

RUFINUS THE SYRIAN: MYTH AND REALITY¹

The title already announces the conclusion of this study: Rufinus the Syrian is a myth! But like all myths, that of the Syrian has some basis in reality; and like all myths it has a pervasive influence, and is difficult to dispel. In the following pages I shall examine how the conviction has emerged that Rufinus the Syrian in fact existed, and I hope to show that the conviction is based on a mistaken interpretation of the facts. Facts, however, are facts, and to suggest that the Syrian never existed is by no means to imply that he is simply the product of somebody's creative imagination, although (as we shall see) some degree of imagination may have played a part in constructing his *persona*. I have questioned long ago the main evidence – that of Marius Mercator² on which the existence of the Syrian is based –, but with little apparent success,³ because he still remains entrenched in our histories.⁴ That I return to the subject again is partly because I remain convinced that in essence that earlier contribution was correct, but mainly because a re-consideration both of the evidence, and in particular of the interpretation of that evidence, leads to an ever more cogent conclusion that the case for the existence of the Syrian is fundamentally flawed. A more important reason to return to the question lies in the consequence of removing the Syrian from the picture. The contention that Mercator referred to the Aquileian will require that we re-read Rufinus of Aquileia not only to show that he is a possible candidate, but also to note how much of an influence he could have had in early Pelagian circles. Since both sides of the coin – the Syrian 'myth' and the 'Pelagian' Aquileian – go against the grain in current accounts, some details will necessarily have to be teased out at length, whereas

¹ The following is a much expanded version of a 'Short Communication' given at The Fifteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford, August 2007, under the title 'The Identity of Rufinus the Syrian.'

² W. Dunphy, 'Marius Mercator on Rufinus the Syrian: Was Schwartz Mistaken?' *Augustinianum*, 32 (1992), pp. 279–88.

³ Thus, in a review of developments in studies on Pelagian history, Y.-M. Duval could claim in 1999 that 'almost everybody is agreed' as to the identity of Rufinus: 'Pélage en son temps: Données chronologiques nouvelles pour une présentation nouvelle,' in *Studia Patristica* 38, Leuven 2001, pp. 95–118 (here p. 99).

⁴ H. Chadwick, *The Church in Ancient Society: From Galilee to Gregory the Great*, Oxford 2001, pp. 439, 449–450, offers two (not fully consistent) accounts of the Syrian. V.H. Drecoll, *Augustin Handbuch*, Tübingen 2007, p. 179, begins his account of the Pelagian conflict with a *de rigueur* mention of Rufinus the Syrian, while admitting that we know little about the man.

at some other points the reader of the following may also baulk at the lack of more cogent argument.

Suspensions

The 'biography' of Rufinus is brief. Mercator's account tells us that he was of Syrian origin. He was influenced⁵ by the teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia, which he brought with him to Rome in the time of Pope Anastasius (c.400). Because of some 'difficulties' encountered with the Pope, he refrained from promulgating his views personally but did so through Pelagius and Caelestius who became his disciples. For reference purposes I give the necessary essentials of the text: *Quaestio contra catholicam fidem apud nonnullos Syrorum et praecipue in Cilicia a Theodoro (...) iamdudum mota (...). hanc ineptam (...) quaestionem sub sanctae recordationis Anastasio (...) Rufinus quondam natione Syrus Romam primum inuexit (...), Pelagium gente Brittanum monachum tunc decepit (...). huic Pelagio adhaesit Caelestius, nobilis natu quidem et illius temporis auditorialis scholasticus (...).*⁶ We next hear of him – if it is the same Rufinus! – from another source, when in 411 Caelestius, in his 'trial' at Carthage, referred to 'the holy priest Rufinus' as his authority for the opinion that there is no such thing as *tradux peccati*.⁷ That is all!⁸

There is, of course, much more in our modern accounts of Rufinus. He is identified as the priest Rufinus, a member of the community in Bethlehem whom Jerome sent via Rome to Milan about the same time when Mercator's Rufinus traveled to Rome.⁹ A *Liber de*

⁵ The connection is not at all clear. It seems to reflect Mercator's own attitude to Theodore at the time of writing, else we must posit an otherwise unknown pre-Pelagian debate in the East concerning the consequences of the sin of Adam.

⁶ Marius Mercator, *Commonitorium I*, ACO I,v,1, pp. 5-6. An Italian translation of the anti-Pelagian memoranda is given by S. Prete, *I Memoriali Antipelagiani*, Siena 1960. A German translation of Mercator's full dossier is in C. Konoppa, *Die Werke des Marius Mercator*, Berlin 2005.

⁷ Augustine, *De gratia Christi*, II,3,3, CSEL 42, p. 168, in a citation from the minutes of the meeting. I have examined the events at length in my study: 'A Lost Year: Pelagianism in Carthage, 411 A.D.,' *Augustinianum* 45(2005), pp. 389-466.

⁸ The scant indications available are collated in C. Pietri, L. Pietri (ed.), *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire 2: Prosopographie de l'Italie chrétienne (313-604)*, Rome 2000, pp. 1941-42 (s.v. 'Rufinus 6').

⁹ Jerome, *Ep.* 81,2, CSEL 55, p. 107; *Apologia contra Rufinum* III,24, CCSL 79, p. 96. P. Lardet, *L'Apologie de Jérôme contre Rufin: un commentaire*, Leiden 1993, pp. 321-22, lists opinions on the identification, but refrains from drawing his own

Fide, which is attributed in a MS to Rufinus (of Palestine), is generally put under the name of the Syrian.¹⁰ It contains Pelagian teaching, particularly a denial of *tradux peccati*, that is very close to that of an otherwise unidentified book which Augustine refuted in his first anti-Pelagian writing (411), *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*. The connection with Caelestius' 'holy priest Rufinus' and further with Mercator's Syrian is considered to be obvious. A further step is taken to consolidate the picture with the probable identification of the author of the *Liber* with the hitherto unidentified translator of a major portion of the Vulgate New Testament. That translation, it is maintained, is first detected in Pelagian writings, and is also used in the *Liber*. It would seem logical that the translator be found in Pelagian circles, and that the Syrian, as author of the *Liber* and as a former member of Jerome's community, should continue the work left unfinished by Jerome.¹¹

Many question marks could and should be added to the brief sketch just given. It is not very clear, for instance, how a Syrian, particularly a Syrian with even remote sympathy for Theodore of Mopsuestia, could become a member of Jerome's community. To the best of our knowledge, the Rufinus sent by Jerome to the West was a Latin. That the *Liber de Fide* was in circulation before 411 is possible, but by no means an established fact. Much less established is its attribution to Rufinus the Syrian. That the *Liber* can be taken as a very early, or even the earliest witness to use of the Vulgate is open to doubt, but it is a problem that I hope to examine elsewhere. Should there be a case to be made for identifying the continuator of the translation of the Vulgate in Pelagian circles, he succeeded well in avoiding all trace of Pelagianism in his translation.¹² This is important, because strangely none of the biblical texts bandied about in the controversy, and which he supposedly translated, were 'tampered with' in any Pelagian sense in the translation.

conclusion. The *Prosopographie* ('Rufinus 5' p. 1941) accepts the identification as being possible, but at 'Rufinus 6' rejects it!

¹⁰ For a modern edition see M.W. Miller, *Rufini Presbyteri Liber de Fide*, Washington 1964. Earlier editions are in PL 21,1123-54 (Sirmond); PL 48,451-488 (Garnier). We shall meet it again later.

¹¹ The clearest presentation of the case is made by B. Fischer, 'Das Neue Testament in lateinischer Sprache,' in K. Aland, (ed.), *Die alten Übersetzungen des Neuen Testaments, die Kirchenväterzitate und Lektionare*, Berlin 1972, pp. 1-92 (see esp. p. 74).

¹² D. de Bruyne, 'Étude sur les origines de notre texte Latin de Saint Paul,' in *Revue Biblique*, 12 (1915), pp. 358-92, vainly attempted to attribute the translation to Pelagius himself, while admitting from the outset the non-Pelagian character of the translation.

If the sketchy 'biography' of the Syrian is basically correct, we are confronted with a phenomenon that is passing strange, even if it would not be a unique case in history. It means that through the first decade of the fifth century there were two persons with considerable influence in Roman Christian circles (irrespective of whether or not they resided in the city) who not only shared the same name, but also lived uncannily parallel lives: Rufinus the Syrian and Rufinus of Aquileia.¹³ The following outline may serve to draw attention to a malaise that underlies any ready acceptance of the existence of the Syrian. Both the Aquileian and the Syrian came to Rome from the East just before the turn of the century. They were both proficient in Latin and Greek. They both – whether personally in the case of the Aquileian, or through his disciples in the case of the Syrian – enjoyed the patronage the Anicii. They both introduced to Rome teachings that would subsequently be condemned as being heretical. They both met with the disapproval of Pope Anastasius. They both refrained from publishing their theological opinions under their own names. They both had a formative influence on the Pelagians – Mercator is explicit on this with reference to the Syrian; Jerome indicates the translations of Rufinus of Aquileia as being at the root of the Pelagian error. A direct result of that influence emerged in Pelagius' Expositions on the Pauline letters.¹⁴ Finally, they both exited the stage of history at about the same time in 410/411. At least we can date the death of Rufinus of Aquileia to around this time; of the Syrian, other than the (possible) reference made to him by Caelestius in 411, we hear no more.

It is not impossible, of course, that two different individuals are being referred to here. Rufinus was, after all, very common as a name.

¹³ I omit the others listed under the same name (cf. Miller, *op.cit.*, p. 39, n. 23), in particular Rufinus of Rome to whom Jerome addressed *Ep.* 74. For the Aquileian the essential work of reference remains F.X. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345-411). His Life and Works*, Washington 1945. The sources for a *Vita Rufini (Aquilensis)* are collected s.v. '(Tyrannius) Rufinus 3' in *Prosopographie* (see n. 8 above) pp. 1925-40. For more recent studies see H. Drobner, 'Tirannio Rufino di Concordia (Aquileia): Bibliografia,' *Augustinianum*, 40 (2000), pp. 461-517, and *ibid.* 'Rufinus, Tyrannius' (with updates) on the internet edition of *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon* (www.bautz-de/bbkl).

¹⁴ Mercator 'casually' tells us that *after* Pelagius came under the influence of Rufinus the Syrian he then had the audacity (unlike Rufinus) to publish a Commentary on Paul. Rufinus of Aquileia was chided by his contemporaries for not publishing his translation of Origen's Commentary on Romans under his own name. In modern scholarship it has been established Pelagius used the Origen-Rufinus Commentary. From the following it will emerge that Mercator had told us this long ago!

Nevertheless, when presented in outline the parallels noted above cannot but give rise to the *suspicion* that we may be confronted here by the same individual appearing in our sources under two different names, however we attempt to explain some serious difficulties encountered if we attempt to reduce them to one person. That suspicion will only be strengthened when we look more closely into the arguments offered to establish the identity of the Syrian, and strengthened even more when we examine the sources themselves that serve as a basis for those arguments. Both the sources and the arguments are open to question.

Where is the Syrian?

A major obstacle to accepting the existence of Rufinus the Syrian is paradoxically his *absence* both from the Pelagian controversy itself and from contemporary (or later) ancient accounts of it. Assuming that Mercator and Caelestius refer to the same Rufinus, we are not only confined to these two solitary references, but also confronted with what would amount to a conspiracy of silence on his name in all the other sources. Even the reference by Caelestius, we should recall, is transmitted to us by Augustine, who sees no need to identify this Rufinus. Later in the same writing, in a rebuff of Caelestius' claim that the matter under debate was a *quaestio disputata et disputanda* (and presumably that his opinion was also held by others), Augustine writes: *huius peruersitatis [Pelagius et Caelestius] auctores uel perhibentur uel etiam probantur uel certe, si auctores non sunt, sed hoc ab aliis didicerunt, assertores tamen atque doctores*.¹⁵ We might include the Syrian among the *alii*, but it is strange that, despite his having the account of Carthage under his eyes at this time, Augustine passes over the mention of Rufinus without comment. To say that his name does not appear in *Ep.* 190 because he was dead¹⁶ is not sufficient. Mercator, a decade or more later, has no qualms about naming him. When

¹⁵ *De gratia Christi*, II,23,26, CSEL 42, pp. 184-85 (in similar terms in *Ep.* 190,6,22, CSEL 57, p. 157, from the same period). In 416 when he learned of Diospolis he named Pelagius: *princeps est auctor huius perniciosi dogmatis* (*Sermo Dolbeau* 30 [*Serm.*348A],6). For the reading (not *est et*) cf. G. Partoens, 'Quelques remarques de critique textuelle sur le sermon 348A augmenté de Saint Augustin (Dolbeau 30),' *Augustiniana* 50 (2000), pp. 175-95 (here p. 182). The African bishops in their letters to Pope Innocent follow suit: Pelagius and Caelestius are the *auctores* (*Epp.*175,1; 176,4).

¹⁶ Thus W. Thiele, *Epistulae Catholicae* [VL 26/1], Freiburg 1969, 'Einleitung' p. 101*.

Pelagius himself saw fit to quote in his 'Expositions' the opinion of those who were opposed to *tradux peccati*,¹⁷ he did not quote his 'teacher' the Syrian, but his own disciple Caelestius.¹⁸ We will search in vain through all the ancient sources for any mention of a Syrian. There is, of course, a clear reference to Rufinus as the source of Pelagianism, but that is Jerome's attempt to 'blame it all' on Rufinus of Aquileia,¹⁹ and in modern scholarship the identification of the Syrian with the Aquileian is roundly excluded. This identification was the substance of my earlier attempt at a solution in which I revived an opinion that was advanced very summarily by Schwartz.²⁰ A. de Veer²¹ found Schwartz's suggestion to be too '*tortueuse*' and could conclude a comprehensive note on the identity of Rufinus by saying that Garnier's solution remains the most plausible.²² Thirty years later the question has been again examined at some length by C. Konoppa, who in conclusion gives the 'most likely' solution – it is essentially the *opinio communis* that goes back to Garnier.²³

Between c.430 when Mercator wrote his *Commonitoria* at the time of the Council of Ephesus, and 1673 when Garnier published the *Collectio Palatina*, the Syrian remained unknown. An objection will perhaps be raised to that statement with the reminder that the *Liber de Fide* was known, but that objection will not suffice. The

¹⁷ *De peccatorum meritis*, III,2,2, (p. 129): *Hi autem, inquit, qui contra traducem peccati sunt, ita illam impugnare nituntur...* (= Pelagius, in *Rom.* 5,15, ed. Souter, p. 46). Attention is rarely given to the fact that this is the only *in extenso* citation of any 'author' in the Expositions.

¹⁸ [Ambrosius Iunior], '*Praedestinatus*,' I,88 (CCSL 25B, p. 52) (referring to Pelagius in his Expositions): *tangens Caelestium, qui contra traducem peccati primus scripsit...*

¹⁹ R.F. Evans, 'Pelagius and the Revival of the Origenist Controversy,' in *Pelagius: Inquiries and Reappraisals*, New York 1968, pp. 6-25, made a strong case for not dismissing Jerome's evaluation.

²⁰ E. Schwartz in the *Praefatio* to his edition of the *Collectio Palatina*, ACO I,v,1, p.XI. He offered only a few references to Jerome as being Mercator's source. Scholars, he opined, simply did not notice that the Aquileian was intended because it seemed too incredible (*incredibile videtur*).

²¹ 'Le prêtre Rufinus,' BA 22, *La Crise Pélagienne II*, Paris 1975, pp. 704-711 (here p. 706). O. Wermelinger, *Rom und Pelagius*, Stuttgart 1975, p. 12, merely lists Schwartz 'with forerunners who held the same view,' and states that their identification of Rufinus of Aquileia as the person in question can be 'easily' discounted. In the same vein see B.R. Rees, *Pelagius: a Reluctant Heretic*, Woodbridge 1988, pp. 9-10. To equate Schwartz's position with the pre-Garnier view is not quite accurate, because the 'pre-Garnierians' did not have to contend with Mercator's evidence. When that evidence came to light, as we shall see, they then readily (at least initially) interpreted it as a reference to the Aquileian.

²² Reprinted in PL 48, 261-66. We shall examine that solution at length below.

²³ Konoppa, *Mercator*, pp. 94-98.

only surviving copy of the *Liber* was made c.600, possibly in northern Italy.²⁴ Another copy (later, but of unknown date and provenance) still existed in the 17th century, but is now lost.²⁵ Other than those, the *Liber* had no MS tradition. We should be wary, however, of concluding from this brief appearance of the *Liber* in history that 'knowledge' of the Syrian also survived. It is too easily assumed that the evidence of the colophon of the surviving MS, in which the author is identified as *Rufinus presbyter*, proves that this is a work by the Syrian. The text of the colophon (f.61r) is: *Exp(licit) Rufini pr(es)b(yster)i prouinciae palestinae / liber de fide translatus de graeco / in latinum sermonem. Amen.* This is very ambiguous. It is highly unlikely that anybody would have been identified as 'a/the priest of the Province of Palestine,' and I find it equally unlikely (though not impossible) that 'Province of Palestine' was used to identify any individual. Since the colophon continues with the claim that this is a translation from Greek I suggest that the text states that this is 'A Book of (the) Faith of the Province of Palestine.'²⁶

We can, however, bypass this problem, leaving it as a possible ambiguity, and still maintain that the MS tells us nothing about the existence of the Syrian. A gloss on the MS that is probably contemporary with the transcription of the text tells us *why* the copy was made. It was understood to be an anti-Arian tract by *Rufinus presbyter*, but the glossator warned against its concealed Pelagian content and recommended that it be removed from the codex. He also rejected its attribution to *Rufinus*, and identified the author as being Pelagius himself!²⁷ In so doing he left us in little doubt about his understanding of the identity of the writer to which it was falsely ascribed – Rufinus of Aquileia. This is confirmed by John the Deacon at about the same time (precise dates are again uncertain), who quoted excerpts from the *Liber* in his *Expositum in Heptateuchum*, and introduced them simply as *in libro de fide Rufini*.²⁸ When John also quoted from

²⁴ For the dates cf. Miller, pp. 46-47.

²⁵ See n. 37 below.

²⁶ In the concluding section of this study further evidence will be offered to support this suggestion.

²⁷ The text of the gloss is given by Miller, p. 36 (also in PLS I,1099). The recommendation that the *Liber* be removed from the collection suggests a time when the codex itself (as codex) was still incomplete. A later gloss at the conclusion (reproduced in Miller, p. 50) identifies the 'true' author as *Rufin[us] catholic[us]*.

²⁸ Miller, pp. 33-35. John's mistaken reference to a second book by Rufinus leads us again to the Aquileian. See my note: 'Rufinus the Syrian's 'Books', *Augustinianum* 23 (1983), pp. 523-29.

Rufinus of Aquileia's *De benedictionibus patriarcharum* he confined himself again to the simple reference *Rufini*.²⁹ At the time, therefore, when the *Liber* made a fleeting appearance in history, despite the reference to *Provincia Palestina* in the colophon of the MS – there is no incipit or other introductory matter – it was considered to be a work by Rufinus of Aquileia.

Before we turn to the Syrian's 'resurrection' a few background notes should be made. As we have seen, the only explicit mention of Rufinus the Syrian is made by Marius Mercator. Mercator's *Commonitorium*, in turn, only survives in the *Collectio Palatina*, and this *Collectio*, in its turn, is only to be found in one codex. The repetition of 'only' must attract attention, and we shall have occasion to return to this strange phenomenon again. Mercator's name, but little else about him, was known from the works of Augustine.³⁰ But if the Syrian (with Mercator's writings) remained unknown, the Medievals were in no doubt as to the identity of the teacher of Caelestius. In the writings of Jerome the source of Pelagianism lay in the translations of Rufinus of Aquileia, and together with that information the Medievals were also armed with a 'Papal censure' of the Aquileian in the so-called *Decretum Gelasianum* attributed to Pope Gelasius.³¹ The fact that 'Pope' Gelasius was based on a garbled reading of Jerome's information was not an issue. It was Papal! At the beginning of the 17th century, to condense almost a millennium in one voice, Bellarmine could write: *Ruffinus Presbyter Aquileiensis... merito notatur erroris a Gelasio Papa*.³² It is furthermore important to keep in mind, when we examine the re-emergence of Rufinus the Syrian, not only this traditional and authority-based suspicion with regard to the Aquileian, but also, and even especially, the attitude of the age towards Jerome.³³

²⁹ Paris BNF lat. 12,309, ff.72v, 94r.

³⁰ At least from *De Octo Dulcitii Quaest.* 3,2, CCSL 44A, p. 275, and the *Indiculus* by Possidius (PL 46,9). The extent to which Augustine's *Ep.* 93 to Mercator was known must remain uncertain. It was only first included in the corpus of letters in the Maurist edition. I omit Jerome's mention of Mercator (*Ep.* 154). This letter was not widely known, and was only added to his collection a century ago.

³¹ E. von Dobschütz (ed.), *Decretum Gelasianum [de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis]*, TU 38/4, Leipzig 1912, pp. 44–45. Rufinus (*uir religiosissimus*) is not in fact listed among the authors to be rejected, but it is noted that Jerome *eum in aliquibus de arbitrii libertate notauit, illa sentimus quae praedictum beatum Hieronymum sentire cognoscimus*.

³² R. Bellarmine, *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis, Opera Omnia* XII, p. 392. I cite from the edition of the *Opera* by J. Fèvre (Paris 1891). The first edition appeared in 1613.

³³ See the admirable account given by E.F. Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, Baltimore, 1985.

While both sides, in the Confessional divide after the Reformation, haggled – between and among themselves – over the interpretation and ‘ownership’ of Augustine, Jerome, who gave the Church its Vulgate Bible, was a bastion of Tridentine Roman orthodoxy. The suggestion that the ‘Father of Pelagianism’ could be somebody other than Rufinus of Aquileia, whom Jerome had pointedly singled out for that role, might (and would) require that attitudes towards Jerome be re-dimensioned,³⁴ and that would inevitably cast a shadow on the splendour of the *Doctor Maximus*.

Enter Garnier

When Jacques Sirmond first published the text of the *Liber de fide* in 1650³⁵ he refrained from offering any name for its author. In a note on the final colophon (quoted above) he maintained that this should be retained as the missing *Inscriptio* to the book, and from here he took the title of the book and the name of the author *ne libro nomen deesset*.³⁶ In the brief introductory note ‘to the reader’ (*Lectori*) he drew attention to the fact that John the Deacon had attributed the work to *Rufinus presbyter*, and that in the two MSS (*in binis exemplaribus*) Sirmond had seen in Corbie, an annotator had rejected this attribution and proposed Pelagius as the author.³⁷ Sirmond excluded both Pelagius and Rufinus (of Aquileia) from consideration, the latter because the

³⁴ For a brief (at times benign) account of the ‘reception’ of Rufinus through the ages see F.X. Murphy, *Rufinus*, (n. 13 above) pp.ix-xvi, 223-25. The account needs revision and updating. A history of ‘Rufinus in history’ (especially as found in the MSS) remains to be written.

³⁵ J. Sirmond, *Rufini presbyteri provinciae Palaestinae Liber de Fide*, Paris 1650. This, without the [*Praefatio*] *lector*, is reprinted (from Vallarsi’s edition of the works of Rufinus) in PL 21,1123-54.

³⁶ PL 21,1153-54. In this same note he deduces from the evidence of John the Deacon (see n. 28 above): *libros de fide sub Rufini nomine duos saltem fuisse*. The running header in the *editio princeps* (and in reprints in his *Opera Varia*) is *De Fide Liber I*, implying the existence of *Liber II*! In PL 21 it is simply *Liber de Fide*, although the references in the notes to a second book remain.

³⁷ I have argued elsewhere that when he established the text for publication Sirmond used the lost MS, since all the MS variants he offers agree with the readings found in the surviving *Codex Petropolitanus*. Cf. W. Dunphy, ‘The Lost Manuscript of Pseudo-Rufinus: *De Fide*,’ *Augustinianum* 40 (2000), pp. 89-103. At that time I was not aware that in the *editio princeps* the variants (given as footnotes in later editions and PL) appeared in a final page under the title: *Omissa vel Variantia ex altero exemplari*. This unnumbered page seems to have been added after the text had been prepared for print.

Liber de Fide is so violently anti-Origenist that it could not have been written by Rufinus. There is no question of Rufinus the Syrian here – nor could there have been, because at the time of the publication of the *Liber*, the possible existence of the Syrian was still unknown.³⁸ In a note to c.38 (*Quod liberi non pro parentibus puniantur...*) Sirmond is not unaware of the difficulty involved in excluding Rufinus (of Aquileia!) as author, because the text here launches into a denial of *tradux peccati*, and according to accepted opinion in Sirmond's day Caelestius at Carthage had invoked the authority of the Aquileian on this issue.³⁹ He concludes the note, however, by maintaining that the anti-Origenism of the *Liber* is sufficient to reject the Aquileian as author. In the first reprint of Sirmond's text – to be distinguished from Garnier's 'corrected' re-edition, to which we will give our attention presently – it appears as: *Anonymi cuiusdam, qui sub nomine Ruffini Praesbyteri a Iac. Sirmondo editus est, liber de fide*.⁴⁰

The year 1673, when Jean Garnier published his edition of the *Codex Palatinus* 234,⁴¹ was not a time when one would enter lightly into the field of Pelagian history. Mention of a few items must suffice here to conjure up the atmosphere of the times. The controverted *Augustinus* by C. Jansen (*Jansenius*) had been (posthumously) published in 1640. Some works of Augustine that are greatly important to a full appreciation of the Pelagian debate (e.g. *De Gestis Pelagii* and *Contra Iulianum op. imperf.*) had only been re-discovered and published earlier in the century. Attempts to publish a new 'definitive' edition of the corpus of Augustine's writings were meeting with considerable difficulty and the complete (Maurist) edition would not begin

³⁸ A question mark should be added here because Holsten, before his death in 1661, had taken notes from the *Cod. Pal.* and rumours of it provoked lively interest (cf. Schoenemann in PL 48,51). The earliest date I can find is 1655 (ACO p.V), but it is not to be ruled out that rumours about the MS were in circulation earlier, and that Sirmond may have been informed of some of MS's contents.

³⁹ PL 21,1143-44. The note is followed by a 'rectification' of Sirmond by Vallarsi who explains that Caelestius referred to a different Rufinus: *puta Syrum illum, quem narrat Marius Mercator...* Nevertheless Vallarsi remains cautious: *Nec ignoramus quae de ipso [= Rufino Syro(?)] disputant eruditi. Sed Aquileiensis apud Pamachium non fuerit*. The reference of *de ipso* is not entirely clear.

⁴⁰ M. de la Bigne, *Maxima Bibliotheca veterum Patrum* 27/2, Lyon 1677, col. 528-543. It continued in that ever-expanding collection until the appearance of Migne's *Patrologia*.

⁴¹ J. Garnier, *Marii Mercatoris S. Augustino aequalis opera quaecumque extant...*, Paris 1673. Schwartz, little impressed by Garnier's work as editor, notes (p.VII) that the volume was laden *magna notarum farragine et uasta dissertationum mole...*! An edition of *Comm.II* (on Caelestius) had been published in Paris by P. Labbe in 1671.

to appear until 1679.⁴² H. de Noris had been working for some time on his *Historia Pelagiana* that would appear in 1673, the same year as Garnier's publication.⁴³ That too would see a history of controversy.⁴⁴ Since Mercator's writings offered new historical information on Pelagianism it is not surprising that they should have aroused interest and their publication even involved some intrigue.⁴⁵

One chapter of Garnier's many studies that accompany his edition of the writings of Mercator is entitled: *De Rufino quem Coelestius pro magistro agnovit*.⁴⁶ In an extended commentary on Mercator's account of the history of Pelagianism he thus launches directly into an identification of Mercator's Syrian as 'the holy priest Rufinus' named by Caelestius. But before he lists his arguments Garnier shows himself to be aware that he is treading on thin ice. He raises the question of the identity of Rufinus, he says, because of the widespread and deeply rooted opinion – based on good authority! – that Caelestius had referred to Rufinus of Aquileia.⁴⁷ This Rufinus was *notissimus* throughout the whole Church because of his friendship with Melania; because of the books he published; because of his enmity towards *sanctus Hieronymus*; and last, but not least, because of his obstinate defense of Origenism. Garnier admits that it will be difficult

⁴² For an appreciation of the difficulties encountered cf. G. Folliet, 'L'édition des *Opera insigniora S. Augustini c. Pelagianos* publiée à Rome en 1652 et censurée par le Saint-Office,' *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, 39 (1993), pp. 425-39. A comprehensive account of the on-going work of publication during the century is given by J.-L. Quantin, 'L'Augustin du XVII^e siècle? Questions de corpus et de canon,' in L. Devillairs (ed.), *Augustin au XVII^e siècle*, Firenze 2007, pp. 3-77.

⁴³ Souter, I, p. 13, noting that Noris consulted the MS of Mercator during the preparation of his *Historia*, also draws attention to the fact that Noris had completed the work by mid-1672.

⁴⁴ Noris, while retaining the connection between Rufinus and the Pelagians, nevertheless maintained that Rufinus did not end his days as a heretic (cf. I, p. 14). (The edition to hand was published in Padua, 1708). Writing almost a century later (1762) J. Stilling introduced his biography of Jerome by roundly denouncing attempts – Tilli-mont is singled out in particular – to re-instate Rufinus (cf. AASS 48, *Sept. VIII*, p. 418). Note here that Stilling is primarily concerned with protecting the image of Jerome!

⁴⁵ Cf. Schoenemann, PL 48,51-52, Schwartz, *Praefatio*, pp.V-VII, Souter (I, pp. 13-14), for some interesting notes on the belaboured first appearance in print of Mercator's writings. The 'mountain' of c.3,500 Palatine codices had only been transferred from Heidelberg in 1623.

⁴⁶ PL 48,261-66.

⁴⁷ The passage (PL 48,261D) deserves to be quoted: *Insedit animis multorum opinio, invaluitque, partim tempore, partim auctoritate, sive opinantium, qui magni viri, sive Patrum, quorum testimonia proferuntur in speciem manifesta, Rufinum quem Coelestius dixit se audivisse, eundem esse cum Aquilensi presbytero...* In the preface to the volume (PL 48,27) we read: *refellitur popularis opinio de Rufino Aquileiensi*.

to eradicate this long-established opinion, but he offers his arguments with all due deference (*nisi admodum timide*) for the consideration of scholars.⁴⁸

A series of nine arguments is then offered, which I summarize here in the order in which they are given by Garnier. (In the following ‘*’ introduces Garnier’s ‘*quod non*’ with regard to the Aquileian.)

1. Mercator refers to a Syrian. *We know from his contemporaries that the other Rufinus was Italian (cf. Palladius), and from the region of Aquileia (cf. Jerome).
2. When Mercator writes *quidam natione Syrus*, he implies that this Rufinus was evidently little known. *The Aquileian, on the other hand, was known throughout the world because of his erudition, his *sanctitas*, and his association with Melania the Elder.
3. The Syrian came to Rome during the Pontificate of Anastasius. *The Aquileian came during the reign of Siricius.
4. Caelestius tells us that (‘his’) Rufinus stayed in the home of Pam-machius, the admirer of Jerome. *This would be unthinkable in the case of the Aquileian, Jerome’s arch-enemy.
5. Rufinus was in Rome when Caelestius met him. *The Aquileian had left Rome, did not even return there when summoned by Pope Anastasius, and remained in Aquileia until the barbarians invaded that region.
6. Jerome accused the Aquileian on the question of ‘*apatheia*’ and sinlessness; no mention was made his denying *tradux peccati* which was denied by the other Rufinus. *As an Origenist, in fact, the Aquileian would have done worse than his namesake – he would have upheld the blasphemy of a sin of the pre-existent soul.
7. Paulinus of Milan raised no objection to Caelestius’s reference to the authority of Rufinus. *Had this been a reference to the Aquileian, Paulinus would have known (and used) the fact that Rufinus of Aquileia had been condemned in both Rome and Milan.
8. Caelestius clearly (*satis aperte*) referred to somebody still living, otherwise he would have added something like *beatae recordationis* to his name instead of simply calling him *sanctus* Rufinus. *The Aquileian, however, had died a year or two earlier in Sicily.

⁴⁸ Note that Garnier is only concerned here with the identity of the Rufinus mentioned in the account of Carthage. He is careful to retain the *disrepute* of the Aquileian, which will in fact be central to his argument.

9. Caelestius spoke of a priest in good standing in the Church (*sanc-tus presbyter*). *Pope Anastasius, in his letter to John of Jerusalem, had excommunicated the Aquileian.

Having thus, to his satisfaction, excluded Rufinus of Aquileia from consideration in the notice given by Caelestius, Garnier goes on to attempt to piece together the strands of information on which a 'biography' of the Syrian can be built. Before he takes the plunge, however, and identifies the Pelagian Rufinus of Syria as the emissary of Jerome, he makes a last attempt at self-defense: *Fatebor rugens me nihil habere quod vehementer affirmare velim, propter inveteratum de Aquileiensi praeiudicium*.⁴⁹ His main evidence, of necessity, is the *Liber de Fide* only recently brought to light by Sirmond. An annotated edition of the *Liber* is included in a collection of the various Pelagian *libelli* that were written at the time of the controversy,⁵⁰ and in Garnier's introduction to it another abbreviated account of the Syrian is offered, this time with more attention given to the role of Julian as the presumed translator of the *Liber*. Garnier notes points of contact between the *Liber* and the *Libellus fidei* attributed by Garnier to Julian of Aeclanum,⁵¹ and confidently dates the 'translation' to c.417. With equal confidence he maintains that the whole book (including its 'Pelagian' section!) in its original Greek form can be dated between 370 and 400, i.e., prior to the Syrian's dispute with Pope Anastasius.⁵²

Writing with the conviction (and for readers more or less equally convinced) that Rufinus of Aquileia was an excommunicated heretic, arguments nn. 7 and 9 would have a certain value within Garnier's terms of reference at that time. In fact, Garnier felt so assured on this point that he had no qualms about 'doctoring' his edition of the letter of Anastasius (also found in the *Collectio Palatina*) in such a manner as to make it clear that the Pope had not only condemned Origenism, but had also specifically condemned Rufinus in person – something

⁴⁹ PL 48,262D.

⁵⁰ Garnier's 'edition' of the *Liber de Fide* is reprinted in PL 48,451-488 (Garnier's preface at col.449-450). Apart from (unnecessarily) re-ordering some sections of the text his main editorial contribution was to include in the text most of Sirmond's MS variants, and to tacitly 'correct' some of the text. By ranking it among the other Pelagian apologetic *libelli* Garnier gives a false impression of the character of the writing. A further unfortunate result is that the *Liber* is frequently and mistakenly (and confusingly) referred to as the *Libellus fidei* of Rufinus.

⁵¹ PL 48,508-26.

⁵² PL 48,450. A discussion of the nature and origin of the *Liber de Fide* must be left to a different forum. Some preliminary notes are given in the concluding section below.

that Anastasius did not do.⁵³ To base anything, however, on the fact that Paulinus of Milan did not object to the introduction of the authority of (the condemned/excommunicated) Rufinus goes beyond the limits of the evidence, because only a snippet of the debate in Carthage has been preserved for us. Furthermore, even at the time Garnier wrote, Noris (to offer one example) was raising some doubts about the disrepute into which the Aquileian had been consigned by history.⁵⁴ Noris accepted the fact that Rufinus had subscribed to the heterodox views of Origen that were rejected in the time of Pope Anastasius, but with a list Rufinus' friends and admirers Noris argued that the Aquileian must have been reconciled to the Church by Pope Innocent, and as proof offered the text of the so-called *Fides Rufini* from the (still unpublished) *Collectio Palatina*.⁵⁵ While nobody, nowadays, would give credence to an argument based on the assertion that Rufinus was either condemned as a heretic, or excommunicated,⁵⁶ this assertion nevertheless plays an important part in Garnier's cumulative argument to which credence is in fact given. There is also a further inherent flaw in Garnier's own logic at this point, because in n. 2 he had argued that Rufinus of Aquileia (unlike the Syrian) was renowned in ancient times *ob eruditionis famam, opinionem sanctitatis et Melaniae consortium*. To this fame (in the same n. 2) Garnier opposes the relative obscurity of the Syrian, while the reasons offered for the Aquileian's *fama* (especially his repute for *sanctitas*!) are left without comment.

Here too (n. 2) Garnier's argument runs into a further difficulty, because in order to maintain the separate identity of the relatively unknown Syrian he tacitly emends *quondam* in the MS to

⁵³ He claims (PL 48,236n) that there is a lacuna in the MS(S) which he restores with the aid of Jerome's *Ep.* 130. Coustant vigorously rejects the restoration (PL 20,72n). Schwartz (p. 4) passes it over in silence.

⁵⁴ See n. 44 above. The alacrity with which De Pin and Tillemont (for references see Murphy, pp.xi-xii) would accept Garnier's discovery of the Syrian (but not his condemnation of the Aquileian!) suggests that Noris was giving voice to a growing re-evaluation of the Aquileian. See n. 136 below for a hint of this already in Trithemius.

⁵⁵ *Historia Pelagiana*, I, pp. 14-15. Garnier (PL 48,241-42) rejects any connection of the *Fides* with the Aquileian, and suggests that the connection in the title be referred to the priest who was sent by Jerome to Milan. It's presence at this point in the *Collectio Palatina* is due, he thinks, to an *imperitus librarius*!

⁵⁶ Cf. Murphy, pp. 127-37 for an account of what happened in Rome and Milan. The 'authority' of the *Decretum Gelasianum* in the question has also been removed since the time of Garnier.

⁵⁷ The MS's *quondam* is retained by Baluze (cf. PL 48,111) and Schwartz (who does not even note Garnier's 'correction'). In modern times, Wermelinger (*Rom und Pelagius*, p. 12, n. 40) can write that the MS 'must' be corrected! This 'insignificant' *quondam* will become very significant later in the present study.

quidam.⁵⁷ If, for the moment, we allow the possibility that the Aquileian *might* have denied *tradux peccati* – and on this we will have much more to say – it is more likely that a lawyer of Caelestius' acumen⁵⁸ would have invoked the authority of somebody who was *notissimus* rather than base his case on the opinion of some unknown Syrian cleric. But even if we exclude the Aquileian, the surety with which Caelestius claims that the authority of this one priest should be sufficient argues against the suggestion that this priest was little known.

To claim in n. 8 that use the honorific *sanctus*, along with omission of any suggestion of his death, is indicative of Rufinus being alive when Caelestius referred to him, is singularly unconvincing. The very text on which Garnier bases his argument should have put him on his guard, because Caelestius informed the assembly that Rufinus stayed in the home of *sanctus* Pammachius. While (according to Garnier) they were well aware of the death of the Aquileian, apparently Caelestius and his audience had not been informed of the death of the senator. Pammachius, also, would surely have deserved some form of posthumous honorific of the kind expected here by Garnier.⁵⁹ Curiously, a modern commentator can use the term *sanctus* as indicative of the fact that the Rufinus referred to by Caelestius was in fact dead!⁶⁰ Use of the word *sanctus* here, or failure to use *beatae recordationis*, offers no basis on which to determine whether the person was currently living or dead.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Mercator refers to him as *auditorialis scholasticus* (*Comm.I*, ACO I.v.1, p. 6). On *auditorialis scholasticus* see M. Stein, 'Bemerkungen zu Iulianus von Aeclanum,' *JAC* 43 (2000), pp. 122–25. This 'title' may have had derogatory overtones. Use of it by Julian (*Aug. Cont. Iul.* 2,10,37; 6,11,34) in a list of 'common' professions and trades suggests that it does not simply mean 'student' but somebody already engaged in his profession, and there is no reason to think that Mercator was not referring to Caelestius as such. In the page of Cicero to which Julian referred (*De Officiis* I,42,150), the position of 'magistrate' is in fact one deserving respect! J.-M. Salamito (n. 153 below) is not convincing when (p. 117) he prefers 'student' as the meaning intended by Julian. Konoppa, *Mercator*, p. 107, underlines its negative connotation.

⁵⁹ PL 48,282 Garnier dates the trial of Caelestius to 412. It is now agreed that this was 411. The precise date of the death of Rufinus of Aquileia (410? or perhaps even 412?) is still debated. Cf. Y.-M. Duval, 'Rufin d'Aquilée émule de Jérôme de Stridon,' in S. Crogiez-Pétréquin (ed.), *Dieu(x) et Hommes*, Rouen 2005, pp. 163–185 (here p. 185, n. 109). Murphy, *Rufinus*, pp. 218, 235, gives 410, but strangely puts 411 in the study's title!

⁶⁰ Cf. H. I. Marrou, 'Les attaches orientales du Pélagianisme,' in *Patristique et Humanisme*, Paris 1976, pp. 331–44 (here p. 333).

⁶¹ I. Kessler, *Reichtumskritik und Pelagianismus*, Freiburg (Schweiz) 1999, p. 33, rejecting Marrou, offers a few telling examples of *sanctus* referring to the living. I am not fully convinced, however, with his suggestion that the term might carry a connotation of an ascetic background for Rufinus.

Remaining for the moment on matters of history, we must note that Garnier's case is without foundation when he maintains (n. 5) that Caelestius cannot have heard Rufinus of Aquileia in Rome because the latter was in Aquileia during the time concerned. Garnier himself does not offer a *specific* date either for the return south of the Aquileian, or for Caelestius' departure from Rome.⁶² Apart from associating the latter with the general exodus that took place ahead of Alaric's threat to the city, we do not know when exactly Caelestius left Rome, but it has been established with reasonable certainty that Rufinus left Aquileia earlier than 407.⁶³ While precise dates in either case may be still in debate, from the point of view of chronology there was ample time for the two to meet in Rome. Whether or not such a meeting could have taken place in the home of Pammachius is a problem to which greater attention will be given below.

When Garnier at n. 3 draws attention to the chronological impossibility of identifying the two Rufinus' in earlier years he would seem to be on safe ground, yet again his argument is wanting. The Aquileian had indeed come to Rome during the Pontificate of Siricius and had left before Anastasius became Pope. Therefore, Mercator's Rufinus, who arrived in the time of Anastasius, must refer (according to Garnier, and almost everybody else) to a different Rufinus. Nevertheless, although Garnier had Jerome's account of the origins of Pelagianism (as an offshoot of Origenism) before his eyes, and uses it specifically in his arguments – as we shall see again in the next paragraph – he failed to notice that Jerome, when he wrote about it to Demetrias (*Ep.* 130), had purposely displaced the history of the Origenist dispute into the Pontificate of Anastasius. Garnier even depends on Jerome's information both here (n. 3) and in his repeated insistence on the condemnation of Rufinus by Anastasius (nn. 7,9). This might have led him (and others) to notice that, irrespective of the absence of Rufinus of Aquileia from Rome, and irrespective of the inaccuracy of Jerome's version, it was in fact during the time of Anastasius that the debate over Origen 'began' in Rome, because earlier Siricius had refused to recognize that it was a problem.⁶⁴

Jerome's contribution to the debate is central to n. 6, but Garnier's use of it borders on the inept, even when judged in terms of the

⁶² PL 48,280C: Caelestius left Rome in 408 or 409; PL 48,262B: Rufinus did not leave Aquileia *priusquam barbari patriam vastarent*.

⁶³ For the date see C.P. Hammond, 'The Last Ten Years of Rufinus' Life and the Date of his Move South from Aquileia,' in *Journal of Theological Studies*, 28 (1977), pp. 372–429. (At p. 421 she allows for a date 'as early as 403 or 404.')

⁶⁴ On the complicated history of the dispute see P. Laurence, 'Marcella, Jérôme et Origène' in *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, 42 (1996), pp. 267–93. The account, however, makes Pammachius more culpable than I would accept.

knowledge that was available to him. It is true that Jerome attacked the Pelagians with respect to their teaching on '*apatheia*', a teaching that was not far removed from the Origenism to be found in the translations done by Rufinus translations. Jerome wrote on the basis of the evidence currently available to him in Palestine of what the Pelagians were teaching, and he was as yet unaware of the developments in Africa, in which the problem of *tradux peccati* took centre stage. When apprised of the African condemnation of Caelestius,⁶⁵ Jerome readily subscribed to it, despite the difficulties this raised for his own teaching on the creationist origin of the soul. Insofar as Jerome did not accuse the Aquileian of denying *tradux peccati*, whereas Caelestius claimed that 'his' Rufinus did make such a denial, Garnier's distinguishing here between two different persons seems again to be persuasive. When, however, he then expands on the *probable* opinion of the Aquileian on the status of the soul, Garnier leads us to the point where his own argument crumbles. As an Origenist (Garnier continues) the Aquileian would not only have affirmed the pre-existence of the soul, and would have posited the sinful fall of the pre-existing soul. Here Garnier draws a conclusion concerning Rufinus of Aquileia on a subject on which the same Rufinus resolutely refused to decide, precisely because he found himself barred from reaching the conclusion that Garnier suggests he would have reached. We will return later to an examination of the writings of Rufinus to attempt to understand what his thought on the question *might* have been,⁶⁶ but it is unnecessary in the present context to search there, because Caelestius did not offer any writing by Rufinus to bolster his case. The evidence used at Carthage (insofar as we know) was based on what Caelestius *heard* Rufinus deny, not on anything that the latter had written on the subject. Caelestius, we may recall, was reputed to have been the first to commit to writing a rejection of *tradux peccati*.⁶⁷ If we are to exclude the Aquileian from consideration here it will not be sufficient to do so because no explicit rejection of *tradux peccati* can be found in his surviving writings and translations. We must establish from his existing works that he *would not* have denied it. As we shall see, however, the evidence clearly points in the opposite direction, namely, that he *would* have denied it.

⁶⁵ Jerome probably depended on Orosius' account. More detail on the matter is not germane to the present discussion.

⁶⁶ It will be argued below that there is adequate evidence to show that Rufinus of Aquileia would not have countenanced the imputation of *peccatum alieni*, and consequently would logically have excluded *tradux peccati*.

⁶⁷ See nn. 17, 18 above.

Sanctus Pammachius

Whoever the Rufinus referred to by Caelestius was, he expressed his rejection of *tradux peccati* in the home of Pammachius where he was a guest: *sanctus presbyter Rufinus, Romae qui mansit cum sancto Pammachio*.⁶⁸ Strangely, throughout the traditional understanding that identified this Rufinus with the Aquileian, this item of information does not seem to have created a problem, but since it was first (to my knowledge) used by Garnier, down to the present, it has become a staple component of the argument: Rufinus of Aquileia *could not* have been a welcome guest in the home of Pammachius.⁶⁹ The assertion deserves closer examination. As the long-standing friend, promoter, and protector of Jerome, and the person in Rome who played a central role (*apparently* on Jerome's side) in the debate concerning Origen, Pammachius would not be readily seen as the host of Jerome's arch-rival Rufinus. The bases for the conclusion, however, are not as convincing as they might seem at first sight, and as a conclusion it may in fact do a grave injustice to Pammachius.

Pammachius,⁷⁰ who died in 410, had been a person to reckon with in Africa where he held estates (and had possibly been proconsul),⁷¹ and to drop in his name, even after his death, would be calculated to elicit some respect. Pammachius had also been the doyen of the Christian Roman aristocrats, the first senator (whom we know of) to have discreetly donned ascetical garb, an exemplary figure in the

⁶⁸ *De Gratia Christi* II,3,3, CSEL 42, p. 168.

⁶⁹ Thus in a Maurist note to this text in PL 44,387, following a list of possible candidates, we read with reference to the Aquileian: *Certe vix, ac ne vix quidam credi potest, aut Romam ivisse pontifice Anastasio, aut ibi cum Pammachio mansisse*. To list the names of those who repeat almost *ad litteram* this argument would almost amount to a recitation of the litany of studies of Pelagian history. Suffice it to say that I do not recall having found any account in which it is disputed. Rather than his 'private' home, the reference could conceivably be to the *xenodochium* established by Pammachius, where all would have been welcome – but that is an unnecessary quibble.

⁷⁰ See the entry in *Prosopographie chrétienne* (n. 8 above), pp. 1576–81. S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis*, Stuttgart 1992, can mention Pammachius frequently, but is surprisingly brief in his characterization of the senator (pp. 199–201). Our very limited knowledge of Pammachius is due almost entirely to the pen of Jerome, and much of that in contexts of controversy, when of necessity Jerome would enlist any name of consequence on his own side.

⁷¹ The title may have been honorary, but if real, a precise year and location cannot be offered, according to the notice in A.M.H. Jones, *et al.*, (ed.), *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vol.I, Cambridge 1971, p. 663.

exercise of charity (of the substantial kind that mattered), and most of all a defender of Christian orthodoxy in the struggle over Origenism a decade before this event in Carthage. Caelestius, *nobilis natu*, could (rightly or not) consider himself to be a representative member of the Roman nobility then present in unusual numbers in Carthage, a miscellaneous group who would have known Pammachius well. A person of their rank was being accused of nothing less serious than heresy by a 'mere' deacon of Milan, on a subject that was – at least in Roman circles⁷² – undefined and open to discussion, before a 'mere' provincial bishop, while the bishop of Rome had seen no need to take a stance on the question in debate! This, clearly, is a very broad and general summary of a complex situation, but it may help to draw our attention to the importance of this name, Pammachius, introduced by Caelestius in an almost gratuitous manner. For Garnier's case, of course, the appearance of Pammachius' name definitely excludes the Aquileian from being considered the teacher of Caelestius, given the senator's resolute antipathy towards Jerome's opponent.

It is evident that in the Origenist debate he played a prominent role on the anti-Origen (and anti-Rufinus) side.⁷³ The goading of his cousin Marcella may have played a part in his being involved,⁷⁴ but we must also acknowledge his personal interest in the affair. He requested Jerome to make a 'correct' translation of Origen's controversial *De Principiis*, a translation which he promptly suppressed, because he was horrified (according to Jerome!) when he saw the extent of the heterodoxy of the writing – although he did allow some friends to see it.⁷⁵ Pammachius also refused to forward a letter (*Ep.* 81) from Jerome to Rufinus, for the unconvincing reason (given by Jerome!) that Pammachius and his friends considered Rufinus to be

⁷² There is room for greater clarification on the extent and nature of the 'discussions' in these circles before the events of 411 in Africa. In E.D. Lavender's *The Development of Pelagius' Thought within a late fifth century Ascetic Movement in Rome*, Ann Arbor, 1992, opposition to Pelagianism is too easily equated with Africa's reaction.

⁷³ For details of the controversy see especially E.A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate*, Princeton 1992. It is significant that the study ends (as it must) by being a study of Pelagianism. A question that must arise is, Where were the Pelagians during the Origenist controversy?

⁷⁴ See Laurence, 'Marcella' (n. 64 above). In *Ep.* 127,9-10, CSEL 56, pp. 152-53, Jerome speaks of repeated visits by Marcella to both Siricius and Anastasius in her efforts to have Origenism condemned.

⁷⁵ One wonders if Pammachius' real reasons for quashing the translation lay only in its literal presentation of the full extent of the errors of Origen. We shall return to this presently.

inimical to Jerome.⁷⁶ That letter (again according to Jerome!) was supposedly conciliatory, but it nevertheless put the onus of repairing the rift on Rufinus. Such a self-righteous attitude on Jerome's part could hardly be calculated to contribute to any attempt at pacification, and is a more likely explanation for their failure to forward the letter. In the closing pages of his *Apologia (contra Hieronymum)* Rufinus himself voiced his dismay that Pammachius did not bring his difficulties with the translation of *De Principiis* to Rufinus' personal attention, but he maintained due protocol and respect in any reference to the senator.⁷⁷

It will be noted that in the account above I have purposely accentuated the fact that our information comes from Jerome. Pammachius and Jerome had been acquainted since their schooldays (according to Jerome!) in the school of Donatus. We should not overplay that card, and Jerome only brings it up when it seems useful.⁷⁸ In the unspecified troubles that resulted in the effective banishment of Jerome from Rome in 385 there had been no Pammachius or *gens Furia* to defend and protect Jerome.⁷⁹ In the dispute over Jovinian in the early 390s Pammachius comes to the fore as a clear opponent of Jovinian. But the reasons behind Pammachius' request for clarifications of certain passages of *Contra Iovinianum*, should be attended to. This request is too easily interpreted as Pammachius merely voicing the objections of other readers to Jerome's perceived condemnation of marriage in that writing, but the long public *Apologia* (*Ep.* 48), with the accompanying personal letters to Pammachius and Domnio (*Epp.* 49-50), betray Jerome's awareness that his correspondents also were disturbed by his dim appreciation of marriage, and probably concurred in no small degree with the criticisms they reported from Rome.⁸⁰

With the emergence of the Origenist dispute we are again in difficulty as regards the part played by Pammachius in that debate.

⁷⁶ *Apologia contra Rufinum* I,12, CCSL 79, p. 12; again at III,38, p. 106.

⁷⁷ In *Contra Hieronymum* I,1 Pammachius is referred to as *nobilissimus*, and in II,48 speaks (via Apronianus) to *sanctus uir ille* (= Pammachius) (CCSL 20, pp. 37,116).

⁷⁸ In *Ep.* 49,1, CSEL 54 p. 351, Jerome refers to Pammachius as *condiscipulus*. J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome. His Life, Writings, and Controversies*, London 1975, p. 19, portrays them as friends from their time together at grammar school.

⁷⁹ Pammachius, of course, may not have been in Rome at the time.

⁸⁰ The social and theological complexity of the debate is fully discussed by Y.-M. Duval, *L'Affaire Jovinien*, Rome 2003, (esp. pp. 248-50 on the reaction of Jerome's correspondents).

In general presentations of the history of events, Pammachius is simply portrayed as the agent and defender of orthodoxy (represented by Jerome) against the Origenist heresy (disseminated in Rufinus' translations). As mentioned above, Rufinus complained about the unfairness shown by Jerome's Roman friends in his own regard, but as regards Pammachius' personal motives we only know what has been recorded in the biased version of Jerome. There is little evidence to conclude that Pammachius was personally in any way a – much less *the* – ringleader in what Kelly refers to as 'chicanery' being perpetrated among Jerome's supporters in Rome.⁸¹ Pammachius was not Jerome's only source of information from Rome, nor was he the only (and certainly not the most active) promoter of Jerome's cause. The same must be said when we speak of opposition to Rufinus in the capital.

The case of Jerome's translation of *De Principiis* merits some comment. Where the Greek original is extant it is generally agreed that Rufinus' version – within the parameters he set himself of approximating the thought of Origen to the orthodoxy of Rufinus' own day; suppressing also what he thought (correctly or not) to be interpolations; and following the accepted translation techniques of the time – is not to be readily dismissed as a travesty of the original.⁸² Jerome, by contrast with Rufinus, who approached the translation with (self-confessed) diffidence,⁸³ rushed off a translation of that extensive work with almost prodigious speed.⁸⁴ The result, with its claim to being a literal translation, was not likely to have been a masterpiece either of literature or of translation. Pammachius, who knew Greek, and could not be written off as an amateur in questions of theology, would not have missed either of these points. In a translation undertaken in the heat of debate the equanimity of the translator may rightly be questioned. The very purpose of the new translation, namely to 'show up'

⁸¹ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 240. I would demur when E. TeSelle tells us that Pammachius 'decided to intensify the conflict' over Origen. E. TeSelle, 'Rufinus the Syrian, Caecilius, Pelagius: Explorations in the Prehistory of the Pelagian Controversy,' *Augustinian Studies*, 3 (1972), pp. 61-95 (here p. 70).

⁸² The intricacy of this problem, to which we will return briefly later, emerges clearly in N. Pace's study (see n. 151 below). Here his chapter (pp. 162-96) on a comparison between the two translators' handling of doctrinally 'dangerous' passages is of particular relevance. Rufinus in his two *praefationes* explains why he thinks that the received text of *Peri Archon* should be emended (CCSL 20, pp. 246-48).

⁸³ In the *Praefatio* I,2 (CCSL 20, p. 245) he claims to have refused repeatedly until finally persuaded by Macharius.

⁸⁴ Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 237: 'in the winter months of 398/9.' Kelly, in these pages, is indulgent towards Jerome.

both the theological dangers of *De Principiis* and the distortions of Rufinus' version, could only result in the perceived heterodoxy of the original being necessarily (however subtly) underlined.⁸⁵ At the same time, indeed, Jerome's version served to justify the contention (maintained all along from the beginning by Rufinus!) that in its unadulterated state the original Greek text of Origen's work should not be made available without 'corrections' to Latin readers. Pammachius' suppression of the literal translation was in effect an expression of agreement with Rufinus! His action fits only with difficulty into any strategy on the part of Pammachius to denigrate Rufinus, and the motive attributed to him by Jerome – viz. Pammachius being horrified by the extent of Origen's heresy in the writing – bears all the stamp of being an expression more of Jerome's own *horror* with regard to Origenism than that of the senator.

We must not lose sight of Pammachius' senatorial colleague Apronianus, Rufinus' voice in Rome, who was currently, during the height of the controversy, receiving a steady flow of translations (of Basil, Gregory, and others). These gave a different account of Origen – and of Rufinus! – from that which Pammachius might get from Jerome. It was Apronianus who forwarded to Rufinus the letter of Jerome to Pammachius (*Ep.* 84). Rufinus' *Apologia* was addressed to Apronianus, and, while it is an answer to Jerome's letter, in the conclusion he specifically asked Apronianus to draw Pammachius' attention to the facts of the case. In the course of his discussion, Rufinus berated the behaviour of 'some' who had circulated inaccurate versions of (stolen!) drafts of his incompleated translation of *De Principiis*, adding – by the way! – that if this had happened in the public secular forum, the legal consequences would be serious (*Apol.* I, 19). It is unlikely that such an aside would have escaped Pammachius' notice. The polite, but forceful reprimand directed at the senator in Rufinus' closing paragraphs demanded that Pammachius reconsider. Although

⁸⁵ While noting that Jerome 'took great pains' over the translation, Kelly also adds (*loc. cit.*) that he 'subtly highlight[ed], here and there, some of Origen's objectionable statements.' Two important details need to be recalled here: a) We have only a few fragments of the original Greek text; b) our knowledge of Jerome's version depends on a few fragments that Jerome *himself* preserved for us, and (see Kelly, *loc. cit.*) there are but 'rare cases where [the Latin fragments] overlap with surviving fragments of the original Greek.'! This limited evidence hardly tells the whole story. In the evaluation of H. Crouzel, Jerome's translation was as tendentious as it was literal. See H. Crouzel, M. Simonetti, *Origène: Traité des Principes* I (SChr 252), Paris 1978, Introduction pp. 28-29.

Apologia contra Rufinum I, 12, CCSL 79, p. 12; again at III, 38 (p. 106)

the full force of Jerome's counter-attack was still to come, it is significant, I think, that Pammachius' direct involvement in the affair should end after the publication of Rufinus' *Apologia*.⁸⁶

Pammachius, after all, was a Roman senator, who had to live by the social and political rules of the City and meet expectations that Jerome in distant Bethlehem might disregard. After the Origenist debate and until his death in 410 Pammachius will be the dedicatee of a number of commentaries by Jerome, in the prefaces to which Jerome will repeatedly call on Pammachius to defend him from his detractors, but do these dedications allow us to assume that Pammachius was assiduously continuing to commission works from Jerome in these years? In the preface to the translation of Joshua in 404 we learn that Jerome has resurrected his work on translating the Old Testament from Hebrew, dedicating it to Eustochium. Paula, recently deceased, is mentioned also in the preface, giving the impression that she was also the intended recipient. But Jerome adds, almost by way of postscript, that he has returned to the task 'particularly because the admired and holy Pammachius insists on this in letters (*litteris flagitet*).'⁸⁷ There is no need to cast doubt on this, but there is also no reason to be specific about the date or force of Pammachius' insistence. Commentaries on three of the Minor Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos) will be dedicated to Pammachius in 406, as will the Commentary on Daniel in 407. It should be noted, however, that the former were originally intended for Paula before her death, and the latter had been undertaken at the request of Rufinus' friend Paulinus of Nola (with whom Jerome's relations had now for some reason turned sour). The revised dedications tell us much about Jerome and his need to maintain the support of people with influence in Rome in these years, but we should be hesitant in drawing conclusions from them about Pammachius' attitudes or behaviour in his immediate social surroundings in the capital.⁸⁸ After the abrupt end imposed on the fight between Jerome and Rufinus,

⁸⁶ Looking back on the events over a decade later, and at a time (413) when he was taking note of the re-emergence of Origenism in the teaching of Pelagius, Jerome would single out Marcella alone as having been the champion of orthodoxy. (Cf. *Ep.* 127,10, CSEL 56, p. 153.) Is this mere oversight?

⁸⁷ R. Weber, *et al.*, (ed.), *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Stuttgart 1975, pp. 285-86. If it is to be understood literally, one might easily surmise that Pammachius thought it safer that Jerome occupy himself with biblical translation and commentary to avoid getting involved in controversy. But see also the following note.

⁸⁸ Political implications of some of Jerome's exegesis in his Commentary on Daniel were probably a source of great embarrassment to Pammachius. Cf. É. Demougeot, 'Saint Jérôme, les Oracles Sibyllins et Stilicon,' *Revue des Études Anciennes*, 54(1952), pp. 83-92.

Pammachius fades from the picture in our knowledge of Roman society in these years, perhaps simply due to advancing age. We do not know how or why the end to bickering between the two *literati* was engineered. I have suggested above that Apronianus may have played a part in bringing Rufinus' side of the case to Pammachius notice. Avita, wife of Apronianus, was the niece of Melania the Elder (who was also related to Pammachius), and the presence in Rome of this long-time patroness of Rufinus surely had some influence on the developments.⁸⁹ That lady was also engaged – perhaps the main reason for her return – in sorting out the legal and social difficulties encountered by Melania the Younger and Pinianus in their efforts to dispose of their properties.⁹⁰ Mention of these names also inevitably brings the name of Rufinus of Aquileia (and Pelagius!) to mind.

The political-religious climate had changed greatly in Rome in the years in consideration. The anti-Origenist battle took the unexpected turn of becoming an 'anti-anti-Origenist' struggle when the Romans rallied to the defense of John Chrysostom against the machinations of Theophilus of Alexandria under whose umbrella Jerome had been campaigning. Rome no longer had much interest in the whining of Jerome in Bethlehem.⁹¹ An unusual event that does not find much echo in the theological histories of these years should also be recalled. From the end of 403 and for about six months, the Emperor Honorius resided in Rome. He would do so again in 407/8.⁹² His presence alone might be expected to impose a show of social unity on the part of the Christian aristocrats, leaving the rivalries of a few years earlier off the agenda. In fact we find that Honorius, Pope Innocent, and the Roman aristocracy, were now united in their defense of John

⁸⁹ She returned probably in 400, but we do not know how long she stayed in the environs of Rome. In 406(?) she visited Augustine, presumably on her way back to the East.

⁹⁰ See J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital*, Oxford (2000), pp. 269-98, for an enlightening account of the social (and legal!) problems facing Roman aristocrats who dallied with the ideals of Christian asceticism in these years. (Here cf. also p. 314.)

⁹¹ By the time Jerome sent his last translation of Theophilus' letters (the Paschal letter for 404) the readers for whom it was intended had already become openly anti-Theophilus. See Ch. Pietri, *Roma Christiana*, Rome 1976, pp. 1288-94.

⁹² See Pietri, *Roma Christiana*, pp. 912, 1318. Melania the Younger needed an imperial edict from Honorius, obtained through the influence of Serena (wife of Stilicho), in order to legally dispose of her property. On the complications involved see Curran, *Pagan City*, pp. 298-306. Melania the Elder (noted above) played some part. We have noted Stilicho in another connection above n. 88, where Pammachius must be distanced from Jerome.

Chrysostom. These same aristocrats were also the supporters of Rufinus of Aquileia.⁹³ At the same time Rufinus, who returned to (the environs of?) Rome in 405 or even earlier,⁹⁴ continued unimpeded with his translating of Origen, evidently for a receptive readership, and without interference from the now reigning Pope Innocent (on whose attitude Jerome is mute in these years).⁹⁵ Was the statesman Pammachius untouched by this change? In his attitude toward Rufinus did he stubbornly stay on the fringe of the aristocratic society, defending the bygone anti-Origenism of Jerome by keeping Rufinus at a distance – if, that is, he ever fully endorsed the ostracizing of Rufinus? In these years Palladius, whose admiration for Rufinus was equaled by his dislike of Jerome, visited Rome and found Pammachius to be a perfect and exemplary Christian gentleman; he mentions Pammachius together with Macharius, who ‘started the fire’ when he initially convinced Rufinus to translate Origen’s *Peri Archon*.⁹⁶ This is not trivial, because according to the received opinion concerning Pammachius in these years, the senator’s name should not find a place in Palladius’ list. Melania the Younger and her husband Pinianus were also remembered with high esteem by Palladius, but the existence of Marcella, the Roman lady who above all others (according to Jerome!) should deserve a mention in a catalogue of exemplary ascetics, cannot be detected even by allusion in the *Historia Lausiaca*. But Pammachius is listed there, and from the end of the dispute over Origen until his death, other than the continued mention of him by Jerome that was noted above, this is the sole reference to Pammachius that is left to us for these years. It is only when the Roman scene is read through

⁹³ I only mention in passing here the introduction of the influence of Chrysostom’s writings in Roman circles, where Pelagius himself and the nascent Pelagian movement show the first evidence for that influence. See Ch. Pietri, ‘Esquisse de Conclusion’ in C. Kannengiesser (ed.), *Jean Chrysostome et Augustin*, Paris 1975, pp. 283–305 (esp. pp. 300–303); Y.-M. Duval, ‘Le date du ‘De Natura’ de Pélage,’ in *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, 36 (1990), pp. 257–83. E. TeSelle, ‘Rufinus the Syrian,’ offers some concrete evidence from Chrysostom. This should also be extended to include further Antiochene (and other) influence on theology in Rome at the time. See Marrou, ‘Les attaches,’ for Theodore. We shall have occasion to return to this later.

⁹⁴ See n. 63 above.

⁹⁵ Jerome will only ‘discover’ Innocent when it suits him later in his letter to Demetrias (*Ep.* 130,16, CSEL 56, p. 196). On Jerome and Pope Innocent see G.D. Dunn, ‘Anastasius I and Innocent I: Reconsidering the Evidence of Jerome,’ *Vigiliae Christianae* 61(2007), pp. 30–41.

⁹⁶ *Historia Lausiaca* 62, (ed. Bartelink), Verona 1974, p. 268. In any study of the ‘affair’ of Chrysostom, E.D. Hunt, ‘Palladius of Helenopolis: A Party and its Supporters in the Church of the Late Fourth Century,’ *Journal of Theological Studies*, 24 (1973), pp. 456–80 is essential reading.

the eyes of Jerome in Bethlehem that we can maintain that Rufinus of Aquileia would continue to be a *persona non grata* in the eyes of Pammachius.⁹⁷

If I have delayed inordinately on the question of Pammachius it is because Caelestius' reference to the 'home of Pammachius' has become central to establishing the identity of the Syrian. That Caelestius himself (*nobilis natu*) should have been a visitor there would not be surprising. When Caelestius first appears on the historical stage in Carthage 411, he is introduced as one of that elusive group referred to as 'disciples of Pelagius'.⁹⁸ Pelagius was in the entourage of the Anicii, and as a disciple of Pelagius we can certainly locate Caelestius also in the circles of the Anicii, whether or not his own ranking in the nobility would already allow us to posit this.⁹⁹ Rufinus of Aquileia embarked on his final journey in the company of the Anicii, ending his days on one of their estates in Sicily. It is this Rufinus whose translations were being read by Pelagius and his disciples, and were sought after by many other avid Roman readers. It seems to me to be very unrealistic to think that it was not this same Rufinus who was the 'teacher' of Caelestius, and that the introduction of another Rufinus on the basis that the Aquileian could not have been a guest of Pammachius is gratuitous.¹⁰⁰ It is a conclusion that neglects the realities of the social context in Rome in the first decade of the fifth century, imposing on it entrenched attitudes that are specific to Jerome and his more fanatical supporters, among whom there is no reason to count Pammachius. It is also a conclusion that has gained cogency by the sheer momentum of repetition.

⁹⁷ The Roman setting in these years, as seen from the point of view of Rufinus, is well presented by A. Grappone, *Omellie Origeniane nella Traduzione di Rufino*, Rome 2007, pp. 26-55 ('I destinatari delle traduzioni').

⁹⁸ *De Gestis Pelagii*, 22.46, CSEL 42, p. 100. The denomination merits closer study. It is concealed in Jerome's jibe in *Ep.* 133.12, CSEL 56, p. 259: *rides atque laetaris, quod alii tuo (= Pelagii) nomine, alii Christi appellentur*. Pelagius' Expositions, according to Mercator (*Comm.II*, ACO p. 66), were circulated among those *de quorum amicitia praesumebat*. What form did this closed(?) 'circle of friends' or 'disciples' who were 'quasi-monks' (*uelut monachi*) take?

⁹⁹ Cf. P. Laurence, 'Proba, Juliana et Démétrias,' *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, 48(2002), pp. 131-163. At p. 157 he does not rule out contact between the Anicii and Caelestius, but we are confined to inference. In their later attempts to defend Pelagius, it does not emerge from Augustine's answer in *De Gratia Christi* that the Anicii were particularly (if at all) concerned about the fate of Caelestius.

¹⁰⁰ The only viable objection I can think of is that Caelestius says that he 'stayed' (*mansit*) in the home of Pammachius. Would the Aquileian not have stayed with Apronianus, or the Anicii, or (cf. Grappone, p. 47) in the monastery at Pinetum? In the last analysis we simply cannot say where he might have stayed.

Quondam natione Syrus

The winning, and apparently unassailable argument in Garnier's case is the evidence of Mercator who identifies Rufinus as 'a former Syrian.' In my earlier study I argued (with Schwartz) that Mercator was in fact relying on Jerome's account, according to which Pelagianism was introduced to the West by Rufinus of Aquileia. Jerome had also identified the heresy as being widespread in Syria. It would not necessarily seem unusual, then, if Mercator should simply connect Rufinus with Syria. He goes further than that, however, when he also gives a Syrian origin to Rufinus (*natione Syrus*). By so doing, he apparently had somebody else in mind, because it was known (and Mercator himself surely knew) that the well-known Rufinus was originally from the region of Aquileia. Yet if we accept that Mercator is correct we are faced with a host of difficulties, most notably the fact that nobody else in antiquity seems to have known about the Syrian's existence. As a result of a ready acceptance of Mercator's version, scholarship since the time of Garnier has been attempting to hold together a puzzle, the pieces of which do not fit easily together. In addition, building on the assumption that the foundations are solidly based, the stature of the Syrian has grown steadily from being an elusive little-known priest who held questionable opinions on the existence of *tradux peccati*, to becoming a major contributor to Western Christian culture with his translation of an important part of Vulgate Bible.

Both solutions – a) Mercator (for some unclear reason) called the Aquileian a Syrian; or b) the Syrian really existed – presuppose that a more fundamental question has been asked and answered, and yet it is a question that (to my knowledge) nobody has ever asked. Did Mercator in fact refer to Rufinus as *quondam natione Syrus*? To even raise the question will court immediate rejection because the Syrian has become so much a part of the landscape in studies in the history of Pelagianism that he is almost indispensable. Just as Garnier, when he presented his case for the identity of the Syrian, had to grapple with an *inveterata opinio* concerning Rufinus of Aquileia as being the teacher of Caelestius, so too by raising this question I must confront an equally *inveterata opinio* concerning Rufinus the Syrian that took its origin in Garnier's solution to the enigma.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ A comment by Souter (l.p. 17) on Garnier's solution to a troublesome passage in Mercator's quotation from Pelagius will not be out of place here: 'The industry which Garnier displayed gained a signal reward: his opinion remained practically

An examination of Mercator's historical account in order to draw attention to the limitations of his accuracy would take us too far afield. Konoppa repeatedly (*Marius Mercator*, pp. 46, 93, 103...) assures us that he is 'generally well-informed' and worthy of reliance, but in fact when it comes to detail that appreciation must be tempered greatly, and her assurances conceal the fact that in the details Mercator is not reliable. With that in mind, we may legitimately question the accuracy of his information in this comment on Rufinus. It is strange, to say the least, that in *Comm. II* concerning Caelestius he should omit this detail concerning the Syrian, because to associate Caelestius with the then (when Mercator wrote) suspect theology of Theodore would surely make Mercator's presentation all the more cogent. True, *Comm. II* was written prior to *Comm. I* (on Julian), but in its present form it serves as an appendix to the invective against Julian, and one might expect Mercator to have added any additional incriminating information concerning the pre-history of Pelagianism. However, he evidently did not see the need to make such a change, and we are confined to this note in *Comm. I* on the beginning of Pelagian history in the West: *Rufinus quondam natione Syrus Romam primus inuexit...* Quite apart from the troublesome word *Syrus*, editors and commentators have had difficulty with *quondam natione*; some wish to emend it to *quidam natione*;¹⁰² or (if the manuscript reading is retained) it may be possible to disregard the irregularity and to 'think around it' by suggesting that Rufinus was indeed born in Syria but then moved on to Palestine (and later to Italy); or again, a more simple solution might lie in the idea that Mercator is more interested in presenting theological affiliations rather than dwelling on geographical details.¹⁰³ A further solution might lie in translating *quondam* as

undisputed for two centuries.' The mistake on the 'Syrian's' second book had an even longer period of survival (see n. 28 above).

¹⁰² See n. 57 above. S. Prete (*Memoriali* p. 16) simply omits it. Kessler (*Reich-tumskritik*, p. 33) quotes the text from Schwartz (with *quondam*) in a note, but writes *qu[i]dam* in his own account. Konoppa (*Mercator*, p. 86) is evasive, writing: '[Diese...Thematik] hat einst Rufinus, ab Geburt Syrer, als erster nach Rom hineingebracht...'

¹⁰³ Variants on these solutions prevail. See Wermelinger, *Rom und Pelagius*, p. 12. Noris was clearly at a loss to explain how Rufinus of Aquileia could be fitted into Mercator's version. At p. 4 we read that Rufinus came to Rome *ex Syria*, and because of his long stay in the East, *Syrus vulgo habebatur*. Fully aware that the Aquileian had studied with Didymus, Noris must also explain (p. 5) how Rufinus *also* learned from Theodore, but at this point he gives up: *num eundem [Theodorum] sacra loca visitantem, vel adhuc Presbyterum Antiochia catechesim exponentem audiens, vel eiusdem tantum libros legens, in medio relinquo.*

‘the late’ Rufinus, merely indicating that he was dead.¹⁰⁴ Yet another possibility might be – but this seems remote – to accept the text as it stands and, disregarding the niceties of word order, read *quondam* as a modifier of the verb *inuexit* (‘Rufinus some time ago – he was of Syrian nationality – first introduced [this heresy] to Rome.’)¹⁰⁵ All these efforts are concerned with the words *quondam natione*, leaving untouched the reference to *Syrus*.

Perhaps, however, the difficulty lies not with *quondam*, but with the words *natione Syrus*. The argument to be presented below concerning *natione Syrus* can equally apply to the word *quondam*, because I will argue that the text is indeed corrupt, and accordingly I should agree that a correction to *quidam* can be justified. Nevertheless, from Mercator’s usage it seems to me that *quondam* is to be retained, and if the argument offered below is correct its retention will in fact be necessary. He uses *quondam* with reference to both Nestorius as the former Patriarch of Constantinople (pp. 23, 28), and to Theodore, the former bishop of Mopsuestia (pp. 5, 23, 28).¹⁰⁶ Given that at the time Mercator wrote Theodore was dead, but Nestorius was still very much alive, Marrou’s case for translating *quondam* here as ‘the late Rufinus’ rests on a very tenuous basis.

One might be tempted to simply eliminate (with Prete) the offending *quondam*, or indeed the entire phrase, as a gloss! However, if *quondam* alone be considered the addition it would be difficult to explain why a glossator should supply it, and if he did, why did he not give us the more acceptable *quidam*? To excise the entire phrase as being a later gloss would leave a dangling mention of an unidentified Rufinus – something that is not normal to Mercator’s usage. He regularly identifies in some form or other the persons who appear in his account. We have just seen above two cases of this – Nestorius and Theodore. Pelagius is referred to as *gente Brittanu[s]*, but also as *monachu[s]* (p. 5).¹⁰⁷ Caelestius, when he joined Pelagius, was *nobilis natu quidem et illius temporis auditorialis scholasticus*

¹⁰⁴ So Marrou, ‘Les attaches orientales,’ p. 461, basing his interpretation on Mercator’s reference to Theodore, but see below on Nestorius.

¹⁰⁵ Konoppa in her translation (n. 102 above) seems to go in this direction. She does not discuss the textual problem involved here.

¹⁰⁶ Julian, for all his loathsomeness in Mercator’s opinion, still holds a title – he is *ex episcopus* (p. 23)!

¹⁰⁷ The need to specify his place of origin may come from Augustine, *Ep.* 186,1,1, CSEL 57, p. 45 (*Pelagium... Britonem... seruum Dei*) who used it to distinguish him from another *Pelagius Terenti* (var. *Tarenti*) (otherwise unknown to us).

(p. 6).¹⁰⁸ If Valerius, Turbantius, and Florus appear without identification (p. 6), it is because the names appear as part of the titles of books – they are not introduced into the text by Mercator himself. What is also common in all the identifications, with the exception of Rufinus, is that we know something of the status of each person mentioned – (*quondam/ex/illo tempore*) *episcopus, monachus, auditorialis scholasticus*. This arouses the suspicion that *natione Syrus* is not the original form in which Mercator referred to Rufinus, but that it is the result of an error in the transmission of the text. Like the others, Rufinus was introduced as *quondam* ‘something,’ and like the others, ‘something’ referred to an office or a status, but not to his place of origin.

Codex Palatinus Latinus 234

That any text, ancient or modern, may possibly be corrupted whether by scribal error or choice, by typographical error or the insidious intervention of a PC’s self-correction feature, is a presupposition that we normally and tacitly take for granted. For the most part errors can readily be detected and emended, and the cause of the error explained. But, as a reading of any critical edition of an ancient text shows, there remain cases where editors are reduced to conjecture, or where a scribal error has gone unnoticed. This text of Mercator, in my opinion, is an example of this last mentioned in textual problems. The scrutiny to which the re-discovered ‘new’ letters of Augustine have been, and continue to be subjected in recent decades may serve to illustrate the delicate task involved in establishing the original text. In the case of the text of these letters, words and phrases are added, deleted, or emended at what might seem to be editorial whim, were it not for the fact that we possess a whole library of authentic writings of Augustine against which to judge and emend the readings of the manuscripts.¹⁰⁹ We are not so

¹⁰⁸ In *Comm. II* (p. 66) Mercator grudgingly admits that Caelestius was also admitted to the priesthood in Ephesus *per obreptionem*, but he refuses to use the title *Caelestius presbyter*. Nestorius thus addresses Caelestius in his letter (p. 65), but Mercator omits the title from his introduction to the letter! Only Pope Zosimus, apparently, in his early openness to hearing the Pelagian case, recognized for a time the ordination. See s.v. ‘Caelestius’ in *Prosopographie* (n. 8 above), p. 316. Attention is given throughout to the presence or absence of his title.

¹⁰⁹ See the second edition of the ‘Divjak letters’ in J. Divjak (ed.), *Saint Augustin. Lettres I*-29**, BA 46B, Paris (1987), which incorporates many *corrigenda* offered by scholars to the *editio princeps* in CSEL 88. In the same connection mention may also be made of the ‘Dolbeau Sermons’ added (from a single manuscript in many cases) to the corpus of Augustine’s works.

fortunate when dealing with the text of Mercator, although (as will be seen below) there are places where the MS readings can be checked against other witnesses.

The writings of Marius Mercator, contained in the *Collectio Palatina*, survive in a single Vatican manuscript, *Codex Palatinus Latinus* 234.¹¹⁰ It probably belonged to the abbey of Lorsch,¹¹¹ and from the script it is dated to the early ninth century.¹¹² I have already noted that apart from a very few references to Mercator in the works of Augustine and Jerome, Mercator and his writings were unknown through the Middle Ages. When his writings were rediscovered in the 17th century, after not a little intrigue and in delicate circumstances¹¹³ full editions were published by J. Garnier (1673) and S. Baluze (1684), both of which are severely criticized by E. Schwartz in the introduction (p.VII) to his edition that appeared in the years 1924-26.¹¹⁴ The text, therefore, of Mercator's works, written in the early fifth century in the environs of Constantinople, and included in a dossier of texts collected by Latin-speaking monks in the East a century or so

¹¹⁰ A second (lost) MS (*Cod. Bellovacensis*) existed in Beauvais, but it is considered to have been a copy of *Cod. Pal.* (Schwartz, ACO, p.V; Glorie [n. 115 below], CCSL 85A, p. 180). In its present form the Vatican codex is a combination of two earlier codices, the second being a copy of Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram*.

¹¹¹ Cf. B. Bischoff, *Die Abtei Lorsch im Spiegel ihrer Handschriften*, Lorsch 1989, p. 89. (This is a separate and expanded version of a study that appeared in F. Knöpp [ed.], *Die Reichsabtei Lorsch*, II, Darmstadt 1977, pp. 7-128.) The library that was transported from Heidelberg to Rome in 1623 also contained codices that originally belonged in collections other than that of Lorsch (*ibid.* p. 29). At the end of each of the originally separate codices (fol.114v, and 271v) there is a later librarian's note identifying both as *Codex de monasterio S(an)c(t)i Nazarii* (= Lorsch). Bischoff's hesitation on the matter is perplexing. It is partly due to the fact that he mistakenly attributed the signature of the scribe (see the following note) to the second part of the codex.

¹¹² Bischoff, *loc. cit.*, refers to the script as being typical of the early ninth century 'school of Verona.' While this may identify the scribe's style, it does not necessarily identify the place where he worked. In fact we know from fol.114v that it was transcribed by a certain *clericus* Flotbert on the orders of Gerward. This latter was librarian to Louis the Pious, and was somehow connected to Lorsch. A. Siegmund, *Die Überlieferung des griechischen christlichen Literatur*, München (1949), draws attention (p. 147) to the spate of collections of conciliar documents witnessed to in MSS of the sixth and ninth centuries. The *Collectio Palatina* originated in the first of these periods, and perhaps it survived as a result of the second.

¹¹³ See above on Garnier's edition.

¹¹⁴ Schwartz (ACO I,v,1, pp.V-VII) gives an account of the belaboured first appearance of Mercator's works in print. See also Konoppa, *Mercator*, pp. 53-55, who adds details on later reprints. Her gratuitous comment (p. 53, n. 163) on the difficulties of using the Vatican library refer to another age! The profuse gratitude expressed by Schwartz (p.XVII) to Pope Pius XI, for his support of the publication of ACO during most difficult times, should not be overlooked.

later,¹¹⁵ survives only in this *codex unicus* that was copied (in the environs of Lorsch?) some 400 years still later. Other than its 'migration' into the *Collectio Palatina*, we do not know anything about the *iter* of the text itself in the intervening four centuries between its original composition by Mercator and its transcription into the surviving *Codex Palatinus*.¹¹⁶ However, since the collection contains excerpts from texts that had a separate transmission, and hence can be verified at those places, it must be admitted that the text as it survives did not fair badly. This can be said on the basis of the fact that the writings of Mercator contained in the *Collectio* include sizeable excerpts from the writings of Julian that are paralleled in Augustine's writings, and a long extract from Pelagius's Expositions that played an important part in Souter's attempt to identify this work in the manuscripts.¹¹⁷ But from these quotations also we can evaluate the extent to which the text in the *Collectio* is corrupt. It is not possible to say at what stage errors crept into the text, but given the fact that the scribes of *Cod. Pal.* were reasonably careful in their work one may suppose that the more glaring errors belong to an earlier stage, or (in some cases, perhaps) that the scribes were working from a poor copy which they attempted to make more legible – if not always more intelligible – in the present codex. Some aberrations in the surviving text were probably caused by the cryptic character of pre-caroline cursive scripts in which the text was transmitted, and which the scribes were unable to decipher. In sum, the text of Mercator that we read today, is a text that owes a great deal to the expertise, and not infrequently to the sheer ingenuity of its modern editor(s).¹¹⁸

Many readings in the *Cod. Pal.* are obviously in need of emendation, as a glance through the *apparatus criticus* in Schwartz's edition

¹¹⁵ For a discussion of the circumstances surrounding this, see the *Prolegomena* (pp. XXIII-XLI) by Fr. Glorie, in CCSL 85A (*Maxentii... Opuscula*), esp. pp. XXXVIII-XXXIX.

¹¹⁶ Schwartz (p.I) thinks that two scribes contributed to the MS, and has high praise for their diligence – but that diligence seems to include their reproducing faithfully the errors of their exemplar, unless we attribute to them the errors offered below!

¹¹⁷ Souter I, pp. 41-48. Unfortunately in the case of the extract from Pelagius, Mercator evidently retranslated what he had earlier published in a Greek version, and hence there are considerable verbal differences between the text he offers and that known from other sources. The omission of a sentence missing in Mercator's text is explained by Souter (I, p. 45) as 'a scribal error at some stage or other' of the transmission (emphasis added). O. Wermelinger, 'Das Pelagiusdossier in der *Tractoria* des Zosimus,' *Freib.Zeit.Ph.Th.* 26 (1979), pp. 336-68, suggests (p. 343) that Mercator's text of Pelagius (taken from the *Tractoria*?) was already altered.

¹¹⁸ Some portions of the *Collectio Palatina* have been re-edited in CCSL 85A, pp. 183-234 (see n. 115 above), where some of Schwartz's emendations are rejected. Schwartz himself does not report all the readings of his predecessors.

will readily show.¹¹⁹ Some are banal 'errors' endemic to manuscripts of the medieval period, such as the interchange or confusion of a/ae, b/u(v), e/i, etc., and these are collected by Schwartz in his introduction (pp.I-V).¹²⁰ Others are the result of 'normal' scribal oversights due to homeoteleuton, dittography, etc., or are due to a mistaken reading of abbreviations or suspensions in the exemplar. Two categories of error, however, deserve particular attention here. The first is where the surviving text is simply illiterate and has demanded that Schwartz (and other editors) 'invent' a correct reading. The second, and more important for us, is where the text offers words or phrases that are perfectly intelligible in themselves, but are meaningless in their contexts, or even distort the meaning, and must be discarded and/or replaced.

The following is but a minimal selection of troublesome readings from the *Cod. Pal.* – with the corrections or conjectures of the editor(s) given in parentheses – that offers some idea of the condition of the text as it survives. For the sake of brevity I give only the page number of *ACO*, since the line will be readily retrievable from the *apparatus*. (To avoid confusion I have reverted editorial comments made by Schwartz from italic to Roman type.)

P.5: *mamsistenti* (*Mampsistenti*); p. 6: *caelestinus* (*Caelestius*); *ualer-inium* (*Valerium*); *matris utero eruditus* (*matris utero editus* – correctly at p. 66); p. 7: *ut cum* (*anticum*); p. 8 *condicionis origo* (Schwartz: 'lacunam statui e.g. supplendo natura non est condicionis'); p. 9: *atabus* (*Atabulus*); p. 10 *immode ista* (*immodesta*); p. 11: *amicitias* (*amicitiae es*); p. 13: *si haeret* (*sic haberet*); p. 14: *ut crescens* (*et crescentes*); p. 15: *euanissimum* (*te uanissimum*); p. 17: *paruum* (*prauum*); p. 18: *chirofum* (*chirografum* = Col.2.14); *sihe ho* (*sine hoc*); p. 19: *teneam* (edd: *te nectam*; *te ducam*; *tendam*); *sentias* (*sententias*); p. 22: *iudicane* (*iudicantes* = 2Cor.5.14 VL [Vg = *aestimantes*]); p. 23: *fragorum* (fort. recte? Schwarz coni. *tractatorum*); *uelt huncunde* (*uel tunc unde*); *silere* (*si legere*); p. 24: *inenaturaliter* (*inenarrabiliter*); *particeps geniti* (Schwarz coni. *particepsque filii*); p. 25: *scelentissima* (*scelestissima*); p. 26: *aud(+ii)et se iam* (*audi Esaia*); p. 28: *ac horismate* (*a chrismate*); p. 29 *mala edunt* (*me laedunt*); p. 32: *incommutabilem eam* (*incommutabilitatem*); p. 34: *iniusta defensio* (*in iusta defensione*); *mortua* (*orta*); p. 35: (Schwartz: 'haec ex ceteris locis corrigere nolui; potest enim Marius alia ex male descripto exemplari sumpsisse, alia uertendo corrupisse'); p. 37: *perimento* (*experimento*); *audita sunt* (*auiditas*); p. 38: *similiter*

¹¹⁹ I confine my attention in the following to the writings of Mercator.

¹²⁰ As a result, of course, the lack of unnecessary 'clutter' in the *apparatus* can give a false impression of the real extent to which the text has been emended.

(*simpliciter*); *ligatio* (*litatio*); p. 41: *putat hunc* (*puta tunc*); p. 42: *existente* (*existentem ante*); p. 43: *accendens* (*attendens*); p. 44: *eis solentiae* (*ei insolentiae*); p. 47: *proprietaem* (*pro pietate*); *diuinitatis* (*natiuitatis*); p. 50: *hac ratione* (*ac rationes*); p. 51: *sybillabe* (*syllabae*); p. 53: *cassibilitatis* (*passibilitatis*); *eloquentiorio iohannes* (*eloquentior Iohanne*); *supercibum* (*supercilium*); p. 54: *tercilinia* (*sterquilinia*); *sic adopta* (*sicut opto*); p. 57: *sed paro* (*separo*); p. 58: *seuus ininterpres* (*scaeuus interpres*); *capesibilis* (<in>*capessibilis*); p. 59: *diuinitisque* (*dignitatisque*); *inoperationem* (*in se operationem*); p. 60: *eclanensium* (*Eclanensi cum*); *letandos* (*lactandos*); *memorationephensiensi* (*memorato in Ephensiensi*); p. 61: *simulatae sepulturam* (*stimulatae sepultura*); p. 63: (Schwartz ad ll.18-22: 'locus obscurus'); p. 64: *intendebat* (*ille ostendebat*); p. 65: *dionesi* (*Dionysii*); p. 66: *septem paribus* (edd: *exemplaribus*; *insertis partibus*); *et stantius* (*instantius*); p. 69: *Liuaniam* (leg. *Iulianam*?); *aetate quali* (*et aequali*).

Taken from only a limited portion of the MS the examples given here should suffice to put us on our guard against a too ready dependence on its evidence. Comment may be permitted on a few readings. Schwartz emends MS *mamsisteni* (also p. 23 *mansisteni*) to *Mampsisteni*. Beginning with Garnier it is normally emended to *Mopsuesteni*. Marrou accepts the correction to *Mopsuesteni* but lets his concern for detail run amok when he allows the possibility that a town called *Mampsis* in the Negev (being excavated at the time he wrote) may be referred to here.¹²¹ The correction of the Caelestius' name is obviously required, but if we did not have the help of *Comm.II* (p. 66: *editus*) the information that 'by a fault of nature, from his mother's womb he was [*eunuchus*] *eruditus*,' might have given rise to some interesting speculation!¹²² The addressee of the letter by Pelagius to Livanian (p. 69: another scribal error?) is not otherwise known. Schwartz retains the reading *Liuaniam*, but includes in the *apparatus* the conjectural emendation to *Iulianam*, and seems disposed to accept this in the introduction (p.XI, where, however, he also suggests that the MS should be emended to *Libaniam*).¹²³

¹²¹ Marrou, 'Les attaches orientales,' p. 462n. Baluze (PL 48,109) notes that the orthography varies in MSS. The form is not specific to *Cod. Pal.* (cf. *Maxentii... opuscula*, CCSL 85A, *app.crit.*, pp. 14,20,22,24, in a MS from the same period – and perhaps the same circles).

¹²² Coming within the passage to which so much attention has been given, the double error concerning Caelestius might have alerted readers to greater care in reading the text. It is not noted in PL 48.

¹²³ Garnier (PL 48, 102-103; 597-98) notes the suggested emendations of the name to *Iuliana* or *Melania*, but leaves the question open. It is listed as n. 754 (*Ep. Ad*

In a note above (n. 116) I referred to Schwartz's praise for the scribe(s) of *Pal.lat.234*. It was, he says, written *nitidis et pulcris literis*. The *diligentia* of the scribes is attested to by their transcription of Greek passages: *ut nullis aut paruis tantum egeant currectoris*. Even in the orthography [*non*] *multum peccauer[unt]*. This evaluation of the text contrasts sharply with that of Cardinal Hieronymus Casanata who checked the same MS at the request of Baluze, and in 1678 wrote in reply:¹²⁴ *Barbaris ac truncis vocibus scatet hic codex. Et quamvis facile potuisssem ex ingenio illas vel supplere vel emendare, ex industria tamen omisi...* The *Cod. Pal.* could serve well as a textbook to illustrate every possible kind of scribal error! Faced with such a variety of errors in the text as exemplified above, I would include *quondam natione Syrus* as belonging to the last category of error mentioned already, namely, words that are fully meaningful in themselves, but require emendation. Allowance being made for the anomaly of *quondam*, the phrase is quite intelligible, and it has consequently passed the scrutiny of editors and historians alike, and been read as the text written by Mercator, but in its textual and historical context it has created no end of bother. Without *quondam*, we would have no syntactical or other difficulty with *Rufinus natione Syrus*,¹²⁵ but the enigma of the historical identity of the Syrian would still remain, and perforce we have to 'create' a history in which he can be accommodated. Unfortunately, the resulting 'history' appears to be compellingly correct!

Rufinus quondam monachus!

As mentioned already, when he identifies people Mercator usually offers some form of a title or status for them, and from that I take my lead. In Jerome's anti-Pelagian writings Rufinus, the channel of Origenism to Pelagianism, is often passed over anonymously, or reference to him can only be detected behind one or other of Jerome's favourite uncomplimentary pseudonyms. We find the name Rufinus in the same prologue in which Syria is singled out as a den of heresy, but

Liuaniam) in the *Clavis. Prete, Memoriali*, p. 72, Nuvolone, *Dict. Spir.* XII/2, col. 2899, Konoppa, Mercator, pp. 365, 367, retain the reading *Livianiam*.

¹²⁴ Quoted by Schoenemann (PL 48,61), from the preface by Baluze (PL 48,45).

¹²⁵ Jerome, e.g., refers both to Luke the Evangelist (*Praef. In Matth.*, CSEL 77, p. 2), and to Malchion the Monk (*Vita Malchi*, 2 (PL 23,56) as *natione Syrus*.

without the courtesy of his being given any title.¹²⁶ In the earlier dispute concerning Origen, Jerome refrained from giving the name of his *aduersarius*.¹²⁷ However, while they were still friends, and before Rufinus became *presbyter*,¹²⁸ we find a reference to Rufinus that is of interest. In Jerome's continuation of the *Chronicon* of Eusebius for the year 377, Rufinus, Bonosus and Florentinus are mentioned with respect as *insignes monachi*.¹²⁹ The sole surviving letter written by Jerome to Rufinus from before the time of their dispute is *Ep.* 3, written from Chalcis, in which Jerome describes his wandering through the region of Syria (including Cilicia, which the would-be ascetic found to be unbearably hot!) in search of a suitable location in which to settle as a monk. From it we learn that Rufinus had already become a *monachus*, but to Jerome's evident dismay he had opted to reside in Egypt.¹³⁰

This, I suggest, is the Rufinus originally referred to by Mercator: (*hanc quaestionem*) *Rufinus quondam +monachus+ Romam*

¹²⁶ *Dial. adu. Pel.* I, *prol.* 1-2, CCSL 80, pp. 3-4. In *Ep.* 133,3, CSEL 56, p. 246, Rufinus (without title) is also berated. He appears under the name 'Grunnius' in *Comm. Hier.* IV, *prol.*, CCSL 74, p. 174.

¹²⁷ Jerome's *Ep.* 81, written during their dispute, was transmitted (to judge from Hilberg's limited apparatus, CSEL 55 p. 106) with the brusque address *Ad Rufinum* and lacks any prefatory pleasantries. In the letter which forms *Contra Rufinum* III, 1 (CCSL 79 p. 73) Jerome deigns to refer to Rufinus as *prudencia tua*. Some MSS include *presbyter* in the address, and this is retained by Lardet (p. 73, see also p. 116). Note that in the same letter (*par.* 2, p. 74) all Rufinus' 'titles' are (sardonically) listed: (*te*) *vetustissime monachorum, bone presbyter, imitator Christi!* See also III.12 p. 84: *Credidi christiano, credidi monacho.*

¹²⁸ We do not know exactly when he was ordained. Palladius (*Hist. Laus.*, 46,5, ed. Bartelinck p. 224) says that Rufinus 'later' became a priest, i.e., sometime after he joined Melania in Jerusalem. While Palladius does not refer to Rufinus with the Greek term *monachos*, in the context he is clearly referring to Rufinus as such. It is in fact as monk, not as priest, that Rufinus qualifies for inclusion in Palladius's catalogue. In 395 Epiphanius refers to him as a priest (Jerome, *Ep.* 51,2 and 6, CSEL 54 pp. 399, 406; quoted by Jerome in *Contra Rufinum* III,23, CCSL 79 p. 95). In his *Apologia ad Anastasium* (n. 8) Rufinus includes Jerusalem with Rome, Alexandria, and Aquileia as witnesses to the faith he holds (CCSL 20 p. 28). The probability is that he was ordained by John of Jerusalem. John is also presented as guarantor of his orthodoxy in the prologue to his translation of Pamphilus' Defense of Origen (CCSL 20 p. 28). See Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia*, pp. 55-56.

¹²⁹ GCS 47 p. 278. Jerome finished this writing in 381.

¹³⁰ *Ep.* 3 (CSEL 54, p. 12). Martianay and Vallarsi give it the address *Ad Ruff(inum) monachum*, but we do not know on what MS authority. Hilberg offers one 12th cent. MS with this address. In *Ep.* 3,2 (p. 14), 4,2 (p. 20), 5,2 (pp. 21-22) Rufinus is addressed or referred to by Jerome as *frater*. *Ep.* 3 also mentions Bonosus, and readers of *Ep.* 3 would probably have copies of the following *Epp.* 4-5 to Florentinus. This is the trio of *insignes monachi* mentioned in the *Chronicon* (see above).

primus inuexit...¹³¹ At that time, when he returned to the West, Rufinus was already a priest, and would have been known as such by Caelestius and others in Rome who held him in high regard;¹³² and it is also as *presbyter* that he would be remembered generally in history; but he had been *quondam monachus*. It is open to conjecture what the word *monachus* may have looked like in the script of the exemplar from which the surviving *Codex Palatinus* was copied, and the following is only offered as a tentative hypothesis.¹³³ An end-line division of *mo/nachus* or *monac/hus*, and the frequent interchange of c/t (also in *Cod. Pal.*), would readily lend to confusion on the part of the scribe. As a result *quo(n)da(m)mo* was 'corrected' to *quondam*, *nac/nat* was expanded to *natione*, and the remaining enigmatic *hus* (a cursive 'h' being read as 'Syr'?) has become *Syrus* to identify *Rufinus quondam* with the region from which, we have just been informed by Mercator in the same text, the heresy originated. As a solution to the problem of the identity of Rufinus the Syrian this will appear all too far-fetched to merit consideration, and for its naiveté it will be laughed out of court. Yet in a text where the *apparatus criticus* is witness to a series of editorial corrections, conjectures, and not infrequent resignation by the editor(s) to desperation with the note: *locus incertus*; and in the face of a few words that raise not insignificant historical difficulties, but can be emended without any undue paleographical contortions, it is a solution that I offer for serious consideration.

It identifies correctly a Rufinus who was once known and referred to as an *insignis monachus*, but later became better known as *presbyter*. The title *Rufinus monachus* did not disappear entirely from history, although the traces of it are scant. Erasmus, no friend of Rufinus, gives him no title in the *Vita Hieronymi*, preferring to refer to him as *Calumniator*, but in a rare *lapsus* he could write: *Ruffinus... monachus et ipse*.¹³⁴ A fifteenth century Italian translation (in manuscript) of Jerome's *Apologia* refers to *Rufino monacho* in the title.¹³⁵

¹³¹ I add *cruces* to note the difficulty in the text.

¹³² The contribution Rufinus made to the new heresy may even explain in part Mercator's avoiding the title *presbyter*.

¹³³ See W.M. Lindsay (and D. Bains), *Notae Latinae*, Cambridge 1915 (repr. Hildesheim 1963), pp. 431-32. For *monachus*, *monasterium*, he offers 'a few out of many' examples to show '[h]ow capriciously Christian scribes symbolize these recurrent words.' The contortions to which 'h' was subjected in cursive scripts are myriad.

¹³⁴ *Hieronymi Stridonensi Vita*, ll.404-405, in W.K. Ferguson (ed.), *Erasmi Opuscula*, The Hague 1933, p. 148. At p. 134n Ferguson collects references to Rufinus in the *Vita*.

¹³⁵ Cf. P. Lardet, CCSL 79 (*Hieronymus: Contra Rufinum*), pp. 291*, 310*. At p. 274* reference is given to a post(?) -1475 marginal note which incorrectly identifies Jerome's *Apol.III* as '*Ad Rusticum (leg. Rufinum?) monachum*.'

The notice by J. Trithemius¹³⁶ is of no little interest. As in the *Decretum Gelasianum*, the writings of Rufinus are placed among the Apocrypha, but the reason is: *propterea quod in sanctissimum uirum Hieronymum scripserit inuectiuas epistolas*. Trithemius then adds: *Sed postea in concordiam dilectionis fraternae redeuntes, facta sunt opuscula Rufini autentica (sic!) in quantum Hieronymi dictis non fuerint contraria*. This note by Trithemius on the renewed friendship between Rufinus and Jerome has all the appearance of being a fiction of his fertile imagination, but he may also be reflecting some current 'revision' of the dispute, especially when he goes on to claim that the *opuscula* of Rufinus were now considered to be 'authentic' and not contrary to Jerome's writings. It will be many moons before the writings of Rufinus the monk of Aquileia will be unfettered from the shackles of Jerome's censure! I refer to Trithemius here, however, more because he introduces this author as: *Rufinus monachus et Aquilegiensis (sic!) ecclesiae presbyter*. Noris in his *Historia* introduces the mentor of Pelagius as *Rufinus Monachus Aquilejensis*, and suggests (p. 5) that Rufinus was ordained *ad titulum monasterii*.¹³⁷ J. Martianay (1706) also gives *Rufinu[s] monachu[s]* in the title of the *Apologia* (Lardet, p. 1, app.), but I have not been able to identify his authority for this. These few notices are offered (without any claim to being exhaustive) to draw attention to the existence (persistence?) of the use of the title *monachus* with reference to Rufinus.

When Jerome warned Demetrias in *Ep.* 130 of the new heresy that was making its appearance, he was clearly referring to Pelagianism; but when he identified it as the same pestilence of heresy that had once been imported into Rome in the time of Anastasius, the reference can only be to Origenism (despite his adjustment of the chronology). The heresy was rampant in Syria, according to Jerome in the introduction to his *Dialogus*, who sees fit to name Evagrius, Rufinus (of Aquileia), and Palladius – all Origenists! – along with an assortment of other heretics who attempted to introduce the subversive notion of 'apatheia' into Christianity. Rufinus (of Aquileia), in his translations of Origen and Evagrius, is identified by Jerome as the

¹³⁶ *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, in *Opera Historica*, Frankfurt (1601), pp. 214-15.

¹³⁷ Noris, in his account of *Rufinus monachus*, notes the fact that at the Council of Chalcedon it was thought necessary to include a canon on the subject (can. 6: *Nullum absolute ordinari debere presbyterum... nisi specialiter ecclesiae ciuitatis... aut monasterii*), implying that such an irregularity had been developing at the time. To predate the use of *Ad titulum monasterii* into the time of Rufinus seems unwarranted.

main culprit in the introduction of this heresy to the West. Jerome, however, does not in fact say that Rufinus brought the heresy from Syria – nor, for that matter, does Mercator. Both only say that the heresy was widespread in Syria, and that Rufinus introduced it to Rome in the time of Pope Anastasius. Mercator decries the fact that Rufinus did not ‘publish’ his heresy (*per se proferre non ausus*); Jerome laments the pervasive influence of his translations. History tells us that the Origenist controversy in Rome ‘broke out’ during the pontificate of Anastasius and was sparked by a translation done by Rufinus of Aquileia. That translation, *De Principiis*, raised a furore over some of its theological content and over Rufinus’ handling of the original, but the controversy did not deter Rufinus from continuing to translate, nor Romans from reading his translations. This is attested to by Jerome, by his own prefatory dedications, and not least – but most important for this study – by the fact that his translations were used by the early Pelagians.

It is worth recalling at this point (something that Jerome would probably prefer not to recall!¹³⁸) that one of Rufinus’ first contributions as a translator when he returned to the West was to make available a Latin version of the *Regula* of Basil.¹³⁹ We shall return again below to the importance of this translation. I mention it here because attention to the dispute over Origen has tended to overshadow the seminal and ongoing role Rufinus played in promoting the monastic ideal in the West at the beginning of the fifth century. It would be a very unrealistic reading of the social conditions in which Rufinus moved to conclude that the monastic ideal he promoted was confined to the cloister, or that this translation did not have a wider influence. By this time he was known as *Rufinus presbyter*, but it is historically correct

¹³⁸ See Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 228, on Rufinus’s translation; and pp. 280–81, on Jerome’s later translation of the Rule of Pachomius. The Rules had very different origins; equally diverse were the intended readers of the translations. Kelly offers cogent reasons for Jerome’s disregard of Rufinus’s translation of Basil’s *Regula*, but it is unlikely that he was unaware of its existence. At least he knew about the Greek version, but in his *De viris illustribus* CXVI, PL 23,747, he glosses over the ‘*asketikon*’ (sic!) with a bare mention. He wrote to Demetrias in *Ep.* 130,17, CSEL 56, p. 197: *Solet inter plerosque esse certamen, Utrum solitaria, an cum multis vita melior sit*. This looks very like an allusion to *Regula Basilii* 3 (Longer Rule 7) where that specific question is discussed.

¹³⁹ Kelly (*Jerome*, p. 228) follows Murphy (*Rufinus*, p. 91) in saying that Rufinus combined and selected from Basil’s two Rules. It is more probable that he translated an existing composite collection. See the brief note by K. Zelzer in the *Prolegomena* to his edition, pp.IX–X, and now A.M. Silvas, *The Asketikon*, p. 102. (See below for details.)

to say that he was also *quondam monachus*. That a baffled scribe, transcribing a text that offered *quo(n)da(m)mo/nac/hus* (with any of the syllable divisions, or peculiarities of script suggested above), produced the reading *quondam nat(ione) S(yr)us*, is far from being impossible. While this can be no more than a conjecture, it is not one that has been arrived at – nor is it being presented here – on any whim of convenience.

Rufinus Pelagianus?

There is no question about the fact that the influence of somebody called Rufinus lies at the beginning of the Pelagian debate.¹⁴⁰ But to dismiss the ‘existence’ of the Syrian as an overlooked scribal error can only appear to be too simplistic; particularly if in doing so we foist *tout court* the responsibility for Pelagianism on the Aquileian. In his attempt to identify the author of the *Liber de Fide*, Altaner, as a point of departure, took it as having been adequately *established* by Fontanini that Rufinus of Aquileia ‘had nothing to do with Pelagianism.’¹⁴¹ However, the arguments offered by Fontanini (PL 21,275-79) to which Altaner referred, were only concerned with showing a) that the *Liber de Fide* cannot be attributed to the Aquileian, and b) that it is impossible to think that in Mercator’s day Rufinus of Aquileia would be referred to as a Syrian. He also makes the suggestion (col.277) that ‘Syrian’ or ‘Palestinian’ may have been chosen specifically to avoid confusion with the Aquileian.¹⁴² The strength of Fontanini’s argument may be appreciated from a statement (col.271) found in his preceding discussion of the authorship of the *Libellus fidei* and the *Liber de Fide: Absit, ut nostrum [Rufinum]... ad impias haereticorum partes unquam transfugisse credamus*. Perish the thought that Rufinus of Aquileia be considered a heretic!

The clear distinctions between heresy and orthodoxy that would emerge from the Pelagian debate cannot be backdated into the life of Rufinus. Indeed, history tells us that apart from the formulation of some very specific anathemas, the borderline between heresy and

¹⁴⁰ In the following I expand on some ideas published in ‘Unexplored Paths Relating to the Outbreak of the Pelagian Debate,’ in *Nanzan Journal of Theological Studies*, 30 (2007), pp. 27-54.

¹⁴¹ Altaner, *art. cit.* p. 434.

¹⁴² A variant on this, I must confess, was my own conclusion in my earlier attempt to solve the riddle of the Syrian.

orthodoxy in questions related to Pelagianism was never clearly drawn, and the accusation 'Pelagian!' has not only resurfaced down the centuries, but continues today. It is not without reason that much Pelagian literature has survived through the centuries under the names of its chief adversaries, Augustine and Jerome, and the attribution of individual writings remains a *crux* of Pelagian scholarship.¹⁴³ There is all the more reason, then, to refrain from imposing on its precursors the categories of what would later be considered to be heresy.¹⁴⁴ Nevertheless, this should not preclude our searching into the more immediate sources from which the Pelagians drew their inspiration. The translations made available by Rufinus were among those sources, but on this topic we are confronted by a surprising lack of interest on the part of modern scholarship, and this is due in great part to the 'existence' of the Syrian. The situation can be summed up as follows: Since Caesarius identified his source as Mercator's Syrian, and the Syrian's *Liber de Fide* can be dated to roughly the time in question, and furthermore Augustine in *De peccatorum meritis* refuted this *Liber*, there is no case for implicating Rufinus of Aquileia as a direct source of Pelagianism, and consequently there is no need to examine his translations as a possible seed-bed for incipient Pelagianism. Concomitant with this is a much greater lack: With the exception of a few very limited studies that we will mention presently, no comprehensive effort has been made to extract from his translations the theological anthropology specific to Rufinus, and to present it in a systematic way.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ When B.R. Rees published a translation of a fairly comprehensive selection of writings in *The Letters of Pelagius and his Followers*, (Woodbridge, 1991), he seems to have been unaware of the fact that *De Vita Christiana*, generally attributed to Pelagius, had appeared in translation as the first tract in *Treatises on Various Subjects* (by Augustine!): *Fathers of the Church*, vol. 16, pp. 9-43, Washington 1952. The translator (M.S. Muldowney) notes its 'Pelagian character' in the introduction (pp. 3-5.)

¹⁴⁴ Despite its age the following can still be read with profit: J. von Kuhn, 'Der vorgebliche Pelagianismus der vor-augustinischen Väter,' *Theol.Quart.* 35(1853), pp. 433-72. An updated 'reprint' would be welcome.

¹⁴⁵ C. Moreschini draws attention to this lacuna in 'La traduzione di Rufino delle Omelie di Basilio: motivo e scopo di una scelta,' in C. Moreschini/G. Menestrina (ed.), *La traduzione dei testi religiosi*, Brescia (1995), pp. 127-47. Fr. Thelamon's article 'Rufin d'Aquilée' in *Dict.Spir.* XIII, Paris 1988, col.1107-1117, fails us on this point. Older studies abound, and, with on-going new editions of his translations, there is a plethora of recent studies of his translation technique. See, e.g., C. Lo Cicero, 'Come romanizzare Basilio: Ancora sul *Vertere* di Rufino,' *Riv.fil. ed istruz.classica*, 130 (2002), pp. 40-75; A. Silvas, 'Rufinus' Translation Techniques in the *Regula Basilii*,' in *Antichthon* 37 (2003), pp. 71-93. Much can be gleaned from these to build up a picture of the thought of Rufinus, but the tree on which to hang the fruit has yet to be grown.

By way of introduction into the difficulties encountered in reading Rufinus' translations, I offer as an example this short statement from the translation of *De principiis* (III,1,6^{fin.}): *Alioquin contrarium esset dari nobis mandata ex quorum vel observatione salvemur, vel praevaricatione damnemur, si observandi ea facultas in nobis non est.* This, according to the commentators, is a 'banal' 'recapitulation' 'characteristic' of Rufinus, that 'adds nothing' to the argument just made by Origen.¹⁴⁶ Trivial though it may be, the addition nevertheless betrays Rufinus' concern to underline an idea – the equivalent to our adding emphasis to a text. At the beginning of III,1,6 we read: 'That it is our own task to live a good life, and that God asks this of us *not as his work* nor as a thing (...) from somebody else, nor (...) fate....'¹⁴⁷ Here the emphasized phrase is omitted by Rufinus – out of prudence, according to Simonetti and Crouzel,¹⁴⁸ lest God be seen as impinging upon our liberty to chose right living. While both commentators offer adequate evidence for Origen's insistence elsewhere on the need for Grace, the reason offered for the omission of the phrase by Rufinus at this point is open to question. It is certainly important in establishing the text of Origen to identify the omissions, additions, and changes due to Rufinus, but to what extent have the consequences of this for understanding the thought of Rufinus himself been explored? J. Rist¹⁴⁹ pointed out the shifting philosophical context in which Rufinus' version is to be read, but his lead has found little following in studies.¹⁵⁰ N. Pace,¹⁵¹ proposing (p. 3) 'to follow on and extend' the approach of

¹⁴⁶ The terms are taken in turn from H. Görgemanns/H. Karpp, *Origenes: Vier Bücher von den Prinzipien*, Darmstadt 1985², p. 481; M. Simonetti, *I Principi di Origene*, Torino 1968, p. 372; G.W. Butterworth, *Origen on First Principles*, London 1936, (repr. London 1973), p. 166; H. Crouzel/(M. Simonetti), *Origène: Traité des Principes [IV Commentaire]*, *SC* 269, Paris 1980, p. 22. It is a good example of the malaise of studies of Rufinus. Much of what is original to, or underlined by Rufinus, is reduced to 'explicative addition' or 'common amplification' and gets lost in 'translation technique.'

¹⁴⁷ Trans. from Butterworth, pp. 163–64. Unless specified, as here, any translations offered in the following are my own.

¹⁴⁸ Simonetti, p. 370; Crouzel, p. 22. The punctuation of Crouzel's comment needs correction; otherwise he confusingly suggests that Rufinus' prudence was spurred (in 398!) by the Pelagian appearance of the original! The resulting Latin in *De Principiis* (omitting 'not at his [= God's] work') is patent of Pelagian interpretation.

¹⁴⁹ J.M. Rist, 'The Greek and Latin Texts of the Discussion on Free Will in *'De Principiis'*,' in H. Crouzel, *et al.* (ed.), *Origeniana*, Bari 1975, pp. 97–111.

¹⁵⁰ Silvas (see below) plays down the cultural differences between East and West more than I would accept. 'Words' (quite apart from how they are used) have a different resonance when translated. Even within a language the meanings of 'words' differ greatly according to the culture in which they are used.

¹⁵¹ *Ricerche sulla traduzione di Rufino del 'De principiis' di Origene*, Firenze 1990. In his conclusion (p. 202) he can note that there is an 'inexplicable silence' in

Rist, goes into minute and invaluable detail in his analysis of Rufinus' translation. Yet it can only help us partially in building up the framework of the translator's thinking. When discussing (pp. 72-73) the striking omission by Rufinus of two references to 'divine assistance being 'by far in excess' of our human contribution' to our salvation, Pace concludes that the omission is due to a problem in translating the Greek encountered by Rufinus. This is not entirely convincing; but I have greater difficulty with Pace's rejection of the possibility that the omission was motivated by the emergence of Pelagianism – which according to Pace would only make its effects felt a decade later. This is unrealistic. Pelagianism did not suddenly appear in a void, and our task is to be alert to evidence for its 'pre-history' in the years before it emerged into a full-blown debate.

The translations by Rufinus of *De principiis*, and of other ascetic-moral writings done around the turn of the century were intended for a cultured (aristocratic) Roman Christian laity¹⁵² who were eager to gain access to the spiritual writings of the East. If our histories are correct, it was precisely in these circles, and at this time, that Pelagius was beginning to make a name for himself in these same circles. How Pelagius could transpose Christian values into a social ethos in which Roman aristocrats would find themselves comfortable, while retaining all the traditional Roman values to which they were born, has been well presented by J.-M. Salamito.¹⁵³ It astounds, however, that he can underline Pelagius' discovery(?) of a novel optimistic evaluation of human nature, without any mention of the *concurrent* contribution being made by Rufinus in his translations with regard to Christian anthropology – a contribution to which we know Pelagius was indebted.¹⁵⁴ In the following pages

contemporary studies on certain aspects of the translation, but without being very specific as to what aspects he intends.

¹⁵² A. de Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire du mouvement monastique, tom.III(1): Le monachisme latin*, Paris 1996, pp. 247-385, gives a thorough presentation of Rufinus's translations of the Eastern ascetics and their lives. It is, however, a history of the monastic movement written *ab intra*, with little attention given to the questions raised in the present study. At pp. 52-53 (introducing the translation of *De Principiis*), and again pp. 294-301 (in a short presentation of the translations to which we will turn our attention presently) we are given a brief introduction to the 'non-monastic' Roman 'ascetics.' These remain very marginal to de Vogüé's interest.

¹⁵³ J.-M. Salamito, *Les Virtuoses et la Multitude. Aspects sociaux de la controverse entre Augustin et les Pélagiens*, Grenoble (2005).

¹⁵⁴ Fleeting reference is made to a homily by Basil (p. 33) and to the Sentences of Sextus (pp. 119, 121), but we are told nothing of the context of these writings

I do not presume to do more than scratch the surface of largely unfathomed waters. They will have served their purpose if, by way of correction or rejection, more capable scholars will take a fresh look at the evidence.

When Pelagius found the Sentences of 'Pope' Sixtus to be congenial reading he may have thought that he was consulting a writing graced with the authority of a martyred Pope, but he read those Sentences in the translation by Rufinus. R.E. Evans¹⁵⁵ has shown how 'Pelagian' that work had become by the time it left the desk of Rufinus. That desk may have been somewhere in the region of Aquileia, but the translation was intended to meet a request from his Roman friends Apronianus (to whom it is dedicated in the Preface) and his wife Avita. She should find the collection of Sentences eminently useful, because *unius uersus sententia ad totius possit perfectionem uitae sufficere*.¹⁵⁶ For the same couple, and perhaps his last task in Rome in late 398, Rufinus had translated Origen's Homilies on Psalms 36-38. In these 'moral' homilies they would find everything (*tota*) that pertained *ad emendationem uel projectionem morum*.¹⁵⁷ At about the same time as the translation of the Sentences, Rufinus sent a selection of sermons by Gregory of Nazianz to Apronianus, so that his departure from Rome might not be the occasion for Apronianus to interrupt the studies (*a consuetis studiis*) they had been doing together.¹⁵⁸ His translation of homilies by Basil (also for Apronianus) belonged to the same 'project' of study. True, he notes that these homilies are not weighed down with *dogmatum question[es]*, and this may betray an avoidance on his part of currently sensitive debates and controverted writers like Origen, but we should not overplay this aspect at the expense of forgetting that he also saw the collection as something that would suffice *instituere... animos ad bonam uitam*.¹⁵⁹ These translations alone, and their dedications, should serve

within a possible 'strategy' by Rufinus to disseminate Eastern asceticism. In any case, Rufinus is left out of consideration.

¹⁵⁵ 'Pelagius and the Sentences of Sextus,' in *Pelagius* (n. 19 above), pp. 43-65.

¹⁵⁶ *Praef. in Sexti Sententias*, CCSL 20, p. 259. Two of the earliest MSS (one lost) expanded the title to include: *De vita hominis perfecta*. It is also the form of title given in a catalogue in Lorsch. Cf. P.-M. Bogaert, 'La préface de Rufin aux Sentences de Sexte et a une oeuvre inconnue,' in *Revue Bénédictine* 82 (1972), pp. 26-46 (here pp. 35-36). There is good reason to think, pace Bogaert, that this reference in the Lorsch catalogue is to the *Collectio Palatina*!

¹⁵⁷ *Prol. in Explan. Origenis...* CCSL 20, p. 251.

¹⁵⁸ *Praef. in Greg. Naz. Orat.*, *ibid.*, p. 255.

¹⁵⁹ *Praef. in Omelias S. Bas.*, *ibid.*, p. 237. On the collection see C. Moreschini (n. 145 above).

as a reminder that the departure of Rufinus from Rome does not mean that he was simply 'absent' (physically) from the City. While the merits and demerits of his translation, and his own orthodoxy, may have been the subject of debate, he continued to be very much present as a spiritual director to his Roman friends by means of his translations.

A translation of singular importance for the history of Pelagianism would soon appear – his abridged version of Origen's Commentary on Romans. Since the studies of Smith,¹⁶⁰ and Bohlin,¹⁶¹ the fact that Pelagius made use of this translation has been established in Pelagian studies, but here again it is important to remember that it was in the version by Rufinus that Pelagius read the Commentary.¹⁶² To overlook, as Bohlin explicitly does,¹⁶³ the contribution of Rufinus, even perhaps in such minor details as his choice of language, is to overlook what Evans and others (see above) have drawn attention to in other translations. Furthermore, any conclusions we draw from a search for the influence of the translation of the Commentary on Pelagius' Expositions must of necessity take into account the nature of the translation by Rufinus. Apart from giving attention to characteristics of his translation technique, we must also keep in mind that in his version the original fifteen books are drastically reduced to ten. This gives us some indication of the extent of his omissions – if they are all his, because Rufinus' copy of the original does not seem to have been complete – but except for rare passages preserved in the original Greek, we are ignorant of what, where, and why sections were actually omitted.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ A.J. Smith, 'The Commentary of Pelagius on 'Romans' Compared with that of Origen-Rufinus,' *Journal of Theological Studies*, 20 (1918), pp. 127-77.

¹⁶¹ T. Bohlin, *Die Theologie des Pelagius und ihre Genesis*, Uppsala 1957.

¹⁶² It is of no little interest that Pelagius even had access to the translation, because there is some evidence that Rufinus may not have actually 'published' it before his death, or at least, that it was only available in limited circulation. Augustine also seems to have had access to it (privately from Melania the Younger?). Cf. C.P. Bammel, 'Rufinus' Translation of Origen's Commentary on Romans and the Pelagian Controversy,' *Antichità Altoadriatiche* 39 (1992), pp. 131-42; and 'Augustine, Origen and the Exegesis of St. Paul,' *Augustinianum* 32 (1992), pp. 341-68. (Both are reprinted in *Tradition and Exegesis in Early Christian Writers*, Aldershot 1995.)

¹⁶³ Bohlin (p. 87) maintains that it is unnecessary to distinguish between what is 'origenistisch' and what is 'rufinisch' – on this he is correctly criticized by Evans (cf. n. 155 above). The study by G. Bobstock, 'The Influence of Origen on Pelagius and Western Monasticism,' in *Origeniana Septima*, (Bibliotheca Eph. Theol. Lov. 137), Leuven 1999, pp. 381-96, also fails to make this important distinction.

¹⁶⁴ A discussion of Rufinus' method in his translation is presented at length by C. P. Hammond Bammel, *Der Römerbrieftext des Rufin und seine Origenes-Übersetzung*,

In one study in which she compares the Latin and Greek texts, C.P. Hammond Bammel seems to go out of her way to underline the fact that Rufinus completed his translation *before* the emergence of Pelagianism.¹⁶⁵ She notes: 'His [*scil.* Rufinus] own attitude *may perhaps have been somewhat inclined towards a kind of Pelagian legalism*, but the commentary he translated was a rich treasury of arguments, which could readily provide material both for the Pelagian and for the anti-Pelagian side of the controversy.'¹⁶⁶ Rather than write 'the commentary he translated' here, I would echo the complaint made by the contemporaries of Rufinus, and suggest that Bammel should have written 'his commentary.' This same statement by Bammel is quoted by N. Pace to show that Rufinus, not only when he translated *De Principiis* 'about' a decade earlier, but also now in the abbreviated translation of the Commentary of Romans, was *not* influenced by the concerns that would become the focus of the (future) Pelagian debate. When exactly the Pelagians began to 'campaign' for a re-evaluation of the inherent moral power of human nature may be impossible to determine – as noted already above – and it would be unrealistic to attempt to pin-point this to any given year, but instead of attempting to read Rufinus while making a conscious effort to exclude the presence in his writings of a *later* debate, we must approach his translations bearing in mind that the Pelagian problematic was already a *contemporary* debate in Rome in the first decade of the fifth century. Emphasis has been placed here on both the time and the place. Too often, in studies, the temporal and geographical *continuity* of the debate over Origen in the West and the subsequent(?) Pelagian debate are presented in such a manner as to miss their *contiguity*.¹⁶⁷

We are frequently directed towards the emergent interest in, and influence of Antiochene anthropology among the early Pelagians. John

Freiburg 1985, pp. 43-58. At pp. 58-104 she discusses the problem of how (in)complete his Greek exemplar may have been.

¹⁶⁵ 'Philocalia IX, Jerome, Epistle 121, and Origen's Exposition of Romans VII,' in *Journal of Theological Studies* 32 (1981), pp. 50-81. She notes that Rufinus omits or plays down Paul's references to himself as being weak or a sinner (pp. 69f, and 74 n. 6). Is this prompted by reverence for the Apostle, or by his appreciation of the power inherent in human nature?

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.* p. 72. The contorted phrase, to which I added emphasis, can only mean the opposite to what it purports to say! See Pace, *Ricerche*, pp. 72-73 for the following.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. P. Grech, 'Justification by Faith in Origen's Commentary on Romans,' in *Augustinianum* 36 (1996), pp. 337-59. I can endorse his intrigue (p. 338) at the fact that the translation was undertaken 'during the early stages of the Pelagian controversy.' (Emphasis added.) I would have reserves, however, about his conclusion (p. 359) that Origen[-Rufinus] 'is certainly not Pelagian in his doctrine about Adam's sin.'

Chrysostom becomes the main focus of attention here, perhaps simply because we can document Pelagian use of his writings, but the sources are probably more extensive. The more sober approach of John and the 'school' of Antioch to the human condition did not come laden with the ballast of an Origenist cosmology, and while we trace its developing influence on the West, we can safely maintain a clear divide between the Roman Pelagian 'Antiochenes,' and the Greek Antiochene 'Pelagians.'¹⁶⁸ It would be a great error, however, to think that the Pelagian movement 'took off' with their discovery of the theology and anthropology of the writers of Antioch. Undoubtedly they found much there to support their case, but Pelagius and his supporters already had sufficient sources in the translations being made available by Rufinus.¹⁶⁹ It is an understatement to say that we know that they read them! But it needs to be repeated and underlined because there seems to be a kind of taboo – the 'inexplicable silence' referred to by Pace (n. 151 above)? – operative in admitting its implications. If the Pelagians read what Rufinus was currently translating, they did so precisely because they found there what they agreed with. It is a different matter to suggest that Rufinus would agree with the more extreme conclusions that were drawn and *later* (after Rufinus' death) defended by his Pelagian readers, but the bases on which those conclusions were established already existed in the sources they used – and to which they appealed for authority – sources that included the translations made by Rufinus.¹⁷⁰

Regula 'Rufini'?

On his return from the East in 397 one of the first contributions that Rufinus made to the Latin theological library of the day was a

¹⁶⁸ See n. 144 above, and the pertinent comments in R.C. Hill, 'A Pelagian Commentator on the Psalms,' *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 63 (1998), pp. 263-271. The commentator referred to is John Chrysostom.

¹⁶⁹ Grech, *art. cit.*, offers as one of his conclusions (p. 359) that Origen[-Rufinus] 'comes close to the Pelagians in his anthropological optimism.' Would it not also be true to say that they found their anthropological optimism in Origen-Rufinus?

¹⁷⁰ It is interesting to note how the anti-Pelagian William of St. Thierry in the twelfth century would almost systematically 'correct' or rephrase 'Origen's' Commentary where he found it to be open to Pelagian interpretation. Long before, Cassiodorus (equally alert to Pelagianism) had nothing but praise for Origen! Cf. T.P. Scheck, *Origen and the History of Justification*, Notre Dame (Indiana) 2008, pp. 104-28.

translation, mentioned already above, of Basil's *Regula*.¹⁷¹ To pass over the *Regula*, however, as a mere work of translation is to miss a major element of its significance.¹⁷² In his preface Rufinus expresses his hope that through his efforts, undertaken at the request of the abbot Ursacius of Pinetum, Basil's monastic rule may become available to monasteries throughout the West.¹⁷³ Despite its origin as a manual for daily life in an ascetic Christian community, and the apparently restricted 'group' for which the translation was intended by Rufinus, this was a rule for Christian living as such. In Basil's understanding, the terms 'Christian life' and 'monastic life' were interchangeable.¹⁷⁴ So too in Rufinus we should expect that ideals towards which the few who embraced the monastic life were striving, and the means at their disposal in their efforts, were the same as the ideals and means Rufinus presented to the Christians 'in the world' to whom he became spiritual director in Rome.¹⁷⁵ In his study of the beginnings of western monasticism, R. Lorenz draws attention to the influence of the introduction of the monastic ideal, with specific reference to the translation of Basil's Rule, on Latin Christian thought at the beginning of the fifth century.¹⁷⁶ In the *Regula*, Lorenz notes, humankind is presented as having an *anima naturaliter pelagiana*. To use terminology that would

¹⁷¹ *Basili Regula*, CSEL 86, (ed. K. Zelzer). The earlier edition by L. Holsten is reprinted in PL 103,483-554. To be highly commended are the introduction and notes by U. Neri to the Italian translation of Basil's rules by M. B. Artioli: *Opere Ascetiche di Basilio di Cesarea*, Turin 1980. I underline, however, that my interest here is in the Latin end-product of Rufinus' efforts.

¹⁷² A.M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great*, Oxford 2005, (= Silvas below) offers a splendid translation of the Greek and Latin versions (with commentary). In the introductory matter (pp. 102-29) she studies the translation by Rufinus under the title: 'Rufinus, Witness of the Small *Asketikon*.' As the title of the chapter implies, she is interested more in identifying the Greek text lying behind the translation, than in a consideration of the idea that in translation the *Regula* took on a (Latin!) life of its own. This comes out more cogently in her earlier study: 'Edessa to Cassino: The Passage of Basil's *Asketikon* to the West,' in *Vigiliae Christianae* 56(2002), pp. 247-59.

¹⁷³ *Praefatio* 11 (ed. Zelzer, p. 4): *tui (scil. Ursacii) sit officii etiam aliis monasteriis exemplaria praebere*. It is likely that Rufinus and Melania (the Elder) followed this rule in their monasteries on the Mount of Olives (cf. Silvas p. 483, following a suggestion proposed by J. Gribomont).

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Neri (n. 171 above), pp. 42-45. Silvas in a note (p. 153) writes: 'to Basil, the imperatives of the baptismal life and the Christian ascetic life are effectively coterminous.'

¹⁷⁵ In this sense the *Regula* could serve well as a prologue to Salamito's study (n. 153 above).

¹⁷⁶ Cf. R. Lorenz, 'Die Anfänge des abendländischen Mönchtums im 4. Jahrhundert,' *Zeit.Kirch.Gesch.* 77 (1986), pp. 1-61 (here pp. 36-38).

be more familiar to us from a (very slightly) later date, *gratia* is essentially 'what we are in our created state' when born. The Law, as an *adiutorium gratiae*, calls up the natural *posse* that we possess. While stopping short of suggesting that Pelagius may have depended on Basil's Rule, Lorenz nevertheless concludes that the *Regula* may be seen as a 'Typus' of the outlook of *pre*-Pelagian (monks') thinking. Given both the spatial and temporal contiguity involved here – spatial, in the highly literate and theologically aware circle(s) of Roman Christians, and temporal, within the short span of a decade – this conclusion by Lorenz is over-cautious. When examining the cultural milieu of the aristocrats who form the backdrop to the unfolding drama of Pelagianism, P. Brown can readily draw on Lorenz's study to back-up his account. Brown does not confine his interest here to cloistered ascetics, but to the wider Roman audience among whom the influence of Rufinus was pervasive.¹⁷⁷

Much of Basil's *Regula* is of little interest to the daily life of the Christian in the street. There are solutions to petty (and not so petty!) problems of community living, where the rule of thumb offered can be simply described as the use of (good!) common sense. Various enigmatic terms and phrases from the Bible are explained, and apparent contradictions in the Biblical text are resolved. These, however, are incidents in the lives of those who are intent on *conversatio perfecta*¹⁷⁸ according to the Gospels. The *Prologus* sets the stage for what follows in the *Regula*. It is incumbent upon (*necesse est*) the teacher/superior to be ready and willing at all times to teach how one can become a *perfectus homo Dei* (cf. 2Tim 3,17).¹⁷⁹ Equally, the disciple is admonished (with Ps 1,2) to meditate on the law of God, day and night. This might well be considered impractical in the lives of 'ordinary' Christians, but already a motif of *perfectio* has been introduced and is being proposed as an ideal for everybody. Basil goes on to remind the reader that everybody will be judged according to their personal performance, based on their knowledge of the divine will, *ante tribunal Christi*, an event that may beset us at any day or hour. The prospect of the terrible day of judgement, when all must render account, recurs throughout the *Regula*.

¹⁷⁷ P. Brown, 'The Patrons of Pelagius: The Roman Aristocracy between East and West,' repr. in *Religion and Society in the Age of St. Augustine*, London 1972, pp. 208-26 (here p. 219). On the crucial question of original sin, however, the Aquileian is upstaged by his namesake, Rufinus the Syrian in his study.

¹⁷⁸ *Prol.5* (ed. Zelzer, p. 5). *Conversatio* might adequately render the Greek *politeia* here, but Rufinus adds *perfecta*.

¹⁷⁹ *Prol.5* (Rufinus strengthens the original to *perfectus et consummatus*).

The opening pages¹⁸⁰ of the *Regula* in Rufinus' version are programmatic. Having established briefly with the words of the Gospel (Matt 22,36-39) that all the commandments are reduced ultimately to love of God (*Resp.I*), the question arises how this is in fact possible (*Inter.II*). The answer becomes a long discourse on the human condition.¹⁸¹ Were this *Responsio II* to have circulated independently and anonymously in Latin (without our knowledge of its origin and true location) I hazard the suggestion that we would list its author among the *Anonymi Pelagiani*! Admiring readers of Basil will loudly denounce such a suggestion, but the Roman Christian reader in c.400 did not have access to the whole of Basil's 'programme' and could not know where some of the ideas and ideals presented in the *Regula* might (and did) lead to in the very near future.¹⁸² We must read the (Latin) *Regula* not with a fear of turning (the Greek) Basil into a 'Pelagian,' but with the eyes of late fourth-century Roman Christians who were fighting a battle against (Pagan) fatalism on the one hand, and (Christian) laxism on the other. Both 'enemies' had succumbed to the malady of accepting that sin was inevitable in the human condition. The *Regula* of Basil-Rufinus offered an accessible antidote for both.

The following is no more than a drastically reduced précis of this *Responsio* that may serve to give some impression of the trend of its teaching – and, indeed, of the whole *Regula*. The fundamental command, and all the other laws which devolve from it, can be obeyed because humanity, as created, has it in its power to do so: *omnium mandatorum quae a Deo accepimus virtutes in nobismetipsis insitas gerimus*. We received a command to love (*diligere*) God, but at the same time *dilectionis virtutem in ipsa statim prima conditione a Deo anima sibi insitam gerit*. There can be no difficulty involved; nor is anything new or alien expected of us. We should not be proud if we

¹⁸⁰ *Reg.Bas.* (ed. Zelzer, pp. 8-25). See Silvas, pp. 160-80, for an 'interlaced' presentation in translation of the Greek and Latin, through which one must pick one's way carefully in order to discern the Latin version.

¹⁸¹ Although Rufinus translated for a particular monastic community, I cannot agree with M. Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism*, Oxford 2003, when she writes (pp. 69-70) that Rufinus 'transformed Basil's introductory discourse to a group of Christians living in the world into one directed to a monastic community.' I would propose quite the opposite conclusion.

¹⁸² The presentation of Basil's spirituality by A. Holmes, *A Life Pleasing to God*, Kalamazoo 2000, may be taken as representative of the malaise encountered here. At pp. 132-36 ('Excursus: Basil and Original Sin') we are offered texts from other writings to show that Basil's teaching does indeed include a notion of our solidarity in the sin of Adam, in an attempt to show that Basil's thought is not contrary to what would subsequently become Western orthodoxy.

succeed, and think we are doing anything of our own, other than using what *ab ipso [Deo] in natura nostrae creationis accepimus*.¹⁸³ Our attention is directed (with expansive rhetoric) to the wonders of the gifts of creation, at the summit of which is the gift of rationality to humanity, and within this great gift lies our ability to know even the Creator of the universe. Undoubtedly, all of this munificence should lead us to love the *Genitor* in return – if not, even the mute beasts in their respect for their masters (Is. 1,3) would put us to shame. Even after the fall into sin and death the Creator continued to take care of humanity. He gave the law *in adiutorium*; He set angels to guard us; He sent the prophets to warn us; He even gave His son up to death in order to recall us to life. Who could not be disposed to love in return a *Largitor* of such largesse? The same argumentation applies to the second commandment to love one's neighbour.¹⁸⁴ It is natural! Humanity is defined as being a *humanum animal et communicabile*, not *agreste aliquod ac ferum*.¹⁸⁵ To need and love another is part of our nature because *Dominus harum in nobis virtutum semina seminavit*. If He gave us the seeds, He surely expects to see the fruit. Proof that we really love God, is made explicit in the love we show towards our neighbour. This teaching is made clear with a shower of scriptural proof-texts in which we are commanded to exercise charity.

There is a glaring equivocation in this account of human nature. Whereas mention is made of the delights of Paradise (that were lost), and note is duly made of the sorry fact that the creature so highly gifted fell into sin, and through sin into death, there is no intimation here that there exists any essential differentiation between a pre- and post-lapsarian human condition, except that physical death is a *de facto* reality in the latter. Adam is not mentioned, nor is there any suggestion that his sin had any moral consequence on his posterity. The person who is commanded to love God and neighbour, and has the inherent ability to fulfill these commands, is intrinsically in the same condition as Adam (unnamed) was before the Fall. Further reading of

¹⁸³ The phrase *in natura nostrae creationis* is an addition by Rufinus. Cf. Silvas p. 172.

¹⁸⁴ Although they are treated as a separate topics in the 'Longer Responses' the two commands form a unity in the version offered by Rufinus. Cf. Silvas p. 172.

¹⁸⁵ Rufinus evidently had difficulty with the terminology here. His choice of *ferum* ('wild') as the opposite of *communicabile* ('social') may seem strange, but if he had remained close to the Greek he would have had to write something like *solitarium*, or even *monasticum*! Basil's use of '*monastikos*' is not yet in the technical sense of 'monastic' but already in Rufinus (e.g. *Prol.*) *monachus/monasterium* take on their later more restricted and usual meanings. See Neri, p. 232n; Silvas p. 172n.

the works of Basil would certainly give a more nuanced account of the human condition, but here we are reading the preamble to a 'manual' on authentic Christian living as it was presented to his Western readership by Rufinus. In it he tells the reader that it is possible to keep *all* the commandments because humankind has the capacity *naturaliter*, now as it was *ab initio*, to do so. In good Stoic tradition we are told that we can (and should!) cultivate all the virtues, and conversely that all vices should (and can!) be rooted out. Much of what appears to be evil in our nature is nothing more than (bad) habit (*mos*) that takes on the appearance of being a second nature. When the apostle tells us to be imitators of God (Eph 5,1s) we should not be deterred: *Numquam autem praeciperet hoc iustus et clemens deus nisi utique etiam possibilitatem nobis donasset. Inesse enim hoc naturae nostrae ostenditur...*¹⁸⁶

This is Basil – but it is also Rufinus. It is not to my purpose here to pick our way through the Latin text in order to note additions or omissions by Rufinus, nor to discuss where Rufinus' version is to be placed in the complex development and tradition of Basil's *Asketikon*. In essence Rufinus retains the thought of Basil, even when he reworks some phrasing or words, and it is this resulting product that was read by Latin readers. In it they were confronted with a demanding programme for Christian living, but at the same time they were reminded that nothing beyond the possible is demanded: When a *just* God gave *just* commandments, with the same *justice* he gave to human nature the possibility of keeping his commands. This was the same teaching that Rufinus found, and underlined, in Origen's *De Principiis*.¹⁸⁷ The optimistic, but at the same time demanding, account of human nature that these translations offer will be summarized not very many years later – by Augustine! – in these terms: *Sunt enim quidam tantum praesumentes de libero humanae uoluntatis arbitrio, ut ad non peccandum nec adiuvandos nos diuinitus opinentur semel ipsi naturae nostrae concessio liberae uoluntatis arbitrio*.¹⁸⁸ The focus of attention, however, has moved from what we have been given in nature to what an over-insistence on that gift in nature may imply for our understanding of a need for any further divine assistance. In historical terms, between the translations by Rufinus mentioned above, and the complaint of

¹⁸⁶ *Inter.CLVI* (ed. Zelzer, p. 181) = SR 176 (Silvas p. 370).

¹⁸⁷ See at n. 146 above. He may have been working on the translations at the same time (397/98). Rist (*art. cit.* p. 99) begins his study with the assertion that Rufinus 'goes out of his way to describe God as not merely just but just as judge.'

¹⁸⁸ *De pecc. mer.* II,1,1, CSEL 60, p. 72.

Augustine just quoted, lies the event that almost pin-points the 'start' of Pelagianism – the violent reaction of Pelagius to Augustine's prayer *Da quod iubes et iube quod uis*, which Pelagius understood as being a prayer that undermined free will.¹⁸⁹ When Augustine turns in *De peccatorum meritis II* to discuss the opinions of those who defend the power of free will, one (perhaps the only) written source at his disposal can be attributed to Caelestius. The subsequent debate would revolve around the condition in which each individual is born (under the sway of Adam's sin?), and the God-given power that is inherent in nature (limited, and in need of Grace?), but the point of departure had been established in an optimistic understanding of human nature *in se* which some Latin Christians had discovered through the translations of Rufinus of Aquileia.

Tradux animi/peccati

In the paragraphs above I have only skimmed stones over the surface of a lake of placid waters that have been left largely untouched from the point of view of my search. Space, however, does not permit here that we enter further into an examination of the thought of Rufinus on the subject of the human condition since my purpose is primarily to show that the Rufinus whose name appears in history at the beginning of the Pelagian debate is to be identified as Rufinus of Aquileia. Such an attempt to 'eliminate' the Syrian encounters a fundamental difficulty, and it lies in both of the sources on which the real existence of *Rufinus quondam natione Syrus* depends. Mercator (at least generally) and Caelestius (very specifically) both present Rufinus as somebody who denied *tradux peccati*. Against this, there is no evidence from his extant writings or translations to maintain that Rufinus of Aquileia made such an explicit denial. It is legitimate to ask, however, if he *might* have denied it, or, to put it in other words, if his expressed opinions on related topics that were in discussion in his day would not allow for, or even exclude his acceptance of the idea of sin being transmitted.

The problem of *tradux peccati* was intimately bound up with that of the origin of the soul. In his first rebuttal of the Pelagians in *De peccatorum meritis*, Augustine was careful to concentrate on the existence of the sinful condition in which humans are *de facto* born,

¹⁸⁹ *De dono perseverantiae* 20,53, PL 45,1026.

and only in a concluding note mentioned, in a convoluted paragraph-length sentence, that the problem of the soul was a *magna quaestio* requiring a solution – a solution that Augustine did not have.¹⁹⁰ Shortly afterwards, and under pressure to decide on the problem of the soul, Augustine discussed this matter in a long letter (*Ep.* 166) to Jerome, the object of which was to coax Jerome to explain how creationism could be reconciled with the need for Baptism. Among the arguments quoted (from Caelestius) by Pelagius in his Expositions, one is based specifically on an understanding of the origin of the soul: ‘... ‘if the soul does not exist by transmission, but the flesh alone, then only the flesh carries the transmission of sin and it alone deserves punishment.’ Thus, declaring it to be unjust that a soul which is born today, not from the lump of Adam, bears so ancient a sin belonging to another, they say that on no account should it be granted that God, who forgives a person his own sins, imputes to him another’s.’¹⁹¹ Caelestius, then, sometime during the first decade of the century (presumably in Rome) had denied both *tradux animi*, and *tradux peccati*, and had invoked the concept of justice, both human and divine, to underpin his argument. A few years later in Carthage (411) the same Caelestius would introduce ‘the holy priest Rufinus’ as his authority for casting doubt on the notion of *tradux peccati*.

It is true that Rufinus of Aquileia does not explicitly deny *tradux peccati* in any of his writings. Caelestius, however, merely claimed that he *heard* Rufinus, among others, make the denial, and the difference between what Rufinus said in private and what he committed to writing is not to be dismissed as unimportant. With regard to his opinion on the origin of the soul, this was a point on which Jerome would berate Rufinus – his silence.¹⁹² This attack by Jerome is directed in particular against Rufinus’s *Apologia ad Anastasium*, because in that writing Rufinus listed various opinions then current concerning the origin of the soul, but (Rufinus continued) *usque ad praesens certi et definiti aliquid de hac quaestione non teneo*.¹⁹³ The ugly details of the history of the feud between the two does not belong here – we have already touched on some of it when

¹⁹⁰ De pecc. mer. II,36,59, CSEL 60, pp. 127–28. We have met above in the *Regula ‘Rufini’* the centrality of the concept of divine *iustitia* in Basil-Rufinus’ insistence on our innate human ability to keep all the commandments.

¹⁹¹ Rom 1.15 (ed. Souter p. 47); translation by T. de Bruyn, *Pelagius’ Commentary on St Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, Oxford (1993), p. 94.

¹⁹² Adu. Ruf. 3,30 (CCSL 79, p. 101): *cur disputantium libertatem angusto fine concludas et, cum mendacia protuleris, de ueritate taces?*

¹⁹³ *Apol. ad Anast.* 6, CCSL 20, p. 27. A decade (and more) later the same thought would be penned repeatedly by Augustine!

considering the position of Pammachius – but within it we catch glimpses of the concerns with which Rufinus was struggling in his attempts to understand the origin of the soul. Our direct source, however, is Jerome, and due caution must be exercised when we read what he reports.

In Jerome's summary of the heresy that had made a brief unsuccessful appearance in Rome in the time of Anastasius, and was still a threat to reckoned with, he offers Demetrias an outline of some of 'their' arguments: *solent... iustitiam dei quaerere: 'cur illa anima in illa est nata prouincia?' [Q]uid causae extitit, ut alii de Christianis nascantur parentibus, alii inter feras et seuiissimas nationes, ubi nulla dei notitia est? [P]utasne, frustra infans paruulus et qui uix matrem risu et uultus hilaritate cognoscat, qui nec boni aliquid fecit nec mali, daemone corripitur, morbo opprimitur regio et ea sustinet, quae uidemus inpios homines non sustinere et sustinere deo seruientes? sin autem iudicia, inquit, domini uera, iustificata in semet ipsis et nihil apud deum iniustum est, ipsa ratione conpellimur, ut credamus animas fuisse in caelestibus et propter quaedam antiqua peccata damnatas in corporibus humanis et, ut ita loquamur, sepultas nosque in ualle lacrimarum poenas luere peccatorum...*¹⁹⁴ About a decade earlier (404), in a letter of condolence written to Eustochium after the death of Paula, he had reported the arguments of some unnamed heretic who had been pestering Paula. Among them we read: *probare cupiebat rationales creaturas ob quaedam uitia et antiqua peccata in corpora esse delapsas et pro diuersitate ac meritis peccatorum tali uel tali condicione generari, ut uel corporum sanitate gauderent et parentum diuitiis ac nobilitate uel in morbidas carnes et domos inopum uenientes poenas pristinatorum luerent delictorum et praesenti saeculo atque corpore quasi carceri clauderentur.*¹⁹⁵

These are clearly arguments used to support the Origenist theory of the pre-existence of the soul that were in circulation in the early fifth century. At stake was not so much the *de facto* origin of the soul itself, which on the basis of any theory can be ultimately attributed to the divinity, but the need to uphold divine justice within the framework of whatever theory was adopted. The inequalities, into which infants are born, logically require that we conclude (*ipsa ratione compellimur*) to the existence of some personal sin in a pre-existent state before physical birth; otherwise we would call into question the justice of God.¹⁹⁶ There is no

¹⁹⁴ Ep. 130,16, CSEL 56, pp. 196-97. Apart from mention of Popes Anastasius and Innocent, names are studiously avoided.

¹⁹⁵ Ep. 108,23, CSEL 55, pp. 339-40.

¹⁹⁶ Augustine (*De pecc. mer.* I,22,31, CSEL 60, p. 29) dismisses those (Origenists?) who invent *fabulas improbables* in order to defend *iustitiam Dei*.

implication in these arguments, however, that the inequalities evident in the human condition might lead or 'compel' *ratio* to find the causal source of these inequalities in the ancient and original sin of Adam.

While we can neither prove nor presume that Rufinus would have agreed with the logical rigour of this argumentation, Jerome has no hesitation about naming him as a proponent of this Origenist theory on the origin of the soul, and in his curt answer to Marcellinus (who asked him for an explanation) he refers his correspondent to his rebuttal of Rufinus on the question of the soul in his *Contra Rufinum*.¹⁹⁷ In that writing Jerome presents Rufinus as raising the same objection to Jerome's own preferred theory of creationism: *ubi est iustitia Dei, ut de adulterio incestuque nascentibus animas largiatur?*¹⁹⁸ Jerome goes on to remind Rufinus of a work by Didymus written specifically to answer Rufinus's question: *quare moriantur infantes, cum propter peccata corpora acceperint?* If Rufinus shared with his Origenist contemporaries such concern about preserving the justice of God in the face of the reality of the inequalities of life, and posed this as a major hurdle encountered by Jerome's facile affirmation that it is Church teaching (*illud ecclesiasticum*) that: *Cotidie Deus operatur animas et in corpore eas mittit nascentium*, it seems reasonable to deduce that Rufinus would not have accepted readily the idea of *tradux peccati*. Such a solution would run counter to the very notion of justice.¹⁹⁹ The same concern for maintaining divine justice, as we have seen, lay at the foundation of Caelestius' argument against *tradux peccati*.²⁰⁰

A short study by C.P. Bammel entitled 'Rufinus' Translation of Origen's Commentary on Romans and the Pelagian Controversy,'²⁰¹ would appear to categorically contradict the suggestion being made

¹⁹⁷ *Ep.* 126. Addressed to Marcellinus in Africa, the letter must be dated to 411 or very soon after.

¹⁹⁸ *Cont. Ruf.* 3,28 CCSL 79, p. 100. This third book replies to a lost letter from Rufinus, the traces of which are collected in an appendix by C. Lardet in CCSL 79, pp. 252-56.

¹⁹⁹ Jerome was not unaware of the difficulty. He refers thus to the creationist theory: *quam nos [sequimur], simplices et fatui homines, qui non intellegimus quod, si ita sit, iniustus a nobis arguatur Deus.* (3,30, p. 101). But he (*simplex et fatuus!*) does not attempt to resolve the problem. It is to be noted that when Jerome berates the feigned(?) ignorance of Rufinus on all three theories, he implies that Rufinus continued to countenance the possibility of the soul's pre-existence.

²⁰⁰ See at n. 191 above.

²⁰¹ See n. 162 above. The primary and limited concern of the following pages, it needs to be repeated, is not to read Origen, but to read Rufinus' translation of Origen (= Or-Ruf below; references are to the chapter/verse of *Ep.Rom.*).

here concerning the thought of Rufinus. In it she asks the very pertinent question (pp. 132, 138): '... where would Rufinus have stood in relation to the issues debated in the Pelagian controversy?' While allowing it to be probable (p. 138) that Rufinus 'was aware of the points under discussion,' the benign tenor of her attitude to Rufinus is set from the outset (p. 131): 'We may regard Rufinus as fortunate to have escaped the polemics of the following years.' Again, in her concluding remarks (p. 141), she can write that Rufinus 'deliberately... provided a contribution to [the assertion of free will].' On the question of original sin, however, Bammel insists (p. 138) that the translation of the Commentary on Romans 'was clearly opposed to Pelagian views.' We shall return presently to this claim, but it should be noted here that the conclusions of her study (at pp. 139-40) rest in no small part on the assertion that the 'earliest surviving writing to put forward characteristically Pelagian ideas' is the work of the other Rufinus – Rufinus the Syrian's *Liber de Fide*! One is left with the impression that, given the Syrian's existence, and the assumed certainty concerning the dating of the *Liber*, it becomes almost unnecessary to even consider the position of the Aquileian on these questions.

One of the great merit's of Bammel's study is that she draws our attention to the extent to which Augustine himself, in his first reply to the Pelagians, seems to have used the translation by Rufinus. There he would have read, with approval, that Christ, who was born *ex nulla uiri contagione*, had the nature of our body, but was in no way tainted with the pollution of sin *quae ex concupiscentiae motu conceptis traditur*.²⁰² That infants are born in sin is also affirmed at Rom 6,6²⁰³ – a passage to which we shall return below. But the Commentary on Rom 5.12-14 (*per unum hominem...*) is disconcertingly ambivalent,²⁰⁴ and Or-Ruf even offers alternative possible explanations. While keeping in mind that Rufinus may have omitted much, we should, however briefly, take

²⁰² Or-Ruf: *Comm.Rom.* 8,3 (ed. Bammel p. 525). Cf. here her related study on 'Augustine, Origen' (also n. 162 above). In another study (in same collection, no. XII: 'Adam in Origen' – original in R. Williams (ed.) *The Making of Orthodoxy*, Cambridge 1989, pp. 62-93) Bammel reviews the thought of Origen insofar as it can be reconstructed. There (pp. 81-82) she writes: '...it remains an open question whether it is because of its own previous fall or because of the taint of birth in succession from Adam (or rather it is probably for both reasons) that the soul is already polluted on arrival in this life and requires purification.' In the light of this conclusion I am not sure how she then comes to assert ('Rufinus' Translation' p. 138, in text above) that Origen-Rufinus is clearly opposed to *tradux peccati*.

²⁰³ *Comm.Rom.* 6,5-6 (ed. Bammel, p. 440).

²⁰⁴ In 'Adam in Origen' p. 92, n. 88, Bammel remarks that Rufinus abbreviates this section 'particularly heavily.'

note of some of the ideas that he retained.²⁰⁵ When Paul says that 'sin entered' the world, Or-Ruf underlines (p. 374) the use of the verb *intrauit* as signifying 'enter' or the (temporal) 'beginning' of sin being committed. As its consequence, sin brought on *mors*. The death referred to here is the death of the soul,²⁰⁶ as is explained (p. 371: *sine dubio!*) by a quotation from Ezek 18,4: *anima quae peccat ipsa morietur*. Physical death is but a shadow of this death of the soul.²⁰⁷ By contrast with the entry/beginning of sin, Paul writes that death²⁰⁸ *pertransiit* over all humans, i.e., it 'touched' all, but in the case of some its influence was/is temporary. The reason why *omnes homines* are subject to this death is stated definitively (p. 372: *absoluta sententia*) by Paul: *in quo omnes inquit peccauerunt*. No exception is allowed, and Or-Ruf must go to some pains to show how this text can be applied to a list of persons (Abel, Enos, Enoc, Mathusalam, Noe, Abraham) who are otherwise praised in the Bible for their rectitude. With a certain amount of ingenuity, Or-Ruf can argue from the biblical account that their rectitude was a condition subsequent to that of being somehow less than righteous. Even Abel is included because he brought his offering to God *post dies... et post Cain*. Why did he not do so *statim*, and before Cain?²⁰⁹

Or-Ruf does not have the difficulty of solving the problem of how all sinned 'in Adam' because the Pauline text *in quo* is not understood as referring to Adam.²¹⁰ Almost perversely, Or-Ruf even introduces (p. 368) the idea of all humanity being 'in Adam' when Adam

²⁰⁵ *Comm.Rom.* 5,12-14 (ed. Bammel, pp. 358-91). Specific page references are given in the text above. The length of the commentary at this point should serve as a warning in itself that it is very complex, but the very fact that he retained so much is indicative of his concern with the problems involved.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Augustine's expansion (*De pecc. mer.* I,2,2, CSEL 60, p. 3) on the first charge brought against Caelestius: 'That Adam would die *necessitate naturae*.' 'They' interpret *morte moriemini* not as referring to physical death, but *ad mortem animae*. However, reference is not made to Ezek 18.

²⁰⁷ The reality (*mors animae*) implies of necessity that it have a shadow (*mors corporis*), but the commentary at this point (p. 371) does not make it specific that physical death is a punitive consequence of sin. Christ went to the netherworld, we are told in another context (p. 386), to release the *sancti* who were held in *infernum* not as a punishment, but *moriendi condicione*. Logically, this implies that physical death is part of the human condition, irrespective of the presence or absence of personal sin.

²⁰⁸ That *mors* is in the text as the subject of *pertransiit* (absent in most contemporary texts on the Bible) is discussed at length in C.P. Hammond Bammel, *Der Römerbrieftext des Rufin und seine Origenes-Übersetzung*, Freiburg 1985, pp. 333-34.

²⁰⁹ The same words (*post dies*) will be used again immediately after, but from a different perspective (p. 385 – cf. the following comments here on *paterna institutio*).

²¹⁰ Cf. Hammond Bammel, *Römerbrieftext*, pp. 335-36.

was in paradise and sinned, and Adam was subjected to the consequences of his sin. Biblical authority is invoked: we read (Heb 7.9-10) that Levi was *in lumbis patris*, and again Paul declares (1Cor 15.22): *in Adam omnes moriuntur*. But in the context this idea is introduced to explain why Paul has everything begin with Adam, when in fact Adam was not the first to actually commit sin. Adam, here, is the person *ex quo omnes mortales originem ducunt*. His human posterity refers itself back to Adam (not to Eve, who was prior in committing sin) as its *auctor*. When that posterity shares in the sin and punishment of the *auctor*, it is because individually *omnes peccauerunt*. Adam was the first to open the way for the entry of sin into the world (p. 383). His descendents sin(ned) *in similitudine praeuaricationis*. What 'in the likeness' means prompts a number of attempts at an explanation.²¹¹ Of particular note is that which is offered as the easier (p. 384: *simpliciter*) solution. All who are born: *sunt non solum filii peccatorum sed et discipuli*. It is in this sense that even Abel, in the first days/years of his life was less than perfect, because (p. 385): *paternae praeuaricationis institutionibus tenebatur*. The statement is annoying in its ambiguity, if not also its obscurity. By what was Abel 'held' – the *institutio*, or the *praeuaricatio*? Does the *paterna praeuaricatio* of Adam have its effect upon Abel through *institutio* alone, or does it have more profound implications stemming from the very fact that Adam, the instructor, was also a *praeuaricator*? It would seem that birth from parents who committed sin is insufficient in itself to explain the condition of their offspring, without adding the note that children are also disciples of their parents, but does discipleship dispense with the further (and prior?) influence of the paternal sin? Ready answers are not forthcoming, but the fact that Or-Ruf introduces as a necessary condition the personal involvement of being a disciple of one's (sinful) parents, and even includes Abel in this condition, suggest the direction of the thought. Personal responsibility for sin is a fundamental concern when we attempt to explain the human condition.

The above presentation touches only some aspects, and in a very limited portion, of a complex Commentary. In addition to this, it must also be repeated that we are dealing with what is already an abridged version by Rufinus. In overall terms, the role of Adam in human

²¹¹ Included in these attempts there is also consideration given to the fact that in some MSS the reading was that death also reigned over those who did *not* sin (*qui non peccauerunt*). This problem is solved by the idea noted in n. 207 above: these *sancti* died *moriendi condicione*.

'sinfulness' is reduced to his being the father of the human race, and almost coincidentally the first sin is attributed to him in his role as *primogenitor* (rather than to Eve or the serpent). If his posterity all became sinners, it was because all *de facto* committed sin. Death, as a result of Adam's sin, is clearly defined as *mors animae*. At the same time, however, we are *filii peccatorum*, and even the righteous are subject to the physical *moriendi condicio*. The question may be asked: is there something 'un-whole' in the human condition itself that each individual inherits at birth?

Per baptismi sacramentum remissio

We referred above to a text where Or-Ruf, according to Bammel, speaks clearly of 'the pollution of sin, which is transmitted to those conceived by the impulse of concupiscence.'²¹² The context of the discussion, however, warns us against drawing over-hasty conclusions from this text. It belongs in an examination of Rom 8,3-9 (*Nam quod impossibile erat legis...*) in which it is shown that full compliance with the law is impossible *secundum litteram*, but through the advent of Christ this becomes possible to those who live *secundum spiritum*. Central to the development of this argument is Paul's statement that God sent His Son *in similitudine carnis peccati*. Here *similitudo* is explained by reference to Christ's birth from the virgin Mary: Christ has the same human nature as all others, except for the pollution of sin *quae ex concupiscentiae motu conceptis traditur*. This certainly can only imply some notion of a transmission of 'sin' through normal human procreation. However, before we conclude that this was the understanding of Origen and/or Rufinus, we should read further. The text continues with a long exposition in which *lex* in the passage under consideration is understood as *lex Mosei*, and then we read: *Potest sane et secundum aliam expositionem... de lege mentis intellegi*.²¹³ This alternative exposition is very brief, and in it we are not given any detailed explanation of how Christ differs from other humans by being *in similitudine carnis peccati*. At the conclusion the reader is invited to select whichever of the two explanations is found to be the better, without a suggestion

²¹² See at nn. 202, 203 above.

²¹³ Ed. Bammel p. 530. The difference in length between the alternative explanations (seven pages against one in Bammel's text) suggests that the second has been greatly abbreviated by Rufinus. See Hammond Bammel, *Römerbrieftext*, pp. 361-62.

being offered by Or-Ruf as to which is to be preferred. If Rufinus retained the fuller text of the former, this may suggest that he preferred it; but equally it could be argued that he reduced the second exposition – if he reduced it – simply because he found it too complicated! But the fact that the choice of alternate explanations is given by Origen, and retained by Rufinus does not permit us to assume that the one in which a notion of transmitted sin is countenanced is to be preferred as indicating the final thought of either the author or the translator.

The possibility that Origen (and Rufinus) *could* countenance the idea of sin being transmitted by human procreation emerges more clearly elsewhere. In the same Commentary on Romans 6.6 (pp. 437-440) the meaning of *corpus peccati* is discussed. Here again two possibilities are offered. Perhaps *corpus peccati* is to be understood in the same sense as Paul uses the word *corpus* elsewhere (1Cor 12,27): *vos estis corpus Christi*. In this case *corpus* can be taken to refer to the manner of our living, whether as befitting members of the Church or not. Alternatively, *corpus peccati* refers to the physical body that is born in sin. It was for this reason that in the Old Testament offerings were made for new-born infants, a practice that continues in the New Dispensation, as seen when *ecclesia ab apostolis traditionem suscepit etiam paruulis baptismum dare*. We shall return presently in more detail to this argument, but it may be noted that at the conclusion of the discussion the choice is left to the reader: *Quae autem e duabus expositio sensui conueniat apostolico aut si neutra probet qui legit*.

This leeway given to the reader in the conclusion is a frequent feature of Origen's commentaries and is not to be interpreted as Or-Ruf offering any easy way out of a thorny problem. In fact we find reference to the practice of infant baptism elsewhere in Origen's works: *Hom. Lev. VIII,3* (PG 12,496), and *Hom. Luc.14,5* (PG 13,2835 = PL 26,298A). Since the latter is a translation by Jerome there is no reason to doubt that the reference to infant baptism is original to Origen. As translations, the relative dating is *Hom. Luc.* (389/90), *Hom. Lev.* (403/4), *Comm. Rom.* (405/6). In *Hom. Luc.* the fact of infant baptism *in remissionem peccatorum* is merely mentioned. It can (says Origen) raise the question as to what sin(s) this applies to, and in answer we are given the authority of scripture which teaches both that *nemo mundus a sorde [est]...* (Job 14.4LXX), and also *nisi enim quis renatus fuerit...* (Jn 3,3). Infants, accordingly, are baptized because *per baptismi sacramentum nativitatis sordes deponuntur*. Ecclesiastical or apostolic tradition is not introduced here by way of justification of the

practice,²¹⁴ nor does Origen discuss or resolve a difficulty in his own presentation at this point. He refers his audience back to his earlier explanation of *sordes* – but in that explanation, in fact, he had concluded that the *sordes nativitatis* did not refer to *peccatum*! We are thus left without an explanation of what the *sordes* are. The second text, *Hom. Lev.*, is an examination of the law in Lev.12.2 which declares that the woman who conceives and gives birth is unclean for seven days. Origen writes (PG 12,495): *Ego in talibus nihil audeo dicere, sentio tamen occulta in his quaedam mysteria contineri ...* He goes on to collect a series of scriptural texts, which repeat in one form or another, the idea that there is ‘pollution’ involved in human birth. To these he adds (12,496) the fact that infants are baptized *secundum Ecclesiae observantiam* – if there were no need for *remissio* *indulgentia*, he concludes, the grace of baptism would as a result appear to be superfluous. Without, however, attempting to resolve the problem of what the object of *remissio* may be, he then turns his attention to an examination of the spiritual sense.

By comparison with these two homilies, in the Commentary on Romans the subject is considered at greater length and with greater subtlety. The context, as already noted above, is a discussion of the meaning of *corpus peccati*, and Or-Ruf is examining the possibility (as an alternative!) that this may refer to the physical body. He notes the law in Leviticus on making offerings for the newborn *pro peccato*. In the same manner as he did above in *Hom. Lev.* (*nihil audeo dicere*), in his conclusion he leaves the reader to accept or reject his explanation, because he finds himself confronted with something mysterious, but a mystery revealed to the biblical authors. Paul’s statements were made *per ineffabilem Dei sapientiam quae data est ei arcanum nescio quid intuens et reconditum*. When he spoke, David, like Paul, was *eodem spiritu secretorum caelestium gnarus*. Of Jeremiah we are told that he also was *similis mysterii per Dei spiritum conscius*. In the same Spirit the Church baptizes infants in a tradition received from the Apostles.²¹⁵ They (the Apostles) were the ones *quibus mysteriorum secreta commissa sunt diuinorum*. Accordingly they knew *quia essent*

²¹⁴ Jerome’s translation is not strictly literal, but had he found a reference to ancient tradition here it is highly unlikely that he would have omitted it. On his translation cf. Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 143.

²¹⁵ Note that Augustine, presenting the scriptural proof for the need for (infant) baptism in *De pecc. mer.* I,26,39–29,54, subtly changes the order of the canon to make his case more ‘historically’ authoritative and probative: Gospels (= Jesus), Peter, John, Paul, Revelation, Acts, with the Old Testament added in summary.

in omnibus genuinae sordes peccati, that must be cleansed *per aquam et spiritum* (cf. Jn 3,5). But the problem is shrouded in mystery, and a solution is not attempted in Or-Ruf.

One may well ask – and it is the purpose of our quest – what Rufinus thought on this subject when he translated the Commentary in c.405/6. That the problem was shrouded in mystery was surely something with which he would concur. Like Origen he would not proffer any final solution. Nevertheless, on the assumption that here Rufinus is reasonably close to the original, there are some elements in the presentation of the problem in Or-Ruf that may give us an inkling of the direction of Rufinus' thought. When it is allowed that infant baptism implies the presence of *genuinae sordes peccati*, we are forcefully reminded that this by no means opens the way to the doctrine of *metempsychosis*,²¹⁶ because the soul did not sin *in alio corpore*. By the same logic we might infer that the notion of the individual soul sinning *in Adam* should also be excluded, but such a conclusion, while not impossible,²¹⁷ risks reading more into the text of Rufinus than is actually there. Nevertheless, he does insist (against the idea of metempsychosis) that infants are born in sin *pro hoc ipso quod in corpore peccati et corpore mortis atque humilitatis effecta est [anima]*. The term *humilitas* here must attract attention. Wherever possible throughout the discussion Or-Ruf juxtaposes *corpus peccati* with *corpus mortis* and/or *corpus humilitatis*. In fact the discussion is brought to a close with Ps 43,26: *quia humiliasti in pulverem animam nostram*. As an explanation of the meaning of *corpus peccati* this is suspiciously close to being a (veiled) nod in the direction of a preference for the theory of the soul's humiliation and fall! However, in the immediate context here the discussion centres on *corpus peccati* being a reference to our physical body transmitted through human generation. In human history this began with the generation of Cain, which in fact took place *post peccatum*. A new beginning is effected in Christ because he, by a new generation, *non ex semine uiri concept[us] est*.²¹⁸ Here we seem to be confronted by an explicit affirmation of *tradux peccati*, but we cannot draw that conclusion because throughout Or-Ruf retreats

²¹⁶ As an error, this teaching was a problem in the time of Origen rather than one of immediate concern for Rufinus, but if we read it merely as a rejection of the 'transmigration' of souls we may be missing the point. It is also a rejection of the possibility of committing sin *in alio corpore*, and this was very much a problem in Rufinus' time.

²¹⁷ See above on the meaning of *in lumbis patris*, where this is almost reduced to being no more than a figure of speech.

²¹⁸ Bammel in her edition here (p. 438app.) draws attention to Augustine, *De pecc. mer.* II,24,38, CSEL 60, p. 111.

behind the authority of the prophets and the Apostle and their being privy to a knowledge of a mystery into which we cannot penetrate. The only conclusion to be drawn is that Or-Ruf accepts that there is sin in infants, – else infant baptism would be superfluous (*Hom. Lev.*) – but what that sin is, or whence it derives, are shrouded in mystery.

It is unfortunate that these texts concerning infant baptism in Rufinus' translation are rarely read in the historical context in which he translated them. We cannot, perhaps, be sure if he undertook the task of translation already while he was in Aquileia, or whether he had already moved south at the time, but the criticisms he rejects in his prefaces to the work show him to be concerned with his critics in Rome. Given that the Commentary on Romans was greatly reduced, why did he not excise this particularly difficult discussion on the sinfulness of infants? It surely betrays his continuing concern with understanding the condition in which infants are born, shown earlier in his opting for a pre-existence of the soul as the only possible solution. But rather than adopting any alternative solution on the question of the soul, or specifically affirming *tradux peccati* in the condition of infants, he leaves the former open to discussion, and in the latter he admits (with Origen?) to the presence of an *arcanum nescio quid*. While this is not an explicit denial of *tradux peccati*, it is tantamount to being so, and it is certainly not any endorsement of the idea. He also retains in his translation (*Hom. Lev.*) an endorsement of the practice of infant baptism *in remissionem peccatorum*, even if he cannot explain what sin(s) is/are remitted. About the same time in Rome, a certain Caelestius would both exclude *tradux animi*, and equally deny *tradux peccati*. The 'first' Pelagians with whom Augustine will soon be concerned were arguing that the death that entered the world through the sin of Adam was the death of the soul (= Or-Ruf).²¹⁹ They accept that infants must be baptized, 'terrified' (*terrentur*) by the Lord's words: *nisi quis natus...* (= Or-Ruf).²²⁰ For whatever reason, any reference to the authority of Church tradition is absent from Jerome's translation of the Homily on Luke, but in the two texts translated by Rufinus in c.403-6 it is present. Infants (so Or-Ruf) are baptized for the remission of sin in a Church tradition that goes back to the Apostles, although the nature of that sin is a mystery. If (not knowing what sin is remitted) we ask why infants are baptized, the only ultimate justification for it lies in that tradition. Before very long, when

²¹⁹ *De pecc. mer.* I,2,2, CSEL 60, pp. 3-4.

²²⁰ *De pecc. mer.* I,20,26, CSEL 60, p. 26, but they restrict it to referring to entry into the Kingdom.

pressed on the subject, the same solution will be resorted to by Caelestius in his *Libellus fidei*. Infants are baptized for the remission of sins, he declares, *secundum regulam uniuersalis Ecclesia et secundum Euangelii sententiam*.²²¹

If a summary of the all too brief and selective account given above may be attempted, it is as follows. There are certainly texts where Or-Ruf proposes the notion of a transmitted sin, but the Commentary is singularly hesitant in being any way explicit on the 'means' of that transmission. Wherever it seems to be clearly posited that Adam's sin is transmitted to his posterity through human procreation we find that such a concept is presented as one possible explanation that the reader is free to accept, but Or-Ruf does not necessarily endorse. There are two explicit cases where Or-Ruf seems to me to clearly shy away from the notion of *tradux peccati*. The one is the case of Abel – 'Just' and without sin, by all accounts, and still he was subject to the sin of his father; this subjection, however, derives from Abel's learning from the *disciplina* of his sinful parent and being remiss in a delay in making his offering, thus shifting the onus of Abel's condition onto himself. The other is the case of infants who are baptized *in remissionem peccatorum*. Or-Ruf can only bow to the authority of Church tradition on this matter, and insist on the presence of a mystery, the secrets of which were known only to the Apostles. A solution 'to hand' in the notion of infants being born as sinners *per traducem peccati* (*Adae*), is simply not taken into consideration.

Rufinus the Author

In his own original writings, Rufinus offers little to help us understand how he explained the origin of sin and death, or whether or not he accepted the idea of a transmitted sin. His polemical writings are too concerned with the techniques of, and motives for, translation, to allow room for much discussion of ideas, and the subjects being debated do not directly touch on the present problem.²²² Even in his *Apologia ad Anastasium* he limits himself to a simple declaration of his faith, and to listing various opinions on the origin of the

²²¹ Cited by Augustine. *De Grat. Christi*, 2,5,5, CSEL 42, p. 169.

²²² In *Contra Hier.* I,28, CCSL 20, p. 62, he gives a resume of the problem of the 'Fall of the Soul', but it is in order to show what Jerome had said in his commentary on Ephesians. Rufinus does not elaborate on his own views. F. X. Murphy, *Sources of the Moral Teaching of Rufinus of Aquileia*, StPat. VI, TU 81 (1962) pp. 147–54, gives an overview of Rufinus's thought, especially in *De Ben. Patriarcharum*, but does not confront the question raised here.

soul. We might expect some fuller discussion of the question of sin in his *Expositio Symboli*, but we will see presently that he pays little attention to the subject. In his summary of Origenism in the *Expositio*, he makes no mention whatever of the much debated problem of the origin of the soul, and when he rejects Origenism in the same work, he does so in terms that sum up the whole malaise of the crisis in the West; for, according to Rufinus, it is not at all certain that Origenists even exist, though some people fancifully think that they do.²²³ In the opening chapters of his *Apologia contra Hieronymum* he defends his orthodoxy, particularly on the question of the resurrection of the body. There he makes a declaration which we should not pass over unnoticed: *ea quae de Deo dicuntur, ad fidem pertinent; quae uero de creaturis disputantur, ad rationem.*²²⁴ The same distinction will be invoked in his own defense by Caelestius (*discipulus Rufini?*) in Rome: *fides* is involved in matters *a Trinitate unius deitatis usque ad resurrectionem... mortuorum*. Other matters are *praeter fidem quaestiones*.²²⁵

Rufinus, in *Exp.Symb.*, is at best reticent and noncommittal in any statements he makes about the sin of Adam and its consequences. By the power of the resurrection, we are told, the fall of Adam is repaired and (the human body) is brought on high.²²⁶ Does he mean by this that Adam lost a prior physical immortality, or lost access to a blessed eternal life? We would need to delve at length into Rufinus' thought before we can pin down *protoplasti lapsum* to any specific meaning. While he does state, in Pauline terms,²²⁷ that death entered

²²³ *Exp.Symb.* 37, CCSL 20, p. 173: *si qui illi sunt...* The *Expositio* dates from c.404, when Rufinus had already returned to his work of translating Origen. His main source was the Catechetical Homilies of Cyril of Jerusalem. The points of contact are noted by both Kelly and Simonetti in their commentaries: J.N.D. Kelly, *Rufinus: A Commentary on the Apostles' Creed*, London 1955; M. Simonetti, *Rufino: Spiegazione del Credo*, Rome 1978. (Simonetti's translation and notes, with the CCSL text, are also in *Rufino di Concordia: Scritti Vari*, Rome 2000, pp. 98-173.)

²²⁴ *Contra Hier.* I,15, CCSL 20, p. 48.

²²⁵ Caelestius in his *Libellus* to Zosimus, referred to by Augustine, *De pecc. orig.* 23,26, CSEL 42, p. 185. He had already resorted to the distinction in Carthage 411 (*ibid.* 3,4, p. 169): *quaestionis res [est] ista, non haeresis*.

²²⁶ *Exp.Symb.* 27, CCSL 20, p. 162: *in ea protoplasti lapsum resurrectionis virtute reparatum (...) in altissimis [carnem] conlocavit*. Kelly's expansive translation of this (p. 63) is indicative of how condensed the thought is: '(human flesh) which had been brought to death by the first man's sin, and restored it by the power of His resurrection.' Simonetti also translates *lapsum* with the Italian 'peccato' (*Spiegazione*, p. 83).

²²⁷ *Exp.Symb.* 23 (p. 159): *Solus est enim qui peccatum non fecit et abstulit peccatum mundi. Si enim potuit per unum hominem mors introire, quanto magis per unum hominem, qui et Deus erat, potuit uita restitui?*

through one man, and accordingly it was fitting that (new) life should be given through one man, it is left ambiguous what he means here by death – that of the body, or spiritual death? – since the new life that is given is eternal life. If he means spiritual death, then physical death as such should be considered to be natural to our human condition. One is led to believe that Rufinus inclined toward this latter view when he explains that we should accept the reality of death willingly, following the example given to us by Christ.²²⁸ What had become ‘unnatural’ about death of the body is the fact that we live in fear of it. Again, in his discussion of the change brought about by the final resurrection of the dead, he argues that there is no reason why God, who changed soil into a living physical body (*corpus animale*), cannot also change this present body into a spiritual body (*corpus spiritale*).²²⁹ He then adds, with reference to that body formed from dust: *et haec est natura corporis nostri*, which suggests that he saw no real difference between the body of Adam as originally created by God and the human body as it now exists, both requiring further transformation into a spiritual body.

Only fleeting reference is made to the sin of Adam. The whole world, Rufinus writes with reference to the account in Genesis,²³⁰ was punished because of that sin, but he does not expand on the thought. Before, however, we understand this as being a clear reference to a punishment meted out on humanity, we should take note that the ‘world’ to which he refers is the physical environment (*terra*) of Adam. Even when he speaks of Eve as *fons peccati et mortis* – in antithesis to the blood and water flowing from the side of Christ, which are *fons redemptionis et vitae* – we should not conclude that the sin of which he speaks is one in which the human race as a whole is a guilty partaker.²³¹ Rather, he seems to intend that Eve’s sin was but the starting point in the history of human sinning.²³² This becomes clearer when we turn to Rufinus’ understanding of redemption. Although the effects of Christ’s death have profound consequences for the human race, in fact these consequences are presented as a secondary result of the

²²⁸ *Exp.Symb.* 13 (p. 150): *Nos vero, hoc est humanum genus, [Christus] edocet primo omnium usque ad mortem resistere aduersum peccatum et libenter interitum pro pietate suscipere.*

²²⁹ *Exp.Symb.* 45 (p. 181).

²³⁰ *Exp.Symb.* 20 (p. 157): *oportebat eum [scil. Christum]... etiam terrae male dicta purgare, quae peccante protoplasto, sententiam praeuaricationis acceperat...*

²³¹ *Exp.Symb.* 21 (p. 158).

²³² We have met the same notion of ‘starting point’ above in the Commentary on Romans, but with reference to the entry (*intrauit*) of sin into the world through Adam.

Incarnation. By the Incarnation, God concealed himself in man in order to deceive the devil and so rob him of his power.²³³ The devil held humankind in his grip because through his *teaching* humans had learned disobedience to God and obedience to himself.²³⁴ At this point Rufinus betrays his real understanding of mankind's sin, when he goes on to say: *et hinc aduersum nos peccatorum chirographa scripta sunt, quia, ut propheta dicit, peccatis nostris uenumdati sumus (Is 50.1). Pretium namque animae suae unusquisque consequitur, cum concupiscentiae satisfecerit.*²³⁵ It was by such personal acquiescence to the devil that each person (*unusquisque*) was held in the devil's sway until Christ came to deprive the devil of his dominion. Christ's death, then, was directed primarily against the devil and his tyranny, from which, once broken, mankind is now freed. Furthermore, Rufinus related this to the individual's sins, not to the deletion of a primordial sin. This is made all the clearer when he says that the direct meaning of Christ's death for the individual lies in the example²³⁶ it gives us: we are taught to resist sin up to death, to accept death willingly, and to re-learn obedience to God from the example of Christ.²³⁷

Later in the same work Rufinus addresses a pagan criticism of the notion of *remissio peccatorum*. It is objected that a crime once committed cannot be undone, and that the criminal remains always a criminal and guilty. Rufinus retorts that just as we would not object if a king were to show *liberalitas*, equally we should not question divine generosity.²³⁸ He can also, however, reject the criticism by turning *ad*

²³³ *Exp.Symb.* 14 (p. 152). Cf. *Ben. Patr.* I,6, CCSL 20, p. 194: *mors Christi oppressio et triumphus daemonum fuit.*

²³⁴ *Exp.Symb.* 13 (p. 150). Note through here his insistence on teaching. Abel, as we have seen in *Comm.Rom.* was both a son and a disciple of Adam.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ Cf. *Ben.Pat.* I,8 (p. 196): *Dei Verbum... populum suum coniungit et sociat ei conuersationi, quam ipse exegit in carne, ut imitatione ipsius... efficiatur cum illo et filius Dei coheres Christi.*

²³⁷ *Exp.Symb.* 13 (p. 150). By drawing attention to Rufinus' insistence on our personal response to Christ, I do not imply that he denied any objective value in the Redemption. Christ died not only to defeat our external enemy, nor merely to give us an example, but also: *pro nobis, id est pro peccatis nostris, corruptioni traditum* (*Exp.Symb.* 17, p. 154). It is the direction of his thought, in which Rufinus continually places emphasis on personal involvement in sin and salvation from sin, that is the focus of my attention here.

²³⁸ *Exp.Symb.* 38 (p. 174). Both Kelly (*Rufinus*, p. 148) and Simonetti (*Spiegazione*, p. 105) note Rufinus' underlining of the role of the will, against gnostic and pagan determinism. We should not forget the corollary to this: an emphasis on the role of the will as being also an essential component in all sin would raise a serious question against the idea of sin being transmitted.

ipsius naturae testimonium. Crime, he argues, lies not in the nature of the act committed but in the will that perpetrated the crime, and this *uoluntas* can subsequently be changed for the better. He seems to admit here some concept of an 'Original Sin' that deformed the human will and of a redemption that reformed it when he says: *sicut mala uoluntas, auctore malo daemone, peccato me et morti fecit obnoxium: ita in bonum uoluntas mutata, auctore bono Deo, innocentiae me reddit et uitae*.²³⁹ The antithesis presented here between devil/sin/death and God/innocence/life suggests that he is thinking of the overall Fall of mankind into sinfulness and death, *auctore daemone*, and its subsequent restoration to innocence and life, *auctore Deo*. Nevertheless, he presents this in very individual and personal terms (*me fecit – me reddit*); and, as we have seen already, the devil is *auctor* because mankind acquiesced to his teaching. In the context of an argument that sin lies in the will rather than in the subsequent act, while Rufinus admits a role for the promptings we receive from either side when we make a decision for good or evil, the individual *uoluntas* is the immediate cause of individual actions. To ask for greater clarity here on the origin of *mala uoluntas*, or on how God acts so that the *uoluntas* is *in bonum mutata* is to introduce into the context a problem with which Rufinus is not immediately concerned.

Rufinus magister

It would be wrong to think that the not-impartial attention given above to the writings and translations of Rufinus of Aquileia was intended as a form of witch-hunt from which it would clearly emerge that he was a Pelagian – even the 'Father' of Pelagianism. It was undertaken because of a number of difficulties that beset the current status of studies of early Pelagianism. History tells us that there was a person named Rufinus whose influence was of fundamental import at the beginnings of Pelagianism. Since the seventeenth century this Rufinus has been identified as Rufinus the Syrian, a person whose existence, I have argued, depends on a trivial scribal error. Because of the Syrian's presumed existence, however, the attention of scholars has been deflected away from an examination of the writings of the Rufinus on whose authority the early Pelagians made their case. But when I say that he was their authority, some clarifications need to be made. It is hardly necessary to offer proof that Rufinus of Aquileia

²³⁹ *Exp.Symb.* 38 (p. 174); cf. *Apol. Anast.* 5, CCSL 20, p. 26.

was a personality to be reckoned with in Roman Christian circles at the beginning of the fifth century. This was not merely due to the fact that he was good at Greek! Certainly, his proficiency in that language resulted in his Latin contemporaries gaining access to a library of theology that would perhaps never have been opened to them. There were, indeed, others engaged in translating, but none so prolific as Rufinus;²⁴⁰ and not only his contemporaries, but the whole of Western theology later would be indebted to him.²⁴¹ The *Opera Omnia Rufini* are not to be confined to one slim volume, but should be a multi-volume collection that includes his translations.²⁴² He was overshadowed in subsequent history by appreciation of the stature of Jerome (that could not countenance anything of value in a critical voice),²⁴³ by a mistaken interpretation of a supposed condemnation by Pope Anastasius, by the apocryphal papal condemnation attributed to Pope Gelasius, by his own reluctance to 'promote' himself,²⁴⁴ and not least by his perceived association with both Origenism and Pelagianism. Rufinus the translator apart, Rufinus himself was also a man with not a little prestige. He was a pioneer among Western ascetics, and introduced the West to a concept and form of asceticism that 'made sense' of the Gospel command to be perfect – it was reasonable and possible. He was admired by, and moved about in the highest levels of aristocratic Roman Christians. He was also – a factor not to be omitted – a priest! The Pelagians could look for 'authoritative' direction to a person such as this.

²⁴⁰ By comparison Jerome's translations (omitting the Vulgate) are few, but to say this is to overlook the fact that in his commentaries Jerome was to a great extent transmitting the commentaries of others on whom he (openly or tacitly) depended.

²⁴¹ The vast review by H. de Lubac, *Exégèse Médiévale: Les quatre sens de l'Écriture*, Paris (1959), leaves its reader amazed by the extent of Origen's influence. Of necessity, de Lubac frequently refers to Rufinus (as translator), but the medieval authors normally bypass mention of Rufinus. From a preliminary survey of the manuscript tradition of the translations I get the same impression – the name of the translator is more often omitted than retained by the scribes.

²⁴² B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, Notre Dame (Indiana) 1964 (but the preface [third edition] is dated 1982!), can equate (p. 14) the history of Origenist influence with the history of western exegesis. She mentions Rufinus once (p. 13) in passing, as the translator of Origen, and once more (p. 16) with reference to his name being given to the only surviving manuscript of Julian's Commentary on the Minor Prophets.

²⁴³ According to de Lubac (I, p. 252) the few ('quelques-unes') medieval writers who express criticism of the person of Origen himself (and with him Rufinus is sometimes mentioned), do so in the context of praising Jerome.

²⁴⁴ Many of his translations are prefaced by a few pithy lines of dedication that are hardly more than a show of deference to protocol. Some translations lack prefaces, perhaps because they were simply handed over directly to his friends for whom they were intended.

When confronted by Paulinus of Milan at Carthage, Caelestius offered as his authority the name of Rufinus the holy priest, and on being pressed for more names he retorted: *Non tibi sufficit unus sacerdos?*²⁴⁵

The authority of Rufinus also lay in another area, and this was precisely in his role as translator. He translated the Greek writings of people who enjoyed authority for various reasons: 'Pope Clement,' 'Pope' Xystus, Eusebius, Basil, Gregory of Nazianz, Evagrius, – even, and especially, Origen.²⁴⁶ By making the writings of such lights from the East available in Latin, and under their own names, Rufinus added their authority to his own. Perhaps one should also say the inverse: he added his own authority to theirs! Rufinus' translations were in effect a teacher's reading-list for his disciples. Jerome's worried complaints about the translations done by Rufinus and their (evil!) influence are not to be brushed aside as idle rhetoric. Whether or not we agree with Jerome, he is eloquent witness to the influence of Rufinus.

One can readily agree with the sentiment implied in Bammel's words (noted above) when she wrote that Rufinus was spared the polemics of the following years. There is a sense, however, in which we can also regret that he did not live to see those polemics, and perhaps either set the record straight on the question of his own thought, or temper the more ardent of his admiring readers where they pushed beyond limits ideas found in his translations. The purpose of the foray into his writings made in the preceding pages above has not been to see how much of a 'Pelagian' he was, but rather to see how a Pelagian could read his works, and find there so much that would fit clearly into a Pelagian 'system' of thought. This is not to suggest that Rufinus would have agreed with the conclusions the Pelagians reached, much less to imply that he was a Pelagian *ante litteram* or even the 'proto'-Pelagian. Such would be tantamount to expecting answers from him to questions that had not been asked. The translations done by Rufinus were judged against earlier established orthodoxy, on which point he was himself very ready to 'correct' the text of Origen; or they were judged against the standard of a consensus on some subjects that was beginning to emerge during the debate over Origen, where Rufinus maintained a prudent agnosticism. Jerome might dismiss this as

²⁴⁵ *De pecc. orig.* 3,3, CSEL 42, p. 168. Cf. Augustine's lament in *Gest. Pel.* 35,61, CSEL 42, p. 116: (the new heresy has been introduced) *non ab episcopis seu presbyteris uel quibusque clericis, sed a quibusdam ueluti monachis* ... This should effectively exclude Rufinus, but as we have seen earlier, Augustine draws a clear line between what the Pelagians claim to have learned from others, and what they promote.

²⁴⁶ The absence of John Chrysostom from the list may be due to simple lack of time; or (more likely?) because other's were already engaged on the task.

culpable *ignorantia* but few other contemporaries would share that view. We should allow him the benefit of the same prudence. The way in which some readers of Rufinus' translations, namely the Pelagians, misused individual texts from the Bible was countered by Jerome: *totum legant!*²⁴⁷ Augustine in his refutation of the so-called *Definitiones* of Caelestius expressed his dismay at the way in which the latter's tactic resulted in no more than making the Bible contradict itself.²⁴⁸ Rufinus had translated thus from Origen: *Sed qui fideliter et integre sacrorum uoluminum colligit sensum, debet ostendere, quomodo ea, quae uidentur esse contraria, non sunt uere contraria.*²⁴⁹ Had he lived, this might have been his rebuke to some of his readers.

Liber de Fide (Rufini?)

The present study cannot be brought to a close without considering, however summarily, the problem raised by a writing that is central to any account of Rufinus the Syrian and the beginnings of Pelagianism, namely, the *Liber de Fide*.²⁵⁰ Its centrality rests on a number of factors already mentioned, but which I repeat here. It is attributed in the only surviving manuscript to *Rufin[us] presbyter (Provinciae Palaestinae)*,²⁵¹ who has been identified as the Rufinus to whom Caelestius referred to at Carthage. It is considered to be the *liber unius eorum* which Augustine refuted in his first anti-Pelagian work, *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*, written in 411.²⁵² It offers a strongly worded refutation of Origen and his followers; defends the creationist theory of the soul's origin; and boldly attacks those *imperiti* who would uphold the notion of a sin being transmitted from Adam. If the presumed identity

²⁴⁷ Cf. Jerome, *Dial. adu. Pel.* I,5, CCSL 80, p. 9: *Lege totum Psalterium, omnes sanctorum uoces*

²⁴⁸ *De perf. iust.* 12,29, CSEL 42, p. 28: *diuina eloquia in lite dimisit ...*

²⁴⁹ *Comm.Rom.* 3,21-24 (ed. Bammel, p. 229).

²⁵⁰ Most of the essential references have been given above. In this 'introductory postscript' documentation on a subject that requires a much more thorough examination is minimal.

²⁵¹ I have raised my suspicions earlier about the translation of the colophon. It is worth insisting that while Sirmond retained the text of the colophon (as above, he did not attribute it to Rufinus of Aquileia. Garnier gave it the title: *Libellus fidei a Rufino Palaestinae provinciae presbytero scriptus*. In Vallarsi/Migne it is among the *pseudo-Rufiniana*. Miller in the title omitted *provinciae Palaestinae*, but clearly (p. 7) understood the reference as identifying Rufinus. In many on-line library catalogues the *Liber* and/or Sirmond's edition is listed under the Aquileian.

²⁵² Cf. R. Gryson, *Répertoire générale*, Freiburg 2007, vol.II, p. 766 (s.v. PS-RUF fi).

of the author, and its presence in Augustine's writing, are both correct then clearly (irrespective of Mercator's 'information') there must be a Rufinus other than the Aquileian at the source of the Pelagian debate. As I have maintained elsewhere,²⁵³ the argument that Augustine knew the *Liber de Fide*, or even extracts from it, cannot be defended. The one specific text where contact can be established is a non-polemical paraphrase of a Pauline statement,²⁵⁴ whereas Augustine (or his source) does not quote in *De pecc. mer.* any specific 'Pelagian' statement directly from the *Liber de Fide*. Points of close similarity in ideas expressed, both in the *Liber* and in statements refuted by Augustine, are not wanting, but scholars have had to resign themselves to simply noting them as similarities, whereas the differences posit the conclusion that the source used by Augustine must lie elsewhere. It is known that a book (or books) by Caelestius was/were in circulation, and that Augustine read at least one writing by Caelestius. It is here that we must search for the source of contacts, but the connection between the *Liber de Fide* and Caelestius' book(s) remains unclear, mainly because of a dearth of writings that can be clearly attributed to Caelestius.

Garnier (PL 48,264,450) proposed that the *Liber* was written while 'Rufinus' was in the cloister in Bethlehem, and that in its present form it was translated by Julian in the time of Zosimus. Miller (pp. 9-10), closely following Altaner, gives a date sometime between 413 and 428,²⁵⁵ the *terminus post quem* being Augustine's *De pecc. mer.* (c.412) or his *Sermo* 294 (413).²⁵⁶ Given the fact that the *Liber de Fide* gives no hint that Pelagianism had already been condemned, it might be concluded that it must pre-date 411. Against this, however, lies the fact that still into 418 the Pelagians maintained that there had been no condemnation. Caelestius would make his case with Zosimus (and Zosimus was inclined to agree) that the supposed condemnation in 411 had no legal standing. The Synod of Diospolis had effectively – at least in the understanding of the Pelagians – over-ruled the

²⁵³ See 'A Lost Year,' pp. 416-20.

²⁵⁴ *Liber de Fide* c.40 = *De pecc. mer.* I,18,23. In the *Liber* the quotation is followed immediately by the example of Cornelius (Acts 10,44-48), which would surely have been examined by Augustine had he known it at this time. If my suggestion in the following on the date of the *Liber* has any validity, I would advance the possibility that in this very anti-Augustinian section of the *Liber*, the author is using *De pecc. mer.* and quoting Augustine against Augustine, not vice-versa.

²⁵⁵ Both Garnier and Miller shrug off the difficulty of locating a 'hidden-heretic' in Jerome's monastery in Bethlehem. Secrecy is not as easy in a cloister as they would seem to imply!

²⁵⁶ In 'A Lost Year,' I argue that both of these should be dated to 411.

Africans and acquitted Pelagius (and the Pelagians) of heresy. If there is any indication for a date for the *Liber de Fide* it lies possibly (see further below) in the contacts pointed out already by Garnier between the *Liber* and the *Libellus fidei* (PL 48,509-26) that is thought to belong to the time when the debate returned to Rome in 417-418 after the 'Pelagian victory' at Diospolis. Because of these contacts, and because of the possibility that Julian of Aeclanum may have been the author of the *Libellus fidei*, Garnier went further and argued that the *Liber* in its present form was translated by Julian at this time.

Such a dating might also account for the presence of *Provincia Palestina* in the colophon of the MS. In the Pelagian debate, reference to the Province of Palestine played a very significant part in Pelagian propaganda after the Synod of Diospolis, not merely because it exonerated Pelagius, but also because this was a decision taken by a Synod of bishops of the Province of Palestine. Following their 'victory' at the Synod of Diospolis, the Pelagians seem to have initiated a propaganda campaign touting the decision, and broadcasting a version of the Acts of the Synod.²⁵⁷ Even Pope Innocent received a copy *a nescio quibus laicis*.²⁵⁸ The importance of Diospolis for both parties in the dispute lay in the fact that it was a *provincial* synod of bishops, thereby having an authority far beyond the decision of any individual bishop or of any *ad hoc* gathering of bishops such as the 'trial' of Caelestius (411) seems to have been. In his examination of the *Gesta* of that synod, Augustine went to great lengths to distinguish between what was, and what was not, explicitly accepted at Diospolis, because this was a decision taken *ab episcopis quattuordecim prouinciae Palaestinae*.²⁵⁹ It is in this historical context (417/18) that we might find a place for a pseudonymous 'translation' making its appearance. As

²⁵⁷ [Aug.] *Ep.* 177,2, CSEL 44, p. 670: *in Oriente, ubi degit [Pelagius], gesta ecclesiastica facta esse iactantur, quibus putatur esse purgatus*. Augustine wrote (in vain) to John of Jerusalem requesting a copy of the authentic *Acta* (*Ep.* 179). He finally obtained some version, not from John but from Cyril of Alexandria (cf. *Ep.* 4* [Div-jak]).

²⁵⁸ [Inter Aug.] *Ep.* 183,3, CSEL 44, p. 727. There is strong evidence which suggests that the only Latin *Acta* in circulation were of Pelagian provenance. See my art. 'The Acts of the Synod of Diospolis,' in *Academia* (Nanzan), 67 (1968), pp. 185-228.

²⁵⁹ *De Gestis* 1,1, CSEL 42, p. 51. In their letters to Pope Innocent ([Aug.] *Epp.* 175-177) the Africans confine themselves to a general reference: '*in Oriente*.' Apart from a very few biblical quotations containing the name *Palaestina*, Augustine only uses the name to identify the *ecclesiasticum/episcopale iudicium* that took place *in Oriente* (at Diospolis)! The list of writings alone is indicative: *De gestis*; *Epp.* 186, 194; *De pecc. orig.*; *Cont. Iul.*; *De grat. lib. arb.*; *De praed. sanct.*; *De haer.*; *Cont. Iul. op. imp.* Note in *De pecc. orig.* 8,9 and 14,15: ... *de gestis quibus [Pelagius] gloriatur*.

I maintained earlier above, the colophon of the MS of the *Liber* makes little sense if we read its reference to *Provincia Palestina* as an identification of Rufinus, whereas it is also possible to read it as 'the faith of the Province of Palestine' (*Provinciae Palaestinae Liber de Fide*). In the later post-Diospolis phase of the debate this would make more sense.

As regards the attribution of the *Liber de Fide* to 'Rufinus' the 'Syrian' I can only rest my case. At the time the text was copied, and again when it was rediscovered by Sirmond, the name 'Rufinus' was regarded as a spurious reference to Rufinus of Aquileia, and the evidence for the existence of a Syrian of that name does not stand up to examination. The misleading colophon, however, may turn to some advantage: *Explicit Rufini presbyteri provinciae Palaestinae Liber de Fide, translatus de Graeco in Latinum sermonem*. This claim that the *Liber* is a translation by a certain priest Rufinus would certainly lend credence to the idea that it be attributed (as a translation) to Rufinus of Aquileia, ranking it with the many other translations, including many 'concerning the faith,' for which he was well known. It would also give the added aura to the *Liber* of being Greek in origin, and not only Greek, but from the Province of Palestine: *Provinciae Palaestinae Liber de Fide*. With such a title and under the 'authority' of a translator of the caliber of Rufinus (of Aquileia), an approximate date for the falsification is ready to hand.

The *Liber de Fide* is an enigmatic piece of writing, and I can do no more than draw attention here to a few of the enigmas, reserving to a different forum a more thorough discussion of the question.²⁶⁰ Despite Miller's praise for the author and his work,²⁶¹ it is clearly a composite work, the sources and layers of which have yet to be unraveled. It is my *personal* impression that the writing as we know it is a draft that was never brought to completion, nor intended for publication in its present form.²⁶² In studies of Pelagianism we are blithely referred to 'the *Liber de Fide* of Rufinus the Syrian' as if it were a

²⁶⁰ At the time of writing I am aware that a long overdue account of Rufinus the Syrian (and the *Liber*?) by the late Prof. Y.-M. Duval is 'about' to be published.

²⁶¹ Miller, p. 15: 'except for a few obscure places [the *Liber*] presents a clear, logical exposition...' The language is 'faithful to the best late literary tradition.' Rufinus' rhetoric 'evidences his familiarity with the best rhetorical tradition of his age.' While Garnier passed no judgement on the author's prose, he thought the 'appendix' (cc.52-61) could (= should?) be discarded! PL48,450D: *Fidem edimus et nos, immo et appendicem, etsi potuisset omitti*.

²⁶² Already in c.2 we are confronted with an intrusive (and inadequate) non-biblical attempt to 'define' *simplex et incompositus*, an attempt that seems to have been abandoned.

straight-forward 'Book on the Faith' written by some individual (Rufinus). The references, however, are usually to a limited portion of the work, either to its anti-Origenism (cc.16-28) or to its 'anti-Augustinian' Pelagianism (esp. cc.39-41, 48²⁶³), without account being taken of how or why these sections even belong in the book. Where its anti-Arian arguments belong in *that* debate is far from being clarified.²⁶⁴ When Origenism is refuted, it is in terms that generally agree with anti-Origenist arguments from the turn of the fifth century, yet in his (few) quotations from Origen, 'Rufinus' – contemporary though he be to the dispute at that time – seems to be totally independent of other sources known to us.²⁶⁵

I have drawn attention in my study of the beginning of the Pelagian dispute²⁶⁶ to the fact that 'Rufinus' uses Heb 12,9 (*pater spirituum*) to prove the creationist origin of the soul, in an interpretation that elsewhere is only found in Cassian, a contact that is difficult to explain. This short compact argument for creationism as it is presented by 'Rufinus' in c.28 seems to have escaped attention in studies of the development of the theory of creationism.²⁶⁷ In his dossier of proof-texts 'Rufinus' includes Job 10,8 and takes the occasion to inform us that the same words are found in Ps 118,73. We might be tempted to eliminate this gratuitous comment as a gloss, but it repeats *ad litteram* (in translation) a comment on the same verse of Job found in Theodoret.²⁶⁸ Equally enigmatic is the exegesis of Matt.1.25 (*et non*

²⁶³ On any reading the Pelagian conclusion to c.48 (*Unde infantes...*), rejecting the idea that infants are baptized for the remission of sin, is secondary to the original context at this point. In a writing laden with biblical texts, as an introduction of biblical proof *secundum beatum Paulum* is only found here and in (the equally Pelagian!) c.40 (where uniquely in the *Liber*, Paul is referred to but not in fact cited). The same(?) 'Rufinus' at c.15 can forcefully remind the Arians and Eunomians of their belief: *per baptismam remissionem (vel indulgentiam) peccatorum*. He sees no need at that point to except infants.

²⁶⁴ The commentary in Miller is very wanting on the questions asked here.

²⁶⁵ See the notes to *De Principiis* I,7,2; 75; II,9,1 in H. Crouzel/M. Simonetti, *Origène: Traité des Principes*, SC 253, Paris 1978, pp. 107, 111, 212.

²⁶⁶ 'A Lost Year,' p. 420.

²⁶⁷ Cf. R. Hennings, 'Disputatio de origine animae (CPL 623,37) – or the victory of creatianism (*sic!*) in the fifth century,' *Stud.Pat.* 29 (1997), pp. 260-68; G. Sfameni Gasparro, *Origene e la tradizione origeniana in Occidente*, Rome 1998, pp. 107-22 (on the same *Disputatio/Dialogus*); E. Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, (n. 73 above), pp. 204-205 (surprisingly unnoticed in a discussion of 'Rufinus the Syrian'), and p. 243 (on the *Disputatio*). Clark's evident wonder (p. 205) at what 'Rufinus' does not criticize in Origen would be readily dissipated had she noted that the *Liber* is composite. The 'not anti-Origenist' discussion of the resurrection (in c.51) belongs to the 'area' of the 'Budapest' Anonymous (see below).

²⁶⁸ *Quaest. Gen. XIX* (from Theodore?) PG 80,103.

cognovit eam donec peperit filium suum) given by 'Rufinus' at c.43: *id est, non noverat certius quod ipsa erat virgo quae Christum paritura praedicta est...* On the assumption that the *Liber* belongs to the early fifth century (in Latin circles?) we should expect 'Rufinus' to reflect the understanding of this text that had been 'defined' by Jerome in the debate with Helvidius. In the same c.43, in fact, the following is affirmed of Mary: *virgo concepit – virgo permanens peperit – (permansit) virgo post partum*. The explanation, however, of *non cognovit eam* as being a reference to Joseph's 'not understanding' that Mary was the virgin predicted by the prophet is not part of main-stream exegesis of the period. Epiphanius offers a version that is close to this,²⁶⁹ but the only place where I have found this verse explained as it is by 'Rufinus' is very much off the beaten track in a work of equally obscure origin, the anonymous *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum*.²⁷⁰

There is further contemporary literature that has been left unquarried. If somebody wishes to attempt to 'locate' the *Liber de Fide*, he or she would be advised to look closely at both the Anonymous Commentary on Paul found in a Budapest manuscript, and the Pseudo-Jerome interpolations in the Expositions by Pelagius.²⁷¹ Contacts between the *Liber* and both these anonymous writings are more than casual. Frede noted this, but he was over-hasty in his rejection of 'Rufinus' as the possible author of the Anonymous Commentary.²⁷² In part this may have been the result of his understanding of the *Liber* as being the work of one author, but his conclusion was also based too readily on a limited comparison of the exegesis of some specific biblical texts found in both writings. There are further elements of contact between the works that make a re-reading of the evidence necessary. To offer but one example: 'Rufinus' (*Liber de Fide* cc.5-12, 61) makes almost indiscriminate use of the psychological analogy to

²⁶⁹ Epiphanius, *Panarion*, Haer.LXXVIII, PG 42,728B, 731D. His use of the text, however, differs greatly from that in the *Liber*.

²⁷⁰ *Opus Imperf. in Matt. Hom.I*, PG 56,635. This explanation is included (on the authority of John Chrysostom!) in the *Catena Aurea* (*ad loc.*) by Thomas Aquinas. F.W. Schlatter, 'The Author of the *Opus Imperfectum in Matthaum*' in *Vig.Christ.* 42(1988), pp. 364-75 argues for the Pelagian Annianus of Celada as the author. The possible Pelagian connection of this writing is not my concern here, but the reference is given to underline the obscurities that beset a study of the *Liber de Fide*.

²⁷¹ H.J. Frede, *Ein neuer Paulustext und Kommentar*, Freiburg 1973 (I: *Untersuchungen*); 1974 (II: *Die Texte*). Vol.II contains a new edition of Pseudo-Jerome, originally published by A. Souter as vol.III (Cambridge 1931) of his edition of the Expositions by Pelagius.

²⁷² Cf. Frede, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 252-55. His exclusion of 'Rufinus' may have contributed to a failure to explore the relationships.

'explain' the Trinity, using the terms *mens/sensus-sermo/verbum-sapientia*.²⁷³ At Rom19b (on Rom 1.20) the Anonymous offers the gloss: *Simul et mens trinitatis demonstrat imaginem in quo generat insitum sibi verbum et inseparabilem habet sibi ex nato verbo sapientiam*.²⁷⁴ As a possible source Theophilus (of Antioch!) or Irenaeus may be suggested (but they retain 'Theos' as the first member), but who else among Latin authors uses this particular triad?²⁷⁵ A more immediate question, however, comes to mind: Is it mere chance that such an uncommon analogy should appear in these two coeval anonymous Latin writings? Contacts between the two in language, exegesis, and thought, can be multiplied far beyond those noted by Frede, and they can be extended to include contacts with Pseudo-Jerome. But the very mention of this last author should act as a warning that the waters on which the *Liber de Fide* floats are very murky and they will be navigated at risk!

'Much ado about nothing!'

This sub-heading could well describe the content of this study! It is all concerned with a very slight scribal error in one manuscript. However, that error – if it is an error! – has created a history of Pelagianism that has wandered unwittingly off course for over three centuries. That history somehow lived with the uncomfortable conclusion that the source of Pelagianism should be found in such an unlikely place as the monastery of Jerome in Bethlehem. It has not, however, been a wandering in vain, particularly in the past half-century when more attention was given to the connections between Pelagian thought and the theological anthropology of the 'school' of Antioch. When the 'Budapest Anonymous' came to light, he was seen as new proof of the influence of the theology of Antioch on the early Pelagians. This further confirmed the pivotal role played by Mercator's mysterious 'Syrian' – if only we could identify him!

²⁷³ The author (translating, or depending on a Greek source?) vacillates in his use of the terms *mens/sensus* and *sermo/verbum*.

²⁷⁴ Frede, *Die Texte*, p. 25. See also Eph.13 (on Eph.4.23) p. 242. We are not referred to 'Rufinus' at either point by Frede.

²⁷⁵ I confess that I have not found any other. In the exhaustive(?) list of triadic variants given by E. Schadel, *Bibliotheca Trinitariorum*, Berlin (1986), pp. 180-96, this triad is not to be found. In Greek sources the discussion of 'eikōn' in Theodoret (*Quaest. Gen.* XX, PG 80,108), using 'nous', 'logos' and 'pneuma', is closer to 'Rufinus' than that found in Theophilus or Irenaeus. Perhaps even closer is the analogy of 'soul-rationality(sapientia?)-word' outlined by Theodore in *Hom.Cat.* III,14 (ed. Ton-neau/Devreese, p. 73).

In the meantime, the possible role of another 'holy priest Rufinus' has been totally upstaged. This is Rufinus of Aquileia, and it has been the main concern of this study to show that when the Pelagians invoked the authority of Rufinus, they were referring to the Aquileian. I hope that I have not resurrected an earlier mistaken opinion that condemned this Rufinus as the *author* of Pelagianism. My intention has been to draw attention to the presence in his writings and translations of ideas that could be (and were) taken up and consolidated by the first Pelagians. Most of what is contained in his translations can be traced back to the original authors, but too little attention has been given to the mediating role played by Rufinus the translator – be it in his choice of writings to be translated, or in what he decided to retain or excise, or even in his choice of language – between those original authors and the readers of his translations. We cannot say whether or not he would have sided with his readers/disciples in the controversy, simmering in his own lifetime, which would begin to engulf Western Christendom precisely at the time he died. Perhaps, with Hammond-Bammel (n. 166 above) we should stop there and be content with the idea that Rufinus 'may perhaps have been somewhat inclined' towards 'a kind of' Pelagian way of thinking. This, however, should not deter us from reading his translations, not only with the intention of rediscovering there what Origen really said, but also with eyes open to what they offered as sources for Pelagius and his disciples, who read them almost as they were coming from the translator's pen. In our search for the sources of early Pelagianism we seem to have almost systematically overlooked a whole library.

Summary: The evidence for the existence of Rufinus the Syrian is essentially a solitary mention by Marius Mercator. On the basis of this a 'profile' of the Syrian has been established, and a case has been built up to prove that Mercator could not refer to Rufinus of Aquileia. Mercator's evidence is found in only one, very unreliable manuscript in which the reading *quondam natione Syrus* can (and should) readily be rejected as a scribal error. The arguments advanced to establish the identity of the Syrian are examined to show that they are misguided. In the second part of the study, evidence is offered from the writings (mainly the translations) of Rufinus of Aquileia to show that he was the authority to whom the early Pelagians turned.

¹⁵ Oxford, Angoulême, and Armagh (Oxford, 1981).

¹⁶ *Manuale Academicum*, ed. Henry Anstey (London, 1907).

¹⁷ For a survey of the theory of dominion, see Janet Coleman, 'The Theory of Dominion,' in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, ed. J. H. Burns, pp. 607–48.

¹⁸ 'Columella, Property,' p. 634.

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