exclusively as a translation of **na'aph*. Jerome, however, uses **adulter* to translate **na'aph*, but also Hebrew words of more general meaning (7 occurrences, Table 7). Such use of **adulter* prevails in the Pentateuch (5/7); it is not conditioned by the vocabulary of older Latin translations or the *Septuagint*.

Ancient Bible translators generally tended to choose words with the most general meanings for translating terms with a wide semantic range unless the context required specificity (Krašovec 2018, 489); this indicates that Jerome felt the strong need to use the terms with more specific meaning.

Jerome only uses nouns *adulter* (2), *adultera* (2) and *adulterium* (3) in such a manner. He never uses the verb *adulterare*, although half of the translated Hebrew forms are verbs (Num 5:13; 5:27; Is 57:8) and predicate constructions (De 22:22).

3.4.1 *Adulter, adultera* = ,man', ,woman'

In De 22:22, the death penalty for adulterers is again prescribed: »Si dormierit vir cum uxore alterius, uterque morietur, id est, adulter et adultera /.../.« The nouns *adulter* and *adultera* are a translation of 'iysh ,man' (אִישׁ), that is, the syntagm meaning ,the one lying down with a woman' and 'ishshah ,woman' (אִשָּׁה), referring to an adulteress and her lover. The text of the *Septuagint* and older Latin translations corresponds to the Hebrew original; therefore, Jerome's translation is excluded.³¹

3.4.2 *Adulterium* = ,defiled', ,sin', ,betray'

Section Num 5:12-31 describes the procedure for proving a wife's adultery; in it *adulterium* appears three times, indicating wife's infidelity as a translation of the

²⁸ *Clementina*: »adulteratae sunt.«

²⁹ »Maechabantur /.../ cogitationibus suis moechabantur.«

³⁰ Hier., *In Ezech.* 7.23.36 sqq: »Adulterae sunt /.../ sunt enim moechatae in idolis.«

³¹ LXX: »τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν κοιμῶμενον μετὰ τῆς γυναίκος /.../ τὴν γυναῖκα«; *Cod. Lugd.* »qui dormierit cum mulierem.«; *Cod. Monac.* »/.../ et illum qui cum muliere /.../ abit, et mulierem.«

words *tame'*, *'avon* and *ma'al*.

In Num 5:13³² *adulterium* is a translation of *niṯmā'āh*, 'defiled' from *ṯame'* (אִטַּף)³³ (*latet adulterium*, literally 'there is no evidence that she is defiled'). In the Septuagint and older Latin translations, we find the perfect passive participle ἡ μεμιαμμένη (μιαίνω) and *coinquinata*, both meaning 'defiled'.³⁴ Elsewhere in the *Vulgate* *niṯmā'āh* is translated by the perfect passive participle *polluta est*.³⁵

In Num 5:15³⁶ *adulterium* is a translation of the noun *'avon* (אִוֹן) (Strong 1890, 5771) 'sin', corresponding to ἀμαρτία in the *Septuagint* and *peccatum* in older Latin translations.³⁷ Elsewhere in the *Vulgate*, Jerome translates *'āvōn* (68) mainly by *iniquitas* (60)³⁸ and, less frequently, *peccatum*,³⁹ *peccare* (Ios 22:17), *malum* (1Rg 28:10), *scelus* (3Rg 7:9) and in the paraphrase *quod argueres* (2Rg 3:8).

In Num 5:27⁴⁰ clause (*sc. si uxor est*) *contempto viro adulterii rea* translates two Hebrew forms: a) finite verb *wattim'ōl* from *ma'al* (לַעֲלֹב)⁴¹ 'to betray' and b) noun *ma'al* (לַעֲלָב)⁴² 'betrayal'. Jerome's translation differs from the *Septuagint* and other Latin translations.⁴³ The noun *ma'al*, usually combined with the verb *ma'al*, indicates apostasy in the OT (except Num 5:12). Jerome translates it by *contemne-re* (*maritum, Deum, Dominum*),⁴⁴ *praevaricari, transgressio*, and related terms.⁴⁵

3.4.3 *Suscepisti adulterum* = *'alah*

In Is 57:8⁴⁶ *suscepisti adulterum* is a translation of the finite verb *watta'ālī* from *'alah* (אָלַח)⁴⁷ 'to ascend', 'mount'.⁴⁷ Jerome's motivation for such a translation is not

³² »(Sc. vir cuius uxor) dormierit cum altero viro, et hoc maritus deprehendere non quiverit, sed latet adulterium, et testibus argui non potest, quia non est inventa in stupro /.../«

³³ »To be foul, especially in a ceremonial or moral sense (contaminated).« (Strong 1890, 2930)

³⁴ »κρύψη αὐτὴ δὲ ἡ μεμιαμμένη.«; *Cod. Lugd.*: »et absconderit hoc ipsa aut fuerit coinquinata.«

³⁵ Eze 23.7; 23.13; *cf. Nova Vulgata* Num 5:14: »sed latet quod impuram se reddiderit.«

³⁶ »/.../adducet eam ad sacerdotem, et offeret oblationem /.../ sacrificium zelotypiae est, et oblatio investigans adulterium.«

³⁷ »ἔστιν γὰρ θυσία ζηλοτυπίας θυσία μνημοσύνου ἀναμνησέκουσα ἀμαρτίαν.«; *cf. Cod. Lugd* »est enim sacrificium zelationis, sacrificium memoria, commemorans peccatum.«

³⁸ *E.g.* Gen 15:16; Le 10:17; Num 14:18; 18:1; De 5:9; 1Rg 3:14; Job 31:11; Ps 49:5; Is 53:6; Jer 14:20.

³⁹ Num 14:18; 18:1; De 19:15; Ps 78:38.

⁴⁰ »Quas cum biberit, si polluta est, et contempto viro adulterii rea /.../«

⁴¹ »To cover up /.../ to act covertly, i.e. treacherously.« (Strong 1890, 4603)

⁴² »Treachery, i.e. sin.« (Strong 1890, 4604)

⁴³ Num 5:27 *Cod. Lugd*: »siquidem fuerit coinquinata et latuerit iurum suum«; LXX: »ἐὰν ἡ μεμιαμμένη καὶ λήθῃ λάθῃ τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς.«

⁴⁴ Le 6:2 »contempto Deo«; Num 5:12 »maritumque contemnens«; 2Par 28:19 »contempui /.../ Dominum.« *Cf.* Jos 22:20 »praeteriit mandatum Domini.«

⁴⁵ »Praevaricari et sim.«: *e.g.* Num 31:16; Le 5:15; Jos 7:1; Eze 14:13; »Transgressio et sim.«: Esdr 9:4; 10:6; Num 5:6; Job 21:34 »repugnare /.../ veritati.«

⁴⁶ »Quia iuxta me discooperuisti, et suscepisti adulterum, dilatasti cubile tuum; et pepigisti cum eis foedus; dilexisti stratum eorum manu aperta.«

⁴⁷ »Used in a great variety of senses, primary and secondary, literal and figurative.« (Strong 1890, 5927)

clear.⁴⁸ The possibility of impact of the Septuagint text, significantly different from Latin, is excluded.⁴⁹ The commentary on Isaiah provides no answers since it contains a formulation similar to the one in the Vulgate.⁵⁰ Maybe Jerome interprets *'alah* in Is 57:8, 'to abandon' (husband, God); in certain verses, he translates *'alah* by *recedere* 'to leave' (3Rg 15:19; 4Rg 12:18; 2Par 16:3; Jer. 37:4.).

3.4.4 *Adultera* = μοιχαλῖς

In Prov 18:22a, *adultera* is a translation of μοιχαλῖς. We find this verse in the Septuagint and Clementine, but not in the Hebrew text or the Stuttgart edition of the Vulgate.⁵¹

	Vulgate	Greek	Vetus Latina	Hebrew
Num 5:13	<i>latet adulterium</i>	ἡ μεμαμμένη	<i>fuerit coinquinata</i>	<i>tame</i>
Num 5:15	<i>adulterium</i>	ἀμαρτίαν	<i>peccatum</i>	<i>'avon</i>
Num 5:27	<i>si... est et contempto viro adulterii rea</i>	λήθη λάθη τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς	<i>fuerit coinquinata et latuerit uirum suum</i>	<i>ma'al</i>
De 22:22	<i>adulter</i>	τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν κοιμώμενον μετὰ τῆς γυναίκος	<i>qui dormierit cum mulierem/ qui cum muliere... abit</i>	<i>'iysh</i>
	<i>adultera</i>	γυναῖκα	<i>mulierem</i>	<i>'ishshah</i>
Prov 18:22 a	<i>adulteram</i>	μοιχαλίδα		
Is 57:8	<i>suscepisti adulterum</i>	ᾧσου ὅτι ἐὰν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ ἀποστῆς πλεῖόν τι ἔξεις		<i>'alah</i>

Table 7: Jerome's self-initiated use of **adulter*.

3.5 Distribution by the Books

The distribution of the terms for adultery by OT books shows certain not overly significant regularities. **Moechus* (almost exclusively *moechari*) occurs only in the Pentateuch and the Book of Jeremiah. Finite verb forms of *moechari* always translate the finite verb forms of **na'aph*. The exception is Le 20:10 (*adulterium perpetrare*) for stylistic reasons; it is also the only place in the *Pentateuch* where **adulter* appears as a translation of **na'aph*; everywhere else in the *Pentateuch* **na'aph* is translated by **moechus*, while **adulter* as a translation of more general terms (Table 8).

Jerome translated the Torah at the very end of his translation endeavour, after most other OT books, after the much-translating experience.⁵² However, all the

⁴⁸ *Nova Vulgata*: »et ascendisti«.

⁴⁹ » /.../ ᾧσου ὅτι ἐὰν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ ἀποστῆς πλεῖόν τι ἔξεις ἡγάπησας τοὺς κοιμωμένους μετὰ σοῦ.«

⁵⁰ Hier., *In Is.* 57.7sqq.: »eamdem nunc quasi uxorem adulteram arguit et confutat, quod dormiens cum viro, clam adulterum susceperit, et discooperuit pallium, immo, dilataverit stratum suum, et fecerit pactum, quasi dotis instrumenta conficiens cum adulteris. Hoc autem dicit, ut ostendat quod non solum in agris et domibus idola coluerint, sed in Templo quoque posuerint simulacrum Baal /.../«

⁵¹ Reflections of Prov 18:22a are found in: Hier., *In Matth.* 19.9 (146); Aug. *Retract.* 1.19.6; 94; *Cod. Valv.* p. 206.

⁵² Between 398 and 406 (Denzin-Weber and Thompson).

prophetic books were translated in the same year, 389–392 AD (Williams 2006, 281–283); still, **moechus* only appears in the Book of Jeremiah. The chronological criterion, therefore, only partly explains Jerome's lexical choice.

	<i>*moechus</i>	<i>*adulter</i>	<i>*fornicatio</i>
Ex	1		
Num		3	
De	1	2	
Le	2	2	
Job		1	
Prov		3	
Is		2	
Ps		1	
Jer	4	5	
Eze		6	1
Os		6	
Mal		1	
Sum	8	32	1

Table 8: *Distribution by the books.*

3.6 Impact of Greek Vocabulary

The impact of the Greek vocabulary in choosing **moechus* or **adulter* is negligible. In the *Septuagint* **na'aph* is always translated by **μοιχός* (Joksimović 2016, 213–225). The expected influence would be reflected in the more frequent use of **moechus*, especially in the books, which Jerome first translated from Greek into Latin (Ps, Prov, Eccl, Job, Par). In these, however, only **adulter* appears.

4. Vulgate - New Testament

The translation of the Vulgate NT books shows a great deal of consistency and uniformity. The leading Greek lexical group for adultery is based on the term *μοιχός*. In NT, the nouns *μοιχός*, *μοιχαλῖς*, and *μοιχεία* are always translated by the nouns *adulter*, *adultera* and *adulterium*.⁵³ The verbs *μοιχεύω* and *μοιχάομαι* are mainly translated by the verb *moechari* (14), and less frequently by the verb *adulterare* (4) and constructions with the noun *adulterium* (2).⁵⁴

5. Other Jerome's Works

In quotations and references to relevant Bible verses in his other works, Jerome predominantly uses the same forms as in the Vulgate, particularly in the OT ver-

⁵³ Exeptions: 2Pt 2:14, Iac 4:4.

⁵⁴ For group **μοιχός* and its translation in the NT, see Joksimović 2016, 83–102, 215–258.

ses. Discrepancies are rare and usually conditioned by stylistic needs, the desire for precision, or under the influence of older Latin translations. As in the Vulgate, he only uses the verb *moechari* and the noun *moechus*, and never *moecha* or neologisms *moechia*, *moechatio*, *adulterator*, *adulteratio*. (Joksimović 2016, 219; 221; 224; 246; 256–258).

6. Vetus Latina

Vetus Latina shows the most remarkable similarities to the vocabulary of the Vulgate NT books. The impact of the Greek language and Vulgar Latin is noticeable. The quotations of the relevant Bible verses and references in the corpus Vetus Latina mostly contain the same forms as in the Vulgate. Discrepancies from the Vulgate mainly consist in alternate use of the terms **moechus* and **adulter*. The terms for prostitution, fornication and sin in general (**fornicatio*, **meretrix*, **peccatum*, **stuprum*) occur less frequently. In Vetus Latina we find words absent from the Vulgate: *moecha*, *moechatio*, *moechia*, *adulterator*, *adulteratio*. **Adulter* is typical for the language of the educated, above all the constructions with the noun *adulterium* and the corresponding verb (*facere*, *committere*, *admittere*, *concupere*, *perpetrare*). (Joksimović 2016, 217–224)

7. Christian Latin

7.1 New Meanings – Husband’s Adultery

Christian sexual ethics brings a great novelty – the view that adultery violates the marriage bond, regardless of who violates it. All extramarital sexual relations are condemned, including a husband’s infidelity. A man is expected to limit his sexuality to marriage. This cultural change is reflected in the language; the semantic content of the terms for adultery changes, and **adulter* and **moechus* begin to denote the unfaithful husband and his actions.

Such use begins with the New Testament. The Synoptic Gospels testify that Jesus forbade divorce and characterized the second marriage, concluded during a former spouse’s life, as adultery.

Lk 16:18 »Omnis qui dimittit uxorem suam et alteram ducit, moecharur.«

Mt 19:9 »/.../ quicumque dimiserit uxorem suam /.../ et aliam duxerit moecharur /.../.«

Mk 10:11 »/.../ quicumque dimiserit uxorem suam et aliam duxerit adulterium committit super eam.«

Moechari and *adulterium committere* in the verses mentioned denotes the husband’s adultery, thus imposing a new meaning on Latin terms. Such use is marked and aims at changing the language content to adapt it to Christian teaching. The

verses mentioned were of great importance for the development of Christian sexual ethics, and such use of the terms for adultery in them paved the way for their further use with a new meaning.

In the OT **adulter* and **moechus* denote the patriarchal concept of adultery, that is, only a wife's infidelity, or, respectively, the seduction of married women. In the Hebrew world, as in other ancient societies, only female adultery was sanctioned; thus, it is the only form of infidelity mentioned.

7.2 Revival of **moechus*

Another change with Christian Latin is a higher frequency of the group **moechus*. **Moechus* occurs five times more frequently in the Christian texts than in Pre-Christian Latin (556:99).⁵⁵ This is only partly due to the larger volume of preserved texts; **adulter*, by comparison, occurs only twice as often (2610:1078). **Adulter* remains more frequent than **moechus* (2610:556), but the proportion decreases from 11:1 to 5:1, and the share of **moechus* increases from 8% to 18% (Table 9).

The difference in tone and connotations between **adulter* and **moechus*, characteristic of Pre-Christian Latin, disappears with Christianity and is used interchangeably (Joksimović 2016, 174–175).

	<i>*adulter</i>	<i>*moechus</i>	Sum	<i>*adulter</i> : <i>*moechus</i>
Pre-Christian	1078	99	1177	11:1
%	92	8	100	
Christian	2610	556	3166	5:1
%	82	18	100	

Table 9: **adulter* and **moechus* in Pre-Christian and Christian Latin.

In the *Vulgate*, this ratio is even more favourable of **moechus*, with 4:1 (32:8 occurrences) in the OT and 1,6:1 (22:14 occurrences) in the NT. Moreover, in the NT **moechus* occurs almost twice as often (14) as in the OT (8). This does not apply to **adulter*, which remains more common in the OT (32) than in the NT (22) (Table 10).

	<i>*adulter</i>	<i>*moechus</i>
Pre-Christian	11	1
Christian	5	1
OT	4 (32)	1 (8)
NT	1.6 (22)	1 (14)

Table 10: Ratio of **adulter* and **moechus* in Pre-Christian Latin, Christian Latin, OT and NT.

Terms for adultery occur almost as often in the OT (40) as in the NT (36), but in the OT **adulter* (32:8) predominates, and in the NT **moechus* (22:14); this difference indicates that Jerome's interventions on the text of the NT were not extensive.

⁵⁵ Numbers in brackets are explained and compared in relevant accompanying tables, in this case, Table 9.

The high proportion of **moechus* in the NT indicates that Christianity gave a key impetus for the revival of this lexical group due to Greek and spoken Latin on Christian Latin. In Late Latin **moechus*, we have said, disappeared from the literary language of pagan writers; it was revived in spoken Latin under the influence of the Greek and established itself in the Christian written tradition.

7.3 Higher Proportion of Verbs *adulterare* and *moechari*

In Christian Latin, *adulterare* and *moechari* are more frequently used, while the proportion of the nominals from groups **moechus* and **adulter* diminishes.

Within its lexical group, the proportion of *moechari* increases drastically (5: 67%). The share of the noun *moecha* is, on the other hand, drastically reduced (32: 2%). *Moecha* disappears after the age of Augustine. Vulgate follows these tendencies; *moecha* occurs neither in the OT nor in the NT (nor in Jerome's other works). *Moecha* probably retained offensive connotations, causing its gradual disappearance (Table 11).

	moechus	moecha	moechari	ἅπαξ λεγόμενα	moechia	moechatio	Sum
Pre-Christian	58	32	5	4	/	/	99
%	59	32	5	4	/	/	100
Christian	91	13	365	/	67	11	547
%	17	2	67	/	12	2	100

Table 11: **moechus* in Pre-Christian and Christian Latin (Joksimović 2016, 142).

**Adulter* is not subject to such drastic changes. Despite the more significant proportion of *adulterare* (1:8%), the nominals prevail in Christian Latin, as well (Table 12). (Joksimović 2016, 171–172)

	adulter	adultera	adulteri- um	adulter (adi.)	adulteri- nus	adulter- are	other	Sum
Pre-Christian	405	114	525	15	1	16	2	1078
%	38	11	49	1	0	1	0	100
	98							
Christian	740	339	1149	99	65	217	1	2610
%	28	13	44	4	3	8	0	100
	92							

Table 12: **adulter* in Pre-Christian and Christian Latin.

In Vulgate, these tendencies are even more emphasized. The ratio of the nominals and the verb *adulterare* is reduced from 66:1 in Pre-Christian to 11:1 in Christian Latin and 3:1 in the OT. Moreover, in the NT, *adulterare* appears twice more often than the nominals from the same group. The high frequency of *adulterare* in the OT is striking, given that Jerome, as we have said, avoids using the verb *adulterare*.

In the Pre-Christian corpus, the nominals from the group **moechus* appear more often than the verb *moechari* (16:1). In Christian Latin, *moechari* becomes more common (2:1). Even more striking is this ratio (in favour of *moechari*) in the OT (7:1) and NT (14:1). In *Vulgate* alone, *moechari* occurs more frequently (OT 7; NT 14) than in the entire Pre-Christian corpus (6). In *Vulgate*, we have said that the verb *moechari* occurs; the noun *moechus* appears only once in the OT. (Table 13).

Moreover, in Christian Latin *moechari* is more common than *adulterare* (365:217 = 1,7:1); this proportion increases with the OT (7:3 = 2,3:1) and especially the NT (14:4 = 3,5:1). (Table 13)

	*adulter		*moechus	
	Nominals	Verb	Nominals	Verb
Pre-Christian	66 (1062)	1 (16)	16 (93)	1 (6)
Christian	11 (2393)	1 (217)	1 (182)	2 (365)
OT	3 (8)	1 (3)	1 (1)	7 (7)
NT	1 (2)	2 (4)	0 -	14 (14)

Table 13: Ratio of the nominals and verbs from the groups **adulter* and **moechus* in Pre-Christian and Christian Latin, OT and NT.

There are several possible explanations for the high proportion of *moechari* in the *Vulgate*. First, *adulterare* has been used predominantly in non-sexual meaning in Pre-Christian Latin; maybe that is why Jerome avoids it. Jerome's time, the revival of **moechus* was already finished, and *moechari* was already established in the existing Latin translations. Thus, *moechari* might have been an acceptable choice to Jerome. *Moechari* occurs in many verses of great importance for the development of Christian sexual ethics. We find it in Jesus' words about the unbreakability of marriage, but also God's commandment forbidding adultery (Ex 20:14: *Non moechaberis*). These verses were often repeated at gatherings of believers and in Christian literature, so their vocabulary became widely known. His interventions would encounter opposition if Jerome departed from the established vocabulary, replacing the *moechari* with *adulterare*.

7.4 Neologisms – Abstract Nouns *moechia* and *moechatio*

There is no abstract noun from the **moechus* group with the meaning of adultery in Pre-Christian Latin. With Christianity, the nouns *moechia* and *moechatio* appear as a translation of *μοιχεία*. Their use is sporadic compared to *adulterium* (*moechia* 67, *moechatio* 11, *adulterium* 1149, Table 11).⁵⁶ *Adulterium* remains the primary abstract term with the meaning 'adultery' in both eras. The only neologism in the **adulter* group is *adulteratio*.

⁵⁶ *Moechia* survives in medieval literature. *Moechatio* is rare, found mainly in translations of Greek Christian scriptures, and disappears from the 6th century (Joksimović 2016, 132–142).

No neologisms appear in the Vulgate, in the OT, or the NT. In this aspect, the Vulgate vocabulary is conservative. Maybe Jerome purified the NT Vulgate text from neologisms. Their absence is the main difference between the vocabulary of the Vulgate and older Latin translations.

8. Conclusion

Jerome translates Hebrew terms for adultery formed from the root *na'aph* by the nouns *adulter*, *adultera* and *adulterium* and the verb *moechari*. Similarly, in the NT Greek terms for adultery, gathered around the word *μοιχός*, are translated predominantly by nominals from the group **adulter* and the verb *moechari*. As Krašovec points out, »we may assume that relative uniformity of ancient translations of the Bible reflects a living tradition« (2018, 488).

With the NT, terms for adultery start denoting the husband's adultery and paving the way for new use in Christian Latin. In the OT, due to the content of the Hebrew sacred texts, terms for adultery denote only a patriarchal concept of adultery.

A specific feature of Christian Latin is a higher frequency of a) terms from the **moechus* group, especially the verb *moechari*, and b) verbs *adulterare* and *moechari* in general. Their frequency increases with the OT and, particularly, the NT, indicating that Christianity has instigated said lexical changes. The fact that the vocabulary of the OT is more similar to the language of the Christian Fathers in general than to the vocabulary of the NT indicates that Jerome adopted the current language tendencies only to some extent and that he rarely intervened in the text of the NT.

The vocabulary of the NT and *Vetus Latina* shows the most significant similarities. The striking difference between them is the absence of neologisms such as *moechia*, *moechatio*, *adulteratio* from the NT. Jerome may have cleaned the NT of them. Neologisms are absent from other Jerome's works as well. The term *moecha* gradually disappears with Christian Latin; it does not appear in Vulgate or Jerome's other works. Such consistency of vocabulary and phrasing may be the product of Jerome's editorial interventions (Krašovec 2018, 489).

Jerome's lexical interventions in the NT are scarce. He instead innovates with syntax and morphology than with vocabulary. The biblical text is considered sacred, which reflects in the conservative approach to its translation. Once formed, the vocabulary of biblical translations is preserved and not changed without valid reasons. Any change contradicts the established tradition and leads to a possible misinterpretation of biblical truth.

This research clearly distinguished three separate lexical units. The first is Pre-Christian Latin, which shows no resemblance to other corpora. The second is the vocabulary of Christian fathers, including Jerome (in the OT translation and his other works); they show the most remarkable similarities. The third is the vocabulary of

the NT, which represents the radical lexical pole of Christian Latin, formed under the strong influence of spoken Latin on the one hand, and Greek on the other. New Testament translations have become the reference pivot for Christian Latin.

The language of biblical texts, especially of their most significant and quoted verses, became the basis for further developing Christian vocabulary. Such are the verses forbidding divorce and characterizing second marriage as adultery. In these verses, **adulter* and **moechus* are used in a manner inconsistent with Pre-Christian Latin, denoting the husband's adultery. Such use was the basis for the future development of the semantic field of lexical groups gathered around the terms mentioned.

		Vulgate	Greek
Ex	20:14	<i>non moechaberis</i>	οὐ μοιχεύσεις
De	5:18	<i>neque moechaberis</i>	
Le	20:10	<i>si moechatus quis fuerit</i>	ἂν μοιχεύσῃται γυναῖκα
		<i>adulterium perpetraverit</i>	ἂν μοιχεύσῃται
		<i>moechus</i>	μοιχεύων
		<i>adultera</i>	ἡ μοιχευομένη
Job	24:15	<i>adulteri</i>	μοιχοῦ
Prov	30:20	<i>mulieris adulterae</i>	γυναϊκὸς μοιχαλίδος
	6:32	<i>adulter</i>	μοιχὸς
Is	57:3	<i>semen adulteri</i>	μοιχῶν
Ps	49:18	<i>adulteris</i>	μοιχῶν
Jer	3:8	<i>moechata esset</i>	ἐμοιχᾶτο
	3:9	<i>moechata est</i>	ἐμοίχευσεν
	5:7	<i>moechati sunt</i>	ἐμοιχῶντο
	7:9	<i>adulterare/ adulterari</i>	μοιχᾶσθε
	9:2	<i>adulteri sunt</i>	μοιχῶνται
	13:27	<i>adulteria</i>	μοιχεῖα
	23:10	<i>adulteris</i>	-
	23:14	<i>similitudinem adulterium</i>	μοιχωμένους
Eze	16:32	<i>mulier adultera</i>	ἡ γυνὴ ἡ μοιχωμένη
	16:38	<i>adulterarum</i>	μοιχαλίδος
	23:37	<i>fornicatae sunt</i>	ἐμοιχῶντο
	23:43	<i>in adulteriis</i>	μοιχεύουσιν
	23:45	<i>adulterarum</i>	μοιχαλίδος
		<i>adulterae sunt</i>	μοιχαλίδες
		<i>adulteria</i>	μοιχεῖαν
	Os	2:2	
3:1		<i>mulierem ... adulteram</i>	γυναῖκα ... μοιχαλίν
4:2		<i>adulterium</i>	μοιχεῖα
4:13		<i>adulterae erunt</i>	μοιχεύσουσιν
4:14		<i>adulteraverint</i>	μοιχεύωσιν
7:4		<i>adulterantes</i>	μοιχεύοντες
Mal	3:5	<i>adulteris</i>	ἐπὶ τὰς μοιχαλίδας

Appendix – Table 14:

Translation of **na'aph* - cumulative table.

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Florence Bret

Fondation et transmission dans la *Vita Pauli* et la *Vita Hilarionis*

Ustanovitev in prenos v Vita Pauli in Vita Hilarionis ***Foundation and Transmission in Vita Pauli and Vita Hilarionis***

Sommaire: Les rapports entre mentor et disciple scandent la *Vita Pauli* et la *Vita Hilarionis* de Jérôme et tissent une continuité presque héréditaire entre un fondateur et ses successeurs. Le but de cet article est de se demander comment ces relations de transmission témoignent des ambitions de Jérôme tant dans le domaine ascétique que littéraire. Ces deux *Vies* de moines, tout d'abord, veillent à préciser la place de leur héros dans une lignée de moines qui remonte aux origines. La *Vie de Paul* ne dit presque rien de la vie de l'ascète et se concentre sur sa rencontre avec Antoine, qui devient en tout son héritier grâce à des parallèles bibliques. Hilarion, quant à lui, commence sa vie monastique par la rencontre avec un mentor et la termine dans la transmission à l'un de ses disciples. À chaque fois, le vêtement ascétique, signe le plus immédiatement visible de l'idéal monastique, transmis d'un moine à son disciple, se fait représentation symbolique de cette filiation spirituelle. Cette insistance sur la transmission peut alors être lue comme un redoublement de la visée exemplaire des *Vitae*, où le lecteur devient le disciple du mentor qu'est pour lui le saint. Mais ce motif devient également pour Jérôme le moyen de définir sa place dans la tradition littéraire hagiographique : à la fois rival et imitateur de la *Vie d'Antoine*, et premier auteur latin de *Vies* d'ascètes aspirant à créer lui-même des émules.

Mots clés: fondation, transmission, monachisme, Vie de Paul, Vie d'Hilarion

Povzetek: Odnos med mentorjem in učencem loči Hieronimovi deli *Vita Pauli* in *Vita Hilarionis* in tke skoraj dedno kontinuiteto med ustanoviteljem in njegovimi nasledniki. Cilj tega članka je prevpraševanje, kako ti odnosi prenosa pričajo o Hieronimovih ambicijah na asketskem in na literarnem področju. Vsak od obeh meniških življenjepisov najprej poskrbi za razjasnitev mesta svojega junaka v vrsti menihov, ki sega nazaj vse do začetkov. *Vita Pauli* skoraj nič ne govori o asketovem življenju in se osredotoča na srečanje z Antonom, ki v skladu

z bibličnimi vzori postane njegov dedič. Po drugi strani Hilarion začne meniško življenje s srečanjem z mentorjem in ga konča s prenosom na enega od svojih učencev. Vsakokrat asketsko oblačilo, najbolj neposredno vidno znamenje meniškega ideala, ki se prenaša od meniha do njegovega učenca, postane simbolična predstavitev tega duhovnega sorodstva. Ta poudarek na prenosu lahko nato razumemo kot okrepitev namena obeh *Življenj*, da bi bralec postal učenec mentorja, to je opisanega svetnika. Toda ta motiv je za Hieronima tudi sredstvo za opredelitev njegovega mesta v hagiografski literarni tradiciji: je tekmeč in obenem posnemovalec *Življenja sv. Antona*, prvi latinski avtor asketskega življenjepisa, in situdi sam prizadeva ustvariti posnemovalce.

Ključne besede: utemeljitev, prenos, meništvo, Pavlovo življenje, Hilarionovo življenje

Abstract: Paul and Anthony, Anthony and Hilarion, Hilarion and Hesychius /.../, the mentor-disciple relationships punctuate Jerome's *Vita Pauli* and *Vita Hilarionis*, and forge an almost genetic continuity between a founder and his successors. This article will ask how these inheritance relationships reflect Jerome's intentions in the ascetic and literary fields. These two *Lives* of monks make sure to place their hero in a monastic line that goes back to the origins. The *Vita Pauli* says almost nothing about the ascetic's life and focuses on his encounter with Anthony, who becomes his heir in all thanks to biblical parallels. Hilarion, for his part, begins his monastic life by meeting a mentor and ends it with an act of transmission to one of his disciples. Each time, the ascetic garment, the most immediately visible sign of the monastic ideal given by a monk to his disciples, becomes a symbolic representation of this spiritual lineage. Consequently, this emphasis on transmission can be read as a doubling of the *Vitae's* exemplary aim, the reader becoming the disciple of the mentor the saint is for him. However, this motif also becomes for Jerome a way to define his place in the literary hagiographic tradition: both a rival imitator of the *Vita Antonii* and the first Latin author of *Lives* of ascetics aspiring to create emulators.

Keywords: Foundation, transmission, monasticism, Life of Paul, Life of Hilarion

Paul et Antoine, Antoine et Hilarion, Hilarion et Hesychius... Ces duos mentor-disciple ouvrent et ferment la *Vie de Paul* et la *Vie d'Hilarion* de Jérôme, deux des trois *Vies* de moines que Jérôme a écrites entre 376 et 392.¹ La *Vie de Paul* est la première dans l'ordre de rédaction. Elle date de 376 environ et s'intéresse à la figure de Paul de Thèbes qui aurait vécu sur les troisième et quatrième siècles de notre ère et que Jérôme présente comme la figure fondatrice du monachisme. Il répond ici au »best-seller« qu'est la *Vie d'Antoine* écrite moins de vingt ans plus

¹ Nous ne parlerons pas de la troisième *Vie* de moine, la *Vie de Malchus*, dont la forme est très particulière et très différente des autres: il s'agit d'un récit romanesque à la première personne enchâssé dans le récit d'un narrateur anonyme. Le héros de la *Vita* est toujours vivant à la fin du texte.

tôt et déjà traduite deux fois en latin² dans laquelle Athanase d'Alexandrie parle lui aussi de celui qu'il considère être le père des moines.³

La *Vie d'Hilarion* est la dernière des trois *Vies* écrites par Jérôme, un peu avant 392. C'est la plus longue des trois⁴ et celle qui a la construction narrative la plus proche de la biographie classique, de la *Vie d'Antoine*, et des *Vies* de saints postérieures. Dans ce texte également, Jérôme a à cœur de placer son héros dans une lignée monastique temporellement très précise : à la fois par rapport à Antoine, son prédécesseur, et par rapport à la postérité.

Dans ces deux *Vies*, Jérôme place donc comme enjeux majeurs les thèmes de la fondation et de la transmission, qui peuvent être lus à trois échelles différentes. Il s'agira ainsi d'étudier, dans cet article, comment il les présente et les articule au niveau narratif de l'existence du héros de son hagiographie, mais également au niveau spirituel de l'idéal monastique et au niveau littéraire de l'écriture de vies de saints.

1. Fondation et transmission dans le schéma narratif

1.1 La *Vie de Paul*

La *Vie de Paul* est presque uniquement construite autour des deux thèmes que sont la fondation et la transmission. En effet, la part qui narre la vie même de Paul, son existence dans le désert, est extrêmement réduite : seuls les chapitres 4 à 6 en parlent, ce qui est très peu, même à l'échelle d'une vie aussi courte.⁵ Mais ce qui rend ce passage particulièrement bref est l'inscription générique du texte puisque, dans l'horizon d'attente du lecteur, le sujet d'une biographie est le suivant : écrire la vie d'un homme de sa naissance à sa mort en reprenant un certain nombre de topoï codifiés par les théoriciens de la rhétorique,⁶ ce dont Jérôme, en fin lettré, est parfaitement conscient. D'ailleurs, quand il annonce son plan, il souligne cette construction textuelle anormale pour une biographie : »J'ai conçu le dessein /.../ d'écrire quelques pages sur les premières années et sur la fin de

² Athanase rédige la *Vie d'Antoine* un an après la mort du saint, en 357. Elle est rapidement traduite en latin dans les années qui suivent (traduction aujourd'hui anonyme) puis l'est une seconde fois par Évagre d'Antioche en 373. Ces traductions connaissent une ample diffusion en Occident comme l'atteste Sulpice Sévère qui évoque clairement le texte dans la *Vita Martini* et dont la connaissance du grec n'est pas assurée (cf. SC 133, 119).

³ »En effet, il n'y avait pas encore en Égypte de si nombreux monastères et le moine ne savait absolument rien du grand désert. Quiconque voulait être attentif à soi-même s'exerçait seul non loin de son village.« (Ath., *V. Anton.* 3.2)

⁴ Elle compte trente-trois chapitres.

⁵ 18 chapitres relativement brefs.

⁶ *Eugeneia, genesis, physis, sôma, paideia, epitêdeumata, praxeis et aretai, tukhê, teleutê et ta meta tèn teleutên*, comme le relève Laurent Pernot (1993, 154–177) à propos de la biographie et du discours épictétique en s'appuyant notamment sur Ménandre de Laodicée et Théon.

Paul⁷ et il justifie cette ellipse d'une certaine d'années par son ignorance en la matière : «Les événements qui ont marqué le milieu de sa vie, les embûches que le démon lui a dressées, nul, en effet, ne les connaît.»⁸

Le fait d'écrire une *Vie* sans presque rien dire de la vie du personnage apparaît paradoxal. Ce qui reste dans l'œuvre, une fois que tout ce qui aurait pu y être a été écarté, est donc particulièrement révélateur des intentions de Jérôme lorsqu'il rédige ce texte. Il subsiste, dans l'œuvre, un prologue, qui correspond, nous allons le voir, au motif de la fondation, et des chapitres qui correspondent à la fin de la vie de Paul et donc au motif de la transmission.

Reprenons le premier motif, celui de la fondation. Jérôme y consacre la première partie de son prologue avant de parler de martyrs pour établir la continuité entre les figures de sainteté : le moine ascète est le successeur des martyrs. Il est martyr dans le cœur à défaut de l'être physiquement.

Le premier chapitre de *la Vita Pauli* est, littéralement, une recherche des origines. Il s'ouvre sur une question inspirée par le début de l'Évangile de Luc :⁹ «Bien des gens ont souvent demandé quel était le premier solitaire à avoir habité le désert»¹⁰ et qui pose clairement le thème de ce prologue : il s'agit de rechercher le *πρῶτος ἀνήρ*, le fondateur. Se réappropriant un motif courant chez les historiens (dans *l'Histoire Romaine* de Tite-Live par exemple), Jérôme annonce son ambition de remonter aux origines même du monachisme.

Grâce à une habile *variatio* autour du thème du commencement (*a quo potissimum monachorum [...]/ coepta sit, principia, huius propositi caput, ipse ante omnes, principem rei istius*), il propose alors plusieurs hypothèses qu'il va argumenter avant de les rejeter pour mieux mettre en valeur sa réponse à la question : le premier moine est Paul. Jérôme organise son propos pour nous donner à voir une véritable enquête.

Ainsi, il écarte tout d'abord deux figures bibliques : Elie et Jean-Baptiste qui, par leur mode de vie, se rapprochent beaucoup du moine ascète et qui seront d'ailleurs, pour cette raison, les comparaisons bibliques les plus fréquentes utilisées dans les *Vies* de moines postérieures. Ce rejet est aisé : si l'on considère que le monachisme est né au IV^e siècle, il est évident qu'Elie et Jean ne peuvent être que des modèles, non de vrais moines.

Ce n'est qu'ensuite que son propos peut réellement surprendre son lecteur cultivé. Il écarte également une autre figure, celle d'Antoine considéré jusqu'ici comme le premier moine.

⁷ «Pauca de Pauli principio et fine scribere disposui.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 1.4)

⁸ «Quomodo autem in media aetate vixerit, aut quas Satanae pertulerit insidias, nulli hominum comperit habetur.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 1.4)

⁹ Lc 1,1 : «Beaucoup ont entrepris de composer un récit des événements qui se sont accomplis parmi nous.»

¹⁰ «Inter multos saepe dubitatum est a quo potissimum monachorum eremus habitari coepta sit.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 1.1)

Ce rejet ne peut se faire qu'au prix de concessions : «cela est vrai en partie»¹¹ et «il aiguillonna le zèle des autres»,¹² écrit-il, concessions qui soulignent déjà le type de rivalité littéraire qu'il va vouloir entretenir avec l'œuvre d'Athanase et qui sont une manière de ne pas perdre son lecteur qui connaît déjà Antoine. De plus, souligner l'excellence d'Antoine est une preuve d'honnêteté intellectuelle de la part de Jérôme et une manière de valoriser encore davantage Paul qu'il va placer au-dessus.

Car Paul est assurément le terme de sa recherche, et il est défini comme le *princeps istius rei*. Si Jérôme présente bien le fait qu'il est le fondateur du concept et non du nom, il fait néanmoins immédiatement de lui le seul moine parfait, correspondant à la définition du mot (*μοναχός* signifiant seul) en prenant astucieusement comme témoins de l'existence de Paul des disciples d'Antoine : «Amathas et Macaire», ce qui laisse entendre qu'Antoine, lui, n'était pas vraiment seul, donc pas vraiment *monachos* contrairement au héros de la *Vita*.

Il s'agit donc pour Jérôme de prouver, par une reprise des formes et des règles du genre historique, par une véritable enquête si l'on reprend l'étymologie du mot *historia*, que Paul est bien le premier moine du monde.

Le sérieux et la qualité de sa recherche, d'un point de vue scientifique, se veulent renforcés par le choix d'écarter toutes les anecdotes saugrenues et d'aspect légendaire qui ont pu être rapportées sur Paul («on a dit qu'il vivait dans une grotte souterraine, avec une chevelure qui lui tombait jusqu'aux talons»),¹³ même s'il s'agit d'une prétériorité qui permet de faire entendre brièvement au lecteur ces histoires plaisantes sans les cautionner pour autant.

Cette découverte, somme toute scientifique, puisqu'elle s'appuie sur des témoignages humains, est renforcée par une preuve d'origine divine. En effet, lorsque, au chapitre 7, Antoine apprend l'existence de Paul, il l'apprend grâce à un songe : «Il lui fut révélé que, plus profond dans le désert, vivait un autre plus parfait que lui»¹⁴ dont la nature divine est confirmée par sa déclaration suivante: «Dieu me montrera son autre serviteur.»

L'enquête humaine et le signe du ciel ont ainsi donné le même résultat : Jérôme peut donc affirmer que Paul est le fondateur du monachisme.

Nous passons presque directement du motif de la fondation à celui de la transmission tant le passage sur la description de la vie de Paul se limite à la présentation de son lieu de vie, proche du *locus amoenus* (avec l'ombre, l'eau cristalline et le calme).

Le récit, après une brève digression hiéronymienne sur d'autres ascètes isolés du désert, se focalise sur le personnage d'Antoine. Désormais, c'est autour de

¹¹ «Quod ex parte verum est.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 1.2)

¹² «Ab eo omnium incitata sunt studia.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 1.2)

¹³ «Subterraneo specu crinitum calcaneo tenus hominem /.../.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 1.3)

¹⁴ «Atque illi per noctem quiescenti revelatum est, esse alium interius multo se meliorem.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 7.2)

lui que le récit évolue, comme s'il devenait le héros du texte, alors que Paul, au lieu d'être le personnage principal de sa propre *Vita*, devient l'enjeu de la quête.

D'emblée, la relation entre Paul et Antoine est placée sur le mode de l'inégalité et de la rivalité constructive. En effet, en plus d'être plus âgé qu'Antoine (treize ans contre «seulement» quatre-vingt-dix), Paul est défini par deux comparatifs : *interius* et *mliorem*, donc il vit plus profond dans le désert et il est meilleur, ce qui nous invite à le percevoir immédiatement comme supérieur à Antoine.

Ce choix de la comparaison avec Antoine pour définir le lieu de vie ainsi que les qualités de Paul est très habile de la part de Jérôme : faire un portrait de Paul qui aurait été extrait de la comparaison l'aurait exposé à des critiques aisées de gens qui auraient souligné que rien de cela n'était mieux que ce qu'avait fait Antoine. Là, par l'usage de la comparaison, il place Paul au-dessus d'Antoine sans avoir à préciser comment exactement se manifeste cette supériorité.

Antoine, au terme d'un parcours dont la structure du récit est proche de celle d'un conte avec les péripéties, les opposants et les adjutants qui sont, de plus, des créatures fantastiques ou des animaux, parvient à rencontrer enfin Paul. Face à la porte fermée de ce dernier, Antoine doit se placer en position de suppliant, dans une réécriture du chapitre 48 de la *Vie d'Antoine* où le saint refusait d'ouvrir lui aussi à un homme qui l'en priait devant sa porte. Cette fois, c'est Antoine qui est devant la porte, ce qui prouve bien qu'il y a une hiérarchie entre les deux hommes : Paul est l'ancien, il est le mentor. Antoine est le disciple.

Les moments que les deux moines partagent sont révélateurs de la façon dont Jérôme envisage la transmission entre mentor et disciple : elle se trouve sans cesse à la frontière de l'émulation et de la communion.

En effet, les deux moines font tout ensemble. Ils échangent de «mutuelles étreintes» (*mutuos amplexus*), ils rendent grâce à Dieu «en commun» (*in commune*). Après cette communion dans leurs retrouvailles, ils entrent en communion de manière spirituelle au moment de leur repas. En effet, il s'agit de rompre le pain, donc de reproduire le geste de Jésus lors de la Cène et de célébrer ainsi l'Eucharistie. Incapables de choisir qui aura l'honneur d'imiter le Christ, Paul et Antoine agissent de concert : «ils se décidèrent à prendre le pain chacun par un bout en tirant à soi»,¹⁵ lit-on au chapitre 11 de la *Vita Pauli*, ce qui constitue une concélébration à la forme pour le moins surprenante mais qui a le mérite de souligner la communion spirituelle des deux hommes par ce geste.

Cette communion, néanmoins, n'est qu'un élément de la transmission. Entre ces deux hommes qui partagent la même foi et le même ascétisme, il y a une figure de mentor et une figure de disciple. Paul tient pour Antoine des discours formateurs et il est celui qui a le plus de connaissances puisque lui, par exemple, bien qu'il ne soit pas sorti du désert depuis une centaine d'années, connaissait l'existence d'Antoine : «Depuis longtemps, mon frère, je savais que tu habitais

¹⁵ »Tandem consilium fuit, ut adprehenso e regione pane, dum ad se quisque nititur, pars sua remaneret in manibus.« (Hier., *V. Pauli* 11.2)

dans ces régions»,¹⁶ déclare-t-il à Antoine au chapitre 11. Du fait de son âge, Paul sera également le premier à mourir et il compte sur Antoine pour remplir pour lui le devoir d'un fils envers son père : enterrer son corps : «Le Seigneur t'a envoyé pour couvrir de terre mon pauvre corps»,¹⁷ annonce Paul à son visiteur qui, ensuite, se considérera comme son «pieux héritier» (*pious haeres*), comme on peut le lire au chapitre 16.

Cette relation entre un mentor et son disciple est d'autant plus prégnante dans le texte que Jérôme a recours à une double intertextualité biblique : une intertextualité néotestamentaire et une intertextualité vétotestamentaire.

Les instants partagés par Paul et Antoine suivent tout d'abord l'ordre chronologique des derniers moments du Christ sur terre. Ils partagent un repas avec la fraction du pain puis ils partagent leur boisson (certes de l'eau et non le sang du Christ), ils passent la nuit en prière, comme Jésus au Jardin des Oliviers, jusqu'au lever du jour. La mention suivante de Paul est dans une parole d'Antoine revenu chez lui : «J'ai vu Paul au paradis», affirme-t-il avant même d'être sûr de son décès. Ce propos se confirme par une vision qui nous offre à voir la transfiguration et l'ascension de Paul : «Il vit, au milieu des légions angéliques, parmi le chœur des prophètes et des apôtres, Paul, resplendissant d'une blancheur de neige, s'élever dans les cieux.»¹⁸ Paul apparaît donc déjà ressuscité et auprès de Dieu. Ce visage christique de Paul, conforté par la pensée que Jérôme donne à Antoine au chapitre 12 : «Il crut voir le Christ en Paul», particulièrement du Christ au moment de la Cène, donc de l'instauration et de la transmission de l'Eucharistie, en fait le mentor absolu vis-à-vis d'Antoine qui se trouve à la place des apôtres.

Plus explicite encore que cette intertextualité évangélique, c'est une intertextualité vétotestamentaire que Jérôme met en place pour figurer la transmission entre le premier moine et son émule. Paul et Antoine deviennent comparables à Elie et Elisée. Ce parallèle était déjà esquissé dans le prologue quand Jérôme traitait de la possibilité qu'Elie soit à l'origine du monachisme. Le lien entre Paul et Elie est particulièrement visible lors du repas des deux moines ou, plus précisément, dans la manière dont ce repas est apporté à Paul au chapitre 10 : «Ils voient un corbeau s'arrêter sur une branche d'arbre, puis voler doucement à terre et y déposer un pain entier.»¹⁹ Cette manière de recevoir de la nourriture est semblable à ce dont bénéficie Elie dans le troisième livre des Règles (3 Reg 17,6) : «Les corbeaux lui apportaient du pain et de la viande le matin, et du pain et de la viande le soir.»

¹⁶ «Olim te, frater, in istis regionibus habitare sciebam.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 11.3)

¹⁷ «Tu missus a Domino es, qui humo corpusculum tegas.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 11.3)

¹⁸ «Cumque iam dies inluxisset alia, et trium horarum spatium iter remaneret, videt inter angelorum catervas, inter prophetarum et apostolorum choros, niveo Paulum candore fulgentem in sublime conscendere.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 14.2)

¹⁹ «Suspiciunt alitem corvum in ramo arboris consedissee, qui inde leviter subvolans, integrum panem ante mirantium ora deposuit.» (Hier., *V. Pauli* 10.2)

Le parallèle avec les deux prophètes se poursuit par le motif du manteau qui prend une place prépondérante à la fin de la *Vita Pauli*. En effet, Paul force Antoine à le quitter et à ne pas assister à son décès en lui réclamant la tunique d'Athanase comme linceul mais, plus intéressant, il y a une transmission de la tunique de Paul, celle qu'il s'était lui-même fabriquée, à Antoine et cette transmission est qualifiée d'héritage : «Le lendemain, le pieux héritier, ne voulant rien perdre des biens de celui qui était mort sans testament, prit pour lui la tunique que Paul avait tissée lui-même /.../ avec des feuilles de palmier.»²⁰ Ce passage de la tunique ou du manteau d'un moine à un autre est une réécriture de cette même transmission entre Elie et Elisée. Elisée reçoit tout d'abord le manteau d'Elie (3 Reg 19,19) : «Élie s'ap procha de lui, et il jeta sur lui son manteau.» et, au moment de la montée d'Elie au ciel, il récupère son manteau comme Antoine le fait pour Paul (4 Reg 2,14) : «Il prit le manteau qu'Élie avait laissé tomber.» Prenant son manteau, Elisée devient le successeur d'Elie, son héritier. De même, prenant son manteau, Antoine devient l'héritier de Paul.

Ce n'est pas simplement un manteau qui est transmis. Ce vêtement, comme Jérôme nous le rappelle dans l'épilogue, représente le mode de vie monastique. Dans ces derniers chapitres de la *Vita Pauli*, avec un travail rhétorique recherché, Jérôme offre à son lecteur un développement plus large, à portée catéchétique, sur le mode de vie qui convient à un bon chrétien. Sa *variatio* dans le lexique du vêtement : *vestiunt, tunicis, indumentum, vestem ...* lui permet de broder toutes les possibilités qui s'offrent aux hommes pour montrer que le bon choix est celui d'Antoine, celui que lui, Jérôme, ferait en conclusion de cet épilogue qui invite à prendre cette *Vita* comme un apologue : la tunique de Paul, c'est-à-dire le mode de vie ascétique d'un moine, du fondateur du monachisme.

1.2 La Vie d'Hilarion

La *Vie d'Hilarion*, bien que plus classique dans sa composition, développe aussi ces deux thèmes de la fondation et de la transmission.

Impossible, bien évidemment, pour Hilarion d'être, lui aussi, le premier moine au monde. Néanmoins Jérôme fait tout pour le présenter comme le premier de sa région, donc comme le premier moine de Palestine. De fait, quand Hilarion cherche un modèle au début de sa vie monastique au chapitre 4, c'est vers l'Égypte et Antoine qu'il doit se tourner, il n'y a pas plus près et, quand il repart d'Égypte pour sa région natale, il est seul avant de faire des émules à son tour et d'être à l'origine de tout le monachisme palestinien.

Mais, justement, parce qu'il ne peut pas être le premier de tous, Hilarion se trouve inscrit dans une lignée de moines. En visitant Antoine, il reçoit de sa part un «manteau». ²¹ Jérôme continue ici de filer la métaphore d'un texte à l'autre. Hilarion, en obtenant un vêtement de moine de la part d'Antoine, reçoit de lui

²⁰ »Ne quid pius haeres ex intestati bonis non possideret, tunicam sibi eius vindicavit, quam in sportarum modum de palmae foliis sibi ipse texuerat.« (Hier., *V. Pauli* 16.8)

²¹ »Pelliceum habens ependyten quem illi beatus Antonius proficiscenti dederat.« (Hier., *V. Hilar.* 3.1)

l'idéal monastique, celui qu'Antoine, en prenant le manteau de Paul, avait obtenu du premier moine de tous les temps. Hilarion se trouve ainsi inséré dans une filiation de moines qui remonte aux origines mêmes.

Ce qu'il a reçu, Hilarion le transmet à son tour. En effet, à la fin de sa vie, au chapitre 32, sentant la mort venir, Hilarion lègue ses biens, qui sont essentiellement ses vêtements, à son disciple Hésychius : «Pendant une absence d'Hésychius, il lui écrit de sa propre main une courte lettre sous forme de testament par laquelle il lui léguait toutes ses richesses, à savoir son exemplaire de la Bible, le sac qui lui tenait lieu de tunique, son capuchon et son petit manteau.»²² On retrouve donc la même notion de legs et d'héritage que dans la *Vita Pauli*. Un bon moine, un moine saint, se doit de propager le monachisme, de transmettre à des disciples, ressort-il de ces deux *Vies* de Jérôme.

2. L'élan du monachisme

Si Jérôme insiste autant sur la constitution d'une lignée, c'est aussi que cette transmission doit s'étendre plus largement. Le lecteur est invité à s'identifier au disciple. Il est amené, comme Antoine ou Hilarion, à parcourir un chemin pour atteindre le saint qui est pour lui le modèle de vie monastique ou, alors, comme Hésychius, il est convié à accompagner Hilarion, son exemple, durant sa vie, grâce à la lecture.

La difficulté du parcours qu'Antoine doit effectuer pour atteindre Paul peut être relue sous cet angle : elle représente spirituellement le parcours que le lecteur devenu ascète doit faire pour se rapprocher de Dieu. Sans proposer un combat spirituel visible par un combat physique contre le diable comme c'est le cas dans la *Vie d'Antoine*, il s'agit malgré tout de ne pas céder devant les manifestations d'inspiration diabolique et de ne pas se décourager quand le chemin n'est pas évident à reconnaître.

Cette insistance sur la transmission d'un mentor à son disciple est donc une manière de rendre visible la visée du texte hagiographique héritée de la biographie classique : c'est un texte didactique, qui narre la vie d'un personnage exemplaire, imitateur du Christ, qui doit servir de modèle pour les lecteurs.

La façon dont les disciples découvrent et imitent leur mentor, puis dont ils transmettent à leur tour cette spiritualité ascétique et monastique est la représentation de ce que doit faire le lecteur qui accède au même mentor grâce à l'hagiographie. Il doit vivre comme un moine et transmettre à son tour.²³ Grâce à l'hagiographie, le lecteur devient à son tour l'héritier du manteau de Paul, pour reprendre l'image de Jérôme, et il est invité à le léguer lui aussi.

²² «Cum absens esset Hesychius, quasi testamenti vice brevem manu propria scripsit epistulam, omnes divitias suas ei derelinquens, evangelium scilicet et tunicam sacceam, cucullam et palliolum.» (Hier., *V. Hilar.* 32.1)

²³ Sur l'importance du monachisme dans la construction de la communauté ecclésiale, voir Bugiulescu 2018.

3. Une lignée littéraire

Mais il me semble qu'on peut aller encore plus loin et voir également dans cette importance des motifs de la fondation, de la rivalité et de la transmission une représentation des ambitions littéraires de Jérôme dans le genre biographique hagiographique.

Jérôme est un auteur cultivé et qui a une conscience forte de sa création littéraire. Les *Vies* de Paul et Hilarion entretiennent des rapports d'intertextualité très forts avec la *Vie d'Antoine* d'Athanase d'Alexandrie. C'est une source majeure de Jérôme et, en même temps, il se place en rivalité littéraire constante avec cette œuvre (Bastiaensen 1994). Les rapports entre Paul et Antoine sont une manière de mettre son texte et celui d'Athanase sur un pied d'égalité, puis de se hisser littérairement au-dessus finalement, ce que son prologue à la *Vita Pauli* laisse entrevoir : « Comme la vie d'Antoine a été racontée avec exactitude tant en grec qu'en latin, j'ai conçu le dessein, pour réparer une omission, d'écrire ces quelques pages /.../. »²⁴ L'enjeu littéraire de Jérôme ici est clairement suggéré et l'émulation entre auteurs apparaît plus nettement que chez un autre auteur dont la source principale est aussi la *Vie d'Antoine*: Sulpice Sévère quand il écrit la *Vie de Martin* (SC 113, 118–119).

On peut donc relire sous cet angle la rivalité entre Paul et Antoine et notamment la question de qui est le plus ancien et de qui est le meilleur.

Le fait que Jérôme mette des expressions ou des citations virgiliennes dans la bouche de Paul alors que c'est lui l'homme cultivé et non Paul montre qu'il crée un rapprochement entre le premier moine et lui-même. Jérôme s'inscrit donc dans une lignée d'auteurs, il hérite des classiques, il hérite d'Athanase, mais revendique la particularité d'être le premier de son espèce, le fondateur d'un genre en latin en étant remonté aux origines du monachisme et en étant le premier à écrire dans cette langue des *Vies* de saints, qui ne sont pas des passions et il invite à l'imitation littéraire.

4. Conclusion

Il s'agit donc moins, pour Jérôme, d'écrire des *Vies* que de fournir des exemples. La *Vie de Paul*, particulièrement, met l'existence même du héros à l'écart. Le choix d'un objet paradoxal pour une *Vita*, le choix d'une *Vie* sans vie, est révélateur des ambitions plus larges de Jérôme : au-delà d'un exercice littéraire autour des conventions du genre biographique, il entend offrir un redoublement de l'objet d'imitation au lecteur. Le personnage principal de la *Vita* n'est pas le seul exemple à suivre, le destinataire peut et doit également s'identifier à son disciple, à son successeur, pour venir prendre sa place dans la lignée des ascètes dont, lui, Jérôme aura été le premier à narrer la vie dans le monde latin.

²⁴ »Igitur quia de Antonio tam Graeco quam Romano stilo diligenter memoriae traditum est /.../.« (Hier., *V. Pauli* 1.4)

Abréviations

- 3(4) Reg** – Regum III(IV).
Ath. – Athanasius Alexandrinus.
Hier. – Hieronymus.
SC – Sources Chrétiennes.
V. Ant. – *Vita Antonii* [Baterlink 2004].
V. Hilar. – *Vita Hilarionis* [Morales 2007].
V. Pauli – *Vita Pauli* [Morales 2007].

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Stoletni sadovi

Člani katedre za dogmatično teologijo v jubilejnem letu z zbornikom predstavljajo »dogmatične sadove« na »stoletnem drevesu« TEOF v okviru UL. Prvi del z naslovom »Sadovi preteklosti« s hvaležnostjo predstavlja delo njenih rajnih profesorjev. Kako katedra živi ob stoletnici svojo sedanost in gleda v prihodnost z upanjem, predstavljajo prispevki živečih članov katedre v drugem delu pod naslovom »Sadovi sedanjosti«. Tretji del ponuja »Podarjene sadove«, ki so jih ob jubileju poklonili nekateri pomembni teologi iz tujine, ki so povezani z našo fakulteto (zaslužni papež Benedikt XVI., Hans Urs von Balthasar, Jürgen Moltmann, Bruno Forte, Marino Qualizza in Marko I. Rupnik).

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David Movrin

Holy Aemulatio: Vita Hilarionis and Jerome's Efforts to Outdo the *Life of Antony*

Sveto posnemanje: Vita Hilarionis in Hieronimovi naporih pri preseganju Antonovega življenjepisa

Abstract: The three lives of saints penned by Jerome, *Vita Pauli*, *Vita Malchi*, and *Vita Hilarionis*, were frequently described in the past by one or another variant of Edward Gibbon's acerbic verdict – that their only defect is »the want of truth and common sense.« Twentieth-century scholarship, less sweeping and perhaps more discerning, pointed out significant differences between the texts. While the *Life of Malchus* is not even biography and while the subject of *Life of Paul* seems to have been a figment of Jerome's imagination, the *Life of Hilarion* is anchored in reality, to the extent that traces of its protagonist can still be found in independent secondary sources such as Sozomenus. However, while its historicity poses intriguing questions of its own, recent decades have become particularly interested in its narrative strategies. Susan Weingarten convincingly showed how Jerome used and subverted a masterpiece of profane literature, namely, Apuleius' *Golden Ass*. What inspired such a daring tactic? The approach was partly motivated by the text Jerome was emulating, namely, the *Life of Antony* itself.

Keywords: Jerome, Hagiography, *Vita Pauli*, *Vita Malchi*, *Vita Hilarionis*

Povzetek: Trije Hieronimovi svetniški življenjepisi, *Vita Pauli*, *Vita Malchi* in *Vita Hilarionis*, so bili v preteklosti pogosto deležni te ali one različice jedke sodbe iz ust Edwarda Gibbona, ki je mimogrede navrgel, da je njihova edina napaka »pomanjkanje resnice in zdrave pameti«. Raziskovalci 20. stoletja so z manj posploševanja in morda z več razločevanja poudarili, da obstajajo med temi tremi besedili tudi velike razlike. Medtem ko *Malhovo življenje* sploh ni biografija in se zdi, da je bil protagonist *Pavlovega življenja* plod Hieronimove domišljije, je Hilarionov življenjepis zasidran v stvarnosti: sledi njegovega protagonista je moč najti v neodvisnih sekundarnih virih, kakršen je Sozomen. Zgodovinskost besedila zastavlja vrsto svojih lastnih vprašanj, zadnja desetletja pa se posebej zanimajo za v njem nakazane narativne strategije. Susan Weingarten je prepričljivo pokazala, kako je Hieronim uporabil in subvertiral mojstrovino profane literature, Apulejevega *Zlatega osla*. Kaj bi lahko navdihnili tako drzno taktiko? Zdi se, da je bil pristop deloma motiviran prav z besedilom, ki ga je Hieronim posnemal, z Antonovim življenjepisom.

Ključne besede: Hieronim, hagiografija, *Vita Pauli*, *Vita Malchi*, *Vita Hilarionis*

1. Introduction

The three lives of saints penned by Jerome of Stridon, *Vita Pauli*, *Vita Malchi*, and *Vita Hilarionis*, were frequently described in the past by one or another variant of Edward Gibbon's acerbic verdict that »the only defect of these pleasing compositions is the want of truth¹ and common sense« (Gibbon 1931, 5, n. 17). Twentieth-century scholarship, less sweeping and perhaps more discerning, pointed out significant differences between the texts and that it hardly makes any sense to lump them together. Timothy Barnes, in his *Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History*, warned that »it becomes a serious bar to understanding when all three are treated as if they formed three parts of a trilogy, or when they are put on the same level of historicity«; this can happen when all three are assumed to be truthful, or all three are characterized as 'romances of monastic life' (Barnes 2016, 171). Interestingly enough, this fact was consistently recognized by the manuscript tradition, where the texts tended to be transmitted separately; of many manuscripts that contain *Vita Pauli*, *Vita Malchi*, or *Vita Hilarionis*, only a minute segment contains all three.²

While one could argue that the *Life of Malchus* is not even biography³ and while the subject of the *Life of Paul* seems to have been a figment of Jerome's imagination, the *Life of Hilarion* is an entirely different matter. Following criticism from contemporaries who were not always ready to provide the *carte blanche* from Mark 9:23, *Vita Pauli* 6.2 demanded the faithful – »haec incredibilia videbuntur eis, qui non crediderint omnia possibilis esse credentibus« – Jerome's subsequent attempt was anchored in reality. The onslaught of his colleagues is evident from the very beginning of the text, where Jerome complains about their scepticism:⁴

»Maledicorum voces contemnimus, qui olim detrahentes Paulo meo nunc forsitan detrahent et Hilarioni, illum solitudinis calumniati, huic obicientes frequentiam, ut qui semper latuit, non fuisse, qui a multis visus est, vilis extimetur.« (*Vita Hilarionis* 1.6)

¹ It seems that Gibbon was not yet ready for the more nuanced understanding of Christian biography, open to the fact that in these texts, »truth claims were made quite apart from the stories themselves and, indeed, were often incidental to the narrative being told«; these claims could be focused on »the order of world powers and the constructedness of social or family relations« (Johnson 2020, 81).

² The landmark work by W.A. Oldfather's team (McNeil B.V.M. 1943) was supplemented by *Bibliotheca Hieronymiana Manuscripta* (Lambert 1969) and more recently by the work of Edgardo Morales (Leclerc, Morales, and Vogüé 2007, 112 ff.).

³ For the discussion of the literary form, see the edition and commentary published by Oxford University Press (Gray 2015, 14). It should be noted that a shift is currently taking place in the very definition of biography as the life story of a historical, rather than a fictional individual, which used to be the norm (von der Nahmer 1994, 57 ff.); recent scholarship proposes a revision, as it is »arguably a remnant of our modern characterization of biography as a provider of historical truth« (De Temmerman 2020).

⁴ The text is from the critical edition published by Sources Chrétiennes (Leclerc, Morales, and Vogüé 2007).

»I disregard what the critics say of it, for those who earlier found fault with my life of Paul will now perhaps also find fault with my life of Hilarion. If they criticize Paul for his solitude, they will criticize Hilarion for his sociability, believing that because Paul always remained out of sight, he did not exist and because Hilarion was seen by many, he should be regarded as of no importance.«⁵

Vita Pauli was among the earliest literary achievements of Jerome; it probably appeared before 381. Despite the slanderers' claims, it was of significant literary quality and came to have enormous influence in the West. Only later (but probably still before 392) followed the lives of Malchus and Hilarion. Stephan Rebenich, who pointed out the fine literary form of *Vita Pauli* (Rebenich 2013, 18), was not the first one to do so; Richard Reitzenstein, in *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen*, speaks of a 'gem of narrative literature' (Reitzenstein 1906, 68), and indeed several scholars analyzed the motives and elements which Jerome borrowed from Greek and Latin literature of both pagan and Christian provenance when composing his *vitae*.⁶ When working with earlier forms, Jerome was flexible.

»Collections of examples and apophthegms, as well as miraculous stories, served him as a framework for individual episodes; the predominant literary structures are modelled on the archetype of the classic novel and the classical biography. Terms such as 'romance of monastic life', 'Enkomion', 'travel-aretalogy', 'saint's Life' or 'Mönchsbiographie', therefore describe only one particular aspect of this work.«

Rebenich further noticed how Jerome mastered classical literary practice and integrated stylistic devices and narrative structures of pagan origin into his writings. His mixed reception of classic examples guaranteed his contemporaries an entertaining reading experience (Rebenich 2013, 18).

2. Modelling and Rivalry

Despite all this eclecticism, one text was on Jerome's mind more than the others when he embarked on his hagiographic projects. *Life of Antony* by Athanasius⁷ was translated from Greek to Latin by Jerome's friend and patron, Evagrius of Antioch. Antony's story was an ancient bestseller, highly influential; in a famous passage in his *Confessions*, Augustine mentions its role in his conversion.⁸ For Jerome, Evagrius produced a golden standard. He quotes his very words in one of his seminal polemical letters, *Ep. 57*, known as *De optimo genere interpretandi*:⁹

⁵ Wherever possible, translations are taken from the Penguin anthology of *Early Christian Lives* (White 1998).

⁶ For *Vita Hilarionis*, see in particular the study by Paul Winter (Winter 1904).

⁷ There was considerable controversy regarding the authorship of the text; however, as one overview of the problems involved concludes, the various theses »have not convinced many« (Harmless 2004, 111–113).

⁸ The significance of this mention is perhaps heightened by the fact that the references to Antony are otherwise hard to find in Augustine's work (Kamimura 2014, 42).

⁹ The text is taken from the critical edition published by Mnemosyne (Bartelink 1980).

»Verum ne meorum parva sit auctoritas quamquam hoc tantum probare voluerim, me semper ab adulescentia non verba, sed sententias transtulisse, qualis super hoc genere praefatiuncula sit, in libro, quo beati Antonii Vita describitur, ipsius lectione cognosce. »Ex alia in aliam linguam ad verbum expressa translatio sensus operit et veluti laeto gramine sata strangulat. Dum enim casibus et figuris servit oratio, quod brevi poterat indicare sermone, longo ambitu circumacta vix explicat.« Hoc igitur ego vitans ita beatum Antonium te petente transposui, ut nihil desit ex sensu, cum aliquid desit ex verbis. Alii syllabas aucupentur et litteras, tu quaere sententias.« (6.1–2)

»In quoting my own writings, my only object has been to prove that from my youth up, I at least have always aimed at rendering sense, not words, but if such authority as they supply is deemed insufficient, read and consider the short preface dealing with this matter which occurs in a book narrating the life of the blessed Antony. A literal translation from one language into another obscures the sense; the exuberance of the growth lessens the yield. For a while, one's diction is enslaved to cases and metaphors, and it has to explain by tedious circumlocutions what a few words would otherwise have sufficed to make plain. I have tried to avoid this error in the translation, which at your request, I have made of the story of the blessed Antony. My version always preserves the sense, although it does not invariably keep the words of the original. Leave others to catch at syllables and letters, you for your part, look for the meaning.«¹⁰

Evagrius followed this approach in his translation; this meant adding and occasionally improving. Compared to the previous Latin version, which was close to the original and stylistically less than impressive, Evagrius produced a rhetorical breeze of fresh air, showing an audience for Lives on a high literary level. Indeed, it is not surprising that numerous borrowings from Evagrius' translation could be detected in Jerome's text since he »entered into competition with Athanasius' *Vita Antonii* and its Latin translations« (Rebenich 2013, 22). Indeed, this rivalry seems to be the scholarly consensus (Rousseau 2010, 133). As for the stylistic swagger, Hagendahl, for instance, called Jerome's style »rather exuberant«, stressing that it is not devoid of classical ornaments, such as »Virgilian lines« (Hagendahl 1958, 105).¹¹ More recent studies go into detail, analyzing particular parallels between the texts, for instance, the concept of the desert (Šubrt 2007), solitude (Konig 2020), or supplication (Gray 2020b). Alan J. Ross has shown how Jerome's writing relies on »allusive engagement with the only other monastic hagiography likely than in existence, Athanasius' *Vita Antonii*,« and how well-marked intertext it represented. Jerome mentioned both Greek and Latin accounts; there seems to be a consensus among scholars that Jerome presents Paul as »not just the earlier but also the superior monk« and a »truer example of asceticism« (Ross 2020, 124–127).

¹⁰ Translated by W.H. Fremantle, G. Lewis and W.G. Martley.

¹¹ His work gave new impetus to the scholarly research of these texts; in the years that followed, even their Latin world order was meticulously analysed (Heimann 1966).

3. *Aemulatio*

The present paper proposes to take the observation a step further and use this concept of competition, *aemulatio*, a key concept when one tries to analyze Roman translation (McElduff 2013), for Jerome's *Life of Hilarion*, the longest of his three *vitae*, which for some reason remained sorely underrepresented in Hagendahl's brilliant and magisterial analysis. *Life of Hilarion* was a new attempt to outdo the *Life of Antony*. This time, it was based on a personality with significantly stronger historical credibility, to the extent that traces of its protagonist can be found in independent secondary sources such as Sozomenus.

Philip Rousseau eloquently describes how Jerome's Hilarion, in his career, mirrored the path of his teacher, Antony;¹² first by keeping him company and trying to understand his way of life, later by deciding to mirror the same pattern, *ordo*, of his life, selling everything and going to the desert. Hilarion's staying there was again akin to Antony's; it took 22 years before people started visiting – but once they did, »they flocked to him«. ¹³ The next step, the miracles, will be again oddly familiar to the readers of *Vita Antonii*. Antony healed a young girl from a distance (*Vita Antonii* 58), as well as a man, possessed while on a boat (63) – and so did Hilarion (*Vita Hilarionis* 25); like Antony (*Vita Antonii* 89), Hilarion kept visiting the monks living nearby (*Vita Hilarionis* 17); and while Antony made a spring appear in the desert (*Vita Antonii* 54), Hilarion made the rain (*Vita Hilarionis* 22) fall on the crops (Leclerc, Morales, and De Vogüé 2007, 51).

However, the exciting part comes afterwards, with Hilarion showing his taste for one-upmanship. While Antony avoided crowds by withdrawing to the desert, Hilarion opted for »a prolonged pilgrimage, a lifetime of escape from reputation, and from the danger of becoming rooted in one place« (Rousseau 2010, 138). This meant moving first to the site where »Antony himself used to sing, pray, work, and rest when weary« (*Vita Hilarionis* 21.4) and later, to the oasis of Aphroditon. There, he realized an island might be a better choice, so he sailed to Sicily; and when that was not enough, he decided to go to »barbarous races where his name and fame were unknown« (28.1), which meant Epidaurus in Dalmatia, and eventually Cyprus, where he died, »semper de fuga cogitans« (31ff.).¹⁴

While the historicity of these events poses fascinating questions of its own,¹⁵ recent decades became particularly interested in the implied narrative strategies; as Christa Gray points out, the fact that its protagonist is a historical character

¹² See the fourth chapter in his *Ascetics, Authority, and the Church* (Rousseau 2010, 137 ff.).

¹³ »Certatim ad eum de Syria et Aegypto populi confluebant.« (*Vita Hilarionis* 8.9); cf. *Vita Antonii* 14.2, »Πολλῶν ποθούντων καὶ θελώντων αὐτοῦ τὴν ἄσκησιν ζηλώσαι.« Greek text of *Vita Antonii* is quoted after the SC edition (Bartelink 2004).

¹⁴ Rousseau perceptively pointed out how Hilarion's deliberate dedication to a life of pilgrimage can be understood as »a vivid comment on Jerome's own enforced situation, following his expulsion from Rome« (2010, 138).

¹⁵ Recent scholarship of the genre warns that even »when the biographee is a historical person, stylization can be so strong that we cannot trust the biography to give us any reliable information about the reality behind him« (Praet 2020).

should not preclude the understanding of the text as a Christian literary biography (Gray 2020a, 88).¹⁶ This tradition forms part of its background, even though the author mostly avoids explicit referencing or even direct quotations from earlier texts, as do others in this genre (Müller 2020, 80). To begin with, *Vita Hilarionis* is rhetorically structured in a way that mirrors *Vita Antonii* (Nehring 2003, 434). Its preface has a passage that sounds very much like a passage from *Vita Probi* in *Historia Augusta* (Adkin 1997); it is not entirely clear who copied whom, but what matters is that Jerome is echoing the Sallustian *Bellum Catilinae*, as well as Cicero's *Pro Archia*. When describing the carnal desires of a young monk, he uses Virgil (Pataki 2001). In *Vita Hilarionis* 3.7, editors of the critical edition have noticed parallels with Vergil, Livy, and Tacitus in one particularly dense sentence. However, this was only a beginning; and one can imagine Jerome as a late-antique Al Pacino in the *Scent of a Woman*, thundering: »I am just getting warmed up!« Susan Weingarten, in her study on *The Saint's Saints: Hagiography and Geography in Jerome*, has shown how Jerome used, and subverted, a masterpiece of profane literature, namely Apuleius' *Golden Ass*. Weingarten analyzed a series of verbal and visual parallels and discovered a shared joke and examples of shared vocabulary, as well as a series of shared images and functional parallels. It seems that the bawdy and indecent *Golden Ass* was used as a fundamental antithesis for the ascetic monk – as a »pagan captive which has been shorn and converted to Jerome's ascetic Christianity« (Weingarten 2005, 104).¹⁷

Why all these parallels, and why are they not explicit? Jerome's ambivalence with classical authors is well known. Weingarten points out his letter 22 to Eustochium about being a Ciceronian, not a Christian. As he wrote in that letter: »Quid facit cum psalterio Horatius? Cum evangelii Maro? Cum apostolo Cicero?« (*Ep.* 22.29) Decades later, he developed this motif further: »Quid Aristoteli et Paulo? Quid Platoni et Petro?« (*Adv. Pelag.* 1.14) Could this be the reason for his concealment – which nonetheless failed to conquer his rivalry? Just as Hilarion in his Christianity surpasses his pagan rivals, the many literary allusions appear to have been used by Jerome to show how compared to the *Vita Antonii*; his literary masterpiece can go one better. Nevertheless, what in Athanasius' text inspired such a daring tactic?

4. *Life of Antony and Its Literary Context*

To attempt an answer to this question borders on rushing in where angels fear to tread. Scholarship has long ago realized that Jerome's relationship with the cultural legacy of the ancients could not be defined in an unequivocal formula. »It is inconsequent, inconsistent, reflecting opposite tendencies, fluctuating like

¹⁶ For the reciprocal influence, see the intriguing concept of 'Bio-Historiographie' (Führer 2020).

¹⁷ It should be noted that the case of Apuleius remains *sub iudice* and that Neil Adkin disagreed with Weingarten in 2011, arguing that her parallels are too general to prove direct dependency (Adkin 2011); in two earlier papers, he had already written about the »dangers of over-zealous identification of classical reminiscences in this work« (Adkin 2000, 2010).

the currents of the tide.« (Hagendahl 1958, 309) Nonetheless, one cannot help but wonder whether Jerome's approach was not at least partly motivated by the way other texts were alluded to in the *Life of Antony* itself. Richard Reitzenstein famously showed how Athanasius employed the lives of pagan philosophers,¹⁸ specifically the *Life of Pythagoras* by Porphyry (Reitzenstein 1914); other scholars, such as Johann List, discussed parallels between *Life of Antony* and *Life of Plotinus* by Porphyry (List 1930); and Ludwig Bieler, in his *Theios aner: Das Bild des ‚göttlichen Menschen‘ in Spätantike und Frühchristentum*, created a whole network of parallels between the holy men of antiquity, using texts such as Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* and *The Lives of Sophists*; the *Pythagorean Life* by Iamblichus; the already mentioned *Life of Pythagoras* and *Life of Plotinus* by Porphyry; and the *Lives of Philosophers* by Eunapius (Bieler 1935).

Indeed, one can go through *Life of Antony* using this type of framework, and the analysis produces a series of parallels with the classical literature. Like the pagan holy men, Antony was marked by early maturity, and as a child, he wished to »stand apart from the normal activities of children« (*Vita Antonii* 1.2). The same could be said of the young Apollonios of Tyana, also able to rise above his companions like a young eagle (*Vita Apollonii* 1.7); and about the young Porphyry, developing so fast, according to Eunapius, that he soon became an ornament to his teacher (*Vitae sophistarum* 4.1). Similarly, the young Proclus did not yield to peer pressure (*Vita Procli* 11). Their archetype, of course, was the young Pythagoras (*De vita Pythagorica* 10). Antony was also marked by special knowledge, such as the knowledge of approaching death; he ordered the monks to wrap his body, prepare it for burial, and hide it under the earth, so that »to this day no one knows where it is hidden« (*Vita Antonii* 91–92). A similar shroud of secrecy covered the deaths of Apollonios (*Vita Apollonii* 8.29 ff) and Plotinus, who was reluctant to mention even the details of his birth (*Vita Plotini* 2). Of course, Antony's life was marked by the ubiquitous asceticism, linked by Reitzenstein, via direct quotation, to the *Life of Pythagoras*. His biographer stresses that it is »superfluous even to speak about meat and wine, for nothing of this sort could be found among those who are zealous« (*Vita Antonii* 7.7) – and there were parallels for this in the conduct of Pythagoras (*De vita Pythagorica* 187 ff.), Apollonios (*Vita Apollonii* 1.8), and others. The unique capabilities, marked by Antony's exceptional knowledge,¹⁹ can also be traced across the lives of Pythagoras (*De vita Pythagorica* 66; *Vita Pythagorae* 28) Iamblichus (*Vitae sophistarum* 459), and Apollonios (*Vita Apollonii* 8.26). Antony's benevolently traditional approach to nature sometimes gives the impression of a proto-Francis of Assisi (*Vita Antonii* 50); this can also be observed with Pythagoras (*De vita Pythagorica* 60) and others. Although Antony avoids his followers, they come in droves, eventually making the desert a city (*Vita Antonii* 14.7; 44). Pythagoras likewise attracted many followers, who created their community (*Vita Pythagorae* 20), and entire cities sought Apollonios of Tyana

¹⁸ This took place in the broader context of the relationship between asceticism and ancient philosophy (Bobovnik and Derhard 2020).

¹⁹ For instance in *Vita Antonii* 19.4–5, where the monk saves two visiting companions, somehow knowing they need help and sending them water to the desert.

(*Vita Apollonii* 4.1). Many more of these *loci in libris* could be adduced here (Movrin 2011, 324–340). Direct quotations cannot pinpoint these parallels. However, their sheer number testifies to the close relationship between the texts; in this context, Patricia Cox perceptively wrote about ‚mirroring‘ (Cox 1983, 146).

5. Conclusion

In the opening of one of his *Lives*, Jerome mentioned that he had been silent for a while. His little exercise, so he stated, helped him overcome his writer’s block; he desired »to practice on a minor work and to rub away, so to speak, any rust from [his] tongue«²⁰ – which probably explains his search for inspiration in the texts of older masters. While there are no explicit references to using secular authors in such practice, scholars have certainly understood this remark in the context of what seems to be ‚unequivocal traces‘ of several classical passages – even though Jerome’s paraphrase technique meant that, in his writings, »hardly a word is left unchanged in the passage imitated« (Hagendahl 1958, 117–118). Admittedly, this makes the analysis somewhat tricky.

With all this in mind, what can be inferred from the fact that Athanasius played upon classical allusions and that Jerome upped the ante by using ancient biography and several other genres, from Cicero to Apuleius? It would seem that Jerome’s *aemulatio* went much further from mere content and style; it also included narrative strategies, using pagan texts as models, following the example of the Israelites in the Exodus, despoiling the Egyptians of their gold and silver. There is, of course, a caveat, memorably expressed by Bartelink. It is challenging to know which of these lives were known to Athanasius when he was writing the *Life of Antony*, and the same could be said about Jerome (Bartelink 1982, 146–147). One can almost sense a similar realization from Susan Weingarten when she speaks about Jerome using Apuleius »consciously or unconsciously« (Weingarten 2005, 104).

Indeed, Jerome’s efforts to outdo the *Life of Antony* pose several challenging questions. While his strategy of using pagan sources mirrored the one in the *Life of Antony*, it is hard to say how much of this was calculated and how much was intuitive. Furthermore, there is the thorny issue of how the audience perceived Jerome’s efforts.²¹ Questions like these will be challenging to answer, but this difficulty should not preclude them from being stated. It is easy to feel gaslighted by the constant oscillating of Stridonian’s position and the many contradictions between his proclamations and stylistic usage. The above paragraphs, however, testify to the fact that this complexity is far from coincidental:

»In his case, matters lie deeper. His inconsistency reflects the inner conflict of his soul. He was a Christian ascetic and felt the incompatibility of this ide-

²⁰ *Vita Malchi* 1.2: »Prius exerceri cupio in parvo opere, et veluti quamdam rubiginem linguae abstergere.«

²¹ As the time was passing, the perception of this layer all but disappeared; this can be seen from Jerome’s reception in euchological texts (Aracki Rosenfeld 2020).

al and the humanism of pagan antiquity strongly. But he was also a rhetor brought up in the atmosphere of the old cultural legacy. He felt attracted and repelled – at the same time. For a time, the one feeling prevailed over the other, but he never reached a stable equilibrium. As a Christian, he felt bound to reject pagan literature. But he did not cease admiring it and reading it – apart from a short interruption caused by the dream. To this reading, he owes more than his incomparable style. If any Latin Father can be called a humanist, it is certainly Jerome.« (Hagedahl 1958, 328)

Abbreviations

Ep. – *Epistulae.*

Adv. Pelag. – *Adversus Pelagianos.*

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»Monachum ecclesia peperit postumum« (Hier., Ep. 66.4.2): Metaphors of Conversion to Asceticism in Jerome's Letter 66

»Monachum ecclesia peperit postumum« (Hier., Ep. 66.4.2): Metafore spreobrnjenja k asketskemu življenju v Hieronimovem Pismu 66

Abstract: Conversions are usually narrated in metaphors. This is also true for the conversions to asceticism present in several of Jerome's letters. This article examines the use of metaphors of conversion in Jerome's Letter 66 to Pammachius. The addressee's wife, Paulina, is presented as a young mother who died in labour. I will argue that this pregnancy may be read as a transformative metaphor for Pammachius's conversion to asceticism. The choice of this surprising metaphor, changing the relation between Paulina and Pammachius from wife and husband to mother and son, serves several intra- and extratextual functions.

Keywords: Conversion, Metaphor, Jerome, Letters, *Epistula* 66

Povzetek: Spreobrnjenja so ponavadi opisana z metaforami. To velja tudi za spreobrnjenja k asketskemu življenju, ki so navzoča v nekaterih Hieronimovih pismih. Članek obravnava rabo metafor spreobrnjenja v Hieronimovem Pismu 66, ki ga je naslovil na Pamahija. Pavlina, naslovljenčeva žena, je prikazana kot mlada mati, ki je umrla ob porodu. Predstavljena teza zagovarja idejo, da je to nosečnost mogoče razumeti kot transformativno metaforo za Pamahijevo spreobrnitev k asketskemu življenju. Izbira te presenetljive metafore, ki spreminja odnos med Pavlino in Pamahijem iz odnosa žena – mož v odnos mati – sin, je vpeljana z različnimi nameni tako znotraj besedila kakor zunaj njega.

Ključne besede: spreobrnjenje, metafora, Hieronim, pisma, *Pismo* 66

1. Introduction

Conversions to asceticism are pervasive in Jerome's *Letters* and are particularly important in those letters dealing with a beloved person's death. For instance, the narrator announces only to praise the deceased's life after his or her conversion (Hier., *Ep.* 77.2.2). The conversion, almost like the baptism, seems to create a wholly new person. Jerome's own wish to convert to a more devout Christian lifestyle free from sin manifests itself in an early letter: the Lord should save him by calling: »Hieronyme, ueni foras« (4.2.2).¹ This claim is provided by the biblical story of Lazarus's resurrection (John 11:1-46, esp. 43) and is also used in *Letter* 38. There, Jerome describes Blesilla's conversion to asceticism by alluding to the same story: Blesilla was lying in her metaphorical tomb, suffering from a fever, tied up by the bonds of the earthly world when Jesus exclaimed: »Blesilla, exi foras« (38.2.2). She converted to asceticism and recovered from her sickness. In other letters, individual conversions are presented using the metaphors of a survived shipwreck (77.6.1) or a change of clothes (130.5.4).²

Conversion is depicted with metaphors in all these narratives, which is not surprising considering that the very term ‚con-versio‘ is a metaphor. In its literal sense, it means that you turn back and thus denotes a spiritual reversal. Conversion is, although it occurs in earthly life, experienced as a transcendent phenomenon. Visualizing conversion, measurable only by the status of the converted before and after the event, demands the use of metaphors from the immanent domain: »the ‚transcendental‘ (the ‚absent‘ /.../) that religious communication is based on, itself cannot be communicated and therefore must be described using ‚immanent‘ (known, ‚present‘) means« (Krech 2012, 24).³ Metaphors of conversion enable communication about this reconstructed experience. At the same time, how conversions are narrated and which metaphors are chosen has an impact on other people's conversion experiences.⁴ Therefore, the literary use of metaphors not only mirrors conversions that have taken place and creates a way of thinking about this complex phenomenon; it also triggers new perceptions of conversions. As metaphors are always selective,⁵ they shed light on different aspects of conversion. Thus, we can analyze how metaphors shape cultural understandings of conversion, how they conceptualize and systemize realities, and how they model extratextual and extralinguistic acts through imagination.

¹ I quote Jerome's text from Hilberg's CSEL edition.

² Jerome accords great importance to the differences between a worldly Christian and an ascetic lifestyle. He describes the decision to embrace asceticism with the same metaphors that are used elsewhere to describe conversions from one religion to another. Therefore, I decided to use the expression ‚conversion to asceticism‘ in this article.

³ Palmisano (2019) has for instance shown in a recent article how the concept of the fear of God is developed through metaphors in Ben Sira.

⁴ For the idea that metaphors are not only part of language, but also shape thought and action, cf. Lakoff and Johnson 2003.

⁵ Using a metaphor, you select items of the *explanans* as well as of the *explanandum*. These virtual items are actualized in the process of metaphorization. Cf. Black 1954–1955, 287; Le Guern 1973, 19.

2. Jerome, *Letter 66*: A Case Study

This article focuses on a very original description of conversion to asceticism, the one of Pammachius, which is described in Jerome's *Letter 66*. The occasion for this letter is the death of Pammachius's wife, Paulina. She was a daughter of Jerome's lifelong companion Paula and thus one of Eustochium's sisters. Pammachius was a Roman aristocrat and senator, as well as a friend of Jerome.⁶ After Paulina's early death in 396,⁷ Pammachius converted to Christian asceticism. The way his conversion is described turns out to be crucial for the structure and argumentation of Jerome's *Letter 66*. Therefore, I will first consider the conversion narrative in more detail before turning to the metaphor's textual functions. My analysis will focus on how this conversion metaphor influences the structure of *Letter 66*.

Pammachius's conversion to asceticism is closely linked to Paulina's death. Indeed, she is said to have died in labour. I contend that her being in labour is a metaphorical process instead of the end of a natural pregnancy. The son to whom she gives birth is the ascetic Pammachius. Jerome takes up the conversion-as-rebirth motif but develops it further and thereby alters it. I will show that Paulina's metaphorical pregnancy develops in four steps.

2.1 Introduction of the Conversion Metaphor

First, the metaphor is carefully introduced but is still ambiguous: in Hier., *Ep.* 66.1.2, Paulina is described as a *parturiens rosa*, a »rose coming into flower«, and a *papillatus corymbus*, a »cluster of flowers being in the bud«. The imagery of blooming flowers is a *topos* in obituaries and often stresses that the deceased has died young (Hier., *Ep.* 60.13.1–2; Paul. Nol. *Ep.* 13.6). Jerome continues by developing the floral image,⁸ but striking is the use of *parturiens* and *corymbus*. Both expressions may refer either to a flower or to the description of a woman who is about to give birth or who has just given birth to a child. In the *parturiens rosa*, the metaphor is created by combining the proper meaning of *parturio* to the metaphor of the rose, thus becoming »a rose in labour, a rose giving birth«. While the rose is undoubtedly a flower, the word *corymbus* can either refer to a cluster of flowers, which is the most common and the proper meaning, or that of a nipple which refers to a woman breastfeeding a child. In consequence, both expressions not only portray Paulina as a good woman who died in the prime of life but also as the mother of an infant child: the *parturiens rosa* hints to a pregnant woman, who is about to give birth at the moment of her death; the *papillatus corymbus* presents her as a breastfeeding mother. Besides the possibility of an

⁶ For Paulina, cf. for instance Fürst 2016, 228, and for Pammachius Fürst 2016, 223–224.

⁷ Nautin (1978, 547; 550) also analyses that Jerome wrote and sent his letter to this occasion in 398. Paulinus of Nola wrote his *Letter 13* for the same reason in the winter of 396/7. Fürst (2016, 228) dates Paulina's death to 396 or 397.

⁸ Cf. »Quis parturientem rosam et papillatum corymbum, antequam in calathum fundatur orbis et tota rubentium foliorum pandatur ambitio, immature demessum aequis oculis marcescere uideat?« (Hier., *Ep.* 66.1.2)

actual pregnancy with a miscarriage,⁹ this might also be read metaphorically and already hints at the birth of a metaphorical, spiritual heir.

2.2 Paulina the Mother, Pammachius the Infant Child

This assumption is proved by another, much clearer passage: Jerome presents Pammachius's conversion as a birth; he, therefore, transforms Pammachius the ascetic into a newborn child and Paulina into his mother, who is still alive when he first sees the light of day. She dies shortly afterwards (Hier., *Ep.* 66.3.3):

»quamquam illa inito semel matrimonio nihil aliud diebus ac noctibus cogitavit, nisi ut reddito fructu nuptiarum secundum castimoniam gradum arriperet et, tanti dux femina facti (Verg., *Aen.* 1.364), uirum proposito suo iungeret non relinquens salutis comitem, sed expectans. dumque crebris abortiis et experta fecunditate conceptuum non desperat liberos et sorcus auiditatem maritique tristitiam praeponit inbecillitati suae, passa est aliquid de Rachelis exemplo et pro filio doloris ac dexteræ (cf. Gen. 35:18) uirum desiderii sui peperit heredem.«

»Though indeed she had once entered into marriage, she was only thinking day and night about seizing the second degree of chastity as soon as she should have borne the fruit of her marriage, and inducing as »a female leader in this high venture«, her husband to follow her course, not forsaking her companion in salvation, but waiting for him. She did not give up the hope of having children because she had experienced in many miscarriages that she was not infertile; she prefixed the eagerness of her mother-in-law and the sadness of her husband to her own weakness. Thus, she suffered much as Rachel suffered, although instead of bringing forth, like her, »a son of grief and the honoured,«¹⁰ she bore an heir who was the husband she had been longing for.«

Paulina and Pammachius indeed tried to have descendants, and Jerome's hint at Paulina's pregnancies and miscarriages might depict reality. However, the heir Paulina finally gets does not seem to be a baby since her husband Pammachius is depicted as her heir. The word *uir* is used twice, each time linked to another substantive, respectively *comes* and *heres*. In the first case, it is unambiguously Pammachius who is called *uir*; it is thus unlikely that *uir* describes someone else in the second sentence. Furthermore, if you understand a real *heres*, you would think of a child and not an adult, a meaning *uir* does not take.¹¹ Pammachius is then Paulina's *heres*.¹² This passage suggests that Paulina died after her heir's birth,

⁹ For Paulina's miscarriages, cf. Hier., *Ep.* 66.3.3 and *infra*.

¹⁰ Benjamin is given the name Benoni (*filius doloris*) by Rachel and the name Benjamin (*filius dexteræ*) by his father Jacob (Gen. 35:18).

¹¹ Cf. »Contrasted w.[ith] a child, etc., as implying maturity of age.« (*Oxford Latin Dictionary* 2012, s.v. »*uir*«).

¹² Cf. Hier., *Ep.* 108.4,2 for a similar description: »Paulina /.../ sanctum et admirabilem uirum et propositi

thus after having influenced Pammachius towards asceticism.¹³ According to this passage, Paulina has had ascetic ambitions, which are stressed in this passage by the verb *cogitavit*. She is said to have favoured asceticism long before Pammachius (*salutis comitem /.../ expectans*),¹⁴ which explains why she is described as the mother and Pammachius as her child. At the same time, the verb *cogitavit* also states that, although she might have been in favour of the ascetic life, she had not embraced it: Pammachius as her spiritual heir fulfils these ambitions after her death.¹⁵ Using the verb *peperit* in perfect tense compared to *parturiens* used before highlights a dynamic process, which describes Paulina's transformation from a woman in labour to a woman who has already given birth to her child.

2.3 From a Spiritual Leader to a Physical Mother

Paulina's leading role in the ideal of asceticism is underlined on the one hand using a Virgilian quotation (Verg., *Aen.* 1.364), which in its pretext describes Dido leading a group of Tyrians away from their home country to a new land. On the other hand, her pioneer role is highlighted by comparing her to Rachel, Benjamin's mother, who died in labour (Gen. 35:18). This death functions as the *tertium comparationis* for the two women. However, the comparison only assumes its whole meaning when an heir is born. Jerome draws a parallel between Benjamin, the *filius doloris ac dexteræ*, and Pammachius, the *uir desiderii Paulinae*. He alludes once more to Rachel and twice to the wife of Phineas, Eli's daughter-in-law, who also died in labour while giving birth to Ichabod (1 Sam. 4:19-21).¹⁶ Paulina's comparison to Rachel and the wife of Phineas on the one hand, and Pammachius's association with Benjamin and Ichabod on the other, thus insist on the image of birth: the reader is encouraged to imagine a physical birth. It is thus specific by this comparison that the

et rerum suarum Pammachium reliquit heredem.«

¹³ Shanzer on the contrary maintains that Paulina was probably dead in childbed. But she also underlines Paulina's »consolation that the reformed Pammachius was the offspring she had wished for.« (2009, 100–101; 101, n. 67).

¹⁴ This is presented similarly in another letter of Jerome's (*Hier., Ep.* 77.10.1): »Inter laudes feminae subito mihi Pammachius meus exoritur. Paulina dormit, ut ipse uigilet; praecedit maritum, ut Christo famulum derelinquat. hic heres uxoris et hereditatis alii possessores.«

¹⁵ Cain (2013, 158) understands the quoted paragraph in the way that Pammachius »and Paulina vowed to live together in a state of lifelong marital celibacy, and [that] from that point on, until her death near the end of 396 /.../, Paulina regarded Pammachius as her *heres* in the faith.« (*Hier., Ep.* 66.3.3) Jerome mentions Paulina's *castum /.../ cubile* (*Hier., Ep.* 66.2.1) and her *cubile immaculatum* (*Hier., Ep.* 66.3.2, quotation from Heb. 13:4). But 'chaste' does not absolutely refer to complete sexual renunciation, as states Courtray: »la chasteté n'est pas l'abstention de toute activité sexuelle. /.../ La chasteté peut être définie plus justement comme un comportement ordonné de la sexualité, comme une maîtrise qui coordonne le corps, l'esprit et l'âme dans une unité de tout l'être, comme un respect également de son état de vie.« (2009, 442) The quoted passage of Jerome's shows on the contrary that Paulina and Pammachius tried to have children until her death as is shown by the expressions *non desperat liberos* and *reddito fructu*. Cf. also van 't Westeinde 2017, 20–21. Paul. Nol., *Ep.* 13.3 also says that Pammachius has turned to asceticism only after Paulina's death.

¹⁶ The narrator insists on the virtuousness and faith of these women and their sons: *De prima* [i.e. Rachel] *Beniamin, hoc est, filius uirtutis ac dexteræ, de secunda* [i.e. wife of Phineas] *inclitus sacerdos dei ex arcae cognomine nascitur* [i.e. Ichabod]. (*Hier., Ep.* 66.4.1).

metaphorical words describing conversion as birth are to be taken in their proper and not transferred meaning. This makes this metaphor of conversion grotesque since, according to worldly rules, Pammachius was Paulina's husband and not her infant son, as is stressed by the double use of the substantive *uir*.

2.4 Returning to ‚Reality‘

Finally, the narrator turns away from the imagery that distorts the relationship between Paulina and Pammachius, but only after alluding one last time to the metaphor of pregnancy and birth. Paulina is enumerated *expressis uerbis* as the third woman who has died under the same circumstances (Hier., *Ep.* 66.4.2):

»Nobis post dormitionem somnumque Paulinae Pammachium monachum ecclesia peperit postumum et patris et coniugis nobilitate patricium, elemosynis diuitem, humilitate sublimem.«

»In our time, after Paulina has fallen asleep and passed away, the Church has born the monk Pammachius, her posthumous son, a patrician by the nobility of his parentage and marriage, rich in alms, and lofty in lowliness.«

While Jerome again insists on the metaphorical birth of Pammachius after Paulina's death, he still introduces a shift here. Paulina's death causes Pammachius's birth and thus his conversion to asceticism. After a long process, the final conversion to asceticism is described through the metaphor of birth as a violent process, in which the mother renounces her own life to give life to her son's ascetic life. Of course, grammatically, the Church and not Paulina gives birth; but ‚posthumous‘ can only acquire meaning when related to the death of Paulina and not to that of the Church. The vocabulary still corresponds to the imagery of pregnancy, labour, and birth (*peperit*), but since the *ecclesia* is subject to that verb, the image of a physical mother is less striking. As in the other occurrences of the conversion metaphor, death and birth are closely linked in this passage.

In summary, it can be pointed out that in Jerome's letter, Pammachius's conversion to asceticism is described as a metaphorical birth. Pammachius is reborn as an ascetic, and Paulina is presented as the originator of this conversion to asceticism. Presenting Pammachius as Paulina's child, and insisting on this physical image by comparing Paulina to Rachel and the wife of Phineas, seems somehow grotesque as Pammachius was her husband. This metaphor thus asks for our attention. The first and the last step link the real to the metaphorical level, carefully introducing and discontinuing the metaphor. Once the way is paved, Jerome develops his metaphor, not only turning Paulina literally into a mother and Pammachius into an infant but even challenging the reader's imagination with the comparison to women who, according to some Old Testament passages, have physically died in labour. As soon as this metaphor has reached its climax, turning upside down the family's relations, the metaphor is discontinued with a change in subject; it is stressed once more that Pammachius's birth as an ascetic is due to Paulina, but the *ecclesia* becomes subject of the verb *pario*. Therefore, the reader is brought back to the real world: Pammachius is a natural infant in asceticism and needs guidance.

3. The Metaphor's Functions Inside the Letter

For this reason, one may now ask why precisely this conversion metaphor is employed and why it is highlighted by the four steps I have just presented; indeed, other more common metaphors would be conceivable.¹⁷ However, this metaphor serves several purposes inside the text. Therefore, I would like to show how far this metaphor impacts the letter's argumentation, structure, and function.

3.1 Glorification of a Worldly Christian, or: Praising a Sinner

Presenting Paulina as the source of Pammachius's asceticism and many other people's devout faith, Paulina is glorified according to the narrator's ascetic ideal. It seems that Paulina was not the saint whom everyone wanted to praise for her Christian virtues. Consequently, it was necessary to make some detours to glorify her posthumously. Since she did not embrace the ascetic life herself, as shown above, this metaphor presenting her as the origin of other people's conversions is needed to glorify her according to ascetic standards.

Although she was a religious Christian, she did not excel in any particular Christian virtue or action, as the narrator states himself when praising her *temperantia*, her 'moderation'.¹⁸ This argument is supported by the fact that Paulina is never praised on her own,¹⁹ but always together with her family: her mother Paula, her sister Eustochium and her husband Pammachius: true ascetics in the narrator's eyes.²⁰ Before recognizing the conversion metaphor, one might have considered these long explanations about the family's virtues as part of panegyric *res externae*.²¹ One now might ask whether they might be due to the narrator's embarrassment that he has to praise Paulina's mediocrity.²² The glorification of Paulina's family extends the praises on her person.

One might even go further: The narrator hints at Paulina's expensive clothes and jewellery²³ and voluntarily presents Paulina more as a sinner than a saint by high-

¹⁷ One may for example think about metaphors that present the transition from dirt to cleanness, from one place or path to another, from darkness to light, from blindness to strength of vision.

¹⁸ Cf. Hier., *Ep.* 66.3.1–2. Cf. Favez for this thought: »Certes, celle-ci avait été une croyante sincère, mais /.../ elle avait passé discrète et fervente, tout entière à ses devoirs d'épouse chrétienne, sans que rien l'eût signalée spécialement à l'attention de ses contemporains.« (1937, 27).

¹⁹ The only exception is the flower metaphor in Hier., *Ep.* 66.1.2, which is a *topos* of obituaries; cf. supra.

²⁰ For instance, these four family members are linked to the Stoic cardinal virtues *prudencia*, *iustitia*, *fortitudo*, and *temperantia* in Hier., *Ep.* 66.3.1.

²¹ Jerome talks about the rhetoricians' precepts of praising the deceased ancestors for example in Hier., *Ep.* 60.8.1; 77.2.3.

²² This also seems to be the reason why Jerome emphasizes that Paulina wanted to have descendants only to »produce virgins for Christ (*ut Christo uirgines pareret*).« (Hier., *Ep.* 66.3.3).

²³ Cf. »Ardentes gemmae, quibus ante collum et facies ornabatur, egentium uentres saturant; uestes sericae et aurum in fila lentescens in mollia lanarum uestimenta mutata sunt, quibus repellatur frigus, non quibus nudetur ambitio; deliciarum quondam supellectilem uirtus insumit.« (Hier., *Ep.* 66.5.1) Paulinus of Nola (Paul. Nol., *Ep.* 13.28) also mentions Paulina's valuable clothes and jewelry to contrast them with the poor whom Pammachius feeds with their returns (Shanzer 2009, 101). Cain (2013, 324) understands Jerome's passage in the way that Paulina herself had got rid of her valuable clothes and

lighting Pammachius's posthumous alms as a way of extinguishing Paulina's sins.²⁴ In this context, it is also essential to consider that Jerome refers back to this letter twice, respectively praising Pammachius through positive words and not Paulina.²⁵

Despite these points, the conversion metaphor enables some panegyrics on Paulina in this letter since she is presented as the origin of other people's conversions. Moreover, the metaphor allows for the comparison with two biblical women who died in labour, which elevates Paulina into the biblical realm and thus into the excellent line of God's good servants.

3.2 Praise of Pammachius's Ascetic Actions

Second, the image of a metaphorical birth enables a transition from Paulina's to Pammachius's glorification: Pammachius's new ascetic lifestyle can be praised this way. With this association, Jerome links the *laudes* for Paulina to the *laudes* for Pammachius. The letter is announced as treating the death of a beloved person; the narrator calls himself a *consolator* and announces a *commemoratio*.²⁶ Thus, the reader might expect praises of the deceased. Nevertheless, the praises of the addressee Pammachius are much more important by their content and scale than those of the deceased Paulina. Namely, chapters 4 to 7 glorify Pammachius's efforts to convert more Christians to asceticism (Hier., *Ep.* 66.4.3–66.5.1),²⁷ his alms for the sick and the poor (66.5.2) that function as flowers on Paulina's tomb (66.5.3–4), his indifference about the other senators' opinions when he arrives in his monastic garb in the Senate (66.6.1–2) and his high reputation as ascetic (66.7.1–3). By presenting Pammachius as Paulina's spiritual heir, the glorification of Pammachius reflects on Paulina and makes the transition to Pammachius's praises natural and effortless.

jewelry, but the returns' benefits are mentioned in the context of Pammachius's actions for the poor, which is even clearer in Paulinus of Nola's passage.

²⁴ Cf. »Pammachius noster sanctam fauillam ossaque ueneranda elemosynae balsamis rigat. his pigmentis atque odoribus fouet cineres quiescentes sciens scriptum: »sicut aqua extinguet ignem, sic elemosyna peccata« (*Eccli. 3:30).« (Hier., *Ep.* 66.5.3) Cf. Shanzer's explication of this passage: »this may be the first explicitly documented example of *post mortem* alms offered by another (i.e. surrogate alms) to extinguish the sins of one deceased.« (2009, 100) Cf. Paul. Nol., *Ep.* 13.3; 13.11. This is implicitly stated in Hier., *Ep.* 66.5.4: »Gaudet huiusce modi filiae mater herede.« Shanzer explains that »the daughter who inherits is the *ecclesia pauperum*« (2009, 99, n. 56). Paulina must then be the *mater* who rejoices about the alms.

²⁵ Cf. »Ante hoc ferme biennium Pammachio meo pro subita peregrinatione Paulinae breuem epistulam dedi erubescens ad disertissimum uirum plura loqui et ei sua ingerere, ne non tam consolari amicum uiderer, quam stulta iactantia docere perfectum.« (Hier., *Ep.* 77.1.1) »Paulinam, quae sanctum et admirabilem uirum et propositi et rerum suarum Pammachium reliquit heredem, ad quem super obitu eius paruam libellum edidimus.« (Hier., *Ep.* 108.4.2) Both *epistula* and *libellus* refer to Hier., *Ep.* 66.

²⁶ Cf. »Ita et ego, serus consolator, qui inportune per biennium tacui, uereor, ne nunc inportunus loquar et adtractans uulnus pectoris tui, quod tempore et ratione curatum est, commemoratione exulcerem.« (Hier., *Ep.* 66.1.1)

²⁷ Ambrose (*Patr.* 12.57) refers to Rachel's death and to the name *filii doloris*' when he links the apostle Paul to his ancestor Benjamin and describes the former's efforts to convert his contemporaries to Christianity. We may here see a parallel to Pammachius's efforts to move his contemporaries to an ascetic Christian life.

3.3 Paving the Way for Pammachius's Exhortations

Third, depicting Pammachius's ascetic actions as Paulina's ambitions that she could not complete in her lifetime means exhorting and encouraging Pammachius to continue this way of life. As her posthumous heir, he should continue walking on the path she had decided on before her death. The rest of the letter includes a long exhortatory part, which is not, as might be expected in a letter written on the occasion of a death, on managing grief, but rather on the ascetic lifestyle.²⁸ This might also be the reason why the narrator is insisting a lot on Paulina's family: He shows his addressee that he can follow the exemplary lives of Paula and Eustochium. This might encourage and exhort Pammachius (and other readers) to asceticism since Paula and Eustochium are presented as *exempla* for this lifestyle. It perfectly fits the image of the infant ascetic, as Pammachius is depicted in the conversion metaphor, who still must be provided with sustenance for his faith and religious lifestyle.²⁹ These nourishing instructions are provided by Jerome's letter.

3.4 A Broader Audience and a Wider Impact

Fourth, the metaphor transforms traditional aristocratic values, such as wealth and male heirs, into Christian ascetic ones, such as almsgiving and producing children in the faith (Hier., *Ep.* 66.4.3):

»Tales Paulina morte sua nobis liberos edidit, quos uiuens cupiuerat possidere. ›Laetare, sterilis, quae non paris, erumpe et clama, quae non parituris« (Gal. 4:27; Is. 54:1), quoniam, quot Romae pauperes sunt, tot filios repente genuisti.«

»These are the children that Paulina has given birth to for us in her death, whom she had desired to have in her lifetime. ›Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labour!«,³⁰ because you have brought forth all of a sudden as many sons as there are poor people in Rome.«

This passage explains that the new ascetic ideal subverts the old aristocratic wish of descendants. Spiritual children replace those related by blood; inheritance is given not to the heirs in the bloodline but to the poor. Jerome visualizes these transformations by employing his conversion metaphor. Paulina and Pammachius

²⁸ Cf. Hier., *Ep.* 66.8–13. Here one also has to take into consideration that this letter has been written two years after Paulina's death and that Pammachius has already overcome his grief at the time when Jerome was writing his letter. Cf. Hier., *Ep.* 66.1.1.

²⁹ In the exhortatory part of the letter, there is a long allegory that develops some metaphors of the Song of Songs (cf. Hier., *Ep.* 66.10.1–2). Within this allegory, the topic of a faith that has to be nourished and starts its being as an infant that grows slowly is repeated: »Ibi ei da mamillas tuas, sugat de erudito pectore et requiescat ›inter medios clericos, pinnae deargentatae columbae et interiora eius in fulgore auris« (Ps. 67:14). Paruulus iste et puer, qui butyro et melle saginatur, qui inter caseatos nutritus est montes, cito crescit in iuuenem, uelociter in te hostes spoliat, mature praedatur Damascus et regem uincit Assyrium.« (Hier., *Ep.* 66.10.2).

³⁰ Translation taken from the English Standard Version.

thus become models for the Roman world of their time. According to the passage, Paulina's heir has been multiplied in the following months since Pammachius has not only given alms to the poor but has also brought his faith to them. These people are here presented as Paulina's children (*liberi, filii*).³¹

4. Conclusion

The example of Jerome's *Letter* 66 illustrates in many ways how the choice of metaphor generates meaning. This letter presents Pammachius's conversion to asceticism as a birth, selecting and insisting on transferring the ascetic ideal from Paulina to Pammachius and thus on Pammachius's spiritual dependence on Paulina. It is irrelevant whether this presentation depicts reality: More importantly, it influences the letter's argumentation and structure and therefore plays a vital role in the transmission and promulgation of Jerome's ascetic ideal.

The conversion metaphors chosen by Jerome, in general, refer to a variety of worldly objects and events. With these, different aspects of conversion are selected. The depiction of conversion is therefore not a homogenous field. Metaphors present a broad panorama of views on this complex phenomenon. As a result, metaphors of conversion do not only shape our perception of Jerome's contemporaries more than 1600 years after their death but, more importantly, have always been a way of narrating and alternating events. Metaphors provide a graspable explanation for a complex phenomenon.

Abbreviations

Ambr., Patr. – Ambrosius Mediolanensis, *De patriarchis*.

Hier., Ep. – Hieronymus, *Epistulae* [Hilberg 1996].

Paul. Nol., Ep. – Paulinus Nolanus, *Epistulae*.

Ser., Med. – Q. Serenus, *Liber medicinalis*.

ThLL – Thesaurus Linguae Latinae.

Verg., Aen. – Vergilius, *Aeneis*.

³¹ In the next chapter, the idea that sick people claim that Pammachius and Paulina brought them relief, is repeated: »Ille caecus /.../ clamitans heres Paulinae, coheres Pammachii est.« (Hier., Ep. 66.5.1)

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Monografije FDI - 22



✧ Rojstvo sakralnosti ✧ hrepenenje po Bogu ✧
občutje svetega ✧ vrojenost ideje o Bogu
✧ razlogi za vero in nevero ✧

Psihoanaliza in sakralno izkustvo

Christian Gostečnik OFM



Christian Gostečnik

Psihoanaliza in sakralno izkustvo

Psihoanalitična relacijska paradigma predpostavlja, da imata tako religiozni kot nereligiozni človek svoje psihične razloge za vero oziroma nevero. Zato je pomembno ugotoviti v kakšnega Boga verujoči veruje oziroma v kakšnega Boga neverujoči ne veruje. Tudi religiozna oseba namreč ne veruje v Boga v katerega nereligiozna oseba ne veruje ali ne more verjeti.

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Giorgia Grandi

Narrating the Ascetic Model, Its Context and Its Hero(in)es: A New Proposal for Jerome's *Letters* and *Lives*

Pripovedovanje asketskega vzora, njegov kontekst in junaki/junakinje: nov predlog za Hieronimova Pisma in Življenja

Abstract: Epistles 1–17, 22–23, 41–43, 68, 70, 72, 107, 130, despite being different from one another in length, addressee, and content, can be considered narrative letters show specific narrative techniques and strategies. What makes them ‚narrative‘ is the author's behaviour: he is pleased to narrate episodes, places, memoirs, novels, or *exempla* to his friends, trying to persuade them to embrace (or persist in following) his monastic way of life. We can talk about ‚weak narrativity‘ because they incorporate a proliferation of ‚minor‘ narrative genres to be compared to the *Lives* and divided into three main periods. The inner and extratextual functions of these epistles change throughout these periods, especially since letter-writing is: »a form not only of representing but of constituting reality«, of constituting, in the case of Jerome, his reliability and the monastic movement itself, its history, its heroes and heroines.

Keywords: Narrativity, *Epistles*, monasticism, fiction, novel, *Lives* of Paul, Malchus and Hilarion

Povzetek: Čeprav se *Pisma* 1–17, 22–23, 41–43, 68, 70, 72, 107 in 130 med seboj razlikujejo po dolžini, po naslovniku in po vsebini, jih lahko razumemo kot narativna pisma, saj izkazujejo posebne narativne tehnike in strategije. ‚Narativne‘ jih napravlja avtorjev odnos: všeč mu je opisovanje dogodkov, krajev, spominov, romanov ali *exempla*, s tem pa želi svoje prijatelje prepričati, da bi sprejeli ali nadaljevali življenje po njegovem meniškem idealu. V *Pismih* lahko govorimo o »šibki narativnosti«, ker uporablja manjše narativne žanre, in jih zato lahko primerjamo z *Življenjepisi* ter jih razdelimo v tri glavna obdobja. Znotraj- in zunaj-besedilne funkcije teh pisem se skozi obdobja spreminjajo, predvsem zato, ker je pisanje pisem »oblika, ki ne le prikazuje, marveč vzpostavlja resničnost«. Pri

Hieronimu vzpostavlja njegovo lastno zanesljivost in meniško gibanje nasploh, skupaj z njegovo zgodovino ter z junaki in junakinjami.

Ključne besede: narativnost, *Pisma*, meništvo, fikcija, roman, *Življenje* Pavla, Malha in Hilariona

Having studied the excellent works of Cain (2009), Canellis (2002), and Stoico (1972) about the *Epistolary* of Saint Jerome, in my doctoral dissertation (Grandi 2014b), I suggested an alternative classification for his letters, following my criteria which are based mainly on a linguistic, narratological, stylistic and rhetoric analysis. I concluded that we could find six macro-categories: paraenetic, eulogistic/consolatory, functional, polemic, exegetical, and narrative letters. This last category results from my consideration of the content and structure more than of the addressees.¹ I aimed to reveal and study their intimate kinship with the *Lives* (Hilarion, Malchus, Paul) written by the author more or less in the same period.² All these masterpieces were the product of Jerome's fictional vein, need for communication, and attitude towards storytelling³ exploited to support the rapidly expanding monastic movement. I accordingly argued that his letters 1–17, 22–23, 41–43, 68, 70, 72, 107, 130, despite being different from one another in length, addressee, and content, showed specific narrative techniques and strategies⁴. What makes them 'narrative letters' is the strategy of the author:⁵ he is pleased to narrate episodes, places (*in primis* desert and sea), memoirs, novels, or *exempla*⁶ to his friends, trying to persuade them to embrace (or persist in following) his ideal monastic way of life. In doing this, he is always attractive and entertaining, thanks to peculiar narratological tools. For *Letters*, in particular, we can talk about 'weak narrativity' because they »incorporate a proliferation of 'minor' narrative genres: anecdotes, gossips, and hearsays, jokes, dream narratives, *eckphrasis* of paintings« (McHale 2001) that we are going to analyze in this paper.

Nevertheless, the intra- and extratextual functions of these epistles change throughout time, especially since letter-writing is: »a form not only of representing but of constituting reality« (Bruner 1991), of constituting, in the case of Jerome,

¹ Both Canellis (2002) and Cain (2009) tend to approach this type of letters – at least a part of them – as *amicales* or *ad familiares*. Also see Gibson 2012 and Malherbe 1977.

² Following Cavallera's chronology (1922), Jerome started his career as an epistolographer in 374 with narrative letters and wrote the most considerable part of them between 374 and 385. While the chronology of *Lives* is still discussed, they were probably written between 376 and 390.

³ Palmer proposes: »Theorists from various disciplines have suggested that life plans are scripted on fairy-tales' patterns and in a sense we are all novelists.« (2004, 186) We can consider that this is particularly true for our saint.

⁴ Here I have to thank the organizers of „Epistula narrans. Narrative modeling in Latin epistolography. International graduate and early career conference“ (Tübingen, July 5-7, 2018) conference; the present paper shows the results of a research began on that occasion.

⁵ We can talk about »narratives that are incorporated in non-narrative genres« by Jerome (De Jong 2014, 17).

⁶ Hagendahl highlights that Jerome tries to impress the reader with these witty remarks and commonplaces (1958, 104).

his reliability and the monastic movement itself, its history, its heroes and heroines. So, following Cavallera's chronology, I have identified three main periods in Jerome's narrative production.⁷ In the desert (374–376), Jerome complains about his loneliness and lets the readers meet him as a hermit through letters that are at the same time factual and fictional and through *Vita Pauli*, the first step in shaping a new history of monasticism. In Rome (384–385), he primarily addresses long, paraenetic letters about the lives of holy women to Marcella, building his influence and authoritativeness in the Western world and promoting himself against other competing groups. At the end of this period, looking back to his Roman experience, he also writes *Vita Malchi*, turning his relationship with Paula into a breath-taking novel of chastity. More or less in the same period, looking forward to Bethlehem and beyond, he narrates the adventures of saint Hilarion, enriching them with historical hints and revealing that the late antique world was changing and challenging new gauntlets. In Bethlehem, until his death, he also writes something that we can almost call 'metaliterature', explaining why he frequently uses controversial issues in these works.

Before analyzing the internal narrativity of Jerome's *Letters* and *Lives*, we first need to remember that, as the writing of letters in antiquity was strictly standardized (Cugusi 1983; Fowler 1982), Jerome was not going to break the rules which he had studied and admired. At the same time, he was well aware that, to spread the new Christian message at its best, it was necessary to employ and regenerate classical tools, to use epistles – as Antin would say – as a 'passe-partout' genre (Antin 1951, 123). As I have elsewhere said (Grandi 2010), the *Lives* also can be considered (Fuhrmann 1976, 87) as *Formexperimenten*, not belonging to a definite genre. The blurring lines of all these texts reflect Jerome's complex personality and define the holy woman/Christian heroine (*Letters*) and those of the holy man/Christian hero (*Lives*) in second place Jerome as an *auctoritas*.⁸

Ep. 1 to Innocence is very interesting for us.⁹ It can be entitled *History of a martyrdom's (epic) fail*, and it is a sort of ideal entanglement between *Epistles* and *Lives*; actually, I would dare to say that, having been written in 374,¹⁰ a few years before *Vita Pauli*, it is the matrix for both of the collections. It derives its form from *Acta martyrum*,¹¹ a well-known and structured genre in ancient Christianity, expiring after the end of persecutions (Van Uytfganghe 2001). It is the report

⁷ The context is particularly important since joining events with their times produces an easier comprehension of the one from the other and a better comprehension of the whole continuative history of the author.

⁸ To do so, Jerome adapts himself and his style to his audience (Vessey 1993): for example, he often literary turns himself into a woman (even into the sinful Magdalene) or in other characters as Lazarus, trying to convince his addressees to act in a monastic (or eremitic) manner.

⁹ For the literary analysis of this epistle, see Praet et al. 2014, 385, in which the text is defined as a 'hybrid composition' and in which the authors find a connection with hellenistic novel, in particular with Elio-dorus' *Aethiopia*.

¹⁰ The chronology is not clear: Grützmacher (1969) and Cavallera (1922, 53) propose a late dating – 384/385 –, while Hagendahl (1958, 100) dates it a decade earlier.

¹¹ For example from *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (e.g. the 'Thecla motif' of gender-shift).

of a miracle, which occurred at the time of Diocletian in Vercelli: the story of a woman who, wounded seven times by her persecutors and tortured to death, does not even faint, but rather lives to testify to the greatness of God. This is the supernatural story of a martyr¹² – and a monk is exactly a martyr *in pectore*, we can say a ‚failed‘ martyr (because of the end of persecutions), or a new type of it (for he loses his life in a metaphorical, not in an authentic way). Because of this, for Jerome, the unnamed woman stands for the prototype of monks and nuns. For these reasons, we can ascertain that the text, although addressed (which is a *sine qua non* condition for letters) to Innocence, has less of the genre of the letter and more of the hagiography. In particular, it has many features in common with *Vita Malchi*, and its *Lust am fabulieren*: literary quotations (the initial nautical metaphor, the *rubigo*, the unnamed female heroine), narrative mechanism (such as the claimed suicide/*Scheintod*, bloody details, and witty trick to gain freedom...),¹³ and a stylistic pattern that resembles that of a novel (an antagonist, the intervention of the marvellous and desirable happy-ending). All of these entertain the reader. Nevertheless, the latter tends to praise Evagrius, a good friend of Jerome who intervened in the persecution and prevented the woman’s second death. This brings the reader back to reality, giving him the sensation that God is operating in history through the group to which Jerome belongs.¹⁴

Ep. 2 to Theodosius and other hermits is a very brief letter in which Jerome praises the desert. Two motifs are substantial: the drawing of the *solitudo* as a *locus amoenus*, and the *captatio benevolentiae* towards the abbot of the desert. Jerome here introduces himself as a sinful man needing forgiveness, using two central metaphors that will often return in his production: the one of the good shepherd and that of the prodigal son; they are a sort of *professio humilitatis* that icastically resumes the saint’s biography and his experience in a desert scene as the very place of monasticism. The Christian themes intersect classical literature, and Jerome also uses a metaphor derived from Virgil: the ship that has a tormented journey (=life) but still arrives safely at the harbour. All these literary expedients end in a sort of prayer or autoreferential propitious motto for a long journey, partially assuming the function of a *propemptikon*¹⁵ full of pictures and sketches about Jerome’s everyday life that evoke narrative forms of coherence, without fully submitting to them (McHale 2001, 162): he is narrating by himself about himself.

Closer to the attitude of the first letter and of the *Lives* is *Ep. 3* to Rufinus. In this letter, Jerome compares himself to Bonosus, whose life is an incredible journey among the rocks of ascetic life (again, the nautical metaphor) to gain his place on

¹² In effect, as Praet et al. 2014, 408, say: it is not a martyr but a secular trial on adultery, a case of *Unterhaltungsliteratur* as Kech (1977) calls it.

¹³ For other particulars, see Capponi 1989.

¹⁴ In effect, Evagrius was a pro-Nicene activist who had translated Athanasius’s *Vita Antonii*, dedicating it to Innocence alike, so Jerome with this letter wanted to follow in his footsteps (Praet et al. 2014, 388) or at least to give a first essay of a similar operation.

¹⁵ The definition of ‚lettere augurali‘ (greetings letters) is by Paolo Cugusi (1989, 396).

an island surrounded by cliffs wildlands and seas. On the contrary, a 'storm' blows Jerome from Aquileia. We can consider this letter, written in 375, the first example of male hagiography (of Bonosus, seen as a *puer-senex*) by the Saint of Stridon. However, it is also an account of Jerome's journey throughout the Mediterranean Sea¹⁶ and collects many details that will re-appear in the *Lives* (the language of *militia Christi*, the attitude of the two main characters, the references to John of Patmos and Vergil). In *Ep. 4*, to Florentinus, Jerome again praises his friend Rufinus and identifies himself with Lazarus (»Hieronyme, veni foras«), showing his preference for complicated, extreme, borderline figures. Closely connected to these last letters and their narrative construction of friendship and solitude are *Ep. 7–13*,¹⁷ in particular, *Ep. 7* to Chromace, Eusebius and Jovinus, where Bonosus is named *filius ikthus* and where desert and sea are one more time compared, precisely as the sinful life of Jerome¹⁸ and the perfect life-style¹⁹ of his friend.²⁰ It seems that this holy paradigm is not sufficient to promote an ideal way of life: Jerome has read Evagrius' translation of *Vita Antonii* and needs his archetype, especially to convince Heliodorus after the failure of his invitation in *Ep. 14*; he needs to write *V. Pauli*.

In *Ep. 5*, the first explicit references to *V. Pauli* and the upcoming *V. Malchi* appear.²¹ Here it starts to become apparent that all these fictional characters are Jerome's alter egos (and, vice-versa, Jerome introduces himself as one of them) because many details that here are referred to him return in *Lives* to characterize their heroes (above all the contrast between loneliness and relationships in the desert). In this epistle, he also reveals his tireless desire for reading and writing. *Ep. 6* is a quarrel that adopts the question-answer strategy of *Acta martyrum* and uses juridical language. What is most interesting about this is the question asked by Jerome if his native land still exists. Let us think that he is relatively isolated in the desert near Chalcis (every day, he meets messengers, travellers and mail carriers) (Clausi 2013, 135). His loneliness appears to be predominantly a *topos*, mourning for being distant from the hot spots of Rome to the extent that the very same question appears in a very similar context in *V. Pauli* (where we find Paul isolated in the middle of a harsh desert, curious about the world left behind

¹⁶ As in *Ep. 46* and *Ep. 108* or in *Vita Hilarionis*. Hagendahl (1958, 100) proposes that the historical journey across the sea impressed Jerome so much that it induced him to talk frequently about this experience in his texts.

¹⁷ Here he proves to be a loyal friend through the report of some episodes, underlining again his solitude. *Ep. 9* shows many references to classical narrative literature (e.g. Verg., *Aen.* 4.366f.; Hor., *Carm.* 2.13.39f. e 1.23); *Ep. 11–13* display a *synkrisis* of passages about forgiveness (a technique that Jerome frequently uses for his exegesis); lastly, *Ep. 8*, among the other narrative motifs, presents a brief historical *excursus* about the people called 'Caschi'.

¹⁸ Jerome here claims, as in *Ep. 4*, to be dead and waiting to be brought back as Lazarus.

¹⁹ »Si vis perfectus esse« is the theme of parenetic epistles, that is strictly connected with the ideal life of the characters presented here, in narrative letters and *Lives* (Grandi 2014).

²⁰ Another detail that lends a narrative allure to the letter is the metaphor used by Jerome to describe his joy: even superior to that of the Romans after their victory at Cannae.

²¹ For example, the first lines of the letter quote (or are quoted?). The chronology of the epistle is uncertain, between 375 and 377, whereas *V. Pauli* dates to 376. See Hier., *V. Pauli* 6.2.

but not longing for it)²², linking the two biographies definitively. In addition, in this letter, Jerome starts to complain about ‚false monks with long hair‘, which also appear in *V. Pauli* and *Ep. 22*. *Ep. 10* technically is not a narrative letter, but a text explaining the relationship between the *Epistolary* and the *Lives*: they are strictly interrelated; they complete each other for themes, suggestions, and Jerome’s reflections. Here he dedicates his *V. Pauli* and claims to have adopted a simple style to be read by everyone; actually, we know that he writes with chosen words, classical echoes, many samples of universal history drawn from the Bible colourful descriptions.²³ In *Ep. 10*, he speaks about ‚eastern merchandise‘ and works that are already *condita*, maybe referring to a germ form of the upcoming last *Lives*. A few evangelical metaphors, depicting the contrast between East and West, the story about the monks of the desert spoiling its solitary life,²⁴ and the sea element again, are instead the content of *Ep. 15–16* to Damasus and prepare Jerome’s coming to Rome, providing his *professio fidei* to the pope and his fashioning as an exegete. The end of *Vita Pauli* and the prologue of *Vita Hilarionis* echo these episodes. In the end, the *topos* of the *rubigo linguae* and the Virgilian sentence »hospitio prohibemur harenae«²⁵ in *Ep. 17* leave no more doubts about the link between *Lives* and *Letters*. In these, Jerome uses polemic hints against false monks, and a desert suddenly becomes uninviting. In all these letters of the first period, he tells us all about his life in the desert and his feelings; it is a diary, but it is also fictional,²⁶ rich in *topoi*, and intended for a vast public in Rome and beyond: it is the saint’s novel.

The second period of his life and his narrative letters²⁷ opens in 385 in Rome. In the desperate moment when he was the object of resentment and charges, he felt he had to return to the tale (probably a few years before *V. Malchi*): violent sketches of secular Roman life, counterposed to the first female hagiographic portraits,²⁸ and the *angulus* theme here prevail, together with the narratological tool of flash-back.²⁹ Lastly, the narrative epistles of the third period, when Jerome

²² Paul despises the cities and appreciates the desert, but this is only rhetoric: Jerome is well aware of the perils of a desert that is far from his ideal and, at the same time, of the possibilities offered by Rome.

²³ Gerlinde Huber-Rebenich (1999, 207) supposes that Jerome sent *V. Pauli* to Paul because of his huge library: he could have the economic and technical means to spread the text, moreover Jerome asks in exchange for a book.

²⁴ Depiction of contrasts that he renews in *Ep. 17*, where the monks become the real monsters of the desert, in opposition to the friendly creatures of *V. Pauli*: »Melius est inter feras habitare.« (*Ep. 17.3*; *V. Pauli* 72.8–9)

²⁵ Verg., *Aen.* I, 539 that Jerome ‚translates‘ in »non mihi conceditur unus angulus heremi« (*Ep. 17.3*; *V. Pauli* 72.9–10).

²⁶ In claiming this, I am not assuming that Jerome is inventing his staying in the desert, but that he has the attitude of a good narrator, which he derives from Late antique and classic literature.

²⁷ For the narrative characteristics in this period, I refer you to my recent paper presented in Rome at the conference *Girolamo e Roma* (Rome, 30 September – 3 October 2019): „Bethlehem contra Romam? Il tema dell’*angulus* declinato nelle *Epistole* geronimiane“ to be published in the acts of the conference (see Grandi 2021).

²⁸ For a general introduction to the topic, see Coon 1997.

²⁹ See the dream narrative of *Ep. 22* or of *V. Hilar.* in Nazzaro 2013.

settles in Bethlehem, are merely occasional and include concise stories, such as that of Demetriades' choice, of Didymus the Blind (an *excursus* and a fanciful *exemplum* to support the reasoning of the letter), of the Beautiful Israelite Bride (metaphor of the saint's relationship with the classics), or that of the mother and daughter in danger of backsliding,³⁰ to discredit Vigilantius. Eventually, around the end of the century, Jerome shifts towards meta-narration: he wants to explain why he is telling stories and working, mainly because he now has a broader audience in the eastern and western world. Through these letters, he becomes pervasive in the ancient world to the point that, finally, when he describes his journey through the desert and the Holy Land (Cain 2013), he does not want to transmit a memorial travel diary, but to let poor people from all over the known world make the same journey, with him, at least in a spiritual sense. Jerome *auctor* and *agens* are now closer than ever because he shows us his methods, working routine, and *studiolo*.

The same hazy line between fictional and factual events marks the *Lives*, too. I have elsewhere (Grandi 2017) discussed some of the *Lives'* sources, here I desire to restate the ambivalence of their provenience: history and novel, introducing some new considerations on their narrativity and registering new findings.³¹ First of all, if Paul and Anthony are primarily Christian and religious characters, *Vita Pauli's* marked dependence from (or, rather, opposition to) Evagrius/Athanasius' *Vita Antonii*,³² Malchus is a pagan novelistic hero, and Hilarion is a historical figure with exceptional traits. *Puer-senex*, *theios aner*, thaumaturge, and wrestler, Hilarion's biography shares features with neo-platonic philosophers, Christ in the Gospels, and Jerome himself, as we know, but also with Alexander the Great.³³ For example, to Curtius Rufus's historical work, Jerome owes a linguistic pattern for natural descriptions (e.g., Curt., *Hist. Al.* 4.7.1–32; 7.10.1–2.) and an entire episode related to the death of the saint/emperor (10.5.1–37; Hier., *V. Hilar.* 44, 47.): a woman, whom he has helped, dies, overwhelmed by grief, right after her champion.³⁴ To *Great Alexander's novel* (a famous novelistic biography) by Ps-Callisthenes (or maybe to its Latin translation from 3rd–4th century by Iulius Valerius), *V. Hilar.* owes the strategies to resume the hero's life during the narration (cap. 35; Hier., *V. Hilar.* 9-13), the scene of the contention for his corpse (cap. 34; Hier., *V. Hilar.* 47), or even the chariot race (cap. 19; Hier., *V. Hilar.* 20). Last, to Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*, Hilarion's biography is indebted for some details: the prologue that diverts

³⁰ *Ep.* 117 presents, for example, these formulas that betray a narrative allure: »rettulit mihi quidam« and »narrare surdis fabulam«.

³¹ But, like Hagendahl (1958, 94) says, it is beyond human individual resources to find out each source of Jerome.

³² Evagrius's translation with its novelty inspires Jerome, but at the same time the saint feels competitive with his source, so he replaces Antony with Paul (older and holier) and create 'another' Antony (see Leclerc 1988).

³³ A similar process has been studied for *Vita Antonii* by Cameron (2000) and Rubenson (2006).

³⁴ *Vita Malchi* also shares a peculiarity with *History of Alexander the Great*, the particular of the goatskin used to cross the river (Curt., *Hist. Al.* 7.5.17). It could also be a reference to Sall., *Hist. Fr.* 3.77, or, following Susan Weingarten (2005, 178ff.), to Amm., *Res. gest.* 35. In the same way *Vita Pauli* shows a lykös-wolf that guides the protagonist (as in Curt., *Hist. Al.* 5.4.10).

critique, the hero's repulsion for *ludii*, and the information that both Alexander and Hilarion had a favourite, inseparable book: the *Iliad* for the first (Plut., *Alex.* 8.1-2) and his handwritten Gospel for the other (*V. Hilar.* 35). The key to explain these similarities is probably the record of Alexander's exclamation in front of Achilles' tomb (Cic., *Arch.* 24) in *V. Hilar.* prologue. Here, for excess of exegetical zeal, the saint lists Daniel's various names for the Macedonian leader (Dan 2:32.39; 7:6; 8:5). This might betray Jerome's interest in historical works on Alexander to comment on the prophet; all the more since we know that he was fond of historical writers³⁵ (Ammianus Marcellinus³⁶ and Aurelius Sextus Victor³⁷ above all).

Concerning *V. Malchi*, I will secondarily suggest a few reflections since its narrativity has been already studied³⁸, and its dependence on the ancient novel is very explicit. Even if Hagendahl warns us that Jerome's knowledge of Greek literature was indirect and labile, except for exegetical works,³⁹ I propose that he somehow read Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* (maybe for the surmised Christian conversion of its author). Many are the similarities with this work: the opening on a seascape (which signify not life as in *Letters*, but the narration itself),⁴⁰ the occurrence of linguistic puns and different levels of narration; the tragic allure; the presence of shepherds, barbarians, caves to hide in; and above all the behaviour of Chariclea, a clever woman who elaborates a safety plan and a fake marriage, remaining chaste (Heliod., *Aeth.*, 1.22) precisely as the unnamed heroine in *V. Malchi*,⁴¹ and that of Cnemone's father (1.10–11) which resembles that of the abbot in *V. Malchi*.

At the end of this quick survey on the narration in these works, we can see that *Lives* and *Letters* share the aim to narrate (and construct) an ascetic model, its context, and its champions, using classical techniques and sources to found a Christian literature. Unusual scenarios versus real life, exemplar biographies versus choices and episodes (*kairos*), heroes versus heroines, structured presentation versus spots, saints versus the sinful Jerome are only different aspects of a

³⁵ In fact the biographies of *De viris illustribus* are historical works inspired by Svetonius and Eusebius of Caesarea, moreover in the prologue of *V. Malchi* he states that he would like to write a major historical work.

³⁶ From Marcellinus, Jerome derives much information about the desert in *V. Malchi*, while Pliny the Elder and Valerius Maximus are at the base of the knowledge of the fantastic beasts of *V. Pauli*.

³⁷ It is his book that Jerome requests to borrow from Paulus of Concordia in *Ep.* 10.

³⁸ For the quotation from Apuleius, Longus and Achilles Tatius, see Bauer (1961) and Fuhrmann (1976, 50; 57; 64; 85). For Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon*, see Šubrt (2014, 207). In general, see Gray (2017) and Huber-Rebenich (1999, 199), that talks about an »eclectic reception of a variety of models« (Petronius, Apuleius, Lucian, Xenophon of Ephesus). For the relationship with *Aeneid* and the characters of Dido and Aeneas, see again Grandi (2015, 215), Weingarten (2005, 171–174) and De Vogüé (1991–2008, II 91).

³⁹ Hagendahl (1958, 93) cites Courcelle, Pierre. 1948. *Les lettres grecques en occident: De Macrobe à Cassiodore*. Paris: Boccard, and Lübeck, E. F. C. 1872. *Hieronymus quos noverit scriptores et ex quibus hauserit*. Leipzig: Teubner.

⁴⁰ Even if the most direct reference is Ambr., *Off.* 1.10.32–3, as revealed by Harvey (2005, 287). The seascape is real in Heliodorus, metaphorical in Jerome.

⁴¹ An interesting challenge is that of Haskins (2018), who presents all the classical and biblical possible identifications of the woman.

single literary, paraenetic operation intended to convince the public to the monastic cause. The collateral effect is that Jerome is introduced as a remarkable storyteller and a hero: for his addressees and us, he is a friend whose incredible stories and challenges across exotic and queer lands are attractive to listen to. As he says in *V. Hilar.*: good enterprises need good storytellers, good as Homer, Ulysses, and Jerome ...

Abbreviations

- Ambr., Off.** – Ambrosius Mediolanensis, *De officiis ministrorum*.
Amm., Rer. gest. – Ammianus Marcellinus Antiochenus, *Rerum gestarum*.
Cic., Arch. – Cicero, *Pro Aulo Licinio Archia poeta oratio*.
CSEL – Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.
Curt., Hist. Al. – Curtius Rufus, *Historiae Alexandri magni*.
Ep. – *Epistulae* [Hilberg 1910–1918].
Heliod., Aeth. – Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*.
Hor., Carm. – Horatius, *Carmina*.
Sall., Hist. – Sallustius, *Historiae*.
SC – Sources Chrétiennes.
V. Hilar. – *Vita Hilarionis* [Morales 2007].
V. Malchi – *Vita Malchi* [Gray 2015].
V. Pauli – *Vita Pauli* [Morales 2007].
Verg., Aen. – Vergilius, *Aeneis*.

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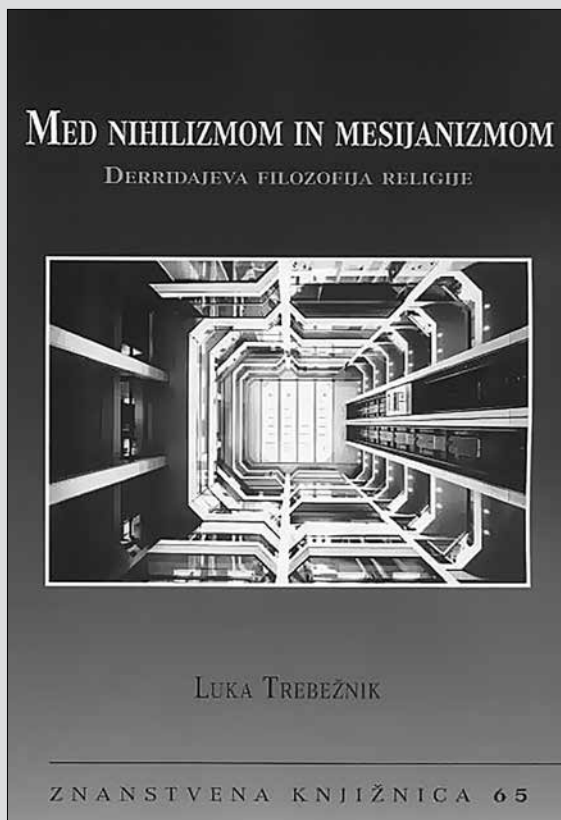
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Luka Trebežnik

**Med nihilizmom in mesijanizmom:
Derridajeva filozofija religije**

Derridaju nikakor ne gre za zavračanje obstoja resnice, temveč gre le za sporočilo, da ta nastopa preko razlike. Dekonstrukcija trdi, da ne obstaja zunaj teksta, kar pomeni, da ne obstaja večna resnica. Temu je tako, ker je sleherna resnica inkarnirana v jezik in pripoved. Ta Derridajeva stališča pa so v veliki meri nasprotna tradiciji, ki veruje, da se za tekstom nahaja trden in nesporen smisel. Izmed vsega slovstva je to najočitneje izraženo pri religijah, ki sprejemajo nadnaravni izvor svojih tekstov. Od to sledi, da sta dekonstrukcija in teologija izvorno nerazdružljivi.

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Rafko Valenčič

Where are you, Stridon?

Kje si, Stridon?

Abstract: St. Jerome's reference to the geographical location of Stridon cannot be resolved if we do not take into account the citations in his own texts as well as the people, events and other places associated with his life. This article addresses these questions and proposes hypotheses regarding the location of Stridon. A verbal contest between Croats, Italians and Hungarians has taken place over the current Slovenian territory as to whose compatriot St. Jerome is. However, in their arguments, they have largely ignored the course of St. Jerome's life, his friendships and acquaintances, citations of geographical features, as well as heated controversy and contention. The search for the location of Jerome's Stridon is narrowing to the region between Aquileia and Emona (Ljubljana). This has so far been accepted by many scholars, referring in particular to the Letters of Jerome. This article contributes new arguments: the early presence of Christianity in this area, as confirmed by recent archaeological findings in Emona 2017–2018, the concentration of churches in the Slovenian Karst dedicated to St. Jerome. At this point, we mention the settlement of Strane on the slope of Mount Nanos (Odra), which draws our attention because of its name and other geographical features and historical events.

Keywords: location of Stridon, Jerome's citations, hypotheses, new archaeological research, the concentration of churches in the Slovenian Karst (Pivka), Strane (Stridonae?)

Povzetek: Hieronimova navedba geografske lege Stridona je nerešljiva, če ne upoštevamo navedb, ki jih sporočajo njegova besedila in ljudje, dogodki in kraji, povezani z njegovim življenjem. Ta vprašanja obravnava razprava, v kateri na vajamo razne domneve glede ubikacije Stridona. Prek današnjega slovenskega ozemlja se je v preteklosti vihtel besedni dvoboj med Hrvati, Italijani in Madžari, čigav rojak je sv. Hieronim. Pri tem so večinoma prezrli potek Hieronimovega življenja, njegova prijateljstva in poznanstva, navedbe geografskih značilnosti, pa tudi vroče polemike in nasprotovanja. Razprava glede lokacije (ubikacije) Hieronimovega Stridona se zožuje na prostor med Akvilejo (Oglej) in Emono (Ljubljana). To so že doslej sprejemali številni raziskovalci, sklicujoč se zlasti na Hieronimova Pisma. Naša razprava prispeva nove argumente: zgodnja navoč-

nost krščanstva na tem območju, kakor potrjujejo novejšje arheološke raziskave v Emoni 2017–2018, koncentracija cerkva na Krasu, posvečenih sv. Hieronimu. Tukaj omenjamo naselje Strane (Stridonae?) na pobočju gore Nanos (Ocra), ki priteguje našo pozornost zaradi svojega imena in drugih geografskih značilnosti in zgodovinskih dogajanj.

Ključne besede: lega Stridona, Hieronimove navedbe, domneve, nove arheološke raziskave, koncentracija cerkva na Slovenskem Krasu (Pivka), Strane (Stridonae?)

The true location of Stridon, the birthplace of St. Jerome, remains unknown. Many researchers in various scientific fields are working to find an answer to this question or at least the direction for further research efforts. Archaeological, historical and comparative studies have nevertheless contributed evidence toward pinpointing the geographical location of Stridon. Is it possible to repeat a finding such as the discovery of a milestone along the former Roman road *Ad Malum* near Materija na Krasu (1842) (Vidrih-Perko 2006; Slapšak 1997), which revealed the presence of Rundicts in this Karst area and territorial demarcations between the contemporary populations? Perhaps a similar milestone lies discarded in a ditch or has been incorporated into the wall of a building or a church in the Slovenian Karst or somewhere nearby.

A millennium and a half after St. Jerome historical and archaeological sciences, as well as social, cultural and religious interest, joined in the search for the true location of Stridon, the birthplace of St. Jerome, translator, researcher and interpreter of the Bible. This discussion does not seek or provide an answer that would satisfy partial interests but strives to contribute to the kind of answer that interests the ecclesiastical as well as the historical and cultural public. St. Jerome contributed to the understanding and dissemination of the message of the Bible so that he himself — because of the Bible — would receive a lasting memory in the history of mankind and in European and world culture. The celebration of the 1600th anniversary of St. Jerome's death (419/420–2019/2020) was a special incentive for us, the most convincing heirs to the place of his boyhood and the search of his calling by studying the Bible and the lives of spiritual men of the first centuries of Christianity, to contribute to the recognition of the location of his birthplace Stridon.¹

1. Jerome's Accounts

Jerome's reference to the location of Stridona in *De viris illustribus sive de scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* (*On Famous Men or On Church Writers*), written in 392 or 393, is short and concise. He presents himself as the last of the 135 cited names with the words: »Hieronymus, natus patre Eusebio, oppido Stridonis, quod a Gothis

¹ This question is treated by Valenčič 2007. Some of the papers from the symposium *Hieronymus noster*, which deal with various aspects of the reception of St Jerome in Slovene and Slavic culture, were published in the journal *Edinost in dialog*; see Bogataj et al. 2020.

eversum Dalmatiae quondam Panoniaeque confinium fuit (135) [Jerome, born to his father Eusebius, in the town of Stridon, which was formerly the border of Dalmatia and Pannonia, having been overthrown by the Goths«]. Enough and too little. Enough for his contemporaries, who knew his life and work at the time he spread and preserved the cultural and Christian tradition of the contemporary generations, in spite of turbulent historical, social and religious events. Not enough for the generations that followed, who could not recognize the message of his records.

Jerome's account of the geographic location of Stridon and its historical destiny is incomplete if we do not take into account the statements given by other texts and the events, people and places associated with St. Jerome. We shall address these questions in this discussion by first briefly stating the hypotheses regarding the location of Stridon as presented by their proponents. We present arguments by older and more recent researchers who have addressed this issue based on the course of Jerome's life and the statements in his works, not always and not all, *sine ira et studio* (without anger and ambition).

2. Enigmas Regarding the Name Stridon

Some believe that the most important mention is that of the *very name* – *Stridon*,² which is cited only by Jerome and only in one place and not by any of his contemporaries. The place has not yet been identified with certainty. It has turned out that the name alone does not suffice if we do not take into account other features that indirectly confirm the location, such as other historical events and comparisons, the mention of the demarcation between the provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia, the year of the destruction of Stridon, etc. Consequently, some researchers rightly refuse to mention the alleged localities, be it in Dalmatia or Pannonia, which may have a similar name but do not possess the other features and circumstances of the former Stridon. None of the major researchers and scholars of St. Jerome is willing to be limited to a single statement on which to base his hypothesis.

Others, among them the Croatian archaeologist and historian, academician Mate Suić (1986), tackled the linguistic features or *homophones* of the name Stridon, which begins with the characteristic consonants *s-t-r-(d)*. They sought a clue in the Latin verb *strideo, stridere*, which signifies squeezing, creaking, roaring, that is generated upon passing through a strait or overcoming an obstacle. Such phenomena are characteristic of the karst topography, of the passage between mountains and hills, of the transition from the plain to the hilly area, e.g., from Dalmatia to Pannonia or from Pannonia to Dalmatia. M. Suić (1986, 239-240) places Stridon in the area of Liburnia, in the hinterland of the Kvarner Bay,

² M. Suić believes that the expression 'oppido Stridonis' is the plural form of the word 'Stridonae'. This plural form is familiar in Liburnia, e.g. Šapjane, Žejane ... It is thus possible to explain the place name *Strane*, which is dealt with in this discussion.

where such natural phenomena are very pronounced. He cites toponyms such as Šapjane, Žejane, Starod ... with occasional explanations. In the vicinity of these places, along the former Roman road *Ad Malum* and *Ad Titulos* (between Aquileia and Tarsatica), there is a strong fortress *Gradina (Gradišče)*, which dominates the landscape and the passages toward the Kvarner Bay. The toponym *Šapjane* (from the Croatian *šaptati*, Slovenian *šepetati*, *piskati*) is supposed to indicate a place where the wind produces a special echo and noise. Suić has also tackled linguistic explanations and similarities. The place of *Žejane (Eu-sebiane)* is said to be reminiscent of Eusebius, Jerome's father, and his grange (*villulae*). The suffix *-ane* is also said to be a relic of Roman provenance. The author's statements are biased, for he does not mention other places in the geographical vicinity, e.g., the oldest medieval settlement in the area, the pre-parish of Jelšane (10th century AD). He also fails to mention the important prehistoric and ancient Roman fort of Sv. Katarina nad Jelšanami, which dominates the routes between Tarsatica and Aquileia, and between Tarsatica and Emona. He appears to be unaware of the presence of Christianity in nearby places (Šilentabor, Ahac; in the 6th century), nor does he mention the churches dedicated to St. Jerome in the near vicinity (Koritnice, Čelje, Nanos, Sv. Ahac, Ivanje selo), as well as the medieval locality of *Strane* in Pivka on the eastern side of the *Ocra* (Nanos), along the once important thoroughfare between *Emona* (Ljubljana), *Longaticum* (Logatec) and *Aquileia*. This was called *Via Gemina*.

Our attention is especially drawn to the settlement of *Strane* on the slope of the Nanos. The name of the place has both the characteristic consonants *s-t-r* and the suffix *-ane*. In the Middle Ages, *Strane*, together with the villages of *Studeno in Strmca*, belonged to the lordship of the Cistercian monastery of Stična (Grebenc 1973; Penko 2007, 91–93). The place, including its geographical location and area, which have been buried by a rockslide from the Nanos, are still archeologically and historically unexplored. A reminder of the rockslide is the church of St. Bric (Briccius) on the eastern slope of the Nanos at an altitude of 900 m. Churches built where similar snow-, stone- or landslides have taken place tend to be dedicated to the saint.

Much as the search for the location of Stridon in relation to the toponyms or homophones, the mention of the Roman provinces of *Dalmatia – Pannonia* and their borders or junctions has not led to a definitive answer. The borders (junctions) between the provinces shifted, such that some researchers have extended the search for Stridon to the banks of the Drava in the North and to Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica) in the East. Some scholars have thought or expected that their authority was sufficient for the validity of a hypothesis, e.g., the archaeologist Frano Bulić (Suić 1986, 222), who defends the Dalmatian hypothesis, to be discussed below.

Fewer questions are raised as to the year the Goths destroyed Stridon. M. Suić believes that it was in 379 (Suić 1988, 241)³ after the Goths had plundered the lands of the Danube after their victory over the Roman army at Adrianopolis. They

³ Similarly Milotić (2006, 28); Penko (2007, 29) believes the year was 378.

came all the way to the foot of the Julian Alps (*Alpium Vallum*). From the East, they probably came via Emona and Longaticum and continued their way through Ocra (Nanos, Razdrto) or along a parallel route via Stari trg near Lož. Stridon certainly was an important place in the geographical area and lay on the transit route; otherwise, the Goths would not have stopped there on their march toward the centre of the Empire (Mandac 1995, 13). The Goths chose routes and places (*castella*) that were strategically, militarily and commercially more important. They housed »a permanent military crew that supervised the main thoroughfares« and were surrounded by autonomous military areas with warehouses in support of security personnel (Penko 2007, 45).

Some have sought Stridon, with its characteristic initial consonants *s-t-r*, elsewhere. A typical example is *Štrigova* in Međimurje (near Razkrižje), which has a rich and important tradition regarding Jerome's birthplace. The hypothesis has been defended, among others, by Melchior Inchoffer (1644) and later by the renowned Trieste historian Franc Kandler (1805–1872). The most important advocate and promoter of this hypothesis was Josip Bedeković (1688–1760), who has written a monograph on *Štrigova* and St. Jerome titled *Natale solum magni Ecclesiae doctoris Sancti Hieronymi* [Native Land of the Great Teacher of the Church St. Jerome] (Neostadii Austriae, 1752). The book has been translated into Croatian (2017)⁴ by a group of collaborators (J. Bedeković, D. Feletar, M. Berljak, L. Logožar), who later prepared and published the anthology *Prinosi za povijest Štrigove. Štrigova – rodno mjesto sv. Jeronima* [Contributions for the History of *Štrigova*. *Štrigova* — Birthplace of St. Jerome] (2019). They argue that *Štrigova*, considering historical and archaeological evidence and local tradition, is the birthplace of St. Jerome or his parents. They refer to the fact that Dalmatia, as it then bordered the province of Pannonia, extended as far as the Mura. A wooden church was first erected at the place, dedicated to the saint who was specially venerated by the Pauline monks, for the reason that St. Jerome had written the biography of St. Paul the Hermit in Egypt (4th cent.), whose example inspired in St. Jerome enthusiasm for hermit life.⁵ Proponents of this hypothesis refer to Pope Nicholas V (1439-1455), who in 1447 issued a bull allowing the Counts of Celje (Frederick of Celje) to bless the newly built (Gothic) church and venerate the saint. The book by J. Bedeković (original and translation) is an apology for the claim that Jerome's birthplace be-

⁴ The translation was published under a different title: Josip Bedeković, *Knjiga o sv. Jeronimu, Iliriku i Međimurju*, Zagreb: Hrvatska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 2017. O sv. Hieronimu na str. 303–502.

⁵ Paulines were founded in 1303. They had several monasteries in Croatia: Remete (1272), Lepoglava (1400), *Štrigova* (15th cent.), Sv. Helena pri Čakovcu, Sv. Petar u Šumi in Istria (1459), Kamensko near Karlovac, Olimje (1663) etc.

In preparation of the commemoration of the 1600th anniversary of the death of St. Jerome (2019) the Croatian scientific institutions (HAZU and its outstations) published a translation of Bedeković's book and organized a symposium on Bedeković's work and on compatriot St. Jerome. The Church and societal events at the time were supposed to confirm the belief that the saint belonged to their place as well as to revitalize veneration and pilgrimages to the restored church of St. Jerome at *Štrigova* that had been forbidden or hindered after World War II. The church has been in the process of renovation since 2000, including the important paintings of the baroque fresco painter, Tirolean and Pauline monk Ivan Krstnik Rengar (1700–1753).

longs to Croatia and not to Hungary or Styria, rather than presenting evidence for its true location (2017, 78).

In the Western flank, staunch advocates claimed that *Zrenj* (*Sdregna*, also *Stridone*) near Oprtalj/Buzet in northern Istria was the birthplace of St. Jerome. Proponents of this Italic/Istrian hypothesis thus wanted to emphasize Jerome's Romance (Italic/Istrian) origins. The hypothesis was a response to the Dalmatian (Croatian/Slavic) hypothesis and cited as evidence, in addition to the name of the place, the cemetery church dedicated to St. Jerome, other devotional markers, and a rich tradition among the local people. Among proponents of this hypothesis were the historian and humanist Flavio Biondo (Flavius Biondus, 1392–1463),⁶ Domenico Vallarsi (1771) and Peter Stanković (1771–1852; 1824)⁷ (Milotić 2006). Vallarsi placed the birthplace of St. Jerome a little north of Zrenj, in the area between Aquileia and Emona, which then belonged to Italy. Biondo mentions the Istrian towns (*civitas, oppidum*) Buje, Momjan, Oprtalj, Grožnjan, Buzet, which were then under the administration of Koper, among them also the *oppidulum* – little town of *Sdrigna* (*Sdregna*), where St. Jerome was supposedly born. Biondo as well as other proponents of the Istrian (Italic) hypothesis were aware of the fact that the Glagolitic alphabet and Slavic worship had been widespread in these places for some two centuries, which was disturbing for some from the ethnic viewpoint.

The association between Zrenj and St. Jerome is comprehensively discussed by Ivan Milotić (*1982), a lawyer and researcher of the Istrian past, in the monograph *Zrenj i sveti Jeronim* [Zrenj and St. Jerome] (2007). Milotić is careful not to mislead the reader that Zrenj is Jerome's birthplace. He describes Jerome's life in a transparent and critical way, referring to renowned authors such as F. Cavallera, A. Vaccari, M. Suić, J. Bratulić and others. Although in Istria, in addition to Zrenj, there are several churches dedicated to St. Jerome, Milotić does not refer to this fact in confirmation of Zrenj as Jerome's Stridon (Milotić 2006, 20–22).⁸ When presenting the »Istrian hypothesis« advocated by older authors, he states that his purpose »is not to prove or disprove a hypothesis of Jerome's birthplace« (59–60) but to point out the fact that there are close ties between Zrenj and St. Jerome, which were created by a historical and religious tradition that cannot be denied. He cites the proponents of the various hypotheses, especially the Dalmatian (Croatian/Slavic) and Istrian (Italic) hypotheses, showing their one-sidedness and shortcomings. When he strives for a comprehensive insight into Jerome's life, references in his works and events in his life, he is most convinced by the archaeologist and historian Mate Suić (1986) that the birthplace of St. Jerome is Liburnia, a region in the hinterland of Kvarner.

⁶ Flavio Biondo, *Italia illustrata sive descriptio XIV regionum Italiae*, Basileia, 1559. The book was published in 1474 after Biondo's death. (Milotić 2006, 61–66)

⁷ Pietro Stankovich, *San Girolamo il dottore massimo dimonstrato evidentemente di patria Istriano - Apologia*, Trieste, 1829.

⁸ The author does not mention St. Jerome's churches at Klana and at Rijeka, which are not part of Istria.

The controversy over the location of Stridon has thus focused mainly on the Dalmatian and Istrian hypotheses. The key issue is that Jerome belonged to Italy, that he was, therefore, an Italic (Italicus) and not a Dalmatian, i.e., a Slav. Some see a link between Jerome and Aquileia in the inscription at the entrance to the church of Aquileia, where Jerome was supposed to have been baptized; the inscription reads: »Divo Hieronymo qui in hac sancta ecclesia lavacrum gratiae suscepit et fidem.« [To St. Jerome, who in this holy church received the laver of grace and faith.] (De Leo 2007, 477) However, Jerome was baptized during his first stay in Rome (in 366).

The claim of Jerome's Italic origin was strongly opposed by the Split humanist and renowned spiritual writer Marko Marulić (1450–1524). In his time, the veneration of St. Jerome in Dalmatia was widespread due to the use of the Glagolitic alphabet and the belief that Dalmatia was his homeland. The title of Marulić's treatise *In eos qui beatum Hieronymum Italum fuisse intendunt* [Among Those who Consider that Blessed Jerome Was an Italic] (Milotić 2007, 68) is already telling. Marulić was inspired by St. Jerome to compose poems of biblical stories and spiritual instructions (*Davidias, Judita, Suzana, De imitatione bene vivendi, Vita divi Hieronymi*, etc.). Most researchers then and later sought the location of Stridon in Dalmatia or its vicinity. That is why they considered Jerome a 'Dalmatian'. The first to call Jerome a Dalmatian, in a contemptuous context, is Palladius Galata, bishop of Henelopolis in Bithynia, in his work *Historia Lausiaca* (+431). Palladius states: »Some priest, Jerome« and »Some Jerome, Dalmatian« (*Patrologia Graeca* 34).

This question has more recently been dealt with by the Croatian archaeologist Frano Bulić (1846–1934), who established himself as a researcher of the Roman Salona (Solin, Split). Bulić was an undisputed authority in the field of archaeology and convinced many with the theory that Jerome's birthplace was somewhere in Dalmatia or vicinity. Without scruples, he referred to the famous saying attributed to Jerome: »Parce mihi, Domine, quia Dalmata sum!« (Lord, forgive me for being a Dalmatian). Jerome neither said nor wrote these words, although some still refer to them today. An important role regarding Jerome's presumed Dalmatian origin was played by the Slavic liturgy and Glagolitic alphabet, widespread in Dalmatia and on Dalmatian and Istrian islands, which was attributed to St. Jerome.⁹ More on this below.

Bulić believed he had found the crowning proof for the location of Stridon on the Grahovo Polje, on the Roman road to Bosnia, in the inscription on the milestone that had been found around 1860 near Knin. Its inscription was recorded by the military commander and amateur archaeologist Stjepan Petković and interpreted by the lawyer Josip Alačevich. For Bulić, finding a milestone referenced to Stridon in its text was indisputable proof that he had discovered Jerome's birthplace. He published his hypothesis as early as 1898 and more extensively in various langua-

⁹ For an interesting study of Jerome's friend Bonosus and the beginnings of monasticism in the Adriatic islands, see Ciglenečki and Bobovnik 2021. Parallely, Sales-Carbonell (2021) makes a compelling study of the origins of monasticism at the other end of the Mediterranean Sea.

ges on the 1500th anniversary of Jerome's death (1920; 1984 [1920]). It turned out to be a forgery; the milestone with the noted inscription was mysteriously »lost.« Its transcription and interpretation are unconvincing. The case went *ad acta*, and the scientific persuasiveness of its advocates was shattered. M. Suić (1915–2002) recognizes that Bulić was very knowledgeable of the literature on this issue and was able to present the conflicting hypotheses regarding the location of Stridon systematically, but disagrees with him (Suić 1986, 217–218).

On the occasion of the 1500th anniversary of Jerome's death (1920), many scholars responded to Bulić's claims and rejected his hypothesis for various reasons. Ferdinand Cavallera (1922), an excellent scholar of Jerome and publisher of his works, firmly rejects Bulić's hypothesis, finding that any search for Stridon outside the triangle Aquileia — Emona — Tarsatica, outside the region of the Julian Alps, is unconvincing. Alberto Vaccari (1922, 150), a biblical scholar and editor of the new Vulgate, responds to individual Bulić's claims by citing Jerome's texts and comparisons, although he still calls Jerome a 'Dalmatian'. Roko Rogošič (1928, 275) rejects the writings and interpretations by Petkovič/Alačevich as a forgery and suggests St. Peter at Pivka (on the Karst) as a possible location, which is given support by an expert on Istrian saints, the bishop and historian Dragutin Nežić (1985, 264–277). The lawyer Miroslav Premrou refers to the statements in Jerome's works (1921, 235–246). The patrologist Franc Ksaver Lukman summarizes Rogošič's statements (1941), while the historian Rajko Bratož (1990, 348–353) accepts Matej Suić's (1986) Liburnian hypothesis, given the then known data, which I comprehensively and critically discusses in the monograph *Sveti Hieronim – mož s Krasa* (2007). Recently, Francisco Moreno (1989), Josip Bratulić (1990), Regine Pernoud (1996), Rajko Bratož (1993), Ivan Miličić (2006), Josip Stanko Škunca (2017), Leo De Pietro (2007)¹⁰ and others have also written about Jerome. M. Mandac abandons the further search for the location of Stridon but still gives Jerome the nickname 'Dalmatian' (1995), even in the title of his book. All of the above touches upon the issue of the location of Jerome's Stridon and, in part, address his life and work, especially translation and theology, which have left lasting traces in European and world culture.

A similar unknown as the name Stridon is Jerome's statement that the place *once (quondam)* lay on the *former (quondam)* border between Dalmatia and Pannonia. The border between the provinces stretched from Liburnia (Kvarner) in the North to Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica) in the East. Some scholars were looking for Stridon even along this extensive frontier, all the way to its Eastern edge. The former Dalmatia did not always have the same borders, and today's borders are more misleading than helpful in resolving the position of Stridon. In the North, the former Dalmatia also included Liburnia, an area called *Dalmatia supra mare* (according to Farlatti), which included the hinterland of Kvarner or even today's Pivka (Mons Odra). D. Nežić disputes that St. Jerome would be from Istria or from

¹⁰ De Pietro (2007, 13) cites: »Born at Stridon, an unknown place in the Roman Empire, not far from Aquileia.«

the region of *Venetia - Histria (Regio decima)*, which nevertheless »I would be happy to list« as a recognizable locus at the time, if it were true. He believes that Stridon lies »somewhere in the area around Sv. Peter na Krasu« (today's Pivka). In Jerome's time, this was the edge of Roman Dalmatia. »Somewhere here was Stridon, the birthplace of St. Jerome... His living contacts with the Church people in Aquileia and Emona (Ljubljana) speak in favor of this, while he does not know or name Salona (Solina) and its bishop at all.« (Nežić 2000, 161–162)

Thus, a verbal contest raged over the current Slovenian territory between Italians, Croats and Hungarians, especially between Croats and Italians, as to whose compatriot St. Jerome was. In doing so, they ignored the course of St. Jerome's life, friendships and acquaintances, citations of geographic features, as well as controversies and contentions, which were not few. They ignored the statements in Jerome's writings and other scientific comparisons (Rogošič 1928, 296–270).¹¹ Some rightly believe that even if the name and location of Stridon were to be found and the location were too distant from the Julian Alps, one should not be considering it as a candidate for Jerome's Stridon (F. Cavallera).

3. For a New and More Comprehensive Approach

The modest data on the location of Stridon, as cited by Jerome himself in *De viris illustribus*, have drawn the attention of researchers to other statements of his. Jerome was a Roman and a cosmopolitan who knew the Roman Empire, fed on Roman and Greek culture; he met and corresponded with many people of the time, while maintaining a keen memory of his birthplace, Stridon. In his *Letter to Heliodorus* he complains, »My heart stops when I ponder how things are going wrong today. For twenty years and more Roman blood has been spilled day after day between Constantinople and the Julian Alps ...« (*Letter* 60.16)

The medieval Split historian Archdeacon Tomaž (Thomas Archidiaconus, 1201–1268) approached the location of the birthplace of St. Jerome with more evident citations. In his work *Historia Salonitana* he locates Stridon in Liburnia, in the hinterland of Kvarner, in the so-called upper Dalmatia (*Dalmatia supra mare*) (*Historia Salonitana*, 55; 410). Tomaž states: »Dalmatia is a coastal region that stretches from Epirus /.../ to the Kvarner Bay; inside it lies Stridon, which was on the border between Dalmatia and Pannonia. This was the homeland of Blessed Jerome, a great teacher.« (Milotić 2006, 32) Some believe Archdeacon Tomaž, a renowned medieval historian, had reliable historical sources at his disposal to claim this with such certainty. His work has been obscured over time by patriotic and biased opinions, which are still widespread today. Veneration of the saint, as well as disputes over his birthplace, were especially widespread during the Crusades (in the 13th century) and upon the transfer of the relics of the saint from Bethlehem to Rome

¹¹ The author states that »osobito malo pisaca obaziralo na same Jeronimove spise« [few writers even considered Jerome's writings] (Rogošič 1928, 296–270).

(Rupnik 1929, 52–53), to the church of Santa Maria Maggiore (Saint Mary Major or Mary of the Snows), where they still rest today. At that time St. Jerome was often portrayed by painters and sculptors, and his life was presented by writers (Milotić 2006, 14; 18). Most of the churches dedicated to St. Jerome in Slovenia date to the Middle Ages, to the time of (late) Gothic style, which took hold in Slovenia with a century-long delay. The churches on our soil decorated with Templar crosses and memorials, such as at Dutovlje on the Karst (St. George), at Slap near Vipava (St. Matthias), at Strane on the Pivka (Sv. Križ), remind us of the pilgrimages to the Holy Land and the defence of pilgrims against robbers.

Our attention is now drawn to the connection of St. Jerome with the Glagolitic alphabet. Rabanus Maurus (784–856) wrote about Jerome's authorship of the Glagolitic alphabet in his work *De inventione linguarum* (Patrologia Latina 112, 1579–1584), which experts on the origin of the Glagolitic alphabet strongly reject (SNS 2021). Veneration of St. Jerome is closely associated with the use of the Glagolitic alphabet and (old) Slavic liturgy, which was widespread on the Kvarner islands, in Istria and Dalmatia, and the neighbouring regions. Catholic Rome opposed this practice for fear of a recurrence of the schism between the West and East (in 1054). It saw Latin liturgy as a counterweight to Slavic liturgy, which was already established not only in the Christian East but also among neighboring Slavic nations (Croats, Macedonians, Czechs, Moravians, and also in the nearby Slovenian regions of Primorje and Goriška). The establishment of the Glagolitic alphabet was met with trials and opposition, for example, the action at the Split Parliament in 925, the prohibition of liturgy in the national language in 1060, and the order to priests in the countryside to master Latin much as priests in the cities did. (Bogović 2004, 247–260)

The effort to preserve the Glagolitic alphabet and the veneration of St. Jerome reached an important point in 1248. The Croatian historian Franjo Šanjek has stated that the belief the Glagolitic alphabet was invented by St. Jerome took hold in the 12th and 13th centuries. Bishop Filip of Senj in 1248 addressed Pope Innocent IV (1243–1254) a letter in defense of the Glagolitic liturgy by stating that it was a 'letter of Jerome', to which the Pope did not object out of respect for the saint. The authority won; later, many also referred to it. The Croatian historians Josip Buturac and Andrija Ivandija believe this was a 'pious lie' (*pia fraus*). (Valenčič 2007, 79) Regardless of the stated reasons, both the Glagolitic alphabet and St. Jerome received confirmation, which was an incentive to preserve religious, cultural and ethnic affiliation, which in turn has an important place in Croatian cultural and religious history. Thus the Glagolitic alphabet played a vital role in the religious and national development, both then and now, in Dalmatia and Istria, on the Dalmatian and Kvarner islands, on the Northern Croatian border belt and even in the Slovenian lands (Naldini 2001).

Now we direct our attention to the many churches dedicated to St. Jerome in the area between Aquileia and Emona and the immediate vicinity, for example, Nanos - Odra (altitude 1019 m), Koritnice near Knežak, Čelje near Prem, Bošamarin near Koper, Topolovec near Sočerga, Ivanje selo near Rakek, Petkovec in

Rovte, Kozana in Goriška Brda, Ahac (later dedicated to St. Jerome and today to St. Joachim) at Jasen near Ilirska Bistrica, Branica (later dedicated to St. Catherine of Alexandria), Jagršče near Tolmin (in ruins), on Loza (in 'borscht') near Slavina (unidentified location). In addition to the churches, it is worth mentioning the chapels and votive signposts dedicated to the saint in settlements or along pilgrimage routes, as well as depictions (paintings, sculptures) in other settings (Valenčič 2020, op. 40).

On the occasion of the 1600th anniversary of Jerome's death (419/420–2019/2020), the Diocese of Koper prepared and revived pilgrimages to the churches on its territory mentioned above (Koritnice, Čelje, Kozana, Bošamarin, Topolovec and Nanos), which showed the still enduring tradition of veneration of the saint. Among them, the church on the Nanos stands out, as it has preserved a rich pilgrimage tradition in spite of inclement weather conditions and the post-World War II hostile attitude toward faith. (Valenčič 2020)

There are several churches dedicated to St. Jerome in the Croatian Istria and vicinity as well: Zrenj near Oprtalj, Nova vas, Hum, Vižinada, Muntić, Kavran, Otok sv. Jerolima (Brioni), Rijeka and Klana near Rijeka (Medved 2020). Should Istria perhaps also be included in the search for the birthplace of St. Jerome? Scholars such as D. Nežić, I. Milotić, M. Suić and others make no references to this fact.

The concentration of churches dedicated to St. Jerome in the Slovenian Karst and in Istria is not accidental. It was the ecclesiastical authority — the local bishop, who also consecrated or blessed the church, the diocese, or the patronage over the parish — that decided to which saint a given church was to be dedicated. We do not have detailed information on the locations mentioned above. It is not known how much influence the believers had in these cases if any. We can assume that pre-existing influences, such as the veneration of a saint at a given place or in the surrounding area, oral and written tradition, pilgrimages, answered prayers, as well as events in the Church and broader society, e.g., the Crusades, the pilgrimages to the Holy Land, the spread of infectious diseases, were crucial to the erection of a church and the veneration of a saint. Perhaps this is the reason why churches dedicated to St. Jerome were erected in turbulent and critical times, in secluded places, at the edge of settlements, in cemeteries, so that they do not stand out in terms of size or furnishings.

Researchers and the general public are less familiar with the facts we cite below as important factors in finding the location of Jerome's Stridon. The well established and recent archaeological findings reveal the early presence of Christianity in the area of the Slovenian Karst (the Pivka and Bistriško) in late antiquity. The Romanesque-Gothic church of St. Martin at Šilentabor (also known as Šilen Tabor) near Zagorje na Krasu harbours archaeological artefacts from late antiquity (6th century) in the presbytery. The church of St. Achatius above Ilirska Bistrica, which is in ruins, also contains artefacts from the 6th century. Both sites date back to the 7th to 8th centuries B.C. These were independent agrarian communities (Šilen Tabor, Knežak–Šembije, Trnovo – Dol. Zemon), which were interconnected, as recently

obtained LIDAR images and archaeological excavations show. The area maintains continuity of settlement until late antiquity and beyond.

Christian artefacts have been found in the Škocjan Caves and the nearby Ajdovščina above Rodik. This area also shows the later continuity of settlement and the early establishment of Christian centres with the founding of pre-parishes from the 10th century onwards. Janez Höfler lists Slavina, Hrenovice, Trnovo and Vipava as the oldest pre-parishes in this area, as well as Jelšane, Knežak, Vreme, Tomaj, Hrušica..., which were founded a few centuries later, all of which maintain connections with the past. (Höfler 2001)

Due to its geographical location and its features, the broader territory of the Pivka and Karst was an important junction of the East-West and North-South routes, which enabled trade, military campaigns and migration of peoples. From pre-historic to Roman times and in later periods, the places witnessed migrations of peoples, destructive campaigns and military conquests. In connection with Istria, this area is known for its many fortifications (*castellum*). (Marchesetti 2020) A. Penko notes that considering the densest concentration of early and late Roman sites found in the area of the Nanos or Ocra–Razdrto and »considering the rich folk tradition and the location on the ancient Roman route between Aquileia and Emona, it is possible to look for the ancient Stridon in the very area of the settlement Strane« (2007, 67; 107–140).

In the 4th and 5th centuries, the Romans built a system of fortified Alpine checkpoints (*Claustra Alpium Iuliarum*) in the Eastern part of this area to defend the empire, which ran from Tarsatica through Studena and Klana in Croatia and Babno polje and Prezid to the North across the present-day Slovenian territory to Carinthia; to the West was the strongest fortress *Gradina* (562 m) near Starod. The system of Alpine checkpoints also required an adequate hinterland for supplies, defence and support (material, military, settlement) (cf. *Castra–Ajdovščina, Ad Pyrum–Hrušica* at 858 m above sea level). Archaeologists have yet to focus on the area between Tarsatica and Emona, where there were orderly and interconnected agrarian communities (Šilen Tabor, Knežak–Šembije, Trnovo), as shown by recent LIDAR images (2017). This area, especially its Eastern part — Dolenji Zemon, Jelšane, Podgraje, st. Katarina —, researched by the lawyer and renowned amateur archaeologist Franc Poklar (1919–2021), is largely unexplored.¹² Due to its geographical location, proximity to Alpine checkpoints and local features, this area lent a strong backdrop and support to the Alpine checkpoints defence system.

In addition to the already known archaeological finds in Roman Emona, such as the baptistery with mosaics in the centre of Ljubljana (the Zgodnjekrščansko središče [Early Christian Center], discovered in 1962), additional archaeological excavations took place in 2017–2018 along the Northwestern part of the former Emona (now Gosposvetska ulica), which have also confirmed the strong presence of Christianity in the 4th and 5th century. The findings include a room (chapel) with

¹² Poklar's historical and archeological studies have been published in local newspapers and are accessible in the library Knjižnica Makse Samsa in Ilirska Bistrica.

mosaics, 45 sarcophagi, one of which is fully preserved and contained the remains of a prominent middle-aged person with a preserved glass bowl of Eastern provenance with grapevine ornaments and Greek text, and around 300 skeletons buried *ad sanctos*. This was undoubtedly a Christian community with which St. Jerome communicated.¹³ Two of the preserved letters by St. Jerome remind us of his connection with Emona: the *Letter to the Virgins in Emona* (10) and the *Letter to the Monk Anthony* (12). Jerome scolds Anthony for not replying to the ten letters he had sent him. Researchers conclude that Jerome was not received benevolently in Emona due to his ascetic rigour and demand, which can also be inferred from his similar conduct in Aquileia, in the Calchidian desert and later in Rome which in turn is to be ascribed to his fiery character.

4. Jerome's Birthplace – Stridon

So far, we have critically assessed the various hypotheses about St. Jerome's birthplace, referring to the name Stridon, with the characteristic consonants *s-t-r*, to the argumentation and critical tradition of individual hypotheses, and the veneration of the saint, confirmed by the numerous churches dedicated to St. Jerome at the junction between the Roman provinces Dalmatia and Pannonia. Historians and archaeologists have tried in vain to discover any indication of the place in other historical records of the time or confirmation in archaeological excavations. We summarize the findings so far.

The references to the toponym Stridon, a similarly written or sounding (homophonic) name of the place, have not provided a convincing answer. Štrigova in Medžimurje is distant from the then and present Dalmatia and even more so from Jerome's citations. Zrenj (Sdregna) near Oprtalj/Buzet in Istria, despite its rich tradition, has no convincing justification, as Jerome would without hesitation have listed Istria as his birthplace, which was then part of the province of *Italia-Histria* (*Regio X*). The location of Stridon on Grahovo polje in Bosnia or even farther to the East near Sirmium is unconvincing, which raises many new questions. The border (junction) between the provinces Dalmatia and Pannonia, both of which bordered on *Italia-Histria*, extended from the river Raša in Istria to Sirmium (now Sremska Mitrovica), has changed and does not constitute the borders of either then or now. To the four hypotheses described by Bulić (Dalmatian, Pannonian, Italic, neutral) (1984, 241–270; Valenčič 2007, 72–154), we could add others, depending on the scholars who would propose them. In this uncertainty and confusion, it is not surprising that some have abandoned any further search for the location of Stridon (Mandac 1995, 13).

The neutral (Liburnian) hypothesis of F. Bulić has never been at the forefront, although the most convincing evidence supports it. It was proposed in the 13th

¹³ These findings were also communicated by an article in the Slovenian edition of the journal *National Geographic* (February 2019).

century by the Split historian Archdeacon Tomaž (Thomas Archidiaconus), who located Stridon in Liburnia, in the hinterland of the Kvarner Bay, in the extreme North of Dalmatia (*Dalmatia supra mare*). The hypothesis is supported by many of the researchers already mentioned above, such as F. Cavallera and A. Vaccari. The academician M. Suić (1986), an archaeologist and historian, places Stridon in Liburnia, in the area of the settlements of Žejane, Šapjane, Mune, Pasjak, the fortress Gradina, and Starod, all located along the important Roman thoroughfare between Tarsatica and Aquileia. The historian R. Bratuž considers the hypothesis the most convincing to date (1990), which has also been stated by Miroslav Premrou (1921), Roko Rogošič (1928), Fran Ksaver Lukman (1941), and Dragutin Nežić (1985). This location has also been cited, but not argued, by Pope Benedict XVI (audience 7 and 14 October 2007).¹⁴ It has also been cited by other recent authors, such as Ivan Milotić (2006) and Josip Stanko Škunca (2018). The monograph *Saint Jerome - a Man from the Karst* (2007) locates Stridon slightly north of Liburnia, on the Slovenian Karst, in the geographical area between Aquileia and Emona today's Pivka. The hypothesis is related to the Liburnian, so we call it the Liburnian-Karst hypothesis. More evidence supporting this hypothesis is presented in detail in the monograph *Saint Jerome - a Man from the Karst* (2007), supplemented by recent archaeological findings in Emona and the Karst/Pivka (2017–2018). Evidence includes the events and characteristics of Jerome's life and the citations in his writings.

The search of the location of Jerome's Stridon thus narrows to the area between Aquileia and Emona (Ljubljana). This has so far been argued and accepted by many researchers, who have referred to the statements in Jerome's works and the relations with the events of his life. Our discussion also refers to these statements. Researchers of Jerome's birthplace tend to suggest that Stridon be sought in the territory between the former Roman cities of Aquileia and Emona. The distance from the coastal Aquileia through the Karst or Castra (Ajdovščina) in the Vipava Valley, Odra (Razdrto) or Ad Pirum (Hrušica), Longaticum (Logatec) to Emona does not exceed 200 km. This area is familiar to us Slovenians, so we can make an important contribution in identifying the location of Stridon.

At this point, it is worth mentioning the settlement of *Strane*, which has not been properly researched so far and attracts our attention from several aspects. In addition to the settlements of Strmca and Studeno, the settlement of Strane belonged to the lordship of the Cistercian monastery of Stična (1162). It lies on the Eastern slope of the Nanos (at an altitude of 700 m), on the former amber and latter main road between Aquileia and Emona, near Šmihel under the Nanos, one of the major strategic and archaeological localities on the Pivka. Above Strane are the archaeological sites *Dolgi grič*, *Divji skedenj* and *Pod Rjavo steno*. The settlement of Strane dominates over the entire Pivka and Odra, a natural passage to the Southwest toward Tergesta and Aquileia. The settlement location had a suitable hinterland for the provision of the inhabitants (arable land, rich water sources). The church dedicated to the Holy Cross (1704) dates to the Middle Ages. Folk

¹⁴ Both speeches by Pope Benedict XVI are published in Slovenian translation in Frančiček 2020.

tradition also refers to Jerome's yew, one of Slovenia's oldest and best-protected trees (Rupnik 2000, 196–200). The name – *Strane* – is also reminiscent of the connection with Stridon. The configuration of the land — paths, mounds, demolished walls — is a challenge for archaeologists, to which they have not yet responded. Whatever artefacts have been found in the past, by Austrian archaeologists in the 19th century, by Italian archaeologists in the 20th century, and occasionally by amateur researchers and seekers of 'hidden treasures', have ended up in foreign depots or private hands.

5. Updates and Starting Points

The amendments to the Liburnian or the Liburnian-Karst hypothesis are based on Jerome's life and mentions in his writings, as well as on recent archaeological findings and comparative studies, which are enumerated below. Jerome's statements are exhaustively referred to by M. Premrou, who already in 1922 responded to Bulić's publications (*Civiltà Cattolica* 1921; reprinted in *Arhivi* 2014).

(1) Jerome describes his birthplace as a fortified town (*oppidum*) that provides residents with security from enemy attacks. The location of the town, probably the acropolis, considers the natural features that determine its internal design and strength. Stridon is organized by a hierarchical order (rural aristocracy, wealthy landowners, servants). The owner (settlement) also owns the *granges* (*vilullae*) for leisure activities (*otium*), which complement the trade and other economic activities (*negotium*) of the owners, which is confirmed by the fact that Jerome's family can afford to hire servants. His father's estate is apparently large so that Jerome hopes that, despite the enemy's destruction of the place, there is still some inheritance left to be sold. In the *Letter to Pamachius*, Jerome states that »he was compelled to send his brother Paulinianus to his homeland to sell the half-ruined properties that had been spared from the barbarian hands, and the income of our parents« (*To Pamachius* 66.14). The location and configuration of the Pivka and Karst landscapes provide indisputable possibilities for the existence of such estates (a plain with smaller hills and protected settlements (*castellum*), rich water sources, access to routes...). Jerome's family can afford a domestic teacher who provides the children — Jerome, his brother Paulinianus and sister, possibly also friend Bonos — with basic education and a general, including Christian, upbringing.

(2) Jerome is critical of his fellow Stridonians/Stridoners. In the *Letter to Cromatius* (7,5), he complains: »In my hometown, where ill-breeding is at home, the belly is god and one lives with abandon: the richer one is the holier.« The town is therefore ruled by 'ill-breeding' and 'prosperity'. In spite of the hostile environment, Eusebius' children receive the upbringing and spiritual education that prepares them for life in the world of that time. It is not clear to which Christian centre Stridon gravitates. M. Suić believes it is Tarsatica, so he calls Jerome a »citizen of Tarsatica« (*građanin Tarsatike*); however, Jerome never mentions Tarsatica (Suić

2986, 213). As expected by their parents and themselves, Eusebius' adolescents go out into the world to receive proper preparation for the tasks of life.

Jerome spends his playful childhood years in Stridon, his youth in Rome and then in Aquileia, where he establishes lasting friendships and matures for the challenges of adult life. Stridon also plays an important strategic role; otherwise, the Goths would not have stayed there on their way to the centre of the Empire, looting and demolishing it in the process. Due to the situation in the family — relations with Aunt Castorina, his sister's easy life, the seducer priest Lupicinus and other tensions, possibly also due to his own strictness and ascetic demands that others refuse to accept — Jerome is reluctant to return to and stay in Stridon. However, he still follows its fate with pain. In the *Letter to Heliodorus* he states that »every day from Constantinople to the Julian Alps Roman blood is shed in Thrace, Macedonia, ... Dalmatia, and all the Pannonias (*Dalmatiam cunctasque Pannonias*), which are plundered and destroyed by the Goths and Sarmatians« (Premrou 1921, 237).

(3) Stridon was located along the route between Aquileia and Emona, as confirmed by other evidence. Aquileia was an important administrative, military, naval, commercial and religious centre in this part of the Roman Empire. It gathered like-minded Christians seeking spirituality and asceticism, whom Jerome called the 'choir of the blessed' (*chorus beatorum*). Apparently Jerome felt good among them and later maintained written contact with many. They include Bishop Valerian, his successor Bishop Chromatius, then Rufinus, Eusebius and Bonos (a friend from Stridon), Deacon Julian, Elder Paul from Concordia. During his stay in Aquileia, he probably also contacted Emona — with the virgins of Emona and the monk Anthony, to whom he wrote several letters.¹⁵ His *Letters to Anthony* and *Letters to the Virgins of Emona* confirm that Jerome had personal contact with them. He was at home with the Christian community of Emonians but probably broke up with them because of the strict ascetic precepts and demands he advocated (Premrou 1921, 294). Recent archaeological discoveries on Gosposvetska ulica in Ljubljana (Emona) in 2017–2018 confirm the strong presence of a Christian community in this area.

(4) Jerome thanks the clerics of Aquileia — Deacon Julian — for encouraging the younger sister (name unknown) in Christ, the 'fruit of Saint Julian', who had gone astray, to convert and is now »steadfast in what she has begun« (*Letter to Julian* 6.2). It is not clear whether this is about a religious or a moral matter, behind which was probably the priest Lupicinus, the »Iberian serpent« (6.2). Looking back on her misguided youthful steps, he remembers, »how slippery is the path of youth, on which he also slipped.« He begs his friends to ask Bishop Valerian »to encourage her with a letter« (*Letter* 7.4). There is no doubt that Stridon had to be somewhere near Aquileia for Aquileian clerics to take care of its faithful. This task could have been performed by those who knew the sister and lived near Aquileia.

¹⁵ In the *Letters to Anthony* (12.3) he writes: "I have already sent you ten letters ... full of courtesy and requests, while you are too lazy to budge. The Lord talks to his servants; you, brother, do not give your brother a word."

(5) In his *Letter to Pamachius*, Jerome complains that the monasteries in Bethlehem have run into material trouble. Therefore, he »was compelled to send my brother Paulinianus to our homeland to sell the half-ruined family properties that escaped the barbarian hands, and the income of our parents, so as not to stop work for the saints and be ridiculed by gossips« (*Letter* 66.14). He also mentions the matter in his *Letter to Rufinus*, in which he writes that »Paulinianus has not yet returned and hopes that he will see Bishop Chromatius in Aquileia.« Scholars of Jerome's life rightly conclude that Paulinianus would not have wasted either time or material resources on an unnecessary journey if Stridon were very distant from Aquileia. The request to Paulinianus to pay a visit to Bishop Chromatius confirms that there was a bond of acquaintance and friendship.

(6) In a commentary on the prophet Zephaniah (1.2), Jerome mentions in addition to Illyricum and Thrace the land of birth as the third land. He states: »The witness is Illyricum, the witness is Thrace, the witness is the land in which I was born, where everything but the sun and earth, the growing thorns and dense forests, is destroyed« (»Testis Illyricum est, testis Thracia, testis in quo ortus sum solum«) (Premrou 1921, 237). The provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia both touched Italy at their junction. However, Jerome is not an 'Italicus', nor is he a Dalmatian or a Pannonian. D. Vallarsi (*Opera*, X, 1, 5, etc.), the publisher of Jerome's works and a scholar of Jerome's life, already states that Stridon should be sought in the area between Aquileia and Emona towards the Julian Alps and near the Ocra (Nanos), where Dalmatia and Pannonia touched, and this is Liburnia. It is surprising how the later seekers of Jerome's Stridon ignored the clear statements by Vallarsi. Other personal, domestic and patriotic views prevailed.

(7) In the area of the Karst (Pivka) and its vicinity, there is an intense concentration of churches dedicated to St. Jerome not found elsewhere, namely: Mount Nanos (at an altitude of 1018 m; its existence is attested at the latest in 1350), Koritnice near Knežak, Čelje near Prem, Ivanje selo near Rakek, Petkovec above Logatec, Bošamarin near Koper, Topolovec in the Slovenian Istria, Kozana in Goriška Brda, Kontovel near Trieste. Some churches, dedicated initially to St. Jerome, were later dedicated to another patron saint, namely at Jasen near Ilirska Bistrica (first to St. Achatius and later to St. Joachim) and in Gornja Branica in the Vipava region (to St. Catherine); the church at Jagršče is in ruins.

The pilgrimages organized in the Diocese of Koper in 2019 on the 1600th anniversary of the death of St. Jerome to the churches dedicated to him showed that the tradition was more alive than expected. Neither the ravages of time with the overgrowth on landslides and the surrounding area nor the various weather disasters nor the post-World War II unfavourable conditions to pilgrimages could suppress it. The tradition also reflects other local components, such as prayers for intercession for health and happy childbirth, hand and face washing in a nearby stream, etc., to which were added various legends expressing general contents, such as the pilgrimages by the saint, his stories and sermons, signs in stone, the transfer of a church or chapel, friendship with wild animals, etc.

(9) The presence of Christianity in this territory is attested by the late antique Christian churches at Šilen Tabor above Zagorje on the Pivka and at Ahac near Ilirska Bistrica (both from the late antiquity (6th century); the latter is in ruins). Other sites, such as the finds at Ajdovščina above Rodik and in the Škocjan Caves, also testify to the presence of Christianity. (Slapšak 1997, 19–64) The deposits lie in an important transit area between the East and West, marked by the defence, trade and military routes, and the *Claustra Alpium Iuliarum* (Alpine checkpoints), built by the Romans in the 4th and 5th centuries for the defence of the Empire against the peoples coming from the East. The checkpoints are visible in many places between Tarsatica and Emona, and recently (2017–2018), other archaeological traces of early settlements and Roman roads from this period have been discovered in this area, as well as visible traces of the inner defensive wall (*Claustra Alpium Iuliarum*) between Ahac and Trnovo (Ilirska Bistrica), which runs through Ahac, Trnovo (Stražice) and Knežak toward Šilen Tabor and Nanos–Hrušica (*Ocra-Ad Pyrum*). (Jurešič 2015) There are also other archaeological sites and Roman roads in the immediate vicinity, which confirm the possibility of various activities (trade, handicraft, farming) performed by servants for their masters, such as preparation of firewood, land cultivation, knitting socks for winter, creating a suitable environment for children's games, etc. The Karst area enabled an important passage from the East to the West and vice versa, which also opened up opportunities for military campaigns.

The early settlement and presence of Christianity continued well into the Middle Ages with the establishment of pre-parishes, which to this day carry out their mission. Pre-parishes Slavina, Hrenovice, Trnovo, Vipava etc., were the mothers of later parishes and Christian centres, which preserve the Christian and cultural traditions of the past centuries to the present day.

Surprisingly, the veneration of St. Jerome persisted even though there was no important centre (diocese), institution, or person that would be the bearer of this tradition. Aquileia as well as many neighbouring Istrian dioceses, lost their historical role, and any influence of the central Slovenian area cannot be detected. It is therefore surprising that veneration of the saint began and has been maintained in this territory.

(10) The archaeological heritage of these places is vibrant but unexplored. This is especially true for the Bistriška, which borders the territory of today's Croatia that from the archaeological and historical standpoint forms a unit with the Slovenian region. This has already been noted by F. Poklar, a lawyer, amateur archaeologist and historian, who has collected substantial historical and archaeological data. The situation is better in the Pivka/Karst, presented by Andreja Perko in the book *Naše korenine* (2007). Along the former Roman road linking Aquileia and Emona and during the construction of the expressway at Razdrto (Ocra), rich traces of the past were discovered in several places. The Eastern side of the Ocra (Nanos) remains unexplored and is calling for archaeological exploration. This is especially true for the village of *Strane*, with the church of the Holy Cross, which preserves the memory of the Crusades, and the old Jerome's yew, protected as a cultural

heritage and with many archaeological sites from the Iron Age to late antiquity. The village's existence is attested to as the property of the Cistercian monastery at Stična in 1162. Here ran the former Amber, then Roman and then Mast road, which connected the continental area with the Mediterranean. The ancient village dominates the Pivka, and above it are three archaeologically unexplored sites that are begging archaeological research.

6. In Conclusion

I summarize some well-known and some lesser-known facts that support the hypothesis that Jerome's Stridon should be located in the area between Aquileia and Emona.

The Diocese of Koper, whose territory, according to current knowledge, harbors the place of St. Jerome's birth Stridon, prepared in 2019 a resounding series of pilgrimages to the churches dedicated to the saint within the diocese and published a memorial anthology *Sveti Hieronim in naš čas [Saint Jerome and Our Time]* (2020). In this territory between Aquileia and Emona lay important strategic and military as well as trade and migration routes between the Western and Eastern parts of the Roman Empire, which are only partially archaeologically and historically known to the world public. LIDAR images (2017) of Šilen Tabor, Knežak-Šembije and Trnovo (2017) perceive three autonomous agrarian communities with intermediate territories. The area of Ajdovščina above Rodik, which covered the routes between Tarsatica and Aquileia, had a similar character (Slapšak 1997). Conditions have so far not been conducive to archaeological and historical research in this area. Archaeological artefacts found in this area in the 19th century have ended up in depots in Vienna and those from the early 20th century in Trieste. We hope that both the symposium on the 1600th anniversary of Jerome's death and the revived pilgrimages have provided new impetus for exploring his Stridon. In this way, like Jerome in his time, we will be able to contribute to the treasury of knowledge about the time and place, the people and the identity of the peoples and nations that were or still are involved in the story.

Although it is the task of archaeological science to contribute to the confirmation of various hypotheses, it is also the task of the hypotheses to indicate to archaeology where to stick the shovel.



Photo 1: The map of churches dedicated to St. Jerome.

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Jerome and Western Monasticism: Asceticism, Evergetism, and Orthodoxy in the Late 4th Century Hispania

Hieronim in zahodno meništvo: asketicizem, evergetizem in ortodoksnost v Hispaniji poznega 4. stoletja

Abstract: Jerome had very little Hispanic epistolary correspondence. Nonetheless, the information contained in his few surviving letters gives us an idea of the essential nature of the first Hispanic monasticism - that related to aristocratic asceticism in a family milieu. Among other things, it was the economic basis for the foundation of monasteries throughout the Holy Land under the direct patronage of Jerome of Stridon. Lucinus and his wife Theodora were wealthy Baetican landowners who became active evergetes for the Christian cause and embraced an ascetic life under Jerome's influence. Lucinus sent conspicuous amounts of money to Jerome. He also sent a garment he had worn as a symbol of his conversion to monasticism, a decision Jerome endorsed and blessed when he replied by sending silicon garments for him and his wife, Theodora. Abigaus was a blind man who also converted to asceticism under the epistolary influence of Jerome. He appears to have been related to a proto-monastic community to which Lucinus and Theodora may have belonged. This is an exciting aspect that allows us to fully comprehend the beginnings of coenobitism in the western reaches of the Roman Empire. The portrait of a late 4th-century orthodox asceticism painted by Jerome's letters will be analyzed and compared with the information gleaned from the contemporary archaeological remains in Hispania impregnated by Priscillianism and other heterodox movements against which Jerome railed through epistolography from his base in the Holy Land.

Keywords: Hispania, monasticism, asceticism, orthodoxy, Christianization among the aristocracy, *ecclesia in villa*

Povzetek: Čeprav je Hieronimovih epistolarnih korespondentov iz Hispanije zelo malo, je iz nekaterih ohranjenih pisem kljub temu mogoče razbrati bistveno značilnost zgodnjega hispanskega meništva, ki je bilo povezano z aristokratskim asketicizmom družinske narave, to pa je med drugim prispevalo k ekonomski

podlagi ustanavljanja samostanov v Sveti deželi pod vodstvom stridonskega pisca. Bogata betičanska veleposestnika, Lucin in žena Teodora, ki sta postala dejavna pri krščanski dobroti, sta pod Hieronimovim vplivom sprejela asketski način življenja. Lucin je Hieronimu poslal velik znesek denarja, obenem pa – kot simbol svojega sprejetja meniškega življenja – tudi volnen kos blaga; to je Hieronim pohvalil in blagoslovil, saj jima je nazaj tudi sam poslal kos blaga. Na drugi strani se zdi, da je slepi Abigaus, ki se je prav tako oklenil meništvu pod vplivom Hieronimovih pisem, povezan s protomeniško skupnostjo, kateri sta morda pripadala tudi Lucin in Teodora, to pa lahko prispeva k boljšemu razumevanju cenobitskega meništvu v zahodnem delu imperija. Članek obravnava ortodoksni asketicizem s konca 4. stoletja, kakor ga prikazujejo Hieronimova pisma, in ga primerja s sodobnimi dognanji glede (arheologije) hispanskega meništvu, ki so ga pogosto zaznamovale tendence priscilijanizma in drugih heterodoksnih gibanj, proti katerim se je Hieronim iz Svete dežele boril s pismi.

Ključne besede: Hispania, meništvu, asketicizem, ortodoksnost, pokristjanjevanje aristokracije, *ecclesia in villa*

1. Introduction

This short paper will analyze various aspects deriving from the direct contact Jerome established with the first Hispanic monasticism¹ (or, more specifically, the first Hispanic asceticism).² As far as we know, Jerome never travelled to Hispania, and none of his texts or any third parties refers to it, either in a legendary or an apocryphal manner.

His presence on Hispanic soil came through his letters and the early dissemination and influence of his work. It should be framed within an initial general flow in which the 'Eastern Christian factor' reached the Iberian Peninsula almost exclusively in the form of literature (4th–5th centuries). It also arrived very occasionally through the presence of certain people who came with or at the invitation of Westerners who had previously travelled to the Holy Land.

This occurred in both Hispania and the rest of Western Europe. With Jerome, it can be seen; for example, in the presence among his circle of friends and acquaintances of Evagrius of Antioquia, an Eastern priest brought to Europe by Eusebius of Vercelli, who, during Jerome's youth, moved between Aquileia and Concordia.

¹ This paper falls within the framework of the project: „Monastic Landscapes. Representations and virtualisations of Medieval Spiritual and Material Realities in the Western Mediterranean (6th–16th centuries)“ PGC2018-095350-B-I00.

² The origin of Hispanic asceticism has already been dealt with masterfully by, among others, Díaz Martínez 1991 and Marcos Sánchez 2002.

It would not be until later (6th–7th centuries) that the Oriental Christians, especially monks, physically moved westwards in general and to the Iberian Peninsula.³ This occurred for various reasons, none of which interests us here and will not go into this presentation. However, this research will focus on the stage during the last years of the Western Roman Empire and the influence exerted by Jerome on the first outbreaks of monasticism at its westernmost end.

2. The Hispanic Religious Framework

From the point of view of Christianity, the Hispania of the last decade of the 4th century (the chronological framework in which we document the contact between Jerome and Hispanic asceticism) was a territory characterized by the proliferation of different heterodoxies (Escribano Paño 1990, 151–189), as also happened in the East and many other parts of the Empire. It is known that Jerome fought very actively and vehemently against many of these doctrinal positions (Jeanjean 1999).

In the historical framework of Jerome's lifetime, some of the primary heresies in Hispania were Arianism, Priscillianism,⁴ Gnosticism, Manichaeism, and Novatianism, even though the prefecture of Gaul (and therefore the Vicariate of the Hispanias) suffered the most extreme measures of religious totalitarianism applied by Emperor Maximus from 383. In this very messy, confused, and tense doctrinal environment, Hispanic Christians who devoted themselves to the ascetic way of life⁵ needed clear spiritual guidance, an aspect that does not always appear to have been satisfied by the local hierarchies (often precisely because they were immersed in their doctrinal struggles).

Some confusion and involuntary heterodoxy must have existed (and is verified in different sources) among Hispanic Christians, who were victims of pressure from the different positions mentioned above. Consequently, it is not surprising that the faithful and ascetic, in order to ensure the correct orthodoxy in their ascetic practices (un- or very little regulated in those initial moments of Western monasticism), would end up appealing to an exogenous, superior authority such as Jerome at this stage of their maturity for precise advice and instruction. Moreover, the fear of falling into heterodoxy and ending up like Priscillian (executed in 385, a few years before the Hispanic letters we comment on below) would probably have influenced the decision to be placed under the direct tutelage of a higher authority.⁶ This procedure had already been clearly established in other canonical documents, such as Pope Siricius' letter-decree to Bishop Himerius of Tarraco (*Ep.* 1.7 [PL 13, 1137–1141]), also in 385.

³ My article entitled „Syrian and other Eastern monks in Late Antique Hispania. Archaeological data“ will appear in a monograph *Power, Conversion and Religious Leadership* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

⁴ A heresy for which Jerome had a particular aversion, e.g. *Ep.* 120.10.

⁵ Fontaine (1979, 28–53) analysed some years ago the ascetic model that had been brought from the East to the West and that, from the late 4th century, had been installed in the *villae* of the aristocratic families converted to Christianity.

⁶ As Jerome himself confirms in his *Ep.* 75 addressed to a Hispanic ascetic.

Additionally, Jerome's base in the Holy Land and its strategic installation next to the Nativity Church in Bethlehem gave him an unquestionable aura of fame and authority in the Christian world. That authority is known to have begun taking shape when he worked as a »secretary of Latin letters« for Pope Damasus in the 480s and began to surround himself with select Roman matrons prepared to devote themselves to asceticism under the guidance of their master. Finally, having overcome his problems in Jerusalem relating to Origenism (Bautista Valero 2013, 45–65), his steadfast struggle against the diverse heterodoxies of the period endowed him with the outstanding experience and authority to emerge as a universal reference for the Catholic orthodoxy of his time (Moreschini 1982, 61–71).

Returning to the Hispanic heterodoxies, perhaps the most influential of the time, Priscillianism, should be particularly highlighted, not only for its intrinsic importance but also for its apparent similarities to the way Jerome organized his disciples. Jerome, like Priscillian, surrounded himself mainly with women, aristocratic Roman matrons who sought in the charismatic figure the spiritual master who would guide their new ascetic status.⁷ Let us recall the first woman Jerome led to becoming a ,consecrated virgin': his sister. This led to family tensions, and that, together with the resignation of his career in the court of Valentinian I, was the straw that broke the camel's back and resulted in Jerome's first departure to the East.⁸

Therefore, if Priscillian and Jerome have one thing in common, apart from a very similar age, it is the charisma and ability to attract circles of Roman aristocratic women to their ranks.⁹ Nevertheless, according to the sources, it appears that the equality with which Priscillian treated them compared to ascetic males was one of the essential differences between him and Jerome and, at the same time, one of the many things his enemies accused him of. However, as some authors have pointed out, in this regard, Jerome's attacks on heretics are artificially rhetorical and somewhat hypocritical because they appear accompanied by women (Hier., *Ep.* 53.7),¹⁰ given their intense ascetic activity with their circle of Roman matrons.

⁷ In fact, women were the protagonists of the first forms of asceticism documented in *Hispania*, when they are mentioned in the Council of Elvira held at the beginning of the 4th century as ,consecrated virgins' (males ascetics would not appear in the Hispanic sources until well into the 4th century); these female ascetics would have made a formal religious commitment under the tutelage of the ecclesiastic ministers with the sexual restraint as its basis (Marcos Sánchez 2002, 234–238). On the other hand, it is well known that Jerome wrote various treatises on female virginity, one of the most popular subjects of early Christianity, see Adkin 2003.

⁸ By chance, his second and definitive departure for the East was also motivated by the unfortunate consequences of the conversion to asceticism of the young widow Blaesilla, see Hier., *Ep.* 45. (González Salinero 2011, 543–562)

⁹ Well documented in the case of Priscillian is the staunch defence for him mounted by powerful aristocrats, who in turn also ended up being condemned to death (Marcos Sánchez 2002, 244–245).

¹⁰ Other works by Jerome insist on the idea of seduction of wealthy women by the leaders of the heresies, e.g. Hier., *Comm. in Isaiam* 17.64.

3. The Hispanic Ascetics Related to Jerome

From his base in Bethlehem, Jerome consolidated his authority and continued to send letters to the Christian aristocracy of the time, which also includes a cast of Hispanic correspondents (Brogiolo 2005, 127–150; Marcos Sánchez 2014, 13–35), although we only have evidence of three: a consecrated couple and a blind ascetic. They appear in three preserved letters (*Ep.* 71; 75; 76) written at the end of the 4th century. The information is sparse, but it allows us to draw very eloquent lines of the essential nature of the first Hispanic monasticism.

Letters 71 (*Ad Lucinum baeticum*, a. 398) and 75 (*Ad Theodoram spanam de morte Lucini*, a. 399) of Jerome's epistolary corpus correspond to Lucinus and his wife, Theodora. They were wealthy landowners from *Baetica* (Hier., *Ep.* 71.3–4)¹¹ and active euergetes for the Christian cause who had embraced the ascetic life under Jerome's influence (Marcos Sánchez 1994). Lucinus had already sent other letters (not preserved) to Jerome and six copyists to make copies of his works (Hier., *Ep.* 75.4). These would be the first copies of Jerome's works to arrive in *Hispania*.

Likewise, Lucinus had sent vast amounts of money to the churches of Jerusalem and Alexandria (75.4) and other simple but highly symbolic items. These included a piece of wool and two capes he used as proof of his renunciation of the world and his conversion to the 'perfect life' (71.7),¹² a decision that had been blessed by Jerome himself when he sent four silicon garments to the Hispanic couple, endorsed in writing the orthodoxy of their practices, and invited them to establish, finally, their residence in the Holy Land (71.7).

On the other hand, in Letter 75, sent a few months later on the occasion of Lucinus' death, Jerome gave a funeral eulogy for the husband to immediately encourage Theodora to continue improving her spiritual 'life of perfection' after having successfully achieved sexual continence during her last years of married life (Laurence 1997, 274–276). This letter gives clear evidence of the problem mentioned above of the heresies that were invading *Hispania* at that time, especially among the ascetic circles of the aristocracy: »He (Lucinus), that when the most impure heresy of Basilides was ravaging the Hispanics, and like the contagious plague was devastating all the provinces between the Pyrenees and the Ocean, was able to maintain the purity of the Church, and not admit Armazel, Barbelon, Abraxas, Balsam, or the ridiculous Luesibora or those others that, more than names of persons, are monsters invented by those heretics to impress the spirit of the ignorant and prostitutes.« (Hier., *Ep.* 75.3)¹³ Subsequently, in the same paragraph,

¹¹ Marcos Sánchez (2002, 254) argues that this Hispanic husband and wife did not belong to the senatorial aristocracy, but rather to a well-off urban elite. We are going by the dates given in the 2013 Spanish translation of Jerome's epistolary by the *Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos* (Madrid), who based their work mainly on Migne's Latin text (PL 22 and PLS 2, 20).

¹² Lucinus would have communicated to Jerome his decision to convert to the ascetic life in a letter that has not been preserved (Vilella Masana 2002, 92–93).

¹³ In the same letter Jerome also alludes to Gnosticism and its overwhelming success among the Hispanic aristocracy. In subsequent letters, Hieronymus described Hispanic Priscillianism as an accomplice of Gnosticism, (Hier., *Ep.* 133.3). The translations of the passages from Jerome's letters are taken from

Jerome proclaims how those heterodox movements attempted, in particular, to procure for their ranks the women of 'the wealthy households'. As we have already mentioned, this is a curious reproach, given that it is merely a projection and a reflection of Jerome's strategy of surrounding himself with wealthy matrons to support his projects.

Because of their content, *Ep. 71* and *Ep. 75* are considered extolments to the nascent monastic life that was beginning to proliferate in *Hispania* according to the model of the married couple,¹⁴ withdrawing from the world and continuing to live together as a family while following rigorous patterns of continence and chastity. With their abundant economic resources – and often in their properties – they ended up sowing the seeds of authentic monasteries as they would be defined in the later literature. For this model, we have the case of the nobles Paulinus (of Gallic origin) and Tharasia (of Hispanic origin), who founded the famous Nola in a final phase of their ascetic life monasteries. We will return to Paulinus of Nola shortly.

However, the third letter sent to Hispania (*Ep. 76; Ad Abigaum spanum*, a. 399) briefly and concisely reveals a single person, the blind Abigaus (a priest?), perhaps also converted to asceticism under the epistolary influence of Jerome. Abigaus appears surrounded by *sancti* and related to an unnamed and undescribed community of a proto-monastic nature, to which some authors have indicated that the husband and wife Lucinus and Theodora may also have belonged (Vilella Masana 2002, 107). This is an exciting aspect for understanding the beginnings of the coenobitic organization at the western end of the Roman Empire. In this respect, Jerome asks Abigaus to take over the widow Theodora (*Hier., Ep. 76.3*).

On the other hand, also significant is the mention at the end of the letter of the journey to the Holy Land that Theodora would have begun. This was a fashionable itinerary for ascetics of the time, although, among the Hispanic women about whom we have information from the sources, she would have only been preceded by the Galician ascetic Egeria, who visited the holy sites of the East between 381 and 384 and left a written account of it.

Furthermore, here our questions arise about the structure and hierarchy of this supposed ascetic community. Would the husband and wife Lucinus and Theodora have been the estate owners on which the community came together? Therefore, would they have been the leaders of the ascetic community? Would Abigaus have been a prominent member of this community, as evidenced by his epistolary contact with Jerome? Unfortunately, all these nuances are neither indicated in the letters nor can they be deduced from them, although the first signs of a coenobitic organization that would be imposed in later centuries can be seen.

Finally, we cannot end this section concerning the letters Jerome sent to Hispania

Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, ed. 1893. *Jerome: Letters and Select Works*. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 6. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co. For the Latin text of Jerome's letters Hilberg's CSEL editions are used.

¹⁴ For the Late Antique marriage model, see Saje 2019.

without mentioning *Ep. 53* and *Ep. 58* sent to Paulinus of Nola. Although this great poet of Christian antiquity was not Hispanic, the native of Bordeaux would indeed have begun his conversion to asceticism while living in Hispania with his wife, the Hispanic noblewoman Tharasia,¹⁵ following the death of their son, Celsus, a few days after birth between 390 and 393.¹⁶ Therefore, the ascetic model of this couple would not have been very different from that of Lucinus and Theodora.

Furthermore, thanks to Paulinus and Tharasia, we know about what we could call Jerome's 'epistolary antithesis', Ausonius of Bordeaux. Thus, just as Jerome congratulated Paulinus on his conversion and then encouraged the Baetican couple (Lucinus and Theodora) to embrace the ascetic life, in contrast, some years earlier, the poet from Bordeaux, perplexed by such a choice, was exhorting Paulinus and Tharasia to abandon that type of life and Hispania (Martínez Gázquez 1973, 30–31). In the light of the final result, the 'spiritual victor' in the epistolary contest with the ascetic couples from the Iberian Peninsula was undoubtedly Jerome. For this reason, he should be considered as one of the founders and promoters of Iberian monasticism.

Jerome's epistles have been sent to Paulinus dated 394 and 395, when the Hispano-Gallic couple relocated to their properties in Campania, near Cimitile.¹⁷ However, that does not mean that they are less attractive in terms of what we can learn from them about the asceticism practised by Christian couples in the West and Hispania.

In *Ep. 53 (Ad Paulinum presbyterum, a. 394)*, Jerome congratulates Paulinus on his desire to enrich himself spiritually as »an obedient ingenuity, still without a master, is worthy of praise« (53.3). This would have been a veiled allusion to the nascent but important monastic movement organized in the West outside the priestly hierarchies that largely contributed to expanding the aforementioned 4th-century heresies. This is why Jerome was at pains to guide Paulinus in the reading and study of the Holy Scripture (»let us study in the land that will live on in heaven« [53.10]) and invited him to come and be at his side in the Holy Land (53.11).

On the other hand, *Ep. 58 (Ad Paulinum presbyterum, 395)* confirms Paulinus and Tharasia's decision taken in Hispania sometime before to live a life devoted exclusively to asceticism. Therefore, Jerome exhorts Paulinus to renounce all his worldly goods completely. However, he is no longer insisting that Paulinus move to the East, as »Anthony and all the swarms of monks of Egypt and Mesopotamia, of Pontus, Cappadocia and Armenia never saw Jerusalem, and without the need for that city the gates of paradise are open to them« (58.3). However, Jerome does

¹⁵ Paulinus would have met Tharasia thanks to the divine intervention of the martyr Felix (Paul. Nol., *Carm.* 21.398–402).

¹⁶ The baby, born in the Hispanias, was buried alongside to martyred children (Paul. Nol., *Carm.* 31) in Complutum (Alcalá de Henares). Those martyrs were not named in the source but were later identified as *lustus* and *Pastor*.

¹⁷ At Christmas 394 Paulinus had been ordained priest in Barcelona, just before leaving for Italy (Paul. Nol., *Ep.* 1.10). That is why there is some debate as to whether Paulinus received *Ep. 53* from Jerome while he was still in *Hispania* or after he arrived in Italy (Vilella Masana 2002, 87–88).

recommend »that you renounce the city and do not abandon your vocation as a monk« (58.4) if he finally decides not to practice as a presbyter. He also recommends that he distance himself from the masses and the powerful, as well as eating meagre, vegetarian meals and practising other recommendations of austerity and contention along the lines that would be followed by Lucinus and Theodora a few years later (58.6–7).

Jerome's letters directly impacted Hispania, but part of his non-epistolary literary work also influenced subsequent monasticism.¹⁸ For example, the *Vita Pauli* influenced the drawing up of the *Vita Fructuosi* (Díaz y Díaz 1974, 28), the famous monk and bishop of Braga who organized the monastic life of the northwestern quadrant of the Iberian Peninsula during the 7th century, founding numerous monasteries and writing the rules for them.

Concerning Hispania and its incipient monasticism, we should also mention the *Adversus Vigilantium*, a treatise written by Jerome in 406 in response to the critical views that Vigilantius, a priest from Barcino,¹⁹ had on monasticism and other fundamental elements of Christianity, such as the worship of saints and relics. His criticism of monasticism derived from his complete rejection of celibacy, a mainstay of asceticism for Jerome and in the official position of the Church. Vigilantius did not accept the monk's view as, from his perspective, it represented an escape from society (Hier., *Adv. Vigil.* 356–357). Once in Barcelona, where he would have arrived between 406 and 408 fleeing from the Vandal invasions (Massie 1980, 94–96), Vigilantius continued to defend his postulates (Castellanos 1995–96, 416–418).

4. Some Archaeological Notes

From other letters written by Jerome, it can be deduced that this Hispanic aristocracy probably built other *domestica ecclesia* on their properties, as documented for example in *Ep.* 30, which refers to the construction of a domestic church to host an ascetic community in the house of the Roman matron Paula (30.14).

We could already be looking at *domestica monasteria*, as documented half a century later in the Council of Ilerda (present-day Lleida) in 546, which would anathemise the monasteries founded by private individuals that were not subjected to the authority of the diocese (*Conc. Ilerdensis*, c. III.). More than a century later, the *Regula communis*, probably written by Fructuosus of Braga, insisted on that subject and specified the existence of monasteries consecrated in private homes.²⁰

¹⁸ However, Monaci Castagno noted that Jerome never wrote neither ecclesiastical history nor a monastic history, nonetheless he cultivated the ambition to be a historian of the Church or monasticism (2011, 22).

¹⁹ Vigilantius was of Aquitanian origin (Hier., *Adv. Vigil.* 355ss.) and news of his appointment in Barcelona was provided by Gennadius of Marseille (Gennad., *De vir. ill.* 36).

²⁰ »Indeed, some are accustomed to organising monasteries in their own homes for fear of hell, and to gather in community with their wives, children, servants and neighbours under the firmness of oath,

There are quite a few Roman *villae* in Hispania in which slightly later chapels are documented (5th–7th cent.) (Chavarría Arnau 2007, 143–152; Brogiolo 2005, 130–132) that could already have been fulfilling this function in the last quarter of the 4th century. We have some archaeological remains of a sizeable late-Roman *villae* in southern Hispania for which we do not know the names of the former owners, but that could have easily belonged to ascetic married couples or another kind of family circle from the end of the fourth century.

Roman villas such as La Cocosa (Badajoz), La Olmeda (Palencia), El Saucedo (Toledo) or Milreu (Estoi, Portugal) could have been Christian monasteries or retreats for aristocratic ascetics during their late imperial phase. This possibility is based on the presence of basilicas in each of them. However, it is hazardous to go further and deduce only from that archaeological evidence that the ancient buildings in Roman villas were occupied by ascetics and/or monks or whether, in contrast, the villa basilicas were merely private chapels built for the owners. There is also a possibility that both cases could have occurred, correlatively, in individual villas. The private chapel could have attracted a community of monks, all without excluding the following parochial functions.

All these possibilities and questions can be applied to many archaeological sites. The paradigm could perhaps be the Villa Fortunatus (Fraga, Huesca), where, on one side of the peristyle, a chapel with a baptismal pool and a necropolis were installed in the 5th century (Navarro Sáez 1999, 147–150). All this in a villa whose proprietor was already a Christian in the third quarter of the 4th century, according to a mosaic excavated in the domestic area.

Along the same lines of discussion but introducing more recent stratigraphic levels, of particular interest are various medieval monasteries or late antiquity churches that, interestingly, are built on the remains of Roman villas. For example, at the site known as Monte do Mosteiro (Mértola, Portugal), there is an early medieval church on the plot of a Roman villa (Maciel and Martins 1995, 499–506). Moreover, at Sítio do Mosteiro (S. Bartolomeu do Outeiro, Portugal), a Visigothic basilica was excavated in a Roman villa with several chronological phases (Alfênim and Lima 1995, 463–469). It is likely that the toponym ‘monastery’ in these places (documented as early as the Middle Ages) refers to a *monasterium in villa*?

Therefore, the archaeological examples mentioned could have their origin as monasteries in the early ascetic practices of a private family nature, such as those undertaken in their villas by the Hispanic and Hispano-Gallic couples, is documented in Jerome’s letters.

and to consecrate churches in their own homes dedicated to martyrs and give them the title of ‘monasteries’.« (*Regula communis* 1)

5. Conclusion

Jerome shows us how Hispanic monasticism was born and spread among the aristocracy due to the influence of literature (in this case, the epistolary genre) at a time when it was a practice restricted to matrimonial and/or family circles. Jerome addresses his letters to that aristocracy to answer their doctrinal doubts and lead them on the straight path of heterodoxy at a time of convulsion caused by heretical disputes that ravaged both East and West. The Hispanic monasticism that came later – progressively more plural and heterogeneous on a social level – would be regulated based on coenobitic rules designed for community life and promoted by what had already become local episcopal hierarchies. Meanwhile, the formation of communities would soon be disassociated from their origin in the nuclei of aristocratic married couples converted to asceticism that abounded in the last years of the 4th century.

However, the substrate of the Hieronymian seed in Hispanic monasticism would survive the passage of time, with not only the influence of his work remaining indelible but also its invocation in many monasteries and monastic landscapes. For instance, in Montserrat's millenary monastery (north-eastern Hispania), the highest peak on the mountain, where it is set, has been dedicated to St Jerome.

The saint's popularity on the Iberian Peninsula would be crystallized in creating the Order of Saint Jerome in the 14th century (after a brief formation stage of an eremitic nature) foundation of successive Hieronymian monasteries during the years immediately after. These included San Bartolomé de Lupiana (Guadalajara), the true germ of the Order; San Jerome de Yuste (Cáceres); Sant Jeroni de la Vall d'Hebron (Barcelona); and Sant Jeroni de la Murtra (Badalona) (Díaz Martí, 2006).²¹

Nevertheless, it is in the south of the Iberian Peninsula that the Hieronymian monastic order appears to have taken root most extensively and intensively, especially in Andalusia:²² San Jerónimo de Valparaíso, in Córdoba, now declared a National Monument; or San Jerónimo de Buenavista in Seville; and eloquently, the first monastery built in Granada after the Catholic monarchs had taken the Muslim town, was one dedicated to St. Jerome (which appears to have an earlier history, although it is very poorly known). For their part, the female Hieronymian congregations, such as Santa Paula in Seville, Santa María de la Asunción in Morón de la Frontera, Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles in Constantina, Santa Marta in Córdoba, and Santa Paula in Granada, remind us of the importance of female spirituality in Jerome's monastic doctrine.

So, it should be noticed that it was in southern Spain – ancient Baetica (where Lucinus, Theodora, and Abigaus lived and practised asceticism) – that coincidentally it appears that Jerome's name associated with the monastic world was recov-

²¹ Although it is currently cloistered, this monastery is spiritually and culturally still very active.

²² Hernández-Díaz Tapia also emphasises the importance of the female branch of the Hieronymian order in Andalusia (1976, 7).



Photo 2: *The highest peak - dedicated to St. Jerome - of the mountain that hosts the monastery of Montserrat (Barcelona), dedicated to St. Jerome (photo: Sergi Boixader).*

ered with greater intensity from the time of the Christian advance that ended up expelling the Muslims from ancient Hispania. This leads us to suspect that the Hieronymian legacy would have been transmitted powerfully from antiquity and survived during the long interval of Muslim occupation.

Abbreviations

Adv. Vigil. – *Adversus Vigilantium*.

CSEL – Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.

De vir. ill. – *De Viris Illustribus*.

Ep. – *Epistulae*.

PL – Patrologia Latina.

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Blue Deserts: Jerome and the Origins of Insular Monasticism in the Adriatic

Modre puščave: Hieronim in izvori otoškega meništvaja na Jadranu

Abstract: This article focuses on Jerome as one of the first ,ideologists of the desert'. To this end, it discusses his letters, *Vitae*, and his personal experience in the desert of Chalcis (c. 374–377 AD). Jerome is also an important historical source for the 4th-century insular eremitism in the Adriatic: in *Ep.* 60 to Heliodorus, he mentioned Dalmatia as one of the three archetypal deserts, equating it with Egypt and Mesopotamia. The article analyses Jerome's extant references on anchoritic communities and ascetic monks residing in Dalmatia. A special place among them was given to Bonosus, Jerome's close friend who around 374 AD moved to an unknown Northern Dalmatian island. Jerome depicted Bonosus' ascetic life on an island as an ideal that surpasses even the established forms of eremitism in more traditional desert environments. Jerome's propaganda for *insulae Dalmatiae* raises the question about their possible localization, which is shortly discussed in the concluding paragraphs.

Keywords: Jerome, Bonosus, Insular eremitism, Monasticism, Asceticism, Dalmatia

Povzetek: Članek se osredotoča na Hieronima kot enega prvih ,ideologov puščave'. V tem oziru se obrača tako k Hieronimovim pismom in hagiografijam kakor tudi k njegovi osebni izkušnji v sirski puščavi Halkis (ok. 374–377). Hieronim je pomemben tudi kot zgodovinski vir za začetke otoškega puščavnštva na Jadranu v 4. stoletju: v *Ep.* 60, naslovljeni na Heliodora, Hieronim omenja Dalmacijo kot eno izmed treh arhetipskih puščav in jo postavlja ob bok Egiptu in Mezopotamiji. V osrednjem delu članek analizira Hieronimova pričevanja o anahoretskih skupnostih in menihih na Jadranu. Posebno mesto med njimi zaseda Bonoz, Hieronimov bližnji prijatelj iz otroštva, ki se je okrog leta 372 preselil na neznan otok na področju severne Dalmacije. Bonozovo asketsko življenje na otoku Hieronim vzporeja z najbolj znamenitimi puščavniki tistega časa. Ob Hieronimovi propagandi za *insulae Dalmatiae* se zastavlja vprašanje o njihovi lokaciji, ki ga avtorja obravnava v zadnjem delu članka.

Ključne besede: Hieronim, Bonoz, otoško puščavnštvo, meništvaja, asketizem, Dalmacija

1. Introduction

As historical fatherlands of monasticism, one usually thinks of Egypt, Palestine, and Syria.¹ In *Ep.* 60 to Heliodorus, however, Jerome offered a different picture: alongside Egypt and the broader regions of the Near East, he mentioned the Roman province Dalmatia as one of the promised lands for zealous hermits (Bratož 2000, 110). Moreover, Jerome referred to Dalmatia several times in his other letters and his *Vitae*, hence becoming the first and only source for eremitic tradition in the late 4th-century Adriatic. Firstly, this article discusses Jerome's 'ideology of the desert' and secondly, it systematically overviews the passages in Jerome's opus that mention monasticism in the Adriatic. Finally, the concluding section addresses different speculations about the possible localization of Jerome's *insulae Dalmatiae*.

2. Jerome as the 'Ideologist of the Desert'

Jerome first encountered ascetic *modus vivendi* during his study years in Trier (before 370 AD), where he likely came across Athanasius' famous work *Vita Antonii*. He described this »first conversion« (Campenhausen 1972, 131; Derhard-Lesieur 2021) to asceticism in *Ep.* 3, where he wrote that in Trier, he devoted himself to God for the first time (Hier., *Ep.* 3.5.2).² Rufinus' account corroborates this in *Apologetica contra Hieronymum*, where Rufinus alluded to Jerome's knowledge of Greek before his conversion (Rufin., *Apol. c. Hier.* 2.9).³ According to some scholars, the two protagonists in Augustine's famous account of his conversion (Aug., *Conf.* 8.6–12) were no other than Jerome and his closest friend Bonosus.⁴

The next formative stage in the development of Jerome's vision of ascetic life was the time he spent in Aquileia.⁵ In the second half of the 4th-century, ascetic communities in Aquileia were already flourishing (Bratož 2000, 104–110).⁶ Even before the arrival of Jerome and Bonosus around 370 AD, the household of the future

¹ For general introduction see Chitty, Derwas. 1966. *The Desert a City: An Introduction to the Study of Egyptian and Palestinian Monasticism Under the Christian Empire*. Oxford: Blackwell; Steidle, Basilius, ed. 1956. *Antonius Magnus eremita 356–1956. Studia ad antiquum monachismum spectantia*. Rome: Orbis Catholicus, Herder; Canivet, Pierre. 1977. *Le monachisme syrien selon Théodoret de Cyr*. Paris: Beauchesne. Primary sources for Egypt are: Athanasius, *The Life of St. Anthony* (critical edition: Bartelink, Gerard J. M., ed. 1994. *Vie d'Antoine – Athanase d'Alexandrie. Introduction, texte critique et traduction*. SC 400. Paris: Cerf), and Paladius, *Historia Lausiaca* (critical edition: Bartelink, Gerard J. M., ed. 1974. *La storia Lausiaca*. Verona: Fondazione Lorenzo Valla). For Palestine and Syria: Theodoret of Cyrus, *A History of the Monks of Syria*: Price, Robert M., tr. 1985 Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications (critical edition: Canivet, Pierre, and Alice Leroy-Molinghen, ed. 1977–1979. *Histoire des moines de Syrie*. SC 234, 257. Paris: Cerf.)

² »Cum post Romana studia ad Rheni semibarbas ripas /.../ ego primus coeperim velle te colere.«

³ »Ante enim quam converteretur, mecum pariter et literas Graecas et linguam penitus ignorabat.«

⁴ Kelly refutes the hypothesis arguing that Augustine would not describe Jerome and Bonosus as *indocti* (1975, 30). For further discussions see Courcelle 1950, 181; Leclerc et. al. 2007, 13; Steinhausen 1951, 134.

⁵ On Jerome's personal accounts on his contacts with the Aquileian circle see Bratož 2013, 18–23.

⁶ Spinelli (1982, 273) labels the group of Aquileian ascetics not exactly as a cenobitic monastic commu-

Aquileian bishop Chromatius was organized as an informal religious community, *monasterium* – or this is at least how Rufinus later described it.⁷ In Aquileia, Jerome and Bonosus met a group of ascetics – *chorus beatorum* (Hier., *Chron.* a. 374) – that nurtured their ascetic zeal. This community lasted until 374 AD, when they were parted by a »sudden whirlwind« (*subitus turbo*), as Jerome put it (Hier., *Ep.* 3.3).⁸

Afterwards, Jerome set out to Syria and into the desert of Chalcis, which seemed to him »the most secure harbour for a shipwrecked man« (3.3).⁹ This was a significant turning point in his life, for the change of environment encouraged him to write the first eulogies of anchoritic life in the desert. These eulogies set the stage for the development of his ideal image of the desert, which he later promulgated in his writings. Jerome's exalted descriptions of eremitism have significantly influenced later monastic literature in the West and inspired many other ascetics and laypeople.

„Desert as a paradise“ became a recurrent *topos* in Jerome's writings. A meaningful paradigm shift is found in the opening of Jerome's *Vita Pauli*, where the classic attributes of paradise are presented as the utmost agony, while the real desert with all its hardships is described as a paradise (Šubrt 2000, 125–126). The motif of the „desert as a paradise“ also occurs in *Ep.* 2 where Jerome is asking a certain Theodosius, leader of the ascetic community in the Syrian desert, to pray for him to become worthy of the desert and to be allowed to join that „admirable community“ (*admirandum consortium*), since – according to Jerome – the desert was »lovelier than any city«¹⁰ and „those lonely spots“ were »made into a paradise by the saints that throng them.«¹¹

This notion of the „desert as a paradise“ is further related to Jerome's exhortations aimed at various individuals, encouraging them to retreat from society and leave behind their city life.¹² In *Ep.* 14, Jerome observed that »a monk cannot be perfect in his own country« (14.7.2),¹³ while in *Ep.* 58, he suggested to Paulin of Nola that he should consider a solitary life if he desires to become a true monk. In

nity, but with a strong „fervore ascetico“ that is manifested in later writings of Jerome, Rufinus, and Chromatius.

⁷ *Apol. c. Hier.* 2.9. Among the ascetics in the circle were deacon Iulianus, subdeacon Niceas, monk Chrysocomas, Chromatius' brother Eusebius, who was also a deacon, and upper deacon Iovinus, as well as Rufinus. Chromatius, Iovinus, and Eusebius later became bishops.

⁸ The translations of Jerome's letters are, if not stated otherwise, taken from Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, ed. 1893. *Jerome: Letters and Select Works*. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 6. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co. For the Latin text of Jerome's letters Hilberg's CSEL editions are used.

⁹ »Syria mihi velut fidissimus naufrago portus occurrit.«

¹⁰ »Spectarem desertum, omni amoeniorem civitatem.« (Hier., *Ep.* 2)

¹¹ »Viderem desolata ab accolis loca, quasi ad quoddam paradisi instar.« (Hier., *Ep.* 2) The passage is explored in depth in Cain 2009, 20–21.

¹² Cf. »They [i.e. the cities] were considered as environments where all worldly wishes (power, money, sex and greed for food) prevailed, distracting people from the interest for afterlife and betraying Christ's true teaching.« (Marazzi 2015, 605)

¹³ »Monachum in patria sua perfectum esse non posse.« Cf. Lc 4,24.

order to abide by the true meaning of the word *monachus*, therefore, one needed to live alone in the desert and leave behind »cities which are the homes not of the solitaries but crowds« (58.5.1).¹⁴ In *Ep.* 125, he exclaimed along the same line that »a town is a prison and solitude a paradise« (125.8.1).¹⁵ In *Ep.* 14, one finds Jerome's famous eulogy to the desert: »O wilderness, bright with Christ's spring flowers! O, solitude, whence come those stones wherewith in the Apocalypse the city of the mighty king is built! O desert, rejoicing in God's familiar presence!« (14).¹⁶ Jerome's praise of the desert thus coincides impeccably with the concept of solitude, recently established by the first Christian ascetics as the principal criteria for ascetic life (Bobovnik and Derhard 2020).

In addition to his *Epistulae*, the formation of Jerome's 'ideology of the desert' can be observed in his *Vitae* of the legendary Desert fathers – *Vita Pauli*, *Vita Malchi*, *Vita Hilarionis* –, texts that mark the very beginning of Latin hagiography (Leclerc et al. 2007, 20). The first and most influential among these works is *Vita Pauli*, written sometime between 376 AD and 381 AD.¹⁷ The text depicts the life of St. Paul of Thebes, who is presented as preceding St. Anthony and surpassing him in his virtue. With this twist, Jerome re-writes the very origins of the Egyptian eremitic tradition as set out in the Athanasius' *Vita Antonii* and establishes St. Paul as the 'first hermit' (Hier., *V. Paul.* 1).¹⁸ In Jerome's version of the story, St. Anthony's older friend Paul is compared to Biblical figures such as the Prophets Elias, John the Baptist, and apostle Paul (13).¹⁹ In stark contrast to St. Anthony, who in Athanasius' words »could not endure learning letters« (Hier., *V. Ant.* 1),²⁰ St. Paul was, according to Jerome, an educated Christian (Hier., *V. Paul.* 4).²¹ In this way, Jerome intentionally positioned erudition as an integral part of monastic life, a notion that later exerted a significant influence on monasticism in the West (Hale-Williams 2006, 39).

The three *Vitae* by Jerome helped to consolidate Egypt, Syria, and Palestine as the fatherlands of the 4th-century monasticism: Paul of Thebes was presented as the first hermit in the Egyptian desert, the story of Malchus took place in the Syrian desert,²² and Hilarion was an itinerant monk from Gaza. As far as the 'coverage' of main geographical regions of early monasticism in Jerome's *Vitae* is con-

¹⁴ »Non sunt solorum habitacula, sed multorum.«

¹⁵ »Mihi oppidum carcer est et solitudo paradusus.«

¹⁶ Translation by F. A. Wright. »O desertum Christi floribus vernans! O solitudo, in qua illi nascuntur lapides, de quibus in Apocalypsi ciuitas magni regis extruitur. O heremus familiari Deo gaudens!«

¹⁷ For the attempts to determinate the date see Kelly 1975, 60–61; Rousseau 2010, 133.

¹⁸ »Paulum quemdam Thebaeum principem rei istius fuisse.«

¹⁹ »Vidi Eliam, uidi Ioannem in deserto, et uere in paradiso Paulum uidi.«

²⁰ Γράμματα μὲν μαθεῖν οὐκ ἠνέσχετο.

²¹ »Litteris tam Graecis quam Aegyptiacis adprime eruditus.«

²² The story of *Vita Malchi* revolves around the early Christian phenomenon of 'spiritual marriage', a favourite topic for Jerome as well, who highly praised the life of ascetic virgins (*subintroductae*), encouraging them for the 'unconsummated' marriage. For the general discussion on marital practices in Late Antiquity see Saje 2019, 989–1000, and Saje 2018, 813–823.

cerned, it is interesting to note that an important episode of *Vita Hilarionis* occurs in (southern) Dalmatia.²³ Jerome placed the Adriatic region on the map of ideal monastic landscapes, an act which he confirms by adding the Dalmatian islands to his list of promised monastic lands in *Hier., Ep.* 60.

3. Insular Eremitism in the Adriatic

Since there were no natural desert environments in the Latin West, monks who followed in the footsteps of famous Eastern ascetics looked for extreme solitude, remoteness, and wilderness that were characteristic of the deserts in Egypt and the Middle East (Marazzi 2015, 605–615; Lebecq 2013, 11). One obvious candidate for such an environment were desolate islands, isolated from the rest of the world by sea.²⁴ These insular ‘cells’, well-defined by their shores,²⁵ soon became a symbol of retreat and asceticism (Gioanni 2013, 100). The same holds true for the 4th-century anchoritic communities in the broader Adriatic region. Due to the lack of archaeological evidence from this earliest period, all knowledge about insular monasticism in the Adriatic comes from Jerome (Bratož 2000, 103–126).²⁶ It is to this textual evidence that we now turn.

3.1 *Hier., Ep.* 60

Jerome’s *Ep.* 60, written in 396 AD, is a *consolatoria* (Cain 2006, 504) composed for his friend Heliiodorus, whose nephew Nepotianus died not long ago. Nepotianus had, like his uncle, abandoned civil or military service (*Hier., Ep.* 60.9.2) and became a presbyter in Altinum, a town in the province of Venetia-Histria, where Heliiodorus was bishop.²⁷ In *Ep.* 60, Jerome tried to soothe his friend’s grief by praising Nepotianus’ traits and impeccable ascetic values. Nepotianus, Jerome wrote, would have eagerly left everything behind when he became a monk if the love for his uncle would not have prevented him. That is why he contemplated leaving for Egypt or Mesopotamia. In this respect, he also considered Dalmatian islands:

»He [sc. Nepotianus] longed daily to make his way to the monasteries of Egypt, or to visit the communities of Mesopotamia, or at least to live a

²³ See below.

²⁴ The term ‘isolation’ is etymologically derived from *it. isola*, which in turn comes from *lat. insula*, ‘island’. The problem of water shortage could have been partly solved with the use of cisterns, which was a common practice at the time, while the abundance of seafood provided better natural resources than the harsh desert environments in the deserts of Egypt, Palestine and Syria.

²⁵ Cf. Jerome’s description of the island as a jail: »Abruptae rupes, quasi quemdam horroris carcerem claudunt.« (*Ep.* 3.4.4)

²⁶ For the recent archaeological survey in the North Adriatic region see Čaušević-Bully and Bully 2013; 2015. Archaeological evidence for early insular monasticism is scarce in other Mediterranean regions (e.g. Tyrrhenian Sea, Ligurian Sea) as well (Belcari 2013, 80).

²⁷ Nepotianus was also the addressee of *Ep.* 52, in which Jerome offers guidance for those struggling to combine their ascetic life and ecclesiastical career.

lonely life in the Dalmatian islands, separated from the mainland only by the strait of Altinum. But he had not the heart to forsake his episcopal uncle in whom he beheld a pattern of many virtues and from whom he could take lessons without going abroad.« (60.10)²⁸

3.2 Hier., Ep. 105

The second testimony that hints at eremitism in the Adriatic is Jerome's *Ep. 105*, written around 398 AD. It addresses the lost letter that was sent to Jerome by St. Augustine. The relevant passage is the following:

»You are sending me letter upon letter, and often urging me to answer a certain letter of yours, a copy of which, without your signature, had reached me through our brother Sysinnius, deacon, as I have already written, which letter you tell me that you entrusted first to our brother Profuturus, and afterwards to someone else; but that Profuturus was prevented from finishing his intended journey, and having been ordained a bishop, was removed by sudden death; and the second messenger, whose name you do not give, was afraid of the perils of the sea, and gave up the voyage which he had intended. These things being so, I am at a loss to express my surprise that the same letter is reported to be in possession of most of the Christians in Rome and throughout Italy and has come to everyone but myself, to whom alone it was ostensibly sent. I wonder at this all the more because the brother Sysinnius aforesaid tells me that he found it among the rest of your published works, not in Africa, not in your possession, but on an island of the Adriatic some five years ago.« (105.1)²⁹

The passage implies an established (monastic?) community on an unnamed *insula Hadriae*; however, there are no geographical clues that would allow for locating this island (Bratož 2000, 111).

3.3 Hier., Ep. 118

The third reference to eremitic communities in the Adriatic is found in Jerome's *Ep. 118*, dated 407 AD. In this letter, Jerome writes to a certain Julian, his compatriot or perhaps a neighbour (Suić 1986, 236), praising his benefactory deeds:

²⁸ »Cumque arderet cotidie aut ad Aegypti monasteria pergere aut Mesopotamiae invisere choros vel certe insularum Dalmatiae, quae Altino tantum freto distant, solitudines occupare, avunculum pontificem deserere non audebat tota in illo cernens exempla virtutum domique habens, unde disceret.«

²⁹ »Crebras ad me epistolas dirigis, et saepe compelis, ut respondeam cuidam epistolae tuae, cuius ad me, ut ante iam scripsi, per fratrem Sisinnium diaconum exemplaria pervenerunt absque subscriptione tua et quam primum per fratrem Profuturum, secundo per quendam alium te misisse significas, et interim Profuturum retractum de itinere et Episcopum constitutum veloci morte subtractum, illum cuius nomen retices, maris timuisse discrimina et navigationis mutasse consilium. Quae cum ita sint, satis mirari nequeo, quomodo ipsa epistola et Romae et in Italia haberi a plerisque dicatur et ad me solum non pervenerint, cui soli missa est, praesertim cum idem frater Sisinnius inter caeteros tractatus tuos dixerit eam se non in Africa, non apud te, sed in insula Hadriae, ante hoc ferme quinquennium reperisse.«

»I would not, therefore, have you offer to the Lord only what a thief may steal from you or an enemy fall upon, or a proscription confiscate, what is liable to fluctuations in value now going up and now down, what belongs to a succession of masters who follow each other as fast as in the sea wave follows wave, and – to say everything in a word – what, whether you like it or not, you must leave behind you when you die. Rather offer to God that which no enemy can carry off, and no tyrant take from you, which will go down with you into the grave, nay on to the kingdom of heaven and the enchantments of paradise. You already build monasteries and support in the various islands of Dalmatia a large number of holy men. But you would do better still if you were to live among these holy men as a holy man yourself.« (118.5)³⁰

The plural term *monasteria* and phrase *multus numerus sanctorum* suggest that several separate ascetic communities in the Adriatic already existed around 400 AD (Čaušević-Bully and Bully 2015, 79). However, Jerome's use of the term *monasteria* does not necessarily denote a coenobitic monastery but rather refers to a semi-anchoretic colony (*laura*) or a solitary hermitage (Bratož 2000, 110). Apart from the general mention of Dalmatia, no geographical details can be derived from this passage.

3.4 Hier., *Apologia contra Rufinum*

Further to the *Epistulae*, monastic communities on the Adriatic islands were mentioned twice in Jerome's *Apologia contra Rufinum*:

»Whence then, I beg you to consider, did the report of you [sc. Rufinus] having written these books reach me? Who was it that sowed them broadcast through Rome and Italy and the islands of the coast of Dalmatia? How did these charges against me ever come to my ears if they were only lurking in your desk and those of your friends?« (3.3.12–16)³¹

Jerome again mentioned Dalmatia in a later passage:

»After I repelled your charges, that is your praises, and without showing an ill will to you personally, answered the accusations, not the accuser, and inveighed against the heretics, to show that, though defamed by you, I was a Catholic; you grew angry, and raved and composed the most magnificent works against me; and when you had given them to all men to read and re-

³⁰ »Nolo tantum ea offeras domino, quae potest fur rapere, invadere inuadere, proscriptione tollere, quae et accedere possunt et recedere et instar undarum ac fluctuum a succedentibus sibi dominis occupantur atque – ut uno cuncta sermone comprehendam – quae – velis nolis – in morte dimissurus es; illud offer, quod nullus tibi hostis possit auferre, nulla eripere tyrannis, quod tecum pergat ad inferos, immo ad regna caelorum et ad paradisi delicias. Exstruis monasteria, et multus a te per insulas Dalmatiae sanctorum numerus sustentatur; sed melius faceres, si et ipse sanctus inter sanctos viveres.«

³¹ »Et unde, oro te, librorum tuorum ad me fama pervenit? Quis eos Romae, quis in Italia, quis per Dalmatiae insulas disseminavit? Si in scriniis tuis et amicorum tuorum latebant, ad me quomodo mea crimina pervenerunt?«

peat, letters came to me from Italy, and Rome and Dalmatia, showing each more clearly than the last, what all the encomiums were worth with which in your former laudation you had decorated me.« (3.7. 32–40)³²

In these two passages Jerome reported that Christian communities in the Adriatic were aware of concurrent affairs, particularly about an ardent polemic he had with Rufinus (Bratož 2000, 111). Jerome's former friend was now sending malicious letters across the 'Dalmatian islands' (*per Dalmatiae insulas*) in order to discredit him among his compatriots (Bratož 2013, 9). Like with the letters, it is impossible to locate these islands on the grounds of the text alone.

4. *Eremitae Dalmaticae: Hilarion, Bonosus, Castricianus*

4.1 Hilarion

In *Vita Hilarionis*, the eponymous saint was presented as a forefather of the ascetic movement in the broader Adriatic region. According to Jerome, Hilarion travelled extensively in his late years in order to escape the crowds of admirers that appeared at his every place of residence. The same applied to Sicily, his last stop before setting sail for Dalmatia. In this context, Jerome wrote that Hilarion

»wanted to go to certain barbarous races where his name and fame were unknown. He [sc. Hesychius] therefore brought him to Epidaurus, a town in Dalmatia, where he stayed for a few days in the country near but could not be hidden.« (28.1–2)³³

Ironically, Dalmatia, the country of 'barbarous races', was Jerome's fatherland.³⁴ With 'barbarous races' he might have alluded to the pagan population of this region, which was only partly Christianised in the mid-4th-century.

According to Jerome, Hilarion arrived to Epidaurus (present-day Cavtat near Dubrovnik) around 366 AD and performed two miracles. First, he saved the local population from a gigantic savage snake (28), and second, he tranquillized the sea after a devastating earthquake (29). These miracles were so remarkable that »Epidaurus and all the region roundabout tell the story to this day, and mothers teach their children to hand down the remembrance of it to posterity« (29.4).³⁵

³² »Postquam repuli crimina, id est laudes tuas, et absque invidia tui nominis respondi criminibus, non criminatori, atque, ut me catholicum a te infamatus probarem, invectus sum in haereticos, irasceris, furis, et loculentissimos libros contra me cudis. Quos cum legendos et cantandos omnibus tradidisses, certatim ad me de Italia et urbe Roma atque Dalmatia scripta venerunt, quibus me laudatur pristinus ornasses praeconiis.«

³³ »Velle ad barbaras quasdam pergere nationes, ubi et nomen et sermo suus incognitus foret. Duxit itaque illum ad Epidaurum, Dalmatiae oppidum, ubi paucis diebus in vicino agello mansitans non potuit abscondi.«

³⁴ For a discussion of Jerome's Dalmatian origins, see Bratož 2013, 8–15.

³⁵ »Hoc Epidaurus et omnis illa regio usque hodie praedicat, matresque docent liberos suos ad memoriam in posteros transmittendam.« This anecdote is mentioned also by Sozomenus in *HE* V.10.2–3 (Cedilnik 2004, 291–292).

Jerome further added that his fame spread as far as Salona (29.7),³⁶ leaving Hilarion no other choice but to escape the crowds. Thus, he sailed away »secretly by night in a small boat« (29.7).³⁷

Another passage in *Vita Hilarionis* should be considered in the context of the previously discussed ‚ideology of the desert‘ and its insular forms.³⁸ Hilarion was beset by familiar problems with admirers already in Egypt long before he visited Dalmatia. To this end, he contemplated on how to avoid them:

»Having then left Bruchium, he entered the oasis through the trackless desert and there abode for a year, more or less. But, inasmuch as his fame had travelled thither also, he felt that he could not be hidden in the East, where he was known to many by the report and by sight, and began to think of taking ship for some solitary island, so that having been exposed to public view by the land, he might at least find concealment in the sea.« (23.7)³⁹

Described here is an ideal of the insular ascetic life that Hilarion himself never wholly fulfilled. While he lived in Sicily and Cyprus, these two islands did not correspond to his idea of a small and solitary island (*sola insula*), primarily due to their size and population density. The ideal of insular eremitism, envisaged by Hilarion, was yet to be fulfilled by later generations of ascetic monks in Dalmatia.

4.2 Bonosus

According to Jerome, the most remarkable insular hermit was his close friend Bonosus. Jerome considered him as an inseparable brother, writing in *Ep.* 3 that they were »fostered in the bosoms of the same nurses, and carried in the arms of the same bearers« (3.5).⁴⁰ Afterwards, they were schoolmates in Rome, lived together in Trier (3.5.2), where they became interested in asceticism and later moved to Aquileia (*Ep.* 3; 7; *Apol. c. Ruf.* 1.4; *Chron.* a. 374). After the quarrel in Jerome’s Aquileian ascetic circle in 374, Bonosus decided to pursue eremitic life and moved to an unknown island. Although never explicitly stated by Jerome, we can arguably assume that Bonosus settled down on one of the islands in the Adriatic, on the shores of which the city of Aquileia stood (Bratož 2000, 110).

Jerome described him as a »new inhabitant of paradise« (*novus paradisi colonus*) (*Hier., Ep.* 3.4.2), living »in the safe shelter of his island« like John (of Patmos) (7.3).⁴¹ Bonosus’ island is depicted in a highly poetic manner:

³⁶ »Mirabatur omnis civitas et magnitudo signi Salonis quoque precrebuerat.«

³⁷ »In brevi lembo clam nocte.«

³⁸ For Jerome’s contribution to Late Antique conception of insular eremitism cf. Marazzi 2015, 606.

³⁹ »Egressus ergo de Bruchio per inviam solitudinem intravit Oasim, ibique anno plus minus exacto, quia illuc quoque sua fama peruenerat, quasi iam in Oriente latere non posset, ubi multi illum et opinion et vultu noverant, ad solas navigare insulas cogitabat, ut quem terra vulgaverat, saltem maria celarent.«

⁴⁰ »Idem nos nutricum sinus, idem amplexus foverint baiulorum.«

⁴¹ »In tuto insulae /.../ ad exemplum Ioannis.«

»For here you have a youth educated with us in the refining accomplishments of the world, with an abundance of wealth, and in rank inferior to none of his associates; yet he forsakes his mother, his sisters, and his dearly loved brother and settles like a new inhabitant of paradise on a dangerous island, with the sea roaring round its reefs; while its rough crags, bare rocks, and desolate aspect make it more terrible still.« (3.4.2)⁴²

And in the following passage:

»Around the entire island roars the frenzied sea, while the beetling crags along its winding shores resound as the billows beat against them. No grass makes the ground green; there are no shady copses and no fertile fields. Precipitous cliffs surround his dreadful abode as if it were a prison.« (3.4.4)⁴³

These descriptions, which are perhaps only Jerome's inventions, again offer no firm grounds for establishing the island's location. According to Suić's theory, the above passage could refer to one of the islands in the Brioni archipelago, which lies along the Western coast of Istria (Suić 1986, 266). However, Jerome's explicit depiction of Bonosus' island as a solitary place in *Ep.* 3.4.2 is an argument against the theory because Brioni islands lie in close proximity to the densely populated Western coast of Istria.⁴⁴ Thus, it would be more plausible to place Bonosus's island farther South or/and East of Istria among the *insulae Dalmatiae*.

As far as Bonosus is concerned, retreating from Aquileia to an unknown island, he became the second known Western insular hermit after St. Martin of Tours (Bratož 2000, 110), who settled on the island of Gallinaria along the Ligurian coast some 15 years before (*Sulp. Sev., V. Mart.* 6.5).⁴⁵ However, the conditions in which Bonosus lived seem to have been more austere than those of St. Martin. The latter's insular episode lasted only a couple of years (c. 358–360 AD) that he spent accompanied by a presbyter. On the other hand, Bonosus seems to have remained a solitary insular hermit his entire life (Bratož 2000, 110, n. 53).⁴⁶

Jerome painted Bonosus' saintly life as an unattainable *exemplum*. This can be observed in the following passage, full of biblical allusions and symbolism:

⁴² »Ecce puer honestis saeculi nobiscum artibus institutus, cui opes adfatim, dignitas adprime inter aequales, contempta matre, sororibus et carissimo sibi germano insulam pelago circumsonante navifragam, cui asperae cautes et nuda saxa et solitudo terrori est, quasi quidam novus paradisi colonus insedit.«

⁴³ »Totam circa insulam fremit insanum mare et sinuosis montibus inisum scopulis aequor reclamant; nullo terra gramine viret; nullis uernans campus densatur umbraculis; abruptae rupes quasi quemdam horrore carcerem claudunt.«

⁴⁴ Cf. discussion on Brioni below in „Conclusion“.

⁴⁵ »Cedendum itaque tempori arbitratus ad insulam, cui Gallinaria nomen est, secessit comite quodam presbytero, magnarum virtutum viro. Hic aliquamdiu radicibus vixit herbarum: quo tempore helleborum, venenatum, ut ferunt, gramen, in cibum sumpsit.« Critical edition: Halm, Karl, ed. 1866. *Sulpicius Severus, Opera*. CSEL 1.

⁴⁶ Jerome mentions that even Bonosus' closest friend was not with him on the island: »Nullus ibi agriculturalum, nullus monachorum ne parvulus quidem quem nosti, Onesimus, quo velut fratre minusculo fruebatur, in tanta vastitate adhaeret lateri comes.« (*Ep.* 3.4.2) Cf. Bratož 2000, 110; Gioanni 2013, 101.

»You tell me that Bonosus, like a true son of the Fish, has taken to the water. As for me, who am still foul with my old stains, like the basilisk and the scorpion, I haunt the dry places. Bonosus has his heel already on the serpent's head, while I am still as food to the same serpent which by divine appointment devours the earth. He can scale already that ladder of which the psalms of degrees are a type; while I, still weeping on its first step, hardly know whether I shall ever be able to say: I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence comes my help. Amid the threatening billows of the world, he is sitting in the safe shelter of his island, that is, of the church's pale, and it may be that even now, like John, he is being called to eat God's book; while I, still lying in the sepulchre of my sins and bound with the chains of my iniquities, wait for the Lord's command in the Gospel: ›Jerome, come forth.‹ But Bonosus has done more than this. Like the prophet Jeremiah, he has carried his girdle across the Euphrates (for all the devil's strength is in the loins) and has hidden it there in a hole of the rock.« (Hier., *Ep.* 7.3)⁴⁷

Not only was Bonosus described as »a new inhabitant of paradise«, but Jerome also went even further, likening him to Jacob (Hier., *Ep.* 3.4)⁴⁸ and comparing him with Moses (3.4)⁴⁹ and John (of Patmos) (7.3).⁵⁰ He further described him as someone who surpasses even the Apostles (3.4),⁵¹ claiming that Bonosus experiences similar visions as John (of Patmos) (3.4).⁵² In a telling metaphor, he described Bonosus as »a son of the Fish« (*filius, ἰχθύος*), who set out to the solitary island. He »has taken to the water« (*petere aquosa*) (*Ep.* 7.3), while Jerome, considering himself too sinful, was still »haunting the dry places« (*arentia sectari*) (7.3).

The last testimony of Bonosus in Jerome's opus is a short passage from *Chronicon*, written around 380 AD, where Bonosus, Florentinus, and Rufinus are described as *insignes monachi* of the Aquileian circle (Hier., *Chron.* a. 377).⁵³

⁴⁷ »Bonosus, ut scribitis, quasi filius ἰχθύος, id est, piscis, aquosa petiit, nos pristina contagione sordentes quasi reguli et scorpiones arentia quaeque sectamur. Ille iam calcat super colubri caput, nos serpenti terram ex divina sententia comedenti adhuc cibo sumus. Ille iam potest summum graduum psalmum scandere, nobis adhuc in primo ascensu flentibus nescio an dicere aliquando contingat: ›Levavi oculos meos in montes, unde veniat auxilium mihi‹ (Ps 120,1) Ille inter minaces saeculi fluctus in tuto insulae, hoc est, ecclesiae gremio, sedens ad exemplum Iohannis librum forte iam devorat, ego in scelerum meorum sepulchro iacens et peccatorum vinculis conligatus dominicum de evangelio exspecto clamorem: ›Hieronyme, veni foras‹. Bonosus, inquam, – quia secundum prophetam omnis diaboli virtus in lumbis est – trans Euphraten tulit lumbare suum ibi illud in foramine petrae abscondens.«

⁴⁸ »Scalam praesagatam Iacob somniantem iam scandit.«

⁴⁹ »Et sacramento Moysi serpentem in heremo suspendit.«

⁵⁰ »Ille inter minaces saeculi fluctus in tuto insulae, hoc est ecclesiae gremio, sedens, ad exemplum Iohannis librum forte iam devorat.«

⁵¹ »Videt gloriam dei, quam etiam apostoli nisi in deserto non viderant.«

⁵² »Et fortasse ad exemplum Iohannis aliquid videt, dum in insula commoratur.«

⁵³ »Florentinus, Bonosus, et Rufinus insignes monachi habentur.« To this passage alludes also Rufinus (*Apol. c. Hier.* 2.28.44).

4.3 Castricianus

Besides Hilarion and Bonosus, Castricianus, a blind man of Pannonian origins, is the last insular hermit in the Adriatic mentioned by name. In *Ep.* 68, dated to 397 AD, Jerome wrote that Castricianus' journey to Bethlehem with the intention of visiting Jerome did not last long. When he reached Cissa, he was convinced by his ,brothers' to stay:

»My reverend son Heraclius the deacon has reported to me that in your eagerness to see me you came as far as Cissa, and that, though a Pannonian and consequently a land animal, you did not quail before the surges of the Adriatic and the dangers of the Aegean and Ionian seas. He tells me that you would have actually accomplished your purpose had not our brethren with affectionate care held you back. I thank you all the same and regard it as kindness shown. For in the case of friends, one must accept the will for the deed.« (68.1)⁵⁴

This passage confirms that there was a community of monks present in Cissa around 397 AD.

5. Conclusion

Insular eremitism in the Adriatic holds a special place in Jerome's writings. Jerome presented it as an ideal that surpasses even the established forms of monasticism in more traditional desert environments. He openly praised Bonosus' ascetic life on an island (*petere aquosa*) over the life of those who lived in desert places (*arentia sectari*) (*Hier., Ep.* 7.3). Considering the high status of the Adriatic islands in Jerome's ideal image of the desert, his propaganda for *insulae Dalmatiae* raises the question about their possible localization. While it is certainly not possible to establish their exact location based solely on the figurative descriptions in Jerome's texts, the above-discussed passages nevertheless provide some general indications.

The toponym Altinum, which according to Jerome's *Ep.* 60 was separated from the Dalmatian islands only by a strait (*fretum*) of the sea, can form the basis for cautious speculation about their location. Altinum was a Roman town in Venetia-Histria, located on the border of the West Adriatic lagoons, opposite the Torcello island.⁵⁵ In strictly geographical terms, the first impulse would be to interpret Jerome's phrase *quae Altino tantum freto* distant as the archipelago along the Italian coast right in front of the ancient Roman town. Nevertheless, it would be highly improbable for the educated Jerome, who must have been well acquainted

⁵⁴ »Sanctus filius meus Heraclius diaconus mihi retulit, quod cupiditate nostri Cissam usque venisses et homo Pannonius, id est terrenum animal, non timueris Adriatici maris aestus et Aegei atque Ionii subire discrimina et, nisi te pius fratrum retinisset affectus, voluntatem opere complisses. Habeo itaque gratiam et in acceptum refero. In amicis enim non res quaeritur, sed voluntas.«

⁵⁵ For Altinum see Scarfi and Tombolani 1985.

with the broader region from his time in Aquileia, to count the tiny islands on the Italian coast among the *insulae Dalmatiae*. Moreover, Altinum had a busy port in Jerome's time, which alone would have highly diminished the solitude of hermits living on the islands in its immediate vicinity.

A similar argument can be further used for dismissing the identification of Jerome's 'Dalmatian islands' with the islands on the Western coast of Istria, opposite the Italian mainland.⁵⁶ For this to be true, the Latin word *fretum* must be read as 'a stretch of the sea' (a possible alternative to its primary meaning 'strait'),⁵⁷ which corresponds to approximately 100 kilometres of seawater separating the Istrian coast from Italy. However, the hypothesis about the islands on the Western coast of Istria seems again implausible, for Jerome would hardly confuse this region, which ecclesiastically and jurisdictionally belonged to Italy, with the Roman province of Dalmatia. In that period, the Western borders of Dalmatia followed the river Arsia (Raša), running through the Eastern part of Istria, while in turn, the whole Western coast was part of Italy.⁵⁸ It is clear from the famous passage about Jerome's birthplace Stridon in *De viris illustribus* (125)⁵⁹ that he was well aware of the nearby provincial borders between Pannonia and Dalmatia.⁶⁰ Considering the border between Italy and Dalmatia, we can therefore assume that Jerome, a native from the same area, would not ignore the well-known fact that important early Christian centres, such as Pola (Pula) and Parentium (Poreč), as well as the islands along the coast did *not* belong to Dalmatia.

A further argument speaking against the localization of Jerome's *insulae Dalmatiae* on the Western coast of Istria is their proximity to the economically flourishing, agriculturally well developed, and densely populated coastal region (Bratož 2014, 403, 406; Matijašić 1998, 334–366), altogether making the whole archipelago highly inadequate for the zealous solitude-seeking ascetics of Jerome's time.

If we discard the above hypotheses about the possible semi-anchoritic settlements in the Altinum archipelago and the Western Coast of Istria, Jerome's vague phrase *quae Altino tantum freto distant* could designate the broader Kvarner region further to the East,⁶¹ from where it was possible to reach the coast of Altinum via direct maritime routes with no intermediate stops. This same argument would also apply to the

⁵⁶ These possibilities were proposed by Bratož and Suić, who have cautiously identified the 'Dalmatian islands' with the Brioni archipelago north-west of Roman city of Pula (Pola) (Bratož 2000, 112; Suić 1986, 266).

⁵⁷ In Latin *fretum* can mean 'a strait', 'sound', 'channel' as well as (even if used more in poetry) 'the sea', as suggests Lewis-Short's Latin Dictionary with given examples: the sea (syn.: *mare, oceanus, pelagus, pontus*). Plur.: »fervet fretis spirantibus aequor«, Verg., *Gerog.* 1.327: »in freta dum fluvii current.«; Id., *Aen.* 1.607; cf. Ov., *Met.* 1.36: »pastor cum traheret per freta navibus Idaeis Helenen.«; Hor., *Carm.* 1.15.1: »fretis acrior Hadriae.«.

⁵⁸ Cf. the map of the borderlines between Dalmatia and Italy in Cedilnik 2004, front inner page.

⁵⁹ »Hieronymus natus patre Eusebio, oppido Stridonis, quod a Gothis eversum Dalmatiae quondam Pannoniaque confinium fuit.«

⁶⁰ For discussion on ubication of Stridon see Bratož 2013, 8–15.

⁶¹ For a historical overview of archaeological excavations on Kornati islands and speculation about possible early monastic locations see: Radić Rossi, Irena, and Tomislav Fabijanić. Arheološka baština Kornata. In: *Toponimija kornatskog otočja*, Vladimir Skračić, ed. Zadar: Sveučilište u Zadru, 2013, 86–87.

more isolated outer line of islands stretching from southwestern Kvarner (islands Unije, Susak, Žirje, Dugi otok etc.) towards Kornati archipelago in the South. On the other hand, it seems rather implausible that Jerome's phrase »a short strait from Altinum« (Hier., *Ep.* 60) would also comprise islands located further south than these regions. Apart from the legend of Hilarion that took place in Epidaurus, no other explicit indication in Jerome points to central parts of Dalmatia.⁶²

The suggested localization of Jerome's *insulae Dalmatiae* in *Ep.* 60 in the Kvarner region can be further corroborated by the toponym Cissa (Hier., *Ep.* 68), mentioned in the context of Castricianus, who intended to visit Jerome in Bethlehem, but was held by brethren with loving care at Cissa. Based on Pliny the Elder's mention of the two islands with the name Cissa in his *Naturalis historia*,⁶³ scholars distinguish between Cissa Pullaria (Istria) and Cissa Liburnica (island Pag). While the identification of the latter as island Pag is generally accepted, the question of localization of Cissa Pullaria has raised heated debates among scholars (Šonje 1980–1981, 105; Marušič 1990, 403; Suić 1996, 693; Bratož 2004, 554–556; Škunca 2011, 333). As far as our present discussion is concerned, however, the main question is not the exact location of Cissa Pullaria, but foremost the question, which of the two islands of Cissa, mentioned in Pliny, the Elder – Cissa Pullaria (Istria) or Cissa Liburnica (Kvarner) – Jerome had in mind in *Ep.* 68.

According to Suić's theory, the island where Castricianus interrupted his journey to visit Jerome in Bethlehem is Cissa Pullaria. He derives his conclusions by identifying the island Cissa mentioned in Pliny the Elder (3.129) with the Brioni archipelago, for which he finds confirmation in Jerome's account of Castricianus (Hier., *Ep.* 68), who allegedly started his journey from Aquileia. Nevertheless, as there is no clue in Jerome that Castricianus indeed set sail from Aquileia, Suić's argument for the identification of Jerome's toponym Cissa with Brioni islands forms a *petitio principii*. An argument against Suić's theory is Jerome's description of Castricianus as *homo Pannonius* (Hier., *Ep.* 68.1), which would suggest that his point of departure was Pannonia and that for him, the shortest route towards Adriatic was not via Aquileia, but directly to Tarsatica (Rijeka), Senia (Senj) or any other port in broader Kvarner region.⁶⁴ According to this itinerary, the toponym Cissa in Jerome's *Ep.* 68 would have necessarily referred to Cissa Liburnica (island

⁶² Noteworthy, however, is the argument proposed by Nikolina Uroda (2013, 114) who connects the name Ausonius, to whom Jerome entrusts the letter 118, with the inscription from Podstrana near Split, dated to the 5th-century AD. The inscription mentions a certain Ausonius (*vir spectabilis*) and is the only evidence for this name in the territory of the Roman province of Dalmatia.

⁶³ »/.../ iuxta Histrorum agrum Cissa, Pullariae et Absyrtides, /.../ iuxta eas Electrides« (3.129) and »Insulae eius sinus cum oppidis /.../ Absortium, Arba, Gissa, Portunata« (3.152).

⁶⁴ Suić seeks to diminish those drawbacks to his argument by referring to the Gothic invasion which has at the time caused an unstable situation on the roads in the Illyricum and could have prevented Castricianus from taking the more direct road to Kvarner (Suić 1996, 693, n. 17). This argument is not very convincing since the same would be true also regarding the roads leading from Pannonia to Aquileia. Suić seems to contradict his own claim that Jerome's Cissa is the Brioni islands while attempting to undermine Šonje's theory about 'basilica urbana' in Cissa in Novalja, arguing that the church might have as well been a monastic one. He sees the proof for this argument in Jerome (Suić 1996, 708), thus ironically supporting the Šonje's argument of identification of Jerome's Cissa with Cissa Liburnica on island Pag.

Pag), from where Castricianus could embark on a ship to Salona and continue his journey overseas towards Bethlehem (Šonje 1980–1981, 106).

The final point to consider in Jerome's words *quod cupiditate nostri Cissam* in *Ep.* 68 is whether the toponym Cissa means the town (modern-day Novalja), which was a populated urban area at that time, or it more generally refers to the eponymous island Pag (Cissa). As mentioned above, Jerome's use of the term *monasteria* (Hier., *Ep.* 60; 118) in the late 4th-century refers to semi-anchoretic colonies rather than to coenobitic communities. Thus, it is more probable that the *fratres*, with whom Castricianus stayed in Cissa, were a semi-anchoretic community that deliberately moved away from urban centres. In this case, the ambiguous toponym Cissa in *Ep.* 68 would refer to the island rather than to the town. Island Pag (Cissa) can arguably be counted among the *insulae Dalmatiae*, mentioned in Jerome's *Ep.* 60 as one of the three promised monastic lands. Even if a more precise localization of other Dalmatian islands is not possible based on Jerome's texts alone, *Ep.* 60 and *Ep.* 68 at least seem to both point towards the broader Kvarner region.

Abbreviations

Apol. c. Hier. – *Apologia contra Hieronymum*.

Apol. c. Ruf. – *Apologia contra Rufinum*.

Aug., Conf. – Augustinus, *Confessiones*.

CCSL – Corpus Christianorum Series Latina.

Chron. – *Chronicon*.

CSEL – Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.

Rufin. – Tyrannius Rufinus.

SC – Sources Chrétiennes.

Sulp. Sev., V. Mart. – Sulpicius Severus, *Vita Martini*.

V. Ant. – *Vita Antonii*.

V. Hilar. – *Vita Hilarionis*.

V. Pauli – *Vita Pauli*.

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Jože Krašovec

Izvori Hieronimovih pogledov na prevajanje in razlaganje Svetega pisma

Origins of Jerome's Views on Translation and Interpretation of the Bible

Povzeteke: Namen tega prispevka je prikazati, kako Hieronim v svojih prevodih, v predgovorih k prevodu posameznih knjig Svetega pisma, v komentarjih in v pisnih izražja svojo zavezanost grško-rimski retoriki na eni strani in različnim posebnostim svetopisemskega jezika, sloga in sporočila na drugi. Hieronim je bil velik strokovnjak v klasični literaturi, v literarni teoriji in v dialektiki. Ko je začel prevajati Sveto pismo, je spoznal, da resnica Svetega pisma presega vse poganške arhetipe, trope in ideale. Ko se je v duhovni zrelosti povzpел nad grško-rimske vzornike, je začel poudarjati posebnost svetopisemskih besedil, ki se kaže predvsem v večpomenskosti temeljnih dogodkov, likov in simbolov. Zavzemal se je za jasnost izražanja in za natančnost v prevajanju svetopisemskih besedil tako glede vsebine kakor glede literarne oblike. Poseben cilj tega prispevka je vprašanje, kateri dejavniki so vplivali na razvoj Hieronimovih hermenevtičnih načel v prevajanju in razlaganju Svetega pisma. Temeljno vprašanje je, kako pomemben dejavnik je večpomenskost svetopisemskih besedil, ki je v srednjem veku dala povod za razvoj judovskih in krščanskih hermenevtičnih načel glede razmerja med dobesednim in duhovnim pomenom svetopisemskih besedil. Vzporedni cilj prispevka je ugotavljanje, kateri dejavniki so vodili do tega, da je Hieronimov prevod Svetega pisma (*Vulgata*) v srednjem veku v katoliški Cerkvi dobil status avtoriziranega latinskega prevoda Svetega pisma.

Ključne besede: Hieronim, dobesedni in prosti prevod, hebrejski izvirnik, Septuaginta, revizija prejšnjih prevodov, *Vetus Latina*, *Vulgata*, *Nova Vulgata*

Abstract: The purpose of this article is to show how Jerome in his translations, in the prefaces to the translation of individual books of the Bible, in commentaries, and letters, expresses his commitment to Greco-Roman rhetoric on the one hand and various peculiarities of biblical language, style, and message on the other. Jerome was a great expert in classical literature, literary theory, and dialectics. When he began translating the Bible, he realised that the truth of the Bible transcends all pagan archetypes, tropes, and ideals. As Jerome rose

above Greco-Roman models in his spiritual maturity, he began to emphasise the uniqueness of biblical texts, manifested above all in the diversity of meaning of actual events, characters, and symbols. He advocated clarity of expression and accuracy in translating biblical texts in terms of content and literary form. The specific aim of this paper is the question of what factors influenced the development of Jerome's hermeneutic principles in the translation and interpretation of the Bible. The fundamental question is what an important factor is the ambiguity of biblical texts, which in the Middle Ages gave rise to the development of Jewish and Christian hermeneutic principles regarding the relationship between the literal and the spiritual meaning of biblical texts. The parallel aim of the article is to determine what factors led to the fact that Jerome's translation of the Bible (Vulgate) in the Middle Ages was given the status of an official Latin translation of the Bible in the Catholic Church.

Keywords: Jerome, literal and free translation, Hebrew original, the Septuagint, revision of previous translations, *Vetus Latina*, the Vulgate, *Nova Vulgata*

1. Uvod

Zgodovino študij o prevajanju sta zaznamovala komentator 1. stoletja, Ciceron, nato pa prevajalec in komentator iz 4. stoletja, Hieronim. Ta članek ponuja kritično presojo Hieronimovih pogledov na prevod in razlago Svetega pisma. Raziskuje Hieronimove zapletene odnose do rimske prevajalske tradicije na eni strani in do nastajajoče krščanske tradicije na drugi strani. Pokaže, kako Hieronim v svojih prevodih in predgovorih k posameznim delom, komentarjem in pismom izraža svojo zavezanost različnim posebnostim svetopisemskega jezika, sloga in sporočila. Da bi pravilno ocenili razvoj Hieronimovih pogledov na prevod in razlago Svetega pisma, se zdi pomembno, razmisliti o okoliščinah njegovega življenja in dejavnosti.

Kontekst Hieronimovega življenja in njegovo delovanje v obdobju pozne antike in zgodovina sprejema njegovega prevoda Svetega pisma (*Vulgata*) v Cerkvi pojasnjujeta pomen Hieronimovega edinstvenega prispevka k razvoju krščanske civilizacije v Evropi in pozneje po vsem svetu. Velik Hieronimov prispevek je razprava o svetopisemskih besedilih med predstavniki judovske, krščanske in klasične literarne tradicije. Njegov materni jezik je bil latinščina, uradni jezik rimskega cesarstva, vendar je v tistem času helenistična grščina ohranila enakomeren položaj kot pomemben jezik literature, filozofije in religije. Grščina je bila v začetku kulturni jezik krščanskega sveta; izobraženi Rimljani so bili dvojezični. Prevlada latinščine v zahodnem delu rimskega cesarstva je povzročila naraščajoče povpraševanje po latinskih prevodih Svetega pisma za notranje potrebe krščanskih skupnosti in za liturgične in izobraževalne namene. Prvi latinski prevodi svetopisemskih besedil segajo v sredino 2. stoletja po Kr. Do Hieronima (347–420) je bilo tako že narejenih veliko latinskih različic, predvsem *ad hoc* prevodov iz grškega Svetega pisma

(Septuaginte). Avguštin (354–430) govori v svojem delu *O krščanskem nauku* (*De Doctrina Christiana*) o »neizmerni raznolikosti latinskih prevajalcev« (2.11). Pozneje so stare prevode Svetega pisma v latinščino poimenovali z zbirno oznako *Vetus Latina* (stari latinski prevodi). Opozoriti je treba, da nobeden od številnih latinskih prevodov Svetega pisma v zgodnji krščanski dobi ni dobil uradne veljave.

Ko se je število izvodov, revizij in recenzij starih latinskih prevodov Svetega pisma povečalo v mnogih besedilnih oblikah, so v vodstvu Cerkve vse bolj čutili potrebo po ustanovitvi enega samega veljavnega latinskega besedila Svetega pisma. Papež Damaz I. je zaupal nalogo, da pripravi revidirano latinsko različico Svetega pisma, Evzebiju Sofroniju Hieronimu. Sledovi Hieronimove izobrazbe v klasični latinski literaturi se kažejo v njegovem posebnem odnosu do Vergila in Cicerona. V stiku s Svetim pismom pa se je Hieronim vse bolj zavedal, da je Sveto pismo Božja beseda. Ta zavest je v njem utrjevala čut odgovornosti do načina prevajanja Svetega pisma v latinščino. Svoja spoznanja je posređoval v predgovorih k svojim zgodnjim delom, v predgovorih k prevodom posameznih knjig Svetega pisma, v nekaterih pismih in v svetopisemskih komentarjih. Hieronim je mnogokrat poročal o posebnih težavah, s katerimi se je srečal kot prevajalec ali komentator, o obsegu in mejah svojega lastnega znanja, o vprašanju legitimnosti svojega projekta prevajanja Svetega pisma, o svoji obrambi pred kritikami in obtožbami, ki so jih izražali njegovi nasprotniki, in o razlogih za prevajanje Stare zaveze neposredno iz hebrejščine (Schaff in Wace 1995, 483–502).

Hieronimovo delo vključuje prevode grških očetov, polemične traktate, življenje asketov, prevod Svetega pisma Stare zaveze iz hebrejščine v latinščino, komentarje k svetopisemskim knjigam in 126 pisem. Tako je Hieronim poskrbel za edinstven obseg virov, ki omogočajo spoznavanje Hieronimovih načel o prevajanju na splošno in posebej o prevajanju Svetega pisma in o njegovem pristopu v pisanju komentarjev k svetopisemskim knjigam. Zato je Hieronimove hermenevtične poglede mogoče precej natančno določiti.

2. Poznoantični kontekst Hieronimovega življenja

Za pravilno oceno razvoja Hieronimovih pogledov na prevajanje in razlago Svetega pisma se zdi pomembno razmisliti o okoliščinah njegovega življenja in o njegovi dejavnosti v več pogledih: rojstvo v težavnih časih po smrti cesarja Konstantina (337); otroštvo v Stridonu, vasici blizu Emone na meji Dalmacije in Panonije; bivanje v Rimu na šoli, kjer je študiral retoriko (363–366); življenje v Galiji, ko se je naselil v mestu Avgusta Treverorum (Trier, 366–370); asketsko življenje v Ogleju (370–373); potovanje skozi Trakijo, Pont, Bitinijo, Galatijo, Kapadokijo in skozi Kilikijo do Antiohije (374) v slabem zdravstvenem stanju; spokorno življenje puščavnika v puščavi Halkidi (374–379); vrnitev v Antiohijo (379), kjer ga je za duhovnika posvetil antiohijski škof Pavlin; prebivanje v Carigradu (380–381), kjer je v latinščino prevedel Evzebijovo delo *Chronicon* (260–339); življenje v Rimu, kjer je služil kot tajnik pri papežu Damasus I. (382–385); potovanje v

Antiohijo (385); obisk Jeruzalema, Betlehema in svetih krajev Galileje in Egipta (pozimi 385); naselitev v Betlehemu (386), kjer je živel do smrti 30. septembra 420 v bližini Betlehema.

Za našo študijo sta še posebej pomembni dve obdobji: obdobje njegovega prevajanja Svetega pisma (382–405) in obdobje pisanja komentarjev (405–420). Hieronim je odlično obvladal latinščino in grščino. Imel je tudi nekaj znanja o hebrejščini, ko je začel svoje prevajalsko delo (iz časa študija v Siriji). Ko se je naselil v Sveti deželi v Betlehemu, se je načrtno lotil izpopolnjevanja v hebrejskem jeziku. Redno je bil v stikih z judovskimi učitelji. Leta 382 je začel prevajati Sveto pismo tako, da je najprej izboljšal obstoječo različico prevoda Nove zaveze v latinščino (*Vetus Latina*). Predgovor v štiri evangelije je velikega pomena (Schaff in Wace 1995, 487–488). Po končani redakciji Nove zaveze se je lotil primerjave različnih besedil gršega prevoda Stare zaveze (*Septuaginta*) in drugih grških različic Stare zaveze. V tem obdobju je začel oblikovati prepričanja, ki so na koncu privedla do njegovega prevoda neposredno iz hebrejščine.

Svoje najpomembnejše delo, latinski prevod Svetega pisma (*Vulgata*), je Hieronim opravil v letih 391–404. Staro zavezo je začel prevajati leta 391 in jo je dokončal leta 404. Med zadnjim obdobjem svojega življenja v Betlehemu (405–420) je Hieronim pisal komentarje o prerokih in predgovore k tem komentarjem. V predgovorih in komentarjih je obilno razlagal svoje prevajalske izbire na podlagi hebrejskega izvirnika in se torej ni opiral na nezanesljive prevode (Schaff in Wace 1995, xvi–xxxiii). Matthew A. Kraus v svoji najnovejši knjigi *Jewish, Christian, and Classical Exegetical Traditions in Jerome's Translation of the Book of Exodus: Translation Technique and the Vulgate* (2017) trdi, da je Hieronim združil »klasična slovnična načela z analizo Septuaginte, starega latinskega prevoda in druge verzije (*recentiores*: Akvila, Simah in Teodotion) v dialogu z rabinskimi tradicijami« (Kraus 2017, 2).

Hieronim je bil tudi avtor knjig, ki pojasnjujejo izvirno besedilo Stare zaveze: *Knjiga hebrejskih imen* ali *Slovar lastnih imen v Stari zavezi* (Betlehem 388); *Knjiga vprašanj o Genezi* (Betlehem 388); prevod Evzebijeve knjige o krajih in imenih hebrejskih krajev (*Onomasticon*, Betlehem 388). To pojasnjuje, zakaj v svojih komentarjih navaja številne judovske tradicije v zvezi z lokacijo krajev, omenjenih v Svetem pismu. Pomemben segment Hieronimove velike literarne zapuščine je njegova obsežna zbirka pisem (*epistulae*), v benediktinski izdaji jih je ohranjenih 126. V slogovnem pogledu so pisma njegova najboljša dela. Pisma imajo med drugim posebno vrednost takrat, ko avtor izraža tudi svoja čustva tistim, ki jim je zaupal. Tako je razkril svojo nadarjenost za prevajanje in razlaganje svetopisemskih besedil, pa tudi sposobnost za asketski način življenja. To korespondenčno gradivo je pomemben vir informacij o splošnem družbenem in cerkvenem življenju v njegovem času.

3. Hieronimovi pogledi na prevajanje in predgovori v njegove prevode

V predgovoru v Evzebijevu *Kroniko*, ki jo je prevedel v letih 381–382, opozarja Hieronim na težave, ki izhajajo iz različnih prevodov Stare zaveze. Na začetku predgovora poroča, da je »naš Tulij dobesedno prevedel cele Platonove knjige« in opisuje naravo težav, s katerimi se srečuje v svojem lastnem prevodu. Največja težava je iskanje ustreznih besed za izražanje pomena (Schaff in Wace 1995, 483). Hieronim že v tem predgovoru izkaže svoje prepričanje o nujnosti vrnitve k hebrejskemu izvirniku. Ko se je naselil v Betlehemu (385), mu je uspelo najti številne judovske učitelje, s katerimi je pridno razpravljal o lastnostih hebrejskega Svetega pisma. Hieronim je menil, da prevajalci Septuaginte niso ohranili posebnosti hebrejskega besedila. Težavo je ponazoril z latinskim prevodom grške poezije, sestavljenim v heksametrih in pentametrih: »Ko jih beremo v grščini, imajo *neki* pomen; ko jih imamo v latinščini, so skrajno nekoherentni.« (Hieronim 1995, 484) V predgovoru k prevodu Origenovih dveh homilij o Visoki pesmi, napisanih leta 383, trdi Hieronim, da se je bolj učil »zvestobe kakor elegance« (Schaff in Wace 1995, 484).

Med letoma 383 in 385 je Hieronim na prošnjo papeža Damaza I. v Rimu pripravil uradno latinsko izdajo Nove zaveze. Pregledal je obstoječe latinske različice na podlagi grškega izvirnika. V edinem ohranjenem predgovoru, in to v predgovoru k prevodu evangelijev iz leta 383, je Hieronim papežu Damazu poročal, da se težava pokaže že v presoji, kateri obstoječi latinski prevod naj vzame za podlago svoje redakcije, ker je latinskih prevodov izredno veliko. Zato prihaja do sklepa, da se je treba opreti na izvirnik (Schaff in Wace 1995, 487–488).

Do leta 388, dve leti po tem, ko se je Hieronim naselil v Betlehemu, je končal tri dela: *Knjigo o hebrejskih imenih*, *Knjigo o krajih in imenih v hebrejščini* in *Knjigo o hebrejskih vprašanjih*. V predgovorih omenja svoje pripravljalne študije za prevod Stare zaveze. Njegov prevod Stare zaveze ni bil izveden z odobritvijo Cerkve, kakor se je to zgodilo z evangeliji, ampak na prigovarjanje zasebnih prijateljev in po njegovem lastnem občutku o nujnosti tega dela. Staro zavezo je prevajal v Betlehemu od leta 391 do leta 404. Hieronim je napisal predgovore k večini prevodov starozaveznih knjig. Prvi po vrsti objave je bil predgovor k Samuelovima knjigama in h Knjigama kraljev. Predgovor je naslovil: »Pavli in njeni hčeri Evstohiji«, objavljen pa je bil okoli leta 391. Hieronim je ta predgovor predstavil kot razlago načel, sprejetih v vseh njegovih prevodih iz hebrejščine. Celoten predgovor je posvečen naravi hebrejskega jezika in zgradbi judovskega kanona hebrejskega Svetega pisma. Poudarja izvirnost njegovega pristopa k prevajanju neposredno iz hebrejskega izvirnika (Schaff in Wace 1995, 490).

V predgovoru k Jobovi knjigi, ki je bil napisan leta 392 in dan v obtok okoli leta 393, Hieronim zagovarja svoj prevajalski pristop pred »zlorabo« svojih nasprotnikov, ki ga obtožujejo zaradi kritičnega odnosa do grških prevodov (491). V nadaljevanju Hieronim prikazuje žalostno stanje latinskega prevoda številnih delov Svetega pisma in zagovarja natančnost svojega pristopa (491). V predgovoru k Jobovi knjigi Hieronim dalje prikazuje svoje prizadevanje za učenje hebrejščine, saj je plačal ve-

liko vsoto za storitve judovskega učitelja, »domačina iz Lide, ki je bil med Hebrejci, ki so bili uvrščeni na prvo mesto«. Hieronim se je zavezal, da bo prevajal samo tisto, kar je prej razumel. Resno je upošteval naravo besedil v prozi in v pesniški obliki, ki jo je primerjal z grško in latinsko poezijo. Glede svoje kvalifikacije v latinščini pravi, da je »svoje življenje, skoraj iz zibelke, preživel v družbi slovničarjev, retorikov in filozofov« (491). V predgovoru k Jobovi knjigi Hieronim razlaga tudi cilj svoje zaveze, da v prevodu Svetega pisma povrne izgubljeno, popravi tisto, kar je pokvarjeno, in razkrije v čistem in vernem jeziku skrivnosti Cerkev. Izpostavi svoj trud, da v latinščino prevede tako grški prevod Septuaginte kakor hebrejski izvirnik, ki je temelj za njegovo prevajalsko delo. Dalje zagotavlja, da njegovo delo ni sad zlobe, ampak skrbnega učenja (492).¹

4. Hieronimovi pogledi na prevod v njegovih pismih

Hieronimova stališča o ustrezni metodi prevajanja kažejo nasprotujoče si teorii in včasih protislovnosti. Leta 396 je Hieronim napisal dolgo pismo Pamahiju o najboljši metodi prevajanja (*Pismo* 57; Schaff in Wace 1995, 112–119). To pismo je njegov odgovor na ostro kritiko neke osebe, ki je proti njemu vložila obtožbo, češ da je s prevajanjem pisma nekega moškega ponarejal izvirnik in ga ni prevajal »besedo za besedo« (57.2). Hieronim brani svoj prevod pisma z obrazložitvijo metode svojega prevajalskega dela (57.5). Pravi, da »pri prevajanju iz grščine (razen v primeru svetih spisov, kjer je celo vrstni red besed skrivnost) prevaja pomen za pomen in ne besedo za besedo« (Schaff in Wace, 1995, 113–114).²

V *Pismu* 57.6 Hieronim izjavlja, da si je že od mladosti prizadeval, kako bi v prevodu ohranil smisel, čeprav v prevajanju ne ohranja vedno besed izvirnika. Glede citiranja odlomkov iz Stare zaveze, ki so navedeni v Novi zavezi, Hieronim ugotavlja, da so apostoli in evangelisti starozaveznih spisov gledali na pomen, ne pa na ohranitev oblik ali konstrukcij (57.9). V nadaljevanju pravi, da v Svetem pismu ni treba upoštevati »besed«, temveč »pomen« (57.10).³ Opozarja na »velike dodatke in opustitve, ki jih je naredila Septuaginta«; tako bi upravičil svoje stališče, da je prednost treba dati izvirniku. Kljub temu priznava, da je Septuaginta upravičeno ohranila svoje mesto v cerkvah, »bodisi zato, ker je prvi od vseh prevodov,

¹ Čeprav je Hieronim dajal prednost hebrejskemu izvirniku, so bili pomembni razlogi, da bi upoštevali tudi grško Sveto pismo Stare zaveze (*Septuaginta*). Kot poudarja Emanuel Tov, »v judovstvu LXX ni bila nikoli tako cenjena kot v krščanstvu, ker so Judje imeli navdihnjeno hebrejsko Sveto pismo, medtem ko je bila za večino kristjanov LXX edini sveti vir Stare zaveze in je nekaterim od njih bila njihov glavni vir« (1988, 163). Obstajal pa je tudi notranji razlog za veliko spoštovanje do Septuaginte: »LXX je bila eno izmed velikih prevodnih podvigov antike. To je bil prvi večji prevod iz orientalskega jezika v grški jezik in tudi prvi pisni prevod Svetega pisma. Iz tega izhaja, da so se prvi prevajalci morali spoprijeti s številnimi težavami, ki se jih še nihče ni lotil, med njimi s prehodom s semitskega na indoevropski jezik in s prenosom konceptov iz ene kulture v drugo.« (169)

² »Ego enim non solum fateor, sed libera voce profiteor me in interpretatione Graecorum absque scripturis sanctis, ubi et verborum ordo mysterium est non verbum e verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu.« Odlomki iz izvirnika so navedeni po Hilbergovi izdaji.

³ »Non verba in Scripturis consideranda sed sensus.«

narejenih pred Kristusovim prihodom, bodisi zato, ker so jo uporabljali apostoli«. Vendar je zelo kritičen do Akvilovega pristopa pri prevajanju hebrejskega izvirnika v grščino: »Po drugi strani imamo prav, da zavračamo Akvila, prozelitnega in kontroverznega prevajalca, ki si prizadeva prevajati ne le besede, temveč tudi njihove etimologije.« (57.11) V *Pismu* 106.3 je Hieronim opredelil kot nalogo dobrega prevajalca to, da idiomatske izraze drugega jezika ustrezno izrazi v svojem jeziku.⁴

Hieronimova konfliktna načela pa se v praksi ne izvajajo. Včasih govori o potrebi prevajanja glede na smisel in hkrati ponuja dobesedno prestavljanje, včasih pa nasprotno. Pri prevajanju poezije so za Hieronima najbolj očitni izzivi struktura paralelizem (*parallelismus membrorum*), prepoznavanje stereotipnih pesniških oblik in iskanje latinskih ekvivalentov pri prevajanju danega hebrejskega korena ali besede in idioma. V procesu jezikovne in slogovne identifikacije ekvivalentov so igrali pomembno vlogo eksegetični dejavniki. Poudariti je treba, da posebnost jezika Vulgate izhaja predvsem iz prevajalčeve tesne navezanosti na izvorni jezik. Zavedanje, da so svetopisemska besedila božja beseda, je razvilo občutek zvestobe, to pa odseva prepričanje, da je treba besede Svetega pisma prevajati dosledno, da bi čimbolj ostali zvesti izvornemu jeziku.

5. Hieronimov premik med svetovnimi kulturami

Hieronimova Vulgata ponuja bogat vir za preiskovanje tehnike prevajanja in za razlago eksegetskih vprašanj. James Barr v svoji knjigi *The Typology of Literalism in Ancient Biblical Translations* (1979) prepozna šest vrst dobesednosti: delitev na elemente in segmente; besedni red; količinski dodatki ali odštevanja v ciljnem besedilu; doslednost in neskladnost pri prevajanju besedišča; natančnost pri prevajanju semantičnih ekvivalentov; imitacija hebrejščine (Barr 1979, 281). Hieronim obravnava sestavne elemente svojega izvirnega besedila, na primer infinitivne konstrukte, infinitivne absolute, pridevnike, genitive, glagole in samostalnike. Matthew A. Kraus navaja:

»Ne samo, da je Hieronim imel slovnično izobrazbo (filologijo), imel je ekvivalent leksike (Origenova *Heksapla*), svoje delo o hebrejskih imenih in krajih, judovske svetovalce (rabine) in svoje izkušnje kot prevajalec, številne komentarje (svoje in komentarje svojih predhodnikov) in več prejšnjih prevodov (Septuaginta, stari latinski prevodi, Akvila, Simmah in Teodotion). Te vidne podrobnosti o prevajalcu so podlaga za hipotezo, da je kot svojo tehniko prevajanja Druge Mojzesove knjige iz hebrejščine v latinščino uporabil *recentiores* – rabinsko filologijo.« (2017, 13)

Hieronimov pristop ni bil atomističen. Posamezni besedilni vidiki delujejo v njegovem prevodu soodvisno kot poenoteni sistem v širšem zgodovinskem in li-

⁴ »Et hanc esse regulam bono interpretis, ut ιδιώματα linguae alterius suae linguae exprimat proprietate.« Prim. *Pismo* 106.3: »boni interpretis ...«

terarnem kontekstu s poudarkom na eksegetičnih tradicijah. Hieronimova prevajalska tehnika »vključuje tesno primerjavo s hebrejskim besedilom, da se izolirajo različice od hebrejščine, ki bistveno vplivajo na pomen besedila« (13). Celovito preučevanje konceptualnega sveta in kulturnega duha hebrejskega Svetega pisma in judovskih tradicij je bilo za Hieronima bolj pomembno kakor postavljanje strogo togih načel za njegovo prevajalsko delo. To pojasnjuje očitna nepovezanost med tem, kar govori o prevodu, in tistim, kar dela, ko dejansko prevaja Sveto pismo. Navaja, da je prevajalec kakor ‚osvajalec‘, ki je »ujel v svoj jezik pomen svojih izvornikov« (*Pismo* 57.6). Uporaba bojne metafore ‚osvajalec‘ kaže na napetost med izvornim in ciljnim jezikom. Matthew A. Kraus meni, da je Hieronim morda gojil širši obseg besede *sensus*:

»Na eni ravni, predvsem filološki, se *sensus* nanaša na povezovanje leksikografije, morfologije in sloga, v nasprotju z *verbum*, ki namenja izključno pozornost leksikografiji in morfologiji. Vsaka pomenska enota v izvornem besedilu mora imeti natančen ekvivalent v ciljnem prevodu. Na drugi ravni, predvsem duhovni, se *sensus* nanaša na razumevanje v religioznem kontekstu. Zagotovo je pri prevajanju prevladujoč filološki *sensus*, medtem ko duhovni *sensus* igra osrednjo vlogo v njegovih komentarjih.« (2017, 46)

Tako v prevodu kakor v komentarjih se dvojni koncept besede *sensus* prekriva. Dejstvo, da je Hieronim napisal komentarje po tem, ko je dokončal prevod Stare zaveze, kaže na kronološki razvoj od začetne, bolj preproste tehnike prevajanja do poznejšega širšega razumevanja pojma *sensus*, ki vključuje slogovne elemente poetičnih in proznih svetopisemskih besedil. Dobesedni prevod (prestavljanje *verbum de verbo*), ki mu ne uspe reproducirati slogovnih sredstev izvornika, v resnici ne bi bil zvest prevod. Hieronim je dobro vedel, da Sveto pismo vključuje metaforične izraze in govorne figure.⁵ Njegovo širše razumevanje besede *sensus* pri prevajanju svetopisemskih besedil ga je privedlo do neskladja med teorijo in prakso: kljub trditvam v pismu Pamahiju (57.5), da svetopisemski prevod »zahteva dobesedno« (*verbum ad verbum*) metodo, je njegov prevod večine svetopisemskih knjig prosti prevod. Matthew A. Kraus trdi, da so »pri prevajanju pomena besedila vključeni

⁵ Največji dosežek Hieronimovega spreobrnjenja iz ciceronijanca v kristjana je njegova uporaba jezikovnih in literarnih izraznih sredstev za večino pretanjenih duhovnih resnic: »Dojemanje resničnosti in resnice v svetu človekove duhovnosti sta specifično področje svetopisemskih literarnih predstavitev. Literatura prikazuje življenje v vseh razsežnostih in razkriva, kako poteka, bi lahko potekalo ali bi moralo potekati moralno življenje. Svetopisemska literatura sporoča zgodovinsko resnico izkušnje razmerja med Stvarnikom in izvoljenim ljudstvom.« (Avsenik Nabergoj 2016, 76) Kakor je v svojih delih izjavil Hieronimov sodobnik Avguštin, so metafore in simboli primerno sredstvo za izražanje duhovnih razsežnosti resničnosti in resnice. Med najvidnejše metafore, ki jih Avguštin uporablja, so metafore hrane za opis duhovne lakote in intelektualne nasičenosti (Avsenik Nabergoj 2017). Druga smer razumevanja vloge metafor in simbolov je odnos med naukom in živo izkušnjo: »Najboljši prevod resnice Boga niso besede, ampak dejanja in življenje.« (Petkovšek 2017, 635) Hieronim se je dobro zavedal, da nobena beseda, metafora ali simbol ne izpolni svoje vloge v izolaciji, temveč v širšem kontekstu svetopisemske literature: »Duhovni pomen celote svetopisemskega besedila kaže tudi na njegov univerzalni pomen in nadčasovno aktualnost. Tako prepoznamo večstransko vlogo metafor, simbolov, slogovnih in retoričnih figur v strukturi večjih literarnih enot. Presojanje posameznih figur samih na sebi ne bi imelo velikega pomena v raziskovanju sporočilnosti Svetega pisma.« (Avsenik Nabergoj 2019, 855)

naslednji elementi: razlaga hebrejskih idiomov, določitev izrazov, vzdrževanje pri-povedne in tehnične logike, ustvarjanje živih podob, ustvarjanje jasnejše latinščine, ugotavljanje konotacij in dodajanje poudarkov» (102).

V povezavi s svojo slovnično/retorično izobrazbo Hieronim kaže nagnjenje do idiomatičnega (*sensus ad sensum*) prevoda v nasprotju z dobesednim (*verbum ad verbum*) prestavljanjem. Njegove odločitve o prevajanju Stare zaveze *iuxta Hebraeos* so zmanjšale vrednost prejšnjih grških, latinskih in drugih prevodov. Besedilni dokazi kažejo, da Hieronim prejšnjim prevodom ni sledil kot besedilom, ki bi jih bilo treba kopirati, ampak kot uporabnim virom, ki temeljijo na slogovnih pomislekih pod vplivom semantičnih, lingvističnih, funkcionalnih, literarnih in družbenih parametrov pozne antike. Hieronim pristopi k hebrejski verziji neposredno, skozi grške ali skozi judovske in krščanske eksegetične tradicije znotraj širših kontekstov poznega klasičnega kulturnega sistema. Celovito natančno branje in preučevanje Vulgate v širših poljih pozne antike razkriva, da Hieronimov prevod Svetega pisma ni le reprodukcija pomena izvornika v ciljnem jeziku, ampak zagotovo tudi dejanje razlage, oblika eksegeze same v sebi. Matthew A. Kraus trdi:

»Obnavljanje eksegetičnih tradicij, kodiranih v Vulgati, na splošno osvetljuje poznoantično kulturo zaradi njihove judovske, krščanske in klasične pripadnosti. Ta grobi opis razkriva Hieronimovo globino kot bralca in razlagalca Svetega pisma. Še več, ker je proces prevajanja tako zapleten in kulturno vpet, nas na koncu natančna besedilna analiza ponese prek lingvističnih in literarnih vprašanj do družbenega in kulturnega okolja ter nas povabi, da Drugo Mojzesovo knjigo v Vulgati beremo v razmerju do sodobnega razvoja preučevanja pozne antike, patristike, rabinske literature in zgodovine svetopisemske razlage.« (214)

Kot značilni poznoantični lik, ki se giblje med judovskim, krščanskim in klasičnim kulturnim svetom, omogoča Hieronim širši in bolj integrativni pristop h kulturnim sistemom, ki jih posreduje jezik. V današnjem času Hieronimov lik signalizira ponovno razmišljanje o odnosu med judovstvom in krščanstvom in močno vzbuja ponovno zanimanje za medkulturno izmenjavo. Hieronim je skozi celotno življenje dozoreval v iskanju najboljše metode prevajanja.⁶ Cerkev je morala doživeti dolgo zgodovino sobivanja z Judi, da je končno v moderni dobi sprejela načelo dialoga. Ta novi odnos Cerkve do judovskih svetopisemskih virov vključuje pripravo Nove Vulgate (*Nova Vulgata Bibliorum Sacrorum*) iz znanstvenih in ekumenskih razlogov, ki je potekala med letoma 1965 in 1979. Do leta 1968 je bil predsednik Komisije za revizijo Vulgate kardinal Augustin Bea. Nova Vulgata je nadomestila nekdanje verzije Vulgate kot uradni liturgični prevod. Drugi predsednik Komisije

⁶ Christoph Marksches v svojem članku „Hieronimus und die ‚Hebraica Veritas‘“ (1994) orisuje tri faze Hieronimove poti do popolnega sprejemanja ‚Hebraica Veritas‘: prva faza (375–387) je bila čas ‚Graeca Veritas‘; druga faza (386–393) čas posvečanja večje pozornosti hebrejščini kakor grškim prevodom; tretja faza (393/94–420) obdobje preciziranja in radikalizacije njegove naklonjenosti do ‚Hebraica Veritas‘ (177–178). Za Hieronimovo razpravo z Avguštinom, kakšno novo resnico je mogoče pridobiti z novim prevodom na podlagi hebrejskega besedila (Worth 1992, 33–93).

za revizijo Vulgate, od leta 1968 do leta 1971, Pietro Rossano, opredeljuje naravo Nove Vulgate takole:

»Nova Vulgata je prevod, ki je do besedil izvirnika kritično zvest. Od vseh drugih izdaj se razlikuje po vrsti jezika, ki ga uporablja, jezika stare krščanske latinske tradicije, ki vsebuje neizbrisne sledi semitizma, ki nosijo znake vpliva prevoda Septuaginte, jezika, ki za razliko od hebrejščine teži k spiritualizaciji nazivov, ki se nanašajo na Boga (prim. začetek Ps 18) in povezujejo judovsko zavezo z novo krščansko zavezo.« (1990, 193)

6. Sklep

Hieronim zagovarja najboljši način prevajanja svetopisemskih besedil in je prepričan, da se prevajalec nikoli ne sme po nepotrebnem oddaljiti od izvirnika, vendar je treba izvirnik vzeti v celostnem smislu. Glede Hieronimovega poznavanja hebrejščine ima Benjamin Kedar očitno prav, ko trdi: »V nasprotju s tistimi, ki trdijo, da je Hieronimovo znanje hebrejščine precenjeno, je treba poudariti, da je v resnici ta jezik dobro obvladal. V povezavi z njegovim monumentalnim prevodom, latinsko Vulgato, Hieronimove neštete pripombe o hebrejski filologiji pričajo o tem znanju.« (Kedar 1988, 315) Hieronimova prednost je bilo torej njegovo dobro znanje treh jezikov – latinščine, grščine in hebrejščine –, ki so igrali pomembno vlogo pri njegovem razmišljanju. V *Pismu* 17.2 Hieronim omenja svoje »tekoče znanje sirščine in grščine«. Njegova latinska verzija Svetega pisma dokazuje, da je znal zlahka najti enakovredne besede za hebrejske besede, besedne zveze in slogovne oblike in videti pretanjene semantične razlike med hebrejskimi sinonimi.

Ocena obsega in vrednosti Hieronimovega prevoda Svetega pisma v latinščino temelji tako na njenih notranjih prednostih kakor na zgodovinskem položaju in vplivu Vulgate. Hieronim je živel in deloval ob zatonu stare grško-rimske civilizacije in signalizira novo, krščansko dobo. Hieronimov vpliv je rasel za njegovega življenja in se krepil po njegovi smrti. Njegov prevod Svetega pisma (Vulgata) je močno vplival na zahodno krščanstvo v celotnem srednjem veku do reformacije. Seviljski nadškof Izidor iz Sevilje (560–636) je v svojem delu *Etymologiae* (6.4.5) opisal Hieronimovo edinstveno delo, Vulgato: »Tudi duhovnik Hieronim, spreten v treh jezikih, je spise Svetega pisma iz hebrejščine prevedel v latinski govor in jih je naredil dostopne. Njegov prevod (Vulgata) ima zaslužen prednost pred drugimi, saj je natančnejši v prevodu in bistroumnejši v jasnosti njegove misli [in kolikor je delo kristjana, je prevod prostejši].« (Barney et al. 2006, 139) Na četrtem zasedanju (8. aprila 1546) je tridentinski cerkveni zbor razglasil, da je treba Vulgato v liturgičnih in didaktičnih dejavnostih Cerkve sprejeti kot avtentično (Rossano 1990, 193–194).

Hieronimova Vulgata je postala medij, s katerim je kulturna, verska in družbena kontinuiteta preseгла temeljne politične in gospodarske spremembe v obdobjih vse do moderne dobe. V moderni dobi pa je Hieronim deležen posebne pozornosti teoretikov prevajanja med teorijo in prakso. V drugi polovici 20. stoletja se

je prevajalski študij razvil v akademsko disciplino. Prevajalske študije so zdaj področje, ki združuje filologijo in kulturne študije. Pozornost je namenjena celovitosti in etični vrednosti instrumentalnih prevajalskih modelov, ki so zgodovinsko in kulturno določeni (Krašovec 2013).

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Branko Klun, Luka Trebežnik (ur.)

Vračanje religije v postmodernem kontekstu

Zbornik želi pokazati, da religija ni izginila iz filozofije, kot so napovedovali nekateri razsvetljenski misleci, temveč se vanjo vrača in jo na novo vznemirja. Sicer je to vračanje raznoliko in pogosto nekonvencionalno, vendar pa to ne zmanjšuje njegovega pomena in s tem potrebe po dialogu med postmoderno filozofijo in teologijo.

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Giovanna Martino Piccolino

La regola educativa di S. Gerolamo: esempi di *institutio christiana* nell'Epistolario geronimiano (Ep. 107 e 128)

*Hieronimovo vzgojno pravilo: institutio christiana v
Hieronimovih pismih (Ep. 107 in 128)*

*The Educational Rule of St. Jerome: Examples From in-
stitutio christiana in His Epistolography (Ep. 107 in 128)*

Riassunto: Le epistole ‚pedagogiche‘ di Gerolamo (Ep. 107 e 128; la prima scritta tra il 400 e il 401, la seconda tra il 412 e il 413) costituiscono un interessante e prezioso documento della *paideia* cristiana: dispensando consigli, l'autore delinea *curricula* di apprendimento, ereditati dalla cultura romana (in particolare da Quintiliano) e metodi d'insegnamento ispirati dalla Sacra Scrittura. Gerolamo afferma che l'esempio dei genitori è più efficace di qualsivoglia regola o precetto. È necessario per i fanciulli apprendere sotto forma di gioco. L'educazione femminile, con l'affermarsi del Cristianesimo, diviene un tema fondamentale della speculazione pedagogica: nel testo un confronto con altri autori cristiani, come Gregorio di Nissa, sull'educazione delle vergini è supportato da opportuni rimandi testuali.

Parole chiave: educazione cristiana, famiglia romana, figlia, educazione della vergine, gioco, la donna nella cultura greco-romana, docenti, discenti.

Povzetek: Tako imenovani ‚pedagoški‘ pismi sv. Hieronima (Pismo 107 in Pismo 128; prvo napisano leta 401/402 in drugo leta 412/413) pomenita zanimiv in dragocen dokument tistega, kar imenujemo krščanska *paideia*; avtor svetuje, začrta *curricucula* učenja, kakor nam jih je predala rimska kultura (predvsem Kvintilijan), in metode poučevanja, ki jih je navdihnilo Sveto pismo. Hieronim zatrjuje, da je zgled staršev veliko bolj uspešen kakor kakršnokoli pravilo ali zapoved. Za otroke je prav tako nujno, da sprejemajo pouk skozi igro. Vzgoja žensk je z uveljavitvijo krščanstva postala temeljna tema pedagoškega premisleka, zato je tema vzgoje devic v članku obravnavana tudi v povezavi z drugimi krščanskimi avtorji, z Gregorjem iz Nise na primer.

Ključne besede: krščanska vzgoja, družina v Rimu, hči, vzgoja devic, igra, ženska v grško-rimski kulturi, učitelji, učenci

Abstract: The ‚pedagogical‘ epistles by Jerome (*Ep.* 107 and 128; the former written in 400–401 and the latter in 412–413) are an exciting and precious document from Christian *paideia*: giving advice, the author gets Scholarship *curricula* inherited from Roman culture (mainly from Quintilian) and the teaching methods provided by holy Bible. Jerome wrote that parents’ example is more instructive than a lot of rules or precepts. Then children must learn to play. Woman’s education, in Christianity, becomes a fundamental subject in the pedagogical reflection: in this text, comparison with other Christian authors, for example, *gratia* Gregorius Nyssenus, about virgins’ education is supported by textual references.

Keywords: Christian education, Roman family, daughter, education of virgins, play, women in Greek and Roman society, students and teachers

1. La cultura greco-romana e la predicazione di Gesù

Nella graziosa novella di Gige e Candaule,¹ Erodoto afferma che »con lo spogliarsi delle vesti la donna si spoglia anche del pudore«:² benché presso i barbari la nudità fosse disonorevole anche per l’uomo, è certamente da rilevare, come ha scritto lo Jaeger (2018, 1104–1110), un notevole cambiamento di sentire prodottosi ad Atene rispetto alla donna dall’età periclea ai primi decenni del IV secolo, quando Platone scrive la *Politèia*. In essa, infatti, il filosofo ateniese dedica attenzione alla formazione della donna aristocratica, futura consorte del guerriero, la quale dovrebbe essere cooperatrice nell’ufficio di lui: se comune dovrà essere il compito, tali dovranno necessariamente essere anche educazione e formazione. La donna aristocratica, pertanto, educata alla musica e alla ginnastica, non avrebbe dovuto vergognarsi di svestirsi nei ginnasî, perché insieme col marito guerriero anziché dell’*himation* si sarebbe vestita di *areté*.³ L’attuazione del programma di una formazione culturale unica per uomo e per donna avrebbe rafforzato, quindi, secondo Platone, l’unità dello stato ideale da lui ben delineato nel noto dialogo, conferendo alla classe dirigente quella superiorità richiesta dal compito. Occorre, infine, notare che anche in un tale progetto la donna non è destinataria di un programma educativo volto a coglierne e potenziare le peculiarità di genere, mentre il riconoscimento più elevato che le si riesca a concedere consiste nell’essere uguagliata al genere maschile (Cantarella 2010, 93–95).

¹ Ringrazio il Preside del Pontificium Institutum Altioris Latinitatis, Prof. Don Miran Sajovic SDB, per il cordiale incoraggiamento. Resta, tuttavia, solo mia la responsabilità di eventuali errori o imperfezioni.

² »Ἄμα δέκιθῶνι ἐκ δυομένων συνεκδύεται καὶ τὴν αἰδῶγυνη.« (Hdt., *Hist.* 1.8.3) Dopo una breve esposizione sulle origini mitologiche del conflitto Europa-Asia, dalle quali Erodoto prende le distanze, l’autore introduce Creso, con il quale ha inizio il *lógos* sulla Lidia, fino al regno di Gige che soppianta Candaule perché indotto dalla moglie di questi a scegliere tra la morte sua o del marito, dopo che il sovrano aveva consentito a Gige di ammirarla nuda a sua insaputa. (Cassola 1984, 84–91)

³ Cf. Pl., *R.* 452e–456c (Sartori, Vegetti e Centrone 2003, 304–315).

Diversa è la situazione a Roma, dove l'istruzione non è preclusa alle ragazze, in particolare alle rampolle di famiglie gentilizie: la donna, quale *mater educatrix*, è depositaria del compito di trasmettere il *mos maiorum* ai figli, di provvedere alla loro educazione, almeno fino all'età di sette anni. Il suo bagaglio culturale deve essere speso prevalentemente in ambito privato, evitando pubbliche esibizioni come simbolo di emancipazione e di superiorità rispetto all'uomo. Il *curriculum* scolastico prevede una prima istruzione elementare detta *ludus litterarius*, dai sette ai dodici anni circa, con la compresenza di ragazzi e ragazze: è prevista la lettura, la scrittura e il calcolo sotto la guida del *litterator* o *ludi magister*. Segue verso i dodici anni, in classi distinte tra maschi e femmine, l'insegnamento secondario, ovvero la scuola del *grammaticus* che insegna in prima istanza la lingua (ossia valore fonetico, declinazione, coniugazione, ritmo dei versi, parti di un discorso), in seconda l'uso corretto della lingua parlata e scritta (con l'introduzione degli autori e di esercitazioni sullo stile).

Ai soli maschi, in genere, è riservato l'accesso alla scuola di retorica, verso i quindici o i sedici anni: il *rhetor*, oltre a insegnare le regole del discorso, dedica attenzione allo studio del diritto insieme col *magister iuris*, nel quadro di una più ampia formazione filosofica (Lanfranchi e Prelezo 2008, 150–164).

La diffusione della predicazione di Gesù, nella prima età imperiale, s'innesta in una cultura ebraica dove il ruolo femminile assume funzioni nettamente subordinate alla volontà maschile,⁴ mentre per il mondo greco-romano non è possibile delineare un quadro univoco. In Grecia come a Roma, infatti, non mancano discriminazioni, tuttavia nei ceti sociali più elevati dell'Impero è possibile trovare donne emancipate, oppure (fenomeno del tutto assente in Palestina) la presenza di sacerdotesse nei culti pagani.⁵ Le donne nei Vangeli canonici, invece, hanno sempre ruoli ben definiti: alcune che procurano assistenza, anche mediante le proprie sostanze (Lc 8,1-3), l'emorroissa, considerata impura, che sperimenta la guarigione immediata (Mt 9,20-22), la samaritana che, da una condizione poco rispettabile, diviene valida testimone per la sua città (Gv 4,1), la Maddalena tenace nella fedeltà al Maestro e Salvatore (Mc 16,9), Marta e Maria di Betania, dedite rispettivamente al servizio e all'adorazione del Maestro. Sono esse solo alcuni esempi della grande attenzione e della benefica cura spirituale di cui sono destinatarie le donne durante il ministero di Cristo (Fabris 1987, 209–222; Mattioli 1992; Marucci 1976, 273–296; Martino 2010, 615–624).

⁴ Filone spesso afferma l'inferiorità della femmina rispetto al maschio e, nella sfera umana, della donna rispetto all'uomo. La donna è debole, nata per essere ingannata, poco incline alla riflessione (Phil., *Quaest. in Gen.* 1.46). Il peccato, inoltre, è conseguenza della debolezza femminile (Phil., *Quaest. in Gen.* 3.3).

⁵ Basti pensare, a mo' di esempio, all'insigne ruolo delle Vestali a Roma, a partire dall'età arcaica: le giovani che venivano scelte per il culto di Vesta erano bambine tra i sei e i dieci anni, selezionate grazie ai requisiti delle loro famiglie d'origine. Ancora Prudenzio in *Contra Symmachum* 2.1066 dirà: »podii meliore in parte sedentes«, riferendosi al fatto che assistevano alle rappresentazioni pubbliche, non relegate in *summa cavea*, come le altre donne, ma sedute nelle prime file, tradizionalmente riservate ai senatori. (Orlandi 1995–1996, 359–371)

2. Dall'età apostolica al IV secolo

In età apostolica alcuni scritti sono rivolti indistintamente a fratelli e sorelle: l'*Epistola di Barnaba* si rivolge a «figli e figlie»,⁶ mentre Adolf von Harnack ha descritto come le donne abbiano avuto fin dall'inizio un posto di rilievo accanto ai grandi maestri, anche nella diffusione della cultura cristiana di tipo scolastico o intellettuale (1906, 406–419).⁷ Taziano, ad esempio, esalta le figure femminili che «si dedicano alla filosofia», ovvero repute sagge:⁸ i lemmi *φιλοσοφία/sapientia* cominciano nel II secolo ad assumere l'accezione di «percorso interiore verso il superamento della dimensione terrena»⁹ e, a partire dal IV secolo, in concomitanza con l'evoluzione dell'ambito semantico del termine, che tende a lambire la realtà degli asceteri e dei monasteri, si profila un nuovo progetto pedagogico, specificamente rivolto alle donne da parte dei Padri, sia in Oriente, sia in Occidente, che consenta alla donna cristiana di anelare a un nuovo paradigma di santità, mediante una vita di ascesi, di preghiera e di continenza.¹⁰ Questo prodotto peculiare della cultura cristiana del IV secolo, che rappresenta, senza dubbio, un'evoluzione morale-speculativa rispetto alla coeva temperie storica ellenistico-giudaica¹¹ eredita, tuttavia, sia dalla tradizione ebraica, sia da quella romana la centralità del ruolo della famiglia nella trasmissione dei valori.¹² A tal proposito, un esempio illuminan-

⁶ «Χαίρετε, υἱοὶ καὶ θυγατέρες.» (*Barn.* 1.1 [Prinzivali e Simonetti 2010, 112–113]).

⁷ Per un approfondimento sulle donne cristiane, partecipi della cultura, in qualità di allieve, collaboratrici o protettrici di intellettuali cristiani cf. Mazzucco 1989, 10–16.

⁸ «/.../ affinché /.../ sotto i vostri occhi non deridiate quelle donne che presso di noi si dedicano alla filosofia. /.../ Tutte le nostre donne vivono nella continenza e le fanciulle intorno alla conocchia rivolgono espressione a Dio con più ardore d'ogni vostra fanciulla.» (Tat., *Orat.* [Burini 2000, 230–231])

⁹ Sull'evoluzione del termine *φιλοσοφία/sapientia* negli autori cristiani cf. Bardy 1949. A titolo meramente esemplificativo vale la pena ricordare le parole di Socrate di Costantinopoli, quando descrive la biografia di Gregorio il Taumaturgo: «Καὶ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ (Ἐριγένου) παιδευθεὶς τὴν ἀληθῆ φιλοσοφίαν.» (Soc., *H.e.* 4.27 [SC 505, 116–117]) Qui per ἀληθῆς φιλοσοφία s'intende l'ispirazione spirituale che garantisce la veritiera interpretazione delle Scritture.

¹⁰ Sulla novità del progetto educativo dei Padri rivolto al genere femminile cf. Milazzo 2002; sulla funzione profetica e sul diaconato femminile all'interno della comunità cristiana cf. Hauser-Borel 2000; Ugione 1989; Gryson 1974; Mara 1981; Rousselle 2000, 143–165.

¹¹ Si ricorda, tuttavia, in ambito romano, la figura di Musonio Rufo, filosofo stoico, vissuto nel I secolo e maestro di Epitteto, nelle cui pagine a noi pervenute è del tutto assente l'immagine tradizionalmente negativa della donna: nella *Diatriba IV* afferma che figli e figlie vanno educati allo stesso modo perché sia gli uni, sia le altre diventino virtuosi. Di interesse è anche la *Diatriba III* per il tema del rapporto delle donne con la cultura che si intitola *Del fatto che anche le donne debbano accostarsi alla filosofia*. Cf. Ramelli, Ilaria, ed. 2001. *Musonio Rufo: Diatribe, Frammenti e Testimonianze*. Milano: Bompiani. Sul caso di Ipazia di Alessandria cf. Cameron 2013, 65–82; Ronchey, 2011; Ronchey 2014, 135–169.

¹² «/.../ maiores nostri /.../ domum pusillam rem publicam iudicaverunt.» (Sen., *Ep.* 47.14 [Barone 1989, 224–227]) Questa espressione corrisponde alla struttura piramidale della *familia Romana*, dove i ruoli dei membri sono ben definiti e il cui ordine è garantito dalla presenza del *pater familias*. La *familia romana* è un organismo in sé autosufficiente e che si autodetermina in ambito educativo, essendo questa la dimensione sociale che maggiormente le compete. (Frasca 1991, 9–11, 14–15) I rapporti affettivi competevano maggiormente al ruolo materno, mentre il padre era soprattutto un severo custode della tradizione. Utile, in proposito la testimonianza ciceroniana: «Prima societas in ipso coniugio est, proxima in liberis, deinde una domus, communia omnia; id autem est principium urbis et seminarium rei publicae.» (Cic., *De off.* 1.54 [Narducci e Resta Barrile 2004, 122–123]) Sul ruolo attribuito alla famiglia nella trasmissione dei valori, come già avveniva nel mondo romano e giudaico cf. Marrou 2016, 642–646. Diversa è la famiglia cristiana costituita da due coniugi ferventi nella fede: è il caso delineato

te è costituito dalla *Vita di S. Macrina*, scritta con devozione fraterna da Gregorio di Nissa:¹³ l'educazione impartita da Emmelia, madre di Macrina nonché figlia di Macrina *senior*, la quale era stata discepola di Gregorio Taumaturgo,¹⁴ indirizza la giovane verso un modello di santità plasmato sull'esempio di quello proposto da Atanasio nella sua *Vita di Antonio*. L'opera, scritta su richiesta del fratello Basilio, segue cronologicamente la stesura del *Trattato sulla verginità*,¹⁵ realizzando così una sorta di ideale continuità tra la riflessione teorica e la sua esemplificazione sulla vita virtuosa, alla quale il Nisseno intende invogliare il lettore.¹⁶

3. San Gerolamo e l'educazione delle fanciulle

Anche Gerolamo recepisce l'ideale ascetico della *Vita di Antonio*,¹⁷ che ha, secondo gli studiosi,¹⁸ un ruolo determinante nella formazione del monachesimo occidentale: grazie alla mediazione del patriarca alessandrino Atanasio (nonché di vari monaci dai quali sarebbe stato accompagnato), rifugiatosi dapprima a Roma, poi a Milano e infine ad Aquileia in seguito alle ostilità degli ariani a partire dal 339, l'ideale ascetico di origine egiziana si diffonde rapidamente in Occidente.¹⁹ In particolare, le testimonianze letterarie parlano di un ascetismo al femminile, cui sono

da Tertulliano in *Ad uxorem*: »Quale iugum fidelium duorum unius spei, unius voti, unius disciplinae, eiusdem servitutis. Ambo fratres, ambo conservi; nulla spiritus carnisve discretio, atquin vere *duo in carne una*. Ubi caro una, unus et spiritus: simul orant, simul voluntantur, simul ieiunia transigunt, alterutro docentes, alterutro exhortantes, alterutro sustinentes.« (Tert., *Ad Uxor.* 2.8.7 [Isetta et al. 2008, 318–321]). Una donna timorata di Dio, invece, curerà di piacere solo al proprio marito, come afferma sempre Tertulliano: »Sancta femina sit naturaliter speciosa, non adeo sit occasio. Certe si et fuerit, non ignorare, sed etiam impedire debet. Quasi gentili bus dicam, gentili et communi omnium praecepto alloquens vos: solis maritis vestris placere debetis.« (Tert., *Cult. fem.* 2.3.4 [Isetta et al. 2008, 376–377]).

¹³ Cf. *La Vita di S. Macrina* di S. Gregorio di Nissa (Giannarelli 1988). Un ottimo contributo esegetico è quello offerto dall'introduzione in Grégoire de Nysse, *Vie de sainte Macrine*, dove si legge: »d'une éducation entièrement domestique, que se réserve la mère de Macrine.« (Gr. Nyss., *V. Macr.* 3.6 [SC 178, 51])

¹⁴ Macrina *senior* è definita da Basilio come colei che trasmette ai nipoti la dottrina di Gregorio Taumaturgo (Bas., *Ep.* 204.6), mentre nell'*Ep.* 223.3 scrive di aver ricevuto la prima idea di Dio da sua madre e dalla nonna.

¹⁵ Il *Trattato sulla Verginità* fu scritto nel 371, mentre la *Vita di S. Macrina* nel 380.

¹⁶ Evidente influsso esercitò la *Vita di Macrina* nella Patristica e in particolare su Geronzio, autore della *Vita di Melania*, la ricca matrona romana, che dopo la morte dei figli, insieme con il marito, decide di liquidare i beni, di vivere in castità e di viaggiare in Africa, Terra Santa ed Egitto, fondando monasteri e dedicandosi a una rigidissima asceti. Cf. Gorce, Denys, ed. 1962. *Vie de sainte Mélanie*. SC 90. Paris: Cerf.; Coco, Lucio, trad. 2013. *Geronzio: Vita latina di Santa Melania*. Roma: Città Nuova. Delle due versioni quella greca dovrebbe essere l'originale rispetto a quella latina ed è storicamente affidabile e importante per le informazioni sullo sviluppo dell'asceti cristiana. (Perrone 1980; Giardina 1994)

¹⁷ Evagrio di Antiochia la tradusse in latino prima del 375, mentre un'altra traduzione latina anonima, meno letteraria, è più antica. Entrambe traduzioni suscitarono in Occidente interesse autentico per il fenomeno del monachesimo, costituendo, inoltre, un modello per la letteratura agiografica latina (cf. Ruggiero, Fabio, ed. 2003. *Sulpicio Severo: Vita di Martino*. Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna).

¹⁸ Il ruolo dell'Oriente nell'impulso al monachesimo occidentale si espletò, con rapidità, mediante la circolazione di traduzioni provenienti dal *milieu* egiziano (e cappadoce). Oltre la *Vita di Antonio* si diffusero le regole basiliane e la *Historia monachorum*, libera traduzione della *Storia dei monaci d'Egitto*, di Rufino di Aquileia, nonché il *corpus* delle regole di Pacomio, tradotte da Gerolamo nel 404. Per un ragguglio esaustivo sull'argomento cf. Vecoli 2015.

¹⁹ Lo stesso Gerolamo ce ne dà notizia in *Ep.* 127.5.

connesse le origini del monachesimo latino in Terrasanta, di antica tradizione e sovente rappresentato da personaggi legati all'aristocrazia di Roma.

Mario Maritano, nel suo pregevole contributo alla comprensione della figura del maestro nella pedagogia geronimiana (2012), evidenzia l'importanza delle *Epp.* 107 e 128,²⁰ scritte rispettivamente nel 400–401 e nel 412–413, quali documenti illuminanti ai fini di una certa e articolata educazione cristiana delle *virgines*.²¹ Non si può non convenire con l'illustre patrologo su questo punto, tenuto conto del fatto che in esse Gerolamo trae dalla Bibbia motivi di intervento e di impegno, ispirandosi anche a pratiche e programmi scolastici ereditati dalla cultura romana e, in particolare, da Quintiliano. In sintesi, la tradizione classica viene in queste lettere rimodulata e rinnovata alla luce della visione cristiana della vita.

Nell'*Epistula* 107 (*ad Laetam de institutione filiae*), alla nuora di Paola,²² che ha dato alla luce una fanciulla (anch'essa di nome Paola, in ossequio alla di lei *ava*) facendo voto di consacrarla alla vita religiosa, la quale chiede come educare al meglio cristianamente la bambina, lo Stridonense risponde che la *virgo*, destinata ad essere «Tempio del Signore» e «consacrata a Cristo» dovrà ispirare la sua educazione e la vita, in ogni suo aspetto, al messaggio evangelico. Inoltre, avrà anche

²⁰ Il testo latino utilizzato è ripreso per *Ep.* 107 e *Ep.* 128 dall'edizione di Labourt (2002a; 2002b), invece la traduzione e di Cola (1996). Resta tuttavia proficua la consultazione dello spicilegio (Moreschini 2000, 434–469). Per una bibliografia specifica sulle *Ep.* 107 e 128, cf. Labanca 1901; Lanfranchi 2008.

²¹ Sul problema della verginità Gerolamo si era scagliato contro il monaco Gioviniano nel *Contra Iovinianum* (PL 25, 211–338). Costui, giunto a Roma forse dal nord, aveva spinto al matrimonio delle vergini consacrate, suscitando lo sferzante intervento di Gerolamo da Betlemme, mediante attacchi *ad personam*, con l'impiego a dismisura di testimonianze bibliche, nonché con la ripetizione di argomenti attinti anche da Tertulliano. A Roma gli amici di Gerolamo vennero a trovarsi in una situazione imbarazzante, per i toni eccessivi che aveva assunto la polemica con l'intervento dello Stridonense, tanto da spingere l'amico Pammachio (genero di Paola) a ridurre il numero di copie dell'opera in circolazione. L'epistola geronimiana 49, *Apologeticum ad Pammachium*, ben testimonia la cooperazione in prima linea dell'amico romano: «Ego, si bene problematis memini, inter Iovinianum et nos ista contentio est, quod ille exaequet virginitatis nuptias, nos subiciamus; ille vel parum vel nihil, nos multum interesse dicamus. Denique idcirco te post dominum faciente damnatus est, quod ausus sit perpetuae castitati matrimonium comparare.» (Hier., *Ep.* 49.2 [Moreschini e Palla 2000, 266–267]) Nel 390, o poco dopo, la fazione favorevole al monachesimo e in particolare Pammachio indussero la condanna di una decina di partigiani di Gioviniano (cf. Siricio, *Ep.* 7 [PL 13, 1168–1172]). Ambrogio e un suo sinodo espressero formale condanna di Gioviniano (PL 16, 1124–1129). Agostino più tardi interverrà sull'argomento con il *De sancta virginitate*, in difesa della verginità, contro Gioviniano e Vigilanzio, ove oltre lodare suddetta virtù ammonirà le vergini perché non insuperbiscano. Cf. Recchia 1966; Duval 2003.

²² Sulla nobildonna romana Paola, la testimonianza più completa lasciata da Gerolamo è certamente l'*Epitaphium Sanctae Paulae*, che figura come *Ep.* 107, dedicata alla figlia Eustochio, e destinata, certamente, a un pubblico più vasto. L'intento dichiarato (cap. 2) dell'autore è quello di rendere testimonianza alla vita esemplare della nobildonna. Segue la narrazione del matrimonio e, con la morte del marito, di una vita ascetica che si traduce in grande carità e liberalità verso il prossimo. In seguito all'incontro con alcuni vescovi orientali (giunti a Roma per un sinodo), Paola si imbarcherà per l'Oriente, insieme con la figlia Eustochio; giunta ad Antiochia, da dove secondo studi autorevoli (Cavallera 1922, 123) insieme con Gerolamo e altri compagni, intraprese il viaggio in Terrasanta, per poi muovere alla volta dell'Egitto, culla di asceti e anacoreti. L'umiltà, unita alle pratiche ascetiche e penitenziali, nel quadro di una castità irreprensibile, delineano il ritratto di una donna integerrima, severa nella disciplina prima con sé stessa, esempio di umiltà, tenacia e liberalità che si manifestano soprattutto nell'organizzazione della vita monastica a Betlemme. Concludono l'*epitaphium* due poemetti epigrafici, incisi sulla sua tomba, che menzionano i cinque anni di vita ascetica a Roma e i venti a Betlemme, in osservanza anche alla gran dama romana, rampolla degli Scipioni e dei Gracchi, secondo un gusto poetico di ascendenza damasiana. Cf. Mohrmann 1975.

Maria, madre di Gesù, come suo modello e a lei dovrà ispirarsi nei comportamenti: da altri Padri della Chiesa, come Ambrogio,²³ Maria è espressamente indicata quale *magistra* per le vergini, mentre San Paolo, nella medesima epistola, viene definito *praeceptor* da Gerolamo per gli opportuni consigli dispensati ai cristiani.

In senso primario e manifesto, maestri sono gli stessi genitori della fanciulla. Con chiarezza rivolgendosi alla madre, poi al padre Gerolamo scrive: »Te habet magistram, te rudis miretur infantia. Nihil in te et in patre suo videat, quod si fecerit, peccet. Mementote vos parentes virginis et magis eam exemplis docere posse quam voce.« (Hier., *Ep.* 107.9)²⁴

In primo luogo, il nostro Autore intende porre l'accento sull'insegnamento morale e sull'esempio; in secondo luogo, nel più specifico ambito scolastico, egli richiama come fondamentale la corretta pronuncia delle parole:

»Unde et tibi est providendum, ne ineptis blanditiis feminarum dimidiata dicere filiam verba consuescas et in auro atque in purpura ludere, quorum alterum linguae, alterum moribus officit, ne discat in tenero, quod ei postea dediscendum est. Graccorum eloquentiae multum ab infantia sermo matris scribitur contulisse, Hortensiae oratio in paterno sinu coaluit. Difficulter eraditur, quod rudes animi perbiberunt. Lanarum conchyliquis in pristinum candorem revocet? Rudis testa diu et saporem retinet et odorem, quo primum imbuta est.« (*Ep.* 107.4)²⁵

È evidente anche in questo caso che la madre, in particolar modo, a continuo contatto con i figli piccoli, risulti la prima *magistra dicendi*. Questo è quanto afferma, ad esempio, Cicerone riferendosi ai Gracchi, figli di Cornelia: »Sed magni interest quosquisque audiat cotidie domi, quibuscum loquatur a puero, quemadmodum patres, paedagogi, matres etiam loquantur. Legimus epistulam Corneliae matris Gracchorum; apparet filios non tam in gremio educatos quam in sermone matris.« (Cic., *Brut.* 210–211)²⁶ La *neglegentia parentum*, per contro, fu conside-

²³ »Il primo stimolo dell'apprendimento è costituito dalla nobiltà del maestro. Che cosa c'è di più nobile della madre di Dio?« (Ambr., *Virg.* 2.2.7 [SAEMO 14/1, 168])

²⁴ »Te abbia come sua maestra, te ammira la sua infanzia inesperta. In te e in suo padre non veda cosa che, da lei imitata, la porti a peccare. Ricordatevi che siete i genitori di una vergine e che potete esserle di insegnamento più con l'esempio che con le parole.«

²⁵ »Perciò devi anche provvedere a che tua figlia, per le insulse moine delle donne, non prenda l'abitudine di pronunciare le parole a metà e di dilettersi nell'oro e nella porpora (la prima cosa nuoce alla lingua, la seconda ai costumi) e a che non impari in tenera età cose che dovrebbe poi disimparare. Sta scritto che all'eloquenza dei Gracchi contribuì molto, fin dall'infanzia, il modo di parlare della madre e che l'abilità oratoria di Ortensia si formò in seno al padre. Si cancella con difficoltà ciò che menti vergini hanno assorbito. Chi può ricondurre all'antico candore le lane tinte di porpora? Un'anfora nuova mantiene a lungo il sapore e l'odore di ciò che ha contenuto la prima volta.«

²⁶ »Ma importa molto chi uno senta parlare tutti i giorni in casa, con chi parli fin da fanciullo, in che modo parlino i padri, i pedagoghi e anche le madri. Se leggiamo le lettere di Cornelia madre dei Gracchi, appare evidente che i suoi figli sono stati educati non tanto nel grembo quanto nell'idioma della madre.« (Narducci 1995, 276-279) Le medesime osservazioni vengono avanzate da Cicerone a proposito dei Catuli, figlio e padre (Cic., *Brut.* 133), e di Scipione l'Emiliano, »usu et domesticis praeceptis« (Scip., *Rep.* 1.22.36 [Ferrero e Zorzetti 1975, 103–104]).

rata una delle cause principali della corruzione dell'eloquenza in età imperiale e, in generale, della decadenza dei costumi:²⁷ non solo i genitori, in età tardo-repubblicana, avevano smesso di occuparsi personalmente dell'educazione dei figli,²⁸ ma con il loro comportamento li inducevano alla *lascivia* e alla *dicacitas*.

Nell'epistola 128, che l'autore definisce col diminutivo *epistulum*, quasi a evidenziarne il tono confidenziale, indirizzata a Gaudenzio, sull'educazione dell'infante Patatula, oltre a rimodulare concetti espressi nella lettera precedente, si accentuano le peculiarità dell'ambiente nel quale la giovinetta va educata, sereno e gioioso, che sappia trasmettere l'amore per la cultura, senza indulgere a espressioni disoneste o a compagnie maschili. Oltre al lavoro intellettuale, la fanciulla dovrà abituarsi anche ai lavori manuali, caratteristici della donna romana, in particolare la tessitura, insieme col lavoro di confezionare vestiti, occupazione costante nell'ascetismo e nel monachesimo femminile: »Interim et tenero temptet pollice fila deducere; rumpat saepe stamina, ut aliquando non rumpat« (*Ep.* 128.1);²⁹ in tal modo si rifugge l'ozio (consuetudinario nella nobiltà), e si produce un'opera compiuta con le proprie mani. Gerolamo richiede anzitutto che le persone, le quali dovranno accudire all'educazione e all'istruzione della bambina siano di moralità provata, tuttavia che ella eviti di legarsi morbosamente a qualche domestica: la governante modello deve guidare la fanciulla in una formazione monastica, con scanditi orari di preghiera diurna e notturna (107.9). Riferendosi poi al maestro, Gerolamo ne riporta tre qualità da richiedersi: età, condotta ineccepibile, sapere. Erano queste virtù legate a valori umani apprezzati anche dai gentili:³⁰ l'azione dei maestri a Roma fu sempre risultante della diretta influenza paterna, garante di moralità, severità e competenza.

Lo Stridonense, concludendo la lettera a Leta, le suggerisce di affidare la figlia al monastero di Betlemme, data l'impossibilità di allevare convenientemente una vergine nella mondana società contemporanea. Egli stesso si offre come possibile maestro e precettore di Paola, la quale circa quindici anni più tardi, sarà inviata nel monastero di Betlemme, accanto alla nonna Paola e alla zia Eustochio. In esordio, richiamando l'esempio di Aristotele, che fu maestro di Alessandro Magno, l'Autore aveva dichiarato la responsabilità di pari grado nell'educare una nobile vergine (*Hier.*, *Ep.* 107), sposa del Signore.

Da Rufino apprendiamo che Gerolamo avviò una scuola nel monastero di Betlemme, insegnando ai giovani studenti la grammatica e la lettura di autori classici latini, in particolare Virgilio, i comici, i lirici e gli storici (*Ruf.*, *Apol. adv. Hier.* 2.11).

²⁷ Espressione massima di questo disinteresse era il rifiuto della paternità che creava in Grecia e a Roma gravi problemi demografici come riporta Polibio (Nicolai 1998, 344–345).

²⁸ Si tratta di un'usanza contraria all'antica educazione, secondo quanto testimoniato in Plutarco: »/.../ Pensava non fosse dignitoso, come egli stesso diceva, che uno schiavo potesse rimproverare suo figlio nel caso che fosse lento nell'apprendere, né che fosse debitore a uno schiavo di una cosa così grande come l'istruzione /.../.« (*Plu.*, *Cat. Ma.* 20.5–6 [Traglia 1992, 636–637])

²⁹ »Nel frattempo col suo tenero pollice provi a sconocchiare; spezzerà sovente il filo, ma è così che impara a non spezzarlo più.«

³⁰ La *mollis educatio* dei suoi tempi, secondo Quintiliano, spinge i giovani inconsapevolmente ai vizi (Piscitelli 2001, 34–35).

Egli avvertì la necessità di formare le giovani generazioni e »dar loro le armi per difendere le loro convinzioni: questo può avvenire solo con l'apprendimento dei grandi modelli che la letteratura fornisce. /.../ Anche nel problema della scuola egli è romano: insegna secondo il sistema scolastico romano, che non insegnava idee, ma come esprimere idee con proprietà e ricchezza; anche qui è filologo e letterato, non teologo.« (Grilli 2004, 312)

Infine, dalle epistole esaminate si possono dedurre gli ulteriori seguenti principi educativi enunciati: un ambiente sereno e gioioso stimola l'allievo a dare il meglio di sé stesso, dunque anche l'apprendimento delle lettere dell'alfabeto deve diventare un gioco. In secondo luogo, un clima di amore per la cultura, nello sforzo che essa implica, favorisce l'erudizione: *lusus eruditio sit* (Hier., *Ep.* 107.4). L'allieva dovrà, inoltre, preferire lo studio dei testi sacri, ad altri beni preziosi che pure si possono godere e deve dilettarsi nella lettura di trattati e opere di scrittori ispirati dalla fede.

Gerolamo scrive da cristiano per cristiani, pertanto il suo punto di riferimento primigenio è costituito, quanto ai contenuti, dalla Sacra Scrittura, nonché dalla tradizione classica romana, quanto alla forma. Qui la tradizione scolastica quintiliana si ammanta di un superiore rigore morale nell'essere ,donata' ai genitori di due *virgines*, destinate alla vita ascetica.

Con la scuola di Betlemme, in definitiva, lo Stridonense, già allievo del grammatico Elio Donato, fonda un'istituzione educativa ove il Cristianesimo diviene naturale erede della tradizione pedagogica del mondo antico, nella consapevole *traditio* della *humanitas* antica, quale presupposto ad una piena e consapevole accoglienza del dono di Dio.

Abbreviazioni

Ep. – *Epistulae* [Labourt 2002a; 2002b].

SAEMO – Sancti Ambrosii Episcopi Mediolanensis Opera.

SC – Sources Chrétiennes.

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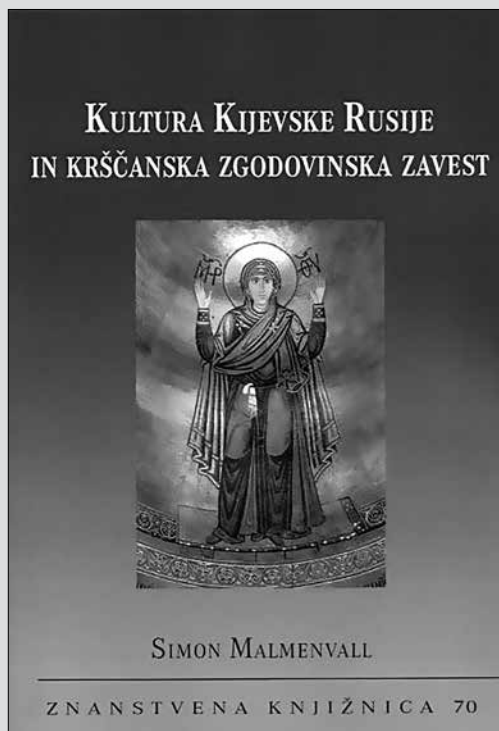
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Simon Malmenvall
**Kultura Kijevske Rusije
in krščanska zgodovinska zavest**

Monografija spada v okvir kulturno-idejne zgodovine in historične teologije. Gre za prvo celovito osvetlitev oblikovanja krščanske kulture Kijevske Rusije (najstarejše vzhodnoslovanske državne tvorbe, ki je obstajala med 10. in 13. stoletjem) v slovenskemu znanstvenemu prostoru. Pri tem je posebna pozornost namenjena proučitvi zgodovinske zavesti (kot zgodovine odrešenja) takratne staroruske psvetne in cerkvene elite v času neposredno po uradnem sprejetju krščanske vere. Poglavitni del monografije se posveča štirim zgodovinsko-religijskim narativnim virom, sestavljenim med sredino 11. in sredino 12. stoletja: pridigi Beseda o postavi in milosti, letopisu Pripoved o minulih letih, hagiografiji Branje o Borisu in Glebu in potopisu Življenje in romanje Danijela.

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Irena Avsenik Nabergoj

Hieronimova in sodobna spoznanja o literarni kakovosti Svetega pisma

Jerome's and Contemporary Findings on the Literary Quality of the Bible

Povzetek: V prvih stoletjih krščanstva so številni cerkveni očetje, kakor so Tacijan Sirski (približno 120–180), Klement Aleksandrijski (150–111), Origen (184–253), Evzebij (260–339), Janez Krizostom (347–407), Ambrozij (339–397), Hieronim (347–419) in Avguštin (354–430), izrazili svoje poglede o literarnih lastnostih svetopisemskih besedil. V 2. in 3. stoletju je med učenjaki prevladovalo mnenje, da se literarne in retorične lastnosti Svetega pisma ne morejo meriti z najpomembnejšim standardom klasične grško-rimske retorike, saj pisateljev svetih spisov niso gnale literarne ali retorične konvencije, ampak vsebina razodetja. V 4. stoletju pa so cerkveni očetje širokega znanja in literarne spretnosti v Svetem pismu prepoznali nekatere izrazite lastnosti literature. Ta prispevek obravnava sv. Hieronima (Eusebius Hieronymus), ljubitelja klasične literature in latinsko-grške dvojezičnosti, ki je Sveto pismo prevajal iz izvirnih jezikov in napisal veliko svetopisemskih komentarjev in pisem. Hieronim je bil umetnik besede s pretanjeno občutljivostjo za lepoto jezika. Bolj prepričljivo kakor katerikoli drug starodavni svetopisemski učenjak je dokazal, da je hebrejska Stara zaveza umetniška na svoj poseben način. Ugotovil je, da imajo literarne zvrsti Svetega pisma umetniško vrednost kot literatura in jih je mogoče najbolje razložiti ob uporabi literarnih konvencij, ki so oblikovale Staro zavezo. Prispevek se osredotoča na Hieronimove uvode v njegove prevode svetopisemskih knjig, na njegova pisma in svetopisemske komentarje, ki najbolje kažejo njegovo prepričanje o umetniški kakovosti Svetega pisma.

Ključne besede: Hieronim, hebrejsko Sveto pismo, Septuaginta, Vulgata, cerkveni očetje, literarna kakovost Svetega pisma, dobessedni in duhovni pomen Svetega pisma, pomen Hieronimovega dela, moderna literarna kritika

Abstract: In the early era of Christianity, several church fathers such as Tatian the Syrian (c. 120–180), Clement of Alexandria (150–211), Origen (184–253), Eusebius (260–339), John Chrysostom (347–407), Saint Ambrose (339–397), Saint Jerome (347–419) and Saint Augustine (354–430), expressed their opinions on

the literary characteristics of biblical texts. In the second and third centuries, the prevailing view among scholars was that the literary and rhetorical qualities of the Bible could not be measured by the leading standard of classical Greco-Roman rhetoric since the writers of Scripture were not driven by literary or rhetorical conventions but by the content of Revelation. In the 4th century, conversely, church fathers of broad knowledge and literary ability recognized some unique literature characteristics in the Bible. This contribution deals with Saint Jerome (Eusebius Hieronymus), a lover of Classical literature and a Latin-Greek bilingual, who translated the Bible from original languages and wrote many Biblical commentaries and letters. Jerome was an artist of the Word with a subtle sensitivity to the beauty of language. He demonstrated more convincingly than any other ancient biblical scholar that the Hebrew Old Testament shows its own unique way of being profoundly artistic. He found that the literary genres of the Bible have an artistic value as literature and can best be distinguished through the literary conventions that shaped the Old Testament. This contribution focuses on Jerome's introductions to his translations of the biblical books, to his letters and his biblical commentaries, which best demonstrate his belief in the artistic quality of the Bible.

Keywords: Jerome, the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, the Vulgate, the Church fathers, literary quality of the Bible, literal and spiritual meaning of the Bible, the impact of Jerome's work, modern Literary Criticism

1. Uvod

Helenistična kultura je literarnemu in retoričnemu izražanju dajala veliko vrednost v vseh literarnih vrstah in zvrsteh. V odgovor na poveličevanje vloge retorike v grško-rimski antiki so cerkveni očetje bistvo biblijskih vsebin videli v božjem klicu ljudem k vrlini ponižnosti: »Resnica in božja moč Svetega pisma sta jasno prikazani, ker so se ljudje odzvali na sporočilo Svetega pisma in ne na njegov slog.« (Graves 2010, 168) V 4. stoletju so nekateri krščanski misleci začeli razmišljati tudi o literarnih prednostih Svetega pisma. Hieronim, ljubitelj poglobljene literature in latinsko-grške dvojezičnosti, ki je imel izostren jezikovni čut in veliko volje za raziskovanje skrivnosti hebrejščine, je bil eden tistih, ki so najbolj izrazili umetniško rabo literarnega sloga svetopisemskih besedil v njihovih izvirnih jeziki (hebrejščina, aramejščina in grščina). Hieronim je bil poleg Origena največji poznavalec Svetega pisma v zgodnji Cerkvi in največji prevajalec Svetega pisma v latinščino, ki je bila njegov ‚materni‘ jezik.

Hieronim je bil prvi in celo edini med očeti latinske Cerkve, ki je komentiral vse preroke in večino novozaveznih knjig. V latinščino je prevedel tudi Evzebijevu *Kroniko* in *Onomastikon*. Origenove komentarje Svetega pisma in njegove svetopisemske homilije napravil dosegljive latinsko govorečim. Kljub temu ni sistematično določil pravil svoje hermenevtike. Njegova eksegetična praksa je navadno postavljena v

tradicionalni okvir dvojnih pomenov svetopisemskih besedil: v okvir dobesednega pomena in v okvir duhovne interpretacije z različnih vidikov. Cilj tega članka je opisati, potrditi in oceniti Hieronimovo spoštovanje literarne kakovosti svetopisemskih besedil glede na njegove lastne vire, metode in cilje. Na podlagi tega lahko ocenimo Hieronimov vpliv na poznejši razvoj literarnega vrednotenja Svetega pisma, vse do nove kritike in nekaterih njenih metod, kakor je natančno branje (close reading), ki je tudi še danes med temeljnimi orodji literarne interpretacije.¹

2. Pot od klasičnih idealov do odkritja *Hebraica veritas*

Ko so cerkveni očetje priznali inferiornost Svetega pisma v primerjavi s klasično grško-rimsko literaturo v smislu literarnega sloga, so potrdili superiornost božanske resnice Svetega pisma. Avguštin na primer v svojem delu *Izpovedi* (3.5) priznava svojo nekdanjo zmoto v vrednotenju literarne kakovosti Svetega pisma v primerjavi s klasiki antične literature:

»Zakaj ko sem posvetil pozornost Pismu, nisem čutil tako, kakor danes govorim, zdelo se mi je marveč nevredno, da bi ga bil meril ob Tulijevi vrednosti. Mojemu napuhu se je upiral njegov zmerni način in moja bistrost ni prodirala v njegove globine. In vendar je bilo tako, da je raslo z malim, in zdel sem se samemu sebi velik, ker sem bil od nadutosti napihnjem.«²

Zato Avguštin nekoč ni videl ‚svetopisemske zadržanosti‘ in veličastnosti njenega pomena.

Podobno preobrazbo je napravil Hieronim v svojem srečanju s svetopisemskimi besedili v primerjavi z velikimi klasičnimi deli antike. Hieronim v svojem delu *Contra Rufinum* (1.16) piše, da je bil njegov učitelj Elij Donat, rimski slovničar in učitelj retorike. V pismu poroča: »In ko sem se občasno vrnil v pravi um in začel brati preroke, se je njihov slog zdel neotesan in odbijajoč. S slepimi očmi nisem videl svetlobe; vendar krivde nisem pripisal njim, temveč soncu.« (*Pismo* 22.30)³ V svojem poročilu o znamenitih sanjah je priznal očitek: »Ti si Ciceronec in ne kristjan.« (22.30)⁴ To se je zgodilo v času njegovega umika v puščavo Halkis (Chalcis), ki je pomenil vrhunec notranjega konflikta med ljubeznijo do klasike in vizijo, s katero se je srečal v svoji asketski poklicanosti.

Vsebina svetopisemskih spisov je kristjanom omogočila, da »v svojem razmišljanju o umetniški naravi Svetega pisma presežejo grško-rimske konvencije« (Graves 2010, 162). Grško-rimski jezikovni slog je pomenil razmeroma skladno tradicijo od

¹ Prispevek je nastal kot rezultat dela v okviru raziskovalnega programa P6-0262, ki ga je sofinancirala Javna agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost Republike Slovenije.

² Slovenski prevod *Izpovedi* je navajan po Gantarjevem prevodu (1984).

³ »Si quando in memet reversus prophetam legere coepissem, sermo horrebat incultus et, quia lumen caecis oculis non videbam, non oculorum putabam culpam esse, sed solis.« (Hilberg 1996, zv. 1, 189–190)

⁴ V izvirniku: »Ciceronianus es, non Christianus.« (Hilberg 1996, zv. 1, 190)

obdobja Aristotela do zgodnje bizantinske dobe, vendar so bile literarne kompozicije grškega Svetega pisma kot prevod iz semitskega izvornika v grškem svetu neka tujerodna entiteta. Prvi poganski avtor, ki je citiral svetopisemsko besedilo, Pseudo-Longin iz prve polovice 1. stoletja po Kristusu, je pohvalil njegov način izražanja. V svojem delu *O vzvišenosti* 9.9 takoj po homerskem opisu Pozejdona v *Iliadi* 13 navaja uvodni del Geneze kot zgled literature, ki predstavlja božansko naravo, kakršna je v resnici, čista in neokrnjena. Avtor Mojzes ni imenovan po imenu, ampak samo kot judovski zakonodajalec: »Na podoben način je tudi postavodajalec Judov, ki ni bil kdorsibodi, dostojno povzel in predstavil moč Božanskega, ko je takoj na začetku Postave zapisal: ›Bog je rekel – kaj? – Bodi svetloba! – In nastala je. Bodi zemlja! – In nastala je.« (Longin 2011, 18)

Hieronimova eksegetična praksa dobesedne razlage svetopisemskih besedil odseva njegovo prizadevanje za psihološko analizo pri ugotavljanju zgodovinskih dejstev z neposrednim pričevanjem oseb, ki so vpletene v svetopisemske pripovedi, ali z informacijami o preteklosti, ki jih ponujajo sama svetopisemska besedila. Pierre Jay navaja značilne usmeritve »aleksandrijskih predhodnikov, ki vsako figuro hitro izrabijo kot povabilo, da se dvigne k duhovnemu smislu,« in usmeritve »antiohijskih sodobnikov, ki v slovnico vnesejo vse, kar ima opraviti s figurativnim pomenom ali je z njim povezano« (Jay 2004, 1104). Nadalje ugotavlja, da Hieronim v razlagi besedila upošteva postopke, kakor so »semantična študija, parafraza, upoštevanje konteksta, pritožba na argumentacijo, različne oblike argumentacije. Tako je v Hieronimovi praksi izrisano zблиževanje vseh virov znanja za natančno razumevanje dobesednega pomena, *historiae veritas*, temeljni kamen veljavnosti vsake duhovne interpretacije.« (Jay 2004, 1105)

Matthew A. Kraus ugotavlja, da je klasična tradicija vplivala na Hieronimovo metodo prevajanja tako glede splošnih načel kakor tudi v posebnih primerih:

»V soglasju s Ciceronom, Horacijem in Terencijem simpatizira z idiomatičnim (*sensus ad sensum*) prevodom v nasprotju z dobesednim (*verbum ad verbum*) prestavljanjem. Poleg tega njegova primerjalna metoda ustreza standardom, ki veljajo v klasični komentatorski literaturi njegovega časa. Kakor je komentator razložil besedilo s predstavitvijo različnih interpretacij, Hieronim razmišlja o različnih prevodih, recenzijah in eksegetičnih tradicijah.« (Kraus 2017, 182)

3. Hieronimovo spoštovanje literarne kakovosti hebrejske in grške Biblije

Kakor trdi Jay, Hieronimova eksegetična praksa odseva njegov celostni in medbesedilni pristop k svetopisemskim besedilom. Upošteva načelo, da Sveto pismo razlaga Sveto pismo. To stališče temelji na povezavi med izrazom komentiranega besedila z drugimi odlomki Svetega pisma, ki vsebujejo isto besedo ali katerokoli drugo slovnično ali literarno sestavino. Uporaba drugih besedil Svetega pisma

igra bistveno vlogo pri razlagi dobesednega pomena besedila in pri prehajanju v duhovni pomen. Pomembnost, ki jo pripisuje dobesednemu pomenu, obveznemu temelju vsake duhovne interpretacije, ga vodi k več kakor eni liniji razlage in k izraziti naklonjenosti figurativni eksegezi. Pomenljivost, ki jo Hieronim pripisuje jezikovnim, zgodovinskim in literarnim lastnostim svetopisemskih besedil, ga je privedla do tega, da se je vrnil k *hebraica veritas* kot besedilu hebrejskega Svetega pisma. Bil je »izjemen posrednik v službi Svetega pisma: med dediščino antične kulture in novostjo krščanskih izkušenj, med judovskimi tradicijami in tradicijo Cerkve, med grškim vzhodom in latinskim zahodom« (Jay 2004, 1114).

Hieronim je s svojim celostnim in medbesedilnim pristopom edinstveno obogatil krščansko eksegezo. Matthew A. Kraus navaja, da so bili Hieronimovi viri »grška tradicija, klasični tropi ali judovske tradicije« (Kraus 2017, 35–36). Trdi: »Ta besedilna analiza gre še dlje s celovitim branjem teh tehnik in virov. Takšno branje naslika Hieronima kot tipično poznoantično figuro, ki se giblje med kulturnimi svetovi. Še posebej zanimivo je, da so ti svetovi krščanski, klasični in judovski in da se ti kulturni sistemi posredujejo z jezikom.« (220–221) Zgodaj v svojem življenju je Hieronim razvil svojo literarno občutljivost s formalnim izobraževanjem. Njegov celostni eksegetični pristop je bil po naravi v nasprotju zgolj z abstraktno refleksijo ali špekulacijo. Njegova globoka razlaga in krepostno življenje sta vabila k natančnemu branju besedil. Aline Canellis ugotavlja, da je bila »izbira tehnike odvisna od vrste besedila in posebnega namena njegove eksegeze. Posledično obstajajo tri vrste komentarjev: polemični, nedorečeni (tj. brez jasne artikulacije metodologije) in namerni (tj. z določeno metodologijo).« (Canellis 2016, 66–68)

Hieronima prva srečanja s svetopisemskimi besedili niso navdušila z vidikov elegance in lepote. V zgodnjih letih je imel raje rafinirano kakovost latinske literature. V pismu 22 Hieronim poroča o svojih znamenitih sanjah, da je preveč ljubil klasično literaturo, in prizna:

»In tako, bedni človek, kakršen sem bil, bi se postil samo zato, da bi lahko pozneje bral Cicerona. Po mnogih nočeh, ki sem jih preživel v budnosti, po poplavah solz, poklicanih iz mojega najglobljega srca, bi se po spominu na svoje pretekle grehe še enkrat lotil Plavta. In ko sem se občasno vrnil v pravi um in začel brati preroke, se je njihov slog zdel grob in odvraten. Z zaslepljenimi očmi nisem videl svetlobe; vendar krivde nisem pripisoval njim, temveč soncu.« (Pismo 22.30 [Hilberg 1996, 1:189–190])

Z branjem Svetega pisma v hebrejščini je Hieronim premagal svojo prvotno nenaklonjenost Stari zavezi kot literaturi. V pismu 125 poroča o začetkih učenja hebrejščine v svoji burni mladosti pred spreobrnitvijo:

»Da bi ublažil svoj nemir, sem se posvetil bratu, ki je bil pred spreobrnitvijo Jud, in ga prosil, naj me nauči hebrejščine. Tako sem, potem ko sem se seznanil z ostrino Kvintilijana, tekočim jezikom Cicerona, resnostjo Frontona in nežnostjo Plinija, začel pisati na novo in se učil izgovarjati besede tako ostre kot grlene. Kakšen trud sem namenil za to nalogo, skozi kakšne

težave sem šel, kako pogosto sem obupaval, kako pogosto sem popustil in nato v svoji želji po učenju začel znova, lahko potrdim tako jaz, subjekt te bede, kot tudi tisti, ki so takrat živeli z mano. Toda Gospodu se zahvaljujem, da iz tega semena učenja, posejanega v grenkobi, zdaj izkoriščam sladke sadeže.« (125.12 [Hilberg 1996, 3:131])⁵

Michael Graves trdi, da je učenje v pozni antiki

»vključevalo estetsko vrednotenje besedila, in čeprav ga je v svetopisemskem besedilu v prvi vrsti zanimal njegov moralni ali teološki nauk, je Hieronim Sveto pismo bral tudi s pogledom na njegovo lepoto, zlasti (vendar ne samo) v zvezi s hebrejskimi zadevami. Hieronim je v Stari zavezi našel tako dobro sestavljeno vsebino kot tudi čudovit jezik.« (2010, 170–171)

Za prikaz umetniške kakovosti Stare zaveze v hebrejščini se Hieronim sklicuje na grške literarne izraze in figure, kakor so personifikacija, hiperbola, sinekdoha, metafora. Jasno se je zavedal bogate zmožnosti hebrejskega jezika za asonanco in besedno igro. Razumevanje pomembnih jezikovnih in literarnih lastnosti izvirnih svetopisemskih jezikov je nenehno zaposlovalo Hieronimovo misel. V svoji prevajalski dejavnosti je najjasneje spoznal, da se jeziki razlikujejo glede na vrstni red besed, njihove specifične metafore in njihove domače idiome. To dejstvo prevajalca postavlja pred moreče težave, ki jih ni vedno mogoče v celoti rešiti. Temu glavnemu problemu je namenjen večji del njegovega Predgovora k prevodu Evzebijeve *Kronike*. Hieronim izraža izkušnjo o različnih razlogih za zadrego v prevajanju: pomanjkanje ustreznih besed, raznolikost figur, idiomi jezika, posebnosti vrstnega reda (Fremantle 1995, 483).

Hieronim je resno upošteval naravo besedil v prozi in v pesniški obliki, ki jih je primerjal z grško in latinsko poezijo. V Predgovoru k Jobovi knjigi iz leta 392 piše:

»Če se komu zdi neverjetno, da imajo Hebrejci v resnici metrum, in če upoštevamo psalter ali Jeremijeve Žalostinke ali skoraj vse pesmi v Svetem pismu, so te podobne našemu Flaku, grškemu Pindarju, Alkaju in Sapfo, pa naj bere Filona, Jožefa (Flavija), Origena, Evzebija iz Cezareje in bo s pomočjo njihovega pričevanja ugotovil, da govorim resnico.«⁶

⁵ Za izvirno latinsko različico Hieronimovih pisem glej izdajo Hilberg 1996.

⁶ Slovenski prevod je narejen na podlagi angleškega v Fremantle 1995, 491.

4. Hieronimov filološki in literarni pristop v njegovih svetopisemskih komentarjih

Matthew Kraus obravnava Hieronimovo Vulgato kot delo poznoantične latinske literature. Opozarja, da želja po evalvaciji medsebojnega vplivanja poznih antičnih študij, patristike, judovskih študij in zgodovine svetopisemske hermenevtike s podarkom na eksegetičnih tradicijah zahteva natančno branje. Kraus v Hieronimu vidi »poznoantičnega prevajalca pri delu, pri katerem se ukvarja s hebrejščino, preučuje grške vire, razrešuje ali odgovarja na zagonetko interpretacije. Takšen pristop ne zagotavlja samo zanesljivejše baze podatkov o eksegetičnih izvajanjih, ampak tudi natančnejši opis tega ‚prevodnega dogodka‘.« (Kraus 2017, 14)

Hieronim v svojem prevajalskem delu posveča pozornost slovničnemu in jezikovnemu pojasnjevanju, interpretaciji zgodovine, slogu in poetičnemu jeziku, pa tudi razlagi težavnih besed (*glossae*) s parafrazo ali etimologijo: »Latinska slovnica, ki izhaja iz grške znanosti, je tradicionalno sestavljena iz štirih delov: *lectio*, *enarratio*, *emendatio* in *iudicium*.« (Kraus 2017, 63) Hieronim v svetopisemskih komentarjih celo bolj kakor v prevodu Svetega pisma izkazuje svojo široko sposobnost obravnave jezikov in literatur (Scheck, 2010, 2015, 2017 itd.). Graves v svoji knjigi *Hieronimova hebrejska filologija: študija, ki temelji na njegovem komentarju Jeremija* (2007), ponuja zelo lucidno razlago Hieronimovega razumevanja izrazov *lectio* (branje na glas), *enarratio* (razlaga), *emendatio* (besedilna kritika) in *iudicium* (literarna presoja). Meni, da je »vsaka od teh komponent na neki način vplivala na Hieronimovo hebrejsko filologijo« (Graves 2007, 193–194). Ugotavlja, da je Hieronim s svojim treningom v *iudicium* razvil močan občutek za dober slog, čeprav je zaradi splošne osredotočenosti na »sporočilo« besedila njegovo vrednotenje klasične slovnične tradicije nagnjeno k eksegezi, s katero »je razvil izrazito krščansko hebrejsko filologijo« (194).

Graves trdi, da je Hieronimov pristop ‚filološki‘, in obseg pomena tega izraza razlaga s sklicevanjem na angleški *Oxford English Dictionary*: »Ljubezen do učenja in literature; študij literature v širšem smislu, vključno s slovnico, literarno kritiko in interpretacijo, odnos literature in pisnih zapisov do zgodovine itd.« (2007, 1) Avguštin v svojem delu *O krščanskem nauku* (4.7.15) pravi, da je svetopisemsko besedilo navajal, »kakor ga je iz hebrejščine prevedel v latinščino prezbiter Hieronim, ki je bil doma v obeh jezikih (*utriusque linguae peritus*)«. ⁷ Na drugem mestu istega dela (4.20.41) pa Avguštin pravi:

»Našel bi tudi mnogo čudovitih vrst sloga – lepih tudi v našem jeziku, najbolj pa v izvirnem –, kakršnih ni najti nikjer v književnosti, zaradi katere se ti retorji napihujejo. Toda paziti moramo, da ne bi s tem, ko bi tehtnim božjim mislim dodali ritem, zmanjšali njihove teže. Kajti nauk o glasbi, kjer se najbolj temeljito poučimo o ritmu, je bil našim prerokom tako domač, da učeni (*doctissimus*) Hieronim omenja celo metrume pri nekaterih, vsaj v hebrejščini; v prevodu pa jih ni poustvaril, da bi ohranil točen pomen v besedah.«

⁷ Slovenski prevod dela *O krščanskem nauku* je navajan po prevodu Nade Grošelj (2013).

Opažanja o hebrejskem besedilu lahko najdemo v njegovih svetopisemskih komentarjih in v številnih njegovih filološko naravnanih pismih. Komentarji k prerokom so Hieronimova najbolj zrela dela, saj jih je napisal v zadnjem obdobju svojega življenja: Mali preroki (končal leta 406), Daniel (leta 407), Izaija (v letih 408–410), Ezekiel (v letih 410–414), Jeremija (začel leta 414). Hieronim je v teh komentarjih lahko uporabil celotno izkušnjo učenja hebrejščine za svojo razlago svetopisemskih besedil. Obsežno obzorje, ki ga je Hieronim sestavil v svojih ustvarjalnih obdobjih, kaže, da se izrazi, kakor je ‚dobesedni pomen‘, po njegovi presoji lahko uporabljajo v zelo širokem smislu. Graves piše, da Hieronim z »dobesednim pomenom« ne označuje preprosto pomena, ki temelji na besedah, saj je duhovni pomen mogoče izvesti tudi iz jezikovnih prvin. Zdi se, da je Hieronim namesto tega dojemal pomen *ad litteram* kot tisti pomen, ki se ujema tako z besedilom odlomka kakor tudi s kontekstom knjige kot celote (Graves 2007, 190). Graves meni, da se »Hieronimova hebrejska filologija zdi najbolj podobna modernemu raziskovanju. Tukaj, v njegovi hebrejski filologiji *ad litteram*, je Hieronim najbolj spreten in ustvarjalen.« (191–192)

Izjemna skladnost filološke metode dela Hieronima edinstvenega med zgodnje-krščanskimi razlagalci in najbližjega sodobnemu raziskovanju. Hieronimov prispevek je dobro povzet v vrednotenju njegovih eksegetičnih del:

»Hieronimove interpretacije zaznamuje skladna literarna teorija, katere značilnosti so sestavljene iz: (1) zaupanja v enotnost Svetega pisma, (2) raziskovanja različnih stopenj pomena (polisemija), (3) vere v navdih svetopisemskih avtorjev, svetopisemskih besedil in bralstva, (4) širitve, a tudi omejevanja pomena s strani skupnosti, ki besedila sprejema (*regula fidei*), ter (5) povezave med eksegezo in duhovno prakso (*lectio – meditatio – oratio – contemplatio*). Nazadnje, če primerjamo Hieronimove metode z metodami sodobnih svetopisemskih raziskovalcev, je mogoče dati nekaj predlogov o področjih svetopisemske eksegeze, kjer bi hermenevtični pristop lahko odprl nove vidike za diskusijo in razpravo.« (Birnbaum in Schwiendorst-Schönberger 2014, xviii)

5. Pomen Hieronima za poznejše literarne pristope k interpretaciji Svetega pisma

V zadnjih treh desetletjih so svetopisemski in literarni izvedenci tako navdušeno sprejeli literarne pristope k Svetemu pismu, da se zdi, kakor da se je zgodil korenit »premik paradigme« ali »revolucija« v metodologiji interpretacije (Ryken 1993, 49). Po besedah Tremperja Longmana, Stephena Pricketta in drugih je to ‚novo‘ gibanje (nova kritika) zasidrano v tradiciji. Logman trdi, da je spajanje Svetega pisma in literature v poznem 20. stoletju dejansko »ponovna integracija starodavne zveze« (Longman 1999, 101). Janet Soomers želi v svojem članku „Interpreting the Bible as Literature: Historical and Contemporary Contexts with Implications for

Christian Education“ (Interpretacija Biblije kot književnosti: zgodovinski in sodobni konteksti s posledicami za krščansko vzgojo) iz leta 2007 odgovoriti na tri glavna vprašanja: »Kaj je razlaga Svetega pisma kot literature pomenila v preteklosti? Kaj pomeni danes? Kakšen vpliv mora ta metoda razlage imeti na poučevanje božje besede v sodobni kulturi?« (2007, 78)

Zgodnji cerkveni očetje, ki so bili zelo občutljivi za literarno kakovost klasičnih svobodnih umetnosti, so bili soočeni z napetostjo med preprostostjo in lepoto, ki sta značilni za božjo besedo v Svetem pismu, in očitno slogovno premočjo klasike. Janet Sommers trdi, da je »za Avguščina in druge cerkvene očete razlaga Svetega pisma kot literature pomenila pogosto problematično aplikacijo njihove klasične vzgoje in njihovo poznejše utemeljevanje posebnega statusa Besede« (79). Kakor meni, so bila za zgodnje cerkvene očete »vprašanja o literarni naravi Svetega pisma neločljivo vezana na njihovo klasično izobraževanje o svobodni umetnosti. Dobro podkovani v preučevanju jezikov, slovnice in retorike so po podobni metodologiji razlagali Sveto pismo in klasično literaturo.« (17)

Avguštin v svoji razpravi *O krščanskem nauku* (4.6.10) trdi, da so svetopisemski pisci v resnici imeli posebno vrsto retorične umetnosti, ki je estetsko boljša od klasične literature, in pravi, da to, kar ga v besedni umetnosti piscev svetopisemskih besedil »navdaja z nepopisnim užitkom, niso odlike, ki jih delijo s poganskimi govorniki in pesniki. Bolj se čudim in strmim nad tem, kako so v povsem drugačni, svojstveni govorniški umetnosti uporabili našo retoriko na tak način, da ne izostane, a tudi ni izrazita, ker ni bilo potrebno, da bi jo bodisi odklanjali bodisi razkazovali.« V srednjem veku, od 5. stoletja do renesanse, so biblicisti Sveto pismo še naprej spoštovali kot božje razodetje in literarno besedilo, čeprav se je zgodil »premik paradigme« tako pri razlagi posvetnih kakor tudi pri razlagi svetopisemskih besedil, izhajajoč od dobrednega in literarnega pristopa do alegoričnega, figuralnega in tipološkega načina branja svetopisemskih besedil, ob interpretacijah, ki so postale norma zapletenega in večpomenskega sistema eksegeze, zajemajočega celotno Sveto pismo. Stephen Prickett trdi: »V naslednjih stoletjih se je to razvilo v večplastni sistem branja, ki je v kontekstu, ko še ni bilo razlikovanja med svetimi in posvetnimi besedili, zajel celotno literaturo.« (1999, 17)

Alegorizacija je pomenila zagotavljanje notranjega duhovnega pomena in možnosti splošnega pomena besedil, pomagala pa je tudi pri njihovem sproščanju iz prvotnega okolja. V obdobjih renesanse in reformacije je nastal nov poudarek na samem besedilu. Interpretacija Svetega pisma je manj temeljila na raznolikih alegoričnih branjih in bolj na dobesednem pomenu in na zgodovinskih kontekstih Svetega pisma. Raziskovalci so se obrnili na izvirne svetopisemske jezike, njihov kulturni kontekst in njihove literarne oblike. Stephen Prickett pravi: »Čeprav je bilo splošno soglasje, da je dobesedni pomen osrednji, to še ni pomenilo enotnosti razlage ali celo, da je množica pomenov izključena. Dejansko so bili novi, notranji, navdihnjeni in skrivni pomeni besedila v številnih pogledih pomembnejši kot kdaj prej.« (1999, 22) V 18. stoletju je Robert Lowth (1710–1787) v svojem delu *De sacra poesi Hebraeorum* (Oxford 1753) poudaril potrebo po razumevanju stanja svetopisemskih pisateljev kot ljudi svojega časa, zato si moramo, kolikor je mogoče,

prizadevati, »da beremo hebrejščino, kot bi to počeli Hebrejci« (1969, 113–114).

Zdi se upravičeno trditi, da je Lowthovo delo »začelo kritično revolucijo« (Prickett 1999, 27). V 18. stoletju je drug vplivni literarni kritik izrazil občudovanje literarne lepote Svetega pisma, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803). V skladu s svojim prepričanjem, da poezija nekega ljudstva kaže edinstvene lastnosti in vrednote njegovega jezika in kulture, v delu *Duh hebrejske poezije* (1782/1783) povzdiguje »genij« hebrejskega jezika. V Predgovoru piše, da nikjer ne moremo bolje preučiti briljantnosti hebrejskega jezika kakor v njegovi poeziji, in spodbuja: »Naj potem učenjak preučuje Staro zavezo, četudi bi bila le človeška knjiga, polna starodavne poezije, s sorodnim občutkom in naklonjenostjo.« (1833, 22–23) Herder s širšim pomenom nemškega koncepta »poezije« zajema tudi zgodovinske knjige, ne da bi se spraševal o njihovi zgodovinski vsebini. Piše, da »je zgodovina pravzaprav sama po sebi poezija« (37), in priznava, da hebrejska poezija izraža »najzgodnejše zaznave, najpreprostejšo obliko, s katero je človeška duša izrazila svoje misli, najbolj nepopačena čustva« (45–46).

Nekateri drugi pisci in literarni kritiki so zasledovali novejši razvoj literarnih pristopov k razlagi Svetega pisma: René Auguste de Chateaubriand (1768–1848), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834), Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822), Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), Thomas Mann (1875–1955), James Joyce (1882–1941), Thomas Stearns Eliot (1888–1965), Erich Auerbach (1892–1957), Northrop Frye (1912–1991) itd. David Jasper in Stephen Prickett opozarjata na celotno obseg vpliva nove kritike: »Bolj kot kdaj prej je postalo ‚odprto besedilo‘, podvrženo različnim branjem, in njegove verske trditve so se na novo odprle ob pomoči bralnih strategij feminističnih branj, dekonstruktivnih branj, novih pristopov v retoričnih študijah in tako naprej skoraj v neskončno (*ad infinitum*).« (1999, 9–10) Primerljivo veliko delo o svetopisemski literarni kritiki je napisal Robert Moulton, profesor književnosti na univerzi v Chicagu, z naslovom *Literarni študij Svetega pisma* (*The Literary Study of the Bible*, 1899). V tem delu je Moulton opravil natančno literarno analizo številnih svetopisemskih besedil. Njegova občutljivost za literarne lastnosti Svetega pisma spominja na občudovanje »literarne lepote« svetopisemskih besedil pri zgodnjih cerkvenih očetih (Ryken 1993, 58).

Zgodovinski pregled Svetega pisma kot literature nam pomaga razumeti pomen radikalne ‚spremembe paradigme‘ v interpretacijski metodologiji v zadnjih desetletjih. Od zgodnjih cerkvenih očetov prek renesanse, reformacije in poznejših zgodovinskih premikov v svetopisemski hermenevtiki, imenovani nova kritika, so Sveto pismo razlagali kot sveto sporočilo in literarno besedilo. Nova kritika na področju literature na splošno je imela velik vpliv na nove tokove v svetopisemskih študijah. René Wellek pojasnjuje značilnosti nove kritike in njen vpliv na posameznike in družbo na splošno, najbolj prepričljivo v svojem članku „Nova kritika: Pro in kontra“ (*The New Criticism: Pro and Contra* [1978]). Različne smeri gibanja nove kritike v Ameriki so se združile v nasprotovanju »povsem filološkim in zgodovinskim raziskovanjem, ki so prevladala v celotnem poučevanju, objavljanju in promociji« (1978, 614).

V nasprotju z vsemi oblikami ‚formalizma‘, ‚pozitivizma‘ raziskav v 19. stoletju in samopriznavajočega ‚nihilizma‘ nova kritika predstavlja stališče, da je uspešno umetniško delo celota, v kateri deli medsebojno sodelujejo in spreminjajo drug drugega. Nova kritika zagovarja popolno zgodovinsko shemo, skladnost in organskost poezije, enotno senzibilnost pesnikov in organski način življenja: »Novi kritiki se v veliki meri ukvarjajo s pomenom umetniškega dela, z držo, tonom, občutki in celo s končnim implicitnim pogledom na svet.« (618) Iz tega sledi, da je »metoda natančnega branja postala pedagoško orožje nove kritike.« (620) Občutek celovitosti, enotnosti in skladnosti pri branju literarnih besedil bralca usmerja k doživljanju resničnega življenja v celoti: »Ni mogoče zanikati, da je navsezadnje poezija z več novimi kritiki če ne religija, pa potem priprava na religijo: dodeljena ji je vloga, primerljiva z domišljijo v Wordsworthu in Coleridgeu. Pesnika in njegovega bralca vrne v celoto njunih bitij, povrne se jima prvotna človečnost.« (623)⁸

Natančna literarna analiza besedil različnih literarnih vrst in zvrsti, ki jih vsebuje Sveto pismo, nam pomaga, da jasneje vidimo prirojene enotnosti kraja, časa in dejanja, predstavljene v posameznih besedilih, in natančneje ocenimo naravo in zelo širok vpliv Svetega pisma v sodobni kulturi. Janet Sommers poskuša odgovoriti na vprašanje, zakaj so tako svetopisemski kakor tudi literarni raziskovalci od sredine sedemdesetih let 20. stoletja dalje kazali neustavljivo zanimanje za Sveto pismo kot literaturo, pri tem pa navaja stališča Lelanda Rykena in Tremperja Longmana. Longman je izjavil: »Ni običajna akademska hiperbola, če rečemo, da je bilo zanimanje za literarni pristop k Svetemu pismu v tem časovnem obdobju brez primere.« (1999, 114)

Sledimo lahko sodbi Janet Sommers: »Začetni sodobni pristop k Svetemu pismu kot literaturi odraža zapuščino novih kritikov sredine 20. stoletja. Ta metoda svetopisemske razlage, osredotočena na žanrske in literarne prvine, vključuje končno obliko besedila in zahteva natančno branje besedila.« (2007, 85) Navezuje se na Lelanda Rykena, ki trdi, da božje razodetje prihaja k nam večinoma kot zbirka zgodb, pesmi, vizij in pisem, ne pa v obliki abstraktne doktrine ali sistematične teologije. Literarno branje Svetega pisma »dejansko temelji na tradicionalni slovnično-zgodovinski metodi« tako, da bralca »čim bolj približa prvotno predvidenemu navadnemu pomenu besedila« (1984, 9).

6. Sklep

Argument za vsebino bolj kakor za obliko, kakor so ga izrazili Hieronim in nekateri drugi zgodnjekrščanski pisci, je lahko vzrok za to, da je bila literarna umetnost

⁸ Miran Špelič in Jan Dominik Bogataj (2017, 79–95) obravnavata to temo v patrističnih besedilih z uporabo primerjalne ‚metode sinteze‘ v odnosu do sodobne teološke misli. Jože Krašovec (2018, 483) metodo svoje semantične študije opredeli takole: »Članek obravnava vprašanje enotnosti besedišča in značilnega bibličnega sloga s predstavitevjo ustreznice za koncept božje pravičnosti v hebrejskem izvirniku in v aramejščini (Tg), grški (LXX) in latinski (Vg) prevod iz Izaijeve knjige. Bistvo je, da je besedišče neločljivo povezano s pojavom svetopisemskega sloga in osnovnimi literarnimi oblikami.« V svoji monografiji *Prevajanje med teorijo in prakso* (2013) Krašovec obravnava Hieronimov prispevek na straneh 80–102.

številnih svetopisemskih knjig dolgo časa skrita. V moderni dobi smo s podrobnim poznavanjem starodavne literature starega Bližnjega vzhoda seznanjeni s skupnimi literarnimi umetniškimi konvencijami, ki so oblikovale Staro zavezo. Tako lahko upoštevamo literarne zvrsti, ki so delovale v časih in krajih, ko so bile napisane svetopisemske knjige: Visoka pesem v povezavi s staroegipčansko ljubezensko poezijo, Žalostinke v zvezi s starodavnimi žalostinkami itd. Kar zadeva Hieronimov splošni vpliv na zgodovinski razvoj svetopisemske interpretacije, sklene Michael Graves svojo knjigo *Hieronimova hebrejska filologija* (*Jerome's Hebrew Philology*, 2007) z velikim izrazom spoštovanja do vpliva, ki ga je imelo Hieronimovo delo skozi čas in ga ima še danes:

»Hieronimovega pomena za zgodovino krščanskega hebraizma ni mogoče preveč poudariti. /.../ Tudi danes Hieronim ostaja pomembna priča razlage hebrejskega Svetega pisma v antiki. Obseg njegovih raziskav o hebrejščini Stare zaveze ga dela edinstvenega med zgodnjekrščanskimi razlagalci. Čeprav se Hieronimova eksegeza v drugih pogledih lahko zdi kot izpeljana in eklektična, je Hieronim na področju hebrejske filologije res izviren in kaže izjemno skladnost metode.« (2007, 199)

Hieronimovo široko zanimanje za literarne študije, ki zajema vse od besedil in slovnice do interpretacije in kritike, pomeni njegovo najširše možno razumevanje »dobesednega« pomena svetopisemskih besedil, to pa ustreza tako formulaciji besedil kakor tudi njihovemu kontekstu znotraj knjige kot celote.

V današnjem času nova obzorja za diskusijo in razpravo ponujajo zagovorniki ,nove kritike' s pozivanjem k ,enotni senzibilnosti', ki združuje intelekt in občutek. Kakor ugotavlja Welles: »Estetsko stanje duha lahko dosežeta le skladnost in enotnost umetniškega dela /.../. Ideja o skladnosti, popolnosti in celo organskosti umetniškega dela je stara toliko kot Aristotel.« (1978, 616) Zaznavanje prepletanja jezikovnih, kontekstualnih ali zgodovinskih informacij v kontekstu knjige kot celote nas naredi občutljive na literarne lastnosti svetopisemskih besedil v njihovem dobesednem in duhovnem pomenu. Natančna besedilna analiza nas zmora popeljati onkraj jezikovnih in literarnih vprašanj, onkraj estetske izkušnje retoričnega in literarnega prepričevanja do celostne religiozne izkušnje in do rekonstrukcije prvotne celovitosti človekovega obstoja.⁹

⁹ V novejšem obdobju imamo tudi pri nas vse več raziskav večpomenskosti temeljnega teološkega besedišča Svetega pisma v njegovih različnih kontekstih in intertekstualnih razmerjih. Matjaž v članku 2019, 923–935, odkriva globlji pomen, ki ga Pavel v Prvem pismu Korinčanom daje uporabi Stare zaveze v retorični argumentaciji novih razsežnosti pomena »modrosti« v luči Jezusovega nauka in osebnega zgleda. Palmisano v članku 2019, 891–907, raziskuje večpomensko rabo metafore ,Gospodovega strahu' pri Ben Sirahu.

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Emmanuelle Mantel

La lettre de consolation chez saint Jérôme

Tolažilno pismo pri sv. Hieronimu

Letter of Consolation in St. Jerome

Résumé: Mon étude porte sur sept lettres de consolation écrites par Saint Jérôme : *Ep.* 23, à Marcella à la mort de Léa ; *Ep.* 39, à Paula sur la mort de sa fille Blesilla ; *Ep.* 60, à Heliodorus sur la mort de son neveu Népotien ; *Ep.* 66, à Pamachus à la mort de sa femme Paulina ; *Ep.* 77, à Oceanus sur la mort de Fabiola ; *Ep.* 79, à Salvini à la mort de son mari ; *Ep.* 108, à Eustochium à la mort de sa mère Paula. Nous analyserons si ces lettres peuvent être considérées comme des consolations, s'il existe des particularités hiéronymiennes dans ce genre littéraire, si Jérôme se conforme à un style existant ou s'il crée son propre style à partir de la tradition consolatoire. Nous étudierons aussi l'évolution de l'écriture de Jérôme au fil du temps et selon les destinataires.

Mots clés: *epistula, consolatio*, rhétorique, *laudatio, exhortatio, lamentatio*, christianisme, style

Povzetek: Študija zadeva sedem tolažilnih pisem, ki jih je sv. Hieronim napisal: Marcella ob Lejini smrti (*Ep.* 23); Pavli ob smrti njene hčere Blezile (39); Heliodorju ob smrti njegovega nečaka Nepocijana (60); Pamahiju ob smrti njegove žene Pavline (66); Oceanu ob smrti Fabiole (77); Salvini ob smrti njenega moža (79); Evstohiji ob smrti njene matere Pavle (108). Analizirana bodo vprašanja, ali lahko ta pisma uvrščamo v žanr tolažilnega pisma, ali obstajajo hieronimijanske posebnosti v tej literarni zvrsti, ali Hieronimovo pisanje ustreza obstoječemu slogu ali na podlagi tolažilne tradicije ustvarja svoj slog. Preučevan bo tudi razvoj Hieronimovega pisanja glede na čas in prejemnike.

Ključne besede: pismo, *consolatio*, retorika, *laudatio, exhortatio, lamentatio*, krščanstvo, slog

Abstract: My study is about seven letters of consolation written by Saint Jerome: *Ep.* 23, to Marcella on Lea's death; *Ep.* 39, to Paula on her daughter Blesilla's death; *Ep.* 60, to Heliodorus on his Nepotian nephew's death; *Ep.* 66, to Pam-

machus on his wife Paulina's death; *Ep.* 77, to Oceanus on Fabiola's death; *Ep.* 79, to Salvina on her husband's death; *Ep.* 108, to Eustochium on his mother Paula's death. We will analyze if these letters can be considered as consolations, if there are any of Jerome's peculiarities in this literary genre, and if Jerome conforms to an existing style or borrows his style from the Consolatory tradition. We will study the evolution of Jerome's writing over time and according to the addressees.

Keywords: epistula, *consolatio*, rhetorics, *laudatio*, *exhortatio*, *lamentation*, *Christianity*, *style*

Jérôme de Stridon est une personnalité à part chez les Pères de l'Église : jamais évêque, entouré de femmes, en général très tranché, parfois à contre-courant. Pour les lettres de consolation latines chrétiennes, qu'en est-il ? Jérôme réussissait-il à être un «bon» consolateur ? Lui qui ne voulait pas être «cicéronien mais chrétien», se conformait-il au modèle existant ? Existe-t-il des particularités hiéronymiennes ? Y a-t-il eu une évolution au cours des vingt années qui séparent sa première lettre considérée comme consolatoire de la dernière (de 384 à 404) ? Diffèrent-elles en fonction du degré d'intimité qui lie le destinataire et le destinataire ? Ou en fonction du sexe du destinataire ? Nous essaierons de répondre au mieux à ces questions à l'aide de notre corpus.

1. Notre corpus

Il est composé de sept lettres, évoquant toutes des morts de proches :

- *Ep.* 23, rédigée à l'automne 384, à l'adresse de Marcella sur la mort de Lea, une amie (*ad Marcellam de exitu Leae*)
- *Ep.* 39, rédigée la même année, adressée à Paula sur la mort de sa fille Blesilla (*ad Paulam de morte Blesillae*)
- *Ep.* 60 à Heliodorus sur la mort de son neveu Nepotianus, vers 396 (*ad Heliodorum epitaphium Nepotiani*)
- *Ep.* 66 à Pammachius sur la mort de son épouse Paulina (*ad Pammachium de dormitione Paulinae*), rédigée en fin d'année 397
- *Ep.* 77 à Oceanus sur la mort de Fabiola (*ad Oceanum de morte Fabiolae*), rédigée vers 400
- *Ep.* 79 à Salvina (*ad Salvinam*) sur la mort de son époux Nebrius, rédigée en 400 ou 401
- *Ep.* 108 à Eustochium sur la mort de sa mère Paula (*epitaphium sanctae Paulae*), rédigée en 404¹

En quoi ces lettres sont-elles des consolations ? Et pour commencer, qu'est-ce qu'une consolation ?

¹ »La vierge Eustochium, aussi dévouée dans le Christ, sa fille, pour la consolation de laquelle ce petit ouvrage est forgé.« (Hier., *Ep.* 108.2) Les traductions sont de l'auteur, sauf mention contraire, et le texte latin est cité de l'édition Les Belles lettres de Labourt 1949–1963.

2. Qu'est-ce qu'une consolation ?

La consolation est, tout d'abord, une réponse face à une perte vécue dans la douleur, généralement la mort d'un proche, comme dans notre corpus.

La consolation est aussi, pour les Romains, un *officium* : au nom de *l'amicitia*, il est un devoir d'écrire une *consolatio* à celui qui est en deuil, un court billet la plupart du temps (la *brevitas* étant une des qualités de la lettre de consolation antique) pour rappeler au consolé qu'il n'est pas seul et qu'il participe à une vie en société. Il existait alors un impératif social de maîtrise de soi. Toutefois, cette *consolatio* ne devait pas être envoyée dès l'annonce du décès. En effet, les Anciens pensaient qu'il fallait laisser un peu de temps au deuil, sur les conseils du sage Chrysippe. C'était la trinité du consolateur païen en quelque sorte : *l'opportunitas temporis*, *l'amicitia*, puis la philosophie.

Voici les trois points importants que l'on retrouve dans une lettre de consolation :

1. Le destinataire doit faire preuve de sympathie envers le destinataire, en exprimant ses regrets dans une *lamentatio*, en partageant la douleur du consolé, en utilisant un vocabulaire choisi, des euphémismes, la première preuve de sympathie étant bien entendu la lettre, objet de consolation en elle-même, puisqu'elle marque la présence en pensée du consolateur. Rappelons le sens premier du terme *sympathie*, qui prend toute sa valeur dans le cas de la consolation : le consolateur *souffre avec* le consolé.
2. Après avoir partagé la douleur du consolé, le consolateur doit l'aider à surmonter cette douleur et l'exhorter à ne pas se laisser submerger par les émotions. C'est un *modus vivendi* typiquement antique de ne pas se laisser envahir par les passions. La pensée chrétienne n'est pas en reste puisqu'un chrétien ne doit pas (trop) pleurer face à la mort, dans la mesure où ce sont la résurrection et le bonheur auprès du Christ qui attendent le défunt (et le consolé lui-même d'ailleurs à plus long terme). Ainsi donc, le consolateur doit amener le consolé à la *metriopatheia*, à «modérer la douleur pour en maîtriser les manifestations extérieures» pour reprendre les termes de Sabine Luciani (2016, 279). Pour accompagner le consolé dans cette démarche que beaucoup de philosophes antiques associaient à un processus thérapeutique, le consolateur puise dans une mine de *topoi* consolatoires et d'arguments philosophiques ou spirituels selon les époques, appuyés sur des *exempla* historiques, mythologiques ou bibliques. Le consolateur n'exhorte pas à oublier le défunt, mais à apprendre à vivre avec la douleur en la domptant, grâce à la philosophie, la foi ou la *medicina temporis*.
3. Face à un deuil, le consolateur peut aussi faire l'éloge du défunt, rappeler quelle belle personne il était, pour la communauté, à travers une *laudatio* : celle-ci mettra en avant les origines du défunt ou ses vertus, selon que la consolation est païenne ou chrétienne.

Une fois exposé ce modèle-type de la consolation, voyons si les lettres de notre corpus y obéissent. En effet, «les chrétiens, tout en subissant l'influence de la tradition, ont, dans une large mesure, renouvelé le genre» (Favez 1937, 12).

3. Les lettres de Jérôme sont-elles des consolations *stricto sensu* ?

Commençons par traiter de *l'epistolaris brevitatis*, principale caractéristique de la lettre antique (A. Canellis 2002, 312), caractéristique la plus visible. En effet, Jérôme en a une définition assez personnelle.

L'epistula 23 fait 3 pages, *l'epistula* 39 14 pages. Jérôme l'appelle d'ailleurs «liber» au paragraphe 2. *L'epistula* 60 fait 20 pages. Là encore, Jérôme emploie le terme «libro» au paragraphe 6, aussitôt corrigé en quelque sorte par «parvo isto volumine» au paragraphe suivant. *L'epistula* 66 comporte 13 pages et est appelée *'epistulae'* (au génitif) au paragraphe 15, repris ensuite dans *l'epistula* 77 comme étant *'breve epistulam'*, puis dans *l'epistula* 108 par *'parvum libellum'* : *l'epistula* 108 comporte 42 pages. Elle est d'ailleurs appelée *'prolixior liber'* au paragraphe 27 et *'librum'* au paragraphe 32 par Jérôme, même si, au paragraphe 2 il évoque un «libellus», peut-être parce qu'il ne s'attendait pas à être si bavard au début de son écrit. Comparées à cette lettre, toutes les missives sont *parvae* ou *libelli*. Toutefois, *l'epistula* 66 peut nous servir d'aune pour déterminer de ce qui semble respecter la *brevitas epistolaris* pour Jérôme, ce que nous confirme *l'epistula* 79 au paragraphe 11 : il y est évoqué *'libelli brevitatem'* alors qu'elle comporte 14 pages.²

Quelles hypothèses déduire de cette litanie de chiffres ?

1. Qu'au début de sa lettre, Jérôme ne sait peut-être pas la taille de son écrit. Au paragraphe 2 de *l'epistula* 39, il parle de *liber* alors qu'à ce même paragraphe de *l'epistula* 108, il parle de *libellus*. L'inverse eût été moins étonnant.
2. Si on excepte ces deux lettres (mais cela restera à vérifier lors de mes recherches futures), le terme *libellus* est employé pour évoquer des missives de taille moyenne (une quinzaine de pages environ), associé à une notion de brièveté *brevitatem* et *parvum* : les *epistulae* 66 et 79. Cette idée de brièveté se retrouve aussi dans *l'epistula* 60, associée alors à *volumine*.

Jérôme est bavard, ce qui s'oppose à l'idée de *brevitas* attendue dans les lettres antiques, mais en accord avec sa personnalité.

Venons-en maintenant à l'étude à proprement parler des lettres de notre corpus.

3.1 Ep. 23

La lettre 23, adressée à Marcella sur la mort de Léa, est une *consolatio*. Elle répond à tous les impératifs cités ci-dessus : Jérôme partage la douleur de son amie, à laquelle il exprime toute sa sympathie par le biais de la lettre et par l'usage d'euphémismes (comme «Leam exisse de corpore» [Hier., Ep. 23.1]) et son inquiétude au §1 «Ibique ita te paluisse conspexi, ut vere aut pauca aut nulla sit anima quae fracto vase testaceo non tristis erumpat» (23.1).³ Puis il fait l'éloge de Léa,

² *L'epistula* 77, de 12 pages, ne contient aucune évocation de ce style.

³ «Et là, je t'ai vue, pâlie, à tel point qu'il n'existe que, peu d'âmes, voire aucune, vraiment, qui n'en exploserait de tristesse comme jaillissant d'un vase d'argile brisé.»

,*sanctissimam Leam*’, dans tout le paragraphe suivant. Il apaise ensuite Marcella en lui assurant que Lea est heureuse là où elle est : «aeterna beatitudine fruitur : excipitur angelorum choris, Abrahae sinibus confovetur»⁴ (23.3). Enfin Jérôme clôt l’épître par une exhortation à Marcella : n’oublions pas que nous sommes mortels afin d’accéder à l’immortalité : «Pro brevibus et caducis aeterna succedant, et cum cotidie -secundum corpus loquor- praemoriatur, in ceteris non nos perpetuos aestimemus, ut possimus esse perpetui.» (23.4)⁵

A priori cette lettre a tout d’une consolation classique. Toutefois, le terme *re-
plicatio* au début du second paragraphe nous interpelle rapidement : après la mise en contexte du premier paragraphe, surprenante au demeurant, nous pouvons nous étonner du retour sur cet événement alors même que Marcella était avec Jérôme au moment des faits. Pourquoi cette *replicatio*, effectivement, et par courrier qui plus est ? Le saint expose vite les raisons de cet écrit : «primum, quod universorum gaudiis prosequenda sit» (23.2).⁶ Cette première raison peut choquer le lecteur, surtout après le premier paragraphe où est évoquée la tristesse de Marcella. Mais la joie est un sentiment bien normal pour un chrétien qui sait ce qui l’attend dans l’au-delà. La deuxième raison, «ut eius vita breviter explicetur» («pour exposer brièvement sa vie» [23.2]) est logique dans une *consolatio*. La troisième en revanche est atypique : «tertio, ut designatum consulem de suis saeculis detrahentes esse doceamus in tartaro» (23.2).⁷ Pourquoi cet homme apparaît-il ici ? Tel un contre-exemple à la belle personne qu’était Lea, «Christi ancilla» (23.2), le consul désigné, Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, un païen, est cité, puis au troisième paragraphe, clairement critiqué, comme modèle d’une société que Jérôme refuse, celle du siècle. Le saint oppose donc deux personnes, qui chacune représente son monde : celui de Dieu d’un côté contre celui des païens de l’autre. Tout est dès lors construit sur des antithèses : «divitem purpuratum /.../ nunc desolatus est, nudus» ; «non in lacteo caeli palatio /.../ sed in sordentibus tenebris» ; «haec vero, quam unius cubiculi secreta vallabant, quae pauper videbatur et tenuis /.../ Christum sequitur.» (23.3)⁸ Le but inavoué de cette *consolatio* n’est donc pas de consoler Marcella, mais de porter atteinte au monde d’ici-bas : «non pariter et Christum habere velimus et saeculum» (23.4)⁹ et de mettre en garde Marcella et son entourage contre les vices du monde présent.

⁴ «Elle jouit d’une béatitude éternelle : elle est reçue par les chœurs des anges, elle est réchauffée dans le sein d’Abraham.»

⁵ «A la place des choses brèves et caduques succèdent les choses éternelles, et puisque chaque jour -selon le corps je veux dire- nous nous préparons à la mort, pour le reste, ne nous estimons pas immortels, afin de pouvoir être immortels.»

⁶ «D’abord parce qu’elle doit être accompagnée par nos cris de joie.»

⁷ «Troisièmement pour enseigner aux détracteurs de son siècle que le consul désigné est au tartare.»

⁸ «Le riche couvert de pourpre. /.../ Maintenant il est abandonné et nu.» ; «non dans le palais lacté du ciel /.../ mais dans de misérables ténèbres» ; «alors que celle-ci, que la solitude d’une unique chambre protégeait, qui semblait pauvre et chétive /.../ suit le Christ.»

⁹ «Ne souhaitons pas avoir également et le Christ et le siècle.»

3.2 Ep. 39

La lettre 39, adressée à Paula sur la mort de sa première fille Blesilla, répond là encore aux caractéristiques de la *consolatio* : la sympathie, les lamentations («*Matris prohibitori lacrimas ipsi plangimus. Confiteor affectus meos, totus hic liber fletibus scribitur.*» [Hier., Ep. 39.2]),¹⁰ l'exhortation à ne pas verser de larmes puisque nous sommes chrétiens («*Nos vero, qui Christum induimus et facti sumus iuxta apostolum genus regium et sacerdotale, non debemus super mortuos contristari.*» [39.4]),¹¹ la *laudatio* avec l'éloge de Blesilla tout au long de la lettre, et enfin les paroles consolatoires puisque Blesilla accède à l'immortalité près du Christ mais aussi auprès des hommes grâce à Jérôme («*Breve spatium aeterna memoria pensabit. Quae cum Christo vivit in caelis in hominum quoque ore victura est.*» [39.8]).¹²

Nous n'avons pas remarqué d'éléments supprimant ou amoindrissant la *consolatio* dans cette lettre, mais au contraire, un argument nouveau, a priori jamais lu ailleurs auparavant : l'utilisation de la prosopopée du Christ («*Nonne vereris ne tibi salvator dicat*» [39.3] suivi des paroles imaginaires du Christ) à laquelle Jérôme imagine une objection de Paula («*sed dicis*», [39.4]) puis de la défunte elle-même («*Quas nunc Blesillam nostram aestimas pati cruces, quae ferre tormenta, quod tibi Christum videat subiratum?*» [39.7]).¹³ Argument fort pour convaincre Paula que son chagrin est inutile, voire déplacée, et la consoler de manière plus efficace.

3.3 Ep. 60

La lettre 60, quoiqu'un peu longue et présentée par Jérôme comme un *epitaphium*,¹⁴ est une *consolatio* : sympathie et lamentations («*Nepotianus meus, tuus, noster, immo Christi, et quia Christi, idcirco plus noster, reliquit senes et desiderii sui iaculo vulneratos intolerabili dolore confecit.*» [60.1]),¹⁵ paroles consolatoires («*cum quo loqui non possumus, de eo numquam loqui desinamus.*» [60.19]),¹⁶ exhortation à la *metriopatheia* («*obsecro ut modum adhibeas in dolore, memor illius sententiae : »ne quid nimis*» [60.7]),¹⁷ *laudatio* avec l'éloge du défunt tout

¹⁰ «A sa mère nous interdisons les larmes, alors que nous-mêmes nous pleurons. J'avoue mes émotions, tout ce livre est écrit avec des larmes.»

¹¹ «Mais nous, qui avons revêtu le Christ et sommes devenus selon l'Apôtre une race royale et sacerdotale, nous ne devons pas être attristés au sujet des morts.»

¹² «La brièveté de sa vie, une éternelle mémoire la compensera. Car c'est avec le Christ qu'elle vit dans les cieux, mais sur la bouche des hommes aussi elle vivra.»

¹³ «Quelles croix maintenant notre Blesilla supporte-t-elle, à ton avis, quelles tortures, en voyant le Christ un peu irrité contre toi ?»

¹⁴ Ep. 77.1 «*ad Heliodorum episcopum Nepotiani scribens epitaphium*» : «quand j'ai écrit à l'évêque Héliodore l'éloge funèbre de Népotianus.»

¹⁵ «Mon Népotianus, le tien, le nôtre, non plutôt celui du Christ, et parce qu'il est au Christ, justement plus le nôtre, nous a abandonnés vieillards et par le manque de lui qui nous touche tel un trait, il nous a blessés et nous souffrons, c'est insupportable!»

¹⁶ «Puisque nous ne pouvons pas lui parler, ne cessons jamais de parler de lui.» (Trad. CUF)

¹⁷ «Je te prie d'adopter une juste mesure face à la douleur, en te souvenant de cette sentence: ,rien de trop'»

au long de la lettre, tout y est.¹⁸ »*Letter 60 is certainly the greatest of his consolations.*« (Scourfield 1993, 28)

3.4 Ep. 66

La lettre 66 a été écrite deux ans après le décès de Paulina («per biennium tacui» [Hier., Ep. 66.1]). Cela ne fait pas figure d'exception dans l'Antiquité, mais c'est, à ce qu'il semble, la première fois que Jérôme met autant de temps à consoler quelqu'un. D'ailleurs il se présente ouvertement comme «consolateur en retard» dès le premier paragraphe : *serus consolator*'. Toutefois, il suit toujours le même procédé : lamentations et sympathie («Quae enim aures tam durae, quae de silice excisa praecordia et Hyrcanarum tigrium lacte nutrita, possunt sine lacrimis Paulinae tuae audire nomen ?» [66.1]),¹⁹ euphémisme (*de dormitione Paulinae*'), *laudatio* avec l'éloge de Paulina dans les paragraphes 2 et 3 notamment, paroles consolatoires («illa cum sorore Paulina dulci somno fruitur, tu duarum medius ad Christum levius subvolabis.» [66.15]),²⁰ exhortation à redoubler d'ardeur au combat du Christ («Haec dico, non quo de ardore mentis tuae quicquam dubitem, sed quo currentem inpellam, et acriter dimicanti fervorem fervore augeam.» [66.13]).²¹

Pourtant la lecture de cette épître peut laisser dubitatif. Nous avons plus l'impression de lire l'éloge de Pammachius qu'une véritable consolation, comme nous le montre ce passage : «Nobis post dormitionem somnumque Paulinae Pammachium monachum ecclesia peperit postumum, et patris et coniugis nobilitate patricium, elemosynis divitem, humilitate sublimem.» (66.4)²² Cet extrait est empli de lyrisme, comme si nous assistions à une renaissance sous nos yeux. De l'endormissement de Paulina naît Pammachius, et loin d'être triste, au contraire c'est un moment de douceur et de beauté qui nous est offert à travers les quatre derniers mots de cette phrase : «elemosynis divitem, humilitate sublimem». Cette construction en parallélisme, contenant de part et d'autre le même nombre de syllabes ainsi qu'une homéotéleute, nous amène au sublime. Il n'est plus question ici de *consolatio*, mais bel et bien de la *laudatio* du vivant. Ce passage est assez représentatif de l'épître et nous éloigne de ce que nous pensions être, au départ, par la forme, une *consolatio*.

¹⁸ Nous renvoyons à l'ouvrage très détaillé de Scourfield, notamment au chapitre intitulé „Letter 60 and the consolatory tradition” (1993, 15–33), extrêmement complet.

¹⁹ »En effet, quelles oreilles suffisamment insensibles, quelles entrailles taillées dans le silex ou nourries au lait des tigresses d'Hyrcanie, peuvent sans larmes entendre le nom de ta chère Pauline?»

²⁰ »Blesilla et sa sœur Paulina jouissent d'un doux sommeil, toi, au milieu d'elles deux, tu t'élèveras en volant vers le Christ de manière plus légère.»

²¹ »Je dis cela, non que je doute en quoi que ce soit de l'ardeur de ton âme, mais je souhaiterais te pousser à accélérer, et augmenter ardemment la ferveur d'un combattant par leur ferveur.»

²² »Pour nous, après l'endormissement dans le sommeil de Paulina, l'Eglise a engendré Pammachius, un moine, né de manière posthume, patricien par la noblesse de son père et de son épouse, riche de miséricordes, sublime d'humilité.»

3.5 Ep. 77

L'épistula 77 évoque les trois dernières *consolationes* rédigées par Jérôme. Ici, à la différence des précédentes, le saint répond à une demande d'Oceanus.²³ Nous retrouvons les caractéristiques habituelles à l'exercice : la *laudatio* de Fabiola, tellement vertueuse qu'il lui faut un nouveau type d'éloge («quo pro novitate virtutum, veterem materiam novam faciam» [Hier., Ep. 77.1]),²⁴ la sympathie par le biais de la réponse accordée, voire réclamée, par Jérôme à Oceanus, la lamentation («Nos hoc tantum dolemus, quod pretiosissimum de sanctis locis monile perdidimus.» [77.9]).²⁵ Peu de douleur dans cette lettre, pas de parole consolatoire à proprement parler, ni d'exhortation. Est-ce une autre nouveauté ?

En fait, il semble que l'identité de la défunte pose problème à Jérôme : ce dernier souhaitait répondre favorablement à un ami au sujet d'une personne très pieuse, il lui eût été difficile de se dérober. Mais l'enjeu est de taille : comment écrire une lettre de consolation, avec *laudatio*, paroles consolatoires, et *lamentatio*, au sujet d'une pécheresse ? En effet, Fabiola s'était mariée une deuxième fois, après avoir demandé le divorce, ce que rappelle Jérôme au début du troisième paragraphe. Certes, elle a été par la suite pénitente, et a consacré sa vie à Dieu de manière très pieuse. Mais le mal a été fait. Et Jérôme doit encenser Fabiola. Il parle d'ailleurs de «praeconiis» plutôt que de «laudatione» (Hier., Ep. 77.2)²⁶ et prévient qu'il ne louera la défunte qu'à partir de sa conversion. Comment encourager les autres à suivre un tel modèle ? Face à la difficulté de l'entreprise et grâce à la nouveauté qu'il s'autorise, Jérôme supprime tout simplement le recours à l'exhortation de sa consolation de commande. Dans ces divers changements apportés à la *consolatio*, nous pouvons peut-être voir le manque de sincérité d'un Jérôme qui n'a pas su dire non à un ami ou refuser la couronne blanche à une femme pieuse, accidentée de la vie, mais néanmoins pécheresse.

3.6 Ep. 79

L'épistula 79 est à nouveau une pièce de commande, présentée comme un «of-ficium», dès le début de la lettre, et comme une réponse à une demande : «extrema, quae et validior, quod filio meo Avito roganti negare nihil potui.»²⁷ ; en effet, Jérôme ne connaît pas Salvina : «loquimur ad eam cuius faciem ignoramus»²⁸ (Hier., Ep. 79.1). Cela induit immédiatement dans la lettre un manque : la sympa-

²³ «Nunc mihi, fili Oceane, volenti et ultro adpetenti, debitum munus imponis.» «Maintenant, Océanus, mon fils, j'accepte, je recherche même, cette charge que je te dois, que tu m'imposes.» (Hier., Ep. 77.1)

²⁴ «Et pour cette nouveauté des vertus, je renouvellerai un vieux matériau.»

²⁵ «Nous souffrons de cela seulement que nous avons perdu le collier le plus précieux des lieux saints.»

²⁶ «Unde nouis mihi est efferanda praeconiis, et ordine rhetorum praetermisso, tota de conuersionis ac paenitentiae incunabulis adsumenda.» «Je dois donc la louer avec des éloges d'un genre nouveau, et après avoir laissé de côté le style des rhéteurs, c'est à partir des origines de sa conversion et de sa pénitence que je dois l'exalter tout entière.» (Hier., Ep. 77.2)

²⁷ «Voici la dernière raison, et la plus forte : parce que je ne peux rien refuser à mon fils Avitus qui me l'a demandé.»

²⁸ «Nous parlons à une personne dont nous ne connaissons pas le visage.»

thie. Comment partager la douleur de quelqu'un que nous ne connaissons pas ? Jérôme a bien essayé l'exercice, mais, en recourant à la troisième personne pour évoquer Salvina (,eam'), une distance est aussitôt mise entre le consolateur et la consolée, distance qui nuit à la consolation mais qui dans le même temps est rendue nécessaire par le rang de Salvina, qui appartient à la famille impériale, et par le fait que Jérôme ne la connaisse pas. Le passage est beau, mais manque foncièrement de sincérité : »Orbitatis magnitudo, religionis occasio fuit. Nebridium suum sic quaerit, ut in Christo praesentem noverit.« (79.2)²⁹ Les quatre premiers mots nous rappellent le lyrisme du parallélisme adressé à Pammachius qu'ils imitent, mais sans la sincérité, le sublime ne prend pas. Au mieux Salvina nous fait-elle pitié...

Toutefois, cette lettre ressemble à une *consolatio*, comme le montrent la *laudatio* du défunt (Hier., Ep. 79.2; 79.5), les paroles consolatoires qui se retrouvent dans les portraits des deux enfants, notamment celui de la petite sœur : »iungitur ei germana, rosarum et liliorum calathus« (79.6).³⁰ Cette image n'est pas due au hasard et a une connotation très précise depuis saint Cyprien : elle évoque la couronne rouge du martyr et celle blanche, lot de ,consolation' des personnes pieuses qui ne sont pas mortes sous les coups de la persécution mais qui, par leur vie chrétienne irréprochable, ont été des *milites* ou *ancillae Christi*. La fille de Nebridius apparaît alors comme une consolation pour sa mère. À défaut de connaître Salvina, Jérôme ruse en recourant à des images lyriques pour emporter l'adhésion et, espère-t-il, consoler l'épouse du défunt. Enfin, et c'est, pensons-nous, le véritable but de cette lettre, le saint exhorte sa destinataire à rester veuve. Est-ce le souvenir de la consolation précédente, toute fraîche encore, qui pousse Jérôme à insister sur ce point ? En tout cas, ce dernier met à profit toute la fin de la consolation pour mettre en garde Salvina et lui conseiller de ne pas se remarier, comme dans ce passage »tu vero quae in tumulo mariti sepelisti omnes pariter voluptates, quae litam purpurisso et cerussa faciem super feretrum eius lacrimis diluisti« (79.7)³¹ où nous retrouvons les couleurs blanche et rouge, qui nous signifient : »ne te maquille pas, tes enfants sont ton ornement«, telle Cornelia, exemple de vertu de la République romaine dans sa grande époque. Toute cette *consolatio* tend, d'après nous, vers cet unique but : empêcher Salvina de se remarier, et pour cela tous les moyens sont bons, comme écrire à une inconnue sous peine d'être taxé d'opportunisme.

3.7 Ep. 108

Enfin, l'*epistula* 108, la plus longue, apparaît d'emblée comme un *epitaphium*. Par sa longueur d'une part. Par la quantité de louanges et de mises en valeur de la défunte, Paula, qui était une amie très proche de Jérôme. Par la quasi-absence de

²⁹ »La grandeur de la perte fut l'occasion de sa piété. Ainsi son Nébridius, elle le cherche, alors qu'elle le sait présent dans le Christ.«

³⁰ »Lui est attachée sa sœur, panier de roses et de lis.«

³¹ »Mais toi qui as enterré dans le tombeau de ton mari également toutes les voluptés, toi qui as nettoyé de tes larmes, sur son lit funèbre, ton visage couvert de fard rouge et de céruse.«

destinataire. Sur la quarantaine de pages qui constitue cette lettre, seules deux occurrences nous permettent de savoir que Jérôme s'adresse à Eustochium : »secura esto, Eustochium.« (Hier., *Ep.* 108.2; 108.31)

Cette *consolatio* contient une *laudatio* de Paula, sur la majeure partie du texte et une *lamentatio*, diffuse, par touches, lorsque Jérôme raconte des anecdotes de vie en commun avec son amie à la première personne du singulier (*fateor'* par exemple) : nous sentons bien que Paula lui manque, il l'avoue d'ailleurs très clairement aux paragraphes 14 et suivants. Après le récit de la mort de son amie, Jérôme offre des paroles rassurantes à Eustochium pour la consoler : »Quo magis gaudeas, mater tua longo martyrio coronata est.« (108.31)³² Les adieux à Paula sont déchirants : »Vale Paula, et cultoris tui ultimam senectutem orationibus iuva.« (108.33)³³ Jérôme a beau savoir que son amie a rejoint le Christ, il a perdu quelqu'un de cher et cela reste un moment très difficile pour lui. Ce qui peut expliquer l'absence d'exhortation dans cette longue missive. Il a du mal à exhorter les autres à être heureux de la mort de Paula. Alors il répète les paroles d'exhortation de son amie agonisante (108.19), mais est incapable d'en prononcer lui-même. Et puis, il la connaissait tellement qu'il lui est difficile d'exhorter les autres à imiter Paula, il en vient même à la critiquer au paragraphe 21 : »hac re pertinacior fuit«, »vitia loquor« (108.21).³⁴

4. Conclusion

En conclusion, Jérôme savait être un bon consolateur lorsqu'il était sincère, les *consolationes* de commande nous l'ont prouvé. Nous n'avons pas noté, *a priori*, d'évolution flagrante entre les premières et les dernières pièces. Si évolution il y a, elle serait liée à la personnalité du défunt plus qu'au temps qui passe. Que le destinataire soit un homme ou une femme ne change pas grand-chose au style, c'est surtout le degré de proximité qui joue dans la beauté du texte. Existe-t-il des particularités hiéronymiennes ? Oui, sa propre définition de la *brevitas*, en est un exemple. Et il y en a d'autres, c'est d'ailleurs à cela que l'on reconnaît un grand auteur.

³² »Pour que tu te réjouisses davantage, ta mère a été couronnée pour son long martyre.«

³³ »Adieu, Paula, et aide par tes prières l'extrême vieillesse de celui qui te vénère.«

³⁴ »Sur ce sujet elle fut trop obstinée«, »je parle de ses défauts.«

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Kronična bolezen v družini

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Felix Seibert

Integrating Pagan Knowledge: The Virgilian Quotations in Jerome's Letters

Vključevanje poganskega znanja: Vergilijanski navedki v Hieronimovih pismih

Abstract: This paper analyses Jerome's treatment of quotations from Virgil, whose works had a status as the collective memory of antiquity in the Latin West in the fourth century. Four central topics in Jerome's letter collection are examined: language, chastity, barbarian invasions, and asceticism. Examples from famous letters like *Ep. 22* to Eustochium, *Ep. 123* to Geruchia, *Ep. 14* and *60* to Heliodorus, and others, show how and in which context Jerome uses such pagan quotations to approach and connect with the pagan heritage. The stories of Aeneas and Dido, the Tartarus, or the fall of Troy are used as *bona* or *mala exempla* and role models for Christian and everyday life and as rhetorical tools in Jerome's argumentation for their general educational value. For Jerome, Virgil serves as an authority for language and knowledge and moral questions. Herein Jerome finds the best argument for a connection between pagan ideas and the Christian faith.

Keywords: Jerome, letters, Virgil, Aeneid, intertextuality, pagan heritage

Povzetek: Avtor v članku analizira Hieronimovo navajanje Vergilija, čigar dela so v 4. stoletju na latinskem Zahodu veljala za skupno antično dediščino. Obravnava štiri osrednje tematike v Hieronimovi zbirki pisem: jezik, čistost, barbarske vpade in asketicizem. Zgledi iz slovitih pisem Evstohiji (*Ep. 22*), Geruhiji (*Ep. 123*), Heliodoru (*Ep. 14* in *60*) in drugim kažejo, kako in v kakšnih kontekstih je Hieronim uporabljal navedke iz poganske književnosti, da bi jih približal in povezal s poganskim znanjem. Zgodba Eneja in Didone, podoba Tartarja in slika padle Troje so uporabljene kot *bona* ali *mala exempla*, s tem pa tudi kot vzori za krščansko in nasploh vsakodnevno življenje. Še več, pomenijo retorična orodja v Hieronimovi argumentaciji in se uporabljajo v splošne vzgojne namene. Za Hieronima je Vergilij avtoriteta, ne le glede jezika in znanja, marveč tudi glede moralnih vprašanj. Pri njem Hieronim najde najboljši argument za povezavo med poganskimi idejami in krščansko vero.

Ključne besede: Hieronim, pisma, Vergilij, Eneida, intertekstualnost, poganska dediščina

1. Introduction: Jerome and the Latin classics

»Illustris poeta, poeta eloquentissimus, alter Homerus apud nos« (Hier., *Ep.* 140.10.2; 129.4.3; 121.10.5) – these are just some of Jerome's attributes to describe his admiration for the Augustan poet Virgil, the second most cited pagan author in Jerome's oeuvre besides Cicero (Hagendahl 1958, 298).¹ The omnipresence of Virgil and other pagan authors throughout Jerome's works and especially in his highly stylized letter collection is not surprising since his school education had focussed on a small canon of classical authors among whom Virgil had a pre-eminent position. Although Jerome was born into a Christian family, he was raised in the traditional manner of ancient Roman education, even with the most famous *Grammaticus* of that time: Aelius Donatus, one of the leading experts of Virgilian exegesis in those days.²

However, Jerome's attitude towards the pagan classics was highly ambivalent and oscillated between great admiration and radical rejection,³ which is most evident in the description of his famous dream in *Ep.* 22.30.⁴ Nevertheless, he was fully aware of the cultural heritage and the collected knowledge of the ancient world, which was passed on by pagan literature and thereby created a connection between the (pagan) past and the (Christian) present. Primarily Virgil was understood as the leading authority on Roman culture and religion, his works were regarded as containing the knowledge and wisdom of the whole world, and thus his works had a similar status as the Bible.⁵ Pelttari, who states a close connection between the reception of literature and literary production in late antiquity, has shown that »the reading of Virgil's text as containing deeper wisdom was a significant act of appropriation performed by late antique readers« (Pelttari 2014, 43; see also Stefanie 2019, 193–195). Reading, therefore, was a relevant act to understand the world as a whole, and in this context, Jerome, who continued reading and also citing pagan books even after his dream (Revellio 2020, 397), appears as the »ideal author-as-reader« (Pelttari 2014, 17) who aimed at an integration of

¹ In succession to Luebeck (1872), Hagendahl collected a large number of quotations from several pagan authors: Virgil, of course, but also Horace, Terence, Cicero, Quintilian and others. Further important studies on the topic include Courcelle's *opus magnum* about the reception of Virgil's *Aeneid* in Christian and pagan authors (1984) and the recent works of Jeanjean (2018) and Revellio (2020).

² For details on Jerome's life see the many biographies available, for example Rebenich (2002) and Schlang-Schöningen (2018).

³ For example, he calls the pagan classics »mendacis ficta miracula« (Hier., *Ep.* 3.4.1) in comparison with the Bible.

⁴ His ambivalent attitude, which was quite common among Christian authors of the post-Constantinian era, has been subject to several investigations, for example by Pease (1919), Hagendahl (1958, 328; 1983, 88–91), and recently by Mohr (2007, 307–313).

⁵ Recently, Stefaniw (2019, 196) has shown that Didymus the Blind, who was teacher to Jerome, taught his students the use of the tools of ancient grammar for biblical texts: »[T]he text was understood as a microcosm of all knowledge. As a microcosm of the total, the text necessarily included knowledge of the past. Since it gave access to universal knowledge, it was necessarily also valid for the future and an appropriate bequest for the next generation.« While Jerome was familiar with pagan literature from schooldays, he was encouraged by Didymus to value pagan methods and ideas also for his Christian purposes and thus to use the Virgilian and the biblical text in a similar way.

the pagan heritage into the new Christian lifestyle. This becomes most apparent in his treatment of quotations from the pagans, especially Virgil, whom he cites in many of his letters, mainly when he expects his addressees to recognize and understand the references.⁶

Therefore, this paper will deal with the question in which way and for which reasons Jerome uses quotations and allusions to Virgil's works.⁷ The examination will focus on certain topics which are particularly susceptible to quotations from Virgil's works, as they refer to Virgil as a central authority: asceticism, chastity, philology, and contemporary history. These topics are of great importance for Jerome's life and work and are repeatedly mentioned by him. Based on select examples from his letters, it will be shown that Jerome was in search of an appropriate handling of the pagan heritage all his life and saw pagan literature as a possibility of approaching, connecting, and integrating pagan knowledge into the new Christian culture of life.

2. Jerome and Virgil

2.1 *Quod et illustris poeta testatur* – Jerome on Philology

First of all, Virgil serves as an unquestionable authority on grammatical and metrical problems and has a strong influence on Jerome's language and style. One example of his dealing with articulation questions can be found in *Ep.* 20, where he explains to Damasus the meaning of the word *OSANNA*, which, as he writes, is a combination of the two Hebrew words *OSI* and *ANNA* with the elided vowel *I* in the middle. For a better understanding of the metrical phenomenon, he uses an example from Virgil's epic: »*sicut facere solemus in versibus, quando mene incopto desistere victam, scandimus ›men incopto‹.*« (Hier., *Ep.* 20.5.2; Verg., *Aen.* 1.37)⁸ It is not clear why he chose this particular verse from the beginning of Juno's angry speech in book 1, but it works very well as an example for elision and shows how Jerome uses well-known pagan texts for explanatory reasons in linguistic contexts.

Another example appears in Hier., *Ep.* 106.57, where he replies to a question regarding his translation of Ps 88,8 – *magnus, et horrendus* for Greek μέγας και

⁶ Many of Jerome's addressees were highly educated people, the intellectual and also ecclesiastical elite of their time (e.g. Augustin or pope Damasus), for whom the classics served as a kind of stylistic code (Cameron 2011, 406; Conring 2001, 225; Rebenich 1992; Revellio 2020, 401).

⁷ Several studies have already dealt with the question of the function of the pagan quotations in Jerome's works, including Pease (1919, 163–166) and Jeanjean (2013–2014, 166–169). While the first emphasises the exemplary and educational value of the quotations, the latter points out their two functions within the text, either as a rhetorical tool or a dialectic one. Already in pre-Constantinian Christian texts quotations from Virgil were used as stylistic models and for argumentative reasons, although quotations were much rarer at that time (Freund 2000, 355–361). Augustine as Jerome's contemporary, however, uses such quotations primarily for dealing with the pagan faith and as a tool for his missionary work (Müller 2003, 448–454).

⁸ »This is how we usually deal with the verses when we pronounce ›men incopto‹ for ›mene incopto desistere victam‹.«

φοβερός – in comparison to the Septuagint.⁹ He explains that he understands φοβερός in its original meaning as *terribilis*, *timendus*, *formidandus* or more precisely *horrendus* (which all could be translated to ‚terrible‘ or ‚horrible‘) and not as *despiciendum* („despicable“) or *squalidum* („rough, filthy“), as most people use it colloquially according to him (106.57).¹⁰ The passage in question (Ps 88) provides a picture of the punishing God of the Old Testament, the creator and ruler of heaven and earth who should be feared by everyone that surrounds him. To illustrate his understanding of φοβερός as *horrendus*, Jerome cites three passages from the *Aeneid*, in which he presents Virgil’s use of the word. The first (»mihi frigidus horror membra quatit« [Verg., *Aen.* 3.29–30]) is taken from the Polydorus episode in book 3: Aeneas wants to make a sacrifice to the gods for his newly built city in Thrace, but when he tears branches off a bush, they start bleeding. The voice of the Trojan prince Polydorus tells the horrified Aeneas that the Thracians had killed him and that Aeneas should immediately leave with his companions.¹¹ The second quote (»horror ubique animo, simul ipsa silentia terrent« [2.755]) describes Aeneas’ feelings at the end of book 2, when he re-enters the fallen city of Troy to search for his wife Creusa whom he had lost during his escape – the most horrible event for him in the entire epic (Binder 2019, 184). The last one (»monstrum horrendum, ingens« [3.658]) is the shortened description of the Cyclops Polyphemus, the monstrous son of Poseidon who had eaten six of Ulysses’ companions before they could escape from his cave (Hom., *Od.* 9.105–566). All these passages represent situations that are hard to beat in terms of horror. Through his translation and his explanations, Jerome tries to portray the God of Ps 88 as one who can cause such horrors that he finds described in the *Aeneid*. Virgil serves as a stylistic and linguistic example and provides vivid images, which the reader associates with the ideas of the Psalm. Thus, Virgil also influences Jerome’s exegetical work.

2.2 *Quid expectandum est a vidua Christiana – Jerome on Chastity*

A subject of great importance for Jerome was virginity and chastity. Some of his most famous letters deal with the question of a chaste life, for example, *Ep.* 22 *de virginitate servanda* to Eustochium. Because of its specifically Christian topic, *Ep.* 22 contains many biblical quotations, but only a few from the pagan classics. Nevertheless, in *Ep.* 22.6.6, Jerome adds a slight allusion to Virgil to his demand for a pure and chaste life.¹² Eustochium must ensure her chastity both in mind and deed and must not be overcome by Babylonian sins,¹³ which should somewhat

⁹ His translation was based on the critical Greek edition of the psalter by Origen and not the common text of the Septuagint (Rebenich 2002, 25).

¹⁰ In spoken or colloquial language *horrendus* seems to have been mixed with the meaning of *horridus* („rough, bristly“) which both stem back to *horrere* and *horror* (Lammert 1918, 401).

¹¹ In addition, this whole episode is introduced as *horrendum monstrum* (Verg., *Aen.* 3.26).

¹² Consider Virgil’s name in this context, which his biographer Aelius Donatus (Jerome’s teacher!) etymologically derived from *virgo*, on account of which Virgil – especially in the middle ages – is known as the »virgin« poet (*vita Verg.* l. 35–37).

¹³ Babylon, which Jerome refers to twice in the passage, is understood as the biblical commonplace for luxury, heresy, and sin. Compare the »whore of Babylon« (Rev 17,5).

shatter on a rock. Jerome concludes the paragraph as follows:

»Quia ergo impossibile est in sensum hominis non inruere notum medullarum calorem, ille laudatur, ille praedicatur beatus, qui, statim ut coeperit cogitare, interficit cogitatus et elidit eos ad petram: petra autem est Christus.«

»It is impossible that the body's natural heat should not sometimes assail a man and kindle sensual desire, but he is praised and accounted blessed, who, when thoughts begin to rise, gives them no quarter, but dashes them straightway against the rock: And the rock is Christ.« (trans. Wright)

In this passage, Jerome alludes to »notusque medullas intravit calor« (Verg., *Aen.* 8.389), a phrase from a famous passage in the *Aeneid*, where Venus successfully coaxes her husband Vulcan to forge weapons for her illegitimate son, Aeneas (8.387–393). Through this allusion, Jerome introduces, on the one hand, Venus, the prototype of the unchaste wife and converse of every Christian *virgo*, and on the other hand, Vulcan, the cheated husband who has absolutely no reason to fulfil her wish. Nevertheless, his flesh is weaker than his spirit, and so he falls victim to Venus' seduction, totally driven by his lust, and finally fulfils her wish. The introduction of these two antipodes of Christian asceticism as *mala exempla* fits perfectly well in the context of Jerome's treatment of Christian chastity: it is not just their behaviour that contradicts every principle of Christian monogamy but also their status as part of the pagan *dei consentes* that reveals the total corruptness of the pagan religion, which Jerome has already attacked with his references to Babylon above.

However, the scenes most frequently quoted in his treatises on chastity are surprisingly taken from the Dido tragedy of the fourth book of the *Aeneid*. In the beginning, Dido is shown as the mourning widow who wants to remain faithful to her dead husband and thus gives a perfect example for the Roman *univira* (Kru-meich 1993, 251–257). The following conversation between Dido and her sister Anna after the death of Dido's first husband Sychaeus is cited twice. In full detail, it can be found in Hier., *Ep.* 123.13.1 *ad Geruchiam de monogamia*:

»Solane perpetua maerens carpere iuventa
nec dulces natos, Veneris nec praemia noris?
id cinerem aut manes credis curare sepultos?
cui breviter respondeat ipsa, quae passa est:
›tu lacrimis evicta meis, tu prima furentem
his, germana, malis oneras atque obicis hosti.
non licuit thalami expertem sine crimine vitam
degere more ferae tales nec tangere curas.
non servata fides cineri promissa Sychaeo.« (4.32–34.548–552)

»Wilt thou, lonely and sad, pine away all thy youth long, and know not sweet children or love's reward? Thinkest thou that dust or buried shades give heed to that?‹ To this, the sufferer replies briefly: ›Won over by my

tears, thou, my sister, thou wert first to load my frenzied soul with these ills, and drive me on the foe. Ah, that I could not spend my life, apart from wedlock, a blameless life, even as some wild creature, knowing no such cares! The faith vowed to the ashes of Sychaeus I have not kept!« (trans. Fairclough)

During the conversation, Dido lets her sister convince her to enjoy the *prae-mia Veneris*, break her *fides* to Sychaeus, and start a relationship with Aeneas. However, he abandons her in the end, and so she finally commits suicide out of despair. Thus, Jerome utilizes Dido as a *malum exemplum* for a desperate widow longing for a new husband. In the following, he explicitly warns Geruchia about the horrors of marriage (Hier., *Ep.* 123.13.2):

»Proponis mihi gaudia nuptiarum; ego tibi opponam pyram, gladium, incendium. non tantum boni est in nuptiis, quod speramus, quantum mali, quod accidere potest et timendum est.«

»You set before me the joys of wedlock. I, for my part, will remind you of Dido's sword and pyre and funeral flames. In marriage, there is not so much good to be hoped for as there is evil which may happen and must be feared.« (trans. Fremantle)

The message for Geruchia is clear: if she does not preserve her widowhood, she has to expect grief and pain instead of the supposed joys. Only in the renunciation of carnal pleasures does she have the opportunity to devote herself entirely to her religious faith.¹⁴

In Hier., *Ep.* 79, a consolation to Salvina on the early death of her husband, Nebridius, Jerome conversely recalls Dido as a *bonum exemplum*, who lives the life of a perfect *univira*, when he cites her (79.7.8):

»Ille meos, primus qui me sibi iunxit, amores / abstulit; ille habeat secum servetque sepulcro. / ... / si tanti vilissimum vitrum, quanti pretiosissimum margaritum? si communi lege naturae damnat omnes Gentilis vidua voluptates, quid expectandum est a vidua Christiana, quae pudicitiam suam non solum ei debet, qui defunctus est, sed ei, cum quo regnatura est?«

»He, my first spouse, has robbed me of my loves. / So be it: let him keep them in the tomb. / If common glass is worth so much, what must be the value of a pearl of price? If in deference to a law of nature a Gentile widow can condemn all sensual indulgence, what must we expect from a Christian widow who owes her chastity not to one who is dead but to one with whom she shall reign in heaven?« (trans. Fremantle)

¹⁴ A second treatment of this scene can be found in Hier., *Ep.* 54.5 *ad Furiam de viduitate servanda*. Here, Anna's words are put in the mouth of Furia's heathen handmaids. Thus, Furia is identified with the *malum exemplum* Dido, who should better preserve her *viduitas* instead of listening to her servants' advice.

Jerome asks for such an attitude from every Christian woman, and in the mythological figure Dido, he finds the perfect role model of a chaste widow for noble Roman women.¹⁵ Intentionally, Jerome takes possession of the manners and mindset of the Roman culture, for which Virgil serves as a moral authority, and uses this pagan way of thinking to promote his ideals of chastity and asceticism.¹⁶

2.3 *Urbs antiqua ruit* – Jerome on the Sack of Rome

In his letters, Jerome repeatedly mentions that he worries about the future of Rome due to the continuing barbarian invasions. He was so profoundly impressed by the sack of Rome that he even pretended to have lost his words after the tragedy (Hier., *Ep.* 126.2.1). Already in 396, 14 years before Alaric defeated Rome, in a consolatory letter to his friend, Heliodorus, on the death of his nephew, Nepotian, Jerome drew a dark picture (60.16.2–60.17.1):

»Viginti et eo amplius anni sunt, quod inter Constantinopolim et alpes Iulias cotidie Romanus sanguis effunditur. Scythiam, Thraciam, Macedoniam, Thessaliam, Dardaniam, Daciam, Epiros, Dalmatiam cunctasque Pannonias Gothus, Sarmata, Suadus, Alanus, Hunni, Vandali, Marcomanni vastant, trahunt, rapiunt. /... / »ubique luctus, ubique gemitus et plurima mortis imago.« Romanus orbis ruit /... / »Non, mihi si linguae centum sint oraque centum, ferrea vox, omnia poenarum percurrere nomina possim.« /... / felix Nepotianus, qui haec non videt; felix qui ista non audit.«

»For twenty years and more, the blood of Romans has every day been shed between Constantinople and the Julian Alps. Scythia, Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Dardania, Dacia, Epirus, Dalmatia, and all the provinces of Pannonia, have been sacked, pillaged, and plundered by Goths and Sarmatians, Quadians and Alans, Huns and Vandals and Marcomanni. /... / »Sorrow and grief on every side we see / And death in many a shape.« The Roman world is falling. /... / »Had I a hundred tongues, a hundred mouths, / A voice of brass, I could not tell the names / Of all those punishments.« /... / Happy is Nepotian, for he does not see these sights nor hear those cries.« (trans. Wright)

The first thing to be noticed in this passage are the allusions to the catalogues of nations and warriors in the ancient epics (Hom., *Il.* 2.484–877; Verg., *Aen.* 7.647–817; 10.163–214). Previously, Jerome had spoken about the successfully converted nations (Hier., *Ep.* 60.4), using a quotation from the ekphrasis of Aeneas' shield (Verg., *Aen.* 8.723) and thereby alluding to Augustus' triumph over the barbarians

¹⁵ Another important quotation in this context is the recurring *dux femina facti* (Verg., *Aen.* 1.346) which Jerome uses for example of Paulina, the second daughter of Paula (Hier., *Ep.* 66.3), or of Artemia, the wife of the Gaul Rusticus (Hier., *Ep.* 122.4). Like Dido, who led the founding of Carthage, these women lead their husbands in their efforts for a chaste marriage.

¹⁶ Nevertheless, his choice of quotations and allusions used seems arbitrary in terms of ideology. He shares this attitude with other early Christian writers, especially Lactantius and Augustine, who regularly reinterpret Virgil for Christian purposes (Schelkle 1939, 195; 207; Heck 1988, 178–179).

depicted there. Now, he spreads out a catalogue of nations involved in the war, thus comparing the current situation of the Roman empire with the mythical wars.

Furthermore, there are two direct quotations from the *Aeneid*. The first one (»ubique luctus, ubique gemitus et plurima mortis imago« [Verg., *Aen.* 2.368–369]) is derived from the narration about the fall of Troy in the second book. The parallel is evident here: Rome is seen as a second Troy,¹⁷ and one could quickly think that Jerome functions as a prophet for the sack of Rome 14 years later. The second quotation, Verg., *Aen.* 6.625–627¹⁸ is taken from Aeneas' *katabasis*, where his guide, the Cumaean Sibyl, concludes her description of Tartarus, the most horrible place in the entire underworld, with those words. Positioned at the end of the paragraph about the barbarians, Jerome shows the parallels between the terrible kinds of torture the sinners are suffering in the underworld and his own life in such dangerous and uncertain times. The barbarian invasion is hell on earth for everyone, and Nepotian is fortunate to have escaped.

In 412 then, two years after the disastrous defeat against Alaric's Goths, Jerome mourns the fate of Rome and his brethren in Christ (Hier., *Ep.* 127.12.3) and cites the passage from book 2 in total length (Verg., *Aen.* 2.361–365,369), replacing the end of verse 365 with verse 369, words he had already used years before in the letter cited above (Hier., *Ep.* 60.16.3).¹⁹ He could not have found more suitable words and images to describe the horrors of that time. Pagan poetry, therefore, seems to have had a more profound truth for Jerome than he was probably aware of: the influence of the mythological underworld on his view of a world out of joint, the mythical enemies that have become a real threat, and of course the fall of Troy as parallel to the fall of Rome show his tremendous reading experience and form points of contact between the pagan heritage and the Christian present.

2.4 *Militia Christi* – Jerome on Asceticism

The last matter to take a closer look at is the strictly ascetic life (as a hermit in the desert), which Jerome considered the best way to serve Christ. The subject is most prominent in Hier., *Ep.* 14, where he tries to convince his schoolmate, the monk, and former military officer, Heliodorus, to live a life of asceticism as a hermit. The setting of the letter is quite martial due to the understanding of asceticism as *militia Christi* – military service for Christ.²⁰ Already, in the beginning, Jerome writes:

»Ecce de caelo tuba canit, ecce cum nubibus debellaturus orbem impera-

¹⁷ Also, the date given in the beginning of the passage (*viginti et eo amplius anni sunt*) recalls the long duration of the Trojan war (more than 9 years) and afterwards the Odyssey (about 10 years).

¹⁸ »Non mihi si linguae centum sint oraque centum, / ferrea vox, omnis scelerum comprehendere formas, / omnia poenarum percurrere nomina possim.« One of Jerome's favourite passages, as it seems; also found at Hier., *Ep.* 66.5; 77.6; 123.16.

¹⁹ He also alludes again to Virgil's description of the underworld when he cites Verg., *Aen.* 6.266 (*sit mihi fas audita loqui*) in the context of his report of a barbarian attack on Marcella's house.

²⁰ A common metaphor for the life of a monk in early Christianity, which stems back to 2 Tim 2,3 and can be found for example in Hier., *Ep.* 52.5.3 (Harnack 1905, 1–46).

tor armatus egreditur, ecce bis acutus gladius ex regis ore procedens obviam quaeque metit.» (Hier., *Ep.* 14.2.1)

»Lo, the trumpet sounds from heaven! Lo, our general fully armed comes forth amid the clouds to subdue the world! Lo, from our king's mouth proceeds a sword twice sharpened, which cuts down all that is in its path!« (trans. Wright)

A small phrase is borrowed from Virgil's *Aeneid* (»proxima quaeque metit gladio« [Verg., *Aen.* 10.513]) that alludes to Aeneas' rage after the death of his young friend Pallas. Another allusion goes back to the beginning of the Revelation (»et de ore eius gladius utraque parte acutus exibat« [Rev. 1,16]), where John describes his vision of the voice that gives him the order to write down the book. Jerome now combines both quotations and creates a new phrase that transports the ideas and concepts of both worlds, the pagan and the Christian one. Like John before Christ and *pious* Aeneas in front of the dead body of Pallas, Heliodorus shall follow his destiny and choose the ascetic life of a hermit to serve God. Thus, Jerome shows parallels between Christian and pagan values and presents a way of approaching and connecting with the other culture.

However, it is not only asceticism that demands a soldier's qualities from Heliodorus. Every day holds adversities and persecution for a true Christian, as Jerome writes hereafter (Hier., *Ep.* 14.4). He explicitly warns Heliodorus about the devil (*adversarius noster*) and immediately accuses him of being far too inattentive, using a quotation from Verg., *Georg.* 2.470, where the author describes a paradise-like place where farmers live a peaceful life far from war and other duties. However, such conditions exist only in the fictional worlds of the pagan poets – not in the real world of Jerome and Heliodorus. There, one is constantly confronted with temptations (*luxuria, avaritia, libido*) and attacks on his Christian beliefs. A paradise on earth is a pagan invention. There is just one heavenly paradise for a Christian, which can only be reached by resisting all worldly temptations. To emphasize his point, Jerome ends the passage with another warning and once again quotes the *Aeneid* (Verg., *Aen.* 7.337), alluding to the Fury Allecto (»hostis, cui nomina mille, mille nocendi artes«), who is described as sowing discord, hate, and violence in order to keep the Trojans from settling in Italy. In the same way, Aeneas faces the Fury, a Christian like Heliodorus has to face the temptations of the devil, who likewise has many faces and knows many wiles, and he always has to be prepared to fight like a soldier for his faith. Thus, Aeneas serves as a role model worth copying for Heliodorus and every true Christian.

3. Conclusion: Jerome and the pagan heritage

»Omnes paene omnium libri /.../ eruditionis doctrinaeque plenissimi sunt«²¹ Jerome writes in *Ep.* 70.6.1, and thereby, the best summarizes his view of pagan literature: first of all, it is helpful for its educational value, even for Christians (Pease 1919, 163; Coffin 1924, 172). As the primary author of school education, Virgil serves as the chief source for knowledge about Roman history, religion, mythology, language, culture, and life. In Jerome's opinion, every erudite Christian must be familiar with his texts. Therefore, he engages in intensive life-long reading of Virgil's texts, which he understood as the cultural memory of the ancient world. Especially in questions of style, Virgil is the foremost authority Jerome refers to repeatedly, first of all in linguistic problems, which may even have exegetical implications for his Latin translation of the Bible, as has been shown.

Nevertheless, one must not read Virgil as a (pre-)Christian poet or Messianic prophet, as some of Jerome's contemporaries do.²² For Jerome, the Bible has the sole claim for truth. Virgil, however, provides memorable images, which Jerome copies and reuses for his purposes. Thus, pagan texts can support a better understanding of the biblical messages or provide exemplary models for a lifestyle to be attained by Jerome's readers. Therefore, allusions and quotations from the classics (Virgil as well as other pagan authors) are usually used as rhetorical tools: as simple examples to support an argument (the catalogue of the invading barbarian nations), for comparisons with historical events or current living conditions (the parallel Rome – Troy; the Tartarus that has become a reality due to the barbarian invasion or asceticism, which is nothing else than military service for Christ), as *bona or mala exempla* (Venus and Vulcan or Dido and Anna as examples of the dangers of an unchaste life) and finally as easily understandable role models for a Christian way of life (Dido, the aristocratic widow and willing *univira* or Aeneas, the pious fighter for his destiny and faith). By citing him over and over again, Jerome creates different authorities of Virgil: as a stylistic example, as a source of knowledge and learning, and finally as an *auctoritas* in a field that is extremely important for the Christian faith: morality, which seems to tie in directly with pagan poetry and its images. For a scholar like Jerome, the easiest way to approach pagan ideas and culture was studying, reading, and writing. Through his intensive examination of the classics, he saw various intersections between pagan traditions and the outline of a Christian's life. So, he integrated whatever he considered helpful from the classics into his writings and thus connected the 'old' pagan world with ideas of the 'new' Christian one.

²¹ »Almost all the books of all these [pagan] authors are extremely full of erudition and learning.«

²² With his criticism of the *Centio*-poets, who saw Virgil as a Christian *vates* who foretold the birth of Christ in *ecl.* 4, he condemns the practice of Christian reinterpretation severely: »ac non sic etiam Maronem sine Christo possimus dicere Christianum /.../ puerilia sunt haec et circulatorum ludo similia.« (Hier., *Ep.* 53.7.3)

Abbreviations

CSEL – Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.

Hier., *Ep.* – Hieronymus, *Epistulae* [Hilberg 1996].

Hom., *Il.* – Homerus, *Ilias*.

Hom., *Od.* – Homerus, *Odyssea*.

Verg., *Aen.* – Vergilius, *Aeneis* [Conte 2009].

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Saint Jerome in *Liber officialis* of Amalar of Metz (775–850) and *Rationale divinorum officiorum* of William Durand (1230–1296)

Sv. Hieronim v delu Liber officialis Amalarja iz Metza (775–850) in v spisu Rationale divinorum officiorum Vilijema Duranda (1230–1296)

Abstract: Amalar of Metz and William Durand were medieval liturgists from the beginning and end of a long period during which liturgical treatises were created and labelled *expositio missae* or liturgical expositions. In the early 9th century, Amalar of Metz compiled the exposition *De ecclesiastico officio*, in which he examines liturgical celebrations by using an allegorical interpretation and the contribution to the Carolingian reform. He eventually became a role model for later authors who created more or less similar treatises following his example. One author who considered Amalar a role model was William Durand the Elder, bishop of Mende in France. In the 13th century, he compiled the exposition *Rationale divinorum officiorum*. Both expositions were very influential not only in the period in which they were created but also in later periods. Amalar's exposition enhanced the development of allegorical interpretations in the Middle Ages, while Durand's exposition has been used up to the liturgical reform introduced by the Second Vatican Council. In the present paper, the author explores the reception of Saint Jerome by both authors referred to above. The said authors do not use the patristic ideas in their original sense; they do not expand on them theologically. Their purpose for using patristic sources is to verify doctrines or liturgical practices of their period. Introducing allegory in the interpretation of liturgy and compiling existing material is relevant for transmitting the Fathers' beliefs to future generations.

Keywords: liturgical exposition, Jerome, reception, *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, *De ecclesiastico officio*

Povzetek: Amalar iz Metza in Viljem Durand, srednjeveška liturgika, sodita na začetek in konec dolgega obdobja, ko so se oblikovale liturgične razprave z razlago obreda svete maše (*expositio missae*). V začetku 9. stoletja je Amalar sestavil

delo *De ecclesiastico officio*, v katerem z alegorično interpretacijo razlaga bogoslužje v odnosu do karolinške reforme. Sčasoma je postal vzor še za poznejše razlagalce, med drugim tudi za Viljema Duranda, škofa francoskega mesta Mende, ki je v 13. stoletju pripravil *Rationale divinatorum officiorum*. Oba spisa sta imela velik vpliv ne le v obdobjih nastanka, marveč tudi pozneje. Amalarjevo delo je okrepiło razvoj alegorične interpretacije v srednjem veku, Viljemovo pa je ostalo v rabi vse do liturgične reforme drugega vatikanskega koncila. V prispevku avtor obravnava recepcijo sv. Hieronima v navedenih delih. Avtorja se ne sklicujeta na patristično misel na izviren način, v smislu razvoja teološke misli, marveč z uporabo patrističnih virov utemeljujeta nauk in bogoslužne prakse svojega časa. Alegorija kot pomoč pri razlagi liturgije in za zbiranje že obstoječih besedil sta metodi za prenos učenja očetov na prihodnje generacije.

Ključne besede: razlaga liturgije, Hieronim, recepcija, *Rationale divinatorum officiorum*, *De ecclesiastico officio*

1. Amalar of Metz and William Durand in the Context of Medieval Theology

Medievalists and theologians who explore medieval theology have recently been writing about the significance of medieval liturgists (Koščak 2019, 23–25). When it comes to liturgy, medieval theology abounds in authors who can testify about the context in which they created their works. Two authors referred to in the title of the present paper, Amalar of Metz (Amalarius Metensis, abbr. Amalar.) and William Durand (Guillaume Durand, abbr. Guil. Dur.), primarily discuss the symbolism inscribed within the medieval course of liturgical celebrations. The authors also discuss the literary creativity of the period, primarily the role models used in the creation of their original works.

Amalar of Metz, who introduced the allegorical method into the interpretation of liturgical celebration during the Carolingian era, was born in the late 8th century in Burgundy. He was appointed the Archbishop of Trier around 809. He started writing his well-known liturgical works around 813. Following Charlemagne's death, he was demoted from the position of bishop. He was back in the king's good graces in 825. In 835, he was assigned the position of the Archbishop of Lyon. He spent his whole life discovering the symbolism in liturgical celebrations (Knibbs 2014, vii–xxx). He is the first author in the long line of writers of the medieval literary form entitled liturgical exposition.¹ This literary form reached its pinnacle in the works of William Durand the Elder. Works of authors who succeeded him were much less successful, while Durand himself remained an authority up to the Second Vatican Council.

¹ Liturgical exposition is a medieval literary form used by liturgists of the period to teach the clergy on the symbolism of liturgical celebrations and everything related to it (church architecture, gestures, liturgy times, sacraments, church services in liturgy etc.).

William Durand was born in 1230 or 1231 in the French town of Puymisson near Béziers. He held various positions and honours in the French church hierarchy. He was named a clergyman in Miquelon in 1251, while in 1254, he became the spiritual leader of a church in Narbonne. From 1255, he studied canonical law at Modena. During the pontificate of Pope Clement IV (1256–1268), he was appointed priest of the Roman Curia. He was named the general auditor at the Holy See court of appeals (*audientia causarum sacri palatii*). He also held the position of captain and prefect of the Papal State. In 1285, he was appointed bishop of the French town of Mende. In 1295, Pope Bonifacius VIII offered him the Ravenna Diocese. However, Durand declined this position. He died on 1 November 1296. The epitaph on his grave in the Roman basilica Santa Maria sopra Minerva testifies his significance in the Church ranks and the significance of his works. (Koščak 2019, 25–26)

2. The Use of Patristic Ideas in Liturgical Expositions by Amalar of Metz and William Durand the Elder

The present paper explores the reception of Saint Jerome's ideas by both authors mentioned in the title. Medieval authors do not use the patristic ideas in their original sense; in other words, they do not expand on the Fathers' ideas in a theological sense. The goal of using patristic sources is to verify the teachings or liturgical practices of the recent period. Compilatory methods of the subject authors are used to transmit the Fathers' ideas to following periods, but a touch of originality characteristic of the context under research is also evident.

Amalar's best-known work, *Liber officialis* or *De ecclesiastico officio* (*On the Liturgy*), is the subject of research.² This work reached a broad medieval audience. Jean-Michel Hanssens discovered seventy-four manuscripts in circulation throughout the centuries (Knibbs 2014, xi), while the manuscript underwent three redactions (xv–xvi).

In the work's Prologue, Amalar introduces the testimony on the reasons behind his writing, which are, in his words, »desiderio ut scirem rationem aliquam de ordine nostrae Missae« (Knibbs 2014, 18–19). He writes that his comment would present »necnon etiam et iterare quod a scripto sancti Ambrosii et sancti Augustini didici de ordine orationum in Missa et in aliis officiis« (2014, 2). Even though he claims that he would be transmitting the ideas of the most prominent patristic authors from the Middle Ages, he uses other sources of the Church fathers. For this reason, in the primary stage of the research, we created a list of all citations of the patristic works within *Liber officialis*. When it comes to the other patristic sources, as well as those of his contemporaries, he cites the works of Saint Jerome, Saint Bede the Venerable, Saint Cyprian, Saint Gregory the Great, Saint Gregory

² For the critical edition of Amalar's works, see Hanssens 1948–1950. It is published in three volumes: Tomus I - Introductio, Opera minora; Tomus II - Liber officialis; Tomus III - Liber de ordine antiphonarii, Eclogae de ordine romano; Appendix Tomi I et II - Indices.

of Nazianzus, Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Saint John Chrysostom, Rabanus Maurus, Saint Isidore of Seville, Boetius and Gregory of Tours.

Considering the initial thought on Saint Augustine and Saint Ambrose and with the preliminary research into the presence of citations of the Fathers unveiling many citations by Saint Jerome, two research questions were asked in the context of our research: 1. What is the reason behind Amalar's use of Saint Jerome's ideas? 2. Does Amalar of Metz use Saint Jerome's works to base a new method for interpreting liturgy on the Fathers' foundations?

We researched the reception of Saint Jerome in *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* by William Durand the Elder, in an equal manner (Koščak 2019, 26–28). At the very end of *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* Durand acknowledges that they used various sources for assembling the treatise (Thibodeau 2007, xx).

2.1 The Reception of Saint Jerome in *Liber officialis* by Amalar of Metz

Below we provide a list of all sections where Amalar of Metz cited Saint Jerome. After the title of the cited work, numbers within slashes provide information on the citation location in Saint Jerome's work. The reference to Saint Jerome's work is followed by the location of the citation in Amalar's work. Saint Jerome was cited in sixty-five places throughout four books of *Liber officialis* (*Lib. off.*). Amalar references various works by Saint Jerome, mostly his Commentaries on the Scripture.

Of Saint Jerome's commentaries on the Books of the Old Testament, the most cited is the Hier., *In Is.*, which was cited in nine places (*In Is.* 14.53 – *Lib. off.* 1.11.8; *In Is.* 17.63 – *Lib. off.* 1.11.11; *In Is.* 17.61 – *Lib. off.* 1.12.45; *In Is.* 3.7 – *Lib. off.* 1.12.47; *In Is.* 2 – *Lib. off.* 1.19.7–8; *In Is.* 15 – *Lib. off.* 1.19.12; *In Is.* 1.1 – *Lib. off.* 3.3.6; *In Is.* 4.11 – *Lib. off.* 4.12.6; *In Is.* 4.12 – *Lib. off.* 4.12.7). The other Old Testament-related commentaries Amalar cites are the *In Zach.* (*In Zach.* 1.1 – *Lib. off.* 1.1.7–8), *In Ioel* (*In Ioel* 2 – *Lib. off.* 1.2.2; 3.1.3), *In Ezech.* (*In Ezech.* 11.36 – *Lib. off.* 1.8.6; *In Ezech.* 13.44 – *Lib. off.* 1.16.5; *In Ezech.* 3.9 – *Lib. off.* 3.5.2), *In Hab.* (*In Hab.* 2 – *Lib. off.* 2.13.4; *In Hab.* 2.3 – *Lib. off.* 4.16.2), *In Hos.* (*In Hos.* 2 – *Lib. off.* 1.13.8) and *In Dan.* (*In Dan.* 6 – *Lib. off.* 4.3.1; *In Dan.* 12 – *Lib. off.* 4.10.13).

Of Saint Jerome's commentaries to the Books of the New Testament, Amalar uses the *In Matth.* (*In Matth.* 4 – *Lib. off.* 1.16.3; *In Matth.* 1.9 – *Lib. off.* 1.36.6–7; *In Matth.* 2.2 – *Lib. off.* 2.20.1; *In Matth.* 6.26 – *Lib. off.* 3.23.14; *In Matth.* 4.26 – *Lib. off.* 3.23.25), *In Tit.* (*In Tit.* 1 – *Lib. off.* 2.3.2–4; *In Tit.* 1 – *Lib. off.* 2.13.4–6), *In Eph.* (*In Eph.* 3.5 – *Lib. off.* 1.1.21; 3.2.12; 4.3.15–16; *In Eph.* 2 – *Lib. off.* 1.14.4; *In Eph.* 2.4 – *Lib. off.* 1.27.27; *In Eph.* 3.6 – *Lib. off.* 3.4.4) and *In Gal.* (*In Gal.* *In Gal.* 2.4 – *Lib. off.* 4.37.2–5).

Of the other texts written by Saint Jerome, Amalar cites his Epistles (*Epistulae*), more specifically *Ep.* 78 (*Ep.* 78.2 – *Lib. off.* 1.4.5; 1.18.2–3), *Ep.* 77 (*Ep.* 77.4 – *Lib. off.* 1.12.40), *Ep.* 108 (*Ep.* 108.9 – *Lib. off.* 1.14.7; *Ep.* 108.19 – *Lib. off.* 4.9.20), *Ep.* 41 (*Ep.* 41.3 – *Lib. off.* 1.36.4; 1.37.10), *Ep.* 71 (*Ep.* 71.6 – *Lib. off.* 1.36.5), *Ep.* 52 (*Ep.* 52.5 – *Lib. off.* 2.4.1–2), *Ep.* 146 (*Ep.* 146.2 – *Lib. off.* 2.12.7; *Ep.* 146.1 – *Lib. off.* 2.13.11; 2.13.15) and *Ep.* 64 (*Ep.* 64.20 – *Lib. off.* 2.15.2; *Ep.* 64.2 – *Lib. off.*

2.18.1; *Ep.* 64.21 – *Lib. off.* 2.22.1). Below we provide some of the citations of Saint Jerome's texts referred to above.

Hier., <i>In Is.</i> 14.53 Amalar., <i>Lib. off.</i> 1.11.8	»Si posuerit pro peccato animam suam – ille quem Dominus contereere voluit sive mundare – videbit semen longevum quod seminavit in bona terra. De quo et in Evangelio scriptum est: Exiit qui seminat seminare semen bonum.«
Hier., <i>In Ezech.</i> 11.36 Amalar., <i>Lib. off.</i> 1.8.6	»Creator enim omnium sum; peperi eis et sanctificavi illos et gloriae pristinae restitui, ita ut super credentes et ab errore conversos effunderem aquam mundam baptismi salutaris, et mundarem eos ab abominationibus suis et ab universis erroribus quibus fuerant occupati, et darem eis cor novum, ut crederent in Filium Dei.«
Hier., <i>In Dan.</i> 6 Amalar., <i>Lib. off.</i> 4.3.1	»Tria autem tempora quibus Deo flectenda sunt genua: tertiam horam et sextam et nonam, ecclesiastica traditio intelligit. Denique tertia hora descendit super apostolos Spiritus Sanctus; sexta volens Petrus comedere, ad orationem ascendit in caenaculum; nona Petrus et Iohannes pergebant ad templum.«
Hier., <i>In Matth.</i> 4 Amalar., <i>Lib. off.</i> 1.16.3	»Traditio Iudeaorum est Christum in media nocte venturum in similitudine Aegyptii temporis. Quando Pascha caelebratum est, exterminator venit et Dominus super tabernacula transiit, et sanguine agni postes nostrarum frontium consecrati sunt. Unde reor et traditionem apostolicam permansisse, ut die vigiliarum Paschae ante noctis dimidium populos dimittere non liceat, expectantes adventum Christi, et, postquam illud tempus transierit, securitate praesumpta, festum cuncti agunt diem.«
Hier., <i>In Eph.</i> 3.5 Amalar., <i>Lib. off.</i> 1.1.21	»Significare absconditam cogitationem, cum inflammatur sensus noster ad libidinem, et carnis titillationibus anima ignita succenditur; et nihilominus Dei timore et mentis iudicio refrenatur.«
Hier., <i>In Gal.</i> 2.4 Amalar., <i>Lib. off.</i> 4.37.2–5	»Si dies observare non licet, et menses, et tempora, et annos, nos quoque similiter crimen incurrimus, quartam sabbati observantes et Parasceven et diem Dominicam et ieiunium Quadragesimae et Paschae festivitatem et Pentecostes laetitiam et, pro varietatem regionum, diversa in honore martyrum tempora constituta... Nos enim non azymorum pascha celebramus, sed resurrectionis et crucis. Nec septem iuxta morem Israel numeramus ebdomadas in Pentecoste; sed Spiritus Sancti veneramur adventum. Et ne inordinate congregati populi fides minueretur in Christo, propterea dies aliqui constituti sunt, ut in unum omnes pariter veniremus – non quod celebrior sit dies illa qua convenimus, sed quacumque die conveniendum sit, ex conspectu mutuo laetitia maior oriatur.«
Hier., <i>Ep.</i> 78.2 Amalar., <i>Lib. off.</i> 1.4.5	»Nec mirum si in illo numeri sacramento perveniamus ad regna caelorum, sub quo Dominus atque salvator a primo patriarcha pervenit ad virginem – quasi ad Iordanem, qui pleno gurgite fluens, Spiritus Sancti gratis redundabat.«
Hier., <i>Ep.</i> 41.3 Amalar., <i>Lib. off.</i> 1.36.4	»Nos unam Quadragesimam secundum traditionem apostolorum tempore nobis orbe congruo ieiunamus; illi tres in anno faciunt quadragesimas, quasi tres passi sint salvatores. Non quod et per totum annum, excepta Pentecoste, ieiunare non liceat, sed quod aliud sit necessitate, aliud voluntate munus offerre.«
Hier., <i>Ep.</i> 64.20 Amalar., <i>Lib. off.</i> 2.15.2	»Legimus in Levitico iuxta praeceptum Dei Moysen lavisse Aaron et filios eius. Iam tunc purgationem mundi et rerum omnium sanctitatem baptismi sacramenta signabant. Non accipiunt vestes nisi loti prius sordibus, nec ornantur ad sacra nisi in Christo novi homines renascantur.«

Table 1: *The selected quotations of St. Jerome (part 1).*

It has already been said that Amalar's originality lies in the use of the allegorical method of interpretation. The existing works claim that »the allegorical significance of liturgical words and actions reflects, for Amalar, the divine inspiration of those who devised the liturgy« (Knibbs 2014, xviii). However, based on the citations

used that interpret the Scripture in an allegorical manner, we can say that liturgy for Amalar has allegorical meanings in the same manner as the Scripture does.

Many of Amalar's interpretations and the selected citations of the Fathers' work may seem arbitrary. However, the amount of Jerome's citations used in which he interprets lines from the Scripture in an allegorical manner provides the answer to why Amalar specifically uses those interpretations and why he uses Jerome's interpretations. Jerome used the allegorical method in the interpretation of the Scripture. On the other hand, Amalar used allegory for interpreting liturgy to prove that the 'architects' of liturgical celebrations are equal to the writers of the Scripture books. Just like Scripture writers were guided by divine inspiration, the same applied to those who modelled liturgy. Hence, it is no surprise that he used the Fathers' texts drafted as commentaries on the Old Testament for verifying the allegorical interpretation of individual liturgical celebrations. This is also the reason why he often cites texts written by Saint Jerome.

Of all the Fathers' texts, Saint Jerome is the most represented author in the *Liber officialis* corpus. Contemporary authors claim that Saint Jerome's theological insights are not as deep as Saint Augustine's (Bratulić 2018, 221–222). The fame he acquired by translating the Holy Bible and writing his commentaries has not diminished even after the ecclesiastical and political changes of the Middle Ages until Amalar's period. In *Liber officialis*, he is not dependent on Jerome's interpretations. Jerome's citations conveyed in *Liber officialis* demonstrate that Amalar based his allegorical method specifically on Jerome's allegorical interpretation of the Scripture.

It should also be added that Saint Augustine's theology is far more represented in *Liber officialis* than that of Saint Jerome. The explored citations of Saint Augustine demonstrate that Amalar used texts that are theologically more developed. As stated by Amalar himself, Augustine's theology is his teacher, and he wants it to be transferred to the priests. Our exploration of the reception of Saint Jerome by Amalar of Metz leads us to the conclusion that he inherited theological insights from Saint Augustine and new methodologies for interpreting liturgy from Saint Jerome.

2.2 The Reception of Saint Jerome by William Durand

Our research also includes the reception of Saint Jerome by William Durand during his most productive period of writing liturgical expositions. He is Amalar's late medieval successor. Even though he is not the last ever compiler of liturgical exposition, he is the most successful one – the quality of texts decreased after his demise. The number of later editions of Durand's exposition *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* (*Rat. div.*) shows the relevance of this work in later periods. In addition, Durand's exposition is the second-ever printed book.

Our recent research was conducted to write the doctoral thesis on *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* by William Durand (1230–1296) as an example of medieval pre-treatise ecclesiology. It unveiled a large number of patristic texts that Durand used for creating his expositions. Even a superficial analysis shows that he is en-

tirely dependent on his literary role models. In other words, the process of creating his exposition primarily consisted of compiling sources. Since the author was an expert in canon law, the majority of sources included medieval legal literature. Concerning methodology, the structure of the work, liturgical topics included or interpretation of liturgy, Durand is entirely dependent on previous authors of expositions based on the Fathers' sources, beginning from Amalar of Metz to Pope Innocent III and Johannes Belet (Thibodeau and Davril 2000, 229–247 [*Apparatus in margine*]; 248–269 [*Apparatus fontium*]).

Unlike Amalar's methodological originality, Durand is entirely dependent on his predecessors. Both authors studied in this paper attempt to penetrate the symbolism of liturgical celebration to educate the clergy of their times. The 13th-century clergy Durand addresses the people who were mainly uneducated about the meaning of celebrations. However, Timothy Thibodeau considers the compilation method as Durand's original contribution (1992). Of all the Fathers' texts used by Durand, no author stands out in terms of quantity. All authors have been used relatively equally to present his conclusions as accurate.

In our exploration of Durand's use of the Fathers' theology, Saint Jerome's in particular, we found citations used about the Church symbolism. In other words, Durand is a compiler of liturgical exposition and the creator of pre-treatise ecclesiology incorporated into the liturgical treatise (Holmes 2011). As stated in the literature, before the publication of the Bull by Pope Bonifacius VIII *Unam sanctam* in 1302, Durand reflected on the Church in the context of sacrament life, worship within the sacred space.

Here we present the works of Saint Jerome that have ecclesiological implications in Durand's exposition. These elements bear the same implications in its original context. Durand's *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* contains fifteen such citations. The majority of these citations have been incorporated into larger units of canonical-legal literature used by Durand. This conclusion is brought forward by Timothy Thibodeau and Anselm Davril, editors of the critical edition of our reference source. The cited sections are presented in the same manner as for Amalar of Metz.

It can be concluded that Durand uses Saint Jerome's texts of the commentaries to the Scripture in order to verify his statements on the Church or to talk about ecclesiological topics to his contemporaries by using the patristic arguments. The sources include: *In Am.* (*In Am.* 2.4 – *Rat. div.* Pr. 9), *In Mich.* (*In Mich.* 1.2 – *Rat. div.* 1.1.22), *In Is.* (*In Is.* 3.2 – *Rat. div.* 2.10.5), *In Ezech.* (*In Ezech.* 13.44.20 – *Rat. div.* 3.1.1), *In Dan.* (*In Dan.* 2.6.10 – *Rat. div.* 5.1.7), *In Eph.* (*In Eph.* 3.5.9 – *Rat. div.* 2.2.3) and *In Tit.* (*In Tit.* 1 – *Rat. div.* 2.11.16). In the ecclesiological context, he also uses Saint Jerome's work *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum* (*Nom. hebr.* – *Rat. div.* 1.5.11; 1.1.4; 5.4.23). Other texts used by Durand in the context of speaking on the Church are Saint Jerome's *Epistula Ad Rusticum monachum* (*Ep.* 125.11 – *Rat. div.* 1.9.17; *Ep.* 125.19 – *Rat. div.* 2.1.29), *Ad Euangelum presbyterum* (*Ep.* 156 – *Rat. div.* 2.10.5), *Ad Nepotianum* (*Ep.* 52.5 – *Rat. div.* 2.1.30)

and *Adversus Iovinianum* (*Adv. Iovin.* 1.4 – *Rat. div.* 1.5.11). Below we present the citations of Saint Jerome's texts referred to above.

Hier., <i>In Am.</i> 2.4 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> Pr. 9	»debemus divinam scripturam in ethica scrutari: primo iuxta litteram; secundo iuxta allegoriam, id est spiritualem intelligentiam; tertio secundum futurorum beatitudinem.«
Hier., <i>Ep.</i> 125.11 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 1.9.17	»Semper aliquid operis facito, ut dyabolus inveniat te occupatum.«
Hier., <i>Adv. Iovin.</i> 1.44 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 1.5.11	»tres patriarche sepulti sunt in civitate Ebron in spelunca duplici cum tribus uxoribus suis.«
Hier., <i>In Mich.</i> 1.2 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 1.1.22	»Vae dormientibus, exsurge qui dormis«
Hier., <i>Quaest. hebr. in Gen.</i> Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 1.5.11	»tres patriarche sepulti sunt in civitate Ebron in spelunca duplici cum tribus uxoribus suis.«
Hier., <i>Nom. hebr.</i> Litt. 1 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 1.1.4	»Ierusalem vocatur, nam Ierusalem visio pacis interpretatur.«
Hier., <i>Ep.</i> 156 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 2.10.5	»Presbyter ergo /.../ nomen est aetatis, episcopus vero dignitatis.«
Hier., <i>Ep.</i> 52.5 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 2.1.30	»sunt reges et sacerdotes, id est regales sacerdotes; et sunt reges, id est, se et alios in virtutibus regentes, et ita in Deo regnum habent.«
Hier., <i>Ep.</i> 125.19 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 2.1.29	»veritas angulos non amat«
Hier., <i>In Is.</i> 2.3.2 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 2.10.5	»Canities hominum prudentia est.«
Hier., <i>In Eph.</i> 3.5.19 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 2.2.3	»Audiant, inquit, adolescentuli, audiant hii quibus officium est in ecclesia psallendi, Deo non voce tantum sed corde esse cantandum, nec in tragediarum modum guttur et fauces medicamine liniende sunt ut in ecclesia theatrales moduli et cantica audiantur.«
Hier., <i>In Ezech.</i> 13.44.20 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 3.1.1	»Religio divina alterum habitum in ecclesiasticis officiis, alium in communi usu.«
Hier., <i>In Dan.</i> 2.6.10 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 5.1.7	»Hinc habet ecclesiastica traditio quod ter in die genua sunt flectenda, scilicet in tertia, sexta et nona.«
Hier., <i>Nom. hebr.</i> Litt. 5 Guil. Dur., <i>Rat. div.</i> 5.4.23	»Syon interpretatur speculatio sive contemplatio.«

Table 2: *The selected quotations of St. Jerome (part 2).*

3. Conclusion

The use of the Fathers' theology in the Middle Ages is not only a verification of the rigid attitudes of the Church but is also used to develop original theological methods. Amalar of Metz founded the allegorical method for interpreting liturgy on Saint Jerome's allegorical interpretation of the Scripture. Throughout medieval times, liturgical expositions were written using this method, thereby transmitting the Fathers' ideas to future periods. William Durand achieved in transmitting the Fathers' ideas. He managed to transmit a wide variety of the Fathers' works by using the allegorical method and successfully compiling sources. A particular value of Durand's liturgical exposition lies in his integration of ecclesiological topics, whereby he defines the ecclesiological treatise form before the arrival of the original *de ecclesia* treatises. Regardless of their frequent allegorical simplification to

find a deeper meaning behind liturgical celebrations, both authors influenced the comprehension of liturgy up to the last liturgical reform in the mid-20th century.

Both authors can be labelled teachers of what had then been a largely undereducated clergy. Their most outstanding contribution is the transmission of patristic ideas on liturgy to the Middle Ages. Amalar of Metz builds his allegorical method on the interpretation method used in the Fathers' period. Using the allegorical method for interpreting liturgy, Church jurist William Durand is original in using existing theological material. The majority of his sources of patristic theology are legal texts. His creation of the unique medieval liturgical treatise *Rationale divinatorum officiorum* makes him a compiler of legal literature.

Abbreviation

CCCM – Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis.

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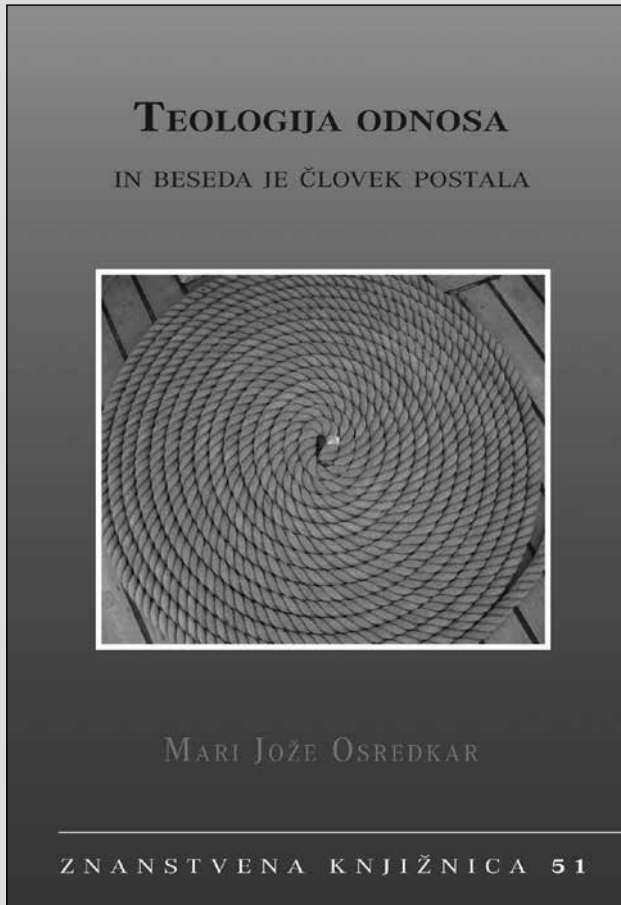
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Mari Jože Osredkar

**Teologija odnosa
In beseda je človek postala**

Odnos je nekaj duhovnega, nekaj, kar se ne vidi, nekaj česar človeški čuti ne zaznajo neposredno. Pa vendar je odnos za posameznikovo življenje nekaj eksistencialno pomembnega. Je pravzaprav naš življenjski prostor: »v njem živimo, se gibljemo in smo«. Še več, odnos je ključ za razumevanja vere in Boga.

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»Movere et delectare« after St. Jerome: Pier Paolo Vergerio's Fifth Sermon *pro Sancto Hieronymo*

»Movere et delectare« po sv. Hieronimu: Vergerijev peti govor *pro Sancto Hieronymo*

Abstract: The present paper analyzes the personal devotion to St. Jerome as expressed in the works of Pier Paolo Vergerio, one of the leading humanist authors of his generation. Jerome's simultaneous investment in theology and classical learning made him a famed saint among the humanists. By transforming St. Jerome into a model of a pious scholar, Vergerio was, therefore, one of the key proponents in the dissemination of St. Jerome's cult in the Renaissance. Vergerio's ten lively *Sermones pro Sancto Hieronymo* (1392–1408) are considered the earliest examples of the classicizing orations (panegyrics) in the context of devotional public oratory. Vergerio includes traditional elements of Jerome's hagiography in his orations yet charges them with a personal dimension. Referring to the ancient tradition of his family, Vergerio portrays St. Jerome as their protector and patron saint and commends his recently deceased father into the saint's care. There is, however, no extant information about the family's rituals regarding St. Jerome and Vergerio does not refer to their devotion in all of his orations in honour of the saint. This paper explores Vergerio's creation of a personal cult of St. Jerome and interprets it as a self-fashioning device, aiming to establish Vergerio as an eloquent humanist intellectual.

Keywords: Pier Paolo Vergerio the Elder, St. Jerome, patron saint, epideictic oration, humanist self-fashioning

Povzetek: Članek obravnava sv. Hieronima kot osebnega in družinskega zavetnika v slavilnih govorih enega najpomembnejših humanističnih avtorjev svoje generacije, Koprčana Petra Pavla Vergerija Starejšega. Hieronim je zaradi svoje ljubezni tako do Biblije kakor do klasičnih avtorjev postal priljubljen zavetnik humanistov, ki so ga razumeli kot ideal sinteze med krščanstvom in antiko. Vergerij je s prevrednotenjem sv. Hieronima v lik pobožnega učenjaka postal eden glavnih glasnikov Hieronimovega humanističnega kulta. Vergerijev slavospjev v čast sv. Hieronimu se razlega iz desetih živahnih govorov *Sermones pro Sancto Hieronymo* (1392–1408), ki jih je Vergerij spisal po vzoru klasičnega slavilnega

govorništva. Kljub resda standardnim elementom Hieronimovih hagiografskih upodobitev pa Vergerijevi govori izstopajo zaradi dodatne, osebne note. Humanist sv. Hieronima časti kot osebnega in družinskega zavetnika in mu v skrb priporoča svojega umrlega očeta. Vendar ni znano, da bi Hieronim v resnici veljal za družinskega zavetnika družine Vergerijev, poleg tega pa ga Vergerij ne naslavlja tako v vseh desetih govorih. Članek pojasnjuje Vergerijevo prevzetje sv. Hieronima za osebnega in družinskega zavetnika kot spretno govorniško potezo, ki jo je humanist uporabil predvsem za samoupodabljanje na renesančnem govorniškem odru.

Ključne besede: Peter Pavel Vergerij Starejši, sv. Hieronim, zavetnik, govor, humanistično samoupodabljanje

1. Introduction

During 1390–1408, Pier Paolo Vergerio, one of the leading humanists of his generation, delivered at least ten public orations in honour of Saint Jerome. His *Sermones pro Sancto Hieronymo* counts as the earliest examples of the classicizing orations (panegyrics) in devotional public oratory (O'Malley 1979, 86).¹ Following the classical precepts, rather than the traditional thematic form of late medieval speeches, Vergerio's orations illustrate one of the most discernible aspects of the humanists' amalgamation of classicizing elements and hagiography.² The omission of biblical quotations, which otherwise guided thematic sermons, opened the ground for humanist innovation and self-fashioning. Accordingly, the contents of the orations ceased to focus on the saints' performances of miracles, and instead replaced them with their lives and deeds, interpreted in conformity with the preferences of their audience.

Vergerio began his public speaking career in Padua around 1390.³ His tradition of annual orations in honour of St. Jerome probably began around the same time, although the precise year has not yet been identified. In his *Ep. 42*, Vergerio states

¹ On epideictic oratory, see Pernot, *La Rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-romain* (1993) or Kennedy (1999) for a summarization. For humanist oratory in imitation of Ciceronian handbooks, see Witt 1990, and for humanist devotional oratory, McManamon's *Funeral Oratory of the Papal Court* (2017). When referring to the format of Vergerio's *Sermones*, the secondary scholarship employs different terminology. The expressions 'sermon', 'oration', 'speech', and 'panegyric' are used interchangeably by the previous scholarship; I will refer to these texts as *sermones*, since this is the label used in the manuscripts.

² The thematic form appeared in the late twelfth century and coincides with the birth of Scholasticism. The central study of the theme remains Caplan's *Of Eloquence* (1970). For Latin medieval preaching see *Modern Questions About Medieval Sermons* by Nicole Bériou and David D'Avray (1994).

³ There is no evidence of any public activity before this time. These early speeches are Vergerio's judicial oration in defense of Francesco Novello da Carrara's lieutenant Bartolomeo Cermisone (1390–1392), an oration celebrating Francesco Novello's recovery of Padua (1392) and the well-known funeral oration for Francesco Carrara the Elder (1393) (Katchmer 1998, 15; Simoniti 1979, 27–29). For Vergerio's biography, see Katchmer (1998, 1–77).

that his practice started four years before the letter's composition (Smith 1934, 91). If Smith's dating of the letter to 1392–1394, more probably to 1394, is correct, Vergerio possibly delivered his first oration in 1390. Two of the orations are dated in the manuscripts: *Sermo* 5 to 1392 and *Sermo* 9 to 1408. *Sermo* 8 can be dated to 1406, based on internal evidence (Robey 1973, 27). The exact order of the orations, however, does not depend on manuscript numbering and remains unknown.⁴ Three of the orations were delivered in monastic environments (1; 5; 10), two were delivered close to Vergerio's hometown in Istria (3; 6) (Robey 1973, 37), and *Sermo* 8 was delivered at the papal court in Rome.

In his panegyrics, Vergerio actively contributed to shaping the humanist cult of St. Jerome. As an active scholar in numerous fields, from the theory of education, canon law, and medicine to logic and rhetoric, Vergerio portrayed a similarly active figure of Jerome and called to the imitation of his countless virtues. He emphasized Jerome's erudition and piety and portrayed him as a pious scholar. Touching upon merely a few of his most famous miracles, Vergerio emphasized Jerome's human aspects and depicted him as a familiar figure, approachable for imitation of everyone. Vergerio's orations were circulated in numerous codices, often functioning as prefaces to Jerome's works. The orations became a new and influential model for the humanists' epideictic oratory. This made Vergerio's panegyrics so famous that they survived in many manuscripts and even in the first incunabula of Jerome's collected works.

While praising St. Jerome, Vergerio offers himself as a witness of the saint's excellence. In *Serm.* 5 and 8, and one of his letters, Vergerio explains that his inspiration to praise Jerome derives from his family's ancient tradition and his personal experience of Jerome's sanctity.⁵ On these grounds, he vowed to annually deliver a public oration in the saint's honour on his feast-day (McManamon 1985, 185). His vow is often referred to at the beginning of the orations' *exordia*. However, there is no information about Vergerio's family partaking in any specific rituals in honour of the saint, nor did St. Jerome remain the patron saint of the Vergerii family (Marinčič 2018, 13). Usually taken for granted, Vergerio's invocations of St. Jerome as his family patron have not been probed to a satisfactory degree by the existent scholarship.⁶ McManamon takes it at face value in his seminal edition and does not pause much at Vergerio's words.⁷

This paper, however, is meant to signal that Vergerio's appropriation of St. Jerome as his personal and family patron was his rhetorical device to add to the emotionality of his orations and contribute to his fame. On these grounds, I will discuss the unique features of Vergerio's authorial approach in his fifth pane-

⁴ I use the numbering and sequence of delivery suggested in McManamon's edition, which, due to different manuscript referencing, differs from the one used earlier by Robey and Smith.

⁵ *Ep.* 79 to Vergerio's father (Smith 1934, 186–187).

⁶ See the article by Marinčič (2018) for a welcome exception to this trend.

⁷ The full title of McManamon's book is *Pierpaolo Vergerio the Elder and Saint Jerome: An Edition and Translation of Sermones Pro Sancto Hieronymo* (1999).

gyric and compare it to his other panegyrics in honour of St. Jerome as well as to Vergerio's letters. Taking the orations in parallel with later panegyrics to St. Jerome composed by other humanists, I will illustrate Vergerio's appropriation of St. Jerome as a smart rhetoric device to establish himself on the humanist stage of classicizing rhetoric.

2. Departing From the Tradition: Sermon 5

According to the manuscripts, Vergerio's fifth sermon was delivered in 1392 to Benedictine monks in Padua (McManamon 1985, 185). This is Vergerio's most extended oration, and, according to Robey, it may have been the earliest (Robey 1973, 37). Indeed, the oration does not refer to any previous speeches, which is otherwise a systematic way for Vergerio to start the *exordium*. Although Robey's argument is based only on his opinion, according to which the oration is relatively immature in style and hesitant in its approach to the subject (37), the speech is the least coherent among Vergerio's orations and often jumps between the topics.

Moreover, *Sermo* 5 is famously unique owing to Vergerio's explicit declaration of his complete break with the thematic structure of the scholastic sermons. This might be another argument in favour of the oration being the first one. Vergerio straightforwardly draws attention to his omission of the usual biblical verse at the beginning of the sermon:

»With your kind permission, I will slightly depart today from the usual manner of delivering a sermon, and leaving aside the thematic verse from the Scripture (a convention that is no longer observed by the most up-to-date-preachers), right at the beginning, I will call to my aid the most glorious Virgin.« (McManamon 1999, 172)⁸

Owing to the lack of materials, the veracity of Vergerio's claim that this was already part of contemporary practice cannot be established. Nevertheless, even though not a single example of sermons delivered from the pulpit and following classical norms has been found up to date, as O'Mally (1979, 86) and Knowles Frazier (2005, 213) report, Vergerio already used the new format in his earlier funeral orations.⁹ In any case, the emphasized opening remark served chiefly to underline his classicizing program.

Moving on, Vergerio inserted an emotional confession of his family's devotion to St. Jerome in a first-person narrative. He reported that his family arranged annual feasts in St. Jerome's honour as long as they could afford them:

⁸ »Cum bona venia vestra praetermitteram nunc parumper solitum morem sermocinandi, et, omisso themate (qui mos iam apud modernos deciderat) primo gloriosissimam virginem ad auxilium mihi vocabo.« (McManamon 1999, 171) I quote Vergerio's orations in McManamon's English translation, occasionally modified.

⁹ See note 3.

»They were accustomed for as long as their resources permitted them to offer a solemn feast for the poor of the city. Moreover, they used to remember that their own ancestors had consistently performed the same service on this feast day. /.../ If ever fortune should look and smile upon me once again, I will not hesitate to revive this ancient custom of our family.« (McManamon 1999, 178–179)¹⁰

He then vowed to continue with the tradition to honour St. Jerome on his name day and started to ponder which of his many virtues he should praise. Vergerio does not share the information about the aftermath of his family's devotion in this oration; however, he recounts it in *Sermo 8* (McManamon 1985, 224). As a result of Jerome's divine intercession, Vergerio's family survived the attacks of Genoans on their hometown, Justinopolis (now Koper, in Slovenia). This deepened much further their already ardent devotion, cultivated most notably by Vergerio's father, who, at the time of *Sermo 8*, according to Vergerio, was just recently deceased. After his father's death, Vergerio presented himself as the sole heir to the family tradition, whereby he vowed to deliver a speech in the saint's honour each year. The oration becomes highly emotional when Vergerio speaks of his father's legacy, and its style frequently borders on theatricality.

However, one might wonder whether Vergerio was, in fact, »[n]ourished in an environment that saw the family as honoured clients of a powerful heavenly patron [and] committed himself to a public act of devotion to Jerome for the rest of his life« on this ground, as stated by McManamon in his seminal work (1999, 16). There is no actual evidence about St. Jerome as the patron saint of the Vergerii family (Marinčič 2018, 13) or their special rituals in honour of the saint in Justinopolis. The patron saints of the town were, at the time, St. Nazarius and St. Alexandrus,¹¹ who, in contrast to St. Jerome, are not mentioned in any of Vergerio's extant works, nor his letters.¹² However, as indicated by Frazier, appropriation of 'personal saints' was the standard humanist practice (Frazier 2005, 16). Vergerio probably familiarized himself with the humanist cult of St. Jerome in the learned university milieu of Florence, Bologna, and Padua. Jerome was an ideal epitome for the humanists' Christian universalism, owing to his simultaneous enthusiasm for the classical authors and biblical exegesis.

¹⁰ »[S]olebant parentes mei, dum fortuna laetaeque res starent, atque id a suis fieri solitum commemorabant perpetuo hoc ipso festo die, cum sacra ritu debito et solito more peracta essent, sollemne convivium pauperibus facere. Si quando tamen fortuna placide vultu faverit, ne vetustum quidem morem familiae nostrae praetermittam.« (McManamon 1999, 176–177)

¹¹ The cult of these two saints was in fact very popular in Justinopolis. The requisition of St. Nazarius's relics was, for example, the main calamity during the attack of Genovese on Koper which also forced the Vergerio family to leave their hometown. St. Alexander's relics are preserved in the cathedral church of Koper (Smith 1934, 506).

¹² Although Smith reports on four hymns in honor of St. Nazarius in Vergerio's *Epistolario*, he already emphasizes that they were wrongly attributed to Vergerio, since they were added to one of the manuscripts with his *Sermones*. They were, in fact, written in 1422 to celebrate the return of the relics to Koper, arranged by archbishop of Genoa, Pileo de Marini (Smith 1934, 506). The hymns are listed as anonymous in McManamon, „Research Aids: Pierpaolo Vergerio the Elder.“

Moreover, in their lively interest for textual criticism, the humanists also fiercely transcribed and compiled his letters (Cain 2009, 225). Devotional texts, transcription of a saint's works, or production of his *vitae* served as an *ex-voto* to the saint. Passing through Italian cities, courts, and university towns, thus encountering different local cultures, humanists depended on their rhetorical abilities, and they tailored them according to the circumstances. Thus, looking closer into the contexts of *Serm.* 5 and 8 and comparing them with the circumstances of deliveries of other orations by Vergerio might shed light upon some additional arguments for his references to the family and personality cult of St. Jerome precisely in these two sermons.

3. *Effigiem mihi confingo: Sermons 5 and 8 Among the Other Vergerio's Orations*

Vergerio's *Sermones* were treated as a corpus by the previous scholarship, and the specific contents or backgrounds of the individual orations have not been analyzed in much depth. Despite their differences, McManamon's edition and English translation of Vergerio's speeches do not observe Vergerio's orations as individual texts. Vergerio's works are looked upon in the same way by Rice's monograph on the cult of St. Jerome in the Renaissance (1988), and the orations are treated merely as a product of a new rhetorical style, intended to promote the revised image of St. Jerome.¹³ However, by examining the orations one by one as individual pieces, it is possible to grasp Vergerio's program of remodelling the image of St. Jerome according to his different audiences. As there are no other humanist authors who produced more than one oration on St. Jerome, Vergerio's orations offer a unique opportunity to inspect the changes of his rhetorical approach according to the contexts in which the orations were delivered, by the same author and in praise of the same subject. A captivating performance was essential for the epideictic genre of Vergerio's speeches, which therefore focused primarily on the audience. Vergerio aptly devised the rhetorical *topoi* and shaped the entire contents of his orations to secure the audience's sympathy. The imitation of examples is indeed the chief motto of his work. Nevertheless, the examples given in the orations are different when it comes to an audience of different social backgrounds.

For example, in the orations delivered to monks, Vergerio demonstrates praise to be instructional on the grounds of Jerome's biographies, which praised the desert fathers. Writing about the lives of these, Jerome was motivated to imitate their austerity as well.¹⁴ According to his teaching, Jerome's lifestyle is highlighted, and

¹³ McManamon looks into the classicizing features of Vergerio's oratory also in his monograph *Pierpaolo Vergerio the Elder: The Humanist as Orator* (1996) and in his earlier article „Pier Paolo Vergerio (the Elder) and the Beginnings of the Humanist Cult of Jerome“ (1985).

¹⁴ See Bobovnik and Derhard 2020, 3–31 on Jerome as a chief promotor of the philosophy of desert ascetics.

the Benedictine monks are exhorted to imitate it. Not only does Vergerio emphasize Jerome's extreme endurance and piety while enumerating his deeds, but the orations also echo criticism and blame, clearly in line with the reform movement inside religious orders (McManamon 1985, 354). In contrast, speaking in front of lay audiences, Vergerio paraphrased classical authors¹⁵ and illustrated praise as an already ancient practice, which taught the examples for imitation.

In the orations delivered in Istria (*Serm.* 3; 6), Vergerio argued that owing to the location of Jerome's birthplace near 'this particular region' (*regio ista*), the audience, in this case, lay locals has a special duty to venerate the saint and imitate his deeds.¹⁶ He portrayed Jerome as one of the illustrious fellow citizens, only that he is immensely more praiseworthy and learned. He emphasized the saint's shared humanity with the audience and characterized him in terms of the audience's intercessor with God. If the audience joins Vergerio in faithful praise of St. Jerome, they, now living close to Jerome's earthly residence, will make themselves »members of his heavenly lineage« in the afterlife (Mcmanamon 189, 355). However, even though Vergerio sided with the audience and depicted himself as one of the local populace, he spoke here in a considerably less personal tone than in *Serm.* 5 and 8. However, his orations echo the language of late-antique local cults,¹⁷ his Jerome does not figure as a 'national' saint of Dalmatia.¹⁸ Moreover, in *Serm.* 3, Vergerio carefully warns against an affection towards St. Jerome merely on account of his origins:

»But indeed, neither proximity of birth, nor blood relationship, nor any earthly bond renders us acceptable and gratifying to the saints of God; only moral integrity, sanctity of life, and spiritual devotion can do that. As a matter of fact, we can please the saints only by doing the same things that made the saints themselves pleasing to God.« (McManamon 1999, 99)¹⁹

Going even further, in *Sermo* 6, Vergerio delivered a semi-historical lecture about a historically unfounded local veneration based on resemblances of the names of a small nearby village Stregna and Jerome's Stridon.²⁰ He labels it as 'a local rumour' (*dictum est*) and straightforwardly condemns it. Jerome was born in a 'place nearby' (*hinc proximo loco*), but not in Stregna, the village closest to Vergerio's hometown

¹⁵ E.g. Ovid in *Serm.* 2 (McManamon 1999, 143) or Seneca in *Ep.* 78 (McManamon 1985, 185).

¹⁶ The infamous question of the exact location of Jerome's birthplace, Stridon, remains unanswered. On various placements of Stridon by the humanists, see the article by Grubišić (2008, 227–298).

¹⁷ For the function of medieval cults of saints see, for instance, Brown's *The Cult of Saints* (1989), and Klaniczay, »Using Saint: Intercession, Healing, Sanctity« (2014, 217–237).

¹⁸ On this topic, see the article by Ivić »Jerome comes home« (2016, 618–644), and her dissertation »The Birth of the National Saint: The Cult of St. Jerome in Late Medieval Dalmatia« (2020). On the cult of St. Jerome among the Slavs, see Verkholtantsev, *The Slavic Letters of St. Jerome: The History of the Legend and Its Legacy, or, How the Translator of the Vulgate Became an Apostle of the Slavs* (2014).

¹⁹ »Verum enimvero non ortus propinquitatis, non coniunctio sanguinis, non ulla mundialis necessitudo, sed honestas morum, vitae sanctitas, ac mentis devotio Sanctis Dei acceptabiles nos reddit et gratos. Per ea etenim sola placere ipsis possumus per quae et ipsi Deo placuerunt.« (McManamon 1999, 198)

²⁰ For the translation of the entire passage to Slovenian, see Marinčič 2018, 14.

(McManamon 1999, 201). Additionally, Vergerio does not honour St. Jerome as a national saint, as was the practice within the Dalmatian cult of the saint.²¹ Moreover, in none of the panegyrics from Istria did he ever refer to St. Jerome as his family's patron saint, as he does in *Serm.* 5 and 8. One might ask why Vergerio opted to denounce local rumours rather than referring to his family's devotion to the saint, particularly in these orations delivered closest to his hometown.

It might not be too far-fetched to infer some explanations from the same venues of the orations' performances. Compared to the orations delivered in the small provincial towns of Istria, the circumstance of *Serm.* 5 and 8 were far more critical. Even though *Sermo* 5 was delivered in front of monks, it was among Vergerio's first orations (if not the very first one), which made it significant for his rhetorical career. His arguments on account of the family tradition of praise would help him establish himself as a premier member of Jerome's cult and add to his praise's rhetorical 'veracity'. Appealing to the traditional family veneration served as grounds for a popular epideictic device already part of the ancient oratory.²² Indeed, the cult of St. Jerome was already firmly established by the time Vergerio wrote his orations; however, it has to be kept in mind that Vergerio was promoting a particular representation of the saint – that of a learned orator and translator, including a refurbished version of Jerome's dream.²³ He referred to his family as already 'veteran' followers of Jerome's cult and contributed to his fame.

Vergerio's self-fashioning is even more evident concerning the particular circumstance of *Sermo* 8. This oration was delivered in front of the papal Curia in 1406. It was probably one of the most renowned orations during the Renaissance, as it was included as a biographical appendix to the first edition of Jerome's works published in Rome in 1468. It belonged among Vergerio's most accomplished orations and was seen as advocacy of humanist studies by the later Renaissance authors. Vergerio primarily reflected on Jerome's dream in this sermon and offered a revised humanist interpretation (Belting 2014, 6). According to his own words, he described how Jerome continued to read the classics, but not as ardently as the Scripture (McManamon 1999, 155).

Moreover, he inferred that St. Jerome merely applied his classical studies in the service of his biblical work. This panegyric therefore comprised a call for humanism in the service of the religious community, announcing that the humanist studies would prepare learned clergy capable of moral reform by living exemplary lives.²⁴ Where could Vergerio more appropriately insert an emotional appeal to his fam-

²¹ On Slavic cult of St. Jerome, see Verkholtantsev 2014 and Badurina-Stipčević 2013, 17–26.

²² The canon of epideictic *topoi*, listed by Menander, was transmitted to the humanists by Priscian's handbooks as *loca laudis vel vituperationis* (Simoniti 1979, 25). For the impact of humanist classicizing oratory on the preachers of the Catholic Reformation see, for instance, Visočnik 2018.

²³ *Ep.* 22. For English translation, see Wright (1933, 52–157).

²⁴ In ecclesiastical context, Vergerio used the image of St. Jerome in order to contrast him to the corrupted practice of the clergy of his time. He especially criticized the preachers, accusing them of delivering empty words in front of their audience while not providing an example of moral life themselves (McManamon, 115–29).

ily tradition, boosted by the reference to his recently deceased father, if not in the refined background of the papal court and campaigning for classical learning?

Similar creation of saintly patronage was frequent in the Late Middle Ages, and the saints whose sanctity one heard of being experienced by those close to them immediately became more popular (Vauchez 1997, 133). On the other hand, there was no need to bring the saint closer by referring to his devotion in the orations in Istria; a local veneration was probably present there already in the late medieval period.²⁵ Vergerio did not need an additional device to bring Jerome's cult closer – a medieval cult of St. Jerome as a pious penitent saint was already widely disseminated within the area. What Vergerio instead focused on in his orations in Istria is Jerome's reinterpreted image of a learned scholar and translator. Consequently, it was much more expected of Vergerio to exploit the proximity of the saint's birthplace to display his linguistic knowledge by exposing the erroneous theory of Stregna as Stridon. In contrast, while speaking in faraway Padua or Rome and aiming to establish himself as Jerome's spokesperson, a reference to the traditional family devotion to St. Jerome would likely add to Vergerio's rhetorical authority. He did not argue his family's or his father's devotion to the saint, yet his affection for the cult was expressed with sufficient emotionality to make the oration effective.

4. *Patronus meus: St. Jerome in the Context of Vergerio's Letters*

Even if Vergerio did not report the reasons for his family's extraordinary devotion to St. Jerome in his orations, he described them in one of his letters, *Ep.* 79, addressed to his father and dated in the year 1397 (Smith 1934, 186–87). The letter begins almost verbatim as some of Vergerio's orations. He first asserts his rhetorical inadequacy to the subject yet immediately pledges to carry on with his practice of public preaching since it is a way to repay his father's love. Then he makes several passionate exclamations, urging his father to honour St. Jerome and underlining it with a paraphrase from Seneca: »[T]o receive a favour without a single word of thanks comes close to denying it.«²⁶ Afterwards he recounts the story about Jerome's intercession but placing it at his father's lips as if it were a recollection of something his father has once told him himself. Further, he inserts a series of rhetorical questions and reaching the climax by an appeal to St. Jerome as the one who saved the life of Vergerio's father:

²⁵ The Franciscan monastery in Justinopolis at the time belonged to the Dalmatian Franciscan province of St. Jerome. This is also reflected by a large number of local churches, consecrated to St. Jerome, which was the reason for a recent suggestion to declare St. Jerome for the main patron of the present-day bishopric of Koper (Valenčič 2007, 123–154).

²⁶ »Proximus est enim neganti beneficium is qui tacet.« (Smith 1934, 186). Cf. Seneca, *De Beneficiis* 2.1.: »[P]roximus est a negante, qui dubitavit, nullamque iniit gratiam.« For the entire translation of the letter, see Božič 2020, 90–91.

»Who was it that led us out alive from so many traps laid against us during that wartime clash, when everything was filled with terror and was collapsing? Who was it that carried us safe and sound from the devastation and smouldering ashes of our pillaged homeland? /.../ Last but not least, who was it that saved your life after you had been condemned to death and exposed to many great dangers if not the one to whom you have entrusted your life?« (Smith 1934, 186)²⁷

The letter closely echoes *Serm.* 5 and 8, and Vergerio sometimes repeats entire phrases from the orations. Curiously enough, Vergerio uses the same admonitions he used in his oration to the monks, and he seems to be reminding his father, supposedly the initiator of the family's devotion to St. Jerome, why the saint deserved to be praised by the family. One might reasonably wonder why Vergerio's father would need to be reminded of the family tradition.

Vergerio's letter belongs among the typical humanist stylistic letters that form their authors' image as they each wanted it conveyed to posterity. It was not unusual for the humanist authors to combine themes and even phrases from their orations with those from the letters and vice versa. *Ep.* 79 is likely to have been designed precisely to enforce Vergerio's auto-portrayal as Jerome's disciple. The phrases that are repeated in his public oratory and stylistic letters are likely to serve as self-fashioning rhetoric devices, especially in the works that were expected to be disseminated or even included within the significant works.

Moreover, some other letters of Vergerio's illustrate his inclination to the etiological myths, a literalization of his hometown origins, and his aspirations to be bound with St. Jerome's figure. Although pretending to disdain some of his letters, Vergerio was quite concerned with the local history.²⁸ He was also engaged in discussions about the origins of the name Justinopolis, claiming that the city was named by Emperor Justinian II (565–578). Justinian reinforced and regulated the original Roman settlement of Aegida or Capris, inhabited by fugitives of the Langobardic invasion at the time of his arrival. Vergerio describes the myth in one of his letters, where he also states that Justinopolis has now fallen into moral decay and ruins despite its noble history. The only reason it could be praised for nowadays is its proximity to Jerome's birthplace:

»Because you see, even some obscure places had brought up great men, and celebrated cities ignoble ones, since, as it is indeed attested, it usually happens more often that extreme brilliance springs from an oppressed

²⁷ »[Q]uis nos belli fragore, quo cuncta terrebantur, cuncta ruebant, ex tot paratis insidiis vivos eripuit? Quis ex patrie, populate ruinis, ardentis cineribus, sanos et tutos evexit? Aut quis patrium solum egresos ac alieno benigne receptos olim in patriam et revexit ac in tuto reposuit? Quis denique caput tuum damnatum, tot periculis expositum, nisi is cui fuerat commendatum, servavit incolume?« For leaving his post in order to flee, Vergerio's father was at first condemned to death. Upon their return to Justinopolis in 1483 he was acquitted, but the family never rose to the same distinguished position it held before.

²⁸ Vergerio's two works that focus primarily on the region close to his hometown are *De situ Iustinopolis* and *De republica Venetorum*.

and unknown place. In this regard, you could give many ancient examples, yet you could hardly quote any worthier or one that would be dearer to me, than, as you have remarked, St. Jerome, my patron, 'the star of the Church', to praise him in your words, and, as you ought to have added, of exceptional learning. He was born not far from my fatherland's borders in a humble place, which became therefore revered before many other most splendid cities.« (Smith 1934, 145)²⁹

In this passage, Vergerio refers to one of the common *topoi* of the epideictic genre, which links the subject of praise to his birthplace. As recommended by the handbooks, when the homeland of the subject praised was already remarkable, the panegyrist should refer to it as foretelling the glory of the one being praised. In contrast, if their birthplace was humble or disreputable, this should be emphasized to point out how gloriously the subject being praised surpassed their little background (Kennedy 2003, 156). The reference clearly illustrates Vergerio's intentions and is underlined in his orations from Istria, where he highlights Jerome having departed for Rome to become »better and more learned«, despite his love for his homeland (McManamon 1999, 156).³⁰ By emphasizing the proximity of St. Jerome's origins and his birth town in this letter, Vergerio, in a way, binds himself with his successful compatriot. It was not only Jerome who rose above his humble origins but also Vergerio, coming from the same region—aligning his family and upbringing to a famous figure of an erudite theologian added to his promotion. Emphasis on the saint's humanist activities presented St. Jerome as a model for imitation. Vergerio's self-representation as a paragon of Jerome's cult also shaped his portrait – in close resemblance to that of his patron.

5. Closing Remarks: Vergerio's Orations in Parallel With Other Panegyrics on St. Jerome

Vergerio's other panegyrics and letters are not only texts that invite for a closer examination, especially in a comparative context. By focusing on Jerome as the subject of praise, I have been able to locate a set of epideictic orations composed throughout the fifteenth century. The first one of these was delivered in 1410 in Padua by Nicolaus (Niccolò) Bonavia of Lucca.³¹ Soon after that, there was a simi-

²⁹ »Sed, ut vix ullum dignius, ita nullum michi gratius adhibere potuisses quam quod Hieronymum memoras, patronum meum, Ecclesie, ut voce tua suo cum titulo decorem, sidus, et, ut adicere debueras, summum doctrine, quem non procul a patrie mee finibus humilis locus sed hoc uno plurimis amplissimis urbibus.« (*Ep.* 62, to Giovanni Zabarella)

³⁰ The passage in fact turned out to be extremely far-reaching. Owing to Vergerio's self-representation, the famous Italian historian Fabio Biondo (1392–1463) listed Vergerio and Jerome as the most prominent people from the region, and on this grounds classified Istria as an Italian province.

³¹ Biographical information about Bonavia is sparse. So far, the only detail I have been able to gather is that he was an erudite poet and at the time of delivering the oration, a student at the University of Padua. His oration is preserved in two manuscripts: Vatican library, BAV Vat. lat. 5994 3r–7v, and in Biblioteca Ambrosiana, R 92 sup. 2, 13r–17r.

lar oration in praise of St. Jerome in Siena, no later than 1447, by Agostino Dati.³² They offer a contrast to Vergerio's earlier work, and none of them represents Jerome as the personal patron of the authors or their families. Bonavia's oration was delivered in 1410 in Padua (Rice 1988, 95). Instead of offering a personal motivation to praise St. Jerome, Bonavia employs the Platonic doctrine of the four cardinal virtues and introduces Jerome's deeds as evidence of these virtues. His oration thus closely adheres to the scheme of ancient funerary encomia and is exceptionally detailed when it comes to Jerome's biographical details. Dati's oration offers a similar example and turns into a catalogue of Jerome's translations. Again, there is no reference to Dati's devotion to St. Jerome; on the contrary, the oration is characterized by a rather detached tone.

Another oration was delivered in Verona in 1453 by one of the first female humanists, Isotta Nogarola.³³ Instead of a detailed biography, Nogarola focuses on Jerome's persistent pursuit of knowledge. Going against Jerome's emphasis in his famous letter to Eustochium,³⁴ she promoted his learning over the virtue of virginity, thus justifying her scholarly ambitions and using the oration as a personal apology. Nogarola exploited the rhetoric tropes to position herself as a female author. Even though she did not offer her audience any explicit incentive to imitate the saint, the human quality of her portrayal of St. Jerome recalls Vergerio's patron. However, compared to Vergerio's works, these later pieces were less vivid in terms of authorial presence and the authors' affection for St. Jerome. These orators did not offer any argumentation for their praise, and they did not present it as part of their devotion to the saint. Even if the pieces are long and meticulously crafted, they inspire far less emotional effect than Vergerio's narrative. Curiously, however, none of these panegyrics attained such wide promulgation as did Vergerio's; they often survived in a unique version. Vergerio's panegyrics, in contrast, circulated in several manuscripts, even though none of them includes all ten orations (McMannan 1999, 137). Their presence in the volumes, originating from Northern Italy, suggests that the students often turned to them as models for their rhetorical compositions, regardless of their interest in St. Jerome.

The humanist scholars already acknowledged this variety of epideictic oratory in praise of civil or ecclesiastical governors. »Nobody remains unaware that panegyrics reflect not their subjects' merits, but their author's ingenuity,« stated Desiderius Erasmus (Rundle 2007, 159).³⁵ Was the personal appropriation of St. Jerome and his representation as a patron saint one of the critical features of

³² Agostino Dati: *Incipit Oratio prima de laudibus divi Hieronymi*. For a summary of his life, see *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (1987, 15–21).

³³ The oration was composed as a public welcome of the new Veronese bishop Ermolao Barbaro. It is translated to English in Nogarola's *Complete Writings*, edited by Margeret L. King and Diana Maury Robin (2003, 159–74).

³⁴ *Ep.* 22.7.

³⁵ »Ac minus quidem laedunt Poetae Rhetoresque, quorum nemini iam ignotum est institutum, Principum laudes non ex ipsorum meritis, sed ex suo metiri ingenio.« (Desiderius Erasmus, *Institutio Principis Christiani* II, 2.4, 1335–1337 [Rundle 2007, 159]).

Vergerio's authorship? It is impossible to speculate whether Nogarola's oration would have made it to later collections were it not composed by a female *oratrix*, and therefore disseminated primarily in her local background. Nevertheless, Vergerio's affectionate representation of St. Jerome as his and a humanist patron saint beyond any doubt promoted the dissemination of the famous *Sermo 8*, as well as contributed to Vergerio's popularity as a rhetorician. The utilization of the historical background to give authority to a speech was widely acknowledged already by contemporary writers. To quote another famous humanist, Leonardo Bruni openly renounced the historical fidelity of praise while commenting on his panegyric to Florence: »History must follow the truth, but praise raises many things above the truth.« (1998, 487–88)³⁶ Vergerio masterly raised his Jerome above all. Regardless of the veracity of his family devotion to St. Jerome, his references are convincingly exploited in order to point out his path to proper veneration of the saint: not only through imitations of Jerome's piety but also, and especially, through the emulation of his eloquence.

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³⁶ »Aliud est historia aliud laudatio. Historia quidem veritatem sequi debet, laudatio verum multa supra veritatem extolit.« L. Bruni *Epistolarum Libri VIII*, ed. L. Mehus (Florence, 1714), *Ep.* 8.4.

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St. Jerome *versus* Sanctes Pagnino in the Reception and Inquisitorial Process of the Polyglot Bible of Antwerp (1568–1577)¹

Sv. Hieronim vs. Sanctes Pagnino v recepciji in inkvizitorskem procesu Biblia Polyglotta iz Antwerpna (1568–1577)

Abstract. The controversial reception of the Polyglot Bible of Antwerp (1569–1573) was a result of the religious conflict of Post-Tridentine Europe between the rigorist defenders of the Vulgate of St. Jerome, who fiercely attacked this new Bible, and the Hebraists, who claimed the value of the sources even to correct the mistakes of the Vulgate. The Polyglot of Antwerp, edited by the most prominent Hebraists of the moment, was printed with the Latin column of St. Jerome. However, the editors also published the translation of the Hebraist Sanctes Pagnino, after revising it, within the *Apparatus Sacer*, the last three volumes of the Bible that included all sorts of instruments for studying the Sacred Text. This was one of the main reasons why the immediate reception of the most critical Bible of the 16th century stirred up so much controversy that it became subject to an inquisitorial process in 1577. In the present contribution, this polemic reception is studied mainly in light of what new texts recently published on that process tell about the philological and theological confrontation of different translations of the same biblical passages made by St. Jerome, on the one hand, and by Sanctes Pagnino, on the other one.

Keywords: Biblical Scholarship, Humanism, Benito Arias Montano, León de Castro, Juan de Mariana

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Povzetek: Kontroverzna recepcija Večjezične biblije iz Antwerpna (1569–1573) je bila sad verskih nasprotij v Evropi po tridentinskem koncilu med zagovorniki Hieronimove Vulgate, ki so to novo Sveto pismo ostro napadali, in pa ‚hebraisti‘, ki so cenili hebrejski izvirnik in so želeli popraviti napake v Vulgati. Večjezična biblija iz Antwerpna, ki so jo pripravili najboljši tedanji strokovnjaki za hebrejščino, je vsebovala tudi stolpec Hieronimovega latinskega besedila, poleg tega pa je bil znotraj oddelka *Apparatus Sacer*, ki je obsegal zadnje tri knjige in je vključeval različna orodja za preučevanje svetega besedila, natisnjen tudi izboljšani prevod hebraista Sanctesa Pagnina. To je bil eden glavnih razlogov, da je recepcija najpomembnejše izdaje Svetega pisma 16. stoletja vzbudila toliko kontroverz in postala celo predmet inkvizitorskega procesa leta 1577. Članek opisano obravnava z vidika nedavno objavljenih besedil glede procesa v zvezi z njihovimi filološkimi in teološkimi argumenti glede razlikovanja v prevodu sv. Hieronima in S. Pagnina.

Ključne besede: bibličistika, humanizem, Benito Arias Montano, León de Castro, Juan de Mariana

1. Introduction

In the history of Biblical Scholarship, one of the episodes that best exemplify the tensions between Theology and Philology is the controversial reception of the Polyglot of Antwerp, the essential edition of the Bible in the 16th century (*Biblia Sacra* 1569–1573). Around this Polyglot, two opposing groups of scholars clashed again: on the one hand, the strict defenders of the Vulgate of St. Jerome, who attacked this new Bible fiercely; on the other, the Hebraists, who claimed the value of the sources even to correct the Vulgate in those passages needing revision.

The project of the Polyglot of Antwerp (1569–1573) was born as a re-edition of the Complutensian Polyglot of the beginning of the century (*Vetus Testamentum* 1514–1517). However, during the time elapsed from the first Polyglot to the second, the conflict between the defenders of the Vulgate and the Hebraists was gradually deteriorating. The turning point in this controversy was marked by the fourth session of the Council of Trent, April 8, 1546, which promulgated the well-known *Decretum de editione et usu sacrorum librorum*. This decree placed the Vulgate –by considering it as the ‚authentic‘ version– above all the Latin translations of the Sacred Books. The primary purpose of this decree was to put control on the new Latin translations based on the originals. However, a radical interpretation of the decree led some biblical scholars even to defend Vulgate’s superiority over the original biblical texts.

Since the beginning of the new Polyglot editorial project, the main reason for discussion was which Latin translation should be printed in the column next to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. The first proofs sent by the printer Christopher Plantin from Antwerp to Madrid dared to replace the text of the Vulgate, which was the one printed in the Complutensian, by the more literal Latin translation of the Hebraist Sanctes Pagnino, published for the first time in 1527 (*Habes in hoc libro* 1527). The Spanish authorities rejected the proposal. Finally, the Polyglot of Antwerp

was printed with the Latin column of Saint Jerome – as it was in the Complutensian Polyglot – but the editorial team of the Bible would not allow the new Polyglot to lack a literal Latin translation and, although they had no official instruction in this regard, they published Pagnino's translation, revised and amended. It was not located in the columns of the first five volumes dedicated to the biblical text, but within the so-called *Apparatus Sacer*, the final three volumes that included all kinds of instruments for studying the Bible. The simple coexistence of Pagnino's translation with that of St. Jerome in the new Bible was reason enough for the attacks against this edition to arrive even before the first sheet was printed. In Spain, the main enemy of the Polyglot was the professor of Greek at the University of Salamanca León de Castro, who had also managed to imprison in 1572 his colleagues of the same university fray Luis de León, Martín Martínez Cantalapiedra and Gaspar de Grajal on the very same grounds, a fact that shook the European Theology².

The volume of the entire preceding bibliography on the reception of the Polyglot is enormous. It allows following the conflicting parties' movements very well since the printing of the last volume of the *Biblia Regia* in 1573 until the beginning of the inquisitorial lawsuit against this work in 1577. Nevertheless, the recent edition of new texts related to the three actors of the process (prosecution, defence and censorship) has allowed us to connect these writings with other texts already published, reconstruct some unpreserved texts, and achieve a better comprehensive knowledge of that relevant inquisitorial lawsuit. To put it simply, the centrepiece of the lawsuit was a cluster of twenty-four passages of the new Latin translation of the Old Testament published in the Polyglot, based on Santes Pagnino's version, that distanced themselves from the corresponding translations of St. Jerome and that, according to the complainant, obscured the prophetic sense that the Catholic Church had traditionally seen in those same passages of the Vulgate. This article analyzes the connection between all the texts of the inquisitorial process collected to date with the primary objective of shedding light on the three passages of the new Latin translation of the Old Testament published in the Polyglot of Antwerp that were denounced and finally condemned due to its deviation from the translations offered by the Vulgate of St. Jerome.

2. The Immediate Reception of the Polyglot Bible in the Light of a New Document (HSA B 1351)

Scholars working on Humanism are fortunate that, from time to time, one may come across still unpublished and valuable documents. This is the case of an apology of the *Biblia Regia* written in Spanish by its director Benito Arias Montano, of which the Spanish bibliographer Nicolás Antonio gave vague news in the 17th century: in particular, Antonio referred to a manuscript of this apology or defence that was sacked by the English army in the Spanish city of Cádiz and taken to

² On the process of Luis de León see the recent edition of Alcalá Galve 2009. The documentation on the two other inquisitorial processes can be found in Pinta Llorente 1935; 1946.

the University of Oxford at the end of the 16th century (Antonio 1783, I, 210). This manuscript promised to be a key piece to rebuild the reception of the Royal Bible, and, for this reason, a long series of researchers has unsuccessfully tried to locate this document in the libraries of Oxford since the 17th century (Dávila Pérez 2016). Some scholars have even considered it a non-existent work (Morochó Gayo 1998, 260–261). However, fortunately, such is not the case.

In 2019 I published a book with the first critical and annotated edition of this text, which is titled *Defensión y respuesta de la traslación latina ad u[er]bum del hebreo que está en el segundo tomo del Sacro Apparato de la Biblia Real*. The only copy I have come across is not the one supposedly preserved in Oxford (a testimony that, if it still exists, I have not been able to locate yet), but in the Hispanic Society of New York.³ The description of this manuscript already appeared in the catalogue *Iter Italicum* of Paul Kristeller with the abbreviated title –and with a typographical error– of *Defensión y respuesta de la traslación latina ad abum (sic)⁴ del hebreo*. After reading this manuscript, the sound conclusion can be drawn that this is the same document called „Apology“ by previous scholarship because its content fits perfectly with the little that was known to us about the content of that ‚lost‘ apology, namely, a complete account (according to Arias Montano’s version) of the reception of the Polyglot Bible; as well as the answers to each of the objections of the enemies of the Polyglot, in particular of León de Castro.⁵ Nevertheless, the most critical reachable conclusion is that this *Defensión y respuesta* was the exact text presented by Arias Montano as self-defence for the lawsuit initiated by the Spanish Inquisition in 1577; that is, it is the same defensive writing that Juan de Mariana had before his eyes to elaborate his inquisitorial report. Moreover, the primary evidence is that Juan de Mariana, in his handwritten censorship document, which is still unpublished,⁶ responds to Arias Montano’s allegations following the same order and structure in which they can be read in the manuscript of the Hispanic Society.

3. The Genetic Circle of Accusatory Writings: The Accusation on Job 19,25-26

The *Defensión y respuesta* of Arias Montano provides us with new information on the movements of León de Castro during the reception of the Polyglot. It should be highlighted here that, during the entire period after the publication of the Polyglot, its director showed eagerness, as it is natural, to know the exact content of the accusatory writings of León de Castro. These writings have not been located yet, in case they are preserved. Nevertheless, the *Defensión y respuesta* provides

³ With the reference HSA Ms. B 1351.

⁴ Instead of the abbreviation *ad u[er]bum*; see Kristeller 1963–1992, V, 319.

⁵ This fully coincides with what the first librarian of the Bodleian wrote on the content of the manuscript of the Apology taken by the English army to Oxford at the end of the 16th century; see James 1612, III, 43.

⁶ *Io[hannis] Marianaе censura in Biblia Regia quae nuper diligentia et industria D. Benedicti Ariae Montani in lucem edita sunt* (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Barb. Lat. 674, ff. 14^a-66^a).

essential information in this regard since it allows us to reconstruct how many accusatory writings there were, their title, and their main content.

According to one crucial passage of this new text,⁷ there were, in total, three writings of accusation. The first two contained general questions, and, as Arias Montano criticizes, they came to repeat ideas from the commentaries on the prophet Isaiah published by Castro in 1570 (Castro 1570). Castro's thesis could be summed up in the idea that the Jews had intentionally corrupted the Hebrew original text of the Bible in the passages of the Old Testament that could be understood as a prophecy of Jesus Christ. The accuser's final claim was that the literal translators of the Hebrew Bible had to correct the Hebrew original text, allegedly corrupt, so that their translations coincided with the Hebrew text that St. Jerome seemed to have followed in the Vulgate. The point that Arias Montano makes linking Castro's accusation with a work already published seems to me of great interest. The reality is that, as we will see, all the writings that formed part of the Inquisitorial dossier of the *Biblia Regia* (those of the defender, of the prosecutor and the censor) were finally reused by their authors in later printed publications. Moreover, that happened even though, in principle, the whole inquisitorial process and its materials should be kept secret.

In his third and final accusatory writing, now in Latin, León de Castro compiled a list of twenty-four passages of the new Latin literal translation of the Old Testament included in the Polyglot that demonstrated, in his opinion, the Judaizing character of the new Bible. In this text, the primary evidence of the accusation can be found, and, therefore, this is the writing to which Arias Montano responds most directly in his *Defensión y respuesta*. The content of Castro's specific accusations can be reconstructed based on the responses of Arias Montano and the censorship of Juan de Mariana.

For example, let us examine one of the denounced passages, perhaps the most important: Job 19,25-26.⁸ The Vulgate reads as follows:⁹ »Scio enim quod redemptor meus uiuit, et in nouissimo die de terra surrecturus sum: et rursum circundabor pelle mea, et in carne mea uidebo Deum meum.« (*Biblia Sacra*, VII, f. [Cc 6^r], p. 35.)¹⁰ (»For I know that my redeemer lives, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth: and I shall be covered again with my skin, and in my flesh, I shall see my God.«) According to the Catholic Church, this passage was one of the most evident testimonies of the resurrection of the flesh. Let us now check the new Latin translation of the *Biblia Regia*, based on Pagnino's version: »Et ego noui redemptorem meum uiuum et nouissimo super puluerem staturum. Et postquam

⁷ In *Defensión y respuesta* (HSA Ms. B 1351, ff. 3^v-4^r); see edition in Dávila 2019, 33.

⁸ In the *Defensión y respuesta*... this passage is discussed in the accusations number 5 (HSA B 1351, f. 5^v, edited in Dávila 2019, 53–55) and number 19 (HSA B 1351, f. 7^r, edited in Dávila 2019, 77–78).

⁹ When quoting the Vulgate, I follow the edition of Colunga Cueto and Turrado Turrado 1983. The reason for this choice is the fact that in the texts of the process of the Polyglot Bible of Antwerp, the passages quoted from the Vulgate are closer to the state of the text that was consolidated in the Sixto-Clementine edition of 1592 than to the text of St. Jerome that appeared in the Polyglot of Antwerp, heir of which was published in the Complutensian Polyglot. All the translations of the Latin texts in this article are mine.

¹⁰ My references to the Polyglot Bible of Antwerp correspond to the copy kept in the Library of the University of Granada with the signature BHR/Caja IMP3-022.

pellem meam contriuerint hanc, et de carne mea uidebo Deum.« (»But I know that my redeemer is alive, and at the end, he will stand on the dust. Even after my skin has been destroyed, yet I shall see God in my flesh.«) Leon denounced that this new translation completely confused the idea of the resurrection and followed the interpretation of the Jews. His main arguments were the following: first, on the assumption that the Jews had corrupted the Hebrew original text of the Bible, Castro proposes to change a letter in the Hebrew text in order to read *iakim* (*surgam* or *surrecturus sum*, »I shall rise«, as translated in the Vulgate) instead of *iakum* (*resurget*, »he will stand«, the meaning accepted in the new Latin literal translation of the Polyglot Bible); second, the Hebrew word *naquaf* does not only mean ,to cut' or ,to destroy' (*contriuerint*, in the literal Latin translation of the Polyglot Bible) but also ,to cover' or ,to enclose' (*circundabor*, as St. Jerome translated). The censor Juan de Mariana declared that the proposal of changing the original Hebrew text of the Bible could not be admitted without the consensus of the Catholic Church; despite that, he finally agreed with León de Castro that the new Latin translation of this passage published in the Polyglot had to be corrected since it completely deformed the mystery of the resurrection of Christ.¹¹

We have already said that Castro's accusatory writings have not been located yet. However, I have been able to verify that the majority of the passages denounced by Castro in the process of the Polyglot Bible were collected, explained, and developed in a later publication of 1585 with the title *Apologeticus*¹² where, by the way, there is no reference to the inquisitorial lawsuit (Castro 1585).¹³ This closes, therefore, the genetic transit of texts that have been pointed out here. In the case of the accusation, Castro's postulates started from their commentaries on Isaiah published in 1570; they materialized in the form of the specific denunciations in the three accusatory writings of the process of 1577, and, finally, many of those accusations of the process came to light in the *Apologeticus* of 1585.

¹¹ Io[hannis] Marianaе censura in Biblia Regia (ff. 30^v-31^v; 42^r-43^r).

¹² León de Castro, *Apologeticus pro lectione apostolica et euangelica pro Vulgata diui Hieronymi, pro translatione LXX uirorum, proque omni ecclesiastica lectione contra earum obtractatores* (Salmanticae, Matthiae Gastii, 1585).

¹³ The specific pages of the *Apologeticus* where many of the passages already denounced in the process of 1577 are analyzed are the following: Ps. 9,1 (p. 547); Iob 19,26 (pp. 353–354); Iob 19,27 (pp. 355–256); Is. 16,1 (pp. 279–281); Dan. 9,26 (pp. 334–338); Dan. 9,27 (pp. 336 and 666–667); Hab. 2,3 (pp. 554–555); Hab. 2,4 (pp. 555–556); Is. 1, 9 (pp. 162–164); Is. 9,1 (pp. 638–642); Os. 11,1 (pp. 621–622); Iob 19,25 (pp. 352–353); Ps. 8,1 (pp. 331–332); Is. 11,1 (pp. 626–629); Ps. 79(80),1 (p. 74); Ps. 21(22),17 (pp. 343–344); Ps. 15(16),10 (pp. 486–488); Ps. 8,3 (pp. 664–666 and 674–675); and Ps. 15(16),9 (pp. 483–484). Some of the preceding biblical passages and others not included in the *Apologeticus* had already been discussed by Castro in his *Commentaria in Isaiam Prophetam* of 1570: that is the case of Is. 16,1 (pp. 334–335); Is. 1,9 (pp. 22–24); Is. 9,1 (pp. 212–215); Is. 10,22 (pp. 263–266, not studied in *Apologeticus*); Is. 28,10–11 (pp. 476–482, not studied in *Apologeticus*); and Is. 11,1 (pp. 273–283).

4. From the Defence of the Polyglot Bible to the Apology of the Hebrew Studies: The Omission of the Accusation on Ps. 21(22),17

Let us now turn again to the defence. The new manuscript titled *Defensión y respuesta* located in the Hispanic Society of America has already been considered in the previous lines, focusing on its transmission and primary content. Here I will approach two later texts that seem to be genetically dependent on the *Defensión y respuesta*. The first one is a manuscript from the Spanish National Library entitled *De Hebraicorum Bibliorum uaria scriptione et lectione atque de uario interpretum instituto animaduersio*.¹⁴ I did not know any previously printed witness of this manuscript before my recent edition (Dávila 2019, 88–105); this document is a working draft, and intermediate textual material between the *Defensión y respuesta* and a later text of Arias Montano titled *Benedicti Ariae Montani de uaria Hebraicorum Librorum scriptione et lectione commentatio*. This *Commentatio* is a prologue of eleven pages published in the re-editions of the successful seventh volume of the Polyglot of 1584 and subsequent years (*Biblia Hebraica* 1584).¹⁵ The text was printed only seven years after Mariana's censorship. It included the same contents of the *Animaduersio* (mainly dealing with the philological peculiarities of the Holy Tongue) followed by a wide selection of León de Castro's objections to Pagnino's translation and Arias Montano's responses, which, as has been said before, came from the *Defensión y respuesta* of the inquisitorial process. By the way, Arias Montano, like León de Castro in his *Apologeticus*, does not reference the inquisitorial process in his publication, nor does he quote Castro by name.

Unlike the *Defensión y respuesta*, the printed *Commentatio* is written in Latin, the answers to Castro's accusations are much more elaborated, and one can perceive in this publication the filter that was the censorship of Juan de Mariana. Thus, in Ps. 21(22),17, the Vulgate presents Saint Jerome's translation: »quoniam circumciderunt me canes multi; concilium malignantium obsedit me. Foderunt manus meas et pedes meos« (»for many dogs surrounded me: the council of the malignant has besieged me. They have dug my hands and feet«). According to the Catholic Church, this text was a prophecy of the death of Christ on the cross. The new literal Latin translation of the *Biblia Regia* reads as follows: »Quoniam circuncederunt me canes, coetus malignantium circuncederunt me: quasi leo manus meas et pedes meos« (*Biblia Sacra*, VII, f. [Ee 2^v], p. 52) (»for many dogs surrounded me, a gang of evil men crowded around me; like a lion, my hands and feet«). The phrase »like a lion' came from a bizarre variant of the original Hebrew text (*caari* or *sicut leo* instead of *caru* or *foderunt*). Furthermore, that was different from that of the Hebrew text of the Complutensian and the one accepted by Saint Jerome and the foremost Hebraist scholars of the moment. In his censorship of the Polyglot, Mariana proved that Castro was right and strongly recommended

¹⁴ Reference Ms. 149, ff. 120^r-123^r.

¹⁵ The *Commentatio* appears on ff. ++^r-[++ 6]^r.

to correct this translation,¹⁶ and I think that was why Arias Montano directly removed this accusation in his printed text of 1584.¹⁷

5. The Manuscript Inquisitorial Report and Its Later Printed Reuse: The Third Condemned Passage (Ps. 15[16],10)

Mariana's censorship of 1577 also has an engaging genetic-textual transmission. The first testimony, in chronological order, is a letter in Spanish from Juan de Mariana to the General Inquisitor in Spain written in August 1577, in which he informs the reader that he has concluded the censorship and makes a valuable summary of it.¹⁸ The entire censorship is in Latin, it is a document still unpublished, signed in September 1577, and the only testimony I know is the copy, with some mistakes, preserved in the Vatican Library. Nevertheless, just as the two parts of the lawsuit did, Mariana also wanted to take advantage of the papers he wrote for this important occasion. In 1609 the Jesuit published a brief treatise entitled *Pro editione Vulgata* (Mariana 1609, 34–126). Suppose that the still-unpublished censorship document is compared with this printed publication. In that case, it becomes evident that what Mariana did was to reproduce and adapt most of his inquisitorial report on the *Biblia Regia* by adding new materials and modifying some formal aspects.

Nevertheless, Mariana confesses that his writing comes directly from his activity as an informant of the lawsuit between Arias Montano and León de Castro in any place of this printed treatise. Mariana instead refers to the general controversy on the authority of the Vulgate, and his words also perfectly apply to the inquisitorial processes of the famous Hebraists of Salamanca. Moreover, Mariana even quotes in his printed treatise the names of Castro and Arias Montano in the places where he also cited them in the censorship document, but he also manages to avoid all those passages of the handwritten censorship document where he speaks of himself as the censor. One may ask how it is possible that Mariana cites the arguments of the two parts of a secret inquisitorial lawsuit and, at the same time, can hide his role as censor. He could safely do it because Castro's complaints and Arias Montano's responses were already of public knowledge after the impression of the *Apologeticus* of the first and the *Commentatio* of the second.

Mariana admits that he had more inclination to defend than to condemn as far as the censorship content is concerned. Despite this, the Jesuit severely assesses both Leon de Castro and Arias Montano. As to the first one, the censor condemns his excess of rage, the contradictions and lies of some of his anti-Hebrew argu-

¹⁶ Io[hannis] Mariana's *censura in Biblia Regia*, ff. 44^v-45^r.

¹⁷ In contrast to the other two passages studied in this article, that, despite Mariana's negative report, were also included in the printed *Commentatio*. See, on Job 19,24-25, Dávila 2019, 154–157 and 188–191; as to Ps. 15(16),10, see Dávila 2019, 196–199.

¹⁸ A complete copy of the letter is preserved in the Royal Library of Sweden in Stockholm Ms. A 902, ff. 91^r-94^r and has been edited by Macías Rosendo 1998, 464–468.

ments, and he even refuses Castro's core claim: no one can correct the original Hebrew text of the Bible without the consensus of the Catholic Church.¹⁹ As to Arias Montano, Mariana criticizes the little appreciation he gave to the Vulgate and urges him to correct three passages of his new Latin translation of the Bible: two of them have already been examined here, namely, Job 19,24 and Ps. 21(22),17. The third is Ps. 15(16),10.²⁰ Here the Vulgate translated: »Quoniam non derelinques animam meam in inferno, nec dabis sanctum tuum uidere corruptionem« (»Because you will not leave my soul in hell, nor will you give this holy one to see corruption«); the Catholic Church interpreted the passage as an announcement of the resurrection of Christ, whose body did not experience corruption. The new literal translation of the Polyglot of Antwerp reads as follows: »*Quoniam non relinques animam meam in sepulchro: non dabis misericordem tuam uidere foueam*« (*Biblia Sacra*, VII, f. [Ee^r], p. 49.) (»Because you will not leave my soul in the grave: nor will you allow your merciful one to see the pit«). The main arguments of the censor against this new translation were the following. The primary meaning of the Hebrew word *seol*, according to the censor, was ‚hell‘, as in the Vulgate, and not ‚grave‘ or *sepulchre*, translation with which the new Bible fell on the side of the heretics, who deny that Jesus descended into hell. On the other hand, when translating the Hebrew word *sahhath* as *foueam* („pit“) instead of the generally admitted (by the Catholic Church) meaning of *corruptionem* („corruption“), Arias Montano followed Judaizing interpretations and made it difficult to understand the passage as a prophecy of the resurrection of Christ, since the Messiah was buried, that is, he saw the pit or the grave.²¹

6. Conclusions

This paper intends to show that the reception and inquisitorial process of the Polyglot Bible of Antwerp consisted in a philological and theological confrontation over the centuries between St. Jerome and the defenders of the Vulgate, on the one hand, and Sanctes Pagnino and his Hebraist followers, on the other hand.

During the inquisitorial lawsuit against the *Biblia Regia* in 1577, the close precedent of the processes and imprisonment of the Hebraists professors at the University of Salamanca in 1572 was always alive. First, Leon de Castro himself also operated in the denunciations against his colleagues in Salamanca. Second, the principles of the accusations against them were similar to those that Castro presented years later against the Polyglot Bible: the contempt for the Vulgate of Saint Jerome and the preference for the rabbinic interpretations of Pagnino, Vatable, and others in passages of the Old Testament that announced the arrival of Jesus

¹⁹ See, especially, the first chapter of Mariana's censorship document titled „Nemini licere priuata auctoritate Hebraico Diuinae Scripturae castigare“; in *Io[hannis] Marianaе censura in Biblia Regia*, ff. 21v-23r.

²⁰ Mariana also discussed the three condemned passages studied in this article within the chapter titled „De nouis uersionibus“ of his treatise *Pro editione Vulgata* (1608, 114–119).

²¹ Mariana's censorship on this passage can be read in *Io[hannis] Marianaе censura in Biblia Regia*, ff. 30^v-31^v and ff. 60^v-62^v.

Christ. This point becomes more plausible if it is taken into account that even several specific passages of the Vulgate alleged by Castro in the process of the Polyglot Bible had already been used by himself against the professors of Hebrew at Salamanca. That is the case, for instance, of two important passages studied in the present article: Job 19,24²² and Ps. 15(16),10.²³

The three parties involved in the inquisitorial lawsuit of 1577 (prosecution, defence and censorship) produced, in different phases, a series of writings in Latin and Spanish genetically linked to each other. The edition and in-depth examination of the genetic thread from the manuscripts of the process until its printed reuse is the purpose of my research projects underway.

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²² Which also appeared in the process of Luis de León; see Alcalá Galve 2009, 324, 330, 332.

²³ Which had been also cited in the process of Martín Martínez Cantalapedra; see Pinta 1946, 24, 74, 104, 170, 247.

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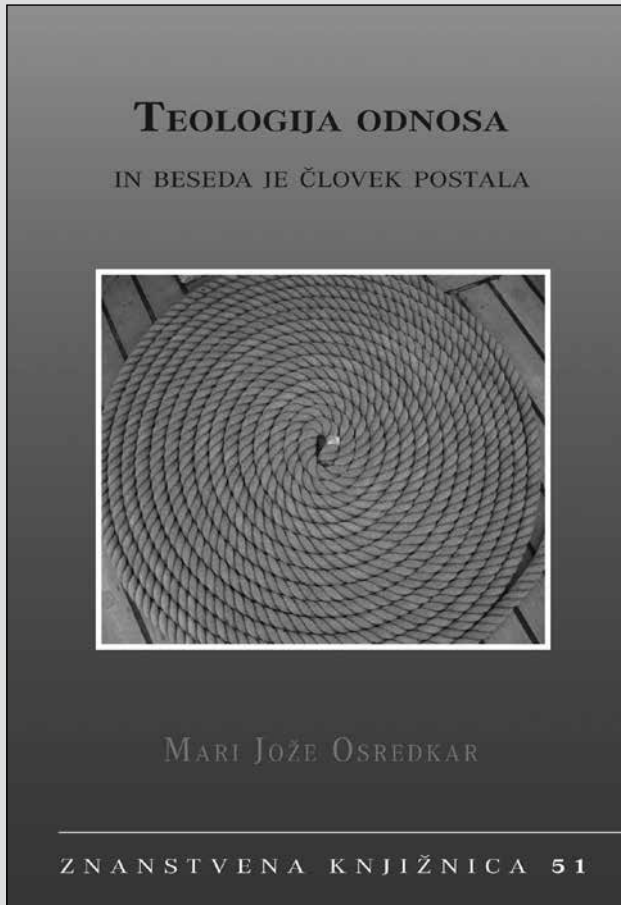
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MAGNA CHARTA FACULTATIS THEOLOGICAE LABACENSIS

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