

# JEROME'S ANIMOSITY AGAINST AUGUSTINE

## Introduction

Between 394 and 419 C.E., Augustine and Jerome carried out a letter correspondence that addressed a number of topics including exegesis, Jerome's translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew, and the origin of souls. This fascinating exchange between two of the Latin Doctors has caused numerous papers by modern scholars over the past 50 years. One feature that has warranted comments is the hostility of Jerome's response to Augustine's initial letters. Augustine had written to Jerome praising him for his literary works, hoping to gain a friendly relationship with Jerome,<sup>1</sup> and insisting that "in body only, and not in mind, we are two, so great is the union of heart, so firm the intimate friendship subsisting between us."<sup>2</sup> Jerome's abrasive retort to Augustine was surprising and – to many readers – unduly pointed.

There have been many responses given concerning why Jerome was fiercely aggressive against Augustine's initiation of their correspondence. Most scholars have placed the onus on Jerome's rough personality, or the fact that he had recently endured attacks from Rufinus concerning Origenism. J.N.D. Kelly argued in his renowned biography of Jerome, for example, that Jerome was "morbidly suspicious and ready to take offence."<sup>3</sup> Carolinne White has also suggested that "the deterioration of Jerome's relations with his old friend Rufinus at this time, and the subsequent violent rupture of their friendship against the background of the Origenist controversy, clearly made Jerome suspicious of everybody."<sup>4</sup> These explanations are not satisfactory,

<sup>1</sup> Alfons Fürst argues that "...hatte allein Augustinus ein ernsthaftes Interesse an engen, intensiven Kontakten auf freundschaftlicher Basis." Fürst, Alfons. *Augustins Briefwechsel Mit Hieronymus: Jahrbuch Für Antike und Christentum Ergänzungsband 29*. Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1999, p. 130. See also pp. 126-130.

<sup>2</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886, letter 27:i. "Non enim animo me atque illum, sed corpore duos, qui nouerit, dixerit, concordia dumtaxat et familiaritate fidissima, non meritis, quibus ille antecellit." Schmid, Josefus, ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Kelly, J.N.D. *Jerome: His Life, Writings and Controversies*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1975, p. 264.

<sup>4</sup> White, Carolinne. *The Correspondence (394-419) Between Jerome and Augustine of Hippo*. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990, p. 5.

however, because they entirely ignore Augustine's role in the correspondence.<sup>5</sup> Although Jerome may have had a suspicious personality and had recently finished his battles with Rufinus, these reasons do not convincingly account for Augustine as the object of Jerome's ire. I believe that Jerome's invectives against Augustine were caused by

<sup>5</sup> There are many more answers offered by scholars concerning why Jerome was so aggressive against Augustine's initiation of their correspondence that should be noted: "in addition to his natural defensiveness, Jerome in these years had to fear that he could be attacked at any moment for 'Origenism.'" O'Donnell, James. *Augustine: A New Biography*. New York: HarperCollins, 2005, p. 96; "It is hard not to regard this as simply the eruption of an irascible, morbidly sensitive old curmudgeon." Cannon, Stephen. "The Jerome-Augustine Correspondence." *Word and Spirit: A Monastic Review 9, St. Augustine (387-1987)*. Ann Arbor: St. Bede's Publications, 1987, p. 39; "Unfortunately, [Augustine] did not know how sensitive Jerome was about his opinions, which to him were truth and not open to discussion. Nor did Augustine know how fiercely Jerome resented adverse criticism." Hellenga, Virginia. "The Exchange of Letters between Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome." *Daidalikon: Studies in Memory of Raymond V. Schroder, S.J.*, Ed. Robert F. Sutton Jr. Wauconda: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1989, p. 177; Jerome was "sensitive and easily offended" and Augustine's language was "tactless, his letters miscarried, and Jerome was quick to take offense." Bonner, Gerald. *St. Augustine of Hippo: Life and Controversies*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963, p. 147; "Augustine provoked Jerome; and Jerome, though treating Augustine with more respect than others who had crossed him, would not resist playing cat and mouse." Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000, p. 271-2; "les critiques d'Augustin l'avaient irrité, et la divulgation de la lettre 40 à Rome l'avait humilié." Bruyne, Donatien de. "La Correspondance Échangée entre Augustin et Jérôme." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 31, 1932, p. 236; "in Augustine's request for a palinode, Jerome reads the tone and intent of his earlier use of the phrase against Rufinus." Jamieson, Kathleen. "Jerome, Augustine and the Stesichoran Palinode." *Rhetorica* 5, 1987, p. 362; J.A. Möhler's text on this issue written in 1839 seems to have set the tone for subsequent modern scholarship concerning why Jerome was aggressive. Anne P. Carriker summarizes his position when she claims that "Jerome's recent confrontation with Rufinus, Möhler maintains, may have led him to avoid confrontation with others." Möhler, J.A., "Hieronymus und Augustinus im Streit über Gal. 2, 14,ü *Gesammelte Schriften und Aufsätze*. J. Döllinger, ed., vol. 1 Regensburg: 1839, 1-18. As quoted in Carriker, Anne P. "Augustine's Frankness in his Dispute with Jerome over the Interpretation of Galatians 2:11-14." *Nova Doctrina Vetusque*. Ed. Douglas Kries and Catherine Brown Tkacz. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1999, p. 125; "he must put up with this relatively recent convert, this Carthage-educated upstart! But add to this Jerome's prickly character...and none was readier to suspect that only the darkest of motives could inspire any criticisms of himself. Few men could be more terrible in their anger." O'Connell, Robert J. "When Saintly Father Feuded: The Correspondence between Augustine and Jerome." *Thought* 57, 1979, p. 346-7; "it all seemed so uncalled for." Pope, Hugh. *Saint Augustine of Hippo*. London: Sands and Company, 1937, p. 217; "by reason of the peculiar circumstances of its [Augustine's letter] reaching Jerome, was occasion of offence and probably ten years of distrust and misunderstanding." Tourscher, Francis E. "The Correspondence of Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome – a Study." *The American Ecclesiastical Review* 57, 1917, p. 480.

Augustine's biography, not with Jerome's personality or the Origenist controversy.

This paper will argue that Jerome was guarded against Augustine because Jerome knew of Augustine's association with Ambrose of Milan. Jerome had harshly criticized Ambrose on three points and, as a result, braced himself against what he thought was a reprisal from Augustine. To elucidate this thesis, the first section of this paper will review the three criticisms Jerome leveled against Ambrose: being a weak scholar, not being prepared for his office, and plagiarism. The second section will revisit the relationship between Ambrose and Augustine. After this context has been established, the third section will analyze the letters of Augustine and Jerome between 394 and 404 C.E. to determine what Jerome knew of Augustine's life and also of Augustine's relationship with Ambrose. After a close reading of these letters, it will become clear that Jerome was well acquainted with Augustine's biography and that Jerome knew Ambrose was an important part of Augustine's spiritual life. Knowing these facts, then, Jerome's aggressiveness against Augustine was not a result of Jerome's personality but was a result of his knowledge of the relationship between Augustine and Ambrose.

### The Criticisms Jerome Leveled against Ambrose

Before we take a close look at the letters between Jerome and Augustine, we must recount the criticisms that Jerome leveled against Ambrose in order to begin to understand the context of the correspondence between Jerome and Augustine. Starting in 384<sup>6</sup> and continuing past the death of Ambrose, Jerome condemned Ambrose both anonymously and overtly. Without question, Jerome's most famous critique comes from chapter 124 of his *On Illustrious Men* when he said "I withhold my judgment of him, because he is still alive, fearing either to praise or blame lest in the one event, I should be blamed for adulation, and in the other for speaking the truth."<sup>7</sup> Although this quote

<sup>6</sup> Neil Adkin convincingly suggests that Jerome's first critique of Ambrose was in his letter 22 to Eustochius where the charge of plagiarism was leveled. "Ambrose and Jerome: The Opening Shot." *Mnemosyne* 46, 1993, 364-376.

<sup>7</sup> Jerome, Saint. "On Illustrious Men" *Jerome: The Principal Works of St. Jerome*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1892. "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 ueritas." "Ἀμβρόσιος, Μεδιολάνου ἐπίσκοπος, ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας συγγράφεται καὶ ἐπέιπερ περίεστι, τὴν ἐμὴν κρίσιν

is rather cryptic concerning Jerome's specific issues with Ambrose, Jerome would eventually censure for incompetence as a biblical scholar, his lack of preparation for his office, and plagiarism.

Jerome attacked Ambrose's biblical scholarship because of what Jerome saw as flawed exegesis and because Ambrose did not know Hebrew. Although Ambrose's name is not mentioned in Jerome's *Commentary on Ephesians*, Jerome was referring to Ambrose when he said

it is one thing to compose one's own books – for example on avarice, faith, virginity, or widows – and to unite secular eloquence on each subject with testimonies from the Scriptures selected and another to display a splendid style on rather common topics. It is another thing to enter into the meaning of the prophets and apostles, to understand why they wrote, in what way they have declared their thinking, [and] what they regard...<sup>8</sup>

S.M. Oberhelman has shown that Jerome was referring to Ambrose here because Ambrose wrote treatises on avarice, faith, virginity, and widows.<sup>9</sup> The first instance when Jerome disparaged Ambrose's exegesis was in his *Preface to the Translation of Origen on St. Luke*. At the beginning of this short work addressed to Paula and Eustochium, Jerome said "A few days ago you told me that you had read some commentaries on Matthew and Luke, of which one was equally dull in perception and expression, the other frivolous in expression, sleepy in sense."<sup>10</sup> Rufinus claimed that this was an attack on

ἀναστῆλλω, μήπως κολακείας μᾶλλον, ἢ ἀληθείας εὐθύνωμαι." "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 23 Chapter 124.

<sup>8</sup> Jerome, Saint. *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*. Ed. Ronald E. Heine. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 76. "Sed cum aliud sit proprios libros componere, uerbi gratia, de auaritia, et de fide, de uirginitate, de uiduis, et super unaquaque materia testimoniis Scripturarum hinc inde quaesitis eloquentiam iungere saecularem, et paene in communibus locis pompaticum iactare sermonem: aliud in sensum prophetae et apostoli ingredi, intelligere cur scripserint, qua sententiam suam ratione firmauerint, quid habeant in ueteri Lege proprium Idumaei, Moabitae, Ammonitae, Tyrii, Philistii, Aegyptii, et Assyrii; quid rursum in nouo Testamento Romani, Corinthii, Galatae, Philippenses, Thessalonicensis, Hebraei, Colossenses, et quam nunc ad Ephesios Epistolam habemus in manibus." "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 26, Prologue.

<sup>9</sup> Oberhelman, S.M. "Jerome's Earliest Attack on Ambrose: On Ephesians, Prologue." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 121, 1991, 393-401.

<sup>10</sup> Jerome, Saint. "Preface to the Translation of Origen on St. Luke" *Jerome: The Principal Works of St. Jerome*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1892. "Ante paucos dies quorundam in Matthaenum et in Lucam Commentarios uos legisse dixistis, e quibus alter et sensibus hebes esset, et uerbis; alter in uerbis luderet, in sententiis dormitaret." "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 26. Prologue.

Ambrose and, because Jerome never denied it, one is inclined to agree with Rufinus.<sup>11</sup>

A second criticism of Ambrose's scholarship comes from Jerome's *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*. In this text, Jerome stated "I know that a certain man has referred Gog and Magog...in Ezekiel to the account of the Goths who were recently raging in our land: whether this is true is shown by the outcomes of the actual battle (recorded in Ezekiel 39-9). But in fact all learned men in the past had certainly been accustomed to calling the Goths Getae rather than Gog and Magog."<sup>12</sup> This is a direct reference to Ambrose's exegesis in *On Faith* when Ambrose said "for Ezekiel, in those far-off days, already prophesied the minishing of our people, and the Gothic wars, saying: 'prophesy, therefore, Son of Man, and say: O Gog, thus saith the Lord – Shalt though not, in that day when My people Israel shall be established to dwell in peace, rise up and come forth from thy place?'"<sup>13</sup>

Yet another critique from Jerome comes from his letter 54 to Furia. In this letter, Jerome stated that "some, from a misapprehension, number Deborah among the widows, and suppose that Barak the leader of the army is her son, though the scripture tells a different story."<sup>14</sup> Ambrose made this exegesis in *On Widows* when he said "for she [Deborah] showed not only that widows have no need of the help of

<sup>11</sup> Rufinus of Aquileia's *Apology* (2:25-28, 39, 47). See also Adkin, Neil. "Jerome on Ambrose: The Preface to the Translation of Origen's Homilies on Luke." *Revue Bénédictine* 107, 1997, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Jerome, Saint. *Saint Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis*. Ed. C.T.R. Hayward. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 39. "Scio quemdam Gog et Magog, tam de praesenti loco, quam de Ezechiel, ad Gotthorum nuper in terra nostra bacchantium historiam retulisse, quod utrum uerum sit, praelii ipsius fine monstratur. Et certe Gotthos omnes retro eruditi, magis Getas, quam Gog et Magog appellare consueuerunt. Hae itaque septem gentes, quas de Japheth uenire stirpe memorauit, aquilonis partem inhabitant." "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 23. Chapter 10:ii.

<sup>13</sup> Ambrose, Saint. "On the Christian Faith." *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Ed. Schaff, Philip and Henry Wace. Vol. X., New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1896, p. 241. "Namque et futuram nostri depopulationem, et bella Gothorum Ezechiel illo iam tempore prophetauit; sic enim habes: Propterea prophetiza, fili hominis, et dic: O Gog, haec dicit Dominus: Nonne in die illa cum constituetur habitare populus meus Israel in pace, surges et uenies de loco tuo, ab extremo Aquilone: et gentes tecum multae, sessores eorum omnes, congregatio multa et magna, et uirtus copiosa; et ascende ad populum meum Israel ut nubes operire terram in nouissimis diebus." "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 16. II:xvi:137.

<sup>14</sup> Jerome, Saint. "Letter 54 to Furia" *Jerome: The Principal Works of St. Jerome*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1892. "Quidam imperite et Deborah inter uiduas numerant, ducemque Barac, arbitrantur Deborahae filium; cum aliud Scriptura commemoret." "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 22 section 17.

a man, inasmuch as she, not at all restrained by the weakness of her sex, undertook to perform the duties of a man, and did even more than she had undertaken.” Later, Ambrose also said “Barak, as he was bidden, led forth the army.”<sup>15</sup> These incorrect interpretations fueled Jerome’s attacks on Ambrose.

Jerome not only censured Ambrose for his exegesis but Jerome was also responding to an attack on his Hebrew scholarship from Ambrose.<sup>16</sup> At the beginning of Jerome’s *Preface to the Translation of Origen on St. Luke*, as we have already seen, Jerome critiqued Ambrose for his *Commentary on St. Luke*. Later in this same text, however, Jerome asserted that “I hear on the left of me the raven – that ominous bird – croaking and mocking [*ridere*] in all extraordinary way at the colors of all the other birds, though he himself is nothing if not a bird of gloom.”<sup>17</sup> Modern scholarship, following Rufinus, has assumed that this criticism, like the criticism earlier in this *Commentary*, was a slight on Ambrose’s exegesis.<sup>18</sup> Neil Adkin,<sup>19</sup> however, has suggested that “here Jerome is responding to

<sup>15</sup> Ambrose, Saint. “Concerning Widows.” *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Ed. Schaff, Philip and Henry Wace. Vol. X., New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1896, p. 398-99. “Haec enim docuit non solum uiri auxilio uiduas non egere, uerum etiam uiris esse subsidio: quae nec sexus infirmitate reuocata, munia uirorum obeunda suscepit, et suscepta cumulauit. Denique cum Iudaei Iudicum regerentur arbitrio, quia uirili non poterant uel aequitate regi, uel uirtute defendi, bellis hinc inde ardentibus, Debboram sibi cuius regerentur iudicio, cooptarunt. Itaque multa millia uirorum una uidua et in pace rexit, et ab hoste defendit.” “*Patrologia Latina*.” Vol. 16 (VIII:xliv). “Debbora ergo praelii prophetauit euentum, Barach iussus produxit exercitum: Iael cepit triumphum; huic enim prophetiae in Debbora militauit, quae mystice nobis ortum surrecturae ex gentibus Ecclesiae reuelauit, cui triumphus de Sisara spiritali, hoc est, de aduersariis potestatibus quaereretur” “*Patrologia Latina*.” Vol. 16 (VII:xlvi).

<sup>16</sup> There is no extant text from Ambrose critiquing Jerome for his Hebrew scholarship.

<sup>17</sup> Jerome, Saint. “Preface to the Translation of Origen on St. Luke” *Jerome: The Principal Works of St. Jerome*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1892. “praesertim cum a sinistro oscinem coruum audiam crocitantem, et mirum in modum de cunctarum auium ridere coloribus, cum totus ipse tenebrosus sit.” “*Patrologia Latina*.” Vol. 26, Prologue.

<sup>18</sup> Rufinus of Aquileia’s *Apology* (2:25-28, 39, 47). Adkin goes into detail about what much of modern scholarship has made of this passage including Fournir, Shenkl, Süss, Steinmann, and Testard. Adkin, Neil. “Jerome on Ambrose: The Preface to the Translation of Origen’s Homilies on Luke.” *Revue Bénédictine* 107, 1997, p. 7-9.

<sup>19</sup> Adkin, Neil. “Jerome on Ambrose: The Preface to the Translation of Origen’s Homilies on Luke.” *Revue Bénédictine* 107, 1997, 5-14. Richard Layton does raise reasonable questions about Adkin’s thesis, but I am still convinced by Adkin. Layton, Richard. “Plagiarism and Lay Patronage of Ascetic Scholarship: Jerome, Ambrose, and Rufinus.” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 10, 2002, p. 511 footnote 74.

Ambrose's mockery of his Hebrew scholarship...Jerome's aim in making the translation [Origen's commentary on Luke] is...to show up the ineptitude of his exegesis."<sup>20</sup> One of Jerome's most stringent criticisms of Ambrose, then, was on his exegesis and, more specifically, as a response to Ambrose's critique of Jerome's Hebrew scholarship.

Jerome also disparaged Ambrose for his lack of preparation for his office. It was well known throughout the Christian world that Ambrose was made a bishop while still a catechumen. Ambrose, himself, admitted that he was unprepared for his office when, in the opening chapter of his book *On The Duties of the Clergy*, he said "I was carried off from the judgment seat, and the garb (*infulis*) of office, to enter on the priesthood, and began to teach you, what I myself had not yet learnt."<sup>21</sup> Jerome, of course, was highly critical of this ordination and made this clear in his letter 69 to Oceanus. Jerome argued in his letter saying that "no one regards a commandment so clear and unmistakable as this about bishops not being novices. One who was yesterday a catechumen is today a bishop; one who was yesterday in the amphitheatre is today in the church; one who spent the evening in the circus stands in the morning at the altar: one who a little while ago was a patron of actors is now a dedicator of virgins."<sup>22</sup> The 'commandment' upon which Jerome rested his remarks is from 1Timothy that says "He [a potential bishop] must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil" (1Timothy 3:6).<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Adkin, Neil. "Jerome on Ambrose: The Preface to the Translation of Origen's Homilies on Luke." *Revue Bénédictine* 107, 1997, p. 13-14.

<sup>21</sup> Ambrose, Saint. "On the Duties of the Clergy." *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Ed. Schaff, Philip and Henry Wace. Vol. X., New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1896, p. 1. "Quod ne ipsum quidem mihi accidit. Ego enim raptus de tribunalibus atque administrationis infulis ad sacerdotium, docere uos coepi, quod ipse non didici. Itaque factum est ut prius docere inciperem, quam discere. Discendum igitur mihi simul et docendum est; quoniam non uacauit ante discere." "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 16. I:i.

<sup>22</sup> Jerome, Saint. "Letter 69 to Oceanus" *Jerome: The Principal Works of St. Jerome*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1892. "cum tam apertum euidentisque praeceptum nemo custodiat. Heri catechumenus, hodie pontifex: heri in amphitheatro, hodie in Ecclesia; uespere in circo, mane in altario: dudum fautor histrionum, nunc uirginum consecrator." "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 22 section 9.

<sup>23</sup> *non neophytum ne in superbia elatus in iudicium incidat diaboli*; μη νεόφυτον, ἵνα μη τυφωθείς εἰς κρίμα ἐμπέση τοῦ διαβόλου. The second canon of the Council of Nicea also asserts that a recently baptized Christian may not be advanced to the episcopate or presbyterate.

Jerome's third and most serious charge against Ambrose was the indictment of plagiarism. His harshest accusation was directed at an anonymous thief, but the reference is unmistakable:

and as I have confessed the name of the author [Didymus] in the title, I have preferred to stand forth as the translator of the work of another, rather than to adorn myself as some do with foreign colors, as some deformed little crow. I read not long ago the slight books of a certain author concerning the Holy Spirit and I saw, in keeping with the opinion of the comic, bad Latin made from good Greek. There was nothing in these books of dialectic, nothing manly and rigorous, which even in difficult points draws the reader to assent, but everything was weak, soft, yet refined and beautiful, embellished here and there with painted colors.<sup>24</sup>

Later in this same preface, Jerome claimed "surely, whoever reads the work of Didymus will recognize the plagiarism of the Latins, and will condemn the trickle when he has begun to drink from the spring."<sup>25</sup> The object of this invective is most certainly Ambrose for he had written a tract on the Holy Spirit shortly before this translation of Didymus. Rufinus was well aware of the allusions made in this preface and vigorously defended Ambrose saying "you observe how he [Jerome] treats Ambrose. First, he calls him a crow and says that he is black all over; then he calls him a jackdaw who decks himself in other bird's showy feathers; and then he rends him with his foul abuse, and declares that there is nothing manly in a man whom God has singled out to be the glory of the churches of Christ."<sup>26</sup> Jerome most certainly intended for his slight to be noticed.

<sup>24</sup> As translated by Layton, Richard. "Plagiarism and Lay Patronage of Ascetic Scholarship: Jerome, Ambrose, and Rufinus." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 10, 2002, p. 500-501. "Et ut auctorem titulo fatear: malui alieni operis interpres existere, quam (ut quidam faciunt) informis cornicula, alienis me coloribus adornare. Legi dudum cuiusdam libellos de Spiritu sancto: et iuxta Comici [Scil. Terentii] sententiam ex Graecis bonis, Latina uidi non bona. Nihil ibi dialecticum, nihil uirile atque strictum, quod lectorem uel ingratum in assensum trahat: sed totum flaccidum, molle, nitidum, atque formosum, et exquisitis hinc inde odoribus pigmentatum." From Jerome's translation of Didymus's treatise on the Holy Spirit. "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 23, Prologue.

<sup>25</sup> As translated by Layton, Richard. "Plagiarism and Lay Patronage of Ascetic Scholarship: Jerome, Ambrose, and Rufinus." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 10, 2002, p. 501. "Certe qui hunc legerit, Latinorum furta cognoscet: et contemnet riuulos, cum coeperit haurire de fontibus." From Jerome's translation of Didymus's treatise on the Holy Spirit. "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 23, Prologue.

<sup>26</sup> Rufinus of Aquileia "Apology" *Theodoret, Jerome, Gennadius, and Rufinus: Historical Writings*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1892. "Audistis quomodo quem ante coruum dixerat et totum tenebrosum, nunc iterum corniculam dicat, alienis se pennis uel coloribus depingentem, et quam turpiter

The other accusation of plagiarism – Jerome's first ever criticism of Ambrose in 384 C.E. – was so subtle that modern scholarship has missed it until recently.<sup>27</sup> In his letter 22 to Eustochium, Jerome argued “if you want to know from how many vexations a virgin is free and by how many a wife is fettered you should read...the treatises recently written for his sister by our own Ambrose (*Ambrosii nostri*). In these he has poured forth his soul with such a flood of eloquence that he has sought out (*exquisierit*), set forth (*ordinarit*), and put in order (*expresserit*) all that bears on the praise of virgins.”<sup>28</sup> On an initial reading, this seems to be complimentary of Ambrose's work. However, Adkin has convincingly argued that the three verbs (*exquirere*, *ordinare*, *exprimere*) Jerome used were, in fact, latent charges of plagiarism. This, Adkin insists, is “to be seen as an allusion to the derivative nature of Ambrose's work. It would appear therefore that these words are an anticipation of the charge of plagiarism which Jerome makes in 387 against Ambrose.”<sup>29</sup> Jerome was saying, in effect, that the ideas on Ambrose's text were good simply because they were compiled from other sources and that Ambrose himself is not to be lauded for his cribbing. This passage may also be seen as a cryptic attack on Ambrose because of Jerome's use of *Ambrosii nostri*. P. Lardet has noted that this use of *noster* by Jerome in letter 22 to Eustochium is “*ironique*”<sup>30</sup> and Adkin has noted that “Jerome has accordingly combined a malicious sneer with an unctuous claim to intimacy.”<sup>31</sup> Jerome's use of *noster*, then, was not intended as a term of endearment.

laceret, et nihil uirile dicat habere uirum, qui ad Ecclesiarum Christi gloriam electus a Deo est, qui in testimoniis Domini locutus est, in conspectu persecutorum regum, et non est confusus.” “*Patrologia Latina*” Vol. 21 Book II:xxv.

<sup>27</sup> For this argument, I am relying on Neil Adkin “Ambrose and Jerome: The Opening Shot.” *Mnemosyne* 46, 1993, p. 364-376.

<sup>28</sup> Jerome, Saint. “Letter 22 to Eustochium” *The Principal Works of St. Jerome*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1892. “Et si nupserit, inquit, uirgo, non peccat: Tribulationem tamen carnis habebunt huiusmodi. Et in principio libelli praefatus sum, me de angustiis nuptiarum, aut nihil omnino, aut pauca dicturum: et nunc eadem admoneo, ut si tibi placet scire quot molestiis uirgo libera, quot uxor astricta sit, legas Tertullianum ad amicum Philosophum, et de Virginitate alios libellos, et beati Cypriani uolumen egregium, et Papae Damasi super hac re, uersu, prosaque composita; et Ambrosii nostri quae nuper scripsit ad Sororem opuscula. In quibus tanto se effudit eloquio, ut quidquid ad laudes uirginum pertinet, exquisierit, expresserit, ordinarit.” “*Patrologia Latina*.” Vol. 22, section 22.

<sup>29</sup> Neil Adkin “Ambrose and Jerome: The Opening Shot.” *Mnemosyne* 46, 1993, p. 366.

<sup>30</sup> Lardet, P. *Saint Jerome: Apologie contre Rufin. Commentaire du livre premier, II* (unpublished dissertation, Paris 1980), 283. As cited by Neil Adkin “Ambrose and Jerome: The Opening Shot.” *Mnemosyne* 46, 1993, p. 368.

<sup>31</sup> Adkin, Neil. “Ambrose and Jerome: The Opening Shot.” *Mnemosyne* 46, 1993, p. 369.

## The Relationship between Ambrose and Augustine

It is also important to review the relationship between Ambrose and Augustine in order to fully establish the context of the correspondence between Augustine and Jerome. Because the relationship between the Bishop of Milan and the African convert is widely known, we will not exhaustively examine it here.<sup>32</sup> Without question, their relationship was unequal, as the influence that Ambrose had on Augustine was not reciprocated.<sup>33</sup> Ambrose's sway over Augustine, as we shall see, was certainly "more intellectual than personal."<sup>34</sup> In this section, we will analyze two central aspects of the relationship between Augustine and his "spiritual father:"<sup>35</sup> Ambrose's preaching and oratorical acumen helped initiate Augustine's eventual conversion and the theological influences from Ambrose helped shape Augustine's views of Christianity.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> See Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000, p. 69-79; Paredi, Angelo. *Saint Ambrose: His Life and Times*. Trans. M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964, p. 278-295; Dudden, Frederick Homes. *The Life and Times of St. Ambrose*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935, p. 321-345.

<sup>33</sup> Papini argues that Ambrose never quoted any of Augustine's works. Papini, Giovanni. *Saint Augustine*. Trans. Mary Pritchard Agnetti. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1930, p. 99.

<sup>34</sup> Stock, Brian. *Augustine the Reader: Mediation, Self-Knowledge, and the Ethics of Interpretation*. Cambridge, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996, p. 58.

<sup>35</sup> Moorhead, John. *Ambrose: Church and Society in the Late Roman World*. New York: Pearson Educated Limited, 1999, p. 10.

<sup>36</sup> Scholars have cited a number of other important influences from Ambrose on Augustine that should be noted: Ambrose influenced Augustine by telling him that he observed the local customs of the different churches he visited. Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000, p. 77; Ambrose was the greatest mediator of Greek thought into the Latin context because of his direct influence on Augustine. Ramsey, Boniface. *Ambrose*. New York: Routledge, 1997, p. 54; Augustine received the theme of his *City of God* from Ambrose. Morino, Claudio. *Church and State in the Teaching of St. Ambrose*. Trans. M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, Inc., 1969, p. 54; Later in life, Augustine did not object to the use of civil authority in ecclesial matters. This idea came from Ambrose. Morino, Claudio. *Church and State in the Teaching of St. Ambrose*. Trans. M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, Inc., 1969, p. 120-1; Ambrose taught Augustine a lesson of the relationship between reading and contemplative silence. Stock, Brian. *Augustine the Reader: Mediation, Self-Knowledge, and the Ethics of Interpretation*. Cambridge, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996, p. 61; The idea of original sin that Augustine elaborated came from Ambrose. Paredi, Angelo. *Saint Ambrose: His Life and Times*. Trans. M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964, p. 313; Ambrose's mysticism

Ambrose's reputation for eloquence was known to Augustine and Augustine tested Ambrose's "oratorical skill to see whether it merited the reputation it enjoyed or whether his fluency was better or inferior than it was reported to be."<sup>37</sup> Augustine's hagiographer, Possidius, recounted that Augustine "used to listen with fixed attention to the discourses frequently delivered in the church by this preacher of God's word."<sup>38</sup> He found Ambrose's style to be less "vivacious and insinuating, but more erudite, than that of Faustus."<sup>39</sup> Although Augustine found Ambrose's oratorical manner in his preaching to be less electrifying than the Manichean's technique, Ambrose's sermons "had enlightened Augustine."<sup>40</sup> Through Ambrose's direction, Augustine came to realize that "Catholic Christianity was intellectually far more defensible than he had imagined."<sup>41</sup> Earlier in his life, Augustine had believed that Christianity was intellectually inferior to philosophical inquiry and Manichean illumination.

More than the realization that the Church could be intellectually challenging, specific ideas in Ambrose's sermons theologically shaped Augustine's views of Christianity. One of the most important of these was the Pauline dichotomy between the spirit and the letter. "Encouraged by the allegories of Ambrose," Brian Stock argues, "he [Augustine] came to understand that the reader could distinguish between what Paul called the "spirit" and the "letter" as a parallel to the

influenced Augustine and, therefore, the later mystical tradition in the west. Paredi, Angelo. *Saint Ambrose: His Life and Times*. Trans. M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964, p. 314.

<sup>37</sup> Augustine. *Confessions*. Trans. Henry Chadwick. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 88. "studiose audiebam disputantem in populo, non intentione, qua debui, sed quasi explorans eius facundiam, utrum conveniret famae suae, an maior minorve proflueret, quam praedicabatur." Augustine. *Confessions*. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999, p. 256.

<sup>38</sup> Possidius. "The Life of Saint Augustine." *Soldiers of Christ: Saints and Saints' Lives from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. Ed. Thomas F.X. Noble and Thomas Head. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995, p. 34. "Huius interea uerbi Dei praedicatoris frequentissimis in ecclesia disputationibus astans in populo, intendebat suspensus atque affixus." *Vita Sancti Aurelii Augustini, Hipponensis Episcopi, Auctore Possidio Calamensi Episcopo*. "Patrologia Latina." Vol. 32 *Caput Primum*.

<sup>39</sup> Dudden, Frederick Homes. *The Life and Times of St. Ambrose*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935, p. 328.

<sup>40</sup> Papini, Giovanni. *Saint Augustine*. Trans. Mary Pritchard Agnetti. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1930, p. 100.

<sup>41</sup> Dudden, Frederick Homes. *The Life and Times of St. Ambrose*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935, p. 328.

“inner” and “outer” self.”<sup>42</sup> Indeed, Augustine claimed in his *Confessions* that he was “delighted to hear Ambrose in his sermons to the people saying, as if he were most carefully enunciating a principle of exegesis: the letter kills, the spirit gives life. Those texts which, taken literally, seemed to contain perverse teaching he would expound spiritually, removing the mystical veil.”<sup>43</sup> This new exegetical framework allowed Augustine to understand that the Bible was worthy of exploration despite its apparent lack of rhetorical style. Earlier in his life when he had first attempted to read the Scriptures, Augustine found them to be “unworthy in comparison with the dignity of Cicero.”<sup>44</sup> Through the sermons of Ambrose, Augustine was able to broach the Christian canon with a new interpretive lens.

Another revelation from Ambrose’s preaching was the understanding that the Christian God was not a material God. In his earlier days, Augustine, like many late antique thinkers, believed in a material existence of God.<sup>45</sup> When encountering Christianity again in Milan, Augustine still thought of the Catholic God in material form, which was probably “a hangover from Manichaeism.”<sup>46</sup> Listening to the preaching of Ambrose, Augustine came to realize that many educated Christians thought of God immaterially. Peter Brown argued that Ambrose “introduced Augustine to some totally new ideas. Augustine found himself in the position of a man, ‘influenced by an authoritative statement, and prepared to say that there was something ‘immaterial,’ but unable to think other than in terms taken from material things.’”<sup>47</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Stock, Brian. *Augustine the Reader: Mediation, Self-Knowledge, and the Ethics of Interpretation*. Cambridge, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996, p. 54.

<sup>43</sup> Augustine. *Confessions*. Trans. Henry Chadwick. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 94. “et tamquam regulam diligentissime commendaret, saepe in popularibus sermonibus suis dicentem Ambrosium laetus audiebam: Littera occidit, spiritus autem uiuificat, cum ea, quae ad litteram peruersitatem docere uidebantur, remoto mystico uelamento spiritaliter aperiret, non dicens quod me offenderet, quamuis ea diceret, quae utrum uera essent adhuc ignorarem.” Augustine. *Confessions*. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999, p. 278.

<sup>44</sup> Augustine. *Confessions*. Trans. Henry Chadwick. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 40. “non enim sicut modo loquor, ita sensi, cum attendi ad illam scripturam, sed uisa est mihi indigna, quam Tullianae dignitati compararem.” Augustine. *Confessions*. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999, p. 112.

<sup>45</sup> Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000, p. 75.

<sup>46</sup> Stock, Brian. *Augustine the Reader: Mediation, Self-Knowledge, and the Ethics of Interpretation*. Cambridge, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996, p. 54.

<sup>47</sup> Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000, p. 76. Augustine quote “aut etiamsi auctoritate commota,

Augustine himself attributed this to Ambrose when he said that he “noticed, repeatedly, in the sermons of our bishop [Ambrose]...that when God is thought of, our thoughts should dwell on no material reality whatsoever, nor the case of the soul, which is the one thing in the universe nearest to God.”<sup>48</sup> Augustine’s capacity, then, to disregard the material nature of God and hold an immaterial notion of God was directly influenced from Ambrose’s preaching.

### Jerome’s Knowledge of Augustine’s Life<sup>49</sup>

Now that we have reviewed the context surrounding the correspondence between Jerome and Augustine, we may turn to the letters themselves. When we do a close reading of Augustine’s letters to Jerome, Jerome’s initial response in 402 C.E. and his two definitive responses in 404 C.E., we can glean a significant amount of information of what Jerome knew about Augustine at that time.

First, we can easily determine that Jerome knew that Augustine did not side with Rufinus concerning the Origenist controversy. Augustine wrote to Jerome in letter 28 asking him – not Rufinus who also translated Origen – to translate Greek Christian authors for Latin readers saying “you may thus put us also in possession of these [Greek] men, and especially of that one whose name you seem to have singular pleasure in sounding forth in your writings (Origen).”<sup>50</sup> Because Augustine had asked Jerome in his first letter to make Origen

fateatur aliquid esse incorporeum, de illo tamen nisi per imagines corporeas cogitare non possit, et tale aliquid esse credere, quale fallax corporis sensus infligit. *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum* “Patrologia Latina” I, xxi, 38.

<sup>48</sup> Augustine “Animaduerti enim et saepe in sacerdotis nostri, et aliquando in sermonibus tuis, cum de Deo cogitaretur, nihil omnino corporis esse cogitandum, neque cum de anima: nam id est unum in rebus proximum Deo.” *De beata vita*, “Patrologia Latina.” I, 4 as quoted in Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000, p. 75.

<sup>49</sup> This correspondence is recorded in the *oeuvres* of both Jerome and Augustine. I am using the numbering system from the corpus of Augustine. See the contents page of White’s book for a helpful conversion chart of the numbering system for these letters. White, Carolinne. *The Correspondence (394-419) Between Jerome and Augustine of Hippo*. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990.

<sup>50</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886, letter 28:ii. “Potes enim efficere, ut nos quoque habeamus tales illos uiros et unum potissimum, quem tu libentius in tuis litteris sonas.” Schmid, Josefus. ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 28.

accessible to Latin readers, we can safely assert that Jerome knew that Augustine was not an adversary on this point.

Second, we can determine that during 402 and 404 C.E., Jerome knew Augustine's writings intimately. Jerome stated the contrary when he claims in his letter 72 from 404 C.E. that he could not "pronounce anything in your works to merit censure. For, in the first place, I have never read them with attention; and in the second place, we have not beside us a supply of copies of what you have written, excepting the books of Soliloquies and commentaries on some of the Psalms."<sup>51</sup> On a closer reading, however, we can determine that Jerome did, in fact, know Augustine's writings and that Jerome's statement that he has never read them with attention was simply a rhetorical maneuver. Two years earlier – when relating to Augustine that he had recently received Augustine's letter 40 through his friend Sysinnius after Sysinnius had brought Jerome a copy of it – Jerome claimed to know Augustine's style well enough that this copied letter seemed to be from Augustine. Jerome stated that "although the style and the method of argument appeared to be yours I must frankly confess to your Excellency that I did not think it right to assume without examination the authenticity of a letter of which I had only seen copies"<sup>52</sup> In his letter 72, Jerome again hints that he knew Augustine's style well when, discussing the lost letter 40, Jerome said "I was afraid lest you should have reason to remonstrate with me, saying, 'What! Had you seen the letter to be mine, had you discovered in the signature attached to it the autograph of a hand well known to you, when you carelessly wounded the feelings of your friend and reproached me with that which the malice of another had conceived?'"<sup>53</sup> Despite Jerome's assertions of his

<sup>51</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886, letter 72:v. "Et hoc dico, non quod in operibus tuis quaedam reprehendenda iam censeam. Neque enim lectioni eorum umquam operam dedi nec horum exemplariorum apud nos copia est praeter 'Soliloquiorum' tuorum libros et quosdam commentariolos in Psalmos, quos si uellem discutere, non dicam a me, qui nihil sum, sed a ueterum Graecorum docerem interpretationibus discrepare." Schmid, Josefus. ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 46.

<sup>52</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886, letter 68:i. "Ego simpliciter fateor dignationi tuae, licet stilus et ἐπιχειρήματα tua mihi viderentur, tamen non temere exemplaribus litterarum credendum putauī, ne forte me respondente laesus iuste expostulares, quod probare ante debuissē tuum esse sermonem et sic rescribere." Schmid, Josefus. ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 39.

<sup>53</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886, letter 72:ii. "ad

ignorance of Augustine's writings, we can be sure that Jerome did know Augustine's texts well.

Third, we know definitively that Jerome knew Augustine was a bishop. Augustine had been consecrated the Bishop of Hippo in 395 C.E., seven years before Jerome's first response to Augustine. Jerome acknowledged four times in his letters in 402 and 404 C.E. that Augustine was a bishop. Moreover, Jerome knew of Augustine's growing fame as a bishop and author; Jerome stated so in his second letter of 404 C.E. when he was rebuking Augustine for Augustine's exegesis of the confrontation between Peter and Paul over the Jewish Law in Galatians 2. Jerome said that "if this [exegesis] is your opinion, or rather since it is your opinion, that all from among the Jews who believe are debtors to do the whole law, you ought, as being *a bishop of great fame in the whole world*, to publish your doctrine, and labor to persuade all other bishops to agree with you" (my italic).<sup>54</sup> Augustine's name was not lost in a sea of bishops; his growing reputation preceded him.

Fourth, we learn from Augustine's letter 71 to Jerome that Augustine had censured Jerome for his Hebrew scholarship – as Ambrose had done. Previously, we saw that Adkin has argued that Ambrose mocked Jerome's Hebrew scholarship.<sup>55</sup> Although Jerome's reply to Ambrose was subtle and anonymous, his reply to Augustine was explicit:

It is, however, more in keeping with your enlightened judgment, to grant to all others the liberty which you tolerate in yourself for in my attempt to translate into Latin, for the benefit of those who speak the same language with myself, the corrected Greek version of the Scriptures, I have laboured not to supersede what has been long esteemed, but only to bring prominently forward those things which have been either omitted or tampered with by the Jews, in order that Latin readers

extremum, ne tu iure expostulares et diceris: 'Quid enim? Epistulam meam uideras et notae tibi manus in subscriptione signa deprehenderas, ut tam facile amicum laederes et alterius malitiam in meam uerteres contumeliam?' Schmid, Josefus. ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 45.

<sup>54</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886, letter 75:v. "Hoc si placet, immo quia placet, ut, quicumque credunt ex Iudaeis, debitores sint legis faciendae, tu ut episcopus in toto orbe notissimus debes hanc promulgare sententiam et in adsensum tuum omnes coepiscopos trahere." Schmid, Josefus. ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 57.

<sup>55</sup> Adkin, Neil. "Jerome on Ambrose: The Preface to the Translation of Origen's Homilies on Luke." *Revue Bénédictine* 107, 1997, p. 5-14.

might know what is found in the original Hebrew. If any one is averse to reading it, none compels him against his will. Let him drink with satisfaction the old wine, and despise my new wine.<sup>56</sup>

This is not the only response that Jerome offered to Augustine concerning this issue but, in fact, Jerome spent two pages on his response. This citation should be a sufficient quote to demonstrate Jerome railing at Augustine's needling. Just as with Ambrose, Jerome felt the need to defend himself against Augustine's attacks on his Hebrew scholarship. Augustine's pleas would not have made Jerome pleased and he most surely viewed this as the protégé following in the master's footsteps.

Fifth, Jerome knew that Augustine had read his *On Illustrious Men*. Augustine had written to Jerome asking him the name of this text that he had read, for the text did not come with a title. "A certain book of yours came into my hands," Augustine stated, "the name of which I do not yet know, for the manuscript itself had not the title written, as is customary, on the first page....[it is a work] of the lives or writings of those only who are deceased. Inasmuch, however, as mention is there made of the works of some who were at the time when it was written, or even now, alive."<sup>57</sup> In *On Illustrious Men*, as we saw earlier in this paper, Jerome criticized Ambrose when he said that he was "fearing either to praise or to blame [Ambrose] lest in the

<sup>56</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886, letter 75:xx. "Quin potius humanitatis tuae est, in quo ueniam tibi tribuis, indulgere et ceteris. Ego enim non tantum uetera abolere conatus sum, quae linguae meae hominibus emendata de Graeco in Latinum transtuli, quam ea testimonia, quae a Iudaeis praetermissa sunt uel corrupta, profere in medium, ut scirent nostri, quid Hebraea veritas contineret. Si cui legere non placet, nemo compellit inuitum. Bibat uinum uetus cum suauitate et nostra musta contemnat, quae in explanatione priorum edita sunt, ut, sicubi illa non intelleguntur, ex nostris manifestiora fiant." Schmid, Josefus. ed. SS. *Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 70-71.

<sup>57</sup> Letter 40: Chapter ii. *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886. "Liber quidam tuus inter cetera non diu est ut uenit in manus nostras. Quae sit eius inscriptio, nescimus adhuc; non enim hoc codex ipse, ut adsolet, in liminari pagina praetendebat. 'Epitaphium' tamen appellari dicebat frater, apud quem inuentus est. Quod ei nomen tibi placuisse ut inderetur, crederemus, si eorum tantum uel uitas uel scripta ibi legissemus, qui iam defuncti essent. Cum uero multorum et eo tempore, quo scribebatur, et nunc usque uiuentium ibi commemorentur opuscula, miramur, cur hunc ei titulum uel inposueris uel imposuisse credaris. Sane utiliter a te conscriptum eundem librum satis adprobamus." Schmid, Josefus. ed. SS. *Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 32-33.

one event, I should be blamed for adulation, and in the other for speaking the truth.”<sup>58</sup> We can be confident, then, that Jerome knew that Augustine was well aware of at least one of his criticisms of Ambrose. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that because Jerome knew that Augustine had read *On Illustrious Men* that Jerome would have braced himself against a rebuttal from Augustine.

Sixth, and most importantly for our purposes, we know that Jerome was well aware of the relationship between Augustine and Ambrose. Jerome said in his second letter in 404 C.E. – in reference to earlier translators of Origen – that “...among Latin writers the bishops Hilary of Poitiers, and Eusebius of Vercueil, have translated Origen and Eusebius of Caesarea, the former of whom has in some things been followed by our own Ambrose (*noster Ambrosius*).”<sup>59</sup> This *noster Ambrosius* clearly denotes that Jerome knew that Ambrose had been Augustine’s mentor.

The use of ‘*noster*’ as a term of familiarity is used throughout many of these letters, not just in this one particular instance with Ambrose. Jerome uses ‘*nostrum papam Alypium*’ in letter 39 in reference to their shared friendship with Alypius.<sup>60</sup> Both Jerome and Augustine use ‘*noster*’ in reference to a mutual acquaintance, a deacon named Cyprian who later became a bishop.<sup>61</sup> Augustine first uses ‘*noster*’ in reference to Cyprian in section one of letter 71 written in 403 C.E. when he refers to the man who took Augustine’s letter to Jerome as “our son Cyprian, deacon.”<sup>62</sup> He uses the same language in

<sup>58</sup> Jerome, Saint. “On Illustrious Men” *Jerome: The Principal Works of St. Jerome*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1892. “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 ueritas.” “Ἀμβρόσιος, Μεδιολάνου ἐπισκοπος, ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας συγγράφεται καὶ ἐπενπερ περνεσσι, τὴν ἐμὴν κρῆσιν ἀναστέλλω, μήπως κολακενας μᾶλλον, ἢ ἀλγέενας εὐθύνομαι.” “Patrologia Latina.” Vol. 23 Chapter 124.

<sup>59</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886, letter 75:xx. “Apud Latinos autem Hilarius Pictavensis et Eusebius, Uercellensis episcopus, Origenem et Eusebium transtulerunt, quorum priorem et noster Ambrosius in quibusdam secutus est.” Schmid, Josefus. ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 70.

<sup>60</sup> See also the beginning of letter 28 for Augustine’s discussion of Alypius’s encounter with Jerome.

<sup>61</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886, letter 82, section 30.

<sup>62</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886. “Filius noster

section one of letter 73 (404 C.E.) when Augustine referred to him as “our son the deacon Cyprian, a servant of God.”<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, Augustine also uses the term “our Ambrose”<sup>64</sup> in section 21 of letter 82, mirroring Jerome’s reference to their mutual acquaintance that we saw letter 75.<sup>65</sup>

The importance of this usage of ‘*noster*,’ however, does not end here. As we saw earlier in this paper, Lardet and Adkin both pointed to a derogatory usage of Jerome’s use of ‘*noster*’ in letter 22 to Eustochium. I believe that the same “*ironique*”<sup>66</sup> and “*unctuous*”<sup>67</sup> flavor that was in Jerome’s letter 22 is present here in Jerome’s letter 65 to Augustine. Jerome was not simply articulating to Augustine that he, like Augustine, knew Ambrose; Jerome was subtly informing Augustine that he is in no way sympathetic to Ambrose. It should also be noted that this reference to Ambrose is embedded in the section of Jerome’s response to Augustine’s criticism of his Hebrew scholarship. In responding to Augustine’s remarks on Jerome’s Hebrew scholarship, Jerome evoked the name of Ambrose. This is most certainly not a coincidence and may be seen as an allusion to Jerome’s remarks in his *Preface to the Translation of Origen on St. Luke*.

Cyprianus diaconus.” Schmid, Josefus. ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 41.

<sup>63</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886. “Per Dei servum, filium nostrum Cyprianum diaconum.” Schmid, Josefus. ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 47

<sup>64</sup> *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886. “Ambrosius noster.” Schmid, Josefus. ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 86.

<sup>65</sup> In section 24 of the same letter, Augustine again uses the term “our Ambrose” and also “our Cyprian” (not in reference to the deacon just stated, but the famous bishop of Carthage). However, the usage of ‘*noster*’ in these two cases does not denote a mutual acquaintance between Augustine and Jerome but is used in creating a dichotomy between Latin writers and Greek writers. *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work*. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Publishing Company, 1886. “Noster Ambrosius...noster itidem Cyprianus.” Schmid, Josefus. ed. *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae Mutuae*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930, p. 88.

<sup>66</sup> Lardet, P. *Saint Jerome: Apologie contre Rufin. Commentaire du livre premier, II* (unpublished dissertation, Paris 1980), 283. As cited by Neil Adkin “Ambrose and Jerome: The Opening Shot.” *Mnemosyne* 46, 1993, 368.

<sup>67</sup> Adkin, Neil. “Ambrose and Jerome: The Opening Shot.” *Mnemosyne* 46, 1993, p. 369.

## Conclusion

It is clear, then, that Jerome would not have been guarded against an attack from Augustine concerning Origen because Augustine asked Jerome, not Rufinus, to translate more of Origen's texts; Jerome knew Augustine's rhetorical style, method, argumentation, and his autograph; he knew Augustine's reputation as a rising bishop with great fame; Augustine, like Ambrose, criticized Jerome for his Hebrew scholarship; Augustine most certainly had known at least one of Jerome's criticisms of Ambrose when Augustine read Jerome's *On Illustrious Men*; we know that Jerome was aware of Augustine's relationship with Ambrose by his use of the term '*noster*,' which he used in reference to several men with whom both Augustine and Jerome were associated such as Ambrose, Alypius, and Cyprian the deacon. It is much more likely, therefore, that Jerome's aggressive responses to Augustine's inquiries were a result of his knowledge that Augustine was a mentee of Ambrose, instead of the previous suggestions made by modern scholars that Jerome was cantankerous, or that he was defensive because of the Origenist controversy.

Stuart Squires  
The Catholic University of America  
Washington, DC, U.S.A.

