

POPE BONIFACE I, THE PELAGIAN CONTROVERSY AND THE GROWTH OF PAPAL AUTHORITY

BONIFACE I AND CELESTINE I

The feast of Christmas was but one day old in the year 418 when Pope Zosimus (whose *Tractoria* issued several months previously had officially condemned the Pelagian movement) departed this life and was buried a day later, most likely in the basilica of St Lawrence on the Tiburtine Way.¹ The most immediate legacy bequeathed the Roman Church with his death, however, was schism. Whether or not this division within the clergy of Rome was an immediate result of the late pope's management of the Pelagian affair is a question to which no certain answer is readily available. Nonetheless, it is a point worth querying, and shall be examined in due course. The facts are that the two contenders for the vacant See were Eulalius (who enjoyed the support of the strong College of Roman deacons) and Boniface, the eventual victor. The *Liber Pontifi-*

¹ "Qui etiam sepultus est via Tiburtina, iuxta corpus beati Laurenti martyris, VII kal. Ianuar." (L. DUCHESNE, *Le Liber Pontificalis* II, Paris, 1886, p. 225.) Duchesne notes that there had been some discussion in the latter part of the nineteenth century as to the exact burial place of this pope, whether he was entombed within close proximity to the body of the martyr or in an ordinary catacomb. It was Duchesne's final opinion, based on certain archaeological evidence, that the late pope was interred in the basilica itself and not in some obscure catacomb (p. 226). Duchesne also notes that with Zosimus' we encounter the first time that a papal date of burial is *not* recorded in the Hieronymian martyrology, a fact which he finds rather astonishing. Although the 27 December marked the feast of Sts John and James, it was hardly unusual to note such a significant event in the church's history as the passing of a Roman bishop, and therefore presumes an oversight. Given St Jerome's rather strong feelings on the recent proceedings at Rome (assuming him to be the actual author of the martyrology which is not beyond dispute), and Caelestius' short-lived victory there before this pope, it is perhaps not quite as surprising as Duchesne might think. The author of the *Liber* seems to be indicating that the burial occurred on the seventh kalends of January (26 December) 418 which was actually the date of Zosimus' death. In fact he was buried on the sixth kalends (December 27), the same day on which Eulalius was elected pope in Rome immediately following the papal funeral rites.

calis, though of a later date², describes the contest between them thusly:

"He and Eulalius were ordained in rivalry on the same day and the clergy were divided 7 months 15 days. Now Eulalius was ordained in the Constantinian Basilica, whereas Boniface was ordained in that of Julius. On hearing this the emperor Valentinian [III], then residing at Ravenna, reported it to the Emperor Honorius in residence at Milan. The two emperors sent a warrant ordering that both men should leave the city".³

Eulalius had been an archdeacon in Rome during the reign of Zosimus. Whatever his favour had been with the late pontiff, he and his party apparently wasted no time in placing him on Peter's Chair, having proceeded to his election immediately from the funeral rites. The reason for such apparently indecorous haste, however, may have been rooted in some of Zosimus' unresolved difficulties with regard to the presbyters of Rome. Pietri feels that Zosimus and the priests of the city had been at odds with one another, though no concrete reason for the contention is yet forthcoming.⁴ Their motivation may have been as simple as a perception of Eulalius associating him with the established and centralized power of the increasingly influential Roman "curia". In the end, the archdeacon's election was hardly convincing. Although perhaps theoretically better placed within the old papal "household" to assume the position, he gleaned the support of but seven deacons and some three priests associated with their number⁵.

His contender, Boniface, was a member of a clerical family, his father Iocundus having been a leading presbyter during the reign of Pope Innocent. Indeed, that pope had employed Iocundus as his envoy on sever-

² Duchesne claims that the *Liber* dates from the early sixth century. In its earliest form, Manuscript 22 from Verona clearly indicates a date from about 555. The problem with this manuscript, however, is that only the ending is extant, and so it is not possible to tell if it is actually identical with the *Liber* as it has come down through history. The Verona manuscript, in fact, begins with the reign of Anastasius II, post-dating our period of interest by half a century. (L. DUCHESNE, *Étude sur le Liber Pontificalis*, Paris, 1877, p. 24.)

³ "Hic sub intentione cum Eulalio ordinatur uno die et fuit dissensio in clero mens. VII d. XV. Eulalius vero ordinatur in basilica Constantiniana, Bonifatius autem in basilica Iuliae. Eodem tempore audiens hoc Placidia Augusta cum filio suo Valentiniano Augusto, dum sederent Ravenna, retulit Honorio Augusto Mediolano sedenti. Eodem tempore ambo Augusti missa auctoritate hoc praeceperunt ut ambo exirent civitate." (DUCHESNE, p. 227; Eng. trans. in R. DAVIS, *The Book of Pontiffs*, Liverpool, 1989, p. 33.)

⁴ C. PIETRI, *Roma Christiana. Recherches sur l'Église de Rome, son organisation, sa politique, son idéologie de Miltiade à Sixte III (311-440)* (Bibliothèque de l'École française d'Athènes et de Rome 224), Rome-Paris, 1976, p. 456.

⁵ *Exemplum relationis Symmachi praef. urb. ad Honorem principem Rauennae constitutum*, Coll. Avel. 14,5, CSEL 35, p. 59,25 - 60,1.

al important missions to the court at Constantinople.⁶ Also during Innocent's reign Boniface had himself served as papal envoy to the Court of Constantinople⁷. It would seem likely, owing to his missions, that he had spent little time in the papal court itself, and so was probably not closely associated with the decisions of his predecessor. On the day after Eulalius' election, December 28, the majority of presbyters, numbering seventy men, and a great number of the laity assembled in the church of Theodora and elected Boniface in opposition to the action of the college of deacons. On Sunday, December 29, both men were consecrated "bishop of Rome", Eulalius in the Constantinian Basilica, and Boniface in the church of St Marcellus – by no less than nine bishops.

Whatever the effect of the Pelagian controversy on the outcome of this election, it would appear from Augustine that partisans of the recently condemned "heretics" had indeed perceived the schism as a judgment upon the Church of Rome for its "prevarication" under Pope Zosimus.⁸ The late pope and his clergy, who may have regrettably acted out of force and fear with regard to the Pelagians, could not be acquitted so easily of their treachery against the truth, believed Julian of Aeclanum, and the confusion which followed the disputed papal vote was but the punishment of God for their offences.⁹

On the day of the double papal consecrations, the prefect of Rome, Symmachus the Younger,¹⁰ sent a report to the Emperor Honorius showing definite favour toward Eulalius.¹¹ Given the latter's position in

⁶ Cf. J.N.D., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Popes*, Oxford, 1986, p. 40.

⁷ Α λαβόντες as described by PALLADIUS, *Dial.* IV.

⁸ AUGUSTINE, *C. Iul.* 6,37, *PL* 44, c. 842; cf. also G. DE PLINVAL, *Pélage, ses écrits, sa vie et sa réforme. Étude d'histoire littéraire et religieuse*, Lausanne, 1943, p. 341.

⁹ "Quale est autem, quod beatae memoriae Zosimum Apostolicae Sedis episcopum, ut in tua pravitate persistas, praevericationis accusas? Qui non recessit a suo praecessore Innocentio, quem tu nominare timuisti; sed maluisti Zosimum, quia egit primitus lenius cum Coelestio: quoniam se in his sensibus vestris si quid displiceret, paratum esse dixerat corrigi, et Innocentii litteris consensurum esse promiserat. Memento sane quemadmodum de constituendo episcopo dissensionem populi Romani insultabundus objectas." (AUGUSTINE, *C. Iul.* 6, 12, 37-38, *PL* 44, c. 842.)

¹⁰ Aurelius Anicius Symmachus, a distant relation to the powerful Anicii family, was Prefect of the city of Rome from 418-20, assuming that office only two days before the death of Pope Zosimus. He is the author of several letters in the *Collectio Avellana*, all dealing with the disputed papal election of Christmastide 418, those being *Epp.* 14, 16, 19, 29, 32 and 34 (*CSEL* 35/1). Martindale expresses uncertainty about the possibility of his embracing Christianity. (J.R. MARTINDALE, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* II, Cambridge, 1980, pp. 1043-44.)

¹¹ PIETRI, p. 453; G. BARDY, *Boniface in Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* 9, Paris, 1937, cc. 895-97, c. 895.

the Roman establishment during the reign of Pope Zosimus, it is perhaps not surprising that he should have enjoyed the support of powerful figures like Symmachus and others who represented the establishment of the city. Of course, there is no way, other than by inference, to determine the particular reasons for the support which certain members of the Roman aristocracy provided the archdeacon. What does become clear is that the Roman church, in order to resolve the crisis, had to pay a certain price in terms of power-sharing to assure aristocratic support. It was imperial power and local authority which, in the end, intervened to bring about the peace of the Church again.¹² The resolution of the schism, therefore, also serves to highlight the fact that any disagreement within the Roman church now involved the whole society of Rome, and that society was already quite fractured.

At first, Honorius continued to support Eulalius, as evidenced in the following rescript sent by the Emperor to Symmachus on 3 January 419:

"Therefore Your Sublimity should know by our Clemency's present authority that our wish and interest are agreed in respect to Eulalius as bishop of the sacred law, on whom a competent number of ordainers, the customary procedure of a legitimate time and place, the character of a rightly venerated name have conferred the highest honour. Moreover, since it is agreed that all things have been lacking to Boniface, we deem that our decision has been awaited unnecessarily, because those who had presumed seem to have condemned their own ordained bishops by presentation of their prayers. Accordingly, by an absolute command we ordain that, when the extraordinary audacity has been dispelled and interdicted, Boniface forthwith should be debarred from the city. It will be a display of modesty on his part for him, accommodating himself to heavenly institutions, to depart voluntarily; but we order him to be expelled, if too stubbornly resisting and unwilling".¹³

¹² As Pietri observes, "Le pouvoir impérial, après quelques hésitations, a dirigé avec ses lois et sa police l'offensive contre l'hérésie et le paganisme, mais pour imposer plus efficacement son autorité centralisatrice l'épiscopat a trouvé l'appui, dès la fin du IV^e siècle, des puissants zelanti et de pieux cénacles. Un siècle plus tard, dans la Rome définitivement conquise à la foi nouvelle, la noblesse entend faire payer sa collaboration à l'oeuvre chrétienne en faisant plier sous son contrôle l'autorité pontificale." (PIETRI, p. 460)

¹³ "Conuenire ergo uotum et studium nostrum circa Eulaliū sacrae legis antistitem sublimitas tua clementiae nostrae auctoritate praesenti cognoscat, cui competens numerus ordinatum, legitimi sollemnitatis temporis locique qualitas recte uenerandi nominis apicem contulerunt. Cum autem Bonifatius constet omnia defuisse, superflue expectatam sententiam nostram esse censemus, cum factum suum episcopum, qui praesumpserant, ammotis damnasse precibus uideantur. Absoluta itaque decernimus iussione extraordinaria praesumptione sumnota Bonifatium interdicta confestim urbe prohiberi: erit uerecundiae eius, ut morem gerens caelestibus constitutis sponte discedat; pertinacius resistentem inuitum praecipimus expelli." (*Exemplum sacrarum litterarum*, Coll. Avel. 15,3-4, CSEL 35, p. 61,5-16; Eng. trans. in P.R. COLEMAN-NORTON, *Roman State and Christian Church*. A

It is not clear how well-informed the Emperor had been concerning the election and ordination. Although no figures are mentioned, he seems unaware of the fact that Boniface appeared to enjoy greater popular support, both among the clergy and the laity of Rome. His concern appears to have been primarily the maintenance of peace and good order, considering the matter merely a question of an illegitimate yet ambitious party claiming power which it did not truly deserve.¹⁴

In keeping with the imperial order, Boniface left the city, but remained on the outskirts, possibly in the vicinity of St Felicity's cemetery on the Via Salaria.¹⁵ Had it not been for the fact that Boniface's partisans petitioned Ravenna for redress of the grievances almost immediately, the matter would most certainly have dropped. As it was, however, some seventy presbyters appealed to Honorius to reconsider the matter. Pietri feels that the petition itself smacks of presbyterianism, over-emphasising the role of the priests in papal elections, and asserting that the divine judgment is to be found in the poll of their number.¹⁶ Honorius must have been persuaded by their appeal for a second rescript was sent to Symmachus on January 15 stating:

"Your illustrious and exalted Grandeur, after all previous decrees have been suspended and with no interim prejudgment arranged, by the authority of the present rescript, shall summon with suitable urgency both most religious men, that is Boniface and Eulalius, that before 8 February they should not delay to expedite their presence at the city of the Ravennates - with all who are performers of each ordination ... By our Serenity's writings we are summoning also from different provinces a suitable number of bishops, that the discussion of very many persons in our presence may put an end to the matter which has been brought into doubt".¹⁷

Collection of Legal Documents to A.D. 535, 2, London, 1966, p. 587.)

¹⁴ Cf. PIETRI, p. 459.

¹⁵ "Qui cum pulsi exissent, habitavit Bonifatius in cimiterio sanctae Felicitatis martyris, via Salaria, Eulalius vero in civitate Antio, ad sanctum Hermen." (DUCHESNE, *Liber Pontificalis*, p. 227.) The expulsion of Eulalius appears to be conflated here with that of Boniface, when in fact it was not until after an unsuccessful attempt to resolve the schism in February that the emperor ordered both contestants to remain outside of the city for the duration of Easter. The fact that Boniface built an oratory in honour of the saint, and was finally buried there all contribute to the likelihood that it was there that he took refuge during his exile. ("Hic fecit in cimiterio sanctae Felicitatis, iuxta corpus eius, et ornavit sepulchrum sanctae martyris Felicitatis et sancti Silvani ... Qui etiam sepultus est via Salaria, iuxta corpus sanctae Felicitatis martyris, vii Kal. Novemb." DUCHESNE, pp. 227-28.)

¹⁶ PIETRI, p. 456.

¹⁷ "Ob quam rem illustris et praecelsa magnitudo tua suspensis omnibus, quae superius sunt decreta, nullique hoc est Bonifatium et Eulalius religiosissimos uiros instantia digna conueniet, ut intra diem sextum Iduum Februariarum Rauennatum ciuitatem praesentiam

The Roman presbyters had claimed, probably quite accurately, that Symmachus had not been impartial in reporting the situation to Ravenna.

To redress the situation, a Synod was called for 8 February 419 in Ravenna. In attendance were the contenders and a company of bishops who had not been personally involved in the conflict. The Synod, however, achieved nothing, adjourning for Easter, with the intention that their meeting should resume on 13 June in Spoleto, to which the bishops of Africa and Gaul would be summoned. On the 15 March, the emperor further commanded that neither Eulalius nor Boniface could enter Rome to celebrate the Easter mysteries. It was left to the bishop of Spoleto, Achilleus, to perform the paschal rites in the absence of a legitimate bishop.¹⁸

suam maturare non differant, omnibus aequae admonitis, qui auctores utriusque ordinationis existunt... Nos quoque ex diuersis prouinciis competentem numerum sacerdotum scriptis nostris serenitatis accimus, ut remdeductam in dubium absoluat nobis coram disceptatio plurimorum." (*Ad petitionem presbyterorum huiusmodi sacrum rescriptum imperator P.U. Symmacho destinavit*, *Coll. Avel.* 18, *CSEL* 35/1, pp. 65,18-66,1; 8-11; Eng. trans. in COLEMAN-NORTON, p. 589.) The suspension of the original decree may have been brought about as much by the influence of the Emperor's sister, Galla Placidia, as it was by clerical pressure. Both she and the Count Constance were known to have supported one of the papal candidates actively, Kelly believing it to have been Boniface (KELLY, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Popes*, Oxford, 1986, p. 40). Given the emperor's rather rapid capitulation on this point, especially after so strongly-worded a rescript as the previous dated 3 January, it would seem appropriate that the strongest influence should have come from the highest places. It would be interesting here to know whether the Pelagian controversy did play a role in the resolution of the schism. The fact is that Galla Placidia had certainly been friendly to the African cause in the recent strife. It is also known that she sent a letter to Aurelius of Carthage summoning him to a council at Spoleto to help in the resolution of the electoral dispute (A. MANDOUZE, ed., *Aurelius in Prosopographie de l'Afrique chrétienne* (Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire 1), Paris, 1982, pp. 105-27, p. 123). Did she throw her weight behind Boniface, knowing that he would continue the policies opposing Pelagianism begun under his predecessor? The answer to this question must unfortunately remain in the realm of speculation, since Eulalius was never given the opportunity to air his views on the matter. His association with Zosimus' household in life, however, could easily have made him suspect in the eyes of both the Africans and their patrons in Ravenna.

¹⁸ Cf. "Quoniam de Romano sacerdotio propter angustias temporis, quas dierum sollemnitas fecit, quae abesse episcopos a suis ecclesiis non sinebat, dilatum constat esse iudicium, recte nostra serenitas credidit ordinandum, beatitudo tua ad <urbem> uenerabilem congrua ueneratione festinet, quatenus sanctae paschae dies ea qua conuenit quiete cum sollemnitate consueta populis repraesentes nec consuetudini obsit, quod differri synodum multiplex necessitas fecit. Illud sane in primis ac praecipue commonemus, ne umquam ulla illorum mentio fiat, de quibus constat suspensos esse iudicio." (Honorius to Achilleus of Spoleto, *Coll. Avel.* 22, *CSEL* 35/1, p. 69,16-25; cf. also *Epp.* 21, *ibid.*, pp. 68,17-69,12; 23, *ibid.*, pp. 69,28-70,16; 24, *ibid.*, pp. 70,19-71,17.)

It was Eulalius' transgression of this order which eventually resolved the crisis. The papal contender entered Rome on 18 March, purportedly in response to the demands of the faithful, before Symmachus had been able to receive the imperial order forbidding this action. Pietri feels that the Emperor probably would not have intervened had it not been for the riots which erupted in the city when the bishop of Spoleto entered to fulfil his appointed duties.¹⁹ On the 29 March, Holy Saturday, Eulalius occupied the Lateran Palace, refusing to submit to the imperial order.²⁰ The response to his recalcitrance was swift, with the "pope" being expelled by the *maiores regionum* that same day and chased from Rome itself by Symmachus.²¹

Thus did the favour of the emperor finally turn against the first elected successor of Zosimus - the candidate who, it should be recalled, initially enjoyed imperial favour. The resolution of this conflict is significant on a variety of levels. Firstly, as far as can be determined, no one theological issue was held responsible for the inauguration of the schism. The very fact that Julian of Aeclanum and his friends considered the situation *itself* a sign of God's wrath without supporting one candidate over the other would seem to indicate that Pelagianism was not a prominent theological factor in the election.

Secondly, the role of the papacy was obviously beginning to have relevance both politically and spiritually well beyond the borders of the Italian paeninsula. If this were not the case, there would have been no summons given to the bishops of North Africa and Gaul to attend a synod to resolve the problem, nor would Galla Placidia have contacted the

¹⁹ PIETRI, p. 457.

²⁰ The account in the *Liber Pontificalis* reads as follows: "Veniens autem dies proximus Paschae praesumpsit Eulalius, eo quod ordinatus fuisset in basilica Constantiniana, et introivit in Urbem et baptizavit et celebravit Pascha in basilica Constantiniana; Bonifatius vero, sicut consuetudo erat, celebravit baptismum Paschae in basilica beatae martyris Agnae. Hoc audientes Augusti utrumque miserunt et erigerunt Eulalium et missa auctoritate revocaverunt Bonifatium in urbem Romam et constituerunt episcopum; Eulalium vero miserunt foris in Campaniam." (DUCHESNE, p. 227.) The account here does not seem to be completely accurate in Eulalius' regard. The use of the perfect *baptizavit* and *celebravit* would indicate an accomplished action, which in fact, was not the case. Eulalius was prevented from celebrating the Easter mysteries in the end.

²¹ "Sed Eulalius ea obstinatione, qua sine praecepto sacro urbem ingressus est, etiam egredi constrictus per omnes potestates pari pertinacia detrectavit." (*Exemplum relationis Symmachi praef. urbis ad uirum inl. com. Constantium patricium*, Coll. Avel. 32,2, CSEL 35, p. 78,19-21.)

African bishops for their assistance in the matter²².

Thirdly, it was political exigency which finally settled the matter, not concern for the religious welfare of the church of Rome. When Honorius finally supported Boniface, it was because Eulalius had challenged the imperial authority, thereby disqualifying himself, not because one man was more suitable for the position. Although the emperor had initially thrown his support behind Eulalius, who appears to have represented the party of the Roman establishment, Honorius could not ignore the impertinence of any of his subjects, especially a claimant to the papal throne whose political influence was becoming more marked.

Lastly, it should be noted that the 'success' of the schism was largely determined by the activity of the various factions in the controversy to which Eulalius and Boniface were forced to appeal for support. In the end, it was this popular backing which made much of the difference, leading to acrimonious charges and counter charges that it was the ignorant common folk, and not God's divine will, who had ensured the success of one or other candidate.²³ In the end, the active recruitment of consecrating bishops, supporting clergy, and a very partisan laity indicated weaknesses rampant in the Roman church, relics of Zosimus' administration. Not surprisingly, such deficiencies did not disappear immediately. A year after his election, as Boniface lay deathly ill²⁴, the pope beseeched the Emperor for a decree disqualifying any who should conspire in a future papal election. Looking over his shoulder, Boniface must have seen that the threat had not yet disappeared.

CONSOLIDATION OF AUTHORITY AND FIRST DECISIONS

Having taken possession of the papal throne, it was essential that Boniface show extreme tact in restoring the fragile unity of the divided Church, and garner the support of the deacons who had been Eulalius' chief supporters.²⁵ In his relations with the provincial churches, he showed himself more judicious than his predecessor, restoring the ancient rights of the metropolitans of Gaul, settling an African appeal regarding an

²² *Coll. Avel.*, 28, *CSEL* 35, pp. 73-74; 26, p. 72; 35,3, p. 82,6-13. Bardy maintains that Galla Placidia was in the presbyters' camp, supporting Boniface's election, although he gives no evidence to support this position. (Cf. BARDY, c. 895.)

²³ Cf. PIETRI, p. 456.

²⁴ An illness, by the way, from which he would recover.

²⁵ Cf. O. WERMELINGER, *Rom und Pelagius: Die theologische Position der römischen Bischöfe im pelagianischen Streit in den Jahren 411-432* (Päpste und Papsttum 7), Stuttgart, 1975, pp. 241-42.

intransigent priest²⁶, and successfully negotiating the prefecture of Illyricum with the Eastern Emperor, in favour of Rome.

Leery of changes in the Roman See, the African episcopate apparently looked carefully for any signs of modification in the policy of the new Roman bishop. Aurelius of Carthage, for example, encouraged a new intervention at Ravenna - not Rome - to punish every bishop with the loss of his office who had escaped condemnation for supporting the heretics. That Africa would admit no compromise was certainly brought home to Boniface by the imperial Act of 9 June 419 which was largely influenced by Aurelius and his brother bishops.²⁷ This imperial rescript which extended the bann against the Pelagians also stated that the original action of the government had followed the judgment of Aurelius.²⁸

At first blush, the African action may seem to be a threat to the importance of Rome as a judicial and administrative power. Wermelinger, however, maintains that judging from Boniface's reaction, it was not really problematic at all. In fact, he was thus able to maintain for himself, in those early days, a certain conscientious detachment.²⁹ In 419 and probably 421, the bishop Alypius of Thagaste, acting as emissary for the

²⁶ M. WOJNOWYTSCH, *Bonifatius episcopus Romanus in Augustinus-Lexikon* I, Basel, 1992, cc. 655-58, c. 655.

²⁷ The following excerpt from the emperor's June letter to Aurelius appears to have as its principal concern Julian and the recalcitrant "Pelagian" bishops. What is most interesting is that it is to *Aurelius'* authority that reference is made, and not the bishop of Rome who surely should have had more influence over the bishops of Italy. If anything, this indicates that the influence of Africa at Court was still strong during the early reign of Pope Boniface, and may further demonstrate that uncertainty continued to surround the new pope's allegiance with regard to Pelagianism. "Praecipue tamen ad quorundam episcoporum pertinaciam corrigendam, qui prauas eorum disputationes uel tacito consensu adstruunt uel publica oppugnatione non destruunt, pater carissime atque amantissime, sanctitatis tuae auctoritatem manere conueniet, quatenus in abolitione praeposterae haeresis omnium deuotio Christiana consentiat. Religio itaque tua compententibus scriptis uniuersos faciet admoneri scituros definitione sanctimonii tui hanc sibi definitionem esse praescriptam. Ut, quicumque damnationi supra memoratorum, quo pateat mens pura, subscribere impia obstinatione neglexerint, episcopatus amissione multati interdicta in perpetuum expulsi ciuitatibus communione priuentur." (AUGUSTINE, *Ep.* 201,2, *CSEL* 57, pp. 297,6-98,5; cf. also WERMELINGER, p. 243.)

²⁸ Cf. AUGUSTINE, *Epp.* 200 & 201; J. PATQUT BURNS, *Augustine's Role in the Imperial Action against Pelagius* in *Journal of Theological Studies* 30, 1979, pp. 67-83, p. 77.

²⁹ WERMELINGER, p. 243. Too much ought not to be made of Prosper of Aquitaine's remark that Boniface enforced the apostolic decrees and imperial decisions against the Pelagians. While it is certainly true to say that Boniface could not very well set himself up against the decisions of his predecessors, nonetheless he appears not to have been eager to engage in theological dispute himself.

Africans,³⁰ succeeded in convincing ecclesiastical and imperial officials, including Pope Boniface, of the need to continue the fight against Julian and the remaining Pelagians³¹. At this point, at any rate, Boniface did not

³⁰ As Thonnard notes, the exact date of these visits is unclear, although they certainly took place during the reign of Pope Boniface I (419-22). Because of the quality and quantity of works written by Augustine, the amount of time it would take to complete the books, the journey back and forth across the Mediterranean and between courts, Thonnard suggests 419 and 421 as an appropriate time frame for the two journeys, allowing Augustine the winter of 420-21 to compose the *De nuptiis et concupiscentia II* and the *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum* (F.J. THONNARD, E. BLEUZEN and A.C. DE VEER, *Premières polémiques contre Julien. De nuptiis et concupiscentia, Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* [Oeuvres de Saint Augustin 23], 1974, p. 25).

³¹ Alypius is known to have taken part in the first session of the Council of Carthage of 25 May 419, and so it was some time after this that he would have departed for Italy. (Cf. *Conciliae Africae*, CCL 149, p. 150,4; also, pp. 91, 103, 161, 229, 233). The opening sections of the *Contra duas epistolas pelagianorum II* and the *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* both inform that Alypius spent an extended period of time in Ravenna before returning to Africa. He was accused by Julian of being the one who brought the bribe of eighty African horses to sweeten the decision of the imperial court against the Pelagians (AUGUSTINE, *Op. imp.* 1,10, CSEL 85, pp. 10-11). Alypius himself informs us in his *Commonitorium* of October 419 that he was in Ravenna, near the Imperial Court, and had been in contact with Imperial officials (AUGUSTINE, *Ep.* 15*). It is also clear from Letter 22* of the following March that Alypius was still at Court, and that he was in the company of one Bishop Peregrinus. Berrouard quite reasonably maintains that, since only one of the Divjak letters pertaining to Alypius' work in Ravenna concerns the Pelagians (*Ep.* 16*) it is not fair to say, as Julian alleged, that Alypius was only working to fight the heretics at the Court. (JULIAN, *Ad Florum in Op. imp.* 1,42, CSEL 85, p. 30; 3,35, *ibid.*, pp. 374-75). While he probably did discuss this matter with Count Valerius, the evidence does not justify seeing Alypius' trip in 419 as motivated by the combat of Pelagianism alone (M.-F. BERROUARD, *Un tournant dans la vie de l'Église d'Afrique: les deux missions d'Alypius en Italie à la lumière des Lettres 10*, 15*, 16*, 22* et 23** *A de saint Augustin* in REA 31, 1985, pp. 46-70, p.51; also, THONNARD *et al.*, p. 23, fn. 36). Mandouze, however, definitely places the Pelagian affair as the primary, if not the only motive, for the mission (MANDOUZE, p. 63). The content of the so-called "Divjak letters" demonstrate that the point of Alypius' journey was apparently two-fold. One purpose of the visit appears to have been to confirm the rights of sanctuary for the Carthaginian churches. The other was an unspecified matter concerning the people of Carthage, whatever that was. The affair concerning all of Carthage may have been a fiscal one. The reason why it may have been fiscal is that we are told that he obtained an *indulgentia* which often refers to finances (*indulgentia debitorum*). On the other hand, it could also have been a criminal matter (*indulgentiae criminum*). Whichever, it is likely that the matter was probably secular in nature (Cf. BERROUARD, p. 54). Berrouard speculates (p. 56) that, encouraged by his success Alypius may have remained longer in Ravenna, attempting to accomplish more tasks for the African Church. Augustine's *Ep.* 10*, however, indicates that there was other business which Alypius had been charged to accomplish by the Council of Carthage held in late summer 419, but which he failed to do. Unfortunately, Augustine does not reveal the nature of these affairs. A third reason for

hesitate to comply. In fact, on one trip from Ravenna to Rome, Alypius was given two letters by Boniface, both from the recalcitrant pens of the Pelagian bishops (though likely inspired and edited by Julian). One was addressed to Rufus of Thessalonica and the other to the pope himself, though intended for public distribution among the Pelagians still living in Rome³². The letter to Rufus was probably penned with a view to finding

Alypius' trip to Ravenna was probably to deal with a concern related to taxation, and its fair distribution in the colony so that the poor would not bear the burden of the payment (AUGUSTINE, *Ep.* 22*). There is still disagreement among some modern scholars over the question of a second journey by Alypius to Italy in 420. Julian of Aeclanum maintained that Alypius came to Ravenna and Rome twice during the reign of Pope Boniface, on the second occasion bearing with him the second volume of Augustine's *De nuptiis* to Valerius, along with the four books of the *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum* for Boniface (JULIAN, *Op. imperf.* I,7; I,52,1, CSEL 85, p. 9, 45; AUGUSTINE, *De nupt. et con.* II,1,1, CSEL 42, p. 253, 1-6). Berrouard does not believe that such a visit ever took place because of Augustine's silence concerning the emissary; that it is merely the accusations of a polemicist attempting to present Augustine as an intrigant with Alypius as a servile valet. Berrouard claims that it would be strange for Augustine to pass over in silence the performer of such good service, especially when he holds so dignified a position as bishop of Thagaste. Mandouze, however, takes Julian at his word, saying that it is the very venomous reaction of the former bishop of Aeclanum which could only have been aroused by such a second instance of interference. While Berrouard's point is well-taken, there seems to be no legitimate reason for doubting Julian's evidence, and certainly Alypius' role was never denied by Augustine. As Peter Brown notes, the bishops had become the courriers *par excellence* by this period in late Roman history. (P. BROWN, *Augustine of Hippo*, London, 1967, p. 420.)

³² Cf. THONNARD *et al.*, pp. 20-24. It was also while he was *en route* from Ravenna to Rome that Alypius apparently came into possession *via* the Count Valerius of a work of Julian's which came to be known as the fourth book of his *Ad Turbantium*, refuting Augustine's *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I. (Cf. M.-F. BERROUARD, *Un tournant dans la vie de l'Église d'Afrique: les deux missions d'Alypius en Italie à la lumière des Lettres 10*, 15*, 16*, 22* et 23*A de saint Augustin* in *REA* 31, 1985, pp. 46-70, p. 62; L. DE CONINCK, *Introduction*, CCSL 88, p. viii.) Concerning the work which Valerius forwarded, Augustine wrote, "Et quia non tantum relatu memorati mei fratris id didici, uerum etiam prolatas ab eo chartulas legi, quas post eius de Rauenna profectionem Romam mittere ipse curasti, ubi aduersariorum potui uaniloquia reperire, ad ea respondere adiuuante domino quanta possum ueritate et scripturarum diuinarum auctoritate proposui. Chartula, cui nunc respondeo, hoc titulo praenotatur: "capitula de libro Augustini quem scripsit contra quae de libris pauca decerpsi." (AUGUSTINE, *De nupt. et con.* 2,1,1-2,2.) It was these letters from Julian's party to Rufus of Thessalonica and Boniface however, which first prompted the pope to seek Augustine's assistance against the movement. The "Letter to the Romans" (also known as the "Declaration of Aquileia") was written in late 419 or early 420 and, although intended for public dissemination in the City to encourage popular support for their cause, it was also sent directly to Boniface himself. De Plinval maintains that the text was also meant to provide partisans with a text or manifesto around which to rally, which the text, as preserved in *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum* I certainly bears out in its clarity of expression. (Cf. DE PLINVAL, *Pélage*, p. 336.)

a suitable refuge for the exiled bishops. Its theological import, however, was to demonstrate the perceived Manichaean tendencies inherent to the African doctrine with which the Pelagians contrasted their own "orthodox" teachings, whereby they attempted to safeguard the glory of creation, marriage, the Law and the free will of the saints.³³ The letter also deplores the cowardice of the Roman clergy and demands that a council be convened³⁴ to settle the matter.³⁵ The letter to the Romans,³⁶ which is the subject of Augustine's Book One of the *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum*, shares the similar doctrinal concerns of Julian's *Libri ad Turbantium* as well as the aforementioned letter to Rufus of Thessalonica.³⁷

Through Alypius, Boniface apparently begged Augustine's help, talent and theology to refute them, the result being the *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum*.³⁸ It may legitimately be said, therefore, that at the theological level, he left it to Augustine to refute the remnants of the "heretical" movement. The preface to this work, dedicating it to Pope

³³ Cf. AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 2,1,1-2,2,2, CSEL 60, pp. 459-63.

³⁴ Cf. AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 2,3,5, CSEL 60, pp. 463-65.

³⁵ The fragments of the *Epistula ad Rufum* may be variously found in Augustine's books 2-4 of the *C. duas ep. pel.*, although the exact order of the bishops' argumentation is not preserved, as Augustine himself admits. Cf. also DE CONINCK, pp. viii and xxxi.

³⁶ The authorship of the *Epistula ad Romanos* has at various times been disputed by scholars, such as A. BRUCKNER in his *Julian von Eclanum. Sein Leben und seine Lehre. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Pelagianismus* (Texte und Untersuchungen 15/3), Leipzig, 1897, p. 36, fn. 2; Augustine himself appeared to have experienced a certain hesitation in ascribing the work to Julian, stating "Haec autem quae duabus epistulis eorum respondeo, uni scilicet, quam dicitur Romam misisse Iulianus - credo, ut per illam quos posset suos aut inuenerit aut faceret." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,1,3, CSEL 60, p. 424,17-19.)

³⁷ Cf. DE CONINCK, pp. ix-x.

³⁸ "Haec autem quae duabus epistulis eorum respondeo, uni scilicet, quam dicitur Romam misisse Iulianus - credo, ut per illam quos posset suos aut inuenerit aut faceret, alteri autem, quam decem et octo uelut episcopi participes eius erroris non ad quoslibet, sed ad loci ipsius episcopum sua calliditate temptandum et ad suas partes, si posset fieri, traducendum ausi sunt Thessalonicam scribere, haec ergo, quae istis, ut dixi, duabus epistulis illorum ista disputatione respondeo, ad tuam potissimum dirigere sanctitatem non tam discenda quam examinanda et, ubi forsitan aliquid displicuerit, emendanda constitui. Indicauit enim mihi frater meus, quod eas illi dare ipse dignatus es, quae in tuas manus nisi uigilantissima diligentia fratrum nostrorum filiorum tuorum uenire non possent. Ago autem gratis sincerissimae in nos beniuolentiae tuae, quod eas me latere noluisti litteras gratiae Dei, in quibus repperisti meum nomen calumniose atque euidenter expressum." (AUGUSTINE, *Contra duas ep. pel.* 1,1,3, CSEL 60, pp. 424,17-25,6.) "Sequuntur libri quattuor, quos contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum ad episcopum Romanae Ecclesiae Bonifacium scripsi, quia cum in manus eius venissent, ipse mihi eas miserat, inueniens in illis calumniose interpositum nomen meum." (*Retract.* II,61, CSEL 36, p. 200.)

Boniface is written in a very friendly tone³⁹. All the devoted and humble formulae, however, cannot conceal a certain reproachful undertone in the address to the Roman Church. Augustine would not in any ill-mannered way state that, in the past, cautious steps had been disregarded by Boniface's predecessor; but he could let it be understood that the prudence of an episcopal shepherd must never tire.

"For you, who mind not high things, however, loftily you are placed, did not disdain to be a friend of the lowly and to return the love bestowed upon you.⁴⁰ For what else is friendship which has its name from no other source than love, and is nowhere faithful but in Christ, in whom alone it can be eternal and happy? Whence, also, having received a greater assurance by means of that brother [Alypius], through whom I have learned to know you more familiarly, I have ventured to write something to your blessedness concerning those things which at this juncture are claiming by a later stimulus the episcopal care, as far as we are able, to vigilance on behalf of the Lord's flock".⁴¹

³⁹ In fact, this is the only work, among all of Augustine's treatises which is actually dedicated to a pope.

⁴⁰ De Veer feels that this sentence may contain a veiled reference to the late Pope Zosimus who, upon attaining papal authority, could have been described as disdaining his simple brother bishops. (A.C. DE VEER, *Note complémentaire 23, Premières polémiques contre Julien. De nuptiis et concupiscentia, Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* [Oeuvres de Saint Augustin] 23, 1974, p. 749.) Indeed, as is evident from his letters, Zosimus assumed a highly critical attitude with regard to the Africans verging on arrogance. (Cf. M. LAMBERIGTS, *Augustine and Julian of Aeclanum on Zosimus in Augustiniana* 42, 1992, pp. 311-30.)

⁴¹ "Neque enim dedignaris, qui non alta sapis, quamvis altius praesideas, esse amicus humilium et amorem rependere impensum. Quid est enim aliud amicitia, quae non aliudne quam ex amore nomen accepit et nusquam nisi in Christo fidelis est, in quo solo esse etiam sempiterna ac felix potest? Unde accepta per eum fratrem, per quem te familiarius didici, maiore fiducia ausus sum aliquid ad tuam beatitudinem scribere de his rebus, quae hoc tempore episcopalem curam, si qua in nobis est, ad uigilantiam pro grege dominico stimulo recentiore sollicitant." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,1,1, *CSEL* 60, p. 423, 10-18; Eng. trans. in SCHAFF, p. 377; cf. also WERMELINGER, pp. 243-44.) As de Veer notes, the emphasis in this section, and in the following one, is on the collegiality of *all* the bishops, whose common concern must be with the flock and its protection. The fact that Augustine above uses the expression *in nobis* (1,1,1) communicates the collective effort which, Boniface must remember, is the hallmark of the successors of the apostles, and not merely the prerogative of the bishop of Rome (DE VEER, n.c. 23, p. 749). Augustine continues, as if attempting to dispel the ghosts of the previous administration. He writes, "Cum uero non desinant fremere ad dominici gregis caulas atque ad diripiendas tanto pretio redemptas oues aditus undecumque rimari communisque sit omnibus nobis qui fungimur episcopatus officio - quamvis ipse in ea praemineas celsiore fastigio - specula pastoralis, facio quod possum pro mei particula muneris, quantum mihi dominus adiuvantibus orationibus tuis donare dignatur, ut pestilentibus et insidiantibus eorum scriptis medentia et munientia scripta praetendam, quibus rabies qua furiant aut etiam ipsa

The fact that Augustine emphasizes papal attentiveness in matters of heresy does raise certain questions concerning Boniface's level of commitment to supporting the anti-Pelagian cause. A similar anxiety, as we shall see, is also communicated in Jerome's letters written on the occasion of Boniface's installation (*ordinatio*) as bishop of Rome.

Jerome's *Ep.* 153 is a rather curious expression of congratulations. He accomplishes his felicitous business within the first sentence⁴² and proceeds essentially to eulogize his late companion and disciple, the virgin Eustochium⁴³. What seems to be the pensive meanderings of a grieving friend actually provide the scholar with certain biographical information on Boniface's life and the circles in which he travelled. It would seem that Boniface had been a friend to Eustochium and her family, conceivably even acting as her spiritual father at one time.⁴⁴ He is also credited with the education and, perhaps, raising of Paula, Eustochium's niece.⁴⁵ These

sanetur aut a laedendis aliis repellatur." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas. ep. Pel.* 1,1,2.) While Augustine grants the pride of place to the Petrine office, the picture he paints is finally one of cooperation in prayer and action between him who is privileged to hold the See of Rome and other Catholic bishops. This may explain why Augustine plays here with the meaning of the Greek word ἐπίσκοπος which, prior to meaning "bishop" had the sense of a curator, guardian or superintendent. Together, all the bishops are "overseers" of the watchtower, from which the flock and the faith are protected. Despite the courteous expressions, therefore, one cannot help but feel that Augustine is only lightly concealing a warning to the successor of Zosimus, as well as Peter's heir to remain on his guard at all times, and depend upon the fellowship of his brothers in office. De Veer also notes the rather didactic quality to be found in Augustine's style of address here. He is writing Boniface "*non tam discenda*", indeed, but "*discenda*" nonetheless (I,1,3; DE VEER, n.c. 23, p. 749). The work before the new pope is still for his instruction - though not *just* for that. This very construction continues to raise the question: how much did the Africans know about Boniface *prior* to his election, and to what extent did the Pelagian controversy actually affect the decision of the Roman electorate?

⁴² "Quantum gaudii super ordinatione pontificatus tui sancto Innocentio presbytero et nuntium et litteras tuae beatitudinis perferente suscepim, ambigere non potest tua reverentia, cum olim mutuo iungamur affectu et ante coeperimus nos amare quam nosse interiorque homo ita sibi coniunctus sit, ut exterioris hominis damna non sentiat." (JEROME, *Ep.* 153, *CSEL* 56, pp. 365,18-366,1.)

⁴³ Eustochium probably died toward the end of 419.

⁴⁴ "Quo enim illa, si hoc in corpore constituta audire meruisset, gestisset gaudio, quibus precibus et gratiarum actione Christi clementiam flagitasset, quod sanctum ac venerabilem parentem suum apostolicae cathedrae successorem esse didicisset!" (JEROME, *Ep.* 153, *CSEL* 56, p. 366,4-8.)

⁴⁵ "Infans Paula, quae in tuis nutrita est manibus, quasi pignus sanctae ac venerabilis memoriae Laetae nostris est inposita ceruicibus." (JEROME, *Ep.* 153, *CSEL* 56, p. 366,8-10.) Laeta was the wife of Toxotius, the only son of Paula of Rome. From this reference it would seem that Boniface had served as something of a spiritual father, perhaps teacher, to their daughter, the young Paula, perhaps in keeping with the advice given by Jerome to

were no ordinary women, but had descended from one of the noblest Christian families of Rome, that of Paula⁴⁶ and her husband Toxotius⁴⁷.

Eustochium was but one of five distinguished children of these aristocratic parents. What is interesting for our purposes with regard to Boniface is that her eldest sister Paulina was also the wife of Pammachius, the Roman senator in whose home Rufinus the Syrian found shelter in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. It would be most interesting to know if Boniface had also been welcome in their home through Eustochium or Toxotius the younger. If so, it is quite possible that he had encountered the Syrian, Caelestius and Pelagius there at the beginning of their Roman careers and may thereby have had first-hand exposure to their nascent doctrines. The record of history is, unhappily, quite silent on these details. It would seem rather improbable, however, that Boniface, having come from a "good" Roman family himself, with access to the aristocracy, would have been barred from Pammachius' home, even after Paula's departure for Palestine in 385, following Jerome.

Indeed, Eustochium accompanied her mother that year, demonstrating that whatever the nature of her relationship with Boniface, it must certainly have been an old and well-founded one to have survived the intervening thirty-five years. Interestingly enough, Jerome indicates that he himself was not personally acquainted with the new pope, though they enjoyed friends in common, and thus "knew" each other in this manner.⁴⁸ This is not an overly surprising revelation, in spite of the fact that the two men travelled in such remarkably similar circles. Jerome, it must be remembered, departed Rome, never to return, in 385. It is most likely that

Laeta in *Ep.* 107. Written in 403, the letter concerns the girl's education as a consecrated virgin in Rome. "Magister probae aetatis et uitae atque eruditionis est eligendus nec, puto, erubescit doctus uir id facere uel in propinqua uel in nobili uirgine, quod Aristoteles fecit in Philippi filio, ut ipse librariorum uilitate initia ei traderet litterarum. Non sunt contemnenda quasi parua, sine quibus magna constare non possunt. Ipse elementorum sonus et prima institutio praeceptoris aliter de erudito, aliter de rustico ore profertur." (JEROME, *Ep.* 107,4, *CSEL* 55, pp. 294,23-295,6; Eng. trans. in SCHAFF, p. 191.) If Jerome's suggestions were taken at face value, Boniface may have had an incredibly important role to play in the development of the child, bordering on fostering. Cf. fn 55 *infra*.

⁴⁶ Paula was the daughter of Blaesilla and her husband Rogatus. Jerome tells us that the mother was a descendent of the Scipios. (Cf. F. LAGRANGE, *Histoire de sainte Paule*, Paris, 1931; G. DEL TON, *S. Paola Romana*, Milan, 1950; D. GORCE, ed., *Vie de sainte Mélanie*, SC 90, 1962.)

⁴⁷ "Tali igitur stirpe generata iunctaque viro Toxotio, qui Aeneae et Iuliorum altissimum sanguinem trahit." (JEROME, *Ep.* 108,4, *CSEL* 55, p. 309,12-13.)

⁴⁸ "Cum olim mutuo iungamur affectu et ante coeperimus nos amare quam nosse interiorque homo ita sibi coniunctus sit." (JEROME, *Ep.* 153, *CSEL* 56, p. 365,20-22.)

Boniface's acquaintance with the noble families of Rome post-dates this period.

In terms of Boniface's approach to Pelagianism, it is the postscript to *Ep.* 153 which deserves notice. He states:

"What I have written with my own hand I write for your Beatitude. May the heretics discern in you the enemy of error in the matter of the faith, may they detest you, so that the Catholics may love you more. Execute and complete the sentence of your predecessors, and do not suffer supporters and allies of the heretics in the ranks of the episcopate".⁴⁹

The allusion in the last sentence is clearly to Julian and the eighteen Italian bishops who did not subscribe to Zosimus' *Tractoria* of 418, and found themselves under censure⁵⁰. Two rather engaging questions, however, are raised by Jerome's slightly cryptic remarks. Firstly, does the fact that he must offer encouragement to the new pope indicate uncertainty in any way over his commitment to the "orthodox" path of Innocent and Zosimus? If this is indeed the case, then a further question may be raised over what, if any, role Pelagianism had played in the contested papal election⁵¹. Secondly, in the light of this postscript, what role would there be for the presbyter Sixtus in the new administration? As it stands, there is no record of Sixtus' activities during the reign of Boniface. Was he considered too great a risk to hold higher office for the moment?

Jerome's *Ep.* 154 to Donatus also indicates that the new pope was originally something of an enigma. Encouraging Boniface in letter 153 to deal sharply with the heretics, he here makes allowances for unexpected papal leniency in their regard. All that is left for Jerome is to trust that everything will work out as God wills - and Jerome determines:

"We have confidence in the mercy of Christ: my holy and venerable Lord, the Bishop Boniface, will uproot them by the spirit of Christ. We ought to excuse him if, in the beginning, he offers them his charity and strives to save them by

⁴⁹ "Propria manu quod scribo, beatitudini tuae scribo. Sentiant heretici inimicum te esse perfidei et oderint, ut a catholicis plus ameris, et executor atque completor sis sententiae praecessorum tuorum nec patiaris in episcopali nomine hereticorum patronos atque consortes." (JEROME, *Ep.* 153, *CSEL* 56, p. 366,20-24.)

⁵⁰ For some reason, Bardy interprets this passage to refer to Pelagians holding firm in Africa, though what grounds he makes for such an allegation are unknown (BARDY, c. 896).

⁵¹ The fact that Boniface appears to have been something of an unknown quantity to both Augustine and Jerome could lead one to speculate that the Pelagian affair was not a burning issue in the minds of the Roman electorate. Had it been, surely a better-known opponent of the heresy would have been selected and received imperial approval. The fact that Eulalius originally enjoyed imperial support, which could subsequently and so easily have been transferred to his rival would merely indicate that neither man was known to have Pelagian tendencies.

his forbearance and his gentleness, but never will they be cured.⁵² I will frankly say what I think; with regard to these heretics, it is necessary to put into practice this programme of David: 'In the morning, I will kill all the sinners of the land.' It is necessary to destroy them, to kill them spiritually, better: to decapitate them by the sword of Christ since they cannot recover their health by plasters and soothing medications".⁵³

From this letter to Donatus, it would appear that Boniface was not as intolerant of the Pelagians as might be expected. Cavallera claims that in the first weeks of his administration the new pope attempted to restore

⁵² It is worthy of note that Jerome here uses the same rationalization for Boniface's actions as Augustine did to justify Zosimus' earlier leniency. Augustine wrote, "Nunc uero cum primitus beatissimi papae Innocentii litterae episcoporum litteris respondentis afrorum pariter hunc errorem, quem conantur isti persuadere, damnauerint, successor quoque eius sanctus papa Zosimus hoc tenendum esse, quod isti de paruulis sentiunt, numquam dixerit, numquam scripserit, insuper etiam Caelestium se purgare molientem ad consentiendum supra dictis sedis apostolicae litteris crebra interlocutione constrinxerit, profecto quidquid interea lenius actum est cum Caelestio seruata dumtaxat antiquissimae et robustissimae fidei firmitate correctione fuit clementissima suasio, non adprobatio exitiosissima prauitatis." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 2,3,5, *CSEL* 60, p. 465,11-21.) Earlier, Augustine had similarly stated that "Immo uero Pelagiani spe falsa putauerant nouum et execrabile dogma Pelagianum uel Caelestianum persuaderi quorundam Romanorum catholicis mentibus posse, quando illa ingenia quamuis nefando errore peruersa, non tamen contemptibilia, cum studiose corrigenda potius quam facile damnanda uiderentur, aliquanto lenius, quam seuerior postulabat ecclesiae disciplina." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 2,3,5, *CSEL* 60, p. 463,21-26.) Again, with reference to Caelestius, Augustine writes in a rather historically revisionist style, "Atque ita uelut phreneticus, ut requiesceret, tamquam leniter fatus a uinculis tamen excommunicationis nondum est creditus esse soluendus. Sed interposito duorum mensium tempore, donec rescriberetur ex Africa, resipiscendi ei locus sub quadam medicinali sententiae lenitate concessus est, quoniam reuera, si deposita peruicaciae uanitate quod promiserat uellet attendere et easdem litteras quibus se consensurum esse responderat diligenter legeret, sanaretur." (AUGUSTINE, *De pec. orig.* 7,8, *CSEL* 42, p. 171,13-21.)

⁵³ "Credimus in Christi misericordiam, quod dominus meus sanctus et venerabilis episcopus Bonifatius eradicet eos spiritu Christi, cui debemus ignoscere, si in principiis suis offert caritatem et per clementiam suam et mansuetudinem servare conatur, qui tamen numquam curandi sunt. Vere dicam, quod sentio: in his hereticis illud exercendum est Davidicum: 'in matutinis interficiebam omnes peccatores terrae'. Delendi sunt, spiritaliter occidendi, immo Christi mucrone truncandi, qui non possunt per emplastra et blandas curationes recipere sanitatem." (JEROME, *Ep.* 154,1, *CSEL* 56, p. 367,12-21.) The syntax and style here are quite reminiscent of Augustine's apology for Zosimus' forbearance in dealing with the Pelagians in the early part of that pope's reign. To take the parallel to one logical conclusion - is it possible that Jerome was actually warning the pope *sub laudibus* in *Ep.* 153 against a sympathy which he may have enjoyed with the Pelagians in earlier days? Of course, this is a matter for academic speculation but one which cannot be proven from the extant texts. Cf. fn. 47 *supra*.

those who had "gone astray" through mercy.⁵⁴

Such an interpretation is, of course, quite possible. It is certainly the one to which Augustine and Boniface would have held. It is equally likely, however, that given the disruption of the Roman church subsequent to Zosimus' death, it was necessary for Boniface to tread lightly, and attempt to mend the divisions which remained within the community in order to consolidate his power. This particular approach to Pelagianism may not only have been a hallmark of the beginning of his reign. His choice to have Augustine confront Julian and his supporters, rather than assume the burden himself, supports the view that Boniface preferred more subtle tactics in approaching the controversy. His actions certainly do not place him in the Pelagian camp itself, but depict him as a man well-aware of the ravages of schism and not desirous of courting more problems personally⁵⁵.

BONIFACE'S ANTI-PELAGIAN ACTIONS

Evaluating Boniface's relationship with the Pelagians is not an easy task. As de Plinval notes, the difficulty lies in the fact that the pope neither initiated nor was subject to any *direct* contact with the dissidents.⁵⁶ In general, he appears to have been content to have allowed others to act on his behalf in their regard - the emperor in matters of legality, and Augustine in affairs of theology.

⁵⁴ F.S. CAVALLERA, *S. Jérôme, sa vie et son oeuvre* (Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense. Études et Documents 2), Louvain-Paris, 1922, p. 59.

⁵⁵ Whether those problems would come to him instead, however, is another matter. Indeed, it should not be forgotten that, at first, beyond turning Julian's letters over to Augustine, the pope did nothing more against the Pelagians. Boniface, however, could certainly neither ignore the issue indefinitely or completely. This same letter to Donatus reveals that Marius Mercator was in Rome at the time of Boniface's election. He is encouraged by Jerome who writes, "sanctum filium meum Mercatorem ut meo obsequio salutes precor et moneas, ut non ostendat ardorem fidei et detestetur eos, qui suscipione aliqua Pelagianae hereseos maculati sunt." (*Ep.* 154,3, *CSEL* 56, p. 368,3-5.) It seems superfluous to urge Mercator on in such wise, but its reinforcement would certainly have made it difficult for Boniface to examine seriously any other course of action besides that of Africa. Wermelinger notes that Mercator was certainly at Rome from 418-419, during the final phase of the Pelagian controversy. His emphasis at the time, as his writings indicate, was on the mystery of death as the natural result of original sin. Jerome indicates in *Ep.* 154,3 that he was counted among a group of Roman theologians who prepared documents which would eventually form the foundation of such decrees as the *Tractoria*. (O. WERMELINGER, *Marius Mercator in Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* 10, 1977, cc. 610-15, c. 610.)

⁵⁶ DE PLINVAL, *Pélage*, p. 343.

The relative calm during his reign, however, does not mean that Boniface had inherited a tranquil situation. Before his death, Zosimus had excommunicated Julian and the eighteen non-juring bishops, a decision which remained without effect during the period of the schism which followed the elections of Eulalius and Boniface. After the latter secured Peter's chair for himself, apprehension appears to have grown in Rome that Boniface might agree to new negotiations or seek a settlement with those who had already been condemned. Such appears to be the context for Donatus' lost letter to Jerome, penned shortly after Boniface's election. If the new pope indeed attempted to respond to the renewed overtures of the Pelagians, he would be acting contrary to the terms of the *Tractoria* as far as Africa and their supporters would view the matter. Wermelinger feels that this may indeed be the *paenitentia* exhibited by the Pelagians, to which Jerome refers in his letter to Donatus - a *paenitentia* which ought not to be trusted.⁵⁷

It would not be possible for Boniface to remain forever straddling the proverbial theological fence, if that indeed was what he was doing. The indulgence which the Africans and Jerome displayed in his regard would last only as long as their resolve were not tried by papal actions to the contrary. The city of Rome was apparently not yet completely free of the Pelagian threat, all imperial rescripts notwithstanding. Hedde and Amann feel that some time after the Imperial Letter of 9 June 419, Boniface may have made an intervention against the Pelagians at a semi-official level. The prefect of the City just prior to Zosimus' death had been Rufius Antonius Agrypinus Volusianus, the uncle of Melania the Younger, a pagan who was rumoured to have dealt favourably with the Pelagians.⁵⁸ It could have been through his indulgence that the "heresy" was indeed

⁵⁷ "Hereticorum autem pectora non posse purgari ego testis sum, cui decretum est numquam paenitentiae eorum credere. Ad hoc enim simulant caritatem, ut, quos per inimicitias occidere non potuerint, per fictas amicitias interficiant. Pectora eorum plena sunt venenis et - secundum quod optime locutus es - 'nec Aethiops mutare pellem, nec pardus varietates suas.'" (JEROME, *Ep.* 154,1, *CSEL* 56, p. 367,6-12; cf. WERMELINGER, p. 242.)

⁵⁸ That Volusianus was a pagan is attested to by Augustine in the *Epp.* 132, 135 and 137, although it is also certain he was born of a Christian mother. Augustine refers to her as "holy" which would be unthinkable should she have been a pagan. His salutation to *Ep.* 132 reads, "De salute tua, quam et in hoc saeculo et in Christo esse cupio, sanctae matris tuae uotis sum fortasse etiam ipse non inpar." (AUGUSTINE, *Ep.* 132, *CSEL* 44, p. 79,10-12.) Volusianus was also the uncle of Melania the Younger, as the *Vita Melaniae* indicates (cf. GENNADIUS, *Vita S. Melaniae* 50, *SC* 90, p. 224). In the years 411-12, he was in Carthage and had correspondence with Augustine, on the subject of Christianity as Augustine, *Ep.* 161,1, *CSEL* 44, p. 507,3-8 indicate. He finally did receive baptism in early 437, at the behest of his niece. (Cf. MARTINDALE, pp. 1184-85.)

tolerated in Rome well into Boniface's reign. Hedde and Amann maintain that it may also have been Boniface who encouraged Constans, the emperor's brother-in-law to instruct Volusianus himself to remove the remaining Pelagian heretics from Rome, among whose number was rumoured to be Caelestius, which he finally did.⁵⁹ This thesis, however, is not without its problems, among which is a distinct lack of sources.⁶⁰ It may be to just such an intervention, however, that Prosper of Aquitaine refers when he writes that,

"Boniface of saintly memory directed the Catholic zeal of pious emperors and countered the enemies of God's grace not only with apostolic but also with imperial decrees".⁶¹

Boniface remained circumspect in all of his personal dealings with the condemned and excommunicated members of the movement. In fact, apart from passing the Pelagian letters on to Alypius for Augustine's response, it is not known that he actually had any intimate contact with the deposed bishops.⁶² The frustration for the student of the Pelagian movement during this papacy is that so much must remain in the realm of speculation. As we have seen, the only certain action on Boniface's part concerns the

⁵⁹ Volusianus' edict reads thusly: "Hactenus Caelestium divinae fidei, et quietis publicae turbatorem, iudiciis, amica reis secreta subduxerunt. Jam leges et jam edicta persequuntur absentem: cui, quod primum est, aeternae urbis negatur habitatio, ut si vel in proximis fuerit diversatus, debitum non evadat exitium, pro merito temeritatis atque ausus sui. Cunctos etiam hujus edicti cautione praemonemus, ne quis iniquus noxio latebram putet esse praebendam; ne, cum huiusmodi sit posita poena, supplicium ac stylum necesse sit proscriptionis incurrere, quisquis legibus divinis humanisque reum apud se putaverit occultandum." (*Constitutio* 6, *PL* 48, cc. 408-09.)

⁶⁰ R. HEDDE and E. AMANN, *Pélagianisme* in *DTC* 12, Paris, 1933, col. 675-715; c. 707. Unfortunately, the authors of this article do not provide any citation to support their claims on Boniface's behalf. They also date this event to 421 which is somewhat problematic where Volusianus is concerned since he was not prefect of the city of Rome in that year, his term of service having concluded in mid-418. (MARTINDALE, p. 1184.)

⁶¹ "Quando sanctae memoriae papa Bonifacius piissimorum imperatorum catholica devotione gaudebat, et contra inimicos gratiae Dei non solum apostolicis, sed etiam regiis utebatur edictis." (PROSPER C. *Coll.* 21,1, *PL* 51, c. 269; Eng. trans. in J. QUASTEN and W. BURGHARDT eds., *Prosper of Aquitaine: Defense of St Augustine* [Ancient Christian Writers 32], London, 1963, pp. 133-34.)

⁶² Y.-M. DUVAL, *Julien d'Éclane et Rufin d'Aquilée. Du Concile de Rimini à la répression pélagienne. L'intervention impériale en matière religieuse* in *REA* 24, Paris, 1978, pp. 243-71, p. 256. As the general introduction to *Premières polémiques contre Julien* notes (pp. 19-20), Julian actually addressed his letter to the Romans to Zosimus' successor when the outcome of the schism was still unknown. In the *Lib. subn.* 6,10 Mercator tells us that it was written in that way so as to be adaptable to either man being victorious. If this is true, it once again indicates that strong Pelagian sentiment was not a quality possessed by either man.

two Pelagian letters which he forwarded to Augustine for reply. These letters, which concisely enunciate the basic tenets of the Pelagian movement, were probably largely directed against Zosimus' *Tractoria* by affirming the value and integrity of human nature as created by a good God.⁶³ Julian's own letter to Boniface asserted that humanity continued to be created by him and blessed in his own image. The letter also asserts that there can be no *peccatum naturale* in human nature⁶⁴ or the divine institution of marriage⁶⁵. Furthermore, the righteous of the old covenant were justified by their own merits and faith in Christ.⁶⁶ He continues to oppose the teachings of all opponents vilifying their doctrine as "Manichaeian".⁶⁷

The "Letter to Rufus of Thessalonica" is what de Plinval calls a *contre-encycliche*, refuting what Julian designates "Manichaeian theses", whilst at the same time offering an *apologia* for Pelagian principles. Hav-

⁶³ Augustine quotes Julian's opinion which states that, "Contra haec, inquit, nos cotidie disputamus et ideo nolumus praeuicatoribus adhibere consensum, quia nos dicimus liberum arbitrium in omnibus esse naturaliter nec Adae peccato perire potuisse, quod omnium scripturarum auctoritate firmatur." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,15,29, CSEL 60, pp. 449,21-450,1.)

⁶⁴ "Homines, inquit, Dei opus esse defendimus nec ex illius potentia uel in malum uel in bonum inuitum aliquem cogi, sed propria uoluntate aut bonum facere aut malum, in bono uero opere a Dei gratia semper adiuuari, in malum uero diaboli suggestionibus incitari." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,18,36, CSEL 60, p. 452,19-23.)

⁶⁵ "Dicunt etiam, inquit, istas, quae modo aguntur, nuptias a Deo institutas non fuisse; quod in libro Augustini legitur, contra quem ego modo quattuor libellis respondi. Cuius Augustini dicta inimici nostri in ueritatis odium susceperunt." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,5,9, CSEL 60, pp.429,21-430,1.) "Dicimus, inquit, has, quae nunc aguntur in orbe terrarum, a Deo nuptias institutas nec reos esse coniuges, sed fornicatores et adulteros condemnandos." (*Ibid.*, 1,15,30, CSEL 60, p. 448,6-8.) "Motum, inquit, genitalium, id est ipsam uirilitem, sine qua non potest esse commixto, a Deo dicimus institutam." (*Ibid.*, 1,15,31, CSEL 60, p. 448,12-13.)

⁶⁶ "Dicunt, inquit, sanctos in uetere testamento non caruisse peccatis, id est nec per emendationem a criminibus fuisse liberos, sed in reatu a morte fuisse deprehensos." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,6,12, CSEL 60, p. 432,9-10.) "Dicimus, inquit, sanctos ueteris testamenti perfecta hinc iustitia ad aeternam transisse uitam, id est studio uirtutis ab omnibus recessisse peccatis, quia et illi, quos legimus aliquid peccasse postea tamen eos emendasse cognouimus." (*Ibid.*, 1,21,39, CSEL 60, p. 456,14-17.)

⁶⁷ "Dicunt etiam, inquit, motum genitalium et commixtionem coniugum a diabolo fuisse repertam et propterea eos qui nascuntur innocentes reos esse et a diabolo fieri, non a Deo, quia de hac diabolica commixtione nascuntur. Hoc autem sine aliqua ambiguitate Manicheum est." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,5,10, CSEL 60, p. 431,1-5.) "Nemo ergo uos seducat nec se negent impii ista sentire, sed, si uerum dicunt, aut audientia detur aut certe isti ipsi episcopi, qui nunc dissident, damnent quae supra dixi cum Manichaeis ista tenere, sicut nos ista damnamus quae de nobis iactant, et fit plena concordia. Quod si nolunt, scitote eos esse Manicheos et ab eorum uos abstinete consortiis." (*Ibid.*, 1,24,42, CSEL 60, p. 458,16-21; cf. also DE PLINVAL, *Pélage*, pp. 337-8.)

ing attacked the Manichaean tendencies in the views of his opponents, Julian proceeds to expose the Pelagian belief in the glory of creation, marriage, the law, free will and the sanctity of the church itself. Augustine responds to these positions in books two to four of the *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum*.⁶⁸

BONIFACE AND THE *CONTRA DUAS EPISTULAS PELAGIANORUM*

What, if anything, may be learned of Boniface himself and his relationship to the Pelagian movement from this Augustinian treatise? Beyond the introduction, which is specifically addressed to the pope, nothing is actually directed by Augustine to Boniface with the exception of the expression *praecessor tuus*. This phrase is employed twice within a short space of verses dealing with Zosimus' earlier treatment of Pelagius and Caelestius in Rome.⁶⁹ The choice of this particular expression may not reveal anything startling about Boniface's personal involvement with the heresy itself, but it does help scholars gain insight into Augustine's own perception of the new bishop of Rome. The intent here appears to be to associate Boniface with the final, definitive actions of his predecessor, with a view to seeing that pattern followed in a new papal administration.

The rest of the work may be applied to Boniface only by inference. That Augustine was somewhat wary of the pope's own stance may be indicated from his statement in the introduction wherein he writes:

"I have ventured to write something to your blessedness concerning those things which at this juncture are claiming by a later stimulus the episcopal care, as far as we are able, to vigilance on behalf of the Lord's flock".⁷⁰

Several questions are raised here. Who is meant by "we"? Is it merely the African councillors, or is the pope included? Is it possible that Augustine is in fact recalling Boniface to his own episcopal duty? Whichever the case may be, it is obvious that Augustine's great concern is to summon the pa-

⁶⁸ DE PLINVAL, *Pélage*, pp. 339-40.

⁶⁹ "Interrogationibus enim sancti praecessoris tui et Caelestii responsionibus, quibus se beati papae Innocentii litteris consentire professus est." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 2,4,6, CSEL 60, p. 465,28-466,3.) "Huic se Caelestius consentire professus est, quando, cum illi a sancto praecessore tuo dictum esset: illa omnia damnas quae iactata sunt de nomine tuo? Ipse respondit: Damno secundum sententiam beatae memoriae praecessoris tui Innocentii." (*Ibid.*, p. 466,17-21.)

⁷⁰ "Maiore fiducia ausus sum aliquid ad tuam beatitudinem scribere de his rebus, quae hoc tempore episcopalem curam, si qua in nobis est, ad uigilantiam pro grege dominico stimulo recentiore sollicitant." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,1,1, CSEL 60, p. 423, 16-18; Eng. trans. in SCHAFF, p. 377.)

pal attention to attend to a threat which he perceives as being far from over⁷¹. That such an anxiety even need be expressed may indicate that, as far as Augustine was concerned, the new pontiff may not have been working with as much haste or attentiveness as the Africans would have preferred. While it is true that Boniface himself had initiated the present conversation with the Africans thereby appearing rather proactive, surely the very fact that Julian had the misplaced confidence to appeal to the pope at all would have been sufficient to raise the concerns, if not the suspicions of Augustine and his colleagues that the condemned bishops may have indeed hoped for a favourable hearing.⁷² After all, and as noted previously, beyond turning the letters over to the Africans, Boniface had actually done nothing else and, indeed, had showed himself rather tolerant of the religious "miscreants".

Augustine also begins his introduction to the letter with the phrase, *I had learned how full you were of the grace of God* which could, of course, bear many different interpretations, some of them merely diplomatic in nature. In the light section 2,6, however, Augustine's effusiveness may also be understood differently. In this particular paragraph, Augustine emphasizes that grace is not given according to any merits. It is freely obtained, and beyond earning. One of his most penetrating analogies for the gratuitous nature of divine election and mercy is saved for the third book of the treatise, wherein Augustine writes,

"For what is more perfect, or what was more excellent, than the holy priests among the ancient people? And yet God prescribed to them to offer sacrifice first of all for their own sins. And what is more holy among the new people than the apostles? And yet the Lord prescribed to them to say in their prayer, 'Forgive us our debts.' For all the pious, therefore, who lie under this burden of a corruptible flesh, and groan in the infirmity of this life of theirs, there is one hope: 'We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins'."⁷³

⁷¹ Augustine tells us, for example, that "Noui quippe heretici, inimici gratiae Dei, quae datur pusillis et magnis per Iesum Christum dominum nostrum, etsi iam cauendi euentius apertiore inprobatione monstrantur, non tamen quiescunt scriptis suis minus cautorum uel minus eruditorum corda temptare. Quibus utique respondendum esset." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,1,2, CSEL 60, p. 424,1-5.)

⁷² Augustine's use of *iste* in the following passage has a pejorative ring in this particular case. He writes, "Non itaque, sicut dicunt nos quidam dicere et iste audet insuper scribere, 'omnes in peccatum' uelut inuiti 'carnis suae necessitate coguntur', sed si iam in ea aetate sunt, ut propriae mentis utantur arbitrio, et in peccato sua uoluntate retinentur et a peccato in peccatum sua uoluntate praecipitantur." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,3,7, CSEL 60, p. 428,17-21.)

⁷³ "Quid enim excellentius in ueteri populo sacerdotibus sanctis? Et tamen eis praecepit Deus sacrificium pro suis primitus offerre peccatis. Et quid sanctius in nouo

The recent history of the bishops of Rome had seen them portray themselves as high-priests, the fountain of divine teaching and unity itself⁷⁴. By emphasizing the gracious character of election of ancient priests and apostles, however, Augustine was putting the papal office in a different perspective. If the apostles, whom Boniface and his predecessors claim to succeed, were in need of grace to avoid error, and in need of mercy when they failed in their endeavour, how much more so mortals who daily operated beyond the physical realm of the ascended Saviour? The weakness of the apostles could also stand as a tacet but firm reminder to Boniface of Zosimus' halting effort to fulfil his Master's charge to tend the sheep.

Augustine, however, is not so bold as to cast aspersions upon the late pontiff himself. He contents himself, instead, to interpret Zosimus' actions for Boniface's benefit and enlightenment:

"The Pelagians had conceived, with a false hope, that the new and execrable dogma of Pelagius or Caelestius could be made acceptable to the catholic intelligences of certain Romans, when those crafty spirits - however perverted by a wicked error, yet not contemptible, since they appeared rather to be deserving of considerate correction than of easy condemnation - were treated with somewhat more of lenity than the stricter discipline of the Church required. For while so many and such important ecclesiastical documents were passing and repassing between the Apostolical See and the African bishops, - and, moreover, when the proceedings in this matter in that see were completed, with Caelestius present and making answer, - what sort of a letter, what decree is found of Pope Zosimus, of venerable memory, wherein he prescribed that it must be believed that man is born without any taint of original sin? Absolutely he never said this - never wrote it at all."⁷⁵

populo apostolis? Et tamen praecepit eis Dominus in oratione dicere: dimitte nobis debita nostra. Omnia igitur piorum sub hoc onere corruptibilis carnis et in istius uitae infirmitate gementium spes una est, quod aduocatum habemus apud patrem Iesum Christum iustum; et ipse est exoratio peccatorum nostrorum." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 3,5,15, *CSEL* 60, p. 504,8-16; Eng. trans. in SCHAFF, p. 409.)

⁷⁴ Cf. AUGUSTINE, *Ep.* 181,1, *CSEL* 44, pp. 702,11-703,5; *Ep.* 182,2, *CSEL* 44, p. 717,6-8.

⁷⁵ "Immo uero Pelagiani spe falsa putauerant nouum et execrabile dogma Pelagianum uel Caelestianum persuaderi quorundam Romanorum catholicis mentibus posse, quando illa ingenia quamuis nefando errore peruersa, non tamen contemptibilia, cum studiose corrigenda potius quam facile damnanda uiderentur, aliquanto lenius, quam superior postulabat ecclesiae disciplina, tractata sunt. Tot enim et tantis inter apostolicam sedem et afros episcopos currentibus et recurrentibus scriptis ecclesiasticis, etiam gestis de hac causa apud illam sedem Caelestio praesente et respondente confectis quatenus tandem epistula uenerandae memoriae papae Zosimi, quae interlocutio repperitur, ubi praeceperit credi oportere sine ullo uitio peccati originalis hominem nasci? Nusquam prorsus hoc dixit, nusquam omnino conscripsit." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 2,3,5, *CSEL* 60, pp. 463,21-64,6; Eng. trans. in SCHAFF, p. 393.)

Given the rather open nature of letters written during this period of antiquity, it is obvious that this "instruction" to Boniface is meant to benefit a wider, more unsuspecting audience. Augustine had, however, addressed this work to Pope Boniface personally, and while setting the record straight for the whole Christian world, he was also indicating to the new bishop of Rome himself the manner in which Zosimus' actions ought to be regarded and properly evaluated. By understanding the *true* intent of Zosimus' actions, Boniface could avoid repeating the unmentioned errors.

To make the matter perfectly clear, Augustine continues at the end of the third book to enunciate what *must* be done in the Pelagian affair.

"Whoever builds up, either concerning the soul or any other obscure matter, any edifice whence he may destroy this, which is true, best founded, and best known, whether he is a son or an enemy of the Church, must either be corrected or avoided."⁷⁶

If the letter were intended for the general public, such an exhortation would be superfluous, since there would be little that individuals might do. If the work were intended for imperial officials, it would certainly be useful and directive. In a letter addressed to the bishop of Rome, however, such a statement was actually quite bold in its rather imperious tone. Perhaps this style, more than anything else, indicates the anxiety which still haunted Augustine and his brethren as they recalled Rome's recent handling of the whole unhappy affair, and their strong intention to ensure that such an eventuality should never occur again.

Augustine closes the whole treatise with one more observation which could be interpreted as an indictment of those who have not followed the demands of Zosimus' *Tractoria*; it could equally stand, however, as an indictment of Zosimus himself, and his resistance to the original judgment of Carthage. He writes:

"They endeavour, forsooth, to disturb the catholic world, because, the Lord being against them, they are unable to pervert it; when rather they ought to have been trodden out wherever those wolves might have appeared, by watchfulness and pastoral diligence, after a competent and sufficient judgment made concerning them; whether with a view of their being healed and changed, or with a view of their being shunned by the safety and soundness of others, by the help of the Shepherd of the sheep, who seeks the lost sheep also among the little ones, who makes the sheep holy and righteous freely; who both providently instructs them, although sanctified and justified, yet in their frailty and infirmity to pray for a daily remission for their daily sins, without

⁷⁶ "Qua propter quisquis uel de anima uel de quacumque re obscura id adstruit, unde hoc quod uerissimum, fundatissimum, notissimum est destruat, siue sit ille filius siue inimicus ecclesiae, aut corrigendus est aut cauendus." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 3,10,26, *CSEL* 60, p. 519,11-15.)

which no one lives in this world, even although he may live well; and mercifully listens to their prayers."⁷⁷

As Peter's successor - the one specifically charged to feed the lambs and tend the sheep⁷⁸ - the *double-entendre* of this passage and its concomitant challenge could not have been lost on Boniface. Indeed, this passage forms rather a remarkable literary *inclusio* with the introduction which specifically refers to the episcopal vigilance on behalf of the Lord's flock.⁷⁹ The Good Shepherd protects the sheep from the wolves and their misguided teaching and heretical notions. Unhappily, pastoral diligence has not been sufficient to bring about the destruction of the wolf-pack; it has merely dispersed it, and as a result the threat remains, demanding the full attention and commitment of the Shepherd's vicars, among whom the bishop of Rome enjoys a particular pre-eminence.⁸⁰ The message to Boniface is, in a sense, *caveat episcopus*.

One question naturally arises. Why, out of his whole pontificate, did these letters alone evoke the papal response against Pelagianism? The answer is, on one level, quite simple. Boniface, who to this point had been rather inconspicuous on the Pelagian matter, could not ignore a direct and publically-known address from the leading member of the dissenters. It was imperative that some response be given, even if it had been somewhat forcefully elicited. Secondly, Julian's attack was principally aimed at Zosimus' *Tractoria* and the "prevarication" of the Roman Church,⁸¹ which essentially amounted to an assault against the papacy itself. Boniface could certainly not allow such a challenge go unanswered which questioned the very right and ability of the bishop of Rome to teach, judge

⁷⁷ "Orbem quippe catholicam quoniam domino eis resistente peruertere nequeunt, saltem commouere conantur, cum potius uigilantis et diligentia pastorali post factum de illis competens sufficiensque iudicium, ubicumque isti lupi apparuerint, conterendi sunt, siue ut sanentur atque mutantur siue ut ab aliorum salute atque integritate uidentur, adiuuante pastore pastorum, qui ouem perditam et in paruulis quaerit, qui oues sanctas et iustas gratis facit, qui eas quamuis sanctificatas et iustificatas, tamen in ista fragilitate atque infirmitate pro cotidianis peccatis, sine quibus hic non uiuitur, etiam cum bene uiuitur, cotidianam remissionem et ut petant prouidenter instruit et petentes clementer exaudit." (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 4,12,34, *CSEL* 60, p. 570, 12-22; Eng. trans. in SCHAFF, p. 434.)

⁷⁸ Jn 21,15-17.

⁷⁹ AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,1,1-2, *CSEL* 60, pp. 423-24.

⁸⁰ AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 1,1,2, *CSEL* 60, p. 424,10-11.

⁸¹ "Quin etiam Romanos clericos arguunt scribentes 'eos iussionis terrore percussos non erubuisse praeauaricationis crimen admittere, ut contra priorem sententiam suam, qua gestis catholico dogmati affuerant, postea pronuntiarent malam hominum esse naturam'". (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas ep. pel.* 2,3,5, *CSEL* 60, p. 463,21-23.)

and determine the law. What was perhaps even more preferable, however, was that such papal prerogative should be defended by someone other than the pope himself. The force of an illustrious provincial bishop's word against an Italian dissenter could not be underestimated and added to the lustre of Rome. Augustine, therefore, offers a fervent *apologia* on behalf of both Innocent and Zosimus, although it is clear that his preference was for the former.⁸²

CONCLUSIONS

In the end, Boniface unwittingly presided over a major alteration in the original character of Pelagianism. De Plinval maintains that, from the date of publication of the *Tractoria* in 418 until Boniface's death in September of 422, the movement evolved from simple asceticism into a more organized intellectual religious expression.⁸³ The earlier, more simple membership was perhaps even overwhelmed by younger associates whose knowledge of letters and philosophy exerted tremendous impact on the direction the movement would take, consequently losing some of the older adherents along the way.⁸⁴

⁸² Augustine makes the following defence against Julian's charge of prevarication, which *in fine* is actually little more than a rationalization of Zosimus' actions. He writes, "Nunc uero cum primitus beatissimi papae Innocentii litterae episcoporum litteris respondentis afrorum pariter hunc errorem, quem conantur isti persuadere, damnauerint, successor quoque eius sanctus papa Zosimus hoc tenendum esse, quod isti de paruulis sentiunt, numquam dixerit, numquam scripserit, insuper etiam Caelestium se purgare molientem ad consentiendum supra dictis sedis apostolicae litteris crebra interlocutione constrinxerit, profecto quidquid interea lenius actum est cum Caelestio seruata dumtaxat antiquissimae et robustissimae fidei firmitate correctionis fuit clementissima suasio, non adprobatio exitiosissima prauitatis. Et quod ab eodem sacerdote postea Caelestius et Pelagius repetita auctoritate damnati sunt, paululum in intermissae iam necessario proferendae ratio seueritatis fuit, non praeuaricatio prius cognitae uel noua cognitio ueritatis. (AUGUSTINE, *C. duas. ep. pel.* 1,3,5, CSEL 60, p. 465,11-25.) Augustine's reasoning is not so much convoluted as it is tortuous in its expression. His effort here is to demonstrate that, despite recent vicissitudes, the Roman bishops had truly acted in a manner consistent with the judicial and administrative power which they enjoyed. This reality may not be perceived accurately - or appreciated - by detractors like Julian, but that does not alter the fact that they had acquitted themselves appropriately in the face of the Pelagian threat. Given that Boniface had first-hand acquaintance with the difficulties which Zosimus' *volte-face* had created for him and the church in Rome, he really could have asked for no finer testimony to the authority of his office.

⁸³ DE PLINVAL, *Pélage*, p. 344.

⁸⁴ De Plinval cites Augustine's *C. Iul.* 5,4 to support this particular claim, though this author is not convinced it need necessarily bear this interpretation. More persuasive is his quotation from *C. Iul.* 2,37 wherein it is written, "milites, scholastici auditoriales... de

Perhaps de Plinval is correct with reference to the lower classes who were willing to battle in the streets of Rome in 418, but many of the nobles, who had been with Pelagius from the very beginning, transcended the "mob mentality". They were themselves steeped in the Roman philosophical tradition as well as the scriptural roots of the teaching. It must be borne in mind that one of Jerome's earliest criticisms was that Pelagius and his followers were much too indebted to the Stoics and Pythagoreans.⁸⁵ Whether or not these specific accusations were accurate does not alter the fact that philosophy and letters had always played a role in the development of Pelagian thought.

That is not to say, however, that de Plinval is wrong in recognizing an evolution in the movement throughout Boniface's reign. It is more likely, however, that Pelagianism developed as a result of repression, as any outlawed movement is bound to do. If membership indeed declined or changed during Boniface's reign, this phenomenon could just as easily be explained by the fact that individual ascetic needs were being met by the institutions approved by the official church, or by the fact that the spiritual leaders of the movement had been exiled to the East. In the end, one could indeed live the life that Pelagius, Caelestius or Rufinus espoused without being threatened with censure by assimilating into the victorious faith-community itself.

In the final analysis, did this phase of the Pelagian controversy add to or detract from the growth of papal authority? In one sense, this question is quite unanswerable because of the dearth of information. In large part, however, Boniface's particular contribution to the extension of papal influence is bound to what could be popularly described as "damage control". He steered a cautious course, making no statements himself, but allowing Honorius and Augustine to act on his behalf. Thus he regained the trust of the victors in the recent strife - a trust which had been shaken by Zosimus' actions, all Augustine's justifications notwithstanding⁸⁶. As

qualicumque clericorum turba..., quia non possunt secundum categorias Aristotelis de dogmatibus iudicare", although even this does not indicate a widespread discontent precipitous to abandoning the movement.

⁸⁵ Jerome, for example, saw a direct link between the Pelagian notion of *impeccantia* and the Stoic ἀπαθεία, maintaining that the former was but Stoicism writ piously. Cf. for example *In Hierem.* I,17, CSEL 59, p. 20,5-7.)

⁸⁶ Pietri declares that it was largely Boniface's rigor, with regard to the Pelagians which helped to restore the confidence of Africa in the papacy (C. PIETRI, *Les lettres nouvelles et leurs témoignages sur l'histoire de l'Église romaine et de ses relations avec l'Afrique* in *Les lettres de Saint Augustin découvertes par Johannes Divjak*, Paris, Études Augustiniennes, 1983, pp. 343-54, p. 352). This author, however, would take exception to the use of "la rigueur" by Pietri and would suggest that, given the facts of Boniface's

