

JEROME'S EARLIEST ATTACK ON AMBROSE:
ON *EPHESIANS*, PROLOGUE (ML 26:469D-70A)

S. M. OBERHELMAN
Texas A & M University

Jerome initiated and conducted for almost thirty years a malicious assault on Ambrose's character, as well as his literary and exegetical abilities.¹ Although

¹ A. Paredi has collected all the *testimonia* in his article "S. Gerolamo e s. Ambrogio," in *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant*, V: *Archives vaticanes d'histoire ecclésiastique, deuxième partie*, Studi e Testi 235 (Vatican 1964) 153–98. I owe many of my primary references to the Ambrose/Jerome controversy in the ancient texts to his excellent study.

Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations of ancient authors will be from the series *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum* (CSEL) and *Corpus christianorum scriptorum, series latina* (CCL). The following authors will be cited by last name only: B. Altaner and A. Stuiber, *Patrologie. Leben, Schriften und Lehre der Kirchväter*⁸ (Freidburg-Basel-Wien 1978); O. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur*, III: *Das vierte Jahrhundert mit Ausschluss der Schriftsteller syrischer Zunge* (Freiburg 1923; rpt. Darmstadt 1962); G. J. M. Bartelink, *Hieronymus. Liber de optimo genere interpretandi* (*Epistula* 57). *Ein Kommentar*, Mnemosyne Suppl. 61 (Leiden 1980); Y. Bodin, *Saint Jérôme et l'église*, *Théologie Historique* 6 (Paris 1966); F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme, sa vie et son oeuvre*, *Specilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, Études et Documents* 1–2, 2 vols. (Louvain 1922); P. Courcelle, *Les lettres grecques en Occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore*, nouv. éd., rev. et augm. (Paris 1948); F. H. Dudden, *The Life and Times of St. Ambrose*, 2 vols. (Oxford 1935); G. Grützmacher, *Hieronymus. Eine biographische Studie zur alten Kirchengeschichte*, *Studien zur Geschichte der Theologie und der Kirche* 6.3 (Leipzig 1901=vol. 1 cited in notes below), 10.1 (Berlin 1906=vol. 2), 10.2 (Berlin 1908=vol. 3); M. Ihm, "Studia ambrosiana," *Jahrbücher für klassische Philologie*, Suppl. bd. 17 (1890) 1–124; J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome. His Life, Writings and Controversies* (London 1975); G. Lazzati, "L'autenticità del *De sacramentis* e la valutazione letteraria delle opere di s. Ambrogio," *Aevum* 29 (1955) 17–48; S. M. Oberhelman, *Rhetoric and Homiletics in Fourth-Century Christian Literature*, American Philological Association Classical Studies Series 26 (Atlanta 1991); J.-R. Palanque, *Saint Ambroise et l'empire romain. Contribution à l'histoire des rapports de l'église et de l'état à la fin du quatrième siècle* (Paris 1933); A. Penna, *S. Girolamo* (Torino 1949); M. Schanz, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur bis zum Gesetzgebung des Kaisers Justinian*, *Handbuch der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* 8, 4 (München 1914); V. R. Vasey, *The Social Ideas in the Works of St. Ambrose. A Study on the De Nabuthe*, *Studia Ephem. Augustiniana* 17 (Roma 1982); D. S. Wiesen, *St. Jerome as a Satirist. A Study in Christian Latin Thought and Letters*, Cornell Studies in Classical Philology 34 (Ithaca 1964).

The following authors will be cited by last name and short title: P. Antin, *Essai sur saint Jérôme* (Paris 1951) and *Recueil sur saint Jérôme*, Collection Latomus 95 (Bruxelles 1968); H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics. A Study on the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers*, *Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia* 6 (Göteborg 1958) and "Hieronymus" in *RLAC* (Stuttgart 1989) 113:117–39; P. Nautin, "L'excommunication de saint Jérôme," *AEHE IV^e Sect.* 80/81.2 (1973/4) 7–37, "Le premier échange épistolaire entre Jérôme et

he does not mention the Milanese bishop by name until after the latter's death in 397,² he hurled certain insidious and slanderous insults at Ambrose throughout the previous ten years. In this paper I will examine the history of the relations between Jerome and Ambrose and the reasons for the one-sided hostility, since the entire episode is not well known to classicists and religious historians, and since no full treatment of it—beyond scattered references by Italian and French scholars—has been offered. Then I will demonstrate that the first outbreak of Jerome's rage against Ambrose occurs much earlier than has been supposed and is, in fact, his most vitriolic and detailed attack.

We owe our knowledge of most of Jerome's attacks to Jerome's erstwhile friend, Rufinus Tyrannus, who meticulously proved in his *Apology against Jerome* of 401 that Jerome had savagely pilloried Ambrose, to Rufinus one of the stalwarts of the church.³ The attacks, though, are so obvious that even contemporaries who did not have at hand the detailed personal knowledge of the episode possessed by Rufinus could not have failed to decipher them.⁴ For example, Jerome says in his letter to Oceanus, dated to the mid-390s:⁵

"Non neophytum, ne in superbiam elatus in iudicium incidat diaboli"; mirari satis non queo, quae hominum tanta sit caecitas de uxoribus ante baptismum disputare, et rem in baptismo mortuam, immo cum Christo vivificatam, in calumniam trahere, cum tam apertum evidensque praeceptum nemo custodiat. Heri catechumenus, hodie pontifex; heri in amphitheatro, hodie in ecclesia; vespere in circo, mane in altari; dudum fautor histrionum, nunc virginum consecrator. (*Ep.* 69.9.4 [CSEL 43, p. 697, 14-p. 698, 4])

Damase: lettres réelles ou fictives?," *ZPhTh* 30 (1983) 331–44, "L'activité littéraire de Jérôme de 387 à 392," *RThPh* 115 (1983) 247–59, and "Hieronymus" in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (Berlin 1986) 15: 304–15; A. Paredi, *Ambrogio e la sua età*, 2a ed. ampl. (Milano 1960) and "S. Gerolamo e s. Ambrogio," referenced above.

² Hagendahl, *Fathers* 115.

³ Rufinus, *Apology against Jerome* 2.26 (CCL 20, p. 102, 17–23: "...polliciti sumus probaturos nos quomodo laceret virum omni admiratione dignum, Ambrosium episcopum, qui non solum Mediolanensis ecclesiae, verum etiam omnium ecclesiarum columna quaedam et turris inexpugnabilis fuit...")

⁴ Rufinus was a schoolmate and friend of Jerome in Rome and later in Palestine: Grützmacher 1:113–14. Rufinus, being a good friend until the mid-390s, accordingly possessed much damaging information about Jerome, the most dangerous of which concerned Jerome's pilfering of Origen's writings and his replication of many of Origen's unorthodox beliefs: see Cavallera 2:115–27; I. Opelt, *Hieronymus' Streitschriften* (Heidelberg 1973) 83–118; P. Lardet, *Saint Jérôme. Apologie contre Rufin*, Sources Chrétiennes 303 (Paris 1983) 1*–75*.

⁵ Cavallera 2:46 dates the letter between 395 and 401; Grützmacher 1:81, at some point before 402, but after 395 when Oceanus left Bethlehem. Ambrose is not named personally and so we may wish to date the letter on this basis between 395 and 397 (Ambrose's death). But as Alan Cameron has argued in personal communications, the reference to Ambrose would have been to the ancient reader so unmistakable, so blatant, that a name was superfluous.

A brilliant assault, and if Ambrose read it, he, too, as a trained rhetor, would have applauded the masterly stroke as it fell on his head.⁶ Ambrose, appointed governor of Aemilia-Liguria in 370, had his headquarters in Milan.⁷ As Ambrose himself testifies, his duties as *consularis* were primarily judicial.⁸ Thus we cannot say for certain whether part of his duties as provincial governor included attendance at the circus, amphitheater, and theater, as was the case for emperors.⁹ But in Milan during the time of Ambrose's governorship, there did exist an extraordinarily large circus,¹⁰ a first-century B.C. theater,¹¹ and, quite possibly, the amphitheater to which his biographer Paulinus refers as existing during his episcopate.¹² Given the absence in Ambrose of the rigid isolationism so typical of Jerome and many of the earlier Western ecclesiastics, and given, furthermore, Ambrose's neophytism when he was elected to the bishopric, common sense, as well as pictorial representations on diptychs from the

⁶ We do not have specific references to Ambrose's education other than Paulinus' catch-all phrase "edoctus liberalibus disciplinis" (*Life of Ambrose* 5). But given the prestigious status of Ambrose's family, he must have been trained in the finest rhetorical schools: H. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique*⁴ (Paris 1958) 4–5. We do know that Ambrose moved up the civilian administrative ranks very quickly—from the bar at the court of the Prefect of Italy to the governorship of Aemilia-Liguria (Palanque 13)—and law school and rhetorical training were *sine qua non* conditions for this career ladder.

⁷ A. Calderini, *Milano romana* (Milano 1965) 53 and P. Nautin, "Les premières relations d'Ambroise avec l'empereur Gratian. Le *De fide* (Livres I–II)," in *Ambroise de Milan. XVI^e centenaire de son élection épiscopale. Dix études*, ed. Y. M. Duval (Paris 1974) 229–30.

⁸ *On penitence* 2.8.67 (CSEL 73, p. 191, 3–5): "Plus debuisse me fateor et plus dimissum mihi, qui de forensium strepitu iugiorum et a publicae terrore administrationis ad sacerdotium vocatus sim." Cf. 2.8.72 (p. 192, 52–55): "Ecce ille [Ambrosius] non in ecclesiae nutritus sinu, non edomatus a puero, sed raptus de tribunalibus, abductus vanitatibus saeculi huius, a praeconis vice ad psalmistae aduffectus canticum, in sacerdotio movet..."

⁹ A. Cameron, *Circus Factions. Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium* (Oxford 1976) 157–92, esp. 175–77.

¹⁰ For the circus, see Calderini (above, note 7) 97–101 and M. M. Roberti, *Milano romana* (Milano 1984) 63–68. The excavation reports are summarized in A. De Capitoni D'Arzapo, *Il circo romano*, Istituto di Studi Romani—Sezione Lombarda 1 (Milano 1939).

¹¹ For the amphitheater, Calderini (above, note 7) 94–97 and Roberti (above, note 10) 52–56.

¹² Controversy exists whether an amphitheater existed in the 370s. Ausonius, who visited Milan in 379, does not mention any such edifice among those he reports having seen: *Catalogue of noble cities* 35–45 (= G. M. Mondini, *La tradizione intorno agli edifici romani di Milano dal secolo v al secolo xviii*, Istituto di Studi Romani—Sezione Lombarda 2 [Milano 1942] 63). Paulinus, in his *Life of Ambrose* (c. 34), relates a story of a certain Creconius who, having taken refuge at the altar of the basilica, was dragged away by the soldiers of Stilicho to the amphitheater for execution; the wild beasts, however, devoured the soldiers instead. Morality aside, the story does place an amphitheater in Milan in Stilicho's time. Calderini, *L'anfiteatro romano*, Istituto di Studi Romani—Sezione Lombarda 3 (Milano 1940) 7–8, gets around the problem of Ausonius' silence by hypothesizing that "...forse l'anfiteatro milanese ad tempo della vista...non era più in efficienza e forse era già stanto smantellato e reso inservibile per gli scopi pei quali era stato creato." For full particulars of the amphitheater, see Calderini (1940) and (1965, above, note 7) 101–3 and Roberti (above, note 10) 57–62.

provinces, should tell us that the leading administrative officer in the province attended the games, just as the emperor always did at the capitol.¹³ Furthermore, when Ambrose assumed the office of bishop in October 373, he was a catechumen.¹⁴ As Ambrose often ruefully complained, he required immediate "on the job" training because of his ignorance of the scriptures, theology, and the functions of the clergy.¹⁵ In the light of all these historical and biographical

¹³ Ambrose makes many references to games and circuses; Dudden has collected relevant passages: 1:34n. 5, 35n. 3, 37nn. 1–4. Whether these references imply passing knowledge or acquaintance with the games from personal experience is quite debatable. Most men and women these days possess enough working knowledge of sports to use them in drawing *exempla* and metaphors. We cannot discount either the attractiveness for an ancient rhetor or preacher of adding vividness and color to his discourse by adducing parallels from the games.

Several diptychs depict officials at games: R. Delbrück, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler*, Studien zur spätantiken Kunstgeschichte im Auftrage des deutschen Archäologischen Instituts 2 (Berlin und Leipzig 1929) 158–61 (pl. 37) and 221–23 (pl. 57). Other diptychs show praetors and a consul suffect at the games: A. Chastagnol, *Le sénat romain sous le règne d'Odoacre. Recherches sur l'Épigraphie du Colisée au V^e siècle*, Antiquitas 3 (Bonn 1966) 58–59; cf. J. W. Salomonson, "Kunstgeschichtliche und ikonographische Untersuchungen zu einem Tonfragment der Sammlung Benaki in Athen," *BVAB* 48 (1973) 14–17. (My thanks to Alan Cameron for assistance on diptychs.) Salomonson has published a large amount of pottery from Northern Africa and Egypt that shows *venationes* and magistrates: "Late-Roman earthenware with relief decoration found in Northern-Africa and Egypt," *OMRL* 53 (1962) 58–63 (pls. 13, 1; 14, 1; 16, 6) and 65–67 (pls. 19, 3 and 20, 1); all these date from 375 to 430 (pp. 87–88) and probably served as mementos of games. A. Visconti in his article "La Milano burocratico del IV secolo," in *Lombardia romana: Italia romana* 1 (Milano 1938) 119–48, while not mentioning games, does have a good, though brief, discussion of Ambrose as an example of the *consulares* who governed Milan during the fourth century.

Interestingly, Claudian, in his *Panegyric for Manlius Theodorus* 276–332, when giving a complete list of consular activities for the year 399, categorizes them as circus, amphitheater, and theater; I owe this reference to Delbrück 67. Ambrose's activities, as Jerome mentions them, would be, therefore, a microcosm of the consul's duties.

¹⁴ The indispensable sources for the whole episode are Y. M. Duval, "Ambroise, de son élection à sa consécration," and M. Simonetti, "La politica antiariana di Ambrogio," both in *Ambrosius Episcopus. Atti del Congresso internazionale di studi ambrosiani nel XVI centenario della elezione di sant'Ambrogio alla cattedra episcopale, Milano 2–7 dicembre 1974*, ed. G. Lazzati (Milano 1976) 2:243–83 and 1:266–70, respectively. Also important are C. Corbellini, "Sesto Petronio Probo e l'elezione episcopale di Ambrogio," *RIL* 209 (1975) 181–89, and I. Schuster, *La liturgia della Settimana Santa nel rito della Chiesa milanese* (Milano 1938) 3–15; cf. E. Lamirande, *Paulin de Milan et La Vita Ambrosii. Aspects de la religion sous le Bas-Empire* (Paris 1983) 78–79, 149–51; M. Sordi, "L'atteggiamento di Ambrogio di fronte a Roma e al paganesimo," in *Ambrosius Episcopus* 1:203–4; A. Paredi, "Ambrogio vescovo," in *Sant'Ambrogio nell'arte del Duomo di Milano*, ed. A. Paredi-A. M. Brizio (Milano 1973) 9–55. O. Faller would place the date of Ambrose's election to the bishopric to 384 ("La data della consacrazione vescovile di Sant' Ambrogio," in *Ambrosiana. Scritti di storia, archeologia ed arte pubblicati nel XVI centenario della nascita di sant'Ambrogio* [Milano 1942] 97–112), but this date has not been accepted: cf. P. Nautin, "Études de chronologie hiéronimienne (393–397)," *REAug* 20 (1974) 283–84.

data and the fact that virginity was perhaps the area to which Ambrose devoted his greatest attention as writer and preacher, we can only admire, as Jerome's reading audience at Rome must have, the superb but devastating sets of antithetic cola capped by chiasmus: "heri catechumenus, hodie pontifex; heri in amphitheatro, hodie in ecclesia; vespere in circo, mane in altari; dudum fautor histrionum, nunc virginum consecrator."¹⁶

The three most vicious attacks, however, are much earlier in date: the prefaces of two of Jerome's translations of Greek patristic writers and the entry "Ambrosius" in his *On famous men*. In 381 Ambrose had composed a treatise of three written books on the holy spirit and sent it to the emperor Gratian in compliance with the latter's request.¹⁷ Among Ambrose's many sources was Didymus' *On the holy spirit*, dated to the late 350s.¹⁸ Modern scholars are divided over the extent of Ambrose's dependency on Didymus' text.¹⁹ The issue is rather moot, however, since the Greek text is lost, while those scholars who label Ambrose a plagiarist rely too much on Jerome's testimony, hardly a source to be trusted, for much of their evidence. Jerome, however, was horrified (so he claims) at what he considered Ambrose's whole-sale plagiarism of Didymus. Accordingly, he published in 388 a translation of the entire Greek

¹⁵ Ambrose speaks of himself in *On duties of the Christian clergy* 1.4 (PL 16:24B–25A): "Ego enim raptus de tribunalibus atque administrationis infulsis ad sacerdotium, docere vos coepi, quod ipse non didici. Itaque dictum est ut prius docere inciperem, quam discere."

¹⁶ This letter was sent to Oceanus, a rich aristocrat residing in Rome. The letter is, in fact, a treatise, as it addresses the issue of whether a bishop may remarry (yes, according to Jerome, if the first marriage occurred before baptism). Jerome always envisioned for his correspondence a large reading audience beyond the immediate recipient: Antin, *Recueil* 346 and Altaner-Stuiber 400. In his own *vita* in *On famous men*, Jerome lists some of his letters as *libelli*, implying that these letters were meant for dissemination as treatises.

¹⁷ For the date, Bardenhewer 534; Faller, CSEL 79: 15*–17*; Ihm 32–33; Palanque 503–4; Paredi, *Ambrogio* 534; Schanz 346. For the form of composition, Bardenhewer 534–35; Ihm 32–33; C. M. Moreschini, *Sant'Ambrogio. Opere dogmatiche* II (Milano 1979) 9–10, 32–33; Palanque 460; Schanz 345–47. Faller (CSEL 79: 17*) thinks that the work is a written version of sermons with traces of oral delivery removed, but Lazzati 47 is decisive on the purely written nature of the work.

¹⁸ Faller, CSEL 79: 17*–21*; Moreschini (above, note 17) 12–32; M. Simonetti, "Sulle fonti del De spiritu sancto di S. Ambrogio," *Maia* 4 (1951) 239–48. For the date of Didymus' work, see E. Staimer, *Die Schrift 'De spiritu sancto' von Didymus dem Blinden von Alexandria* (München 1960) 117–71.

¹⁹ Among those who accuse Ambrose of plagiarism are E. Stolz, "Didymus, Ambrosius, Hieronymus," *ThQ* 87 (1905) 371–401; C. Mohrmann, "Observations sur le De sacramentis et le De mysteriis de saint Ambroise," in *Ambrosius Episcopus* (above, note 14) 1:110; Hagendahl, *Fathers* 372; cf. Schanz 363: "Seine Abhängigkeit von den Quellen, besonders von Philo und Basilius, ist eine ausserordentlich starke." Defending Ambrose are Faller, CSEL 79: 17*–18*, who in turn attacks Jerome, and Th. Schermann, *Die griechischen Quellen des hl. Ambrosius in Libri III de Spiritu Sancto*, Veröffentlichungen aus dem kirchenhistorischen Seminar, München 10 (München 1902).

text, simply so that people could detect Ambrose's plagiarism,²⁰ although such charges could easily be laid at Jerome's feet as well.²¹

In the preface to the translation, Jerome gives no name, but the attack, relentless and brutal, is obvious in its direction. Rufinus, though, wanted to make certain that the reference to Ambrose would escape no one. Thus in his *Apology*, he quotes no less than Jerome's entire preface word-for-word and then offers the following explication of the tag "quidam":

Audistis quemadmodum quem corvum ante dixerat, et totum tenebrosum et quam turpiter laceret ac nihil virile habere dicat virum, qui ad ecclesiarum Christi gloriam electus a Deo est; qui in testimoniis Domini locutus est in conspectu persecutorum regum, et non est confusus. Ambrosius sanctus de Spiritu Sancto non solum verbis, sed et sanguine suo scripsit: obtulit enim persecutoribus sanguinem suum, quod in se fudit, sed a Deo ad alios adhuc reservabatur labores. Quod etiamsi secutus est Graecos catholicos nostrorum scriptores, et aliquid de eorum dictis praesumpsit, continuo haec debuit tua esse summa cura, hic labor, hoc studium, ut pro hac causa interpreteris librum Didymi de Sancto Spiritu ut furta illius cognoscerentur... Si ergo neque tanto ac tali viro Ambrosio pepercisti... (*Apology against Jerome*, 2.27–28 [CCL, 20, p. 102, 17–27, p. 103, 34–p. 104, 14, 29–30])

Modern critics have generally accepted Rufinus' explanation, since he was intimately acquainted with Jerome the person and Jerome the polemicist. Grützmacher, Jerome's first great biographer, starkly proclaimed: "Diese giftigen anonymen Invektiven sind gegen Ambrosius und seine drei Bücher über den heiligen Geist gerichtet."²² Subsequent Jerome scholars have agreed.²³

²⁰ Cf. Courcelle 109: "...à cause de la publication du traité concurrent de saint Ambroise... Jérôme... se contente de publier... une traduction du traité de Didyme, destinée à mettre en lumière les plagiat d'Ambroise."

Regrettably, Jerome's text can be found only in Migne (PL 23:103–54). For the date of the translation I accept that offered by Nautin, "Échange" 343–44; cf. his "L'activité littéraire du Jérôme de 387 à 392," *RThPh* 115 (1983) 257–58. Cavallera 2:27 dates it earlier to 386/7 (cf. P. Antin, CCL 72: vii), while Grützmacher (1:63), Bardenhewer (614), and Schanz (392) allow it to be as late as 391/2. The date of 380 in Altaner-Stuiber is impossible.

²¹ Courcelle 113. A. Penna, *Principi e carattere dell'esegesi di S. Gerolamo* (Roma 1950), attacks Jerome's critical tools by proving that Jerome slavishly used Origen and Jewish exegetes. The bibliography on Jerome's plagiarism in his commentaries alone is overwhelming, which is a statement in itself. Plagiarism extends to the polemics, for example, the *Against Jovinian* (PL 23:211–338). E. Bickel (*Diatriben in Senecae philosophica fragmenta* [Leipzig 1915]) has shown conclusively that Jerome ransacked the Neoplatonist and anti-Christian Porphyry for most of this polemic, while F. Schultzen, "Die Benutzung der Schriften Tertullians de monogamia und de ieiunio bei Hieronymus adversus Iovinianum," *Neue Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie* 3 (1894) 485–502, has shown Jerome's plagiarism of Christian sources. A masterly summary in Hagendahl, *Fathers* 147–57, who states in conclusion that Jerome "plagiarizes so unblushingly."

²² Grützmacher 2:75.

²³ Hagendahl, "Hieronymus" 126: "Die Schrift ist besonders bekannt wegen des heftigen Angriffs der Vorrede auf Ambrosius." So too Wiesen 241–42; Nautin,

Ambrose's biographers, predictably, have rushed to the bishop's defense by attacking Jerome's own plagiarism and asserting that Ambrose was not very reliant on Didymus' text and often took liberties with it.²⁴

Ambrose gives us no hint whether he was aware of this attack. Even if he was, however, he probably would have refrained from comment, given the "silence diplomatique" (to use Palanque's phrase) so typical of the bishop. Moreover, the attack came from a monk who had recently been expelled from Rome in disgrace and was now isolated in a monastery in Bethlehem. Ambrose, on the other hand, was an exalted bishop who, through his influence over a succession of emperors, was the most powerful ecclesiastic in the empire. The buzzing of a fly, Ambrose would have (quite correctly) thought.²⁵

"Hieronymus" 306 and "Échange" 342 ("Nul doute n'est possible: la traduction du *De spiritu sancto* de Didyme et plus tard celle des *Homélies sur Luc* d'Origène sont des actes d'hostilité de Jérôme contre Ambroise"); Hagendahl, *Fathers* 115–17; Cavallera 1:134–35; Kelly 143. J. Gribomont, "Jerome," in *Patrology*, IV: *The Golden Age of Latin Patristic Literature from the Council of Nicea to the Council of Chalcedon*, ed. A. Di Berardino, trans. P. Solari (Westminster, MD 1986) 230, has nicely phrased as follows: "[Jerome] made translations of Origen and Didymus only with the perverse intention of exposing the borrowings and weaknesses of other translations."

²⁴ Paredi, *Ambrogio* 268; Dudden 1:197; G. Bardy, "Tradacteurs et adaptateurs au quatrième siècle," *RecSR* 30 (1940) 280–81, esp. 280n. 2; E. Lucchesi, *L'usage de Philon dans l'oeuvre exégétique de saint Ambroise* (Leiden 1977) 3, with n. 2 there.

For the counterattack, Dudden 1:197–98 and Courcelle 113. Jerome's supporters, on their part, are also vehement (though often obnoxiously so) in defense of his writings and statements. Cavallera, for example, gives such flighty paeans of Mariology in the context of Jerome's assaults on opponents that it becomes difficult to read his text (for instance, 1:96–100, esp. 99, and 1:154–55). Two consistently biased studies of Jerome are J. Brochet, *Saint Jérôme et ses ennemis* (Thèse Paris 1905) and J. Steinmann, *Saint Jérôme* (Paris 1958). Opelt's *Streitschriften* (above, note 4) is a model of fairness and should serve as the indispensable work on Jerome's conflicts and polemical treatises.

²⁵ Palanque 316. On Ambrose's relations with the emperors: O. Seeck, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt* (Berlin 1913) 5:158–67, 198–209, 221–59, 515–18; J. H. Van Haeringen, "De Valentiniano II et Ambrosio," *Mnemosyne* 5 (1937) 152–58, 229–40; B. Biondi, "L'influenza di sant'Ambrogio sulla legislazione religiosa del suo tempo," in *Sant'Ambrogio nel XVI centenario della nascita* (Milano 1940) 337–420; A. Saba, "L'opera politica di Sant'Ambrogio," in *ibid.* 535–69; H. Lietzmann, *Geschichte der alten Kirche*, IV: *Die Zeit der Kirchenväter* (Berlin 1944) 47–58, 59–88; W. Ensslin, *Die Religionspolitik des Kaisers Theodosius der Grosse*, Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in München, Philos.-Philolog. und Histor. Klasse 1953, 2 (München 1953) 51–63, 64–77; F. Canegallo, *I rapporti tra Stato e Chiesa nella legislazione di Costantino e Costanzo II. La teoria di S. Ambrogio e le ripercussioni nella legislazione di Graziano Valentiniano II e Teodosio* (Diss. Genova 1961); H. J. Diesner, "Kirche und Staat in ausgehenden vierten Jahrhundert: Ambrosius von Mailand," in *Das Frühe Christentum im römischen Staat* (Darmstadt 1971) 415–54; H. Gläsener, "L'empereur Gratien et saint Ambroise," *RHE* 52 (1957) 465–88; G. Gottlieb, *Ambrosius von Mailand und Kaiser Gratian*, Hypomnemata, Untersuchungen zur Antike und zu ihrem Nachleben 40 (Göttingen 1973); A. Paredi, *Politica di S. Ambrogio* (Milano 1974).

Another attack appeared immediately after Ambrose's publication in the late 380s of his *Exposition on the gospel of Luke*.²⁶ Ambrose's text is a collage of both written sections and approximately twenty-five sermons²⁷ that he then reworked into a highly polished stylistic masterpiece.²⁸ As soon as he caught wind of this treatise, Jerome abruptly put aside his work *Hebrew Questions* and produced a translation of Origen's thirty-nine homilies on Luke.²⁹ The preface is vintage Jerome as he proceeds to savage Ambrose, without naming him, in the most vicious terms.³⁰ Rufinus, once again, reproduces Jerome's preface and then in a bold air of defiance dares Jerome to refute the fact that Ambrose is the person behind the slur "corvus"; after all, he says, he has in his hands a personal communication to prove his case:

Nam et sanctae memoriae Ambrosium episcopum qualibus figuris (Hieronymus) laceret, qualibus obtreactionibus secet in his ipsis in quibus nihilominus laudat Originem, similiter ex suis praefationibus edocebo. Praefatio de omiliis in Lucam ad Paulam et Eustochium: "Ante paucos dies quorundam in Mathaeum et Lucam commentarios vos legisse dixistis, e quibus alter et sensibus hebes esset et verbis, alter in verbis luderet, in sententiis dormitaret. Quam ob rem petitis, ut, istiusmodi nugis conemptis, saltem triginta novem Adamantii nostri in Lucam omilias sicut in Graeco habentur, interprete...praetermisi paululum Hebraicarum Quaestionum libros, ut...non mea sed aliena dictarem, praesertim cum a sinistro oscinem corvum audiam croccientem et mirum in modum de cunctarum avium ridere coloribus, cum totus ipse tenebrosus

²⁶ Bardenhewer (510) dates the work to 388; Ihm (24–26, 79) to 386/7; Palanque (529–36) between 377 and 389; Paredi, *Ambrogio* (533) to c. 390; Schanz (337) to early 387; K. Schenkl (CSEL 32.2: xiii) to 386; G. Tissot (*Ambroise de Milan. Traité sur l'Evangile de S. Luc*, Sources Chrétiennes 45 [Paris 1957] 11) between 377 and 389; W. S. Wilbrand ("Zur Chronologie einiger Schriften des hl. Ambrosius," *HJ* 41 [1921] 9–11) to 387. See also the discussion in G. Coppa, *Sant'Ambrogio. Opere esegetiche, IX/1. Esposizione del evangelio secondo Luca* (Milano 1978) 21–25.

²⁷ Palanque 449–52, esp. 451; cf. Coppa (above, note 26) 18–20 and Tissot (above, note 26) 11–14.

²⁸ For details see Oberhelman 32, 57, 108–9; cf. Lazzati 42–47.

²⁹ Text in M. Rauer, *Origenes Werke, 9. Homilien zu Lukas in der Uebersetzung des Hieronymus und des griechischen Reste der Homilien und des Lukas Kommentars* (Leipzig 1930) 1–222. In the preface (p. 1, 4–p. 2, 6 Rauer), Jerome claims that the impetus for the translation came from Paula and Eustochium; but given Jerome's proclivity for deceit, I would rather credit malice as the inspiration.

For the date of Jerome's translation, see Bardenhewer (612), who places it in 390; Nautin ("L'activité" [above, note 20] 252–53) in 392; Cavallera (2:27–28) between 389 and 392; Grützmaker (1:63) between 388 and 391; Hagendahl ("Hieronymus" 133) in 390; Altaner-Stuiber (399) in 390; Antin (CCL 72: vii) after 390.

³⁰ Cavallera 1:142: "La préface est caractéristique de l'état d'âme de saint Jérôme et son intransigeance critique. Elle fait connaître très nettement quelles circonstances motivèrent ce nouveau labeur. C'est encore saint Ambroise, avec son commentaire sur saint Luc, qui est en cause."

sit."³¹ Fateor itaque, antequam ille obiciat, in his Origenem tractatibus quasi puerum talis ludere. Alia sunt virilia eius et alia senectutis seria...Quod si negare voluerit hoc quod omnes sciunt, quia de sancto Ambrosio dixerit, primo ex eo vincitur quod apud Latinos ipsius tantum et non alterius in Lucam commentarius fertur, deinde scit me habere epistolam suam in qua hoc ipsum ab aliis excusans in illum convertit suspicionem. (*Apology against Jerome*, 2.25 [CCL 20, p. 101, 12–p. 102, 41] and 2.26 [p. 102, 1–6])

In his rebuttal, the *Apology against Rufinus*, Jerome utters not a word to refute the charge.³² The silence serves only to validate Rufinus' decoding of the "corvus" reference.³³ As for Jerome's attack on the literary qualities of Ambrose's work, I may note that Jerome is quite the poor critic here: Ambrose not only enriched Origen's homilies but was rather free in adapting and translating them.³⁴ Jerome's translation, on the other hand, adheres very closely to the Greek text, with only a few changes necessitated because of Latin syntax and language.³⁵

³¹ For the Horatian provenance of Jerome's imagery, see Hagendahl, *Fathers* 117.

³² Paredi, "Gerolamo" 188: "A questa accusa di Rufino, dell'anno 400, s. Gerolamo si guardò bene dal replicare: prudentemente tacque." Cf. Cavallera 1:142n. 4: "Saint Jérôme a gardé un silence prudent sur les accusations précises portées par Rufin au sujet de son attitude à l'égard de saint Ambroise..."

³³ Schanz 458: "Machte [Hieronymus] einen boshaften Ausfall auf Ambrosius, in dem er ihn mit einem krächzenden Raben verglich." Cf. Hagendahl, "Hieronymus" 126 and *Fathers* 117; Grützmacher 2:75 (cf. 2:79); Courcelle 89; Rauer (above, note 29) xvi; Nautin, "Hieronymus" 306; Bardy (above, note 24) 284–85; Lucchesi (above, note 24) 32; Kelly 143; Penna 136–37; Antin, *Essai* 154.

³⁴ H. Crouzel, F. Fournier, P. Périchon, *Origène. Homélie sur s. Luc*, Sources Chrétiennes 87 (Paris 1962) 70–73, who claim that "la sévérité de Jérôme à l'égard d'Ambroise est au moins excessive," show Ambrose's freedom with the text (pp. 73–74). So too Tissot (above, note 26) 17; B. Studer, "Zu Frage des Westlichen Origenismus," *Studia Patristica* 9, Texte und Untersuchungen, 94 (Berlin 1966) 270–87; P. Simon, *Die Deutung der Braut des Hohenlides in der vornizänischen griechischen Theologie und in der lateinischen Theologie des dritten und vierten Jahrhunderts* (Diss. Bonn 1951) 1:84–92; D. H. Müller, *Die Deutungen der hebräischen Buchstaben bei Ambrosius*, Sitzungsberichte der kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Phil.-Hist. Klasse 167, 2 (Wien 1911); K. Baus, "Das Nachwirken des Origenes in der Christusfrömmigkeit des heiligen Ambrosius," *RQA* 49 (1954) 21–55; Ch. Puech and P. Hadot, "L'Entretien d'Origène avec Héraclide et le Commentaire de saint Ambroise sur l'Evangile de saint Luc," *VChr* 13 (1959) 204–34; P. Hadot, "Une source de l'Apologia David d'Ambroise, les commenaires de Didyme et d'Origène sur le psaume 50," *RSPH* 60 (1976) 205–25. M. Rauer, *Form und Ueberlieferung der Lukas-Homilien des Origenes*, Texte und Untersuchungen 47, 3 (Leipzig 1932) 33–40, shows that Ambrose's text of Origen's homilies on Luke was different from Jerome's text.

³⁵ The important work on this subject is V. Peri, "I passi sulla Trinità nelle omelie origeniane tradotte in latina da san Gerolamo," *Studia Patristica* 6, Texte und Untersuchungen 81 (Berlin 1962) 157–63, who shows that Jerome made minimal changes. P. Nautin, *Origène, Homélie sur Jérémie*, Sources Chrétiennes 232 (Paris 1976) 33–43, agrees that Jerome added only a little to the Greek text: "...plus fréquentes sont des retouches destinées à expliciter la pensée dans des

In his *On famous men*, Jerome devotes but one sentence to Ambrose in what critics have called a "chapitre terrible"³⁶ filled with "insinuations malveillantes."³⁷ The sentence runs thus:

Ambrosius, Mediolanensis episcopus, usque in praesentem diem scribit, de quo, quia superest, meum iudicium subtraham, ne in alterutram partem aut adulatio in me reprehendatur aut veritas. (*On famous men* 124 [E. R. Richardson, *Texte und Untersuchungen* 14, 1 (Leipzig 1896) p. 53, 20–24])

Wiesen has made the nice observation that the whole passage "must mean that the truth would be highly uncomplimentary to Ambrose" if it were exposed,³⁸ while Grützmacher points to this work as probably the crassest example of Jerome's maliciousness.³⁹ All this, of course, in a work that is the epitome of wanton and outright plagiarism.⁴⁰

passages que Jérôme a jugés elliptiques, ou à embellir le style. Il s'agit le plus souvent d'additions, mais quelquefois aussi de suppressions ou de changements." Crouzel et al. (above, note 34) 85–87 also agree, and criticize E. De Faye, *Origène, sa vie, son oeuvre, sa pensée, I: Sa biographie et ses écrits* (Paris 1923) 59, who complains that "Jérôme n'a pas le respect de son texte: il en use avec une absolute liberté." Cf. Cavallera 1:443–44 and Grützmacher 2:81–82, who calls the translation "ausführlicher." It seems obvious to me that Jerome would have deviated from his usual rule of translating Origen "sensus e sensu, non verbum e verbo," simply because he wished his reading audience to realize the extent of Ambrose's use of Origen. For Jerome's usual method of translating Origen, see F. Blatt, "Remarques sur l'histoire des traductions latines," *C & M* 1 (1938) 117–42; G. Cuendet, "Cicéron et saint Jérôme traducteurs," *REL* 11 (1933) 380–400; Courcelle 42–46; P. Koetschau, *Origenes Werke, 5. De principiis* (Leipzig 1913) lxxxviii–xcv; G. Lomineto, "Note sulla traduzione geronimiana delle omelie su Geremia di Origene," *VetChr* 10 (1973) 243–62; E. Klostermann, "Die Ueberlieferung der Jeremiahomilien des Origenes," *Texte und Untersuchungen* 16, 3 (Leipzig 1897) 19–31. Bartelink is now the classic source.

Steinmann (above, note 24) 194–45, per his usual biased attempts to rescue Jerome from a reputation for nastiness, actually believes that Rufinus was the intended victim in the preface: "Le corbeau, de mauvais augure et tout noir, ne saurait être Ambroise. Les moines seuls étaient vêtus de noir et ce corbeau est tout proche de Jérôme, à la manière des Anciens face au soleil levant. 'La gauche', en Palestine, c'est le Nord, c'est Jérusalem. Le sinistre corbeau noir ne saurait être qui Rufin!" Beyond the simple fact that at this time Jerome and Rufinus were close friends, no further comment is necessary.

³⁶ Antin, *Essai* 99.

³⁷ Palanque 431; cf. Penna 177–78 and Paredi, "Gerolamo" 495.

³⁸ Wiesen 241.

³⁹ Grützmacher 2:129; cf. 2:137 on Jerome's subjective treatment of people in this work on the basis of his own conceit, and the insightful essay by S. Pricoco, "Motivi polemici e prospettive classicistiche nel *De viris illustribus* de Girolamo," *SicGymn* 32 (1979) 69–98.

⁴⁰ S. von Sychowski, *Hieronymus als Litterarhistoriker. Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung der Schrift des hl. Hieronymus 'De viris illustribus'*, Kirchengeschichtliche Studien 2, 2 (Münster 1894) 19: "Der erste Teil, welcher mit Ausnahme weniger Kapitel fast ganz aus Eusebius' Kirchengeschichte ausgeschrieben ist, aber dazu noch mit vielen Fehlern, Entstellungen, Abkürzungen und willkürlichen Erweiterungen, sowie auch stellenweise in einer fehlerhaften Übersetzung reproduziert, während selbständige Zusätze von Wert nur ganz selten vorkommen, hat nur den relativen historischen Wert, den eine mangelhafte Über-

These attacks, dating from 388 to 392/3, not only are remarkable in showing Jerome's mean-spiritedness and viciousness,⁴¹ but they stand in complete contrast to Jerome's first notices on the bishop of Milan. In 380, in one of his additions to his translation of Eusebius' *Chronicle*, Jerome remarks that Ambrose's appointment to the bishopric of Milan effectively purged Italy of the Arian heresy:⁴² "Post Auxenti seram mortem Mediolanii Ambrosio

tragung für die des griechischen unkundigen Jahrhunderte leistete. Absolut betrachtet ist er sachlich wertlos. Denn fast alle Nachrichten, die Hieronymus hat, sind uns besser und viel zuverlässiger in der von ihm benutzten Quelle erhalten." After the work of Sychowski and C. A. Bernoulli, *Der Schriftstellerkatalog des Hieronymus. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* (Freiburg und Leipzig 1895), no one can deny that *On famous men* is a ruthless *furtum* on the part of Jerome; cf. Courcelle 78ff. and T. D. Barnes, *Tertullian* (Oxford 1971) 3–12, 236–38. Such works cause one to wonder at the defense of Jerome by Cavallera 1:150 and A. Ceresa-Gastaldo, "The biographical method of Jerome's *De viris illustribus*," *Studia Patristica* 15, *Texte und Untersuchungen* 128 (Berlin 1984) 55–68.

Controversy exists concerning the date of *On famous men*, which is critical for dating much of Jerome's corpus. P. Nautin, "La date du *De viris illustribus* de Jérôme, de la mort de Cyrille de Jérusalem et de celle de Grégoire de Nazianze," *RHE* 56 (1961) 33–35, would have it published in 393; cf. his "Hieronymus" 306. He has been followed by Y. M. Duval, "Sur les insinuations de Jérôme contre Jean de Jérusalem: de arianisme à l'origénisme," *RHE* 65 (1970) 370 (although he gives a date of 392 in his *Jérôme. Commentaire sur Jonas, Sources Chrétiennes* 323 [Paris 1975] 11); M. A. Schatkin, "The influence of Origen upon St. Jerome's Commentary on Galatians," *VChr* 24 (1970) 52–53; Bodin 20; and M. Testard, *Saint Jérôme. L'apôtre savant et pauvre du patriciat romain* (Paris 1969) 55. Barnes (above paragraph) in his Appendix A (pp. 233–35) challenges Nautin's date and prefers 392; for Nautin's reply see his "Études de chronologie hieronymienne (393–397) (suite et fin)," *REAug* 20 (1974) 280–81. A. D. Booth, "The chronology of Jerome's early years," *Phoenix* 25 (1981) 241, agrees with Barnes. Earlier scholars simply waffled between 392 and 393; Cavallera 2:31; Grützmacher 1:8 and 64; Hagendahl, *Fathers* 138; Antin, *CCL* 72: vii. I follow Hagendahl ("Hieronymus" 127) in accepting the work's publication in late 392 or early 393, that is, I waffle too.

⁴¹ For the attacks on Ambrose after this date, see Paredi's *testimonia* ("Gerolamo" 189–98); the difference is that after 397 the name "Ambrosius" appears. For example, in *Ep.* 54.17.1 (CSEL 54, p. 484, 6–8), Jerome talks of a "quidam" who "imperite et Debboram inter viduas numerat," a direct reference to Ambrose's *On widows* 8 (Jerome's use of the term "imperite" will loom important below in the text); cf. the preface to Jerome's translation of the Psalms, where he begins by saying "scio quosdam..." (*Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, ed. R. Weber [Stuttgart 1975] 1:768, 2). After Ambrose's death, Jerome assaults directly: *Ep.* 84.7.6 (dated to 398/9): "nuper Ambrosius sic Exaameron illius compilavit, ut magis Hippolyti sententias Basilique sequeretur" (CSEL 55, p. 130, 8–10), and *Apology against Rufinus* 1.2 (CCL 79, p. 2, 3–p. 3, 8): "si auctoritatem suo operi praestruerat volens quos sequeretur ostendere, habuit...Ambrosii, cuius omnes paene libri huius (sc. Origenis) sermonibus pleni sunt."

⁴² For the date, A. Grisart, "La chronique de saint Jérôme. Le lieu et la date de sa composition," *Helikon* 2 (1962) 248–52; Bartelink 63; Nautin, "Études" (above, note 40) 282; Altaner-Stuiber 399; Grützmacher 1:55–56; Bardenhewer 613–14; Schanz 444. For the sources, Th. Mommsen, "Ueber die Quellen der Chronik des Hieronymus," *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin 1909) 7:606–32; R. Helm, "Hieronymus und Eutrop," *RhM* 76 (1927) 138–70, 254–306; Schanz 443–47;

episcopo constituto omnis ad fidem rectam Italia convertitur" (*Chronicle*, p. 247, 16–19 Helm).⁴³ Later, in 384, in a letter that may safely be called one of Western civilization's most misogynistic texts, Jerome refers in glowing terms to Ambrose's works on virginity:⁴⁴

At si tibi placet scire, quot molestiis virgo libera, quot uxor adstricta sit, lege Tertulliani ad admicum philosophum et de virginitate alios libellos et beati Cypriani volumen egregium et papae Damasi super hac re versu prosaque composita et Ambrosii nostri quae nuper ad sororem scripsit opuscula. In quibus tanto se fudit eloquio, ut, quidquid ad laudem virginum pertinet, exquisierit, ordinavit, expresserit. (*Ep.* 22.22.3–5 [CSEL 43, p. 174, 21–p. 175, 6])⁴⁵

How to account for this remarkable *volte-face*? Why the excessive paeans in the years from 380 to 384 and then the vicious spite so evident four years later? A tangible and real reason must have existed for Jerome to begin such an evil campaign against a bishop who had direct access to emperors and who could figuratively, if not literally, force an emperor to his knees in a moment of contrite penitence. Moreover, this reason must have risen from a sudden and real cause, for otherwise we cannot explain the polar extremes of praise and of disgust within so short a period of time. It is too simplistic to think solely in terms of personality, as Grützmacher does when he adduces Jerome's jealousy of Ambrose's position of authority and frustration at his own lowly state.⁴⁶ If this were so, one would expect at least a transitional period wherein Jerome redefined and reformulated his attitudes toward Ambrose. Likewise, a conflict deriving

Grützmacher 1:191–96; and G. Puccioni, "Il problema delle fronti storiche di s. Girolamo," *ASNP* 25 (1956) 191–212, although Puccioni is not aware of Helm's important work. For the overall sloppiness and messy state of the *Chronicle*, see Kelly 74–75 and Hagendahl, "Hieronymus" 133 (but cf. Cavallera 1:64).

⁴³ For the Auxentius episode and its subsequent history, see G. Gottlieb, "Der Mailänder Kirchenstreit von 385–86. Datierung, Verlauf, Deutung," *MH* 42 (1985) 37–55.

⁴⁴ For the date, Grützmacher 1:58; Cavallera 2:24; Bodin 17; Bardenhewer 645; N. Adkin, "Some notes on the style of Jerome's twenty-second letter," *RFIC* 112 (1984) 287–91. That this letter is one of the most rhetorical pieces that Jerome ever composed, despite his denials to the contrary, was first noted by Grützmacher (1:251), who remarked that the letter was "mit der feurigsten Rhetorik geschrieben und in formeller Beziehung bis ins Einzelne durchgefeilt." See also Adkin, Kelly 101, and Hagendahl, *Fathers* 110–11.

⁴⁵ See Cavallera 1:125. Y. M. Duval, "L'originalité du De virginibus dans le mouvement ascétique occidental Ambroise, Cyprien, Athanase," in *Ambroise de Milan. XVIe centenaire de son élection épiscopale. Dix études*, ed. Y. M. Duval (Paris 1974) 64 with n. 271 on pp. 64–65, has shown that Jerome actually borrowed from Ambrose in those sections of *Ep.* 22 that deal with Mary, the mother of Jesus.

⁴⁶ Grützmacher 2:76: "Sein Charakter erscheint hier einmal wieder von der hässlichsten Seite. Dem römischen Aristokraten und gewaltigen Gottesstreiter war das Los aufs lieblichste gefallen, er war der einflussreichste Bischof der abendländischen Kirche, der auch die Kaiser nach seinem Willen leitete. Und der ehrgeizige Hieronymus, der sich einst auf den Stuhl Petri Hoffnungen gemacht hatte, sass einsam im Kloster zu Bethlehem, und nur wenige Frauen vertrauten sich seiner Seelenleitung an."

from differences in social class, such as Wiesen has conjectured, is not possible, since both Ambrose and Jerome came from upper-class, prosperous families.⁴⁷ Finally, although the two clerics must have been acquainted personally from Jerome's stay in Rome during the early 380s, no documented incident that could have caused such a rift seems to have occurred, especially since in *Ep.* 22 (written in 384) Jerome so lavishly praised Ambrose.⁴⁸

The answer must lie in the circumstances of Jerome's ignominious expulsion from Rome in the summer of 385. According to a theory first advanced by Paredi in 1964 and then elaborated by Nautin over the next twenty years, Ambrose did not come to Jerome's defense when Jerome was brought before an ecclesiastical council and was driven back to Bethlehem in disgrace. For this, Jerome never forgave Ambrose.⁴⁹

By piecing together fragments of evidence—Jerome's *Ep.* 45 (CSEL 54, pp. 323–28), his preface to his translation of Didymus' *On the holy spirit*, and Rufinus' *Apology*—a clear picture of the events emerges.⁵⁰ After pope Damasus died on 11 December 384, the deacon Siricius was elected to the papacy (a position that Jerome had flattered himself worthy of and had seemed to expect would fall his way). Later, in the summer of 385, an official inquiry was made into charges of scandalous relations between Jerome and his devoted follower

⁴⁷ Wiesen 240n. 146; but Kelly's observations (pp. 6–7) on the wealth and status of Jerome's own family refute Wiesen. Ambrose, of course, could lay claim to the highest pedigree: S. Mazzarino, "Il padre di Ambrogio," *Helikon* 13/14 (1973/4) 111–17; cf. Dudden 1:2 with n. 3 and Vasey 29n. 86.

⁴⁸ P. Asslaber, *Die persönlichen Beziehungen der drei grossen Kirchenlehrer Ambrosius, Hieronymus und Augustinus*, Studien und Mitteilungen aus dem kirchengeschichtlichen Seminar der theologischen Facultät der k.k. Universität Wien 3 (Wien 1908) 4–12, asserts that Jerome and Ambrose knew each other in their youth; the chronology, however, is impossible. Grützmacher (1:1) remarks that Ambrose "[Hieronymus] doch persönlich vom Konzil zu Rom 382 kannte" (for this council see 1:197–99), but this is not certain.

It is remarkable that Jerome appears nowhere in all of Ambrose's corpus, either by name or by reference (Grützmacher 1:1), while truly important and critical episodes in Ambrose's life and in church history—for example, the episode on the Altar of Victory (although its significance is far too exaggerated in modern scholarship: see Oberhelman 2n. 5)—are nowhere to be found in Jerome's works (Hagendahl, "Hieronymus" 123).

⁴⁹ Paredi, "Gerolamo," although he drops a hint at *Ambrogio* 338; Nautin, "Excommunication" 8, "Échange" 342–43, and "Hieronymus" 305. In the latter article, Nautin gives a very brief summary as follows: "Auf einer Kurz danach in Rom stattfindenden kirchlichen Versammlung, an der auch die italienischen Bischöfe teilnahmen, wurde H. von den Anwesenden offen angefeindet, und Ambrosius, der ebenfalls dort war, unternahm nichts zu seiner Verteidigung, wodurch er sich den bitteren Hass von H. zugezog." I will delve into this episode here, as Nautin and Paredi have not stated their views beyond scattered paragraphs in various essays. Cavallera had anticipated the first part of this whole theory: "Il semble même qu'il y eut alors une réunion ecclésiastique, soit officielle, soit officieuse, où sa cause fut examinée et ne trouva aucun défenseur. Cette attitude le décida au départ" (1:117). However, Cavallera did not connect Ambrose to this council, and did not understand the reasons for Jerome's outbursts against Ambrose in various literary passages.

⁵⁰ Cavallera 2:86–88, Note G: "Les circonstances du départ de Rome," and Kelly 112–15, whom I have followed in parts of this paragraph.

Paula, an aristocratic widow with whom Jerome, as he states, spent night after night reading and discussing scriptures. Jerome refers to this council and the registration of charges in his preface to the translation of Didymus: “et ecce olla illa, quae in Jeremia post baculum cernitur a facie Aquilonis, cepit ardere: et Pharisaeorum conclamavit senatus et nullus scriba vel fictus, sed monis quasi inducto sibi proelio doctrinarum, adversum me imperitiae factio conjuravit.” As Cavallera has noted, this “senate of Pharisees” must be “une assemblée du clergé romain.”⁵¹ Jerome was acquitted of wrongful conduct, but the council seems to have reached a formal decision that involved the signing of a document whereby Jerome agreed to leave Rome. The evidence for this is a letter of Rufinus, now lost but quoted by Jerome. Rufinus boasts that he could produce written evidence (and Rufinus at this time was living in Rome) and refers to an oath that Jerome had taken. Jerome, in later answering this taunt, first clouds the whole issue by describing in a long-winded paragraph the details of his departure from Rome and the itinerary of his voyage to Jerusalem. He then threatens to expose Rufinus for the circumstances of *his* departure from Rome. Remarkably, Jerome does not deny the existence of a judgment, an oath, or a document; if anything, his reply verifies the basic outlines of Rufinus’ charges:

...alios appeteris, aliorum criminatione confoderis, et contra me furibundus iactaris et loqueris: “numquid et ego non possum enarrare tu quomodo de Urbe discesseris, quid de te in praesenti iudicatum sit, quod postea scriptum, quid iuraveris, ubi navim conscenderis, quam sancte periurium vitaveris? Poteram pandere, sed plura reservare statui quam referre.” Haec sunt tuorum ornamenta verborum...Quid autem de me Romae iudicatum sit et quid postea scriptum, nolo taceas, praesertim cum habeas testimonium scripturarum, et ego non verbis tuis, quae simulare potes et impunito iactare mendacio, sed scriptis ecclesiasticis arguendus sim. Vide quantum te timeam: si vel parvam schedulam contra me romani episcopi aut alterius Ecclesiae protuleris, omnia quae in te scripta sunt mea crimina confitebor. Numquid et ego non possem protectionem tuam discutere, cuius aetatis fueris, unde, quo tempore navigaris, ubi vixeris, quibus interfueris? Sed absit ut quod in te reprehendo faciam et in ecclesiastica disputatione anilium iurgiorum deliramenta conpingam. Hoc solum prudentiae tuae dixisse sufficiat, ut caveas in alterum dicere quicquid in te statim retorqueri potest. (*Apology against Rufinus* 3.21–22 [= *Epistle against Rufinus* 21–22 (CCL 79, p. 93, 15–24, p. 94, 25–39)])

⁵¹ Cavallera 2:87; as for the charges, Jerome claims (naturally) that they were due to his gender: “nihil mihi aliud obicitur nisi sexus meus, et hoc umquam obicitur nisi cum Hiersolyma Paula proficiscitur” (*Ep.* 45.2.2 [CSEL 54, p. 324, 18–20]). Jerome brushes aside the allegations of sexual misconduct by asserting that the large band of virgins surrounding him were there only to drink in his knowledge of sacred texts: “multa me virginum turba circumdedit [note how Jerome has ensconced himself syntactically amid the adoring throng of women, and that the colon comprises a string of four cretics, that is, two Ciceronian dicretics—Jerome was ever the rhetor]; divinos libros, ut potui, nonnullis saepe disserui; lectio adsiduitatem, adsiduitas familiaritatem, familiaritas fiduciam fecerat” (45.2.2 [p. 324, 13–16]).

If Jerome had been exonerated of charges of sexual misconduct, what would have been the cause of Jerome's expulsion from Rome? Here Nautin has offered a speculative but persuasive theory. When Siricius and the council demanded that Jerome leave Rome in that summer of 385, they invoked a canon of the Council of Nicaea held in 325. According to canon 16, a cleric, either bishop or priest, cannot leave the geographical boundaries of his diocese; if he does, then he must perforce return, and if he refuses, then he must be excommunicated. I give the Greek text of the canon and then Nautin's elegant translation:

“Ὅσοι ῥιψοκινδύνως μήτε τὸν φόβον τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ἔχοντες, μήτε τὸν ἐκκλησιαστικὸν κανόνα εἰδότες, ἀναχωρήσουσι τῆς ἐκκλησίας, πρεσβύτεροι ἢ διάκονοι ἢ ὅλως ἐν τῷ κανόνι ἐξεταζόμενοι· οὗτοι οὐδαμῶς δεκτοὶ ὀφείλουσιν εἶναι ἐν ἐτέρᾳ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἀλλὰ πᾶσαν αὐτοῖς ἀνάγκην ἐπάγεσθαι χρή, ἀναστρέφειν εἰς τὰς ἑαυτῶν παροικίας, ἢ ἐπιμένοντας ἀκοινωνήτους εἶναι προσήκει. εἰ δὲ καὶ τολμήσειέ τις ὑφαρπάσαι τὸν τῷ διαφέροντα, καὶ χειροτονῆσαι ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ ἐκκλησίᾳ, μὴ συγκατατιθεμένου τοῦ ἰδίου ἐπισκόπου, οὗ ἀνεχώρησεν ὁ ἐν τῷ κανόνι ἐξεταζόμενος, ἄκυρος ἔσται ἡ χειροτονία.”⁵²

Les prêtres, les diacres ou en général les clercs qui, par légèreté et n'ayant plus devant les yeux la crainte de Dieu, abandonnent leur diocèse au mépris des lois ecclésiastiques, ne doivent en aucune façon être reçus dans un autre; on doit les forcer absolument à revenir dans leur diocèse, et s'ils s'y refusent, on doit les excommunier.⁵³

If this canon was adduced by the Roman investigatory board, Jerome would have had no recourse but to return to Bethlehem, to the monastery that lay within the confines of his diocese. Jerome may not have been reluctant to leave, however, as he now saw dashed all hopes of ascendancy to the papacy and himself surrounded on all sides by enemies and slanderers. The anguish and sorrow that Jerome pours out in *Ep.* 45, in other words, derive more from the thwarting of his ambitions and from self-deluded egotism than from any attachment to a city he usually referred to with sarcasm and loathing as Babylon.

Where Ambrose fits into this vignette can only be inferred. Yet common sense and historical probability should tell us that Ambrose and pope Siricius either must have been participants in this “senate of Pharisees” or must have granted tacit approval by refusing to come to Jerome's defense. Now Jerome had served as pope Damasus' secretary for several years and his reputation as scholar and cleric was well promulgated because of the reaction that flared up over his revision of the four gospels.⁵⁴ An action like expulsion could not have been

⁵² Text from F. Lauchert, *Die Kanones der wichtigsten altkirchlichen Concilien nebst den apostolischen Kanones*, Sammlung ausgewählter kirchen- und dogmengeschichtlicher Quellenschriften 12 (Freiburg und Leipzig 1896), p. 41, 19–29.

⁵³ Nautin, “Excommunication” 8.

⁵⁴ For this revision, which did not extend beyond the gospels despite Jerome's hyperbolic statements to the contrary, see F. Cavallera, “Saint Jérôme et la Vulgate des Actes, des Épîtres, et de l'Apocalypse,” *BLE* 44 (1920) 269–92 and B. Fischer, “Das Neue Testament in lateinischer Sprache,” in R. Aland, *Die alten*

possible without consent in some form from the two leaders of the church. It is certainly possible, furthermore, that Jerome wrote to Ambrose to enlist his aid, but was refused, perhaps even sharply. Jerome's very specific hostile and bitter attack on Ambrose cannot have risen from happenstance; Jerome must have known something concrete regarding Ambrose and his own expulsion, namely that Ambrose did not intervene on his behalf, either when asked or simply by not acting. In other words, a personal plea to Ambrose that was turned aside is the most obvious reason for Jerome's sudden hatred of the Milanese bishop. No accident, therefore, that in his preface to the translation of Didymus Jerome couples the senate of Pharisees and his troubles resulting from it with his savage insults against Ambrose.

Thus the *status quaestionis*: until the end of 384, Jerome praised Ambrose as a gifted writer and a pillar of orthodoxy. But beginning in 388 Jerome cast malicious aspersions on Ambrose's character, literary accomplishments, theological training, and critical tools in scriptural exegesis; the attacks do not cease with Ambrose's death but continue until the end of Jerome's life. Jerome blamed Ambrose for a hand in his expulsion from Rome. This then accounts for the deep bitterness that emerges immediately after his return to the east in late 385 or the summer of 386.⁵⁵

Uebersetzungen des Neuen Testaments, die Kirchenväterzitate und Lektionare. Der gegenwärtige Stand ihrer Erforschung und ihre Bedeutung für die griechische Textgeschichte (Berlin 1972) 1–92.

⁵⁵ Nautin, "Échange" 342–43: "La rupture entre Jérôme et Ambroise date des événements qui ont suivi la mort de Damase et auxquels Jérôme fait allusion dans la préface que nous venons de lire: après l'élection de Sirice, un concile s'est tenu à Rome dans lequel Jérôme fut mis en accusation. Si Jérôme mentionne ce 'sénat des Pharisiens' dans la même préface où il attaque Ambroise, c'est visiblement parce qu'Ambroise y participait et qu'il n'a pas pris la défense de l'accusé: d'où la rancoeur de Jérôme."

The date of Jerome's arrival at Bethlehem after the departure from Rome is not known. P. Nautin, "Études de chronologie hiéronymienne (393–97)," *REA* 18 (1972) 215, gives it as at the end of 385; Cavallera (1:127) and Grützmacher (1:60) as in the summer of 386.

The logical candidate for Jerome's attack, of course, would have been Siricius, but Jerome typically chose with caution the victims of his attacks. For example, Jerome's most bitter attacks were directed against obscure monks like Vigilantius, against the excommunicated like Jovinian, and against Rufinus, who was his most dangerous opponent because of the damaging information to which he was privy.

Jerome's deceit and duplicitous nature are manifested in another way. Nautin has demonstrated in his "Échange" that Jerome created a fictitious series of letters (*Epp.* 35 and 36) between himself and Damasus, with the sole purpose of obfuscating the attack on Ambrose in the preface to his translation of Didymus' *On the holy spirit*. In this "exchange" of letters, ostensibly from 382–84 but contemporaneous with the translation of Didymus, Jeromes declares that he has begun the translation and wishes to dedicate it to the pope. With this false chronology in place, Jerome could claim to any opponent that he had already begun the work before the episode at Rome in 385. Thus, this translation, Jerome could state, was not an attack on Ambrose: "Il savait que cette attaque contre l'évêque de Milan [sc. the translation] ne manquerait pas de passer pour une basse vengeance qui déplairait à ses amis romains et fournirait de nouvelles armes à ses adversaires: il a voulu se couvrir par un alibi en affirmant que cette traduction était

Paredi and Nautin believe that the first attacks are the prefaces to the translations of Didymus and Origen, followed by the passage in *On famous men*; that is, these attacks date from 388 through 392/3. But I am convinced that an earlier, and more damning, assault exists in the prologue to the *Commentary on Ephesians*, which was dictated along with the commentaries on Galatians, Philemon, and Titus within a period of two or three months in 386 or early 387.⁵⁶ I quote the relevant passage from Migne's text, since the Pauline commentaries alone of Jerome's exegetical works have not yet received a modern critical edition:

Sed cum aliud sit proprios libros componere, verbi gratia, de avaritia, et de fide, de virginitate, de viduis, et super unaquaque materia testimoniis scripturarum hinc inde quaesitis eloquentiam jungere saecularem, et paene in communibus locis pompaticum jactare sermonem: aliud in sensum prophetae et apostoli ingredi, intelligere cur scripserint, qua sententiam suam ratione firmaverint, quid habeant in Veteri Lege proprium Idumaei, Moabitarum, Ammonitarum, Tyrii, Philistinorum, Aegyptii, et Assyrii; quid rursum in Novo Testamento Romani, Corinthii, Galatae, Philippenses, Thessalonicenses, Hebraei, Colossenses, et quam nunc ad Ephesios Epistolam habemus in manibus. (26:469D–70A)

It is quite one thing to compose treatises on particular topics, for example, on avarice, as well as on faith, on virginity, and on widows, to harness secular eloquence to scriptural testimonies that one has extrapolated from this place or that on any one particular subject, and, as I may say, to utter bombastically a pompous discourse⁵⁷ filled with rhetorical topoi. It is quite another thing,

antérieure à la mort de Damase et au concile romain. Mais il ne suffisait pas de l'affirmer, il fallait le prouver, et comment le prouver si ce n'était en produisant une correspondance qui attesterait que Jérôme était en relations étroites avec Damase et qu'il avait effectivement commencé sous son pontificat l'ouvrage publié maintenant?" Much of Jerome's correspondence and corpus in general may well be layered with deceit. For example, Jerome himself in *Against Vigilantius* 3 states that he made up *Ep.* 107, a letter that involves sexual misconduct by two monks and a mother and daughter.

⁵⁶ I prefer Nautin's date of 386: see his "L'activité" 248 (first stated in his "La date des commentaires de Jérôme sur les épîtres pauliniennes," *RHE* 74 [1979] 5–12). Cf. Bardenhewer 625; Schanz 469; E. Clark, "The place of Jerome's Commentary on Ephesians in the Origenist controversy. The apokatastasis and ascetic ideals," *VChr* 41 (1987) 154; Altaner-Stuiber 400; Grützmacher 1:61–62; Cavallera 2:27. Jerome's slavish use of Origen in this commentary is well known: Clark 155–61; Grützmacher 2:38–41; V. Bullhart, "Le commentaire de Jérôme sur Ephésiens nous permet-il de connaître celui d'Origène?," in *Origeniana. Premier colloque international des études origéniennes (Montserrat, 18–21 septembre 1973)*, ed. H. Crouzel et al. (Bari 1975) 163–79; A. Harnack, *Der kirchengeschichtliche Ertrag der exegetischen Arbeiten des Origenes*, Texte und Untersuchungen 42, 4 (Leipzig 1919) 156–65. For the dictation, see Schanz 469 and Kelly 145–46; cf. H. Leitzmann, "Hieronymus" *RE* 8.2 (1913) col. 1575: "Die eilig diktierten Arbeiten...sind mit immer mehr wachsender Flüchtigkeit hingeworfen und basieren durchaus auf griechischen Quellen, vornehmlich auf Origenes."

⁵⁷ I take *sermo* to be deliberately ambiguous in its rhetorical and ecclesiastical connotations.

however, to enter into and decipher what a prophet or apostle meant to say and to gain an understanding of matters such as what propelled them to write, what sort of reasoning they used to shore up their thoughts, and what particular role was played in the Hebrew Bible by the Idumeans, Moabites, Ammonites, Tyrians, Philistines, Egyptians, and Assyrians, and in the New Testament by the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Thessalonians, Hebrews, Colossians, and the Ephesians, the letter to whom I now have before me.

At first glance this passage seems to involve a simple antithesis: one thing to write on specialized topics dealing with moral and ascetic issues and when doing so to indulge in rhetoric and oratorical prose style; another to bring the powers of an exegete to bear on the scriptures.⁵⁸ But this does not explain the severity of the attack on eloquence and rhetoric or the fact that apart from virginity Jerome lists topics that are foreign to his literary output. Jerome refers to widows and avarice only on rare occasions, and then as asides, while he comments on faith merely in the context of heresy. What scholars have failed to notice is that Jerome has given us a veritable list of Ambrose's works *by title*—works, in fact, from which he quotes on several occasions in the 380s and 390s.

First, the *On faith (De fide)*. Ambrose composed books 1 and 2 in the spring or summer of 378 at the request of the emperor Gratian;⁵⁹ he then revised a series of sermons that he had delivered against Arianism in 379 or 380 into three further books.⁶⁰ The five books were subsequently published as a treatise written in a very polished and highly rhetorical style.⁶¹ Jerome quotes from this

⁵⁸ Best discussions of Jerome as exegete are Penna (above, note 21); P. Jay, *L'exégèse de saint Jérôme d'après son "Commentaire sur Isaïe"* (Paris 1985), esp. 127–333; Y. M. Duval, *Saint Jérôme. Commentaire sur Jonas*, Sources Chrétiennes 323 (Paris 1985) 25–104.

⁵⁹ Bardenhewer (533–34) dates the work to 377/8; Fallar (CSEL 78: 5*–8*) in September 378; Ihm (31) in 378; C. M. Moreschini (*Sant'Ambrogio. Opere dogmatiche, I* [Milano 1984] 25–26) to 378; Palanque (498) in summer 378; Paredi (*Ambrogio* 531) in 378; Schanz (345) at the end of 377.

⁶⁰ Lazzati 47. Cf. Bardenhewer 530; Dudden 2:695; Ihm 27; Palanque 493; Paredi, *Ambrogio* 535; Schanz 341.

⁶¹ For details, see Oberhelman, 32–33, 44, 56, 58, 108–9.

On the whole issue of reworking sermons as treatises, cf. J. Fontaine, "Comment doit-on appliquer la notion de genre littéraire à la littérature latine chrétienne du IV^e siècle," *Philologus* 132 (1988), 53–73, who describes (68) oral sermons taken down by stenographers, revised, augmented, corrected, and polished as tractates as "une sorte de réécriture de l'Écriture," something between oral and written text. So too H. Hagendahl, "Die Deutung der Stenographie für die spätlateinische christliche Literatur," *JbAC* 14 (1971) 24–38 (34–36 for Ambrose), and Oberhelman 90–97 and 101–9. Palanque's criteria for determining in Ambrose's corpus sermon versus written text (448–50) are arbitrary, slippery, and inadequate. Lazzati is now the work of reference. Very useful on specifics is C. Mohrmann, "Le style oral du De Sacramentis de saint Ambroise," in *Latin chrétien et liturgique* (Roma 1965) 389–98 and "Observations sur le le De Sacramentis et le De Mysteriis de saint Ambroise," in *Ambrosius Episcopus* (above, note 14) 2:336–62.

Jerome's practices are more certain: A. Wickenhauser, "Der hl. Hieronymus und die Kuzschrift," *ThQ* 92 (1910) 50–87 and R. P. Arns, *La technique de livre*

work in his *Hebrew Questions*, dated between 389 and 391, as an example of "a certain person's" incompetence in scriptural exegesis:⁶²

Scio quendam Gog et Magog tam de praesenti loco quam de Ezechiel ad Gothorum nuper in terra nostra vagantium historiam retulisse: quod utrum verum sit, proelii ipsius fine monstratur. Et certe Gothos omnes retro eruditi magis Getas quam Gog et Magog appellare consueverant. (*Hebrew Questions* 10.21 [CCL 72, p. 11, 18–22])

The passage from *On faith* to which Jerome refers is as follows: "Gog iste Gothus est, quem iam videmus exisse, de quo promittitur nobis futura victoria dicente domino..." (*On faith* 2.138 [CSEL 78, p. 105, 14–16]).

Ambrose's *On virginity* (*De virginitate*) was originally a sermon⁶³ which was subsequently published in 377 or 378.⁶⁴ The sermon was revised for publication and, as has been demonstrated, was decked out with all the trappings of rhetorical style.⁶⁵ As we saw above, Jerome, in *Ep.* 22.22.3–5, heaped great praise not only on this work but also on Ambrose's companion piece, *On virgins*, a treatise of three edited and rhetorically polished sermons from 377.⁶⁶

The *On widows* (*De viduis*) was a sermon⁶⁷ delivered in 376 or 377,⁶⁸ subsequently revised from oral delivery into an adorned style for publication.⁶⁹

d'après saint Jérôme (Paris 1953) See also Oberhelman 66–67, 70–71, 83. Jerome made great distinction between stenographic records that he published without revision, those with slight revision, and those with ornate polishing, as opposed to treatises and letters that he wrote carefully by hand: see, for example, *On Obadiah* (CCL 76, p. 374, 775–79); *On Matthew* (CCL 77, p. 5, 98–p. 6, 113); *On Zachariah* (CCL 76A, p. 795, 133–35; p. 848, 1–12); *On Isaiah* (CCL 73A, p. 507, 21–23); *On Ezechiel* (CCL 75, p. 278, 29–31); *Ep.* 18A.16.2; *Ep.* 112.1.2.

⁶² For the date, Bardenhewer 619; Cavallera 2:28; Grützmacher 1:62–63; Antin, *Essai* 155; Nautin, "L'activité" 253–56 and "Hieronymus" 391. For the treatise's importance in Jerome's rejection of the inspiration of the Septuagint, see Altaner-Stuiber 400. For the reference to Ambrose by Jerome, cf. Grützmacher (1:64): "Auch gegen Ambrosius, der die Völkernamen Gog und Magog auf die Gothen bezog, polemisiert er, jedoch ohne ihn zu nennen."

⁶³ Bardenhewer 531; Ihm 28; Palanque 456–57; Schanz 342–43. Dudden 2:696 considers this work to be composed of two sermons, rather than one.

⁶⁴ So Ihm 29; Palanque 494–95; Paredi, *Ambrogio* 535; Schanz 342. Bardenhewer (531–32) dates it to 378. Wilbrand's date of between 388 and 390 (see pp. 1–7) has not been accepted.

⁶⁵ See Oberhelman 36, 56; cf. Lazzati 47, who considers the works on virginity and on widows to be "prediche pubblicate dopo la revisione di Ambrogio, revisione che, sebbene non possa mai ridursi a leggeri ritocchi, importa diversi gradi secondo il tempo a disposizione dell'Autore e l'importanza data all'opera." For the importance of virginity in Ambrose's thought and works, see R. D'Izarny, *La virginité selon saint Ambroise* (Thèse Lyon 1952); G. Oggioni, "Matrimonio e verginità presso i Padri (fino a S. Agostino)," in *Matrimonio e verginità. Saggi di teologia* (Venegono Inferiore 1969) 286–306; C. Riggi, "La verginità nel pensiero di S. Ambrogio," *Salesianum* 42 (1980) 789–806.

⁶⁶ Homiletic origin: Bardenhewer 530–31, Ihm 27–28, Lazzati 47, Palanque 455–56, Schanz 341. Date: Bardenhewer 530, Dudden 2:695, Ihm 27, Palanque 493, Paredi, *Ambrogio* 535, Schanz 341.

⁶⁷ Bardenhewer 531, Dudden 2:695, Palanque 457–58, Schanz 343–44. Ihm (19) considers the whole work to have been written, but Lazzati is convincing.

In his *Ep.* 49 (393/4), Jerome quotes from this treatise no less than three times and also refers to the *On virgins*:

Quodsi cui asperum et reprehensione dignum videtur tantam nos inter virginitatem et nuptias fecisse distantiam, quanta inter frumentum et hordeum est, legat sancti Ambrosii de viduis librum, et invenient illum inter cetera quae de virginitate et nuptiis disputavit etiam ista dixisse...(quotations from *On widows* [13.79, 13.81, 11.69 follow]). Deinde nuptias dicit et quasi necessitatis sarcinam declinandam, et definitionem esse evidentissimae servitutis, et multa alia, quae in tribus libellis de virginibus latissime prosecutus est. (*Ep.* 49.14.9–13 [CSEL 54, p. 374, 4–p. 375, 20]: this letter is *Ep.* 48 in Migne's edition)

The fact that Jerome was forced to quote Ambrose's treatises in this letter is proof of the exceedingly bitter criticism that greeted Jerome's polemic *Against Jovinian* in Rome. To blunt the criticism, Jerome was compelled to write *Ep.* 49 as a *defensio*. Jerome's lack of scruples (or his immoral cunning) is obvious in the way that Jerome adduces Ambrose as an admirable model of exegesis—if doing so serves his own purposes—even as he elsewhere and simultaneously labels him an ignorant and unskilled exegete.⁷⁰

The rubric "on avarice" is precisely that—a rubric. Ambrose never published a treatise *On avarice* (*De avaritia*), but the subject was at the center of many of his most vitriolic sermons and did form the basis of three works, all published between 386 and 390: *On Elias*, *On Naboth*, and *On Tobias*.⁷¹ These

⁶⁸ Bardenhewer (531) dates it to 377 or 378; Ihm (28) to 377; Palanque (493) in early 376; Paredi (*Ambrogio* 535) to 377; Schanz (1914) to 377. Excellent discussion in A. V. Nazzaro, "Il De viduis di Ambrogio," *Vichiana* 13 (1984) 274–98.

⁶⁹ See Oberhelman 35–36, 56, 108–9.

⁷⁰ Grützmacher 2:167–68: "Plötzlich beruft er sich hier auf die Autorität des mailändischen Bischofs, den er sonst immer so böseartig und heimtückisch angegriffen hatte. Jetzt preist er ihn, der auch in seinen drei Büchern über die Virginität die Ehe als die offenbarste Dienstbarkeit geschildert habe. Wohl durfte er in sachlicher Beziehung Ambrosius als Eideshelfer zitieren; aber wie ernst und ruhig heben sich doch die Zitate aus den Schriften des nie würdelosen Ambrosius—und Hieronymus hatte schon die stärksten Stellen ausgewählt—von dem leidenschaftlichen Fanatismus des Hieronymus ab."

Jerome comments in *Ep.* 49.18.3 (CSEL 54, p. 382, 7–11) as follows: "In libros quoque ad Eustochium multo duriora de nuptiis diximus et nemo super hac re laesus est; amator quippe castitatis praeconium pudicitiae intenta aure captabat. Lege Tertullianum, legi Cyprianum, lege Ambrosium, et cum illis me vel accusa vel libera." For the date of the letter, Grützmacher 1:65 and Cavallera 1:182 and 2:43.

Jerome, however, must have been pleased that Ambrose upheld the excommunication of Jovinian: see F. Valli, *Giovianiani. Esame delle fonti e dei frammenti*, Pubblicazioni dell'Università di Urbino 2 (Urbino 1954) 125–41, and J. A. De Aldama, "La Condennación de Joviniano en le sínodo de Roma," *Ephemerides Mariologicae* 13 (1963) 107–19.

⁷¹ Vasey (25) gives detailed arguments. I would prefer early dates for these treatises, say, by 386. The *On Tobias* has typically been dated quite early: Bardenhewer (516) before 380; Ihm (20) after 375; Th. Förster (*Ambrosius, Bischof von Mailand. Eine Darstellung seines Lebens und Wirkens* [Halle 1884],

treatises originally were sermons, but Ambrose reworked and stylistically polished them before publication.⁷² Since Ambrose's attacks on avarice spanned his entire career as bishop,⁷³ the rubric "on avarice" would very aptly describe much of the homiletic activity of Ambrose. Moreover, we cannot discount, because of chronological problems, the possibility that these treatises had been published before Jerome dictated *On Ephesians*. If they were already in circulation, they would certainly have found a quick place in what modern scholars have called the most extensive private library in the empire at that time;⁷⁴ if so, Jerome's allusion to "on avarice" would be his way of summarizing the contents of three of Ambrose's published works.

The prologue to *On Ephesians*, therefore, gives us a catalogue of the very three themes on which Ambrose published and preached: virginity, avarice, and orthodox faith. Ambrose is not named, of course, only implied; but this is typical of Jerome's other attacks on Ambrose until 397. The malicious undercutting in the passage in *On Ephesians* involves the accusations that Ambrose decked out his works with secular eloquence (this from a trained rhetor like Jerome, who indulged in oratory repeatedly), that Ambrose was not a trained exegete, and that Ambrose's main concern was attaining flights of oratorical pomposity, not seeking out and understanding spiritual truth. The passage in the first half of the antithesis thus implies obsession with superficial, secular knowledge, a lack of exegetical training (a charge, as Paredi's *testimonia* show, Jerome levels at Ambrose repeatedly), and a methodology of exposition that merely plucks passages here and there from the Bible.⁷⁵ The second part of the

45) in 377; W. Dunphy ("On the date of St. Ambrose's *De Tobia*," in *SEJG* 27 [1984] 27–36) between 375/6 and 385/6. The dates of the other two treatises range widely—from 386 to 396—although the period of from 386 to 389 is now usually accepted. See the discussion in M. Giaccherio, *Ambrosii De Tobia*, Pubblicazioni dell'Istituto di Filosofia Classica e Medioevale 19 (Genova 1965) 7–8, 10–12.

⁷² Lazzati 47; Vasey 24 and 31; and Giaccherio (above, note 70) 7–8, 10–16. Cf. K. Schenkl, CSEL 32, 2: v–vi; Ihm 19–20; Palanque 444–45; Schanz 331–33; Oberhelman 33–34, 59.

⁷³ Vasey 143–225, esp. 176–81. To which add: E. Frattini, "Proprietà e ricchezza nel pensiero di sant'Ambrogio," *RFID* 39 (1962) 745–66; P. Christophe, *L'usage chrétien du droit de propriété dans l'Écriture et la tradition patristique*, Théologie, Pastorale et Spiritualité 14 (Paris 1964) 164–81; G. Barbieri, *Il pensiero sociale del Medioevo* (Verona 1968) 81–87; J. Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung des Buches Tobias in der griechisch-lateinischen Kirche der Antike und der Christenheit des Westens bis um 1600*, Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 21 (München 1969) 68–72.

⁷⁴ For Jerome's book-collecting activities, see Grützmacher 1:126–29; Cavallera 1:42–43, 61–62; S. Protin, "Les bibliothèques chrétiennes aux premiers siècles," *RevAug* 2 (1903) 299–300; and C. Wendel, "Die Kirche auf griechisch-römischen Boden," *Handbuch der Bibliothekswissenschaft*² (Wiesbaden 1955) 3.1:136–37.

⁷⁵ This period (late 380s) marks the beginning of the formation of Jerome's thoughts on *Christiana simplicitas* and *rusticitas*, which he placed in opposition to *saecularis eloquentia* and *saecularis sapientia*. At first, Jerome would claim that the former is proper for the Christian exegete, preacher, and teacher, the latter for heretics, pagans, and Jews. Jerome did redefine his views, however, as he came to realize that Christianity could accommodate *eloquentia* and *sapientia*: his motivation derived, no doubt, from the deep-rooted love for the classics and rhetoric that he could never expel. For *Christiana simplicitas* the classic works

antithesis, along with the subsequent thirteen lines in Migne's text, renders a picture of how a true theologian, skilled in all the tools of biblical criticism, can work with the scriptures.⁷⁶ In short, it is one thing to be a rhetor whose topics deal with Christian themes but whose real object is to parade his eloquence (read Ambrose); another thing to be a Christian scholar in search of spiritual truth (read Jerome). To drive home this point, Jerome names works of Ambrose with which he was familiar (hence the repeated use of "de") before launching into a discussion of his own methodology of exegesis.

If I am correct in recovering the real import of this passage, then we may see in a new light Jerome's diatribes against bishops in the Pauline commentaries and in his *On Ecclesiastes*, all composed immediately after his return to Bethlehem.⁷⁷ These diatribes, as Wiesen has shown, are the most extensive and

are R. Eiswirth, *Hieronymus' Stellung zur Literatur und Kunst*, *Klassisch-Philologische Studien* 16 (Wiesbaden 1955) 12–51; P. Antin, "Saint Jérôme et son lecteur," *RSR* 34 (1947) 82–99; C. Q. A. Meershoek, *Le Latin biblique d'après saint Jérôme. Aspects linguistiques de la rencontre entre la Bible et monde classique*, *Latinitas Christianorum Primaeva* 20 (Nijmegen 1976); P. G. Van Der Nat, "Zu den Voraussetzungen der christlichen lateinischen Literatur: Die Zeugnisse von Minucius Felix und Laktanz," in *Christianisme et formes littéraires de l'antiquité tardive en occident*, *Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique* 23, ed. M. Fuhrmann (Vandoeuvres-Genève 1976) 191–225, esp. 199–203. Cf. R. Kaster, *Guardians of Language. The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity*, *Transformation of the Classical Heritage* 7 (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1988) 82–84; G. J. M. Bartelink, "Les observations de Jérôme sur les termes de la langue courante et parlée," *Latomus* 38 (1979) 193–222 and his *Hieronymus* 46–63; I. Mazzini, "Tendenze letterarie della Vulgata di Gerolamo," *A & R* 21 (1976) 132–47; M. Roberts, *The Jeweled Style: Poetry and Poetics in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca and London 1989), esp. 122–47; Oberhelman 112–40; and L. F. Pizzolato, *La dottrina esegetica di sant'Ambrogio* (Milano) 22–26.

⁷⁶ 470A–B: "Necesse est enim, ut juxta diversitates locorum et temporum, et hominum, quibus scriptae sunt, diversas et causas, et argumenta, et origines habeant. Et quomodo beatus Joannes in Apocalypsi sua ad septem scribens Ecclesias, in unaquaque earum specialia, vel vitia reprehendit, vel virtutes probat: ita et sanctus apostolus Paulus per singulas Ecclesias vulneribus medetur illatis, nec ad instar imperiti medici uno collyrio omnium oculos vult curare."

⁷⁷ The exact date is not known: Cavallera (2:27) dates it to 386/7; Grützmacher (1:62) to 389/90; Bodin (19) to 386/7; Bardenheuer (621) to 389; Schanz (464–65) between 387 and 390; Nautin ("L'activité" 251–52; cf. "Hieronymus" 306) to 388; Jay (above, note 58, 49n. 152) to 388/9. It is certain that Jerome had orally gone through the text with Blesilla in Rome and later revised his notes for publication: Steinmann (above, note 24) 181–85 and H. P. Rueger, "Hieronymus, die Rabbinen und Paulus. Zur Vorgeschichte des Begriffspaars 'inner und äusserer' Mensch," *ZNTW* 68 (1977) 132–37.

The classic source for Jerome's tirades against the bishops and the clergy in general is Wiesen, esp. 96–106, who gives pertinent sources. I must acknowledge here that in the course of my research on this topic I stumbled upon Wiesen's note 147 on page 241, where he says: "There is probably another reference to Ambrose in the preface to the *Comment. in Eph.* (PL 26, 469C–470A), where Jerome describes an unnamed writer who is accustomed *paene...sermonem*." Although Wiesen had anticipated me in seeing a reference to Ambrose in this one clause of the entire passage, he did not see that Ambrose is intended throughout and therefore did not realize its importance; nor did he notice that Jerome adduces the titles of a number of Ambrose's treatises simply in order to contrast them very unfavorably with his own works and skills.

most hysterical that Jerome wrote. I would add that the bitterness toward bishops informing these passages derives from Jerome's maltreatment at the hands of the "senate of Pharisees" and also from his newly-formed hatred of Ambrose.⁷⁸

In *On Titus* Jerome inveighs against bishops who have achieved their positions, not by merit, but by influence and connections ("gratia," in what seems a magnificent punning between "grace" and "political influence" and may well underscore Jerome's sense of his own selfworth and his knowledge that Ambrose became bishop through political and social contacts). Measures undertaken by such unscrupulous and nonqualified bishops include obsequiousness, bribery, and methods so vile (so Jerome claims) that he must keep silent:

...manifestum est, eos qui, Apostoli lege contempta, ecclesiasticum gradum non merito voluerint alicui deferre, sed gratia, contra Christum facere...At nunc cernimus plurimos hanc rem beneficium facere, ut non quaerant eos, qui possunt Ecclesiae plus prodesse, in Ecclesiae erigere columnas: sed quos vel ipsi amant, vel quorum sunt obsequiis definiti: vel pro quibus majorum quispiam rogaverit, et, ut deteriora taceam, qui ut clerici fierent, muneribus impetrarunt. (*On Titus* 26:596B–97A)

Once these bishops assume office, they consider their position as one of absolute authority rather than as a dispensation from God: "...eos qui de episcopatu intumescunt, et putant se non dispensationem Christi, sed imperium consecutos" (600B). What must have further inflamed Jerome's passions was his absolute conviction that priests and bishops were, in fact, coequal in authority. Equality, Jerome tells us, was the rule in the apostolic age, but church traditions dictate a hierarchy that subordinates priests to bishops:

Putet aliquis non Scripturarum, sed nostram esse sententiam, episcopum et presbyterum unum esse, et aliquid aetatis, aliud esse nomen officii...Haec propterea, ut ostenderemus apud veteros eosdem fuisse presbyteros quos et episcopos: paulatim vero ut dissensionum plantaria evellerentur ad unum omnem sollicitudinem esse delatam. Sicut ergo presbyteri sciunt se ex Ecclesiae consuetudine ei qui sibi praepositus fuerit, esse subjectos: ita episcopi noverint se magis consuetudine, quam dispositionis Dominicae veritate, presbyteris esse majores... (*On Titus* 26:597B, 597D–98A)

Jerome does not stop here with theoretical observations, but proceeds to paint a series of very vivid, highly rhetorical scenes of bishops inebriated in taverns, hurling wine cups, "vomiting in order to drink and drinking in order to vomit," and indulging in the most disgusting sexual and carnal lusts (601B–

⁷⁸ Cavallera 2:27. There is in the preface to book 2 of the *On Ephesians* a reference to a "senate of learned men," which may parallel the "senate of Pharisees": "non quod haec dignetur legere doctorum senatus, et bibliothecis veterum ascribere: sed quod sancta Marcella idipsum fieri per epistolas flagitat" (26:507C).

C).⁷⁹ These same bishops, exulting as they do in their power, will not refrain from excommunicating laypeople who seem to be enjoying the “good life”:

Vere nunc est cernere quod praedictum est, is plerisque urbibus, episcopos, sive presbyteros, si laicos viderint hospitales, amatores bonorum, invidere, fremere, excommunicare, de Ecclesia expellere, quasi non liceat facere quod episcopus non faciat. (603B)

Such passages have particular relevance when we reflect on Jerome’s expulsion of a year earlier from Rome by a council of Roman clerics who had been abetted by the powerful bishops of Rome and Milan.

In the contemporaneous *On Ecclesiastes*, Jerome inserts in the most irrelevant places tirades against the highest ranking members of the clergy, who, as Jerome is careful to point out, are ignorant of theology and the scriptures, but who prefer to pander to fawning congregations and audiences by indulging in rhetoric and oratory—the very charges that the prologue to *On Ephesians* lays at Ambrose’s feet. For example, Jerome remarks:

Videas enim in Ecclesia imperitissimos quosque florere; et quia nutrierunt frontis audaciam et volubilitatem linguae consecuti sunt, dum non recognitent quid loquantur, prudentes se et eruditos arbitrantur, maxime si favorem vulgi habuerint, qui magis dictis levioribus delectatur et commovetur. (*On Ecclesiastes* 9.11 [CCL 72, p. 329, 274–79])⁸⁰

In another passage Jerome may even be attacking pope Siricius, as Wiesen has conjectured. After repeating a gloss of Symmachus on *Ecclesiastes* 10.5–7, Jerome comments on the cruel fact that ignorant and ignoble bishops hold high positions of authority in the church while learned men are crushed:

Et hanc ergo iniquitatem se in saeculo perspexisse commemorat, quod videatur iniustum Dei esse iudicium; et sive per ignoracionem, sive absque eius fieri voluntate, ut vel in mundi potestatibus, vel in Ecclesiae teneat principatum. Hoc autem fieri a vultu eius, qui in saeculo habeat potestatem, dum potentes quosque et doctos viros premat, nec eos in populis apparere permittat illos vero scit esse imprudentes in ecclesiis, faciat esse maiores, ut caeci a caecis

⁷⁹ Some of the themes, imagery, and even phrases in Jerome’s passage may be found in Ambrose’s *On Elias* 12.41–48 (CSEL 32, 2, pp. 436–40), but it cannot be determined whether this is due to dependency, a common source, or Christian rhetorical *topoi*. One can see how Jerome’s mind works in that while Ambrose attributes the battles and wine-cup throwing to laypeople, Jerome assigns them to bishops.

⁸⁰ Cf. *On Ecclesiastes* 9.17 (CCL 72, p. 332, 362–67): “Quemque in Ecclesia videris clamorem et cum quodam lenocinio ac venustate verborum excitare plausus, risum excutere, audientes in affectus laetitiae concitare; scito signum esse insipientiae, tam eius qui loquitur quam eorum qui audiunt.” Cf. also 1.8 (p. 256, 208–18) and 3.6/7 (p. 276, 123–24).

For a vicious attack on bishops who commit scandalous sins throughout their tenure in office (which would be for the duration of their life) but who are, nevertheless, eulogized after death, see 8.9/11 (p. 318, 142–53). Jerome then concludes with the caustic remark (153–55): “Difficilis est accusatio in episcopum. Et si enim peccaverit, non creditur, et si convictus fuerit, non punitur.”

ducantur in foveam. In hunc sensum facit et illud quod sequitur: *Vidi servos super equos et principes ambulantes quasi servos super terram*. Quod hi qui servi sunt vitiorum atque peccati, sive tam humiles, ut servi ab hominibus computentur, subita a diabolo dignitate perflati, vias publicas mannis terant; et nobilis quisque vel prudens, paupertate oppressus, gradiatur itinere officioque servorum...Non simus itaque tristes, si in hoc saeculo humiles esse videamur, scientes a facie diaboli et stultos sublevari et divites deici? Servos insignia habere dominorum et principes servorum ingredi utilitate. (10.5/7 [p. 335, 89–p. 336, 106, 113–15])

None of these references in the Pauline or Ecclesiastes commentaries directly supports my contention that the prologue to *On Ephesians* contains a thinly-veiled slander of Ambrose, but they do illustrate the intensity of Jerome's ill-will and hatred toward the bishops of the church at the very time when he formulated his attacks on Ambrose between 386/7 and 392.⁸¹ Jerome could never forget the episode in Rome or those whom he held accountable for his disgraceful departure. Jerome's malice toward Ambrose and the "senate of Pharisees" surfaces first in the Pauline commentaries and does not cease until death conquered what his Christian love and faith were not able to overcome.⁸²

⁸¹ Wiesen 99: "The detailed description...could only have been written by an astrigent personality whose natural harshness was intensified at once by moral outrage and private animus."

⁸² I wish to express my warmest thanks of gratitude to Alan Cameron, whose advice and suggestions have been invaluable at every stage of this project; to his gentle humanity and inestimable knowledge I owe this article. I am also grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities for funding support during the summer of 1990; to the library staffs at Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary; and to Michelle Salzman and my colleagues Craig Kallendorf and Timothy Moore for reading earlier drafts and improving the article throughout.