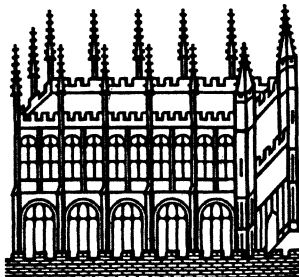


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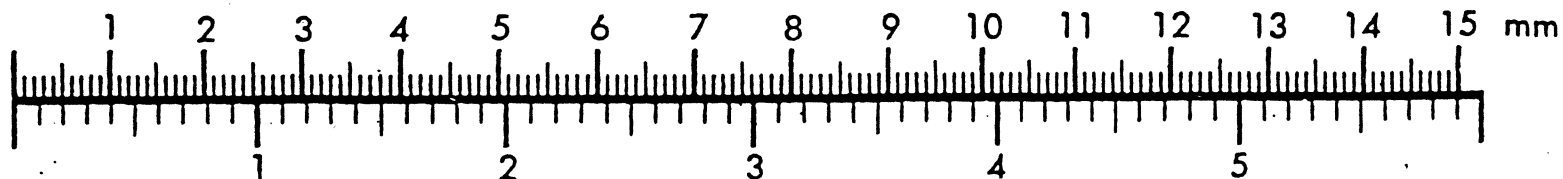
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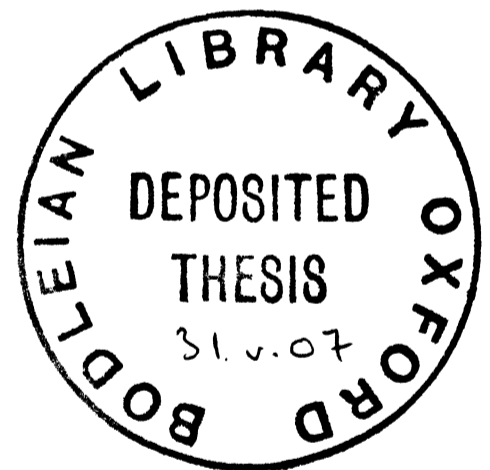
Classical, Jewish and Christian Influences

on Jerome's translation of the Psalter *Iuxta Hebraeos*

By

J S Cameron

Jesus College



Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Theology

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Trinity 2006 [in 2007] (LTS 22.11.07)

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Short Abstract

This thesis investigates the influences on Jerome's translation of the Psalter from the Hebrew (*IH* Psalter) that came from the three major socio-religious spheres with which Jerome was acquainted. It argues that the results offer insights into Jerome's conception of the nature of Hebrew text itself, of the relationship between it and the Christian faith, and of his role as translator.

The thesis argues and demonstrates that the language of the *IH* Psalter reveals influences that derive from Jerome's classical background, from his contact with rabbinic scholars in Palestine, and, especially, from his adopted Christian faith. These influences are subtle, but their combined effect is considerable.

Care is taken to demonstrate that Jerome was a competent translator, and that he deliberately intended the classical, Jewish or Christian nuances that are discussed.

This is achieved, first, by comparing the *IH* Psalter with the Hebrew as an initial step, then with Jerome's translation of the Psalter from the Hexaplaric Septuagint, and with the various Greek versions where they are extant; and second, by evaluating the relationship between Jerome's translations and his exegetical material on the Psalter.

The fact that Jerome is both translator and exegete of the Psalter allows clear insight into the impact of his understanding of the Psalms on his translation of them.

The Conclusion argues that the issues can be focussed on and find their resolution in Jerome's conception of the nature and function of the Hebrew text. By imputing to Jerome a belief in the divine inspiration of the Hebrew text, and a belief that the Hebrew text properly understood and properly translated reveals Jesus Christ, the character of the *IH* Psalter can best be explained. Jerome's translations often exploited available linguistic space, but they rarely went beyond what *hebraica veritas* could reasonably signify.

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Long Abstract

Fundamental to Jerome's *Iuxta Hebraeos* project was his argument that the only adequate Latin Old Testament for Christians was one translated from the Hebrew. Jerome also seems to have believed that translations of the Old Testament books from Hebrew to Latin could be both attractive in Latin and faithful to the original Hebrew. In this way he hoped to answer both the complaints of educated Latin speakers who accused the Latin Bible of literary barbarity, and those of the Jews who disputed the

accuracy of the versions of the Old Testament used by Christians. Jerome's primary aim was to provide a Latin Old Testament for Christians based on the Hebrew text, but herein lay his greatest difficulty, namely that of making his new translation acceptable to a sceptical and conservative Christian audience.

Jerome's classical education, his contact with Jewish scholars in Palestine, and his own Christian faith gave him personal empathy with the three groups of people whom he directly or indirectly aimed to satisfy by his new translation. This thesis describes the process and results of an investigation into the ways in which Jerome answered the claims of these potentially conflicting ends of his translation. It considers the extent to which Jerome met these ends, and asks whether he manipulated his translation to make it appeal to one or other of these groups.

The basic methodology has been to read the *Iuxta Hebraeos* (*IH*) Psalter in parallel with the Massoretic Text, and comparing it to Jerome's earlier translation of the Psalter from the Septuagint (*ILXX*). Readings in the *IH* that appeared to have a particularly "Christian," "Jewish," or "Classical" character were noted, and attempts were made to explain them by reference to an earlier textual tradition, whether Hebrew, Greek or Latin, and/or by reference to influence from classical, Jewish or Christian sources. Special attention was given to the relationship between Jerome's exegetical material on the Psalter and his *IH* translation of the Psalter in order to gauge more accurately the impact of Jerome's interpretation of a particular verse on his translation of it.

The thesis is divided into four major sections. The first is a review of Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew within the specific context of his Old Testament translations. The second considers evidence that Jerome's *IH* Psalter reveals influences that come from the classical world; the third considers evidence of influences from Jewish/rabbinic sources; and the fourth longer section considers evidence of various influences from Christian sources.

Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew is an important issue in the context of this thesis: "significant" translations in the *IH* Psalter lose much of their significance if they are erroneous or ignorantly reliant on previous translations. A major source of difficulty in assessing is precisely what "knowledge of Hebrew" means. However, in an investigation of Jerome's Old Testament translations, whether or not he could speak Hebrew is of little relevance as is his ability to translate from Latin or Greek into Hebrew: the issue is his ability to translate a written Hebrew text into a written Latin text. Various approaches taken by previous scholars to assess Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew are reviewed, and new sources of evidence are suggested. The section concludes by arguing that while on the one hand it seems that Jerome was indeed capable of translating a written Hebrew text into a written Latin text largely unaided, on the other it seems that Jerome was content to assert his credentials as a Hebraist among his Latin and Greek speaking contemporaries, but never set himself up as an authority in Hebrew alongside or in opposition to his Hebrew teachers.

There has been much scholarly interest recently in the possibility that Jerome included references to classical literature in his *IH* translations. Jerome's rhetorical question to Eustochium, "*Quid facit cum Psalterio Horatius?*" made it particularly interesting to

look for classical allusions in the *IH* Psalter. In an attempt to avoid problems encountered by previous scholars, a rigorous methodology was adopted. This involved comparing the *IH* with the Hebrew as the starting point, intending to explain differences between them with respect to Classical literature, rather than starting with Classical literature and looking for similarities in the *IH*.

The thesis argues that there are no readings at all in the *IH* Psalter that can only or best be explained by reference to classical literature. However, there is evidence that Jerome sought at times to make the Latin of the *IH* Psalter conform to the literary standards of the fourth century, standards that were themselves based on the great authors of late Republican and early Imperial Rome. Instances in the *IH* Psalter that show greater poetic and literary merit than its predecessors must no doubt partly be explained by Jerome's sensitivity, as a competent translator, to Hebrew poetic structures. But those instances where the poetry of the *IH* goes beyond the Hebrew suggest that Jerome was concerned to demonstrate a certain degree of classical *παιδεία* in his *IH* Psalter.

It is a well-established fact that Jerome includes rabbinic exegetical material in his commentaries on biblical books. A previous scholar suggested instances in the book of Proverbs where Jerome's translation had been influenced by rabbinic thinking. Since then, it seems, little work has been done in this area. The thesis argues that Jerome distinguished between Jewish philological expertise and Jewish exegetical expertise, and that while he was willing to utilise the former in its various guises to discover the natural sense of the Hebrew text, he was less willing to allow the latter to influence his translations. Jerome's use of Jewish sources (including Hexaplaric

Greek versions) as aids to translation is irrefutable, but it does not make the *IH* “Jewish.” A conscious reflection of Jewish exegetical traditions in the *IH* would be far more significant. The thesis demonstrates however that there are very few readings in the *IH* that appear to be directly dependent on such traditions.

The most productive part of the thesis has been the investigation of the ways in which Jerome’s Christian beliefs impacted his translation of the Psalter from the Hebrew. For a range of predominantly pragmatic reasons the Christian church had adopted as its own the Greek version of the Old Testament, the Septuagint. By Jerome’s day it had gained a status in Christian theology that placed it far above a mere “translation.” Rather it was considered to be divinely inspired in its own right and, as such, to represent God’s specific revelation to the Gentiles.

Jerome’s rejection of the LXX in favour of the Hebrew as the basis of his new translation brought him into direct opposition with this viewpoint. Indeed Jerome appeared to be rejecting the scriptural basis of Greek and Latin Christianity. The question that the thesis asked and sought to answer therefore was whether or not Jerome sought to make his new translation from Hebrew appear more “Christian” so that it would appeal to those who had formerly held to the inspiration of the LXX. Jerome was in a difficult position. Much of his justification of his new version to Christians depended on his claims that references to Christ were obscured in previous Greek and Latin versions: his new version might reasonably be expected to have removed these obscurities. Yet in order for his new version to be useful as an apologetic tool in disputes with the Jews he had to follow the Hebrew closely,

propagating no more specificity in his messianic references than the Hebrew allowed.

The thesis deals with these issues in three specific areas.

First, one of Jerome's principal arguments for a return to the Hebrew text as the basis for Latin Old Testament translations was that it rather than the LXX was the source of Christ's and the Apostles' Old Testament quotations. In the *Preface to the Gospels*, Jerome argues, but does not explain what he means by, "*sit illa vera interpretatio, quam Apostoli probaverunt.*" The thesis investigates his apparent preference for apostolic rather than Old Testament textual authority by examining in parallel those verses from the Psalter that are quoted in the Gospels. The results demonstrate that in most cases the New Testament appears to follow neither the Hebrew nor the LXX, and consequently suggest that Jerome made no attempt to follow New Testament textual authority when he subsequently translated the Psalter from the Hebrew, even when this could have been achieved by judicious use of synonyms. Despite thereby undermining his argument for a return to the Hebrew text, Jerome preferred to follow the Hebrew text closely when translating the Psalter, and the Greek New Testament text closely when translating the Gospels.

Second, Jerome argued that the translators of the Old Greek version "hid" references to Jesus Christ, whether deliberately (an extraordinary claim!) or simply by virtue of the fact that, working before Christ, they could not know what Jerome believed to be the true Christian significance of the Old Testament. Jerome therefore argued that a return to the Hebrew text was necessary for the true Christian significance of the Old Testament to be revealed and that he, a Christian born of Christian parents, was best placed to reveal it. In order to test the effect of this argument on his translation, the *IH*

Psalter was examined in parallel with the *ILXX*, and both of them in parallel with the Hebrew and *LXX* respectively, in order to discover whether the *IH* is in fact more “Christian” than the *ILXX* – as defined by Jerome: particular attention was paid to Jerome’s exegetical material on the Psalter, partly to discover the coincidence of Christological exegeses with Christological translations in the *IH*, and partly to ensure that any particular translation was not assigned a greater (or lesser) Christological significance than Jerome himself assigned to it. The results of the investigation suggest that at all times Jerome paid the greatest respect to the veridical authority of the Hebrew text. While he was willing to exploit linguistic “space” to demonstrate Christian significance in the Hebrew scriptures, he rarely provided a reading that was not a reasonable translation of the Hebrew. Occasionally this meant that he could propagate a Christological translation in the *IH* that was not in the *ILXX*, and at other times it meant abandoning a Christological translation from the *IH* that he had already used in the *ILXX*.

Third, the thesis examines Jerome’s use of several words that by the fourth century had gained a particularly Christian significance. It demonstrates in each case that he understood the natural sense of the particular Hebrew word and that he could have translated the same Hebrew word by a Latin word that was not so theologically significant – and indeed did so on other occasions. Most of these words could be justified as reasonable translations of the Hebrew word in question, but their deliberate use in preference to less theologically significant alternatives suggests that Jerome deliberately in this way introduced a specifically Christian nuance into his translation of the Psalter.

The Conclusion seeks to draw together the evidence from the investigations of all three of classical, Jewish and Christian influences on the *IH* Psalter. It argues that the issues can be focussed on and find their resolution in Jerome's conception of the nature and function of the Hebrew text. By imputing to Jerome a belief in the divine inspiration of the Hebrew text, and a belief that the Hebrew text properly understood and properly translated reveals Jesus Christ, the character of the *IH* Psalter can best be explained. It seems that Jerome was most willing to utilise Classical and Jewish expertise when this enabled him to demonstrate Christological significance in the Hebrew text, or to demonstrate the divinity and so high literary quality of that text. Similarly, a belief in the divine inspiration of the Hebrew text meant that Jerome was generally willing to propagate only as much specificity in his Christological references as that text allowed. Jerome's translations placed the veridical authority of the Hebrew text above that of Christian exegesis, with the result that while his translations often exploited available linguistic space, they rarely went beyond what *hebraica veritas* could reasonably signify.

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Abbreviations

Note: Full details of all these texts and reference works will be found in the relevant sections of the Bibliography.

| | |
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| BDB | The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon |
| BHS | Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia |
| CCSL | <i>Corpus Christianorum Series Latina</i> |
| CSEL | <i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> |
| ESV | English Standard Version |
| GNT | Greek New Testament |
| <i>IH</i> | <i>Iuxta Hebraeos</i> , the translations made by Jerome from the Hebrew text available to him |
| <i>ILXX</i> | <i>Iuxta Septuaginta</i> , the translations made by Jerome from the Hexaplaric Septuagint, in the case of the Psalms, sometimes referred to as the “Gallican Psalter” |
| KJV | King James Version |
| L&S | A Latin Dictionary, ed. C.T. Lewis and C. Short |
| Lampe | A Patristic Greek Lexicon, ed. G.W.H. Lampe |
| Lidd-Scott | A Greek-English Lexicon, ed. H.G. Liddell and R. Scott |
| LXX | Hexaplaric Septuagint |
| MT | Massoretic Text |
| NIV | New International Version |
| OG | Old Greek Version(s) |

| | |
|------------|---|
| <i>PL</i> | <i>Patrologia Latina</i> |
| <i>QHG</i> | <i>Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim</i> |
| TDNT | Theological Dictionary of the New Testament |
| TDOT | Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament |
| TWOT | Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament |
| VNT | Vulgate New Testament |

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Finally to my parents, who loved me enough to give me the greatest gift by bringing me up to love the God of the Bible and his Messiah, who unfailingly encourage my endeavours at considerable cost, and who taught me the basis of true wisdom and knowledge, Thank you. I can do no better than to make your priorities in life my own.

Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam

קריעו ליהוה כל־הארץ
עבדו את־יהוה בשמחה באו לפניו ברננה
דעו כי־יהוה הוא אלהים הוא עשנו ולא אנחנו עמו וצאן מרעיתו
באו שעבדו בתורה מצלתיו בתהלה הודו־לו ברכו שמו
כי־טוב יהוה לעולם חסדו ועד־דר ודר אמונתו

(Psalm 100 MT)

Iubilate Domino omnis terra servite Domino in laetitia
ingredimini coram eo in laude
scitote quoniam Dominus ipse est Deus
ipse fecit nos et ipsius sumus populus eius et grex pascuae eius
ingredimini portas eius in gratiarum actione
atria eius in laude
confitemini ei benedicite nomini eius
quia bonus Dominus
in sempiternum misericordia eius
et usque ad generationem et generationem fides eius.

(Psalm 99 IH)

Nulla altitudo te altior est, nullum profundum te profundius

Oriens et occidentis in tua continentur manu.

(Jerome, on Psalm 138.8 *IH*, *CCSL* 72, p. 242)

Chapter 1

Introduction

“Translations (like wives) are seldom strictly faithful if they are in the least attractive.”¹

Roy Campbell’s tongue was, we assume, firmly in his cheek when he wrote these words, as is ours when we quote them, but given Jerome’s infamous misogyny they could just as easily have come from his pen, or stylus – or could they? Jerome’s verdict against the affected speech of fourth century Roman women, *Adeo illis adulterium etiam linguae placet*,² “so much does adultery even of the tongue please them,”³ suggests that he too could associate language and marital infidelity.⁴ Yet it seems that, whatever the moral deficiencies of affected speech against which he railed in his letter to Eustochium, Jerome perceived the process of translation to be very different. Indeed it seems that a fundamental principle underlying Jerome’s translations of the Old Testament from the Hebrew was a belief that his new Latin translations could be both faithful to the original language and attractive to a broad spectrum of readers.

¹ Campbell, R., “Rimbaud – And Two Homely Muses,” in *The Poetry Review*, Vol. 40, No. 3, (June-July 1949), p. 199.

² *Epistula (Ep.) 22.29, CSEL 54*, p. 188.

³ All translations are my own, unless indicated otherwise.

⁴ Adkin suggests that “Such an idea was naturally attractive to Jerome: it appealed to his taste for prurience as well as to his partiality for arresting language,” Adkin, N., *Jerome on Virginité, A Commentary on the Libellus de Virginitate Servanda (Letter 22)*, ARCA 42, (Cambridge: Francis Cairns, 2003), p. 279.

1.1 The *IH* in Old Testament Tradition

Before Jerome the Latin tradition of the Old Testament⁵ most likely comprised a collection of ad hoc translations of the Old Greek version(s).⁶ The result was a shambolic array of different Latin versions, with little consistency of quality or translation practice, and often in a questionable Latin style.⁷ During those first four centuries⁸ Christianity enjoyed a change in status from being a barely tolerated religion whose followers were occasionally persecuted to being the official religion of the Roman Empire and then, as a result of Theodosius' decrees of the 390s, the only religion officially tolerated in the Empire.⁹ The texts which formed the basis of

⁵ We will use this term interchangeably with the (arguably) more neutral "Hebrew scriptures" to reflect the fact that our investigation is concerned with a translation of the Psalter by a Christian, primarily for Christians, and within the officially Christian Roman Empire.

⁶ Debate abounds concerning the circumstances under which the Old Testament was first translated into Greek, and subsequent developments in the Greek Old Testament tradition until Origen's work in the early third century. Origen's work involved a comparison of the Greek and Hebrew traditions of the Old Testament and the indication of differences between them by the use of asterisks and obeli in the Greek text, and was a turning point in the development of a standardised Greek Old Testament text. In order to distinguish the pre-Origenic text from the post-Origenic text we will refer to the former as the "Old Greek" (= OG), and the latter as the "Hexaplaric Septuagint" or simply "Septuagint" (= LXX). We shall also follow the standard practice of referring to the whole of the Greek Old Testament as the "OG/LXX," rather than limiting this to the Pentateuch as is strictly correct. See, for example, Fernández Marcos, N., *The Septuagint in Context, Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible*, translated by W.G.E. Watson, (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 53-65; Tov, E., "The Septuagint," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, edd. M.J. Mulder and H. Sysling, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1988), pp. 161-188; Jobes, K.H., and Silva, M., *Invitation to the Septuagint*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, and Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000), pp. 29-37.

⁷ Cf. Norton, D., *A History of the Bible as Literature, Volume One, From Antiquity to 1700*, (Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 30-31, and pp. 36-37 for Jerome's awareness of this; Kedar, B., "The Latin Translations," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, edd. M.J. Mulder and H. Sysling, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1988), pp. 299-338, here pp. 299-313; Kamesar notes Jerome's characterisation of the Old Latin as *turbulentus rivus* in the *Praef in Ps (ILXX)*, Kamesar, A., *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim*, Oxford Classical Monographs Series, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 45.

⁸ All dates should be taken as AD (rather than CE, in keeping with the Christian setting of our subject matter), unless specified otherwise.

⁹ Cf. Millar, F., "Christian Emperors, Christian Church and the Jews of the Diaspora in the Greek East, CE 379-450," in *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 55.1, (2004), pp. 1-2: "it is entirely reasonable to see [the accession of Theodosius I in 379] as the decisive moment in the adhesion of the Roman State to Christianity, in its commitment to the step-by-step suppression of paganism, and also in the proclamation by the Emperor, a couple of years later, of the State's support for what we can label as

Christianity similarly shifted from being the obscure scriptures of a breakaway Jewish sect to being the foundation of the state religion. It is no coincidence that Pope Damasus' commission to Jerome to revise the Old Latin to provide a uniform text came in around 383-384, only a few years before Theodosius' reforms.¹⁰

Having revised the Old Latin version of the Psalter at Rome in 384,¹¹ Jerome went a step further and made a new translation, or perhaps heavy revision,¹² directly from the Hexaplaric Septuagint, known as the *Iuxta Septuaginta* (= *ILXX*) or as the "Gallican" Psalter, in around 386.¹³ This is the Psalter that was eventually included in the Vulgate.¹⁴ Despite Jerome's fears¹⁵ these revisions seem to have excited little opposition. However serious controversy arose when Jerome's thinking led him to

either 'orthodox' or 'catholic' belief, in essence subscription to the doctrine of the consubstantiality of the Trinity." Also Brown, P., *The Rise of Western Christendom, Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200-1000*, Second Edition, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 60-64, 72-80.

¹⁰ Cf. Kelly, J.N.D., *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies*, (London: Duckworth, 1975), pp. 86-87.

¹¹ This version is lost. Its traditional identification with the "Roman Psalter" has been dismissed, though extant copies of the latter are probably close to the text on which Jerome worked. See *Le Psautier Romain et les Autres Anciens Psautiers Latins*, Édition Critique par Dom Robert Weber, moine bénédictin de l'Abbaye Pontificale de Saint-Jérôme in Urbe, Collectanea Biblica Latina, Vol. X, (Rome: Abbaye Saint-Jérôme, and Città del Vaticano: Libreria Vaticana, 1953), p. IX; Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 89.

¹² For this view, see in particular: McCarthy, D.P., "Saint Jerome's Translation of the Psalms: The Question of Rabbinic Tradition," in "Open Thou Mine Eyes..." *Essays on Aggadah and Judaica Presented to Rabbi William G. Braude on His Eightieth Birthday and Dedicated to His Memory*, Ed. H.J. Blumberg et al., (Hoboken, New Jersey: KTAV Publishing House Inc.), 1992, pp. 155-191; also Weber, *Le Psautier Romain*, p. VIII: "... Psautier dit «Gallican» de S. Jérôme, qui n'est qu'une révision, sur le texte grec des Hexaples, d'une ancienne version latine."

¹³ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 158; *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. R. Weber, R. Gryson, et al., Fourth Edition, (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994) (= Weber/Gryson), pp. XXIX-XXX.

¹⁴ The general scholarly consensus is that the Vulgate Old Testament, apart from the Psalter, comprises Jerome's translations from Hebrew to Latin, so that "IH" and "Vulgate" may be used interchangeably. In the case of the Psalter, however, since Alcuin's liturgical reforms the version included in the Vulgate has been Jerome's earlier *ILXX* Psalter, the text of which was that commonly in use in Gaul in Alcuin's day. In order to avoid confusion, therefore, we will avoid using the term "Vulgate," and use "IH" or "ILXX" instead. Using the term "IH" also serves as a constant reminder of the Hebrew provenance that Jerome claimed for his new translations, and the fact that, if he is to be trusted, the *IH* comprised a new and distinct *rivulus* in the Latin Old Testament tradition. See Weber/Gryson, Preface to the First Edition, p. XXX. Note also that when Jerome himself speaks of the *vulgata*, he is referring to what we would call the Old Latin, that is, Latin versions made from the Greek tradition of the Old Testament.

¹⁵ *Praefatio in Evangelia*, PL 29.525-526, Weber/Gryson p. 1515.

believe that only the original Hebrew would suffice as a basis for a new Latin version of the Old Testament,¹⁶ a project he undertook in around 392.¹⁷

Jerome's belief that the only adequate Latin Old Testament for Christians was one translated from the Hebrew was fundamental to his *Iuxta Hebraeos* (= *IH*) project, but also the source of his greatest difficulty, namely that of making his new translation acceptable to a sceptical and conservative Christian audience. However, while his Christian contemporaries were without doubt his primary intended audience, it seems that Jerome had two further groups of people in mind. Jerome believed that translations of the Old Testament books from Hebrew to Latin could be both attractive in Latin and faithful to the original Hebrew.¹⁸ By demonstrating this he hoped to answer both the complaints of educated Latin speakers who accused the Latin Bible of

¹⁶ We will discuss this in depth in Chapter 5.1. C.f. in particular, Kamin, S., "The Theological Significance of the *Hebraica Veritas* in Jerome's Thought," in "*Sha'arei Talmon*" *Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon*, Ed. Fishbane, M., Tov, E., and Fields, W.W., (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1992), pp. 243-253.

¹⁷ Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 161-162; Weber/Gryson, pp. XXIX-XXX.

¹⁸ We will discuss this in Chapter 3. Cf. Rebenich: "The new Latin version of the Bible was an attempt at providing an educated Christian audience with a scholarly and accurate translation that also pleased the literary taste of an audience that was familiar with classical literature." Rebenich, S., *Jerome, The Early Church Fathers*, Series Editor C. Harrison, (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 54. For Jerome's claim that the Hebrew bible has literary merit, see Norton, *A History*, p. 37: "Jerome's acute awareness of deficiencies in the Old Latin Bible is balanced by his idea of the originals: he believes them perfect in content and style. Though he never tries to demonstrate rhetoric in them, he occasionally turns to another aspect of literature, poetic form, to bolster his idea of literary quality." See also Kamesar, *Jerome*, pp. 46-49; cf. Kinzig's description of the "attempt of some circles among the educated Christian elite at reconciling Christian theological ideas with pagan literary standards." Kinzig, W., "Jewish and 'Judaizing' Eschatologies in Jerome," in *Jewish Culture and Society under the Christian Roman Empire*, Ed. R. Kalmin and S. Schwartz, *Interdisciplinary Studies in Ancient Culture and Religion* 3, (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), pp. 409-429, here p. 424; also Pease, A.S., "The Attitude of Jerome towards Pagan Literature," in *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 50 (1919), pp. 150-167; Salvesen notes that "the literary style of its [the *IH*] Latin was evident, especially when compared with the Old Latin," though she does not say whether this was a primary motivation in his *IH* project. Salvesen, A., "A Convergence of the Ways? The Judaizing of Christian Scripture by Origen and Jerome," in A.H. Becker and A.Y. Reed, ed., *The Ways that Never Parted, Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), pp. 233-258, here p. 254.

literary barbarity, and those of the Jews who derided the inaccuracies in the versions of the Old Testament used by Christians.¹⁹

1.2 The *Vir Tricultus*

Jerome's enigmatic boast to Rufinus, "*ego ... Hebraeus, Graecus, Latinus, trilinguis,*"²⁰ has long excited scholarly debate concerning Jerome's linguistic abilities, and inspired the title of Denis Brown's book.²¹ The veracity of Jerome's claim to be *vir trilinguis* is important in our study too, and we will discuss it in Chapter 2, but we wish to go a step further. Jerome's capacity in three languages was mirrored in his exposure to three cultures that were interrelated with those languages. Jerome's classical education,²² his contact with Jewish scholars in Palestine,²³ and his own adopted Christian faith²⁴ had exposed him to these disparate yet interconnected cultures. The *vir trilinguis* was also the *vir tricultus*. This gave him a degree of personal empathy with the three groups of people whom he directly or indirectly aimed to satisfy by his new translation. Yet his troubled relationship with classical literature and his seemingly contradictory attitudes towards Jews and Jewish learning

¹⁹ Thus Augustine admits that the Jews considered Jerome's *IH* translations to be more accurate than the Old Greek/Septuagint versions: "*eius tam litteratum laborem ... Judaei fateantur esse veracem, Septuaginta vero interpretes in multis errasse contendunt,*" *De Civitate Dei* XVIII.43, *PL* 41.603, *CCSL* 48, p. 639; see also McKane, W., *Selected Christian Hebraists*, (Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 36; Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 160; for the Jews' derision of the accuracy of the Septuagint, see de Lange, N.R.M., *Origen and the Jews*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 50.

²⁰ *Apologia adversus Libros Rufini*, *PL* 23.461, = *Epistula Adversus Rufinum*, 6, *CCSL* 79, p. 79.

²¹ Brown, D., *Vir Trilinguis. A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome*, (Kampen, 1992).

²² We consider this in more detail in Chapter 3. For adequate synopses, see McKane, *Christian Hebraists*, pp. 31-32; Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 10-24.

²³ This is the subject of Chapter 4. See also, in particular, Bardy, G., "S. Jérôme et ses maîtres Hébreux," in *Revue Benedictine*, 46 (1934), pp. 145-164; Kamesar, *Jerome*, pp. 176-192; Kedar, "Latin Translations," pp. 313-318.

²⁴ Jerome was born to Christian parents: McKane suggests that Jerome became a Christian himself only after he had moved to Rome (McKane, *Christian Hebraists*, p. 31), while Kelly simply refers to a marked increase in Jerome's Christian zeal at that time (Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 22).

show that his interaction with these cultures or *Weltanschauungen* was not straightforward.

This thesis describes the process and results of our investigation into the ways in which Jerome's personal exposure to the classical pagan world, the Jewish world, and the Christian world influenced his translation of the Psalter *IH*. Moreover, whatever his personal beliefs and experiences Jerome was constantly aware of those at whom he aimed his translations. Therefore this investigation is also an assessment of the extent to which Jerome sought to make his translation of the Psalter *IH* more acceptable to those who shared his classical education, to Jews, or to Christians. The basic question we set out to answer is this: does Jerome's *IH* Psalter appear to be more "Christian" or "Jewish" or "Classical" than the Hebrew Psalter or did Jerome provide as "neutral" or "scientific" a translation as possible?

Our choice to answer these questions by reference to the Psalter should be explained. Jerome's *IH* translations generally became less literal and exhibited more stylistic freedom as the project progressed.²⁵ The Psalter's place among the first few books that were translated suggests that there might be more to discover in a book that Jerome translated later, such as Kings or Chronicles. However, quite apart from the innate value of assessing Jerome's early practice, there are three factors that favour an investigation of the Psalms. First, the Psalter has always been a liturgically important book in both Judaism and Christianity, and so is a good place to investigate the impact of Christian (or Jewish) exegesis on Jerome's translations.²⁶ Second the variety of

²⁵ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 162.

²⁶ For early Christian use of Psalms see, for example, Bradshaw, P.F., *Daily Prayer in the Early Church, A Study of the Origin and Early Development of the Divine Office*, Alcuin Club Collections No. 63, (London: SPCK, 1981); Lamb, J.A., *The Psalms in Christian Worship*, (London: The Faith

subject matter, language and emotion in the Psalter is unparalleled in other biblical texts, and so presents a wide range of opportunities for experimenting with different literary tropes and translation techniques.²⁷ Indeed Jerome (following Origen – though he does not admit it – who claims to be following a Jewish informant)²⁸ likens the Psalms to rooms in a house, each of which needs the correct key to open it: “*singuli psalmi quasi singula cellulae sunt, habentes proprie claves suas.*”²⁹ Third, Jerome’s fondness for and appreciation of Latin poetry, particularly that written by Virgil and Horace,³⁰ is well known, and so the Psalter is an ideal medium within which to test the mutual influence of Jerome’s classical literary sensibilities with his (claimed) literary appreciation of the Hebrew bible.

Press, 1962), pp. 18-45; Jungmann, J.A., *The Early Liturgy, To the Time of Gregory the Great*, tr. F.A. Brunner, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1960), pp. 167-169. For Jewish use of the Psalter contemporary with or prior to Jerome see, for example, Gunkel, H., *Introduction to the Psalms, The Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel*, completed by J Begrich, tr. J.D. Nogalski, (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1998), pp. 41-47; Weiser, A., *The Psalms, A Commentary*, (London: SCM, 1962), pp. 21-52; Seybold, K., *Introducing the Psalms*, tr. R.G. Dunphy, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), pp. 23-28, 99-103; Gerstenberger, E.S., “Singing a New Song: On Old Testament and Latin American Psalmody,” in *Word and World* 5/2 (Spring 1985), pp. 155-167.

²⁷ In a related context, Edwards suggests that “the variety in style [in Targum Psalms] is, at least in part, due to the Hebrew text itself. In this regard it should also be noted that there is a great variety in the language found in the Psalms.” Edwards, T.M., *The Old, the New, and the Rewritten: The Interpretation of the Biblical Psalms in the Targum of Psalms, in Relationship to other Exegetical Traditions, both Jewish and Christian*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Oxford, (2003), pp. 223-224. Edwards notes that Psalms in which the Hebrew is difficult are those that receive the most “midrashic” translations, while those with simpler Hebrew have more straightforward translations.

²⁸ See Origen, *Philocalia*, II.3 in Lewis, G., (translator), *The Philocalia of Origen, A Compilation of Selected Passages from Origen’s Works made by St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. Basil of Caesarea*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1911), pp. 31-32.

²⁹ *Tractatus S. Hieronymi Presbyteri in Librum Psalmorum*, CCSL 78, p. 3.

³⁰ In Jerome’s original writings, Virgil (in particular the *Aeneid*) and Horace are the classical poets most frequently cited, while Cicero heads the list of prose authors. See Brown Tkacz, C., “*Quid Facit Cum Psalterio Horatius?* Seeking Classical Allusions in the Vulgate,” in D. Kries, and C. Brown Tkacz, edd., *Nova Doctrina Vetusque: Essays on Early Christianity in Honor of Frederic W. Schlatter, S.J.*, American University Studies, Series VII, Theology and Religion, 0740-0446, Vol 207, (New York: Lang), 1999, pp. 93-104, here p. 95.

1.3 Translation Technique(s)

A considerable body of literature has accumulated concerning the various translation techniques that Jerome advocated for biblical and non-biblical translations, and his actual translation practice, which is often different. Most famously perhaps, Jerome suggests that he translates “sense for sense” rather than “word for word” (“*non verbum e verbo, sed sensum ... de sensu*”) except in the case of the scriptures, where “*et verborum ordo mysterium est.*”³¹ Most Hieronymian scholars have at some point tried their hand at understanding Jerome’s attitudes towards and practices of biblical translation. Schwarz, for example, sees an inconsistency between Jerome’s advocacy of word for word biblical translation and his failure to follow it, and explains this with reference to Jerome’s humanity.³² Brown argues that “Jerome believed that a word for word translation of the Bible was vital,” but admits that “As a translator, he was by no means arbitrary, although he was not altogether consistent.”³³ Kelly suggests that “he felt justified in preserving the characteristic elegance of Latin so long as he did not alter the sense.”³⁴ McKane notes that Jerome’s “translation from Hebrew into Latin is not wedded to a word for word equivalence with the Hebrew, nor to an undeviating preservation of the word-order of the Hebrew,” but also that “Jerome criticizes the excessively literal translation of Aquila.”³⁵

³¹ *Ep. 57.5, PL 22.571, CSEL 54, p. 508.* Brock discerns a “semi-apologetic note” here, “designed for Jerome’s more cultured critics, for whom the free style was the rule for rendering all literary works.” Brock, S.P., “The Phenomenon of Biblical Translation in Antiquity,” in S. Jellicoe, ed., *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretations*, (New York: KTAV, 1974), pp. 541-571, here p. 556.

³² Schwarz, W., *Principles and Problems of Biblical Translation, Some Reformation Controversies and their Background*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1955), p. 35.

³³ Brown, *Vir Trilinguis*, p. 108.

³⁴ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 162.

³⁵ McKane, *Christian Hebraists*, p. 37.

However Kedar's remark that Jerome "speaks of the need to translate according to the sense at a moment when he offers very literal renderings (*Epistulae* 57:5-10) ..." ³⁶ demonstrates the difficulty of assessing the significance of what Jerome says. He is probably correct in principle, but he is mistaken in thinking that this example at *Ep* 57 demonstrates that principle. At *Ep*. 57.5 Jerome is speaking about translation, and claims to translate the scriptures *non verbum e verbo, sed sensum ... de sensu*. At *Ep* 57.10, however, where Jerome argues that *non verba in Scripturis consideranda, sed sensum*, ³⁷ he is no longer speaking specifically about translation, but about exegesis, namely the way to reconcile opposing biblical accounts of the same events: in this case Stephen's account of Abraham's burial, as related in Acts, versus that recorded in Genesis. Jerome does not retract his earlier principle, he simply argues that slight contradiction between two accounts of an event does not render those accounts unintelligible. We will argue at various points in Chapters 4 and 5 that an awareness of Jerome's distinction between translation and exegesis is integral to understanding several of his apparently contradictory attitudes.

Perhaps the most interesting recent contribution is that of Norton, who assesses Jerome's arguments concerning translation practice in relation to classical models promoted by Cicero in particular, ³⁸ and suggests that the most powerful forces in determining the nature of Jerome's final translations were "the people's established sense of biblical Latin and ... his own sense of the text's divinity." ³⁹

³⁶ Kedar, "Latin Translations," pp. 323-324.

³⁷ *Ep*. 57.10, *PL* 22.577, *CSEL* 54, p. 522.

³⁸ Norton, *A History*, p. 33-37.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 34.

This thesis, concerned as it is with Jerome's *IH* translation of the Psalter, is integral to this ongoing debate, and we hope that it will shed further light on it. Jerome's translation practice is a theme that runs throughout the thesis: we will not devote a separate chapter to it, but will return to consider the issues again in the Conclusion.

1.4 Modern Literature

Within the large corpus of scholarship concerning Jerome relatively little has been done to assess the characteristics of his biblical translations. There is only one study that we are aware of that describes a tripartite investigation like that which we attempt here, namely Matthew Kraus' PhD thesis, *Jerome's Translation of the Book of Exodus Iuxta Hebraeos in relation to Classical, Christian, and Jewish traditions of Interpretation*.⁴⁰ Kraus successfully demonstrates the influence of all three of these interpretive traditions at various points. However, his study is set out in the form of a commentary rather than thematically, and it is consequently difficult to get a comprehensive sense of the overall picture.

Joachim Schaper's study on eschatological and messianic translations in the Greek Psalter is perhaps closest to ours in terms of the impact of theology on translation that he attempts to show.⁴¹ Schaper's work, which we will discuss in Chapter 5.3, is a significant antecedent for our own, and the difficulties he faced have been important in developing our own methodology in this current study.

⁴⁰ Kraus, M.A., *Jerome's Translation of the Book of Exodus Iuxta Hebraeos in Relation to Classical, Christian, and Jewish Traditions of Interpretation*, PhD Thesis, University of Michigan, 1996.

⁴¹ Schaper, J., *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 2. Reihe, Herausgegeben von Martin Hengel und Otfried Hofius, 76, (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995).

Colette Estin's study on the *IH* Psalter touches on various issues that we will discuss, and we will refer to her work throughout as appropriate.⁴² However, her study and ours set out with fundamentally different objectives – hers to trace the influence of previous versions of the Psalter on Jerome's *IH* version, and ours to trace the influence of the classical, Jewish and Christian worlds, mediated through Jerome, on his new version. While her study for the most part looks inwards and backwards (tracing textual influences from previous versions of the Psalter), we intend that ours will look outwards and forwards (tracing textual/exegetical influences from the world outside the textual tradition of the Psalter.) We hope, therefore, that our study will be complementary to hers.

There have been various shorter studies investigating Classical and Jewish influences on Jerome's *IH* translations and, surprisingly, rather fewer studies on Christian influences. Rather than attempt to discuss all of them here, it seems more productive to discuss each in turn in the respective chapters of this thesis.

1.5 The Scope and Structure of this Study

Our investigation covers the entire *IH* Psalter, and we discuss significant translations (whose identification we discuss in the next section) under thematic headings. This approach seems preferable to discussing a few Psalms in great detail partly because it offers a comprehensive picture of Jerome's practice through the whole book, but also

⁴² Estin, C., *Les Psautiers de Jérôme à la Lumière des Traductions Juives Antérieures*, Collectanea Biblica Latina XV, (Rome: San Girolamo, 1984).

because significant readings in the *IH* Psalter tend to be limited to single verses. If Jerome introduces an interpretive translation at one point in a Psalm he routinely does not follow that interpretive theme throughout the rest of the Psalm.

This approach undoubtedly runs the risk of appearing to atomise individual Psalms into series of unconnected verses. However, Jerome's standard practice of remarking apparently randomly on individual verses in the *Commentarioli*⁴³ leads to similar atomisation. It seems that rather than use the *Commentarioli* to reflect on themes and applications across whole Psalms or even sections of Psalms, Jerome would record whatever exegeses he discovered in Origen's work, or occurred to him personally, concerning individual verses. We believe that our approach therefore befits and reflects Jerome's own exegetical approach.

This thesis falls into four distinct sections. We begin in Chapter 2 with an assessment of Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew, simply because without it we would be hard pressed to assign interesting readings in the *IH* to Jerome's personal intervention. We proceed to discuss verses that demonstrate the impact on the *IH* Psalter of the classical world in Chapter 3, of the Jewish world in Chapter 4 and of the Christian world in Chapter 5. Chapter 5 is itself divided into four sub-chapters, each concerning a different aspect of Christian influence on the Psalter. In so doing we aim to provide a true impression of the relative influence that each of these three *Weltanschauungen* had on Jerome as he undertook his translation.

⁴³ We will discuss issues concerning the composition of the *Commentarioli* below.

1.6 Methodology

Details of our methodology varied from chapter to chapter, but the general principles were the same throughout. We began by reading the *IH* Psalter in parallel with the Massoretic Text (MT), and comparing it to Jerome's earlier translation of the Psalter *ILXX*. We looked for instances where the plain sense of the *IH* Psalter diverged from that of the MT, as well as instances where the *IH* and *ILXX* were very different, and were particularly interested in examples that seemed to demonstrate a "classical," "Jewish" or "Christian" nuance.

The problems of dealing with ancient texts of the Old Testament across three languages constitute something of a minefield. Our knowledge of these three ancient languages at various stages of development is necessarily limited as, consequently, is our ability accurately to evaluate an ancient translator's knowledge of them. The individual textual traditions of the various texts involved are complex, and the problems multiply when we try to compare them. These problems are familiar to any student of ancient languages, so we will simply make two points. First, despite their complexity, the textual traditions involved appear by all accounts to be as reliable as any we encounter⁴⁴ – and it seems that the Hebrew text from which Jerome made the *Iuxta Hebraeos* version corresponds closely to the modern MT in its consonantal form, and to a large extent in its reading tradition as well.⁴⁵ Second, the nature of the material we are dealing with, and the sort of changes we are interested in – often small

⁴⁴ See the Prefaces to the critical editions cited in the "Texts" section of the Introduction.

⁴⁵ Cf., for example, Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 322; Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 159-160; also Barr's comment that "Jerome's [transliteration] material can be interpreted in a sense which keeps it closer to the Masoretic structure of Hebrew than has recently been supposed." This implies similarity in both consonantal structure and vocalisation. Barr, J., "St Jerome and the Sounds of Hebrew," in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Volume 12, Number 1, (1965), pp. 1-36, here p. 34.

changes in nuance in individual verses – means that the evidence from any one verse on its own will inevitably be inconclusive. It could always be dismissed as a simple mistake or lapse of standard procedures. However, the cumulative effect of many such individual verses over the entire Psalter is impossible to dismiss. Repeated instances of a particular phenomenon make it less likely that any one instance is simply a mistake, and taken together they have the potential to give the *IH* Psalter a different feel to any of its predecessors.⁴⁶

Having noted readings that struck us as having a “classical,” “Jewish,” or “Christian” nuance, we sought to explain them by reference to an earlier textual tradition, whether Hebrew, Greek or Latin, and/or by reference to the classical, Jewish and Christian traditions that may have influenced Jerome. A particular difficulty was how to assess whether or not Jerome intended us to so see a nuance that we think we see in a particular verse of the *IH* Psalter.⁴⁷ Fortunately, with the *IH* Psalter in particular there are several ways to ensure that we are not reading more into the translation than he intended. First, Jerome’s exegetical material on the Psalter – which we will discuss presently – provides insight into his understanding of many individual verses, as well as general information on his theology and translation technique. Second, by reading the *IH* in parallel with the *ILXX*, and both of them in parallel with their respective

⁴⁶ In taking this approach we disagree with Cox’ criticism of Schaper’s work which, he claims, tries “to make a few trees into a forest.” Cox, C.E., “Schaper’s *Eschatology* Meets Kraus’s *Theology of the Psalms*,” in *The Old Greek Psalter, Studies in Honour of Albert Pietersma*, edd. R.J.V. Hiebert, C.E. Cox, P.J. Gentry, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series 332, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001,) pp. 289-311, here p. 302, cf. Schaper, *Eschatology*. We will discuss these issues further in Chapter 5.3, where we will argue that Cox misses the point of Schaper’s work.

⁴⁷ This difficulty of assessing the gap between the translators’ understanding of a particular translation and our own was perhaps the greatest that Schaper faced. The various checks that we discuss in this section are designed to narrow that gap as far as possible. Cf. Cox, “Schaper’s *Eschatology*,” p. 301; Salvesen, A.G., “*Eschatology in the Greek Psalter* (J. Schaper),” in *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, 47.2 (October 1996), pp. 580-583, esp. p. 581.

Vorlagen, and with such fragments of the Three⁴⁸ that survive, the degree of innovation in the *IH* can be easily assessed. Indeed the fact that both the *IH* and the *ILXX* Psalters were produced by Jerome suggests that he was aware of and deliberately intended the similarities and differences between them. Thirdly, we have assumed that a man of Jerome's intellectual calibre, working within his particular theological and social milieu, will have been sensitive to a translation that would give a particularly "classical," "Jewish," or "Christian" nuance to a particular verse, and will have taken more care over such translations. Finally, the *IH* Psalter is purportedly just that, "from the Hebrew." Therefore if Jerome has apparently carried over a "significant" reading from the *ILXX* (or another earlier version other than the Hebrew) into the *IH*, we have not dismissed it outright as less important, simply because he claimed in each case to be translating a different text.

Regarding Jerome's exegetical material on the Psalter, we began by considering his remarks in the *Commentarioli in Psalmos*, (otherwise known as the *Excerpta de Psalterio*), and which we will refer to as the *Commentarioli* or *Comm.*⁴⁹ By way of

⁴⁸ "The Three," and "the *recentiores*" are terms commonly used to refer to the translators known as Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion, whose versions appeared in the third, fourth and sixth columns respectively of Origen's Hexapla. We must note however that the provenance of Theodotionic column of the Hexapla is complex. The "kaige" school of translation was active before the time of Christ, and Theodotion (coming after Christ) aligned himself with it. It is difficult to tell at any point whether the text in the sixth column is the translation of Theodotion himself, or an earlier one made along similar principles.

⁴⁹ This was first published by Morin as *Anecdota Maredsolana. Vol. III, Pars I. Sancti Hieronymi Presbyteri qui deperditi hactenus putabantur Commentarioli in Psalmos. Edidit, commentario critico instruxit, prolegomena et indices adiecit D. Germanus Morin. Maredsoli, apud Editorem ... 1895*, but since then it has been republished as Volume 72 in the *CCSL* Series, and it is the latter edition that we have utilised. It seems that Jerome produced it in the period between the production of the *ILXX* Psalter and that of the *IH* Psalter, see Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 157-158. Indeed our own observation that the verse excerpts in the *Commentarioli* are generally close to the *ILXX*, while the *IH* is usually similar to what Jerome claims in the *Commentarioli* to be *in hebraeo* further confirms the dating of the *Commentarioli* to the period between these two versions. Kedar suggests a date of 392 for the *Commentarioli*, which would make it contemporary with the *IH* Psalter, see Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 319; for a recent study, see Lane, R.M., *Jerome's Excerpta de psalterio: a study in originality and methodology; together with a first translation into English*, M.Phil Thesis, University of St-Andrews, 2001; see also Pease, A.S., "Notes on St. Jerome's Tractates on the Psalms," in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 26/2 (1907), pp. 107-131, here pp. 109-112.

comparison we considered the shorter of Morin's two editions of Jerome's longer discourses, or *Tractates*, on various Psalms, the *Sancti Hieronymi Tractatum in Psalmos series Altera*, which we will refer to as the *Tractatus*, and which contains commentary on just fourteen Psalms.⁵⁰ We found sufficient exegetical material in these two works for our requirements in this thesis, so did not look further. As a result, the relationship between Jerome's translations of the Psalter and those of his *Tractates* published in Morin's longer edition, the *Tractatus S. Hieronymi Presbyteri in Librum Psalmorum*,⁵¹ remains to be investigated: this could be a doctoral project in itself. A passing observation that we made, and one that would be worthwhile to pursue, was that while the excerpts in the *Commentarioli* are usually closer to the *ILXX* than to the *IH*, those in the *Tractatus* are usually closer to the *IH*, suggesting that at least these fourteen discourses were composed after or at the same time as Jerome's work on the *IH*.

By Jerome's own admission the *Commentarioli* was based on Origen's commentary on the Psalms, the *Enchiridion*, which he had been reading with the unknown addressee of the *Commentarioli* who had asked him to provide more detail on points that Origen ignored or treated briefly.⁵² Jerome explains his procedure as follows:

“Non quo putem a me posse dici quae ille praeteriit: sed quod ea quae in tomis vel in omiliis ipse diseruit, vel ego digna arbitror lectione, in hunc angustum

⁵⁰ This was first published by Morin as *Anecdota Maredsolana. Vol III, Pars III. Sancti Hieronymi Presbyteri Tractatus sive Homiliae in Psalmos quattuordecim. Detexit, adiectisque commentariis criticis primus edidit D. Germanus Morin. Maredsoli ... 1903*. It has since been republished in *CCSL* Volume 78, pp. 353-446, and it is this edition that we have used. Pease suggests that Jerome composed the material in this collection in the late 380s or early 390s, Pease, “Notes,” pp. 130-131. Kelly suggests that the *Tractatus de Psalmo XV*, which is included in this collection, should be dated to the same period as the *Commentarioli*. See Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 157.

⁵¹ First published by Morin as *Anecdota Maredsolana. Vol III, Pars II. Sancti Hieronymi Presbyteri Tractatus sive Homiliae in Psalmos, in Marci evangelium, aliaque varia argumenta. Partem nuper detexit, partem adulteris mercibus exemit, auctori vindicavit, adiectisque commentariis criticis primus edidit D. Germanus Morin. Maredsoli ... 1897*, and now republished in *CCSL* Volume 78, pages 3-352.

⁵² *CCSL* 72, p. 177.

commentariolum referam.”⁵³ We have no such statement from Jerome about his *Tractates*, but Pease’s suggestion that they were sermons composed for oral delivery to monks within Jerome’s monastery seems plausible.⁵⁴ There is debate over the degree of plagiarism versus original thought in the *Commentarioli* in particular. Pease approves Morin’s collection from the *Commentarioli* and his first edition of the *Tractates* of “abundant and convincing instances of similarity of thought and expression to other passages in the undisputed works of Jerome.”⁵⁵ Nautin, however, accuses Jerome of plagiarism: “Je ne doute pas qu’il ait donné ici et là des interprétations ou remarques personnelles ... mais les constatations suivantes le trahissent et montrent que sa source essentielle est bel et bien les *Excerpta in psalterium* d’Origène.”⁵⁶ Kelly suggests that “Origen was ... his exclusive source, and he did not hesitate to incorporate his ‘dubious’ opinions without hint of criticism.”⁵⁷ Simonetti, too, suggests that “Jerome’s first serious contact with Scripture was through the works of Origen, and his earliest commentaries ... are little more than paraphrases of Origen...”⁵⁸ In his recent discussion of the *Commentarioli*, Lane suggests per contra, that while Jerome undoubtedly used Origen’s *Enchiridion* and other works as his primary sources, he added his own thinking, and drew on many

⁵³ *CCSL* 72, p. 178.

⁵⁴ Pease, “Notes,” pp. 112-113. Jerome took up residence in Bethlehem in autumn 386, making the *Tractatus* – by this reckoning – slightly earlier than if not contemporary with the *Commentarioli* and his work on the Psalter. See Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 141. By contrast, our observations regarding the text form used in each suggest a terminus a quo for the *Tractatus* after the composition of the *Commentarioli*.

⁵⁵ Pease, “Notes,” p. 108.

⁵⁶ Nautin, P., *Origène, Sa vie et son oeuvre*, Christianisme Antique, Bibliothèque de recherches dirigée par P. Nautin, I, (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977), p. 283.

⁵⁷ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 157.

⁵⁸ Simonetti, M., *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church, An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*, tr. J.A. Hughes, ed., A. Bergquist, M. Bockmuehl, and W. Horbury, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), p. 99.

other sources including Clement and (indirectly) Philo.⁵⁹ We agree with Lane, and will add Pliny to that list of sources in due course.

Regarding the edition of the *Tractatus* that we used, Pease suggests dividing the Tractates into two groups, on stylistic grounds. He wishes to group those on Psalms 10 and 15 together as showing “parallels in written work, rather than in the homilies,” and those on the other twelve Psalms together as more obviously homiletic.⁶⁰ In any case, he never doubts that both groups represent Jerome’s own work. Jay draws a reasonable distinction between being “inspired by,” and “copying” an author, and argues that “Toutefois restituer au prédicateur de Bethléem ... la pleine responsabilité de ces *Tractatus*, ce n’est pas les retirer totalement à Origène. Leur dépendance origénienne apparaît en effet assez étroite pour qu’on puisse espérer dégager grâce à eux quelques matériaux sur l’exégèse des psaumes de l’Alexandrin.”⁶¹

Given the complexity of the evidence in this debate, we have not been able to give it much attention here. Instead, we have taken Jerome at his word in the *Prologue* to the *Commentarioli*, where he states “*sed quod ea quae ... ego digna arbitror lectione, in hunc angustum commentariolum referam,*”⁶² and have taken his choice to propagate this material as evidence at least of his agreement with it. Whatever the ratio of original thought to plagiarism in Jerome’s translations and exegetical material, he nevertheless disseminated them bearing his name.

⁵⁹ Lane, *Excerpta*, pp. 6, 9, 28, 33.

⁶⁰ Pease, “Notes,” pp. 123-131.

⁶¹ Jay, P., “Jérôme à Bethléem: les *Tractatus in psalmos*,” in *Jérôme Entre l’Occident et l’Orient*, XVI^e centenaire du départ de saint Jérôme de Rome et son installation à Bethléem, Actes du Colloque de Chantilly (Septembre 1986) publiés par Yves-Marie Duval, (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1988), pp. 367-380, here p. 380.

⁶² *CCSL* 72, p. 178.

As a general principle we discussed only those verses that have different readings in the *IH* compared to one or more earlier versions, and for which we have exegetical remarks by Jerome concerning those variant readings, either in the *Commentarioli*, or the *Tractatus*. In doing so we hoped to minimise the possible difference between Jerome's assessment and our own assessment of the significance of his translation in the *IH*, so that we could be confident that we were assessing Jerome's personal and deliberate impact on the *IH* Psalter.⁶³ We should also point out that while Jerome, as the translator but not the author of the Psalter, cannot live up to Lewis' ideal of "the author-translator [who] ... can shift at will between conventional translation that has to violate the original and commentary that attempts to compensate for the inadequacy of the translation," the facts that he is both translator of the Psalter and author of a commentary on it, and that we have access to both these works, brings him and us as close to this ideal as ever possible.⁶⁴

1.7 Texts

We have cited the *IH* and *ILXX* Psalters according to the edition of Weber and Gryson: *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. R. Weber, R. Gryson, et al., Fourth Edition, (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994). This is the most recent critical edition of both Psalters, the texts in which are based on that of the

⁶³ M. Caloz employed a similar approach in his assessment of the text of the Gallican Psalter in light of Jerome's remarks in *Ep. 106 Ad Sunniam et Fretelam*: Caloz, M., *Étude sur la LXX Origénienne du Psautier, Les relations entre les leçons des Psaumes du Manuscrit Coislin 44, les Fragments des Hexaples et le texte du Psautier Gallican*, (Éditions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Göttingen, 1978), pp. 217-229. There is a useful English translation of *Ep. 106* at Metlen, M., "Letter of St. Jerome to the Gothic Clergymen Sunnia and Friþila Concerning Places in their Copy of the Psalter which had been Corrupted from the Septuagint," in *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 36, (1937), pp. 515-542.

⁶⁴ Lewis, P.E., "The Measure of Translation Effects," in J.F. Graham, ed., *Difference in Translation*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 31-62, here p. 38.

Benedictines of St Jerome's monastery in Rome for the *ILXX*, *Biblia Sacra iuxta latinam vulgatam versionem ad codicum fidem cura et studio monachorum Pont. Abbatiae S. Hieronymi in Urbe edita*, (Rome, 1926-1994), and that of H. de Sainte-Marie for the *IH*, *Sancti Hieronymi Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos*, *Collectanea Biblica Latina*, vol. XI, (Rome, 1954). The particular strength of the Weber/Gryson edition is that its physical layout, with the *ILXX* and *IH* printed on facing pages, greatly aids a comparison based study such as our own.

The Hebrew is cited from *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, K. Elliger and W. Rudolph (eds.), (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1977).

The Septuagint (LXX) is cited from *Septuaginta*, A. Rahlfs, (ed.), (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979).

Vulgate New Testament (VNT) passages are cited from the same Weber/Gryson edition as the *IH* and *ILXX* Psalters.

Greek New Testament passages (GNT) are cited from the *Greek New Testament*, Fourth Corrected Edition, (The United Bible Societies, 1993).

The *Commentarioli* is cited from Volume 72 of the *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, (Turnholti, Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1959), (CCSL 72).

The *Tractatus* is cited from Volume 78 of the *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, (Turnholti, Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1958), (CCSL 78).

We have cited Hexaplaric readings from Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt: sive veterum interpretum graecorum in totum Vetus Testamentum Fragmenta*, F. Field, Editor, (2 Volumes), (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1875), Repr. Georg Olms, Hildesheim, 1964. This edition does not take account of more recent discoveries of Hexaplaric fragments, but it is the only edition to cover the entire Psalter. We referred to Cardinal Mercati's edition of Hexaplaric fragments of the Psalter,⁶⁵ but none of the verses we wished to comment upon are included there.

Other works are cited either from *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, (CCSL), from *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (CSEL), or from the *Patrologia Latina* database (PL).

1.8 Old Latin

The textual tradition of the Latin bible as it existed prior to Jerome is immensely complicated, and it is for convenience rather than to convey an idea of homogeneity that it is known as the Old Latin, or *Vetus Latina* (VL). Our present task is to discuss the relevance of the VL Psalter(s) in our investigation of the *Iuxta Hebraeos* Psalter.

⁶⁵ *Psalterii Hexapli Reliquiae, cura et studio Iohannis Card. Mercati Bybliothecharii et Scriniarii S.R Ecclesiae Editae, Pars Prima, Codex Rescriptus Bybliothecae Ambrosianae O 39 SVP. Phototypice Expressus et Transcriptus, (in Bybliotheca Vaticana MCMLVIII), Codices ex Ecclesiasticis Italiae Bybliothehis Delecti Phototypice Expressi iussu Pii XII Pont. Max. Consilio et Studio Procuratorum Bybliothecae Vaticanae, Volumen VIII, Psalterii Hexapli Reliquiae.*

Jerome's Attitude to the VL

The low regard in which Jerome held the VL is well known, and has been adequately discussed by Kedar, Kamesar and Norton among others.⁶⁶ More positive assessments of the VL, such as Kedar's,⁶⁷ are interesting but are of little relevance in the context of our investigation. Given Jerome's passionately argued opposition to the VL it is most unlikely that he would have deliberately sought to introduce readings from the VL Psalter into either the *ILXX* or the *IH*. Against this however, we must note the "conservative pressure of the Old Latin," discussed by Norton among others. He argues that "Jerome could not forget his audience, and he knew the perils of changing the familiar."⁶⁸ It is difficult to assess the combined effect of these competing pressures on Jerome's actual practice in retaining or rejecting individual translations from previous versions.⁶⁹ Indeed many scholars have pointed out that Jerome cites verses apparently from the Old Latin Psalter at all periods in his career.⁷⁰ However, Jerome's decision to retain an older translation may just as easily be explained in terms of his approval of it as an accurate translation, as in terms of compromising his new translation by bowing to conservative pressure.

Teofilo Marazuela has shown that there is a far smaller textual correspondence (by a factor of nearly ten) between the *IH* Psalter and earlier Latin Psalters than between

⁶⁶ Kedar, "Latin Translations", p. 301; Kamesar, *Jerome*, pp. 41-49; Norton, *A History*, pp. 30-40.

⁶⁷ "... this Latin version ... achieved its goal, namely that of providing the Latin-speaking reader with a meticulously produced replica of what was considered to be the authentic Bible text." Kedar, "Latin Translations," pp. 307-308.

⁶⁸ Norton, *A History*, p. 35.

⁶⁹ McCarthy suggests a similar conservatism in another context: "Jerome's new translation of the Psalms, *Psalterium Iuxta Hebraeos*, is to even the most careless reader a reworking of the previous *Psalterium Iuxta Septuaginta*. This is a rendering primarily concerned with preserving some traditional phrases." McCarthy, "Jerome's Translation," p. 163.

⁷⁰ Jay, for example, notes that Jerome's excerpts in his *Commentary on Isaiah* "reflètent non pas sa traduction sur l'hébreu" and suggests that "dans de tels cas, ce qui se présente à son esprit, ce n'est donc pas d'ordinaire sa version sur l'hébreu, mais la version traditionnelle dont il était imprégné depuis longtemps." Jay, P., *L'Exégèse de S. Jérôme d'après son Commentaire sur Isaïe*, (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1985). pp. 92-3; also Jellicoe, S., *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 254.

any two of those earlier Latin Psalters. He concludes that this evidence sets the *IH* apart from the other Latin Psalters as a “version” in its own right whereas the others are simply “revisions” of (perhaps) a single original.⁷¹ Estin arrives at a similar conclusion: “Le *Gallican* est une *emendatio*, c’est-à-dire un pur travail de retouche ... Le *iuxta Hebraeos*, lui, est une *translatio*.”⁷²

Jerome’s knowledge of Hebrew

We will discuss this in depth in Chapter 2, and so will make just two points here. First, were our investigation of Jerome’s knowledge of Hebrew heavily dependent on the accuracy of his *IH* translations, the possibility that they were in fact copied from a previous version would seriously undermine our efforts. As it is, the *IH* translations have little bearing on our assessment of Jerome’s knowledge of Hebrew, so that there is correspondingly little need to investigate similarities between the *IH* and the *VL*. Second, the positive assessment of Jerome’s knowledge of Hebrew at which we arrive in Chapter 2 means that we may proceed on the assumption that correspondence between readings in the *IH* and previous version(s) (if not coincidental) suggests that Jerome considered that particular translation to be accurate.

Our Access to the VL

The only complete edition of the *VL* to date is that of Pierre Sabatier: *Bibliorum Sacrorum Latinae Versiones Antiquae, seu vetus Italica, et caeterae quaecunque in codicibus mss. & antiquorum libris reperiri potuerunt: quae cum Vulgata Latina, & cum textu Graeco comparantur. Accedunt praefationes, observationes, ac notae,*

⁷¹ Marazuela, T.A., *La Vetus Latina Hispana, V, El Salterio, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas*, (3 Volumes), Madrid 1962; here v. 1, pp. 26-30.

⁷² Estin, C., “Les traductions du Psautier,” in *Le Monde Latin Antique et la Bible*, ed. J. Fontaine, C. Pietri, Bible de Tous les Temps, (Paris: Éditions Beauchesne), 1985, pp. 67-88, here p. 85. (Her emphases.)

indexque novus ad Vulgatam è regione editam, idemque locupletissimus. Opera & studio D. Petri Sabatier..., (Paris, 1751). This is now very outdated. Since 1949 the Vetus Latina-Institut in Beuron has slowly been publishing updated volumes of the VL, but there is as yet no sign of a VL Psalter. The best access we have to a VL Psalter is Weber's edition of the Roman Psalter.⁷³ Weber argues that there is good reason to favour the Roman Psalter above others partly because of "le grand nombre des manuscrits qui le contiennent," but primarily because "il paraît avoir conservé plus fidèlement que les autres le texte d'une version latine primitive dont ils sont tous tributaires."⁷⁴ He argues that Jerome was familiar with the text that he has published, in that many verses from the Psalter quoted in Jerome's corpus correspond to those in the Roman Psalter as we have it.⁷⁵ This is significant for us: if Weber is correct, this is the closest we may come to a VL Psalter that Jerome himself had access to. However, Weber's is the first critical edition of the Roman Psalter to date, and he makes no claim that it is "définitif," instead pointing ahead to the Beuron edition.⁷⁶

Marazuela's work on what he calls the *Vetus Latina Hispana* includes a Hexapla-like printing of six versions of the Psalter in parallel columns consisting, from left to right, the Gallican, Mozarabic (a medieval Spanish version), Roman, "Spanish," *Iuxta Hebraeos*, and LXX.⁷⁷ From our point of view his work is more significant for what it omits. He points to sixteen LXX based Latin Psalters, but is able to include only three of them in his parallel columns.⁷⁸ This simply highlights the fact that any attempt to

⁷³ *Le Psautier Romain et les Autres Anciens Psautiers Latins*, Édition Critique par Dom Robert Weber, moine bénédictin de l'Abbaye Pontificale de Saint-Jérôme in Urbe, Collectanea Biblica Latina, Vol. X, (Rome: Abbaye Saint-Jérôme, and Città del Vaticano: Libreria Vaticana, 1953).

⁷⁴ Weber, *Le Psautier Romain*, p. VIII.

⁷⁵ Weber, *Le Psautier Romain*, p. IX.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. XXII.

⁷⁷ Marazuela, *La Vetus Latina Hispana*, vv. 2-3.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, v. 1, p. 19.

trace specific readings in the *IH* to a basis in the *VL* will be hindered by the large number and varying completeness of *VL* manuscripts.

A more serious problem is that of “contamination” of one textual tradition with readings from another. Rebenich argues that “in practice, the text of the Vulgate quickly became corrupted with passages taken from the Old Latin Bible.”⁷⁹ Likewise de Saint-Marie discusses both “L’influence des Psautiers latins sur la tradition de He,” and “L’influence de He sur la tradition des Psautiers latins.”⁸⁰ His work highlights the complexity of any attempt to evaluate the source and significance of similar readings in different traditions. However, “contamination” between different traditions is most likely to involve a homogenising replacement of unusual or difficult readings. Our work is concerned with just such unusual or difficult readings. Their very existence in the *IH* is testament to a lack of “contamination,” in those verses at least.

The IH and ILXX as Exemplars

We will show that Jerome’s arguments for the superiority of the Hebrew text as the basis of a new translation were fundamental to his *IH* project. Whether or not Jerome ever did undertake a revision of the existing text of the *VL* Psalter,⁸¹ it is important that he felt it necessary to make a new translation/thorough revision on the basis of the Hexaplaric text of the Septuagint, as “corrected” by Origen, namely the *ILXX* Psalter. The *ILXX* thus constitutes his translation *par excellence* of a Latin Psalter on the basis of the Greek tradition: for Jerome, the *ILXX* is the ultimate exemplar (in terms of time and reliability) of the Greek-based Latin tradition of which the *VL* Psalter(s) were

⁷⁹ Rebenich, S., *Jerome*, p. 52.

⁸⁰ de Saint-Marie, *Sancti Hieronymi Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos*, pp. LXI-LXII.

⁸¹ Cf. Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 89.

earlier manifestations.⁸² The *IH* constitutes his translation *par excellence* of a Latin Psalter on the basis of the Hebrew tradition. Our comparison of the *IH* Psalter to the *ILXX* is therefore a direct comparison of Jerome's conception of the Psalter as derived from the Hebrew versus the Greek tradition, and has the added benefit that both were translated by Jerome.

A comparison of the *IH* to the *VL* would no doubt be worthwhile, but it does not need to precede a comparison of the *IH* to the *MT*, and will best wait until a critical edition of the *VL* Psalter is published. The specific nature of our investigation, and the methodology we employ, means that the *ILXX* can for the most part stand proxy for the Greek-based textual tradition of which the *VL* Psalter is a part.

1.9 Numbering Conventions

We have followed the numbering of the Weber/Gryson edition of the *Iuxta Hebraeos* Psalter, and use the form "Psalm x.y *IH*" as the standard form of reference to a particular verse. Where the verse in question is numbered differently in the *ILXX*, *LXX* or *MT*, we have made this clear as appropriate. However, none of the exegetical resources we refer to were based on the *IH* Psalter: the *Commentarioli* seems to have been based largely on the *ILXX*, and rabbinic sources number the Psalms according to the Hebrew tradition. In order therefore to avoid the confusion of referring to the same verse by different numbering conventions within the same argument, we have used

⁸² Thus Jerome's comment to Sunnia and Fretela in *Ep.* 106.2: "*ea [septuaginta] autem, quae habetur in ἑξαπλοῖς et quam nos vertimus, ipsa est, quae in eruditorum libris incorrupta et immaculata septuaginta interpretum translatio reservatur. Quicquid ergo ab hac discrepat, nulli dubium est, quin ita et ab Hebraeorum auctoritate discordet.*" *CSEL* 55, p. 249.

the *IH* numbering convention throughout. Thus by stating, for example, that “Jerome/
the Targum/ Midrash Tehillim comments on Psalm x.y *IH* as follows ...” we are
simply identifying the verse on which they comment, and not (quite obviously)
suggesting that they were commenting on the *IH* version of that verse.

Chapter 2

The *Vir Bilinguis*? A Review of the Depth and the Development of Jerome's

Knowledge of Hebrew.

“Like others reputed to be great linguists, [Jerome] found it better to acknowledge the existence of the reputation than to define precisely the extent to which it was deserved.”⁸³

2.1 The *Doctor Ecclesiae*

Few issues in Hieronymian scholarship are as difficult to assess or as wide ranging in implication as Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew. His competence in Latin was never questioned, and his competence in Greek is now generally accepted, but the debate over the extent of his knowledge of Hebrew is inconclusive. From his subjective viewpoint, even Jerome himself cannot have known the true extent of his knowledge. The surest estimation might have come from a discussion between Jerome's various Jewish teachers, but they left no written appraisal of their ambitious student.

Jerome's status as *doctor ecclesiae* has always rested in large part on his claim to be *vir trilinguis*. This claim was certainly unique in the Latin speaking world, and may only have been surpassed by Jerome's friend Epiphanius of Salamis, about whom he

⁸³ Barr, J., “St. Jerome's Appreciation of Hebrew,” in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 49 (1966-1967), pp. 281-302, here p. 287.

writes to Rufinus, “*et papa Eriphanius πεντάγλωσσος, quia quinque linguis ... loquitur.*”⁸⁴ Dummer emphasises the difficulty of assessing the veracity of Jerome’s claim from the evidence available to us: it does seem however that Epiphanius’ knowledge of Hebrew was not superior to Jerome’s, and his knowledge of Latin was certainly inferior.⁸⁵ Stefan Rebenich discusses the importance of Jerome’s claim for his own abilities in terms of his need to secure financial support from his Roman sponsors.⁸⁶ He is surely correct, but we must go further and insist that Jerome himself needed to hold his linguistic abilities in Greek and Hebrew in high regard. Given his apparent belief in the supreme authority of the Hebrew text, and his desire that the *IH* version be suitable for use in apologetic debate with the Jews,⁸⁷ it seems inconceivable that Jerome would have embarked upon the *IH* project if his claims were simply an elaborate masquerade, and he did not believe that he was capable of it. Wealthy Roman patronesses could be hoodwinked into believing Jerome to be more capable than he really was, but not potential Jewish antagonists.⁸⁸

2.2 Earlier Attempts to Assess Jerome’s Knowledge of Hebrew

Many scholars have attempted to assess Jerome’s knowledge of Hebrew, and have arrived at as many different conclusions. Despite his opposition to the *IH* project, it

⁸⁴ *Ap. adv. Ruf.*, 6, *CCSL* 79, p. 79. Cf. “Epiphanius of Salamis, the so-called ‘pentaglossic’ ... was said to know the Greek, the Syrian, the Hebrew, the Coptic, and in part also the Latin language,” Rebenich, *Jerome*, p. 56, n. 34.

⁸⁵ Dummer, J., “Die Sprachkenntnisse des Epiphanius,” in *Die Araber in der Alten Welt*, v. 5, no. 1, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1968), pp. 392-435, esp. pp. 434-435.

⁸⁶ Rebenich, *Jerome*, p. 56.

⁸⁷ As Jerome hints in his Preface to the Psalter *IH*: “*sed quod aliud sit in ecclesiis Christo credentium Psalmos legere, aliud Iudaeis singula verba calumniantibus respondere.*” *PL* 28.1126; Weber/Gryson, p. 769; and in the *Preface to Isaiah* where Jerome says that he translates *ne Iudaei de falsitate scripturarum ecclesiis ... diutius insultarent*,” *PL* 28.774, Weber/Gryson p. 1096; cf. also McKane, *Christian Hebraists*, pp. 36-37.

⁸⁸ At least not those Jerome describes as “*singula verba calumniantibus*”!

seems that Augustine had a favourable opinion of Jerome's abilities in Hebrew:

*"Hieronymus, homo doctissimus et omnium trium linguarum peritus, qui non ex Graeco, sed ex Hebraeo in Latinum eloquium easdem scripturas conuerterit, and he acknowledges the Jews' positive verdict on Jerome's translations, "Sed eius tam litteratum laborem quamuis Iudaei fateantur esse ueracem, septuaginta uero interpretes in multis errasse contendant."*⁸⁹ Sulpicius Severus likewise had a positive perception of Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew, as Rebenich points out.⁹⁰ However, neither knew Hebrew, so had most likely formed their opinion of Jerome's abilities via hearsay and no doubt, to some extent, from Jerome's own claims.

Rebenich draws attention to the positive appreciation of Jerome's abilities in Hebrew afforded him by certain Reformers and other Renaissance thinkers: "Jerome's Latin translation of the Bible ... won the outspoken appreciation of [Luther], who in this respect shared the Humanists', and especially Erasmus's positive assessment of Jerome's work."⁹¹ Burstein refers briefly to Erasmus and Victorius as he discusses "la légende créée sur la parfaite connaissance de l'hébreu que Jérôme aurait eue."

Regarding the latter, he points out that "Victorius ... préféra tout simplement insérer la correction d'Érasme dans son édition. Il trouva plus facile d'admettre une telle correction textuelle que de supposer une lacune dans les connaissances de Jérôme."⁹²

Modern scholars have come to a variety of conclusions. We have already mentioned that Nautin accuses Jerome of wholesale plagiarism of Origen in the *Commentarioli*,

⁸⁹ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XVIII.43, PL 41.603, CCSL 48, p. 639.

⁹⁰ Rebenich, *Jerome*, p. 56, n. 34.

⁹¹ Rebenich, S., "Jerome: The 'Vir Trilinguis' and the 'Hebraica Veritas,'" in *Vigiliae Christianae* 47 (1993), p. 50.

⁹² Burstein, E., 'La compétence de Jérôme en hébreu: explication de certaines erreurs,' in *Revue Augustinienne* 21 (1975), pp. 3-12, here p. 7.

with the inevitable implication that Jerome knew too little Hebrew to come to his own conclusions.⁹³ Nautin's accusations are serious, but have failed to convince many modern scholars.⁹⁴ Estin suggests that "Les connaissances de Jérôme en hébreu sont certainement supérieures à celles d'Origène, mais inférieures à celles qu'on lui a prêtées pendant des siècles."⁹⁵

More positive assessments include those of Kedar, who suggests that: "Against those who maintain that Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew has been overestimated, it must be stressed that he was, indeed, proficient in this language."⁹⁶ He points to the Vulgate itself and to Jerome's "innumerable remarks on Hebraic philology"⁹⁷ as evidence. He also suggests that "Jerome inadvertently demonstrates that he is able to find easily a Hebrew equivalent for a given Greek word whenever, in correcting the wording found in the LXX, he states what the Hebrew vocable, not found in the MT, should have been, were the LXX correct."⁹⁸ The factual basis of this claim has been successfully refuted by the likes of Burstein, whose work we will examine presently. Braverman takes Jerome's claim to have translated Tobit with the help of a Jew who dictated improvised Hebrew from the Aramaic of Tobit, with Jerome providing a simultaneous translation into Latin, as proof of "Jerome's ability of oral comprehension of the

⁹³ Nautin, *Origène*, p. 283.

⁹⁴ Cf. Rebenich, "Vir Trilinguis," p. 57: "It has long been recognized that Jerome was dependent on Origen as well as on other Greek scholars. That also implies that Jerome, in those cases where he said he has directly referred to Jewish traditions, might repeatedly have plagiarized his source. But does it necessarily follow that he had never used Rabbinic writings and established contact with Jewish scholars?" Rebenich is correct: it does not "necessarily follow ..." However, contra Rebenich, the uncertain dating of written Rabbinic material, and the consideration that Jerome's Jewish contacts probably spoke Greek, means that he could have gained access to Jewish traditions independently of Origen, but still know little Hebrew.

⁹⁵ Estin, "Les traductions," p. 83.

⁹⁶ Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 315.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 315.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 317.

Hebrew language.”⁹⁹ Kedar and Braverman almost certainly give too much literal credence to Jerome’s self-promoting claim, especially given the large number of readings that Jerome’s translation of Tobit shares with the Old Latin version.¹⁰⁰

More significantly, in his incisive assessment of various remarks made by Jerome in his commentaries and letters Eitan Burstein demonstrates Jerome’s ability to comment accurately on a Hebrew text that was in front of him, but shows that when he resorts to recalling Hebrew words from memory he often falls into error.¹⁰¹ His conclusion is worth quoting in full: “Néanmoins on peut, nous semble-t-il, établir pour Jérôme une distinction entre ce que nous proposons d’appeler compétence «active» et connaissance «passive». Jérôme, de toute évidence, était capable de lire et de reconnaître les formes hébraïques; il lisait l’Écriture avec une aisance et une célérité qui étonnaient ses contemporains. Mais les exemples que nous avons relevés obligent à ré-examiner sa compétence «active» et à se demander si l’illustre savant était capable de reconstituer couramment des formes qui ne figuraient pas dans le texte biblique qu’il avait sous les yeux.”¹⁰² This distinction between “active competence” and “passive acquaintance” is certainly a valid one to draw: students who can translate accurately from Hebrew to English cannot necessarily produce accurate English to Hebrew prose compositions. Burstein’s suggestion is useful for two reasons. Firstly, it suggests the possibility, or even the necessity, of categorising different types of

⁹⁹ Braverman, J., *Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel: A Study of Comparative Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the Hebrew Bible*, The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series, 7, (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America) 1978, p. 4; also Kedar, “Latin Translations,” p. 317.

¹⁰⁰ For knowledge of correspondences between Old Latin and Hieronymian versions of Tobit I am indebted to a paper given by Danuta Shanzer at the International Conference on Jerome of Stridon, at Cardiff University in July 2006. The published proceedings of this conference will be forthcoming.

¹⁰¹ “Compte tenu de ces difficultés [of searching for specific words within large scrolls without the help of a concordance], il préférerait recourir à sa mémoire, qui le trompait plus d’une fois.” Burstein, “La compétence,” p. 10.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, p. 12.

evidence for Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew. Secondly, and more importantly, it suggests the notion of different types and levels of knowledge which, while there is undoubtedly overlap between them, underlie different types and levels of ability, and so need to be investigated separately.

Most recently Stefan Rebenich has concluded that (contra Nautin in particular)

“Jerome had direct access to Rabbinic literature and was at least able to understand a Hebrew text. His translation of the Old Testament *iuxta hebraeos* and his conception of the *hebraica veritas* was indeed an outstanding and original achievement.”¹⁰³ And again “a close examination of the evidence makes it more than likely that he at least knew some Hebrew. I would conjecture that his Hebrew was at the same level as his Aramaic, which he could read and understand better than he could speak it.”¹⁰⁴

Both Burstein and Rebenich hint at different types of knowledge, but neither seeks to define those types more closely, or to evaluate their respective usefulness.¹⁰⁵ This is largely because they discuss Jerome's “knowledge of Hebrew” in an abstract and theoretical sense, treating their assessments as ends in themselves. Burstein's caveat is appropriate, and is adequate explanation for the equivocal conclusions at which both he and Rebenich arrive: “Dans une étude de ce genre, il serait aussi injuste que dangereux de porter des jugements hâtifs sur la compétence de Jérôme en hébreu. La compétence linguistique ne se mesure pas avec précision; et faire passer l'oeuvre

¹⁰³ Rebenich, “Vir Trilinguis,” p. 58. We question his statement about Jerome's “direct access to Rabbinic literature:” the Mishnah was published and (probably) written down by the 3rd Century, and Bereshit Rabbah by around the 4th Century, but other works were redacted later. Jerome would most likely have had only oral access to the traditions they preserve.

¹⁰⁴ Rebenich, *Jerome*, p. 56.

¹⁰⁵ Note the ambiguity in Rebenich's claim that “There is no denying that he knew Hebrew ... [But] how fluently he read or even spoke and wrote Hebrew requires further examination.” What, then, does he mean by “knew Hebrew”? Rebenich, “Vir Trilinguis,” p. 62.

hiéronymienne au crible des critères de la philologie moderne serait aussi absurde que vain.”¹⁰⁶ A new and more utilitarian approach, based not on the abstract question, “How well did Jerome know Hebrew?” but rather on the pragmatic question, “Did Jerome know Hebrew well enough to translate the Old Testament from Hebrew to Latin?” will almost certainly be more conclusive and more useful.

Our investigation will therefore attempt to answer this pragmatic question. We might divide the problem into three separate issues: first, what sort of “knowledge” are we talking about? Second, how much of that sort of knowledge would be sufficient? And third, how do we assess how much of that sort of knowledge Jerome had?

2.3 What sort of “knowledge”?

Our assessment of Jerome’s knowledge of Hebrew fits into a very specific context, namely that of investigating his *IH* translations. If we are to attribute developments in the *IH* over previous versions to Jerome’s personal influence, we must be able to assume that the text as it stands represents Jerome’s considered and deliberate translation of the Hebrew text. Only then can deviations from the Hebrew text, of whatever sort, be assigned significance with respect to Jerome. Therefore our assessment of Jerome’s knowledge of Hebrew will be concerned with evidence for or against his ability to translate a written Hebrew text into a written Latin text.

¹⁰⁶ Burstein, “La compétence,” p. 12.

The broad semantic range of the noun “knowledge” includes such disparate notions as recognition, acquaintance, clear and accurate understanding, and erudition. However, within our specific context the pertinent semantic range of “knowledge” is significantly narrowed.

Visual recognition of the letters of the Hebrew script, or of a few common words or names, is certainly inadequate, as is an ability to write the Hebrew script – even if with sufficient fluency as to be able to copy large volumes of Scripture. Evidence of Jerome copying Scriptures in Hebrew script may signal an attempt to learn the language, but is not proof of success.¹⁰⁷

A working acquaintance with Hebrew might be demonstrated by the ability correctly to verbalise and pronounce written Hebrew and, contingent on this, the ability to transliterate Hebrew words into Latin script. Given that Jerome worked with unpointed Hebrew manuscripts such an ability could demonstrate proficiency in grammar and vocabulary, which would in turn suggest a degree of comprehension.

A clear and accurate understanding of Hebrew on Jerome’s part might also be described as a “good working knowledge” backed up by occasional reference to his Jewish teachers in the absence of dictionaries and grammars. This level of knowledge would be sufficient in the narrow context that interests us, and if it could be demonstrated, we could finally lay to rest the debate over Jerome’s proficiency in translating the written language. This level of knowledge would of course ideally be

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Sutcliffe: “He began his study of the sacred language in Syria under a convert Jew, who seems to have owned scrolls of his own, and it is probably that Jerome wrote them out for himself both as a means of learning the difficult language and of beginning the collection of a Hebrew library.” Sutcliffe, E.F., “St Jerome’s Hebrew Manuscripts,” in *Biblica* 29 (1948), pp. 195-204, here p. 196.

demonstrated by a direct study of the accuracy of his *IH* translations themselves.

However, for several reasons that we will discuss in detail later, this level of knowledge is potentially the most difficult to demonstrate, and the method of investigating it, via the *IH* translations, is very problematic.

Erudition in the context of proficiency in a language includes but extends beyond the ability to produce accurate translations from that language into one's own language. It implies a sophisticated knowledge of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, beyond that of many or most speakers of that language, including those for whom it is their first language. It might include abilities to critically evaluate literary works in that language, to criticise other translations from that language, to suggest alternative or better uses of grammar or vocabulary, or to suggest and rank various possible readings of an obscure word or phrase. It might also include an ability to teach that language sufficiently well that one's pupils (assuming they are adequately talented) may attain at least a "clear and accurate understanding" of the language. We will discuss evidence that Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew was "erudite" according to some of these criteria.

These possible meanings of "knowledge of Hebrew" partially overlap and are not exhaustive, but they provide a useful framework within which to proceed because they suggest criteria that will have to be met if we are to say that Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew was sufficient in our context. They also allows us to define the sort of knowledge we will seek to demonstrate. Only the third and fourth imply a degree of knowledge that would be adequate for Jerome to have translated the Old Testament from Hebrew to Latin. The first is hardly worth investigating, but we will consider the

second, partly because so much importance has been placed on it in previous scholarship, and partly because, if correctly approached, it may yield useful information.

Whether or not Jerome's knowledge of the language ever included an ability to speak Hebrew is a moot, and mute, point, but is of little significance here: many modern scholars of ancient languages might struggle to sustain a conversation but would nevertheless consider themselves proficient in those languages. Conversely, some fluent speakers of a language are weak in the written language, especially at a literary level. Even direct evidence that Jerome could not speak Hebrew would not necessarily imply an inability to translate it in a written form.¹⁰⁸

2.4 How much knowledge?

If the process of qualifying "knowledge" is difficult, the process of quantifying "knowledge" is more difficult still. Burstein is quite correct: "La compétence linguistique ne se mesure pas avec précision."¹⁰⁹ However his suggestion that it is "aussi absurde que vain"¹¹⁰ to apply modern linguistic criteria to an assessment of Jerome's work is only partially correct. Formal linguistic principles may have been articulated relatively recently but if they are valid they will apply equally whether or not the authors or translators concerned were themselves aware of those principles. James Barr for one has profitably applied modern linguistic ideas to his investigation

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Rebenich, *Jerome*, p. 56.

¹⁰⁹ Burstein, "La compétence," p. 12.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 12.

of Jerome's transliterations of Hebrew words.¹¹¹ Nevertheless it is difficult to measure "knowledge" with precision, and this is all the more so when the evidence at our disposal is very limited. There is no possibility, for example, of scheduling a *viva voce* to probe his deeper understanding, or of testing his ability to translate from Latin to Hebrew. So we must work with what we have.

Laying aside difficulties for the moment we would want to see a "clear and accurate understanding" of Hebrew demonstrated primarily by substantially accurate translation of the Hebrew scriptures into Latin. This would include evidence that Jerome knew Hebrew idioms such as adjectival comparison. Debate over the relative merits of "word for word" versus "sense for sense" translation is relevant here: arguably the latter demonstrates a deeper appreciation of the language, but it can also be a screen for inaccuracies or gaps in a precise technical understanding. Fortunately for us, the Psalter was translated relatively early in Jerome's *IH* project,¹¹² and scholars have long detected a general shift from "word for word" to "sense for sense" translation as the project progressed.¹¹³ The Psalter's position near the beginning of this continuum means that we might, perhaps, be more able to judge Jerome's translation by direct comparison with the Hebrew text.¹¹⁴

Evidence for Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew being "erudite" will come primarily from his commentaries and letters, although a particularly neat translation might also

¹¹¹ Cf. Barr, "Sounds," pp. 281-302.

¹¹² Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 320.

¹¹³ Cf. for example Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 163: "he tended to take greater liberties with the books he translated latest, so that while he justly scorned any suggestion that his Samuel and Kings could be described as a paraphrase, his version of Judges (404/5) comes pretty close to being one." Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 326: "Psalter and Prophets exhibit adherence to the linguistic structure of the source language while Joshua and Judges, Ruth and Esther abound in free renderings."

¹¹⁴ We will discuss difficulties of assessing the relationship between Jerome's text(s) and our *textus receptus* in due course.

be useful. Jerome certainly criticises the translation of the LXX, and he makes numerous technical comments concerning difficult Hebrew words or phrases. If these comments can be shown to be both correct and generated by his own understanding, this will be good evidence for erudition, as will evidence that he successfully taught Hebrew to others, or accurately evaluated previous translations from Hebrew.

If we find these types of evidence through substantial sections of Jerome's work, suggesting both long association and increasing capability over time, this would be sufficient to sustain an argument for Jerome's ability to translate the Hebrew text of the Old Testament into Latin.

2.5 Methods for Assessing Jerome's Knowledge of Hebrew

We shall discuss the many different approaches that have been taken in an attempt to quantify Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew, pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of each. Finally we will suggest a novel approach to the issue. First we must identify and suggest ways to work through some of the major difficulties involved.

2.5.1 Problems to be Overcome

Jerome's Hebrew Teachers

We must always consider whose knowledge is reflected in the sources. Jerome's Hebrew teachers, whose advice he valued and whose services he procured at often

considerable expense,¹¹⁵ are always in the background. Unless he specifically acknowledges it, their input can usually not be traced. Jerome may have turned to them for help with obscure passages, but he may also have turned to them for help with translation. Our investigation of his knowledge of Hebrew would not be troubled by the former – no one could criticise Jerome for seeking expert help in difficult passages – but we need to be sure that the majority of the *IH* represents Jerome's own work without frequent recourse to his teachers.¹¹⁶

It is impossible to trace directly how much input Jerome's teachers had on his translation activities from day to day, simply because their work in this sphere would largely have been limited to correcting errors in Jerome's basic understanding.¹¹⁷

However the indirect evidence for Jerome translating substantially on his own is compelling. The sheer volume of work that he undertook in a relatively short space of time¹¹⁸ simply would not have been possible without his own considerable fluency in reading and understanding Hebrew. Then there are instances in the *IH* where Jerome apparently ignores previous translations and makes his own, which turns out to be wrong. These mistranslations are infrequent but their existence suggests that Jerome was indeed working alone, as it is difficult to see how a shadow translator in the form

¹¹⁵ Cf., for example, "*Memini me ob intellegentiam huius voluminis lyddeum quemdam praeceptorem qui apud Hebraeos primas habere putabatur, non parvis redemisse nummis, cuius doctrina an aliquid profecerim nescio, hoc unum scio non potuisse me interpretari nisi quod ante intellexeram,*" *Preface to Job* (Vulgate), *PL* 28.1081; Weber/Gryson p. 731.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Rebenich, "Vir Trilinguis," p. 63: "any examination of his linguistic competence has to face the problem that it is nearly impossible to reconstruct the scale of Jewish help Jerome enjoyed during his work with the Hebrew original."

¹¹⁷ It is most likely that Jerome's Jewish teachers would have spoken Greek but not Latin, so would not have been correcting his translations *per se*. Cf. "The 'Roman' Empire of Theodosius, therefore, functioned in constant dialogue, conducted in Greek, with its Greek-speaking subjects, who ... had no secure or reliable understanding of Latin, written or spoken." Millar, F., *A Greek Roman Empire, Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408-450)*, Sather Classical Lectures, Vol. 64, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2006), p. 23. It does seem, however, that some Jews (perhaps those in North Africa rather than Palestine) could speak Latin, and so were able to affirm the accuracy of Jerome's translations as Augustine admits in *De Civ. Dei*, XVIII.43.

¹¹⁸ He took around 15 years to produce the *IH*, from c390-405, alongside his other activities. Cf. Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 320.

of one of Jerome's teachers could have allowed such errors to pass unchecked.

Consider these examples, each of which involves a Hebrew *hapax legomenon*:

Psalm 57.9 IH:

The *IH* is very different to the *ILXX* but close to the Hebrew. *IH vermis*, "worm" is unattested in extant versions, suggesting independent translation by Jerome. While it is closer to the obscure Hebrew *hapax legomenos* שֶׁבִּלְוִי, "snail" than the LXX κηρός, "wax," the remaining inaccuracy suggests that Jerome in this instance had not referred to a Hebrew teacher for help.¹¹⁹ That said, Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion all have ἄκτρομα γυναικός for נִפְלְ אִשָּׁת, so we cannot prove independent translation of the Hebrew in Jerome's *abortivum mulieris*.

Psalm 76.5 IH:

We are interested in *IH suspectum*, "looking up," for שְׂמוֹרָה. The use of שְׂמוֹרָה here to mean "eyelid" is a *hapax legomenos*, so that Jerome's ignorance of its meaning may be excused, but we may reasonably assume that his Jewish teachers would have known the word and would have enlightened him had he asked their advice. The *IH* "I prevented the upward-looking of my eyes" and *ILXX* "they seized the guards of my eye" are clearly different suggesting that Jerome was making a fresh translation in the *IH*. Moreover, Jerome's *IH prohibeo*, "hold back, impede" is not a very good translation for אָחַז, "take hold of, seize." The fact that his translation is wrong on two counts makes it very likely that he was translating alone.

¹¹⁹ BDB p. 117 suggests that שֶׁבִּלְוִי is the Shaphel form of בָּלַל, with the basic meaning "causing moisture," hence "snail" due to the slimy trail left by these gasteropods. If correct, the slimy trail left by worms may provide justification for Jerome's translation.

Benjamin Kedar has similarly suggested that various mistakes made by Jerome affirm his general competence in Hebrew. Concerning Jerome's occasional confusion of \aleph with ν , he writes: "Jerome generally worked in great haste and obviously did not look up every Bible verse that he wanted to quote; or somebody unable to pronounce the gutturals read the passage to him whereupon Jerome dictated his Latin rendering. We submit therefore, that this kind of error, paradoxically, constitutes additional proof of Jerome's expertise."¹²⁰

Having said all this, it is vital to remember that the problem is not so much whether or not the knowledge and capabilities Jerome displays can be traced to other sources, but the extent to which he internalised that knowledge, and made it his own, so that he could apply it to new situations. Disagreement with his predecessors, or translations that cannot be traced directly to them (as in the examples above), will be among the signs that Jerome did indeed achieve a first hand working knowledge of Hebrew. When applied to his Biblical translations this might be manifested in readings which, so far as can be ascertained, have no prior existence, or in a judicious selection of one of a variety of possibilities.

The Hexapla

It is similarly difficult to quantify the effect of Jerome's use of Origen's Hexapla on an estimation of his linguistic abilities. If nothing else, the Hexapla was, rather like a modern interlinear bible, an ideal crib for an enthusiastic student of biblical languages. Like its modern counterpart it offered a reader who was inexperienced in Hebrew the opportunity to appear rather more competent than was actually the case.

¹²⁰ Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 318.

The extreme incompleteness of the extant portions of the Hexapla make it more difficult still to trace Jerome's reliance on it. Estin has described the problem succinctly: "D'une part, il nous est souvent impossible de discerner, parmi les remarques grammaticales de Jérôme, celles qui sont de première, de deuxième ou de troisième main, c'est-à-dire celles qu'il aurait faites personnellement sur l'hébreu, celles dont le contenu lui aurait été enseigné par tel ou tel maître hébreu, celles qu'il aurait puisées chez des commentateurs grecs."¹²¹ Estin is not entirely correct, however. Certainly when Jerome does not tell us whether the view he expresses is his own or another's it is often difficult for us to know whose it is – though Jerome's choice to propagate it suggests at least that he agreed with it. Nevertheless, occasionally when Jerome makes an observation in a commentary about what is written *in hebraeo* the potential source of that information can be traced in the Hexapla. The following examples will demonstrate this in practice.

Psalm 44.1 IH:

The *Commentarioli* provides clear evidence for Jerome using the Hexapla at this point: his assertion of what is written *in hebraeo* is written in Greek! – "*In finem pro his qui commutabuntur. Pro quo in hebraeo ita habet: ἐπινίκιον ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνδρῶν.*"¹²² If Jerome were reading the Hebrew for himself here there would be no conceivable benefit of using Greek to tell his Latin speaking readers what it said. As it is, he chooses to use Symmachus' translation, but does not acknowledge it. It is interesting that he does not attempt to cover his tracks by translating the Greek phrase into Latin: perhaps at this stage he felt that appeal to a Greek authority would carry greater credibility than his own suggestion.

¹²¹ Estin, *Les Psautiers*, p. 38.

¹²² *CCSL* 72, p. 209.

Psalm 115.2 IH:

Jerome's remark in the *Commentarioli* about what is written *in hebraeo* appears to be based on the non-extant second column of the Hexapla and not on the Hebrew text: "Ego dixi in excessu mentis meae: omnis homo mendax. Ubi nos legimus 'mendax,' ibi in hebraeo positum est KIVZHB: quod interpretatur Symmachus 'mendacium,' quinta vero editio 'deficit'."¹²³ Regarding *ILXX mendax* Jerome rather confusingly suggests that the Hebrew reads "KIVZHB." The MT, however, has כִּזְבִּי. The "V" could potentially be explained in terms of an alternative spelling of כִּזְבִּי as כִּזְבִּי, but the real giveaway is the "H" which must surely be mimicking an η or H, the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew *sere*.¹²⁴

More interestingly however, the *IH omnis homo mendacium*, "every man is a lie" is a reasonable translation of כָּל-הָאָדָם כִּזְבִּי, "every man [is] lying" even if it translates the participle כִּזְבִּי, "lying," as the noun *mendacium*, "lie, untruth." The reasoning in the *Commentarioli* is most significant. Jerome appears to reach his conclusion on the meaning of the Hebrew word "KIVZHB" or כִּזְבִּי entirely by reference to the Hexapla, but ascribes his reading to the wrong authority. Jerome's *mendacium* is closest to Aquila's διάψευσμα, and not Symmachus' διαψεύδεται. The *Commentarioli* therefore provides evidence of Jerome using the Hexapla to aid his translation and exegesis, but

¹²³ *CCSL* 72, p. 234.

¹²⁴ The apparatus of *CCSL* notes uncertainty in the tradition of this word. However the fact that the *textus receptus* records a more difficult reading than, say, *KIVZEB*, may be evidence against the work of a later editor, who would more likely have favoured an easier reading.

misreading – or mistransliterating – the second column, and misattributing the information that he discovers.¹²⁵

These examples bear out some of Estin's concerns by demonstrating that in each case Jerome's grammatical remarks in the *Commentarioli* concerning what is written in *hebraeo* appear to come directly from the Hexapla. However, only in the second example does the *IH* exactly follow a Hexaplaric reading. This variation in itself suggests a degree of intelligent selection by Jerome so that even if the resulting versions in the *IH* do bear similarities to Hexaplaric readings, Jerome is not simply engaged in uncomprehending plagiarism, a concept to which we will return.

McCarthy has attempted the most comprehensive survey to date of Jerome's use of hexaplaric material in the *IH* Psalter.¹²⁶ He limits his investigation to verses that are extant in the Mercati fragments of the Hexapla, because only these verses are preserved across the five non-Hebrew columns. Despite these fragments containing only 1,641 words,¹²⁷ a small fraction of the total in the Psalter, their distribution is probably sufficiently random to provide a representative picture. His basic methodology is to explain each word in the *IH* by reference to a previous version, whether the *ILXX* or a hexaplaric version, noting whether the *IH* word demonstrates the sole influence of a specific version, or the possible shared influence of two or more versions. His work looks promising at first, but is flawed at several points. First, as he acknowledges, "That Aquila knew the Hebrew word does not, of course,

¹²⁵ Assuming that Jerome's copy of the Hexapla agreed with ours at this point.

¹²⁶ McCarthy, "Jerome's Translation," pp. 155-191.

¹²⁷ By his count! It is unfortunate that he does not specify which words he was counting. McCarthy, "Jerome's Translation," p. 163.

preclude that Jerome also knew the Hebrew word.”¹²⁸ Nevertheless, his study seems to proceed on the premise that if correspondence can be demonstrated between the *IH* and a previous version, then it most likely counts as dependence, that is, in practice he discounts Jerome’s independent knowledge of Hebrew. Second, he acknowledges the debt of the *IH* to the *ILXX*,¹²⁹ but ignores the fact that because the *ILXX* is a translation of the *LXX*, the debt of the *IH* to the *ILXX* is effectively the debt of the *IH* to the *LXX*.¹³⁰ This being so, Jerome owes the greatest debt not to Aquila but to the *LXX*.¹³¹ Third his predilection for Aquila leads him to ascribe words that show a possible shared influence from Aquila and Symmachus to Aquila alone.¹³² He might be correct, but one gets the impression that he is simply finding what he wanted to find.

It is most damaging for McCarthy’s argument that he does not adduce negative examples (if he ever looked for them), that is, he does not demonstrate examples in which Aquila’s translation is wrong, but is followed by Jerome nonetheless. A coincidence of incorrect translations between Jerome and Aquila (or another Hexaplaric source) is a far more reliable way of demonstrating Jerome’s dependence than a coincidence of correct translations, where we must always allow the possibility of independent knowledge of Hebrew leading to independently correct translations.

¹²⁸ McCarthy, “Jerome’s Translation,” p. 171.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 163, for example.

¹³⁰ So his table on p. 172, showing the greatest influence of the *ILXX* (which is presumably what he means by “Latin”) but minimal influence of the *LXX* is fundamentally misleading.

¹³¹ He does not consider the possibility or the extent to which Jerome carried over Old Latin readings into the *ILXX*. However, given that the Old Latin was also based on the *LXX*, this oversight does not have much effect on his (or our) conclusions.

¹³² McCarthy, “Jerome’s Translation,” p. 176.

These problems aside, McCarthy's work does clearly demonstrate Jerome's critical and apparently wide ranging use of the Hexapla as he translated the *IH* Psalter.¹³³ It also demonstrates a far more frequent correspondence between the *IH* and Aquila than other Jewish Greek versions – apart (as we have argued) from the LXX mediated through the *ILXX*.¹³⁴ The influence of Symmachus' version appears to be about half that of Aquila's, and that of Theodotion (or "Quinta" as McCarthy refers to it¹³⁵) almost negligible. "This conservatism for both the Latinity of the *Psalterium Iuxta Septuaginta* and for the Aquilan approval of the Septuagint, explains the nature of the revisions made in the *Psalterium Iuxta Hebraeos*."¹³⁶

Finally, however, McCarthy admits the possibility that the similarity between Hexaplaric readings and Jerome's translations in the *IH* may be coincidental: "... if Jerome learned Hebrew well, he must have learned a hexaplaric Hebrew from the Rabbis; for that is the best descriptive name for it."¹³⁷ It is not clear what McCarthy means by "hexaplaric Hebrew" – perhaps he means an independent knowledge of Hebrew that would allow Jerome to make translations that were similar to those found in the Hexaplaric Greek versions. McCarthy does not admit the difficulty of assessing Jerome's Latin translations against the Greek versions in the Hexapla (which involves further translation) and so of assessing whether Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew, and the characteristics of the Hebrew that he knew, was similar in both respects to that of

¹³³ "In practically no case, save a few, does Jerome in fact translate outside the boundaries set by Aquila and Symmachus." McCarthy, "Jerome's Translation," p.176.

¹³⁴ This is not surprising, given that Jerome describes Aquila as talented in Hebrew and adhering to Jerome's own ideals for scriptural translation: "*homo eruditissimus linguae Hebraicae, et verbum de verbo exprimens*," *Comm. in Isa.*, XIII, PL 24.466, CCSL 73A, p. 537.

¹³⁵ McCarthy appears to be following Barthélemy's equation of the *Quinta* with the *καίγε* recension, cf. Barthélemy, D., *Les Devanciers d'Aquila, Première Publication Intégrale du Texte des Fragments du Dodécaprophéton*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, v. 10, edd. G.W. Anderson, P.A.H. de Boer, et al., (Leiden: Brill, 1963), p. 260; also Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint*, p. 157.

¹³⁶ McCarthy, "Jerome's Translation," p. 164.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 177.

the *recentiores*. In any case, it has always been our contention that Jerome learned his Hebrew from contemporary Rabbis or Jewish converts to Christianity, and it would not be surprising if he had asked them to comment on the relative merits of various Hexaplaric translations.

Estin's earlier analysis of Jerome's use of Hexaplaric material was similarly limited to that which is extant in the Mercati fragments. Her choice to use different fonts to show Jerome's use of earlier Greek versions in his own work is visually striking and very effective.¹³⁸ It appears to show at a glance the complex textual history of the Gallican and *IH* Psalters, and allows the reader to form an impression of the relative importance of earlier versions in Jerome's work. Her own conclusion is similar to McCarthy's, namely that "dans le *Iuxta Hebraeos*, le principal témoin de la vérité hébraïque est Aquila, Symmaque servant de *second best*; Théodotion et la *Quinta* sont les «extras»."¹³⁹

However, we believe that Estin's visual representation of the textual history of Jerome's Psalters highlights a potential methodological problem that will have to be dealt with in the future. Her work suggests that Jerome regularly switched between one textual tradition and another up to three or four times within a single verse, and not infrequently took the root of a word from one source and its grammatical ending from another. We cannot help wondering whether this is feasible. We are struck by the sheer impracticality of rapidly translating large volumes of scripture while looking simultaneously in such detail at four or five previous versions. It seems to us that the mental application required by such an exercise in simultaneous translation-

¹³⁸ Estin, *Les Psautiers*, pp. 51-105.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 205.

comparison-selection far outweighs the difficulty of learning a new language from scratch! We wonder therefore whether the similarity of readings in the Hieronymian Psalters to earlier versions has more to do with coincidence and independently accurate translation than Estin (or McCarthy) would admit.

Jerome does occasionally disagree with hexaplaric translations, even those of Aquila, whose abilities in Hebrew he otherwise holds in high regard. For example, Jerome disagrees with Aquila's translation of Isaiah 49.5 on the basis of the Hebrew text:

*“Aquila ... qui interpretari voluit: et Israel ei congregabitur, hoc est Deo. Cum verbum Hebraicum lo, in hoc loco non scribatur per lamed et uau; quod si esset, significaret ei vel illi; sed per lamed et aleph quod proprie non sonat.”*¹⁴⁰ Similarly, in his letter to Sunnia and Fretela Jerome writes: *“in eodem: factus sum sicut νυκτικόραξ in domicilio ... In Hebraeo pro nycticorace verbum ‘bos’ scriptum est, quod Aquila et Septuaginta et Theodotio et quinta editio ‘nycticoracem’ interpretati sunt, Symmachus ‘upupam,’ sexta editio ‘noctuam,’ quod et nos magis sequimur.”*¹⁴¹ Jerome's critical evaluation of his Hexaplaric resources is evident.

Textual Variation

We discussed the Hebrew and Latin textual traditions in the Introduction. The general practice in modern scholarship seems to have been to assume that Jerome's Hebrew text was sufficiently close to the MT, and that the *IH* textual tradition is sufficiently strong, for differences to be negligible in this context. This is reasonable, so long as we look for a cumulative weight of evidence rather than attaching great significance to the translations of a few words. Minor textual differences are more likely to be a

¹⁴⁰ *Comm. in Isa.*, XIII, PL 24.466, CCSL 73A, p. 537.

¹⁴¹ *Ep.* 106.63, CSEL 55, p. 279.

problem for investigations of Jerome's transliterations from Hebrew, than in a direct investigation of Jerome's translations from Hebrew, where such variations might leave the sense unaltered.

2.5.2 Sources for Assessing Jerome's Knowledge of Hebrew

Jerome's Transliterations

Much modern scholarship has concerned itself with Jerome's transliterations of Hebrew words and names, both as a guide to contemporary pronunciation,¹⁴² and as a guide to Jerome's knowledge of the language.¹⁴³ The process of transliteration is assumed to involve the representation of the sounds of Hebrew by means of the Latin or Greek alphabet. Thus, on the one hand, Jerome's transliterations are taken as a guide to the sound (or pronunciation) of Hebrew at that time and, on the other, accurate transliterations (judged by some external criteria) are taken as an indicator of the level of Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew. However, while an intimate knowledge of a language almost always issues in correct pronunciation, when allowances are made for variations in accent due to region, class or era, the reverse is not always true. We need only consider that modern students with a rudimentary grasp of Hebrew may pronounce the words "correctly" while having little idea what they mean.

Any attempt at transliteration between Hebrew and Latin faces the basic problem of the mismatch of Semitic and Indo-European languages, whereby the former do not

¹⁴² For example, Sperber, A., "Hebrew Based upon Greek and Latin Transliterations," in *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 12-13 (1937-1938), pp. 103-274; Kahle, P.E., *The Cairo Geniza*, 2nd ed., (Oxford, 1959); Sutcliffe, E.F., "St. Jerome's Pronunciation of Hebrew," in *Biblica* 29 (1948), pp. 112-125; and Barr, "Sounds," pp. 1-36; and, to some extent, Barr, "Appreciation," pp. 281-302, specifically p. 293.

¹⁴³ Most recently Lane, *Excerpta*; also Barr, "Appreciation."

adequately represent the vowels of the latter, and the latter do not adequately represent the full consonantal range of the former. We will show that Jerome was aware of these difficulties. The long tradition of transliteration prior to Jerome poses the additional problem of determining the source of any particular transliterated word in Jerome's work.

By applying modern linguistic theories to previous work on Jerome's pronunciation of Hebrew, as shown by transliterations or isolated remarks about Hebrew sounds, James Barr demonstrated that "Jerome's material can be interpreted in a sense which keeps it closer to the Masoretic structure of Hebrew than has recently been supposed."¹⁴⁴ Barr was interested in Jerome's work as a guide to late 4th Century pronunciation of Hebrew, not as a guide to Jerome's knowledge of it, and offers only this in regard to the latter: "it is true that Jerome did listen to his teachers and that he knew the greater importance of sounded Hebrew over written Hebrew because only the former provided the full vowelings, which was semantically necessary to obtain the sense of the texts. He was also aware of a Jewish insistence on exact pronunciation."¹⁴⁵

Extrapolating Barr's conclusions we might suggest that, given the importance of sounded Hebrew, evidence that Jerome was not aware of correct pronunciations would suggest a substandard knowledge of the language. However, Barr also provides adequate warning that this method cannot be pushed too hard: "the analysis of the sounds of a language by the speaker of another language will, unless special training has been given, tend to be dominated by the phonemic structure of his own language. He will not "hear" the sounds of the new language...just as they are; he will interpret

¹⁴⁴ Barr, "Sounds," p. 35.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 35.

them by classifying them in relation to the structure he already uses... This is a primary reason why we should not expect that Jerome's remarks and transcriptions will give us direct access to the pronunciation of Hebrew in his time."¹⁴⁶ Elsewhere Barr refers to the "ways in which the pronunciation of Hebrew has varied along coordinates of time and place,"¹⁴⁷ which highlights for us the difficulty of ascertaining the pronunciation with which Jerome would have been familiar. These constitute important reasons why these sources cannot provide direct insight into Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew. An interesting example is provided by the following.

Psalm 51.2 IH:

Jerome appears to have had access to two different Hebrew manuscripts, one reading אַחִימֵלֵךְ as in the MT, the other אַבִּימֵלֵךְ. In both the *IH* and the *ILXX* Jerome renders the name as *Achimelech*. The LXX has Ἀβιμέλεχ, while Aquila has Ἀειμέλεχ, and Symmachus and Theodotion have Ἀχιμέλεχ. The BHS *apparatus criticus* notes the LXX usage and two Hebrew manuscripts which have אַבִּימֵלֵךְ. Jerome drew no theological significance from the variation of אֶבֶט and אֶחָד, rather his interest was textual. The problem here is complicated. The *Commentarioli* puts the confusion down to the graphical similarity of א and א, yet the occurrence of א is unattested in extant manuscripts: *et adnuntiavit ei, et dixit ei: Venit David in domum Achimelech. In Regnorum libris et in ipso hebraico psalterio Abimelech scriptum est: sed quoniam BETH et CAPH apud Hebraeos litterae modico apice distinguuntur, ideo error facilius obrepit.*¹⁴⁸ This also provides no explanation of why in the *ILXX* Jerome used *Achimelech* when the LXX read Ἀβιμέλεχ, nor why he persisted with *Achimelech* in

¹⁴⁶ Barr, "Sounds," p. 3.

¹⁴⁷ Barr, J., *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 200.

¹⁴⁸ *CCSL* 72, p. 211.

the *IH* if he knew the Hebrew read אַכִּימֶלֶךְ. The *IH* reading *Achimelech* may perhaps be explained either as unthinking retention of the *ILXX* version, or as the deliberate attempt to render a version of the Hebrew which read אַכִּימֶלֶךְ, or even אַחִימֶלֶךְ as the MT, which he was unaware of when writing the *Commentarioli* yet preferred by the time he made the *IH*.¹⁴⁹ The confused multiplicity of transliterations of this relatively familiar Hebrew name highlights the difficulties of using Latin or Greek transliterations to find an original Hebrew reading, never mind assess Jerome's linguistic abilities.

Sperber makes the important observation that "the Hebrew text of the Bible itself, even in passages where Jerome's consonantal text is identical with our *textus receptus*, could at that time be read very differently from the vocalization to which we are accustomed as a result of the activities of the Tiberian school of grammarians. Both the pronunciation and the etymological derivation of Hebrew words were at that time to a large extent decidedly uncertain, as Jerome himself frequently remarks."¹⁵⁰ This amounts to a further warning against placing heavy emphasis on Jerome's transliterations as a source of information of his knowledge of Hebrew. However, Sperber's reference to Jerome's awareness of uncertainty and differences of opinion may be useful as a guide to his knowledge of the language.

¹⁴⁹ Sperber draws attention to Jerome's remark in the *QHG*, "*frequenter LXX interpretes, non valentes heth literam quae duplicem aspirationem sonat, in graecum sermonem vertere, chi graecam literam addiderunt*," (PL 23.949-950), and notes, "This manifests what Jerome understood by the duplex aspiratio: an H ... such transliterations clearly indicate that ח had the consonantal value of χ. But when in the period of the Second Column ח became merely a vowel, no change was made in the transliterations of proper names which were utilized in current texts." He suggests this as the reason that "Jerome sometimes renders the same Hebrew name forms, occurring in the various Biblical books or even in the same book, differently; f.i. אַחִי achi and אַחִי...". Sperber, A., *A Historical Grammar of Biblical Hebrew, A Presentation of Problems with Suggestions to their Solution*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966), pp. 109-110.

¹⁵⁰ Sperber, A., "Hebrew Based upon Greek and Latin Transliterations," p. 118.

Lane has made the most recent attempt to demonstrate Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew by this method.¹⁵¹ Unfortunately his work seems to exemplify many of the difficulties of this method, and the confusions over what sort of "knowledge" is revealed, and how well it is revealed. He cites as his inspiration the following words of Kutscher: "Thanks to the several hundred H[ebrew] words that appear in his commentaries, we are able to form an idea of H[ebrew] as he knew it...the writings of Jerome are still a gold mine of information ..."¹⁵² Lane assumes "an idea of H[ebrew] as he knew it" to mean "an idea of how well Jerome knew Hebrew" while Kutscher appears to have meant "an idea of the characteristics of the Hebrew that Jerome knew," that is, was exposed to and had comprehended to some degree.¹⁵³

Lane's investigation, thorough though it is, provides little evidence for Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew. His investigations reveal many discrepancies in Jerome's transliteration practices that he struggles to explain, and he admits that "The inconsistencies of the examples do pose a problem if one is trying to attribute the author with any particular abilities or knowledge."¹⁵⁴ This is correct, unless the type of "knowledge" is an awareness of Hebrew pronunciation(s), and an ability to represent the sounds of Hebrew by means of the Latin alphabet. If this is the case, inconsistencies can easily be explained by appeal to differences in pronunciation among Jerome's Jewish contacts,¹⁵⁵ and to the difficulties inherent in using an alphabet to represent sounds it did not evolve to represent.¹⁵⁶ In spite of his awareness

¹⁵¹ Lane, *Excerpta*, pp. 47-86.

¹⁵² Lane, *Excerpta*, p. 51, cf. Kutscher, E.Y., *A History of the Hebrew Language*, Ed. R. Kutscher, (Jerusalem, The Hebrew University, The Magnes Press, and Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1982), p. 145.

¹⁵³ This latter interpretation fits better with Kutscher's purpose in the book which is, as the title suggests, to trace the history of the Hebrew language.

¹⁵⁴ Lane, *Excerpta*, p. 66.

¹⁵⁵ As Lane suggests but does not explore, *ibid*, p. 56.

¹⁵⁶ Lane was aware of this too. *Ibid*, p. 59.

of these difficulties, and in spite of the more obvious inference (within the parameters of his investigation) that such inconsistencies display a poor knowledge of the language, Lane persists in his conclusion that "From the examples found in the commentaries, specific knowledge of Jerome's Hebrew can be gleaned."¹⁵⁷ The remainder of his Conclusion does not, and cannot demonstrate this certainty.

Part of the difficulty, no doubt, stems from the disparity between the purpose for which Jerome originally made the transliterations, and the purpose to which Lane and his predecessors want to press them. They were conceived by and for people with no formal linguistic training, and were designed simply to aid the exposition of a text in another language.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, by Jerome's time there was a long history of Hebrew words being transliterated into Greek and Latin, culminating in the second column of Origen's Hexapla. The familiarity of many of these words encouraged Jerome to use a standard transliteration, even if he disagreed with it.¹⁵⁹

Yet there is more to be said in favour of this essentially aural approach. In the case of an unpointed text such as that with which Jerome was working, consistently correct pronunciation is far more indicative of a good understanding of the vocabulary and the underlying grammar than would be the case with a pointed text.¹⁶⁰ Even if the trilateral root at the basis of Hebrew grammar was not yet understood,¹⁶¹ a demonstrable awareness of and an ability to choose correctly between (or at least

¹⁵⁷ Lane, *Excerpta*, p. 85.

¹⁵⁸ Barr, "Sounds," p. 9.

¹⁵⁹ A well-known example is the following: "*Gaza fortitudo, sed sciendum quod apud Hebraeos non habeat in principio litteram consonantem, uerum incipiat a uocali ain, et dicatur Aza.*" (*De Nom. Heb.*, PL 23.799), cf. Barr, "Sounds," pp. 19-23.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Sutcliffe, "Pronunciation," p. 116.

¹⁶¹ Yehuda ben David Hayyug, in the early eleventh century, was the first to develop the grammatical principle of the trilateral root consistently. Before this, it seems, "the trilaterality of roots was not ... an accepted principle," Barr, *Comparative Philology*, pp. 62-63.

point out the difficulty in so choosing) different possible vocalisations of identical consonantal groups does imply a relatively detailed knowledge of the language. Likewise, discussions concerning the peculiar (to a Latin ear) sounds of Hebrew, and the difficulty of representing them by Latin characters (as opposed to an actual attempt so to represent them) similarly imply at least a deep awareness of the “otherness” of Hebrew, and implies that considerable thought has been devoted to studying that language. Furthermore, since the transliterations into Latin, and discussions concerning them, are written from Jerome’s Latin point of view¹⁶² rather than his teachers’ Hebrew point of view, the likelihood is that they reflect Jerome’s own intellectual struggle to represent one language by means of another. At this stage however, the source of the evidence has strayed away from transliterations themselves, into the discursive content of Jerome’s commentaries, letters, and prefaces.

Jerome’s Translations

Jerome’s *pièce de résistance* was of course his production of what became known as the Vulgate by (apparently) making new translations from the Hebrew and Greek for the Old and New Testaments respectively. However, Jerome’s *IH* Latin version of the Old Testament is the least promising part of his own writings for critical evidence of his knowledge of Hebrew.

We have already discussed the difficulties of assessing Jerome’s dependence on his Hebrew teachers and on the Hexapla when making his *IH* translations. The degree of correspondence between Jerome’s *IH* text and its predecessors may be determined by

¹⁶² With the obvious caveat (discussed previously) that many transliterations were standardised.

painstaking comparison, as McCarthy's work demonstrated. Yet this correspondence, or lack of it, requires careful interpretation before it may be used as a guide to Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew. Were Jerome engaged in literary piracy, passing off a compilation of his predecessors' work as if it were his own direct translation from Hebrew, one might reasonably call his knowledge of that language into doubt. Proud and independent in other academic pursuits, Jerome might be expected to want to leave his own mark on the new translation, were he capable of doing so. More importantly, if the new translation from the Hebrew ended up looking very similar to existing translations from the LXX, the necessity of Jerome's *IH* project would be called into question (more than it already was), and the controversy that it caused would seem rather pointless.

However, although it is difficult to affirm Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew by the degree of innovation in his *IH* translations, the apparent lack of innovation does not constitute positive evidence for a lack of Hebrew knowledge, for several reasons. First, the existing translations had presumably been made by predominantly competent scholars. Second, unless the older translations were particularly inaccurate, it would be difficult for Jerome to 'leave his mark' on the new translation while being faithful to the original text. Third, certain standard translations (such as בית equals οἶκος equals *domus*)¹⁶³ were well established and perfectly valid. Fourth, ecclesiastical doctrine together with religious conservatism meant that a well-known translation (especially of a liturgically or doctrinally important passage) was difficult to avoid. The most likely explanation for similarity between Jerome's version and previous versions, particularly given that Jerome jumps apparently randomly from one

¹⁶³ Cf. Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 324.

predecessor to another, is simply that on the basis of his knowledge of Hebrew, Jerome agreed with, and so actively selected, whichever reading he chose at any given point.¹⁶⁴ Such activity is outside the realm of shallow and uncomprehending plagiarism: it may not quite be original translation, but it still entails a good knowledge of the language to make intelligent choices.

Commentaries, Prefaces and Letters

E.F. Sutcliffe proposes that “A complete treatise on Jerome’s pronunciation of Hebrew would comprise both an account of the information he lets fall from time to time concerning various consonants and a study of his transliterations.”¹⁶⁵ Such remarks made by Jerome may also be useful for demonstrating a sophisticated knowledge of Hebrew. Barr takes a similar approach, and while he seeks to develop Sutcliffe’s conclusions, he too does not consider the possibility of investigating Jerome’s knowledge of Hebrew by this method. Most of Jerome’s remarks are not surprisingly to do with difficult transliterations or alternative readings of the same word, particularly where variation would affect exegesis. However, rather than being the confused statements of a newcomer inexperienced in Hebrew, these statements often betray a wide knowledge of the language, and considerable grammatical ability.

Many statements have to do with ambiguities that arise from a lack of direct correspondence between the Hebrew and Latin alphabets, such as the existence of three Hebrew sibilants versus one in Latin.¹⁶⁶ Other statements concern alternative

¹⁶⁴ Note the active choice implied by Jerome in: “*unusquisque inter dubia quod sibi consequentius videtur, hoc transfert,*” *Apol. adv. Lib. Ruf.* 1.20., *PL* 23.414, *Apol. c. Ruf.*, *CCSL* 79, p. 20.

¹⁶⁵ Sutcliffe, “Pronunciation,” p. 116, 116-125

¹⁶⁶ “*Siquidem apud Hebraeos tres sunt S litterae: una quae dicitur SAMECH, et simpliciter legitur, quasi per S nostram litteram describatur: alia SIN, in qua stridor quidam non nostri sermonis*

vocalisations of the same consonantal group, for example Jerome's remark on Jeremiah 9.22: "*Verbum Hebraicum, quod tribus litteris scribitur daleth, beth, res,*¹⁶⁷ - *vocales enim in medio non habet – pro consequentia et legentis arbitrio si legatur 'dabar,' 'sermonem' significat, si 'deber,' 'mortem,' si 'dabber,' 'loquere.'*"¹⁶⁸ As Brown notes, Jerome's choice of translation was opposed to that of the LXX, the Hexapla, Aquila and Symmachus: the LXX left the word out, and the other three versions translated it in ways that implied different vocalisations.¹⁶⁹ Whether or not Jerome knew two pronunciations of ϖ does not affect an estimation of his knowledge of Hebrew, primarily because there is still open debate over whether or not there was a dual pronunciation at that time.¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, an example commonly cited in this debate also reveals Jerome's awareness of alternative meanings of a pair of homonyms or near-homonyms from different roots: "*uerbum sam pro qualitate loci et posuit intelligitur et ibi.*"¹⁷¹ We have already touched on Jerome's awareness of the difficulty of representing Hebrew gutturals. Even where Jerome was not sure if a guttural was best described as a vowel, a consonant or an aspiration, he was able to provide an explanation which appears to come from wide experience with the language.¹⁷²

interstrepit: tertia SADE, quam nostrae aures penitus reformidant," De Nominibus Hebraicis, PL 23.783.

¹⁶⁷ There is nothing elsewhere in Jerome's corpus to suggest that this statement implies an appreciation of the triliteral root system of Hebrew.

¹⁶⁸ *In Hieremiam Prophetam, CCSL, 74, p. 99.*

¹⁶⁹ Brown, *Vir Trilinguis*, p. 81.

¹⁷⁰ See Barr, "Sounds," pp. 23-28 for a useful discussion.

¹⁷¹ *Comm. in. Hab. 3.4 PL 25.1312, CCSL 76A, p. 624.*

¹⁷² For example, Jerome's comments on the change of the name Abram to Abraham: "*Dicunt autem Hebraei quod ex nomine suo deus, quod apud illos tetragrammum est, he litteram Abrahae et Sarae addiderit...nec mirandum quare, cum apud Graecos et nos a littera uideatur addita, nos he litteram hebraeam additam dixerimus: idioma enim linguae illius est, per e quidem scribere, sed per a legere: sicut e contrario a litteram saepe per e pronuntiant. Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim, PL 23.963; cf. Barr, "Sounds," pp. 28-29.*

Barr discusses Jerome's reliance (where possible) on the spelling of Hebrew for correct vocalisation, for example at Amos 4.13, where the Hebrew reads וּמַגִּיד לְאָדָם יְהוָה , which the LXX had taken christologically¹⁷³ as $\text{καὶ ἀπαγγέλλων εἰς ἀνθρώπους τὸν χριστὸν αὐτοῦ}$. Jerome proved his point, contra LXX (with all the potential problems of such a course of action), by reference to the writing of the Hebrew rather than to its sound: it is not “*mem sin iod heth uau,*” but “*mem he...deinde sin iod heth.*”¹⁷⁴ Barr is probably correct to suggest that Jerome employed this approach (rather than simply citing variant vocalisations) in order to elucidate and strengthen his argument.¹⁷⁵ The implication that Jerome felt confident enough with the Hebrew text to use this rather than some more nebulous argument, which might still have been enough to convince his non-Hebrew speaking audience, is further proof of his linguistic competence. It may also reflect his teachers' attitudes: the idea that text is stronger than vocalisation ties in with rabbinic approaches.

Brown and Kamesar investigated Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew partly by looking at his etymologies. Brown suggests that: “Very many of Jerome's explanations are correct, but a sizeable minority of these meanings are taken from the Bible itself, and so these are no real guide to the extent or quality of Jerome's Hebrew knowledge.”¹⁷⁶ His results are ultimately (as he admits) inconclusive.¹⁷⁷ Kamesar's longer discussion of the *Liber Nominum* is more detailed, and while his object is to demonstrate Jerome's critical use of Greek exegetical sources, he also hints at Jerome's sophisticated use of the Hebrew text. In the case of difficult etymologies he notes that “we find Jerome making a serious attempt to evaluate the material contained in it in

¹⁷³ That is, referring to the anointed “*christos*,” not to the person of (Jesus) Christ.

¹⁷⁴ *PL* 25.1033, *CCSL* 76, p. 269, cf Barr, “Sounds,” pp. 7 and 26.

¹⁷⁵ Barr, “Sounds,” p. 7.

¹⁷⁶ Brown, *Vir Trilinguis*, p. 75.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 74-78.

light of the biblical evidence in the Hebrew text.”¹⁷⁸ All of this suggests, though it could not prove, that Jerome was capable of conducting a sophisticated examination and evaluation of Scriptural texts.

Much of the evidence we have discussed in this section suggests that Jerome had a sufficiently good working knowledge of Hebrew, that he was able to make intelligent observations about the Hebrew text that he found in front of him.

Indirect Evidence

By its nature evidence that we draw from sources that are not specifically related to the content or practice of Jerome’s translations is circumstantial and non-specific. On its own it could never be sufficient to convince us one way or the other about Jerome’s ability to translate a Hebrew text into Latin. However, taken as supporting evidence it has the potential to be valuable, particularly because the impact of external influences such as Jerome’s teachers and the Hexapla will be minimal here, and Jerome’s degree of posturing might be lower.

Jerome’s Critics

Despite their vociferous opposition, Augustine and Rufinus very rarely challenge Jerome’s actual translations: they appear to have been concerned with the concept rather than the results of the *IH* project. The only possible exception that we know about is Augustine’s claim that Jews supported the earlier translation of קיקיון in Jonah 4.6 as *cucurbita* (gourd) rather than Jerome’s *hedera* (ivy). However

¹⁷⁸ Kamesar, *Jerome*, pp. 106-107.

Augustine's imputation of *imperitia an malitia* to the Jews in this case suggests that in fact he preferred Jerome's new translation, and considered it to be accurate.¹⁷⁹

Rebenich makes the important observation that "Rufinus – who in his bitter quarrels with his former friend hardly ever forgot to make public all of Jerome's half-true and untrue remarks – at no time doubted that Jerome had command of Hebrew."¹⁸⁰

Similarly, as Polman observes, Augustine acknowledged that the Jews "looked upon St. Jerome's translation as faithful while they considered the Septuagint to be full of omissions." Augustine's admission comes in the context of arguing his opposition to Jerome's work on the *IH* so, given that it does his own argument little good, we may conclude that he believed that the Jews' verdict was beyond dispute.¹⁸¹ It is very unlikely that these two astute and not altogether sympathetic churchmen would have missed an opportunity to trumpet any third party's suggestion that Jerome's Hebrew was not up to standard.

Jerome the Hebrew Teacher

Finally, Jerome does claim to have taught Hebrew to Paula's daughter Blesilla, who apparently herself reached such a standard in the language as to be able to recite the Psalter in perfect Hebrew, as had her mother: "...*in paucis non dico mensibus, sed diebus ita Hebraeae linguae uicerat difficultates, ut in ediscendis canendisque psalmis cum matre contenderet.*"¹⁸² There are many difficulties with this account: its

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Augustine, *Ep. CIV.5*, *PL* 22.833-834, *CSEL* 55, p. 241. Rebenich attributes this assessment to Jerome, not Augustine, (see Rebenich, *Jerome*, p. 57), but the context of the remarks, namely arguing against the introduction of Jerome's new translation, suggests he is mistaken.

¹⁸⁰ Rebenich, "'Vir Trilinguis,'" p. 60.

¹⁸¹ Polman, A.D.R., *The Word of God According to Saint Augustine*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton), 1961, p. 187, cf. Augustine, *De Civ Dei* XVIII.43, "*eius tam litteratum laborem ... Judaei fateantur esse veracem, Septuaginta vero interpretes in multis errasse contendant,*" *PL* 41.603, *CCSL* 48, p. 639.

¹⁸² *Ep. 39.1*, *PL* 22.466, *CSEL* 54, p. 294.

time scale and its polemical flavour suggests that a certain degree of exaggeration is more than likely.

More importantly, there is no mention that Blesilla understood what she was chanting. Perhaps her performance is best compared to that of the hypothetical modern student of Hebrew we mentioned earlier, who speaks with fluency and a correct accent, but with little comprehension.¹⁸³ If so it is significant that the criterion Jerome used to judge her proficiency in Hebrew was her fluency, or her pronunciation. Of course, this does not mean that she lacked comprehension, but it does suggest that Jerome took the former to be a vital sign of “knowing Hebrew,” a consideration that has further resonance in the context of Jerome’s transliterations. Nevertheless, the fact remains that Jerome claims to have taught her personally, and must have been sufficiently confident in his abilities to be willing to take on the task.

Jerome’s Self-Assessment

This last point raises the criterion which we will suggest as a hitherto unutilised method of judging Jerome’s competence in Hebrew, that of his self-confidence in the language. The major difficulties with this approach are that Jerome’s assessment of his abilities is inevitably subjective and must have been biased to some degree, and that he may have exaggerated his abilities in order to lend authority to his translations. Nautin’s examples of instances where Jerome claims for himself expertise in Hebrew that appears to have come rather from Origen, Lactantius, or some other source¹⁸⁴ need not compel us to reject all Jerome’s claims about his ability in Hebrew, but they prompt us to exercise caution.

¹⁸³ Indeed with a little application one may learn to pronounce Hebrew in “a matter of days rather than months,” which further suggests that this might be the true meaning of Jerome’s remarks in *Ep.* 39.

¹⁸⁴ See especially: Nautin, *Origène*, pp. 326ff.

The first and most obvious point to make is that Jerome was willing to undertake his *IH* project at all. Jerome's description of his embarkation on this project is well known, "with my eyes open I thrust my hand into the flame,"¹⁸⁵ and we will discuss it further in the following Chapter. The flame no doubt symbolises in particular the opposition that Jerome realised his project would generate, and it may also refer to the enormity and gravity of the task he had given himself. Nevertheless, despite the potential controversy, he was confident that he could make a better translation than the LXX, one that would stop the Jews criticising Christians for the inaccuracy of their scriptures.

Jerome's long involvement with his many Hebrew teachers is instructive in several ways. His concern to find the best teachers, his willingness to pay large sums of money for their services, and his willingness to take lessons at inconvenient times¹⁸⁶ demonstrate his eagerness to learn, and his realisation of his need to be taught. This latter point is bivalent: if acknowledgement of ignorance is a basic requirement for learning, Jerome was on the right track; and his on-going reliance on his teachers suggests an ever-deepening quest for knowledge. Jerome's high regard for his teachers is evident in some of his more general remarks.¹⁸⁷ Indeed Jerome was overtly concerned to affirm the scholarly credentials of his Jewish teachers.¹⁸⁸ Sutcliffe remarks that this demonstrates that his "zeal to master the language was matched by

¹⁸⁵ *Preface to Isaiah* (Vulgate), *PL* 28.772; Weber/Gryson, p. 1096.

¹⁸⁶ For example, in relation to his teacher Baranina, Jerome writes: "*Rursum Hierosolymae et Bethleem quo labore, quo pretio, Baraninam nocturnum habui praeceptorem! Timebat enim Iudaeos et mihi alterum exhibebat Nicodemum.*" *Ep.* 84.3 *PL* 22.745, *CSEL* 55, p. 13.

¹⁸⁷ For example, "*Sicubi dubitas, Hebraeos interroga.*" *Ep.* 112.20, *PL* 33.262, *CSEL* 55, p. 391.

¹⁸⁸ Sutcliffe, "Pronunciation," pp. 112-115.

his wisdom in securing the services of the most competent masters.”¹⁸⁹ He may well be correct, but there is also the possibility that Jerome wanted to be able to appeal to his teachers’ authority if his own was not to be trusted.

It is significant that Jerome nowhere overtly disagrees with what his Jewish teachers told him. Apparently, even towards the end of his life when he had presumably had much experience in Hebrew, he was still not sufficiently confident in his own abilities to be able to disagree with them. It is possible that Jerome did not record instances of disagreement, but given his tendency towards violent dispute, and the pleasure he takes elsewhere in parading his own learning, it is more likely that Jerome did not (or chose not to) disagree with the views of his teachers.

Jerome was, however, willing in other circumstances to claim authority as a translator: we mentioned Jerome’s disagreement with Aquila’s translation of Isaiah 49.5 above, and *Ep.* 106 provides further examples of Jerome’s disagreement with earlier versions, Concerning Psalm 62 Jerome writes: “*sitivit tibi anima mea, pro quo in Graeco sit: sitivit in te anima mea. Sed in Hebraeo non habet ‘attha,’ quod significat ‘te,’ sed ‘lach,’ quod ostenditur ‘tibi,’ quod et omnes interpretes transtulerunt. Ergo secundum linguae proprietatem versum est in Latinum.*”¹⁹⁰

Jerome was sufficiently confident in his abilities to set himself up as an authority in Hebrew among his Latin and Greek speaking contemporaries, for example by teaching Hebrew to Paula and Blesilla, or by defending his translation to Sunnia and Fretela, but never reached a stage at which he was willing to set himself up on his own merits, in potential opposition to his teachers, as an authority on Hebrew.

¹⁸⁹ Sutcliffe, “Pronunciation,” p. 115.

¹⁹⁰ *Ep.* 106.37, *CSEL* 55, p. 264.

Ego ... trilinguis

Finally we must reconsider Jerome's famous statement on his own abilities: "*ego ... Hebraeus, Graecus, Latinus, trilinguis. Hoc modo et tu bilinguis eris, qui tantam habes Graeci Latinique sermonis scientiam, ut et Graeci te Latinum, et Latini te Graecum putent.*"¹⁹¹ A certain degree of posturing is inevitable. Given the general unpopularity of the *IH* project, Jerome had to convince his potential audience of his ability in Hebrew in order for it to have any credibility at all.

But just what level of ability was Jerome claiming for himself? The next sentence provides the clue: "*Hoc modo et tu bilinguis eris, qui tantam habes Graeci Latinique sermonis scientiam, ut et Graeci te Latinum, et Latini te Graecum putent.*" Not, we should note, that "Greeks think you are Greek, and Latins think you are Latin." Jerome's definition of *bilinguis* involves the ability to appear "foreign" to both, a much easier prospect than appearing "native" to both. Perhaps his definition of *trilinguis* is the same. If so, it will fit neatly with the tentative conclusions we have already drawn, namely that Jerome was content to assert his credentials as a Hebraist among his Latin and Greek speaking contemporaries, but never set himself up as an authority in Hebrew alongside or in opposition to his Hebrew teachers.

¹⁹¹ *Apol. adv. Ruf.*, PL 23.461, = *Ep. adv. Ruf.*, 6, CCSL 79, p. 79.

2.6 Conclusion: The *Vir Trilinguis*?

Jerome's unique reputation as the *vir trilinguis* not only lent him great authority in his own day and later, but its acknowledgement was necessary to the success of his project. Our discussion of the difficulties and ambiguities involved in investigating Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew and has shown that every line of investigation leads to some degree of uncertainty. While we have not been able to prove beyond reasonable doubt that Jerome did know enough Hebrew to produce the *IH* largely unaided and with a reasonable degree of insight into his translation, we have also demonstrated the impossibility of proving the opposite. The picture that has emerged is one of a scholar with an eager interest in Hebrew, a determination to go to great lengths to procure the best available teaching, and sufficient confidence in his abilities that he believed himself to be capable of producing a more accurate translation than those already in existence. We may assume that with the resources at his disposal, whether earlier versions or his Jewish teachers, Jerome had ample opportunity to check translations that he was unsure about, so that the final version he offers is at least the deliberate result of careful thought, even if not entirely original translation.

Effect on Methodology

Our positive conclusion in this chapter was based on a large body of different types of evidence rather than on a few individual examples. Our methodology in later chapters of this thesis will be similar. As we assess the impact on the *IH* of Jerome's Christian beliefs, his classical education and his contact with Jewish scholars, we will be careful

not to draw weighty conclusions from only a few examples. Some examples may be clearer and more conclusive than others, but our aim throughout will be to identify the broad trends in and general characteristics of Jerome's work.

Chapter 3

The Influence of the Classical World on the *IH* Psalter

“... eventually we may be able to answer Jerome’s own question, “What *has* Horace got to do with the Psalter?”¹⁹²

3.1 *Quid Facit cum Psalterio Horatius?*

Jerome’s quotation of and allusion to classical literature in his letters, his commentaries on biblical books and his prefaces to biblical books, has been the subject of much modern scholarship, beginning with that produced by Luebeck and Hagendahl, whose work we will discuss below. More recently scholars began to search for classical allusions within Jerome’s biblical translations – the possibility of direct quotation being rendered nearly impossible by the very nature of translation. We may be tempted to see the search for classical allusions within Jerome’s biblical translations as a simple extension of similar searches within his other writings. Indeed Catherine Brown Tkacz suggested that the presence of classical allusions in Jerome’s commentary or preface to a particular book may portend the discovery of similar allusions to the same classical authors in the *IH* translation of that book.¹⁹³ However, one of our fundamental concerns in this chapter will be to argue that Jerome’s conception of his role in biblical translation was far removed from that of his role in

¹⁹² Brown Tkacz, “*Quid Facit?*” pp. 93-104.

¹⁹³ *Ibid*, pp. 96-98.

other translations or in original composition. We will argue that while allusion to classical literature in his own writings may have been legitimate and productive in certain circumstances (if not entirely problem free), similar allusion within his biblical translations was at best unnecessary and at worst would have undermined one of Jerome's principal arguments for a return to the Hebrew.

However, if one of our aims in this chapter is to lay to rest the debate over the occurrence of direct classical allusions in the *IH* Psalter, another is to open a further avenue of enquiry that is distinct from yet related to the first. While classical allusions per se may have been undesirable, we cannot rule out the possibility that Jerome's *IH* translations display the influences of classical παιδεία, and of 4th century Latin culture, in different and more subtle ways. Jerome and his contemporaries were heirs to centuries of Greco-Latin culture which took as its golden exemplars the authors of imperial Athens and of late republican and early imperial Rome. Indeed the content of Jerome's 4th century Roman education was dictated by what Kelly calls a "backward-looking reverence for the classical ideal."¹⁹⁴ Jerome's education and his experience of his intellectual and social milieu will undoubtedly have influenced his translations.

In the course of the chapter we will examine the evidence adduced by modern scholarship to suggest that allusions to classical literature might be found in the *IH* Psalter. We will show that, in spite of this strong evidence, there are no sustainable allusions to specific classical authors in this book, nor are any likely to be found by scholars with a more intimate knowledge of the classics than our own. We will suggest reasons why this is so.

¹⁹⁴ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 11.

However our more exciting task will be to discuss several examples in which the *IH* Psalter displays literary and poetic devices, such as alliteration and onomatopoeia, which would have been familiar to any classical scholar. Some of these reflect similar devices in the Hebrew text, and others appear to have been imported by Jerome to the *IH* text. We will suggest that this evidence is compatible both with Jerome's strict early views concerning the translation of the *Hebraica veritas*, and with his arguments for the literary merit of the Hebrew text, and his desire that his new translation be acceptable to the educated Latin speaking elite.

3.2 Jerome's Education and Attitude to Classical Erudition

This topic is undoubtedly complex and difficult to unravel, but an investigation into Jerome's allusion to classical authors necessarily relies on, and ultimately contributes to, a comprehensive understanding of his attitude to the classics. The significance of Jerome's account of his dream in *Ep. 22* has always been central to this debate, often, as we will argue, to its detriment. In the interests of painting a more comprehensive picture, we will also take into account information that Jerome provides in other letters and commentaries. This will help us to reach an understanding that is broader in terms of both time and subject matter, and that may be easier to interpret than the rhetoric-laden account of his dream.

Any assessment of Jerome's attitude to the classics tends to ask more questions and demonstrate more ambiguities than it answers. This is itself an insight into Jerome's

complex mindset, but it also forces us to define the limits of our interest as narrowly as possible. Our assessment of Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew focussed specifically on his ability to translate a written Hebrew text into written Latin text. In this chapter we are interested in Jerome's attitude to the classics only insofar as it influenced his decision whether or not to allude to specific classical works in his translation of the *Psalter Iuxta Hebraeos*, and whether or not to make the language and style of his translation conform to classical ideals.

Jerome's Education

Jerome's education followed the pattern common in his day for the sons of wealthy parents, with him being sent to Rome to complete his secondary education, in Jerome's case under the renowned scholar and grammarian Aelius Donatus.¹⁹⁵ Such an education focussed heavily in its early stages on grammar and classical literature, which manifested itself in the style of language that was taught, and in the authors who were chosen for closer study: specifically Virgil, Terence, Sallust and Cicero. Kelly rightly thinks it "unrealistic to suggest that Jerome acquired a thorough mastery of all these classical writers while at Donatus's school," and draws the plausible conclusion that Jerome read widely during the thirty or so years between his formal education and the crisis point of his dream.¹⁹⁶ As we would expect, Jerome's education extended to a thorough training in rhetoric: it was perhaps here that his proficiency in language found its fullest expression. Jerome's later writings include most if not all the forms and genres of ancient rhetoric and together they "illustrate how brilliantly he had mastered all the ploys of ancient rhetoric."¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ See e.g. Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 10-24; Rebenich, *Jerome*, pp. 4-7; Kedar, "Latin Translations," pp. 313-318.

¹⁹⁶ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 12.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 15.

It is less clear whether or not Jerome's education at this stage included Greek. Kelly concludes that it did, at least as far as a basic working knowledge.¹⁹⁸ Courcelle suggests that "Suivant le cycle des études libérales à Rome, il a dû recevoir ensuite du *rhéteur* une teinture de littérature greque classique pour s'initier à l'art oratoire."¹⁹⁹ Hagendahl and others, following Rufinus, conclude that it did not.²⁰⁰ Certainly his knowledge of Greek improved vastly during his stay with Evagrius at Antioch.²⁰¹ All agree, however, that Jerome's knowledge of Greek classical literature never matched his knowledge of its Latin counterpart. Little work appears to have been done to assess Jerome's allusion to classical Greek authors in his work. McDermott's article looks promising at first, but is ultimately disappointing, with his suggestions based on rather flimsy speculation.²⁰² We will not specifically consider allusion to classical Greek literature in this chapter, but our conclusions regarding allusion to classical Latin literature would most likely apply to Greek literature as well.

Jerome's Attitude towards Classical Erudition

Jerome was proud, at least in his early life, of the extent and quality of his erudition. In *Ep.* 52, written to Nepotian in 394, he describes how his enthusiasm for classical learning led him to embellish an earlier letter with scholarly flourish: "*in illo opere pro aetate tunc lusimus et calentibus adhuc rhetorum studiis atque doctrinis quaedam scolastico flore depinximus.*"²⁰³ In reply to Rufinus' accusations, which included the

¹⁹⁸ Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 13-14.

¹⁹⁹ Courcelle, P., *Les Lettres Grecques en Occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore*, (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1948), p. 37.

²⁰⁰ Hagendahl, H., *Latin Fathers and the Classics, A Study on the Apologists, Jerome and other Christian Writers*, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis 64,2, (Göteborg, 1958), p. 93.

²⁰¹ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 39; McDermott, W.C., "Saint Jerome and Pagan Greek Literature," in *Vigiliae Christianae*, 36 (1982), pp. 372-382, here p. 372.

²⁰² McDermott, "Saint Jerome," pp. 372, 374, 376.

²⁰³ *Ep.* 52.1, PL 22.527, CSEL 54, p. 414.

charge that he had broken the oath sworn in his dream, Jerome prided himself: “*ego philosophus, rhetor, grammaticus, dialecticus, hebraeus, graecus, latinus, trilinguis.*”²⁰⁴ It is significant that even in this context, in which we might expect him to emphasise his Christian credentials, Jerome chose to refer to himself first as “*philosophus, rhetor, grammaticus, dialecticus,*” which were skills gained through a traditionally classical/pagan education, and then as “*hebraeus, graecus, latinus, trilinguis.*” In his *Commentary on Galatians*, Jerome betrays his own high opinion of his linguistic abilities when he complains (albeit in a phrase whose quality undermines its content!) that his pursuit of learning Hebrew has destroyed “*omnem sermonis elegantiam et Latini eloquii venustatem.*”²⁰⁵ Indeed, Hagendahl proposes this as one of the reasons Jerome began to reread the classics.²⁰⁶ So far, Jerome appears to have approved of his education.

Jerome’s extensive education had fostered a love of classical literature and classical learning which he maintained and developed at least until the apparent hiatus of his dream. More than that it had fostered a love of erudition, of *παιδεία*, the opposite of *sermo incultus*, for its own sake. Moreover Jerome’s long involvement with them will have made the patterns and cadence of classical literature and learning an integral, if not the central, part of his conscious and sub-conscious thought patterns, so that in his reply to Rufinus Jerome writes of the difficulty of eradicating traces of the education that he had received from a young age.²⁰⁷ He was clearly aware of how integral his classical education had become to his thinking, even his personality.

²⁰⁴ *Apologia adversus libros Rufini*, (PL 23.461) cf. Kedar, “Latin Translations,” p. 316n.

²⁰⁵ *Comm. in Gal. 3 Prol.*, PL 26.399.

²⁰⁶ Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers*, pp. 323-24.

²⁰⁷ “*Crede mihi, multa ad purum recordatur infantia,*” *Apol. c. Ruf.*, CCSL 79, p. 30.

On the one hand, this may make it more likely that allusions to classical material will have found their way into his biblical translations; on the other, Jerome's awareness of the possibility may have made him more attentive to eradicating allusions which he deemed unsuitable. While he appears to regret the pervasiveness of his education to some extent at least, he never suggests that he would have been better without it, nor even that it has been injurious to his Christian profession. On the contrary, Jerome and his Christian contemporaries were well aware of the importance of studying classical grammar and literature in order to be educated at all, and as a basis for Christian literature of all varieties.²⁰⁸

The Dream

Jerome's account of his dream, contained in *Ep.* 22.30, addressed to Eustochium, and written in 384, is perhaps the single most famous passage written by him.²⁰⁹ Despite its fame the story is less easy to understand within the context of Jerome's oeuvre as a whole than is generally appreciated, and because of its fame scholars tend to give it inordinate significance. Until recently in regard to Jerome's use of classical references in his biblical translations scholarship unanimously, if tacitly, agreed with the negative response Jerome apparently anticipated to his rhetorical questions in *Ep.* 22.29: "*Quid facit cum psalterio Horatius? cum evangeliiis Maro? cum apostolo Cicero?*"²¹⁰ This is most strikingly evident in the fact that Hagendahl did not take Jerome's biblical translations into account when investigating the occurrence of classical allusions in Jerome's works.

²⁰⁸ See a brief but helpful discussion in Pease, "The Attitude," pp 163-166.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Thierry, J.J., "*The Date of the Dream of Jerome*", in *Vigiliae Christianae* 17 (1963), p. 28.

²¹⁰ *PL* 22.415, *CSEL* 54, p. 189.

However, in regard to Jerome's use of classical references in his own writings, most scholarly assessments of the importance of the dream have followed not Jerome but Rufinus, who was the first to criticise Jerome for breaking the oath he swore to the judge in his dream.²¹¹ As is often the case with Jerome, his words and his actions demonstrate varying degrees of disparity. Given these difficulties, the most profitable way to proceed is surely via de Labriolle's caution, "de ne pas accorder à l'épisode célèbre ... plus d'importance que St Jérôme n'y paraît en avoir lui-même attaché."²¹² We should also bear in mind Pease's caveat that while for us the dream exists only as a literary artefact, Jerome's relationship with it was much more organic, and his interpretation of the dream is likely to have changed over several years.²¹³

As part of our research for this chapter we undertook an extensive survey of existing literature on Jerome's account of his dream. Space does not allow its inclusion here, but we hope that it will be published separately at some stage. For the moment, we will confine ourselves to a brief discussion of the major issues.

Adkin and Thierry draw attention to links between chapter thirty and the rest of *Ep.* 22, as well as to links with other primarily Christian sources. Adkin demonstrates Jerome's use of the vocabulary of martyrdom,²¹⁴ and Thierry attempts to suggest a

²¹¹ Rufinus, *Apologia in Hier.* 2.6-7, (PL 21.588-589). See also Adkin, N., "Adultery of the Tongue: Jerome, Epist. 22,29,6f.," in *Hermes* 121 (1993), pp. 100-108; Adkin, "Some Notes," p. 120; and Brown Tkacz, C., "Ovid, Jerome and the Vulgate", in *Studia Patristica* 33 (1997), p. 379. It is most significant, however, that despite Rufinus' well known opposition to Jerome's "return" to the pagan Classics, he does not accuse Jerome of letting his attachment to the Classics influence his actual translations. Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 250.

²¹² de Labriolle, P., "Le songe de St Jérôme," in *Miscellanea Geronimiana, Scritti Varii Pubblicati nel XV Centenario dalla Morte di San Girolamo*, (Roma: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1920), pp. 227-235, here p. 234.

²¹³ "Indeed, we may say that the subsequent world, more deeply impressed by one dramatic incident than by many years passed in modification or contradiction of it, has ascribed to the vision of Jerome altogether too much importance." Pease, "The Attitude," p. 167.

²¹⁴ Adkin, "Some Notes," p. 120.

date for the dream.²¹⁵ Taken together, their work emphasises that the account of the dream must be viewed within its fourth century literary context, its context within the letter, and its context within Jerome's wider concerns.

The immediate context of the account is the remaining forty of the forty-one chapters of *Ep.22*, which has virginity and asceticism as its main themes. Within the letter there is little discernible structure, and nothing that indicates that Jerome wished his account of the dream to be the most important section: indeed Jerome's purpose in writing to Eustochium is to encourage her in her ascetic resolve.²¹⁶ The dream is introduced to illustrate Jerome's warning against the pursuit of fashionable eloquence and poetry, which, in language appropriate to the theme of virginity, he derides as "*adulterium ... linguae.*"²¹⁷ No conclusions or exhortations follow the account of the dream, only the banality of a warning against the love of money.²¹⁸ The co-ordinating phrase between chapters thirty and thirty-one, "*quoque tibi vitandum est,*"²¹⁹ ("you should also avoid") suggests that Jerome did not consider the account of the dream to be any more significant than the subject matter immediately surrounding it. In fact, if the letter is approached with an assumption of the central importance in Jerome's career of the dream per se, the account of the dream seems incongruous in its brevity and obscurity, its thematic disconnection from the surrounding chapters, and Jerome's apparent lack of concern to draw much attention to it.

²¹⁵ Thierry, "The Date," pp. 28-40.

²¹⁶ Cf., for example, *Ep. 22.1: Verum non sufficit tibi exire de patria, nisi obliviscaris populi et domum patris tui et carne contempta sponsi iungaris amplexibus*, CSEL 54, p. 144.

²¹⁷ "adultery of the tongue," *Ep. 22.29, PL 22.416, CSEL 54*, p. 188. Adkin suggests that this phrase is "a digression which enables Jerome to show off," and claims that it is "wrong therefore to turn the phrase *adulterium linguae* into the justification for Jerome's attack on the classics ... it has nothing whatever to do with them." Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, p. 279. While it may be better to read the phrase primarily with the preceding contents of Chapter 29, it is impossible to agree that it has "nothing whatever" to do with the account of the dream in Chapter 30.

²¹⁸ "*Avaritiae quoque tibi vitandum est malum...*" *Ep. 22.31, PL 22.417, CSEL 54*, p. 191.

²¹⁹ *Ep. 22.31, PL 22.417, CSEL 54*, p. 191.

De Labriolle and Thierry have demonstrated how Jerome's account of the dream in *Ep.* 22.30 coincides with his accounts of other dreams earlier in the letter (Thierry),²²⁰ and with dream narratives found in earlier or contemporary literature (de Labriolle).²²¹ Their work is not problem-free, but it suggests that however striking a picture Jerome paints in *Ep.* 22, his account nevertheless falls within a recognisable genre of early Christian literature. This does not of course discount the reality of the dream, but it alerts us to the possibility that Jerome was exercising a certain degree of licence afforded by working within a literary tradition.

Nevertheless, the thesis of de Labriolle and various scholars of the early twentieth century that Jerome's dream was simply a ruse fabricated by him to support his arguments against reading pagan authors has been successfully challenged.²²² Both Kelly and Hagendahl note that when challenged by Rufinus in 400 that he had broken his oath to the Judge,²²³ Jerome does not deny the dream, but simply refuses to be bound by what he said in a dream. They take his appeal to Eustochium and her mother Paula, to testify that he has had no recourse to pagan literature over the previous fifteen years,²²⁴ as further evidence of his belief in the reality of the dream.²²⁵ Whatever the difficulties of interpreting the dream, Jerome maintained – or at least argued for – a significant degree of belief in its reality.

²²⁰ Thierry, "The Date," pp. 34-35.

²²¹ de Labriolle, "Le songe," pp. 227-235.

²²² For a brief discussion, see Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 42.

²²³ Rufinus, *Apologia in Sanctum Hieronymum*, 2.6-7, *PL* 21.588-589.

²²⁴ *Comm. in Gal. 3 Prol.*, *PL* 26.399.

²²⁵ Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 42-3; Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers*, pp. 318-19; for a similar viewpoint, see Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, p. 283.

The surest test of Jerome's perception of the seriousness of his account of the dream is the effect it had on his reading and writing habits thereafter. The most comprehensive survey in this regard was undertaken by Hagendahl, who investigated the occurrence of classical quotations and allusions in Jerome's writings, excluding his translations of the Bible. Hagendahl's study divides Jerome's authorship into four periods, beginning with his proposed date for Jerome's dream: 374-385; 386 to 393 (or the publication of *De viris illustribus*); 393 to 402; and 402 to 419.²²⁶ His study provides convenient reference points at which to examine Jerome's *modus operandi*, and, although Hagendahl did not take Jerome's biblical translations into account, his work enables them to be placed relative to Jerome's other writings. Hagendahl finds a decrease in the number of classical references towards the end of the first period, consonant, he says, with a fading memory of classical texts. He records an increasing number of classical references through the second period, but he perceives the major change in practice at the start of the third period in 393, with the publication of the pamphlet *Adversus Iovinianum*, where Jerome openly mentions Aristotle, Plutarch and Seneca as being among his sources. The fourth period sees little change.²²⁷ Pease undertook a similar investigation, and while the boundaries he set between different periods vary slightly from Hagendahl's, his conclusions are substantially the same: "it is of interest to observe the diminished frequency of citation immediately following the vision, and again, the increase subsequent to the period of the *Commentary on Galatians*."²²⁸

In his *Commentary on Galatians*, written approximately fifteen years after *Ep. 22*, Jerome calls on Eustochium and her mother Paula, to confirm that for more than

²²⁶ Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers*, p. 99.

²²⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 320-27.

²²⁸ Pease, "The Attitude," p. 157.

fifteen years he has neither handled nor read a pagan author,²²⁹ evidently alluding to the account of his dream.²³⁰ It is difficult to reconcile Hagendahl's observations concerning the period around 385/386 with the composition of *Ep. 22* in 384, and of the *Commentary on Galatians* in around 390. Hagendahl's observations of a decrease in the number of classical allusions in his first period would tally with a hiatus in Jerome's study of classical literature in response to his dream. However, given the intensity of Jerome's experience, at least as related in *Ep. 22*, it is surprising that he allowed any classical allusions to slip into his writings at all. Furthermore, Hagendahl's observation of a gradual decrease in the frequency of allusion between the dream and 385 does not tally with the sort of fundamental change of practice that might be expected after so frightening an ordeal. More difficult is the observation of an increase in the number of classical references in the period after 385/6, and with it Hagendahl's plausible conclusion that Jerome's practice regarding pagan literature has changed. A gradual change in practice over the ten to fifteen years after his dream would be understandable, but Jerome betrays no hints of a softening in his attitude in *Ep. 22*, written in the latter part of that period. Perhaps his own attitudes in practice were never as strict as those which he sought to inspire in Eustochium.

While Jerome appears to have taken seriously, at least for some time, his promise not to read classical literature, he never seems conscientiously to have extended this to a ban on citing classical literature in his own writings. The issue can be focussed on the accuracy of Kelly's statement that after his dream "Jerome seems to have striven to observe his promise strictly, shunning the study of the pagan classics and, so far as he

²²⁹ "Nostis enim et ipsae, quod plus quam quindecim anni sunt, ex quo in manus meas numquam Tullius, numquam Maro, numquam gentilium litterarum quilibet Auctor ascendit," *Comm. in Gal. 3 Prol.*, PL 26.399.

²³⁰ Cf. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers*, p. 319.

still quoted from them, relying on his retentive memory.”²³¹ By Kelly’s reasoning, Jerome saw nothing wrong with quoting classical literature, so long as he didn’t actually study it. This view does seem to be borne out by Jerome’s actions if not by his words. If Jerome really did rely on his memory of classical literature, it suggests a less extreme understanding and application of his dream: but Jerome never claims to rely on his memory, he only states that classical allusions “crept up” on him from his memory. Kelly’s formulation is too proactive to fit Jerome’s words, but it does seem to fit his practice.²³²

Debates around Jerome’s account of his dream will no doubt continue, but the important point for our search for classical allusions in the *IH* Psalter is that by the time Jerome undertook this task in around 392,²³³ classical allusions in his own writings were becoming more frequent and his attitude towards classical learning was apparently becoming more positive.

The Intellectual Milieu of Late 4th Century

Markus argues convincingly that “The real division between pagan and Christian at the end of the fourth century did not coincide with the old religious division; indeed it was a recent creation, and not primarily a religious division at root. The attempt, first by the emperor Julian ... to rally the forces of Roman conservatism to the defence of a

²³¹ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 43.

²³² Adkin’s insights are important: “The final words of his account, which unlike the ‘vow’ lie outside the dream itself and are therefore clearly to be taken seriously as a description of reality, proclaim resonantly that [assiduous study of the bible] was its consequence: *tanto dehinc studio divina legisse* ... There is no mention of ‘abandoning’ the classics ... Jerome’s problem was not with the classics, but with the bible.” Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, pp. 283-284. Adkin almost certainly draws too great a distinction between what Jerome said during or after the dream: Jerome certainly did not entirely abandon the classics, but he does seem to have felt uneasy about his involvement with them in the period after the supposed date of his dream.

²³³ In *De viris illustribus* 134 (written in 392 or 393) Jerome reports that Sophronius had already made a Greek translation of Jerome’s renderings of the Psalter and the Prophets from Hebrew; cf. Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 161-62.

tradition transformed the confrontation of religions into a confrontation of cultures.”²³⁴ His work emphasises the shifting tensions that were exposed and heightened as traditions and culture based on classical paganism were challenged by an increasingly Christianised elite. While in the mid fourth century “It was Julian, not the Christians, who thought that the classics and the gospels could not go together,”²³⁵ Markus suggests that by the end of that century, particularly under the influence of Jerome and Augustine, there was a “real possibility of a brutal rejection of the whole classical past by a triumphantly aggressive Catholicism.”²³⁶ No doubt this opposition had much to do with the fundamental link between classical literature/culture and classical paganism.²³⁷ However his work highlights the pressures faced by Jerome, a member of the Christian elite with a deep love of the classics and a concern to demonstrate the superiority of Christianity over paganism. In this latter quest a thorough knowledge of the classics was essential for the Christian apologist wishing to refute pagan criticisms on their own ground.²³⁸

Fergus Millar has highlighted the growing opposition to paganism and Judaism in the eastern, predominantly Greek speaking, part of the Roman Empire, in the period after the accession of Theodosius I in AD 379, which he sees as the “decisive moment in the adhesion of the Roman State to Christianity.”²³⁹ After reviewing various imperial pronouncements which list pagans and Jews together as (potential) opponents of the new Christian order, he writes: “Above all, however, we ought to be conscious ... of

²³⁴ Markus, R.A., “Paganism, Christianity and the Latin Classics in the Fourth Century,” in J.W. Binns (Ed.), *Latin Literature of the Fourth Century*, [Greek and Latin Studies, Classical Literature and its Influence, Edd. C.D.N. Costa and J.W. Binns], (London and Boston: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1974), pp. 1-21, here p. 8.

²³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 3.

²³⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 12-13.

²³⁷ Cf. Pease, “The Attitude,” pp. 161-162; Markus, “Paganism,” p. 10.

²³⁸ E.g. *Ep.* 70.3, *PL* 22.666, *CSEL* 54, pp. 703-704; *Ep.* 72.2, *PL* 22.673-674, *CSEL* 55, pp. 9-10; Cf. Pease, “The Attitude,” pp. 163-165.

²³⁹ Millar, F., “Christian Emperors,” pp. 1-24, esp. p. 1.

the vast gulf which separates the situation which obtained in the first three centuries, when both Jewish and Christian communities were minority elements in a predominantly pagan world, from one in which the institutions and rituals of paganism were under vigorous attack, and in which Judaism represented a (generally) tolerated rival variant of monotheism, living in the threatening shadow of a Christianity which had the full backing of the State.”²⁴⁰ Despite his involvement in Christian affairs in the Greek east at this time, or perhaps because of his consequent first hand exposure to Jews and their beliefs, Jerome’s cautious approval of certain Jewish teachings and customs is well known. Perhaps we might expect a similarly cautious approval of certain pagan ideas.

A Converging of the Ways?

The evolution of Jerome’s attitude towards classical/pagan literature and learning appears to have moved along a similar trajectory to that of his attitude towards Jewish learning, which we will discuss in the next chapter. His attitude in both cases appears at first glance to be mercurial in the extreme, ranging swiftly from outright hostility to glowing approval. Yet in both cases Jerome’s approval or disapproval appears to have been based on the same, scriptural, criteria, namely that anything which accorded with scripture could be considered legitimate and useful. Jewish material was legitimate insofar as it was “appropriate to Scripture,”²⁴¹ and pagan/classical learning could be used provided that unsuitable elements were removed.

²⁴⁰ Millar, “Christian Emperors,” pp. 7-8.

²⁴¹ “*semel proposui arcana eruditionis Hebraicae, et magistrorum synagogae reconditam disciplinam, eam dumtaxat, quae scripturis sanctis convenit, Latinis auribus prodere,*” In *Zachariam Prophetam 2*, PL 25.1455, CCSL 76A, p. 796.

This observation has important implications. First, Jerome approved of the use of classical literature and learning in the right circumstances and with the right provisions. Unsurprisingly, this most often occurred in the realms of history and scientific learning in which no specifically Christian tradition of learning had grown up, and in various apologetic situations when it was useful to draw parallels between Christian and pagan experiences.²⁴² Second, the similarities in Jerome's attitude towards classical and Jewish material, and the suitability of each for use in a Christian context, suggests that he had developed ideas on the universal nature of culture and scholarship. Although Jerome maintained the absolute superiority of Christianity as a whole, he did not view the classical, Jewish and Christian traditions as entirely mutually exclusive, but was able and willing to note not only correspondences between the three, but also ways in which the insights of one could benefit another.

Or The Triumph of God's Way?

Among the most interesting expressions of Jerome's developing attitude to the classics are found in *Ep. 70*, written to Magnus in 397, and in the *Commentary on Daniel*. The former is Jerome's reply to Magnus' accusations that he has defiled the church by quoting secular writings. In it, Jerome makes both cultural and literary arguments from Judaeo-Christian history. As God had allowed Israelites to incorporate non-Jewish female captives into their communities under certain circumstances, and as Moses, the prophets and Paul all referred to pagan literature, so too may Christians, provided they remove any unsuitable elements.²⁴³ *Ep. 70* was written in response to an attack, and so could be read as shrewd manoeuvring by Jerome to defend his actions. Even if this is so, it was written three years before

²⁴² Cf. Pease, "The Attitude," pp. 163-166.

²⁴³ Cf. Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 43-4.

Rufinus' attack and his own comprehensive reply, and provides evidence for developments in Jerome's thinking concerning the classics occurring well before 400.

Unlike *Ep. 70*, the *Commentary on Daniel* was not written in response to specific accusations, and so may more reliably indicate Jerome's true attitude. In it he refers to certain ideas that pagan philosophy and Christian theology hold in common: "*Si enim cunctos philosophorum revolvās libros, necesse est ut in eis reperias aliquam partem vasorum Dei. Ut apud Platonem, fabricatorem mundi Deum, ut apud Zenonem Stoicorum principem, inferos et immortales animas, et unum bonum, honestatem.*"²⁴⁴

This positive assessment of pagan philosophy is striking particularly because it is unusual: it is far more common to find Jerome referring disparagingly to philosophers as predecessors of the heretics, and deriding their lifestyle, writings and beliefs.²⁴⁵

Both of these examples share the common notion of what we might call the "triumph of God's way." In the first, non-Jewish female captives were incorporated into Israelite communities and became Jewish themselves and the ancestors of Jews.²⁴⁶

Similarly in the *Commentary on Daniel* Jerome approves and affirms the pagan philosophers insofar as their ideas correspond to Christian teaching. The common notion is one of incorporation of suitable non-Christian elements into the Christian community so that they become Christian themselves and do not alter the essential character of that community.

The most striking example of this type of thought occurs in a previously uncited passage from the *Commentarioli*. Commenting on Psalm 132.3 *IH* Jerome writes:

²⁴⁴ *In Daniele Prophetam*, 1.1, *PL* 25.495-496; *CCSL* 75A, p. 778.

²⁴⁵ Cf. Pease, "The Attitude," pp. 161-166.

²⁴⁶ The story of Ruth the Moabitess, who became an ancestor of King David, contains similar elements.

*Ahermon ἀνάθημα interpretatur. Ipse est autem mons, qui mutato vocabulo Hermoni et Sanir appellatur, idolis consecratus, et adsiduo hostiarum cruore perfusus. Hoc ergo est, quod dicit: quia omnis gratia et potentia idolatriae, et sublimitas ac pompa culturae ad montem transeat Sion, hoc est, ad ecclesiam Christi.*²⁴⁷ This quite extraordinary statement is simply a higher expression of Jerome’s sentiments that we have already discussed: all that is lovely and majestic not only in pagan culture, but even in pagan religion, will be taken over into Christian culture. The question remains as to what Jerome meant by “all the loveliness and power of idolatry, and the grandeur and ceremony of culture,” or at least how these ideas impacted the degree to which he was willing to incorporate classical readings into his *IH* Psalter. The rest of this chapter will answer this question, and we will return to these words of Jerome in the Conclusion.

3.3 Modern Literature

The seminal modern studies in this area are Luebeck’s *Hieronymus quos noverit scriptores et ex quibus hauserit* of 1872,²⁴⁸ and Hagendahl’s *Latin Fathers and the Classics* of 1958.²⁴⁹ Emil Luebeck lists passages where Jerome refers by name to Greek or Roman authors, and suggests other instances where Jerome borrows phraseology from classical authors unacknowledged – for which he helpfully lists the Hieronymian passage and its putative source in parallel. He divides his work according to the genre within which the classical authors operated and lists *Scriptores*

²⁴⁷ CCSL 72, p. 240.

²⁴⁸ Luebeck, A., *Hieronymus Quos Noverit Scriptores et ex Quibus Hauserit*, (Leipzig: Typis B. G. Teubneri, 1872).

²⁴⁹ Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers*.

Graeci on pages 10-104, *Scriptores Romani* on pages 105-159 (Republican authors) and 160-227 (Imperial authors). Luebeck considers only Jerome's own writings when looking for references to classical authors. Moreover, he is simply concerned to compile a list of references to and parallels with classical authors: he makes no attempt to discern a pattern within Jerome's references. Likewise he does not discuss Jerome's motivations for making such references, nor the various implications of the fact that he does make them. His work is useful as an initial list of classical references in Jerome's writings, but tells us little beyond that.

We have noted that Hagendahl similarly restricts his work to Jerome's original compositions, and ignores his translations, though he does not explain why.

Nevertheless it has formed the basis of most modern scholarship in this area, primarily because it provides vital background information on which classical authors Jerome was most familiar with and fond of, and on the frequency of classical allusions occurring in his own writings at different periods of his career.

A later article by Hagendahl was similarly devoted to identifying further classical references in Jerome's own writings, and to noting identifications made by other scholars.²⁵⁰ Other scholars tend to have followed Hagendahl's lead, suggesting and debating the occurrence of classical allusions in Jerome's letters, prefaces and commentaries. The debate has widened to include general assessments of Jerome's attitude towards the classics, and ongoing disagreements about how to interpret and evaluate Jerome's account of his dream, as we have seen.²⁵¹ These investigations and debates are useful as background information to our current study, but the

²⁵⁰ Hagendahl, H., "Jerome and the Latin Classics," in *Vigiliae Christianae*, 28, (1974), pp. 216-227.

²⁵¹ For a comprehensive bibliography, see Rebenich, *Jerome*, pp. 145-162.

fundamental difference between composition and translation means that our investigation of classical allusions in the *IH* Psalter proceeds along a different path.

More recently scholars have driven the discussion beyond the parameters of Jerome's own writings, and have considered the possibility of discovering classical allusions within Jerome's *Iuxta Hebraeos* (*IH*) translations. Catherine Brown Tkacz and Neil Adkin in particular have increasingly challenged the negative answer Jerome presumably anticipated to his rhetorical questions to Eustochium, which were themselves inspired by the Apostle Paul's questions in 2 Corinthians 6.15-16a,²⁵² “*Quae enim communicatio luci ad tenebras? Qui consensus Christo cum Belial?*” *Quid facit cum Psalterio Horatius? cum Evangeliiis Maro? cum Apostolo Cicero?*”²⁵³

Brown Tkacz credits herself with initiating the study of the *IH* as literature,²⁵⁴ by which she appears to include the study of the influence of the *IH* on later literature as well as the influence of earlier literature on the *IH*.²⁵⁵ Her work seeks to re-examine the *IH* as the literary product of a human translator, one which must be situated within its cultural, historical, religious and literary contexts, rather than treated as a free-standing and timeless religious artefact. She perceives the influence of the Vulgate on the development in Old English of explicitly Christian formulaic expressions to express biblical ideas,²⁵⁶ but the more interesting areas of her work for our purposes are those in which she proposes that at certain points in his biblical translations Jerome made direct allusion to classical works.

²⁵² “What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols?” 2 Corinthians 6.15-16a, ESV.

²⁵³ *Ep. 22.29, PL 22.416, CSEL 54, pp. 188-189.*

²⁵⁴ Cf. Brown Tkacz, C., “*Quid Facit?*” pp. 93-104. The dissertation in question is: Brown Tkacz, C., *The Topos of the Tormentor Tormented* (Ph.D. dissertation: University of Notre Dame, 1983).

²⁵⁵ Brown Tkacz, “*Quid Facit?*” pp. 93-94.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 93.

Her groundwork in terms of establishing the parameters and methods to be employed in an investigation of classical allusions in the *IH* is very helpful, and need not be reworked.²⁵⁷ She issued the unprecedented challenge to search for classical influences in the *IH*,²⁵⁸ which she later took up, suggesting allusions to Ovid in the wording of Mark chapter 6 and Esther chapters 5 and 7. She quite rightly argues that “Jerome would not interpolate into his translation an actual quotation from Ovid ... Nor would he grossly intrude with a flagging reference such as *insignis poeta* ... [nor] would he allude in a biblical translation to a classical text that was dissonant in context.” Instead she suggests that in cases where biblical and classical contexts are similar we should look for “dictional allusions” in the form of “lexical choices and possibly such features as syntactical patterning.”²⁵⁹ This is all rather vague, as she is evidently aware when she provides herself with the caveat that “such dictional allusions are by their nature unprovable.”²⁶⁰ She suggests allusion to the Ovidian phrase *quodvis pete munus* at *Metamorphoses* 2.44 in *pete a me quod vis* at Mark 6.22, in *quae est petitio tua* at Esther 5.3 and 7.2, and in *quid petis ut detur tibi* at Esther 5.6.²⁶¹

We should note Brown Tkacz’ argument in full: “The narrative similarities are what make the dictional allusion plausible. All three accounts ... treat rash promises made in circumstances and with results which have salient points of comparison: in each narrative a young favorite elicits a rash promise from a rather foolish ruler. In each case the favorite’s request ends in death, an outcome quite unforeseen by the ruler.

²⁵⁷ Her most important articles here are “*Labor tam utilis: The Creation of the Vulgate*,” in *Vigiliae Christianae* 50 (1996), pp. 47-72, and the later “*Quid Facit?*”

²⁵⁸ Brown Tkacz, “*Labor tam utilis*,” p. 43.

²⁵⁹ Brown Tkacz, “Ovid,” p. 380.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 380.

²⁶¹ *Ibid*, pp. 380-81.

Moreover, alluding to the classical narrative helps emphasise the character-revealing contrasts between the biblical narratives: Phoebus and Ahasuerus made immutable oaths, but Herod's promise is not clearly binding, so that his compliance suggests cowardice. Phaeton and Salome each recklessly cause death, but Esther knowingly risks her life to save the lives of a whole people. In short what the classical allusion implies matches the import of the original biblical narratives; thus the allusion enhances the presentation of nuances already in Scripture."²⁶²

Neil Adkin successfully refuted Brown Tkacz' proposals. His first argument is circumstantial: he suggests that "Jerome's acquaintance with the *Metamorphoses* was in fact very slight,"²⁶³ with the consequence that Jerome is unlikely to have recognised a dictional parallel between the Ovidian and biblical texts. The second is textual and far more important. He notes that "the Vulgate's wording corresponds exactly to the Greek of the Marcan text and to the Hebrew of Esther respectively, while in the former the Vulgate in any case merely reproduces the Old Latin."²⁶⁴ His comparison of Jerome's versions with the previous versions is absolutely essential: indeed if Brown Tkacz had followed her own advice²⁶⁵ she would have noticed her error.

Adkin's refutation is sufficient as it stands, but we can go further. Brown Tkacz' proposed allusions depend on the similarity of the words *quodvis pete* (Ovid), *pete ... quod vis* (Mark), and *quid vis ... petitio* (Esther). These words are very common in

²⁶² Brown Tkacz, "Ovid," p. 381.

²⁶³ Adkin, N., "Biblia Pagana: *Classical Echoes in the Vulgate*", in *Augustinianum* 40 (2000), p. 78.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 78.

²⁶⁵ "In such research, one will compare the Latin of Jerome's Vulgate and of the classical passage to all other pertinent biblical versions, i.e., Hebrew, the Greek, the Old Latin," (and, we may add, Hexaplaric readings too if possible), Brown Tkacz, "*Quid Facit?*" p. 95.

themselves, as is asking for what one wants, or being invited to ask for what one wants. The Greek *αἰτέω* or a cognate (whence *αἴτησόν* in Mark 6.22) occurs nine times in Mark alone. In eight of those Jerome translates it by *peto* or a cognate, using an alternative, *rogo*, only once. Similarly *θέλω* or a cognate occurs twenty five times in Mark, and is invariably translated as *volo* (including once as *noluit* for *οὐκ ἠθέλησεν* at Mark 6.26). The Hebrew *לָחַץ* occurs in thirteen verses in the Old Testament. When translating it as a noun Jerome uses *petitio* all but once, and when translating it as a verb he uses *peto* as well as *postulo*, *commodo*, *deprecor* and *rogo*. Jerome's translation *quid vis* for *לָחַץ-הָאֵל* at Esther 5.3 is potentially more significant, being the only occasion on which the *IH* reading does not correspond exactly to the Hebrew – a translation such as *quid tibi* would have been more literal (though incomprehensible!). Nevertheless, the differences between Ovid's objective relative clause *quodvis*, “[ask for] what you want,” and Jerome's interrogative clause *quid vis*, “what do you want?” further undermine the possibility of an allusion here.

There is no linguistic necessity or justification for proposing an allusion to Ovid,²⁶⁶ but is there any substance to Brown Tkacz' argument that “the narrative similarities are what make the dictional allusion plausible”²⁶⁷? She points to the “rash promises” made by Phoebus, Ahasuerus and Herod. This may be true in the cases of Phoebus and Herod, but Ahasuerus made his promise several times, both when drunk, and when he had been sober for two days. His actions are certainly not rash. Then there is her claim that “alluding to the classical narrative helps emphasise the character-revealing contrasts between the biblical narratives.” She suggests that the allusion

²⁶⁶ “The brevity of this communication precludes examining the other dictional choices, such as *rogare* and *poscere*, which Jerome could have made.” Brown Tkacz, “Ovid,” p. 381, n. 17. We have shown that such examination is essential.

²⁶⁷ Brown Tkacz, “Ovid,” p. 381.

works in two directions, revealing both similarities and contrasts: “Phoebus and Ahasuerus made immutable oaths, but Herod’s promise is not clearly binding, so that his compliance suggests cowardice. Phaeton and Salome each recklessly cause death, but Esther knowingly risks her life to save the lives of a whole people.”²⁶⁸ Surely we could see all these nuances without reference to Ovid? The salient points could be summarised as follows:

| | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ovid | Rash promise | Immutable promise | Reckless death of many people | Tragic outcome, large impact |
| Esther | Considered promise | Immutable promise | Single deserved death, Jews saved | Positive outcome, large impact |
| Mark | Rash promise | Non-immutable promise | Single calculated death | Tragic outcome, small impact |

Apart from the fact that each story has to do with a promise to honour a request that turns out to lead somehow to death, there is little similarity between the passage in Ovid and those in either Esther or Mark. We have to admit that the context of each story is sufficiently different to make the proposed allusions nearly meaningless.

With a little help from Adkin we have refuted Brown Tkacz’ proposals on four counts: first, Jerome probably did not know Ovid’s work very well; second, the Latin versions of the biblical texts closely follow their Hebrew and Greek predecessors; third, the words in question are themselves very common, and there is nothing surprising about Jerome’s translations; and fourth, there is in fact little in common

²⁶⁸ Brown Tkacz, “Ovid,” p. 381.

between the stories which would have suggested to Jerome a special connection among them all, and little to be learned by comparison of one with another.

We can therefore extract criteria that we will wish to see fulfilled in future candidates for allusion: first, we will need evidence that Jerome was familiar with all the texts in question; second, we will want the Latin reading to diverge to some extent from the original Hebrew (or Greek, in the context of the New Testament); and third, the words in question will need to be unusual, or at least unusual choices for translation.

Additionally, if the biblical and classical narrative contexts are particularly similar, this may provide circumstantial evidence in favour of an allusion, simply because such similarity could have triggered Jerome's memory of the classical passage in question.

When we turn to Adkin's work we see some of these criteria fulfilled. The essential difference between Adkin's suggestions and those of Brown Tkacz is that Adkin's reflect points at which the Latin reading has no basis in the Hebrew (nor, indeed, in the Septuagint).

His first suggestion concerns Esther 9.4. The phrase in question is *per cunctorum ora volitabat*, which clearly has no basis in the Hebrew or the Greek. Adkin suggests that Jerome is mimicking a fragment of Ennius, quoted by Cicero as *volito vivos per ora virum*, and imitated by Virgil in the *Georgics* as *victorque virum volitare per ora*. He notes that Jerome had already imitated these words in *Ep 57.2.2* as *per multorum ora volitaret*.²⁶⁹ Most of our criteria mentioned above are fulfilled. There is no doubt that

²⁶⁹ Adkin, "Biblia Pagana," pp. 78-79.

Jerome was familiar with the works of both Cicero and Virgil, and the occurrence of the similar line at *Ep 57* suggests that he was familiar with these particular works. There is no equivalent line in the Hebrew or LXX texts. The words themselves are common enough, but the imagery is striking and unusual. The fourth criterion is more difficult to judge as the Ennian fragment is entirely devoid of context.

Adkin proposes four other cases of possible allusion, then supports three and dismisses one of them. All of those that he supports share the criteria of going beyond the Hebrew text and of being unusual and striking phrases. At 1 Kings 10.15 the *IH* has *universique scruta vendentes*, cf. MT וּמְסַחֵר הַרְקָלִים; and at Nehemiah 3.31 it has *usque ad domum Nathinneorum et scruta vendentium*, cf. MT עַד-בַּיִת הַנְּתִינִים וְהַרְקָלִים. In each case, the specifics of what was sold, namely *scruta*, “worthless stuff, bricabrac,” has no basis in the Hebrew. Adkin traces it to a similar phrase in one of Horace’s epistles: *vilia vendentem tunicato scruta popello*, which Jerome had imitated in his *Vita Hilarionis* as the “elegant cretic spondee clausula,” *vilia populis scruta vendente*.²⁷⁰ Again, many of our criteria are met.²⁷¹

Similarly at Deuteronomy 23.12 the *IH* has *habebis locum extra castra ad quem egrediaris ad requisita naturae*, cf. the MT וְגַר תִּהְיֶה לְךָ מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה וְנִצָּאתָ שָׁמָּה חוּץ (23.13), which has no mention of “the call of nature.” Adkin has found this phrase too in Jerome’s writings elsewhere, namely his *Adversus Iovinianum*, and traces it to a fragment of one of Sallust’s *Histories*: *profectus quidam Ligus ad requisita naturae*.²⁷² He argues convincingly against the phrase being a cliché and against

²⁷⁰ Adkin, “*Biblia Pagana*,” pp. 81-82.

²⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 81.

²⁷² *Ibid*, p. 82.

Jerome having found the phrase in a later author such as Augustine, Julian of Eclanum, or Quintilian.²⁷³ Here too most of our criteria are met.²⁷⁴

Adkin's reasons for rejecting a possible allusion are also significant. The verse in question is Esther 9.28: *IH isti sunt dies quos nulla umquam delebit oblivio*, "these are the days which no forgetfulness will wipe out," cf. MT וְהַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה נִזְכָּרִים, "and these days [should] be remembered." Adkin notes that while *nulla umquam delebit oblivio* "exactly matches the wording of a Ciceronian epistle," nevertheless Jerome's apparent lack of familiarity with Cicero's letters mitigates against proposing that as the source. Likewise while similar vocabulary occurs elsewhere in Cicero's letters, so also does it occur in the *IH*. Adkin concludes that all this "would appear to undermine further the hypothesis of a direct debt to the *Ad Familiares* at Esther 9.28."²⁷⁵ We concur. Jerome was apparently unfamiliar with the relevant classical excerpt. The *IH* phrase in question has no direct basis in the Hebrew, but is easily understood as a paraphrase of what we do find there. The phrase is striking, but the vocabulary is not unusual elsewhere in the *IH*. There would be little to be gained by alluding at this point in Esther to this letter of Cicero.

Our examination of the work of Brown Tkacz and Adkin may be focussed on the starting point from which they look for allusions. Brown Tkacz' basic position is that "ideally in reading the Vulgate one may simply be struck by what seems to be a dictional allusion to a specific classical passage."²⁷⁶ She focuses on the Latin text first of all, comparison with the Hebrew and other previous versions being secondary.

²⁷³ Adkin, "*Biblia Pagana*," pp. 82-87.

²⁷⁴ Cf. Brown Tkacz, "*Quid Facit?*" pp. 94 and 102 for Jerome's familiarity with Sallust.

²⁷⁵ Adkin, "*Biblia Pagana*," pp. 80-81.

²⁷⁶ Brown Tkacz, "*Quid Facit?*" p. 95.

Thus she was content to propose the Ovidian allusions despite Jerome's translations in each case being unremarkable translations of the Hebrew and Greek. Adkin on the other hand only proposed allusions where the Latin text departed significantly from its predecessors, and was more successful as a result.

There is another, more subtle, but more important, point to be made. Brown Tkacz offers her theory that "Jerome might have recognized in a given biblical passage similarities to a particular classical text, or topos, and fittingly borrowed diction from that text or commonplace to use in his translation."²⁷⁷ She makes no attempt to explain why (or even that) Jerome might have considered that the best way to demonstrate such a connection would be to introduce wording from the classical text into the biblical text. Jerome's reference to classical authors, and the situations they describe, in his prefaces and commentaries undeniably show that he made mental comparisons between classical and biblical narratives. However, such comparison by no means indicates that he would have considered it appropriate to assimilate his biblical translations to those classical narratives by introducing verbal allusions to them.

Adkin, per contra, makes no mention whatsoever of contextual plausibility or "narrative similarities." Most of the allusions that he suggests do involve similar contexts in the classical and biblical passages, but Adkin desists from using Brown Tkacz' argument that Jerome's intention in making the allusion was that the classical passage would in some way illuminate the biblical passage. In fact he offers no argument at all, so we will propose our own.

²⁷⁷ Brown Tkacz, "*Quid Facit?*" p. 95.

All the allusions that Adkin proposes involve a particularly striking Latin phrase, in terms of vocabulary, imagery, or poetic merit: the striking imagery of *per cunctorum ora volitabat*, the “elegant cretic spondee”²⁷⁸ that is *scruta vendentes*, and the “stylistic and scatological salience” of *ad requisita naturae*.²⁷⁹ It is no surprise that these phrases in particular imprinted themselves upon Jerome’s “magpie mind and mammoth memory.”²⁸⁰ The most memorable phrases in the literature of any language tend to be those that employ arresting vocabulary, imagery or reveal poetic merit such as rhythm, metre, assonance and alliteration. We may think of similarly striking phrases in English, phrases such as “all that glitters is not gold,” or “If you prick us, do we not bleed?” or “a pound of flesh.”²⁸¹

The point is simply that these English phrases are memorable because of their innate literary quality: the fact that they were written by Shakespeare is of little immediate concern. Many such phrases have become clichés in modern English, with no recognition of their provenance. Yet we wager that even when they are used in written or oral conversation between people with full knowledge of their original context, it is most often their gnomic wisdom, their striking imagery, or their literary quality that has precipitated their use, and not a particular desire to recall or invite comparison with a scene from *The Merchant of Venice*.²⁸²

²⁷⁸ Adkin, “*Biblia Pagana*,” p. 81.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

²⁸⁰ Adkin, during a presentation at the International Conference on Jerome of Stridon, at Cardiff University in July 2006. The published proceedings of this conference will be forthcoming.

²⁸¹ Kaplan, M.L., ed., *William Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, Texts and Contexts*, (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2002), p. 60 (Act II, Scene vii), p. 68 (Act III, Scene i), and p. 82 (Act III, Scene iii) respectively.

²⁸² Even our practice throughout this discussion of providing three examples bows to the classical literary convention of the tricolon!

This discussion reveals a further problem with Brown Tkacz' reliance on the narrative context of the biblical and classical texts. Whether or not the users know that, for example, "a pound of flesh" refers to the pact between Antonio and Shylock in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, by its very nature it will almost always be used in the context of one party extracting unreasonable payment from another. The same can be said for most cases of verbal borrowing. Phrases that are striking enough to be memorable and unusual enough not simply to be part of normal speech are often evocative of a particular type of situation. It will be no surprise if they are used by a later writer or speaker to refer to a similar situation as that to which they first referred, whether or not the later writer has that first usage in mind.

Our argument therefore is that the primary reason Jerome used these classical phrases was not in order to allude to the context in which they were originally used and so draw a connection between the biblical and classical situations, nor even because they were "classical" per se, but simply because they were memorable phrases in high quality Latin, as defined by the standards of his education. The work of Hagendahl, Brown Tkacz, Adkin et al suggests that Jerome did indeed know that he was using phrases drawn from specific classical authors, rather than clichés. They are probably correct: Jerome's education would have seen to that. We have already mentioned the "backward-looking reverence for the classical ideal"²⁸³ that characterised Jerome's education. That classical ideal was certainly exemplified in the elegant phraseology of the better Roman authors and poets, but it was not confined to their work, just as "good English" may be exemplified by Jane Austen's prose (for example) but is not limited to quotations of her work or allusions to it.

²⁸³ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 11.

This leads us to redefine what we mean by “classical” and to reset the parameters within which we will look for classical influences on Jerome’s *IH* Psalter. Part of Jerome’s self-imposed task as a Christian apologist was to convince his Latin speaking contemporaries that, contrary to most opinion – including his own on occasion,²⁸⁴ the Hebrew bible did in fact possess literary merit.²⁸⁵ His Latin speaking contemporaries could not speak Hebrew, so the best way to convince them of the Hebrew bible’s literary merit²⁸⁶ was to produce a Latin version with literary merit.²⁸⁷ In the fourth century Latin literary quality was defined by classical paradigms from the late Republic and early Empire.

Therefore when looking for classical influences on the *IH* Psalter we will look for signs that Jerome made his version conform to classical literary ideals in terms of style, grammar and literary devices such as alliteration, chiasmic structure or even meter. We will also look for evidence that in the *IH* Jerome borrowed phraseology from classical authors, but with the understanding that, if he did, this is more likely

²⁸⁴ See, for example the implied contrast in the following: “*Denique et ego adolescentulus, post Quintiliani et Tullii lectionem ac flores rethoricos, cum me in linguae huius pistrinum reclusissem et multo sudore multoque tempore vic coepissem halantia stridentiaque verba resonare et quasi per cryptam ambulans rarum desuper lumen aspicere, inepi novissime in Danihelem et tanto taedio affectus sum, ut desperatione subita omnem veterem laborem voluerim contemnere,*” *Prologus Hieronymi in Danihele Propheta*, Weber/Gryson p. 1341, *PL* 28.1291-1292. See also Jerome’s complaint, “*Sed omnem sermonis elegantiam, et Latini eloquii venustatem, stridor lectionis Hebraicae sordidavit,*” *Comm. in Gal.*, 3 (Prologue), *PL* 26.399.

²⁸⁵ As we argued in the Introduction. See also Pease, “The Attitude,” pp. 151-152: “... he acquired a sense for literary style, which made him extremely sensitive to works of unrhetorical composition, and in his own writings, though by no means approaching the perfection of his classical models, he became a follower of Ciceronian traditions, and one of the better stylists of the Latin fathers.” Also Brown Tkacz, “Ovid,” p. 379: “Over and over again ... Jerome shows his respect for literary aspects of the Scriptures, as well as his scholarly sense that part of how one understands them is to analyse them as written texts.”

²⁸⁶ For Jerome’s claim that the Hebrew Bible has literary merit, see Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 47, and accompanying bibliography.

²⁸⁷ Cf. Kinzig’s description of the “attempt of some circles among the educated Christian elite at reconciling Christian theological ideas with pagan literary standards.” Kinzig, “Jewish and ‘Judaizing’ Eschatologies,” p. 424.

because he considered it to be good Latin than because he wanted to draw the reader's attention to that author specifically.

3.4 Methodology

Our methodology in this particular chapter was very similar to our general methodology as discussed in the Introduction. We proceeded by comparing the Latin text of the *IH* to the Hebrew text of the MT, and attempted to explain differences we found with reference to classical literature. In this regard, our method was closer to that of Adkin than to that of Brown Tkacz. We referred to the *Commentarioli* throughout, following Brown Tkacz' interesting suggestion that the classical allusions Jerome uses in the prefaces and commentaries might suggest which authors he had in mind as he translated each book.²⁸⁸ We wanted to see the criteria that we had extracted fulfilled before considering an allusion to be valid.

As a second step we followed Brown Tkacz' lead and noted those Psalms whose theme or narrative context are shared by prominent passages of classical literature and then searched the *IH* version of those Psalms for allusion to those passages. Psalms whose theme might lend itself to illustration by means of a classical reference, such as those dealing with an avenging Deity, the Underworld, or battle, fell into this category. Most Psalms, however, are so steeped in Jewish imagery or deal so specifically with the relationship of Israel and her God that allusion to a classical model based on contextual similarity seems all but ruled out.

²⁸⁸ Brown Tkacz, "*Quid Facit?*" pp. 96-7.

Thirdly we investigated the possibility that Jerome sought to reflect the literary standards of the “classical ideal” in his *IH* Psalter by noting occasions on which Jerome had produced a translation with particular poetic or literary merit. We compared the *IH* version of those passages to the Hebrew of the MT to see how far such striking or memorable passages coincided in the two traditions, or how far Jerome went beyond or lagged behind the Hebrew in terms of literary quality. Such assessment is undoubtedly subjective, but the examples we adduce will show that this is a workable principle on which to proceed.

Our framework had to be flexible: the apparent contradictions and inconsistencies between what Jerome says and what he does, are well known.²⁸⁹ Schwarz explains this with reference to Jerome’s humanity which may seem obvious, but needs to be borne in mind, especially as Jerome effectively worked alone, without the balance (or hindrance) of a translation committee. This flexibility made it more important to define closely what we were looking for. Step one above, involving instances where the Latin text goes beyond the Hebrew text and introduces a reading that can easily be attributed to a classical author, is straightforward, but our second and third steps were potentially more liable to turn up spurious “allusions.” In an attempt to limit this liability we worked as closely as possible to the definitions set out below.

Defining “Allusion”

The groundwork done by Brown Tkacz in this regard is helpful.²⁹⁰ She notes that since actual quotations are obviously prohibited, the search will centre on dictional

²⁸⁹ See, for example, Schwarz, *Principles and Problems*, p. 35; on Jerome’s ambiguous attitude towards the Classical legacy, see Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers*, p. 309

²⁹⁰ Brown Tkacz, “*Quid Facit?*” pp. 94-99.

allusion and imitation of syntactical patterns.²⁹¹ Hagendahl's insistence that a quotation be considered definite only if it comprises at least half a verse of the original²⁹² will be too rigid when dealing with Jerome's translations. Brown Tkacz's suggestion that an allusion could be accepted when several words taken from two lines of verse or a single sentence of prose are deployed in one sentence in the *IH*, in a similar narrative context,²⁹³ seems at first to be a workable compromise.

However, the difficulties inherent in defining and searching for allusions may be illustrated by the words Jerome uses to describe his embarkation on his *IH* project:

"Nec ignoro quanti laboris sit Prophetas intelligere nec facile quempiam posse iudicare de interpretatione, nisi intellexerit ante quae legerit: nos quoque patere morsibus plurimorum, qui stimulante invidia, quod consequi non valent, despiciunt.

*Sciens ergo et prudens in flammam mitto manum."*²⁹⁴ Jerome's words bear strong resemblance to the scene described by Livy in *History of Rome* 2.12. C. Mucius Scaevola was at the Etruscan court, having just failed in his attempt to assassinate the Etruscan king. He was threatened with being burnt alive, to which he responded: "*En tibi,*" inquit, *'ut sententias quam vile corpus sit iis qui magnam gloriam vident;'* *dextramque accenso ad sacrificium foculo inicit.*"²⁹⁵

The similarities between the two accounts are extensive: in each case a lone man takes his stand against his detractors, and (literally or metaphorically) thrusts a hand into a

²⁹¹ Brown Tkacz, "*Quid Facit?*" p. 94.

²⁹² Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers*, p. 97.

²⁹³ Brown Tkacz, "*Quid Facit?*" p. 96.

²⁹⁴ *Preface to Isaiah* (Vulgate), PL 28.772, Weber/Gryson p. 1096.

²⁹⁵ Livy, *History of Rome* 2.12, from: *Titi Livi, Ab Urbe Condita, Recognoverunt et Adnotatione Critica Instruxerunt Robertus Seymour Conway et Carolus Flamstead Walters, Tomus 1. Libri I-V, Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis*, (Oxonii: E Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1914).

flame, convinced that by so doing he will win great acclaim, partly for himself, but primarily for some greater cause. It is tempting in addition to imagine that Mucius' low regard for his bodily comfort will have appealed to Jerome's ascetic sensibilities. The fundamental problem of course is that the two accounts share absolutely no verbal similarities: by both Hagendahl's and Brown Tkacz' assessment this would not qualify as an allusion. Perhaps they are correct, there is certainly the possibility that the phrase "*in flammam mitto manum*" was a common idiom of the time, though as far as we have been able to discover it does not occur outside Jerome's corpus.²⁹⁶

Nevertheless, it surely stands to reason that a classically educated Roman man and his classically educated Roman readers cannot have failed to notice the similarity, nor the heroic and flattering light that Jerome thereby directs on to himself.

The most significant point is that despite being in the midst of introducing a biblical project Jerome does not allude to a biblical event or hero. Rather than liken himself favourably to Daniel facing the lions, Elijah facing the priests of Baal, or even Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego facing the fiery furnace, he opts for a non-biblical and most probably classical alternative.

Is this an allusion or not? We suggest that it is: not a verbal allusion, but certainly an allusion to a similar situation, chosen both because of the historical depth and dramatic effect it brings to Jerome's description of his own situation, and because of its memorable phraseology. In light of such difficulties we suggest that rather than

²⁹⁶ It does however appear to have been a phrase favoured by Jerome, appearing twice more in his writings, once in the *Apologia contra Libros Rufini* (PL 23.454), and once in *Ep. 54.2, Ad Furiam, De Viduitate Servanda*, PL 22.550, CSEL 54, p. 467. The former is less significant, being a near-verbatim recapitulation of Jerome's words in *Preface to Isaiah*, but in the latter case he uses the phrase, "*sciens et videns in flammam mitto manum*" to describe the opposition he expects in light of his harsh demands in the letter. No doubt it appealed to Jerome's sense of drama.

attempting a single definition of “allusion,” as do Hagendahl and Brown Tkacz, it will be more useful to describe a range of possibilities to which the label “allusion” might be attached. The principles we discuss here could be equally applied to a search for classical allusions in other *IH* books.

1. (Following Hagendahl) A direct quotation, comprising at least half a verse of the original. Clearly in the case of the *IH* translations, the quotation will not be introduced as such, and it will be up to the reader to recognise it.
2. (Following Brown Tkacz) Several words taken from two lines of verse or one sentence of prose, occurring within one sentence in the *IH* in a similar narrative context. The main point of interest in this case is the coincidence of verbal roots: slight variations in syntax or diction can be tolerated so long as the basic narrative context is similar.
3. A single significant poetic word. Occasionally Jerome’s usage in the *IH* of a rare word, or an unusual usage of a common word, may be deliberately reminiscent of a similar usage in a classical context.
4. An allusion to a similar classical situation by the creation of a particular image, without recourse to the words or phrases used by the original author. Jerome’s “*in flammam mitto manum*” would fall into this category.

In the context of biblical translation the most likely categories in which to find allusions will be numbers two and three. Within the restraints of a translation, and in

the absence of narrative and contextual coincidence, direct quotation is almost impossible, and the scope for creating similar imagery is limited. In other words, the search for allusions is likely to centre around a few words in the *IH* which suggest or call to the reader's mind a similar situation in a classical source.

However, without the filter of substantial verbal similarity, there is consequently a greater risk of "finding" spurious allusions. We suggest that there are three principles which form a framework within which allusions in the four categories mentioned above might exist. As the degree of verbal similarity decreases through the categories, so these three principles will become increasingly important in determining the validity of a possible allusion.

1. Context (following Brown Tkacz). She draws attention to the importance of context, noting that, "the greater the similarity between the classical and biblical passages in context and syntax as well as diction, the more likely it is that an allusion exists."²⁹⁷ In the present case her warning could be modified to suggest that in the absence of similarity of diction, syntax and context, a proposed instance of allusion is unlikely to be correct.
2. Appropriateness to Scripture. We have mentioned the apparent similarity in Jerome's attitude towards Jewish material and classical material in terms of their being acceptable in so far as they were "appropriate to Scripture." Jerome is extremely unlikely to have included allusions that would undermine his perception of the teaching of scripture.

²⁹⁷ Brown Tkacz, "*Quid Facit?*" p. 96.

3. Purpose. The case for a possible allusion will be strengthened if it has a demonstrable purpose, such as serving as a direct example or counter-example for the biblical passage, or as a warning or encouragement, or as a challenge between Christian and pagan understandings of that issue.²⁹⁸ By comparison or contrast with a classical source, such an allusion would promote a broader understanding of the biblical passage.

Defining "Classical"

Direct allusion to the great authors of the late Roman Republic and early Empire clearly counts as "classical." Furthermore, instances in which Jerome sought to make his translation attain to the literary standards of those great authors do not strictly constitute "classical allusion," but undoubtedly demonstrate a "classical influence."

However, there is an important distinction that seems not yet to have been clarified,²⁹⁹ but which we hinted at above, namely the difference between Jerome alluding directly to a classical author, versus employing certain words or phrases in his translations that had important connotations in contemporary Latin society. Arguably, Jerome included only the former in his account of his dream, and his de facto participation in the classical world makes the latter very likely. By this reasoning, Jerome would see no contradiction in employing general classical models of rhetoric even after his dream.

²⁹⁸ Such as Kraus' contention that by the wording of *Exodus 20.2 IH* ("zelotes visitans iniquitatem patrum in filiis in tertiam et quartam generationem eorum qui oderunt me"), Jerome deliberately answers Julian's objections to the concept of punishment to the third and fourth generation. See Kraus, *Jerome's Translation*, p. 210.

²⁹⁹ Kraus seems to have recognised this distinction in practice but does not specifically discuss it: Kraus, *Jerome's Translation*, pp. 78-104.

Nor would the classical inspiration for writing prefaces to books,³⁰⁰ or for particular styles of commentary,³⁰¹ pose a problem.

Kraus has successfully demonstrated several instances of this sort of nuanced and socially or theologically loaded translation in the book of Exodus.³⁰² This sort of allusion (which we might call “Fourth Century” rather than “classical”) to contemporary thought or issues is just as important for gaining an understanding of Jerome’s work on the Vulgate, but its discovery depends upon a thorough knowledge of contemporary history, and a thorough knowledge of Latin to reveal unusual word usages, or the deliberate use of one synonym rather than another.³⁰³

3.5 Examples: Classical Allusions in the Psalter *IH*

3.5.1 Direct Allusions to a Classical or Fourth Century Source

The simple fact is that there are no readings in the *IH* Psalter that can only be explained by reference to a classical or fourth century source.

Our review of Adkin’s work versus that of Brown Tkacz demonstrated that the former was more successful than the latter in proposing and supporting his allusions primarily because they could not be explained by reference to the Hebrew text. The phrases he discussed were appropriate to their context, indeed if the *IH* was not read

³⁰⁰ Brown Tkacz, “*Labor tam Utilis*”, p. 43.

³⁰¹ Kraus, *Jerome’s Translation*, p. 80.

³⁰² Kraus, *Jerome’s Translation*, pp. 82-104.

³⁰³ Cf. the discussions of Exodus 12.3 *IH* and 12.14 *IH* in Kraus, *Jerome’s Translation*, pp. 178 and 181-182 respectively, regarding Jerome’s use of *domus* versus *familia*, and *cultus* versus *legitimum*.

in parallel with the Hebrew there would be little to indicate that they were interpolations. But interpolations they were, whether in a conscious attempt by Jerome to force a comparison with their original use, or, as we have preferred to argue, simply because they were striking and memorable lines.

This being so, we are left with looking for Brown Tkacz' "dictional allusions" with all the inherent difficulties. This approach relies to a great extent on the reader's breadth of knowledge of the classics: it is no surprise that both Adkin and Brown Tkacz come from a classical background. The current author similarly comes from a classical background but there is, of course, the possibility that a future investigation conducted by a scholar with a deeper knowledge of specific classical authors might notice fainter allusions which have escaped our attention here.

There are only four references in the *Commentarioli* that might support a classical interpretation of the relevant text in the *IH* Psalter. We will consider these in turn:

Psalm 21.1 *IH*:

The first verse functions as a heading for the Psalm, and in the corresponding entry in the *Commentarioli*³⁰⁴ we find an extraordinary synthesis of classical and Christian elements as Jerome seeks to attribute the Psalm to Christ – *sicut totius psalmi contextus ostendit* – despite a rather tortuous route to justifying his attribution.

The *IH* reading is almost completely different to the *ILXX*. In some cases Jerome is following his standard practices, rendering *Victori* for לְמִנְצֵרָה, and *canticum* instead of

³⁰⁴ CCSL 72, p. 198.

the Greek loan word *psalmum* for מְזִמּוֹר, though it is odd that he did not translate לְדוֹר: there is no evidence of its absence in the known Hebrew textual history or in any of the ancient versions.

The *IH pro cervo matutino*, “concerning the stag of the morning,” follows Jerome’s claim in the *Commentarioli* that this is what *Hebraei habent*. However by preferring this reading in the *IH* Jerome had to abandon the more easily Christological *pro adsumptione matutina*, “concerning that which is taken up in the morning,” which he had already interpreted as referring to Christ’s resurrection: *Adsumptio matutina resurrectionis dominicae et ascensus ad Patrem significat sacramentum*.

Not to be outdone Jerome translates the verse in the *IH* according to what he believes *Hebraei habent*, namely *pro cervo matutino*, and depends upon classical animal mythology to explain this as a reference to Christ in the *Commentarioli*: “*Sed nos cervum, qui interficiat serpentes et venena consumat, nullum alium nisi Christum intellegimus, sicut totius psalmi contextus ostendit.*” Stags were considered to be the mortal enemies of snakes, and stag horn to have magical powers against snake venom: indeed Pliny the Elder noted these powers in his *Natural History*.³⁰⁵ Jerome was familiar with Pliny’s writings,³⁰⁶ and apparently held them in high regard as a source of information on the natural world.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁵ Pliny, *Natural History*, 8.32(50), in Mayhoff, C., ed., *C. Plini Secundi Naturalis Historiae Libri XXXVII*, Vol II, (Lipsiae: Aedibus B.G. Teubneri, 1909), pp. 118-119.

³⁰⁶ Cf. *Ep.* 125.12.1f: “I betook myself to a brother who before his conversion had been a Hebrew and asked him to teach me his language. Thus, after familiarising myself with the pointed style of Quintilian, the fluency of Cicero, the seriousness of Fronto, and the gentleness of Pliny, I now began to learn the alphabet again and practise hissing and breath-demanding words.” (Rebenich’s translation, from Rebenich, *Jerome*, p. 15). Hayward refers to Jerome’s mention of Aristotle, Theophrastus and Pliny the Younger as writers of natural history in the *Comm in Jeremiah*, III.75 (CCSL 74, p. 167). However, as Hayward points out, following Reiter, none of them discuss the partridge, as Jerome claims they do! Hayward, C.T.R., “Jewish Traditions in Jerome’s Commentary on Jeremiah and the

In this light it is tempting to propose that Jerome translated the feminine אֲנִיָּהּ by the masculine *cervus* in order to ease the identification with Christ. If so, this is a small, but significant, example of a classical influence on a translation *Iuxta Hebraeos*.

Psalm 47.3 IH:

The entry in the *Commentarioli* includes what appear to be gnomic sayings that may have a classical provenance: *Montes Sion, latera aquilonis. Quia 'boreas ventus est durus,' et 'a borea exardescunt mala,' omnes sancti ecclesiae, qui montes vocantur Sion, temptationibus diaboli expositi sunt.*³⁰⁸ Our efforts to identify these have failed. Whatever Jerome had in mind here it appears not to have influenced his translation.

Psalm 87.11 IH:

The entry in the *Commentarioli* shows that Jerome was aware of two possible meanings for רַפָּאִים, but does not explain why he chooses *gigantes* in the *IH*.³⁰⁹ It also shows Jerome's ignorance of the two separate roots רפא and רפה that give rise to the two different meanings of רַפָּאִים. The former means "heal," hence LXX *ἰατροί*, and the latter means "sink, relax," hence both "ghosts" and (extinct) "giants," as sunken and powerless.³¹⁰ Jerome's mistake is understandable, but it has a significant impact on his translation of the verse.

Targum of Jeremiah," in *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association*, 9 (1985), pp. 100-120, here p. 110.

³⁰⁷ See *In Hiezechielem IX*, CCSL 75, p. 394; Cf. Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 314.

³⁰⁸ CCSL 72, p. 209.

³⁰⁹ CCSL 72, p. 222. In the *De Nom. Heb.* Jerome interprets "Raphaim" as "gigantes," but offers no further explanation. PL 23.783.

³¹⁰ Cf. BDB pp. 950-952.

There are twenty six references to רָפָאִים in the Old Testament, but only this one in the Psalter. Fourteen times Jerome simply transliterates the Hebrew as *Refaim*, eleven times he translates it as *gigantes*, and once he translates it using *impius*.³¹¹

Unfortunately then Jerome's use of *gigantes* in the *IH* Psalter is not particularly remarkable in itself. The interest in this verse in terms of classical influences comes in the *Commentarioli*. Jerome's reference to Symmachus' interpretive translation *Rafaim theomachi*, with its clear reference to the classical tales of battles between gods and giants,³¹² makes it very likely that Jerome had these classical overtones in mind as he translated this verse. Throughout the Old Testament the רָפָאִים appear to be mentioned neutrally or in terms of their opposition to one or other people group, but they are never said to be directly opposed to God, i.e. to be *theomachi*. Nevertheless, there is a biblical tradition of the existence of giants,³¹³ so that Jerome's translation (as opposed to his exegesis) is also justifiable against the Hebrew.

Jerome quite rightly abandons the nonsensical translation "physicians" in the LXX and *ILXX* – the psalmist is not condemning all medical personnel! However, this verse depends for its logic either on the notion that the רָפָאִים are opposed to God, i.e. *theomachi*, or that they too are dead: "Will you show wonders to the dead? [NO!] Will the giants rise up and praise you? [NO! They are dead: but if anything, they will rise up and fight you.]" Jerome would have done better to translate רָפָאִים as "ghosts," but his ignorance of this option meant that he had to translate it as "giants" and then suggest that (like classical giants, but unlike biblical giants) these giants were battling

³¹¹ There is a division of practice between different Old Testament books, so that in Genesis, Joshua and 1 Chronicles, Jerome uses only *Refaim*; in Deuteronomy, Job and Psalms he uses only *gigantes*; in 2 Samuel and Isaiah he uses both; and in Proverbs he uses *impius* and *gigans*.

³¹² See, for example, Homer, *Odyssey*, XI.305ff; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I.151ff; and Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI.580-584.

³¹³ See, for example, Genesis 6.4, Deuteronomy 2.10-11, 1 Samuel 17.

against God. Jerome has not directly inserted a classical reading into this verse, but it is only through his classically-influenced understanding of the verse that he can make sense of it.

Psalm 132.3 IH:

We have discussed Jerome's entry in the *Commentarioli* for this verse earlier in this chapter, in particular the notion of the good of classical religion and culture being included in the church of Christ.³¹⁴ Yet the verse to which it is attached is a close translation of the Hebrew, and shows no sign of classical elements.

3.5.2 Thematic Connection to a Classical Passage

We noted several Psalms whose theme, subject matter, or imagery are evocative of similar passages in classical authors. Closer reading revealed that the wording of none of these fulfilled our criteria for allusion. Two of the most striking passages, and those which appeared to share the greatest thematic connection with passages in classical literature, are the description of the storm in Psalm 76.17-21 *IH*, and the description of God's provision of bountiful nature at Psalm 64.10-14 *IH*. Due to constraints of space we will discuss only the latter here. A comparison of the former with the MT, *ILXX*, and classical descriptions of storms such as in Virgil's *Aeneid* III.192-204 and IV.120-122, 160-168 revealed no allusion of any kind to the Virgilian passages in the *IH* passage.

³¹⁴ *CCSL* 72, p. 240.

Psalm 64.10-14 IH cf. Virgil *Eclogue* IV:³¹⁵

The *IH* varies considerably from the *ILXX* at this point, which suggests that Jerome may have been following another, perhaps classical, tradition. Much of the variation between the *IH* and the *ILXX* can be explained by Jerome's desire to produce a more accurate translation of the Hebrew, for example the correction of *speciosa* (following *LXX* ὠραῖα) to *pascua* for תִּינִן in verse 13. However, the theme of natural bounty brought about by the arrival of a deity on earth (cf. *IH visita*, and *ILXX visitasti*) is a common trope in Latin literature looking back, or in some cases forwards, to a Golden Age. It is tempting to posit a connection between Jerome's translation of this Psalm, and one such forward-looking classical work, namely Virgil's fourth *Eclogue*.

The *Commentarioli* shows that Jerome read at least Psalm 64.12 *IH* as referring to Christ: *Benedices coronam anni. Eius circulum et semper in se currentia anni tempora coronam vocavit. Aut certe quia in passione Domini victoria de toto orbe suscepta est.*³¹⁶

By the 4th Century there was a tradition that interpreted *Eclogue* IV Christologically, taking Pollio (Virgil's addressee) to stand for Christ, so that the *Eclogue* became a prophecy of Christ's advent. Jerome refers, apparently disparagingly, to this tradition in *Ep* 53.7, written to Paulinus:

Quasi non legerimus, Homero centonas, et Virgiliocentonas: ac non sic etiam

Maronem sine Christo possimus dicere Christianum, qui scripserit:

³¹⁵ For the text of *Eclogue* IV, see Williams, R.D., *Virgil, The Eclogues and Georgics, Edited with Introduction and Notes by R. Deryck Williams*, (London: Bristol Classical Press, 1996).

³¹⁶ *CCSL* 72, p. 213.

Iam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna. [Virgil, *Eclogue* IV, line 6].

Iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto. [Ibid, line 7].

Et patrem loquentem ad filium,

Nate, meae vires, mea magna potentia solus. [Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.664].

Et post verba Salvatoris in cruce

Talia perstabat memorans, fixusque manebat. [Virgil, *Aeneid* 2.650].³¹⁷

Kinzig argues that Jerome and others promoted a certain degree of overlap between pagan and Christian ideas, partly with reference to this *Eclogue*: “There is, however, another [eschatological] tradition which, in the description of the millennium, derives from pagan ideas of the development of culture. In certain passages the millennium is compared to the golden age of Saturn, as is described, for example, in Ovid (*Met.* 1:89-112) and in Virgil’s famous *Fourth Eclogue*. This is by no means simply Jerome’s polemic, since we know from the writings of Lactantius and the emperor Constantine that such a mixture of Judaeo-Christian and pagan eschatological ideas was indeed current among certain Christian intellectual circles.”³¹⁸ If Jerome wished to demonstrate such a connection, this Psalm constituted, perhaps, a “golden” opportunity.

³¹⁷ *Ep.* 53.7, *PL* 22.544-545, *CSEL* 54, p. 454. Augustine refers to the same tradition in *De Civ. Dei* X.27, *PL* 41.305, *CCSL* 47, pp. 301-303, and in *Contra Iudaeos, Paganos, et Arianos* 15, *PL* 42.1126.

³¹⁸ Kinzig, “Jewish and ‘Judaizing’ Eschatologies,” p. 417.

Given the possible prophetic identity of Pollio and Christ, such an allusion would have a clear purpose, namely to emphasise the universality of the “golden age” that God brings to the earth by demonstrating similarities between Psalm 64 and *Eclogue* IV. It would also be appropriate to scripture in that it would demonstrate the same prophetic ideas in both contexts. It is difficult to conceive of another pair of passages from such different sources in which the theme of each is so fundamental to its particular context (whether Jewish or early Imperial Rome), yet were both interpreted by a later generation as referring to the same event (the arrival of Christ on earth). If there were ever a Psalm and a classical passage ripe for allusion, these are they.

However, examining the texts side by side reveals no correspondence in terms of vocabulary or precise imagery. Despite Jerome’s knowledge of the argument that *Eclogue* IV showed Virgil to be a “Christian without Christ,” he did not seek to demonstrate any verbal similarity between Psalm 64 *IH* and *Eclogue* IV. The lack of any verbal similarity, coupled with the closeness of the Latin of the *IH* to the Hebrew text, and the consideration that a “golden age” type image existed in both Latin and Hebrew thought, renders invalid any proposition of an allusion.

This example has demonstrated the difficulty of proposing an allusion between biblical and classical narratives based on contextual or thematic similarity. Psalm 64 *IH* and Virgil *Eclogue* IV both deal with ideas of future blessing, and share the additional connection that this *Eclogue* had been interpreted Christologically. Despite these similarities Jerome made no attempt to show a connection between them, choosing to follow the Hebrew closely. If there is no allusion between these passages, it is difficult to conceive of similar allusion elsewhere in the Psalter!

3.5.3 The Influence of Classical Literary Ideals

In contrast to the paucity of examples in our previous two categories there are several occasions on which Jerome provides a reading in the *IH* Psalter that conforms more closely to classical literary or poetic ideals than the corresponding reading in the *ILXX*. There is the possibility that the *IH* reading corresponds to one or another *VL* reading, but in this case Jerome's decision to follow that rather than the *ILXX* when making the *IH* means that the *IH* reading is no less significant. Given that one of Jerome's arguments for a return to the Hebrew was to reveal to his Latin readers the literary qualities of the Hebrew, our primary interest in this section will be to see how far Jerome's poetical readings coincide with similar readings in the Hebrew.³¹⁹

- i) Structure or balance of Hebrew preserved in the *IH*

Psalm 2.5 *IH*:

The *IH* is identical to the *ILXX* but is no less significant as a result, particularly as the immediately surrounding verses are different in each version. The *IH* preserves the chiasmic structure of the Hebrew, so that יִבְהַלְמוּ and *conturbabit eos* occupy emphatic positions at the end of the line. This is particularly significant in the *IH* because of Jerome's innovative and incorrect translation of the qal perfect רָגַשׁוּ by the future

³¹⁹ Cf. Müller: "Jerome's translation was seemingly victorious. But the victory was gained first and foremost because of its linguistic qualities, not because of its faithfulness to the Hebrew text." Müller, M., "Graeca Sive Hebraica Veritas? The Defence of the Septuagint in the Early Church," in *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*, 1, 1989, pp. 103-124, here p. 123.

passive *turbabuntur* in Psalm 2.1 *IH*. The rhetorical question of the Hebrew, “why have the nations plotted?” becomes a direct question in the *IH*, “why will the nations be thrown into confusion?” Then verse 5b *IH*, with its emphatically positioned *conturbabit eos*, answers verse 1a *IH*, *quare turbabuntur*. The *gentes* will be thrown into confusion by God because of his anger at their actions and attitudes described in verses 1 to 4.

Psalm 96.11 *IH*:

The *IH* is identical to the *ILXX*, but also preserves the chiasmic structure of the Hebrew. The *IH* is incorrect against the MT in its use of *orior*, “rise, appear” for the pual participle זָרַע, “is sown.” This could indicate that Jerome was simply copying *ILXX*, so that his preservation of the Hebrew chiasm in the *IH* is less significant. However, BHS attests the reading זָרַח, “rise, come forth” as well as זָרַע, “sow,” so Jerome may still be translating afresh, but from a different manuscript tradition.

Psalm 105.22 *IH*:

The *IH mirabilia ... terribilia* admirably captures the meaning of, and replicates the effect of Hebrew נִפְלְאוֹת ... נִרְאֹת.

- ii) Structure or balance of Hebrew lost in *IH*

Psalm 77.58 *IH*:

The differences between the *IH* and the *ILXX* suggest that Jerome was translating afresh here or at least revising heavily. Yet he utterly fails to reproduce in the *IH* the

beautiful four word chiasmic structure of the Hebrew line, and in fact makes no obvious attempt to do so.

Psalm 125.5 IH:

The chiasmic structure of the *IH* follows both the Hebrew and the *ILXX*, but in this case Jerome missed an opportunity to reflect the Hebrew rhyme בְּרִמְעָה בְּרִנָּה in the *IH*.

The feminine singular רִמְעָה could have been translated correctly by the feminine singular *lacrimatio* rather than the plural *lacrimae*, and the resulting phrase *in lacrimatione in exultatione* would also have preserved the Hebrew rhyme.

iii) Questions of Meter

Debates over whether or not “poetic” sections of the Old Testament, most notably the Psalms, were written in meter have limped on since at least the first century AD. For a comprehensive survey of biblical poetry, including various notions of biblical meter, we refer to James Kugel’s *The Idea of Biblical Poetry*.³²⁰ Kugel focuses the question on Jerome’s statement in the *Preface to Eusebius*, and argues as follows: “In the specific question of meter Jerome was not noticeably confident, or consistent. He must have tried to perform some kind of scansion in Hebrew, but never reports or duplicates it. The passage from his preface to Eusebius ... has often been cited without being understood: the point is that the very profusion of metrical types put forth by Jerome translates his own insecurity with any one meter. ... Lastly, in Jerome’s metrical catalogue there is one phrase that sticks in the throat, that most anticlimactic

³²⁰ Kugel, J.L., *The Idea of Biblical Poetry, Parallelism and its History*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), 1981. See especially his sections on “The metrical hypothesis,” pp. 70-76, and on Jerome, pp. 149-156.

‘et nunc semipede ingreditur.’ This ‘half-foot’ seems an escape clause of sorts, an admission that, try as he did, he could not get the Psalms to conform consistently to any of the previously cited meters.”³²¹

We should also note Jerome’s remarks in the *Preface to Job*, where he says of certain verses: “*exametri versus sunt, dactilo spondeoque currentes et propter linguae idioma crebro recipientes et alios pedes non earundem syllabarum, sed eorundem temporum ... Quod si cui videtur incredulum, metra scilicet esse apud Hebraeos et in morem nostri Flacci graecique Pindari et Alchaei et Saffo vel Psalterium vel Lamentationes Hieremiae vel omnia ferme Scripturarum cantica conprehendi, legat Filonem, Ioseppum, Origenem, caesariensem Eusebium, et eorum testimonio me verum dicere conprobabit.*”³²² Kugel suggests that “[for Jerome] the Psalms were metrical because Horace was, and the Psalms were to replace Horace.”³²³ We have already noted the absence of any detailed commentary by Jerome on the possible metre of the Hebrew Psalms, so we have no strong position from which to disagree with Kugel, other than the literary naïvety that his suggestion imputes to Jerome. We can however assess the *IH* Psalter for any signs that Jerome attempted to reflect a Hebrew meter in Latin, or offer an approximate equivalent.

In the entry for Psalm 144 *IH* in the *Commentarioli* Jerome deals with this Psalm being acrostic and written in the same meter as Psalm 118 *IH*: *Et iste psalmus apud Hebraeos secundum ordinem litterarum est: et eodem scribitur metro, quo centesimus octavus decimus scriptus est. sed inter illum et hunc hoc interest, quod ille sub*

³²¹ Kugel, *The Idea*, p. 153.

³²² *Praef in Job*, PL 28.1081-1082, Weber/Gryson pp. 731-732.

³²³ Kugel, *The Idea*, p. 152.

*singulis litteris octonos versus habet, hic singulos.*³²⁴ In neither case does Jerome attempt to reproduce the acrostic pattern in Latin – other than inserting the transliterated form of the relevant Hebrew letter at the beginning of each verse in Psalm 144 *IH*, or at the beginning of each set of eight verses in Psalm 118 *IH* – nor does he make any attempt to write the Latin in meter. Kugel draws attention to *Ep* 30 where Jerome again mentions that Psalms 118 and 145 *IH* are acrostic, but again does not suggest a meter.³²⁵

Perhaps the most striking example is at Psalm 148.9 *IH*. If any Hebrew verse in the Psalter is written in meter this is surely it! Jerome provides a technically correct translation in the *IH*, but utterly fails to reproduce or mimic the rhythm of the Hebrew. He also obscures the clear parallelism of the Hebrew by translating first קָלֵל by *omnes* and second by *universae*, whereas the LXX and the *ILXX* use the same word (πάντες/πᾶσαι and *omnes*) for both.

Whatever Jerome's understanding of or assumptions about the meter of Hebrew Psalms, he made no attempt in the *IH* Psalter to render any Psalms in a Latin meter.

iv) Poetic devices in *IH* that mimic the Hebrew

Psalm 5.2 *IH*:

Jerome's *murmur meum* is a particularly successful translation of MT תַּגִּיגִי. On one level, its meaning of “my murmuring,” is a more accurate translation of תַּגִּיגִי than

³²⁴ CCSL 72, p. 244.

³²⁵ Kugel, *The Idea*, p. 155.

ILXX clamorem meum, “my crying out.” On another level, the repetition of sound within *murmur meum* reflects that in מְגִיגִי, and the overall result in Latin is pleasingly, and accurately, onomatopoeic.

Psalm 21.6 IH:

IH: ad te clamaverunt et salvati sunt

in te confisi sunt et non sunt confusi

This is surely one of the most poetically pleasing verses in the *IH* showing either a rare flash of genius on Jerome’s part, or a rare occasion on which he felt able to indulge it. Jerome’s different versions are virtually identical in meaning, so that the differences he introduced must have been motivated by other considerations. The *IH* is beautifully balanced, the chiasma in 6b is both pleasing and effective, and the cadence, sound and meaning of the *IH* verse admirably mimic, or even flatter, the Hebrew verse.

- v) Poetic devices in the *IH* that go beyond the Hebrew

Psalm 82.16 IH:

Verse 16b *IH* has pleasing rhythm and alliteration, almost onomatopoeia with the repeated stress and repeated “-tu-” throughout line representing the relentless pounding of storm winds. The correction of *ILXX ira* to *IH turbine* for מְפִיחַ, “storm wind,” provided Jerome with an extra “-tu-” which he exploited well, and his mistranslation of תְּבַהֵלֵם as the imperative *conturba* rather than the future indicative *turbabis* facilitated the elision of the final -a to heighten the poetic effect.

In this case the *IH* is not replicating an effect in the Hebrew: there are no unusual rhythms or sounds there. Nevertheless Jerome's *IH* version is reasonably legitimate in terms of translation, and very effective.

Psalm 138.8-9 *IH*:

The *IH* is generally a good translation of the Hebrew, but it follows *ILXX* (which was following the *LXX*) in inserting *si* at beginning of verse 8b, and also at beginning of verse 9a. The Latin therefore constitutes an ascending tricolon which is present in Hebrew though not highlighted as much as it is in the Latin versions by the repeated “*si ... si ... si ...*”

These verses inspired perhaps Jerome's most beautiful entry in the *Commentarioli*:

“*Si ascendero in caelum, tu ibi es: si descendero in infernum, ades, et reliqua. Nulla altitudo te altior est, nullum profundum te profundius: oriens et occidens in tua*

continentur manu.”³²⁶ Clearly these verses had a considerable effect on Jerome so that it is not surprising that he provided a translation in the *IH* that emphasises their significance.

³²⁶ *CCSL* 72, p. 242.

vi) Heightened imagery in the *IH*

Psalm 135.15a *IH*:

Its use of *excussit* and *virtutem eius* means that the *ILXX* is in fact a closer translation of the Hebrew נָעַר, “shake” and חֵיל, “might” than the *IH* with *convolvit* and *exercitum eius*. These deliberate changes by Jerome can be explained in terms of a desire to create more striking imagery in this verse. In the case of *convolvit* he chose a visually striking word to describe Pharaoh’s forces being tumbled over and over as the waters covered them, and in the case of *exercitum* he chose a concrete term instead of the abstract *virtutem* to add to the visual imagery of the army being destroyed in the sea. Jerome departs from the strict sense of the Hebrew in order to produce a more striking translation in the *IH*.

3.6 Conclusion

Our search for allusions along Adkin’s trajectory was fruitless: there are no occasions in the *IH* where Jerome interpolates a classical reading that cannot be justified against the Hebrew. Our search for dictional allusions as advocated by Brown Tkacz turned up a few instances of readings in the *IH* that, when viewed in conjunction with Jerome’s entries in the *Commentarioli*, turned out to be influenced by his knowledge of classical literature. It is perhaps unlikely that Brown Tkacz herself would have accepted any of our suggestions, the degree of dictional correspondence not being high enough, but a classical influence seems at least plausible. The third avenue proved more fruitful. We demonstrated that on several occasions Jerome reveals his

own “backward looking reverence for the classical ideal” by translating verses in the *IH* in such a way as to make the Latin conform to classical literary ideals. Even here his practice was not entirely consistent, so that not all Hebrew passages with particular merit are similarly rendered in the *IH*. Nevertheless, there was a sufficient development of style to show that Jerome was interested in producing a version with literary merit of its own rather than simply a crude word for word translation.

Jerome was prepared to accept classical learning insofar as it conformed to or promoted Christian principles. It is most significant that in the case of the stag in Psalm 21.1 *IH*, Jerome’s classical understanding of the verse enhances its Christian exegesis. It is not so much that Jerome was anti-Classics – he clearly wasn’t, at least not in a definitive sense – but that reference to Classical literature was only rarely helpful and appropriate in a Biblical context.

We set out at the beginning of this chapter to answer Brown Tkacz’ challenge:

“eventually we may be able to answer Jerome’s own question, ‘What *has* Horace got to do with the Psalter?’”³²⁷ We have discovered no direct allusions to the works of specific classical authors in the *IH* Psalter, nor is it likely that any will be identified by other scholars. Yet the influence of Horace, Virgil and Cicero makes itself felt in the greater literary style of the *IH* compared to its predecessors, a literary style that owes its definition to those great Republican and Imperial authors.

So, *quid facit cum Psalterio Horatius?* Very little, and at the same time, rather a lot.

³²⁷ Brown Tkacz, “*Quid Facit?*” p. 99.

Chapter 4

Traces of Rabbinic Exegesis and other Jewish Material in Jerome's Translation of the Psalms *Iuxta Hebraeos*

“C’est d’ailleurs comme telle qu’elle fut accueillie par l’Eglise, jusqu’à ce qu’un Jérôme, nouveau riche de la culture hébraïque frotté de vernis rabbinique, réalisât avec un demi-succès ... un remplacement de l’Ancien Testament de l’Eglise par la Bible des rabbins.”³²⁸

4.1 Rabbinic Expertise: Utilised and Rejected

It is a well established fact that Jerome includes rabbinic exegetical material in his various commentaries on Old Testament books.³²⁹ Indeed the commentaries are the forum in which we might naturally expect such material to appear. An altogether less well explored proposition is whether, and if so, how and when, and with what significance, Jerome’s Biblical translations demonstrate the influence of a rabbinic understanding, or of a “Jewish” or “Hebrew” understanding in a wider sense, of the

³²⁸ Barthélemy, D., “L’Ancien Testament a mûri à Alexandrie,” in *Theologische Zeitschrift* 21, (1965), pp. 358-370, here p. 370.

³²⁹ The foundational studies in this area were by Rahmer and Krauss. Rahmer collected parallels between Rabbinic literature and Jerome’s *Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim*. See Rahmer, M., *Die hebräischen Traditionen in den Werken des Hieronymus*, i. *Die ‘Quaestiones in Genesim’* (Breslau, 1861). Krauss traced evidence of the Jews in the writings of the Church Fathers more generally. See Krauss, S., “The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers,” in *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 5, 1892-1893, pp. 122-157; and Krauss, S., “The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers,” in *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 6, 1893-1894, pp. 82-99 and pp. 225-261. This final section is entirely concerned with Jerome.

subject matter. C H Gordon drew attention to this in an article published in 1931,³³⁰ concluding that “because [the Vulgate], as a whole, remains untreated from this standpoint, a systematic study of [the Vulgate] must be made, before the relation of rabbinic exegesis to the Vulgate can be definitely settled.”³³¹ Gordon’s article suggested a number of instances in the book of Proverbs where a rabbinic understanding was reflected in Jerome’s translation. Since then, to our knowledge, only Matthew Kraus’ doctoral thesis on Jerome’s translation of the book of Exodus *Iuxta Hebraeos* has sought to fill this lacuna in Hieronymian scholarship that Gordon exposed.³³² Adam Kamesar’s work on the *Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim* includes detailed discussion of Jerome’s philological method, which drew heavily, so Kamesar suggests, on rabbinic expertise.³³³ While Kamesar’s work is obviously primarily to do with one of Jerome’s exegetical opera rather than the translation of an Old Testament book, he nevertheless includes material which will be useful in our investigation and raises issues that we must address.

For detailed bibliography covering the history of this area of scholarship we refer to bibliographies and historiographies drawn up by Hayward, Braverman, Kamesar and Kinzig in particular.³³⁴ We would gain little by tracing the scholarship again in detail,

³³⁰ Gordon, C.H., “Rabbinic Exegesis in the Vulgate of Proverbs,” in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 49 (1930/1931), pp. 384-416.

³³¹ Gordon, “Rabbinic Exegesis,” p. 387.

³³² Kraus, *Jerome’s Translation*. It is possible that Benjamin Kedar-Kopfstein’s PhD thesis, *The Vulgate as a Translation: Some Semantic and Syntactical Aspects*, (PhD Diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1968) would shed some light on this area of research. However, it has not been published and, being written in Hebrew, does not feature much in later scholarship. The present author’s lack of facility in modern Hebrew has placed it beyond reach.

³³³ Kamesar, *Jerome*, esp. pp. 176-191.

³³⁴ Hayward, “Jewish Traditions,” pp. 100-120; Braverman, *Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel*; Kamesar, *Jerome*, pp. 176-191; Kamesar, A., “The Evaluation of the Narrative Aggada in Greek and Latin Patristic Literature,” in *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, 45.1, April 1994, pp. 37-71; Kinzig, “Jewish and ‘Judaizing’ Eschatologies,” pp. 409-429.

so instead offer below a few words on those scholars whose work most directly impacts our own.

Despite the attention it has received in subsequent scholarship Krauss' work is of little direct value for our own. His section on Jerome is largely concerned with what we can discover of Jewish life from Jerome's writings, whether Jewish family life, social position, controversies with Christians, the use of the Hebrew language and so on. However, it was his section on Jewish midrashim that were preserved by Jerome in his commentaries that caught scholars' attention and is in many ways the ancestor of this chapter.³³⁵ Subsequent development of the idea has made his work nearly redundant in terms of its direct contribution, but confirms its foundational importance to this area of research. Our work, following that of Gordon and Kraus, is essentially tangential to that of Krauss, looking for Jewish influences on his biblical translations rather than in his own writings.

Condamin's work stems from his observations of Jerome's ambiguous relationship with Jewish scholars: on the one hand positive, in that he turned to them for their linguistic expertise, and appealed to their approval of his *IH* translations; and on the other hand negative, as evidenced by his often violently ant-Jewish invective. So he writes: "Donc, en matière d'hébreu, saint Jérôme s'en rapportait aux Hébreux, suivant l'adage: *peritis in arte sua credendum est*. En matière d'exégèse, c'est tout autre chose. On le voit à chaque page de ses écrits, loin d'exercer la moindre séduction sur son caractère fortement trempé, sur son âme à la foi robuste, les doctrines des juifs, des semi-juifs et des judaïsants excitaient sa verve de polémiste vigoureux. Il a sans

³³⁵ Krauss, "The Jews," *JQR* 6, pp. 249-261.

doute de la reconnaissance pour son maître d'hébreu, mais il n'éprouve aucune tendresse pour les juifs de son temps."³³⁶ He assumes that Jerome's education in Hebrew was concentrated in the period immediately preceding his embarkation on the *IH* translations and so suggests quite plausibly that Jewish influence on Jerome's work is likely to have been greatest immediately following this period.³³⁷ He suggests that, as a way to proceed, "Il est intéressant de rechercher dans quelle mesure saint Jérôme, comme traducteur de la Bible, a suivi la tradition juive, sur des points où elle est en désaccord avec le sens naturel de texte hébreu massorétique et le témoignage des Septante."³³⁸ As we will discuss presently our methodology is similar to Condamin's, but without his particular consideration of the LXX: we considered to be most significant those passages of the *IH* Psalter where Jewish influences apparently caused Jerome's translation to depart from the "natural sense" of the Hebrew.

He proceeds to discuss several examples where Jerome's translations or exegeses, or his comprehension of difficult words, reveal demonstrable parallels with (though he would say dependence on) one or other of the three sources of "la pensée juive" – teachers, rabbinic material, and the Hexapla.³³⁹ His initial procedure of comparing Jerome's *IH* translations of difficult words or passages in Genesis with explanations he had offered in the *QHG* could obviously not be applied to other books, but is an important precedent for our comparison of the *IH* Psalter with what Jerome says in the *Commentarioli* and *Tractatus*.

³³⁶ Condamin, A., "L'Influence de la Tradition Juive dans la Version de Saint Jérôme, in *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, 5, (1914), p. 3.

³³⁷ Condamin, "L'Influence," p. 4.

³³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 6.

³³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 5.

Despite the examples he offers, he concludes by minimising Jerome's dependence on Jewish expertise of any sort: "Faut-il conclure que saint Jérôme, comme traducteur de la Bible, dépend de l'exégèse juive dans une mesure considérable? Ce serait fort exagéré."³⁴⁰ In support of his position he points to "cas beaucoup plus nombreux" where Jerome does not follow Jewish ideas in his translations or in his commentaries. He summarises his position as follows: "S'il a cédé de temps à autre au désir d'expliquer à tout prix un texte obscur ou un problème d'histoire, il est bien rare que la solution arbitraire, empruntée aux juifs et enregistrée dans ses commentaires, se reflète dans sa traduction de la Bible. Mais, dans ses commentaires, à côté des interprétations juives qu'il admet, combien d'autres de même source sur lesquelles il ne se prononce pas, ou qu'il méprise comme absurdes, qu'il rejette comme impies!"³⁴¹ Thus Condamin is quite happy to show that in certain cases Jerome does (apparently) depend on Jewish ideas in both his translations and in his commentaries, but contends that these cases are so few as to be nearly irrelevant when compared to the far greater number of instances where there is no Jewish influence.

Gordon's work on rabbinic exegesis in the *IH* Proverbs is closest in method and ambition to our current investigation of the *IH* Psalter, and sets out in part to counter Condamin's thesis.³⁴² While he appears to have reached his conclusion before he began his investigation,³⁴³ he nevertheless goes on to provide convincing examples of verses where *IH* Proverbs follows rabbinic exegetical traditions, or shows affinities with the Syriac Old Testament or the Targumim, or with the Jewish Greek versions

³⁴⁰ Condamin, "L'Influence," pp. 19-20.

³⁴¹ Ibid, p. 20.

³⁴² Cf. Gordon, "Rabbinic Exegesis," p. 416.

³⁴³ Ibid, p. 385, "... hence the rabbinic exegesis patent in the Vulgate."

contained in the Hexapla. We may draw several important points from his work that will influence our own.

First, Gordon selected the book of Proverbs “because it is the type of book which would oblige Jerome to seek explanation from his Jewish masters; and because, by dint of its purely ethical (and therefore universally acceptable) nature, theological scruples would not prevent him from incorporating their exegesis.”³⁴⁴ We challenge his assessment of the “purely ethical” nature of Proverbs, debating, for example, the identification of personified Wisdom of chapter three. We also challenge Gordon’s assumption that Jerome’s default position (unless prevented from doing so by “theological scruples”) is to incorporate rabbinic exegesis in his translations: rather Jerome’s general practice seems to have been to provide a “scientific” translation, devoid of exegesis, as we will discuss presently. Rather than discussing its “ethical” nature we must point out instead that Proverbs was never a liturgically important book, so that Jerome may have felt more able to experiment with different ideas in his translation. The Psalter by contrast was a liturgically important book *ab initio*,³⁴⁵ so that Jerome’s translation of the Psalter is likely to be more conservative and more aware of his Christian readership than that of Proverbs. Second, Gordon distinguishes between Jerome’s use of Jewish exegesis in his translations (pages 388-410) and his use of such exegesis to deal with textual and philological problems (pages 410-415). We will draw this same distinction in relation to the Psalter, but will first seek to develop our appreciation of the significance of Jerome’s use of Jewish expertise in each case. Third, and most importantly, all of Gordon’s examples, like Condamin’s, (and Adkin’s in Chapter 3) involve instances where Jerome departs from the apparent

³⁴⁴ Gordon, “Rabbinic Exegesis,” p. 387.

³⁴⁵ As we showed in Chapter 1.

plain sense of the Hebrew to follow a different version or exegetical tradition, and it is for this reason that they are convincing cases of direct influence rather than irrelevant coincidence. We followed the same criterion in our investigation of the Psalter, but found fewer cases of such divergence between the MT and the *IH*.

Gordon's positive conclusion that the *IH* Proverbs does show considerable influence of Jewish exegetical expertise is an important counterpoint to Condamin's views, but cannot predict the likelihood of discovering similar influence in the Psalter. The differences between the books, particularly in regard to their subject matter and liturgical usage, means that the *IH* versions of each will provide an interesting comparison of Jerome's practice regarding different genres of Old Testament literature.

Furthermore, neither of these scholars draws much distinction between the issues involved in Jewish ideas impacting Jerome's biblical translations as opposed to the exegeses he offers in his *Commentaries*, nor do they draw a distinction between Jerome's attitude towards Jewish philological expertise as opposed to Jewish exegetical expertise. Our work in this chapter will demonstrate that their failure to appreciate these important distinctions leads to confusion in their methodology, in their evaluation of their discoveries, and conclusions that they draw. Nevertheless, their work provides the basis for that of more recent scholars as well as our own.

As far as recent scholarship is concerned, Adam Kamesar and Matthew Kraus have made the most important contributions in our field of interest. We will refer to their

work throughout this chapter, rather than treat it separately as we have the foundational *opera* of Condamin and Gordon.

4.2 A Common Heritage

Our previous chapter was concerned with the occurrence of allusions to Classical literature and, more generally, of examples of Classical *παιδεία*, in the *IH* Psalter. We highlighted the discontinuity of the Classical and Judaeo-Christian *Weltanschauungen*, and suggested that Jerome's awareness of this discontinuity provides sufficient explanation for the absence of allusions to Classical literature in the *IH* Psalter. Our investigation in this chapter of the influence of Jewish learning and exegesis, in a broad sense, on the *IH* Psalter proceeds upon rather different assumptions. The emergence of Christianity from Judaism is an immensely interesting area of research and one on which we hope our current study will throw a small beam of light. Whether understood broadly as "The Parting of the Ways,"³⁴⁶ or as "The Ways that Never Parted"³⁴⁷ or, as is more likely, as a progression of ways joined by innumerable interconnecting by-roads, the essential point for us is that "The Ways" claimed to share at least a common origin, if not a common trajectory or destination. This was of course particularly the case with the Jewish תורה נביאים וכתובים that became for Christians the Old Testament. Disputes over the extent to which the historical person of Jesus Christ qualitatively and quantitatively fulfilled the

³⁴⁶ See, for example, the collection of articles in Dunn, J.D.G., ed., *Jews and Christians, The Parting of the Ways A.D. 70 to 135*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 66, (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1992).

³⁴⁷ See, for example, the collection of articles in Becker, A.H., and Reed, A.Y., ed., *The Ways that Never Parted, Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

prophecies and patterns that Jews had discerned in “the Law, the Prophets and the Writings” provided (as they still do) the primary cause of the emergence of an alternative “Way” or “Ways.”³⁴⁸ The conversion of Constantine and the subsequent promotion of Christianity as the religion of the Empire by no means ruled out the possibility of mutual influence between Judaism and Christianity. Indeed, Kinzig argues that “Under Christian Rome Judaism continued to be a strong religious and cultural factor. In the wake of the Constantinian revolution Jewish intellectual influence on Christianity may even have increased to a certain degree. One of the areas where this influence can be discerned is precisely the exegesis of the Holy Scriptures.”³⁴⁹

The common textual heritage shared by Judaism and Christianity generates the fundamental differences between our investigation in this chapter and our previous investigation of Classical influences on the *IH* Psalter. Because disagreement occurred at the level of the philology and exegesis of the same texts rather than (as in the Classical/Christian debate) at the level of worldviews based on distinct textual and religious heritages, the scope for cross-fertilisation between Jewish and Christian viewpoints was much broader. However, we must also bear in mind Millar’s perception of “the air of hostility, insecurity and suspicion which pervades Christian

³⁴⁸ Cf. Krauss, “The Jews” *JQR*, 5, p. 129: “The differences between the Synagogue and the Church turn mostly on the exegesis of Holy Writ; a large portion of the Agada in the Midrash and Talmud is a polemic against Christianity. The text of the Scriptures also constituted an important subject of controversy; the Christians usually read into the Bible more than it contained. Moreover, instead of admitting that their copies were often incorrect, they cherished the delusion that the Jews had falsified and mutilated the text for polemical purposes.” Also Clements, R.E., “The Messianic Hope in the Old Testament,” in *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 43, (1989), pp. 3-19, especially p. 8: “Most early Christian polemic against the Jews centred, not upon whether Jews were expecting a messiah, but rather upon whether Jesus was that figure.”

³⁴⁹ Kinzig, “Jewish and ‘Judaizing’ Eschatologies,” p. 424.

writing of the period, as regards Jews.”³⁵⁰ Despite sharing a common background, the familial relationship was not a happy one.

4.3 Philology versus Exegesis

At this point however we need to clarify the distinctions between translation and exegesis and between philology and exegesis upon which our study will proceed. Modern theories of translation emphatically deny the possibility of translation without interpretation or, to put it positively, they assert that every translation is necessarily exegetical to some degree.³⁵¹ We have no desire to contradict these theories, only to evaluate them in the context of Jerome’s fourth century translation projects. The extent to which Jerome would have recognised or ascribed to such theories is debatable. His statements about his translation practice are as well-known as they are difficult to pin down: his claims sometimes to translate word for word, at other times sense for sense, and his varying method in practice have been discussed by Schwarz.³⁵² Crucially, Jerome seems to have been convinced that the job of a translator was to encapsulate the same bare *meaning* in the translation as in the original: that is, he viewed the job of an exegete as distinct from that of a translator.

³⁵⁰ Millar, “Christian Emperors,” pp. 7-8.

³⁵¹ “The very translation that imposes the interpretation attendant to its language should also offer an accurate interpretation, a re-presentation of the original ... To say that translation is always already interpretation is therefore not enough: an adequate translation would be always already two interpretations ... it is the insurmountable fact that these two interpretations are mutually exclusive that consigns every translation to inadequacy,” Lewis, “The Measure,” p. 37; and cf. Brock, S.P., “Translating the Old Testament,” in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars, SSF*, ed. D.A. Carson, H.G.M. Williamson, Cambridge 1988, pp. 87-98, here p. 97.

³⁵² Schwarz, *Principles and Problems*, pp. 32-37.

The most important evidence for this comes from Jerome's famous statements in his *Preface to Job* and his *Apologia adversus Libros Rufini*. The former concerns his procurement of help of the highest quality in his Hebrew translations: "*Memini me ob intelligentiam huius voluminis, Lyddaeum quemdam praeceptorem, qui apud Hebraeos primus haberi putabatur, non parvis redemisse nummis: cuius doctrina an aliquid profecerim, nescio: hoc unum scio, non potuisse me interpretari, nisi quod ante intellexeram.*"³⁵³ The latter concerns the difference for which Jerome argued between the roles of "prophet" and "translator:" "*Aliud est enim vatem, aliud interpretem esse. Ibi spiritus ventura praedicit, hic eruditio et verborum copia ea quae intelligit transfert.*"³⁵⁴ Schwarz discusses these comments in the context of Jerome's rejection of the divine inspiration of the Septuagint.³⁵⁵ However they also provide important evidence for our current discussion. Jerome's emphasis that he personally made every effort to "understand" (*intellexeram*) a text before "translating"³⁵⁶ (*interpretari*) it and his insistence that the job of a translator is to "understand" (*intelligit*) a text before "carrying it over" (*transfert*) into another language suggest that he envisaged a direct correlation of basic meaning between original text and translation.³⁵⁷

³⁵³ *Praefatio in Librum Job*, PL 28.1081, Weber/Gryson, p. 731.

³⁵⁴ *Apol. adv. Lib. Ruf.* II.25, PL 23.449, = *Apol. c. Ruf.* II.25, CCSL 79, p. 63.

³⁵⁵ Schwarz, *Principles and Problems*, p. 32.

³⁵⁶ Latin *interpretari* can mean either "translate" or "interpret." In the context of the *Preface in Job*, in which Jerome defends his new translation from the Hebrew against those who preferred him to use the Septuagint, the meaning "translate" is evidently the one Jerome had in mind. Cf. Brock, "Translating the Old Testament," p. 87.

³⁵⁷ Cf. Kamesar argues that "Jerome sees *IH* first of all as a scientific version, in which he attempts to represent as accurately as possible the 'Hebraica veritas', the only true text." Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 69. However, Jerome's emphasis on "understanding" (*intellexeram* and *intelligit*) implies that this process of accurate representation is not simply mechanical.

One might object on the grounds that there are several instances in the *Commentarioli* on which Jerome offers alternative exegeses of the same verse(s).³⁵⁸ However, in each case Jerome offers these alternative exegeses on the basis of the same Latin text, that is, he divines different exegeses within the same translation, rather than offering different “translations-exegeses” to begin with. It seems clear therefore that Jerome would not have recognised his translations as being in themselves exegeses.³⁵⁹ We must bear this in mind when we come to evaluate his translations.

Brock argues: “Given that an element of interpretation is inherent in all translation, this means that the qualifications for good biblical translation will not be confined to the appropriate linguistic and textual skills and knowledge (though this is obviously a *sine qua non*): the translator must also have insight into, and empathy with, the biblical texts he is translating – or, as Philo put it ... the translator needs to have that ‘sincerity and singleness of thought’ which will enable him ‘to go hand in hand with the purest of spirits, the spirit of Moses.’”³⁶⁰ This seems closely aligned to Jerome’s own argument – though Jerome at least seems to have believed that such insight and empathy would minimise the interpretive element, ensuring that he is more *interpres* (in the sense of “translator”) than *vates*.

³⁵⁸ See, for example, on Psalm 107.10 *IH* (*CCSL* 72, p. 231), and on Psalm 143.2 *IH* (*CCSL* 72, p. 244).

³⁵⁹ We may derive indirect support for our argument from Braverman’s discussion of Jerome’s utilisation of both Antiochene and Alexandrian methods of exegesis. He notes that Jerome studied under representatives of both schools, and suggests that “In his exegetical method, Jerome borrowed from each school ... Usually Jerome begins with the literal interpretation ... Then he expounds the spiritual message, according to the style of the Alexandrians.” Braverman, *Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel*, p. 3. Given Jerome’s sympathy with the Antiochene tradition it is not unreasonable to assume that he attempted to provide literal translations of Hebrew texts, leaving exposition to the *Commentaries* – where, as Braverman notes (p. 3), Jerome spends more time providing exegeses in line with the Alexandrian tradition.

³⁶⁰ Brock, “Translating the Old Testament,” p. 97.

Having established this aspect of Jerome's translation theory (if that term is not too suggestive of conscious and conscientious systematisation) we must discuss the resulting implications for Jerome's utilisation of Jewish philological expertise on the one hand, and Jewish exegetical expertise on the other, in his *IH* translations. Our investigations so far in this chapter would lead us to expect that Jerome would make full use of Jewish philological expertise when making his *IH* translations, but would be more cautious about employing Jewish exegetical expertise. The former is implicit in any attempt to discern the bare textual meaning of the Hebrew in order to transfer it into Latin, whereas the latter is concerned with reference and significance beyond the text. Orlinsky argues that "St. Jerome's Latin translation of the Hebrew Bible ... is predominantly Jewish in spirit. It could not be otherwise. While in his commentaries and other works he could and did argue theologically as a Christian, in his translation he was far more limited by the Hebrew text itself."³⁶¹ We disagree, and will argue that evidence for Jerome utilising Jewish philological expertise when making the *IH* Psalter is not surprising, nor is it particularly significant for the character of his translations. It does not make the *IH* translation "Jewish," it simply (ideally) makes it "correct." However, signs that Jerome was drawing on contemporary rabbinic exegesis when making the *IH* Psalter will be far more significant, suggesting that he brought the Latin text into line with those rabbinic traditions.

Jerome's use of the philological expertise of his Jewish teachers is well known, and we have already discussed it in Chapter 2. Kamesar argues: "the view that *QHG* is simply an attempt to show the utility of the Hebrew text ... is itself incomplete and inadequate. Rather, Jerome goes beyond this objective, and puts forward and defends

³⁶¹ Orlinsky, H.M., *Essays in Biblical Culture and Bible Translation*, (New York: KTAV, 1974), p. 429.

a system for interpreting that text. The system which he advocates may be termed a ‘*recentiores*-rabbinic philology’, and ... is presented as an alternative both to the standard LXX-based philology of the Greeks, and to the Greek attempts to go beyond a LXX-based system. It is of course this same ‘*recentiores*-rabbinic’ philological system that underlies *IH*.”³⁶² This argument is attractive because it recognises the most important resources upon which Jerome drew in his attempts to understand the Hebrew text. However, we strongly challenge Kamesar’s assertion that the same *philological* system underlies both Jerome’s attempts to *interpret* the Hebrew text in the *QHG* and (presumably) to *translate* the Hebrew text in the *IH*.

Kamesar emphasises the close connection between *QHG* and Jerome’s *IH* project, noting that similar defences of the Hebrew text occur in *QHG* and *IH* prefaces,³⁶³ and arguing that “*QHG* is not a ‘hybrid’ composition, for the use of the rabbinic material is directly related to the defence of the Hebrew text. Those who have seen these two features of the work as separate have failed to appreciate its *Sitz im Leben*.”³⁶⁴ Again he argues that “Jerome employed rabbinic sources not only as alternatives to the *recentiores* in determining the translation of a given passage, but also in conjunction with the *recentiores* in order to justify the translation of a given passage.”³⁶⁵ This close connection between translation and commentary that Kamesar seems to envisage with respect to the *QHG* and the *IH* is perhaps justified in the specific context of the *QHG*, given that he has previously established that a large proportion of the *QHG* is taken up with discussing “philological and textual matters.”³⁶⁶

³⁶² Kamesar, *Jerome*, pp. 80-81.

³⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 81.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 179.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 189-190.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p. 96.

However, we wish to distinguish between Jerome's use of "*recentiores-rabbinic*" philology and any use of "*recentiores-rabbinic*" exegesis in the *IH*. Exegesis is often, though not always, closely related to philology but, as we will argue, we can make best sense of Jerome's attitudes and practice only if we prise biblical philology apart from biblical exegesis. If, as we have argued, Jerome was primarily concerned to produce a "scientific" Latin rendering of the *hebraica veritas*, then it will not be surprising to find Jerome utilising whatever resources were available to him for discovering the "scientific" meaning of the Hebrew text. The versions of the LXX, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, other Greek versions such as the "Quinta" to which he occasionally refers, and, possibly, the Aramaic tradition of the Psalms³⁶⁷ provided textual resources that Jerome could mine to discover the meaning of the Hebrew. Of course his Jewish teachers, steeped in rabbinic thinking, provided a vitally important and ready (if expensive) source of information in an oral form.³⁶⁸ Insofar as Jerome employed these textual and oral sources only to elucidate the meaning of the Hebrew text on a philological, "scientific," level, with the aim of producing a Latin version as close as possible in sense and implication to the Hebrew version, his activity is unremarkable, as are its results. The fact that Jerome drew on "Jewish" expertise, albeit from different historical periods, does not mean that the *IH* will bear a particularly "Jewish" nuance: it is simply that Jewish scholars had the best access to

³⁶⁷ Cf. Hayward's remark that "the Targum, like the Septuagint and the Peshitta, is a particular *version* of the Bible, with its own distinctive peculiarities," Hayward, C.T.R., "Saint Jerome and the Aramaic Targumim" in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 32.1, (Spring 1987), p. 123. In another article he suggests two examples in Jerome's translation of Jeremiah *IH* where Jerome apparently derives the meaning of a Hebrew word from the Targum: Hayward, "Jewish Traditions," pp. 108-109. The dating of Targum Psalms is fraught with difficulty. Cf. Stec: "A very tentative suggestion would be fourth to sixth century C.E.," Stec, D.M., *The Targum of Psalms, Translated, with a Critical Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes*, The Aramaic Bible, Volume 16, (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2004), p. 2. Also Edwards, who suggests that "any date before the 5th century for the 'original' Tg.Ps. is very unlikely," Edwards, *The Old, the New, and the Rewritten*, p. 222.

³⁶⁸ Gordon's assertion that "The only ways Jerome had of finding the definition of a Hebrew word in the Bible, were to ask a Hebraeus or consult the meticulous work of Aquila" acknowledges the usefulness of these sources but surely does no justice to the largely accurate translations of other Jewish Greek versions – or to Jerome's own abilities. Gordon, "Rabbinic Exegesis," p. 398.

the “scientific” or “natural” meaning of the Hebrew text. It will also be nearly impossible to determine Jerome’s reliance on Jewish philological expertise when making the *IH*. Obviously from time to time he very clearly follows one particular earlier reading, or even draws attention to it, but the fragmentary nature of the Hexapla, the uncertain dating of Targum Psalms, and the absence of a written record of what his teachers told him means that often we cannot trace the source of an *IH* reading at a given point nor, indeed, deny that it is Jerome’s own unaided translation. In any case, in this study we are more interested in the character of the finished *IH* product than in the process by which it was made, so that if the Latin of the *IH* is close in every respect to the Hebrew, the exact identity of the “*recentiores*-rabbinic” philological resources upon which Jerome drew loses much of its significance.

This is our most important point of departure from Kamesar’s work, as well as from Kraus’ work, which challenges³⁶⁹ then ultimately approves³⁷⁰ an application of Kamesar’s “*recentiores*-rabbinic philology” to the *IH*, but does not challenge its basic assumptions or the significance it purports to add to our understanding of the character of the *IH*.

The far greater interest lies where Jerome did not produce a “scientific” rendering of the *hebraica veritas*, that is, where the *IH* version more clearly coincides with a particular rabbinic understanding of the Hebrew text than does the Hebrew text itself, or where Jerome’s approach to the vocabulary and syntax of a verse reflects rabbinic

³⁶⁹ “Since, nevertheless, Kamesar proves his argument from a commentary ... it remains to be seen whether Jerome applied this *recentiores*-rabbinic philology to the *IH*,” Kraus, *Jerome’s Translation*, p. 47.

³⁷⁰ “Finally, all the examples indicate a critical standard ... Jerome measures the versions *iuxta Hebraicum*. He employs them more as guides to the *hebraica veritas* than as sources to be copied,” Kraus, *Jerome’s Translation*, p. 60.

exegetical techniques.³⁷¹ A conscious reflection of Jewish exegesis in the *IH* Psalter would be more significant than a conscious use of Jewish philological expertise. It would suggest that Jerome was not consistent in his determination to produce a “scientific” translation, though of itself this lack of consistency would not be surprising. More importantly evidence that Jerome reflected particular Jewish exegeses in his *IH* translations would suggest that, whatever he might argue in principle, he was willing to accept certain exegeses as correct, and propagate them in a translation primarily intended for use in Christian contexts.

4.4 Jerome and the Jews: Philology and Exegesis Again

We have argued that the common textual heritage shared by Judaism and Christianity opened a space within which the philological and, perhaps, exegetical expertise of Jewish scholars could productively be appropriated by the likes of Origen and Jerome.³⁷² However in practice such sharing is unlikely to have occurred unless Christian scholars respected at least the technical abilities of their Jewish counterparts, even if they disagreed with their theological conclusions.³⁷³ Jerome’s attitude towards Jews and Jewish traditions is notoriously complex, not to say ambiguous and

³⁷¹ Indeed Gordon’s concentration on verses that display these characteristics is what makes his work so successful. Gordon, “Rabbinic Exegesis,” pp. 384-416.

³⁷² For a general discussion, emphasising the overlap between rabbinic and patristic exegesis, see Horbury, W., “Old Testament Interpretation in the Writings of the Church Fathers,” in Mulder, M.J., ed., *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, [Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum, Section Two, The Literature of the Jewish People in the Period of the Second Temple and the Talmud], (Assen/ Maastricht: Van Gorcum, and Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1988, pp. 727-787, esp. pp. 770-776.

³⁷³ Cf. “the Greek and Latin Fathers conceived of the narrative aggada in a manner vastly different from the Rabbis. They used it primarily for the purpose of adding to their ‘historical’ (in the pagan grammatical, not Christian exegetical sense) understanding of Scripture.” Kamesar, A., “The Evaluation,” p. 41.

occasionally self-contradictory.³⁷⁴ Our purpose here is to consider, within the specific context of his *IH* translations, what we can know of his attitudes and access to Jewish philological and exegetical expertise.

Jerome's Jewish Teachers

We discussed Jerome's recourse to his Jewish teachers in Chapter 2. However we must emphasise here that Jerome seems to have employed his teachers for their linguistic or philological expertise only: there is no sign that he considered them in any way to be spiritual mentors providing theological insight into the Hebrew scriptures. Indeed his awareness of the different conclusions at which Jewish and Christian exegetes arrived concerning the same scriptures³⁷⁵ was one of his motivations in undertaking the *IH* project: he wanted to provide a philologically sound Latin translation, which both Christians and Jews could accept as accurate.³⁷⁶ Brock suggests that a similar motivation lay at the heart of Origen's Hexapla: Origen "was only concerned with finding out what was the text of the Old Testament as used by Jews of his own day," so that "one frequently finds that when Origen discusses textual points ... he will speak of a reading primarily as being present or not in 'the Three', only mentioning, rather as an afterthought, their concurrence with the Hebrew."³⁷⁷ While Jerome's apologetic motivation for utilising Jewish philological

³⁷⁴ For a useful survey, see Brown, *Vir Trilinguis*, pp. 167-193.

³⁷⁵ Cf. Millar's observation that "Contemporary evidence shows a persistent strain of anxiety about, and hostility to, Judaism on the part of Christians, as well as reports of disputes between Jews and Christians on matters of doctrine and biblical interpretation," Millar, *A Greek Roman Empire*, p. 126.

³⁷⁶ As we noted in Chapter 2, pointing to Jerome's remarks in the Preface to the Psalter *IH*: "*sed quod aliud sit in ecclesiis Christo credentium Psalmos legere, aliud Iudaeis singula verba calumniantibus respondere.*" *PL* 28.1126; Weber/Gryson, p. 769; and in the *Preface to Isaiah* where Jerome says that he translates *ne Iudaei de falsitate scripturarum ecclesiis ... diutius insultarent,*" *PL* 28.774, Weber/Gryson p. 1096.

³⁷⁷ Brock, S.P., "Origen's aims as a Textual Critic of the Old Testament," in Jellicoe, ed., *Studies in the Septuagint*, pp. 343-346, here p. 344. We will argue in Chapter 5 that Jerome's conviction that the Hebrew scriptures were the source of Christian truth was a stronger motive in his own project, but we

expertise should not be underestimated, we will argue in our next chapter that Jerome's concern to provide an accurate version of the Old Testament for Christians was a more important motivation for him. In contrast to Brock's observations regarding Origen, Jerome seems to have been determined to discover the Hebrew *fonts*, rather than the Hebrew text used by his contemporaries. In the *Commentarioli* Jerome routinely refers to what is *in hebraeo*, and it is only because we have fragments of the Hexapla that we can sometimes trace the source of his knowledge to 'the Three.' Jerome's implicit claim to be reading the Hebrew text for himself may, occasionally, have been false, but it is, at least, what he wanted his readers to believe he was doing.

Jerome's remarks in the *Commentaria in Zachariam* 6.9-15 provide evidence for our argument here. Jerome famously declares that he passes on to Latin readers whatever Jewish learning "coincides with the Holy Scriptures," but his examples of the sort of learning he is talking about are far less often quoted: *Semel proposui arcana eruditionis Hebraicae, et magistrorum synagogae reconditam disciplinam, eam dumtaxat, quae Scripturis sanctis convenit, Latinis auribus prodere ... Haec dicit Dominus omnipotens: Ecce vir cuius nomen est, Oriens, quod Hebraice dicitur SEMA, non per SIN, sed per SADE litteram scriptum. Qui idcirco Oriens, id est, ἀναπολή, vel ἀναφύη, sive βλάστημα, nuncupatur, id est, germen, quia ex se repente succrescet, et ex radice sua in similitudinem germinis pullulabit, qui vir aedificabit templum Domini.*³⁷⁸

may discern in both Jerome and Origen a similar conviction that contemporary Jews have the best access to the natural sense of the Hebrew.

³⁷⁸ *Commentaria in Zachariam*, PL 25.1455-1456, CCSL 76A, pp. 796-797.

Jerome's comments are usually understood as referring to Jewish exegesis, the strongest support for which comes in his unexplained criterion for propagating those Jewish views, namely "accordance with Holy Scripture."³⁷⁹ However, it is worth considering an alternative explanation. We must note that Jerome's commentary here is heavily weighted towards a philological explanation of the Hebrew text, and only after he has provided a philological explanation does he hazard an exposition. It seems most likely therefore that this philology is what he meant by the "hidden things of Hebrew knowledge" and the "concealed learning of the masters of the synagogue." Indeed, Jewish exegesis, that is, Jewish understandings of the Old Testament, was not "hidden" from non-Hebrew speakers: in broad terms at least it was perfectly evident in the divisions that sprang up between Jews and Christians. But the philological basis of that exegesis certainly was "hidden" from non-Hebrew speakers. This explanation is arguably more difficult to square with Jerome's criterion of "accordance with Holy Scripture," but given that he does not explain what he means by that, we may reasonably suggest that he would have been as willing to judge Jewish philology by his conceptions of "Holy Scripture" as Jewish exegesis.³⁸⁰

The same emphasis on philology is true when Jerome urges his Latin readers to enquire of Jews regarding the accuracy of his translation: he expects those Jews to

³⁷⁹ See especially Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 177.

³⁸⁰ Cf. Kamesar's discussion of Jerome's contribution to the debate about Isaiah 7.14, where he suggests that "this original contribution of Jerome was inspired by both rabbinic technique and Christian exegetical tradition ... Despite the fact that Jerome employs what is clearly rabbinic exegetical technique, the slant which he gives it was probably determined by a Christian source." Kamesar, A., "The Virgin of Isaiah 7:14: The Philological Argument from the Second to the Fifth Century," in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, 41.1, April 1990, pp. 63 and 65.

affirm the philological accuracy of the *IH*, not (initially at least) to debate the exegesis of the Old Testament.³⁸¹

Jerome's use of the LXX and recentiores

There is no doubt that Jerome referred to the Hexapla as an aid to translation.³⁸² His use of hexaplaric material in his work on the Psalter is evident from various entries in the *Commentarioli*, for example in those for Psalms 124.5 *IH* and 131.15 *IH*, where he lists Aquila's, Symmachus', the LXX and the Quinta's readings.³⁸³ In Psalm 124.5 *IH* Jerome appears to follow Symmachus' *σκολιότητας* with the *IH pravitates*, though the *IH* is also a good translation of the Hebrew *מְהִי־לִקְלָקֵץ*. In Psalm 131.15 *ILXX*, despite (apparently, according to the *Commentarioli*,) knowing that the LXX had *θήρα*, he nevertheless translated *viduam*, as if the LXX had *χήρα*. Then in the *IH* Jerome used *venationem*, which is accurate for both *θήρα* (which he believed to be in both Symmachus and *hebraea volumina*), and the Hebrew *תְּצַד*. The close correspondence of Symmachus' readings and the Hebrew in these two examples makes it impossible to state that Jerome was following one rather than the other, but they suggest that Jerome actively utilised the Hexapla when making the *IH*, rather than merely being aware of the variety of readings it recorded.

³⁸¹ See, for example, Jerome's challenge in the Preface to the Psalter *IH*: *Sicubi ergo editio mea a veteribus discreparit, interroga quemlibet Hebraeorum et liquido pervidebis me ab aemulis frustra lacerari*," Weber/Gryson, p. 769.

³⁸² Kamesar, *Jerome*, pp. 70-72. McCarthy, "Jerome's Translation," pp. 155-191.

³⁸³ On Psalm 124.5 *IH*: "*Declinantes autem in obligationes adducet Dominus. Pro obligationibus, Aquila διαπλοκάς, interpretatus est, Symmachus σκολιότητας, quinta editio διεστραμμένος.*" (CCSL 72, p. 237.) On Psalm 131.15 *IH*: "*Viduam eius benedicens benedicam: pauperes eius saturabo panibus. Pro vidua, χήρα, et hebraea volumina et ipsi Septuaginta θήραν habent. Sed propter novitatem verbi et unius litterae demutationem, paulatim θήρα obtinuit ut legeretur χήρα: maxime quia in sequenti versiculo paupere sequebantur. Θήρα Symmachus et Aquila 'cibaria' interpretati sunt.*" (CCSL 72, p. 239.)

The Jewish provenance of the LXX, and the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion means that they all constitute storehouses of Jewish philological expertise, reflecting Jewish understandings of the Hebrew Old Testament scriptures over the several hundred years between the production of the LXX and Symmachus' completion of his project in the late second century.³⁸⁴ The degree to which these Jewish Greek versions reflect contemporary Jewish modes of exegesis is a more complicated matter.³⁸⁵ L.L. Grabbe investigated the reflection of contemporary Jewish exegeses in Aquila's translation, but concluded negatively – though he does not acknowledge the difficulty from a modern day viewpoint of knowing just what these exegeses would have been: “There is little to suggest that he tried to exemplify any of the exegeses [that is, as opposed to philology] current in his own day.”³⁸⁶ As for Symmachus (at least in the Pentateuch), Salvesen argues that “theological considerations are more important to him in the work of translating than in the case of Theodotion and Aquila, or even the Septuagint ... his version is of enormous importance to those studying the history of exegesis of the Hebrew text.”³⁸⁷

³⁸⁴ For chronology of the Greek versions, see Jobes, Silva, *Invitation*, pp. 33-42; Fernández Marcos suggests 140 as a terminus a quo for Aquila's translation, 200 as a likely date for Symmachus' translation, and affirms the uncertainty surrounding the dating of Theodotonic material – though it is most likely earlier than Aquila's, Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint*, pp. 112, 126, 142-146. Salvesen similarly concludes that “Symmachus's version is the last of the Three in time,” Salvesen, A., “Symmachus Readings in the Pentateuch,” in A. Salvesen, ed., *Origen's Hexapla and the Fragments, Papers presented at the Rich Seminar on the Hexapla, Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, 25th-3rd August 1994*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), pp. 177-198, here p. 180.

³⁸⁵ Gordon, for instance, states that “These three Versions [of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion] contain, in varying degree, rabbinic exegesis,” offering Jerome's reference to *Judaeus Aquila, Symmachus et Theodotio iudaizantes haeretici* as support, but not indicating how much rabbinic exegesis they contain, nor how to identify it. Gordon, “Rabbinic Exegesis,” p. 397. Later he states that “Aquila represents a school of rabbinic exegesis,” probably referring to the tradition that Aquila was taught by Rabbi Akiba. (pp. 397-398.) He also suggests, quite plausibly, that as a result, “Because Jerome incorporated much of the older Versions into the Vulgate, and because all the Versions represent Jewish tradition to some extent, some Jewish exegesis has reached the Vulgate through the Versions.” (p. 415.)

³⁸⁶ See Grabbe, L.L., “Aquila's Translation and Rabbinic Exegesis” in *Journal of Jewish Studies* 33 (1982), pp. 527-37. This is a debated point: for one thing Aquila's translation of the direct object marker $\kappa\alpha$ by $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ reflects rabbinic ideas concerning the importance of every word in a text.

³⁸⁷ Salvesen, “Symmachus Readings,” p. 197.

By implication Jerome himself believed that the LXX reflected Jewish Old Testament exegesis, at least insofar as it pre-emptively undermined Christian Old Testament exegesis by “hiding” references to Jesus Christ.³⁸⁸ As far as we are aware there is no direct evidence that Jerome considered the versions of the *recentiores* to contain Jewish exegesis as such. However he similarly accused them of hiding references to Christ, and all the more culpably since they wrote after Christ’s advent: *Quod si apud Graecos, post Septuaginta editionem, iam Christi Evangelio coruscante, Judaeus Aquila, Symmachus, et Theodotio, judaizantes haeretici, sunt recepti, qui multa mysteria Salvatoris subdola interpretatione celarunt, et tamen in Ἐξαπλοῖς, habentur apud Ecclesias, et explanantur ab ecclesiasticis viris.*³⁸⁹

Jerome continues by arguing that by contrast his Christian faith and Christian heritage enables him to reveal the true significance of the Old Testament in “clear and faithful speech:” *quanto magis ego Christianus, de parentibus Christianis natus, et vexillum crucis in mea fronte portans, cuius studium fuit omissa repetere, depravata corrigere, et sacramenta Ecclesiae puro ac fideli aperire sermone, vel a fastidiosis, vel a malignis lectoribus non debeo reprobari?*³⁹⁰

³⁸⁸ See, for example, Jerome’s extraordinary remark on Psalm 9.1 in the *Commentarioli*: “*In finem pro absconditis filii. Licet Aquila pro absconditis filii ‘adulescentiam filii’ posuerit, tamen sciendum in hebraeo haberi ‘pro morte filii.’ Denique et Symmachus in hunc modum transtulit: ‘Pro victoria de morte filii.’ Totus igitur psalmus per tropologiam ad Christi pertinet sacramentum. Unde et Septuaginta interpretes Christi passionem et resurrectionem, quae ignota prius mundo fuit, per verbum absconsionis celare voluerunt, ne a gentibus illo tempore facile nosceretur.*” (CCSL 72, p. 191). This was not merely Jerome’s polemic: Eusebius notes that some Greek Fathers similarly accused the LXX of hiding references to Christ. See Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 65, where he refers to Barthélemy, D., “Eusèbe, la Septante et ‘les autres,’” in *La Bible et les Pères: Colloque de Strasbourg*, Bibliothèque des centres d’études supérieures spécialises. Travaux du Centre d’études supérieures spécialisé d’histoire des religions de Strasbourg, (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1971), pp 53-6 and pp. 56-7.

³⁸⁹ *Praef in Job*, PL 28.1082, Weber/Gryson, p. 732.

³⁹⁰ *Praef in Job*, PL 28.1082, Weber/Gryson, p. 732.

Of course this begs the question how Jerome justified his use of material from the LXX and the *recentiores* when making his *IH* translations: if they truly were *judaizantes haeretici* surely their work had no place in a Christian translation of the Old Testament? Part of the answer lies in the purpose for which he apparently wrote the *Preface to Job*: Jerome's arguments are concerned with the necessity of a new translation, not with the mechanics of its production. More importantly, despite his grave reservations, Jerome does not argue that the various Greek versions are utterly corrupt, only that they "hid" references to Christ. In other words Jerome argues that at certain points the Jewish exegetical concerns of the LXX and *recentiores* influenced their translations. Presumably at other points, namely those that had no exegetical relevance to Christ, he considered their translations to be accurate and useful.³⁹¹ This selective use of the Jewish Greek versions of the Old Testament would correspond to Jerome's remarks in the *Commentaria in Zachariam* that we have already considered: *Semel proposui arcana eruditionis Hebraicae, et magistrorum synagogae reconditam disciplinam, eam dumtaxat, quae Scripturis sanctis convenit, Latinis auribus proderet.*³⁹² Jerome does not say how he decides whether or not such expertise "coincides with Holy Scriptures," but the notion of critical evaluation of Jewish sources and their selective use is clear. Kraus briefly analyses Jerome's view of the LXX and the *recentiores* in this regard. He notes Jerome's apparently "contradictory attitude towards Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, because he both praises and blames them," but concludes that "we perceive such a discrepancy in Jerome's attitude towards his sources because he employed them critically."³⁹³ It is difficult to see how Jerome's attitude towards his predecessors could swing so drastically if he

³⁹¹ This suggestion may be confirmed by analogy with Jerome's attitude towards the expertise of contemporary Jewish scholars, as we will note in our discussion of his remarks in the *Comm in Zach* in the next section of this chapter.

³⁹² *In Zach*, PL 25.1455, CCSL 76A, p. 796.

³⁹³ Kraus, *Jerome's Translation*, pp. 42, 44.

were simply analysing their philological accuracy or their translation style: an assumption of deliberately obscuring the truth must lie in the background. Jerome may also be working from an apologetic motivation here, both in terms of showing his readers and critics that he was not employing the ideas of the *iudaizantes haeretici* uncritically, and in terms of promoting his own credentials as a scholar willing and able to sit in judgement over them.

We have discussed McCarthy's work in detail in Chapter 2, but his most significant contribution to our present debate is his observation that Jerome's "translation does not move to sophisticated midrashic or talmudic renderings."³⁹⁴ Furthermore, we must emphasise the significance of the fact that the versions Jerome tends to favour in the *IH* are the *ILXX* and Aquila's. Both of these gave him close access to the Hebrew text: the former because it was based on Origen's Hexaplaric Greek text that had been "healed" with reference to the Hebrew; and the latter because of Aquila's literalistic, that is philological rather than exegetical, approach to translation.³⁹⁵ Once again however, insofar as the particular *ILXX* or Aquilan reading that Jerome appears to follow in the *IH* is itself an accurate translation of the Hebrew it is impossible to dismiss Jerome's independent knowledge of Hebrew in the background: the reason he follows one particular reading is most probably because he recognised it to be an accurate translation of the Hebrew to begin with.

³⁹⁴ McCarthy, "Jerome's Translation," p. 177.

³⁹⁵ Jerome writes: "*De Aquila autem non miror, quod homo eruditissimus linguae Hebraicae, et verbum de verbo exprimens...*" On this occasion, Jerome disagrees with Aquila, but suggests that either Aquila "*simularit imperitiam,*" or was caught out by "*pharisaeorum perversa expositione,*" *Comm. in Isa.* XIII, PL 24.466, CCSL 73A, p. 537.

The Hebrew Scriptures as the Source of Truth

Kamesar has discussed Jerome's striking use of the imagery of a "spring" and "streams" to distinguish between original texts and translations, a distinction for which he was probably reliant on Origen's work. Thus Kamesar notes that Jerome describes the Hebrew text as *fons* or even *fons veritatis* in contrast to translations which he refers to as *rivuli opinionum*.³⁹⁶ Jerome's conception of the temporal and veridical priority of the Hebrew text had several important corollaries. Kamesar has done some work on these already, but we will challenge and add to his work at various points.

Jerome argued that recourse to the Hebrew text was the way to solve differences between translations. In *Ep. 106* he wrote: *...in Veteri Testamento, si quando inter Graecos Latinosque diversitas est, ad Hebraicam confugimus veritatem*.³⁹⁷ More importantly, in the *Prologus in Libro Paralipomenon* Jerome argued that Jesus and the Apostles quoted Old Testament scriptures according to the Hebrew version, so that it is that version to which Christians should turn: *Ad Hebraeos igitur revertendum est, unde et Dominus loquitur, et discipuli exempla praesumunt*.³⁹⁸ In both these cases Jerome is evidently using the phrase *Hebraicam ... veritatem* and the word *Hebraeos* to refer to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament but, as we will see presently, Jerome exploits the referential ambiguity inherent in the masculine plural adjective *Hebraeos* to use it to refer to the Jews themselves as well as to their scriptures. Thus in the *Commentaria in Zachariam* Jerome refers to the confusion among Christian exegetes concerning Jewish festivals, and suggests that the solution lies in recourse to the Jews:

³⁹⁶ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 45.

³⁹⁷ *Ep. 106.2*, PL 22.838, CSEL 55, p. 249.

³⁹⁸ *Prol. in Para.*, PL 28.1326a, Weber/Gryson, p. 547. *Dominus* could refer to יהוה, but its proximity to *discipuli* suggests that it refers here to Jesus.

*In hoc loco nostrorum multi multa dixerunt, et inter se dissonantia ... Cogimur igitur ad Hebraeos recurrere, et scientiae veritatem de fonte magis quam de rivulis quaerere: praesertim cum non prophetia aliqua de Christo, ubi tergiversari solent, et veritatem celare mendacio; sed historiae ex praecedentibus et consequentibus ordo texatur.*³⁹⁹

The context of this passage, in particular the fact that *Hebraeos* is later understood as the subject of *solent*, means that *Hebraeos* can only refer to Jews who are alive and who can impart their understanding of the scriptures to an enquirer.

Kamesar refers to this passage and points out that the language of *scientiae veritatem*, *fonte*, and *rivulis*, is the same as that which Jerome uses to describe the Hebrew text itself, and then concludes: “It may be, therefore, that in using the same language to describe both the Hebrew text and rabbinic exegesis, Jerome is alluding in this passage not only to the privileged position which he affords the latter, but also to the intimate connection between the two.”⁴⁰⁰ Kamesar correctly notes the privileged position that Jerome afforded to rabbinic scholars in matters of Jewish exegesis: if the Hebrew text is the *fons* from which all other translations flow, so Jewish (in this case rabbinic) exegesis is the *fons* from which non-Jewish scholars gain access to Jewish understanding of the Old Testament.

However, he fails to appreciate that Jerome’s recourse to *Hebraeos* in this case is specifically to clear up confusion among Christian exegetes about Jewish festivals.

Jerome is not relying on the rabbis to provide a Christian exegesis that he can

³⁹⁹ *In Zach*, PL 25.1475, CCSL 76A, p. 820, cf. Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 182.

⁴⁰⁰ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 182.

propagate in Christian circles nor even, in this case, is he relying on them to provide philological assistance with the Hebrew text. He is simply advocating that the Jewish rabbis explain the significance of Jewish festivals. Kamesar has not understood the distinction Jerome apparently made between using Jewish philological expertise and Jewish exegetical expertise. Jerome certainly does use the same language to describe both the Hebrew text and the knowledge of the rabbis, but he is not thereby implying that the two are intimately connected: it is simply that in their textual and exegetical spheres respectively the Hebrew text and rabbinic exegesis both occupy the position of *fons*. Indeed Jerome suggests that the only reason he was willing to refer to Jewish exegetical expertise at this point was precisely because the passage in question had nothing to do with Jesus Christ: *praesertim cum non prophetia aliqua de Christo, ubi tergiversari solent, et veritatem celare mendacio*. He could rely on his rabbinic informants to tell the truth (as he defined it as a Christian) only because the information he sought lay entirely within a Jewish context and had nothing to do with Christian exegesis. Kamesar's suggestion of an "intimate connection" misses the point.

Nevertheless, it seems likely that Jerome exploited the ambiguous meaning of *Hebraeos* – which of course also occurs in Jerome's title for his translations from the Hebrew, *Iuxta Hebraeos* – to argue that while the ultimate source of truth was the Hebrew text, *Hebraica veritas*, in certain circumstances the *Hebraei* (as opposed, perhaps, to the *Judaei* or the *Judaizantes*) were best placed to reveal that truth to a non-Hebrew speaker. This apparent division in Jerome's thinking between cognates of

“Hebrew”, which seem to be generally positive,⁴⁰¹ and cognates of “Jew” which seem generally negative, needs to be more fully investigated in the future.⁴⁰² It is sufficient for us to note that Jerome was convinced of the veridical priority of the Hebrew text and, under certain circumstances, was willing to accept rabbinic interpretations of that text.

Jerome’s high regard for his various Jewish teachers, his willingness to use critically the versions of the LXX and the *recentiores*, and his conviction that the ultimate source of Christian truth in the Old Testament was the Hebrew scriptures properly understood, have all led us to the same conclusion. Jerome distinguished carefully between philological and exegetical approaches to the Old Testament. This distinction enabled him to utilise some aspects of Jewish expertise – whether sourced in the LXX, the *recentiores*, or the rabbis – while violently rejecting others. We should not as a result condemn Jerome for inconsistency. Rather we must allow him to draw this distinction between translation and exegesis – whatever modern theories might suggest – and investigate Jewish influences on the *IH* Psalter within the framework that he established. Did Jerome simply utilise Jewish help to produce a philological, “scientific,” translation? Or was he at times so persuaded by the Jewish exegesis of a particular passage that he reflected that exegesis in his new translation?

⁴⁰¹ We must note again however that Jerome’s positive assessment in the *Comm in Zach* of the expertise of the *Hebraei* is limited to those cases that have nothing to do with Jesus Christ. His assertion that, where Christ is involved, *tergiversari solent, et veritatem celare mendacio*, is hardly positive!

⁴⁰² Cf. Brown, *Vir Trilinguis*, pp. 170-174. He distinguishes between the racial/religious use of “Jew” and the social/legal use of “Hebrew.” On the use of “Hebrew” versus “Jew” by Christian writers, see Inowlocki, S., “Citations of Jewish Greek Authors in Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Praeparatio Evangelica* and *Demonstratio Evangelica*,” M.Litt. Thesis, University of Oxford, 2001, pp. 48-71.

4.5 Methodology

Having established the validity of an investigation of the Jewish influences on Jerome's translation of the Psalms *IH*, two particular concerns remain, namely identifying the occurrences of Jewish influence on the translation, and identifying the potential sources of his knowledge, and then evaluating our own access to those same sources. Our methodology here was essentially the same as that employed in our search for Classical allusions in the *IH* Psalter, and follows that of Condamin and Gordon. We read the *IH* Psalter in parallel with the Hebrew Psalter focussing on those instances in the *IH* Psalter where the Latin differed from the Hebrew in a way that appeared to support a particular Jewish exegetical understanding of the Hebrew text. Jerome's critical evaluation of his various sources, and the fact that he follows none of them consistently, adds significance to the individual words Jerome chooses.⁴⁰³

The absence of any written records of what Jerome's Jewish teachers taught him about Jewish exegeses means that we cannot positively ascribe a significant translation to their influence, but we may assume that they were acquainted with oral exegetical traditions that were later written down.⁴⁰⁴ We were therefore most interested in searching for parallels between extant halachic or aggadic material and instances where the *IH* does not reproduce the natural sense of the Hebrew. Kamesar notes that "the Fathers refer to the Jewish oral tradition as δευτέρωσις, a word which constitutes the literal translation of mishna, but nevertheless contains both halacha and aggada."⁴⁰⁵ He also speaks of the "receptive, or rather partially receptive, attitude

⁴⁰³ Cf. Kraus, *Jerome's Translation*, p. 49.

⁴⁰⁴ Horbury, "Old Testament Interpretation," p. 774.

⁴⁰⁵ Kamesar, A., "The Evaluation," p. 62. Cf. Brown's suggestion that, "Sometimes Jerome equates the literal sense of scripture with the Jewish understanding. Generally speaking, he uses this in a

towards the narrative aggada” of “Alexandrian-Palestinian” scholars including Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, Jerome, and Cyril of Alexandria,⁴⁰⁶ and notes that Jerome accepts “narrative aggada as a legitimate historical source” in the *QHG*.⁴⁰⁷

These observations suggest that Jerome, with his intellectual sympathies for both the Alexandrian and Antiochene schools,⁴⁰⁸ viewed rabbinic material as a source of information that could be mined with care, especially, perhaps, for “historical”⁴⁰⁹ and other non-theological exegeses.⁴¹⁰ However, Kamesar makes no mention of *δευτέρωσις* incorporated into Jerome’s translations: his conclusions are limited to Jerome’s own exegetical *opera*. The distinctions we have drawn between these strands of Jerome’s work means that we cannot straightforwardly apply Kamesar’s conclusions to our own investigation of the *IH* Psalter.

It is difficult to determine Jerome’s access to the material contained in the various extant rabbinic texts. The origin, formulation, and redaction of the Mishnah are open to debate, but tradition points to R. Yehudah ha-Nasi (“Rabbi”) as its author or

favourable sense and not in polemical contexts.” Brown, *Vir Trilinguis*, p. 127. See also Kamesar, A., “The Narrative Aggada as Seen from the Graeco-Latin Perspective,” in *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 45.1, (Spring 1994), pp. 52-70.

⁴⁰⁶ Kamesar, “The Evaluation,” p. 58.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 60-61.

⁴⁰⁸ See Braverman, *Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel*, p. 3; Brown, *Vir Trilinguis*, p. 165.

⁴⁰⁹ We use this in its modern sense, rather than its ancient literary sense, for which see Young, F.M., *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 79-80: she argues that while “it is clear that *historia* could refer to an ancient literary genre not totally dissimilar to what we mean by history,” nevertheless “‘History’ as a literary genre ... was closely akin to rhetoric and tragedy: there was more interest in fate and fortune, in moral lessons, in creative composition and effective style, than in historicity.”

⁴¹⁰ Thus Simonetti refers to Jerome’s interpretation of “the want of bread in Jerusalem” at Ezekiel 4.16-17 as “the want of spiritual bread and water in the Church,” and argues that “This method of drawing freely on diverse sources ... and intertwining a Christian spiritual interpretation ... with the history of the Jews does not help to add to the general coherence of Jerome’s commentaries.” Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation*, p. 102.

compiler.⁴¹¹ Much material in the Mishnah undoubtedly pre-dated Rabbi, and changes and additions were made after his death.⁴¹² Nevertheless, the consensus that Rabbi “must be regarded as the actual redactor of [the Mishnah]” and the dating of his death to 217AD⁴¹³ suggests that the text of the Mishnah was well established by the time Jerome was working.⁴¹⁴ The Midrash on Psalms (Midrash Tehillim) may have been compiled as late as the ninth century AD, though by that stage it already had a long oral, and partially written, history, as Braude argues: the “overwhelming body of material in Midrash Tehillim goes back to the Talmudic period [324-638].”⁴¹⁵ Jerome was writing near the beginning of the Talmudic period and so will most probably have relied on Jewish teachers, rather than on written texts, for access to Midrashic interpretations and insights. Discoveries at Qumran have shown that Aramaic translations of biblical books existed in written form, for at least some books, in the pre-Christian period.⁴¹⁶ The development of the Targumim as such from these translations is a matter of debate, as is the context within which these translations

⁴¹¹ Strack, H.L., and Stemberger, G., *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, translated by Bockmuehl, M., (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), p. 149.

⁴¹² For a fuller discussion see Strack and Stemberger, *Introduction*, pp. 145-156.

⁴¹³ Strack and Stemberger, *Introduction*, p. 89.

⁴¹⁴ Lieberman argues for the oral publication of the Mishnah, suggesting instead that “A regular ἔκδοσις, edition, of the *Mishnah* was in existence, a fixed text recited by the *Tannaim* of the college.” Regarding the work of Rabbi he writes: “when he became Patriarch he was probably granted access to the traditions of the different colleges and was thus able to superpose and incorporate the comments and traditions of R. ‘Akiba’s pupils into the old *Mishnah*, in other words, to edit a new corpus of *Mishnayoth*. The new collection was committed to memory by the *Tannaim* of the colleges, and the *Mishnah* was published.” In spite of this orality he argues that “The corrections and the emendations of the *Tannaim* and the masters of the rabbinic academies affected our text of the *Mishnah* to a certain degree, but the great majority of alterations remained outside of the text.” Lieberman, S., *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine, Studies in the Literary Transmission, Beliefs and Manners of Palestine in the I Century B.C.E. – IV Century C.E.*, Texts and Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Vol. XVIII, (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950), pp. 88, 96-97, 98. If this is the case, any access to Mishnaic material that Jerome enjoyed will have been mediated through his Jewish teachers, but (so Lieberman) the likelihood is that their oral text of the Mishnah was substantially the same as our written text.

⁴¹⁵ Braude, W.G., *The Midrash on Psalms*, (Volume 1 of 2), Yale Judaica Series, Ed. L. Nemoy, Volume XIII, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), p. xi.

⁴¹⁶ Hayward, C.T.R., “Saint Jerome and the Aramaic Targumim” in *Journal of Semitic Studies* 32.1 (1987), pp. 105-123.

were originally used, whether liturgical or educational.⁴¹⁷ However, certainly by the Talmudic period Targum in its various versions, each containing a different mix of translation, paraphrase and aggadic interpretation,⁴¹⁸ had become integral to synagogue liturgy. Gordon observes that “Jerome, despite his associations with Hebraei, never mentions a Targum, in either written or oral form ... However, that [the Vulgate] has affinities with the Targumim is certain.”⁴¹⁹ Hayward is similarly positive: “it is highly probable that he was conversant with traditions now preserved in the Targum.”⁴²⁰ Indeed Jerome’s familiarity with both the Aramaic and Syrian languages provides further support for Hayward’s point, though it is undoubtedly odd that Jerome does not mention a Targum as such – perhaps this should be taken as evidence against written Targumim existing at this period. In any case, these points highlight several important issues. First, a lack of attribution by Jerome by no means rules out a direct link between his work and other material. Second, it is possible that Jerome never did have direct access to a Targumic text, but received his information via one of his Jewish teachers. Indeed this conclusion is inevitable if we accept Edwards’ late date for Targum Psalms.

Thus Jerome is likely to have received much of his knowledge of rabbinic exegesis via his Jewish teachers. At a time when much of this existed only in oral form, and was constantly developing, Jerome’s access to this material was limited to what his teachers told him. By contrast our access to rabbinic traditions is limited to what we find in extant rabbinic texts, but these constitute a finite body of information reflecting an indeterminate portion of Jewish thought that was contemporary with

⁴¹⁷ For a discussion of the *Sitz im Leben* of the targum, see Alexander, P.S., “Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures” in Mulder, M.J., ed., *Mikra*, pp. 238-241.

⁴¹⁸ Alexander, “Jewish Aramaic Translations,” pp. 217-225.

⁴¹⁹ Gordon, “Rabbinic Exegesis,” pp. 395-396.

⁴²⁰ Hayward, “Jewish Traditions,” p. 101.

Jerome. There is always the possibility that a word or phrase used by Jerome “looks” as though it had a source in rabbinic exegesis, but this source cannot be traced.⁴²¹ On the other hand, Jerome could be useful for providing early attestation of traditions that were written down much later.⁴²²

4.6 Jewish Influences on the Psalter *IH*

We found very few instances where the Latin of the *IH* Psalter appeared to have been influenced by Jewish exegesis, but will discuss the four that were most striking. In the first two Jerome’s translation more clearly supports rabbinic exegeses of the verses in question than does the Hebrew text. The third example shows Jerome utilising a rabbinic method for discovering the philological meaning of an obscure word, and the fourth suggests that Jerome’s knowledge of Jewish religious custom and contemporary exegesis influenced his translation.

1. Psalm 7.1 *IH*:

Brock observes that “in cases where the provision of an interpretational element is *optional*, rather than required ... we are best able to discern the individual interests and

⁴²¹ Discussing the media by which rabbinic interpretation reached Christians, Horbury points to pre-rabbinic Jewish literature (particularly Jewish Greek versions of the bible), biblical exposition in the synagogue, and personal contacts. Clearly we have direct access to only the first of these, and even then, given the fragmentary state of the extant portions of the Hexapla, not consistently. Horbury, “Old Testament Interpretation,” pp. 774-775.

⁴²² Cf. Salvesen’s demonstration that “Symmachus has something to offer in the way of providing a *terminus ad quem* for certain traditions. Where the Targumim provide comparable interpretations, the parallels in Symmachus prove that those interpretations must date from Tannaitic times if not earlier.” Similarly, “Where attributions exist in rabbinic midrash for the same haggadic traditions, similar readings in Sym demonstrate that it is not a case of attaching a later interpretation to the name of a prominent early rabbi. Instead, the interpretation must also go back to Tannaitic times...” Salvesen, A., “Symmachus and the dating of Palestinian Targum Tradition,” in *Journal of the Aramaic Bible*, 2 (2000), pp. 233-245, here p. 245.

concerns of a particular translator. Thus ... when confronted with a geographical name the translator may reproduce the Hebrew ... or he may introduce an interpretive element by ‘updating’ the geography.”⁴²³ Rather than transliterating כּוּשׁ, which would conform to his usual practice with Hebrew names,⁴²⁴ and had a precedent in *ILXX Chusi*, Jerome translated it in the *IH* as *Aethiopsis*. Taken on its own this is unremarkable, but in the light of the *Commentarioli* the reference to Saul is clear: “*Sciendum itaque Chusi interpretaeri Aethiopem, et totum psalmum contra Saul esse conscriptum ... Quem Aethiopem vocat propter sanguinarios et tetros et crudeles mores. Iemeni vero familia quod at tribum pertineat Benjamin, de qua Saul ortus est.*”⁴²⁵ The tradition of understanding this Psalm in reference to Saul is well established in rabbinic literature.

There is long discussion of this verse in Midrash Tehillim 7.1-3, clearly identifying Saul as the subject of the Psalm, and suggesting a rabbinic source for Jerome’s translation of כּוּשׁ as *Aetheopsis* in the *IH*. In explanation of כּוּשׁ we find: “What do the words *Concerning the matter of Cush the Benjamite* mean? According to R. Hinena bar Papa, David said: “As the wife of Joseph’s master accosted Joseph saying *Lie with me* (Gen. 39:7), and then complained: *The Hebrew servant, whom thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me* (Gen. 39:17), so Saul complained: *My son hath stirred up my servant against me to lie in wait* (1 Sam. 22:8).” And David went on: “Even as the Cushite woman, the wife of Joseph’s master, used lies against him, so Saul the Benjamite used lies against me.”⁴²⁶ The parallel that the rabbis discerned between the accusation of Potiphar’s Cushite wife against Joseph and the accusation

⁴²³ Brock, S.P., ‘Translating the Old Testament,’ p. 88.

⁴²⁴ See Kedar, “Latin Translations,” p. 331.

⁴²⁵ *CCSL* 72, p. 189.

⁴²⁶ Midr. Teh. 7.3. Unless stated otherwise, the translation of Midrash Tehillim is that of Braude, *The Midrash on Psalms*, p. 103.

of Saul against Jonathan helps to explain its interpretation as a reference to Saul and Jerome's subsequent translation of שׂוֹר as *Aethiopsis*.

Targum Psalms 7.1 likewise identifies Saul as the subject of the Psalm: “A loud song of thanksgiving of David, which he sang before the LORD, because he uttered the song about the misfortune of Saul the son of Kish, who was from the tribe of Benjamin.”⁴²⁷

Thus while Psalm 7.1 *IH* is superficially very similar to the *ILXX*, the *Commentarioli* reveals that there is a greater significance to Jerome's choice of translation in the *IH* than at first meets the eye. In the *Commentarioli* Jerome makes no suggestion of any Christological significance of this Psalm: perhaps it is for this reason that he felt able to follow the rabbis in his identification of the Psalm's subject as Saul in the *Commentarioli*, and in his slight change in the *IH* translation to reflect this.

2. Psalm 81.1 *IH*:

Our interest in this verse centres on explaining the difference between *ILXX* in *synagoga deorum* for LXX ἐν συναγωγῇ θεῶν and *IH* in *coetu Dei* for Hebrew בְּעֶרְת־אֵל. This difference may simply be explained in terms of the Greek and Hebrew texts, but there is a strong possibility that Jerome was following a rabbinic tradition. Symmachus substitutes σύννομα for LXX συναγωγῇ while Aquila has ἰσχυροῶν in place of θεῶν. Jerome's *in coetu* is a near-direct translation of בְּעֶרְת, but without the sense of “assembly by appointment” – and so is (coincidentally perhaps) closer to Symmachus' σύννομα than to the LXX συναγωγῇ. Jerome may have wished to avoid

⁴²⁷ As translated by Stec, *Targum of Psalms*, p. 35.

the latter anyway, because of its negative (in his mind) association with Jews.⁴²⁸

Jerome's singular *Dei* may simply be a correction of the LXX/ILXX's plural *θεῶν/deorum* towards the Hebrew's singular *לֵאלֹהִים*, but it changes the meaning of the phrase from "the assembly of (the) gods" to "God's assembly" – whose members may well be human rather than divine. We should note Jerome's uneasiness in the *Commentarioli* over the use of the plural *deorum*, which he wishes to understand (*licet*) as "angels" or "holy ones:" "*Deus stetit in synagoga deorum: in medio autem deos diiudicat. Licet stet Deus in medio angelorum sive sanctorum, quos nunc deos vocat, tamen diiudicat eos. Si autem deos diiudicat, putas de peccatore quid faciet?*"⁴²⁹

Reference to the Hebrew text alone is sufficient to explain Jerome's use of *Dei* rather than *deorum*. However, by using *coetus Dei* in the *IH* and thereby not identifying the members of that gathering, and specifically by not referring to them as "gods" as he had in the *ILXX*, Jerome may have been influenced by rabbinic traditions that considered the members of this congregation to be human. Mishnah Avoth 3.6 reads: "R. Chalafta of Kfar-Chanania said, If ten men sit together and occupy themselves with the Law, the Divine Presence abides among them, as it is said, *God standeth in the congregation of God* ... And whence [can it be inferred that it also applies] even to three? Because it is said, *In the midst of the judges He judgeth.*"⁴³⁰ Bereshit Rabbah 48.7 – which like the Mishnah is earlier than or contemporary with Jerome – reads:

⁴²⁸ Cf. our reference to Estin's discussion of Jerome's use of *synagoga* in Chapter 5.4, as well as remarks such as the following: "*Princeps enim haereticorum diabolus, cuius vere congregatio synagoga est, de qua in Apocalypsi dicitur: Qui sunt synagogae Satanae.*" In *Ezech X*, PL 25.314, CCSL 75, p. 461.

⁴²⁹ CCSL 72, p. 220.

⁴³⁰ Blackman, P., *Mishnayoth (In Six Volumes), Volume IV, Order Nezikin, [Pointed Hebrew Text, Introductions, Translation, Notes, Appendix, Supplement, Indexes]*, (London: Mishna Press (L.M. Schoenfeld), 1954), p. 508.

“...God said to him [Abraham]: ‘Sit, and thou art a token to thy children: as thou sittest while the *Shechinah* is standing, so will thy children sit and the *Shechinah* stand,’ as it says, *God standeth ... in the congregation of God.*”⁴³¹ Devarim Rabbah 7.2 reads: “R. Aibu said: And what is more, when you stand in the synagogue, God stands by your side. Whence this? For it is said, *God standeth in the congregation of God.*”⁴³² Similarly Targum Psalm 82.1 reads: “A psalm by Asaph. *As for God, his Shekinah dwells in the assembly of the righteous who are mighty in the Law; he judges among the judges of truth.*”⁴³³

Mishnah Avoth, Bereshit Rabbah and Devarim Rabbah all interpret לַאֱלֹהִים as the singular “God,” and all appear to interpret בְּעֵרְתָּ as referring to an earthly gathering of humans – though this is most obvious in Avoth and Devarim Rabbah. The Targum by contrast interprets בְּעֵרְתָּ-אֱלֹהִים as “the assembly of the righteous who are mighty in the Law,” which constitutes an interpretive translation of “the assembly of God,” but certainly does not allow for the existence of multiple “gods.”⁴³⁴ Jerome’s translation of בְּעֵרְתָּ-אֱלֹהִים in the *IH* as *in coetu Dei* reflects the interpretations in Bereshit Rabbah and Devarim Rabbah, and circumvents the difficulties that Jerome hints at in the *Commentarioli*. Note also the religious setting of the “congregation” in these rabbinic texts, which finds a parallel in Jerome’s *sanctos* in the *Commentarioli*.

Carl Mosser recently traced the history of early patristic exegesis of Psalm 81 *IH*, and makes the important suggestion that “Given their earlier dates, we must also be

⁴³¹ Freedman, H., and Simon, M., Edd., *Midrash Rabbah*, Freedman, H., (Translator), *Genesis*, Volume 1, (London and Bournemouth: Soncino Press, 1951), p. 409.

⁴³² Freedman, H., and Simon, M., Edd., *Midrash Rabbah*, Rabbinowitz, J., (Translator), *Deuteronomy*, (London and Bournemouth: Soncino Press, 1951), p. 134.

⁴³³ Stec, *Targum of Psalms*, p. 160.

⁴³⁴ A similar tradition is reflected in Aquila’s translation of לַאֱלֹהִים as *ισχυρῶν*.

conscious of the likelihood that patristic rather than rabbinic writers preserve the earliest extant *Jewish* [his emphasis] interpretations of Ps. 82.6-7.”⁴³⁵ His discussion focusses primarily on the interpretive history of Psalm 81.6-7 *IH* as evident in the work of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria. The patristic tradition of interpreting verses 6-7 in relation to Adam is almost certainly the explanation for Jerome’s translation of 7a תמונתון קאדם קאדם אדם as *ergo quasi Adam moriemini* in the *IH*, (cf. *ILXX vos autem sicut homines moriemini*) when his usual practice is to translate אדם as *homo*.⁴³⁶ However, the traditions he refers to regarding Psalm 81.1 *IH* are all concerned with the identity of the “gods” and patristic attempts to deal with the possible polytheistic implications of the verse. He notes, for instance, that Irenaeus or his source employ the Jewish exegetical technique of *gezerah shavah* so that “Psalm 50:4 says that when God comes he judges his people. This is taken to be the same judgement described when Ps. 82.1 (LXX) says that God judges gods. The gods, therefore, are God’s people ... Thus, Ps 82.1 ... could not, as Irenaeus’ opponents claimed, refer to Gods in addition to the one God.”⁴³⁷

Despite having suggested in the *Commentarioli* that Psalm 81.1 implies that God “*deos diiudicat*,” by translating Psalm 81.1 *IH* as *Deus stetit in coetu Dei in medio Deus iudicat* Jerome circumvents these issues altogether by using the singular *Dei* so that the members of the *coetus* remain unidentified. It is conceivable that this is a response to the same polytheistic ideas that Irenaeus was refuting. However, Jerome’s *IH* translation of Psalm 81.1 as the “assembly of God” rather than the “assembly of

⁴³⁵ Mosser, C., “The Earliest Patristic Interpretations of Psalm 82, Jewish Antecedents, and the Origin of Christian Deification,” in *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, 56.1 (April 2005), pp. 30-74, here p. 60.

⁴³⁶ Mosser, “Interpretations of Psalm 82,” pp. 44, 59.

⁴³⁷ Mosser, “Interpretations of Psalm 82,” p. 46.

gods” appears to have more direct links with the rabbinic sources we discussed above than with the patristic traditions discussed by Mosser.

3. Translations of מִקְתָּם

The Hebrew word מִקְתָּם occurs six times in the Hebrew Psalter, at Psalms 16.1, 56.1, 57.1, 58.1, 59.1 and 60.1 MT. BDB simply notes that it is a technical term used in Psalm titles, with an unknown meaning.⁴³⁸ It shares its root with the verb מִקְתָּ, which occurs only in the Niphal and means “be stained,” and with the noun מִקְתָּ, “gold,” but appears to be related to neither of them. The LXX translates מִקְתָּם by *στηλογραφία*, “inscription,”⁴³⁹ which Jerome follows in the *ILXX* with the tautologous *tituli inscriptio*, “inscription of the title.” In the *IH* however, Jerome translates מִקְתָּם as *humilis et simplex* at Psalm 15.1, 55.1, 56.1, 57.1 and 58.1 *IH*, and as *humilis et perfectus* at Psalm 59.1 *IH*.

The significance of Jerome’s translation of מִקְתָּם by *humilis et simplex* becomes apparent from the entries in the *Commentarioli* for Psalms 15.1 and 55.1 *IH*, which are the only two of these six verses on which Jerome comments. The entry for Psalm 15.1 *IH* is as follows: *In tituli inscriptione David. ‘Tituli inscriptio’ proprie in tumulis et sepulcris est, et quae mortuorum corpora tenent. Pro quo Aquila et Symmachus ‘humilem et simplicem’ et ‘humilem immaculatumque’ posuerunt; significantes psalmum ad Christum proprie pertinere dicentem: ‘Discite a me, quia humilis sum et*

⁴³⁸ BDB, p. 508.

⁴³⁹ The word is unattested in Lidd-Scott, but appears in patristic Greek, meaning primarily “(inscribed) monument, memorial” or “indictment (for heresy).” Its use as a titular inscription for certain Psalms is also noted. Lampe, p. 1259.

*mansuetus.*⁴⁴⁰ The entry for Psalm 55.1 *IH* is similar: *in finem pro populo qui a sanctis longe factus est, David in tituli inscriptione, quando tenuerunt eum alienigenae in Geth. In hebraeo ita habet: 'Pro columba muta, longitudinum David humilis atque perfecti, cum tenuissent eum Filistiim in Geth.'* *Columba muta, et David humilis atque perfectus, Christus in passione monstratur.*⁴⁴¹

In both cases the *ILXX* follows the *LXX*, but the *IH* follows the alternative translation of מְתָם that Jerome notes in the *Commentarioli*. Similarly in both cases the exegesis that Jerome offers in the *Commentarioli* reveals the full significance of his use of *humilis et simplex* or *humilis atque perfectus* in the *IH*. We suggest that Jerome translated מְתָם in this way because he considered it to be the best translation, but that his judgement was itself dependent upon the consequent “revelation” of Jesus Christ as the “true” subject of these Psalms. The *Commentarioli* reveals that the *IH* is more overtly “Christian” than the *ILXX* or even, arguably, the Hebrew.

Jerome's *Tractatus de Psalmo XV* is more revealing. The opening lines reveal Jerome's belief that מְתָם is a compound of two distinct Hebrew words that had been run together. They also reveal Jerome's reference to the hexapla to aid his understanding: *Tituli inscriptio ipsi David. Pro quo quinta editio ipsum verbum hebraicum posuit 'MACTHAM David': quod Aquila interpretatus est 'humilis et simplicis David,' Symmachus 'humilis et immaculati David' ... Ex quo intellegimus, unum verbum et simplicem et immaculatum et perfectum sonare, ita tamen ut semper singulis humilitas praeponatur; quod apud hebraeos compositum est ex duobus integris, ut quomodo dicimus, omnipotens, duo vocabula in uno sermone*

⁴⁴⁰ CCSL 72, p. 194.

⁴⁴¹ CCSL 72, p. 211.

*concludentes, ita et verbum MACTHAM in syllaba quae appellatur MAC humilitatem sine ambiguitate demonstret, in sequenti autem quae dicitur THAM tria quae supra diximus sonat.*⁴⁴² The *Tractatus* also reveals that Jerome understood the titles of all six מַכְתָּם Psalms to refer to Christ: *Sex autem psalmi sunt ... qui hoc titulo praenotantur ... Qui omnes referuntur ad dispensationem et passionem Domini nostri Salvatoris.*⁴⁴³

Estin mentions these texts, but simply suggests that “Comme dans tous ces psaumes figure le nom de David, l’application au Christ est immédiate et l’interprétation d’Aquila et de Symmaque apparaît des plus suggestives à Jérôme.”⁴⁴⁴ We believe we can go further. The *Commentarioli* and *Tractatus* on Psalm 15.1 suggest that Jerome may simply have taken his reading *humilis et simplex* in Psalm 15.1 *IH* from Aquila, no doubt in an attempt to make sense of the obscure Hebrew מַכְתָּם. This is immediately significant. The LXX (Στηλογραφία) and thence *ILXX* (*Tituli inscriptio*) readings are similarly attempts to translate this obscure Hebrew word: nevertheless, Jerome rejects that tradition in favour of Aquila’s, whose philological accuracy Jerome rates highly elsewhere.⁴⁴⁵ It is most likely in Aquila’s case, and cannot be discounted in Jerome’s, that both these translators are reflecting the rabbinic device of divining “hidden” meaning in words by dividing them into their orthographically constituent parts.^{446, 447} This technique, which lies on the boundary between

⁴⁴² CCSL 78, p. 364.

⁴⁴³ CCSL 78, p. 364.

⁴⁴⁴ Estin, *Les Psautiers*, pp. 123-124.

⁴⁴⁵ Cf. Kraus, *Jerome’s Translation*, pp. 42-43, with a useful collection of proof texts.

⁴⁴⁶ Kedar notes that “Analytical renderings of supposed compounds reflect Jewish tradition,” and offers the well-known example of מַלְאָכָה being translated as *umbra mortis*, “shadow of death.” Kedar, “Latin Translations,” p. 334. Similarly Gordon notes two examples in Proverbs where “by dividing a word in two, the Church Father arrives at an interesting translation,” and suggests rabbinic parallels. Gordon, “Rabbinic Exegesis,” p. 411. Neither of these examples appears to have much importance for Christian exegesis.

⁴⁴⁷ It is fascinating to note a similar philological/exegetical train of thought in the Roman philosopher Lucretius who, in his *De Rerum Natura* 1.897-914, discusses the close relationship of the constituent parts of wood (*lignum*) and fire (*ignis*) both phenomenologically and etymologically. Cf. especially

philological and exegetical expertise, undoubtedly gives rise to false etymologies, but occasionally allows useful exegeses.⁴⁴⁸ There is a remark in the *Tractatus* that suggests Jerome was aware of an alternative vocalisation for מִקְתָּם: *Ita et nunc quia humilitas simplicitas immaculatio atque perfectio non hominem ... sed Dei filium demonstrabant ... ut aliud intellexeremus clausum in titulo, aliud in voce prolatum.*⁴⁴⁹

This remark suggests that Jerome was doing more than simply following the *recentiores*, but had personal awareness of rabbinic debates about the meaning of this word, and even the textual basis of those debates.⁴⁵⁰

Indeed this is what we find in Midrash Tehillim 16.1: “*Miktam of David* (Ps. 16:1).

There are some of the Rabbis who say that *Miktam* is compounded of two words which describe David: *mak*, ‘meek,’ and *tam*, ‘undefiled.’ And there are others who derive *miktam* from *ketem*, ‘fine gold,’ and say that *Miktam of David* means the

lines 911-914: “*atque eadem paulo inter se mutata creare/ ignes et lignum? Quo pacto verba quoque ipsa/ inter se paulo mutatis sunt elementis,/ cum ligna atque ignis distincta voce notemus,*” Brown, P.M., ed., *Lucretius: De Rerum Natura I*, General Editor, J.H. Betts, (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1984), p. 31. More interesting still is a reference in the *Tractatus de Psalmo XCVI* that seems to prove Jerome’s acquaintance with the *De Rerum Natura*: *Aiunt philosophi qui solent de rerum disputare naturis, nisi nubes contra se venientes illis fuerint, ignis ex his non potest elabi; cum vero quodam inter se certamine concitatae fuerint in tonitrua, tunc ex eis fulgur elabitur. Quam similitudinem etiam de lapidibus ignitis possumus intellegere. Hoc ideo diximus, ut simile aliquid facilius videamus in mysterio Salvatoris.* (CCSL 78, p. 442.) The juxtaposition of *philosophi ... de rerum ... naturis* is surely a reference to Lucretius! However the direct correspondence of his work on מִקְתָּם with that of Aquila and Symmachus, and with similar rabbinic practices, makes it likely that this topical parallel with Lucretius is merely coincidental.

⁴⁴⁸ Kamesar notes Jerome’s utilisation of this rabbinic technique in his attempt to explain the meaning of the Hebrew עלמה of Isaiah 7.14, suggesting that “Jerome was inspired by both rabbinic technique and Christian exegetical tradition. For the methods of reasoning which Jerome has applied are in fact typical in rabbinic biblical interpretation. Kamesar, “The Virgin of Isaiah,” p. 63. Kedar suggests that “Jerome is prone to offer etymological renderings when a word is rare and difficult,” and offers several examples. However none involve translation of both (or all) parts of the Hebrew word in question, and none appear to have the Christological significance that Jerome perceives in our example. Kedar, “Latin Translations,” pp. 331-332.

⁴⁴⁹ CCSL 78, p. 366.

⁴⁵⁰ Note too, a further parallel with Lucretius’ *cum ligna atque ignis distincta voce notemus* in Jerome’s *ut aliud intellexeremus clausum in titulo, aliud in voce prolatum*. Among other things, this parallel highlights the importance of vocalisation, of the “heard word” rather than the “written word,” in both cultures.

‘golden Psalm’ of David.”⁴⁵¹ The only other reference to מִכְתָּם is a short entry at Midrash Tehillim 56.1: “And *Michtam*? Because of this incident, David became humble (*mach*) and upright (*tam*).”⁴⁵²

Similarly Targum Psalms 16.1 has: “An *upright composition* of David ...” and Stec explains in the notes: “It would appear that TgPss has understood this word as being derived from *mktb*, ‘writing’ and *tm*, ‘blameless.’ This is in line with the way it renders MT *mktm* in the other five titles in which the word occurs. A derivation of *mktm* from *mktb* is also suggested at Ps 60.1, where *mktm ldwd* is rendered *pršgn ’l yd dwd*, ‘a copy by David.’”⁴⁵³ Tg. Pss. 56-59 all render מִכְתָּם as “the humble and blameless one,”⁴⁵⁴ and Tg. Ps. 60.1 renders it as “a copy.”⁴⁵⁵ The parallel with Jerome is not as neat as that demonstrated by Midr. Teh., but nevertheless provides a (probably) more ancient witness to the same interpretive tradition.

Whether Jerome derived his “translation” of מִכְתָּם from Aquila or Symmachus, or from his own knowledge of rabbinic devices, or midrashic and targumic interpretation via his Jewish teachers, the important point is that he is exploiting Jewish exegetical techniques to discern a Christian meaning in the Hebrew text. Furthermore, far from being *judaizantes haeretici*, in these examples Aquila and Symmachus are in fact revealing – however unwittingly – something of the character of Christ, and his presence in the Psalter. Only the LXX and, consequently, Jerome himself in the *ILXX*, face Jerome’s own accusation of *veritatem celare mendacio*.

⁴⁵¹ Midr. Teh. 16.1.

⁴⁵² Midr. Teh. 56.1.

⁴⁵³ Translation and notes by Stec, *Targum of Psalms*, p. 46.

⁴⁵⁴ Stec, *Targum of Psalms*, pp. 113, 115, 116, 117.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 119.

4. Psalm 117.10-12 IH: Vengeance or Circumcision?

The verbal root מוּל means to “circumcise,”⁴⁵⁶ and Jerome translates it correctly by *circumcidere* every time it occurs in the Old Testament apart from these three verses in Psalm 117 IH. See, for example: Genesis 17.10-14; Joshua 5.2-8; and Jeremiah 4.4. Jerome was evidently aware that מוּל also occurs as a preposition meaning “front, in front of,”⁴⁵⁷ for which see, for example, Exodus 18.19; Leviticus 5.8; and Micah 2.8. We must therefore attempt to explain Jerome’s extraordinary translations of אָמַלְתִּים, “I will circumcise them,” as *ultus sum eas*, “I took vengeance on them,” at Psalm 117.10-12 IH.

Jerome makes no remark on these verses in the *Commentarioli*, but the changes between the *ILXX* and *IH* of all three verses indicates Jerome’s close attention to the translations here. The LXX’s and Aquila’s ἡμυνάμην comes from the middle voice of ἀμύνω, namely ἀμύνομαι, which primarily means “to defend oneself” but with the accusative of person can mean “to avenge oneself on [an enemy],” and it is most likely used in this sense in the LXX. Certainly that is how Jerome understood it in the *ILXX* with *ultus sum in eos*, which he carried over to the *IH* as *ultus sum eas*, the feminine plural *eas* referring to the feminine plural *gentes*. Symmachus’ διέθρυψα αὐτούς, from διαθρύπτω, “to break in sunder, break in pieces, shiver,”⁴⁵⁸ follows the same tradition. All these versions were apparently aware of a different translation tradition for this word, or were at least uneasy about translating מוּל by the usual περιτεμεῖν, “circumcise,” in these three verses.

⁴⁵⁶ BDB, pp. 557-558. Note that BDB includes these verses from Psalm 118 MT here, suggesting a meaning “I will make them to be circumcised,” but notes other suggested meanings including “cut to pieces,” “mow,” and “annihilate.”

⁴⁵⁷ BDB, p. 557.

⁴⁵⁸ Lidd-Scott, p. 395.

This alternative translation is also found in rabbinic literature. Midrash Tehillim 118.12 similarly interprets לַמָּוֶל as “destroy:” “*All nations compassed me about; but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them* (Ps. 118:10). Gog and Magog will come three times against Israel and ascend three times against the Land of Israel, and as Nebuchadnezzar ascended three times against Jerusalem. Of the first time the Psalmist says, *All nations compassed me about* – that is, Gog and Magog will assemble all the nations and bring them to ascend against Jerusalem, as is said *And now many nations are assembled against thee* (Micah 4:11, and so on to the end of the chapter), but they will be crushed to dust. Hence it is said *But in the name of the Lord will I destroy them*. Of the second time the Psalmist says, *They compassed me about, yea, they compassed me about* (Ps. 118:11) – that is, Gog and Magog will stir up the nations of the earth into a rage and will bring them to ascend against Jerusalem, as is said *Why do the nations rage?* (Ps. 2:1, and so on to the end of the Psalm), but they will be crushed to dust. Hence the Psalmist says a second time *But in the name of the Lord I will destroy them* (Ps 118.11). Of the third time, the Psalmist says, *They compassed me about like bees* (Ps. 118.12) – that is, Gog and Magog will publish edicts and issue proclamations, as is said *Proclaim ye this among the nations, prepare war* (Joel 3:9, and so on to the end of the chapter), but they will be crushed to dust. Hence the Psalmist says a third time, *In the name of the Lord I will destroy them* (Ps 118.12).⁴⁵⁹

Targum Psalms renders these verses as: “10. All the peoples have surrounded me; in the name of *the Memra of the LORD I trust* that I shall uproot them. 11. They have surrounded me, yea they have surrounded me; in the name of *the Memra of the LORD*

⁴⁵⁹ Midr. Teh. 118.12, following the translation and notes of Braude, *The Midrash on Psalms*, pp. 239-240.

I trust that I shall uproot them. 12. they have surrounded me like bees; they *blaze* like fire *among* thorns; in the name of *the Memra of the LORD I trust* that I shall uproot them.”⁴⁶⁰

Among modern commentators, Allen translates אָמַילָם as “I warded them off,” and explains, “Most understand אָמַילָם as coming from a *hapax legomenon* meaning ‘ward off’ with LXX α’ Hier ... The parallelism indicates that the form is preterite; moreover, ‘from vv 5 and 13 it is clear that the crisis was over’ (Dahood, 157).”⁴⁶¹

Dahood himself, however, translates אָמַילָם as “I cut off their foreskins,” and notes: “Many translators and commentators fight shy of the obvious meaning of MT ^a*mīlēm*, the hiphil of *mūl*, ‘to circumcise,’ but BDB, p. 558, correctly defines it ‘I will make them to be circumcised,’ ... The *yqtl* form expresses the past, since from vss. 5 and 13 it is clear that the crisis was past and the victory won.” Dahood explains the Hebrew as an allusion to 1 Samuel 18.25-27, and suggests that “The reference to the ‘nations’ and the ‘foreskins’ suggests further that the psalmist had the Philistines in mind; most of Israel’s neighbors practiced (sic) circumcision, but the Philistines did not.”⁴⁶²

In 1 Samuel 18.25, 27 Jerome does not avoid translating עָרְלוֹת literally as *praeputia*. Moreover, the verbal connection between *ut fiat ultio de inimicis regis* at 1 Samuel 18.25 for לְהַנָּקָם בְּאֵיבֵי הַמְּלָךְ and *ultus sum in eos* and *ultus sum eas* at Psalm 117.10-

⁴⁶⁰ Translation by Stec, *Targum of Psalms*, p. 209. He notes on p. 209 n. 9 that the Targum’s rendering is apparently based on understanding the root *mwl* as “cut off.”

⁴⁶¹ Allen, L.C., *Word Biblical Commentary*, Volume 21, *Psalms 101-50*, Revised, B.M. Metzger, D.A. Hubbard, and G.W. Barker, (General Editors), (Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2002), pp. 16-162.

⁴⁶² Dahood, M., *Psalms III, 101-150, Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, The Anchor Bible, ed., W.F. Albright and D.N. Freedman, (New York: Doubleday & Company Inc., 1970), pp. 154, 157-158.

12 in the *ILXX* and *IH* respectively, makes it extremely likely that Jerome would himself have made the connection between these two passages.

We could explain Jerome's translation of מְלִיץ by *ulcisci* as simply following the tradition represented in the Jewish Greek versions. Certainly a similar interpretive tradition is evident in Midrash Tehillim and in Targum Psalms, but the close correspondence of LXX/Aquila ἀμύνομαι and *IH ulcisci* means that one or both of these Greek versions is more likely to be the ancestor of the *IH*. An alternative answer to this problem lies in Jerome's understanding, which he would have gained from his own knowledge of the scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments,⁴⁶³ of the specifically Jewish significance of circumcision. Circumcision is usually the method and symbol of inclusion within Israel as God's people, operating within the framework of the Abrahamic covenant as related in Genesis 17.10-14. Circumcision as a symbol of vengeance is relatively rare, occurring in these passages at Psalm 118 and 1 Samuel 18, and in Genesis 34 where it is the means by which the sons of Jacob debilitate the Shechemites before killing them in revenge for Shechem's rape of Dinah. The context of this latter example is slightly different, particularly in that circumcision is an aid to the extraction of vengeance, and not the vengeance itself, but it is significant that in the *IH* of Genesis 34 Jerome uses *circumcido* and cognates throughout to translate מוֹל and cognates.

Jerome was clearly aware of the usual meaning of מוֹל, and he paid close attention to these three verses in the *IH* Psalter, so we can be sure that his decision to follow the

⁴⁶³ Cf. Jerome's comments on the controversy between Peter and Paul in the latter's letter to the Galatians, which is concerned among other things with the Jewish significance of circumcision, *Comm. in Gal.* 2.11-14, *PL* 26.338-342. See also the discussion in Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 147-148.

LXX or Aquila rather than the Hebrew in translating מוּל by *ulcisci* is deliberate and significant. Part of the explanation is no doubt the incongruity of a situation in which a military conqueror proceeds to circumcise his defeated foes. But the more common religious than retributive significance of circumcision may also be part of the explanation: Jerome may have had difficulty with the apparent suggestion in the Hebrew that in defeating its enemies Israel included them within its own numbers, or at the very least removed the symbol of their foreignness, and chose to bypass it by following the LXX or Aquila rather than the Hebrew, or by following the interpretive tradition recorded in Midrash Tehillim and Targum Psalms. Perhaps, however, given the likelihood that Jerome made the connection between Psalm 117.10-12 *IH* and 1 Samuel 18.25-27, his choice to use *ulcisci* rather than *circumcido* in the Psalter has more to do with uneasiness about using the latter in a liturgically important book than with uneasiness about the concept per se. Whatever the direct source of Jerome's *IH ulcisci*, and the explanation for its use, his translation of Psalm 117.10-12 *IH* involves him abandoning his standard translation of a common and theologically important Hebrew word with the result that his translation coincides with Jewish translational and exegetical tradition.

4.7 Conclusion

We suggested at the beginning of this chapter that the close textual connection between Judaism and Christianity opened up a space within which there could be a mutual exchange of ideas concerning the meaning and exegesis of those texts. Our search in the *IH* Psalter revealed very few instances where Jerome's Latin reading

could only or best be explained by reference to Jewish exegetical traditions. The first of these involved understanding Saul as the subject of a Psalm that Jerome apparently believed to be of no Christological significance. In the second, Psalm 81.1 *IH*, Jerome may well have been influenced by Jewish notions that the assembly concerned was an “assembly of God,” and constituted the righteous as the witnesses rather than the objects of God’s judgement. However, by referring to the assembly as *coetus* in the *IH* rather than *synagoga* as in the *ILXX*, he removed the specifically Jewish (in the fourth century) connotations of *synagoga* from the verse.⁴⁶⁴ Jerome was willing to follow Jewish ideas in identifying the members of the assembly as human rather than divine, but was not willing to identify those members as Jews. Our third example, concerning Jerome’s translation of מִקְרָא revealed him to be utilising a characteristically rabbinic device for discovering exegetical significance in obscure Hebrew words, but he interpreted the information thereby revealed as a direct reference to Jesus Christ. Finally, it is possible that Jerome’s appreciation of the Jewish significance of circumcision, and an awareness of an alternative interpretation of this word in rabbinic exegeses, influenced his decision to translate מְיָלֵם by *ulcisci* in these three verses, rather than by *circumcidere* as he does on every other occasion.

We must always bear in mind Gordon’s caution that conclusions we draw will necessarily be based on “cumulative evidence” and cannot be “proof positive,”⁴⁶⁵ but we believe that a clear pattern in Jerome’s practice may nevertheless be discerned. Our discoveries confirmed our suspicion that while Jerome was undoubtedly willing to utilise Jewish philological expertise in his bid to discover the natural or “scientific” meaning of the Hebrew text, he would be far less willing to utilise Jewish exegetical

⁴⁶⁴ Cf. Estin, *Les Psautiers*, p. 126.

⁴⁶⁵ Gordon, “Rabbinic Exegesis” p. 387.

expertise and so provide a translation that reflected a particular Jewish exegesis of the verse in question. Most significantly, the strongest example of the *IH* reflecting a uniquely Jewish understanding, namely Psalm 7.1, involves a Psalm that had no Christological importance. A striking counter-example is Psalm 44 *IH*, which was Christologically important and about which Jerome suggests “*totus psalmus refertur ad Christum.*”⁴⁶⁶ There is a strong tradition in rabbinic literature of reading this Psalm in reference to Abraham, but Jerome makes no attempt to promote this in the *IH*.

Our discoveries here must be seen in the context of Jerome’s *Commentaries*, where he routinely includes Jewish exegeses of a particular verse or passage. The evidence from the *Commentaries* suggests that Jerome was not implacably opposed to Jewish exegetical expertise, indeed he often found it useful for explaining the text in question. However, when it came to the biblical text he was very reticent to reflect Jewish exegetical expertise in his translation. Jerome may have advocated a return to the Hebrew scriptures, but his *IH* translation of the Psalter is not, contra Barthélemy, consequently “rabbinical” in character.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁶ *CCSL* 72, p. 209.

⁴⁶⁷ Thus we have shown that Salvesen’s general verdict that “it is doubtful that any fourth century rabbi would have recognized it as [‘une Bible des rabbins’],” is correct in relation to the *IH* Psalter in particular. Salvesen, “A Convergence,” p. 255.

Chapter 5

Christian Influences on the Psalter *IH*

Our search for Christian influences on Jerome's translation of the Psalter *IH* was particularly fruitful. In the interests of clarity therefore this chapter is divided into four sub-chapters, each of which deals with a different aspect of these Christian influences.

Chapter 5.1

Truth or Apostasy? Jerome and Old Testament Authority

“It must be remembered that despite his belief in the centrality and priority of the Hebrew text, Jerome was a member of a Church in which the LXX was the accepted version ... Since all theological and exegetical discussion took place on the basis of that translation, he was not about to burn his LXX and cut himself off from the rest of the Christian world.”⁴⁶⁸

5.1.1 The Authority of the LXX

Jerome's preference for the Hebrew text naturally raised few eyebrows among his pagan and Jewish contemporaries, but the consequent demotion of the LXX from its position of supreme authority brought much opposition from his Christian contemporaries. Such was the tenacity with which Christians, educated and uneducated alike, held to the Septuagintal text that Jerome did not have to “burn his LXX” to risk ostracism. Indeed Jerome never did reject the LXX outright. Yet his belief that the Hebrew scriptures should hold veridical priority, and his consequent efforts to make them more generally available by translating them directly into Latin, was enough to kindle righteous Christian indignation. No doubt Jerome's irascible temperament did little to quench the flames. However, our investigation of Jerome's

⁴⁶⁸ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 55.

new translation of the Psalter would not be complete without a thorough analysis of the opposition Jerome faced in carrying out his *Iuxta Hebraeos* project, which is our task in this chapter, and the ways in which he sought to counter it, which is the task of our three subsequent chapters.

Opposition to Jerome's project centred on whether or not a new Latin translation based on the Hebrew was theologically justifiable. At stake were the relative claims of the Greek and Hebrew texts of the Old Testament to be the authoritative word of God.

5.1.2 Opposition from Uneducated Christians

The opinions of Jerome's uneducated contemporaries about his work were largely dependent on its similarity to the version(s) they already knew. "Accuracy" and "authority" were (however subconsciously) redefined as "familiarity" and "suitability for Christian exegesis." Given that the greatest part of any congregation's corporate exposure to Christian doctrine necessarily derives from the particular translation it happens to use, "suitability for Christian exegesis" becomes the same as "familiarity." This circular reasoning clearly bypasses any consideration of whether or not that translation was "accurate" when measured by objective standards, but more importantly it also mitigates against the acceptance of a different translation.

Augustine's report of the controversy surrounding Jerome's translation of קִיָּוִן in Jonah 4.6 as *hedera* (ivy) instead of the generally accepted *cucurbita* (gourd) is well known, but we wish to draw two points from it in reference to our discussion here.

“Nam quidem frater noster Episcopus, cum lectitari instituisset in Ecclesia cui praeest, interpretationem tuam, movit quiddam longe aliter abs te positum apud Jonam Prophetam, quam erat omnium sensibus memoriaeque inveteratum, et tot aetatum successionibus decantatum. Factus est tantus tumultus in plebe, maxime Graecis arguentibus, et inflammantibus calumniam falsitatis, ut cogeret Episcopus (ea quippe civitas erat) Judaeorum testimonium flagitare. Utrum autem illi imperitia, an malitia hoc esse in Hebraeis codicibus responderunt, quod et Graeci et Latini habebant. Quid plura? coactus est homo velut mædositatem corrigere, volens, post magnum periculum, non remanere sine plebe.”⁴⁶⁹

First, while it would appear to make very little difference whatsoever to the exegesis of the story of Jonah whether he sat under an ivy plant or a gourd, the novelty of Jerome’s translation over that which was “rehearsed in the traditions of every age” led to its violent rejection by the crowd, with apparently no regard to whether Jerome’s translation was correct. Second, despite the new translation being introduced by the bishop himself, the congregation refused to accept it, and indeed broke into a riot. The verdict of local Jews appeared to support the customary translation, to which the bishop was therefore compelled to revert.⁴⁷⁰ Clearly, for this (presumably) uneducated congregation, familiarity was everything.⁴⁷¹

Jerome himself was aware of this problem from the very beginning, as is evident when he deferentially protests to Damasus that his commission to sit *quasi quidam*

⁴⁶⁹ Augustine, *Ep. CIV.5*, PL 22.833-834, CSEL 55, p. 241.

⁴⁷⁰ Augustine’s remark that the Jews supported the earlier tradition *utrum ... illi imperitia an malitia* is confusing. By ascribing “ignorance or malice” to the Jews’ rejection of Jerome’s translation, Augustine appears to acknowledge its accuracy, even if in the interests of ecclesiastical calm he is opposed to its introduction.

⁴⁷¹ Cf. Augustine’s argument that churchgoers would reject Jerome’s new translation because of differences between it and previous versions, Augustine, *Ep.* 80.3-6. See also Müller, “Graeca,” p. 119.

arbiter over the multitudinous Latin versions of the Gospels will lead to accusations of forgery or sacrilege. It is particularly interesting to note that he foresaw opposition from learned and unlearned alike, so great was their attachment to the “old language:”

“Quis enim doctus pariter vel indoctus, cum in manus volumen assumpserit, et a saliva, quam semel imbibit, viderit discrepare quod lectitat, non statim erumpat in vocem, me falsarium, me clamans esse sacrilegum, qui audeam aliquid in veteribus libris addere, mutare, corrigere?”⁴⁷²

Despite this opposition, both foreseen and experienced, Jerome persisted with his translation project. We will discuss presently why he did so. However when we come to the analysis of the text of the *IH* Psalter in the next three chapters we must bear in mind the conservative and retarding effect of Christian popular opinion and ask how far this caused Jerome to propagate previous translations.

5.1.3 Opposition from Educated Churchmen

Augustine and Rufinus were perhaps Jerome’s harshest contemporary critics, and both were fundamentally opposed to his *IH* project. Neither, however, objected to the results of Jerome’s *IH* project, indeed their lack of proficiency in Hebrew meant that they could not check the accuracy of his work for themselves. Instead, both objected to the concept of Jerome’s project because it ultimately rejected the authoritative position of the Septuagintal tradition of the Old Testament in favour of the Hebrew

⁴⁷² *Praefatio in Evangelia*, PL 29.525-526, Weber/Gryson p. 1515, c.f. Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 87.

tradition. Their opposition was theological and not philological, and therefore has little to tell us about the quality of Jerome's *IH* translations per se. However, the importance of these theological disputes suggests that it is unlikely that they will not have impacted Jerome's work to some degree.

Origen's work had highlighted for the first time the textual differences between the Hebrew and the LXX traditions. These differences posed little problem so long as the Hexapla remained only a vast repository of comparative textual information, accessible to and accessed by only a small number of biblical scholars. More importantly, Kamesar has demonstrated that there are no solid grounds for assuming that Origen assigned greater authority to the Hebrew than to the LXX or the *recentiores*. Indeed, "Origen's dependence on the later versions ... is such that it seems to have obviated a sustained, comprehensive perception of the Hebrew text as a separate entity."⁴⁷³ This is not surprising. Origen's own lack of proficiency in Hebrew meant that any attempt to promote the Hebrew textual tradition over the Greek would have involved Origen relying heavily and blindly on the advice of others.⁴⁷⁴ Kamesar has similarly shown that Origen appears to have held to the view that the LXX was authoritative as it originally stood, including those various passages that do not occur in the Hebrew. Recourse to the Hebrew was simply a means to "heal" the errors introduced by textual corruption.⁴⁷⁵ A "pure" LXX seems to have been his goal, and he used the Hebrew text piecemeal to aid his progress.

As long as the Hebrew tradition was simply used as a quarry for corrections to the LXX tradition there could be no stand-off between them. The LXX (and the Latin

⁴⁷³ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 26.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 11.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 10-21.

versions based on it) simply *was* the Old Testament of the church. It was only when Jerome abandoned his original project of revising the Old Latin versions according to the Hexaplaric LXX and opted instead to make new translations from the Hebrew text that a clear distinction had to be made between these two textual traditions. Jerome and his contemporaries attempted to do this by developing, albeit in a piecemeal and ad hoc fashion, different theologies of revelation and translation that favoured the authority of either the Hebrew or Septuagintal tradition.

We will examine the issues by considering Jerome's position as opposed to that of his contemporaries Rufinus and Augustine, whom we have chosen because their extensive correspondence with Jerome gives us direct insight into the nature of the disputes. The fundamental issue was the provenance of the LXX translation, whether divinely inspired, as later versions of the Aristeas legend claimed (particularly under Philo's influence),⁴⁷⁶ so that it amounted to fresh revelation in itself, or the product of human intellects, however learned and Godly.

5.1.4 Rufinus

Origen's towering yet controversial status as a theologian and (proto-)linguist meant that Jerome's equivocal support for him was bound to elicit strong reactions. More importantly, the textual questions that Origen had perhaps inadvertently raised by producing the Hexapla were without doubt a major spur in the development of different theories about the Hebrew and Greek Old Testament traditions. F. X.

⁴⁷⁶ For an extensive survey, see: Müller, "Graeca," pp. 103-124; also Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint*, pp. 35-51; Jobes, Silva, *Invitation*, pp. 33-37; Brock, "To Revise or not to Revise," pp. 303-305; and Brock, "Translating the Old Testament," p. 92.

Murphy discusses the quarrel between Jerome and Rufinus in two stages, the first from 393 to 397 and the second from 401 to 402.⁴⁷⁷ He suggests that in both periods the dispute over Origen's theology took precedence over other concerns. However, given that Jerome embarked on his *IH* project in around 390⁴⁷⁸ and completed it in around 405/6, it may be significant that Murphy finds Rufinus' criticism of Jerome's *IH* project more marked in the second period (401-402).⁴⁷⁹ We can no doubt explain this in terms of the controversy around the project gathering momentum over the intervening years, but Murphy's findings also suggests that, whatever their differences over Origen, their dispute over Jerome's new translations was no mere side show.

Rufinus' belief in the divine inspiration of the Septuagint translators persuaded him that Jerome's version was vastly inferior: "*De quo ut omittam illud dicere, quod LXXII virorum per cellulas interpretantium unam et consonam vocem, dubitandum non est, Spiritus Sancti inspiratione prolatam, et maioris id debere esse auctoritatis, quam id quod ab uno homine, sibi Barraba aspirante, translatum est.*"⁴⁸⁰ Rufinus argues in two directions, both for the Septuagint translators and against Jerome, and on two levels, promoting the authority of the LXX in terms of inspiration by the Holy Spirit and in terms of numbers.

Rufinus apparently had in mind an advanced iteration of the Aristeas legend: he set Jerome's translation *ab uno homine* against that of the *LXXII virorum* who, despite working independently *per cellulas* nevertheless (he claimed) translated with one and

⁴⁷⁷ Murphy, F.X., *Rufinus of Aquileia (345-411): His Life and Works*, The Catholic University of America Studies in Mediaeval History, New Series, Volume VI, (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1945), pp. 59-81 and 138-157.

⁴⁷⁸ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 159.

⁴⁷⁹ Murphy, *Rufinus*, p. 80.

⁴⁸⁰ Rufinus, *Apologia in Sanctum Hieronymum*, II.33, PL 21.612.

the same voice, *unam et consonam vocem*. If this version of the story were accurate, the only way to explain it would indeed be by reference to *Spiritus Sancti inspiratione*! More plausibly here it suited Rufinus to set the divine aid offered to the Greek translators in contrast to the help offered to Jerome by his Jewish teacher Baranina, whom Rufinus sneeringly dismissed as *Barraba*, Barabbas, the criminal released instead of Christ.⁴⁸¹ Rufinus' verdict is damning indeed: the Holy Spirit on the one hand, and Barabbas on the other. We may go further. In this context it is surely not too fanciful to hear an echo of *in Spiritus* in *inspiratione*, describing the divine help offered to the Septuagint translators, and in *aspirante*, describing the help offered to Jerome, an echo of *aspis*, "viper." So the Holy Spirit's help was "breathed into" the LXX translators, but Baranina's help was "hissed" into Jerome by a criminal Jew if not the Devil himself.

Beneath Rufinus' rhetorical jousting we may easily discern his more sober objections. The first is simple enough: Jerome's translation was produced by one man, and so ran all the risks of being undermined by errors or by conscious or subconscious prejudice that would not be checked and balanced by other translators. More importantly, his sneering dismissal of Baranina reveals his concern that in his new translation Jerome was somehow abandoning the Christian faith and Christian scriptures, so that far from being a useful resource for Christians the *IH* would in fact expose them to an erroneous Jewish version of the Old Testament.

Herein lay the core issue, namely the argument over whether the Septuagint was different to the Hebrew scriptures because it represented a later prophetic dispensation

⁴⁸¹ Cf., for example, Matthew 27.15-23.

specifically for Christians. Rufinus appears to have proceeded upon the belief in the divine inspiration of two separate Old Testaments, one for Jews, and (later) one for Christians, which must be kept separate. Jerome, per contra, appears to proceed upon the belief in a single Old Testament, first for Jews, and later for Christians, which was interpreted and translated with varying degrees of success over time.

There is an important, if difficult, piece of evidence that Rufinus found fault with the translations themselves, rather than the principle behind them. Hammond notes that in his *Apologies against Rufinus* Jerome accuses him of responsibility for a letter purporting to be a statement by Jerome repenting of his *IH* translations.⁴⁸² The provenance of this letter is unclear⁴⁸³ but the fact that Jerome felt he needed to repudiate its claims suggests that he suspected that the reliability of the translations themselves might have been an issue for Rufinus. Nevertheless, Rufinus appears never to have produced examples of instances where Jerome's translation itself was incorrect. This was no doubt partly because he could not read Hebrew, but given the controversy surrounding the *IH* it seems impossible that he would not have picked up on such inaccuracies had others (such as local Jews) discovered any.

A possible objection to these assertions could be Rufinus' reference to the dispute over Jerome's new translation of Jonah 4.6, which we have already discussed.⁴⁸⁴

However, this appears to have been no more than a fortuitous jibe. Rebenich's insights are useful here: "It is also striking that the new translation *ivy* had obviously not been criticized for philological, but for theological reasons; that is to say, Jerome

⁴⁸² Hammond, C.P., "The Last Ten Years of Rufinus' Life," in *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, 28 (1977), p. 383. Cf. Jerome, *Apol.*, II.24, III.25.

⁴⁸³ Hammond, "Last Ten Years," p. 383, n. 3.

⁴⁸⁴ *Apol. in S. Hier.*, II.35, PL 21.614.

was accused of *sacrilegium* since his translation differed from the traditional and thus divinely inspired reading of the Bible.”⁴⁸⁵ Two points are worth making. First, if this was the most serious fault Rufinus could find with Jerome’s translations, his accusations sound rather hollow. Second, Rebenich’s reference to “theological reasons” emphasises the centrality of the debate on the divine inspiration of the LXX. Jerome’s detractors stand or fall largely on this issue alone.

5.1.5 Augustine

Polman and Müller have made helpful contributions to our understanding of Augustine’s view of the LXX. In his long historical survey Müller demonstrates the extent to which Augustine was simply developing the ideas of his ecclesiastical predecessors,⁴⁸⁶ while Polman shows Augustine’s apparently strengthening belief in the inspiration of the LXX.⁴⁸⁷ Like Rufinus, Augustine’s ignorance of Hebrew meant that he relied on the opinions of others to evaluate Jerome’s translations.⁴⁸⁸ Consequently, Augustine’s opposition to the *IH* project was similarly based on Jerome’s preference for the Hebrew text rather than his abilities as a translator, or the quality of the *IH* as a translation.

Polman’s thoroughgoing discussion of the subsequent developments in Augustine’s thought as laid out in *De Civitate Dei* XVIII.43 is more than adequate for our purposes here. We simply wish to emphasise the implications of Augustine’s

⁴⁸⁵ Rebenich, “‘Vir Trilinguis,’” pp. 58-59.

⁴⁸⁶ Müller, “Graeca”, pp. 103-124.

⁴⁸⁷ Polman, *Word of God*, pp. 183-190.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 183-184.

argument for the divine inspiration of the LXX, because they explain the bitterness of his opposition to Jerome's *IH* project. His belief in the divine inspiration of the LXX translators came to be his incontrovertible starting point, and from this starting point any divergence between the Hebrew and Greek traditions whatsoever could be explained in terms of differential revelation. It was a foolproof argument as it stood, and goes some way to explaining Polman's observation that Augustine "conjured up the most far-fetched allegories to explain what a mere glance at the original [Hebrew] text would have explained without any trouble."⁴⁸⁹

However, it is worth pointing out, with Müller, that Augustine in no way dismissed the value of the Hebrew scriptures in their own context, he simply denied them any authority over the church: "Augustine is quite willing to accept the Hebrew text, *Hebraica veritas*, as the authentic Bible text, but only on the understanding that it is a *veritas hebraeis sive Judaeis*. ... Thus, *de facto*, he disposed of the Hebrew Bible text as binding for the Church. The Church has its own Old Testament."⁴⁹⁰ Augustine's views raise more problems than they solve. They may have helped Augustine's immediate concerns over a possible replacement for the familiar scriptures, but raised impossible dilemmas about, for example, the continuity of Christianity from Judaism in terms of Christian fulfilment of the Jewish scriptures, and the possibility of evangelism to or apologetic discourse with the Jews. An assessment of Augustine's appreciation of these problems will be a worthy future research project.

⁴⁸⁹ Polman, *Word of God*, p. 188.

⁴⁹⁰ Müller, "Graeca," p. 122.

The complex motivations behind Augustine's dogged adherence to "his completely baseless and confabulated account"⁴⁹¹ of the divine inspiration of the LXX need not concern us overmuch here: it is enough for us that he did. Kamesar has gone some way to providing an explanation in terms of a knee-jerk reaction to Jerome's project. Referring to Barthélemy's phrase he suggests: "it is significant that the idea of the 'dualisme biblique' did not develop until after Jerome, and is probably best understood as a reaction to his efforts."⁴⁹² Augustine's opposition to Jerome's project most probably had its roots in a pastoral desire to maintain scriptural uniformity between different congregations,⁴⁹³ and in a traditionalism born of his inability to assess Jerome's new translations on their own merit. As time went on, Augustine increasingly made theological arguments for the retention of the LXX as the bible of the Church, based on the idea of the inspiration of the LXX. From our perspective it would be easy to write off Augustine's arguments as either irrational or dishonest but, short of accusing him of extraordinary and reckless arrogance, we must allow the probability that he genuinely held to the truth of his arguments.

In *Ep.* 116.34-35 Augustine offers two reasons why he does not intend to use Jerome's new translation in his churches. The first was his well-known concern that any differences in Jerome's version would offend those who are used to the version based on the LXX. His second reason was, if sustainable, the single most damaging argument against Jerome's *IH* project, namely the assertion that the apostles themselves demonstrated their approval of the LXX by using it: "...*propterea me nolle*

⁴⁹¹ Polman, *Word of God*, p. 188. He is referring to the most developed accounts of the "pseudo-miracle" of the translation of the LXX.

⁴⁹² Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 27.

⁴⁹³ Cf. *Ep.* 104.4: "*Perdurum enim, si tua interpretatio per multas Ecclesias frequentius coeperit lectitari, quod a Graecis Ecclesiis Latinae Ecclesiae dissonabunt, maxime quia facile contradictor vincitur, Graeco prolato libro, id est linguae notissimae.*" PL 22.833, CSEL 55, p. 240.

tuam ex Hebraeo interpretationem in Ecclesiis legis, ne contra Septuaginta auctoritatem, tanquam novum aliquid proferentes, magno scandalo perturbemus plebes Christi, quarum aures, et corda illam interpretationem audire consueverunt, quae etiam ab Apostolis approbata est."⁴⁹⁴ This line of argument is distinct from that concerning the divine inspiration of the LXX. It operates on a pragmatic level – if the LXX was good enough for the Apostles it must be good enough for Christians in general. Whatever the relationship between the Hebrew and Greek traditions, there would be no justification for abandoning the version used by them.

Of course, Augustine's assertion is not sustainable, as many scholars have pointed out,⁴⁹⁵ and as we will demonstrate conclusively in our next chapter. Many if not most quotations of the Old Testament found in the New correspond exactly to neither the Hebrew nor the LXX (at least as we have them). But that is not the point here.

Augustine himself was not in a position to check his assertion with regard to the Hebrew text, there is no indication that he ever checked it with regard to the LXX. Nevertheless, this was Augustine's stance, which reflected and no doubt influenced that of many Christians. It left Jerome in the position of having to prove that the Apostles in fact referred to the Hebrew version of the Old Testament, or that the two versions were identical (which would have undermined his project), or that, properly understood and translated, the Hebrew version of the Old Testament was no less "Christian" than the LXX.

To summarise our argument so far, genuine theological concerns are evident in the disputes between both Jerome and Rufinus, and Jerome and Augustine, but neither

⁴⁹⁴ Augustine, *Ep.* 116.35, *PL* 22.52.

⁴⁹⁵ Salvesen, "A Convergence?" p. 250, Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 64.

Rufinus nor Augustine took issue with Jerome's translations per se. Rather, they were opposed to the concept of producing another translation, specifically one not made from the LXX, and with the potentially divisive influence of a new translation. Both disagreed strongly with Jerome over the proper authority of the LXX, based on their respective theologies of translations. Jerome was convinced that prophecy/revelation and translation were different,⁴⁹⁶ so that only the Hebrew version had authority, whereas both Rufinus and Augustine held that the "inspiration" of the LXX translators ensured that their version was at least equal if not greater in authority to the Hebrew. This was an attractive argument as it both confirmed the LXX as the "Christian" version of the Scriptures, and explained all differences, whether additions or omissions, as products of new divine revelation.⁴⁹⁷ Insofar as the divine inspiration of the LXX was accepted, their position was unassailable. Wermelinger makes the point well: "Pour Jérôme, un seul texte fait autorité: le grec pour le N.T. et l'hébreu pour l'A.T. ... Pour Augustin, un seul Esprit fait autorité. Il faut donc tenir pour authentique ce que l'Esprit confie à l'Église: le texte grec pour le N.T., et deux textes inspirés pour l'A.T., l'hébreu et le grec."⁴⁹⁸ We turn now to consider Jerome's riposte.

5.1.6 Jerome: the *Hebraica Veritas* as the Word of God

Jerome's assessment of the relationship between the Hebrew and Greek traditions of the Old Testament text set him in opposition to the prevailing (if hitherto unverbalsed) attitudes of his contemporaries. With the Hebrew text marginalised

⁴⁹⁶ "Aliud est enim vatem, aliud esse interpretem," *Praef in Pent*, Weber/Gryson p. 3.

⁴⁹⁷ Cf. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* XVIII.43, *PL* 41.603-604, *CCSL* 48, pp. 638-640.

⁴⁹⁸ Wermelinger, O., "Le Canon des Latins au Temps de Jérôme et d'Augustin," in Kaestli, J.-D. and Wermelinger, O. ed., *Le Canon de L'Ancien Testament: sa formation et son histoire*, *Le Monde de la Bible*, (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1984), p. 183-184.

through sheer unfamiliarity,⁴⁹⁹ and the LXX and LXX-based scriptures accepted de facto as the Word of God, Jerome's work was always going to be controversial. It is no surprise that the *IH* version of the Old Testament caught on slowly, replacing the Old Latin only gradually.⁵⁰⁰

While Origen did not question the status of the LXX, the result of Jerome's preliminary forays into biblical translation, and the starting point for his *IH* project, was his rejection of the notion of the divine provision of the LXX and the concomitant belief in two versions of the Old Testament, one for Jews and the other for Christians. Jerome did not reject the value of the LXX tradition altogether, but simply affirmed the Hebrew text as the single authoritative text against which all other versions should be judged.

The factors that motivated Jerome's distinctive position on this debate have been discussed most helpfully by Kamesar and Kamin. Kamesar attributes Jerome's conversion to the Hebrew to a combination of Jerome's bilingual sensitivity as a Latin rather than a Greek speaker,⁵⁰¹ and his linguistic aesthetic sensibilities,⁵⁰² whereby he was able to appreciate the literary merits of a foreign language. Kamin's contribution is probably more helpful: she notes the prevalence of attempts to explain Jerome's preference for translating from the Hebrew text in terms of philological or "scientific" factors, but denies the sufficiency of these factors to persuade Jerome to undertake a project that he knew (as we have shown) would be controversial.⁵⁰³

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 27.

⁵⁰⁰ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 162; McKane, *Christian Hebraists*, p. 39.

⁵⁰¹ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 43.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

⁵⁰³ Kamin, "Theological Significance," p. 245.

Kamin's argument depends on Jerome's comments in the preface to his translation of Genesis: "*Illi [the OG translators] interpretati sunt ante adventum Christi et quod nesciebant dubiis protulere sententiis, nos post passionem et resurrectionem eius non tam prophetiam quam historiam scribimus; aliter enim audita, aliter visa narrantur: quod melius intellegimus, melius et proferimus.*"⁵⁰⁴ Her reasoning deserves to be quoted in full: "It is clear that, according to Jerome, the coming of Jesus provided the key to the understanding of Scripture. Whoever lived before Jesus would be faced with scriptural texts that, of necessity, could not be understood. Thus, the Seventy, living before Jesus, met with what they could not understand and, of necessity, had to err in their translation. However, he, Jerome, living as he did after the coming of Jesus, had the key to understanding Scripture. ... It is here [in Jerome's preface to Genesis] that we find the theological motivation for a new translation directly from the Hebrew source. Jerome wished to establish a *Christian* translation for the Christian world. For Jerome, the significance of the Hebrew text lay in the fact that it was the original word of God which, he believed, prophesied the coming of Jesus. In contrast to the original Hebrew text, the text of the LXX was a translation of the word of God made by translators who were necessarily precluded from understanding the original text, the word of God. Recognizing that translation is always exegetical, Jerome came to the natural conclusion that only one who understands the text better or more correctly can translate the true meaning of the original text."⁵⁰⁵ Kamin's emphasis on the "theological motivation" to provide a "*Christian* translation" is most significant. On the one hand it provides a more plausible reason for Jerome's determination to complete the project than does mere philology. On the other, she suggests that Jerome had developed solid theological arguments in favour of the

⁵⁰⁴ PL 28.151; Weber/Gryson, p. 4.

⁵⁰⁵ Kamin, "Theological Significance," pp. 248-249.

Hebrew with which to trump Augustine's theological arguments in favour of the LXX.

However we challenge her assertion that Jerome recognised that "translation is always exegetical." As we argued in Chapter 4, there are no solid grounds for making this assumption. It is more likely that Jerome considered the "Christian" meaning to be the only true meaning of the Hebrew text, so that a "Christian" translation is not exegetically loaded but simply the natural sense of the Hebrew, while a translation that was made either before Christ's advent or by a non-Christian inevitably obscures that natural sense.

Kamin notes other difficulties in her thesis, including Jerome's retention of LXX readings at several points but explains them as follows: "The compromises within his translation, his agreement with various LXX renderings despite the fact that they had no basis in the Hebrew text, stem from the fact that Jerome was a believing Christian faithful to the Church. However, his translation from the Hebrew stems from his firm belief in the need for a Christian translation of the *Hebraica veritas*."⁵⁰⁶ In our investigation of the *IH* Psalter we will note whether Jerome draws particular Christian significance (say in the *Tractatus* or *Commentarioli*) from those LXX/*ILXX* readings that he does retain, but a willingness to offer concessions to Christian conservatism is sufficient to explain their retention for the moment.

Kamesar's discussion of Jerome's attitudes towards the LXX arrives at similar conclusions, but from a philological rather than theological perspective: "on the basis

⁵⁰⁶ Kamin, "Theological Significance," p. 253.

of fundamental convictions regarding the relationship between translation and original Jerome came to prefer the Hebrew to the LXX version ... Inasmuch as he saw his own version as a closer representation of the original than the LXX, Jerome could not regard his version as a mere complement to the LXX.”⁵⁰⁷ Kamesar’s assessment of Jerome’s promotion of the *IH* to his public proceeds on a similarly philological track: “[Jerome] tries to take his Latin public on an uphill guided tour of the mountain that was the *Hexapla*. The journey progresses from the Hexaplaric text of the LXX via the *recentiores* and his own *IH*, in an attempt to come as close as possible to the ‘Hebraica veritas’ itself. The faint-hearted could either stop at stage one, or continue on to stage two and obtain a better view of the LXX below. On the other hand, those ... who desired to ‘enter the libraries of the Hebrews,’ ... would employ the *recentiores* and Jerome’s version to gain a better understanding of the original. In fine, we would probably not be far from the truth in saying that Jerome’s objective was to give as much of the *Hexapla* as possible to the Latin world.”⁵⁰⁸ Kamesar’s argument is internally coherent and offers a pleasingly neat framework for Jerome’s thinking. However there appear to be two major problems with it. The first is quite how Kamesar envisages that this could have happened in practice. Only a very few scholarly Christians and those closely connected to them would have had the necessary literary and intellectual resources to perform the sort of textual analysis and comparison of which he speaks. The notion of “stopping” at different “stages” implies access to the full range of relevant texts, and the intellectual and religious freedom to make one’s choice as one wishes. On the contrary, few Christians will have had the ability or the interest to undertake such study, not least because their access to the

⁵⁰⁷ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 58. Note that Kamesar’s position implicitly supports our argument that Jerome would have seen his *IH* translations not as “exegetical” but as “natural” or “truthful.”

⁵⁰⁸ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 71.

relevant texts will have been severely limited by unavailability or illiteracy,⁵⁰⁹ and all the indicators are that the religious atmosphere of the time was far too tense to permit the sort of liberal scholarship of which Kamesar speaks. Kamesar's argument would be more believable if Jerome had only a scholarly readership in mind, but Kamesar's own assessment of Jerome's objective suggests this was not the case.

The second problem is more serious. Kamesar's suggestion that "Jerome's objective was to give as much of the *Hexapla* as possible to the Latin world" is difficult to understand. The issue at stake is whether Jerome saw the Hexapla as an end in itself or as a tool towards a further end – no matter what Origen's view was. All the indicators are that Jerome saw it as a tool, as a linguistic reference work, to be employed along with his Hebrew teachers in his attempt to translate the Hebrew. Thus in his commentaries he refers to readings of the LXX or *recentiores* (presumably taken from the Hexapla) to elucidate the Hebrew,⁵¹⁰ and his translations show evidence of his following Hexaplaric readings where he agrees with them.

Nevertheless his essential task was the translation of the Hebrew, not the Hexapla,

⁵⁰⁹ A comparison may be drawn with two English translations of the Bible, the "popular" New International Version (NIV) and the more "literal" English Standard Version (ESV). Those wishing to better understand the NIV may refer to the ESV, while those who wish to get as "close" to the Hebrew as possible (and are willing to put up with certain deficiencies of English style – the ESV translators are the intellectual heirs of Aquila) may use the ESV alone. In practice of course most Christians simply use whichever translation their congregation happens to favour – with or without knowing why – and are discouraged from making an independent choice by such practical considerations as convenience or by the mass perception that one of the two translations is "better," which, of course, depends on hearsay or on what the translators themselves claim in their prefaces.

⁵¹⁰ For example, the entry in the *Commentarioli* for Psalm 9.1: "*In finem pro absconditis filii. Licet Aquila pro absconditis filii 'adulescentiam filii' posuerit, tamen sciendum in hebraeo haberi 'pro morte filii.' Denique et Symmachus in hunc modum transtulit: 'Pro victoria de morte filii.' Totus igitur psalmus per tropologiam ad Christi pertinet sacramentum. Unde et Septuaginta interpretes Christi passionem et resurrectionem, quae ignota prius mundo fuit, per verbum absconsionis celare voluerunt, ne a gentibus illo tempore facile nosceretur.*" (CCSL 72, p. 191). Note Jerome's comparison of Aquila, Symmachus and the LXX in order to arrive at his (Christological) exegesis. It is indicative of his own theology that Jerome gives no thought to whether the Hebrew does in fact refer to Christ, or to some other son's death.

into Latin, in order to give as much as possible of the Hebrew, not the Hexapla, to the Latin world.

The Hexapla did not threaten the LXX's authoritative position in Greek and Latin Christendom. By attempting to "heal" the LXX Origen promoted, rather than undermined, its authority. His work tacitly argued for the maintenance of the status quo – a compared and corrected status quo perhaps, but the status quo nonetheless. The Hexapla therefore drew little if any criticism. Jerome's *IH* project drew severe criticism precisely because it did not attempt to promote the LXX or its Hexaplaric revised version, but sought to replace it with the Hebrew as the authoritative text for Christians. Only a perception that Jerome intended the wholesale replacement of the LXX tradition by the Hebrew can explain the scale of the negative reaction he faced, and only Jerome's concurrence with this perception can explain his determination to pursue his project despite the opposition.

Kamin's thesis therefore, rather than Kamesar's, makes the best sense of Jerome's contradictory attitudes towards the LXX, because of her emphasis on Jerome's intention to give specifically the Hebrew text to his Latin readership, and because of her recognition of Jerome's pastoral motivation for doing so. Nevertheless, her contribution stands in contrast to Kamesar's, and to those he reviews⁵¹¹ in that she makes no mention of a development in Jerome's thinking regarding the relative merits of the LXX and the Hebrew texts. Kamesar's view of Jerome's "conversion" to the Hebrew is probably correct, we simply wish with Kamin to take the process one step

⁵¹¹ Kamesar, *Jerome*, esp. pp. 49-58.

further forward, to a wholesale acceptance of the Hebrew and abandonment of the Hexapla, in theory if not consistently in practice.

Our task is to show how Jerome's conception of the relative claims of the Hebrew and the LXX to be the authoritative Word of God for Christians was worked out in practice in the *IH* Psalter. There are several entries in the *Commentarioli* that reveal Jerome's view of the LXX and other recensions close to the time at which he made the *IH* Psalter. Occasionally Jerome maintains his accusation that the OG translators hid references to Christ, as, for example in the entry to Psalm 9.1 *IH*. In contrast to the Preface to Genesis, Jerome implies here that the OG translators did understand this verse to refer to Christ, but chose to hide it "lest it be easily known by the Gentiles at that time." This notion of hiding truths has clear biblical echoes,⁵¹² and it provides further evidence that Jerome did not consider translations to be necessarily exegetical. Nevertheless, Jerome's own project is designed with the opposite purpose in mind, that is, to make the truth about Christ easily known to the Gentiles (in this case, non-Hebrew speakers). This entry in the *Commentarioli* expressly supports Kamin's notion that Jerome intended to provide a Christian translation, on the basis of the Hebrew rather than the LXX.

We should note that occasionally in the *Commentarioli* Jerome makes references to the LXX that are not overtly hostile. For example, in the entry for Psalm 114.9 *IH* he writes: "*Placebo Domino in regione viventium. Pro 'placebo,' habet in hebraeo 'deambulabo' habet. Quod etiam in Genesi de Enoch scribitur: 'Ambulavit Enoch*

⁵¹² Cf. Acts 28.26-28, itself referring to Isaiah 6.9-10.

cum Deo, et translatus est': non 'placuit Deo,' sicut in nostris codicibus legitur."⁵¹³

The *IH* in this case follows the Hebrew closely, rendering *deambulabo* for אָתְּחַלֵּךְ, but our interest lies in Jerome's reference to the LXX-based *placebo* or *placuit* as the reading *in nostris codicibus*. Certainly *in nostris codicibus* could be no more significant than referring to the materials "we have at hand" but Jerome could certainly have found some more hostile way to refer to the LXX had he wished to.

Our investigation so far has suggested that Jerome's motivation for his *IH* translations rested more on his positive assessment of the Hebrew text and his ability to understand it in the light of Christ than on a highly negative view of the LXX.

Jerome's argument for the benefits of a new translation of the Hebrew scriptures made by a Christian, i.e. himself, was his primary answer to the demands of educated churchmen such as Rufinus and Augustine. Their argument was essentially that the LXX represented a divinely inspired revelation to the Christian church, in other words a specifically "Christian" version of the Old Testament. Jerome accepted their notion of a "Christian" version of the Old Testament, but argued that only a Christian could understand the Old Testament correctly, so that only a translation of the Old Testament made by a Christian would suffice as an Old Testament for Christians.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹³ *CCSL* 72, p. 234.

⁵¹⁴ Referring to Jacobs, Boyarin suggests that "Jerome's Hebrew knowledge [was] an important part of the 'colonialist' project of the Theodosian age." Boyarin, D., *Border Lines, The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 2004, p. 208, referring to Jacobs, A.S., "The Imperial Construction of the Jew in the Early Christian Holy Land," Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 2001, pp. 76-77. In a paper at the International Conference on Jerome of Stridon held at Cardiff University in July 2006, Jacobs described Jerome's translation project in similarly colonial language. (The published proceedings of this conference will be forthcoming). This seems to us to be unsustainable. Jerome's correspondence is replete with ecclesiastical matters, but the political concerns of empire are thinly represented, if at all. Jerome is far more the Christian academic than the imperial colonialist!

5.1.7 A Christianised Translation?

In the next three chapters we will explore the *IH* Psalter to see how these different and conflicting pressures on Jerome influenced his new translation in practice. What effect did awareness of the theological arguments propounded by the likes of Rufinus and Augustine have on the *IH* Psalter? Did Jerome's argument that the Hebrew was the only acceptable basis for a translation for Christians lead him consciously or subconsciously to "Christianise" his translation? Or did his determination to provide a faithful translation of the Hebrew text, lead to him producing a Christologically neutral translation? Did he consider the Hebrew text to be "Christian" already? At the same time, how far did the demands of unschooled Christians for a familiar text lead to his including in the *IH* material derived from the Greek tradition but not strictly justifiable against the Hebrew?

We have seen that Jerome argued for the superior authority of the *Hebraica veritas* over the LXX. However, Jerome gives little insight into what he considers the *Hebraica veritas* to be – whether the verbal tradition (where applicable) that preceded the Hebrew text, or the exact form and word order of the Hebrew text, or the "truth" as revealed to the Hebrews by means of the text, or something else. The way Jerome deals with the Hebrew text as he translates it, rather than what he says about it in argument, will in any case provide a more accurate picture of his true conception of the *Hebraica veritas*.

We need to discuss what we mean by "Christianising" and by "Christologically neutral." We suggest that "Christianising" the scriptures involves making changes so

that the new version directly or indirectly draws attention to the historical person of Jesus Christ, or to the teachings and traditions that arose after his ascension. The important distinction here is the specificity of Jesus Christ, and not the generality of a promised “messiah” figure. Similarly, a version that is “Christologically neutral” is one in which there are neither positive references to nor deliberate concealment of the historical person of Jesus Christ, or associated teachings and traditions.

Thus the Hebrew version of the Psalter is necessarily Christologically neutral: messianic references and prophecies, if the latter existed at all, were not, and could not have been, pinpointed on the historical person of Jesus Christ.⁵¹⁵ The translators of the Old Greek were in a similar position as they worked before the time of Christ. Jerome’s accusation in the *Commentarioli* to Psalm 9.1, to which we have already referred, implies that they did know about Christ: it is a great pity that he does not specify how! The Hexaplaric LXX and the versions of the *recentiores* were made after the time of Christ and so could conceivably contain Christological references.⁵¹⁶

Jerome’s position appears difficult. Much of his justification of his new version to Christians depended on his claims that references to Christ were obscured in previous Greek and Latin versions: his new version might reasonably be expected to have removed these obscurities. Yet in order for his new version to be useful as an

⁵¹⁵ “The future the psalmists point to ... appears to be that of the present or the next generation ... Large-scale eschatological expectations, let alone particular Messianic hopes, do not appear to have been part of the agenda of those who composed or collected the psalms – even in those psalms which use (or imply) the term *māšīah*.” Gillingham, S.E., “The Messiah in the Psalms: A Question of Reception History and the Psalter,” in J. Day, ed., *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East, Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series, 270, Edd. D.J.A. Clines and P.R. Davies, (Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), p. 210.
⁵¹⁶ With the caveat that the material in the Theodotonic column is very difficult to date and may represent translations made before the time of Christ.

apologetic tool in disputes with the Jews he had to follow the Hebrew closely, propagating no more specificity in his messianic references than the Hebrew allowed.

Taken on their own, these different considerations could be thought to have had the potential to produce a “compromised” translation one way or the other, that is, either one in which (in the interests of apologetic usefulness) Jerome avoided Christological references which he believed to be there, or (in the interests of Christian exegesis) one in which Jerome drew out Christian motifs that could not be justified against the Hebrew text. However in the *Commentarioli* Jerome provides a theological explanation for Christological neutrality in his *IH* translations.

Quoting then commenting on Psalm 67.13 *IH*, he writes: “*Si dormieris inter medios cleros, pennae columbae deargentatae: et posteriora eius in viriditate auri. Cum duobus credideris Testamentis, inuenies in utroque Spiritum sanctum. Et licet sit pulchritudo etiam iuxta litteram scire quae legas, tamen uis decoris omnis in sensu est. Exterior itaque uerborum ornatus in argenti nomine demonstratur: occultiora uero mysteria in reconditis auri muneribus continentur.*”⁵¹⁷

This frankly tendentious, not to say bizarrely obscure, exegesis is significant for our investigation, and is itself an example of what Jerome is talking about. True and full exegesis is not a function of the actual words of the passage, but of the meaning behind those words, a meaning that can only be fully discerned by one with a prior belief in the sanctity of those words. Belief is the lens through which the presence of the Holy Spirit can be perceived, and through which hidden meanings can be

⁵¹⁷ *CCSL* 72, p. 214.

discerned. Belief, presumably, was what allowed Jerome to discern this theologically significant meaning in a hopelessly obscure passage which at first glance appears to have little to do with either the Holy Spirit or biblical exegesis.⁵¹⁸

Jerome's words suggest two important points for an investigation into whether or not he "Christianised" his *IH* version of the Psalter. First, he describes the Old and New Testaments as being equal in regard to Spiritual significance: "...you will find the Holy Spirit in each one." Second, the force of both the New and Old Testaments is in the "hidden secrets" contained within them, and not in "the outer decoration of the words." We might tentatively conclude from this that Jerome is likely to have produced as "objective" a translation as possible, neither drawing out references to Christ which were not in the original, nor obscuring verses which could easily be read as referring to Christ. Our task in the next three chapters therefore is to examine different aspects of Jerome's *IH* translation of the Psalter to investigate the ways in which the issues we have discussed in this chapter influenced his work in practice.

⁵¹⁸ This is similar to Jerome's opening remarks in the *Tractatus in Librum Psalmorum*: "*Psalterium ita est quasi magna domus, quae unam quidem habet exteriorem clavem in porta, in diversis vero intrinsecus cubiculis proprias claves habet. Licet amplior una clavis sit grandis portae Spiritus sanctus, tamen unumquodque cubiculum habet proprias claviculas suas,*" CCSL 78, p. 3. Once again, the Holy Spirit is the "key" to understanding the Psalter.

Chapter 5.2

Hebraica Veritas meets Veritas Novi Testamenti

*Ad Hebraeos igitur revertendum est, unde et Dominus loquitur, et discipuli exempla praesumunt.*⁵¹⁹

5.2.1 *Ad Hebraeos Igitur Revertendum Est*

We have argued that historical and philological arguments for a return to the Hebrew were powerless to overcome a belief in the divine inspiration of the LXX. One source of authority remained, namely the sanction of Christ and the Apostles as recorded in the New Testament, and Jerome sought to exploit it. Jerome's statements concerning New Testament approbation of Old Testament versions come in his *Preface to the Gospels*, written in 384,⁵²⁰ and in his preface to the *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, written in around 391.⁵²¹ In each Jerome assigns ultimate authority to the words of Christ and the Apostles, but their comparison suggests a subtle but important development in Jerome's thought, namely the increasing degree of authority that Jerome was willing to ascribe to the Hebrew text. We will argue that this development had a theological basis, but was in the end a pragmatic solution to the complex problem of Old Testament textual authority.

⁵¹⁹ *Praef. in Para.*, PL 28.1326, Weber/Gryson, p. 547.

⁵²⁰ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 88, for the date; *Praef in Evang* PL 29.527; Weber/Gryson, p. 1515 for the text.

⁵²¹ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 1, for the date; *QHG Prol.*, CCSL 72 pp. 1-2, PL 72.937.

Schwarz and Kamesar in particular spend a great deal of time discussing the often contradictory evidence surrounding the developments in Jerome's thought concerning the Hebrew and Greek traditions of the Old Testament, and the various ways in which he attempted to justify his *IH* project.⁵²² Within this context both refer to Jerome's statement in his *Preface to the Gospels*, namely: *sit illa vera interpretatio, quam Apostoli probaverunt*. Despite its attractive prose and its beguilingly neat formulation, it is by no means easy to discern just what he means by "let that interpretation/translation,⁵²³ which the Apostles have approved, be true," Schwarz simply notes that Jerome provides this "as a rule for discerning the correct Greek text."⁵²⁴ He makes no effort to explore Jerome's meaning any further, nor to suggest ways to investigate the effect, if any, of Jerome's arguments on his practice. He does however note the development of Jerome's thinking regarding the Old Testament textual tradition, so that his initial aim of determining which Greek version was most accurate was replaced by a growing concern to assess the relative values of the Septuagint and Hebrew texts. He suggests that Jerome considered the testimony of the Apostles "to be of decisive weight in assessing the value of the Septuagint and the Hebrew text," but once again he does not suggest how to investigate this in practice.⁵²⁵

Schwarz traces a major development in Jerome's assessment of the Septuagint versus Hebrew Old Testament texts between his composition of the *Preface to the Gospels* in around 384 and the *Preface to the QHG* in around 389-392. He plausibly suggests that "the first step to this end was the discovery of the serious differences existing between the Hebrew text and the Septuagint," and proceeds to provide an essentially

⁵²² Cf. especially Schwarz, *Principles and Problems*, pp. 26-44, and Kamesar, *Jerome*, pp. 41-72.

⁵²³ We must bear this ambiguity constantly in mind: many of Jerome's arguments depend on it, and much modern scholarship in this area turns on favouring one meaning or another.

⁵²⁴ Schwarz, *Principles and Problems*, p. 27.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

philological explanation for what he sees as Jerome's final rejection of the Septuagint as an inspired version. He believes that Jerome's comments in the Preface to the *QHG* represent his thoughts at the end of this development: "A further criterion that could be used to discover the reliability of the Septuagint is contained in the New Testament. According to St Jerome, the apostles' quotations of the Old Testament are testimonies for the soundness of the Hebrew text against the wording of the Septuagint. The conclusion is that an agreement between the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament is a full proof of the authenticity of the Hebrew text and a condemnation of the Greek version whenever the Septuagint disagrees."⁵²⁶ He quite rightly notes the "utmost importance" of this idea in determining textual authority, but frustratingly offers no further observations on Jerome's actual practice, nor does he acknowledge the myriad difficulties in implementing Jerome's ideas across several languages and many textual variants.

Most significantly, in spite of Jerome's Apostolic criterion, Schwarz persists with his argument that Jerome's rejection of the Septuagint and acceptance of the Hebrew text as authoritative is explicable in philological terms: "Jerome was not discouraged in pursuing his way after he had arrived at a full comprehension of the facts [of the deviation of the Septuagint from the Hebrew] ... It is the philologist's method to compare the different texts and to rely on the ability of human understanding to find out the truth." He calls to witness Jerome's statement in the *Preface to Job* that "I could only translate what I had understood before."⁵²⁷ Undoubtedly Schwarz is correct in highlighting the philological nature of Jerome's intertextual study, but he entirely misses the crucial theological assumptions that Jerome made in order to reach

⁵²⁶ Schwarz, *Principles and Problems*, p. 31.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 32, with his translation of Jerome's comment in the *Preface to Job*: "*non potuisse me interpretari, nisi quod ante intellexeram*," *PL* 28.1081, Weber/Gryson, p. 731.

his conclusion. Schwarz notes Jerome's assumption that "the inspiration of the apostles is, of course, beyond a shadow of doubt,"⁵²⁸ but he makes no comment on it and his "of course" appears not to be tongue in cheek. Yet this assumption falls in the realm of theology, not philology. Even Jerome's statement in the *Preface to Job*, noted above, is essentially theological and not philological. The basic idea that correct understanding is a sine qua non for correct translation is not particularly controversial, but Jerome's definition of "correct understanding" is completely dependent on his Christian beliefs. Jerome, as a Christian, understood the true meaning of the Old Testament in a way the original Seventy translators could not have done, and this Christian understanding, so he believed, provided him with the requisite tools for translation.⁵²⁹

Kamesar agrees with Schwarz' opinion (as do we) that in the phrase *sit illa vera interpretatio, quam Apostoli probaverunt* "Jerome is advocating the use of the Apostles as a criterion to judge between the LXX and the *recentiores*," noting that most scholars previously had taken the phrase to signal Jerome's approval of the LXX on the grounds that the Apostles had approved it.⁵³⁰ He explains that "Jerome was already aware at this early period that the Apostles often cite the Old Testament according to the Hebrew rather than the Greek." He does not however suggest how Jerome was aware of this, nor the criteria Jerome might have used (nor indeed that Kamesar himself uses) to arrive at this conclusion. Indeed as we will see, Kamesar is well aware of the difficulties of ascribing many of the New Testament references to

⁵²⁸ Schwarz, *Principles and Problems*, p. 32.

⁵²⁹ Cf. Jerome's comments in the *Praef. in Pent.*: "illi [the LXX] interpretati sunt ante adventum Christi et quod nesciebant dubiis protulere sententiis, nost post passionem et resurrectionem eius, non tam prophetiam quam historiam scribimus ... quod melius intellegimus, melius et proferimus," PL 28.151, Weber/Gryson, p. 4.

⁵³⁰ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 51.

either the Hebrew or the Greek. Nevertheless in describing Jerome's growing appreciation of, and strengthening argumentation for, the importance of the Hebrew text Kamesar improves upon Schwarz' work by keeping his philological or text-critical arguments (as he calls them) separate from more theologically-based arguments. His assessment of Jerome's text-critical arguments in favour of the Hebrew is thorough and convincing.⁵³¹ However his assessment of the way Jerome dealt with the "more emotional issue" of the "established position of the version of the LXX within the Church," while thought provoking as far as it goes, does not get to grips with the difficulties of Jerome's stance, and he does not explore how Jerome's arguments were worked out in practice.⁵³²

He credits Jerome with a "two-pronged attack" on the status of the LXX within the Church. His discussion of the second of those "prongs," Jerome's attack on the legends concerning the origin of the LXX, does not concern us here. We are however interested in his assessment of Jerome's attempt "to deprive the LXX of their position in the gentile chain of transmission of the Old Testament." He notes that for most Church Fathers their assessment of the importance of the LXX was dependent on "the common assumption that the version of the LXX was the source of the citations of the Old Testament in the New," in other words that the Apostles themselves had used and so sanctioned that version. Kamesar notes that Jerome took the opposing position, and made "the audacious claim that the Apostles, when they quote the Old Testament, follow the Hebrew rather than the LXX." He notes Jerome's special concentration on

⁵³¹ Kamesar, *Jerome*, pp. 58-63. Note especially his conclusion on p. 63: "If one accepts the Hexaplaric recension, one must admit that the translation of the LXX is flawed. If one accepts neither the Hexaplaric recension nor this troubling implication which results from such an acceptance, one must put all recensional activity in the same boat, even if one need not discard the idea of the infallibility of the LXX. In this case, however, one must admit the irretrievability of that version. Either way, one is led to acknowledge the necessity of *IH*."

⁵³² *Ibid*, pp. 63-69.

passages that contain testimonies of Christ, but he offers no explanation for this.

Presumably it had to do with a belief that of all passages in the Old Testament these references were the most important for a true (that is Christian) understanding of the Old Testament, and therefore likely to be treated with most diligence by the Apostles and other New Testament authors. Kamesar notes that many scholars have derided Jerome's argument as false, but does not assess their grounds for doing so.⁵³³ He acknowledges the complexity of the evidence concerning the citation of Old Testament passages in the New, and suggests that Jerome was simply exploiting this complexity for his own ends: "Jerome has simply exploited the complex nature of the situation in a manner favourable to his own position. If he overstates his case, this is in order that he may deprive the LXX of their entry ticket to the gentile chain of transmission of the Old Testament, which was apostolic approval."⁵³⁴ Kamesar assumes that Jerome is arguing rhetorically – or *γυμναστικῶς* as he might put it – in other words that Jerome based his arguments on expediency rather than a deeply held conviction of their literal truth. Jerome's general *modus operandi* does not make such an assumption a priori groundless. Nevertheless it is unreasonable in a situation as important as this, which is no less than a central pillar in Jerome's justification of his entire *IH* project, not to explore the issues further.⁵³⁵

Although the subject of his book is the *QHG* Kamesar does not refer to Jerome's comments in the Preface to that work as he assesses Jerome's developing attitude

⁵³³ Kamesar, *Jerome*, pp. 63-64. Braverman argues that "The only proof the church would accept concerning the validity of the Hebrew OT would have to be based on the NT. Jerome thus brought the apostles to bear testimony for him concerning the Hebrew OT text." Braverman, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*, p. 32.

⁵³⁴ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 64.

⁵³⁵ Cf. Kamesar's reference to Richard Simon's proposal in the seventeenth century that "*QHG* was to be understood as an apology for *IH*," and his assessment that "this view is probably the closest to being correct." Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 77.

towards the Old Testament text. It seems evident there too that Jerome promotes Apostolic authority above all textual authority, and promotes the Hebrew text because he believes it to accord with New Testament readings that de facto carry Apostolic authority: *Ex quo perspicuum est illa magis uera esse exemplaria, quae cum noui testamenti auctoritate concordant ... quos nos quoque confitemur, plus quam caeteros cum Hebraicis consonare*. Jerome's repeated affirmation of the Hebrew text as the basis of New Testament readings should warn us against assuming his arguments to be based on simple expediency. The date of composition of the *QHG*, which is more or less that at which Jerome began his translations *Iuxta Hebraeos*, means that we cannot put his arguments down to ignorance of the Hebrew text either. Indeed, we are left with several problems.

If Jerome did in fact believe the New Testament quotations of the Old to be based on the Hebrew, how did he reconcile the fact that the two often do not correlate particularly well – even allowing for the language barriers that had to be overcome? Did Jerome in practice favour the New Testament reading over its corresponding Hebrew reading, as his arguments would lead us to believe: in other words, did Jerome consider the *Hebraica veritas* to be inferior to what we might call the *veritas Novi Testamenti* or the *veritas Apostolorum*? What impact did his arguments have on his translation of those Old Testament passages that appeared in the New Testament?

Jerome's arguments for Apostolic use of the Hebrew text put him in a difficult position, in that if his New Testament and Old Testament translations of the same passage did not correlate, he would undermine his own argument. The question we must explore is whether he manipulated his translations to make them correlate, either

in a brazen attempt to support his own argument, or out of a genuine belief in the supremacy of Apostolic testimony over all textual authority. We cannot fully appreciate Jerome's attitude towards the textual traditions of the Old Testament without understanding how his conflicting arguments affected his practice.

5.2.2 Conflicts of Authority?

Jerome began his revision of the Gospels in around 383 to 384.⁵³⁶ Whether we agree with Kamesar's conclusion that Jerome's conviction regarding the importance of the Hebrew text came early in his career,⁵³⁷ or with those such as Kelly⁵³⁸ and Skehan⁵³⁹ who believe it immediately preceded his commencement on the *IH* project, the important point for us here is that Jerome had completed his new translation of the Gospels from the Greek New Testament (GNT) manuscripts before he began working on the *IH* Psalter. Our aim in this chapter is to assess Jerome's Old and New Testament translations of those verses of the Psalter that appear in the Gospels.

We will limit our interest to the Gospels primarily because of the uncertainty surrounding Jerome's involvement in the revision of the rest of the New Testament.⁵⁴⁰ However, the large number of quotations of the Psalter in the Gospels, and the fact

⁵³⁶ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 86.

⁵³⁷ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 70.

⁵³⁸ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 159.

⁵³⁹ Skehan, P.W., "St. Jerome and the Canon of the Holy Scriptures," in *A Monument to Saint Jerome*, ed. F.X. Murphy, (New York, 1952), pp. 271-9.

⁵⁴⁰ See Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 87-89; also Cavallera, F., "Saint Jérôme et la Vulgate des Actes, des Épîtres, et de l'Apocalypse," *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique*, 1920, pp. 269-292. For a similar study on the New Testament book of Hebrews, see Thomas, K.J., "The Old Testament Citations in Hebrews," in Jellicoe, ed., *Studies in the Septuagint*, pp. 507-529. He, however, limits his interest to variant traditions within the Septuagint, on the grounds that "comparison with the LXX text does seem to provide the key to the textual origin of the O.T. citations in Hebrews." (p. 507).

that the Gospels claim to provide a record Christ's very words, means that our project is not compromised by this narrow focus. A similar project could be undertaken investigating Gospel quotations of other Old Testament books, but there is no reason to suppose that it would turn up different results.

In the following pages we consider every passage from the Gospels that contains a quotation from a Psalm. Our principal aim is to assess whether or not Jerome's arguments for the supreme authority of the words of Christ and the Apostles in determining the "true" version of any Old Testament reading led him to follow the New Testament version of Psalms as quoted in the Gospels when he made his subsequent translation of the Psalms *Iuxta Hebraeos*. We will also explore a different avenue, namely that of varying perceptions of what constitutes "quotation" in oral versus textual contexts. We will suggest that the definition with which Jerome appears to have proceeded made his arguments untenable in practice, but is intimately bound up with the high degree of reverence that he pays to the Hebrew text.

5.2.3 Methodology

There are many factors that we need to take into account. In particular we must rule out the possibility that any similarity between New and Old Testament readings of a Psalm is coincidental. We will do this as far as possible by comparing the original language versions in question, whether Greek or Hebrew, and by comparing the *IH* to the *ILXX*. We must also show that Jerome was aware that that particular verse from

the Psalter was quoted in the Gospels: this is more difficult, but where possible we will refer to relevant entries in the respective *Commentaries*.⁵⁴¹

5.2.4 Examples: Gospel Psalms

1. Psalm 8.3 *IH* cf. Matt 21.16 VNT:

In this first example Jerome may be following the New Testament reading, or may simply be copying the *ILXX*. The *IH* version is identical to the VNT and the *ILXX*, and is an accurate translation of the MT except for Jerome's *IH* rendition of יְהוָה as *laudem* "praise" rather than, for example, *fortitudinem* "strength." This is in spite of Aquila and Symmachus using κράτος, and the Sexta using Greek ἰσχύν "strength," all of which are better translations of יְהוָה and would suggest a Latin word such as *fortitudo*. The Syriac reading is תְּשׁוּבָתְךָ which would suggest a reading such as *gloriam tuam*.⁵⁴²

We can make the following observations:

- The Greek New Testament is identical to the LXX, and this obviously provides sufficient grounds for the Vulgate New Testament and the *ILXX* to be identical; there is no need to posit influence of one on the other.

⁵⁴¹ While the *Commentarioli* is roughly contemporary with the *IH* Psalter, Jerome wrote the *Commentary on Matthew* in 398, long after he had translated the Gospels and the Psalter, so that we cannot entirely rely on it to reveal his understanding of the Gospel in the late 380s and early 390s. See Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 222, Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 319.

⁵⁴² BHS app crit, p. 1091.

- However the GNT and LXX are not identical to the MT, setting up a conflict of authority between Greek and Hebrew traditions.
- Christ and/or Matthew seem to be quoting from the LXX tradition rather than the Hebrew tradition, contra Jerome's claim.
- Jerome is clearly following Latin/Greek tradition over Hebrew. There is the possibility that Jerome is following a different Hebrew manuscript to the MT, but the versions of Aquila, Symmachus and the Sexta would have alerted him to this – especially since Jerome considered Aquila to translate Hebrew particularly literally.⁵⁴³
- We cannot therefore conclude beyond doubt that he followed the textual authority of the New Testament over the Hebrew, but the *IH* is certainly closer to the Vulgate New Testament than to the MT.
- The LXX-based reading certainly makes better sense – ordaining “praise” rather than “strength” from the mouths of babies (though even this is not entirely clear), so it is possible that Jerome chose the LXX reading for that reason.

The *Comm in Matt* demonstrates that Jerome was well aware of the connection with Psalm 8: *Non dixit quod Scribae audire cupiebant, bene faciunt pueri, ut mihi testimonium perhibeant, nec rursus, errant: pueri sunt, debetis aetati ignoscere; sed profert exemplum de octavo psalmo, ut, tacente Domino, Scripturarum testimonium puerorum dicta firmaret.*⁵⁴⁴ Incidentally Jerome's reasoning is interesting here: he

⁵⁴³ See, for example: “*De Aquila autem non miror, quod homo eruditissimus linguae Hebraicae, et verbum de verbo exprimens...*” *Comm. in Isa.*, XIII, PL 24.466, CCSL 73A, p. 537; “*Iam pridem cum voluminibus Hebraeorum Editionum Aquilae confero, ne quid forsitan propter odium Christi Synagoga mutaverit: et ut amicae menti fatear, quae ad nostram fidem pertineant roborandum plura reperio,*” *Ep. 32.1 Ad Marcellam*, PL 22.446, CSEL 54, p. 252.

⁵⁴⁴ *Comm. in Matt. III*, PL 6.152-153, CCSL 77, p. 189.

proposes that Christ preferred to cite scripture (and therefore Old Testament) and appeal to its authority rather than rely on the authority of his own words.

However, even though Jerome proposes that Christ himself submitted his own personal authority to Old Testament authority, we can safely say in this example that (aside from the possibility of different Hebrew manuscripts) the reading Jerome offers in the *IH* follows that of the Vulgate New Testament rather than that of the Hebrew. The *veritas Novi Testamenti* trumped the *Hebraica veritas*, even though Christ himself, says Jerome, appealed to the latter.

2. Ps 21.2 *IH* cf. Matt 27.46 and Mark 15.34 VNT:

The second example shows Jerome apparently following the *ILXX* rather than the Vulgate New Testament or the MT. The *IH* is a very close translation of the MT apart, arguably, from the single usage of the possessive adjective *meus* while the MT hireq-yod possessive suffix occurs twice. The following observations may be made:

- The *IH* follows the *ILXX Deus Deus meus* which is itself a direct translation of the LXX ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεός μου. In all the other versions (MT, VNT, GNT) the possessive suffix or adjective occurs twice. Undoubtedly whether *meus* is used once or twice, the sense of the verse is little changed, as is its literary quality. The important point is that despite both the NT and the MT favouring a double usage of *meus* Jerome follows the Greek tradition of the LXX and *ILXX*.

- The *IH* uses *quare* as in the *ILXX* rather than *ut quid* as in the NT. Arguably *quare* is a more elegant translation of הָקֵץ than *ut quid*, but the latter would have been perfectly adequate, and would have signalled a clear connection with the VNT. Jerome did not take this easy opportunity to reflect in the *IH* the authority of Christ's own quotation of Psalm 22.
- The *IH* leaves out *ILXX respice me* in favour of the MT/NT. Clearly while making the *ILXX* Jerome was aware that *respice me*, or πρόσχες μοι as in the LXX, was an interpolation, so when he leaves it out in the *IH* it is impossible to say if he is following the MT or the NT.
- However the *IH* follows the VNT rather than the *ILXX* for the word order *dereliquisti me*.
- Aside from this change in word order there is no evidence that Jerome is following the authority of the New Testament.
- Despite the facts that 1) this verse from Psalm 22 is quoted by Jesus himself at perhaps the most significant point of his earthly ministry, and 2) that Jerome could quite justifiably have translated the Hebrew in line with the VNT reading, he chose not to.

Again, the entry in the *Comm in Matt* indicates Jerome's strong belief that the words of this verse applied directly to Christ, and his awareness of their provenance in Psalm 21 (according to the LXX/*IH* numbering): *Et circa horam nonam, clamavit Jesus voce magna, dicens: Eli, Eli, lammasabachani, Hoc est, Deus meus, Deus meus, ut quid dereliquisti me? Principio vicesimi primi psalmi abusus est, illudque quod in medio versiculo legitur: Respice in me, superfluum est. Legitur enim in Hebraeo: Deus meus, Deus meus, quare me dereliquisti? Ergo impii sunt qui psalmum istum ex*

*persona David, sive Esther et Mardochoaei dictum putant, cum etiam evangelistae testimonia ex eo sumpta super Salvatore intelligent...*⁵⁴⁵ We should note that in line with Jerome's comments here, the *IH* leaves out *respice in me*, but also that Jerome's version here of what is *in Hebraeo* does not directly match the *IH*. This could indicate a shift in Jerome's ideas as his knowledge of Hebrew increased, but it could also indicate that Jerome was more concerned with the sense of a translation rather than with its actual verbal structure.

Contrary to our previous example we must conclude that in the case of this verse Jerome was not concerned to make verbal connections between the *IH* Psalter and the VNT, and that he was content to follow the authority of the Greek textual tradition.

3. Ps 21.19 *IH* cf. Matt 27.35 and John 19.24 VNT:

There is a similar situation later in the same Psalm: the only exact correlation between the versions occurs between the (disputed) verse in Matthew in the VNT, and the *ILXX*.

- The *IH* is a close translation of the MT other than that Jerome translated the imperfect verbs of the MT as perfect verbs in the *IH*. In this the *IH* corresponds to the various VNT and GNT readings, and also to the LXX and *ILXX*.

⁵⁴⁵ *Comm in Matt.*, IV, PL 26.212, CCSL 77, p. 274.

- The only exact correlation is between the *ILXX* and the disputed section of Matthew 27.35 in the VNT.
- The *IH* and VNT versions are similar but not identical in either word order or vocabulary. The readings in the *IH* and Matthew are particularly close, the only differences being the position of *sibi* and the use of the homonyms *vestis* and *vestimentum*. In fact by using the relevant homonyms and introducing minor alterations to word order, Jerome could have rendered the *IH* identical to his Latin versions of either Matthew or John had he wished to do so.
- The GNT of John 19.24 is identical to Psalm 21.19 in the LXX but the corresponding VNT is not identical to the corresponding *ILXX*. In other words Jerome translated identical Greek phrases into two different Latin phrases. Given that Jerome made these translations at different times, these differences are not surprising. Furthermore it is important to note that despite the differences between them each Latin phrase is a legitimate word for word translation of the Greek phrase, so that we are not dealing with a case of mistaken translation. Instead, these examples demonstrate that Jerome was not concerned to replicate in his Latin versions the word for word correlation evident in the Greek versions.

Once again the *Commentary on Matthew* reveals Jerome's awareness of the link with Psalm 21: *Postquam autem crucifixerunt eum, diviserunt vestimenta ejus, sortem mittentes. Et hoc in eodem psalmo fuerat prophetatum: Diviserunt sibi vestimenta mea, et super vestem meam miserunt sortem.*⁵⁴⁶ Jerome here follows the *ILXX* reading of this verse.

⁵⁴⁶ *Comm in Matt.*, IV, PL 26.210, CCSL 77, p. 271.

There is significant correlation between the *IH*, VNT and *ILXX*, but it is difficult to prove any dependence of one on the other. However, we will suggest the following two conclusions. First, the debatable basis in the GNT for Matthew 27.35 VNT, its exact correspondence to Psalm 22.19 in the *ILXX*, and the clear reference to an Old Testament precedent in *ut impleretur quod dictum est per prophetam*, suggests that Jerome was copying the *ILXX* when making his Vulgate translation of Matthew. This evidence from Matthew suggests that Jerome favoured the authority of the *LXX* over the GNT. This is doubly surprising. Not only does Jerome prefer an Old Testament reading over a New Testament reading, but he also prefers a reading of the *LXX* over a reading with Apostolic authority.

Second, despite the fact that mere substitution of homonymns and alteration of word order could have made the *IH* of Psalm 21.19 correspond to the Vulgate of Matthew or John, Jerome chose not to demonstrate a verbal connection between them.

Whatever Jerome's views of the Apostolic authority of the New Testament, this did not extend to demonstrating an exact correspondence between the actual words used in his Latin translations. Of course we could argue quite reasonably that these passages in the VNT and the *IH* Psalter are similar enough that the Apostolic authority of the former can apply to the latter. Even if this is so, it is still true that Jerome did not seek to demonstrate his argument for Apostolic authority by means of exact verbal correspondence.

4. Psalm 33.21 IH cf. John 19.36 VNT (also Exodus 12.46 IH, Numbers 9.12

IH):

- Psalm 33.21 IH is close to the MT, but bears little verbal and no grammatical or syntactical similarity to John 19.36 VNT. Jerome uses the future *confringetur* for the niph'al perfect נִשְׁבַּרְהָ which might suggest he was following the future tense of *comminuetis* in the VNT. However, every version of this verse other than the MT of Psalm 33.21, as listed above, uses a future tense at this point so that the future *confringetur* could be explained by reference to one of these. Jerome could also have understood the Hebrew perfect to refer to the single decisive action of breaking bones, rather than having a particular temporal force.
- John 19.36 VNT is in fact a poor translation of the corresponding verse in the GNT: Jerome translates the passive *συντριβήσεται*, “will be broken” by the active *comminuetis*, “you (pl) will break.” Indeed if Jerome had translated the Greek correctly here, the connection with Psalm 33 would have been clearer!
- Jerome’s choice of vocabulary is also significant. The Hebrew versions all use the same root word, שָׁבַר, for “break, break in pieces” and the Greek versions similarly use a single root word, namely *συντριβω*, “crush.” In contrast, Jerome uses three different verbs, namely *contero* in the ILXX (for the Greek *συντριβω*), *comminuo* in the VNT (also for the Greek *συντριβω*), and *confringo* in the three IH passages (for the Hebrew שָׁבַר). Jerome is consistent in his translation of שָׁבַר, but inconsistent in his translation of *συντριβω*.
- The occurrence of *συντριβω* in both LXX and GNT versions of this verse may have suggested to Jerome that, contra his favoured argument, the New

Testament reading was dependent on the LXX tradition at this point. Perhaps, therefore, Jerome chose to demonstrate a closer verbal link between the three *IH* Old Testament versions of this verse than between the VNT and *IH* Psalter versions of the verse.

Whatever the case, it is very significant for our investigation Jerome did not use a part of *comminuo* in the *IH* to translate שָׁבַר, which would have signalled a clear verbal link with the reading in the VNT. His *IH* version of Psalm 33.21 is very close to the Hebrew.

5. Ps 34.19 *IH* cf. John 15.25 VNT:

- The *IH odientes me frustra* is different to both the VNT *quia odio me habuerunt gratis* and the *ILXX qui oderunt me gratis*.
- The *IH* closer to the MT than to any of the other prior versions, in its use of the masculine plural noun or adjective *mendaces* for the masculine singular noun שָׁקֵר, and in its use of the participle *odientes* for the participle שֹׂנְאֵי (but also cf. the LXX participle οἱ μισοῦντές), instead of the *ILXX* relative clause, *qui oderunt*, or the VNT sub-clause *quia odio me habuerunt*.
- The VNT is closest to the *ILXX*, both in the use of finite verbs rather than participles, and in the verbal correspondence in *gratis*.
- As in the previous example, the VNT does not exactly follow the GNT: *quia odio me habuerunt* is a good paraphrase, but not a one to one translation, of ὅτι Ἐμίσησάν με. If Jerome had followed the Greek more closely, and translated,

perhaps, *quia oderunt me*, the connection with the verse in the Psalter would again have been clearer.

- Once again, the verbal correspondence between the GNT and LXX in *μισέω* and *δωρεάν* suggests that the GNT may well be following the Greek textual tradition. The similarity of the VNT and *ILXX* propagate this similarity in the Latin tradition.
- We might imagine that this caused problems for Jerome in his concern to show that Christ and the Apostles followed the Hebrew tradition. This is all the more so given that Jerome viewed Christ as the true subject of this Psalm (even if David can also be understood as a legitimate subject), as he suggests in the *Commentarioli*: *Totus autem psalmus ex persona Christi est, et per Christum ad omnes sanctos referri potest ... Si ex persona David psalmum accipimus, proximum intellegimus Saulem: si ex Christi, Iudam proditorem proximum vocat.*⁵⁴⁷
- We might argue convincingly that the Hebrew *שְׂנֵאֵי הַנָּחַם* could lie in the background to the GNT *Ἐμίσησάν με δωρεάν* so that we could sustain Jerome's argument for Christ quoting the Hebrew scriptures.
- Nevertheless, despite the fact that Jerome could quite justifiably have used the VNT *quia odio me habuerunt gratis* to translate the Hebrew *שְׂנֵאֵי הַנָּחַם* in his translation of Psalm 34.19 *IH*, he chose not to.

Once again, and this time in spite of his assertion that this Psalm could be read as the very words of Christ himself, and in spite of the fact that the VNT reading would have

⁵⁴⁷ *CCSL* 72, p. 205.

been entirely justifiable against the Hebrew, Jerome chose not to follow the New Testament reading in the *IH* Psalter.

6. Psalm 40.10 *IH* cf. John 13.18 VNT:

- Verbally the *IH* is very different to the *ILXX*, but fairly close to the VNT, in the use in both of *manduco*, *levo*, and *contra*. In terms of grammar and syntax the *IH* is closer to the *ILXX* than to the VNT, in using the imperfect tense in *manducabat* and *edebat*, the possessive *meum* rather than the ablative plus preposition *mecum*, and in omitting the possessive *suum* of the VNT.
- The *IH* is a good translation of the MT. We should note Jerome's translation of the noun *שְׁלוֹמִי*, "my peace" by the adjectival phrase *pacificus meus*, "my peaceful [man]", and of the participle *אוֹכֵל*, "eating" by the imperfect *manducabat*, "was eating." The Hebrew could support the *IH* reading in each case, but Jerome could have translated the Hebrew more closely by using a noun in the former case and a participle in the latter, while still maintaining a good Latin style.
- Had Jerome used the present *manducat* in the *IH*, this would also have brought the *IH* in line with the tense structure of the VNT.
- It may be tempting to propose that Jerome's use of the relative clause *qui manducabat* for the Hebrew participle *אוֹכֵל* is evidence of him following the VNT relative clause *qui manducat*. However, throughout the Psalter Jerome uses Latin participles or relative clauses apparently indiscriminately to

translate Hebrew participles, and he had already used a similar relative clause in the *ILXX*, *qui edebat*. We cannot therefore sustain such a proposal.

- More significantly perhaps, the MT לָרַץ, “become great” would more naturally suggest a Latin translation by *magnifico* rather than *levo*. When he was making the *IH* Jerome had precedents for both these options (*magnificavit* in the *ILXX* and *levavit* in the VNT), but defied the exact sense of the Hebrew and the precedent of the *ILXX* to go with the VNT reading instead. We could argue plausibly that *levo* makes better sense in this context in Latin. However, Jerome cannot have had too serious objections to using *magnifico*, given his prior use of it in the identical context in the *ILXX*. We suggest therefore that Jerome deliberately chose the VNT image of a literal “lifting of the hand” over the MT/LXX/*ILXX* image of a metaphorical “lifting of the hand” in the sense of gaining power over someone.
- Nevertheless, the evidence is not straightforward. The Hebrew כַּף, “heel, footprint,” could have been translated equally well in the *IH* by either *planta* or *calcaneum*. For reasons best known to himself Jerome rightly avoided the mistranslation in the *ILXX* (*subplantatio*, “deceit”), but then chose not to follow the VNT *calcaneum*, offering a new translation instead, namely *planta*.

John 13.18 is part of a quotation of Jesus’ direct speech to his disciples at the Last Supper during which he quotes this verse. While he does not explicitly state it as such, it seems most likely that Jerome understood the speaker of Psalm 40 *IH* to be Christ. This is the obvious deduction to be drawn from his comments on verse six: *Quando morietur, et periet nomen eius? Hoc est, quod in evangelii parabola scribitur, colonis dicentibus: ‘Iste est heres, venite interficiamus eum, et nostra sit hereditas,’* and verse

nine: *Numquid qui dormit non adiciet ut resurgat? Sic me interficere festinabant, quasi post mortem resurgere non haberem.*⁵⁴⁸

Despite the fact that the New Testament version of this verse of Psalm 40 *IH* carried Christ's own authority, and in spite of the possibility that he could have faithfully translated the Hebrew in such a way as to make it nearly identical to the VNT (with the exception of the possessive adjective *suum*), Jerome chose not to do so. He also chose not to remark on this particular verse in the *Commentarioli*. This therefore is an important example demonstrating both Jerome's full consciousness of the intertextuality of Old and New Testaments in this verse, and his belief in Christ as the true speaker of the Psalm, but nevertheless missing the opportunity to demonstrate an exact correspondence between the Old and New Testament versions of this verse.

7. Psalm 68.5 *IH* cf. John 15.25 VNT:

This example can be compared to example 5 above, which involves the same New Testament verse, namely John 15.25 VNT. In both examples the phrase of particular interest is that based on the same Hebrew phrase, $\text{הַשֹּׂנְאִים יְצֵיטָאֵנִי}$, "those who hate me without cause." In both examples, the LXX and *ILXX* also use identical phrases, namely $\text{οἱ μισοῦντές με δωρεάν}$ and *qui oderunt me gratis*. Only the *IH* differs in these two examples, with Jerome translating $\text{הַשֹּׂנְאִים יְצֵיטָאֵנִי}$ as *odientes me frustra* at Psalm 34.19 *IH*, and as *qui oderunt me gratis* here at Psalm 68.5 *IH*.

⁵⁴⁸ *CCSL* 72, p. 208.

- The *IH* is identical to the *ILXX*, and while it uses the same root words as the VNT, its grammatical structure is very different.
- The *IH* phrase *qui oderunt me gratis* is a good translation of the Hebrew יִשְׂנֹאֵנִי בְּיָדָיִם especially as *oderunt* (from *odisse*, which is perfect in form but present in meaning) captures the present sense of the Hebrew participle.
- There is a difference in nuance in the *IH* readings of Psalms 34.19 and 68.5, the former suggesting “those who hate me in vain,” and the latter “those who hate me for no reason.” Both nuances are present in the Hebrew בְּיָדָיִם, which suggests that Jerome relied on external considerations to make his choice between them. In the case of Psalm 68.5 Jerome’s choice of *gratis* could well have been influenced by his prior use of the word in John 15.25 VNT.
- Jerome’s translation of the GNT Ἐμίσησάν με δωρεάν as *quia odio me habuerunt gratis* in the VNT suggests that he saw *odio ... habere* as a legitimate paraphrase or translation of μισέω. By this same logic he could have translated the Hebrew יִשְׂנֹאֵנִי as *qui odio me habuerunt*, so bringing the *IH* in line with the VNT, but he chose not to do so.

Jerome does not remark on this verse in the *Commentarioli*, he considered Christ to be the subject of the Psalm: *Totus hic psalmus ex persona Christi intellegitur.*⁵⁴⁹ While the reading in Psalm 68.5 *IH* is arguably closer to the VNT than the corresponding reading in Psalm 34.19 *IH*, still Jerome does not go all the way and make it identical, which he could have done within his own patterns of translation. Indeed, the exact correspondence of the *ILXX* and *IH* versions of this phrase in Psalm 68.5 suggests that Jerome was content simply to copy the former into the latter.

⁵⁴⁹ *CCSL* 72, p. 215.

8. Psalm 68.10 IH cf. John 2.17 VNT:

- The phrase in question is *zelus domus tuae comedit me*, which is identical in the versions of the *IH*, the VNT and the *ILXX*.
- The *IH* phrase is a good translation of the Hebrew בִּי־קִנְיַת בַּיִתְךָ אֶכְלָתֵנִי, though there are slight variations between the Hebrew and *IH* versions of the rest of the verse.
- The VNT is a good translation of the GNT. The verb καταφαγεῖν serves as the aorist of κατεσθίω, so that the VNT *comedit*, which could be either present or perfect, should probably be taken as a perfect.

The versions are so similar here that it is impossible to draw conclusions concerning their interdependence.

9. Psalm 77.2 IH cf. Matt 13.35 VNT:

Here we have a further example of Jerome following the MT or *ILXX* rather than the New Testament reading. It also demonstrates some of the difficulties of assessing translations between languages with different grammatical systems. We can make the following observations:

- Verse 2a in the *IH* is identical to the *ILXX* (*aperiam in parabola os meum*), but differs from the VNT, which follows the GNT in the use of ablative *in parabolis* for dative *ἐν παραβολαῖς*. The Hebrew prefix כ as in לְפָנָי has a primary sense of denoting position, “in,” though it can also denote proximity, “at” or “by,” or accompaniment, “with.” It can be used to introduce the predicate, “denoting it as that in which the subject consists, or in which it shews itself,”⁵⁵⁰ and it is probably in this sense that it is used here. However, כ is usually translated by *in* plus ablative in Latin or *ἐν* plus dative in Greek, for which see LXX *ἐν παραβολαῖς*. However, the difficulty arises that Latin *in* plus ablative has a strong locative sense, which is difficult to understand in the context of opening one’s mouth in parables! On the other hand, Latin *in* plus accusative can work in “relations in which an aiming at, an inclining or striving towards a thing, is conceivable,” so corresponding to English prepositions such as “on, about, respecting; towards, against; for, as.”⁵⁵¹ This may be why he chose to translate LXX *ἐν παραβολαῖς* by the accusative *in parabola* in the *ILXX* rather than ablative *in parabolis* which would have been more literal.
- However, Jerome seems to have been undecided as to the best translation of Greek *ἐν παραβολαῖς*. He translates the GNT *ἐν παραβολαῖς* with the ablative *in parabolis* in the VNT, yet translates LXX *ἐν παραβολαῖς* with the accusative *in parabola* in the *ILXX*. It is most unlikely that he saw Latin *in* plus accusative or ablative as interchangeable.
- Verse 2b *IH* differs markedly from both the VNT and the *ILXX*, suggesting that Jerome was deliberately making a new translation here.

⁵⁵⁰ BDB, pp. 88-90.

⁵⁵¹ L&S p. 913.

- *IH loquar* for הַפִּי יִצֵּץ, hiphil imperfect “I will cause to gush forth,” appears to be at least partially dependent on *ILXX eloquar*. Significantly, VNT *eructabo* would have been a much better translation for הַפִּי יִצֵּץ, and would have introduced VNT wording into the *IH*, but Jerome chose not to follow it.
- *IH enigmata* is a good translation of תִּירוֹת, “riddles, parables.” LXX *προβλήματα* is close to Hebrew here, so that there is no conflict of authority between Hebrew and LXX versions. Again Jerome disregards the authority of the New Testament version of the verse which uses *κεκρυμμένα*, “hidden things,” correctly translated as *abscondita* in the VNT.
- In this case the difference between the GNT and LXX means that following New Testament reading in the *IH* would not appear to be championing the LXX over the Hebrew. Nevertheless Jerome follows the Hebrew in the *IH*.
- Finally Jerome’s rendition of מִן־קִדְמוֹת, “from antiquity,” “from of old,” as the adjective *antiqua*, “ancient,” probably represents independent translation, and is a reasonable paraphrase of the Hebrew. Jerome follows neither the Greek tradition of the LXX, ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, then *ab initio* in the *ILXX*, “from the beginning,” nor the New Testament tradition, ἀπο καταβολῆς [κόσμου], then *a constitutione mundi* in the VNT, “from the foundation of the world.”

The *Commentary on Matthew* shows Jerome’s awareness of the link with the Psalm – though interestingly the version Jerome offers follows neither the *IH*, the *ILXX*, nor, indeed, the VNT: *Ut impleretur quod dictum est per prophetam dicentem: Aperiam in parabolis os meum, eructabo abscondita a constitutione mundi. Hoc testimonium de septuagesimo septimo psalmo sumptum est.*⁵⁵²

⁵⁵² *Comm in Matt*, PL 26.92-93, (absent from CCSL).

Notwithstanding the linguistic difficulties that we have noted, there is no evidence that Jerome favoured the authority of the New Testament versions of this verse when he was translating the Psalms *Iuxta Hebraeos*. Instead he seems to have been content in the *IH* to provide a generally close translation of the Hebrew.

10. Psalm 77.24-25 *IH* cf. John 6.31 VNT (and Exodus 16.4 *IH*):

- The translation of Psalm 77.24-25 *IH* is a close translation of the Hebrew.
- The quotation in the New Testament appears to be a composite version of the verses from Exodus and the Psalter.
- This situation passes without any remark from Jerome in the *Commentarioli*.

However, John 6.31 occurs within a long dialogue between Jesus and the crowd during which he makes his famous claim, “I am the bread of life” (John 6.35). The centrality of this doctrine to Christian theology and the fact that these are purportedly the words of Jesus himself must have alerted Jerome to the difficulties involved: this is not simply a case of deciding which textual tradition Jesus was following but one of Jesus conflating the imagery from two different Old Testament verses. As a result Jesus’ words clearly refer to the same situation as described in Psalm 78.24-25 MT and Exodus 16.4, but are directly reliant on neither of those sources.

These verses very clearly expose the difficulties of attributing apparent quotations of Old Testament verses by Christ and the Apostles to either the Hebrew or Greek

textual traditions. Indeed they throw into question the concept that Christ and the Apostles “quoted” the Old Testament at all, rather than simply “alluding” to it. At the very least they question our (and Jerome’s) definition of “quotation.” These verses demonstrate that while Christ was undeniably referring to the same situation that was described in Exodus and in the Psalter, and introduced his reference with a clear *sicut scriptum est*, his exact words had no precedent in either the Greek or the Hebrew versions of either Exodus or the Psalter.

Jesus’ “*scriptum est*” referred to the description in the Old Testament of a specific situation, but not to the exact words that were used in that description. In an oral culture like that in which he and the Apostles operated most conversational reference to written texts will have been made from memory.⁵⁵³ In such circumstances the accuracy of quotations is a function of their ability to recall to the hearers’ minds the content of the text being referred to (in this case God providing manna for the Israelites in the desert), and not a function of one to one verbal correspondence.

This, of course, was the fundamental flaw in the attempts of both Jerome and Augustine to ascribe greater authority to either the Hebrew or Greek version of the Old Testament by attempting to show a greater correspondence of the words of one of those versions to the recorded words of Christ and the Apostles. We will return to this issue at the end of this chapter.

⁵⁵³ As Jerome suggests: “*Dominus atque Salvator ubicumque veteris Scripturae meminit, de Hebraicis voluminibus ponit exempla.*” *Apol. adv. Lib. Ruf.*, PL 23.456, CCSL 79, p. 71.

11. Psalm 81.6 IH cf. John 10.34 VNT:

There is full correspondence between all the versions here, so it is impossible to ascribe textual dependence.

12. Psalm 90.11-12 IH cf. Matt 4.6; Luke 4.10-11:

- The *IH* is close to other Latin versions and to the MT. Jerome's use of *ne forte*, "lest by chance" in the *IH* for $\neg\text{לִּפְנֵי}$ when simply *ne*, "lest" would have done, suggests dependence on versions other than the MT, following Greek $\mu\acute{\eta}\pi\omicron\tau\epsilon$ as in the LXX and GNT.
- However, Jerome still shows little concern to introduce NT wording into the *IH*. Thus *IH custodiant* is synonymous with VNT *conservent*, and *IH portabunt* is synonymous with VNT *tollent*. Jerome misses this easy opportunity to champion the authority of the New Testament. He chose instead to use the same words as in the *ILXX*, thereby implicitly acknowledging the authority of the LXX which he tries hard elsewhere to undermine.

The material in the *Commentaries* is interesting here. In the *Commentary on Matthew* Jerome denies that these verses in the Psalm are referring to Christ: *Angelis suis mandavit de te, et in manibus tollent te, ne forte offendas ad lapidem pedem tuum. Hoc in nonagesimo psalmo legimus; verum ibi non de Christo, sed de viro sancto prophetia est. Male ergo interpretatur Scripturas diabolus.*⁵⁵⁴ (Note Jerome's use of

⁵⁵⁴ *Comm in Matt.*, I, PL 26.32, CCSL 77, p. 21.

the perfect *mandavit*, unattested in any of the Latin versions.) No doubt Jerome took solace in revealing the Devil to be a poor scriptural exegete. Jerome proceeds to explain how he would have been convinced that this was a reference to Christ: “*Certe si vere de Salvatore scriptum noverat, debuerat et illud dicere quod in eodem psalmo contra se sequitur: Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis et conculcabis leonem et draconem. De angelorum auxilio quasi ad infirmum loquitur, de sui conculcatione quasi tergiversator tacet.*”⁵⁵⁵ Jerome’s reasoning is not transparent, but his imputation of error on the basis of partial quotation is striking. There is no entry for verses 11-12 in the *Commentarioli*, but the entry for verse 10 shows Jerome’s willingness to interpret the verse Christologically, although his personal preference is different: *Quia in me speravit, et liberabo eum. Deus loquens inducitur de iusto, qui in se spem habuit, quod eum liberaturus sit : siue de Christo, ut plerique uolunt.*⁵⁵⁶

Once again, Jerome appears to have been content to provide a good translation of the Hebrew, and to use the same vocabulary as he had used previously in the *ILXX* rather than introduce vocabulary that he had used in the VNT. This time, at least, his contention that the Psalm does not refer to Christ could explain his not following the language of the VNT.

⁵⁵⁵ CCSL 77, p. 21.

⁵⁵⁶ CCSL 72, p. 225.

13. Psalm 109.1 IH cf. Matthew 22.44 VNT; Mark 12.36 VNT; Luke 20.42-3

VNT:

- All the Latin versions are identical, and all are good translations of their base text, whether Hebrew, LXX or GNT, so that it is impossible to discern the direction of any interdependence.

The *Commentary on Matthew* reveals Jerome's belief that the psalm was referring to Christ, but also suggests a significant belief concerning David: *Interrogatio Jesu nobis proficit usque hodie contra Judaeos. Et hi enim qui confitentur Christum esse venturum, hominem simplicem et sanctum virum asserunt de genere David.*

*Interrogemus ergo eos docti a Domino: si simplex homo est, et filius tantum David: quomodo David vocet eum Dominum suum: non erroris incerto, nec propria voluntate: sed in Spiritu sancto. Testimonium autem quod posuit, de centesimo nono Psalmo sumptum est.*⁵⁵⁷ Jerome's comments regarding the usefulness of this question in his own day gives a flavour of the nature of the debates between Jews and Christians in the late fourth century. However the really interesting comment is that concerning David's authority as the psalmist: Jerome argues that David called (Jesus) Lord "not in the uncertainty of error,⁵⁵⁸ nor of his own accord, but in the Holy Spirit." So David's words in this verse carried all the authority of the Holy Spirit himself. The difficulty of course is knowing how far Jerome ascribed this same authority to the rest of the Psalter. Here at least, however, *Hebraica veritas* appears to be on an equal footing with *veritas Novi Testamenti*.

⁵⁵⁷ *Comm in Matt.*, IV, PL 26.165-166, CCSL 77, p. 209.

⁵⁵⁸ Or perhaps "not through involuntary error."

There is evidence too in the *Commentarioli* that Jerome considered the referent of this verse to be Christ, and that he was aware that the repeated *κύριος* in Greek or *dominus* in Latin masked a variation in Hebrew: *Dixit Dominus Domino meo. Prius nomen Domini τετραγράμματος est, quod proprie in Deo ponitur: secundum, quod commune est cum ceteris, quo et reges et ceteri homines appellantur. Quod si nobis obponere voluerit haeresis Arriana, ex hac diversitate minorem Filium, Patrem esse maiorem, respondebimus ei: illi nomen inferius convenire, cui ut sedeat imperatur.*⁵⁵⁹ In spite of this Jerome made no effort to distinguish between the two Hebrew words when translating Psalm 109.1 *IH*. Partly, no doubt, this was simply because his practice elsewhere is to translate both יהוה and יהוה as *Dominus*.⁵⁶⁰ Moreover, by making no distinction in his translation between יהוה and יהוה, Jerome also implicitly refuted Arian suggestions of unequal status within the Godhead.

14. Psalm 117.22-23 *IH* cf. Matthew 21.42 VNT; Mark 12.10-11 VNT; Luke 20.17 VNT:

- The *IH* is a close translation of the Hebrew.
- Jerome's use of *factum est* in the *IH* to translate יהוה introduces a slightly different nuance: taken on its own it could be the perfect of *feri*, but in conjunction with *a Domino* it must be the perfect passive of *facere*. So while the Hebrew reads "this arose/became from the Lord," the *IH* reads "this was done by the Lord." It is interesting to note that the LXX translation παρα

⁵⁵⁹ CCSL 72, p. 232.

⁵⁶⁰ See, for example, Psalm 11.5 *IH* (*dominus* for יהוה) and Psalm 11.6 *IH* (*Dominus* for יהוה). (Use of upper or lower case "D" is a decision taken by modern editors.)

κυρίου ἐγένετο αὕτη is thus a closer translation of the Hebrew *מֵאֵת יְהוָה הַיְהוּדָה הַזֶּה* than the *IH a Domino factum est istud* – though this is arguably a consequence of Greek and Hebrew linguistic structures correlating more closely at this point than Latin and Hebrew structures.

- However, Jerome’s use of the demonstrative adjectives in the *IH* exactly mimics the Hebrew, but differentiates the *IH* from the *ILXX* and *VNT* versions. Thus the phrase *οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας// παρὰ κυρίου ἐγένετο αὕτη/ καὶ ἔστιν θαυμαστὴ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν*, which is identical in the *LXX*, Matthew and Mark, gives rise to the *ILXX* phrase *hic factus est in caput anguli// a Domino factum est istud/ hoc est mirabile in oculis nostris*, and to the readings in Matthew and Mark which are identical apart from omitting *hoc*, which has no basis in the Greek. In contrast, the *IH* version, *factus est in caput anguli// a Domino factum est istud et hoc mirabile in oculis nostris*, omits the initial *hic* and inserts *hoc*, both of which bring the Latin into line with the Hebrew.
- Note that Jerome retained in the *IH* the neuter rendering of the *VNT*, namely *et hoc mirabile in oculis nostris*. The Hebrew *הֵיא נִפְלְאָת בְּעֵינֵינוּ* could perhaps more easily have supported a masculine rendering, *et hic mirabilis in oculis nostris*, “and he is wonderful in our eyes.” Given the association of this verse with Jesus Christ, it seems inconceivable that Jerome would not have been tempted to “reveal” this “hidden meaning” of the Hebrew.
- These verses also provide useful evidence in the debate over whether Christ and the Apostles followed a Hebrew or Greek text. All three of the Gospel versions of this verse follow the *LXX* version identically, which is surely an argument in favour of Augustine’s position, and against Jerome’s!

The *IH* corresponds with both the Hebrew, *ILXX*, and VNT readings at different points. The *IH* is a reasonable translation of the Hebrew, and there is no evidence that Jerome sought ruthlessly to conform the *IH* to the VNT.

15. Psalm 117.26 *IH* cf. Matthew 21.9; Matthew 23.39; Mark 11.9; Luke 13.35; Luke 19.38; and John 12.13 VNT:

- The *IH* is a close translation of the Hebrew. The *IH venit* should probably be read in the present tense, following the qal participle אָבֵן, rather than in the perfect tense.
- The only difference between the *IH* and the *ILXX* is Jerome's alteration of the future focussed *qui venturus est* of the latter to the present focussed *qui venit* of the former. As we have noted, this brings the *IH* into line with the Hebrew, but it also represents the correct translation of the LXX ὁ ἐρχόμενος.
- The GNT versions of this phrase are all identical to the LXX, except for Luke 19.38 which inserts ὁ βασιλεύς in apposition to ὁ ἐρχόμενος. In the VNT Jerome translates closely to the GNT, rendering the present participle ὁ ἐρχόμενος by the present relative clause *qui venit* in every case except Matthew 21.9 where he uses the future *qui venturus est*.
- Jerome's *IH* version is identical to the majority reading of that verse in the VNT, but it also corresponds directly with the Hebrew, so that we cannot argue that Jerome was submitting his translation to New Testament authority.

- The GNT version of this verse is identical to the LXX in every case apart from the insertion in Luke 19.38. Nevertheless, the close correspondence of the GNT with the Hebrew as well means that this verse offers no insight into the debate over which version of the Old Testament Christ and the Apostles used.

The quotation at the beginning of the entry in the *Commentary on Matthew* for Matthew 21.9 is significant: *Turbae autem quae praecedebant, et quae sequebantur, clamabant, dicentes: Osanna filio David: benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini; osanna in excelsis.*⁵⁶¹ The VNT of this verse reads *benedictus qui venturus est in nomine Domini*, and not *benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*. We could ascribe this variation to rapid translation, or to a change in Jerome's preferred translation over time. Nevertheless, it must caution us against expecting Jerome's definition of a "quotation" to be an exact word for word extract.

Later in his *Commentary* on this verse Jerome remarks: *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini: benediximus vobis de domo Domini, et caetera. Pro eo quod habetur in Septuaginta interpretibus: ὦ Κύριε, σῶσον δὴ, id est, o Domine, salvum fac; in Hebraeo legimus: ANNA ADONAI OSIANNA, quod manifestius interpretatus est Symmachus dicens: Obsecro, Domine, salvum fac, obsecro. Nemo ergo putet ex duobus verbis, Graeco videlicet, et Hebraeo, sermonem esse compositum, sed totum Hebraicum: et significare quod adventus Christi salus mundi sit. Unde et sequitur: Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Salvatore quoque id ipsum in Evangelio comprobante: Ego veni in nomine Patris mei, et non me recepistis. Alius veniet in*

⁵⁶¹ *Comm in Matt.*, III, PL 26.148, CCSL 77, p. 184.

*nomine suo, et recipietis eum.*⁵⁶² Jerome argues that Jesus himself lends his authority to these words, and that, most significantly, the approved version of the words is not based partly on the Greek and partly on the Hebrew, but entirely on the Hebrew.

It would have been useful if there were significant divergences between the various versions of this verse: in that case we could have tested Jerome's claim that Jesus lent his authority to the Hebrew words rather than the New Testament words. The close correspondence of all the versions makes such an investigation impossible. Perhaps that is why Jerome made this comment concerning these verses in particular! More importantly, *id ipsum* clearly does not refer to the exact form of the words "*Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini,*" but to sense that they conveyed.

5.2.5 Sit Illa Vera Interpretatio, quam Apostoli Probaverunt?

Having reviewed these instances of the quotation of Psalms in the Gospels we can suggest answers to some of the problems we raised. Crucially, we could never argue conclusively that where the Hebrew reading of a verse of a Psalm differed from the Latin/Greek reading of that same verse in the New Testament, Jerome imposed the authority of the New Testament on the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Indeed only in the first example, comparing Psalm 8.3 *IH* cf. Matt 21.16 VNT, was there much likelihood that Jerome was following the New Testament reading in the *IH*.

⁵⁶² *Comm in Matt.*, III, PL 26.149, CCSL 77, p. 185.

Whatever Jerome might mean in his *Preface to the Gospels*, and in the preface to the *QHG*, he does not in practice favour a word for word imposition of New Testament authority on the Old – or vice versa. Jerome did not in practice favour one or the other of the *veritas Novi Testamenti* and the *Hebraica veritas*. Indeed Jerome showed more concern to follow the authority of the Hebrew scriptures, or even of the LXX on occasion, than to impose a New Testament reading on the Psalter.

It is consequently difficult to know just what Jerome did mean in these two passages and others like them. We might conclude that when he came to produce the *IH* Psalter Jerome was simply translating too quickly to check his exact translation of parallel verses of Psalms that he had already translated in the Gospels. Yet given that the issues involved were so sensitive as to go to the heart of his *IH* project, and to the heart of his debates with Augustine and others, it is difficult to explain why Jerome did not take the trouble to make such checks, if indeed he considered them to be important. Alternatively we might conclude with Kamesar that Jerome's arguments in the *Preface to the Gospels* and the preface to the *QHG* simply represent expedient and plausible-sounding responses to a difficult situation, but were not carefully considered and deeply held convictions. Again however, the centrality of these arguments to Jerome's *IH* project and the fact that they are repeated suggest that they represent at least an idea that Jerome wanted to believe in, even if he had not fully considered it.

It is eminently probable that the real source of difficulty is differential understandings of what is meant by words such as "quotation," "interpretation/ translation," "approval," "correspondence," and so on. There are signs that Jerome did not expect "quotation" to mean an exact verbal replication of one passage in another. Thus he

could claim that Jesus himself had approved the reading *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini* in the Gospels, when in fact the version of the words in question in Matthew's Gospel was *Benedictus qui venturus est in nomine Domini*.⁵⁶³ Similarly we noted instances where Jerome's quotation of a biblical verse in one of his *Commentaries* did not match any extant version of that verse. It is a pity that Jerome nowhere (as far as we can discover) discusses what he means by "quotation" nor how he might decide which version of the Old Testament a quotation in the New Testament was following. Nevertheless, given the minutiae of the details involved in assessing correspondence between different versions – where the difference may amount to no more than word order, a change of tense, or substitution of one synonym for another – if Jerome expected to come to any firm conclusions he must have envisaged a close verbal assessment of those versions.

More significantly, however, the extreme complexity of attempting to trace Christ's and the Apostles' quotations of Old Testament passages to either the Hebrew or the Greek textual traditions suggests that they understood "quotation" differently to the way we do. Our preoccupation (which was arguably shared by Jerome and Augustine) with the minutiae of verbal correspondence is an artefact of our access to written texts. In an oral culture quotation is likely to be a far more fluid process, concerned with degrees of similarity rather than with producing a facsimile of a written document. When Christ and the Apostles "quoted" from the Old Testament they captured the basic word order and sense of the original, but were not, it seems, concerned to replicate the original word for word – or as closely as possible in a

⁵⁶³ See Example 15 above, dealing with the readings in Psalm 117.26 *IH* and Matthew 21.9, and cf. *Comm in Matt*, PL 26.149, CCSL 77, p. 185: "*Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Salvatore quoque id ipsum in Evangelio comprobante.*"

different language.⁵⁶⁴ The significance of the text in question was the meaning it conveyed, the knowledge it revealed, and these referential properties stood above the grammar and syntax of that text, and were independent of it to the extent that similar meaning and knowledge could be conveyed by a text with different words, grammar and syntax. Jerome's and Augustine's attempts to justify their promotion of a particular version of the Old Testament text by arguing that Christ and the Apostles favoured one or the other textual tradition were bound to end in confusion.

It is inconceivable that Jerome was not aware of these difficulties as he produced the *IH*, even if he had not foreseen them when he penned the *Preface to the Gospels*, or even the preface to the *QHG*. Indeed the fact that he nowhere provides a detailed explanation and concrete examples of what he means is proof enough that he was well aware that no such examples could be found. Jerome's recourse to theological arguments in favour of the Hebrew text is symptomatic of this same phenomenon. Aware that strict definition of the terms and detailed discussion of the principles involved in a philological argument for a return to the Hebrew text was bound to raise far more serious problems than it solved, Jerome took refuge in the theological argument that Christ and the Apostles favoured the Hebrew text.

This same basic reverence for the Hebrew text helps us to understand Jerome's willingness to contradict his own arguments in practice by providing variant translations of the same verses that appear in the Psalter and in the New Testament. It is most significant that despite his vociferous defence of the authority of Christ and

⁵⁶⁴ In this regard, note Jerome's reference to Christ "remembering" scriptures: "*apostolici viri Scripturis utuntur Hebraicis: ipsos apostolos et evangelistas hoc fecisse perspicuum est. Dominus atque Salvator ubicumque veteris Scripturae meminit, de Hebraicis voluminibus ponit exempla.*" *Apol. adv. Lib. Ruf.*, PL 23.456, CCSL 79, p. 71.

the Apostles, Jerome chose when making the *IH* Psalter to submit to the authority of the Hebrew *text* that was in front of him rather than to the New Testament record of Christ's or the Apostles' recollection of that text. Indeed we have shown that in the majority of cases Jerome's Latin translations – whether from the Greek or from the Hebrew – are accurate translations of their specific *Vorlagen*.

Our investigation has revealed a remarkable consistency and objectivity in Jerome's translation practices. Whatever he may have argued elsewhere, when it came to the practice of translation, Jerome strove predominantly to provide a Latin version that was as close as possible to the Hebrew (or Greek) text that he had in front of him. Our discoveries here corroborate our previous observations concerning Jerome's distinction between "translation" and "prophecy," and once again, Jerome's conception of the translator's role seems to be purely philological. Jerome strove to be an *interpres*, even when strict adherence to this role threatened to undermine important arguments elsewhere.

Jerome never in practice brought the *Hebraica veritas* and the *veritas Novi Testamenti* into conflict with each other. The former dictated his attitude towards translation of the Old Testament, and the latter dictated his attitude towards that of the New. Each was equally valid in its own sphere of influence.

Chapter 5.3

Concealment and Revelation:

Passages with Exegetical Significance

“For it was claimed by some Fathers ... that the credibility of the LXX was guaranteed by the fact that they had produced their version before Christ, and accordingly could not be accused of a pro-Christian bias. Jerome, on the other hand, would have been delighted to be charged with such partiality.”⁵⁶⁵

5.3.1 Jerome’s “pro-Christian bias”?

Having discussed Jerome’s approach to conflicts of authority between the New and Old Testaments in the previous chapter, we turn now to consider the broad scope of the *IH* Psalter. In this chapter we will search for a Christian bias by asking whether, to what extent, and under what circumstances Jerome introduced Christological references into the *IH*, or abandoned Christological references from the *IH* that had been in the *ILXX*. Our search is motivated and supported by Jerome’s own use of the language of concealment to denigrate the translations of the LXX and the *recentiores*, and the language of revelation to promote his own translation of the Hebrew scriptures by a Christian for Christians. Our investigation of the extent to which Jerome “reveals” in the *IH* Psalter Christological significance that had been “hidden”

⁵⁶⁵ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 68.

in previous versions (including, occasionally, the Hebrew), or “hides” (or abandons) Christological significance that had been evident in the previous versions, will shed further light on his attitude towards the *Hebraica veritas*, and on the practical implications of the tensions implicit in his role as a Christian translating for Christians who nevertheless wanted his work to be acceptable or justifiable to Jews.

Our work in this chapter follows most closely in the footsteps of Schaper’s investigations of eschatological and messianic readings in the LXX.⁵⁶⁶ Kraus’ work on Christian influences in the book of Exodus *IH* is this chapter’s closest relation in Hieronymian studies.⁵⁶⁷ Both of these scholars aim to demonstrate instances in which the theology of the translators is reflected in the text of their translations. Our aim in this chapter is the same, but we will modify our approach in light of the complexities that their work revealed.

Schaper’s work has been heavily criticised by Cox,⁵⁶⁸ and rather more tactfully by Salvesen.⁵⁶⁹ Cox’ conclusions are worth quoting: “The overall impression one has is that his reading has often been forced into the text. That is, what is not there is read into it ... obvious solutions are passed over in favour of the less likely, and individual verses are treated apart from their contexts. Contemporary texts, that is, texts thought to be contemporary with the translation, are employed to lend an interpretation to the OG Psalms which they do not necessarily have ... What is at issue ... is whether a certain ‘eschatology’ and ‘messianism’ were embedded by the translators into their

⁵⁶⁶ Schaper, J., *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 2. Reihe, Herausgegeben von Martin Hengel und Otfried Hofius, 76, (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995).

⁵⁶⁷ Kraus, *Jerome’s Translation*.

⁵⁶⁸ Cox, “Schaper’s *Eschatology*,” pp. 289-311.

⁵⁶⁹ Salvesen, “*Eschatology*,” pp. 580-583; see also Peters, M.K.H., “*Eschatology in the Greek Psalter*, by Joachim Schaper,” in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 116/2, (1997), pp. 350-352.

work on the OG Psalms. On that point the results of Schaper's study seem thin indeed. We have to conclude that, at best, there is little evidence of an eschatological or messianic colouring in the OG Psalms."⁵⁷⁰ Salvesen by contrast gives Schaper due credit within the specific parameters of his study, noting that "Schaper unashamedly and fruitfully focuses on the meaning of the Greek text of Psalms, selecting clear examples of exegesis on the part of the translators."⁵⁷¹ However, she too suggests that "Occasionally one feels that Schaper has missed a slightly simpler alternative explanation."⁵⁷² It seems to us, however, that the most important problem with Schaper's work lies not with his basic thesis, nor (for the most part) with his conclusions, but with his methodology. We believe that approaching his material differently could have produced the same conclusions in support of the same thesis, but on a considerably firmer foundation.

Introducing his work, Schaper tells us that "The main part of the study will be devoted to the interpretation of individual psalms, always with regard to relevant biblical and non-biblical texts."⁵⁷³ However, his study depends upon interpretations in three different and partially overlapping spheres: first, the interpretation of the Hebrew Psalms by the Old Greek translator(s) and their possible attempts to reflect this in their translations; second, our interpretation of the significance of the particular Greek words and phrases used by the LXX translator(s); and third, our interpretation of the Hebrew Psalms and our consequent assessment of the LXX Psalms. The fundamental problem here is that we have no record of the interpretations that the LXX translator(s) themselves perceived in the Psalms, nor of what they believed

⁵⁷⁰ Cox, "Schaper's *Eschatology*," p. 301.

⁵⁷¹ Salvesen, "*Eschatology*," p. 580.

⁵⁷² *Ibid*, p. 581.

⁵⁷³ Schaper, *Eschatology*, p. 20.

themselves to be doing – whether “translation,” “interpretation,” or both⁵⁷⁴ – as they rendered the Psalms in Greek. Schaper acknowledges this: “Probably the most central and most complicated problem of Septuagint research is to gain some understanding of the minds and motives of the translators and the nature of their cultural environment.”⁵⁷⁵

Of course, the difficulty is that in the absence of such records, modern scholars are forced to evaluate the reading in the LXX according to their own interpretation of the Psalms in Greek and Hebrew, or to draw parallels with contemporary (to the translation) or later exegetical material. Both of these approaches are heavily conjectural, and admit little certainty in the conclusions that are reached. Even when using rabbinic exegesis, we cannot discount the possibility that readings in the LXX may have influenced later rabbinic exegesis rather than simply reflecting early iterations of such exegesis. The methodology that Schaper adopted in his *Eschatology and Messianism* sections incorporates both these approaches, and he struggles with the inherent difficulties.

Schaper is certainly aware of the difficulties, and is disarmingly honest about the tentative nature of his conclusions: “Admittedly, these considerations are conjectural...”⁵⁷⁶ “However, there definitely is a tendency in the Septuagint passage...”⁵⁷⁷ “It may have been the messianic connotations of the term ... which

⁵⁷⁴ “As anyone who attempts to translate a literary text rapidly comes to realise, translation inevitably involves interpretation; significantly enough, many of the words for ‘translate’, both in Greek and Latin, and in Hebrew and Aramaic, also mean ‘interpret, explain,’ Brock, “Translating the Old Testament,” p. 87.

⁵⁷⁵ Schaper, *Eschatology*, p. 21.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 83.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 96.

inspired the translators.”⁵⁷⁸ However, such uncertainty threatens to undermine his entire project, and is pounced upon by Cox: “One can only agree with his own comment, ‘Admittedly, these considerations are conjectural’,”⁵⁷⁹ and “Again he adds, ‘However, there definitely is a tendency...’ ... So, is this re-interpretation really there, or not?”⁵⁸⁰ Cox is surely being unreasonable in his criticism: all research is dependent to some degree on conjecture, and a perception and demonstration of tendencies and patterns within a literary or theological work can never function in terms of absolutes. Salvesen, on the other hand, may be too kind: “as with all the best scholarship the general thesis of the book is so convincing that it leaves one wondering why it has taken so long for someone to show just how central the Greek Psalter is to the development of eschatological and messianic ideas in Judaism.”⁵⁸¹ If individual examples can be undermined the general thesis is inevitably weakened. Incidentally Salvesen is more convinced by Schaper’s demonstration of the influence of the Greek Psalter on subsequent developments in Jewish ideas, where neutral wording could be reinterpreted in a much stronger way, than by his demonstration of the influence of early Jewish ideas on the Greek Psalter, which is what interests us here, and what failed to convince Cox.

Kraus’ work on the Christian influences in Exodus *IH* is similarly hampered by the fact that whether or not Jerome composed a commentary on Exodus, certainly none is extant. He is in a slightly better position in that the Christian commentators on whom he draws were closer in time to Jerome than were extant rabbinic sources to the LXX translators, but his conclusions are still heavily dependent on conjecture: “Thus,

⁵⁷⁸ Schaper, *Eschatology*, p. 99.

⁵⁷⁹ Cox, “Schaper’s *Eschatology*,” p. 297.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 299.

⁵⁸¹ Salvesen, “*Eschatology*,” p. 582.

although I do attempt to identify Jerome's sources, I also read his translation as an interpretation of these sources and these sources as an interpretation of his translation ... Moreover not only may a specific tradition(s) impact Jerome's translation, but also the categories of interpretation may guide Jerome. Nevertheless, there is always the possibility that Jerome does not draw on any interpretive tradition at all.⁵⁸² Kraus is aware of the danger of "over-reading" Jerome's translation, with the result that "[Only] when Jerome's rendition significantly differs from the Hebrew and the later versions, I posit the presence of exegetical traditions whether Jewish, Classical, or Christian."⁵⁸³

Given these difficulties, Lust's emphasis on investigating "messianic" passages solely by careful textual and literary criticism seems the best way to proceed in the context of the Septuagint where the different identities of the translators and the exegetes mean that we cannot be sure whether translation is influencing exegesis, or vice versa.⁵⁸⁴ This approach could also be productively applied to investigations of books and/or verses in Hieronymian or other bible versions for which we do not have commentary written by or approved by the translator.

5.3.2 Methodology

However, in our investigation of the *IH* Psalter we are in the fortunate position that Jerome was responsible both for the translation of the Psalter, and for the exegeses

⁵⁸² Kraus, *Jerome's Translation*, p. 15.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁵⁸⁴ Lust, J., *Messianism and the Septuagint, Collected Essays*, ed., K. Hauspie, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 178, (Leuven University Press, 2004), pp. 9-26.

contained in the *Commentarioli* and the *Tractatus*.⁵⁸⁵ Both of these give us a direct insight into his thinking, or at least his argumentation, albeit for a relatively small portion of the Psalter. Therefore, while following our usual methodology of comparing the text of the *IH* to that of the MT and looking for significant differences, we have restricted ourselves in this chapter to discussing readings in the *IH* involving verses that also feature in one or both of the *Commentarioli* and the *Tractatus*. We have also occasionally included verses that are not directly commented upon by Jerome but come from Psalms that Jerome interprets more generally as Christian. We have done this both in the contexts of concealment and revelation, the former involving Christian exegeses that appear in the *Commentarioli* or *Tractatus*, but are not propagated in the *IH*, and the latter involving Christian exegeses that are propagated in the *IH*. By reading Jerome's translations in parallel with his exegetical works we can be sure that we are not reading more into Jerome's translations than Jerome himself read into them.

Some might object to classifying as "Christian" any cases where the *ILXX* and/or the *IH* are following the tradition of the LXX, on the perfectly reasonable grounds that the LXX translators themselves could never have intended their translation to be "Christian." However, we have proceeded on the grounds that the source of a Latin reading, whether in the *ILXX* or *IH*, matters less than the interpretation Jerome builds upon it. Thus if Jerome offers a Christian exegesis of a Latin reading based on the LXX or the *recentiores*, and then propagates that reading in the *IH*, or abandons it from the *IH* in favour of a Hebrew based reading, he is effectively propagating or

⁵⁸⁵ Note our argument in the Introduction that while portions of the *Commentarioli*, *Tractatus*, and even the *IH*, came from earlier works, Jerome nevertheless chose to translate them and propagate them under his own name.

abandoning a “Christian” reading, even if it was never intended as such by the LXX or the *recentiores*.

We believe that future scholarship will find it fruitful to investigate more generally the influence of the fourth century Christian milieu on Jerome’s *IH* translations, including the *IH* Psalter. Such work would search *inter alia* for demonstrable parallels between *IH* translations and early Christian exegetical works. Our work in this chapter is foundational to such investigations: by limiting ourselves to verses on which Jerome himself comments, we will be able to establish a general pattern in Jerome’s work for the relationship between translation and exegesis, so that future Hieronymian scholarship may more easily avoid or overcome the problems encountered by previous research.

Proceeding within the framework of “Concealment” and “Revelation,” we will look at several examples in each category: first, readings in the *IH* Psalter that conceal, or avoid, a Christian motif; and second, readings that reveal, or introduce, a Christian motif. We will conclude by considering what our discoveries reveal about Jerome’s attitude towards the Hebrew scriptures and his conception of his role as a translator.

5.3.3 Concealment: Readings in the *IH* Psalter that Avoid a Christian Motif

1. Psalm 2.12 *IH*:

As it stands the *IH* is closest to Symmachus' reading: προσκυνήσατε καθαρώς μήποτε ὀργισθῆ, "worship purely/cleanly lest he be angry." The transition from קִשָּׁ ("kiss") to *adorare* ("ask," "entreat," "honour," "worship") is easy enough to understand, and, as is well known, בָּר could conceivably be the adverb formed from בָּרַר ("purify," "select").⁵⁸⁶ So the *IH* reading can be justified according to the Hebrew text as in the MT. The entry in the *Commentarioli* shows that Jerome was aware of, but chose not to exploit, the possibility that בָּר could be read as "son" – even though he clearly (note his use of the superlative adjective *apertissima*) believed this to be a reference to Christ: "*Adprehendite disciplinam, ne quando irascatur Dominus. Pro eo quod in graeco dicitur δράξασθε παιδείας, in hebraeo legitur NESCU BAR, quod interpretari potest, Adorate filium. Apertissima itaque de Christo prophetia est, et ordo praecepti: Adorate Filium, ne forte irascatur Dominus, hoc est Pater.*"⁵⁸⁷ It is doubtful however whether Jerome realised such a meaning would be derived from Aramaic rather than Hebrew.⁵⁸⁸ Nevertheless Jerome apparently chose in the *IH* to follow Symmachus' version, which is more easily justifiable according to the Hebrew than is the LXX.

Schaper suggests that δράξασθε παιδείας is "the *crux interpretum* of this passage" and notes the difficulty of explaining it as a translation of the Hebrew text.⁵⁸⁹ He turns instead to the Psalms of Solomon and suggests that "These psalms have a very

⁵⁸⁶ Cf. the discussion in BDB, p. 141.

⁵⁸⁷ *CCSL* 72, p. 182.

⁵⁸⁸ Cf. his assertion that *in hebraeo* [rather than Aramaic] *legitur NESCU BAR, quod interpretari potest, Adorate filium.*

⁵⁸⁹ Schaper, *Eschatology*, p. 74.

important notion in common which in turn reminds us of Ps 2: the concept of παιδεία. In both [Solomonic] psalms it is a constitutive feature of the messianic age since it is the office of the Messiah to *instruct*.”⁵⁹⁰ He concludes in due course that “the imagery of Ps 2 LXX was conceived of as messianic,” at least by those who composed the Psalms of Solomon.⁵⁹¹ Schaper may be correct as far as he goes, but Jerome’s work demonstrates that he saw a different significance in this verse. In the *Commentarioli* Jerome does indeed perceive a messianic significance in this Psalm as a whole⁵⁹² and this verse in particular, but it is based crucially on a *denial* of the legitimacy of the LXX translation δράξασθε παιδείας. Second, when making the *IH* Jerome exploited neither the possible messianic significance of δράξασθε παιδείας (following Schaper) nor that of “*NESCU BAR*.”

What can be said about his refusal to exploit a potential reference to Christ? And what can be said about how to understand the phrase in the *Comm, interpretari potest*? It seems likely that the ambiguity of the phrase *interpretari potest* is key. The wording of the entry in the *Commentarioli*, suggesting a one to one equivalence might suggest “translation” rather than “interpretation.” Nevertheless, when it came to the *IH* Jerome treated “*Adorate filium*” as a possible “interpretation” but not a legitimate “translation.” Perhaps Jerome had misgivings after consulting his Jewish teachers about the meaning of בָּרַךְ. Jerome does go half way to the “Christian” translation – the *IH* *adore pure*, “worship in purity,” is close to *adore filium*, “worship the son,” and while it brings the *IH* closer to the Hebrew than was the *ILXX*, he does not go all the way and translate קִשָּׁב literally as “kiss.”

⁵⁹⁰ Schaper, *Eschatology*, p. 75.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 76.

⁵⁹² Thus verses 2, 3 and 7 are given a similarly Christological or Christian exegesis by Jerome.

2. Psalm 21.17 IH:

Our discussion of Psalm 21.1 *IH* in Chapter 3 demonstrated that Jerome attributes the whole Psalm to Christ: *Sed nos cervum ... nullum alium nisi Christum intellegimus, sicut totius psalmi contextus ostendit.*⁵⁹³ Returning to verse 17, Jerome avoids a potential Christological reading by substituting *IH vinxerunt*, “bound,” (probably following Aquila’s ἐπέδησαν) for *ILXX foderunt*, “pierced,” to translate כָּאָרְיָ. The Hebrew of this verse is obscure – and was obscure when Jerome came to translate it as his reference to Aquila’s and Theodotion’s readings in the *Commentarioli* suggests: “*Quia circumierunt me canes multi. Pro canibus, in hebraeo habet CALABIN, quod Aquila et Theodotion ‘venatores’ interpretati sunt.*”⁵⁹⁴ But, despite the fact that Jerome follows Aquila and Theodotion in rendering כָּלְבִים as *venatores*, “hunters,” he does not retain “pierced” from the *ILXX* which could have been rather more logical in this context than “bound”, and would have had the useful effect of being applicable to Christ whose hands and feet were, of course, “pierced” rather than “bound.”

Like Psalm 2, Psalm 21 *IH* was important in Christian theology – despite the refusal of the Antiochene exegete Theodore to read it as a prophecy of Christ even when, the New Testament itself had set the precedent.⁵⁹⁵ As with Psalm 2, it seems likely that Jerome chose to avoid an “easy” reference to Christ in his *IH* translation of Psalm 21.17. By supplying only readings that were philologically acceptable Jerome may

⁵⁹³ *CCSL* 72, p. 198.

⁵⁹⁴ *CCSL* 72, p. 199.

⁵⁹⁵ Cf. O’Keefe, J.J., “‘A Letter that Killeth’: Toward a Reassessment of Antiochene Exegesis, or Diodore, Theodore and Theodoret on the Psalms,” in *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 8.1 (2000), pp. 83-104, here p. 98, also Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, pp. 183-184

have sought to avoid Jewish criticism of Christianising exegesis in the text, and thus promote the usefulness of his new version in apologetic discourse with the Jews.

However, this attempt to avoid charges of “Christianisation” where they would be most expected, and most likely to be discovered, was countered by clear Christian exegesis of the Psalm in the *Commentarioli*.

3. Psalm 57.9 IH:

We have discussed this verse in relation to Jerome’s knowledge of Hebrew in Chapter 2.5.1, but it has further relevance to our present discussion. It is significant that Jerome attempts to follow the Hebrew for the first half of the verse despite the LXX notion of melting wax being rather more comprehensible than the Hebrew image of a melting snail. Most importantly for us, however, the entry in the *Commentarioli* dealing with Psalm 57.9b provides a Christian exegesis dependent on the reading in the *ILXX*.⁵⁹⁶ Jerome’s new translation in the *IH* makes his exegesis in the *Commentarioli* impossible to sustain. Jerome was apparently willing to forego a Christian interpretation of this verse in order to render the Hebrew as closely as he could.

⁵⁹⁶ *CCSL* 72, p. 211.

4. Psalm 59.9 IH:

The interest in this verse centres on the translation of the Hebrew יִקְרֹךְ, which is strictly the masculine singular polel participle from קָרָךְ, “engrave, portray, decree, inscribe, govern.” The LXX translated it as βασιλεύς, “king,” hence *ILXX rex*, while in the *IH* Jerome translated it as *legifer*, “law-giver,” which is a more accurate translation of the Hebrew. This is the only significant difference between the *IH* and the *ILXX*, both of which are accurate translations of their respective original texts.

In the *Commentarioli* Jerome predictably explains the *ILXX* “Judah is my king” in terms of Christ’s descent from that tribe: “*Meus est Galaad, Manasse. Universa haec de gentium vocatione dicuntur: quarum diversae virtutes sub singulorum nominum interpretatione referendae sunt. Iuda rex meus. Quia ex Iudae tribu ortus est Christus.*”⁵⁹⁷ Nevertheless, in the *IH* Jerome preferred to follow the Hebrew rather than retain the *ILXX* reading, even though by so doing he invalidated his explanation in the *Commentarioli* and removed an obvious reference to Christ from the Latin version of the Psalm.

We may compare this verse with Psalm 107.9 *IH*, where Jerome similarly eschewed the Christological *rex* in favour of a more neutral *dux*, and this in spite of his translation of the subsequent verse, and his remark about it in the *Commentarioli*, clearly signifying a Christian interpretation. Schaper discusses both Psalm 59.9 and Psalm 107.9 LXX, and argues that it is “beyond reasonable doubt that the *Ιουδας* spoken of in Pss 59,9; 107,9 LXX is conceived of as a messianic figure: the

⁵⁹⁷ *CCSL* 72, p. 212.

personalization of קִרְיָת as $\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma$ is modelled on a rendering chosen in the context of one of the most significant messianic passages of the Septuagint of Genesis [Genesis 49.10]...⁵⁹⁸ Jerome's remarks in the *Commentarioli* confirm the messianic interpretation of these verses in the late fourth century. This makes it all the more striking that in the *IH* Jerome was willing to forego what may well be several hundred years of messianic interpretive tradition. Whatever the reasons for his decision, Jerome considered a reference to Judah as "king" to be a step too far.

5. Psalm 85.16 IH:

Given Jerome's comment on verse 2, attributing that verse "without doubt" to Christ, verse 16 is surely crying out for a Christian interpretation, yet the *Commentarioli* is silent. In fact, the *IH da fortitudinem tuam servo tuo* is far more difficult to interpret than the *ILXX da imperium tuum puero tuo*. The variation between them arises in part from the wider semantic range of the Greek words παῖς and κράτος than their Hebrew counterparts עֶבֶד and עֹז . Thus עֶבֶד means "slave" or "servant," whereas παῖς can mean "slave," or "boy," or "son." Presumably the LXX used it in the former sense, yet when producing the *ILXX* Jerome chose (deliberately one assumes, rather than out of ignorance of an alternative) to take it as the latter, hence *puer*, "boy." Similarly עֹז means "strength" or "might," whereas κράτος can mean "strength" or "might" but also means the exercise of that faculty, namely "dominion." Again, it seems that the LXX used it in the former sense, but Jerome took it in the latter when translating the *ILXX*.

⁵⁹⁸ Schaper, *Eschatology*, p. 84. The Septuagint of Genesis 49.10 has $\eta\gamma\omicron\upsilon\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$ rather than $\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma$, which does not help Schaper's case. The *IH* again has *dux*. Targum Pslams suggests that at least the second half of Genesis 49.10 had a messianic tradition of interpretation among the Jews.

The result is that while the LXX is a close translation of the Hebrew, albeit including ambiguities that do not exist in the Hebrew, by exploiting those ambiguities (whether deliberately or not) the *ILXX* has moved away from the plain sense of the Hebrew.

Jerome's own accusation against the Old Latin, namely that it is three stages removed from the Hebrew⁵⁹⁹ (and therefore likely to be inaccurate), may justifiably in this verse be levelled at the *ILXX*.

When he came to producing the *IH*, Jerome chose to forego the Christological reading in the *ILXX* in order (presumably) to remain faithful to the Hebrew עָזַר and עֶזְרָא, and hence the *IH* reads "give strength to your servant" rather than "give dominion to your son." Certainly *filium*, "son" gets a mention later in the verse in the *IH*, as it does in the *ILXX*, but in that case he is specifically the son of God's "handmaiden," אֲמָתָה, and not the son of God himself. It is also true that Christian theology sees Jesus as God's servant as well as his son, but the *ILXX* combination of "dominion" and "son" is far more strikingly Christological than the *IH* combination of "strength" and "servant."

Again Jerome seems to have taken the Hebrew text as ultimate authority – he wasn't willing to be "Christian" if it meant not being "kosher." Whereas LXX παῖς and κρᾶτος offered a legitimate option of a Christological reading, which Jerome apparently took in the *ILXX*, the Hebrew עָזַר and עֶזְרָא offered no such option. In his determination to remain faithful to the Hebrew in the *IH*, Jerome has effectively expunged a Christian reference.

⁵⁹⁹ "Neque vero ego de veteri disputo Testamento, quod a Septuaginta senioribus in Graecam linguam versum, tertio gradu ad nos usque pervenit." *Praef. in Evang.*, PL 29.527, Weber/Gryson, p. 1515.

6. Psalm 87.9 IH:

The significant change is from *ILXX traditus sum et non egrediebar* to *IH clausum et non prodeuntem*. Jerome's Christological exegesis in this passage of the *Tractatus*⁶⁰⁰ is entirely dependent on *ILXX traditus sum*, which is an accurate translation of LXX *παρεδόθην*. The apparatus in BHS notes a certain difficulty with this verse, and records the reading of the LXX. However, the obscure *IH me clausum et non prodeuntem*, "shut up and not going forth," is an accurate translation of the equally obscure Hebrew text as it stands in the MT, namely אָצַח וְלֹא יֵצֵא, if rather free in its use of the participle *prodeuntem* to render the 1st person singular imperfect אָצַח.

Jerome preferred to translate the Hebrew text as he had it as accurately as possible, despite its obscurity, and despite the fact that by doing so he made the Christological exegesis he had offered in the *Tractatus* on this Psalm utterly redundant.

7. Psalm 89.10 IH:

We are interested in the change between *ILXX quoniam supervenit mansuetudo et corripiemur* to *IH quoniam transivimus cito et avolvimus*, both of which are close translations of their respective *Vorlagen*. In the *Tractatus* Jerome offers a Christological exegesis that is heavily dependent on his translation in the *ILXX*:

⁶⁰⁰ *Tractatus de Psalmo LXXXVII: CCSL 78*, p. 402. This passage, with its multiple exegeses and repeated *dicamus et aliter* bears striking structural similarities to certain rabbinic modes of exegesis. For the midrashic character of some of Jerome's *Commentaries*, see Hirshman, M., *A Rivalry of Genius: Jewish and Christian Biblical Interpretation in late Antiquity*, Translated by B. Stein, (Albany: State University of New York, 1996), p. 106.

*“Quoniam supervenit mansuetudo, et corripiemur. Quae est ista mansuetudo, per quam corripimur? ... Non dixit venit mansuetus, sed venit mansuetudo, quod est Dominus noster Iesus Christus.”*⁶⁰¹

The LXX *πραΰτης* is very odd: it is not used elsewhere as a translation for this Hebrew root,⁶⁰² and there is no record in the apparatus of BHS of alternative readings here. However, this rendition by the LXX and Jerome’s subsequent translation in the *ILXX* allowed him to discern a Christological exegesis,⁶⁰³ even if its connection with the rest of the verse and Psalm is by no means evident! Nevertheless, when it came to the *IH*, Jerome was willing to forego the translation in the *IH*, and the resulting Christian exegesis, in order to translate the Hebrew more closely.

8. Psalm 96.1 IH:

This is one of several Psalms that have titles in the LXX but not in the Hebrew. As we would expect, Jerome includes the title in the *ILXX* but not in the *IH*. In this case however, despite the apparent banality of the title in the *ILXX*, Jerome perceived in it deep Christological significance. The *Tractatus de Psalmo XCVI* demonstrates the considerable Christological potential of the LXX/*ILXX* title of this Psalm, covering the human descent of Jesus, the virgin birth, the holiness of Mary, and even the Christian fulfilment of Old Testament typology (thus *Quae est ergo terra ista David*

⁶⁰¹ *Tractatus de Psalmo LXXXVIII*, CCSL 78, p. 418.

⁶⁰² At Psalm 44.5 the *IH* has *mansuetudinem* for Hebrew *חַנּוּן* and LXX *πραΰτητος*, and at Psalm 131.1 the *IH* has *ad afflictionis eius* for Hebrew *חַנּוּן* and LXX *πραΰτητος αὐτοῦ*.

⁶⁰³ It is not clear what biblical authority Jerome had in mind for identifying Christ as “Wisdom,” (*qui quomodo in alio loco, non sapiens, sed sapientia vocatur*), but a similar phenomenon arises at John 14.6, where Jesus describes himself, among other things, as “the Truth,” and not simply “truthful”: *dicit ei Iesus/ ego sum via et veritas et vita/ nemo venit ad Patrem nisi per me* (VNT.)

quae restituta est? David terra sancta Maria est, mater Salvatoris).⁶⁰⁴ Nevertheless, despite the importance of these themes to Christian theology, and the fact that nowhere else in the *Commentarioli* or the *Tractatus* does Jerome include all of them within the same argument, he followed the Hebrew in the *IH* and abandoned the title and its dependent exegesis.

9. Psalm 109.3 IH:

There are many problems with Hebrew text of this verse, for which see the *apparatus criticus* in BHS. Nevertheless the important point for us is that while the *IH* is very different to the *ILXX*, it is largely justifiable against the Hebrew text as it stands in the MT. Jerome apparently treated עַמֶּךָ as plural so that he could make it agree with נְדָבָתָהּ, despite the latter being feminine and the former masculine, hence the *IH* “your people will be spontaneous,” rather than the Hebrew “your people [will bring] freewill offerings.” Similarly he apparently read בְּהַרְרֵי, “on the mountains” instead of בְּהַרְרֵי, “in the splendours,” and understood מְשַׁחֵר as a verb rather than as a noun.

The Christological discussion in the *Commentarioli* revolves around *ILXX principium*,⁶⁰⁵ which Jerome abandons in the *IH* by following the vocalisation preserved in the MT rather than the alternative נְדָבָתָהּ עַמֶּךָ that is apparently behind the

⁶⁰⁴ *Tractatus de Psalmo XCVI*, CCSL 78, p. 440. Fascinatingly, though not directly relevant to our discussion here, Jerome refers to Mary again in reference to verse 8, in one of the few positive references to women in his writings, if not the only one! Discussing Satan’s efforts to tempt Job into sin through his wife, Jerome writes (somewhat anachronistically): *Memor fuit diabolus pristinae artis, qua Adam aliquando decepit per mulierem: ita et hunc appetit per uxorem, aestimans quod semper viros possit per mulierem decipere, non considerans quia unus per mulierem deiectus est, et nunc per mulierem totus mundus salvatus est. In mente tibi venit Heva, sed considera Mariam: illa nos eiecit de paradiso, ista reducit ad caelum.* (CCSL 78, pp. 444-445.)

⁶⁰⁵ CCSL 72, p. 232.

LXX.⁶⁰⁶ It seems that Jerome preferred to follow what he considered to be a more reliable reading tradition of the Hebrew text rather than persevere with the alternative, even though in doing so he had to abandon his Christological exegesis of the verse.

This trend is more pronounced in the latter half of the verse where Jerome translates the Hebrew as *quasi de vulva orietur tibi ros adulescentiae tuae* in the *IH*, abandoning in the process the *ILXX* reading *ex utero ante luciferum genui te*.⁶⁰⁷ Given Jerome's identification of Christ as the referent of *principium* in the first half of verse 9, it seems reasonable to assume that he most likely understood *genui te* as God speaking about his begetting Christ his Son. The glorious circumstances of this birth (*in splendoribus sanctorum*) and its occurrence before dawn (*ante luciferum*) would have corroborated such an understanding.⁶⁰⁸ Nevertheless, Jerome abandons this reading in favour of what he must have considered to be a more literal, if obscure, translation of the Hebrew in the *IH*.

Schaper discusses Psalm 109.3 LXX, dealing with the apparent notion of messianic pre-existence. He suggests that the LXX version addresses "the correlation between the saviour figure's coming into existence prior to creation and its eschatological action in judgement. The mention of the saviour's birth *πρὸ ἑωσφόρου* can only be understood as a reference to his priority in creation. He was born *before* the creation of the heavenly bodies, even of Venus ... 'the bringer of light' (*ἑωσφόρος*) in the morning."⁶⁰⁹ Schaper's conclusion rests upon his reading *ἑωσφόρος* as "the dawn of time," and this leads him a non-sequitur that he either does not notice or does not feel

⁶⁰⁶ Cf. BHS *app crit.*

⁶⁰⁷ The LXX translators apparently read *יְלִדְתִּי* instead of *יִלְדְתִּי*, hence LXX *ἐξεγέννησά σε*, and *ILXX genui te*. Cf. BHS *app crit.*

⁶⁰⁸ Cf. Luke's account of the circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth at Luke 2.1-20.

⁶⁰⁹ Schaper, *Eschatology*, p. 104.

the need to explain: “ἑωσφόρος clearly has the very specific meaning of ‘Bringer of the morn’, ‘the Morning-star’. Interpreting it as ‘dawn’ misses the point...” Surely that is precisely the point? Jerome’s translation in the *ILXX*, namely *ante luciferum* has no such primeval overtones, which further undermines Schaper’s position. Later he concludes regarding the later significance of the Psalm: “To sum up the observations made in New Testament and patristic texts we may say that Ps 109,3 LXX was a key text in the early stages of the history of christology. It safeguarded, from the point of view of the Christian thinkers, the concept of pre-existence which they needed to perfect their christological system.”⁶¹⁰ If Schaper is correct – and we might ask *inter alia* whether it would not be better to consider Psalm 109 LXX as a source-text rather than a proof-text for early Christian theology – it makes Jerome’s new version in the *IH* all the more remarkable.

10. Psalm 145.3 IH:

The *ILXX in filiis hominum* follows LXX ἐφ’ υἱοὺς ἀνθρώπων, and the *IH in filio hominis* is a close translation of כִּבְנֵי-אָדָם. The LXX/*ILXX* reading at least partially identifies *principibus* and *filiis hominum* whereas the MT/*IH* reading treats them as distinct entities, one plural, the other singular.

The resulting phrase in the *IH*, *nolite confidere ... in filio hominis cui non est salus*, is very striking given Jerome identified *filius hominis* specifically as Jesus Christ in the

⁶¹⁰ Schaper, *Eschatology*, p. 173.

Commentarioli on Psalm 79.18 *IH*.⁶¹¹ Jesus' self identification as the "Son of Man" in the New Testament is not straightforward.⁶¹² Horbury has demonstrated the difficulty of assessing the messianic significance of the phrase "son of man" in pre- and early Christian thought, his own conclusion being that it "had become one of the words and phrases which could readily be understood as a reference to the messiah."⁶¹³ Be that as it may, Jerome's entries in the *Commentary on Matthew* reveal that, for his part, Jerome was in do doubt that the *filius hominis* (at least in Matthew's gospel) was Jesus Christ.⁶¹⁴

Jerome's treatment of Psalm 145.3 *IH* provides further evidence for this debate, albeit concerning a later period. At Job 25.6 and at Ezekiel 2.1, 2.3, 2.6, 2.8 and 3.1 Jerome translates the singular Hebrew phrase בן־אדם (as opposed to the more common plural בני־אדם) as *filius hominis*, as he does at Psalm 145.3, suggesting that – despite the evidence from the *Comm. in Matt.* – in 4th Century Christian Latin "*filius hominis*" did not necessarily mean "the Son of Man," in the specific sense of referring to Jesus Christ. It appears therefore that in Jerome's Christian intellectual circle at least, identifying "the son of man" as Jesus Christ was possible and uncontroversial, but equally it was not necessary.

It is striking that Jerome favoured the Hebrew tradition for Psalm 145.3 *IH*, despite making possible the interpretation that the Psalmist is exhorting his audience not to trust in Jesus, and especially given the much less theologically expensive alternative

⁶¹¹ "Et super filium hominis quem confirmasti tibi. Manifeste de Christi loquitur adventu. Denique et resurrectionem ipsius sequens versiculus ostendit dicent: Vivificabis nos, et nomen tuum invocabimus." CCSL 72, p. 219. Psalm 79.18 *ILXX* and *IH* both have *filius hominis*.

⁶¹² See for example: Matthew 8.20, 24.44, 25.31; Luke 18.8, 19.10.

⁶¹³ Horbury, W., "The Messianic Associations of 'The Son of Man,'" in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, Vol. 36, Part 1, (April 1985), pp. 34-55, here p. 53.

⁶¹⁴ *Comm. in Matt.* 8.20, 24.44, 25.31 in CCSL 77, pp. 51, 234 and 243 respectively.

available in the *ILXX*. We could simply take this as evidence that Jerome's own mind was not made up concerning the identification of "the son of man." Alternatively, in line with other examples we have adduced in this study, we could take it as further evidence that he favoured *hebraica veritas*, in this case the natural sense of the Hebrew text, above the traditions of Christian exegesis. In any case these conclusions are not mutually exclusive.

5.3.4 Revelation: Readings in the *IH* Psalter that Expose a Christian Motif

1. Psalm 9.1 *IH*:

Only the *IH* and Symmachus translate עלמות in terms of "death" (*pro morte*, and *περὶ τοῦ θανάτου*), apparently reading על-מות instead, (possibly by the same technique as that we have discussed regarding translations of מִקְפָּח in Chapter 4.6). Others vary between "hidden things," and "youth," probably seeing a connection with עלומים, "youth," "youthful vigour."⁶¹⁵ While Jerome's *IH* translation is not entirely original it is nevertheless significant, being a deliberate choice of one of a number of alternatives.

Jerome makes the extraordinary suggestion that the Old Greek translator(s) "wanted," *voluerunt*, to conceal specifically the passion and resurrection of Christ – rather than other aspects of his life – through a secret expression (literally "a word of secrecy," *verbum absconsionis*), and, significantly, that they did this "that [the passion and

⁶¹⁵ Cf. BHS *app crit.*

resurrection of Christ] might not be easily known by the nations (or more likely the “Gentiles,” *gentibus*, in contrast to “Israel”⁶¹⁶) at that time,” *ne a gentibus illo tempore facile nosceretur*: “*In finem pro absconditis filii. Licet Aquila pro absconditis filii ‘adulescentiam filii’ posuerit, tamen sciendum in hebraeo haberi ‘pro morte filii.’ Denique et Symmachus in hunc modum transtulit: ‘Pro victoria de morte filii.’ Totus igitur psalmus per tropologiam ad Christi pertinet sacramentum. Unde et Septuaginta interpretes Christi passionem et resurrectionem, quae ignota prius mundo fuit, per verbum absconsionis celare voluerunt, ne a gentibus illo tempore facile nosceretur.*”⁶¹⁷

Fascinatingly, Jerome implies that the OG translators knew that this verse described the specifics of Christ’s earthly life though (as we noted in passing in Chapter 5.1) he does say how they had this knowledge, especially as it was “previously unknown in the world,” *quae ignota prius mundo fuit*. More interesting is the idea of hiding divine truth from the Gentiles. Similar statements by Jerome elsewhere suggest that the LXX hid references to the Trinitarian God from the monotheistic Platonist Ptolemy, presumably from an apologetic motivation to expedite his acceptance of the Jewish God.⁶¹⁸ Here however, the nuance is subtly different. Jerome suggests that the LXX obscured the reference to Christ’s death simply “that it might not be easily known.” This idea of the obfuscation of divine truth to keep it hidden from those not included among the authentic people of God is itself very biblical,⁶¹⁹ indeed the biblical idea is

⁶¹⁶ See a discussion of Jerome’s translations of $\alpha\gamma$ and $\iota\eta$ later in this chapter.

⁶¹⁷ CCSL 72, p. 191.

⁶¹⁸ See, for example, Jerome’s remarks in the *Tractatus de Psalmo XV* concerning Psalm 15.1 *IH* (CCSL 78, p. 365-366) in which he also refers to Psalm 9.1 *IH*.

⁶¹⁹ For example, Isaiah 6.9-10: “And he said, “Go, and say to this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.’” This verse is quoted by Jesus to the disciples to explain his use of parables in Matthew 13.14-15 and by Paul to the unbelieving Roman Jews in Acts 28.26-27. All three

more extreme in that it is God, rather than his incompetent human servants, who hides the truth about himself. Nevertheless, this verse must have struck Jerome as a perfect example of the obscurantist activities of the LXX translators: the vocabulary of the reading in the LXX/ILXX, “concerning the hidden things of the son,” is a direct manifestation of the point Jerome was making: the “hidden things” were in fact the “death” of the son.

The *IH* is a legitimate translation of the Hebrew text, given the uncertainty surrounding the readings על-מות or עלמות, but when read in parallel with Jerome’s remarks in the *Commentarioli* and the *Tractatus de Psalmo XV* (see below), its true significance is evident. Jerome’s choice of one of several alternative readings of the Hebrew enabled him to “reveal” a reference to the death of Christ in this Psalm, and at the same time remove the obscurity, τῶν κρυφίων/*occultis* introduced by the LXX translators. As a result, the *IH* version of Psalm 9.1 has an undeniably Christian nuance that is absent in the LXX, and only one option among many in the Hebrew.

2. Psalm 10.5 IH:

In the *ILXX* Jerome translated LXX ὁ θρόνος by the Latin word *sedis*, but in the *IH* he translated יִסְדָּב by the Greek loan word *thronus*. In making the *IH* Jerome often favoured Latin words over Greek loan words,⁶²⁰ so it is all the more striking that while he used *sedis* in the *ILXX* he reverted to *thronus* in the *IH*. The significance of

cases describe the divinely motivated hiding of divine truth from those excluded from the collective people of God.

⁶²⁰ For example, where he used *psallo* and cognates in the *ILXX* Jerome routinely uses *cano* or *canto* and cognates in the *IH*.

the change is revealed by the *Tractatus de Psalmo X*, concerning Psalm 10.5 *ILXX*: Jerome understands *sedis* to be *thronus Dei*, and invokes what appears to be Luke 1.32b as a proof text to infer that God gave his throne to another (*'Dabit ei Deus thronum David patris sui'*⁶²¹), whom Jerome refers to as *Dominus*. Later Jerome implies the identity of *Dominus* and *Salvator*, so that we should understand *Dominus* to be Jesus Christ.⁶²² It is striking that throughout this passage Jerome refers consistently to the divine seat of honour as *thronus* rather than *sedis*, and that the exegesis he offers is centred entirely on the heavenly rule of Jesus Christ. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that by using *thronus* in the *IH* Jerome wished to draw the reader's attention all the more to Christ's heavenly *thronus* rather than an earthly *sedis*, thereby calling to mind Christ's fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy: "Antequam corporeum templum a Salomone construeretur, scit propheta templum Domini spiritale et in caelo thronum eius."⁶²³

3. Psalm 15.1 IH:

We discussed the apparent Jewish influences on Jerome's translation of this verse in Chapter 4.6, but the *Tractatus de Psalmo XV* reveals a strong Christological element too: "Post haec quaeritur, cur Septuaginta interpretes aliter quam in hebraeo et apud ceteras editiones est transferre voluerunt. Quod et de multis aliis locis, sed maxime de praescriptione noni psalmi intellegi potest. ... Ita et nunc quia humilitas simplicitas

⁶²¹ CCSL 78, p. 359. Note that Luke 1.32b VNT reads: "et dabit illi Dominus Deus sedem David patris eius." Again Jerome is not concerned with exact quotation. Nevertheless, the fact that he uses *thronus* in the *Tractatus* despite using *sedis* in the VNT strongly suggests that he wished to demonstrate a connection between Luke 1.32b and Psalm 10.5 *IH*.

⁶²² "Templum autem proprie Dei, aut Dominus noster et Salvator intellegitur," *Tractatus de Psalmo X*, CCSL 78, p. 360.

⁶²³ CCSL 78, p. 360.

immaculatio atque perfectio non hominem ... sed Dei filium demonstrabant, idcirco στηλογραφίαν, hoc est, dignam rem quae titulo notaretur transferro voluerunt; ut aliud intellegeremus clausum in titulo, aliud in voce prolatum. Titulus autem et viris fortibus ponitur in sepulchris ad memoriam pristinae fortitudinis ... Quorum omnium super persona Domini Salvatoris facilius interpretatio est."⁶²⁴ Jerome argues that this verse (like Psalm 9.1) is an instance of the LXX "hiding" a reference to Christ, by deliberately (*voluerunt*) providing a translation that is different to both the Hebrew and the other versions.⁶²⁵ On one level therefore, Jerome's *IH Humilis et Simplicis David* can be seen as a straightforward attempt to translate the Hebrew accurately. On another level, demonstrated by his arguments in the *Tractatus*, Jerome intended his new translation to be a deliberate revelation of the Christological significance of Psalm 15.1 that was concealed by the LXX. As a result of Jerome's work, the "person" of "the Lord, the Saviour" may be "more easily" seen in this Psalm.

It is most significant that in both the examples Jerome provides in the *Tractatus de Psalmo XV*, i.e. Psalms 9.1 and 15.1 *IH*, he perceives the "true" Christological meaning of the Hebrew words by means of alternative vocalisation. In this way Jerome implied, and perhaps believed, that he was not imposing a Christian exegesis on the text – far from it. Rather, the text itself, properly understood and properly translated, revealed Christ to be its true referent. Jerome was not "Christianising" the Hebrew scriptures: he was simply revealing the fullness of *hebraica veritas*.

⁶²⁴ *Tractatus de Psalmo XV*, CCSL 78, pp. 365-366.

⁶²⁵ Though of course these did not yet exist!

4. Psalm 18.6-7 IH:

The first line represents an incontestable revision towards the Hebrew by Jerome, as the entry in the *Commentarioli* demonstrates: “*In sole posuit tabernaculum suum. In hebraeo ita habet: ‘Soli posuit tabernaculum in eis,’ id est, in caelis Deus.*” Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion likewise use the dative τῷ ἡλίῳ: only the LXX inserts a preceding ἐν. Similarly Jerome’s use of *fortis* for גְּבוּרָה in the *IH* is better than the *ILXX* *gigas* which is not listed in L&S and appears to be a Latinised transliteration of the LXX γίγας. It suggests knowledge of the etymology of גְּבוּרָה, derived from גָּבַר, “prevail,” “be mighty,” “have strength,” and may also be a deliberate demythologisation of the verse.

The entry in the *Commentarioli* is Christological, if obscure: “*Per solem mystice de Christo intellegitur.*”⁶²⁶ The significance of this interpretation becomes apparent in Jerome’s translation of the next verse. Jerome’s use choice of *a summitate* for מְקַצָּה makes little sense at first: the sun moves from horizon to horizon, not zenith to zenith. It is rather difficult to explain his choice along verbal lines. Two verses previously he used *finis* for מְקַצָּה, which would have been perfectly acceptable here too. The change from *summum* to *summitas* suggests he was not simply copying the *ILXX*, and Aquila’s rendering ἀπὸ τέλους might also have suggested *finis* or something similar. There is no entry in the *Commentarioli* to help us out. Nevertheless, the basic meaning of מְקַצָּה is “end, extremity,” and so Jerome could have justified his use of *summitas* as referring to the end or extremity of the heavens.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁶ *CCSL* 72, p. 196.

⁶²⁷ *BDB* lists only “horizontal” uses for מְקַצָּה but Jerome – and his contemporaries – would of course not necessarily have agreed. Cf. *BDB* p. 892.

If, however, “*per solem mystice de Christo intellegitur*,” so that Jerome saw the sun as a metaphor for Christ, then his use of *summitas* will be explained in terms of Christ’s progress from Heaven, to Earth, and back to Heaven. The journey of “the Sun representing Christ” was indeed from zenith to zenith.

5. Psalm 41.11 IH:

The *Comm* interprets this verse as a sort of retrospective comment on the Cross by Christ: “*Cum dicerent mihi per singulos dies: Ubi est Deus tuus? Cum ego te per paenitentiam et adflictionem corporis animaeque placare desiderarem, inimici mei, quasi in cassum haec facerem, dicebant: Ubi est Deus tuus?*”⁶²⁸ The significant change is that from *ILXX confringuntur ossa mea*, “my bones were broken,” to *IH interficerent in ossibus meis*, “they killed me in my bones.” The *IH in* plus ablative correctly picks up the Hebrew ב preposition, and corrects the *LXX/ILXX* which translate בַּעֲצָמוֹתַי as the direct object, *ossa mea*.

However the *ILXX confringuntur* correctly represents the Hebrew בַּרְצָה, the noun רָצָה meaning “shattering”⁶²⁹ while in the *IH interficerent* Jerome appears to have assumed the word was connected with the verb חָצַךְ, “to murder, slay.”⁶³⁰ This could be a simple misunderstanding, encouraged by Aquila’s reading ἐν τῷ φονεῦσαί με, and Symmachus’ ὡς σφαγήν. However, given the context it is likely that Jerome

⁶²⁸ *CCSL* 72, p. 208.

⁶²⁹ *BDB*, p. 954.

⁶³⁰ *BDB*, p. 953.

preferred Aquila's and Symmachus' reading over that of the LXX and Theodotion because of the latter's apparent contradiction of passages such as Exodus 12.46, Numbers 9.12 and Psalm 34.20 which were read Christologically in John 19.36-37:

³⁶ *facta sunt enim haec ut scriptura impleatur*

os non comminuetis ex eo

³⁷ *et iterum alia scriptura dicit*

videbunt in quem transfixerunt

Jerome's substitution of *cum me interficerent in ossibus meis* for *dum confringuntur ossa mea* brings the *IH* into line with the double notion present in the John passage of Christ's bones not being broken, but him being pierced instead – the most obvious meaning of *me interficerent in ossibus meis*.

6. Psalm 71.5, 17 IH:

Jerome seems to allude to a current debate about whether to attribute this Psalm to Solomon or to Christ: "*Et permanet cum sole et ante lunam, generationis generationum. Si super Salomone iste psalmus intellegitur, hoc penitus stare non potest: Salomon quippe nec cum sole nec cum luna permansit. Si vero volumus intellegere de Christo, quaerendum quomodo Christus non habeat finem: cum sol, et luna, et caelum, et omnia veterescere et transire dicantur.*"⁶³¹ Jerome notes the difficulties involved in sustaining either suggestion but does not immediately offer a

⁶³¹ CCSL 72, pp. 216-217.

solution. He apparently prefers to understand the Psalm as referring to Christ, *si vero volumus intellegere de Christo*, rather than to Solomon, *hoc penitus stare non potest*, but he faces the difficulty that – according to his own theology – Christ is eternal whereas the sun and moon are temporal.

Jerome's conundrum is partially solved in the *IH* simply by his apparently reading יִרְאֵוּךְ (as vocalised in the MT) rather than יִרְאֵךְ which BHS posits behind the LXX καὶ συμπαραμνεῖ, so that (as Jerome would see it) the verse is no longer about the extent of Christ's existence, but about mankind's fear of him.

More significant however is Jerome's choice of *ultra* to translate לְפָנַי in the *IH*. As far as we have been able to discover this translation is unique. It is also difficult to justify: its meaning of "beyond, past, longer than" is far removed from that of לְפָנַי, "in the presence of, before," and usually translated by Jerome as *ante*, *coram*, or *in conspectu*.⁶³² By tweaking the translation (albeit of a word with a wide and rather ill-defined semantic range) in this way, Jerome further solves his conundrum. If mankind's fear of Christ is to "be/exist longer than the moon" then clearly Christ himself must exist longer than the moon. The second half of the verse functions as restatement and intensification of the first: "and they will fear you as long as the sun shall be, [and even/moreover/which is to say] longer than the moon, in every generation (to the utmost generation?)."

In verse 17 *IH*, as with verse 5 *IH* Jerome here translates לְפָנַי-שְׁמַי as *ultra solem* in *IH*, despite the more obvious reading *ante solem* in *ILXX*, and apparently for the same

⁶³² At Psalm 71.9 *IH* Jerome translates לְפָנַי as *ante eum* as we would expect; conversely at Psalm 118.44 *IH* Jerome uses *ultra* in *IH* to translate רָעַךְ.

reason as suggested for verse 5 namely to show Christ's existence outlasting that of the sun. By this unusual, though potentially justifiable, translation of יִפְגֵּל as *ultra* in verses 5 and 17, Jerome has facilitated the attribution of the Psalm to Christ rather than Solomon and has simplified the resulting exegesis.

Schaper discusses Psalm 71.17 LXX, which he notes "has been considered as an early example of the belief in the pre-existence of the Messiah's name..."⁶³³ He suggests that "The Hebrew text ... already displays a universalist attitude seeking salvation in the concept of an all-pervasive, benevolent, everlasting and divinely instituted kingship," but notes the temporal or spatial ambiguity of the preposition *πρὸ* in the LXX and, by implication of יִפְגֵּל in the Hebrew. He shows that the Targum removed that ambiguity, choosing to propagate a temporal understanding, but that the Greek *πρὸ* allows both temporal and spatial interpretations: the existence of [messiah's] name before the sun came into being, or its all-pervasive existence under the sun. He concludes: "We can therefore attest that a certain tendency towards an interpretation of Ps 72,17 in terms of the pre-existence of the Messiah's name is detectable both in the Septuagint and in the Targum."⁶³⁴

Despite the prior textual and interpretive traditions emphasising (albeit with varying degrees of ambiguity) the pre-existence of the "name" (whosoever name that turns out to be), Jerome's concern as reflected in the *Commentarioli* was what we might call the "post-existence" of the "name-representing-Christ": *Si vero volumus intellegere de Christo, quaerendum quomodo Christus non habeat finem: cum sol, et luna, et caelum, et omnia veterescere et transire dicantur*. Thus while Jerome seems to be

⁶³³ Schaper, *Eschatology*, p. 93.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 95.

following the messianic interpretive path discerned by Schaper, he is concerned with the other end of time. Despite there being little possibility that לְפָנַי, and no possibility that πρὸ, could refer to future time, he nevertheless renders לְפָנַי as *ultra* in the *IH* in order to affirm Christ's eternal existence in the future.

7. Psalm 87.1 IH:

In the *Tractatus* Jerome notes that “*Meleth sermo hebraicus est, interpretatur autem chorus,*”⁶³⁵ but offers no further explanation. In fact, *IH chorum* instead of the *ILXX* proper noun *Maeleth* probably comes from reading מְחֹלָה as construct of מְחֹלָה, from the root חוּל, “travail, be pained, dance, whirl,” though we cannot be sure of the source of Jerome's information at this point.

The *IH ad praecinendum* for לְעֲנוֹת is rather more interesting. The *LXX ἀποκριθήναι* thence *ILXX ad respondendum* probably come from reading לְעֲנוֹת as the piel infinitive construct of עָנָה, “answer, respond, testify,” (or, with alternative vocalisation, as the qal infinitive construct לְעֲנוֹת). However, in the *Commentarioli* Jerome suggests that this Psalm “refers to the end” (*refertur ad finem*), and that “the sons of Korah are foretelling/singing beforehand,” (*filiis Core praecinentibus*),⁶³⁶ following the root עָנָה, “sing.” Jerome offers a similarly future-focussed exegesis of this verse in the *Tractatus*. He interprets the words *in finem* as referring to the joyful singing of the apostles and Christians, rather than to the (Jewish) patriarchs or prophets. Similarly he takes *chorus* to refer to the universal (Christian) church: “*Nam*

⁶³⁵ *Tractatus de Psalmo LXXXVII, CCSL 78, pp. 399-400.*

⁶³⁶ *CCSL 72, p. 222.*

*mysterium praefiguratur ecclesiae de diversis gentibus congregatae, ut de diversis locis et de diversis partibus et moribus.*⁶³⁷

Significantly, Jerome translates in the *IH* according to the interpretations he offers in the *Commentarioli* and the *Tractatus*: so *IH ad praecinendum* for לְעִנּוֹת draws directly on his entry in the *Commentarioli*, namely *filiis Core praecinens*, and on the future focus of the *Tractatus*, but misrepresents Hebrew in the process. Although Jerome refers in both the *Commentarioli* and the *Tractatus* to the responsorial nature of *chorus* singing (*filiis Core praecinens omnis in eandem vocem respondet chorus*, and *ut propheta concinente omnis chori multitudo in Dei laude respondeat*), his choice of *praecino* in the *IH* mistranslates the Hebrew לְעִנּוֹת, and carries exegetically useful overtones of “prediction.”

8. Psalm 95.8 IH:

In the *IH* Jerome translates the Hebrew שְׂאוּ-מִנְחָה as *levate munera*, which is at first glance unremarkable, though we might wonder whether Jerome was attracted by the homophony of מִנְחָה and *munera*. However, there is a clear change of nuance between the *ILXX* and the *IH*. BDB lists this verse as an example of מִנְחָה signifying an offering “made to God, of any kind, whether grain or animals,”⁶³⁸ and whereas the TWOT suggests that “the term does not mean an animal sacrifice in the specific sense,” and points out that both Abel and Cain are said to have offered a מִנְחָה.⁶³⁹ The

⁶³⁷ CCSL 78, pp. 399-400.

⁶³⁸ BDB, p. 585.

⁶³⁹ TWOT, v. 1, p. 514-515.

TDOT similarly notes that while מִנְחָה “constitutes that part of the ritual which creates the fragrance” of a sacrificial offering, in the official cult it “was normally connected with animal sacrifice.”⁶⁴⁰ The Hebrew phrase probably therefore has a variety of meanings: “lift up your meat offering, offering, present,” and includes the notions of both blood-sacrifices and more generic gifts. The *ILXX tollite hostias*, “lift up your animal sacrifices,”⁶⁴¹ follows the *LXX* but nevertheless represents only one aspect of the meaning of the Hebrew phrase. In the *IH* Jerome’s *levate munera*, “lift up your gifts,” abandons the idea of blood-sacrifices, opting instead for non-specific offerings other than animal sacrifice. Both the *ILXX* and the *IH* constitute justifiable translations of the Hebrew, but with a remarkably different nuance within a Christian context.

In the *Commentarioli* Jerome suggests that *hostias* should be interpreted in sense of *hostiam vivam, placentem Deo*, probably in a covert reference to Paul’s letter to the Romans.⁶⁴² Thus in *IH* he uses *munera* with a standard meaning of “gifts” and no particular notion of blood-sacrifice to replace *hostia* which means specifically a blood-sacrifice.

Jerome’s translation in the *IH* is arguably both “kosher” and “Christian,” while representing a clear alteration of nuance from the *ILXX* to the *IH* to fit Christian theology displayed in the *Commentarioli*.

⁶⁴⁰ TDOT, v. VIII, (English Translation 1997 by D.W. Scott), pp. 417-418.

⁶⁴¹ Cf. Jerome’s remarks on Psalm 132.3 *IH*, revealing the bloody nature of *hostiae*: “*Ipse est autem mons ... adsiduo hostiarum cruore perfusus.*” *CCSL* 72, p. 240.

⁶⁴² *CCSL* 72, p. 226, cf. Romans 12.1 VNT: “*Obsecro itaque vos fratres per misericordiam Dei/ ut exhibeatis corpora vestra hostiam viventem/ sanctam Deo placentem/ rationabile obsequium vestrum.*”

9. Psalm 107.10 IH:

The *IH* is a largely accurate translation of the Hebrew. Verse 10a in the *IH*, *lebes pelvis*, “basin (of?) basin,” is obscure but probably closer to Hebrew סִיר רְחֻצֵי, “pot of washing” than is the LXX λέβης τῆς ἐλπίδος and *ILXX lebes spei*, “basin of hope.”

We might note that in the *IH* Jerome follows what he reports (in the *Commentarioli*) to be Aquila’s translation of תְּלִישָׁא, namely *proiciam*: “*Super Idumeam inmittam calciamentum meum. Pro inmittam, Aquila ‘proiciam’ interpretatus est: quo scilicet etiam ei Idumaea subiecta sit. Idumaea autem aut terrena interpretatur, aut sanguinaria. Et totus psalmus secundum sensum duplicem aut ad David refertur, quod super has gentes Deo se adiuvante regnaverit: aut ad Christum, ut secundum interpretationem nominum hebraeorum diversas ecclesiae reputemus esse virtutes.*”⁶⁴³

Once again Jerome argues that this Psalm can be attributed both to David and to Christ, but does not say which he prefers.

The particular interest lies in verse 10c, especially the translation of the Hebrew אֶתְרוּעָה. In the hithpolel (as here), the root רוע means “shout in triumph,”⁶⁴⁴ so the first person singular imperfect אֶתְרוּעָה means “I will shout in triumph.” The LXX has ὑπετάγησαν, “they have been subjected,” while the *ILXX* has *amici facti sunt*, “have been made friends,” and the *IH* has *foederabor*, “I will be allied/leagued together.” So the *ILXX* follows the LXX in person, tense and voice but introduces a drastically different meaning, and the *IH* follows the Hebrew for person and “tense” but opts for a meaning closer to the *ILXX* than the Hebrew. The LXX by contrast is at best a loose paraphrase of the Hebrew, but captures the same basic sense.

⁶⁴³ CCSL 72, p. 231.

⁶⁴⁴ Cf. BDB p. 929.

The root רוּע occurs twelve times in the Psalter, and in all but three of those cases, Jerome translates it plainly in the *IH* by a part of *iubilare*, “shout.” The exceptions are our verse here and Psalms 59.10 and 64.14 *IH*, which we will consider in less detail below, mainly because Jerome makes no remark on them in the *Commentarioli*.⁶⁴⁵

The *IH* reading might suggest that Jerome mistakenly thought that אָתְרוּעָע was derived from the root רעה II, implying association, friendship or companionship.⁶⁴⁶

Yet this cannot explain the reading in the *ILXX* which is overtly to do with friendship despite the Greek having nothing to do with friendship whatsoever. Furthermore the surprising notion of God entering a treaty with Philistia must surely have compelled Jerome to check that he had understood the Hebrew correctly: and the witness of the *LXX* would have suggested to him that he had not.

Thus through Jerome’s intervention the meaning of the verse shifts radically from God conquering Philistia in the Hebrew to God entering a treaty with Philistia in the *IH*. He facilitates a similarly radical shift in meaning between the *LXX* where “foreigners” (i.e. non-Jews) are subjected to God, and the *ILXX* where they become his friends. The relationship portrayed by the *IH foederabor* is arguably less coequal than that portrayed by the *ILXX amici facti sunt*, but it still constitutes a radical mistranslation of the Hebrew.

⁶⁴⁵ See Psalms 40.12, 46.2, 59.10, 64.14, 65.1, 80.2, 94.1, 94.2, 97.4, 97.6, 99.1, and 107.10, all according to the *IH* numbering.

⁶⁴⁶ Cf. BDB p. 945.

Jerome's translations suggest that he preferred the second of the two alternative exegeses of the verse that he offers in the *Commentarioli*. The first, to do with David ruling the Gentile nations with God's help, is a possible exegesis of the Hebrew or Greek versions, but hardly of the Latin versions. The second, to do with these various Gentile nations being "different strengths of the church," implies the collection of these nations within a single, Christian, grouping. This second alternative is supported by both of Jerome's Latin versions, but by neither the Hebrew nor the Greek.

The Latin versions thus promote the notion of God entering a benevolent relationship with all nations. While this idea is found in the Old Testament, for example in God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12.3,⁶⁴⁷ it is more pronounced in the teaching of the New Testament⁶⁴⁸ and the missionary exploits of the early church. This particularly Christian theology appears to have been the motivation – or perhaps the justification – for Jerome's *ILXX* and *IH* translations of this verse.

Psalms 59.10 *IH* and 64.14 *IH* are the only other occasions in the Psalter where Jerome translates רוע by a word other than *iubilare*.

Psalms 59.10 *IH* bears obvious contextual similarities with Psalm 107.10. The LXX uses ὑποτάσσω in both cases, but Jerome's *ILXX* versions differ markedly. He used the surprising *amici facti sunt* in Psalm 107.10, but here at Psalm 59.10 he translates the Greek faithfully with *subditi sunt*. However, at 59.10 *IH* Jerome uses *foederata est*, to translate הַתְּרַעְעִי, the hithpoel imperative feminine singular of רוע, literally "be

⁶⁴⁷ "I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonours you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." ESV.

⁶⁴⁸ Most notably the "Great Commission" of Matthew 18.16-20.

shouted over/be triumphed over.” He correctly identifies הַתְּרוּעָה as the feminine singular form of the verb, but ignores its root meaning and its theme, opting instead for the idea of Philistia entering a treaty with God.

There is no entry in the *Commentarioli* for this verse: there is one for the previous verse, but the evidence is complicated. We noted earlier in this chapter that Jerome comments on the third part of the *ILXX* reading of this verse as follows: *Iuda rex meus. Quia ex Iudae tribu ortus est Christus*, but then opts for a different reading in the *IH*, namely *Iudas legifer meus*. The Christian connection in Psalm 59.10 is not as straightforward as in Psalm 107.10, but the drastic change from the *ILXX subditi sunt* to *IH foederata est* and the surprising implications of the new reading, suggest that Jerome was deliberately making a point based on his Christian theology.

Regarding Psalm 64.14 *IH*, in the context of this verse the *LXX* correctly translates רוע by κράζω, “call out, cry out, shout,” which Jerome accurately translates using *clamare* in the *ILXX*. Despite this, and despite his accurate translation of the subsequent verb יִשְׁירוּ as *canent*, Jerome translates יִתְרוּעְעוּ by *coaequabuntur*, “are brought to the same level,” in the *IH*. Again there is nothing in the *Commentarioli* to help us out: the most likely explanation is that given the communal context of this verse, Jerome mistakenly assumed יִתְרוּעְעוּ to be a part of רעה II, so “they came together.”

10. Psalm 117.27 IH:

There is no entry in the *Commentarioli* for this verse, but Jerome does comment on verse 25, which is part of the same narrative sequence, and argues that these verses refer to the Triumphal Entry of Christ into Jerusalem: “*O Domine, salvum me fac. Illud quod in evangelio scribitur, quia intrante Domino Hierosolymam parvuli palmas sumpserint, et antecedentes eum consona voce clamaverint ‘Osanna in excelsis, benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini,’ de praesenti psalmo sumptum est. denique ubi nos habemus σωσον δή, hoc est, salvum me fac, in hebraeo OSIANNA scriptum habet.*”⁶⁴⁹ Incidentally this suggests Jerome had a mistaken idea about the Hebrew text: he appears to be running הוֹשִׁיעָה and נָצַח together to get “OSIANNA.” Nevertheless, this implies that Jerome believed that the Jews were crying out in Hebrew (rather than Aramaic for instance) at the Triumphal Entry.

Our interest in these verses centres on Jerome’s inaccurate “translation” of נִאֲרָא, “he showed light, caused to shine,”⁶⁵⁰ as *apparuit*, “he appeared, became visible,” in the *IH*. We might explain this as another case of the ambiguous meaning of a Greek word influencing Jerome’s Latin translations: ἐπιφαίνω can mean both “appear” and “give light,” the latter corresponding with Hebrew נִאֲרָא. Jerome apparently chose to translate the Greek as *inluxit*, “give light,” in the *ILXX*, but opted instead for *apparuit*, “appeared” in the *IH*, despite thereby mistranslating the Hebrew – assuming that Jerome’s *Vorlage* was the same as the MT at this point.

⁶⁴⁹ *CCSL* 72, p. 235.

⁶⁵⁰ The hiphil waw consecutive imperfect third person masculine singular of אור, “give light, cause to shine.”

The *IH frequentate sollemnitatem in frondosis*, “frequent/visit the festival with leafy branches,” is a gross mistranslation of אָרְוֵתֶנּוּ בְּעֵבְתַיִם, “tie the feast with cords,” but may again be drawing on ambiguity in LXX. Greek συνίστημι means “recommend, show,” or intransitively “hold together” and πυκάζω has a variety of meanings including “wrap up” and “deck with garlands.” (It is difficult to know why the OG translators chose to use συνίστημι, unless they were somehow using it transitively.) Thus the *ILXX* reads “fix/prepare the feast/sacrifice with thick coverings,” and so is not far from the meaning of the Hebrew. The *IH* reading *frequentate*, “frequent” or in this sort of context “celebrate in great numbers”⁶⁵¹ probably draws on συνίστημι “combine, associate, band together,” *sollemnitas*, “festival, celebration,” draws on ἑορτή as “festival” rather than “feast,” and *frondosis*, “with leafy branches,” probably draws on πυκάζουσιν (the participle from πυκάζω), “deck with garlands.”

However, the final form of verse in the *IH*, namely “God is the Lord, and has appeared to us, celebrate the festival with leafy branches, all the way to the corners of the altar” is overtly a reference to Christ’s incarnation and his Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. This is particularly so in the context of the entry on verse 25 in the *Commentarioli*, identifying these as words quoted by the people at the triumphal entry, and given that the surrounding verses are famously used to refer to Christ in New Testament.⁶⁵²

The *IH apparuit* is difficult to justify against the Hebrew as it is in the MT, but is easier to justify against the LXX. Jerome may simply have followed the LXX, or he may have read וַיִּאָר, “showed light” as וַיֵּרָא, “he appeared,” either in error or by

⁶⁵¹ L&S, p. 780.

⁶⁵² See, for example, Matthew 21.8-11, Mark 11.8-10, John 12.12-13.

reason of a different *Vorlage*. Either way, in the light of both the *Commentarioli* and the alternative reading in the *ILXX*, the *IH* exhibits a clear Christological nuance.

5.3.5 Conclusions: Concealment and Revelation

The examples we have considered demonstrate that when translating the Psalter from the Hebrew Jerome sought where possible to be, perhaps, both “Kosher” and “Christian.” Jerome’s own Christian beliefs and the knowledge that he was translating in large part for a Christian readership, could hardly fail to have influenced his translation. We have seen this manifested many times in the Psalter in the small changes Jerome introduced into the *IH*, or carried over from the *ILXX*, that help to support a Christian exegesis of the verse in question. Nevertheless Jerome’s primary concern throughout seems to have been to produce a translation which accurately reflected the Hebrew. Occasionally this allowed Jerome to draw out a Christian motif that had hitherto lain “undiscovered.” Other times it meant abandoning a Christian motif to the *Commentarioli* or the *Tractatus* in the interests of close translation.

The general trend is unmissable, but there are of course there are counter examples. By including them, as much as by referring to Jerome’s own exegetical works, we hope to have shown that we did not force a reading into the text,⁶⁵³ in the majority of examples that do fit the general trend. More importantly, we contend that while the number of examples is still small compared to the entirety of the Psalter, their combined influence is nevertheless considerable. We believe that Cox’s criticism

⁶⁵³ Such was Cox’s criticism of Schaper. See Cox, “Schaper’s *Eschatology*,” p. 301.

misses the point: “Studies like Schaper’s fail because they try to make a few trees into a forest. That is, the major work of analysing the translation technique of a document ... is passed over in favour of treating some interesting but small part of the larger issue ... [so that] the situation is misjudged in terms of the overall work of translation.”⁶⁵⁴ On the contrary, much, if not the majority, of Christian doctrine is based around a relatively small number of fundamental tenets that are themselves supported by a similarly small number of biblical texts. Given the frequency with which Jerome’s Christian exegeses of the Psalter in the *Commentarioli* and *Tractatus* were reflected in his *IH* translation of the Psalter we may by no means dismiss the influence of theology on translation and of translation on theology. Our task is that much easier than was Schaper’s because, unlike the LXX translator(s), Jerome left behind exegetical treatises as well as his biblical translations.

We conclude by reaffirming Jerome’s determination to produce a Latin translation that was in large part very close to the Hebrew and, where applicable, almost always justifiable as one of a number of possible translations of the Hebrew. Occasionally the Christian exegete in him led him to offer a Latin translation that could not be justified against the Hebrew, but these examples are in the minority. Whether or not Jerome was consciously aware of his Christian and (indirect) Jewish audiences, his governing principle in translating the Psalter *Iuxta Hebraeos* was to submit his translations to the authority of *Hebraica veritas*.

⁶⁵⁴ Cox, “Schaper’s *Eschatology*,” p. 302.

Chapter 5.4

Significant Words

“L’emploi d’un certain vocabulaire peut également contribuer à modifier le sens d’un texte.”⁶⁵⁵

5.4.1 A Christian Idiom

Estin’s remark hints at a subtle yet powerful tool in the Christian translator-exegete’s box: our aim in this chapter is to consider Jerome’s employment of this translation-exegetical device. In his chapter entitled “The Latin Translations” Benjamin Kedar discusses the influence of the Christian faith on the both Old Latin and Hieronymian translations of the Old Testament.⁶⁵⁶ In regard to the Old Latin he suggests that while “obvious christological amplifications in the translation of the OT are easily recognized as later interpolations,” (though he does not explain how) nevertheless “the influence of the Christian faith makes itself felt in a much subtler way,” pointing to “the penetration of Greek loan words with a very specific meaning attached to them,” and “the lexical and semantic restructuring of the Latin vocabulary.”⁶⁵⁷ He discusses briefly a few Greek loan words, including *angelus*, *evangelizare*, and *psallmare*, and developments in the meaning of a few Latin words, such as *peccatum*

⁶⁵⁵ Estin, *Les Psautiers*, p. 125.

⁶⁵⁶ Kedar, “Latin Translations,” pp. 311-313 for Old Latin versions, and pp. 329-331 for Jerome’s versions.

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 311.

and *testamentum*, and suggests, quite plausibly, that such phenomena “aided in creating a unique idiom of Christendom.”⁶⁵⁸ Estin similarly discusses several words that appear to have particular significance for Jerome, including the anti-Jewish and Christianising nuances in his use of “le couple *synagoga-ecclesia*.” She notes that “Le mot *synagoga* n’est employé que deux fois dans HE ... et c’est effectivement dans un contexte péjoratif,” but refers also to the inconsistencies in Jerome’s practice that make it difficult to reach firm conclusions.⁶⁵⁹ Brock discusses the varying treatment of the titular צבאות in non-Pentateuch books of the LXX, recording books in which it is transliterated as Σαβαωθ, or translated by the “dynamic rendition Παντοκράτωρ,” or by the “more formal rendering τῶν δυνάμεων.” Most significantly for us he argues that “Diaspora Judaism not surprisingly has a preference for *Pantokrator*,” and notes that in line with this Philo “tacitly substitutes παντοκράτωρ for Σαβαωθ in his quotation from LXX Isaiah.”⁶⁶⁰

Kedar’s discussion is a useful starting point, but its brevity is felt in the fact that he does not fully explore the overall translation pattern (whether within a particular book or over the entire Old Testament) for the significant words he discusses.⁶⁶¹ Instead he discusses a few examples in isolation, which tends to give us a distorted sense of Jerome’s wider practice. Furthermore, he does not explore the implications of these significant words in terms of Jerome’s conception of the Jewish or Christian nature of the Old Testament, or in terms of Jerome’s conception of his role as translator or exegete. Of particular significance for us is the fact that he neither notes the existence

⁶⁵⁸ Kedar, “Latin Translations,” p. 312.

⁶⁵⁹ Estin, *Les Psautiers*, p. 126; for Kedar’s brief discussion of these words, see “Latin Translations,” p. 329.

⁶⁶⁰ Brock, “To Revise,” pp. 316-317.

⁶⁶¹ It is possible that he drew material from a longer discussion in his doctoral thesis (written in Hebrew). If so, he does not refer to that work at any point. Be that as it may, the problems in his work that we discuss here still need to be pointed out.

of the parallel Hieronymian Psalters, the *ILXX* and the *IH*, nor does he discuss variations between them. He briefly discusses Psalm 105(106).18-19 (verses 17-18 in Weber), and Psalm 8.6. The excerpts he quotes are evidently from the *IH* Psalter, but he does not mention this, nor does he note or attempt to explain the differences between Jerome's *ILXX* and *IH* versions of these verses. As a result his conclusions as they stand are unsustainable in light of the *ILXX*.⁶⁶² Any brief analysis runs the risk of oversimplifying the issues, and Kedar does not manage to avoid this. We will show that while Jerome does exploit linguistic space to provide Christological readings,⁶⁶³ Kedar's twin assertions that, on the one hand, "any christological interpretation was admissible only to the extent that it was philologically justifiable,"⁶⁶⁴ and on the other, "wherever language leaves room for a Christological acceptance, Jerome of course propounds it,"⁶⁶⁵ are simply not true: Jerome's practice is far too inconsistent for any such assertion to be upheld.

In this chapter we will provide a detailed discussion of five theologically significant words that Jerome uses in the *IH* Psalter. In each case we will attempt to discern a pattern in Jerome's choice to use them in these cases and not in others. Some of the words carry with them particularly strong exegetical overtones, others less so, but all involve a departure from the most obvious sense of the Hebrew, and all involve a Greek loan word. Most of these words developed a technical sense some way removed from their original usage, and part of our investigation will be to consider how far along this process these words were when employed by Jerome. An apparent awareness that the most obvious, or natural, sense of a word is not always its

⁶⁶² Kedar, "Latin Translations," pp. 329-330.

⁶⁶³ Ibid, p. 329.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 330.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 330.

necessary sense allows Jerome to translate in such a way that he exploits the exegetical usefulness of less obvious but nevertheless possible senses of the words in question in both languages.

This investigation therefore occupies a very particular niche in the debate over Jerome's views on translation *verbum e verbo* versus *sensum ... de sensu*. Discussions of translation theory and practice distinguish between "literary" versus "literal" translation, or the practice of the *interpretes* versus that of the *expositor*, and so on, even if a continuum between the two is acknowledged.⁶⁶⁶ However, some of the examples we will adduce suggest a collision of these two principles with the most striking results. In the midst of unremarkable and generally accurate translations that follow both the structure and the sense of the Hebrew, Jerome introduces a single word that carries with it such a weight of meaning that it alters the entire referential domain of its verse and those around it. He then proceeds as ever, providing unremarkable and accurate translations. The principle of *verbum e verbo* is maintained, and there is often some philological justification for translating as he does, but that single word opens up wide exegetical vistas that had hitherto lain hidden from the reader – but, presumably, in clear view of Jerome.

An awareness of Philo's social and religious milieu reveals the significance of his use of *παντοκράτωρ* rather than *Σαβαωθ*, which is otherwise a possible, if rather too strong, translation of *צבא*. Similarly, Jerome's use of certain significant words involves an alliance of the roles of *interpretes* and *expositor* in such a way that his

⁶⁶⁶ See Brock, "To Revise," pp. 310-313; Brown, *Vir Trilinguis*, pp. 87-91, 104-111; Norton, *A History*, p. 33-37; Brock, "Translating the Old Testament," pp. 90-91, suggests the difference as follows: "the interpretive *expositor* aims to bring the source text to his readers, whereas the literalist *interpretes* seeks to bring the reader to the source text."

translations are superficially those of an *interpretes*, methodically translating *verbum e verbo*, but closer acquaintance with Jerome's own exegetical framework and that of his readers reveals them to be those of an *expositor*. Incidentally, Jerome's ability to exploit the fluidity between the natural and necessary senses of words in this way, thereby stretching the boundaries of translation in a carefully controlled fashion, suggests considerable dexterity in both languages.

5.4.2 Methodology

Our assumptions concerning Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew, and consequently the significance we can attach to his choice of words in the *IH* remain the same as in earlier chapters. As far as possible we attempted to demonstrate the significance of the word in question by reference to his interpretation of the word as evidenced in the *Commentarioli* or the *Tractatus*. However, we also paid more careful attention than usual to Jerome's translations of these same Hebrew words elsewhere, and sought to discover a pattern of translation if possible.⁶⁶⁷ In this way we sought both to show that Jerome perceived theological significance in these words, and that he could have translated them by less theologically significant alternatives had he chosen to.

⁶⁶⁷ In this way we hope to avoid the difficulty that Peters saw in Schaper's work when "he fails to point out and explain ... (a) whether there are other occurrences of *קמו* in the Psalter and what is the customary pattern of translation, (b) how a translator without an eschatological bias might have translated the Hebrew as it stands ..." Peters, "*Eschatology*," p. 351.

5.4.3 *Jesus*

In the most overt form of Christianisation possible, Jerome introduced the name “Jesus” into his translation of the Psalter *Iuxta Hebraeos* on five separate occasions, at Psalms 50.14, 78.9, 84.5, 94.1 and 149.4 *IH*.

Kedar draws attention to a similar introduction of the name of Jesus at Habakkuk 3.18: “The root *yš*’ offered Jerome the opportunity to introduce the name of Jesus into the text of the OT: Hab 3:18 ‘I will joy in the God of my salvation (*yš*’*y*); Vg ... *in deo iesu meo* ‘in God, my Jesus’.”⁶⁶⁸ Unfortunately he does not discuss the issue further.⁶⁶⁹ McKane similarly notes this translation in passing.⁶⁷⁰ Estin mentions Jerome’s use of *Iesus* in the *IH* Psalter, but offers no explanation other than a footnote suggesting “L’emploi de IESUS dans HE nous paraît relever nettement d’un désir de la part de Jérôme de montrer que la vérité hébraïque n’est pas contradictoire à la vérité chrétienne.”⁶⁷¹ She is surely correct, but it still remains to analyse Jerome’s understanding of the relationship between *יְשׁוּעָה* and *Iesus*, and to explain why he uses it on these five occasions and on no others.

⁶⁶⁸ Kedar, “Latin Translations,” pp. 330-331.

⁶⁶⁹ He does however draw attention to Habakkuk 3.13, which reads: *egressus es in salutem populi tui/ in salutem cum christo tuo*, in the *IH* and in the MT, יְצֵאתָ לְיֵשׁוּעַ עִמָּךְ לְיֵשׁוּעַ אֱתָתְּךָ שִׁיחֶיךָ. He suggests that: “Jerome renders the word [*māšīaḥ*] as usual, *christus*, but through a linguistically forced interpretation of the nota accusativa ‘*et*’ as ‘with’ turns the Anointed into the active saviour: *egressus es ... in salutem cum christo tuo* ‘Thou art come forth ... for the deliverance with Thine Christ.’” Kedar, “Latin Translations,” p. 331. First, while the *IH* does portray *christus* as being with God as he saves his people, rather than the object of God’s salvation as in the Hebrew, it is by no means necessary that *christus* is therefore “the active saviour.” Indeed in the *IH* God is still the active saviour, and *christus* is at most his associate in salvation. Second, Jerome’s decision to translate אֱתָתְּךָ as *cum* here may be significant, but is not unique, and in fact follows Aquila’s standard practice of translating אֱתָתְּךָ as *σύν*. Kedar himself notes Jerome’s reference to Aquila at this point, and it is most likely that he is the source of Jerome’s translation.

⁶⁷⁰ McKane, *Christian Hebraists*, p. 38.

⁶⁷¹ Estin, *Les Psautiers*, p. 123, n. 148.

Rather frustratingly Jerome did not deign in the *Commentarioli* to remark on any of the verses in the Psalter where he introduces the name of Jesus, so we have no direct insight into his understanding of them nor into how he may have justified such outrageous “translations.” Our only direct insight comes from Jerome’s remarks on Psalm 84.7-8 *IH* in the *Tractatus de Psalmo LXXXIII*. Despite having translated יֵשׁוּעַ as *Iesus noster* at Psalm 84.5 *IH*, at Psalm 84.8 *IH* Jerome translated יְשׁוּעָךְ as *et salutare tuum*. However it is on the latter verse that Jerome has this to say in the *Tractatus*: *Tu conversus vivificabis nos, et plebs tua laetabitur in te. Ostende nobis Domine misericordiam tuam, et salutare tuum da nobis. Quod in latino dicitur salutare, in hebraeo dicitur Iesus. Ergo in hebraeo ita dicitur, Ostende nobis Domine misericordiam tuam, et salutare tuum da nobis: Nisi ante misericors fueris in genus humanum, Iesus tuus non dabitur nobis.*⁶⁷² Jerome understood *Iesus* somehow to lie behind Latin *salutare*, but his reasoning is obscured in that he offers no explanation of what he meant by *dicitur*, whether simple pronunciation or, as is more likely, a more substantial sense of “meaning” or “significance.” He also offers no explanation of why he chose in the *IH* to render this verse on which he comments (verse 8) by *salutare*, but the earlier verse (verse 5), involving the same Hebrew word, by *Iesus*.

In the *Commentarioli* Psalms 78 and 149 *IH* receive no mention at all, while Jerome’s remarks on Psalm 50 *IH* are of a very general nature. Only in the cases of Psalms 84 and 94 *IH* do we have positive evidence of Jerome thinking specifically of Christ.

Regarding Psalm 84.12 *IH* he writes: *Veritas de terra orta est. Quia Christus veritas de terra ortus est,*⁶⁷³ and regarding Psalm 94.3 *IH* he writes: *Quia Deus magnus Dominus. Si unus Dominus Iesus Christus, Dominus autem hic magnus dicitur Deus:*

⁶⁷² CCSL 78, p. 396.

⁶⁷³ CCSL 72, p. 221.

*ergo et Christus Dominus magnus est Deus.*⁶⁷⁴ Both these examples demonstrate Jerome providing an exegesis of the verses in terms of Jesus Christ, indeed the latter specifically identifies the subject of the verse as Jesus Christ, but neither provides any explanation as to why Jerome introduced the name of Jesus into his translations elsewhere. So it is up to us to attempt to explain why in these five cases Jerome was willing to switch from the role of translator to that of exegete.

At a basic semantic level each occurrence of the name *Iesus* in the *IH* corresponds to some form of the root יִשַׁע , which, of course, is the basis of the names “Jesus” and “Joshua,” translated into Latin by Jerome as *Iesus* and *Iosue* respectively, but which has a root meaning of “salvation” or “deliverance.” The root יִשַׁע is extremely common, and occurs in around 120 verses in the Psalter alone. Even discounting those instances where the root occurs as a verb – making it near impossible for Jerome to “translate” it by the proper noun “*Iesus*” – there is no question whatsoever that Jerome understood the Latin nouns *salus* and *salutare* to be the correct translation for יִשַׁע . This much at least is clear from his remarks in the *Tractatus de Psalmo LXXXIII*, and in the translation pattern in Psalm 84 *IH*, where in verse 5 Jerome translated יִשַׁעֲנוּ as *Iesus noster* while the *ILXX* had *salutum nostrarum*. Yet in verse 8 he translated יִשַׁעֲךָ as *et salutare tuum*, identically to the *ILXX*, and in verse 10 he translated יִשַׁעוּ as *salutare eius*, again identically to the *ILXX*. There is no way we can excuse Jerome’s use of *Iesus* in terms of ignorance of the true meaning of יִשַׁע .

⁶⁷⁴ CCSL 72, p. 226.

Jerome might have justified his choice of *Iesus* as a legitimate alternative translation of nouns with the root $\nu\psi\iota$,⁶⁷⁵ though it seems inconceivable that he considered this to be the primary or natural meaning of those words – if for no other reason than that he very rarely translates the root $\nu\psi\iota$ by *Iesus*. In any case, his translation of the feminine $\eta\psi\iota$ of Psalm 149.4 MT as *Iesus* – as opposed to the other four examples which involve the masculine $\nu\psi\iota$ – suggests that Jerome knew full well that he was forcing a strained translation out of perfectly common and unremarkable words.⁶⁷⁶

We have been able to discern no definite pattern to Jerome's decision to render $\nu\psi\iota$ by *Iesus* instead of *salus* or *salutare*. The best we may do is to note that the first four examples, namely Psalms 50.14, 78.9, 84.5 and 94.1 *IH* could all quite easily have occurred in the context of congregational worship. The first three take the form of prayers, and the fourth a call to praise. The final example, Psalm 149.4 could be seen as a statement of faith, with a certain resemblance to the New Testament Beatitudes, especially when taken in the context of the surrounding verses: ³*laudent nomen eius in choro/ in tympano et cithara cantent ei//* ⁴*quia conplacet sibi Dominus in populo suo/ exaltabit mansuetos in Iesu//* ⁵*exultabunt sancti in gloria/ laudabunt in cubilibus suis.*

However, Bradshaw has demonstrated that Psalms 50, 94 and 149 *IH* were employed as integral parts in the daily worship services of various early Christian communities. Psalms 50 and 149 *IH* formed parts of the regular morning office, and Psalm 94 *IH* came at the beginning of the night office.⁶⁷⁷ The dual considerations that some of the

⁶⁷⁵ This must be the minimum significance of the entry in the *Tractatus* that we have already seen, namely *Quod in latino dicitur salutare, in hebraeo dicitur Iesus*.

⁶⁷⁶ Cf. Kedar's discussion of Jerome's awareness of grammatical gender in Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 316.

⁶⁷⁷ Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer*, see especially pp. 108-110 for Psalms 50 and 149 *IH*, and pp. 140-141 for Psalm 94 *IH*, plus further references in the Index.

evidence for this usage comes from Cassian's account of the practice in his monastery at Bethlehem and that Cassian was a near contemporary of Jerome makes it extremely likely that Jerome will have been familiar with this daily usage of these particular Psalms. There appears to have been no similar use of Psalms 78 and 84 *IH*. However, we may note that Augustine preached a sermon on the latter indicating, perhaps, that it was considered to be a significant Psalm within Christian communities. Certainly Augustine appears to have been convinced that this Psalm was describing elements of the relationship of Jesus to his people. Evidently working from a Latin version closer to the *ILXX* than to the *IH*, he interprets verse 1 as a reference to Christ: *Titulus eius est, In finem, filiis Core, Psalmus. Finem non intelligamus, nisi quem dicit Apostolus, Finis enim Legis Christus, ad justitiam omni credenti. Ergo cum primo in titulo Psalmi posuit, In finem; direxit cor nostrum in Christum.*⁶⁷⁸ Augustine interprets verse 2 in terms of the release from captivity brought by Jesus Christ,⁶⁷⁹ then interprets our verse of interest, verse 5, with its present imperative *converte* as opposed to the perfect indicative *avertisti* of verse 2 (*ILXX*), as a different perspective on the same salvation in Christ.⁶⁸⁰

There is also evidence that the sixth passage in which Jerome introduced the name of Jesus into the *IH*, namely Habakkuk 3, was used in early Christian liturgy, possibly in a continuation of Jewish liturgical usage.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁸ Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, PL 37.1069, CCSL 39, p. 1162. The *IH* substitutes *Victori* for *ILXX In Finem* as the title of the psalm.

⁶⁷⁹ *Quoniam hoc cantavit ipse Psalmus futurum: Avertisti captivitatem Jacob. Cui dixit? Christo, propter In finem, propter filios Core: ille enim avertit captivitatem Jacob*, Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, PL 37.1071, CCSL 39, p. 1164.

⁶⁸⁰ *Nondum autem factum esse quod dicebat jam factum, hinc ostendit, quia orat ut fiat: 'Converte nos, Domine sanitatum nostrarum; et averte iracundiam tuam a nobis.' Non jamdudum dicebas, 'Avertisti captivitatem Jacob...'* Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, PL 37.1072, CCSL 39, p. 1165.

⁶⁸¹ "Habakkuk 3 appears to have found its way into Jewish liturgy fairly early, probably in pre-Christian times. Its first use in Christian worship appears to have been in connection with the Easter liturgy, from which it found its way into some weekly liturgies. This may explain that the christological

The close connection to early Christian liturgy of at least four or perhaps five of these six verses where Jerome introduces the name “Jesus” into his *IH* translations may provide the clue as to why he does so. Perhaps in this new version of the Psalter, and in Habakkuk, Jerome felt justified in “revealing” the “hidden meaning” – in the sense that the Hebrew root *יָשַׁע* gives rise to the name *Iesus* – of the Hebrew words behind Greek words such as *σωτήρ* and *σωτηρία*, and Latin words such as *salus* and *salutare*. By so doing Jerome emphasised to his Christian readers that Christian salvation is inextricably connected with Jesus Christ. As these Psalms were chanted during the daily offices, or as they were meditated on in sermons, Christian worshippers were brought face to face with their Christian, in the sense of centred on Jesus Christ, significance.

Nevertheless, whatever the explanation behind Jerome’s choice to use the name *Iesus* in these five verses in the *IH* Psalter, the fact that he does provides us with further evidence that he considered the Psalter to be an indisputably Christian text, and it radically influences our understanding of the five Psalms involved. We may even say that these five verses alter the character of the entire *Iuxta Hebraeos* Psalter. No careful reader or listener could fail to notice or be provoked by these unashamed references to the Christian Saviour. Infrequent though they may be, Jesus himself now makes several appearances in the Psalter. Jewish notions of salvation become Christian understandings of Christ and, as a result of Jerome’s work, the Psalter has become an undeniably Christian text.

interpretation of this chapter was firmly established...” Vanhoozer, K.J., (General Editor), *Dictionary for the Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2005), p. 272.

5.4.4 *Christus*

The Hebrew מָשִׁיחַ occurs in ten verses in the Psalter. In every case the LXX translated it by *χριστός*, strictly the verbal adjective from *χρίω*, so “to be rubbed on,” and hence when used of persons, meaning “anointed.” In the *ILXX* Psalter Jerome chose to transliterate *χριστός* as *christus* rather than translate it by means of a participle from a Latin word such as *ungo*, which did not carry the same Judaeo-Christian religious significance. Then in the *IH* Psalter Jerome similarly rendered every occurrence of מָשִׁיחַ as *christus*: for which see Psalms 2.2, 17.51, 19.7, 27.8, 83.10, 88.39, 88.52, 104.15, 131.10 and 131.17 *IH*.

In the New Testament the Greek *χριστός* became a title for Jesus, reflecting Christian claims that he is the promised Anointed One of the Old Testament.⁶⁸² Horbury, for example, speaks of “the relative rarity of *χριστός* in its Jewish sense of ‘messiah’, rather than as a proper name.”⁶⁸³ Therefore while the Greek word initially had a general application and certainly no specific application to Judaeo-Christian soteriology, after the composition of the New Testament the word *χριστός* was inevitably associated with Jesus Christ in Greek speaking Christianity, even if, in the process, the meaning of *χριστός* was lost so that it became simply a name.⁶⁸⁴ As a transliteration of a Greek word the Latin *christus* never enjoyed such non-specificity. The *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* records no instances of the word in pre-Christian

⁶⁸² Cf. TDNT, Vol. IX, pp. 527-528.

⁶⁸³ Horbury, “Messianic Associations,” p. 53.

⁶⁸⁴ Cf. TDNT, Vol. IX, pp. 573-580.

Latin,⁶⁸⁵ and in ecclesiastical Latin it was associated inevitably with Jesus Christ, or with the promised “Anointed One” of the Old Testament whom Jesus and his followers claimed he was. The situation is exactly analogous to the decision taken by English bible translators to use the English transliterations of $\text{m}\text{š}\text{h}\text{y}\text{h}$ or $\text{x}\text{r}\text{i}\text{s}\text{t}\text{o}\text{s}$, namely “messiah” and “christ” respectively, (whether capitalised or not), or a translation such as, for example, “anointed,” to render $\text{m}\text{š}\text{h}\text{y}\text{h}$ and $\text{x}\text{r}\text{i}\text{s}\text{t}\text{o}\text{s}$ in their translations. Such a decision is theologically and exegetically motivated, and reveals as much about the translators’ theology as it does about what is written in the original text.

We must consider Jerome’s use of *christus* in the Psalter in light of his use of the same word or alternatives elsewhere in his *IH* and VNT translations, and in his own writings. It is no surprise that in the VNT Gospels⁶⁸⁶ Jerome uses *Christus* for every occurrence of either $\text{X}\text{r}\text{i}\text{s}\text{t}\text{o}\text{s}$ or $\text{o}\ \text{X}\text{r}\text{i}\text{s}\text{t}\text{o}\text{s}$ in the GNT. The lack of an article in Latin⁶⁸⁷ means that, unlike in the Greek, Jerome could not distinguish between an absolute or titular use of *Christus*, as for example at Luke 2.11,⁶⁸⁸ and a predicative use of *Christus*, as for example at Luke 2.26 or Luke 3.15.^{689, 690} Thus while there are several New Testament examples where *Christus* does not refer specifically to Jesus (as in Luke 2.26 or 3.15), that is, where *Christus* is used as a predicate rather than a

⁶⁸⁵ *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae editus auctoritate et consilio academiarum quinque Germanicarum Berolinensis Gottingensis Lipsiensis Monacensis Vindobonensis Volumen III*, (Lipsiae: in Aedibus B.G. Teubneri, 1907), pp. 1028-1029.

⁶⁸⁶ In the VNT we can only be certain of Jerome’s hand in translating the Gospels, so our search was limited to them. Cf. Kelly, *Jerome*, pp. 87-88.

⁶⁸⁷ Note Kedar’s discussion of Jerome’s awareness of this fact, Kedar, “Latin Translations,” p. 316.

⁶⁸⁸ Luke 2.11 VNT: *quia natus est vobis hodie salvator qui est Christus Dominus in vicitate David*, cf. GNT: $\text{o}\ \text{t}\text{i}\ \text{e}\ \text{t}\text{e}\ \text{x}\text{h}\text{d}\text{h}\ \text{u}\ \text{m}\text{i}\ \text{n}\ \text{s}\ \text{h}\ \text{m}\text{e}\ \text{r}\text{o}\ \text{n}\ \text{s}\ \text{o}\ \text{w}\ \text{t}\text{h}\ \text{r}\ \text{o}\ \text{s}\ \text{e}\ \text{s}\ \text{t}\ \text{i}\ \text{n}\ \text{X}\ \text{r}\ \text{i}\ \text{s}\ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{s}\ \text{k}\ \text{y}\ \text{r}\ \text{i}\ \text{o}\ \text{s}\ \text{e}\ \text{n}\ \text{p}\ \text{o}\ \text{l}\ \text{e}\ \text{i}\ \text{D}\ \text{a}\ \text{v}\ \text{i}\ \text{d}\ \text{o}\ \text{s}$.

⁶⁸⁹ Luke 2.26 VNT: *et responsum acceperat ab Spiritu Sancto non visurum se mortem nisi prius videret Christum Domini*, cf. GNT: $\text{k}\ \text{a}\ \text{i}\ \ \text{h}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{a}\ \text{u}\ \text{t}\ \text{w}\ \ \text{k}\ \text{e}\ \text{x}\ \text{h}\ \text{r}\ \text{e}\ \text{m}\ \text{a}\ \text{t}\ \text{i}\ \text{s}\ \text{m}\ \text{e}\ \text{n}\ \text{o}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{u}\ \text{p}\ \text{o}\ \ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{u}\ \ \text{p}\ \text{h}\ \text{e}\ \text{u}\ \text{m}\ \text{a}\ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{u}\ \ \text{a}\ \text{g}\ \text{i}\ \text{o}\ \ \text{m}\ \text{h}\ \ \text{i}\ \text{d}\ \text{e}\ \text{i}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{d}\ \text{a}\ \text{n}\ \text{a}\ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{p}\ \text{r}\ \text{i}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{[h]} \ \ \text{a}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{i}\ \text{d}\ \text{h}\ \ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{X}\ \text{r}\ \text{i}\ \text{s}\ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{k}\ \text{y}\ \text{r}\ \text{i}\ \text{o}\ \text{u}\ \text{s}$. Luke 3.15 VNT: *existimante autem populo/ et cogitantibus omnibus in cordibus suis de Iohanne ne forte ipse esset Christus*, cf. GNT: $\text{P}\ \text{r}\ \text{o}\ \text{s}\ \text{d}\ \text{o}\ \text{k}\ \text{w}\ \text{o}\ \text{n}\ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{s}\ \ \text{d}\ \text{e}\ \ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{u}\ \ \text{l}\ \text{a}\ \text{o}\ \text{u}\ \ \text{k}\ \text{a}\ \text{i}\ \ \text{d}\ \text{i}\ \text{a}\ \text{l}\ \text{o}\ \text{g}\ \text{i}\ \text{z}\ \text{o}\ \text{m}\ \text{e}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{p}\ \text{a}\ \text{n}\ \text{t}\ \text{w}\ \text{o}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{e}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{t}\ \text{a}\ \text{i}\ \text{s}\ \ \text{k}\ \text{a}\ \text{r}\ \text{d}\ \text{i}\ \text{a}\ \text{i}\ \text{s}\ \ \text{a}\ \text{u}\ \text{t}\ \text{w}\ \text{o}\ \text{n}\ \ \text{p}\ \text{e}\ \text{r}\ \text{i}\ \ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{u}\ \ \text{I}\ \text{w}\ \text{a}\ \text{n}\ \text{n}\ \text{o}\ \text{u}\ \ \text{m}\ \text{h}\ \text{p}\ \text{o}\ \text{t}\ \text{e}\ \ \text{a}\ \text{u}\ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{s}\ \ \text{e}\ \text{i}\ \text{h}\ \ \text{o}\ \ \text{X}\ \text{r}\ \text{i}\ \text{s}\ \text{t}\ \text{o}\ \text{s}$.

⁶⁹⁰ For an exhaustive analysis of the use of $\text{x}\text{r}\text{i}\text{s}\text{t}\text{o}\text{s}$ in the New Testament and the Early Church, see TDNT, Vol. IX, pp. 527-580.

title, the lack of an article blurs this distinction, so that the person of Jesus is more evident in the VNT than in the GNT.⁶⁹¹ As a result, the link between *Christus* and Jesus in the VNT is if anything stronger than that between ὁ Χριστός and Jesus in the GNT.

In Jerome's own writings he uses *Christus* almost invariably⁶⁹² to refer to Jesus Christ alone, that is, he uses it as a title (or a proper noun) rather than a predicate. For example at *Ep* 21.13 he refers to Jesus' death: *Cavendum igitur, ne captivam velimus habere uxorem, ne in idolio recumbamus; aut si certe fuerimus ejus amore decepti, mundemus eam, et omni sordium errore purgemus, ne scandalum patiatur frater, pro quo Christus mortuus est, cum in ore Christiani carmina in idolorum laudem composita audierit per sonare.*⁶⁹³ Similarly at *Ep* 30.7⁶⁹⁴ Jerome refers to scriptural revelation of Jesus, "who is the life of believers:" *Secunda connexio est, He, Vau, Zai, Heth, ista, et, haec, vita. Quae enim alia potest esse vita sine scientia Scripturarum, per quas etiam ipse Christus agnoscitur, qui est vita credentium?*⁶⁹⁵ There are several examples of Jerome's use of *Christus* in this way in the *Commentarioli* as well, most significantly perhaps Jerome's remarks on Psalm 2.12: *Adprehendite disciplinam, ne quando irascatur Dominus. Pro eo quod in graeco dicitur δραξασθε παιδείας, in hebraeo legitur NESCU BAR, quod interpretari potest, Adorate filium. Apertissima itaque de Christo prophetia est.*⁶⁹⁶

⁶⁹¹ Note, for example, the difference assumptions implied by John's disciples asking him "Are you Christ?" ("What is your identity?") or "Are you the Christ?" ("Are you the one who was promised?")

⁶⁹² For a rare exception, see Jerome's entry in the *Commentarioli* for Psalm 104.15 *IH*, discussed below.

⁶⁹³ *Ep* 21.13, *PL* 22.386, *CSEL* 54, p. 124.

⁶⁹⁴ In this letter Jerome discusses the significance of the Hebrew letters in the acrostic Psalm 118/119.

⁶⁹⁵ *Ep* 30.7, *PL* 22.443, *CSEL* 54, p. 246. Note also Jerome's translation/interpretation of the Hebrew letters ה, ו, ז and כ as *ista, et, haec* and *vita* respectively!

⁶⁹⁶ *CCSL* 72, p. 182.

Jerome's entry in the *Commentarioli* for Psalm 27.8 *IH* is particularly significant here. Quoting then commenting on a portion of the verse he writes: *Et protector salutarium christi sui est. Quicumque in Christo baptizatus est, et ipse christus vocatur.*⁶⁹⁷ At this point Jerome identifies the *christus* of the Psalm as "one who is baptised in [Jesus] Christ," probably referring to the anointing of baptismal candidates. This is certainly different to identifying the *christus* of the Psalm directly as Jesus, but Jerome's reasoning nevertheless depends on Christian understandings of believers' unity with Jesus Christ through baptism.

When we turn to Jerome's *IH* translations the situation is less straightforward. We have noted his practice in the Psalter, namely to translate every occurrence of מָשִׁיחַ by *christus*. In all מָשִׁיחַ occurs around thirty seven times in the Hebrew Old Testament.⁶⁹⁸ On all but four of those occasions Jerome translates it in the *IH* by means of *christus*. The four exceptions are all in Leviticus, at chapters 4.3, 4.5, 4.16 and 6.15, and all involve the same phrase, namely הַכֹּהֵן הַמְשִׁיחַ, "the anointed priest." At Leviticus 4.5 and 6.15 *IH* Jerome simply leaves the phrase out, at 4.3 he translates it as *sacerdos qui est unctus*, and at 4.16 as *sacerdos qui unctus est*, that is, he translates מָשִׁיחַ by the past participle passive of *ungo*, "smear," "anoint." It is significant that these four examples in Leviticus are the only occasions on which מָשִׁיחַ is preceded by the definite article and used as an adjective. On every other occasion מָשִׁיחַ functions as a title, or as a proper noun, and refers to a person or persons. It is also significant that at Leviticus 4.5, 4.16 and 6.15 the LXX translates מָשִׁיחַ as ὁ χριστός, and by ὁ κεχρισμένος (the perfect passive participle of χρίω) at 4.3. Jerome's

⁶⁹⁷ CCSL 72, p. 202.

⁶⁹⁸ We have noted the ten occurrences in the Psalter, the remainder are as follows: Leviticus 4.3, 4.5, 4.16, 6.15; 1 Samuel 2.10, 2.35, 12.3, 12.5, 16.6, 24.7, 24.11, 26.9, 26.11, 26.16, 26.23; 2 Samuel 1.14, 1.16, 19.22, 22.51, 23.1; 1 Chronicles 16.22 (cf. Ps 104.15 *IH*); 2 Chronicles 6.42 (cf. Ps 131.1 *IH*); Isaiah 45.1; Lamentations 4.20; Daniel 9.25, 9.26; Habakkuk 3.13.

use of *unctus* at both Leviticus 4.3 and 4.16 *IH* means that we may be sure that he could have translated מְשִׁיחַ elsewhere as *unctus*. Therefore his use of *christus* elsewhere in the *IH* cannot be explained as simple transliteration of the LXX in ignorance of the meaning of the Hebrew.

Thus on every occasion that מְשִׁיחַ functions as a title Jerome translates it by means of *christus*. We suggest therefore that he viewed *christus* as a technical term, indicating a special relationship of some kind between the *christus* and God, a suggestion that is backed up by Jerome's remarks in the *Commentarioli* on Psalm 27.8 that we have already discussed. It is important to note that apart from the examples in Leviticus, Jerome uses *christus* indiscriminately to translate מְשִׁיחַ . Thus he uses it in the context of Israel's kings, for example at 1 Samuel 24.7 to translate David's reference to Saul as "the Lord's anointed," and at 2 Samuel 19.21 to refer to David. He uses it in the plural in 1 Chronicles 16.22 to refer to the people of Israel: *nolite tangere christos meos et in prophetis meis nolite malignari*. He also uses it at Isaiah 45.1 to refer to Cyrus, the gentile Persian king who was nevertheless acting under God's sovereign command: *haec dicit Dominus christo meo Cyro/ cuius adprehendi dexteram/ ut subiciam ante faciem eius gentes et dorsa regum vertam*.

In the Psalter there is a similarly wide ranging use of *christus*. So Jerome uses it for the "Lord's anointed" at Psalm 2.2 *IH* – a character who is not explicitly identified in the Psalm but whom Jerome clearly believes to be Jesus.⁶⁹⁹ Indeed in the

⁶⁹⁹ In the *Commentarioli* on Psalm 2.2 he remarks: *Adstiterunt reges terrae. Non solum Herodes rex, sed etiam illi reges adversus Dominum constiterunt, quorum regna ei in puncto temporis diabolus ostendit.* (CCSL 72, p. 181.) On verse 7 he remarks: *Dominus dixit ad me: Filius meus es tu, ego hodie genui te. 'Iesus Christus est heri et hodie et in aeternum.'* (CCSL 72, p. 182.)

Commentarioli to Psalm 2 Jerome twice uses *Christus* to refer directly to Jesus.⁷⁰⁰

Jerome also uses *christus* in the plural to refer to the people of Israel, in Psalm 104.15 *IH*, which is the parallel verse to 1 Chronicles 16.22: *nolite tangere christos meos/ et prophetas meos nolite adfligere*. In the *Commentarioli* Jerome betrays his knowledge that *χρίω* and cognates could be translated by *ungo* and cognates, and strikingly suggests that the Israelites were anointed with the Spirit of God: *Nolite tangere christos meos. Notandum quod ante unctionem christi vocentur: ex quo animadvertimus, unctionem non tam olei esse, quam Spiritus.*⁷⁰¹ He could have used *uncti* instead of *christi*. The fact that he does not adds further weight to our suggestion that Jerome used *christus* as a technical term to refer to people in a special relationship to God. It is noteworthy that that relationship is not always positive: thus Jerome persists in using *christus* at Psalm 88.39 *IH* where God is angry with *christus*: *tu autem reppulisti et proiecisti/ iratus es adversum christum tuum*. In the *Commentarioli* Jerome interprets this verse too in reference to Jesus: *Tu vero reppulisti, et despexisti: distulisti Christum tuum. Reppulit et despexit Filium Pater, quando eum in passione deseruit loquentem: 'Deus, Deus meus, quare me dereliquisti?'*⁷⁰² This same Psalm provides further evidence that Jerome understood the meaning of the Hebrew root מִשַׁח: at Psalm 88.21 *IH* he translates the Hebrew בְּשֶׁמֶן קִדְשֵׁי מִשְׁחָתִי as *oleo sancto meo unxi eum*. The *ILXX* had *linui* instead of *unxi* so that the *IH* rendering, together with Jerome's comment on Psalm 104.15 *IH* which also involved the Latin verb *ungo*, constitutes sufficient proof that Jerome understood the relationship between מִשַׁח, *χρίω* and *ungo*.

⁷⁰⁰ In reference to verses 7 and 12, *CCSL* 72, p. 182.

⁷⁰¹ *CCSL* 72, p. 230.

⁷⁰² *CCSL* 72, p. 223. In the *Commentarioli* on this Psalm Jerome uses *Christus* five times to refer directly to Jesus, in reference to verses 16, 21, 28, 38 and 39.

We have shown that almost without exception in his own writings Jerome uses *christus* to refer specifically to the historical person of Jesus Christ. In the VNT he uses it without exception to translate the Greek *Χριστός* or *ὁ Χριστός*, referring either to the historical person of Jesus or to the promised Anointed One who he and his followers claimed him to be. The associative link between *christus/Christus* and Jesus Christ is thus extremely strong. We have also shown that Jerome was fully aware that the Hebrew *מָשִׁחַ* and cognates could be translated by Latin *ungo* and cognates.

Therefore, when we turn to the *IH* in general and the *IH* Psalter in particular it is very striking that Jerome persists in using the Greek loan word *christus*, with all its Christian associations, rather than the neutral (and Latin) *unctus*. It is tempting to explain this as a brazen attempt by Jerome to introduce the person of Christ into the *IH* Psalter, much as he did by using the name *Iesus* to translate words derived from the root *ישׁע*. The strongest evidence against this is simply those occasions on which Jerome uses *christus* in the plural, namely Psalm 104.15 *IH* and 1 Chronicles 16.22 *IH*. Instead we will propose a rather more subtle explanation, but one that is nevertheless strongly Jesus Christ centred. It seems likely that Jerome believed that the Hebrew *מָשִׁיחַ*, with all its kingly and prophetic associations in Hebrew⁷⁰³ was best translated in Latin by *christus*, with its similar, though rather more specific, associations with kingship and prophetic fulfilment. Evidence for this may be drawn from John 1.41-42a, which Jerome renders in the VNT as *Invenit hic primum fratrem suum Simonem et dicit ei/ invenimus Messiam quod est interpretatum Christus/ et*

⁷⁰³ See, for example, Barton's discussion: "A very narrow definition [of the Messiah] would make the link with the Israelite king explicit, and would regard any expected deliverer as the Messiah only if he was the new David ... This is how many Jews and Christians understood the 'messianic' prophecies in Jer. 23.5-6 or 33.14-18..." in Barton, J., "The Messiah in Old Testament Theology," in J. Day, Ed., *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East, Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series 270*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), p. 373.

aduxit eum ad Iesum, translating the GNT εὐρίσκει οὗτος πρῶτον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τὸν ἴδιον Σίμωνα καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, Εὐρήκαμεν τὸν Μεσσίαν, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον Χριστός· ἤγαγεν αὐτὸν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν. Clearly Jerome was simply doing the job of a translator here – and ὃ ... Χριστός is surely an editorial note by the author of John's Gospel – but Jerome cannot have missed the direct association of *Messiam* with *Christus* (and thus with *Iesus* in the next line.)⁷⁰⁴

So Jerome had biblical, indeed Gospel, authority that מָשִׁיחַ should be understood as *christus*. We believe that this is sufficient to explain his translation of it in this way in the *IH* Psalter, and the *IH* Old Testament in general. Indeed it is great testament to his honesty in his self imposed role of “translator” rather than “interpreter” that he persisted in this translation even in those Old Testament verses where the association with the historical person of Jesus, prompted by the word *christus*, was particularly awkward. He felt, it seems, compelled to offer what he believed to be the most accurate translation, leaving aside considerations of potentially difficult exegeses.

5.4.5 *Episcopatus*

Psalm 108.8 *IH* contains the only occurrence of the Hebrew מְשִׁיחַ in the Psalter, but it occurs in around thirty other verses in the Old Testament. Psalm 108.8 *IH* is also the only occasion on which Jerome translates that Hebrew word by the Greek loan word *episcopatus*.

⁷⁰⁴ A similar situation pertains at John 4.25-26, in John's account of Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman: ²⁵*dicit ei mulier/ scio quia Messias venit qui dicitur Christus/ cum ergo venerit ille nobis adnuntiabit omnia/* ²⁶*dicit ei Iesus/ ego sum qui loquor tecum*. Note again the identification of *Messias* and *Christus*, and their close association with *Iesus*.

The context of many of those other occurrences prompts him to translate it by *visitatio*, “visitation, punishment,” but on at least three occasions Jerome uses a word that he could have used at Psalm 108.8 *IH*. At 2 Kings 11.18 (*IV Reg* 11.18) *IH* Jerome translates the Hebrew יהוה הכהן פקדות על-בית יהוה as *et posuit sacerdos custodias in domo Domini*, while the LXX has *καὶ ἔθηκεν ὁ ἱερεὺς ἐπισκόπους εἰς τὸν οἶκον κυρίου*. At 2 Chronicles 23.18 (*II Par* 23.18) *IH* he translates יהוה יהוה פקדת בית יהוה as *constituit autem Ioiadae praepositos in domo Domini* while the LXX has *καὶ ἐνεχείρησεν Ιωδαε ὁ ἱερεὺς τὰ ἔργα οἴκου κυρίου*. Finally at Ezekiel 44.11 *IH* Jerome translates יהוה יהוה פקדות א-ל-שערי הבית as *erunt in sanctuario meo aeditui et ianitores portarum domus*, and the LXX has *καὶ ἔσονται ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις μου λειτουργοῦντες θυρωροὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πυλῶν τοῦ οἴκου*.

These three examples demonstrate that Jerome was not simply relying on the reading in the LXX for his translation in the *IH*. The change at 2 Kings 11.18 from LXX *ἐπισκόπους* to *IH custodias* is particularly significant for our investigation of Psalm 108.8 *IH*. Jerome’s translation *praepositos* at 2 Chronicles 23.18 as against the LXX mistranslation *τὰ ἔργα* suggests independent knowledge of the meaning of פקדת. One could argue that Jerome’s use of *ianitores* in this final example is a technical term in its immediate context, i.e. “the doorkeepers of the gates of the house,” and in this case he is simply following the LXX *θυρωροὶ*. Nevertheless, the idea of oversight or taking charge is evident in all three of the words *custodias*, *praepositos* and *ianitores* that Jerome uses to translate פקדת, and none has the 4th century religious significance of *episcopatus* which, at a purely technical level, conveys the same ideas.

So we must ask why Jerome translated *תַּקְדִּיפוּ* uniquely as *episcopatum eius* at Psalm 108.8 *IH*. Given that he had already used that phrase in the *ILXX* he could simply have copied it into the *IH*, although the correction of *ILXX pauci* to *IH parvi* for *מְעַטִּים*, despite the former making better sense in the context of “days,” shows he took care over this verse, and was keen to demonstrate the literal meaning of this word at least. The answer lies in Jerome’s understanding of Psalm 108 *IH*, and the clues come in the *Commentarioli*. His remarks on verse 27 suggest that he read the Psalm as having to do with the events surrounding Christ’s crucifixion: *Et cognoscant quia manus tua ista, et tu Domine fecisti ea. Intellegant Pilatus, Herodes atque Iudaei, quod non eorum potestate, sed tua voluntate sum passus, nec invitus bibi calicem, uem cum scirem esse potandum, sponte hausit: non meam, sed tuam, id est non hominis quem indueram, sed Dei faciens voluntatem.*⁷⁰⁵ More specifically Jerome interprets verse 7 as referring to Judas Iscariot, who hanged himself in his regret for having betrayed Jesus⁷⁰⁶: *Et oratio eius fiat in peccatum. Cum enim eum proditionis paeniteret, laqueo se suspendit.*⁷⁰⁷ When verses 5 to 8 are read in this light, the first person (*me* etc.) can be taken to refer to Christ, and the third person (*eum* etc.) can be taken to refer to Judas Iscariot:

IH: ⁵et posuerunt contra me malum pro bono

et odium pro dilectione mea

⁶constitue super eum impium

et Satan asted dextris eius

⁷cum fuerit iudicatus exeat condemnatus

et oratio eius sit in peccatum

⁷⁰⁵ CCSL 72, p. 232.

⁷⁰⁶ Cf. Matthew 27.3-6.

⁷⁰⁷ CCSL 72, p. 232.

⁸*fiant dies eius parvi episcopatum eius accipiat alter*

Jerome's use of *Satan* in the *IH* instead of *ILXX diabolus* adds further weight to the allusion. Jerome's remarks in the *Commentarioli* are revealing: *Pro diabolo, in hebraeo 'satan' scriptum est, quod interpretatur adversarius. Diabolus vero graecum vocabulum est: quem nos interpretari possumus criminatorem.*⁷⁰⁸ More importantly, at Psalm 108.20 *IH* Jerome translates *his qui adversantur mihi* for שׂוֹנְיָי, "my adversaries," and similarly at Psalm 108.29 *IH* he translates *adversarii mei* for שׂוֹנְיָי, "my adversaries." Clearly Jerome knew that the Hebrew שׂוֹנְיָי of Psalm 109.6 MT did not necessarily mean "Satan," the supernatural adversary of God and his people, but could equally mean a personal or national, human, adversary.⁷⁰⁹ Given this demonstrated knowledge, and given Jerome's interpretation of the Psalm in the *Commentarioli* it is most likely that he used the specifically nominal *Satan* rather than the general *adversarius* to provide another point of reference with the events surrounding the crucifixion of Christ, namely the point at which "Satan entered Judas" as recorded at Luke 22.3 and John 13.27.⁷¹⁰

We may now answer our original question, namely why at Psalm 108.8 *IH*, and nowhere else in the *IH* Old Testament, Jerome translated פְּקֻדָּתוֹ as *episcopatum eius*. Judas Iscariot was one of the original twelve apostles of Christ who, according to Church tradition from at least the early 2nd Century AD, were the first bishops, or *episcopi*, from the Greek ἐπίσκοπος, and whose office was known as *episcopatus*, the

⁷⁰⁸ *CCSL* 72, pp. 231-232.

⁷⁰⁹ Cf. BDB p. 966. See also Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 312.

⁷¹⁰ Luke 22.3a VNT: *Intravit autem Satan in Iudam*; John 13.27a VNT: *et post buccellam tunc introivit in illum Satan.*

episcopate.⁷¹¹ According to this reasoning, as a result of Judas' betrayal of Christ and his subsequent suicide, his position as one of the Twelve, what we might call his proto-episcopate, was forfeited and passed to another, namely Matthias, whose election is related in Acts 1.15-26. Our explanation is further confirmed by the fact that Luke (as the author of Acts) records the Apostle Peter as referring to Psalm 108.8 *IH* in Acts 1.20.^{712, 713}

5.4.6 *Cathedra*

Psalms 1.1 *IH* and 106.32 *IH* contain the only occurrences in the Psalter of another Greek loan word, *cathedra*, from Greek *καθέδρα*, meaning "a seat" or "the posture of

⁷¹¹ See Hein, M., and Jung, H.-G., "Bishop, Episcopate," in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. 1, Fahlbusch, E., et al. (Editors), Bromiley, G.W., (Translator), (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, and Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 1999), pp. 262-264: "The precedence of the bishop took institutional form in the church's hierarchy in the form of the monarchical episcopate, to which Ignatius bears witness in the territories of Syria and Asia Minor in approximately A.D. 107. ... In the period that followed, opposition to heresy made the theory of apostolic succession a normative one for the episcopate (→ Irenaeus; Tertullian). Consecrated and acknowledged by neighbouring bishops, the bishop formed part of an unbroken line that could be traced back to the apostles. This connection made him a true successor of the apostles in his office." (p. 262). TDNT suggests: "For Jewish Christians *πρεσβύτερος* was an obvious term. But Greek Christianity introduced *ἐπίσκοποι* and *διάκονοι*, as at Ephesus and Philippi. These were simple, widely known titles, yet not precisely defined and therefore in their very breadth of meaning capable of a new and specific use ... the importance of the elected offices constantly increases. Among them that of bishop begins to take precedence of presbyters and deacons. In Syria and Asia Minor at the beginning of the 2nd century the college of bishops which had originally led the churches had disappeared, being replaced by the monarchical bishop." TDNT, vol. II, pp. 619-620.

⁷¹² Peter also refers to Psalm 68.26 *IH*, but there is nothing unusual about this verse in the *IH* Psalter.

⁷¹³ There is evidence of Jerome's use of the word *episcopus* in the *Commentarioli* to Psalm 146.3 *IH*: *Qui conligat contritiones eorum. Iste est de evangelio Samarites, qui seminecis ligavit vulnera, et oleum misericordiae infudit, et revexit ad ecclesiam, curandumque episcopis tradidit.* (CCSL 72, p. 245). However, in the verse to which Jerome is referring, namely Luke 10.35, Jerome refers to the innkeeper as *stabulario*, and moreover there is only one innkeeper, not many "overseers". We noted earlier the difficulty of understanding Jerome's use of *ecclesia* in this instance: it is no easier to understand his use of *episcopus*. Perhaps we should take Jerome's words here, which are his final entry in the *Commentarioli*, as an instance of Alexandrian allegorical exegesis, or simply exegetical licence. How appropriate that a commentary on the Psalms ends with the image of a wounded (Christian?) having his wounds bound, being anointed with oil of mercy, being brought back to the Church, and given over to the care of the Bishops.

sitting.”⁷¹⁴ In Latin *cathedra* had a different nuance, referring especially to a chair “furnished with cushions and supports for women” and, significantly for us, it accrued the further technical meaning of “the office of a bishop.”⁷¹⁵ In each of these verses Jerome uses *cathedra* in the *IH* to translate Hebrew מושב, from the root ישב, and meaning “seat, assembly, dwelling-place, dwellers.”⁷¹⁶

In the Psalter, Jerome only uses *cathedra* in the *IH* Psalter where he has already used the same word in the *ILXX* to translate Greek καθέδρα. The contexts within which the word is used in the Psalter are diametrically opposed: in Psalm 1 in a negative context, referring to company that the psalmist will avoid if he wishes to be blessed, and in Psalm 106 *IH* in a positive context, referring to situations in which God will be praised. Jerome makes no remark on Psalm 106.32 *IH* in the *Commentarioli*, and in his comment on Psalm 1.1 he makes no reference to his choice of *in cathedra* to translate ἐπὶ καθέδραν, despite some apparent knowledge of what was “*in hebraeo*” in this verse: *Et in cathedra pestilentium non sedit. Pro pestilentibus, in hebraeo ‘delusores’ habet, quod scilicet omnes discipulos perversus doctor inludat. Unde et Hieremias: ‘Non sedi, ait, in concilio ludentium.’*⁷¹⁷ Clearly Jerome did not think his choice of *cathedra* to be sufficiently unusual or controversial as to warrant comment.

A survey of the forty three or so verses in which מושב occurs in the Old Testament revealed that Jerome favoured the Latin words *habitare*, *habitatio* and *habitaculum* to render it in the *IH*. The *LXX* similarly favoured the words κατοικία, κατοίκησις, and

⁷¹⁴ Cf. Lidd-Scott, p. 851.

⁷¹⁵ Cf. L&S, p. 301; cf. also Lampe, p. 687, and Volp, R., Metzinger, J., and Maser, P., “Cathedral,” in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, Vol. 1, p. 370: “The term “cathedral” (Gk. *kathedra*; Lat. *cathedra*) originally meant “seat,” then “teaching chair [of the bishop].” The word καθέδρα does not appear in TDNT, suggesting that its ecclesiastical/Christian use developed later.

⁷¹⁶ Cf. BDB p. 444.

⁷¹⁷ CCSL 72, p. 179.

κατοικητήριον. In general Jerome's reading in the *IH* is similar to the reading in the LXX, but as both tend to be good translations of the Hebrew it is impossible to draw much of significance from this. There are however examples regarding the use of *καθέδρα/cathedra* that adequately demonstrate that Jerome could translate מושב independently of the LXX.

Thus at 1 Samuel 20.18 the LXX translated the Hebrew מושבך, referring to David's "seat" (for dining in Saul's palace⁷¹⁸) as *καθέδρα*, and Jerome translated it as *sessio*, "seat," "sitting place," (1 Samuel 20.19 *IH*). However seven verses later at 1 Samuel 20.25 the LXX translated again the Hebrew מושבו, referring this time to the king's, i.e. Saul's, "seat" (likewise for dining), as *καθέδραν*, but Jerome translated it as *cathedram*. At 1 Kings 10.5 and the parallel verse at 2 Chronicles 9.4 the Hebrew reads ומושב, referring in each case to the "seating" of Solomon's servants (עֲבָדָיו) on the occasion of the Queen of Sheba's visit. In each case the LXX translated the Hebrew as *καθέδραν*, but Jerome translated the Hebrew as *habitacula*, "dwelling place," "habitation." Finally at Job 29.7 the Hebrew reads מושבי, referring to the "seat" that Job would take in the square by the city gates when he was still wealthy and honoured by everyone from the young men to the nobles. In this case the LXX translated the Hebrew by *δίφρος*, meaning "chariot-board" or "seat," "chair," "stool,"⁷¹⁹ but Jerome preferred to use *cathedram*.

It is possible therefore to discern a pattern in Jerome's choice of words to translate מושב: irrespective of the reading in the LXX he uses *cathedra* when the "seat" in

⁷¹⁸ Cf. 1 Samuel 20.24-25.

⁷¹⁹ Cf. Lidd-Scott, p. 438.

question belongs to a dignitary, so King Saul or Job before the onset of his troubles.

In all other cases he uses an alternative Latin translation.

Considerable weight is added to our proposition by the various readings at Ezekiel

28.2. The context is God's instruction to the "son of man" to take a message to the

Prince of Tyre, accusing him of supreme arrogance. God charges the Prince with:

וַתֹּאמֶר אֵל אֲנִי מוֹשֵׁב אֲלֵהִים יֹשְׁבֵי בְּלֶב יַמִּים, "thou hast said, 'I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas.'"⁷²⁰ The LXX translated this portion of the verse

as *καὶ εἶπας Θεός εἰμι ἐγὼ, κατοικίαν θεοῦ κατώκηκα ἐν καρδίᾳ θαλάσσης,*⁷²¹ thus taking מוֹשֵׁב as *κατοικία*, "dwelling place." Jerome by contrast translated these words

as *dixisti/ Deus ego sum et in cathedra Dei sedi in corde maris*. Whatever one's

opinion might be about whether the Prince of Tyre was claiming the identity of and

equality with God, a God, a god or gods, it is beyond doubt that מוֹשֵׁב אֲלֵהִים is a seat

of considerable exaltation: the accusation against him depends upon it. It is significant

therefore that in this case Jerome follows the pattern we have discerned and translates

מוֹשֵׁב as *cathedra* instead of following the LXX *κατοικία*, as he did for example at

Ezekiel 34.17 where he used *sedibus terrae* for Hebrew מוֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ and LXX

κατοικία τῆς γῆς.

Jerome's use of *cathedra* in Psalm 1.1 appears to be the exception to this pattern,

having to do with seat of evildoers, or evilsayers. If however we think of physical

rather than moral exaltation then Jerome's translation in the *IH*, *cathedra derisorum*,

the "seat of mockers," fits more easily into this pattern: it is mockers' wont to sit

⁷²⁰ This is the KJV translation. Both the NIV and the ESV translate אֵל as "god" with a lower case "g," but the NIV translates אֲלֵהִים as "god," while the ESV translates it as the plural "gods," again both with a lower case "g." The KJV reveals the full gravity of God's accusation.

⁷²¹ Note Rahlfs et al. introducing another variation on the God/god theme: an upper case Θ for אֵל, and a lower case θ for אֲלֵהִים.

above other people, looking down on and pouring scorn upon those they consider to be inferior to themselves.

Jerome's use of *cathedra* in his own writings coincides with the pattern we have suggested in our analysis of his *IH* translation. Sometimes he uses it to refer to a position of authority, perhaps, but not necessarily, related to a physical seat. For example, Jerome wrote *Ep. 29* in response to Marcella's question about the significance of the Ephod, and speaks of the authority with which others suppose him to speak (presumably on account of his knowledge of Hebrew): *Quasi vero Pharisaeorum teneam cathedram, ut quotiescumque de verbis Hebraicis iurgium est, ego arbiter et litis sequester exposcar.*⁷²² In *Ep. 69.9* Jerome explicitly identifies, or perhaps interprets allegorically, *cathedra* as *superbia*, "pride" or "arrogance": he describes the activities of priests who abandoned a humble and simple way of life and notes, among other things: *De cathedra quodammodo ducitur ad cathedram, id est, de superbia ad superbiam.*⁷²³

Elsewhere Jerome interprets *cathedra* both as *scientia Christi*, "knowledge of Christ," and as *doctrina Legis*, "the teaching of the [Mosaic] Law." The former comes in his *Commentaria in Job*, where he quotes Job 29.7 and explains it in reference to Christ: *Quando procedebam ad portam civitatis, et in platea ponebant cathedram mihi. Velut rex ergo, et Dominus primus civitatis suae Ecclesiae, ad portam ejus Christus procedit ... Cathedra autem eminens scientia Christi intelligenda est.*⁷²⁴ The latter comes in his *Commentaria in Matthaenum* where he quotes Matthew 23.2 and suggests an interpretation: *Super cathedram Moysi sederunt Scribae et Pharisei: per*

⁷²² *Ep. 29.1, PL 22.436, CSEL 54, p. 232.*

⁷²³ *Ep. 69.9, PL 22.664, CSEL 54, p. 698.*

⁷²⁴ *Comm. in Job, PL 26.709.*

*cathedram doctrinam Legis ostendit.*⁷²⁵ It is significant for us that Jerome notes that Christ upholds the doctrinal authority of the scribes and Pharisees, insofar as they occupy Moses' seat/position: he simply warns the crowd not to imitate their deeds.⁷²⁶

Finally there is a significant example in which Jerome uses *cathedra* to refer specifically to the position or office of a bishop, but uses the predicate *Episcopalis* to denote as much. In *Ep* 117 he protests his inability to effect personal reconciliation between a mother and daughter, and refers to his monastic life in contrast to that of a bishop: *Quasi vero Episcopalem cathedram teneam, et non clausus cellula, ac procul a turbis remotus.*⁷²⁷

All of our examples have demonstrated that Jerome used the word *cathedra* to refer to a position of exaltation, usually in a positive context, occasionally in a negative context, but always in a Judaeo-Christian religious context. Jerome sometimes interpreted *cathedra* as a metaphor for religious knowledge, whether of Jesus Christ, or of the Mosaic Law. Thus in his own writings *cathedra* has a strong nuance of religious authority, but does not by itself refer to the office of a bishop, requiring in that case a suitable adjective.

Finally then what can we say about Jerome's use of *cathedra* in Psalm 106.32 *IH*? We have shown that he was well aware of alternative translations for מוֹשֶׁב, and that he did not feel constrained elsewhere to follow καθέδρα in the LXX with *cathedra* in the *IH*. In the context of Psalm 106 *IH* the psalmist is calling on people from all levels of

⁷²⁵ *Comm. in Matt.*, IV PL 26.167, CCSL 77, p. 210.

⁷²⁶ *Comm. in Matt.*, IV PL 26.167, CCSL 77, p. 210: "hortatur populos ut subjiciantur eis, non opera, sed doctrinam considerantes."

⁷²⁷ *Ep.* 117.1, PL 22.953, CSEL 55, p. 423.

society to praise God. At one level this is sufficient explanation for Jerome's use of *cathedra*: the psalmist calls for God to be praised among the mass of ordinary people, *ecclesia populi*, and in the exalted abodes of the elders, *cathedra seniorum*. Given the conclusions we arrived at in our discussion of Jerome's use of *ecclesia*, and given that the verse is speaking about praising God, we may be justified in seeing something of a Christian nuance in his use of *cathedra*, so that the verse implies "exalt him among the churches of the people, and praise him in the seats of bishops (i.e. those who have Christian religious authority)." However the nuance is not strong and we would be unwise to push it too far.⁷²⁸

Unlike *episcopatus*, *cathedra* seems not to have developed by the late fourth century a technical meaning that was exclusively Christian, or at least not in Jerome's vocabulary.

5.4.7 Alleluia

In his remarks on Psalm 104.1 *IH* in the *Commentarioli*, Jerome has this to say about the word *Alleluia*: *Alleluia. Usque hodie consuetudinis Iudaeorum est, ut nulli alteri psalmo Alleluia in canendo subnectant, nisi ei qui in psalterio Alleluia praescriptum aut subiectum habet. Nos autem indifferenter uti solemus, etiam in his psalmis Alleluia dicentes, qui aut historiam replicant, aut per paenitentiam lacrimabiliter*

⁷²⁸ This is particularly so in light of the respective versions of 1 Timothy 1.1 and 19. In each case the GNT refers to a singular "elder," *πρεσβυτέρω* at 1.1 and *πρεσβυτέρου* at 1.17. The context of each suggests that 1.1 refers simply to "an old man," while 1.17 refers to a man of indeterminate age, but occupying a position of authority in the congregation. Nevertheless, while the GNT does not distinguish between them, the VNT translates *πρεσβυτέρω* at 1.1 as *seniorem*, but *πρεσβυτέρου* at 1.17 as *presbyterum*. While the VNT of these verses may not represent Jerome's work, he is likely to have been familiar with the exegetical strains they reflect and/or influenced.

*ingemescunt, aut de inimicis victoriam postulant, aut ut de angustia liberemur precantur. Quod autem semel dicimus, hoc in omnibus observandum est: in quocumque psalmo primum Alleluia fuerit praenotatum, eum etiam in fine habere Alleluia subiectum. Et plerique nescientes sequentis psalmi arbitrantur esse principium: quod nequaquam est. denique saepe reperies in uno psalmo duo Alleluia praeposita: quod significat, unum ad finem prioris, alterum ad sequentis principium pertinere.*⁷²⁹

There are many insights to be gained from Jerome's words here: we will consider just a few of them. Most importantly, Jerome's comments provide direct evidence for the use of the Psalter in Christian liturgy – even if the Jews “sing” (*canendo*) the Psalms while Christians “say” them (*dicentes, dicimus*).⁷³⁰ We will argue that this corporate liturgical use of the Psalter is particularly significant for understanding Jerome's use of the word *Alleluia*. Secondly, Jerome claims to be familiar with current Jewish practice concerning the exclamation (or exaltation) “Alleluia” at the beginning and/or end of Psalms (*usque hodie consuetudinis Iudaeorum est*), but does not say where he gets this knowledge from. Presumably it came from one of his Jewish teachers – it seems most unlikely that Jerome would know this from personal attendance at a synagogue! Thirdly Jerome contrasts Jewish practice with “our,” i.e. Christian, practice (*nos autem indifferenter uti solemus*), providing a list of criteria according to which “Alleluia” was attached to psalms in Christian worship. It is a pity that he did not provide examples of Psalms that fulfilled these various criteria so that we could see his reasoning in practice. Finally Jerome mentions the confusion surrounding the incidence of the word *Alleluia* at the end and beginning of consecutive Psalms. Given

⁷²⁹ CCSL 72, pp. 229-230.

⁷³⁰ Cf. “the liturgical use in Jewish (Hellenistic) worship ... has it sung by the congregation,” TDNT, v. 1, p. 264.

the use of the Psalter in Christian liturgy, and given that fourth century Christian liturgy was based – where relevant – on the LXX rather than the Hebrew Old Testament tradition, the incidence of *Alleluia* in the *IH* Psalter is an important case study for the way Jerome dealt with the conflicting claims of Hebrew bible translation and corporate Christian worship.

Before we discuss Jerome's translation and/or transliteration of הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה it is worth looking at where he places the word at the end and/or beginning of consecutive Psalms. The table below summarises his practice in the *IH* Psalter in relation to the MT, LXX and *ILXX* Psalters. Jerome's transliteration of הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה or הַלְלוּ יְהוָה as *Alleluia* in the *IH* is standard throughout the *IH* Psalter, with the exception of Psalm 134.3 *IH* where he translates it as *laudate Dominum*. For reference, examples 12, 13 and 14 in the table, from Psalm 134 *IH*, illustrate all the phenomena that we discuss. Psalm 134.1 *IH* is a case of all versions placing *Alleluia* in the same relative position; Psalm 134.3 *IH* demonstrates the LXX, *ILXX* and *IH* uniquely translating הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה; and Psalm 134.21 *IH* demonstrates Jerome following the Hebrew in retaining *Alleluia* at the end of a psalm in the *IH* rather than transferring it to the beginning of the subsequent psalm as in the LXX and *ILXX*.

Note:

1. The MT column covers instances of both הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה and הַלְלוּ יְהוָה.
2. The numbering is correct for MT/LXX/*ILXX*/*IH* respectively.

| | תּוֹלְדוֹת MT | Αλληλουια LXX | Alleluia ILXX | Alleluia IH | Precedent for IH |
|----|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 104.35 | 104.1 | 104.1 | 104.1 | LXX |
| 2 | 105.45 | 105.1 | 105.1 | 104.45 | Hebrew |
| 3 | | | | 105.1 | LXX |
| 4 | 106.48 | 106.1 | 106.1 | 105.48 | Hebrew |
| 5 | 111.1 | 110.1 | 110.1 | 110.1 | All |
| 6 | 112.1 | 111.1 | 111.1 | 110.10 | All |
| 7 | 113.1 | 112.1 | 112.1 | 112.1 | All |
| 8 | 113.9 | 113.1 | 113.1 | 112.9 | Hebrew |
| 9 | 115.18 | 114.1 | 114.1 | 113.26 | Hebrew |
| 10 | 116.19 | 116.1 | 116.1 | 115.19 | Hebrew |
| 11 | 117.2 | 117.1 | 117.1 | 116.2 | Hebrew |
| 12 | 135.1 | 134.1 | 134.1 | 134.1 | All |
| 13 | 135.3 | Absent | Absent | Absent | LXX |
| 14 | 135.21 | 135.1 | 135.1 | 134.21 | Hebrew |
| 15 | 146.1 | 145.1 | 145.1 | 145.1 | All |
| 16 | 146.10 | Absent | Absent | Absent | LXX |
| 17 | 147.1 | 146.1 | 146.1 | 146.1 | All |
| 18 | | (Repeated?) | (Repeated?) | (Repeated?) | LXX |
| 19 | | 147.1 | 147.12(1) | | Hebrew |
| 20 | 147.20 | | | 147.20 | Hebrew |
| 21 | 148.1 | 148.1 | 148.1 | 148.1 | All |
| 22 | 148.14 | | | 148.14 | Hebrew |

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------|------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 23 | 149.1 | 149.1 | 149.1 | 149.1 | All |
| 24 | 149.9 | | | 149.9 | Hebrew |
| 25 | 150.1 | 150.1 | 150.1 | 150.1 | All |
| 26 | 150.6 | 150.6 | | 150.6 | Hebrew |
| | MT | LXX | <i>ILXX</i> | <i>IH</i> | Precedent for <i>IH</i> |

The disjunction between Hebrew and Greek/Latin numbering of the Psalms makes the table rather complex, but it reveals the following useful information:

1. In the LXX and thence the *ILXX* *Αλληλουια/Alleluia* always comes at the beginning of a psalm, functioning as all or part of the title. The only exception is the *Αλληλουια* at the end of Psalm 150.6 LXX, which is absent in the *ILXX*.
2. The LXX achieves this pattern by shifting *הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהִים/Aλληλουια* from the end of the Hebrew Psalm to the beginning of the subsequent Greek Psalm on seven occasions, namely examples 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 14.
3. The distribution of *Alleluia* in the *IH* reflects Jerome's remarks in the *Commentarioli* about the expression coming at the beginning and end of a single Psalm. Thus Psalms 104, 105, 110, 112, 134, 148, 149 and 150 *IH* are begun and concluded by *Alleluia*.
4. Several Psalms in the Hebrew are likewise begun and concluded by *הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהִים* or *הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהִים*, namely Psalms 113, 135, 146, 147, 148, 149 and 150 MT.
5. Thus only Psalms 112/113, 134/135, 148, 149 and 150 follow the same pattern in both the MT and the *IH*. In Psalms 104 and 105 *IH* only the Latin has

Alleluia at beginning and end, and in Psalms 146 and 147 MT only the Hebrew has יהללוהו at beginning and end.

6. In twelve of our twenty four examples, namely 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 19, 22, 20, 24 and 26 Jerome follows the pattern of the MT in the *IH*. In a further nine examples, namely 5, 6, 7, 12, 15, 17, 21, 23 and 25 יהללוהו/ *Alleluia* *Alleluia* comes in the same place in all our versions so that Jerome may have been following the authority of either or both the MT or the LXX. In the remaining five examples, namely 1, 3, 13, 18 and 18, Jerome followed the pattern of the LXX.

Thus despite Jerome's claim in the *Commentarioli* that Christian usage of *Alleluia* in the Psalter differed from Jewish/Hebrew usage, in twenty one out of twenty six cases the pattern in the *IH* conforms to the Jewish/Hebrew pattern. Given that, as a result, the *IH* conforms to the LXX/*ILXX* pattern only in fourteen out of twenty six cases, and that nine of these may be coincidental, Jerome seems to have been far more concerned to replicate the pattern of the Hebrew in the *IH* than to make the *IH* conform to the established Greek and Latin pattern.

Similarly, despite Jerome's claim in the *Commentarioli* that Christians attached *Alleluia* to a wider range of Psalms than the Jews did, when it came to translating the *IH* Psalter Jerome seems to have been content largely to follow the pattern of the Hebrew. There are no Psalms that have an *Alleluia* in the *IH* that do not have a יהללוהו in the Hebrew, albeit occasionally in a different place.

As regards transliteration versus translation, the standard pattern is for Hebrew הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה or הַלְלוּ יְהוָה to be transliterated as *Αλληλουια* in the LXX, and as *Alleluia* in the *ILXX*. Jerome follows this pattern almost without exception in the *IH*, despite solid evidence that he could have translated it had he wished. Example number 13 in the table above is the only occasion on which Jerome apparently translates הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה rather than transliterating it. In the Hebrew Psalm 135.3 begins with הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה , as had Psalm 135.1 two verses earlier. Nevertheless, while the LXX began the corresponding Psalm 134.1 with *Αλληλουια*, and the *ILXX* and *IH* followed suit with *Alleluia*, when it came to Psalm 134.3 the LXX translated הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה as *αἰνεῖτε τὸν κύριον*, “Praise the Lord,” and the *ILXX* and *IH* again followed suit with *laudate Dominum*. It is significant that as well as this being the only occasion in the Hebrew Psalter that the Greek and Latin versions translate הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה , it is also the only occasion on which it occurs in the body of a Psalm rather than at the beginning or end.

A similar situation occurs at examples 17 and 18 in the table, regarding Psalm 146(147).1. Given the correspondence of the *IH* with the *ILXX* and LXX at both Psalm 134.1 and 146.1 *IH*, Jerome could simply have been copying them. However, his entry in the *Commentarioli* for Psalm 146.1 *IH* suggests that he could have translated both verses in the *IH* independently: *Laudate Dominum, quia bonus psalmus. Pro eo quod est ‘laudate Dominum,’ in hebraeo habet ALLELUIA. Pro quo quinta editio posuit ‘laudate IA,’ id est Dominum. Ia unum est de decem nominibus Dei.*⁷³¹ This may be compared to Psalm 117.5 *IH* where Jerome twice translates Hebrew יְהוָה by *Dominus* in the *ILXX* and *IH*, despite *κύριος* appearing only once in this

⁷³¹ CCSL 72, p. 245.

verse in the LXX, with reference to the subsequent verse where the Hebrew יהוה is translated by κύριος and Dominus in the LXX and ILXX/IH respectively.

Furthermore there is ample evidence that Jerome understood the meaning of the הללו portion of הללו-יהוה. This is evident from Jerome's remarks on the Quinta that we have just noted, but it is also evident from his translations at Psalms 112.1, 148.1 and 150.1 IH, among others. All three of these verses begin in Hebrew with יהוה הללו which Jerome renders as *Alleluia* in the IH. Psalm 113.1 MT continues with הללו עבדי יהוה הללו את-שם יהוה, which Jerome translates in the IH as *Laudate servi Dominum laudate nomen Domini*. Psalm 148.1 MT continues with הללו את-יהוה מן-השמים הללו את-יהוה בפרזמים, which Jerome translates in the IH as *Laudate Dominum de caelis laudate eum in excelsis*. Finally Psalm 150.1 continues with הללו-אל בקדשו הללו-הו בקייע עזו, which Jerome translates in the IH as *Laudate Deum in sancto eius/ laudate eum in fortitudine potentiae eius*.

We thus have evidence from the *Commentarioli* that Jerome knew that *Alleluia* was a transliteration of the Hebrew, but could be translated as *Laudate Dominum*. We have evidence that he knew to translate הללו as *laudate* and יהוה as *Dominus* when they occurred separately. We also have the evidence from Psalm 134(135).3 where Jerome translated הללו-יהוה as *laudate Dominum* on the only occasion that it did not occur at the beginning or end of a Psalm. Jerome's reference in the *Commentarioli* to the use of the word *Alleluia* in Christian liturgy provides the clue as to why he persists with transliterating rather than translating הללו יהוה. Evidently in 4th Century Latin speaking churches, much as in modern English speaking churches, *Alleluia* had become a formulaic expression of praise, to be said at the beginning and/or end of certain

Psalms as well as on other occasions.⁷³² We have discussed the cases of several Greek words whose Latin transliterations had developed their own specialised meanings. This is a rather more unusual case of the Latin transliteration of a Hebrew word (albeit via the Greek) taking on its own meaning as an interjection within a specifically Christian context.

Jerome found it more expedient in the *IH* Psalter to continue to transliterate יהללו יה when it occurred at the beginning and end of Psalms rather than to translate it. No doubt Jerome foresaw a negative response from Christians were the familiar, not to say sonorous, even lyrical, *Alleluia* to be replaced by the prosaic *Laudate Dominum*, and chose to propagate the reading that was familiar to his Christian audience.

5.4.8 Conclusion: the Impact of a Christian Idiom

Our discussion of these five words in the *IH* Psalter has revealed the complexity of assessing the significance that we may be justified in attaching to their use. It has also revealed the complexity and inconsistency of Jerome's practice so that it is impossible to make broad and sweeping statements about what he would or would not do in a given situation. However, we have also shown beyond doubt that while in most cases the words we discussed could be justified as alternative translations (or at least "interpretations") of the Hebrew, all of them carried an inescapably Christian nuance in the late 4th Century. We have also shown that Jerome was fully aware of the

⁷³² Cf. "the liturgical use in Jewish (Hellenistic) worship ... has it sung by the congregation and makes it an independent acclamation ... Christian worship adopted the same practice." TDNT, v. I, p. 264. Jerome's remarks suggest that Christians did not "sing" *Alleluia*, but it most likely remained an "independent acclamation" nevertheless.

meaning of the Hebrew words behind them, and that on other occasions he used Latin words with no such Christian significance to translate these same Hebrew words.

We may conclude with confidence that Jerome used these significant words deliberately, and with full knowledge of the Christian nuance they brought to the psalms in question. This allows us a deeper understanding of the tension between the roles of Jerome the Christian translator and Jerome the Hebrew scholar that underlies and informs the peculiarities of the final form of the *IH* Psalter. Indeed, we have upheld the validity of Kedar's assertion that "of the Christian application of the OT Jerome was deeply convinced,"⁷³³ but we have demonstrated that this did not always issue in consistently Christian translations, even where linguistic space to do so was available. We have also shown how Jerome's subtle "emploi d'un certain vocabulaire" modified the sense of (strictly speaking) individual verses, but by association the more general sense of the Psalter as a whole. In terms of their etymology these five words may well be *Iuxta Hebraeos*, but in terms of their 4th Century significance they are also, we might say, *Iuxta Christianos*. As a result, these words, and certain others similar to them, contribute to the *Iuxta Hebraeos* Psalter assuming a distinctly Christian tone.

⁷³³ Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 329.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

*“Ad Hebraeos igitur revertendum est unde et dominus loquitur.”*⁷³⁴

Our aim in this last chapter is to bring into focus the comprehensive picture of the character of the *IH* that we advocated in the Introduction. Having summarised the discoveries of each chapter we will assess the benefits and limitations of our methodology in this study, and will suggest new avenues of related research that promise to be fruitful. We will then return to further points that we raised in the Introduction, including Jerome’s translation technique(s), his aims in producing the *IH* Psalter, and Jerome’s “own sense of the text’s divinity.”⁷³⁵ We will suggest that these three aspects of Jerome’s approach to the Psalter are inseparable. Taken together they provide the key to understanding the character of the *IH* Psalter.

6.1 Jerome the Hebrew Scholar

The sort of knowledge we sought to demonstrate straddles Burstein’s categories,⁷³⁶ and might best be termed “connaissance «active»” – suggesting that Jerome would be fully able to translate a Hebrew text into Latin, even if he could not translate a similar

⁷³⁴ *Prol. in Para.*, PL 28.1326, Weber/Gryson p. 547.

⁷³⁵ Norton, *A History*, p. 34.

⁷³⁶ Burstein, “La compétence,” p. 12.

Latin text into Hebrew. While Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew seems never to have reached the level of "compétence «active»,” as defined by Burstein, we noted evidence from several quarters which suggested that it certainly surpassed "connaissance «passive».”

Here at the end of our study we can make two further points. First, by focussing on verses for which we have exegetical comments by Jerome we appreciate what he considered the significance of his Latin translation to be, and by comparing the ways he translates the same Hebrew words on different occasions we appreciate his awareness of unusual translations. Second, and more importantly, while Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew is still up for debate, his knowledge of Latin is certainly not. Whether or not he could discuss the accuracy of his translation at any point he must undoubtedly have been aware of its exegetical significance, and the fact that Jerome at least claimed to be translating from the Hebrew means that we can still investigate his conception of the true meaning and significance of the Hebrew text.

6.2 Classical Influences on the *IH* Psalter

Jerome's rhetorical question to Eustochium, "*Quid facit cum Psalterio Horatius?*" made it particularly interesting to rise to Brown Tkacz' challenge and look for classical allusions in the *IH* Psalter. Crucially, our methodology involved comparing the *IH* with the Hebrew as our starting point, rather than starting with Classical literature and looking for similarities in the *IH*. We discovered no readings at all in the *IH* Psalter that can only be explained by reference to classical literature.

We did, however, discover evidence that Jerome sought at times to make the Latin of the *IH* Psalter conform to the classical literary standards of the 4th century, which corroborated the general observations along these lines made by other scholars.⁷³⁷ Readings in the *IH* Psalter that show greater literary merit than their predecessors must no doubt partly be explained by Jerome's sensitivity, as a competent translator, to Hebrew poetic structures. But those instances where the poetry of the *IH* goes beyond the Hebrew suggest that Jerome was concerned to demonstrate a certain degree of classical *παιδεία* in his *IH* Psalter. Nevertheless, Jerome seems to have been more concerned to provide a close Latin translation of the Hebrew than to provide a highly stylised "classical" translation.⁷³⁸ The examples we discussed were the exceptions rather than the rule.

6.3 Jewish Influences on the *IH* Psalter

Our primary contribution to the debate over Jerome's use of Jewish expertise was to draw careful distinctions between philological and exegetical expertise. The two are closely related, indeed modern theories of translation suggest they are inseparable, but it seems that Jerome sought to distinguish them and to utilise them differently.

Jerome's use of Jewish philological expertise – whether from his teachers or previous Jewish Greek versions of the Old Testament – is ubiquitous, but neither surprising nor particularly significant in terms of the character of the *IH* translations. In contrast to

⁷³⁷ Including Benjamin Kedar, who suggests that "Jerome's translation not infrequently assumes the sonority and rhythm of poetry," Kedar, "Latin Translations," p. 314.

⁷³⁸ This confirms Norton's statement that "Jerome's character and circumstances were more propitious for the creation of a consciously literary version than those of his English successors, yet he did not, by his own standards, produce such a version." Norton, *A History*, p. 37.

this we revealed very few instances where Jerome's Latin reading could only or best be explained by reference to Jewish exegetical traditions. It is significant that the most prominent of the few exceptions to this pattern, namely Psalm 7.1 *IH*, involves a Psalm that had no Christological importance.

6.4 Christian Influences on the *IH* Psalter

We argued with Kamin that Jerome's *IH* project received its greatest motivation from his desire to provide a Hebrew-based Latin version of the Old Testament for Christians, based on his argument – which set him in opposition to his contemporaries – that only the *hebraica veritas* would suffice as the basis of such a version.

Our comparison of Old and New Testament versions of those verses of the Psalter that are quoted by Christ or the Apostles showed that there are great difficulties in deciding which version Jerome is following in *IH* and why,⁷³⁹ but also made it clear that Jerome did not attempt to impose the textual authority of the New Testament on the Old, or vice versa, or even to show a connection between the two by judicious use of synonyms. Whatever Jerome meant by *Sit illa vera interpretatio, quam Apostoli probaverunt*,⁷⁴⁰ he did not in practice consider the Apostles' approval to outweigh the authority of the Hebrew text.

Our investigation of the relationship between Jerome's exegetical remarks in the *Commentarioli* and the *Tractatus* and their respective verses in the *IH* Psalter found

⁷³⁹ It was similarly difficult to decide which version (Hebrew or Greek) Christ and the Apostles were following!

⁷⁴⁰ *Praef in Evang PL 29.527*, Weber/Gryson, p. 1515.

that Jerome generally sought to provide a translation that supported a Christian exegesis of the verse, provided it was also a reasonable translation of the Hebrew. Occasionally this allowed Jerome to draw out a Christian motif that had hitherto lain “undiscovered.” Other times it meant abandoning a Christian motif from the *IH* Psalter in the interests of close translation.

Our assessment of Jerome’s use of Latin words that by the 4th Century had gained a particularly Christian significance showed that he was willing to use these words despite knowing acceptable, theologically neutral, alternatives. Their use throughout the *IH* Psalter brought a nuance to it that, if not always inevitably Christian, at least incorporated Christian overtones, and eased the possibility of reading those verses in a Christian way.

6.5 Methodology: Benefits and Limitations

Our methodology was primarily designed to minimise the potential difference between our assessment and Jerome’s own assessment of the significance of a particular translation. This study is the first of its kind on the *IH* Psalter, so there was adequate material to discuss in this way, but our methodology was occasionally restrictive. Psalm 44 *IH*, for example, includes several unusual translations of the Hebrew and changes over the *ILXX* that seem to promote a Christological interpretation, but the silence of the *Commentarioli* meant that we felt unable accurately to assess their significance.

Our practice of comparing the *IH* Psalter with the MT was a vital first step, and should be followed by all similar future investigations. It also showed that Jerome's Hebrew manuscript, of the Psalter at least, does indeed seem to have been very close to the MT as we have it. Our comparison of the *IH* Psalter with the *ILXX* provided a useful reference point for assessing relationship between these two versions, as well as their relationships with their respective *Vorlagen*. Only Job and the Song of Songs are similarly extant in an *ILXX* version, albeit in two manuscripts for the former and a single manuscript for the latter.⁷⁴¹ Research on other *IH* books will not therefore be able to compare Jerome's practice in this way. While in this study we ignored the Old Latin tradition, partly in the absence of a critical edition and partly because the *ILXX* Psalter stands in for that tradition, future studies will need to pay more careful attention to the relationship between Jerome's *IH* version and the *VL* versions.

Now that this study has begun to establish Jerome's *IH* translation habits in verses that we can compare in another version by the same translator, and whose significance we can confirm from his exegetical material, future scholarship in the *IH* Psalter as well as other *IH* books has a yardstick that will enable more accurate assessment of translations whose significance cannot be investigated in this way.

6.6 Future Scholarship

We are confident that there are no direct allusions to classical literature in the *IH* Psalter, but it would worthwhile to compare its language and idiom with that of 4th

⁷⁴¹ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 159, McKane, *Christian Hebraists*, p. 34.

Century Latin more generally. Similarly, scholars with a deeper knowledge of rabbinic literature may notice influences from this sphere that have escaped us, though the general similarity of the *IH* to the plain sense of the Hebrew means that there are no glaring anomalies to be explained. However, we believe that the most fruitful line of research still to be pursued in the *IH* Psalter will be an analysis of Jerome's translations in light of exegeses of those verses that we find in Jerome's *Tractatus de Psalmos* in particular, but also in other early Christian commentaries on the Psalter, such as those of Augustine, and various of the Greek Fathers. This will offer broader insight into whether and if so how Jerome's translations in the *IH* Psalter reflect contemporary Christian exegeses.

It will also be worthwhile to undertake similar studies on other books of the *IH* Old Testament, both in order to understand their internal character, and to investigate changes in Jerome's practice, if any, over time and in different biblical genres. So far only Exodus has been treated in this way.⁷⁴² An analysis of the relationship of the *IH* Psalter to the *VL* Psalter will be worthwhile when a full critical edition of the latter is published. This is most unlikely to alter the conclusions that we have reached in this study regarding the significance of readings in the *IH*, but it will be more important for investigating verses in the *IH* that Jerome does not discuss personally.

⁷⁴² Kraus, *Jerome's Translation*. We noted, however, that the way he presented his research makes it difficult to gain a sense of the relative influence from classical, Jewish and Christian spheres.

6.7 *Quid Facit cum Psalterio Hieronymus?*

Despite the examples we discussed in the course of this study, Jerome's *IH* translation of the Psalter is generally very close to the Hebrew as we have it in the MT. He did not attempt to provide an impossibly literal translation akin to Aquila's, but seems to have made it his primary task to translate the Hebrew text as objectively as possible into Latin. The result is neither a strict "word for word" translation, nor a "sense for sense" translation that borders on paraphrase. Reading the *IH* in parallel with the *ILXX*, and them in parallel with the MT and LXX respectively, showed that in each case the Latin version is a close and generally unadorned, yet by no means slavishly literal, translation of the Hebrew or the Greek.

Jerome's lofty view of the Hebrew text suggests what we might term an "Antiochene" approach towards bible translation. O'Keefe, Simonetti and Young among others have made important contributions to our understanding of "Antiochene" and "Alexandrian" methods of exegesis,⁷⁴³ noting that Jerome appears to have sat between the two. We suggest that we can discern similar principles in Jerome's translations.

O'Keefe, for example, suggests in regard to Antiochene exegesis that "When the theological reading of a text collides with the accepted standards of interpretation, one should choose the latter. Grammatical rules outweigh theological insight."⁷⁴⁴

Simonetti argues that : "during the [Origenist] controversy, he began ... to listen to the new criteria which the Antiochenes were proposing and especially making fuller use of the philological and linguistic component of interpretation."⁷⁴⁵ For her part Young

⁷⁴³ O'Keefe, J.J., "A Letter that Killeth," pp. 83-104, Simonetti, "Biblical Interpretation," Young, "Biblical Exegesis."

⁷⁴⁴ O'Keefe, "A Letter that Killeth," p. 104.

⁷⁴⁵ Simonetti, "Biblical Interpretation," p. 100.

emphasise the Antiochenes' use of "standard literary techniques in use in the rhetorical schools" to inform their exegesis.⁷⁴⁶ The predominant characteristic of Jerome's translations in the *IH* Psalter is that they show great respect for grammatical and philological rules. Jerome was willing to exploit all the space for interpretive translation that such rules allowed him,⁷⁴⁷ but he rarely broke them without at least some attempt to justify his action.

Nevertheless, the *vir tricultus* left his personal mark on the *IH* Psalter in the sensitivity to and awareness of those cultures that his translation displays in its small details. The influence of Jerome the classical scholar is evident in the literary flourishes that would have pleased any educated Latin speaker. The influence of Jerome the Hebrew pupil in contact with his Jewish teachers is evident in the *IH* Psalter's closeness to the Hebrew text, and in those verses where rabbinic exegeses or rabbinic exegetical devices appear to underlie Jerome's translation, even if (as is the case with his translation of מְקַתֵּם) he subsequently provides a Christian exegesis of those verses. However it is the influence of Jerome the Christian scholar that is most evident, sometimes in strikingly Christian readings like *Iesus*, more often in the cumulative effect of small changes over the entire Psalter, changes whose true significance is obvious in their correspondence to Christological exegeses offered by Jerome elsewhere.

Jerome claims that his aim in translating the Psalter *Iuxta Hebraeos*, and the sole source of differences between his new version and previous versions, was his desire to

⁷⁴⁶ Young, "Biblical Exegesis," p. 182.

⁷⁴⁷ Note, however, that Jerome's translation of נִשְׁקוּ-בָר at Psalm 2.12 *IH* and his accompanying remarks demonstrate that the possibility that a phrase could be interpreted (*interpretari*) Christologically does not necessarily mean that it could or should be translated (*interpretari*) Christologically.

“translate knowledge from the Hebrew truth.” “*Certe confidenter dicam et multos huius operis testes citabo, me nihil dumtaxat scientem de hebraica veritate mutasse. Sicubi ergo editio mea a veteribus discreparit, interroga quemlibet Hebraeorum et liquido pervidebis me ab aemulis frustra lacerari.*”⁷⁴⁸ We are now in a position to judge the truthfulness of this statement, the *veritas Hieronymi*, perhaps.

Jerome’s work on the Psalter undoubtedly brought the Latin text into closer conformity with the Hebrew: many of the significant translations that we discussed can indeed be explained as possible translations of the Hebrew. In this regard it is important to note that Jerome’s words were written in defence of his new version to Christians (possibly Rufinus) who feared that his new translation would diminish the Christian character of the Psalter. We have discovered more cases where the *IH* Psalter offers an increased Christian nuance than cases where it retreats from an earlier Christological reading. Far from “Judaising” the Psalter Jerome’s *IH* version seems on balance to have “Christianised” it, yet he persists in his claim that *quilibet Hebraeorum* will attest to the faithfulness of his translation. Jerome, it seems, was aware of the exegetical space offered by different possible Latin translations of a Hebrew word, and exploited that space to provide a translation that, as we have suggested, was both “kosher” and “Christian.”

However, our study has also demonstrated several instances where *quilibet Hebraeorum* would be hard pushed to affirm the accuracy of Jerome’s translation. Jerome’s varying practice could simply be explained in terms of the inconsistency that scholars routinely detect in Jerome’s attitudes and work in general. It may be that here

⁷⁴⁸ *Alia Praefatio*, Weber/Gryson, p. 769.

as often elsewhere we simply cannot pin Jerome down. We suggest, however, that the character of Jerome's work in the *IH* Psalter can be explained by re-evaluating his conception of *hebraica veritas*.

6.8 Translation technique; the Purpose of the *IH* Psalter; and Jerome's Conception of the Nature of the Hebrew Text

If we take Jerome at his word when he claims that his purpose in translating the Hebrew scriptures was "*nihil dumtaxat scientem de hebraica veritate mutasse*," (and there is no a priori reason that we should not), the results of our investigation suggest that Jerome's conception of *hebraica veritas* is more comprehensive than the natural sense of the words of the Hebrew text. In the Introduction we noted Norton's suggestion that the most powerful forces in determining the nature of the *IH* translations were "the people's established sense of biblical Latin and ... his own sense of the text's divinity."⁷⁴⁹ Jerome's conception of the nature of the Hebrew text is the key that will allow us to synthesise the results of our investigation into the classical, Jewish and Christian influences on the *IH* Psalter.

Two examples that we discussed earlier will aid our progress. The first is Jerome's translation of Psalm 21.1 *IH*, and the corresponding entry in the *Commentarioli*.⁷⁵⁰ We showed in Chapter 3.5.1 that Jerome's *IH* translation followed what he believed to be the meaning of the Hebrew text, despite having to abandon the Christological reading of the *ILXX* in the process, but then resorted to classical animal mythology to

⁷⁴⁹ Norton, *A History*, p. 34.

⁷⁵⁰ *CCSL* 72, p. 198.

interpret the *IH* reading (and so by implication the Hebrew) Christologically.

Jerome's activities suggest an assumption of the Christocentric nature of the Hebrew text, that is, that the Hebrew text, properly translated and properly understood is about Christ. This helps us to understand Jerome's obscure claim that "*omnis gratia et potentia idolatriae, et sublimitas ac pompa culturae ad montem transeat Sion, hoc est, ad ecclesiam Christi.*"⁷⁵¹ All that is laudable in classical pagan culture is that which allows us to discern Christ more clearly. Moreover, the divinity of *hebraica veritas* ensures its literary quality, so that by demonstrating literary flourish in his translations, Jerome was simply reflecting the innate quality of the Hebrew.

The second is Jerome's *IH* translation of מִקְטָנִים as *humilis et simplex* that we discussed in Chapter 4.6. We showed that, whether Jerome derived his translation directly from his rabbinic teachers or from the Jewish Greek translations of Aquila and Symmachus, the crucial point is that he was exploiting rabbinic exegetical techniques, or the translations of *judaizantes haeretici*, to discern a Christian meaning in the Hebrew text. An assumption of the Christocentric nature of the Hebrew text is again apparent. Jerome translated the Hebrew text as accurately as he believed possible, and discerned Christological significance within that translation. Once again, the Hebrew text properly translated and properly understood, is about Christ. In the previous example that proper understanding came via the classical world; in this example it came via the Jewish world. In both the Christocentric nature of the Hebrew text is key.

Our discussion of Christian influences on the *IH* Psalter arrived at similar conclusions: Jerome was convinced of the Christian significance of the Hebrew text,

⁷⁵¹ CCSL 72, p. 240.

but his willingness to make that Christian significance evident in his Latin translation depended on whether or not he believed the Hebrew text could support such a translation. Sometimes, perhaps, as in the case of *ישׁו*/*Iesus*, Jerome's Christocentric interpretation of the Hebrew text caused him to stretch the boundaries of translation, though even in this case too he seems to have believed that his translation revealed what is *in hebraeo*.⁷⁵² Most significantly, our examples of Jerome's translation of *עלמות* and *מכתם* at Psalms 9.1 and 15.1 *IH* respectively, suggested that, in these two cases at least, the Hebrew scriptures properly vocalised and understood were by nature Christocentric.

Salvesen disagrees with Ulrich concerning the significance of Origen's work, noting: "Eugene Ulrich speaks of Origen's work as effecting the Christianisation of the Jewish Bible, but I would see it as a Hebraization of the Christian Bible."⁷⁵³ We believe that Jerome, by contrast, would have seen his own work neither as the "Christianisation of the Jewish Bible," nor as the "Hebraization of the Christian Bible," indeed it seems unlikely that he would accept a distinction between "Jewish Bible" and "Christian Bible" at all.⁷⁵⁴ Jerome's concept of the "divinity" of *hebraica veritas*, in the dual sense of it being the inspired and authoritative word of God, and the source of revelation about Jesus Christ, informed his purpose in the *IH* project and his translation technique. He believed that the only adequate Old Testament for Christians was one translated by a Christian from the Hebrew, and this is what he set

⁷⁵² *Tractatus de Psalmo LXXXIII*, CCSL 78, p. 396.

⁷⁵³ Salvesen, "A Convergence," p. 242, referring to Ulrich, E., "The Old Testament Text of Eusebius: The Heritage of Origen," in *Eusebius, Christianity and Judaism*, ed. H.W. Attridge and G. Hata, (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp 543-63, here p. 558.

⁷⁵⁴ Note, in particular, our discussion of Jerome's remarks in the *Commentarioli* on Psalm 67.13 *IH* in Chapter 5.1.7.

out to do.⁷⁵⁵ Yet he placed the veridical authority of the text above the authority of traditional Christian exegesis so that, for the most part, he propagated Christological translations only insofar as he believed them to be reasonable translations of the Hebrew text.

6.9 Conclusion

Our tripartite investigation of the *IH* Psalter has demonstrated evidence of influences on Jerome's translation that can be traced to his exposure to classical, Jewish and Christian worldviews. In confirmation of Jerome's arguments that the Old Greek translator(s) had hidden references to Christ, we found that the *IH* Psalter has more Christological translations than its *ILXX* counterpart.⁷⁵⁶ How ironic that conservative Christian opinion held so tenaciously to the Old Greek/*LXX* as the product of divine revelation to the Gentiles and to the Christian Church. The reception history of the *IH* Psalter is obscure,⁷⁵⁷ but it is clear that it was never generally accepted. The fatal blow came in the 9th Century when as part of his ecclesiastical reforms, Alcuin substituted the *ILXX* Psalter, that was commonly used in Gaul at that time, for the *IH* Psalter. The latter survived, and was the Psalter used as standard in Spanish Bibles for a long time

⁷⁵⁵ *Praef. in Job*, PL 28.1082-3, Weber/Gryson, p. 732.

⁷⁵⁶ It is intriguing to wonder how much of this was a deliberate attempt by Jerome to prove his own position!

⁷⁵⁷ Salvesen is on to something when she suggests: "It was easier for Latin readers to accept the *Iuxta Hebraeos* version, since no one had claimed inspiration for the Old Latin version(s) it replaced [and, we might add, Jerome had declined to translate more than a few books from the Hexaplaric *LXX*, for which divine inspiration had been claimed!] ... It is doubtful that faithfulness to the Hebrew original was something that readers of the *Iuxta Hebraeos* particularly favored, but they do seem to have liked its good Latin." Salvesen, "A Convergence?" pp. 253-254. Kelly is vague: "By a gradual process extending from the sixth to the ninth century it was to become accepted ... as the standard, or 'Vulgate', Latin text of the Bible," Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 162; so is McKane: "The translation of the book of Psalms which Jerome made from the Hebrew ... did not win acceptance in the Vulgate. It may be supposed that forces of conservatism, attaching to a book with such liturgical centrality in the Church, prevailed against Jerome's new rendering from the Hebrew ... the final ascendancy of his Vulgate ... was an outcome of the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century." McKane, *Christian Hebraists*, p. 39.

afterwards, but it was removed from the mainstream.⁷⁵⁸ Yet this only partial success of Jerome's *IH* Psalter in supplanting its Latin predecessors, and Alcuin's decision based, perhaps, more on local expediency than objective appraisal, means that we have preserved today both of Jerome's major versions of the Psalter.

Our comparison of these two Hieronymian Psalters allowed us to discern the multifaceted connections between the *IH* and the religious and cultural milieux within which Jerome operated. However it showed above all that the *IH* Psalter was primarily a translation by a Christian and for Christians, based on a conviction that the true and natural sense of the Hebrew text of the Psalter pointed inevitably to Christ. Salvesen is correct to say that because of Jerome's work, "the Christian Old Testament had been brought more closely in line with Jewish Scripture, rather than moving gradually further away from it through ... a desire to elucidate difficulties by Christian means only."⁷⁵⁹ Our work, however, shows that we must go further and assert that the motivation behind Jerome's work was a belief that bringing the Latin Old Testament more closely in line with Jewish Scripture was fundamental to understanding its true Christian significance. Jerome abandoned his contemporaries' common notion that the LXX represented a "gentile chain of transmission ... guided by divine Providence."⁷⁶⁰ The consequent coupling of the Christian faith to the Hebrew scriptures was, perhaps, Jerome's most significant achievement.

⁷⁵⁸ Weber/Gryson, p. XXX.

⁷⁵⁹ Salvesen, "A Convergence?" p. 254.

⁷⁶⁰ Kamesar, *Jerome*, p. 33.

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