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Jerome's Hebrew Philology

*A Study Based on his
Commentary on Jeremiah*

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Jerome's Hebrew Philology

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A Study Based on his Commentary on Jeremiah

by

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CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

For journals, series, and reference works, abbreviations are given according to Siegfried Schwertner, *Internationales Abkürzungsverzeichnis für Theologie und Grenzgebiete* (Berlin, 1974). The following abbreviations are used for works not treated in *IATG*:

BDB   Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford, 1906. Reprinted with revisions, 1951.

HR   Hatch, Edwin, and Henry A. Redpath. *A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament*. 3 Vols. Oxford, 1897. Reprint, Grand Rapids, MI, 1983.

KB   Koehler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner, et al. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. 5 Vols. Leiden/New York/Köln, 1994–2000.

The abbreviations found in H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, and H. S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon, with a Revised Supplement* (Oxford, 1996) and P. G. W. Glare, *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1996) are generally used for classical authors (with minor exceptions for clarity). Albert Blaise, *Dictionnaire latin-français des auteurs chrétiens* (Turnhout, 1954) and G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1969) are followed for the abbreviation of patristic authors, unless a slightly altered form of abbreviation would be clearer (e.g., *Comm. Ier.* instead of simply *Ier.* for Jerome's *Commentariorum in Ieremiam libri VI*). For Philo and Josephus, we have used the commonly known abbreviations found in the Loeb Classical Library series. Rabbinic texts are abbreviated according to H. L. Strack, G. Stemberger, and M. Bockmuehl, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (Minneapolis, 1996). In addition, the following three abbreviations are used:

GL   Keil, Heinrich. *Grammatici Latini*. 7 Vols. Leipzig, 1857–1880.

GRF   Funaioli, Hyginus. *Grammaticae Romanae Fragmenta*, vol. 1. Leipzig, 1907. Reprint, Stuttgart, 1969.

OS   De Lagarde, Paul. *Onomastica Sacra*. Göttingen, 1887. Reprint, Hildesheim, 1966.

Finally, the following abbreviations are used for ancient editions of the Bible:

IH   Jerome's translation of the Old Testament *iuxta Hebraeos*
LXX   The translation of the "Seventy" (i.e., the "Septuagint")
VL   The *Vetus Latina* (the Old Latin Version)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Jerome's extensive knowledge of the Bible was central to the shape of his life and thought. By his own reckoning, the study of *Hebraica* was of major importance to his biblical scholarship, as evidenced by his frequent appeals to the *hebraica veritas*, his radical opinions about the shape and basis of the canon, and the descriptions he typically gives of his own intentions in writing his commentaries, such as "eorum, qui de libris hebraicis uaria suspicantur, errores refellere,"[1] or "arcana eruditionis hebraicae et magistrorum synagogae reconditam disciplinam, eam dumtaxat quae scripturis sanctis convenit, latinis auribus prodere,"[2] or again, "hominibus linguae meae hebraeorum graecorumque eruditionem tradere."[3] Perhaps the most telling sign of Jerome's commitment to Hebrew learning was his choice to dedicate the vast majority of his exegetical works to Old Testament books. The foundation of this Hebrew learning was Jerome's study of the Hebrew language, and he rightly publicized the importance of this skill for the interpretation of the Old Testament.

Jerome's approach to the study of the Hebrew Old Testament can well be described as philological.[4] In Jerome's case, "philology" must be understood in the general sense of the "love of learning and literature; the study of literature, in a wider sense, including grammar, literary criticism and interpretation, the relation of literature and written records to history, etc." (OED). This broad interest in literary studies, encompassing everything from texts and grammar to interpretation and

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[1] *QHG*, Prol.

[2] *Comm. Zach.* 6:9–15.

[3] *Comm. Ier.*, Bk. 3, Prol. Jerome transmitted to the Latin-speaking Church the learning not only of the Hebrews but also of the Greeks. As we will see in chapter three, Greek scholarship actually played an important role in Jerome's Hebrew philology, alongside of the *hebraeorum eruditio*.

[4] As M. Simonetti has summarized: "In complesso l'opera esegetica di Girolamo s'impone più per rigore filologico e gran copia di materiali utilizzati che non per coerenza di metodo e originalità d'interpretazione" (M. Simonetti, *Profilo storico dell'esegesi patristica* (Rome, 1981), 95).

criticism, permeates all of Jerome's writings;[5] but it is seen most clearly in his exegetical works on the Old Testament.[6] For Jerome, returning to the *hebraica veritas* was essential to understanding, explaining, and restoring the literature of the Old Testament.[7] Already in Augustine, we see Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew being singled out as the most notable feature of his great literary ability.[8] Jerome's Hebrew philology was also central to his reception in the Middle Ages, and beyond.[9] The present work aims to describe the origin and nature of Jerome's philological method with respect to his study of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

For a long time, Jerome's work was regarded primarily as a source of information on Hebrew matters, rather than as an object of study itself to be evaluated. All of that changed as scholars began to take a more critical approach to the writings of Christian antiquity, and in this regard Jerome has received his fair share of negative criticism. The most common charge against Jerome is that he frequently pretended to

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[5] Cf. A. Fürst, *Hieronymus: Askese und Wissenschaft in der Spätantike* (Freiburg, 2003), 57–137. After his death, Jerome came to be widely acclaimed for his literary accomplishments. By the eighth and ninth centuries, the titles *eruditissimus* and *omnium studia litterarum adeptus* were being applied to Jerome; see E. F. Rice, Jr., *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1985), 32. On the enthusiasm for Jerome among the Italian humanists of the fifteenth century, who looked to the Latin *Doctor* for inspiration in their own *studia litterarum* (or *studia humanitatis*), see ibid., 84–115.

[6] See A. Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim* (Oxford, 1993).

[7] Cf. R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginning to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford, 1968), 3, who defines "scholarship" as "the art of understanding, explaining, and restoring the literary tradition."

[8] Augustine refers to Jerome as "utriusque linguae peritus" (i.e., Hebrew and Latin; *Doct. chr.* 4.7.15) and "vir doctissimus" (ibid., 4.20.41) in direct connection with his Hebrew and Old Testament studies.

[9] Regarding Jerome's reception in the Middle Ages, Pierre Jay observes: "It is in this perspective of the four senses which all converge in the Christian reading of the Bible that the Latin Middle Ages had quickly recognized in Jerome the emblematic figure of the literal sense. This choice is significant: a return to the *hebraica veritas*, concern for the establishing of a text, recourse to philology and to the data of history and profane disciplines as well as to Hebrew traditions to be assured of the exactitude of a literal sense regarded as the basis of any spiritual interpretation—these are indeed the characteristics of Jerome's exegesis that the Middle Ages thought to honor by this patronage" (P. Jay, "Jerome," in *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity*, ed. C. Kannengiesser (Leiden, 2004), 1101). Cf. also B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, 1964), 187. On the significance of Jerome's philology in later times, see J. Friedman, *The Most Ancient Testimony: Sixteenth-Century Christian-Hebraica in the Age of Renaissance Nastalgia* (Athens, OH, 1983), 166–68; and G. L. Jones, *The Discovery of Hebrew in Tudor England: a third language* (Manchester, 1983), 90, 104.

have learned or read things that he had not, in fact, learned or read; and this charge has been made in particular against his competence in Hebrew. As a result, much recent scholarship on Jerome as an Hebraist has focused on the extent (or lack thereof) of his actual Hebrew knowledge.

Early criticism of Jerome's Hebrew scholarship came in 1706 from Bernard de Montfaucon, who noticed that whenever Eusebius said that he had learned something from "the Hebrews" or from "a Hebrew teacher," Jerome also claimed to have learned that information from a Hebrew.[10] In 1897, E. Klostermann drew a similar conclusion with regard to a claim made by Jerome in his *Ep.* 18, this time showing that Jerome's source was Origen.[11] Gustave Bardy (1934) likewise noted several instances in various works where Jewish sources cited by Jerome as his own were actually borrowed from Origen or Eusebius. Bardy did not question Jerome's basic competence in Hebrew, affirming that Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew was remarkable for his time.[12] He simply wanted to show that one should not necessarily take at face value Jerome's claims to have learned an exegetical tradition directly from a Hebrew teacher.[13]

Up to the time of Bardy, the criticisms of Jerome focused only on his unacknowledged "borrowings" of Jewish exegetical traditions. James Barr and Eitan Burstein, however, shifted the discussion to Jerome's competence in Hebrew. In 1966–67, Barr addressed Jerome's Hebrew linguistic ability in two articles, "St. Jerome and the Sounds of Hebrew," and "St. Jerome's Appreciation Of Hebrew." Barr suggested that Jerome could read Hebrew and was familiar with a vocalization tradition similar to what we have come to know through the Masoretes, but that he may not have been able to speak Hebrew as a living language.[14] Eitan

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[10] "Et quod observes velim ubicumque Eusebius se ab Hebraeo doctore vel ab Hebraeis aliquid edidicisse ait, ibidem Hieronymus se idipsum ab Hebraeo doctore accepisse testificatur" (B. de Montfaucon, *Praef. in Comm. in Isaiam Eusebii* IV, 3; PG 24, 88).

[11] E. Klostermann, "Die Überlieferung der Jeremiahomilien des Origenes," *TU* XVI, 3 (1897): 76–83.

[12] "Il ne s'agit pas, cela va sans dire, de contester l'admirable érudition du grand docteur. La connaissance qu'avait acquise saint Jérôme de la langue hébraïque était extraordinaire pour son temps" (G. Bardy, "Saint Jérôme et ses maîtres hébreux," *RBen* 46 (1934): 146).

[13] Ibid., 164.

[14] J. Barr, "St. Jerome's Appreciation of Hebrew," *BJRL* 49 (1966): 281–302; and idem, "St. Jerome and the Sounds of Hebrew," *JSS* 12 (1967): 1–36.

Burstein, in his 1975 article, "La compétence de Jérôme en Hébreu: Explication de certaines erreurs," questioned Jerome's Hebrew language skills even more directly, setting forth six Hebrew errors found in Jerome's writings.[15] Yet, Burstein still ascribed to Jerome a "passive" reading knowledge of Hebrew, simply doubting his "active" ability to translate readily from Latin or Greek back into Hebrew.[16] More recently, Neil Adkin has criticized Jerome's Hebrew knowledge based on two comments found in *Ep.* 34.[17] On closer investigation, however, one of these errors is only a mistaken guess at reconstructing the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX, and the other is simply more plausible than Adkin realizes.[18] In sum, Barr's insightful but general observations, Burstein's

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[15] E. Burstein, "La compétence de Jérôme en Hébreu: Explication de certaines erreurs," *REAug* 21 (1975): 3–12. R. Gryson has followed Burstein in his overall skepticism regarding Jerome's competence in Hebrew; see R. Gryson, *Commentaires de Jerome sur le prophete Isaie: Livres I–IV* (Freiburg, 1993), 107–08. Overall, Burstein's criticisms of Jerome are not severely damaging. In three cases (*Comm. Ezech.* 38:9; *Comm. Is.* 65:8; and *Comm. Is.* 38:9—mistakenly cited by Burstein as 37:9), Jerome is shown to make a minor mistake in working from Greek back to Hebrew (e.g., at *Comm. Ezech.* 38:9, where Jerome produces from memory the word כפר, "village," but says that it begins with a ק; cf. perhaps קריה, "town"). At *QHG* 17:16, where Jerome is said to have misspelled צרעת as צערת, it is interesting to note that the word is spelled correctly in Vallarsi's text of *QHG*, reprinted by J. P. Migne (see D. Vallarsi, *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis Presbyteri Operum. Tomus Tertius* (Verona, 1735), 332; and PL 23.1014), whereas the incorrect spelling is found in P. de Lagarde's text of *QHG, Hieronymi Quaestiones Hebraicae in libro Geneseos* (Leipzig, 1868), 27–28, reprinted in CCSL (72.22). No textual variants for this reading are listed in any of these editions. If Jerome is in fact the one who is responsible for this mistake, it is clearly an easy one to make.

[16] Burstein, "La compétence," 12: "Jérôme, de toute évidence, était capable de lire et de reconnaître les formes hébraïques; il lisait l'Écriture avec une aissance et une célérité qui étonnaient ses contemporains. Mais les exemples que nous avons relevés obligent à ré-examiner sa compétence 'active' et à se demander si l'illustre savant était capable de reconstituer couramment des formes qui ne figuraient pas dans le texte biblique qu'il avait sous les yeux."

[17] N. Adkin, "'Ad fontem sermonis recurramus Hebraei': Jerome, Marcella and Hebrew (*Epist.* 34)," *Euphrosyne* 32 (2004): 215–22.

[18] For the mistaken reconstruction: at Ps. 126:4 (LXX) Jerome correctly follows Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion in his interpretation of הנעורים, but fails to recognize that the passive participle of נער ("to shake off") underlies the LXX's ἐκτετιναγμένον (VL "excussi"); for examples of Jerome's handling of such problems in the *Comm. Ier.*, see pp. 57–59. As for the second mistake, Jerome opposed the LXX's reading of העצבים as "pain" at Ps. 126:2 (LXX), favoring instead Theodotion's "idols," and citing עצביהם at Ps. 113:12 (LXX) in support. Adkin considers it a sign of Jerome's limited Hebrew knowledge that he favored the wrong interpretation (modern commentators follow the LXX) and that he did not recognize that "two different nouns are at issue" (Adkin, "Ad fontem," 220). Yet, Theodotion interpreted עצב at Ps. 126:2 as "idol" (עֹצֶב), and no one doubts the Hebrew competence of this translator. Jerome's view may in fact be wrong, but it is not absurd, and it is notable that he was able to supply the Hebrew

six examples, and Adkin's two criticisms are the only explicit attempts to critique Jerome's knowledge of the Hebrew language itself.[19]

Yet, the most extreme negative appraisal of Jerome's linguistic competence in Hebrew was given by Pierre Nautin. In his 1977 monograph on Origen, Nautin confirmed the negative opinions expressed by Klostermann and Bardy with regard to Jerome's excessive and unrecognized dependence on Origen.[20] But Nautin's strongest statement came in a 1986 article on Jerome:

> läßt es sich beweisen, daß er diese Sprache praktisch kaum kannte. Wenn immer er in seinen Kommentaren oder anderen Werken den transkribierten hebräischen Text zitiert—und das tut er oft—oder Anmerkungen zur hebräischen Sprache macht, verdankt er die jeweilige Information seinen Quellen (Origenes, Eusebius, vielleicht auch Acacius v. Caesarea); sobald er sich jedoch von den Quellen entfernt, ist alles reine Erfindung.[21]

According to Nautin, not only was Jerome unable to make his own translation out of the Hebrew, he was even incapable of checking the accuracy of earlier translations. From this perspective, Jerome's translation *iuxta Hebraeos* was merely a revision of the Old Latin based on the hexaplaric versions, falsely advertised as being "according to the Hebrews."[22]

Nautin's article was widely noted, even though it ignored much previous scholarship on Jerome and the Hebraic tradition. Even more important, Nautin seems to have based his views on studies that had as their objective to prove that Jerome plagiarized his sources, not that Jerome did not know Hebrew. Of course, as Günter Stemberger

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parallel from Ps. 113:12. Furthermore, although in a modern lexicon עֹצֶב, "false god" (KB, I עֹצֶב) and עֶצֶב, "hurt" (but cf. KB, II עֹצֶב, "agony") are considered "different nouns," these words could easily have been seen as two meanings of the same noun, עצב, especially since Jerome was working with unvocalized texts and without the benefits of comparative Semitics and modern lexicography. Adkin's criticisms of Jerome do not take proper account of the nature of Hebrew scholarship in antiquity.

[19] Cf. also Burstein's dissertation, *La compétence en Hébreu de S. Jérôme* (Poitiers, 1971), which was unavailable to S. Rebenich ["Jerome: The 'Vir Trilinguis' and the 'Hebraica Veritas'," *VC* 47 (1993): 73], and to S. Leanza ["Gerolamo e la tradizione ebraica," in *Motivi letterari ed esegetici in Gerolamo*," ed. Claudio Moreschini and Giovanni Menestrina (Morcelliana, 1997), 20], and has not yet been obtained by the present writer. For a correction to one of the criticisms of Jerome found in Burstein's dissertation, see Kamesar, *Jerome*, 138–39, n. 146.

[20] P. Nautin, *Origène. Sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris, 1977), 214–19, 284–292, 326–61.

[21] P. Nautin, "Hieronymus," *TRE* 15 (1986): 309.

[22] Ibid., 310.

has recently observed, there is an obvious connection between the genuineness of Jerome's contact with Jews and the possibility that he could have gained real proficiency in the Hebrew language.[23] Yet, the studies of Bardy and others have hardly proven that Jerome had no contact with Jews whatsoever, and it is one thing to say that Jerome stole from Origen and Eusebius some references like, "I asked a certain Hebrew 'x,' and he told me 'y,'"—it is something else to say that he had no contact with Jews at all, and that he could not read Hebrew. To some extent, the question of Jerome's full integrity in reporting all of his sources on the one hand, and the question of his Hebrew competence on the other, must be kept separate. In Nautin's case, we may suggest that extreme doubts about the first question led illegitimately to a negative appraisal of the second. Even Stemberger, who takes the most negative view perhaps of any recent writer on Jerome's Jewish contacts, dismisses Nautin's position as indefensible.[24] Indeed, recent scholarship has called for a more balanced re-appraisal of Jerome's Hebrew knowledge and his contact with Hebrew sources.

Positive general assessments have been given of Jerome's Hebrew competence by authors such as G. J. M. Bartelink, Michael Wissemann, and Alfons Fürst.[25] In addition, three recent reviews of Jerome and Hebrew learning, one by Ilona Opelt,[26] one by Stefan Rebenich,[27] and a third by Sandro Leanza,[28] have cited an array of older studies, such as those of F. Stummer, L. Ginzberg, and M. Rahmer,[29] as well as newer

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[23] G. Stemberger, "Hieronymus und die Juden seiner Zeit," in *Begegnungen zwischen Christentum und Judentum in Antike und Mittelalter*, ed. D.-A. Koch and H. Lichtenberger (Göttingen, 1993), 348.

[24] Stemberger, "Hieronymus," 363: "Seine Kontakte mit jüdischen Informanten erweisen sich bei genauerer Betrachtung als viel geringer, als oft angenommen wird; seine Landeskenntnisse sind minimal und auch seine Sprachkenntnisse waren nicht so groß, wie er gerne vorgibt, auch wenn das Extremurteil eines P. Nautin kaum haltbar ist." For a more positive view of Jerome's contact with Jews, see A. Salvesen, "A Convergence of the Ways? The Judaizing of Christian Scripture by Origen and Jerome," in *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. A. H. Becker and A. Y. Reed (Tübingen, 2003), 233–57.

[25] G. J. M. Bartelink, "Hieronymus," in *Gestalten der Kirchengeschichte*, ed. M. Greschat (Stuttgart, 1984): 151–2, 158–9; M. Wissemann, *Schimpfworte in der Bibelübersetzung des Hieronymus*, BKA NF 86 (Heidelberg, 1992), 157; and Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 76–79, 130–37.

[26] I. Opelt, "S. Girolamo ed i suoi maestri ebrei," *Aug* 28 (1988): 327–38.

[27] Rebenich, "Jerome," 50–77.

[28] Leanza, "Gerolamo," 17–38.

[29] For Stummer, Opelt cites: F. Stummer, "Beiträge zur Lexikographie der lateinischen Bibel," *Bib.* 18 (1937): 25–50; and idem, "Einige Beobachtungen über die Arbeits-

works, like those of Jay Braverman on Daniel, Pierre Jay on Isaiah, C. T. R. Hayward on Jerome and the Targums, and Adam Kamesar on the *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*,[30] all as demonstrating Jerome's ability to read Hebrew and the reality of his contacts with contemporary Jewish learning. Rebenich, in addition to all of the previous literature that he cites, argues for the credibility of Jerome's Hebrew language competence based on the confidence with which he responded to specific criticisms (such as the Jon. 4:6, gourd-ivy issue),[31] and the fact that Rufinus, who dutifully pointed out many of Jerome's personal faults and fictions,[32] accepted completely that Jerome had Jewish teachers and that he knew Hebrew. Leanza, for his part, contends that Jerome's ability to teach others (like Paula and Marcella) shows his competence in Hebrew, as does his willingness to admit that his Aramaic was weak. The overall point is this: there seems to be little real doubt that Jerome had some contact with the Jews of his day, and most scholars are willing to accept that Jerome could at least read Hebrew.

Nevertheless, little progress has been made on the specific nature and use of the Hebrew language itself in Jerome's exegesis. The linguistic

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weise des Hieronymus bei der Übersetzung des Alten Testaments aus der Hebraica Veritas," *Bib.* 10 (1929): 1–30. To these, one may add idem, "Spuren jüdischer und christlicher Einflüsse auf die Übersetzung der grossen Propheten durch Hieronymus," *JPOS* 8 (1928): 35–48. Among the works of Ginzberg mentioned are: L. Ginzberg, "Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern. V: Der Kommentar des Hieronymus zu Koheleth," in *Abhandlungen zur Erinnerung an Hirsch Perez Chajes*, ed. V. Aptowitzer and A. Z. Schwarz (Vienna, 1933), 22–50; and idem, "Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern. VI: Der Kommentar des Hieronymus zu Jesaja," in *Jewish Studies in Memory of George A. Kohut*, ed. S. W. Baron and A. Marx (New York, 1935), 279–314. For Rahmer, see M. Rahmer, *Die hebräischen Traditionen in den Werken des Hieronymus: durch eine Vergleichung mit den jüdischen Quellen kritisch beleuchtet. Erster Theil: Die Quaestiones in Genesin* (Berlin, 1861); and idem, *Die hebräischen Traditionen in den Werken des Hieronymus: durch eine Vergleichung mit den jüdischen Quellen kritisch beleuchtet. Die Comentarii zu den zwölf kleinen Propheten*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1902).

[30] J. Braverman, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel: A Study of Comparative Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the Hebrew Bible* (Washington, 1978); P. Jay, *L'exégèse de saint Jérôme d'après son "Commentaire sur Isaïe"* (Paris, 1985); C. T. R. Hayward, "Saint Jerome and the Aramaic Targumim," JSS 32 (1987): 105–23; idem, "Jewish Traditions in Jerome's Commentary on Jeremiah," PIBA 9 (1985): 100–20; and Kamesar, *Jerome*; cf. idem, "The Virgin of Isaiah 7:14: The Philological Argument from the Second to the Fifth Century." *JTS* 41 (1990): 51–75.

[31] Cf. also E. Prinzivalli, "'Sicubi dubitas, Hebraeos interroga.' Girolamo tra difesa dell'*Hebraica veritas* e polemica antigiudaica," *ASE* 14 (1997): 179–206.

[32] For an example of Rufinus' criticism of Jerome, see *Apol.* 2.7, where Rufinus casts doubt on Jerome's claim to have read the works of Pythagoras, which were not extant; cf. Jerome's *Ruf.* 3.39.

studies cited by Rebenich give interesting examples and raise important questions, but they are not extensive in coverage,[33] nor do they integrate their findings into Jerome's exegetical method. The recent articles responding to Nautin often cite older works, which list numerous points of contact between Jerome and Hebraic exegesis but, as Kamesar has noted, are primarily collections of parallels and do not describe the function of Hebrew learning or rabbinic sources in Jerome.[34] Braverman's study focuses on broad exegetical traditions rather than on Jerome's philological approach. Jay does mention that Jerome's Isaiah commentary contains 250 comments on Hebrew orthography, morphology, and semantics,[35] but he gives this only a few pages of discussion, paying more attention to the "senses of Scripture" in Jerome than to Hebraic scholarship. Yves-Marie Duval deals extensively with the sources of Jerome's exegesis on Jonah, but only in terms of exegetical themes, not philology.[36] Other studies of Jerome, Hebrew, and Jewish traditions, which have been based on Jerome's translations,[37] have been unable to address questions of method, and have offered only limited results in terms of sources and interpretation, since it is in the commentaries where Jerome explains what he sees in the Hebrew text, what he knows about the Hebrew words involved, and what conclusions he draws from the Hebrew for his interpretation of the passage.

Still, we may point to significant contributions made recently to our understanding of Jerome's Hebrew philology by two scholars who,

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[33] An exception is C. Siegfried, "Die Aussprache des Hebräischen bei Hieronymus," *ZATW* 4 (1884): 34–83, which is quite thorough but lacks analysis.

[34] Kamesar, *Jerome*, 176.

[35] Jay, *L'exégèse*, 99.

[36] Y.-M. Duval, *Le livre de Jonas dans la littérature chrétienne grecque et latine: Sources et influence du commentaire sur Jonas de saint Jérôme* (Paris, 1973).

[37] E.g., V. Aptowitzer, "Rabbinische Parallelen und Aufschlüsse zur Septuaginta und Vulgata," *ZATW* 29 (1909): 241–52; A. Condamin, "L'influence de la tradition juive dans la version de s. Jérôme," *RSR* 5 (1914): 1–21; C. H. Gordon, "Rabbinic Exegesis in the Vulgate of Proverbs," *JBL* 49 (1930): 384–416; B. Kedar-Kopfstein, *The Vulgate as a Translation. Some Semantic and Syntactical Aspects of Jerome's Version of the Hebrew Bible* (Jerusalem, 1968); C. Estin, *Les psautiers de Jérôme à la lumière des traductions juives antérieures* (Rome, 1984); D. P. McCarthy, "Saint Jerome's Translation of the Psalms: The Question of Rabbinic Tradition," in *Open Thou Mine Eyes…*," ed. H. Blumberg (Hoboken, NJ, 1992): 155–91; and M. Kraus, *Jerome's Translation of the Book of Exodus* iuxta Hebraeos *in Relation to Classical, Christian and Jewish Traditions of Interpretation* (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1996). For a brief but excellent treatment of some features of Hebraic learning in Jerome from a linguistic perspective, see B. Kedar-Kopfstein, "Jewish Traditions in the Writings of Jerome," in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context*, ed. D. Beattie (Sheffield, 1994): 420–30.

notably, have both written on Jerome's important *Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim*. First, C. T. R. Hayward showed in his translation and commentary on *QHG* how rabbinic, and especially targumic traditions (along with the hexaplaric materials) can be used to illuminate the Hebraic dimension of Jerome's exegesis.[38] Hayward, however, does not explicitly address the issue of Hebrew competence, and more importantly does not attempt to integrate the Hebraic component into Jerome's overall philological framework. Hayward also argued for a connection between Jerome and the Targums in two articles published in the 1980's, one of which dealt specifically with the *Commentary on Jeremiah*.[39] In these pieces, Hayward showed numerous credible points of contact between Jerome and Jewish traditions known to us through the Targums, and he made some suggestive observations on points of linguistic exegesis. But Hayward's main focus in these articles was not the philological study of the biblical text, and he usually set the Targums against Origen and the LXX as the most likely sources for Jerome's treatment, not taking sufficient account of other possible Greek sources like the hexaplaric versions.[40]

Second, Adam Kamesar has shown that Jerome's appropriation of rabbinic traditions in *QHG* was not simply a matter of antiquarianism, but rather was an essential element within his overall philological system.[41] Jerome seems to have used rabbinic traditions and the direct study of the Hebrew text (the two being closely associated in Jerome's mind) as a means to interpret and correct his Greek sources, intending thereby to obtain a more accurate understanding of the *Hebraica veritas* than his Greek and Latin predecessors. It remains, however, to present a comprehensive picture of Jerome's methodological framework with specific focus on his Hebrew philology, as well as to describe the use of Hebrew in Jerome's larger interpretive enterprise. The present work attempts to address both of these issues. It will also examine the sources that Jerome used in his Hebrew scholarship, as seen in one particular work (the *Comm. Ier.*), explicitly addressing the question of Jerome's competence in Hebrew.

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[38] C. T. R. Hayward, *Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis: Translated with an Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford, 1995).

[39] See note 30 above.

[40] This criticism pertains especially to Hayward's "Jewish Traditions in Jerome's Commentary on Jeremiah."

[41] See Kamesar, *Jerome*.

Observations on the Hebrew text may be found in any of Jerome's commentaries on the Old Testament, as well as in many of his philologically oriented letters. In this study, we have chosen to focus on one commentary in particular, so that we may be able to treat with sufficient detail at least a representative sample of Jerome's Hebrew analysis. For several reasons, the *Commentary on Jeremiah* is especially well suited for our purposes. For one, it is a mature work, and should reflect well what Jerome was and was not able to do. Jerome started on the *Comm. Ier.* in 414, having already written his commentaries on the Minor Prophets (finished in 406), Daniel (407), Isaiah (408–10), and Ezekiel (410–14). The *Comm. Ier.* was therefore one of his last works, which would have completed his series of commentaries on the prophets—if he had been able to finish it. As it turned out, Jerome died in Sept., 419,[42] having reached only to the end of chapter thirty-two of this largest of all prophetic books. In spite of his age and declining health,[43] however, the *Comm. Ier.* does not reflect any weakening of Jerome's mental abilities. On the contrary, the thoroughness of the work—its attention to detail, consistent interaction with sources, and abundance of cross-references—prove Jerome to be still at the height of his powers. In the *Comm. Ier.*, Jerome was able to apply his whole experience of Hebrew learning to his exposition of the biblical text.

Another advantage of the *Comm. Ier.* is that it is a relatively large work (440 pages in the CSEL edition), the comprehensive treatment of which offers an objective basis for research. Within the *Comm. Ier.*, there is found a wide variety of comments based on the Hebrew text, showing the full range of Jerome's method. There are also many opportunities for Jerome to demonstrate his competence in Hebrew, or conversely to commit Hebrew mistakes. Our conclusions will naturally reflect Jerome's practice primarily in the *Comm. Ier.*, but relevant parallel passages from outside Jeremiah will be cited and discussed. The *Comm. Ier.* is large enough that a reasonably accurate picture of Jerome's Hebrew philology in general may be drawn from its contents.

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[42] See F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme. Sa vie et son oeuvre*, II (Louvain/Paris, 1922), 56–63.

[43] Ibid., 55–56. According to the chronology worked out by Cavallera, Jerome was approximately sixty-seven years old when he began writing the *Commentary on Jeremiah*; cf. p. 13.

This is true all the more so because the *Comm. Ier.* contains such a large number of comments on the Hebrew text. More than 75 different Hebrew words are discussed explicitly, over thirty etymologies are given for proper names, and in ten instances Jerome spells out one or more Hebrew words in order to explain a point. In addition, Jerome makes frequent appeal to the Hebrew in order to address other kinds of textual issues, like the division of the text into units, or the identification of the speaker. The nature of Jeremiah itself also contributed to the Hebrew emphasis of the work. With its numerous divergences between the Hebrew and Greek texts, the book of Jeremiah forced Jerome to pay particular attention to questions relating to Hebrew in his commentary. For all of these reasons, the *Commentary on Jeremiah* is an ideal source for analyzing the Hebrew component of Jerome's biblical scholarship.

In terms of our own method, we will describe Jerome's Hebrew philology by looking at the Hebrew observations in his *Commentary on Jeremiah* from three different angles.

First, in chapter two, we will look at the methodological framework of Jerome's Hebrew philology. How did Jerome come to recognize the need for a scholarly approach to the Hebrew Old Testament? What did he look for when he read the text, and how did he go about trying to explain what he found? In order to answer these questions, we will show how Jerome's Hebrew philology developed out of his training in classical literary studies. Only through this lens can we properly assess his work with the Hebrew text, both in the ways that he reflects this literary and cultural environment, and in the ways that he deviates from it.

Second, we will consider the specific sources used by Jerome in learning and interpreting the Hebrew text. How did these sources, and Jerome's access to them, shape his understanding of Hebrew? By what process did Jerome learn Hebrew, and how did he use his sources when explaining the Hebrew text? Did Jerome merely rely on previous Greek studies for his Hebrew information, or was he actually reading the text in Hebrew himself? These questions will be addressed in chapter three, through a comprehensive study of the 76 Hebrew words explicitly discussed in the *Commentary on Jeremiah*.

Third, we will examine what roles Hebrew philology played in Jerome's overall approach to interpreting the biblical text. Does Jerome simply transmit Hebrew information for interest's sake, or is Hebrew integrated into his exegesis? Does he use Hebrew primarily as an

apologetic tool against Jewish interpretations, or does he employ it more for "positive" readings?[44] When Hebrew is employed to elucidate meaning, does it belong more closely with the spiritual sense of the text, or does it serve the literal explanation?[45] We will address these questions in chapter four, by means of our own commentary on key passages from the *Commentary on Jeremiah* where Jerome makes special appeal to the Hebrew text.

Throughout our study, we will consider the ways in which Jerome's approach to the study of the Hebrew Old Testament is similar to, and differs from, that of modern scholarship. In chapter four in particular, we will point out how Jerome's treatments of various philological problems in the Hebrew text of Jeremiah compare with those of modern commentators. Our overall goal is to describe, appreciate, and assess Jerome's Hebrew scholarship on the book of Jeremiah, in light of Jerome's own sources, methods, and objectives.

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[44] Origen in *Ep. Afr.* 9 defends his willingness to identify variants between the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Old Testament by saying that such information is necessary for Christians who wish to dispute credibly with Jewish interpreters. On this analogy, one might presume that one of Jerome's primary reasons for learning Hebrew was to argue with Jews. As we will see, in fact, opposing Jewish exegesis was a very minor part of Jerome's Hebrew philology. Similarly, it is notable that anti-Jewish polemics were just one component of Origen's intentions for the Hexapla; Origen also had a scholarly interest in using the various Greek witnesses along with the Hebrew (at some level) to correct the edition of the LXX (cf. Origen's *Comm. Mt.* 15:14). See J. Schaper, "The Origin and Purpose of the Fifth Column of the Hexapla," in *Origen's Hexapla and Fragments*, ed. A. Salvesen, 3–15 (Tübingen, 1998); and Kamesar, *Jerome*, 4–28.

[45] Prior to Jerome, Origen had used Hebrew proper name etymologies as part of his allegorical interpretation of the Bible; see N. De Lange, *Origen and the Jews* (Cambridge, 1976), 117–18. In the Renaissance, Johannes Reuchlin engaged in the study of Hebrew partly because he saw in the linguistic forms of Hebrew, as viewed through kabbalistic teaching, a source for Christian spiritual exegesis; see Friedman, *Most Ancient Testimony*, 71–98; and F. E. Manuel, *The Broken Staff: Judaism through Christian Eyes* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992), 44–46, 143. Yet, Jerome's Hebrew scholarship has often been associated with his interest in the literal sense (see n. 9 above). One of our aims will be to clarify, for the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, the relationship between Jerome's Hebrew learning on the one hand and his treatments of the literal and spiritual senses of the biblical text on the other.

CHAPTER TWO

READING HEBREW AS A 'GRAMMARIAN'

Jerome took considerable pride in the fact that he was not self-taught. Remembering how he had continued to seek the instruction of teachers, even later in life, Jerome recalled: "Dum essem iuvenis, miro discendi ferebar ardore, nec iuxta quorumdam praesumptionem ipse me docui. Apollinarem Laodicenum audivi Antiochiae frequenter…Perrexi tamen Alexandriam, audivi Didymum…rursum Hierosolymae et Bethleem quo labore, quo pretio Baraninam nocturnum habui praeceptorem."[1] In view of statements such as this one, it is not surprising that many treatments of Jerome's exegesis have focused on the debts owed by Jerome to these three exegetical influences: the Antiochene (Apollinarius), the Alexandrian (Didymus), and the Jewish/Hebraic.[2] Yet, it must be kept in mind that in *Ep.* 84 Jerome was merely describing the studies that he undertook as an older man, when most people thought themselves too old to have a teacher. It is natural in this context that he does not mention the earliest teacher to have had a significant impact on him, his *grammaticus*, Donatus, with whom he studied as a teenager in Rome.[3]

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[1] *Ep.* 84.3. Cf. also *Ep.* 50.1–2, where Jerome criticizes Jovinian for presuming to be self-taught; *Ruf.* 1.20, where he levels the same charge against Rufinus; and *Praef. Par. LXX*: "Fateor enim… nunquam me in divinis voluminibus, propriis viribus credidisse, nec habuisse magistrum opinionem meam."

[2] E.g., A. Vaccari, "I fattori della esegesi geronimiana," *Bib.* 1 (1920): 457–80; L. Hartmann, "St. Jerome as an Exegete," in *A Monument to St. Jerome*, ed. Francis X. Murphy (New York, 1952), 72; and D. Brown, "Jerome and the Vulgate," in *A History of Biblical Interpretation, vol. 1: The Ancient Period*, ed. A. J. Hauser and D. F. Watson (Grand Rapids, MI, 2003), 370.

[3] We follow the chronology worked out by Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, II, 3–12, according to which Jerome was born in approximately 347, and he studied with Donatus at Rome for some years between 360 and 366. This agrees with the statement in his *Comm. Abac.* 3:14–16 that he was a "puer et in grammaticae ludo" when the Emperor Julian died in 362. For further discussion, see P. Jay, "Sur la date de naissance de saint Jérôme," *REL* 51 (1973): 262–80; A. D. Booth, "The Date of Jerome's Birth," *Phoe.* 33 (1979): 346–52; idem, "The Chronology of Jerome's Early Years," *Phoe.* 35 (1981): 237–59; and H. Hagendahl and J. H. Waszink, "Hieronymus," *RAC* 15 (1991): 118–19. A significantly earlier date for Jerome's birth, in 330 or 331, is supported by P. Hamblenne, "La longégevité de Jérôme: Prosper avait-il raison?" *Latomus* 28 (1969): 1081–1119; and J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London, 1975), 337–39, who follow the chronology presupposed by Prosper of Aquitaine's *Epitoma chronicae*.

In Rome education began at the age of seven in the "primary school" under a schoolmaster known as a *litterator* or *primus magister*.[4] At this stage the teacher concentrated on the basics of reading and writing. At the age of roughly eleven or twelve, students came under the instruction of a *grammaticus*, who taught formal "grammar" (in our sense of the word), proper writing and speaking, and the exposition of classic literature (*grammatice*, understood broadly as "literary interpretation"). Finally, for those privileged enough to receive so much schooling, students in their late teens went to study with a *rhetor*. Although we do not know the identity of Jerome's teacher in rhetoric,[5] we do know that his teacher in the field of *grammatice* was the well-known Aelius Donatus.

Donatus was perhaps the most famous grammarian of the fourth century. We know for certain that he was teaching in Rome at least from the mid-350s to the mid-360s.[6] He was the author of commentaries on Terence and Virgil, neither of which survive in their original forms, although the Terence commentary is partly preserved in a later compilation,[7] and materials from the work on Virgil can be found in the Virgilian commentary of another of Donatus' pupils, Servius. Donatus was also the author of an *Ars grammatica* in two parts: an *Ars minor*, which dealt with the parts of speech through a question-and-answer format; and an *Ars maior*, a more comprehensive guide in three books. Both the *Ars minor* and the *Ars maior* were used extensively in the Middle Ages as textbooks, and the *Ars maior* was itself the subject of numerous commentaries. Jerome mentions Donatus explicitly on three occasions, each time proudly identifying him as "praeceptor meus."[8] Numerous parallels have been identified showing Jerome's knowledge of Donatus and the grammatical tradition in general.[9] Thus, Jerome gives the same three examples for *antiphrasis* as Donatus:

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[4] Regarding Roman education in general, see H. I. Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité*, 6th ed. (Paris, 1965), 356–421.

[5] On the unlikely possibility that Jerome's teacher in rhetoric was C. Marius Victorinus, see E. A. Quain, "St. Jerome as a Humanist," in *A Monument to St. Jerome*, 209; and Jay, *L'exégèse*, 27.

[6] R. A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1988), 276.

[7] Ibid.

[8] *Chron.* 354; *Ruf.* 1.16; and *Comm. Eccl.* 1:9.

[9] An extensive list of parallels between Jerome and Donatus may be found in F. Lammert, "De Hieronymo Donati discipulo," *Commentationes Philologiae Ienenses* 9/2 (Lipsiae, 1912). Not all of the parallels are of equal plausibility, but many are valid and have been confirmed by later studies.

Jerome, *Ep.* 78.35	Donatus, *Ars maior* 3.6
Sin autem "sancta" interpretatur κατὰ ἀντίφρασιν est intelligendum, quomodo Parcae dicuntur eo, quod minime parcant, et bellum, quod nequaquam bellum sit, et lucus, quod minime luceat.	Antiphrasis est unius verbi ironia, ut bellum, hoc est minime bellum, et lucus eo, quod non luceat et Parcae eo, quod nulli parcant.[10]

Another direct parallel between Jerome and Donatus can be seen in Jerome's comment on the interjections in Hebrew:

Jerome, *Ep.* 20.5.1	Donatus, *Ars minor, de inter.*
Sicuti nos in lingua latina habemus et interiectiones quasdam, ut in exultando dicamus "ua" et in admirando "papae" et in dolendo "heu"… ita et Hebraei…	Quia aut laetitiam significamus ut "euax," aut dolorem, ut "heu," aut admirationem ut "papae"…[11]

Further examples could be cited. It is clear that Jerome learned from Donatus the traditional "grammatical" approach to reading literature, and that he remembered what he had learned throughout the rest of his life.[12] It has even been suggested that Donatus' use of Greek in studying pagan Latin literature helped to promote Jerome's own recognition of the importance of the *graeca ueritas* in the study of the Latin Bible,[13] which ultimately led, for the Old Testament, to the necessity

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[10] GL 4.402. Cf. G. Brugnoli, "Donato e Girolamo," *VetChr* 2 (1965): 139.

[11] GL 4.366. Cf. L. Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement grammatical* (Paris, 1981), 39. For further evidence of Jerome's knowledge of Donatus, see idem, "A l'école de Donat, de saint Augustin à Bède," *Latomus* 36 (1977): 533–34.

[12] Jerome's famous dream (see *Ep.* 22), in which he promised never again to read pagan literature, did nothing to erase the profound influence that his early grammatical education had on him. Regarding his knowledge of secular authors, Jerome claimed that it was impossible for him to forget what he had previously learned, cf. *Ruf.* 1.30. Furthermore, H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics: A Study of the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers* (Göteborg, 1958), esp. 309–28, has shown that, even if Jerome did for fifteen years or so keep his promise not to read secular authors, he can nevertheless be shown to have returned to reading the classics in the early 390s, including some works of which he had read little or none previously, e.g., Pliny the Younger and Cicero's philosophical works. According to Rufinus (*Apol.* 2.11), Jerome actually taught the classics to children while in Bethlehem. Cf. also A. S. Pease, "The Attitude of Jerome towards Pagan Literarure," *TPAPA* 50 (1919): 159.

[13] W. C. McDermott, "Saint Jerome and Pagan Greek Literature," *VC* 36 (1982): 372. For Jerome on the *graeca ueritas* of the NT, see the *Praef. in Evangelio*; cf. *Ep.* 48.4:

of the *hebraica ueritas.* Just as it is necessary to know the Alexandrian Christian commentary tradition in order to understand Jerome's use of allegory, so also it is essential to understand the methods of ancient Greek and Latin literary scholarship in order to fully appreciate how Jerome operated as a philologist.[14] It was Jerome's training as a "grammarian" that gave him the framework that he needed to recognize and address textual and linguistic problems in the Hebrew text. In fact, Jerome stands in a long tradition of Greek and Latin scholarship going back at least to the Hellenistic period. We will first give a brief account of this tradition, so that afterwards we will be able to show precisely how Jerome appropriated it for his own philological study of the Hebrew text of Jeremiah.

Literary scholarship developed in a new and sophisticated way in the third and second centuries BCE in connection with the great library in Alexandria, which was created as part of the Μουσεῖον organized by Ptolemy I (367/6–282). The blossoming of this scholarly interest in literature was partly a continuation of the literary theories of Aristotle,[15] and partly reflected the highly crafted and technical tastes of many Hellenistic readers and writers of poetry, who saw themselves as the heirs of a great literary heritage that needed to be preserved and explained.[16] As part of this Alexandrian literary community, scholars such as Zenodotus of Ephesus (b. c. 325 BCE), Aristophanes of Byzantium (c. 257–180), and Aristarchus of Samothrace (c. 216–144) produced numerous learned works on the classics of the past, including

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"lege eundem Graecum et Latinum... quantum distet inter veritatem et mendacium." Regarding Jerome's introduction to the rudiments of Greek in the school of Donatus, see P. Courcelle, *Les lettres grecques en occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1948), 37.

[14] For an application of this principle to the study of Jerome's philological method, see Kamesar, *Jerome*. The importance of Donatus and the classical tradition for appreciating Jerome's biblical exegesis has been recognized by others, e.g., A. Penna, *Principi e carattere dell'esegesi di s. Gerolamo* (Rome, 1950), 5–15; Jay, *L'exégèse*, 21–28; and M. C. Pennacchio, *Propheta insaniens: L'esegesi patristica di Osea tra profezia e storia* (Rome, 2002), 163–64.

[15] According to Dio Chrysostom (*Or.* 53.1), criticism and "grammar" received their beginnings with Aristotle. Theophrastus, Aristotle's pupil, was said to be the teacher of Demetrius Phalerius (D. L. 5.75; Str. 9.1.20), who was instrumental in the founding of the Alexandrian library (*Ep. Aris.* 9–10); cf. Pfeiffer, *History*, 99–104.

[16] On scholarship and literary criticism in antiquity, see Pfeiffer, *History*; D. A. Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity* (London, 1981); and G. M. A. Grube, *The Greek and Roman Critics* (London, 1965).

critical editions of texts (διορθώσεις), glossaries (Γλῶσσαι), lexicographic studies (Λέξεις and ὀνομαστικά), chronological and geographical works (e.g., the Χρονογραφίαι and Γεωγραφικά of Eratosthenes (c. 285–194)), commentaries (ὑπομνήματα), and treatises on specific literary topics, such as Aristophanes' Μετρικαὶ παροιμίαι, and Aristarchus' Πρὸς τὸ Ξένωνος παράδοξον, which asserted, against Xenon, that one author had written both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Epic and lyric poetry were the first to receive critical attention, and throughout this period the works of Homer were of primary importance. Yet, prose works were not neglected; for example, Aristarchus wrote a commentary on Herodotus, the first such treatment of a prose author.[17]

In the early part of the third century BCE, such men of learning were known as γραμματικοί,[18] in other words, practitioners of γραμματική, "literary scholarship." A description of γραμματική, representative of the Alexandrian tradition, can be found in the scholia to the Τέχνη γραμματική of Dionysius Thrax (c. 170–c. 90), who was a student of Aristarchus. According to this source, γραμματική is made up of four parts, ἀναγνωστικόν (reading aloud), ἐξηγητικόν (explanation), διορθωτικόν (textual criticism), and κριτικόν (literary judgment).[19] We will return to this system, in its Latin form, in a moment. We may note for now, however, how clearly this Greek tradition had taken shape by the first century BCE when the Roman world, looking as always to the Greek, was developing its own scholarship.

According to Suetonius' *De grammaticis*, self-conscious literary appreciation first came into Latin through the poets Livius and Ennius, both of whom knew Greek and interpreted Greek works along with their own poems. Suetonius connects the development of genuine literary studies in Rome with a visit made from Pergamum to Rome in 169 BCE by Crates of Mallos, who gave well-attended public lectures (*Gram.* 1–2).

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[17] Pfeiffer, *History*, 224.

[18] Cf. Tatian, *Orat.* 31.2; see also Pfeiffer, *History*, 157. Certain scholars of very broad interests, like Eratosthenes, called themselves φιλόλογοι; cf. Suetonius, *Gram.* 10. In the second century BCE, when scholarship began to develop in Pergamum, their leading figure, Crates of Mallos, was called both γραμματικός and κριτικός; see J. I. Porter, "Hermeneutical Lines and Circles: Aristarchus and Crates on the Exegesis of Homer," in *Homer's Ancient Readers*, ed. R. Lamberton and J. J. Keaney (Princeton, 1992), 86.

[19] A. Hilgard, *Scholia in Dionysii Thracis artem grammaticam* (Leipzig, 1901), 12. See Marrou, *Histoire*, 250–55. Cf. C. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der antiochenischen Exegese* (Köln-Bonn, 1974), 34–35; and B. Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe* (Basel, 1987), 30–38.

Another crucial link between Greek scholarship and the Latin world
was made when Dionysius Thrax left Alexandria for Rhodes follow-
ing political upheavals in 144/43 BCE, bringing his scholarly methods
with him, and probably influencing while at Rhodes L. Aelius Stilo (b.
c. 150 BCE), a key figure in the founding of classical scholarship at
Rome.[20] A notable product of the rise of literary studies in Rome is the
work of Stilo's student, Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27), whose wide
learning included extensive research on topics literary and linguistic.[21]
Evidence for the prominence of literary scholarship in the late first
century BCE can be seen in Q. Caecilius Epirota, a *grammaticus* and
freedman of Cicero's Atticus, who was the first to give public lectures
on Virgil (Suetonius, *Gram.* 16).

   Yet, the most comprehensive witness to the tradition of "grammati-
cal" scholarship in the Roman world is the *Institutio oratoria* of Quintil-
ian. In the process of laying out all aspects of the proper education of
an orator, Quintilian transmitted and preserved permanently for Latin
readers a wealth of information about Greek education and literary
studies. In reality, Greek scholarship had already been made Roman by
the first century CE, and Quintilian merely codified this appropriation
for later times. The *Institutio oratoria* was widely read throughout late
antiquity and was well known to Jerome.[22]

   In general, it may be said that the entire tradition of literary scholar-
ship in antiquity, both Greek and Latin, showed a remarkable degree

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[20] Pfeiffer, *History*, 266.
[21] An important example of Varro's erudition is his *De lingua latina*, only six out of
twenty-five books of which have survived. Because of the attention paid by Varro to
etymology and anomaly, topics of special interest to Stoics, G. M. A. Grube associates
Varro with the kind of scholarship brought to Rome by Crates of Mallos, who is gener-
ally thought to be a Stoic (Grube, *Greek and Roman Critics*, 161). For Crates' stoicism, see
Pfeiffer, *History*, 238, following the *Suda*. For doubts about whether Crates was really a
Stoic, see Porter, "Hermeneutical Lines," 85–88. Overall, however, there seems to be
sufficient evidence to connect Crates in at least some fashion with stoicism, although
with regard to his treatment of etymologies he may have been closer to Alexandrian
scholarship than to the Stoics; see M. Broggiato, *Cratete di Mallo, I frammenti* (La Spezia,
Italy, 2001), lx–lxv.
[22] On Quintilian, see F. H. Colson, "The Grammatical Chapters in Quintilian
I.4–8," *CQ* 8 (1914): 33–47; idem, "Some Problems in the Grammatical Chapters
of Quintilian," *CQ* 10 (1916): 17–31; and idem, ed. with intro. and comm., *M. Fabii
Quintiliani institutionis oratoriae Liber I* (Cambridge, 1924). On Quintilian and Jerome, see
Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers*, 197–202, 294–97; idem, "Jerome and the Latin Classics,"
VigChr 28 (1974): 225–26; and N. Adkin, "The Ninth Book of Quintilian's *Institutio
Oratoria* and Jerome," *Arctos* 32 (1998): 13–25.

of overall unity.[23] This unity manifested itself not only in the essential agreement between the Greek and Latin approaches, as seen in the case of Quintilian, but also in the continuity of study methods from the first century BCE up to the fourth century CE, as exemplified by the long commentary tradition on Virgil spanning that period.[24]

With the Virgilian commentaries, we have entered directly into the world of Jerome. The significance of Donatus for the study of Jerome has already been mentioned. Next to him in importance we must add Servius, a contemporary of Jerome and also a student of Donatus. Among his writings, Servius left a commentary on the *Ars grammatica* of Donatus, and also a commentary on Virgil, which has been preserved in a longer and a shorter version, both of which are useful for our present purposes, because both reflect the same tradition.[25] It was this tradition of *grammatice*, literary scholarship, that provided the template for Jerome's Hebrew philology of the Bible. Obviously, Jerome could not have learned any details about the Hebrew language from Donatus, any more than he would have studied the Bible under the famous Roman *grammaticus*. Nevertheless, while reading through Terence, Virgil, and other classical authors with Donatus, Jerome would have absorbed a methodology for identifying and answering linguistic and exegetical problems in texts. Once he had devoted himself to the study of the sacred scriptures, and had undertaken the task of learning Hebrew, it would have been natural for Jerome to apply that methodology to

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[23] Cf. E. Jullien, *Les professeurs de littérature dans l'ancienne Rome* (Paris, 1885), 242–43; and H. I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique, 4th ed.* (Paris, 1958), 8–9.

[24] Cf. H. Nettleship, "The Ancient Commentators on Virgil," in *P. Vergili Maronis Opera*, ed. H. Nettleship, commentary by J. Conington, vol. 1, 4th ed. (London, 1881), lvii–cix.

[25] Servius' commentary on Virgil has been preserved in two forms: (1) the shorter form ("S"), generally thought to be the original Servius; and (2) the longer form, first printed in 1600 by Pierre Daniel, and therefore known as "Servius Danielis" ("SD") or *Servius auctus*, which is generally regarded to be the product of a 7th or 8th century compiler who augmented the original commentary of Servius with materials from the commentary of Donatus; cf. E. K. Rand, "Is Donatus's Commentary on Virgil Lost?" *CQ* 10 (1916): 158–64. For skepticism regarding Donatus as the source for the new materials in "SD," cf. D. Daintree, "The Virgil Commentary of Aelius Donatus—black hole or 'éminence grise'," *Greece & Rome* 37 (1990): 65–79. Without doubt, however, both "S" and the additions in "SD" are relevant to the study of Jerome's intellectual environment. On the transmission of Servius, see the bibliography in P. K. Marshall, "Servius," in *Texts and Transmission: A Survey of the Latin Classics*, ed. L. D. Reynolds (Oxford, 1983), 385–88.

the Hebrew Bible, creating a Christian "sacred philology" of the Old Testament.[26]

Above, we noted the four-part division of γραμματική as found in the scholia to Dionysius Thrax. In order to describe more fully the components of *grammatice* as it would have been practiced and taught in the school of Donatus, we may consider the four-part division of "grammar" offered by the Latin author Varro: *lectio* (reading aloud), *enarratio* (explanation), *emendatio* (textual criticism), and *iudicium* (literary judgment).[27] This will serve as the framework for our analysis of Jerome's Hebrew philology on Jeremiah.

The first element of interpretation, *lectio*, consisted in reading the text out loud correctly. According to Dionysius Thrax, a proper reading should aim for accuracy in expression, accent, and punctuation.[28] Roman grammarians also discussed a fourth part, *modulatio.*[29] At the most basic level, this exercise helped the reader, often a student, to develop proper diction, which was highly desirable for its own sake.[30] *Lectio*, however, involved much more. Because most texts in Jerome's time lacked punctuation,[31] even the act of reading a text out loud

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[26] Cf. Jay, *L'exégèse*, 69. The concept of "sacred philology" as applied to the study of Scripture can be seen in the work of Solomon Glassius, *Philologia sacra* (1623), which dealt primarily with rhetoric and literary figures in the Bible. For an overview of Christian sacred philology more broadly construed (i.e., including all Greco-Latin Christian literature, including but not limited to Scripture), along with a discussion of Jerome's important place within this tradition, see G. M. Vian, *Bibliotheca divina: Filologia e storia dei testi cristiani* (Rome, 2001); and also A. Kamesar, review of *Bibliotheca divina*, by G. M. Vian, *JECS* 11 (2003): 124–27.

[27] Cited by Diomedes, *Art. Gramm.* Bk. 2, *de grammatica*: "Grammaticae officia, ut adserit Varro, constant in partibus quattuor, lectione enarratione emendatione iudicio" (GRF Varro. 236).

[28] ἀναγνωστέον δὲ καθ' ὑπόκρισιν, κατὰ προσῳδίαν, κατὰ διαστολήν (D.T. *Ars gramm.* 2).

[29] Audax, *Exc.* (GL 7.322).

[30] E.g., the epitaph, "grammaticus lectorque fui, set lector eorum more incorrupto qui placuere sono" (*CIL* 6, #9447).

[31] There is some evidence to suggest that punctuation signs marking sentences and clauses were in fact used in literary Latin texts at least from the early first century BCE to the early second century CE, in contrast to Greek texts, which were written in *scriptura continua.* Sometime during the second century CE, however, Latin texts also began to be written almost exclusively in *scriptura continua*, perhaps due to the increasing emphasis on cultural Hellenism favored at that time; see E. O. Wingo, *Latin Punctuation in the Classical Age* (Paris, 1972), 11–28, 132–33; and H. R. Pontes, *Callida Iunctura: The Divided Heroic Clausula in Virgil* (PhD dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1995). After the disuse of the earlier system, the primary "punctuation" marks used by Latin grammarians of late antiquity were those that guided the reader to the proper oral performance of the text, along the lines of Quintilian's application of rhetorical *distinctio* to text reading; cf. Quint. 11.3.35–39.

constituted a significant level of interpretation. Through the oral performance, one could indicate the proper division of words, clauses and sentences (*distinguere*), and show by voice inflection (*pronuntiare*) who was the speaker in a dialogue and whether a sentence should be read as a statement or a question.[32]

Obviously, one could not read a passage out loud without first understanding it, as Qunitilian says regarding the teaching of *lectio*: "Unum est igitur, quod in hac parte praecipiam: ut omnia ista facere possit, intelligat" (Quint. 1.8.2).[33] Because of this, the teacher would give a preliminary reading (*praelectio*), only after which would the students attempt to read the passage for themselves.[34] Anything in the reading that required further clarification would be explained as part of the *enarratio*, which followed closely after the *lectio*. To be sure, Jerome's commentaries are not directly the product of his own oral reading of the biblical text in front of students. Yet, Jerome paid great attention to the linguistic issues relevant to *lectio*, from right pronunciation to the proper tone of a sentence, thus showing how his grammatical education helped him to identify and explain important philological problems in the Hebrew text.

The next stage of literary interpretation was *enarratio*, the exposition of the form and content of the text.[35] Varro described *enarratio* as the explanation of obscure passages and the difficulties that arise from them.[36] Quintilian said that *enarratio* involved the consideration of minor points, such as linguistic usage, figures, and difficult words, and also a concern for the larger content, the stories and accounts that are narrated in the text (1.8.13–21). Because of its breadth of coverage, some diversity existed as to what specifically was included in *enarratio*. Nevertheless, the general method of *enarratio* was to explain the text section by section, clause by clause, and often word by word, providing whatever information was necessary to understand the meaning

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[32] Marrou, *Saint Augustin*, 21, 426; cf. Quint. 11.3.35–42; 1.8.1.

[33] This may be compared to Jerome's statement on translation in his *Prol. Iob IH*: "hoc unum scio non potuisse me interpretari nisi quod ante intellexeram."

[34] Cf. Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.24.5. According to Quint. 2.5.3–7, students should read one at a time when possible.

[35] Cf. Cicero, *De orat.* 1.42.187: "in grammaticis, poetarum pertractatio, historiarum cognitio, verborum interpretatio."

[36] "enarratio est obscurorum sensuum quaestionumve explanatio" (GRF Varro. 236; see n. 27). Cf. Dositheus, *Ars Gramm.* (GL 7.376): "Enarratio est obscurorum sensuum quaestionumque narratio."

of the passage, discussing any problems that arose, and paying special attention to "formal" grammar, vocabulary, and the usage of tropes and figures.

Regarding the various components that make up *enarratio*, Martin Irvine has suggested the following six as appearing regularly in the *enarratio* of Servius:

> (1) grammatical and linguistic clarification, especially metaplasms or poetically altered grammatical forms; (2) interpretation of *historia*, that is, mythology, narrative details, historical and geographical references and antiquities, often leading to philosophical, political, and mythological allegory; (3) commentary on style and poetic language, especially the interpretation of *tropoi*; (4) exposition of unusual words (*glossae*) and interpretation of words by etymology; (5) elucidation of philosophical and religious doctrine; and (6) commentary on literary tradition and on Vergil's place in tradition, including comparisons with other writers.[37]

Of these, numbers one through four are all components of Jerome's Hebrew scholarship. Component number five is ubiquitous in Jerome's *Commentary on Jeremiah*, as in all of his commentaries, but was not strictly a part of *enarratio* as it was defined philologically in ancient sources.[38] Irvine's component six, according to Varro's division, belongs not to *enarratio*, but to *iudicium*, to be discussed shortly.

For our purposes, we will focus on those elements of *enarratio* that bear specifically on Jerome's method of using Hebrew linguistic information in his exegesis. A constructive paradigm for understanding *enarratio* in Jerome's Hebrew philology can be found in the four ὄργανα, or "tools," of γραμματική, known to numerous ancient sources.[39] The ὄργανα were: (1) τὸ γλωσσηματικόν (analysis of words), (2) τὸ ἱστορικόν (elucidation of subject matter), (3) τὸ μετρικόν (treatment of meter), and (4) τὸ τεχνικόν (grammatical and rhetorical analysis). Because of their natural connection to the explication of authors, these four "tools" were prob-

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[37] M. Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: 'Grammatica' and Literary Theory, 350–1100* (Cambridge, 1994), 132.

[38] Jerome obviously devoted much attention in his biblical commentaries to the elucidation of religious doctrine. In this capacity, however, Jerome followed Christian models rather than "grammatical" ones. On Jerome's use of Hebrew, especially proper name etymologies, as part of his exposition of the spiritual sense of the biblical text, see pp. 190–91.

[39] H. Usener, "Ein altes Lehrgebäude der Philologie," in *Kleine Schriften*, vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1912–13), 269–70 (orig. pub. in *SBAW.PPH* 1892.4: 582–648); and A. Kamesar, "Philo, *Grammatike*, and the Narrative Aggada," in *Pursuing the Text*, ed. J. C. Reeves and J. Kampen (Sheffield, 1994), 224–27.

ably seen as components of τὸ ἐξηγητικόν (i.e., *enarratio*).[40] Although Jerome does not discuss meter (τὸ μετρικόν) in his commentaries on the Old Testament,[41] the other three ὄργανα well describe the way in which *enarratio* functioned in his Hebrew scholarship. In addition, we may mention another exegetical tool used by ancient grammarians, which may be treated as part of *enarratio*: παράφρασις (paraphrase), that is, restating the content of the passage in clearer and usually more developed language.[42] The three ὄργανα (τὸ μετρικόν excluded), together with paraphrase, are the primary tools of enarratio with which Jerome interpreted the Hebrew text.

The third stage, *emendatio*, actually encompassed more than just "textual criticism" in the modern sense. Diomedes described *emendatio* as "recorrectio errorum qui per scripturam dictionemve fiunt,"[43] i.e., the correction of the text and the correction of the language. Perhaps the reason why these two elements were so closely connected in antiquity was that many practitioners of *emendatio*, like Servius, rejected readings more often because of improper linguistic usage than for any other reason.[44] Evaluating the correctness of the language, therefore,

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[40] See Kamesar, "Philo," 225; Neuschäfer, *Origenes*, 139–40, 399; Marrou, *Histoire*, 252–55; Colson, "Grammatical Chapters," 42; and Usener, "Ein altes Lehrgebäude," 282.

[41] When Jerome does occasionally describe Hebrew in terms of "hexameters" or "iambic trimeters" and the like, he is merely trying to communicate to his Latin readers that the Hebrew is poetic, mimicking earlier statements of Philo, Josephus, and others. On these passages, see G. B. Gray, *The Forms of Hebrew Poetry* (London, 1915), 9–17; and J. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History* (New Haven, 1981), 135–70. Cf. n. 135 below.

[42] According to C. Wendel, *Überlieferung und Entstehung der Theokrit-Scholien*, AGWG NF 17, 2 (Berlin, 1920), 84: "Alle antike Interpretation hat zwei Grundelemente: Paraphrase und Einzelerklärung." On the extensive use of paraphrase for explanation in the scholia to Pindar, see K. Lehrs, *Die Pindarscholien* (Leipzig, 1873), 18–35, 49–72, 142–58. Ancient sources are not explicit as to the placement of παράφρασις within the system of γραμματική. Marrou included paraphrase as part of his discussion of *enarratio* because of its use in the scholia (Marrou, *Saint Augustin*, 23). Schäublin discussed paraphrase together with style criticism, but what he emphasized most about paraphrase was its interpretive and explanatory function (Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 142–43). Since Jerome's use of paraphrase was essentially limited to grammatical interpretation and exegesis, we (following Marrou on Augustine) will include paraphrase in our discussion of *enarratio*.

[43] GL 1.426.

[44] See J. Zetzel, *Latin Textual Criticism in Antiquity* (Salem, New Hampshire, 1981), 94–96, 132.

was essential for identifying words or phrases that were text-critically suspect.

Emendatio did, of course, go beyond merely objecting to readings based on grammatical and stylistic irregularities. Special significance was attached to manuscripts that were old or that were of known fidelity.[45] Also, critical signs, such as the *asteriscus* and *obelus*, were utilized in texts by Roman grammarians, having been adopted from the Greeks.[46] In these ways, *emendatio* did in fact include what would today be identified as textual criticism.

As for the correction of style, the grammarian focused on "quae barbara, quae impropria, quae contra leges loquendi sint posita" (Quint. 1.8.13). Even great authors like Virgil and Terence were criticized for faults of language, although there were also those who tended to defend the classical authors.[47] Jerome, for his part, does not criticize the language of the Hebrew Bible (although the LXX are not beyond reproach). Nevertheless, Jerome gives considerable attention to textual criticism, discussing manuscripts, identifying copyist errors, and even employing critical signs. Except for his unwillingness to find faults in the language of the Hebrew, Jerome's textual criticism of Jeremiah reflects the background and terminology of the *emendatio* of the grammarians.

The first three stages of interpretation served as the basis for a general assessment of the aesthetic value and overall qualities of the author, this being the goal of *iudicium*.[48] According to Dionysius Thrax, κρίσις (*iudicium*) was κάλλιστόν… πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ (D.T. *Ars gramm.* 1). The grammarian would make observations about what a given author was best at expressing, the most outstanding features of his style, and the general spirit embodied in his work.[49] Adverbs

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[45] Gell. *Noct. att.* 2.3.5; 5.4.1; 9.14.1; 18.5.11; Quint. 1.7.23; 9.4.39. Cf. also R. Jakobi, *Die Kunst der Exegese im Terenzkommentar des Donat* (Berlin, 1996), 23–24.

[46] Zenodotus may have been the first to employ a critical symbol, the *obelus*, although Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus developed the full system of σημεῖα (cf. Pfeiffer, *History*, 178, 218–19). Jerome, following Origen, makes use of both the *asteriscus* and the *obelus*, and he is aware of their Greek origin; cf. *Ep.* 106.7: "Quae signa et in Graecorum Latinorumque poematibus inveniuntur."

[47] R. D. Williams, "Servius—Commentator and Guide," *Proceedings of the Virgil Society* 6 (1966–67): 54–55.

[48] According to Diomedes, "iudicium est quo omnem orationem recte vel minus quam recte pronuntiatam specialiter iudicamus, vel aestimatio qua poema ceteraque scripta perpendimus" (*Art. Gramm.* Bk. 2, *de grammatica*; GL 1.426).

[49] Quint. 2.5.7–9; cf. Lucian, *Ind.* 2.

(and their corresponding adjectives) such as *suaviter, eleganter, sordide*, and *subtiliter*, as well as many others, were used to convey the author's aesthetic qualities.[50] Other aspects of this artistic criticism included the comparison of one author with another, and the assessment of how the author in question fit into the literary tradition in view of the genre in which he wrote.[51] The true nature of the enterprise can be seen in the way that Horace parodies it: "Ennius et sapiens et fortis et alter Homerus, ut critici dicunt;...ambigitur quotiens, uter utro sit prior, aufert Pacuvius docti famam senis, Accius alti;...Plautus ad exemplar Siculi properare Epicharmi, vincere Caecilius gravitate, Terentius arte" (*Ep.* 2.1.50–59). The respected position of the great authors did not rule out the possibility of negative comments.[52] Nevertheless, praise was the central theme of *iudicium*, such that Marius Victorinus could define it as "bene dictorum comprobatio."[53] As part of the evaluation represented in *iudicium*, grammarians also rendered judgments on the authenticity of works ascribed to particular authors.[54] Such a decision could be made for a given work by carefully comparing its stylistic qualities with the usual style of the author, making the question of authenticity a natural outgrowth of the task of *iudicium*.

Despite the fact that *iudicium* was the highest peak of *grammatike*, it was not necessarily left only for the end of the exposition. As seen above, Irvine included aspects of *iudicium* in his description of *enarratio*

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[50] Cf. S. Diederich, *Der Horazkommentar des Porphyrio im Rahmen der kaiserzeitlichen Schul- und Bildungstradition* (Berlin, 1999), 241–306; see esp. 279–306.

[51] Cf. Jullien, *Les professeurs*, 277–79.

[52] Cf. Diederich, *Horazkommentar*, 266–79. As Quintilian observed: "Summi enim sunt, homines tamen" (10.1.25). As an example of negative criticism by a grammarian, Probus questioned whether it was fitting for Nausistrata, being a woman, to use such familar language ("mi homo") with Phormio, a man who was a stranger to her (Donatus on Terence, *Ph.* 5.9.16).

[53] GL 6.188. The *Ars grammatica* attributed in the manuscripts to "Maximus Victorinus" should probably be ascribed to Marius Victorinus; cf. R. A. Kaster, *OCD*, 3rd ed. rev., s.v. "'Maximus Victorinus.'"

[54] Quintilian shows the question of authenticity to be part of *iudicium*: "quo (i.e. "iudicium") quidem ita severe sunt usi veteres grammatici ut non versus modo censoria quadam virgula notare et libros qui falso viderentur inscripti tamquam subditos summovere familia permiserint sibi, sed auctores alios in ordinem redegerint alios omnino exemerint numero" (Quint. 1.4.3). See Neuschäfer, *Origenes*, 248, 467, who also cites the following passage from the scholia to Dionysius Thrax: κρίνει δὲ ὡς οὔ, πότερον αὐτοῖς καλῶς γέγραπται ἢ οὔ, ἀλλὰ ποῖα ἀνόμοια καὶ ποῖα ὅμοια, καὶ ποῖα νόθα τῶν ποιημάτων καὶ ποῖα γνήσια. Jullien, *Les professeurs*, 271–72, deals with the issue of authenticity as part of his discussion of *emendatio*, but the ancient sources associate it rather with *iudicium*.

in Servius. Quintilian described *iudicium* as sometimes mixed in together
with *enarratio* and *emendatio*.[55] Throughout the explanation of the text,
one can find comments pertaining to *iudicium* on the content, construc-
tion, and style of the composition.[56]

In spite of his well-known personal interest in language and style,
Jerome does not devote a great deal of attention in his *Commentary on
Jeremiah* to discussing the aesthetic dimension of the book. Nevertheless,
as we will see, Jerome's desire to appreciate the aesthetic quality of the
Old Testament in its original language was likely part of his motiva-
tion for learning Hebrew in the first place.[57] Furthermore, although he
never says anything negative about the literary quality of the Hebrew
Bible, he does occasionally praise an expression found in the Hebrew
text, and he even makes some comparative judgments regarding the
styles of biblical authors. Jerome also shows a remarkable interest in
the question of authenticity, blending this interest together with his
belief in the *hebraica veritas*. In sum, the intellectual category repre-
sented by *iudicium*, albeit to a slightly lesser extent than *lectio, enarratio*,
and *emendatio*, formed a significant part of the foundation of Jerome's
Hebrew philology.

We now turn to a description of Jerome's Hebrew philology as seen
primarily in his *Commentary on Jeremiah*. Parallels will be introduced from
Jerome's other exegetical writings insofar as they help to illuminate
the general method underlying Jerome's comments on Jeremiah. In the
ancient practice of *grammatice*, as Jerome would have learned it at the
school of Donatus, we see the conceptual framework that largely deter-
mined what questions in the Hebrew text Jerome decided to address
and how he described and resolved those questions.

Lectio

Because Jerome had learned the importance of correct oral reading
during his time of study with the *grammaticus*, he paid careful attention
to the pronunciation of the Hebrew text. His "grammatical" education
gave him a linguistic vocabulary that he could use to describe the sounds

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[55] "enarrationem praecedit emendata lectio, et mixtum his omnibus iudicium est"
(Quint. 1.4.3).
[56] Cf. Horace, *Ars* 38–55; Quint. 1.8.17.
[57] See p. 86.

of Hebrew letters and words. We will begin this section by making a few general observations about Jerome's interest in Hebrew sounds; then, we will discuss four specific ways that Jerome employed principles learned through *lectio* in his Hebrew scholarship on Jeremiah. These four ways are: (1) the pronunciation of words, (2) the punctuation of clauses, (3) the identification of the speaker, and (4) the tone of expressions.

Regarding his general interest in the sounds of Hebrew, we may notice that Jerome was fully aware of his own inadequacies in pronouncing Hebrew correctly. Thus, while discussing Titus 3:9, Jerome pauses to make the following observations:

> …Iudaeos, qui in eo se iactant et putant legis habere notitiam, si nomina teneant singulorum quae, quia barbara sunt et etymologias eorum non novimus, plerumque corrupte proferuntur a nobis. Et si forte erraverimus in accentu, in extensione et brevitate syllabae, vel brevia producentes, vel producta breviantes, solent irridere nos imperitiae, maxime in aspirationibus et quibusdam cum rasura gulae litteris proferendis. Hoc autem evenit quod Septuaginta interpretes, per quos in Graecum sermonem lex divina translata est, specialiter 'Heth' litteram et 'ain,' et caeteras istiusmodi (quia cum duplici aspiratione in Graecam linguam transferre non poterant) aliis litteris additis expresserunt: verbi causa, ut 'Rahel,' 'Rachel,' dicerent; et 'Ieriho,' 'Iericho'; et 'Hebron,' 'Chebron'; et 'Seor,' 'Segor'; in aliis vero eos conatus iste deficit. Nam nos et Graeci unam tantum litteram 's' habemus, illi vero tres: 'Samech,' 'Sade,' et 'Sin,' quae diversos sonos possident. 'Isaac' et 'Sion' per 'Sade' scribitur; 'Israel' per 'Sin' et tamen non sonat hoc quod scribitur, sed quod non scribitur. 'Seon,' rex Amorrhaeorum, per 'Samech' litteram et pronuntiatur et scribitur. Si igitur a nobis haec nominum et linguae ἰδιώματα, ut videlicet barbara, non ita fuerint expressa ut exprimuntur ab Hebraeis, solent cachinnum adtollere et iurare se penitus nescire quod dicimus. (*Comm. Tit.* 3:9)

Jerome here employs terms like *accentus, syllaba*, and *aspiratio* in order to categorize Hebrew sounds. Detailed comments on such topics are not uncommon in Jerome's works, and they testify both to his experience hearing Hebrew read out loud and to his analytical approach to sorting out what he heard.

Thus, with reference to *accentus*, we may consider Jerome's comments on 'hissa' (אִשָּׁה) in Gen. 2:23. Jerome says that this word is derived from the Hebrew word for man, 'his' (אִישׁ), in accordance with the etymology presumed by the verse, but that Theodotion derived it from the Hebrew word for 'assumptio' ('quia ex viro sumpta est,' cf. אֶשָּׂא, "I will take up"). This variation depends, Jerome says, 'secundum varietatem accentus' (cf. *Comm. Ier.* 1:11–12). In other words, from Jerome's

perspective, the Hebrew words אִשָּׁה and אֶשָּׁא were close in pronunciation and differed only in "accentus."[58] Other examples of Jerome's interest in *accentus* include *Comm. Is.* 65:15–16: "quae hebraice dicitur 'sabaa,'… quod verbum multas habet intellegentias et pro accentuum diversitate variatur"; *Comm. Ezech.* 27:18: "frequenter enim hebraea nomina, pro diversitate accentuum et mutatione litterarum vocaliumque… varie interpretantur"; and *Comm. Am.* 8:11–14: "Bersabee autem pro varietate accentuum vertitur in linguam nostram, puteus iuramenti, aut puteus satietatis, ac septimi."

Similarly, Jerome makes numerous observations in his works on the sounds of individual letters in Hebrew. On the topic of 'h,' for example, Jerome says in his *De nominibus Hebraicis* (CChr 72, 87): "'h' autem a plerisque adspiratio putatur esse, non littera." This, Jerome assures us, is the opinion of the grammarians, "adspirationem 'h' in plerisque omisimus, licet eam grammatici non putent litterae loco habendam" (*Nom. Hebr.*; CChr 72, 136). We may compare this with Donatus, *Ars maior* 1.2: "'h' interdum consonans interdum adspirationis creditur nota" (GL 4.368).[59] Jerome's treatment of sibilants may also be clarified by an example from the *Nom. Hebr.* (CChr 72, 71): "Siquidem apud Hebraeos tres 's' sunt litterae: una, quae dicitur samech, et simpliciter legitur quasi per 's' nostram litteram describatur: alia sin, in qua stridor quidam non nostri sermonis interstrepit: tertia sade, quam aures nostrae penitus reformidant." Equally as revealing, in his *Comm. Is.* 11:1–3, Jerome compares the pronunciation of 'sade' to the nearest equivalents known to his readers: "Sed sciendum quod hic 'nezer' per 'sade' litteram scribatur, cuius proprietatem et sonum inter 'zeta' et 'es' latinus sermo non exprimit."[60] Regarding gutturals, Jerome makes the following observations on how they are usually transcribed:

> Non statim, ubicumque ex 'a' littera, quae apud Hebraeos dicitur aleph, ponuntur nomina, aestimandum est, ipsam esse solam quae ponitur. Nam interdum ex ain, saepe ex he, non numquam ex heth litteris, quae

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[58] As seen above in the passage from the *Comm. Tit.*, Jerome identified only three types of 's' sounds in Hebrew, 'samech, 'sade,' et 'sin,' and did not regularly differentiate between the two pronunciations of שׁ. On Jerome's attempts to deal with שׁ, see Barr, "St. Jerome and the Sounds of Hebrew," 23–28, and see below.

[59] Cf. Gell. *Noct. att.* 2.3: "'h' litteram, sive illam spiritum magis quam litteram dici oportet."

[60] The pronunciation of 'samech,' on the other hand, is like the Greek *sigma* (*QHG* 26:32–33).

adspirationes suas vocesque commutant, habent exordium. Sciendum igitur quod tam in Genesi quam ceteris in libris, ubi a vocali littera nomen incipit, apud Hebraeos a diversis (ut supra diximus) incohetur elementis, sed quia apud nos non est vocum tanta diversitas, simplici sumus elatione contenti. Unde accidit ut eadem vocabula, quae apud illos non similiter scripta sunt, nobis videantur in interpretatione variari. (*Nom. Hebr.*; CChr 72, 60)

As James Barr has suggested, the phrase "quae adspirationes suas vocesque commutant" means simply that 'ain,' 'he,' and 'heth' differ from one another in *adspiratio* and *vox*, despite the fact that they look alike in Latin transliteration.[61] This passage also raises the question of vowel letters, about which Jerome says, for example, that "ain" can be a *vocalis littera* (*Nom. Hebr.*; CChr 72, 87), that "he" can stand for "a" (*QHG* 17:15), and that "vav" can represent the letter "o" (*QHG* 23:16).[62] In all of these comments, Jerome demonstrates his awareness of the sounds of Hebrew and his predilection for describing them using grammatical language.

In his *Commentary on Jeremiah*, Jerome frequently handles the text in a manner that reflects his sensitivity to the oral dimension of the Hebrew. Occasionally, the sound of the Hebrew is addressed seemingly for its own sake; but more often, it is brought into the discussion precisely because of its relevance for interpretation. We will now look at the four specific ways that Jerome's training in *lectio* impacted the shape of his Hebrew philology.

First, Jerome often discusses the pronunciation of individual letters and words. Thus, at Jer. 19:2, he describes the pronunciation of 'heth' in 'harsith': "pro 'porta fictili' Aquila, Symmachus et Theodotio ipsum verbum posuerunt Hebraicum 'harsith,' pro quo LXX iuxta morem suum pro adspiratione 'heth' litterae addiderunt 'chi' Graecum, ut dicerent 'charsith' pro 'harsith,' sicut illud est pro 'Hebron' 'Chebron,' et pro 'Hieriho' 'Hiericho.'"[63] Jerome here uses a Greek equivalent in order

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[61] Barr, "St. Jerome and the Sounds of Hebrew," 13–16. Cf. E. F. Sutcliffe, "St. Jerome's Pronunciation of Hebrew," *Bib.* 29 (1948): 117.

[62] Jerome also knows that "vav" can be "u"; see *Comm. Abd.* 1: "'vav' quippe littera et pro 'u,' et pro 'o,' in eorum lingua accipitur." Cf. Jerome's comment on the third person singular suffix וֹ: "'O' autem quod scribitur per solam litteram 'vav,' αὐτοῦ, id est 'eius,' significat" (*Comm. Am.* 4:12–13).

[63] In this instance, Jerome agrees with the *Qere* (חרסית) of MT rather than the *Ketiv* (חרסות); see p. 99, n. 81. Cf. *QHG* Gen. 9:18: "Frequenter LXX interpretes, non valentes heth litteram, quae duplicem aspirationem sonat, in Graecum sermonem vertere, chi Graecum litteram addiderunt, ut nos docerent in istius modi vocabulis aspirare debere."

to describe the sound of the Hebrew letter. A similar procedure can be seen in Donatus, who used the Greek δίγαμμα in order to describe the sound of 'u' in words like "uulgus" (GL 4.367). As for Donatus, so also for Jerome, there is an intrinsic value in understanding the proper pronunciation of the language of the text.[64]

Most often, however, when Jerome cites a Hebrew word, he does so for the purpose of explaining what it means. This aspect of Jerome's Hebrew philology will be addressed more fully as part of *enarratio*, but we may provide two examples here in order to show that Jerome is aware of the special relationship between the pronunciation of a Hebrew word and its meaning.[65] Jerome analyzes the word דבר at the beginning of Jer 9:21 (MT) in light of this pronunciation/meaning relationship: "Verbum Hebraicum, quod tribus litteris scribitur 'daleth, beth, res'—vocales enim in medio non habet—, pro consequentia et legentis arbitrio si legatur 'dabar,' 'sermonem' significat, si 'deber, 'mortem,' si dabber,' 'loquere.'" Theodotion, like the LXX, understood the word as דֶּבֶר (θανάτῳ, Field II, 596) and joined it to the preceding section ("iunxere illud praeterito capitulo"), translating the end of verse twenty as "disperdere parvulos de foris, iuvenes de plateis morte." Jerome, however, follows Aquila and Symmachus (λάλησον) in reading the word as דַּבֵּר and connecting it to what follows: "Loquere: haec dicit dominus."[66] Because the Hebrew text of Jerome's day was written without vowels, the oral reading of a passage involved a considerable amount of interpretation, even at the most basic lexical level. As Jerome notes, the context ("pro consequentia") was the primary guide for the reader.

Jerome makes a similar observation in his discussion of the word אבנים at Jer 18:3: "'cumque,' ait, 'perrexissem et descendissem in domum figuli, faciebat ipse opus super rotam,' quam LXX verbi ambiguitate seducti 'lapides' transtulerunt; 'abanim' enim pro qualitate loci et diversitate pronuntiationis et 'organum,' id est 'rota' figuli, vocatur et

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[64] Jerome also shows his interest in the sound of the Hebrew text read out loud when he provides the underlying Hebrew equivalent of a word without using the Hebrew in any way to discuss its meaning. It is as if Jerome simply wants to let his readers know, for interest's sake, what is the original Hebrew. Thus, on Jer 5:3, "'fidem,' quae Hebraice dicitur 'emuna'"; and on Jer 32:16–19, "'potens'—quod Hebraice dicitur 'gibbor.'"

[65] According to the "ἰδίωμα linguae Hebraeae," the vowel letters are not written in between the consonants (*Comm. Ier.* 25:26c). Especially for Hebrew, therefore, pronunciation is an act of interpretation.

[66] On דבר, cf. also *Comm. Abac.* 3:5; and *Comm. Is.* 9:8–13.

'lapides.'" The LXX, misled by the ambiguity of אבנים, understood the more common word, אֲבָנִים ("lapides"), rather than the word better suited to the context, אָבְנָיִם ("rota"), as in Jerome and MT. Again, the ambiguity of the word is based on the different pronunciation options, and the only guide for the reader is the nature of the passage ("pro qualitate loci"), that is, the context.

Another aspect of interpretation included as part of *lectio* is proper punctuation, the division of words and phrases into sense units.[67] Quintilian, in the course of impressing upon his students the importance of *distinctio* in speaking, gives an example of how a *grammaticus* would read the opening lines of the *Aeneid*, indicating the correct punctuation through pauses:

> Suspenditur *arma virumque cano*, quia illud *virum* ad sequentia pertinet, ut sit *virum Troiae qui primus ab oris*, et his iterum. Nam etiamsi aliud est, unde venit quam quo venit, non distinguendum tamen, quia utrumque eodem verbo continetur *venit*. Tertio *Italiam*, quia interiectio est *fato profugus* et continuum sermonem, qui faciebat *Italiam Lavinaque*, dividit. Ob eandemque causam quarto *profugus*, deinde *Lavinaque venit litora*, ubi iam erit distinctio, quia inde alius incipit sensus… Virtus autem distinguendi fortasse sit parva; sine qua tamen esse nulla alia in agendo potest. (Quint. 11.3.36–39)

We have already seen Jerome's concern for the proper division of clauses in our discussion of דבר at Jer. 9:21. There, for the words לְהַכְרִית עוֹלֵל מִחוּץ בַחוּרִים מֵרְחֹבוֹת דָבַר כֹּה נְאֻם יהוה..., Jerome had to decide whether to pause (*distinguere*) after מרחבות, or after דבר. In a similar fashion, Jerome explains his division and interpretation of the text at the beginning of Jer 8:18 vis-à-vis the reading of the LXX: "'Dolor meus super dolorem, in me cor meum maerens.' Pro quo, ut supra diximus, LXX superiori sententiae, quae dicta sunt, copularunt, ut ponerent: 'et mordebunt vos, ait dominus,[68] insanabiliter cum dolore cordis vestri deficientis.'" The words in question are: וְנָשְׁכוּ אֶתְכֶם נְאֻם יהוה מַבְלִיגִיתִי עֲלֵי יָגוֹן עָלַי לִבִּי דַוָּי. Jerome begins a new clause after נְאֻם יהוה, whereas the LXX seem to have read מִבְּלִי נְהֹת (ἀνίατα, or as Jerome translates the LXX, "insanabiliter") instead of MT מַבְלִיגִיתִי, not punctuating until after מבלי נהת, and joining all of verse eighteen

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to the end of verse seventeen (καὶ δήξονται ὑμᾶς ἀνίατα μετ' ὀδύνης καρδίας ὑμῶν ἀπορουμένης). According to Jerome, the Hebrew suggests his division of the clauses.

Jerome likewise objects to the LXX's *distinctio* at Jer. 12:11, regarding the words found in MT as אבלה עלי. The LXX translated MT אָבְלָה as ἀπωλείας, perhaps reading a form of אבד, "destruction," or maybe even אכלה, as in some Hebrew manuscripts,[69] with the sense of "consuming, devouring." Whatever the origin of the LXX's reading, they punctuated after ἀπωλείας (MT אבלה), joining it to what came before, and beginning a new sentence with the words that follow (starting with עלי), δι' ἐμὲ ἀφανισμῷ ἠφανίσθη πᾶσα ἡ γῆ. Jerome, on the other hand, apparently read something like וְאָרָה (from אור) in place of MT אָבְלָה, and he joined the whole clause, וְאָרָה עָלַי ("Luxitque super me"), to the preceding words (Jerome reads שָׂמָהּ לִשְׁמָמָה), thus punctuating after עלי: "Hoc, quod posuimus: 'luxitque super me' iuxta Hebraicum priori versiculo copulatur, ut sit: 'posuerunt eam in dissipationem,' hoc est hereditatem meam, 'luxitque super me,' meo auxilio destituta." As in the previous case, a difficulty involving the interpretation of a particular word gave rise to confusion in how to punctuate the whole clause.[70]

One can also find in Servius the application of *distinctio* to issues of interpretation, as when he comments on "sancte deorum" at *Aen.* 4.576: "aut distingue 'sancte,' aut secundum Ennium dixit 'respondit Iuno Saturnia sancta dearum.'" Unlike Jerome, however, Servius often appeals to such arguments in order to rescue the text from some fault of language: "'Dum Pluit': hic distinguendum: nam si iunxeris 'dum pluit in terris,' erit archaismos: debuit enim dicere 'in terras'" (*Aen.* 10.807). As we shall see, Servius' frequent habit of discussing the text

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[69] See B. Kennicott, *Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum cum variis lectionibus* (Oxford, 1776–80), 108.

[70] For similar examples, cf. Jerome's comments on Jer 11:7–8 and Jer 23:9a. The importance of proper clause division can be seen in *Tract. psal.* 89, where Jerome rebukes heresy for wrongly punctuating Psalm 89:2 (LXX): "Male distinguis, haeresis. Quare calumniam facis Spiritui sancto? Sic loquere, quomodo Spiritus sanctus locutus est. Sic ergo legendum: 'Domine, refugium factus es nobis in generatione et generatione,' et hucusque distinctio." Jerome's use of the word "distinguis" reflects the "grammatical" nature of his approach to this issue, although there is also a tradition preserved in numerous rabbinic texts that relates to the division of clauses (see *Mek. Amalek*.1; *Tan. Beshallah*. 26; *GenR* 80.6; *Yoma* 52a–b; and *CantR* 1.2.1); the key term used in this tradition is הכרע, i.e., the grammatical "decision" regarding whether to read certain words with what precedes or what follows (see W. Bacher, *Die exegetische Terminologie der jüdischen Traditionsliteratur*, pt. 1 (Leipzig, 1899), 87).

in terms of contemporary usage is one of the major characteristics of his approach that distinguishes him from Jerome.[71]

Moving from the simpler elements to more advanced forms of *lectio*, the reading of a text aloud also provided an opportunity to indicate the identity of the speaker in a given passage. In dramatic reading, it was generally desirable to represent, through vocal performance, some distinctions between the different characters in the work being read. According to Diomedes, "Pronuntiatio est scriptorum secundum personas accomodata distinctione similitudo, cum aut senis temperamentum aut iuvenis protervitas aut feminae infirmitas aut qualitas cuiusque personae ostendenda est et mores cuisque habitudinis exprimendi" (GL 1.436).[72] Frequently, the identity of the speaker as presented by the author was indicated by saying that a given passage was spoken "ex persona" of some individual, such as "dictum est e persona poetae" (Servius, *Aen.* 8.565), "nunc ergo 'veteris' ex persona poetae intellegendum" (Servius, *Aen.* 1.23), and "Hoc servus dicit, sed ex Horati persona" (Porphyrio, *Sat.* 2.7.37).

This same practice may be seen in the Jeremiah commentary, as at Jer. 6:11a, where Jerome appeals directly to the Hebrew in order to identify the speaker: "Iuxta Hebraicum ex persona prophetae dicitur… iuxta LXX autem novus sensus ponitur, quod ipse loquatur dominus."[73] Similarly, Jerome's only comment on the lemma for Jer 10:19a pertains to the identification of the speaker: "Iuxta Hebraicum ipsa Hierusalem

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[71] We may also consider here one particular instance where Jerome deals with a whole verse as the dividing point between two chapters. At Jer 27:1, a verse missing from the LXX, Jerome says: "Hoc in editione LXX non habetur et multi putant sequentis capituli esse pricipium, quod nequaquam ita est, sed iungendum superiori, ut, quicquid dictum refertur et factum, in principio regni Ioiacim factum esse credamus… videntur autem mihi LXX titulum istum hac ratione siluisse, ne secundo dicere viderentur." Although "many" (see pp. 182–83) think that this is the beginning of chapter twenty-seven, as in MT, Jerome believes that it is a summary verse for chapter twenty-six. In Jerome's opinion, the LXX omitted this verse because they saw it as an unnecessary repetition of 26:1. This discussion may be compared to Servius on *Aen.* 5.871, "sciendum sane Tuccam et Varium hunc finem quinti esse voluisse: nam a Vergilio duo versus sequentes huic iuncti fuerunt: unde in non nullis antiquis codicibus sexti initium est 'obvertunt pelago proras, tum dente tenaci.'"

[72] Cf. Audax, *Exc.*, "Pronuntiatio quid est? Scriptorum secundum personas accommodata distinctione similitudo, ut puta cum aut senis temperamentum aut iuvenis protervitas aut feminae infirmitas aut qualitas cuiusque personae distinguenda est et mores cuiusque habitus exprimendi" (GL 7.322).

[73] For similar examples of the use of "ex persona" in the *Comm. Ier.*, cf. Jer. 9:1; 11:18–20; 14:17; 15:11; and 15:17–18.

loquitur, quod vehementer afflicta sit et plagam sustineat insanabilem;
iuxta LXX vero propheta loquitur ad Hierusalem et plangit eam super
contritione et plaga sui."[74] Jerome was keenly aware of how difficult it
could be to identify the speaker, especially in the prophets: "Mutatio
personarum obscuram facit intellegentiam prophetarum" (*Comm. Ier.* 31:
25–26); so also, "Personarum mutatio, et maxime in prophetis, difficilem
intellectum facit (*Comm. Ier.* 8: 14–15)."[75] Among grammarians, this quick
change of speakers could be seen as a literary device, as reflected in
Porphyrio's comment on Horace, *Sat.* 1.9.62–63: "Eleganter mixtum
inter se et confusum sermonem interrogandi ac respondendi expres-
sit." For Jerome, however, whose main objective was to untangle and
explain the meaning of the text for doctrinal and moral instruction,
the prophetic custom of changing speakers without notice was more
of a problem to be overcome.

As a final component of *lectio*, we may consider those instances where
Jerome indicates something of the manner in which texts should be
read. An example of this, where the issue of *persona* is also addressed,
may be found in Jerome's treatment of Jer. 8:18: "ἐμφατικῶς autem
haec ex persona dei legenda sunt plangentis eversionem Hierusalem et
eius miserias non ferentis."[76] Such comments occur regularly in Servius,
as when he explains the expression "Phrygio servire marito" at *Aen.*
4.103: "ἐμφατικῶς, ac si diceret 'exuli.'" Voice inflection could also
indicate that a sentence was to be read as a question. Thus Jerome,
after giving the Hebrew lemma of Jer. 8:12a, states: "ἐρωτηματικῶς hoc
est legendum, ut sit sensus: 'erubuerunt in sceleribus suis, intellexerunt
abominationes quas operati sunt?'" We may compare this to Porphyrio,
Epod. 16.23: "interrogative pronuntiandum est." In his *Commentary on
Jeremiah*, as in his other exegetical works, Jerome reflects the grammati-
cal tradition by commenting on the Hebrew text from the perspective
of its being read out loud.[77]

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[74] Cf. Jer 12:11b,12: "iuxta LXX vero loquitur deus."
[75] Jerome also recognized how often the speaker changes in the Psalms; cf. *Expl.
Dan.* 11:1 "Consuetudinis autem est prophetarum repente personas introducere sine
ulla praefatione verborum—ut est illud in psalmo tricesimo primo... ergo et nunc,
narrante propheta..." See also *Tract. psal.* 80:8: "Prophetae et psalmi ideo obscuri
sunt, quoniam subito, cum nescis, persona mutatur."
[76] Cf. *Comm. Is.* 14:9–10: "Haec ἐμφατικῶς legenda sunt."
[77] For further examples, see Jer. 2:28a: "legendumque increpantis affectu"; Jer. 6:15a:
"Pressius hoc legendum est iuxta Hebraicum"; *Comm. Is.* 26:11: "Et hoc pressius voce
interrogantis legendum est"; and *Comm. Is.* 17:10: "Hoc pressius et cum ironia legen-
dum." Cf. Servius, *Aen.* 4.93: "εἰρωνεία est, inter quam et confessionem sola interest
pronuntiatio."

Although Jerome's commentaries are not school texts intended to teach proper *lectio*, it is clear that Jerome's grammatical education, with its emphasis on proper and intelligent oral reading, provided him with a foundation for studying the Hebrew Bible at the most basic level of exegesis. From having read carefully aloud with the *grammaticus* at school, Jerome was sensitive to these rudimentary exegetical questions and had an interpretive apparatus for solving them. More advanced exegesis, including the explanation of difficult words, belonged to the sphere of *enarratio*.

Enarratio

Jerome's greatest emphasis as a Hebraist lay in the area of *enarratio*: the exposition of the text, the explanation of difficulties, linguistic analysis, and the provision of background information. A large part of this enterprise for Jerome consisted in discussing the meanings of individual Hebrew words. Yet, Jerome's use of Hebrew in *enarratio* went beyond lexical analysis, including such contextually oriented elements as paraphrase and *historia*, as well as more technical comments on grammar and literary figures. Above all else, and more so than contemporary grammarians, Jerome focused on issues that had a direct impact on the meaning of the text. We will examine *enarratio* in Jerome's Hebrew philology through the lens of the three relevant ὄργανα, or "tools" of τὸ ἐξηγητικόν (see pp. 22–23): τὸ γλωσσηματικόν (analysis of words), τὸ ἱστορικόν (elucidation of subject matter), and τὸ τεχνικόν (grammatical and rhetorical analysis), with attention also given to Jerome's extensive use of παράφρασις (paraphrase).

As we have stated, the most important part of *enarratio* for Jerome's Hebrew scholarship was the interpretation of difficult or unusual words. According to Quintilian, students should begin to learn the meanings of obscure words, or γλῶσσαι as the Greeks call them, at a young age (Quint. 1.1.35). Because of their great significance, teachers should be very diligent in explaining *glossemata*, which could also be described as words of rare usage (Quint. 1.8.15).[78] The treatment of glosses was so important to early grammarians that some of them were known simply as *glossematum scriptores*.[79]

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[78] According to ancient usage, the difficult word itself, not its explanation, is called a "gloss."

[79] Jullien, *Les professeurs*, 227.

Roman grammarians of antiquity, far from operating solely within the Latin language system, were deeply aware of the extensive influence that Greek language and literature had had on their own great authors. Servius, in fact, believed that one of Virgil's two great goals in writing the *Aeneid* was to imitate Homer.[80] In view of this literary dependence, especially when there was a direct link between a given Latin work and its Greek model, grammarians would appeal to the Greek "original" in order to clarify the sense of the Latin. One can see this in Servius' use of such expressions as "sicut etiam Homerus ostendit" (*Aen.* 9.305), "hoc autem tractum est de Homero" (*Aen.* 4.496), "secundum Homerum" (*Aen.* 7.26), and "sermone Homeri usus est" (*Aen.* 5.556). In a manner similar to Jerome's appeal to the Hebrew, Servius explains the intended meaning of "puer" at *Aen.* 3.339 with reference to the Greek: "'puer ascanius.' filius, quia Graeci παῖδας etiam filios dicunt."[81] Likewise, on the phrase "acrem Turnum" at *Aen.* 8.614, Servius says: "'acrem Turnum.' fortem. nam proprie apud nos acer est qui apud Graecos δεινός dicitur. nam fortem et vehementem, et asperum et amarum potest significare." Servius frequently expounded on the etymologies of words, as at *Aen.* 3.445, where Servius gives the etymology of "Sibylla": "sibylla appellavitum est nomen adeo, ut Varro, quot sibyllae fuerint, scripserit. sibylla autem dicitur omnis puella, cuius pectus numen recipit; nam Aeolii σιοὺς dicunt deos, βουλὴ autem est sententia: ergo sibyllas quasi σιοῦ βουλὰς dixerunt."[82] On a more technical level, at *Aen.* 1.697, Servius uses Greek to explain the origin of the diphthong in "aulaeis": "sciendum sane omnia Graeca nomina in η exeuntia, cum derivationem faciunt, η in 'ae' dipthongon convertere, ut αὔλη aulaea, Ἴδη Idaea, Αἴτνη Aetnaea." As we see, although Jerome's return to

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[80] According to the preface to his *Aeneid* commentary, Virgil's aims were "Homerum imitari et Augustum laudare a parentibus." Cf. also the preface to Servius' commentary on the *Georgics*, where he says that Virgil followed Homer in the *Aeneid*, Theocritus in the *Bucolics*, and Hesiod in the *Georgics*.

[81] See also Servius on *Aen.* 2.598 and 4.94. Cf. the "D" scholia at *Iliad* 1.496 and 3.106. For a discussion of Servius' knowledge of these scholia, see M. Mühmelt, *Griechische Grammatik in der Vergilerklärung* (Munich, 1965), 50–59. Cf. also Porphyrio, *Carm.* 1.12.25: "'puerosque Ledae.' Graeca consuetudine pueros pro filiis."

[82] Jerome likewise cites Varro for his etymology of the same word: "Quid referam Sibyllas Erithraeam atque Cumanam et octo reliquas: nam Varro decem fuisse autumat, quarum insigne virginitas est et virginitatis praemium divinatio? Quod si Aeolici genere sermonis Sibylla θεοβούλη appellatur, recte 'consilium dei' sola scribitur nosse virginitas" (*Iov.* 1.41).

the Hebrew was an innovation for his time, the practice of utilizing a "source" language in the explanation of a word was already common in the grammatical tradition.

The central theme of the lexical exegesis found in the Jeremiah commentary is that the popularly known Latin translation of Jerome's day, which had been based on the LXX, did not sufficiently capture the precise meanings of many of the original Hebrew words. Only by checking the Hebrew could the true sense of biblical *glossemata* be discovered. For example, commenting on the word תּוֹדָה at Jer 30:19, Jerome corrects the better known "laus," which he had left in his lemma,[83] by citing the Hebrew: "tunc egressa est 'laus' sive 'gratiarum actio'—hoc enim significat 'thoda.'" Jerome seems to regard "praise" as an acceptable rendering for תּוֹדָה, but thinks that "an expression of thanks" is more accurate.[84] Likewise, at Jer 10:16, Jerome first gives the commonly understood meaning of יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, "dominus omnipotens," but prefers the alternative "dominus virtutum," since this is closer to the meaning of the actual Hebrew words: "hoc enim sonat 'dominus exercituum,' quod in Hebraico scriptum est 'dominus sabaoth.'" In his treatment of Jer 25:38, Jerome gives two translation options for סֻכּוֹ, his own ("umbraculum") and the traditional rendering ("cubile"). He also tells the reader how one would translate the word if one wished to follow the Hebrew strictly: "et, ut verius est, 'tabernaculum;' hoc enim 'soccho' Hebraicum sonat." Jerome can be quite forthright in his suggestions, as when he chides the LXX for translating אֶבְיוֹנִים as χήρας at Jer 5:28: "'pupillum et pauperes contumserunt,' pro quo Septuaginta dixerunt 'viduas,' quod in Hebraico non habetur; 'hebionim' quippe proprie 'pauperes,' non 'viduas' sonat." In sum, when Jerome appeals to the Hebrew to explain the meaning of a word, he does so (1) in order to correct a perceived error in the traditional version, or (2) to provide a more complete understanding of the traditional text than could have been available without the knowledge of Hebrew.

Jerome, like a grammarian, was fully conscious of the interpretive problems that could arise due to the ambiguity of words. Quintilian

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[83] On Jerome's willingness to leave familiar phrases in place even in his translation *iuxta Hebraeos*, see H. F. D. Sparks, "Jerome as Biblical Scholar," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible: From the Beginnings to Jerome*, ed. P. Ackroyd and C. Evans (Cambridge, 1970), 523–24; and Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 112–14.

[84] Cf. *Comm. Is.* 65:8: "Et tamen sciendum in hebraico pro calore scriptum esse 'thoda,' quod interpretatur 'gratia.'"

described this interpretive difficulty by referring to the linguistic concept
of homonymy: "Singula adferunt errorem, cum pluribus rebus aut
hominibus eadem appellatio est (ὁμωνυμία dicitur), ut 'gallus,' avem
an gentem an nomen an fortunam corporis significet, incertum est…
quae ambiguitas plurimis modis accidit" (Quint. 7.9.2–3). It was the
grammarian's task to determine which sense of a given ambiguous
word was meant. If the context did not provide enough information,
the problem of ambiguity could be deemed irresolvable.[85] Usually,
however, after having stated the options, the grammarian would indicate
the correct interpretation.[86]

Within Christian circles, the Hebrew language had a reputation for
being highly ambiguous, and therefore subject to numerous different
interpretations.[87] In the manner of a grammarian, Jerome utilized his
knowledge of Hebrew in order to clarify the ambiguities of Hebrew
words for the Latin reader.[88]

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[85] E.g., Servius on *Aen.* 3.142: "'seges' interdum terram significat, ut Horatius…
interdum frumentum, ut… hoc loco utrumque potest intellegi."

[86] E.g., Servius on *Aen.* 1.1: "cano polysemus sermo est. tria enim significat: ali-
quando laudo, ut regemque canebant; aliquando divino, ut ipsa canas oro; aliquando
canto, ut in hoc loco. nam proprie canto significat, quia cantanda sunt carmina." On
"polysemos sermo" in Servius, see E. Thomas, *Servius et son commentaire sur Virgile* (Paris,
1880), 237–38.

[87] Hilary of Poitiers, for example, held that the Hebrew language, which was written
without vowels in antiquity, was especially subject to ambiguity, perhaps deriving this
information from Eusebius of Emesa's *Commentary on the Octateuch*, which he could have
read in Greek translation; see A. Kamesar, "Hilary of Poitiers, Judeo-Christianity, and
the Origins of the LXX: A Translation of *Tractatus Super Psalmos* 2.2–3 with Introduc-
tion and Commentary," *VC* 59 (2005): 280. Hilary argued that the inherent ambiguity
of Hebrew made direct reference to it in his own day essentially useless. According
to Hilary, the seventy translators had access to secret traditions that allowed them to
interpret the ambiguous words correctly, whereas later translators simply guessed at
the meanings, often incorrectly. For Hilary, this confirmed the authority of the LXX.
Jerome obviously did not share this belief, preferring to deal with the ambiguity of the
Hebrew language by learning it; cf. Kamesar, *Jerome*, 31–32.

[88] As an example of the pagan interest in this topic, the grammarian Orus composed
an entire book dealing with polysemy and lexical ambiguity, entitled Περὶ πολυσημάντων
λέξεων; see R. Reitzenstein, *Geschichte der griechischen Etymologika* (Leipzig, 1897), 335–47.
As for Jerome, he justified his interest in Hebrew learning by appealing to ambiguity,
even citing pagan authorities: "Mihi non licebit disputare de verbis et, in commentari-
orum opere, Latinos docere quod ab Hebraeis didici? Nisi et prolixum esset, et redoleret
gloriolam, iam nunc tibi ostenderem quid utilitatis habeat magistrorum limina terere
et artem ab artificibus discere; et videres quanta silva sit apud Hebraeos ambiguorum
nominum atque verborum. Quae res diversae interpretationi materiam praebuit, dum
unusquisque inter dubia quod sibi consequentius videtur, hoc transfert. Quid ad per-
egrina te mitto? Revolve Aristotelen et Alexandrum Aristotelis volumina disserentem;
et quanta ambiguorum sit copia, eorum lectione cognosces" (*Ruf.* 1.20).

Often, Jerome explains the error of one of the earlier Greek ver-
sions by appealing to the ambiguity of the underlying Hebrew, thus
correcting the problem. At Jer 2:2, a verse omitted by the LXX, Jerome
clarifies the meaning of קְרָא, which Theodotion had understood in
the sense of "to read." Jerome concedes that Theodotion's rendering
is not unreasonable in light of the word's ambiguity, but that another
meaning for קְרָא is in fact correct: "Hoc in LXX non habetur, sed sub
asteriscis de Theodotionis editione additum est, qui verbum Hebraicum
'carath,' pro quo nos diximus 'clama' sive 'praedica,' interpretatus est
'lege.' et lectionem enim et clamorem et praedicationem pro sui ambi-
guitate significat."[89] Jerome resolves an exegetical problem by clarifying
the ambiguity of a Hebrew word at Jer 32: 29, where the LXX had
translated the phrase וּבָאוּ הַכַּשְׂדִּים as καὶ ἥξουσιν οἱ Χαλδαῖοι ("et
venient Chaldaei"). Jerome objects to this translation on the grounds
that, according to Jer 32:2 ("tunc exercitus regis Babylonis obsidebat
Hierusalem"), the Chaldeans were already present and were actually
surrounding the city, so that it would make no sense to say at this point
that they "will come." It is better to interpret וּבָאוּ as "they will enter"
("ingredientur"), as Aquila had done (εἰσελεύσονται). This interpreta-
tion fits the context better and is allowed by the Hebrew: "'sed hi, qui
obsidebant urbem, ingredientur,' inquit, 'et capient eam et succen-
dent et ad solum usque comburent'—verbum enim Hebraicum 'bau'
ambiguitate sui et 'venient' et 'ingredientur' sonat." Similarly, Jerome
justifies his diverse renderings of רוּחַ at Jer 4:11–12 ("ventus" in 4:11
but "spiritus" in 4:12) by explaining that the Hebrew word can have
two meanings and that the immediate context must determine which
Latin equivalent to use: "'ventus' et 'spiritus' eodem apud Hebraeos
appellantur nomine 'ruha' et pro locorum qualitate vel 'ventum' vel
'spiritum' debemus accipere."[90] By appealing to the ambiguity of the

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[89] Jerome makes essentially the same comment on two other occasions in the Jer-
emiah commentary: Jer. 3:12–13, and 19:1–3a, where Jerome sums up: "quia verbum
Hebraicum 'carath' tria significat." Cf. Servius on *Aen.* 1.1, cited in note 86 above:
"cano polysemus sermo est. tria enim significat."

[90] On the two meanings of 'ruha,' cf. Jer. 2:23c–24, 10:12–16; cf. also *Comm. Os.*
4:17–19. That "spirit" could also mean "air" was already suggested by Eusebius of
Emesa; see R. B. Ter Haar Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek Dress: The Use of Greek, Hebrew, and
Syriac Biblical Texts in Eusebius of Emesa's Commentary on Genesis* (Leuven, 1997), 174–83. Yet,
by basing his discussion strictly on the Hebrew, which he gives in transliteration, Jerome
has "Hebraized" Eusebius' observation (cf. Kamesar, *Jerome*, 129–31). Although Jerome
recommends here translating the same Hebrew word in two different ways, he did not
refrain from criticizing the LXX for doing this elsewhere, e.g., *QHG* 47:31, 48:2.

Hebrew, Jerome could soften his criticism of previous versions or jus-
tify the novelty of his own suggestion. Previous interpreters erred, not
because of total incompetence, but because of a genuine ambiguity in
the original Hebrew word. The only way to remove the uncertainty
was to go back directly to the Hebrew itself.

   There are occasions, of course, where the ambiguity is explained, but
not resolved. Faced with five different options for translating צור among
the earlier Greek versions, Jerome contents himself merely to report the
diverse meanings of the Hebrew word, without choosing any one in
particular: (the LXX had put Σορ) "...pro quo Symmachus 'petram,'
Theodotio 'obsessam' interpretati sunt, Aquila prima editio 'solidam,'
secunda 'Tyrum'; 'Sor' enim sive 'Sur' lingua Hebraea et 'Tyrum' et
'silicem' et 'coartatam' sonat." Jerome reproduces the rendering of the
first edition of Aquila in the lemma, although he does not explicitly
claim to derive this from the Hebrew, and he surprisingly fails to give
"solida" as a possible meaning when he lists the Hebrew options. In
cases such as this, when Jerome is unsure about the actual meaning of
the Hebrew word, he still asserts that direct recourse to the Hebrew
can at least explain the origins of the diverse evidence, even if it can-
not unambiguously resolve the difficulty.[91] Alternately, Jerome may give
a separate exposition to each of two possibilities for a given word, as
he does for אלה at Jer 2:34: "'sed in omnibus, quae supra memoravi,'
sive 'sub quercu'—quae Hebraice dicitur 'ella,' quae quidem et 'ista'
significat, ut sit sensus: 'in omnibus istis,' sive 'sub quercu atque terebin-
tho': 'sub cuius umbra et frondibus quasi in amoenis locis idololatriae
sceleribus fruebaris.'" The word is either אֵלֶּה, as in MT, so that עַל כּל
אלה means "in all those things," or it should be understood as אֵלָה, in
which case it refers to a cultic tree associated with idolatry.[92] Jerome
is open to either option being correct, and he therefore explains the
literal sense of each. We will see this tendency again when we discuss
Jerome's use of paraphrase. Yet, whether or not Jerome is ultimately
able to resolve every Hebrew difficulty, his method demonstrates a skill-

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[91] Cf. Jer 13:12, where Jerome has similar trouble identifying the right meaning of
נֵבֶל. Jerome seems to have special trouble with animals, as at Jer. 8:7 and 10:22. In each
case, Jerome gives the names of the animals in Hebrew, and supplies different possible
identifications based on the Greek versions, but he does not say which is correct.

[92] Jerome does not distinguish between the pronunciations of these two words, but
regards them simply as homonyms.

ful application of the concepts of homonymy, polysemy, and ambiguity to the explication of Hebrew *glossemata* in the Bible.[93]

Let us now consider a few examples of lexical exegesis involving data from a "third" language. Among pagan grammarians, this involved using foreign languages besides Greek to interpret *glossemata*. Servius appeals to "Phoenician" in order to explain the meaning of Dido's name: "Didonem vocat, ut supra diximus [cf. 4.36], Poenorum lingua viraginem; nam 'Elissa' dicta est" (*Aen.* 4.674). He elsewhere refers to "Punic": "lingua punica 'Bal' deus dicitur" (*Aen.* 1.729). In a similar fashion, Porphyrio makes reference to the "Syrian" language: "'nonnulli.' tamen 'ambubaias' tibicines Syra lingua putant dici" (*Sat.* 1.2.init.). A parallel between Servius and Jerome can be seen in their respective treatments of "Gaza"—Servius: "Gaza Persicus sermo est et significat divitias" (*Aen.* 1.119), and "'Gaza.' census, Persarum lingua" (*Aen.* 2.763); Jerome: "Gaza autem lingua Persarum 'divitiae' nuncupantur, nec est hebraeus sermo, sed barbarus" (*Comm. Is.* 39:1). Every possible avenue of learning was utilized by the grammarians of antiquity in treating the rare and difficult words that they encountered in the classical authors.

Jerome, similarly, would sometimes appeal to languages besides Hebrew when he was explaining words which he thought could be illuminated through such references. In the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, Jerome twice appeals to "Syriac" in the explanation of a word.[94] At Jer 6:1, he makes a somewhat off-hand reference to Syriac in his comments on בֵּית הַכֶּרֶם: "inter hos alius vicus est, qui lingua Syra et Hebraica 'Bethacarma' nominatur, et ipse in monte positus." A more meaningful use of Syriac is found in Jerome's treatment of the word בור (= *Ketiv*)

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[93] On the terms ὁμωνυμία and πολύσημος, and their significance for exegesis, see Kamesar, *Jerome*, 160–63; cf. n. 88 above.

[94] Jerome would have learned some Syriac while living in the desert of Chalcis sometime between 375 and 379, although his competence in this language was probably not strong. Jerome's comment in *Ep.* 17.2 that certain people were worried that he might stir up dissension among the local churches, since he was "eloquentissimus homo in Syro sermone vel Graeco," cannot be taken to imply anything but that Jerome had a reputation for skill in languages and Syriac in particular. The idea that Jerome was fluent in Syriac is not compatible with the difficulties which he encountered later on with the Aramaic of Daniel (*Prol. Dan.*) and Tobit (*Prol. Tobit*). Eventually, Jerome became competent to read Aramaic to some extent, but his practical knowledge of Syriac and Aramaic (which terms he sometimes uses interchangeably) was primarily limited to vocabulary. Cf. Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 76–77; and Barr, "St. Jerome's Appreciation of Hebrew," 286–88.

at Jer 6:7. The LXX had translated this word as λάκκος, a general
term which can refer variously to a pond, a cistern, or a pit. The Old
Latin used the word "lacus" here, which likewise refers generally to
any kind of hollow. Jerome informs his readers that the familiar Latin
rendering is too broad, and that the intended sense of *lacus*, understood
as the Greek word λάκκος, is "cistern," as clarified by the Hebrew and
Syriac: "hoc autem Latinus lector intellegat, ut semel dixisse sufficiat,
'lacum' non 'stagnum' sonare iuxta Graecos, sed 'cisternam,' quae
sermone Syro et Hebraico 'gubba' appellatur. in praesenti autem loco
pro 'lacu,' quem omnes [i.e., the *recentiores*] similiter transtulerunt, in
Hebraico 'bor' dicitur." As Jerome notes, the Hebrew word here is
"bor," so that when he says "quae sermone Syro et Hebraico 'gubba'
appellatur," he may simply mean that the Hebrew and the Syriac both
mean "cistern," since "gubba" is specifically the Syriac form.[95]

Jerome makes another comment relevant to our topic at Jer 25:22,
this time regarding "Phoenician." While discussing Tyre and Sidon, and
their location on the coast of Phoenicia, Jerome remarks on the spell-
ing of "Phoeni" and the similarity between Phoenician and Hebrew:
"unde et Poeni sermone corrupto quasi Phoeni appellantur, quorum
lingua Hebraeae linguae, magna ex parte, confinis est." The similarity
between Hebrew and "Phoenician" or the "lingua punica," which in
Jerome seems to refer to the Phoenician language,[96] leads Jerome else-
where to use this language to explain the meaning of Hebrew words,
as he does for עַלְמָה at Isa 7:14: "Lingua quoque punica, quae de
Hebraeorum fontibus ducitur, proprie virgo 'alma' appellatur" (*Comm.
Is.* 7:14).[97] In addition to the usages of Syriac and the "lingua Punica,"
Jerome also cites "Arabic" as a language relevant to the study of the
Old Testament.[98] Jerome's comparative linguistic approach to explaining
glossemata in the Hebrew Bible not only foreshadows similar methods

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[95] It is also quite possible that the term "gubba" was used popularly in Jerome's time
by Hebrew speakers. On this word, cf. *Vit. Paul.* 6: "in cisterna veteri (quam gentili
sermone Syri 'Gubbam' vocant)." For other uses of Syriac in Jerome, see: *Nom. Hebr.*
(CChr 72: 134, 135, 136, 138); *QHG* 31:46–47, *Comm. Os.* 2:16, *Comm. Ion.* 4:6, and
Comm. Is. 2:16.

[96] See M. Cox, "Augustine, Jerome, Tyconius and the *Lingua Punica*," *StudOr* 64
(1988): 92–97.

[97] On this passage, and Jerome's treatment of Isaiah 7:14 in general, see Kamesar
"The Virgin of Isaiah 7:14," 62–75. For other appeals to "Phoenician" or "Punic,"
see *QHG* 36:24; *Comm. Gal.* 2. Prol.; and *Comm. Ion.* 4:6.

[98] See *Prol. Iob IH*; and *Prol. Dan.*

employed by modern biblical scholarship, but it also looks back to the exegetical tradition of the ancient grammarians.

Although τὸ γλωσσηματικόν, the elucidation of *glossemata*, was the most prominent feature of *enarratio* for Jerome the Hebraist, other exegetical "tools" also played significant roles in his Hebrew scholarship. Another part of *enarratio* that touches on Jerome's Hebrew philology is the explication of *historia* (τὸ ἱστορικόν), that is, providing the mythological, historical, or literary background relevant to any such references or allusions that occur in the text.[99] For Jerome, most of the *historia* necessary for the interpretation of the prophets is to be found in the Bible itself, although not all of it.[100] What makes this relevant to our present discussion is that Jerome generally associates *historia* with the explanation of the text *iuxta Hebraicum*.[101]

For example, Jerome introduces background information from 2 Kings and 2 Chron. in order to elucidate Jer. 22:18–19, referring in his discussion of the passage to what the "Hebraea historia" narrates: "... ut non sit sermo de Ioachaz neque de Sedecia, sed proprie de Ioiacim, quem interfectum a latrunculis Chaldaeorum, Syriae, Ammanitarum et Moabitarum Hebraea narrat historia; unde et in Malachim (i.e., מלכים) mortuus scribitur et sepultus tacetur. In libro Dierum (i.e., דברי

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[99] E.g., Servius says: "frequenter ad opus suum Virgilius aliqua ex historia derivat" (*Aen.* 5.45). On the meaning of *historia* in Servius, see D. B. Dietz, "*Historia* in the Commentary of Servius," *TAPA* 125 (1995): 61–97.

[100] On the book of Daniel, for example, Jerome says: "Ad intellegendas autem extremas partes Danielis, multiplex Graecorum historia necessaria est: Sutorii videlicet Callinici, Diodori, Hieronymi, Polybii, Posidonii, Claudii Theonis et Andronyci cognomento Alipi, quos et Porphyrius secutum esse se dicit, Iosephi quoque et eorum quos ponit Iosephus, praecipueque nostri Livii, et Pompei Trogi, atque Iustini, qui omnem extremae visionis narrant historiam et, post Alexandrum usque ad Caesarem Augustum, Syriae et Aegypti id est Seleuci et Antiochi et Ptolomaeorum bella describunt" (*Expl. Dan.* Prol.). Jerome was following in the Greek patristic tradition in using pagan historians in this way; see Neuschäfer, *Origenes*, 186–87; and Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 90–92, on the use of Herodotus in Origen and Theodore.

[101] A. Vaccari (and many others since) recognized the connection between Jerome's interest in the *hebraica veritas* and his appreciation for the literal sense, which he describes alternately as *ad litteram* and *iuxta historiam;* cf. Vaccari, "I fattori," 472. According to P. Jay, Jerome's association of Hebrew learning with literal/historical interpretation can be traced back to the generally non-allegorical exegesis that Jerome encountered when studying with Jews, just as Origen had encountered earlier (Jay, *L'exégèse*, 42, 199). In the pagan sense, *historia* would include any background material relevant to the interpretation of the text, including mythological narratives. For Christians, however, the concept of *historia* came to be associated with material that was strictly "historical" in our sense, since the biblical books that served as background to the prophets (i.e., Kings and Chronicles) were generally thought to be historical.

הימים) legimus vinctum catenis et ductum in Babylonem nec ultra quid
refertur de eo." Jerome does the same at Jer. 22:13–17, this time using
the Greek name for Chronicles (Παραλειπομένων): "legimus autem
et tam Regum quam Paralipomenon narrat historia undecim annis
regnasse in Hierusalem Ioiacim, filium Iosiae, et regnasse crudeliter
et exstitisse impium et postea mortuum."[102] In the exposition of *histo-
ria*, Jerome refers to several other books by name, including Genesis,
Joshua, Job, and Isaiah, each time in connection with Hebrew data.[103]
At Jer. 7:30–31, where Jerome refers to the book of Joshua, he also
presents as *historia* information received from a contemporary Jewish
source: "traduntque Hebraei…" A notable parallel to this practice can
be seen in Jerome's commentary on Malachi, in the preface to which
Jerome reports that the Hebrews (i.e., contemporary Jewish scholars)
say that "Malachi," which simply means "nuntius meus," is in reality
none other than Ezra. Throughout the commentary, therefore, Jerome
provides background information from the book of Ezra in order to
illuminate the historical context of the individual prophecies of Mala-
chi. For Jerome, who had no access to any Hebraic exegetical tradition
besides the rabbinic, scholarship on the Hebrew Bible required atten-
tion not only to the (unpointed) biblical text, but also to the tradition
that accompanied it.[104] Thus, Jerome used both contemporary Jewish
traditions and the narratives of the Old Testament as *historia* within
the framework of *grammatice*.[105] To discuss fully the role of *historia* in
the Jeremiah commentary would take us beyond the boundaries of the
present work. Still, even in the exposition of *historia*, we can see how
closely Jerome's Hebrew philology was interrelated with his training
as a grammarian.

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[102] Cf. Jer 15:4: "Legimus in Dierum volumine Manassen post captivitatem et pae-
nitentiam reversum in Hierusalem atque regnasse."

[103] "in quo monte Laban fugientem consecutus est Iacob et mons iuxta Genesim
nomen accepit σωρός, id est 'tumulus testimonii'" (Jer. 22:6–9); "'Tofeth' lingua
Hebraea interpretatur 'latitudo' scriptumque fertur in libro Iosue, filii Nun, de hoc
loco, qui est in valle filiorum Ennom et Hebraice dicitur 'gehennom'" (Jer. 7:30–31);
"'Cunctis regibus terrae Ausitidis.' Quae Hebraice appellatur 'Us,' de qua et Iob fuisse
narrat historia: 'homo quidam erat in regione Ausitidi, nomine Iob'" (Jer. 25:20b);
"vicina enim atque confinis eat Azoto, quae Hebraice dicitur Esdod, regio urbis Geth.
Palestinos autem a Babyloniis captos atque vastatos scribit et Isaias" (Jer. 25:20c).

[104] Kamesar, *Jerome*, 181–82.

[105] See A. Kamesar, "The Evaluation of the Narrative Aggada in Greek and Latin
Patristic Literature," *JTS* 45 (1994): 39, 65–68. Although not Hebraic, another Jew-
ish source available to Jerome for *historia* was Josephus; see Ibid., 62–4. On Jerome's
knowledge of Josephus, see Courcelle, *Les lettres grecques*, 71–74.

The next exegetical "tool" of *enarratio* relevant to Jerome's Hebrew philology is τὸ τεχνικόν, which included the discussion of grammar (in the narrow sense) and the identification of rhetorical figures. Regarding the first element, the treatment of technical grammar, Jerome would often illuminate a peculiarity of the text by explaining the relevant grammatical feature of the underlying Hebrew. Features of formal grammar discussed by Jerome include number, gender, tense, and the syntactic construction of syllogisms.

On several occasions in the *Comm. Ier.*, Jerome explains a lexical difficulty with reference to grammatical number. At Jer. 2:12, Jerome explains why some had translated שָׁמַיִם as "caelos" in the plural, whereas others had put "caelum" in the singular: "quodque Aquila et Symmachus 'caelos,' LXX vero et Theodotio 'caelum' interpretati sunt, nullum moveat. Hebraicum enim 'samaim' communis est numeri, et tam 'caeli' quam 'caelum' eodem appellantur nomine, ut Thebae, Athenae, Salonae." According to Jerome, the Hebrew word here has only one form, "samaim," which is used both for "heaven" and "heavens." Such a procedure is not unknown in Latin, as the examples show. Jerome makes an incidental remark about grammatical number while commenting on the clause נְקֵבָה תְּסוֹבֵב גָּבֶר at Jer. 31:22. Jerome had rendered this "femina circumdabit virum," whereas the LXX had put "in salute tua circumibunt homines" (ἐν σωτηρίᾳ περιελεύσονται ἄνθρωποι). Theodotion agrees with the rendering of the LXX in using "in salute," but differs from the LXX in having the singular "homo" instead of the LXX's plural "homines," as Jerome explains: "Theodotio autem et ipse vulgatae editioni consentiens interpretatus est: '... in salute circumibit homo,' singularem ponens pro plurali."[106] Jerome makes another such comment at Jer. 9:13 (בְּעָלִים): "Bahal idolum Sidoniorum et est numeri singularis, Bahalim vero pluralis numeri" (122–23).[107] That Jerome understood Hebrew morphology on these points can be shown from his *Comm. Is.* 1:2, where he explains that '–im' is the masculine plural

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[106] Theodotion: ἐν σωτηρίᾳ περιελεύσεται ἄνθρωπος (Field II, 660).

[107] Cf. *QHG* 6:2: "Verbum Hebraicum 'eloim' communis est numeri: et deus quippe et di similiter appellantur." So also regarding the plural אֱמֻנִים at *Comm. Is.* 26:2, translated not as plural but as singular, Jerome says: "... veritatem, sive, ut in hebraico dicitur 'hemmunim,' quod in nostra lingua vertitur: 'fides,' plurali numero, non singulari." Cf. Donatus, *Ars maior* 2.6: "Numeri sunt duo, singularis et pluralis: singularis, ut hic sapiens, pluralis, ut hi sapientes ... sunt etiam nomina numero communia, ut res nubes dies" (GL 4.376).

ending in Hebrew, and that '–oth' is the feminine plural.[108] Remarks
like these on formal grammar are everywhere in the works of gram-
marians, as when Servius comments on the collective noun "gens":
"sed 'gens' nomen est enuntiatione singulare, intellectu plurale" (*Aen.*
1.96); so also Donatus: "sunt quaedam positione singularia, intellectu
pluralia, ut 'populus,' 'contio,' 'plebs'" (GL 4.376).[109]

    As another point of formal grammar, we may refer here to Jerome's
well-known remarks on the gender of the word רוח: "Nemo autem
in hac parte scandalizari debet quod dicatur apud Hebraeos spiritus
genere feminino, cum nostra lingua appelletur genere masculino, et
graeco sermone neutro; in divinitate enim nullus est sexus" (*Comm.
Is.* 40:9–11).[110] Regarding the concept of tense, at Jer 8:16 Jerome
distinguishes the Hebrew version from the translation of the LXX on
the basis of the tenses of the verbs: "et quae LXX futura, Hebrai-
cum pro veritate rei iam facta commemorat."[111] Even syntactic issues
were addressed by Jerome, as with the conditional sentence found at
Jer. 31:37: אִם־יִמַּדּוּ שָׁמַיִם מִלְמַעְלָה וְיֵחָקְרוּ מוֹסְדֵי־אֶרֶץ לְמָטָּה גַּם־אֲנִי אֶמְאַס
בְּכָל־זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ. The LXX apparently misunderstood
the contrary-to-possibility nature of this condition, and so they added
a negative in the apodosis in an attempt to express the fact that God
would NOT reject all the seed of Israel: ἐὰν ὑψωθῇ ὁ οὐρανὸς... καὶ
ἐγὼ οὐκ ἀποδοκιμῶ. Jerome, however, corrects the LXX using the
Hebrew text, explaining the logic of this "syllogismus":

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[108] "Estque hebraici characteris ἰδίωμα ut omnia quae in syllabam finiuntur IM
masculina sint et pluralia, ut cherubim et seraphim, et quae in OTH feminina pluralia,
ut sabaoth." Cf. *Comm. Ezech.* 9:3.

[109] Jerome also took note of collective nouns, e.g., *Comm. Os.* 11:1: "Et quia Israel
singulariter quidem dicitur, sed pluraliter intelligitur, quomodo et populus et Ephraim
et Iudas; siquidem in numero singulari multus est numerus, qui hoc numero conti-
netur."

[110] See also *Ep.* 18b.1; and *QHG* 4:6–7. Cf. Servius' appeal to gender in discussing
the meaning of "dies" at *Aen.* 5.783: "'Longa Dies,' id est longum tempus: de quo
licet melius femino genere dicamus, tamen et masculino dicimus: nam de certo die
masculino tantum utendum est."

[111] The LXX read the initial verb of 8:16, נִשְׁמַע, as the 1st person plural impefect
form (ἀκουσόμεθα), and therefore read the last two verbs as future (καὶ ἥξει καὶ
καταφάγεται). Jerome reads the Nifal perfect for נִשְׁמַע, and so reads the last two verbs
as perfects, "et venerunt et devoraverunt," as in MT, וַיָּבוֹאוּ וַיֹּאכְלוּ. Cf. also *QHG* 24:43,
where Jerome uses the phrase "declinatio verbi" to describe the effect of putting the
root עלם into the Nifal, and says "licet masculino genere declinetur" of conjugating
נעלם according to gender.

Multum in hoc loco distat Hebraicum ab editione vulgata. dicamus primum iuxta Hebraicum: 'si mensurari potuerint caeli sursum et eorum altitudo cognosci vel investigari fundamenta terrae et extrema eorum ratione conprehendi, et ego,' inquit, 'abiciam universum semen Israhel propter omnia, quae fecerunt, dicit dominus. quomodo autem illud inpossibile est, ut caelorum summitates et terrae fundamenta noscamus, sic et hoc inpossibile erit, ut abiciam universum semen Israhel. sin autem abiecero universum semen Israhel, ergo mensurabitur caelorum summitas et extrema terrarum.' hic syllogismus et in evanelio texitur, quando inpossibile inpossibili conparatur: [citation of Matt 19:24] ... huic sensui LXX transtulerunt ... (*Comm. Ier.* 31:37)

By adding a negative to the apodosis, the LXX unwittingly communicated exactly the opposite of what they had intended. Thus, Jerome demonstrates how the knowledge of Hebrew can solve problems even in the construction of whole sentences.[112] Here, as in all of the examples above, Jerome's primary reason for dealing with formal grammar is to explain the meaning of the text.

The second element of τὸ τεχνικόν, the identification of tropes and figures,[113] so important to the work of grammarians in antiquity,[114] also

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[112] For another example, see *Comm. Ion.* 2:5b: "Hoc quod in Graeco dicitur ἆρα, et habet vulgata editio 'putas,' interpretari potest igitur, ut sit quasi propositionis et assumptionis, confirmationisque ac syllogismi extrema conclusio, non ex ambigentis incerto, sed ex fiducia comprobantis." The Hebrew text has אך אוסיף להביט אל היכל קדשך, which Jerome takes to be a statement of confident hope ("nevertheless, I will again see..."), but which the VL, based on the LXX (ἆρα, marking a question with a negative answer implied; see LSJ, 233), interpreted as an expression of doubt ("Do you think I will again see...?"). Julius Victor, *Ars rhet.* 9, gives the following definition of *syllogismus*: "ratiocinatio, id est syllogismus, est oratio ex ipsa re probabile aliquid eliciens, quod expositum et per se cognitum sua se vi et ratione confirmet." According to Quint. 5.14.20, the parts of a syllogistic argument are the two premises ("intentio" and "adsumptio") and the conclusion ("conclusio"), although "propositio" can also be used for one of the premises (Ibid., 5.14.24). Jerome is saying that אך can be used in an affirmative sense (cf. KB, 45), so that Jonah is making a declaration of faith that is as sure as the conclusion ("conclusio") of a syllogism, along with its premises ("propositionis et assumptionis"). Jerome also adds the term *confirmatio*, which strictly speaking was one of the parts of oratory (cf. *Rhet. Her.* 1.3; and Cic. *Inv.* 1.14). Jerome's use of these terms is not overly precise here.

[113] Technically, the term "trope" (τρόπος, *tropos*) was used for a deviation from natural usage with regard to an individual word, whereas a "figure" (σχῆμα, *figura*) involved such a deviation in the arrangement of words. This distinction, however, was not maintained consistently in antiquity, and it is not significant for Jerome's appropriation of the grammatical tradition; cf. Russell, *Criticism*, 145–47. For the terms used generically as a pair, see e.g., Quint. 9.4.26: "sed ipsum hoc inter tropos vel figuras."

[114] For a thorough treatment of Servius' vocabulary and methodology in this area, see J. L. Moore, "Servius on the Tropes and Figures of Vergil," *AJP* 12 (1891): 157–92,

played a role in Jerome's exegesis, and to some extent in his Hebrew philology. Angelo Penna identified at least thirteen figures explicitly mentioned by Jerome.[115] These are: μεταφορά, συνεκδοχή, μετωνυμία, ὑπερβολή,[116] ἔμφασις, εἰρωνεία, προσωποιία, σύλληψις, ἀποσιώπησις, πρόληψις, αὔξησις, ὑπερβατόν, and κατάχρησις. To these we may add ὕστερον πρότερον (*Tract. psal.* 5:11)[117] and πλεονασμός (*Expl. Dan.* 11:17a). Regarding the latter, Jerome suggests that the expression בַּ הַנָּשִׁים was spoken "per πλεονασμόν," and he illustrates this figure with two quotations from Virgil, *Aen.* 1.614 and 4.359, the first of which is the illustration for pleonasm in Donatus' *Ars maior* (GL 4.395), and the second of which is found as an example of pleonasm in Donatus' commentary on Virgil.[118] Jerome clearly learned about the classification of tropes and figures from Donatus. This training gave Jerome the technical vocabulary needed to describe the classical literary devices that he saw in the biblical text. We would also suggest that his grammatical background increased his sensitivity to certain literary devices specific to the Hebrew language.

A few examples may be cited in the Jeremiah commentary where Jerome explains the biblical text in terms of a literary figure. Jerome translates Jer. 4:12b, "Et nunc ego—sed loquar iudicia mea cum eis," suggesting that God began to speak a favorable word to the people, but cut himself off before finishing, and instead spoke judgments. According to Jerome, this is an example of ἀποσιώπησις, as seen in *Aen.* 1.135: "ἀποσιώπησις iuxta illud Vergilianum: 'quos ego—sed motos praestat conponere fluctus.' dicturus itaque prospera retinet se et tristibus iungit tristia." Quintilian uses the very same passage from

267–92. The repetitive and somewhat mechanical way in which Servius identified and classified literary figures has led some critics to charge him with "literary insensitivity and stereotyped scholarship;" see Williams, "Servius," 51.

[115] Penna, *Principe e carattere*, 77–83. On Jerome and Greek pagan learning in general, see Courcelle, *Les lettres grecques*, 47–78.

[116] Jerome refers to hyperbole once in the *Comm. Ier.*, using the Latin, not Greek, term. Jerome says that the oath mentioned at Jer. 11:5, that God would give to Israel's forefathers "terram fluentem lacte et melle," was really hyperbole for an abundance in all things, as illustrated through Virgil: "terram autem lacte et melle manantem hyperbolice debemus accipere pro rerum omnium abundantia, ut est illud: 'mella fluant illis, ferat et rubus asper amomum' (*Ecl.* 3.89) et iterum: 'et passim riuis currentia vina repressit' (*Geor.* 1.132)."

[117] Jerome gives this figure as ὑστεροπρότερον; cf. "hysteroproteron" in Servius; see A. Souter, *A Glossary of Later Latin* (Oxford, 1949), 180.

[118] See Holtz, *Donat*, 39.

the *Aeneid* to illustrate ἀποσιώπησις, which he says can be used to show feeling or even anger: "ἀποσιώπησις, quam idem Cicero 'reticentiam,' Celsus 'obticentiam,' nonnulli interruptionem appellant, et ipsa ostendit aliquid adfectus vel irae, ut 'Quos ego—sed motos praestat conponere fluctus'" (Quint. 9.2.54). Furthermore, at Jer. 15:10, Jerome appeals to συνεκδοχή in order to explain why Jeremiah says that he will be judged by the whole earth, when in fact he was merely judged by part of it, namely, Judea.[119] This accords with Jerome's definition of συνεκδοχή in his *Tract. psal.* 109:3: "Hoc schema graece dicitur συνεκδοχή, quod dicunt grammatici ἀπὸ μέρους τὸ πᾶν."[120] Lastly, we may note that Jerome appeals eight times in the Jeremiah commentary to μεταφορά.[121] The most significant example occurs at Jer. 6:2–4, where Jerusalem is likened to a lovely maiden, and it is then predicted that the desolation of the city will be so complete that shepherds will graze their flocks within it. Jerome reads verse two of chapter six, דמיתי בת ציון הנוה והמעננה, as "Speciosae et delicatae adsimulavi filiam Sion," so that דמיתי implies the metaphor of likening Jerusalem to a maiden. In view of the two literary figures presented in the passage, the metaphor of the maiden and the image of the desolate and shepherd-filled city, Jerome praises the elegance of רעים in verse three: "satisque eleganter in Hebraeo verbum, quod quattuor litteris scribitur 'res, ain, iod, mem,' si legatur 'reim,' 'amatores,' si 'roim,' 'pastores' significat, ut vel iuxta μεταφοράν pulchrae mulieris amatores vel iuxta eversionem urbis pastores intellegantur." If the word is vocalized רֵעִים, it can refer to the "lovers" of the maiden, following the metaphor; if רֹעִים, then it refers to the shepherds and the desolation of the city. In this instance, the ambiguity of the Hebrew text achieves an artistic purpose. In addition to the recognition of the metaphor, and the grounding of the metaphor in the Hebrew text (דמיתי), we also see Jerome's sensitivity to the literary quality of the Hebrew language.

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[119] Jerome reads מדון as a passive participle of דין (perhaps like מְדוּיִן? cf. M. H. Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* (Oxford, 1927), 82), and so translates מדון לכל הארץ as "qui iudicer in universa terra." On συνεκδοχή, see Quint. 8.6.19.

[120] The term συνεκδοχή stood for metonymy of the quantitative relationship between the word used and the meaning intended. With reference to the quantitative relationship between the part and the whole, συνεκδοχή could represent either "ex parte totum" (as Jerome says here) or "ex toto partem"; cf. Cic. *De orat.* 3.168. On these uses, see H. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, ed. D. E. Orton and R. D. Anderson, trans. M. T. Bliss, A. Jansen, and D. E. Orton (Leiden, 1998), 260–61.

[121] Jer. 5:7–9; 6:2–4a; 10:20; 12:5; 17:21–27; 22:6–9; 22:20–23; and 30:12–15.

Along these lines, we may add a few comments here on Jerome's
awareness of some literary features of Hebrew poetry. Hebrew has a
rich capacity for assonance and word plays. This is a notable feature
of Hebrew poetics, and it was known to Jerome. Thus, Jerome rec-
ognizes the word play between שָׁקֵד and שֹׁקֵד at Jer. 1:11–12: "'saced'
'nux' dicitur, 'vigilia' autem vel 'vigil' sive 'vigilare' appellatur 'soced.'
unde et in posterioribus [cf. 5:6] pardus vigilans hoc nomine ponitur.
ab eo igitur quod dicitur 'nux,' propter verbi similitudinem ad 'vigilis'
intellegentiam nomen adlusit."[122] Jerome also shows some knowledge
of how Hebrew parallelism works. At Jer 25:26, Jerome supports his
identification of שֵׁשַׁךְ as Babylon by quoting Jer. 51:41, where "Ses-
ach" is used in parallel with "Babylon."[123] He does not use the term
parallelos (παράλληλος) to describe this phenomenon, but elsewhere
he does remark that Jerusalem and Zion often form a "word pair"
(διώνυμον).[124] In a general way, therefore, Jerome understood Hebrew
parallelism and was able to work with it. To these observations may
be added Jerome's comments on Psalms 111 (LXX) and 118 (LXX),
where he describes the Hebrew alphabetic acrostic.[125] We may conclude

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[122] In his *Comm. Eccl.* 12:5 (where שָׁקֵד is also found), Jerome uses Jer. 1:11–12 in order
to explain the ambiguity of הֶחָגָב: "sciendum ubi in nostris codicibus legitur 'locusta,'
in Hebraeo scriptum esse, 'aagab,' quod verbum apud eos ambiguum est. Potest enim
et talus et locusta transferri. Quomodo igitur in Ieremiae principio, verbum 'soced,' si
varietur accentus, et nucem significat et vigilias." Cf. also Jerome's *Comm. Is.* 5:7c, where
he explains the word plays between משפט and משפח, and between צדקה and צעקה:
"Una itaque vel addita littera vel mutata sic verborum similitudinem temperavit ut pro
'mesphat' diceret 'mesphaa,' et pro 'sadaca' poneret 'saaca,' et elegantem structuram
sonumque verborum iuxta hebraeam linguam redderet." Word plays were also used in
Greek and Latin literature, e.g., σῶμα/σῶμα (Plato, *Grg.* 493a), and *saccis/sacris* (Hor.
Sat. 1.1.70–71); see M. Landfester, *Einführung in die Stilistik der griechischen und lateinischen
Literatursprachen* (Darmstadt, 1997), 105–7.

[123] Jerome also comments on the "atbash" at Jer 25:26; see pp. 178–81.

[124] See *Comm. Is.* 51:17–19. The grammarian Priscianus took the term *dyonymus* in the
sense of "having two names" (see Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1879),
622). Thus, Jerome may simply be saying that this one city has two names, Jerusalem
and Zion. Yet, because he says that he has observed this often ("Hierusalem et Sion
esse διώνυμον saepe docui"), what Jerome probably means is that, in Hebrew poetic
parallelism, Jerusalem and Zion are often matched together as a pair; on this concept,
see A. Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington, IN, 1985), 65–88.

[125] E.g., regarding Ps. 111: "Psalmus centesimus undecimus alfabetites est. Siquidem
et centesimus decimus et ipse sub alfabeto est. Primus versiculus ex 'aleph' scribitur,…
Secundus ex 'beth,'…Tertius 'gimel,'…et usque ad vicesimam secundam litteram
'thav.'" That these Psalms were structured according to the Hebrew alphabet was
known in Christian circles from at least the time of Origen; see M. Harl, *La chaîne
palestinienne sur le Psaume 118*, vol. 1, SC 189 (Paris, 1972), 108–10, 182–4; M. Milhau,

by suggesting that the time Jerome spent as a youth identifying and labeling tropes and figures in classical authors not only provided him with tools for explaining those same figures in the Bible, but also gave him a special interest in the "figures" which he learned when studying with his Hebrew teachers. Jerome's predilection for using the technical terminology of tropes and figures, together with his sophisticated treatment of formal grammar, reflect his appropriation of τὸ τεχνικόν as part of τὸ ἐξηγητικόν (*enarratio*).

One final component of Jerome's explanation of the Hebrew text, paraphrase (παράφρασις), may be included here in our discussion of *enarratio*.[126] In addition to explaining the meanings of difficult words, ancient commentators also sought to clarify the sense of difficult clauses and sentences, usually by restating them in plainer language.[127] When dealing with complex poetic syntax, the interpreter might paraphrase by simply rearranging the words into a more straightforward order. Thus, Servius explains *Aen.* 1.109: "'saxa vocant Itali mediis quae in fluctibus aras': ordo est, 'quae saxa in mediis fluctibus Itali aras vocant.'"[128] Another common way to introduce paraphrase was to state that one was giving the "sense" of the passage, suggesting perhaps an even greater freedom in recasting the words.[129] We see this style of paraphrase in Servius' comments on *Aen.* 4.436: "'Quam mihi cum dederis cumulatam morte remittam.' sensus est: 'quod beneficium cum mihi cumulatum dederis, sola morte derelinquam.'" In a methodology usually devoted to explaining individual parts of the text, paraphrase was one technique that allowed grammarians to address the broader flow of thought.

Hilaire de Poitiers commentaire sur le Psaume 118, vol. 1, SC 344 (Paris, 1988), 19–20; and L. F. Pizzolato, *La dottrina esegetica di sant'Ambrogio* (Milan, 1978), 278–9. Cf. Jerome's *Ep.* 34.1, where he indicates that the copy of Origen's commentary on Ps. 118 kept at the library of Caesarea was divided according to the Hebrew letters. Jerome is unique in the specific Hebrew letters that he mentions in his prefaces to these Psalms, but he theoretically could have learned the Hebraic character of their structure from previous Greek and Latin sources, especially Origen.

[126] See p. 23.

[127] This explanatory function of paraphrase obviously differs from the stylistic kind of paraphrase used in rhetoric, as described by Quint. 1.9.2; 10.5.4–5. Cf. Lehrs, *Pindarscholien*, 49–50.

[128] Cf. Porphyrio, *Carm.* 3.1.21–23: "Ordo est: non fastidit humiles domos; et ideo apud 'non' particulatim subdistinguendum." See H. L. Levy, "TO HEXÊS in Homeric Scholia and Servius' ORDO," *TAPA* 100 (1969): 237–51.

[129] On *ordo* and *sensus* as technical terms for paraphrase, see P. Antin, "*Ordo* dans S. Jérôme," in *Recueil sur saint Jérôme* (Brüssel, 1968), 230–31.

When Jerome explicitly bases his paraphrase on the Hebrew text, he shows how knowing Hebrew can lead to the proper understanding of a whole passage. Jerome gives the sense of Jer. 10:18, after observing that, contrary to the LXX, the Hebrew word קוֹלֵעַ actually refers to "slinging," as Aquila and Symmachus rightly translated: "'ecce ego in hac vice,' in isto tempore, 'proiciam' sive 'instar fundae iaciam longe habitatores terrae huius.' pro quo Septuaginta interpretati sunt: 'supplantabo et cadere faciam,' pro quo verbo Hebraico, id est 'cole,' Aquila et Symmachus interpretati sunt σφενδονίσω et est sensus: 'instar fundae cum omni impetu abiciam et sic eos obsideri faciam…'" Jerome frequently paraphrases both the Hebrew and the LXX in order to show how they differ in general sense. At Jer. 2:30a, after giving his translation *iuxta Hebraeos*, Jerome says, "pro quo posuere Septuaginta: 'non recepistis.' Sensusque est in Hebraico:… in LXX vero:…" Again, following the Hebrew version of Jer 4:1a: "pro quo Septuaginta transtulerunt:… Et est sensus:… porro iuxta Hebraicum hic sensus est:…" Such comparisons are ubiquitous in the commentary on Jeremiah.[130] In one case, where Jerome wishes to show that the linguistic difficulties do not affect the overall meaning, he concludes: "unus autem atque idem sensus est" (Jer. 8:7).[131] Jerome even criticizes the LXX at Jer. 27:18–22 for paraphrasing badly, putting the sense rather than the words because they misunderstood the passage: "Haec, ut diximus, in LXX non habentur, sed de Hebraica veritate translata sunt, pro quo aliud, quod scriptum non erat, posuere dicentes:… sensum magis quam verba ponentes, forsitan inrationale arbitrati, ut…"[132] As we see, Jerome's use of Hebrew as part of *enarratio* was far from atomistic or limited to lexicography and formal grammar, but included a strong interest in

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[130] E.g., "Multum in hoc loco Septuaginta editio ab hebraica veritate discordat; tamen utraque habet sensum suum… porro iuxta Septuaginta hic sensus est:…" (Jer. 2:23c–24); "'…' inquit, '…'; iuxta Septuaginta vero hic sensus est:…" (Jer. 2:30c–31a); "pro eo, quod nos iuxta Hebraicum interpretati sumus:… in editione vulgata ita scriptum repperi:… et est sensus:…" (Jer. 15:11); "… quod perspicuum est iuxta Hebraicum; iuxta id vero, quod LXX transtulerunt dicentes:… est sensus:…" (Jer. 17:15–17); "… sin autem sequimur LXX in eo, quod dixere:… hic sensus est:…" (Jer. 20:7–8a); "… et in LXX non habetur, hunc habet sensum: '…' inquit, '…'" (Jer. 25:26c); "Si iuxta Hebraicum legerimus:… dicemus… sin autem iuxta LXX, qui dixerunt:… illum sensum ponemus…" (Jer. 31:9); "Iuxta Hebraicum manifestum est, quod… porro iuxta LXX hic sensus est:…" (Jer. 31: 23–24).

[131] Cf. Servius, *Geor.* 4.45: "unus tamen sensus est."

[132] Cf. Jer. 28:3b–4: "Pro quibus LXX transtulerunt:… breviter Hebraicae veritatis sensum magis quam verba ponentes."

the overall sense of the text as revealed by the *hebraica veritas*.[133] This is indicative of the general relationship between Jerome's Hebrew philology and the *enarratio* of the grammarians: Jerome derived much of his methodology and terminology from the tradition of *grammatice*, but as a commentator on Scripture he lacked the grammarians' interest in proper usage, focusing his attention almost exclusively on issues that directly pertained to the meaning of the text.

Emendatio

As we saw previously, *emendatio* encompassed both the correction of the text and the correction of language. Jerome never presumes to correct the style or usage of the Hebrew,[134] and his criticisms of the LXX based on the Hebrew are directed primarily at content rather than usage. In addition, since the Hebrew Bible lacks the kind of regular metrical structure found in classical Greek and Latin poetry, Jerome never recommends a correction to the Hebrew text on the basis of prosody.[135] Jerome does, however, reflect the practice of *emendatio* in one very important area of his Hebrew scholarship, textual criticism. Here, Jerome breaks new ground in the study of the Bible by combining the

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[133] Antiochene biblical exegesis, likewise reliant on pagan models, also expressed an interest in the text's logical coherence of thought (ἀκολουθία) by giving the sense (διάνοια) of passages through paraphrase (Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 142–44). This is comparable to Jerome's concern for preserving the *consequentia* of the text; see Penna, *Principi e carattere*, 180–84. Theodore of Mopsuestia used φησίν to introduce paraphrase in the same manner as pagan scholiasts, similar to Jerome's use of "inquit" (Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 141–42); cf. Wendel, *Überlieferung*, 86. On Jerome's appropriation of Antiochene biblical scholarship, see Kamesar, *Jerome*, 126–74.

[134] Jerome's practice may be contrasted with that of Servius, who regularly supplies what the text "should have said," e.g., at *Aen.* 1.16: "'hic illius arma' figura creberrima adverbium pro adverbio posuit, praesentis loci pro absentis: debuit enim dicere 'illic.'" This is one method by which Servius communicates to his students what they should or should not say (see Kaster, *Guardians*, 180).

[135] Servius frequently appeals to the meter in correcting the text, e.g., "'Menestheo' non 'Mnestheo,' do quo paulo post dicturus est, legendum est, ne versus non stet, sed 'Menestheo,' ita tamen ut meminerimus in ultima syllaba esse synaeresin propter rectam scansionem" (*Aen.* 10.129); cf. Zetzel, *Latin Textual Criticism*, 102–11. That Jerome is familiar with this practice can be seen from his comment on "Osianna" in *Ep.* 20.5: "'Osianna,' sive, ut nos loquimur 'Osanna' media vocali littera elisa; sicuti facere solemus in versibus, quando 'mene incepto desistere victam' scandimus 'men incepto.'" If Jerome had found occasion to talk about the Hebrew text in this way, he could have. The reason why he did not is that he did not perceive any meter in the Hebrew Bible. Cf. n. 41 above.

insights derived from *emendatio* with his radical return to the original
Hebrew text.

As Jerome himself explains, it is the responsibility of the critic to
restore the proper form of the text by correcting errors in transmission.[136]
Some errors arose out of the carelessness of copyists. In other cases,
scribes made changes in order to correct what they perceived to be
an error, when in reality they were introducing one.[137] The kinds of
copying errors recognized by Jerome include faulty word division, the
confusion of similar letters, dittography, haplography, metathesis and
transposition.[138] An important part of the process of correcting such
errors was finding good manuscripts,[139] and, although in the Old Testa-
ment the seemingly uniform Hebrew text itself served as the "reliable
manuscript" opposite the Greek and Latin copies, there are occasions
where Jerome shows an awareness of divergent readings among Hebrew
manuscripts.[140] For Jerome, who loved to explain the origins of various
interpretations, the best way to establish the right reading was to find
the one that, based on the Hebrew, explained the origins of the others.
Since the Hebrew text of Jeremiah differs so widely from the version

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[136] See Jerome's comments on textual crticism in *Ep.* 27.1.

[137] Cf. *Ep.* 71.5; *Ep.* 106.30; and *Praef. in Evangelio*; cf. also Quint. 9.4.39.

[138] See K. K. Hulley, "Principles of Textual Criticism Known to St. Jerome," *HSCP*
55 (1944): 87–109.

[139] E.g., *QHG* 23:2: "Hoc, quod hic positum … in authenticis codicibus non habetur";
Comm. Os. 1:10: "veriora exemplaria"; *Comm. Is.* 58:11: "Quod in alexandrinis exem-
plaribus in prooemio huius capituli additum est:… in hebraico non habetur, sed ne in
Septuaginta quidem emendatis et veris exemplaribus; unde obelo praenotandum est";
Tract. psal. 77:2: "Sic invenitur in omnibus veteribus codicibus, sed homines ignorantes
tulerunt illud." When Jerome says, "nec in Novo profuit emendasse, cum multarum
gentium linguis Scriptura ante translata doceat falsa esse quae addita sunt" (*Praef. in
Evangelio*), he recognizes, at least in principle, the idea that ancient translations of the
NT, e.g., into Syriac or Coptic, could be used to correct faulty Greek readings.

[140] Jerome refers to differing Hebrew readings at *Comm. Abac.* 2:19: "Praeterea sci-
endum in quibusdam Hebraicis voluminibus non esse additum 'omnis' sed absolute
'spiritus' legi." A related phenomenon may be found in the *Comm. Gal.* 3:10, at the
citation of Deut 27:26, where Jerome favors the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX over
his own Hebrew text, because the LXX agree with the Samaritan Pentateuch: "et
incertum habemus, utrum Septuaginta Interpretes addiderint, 'omnis homo,' et 'in
omnibus,' an in veteri Hebraico ita fuerit, et postea a Judaeis deletum sit. In hanc
me autem suspicionem illa res stimulat, quod verbum, 'omnis' et 'in omnibus,' quasi
sensui suo necessarium, ad probandum illud, quod quicunque ex operibus legis sunt,
sub maledicto sint, Apostolus vir Hebraeae peritiae, et in lege doctissimus, nunquam
protulisset nisi in Hebraeis voluminibus haberetur. Quam ob causam Samaritanorum
Hebraea volumina relegens, inveni 'kol,' quod interpretatur 'omnis,' sive 'omnibus,'
scriptum esse, et cum Septuaginta Interpretibus concordare."

of the LXX,[141] it provided ample opportunity for Jerome to use his knowledge of Hebrew for text-critical purposes.

In his comments on Jer. 22:29–30, Jerome identifies three categories of deviations that can occur in the transmission of a text: "Si voluero per loca notare singula, quanta LXX vel praetermiserint vel mutaverint, longam fiet, praesertim cum possit diligens lector ex utraque editione considerare, quid mutatum, quid additum, quid subtractum sit." Jerome, in accordance with his belief in the *hebraica veritas*, treats the Hebrew text of Jeremiah as the original, and deals with the LXX in terms of things changed, added, or subtracted vis-à-vis the Hebrew.[142] We will first say something about Jerome's treatment of additions and subtractions, and then show how Jerome uses Hebrew to correct faulty changes in the text.

Jerome devoted a considerable amount of energy in his commentary on Jeremiah to cataloging what we might call "quantitative" differences between the Hebrew and Greek texts. Since his greatest concern was to show what the Hebrew text adds to our understanding of Jeremiah, Jerome was especially diligent to point out when the LXX had omitted something from the Hebrew. On more than forty occasions, Jerome uses the phrase "in LXX (editione) non habetur,"[143] along side of similar phrases, like "licet… LXX non transtulerint" (Jer. 26:1–3),[144] and "quod in Hebraico positum sit… in LXX editione praetermissum" (Jer. 16:16–18). In three instances, Jerome indicates that material present in the Hebrew but omitted by the LXX can be found in Greek copies under asterisk, added from Theodotion's version, as at Jer. 30:10–11:

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[141] Most modern scholars believe that the shorter text of Jeremiah represented by the LXX reflects, on the whole, a Hebrew *Vorlage* that differed from the expanded Hebrew text of MT, which is virtually equivalent to Jerome's text. Jerome assumed, because of the uniformity of the Hebrew text in his day, in contrast to the textual plurality of the Greek Bible, that the Hebrew of Jeremiah was in every instance the original. See pp. 128–29.

[142] In Deut. 4:2a, οὐ προσθήσετε πρὸς τὸ ῥῆμα ὃ ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαι ὑμῖν καὶ οὐκ ἀφελεῖτε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, and Josephus, *A.* 1.17, οὐδὲν προσθεὶς οὐδ' αὖ παραλιπών, only adding and subtracting are in view; whereas in *Ep. Aris.* 311, ἐκέλευσαν διαράσασθαι, καθὼς ἔθος αὐτοῖς ἐστιν, εἴ τις διασκευάσει προστιθεὶς ἢ μεταφέρων τι τὸ σύνολον τῶν γεγραμμένων ἢ ποιούμενος ἀφαίρεσιν, and Philo, *Mos.* 2.34, μήτ' ἀφελεῖν τι μήτε προσθεῖναι ἢ μεταθεῖναι, all three categories of deviation, namely adding, subtracting, and changing, are mentioned. Jerome here reflects the expanded tradition.

[143] In addition, the following formulations occur: "… qui in LXX non habentur" (Jer. 2:33–34); "haec in LXX non habentur" (Jer. 17:2–4; cf. 27:18–22); and "in LXX editione non dicitur" (Jer. 5:15–18).

[144] Cf. "… non transtulere LXX" (Jer. 28:10–12a).

"Haec περικοπὴ in LXX non habetur et in plerisque codicibus vulgatae editionis sub asteriscis de Theodotione addita est."[145] On several occasions, Jerome gives what he presumes to be the reason why the LXX omitted material. As we noted above, Jerome thought that Jer. 27:1 should be joined to the preceding passage, not to what follows it. According to Jerome, the LXX agreed with his judgment, but they decided to omit the verse from their translation in order to avoid a redundancy with 26:1: "videntur autem mihi LXX titulum istum hac ratione silvisse, ne secundo dicere viderentur; iam enim in principio posuerant: 'in principio regis Ioiacim…'" At Jer. 28:10, Jerome notices that the LXX omit the reference to Hananiah as a "propheta," "ne scilicet prophetam viderentur dicere, qui propheta non erat."[146] As a third example, Jerome says that the LXX passed over Jer. 17:1, which deals with the permanence of Judah's sin, because they wanted to spare the people from such a negative reference.[147] In contrast to all of this, Jerome discusses additions made by the LXX far less frequently. He makes about twelve references to "pluses" in the LXX, employing phrases like, "a Septuaginta additum est (Jer. 2:28b, 2:29),"[148] and "quod autem sequitur iuxta LXX… in Hebraico non habetur" (Jer. 31:10–14).[149] What little attention there is to the "pluses" in the LXX can be credited to Jerome's desire to show why the LXX's additions are wrong,[150] as well as perhaps to his sense of obligation to address

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[145] See also Jer. 2:1–2a: "Hoc in LXX non habetur, sed sub asteriscis de Theodotionis editione additum est"; and Jer. 29:14–20: "Hucusque in LXX non habetur, quae asteriscis praenotavit"; cf. Field II, 649–52.

[146] The reason, Jerome says, why the Hebrew text calls Hananiah a prophet is that here, as often is the case, the Holy Scriptures speak "iuxta opinionem illius temporis, quo gesta referuntur, et non iuxta quod rei veritas continebat." The same observation is made at Jer. 28:15, and the same rational is given for the omission of the LXX ("historiae veritas et ordo servatur, sicut supra diximus, non iuxta id, quod erat, sed iuxta id, quod illo tempore putabatur"). Scripture does not mean to say that Hananiah was truly a prophet, but merely that the people at that time thought that he was a prophet.

[147] On Jer. 17:1: "quod cur LXX praetermissum sit, nescio, nisi forsitan pepercerunt populo suo." Cf. also Jer. 17:2–4, where Jerome makes the same comment.

[148] Cf. also: "a LXX additum est" (Jer. 4:29); "quod a LXX additum" (Jer. 10:20); "hoc, quod in LXX male additum est" (Jer. 23:5–6); "sive… ut addidere LXX" (Jer. 13:12–14); "et de suo (LXX) addidere… quod in Hebraico non habetur" (Jer. 24:1–10); and "hoc, quod LXX in huius capituli addidere principio… in Hebraico non habetur" (Jer. 7:4–7).

[149] Cf. also: "quodque iuxta Septuaginta sequitur… in Hebraico non habetur" (Jer. 1:17b); "quod autem in LXX infertur… in Hebraico non habetur" (Jer. 19:11b–13a); and "et quod in Hebraico non habetur" (Jer. 17:21–27).

[150] E.g., "… quod a LXX additum non stat iuxta historiam" (Jer. 10:20); and "quod autem sequitur iuxta LXX: 'filiorum Levi,' in Hebraico non habetur et perspicuum

the popularly known version. In general, however, Jerome wants to interpret the Hebrew text, and so he devotes most of his time pointing out material in the Hebrew text of Jeremiah that was omitted (from Jerome's perspective) by the LXX.

In many places, Jerome informs us that, although they cover essentially the same ground, the LXX (or another Greek translator) and the Hebrew differ significantly. When these differences pertain to the interpretation of specific words or constructions in the Hebrew, they belong properly to the sphere of *enarratio*. When, however, they are attributed to a mechanical error in copying or translating the text,[151] Jerome gives to them a text-critical solution. We will discuss here, therefore, not errors in interpreting the Hebrew, but those textual errors that Jerome attributes to a misreading of what the Hebrew actually contains.

Just as the ambiguity of Hebrew words was the starting point for Jerome's explication of *glossemata*, the similarity of Hebrew letters is often the starting point for text-critical observations. Jerome must address both of these issues in order to explain the evidence for ירע at Jer. 15:12: הירע ברזל ברזל מצפון ונחשת:

> 'Numquid foederabitur ferrum ferro ab aquilone et aes?' Symmachus: 'numquid nocebit ferrum ferro ab aquilone et aes?' LXX et Theodotio: 'si cognoscet ferrum et operimentum aenum?' Varietatis causa perspicua; verbum enim 'iare,' quod in praesenti loco scriptum est, pro ambiguitate enuntiationis et 'amicitiam' sonat et 'malitiam,' quod, si pro 'res' littera, quae 'daleth' litterae similis est, legatur 'daleth,' 'scientiam cognitionemque' significat.

The Greek versions, which were the basic tools of linguistic exegesis, differed considerably from one another, such that Jerome needed to go back to the Hebrew in order to resolve the problem. Symmachus understood ירע as "to do injury," as from רעע, whereas the LXX and Theodotion interpreted the word as if from ידע, apparently read-

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est nequaquam hic dici de his sacerdotibus, qui filii Levi, sed de his, in quorum typum praecessit Melchisedec" (Jer. 31:10–14).

[151] The same errors, e.g., dittography, parablepsis, and the confusion of similar letters, can occur whether the scribe is copying the text in the same language or translating it into another. If the error took place during the tanslation process, then the erroneous Hebrew reading never existed in a Hebrew manuscript, but only in the mind of the translator. Still, the procees of correction, namely, identifying the cause of the error in the Hebrew text, is the same in either case. Cf. E. Tov, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*, 2d ed. (Jerusalem, 1997), 88–89.

ing ד instead of ר, translating it as "to recognize." Jerome, probably
agreeing with Aquila,[152] reads the 'res,' but derives the word from רֵעַ,
"friend," and interprets it to mean, "to be joined," on the analogy of
חָבֵר, "friend" (חבר, "to join"). Not only is the ambiguity of ירע itself
at issue, but also the similarity between ד and ר. Elsewhere, Jerome
explains that 'daleth' and 'res' differ only by a small point.[153] Jerome
also mentions in his works the possibilities of confusion between ב and
כ, ה and ח, ו and ז, and ו and י.[154] Jerome was even aware that the
shapes of the letters in the old Hebrew script, still in use among the
Samaritans, differed from the shapes in the standard Hebrew writing
familiar to him.[155] Jerome was especially fond of relaying information
of this nature, because it gave him a chance to prove the indispens-
ability of knowing Hebrew.

Jerome solves a complicated problem involving Hebrew, Greek, and
Latin at Jer. 31:2: כה אמר יהוה מצא חן במדבר. For what MT has as
חֵן, the Old Latin had absurdly ("ridicule") put "lupinos," based on
the Greek word used by the LXX, θερμον, which, depending on the
accent, can mean either "heat" (θερμός) or "lupine" (θέρμος).[156] The
Old Latin understood the LXX to mean θέρμος (lupine), whereas
the LXX actually meant θερμός (heat). Even the LXX, however,
erred, because they themselves had misread the Hebrew text as חֹם,
"heat," instead of חֵן, "grace," as Jerome explains: "est enim scriptum
'hen,' quod Aquila, Symmachus et Theodotio χάριν, hoc est 'gratiam,'

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[152] For Aquila, Field suggests ἁρμόζειν or ἑταιρίζειν to represent the Syro-Hexapla
ܡܚܠܦܐ (Field II, 612–13).

[153] Regarding דעה at Isa. 28:9, Jerome says, "Prima enim littera 'deleth' vel 'res'
parvo apice distinguuntur; si ergo legatur 'dea,' scientiam sonat, si 'rea,' malitiam." On
the confusion between ד and ר, cf. *Comm. Is.* 8:9–10, 21:11–12, 38:10–13, 44:24–28;
Comm. Ezech. 27:15b–16; *Comm. Os.* 2:10–12, 9:7.

[154] On ב and כ, see *In Psal.* 51:1: "sed quoniam 'beth' et 'caph' apud Hebraeos
litterae modico apice destinguuntur, ideo error facilius obrepsit" (cf. *Comm. Os.* 5:6
regarding ד and כ). On ה and ח, see *QHG* 14:5: "'Bahem' enim cum per tres literas
scribitur. Si mediam 'he' habet, interpretatur in eis, si autem 'heth' (ut in praesenti),
locum significat, id est in Hom." On ו and ז, see *Comm. Am.* 7:1–3: "Videntur mihi
LXX interpres, verbum Hebraicum gozi quod interpretatur tonsor, sive tonsura, intel-
lexisse, Gog, zai litteram uau arbitrantes,..." On ו and י, see *QHG* 41:2: "sed quia 'u'
litera apud Hebraeos et 'i' similes sunt et tantum magnitudine differunt" (cf. *Comm. Is.*
10:5–11; and *Comm. Os.* 4:15–16).

[155] *Comm. Ezech.* 9:4–6a: "antiquis Hebraeorum litteris, quibus usque hodie utuntur
Samaritani, extrema 'tau' littera crucis habet similitudinem."

[156] Jerome considers this issue of the ambiguity of the Greek word ("ambiguitate
verbi Graeci"), and does not recognize the difference in accent.

interpretati sunt; soli LXX posuere 'calidum' putantes ultimam litteram 'm' esse. si enim legamus 'hen' per litteram 'n,' 'gratia' dicitur; si per 'm,' 'calor' interpretatur."[157] Thus, not only was the Old Latin version corrupt, but even recourse to the Greek could not ultimately solve the problem, unless one could use the Hebrew to show which Greek interpretation was correct. In the Jeremiah commentary, Jerome resolves similar difficulties at Jer. 8:17, involving a confusion between צפענים, "vipers," and צפים, "watchmen," and at Jer. 29:17, where the Greek transliteration of שֹׁעָרִים given by Theodotion underwent inner Greek corruption, which Jerome corrects according to the Hebrew.[158] It is corrections such as these that form the heart of Jerome's use of Hebrew in textual criticism.

As a final example of Jerome's *emendatio*, at Jer. 22:29–30 he solves a theological difficulty by correcting the LXX according to the Hebrew text. The Hebrew version of verse thirty, according to MT, reads as follows:

(a) כְּתְבוּ אֶת־הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה עֲרִירִי   כֹּה אָמַר יְהֹוָה
(b) גֶּבֶר לֹא־יִצְלַח בְּיָמָיו
(c) כִּי לֹא יִצְלַח מִזַּרְעוֹ אִישׁ
(d) יֹשֵׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא דָוִד
(e) וּמֹשֵׁל עוֹד בִּיהוּדָה

For this verse, the LXX translated:

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[157] Jerome here corrects the mistake that he had made in his *Comm. Is.* 65:8, where he wrongly guessed that the Hebrew word at Jer. 31:2 was תּוֹדָה. Apparently, Jerome did not have a Hebrew copy of Jeremiah in front of him when he was writing his commentary on Isaiah, but he knew that he had used "gratia" in his own translation. In view of the fact that "gratia" is part of the idiom in Latin for "to give thanks" (e.g., *agere gratias*), and Jerome knew that תּוֹדָה could refer to thanksgiving (e.g., *Comm. Ier.* 17:21–27, 30:18–22), his guess was not illogical. When he came to write his commentary on Jeremiah, and he had the Hebrew text of Jeremiah before his eyes, he corrected his prevoius error and rightly explained the word as הן. The passage in Isaiah is cited by Burstein, "La compétence," 10–11.

[158] "quae Hebraice appellantur 'suarim,' sed scriptorum vitio pro media syllaba sive littera 'alpha' Graecum 'delta' inolevit, ut pro 'suarim' legatur 'sudrim.'" In other words, Theodotion's transliteration, σουαρεὶμ (cf. Field II, 650) was miscopied by a Greek scribe as σουδρεὶμ. Reiter, following H. Hody, ascribes the transliteration both to Theodotion and to the first edition of Aquila, thus: "quas Theodotio {et Aquilae prima editio} interpretatus est 'sudrinas,' secunda 'pessimus,' Symmachus 'novissimas.'" F. Field favors the emendation of J. Martianay: "quas Theodotio interpretatus est 'sudrinas,' *scilicet* [for *secunda*] 'pessimus,' Symmachus 'novissimas'" (Field II, 650). Perhaps correction is not necassary, if "secunda" is allowed to stand by itself for the second edition of Aquila; otherwise, Field's solution (or the like) is preferable, lest we suppose that the same Greek error happened to appear in both Theodotion and Aquila's first edition.

(a) γράψον τὸν ἄνδρα τοῦτον ἐκκήρυκτον
(b) ἄνθρωπον
(c) ὅτι οὐ μὴ αὐξηθῇ ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτοῦ ἀνὴρ
(d) καθήμενος ἐπὶ θρόνου Δαυιδ
(e) ἄρχων ἔτι ἐν τῷ Ιουδα

Jerome raises a question: how can this prophecy be true, that none from the seed of "Iechonia"[159] will sit on the throne of David and rule over Judah, when in fact Jesus was born from the seed of this man, and the angel Gabriel said that Jesus would sit on the throne of David and rule the house of Jacob forever (Luke 1:32–33)? The answer is found in the phrase not translated by the LXX in line 'b' above, לֹא־יִצְלַח בְּיָמָיו, as Jerome explains: "LXX enim transtulerunt: 'scribe virum istum abdicatum hominem, quia non crescet de semine eius vir, qui sedeat super thronum David, princeps ultra in Iuda,' quod in Hebraico bis positum est; quod putantes, qui ab initio scripserunt, in Graecis libris additum subtraxerunt.[160] Respondeamus igitur, quod in diebus Iechoniae non successerit ei vir, qui sederit super thronum eius, sed multo post tempore de semine eius natus sit, qui solium eius optinuerit." Those who first produced the Greek version, seeing that לֹא יִצְלַח had been put twice (lines 'b' and 'c'), deleted the first occurence at line 'b' (along with בְּיָמָיו), thinking that it had been added wrongly. According to Jerome, this was a poor decision, because it is precisely at line 'b' where the answer to the theological question is found. It is true that no man from the seed of "Iechonia" would sit on David's throne in Iechonia's own day (לֹא־יִצְלַח בְּיָמָיו), but long afterwards Jesus, who was from that seed, would do just that. The very phrase needed to explain the verse theologically had been wrongly omitted by the LXX, and only by going back to the Hebrew was Jerome able to restore the crucial line.

Unlike grammarians such as Donatus and Servius, Jerome is not concerned to define proper linguistic usage through his commentary.

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[159] I.e., כָּנְיָהוּ, another name for Jehoiachin, the son of Jehoiakim. Concerning this "Iechonia," Jerome says the following at verse twenty-eight: "'Iechonias' interpretatur 'domini praeparatio,' cui in praesenti loco prima syllaba, id est domini nomen, aufertur et dicitur 'Chonias,' ut subaudiatur 'perditioni et interitu praeparatus.'"

[160] It is not entirely clear whom Jerome means by "qui ab initio scripserunt," i.e., the ones who are said to have removed the "additional" occurrence of לֹא יִצְלַח. The phrase "in Graecis libris" may suggest that Jerome is thinking of scribes who copied the Greek text; but the words "ab initio" seem to point to the original translators. Either way, the (perceived) error was present in the LXX as known in Jerome's day, and it was to be corrected according to Jerome by recourse to the Hebrew.

Jerome does not discuss any faults of language in Hebrew, nor does he ever criticize the mode of expression of the Hebrew text. On the other hand, Jerome does practice *emendatio* by addressing text-critical matters, especially as they pertain to the interpretation of the text's meaning. For this purpose, Jerome combines the grammatical tradition with his belief in the *hebraica veritas* to create a new *emendatio* suited distinctively to Christian scholarship on the Hebrew Bible.

IUDICIUM

Iudicium, the final stage of literary interpretation, involved giving an overall assessment of the aesthetic quality and stylistic features of a work.[161] Jerome embarked on the study of Hebrew with an already developed sense of good literature, and he eventually achieved a solid appreciation for the Hebrew language. Yet, consistent with Jerome's usual emphasis on meaning, observations on the aesthetic qualities of the Hebrew text are infrequent, although they do occasionally appear. Jerome does, however, reflect his training in *iudicium* through several comments he makes comparing the styles of the Major Prophets. He also shows a unique application to the biblical text of the concern to identify the authenticity of works. In these instances, the influence of the "grammatical" tradition on Jerome is evident.

When Jerome first began to study Hebrew, he found it difficult and even abrasive, especially in comparison with classical literature.[162] Nevertheless, he eventually acquired a genuine appreciation for the Bible in Hebrew, as his abilities with the language improved.[163] We noted above Jerome's recognition of certain features of Hebrew poetry, such as at

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[161] Neuschäfer, *Origenes*, 250–62, leaves open the possibility that "moral criticism" may have been part of κρίσις ποιημάτων (*iudicium*); cf. the moral function of poetry expressed by Horace, *Ars* 333–34: "aut prodesse volunt aut delectare poetae/aut simul et iucunda et idonea dicere vitae." Yet, as Neuschäfer points out (*Origenes*, 252), the grammatical tradition of late antiquity seems to have conceived of κρίσις ποιημάτων/ *iudicium* simply in terms of aesthetic criticism, not moral. Jerome, for his part, owes his conception of moral interpretation to his Christian theological environment. It is not part of his debt to the grammatical tradition.

[162] E.g., "ut post Qintiliani acumina Ciceronisque fluuios gravitatemque Frontonis et lenitatem Plinii alphabetum discerem, stridentia anhelantiaque verba meditarer... et gratias ago domino, quod de amaro semine litterarum dulces fructus capio" (*Ep.* 125.12); cf. *Prol. Dan.*

[163] Cf. especially Barr, "St. Jerome's Appreciation of Hebrew."

Isa. 5:7c, "elegantem structuram sonumque verborum iuxta hebraeam linguam."[164] Similarly, Jerome praises Jon. 1:8 for its "brevitas," of the kind often admired in Virgil: "Et notanda brevitas, quam admirari in Vergilio solebamus: 'Iuvenes, quae causa subegit/Ignotas temptare vias, quo tenditis, inquit./Qui genus? unde domo? pacemne huc fertis, an arma?'" (*Comm. Ion.* 1:8; cf. *Aen.* 8.112–14).[165] Several times in his works Jerome compliments the "ordo" of the text as "pulcher" or even "pulcherrimus."[166] How far Jerome's appreciation for Hebrew had come can be seen from his remark that many Hebrew words had been merely transliterated into Greek and Latin "propter interpretandi difficultatem et ad comparationem linguae hebraeae tam graeci quam latini sermonis pauperiem" (*Comm. Is.* 40:12–17).

The most significant passage touching on Jerome's literary criticism of the Hebrew text of Jeremiah occurs not in the commentary, but in the prologue to Jerome's translation of Jeremiah *iuxta Hebraeos*.[167] In this prologue, Jerome states that Jeremiah's style is characterized by simplicity and rusticity, due to his small town origins:

> Hieremias propheta, cui hic prologus scribitur, sermone quidem apud Hebraeos Esaia et Osee et quibusdam aliis prophetis videtur esse rusticior, sed sensibus par est, quippe qui eodem spiritu prophetaverit. Porro simplicitas eloquii de loco ei in quo natus est accidit. Fuit enim Anathothites, qui est usque hodie viculus tribus ab Hierosolymis distans milibus…

In order to understand this comment correctly, we must place it alongside of Jerome's assessments of Isaiah and Ezekiel in their respective IH prologues. Isaiah, in contrast to Jeremiah, is said by Jerome to speak with eloquence and urbanity: "Ac primum de Isaia sciendum quod in sermone suo disertus sit, quippe ut vir nobilis et urbanae elegantiae nec habens quicquam in eloquio rusticitatis admixtum. Unde accidit, ut prae ceteris florem sermonis eius translatio non potuerit conservare." As for Ezekiel, he represents a middle ground between urbanity and simplicity: "Sermo eius nec satis disertus nec admodum rusticus est,

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[164] See pp. 50–51.
[165] On *brevitas*, cf. Horace, *Ars* 25, 335–36; Quint. 4.2.40–51; and *Rhet. Her.* 1.15. Jerome's place in the tradition of brevity as a stylistic ideal is discussed by E. R. Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und Lateinisches Mittelalter*, 6th ed. (Bern, 1967), 479–85.
[166] E.g., *Tract. psal.* 96:10: "Ordo pulcherrimus"; *Comm. Is.* 6:4: "Et quam pulcher ordo verborum." Cf. Antin, "'Ordo' dans s. Jérôme," 235.
[167] See A. Kamesar, "San Girolamo, la valutazione stilistica dei profeti maggiori, ed. i generi dicendi," *Adamantius* 11 (2005): 179–83.

sed ex utroque medie temperatus. Sacerdos et ipse sicut et Hieremias, principia voluminis et finem magnis habens obscuritatibus involuta. Sed et vulgata eius editio non multum distat ab hebraico." This three-fold division of grand, simple, and "mixed" styles goes back to a standard model in Roman times for describing the kinds of speaking used in rhetoric.[168]

Within ancient rhetorical theory, there was an attempt to categorize the "kinds of speaking" (*genera dicendi*) which characterized certain orators, or which may be appropriate in various circumstances. This discussion developed primarily out of the peripatetic tradition, and the original schematization of the types of speaking may go back to Theophrastus.[169] Ultimately, a tripartitie system of styles became the dominant model, although some sources give lists of two or four.[170] Dionysius of Halicarnassus described three "styles" (λέξεις), the highest, which is ἐξηλλαγμένη καὶ περιττὴ καὶ ἐγκατάσκευος καὶ τοῖς ἐπιθέτοις κόσμοις ἅπασι συμπεπληρωμένη; a second style which is λιτὴ καὶ ἀφελὴς, and is similar to common speech; and a third style, a combination of the first two, a μικτή τε καὶ σύνθετος ἐκ τούτων τῶν δυεῖν (*Dem.* 1–3). Aulus Gellius gives a slightly different version of the same system:

> Et in carmine et in soluta oratione genera dicendi probabilia sunt tria, quae Graeci χαρακτῆρας vocant nominaque eis fecerunt ἁδρόν, ἰσχνόν, μέσον. Nos quoque quem primum posuimus 'uberem' vocamus, secundum 'gracilem,' tertium 'mediocrem.' Uberi dignitas atque amplitudo est, gracili venustas et subtilitas, medius in confinio est utriusque modi particeps... Sed ea ipsa genera dicendi iam antiquitus tradita ab Homero sunt tria in tribus: magnificum in Ulixe et ubertum, subtile in Menelao et cohibitum, mixtum moderatumque in Nestore. (*Noct. att.* 6.14.1–3; 7)

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[168] Jerome's comment that Ezekiel represents a "middle" style makes it clear that his observations on all three prophets should be seen in the light of the classical *genera dicendi*; see Kamesar, "San Girolamo," 180–81.

[169] The idea that this general scheme can be traced back to Theophrastus is supported by G. M. A. Grube, "Theophrastus as a Literary Critic," *TAPA* 83 (1952): 172–83. The direct connection to Theophrastus was denied by G. L. Hendrickson, "The Peripatetic Mean of Style and the Three Stylistic Characters," *AJP* 25 (1904): 125–46; and Ibid., "The Origin and Meaning of the Ancient Characters of Style," *AJP* 26 (1905): 249–90.

[170] E.g., "'quattuor sunt,' inquit Eusebius, 'genera dicendi: copiosum in quo Cicero dominatur, breve in quo Sallustius regnat, siccum quod Frontoni adscribitur, pingue et floridum in quo Plinius Secundus quondam et nunc nullo veterum minor noster Symmachus luxuriatur" (Macrobius, *Sat.* 5.1.7). Cf. D. A. Russell, *Criticism*, 137.

Qunitilan gives much the same information as Aulus Gellius, describing the middle style as "floridum," the Latin equivalent of ἀνθηρόν. To Quintilian, and to Cicero as well, the grand or forceful style is useful for stirring the emotions of the audience, the plain style is best for conveying information, and the middle style is most suitable for charming or persuading the listener (Quint. 12.10.58–65; cf. Cicero, *Orat.* 21.69–70). Aulus Gellius, Quintilian, and Cicero all assign the three styles to characters in the *Iliad*, Ulysses employing the grand style, Menelaus the simple style, and Nestor the middle (cf. Cicero, *Brut.* 40). Eventually, the three styles were applied to all kinds of literature, with representative examples given for each. Thus, for history, the grand, simple, and middle became Thucydides, Herodotus, and Xenophon; for oratory, Demosthenes, Isocrates, and Lysias.[171] Jerome obviously reflects this system in his analysis of the styles of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. But precisely how he applies the system to the biblical prophets is not as straightforward as it might appear.

First, Jerome does not emphasize the forcefulness of Isaiah, but rather his sophistication. Regarding Jeremiah, Jerome states not only that he is simple, but also that he is rustic, which is not a standard term in this system. Third, Jerome says that Ezekiel is mixed, which does fit the classical model, but he does not mention anything about Ezekiel's smoothness or floridity.[172] How, then, do we understand Jerome's appropriation of this model?

Jerome, it would seem, is not using the scheme of the three kinds of speaking to describe the intended effect of the prophetic oracles. Thus, the prologue to Isaiah does not portray him as forceful, trying to move the audience. Likewise, Jerome does not attach to Ezekiel's style any notion of persuasiveness or charm. What is grand about Isaiah is his striking usage and ornate style, similar to the high style as presented by Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Also like Jerome, Dionysius places most of his emphasis regarding the middle style on the fact that it is a

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[171] Cf. Russell, *Criticism*, 138.

[172] It is notable that Jerome describes Isaiah, as representative of the high style, as "disertus," since the term "disertus" might naturally be associated with the smooth, middle style. Yet, Porphyrio (*Comm. in art. poet.* 24) also uses "disertus" for the high style, presumably thinking of loftiness in eloqunce rather than in forcefulness; see Diederich, *Horazkommentar*, 293–94. It would seem that the word "disertus" had a large enough range of meaning to apply either to the high or to the middle style, depending on what aspect of style was being emphasized. Cf. Kamesar, "San Girolamo," 181.

mixture between the embellished high style and the simple style, which resembles common usage. Jerome's scheme may also be compared to what is found in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*,[173] where the grand style is "quae constat ex verborum gravium levi et ornata constructione," the middle style is "quae constat ex humiliore neque tamen ex infima et pervulgatissima verborum dignitate," and the simple style is "quae demissa est usque ad usitatissimam puri consuetudinem sermonis" (*Rhet. Her.* 4.11). Within the classical tripartite scheme, there are at least two separate agendas: the first, which views the styles as (1) forceful, (2) simple, (3) and smooth, underscores the tone of the speech and its intended effect; the second, which may be summed up as (1) ornate, (2) simple, and (3) mixed, describes the level of literary sophistication and artistic elaboration. All of the passages that we have examined partake to some extent in both of these agendas, although Dionysius and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* give less emphasis to the first and more to the second. In Jerome's treatment of the styles of the prophets, he is concerned exclusively with the second agenda, not with the first.

For Jerome, then, Isaiah's style is urbane and ornate, and in that sense, it is "disertus." Jeremiah, by way of contrast, is "rustic" and "simple,"[174] with his rusticity reflecting his small town upbringing in Anathoth. Ezekiel, rather than aiming at charm, is merely the middle ground between Isaiah and Jeremiah; or, as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* says it, "ex humiliore neque tamen ex infima et pervulgatissima verborum dignitate." Jerome is therefore operating within the basic parameters of the tripartite system, but he is applying it only to the varying levels of sophistication and elaboration among the biblical prophets, not to their stylistic tone *per se* nor to the effect that this tone was intended to bring about. Jerome's literary appropriation of this system, including his reference to Jeremiah's simple "rusticity," finds a close parallel in Servius' commentary on Virgil's *Eclogues* (i.e., the "Bucolics"): "tres

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[173] Jerome mentions this work, attributing it to Cicero, in *Ruf.* 1.16, where he gives the full version of the three kinds of speaking: "Chrysippus et Antipater inter spineta versantur. Demosthenes et Aeschines contra se invicem fulminant. Lysias et Isocrates dulcitur fluunt. Mira in singulis diversitas, sed omnes in suo perfecti sunt. Lege ad Herennium Tullii libros, lege Rhetoricos eius."

[174] These two terms appear together often in the commentaries of grammarians and in Jerome; cf. Diederich, *Horazkommentar*, 247–48; and Jerome's *Tract. psal.* 77:9: "Ecclesiastici enim rustici sunt et simplices," where Jerome contrasts rustic and simple men of the Church with philosophically sophisticated heretics. Cf. *Tract. psal.* 78:11: "Ego vero simpliciter rusticana simplicitate et ecclesiastica ita tibi respondeo"; cf. also *Comm. Gal.* Bk. 3, Prol.

enim sunt characteres, humilis, medius, grandiloquus: quos omnes in
hoc invenimus poeta. Nam in Aeneide grandiloquum habet, in georgicis
medium, in bucolicis humilem pro qualitate negotiorum et personarum:
nam personae hic rusticitae sunt, simplicitate gaudentes, a quibus nihil
altum debet requiri" (*Bucolics*, Praef.).

   As for Jerome's critical judgments on the Hebrew styles of the proph-
ets, many have concurred with Jerome at least regarding Isaiah, praising
its lofty style.[175] More importantly, we have rabbinic traditions preserved
from late antiquity that give us some idea of what information might
have been available to Jerome regarding the prophets themselves and
how they compare with one another. Isaiah was thought to be a nephew
of king Amaziah, and therefore was truly of noble birth (*Pesiq. Rab Kah.*
14.3; *Meg.* 10b; *Sot.* 10b).[176] In *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* 14.3, it is explained that
the reason why Jeremiah spoke words of compassion while Isaiah spoke
words of reproach was that Jeremiah came from Anathoth, a country
town, whereas Isaiah was from the big city of Jerusalem.[177] Ezekiel was
also regarded as a villager in comparison with Isaiah, who was from
the capital, which explains why Ezekiel and Isaiah prophesied differ-
ently even though they saw the same vision (*Hag.* 13b).[178] When Jerome
came to apply the threefold model of style criticism to the prophets,
Isaiah was the natural choice for the noble style. Jeremiah was probably

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[175] See C. F. Keil, *Lehrbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in die kanonischen und apok-
ryphischen Schriften des Alten Testamentes* (Erlangen, 1859), 208. On the stylistic level of
the Hebrew of Jeremiah, see R. Lowth, *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum Praelectiones*, 3rd ed.
(Oxford, 1775), prael. 21: "Jeremias, quanquam nec elegantia nec sublimitate caret,
tamen utraque cedit Isaiae. Hieronymus nescio quam sermonis rusticitatem ei obiicere
videtur, cuius equidem fateor nulla me deprehendisse vestigia. In sensibus quidem ali-
quanto minus est elatus, in sententiis plerumque laxior et solutior; ut qui in affectibus
lenioribus saepius versatur, ad dolorem et misericordiam praecipue compositus. Hoc
quidem maxime apparet in Threnis, ubi isti affectus unice dominantur; sed saepe
etiam in eiusdem vaticiniis cernitur, et in priore voluminis parte potissimum, quae
plerumque poetica est; media fere sunt historica: ultima pars, sex constans capitibus,
omnino poetica est; plura continet oracula distincte notata, in quibus vates ille proxime
accedit ad Isaiae sublimitatem. Ex toto autem Jeremiae volumine partem vix dimidiam
poeticam esse arbitror."

[176] The image of Isaiah as a "vir nobilis" is not out of keeping with the book of
Isaiah itself; cf. W. H. Schmidt, *Einführung in das Alte Testament*, 5th ed. (Berlin, 1995), 217:
"Da Jesaja Zugang zum König wie zu höheren Beamtenkreisen hat (7,3; 8,2; 22,15ff),
auch die politischen, sozialen und kultischen Verhältnisse der Hauptstadt gut kennt,
könnte er vornehmer Abstammung und in Jerusalem aufgewachsen sein."

[177] כך ירמיה...שהיה עירוני מענתות...ברם ישעיה...
שהיה בן מדינה מירולם

[178] למה יחזקאל דומה לבן כפר...ולמה ישעיה דומה לבן כרך

selected to represent the simple style because his countryside hometown of Anathoth was known to Jerome.[179] Besides, the extravagant vision in the first chapter of Ezekiel probably made him an unsuitable candidate for the plain style. Jeremiah therefore was "simple" and "rustic," leaving Ezekiel to be "mixed." It is possible that some element of stylistic sensibility may already have been present in the Hebraic traditions that Jerome received, so that Jerome was merely following the lead of these rabbinic sources in assigning the three prophets to the three *genera dicendi*.[180] In any case, Jerome's particular way of describing these styles clearly reflects his "grammatical" background, representing another example of the influence of *grammatice* on his Hebrew scholarship.

The fact that Jerome considered Jeremiah to be simple and rustic perhaps explains why he makes relatively few comments on the prophet's style throughout his commentary on Jeremiah. In his discussion of רעים at Jer. 6:3, Jerome says that the prophet spoke elegantly: "satisque eleganter in Hebraeo verbum."[181] Twice in connection with the Hebrew text Jerome praises Jeremiah for presenting his meaning beautifully, as at Jer. 22:19: "Hoc, quod nos de Hebraico posuimus… in LXX non habetur… pulchre 'sepultura asini' dicit eum sepeliendum."[182] These few examples, however, constitute the exceptions rather than the rule. In general, Jerome pays little attention to the aesthetic value of the biblical text in the course of his commentary on Jeremiah. This is not surprising since, as we said, Jerome thinks that Jeremiah reflects the plain style; it is possible that a detailed investigation of the Isaiah commentary would produce different results, since Isaiah, according to Jerome, represents the ornate style.[183] Yet, overall, as seen in the

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[179] See Jerome's *De situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, s.v. "Anathoth." See also *Comm. Ier.* 31: 38–40.

[180] In addition to the rabbinic texts already cited, see *Sanh* 89a: אמר רבי יצחק סימנן אחד עולה לכמה נביאים ואין שני נביאים מתנבאין בסימנון אחד עובדיה אמר זדון לבך השיאך ירמיה אמר תפלצתך השיא אותך זדון לבך. See Kamesar, "San Girolamo," 181–82; and I. Heinemann, *Darkhei ha-aggada*, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem, 1954), 55, 57.

[181] Cf. Porphyrio, *Carm.* 1.24.5–6: "Eleganter et poetice pro morte dicit."

[182] Also at Jer. 26:1–3: "licet 'civitates' LXX non transtulerint, ne indecorum forte videretur in atrio domus domini loqui ad urbes, quae coram non erant; sed quando ad populos et ad cives loquitur, ipsis civitatibus loquitur. pulchre autem stat in atrio atque vestibulo templi domini,…"

[183] It should be noted, however, that our brief soundings in the *Comm. Is.* did not produce a great number of comments on the style of the Hebrew text, even in comparison with the Jeremiah commentary. The term *eleganter* is used twice in the *Comm. Ier.* (6:2–4a and 7:27–28), once in direct connection with the Hebrew text: "satisque eleganter in Hebraeo verbum,…" (6:2–4a); but it occurs only one time in the whole

Commentary on Jeremiah, Jerome devotes comparatively little discussion to the aesthetic dimension of the Hebrew text.

In one final area, the question of authenticity, Jerome reflects the insight of his background in *iudicium*. Scholars of antiquity were aware that not every work was actually composed by the individual to whom it was attributed. Quintilian, for example, expressed doubt about the authenticity of certain books transmitted under the name of Hermagoras, on the grounds that the books in question disagreed with the known opinion of Hermagoras on a key point.[184] Similar issues arose in the transmission of Christian literature, as shown by Augustine, who proved the inauthenticity of supposed epistles of Christ to Peter and Paul by pointing out a chronological impossibility (*Cons.* 1.10.15–16). Jerome pays great attention to questions of authorship and attribution, such as his observation that the Book of Hebrews is not considered to be one of Paul's letters, "propter stili sermonisque dissonantiam" (*Vir. ill.* 5.10; cf. 15.2),[185] and that 2 Peter is considered by many not to belong to Peter "propter stili cum priore dissonantiam" (*Vir. ill.* 1.3). Regarding the traditional attributions of non-biblical books, Jerome speaks even more authoritatively, as in his comments on Modestus: "Feruntur sub nomine eius et alia συντάγματα, sed ab eruditis quasi ψευδεπίγραφα repudiantur" (*Vir. ill.* 32.2).[186] Jerome brings the grammarian's interest

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Isaiah commentary: "eleganter in hebraeo resonat, sensusque pulcherrimus est" (Isa. 22:6). Jerome uses *pulchre* 15 times in the *Comm. Ier.*, whereas in the *Comm. Is.* (a work almost twice as long) it appears 26 times, e.g., "Pulchreque iuxta hebraicum non ipse dominus implebat templum" (Isa. 6:1); and "Pulchreque iuxta hebraicum, quasi exauditi essent qui supra fuerant deprecati" (Isa. 64:1–3); but cf. "Pulchreque iuxta LXX direpti sunt atque vastati et ducti in captivitatem quasi tauri" (Isa. 5:17). Jerome's usage of such terminology goes back to his training in *iudicium*.

[184] "Sunt tamen inscripti nomine Hermagorae libri, qui confirmant illam opinionem, sive falsus est titulus sive alius hic Hermagoras fuit. Nam eiusdem esse quomodo possunt, qui de hac arte mirabiliter multa composuit, cum, sicut ex Ciceronis quoque rhetorico primo manifestum est, materiam rhetorices in thesis et causas diviserit?" (Quint. 3.5.14). Cf. Gell. *Noct. att.* 3.3 on the whole question of style used to determine authenticity—in this case, regarding the doubtful authenticity of certain plays attributed to Plautus.

[185] Although some attributed Hebrews to Barnabas or Luke, Jerome seems to favor Clement of Rome as the actual composer of the book of Hebrews, with the ideas being Paul's. Jerome accepts Pauline authorship of Philemon, against certain detractors (*Comm. Phil.* Praef.). Regarding Johannine literature, Jerome says that the Gospel of John, 1 John, and the Apocalypse were written by John the apostle, whereas 2 and 3 John likely came from John the presbyter (*Vir. ill.* 9.4–6; 18.3).

[186] For another example of Jerome's use of style as a criterion of authorship for non-biblical books, see *Vir. ill.* 58.2, on Minucius Felix: "Sed et alius sub nomine eius fertur *De fato vel Contra mathematicos*, qui, cum sit et ipse diserti hominis, non mihi videtur cum superioris libri [i.e., *Octavius*] stilo convenire."

in authenticity to bear on all Christian literature, biblical and ecclesiastical.

In the field of Old Testament, the *hebraica veritas* served Jerome as the standard for authenticity. Thus, Jerome rejected as inauthentic those parts of the book of Daniel that were not found in the Hebrew copies, namely, the Prayer of Azariah, the Song of the Three Youths,[187] Susanna,[188] and Bel and the Dragon.[189] He also rejected the books ascribed to Ezra that were not in the Hebrew, calling them "apocryphal."[190] Jerome applied this same principle to the traditional Greek version of Jeremiah, rendering negative judgments on the book of Baruch and the Letter of Jeremiah:

> libellum autem Baruch, qui vulgo editioni Septuaginta copulatur nec habetur apud Hebraeos, et ψευδεπίγραφον epistulam Hieremiae nequaquam censui disserendam, sed magis Hieremiae ordinem librariorum errore confusum multaque, quae desunt, ex Hebraeis fontibus digerere ac conplere, ut novum ex veteri verumque pro corrupto atque falsato prophetam teneas (*Comm. Ier.* Prol.).

Neither Baruch nor the pseudepigraphic Epistle of Jeremiah is treated, because both are absent from the Hebrew. Instead, Jerome promises to complete what is missing and sort out what is confused in the popular edition of Jeremiah by going back to the true Hebrew source. In a sense, Jerome's whole perspective on the Old Testament canon can be

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[187] Jerome makes a few remarks in his Daniel commentary on the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Youths, "ne omnino praeterisse videamur" (*Expl. Dan.* 3:23), but afterwards he promises: "Exin sequamur hebraicam veritatem" (*Expl. Dan.* 3:91a).

[188] Jerome points out that the σχῖνον/σχίσει and πρῖνον/καταπρίσῃ wordplays at Dan. (Sus.) 13:54–55 and 13:58–59 were suited to the Greek rather than to the Hebrew (*Expl. Dan.* Prol. and 13:54–59), but he conceded that "si quis ostenderit duarum istarum arborum scissionis et sectionis et in hebraeo stare ἐτυμολογίαν, tunc poterimus etiam hanc scripturam recipere." Origen had made the same observation about the wordplay (and following him, apparently, Eusebius and Apollinarius; cf. *Expl. Dan.* Prol.), although Origen left more open the possibility that a Hebrew version might have existed, and he did not use this observation as a basis for rejecting Susanna (*Ep. Afr.* 8–10).

[189] According to Jerome, the title of Bel and the Dragon in the LXX contained the statement, "Homo quidam erat sacerdos, nomine Daniel filius Abda, conviva regis Babylonis," which contrdicts the fact that Daniel was from the tribe of Judah (*Expl. Dan.* Prol.). The most serious problem with the story, however, is that it is not found in the Hebrew (*Expl. Dan.* 14:17); cf. *Comm. Abac.* Prol.

[190] In his *Prol. Ezra*, Jerome says, "nec quemquam moveat, quod unus a nobis editus liber est, nec apocriforum tertii et quarti libri somniis delectetur; quia et apud Hebraeos Ezrae Neemiaeque sermones in unum volumen coartantur, et quae non habentur apud illos nec viginti quattuor senibus sunt, procul abicienda."

seen as a theological extenstion of the question of authenticity to the
Bible.[191] One can perceive in Jerome a keen awareness of the issues
surrounding the question of authenticity. This awareness can be traced
directly back to his training in *iudicium*. But for Jerome, when dealing
with the Old Testament, the *hebraica veritas* became the standard for
authenticity.

Overall, we are able to see Jerome's debt to *iudicium* in the few
comments he makes about the aesthetic quality of the Hebrew text,
in his comparison between the stylistic levels of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and
Jeremiah, and in his desire to separate authentic works from spurious
ones. Yet, in the commentary itself Jerome displays his training in
iudicium less frequently than he displays his training in *lectio, emendatio*,
and especially *enarratio*. The most likely explanation for this is that,
like most Christians of his time, he was much more concerned about
the content of the Bible than about its style.[192] Even Christian authors
who were deeply indebted to the tradition of γραμματική, like Origen
and the Antiochenes, showed a lesser enthusiasm for style criticism
than for other aspects of the "grammatical" approach.[193] In *iudicium*,
therefore, we see most clearly how the distinctively Christian emphasis
on content, with a diminished concern for the style of the biblical text,
could shape the manner and extent to which the pagan model would
be appropriated.

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[191] Jerome gives a list of canonical Old Testament books in his *Prologus in Libro Regum*
(the "prologus galeatus"), and in *Ep.* 53.8. Regarding Jerome's views on the canon of the
Old Testament, see P. W. Skehan, "St. Jerome and the Canon of the Holy Scriptures,"
in *A Monument to St. Jerome*, 259–87; and more recently, R. Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel
zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus und ihr Streit um den Kanon des Alten Testaments und die
Auslegung von Gal. 2, 11–14* (Leiden, 1994), 131–217.

[192] Christians in late antiquity rarely approached the Bible in search of aesthetic
literary qualities, partly because of the belief in the didactic purpose of the Bible (e.g.,
2 Tim. 3:16; cf. the "Stoic" position on the didactic usefulness of literature defended
in Strabo 1.2.3–9), and partly because, in its Greek and Latin forms, the Bible was
generally thought to reflect a low literary style anyway; cf. G. Rinaldi, *Biblia Gentium*
(Rome, 1989), 168–75. Although the most common way that Christians addressed this
problem was to concede the poor style of the Bible and to emphasize content instead,
Jerome appealed to the Hebrew text in order to defend the artistic credibility of the
Old Testament, e.g., in the preface to his translation of Eusebius' *Chronicon*: "Inde adeo
venit, ut Sacrae litterae minus comptae et sonantes videantur, quod diserti homines
interpretatas eas de Hebraeo nescientes, dum superficiem, non medullam inspiciunt."
Origen had used a similar argument prior to Jerome (*Cels.* 7.59; cf. Eus. *P.E.* 11.5.2),
and Augustine employed this same defense later, citing Jerome as an authority (see
Marrou, *Saint Augustin*, 477). See also A. Kamesar, "Ambrose, Philo, and the Presence
of Art in the Bible," *JECS* 9 (2001): 73–103.

[193] See Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 145–147; and Neuschäfer, *Origenes*, 255–63.

Although Jerome did not learn Hebrew from Donatus, he did nevertheless read the Hebrew Bible as a grammarian would have done. The clearest signs of Jerome's close relationship with *grammatice* are the numerous parallels between Jerome and the ancient grammarians in technical terminology and in the specific examples cited to illustrate interpretive concepts. A remarkable degree of overlap is also evident regarding the questions that they each bring to the text. This was shown to be especially true in the area of *enarratio*, but it is likewise valid for *lectio, emendatio*, and to a lesser extent *iudicium*. Throughout his exegetical writings, and as we have seen especially in his *Commentary on Jeremiah*, Jerome gave a clear testimony to the significant impact of his grammatical training on his study of the Hebrew Old Testament.

Moreover, it may be added that Jerome's whole conception of how to write a commentary owes something to the grammatical tradition. In the prologue to his *Comm. Ier.*, Jerome, defending himself against detractors, says: "nec intellegit nimia stertens vaecordia leges commentariorum, in quibus multae diversorum ponuntur opiniones vel tacitis vel expressis auctorum nominibus, ut lectoris arbitrium sit, quid potissimum eligere debeant, decernere." Such statements are common in Jerome's works,[194] and he often speaks of the conventions of the commentary as if they were well established, as at *Ruf.* 3.11: "Hic est enim commentariorum mos et explanantium regula, ut opiniones in expositione varias persequantur et quid vel sibi vel aliis videatur edisserant." The purpose of a commentary is to present various opinions side by side, often without presuming to identify the correct interpretation, so that the prudent reader might be in the best position to take what is good and leave behind what is not. That this approach is derived from the grammarians is recognized by Jerome himself:

> Commentarii quid operis habent? Alterius dicta edisserunt, quae obscure scripta sunt plano sermone manifestant, multorum sententias replicant, et dicunt: Hunc locum quidam sic edisserunt, alii sic interpretantur, illi sensum suum et intellegentiam his testimoniis et hac nituntur ratione firmare, ut prudens lector, cum diversas explanationes legerit et multorum vel probanda vel improbanda didicerit, iudicet quid verius sit et, quasi bonus trapezita, adulterinae monetae pecuniam reprobet. Num diversae interpretationis et contrariorum inter se sensuum tenebitur reus, qui in

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[194] Cf. *Comm. Ier.* 22:24–27; *Comm. Is.* Bk. 11, prol.; *Ep.* 20.2; and *Ep.* 61.1. Cf. P. Siniscalco, "La teoria e la tecnica del commentario biblico secondo Girolamo," *ASE* 5 (1988): 228–32.

uno opere quod edisserit, expositiones posuerit plurimorum? Puto quod
puer legeris Aspri in Verilium ac Sallustium commentarios, Vulcatii in
orationes Ciceronis, Victorini in dialogos eius, et in Terentii comoedias
praeceptoris mei Donati, aeque in Vergilium, et aliorum in alios, Plautum
videlicet, Lucretium, Flaccum, Persium atque Lucanum. Argue interpretes
eorum quare non unam explanationem secuti sint, et in eadem re quid
vel sibi vel aliis videatur enumerunt. (*Ruf.* 1.16)

Along with this habit of reporting diverse opinions, Jerome learned
two other lessons from Donatus that complement the first: a zeal for
the collection of sources and the pretence of exhaustiveness.[195] By his
own admission, therefore, Jerome's custom of presenting multiple inter-
pretations side by side comes from his training as a grammarian, not
from his rabbinic teachers.[196] In terms of literary scholarship, Jerome's
approach is that of a grammarian rather than a Rabbi.[197] Although
Jerome was very eclectic in his use of sources, and also employed a
variety of techniques to uncover the Christian meaning of the Old
Testament, his philological method received a large measure of unity
from the tradition of *grammatice*.

   On the other hand, we have also noticed some significant differ-
ences between Jerome and the pagan grammarians. Almost all of the
differences stem from one core value: Jerome's overriding interest in
the meaning of the biblical text. Jerome's focus on meaning expressed
itself, for example, in his more limited attention to *iudicium*, in his lack
of concern for *recte loquendi scientia* in the Bible, and in his extensive use
of paraphrase. As P. Jay has shown, Jerome ultimately moved away
from the highly fragmented style of exegesis common among gram-
marians, as he tried to find a middle ground between short lemmata
that allowed for detailed discussions of words, and long lemmata that

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[195] See Brugnoli, "Donato," 142–43. As Brugnoli points out, it is the pretence
of exhaustiveness that has provoked so much suspicion among modern critics of
Jerome.
   [196] *Pace* B. Höhmann, *Der Amos-Kommentar des Eusebius Hieronymus: Einleitung, Text,
Übersetzung, Kommentar* (Münster, 2002), 25–26; cf. also A. Vonach-Innsbruck, "Der
Ton macht die Musik, Vorgaben und Normen der Exegese bei Hieronymus und in
der rabbinischen Tradition," *BiN* 97 (1999): 38, 44.
   [197] There is no doubt that general similarities can be found between the philological
method of Jerome and that of the Rabbis, but these reflect nothing more than the
common literary environment of late antiquity, and are shared by Jews, Christians,
and pagans. See, for example, the comments on "intertextuality" in Kraus, *Jerome's
Translation*, 13–14.

permitted him to explain the coherence of whole blocks of text.[198] This movement likewise reflects Jerome's concern for meaning. Of course, observations on the sense of the text occur regularly in classical commentaries; but there considerable attention was also paid to issues of culture, style, and the proper use of language. Jerome, although not without interest in such topics, nevertheless concentrated his biblical scholarship, and in particular his Hebrew philology, on expounding the text's meaning.

This emphasis on meaning is best explained in light of Jerome's religious context. It was natural for Jerome to focus on content in his exegesis, considering his Christian beliefs about the abiding significance of the biblical text. Within the Church, the Bible served as the ultimate sourcebook for theological and moral instruction. Christian readers wanted to know what the Bible had to teach; the goal of the biblical commentator was to explain the message in a way suited to this expectation. Even Jerome's practice of reporting diverse opinions underwent increasing modifications as time went on. Such a method, while useful to the grammarian whose task was to transmit a cultural heritage, was not as well suited to the needs of a Christian interpreter, who was expected to differentiate between orthodox and heretical ideas.[199] Jerome's mission in his *Commentary on Jeremiah* was to make the old text speak authoritatively on matters of faith, to affirm right doctrine and condemn heresy, and to promote good morals and discourage bad.

The tradition of γραμματική, on the other hand, had not developed along these lines. Explanations of the meaning of the text could be given through paraphrase or through the analysis of difficult words,[200]

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[198] Jay, *L'exégèse*, 76–87. Cf. Jerome's *Comm. Matt.* 25:13: "Prudentem semper admoneo lectorem, ut non superstitiosis acquiescat interpretationibus, et quae commatice pro fingentium dicuntur arbitrio, sed consideret priora, media, et sequentia, et nectat sibi universa quae scripta sunt." Augustine, by way of contrast, generally kept closer to the grammarian's atomistic exegesis; see Marrou, *Saint Augustin*, 429–30.

[199] See Holtz, *Donat*, 44–46; and Jay, *L'exégèse*, 74–76. Cf. *Comm. Zach.* 4:8–10: "Et ab Hebraeis et a nostris multa dicuntur, quorum pleraque sectantes, et alia repudiamus, quid nobis placeat, inferamus"; and *Comm. Os.* Prol.: "non in omnibus sum secutus; ut iudex potius operis eorum quam interpres exsisterem diceremque quid mihi videretur in singulis, et quid ab Hebraeorum magistris vix uno et altero acceperim."

[200] A greater emphasis on conceptual elaboration could be found among pagan commentators of a more philosophical orientation, e.g., Fulgentius, *Expositio virgilianae continentiae*. Yet, Jerome's education in *grammatice* did not come from a philosophical school, but from the literary school of Donatus (as with Servius). Jerome owed his philology to this "grammatical" tradition; and his theological interpretation he owed to previous Christian interpreters, rather than to pagan philosophical works. Yet, one

but commentary in the classical tradition had generally included a wider array of interests, which altogether could be described as "literary appreciation." Such a phrase would not suit Jerome's biblical scholarship.

In order to see the contrast clearly, one may compare Jerome's biblical philology with the interpretive approach of a late antique grammarian like Servius. As primarily a transmitter of the classical tradition, Servius had little interest in expounding a set of doctrines from Virgil. Instead, the contemporary significance of the text related to culture and language. One way of describing *grammatice*, going back in Latin to Quintilian but ultimately deriving from Greek sources,[201] was to say that *grammatice* consisted of "recte loquendi scientiam" and "poetarum enarrationem" (Quint. 1.4.2). This definition of *grammatice* was repeated often among Latin authors and grammarians up to the time of Servius and beyond.[202] In Servius' case, *recte loquendi scientia* often took precedence over the interpretation of the text, as he attempted to impress upon his readers how to speak and write Latin correctly.[203] Whether labeling a Virgilian phrase as a *figura*, and thereby warning the student not to use it, or promoting *sermo naturalis*, or explaining to the student what he "ought to say" (*debuit dicere*), or prescribing for the student what form "we" (as opposed to Virgil) use, Servius was constantly instructing his students on the proper use of language, utilizing the text as a model where appropriate, but also distancing the student from the text when

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can still recognize a connection between Jerome and the philosophical commentators in the person of Origen, who was very influential on Jerome and who was himself influenced by pagan philosophical exegesis; see Eus. *H.E.* 6.19.8. Cf. M. Simonetti, *Lettera e/o allegoria: un contributo alla storia dell'esegesi patristica* (Rome, 1985), 76; and G. Bendinelli, *Il commentario a Matteo di Origene: L'ambito della metodologia scolastica dell'antichità* (Rome, 1997), 38–45.

    [201] The bipartitie division of *grammatice* found in Quintilian was probably derived from the tripartite division of Asclepiades of Myrleia: τὸ τεχνικόν, τὸ ἱστορικόν, and τὸ γραμματικόν, where the first element is formal grammar, the second stands for the elucidation of the subject by providing the relevant background information, and the third represents exegesis. In the Latin system related by Quintilian, τὸ τεχνικόν became *recte loquendi scientia* (or *methodicen*), and both τὸ ἱστορικόν and τὸ γραμματικόν were collapsed into *poetarum enarratio* (or *historicen*; for the alternative terms, see Quint. 1.9.1). See Kamesar, "Philo," 226–27.

    [202] E.g., Dositheus, *Ars Gramm.*: "ars grammatica est scientia emendati sermonis in loquendo et scribendo poematumque ac lectionis prudens praeceptum" (GL 7.376). See K. Barwick, *Remmius Palaemon und die römische Ars grammatica*, Ph.S. 15.2 (Leipzig, 1922), 219–221. Barwick suggests that this bipartitie division was first brought to Rome by Varro (Ibid., 220–21). Cf. also Seneca, *Ep.* 88.3 and Juvenal, *Sat.* 7.230–31.

    [203] Kaster, *Guardians*, 169–97.

he wanted to recommend a different form. In complete contrast with Jerome, Servius emphasized *recte loquendi scientia* even at times to the neglect of the interpretation of the poet.

For Jerome, commenting on the Hebrew text of Jeremiah for a Christian audience, such an interest in teaching proper Latin usage would be totally out of place. Although the literary tradition of classical antiquity strongly impacted him, the nature of Jerome's subject matter and his Christian literary environment uniquely shaped the way he used his grammatical training. Jerome's emphasis on meaning marks his Hebrew philology as part of a distinctively Christian *grammatice*.

THE SOURCES FOR JEROME'S HEBREW SCHOLARSHIP

Jerome used information about the Hebrew text of the Old Testament extensively in his exegetical writings. He was a trained philologist with significant linguistic abilities, and it was natural for him, given his innate curiosity and his love of literature, to employ Hebrew language data in his research on the Old Testament. It must be asked, however, from where Jerome derived all of his information about Hebrew. When Jerome appealed to the Hebrew, was he making his own observations directly out of the Hebrew text, or was he simply passing on information that he had derived from Greek sources? When he encountered Hebrew-based interpretations in the works of others, how capable was he of evaluating them? How well did Jerome know Hebrew, and how original was his Hebrew scholarship? In order to address these questions, we will first examine the status of the Hebrew language itself in the fourth century, paying particular attention to how Hebrew was taught. Then, we will consider Jerome's own encounter with Hebrew and describe the specific resources that Jerome used in his study of the language. Finally, from this broader context, we will take a detailed look at Jerome's comments on Hebrew words in his *Commentary on Jeremiah*, both to evaluate the plausibility of his information and to ascertain the extent and nature of his reliance upon previous Greek sources.

Jerome began his study of Hebrew in the second half of the fourth century. According to most standard accounts of the history of the Hebrew language, Hebrew was used as a vernacular up until roughly 200 CE in the form of "Mishnaic Hebrew" (MH),[1] after which time it was replaced by Aramaic.[2] MH had existed as a spoken dialect since at

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[1] In rabbinic literature, Biblical Hebrew is referred to as לשון תורה, whereas Middle (or "Mishnaic") Hebrew is לשון חכמים; see *Hul* 137b and *AZ* 58b. Cf. also *Qid* 2b, לישנא דאורייתא versus לישנא דרבנן.

[2] E.g., M. Bar-Asher, "Mishnaic Hebrew: An Introductory Survey," *Hebrew Studies* 40 (1999): 116; A. Sáenz-Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, trans. J. Elwolde (Cambridge, 1993), 171; E. Y. Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, ed. R. Kutscher (Jerusalem, 1982), 115–16. An older view, as represented by Abraham Geiger [see *Lehr- und Lesebuch zur Sprache der Mischnah* (Breslau, 1845), 17–54], that MH was never a genuine spoken language, being rather an artificial language constructed out of

least the early Second Temple Period,[3] having exerted some influence on Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH), and it became a literary language in the first or second century CE, as attested by the Copper Scroll from Qumran and by the Bar-Kochba letters written in Hebrew around 130–140 CE.[4] The decline of MH as a spoken language has been traced to the aftermath of the Bar-Kochba revolt, when the Jews in Judea, among whom Hebrew was still in living use, were either killed or forced to flee to Galilee, where within one or two generations Hebrew disappeared as a vernacular under the influence of the surrounding Aramaic.[5] That spoken Hebrew was in decline in the second century may be suggested by the statement of R. Meir (mid-2nd century CE): כל הדר בארץ ישראל וקורא קרית שמע שחרית וערבית ומדבר בלשון הקודש הריהו בן העולם הבא (SifreDeut 333). In addition, from a remark ascribed to R. Judah ha-Nasi (early 3rd century CE): בארץ ישראל לשון סורסי למה ? או לשון הקודש או לשון יונית (BB 82a), it is clear that, for many Jews, Aramaic was becoming the preferred language of choice.[6]

Aramaic and BH, was refuted by M. H. Segal [e.g., "Mishnaic Hebrew and its Relation to Biblical Hebrew and to Aramaic," *JQR* 20 (1908): 647–737], and has now been universally abandoned. It has been generally recognized, however, that Segal underestimated the influence that Aramaic had on the development of MH; see Kutscher, *History*, 117–20.

[3] For the strong possibility that MH represents a spoken dialect of Hebrew from the pre-exilic period, see Sáenz-Badillos, *History*, 166; and Bar-Asher, "Mishnaic Hebrew," 118.

[4] A. Sáenz-Badillos, *History*, 166–67; and M. Bar-Asher, "Mishnaic Hebrew," 117.

[5] See E. Y. Kutscher, "Some Problems of the Lexicography of Mishnaic Hebrew and Its Comparison with Biblical Hebrew," *Archive of the New Dictionary of Rabbinical Literature*, vol. 1 (Ramat-Gan, 1972), 58–59. Nicholas de Lange, "The Revival of the Hebrew Language in the Third Century CE," *JSQ* 3 (1996): 342–58, emphasizes the paucity of evidence for written Hebrew in the second century, and suggests that Hebrew underwent a revival in the third century, as evidenced by the production at that time of materials in Hebrew from the Tannaitic period. De Lange is no doubt correct that Greek and Aramaic were much used by Jews in the second century, and he is also correct to emphasize the ideological connection between the Hebrew language and the rabbinic movement, but there is not sufficient evidence of Hebrew ignorance in the second century to suggest that Hebrew was in need of "revival" in the third. The lack of written materials from the second century probably relates more to the role that texts played in Rabbinic Judaism at that time than to the lack of Hebrew language skills among the Rabbis; see M. Jaffee, *Torah in the Mouth* (Oxford, 2001), 100–152.

[6] Based on this comment, it would seem that Greek was considered by Jewish intellectuals in Judea to be more acceptable than Aramaic. One may assume that Greek was permitted for common use and Hebrew was preferred for sacred or distinctively Jewish settings (thus לשון הקודש). The problem with Aramaic was that, because of its close proximity to Hebrew, it threatened the preservation of Hebrew more than Greek did.

Some sense of decline in the knowledge of vernacular Hebrew in the
generation following R. Judah ha-Nasi (Rabbi) may be gained from a
story preserved in *Meg* 11a, in which the disciples of Rabbi had to ask
his (presumably old) maidservant the meaning of Hebrew words like
מטאטא and חלגלוגות. Although the young Galilean students did not know
these terms, the maidservant, probably a woman of Rabbi's generation
who had come from Judea, was able to supply the correct meanings.[7]
In sum, it appears that by the fourth century Hebrew was not a widely
spoken vernacular, like Greek still was. We cannot, therefore, expect
Jerome to have learned Hebrew in the same way that he mastered
Greek, i.e., by immersion in an environment where the language was
constantly employed.

On the other hand, it would not at all be accurate to describe Hebrew
in the fourth century as a "dead language." In reality, Hebrew was still
very much alive in Jerome's time.

First, it is likely that Hebrew continued to be spoken among some Jews
even into the fourth century, as E. Y. Kutscher has argued.[8] For example,
R. Jonathan of Bet-Guvrin (4th century) is reported to have said:
ארבעה לשונות נאים שישתמש בהן העולם אילו הן לעז לזמר, רומי לקרב,
סורסי לאילייא, עברי לדיבור (*p.Meg* 1.9, 71b), suggesting some kind of
oral use for Hebrew beyond simply reading a text aloud.[9] Further evi-
dence for the living use of Hebrew has now been found in the form
of "non-academic" Hebrew letters dating from approximately 500 CE,
attesting to the utilization of Hebrew, in composition at least, for regular
communication in daily life.[10] There is even some evidence for spoken
Hebrew in the medieval period.[11] Thus, Hebrew never completely died
out as a genuine mode of communication.

Second, throughout the fourth century and beyond, the Rabbis con-
tinued to employ MH creatively for academic and liturgical purposes.

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[7] Cf. Kutscher, "Some Problems," 59.

[8] Ibid., 57–60. Kutscher actually cites Jerome as part of his evidence that some
Hebrew-speaking Jews survived into the fourth century.

[9] For עברי לדיבור, cf. also *EsthR* 4:12. According to P. S. Alexander, "How Did the
Rabbis Learn Hebrew?" in *Hebrew Study from Ezra to Ben-Yĕhuda*, ed. W. Horbury (Edin-
burgh, 1999), 75 (following Jastrow, 1040b), this expression means simply that Hebrew
was suitable for "oratory," not necessarily everyday speech. Either way, the phrase
certainly implies the oral use of Hebrew in genuine interpersonal communication.

[10] M. Mishor, "A New Edition of a Hebrew Letter: Oxford Ms. Heb. d.69 (P),"
Leshonenu 54 (1989): 215–64.

[11] Kutscher, *History*, 149–50.

Numerous rabbinic documents redacted during or after the fourth century in Palestine employ MH generously, such as *Genesis Rabbah, Lamentations Rabbah, Leviticus Rabbah, Pesikta de-Rav Kahana*, and even the *Palestinian Talmud*.[12] To be sure, as Michael Sokoloff has demonstrated, the form of MH used by Jews in the fourth century (mhe[2]) differs from the MH of the Tannaim (mhe[1]), the latter being the written version of a fully living language, the former being a literary language influenced to a greater degree by BH and Aramaic.[13] Nevertheless, the fact that MH (mhe[2]) was still used in the composition of new works testifies to a strong level of competence in the language. Likewise in the area of liturgy, MH continued to be employed actively.[14] The fact that the liturgy kept developing during this time shows the vitality of the language, and the oral use of Hebrew in the liturgy helped to preserve the sound of spoken Hebrew. Both in the study house and in public worship, the

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[12] See H. L. Strack, G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, trans. and ed. M. Bockmuehl (Minneapolis, 1996), 279–80, 285–86, 178–79, 290–91, 295–96. Even if much of the Hebrew material used in the compilation of these documents comes from the third century or earlier, it certainly took a significant level of competence in Hebrew to be able to supplement and edit them. With respect to the *Babylonian Talmud*, David Kraemer, *The Mind of the Talmud: An Intellectual History of the Talmud* (Oxford, 1990), 26–49, has shown that traditions preserved in Hebrew outnumber those preserved in Aramaic for the first three generations of Amoraim (up to the late 3rd or early 4th century), and only in the 4th generation of Amoraim (mid 4th century) do the Aramaic traditions begin to outnumber those in Hebrew. For a different approach to explaining the use of Hebrew vis-à-vis Aramaic in the *Talmud*, see J. Neusner, *Language as Taxonomy: The Rules for Using Hebrew and Aramaic in the Babylonian Talmud* (Atlanta, 1990), who argues that the shapers of BT used Hebrew for a specific purpose, namely, to express a normative rule or conclusion, as opposed to Aramaic, which they employed for analysis and argumentation. Yet, regardless of whether the Sage cited, or the discourse of the document as a whole, provides the most accurate basis for accounting for the use of language in BT, the *Talmud* clearly provides further evidence for an active (even if academic) knowledge of Hebrew after the age of the Tannaim. For a collection of Hebrew poems preserved in the Talmud, see T. Carmi, ed. *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse* (New York, 1981), 190–94.

[13] M. Sokoloff, "The Hebrew of *Beresit Rabba* according to Ms. Vat. Ebr. 30," *Leshonenu* 33 (1968–69): 25–42, 135–49, 270–79.

[14] See I. Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History*, trans. R. P. Scheindlin (Philadelphia, 1993), 205–18. It is especially important to note the activity of liturgical Hebrew poets in Palestine in the fourth century. Of special significance is the liturgical poet (*paytan*) Yose ben Yose (5th century), whose liturgical poems (*piyyutim*), written in stylized Hebrew, contained many allusions to earlier Hebrew traditions, scriptural, aggadic, and halachic; see A. Shinan, "The Late Midrashic, Paytanic, and Targumic Literature," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism, Vol. 4: The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, ed. S. T. Katz (Cambridge, 2006): 694–95.

"formal" use of Hebrew preserved a direct line of continuity with the living Hebrew of previous generations.[15]

Third, a vibrant understanding of BH was maintained into the fourth century and beyond through the unbroken tradition of reading and studying the Hebrew Scriptures. The Bible (מקרא) was studied as the foundational part of the school curriculum, the widespread practice of sending children to school going back at least to the first century CE, and perhaps even to the first century BCE.[16] Ideally, parents were expected to provide their children with some basic preparation for their formal education, as stated in *SifreDeut* 46: כשהתינוק מתחיל לדבר אביו מדבר עמו בלשון הקודש ומלמדו תורה ואם אין מדבר עמו בלשון קודש ואינו מלמדו תורה ראוי לו כאילו קוברו. As part of this responsibility, it was urged that from a very young age children be taught two verses in particular, Deut. 33:4 and Deut. 6:4.[17] The official study of מקרא began at the age of five and lasted up until the age of ten, at which point the student would turn his attention more in the direction of the oral law (*Avot* 5.21). Scripture was taught in the בית ספר, whereas oral law was taught in the בית תלמוד or בית מדרש.[18] It was in the בית ספר, between the ages of five and ten, that children were initiated into the tradition of reading the Hebrew Bible. Education along these lines was

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[15] As another example of the direct line of active Hebrew usage from earlier times to the fourth century and beyond, one may point to the mystical *Heikhalot* literature, which represents a developing and living tradition stretching back to the period of Qumran (e.g., the "Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice") and reaching well into the Middle Ages; see R. Elior, *The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism*, trans. D. Louvish (Portland, OR, 2004), 232–65.

[16] According to *p.Ket* 8.11, 32c, Simeon b. Shetah, who was active in the first half of the first century, decreed that children should go to school (שיהו התינוקות הולכין לבית ספר). On the other hand, the *Babylonian Talmud* preserves (in the name of Rav) a more detailed account according to which Joshua b. Gamala established an ordinance in the middle of the first century CE that teachers of children should be appointed not only in Jerusalem, but also in every province and town (*BB* 20b–21a). It is difficult to tell whether these represent contradictory opinions, or if they simply describe two different stages in the development of the full-scale system of schools. On the Jewish school system, see S. Safrai, "Education and the Study of Torah," in *The Jewish People in the First Century*, vol. 2, ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern (Philadelphia, 1976), 945–48; and E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, vol. 2, ed. G. Vermes, F. Millar, and M. Black (Edinburgh, 1979), 417–22.

[17] Thus it is stated in *Suk* 42a: יודע לדבר אביו לומדו תורה וקריאת שמע תורה מאי היא א״ר המנונא תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהלת יעקב(i.e., Deut. 33:4) קריאת שמע מאי היא פסוק ראשון (i.e., Deut. 6:4).

[18] For example: דא״ר פינחס בשם ר׳ הושעיה ארבע מאות ושמונים בתי כנסיות היו בירושלם (*p.Meg* וכל אחת ואחת היה לה בית ספר ובית תלמוד בית ספר למקרא ובית תלמוד למשנה) 3.1, 73d); cf. *p.Ket* 13.1, 35c.

central to Jewish culture, such that scholars were advised not to reside in a town that lacked a schoolmaster (*Sanh* 17b–18a). As Resh Lakish reported in the name of R. Judah ha-Nasi: אין העולם מתקיים אלא בשביל הבל תינוקות של בית רבן (*Shab* 119b).[19]

It is clear, then, that Hebrew was not a "dead language" in Jerome's day, but was still being used actively well into the fourth century (and beyond). Although there may have been a decline after 200 CE of the widespread use of Hebrew as the primary vernacular, Hebrew suffered no demise; on the contrary, it continued to be utilized in a variety of ways. The segment of Hebrew language usage that bears most directly on Jerome is the study of the Hebrew Bible. We have already seen the important place that the teaching of מקרא held in the early education of children. We may now turn our attention to the specific way in which the reading of the Hebrew Bible was taught.

As the first task in learning מקרא, the student would be taught the alphabet, with the teacher explaining each letter and demonstrating how to write each letter on a tablet.[20] The letters would first be learned in the regular order, and then in reverse order, and even in the form known as "atbash," where the first letter is paired with the last, and the second letter is paired with the second to last, on so on (e.g., א, ת, ב, ש,…).[21] When the student had learned to read and write the alphabet, he began straightway reading the Bible. The first text to be encountered by the child, oddly enough, was Leviticus—the only explanation given for this practice being that of R. Assi: מפני מה מתחילין לתינוקות בתורת כהנים ואין מתחילין בבראשית אלא שהתינוקות טהורין יבואו טהורין ויתעסקו בטהורים (*LevR* 7.3). It is generally agreed that R. Assi's explanation is a homiletical justification for an already existing practice, but how old this practice really was, and whether it went back to the period of the second temple, is still disputed.[22] Although it was generally not permitted

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[19] On the importance of the education of school children, see also *GenR* 65.20.

[20] The incidental information conveyed in the story about R. Akiba's education, as given in *ARN* 6.2, may be taken to reflect the general practice of late antiquity.

[21] See *ARN* 6.2, *Shab* 31a, and *ARN* 15.3. Mini-homilies may also have been used to teach the alphabet to children (e.g., *Shab* 104a), but we cannot be sure how widespread the practice might have been; cf. N. Morris, *The Jewish School: An introduction to the History of Jewish Education* (New York, 1937), 148–50.

[22] According to W. Bacher, "Das altjüdische Schulwesen," *Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* (1903): 66–67, the practice of beginning with Leviticus goes back to a period when education took place primarily among priestly families. This view was challenged by Morris, *Jewish School*, 89–91, who suggested that the practice arose after

to write a scroll with only a portion of a biblical text on it, allowances were made by some for the writing out of scrolls containing only (1) Lev 1:1–9:1 and (2) Gen. 1:1 to the story of the Flood, because these two texts were used by beginning schoolchildren.[23] After having learned the alphabet, therefore, the student would read from a scroll containing at least Lev. 1:1–9:1 and the beginning of Genesis, after which time he would move on to read the rest of Torah, the prophets, and the Writings, until (ideally) all of Scripture had been studied.[24]

Although we lack precise information regarding the method of instruction, the skill of Scripture reading seems to have been taught primarily through oral recitation and translation. The teacher would take the verses of Scripture to be covered and break them up into manageable units,[25] instructing the students in the proper pronunciation and accentuation of the text.[26] Along with the oral reading, a transla-

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the Bar Kochba war as an attempt to keep the ceremonial part of the Pentateuch alive. Similar views were expressed by N. Drazin, *History of Jewish Education: From 515 BCE to 220 CE* (Baltimore, 1940), 82–83, and E. Ebner, *Elementary Education in Ancient Israel During the Tannaitic Period (10–220 CE)* (New York, 1956), 78–79, both of whom connected the custom of starting with Leviticus to nationalistic sentiments following the destruction of the Temple. More recently, Safrai, "Education," 951, has added his opinion to those who doubt the antiquity of the practice. Yet Alexander, "How Did the Rabbis Learn Hebrew?" 80, has reckoned it "highly plausible" that the practice of starting the school curriculum with Leviticus began in pre–70 priestly schools, essentially reviving Bacher's position.

[23] According to *Gittin* 60a, one perspective allowed the writing out of partial scrolls for children on the basis that the scribe intended to complete the scroll later, while another opinion allowed for the writing of scrolls with the relevant materials from Lev. and Gen. on the basis of the educational need (cf. also *Soferim* 5.9). *p.Meg* 3.1, 74a says that scrolls containing only the passages from Lev. and Gen., as well as Num. 1:1–10:35, are permissible to use for public reading, which may mean that Num. 1:1–10:35 may also have been a school text, although the context here does not relate specifically to education.

[24] היאך אדם למד תורה תחלה אומרים לו תחלה קורא במגלה ואחר כך בספר (*DeutR* 8.3); cf. *ARN* 6.2 ואחר כך בנביאים ואחר כך בכתובים משהוא נומר את המקרא... concerning R. Akiba, (i.e., מקרא) היה לומד והולך עד שלמד כל התורה כולה.

[25] It was usually not permitted to make divisions in verses, but a special allowance was made in the case of teachers: צער נדול היה לי אצל ר' חנינא הנדול ולא התיר לי לפסוק אלא לתינוקות של בית רבן הואיל ולהתלמד עשוין (*Taan* 27b); cf. *Meg* 22a.

[26] In discussing whether or not it is proper for someone to receive pay for teaching Scripture, two suggestions are offered as to how one might be able to compensate teachers for their work without putting them in a position where they would be deriving financial benefit from the sacred text: Rav suggests that the teachers be officially paid only for guarding the children, whereas R. Johanan recommends that the teachers, while teaching the students מקרא, be paid simply for their instruction concerning the division of accents (פיסוק טעמים) (*Ned* 37a). פיסוק טעמים included the division of the verses, but it also necessarily implies that the text was being pronounced out loud. Such guidance

tion was given, such that the student could match up the words of the Hebrew text with the corresponding words in the translation.[27] Such a procedure could be carried out simply through the teacher's oral rendering, or alternatively, a written translation could be used.[28] As Philip Alexander has suggested, the process of matching up translation with original was probably easier with Aramaic than with Greek, since Aramaic and Hebrew are structurally so similar. For Greek speakers, a literal Greek version, like Aquila, would have best facilitated the process, although an explanatory translation like Symmachus would also have had its place.[29] By correctly following the segmentation and alignment of the text with its translation, the student would learn Hebrew vocabulary and the distinctive syntax of Biblical Hebrew. Besides these basic methods, other tools seem to have been available: in addition to alphabet tables, children's exercises and glossaries have been found among the remains of the Cairo Genizah.[30] Primarily, however, Scripture reading was taught by means of breaking the text into manageable units, reading it out aloud, and then giving a translation of the text into the vernacular.[31]

The overall success of this educational endeavor in preserving Biblical Hebrew is demonstrated by the continuous use of מקרא in the liturgy

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was especially necessary before written systems of vocalization were established, and it has often been suggested that the Masoretic vowel pointing system originated in a school context; see Morris, *Jewish School*, 157; and Safrai, "Education," 950–51.

[27] E.g., *p.Ned* 4.3, 38c makes reference to מלמדין ... מקרא ותרגום.

[28] In *p.Meg.* 4:1, 74d, a written Targum is used for instruction, although R. Samuel bar R. Isaac does not approve of the practice: ר׳ חניי אמר ר׳ שמואל בר רב יצחק עאל לכנישתא חמא חד ספר מושט תרגומא מן גו סיפרא א״ל אסור לך דברים שנאמרו בפה בפה דברים שנאמרו בכתב בכתב. On the use of Targumim in teaching, see P. S. Alexander, "The Targumim and the Rabbinic Rules for the Delivery of the Targum," in *Congress Volume: Salamanca* 1983, Suppl. VT 36, ed. J. A. Emerton (Leiden, 1985), 22–23; and *idem*, "How Did the Rabbis Learn Hebrew?" 80–82.

[29] Alexander, "How Did the Rabbis Learn Hebrew?" 83–84. Alexander's suggestion, however, that Jerome might have learned his basic Biblical Hebrew using translations rather than through Jewish teachers, misses the mark. Since translations were used in conjunction with a personal teacher among Jews, there is no reason for one to exclude the other in the case of Jerome. Jerome himself tells us that he learned the basics of Hebrew from a Jewish convert to Christianity; see *Ep.* 125.12.

[30] On these, see Alexander, "How Did the Rabbis Learn Hebrew?" 86.

[31] Bacher, "Das altjüdische Schulwesen," 76, also stressed oral reading and translation as the primary methods of teaching Hebrew in antiquity. Morris, *The Jewish School*, 164, gives a plausible reconstruction of the process: "There is some ground for believing that the lesson in the school was conducted in the following manner: first a reading of the verse in the original; then a translation, or explanation in the vernacular; and finally, another reading in Hebrew alone."

throughout antiquity,[32] the basic agreement between what ultimately
became the Masoretic understanding of the text and the interpretations
presumed by the ancient versions, and the high level of Hebrew com-
petency transmitted to the Middle Ages. Perhaps the most compelling
testament to the effectiveness of this instruction is the corpus of classical
rabbinic literature itself, especially the midrashim: despite the differences
between Biblical and Middle Hebrew, by and large the Rabbis of late
antiquity understand the plain sense of the Biblical text, even if they
also work theologically beyond or apart from it. Wilhelm Bacher actu-
ally cited Jerome as proof of the high quality of Hebrew study in the
fourth century.[33] To what extent Jerome can offer such testimony is the
subject of this chapter. But before moving on to discuss the specifics
of Jerome's situation, we must first consider what the environment of
Hebrew study in the fourth century would have meant for someone like
Jerome, who was trying to acquire the language as an outsider. How
would the linguistic and cultural context of Jerome's world effect how
he might have been able to learn Hebrew?

As stated above, Jerome could not have obtained "fluency" in
Hebrew as he did in Greek, since Hebrew was not a widely spoken
vernacular. The use of Hebrew for genuine oral communication in
the fourth century would have been restricted to specific contexts and
occasions, often revolving around Jewish communal life (e.g., liturgy,
advanced study, family correspondence), to which Jerome would have
had limited access (see below). It is unlikely, therefore, that he would
have been able to master Hebrew in any active sense, because he did
not fully integrate into the subculture that used Hebrew regularly for
active communication.

On the other hand, Jerome's teachers of מקרא would have been
able not only to read Biblical Hebrew but also to express themselves
in Hebrew beyond simply reciting the liturgy, and they might even
have been capable of writing Mishnaic Hebrew.[34] They would have

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[32] For example, seven different readers were required for the Torah on the Sabbath.
Other festival days required multiple readers as well. Although the readings in the
early period were generally not very long, the fact that enough people could usually
be found to perform such a task indicates that the schools were effective in teaching
Hebrew. See *Meg* 4.1–2 and *t.Meg* 3.11.

[33] Bacher, "Das altjüdische Schulwesen," 76.

[34] Although all students learned to write the alphabet and could certainly copy out
words, the craft of written composition was more of a specialist's discipline, and was
therefore less widely known; cf. Morris, *The Jewish School*, 81–83; Safrai, "Education,"
952; and Alexander, "How Did the Rabbis Learn Hebrew?" 79–80.

been completely competent to guide Jerome in the pronunciation of Hebrew and to assist him in learning the grammar and vocabulary through translation, provided that they could speak to Jerome in a common language, in most cases probably Greek.[35] These teachers could also have passed on to Jerome details about Jewish exegesis and the particularities of post-Biblical Hebrew, all of which Jerome could have absorbed, even if he never learned to express his own thoughts in Hebrew. This kind of knowledge could certainly be described as "passive,"[36] but we must not take this necessarily to mean defective. The limits that Jerome would have encountered pertain only to the registers at which he could have known Hebrew, not to the level at which he might have learned what was accessible to him. Even for a non-Jew like Jerome, learning to read Hebrew was a real possibility in the fourth century.

As for what Jerome himself tells us about his Hebrew training, it appears that his first encounter with a Semitic language was not with Hebrew, but "Syriac," to which he was exposed during his stay in the desert of Chalcis, which lasted from approximately 375 to 377.[37] Jerome was forced to gain at least some working knowledge of the rudiments of this language simply to be able to communicate with the local inhabitants.[38] That Jerome was known to be familiar with "Syriac" can be inferred from his somewhat ironic reference to himself as "eloquentissimus homo in Syro sermone vel Graeco" in *Ep.* 17.2, written either at the end of his desert stay or just after he had left.[39]

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[35] As Kedar-Kopfstein, "Jewish Traditions," 427–28, has argued, Jerome probably communicated with his Jewish Hebrew teachers in Greek, at least while he was in the East. This is why Jerome often represented the meanings of Hebrew words as learned from Jews in Greek, e.g., *Ep.* 121.10, "Et si quando certis diebus traditiones suas exponunt, discipulis suis solent dicere: οἱ σοφοὶ δευτεροῦσιν, id est 'sapientes docent traditiones'"; cf. also *Expl. Dan.* 6:4; and *Comm. Abac.* 2:15–17. That Jerome gives the meaning for a Hebrew expression in Greek does not constitute evidence that he borrowed the information from Origen, as suggested by G. Bardy ("Saint Jérôme," 157). It is natural to expect that Jerome conversed with his Hebrew teachers in Greek, and that he sometimes reported the Greek words given to him by his teachers before translating them into Latin for his readers. In Rome, of course, Jerome may have learned from Jews with whom he could speak Latin.

[36] Cf. Burstein, "La compétence," 12.

[37] See S. Rebenich, *Jerome*, ECF (London, 2002), 12–20.

[38] E.g., see Jerome's remarks to his Latin correspondents in *Ep.* 7.2: "Nunc cum vestris litteris fabulor, illas amplector, illae mecum loquuntur, illae hic tantum Latine sciunt. hic enim aut barbarus seni sermo discendus est aut tacendum."

[39] See pp. 41–42. On the date of the letter, see Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, II, 16.

However much or little he may have actually learned of this living Semitic tongue, Jerome immediately began displaying his knowledge in works intended for general circulation, like his *Life of Paul*, composed either during his desert stay or at Antioch in 378–79.[40]

In addition to Syriac, however, Jerome also began his study of Hebrew during his stay in the desert of Chalcis. One might suppose that his exposure to "Syriac" when he first came to the desert helped pique Jerome's curiosity about Hebrew. Jerome, for his part, writing many years after the events in question, recalled his introduction to the Hebrew language in the following terms:

> Dum essem iuvenis et solitudinis me deserta vallarent, incentiva vitio-rum ardoremque naturae ferre non poteram; quae cum crebris ieiuniis frangerem, mens tamen cogitationibus aestuabat. ad quam edomandam cuidam fratri, qui ex Hebraeis crediderat, me in disciplinam dedi, ut post Quintiliani acumina Ciceronisque fluvios gravitatemque Frontonis et lenitatem Plinii alphabetum discerem, stridentia anhelantiaque verba meditarer. quid ibi laboris insumpserim, quid sustinuerim difficultatis, quotiens desperaverim quotiensque cessaverim et contentione discendi rursus inceperim, testis est conscientia tam mea, qui passus sum, quam eorum, qui mecum duxere vitam. et gratias ago domino, quod de amaro semine litterarum dulces fructus capio (*Ep.* 125.12)

Modern scholarship has been unwilling to believe that Jerome's primary motivation in learning Hebrew was the restraint of his wayward thoughts, and it is probable that the original impulse came from forces such as basic intellectual curiosity, a sense of the potential usefulness of Hebrew for biblical scholarship, and a desire to read the Old Testament in the language of original composition, where it might sound just as good as Homer does when read in the original Greek and not in a Latin translation.[41] Jerome's continued interest in Hebrew, even beyond his first encounter in the desert, can be seen in the preface to his translation of Eusebius' *Chronicon*, produced in 380 at Constantinople.[42] While discussing the basic difficulty that a translator faces in trying to render the literary quality of any work into a second language, Jerome

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[40] Cf. "in cisterna veteri, quam gentili sermone Syri 'gubbam' vocant" (*Vit. Paul.* 6). Regarding the date, see J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London, 1975), 60–61; and Rebenich, *Jerome*, 14.

[41] See Barr, "St. Jerome's Appreciation of Hebrew," 286; and Kelly, *Jerome*, 50. On Jerome's aesthetic sensibilities and his desire to read Hebrew, see Kamesar, *Jerome*, 46–49.

[42] On the date of this translation, see Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, II, 20.

explains that the Old Testament only seems like bad literature to the learned because it was not actually written in Greek or Latin, but in Hebrew: "Inde adeo venit, ut Sacrae litterae minus comptae et sonantes videantur, quod diserti homines interpretatas eas de Hebraeo nescientes, dum superficiem, non medullam inspiciunt, ante quasi vestem orationis sordidam perhorrescant quam pulchrum intrinsecus rerum corpus inveniant."

Still, it is during his stay in Rome, from 382 to 385, that Jerome truly began to strengthen his Hebrew knowledge and develop his ideas about returning to the Hebrew truth. As Adam Kamesar has demonstrated, Jerome's extensive use of Hebrew in letters written during the "Roman" period shows that he was already convinced of the ultimate value of the Hebrew language for the interpretation of the Old Testament. Comments from this time, such as "ex Hebraeis codicibus veritas exprimenda est" (*Ep.* 20.2), also prove that Jerome was already realizing the textual priority of the Hebrew.[43] From the end of his stay in Rome (385) to the beginning of his translation *iuxta Hebraeos* (391), Jerome produced numerous works that promoted Hebrew learning and explained the value of Hebrew to the Bible-reading Latin public.[44] From 391 until his death in 419, Jerome devoted most of his literary energies to Hebrew scholarship, completing his biblical translations from the Hebrew in 405, and producing commentaries filled with Hebrew information on all of the prophets. In sum, Jerome's initiation into Hebrew took place sometime between 375 and 377, but his serious development as a student of the Hebrew language did not start until the Roman period (382–85), and he no doubt continued to improve his Hebrew all the way up to the completion of his *iuxta Hebraeos* translation (405) and beyond.[45]

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[43] The older view (e.g., Sparks, "Jerome as Biblical Scholar," 515; and Kelly, *Jerome*, 159–60), that Jerome's hexaplaric revision of the Old Testament, undertaken between 385 and 391, was based on his belief in the inspiration of the LXX, and that he abandoned this belief in 391 when he finally realized the significance and necessity of the "Hebraica veritas," does not sufficiently account for Jerome's high estimation of Hebrew during the Roman period, nor does it fully explain Jerome's admittedly complicated views on the LXX; see Kamesar, *Jerome*, 41–81.

[44] Especially important in this regard are the three works written just before the start of the Hebrew translation project: *De nominibus Hebraicis*, *De situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum*, and *Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim*, the last of which served as an explanation and defense of the philological system upon which the *iuxta Hebraeos* translation was to be founded; see Kamesar, *Jerome*, 76–81.

[45] E.g., see Kedar-Kopfstein, *The Vulgate as a Translation*, 54, on the chronological development of Jerome's translation technique, probably reflecting his increased comfort with the language.

Jerome's own remarks about his Hebrew study demonstrate that he did indeed expose himself to the tools and resources for learning Hebrew that were available to him. Hebrew teachers, general exposure to the Hebrew culture of the fourth century, and translations of the Hebrew Bible into Greek were the main components of Jerome's Hebrew education.

Teachers seem to have played a central role in Jerome's acquisition of the language, not only at the beginning of his study but also at key intervals throughout his learning process. Reference has already been made to Jerome's first Hebrew teacher, a Jewish convert to Christianity, who first instructed him in the desert of Chalcis.[46] Two important points can be gathered from Jerome's comments about this experience: first, that Jerome began his study by learning the Hebrew letters ("alphabetum discerem"),[47] and second, that Jerome was taught to pronounce what he was reading ("stridentia anhelantiaque verba meditarer").[48] Jerome made frequent reference throughout his career to this first teacher,[49] in addition to the numerous other teachers that he identifies.[50]

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[46] It is highly significant that Jerome's first Hebrew teacher was a convert to Christianity. The social dynamics of Jewish-Christian relations in the fourth century would have made it awkward for a Christian to approach a Jew, ask for lessons, and then receive elementary instruction in Hebrew. This social barrier would have been largely removed in the case of a Jew who had converted. By the "Roman" period, when Jerome needed to seek out Jewish teachers, he would have already known the basics of Hebrew, so that it would have been much less difficult to secure a Hebrew teacher simply to help him develop what he had already learned.

[47] Regarding the alphabet, a telling passage on Jerome's instruction is found in the *Comm. Ier.* 25:26c: "sicut apud nos Graecum alfabetum usque ad novissimam litteram per ordinem legitur, hoc est 'alfa, beta' et cetera usque ad 'o,' rursumque propter memoriam parvulorum solemus lectionis ordinem vertere et primis extrema miscere, ut dicamus 'alfa o, beta psi,' sic et apud Hebraeos primum est 'aleph,' secundum 'beth,' tertium 'gimel' usque ad vicesimam secundam et extremam litteram 'thau,' cui paenultima est 'sin.' legimus itaque 'aleph thau, bet sin,'..." In this passage, Jerome looks back to his early lessons in learning the Hebrew alphabet. His knowledge of the "atbash" order for the Hebrew is reminiscent of what we know of Hebrew instruction in antiquity (see above p. 81).

[48] An account of Jerome's endeavors to pronounce Hebrew correctly can be seen in his *Comm. Tit.* 3.9; see the section on *lectio* in chap. 2, pp. 26–35.

[49] References to this first teacher include: *Comm. Eccl.* 1:14, 3:9–11, 4:13–16; *Comm. Is.* 22:17; *Comm. Am.* 3:11; *Comm. Abd.* 20–21; and *Ep.* 18A.10 (cf. Leanza, "Gerolamo," 30–31).

[50] According to Opelt, "S. Girolamo," even if one discounts the inauthentic references to Hebrew teachers pointed out by Bardy, "Saint Jérôme," at least five genuine Hebrew teachers can be discovered in Jerome's works. Leanza, "Gerolamo," also counted at least five Hebrew teachers for Jerome, although on a slightly different reckoning than

Jerome testified to the important role played by his Hebrew teachers both in his commentaries and in the prefaces to his *iuxta Hebraeos* translations. In the commentaries, Jerome often introduces a Hebrew teacher in order to present one of his interpretations, as in the *Comm. Eccl.* 4:13–16: "Hebraeus meus, cuius saepe facio mentionem, cum Ecclesiasten mecum legeret, haec Baracchibam, quem unum vel maxime admirantur, super praesenti loco tradidisse testatus est";[51] or in the *Comm. Is.* 22:17: "'Geber,' quod omnes 'virum' interpretati sunt, Hebraeus autem qui nos in veteris testamenti lectione erudivit, 'gallum gallinaceum' transtulit. Sicut, inquit, gallus gallinaceus."[52] As these examples show, the teacher would read the biblical text with Jerome and would supply for him whatever explanations were necessary to understand the passage in question. In the prefaces to his translations, we see that Jerome also sought out specific help from Hebrew teachers when he felt that he needed additional assistance for a particularly difficult project. For example, in the preface to Chronicles (*iuxta LXX*), Jerome says: "ut vobis Paralipomenon Latino sermone transferrem, de Tiberiade legis quondam auctorem, qui apud Hebraeos admirationi habebatur, adsumpsi, et contuli cum eo a vertice, ut aiunt, usque ad extremum unguem." Jerome also sought help for the challenging book of Job, as he states: "Memini me ob intellegentiam huius voluminis lyddeum quemdam praeceptorem qui apud Hebraeos primas habere putabatur, non parvis redemisse nummis, cuius doctrina an aliquid profecerim nescio" (*Prol. Iob IH*).[53] In a remarkable passage, Jerome says that he obtained the help of a learned Jew who knew both Aramaic and Hebrew and who could assist him in translating the Aramaic text of Tobit. According to Jerome, as the Jew translated orally from Aramaic into Hebrew, Jerome would take what he heard in Hebrew

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Opelt: Opelt counted the Hebrew teacher mentioned in *Ep.* 36, but did not count the teacher of the Law from Tiberius who assisted Jerome in his hexaplaric translation of Paralipomenon. Leanza accepted the latter but not the former.

[51] Regarding Jerome's reference to "Barrachibam" (Bar Akiba), cf. *Ep.* 121.10. Jerome gives a more detailed (although not entirely correct) list of rabbinic sages at *Comm. Is.* 8:11–15.

[52] The idea that "Geber" (נבר) means "poultry-cock" reflects post-biblical Hebrew usage; see M. Rehm, "Die Bedeutung hebräischer Wörter bei Hieronymus," *Bib.* 35 (1954): 194.

[53] Jerome's expression of doubt over whether or not he learned anything from this instructor should not be taken too literally. Of Jerome's Hebrew teachers, perhaps the best-known example is "Baraninas," who came to Jerome secretly to teach him at night; see *Ep.* 84.3 and *Ruf.* 1.13.

and translate it into Latin.[54] This report suggests that Jerome had a solid passive competence in spoken Hebrew, although the vocabulary requirements for this exercise would have been limited to "biblical" phraseology, and there is no presumption that Jerome could have ever translated anything *into* Hebrew. In fact, one might guess that the translator who helped Jerome also shared another language in common with him, namely Greek,[55] and that the rendering into Hebrew might also have been accompanied (when necessary) by some comments in Greek on the meaning of the Hebrew. If this was in fact the case, then Jerome's translation of Tobit reflects both his growing competence in Hebrew and his continuing education in the language. Not only at the beginning, but also throughout his career, teachers played a key role in Jerome's Hebrew education.

Another means by which Jerome strengthened his Hebrew was through general contact with the Jewish community, which still used Hebrew for a variety of purposes. To begin with, it is likely that Jerome had some exposure to popular synagogue exposition,[56] which is consistent with the fact that his knowledge of Jewish learning extended only to aggadic Scripture interpretation and the kind of linguistic exegesis found in the Targumim.[57] Considering his success in picking

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[54] "quia vicina est Chaldeorum lingua sermoni hebraico, utriusque linguae pertissimum loquacem repperiens, unius diei laborem arripui et quicquid ille mihi hebraicis verbis expressit, haec ego accito notario, sermonibus latinis exposui" (*Prol. Tobit*).

[55] See above p. 85.

[56] Jerome sometimes speaks in a generally informed way about the contemporary synagogue, e.g., at *Comm. Is.* 58:2: "Hoc proprie Iudaeis convenit, qui per singulos dies currunt ad synagogas et in dei lege meditantur, scire cupientes quid Abraham Isaac et Iacob, quid ceteri sanctorum fecerint, et libros prophetarum ac Moysi memoriter revolventes decantant divina mandata." Considering Jerome's familiarity with chanting the Psalms (see below), his translation of Tobit from Hebrew by ear, and his general knowledge of aggada, it is reasonable to assume that he could have understood, at least basically, the Hebrew expositions that took place in the synagogue. It is impossible, however, to gather from Jerome any solid details about the style of preaching. S. Krauss, "The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers. VI. Jerome," *JQR* 6 (1894): 234–36, compiled numerous supposed references in the works of Jerome to synagogue preaching; but in reality, none of these texts hold up under scrutiny—most do not even relate to the Jews at all; cf. Stemberger, "Hieronymus," 360–63.

[57] Classic studies that show parallels between Jerome and rabbinic aggada include: Rahmer, *Die hebräischen Traditionen*; and Ginzberg, "Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern." Studies detailing points of contact between Jerome's translations and rabbinic aggada include: Aptowitzer, "Rabbinische Parallelen"; and Gordon, "Rabbinic Exegesis." Evidence for Jerome's awareness of aggadic traditions can be found more recently in Braverman, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*; and Kamesar, *Jerome*. Even when Jerome can be shown to rely on traditions that ended up in the Talmud, these traditions are

up spoken Greek by ear, Jerome certainly would have been able to build on his knowledge of Hebrew by listening to such expositions. In addition, Jerome was aware of the liturgical practice of chanting the Psalms in Hebrew; he made special note of the recitation of Psalm 117 in the Jewish service.[58] He even claims to have taught Paula and Eustochium to sing Psalms in Hebrew, which would mean that Jerome himself must have heard it done frequently enough to teach it.[59] Finally, there is some evidence to suggest that Jerome both read and copied non-biblical Hebrew works. In *Vir. ill.* 3, Jerome reports that certain Nazaraeans in Syria allowed him to copy out a Hebrew Gospel that was purported to be the original version of the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew.[60] Jerome also credited the Nazaraeans with introducing him to an apocryphal work in Hebrew ascribed to Jeremiah.[61] In *Ep.* 36.1,

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still non-technical and aggadic; see e.g., M. Kraus, "Christians, Jews, and Pagans in Dialogue: Jerome on Ecclesiastes 12:1–7," *HUCA* 70–71 (1999–2000): 183–231. On Jerome and the Targumim, see Hayward, "Jewish Traditions"; and *idem*, "Saint Jerome." Jerome does not seem to have been exposed to the details of halakhic exegesis.

[58] See *Ep.* 20.4. On the chanting of the Psalms by the Jews, cf. *Comm. Am.* 5:23 and *Tract. Marc.* 5:30–43. The practice of reciting the "hallel" Psalms (Psalms 113–118) on the three "pilgrim festivals" was already established in the Tannaitic period. See Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy*, 114; cf. *t.Suk* 3.2.

[59] See *Ep.* 108.26. Considering the occasion of the letter (i.e., Paula's death), one may allow that Jerome is somewhat exaggerating when he says of Paula's Hebrew: "sermonem absque ulla latinae linguae proprietate personaret." Note also the exaggeration of Blesilla's Hebrew in the letter written after her death: "in paucis non dico mensibus, sed diebus ita Hebraeae linguae vicerat difficultates, ut in ediscendis canendisque psalmis cum matre contenderet" (*Ep.* 39.1). Yet, there is no reason to doubt that these women did in fact learn from Jerome how to chant certain Psalms in Hebrew.

[60] Jerome seems to have realized after writing *De viris illustribus* that this supposed "Hebrew" Gospel of Matthew was not authentic, although he never openly retracted his original claim; see T. C. G. Thornton, "Jerome and the 'Hebrew Gospel according to Matthew,'" *StPatr* 28 (1993): 118–22.

[61] "Legi nuper in quodam hebraico volumine, quod Nazaraenae sectae mihi Hebraeus obtulit, Jeremiae apocryphum, in quo haec ad verbum scripta reperi" (*Comm. Matt.* 27:9–10). As with the "Hebrew Gospel of Matthew," it may be safely doubted that the apocryphal Jeremiah volume shown to Jerome was authentic. For example, this Hebrew "Jeremiae apocryphum" may have been compiled, with the inclusion of the quote from Matthew in Hebrew, specifically to serve as the "source" for the quote. Jerome would have been eager to accept such a claim, since it would vindicate his return to the Hebrew truth. Bardy, "Saint Jérôme," 161, however, is unduly skeptical to suspect Jerome of inventing the volume altogether, simply because Origen had mentioned the possibility that the quote in Matt. 27:9–10 might be found in some writing of Jeremiah other than the canonical book. As demonstrated by his notice in *Vir. ill.* 3, Jerome did receive Christian Hebrew books from the Nazaraeans, of which one seems to have been this volume transmitted in the name of Jeremiah that contained the quotation from Matt. 27.

Jerome apologizes to Damasus for delaying to respond to the Pontiff's letter, on the grounds that Jerome was interrupted in writing his reply by a Jew who had brought him "non pauca volumina," which had been borrowed from the synagogue and which needed to be returned quickly, thus requiring Jerome's immediate attention. As suggested by Vaccari, these volumes were likely to have included some non-biblical Hebrew materials (a collection of aggadah?),[62] since later in the same letter Jerome relates a post-biblical tradition about Lamech that he claims to have found "in quodam hebraeo volumine."[63] Similarly, while discussing the stations of Israel's wilderness wanderings in *Ep.* 78.20, Jerome supplies the meaning of the Hebrew word "rissa" (ריסה) from the *Book of Jubilees* ("parva Genesis"), which he had seen in Hebrew.[64] All of this suggests that Jerome had at least a limited exposure to Hebrew through the environment of Jewish culture. Although Jerome's contact with this world was not extensive, it certainly would have re-enforced his competency in the fundamentals of Hebrew.

In addition to his personal teachers and his exposure to Jewish culture, the other major resources of which Jerome availed himself in learning Hebrew were the three main hexaplaric versions, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. Jerome's first encounter with the three *recentiores* probably came indirectly, through citations in Greek commentaries;[65] but he

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[62] Vaccari, "I fattori," 473–75. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, II, 23–24, thought that the borrowed scrolls in question were copies of the Hebrew Bible, and that the book borrowing of *Ep.* 36 made possible the collation with Aquila mentioned in *Ep.* 32 (see below). E. F. Sutcliffe suggested that the borrowed volumes at the beginning of *Ep.* 36 might actually have included the version of Aquila, thus facilitating the collation of *Ep.* 32, but he recognized with Vaccari that the reference in *Ep.* 36.4 was to a non-biblical Jewish writing ("St. Jerome's Hebrew Manuscripts," *Bib.* 29 (1948): 197–98). The simplest reading of the evidence seems to be that of Vaccari: that *Ep.* 36.4 refers to a non-biblical aggadic text, and that the volumes referred to at the beginning of the letter at least included a non-biblical Hebrew work.

[63] "Lamech, qui septimus ab Adam non sponte, sicuti in quodam hebraeo volumine scribitur, interfecit Cain" (*Ep.* 36.4). The tradition that Lamech killed Cain by accident can be found in several rabbinic texts, including *Tan. Bereshit.* 11. It also appears in the Christian pseudepigraphic work, *The Book of Adam and Eve* 2.13; see J. Kugel, *In Potiphar's House* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994), 159–72. There is no reason to doubt, however, that Jerome read this account in a Hebrew volume.

[64] "hoc verbum, quantum memoria suggerit, nusquam alibi in scripturis sanctis apud Hebraeos invenisse me novi absque libro apocrypho, qui a Graecis λεπτή, id est parva, Genesis appellatur." Origen, in his homilies on Numbers, does not mention the "Little Genesis," and gives a different interpretation of the word in question; see Vaccari, "I fattori," 474. Jerome also cites this work at *Ep.* 78.26 ("in supradicto apocrypho Geneseos volumine").

[65] See Kamesar, *Jerome*, 72.

would not have been able to use the Greek versions in learning Hebrew until he could read one or more of them critically along with the Hebrew text. In 384, during the period when he was building up and consolidating his knowledge of Hebrew, Jerome reports that he spent a considerable amount of time and energy comparing Aquila's version with the Hebrew text.[66] There is no indication that Jerome had seen the Hexapla at that time, and so it must be assumed that the *recentiores* were circulating separately, and that Jerome was able to obtain copies of the various Greek versions individually.[67] Later, Jerome did have occasion to consult the Hexapla itself in Caesarea, as he mentions on two occasions,[68] and he may have obtained some of his copies of the Greek versions, at least for certain books, by copying directly from the Origenian compilation.[69] That Jerome was using the *recentiores* during this period in his research on the Hebrew Bible is clear from the preface to his *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* (ca. 388), where he states:

> hoc breviter admonens, quod nullius auctoritatem secutus sum; sed de hebraeo transferens, magis me septuaginta interpretum consuetudini coaptavi, in his dumtaxat, quae non multum ab Hebraicis discrepabant. Interdum Aquilae quoque et Symmachi et Theodotionis recordatus sum, ut nec novitate nimia lectoris studium deterrerem, nec rursum contra conscientiam meam, fonte veritatis omisso, opinionum rivulos consectarer.

Although it would have been virtually impossible to begin learning Hebrew simply by looking at multiple translations, it is easy to imagine how Jerome could have built up his vocabulary and gained familiarity with numerous grammatical constructions through the Greek versions. First, he could compare the Hebrew text with Aquila, whose literal segmentation, etymologizing, and quantitative representation of the

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[66] "Iam pridem cum voluminibus Hebraeorum editionem Aquilae confero, ne quid forsitan propter odium Christi synagoga mutaverit, et, ut amicae menti fatear, quae ad nostram fidem pertineant roborandam, plura repperio. Nunc, iam prophetis, Salomone, Psalterio Regnorumque libris examussim recensitis Exodem teneo, quem illi elle smoth vocant, ad Leviticum transiturus" (*Ep.* 32.1).

[67] Kamesar, *Jerome*, 72. See, for example, *Ruf.* 2.34 for further evidence to suggest that the *recentiores* were available individually.

[68] *Comm. Tit.* 3:9; and *In Psal.* 1.

[69] For example, Jerome may have obtained some of his variant Greek readings for the Psalms from the Hexapla, which probably contained some textual information that was no longer available in separate form. Nautin, *Origène*, 328–31, doubted that Jerome had even seen the Hexapla, but his unduly skeptical appraisal has been sufficiently answered by Jay, *L'exégèse*, 411–17.

Hebrew text would help sort out the details of the Hebrew.[70] Then, he could consult Symmachus, Theodotion, and whatever other versions were available for a given book,[71] in order to see how one might construe the sense of the Hebrew word or phrase. One should not overestimate how much Hebrew Jerome could have learned by use of the *recentiores* alone, but together with the periodic help of a teacher and exposure to Hebrew culture, the hexaplaric versions would have gone a long way to compensate for the lack of any written grammars or dictionaries for Biblical Hebrew.

When we come to evaluate Jerome as a Hebraist, we must keep clearly in mind the status of Hebrew in the fourth century and the nature of Jerome's exposure to it. It is important that our method of assessment take proper account of Jerome's own specific circumstances. This pertains both to what Jerome could have known and also to how he would have known it.

Regarding the question of content, as we have seen, Hebrew was still being actively employed in Jerome's day. In fact, it had been in use continuously for centuries, going back to the period of ancient Israel. At the same time, the language had changed over the years. Some words from the biblical period had taken on new senses in later Hebrew, while the meanings of other ancient words were no longer known for sure. All of this had ramifications for Jerome's Hebrew. At some points, Jerome will have accurate information about the meaning of a Hebrew word, information preserved by the tradition from the biblical period all the way down to late antiquity. At the same time, Jerome will naturally reflect Mishnaic Hebrew usage at points where some linguistic change had occurred, and he cannot be expected to know the proper sense of Hebrew words that were no longer known

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[70] On the different levels at which a translation can be literal, see J. Barr, *The Typology of Literalism in Ancient Biblical Translations*, NAWG, I. phil.-hist. Kl. (Göttingen, 1979), 294.

[71] For some books, Jerome clearly had access to readings from the editions "Quinta" and "Sexta"; see Field I, xliii–xlv; and N. F. Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible* (Boston, 2001), 155–60. No such readings appear in the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, but Jerome does cite for Jeremiah readings of the so-called "second edition" of Aquila, and once refers explicitly to a second edition of Symmachus (Jer. 32:30). The nature of these "editions" is not clearly known, but for Jerome they were probably nothing more than a limited number of variant readings written in the margins of his copies of Aquila and Symmachus; see Field I, xxv, xxxvi–xxxvii; and Marcos, *Septuagint in Context*, 119–20.

to anyone in late antiquity. Furthermore, it must be remembered that Jerome's exposure to the Hebrew language culture of his day was limited. Despite his forays into that world, he never lived in constant contact with a community that used Hebrew as a part of everyday life. It is therefore highly unlikely that Jerome could have acquired the same level of Hebrew competency as the redactors of *Leviticus Rabbah* or the *darshanim* who expounded in the synagogue. Jerome's knowledge would have been essentially passive, both in reading and in listening, and his expertise would have centered primarily on the study of מקרא. Nevertheless, there is every reason to believe that Jerome could have learned to read Hebrew; and, as a tradent of the living Hebrew language tradition of late antiquity, he may potentially serve as a witness to the correct meaning of a Hebrew word or phrase.

Regarding the issue of how Jerome learned Hebrew, there are two important observations that bear directly on our method of evaluating Jerome. First, almost all of Jerome's Hebrew study was conducted in Greek: he spoke in Greek with his personal teachers, who told him the meaning of the Hebrew text in Greek; likewise, he developed his Hebrew skills by reading the Greek revisions of the LXX, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. We should not, therefore, be surprised that Jerome made use of what Greek exegetical works had to say about Hebrew matters.[72] This is not a sign that Jerome did not know

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[72] For example, in the *Commentary on Jeremiah* there are numerous parallels with Origen on proper name etymologies. In most cases, these probably reflect Jerome's dependence on the same *onomastica* as known to Origen, although it is also possible that he borrowed certain etymologies directly from Origen. The main parallels, together with cross-references to the *onomastica*, are as follows: *Fr. Jer.* 11: Ἰούδα, τῶν Ἐξομολογουμένων τῷ θεῷ (cf. OS I.169.82); Jerome: *Comm. Ier.* 1:18–19, "Iuda, qui interpretatur 'confessio'" (cf. *Comm. Ier.* 32:42–44). Origen: *Fr. Jer.* 56: Ἐφραΐμ δὲ ἑρμηνεύεται καρποφορία (cf. OS I.164.67); Jerome: *Comm. Ier.* 31:15, "Ephratha (vocatur) καρποφορία, quam nos 'ubertatem' possumus dicere" (cf. "Ephraim" at *Comm. Ier.* 4:15). Origen: *Fr. Jer.* 11: ἐκ γῆς Βενιαμίν, τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς δεξιᾶς (cf. OS I.177.83); Jerome: *Comm. Ier.* 6:1, "Beniamin interpretatur 'filius dexterae'" (cf. *Comm. Ier.* 17:21–27; 20:1–2; 31:15; 32:8a). Origen: *Hom. Jer.* 10.4: ἑρμηνεύεται γὰρ Ἀναθὼθ ἐπακουσμός (cf. OS I.201.37); Jerome: *Comm. Ier.* 11:21–23, "Anathoth, quod interpretatur 'oboedientia'" (cf. *Comm. Ier.* 32:8a). Origen: *Hom. Jer.* 19.14: τοῦ Πασχὼρ τοῦ ἐπωνύμου τῆς μελανίας τοῦ στόματος; Jerome: *Comm. Ier.* 20:1–2, "Phassur... qui interpretatur 'oris nigredo.'" Origen: *Fr. Jer.* 60: Χελκίας γὰρ ἑρμηνεύεται μερὶς θεοῦ, Σαλὼμ δὲ εἰρήνη; Jerome: *Comm. Ier.* 32:6–7, "Chelchias interpretatur 'pars domini,'... Sellum vero in linguam nostram vertitur 'pax' sive 'pacificus.'" Origen: *Fr. Jer.* 60: μετεωρισμὸς θεοῦ· οὕτω γὰρ Ἰερεμίας ἑρμηνεύεται (cf. OS I.192.91); Jerome: *Comm. Ier.* 23:9b, "Hieremias enim interpretatur 'domini excelsus'" (cf. *Comm. Ier.* 32:6–7). Origen: *Hom. Jer.* 19.14: τοῦ βασιλέως Βαβυλῶνος, τῆς Συγχύσεως (cf. OS I.174.91); Jerome: *Comm. Ier.* 27:2–4, "Babylonem, id est 'con-

Hebrew, as has occasionally been supposed.[73] Jerome simply considered the Hebrew etymologies contained in the works of Greek scholars like Eusebius and Origen as further Greek material to be used in his own study of Hebrew. Although Jerome does sometimes accept erroneous Hebrew etymologies derived from Greek works,[74] he also frequently uses the Hebrew text in order to go beyond these traditional etymologies.[75] Jerome's willingness to employ these kinds of sources does not reflect his ignorance of Hebrew, but rather his desire to be exhaustive as a scholar. Clearly, one cannot determine how much Hebrew Jerome knew simply by showing that he sometimes borrows Hebrew etymologies from Greek commentators.

The second observation touching on our method of assessing Jerome arises from the way in which Jerome utilized the *recentiores*. Because Jerome employed these hexaplaric versions in learning Hebrew, using them to "look up" words when needed, it should be expected that there will be parallels between Jerome's IH translation and what is found in these Greek versions. Yet, just because Jerome translated some Hebrew words in agreement with one or more of the hexaplaric versions, it cannot be concluded from this that Jerome did not really know Hebrew.[76] Obviously, if Jerome learned some of his Hebrew vocabulary from the *recentiores*, it is to be expected that he will agree with them in his understanding of many words. This is especially so for difficult terms. In addition, all three of the *recentiores*, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, were closely associated with Judaism, and they often reflect an understanding of the Hebrew text exactly like that found in a Targum or

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fusionem.'" Origen: *Fr. Jer.* 11: τὴν Ἰερουσαλήμ, τῆς ὁράσεως τὴν εἰρήνην (cf. OS I.169.66: Ἰερουσαλήμ ὅρασις εἰρήνης): Jerome: *Comm. Ier.* 32:42–44, "Hierusalem, in qua est 'visio pacis.'"

[73] See especially Nautin, *Origène*, 214–19, 284–292, 326–61; and *idem*, "Hieronymus," 309.

[74] An example of this occurs at *Comm. Ier.* 32:12, where Jerome gives the etymology for the proper name "Maasia" (מחסיה) as "factura et opus domini," as if it were מעשה יה. This error was taken over without correction from the Greek tradition; see OS I.54.24.

[75] Compare, for example, Jerome's treatments of "Sesach" at Jer. 25:26 and "Nehellami" at Jer. 29:24 in the *Comm. Ier.* with what is found in the *Nom. Hebr.* for these names. For a detailed discussion of this issue as seen in *QHG*, see Kamesar, *Jerome*, 97–126. Jerome sometime uses the Hebrew in order to select the best option out of the available Greek evidence. At other times, he improves on the Greek sources outright.

[76] Such is the conclusion reached by Estin, *Les psautiers de Jérôme*, 37–50; and McCarthy, "Saint Jerome's Translation of the Psalms."

in a rabbinic exegetical work.[77] Thus, for example, Jerome might agree
with Symmachus because he is using Symmachus, or Jerome and Sym-
machus might simply be reflecting the same "rabbinic" understanding
of Hebrew.[78] Thus, it is of very limited value simply to show parallels
between Jerome's IH translation and the *recentiores*. In fact, Jerome will
often agree with more than one source, and it is impossible from the
translation to determine what Jerome knows and why he translates as
he does. Any analysis of Jerome's Hebrew competency based primar-
ily on his translations will by necessity leave us guessing at how much
knowledge lies behind each rendering. If, however, we look in Jerome's
commentaries, we do find numerous citations of the *recentiores* as part
of his treatment of the Hebrew text, but we also see Jerome explain,
compare, and correct the Greek evidence on the basis of the Hebrew.
Thus, the best way to assess Jerome's Hebrew knowledge is to study
him as a commentator, so that we do not have to speculate as to why
Jerome translates each word as he does. In the commentaries, we have
the discussion of the text to illuminate the translation.

In the remainder of this chapter, we will take a detailed look at the
76 Hebrew words that Jerome explicitly discusses in his *Commentary on
Jeremiah*. As seen in the previous chapter, Jerome does more with the
Hebrew text than just talk about the meanings of words; nevertheless,
it is in such discussions of specific words that we see most clearly how
much about Hebrew he really understands. Also, we will not treat the
proper name etymologies that Jerome uses in the commentary, since
they were more easily accessed through Greek sources, and therefore
give less opportunity for originality than the "regular" Hebrew words.
In considering Jerome's treatments of these words, we will attempt to
identify what sources he may have used in his analysis. In addition
to the ancient Greek versions of the Old Testament, we have also
searched for Greek parallels with Jerome in Philo and Josephus, in the

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[77] On the *recentiores* and Judaism, see M. Harl, G. Dorival, and O. Munnich, *La
Bible grecque des Septante*, 2d ed. (Paris, 1994): 143–57. Cf. also A. Salvesen, *Symmachus
in the Pentateuch* (Manchester, 1991): 283–97; A. Paul, "La Bible grecque d'Aquila et
l'idéologie du judaïsme ancien," *ANRW* II.20.1 (1987): 221–45; D. Barthélemy, "Qui est
Symmaque?" *CBQ* 36 (1974): 451–65; and *idem*, "Qui est Théodotion?" in *Les devanciers
d'Aquila* (Leiden, 1963), 148–56.

[78] On Jerome and Symmachus, see Salvesen, *Symmachus*, 265–81. For a list of pas-
sages where Jerome is independent of Symmachus (and the other Greek versions), see
W. W. Cannon, "Jerome and Symmachus. Some Points in the Vulgate Translation of
Koheleth," *ZATW* 45 (1927): 198–99.

so-called "Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha" of the Old Testament, in
the homilies on Jeremiah by Origen, in the commentaries on Jeremiah
preserved in whole (Theodoret and Ephraem the Syrian) and in part
through the catenae (Origen, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria,
and Olympiodorus of Alexandria), and in all of the existing volumes
of the *Biblia Patristica*, as well as other indices.[79] As for possible Semitic
parallels, our main sources have been the Rabbinic Midrashim, the two
Talmuds, the Targums, the Syriac version of the Old Testament, and
the medieval commentators Rashi and David Kimchi. For compositions
produced later than the early fifth century, it is obviously impossible
for them to have served as sources for Jerome. Yet, they may preserve
information from an earlier document (or oral tradition) that Jerome
could have known.

The evidence will be presented in three sections: First, we will list
those cases where Jerome essentially stays within the sphere of what
was available in the Greek sources. In many of these cases, Jerome
does make a choice between the Greek options, but he is not explicit
about why he chooses what he does; thus, as far as what he actually
says is concerned, he does not go beyond the Greek evidence. Second,
we will present a number of instances where Jerome's rendering of the
word into Latin agrees with the understanding of the word in one of
the Greek sources, but where he also discusses the Hebrew word in
such detail that he clearly goes beyond anything in Greek. Finally, we
will present instances where Jerome's understanding of the Hebrew
word seems to be independent of any Greek evidence, in which cases
he sometimes agrees with an interpretation known from the rabbinic
tradition. From these examples of Jerome's Hebrew philology, we will
see clearly that he does in fact employ Greek sources in his linguistic
exegesis; yet, we will also see him use the Hebrew original to explain
the Greek evidence, choose the best Greek option, and sometimes even
correct the Greek tradition altogether.

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[79] At present, the *Biblia Patristica* has reached to volume seven, covering Didymus the
Blind. In addition to this valuable resource, I have looked for parallels with Jerome in
the major Greek and Latin lexicons, and in numerous indices based on translations,
such as R. A. Krupp's *Saint John Chrysostom: A Scripture Index* (Lanham, 1984).

Hebrew Philology Within the Greek Sources

We begin by setting out the 39 instances in the *Commentary on Jeremiah* where Jerome interprets a Hebrew word in accordance with evidence available in Greek and does not visibly go beyond that evidence. We will start with several passages where Jerome presents Greek options but is unable to decide between them. We will then look at numerous examples where Jerome does favor a single Hebrew meaning and explicitly cites Greek evidence in support. Lastly, we will set forth another group of texts in which Jerome gives the Hebrew word and its meaning without mentioning the Greek evidence with which he is in agreement.

First, for several Hebrew words in the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, Jerome simply presents various options from the Greek, and then indicates in one way or another that he does not know which one is correct.[80] A very straightforward example of this occurs at Jer. 4:19 on the meaning of the word המה: "Ubi nos iuxta Symmachum posuimus 'turbati sunt' et in Hebraico scriptum est 'homae,' LXX et Theodotio posuerunt μαιμάσσει, quod verbum usque in praesentiarum, quid significet, ignoro." Jerome is especially free to confess his ignorance when the word's meaning does not appreciably effect the exposition that he is about to give. Thus, Jerome avoids giving a clear definition of נבל at Jer. 13:12, since the precise meaning of נבל is irrelevant to his main point: "Verbum Hebraicum 'nebel' Aquilae prima editio 'lagunculam,' secunda ipsum 'nebel,' Symmachus 'craterem,' LXX 'utrem,' Theodotio 'vas' interpretati sunt; *quod omne* non oleo, non aqua, non melle, non lacte, non alia qualibet materia liquentis elementi, sed vino et ebrietate conpletur, ostendens nos vas esse fragile...." Jerome makes a similar move at Jer. 8:7 while discussing the identity of the animals סיס,[81] חסידה, and ענור:

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[80] In a somewhat similar fashion, Servius sometimes indicated that he could not tell which sense of a Latin word was meant, e.g., at *Aen.* 3.142: "'seges' interdum terram significat, ut Horatius... interdum frumentum, ut... hoc loco utrumque potest intellegi"; cf. "Servius Danielis" (see chap. 2, n. 25) at *Aen.* 1.73: "'propriam' autem possumus vel firmam vel perpetuam accipere." Yet, even in examples like these, the Virgilian commentators at least know the possible meanings of the words in question. Jerome seems to be on less sure footing in his understanding of words like המה at Jer. 4:19.

[81] Jerome agrees here with the Qere (סיס) rather than the Ketiv (סוס). For Hebrew words transliterated in the *Comm. Ier.*, Jerome agrees three times with the Qere against the Ketiv (Jer. 8:7, 19:2, 31:40), and only once with the Ketiv against the Qere (Jer. 6:7). This seems to reflect Jerome's general tendency. According to R. Gordis, *The Biblical Text in the Making: A Study of the Kethib-Qere* (New York, 1971), 66, Jerome's IH

Pro 'miluo,' quem interpretatus est Symmachus, LXX et Theodotio ipsum verbum Hebraicum posuere 'asida,' Aquila 'herodiona.' rursumque pro 'hirundine' Symmachus 'cicadam' transtulit, quae Hebraice dicitur 'sis.' ro eo autem, quod nos posuimus 'ciconiam,' et Aquila et Symmachus ita, ut in Hebraeo scriptum est, 'agur' transtulerunt, pro quo LXX 'agri passeres' interpretati sunt. *unus autem atque idem sensus est*…

In this example, Jerome claims that he can explain the meaning of the passage regardless of which animals are meant by the given Hebrew words. Jerome exhibits this same practice for three other Hebrew terms in the *Commentary on Jeremiah*: מבצר at Jer. 6:27, תנים at Jer. 10:22, and צינק at Jer. 29:26. In each case, Jerome gives the Hebrew word, lists out different possible equivalencies from the *recentiores*, and then moves on with his treatment of the passage, without indicating which Greek version has the correct interpretation of the Hebrew. In all of these instances, it is quite obvious that Jerome does not know the meaning of the Hebrew, so that he must content himself merely with presenting the available Greek options. It is notable how openly Jerome exhibits his ignorance of these words.

Next, we will turn our attention to the numerous examples where Jerome does assign a particular meaning to the Hebrew and explicitly cites Greek evidence in support. In some cases, Jerome provides as the meaning of the Hebrew the only Greek alternative to the LXX to be found among the *recentiores*. In other cases, Jerome selects one Greek alternative over another (e.g., Aquila over Symmachus). One could assume that some genuine knowledge of Hebrew must lie behind such a choice, but for now, we will present only those passages where Jerome gives us so little information about his choice that we cannot tell how much about the Hebrew he actually understands.

Once, at Jer. 5:8, Jerome cites all three of the *recentiores* as evidence for the proper sense of the Hebrew, following the "three" in his interpretation of משכים, which he had translated as "admissarii" in the lemma: "pro 'admissariis' in Hebraico scriptum est 'mosechim,' quod omnes voce consona ἕλκοντες transtulerunt, id est 'trahentes.'"

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translation favors the Qere more often than the Ketiv in those passages where it is possible to make the distinction (Gordis' general findings regarding Jerome's version are legitimate, even though some of his specific percentages are not entirely accurate. For a critique of Gordis' methodology, especially concerning his handling of the LXX and the Ketiv/Qere readings, see H. M. Orlinsky, "Problems of Kethib-Qere," *JAOS* 60 (1940): 37–41).

In four cases, Jerome explicitly refers to Aquila and Symmachus together as witnesses to the Hebrew: first, having translated קולע as "proiciam" at Jer. 10:18,[82] Jerome explains: "pro quo verbo Hebraico, id est 'cole,' Aquila et Symmachus interpretati sunt σφενδονίσω"; second, Jerome appeals to Aquila and Symmachus to justify his use of "pactum" for ברית, along side of the more familiar Latin equivalent "testamentum" used by Theodotion and the LXX: "quod verbum 'berith' Aquila et Symmachus semper 'pactum,' LXX et Theodotio 'testamentum' inter-pretati sint (Jer. 11:3)";[83] third, at Jer. 17:27, Jerome cites Aquila and Symmachus to clarify the meaning of the Hebrew word ארמנות: "quos LXX ἄμφοδα, Aquila et Symmachus βάρεις, id est 'turritas domos,' interpretati sunt, appellanturque Hebraice 'armanoth'"; and fourth, having put "speculas" in his Hebrew-based lemma and "speculatores" in the LXX-based lemma for the Hebrew word צינים, Jerome identifies the Hebrew-based reading as being that of Aquila and Symmachus: "verbum Hebraicum 'sionim' vel in 'speculatores' vel in 'speculas' ver-titur, ut Aquila et Symmachus interpretati sunt" (Jer. 31:21).[84]

Aquila alone is explicitly followed for Jerome's Hebrew gloss on four occasions. Jerome refers approvingly to Aquila's translation of the Hebrew word יתמהו at Jer. 4:9: "'consternabuntur' sive, ut Aquila transtulit verbum Hebraicum 'iethmau,' 'amentes erunt.'" At Jer. 4:30, Jerome cites Aquila as being the only one to translate the word שדוד correctly: "Pro 'vastata,' quod Hebraice dicitur 'sadud,' quod solus interpretatus est Aquila, alii transtulerunt 'miseram' atque 'miserabi-lem.'" Jerome favors Aquila's rendering of משא over the other versions at Jer. 23:33: "Verbum Hebraicum 'massa' Aquila ἄρμα, id est 'onus' et 'pondus,' interpretatur; Symmachus, LXX et Theodotio 'assum-tionem.' ubicumque ergo grave est, quod dominus comminatur, et plenum ponderis ac laboris et inportabile, in titulo quoque ἄρμα, hoc est 'pondus,' dicitur."[85] At Jer. 22:30, Jerome follows the "first edition"

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[82] Strictly speaking, הנני קולע is the equivalent for "ego longe proiciam" in the lemma.

[83] The normal equivalent for ברית in the Septuagint is διαθήκη. Jerome's "pactum" represents the Greek word συνθήκη used by Aquila and Symmachus (see Field II, 600).

[84] Field's suggestion of σκοπιάν for Aquila and Symmachus, based on Jerome and the syro-hexapla, ܟܒܐ ܕܘܩܐ, is the most plausible possibility (Field II, 660; cf. Ziegler, 360). For the LXX, Jerome reflects the reading σκοπούς rather than σιωνιμ.

[85] According to Jerome, Aquila's ἄρμα means "onus" or "pondus," which correctly represents the Hebrew, as opposed to the LXX et al., who put "assumptio" (i.e., as if

of Aquila on the meaning of עֲרִירִי: "Pro 'sterili,' in Hebraeo scriptum est 'ariri,' quod Aquilae prima editio 'sterilem,' secunda ἀναύξητον, id est 'non crescentem,'...."

So also, Jerome twice appeals to Symmachus alone to express the meaning of the Hebrew. Jerome uses Symmachus to explain עַרְעָר at Jer. 17:6: "'myrice'—quae Hebraice dicitur 'aroher' sive, ut interpretatus est Symmachus, 'lignum infructuosum.'"[86] Then, at Jer. 32:30, Jerome follows the "second edition" of Symmachus for the Hebrew word אַךְ: "Verbum Hebraicum 'ach'... secunda quippe Symmachi vertit διόλου, quem et nos in praesentiarum secuti sumus, ut diceremus 'iugiter.'"

Whether Jerome is basing his interpretations of these words on the Greek evidence (as is likely with the last example) or is simply supporting his own opinion with their testimony, in all of these cases Jerome explicitly cites a Greek source or sources from which the meaning of the given Hebrew word could have been derived. It must be emphasized that Jerome's failure to present any information about these Hebrew words beyond what was available in Greek does not constitute evidence that he did not know Hebrew. Jerome's comments on these Hebrew words are relatively straightforward, and we cannot tell from them how much personal ownership he had over the information that he relates.

Lastly, we will examine those passages where Jerome's comments on the Hebrew stay within the sphere of what was available in Greek, but where he neglects to mention the Greek sources with which he is aligned. In most of these cases, it can be shown that Jerome agrees either with Aquila or Symmachus, or with both of them together. In other instances, however, the evidence for the *recentiores* is more vague, and although it appears that Jerome is in harmony with at least one of the Greek versions, it is not clear which one. For a few Hebrew words, surprisingly, Jerome does not give any information that was not already available in the LXX. For each of these examples, we will cite Jerome's comment, and then provide the matching Greek evidence in the footnote below.

There are four places where Jerome's treatment of a Hebrew word agrees (anonymously) with the combined evidence of Aquila and Symmachus: Jer. 5:15: "'robustam'—pro quo in Hebraeo scriptum est

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from נשא). Jerome uses "onus" in the IH version, and in the lemma of the commentary he gives "onus" as his primary rendering and "assumptio" as an alternative.

[86] Cf. Isa. 41:19, where Symmachus put ἄκαρπον ξύλον for שִׁטָּה (Field II, 514).

'ethan'" (איתן);[87] Jer. 5:28: "pauperes'... pro quo Septuaginta dixerunt 'viduas,' quod in Hebraico non habatur 'hebionim' quippe proprie 'pauperes,' non 'viduas' sonat" (אביונים);[88] Jer. 6:20: "'calamum' autem, quod Hebraice dicitur 'cane,' pro quo LXX et Theodotio 'cinnamum' transtulerunt" (קנה);[89] and Jer. 27:19: "'bases'—pro quibus in Hebraico scriptum est 'mechonoth'" (מכנות).[90]

Three times Jerome agrees silently with Aquila in his interpretation of a Hebrew word. First, at Jer. 23:6, Jerome gives what amounts to Aquila's meaning of צדקנו (δικαιοσύνη ἡμῶν) while explaining the name Ιωσεδεκ: "si iuxta LXX vocaverit eum dominus, appellabitur 'Iosedec,' id est 'dominus iustus'; si secundum Hebraicum, qui dixerunt: 'nomen eius vocabunt,' dicetur: 'dominus iustitia nostra'; hoc enim significat 'adonai sadecenu,' pro quo Symmachus vertit: 'domine, iustifica nos!'".[91] Second, Jerome reads תמרורים as Aquila does (πικρασμούς) at Jer. 31:21: "quodque sequitur, 'amaritudines,' quae Hebraice dicuntur 'themrurim,' pro quibus Symmachus interpretatus est 'transmutationes,' hoc indicat…".[92] Third, at Jer. 17:26, Jerome gives a meaning for תודה that appears to correspond to Aquila (εὐχαριστία): "'oblationem,' quae Hebraice dicitur 'thoda' et in 'gratiarum actionem' verti potest."[93]

Likewise, on three occasions Symmachus is the one with whom Jerome is in unstated accord: at Jer. 31:40: "'ruinarum'—pro quibus

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[87] Jerome is following the sense of Aquila (στερεόν) and Symmachus (ἰσχυρόν). Theodotion, perhaps based on the following phrase, translates איתן as ἀρχαῖον. The Targum also understands the word to mean "strong" or "firm" (תקיף).

[88] Aquila and Symmachus read πενήτων (syro-hexapla ܕܡܣܟܢܐ). Jerome also agrees with the Targum (חשיכיא).

[89] Aquila and Symmachus apparently read κάλαμον (syro-hexapla ܩܢܝܐ). The Targum (קני) gives the same information.

[90] Aquila reads βάσεις and Symmachus is βάσεων; cf. Theodotion, μεχωνωθ.

[91] Although the onomastica give δικαιοσύνη λαοῦ, ἀόρατος δίκαιος as the meaning of Ιωσεδεκ (cf. OS I.171.15–16), Jerome says that the meaning of the LXX here is "dominus iustus," that is, Ιω (perhaps יהו) = "dominus" and σεδεκ (צדיק) = "iustus." As for the Hebrew text, Jerome reports the interpretation of Symmachus [κύριε, δικαίωσον ἡμᾶς; syro-hexapla ܠܝ ܪܝܐ ܨܕܩܢܝ (יהוה צדקנו)], but he seems to favor those who translate "dominus iustitia nostra." This is the reading of Aquila: κύριος δικαιοσύνη ἡμῶν (syro-hexapla ܪܝܐ ܕܝܩܘܣܘܬܐ ܕܝܠܢ) = MT.

[92] The LXX transliterated the word, τιμρωριμ (cf. Ziegler, 360), which in Jerome's LXX manuscript had been corrupted to τιμωρίαν (which Jerome renders "poenam"). Jerome reports the translation of Symmachus ("transmutationes"), but favors "amaritudines," which is a Latin equivalent for Aquila's πικρασμούς.

[93] Cf. Jerome's comment on Jer. 30:19: "'gratiarum actio'—hoc enim significat 'thoda.'" No Aquila readings are available for this word in Jeremiah, but see Lev. 7:12 for an example of Aquila's rendering of תודה as εὐχαριστία.

Theodotio ipsum verbum Hebraicum posuit 'phagarim'" (פגרים, σ: πτωμάτων);[94] at Jer. 32:18: "'potens'—quod Hebraice dicitur 'gibbor'" (גבור, σ: δυνατός);[95] and at Jer. 22:15: "'Achaz'... pro quo in Hebraeo scriptum est 'araz,' et hic sermo 'cedrum' significet" (ארז, σ: κέδρον).[96]

For the following Hebrew words, Jerome could have known the "Hebrew" meaning in question from the Greek tradition, although it is not clear to us which specific version or versions he might have seen. Thus, for the Hebrew word במות/במה, Jerome adds to the LXX's "altar" the translation option of "high place," as at Jer. 32:35: "notandumque, quod 'arae' et 'excelsa' Hebraico sermone appellentur 'bamoth'." On this detail Jerome agrees with Symmachus on one occasion (Jer. 7:31), with Aquila on another (Jer. 32:35), and a third time he agrees with the Greek material preserved under asterisk (Jer. 17:3).[97] Similarly, Jerome's explanation concurs with asterisked material at Jer. 17:1, dealing with the word שמיר: "'adamantino,' qui Hebraice dicitur 'samir,' non quo ullus ungues sit, qui appelletur 'samir,' sed quo lapis adamantinus...."[98] At Jer. 25:26, Jerome's rendering of צפון ("aquilonis") is found to match a Greek reading preserved anonymously: "Pro 'aquilone,' qui Hebraice dicitur 'safun,' LXX vertere ἀφηλιώτην."[99] Again, Jerome could have

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[94] According to Jerome, Theodotion transliterated this word, φαγαρὶμ (but see Field II, 662, for the evidence for φαγαδεὶμ), as did Aquila, φαγαρεὶμ. Jerome agrees with Symmachus, πτωμάτων.

[95] Jerome's "potens" represents Symmachus' δυνατός (syro-hexapla ܚܝܠܬܢܐ). Aquila and Theodotion give ἰσχυρός (syro-hexapla ܥܫܝܢܐ; cf. Ziegler, 370).

[96] For the beginning of Jer. 22:15 (כי אתה מתחרה בארז אביך אכל הלוא ושתה התמלך), the LXX translated μὴ βασιλεύσεις ὅτι σὺ παροξύνῃ ἐν Αχαζ τῷ πατρί σου οὐ φάγονται καὶ οὐ πίονται, reading ארז as Αχαζ. Both Aquila (ἐν κέδρῳ πατρός σου) and Symmachus (πρὸς τὴν κέδρον; ὁ πατὴρ σου...) correct this word to "cedar," but only Symmachus, like Jerome, makes "cedar" the end of its clause; cf. Jerome's Hebrew-based lemma: "Numquid regnabis, quoniam confers te cedro? Pater tuus nonne comedit et bibit...." Theodoret also follows the interpretation of Symmachus, but he does not report the Hebrew or offer any explanation for the reading of the LXX.

[97] At Jer. 7:31, The LXX (βωμόν) and Aquila (βωμούς) have "altar/s," whereas Symmachus reads "high places" (ὑψηλά; see Ziegler, 189). At Jer. 32:35, the only evidence we have for the *recentiores* is Aquila, ὕψη (syro-hexapla ܪܘܡܐ). ὑψηλά is preserved under asterisk at Jer. 17:3.

[98] The phrase בצפרן שמיר is translated ἐν ὄνυχι ἀδαμαντίνῳ (see Field II, 616). Origen is aware that this verse is in the Hebrew text of Jeremiah, but he does not discuss any details of the Hebrew (*Hom. Jer.* 16.10).

[99] The reading was presented simply as: ἄλλος. τοῦ βορρᾶ (see Field II, 639). The transmitted reading for the LXX is ἀπηλιώτου.

known from the Greek tradition how to interpret מנחה at Jer. 17:26: "'sacrificium,' pro quo LXX ipsum verbum posuere Hebraicum 'manaa,' quod… 'manaa' in nostris libris legitur."[100]

To these examples we may add the six instances where Jerome mentions a word in Hebrew but does not say anything about it that was not evident from the LXX. These six words are: "borith" at Jer. 2:22; "emuna" at Jer. 5:3; "nemer" at Jer. 5:6; "amen" at Jer. 11:5 and 28:6; "mutoth" at Jer. 27:2 and 28:12; and "chassane" at Jer. 27:9.[101]

In none of the cases in this last section does Jerome mention the Greek version or versions that match him, even though it is obvious that he was using the *recentiores* in his *Commentary on Jeremiah*, and there is every reason to think that they helped him in the interpretation of at least a few of these words. Again, because Jerome's discussions of these words are so limited, it is impossible to tell how much of his own Hebrew knowledge stands behind each of these appropriations of (or agreements with) the Greek evidence.

Our picture of Jerome's Hebrew philology within the Greek evidence shows us clearly that Jerome made extensive use of the *recentiores*. When the proper name etymologies are excluded, we find no parallels between Jerome in the *Commentary on Jeremiah* and Origen's preserved works regarding specific matters of Hebrew linguistic scholarship. For regular Hebrew words in the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, Jerome's primary Greek sources seem to have been the hexaplaric versions. In the cases we have seen so far, one could postulate that Jerome had gleaned transliterations from some source, and that for the "Hebrew" meanings he was totally dependent on the "three." Yet, we already see evidence of Jerome's own knowledge in the fact that he sometimes chooses one

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[100] The LXX had transliterated the word μαναα, and the Old Latin had apparently followed them. For this verse, we only have evidence for Aquila, who put δῶρον (see Ziegler, 238). The word θυσία, however, was commonly used for מנחה in the LXX (see HR I, 664–66), and Jerome could certainly have been aware of this association. See especially Lev. 6:23, where the LXX has θυσία and another version (ἄλλος) reads μαναα.

[101] For this last word, Jerome's transliteration does not agree with the Masoretic text, which reads כשפיכם. Removing the suffix, this should be "chassaphe," or, as it has been corrected in one manuscript of Jerome's commentary, "cassaphe" (Reiter, 337). This represents the confusion of נ and פ, which is based on the similarity of these letters in the early Hebrew script (cf. E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd rev. ed. (Minneapolis: 2001): 245), and so the error probably goes back to before Jerome's time and was found by him in his manuscript. Jerome is probably reporting the text as he sees it.

meaning over another—and that when he cannot choose, he admits as much. As we shall see further, Jerome's independence elsewhere justifies the belief that he probably knew some of this information on his own, and that often he neglected to mention any source because he did not need to rely on one. At the same time, it is quite likely that Jerome's silent agreement with Greek evidence in some cases does reflect the fact that he was simply not reporting his sources. This is especially possible for uncommon words, like שמיר.

Hebrew Philology Beyond the Greek Sources

We will now look at the 24 places in the *Commentary on Jeremiah* where, in discussing a Hebrew word, Jerome goes beyond what was available in the Greek evidence. For each of these words, Jerome's translation into Latin agrees with one of the Greek versions, but what he says about the word shows that he is actually drawing on his knowledge of Hebrew to use the Greek materials critically. Jerome often sorts out the conflicting Greek sources by pointing to a potential ambiguity in the underlying Hebrew. He also uses his Hebrew to identify textual errors that gave rise to different Greek and Latin readings. In addition, some of Jerome's Hebrew comments touch on matters of pure grammar or lexical exegesis. Jerome demonstrates his Hebrew knowledge in all of these instances both by what he actually says and by the fact that he knows when to apply which solution (e.g., the ambiguity of the Hebrew word versus a textual error).

Perhaps Jerome's favorite ways to utilize his Hebrew knowledge is to explain the differences between the Greek versions by pointing to the potential ambiguity of the underlying Hebrew.[102] Sometimes, Jerome simply explains that the Hebrew word in question can be taken in more than one sense. Thus, Jerome sorts out the Greek evidence at Jer. 3:12 by describing the possible meanings of the Hebrew word קרא: "Verbum Hebraicum 'carath' (i.e. קראת) et 'voca' sive 'clama' et 'lege' intellegitur, unde Aquila et Symmachus 'clamita,' LXX et Theodotio 'lege' interpretati sunt." Jerome makes the same basic comment on two other occasions in the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, both times in an attempt

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[102] On the "grammatical" background of Jerome's conception of lexical ambiguity, see pp. 37–41.

to explain the Greek translations.[103] All three of these meanings, "calling out," "proclaiming," and "reading" could have been picked up from the hexaplaric materials on the book of Jeremiah.[104] Jerome, however, goes beyond this evidence by explaining that the variations in the Greek arise out of the different ways in which קרא can be used in Hebrew.

We may cite here two other examples where Jerome appeals to the multiple senses of the Hebrew. First, at Jer. 32:29, the LXX had translated the word באו as ἥξουσιν, whereas Jerome, explicitly following Aquila (εἰσελεύσονται), renders the word "ingredientur."[105] It makes no sense, Jerome argues, for the LXX to say that the Chaldeans, who were already present and were besieging the city, "come."[106] Rather, Jerome suggests, the text is saying that the Chaldaeans "enter" the city: "verbum enim Hebraicum 'bau' ambiguitate sui et 'venient' et 'ingredientur' sonat."[107] Second, Jerome twice appeals to the ambiguity of the Hebrew word רוח in order to explain why he gave the translation "ventus" alongside of (or in place of) the LXX's "spiritus": at Jer. 2:24: "'ventum' vel 'spiritum'... enim apud Hebraeos nomine 'ruha' et 'ventus' appellatur et 'spiritus'"; and at Jer. 4:11–12a: "'ventus' et 'spiritus' eodem apud Hebraeos appellantur nomine 'ruha' et pro locorum qualitate vel 'ventum' vel 'spiritum' debemus accipere." Jerome could have known the meaning of "ventus" for רוח from the renderings of

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[103] At Jer. 2:2: "'clama'... hoc in LXX non habetur, sed sub asteriscis de Theodotionis editione additum est, qui verbum Hebraicum 'carath,' pro quo nos diximus 'clama' sive 'praedica,' interpretatus est 'lege.' et lectionem enim et clamorem et praedicationem pro sui ambiguitate significat." At Jer. 19:2: "'et praedicabis'—vel 'leges'... ideo autem, ut iam diximus, et 'praedicabis' et 'clamabis' et 'leges' ponitur, quia verbum Hebraicum 'carath' tria significat."

[104] For קראת at Jer. 2:2, Theodotion has ἀνάγνωθι, whereas Symmachus reads κήρυξον. As Jerome himself reports for Jer. 3:12, Theodotion and the LXX have ἀνάγνωθι, but Symmachus and Theodotion both reflect κήρυξον. For Jer. 19:2, all that is preserved is the LXX, ἀνάγνωθι. The rendering καλέσεις is found as an asterisked reading at Jer. 7:27; cf. the hexaplaric evidence for καλέσατε at Jer. 9:16.

[105] Jerome gave both the LXX ("venient") and Aquila ("ingredientur") as options in the lemma. Regarding the rendering of the LXX, Jerome says: "'venient...' melius Aquila, qui pro eo, quod scriptum est 'venient,' transtulit εἰσελεύσονται, hoc est 'ingredientur' civitatem."

[106] Jerome observes: "neque enim absentes errant, ut 'venirent,' quippe qui circumdederant Hierusalem... quomodo igitur 'venient,' qui praesentes erant."

[107] Cf. the translation of McKane for this passage: "The Chaldaeans who are besieging the city will enter..." (McKane, *Jeremiah*, 846). It was particularly necessary for Jerome to explain the ambiguity of this word here because he himself had earlier used "venient" as a translation of יבאו where the LXX had rendered it ἐξῆλθον, i.e., "egredientur"; see Jer. 31:9 (hexaplaric evidence is lacking).

Aquila and Symmachus at Jer. 2:24.[108] Jerome goes beyond Aquila and Symmachus, however, by showing the Hebrew cause for the different translation possibilities.[109]

Elsewhere, Jerome explains that the ambiguity of the Hebrew arises from the various possible "vocalizations" of the word. Regarding the difficult word צור at Jer. 21:13, the Greek translators could find no agreement. As Jerome reports, the LXX (Σορ) and the second edition of Aquila (Τύρος) had taken it to be a reference to Tyre (= צור). Symmachus interpreted it as "petram" (πέτρα = צור), Theodotion put "obsessam" (συνεχομένη = passive participle from צור, meaning "enclosed"), and the first edition of Aquila gave "solidam" (στερεά). Jerome explains this great variety of renderings by indicating the two primary vocalizations, along with three possible meanings, for the Hebrew letters צור: "'Sor' enim sive 'Sur' lingua Hebraea et 'Tyrum' (= צור) et 'silicem' (= צור) et 'coartatem' (from the verbal root צור) sonat.'"[110]

Jerome similarly sorts out the Greek versions for the Hebrew שבעה. At Jer. 15:9, he states: "Saepe diximus verbum Hebraicum 'saba' vel 'septem' vel 'iuramentum' sonare vel 'plurimos.' unde et diversa est interpretatio Aquila, LXX et Theodotione 'septem' transferentibus, Symmacho 'plurimos.'"[111] Jerome could have taken the meanings of "fullness" and "seven" from the *recentiores* on Jer. 5:24 and 15:9. The idea of "oath" could have been derived from the uses of שבע and שבעה at Gen. 21:30–31 and 26:32–33 (see *QHG*). Jerome, however, recognizes that these meanings arise from the ambiguity of the consonants שבעה. Some of the "ambiguity," of course, comes from the fact that Jerome

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[108] For שאפה רוח, Aquila read εἵλκυεν ἄνεμον, and Symmachus ἐπεσπάσατο ἄνεμον; see Field II, 577.

[109] Prior to Jerome, Eusebius of Emesa had observed that the word "spirit" at Gen. 1:2 could also mean "air"; but beyond Eusebius, Jerome in the *Comm. Ier.* includes the actual Hebrew transliteration, and he gives the Hebrew word itself the central place in his explanation. See p. 39.

[110] Jerome's treatment of צור in the *Commentary on Jeremiah* goes beyond the entry for "Sor" in the *Nom. Hebr.*, which reads: "'Sor.' fortis vel petra sive Tyrus." Jerome provides the additional vocalization "sur," and he replaces "fortis" with "coartatem," which better suits the Hebrew root צור.

[111] Cf. also Jerome's comments on שבעות at Jer. 5:24: "in Hebraeo enim scriptum est 'sabaoth,' quod pro ambiguitate verbi et 'septimanas' significat et 'plenitudinem.'" Jerome does not mention any Greek evidence on this passage, but the LXX had πληρώσεως, Theodotion and the second edition of Aquila put πλησμονάς, and Symmachus and the first edition of Aquila read ἑβδομάδας; see Field II, 585. As Jerome states ("Saepe diximus"), he had made this observation previously: e.g., *QHG* 21:30–31 and 26:32–33; *Comm. Is.* 54:1; and *Tract. psal.* 15.10.

is not distinguishing here between שׁ and שׂ. This is not because Jerome is unaware of the distinction.[112] He simply considers the שׁ / שׂ distinction to be a matter of pronunciation, as with the vowels. Thus, שְׁבְעָה, שִׂבְעָה, and שִׁבְעָה are different ways to be pronounce the word שבעה, which is therefore ambiguous from Jerome's perspective.

As a further example, Jerome must explain at Jer. 18:3 why he translated the Hebrew אבנים as "rotam," when the LXX had rendered it λίθων: "… 'rotam,' quam LXX verbi ambiguitate seducti 'lapides' transtulerunt; 'abanim' enim pro qualitate loci et diversitate pronuntiationis et 'organum,' id est 'rota' figuli, vocatur et 'lapides.'" Jerome's own understanding, "organum" (which, in the context of a potter, he takes to mean "wheel") is based on Symmachus' ὀργάνου.[113] Jerome goes beyond just repeating Symmachus, however, in that he explains the rationale for the rendering of the LXX, namely, that the letters אבנים look like the common word in Hebrew for "stones." Although Jerome does not give the distinct vocalization that underlies "organum" (אָבְנַיִם), he does explicitly state that the cause of the ambiguity is pronunciation.

Along these same lines, Jerome on three occasions actually spells out complete words in Hebrew in order to explain the different vocalization and meaning possibilities. These three examples demonstrate the detailed level at which Jerome was able to work in Hebrew. The first example is Jerome's well-known treatment of דבר at Jer. 9:21: "Verbum Hebraicum, quod tribus litteris scribitur 'daleth, beth, res'—vocales enim in medio non habet—, pro consequentia et legentis arbitrio si legatur 'dabar,' 'sermonem' significat, si 'deber, 'mortem,' si 'dabber,' 'loquere.'" The LXX and Theodotion had translated דבר as θανάτῳ (= דֶּבֶר; cf. Field II, 596), reading it together with the preceding text. As Jerome himself states, he follows Aquila and Symmachus in his interpretation of the word (λάλησον = דַּבֵּר).[114] In terms of detail, however, Jerome is clearly going beyond what was available in the *recentiores* or any known Greek source.[115]

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[112] See pp. 27–28. See also *QHG* 26:32–33.

[113] The reading ὀργάνου for Symmachus is unambiguous. Some manuscripts list this as the reading for all of the "three," while the syro-hexapla gives a different reading for Aquila and Theodotion; cf. Ziegler, 239; and Field II, 619.

[114] See p. 30.

[115] Hebrew discussions of this detail are totally lacking in Origen. Here, in addition to the Greek options, Jerome includes the noun form "dabar" (דָּבָר); cf. *Comm. Abac.* 3:5; and *Comm. Is.* 9:8–13.

In the second example, Jerome comments on the word אנוש (MT
אָנֻשׁ) at Jer. 17:9: "Verbum Hebraicum 'enos' quattuor litteris scribitur,
'aleph,' et 'nun' et 'vav' et 'sin'; si igitur legatur 'enos,' 'homo' dicitur;
si autem 'anus,' 'inscrutabile' sive 'desperabile.'" The meaning "homo"
reflects the reading of the LXX (ἄνθρωπος) and Symmachus (ἀνήρ),
and neither Jerome's "inscrutabile" nor his "desperabile" clearly go
beyond what was available in Greek.[116] In fact, Jerome may not have
been entirely clear on the possible meanings of אָנֻשׁ. In his *Comm. Is.*
17:11, he credits his understanding of אנוש to "the Hebrews": "Pro eo
quod Aquila et Theodotio interpretati sunt 'et dolebit homo,' nos docti
ab Hebraeis pro 'homine,' qui lingua eorum dicitur 'enos,' interpretati
sumus 'anus,' id est, 'graviter.'" In the Isaiah commentary, Jerome
assigns to אָנֻשׁ the meaning "strongly/severely," a sense known for
this word in Middle Hebrew.[117] In the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, however,
he departs from his Hebrew informant and seems to look for possible
meanings of אָנֻשׁ among the *recentiores*, probably because "graviter"
did not make sense in this context. Nevertheless, despite his apparent
uncertainty, Jerome again presents much more information than is
contained in Greek sources.

Then, in our third example where Jerome spells out the Hebrew, he
does so both to clear up ambiguity and to exploit the ambiguity for
literary purposes. At Jer. 3:1, Jerome comments: "Verbum enim 'rehim,'
quod quattuor litteris scribitur 'res, ain, ioth, mem,' et 'amatores' et
'pastores' utrumque significat et, si legamus 'rehim,' 'amatores' sonat,
si 'rohim,' 'pastores.'" In the phrase ואת זנית רעים רבים, The LXX
understood רעים as רֹעִים, that is "pastores." The Masoretic text and
Rashi (אוהבים), on the other hand, take the word as רֵעִים, "amatores."
Although we do not have any hexaplaric evidence for this passage, it

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[116] The meaning "desperabile" shows up in connection with Symmachus elsewhere
in Jeremiah. At Jer 15:18 (syro-hexapla ܐܠܐ ܡܣܝܒܪܐ) and 30:12, Symmachus has
ἀνίατος (= "desperabile") for אנושה/אנוש. The option "inscrutabile" seems to have
been deduced generally as a sense of אנוש based on Greek evidence (σκαμβοτέρα) at
17:9 that Jerome reports as Symmachus: "Symmachus vero hunc locum ita interpre-
tatus est: 'inscrutabile cor omnium; vir autem qui est, qui inveniat illud.'" It seems,
however, that Symmachus put σκαμβοτέρα for עקב, not for אנוש, at 17:9 (see Field II,
617). Perhaps Jerome had access to a variant Symmachus reading, or perhaps he has
presented Symmachus erroneously. On the difficulties of this verse among the versions,
see McKane, *Jeremiah*, 397–98.

[117] See, for example, the use of נברתנית for אנוש in the paraphrase given at *Lev.
Rab.* 18.3.

is not unlikely that one of the *recentiores* reflected רֵעִים, in which case Jerome here would simply be giving a more detailed Hebrew explanation of what was available in Greek.[118] We see Jerome report this data again at Jer. 6:3, this time to suggest that both meanings contribute to the sense of the passage: the רֹעִים/"pastores" relate to the message of destruction, whereas the רֵעִים/"amatores" contribute to the metaphor of Jerusalem as a beautiful maiden with lovers.[119] As with Jer. 3:1, there is no evidence for the *recentiores* for רעים at Jer. 6:3. Still, even if we presume that at least one of the hexaplaric versions reflected "amatores" for one of these passages, we nonetheless see evidence here of Jerome's first-hand knowledge of the Hebrew text. As with all of these examples, Jerome's detailed understanding of the potential ambiguity of the Hebrew word testifies to his knowledge of Hebrew beyond what was available in the Greek sources.

The ambiguity of the Hebrew was not the only cause of confusion among the Greek and Latin versions of the Bible. Jerome also uses his knowledge of Hebrew to explain copying errors that led to diverse Greek and Latin readings.[120] For example, having himself translated ירע at Jer. 15:12 as "foederabitur," and having reported that Symmachus rendered the word "nocebit," and that the LXX and Theodotion translated "cognoscet," Jerome proceeds to untangle the evidence: "Varietatis causa perspicua; verbum enim 'iare,' quod in praesenti loco scriptum est, pro ambiguitate enuntiationis et 'amicitiam' sonat et 'malitiam,' quod, si pro 'res' littera, quae 'daleth' litterae similis est, legatur 'daleth,' 'scientiam cognitionemque' significat." Jerome, following Aquila (ἁρμόσει), interprets ירע as a passive form of רעה (יְרַע?) meaning "will be joined to."[121] Symmachus took the word to be a Hiphil form of רעע (יְרַע), "will harm." The reading of Theodotion and the LXX, however, cannot be explained on the basis of the consonants ירע. In order to arrive at the meaning "cognoscet," Jerome rightly

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[118] When רֹעֶה occurs with the meaning "shepherd," the standard Greek equivalent is ποιμήν (for the hexaplaric versions, see Isa. 31:4, Jer. 23:2, Ezek. 34:2, Amos 1:1, Mic. 5:4, and Zech. 13:7). The word רֵעַ, "friend," is not often used in the sense of "paramour," but at Hos. 3:1, where it has this sense, it is translated by Aquila as ὁ πλησίον, and by Symmachus as ἑταῖρος. It is possible that at least one of the *recentiores* put ποιμένες for רעים at Jer. 3:1, whereas another rendered it somehow as "paramours."

[119] See p. 49.

[120] On Jerome's textual criticism, see pp. 53–61.

[121] Cf. KB, 1262; and Jastrow, 1475.

observes, one would have to assume that the ר was mistakenly read as a ד, thus producing ידע, that is, יֵדַע. A similar example may be found in Jerome's discussion of הן at Jer. 31:2, where he corrects the error of the LXX, who read the word as חם: "est enim scriptum 'hen,' quod Aquila, Symmachus et Theodotio χάριν, hoc est 'gratiam,' interpretati sunt; soli LXX posuere 'calidum' putantes ultimam litteram 'm' esse. si enim legamus 'hen' per litteram 'n,' 'gratia' dicitur; si per 'm,' 'calor' interpretatur."[122] In both of these examples, Jerome's discussion of the Hebrew goes well beyond the Greek evidence with which he agrees in his translation choice.

Jerome also appeals to the Hebrew original to explain other kinds of textual confusions. Jerome uses the Hebrew to correct a Greek copying error at Jer. 29:17, suggesting that his reading for Theodotion, "sudrim," should be corrected to "suarim," since this corresponds more accurately to the Hebrew (שערים).[123] Jerome corrects a Greek misreading of the Hebrew at Jer. 8:17, where the second edition of Aquila had translated צפענים as σκοπεύοντας. Jerome lists three options for this word: "mortiferos" (LXX = θανατοῦντας), "regulos" ("ut Aquila transtulit"), and "pessimos" (σ = πονηρούς).[124] Although he does not give an original rendering of the word, he does suggest that the puzzling equivalent found in Aquila's second edition perhaps arose "ob verbi similitudinem." In fact, the "2nd Aquila" reading probably reflects the Hebrew צפים, which is indeed similar to צפענים. Jerome gives yet another kind of Hebrew explanation at Jer. 31:40, discussing the word שדמות.[125] He reports the rendering of Aquila, "suburbana" (= προάστεια), but prefers the interpretation "regionem mortis," which seems to reflect Symmachus' χῶρον τῶν τάφων. Yet, Jerome does more than merely copy Symmachus, in that he explains how שדמות can mean *regio mortis*: "'Sademoth,' quod nos vertimus in 'regionem mortis,' unum nomen in duo verba dividentes: 'sade,' quod dicitur 'regio,' et 'moth,' quod inter-

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[122] See pp. 58–59. Theodoret reports that ὁ Σύρος and ὁ Ἑβραῖος put οἰκτιρμόν ("compassion") for the LXX's θερμόν; this agrees neither with the *recentiores* nor with the Hebrew text itself, but it matches the reading of the Peshitta (ܪ‍ܚ‍ܡܐ).

[123] See p. 59. Jerome's translation of שערים ("malas") agrees with Aquila (πονηρά); see Ziegler, 346–47.

[124] The syro-hexapla reports ܒܝ‍ܫ for Symmachus.

[125] Jerome gives the Qere (שדמות), whereas the LXX represents the Ketiv (שרמות). Jerome is only aware of the Ketiv as the reading of the LXX: "'Asaremoth' (השרמות)— quod melius legimus 'Asademoth' (השדמות)"; see above n. 81.

pretatur 'mortis.'" Jerome (and presumably Symmachus) is taking שדמות as if it were made of two words: שדה, "field, land," and מות, "death." Whatever the actual meaning of שדמות may be,[126] Jerome clearly goes beyond Symmachus by showing the etymological basis for his reading of the text. In all of these passages, Jerome follows the Greek tradition in his translation equivalents, but shows his own Hebrew knowledge through his discussion of the text.

Occasionally, Jerome goes beyond the Greek sources by touching on some point of Hebrew grammar. At Jer. 2:12, Jerome makes the following observation regarding the translation of the word שמים: "quodque Aquila et Symmachus 'caelos,' LXX vero et Theodotio 'caelum' interpretati sunt, nullum moveat. Hebraicum enim 'samaim' communis est numeri, et tam 'caeli' quam 'caelum' eodem appellantur nomine, ut Thebae, Athenae, Salonae." As he himself states, Jerome could have learned the two options for the "number" of שמים from the Greek versions, but he shows his own knowledge of Hebrew by explaining the underlying grammatical reason for the diversity.

So also, Jerome twice provides a specific Hebrew plural form that is not found in the passage at hand. Jerome supplies the plural form of נבירה at Jer. 13:18: "Verbum Hebraicum 'gebira' Aquila et Symmachus dominatricem et dominam interpretati sunt, quod LXX putaverunt 'geburoth' potentesque dixerunt.'" The LXX translated נבירה as a plural, δυναστεύουσιν, but Jerome follows Aquila and Symmachus in rendering it as singular. Yet, Jerome shows his own abilities in Hebrew by supplying the Hebrew form that the LXX seem to have thought was present, the plural 'geburoth' (נבורות). Likewise, in his comments on Jer. 28:1, Jerome produces the plural form of נביא while explaining the practice of the LXX. For certain passages in the book of Jeremiah (e.g., LXX Jer. 6:13; 33:7–8,11,16; 34:9; 35:1 (= MT 28:1); 36:1,8), the LXX translated נביא/נביאים with ψευδοπροφήτης/ψευδοπροφῆται, in order to indicate that the "prophet" or "prophets" in question were not legitimate. At Jer. 28:1, the LXX had rendered נביא as ψευδοπροφήτης, giving rise to the following observation from Jerome: "Quos Hebraicum 'prophetas,' hoc est 'nebeim,' LXX 'pseudoprophetas' interpretati sunt, ut manifestiorem facerent intellegentiam. Denique et in praesenti loco 'propheta' dicitur, hoc est 'nebia,' et non 'pseudopropheta.'" Jerome

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[126] See McKane, *Jeremiah*, 833–34. Cf. OS I.229.80: Ἀσαδημώθ. ἐν Ἰερεμίᾳ. τὸ Ἑβραϊκὸν τῶν Σαδημώθ, Ἀ. τὰ προάστεια.

could have learned from Aquila and Symmachus that the Hebrew text simply read "prophet," and not "pseudoprophet,"[127] but when he states the issue here in general terms ("those whom the Hebrew put as 'prophets,' that is 'nebeim,' the LXX rendered "pseudoprophets…"), he gives the plural form נביאים to match "pseudoprophetas," even though only the singular is written in this text ("et in praesenti loco 'propheta' dicitur, hoc est 'nebia'"). Even in such off-hand ways as these, Jerome shows that his Hebrew knowledge goes beyond his Greek sources.

Although not strictly grammatical, we may include here Jerome's linguistic comments at Jer. 6:7, where he goes beyond the Greek evidence by using his knowledge of Hebrew and "Syriac" to defend his interpretation of the word *lacus*. For the Hebrew word בור,[128] Jerome gave two options in the lemma: "lacus," which is the Old Latin equivalent to the LXX's λάκκος, and "cisterna," which is one specific meaning of λάκκος. In his commentary, Jerome explains why he favors "cisterna": "hoc autem Latinus lector intellegat, ut semel dixisse sufficiat, 'lacum' non 'stagnum' sonare iuxta Graecos, sed 'cisternam,' quae sermone Syro et Hebraico 'gubba' appellatur. in praesenti autem loco pro 'lacu,' quem omnes similiter transtulerunt, in Hebraico 'bor' dicitur." Jerome informs his Latin readers that "lacus," which is really a Greek word (λάκκος), refers to a "cistern." In support of this statement, he gives the corresponding words for "cistern" both in "Syriac" and in Hebrew.[129] Jerome had learned the word "gubba" during his stay in the desert of Chalcis,[130] and λάκκος was probably the Greek equivalent that was used. When Jerome observed that all of the Greek translators ("quem omnes similiter transtulerunt") had used λάκκος, he saw an opportunity not only to explain the meaning of the word as he had learned it among the Greeks ("iuxta Graecos"), but also to give the "Syriac" and Hebrew equivalents. In this passage, Jerome's translation agrees with all of the Greek versions, but he does much more than simply follow them.

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[127] See Ziegler, 340, for προφήτης as the reading of Aquila and Symmachus for this passage.

[128] Jerome's Hebrew text agrees with the Ketiv (בור) rather than the Qere (ביר); see above n. 81.

[129] When Jerome says, "quae sermone Syro et Hebraico 'gubba' appellatur," this is in reality only the "Syriac"/Aramaic form (cf. the syro-hexapla for Symmachus, ܓܘܒܐ; Targum: גובא). Still, Jerome recognizes that the form we have in this passage is not "gubba," but "bor." Hayward, "Jewish Traditions," 108–9, suggests that Jerome actually knew the targumic rendering for this word at Jer. 6:7.

[130] See *Vit. Paul.*, 6.

Finally, there are several ways that Jerome visibly goes beyond his Greek sources in simple lexical interpretation, even while following the Greek versions for his translation equivalents. First, Jerome moves beyond the Greek evidence when he indicates which of the various Greek options for a given passage is closest to the strict meaning of the Hebrew. He does this for סכו at Jer. 25:38, where he gives the options "umbraculum," "cubile," and "tabernaculum": "'umbraculum'—sive 'cubile'—'suum'—et, ut verius est, 'tabernaculum'; hoc enim 'soccho' Hebraicum sonat." All of these options could have been derived from the Greek versions,[131] but Jerome's statement that "tabernaculum" is truer to the sense of the Hebrew reflects his familiarity with the best-known meaning of the noun סֻכָּה. Jerome makes a similar type of observation concerning צבאות at Jer. 10:16: "...cuius nomen dominus 'omnipotens' est sive 'virtutum'; hoc enim sonat dominus 'exercituum,' quod in Hebraico scriptum est dominus 'sabaoth.'" Jerome first mentions the standard rendering of the LXX's παντοκράτωρ, "omnipotens." Then, he gives an alternative "virtutum," which likely reflects the reading of Symmachus for this passage.[132] Finally, Jerome provides what he thinks to be the most strictly correct meaning of "sabaoth," "exercituum," which matches Aquila (στρατιῶν). Again, all of the evidence could be found in the Greek versions, but Jerome's suggestion that "exercituum" most accurately conveys the sense of the Hebrew shows that he knows to associate צבא specifically with an "army," rather than more generally with "power" or "might."

Second, Jerome shows his Hebrew exegetical insight when he cites a parallel passage where the same Hebrew word used in Jeremiah is found elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. Discussing שרק at Jer. 2:21, Jerome notes that "sorec" is also used "in Isaiae cantico" (see Isa. 5:2).[133] To illuminate נשף at Jer. 13:16, Jerome refers to נשפה ("neseptha") "in principio Isaiae

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[131] In his IH translation, Jerome used "umbraculum," which seems to reflect a standard translation equivalent of Aquila for this word (cf. συσκιασμῷ at Ps. 27:5 and συσκίῳ at Ps. 42:5). For "cubile," Jerome is probably following Aquila's translation here at Jer. 25:38, μάνδραν. Although Symmachus is lacking for Jer. 25:38, we may assume from parallels that he is in accord with "tabernaculum" (cf. σκηνῇ at Ps. 27:5 and σκηνήν at Ps. 42:5).

[132] Symmachus is not preserved for Jer. 10:16, but δυνάμεων is a common translation of צבאות for Symmachus, e.g., Jer. 11:20,22; 19:3,11; 20:12; 25:8,27.

[133] Jerome's translation of שרק at Jer. 2:21, "electam," matches Symmachus at Isa. 5:2 (ἐκλεκτή) as well as the Targum at Jer. 2:21 (בחירא). Cf. Hayward, "Jewish Traditions," 109.

contra Babylonem" (see Isa. 13:2).[134] Jerome even takes דדך ("dodach")
at Jer. 32:7 and uses it to explain the meaning of דודי ("dodi") in the
Song of Songs (e.g., Song 1:13). Jerome says that "dodach" at Jer.
32:7 means "patruelis," thus leading him to the following observation:
"illud, quod in Cantico saepe cantatur a sponsa: 'fratruelis meus,' id est
ὁ ἀδελφιδός μου, in Hebraico 'dodi' dicitur; ergo non 'fratruelis,' sed
'patradelfus,' id est 'patruelis,' dicendus est." Jerome may have learned
this meaning for דוד from Aquila, since "patradelfus" (πατράδελφος) is
the rendering of Aquila at Song 1:13.[135] But here, as in the two previous
examples, there is enough diversity in how the *recentiores* translated the
word that it would be nearly impossible to find an accurate, Hebrew-
based parallel without recourse to the original Hebrew itself.

   Third, and perhaps most impressively, Jerome describes the wordplay
between שָׁקֵד at Jer. 1:11 and שֹׁקֵד at Jer. 1:12. Jerome had translated
מקל שקד in verse 11 as a "watching branch" ("virgam vigilantem"), so
as to bring out the similarity with verse 12, "quia vigilabo ego (שֹׁקֵד אֲנִי)
super verbo meo ut faciam illud." Yet, because שָׁקֵד in verse 11 actu-
ally refers to an almond tree, as the LXX had translated it (καρυΐνην),
Jerome feels compelled to explain what he has done:

> Pro 'virga vigilante,' LXX 'baculum nuceum' transtulerunt. laborandum
> igitur nobis est, ut breviter Hebraeam ἐτυμολογίαν Latinus lector intelle-
> gat. 'saced' 'nux' dicitur, 'vigilia' autem vel 'vigil' sive 'vigilare' appellatur
> 'soced.' unde et in posterioribus [cf. 5:6] pardus vigilans hoc nomine
> ponitur. ab eo igitur quod dicitur 'nux,' propter verbi similitudinem ad
> 'vigilis' intellegentiam nomen adlusit.

Jerome later states that "virgam vigilantem" represents the render-
ing of Aquila and Symmachus.[136] Yet, Jerome's explanation of the
"saced"/"soced" wordplay could not have been derived from Aquila and
Symmachus alone.[137] Jerome is obviously aware of how the similarity

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[134] Jerome translates נשף at Jer. 13:16 as "caligosos," which is closer to the Targum
(קְבַל, "foggy," "obscure") than to any of the Greek evidence preserved for that verse
(see Field II, 607). Still, at Isa. 13:2, Jerome's "caligosum" might be in agreement with
the ἑτέρα ἔκδοσις mentioned by Basil, which reads νεφώδους (see Field II, 453).

[135] See Field II, 413. At Song 1:13, Origen simply bases his interpretation on the
LXX's ἀδελφιδός μου; he observes (as preserved in Latin): "'Fraternus' appellatur fratris
filius," and expounds the text accordingly.

[136] "Pro 'baculo nuceo,' 'virgam vigilantem' Aquila et Symmachus, Theodotio vero
'amygdalinam' transtulerunt."

[137] The evidence for Aquila and Symmachus for these verses is not straightforward,
but Field II, 573–74, reconstructs the text (at least for Symmachus) thus: (v. 11) ῥάβδον

between the words in Hebrew makes the wordplay possible, and he is likewise aware that there is a tension between conveying the wordplay in Latin and translating שָׁקֵד literally. The translator must choose to do one or the other, leaving it to the commentary to explain the rest.

By describing some of Jerome's work as "Hebrew philology beyond the Greek sources," we are clearly affirming the debt that Jerome's Hebrew philology owed to the Greek tradition. We saw in the previous chapter how much of Jerome's method as a Hebraist can be traced back to his education in the Greco-Latin literary environment. But Jerome's relationship to Greek scholarship extends much further than just method. Jerome had learned Hebrew primarily through Greek, and up to the end of his life he always regarded Greek sources as primary tools for the interpretation of the Hebrew text. Jerome would be no more likely to stop consulting Greek sources on Hebrew matters than would a modern reader of the Hebrew Bible be likely to stop using lexicons, grammars, and concordances. If one were to look only at how Jerome had translated these words, in the lemma of the commentary or in his IH edition, it could seem as if Jerome were merely copying renderings already made by Aquila, Symmachus, or Theodotion, perhaps guessing at whom to follow in each case. Yet, when we turn to the commentary itself, we see that Jerome is indeed capable of using his Greek sources in such a way that reveals his own grasp of the Hebrew language.

Hebrew Philology Independent of the Greek Sources

In this final section, we will present those instances where Jerome gives a meaning for a Hebrew word that differs from anything to be found in a Greek source. Of course, by saying that Jerome is "independent" of the Greek, we do not wish to imply that Jerome is not using Greek materials. In fact, the clearest examples of Jerome's independence come when he himself cites all of the *recentiores*, and then gives an altogether

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ἀγρυπνοῦσαν ... (v. 12) ἀγρυπνῶ. Chrysostom seems to be relying on the *recentiores* for his description of "the Hebrew": ὁ δὲ Ἑβραῖος οὕτως ἔχει· Βακτηρίαν ἐγρηγορυῖαν ἐγὼ ὁρῶ. ἡ γὰρ ἐγρήγορσις καὶ τὸ ἀμύγδαλον διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ Ἑβραϊκῷ προφέρεται ῥημάτων (see PG 64, 752). Theodoret's report of "the Syrian and the Hebrew" matches Theodotion: μετὰ ταῦτα δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ ῥάβδον καρυΐνην, ἢ, κατὰ τὸν Σύρον καὶ τὸν Ἑβραῖον, ἀμυγδαλίνην. Neither Chrysostom nor Theodoret explain the issue in terms of the actual Hebrew words. On Jerome's treatment of this passage, see pp. 130–32.

different interpretation of the word. As in the previous sections, the
only Greek data that Jerome even cites for these non-proper nouns
are the hexaplaric versions. We have found no matching parallels to
these Hebrew comments in any other Greek or Latin sources from
antiquity.

In some instances, Jerome's reading of the Hebrew finds a paral-
lel in a classical rabbinic text or in the Targum to Jeremiah. Jerome
obviously could not have known such sources in the forms in which
we have them today, since most of the relevant parallels are preserved
in texts redacted after the fourth century. In all likelihood, these par-
allels simply represent a common testimony to one particular way of
interpreting the given Hebrew word in late antiquity. Such a common
testimony probably reflects the fact that Jerome learned some of his
Hebrew definitions by reading with a teacher who was a Jew or a Jewish
convert to Christianity. Of course, even when no "Hebraic" parallel
can be found for Jerome's reading of a word, he still may be basing his
reading on what he learned from a Jewish teacher, since only a select
number of the verses treated in this section are dealt with explicitly
in classical rabbinic sources. Moreover, even when the relevant part
of the verse is quoted, unless the word in question is the focus of the
comment, it is often unclear how that word is being understood. If we
had a more complete picture of the "Hebraic" tradition regarding the
sense of these words, we might find more parallels with Jerome.[138] In
any case, it is sufficient to conclude that Jerome most clearly shows his
knowledge of Hebrew when he assigns a meaning to a Hebrew word
that is independent of his Greek sources. In such cases, Jerome prob-
ably learned this meaning through reading with a personal teacher.

It is easiest to show Jerome's independence from the Greek versions
when all of the *recentiores* are explicitly known. There are five such
examples in the *Commentary on Jeremiah*.

For חרסית at Jer. 19:2 and כונים at Jer. 7:18,[139] the Greek versions
merely give transliterations, whereas Jerome presents actual meanings
for the words. At Jer. 19:2, Jerome explains his decision to translate

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[138] As we will see below, the Targums can provide ancient evidence for the linguistic
exegesis of a particular word in the Hebrew Bible. Nevertheless, when the Targum
gives a highly interpretive rendering, it is impossible to tell what the translator would
have identified as the straightforward meaning of the Hebrew word.

[139] At Jer. 19:2, the Ketiv has חרסות whereas the Qere reads חרסית. Jerome agrees
with the Qere against the Ketiv; see above n. 81.

שער חרסית as "portae fictilis": "pro 'porta fictili' Aquila, Symmachus et Theodotio ipsum verbum posuerunt Hebraicum 'Harsith,' pro quo LXX iuxta morem suum pro adspiratione 'heth' litterae addiderunt 'chi' Graecum, ut dicerent 'Charsith' pro 'Harsith.'" Not only does Jerome explain the difference between the transliteration of the LXX (χαρσιθ) and that of the other "three" (αρσειθ), but he also gives "fictilis" as a rendering for חרסית, which is without parallel in antiquity, but which is one possible meaning assigned to the word today.[140] Similarly at Jer. 7:18, Jerome gives two possible translations for כונים, "placentas" and "praeparationes," despite the fact that all of the *recentiores* seem to have transliterated it.[141] The rendering "placentas" ("cakes") is closely approximated by a Greek catena fragment ascribed to Chrysostom: τὸ γὰρ χαβῶνάς ἐστι λέξις Ἑβραϊκὴ, σημαίνει δὲ τὸν ἀπὸ μέτρου ἑνὸς τοῦ λεγομένου μοδίου γινόμενον ἄρτον ("bread"); along these lines, it is not impossible that some Greek source available to Jerome might have given "cakes" as a meaning for כונים.[142] Jerome, however, is totally independent of the Greek tradition in connecting כונים etymologically to the verbal root כון, which in the Hiphil regularly means "to prepare"—thus Jerome's "praeparationes." There are no parallels for this in ancient sources,[143] although Kimchi does associate כונים with כן, "to prepare": לעשות כונים...מאכלים שהיו מכינים ומניסים למלאכת השמים. Thus,

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[140] See KB, 355, which gives the suggestion that חרסית is related to חֶרֶשׂ, "clay/ earthenware," so that שער חרסית means "Gate of potsherds." The Targum translates חרסית as קלקלתא, "ruins," perhaps relating it to הֶרֶס, "destruction."

[141] See Ziegler, 186.

[142] Origen does not seem to be a possible source for the meaning "cakes." This phrase in Jer. 7:18 is found only once in the preserved works of Origen, in his *Hom. Ex.* 8.6, where τοῦ ποιῆσαι χαυῶνας τῇ στρατιᾷ (οἱ λοιποί: τῇ βασιλίσσῃ) τοῦ οὐρανοῦ was paraphrased (as preserved in Latin): "incendemus reginae coeli." Cf. Epiphanius, *Haer.*, 79.8.1: τιμῶμεν τὴν βασίλισσαν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; and Didymus, *Comm. Job*, 180.32–34: αἱ γυναῖκες ποιοῦσιν χαυῶνας τῇ στρατιᾷ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. In the *Nom Hebr.* (כונים had wrongly been considered a proper noun), Jerome gives both Hebrew options, "cakes" and "preparations," as he corrects the traditional etymologies: "'Chabonim.' manus vel acervus spinarum. sed melius praeparationes, licet plerique Hebraeorum liba vel crustula significari putent." The word χαβῶνας (or χαυῶνας) is identified with "cakes" in later Greek sources, e.g., the catena fragment on Jer. 7:18 attributed to Olympiodorus of Alexandria (early 6th century): χαβῶνας δὲ φησι πέμματά τινα; and the entry for χαυῶνας in the *Eymologicon magnum* (12th century): χαύωνας· ἄρτους ἐλαίῳ ἀναφυραθέντας κριθίνους, ἢ λάγανα ὀπτά (*E.M.* 807.43).

[143] The noun כונים is connected to the Piel of כון ("to fix/set in line") in *PesR* 31.2: מהו לעשות כוונים למלאכת השמים אלא שהיו עובדים מלאכת השמים...וכיצד עובדים אותה...והיו מכוונים אותה כנגד המזרח

both for חרסית and for כונים, Jerome provides Hebrew based meanings without the help of his Greek source materials.

For העביר (Jer. 32:35), בסוד (Jer. 23:18), and מנור (20:3), Jerome simply gives a meaning for the Hebrew that differs from the explicit testimony of all of the hexaplaric versions.

At Jer. 32:35, Jerome translates להעביר את בניהם ואת בנותיהם למלך as "ut initiarent filios suos et filias suas Moloch." The word in question is העביר, and Jerome tells his readers what the Greek versions had put: "Pro 'initiarent' in Hebraico scriptum est 'ebir,' quod Aquila et Symmachus 'transducerent,' LXX et Theodotio 'offerrent' interpretati sunt.' Neither the LXX and Theodotion (τοῦ ἀναφέρειν) nor Aquila and Symmachus (τοῦ διάγειν) agree with Jerome. What is more, the Peshitta translated להעביר as ܠܡܘܩܕܐ ("to burn"),[144] and the Targum merely gives the cognate לאעברא. Among the ancient versions, therefore, Jerome's "initiarent" is unique; it suggests the meaning of ritual "dedication/initiation" for העביר, an interpretation recently defended by M. Weinfeld, who cites Assyrian, biblical, and rabbinic evidence in support.[145]

Jerome is again without ancient parallel at Jer. 23:18, where he translates (יהוה) בסוד as "in consilio (domini)": "Ubi nos interpretati sumus 'in consilio domini' et in Hebraico scriptum est 'bassod,' Aquila 'secretum,' Symmachus 'sermonem,' LXX et Theodotio 'substantiam' sive 'subsistentiam' interpretati sunt." All of the Greek versions were in disagreement in the interpretation of סוד,[146] and in this case Jerome chooses not to follow any of them. Interestingly, both the Targum (רז) and the Peshitta (ܪܙܐ) agree with the reading of Aquila (ἀπορρήτῳ).[147] Only Jerome gives "consilio," which was a common meaning for סוד in Middle Hebrew (see Jastrow, 961), and which was also an attested usage in the biblical period (see KB, 745).

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[144] Cf. the use of בָּאֵשׁ with the Hiphil of עבר at Deut. 18:10; 2 Kgs. 16:3, 17:17, 21:6, 23:10; Ez. 20:31; and 2 Chron. 33:6.

[145] M. Weinfeld, "The Worship of Molech and of the Queen of Heaven and its Background," *UF* 4 (1972): 140–44, 154, suggests the idea of "dedication" rather than "sacrifice." See, for example, *SifreDeut* 171. Jerome, for his part, uses "consecrare" for this usage of העביר at Lev. 18:21; 2 Kgs. 16:3, 17:17, 23:10; and Ez. 16:21.

[146] The renderings given in this passage are representative of the ways in which the hexaplaric versions handled this word generally; see R. E. Brown, "The Pre-Christian Semitic Concept of 'Mystery,'" *CBQ* 20 (1958): 418. Cf. also Jerome on סוד at Jer. 23:22: "'in consilio meo,' Aquila, Symmachus et Theodotio et LXX ut supra similiter transtulerunt."

[147] See Field II, 633.

Likewise for מגור at Jer. 20:3, Jerome is independent of his Greek sources, taking the word to mean "terror" ("pavor"): "Pro 'pavore,' quod in Hebraico scriptum est 'magur,' LXX et Theodotio μέτοικον, id est 'migrantem,' Aquilae secunda editio 'peregrinum,' prima 'circumspicientem,' Symmachus 'ablatum' sive 'congregatum' et 'coactum' interpretati sunt." The LXX, Theodotion, and the second edition of Aquila understood מגור to be related to the verb גור, "to dwell as a foreigner." The renderings of Symmachus and Aquila's first edition are difficult to explain. Symmachus' interpretation of מגור might be parallel to Aquila's reading of מגורי at Ez. 21:17, συγκεκλεισμένοι;[148] otherwise, Symmachus might be associating מגור with גור, "to treat with hostility," in the sense of "to gather against."[149] As for Aquila's first edition, one can only suspect that it reflects a slightly different set of consonants.[150] In any case, there is no other evidence from late antiquity (rabbinic, targumic, or patristic) for taking מגור to mean "terror,"[151] although Jerome is in accord with Rashi (יראה) and David Kimchi (פחד),[152] thus illustrating his position in Hebrew philology within the stream of tradition leading from antiquity to the middle ages.[153] For all of these words, Jerome probably learned their meaning through his contact with contemporary Hebrew scholarship. He is clearly operating apart from the Greek versions, and it is significant to see examples where Jerome's reading is reflected in medieval Hebrew commentators.

In addition to these first five examples, there are other cases where Jerome seems to be independent of his Greek sources, even though not all of the *recentiores* are known for certain. Thus, in three instances, Jerome gives a meaning that differs from Aquila, Symmachus, and the LXX; yet, no reading is preserved for Theodotion. It is probable,

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[148] Thus, Symmachus' "congregatum" or "coactum" might go back to συγκεκλείσμενον, reflecting the same interpretation of מגור here as is found in Aquila for מגורי at Ez. 21:17, i.e. συγκεκλεισμένοι; cf. Field II, 624.

[149] See McKane, *Jeremiah*, 461.

[150] Perhaps Aquila's first edition read something like מראה מסביב for מגור מסביב, thus calling for the marginal correction supplied by the "second edition" of Aquila.

[151] For the phrase מגור מסביב, the Targum regularly translates מתכנשין מסחור סחור ("those who are gathered, surrounded from all about"); or at Jer. 20:3 and 49:29: יתכנשין מסחור סחור), perhaps deriving מגור from אנר, "to gather" (see Jer. 6:25, 20:3, 20:10, 46:5, 49:29). At Jer. 20:4, the Targum translates מגור as תבר, "misfortune."

[152] Kimchi: מגור מסביב...פחד יהיה לך מכל סביבותיך.

[153] "Terror" or "horror" is also a common understanding of מגור in modern times; see KB, 544.

however, that this merely reflects the fact that Theodotion in these passages did not differ from the LXX.[154] We may consider these instances, therefore, as most likely reflecting Jerome's independence from his Greek sources.

Jerome deviates from the Greek tradition at Jer. 3:2 in his interpretation of ערבי as "latro." The LXX had read ערבי in the sense of "crow" (κορώνη),[155] whereas Symmachus translated it κατάλυμα,[156] and Aquila gave a transliteration, Ἄραψ.[157] Having given in the lemma his own rendering along with that of the LXX ("cornix"), Jerome explains the actual meaning of the Hebrew word: "Pro 'latrone' et 'cornice' in Hebraeo 'arabe' scriptum est, quod potest et 'Arabas' significare, quae gens latrociniis dedita usque hodie incursat terminos Palestinae et descendentibus de Hierusalem Hierichum obsidet vias." Jerome differentiates himself from the Greek witnesses not only by taking ערבי as a reference to the people, "Arabas," but also by associating this people with brigandage, such that he is willing to translate the word simply as "brigand" ("latro"). In his explanation, Jerome provides the contemporary justification for this association: "latrociniis dedita usque hodie …" Like Jerome, the Targum understands ערבי to be a reference to "Arabs," translating the phrase כערבי מדבר as כערבאי דשרן בשכונין במדברא. There are also rabbinic parallels to Jerome's association of ערבי with brigandage, especially as "Arabs" are seen in connection with Ishmael.[158] Jerome gives a distinctive, Hebrew-based interpretation for ערבי, and he is also familiar with one of the connotations associated with the term ערבי in the Hebrew language environment of his day.

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[154] As has long been recognized, one defining characterisic of Theodotion's edition is that it tends to follow the LXX more closely than Aquila and Symmachus do (e.g., Epiphanius, *Mens.* 17; Jerome, *Praef. in Evangelio*, *Praef. Ps.*, *Comm. Eccl.* 2:2; Field I, xxxviii–xxxix; H. B. Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, rev. R. R. Ottley (Cambridge, 1914), 43–45; and Harl, *La Bible grecque*, 155). Swete referred to Theodotion as "a free revision of the LXX, rather than an independent version" (Swete, *Introduction*, 43). The general proximity of Theodotion to the LXX probably accounts for its use in the fifth column of the Hexapla to fill in lacunae in the LXX vis-à-vis the Hebrew text. In passages such as the three treated here, Jerome probably neglects to cite a reading for Theodotion because Theodotion did not differ from the LXX.

[155] Cf. I עֹרֵב (KB, 879).

[156] Cf. perhaps III עֲרָבָה (KB, 880).

[157] See Field II, 578.

[158] E.g., at *Suk* 52b, the word שדדים ("robbers," see Jastrow, 1524) of Job 12:6 is applied to the Ishmaelites, from whom the "Arabs" were thought to descend. For a concrete example of violent conflict connected to the ערבאי, see *BB* 168b.

Jerome makes another Hebrew-centered observation at Jer. 6:26 regarding the word יחיד. The LXX seem to have read ידיד, translating the word ἀγαπητοῦ.[159] Both Aquila and Symmachus rendered יחיד as μονογενοῦς, which Jerome appears to follow in the lemma ("unigeniti").[160] Yet, Jerome goes on to clarify the meaning of the word: "In Hebraico scribitur 'iaid,' quod magis 'solitarium' quam 'unigenitum' sonat." Properly speaking, Jerome argues, יחיד means "alone" rather than "only begotten." Again, Jerome is in agreement with the usage of Middle Hebrew (see Jastrow, 574) and shows the same understanding of the word that appears later in Rashi.[161]

Similarly at Jer. 5:26, Jerome goes against the Greek evidence in his understanding of the Hebrew word ישור. In this case, it is the entire clause, ישור כשך יקושים, that causes difficulty.[162] The LXX apparently interpreted ישור as "snares" and left out כשך יקושים, construing ישור with הציבו (which follows כשך יקושים in MT), thereby producing παγίδας ἔστησαν (ישור הציבו). The reading under asterisk for כשך יקושים, ὡς δίκτυον ἰξευτοῦ, takes שך to be "net" and יקושים to be "fowlers."[163] Aquila and Symmachus both translated the whole phrase ישור כשך יקושים as ἰασὶρ ὡς δίκτυον ἰξευτοῦ, similar to the asterisked reading for כשך יקושים, and giving a transliteration for ישור.[164] Jerome, on the other hand, goes a different route altogether. Jerome renders ישור כשך as "insidiantes quasi aucupes" (שך = "aucupes"). He then translates יקושים as "laqueos" ("snares") and construes it with what follows. Setting aside the obvious difficulties surrounding this passage, we are primarily interested in Jerome's translation of ישור as "insidiantes." This meaning is entirely absent from the Greek versions, but it is somewhat

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[159] As Jerome observes: "si enim esset 'dilectus' sive 'amabilis,' ut LXX transtulerunt, 'ididia' poneretur."

[160] Theodoret follows the rendering of Aquila and Symmachus (μονογενοῦς) for this word, but his comments do not go beyond a simple paraphrase of the verse. I have not found any evidence for a christological reading of μονογενοῦς at Jer. 6:26. If such a reading did exist, Jerome would be backing away from it here.

[161] Rashi comments on אבל של בן יחיד מי שאין לו אלא בן יחיד ומת :אבל יחיד.

[162] Modern commentators have offered numerous proposals and emendations to make sense of these words; see McKane, *Jeremiah*, 132–33.

[163] None of the ancient interpreters seem to have taken שך to be a Qal infinitive construct form of שכך, as is common today (see KB, 1491). Yet, understanding יקושים as "fowlers" is in accord with modern lexicography (see KB, 430).

[164] Based on his comments on their translation, Jerome clearly thinks that Aquila and Symmachus intended the meaning "upright" (*rectus*) by ἰασὶρ (cf. יָשָׁר): "Aquila et Symmachus transtulerunt verbum 'iasir—quasi rete aucupis,' quod etiam, qui bonus inter eos videtur et rectus, instar aucupis tendat insidias."

paralleled by the Targum's "with deceit" (בנכלין), and it is even more closely matched by Rashi's gloss, יארב ("lurk," "lie in wait"). Jerome's conception of the meaning of ישור is aligned with the "Hebraic" tradition of Hebrew Bible scholarship rather than with the Greek.

There are two other cases where the *recentiores* are only partially preserved, but where Jerome is likely to be following his own Hebrew sensibilities, independent of the Greek versions. Jerome's renderings of מעברים at Jer. 22:20 and מקנה at Jer. 9:9 both seem to represent the same interpretive tendency. For מעברים, the LXX and Theodotion translated εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης (as if מֵעֵבֶר יָם), and Symmachus gave ἐξεναντίας,[165] whereas Jerome translated "transeuntes" (מְעַבְּרִים). As for מקנה, the LXX took it to mean "property" (ὑπάρξεως = מִקְנֶה), and Aquila interpreted it similarly as "acquisition/possession" (κτήσεως),[166] apparently trying to show the etymological connection between מִקְנֶה and the verb קנה, "to acquire/possess." Jerome, like Aquila, gives the idea of "possession," but Jerome translates the word "possidentis," probably reading either מְקַנֶּה or מַקְנֶה. In both of these cases, Jerome takes the prefixed מ to be a sign of the participle, even though the required participial forms are not readily attested for either of these roots. Since the evidence is lacking, it is not impossible that Jerome is following Aquila at Jer. 22:20 and Symmachus at Jer. 9:9; but together, these two examples suggest that Jerome may have had a tendency to see a participle in the text when he could identify the root and could recognize the מ as a potential sign for the participle. Jerome may very well be guessing in these passages, but he seems to be guessing based on his own inclination as a Hebrew reader.

Finally, we may mention here one instance where Jerome's comment on a Hebrew word shows independence from the Greek evidence by tying into a broader rabbinic tradition. Jer. 10:9a reads: כסף מרקע מתרשיש יובא וזהב מאופז. The consonants מאופז were problematic for Greek translators and copyists: even though no explicit evidence is extant for the hexaplaric versions, the manuscript evidence for the LXX gives various transliterations, such as Μωφας, μωφαθ, and ωφαζ (see Ziegler, 200). Jerome rightly recognizes the מ as the preposition מן, translating

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[165] Jerome states: "in Hebraeo scriptum est 'meabarim,' LXX Theodotioque verterunt 'trans mare,' Symmachus 'de contra.'" Cf. Symmachus' rendering of מעבר as ἐξ ἐναντίος at 1 Kgs. 4:12.

[166] Syro-hexapla: ܕܩܢܝܘܬܐ.

וזהב מאופז as "et aurum de Ophaz." He then adds the following com-
ment: "Septem nominibus apud Hebraeos appellatur aurum, quorum
unum 'ophaz' dicitur, quod nos dicere possumus 'obryzum.'" Instead
of taking אופז to be a proper noun (cf. תרשיש),[167] Jerome regards it as
a specific type of gold. This much information can be found in the
Nom. Hebr.: "'ofaz' obryzum. est autem genus auri" (CChr 72, 128).
Yet, Jerome also says that "ophaz" is one of the seven names for gold
"apud Hebraeos." This tradition does not seem to have been available
to Jerome through Greek or Latin sources, but it appears several times
in rabbinic texts, as at *NumR* 12:4: שבעה מיני זהבים הם זהב טוב זהב טהור
זהב שחוט זהב סגור זהב מופז זהב מזקק זהב פרוים.[168] In all likelihood,
Jerome learned both the meaning of אופז and the tradition about the
seven types of gold while reading this text with a Hebrew teacher.[169] We
see here illustrated in this last example the close connection between
what Jerome learned linguistically from a Hebrew teacher and what he
learned from him in terms of a broader interpretive tradition.[170]

It is important to emphasize again that, even when Jerome departed
from the *recentiores*, he nevertheless consulted them for each Hebrew word
that he encountered. The *recentiores* were the primary reference tools
in Jerome's context for doing Hebrew philology. He not only checked
them systematically, but he also dutifully reported their readings, even
when they disagreed with his own. Greek scholarship on Hebrew lan-
guage matters served as the foundation for Jerome's Hebrew studies.

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[167] The word אופז occurs only here in the Hebrew Bible and is not otherwise attested.
The Targum translated it with the place name אופיר, which is elsewhere associated
with gold; cf. Isa. 13:12; Ps. 45:10; Job 28:16; and 1 Chron. 29:4.

[168] See also *ExodR* 35.1; *CantR* 3.10.3; and *Yoma* 44b–45a.

[169] It is also possible that Jerome could have learned this information from a Hebrew
aggadic text; see pp. 91–92.

[170] There are two other Hebrew words for whose meaning Jerome may be inde-
pendent of the Greek, but the nature of the evidence precludes certainty. At Jer. 2:34,
Jerome interprets אלה ("ella") to be "ista" (i.e., אֵלֶּה), which agrees with the midrashim
(*LevR* 10.3; *NumR* 15:21; *Tan. Beha'alotkha.*14), Rashi (הדברים האלה), Kimchi (טעמו דבק
עם הפסוק הבא אחריו), and MT. The LXX translated the word δρυΐ (i.e., אֵלָה), but we
have no evidence for the Greek versions, so it is impossible to know whether Jerome
could have been following one of them. For בקבק ("bocboc") at Jer. 19:1, the LXX
had translated it βῖκον ("jar," "cask"), Aquila used στάμνον ("earthen jar," "jar"), and
Jerome put "laguncula" ("flask," "bottle"). Perhaps Jerome's translation was an attempt
to identify the בקבק as a narrow-necked vessel (cf. James L. Kelso, "The Ceramic
Vocabulary of the Old Testament," *BASOR Supplementary Studies* (New Haven, 1948),
17, 48), but it is difficult to match with certainty the Greek and Latin terms used with
the sense that בקבק would have had in late antiquity.

For proper noun etymologies, a fair amount of material was available in commentaries and other exegetical works to assist Jerome in his task. For most other Hebrew words, however, the hexaplaric versions constituted the primary resource for "looking up" the meaning of the Hebrew.[171] At no point did Jerome abandon the Greek evidence. Instead, Jerome's contribution to Hebrew philology in the Christian world is that he found a way to go beyond what was available in Greek.

Perhaps Jerome's greatest contribution to Christian Hebraism was simply that he placed the Hebrew text of the Old Testament at the center of his approach, rather than using it as a tool to explain the Septuagint,[172] or as a quarry for readings to be used alongside of other versions.[173] When Jerome cited a Greek source in the context of a Hebrew discussion, it was because he thought that the Greek materials might help elucidate the Hebrew—but the Hebrew was the center of attention.

Moreover, Jerome realized that the Greek evidence was limited in what it could offer for explaining the sense of the Hebrew, and it was for this reason that he decided to go beyond it by learning to read Hebrew himself. The way in which Jerome says that he learned Hebrew, first from a Jewish convert to Christianity, and then later from Jews at Rome and at Bethlehem, all the while consulting Greek translations, is fully consistent with our picture of Hebrew language acquisition in the fourth century. Having studied the alphabet and sounds, Jerome seems to have learned to read the Hebrew Bible along standard lines: reading

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[171] It is reported in the *Suda* (Δ 1149) that Diodore of Tarsus wrote commentaries on all of the books of the Old Testament. It is unlikely, however, that Jerome could have gathered any of his specific Hebrew linguistic data from Diodore, considering the lack of such material in both the preserved works of Diodore and the surviving Antiochene commentary of Theodoret. Nevertheless, it is certainly possible that, if Diodore's Jeremiah commentary were extant, there would at least be exegetical parallels between Diodore and Jerome on some of the passages discussed above.

[172] Aside from the apologetic use of Hebrew in dispute with Jews, this was ultimately the approach of Origen; see Kamesar, *Jerome*, 21–28.

[173] The best example of the "eclectic" approach to Old Testament exegesis can be seen in Eusebius of Emesa, who cited readings from "the Hebrew" and "the Syrian" alongside of the Greek versions, giving them all approximately equal weight. This approach was not adopted by later Antiochenes, like Theodore of Mopsuestia (who was more consistently "LXX-centered"), and it clearly falls short of Jerome's method, whereby the interpretation of the Hebrew text was the center of discussion; see Kamesar, *Jerome*, 132–34. On Eusebius of Emesa, see also Ter Haar Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek Dress*.

with a teacher, who translated for him, and also reading along with a translation (in Jerome's case, Greek). What was deficient in Jerome's Hebrew, by the standards of his time, was his lack of immersion in a culture of Hebrew language usage, as he had experienced with Greek. Such an immersion experience would only have been possible within the environment of Rabbinic Judaism.

While reading with one of his Hebrew instructors, Jerome would have learned the meaning of the text as his teacher translated for him. In Jerome's mind, this was the most reliable source for the proper interpretation of the text. For difficult words, Jerome could use this personally acquired Hebrew meaning as a standard by which to evaluate the *recentiores*, either confirming them, choosing between them, or correcting them altogether. Of course, if Jerome had not read a particular biblical text with a teacher, or if he simply could not recall what was said, he could always use the *recentiores* to determine the meaning, relying on his own knowledge of Hebrew etymologies and parallel passages to sort out the options. The *recentiores* were a consistent "base-line" of information, but it was Jerome's own knowledge of Hebrew, gained through personal instruction, that allowed him to go beyond any of his Christian predecessors in the study of the Hebrew Old Testament.

Considering that Jerome's personal Hebrew teachers were or had been part of Rabbinic Judaism, one may accept Adam Kamesar's description of Jerome's Hebrew philology as a "*recentiores*-rabbinic" approach.[174] The fact that Jerome's personal instructors learned Hebrew in the world of fourth century Rabbinic Judaism explains why there are parallels between some of Jerome's interpretations and those found in certain rabbinic texts. This combination of the Greek versions and rabbinic Hebrew scholarship into a single philological method was Jerome's greatest innovation as a Hebrew philologist.

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[174] Kamesar, *Jerome*, 174–75, 190–91.

JEROME AS EXPOSITOR OF THE HEBREW
TEXT OF JEREMIAH

We began our study of Jerome's *Commentary on Jeremiah* by looking at the methodological framework of Jerome's Hebrew scholarship. We observed that Jerome owed his philological sensibilities to the Greco-Latin "grammatical" tradition, which he applied in a distinctive way to the task of interpreting the Old Testament. After this, we examined the sources used by Jerome in his study of the Hebrew text of Jeremiah. We found that Jerome made use of whatever information on Hebrew matters was available in Greek, especially the hexaplaric versions, but that he sifted, explained, analyzed, and corrected these Greek sources based on his own understanding of the Hebrew language, developed and sharpened particularly through contact with Jewish scholars. We now wish to consider how Jerome's Hebrew scholarship fit into his overall approach to interpreting the biblical text. We also want to see how Jerome compares with more recent interpreters in terms of identifying and explaining Hebrew exegetical problems in Jeremiah.

In this chapter, we will treat a selection of passages from the *Commentary on Jeremiah* where Jerome focuses special attention on Hebrew issues. For each passage, we will cite the biblical lemma as Jerome presents it in the commentary, and then offer our own commentary on Jerome's analysis of the text. The purpose of our commentary will be three-fold: (1) to identify the problem in the biblical text to which Jerome is responding, (2) to show how Jerome's treatment of the problem or issue compares with modern exegesis and the history of scholarship on the question generally, and (3) to give a full account of Jerome's discussion of the lemma as a whole, so as to situate Jerome's observations about the Hebrew within his larger interpretation of the passage.

The radical divergences in the book of Jeremiah between the transmitted Hebrew text and the edition of the LXX were noted by Origen,[1]

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[1] Having just mentioned the numerous differences between the Hebrew and Greek texts of Job, Origen says: Πολλὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα καὶ ἐν τῷ Ἱερεμίᾳ κατενοήσαμεν, ἐν ᾧ καὶ πολλὴν μετάθεσιν καὶ ἐναλλαγὴν τῆς λέξεως τῶν προφητευομένων εὕρομεν (*Ep. Afric.* 4).

and were the subject of numerous studies in the nineteenth century.[2] Jerome, with his belief in the *hebraica veritas*, assumed that the Hebrew text of Jeremiah available to him was the original edition, and so he saw in the LXX a confused and deficient version that needed to be untangled and restored according to the Hebrew.[3] Most modern scholars, in contrast, believe that the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX was shorter and probably older than MT.[4] For this reason, Jerome's way of dealing with the plus/minus differences between the Hebrew and the Greek is very different from what one would find in a modern commentary. Although Jerome is diligent to point out where the LXX is lacking *vis-à-vis* the Hebrew,[5] we have chosen not to focus in this chapter on passages that involve serious quantitative differences between the Hebrew and Greek. Observations on such matters in the *Comm. Ier.* are usually brief and not particularly integrated into the surrounding exegesis.

Instead, we have selected passages from throughout the commentary where some Hebrew issue is at the center of Jerome's actual interpretation of the text. These passages have been chosen because they are representative of Jerome's Hebrew philology in terms of both the kinds of questions addressed and the purposes to which he puts the information. Through this select commentary on Jerome's *Comm. Ier.*, we will present an integrated picture of Jerome's Hebrew scholarship in the service of biblical exegesis.

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[2] See J. G. Janzen, *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), 1–9.

[3] "censui . . . Hieremiae ordinem librariorum errore confusum multaque, quae desunt, ex Hebraeis fontibus digerere ac conplere, ut novum ex veteri verumque pro corrupto atque falsato prophetam teneas" (*Comm. Ier.* Prol.).

[4] In addition to Janzen, *Studies*, see E. Tov, "Some Aspects of the Textual and Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah," in *Le livre de Jérémie: le prophète et son milieu, les oracles et leur transmission*, ed. P.-M. Bogaert (Leuven, 1997): 145–67; idem, *Textual Criticism*, 319–27; P.-M. Bogaert, "De Baruch à Jérémie: les deux rédactions conservées du livre de Jérémie," in *Le livre de Jérémie*, ed. Bogaert, 168–73; and idem, "Le *vetus latina* de Jérémie: texte très court, témoin de la plus ancienne Septante et d'une forme plus ancienne de l'hébreu (Jer 39 et 52)," in *The Earliest Text of the Hebrew Bible: The Relationship between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered*, ed. A. Schenker (Leiden, 2003): 51–82. On the other hand, it has been observed by several scholars that the Hebrew text underlying the LXX is shorter that MT at many points due to haplography; cf. Janzen, *Studies*, 9; and Lundbom, 61–62.

[5] E.g., more than forty times in the *Comm. Ier.*, Jerome uses the phrase "in LXX non habetur," in order to indicate what words in the Hebrew text are missing from the LXX. Jerome also gives some attention to the "minuses" in the Hebrew text, of which there are fewer. See pp. 55–57.

Jer. 1:11–12. (11) *Et factum est verbum domini ad me dicens: quid tu vides, Hieremia? Et dixi: virgam vigilantem ego video.* (12) *Et dixit dominus ad me: bene vidisti, quia vigilabo ego super verbo meo, ut faciam illud.*

Jer. 1:4–10 reports Jeremiah's divine commission to be a prophet to nations and kingdoms. Following this report are two visionary narratives (1:11–12 and 1:13–16), the first of which is based on a wordplay in the Hebrew between what Jeremiah saw (מקל שקד, "virgam vigilantem") and what the Lord will do (שקד אני, "vigilabo ego"). Such wordplays are not usually visible in translation, as illustrated by the rendering of the LXX, βακτηρίαν καρυΐνην . . . ἐγρήγορα ἐγώ. The first task for one commenting on the Hebrew text would be to identify the wordplay and explain how it works. In addition, although the basic sense of 12b has caused little difficulty ("I am watching over my word, to accomplish it"), the precise identification of the מקל שקד in 11b is not entirely clear. This, too, would need to be discussed.

Almost all commentators who have worked with the Hebrew text, including Jerome, have noticed the wordplay between שָׁקֵד in v. 11 and שֹׁקֵד in v. 12. Jerome begins his discussion of these verses by highlighting the difference between his own rendering of מקל שקד, "virgam vigilantem," and that of the LXX (βακτηρίαν καρυΐνην), which Jerome represents in Latin as "baculum nuceum." Jerome proceeds to explain to the Latin reader the "Hebraeam ἐτυμολογίαν" underlying "saced" in v. 11 and "soced" in v. 12, citing the reference in Jer. 5:6 to a נָמֵר שֹׁקֵד in order to substantiate the meaning of the verb form. Jerome then gives two further examples of similar word plays in order to illustrate how such a literary device works: first, Jerome mentions the wordplays at the end of the story of Susanna between the trees σχῖνον and πρῖνον and the verbs σχίσει and πρίσαι;[6] second, Jerome refers to Gen. 2:23, where it says that woman will be called "issa" (אשה) because she was taken from "is" (איש).[7] Thus, with surprising detail, Jerome has performed the most basic task for one commenting on the Hebrew

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[6] Jerome cites the story according to the version of Theodotion; see Dan. 13:54–59. Cf. also Origen, *Ep. Afric.* 8–10, 18.

[7] Jerome attempts to reproduce the wordplay in Latin by using the terms "viro" and "virago." Cf. *QHG* 2:23, where Jerome states that Symmachus similarly tried to preserve the etymological connection in Greek. On Jerome's exegesis of Gen. 2:23, see Hayward, *Jerome's Hebrew Questions*, 113–14. Modern scholarship does not consider Gen. 2:23 to reflect a historical etymology (KB, 93).

text of this passage, namely, pointing out the etymological wordplay at work in the Hebrew.

Jerome continues his treatment of Jer. 1:11–12 by discussing the meaning of the passage as a whole in light of the phrase מקל שקד. Both of these words present the commentator with a measure of difficulty. As for מקל, Jerome translates it as "virga," meaning by this a rod or staff, as shown by his quotations of 1 Cor. 4:21 ("quid vultis in virga veniam ad vos") and Ps. 23:4 ("virga tua et baculus tuus ipsa conso-labuntur me"). Most modern commentators, in light of the following שָׁקֵד, understand מקל to be referring simply to a branch or twig.[8] Jerome, however, sees part of the significance of the vision as coming from the symbolic import of the staff itself, which could be used to chasten as well as to guide and comfort.[9] Jeremiah was to exercise God's judgment (i.e., the staff of chastisement), but he did this not to destroy totally, but so that he might build again (i.e., the staff of comfort; cf. Jer. 1:10). As Jerome says, "ad hoc enim dominus corripit, ut emendet." Thus, Jerome's understanding of מקל is the primary element that shapes his interpretation of the contextual message of the vision.

The second word in our key phrase, שקד, is in some ways even more problematic. What is the meaning of שקד, and what significance does it add to the vision? Some have suggested that Jer. 1:11–12 represents nothing more that a simple verbal parallel between two similar words, שָׁקֵד meaning "almond," and שֹׁקֵד, meaning "watching," and that there is no further significance to be attached to the phrase מקל שקד (thus McKane, Giesebrecht). Graf, on the other hand, argued that Jerome's rendering, "virgam vigilantem," is entirely accurate, and that in view is not necessarily an almond branch, but a stick of any kind that is bud-ding, that is, "watching" (i.e., מקל שֹׁקֵד). Most modern commentators do think that an actual almond branch is intended, but many also see a genuine connection between the word in Hebrew for "almond" and the verbal root "to watch." Because the almond tree was generally the first tree to blossom in the winter or early spring (cf. Plin. *Nat.* 16.42.103), it

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[8] E.g., Condamin, Rudolph, Holladay, McKane, Lundbom.

[9] Volz, somewhat like Jerome, says that the מקל is a branch used for a riding switch or a driving stick, although he also suggests the possibility that a mantic staff may be in view (see Hos. 4:12; against this view, see Carroll, 103–04). Condamin, on the other hand, directly opposes Jerome's interpretation of מקל: "Jérémie reconnaît tout de suite un amandier—et non d'une verge, symbole du châtiment, comme plusieurs le pensent (il y aurait, dans ce cas, שבט, plutôt que מקל)."

received the name in Hebrew "watcher." As Holladay, 37, notes: "There is no doubt that the word is related to the verb "watch" (שקד, v. 12), so the word association in the two verses is that of a true etymology, not of a folk etymology or simple word-play." Thus, as also pointed out by Calvin, Blayney, and Lundbom, an almond branch is likely intended, but the connection with "watching" is already contained within the name of the tree. Some commentators (e.g., Craigie, Kelley, Drinkard) have even supposed that the blossoming stick is meant to picture the blossoming of Jeremiah's prophetic words, or the like. This association of the word "almond" (שָׁקֵד) with "watching" (שֹׁקֵד) converges with Jerome's decision to render מקל שקד as "virgam vigilantem," and the identification of שָׁקֵד with the almond vindicates Jerome's decision to report Theodotion's "amygdalinam" (almond-). One can see the raw data needed for finding a solution to this problematic word in what Jerome reports about it in his commentary.

Yet, interestingly, Jerome does not settle on a single sense of שָׁקֵד for his exposition. Rather, he makes two concluding observations using various different possible senses for שָׁקֵד. First, Jerome appeals to the terms used by the LXX and Theodtion, "nux" and "amygdalum," and he draws the analogy that, just as a nut or almond has a hard, bitter shell, but is sweet on the inside once the outer shell has been removed, so also is the case with the labor of continence, as well as literary studies: "unde et vetus illa sententia est: litterarum radices amarae, fructus dulces." Second, Jerome relates that some understand the "virgam vigilantem atque nuceam" to refer to the Lord (i.e., Christ), citing Isa. 11:1 ("exiet virga de radice Iessae") and Aaron's budding staff (see Num. 17:8), which was thought dead, but which flourished in the Lord's resurrection. It is interesting to note how contextually oriented Jerome's treatment of the passage was during his discussion of the wordplay and of the meaning of מקל. These discussions were also very Hebrew-focused. At the end of the lemma, Jerome shifted towards a broader theological exposition. For this purpose, he mixed the non-Hebrew readings together with the Hebrew.

> Jer. 2:7.   (7) *Et induxi vos in terram Carmeli, ut comederetis fructum eius et bona illius, et ingressi contaminastis terream meam et hereditatem meam posuistis in abominationem.*

In the address beginning at Jer. 2:5, the prophet charges Judah and Israel with having abandoned their own God so as to turn to other gods. In 2:6–7, a contrast is established between the barren and uninhabitable

land that God led the people through, and the good and fruitful land to which He brought them. In spite of this benevolent act of God, the people, and especially the leaders (2:8) still turned away from God, defiling the land. Jerome begins his comments on this lemma by offering a simple paraphrase of the main idea of 2:7: "Pro labore durissimi itineris dedi vobis omnium rerum abundantiam." In place of the hardships experienced during the journey in the wilderness (2:6), God gave to the people "an abundance of all good things"—which, according to Jerome, is the meaning of "Carmelus" ("hoc quippe significat 'Carmelus'").[10] The noun כרמל, in addition to being a proper place name, seems to refer in the Bible to an orchard or fruit garden (KB, 499). Yet, as has been noted by many commentators, in contexts such as this כרמל comes to represent the kind of fruitfulness and abundance that Jerome here ascribes directly to the word itself.[11]

Interestingly, after Jerome has given this paraphrase based on what the word "Carmelus" is said to mean, he proceeds to supply an etymology for the noun ("qui Hebraice appellatur 'Chermel'") and a corresponding interpretation ("et in lingua nostra sonat 'cognitionem circumcisionis'"). "Knowledge of circumcision" was in fact a common etymology for Carmel in Greek sources.[12] Jerome uses it is as the basis for a further application: just as the people of Israel defiled and polluted their fertile land with idolatry, so also the Christian, who has received a knowledge of the true circumcision and has eaten its fruit, contaminates the inheritance of God if he allows negligence to creep into his life. The paraphrase at the beginning was based on the meaning of Carmel as "omnium rerum abundantiam," whereas the distinctively Christian application at the end was founded on the etymology "cognitionem circumcisionis."

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[10] This interpretation of "Carmel" is found neither in the *onomastica* nor, it seems, in the Greek commentaries. Rabbinic tradition offers two etymologies for כרמל: first, "tender" and "easily crushed," as if from רך מל (*Sifra* Nedabah ch. 14, par. 13; and *Men* 66b); and second, "rounded" and "full," as if from כר מלא (*Men* 66b, where this second etymology is introduced at the end of the discussion with the words: דבי רבי ישמעאל תנא). The first of these is in fact represented in the *onomastica*, e.g., ἀπαλός (OS I.171.30). The second, "rounded" and "full," is perhaps related to Jerome's interpretation.

[11] E.g., Holladay, 87: "The noun כַּרְמֶל appears to be related to כֶּרֶם 'vineyard,' but is contrasted not only with 'wilderness' but with 'forest' (e.g., Isa 29:17; 32:15), so that it means land that is fertile and productive." McKane translates ארץ הכרמל as "fertile land."

[12] Cf. OS I.171.30; I.193.26; I.203.5.

Jer. 2:18.   (18) *Et nunc quid tibi vis in via Aegypti, ut bibas aquam Sior? Et quid tibi et viae Assyriorum, ut bibas aquam fluminis?*

In Jer. 2:18, the prophet rebukes Israel for forsaking God and making political alliances with Egypt and Assyria. The Assyrian "fluminis" (נהר) at the end of the verse is clearly the Euphrates. The issue at hand is the identification of "Sior" (שחור). According to its Egyptian etymology, the word seems to mean "the pond of Horus"; it is a proper noun referring to "one of the eastern branches of the Nile or one of the lakes in the eastern delta" (KB, 1477–78). The LXX identified it with the ניחון of Gen. 2:13 (Γηων). Jerome starts his discussion by reporting an etymology for שחור, "turbidam," known also from the *De nominibus Hebraicis*.[13] Then, Jerome makes two observations regarding the rivers in question.

First, Jerome makes clear which rivers are meant. Since Egypt is named explicitly, and the sons of Memphis and Tahpanhes were just mentioned (2:16), the first river is the Nile. Likewise, the "fluvium Assyriorum" must be the Euphrates, which is confirmed by the fact that the promised land is described as stretching "a torrente Aegypti usque ad flumen magnum Eufraten" (Gen. 15:18). One should not doubt, Jerome insists, that the Nile and Euphrates do indeed have turbid waters.

Second, Jerome makes a theological application based on the turbidity of the rivers. Those who give up Christ, the fount of life, and dig for themselves heretical wells which do not contain sound teachings, will be given over to lions that will desolate them and will destroy the whole church (cf. 2:15). Furthermore, these partakers of heresy will drink turbid waters that flow from the rivers of Assyria and from the north (cf. Jer. 1:14–15, etc.), thus causing evil to break out across the earth.

It should be noted that Jerome gives the etymology for שחור right away in his discussion, even though he only uses the etymology in his exposition after he has already identified the specific rivers that are meant. It is noteworthy as well that Jerome makes a point to affirm that, even at the simplest level, the etymology for שחור is still meaningful: the actual rivers in question really are turbid.

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[13] See OS I.55.13. In addition to "turbidam," "firmamentum novum" is also listed as an option for "sior."

Jer. 2:21.   (21) *Ego autem plantavi te vineam electam, omne semen verum; quomodo conversa es mihi in pravum vinea aliena?* LXX: *Ego autem plantavi te vineam frugiferam, omnem veram; quomodo conversa es in amaritudinem vitis aliena?*[14]

The text has just previously (2:20) charged Israel with engaging in religious harlotry ("tu prosternebaris meretrix") at illicit shrines ("in omni colle sublimi et sub omni ligno frondoso"). Now, the divine voice marvels at how far Israel has fallen from its original, noble position. Although God planted Israel as a שרק כלה זרע אמת, it has become a סורי הגפן נכריה. Perhaps the most difficult task for interpreting the Hebrew text of this verse is to figure out the sense of סורי הגפן נכריה. Jerome, however, does not discuss this at all. The issue that Jerome does bring up is the interpretation of שרק, the basic sense of which is central to his treatment of the verse.

Jerome opens up his discussion by informing his readers that the Hebrew text has "sorec" in the place where he has translated "vineam electam" and where the LXX put "vineam frugiferam." Next, Jerome points his readers to the "Isaiae canticum," where the same Hebrew word may be found (cf. Isa. 5:2).[15] Jerome does not make much of the concept of "chosenness" in his exposition, but he does take as his starting point the understanding of שרק as a kind of "vine."

First, Jerome gives a straightforward paraphrase of the sense of Jer. 2:21, with Isaiah 5 in view: The Lord planted Israel as the best kind

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[14] Jerome's usual practice in his commentaries on the prophets was to give the biblical lemma in full twice, once according to his own Hebrew translation, and once according to the edition of the LXX; see Penna, *Principi e carattere*, 38; Jay, *L'exégèse*, 89; J. M. Dines, "Jerome and the Hexapla: The Witness of the Commentary on Amos," in *Origen's Hexapla and Fragments*, ed. A. Salvesen (Tübingen, 1998): 424–25; and Pennacchio, *Propheta Insaniens*, 171. In the Jeremiah commentary, however, it is most common for Jerome to give only the Hebrew lemma, with alternative translations given for individual words where necessary. For example, in Bk. 1 of the *Comm. Ier.*, Jerome gives the full LXX lemma only 9 times out of 92 (in this chapter, see 2:21, 10:17–18, 15:12, 22:13–17, and 31:2). This reflects the increasing emphasis that Jerome placed on the Hebrew text as he advanced in age.

[15] Almost all modern commentators cite the Isa. 5 passage as a key parallel for understanding Jer. 2:21. Jerome's rendering of שרק as "electam" matches Symmachus' translation of the same word at Isa. 5:2 (ἐκλεκτή), as well as the Targum here at Jer. 2:21 (בחירא). The lexical root שרק, with a meaning related to "vine," occurs also at Gen. 49:11 and at Isa. 16:8. Hexaplaric evidence is lacking for the occurence at Isa. 16:8, and at Gen. 49:11 καλλίκαρπος is preserved as "another" (ἄλλος) reading. Jerome does not discuss the word in his *Comm. Is.* 16:8, but in *QHG* 49:11 he takes "sorec" to mean "choice vine," showing that this understanding of the word goes back to his early days as a Hebrew commentator.

of vine ("genus vitis optimae"), and now He marvels at how such a
"semen verum" and "electa vinea" could be made into bitterness and
into an alien vine.[16] Following this, Jerome gives another, free paraphrase,
this time making an application to his readers: even someone who is
a "plantatio domini"—a "semen verum et vinea sorec"—should be
careful, lest he be changed so much by his own vice that he becomes
separated from the Lord through bitterness and becomes an alien vine.
Lastly, Jerome connects Jer. 2:21 to Christ through John 15:1 ("Ego
sum vitis vera"), assuring his readers that one may stay a "vitis electa
vel vera" if one perseveres in what Christ has planted.

Jerome builds his treatment of this text around the imagery of the vine
and the understanding of שרק as a desirable kind of vine. As is
frequently the case, he begins with more contextually oriented com-
ments, and then tries to reach a Christian reading at the end. Although
Jerome's interpretation of שרק is different from that of the LXX, both Jerome
and the LXX understood the word to refer to a vine, and since Jerome
made so little use of "electam," one may wonder why Jerome brought
up this word at all. In all likelihood, Jerome mentions "sorec" here not
primarily to contrast his own reading with that of the LXX, but in
order to justify his citation of the parallel passage from Isaiah.

> Jer. 2:33–34.   (33) *Quid niteris bonam ostendere viam tuam ad quaerendam
> dilectionem? Quae insuper et militias tuas docuisti vias tuas,* (34)
> *et in alis*—sive *in manibus*—*tuis inventus est sanguis animarum
> pauperum et innocentium. Non in foveis inveni eos, sed in omnibus
> istis* sive *sub omni quercu.*

These verses contain an ironic picture of Israel as successful at doing
evil, followed by a more straightforward condemnation of their sins of
violence. The Hebrew text of v. 33 is notoriously difficult and has been
subjected to varying treatments by modern commentators. Jerome first
gives a brief restatement of v. 33, as he understands it according to
the Latin translation given above. Jerome makes no further comments
on the Hebrew of this verse. Instead, he moves on to v. 34, where he
does address the Hebrew text explicitly.

For 2:34, Jerome works through the text, making observations along
the way. For the beginning of the verse, Jerome suggests that the

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[16] Jerome's use of "amaritudinem" ("bitterness") should be noted. This word is
part of the lemma according to the LXX, not the Hebrew, but it is included here in
Jerome's initial paraphrase.

innocent who were killed had been sacrificed to idols, or some similar scenario, offering both the Hebrew ("in alis tuis," i.e., בכנפיך) and the LXX ("in manibus tuis," i.e., ἐν ταῖς χερσίν σου) as options, without explicitly identifying them as such. Jerome then tells the reader that he has added "pauperum" (אביונים) from the Hebrew, because it is absent from the LXX.[17] As for מחתרת ("foveis"), which today is usually taken to mean "burglary" (see KB, 573), Jerome interprets it as "pits" (cf. חתר, "to dig"), and concludes that God did not find the dead bodies of the innocent in pits, as would have been the case if they had been killed by brigands. This leads to the end of the verse, where Jerome makes his most significant observation on the Hebrew text.

The phrase כי על כל אלה, for which Jerome gave two options in the lemma: "sed in omnibus istis" and "sed sub omni quercu," is extremely awkward here. Many modern commentators have found these last words impossible to interpret in this context.[18] As for Jerome, his second proposal ("under every oak") reflects the interpretation of the LXX (ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πάσῃ δρυί), and has been supported more recently by Blayney and Condamin. His first proposal ("in all these things") reflects the vocalization of MT, and has been taken up by some moderns, although usually in connection with the following verse.[19] According to Jerome, the word "ella" can mean either "ista" (אֵלֶּה) or "quercu" (אֵלָה). If the word means "ista," then the sense ("sensus") of the phrase is: "but in all these things which I mentioned above," which is the rendering given in the IH translation ("sed in omnibus quae supra memoravi"). If the word means "quercu," then the sense is: "under the oak and terebinth trees under whose shade and foliage you enjoyed the evils of idolatry." Jerome does not clearly tie this last phrase logically into

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[17] Some modern commentators, e.g., Duhm, Rudolph, and Holladay, see אביונים in MT as a gloss explaining נקיים; but cf. McKane, Lundbom, and Giesebrecht, who are less sure of its exclusion.

[18] E.g., the comment by McKane, 54, "it is doubtful whether there is any solution to these baffling, final words of vs. 34." Holladay reconstructs עֻלֵּךְ לְאָלָה, "your yoke becomes a curse." Rudolph suggests that the original text read כִּי עָלַיִךְ לְאָלָה כָל־אֵלֶּה, "das alles wirft sich dir zum Fluch aus," which was reduced to its present state by haplography. Volz posits עַל־כָּל־אֹרַח, "auf jedem Weg."

[19] E.g., Lundbom, RSV, NIV, NJB. Yet, both Duhm and Driver find ways to take these words with v. 34. Driver, 12–13: "but because of all these things (i.e., this rejection of Yahweh)"; Duhm, 31: "Jer sagt: wenn am Kleide von Einbrechern Blut gefunden wird, so wird man darum nicht das ganze Volk verurteilen, dem die Einbrecher angehören, Jahwe aber hat 'auf allen diesen da,' an den Kleidern so vieler Israeliten, Blut gefunden."

what surrounds it, so that he fails to resolve the exegetical problem. This may be because he is not certain of which meaning to assign to אלה in this passage, and so must content himself merely with giving the sense of both options side by side.[20]

> Jer. 3:2a.   (2a) *Leva oculos tuos in directum et vide, ubi non prostrata sis; in viis sedebas exspectans eos quasi latro in solitudine* sive *quasi cornix deserta.*

Jer. 3:1–5 presents yet another oracle comparing the idolatry practiced by the people of Judah with the promiscuity of an unfaithful wife. In v. 2, Judah is said to wait for her paramours as a "latro" or "cornix" waiting in the wilderness. The Hebrew question for this verse is the meaning of the word ערבי, which Jerome translates as "latro," but which the LXX understood to mean "cornix."

Jerome starts his discussion by addressing the Hebrew, stating that the Hebrew word "arabe" (MT עֳרְבִי) signifies "Arabs." The image, according to Jerome, is that of brigands lying in wait in the wilderness in order to attack passers-by. Jerome states that Arabs were still known for brigandage even up to his day, and he offers further support for this association by referring to the parable of the "Good Samaritan" (Luke 10:30–36), although this well-known NT story does not actually identify the thieves as Arabs.[21] On the basis of this association, Jerome translates ערבי simply as "latro," both here in the commentary and in the IH translation. Jerome does not even address the LXX's "cornix" (κορώνη, cf. עֹרֵב) in his comments, nor has the reading of the LXX found many supporters among recent commentators, most of whom agree with Jerome that the reference is to Arabs. Some agree with Jerome that the text is envisioning Arab brigands (e.g., Calvin, Blayney, Condamin, Volz, Holladay), whereas others suggest that Arab traders are in view (e.g., Gouge-Gataker, McKane, Lundbom).[22] All agree, however, that Jerome's reading of ערבי as "Arabas" is correct.

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[20] After discussing a Hebrew term, Jerome often in the *Comm. Ier.* gives multiple paraphrases according to the various options, without indicating a preference for one in particular (cf. 15:12, 21:13–14, 23:18). This is a method that Jerome adopted from his training in *grammatice* (see pp. 71–72). In all of the examples just cited, multiple expositions are given for the literal sense of the passage, following the Hebrew; this practice is not restricted only to Jerome's treatment of the spiritual sense (*pace* Hartmann, "St. Jerome," 73).

[21] On the perceived connection between Arabs and brigandage, see p. 122. Cf. also Diod. Sic. 2.48.

[22] Gouge, Gataker, et al., ascribe to "Jewish writers" the view that Jeremiah is envisioning Arab merchants, waiting for their customers.

Having settled the matter of ערבי, Jerome gives a close paraphrase of the verse ("eleva igitur oculos tuos, O Hierusalem . . ."), explaining the metaphor in straightforward terms: just as brigands customarily set traps at night in the wilderness, so also Judah, in the manner of the harlot of Proverbs (cf. 7:5–27), sits and waits at night so that it might kill those with whom it fornicates. In this way all the land is polluted by the "fornication" of the people. Finally, Jerome makes his explicit connection to Christian theology, this time using a Greek term to introduce the "higher sense" (significanterque iuxta ἀναγωγὴν).[23] According to the anagogical sense, the text admonishes those who have promised to leave their heretical errors to lift up their eyes, because unless they see correctly, they cannot truly condemn their earlier depravity.

> Jer. 4:11–12a. (11) *In tempore illo dicetur populo huic et Hierusalem: ventus urens*—sive *erroris*—*in viis, quae sunt in deserto, viae filiae populi mei non ad ventilandum et purgandum.* (12a) *Spiritus plenus ex his veniet mihi.*

Jer. 4:5–9 describes the divine judgment that is coming in the form of destructive invaders from the north. The prophet's response to this is given in v. 10, where he complains that God has deceived the people by promising peace (i.e., by commissioning the "false" prophets to promise peace), when in reality the sword is at their throat ("et ecce pervenit gladius usque ad animam"). As the Hebrew text now stands, vv. 11–12 pick up on this threat of invasion ("In tempore illo") and reaffirm it through another image. Some of the key Hebrew difficulties addressed by modern commentators on these verses include: the meaning of צח, the function of דרך, and the use of the מן in מאלה.[24] Jerome, however,

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[23] In discussing the spiritual meaning of the text, Jerome makes particularly frequent use of the following expressions (and their derivatives): ἀναγωγή, *tropologia*, *intellegentia spiritalis*, and ἀλληγορία. Other terms, like *mysticus* and *sacramenta*, also occur. In general, Jerome employs all of these words indiscriminately as synonyms for the Christian spiritual sense; see Vaccari, "I fattori," 477; Henri de Lubac, "'Typologie' et 'allégorisme,'" *RSR* 34 (1947): 186; Penna, *Principi e carattere*, 58, 110, 133–34; Jay, *L'exégèse*, 130, 215–17; J. Gribomont, "La terminologie exégétique de S. Jérôme," in *La terminologia esegetica nell'antichità*, ed. C. Curti, J. Gribomont, et al. (Bari, 1987): 123–34; and Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 123. On Jerome's use of *typus* terminology, see Penna, *Principi e carattere*, 125–46; and Pennacchio, *Propheta Insaniens*, 209–11.

[24] If there is any consensus on these issues among modern commentators, it would be that צח means "glowing" or perhaps "scorching" (so also Jerome), דרך should be taken adverbially ("in the way of," "towards"), and the מן of מאלה is comparative ("too 'full' than to do these," i.e., to winnow and to purify). There is still, however, not complete unanimity on any of these problems. Lundbom, 341, for example, translates: "At that

does not explicitly discuss any of these issues. Instead, he focuses on the word רוח, which occurs twice in this short passage.

Taking his cue from the opening words of v. 11, Jerome states the logic of vv. 10b–11 by combining the metaphors of the sword (10b) and the threshing floor (vs. 11): "Quando pervenerit gladius usque ad animam et fuerit area consummata, tunc . . ." After this, Jerome gives a paraphrase of vv. 11–12a: The people will suffer from a scorching <u>wind</u> from the desert, one which will certainly not winnow and clear away the chaff, leaving the grain behind.[25] The people will not, however, receive a full <u>spirit</u>; only God will partake of a full spirit, so that his grain may be winnowed. As is clear, Jerome is basing his understanding of these verses on his differing interpretations of רוח in vv. 11 and 12.

In v. 11, רוח is clearly seen by Jerome to be a negative force. In v. 12a, however, when Jerome sees the phrase רוח מלא, he is certain that רוח must be positive. Jerome did not consider that מָלֵא could have a meaning like "strong" (cf. Lundbom) or "tempestuous" (Mckane).[26] To Jerome, a רוח מלא was a "full spirit," which had to be something good. In light of the fact that this "spiritus plenus" was to come "to me" (*mihi*, לי) that is, to God, Jerome seemed to be on sure footing when he assumed that רוח in v. 12a was a positive "spirit," even though in v. 11 it had been a destructive wind. This dilemma, namely, having to take the same Hebrew word in two different ways in two successive verses, is what called forth his Hebrew comment on this passage. Jerome tells his readers that the ideas of "wind" and "spirit" are signified by the same word in Hebrew, "ruha,"[27] and that one must decide on the proper meaning based on the nature of the immediate context ("pro locorum qualitate"). Therefore, Jerome argues, it is perfectly legitimate to interpret רוח as "wind" in v. 11 and as "spirit" in v. 12.

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time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem: a dazzling wind from the bare heights in the desert towards my dear people, not to winnow and not to sift out—a wind stronger than these comes from me." Jerome's translation of צח ("urens") can be reconciled with such a reading, but his handling of שפים . . . דרך ("in viis . . . viae"), and also of מאלה ("ex his"), combined with his interpretation of רוח, put him at odds with most commentators today.

[25] For "scorching wind" (רוח צח), the LXX put πνεῦμα πλανήσεως, which Jerome reports in the lemma ("ventus erroris"), but which he does not take up in his discussion.

[26] It should be noted that some modern commentators, like Condamin and Holladay, emend MT מָלֵא מֵאֵלָה to מָלֵא מֵאָלָה ("full of curse"), which makes the רוח of v. 12a clearly negative. Without such an emendation, it is easy to see why Jerome might take רוח מלא as he does.

[27] Jerome makes the same observation in his comments on Jer. 2:23c–24 and Jer. 10:14. See also *Comm. Os.* 4:17–19.

Jerome concludes with a series of observations that are typical for him in content but unusual in presentation. To begin with, Jerome reports an alternative interpretation of these verses, seeing in them the salvation of a remnant after the winnowing, where the "full spirit" of v. 12 is equivalent to the "spirit of fullness" in John 1:16. What is typical about this comment is that Jerome frequently tries to connect the biblical text to Christ in some way. What is unusual is that Jerome makes the connection here through an off-hand alternative comment, without having concluded his first explanation. Therefore, Jerome must abruptly go back to his first task. According to *historia* ("iuxta historiam"), Jerome says, the scorching wind should be understood as Nebuchad-nezzar, who is the destructive invader. Now, of course, Jerome must shift again in order to end on a Christian note: according to tropology ("iuxta tropologiam"), the scorching wind is the "Adversarial Power" who comes from the desert, where there is no shelter of God, and who tries to destroy God's church. It is typical for Jerome to end his discussion with such a comment, but the back-and-forth organization of the material at the end of this lemma was necessitated by the Christian element introduced in the alternative "remnant" interpretation, which he gave before finishing his explanation *iuxta historiam*.

> Jer. 4:15.   (15) *Vox enim adnuntiantis a Dan et notum facientis idolum*—vel *dolorem*—*de monte Ephraim.*

Jer. 4:15–17 depicts a herald who announces to Judah the coming of calamity, which will take the form of invading forces. In v. 15, the voice of the herald is sounded from Dan and from Ephraim. Jerome's comments are brief, but they touch on the Hebrew in two different ways.

Jerome begins by saying that the divine word now speaks "iuxta situm terrae Iudaeae." He then explains that Dan, which is near to Mt. Lebanon and to a city known in Jerome's time as "Paneas,"[28] faces the north, from where Nebuchadnezzar is going to come. This explains the reference to Dan. Ephraim, Jerome says, is mentioned because one passes it when going from Dan to Jerusalem. On these matters, Jerome is in basic accord with most modern commentators. The only Hebrew element dealt with in this first section is the meaning of the word אָוֶן.

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[28] I.e., Caesarea (Philippi); see G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, R. L. Chapman III, and J. E. Taylor, *Palestine in the Fourth Century: The Onomasticon by Eusebius of Caesarea* (Jerusalem, 2003): 149.

Most modern interpreters take the word as something like "calamity,"
"ill," or "harm." The LXX translated it πόνος, which Jerome reports
as "dolorem." Jerome's own translation, both here in the commentary
and in the IH version, is "idolum." No evidence for the *recentiores* is
preserved for און in v. 15, but in v. 14 Symmachus translates און with
ἀδικίας, and Aquila renders it ἀνωφελείας.[29] Although the context and
linguistic evidence do tend to favor "calamity" or the like, it is also true
that און can approximate all of these shades of meaning depending on
how it is used (cf. KB, 22). Jerome, unsure of what to do with the word
here, gives a number of options in his paraphrase: "idolum autem vel
Bel vel dolorem vel iniquitatem de monte Ephraim venire describit."[30]
All of this represents Jerome's attempt to deal with the straightforward
sense of the text.

Jerome concludes by giving Hebrew etymologies for the two place
names. Dan is interpreted to mean "judgment" ("iudicium"), and
Ephraim is interpreted as "richness"/"fruitfulness" ("ubertas"). Both
of these etymologies are well attested in the Greek tradition.[31] Jerome
derives from these etymologies that the "judgment" of the Lord will
come upon the land with all "richness" of punishment. This exposition of
the etymologies serves to conclude Jerome's discussion in lieu of a direct
reference to something distinctively Christian. In this passage, Jerome
uses the Hebrew etymologies to expand on a theme within the passage
itself, rather than using them to connect to Christian theology.

> Jer. 5:7–9. (7) *Super quo propitius tibi esse potero? Filii tui dereliquerunt me et
> iurant in his, qui non sunt di. Saturavi eos et moechati sunt et in domo
> meretricis luxuriabantur.* (8) *Equi amatores in feminas et admissarii
> facti sunt mihi; unusquisque ad uxorem proximi sui hinniebat.* (9)
> *Numquid super his non visitabo? Dicit dominus, et in gente tali non
> ulciscetur anima mea?*

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[29] Words meaning "pain" or "injustice" or "uselessness" are common equivalents
for און among the Greek versions, but there is no evidence that they ever took the
word concretely to mean "idol." For example, at Isa. 66:3, where many modern com-
mentators interpret און as "idol," Aquila translated ἀνομία, and both Symmachus and
Theodotion put ἀδικία.

[30] The reference to "Bel" is probably an application of the meaning "idolum," or
"false, idolatrous cult" (KB, 22).

[31] Δαν = κρίσις. Εφραιμ = καρποφορία. Both etymologies are found in the onomas-
tica, in Philo, and in Origen; see L. L. Grabbe, *Etymology in Early Jewish Interpretation:
The Hebrew Names in Philo* (Atlanta, 1988), 149, 160–61.

Jer. 5:7–9 presents a vivid metaphor comparing idolatry with promiscuity. The charge of idolatry comes in v. 7, where the people are said to have sworn by false gods. Even though God had provided for them fully, they still committed religious adultery, i.e., worshipped false gods, in the בית זונה ("domo meretricis"). The theme of religious adultery is developed in v. 8, leading to the rhetorical question in v. 9, which affirms God's resolve to take vengeance on the rebellious nation. The most difficult words in the Hebrew text of this passage are found in v. 8, to which Jerome directs his primary attention.

Jerome starts his commentary with an explanatory paraphrase of v. 7. Jerome suggests that the people are referred to as "your" sons (i.e., Jerusalem's) and not "my" sons (i.e., God's) precisely because they have sworn by false gods. Also, Jerome's paraphrase applies 7b to those who have received wealth from the Lord's hand but nevertheless cling to their luxuries. Next, Jerome cites the beginning of v. 8, "Equi amatores in feminas . . . facti sunt" (leaving aside "admissarii"), translating the *hapax legomenon* מיזנים as "amatores."[32] The nature of this metaphor is explained further by Jerome in connection with his discussion of the Hebrew word משכים ("admissarii").

Jerome says that he is following Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion in his translation of משכים. They all rendered it ἕλκοντες, that is, "dragging ones." According to Jerome, this term was used "ut ostendatur magnitudo genitalium," as illustrated by quotations from Ezek. 23:20 and Ps. 48:13, 21 (MT 49:13, 20), the first of which refers to lusty donkeys, and the second of which refers to senseless beasts. Jerome knows that animals, namely "stallions" ("admissarii"), are in view here, because the text says that they are "neighing" ("hinniebat"), which serves the μεταφοράν (as Jerome says) of comparing the desire of lusty horses with the religious adultery of the people. Jerome's interpretation of the Hebrew presumes that משכים is a Qal active participle from the verb משך, "to draw, drag." Duhm, for his part, read מיזנים as if from the root יזן, "weighted," and took משכים to be a verbal form of אֶשֶׁךְ, "testicle," thus producing "Geile Hengste," much like Jerome. So also Lundbom, following Duhm in his treatment of מיזנים, suggested the

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[32] Many recent commentators (Giesebrecht, Condamin, Volz, Carroll, McKane) read מוזנים, according to the western Ketiv, as well as several manuscripts listed in G. B. De Rossi, *Variae lectiones Veteris Testamenti* (Parma, 1784–1788), so that the word is a passive participle from זון, meaning "well-fed."

meaning "heavy-balled stallions" (or "well-endowed").[33] As conjectural as it may seem at first (cf. Keil), Jerome's basic sense of the meaning of the phrase מיזני משכים does fit the context and has found modern support. Jerome concludes his expanded paraphrase by restating v. 9, citing Ps. 88:33 (MT 89:33) as proof that "visitatio" can be used for punishment.[34]

Finally, Jerome concludes with three theological observations, ending with a connection to the New Testament. He does all of this through two words in v. 9, "gente" (גוי) and "anima" (נפש). First, Jerome points out that v. 9 refers to the people as a "gens," and not a "populus" (i.e., עם), causing God's "anima" to take vengeance on them. Second, Jerome quotes Isa. 1:14, intending to show that God's "anima" departed from this wicked "nation." Third, Jerome gives a free quotation from John 10:18 ("potestatem habeo ponendi animam meam et potestatem habeo sumendi illam"), introduced by the following principle: "Quod autem in Veteri Testamento dicitur pro affectu, in Novo scriptum est pro veritate." The point of connection seems to be the word "anima."

> Jer. 5:22–24. (22) *Me ergo non timebitis, ait dominus, et a facie mea non dolebitis*—sive *timebitis*—? *Qui posui harenam terminum mari, praeceptum sempiternum, quod non praeteribit. Et commovebuntur et non poterunt*—sive *turbabiter et non poterit*—*et intumescent*—sive *sonabunt*—*fluctus eius et non transibunt illud.* (23) *Populo autem huic factum est cor incredulum et exasperans et recesserunt et abierunt* (24) *et non dixerunt in corde suo: metuamus dominum deum nostrum, qui dat nobis pluviam temporaneam et serotinam in tempore suo, plenitudinem annuae messis custodientem nobis!*

Jerome's initial observation about this passage is that the prophet mentions the benefits that come from God in order to charge the people with ingratitude. After this comment, Jerome proceeds with his explanatory paraphrase of the text, citing Ps. 148:6 as another case where God is said to set boundaries in nature that are not crossed. These inanimate objects, "quae sensum non habent audiendi," yet which hear and understand God's decrees, Jerome contrasts with the people of Judah, who reject and provoke God. Nowhere in the exposition of vv. 22–23 is there any explicit use of the Hebrew.[35] Only at the end, in

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[33] Lundbom differs from Duhm in his treatment of משכים, relating it to the Hifil form of שכם, "to rise early."

[34] Jerome makes the same comment at Jer. 32:3b–5.

[35] At three points in the lemma, Jerome gave a rendering based on the LXX as an

v. 24, is the Hebrew addressed. God is called "qui dat nobis pluviam temporaneam et serotinam," through which, according to Jerome, God provides "plenitudinem annuae messis" (שבעות חקות קציר). Instead of "plenitudinem," Jerome reports, the first edition of Aquila, as well as Symmachus, put "ebdomadas" (ἑβδομάδας). The difference between Jerome's "plenitudinem" and their "ebdomadas" can be explained by recourse to the ambiguity of the Hebrew word ("pro ambiguitate verbi"). The Hebrew word "sabaoth" (שבעות) can signify both "septimanas" (= "ebdomadas") and "plenitudinem." With this comment, Jerome concludes his discussion of this lemma.

Much of the confusion surrounding שבעות is due to the difficulties involved in understanding the proper sense of the entire phrase שבעות חקות קציר. Blayney, like Jerome ("plenitudinem") and the LXX (πληρώσεως), reads something like שׂבְעַת, "fullness," as in: "a sufficiency of the appointed things of harvest," i.e., the ordinary production of harvest regulated by divine providence. On the other hand, Aquila's first edition, Symmachus, Condamin, Keil, and Lundbom all understand the word as it is presented in MT, שְׁבֻעוֹת, "weeks," so that it refers to the seven weeks of harvest that have been decreed between Passover and the Feast of Weeks (cf. Exod. 23:16; 34:22; Deut. 16:9–10); although for this sense one might have expected the order of the words to be חקות שבעות קציר (cf. Targum, קים שבועיא הצדא). Because of the awkwardness of the expression, Rudolph and Holladay delete שבעות, whereas McKane deletes חקות. It has even been suggested (e.g., Ewald) that שבעות be read as "oaths," as in "die Eide über die Erntefristen." Jerome does not suggest this as an option here, but he does give all three options (i.e., fullness, seven, and oath) for שבעה at Jer. 15:9.[36] Even among modern commentators, there is still no clear consensus on the interpretation of שבעות חקות קציר.

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alternative to his own translation choice. For תחילו, Jerome put "dolebitis," whereas the LXX had given εὐλαβηθήσεσθε, "timebitis." For ויתנעשו ולא יוכלו, Jerome used "commoveo" to translate ויתנעשו, and he made both verbs plural ("commovebuntur et non poterunt") to match the grammatical forms, taking "fluctus" as the subject. The LXX had translated these words ταραχθήσεται καὶ οὐ δυνήσεται, i.e., "turbabitur et non poterit." Jerome translated והמו as "intumescent," but he also gives the LXX's ἠχήσουσιν, "sonabunt." In each case, Jerome's preferred rendering in the lemma matches his IH translation. Hexaplaric evidence is generally lacking for v. 22, where all of these variations occur, but we know that Aquila and Symmachus translated תחילו as ταραχθήσεσθε (see Ziegler, 175).

[36] Cf. also *QHG* 21:30–31 and 26:32–33.

Regarding Jerome's comments, two observations are particularly
worthy of note. First, it is interesting that Jerome agrees with the inter-
pretation presumed by the LXX for שבעות, and yet he still mentions the
Hebrew word and reports Aquila's first edition and Symmacus. Jerome
is not using the Hebrew simply to refute the LXX, but rather he is
engaged in genuine scholarship on the Hebrew text. Second, Jerome
does not make any connection to Christian theology or a spiritual
meaning at the end of the lemma, but is content to finish his discussion
with this comment on the Hebrew.

> Jer. 6:1.   (1) *Confortamini, filii Beniamin, in medio Hierusalem et in Thecua clangite*
> *bucina et super Bethaccarem levate signum*—sive *vexillum*—, *quia malum*
> *visum est*—sive *apparuit*—*ab aquilone et contritio magna!*

In Jer. 6:1, the "sons of Benjamin" are called upon to sound the trumpet
and raise a signal of alarm in warning of a coming disaster.[37] Jerome
gives two different translation alternatives in the lemma, in both cases
his own and the LXX,[38] but he does not discuss them in the com-
mentary. Instead, he uses Hebrew in this verse primarily in connection
with the place names, as regards both their geographic identifications
and their etymologies.

Jerome starts off by giving the locations of the places mentioned
in the verse. Concerning Jerusalem, he states: "Hierusalem in tribu
Beniamin sitam nullus ignorat."[39] In giving the location of Tekoa,
which he says is situated on a mountain 12,000 paces distance from
Jerusalem, Jerome reminds his readers of his own location in the Holy
Land: "cotidie oculis cernimus." About the location of Bethaccarem,
Jerome says only that it is likewise set on a mountain, although he

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[37] According to the Hebrew text, the first imperative given to the sons of Benjamin
is העזו, which most commentators today take to mean "Get to safety," or the like (cf.
Holladay, McKane, Lundbom; KB, 797). Both Jerome ("confortamini") and the LXX
(ἐνισχύσατε) relate העזו to עז, "strength." Symmachus gives a contextual rendering,
ὁρμήθητε ("Hurry").

[38] For משאת, the first option, "signum," is that of the LXX (σημεῖον), whereas the
alternative, "vexillum," matches Jerome's IH translation and is used in the paraphrase.
When Jerome presents variant readings in the lemma, it is almost always his own
Hebrew-based rendering that comes first, with an alternative, usually from the LXX,
that is given next (using *sive* or *vel*). For Jerome to put the LXX's "signum" first here
is very unusual. In the case of נשקפה, Jerome returns to his normal practice; the first
option is the IH version ("visum est"), and the second ("apparuit") reflects the LXX
(ἐκκέκυφεν).

[39] Jerome is following Eusebius' *Onomasticon*: Ἰερουσαλήμ . . . γέγονε δὲ κλήρου φυλῆς
Βενιαμίν; cf. Josh. 18:16.

adds an interesting linguistic detail about its name: "qui in lingua Syra et Hebraica Bethacarma nominatur."[40] Finally, having completed his brief survey of the locations of these towns, Jerome introduces his paraphrase ("Quod ergo dicit, hoc est"): Since Nebuchadnezzar is about to come from the north, and captivity is imminent, the inhabitants of Jerusalem must take up arms, sound the trumpet, and raise a standard, so that they may resist the enemy. This reading is founded on Jerome's interpretation of העזו as "strengthen yourselves" rather than "Get to safety" (see note 37). In fact, a call to arms against the invader from the north would be out of place in the book of Jeremiah. Yet, this is the straightforward sense of the text as Jerome sees it.

Before concluding his comments on Jer. 6:1, Jerome provides the reader with two more types of observations. First, Jerome gives the etymologies of the place names. Without any introduction, he simply states that Benjamin may be interpreted "filius dexterae," Tecoa is "tuba," and Bethaccarem is "villa vineae." Second, Jerome states that he relates "all these things" to the church, so that the church must prepare itself to resist in case it is attacked by persecution.

Jerome has used the proper name etymologies as transition points to move from the "literal" to the spiritual meaning. Jerome's order of presentation fits the model of a double exposition, with the *ad litteram* treatment first and the *intellegentia spiritalis* afterwards. What is noteworthy, however, is that Jerome's Christian meaning in this case is based on an analogy with the content of his paraphrase, and he makes no use of the proper name etymologies in order to derive the spiritual sense. Jerome gives the Hebrew etymologies at the point where he is ready to move to the Christian spiritual interpretation, but he actually generates the higher sense without employing these etymologies.

> Jer. 6:2–4a.　(2) *Speciosae et delicatae adsimulavi filiam Sion.* (3) *Ad eam venient pastores et greges eorum, fixerunt*—sive *figent*—*in ea tentoria in circuitu; pascet unusquisque eos, qui sub manu sua sunt.* (4a) *Sanctificate*—sive *parate*—*super eam bellum, consurgite et ascendamus in meridie!*

Jer. 6:2–4a presents a picture of Zion as a beautiful, pampered maiden, and also as a land unto which shepherds come and pitch their tents,

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[40] Cf. the parallel phenomenon of Latin grammarians appealing to a "third language" (besides Greek) in order to interpret difficult words (*glossemata*); e.g., Porphyrio's reference to "Syrian": "'nonnulli.' tamen 'ambubaias' tibicines Syra lingua putant dici" (*Sat.* 1.2. init.). See pp. 41–43.

and which will soon be facing a hostile invasion. The shift from the
"maiden" imagery in v. 2 to the "pastoral" imagery in v. 3, together
with the uncertainty surrounding דמיתי in v. 2,[41] have given rise to the
suggestion that הנוה, "lovely," in v. 2 be taken as נוה, "field," in keeping
with the pastoral activities of v. 3 (e.g., Volz, Bright, Holladay, BHS).
Jerome's comments on the Hebrew text of this passage can be seen as
another attempt to deal with the juxtapositioning of these two figures,
the maiden and the shepherds.[42]

Jerome begins by informing his readers that Zion is another name for
Jerusalem, since "Sion" refers to the "fortress" ("arx") or "watchtower"
("specula") of the city,[43] and "Hierusalem" is the name of the city itself.
This city, Jerome says, is compared to a beautiful maiden, and just as
shepherds are said to come to the city, so also paramours are said to
come to the maiden. At this point, one may wonder where Jerome sees
the paramours in this passage; but he immediately gives the answer:
Quite elegantly ("satisque eleganter"), Jerome explains, the Hebrew
word here, which is written with the four letters "res, ain, yod, mem"
(i.e., רעים), can be pronounced in two different ways—if it is said
"reim" (רֵעִים), it refers to paramours, but if "roim" (רֹעִים), it refers to
shepherds.

Jerome regards this to be an intentional wordplay designed by the
prophet to convey two meanings simultaneously. On the one hand, the
text may be taken in accordance with the metaphor ("iuxta μεταφορὰν"),[44]
as describing the paramours of the lovely maiden Zion.[45] On the other

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[41] Among modern commentators, this verb has been read as a 1.c.s. (so MT), an
archaic 2.f.s., and has been emended to 3.f.s.; it has also been taken to mean "to liken"
(KB I דמה), "to silence" (KB II דמה), and "to destroy" (KB III דמה). On the numerous
interpretations and corrections proposed for v. 2, see Holladay, 202–03; and Jan de
Waard, *A Handbook on Jeremiah* (Winona Lake, IN, 2003): 21–23. Jerome reads דמיתי
as "I have likened," which could only have lent further credibility in his mind to the
metaphor that he identifies in this passage.

[42] For the lemma of this passage, both of the alternative renderings represent the
LXX, and both of the first option translations agree with Jerome's IH version. Thus
"fixerunt" and "sanctificate" are from Jerome's IH version, while "figent" (πήξουσιν;
MT has תָּקְעוּ) and "parate" (παρασκευάσασθε) represent the LXX.

[43] For this etymology in the Greek tradition (σκοπευτήριον), see Origen, *Fr. Jer.* 32,
and OS I.174.90.

[44] In addition to μεταφορά (see also Jer. 5:7–9; 17:21–27), other Greek literary terms
used by Jerome in the *Comm. Ier.* include: ἀποσιώπησις (Jer. 4:12b), ἐρωτηματικῶς
(8:12a), συνεκδοχή (Jer. 15:10), and ἐμφατικῶς (Jer. 8:18).

[45] It should be noted that the phrase אליה יבאו in v. 3 can have a sexual connota-
tion; cf. Holladay, 206.

hand, the text may depict the shepherds who will enter as part of the overthrow of the city. Along these lines, Jerome sees the shepherds and their flocks as the Chaldaean leaders and their armies,[46] and he explains the rest of the lemma according to this identification.

Few commentators have followed Jerome in perceiving a play on the words רֵעִים and רֹעִים in this passage (but cf. McKane, who mentions Jerome's proposal). Jerome had already noted the similarity between these two words at Jer. 3:1, and he may have simply been looking for an opportunity to use this information. Still, Jerome's reading of רעים here may be seen as a competent attempt to deal with the change of imagery from v. 2 to v. 3, especially in light of the wordplay previously encountered at Jer. 1:11–12.

> Jer. 6:26.   (26) *Filia populi mei, accingere cilicio et conspergere cinere; luctum uni-*
> *geniti—sive dilecti—fac tibi, planctum amarum—sive miserabilem—,*
> *quia repente veniet vastator—sive miseria—super nos—sive super vos!*

Jer. 6:22–26 contains a prophetic warning about the coming invader from the north. In v. 26, the people of Judah ("Filia populi mei")[47] are told to mourn because of the impending disaster. In the lemma for this one verse, four alternative translations are offered. In each case, the first option matches Jerome's IH translation, and the second reflects the LXX.[48] Jerome discusses the Hebrew underlying one of these translation variations, and he follows the sense of his own Hebrew-based render-ings throughout his treatment of the passage.

Jerome's first comment ties v. 26 into the previous verse: since the people had just been forbidden to flee (v. 25), the prophet now tells them what they may do, namely, exhibit repentance, which is the strongest armor of protection one can have. Jerome then takes up the phrase "luctum unigeniti fac tibi," saying that the Hebrew is "iaid" (i.e., יחיד), which strictly speaking means "alone" rather than "only begotten."[49] If

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[46] Cf. Blayney, Holladay, and Lundbom, who all make the same basic association.

[47] As Calvin states, "Nota est et satis trita loquendi forma, dum populus vocatur 'filia populi.'" Cf. also Calvin on Jer. 4:11: "Nam haec loquutio satis nota est omnibus qui mediocriter versati sunt in Prophetis, 'filiam populi' poni pro ipso populo."

[48] As is his custom, Jerome reports the reading of the LXX in Latin: "dilecti" (ἀγαπητοῦ), "miserabilem" (οἰκτρόν), "miseria" (ταλαιπωρία), and "super vos" (ἐφ' ὑμᾶς).

[49] Jerome followed Aquila and Symmachus in his translation, "unigeniti" (μονογενοῦς), but he follows Rabbinic Hebrew usage in his comment here (cf. Jastrow, 574, as well as the interpretation given to the phrase אבל יחיד by Rashi: אבל של בן יחיד מי שאין (לו אלא בן יחיד ומת.

the reading of the LXX were correct, Jerome adds, then the Hebrew text would have needed to be "ididia" (i.e., יְדִידְיָה), as Solomon was called.[50] All of this leads Jerome to make a brief observation on the painfulness of losing an only son.

After this, Jerome moves to the end of the verse, arguing that God is portrayed more compassionately by the Hebrew text, since in the Hebrew God actually includes himself in the distress ("super nos"; contra the LXX, "super vos"). By way of conclusion, Jerome comments on the word "vastator" (הַשֹּׁדֵד),[51] stating that the "destroyer" here may signify either Nebuchadnezzar or the devil. Thus, in a very condensed way at the end of his treatment of the lemma, Jerome makes both a contextually oriented identification (Nebuchadnezzar) and a spiritual connection to Christian theology (the devil). Most of the discussion, however, is given to a pair of homiletical applications based on Hebrew linguistic observations.

> Jer. 7:17–19.   (17) *Nonne vides, quid isti faciant in civitatibus Iuda et in plateis Hierusalem?* (18) *Filii colligunt ligna et patres succendunt ignem et mulieres conspergunt adipem, ut faciant placentas*—sive *chavonas*—*reginae* sive *militiae*—*caeli et libent dis alienis et me ad iracundiam provocent.* (19) *Numquid me ad iracundiam provocant? dicit dominus, nonne semet ipsos in confusionem vultus sui?*

In Jer. 7:16–20, God warns the prophet not to pray for the people of Judah. Most modern commentators take 7:16–20 to be a complete unit. Jerome, on the other hand, deals with 7:16 on its own, followed by 7:17–19, and then 7:20 on its own. Yet, Jerome clearly recognizes the connection between 7:16 and 7:17–19, since he makes it his first task to tie vv. 17–19 back to v. 16. Jerome begins his comments by spelling out the logic of the divine voice: "'Vis,' inquit, 'audire, propheta, cur tibi dixerim: noli orare pro populo hoc?'" (v. 16). The reason why, Jerome says, is given in vv. 17–18, which he gives in quotation mixed with paraphrase. After this, Jerome addresses the Hebrew behind the two translation issues mentioned in the lemma for v. 18, "placentas/

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[50] Jerome refers the reader to the name given to the child Solomon in 2 Sam. 12:25. If the divine element (יָה) is removed from this theophoric name, the remaining word is יְדִיד, "beloved." Jerome supplies this word as what the Hebrew would have needed to be for the LXX's reading to be correct. Both Duhm and McKane also suggest that the LXX read יָדִיד instead of יָחִיד.

[51] Jerome's translation, "vastator," i.e., "the destroyer," is closer than the LXX (ταλαιπωρία) is to what we have in MT (הַשֹּׁדֵד).

chavonas" and "reginae/militiae." Finally, Jerome cites v. 19, and concludes with three observations: first, the "other gods" referred to in v. 19 are not really gods, but demons; second, we never hurt God by our rebellion, but only hurt ourselves by incurring God's anger; and third, returning to v. 18, Jerome states that the text mentions the various members of the family in order to show that no one of any age was lacking in impiety. Jerome's comments on this verse follow the lemma closely in structure, and do not seem to reflect any organization along the lines of different senses. Our primary interest lies in the Hebrew discussions of v. 18.

When Jerome quotes v. 18, he gives "ut faciant chavonim" for לעשות כונים, explaining that he has interpreted the word "chavonim" as "placentas" (= IH version), or "praeparationes." The LXX had simply put χαυῶνας, and the hexaplaric versions had similarly transliterated the word.[52] Of Jerome's two proposals, the first, "placentas," represents the meaning supported by modern lexicography, which identifies כונים as an Akkadian loanword with the sense, "sacrificial cake."[53] Jerome's second proposal, "praeparationes," is an attempt to connect כונים with the root כון, "to prepare" (Hiphil). This same connection was made by David Kimchi, לעשות כונים...מאכלים שהיו מכינים ומניסים למלאכת השמים, as well as BDB, 467b. Jerome's "praeparationes" is further explained in his restatement of the verse: "'praeparationes,' ut omne genus 'ostendat' sacrificii reginae caeli."

As for למלכת השנתם, the LXX, with τῇ στρατιᾷ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, seem to reflect the influence of Jer. 8:2 (צבא השמים), whereas the Peshitta, لفهلس حمحه, assumes the same vocalization as is found in MT (לִמְלֶכֶת השמים (הַשָּׁמַיִם), as if לִמְלֶאכֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם, i.e., "for the worship of heaven."[54] Jerome's "reginae caeli" is based on the reading לִמְלַכַת הַשָּׁמַיִם, following Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion (τῇ βασιλίσσῃ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ).[55] Almost all modern commentators agree with Jerome and the *recentiores* here

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[52] The only meaning somewhat close to Jerome's "placentas" preserved for כונים in the Greek tradition is "bread" (ἄρτον), ascribed in a catena fragment to Chrysostom. See pp. 119–20.

[53] Cf. KB, 466; McKane, 170; and Lundbom, 476.

[54] The reading למלאכת השמים is found in 19 manuscripts cited in Kennicott, *Vetus Testamentum*, 100, as well as in the Complutensian Polyglot (cf. De Rossi, *Variae lectiones*, 74). Some commentators, like Duhm, think that the rendering of the LXX also reflects לִמְלֶאכֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם.

[55] Cf. also the LXX at Jer. 44:17, 18, 19, 25.

(e.g., Duhm, Condamin, Volz, Holladay, McKane, Lundbom). It is suggested by some that the vocalization in MT arose out of an attempt to avoid the suggestion that the people of Judah had worshiped this goddess, who may be identified with "Astarte" (Holladay) or "Ishtar" (Lundbom). According to Jerome, the "Queen of Heaven" is the moon, unless one follows the LXX, in which case the text is referring to all of the stars.[56]

> Jer. 8:18.   (18) *Dolor meus super dolorem, in me cor meum maerens.*

The Hebrew for this verse, מבליגיתי עלי ינון עלי לבי דוי, is notoriously difficult. Jerome's discussion focuses exclusively on the first Hebrew word, מבליניתי, with the exception of his final comment: "ἐμφατικῶς autem haec ex persona dei legenda sunt plangentis eversionem Hierusalem et eius miserias non ferentis." Jerome's analysis of מבליניתי may be used conveniently to organize our consideration of modern scholarship on the word.

First, Jerome informs the reader that the LXX translated מבליניתי as "insanabiliter" (ἀνίατα, i.e. מִבְּלִי נֵהֹת, "incurable") and joined it, along with the rest of v. 18, to the previous sentence (v. 17).[57] Blayney and Rudolph follow the LXX both in their understanding of the word (מִבְּלִי נֵהֹת) and in their association of this word with the previous verse. Rudolph also follows the LXX in deleting נאם יהוה at the end of v. 17. Duhm, Condamin, and McKane accept מִבְּלִי נֵהֹת but, *contra* the LXX, read it with v. 18; thus, "Incurable sorrow has overwhelmed me" (McKane) for מבלי נהת עלי ינון (cf. BHS). All of these proposals follow the LXX in dividing מבליניתי into two words.[58]

After reporting the reading of the LXX, Jerome then offers a qualification or even correction to his own translation, i.e., "dolor meus" (= IH version): in the Hebrew, the word is not really "grief," but rather μειδίαμα ("smile"), which, Jerome claims, can have the sense of a mouth contracted with grief, having the likeness of a smile. As Barthélemy has

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[56] Cf. the Targum, לכוכבת שמיא.

[57] Thus, Jerome reads the LXX as if it were: καὶ δήξονται ὑμᾶς ἀνίατα μετ' ὀδύνης καρδίας ὑμῶν ἀπορουμένης; cf. the punctuation in the edition of Swete.

[58] Kennicott, *Vetus Testamentum*, 102, lists five manuscripts where ניתי and מבלי are written as separate words, to which may be added evidence from the Cairo Genizah (cf. BHS). For an alternative approach to reconfiguring the word, see Giesebrecht, מה בלינתי עלי ינון, "was ist meine Erheiterung beim Kummer." For a homiletical division of מבליניתי, see *LamR* pr. 32.

suggested,[59] Jerome's μειδίαμα is probably the reading of Aquila for this verse, so that Jerome is trying to reconcile his own understanding of the word ("dolor") with the term used by Aquila ("smile"). Although a few modern interpreters have followed Jerome's "dolor,"[60] even more have picked up on the notion of μειδίαμα.[61] For example, Barthélemy translates מבליגיתי עלי יגון as "mon rictus voile (litt.: est sur) le chagrin."[62] Among modern scholars who read מבליגיתי as a single word, many of them do so either in accordance with Jerome's "dolor," or else along the lines of the reading which he preserves (Aquila?), μειδίαμα.[63]

> Jer. 9:22.   (22) *Loquere: haec dicit dominus: et cadet morticinum hominis*—sive
> (MT 9:21)   *cadavera hominum*—*quasi stercus super faciem regionis*—sive *campi*—
>   *et quasi faenum post tergum metentis et non est, qui colligat.*

Verse twenty-two follows logically upon the thought of verse twenty-one. In v. 21, death was described as entering into the "house" of Judah and killing its "children": "quia ascendit mors per fenestras nostras, ingressa est domos nostras disperdere parvulos de foris, iuvenes de plateis." V. 22, then, describes the resultant scenario in which dead bodies cover the land.[64] The flow of logic between these two verses is interrupted by the first few words of v. 22, "Loquere: haec dicit dominus" (דבר כה נאם יהוה). The very first word, "Loquere" (דבר), is the primary subject of Jerome's commentary on this verse.

Jerome opens his discussion directly with the Hebrew. The Hebrew word in question is written with three letters, "daleth, beth, res." Because in Hebrew the vowels are not written ("vocales enim in medio non habet"), this set of letters can be pronounced in different ways, depending on the context and the judgment of the reader ("pro consequentia et legentis arbitrio"). If it is read "dabar," it means "speech" (i.e., דָּבָר), if

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[59] D. Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*, vol. 2 (Göttingen, 1986), 531.

[60] E.g., the CEV, "I am burdened with sorrow."

[61] E.g., BDB, 114b, "smiling, cheerfulness." BDB cites an Arabic cognate in support of the meanings, "to gleam, smile," for the verb בלג. See also the SEB: "Mein (verzerrtes) Lächeln verdeckt meinen Kummer"; cf. J. de Waard, *Handbook*, 39. Lundbom takes מבליגיתי to be a single word, translating it, "my joy."

[62] Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle*, 532.

[63] Another notable approach to מבליגיתי can be traced back to David ben Abraham, J. Buxtorf, and H. Grotius, whereby the word is taken to mean "comfort" or "being at ease" (cf. בלג at Job 10:20 and Ps. 39:14); see Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle*, 532.

[64] Along with his own rendering, "morticinum hominis" (נבלת האדם = IH version), Jerome gives the plural of the LXX as an alternative, "cadavera hominum" (οἱ νεκροὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων). Likewise with "regionis" (השדה = IH version), the alternative, "campi," seems to come from the LXX (τοῦ πεδίου τῆς γῆς).

"deber," it means "death" (i.e., דֶּבֶר), and if "dabber," it means "speak!" (i.e., דַּבֵּר).[65] Jerome states that the LXX and Theodotion interpreted the word as "death" ("mors," דֶּבֶר), and attached it to the end of the previous sentence, producing "disperdere parvulos de foris, iuvenes de plateis morte."[66] Jerome, however, follows Aquila and Symmachus, who put λάλησον, i.e., "loquere," so that God is commanding the prophet to say the words that follow. At this, Jerome concludes his discussion of the Hebrew and moves into his paraphrase ("et est sensus"), which emphasizes that no one will be left in the city to bury all of the dead.

Jerome is clearly aware that v. 22b follows closely on the thought of v. 21. Yet, he is not troubled by the phrase דבר כה נאם יהוה, which could be perceived as intruding on the flow of thought. The majority of modern commentators delete all of these words (e.g., Duhm, Driver, Rudolph, McKane, and Holladay), often suggesting that דֶּבֶר entered the text as a gloss on v. 21, being later misunderstood and expanded upon in MT. Some commentators have deleted only כה נאם יהוה, keeping דבר as the noun דֶּבֶר (Volz) or as a related verbal form (Blayney, citing 2 Chron. 22:10). The Peshitta, on the other hand, deletes דבר and retains כה נאם יהוה. Lundbom, while admitting that דבר כה נאם יהוה is "odd" and occurs nowhere else in the OT, nevertheless recommends that MT be preserved, arguing that "the verse is rightly taken as a divine oracle" (567). Similarly Calvin, following Jerome, interpreted these words in accord with MT, offering the following explanation:

> Tametsi continuat sermonem Ieremias, tamen inserit praefationem, quod scilicet iussus fuerit hoc etiam proferre, quia pro rei difficultate, incredibile erat vaticinium. Poterat igitur uno tenore prosequi, et omittere has particulas דבר כה נאם יהוה, et incipere versum, 'Cadet cadaver hominis.' Sed quemadmodum iam dixi, videbat a maiori parte vaticinium hoc pro nihilo duci, quasi esset fabula: ideo necesse fuit interponere has particulas, quod scilicet prodeat in medium, instructus mandato Dei: ubi simul ostendit se nihil ingerere proprium, sed Deum ipsum loqui. Tenemus ergo quorsum spectet haec interpositio paucorum verborum.

> Jer. 10:17–18. (17) *Congrega de terra confusionem tuam, quae habitas in obsidione*, (18) *quia haec dicit dominus: ecce ego longe proiciam habitatores terrae in hac vice et tribulabo eos, ut inveniantur.* LXX: (17) *Congregavit de foris substantiam suam, quae habitat in munitione*, (18) *quia haec dicit dominus: ecce ego supplantabo habitatores terrae huius et tribulabo eos, ut inveniantur.*

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[65] Cf. *Comm. Abac.* 3:5; and *Comm. Is.* 9:8–13.

[66] Jerome's statement concurs with our evidence for Theodotion and for the Orige-

Jer. 10:17–18 forms a brief literary unit of its own, consisting of an admonition given by the prophet (v. 17) and a prediction of exile spoken through the word of the Lord (v. 18). Instead of indicating a few points of difference between his own translation and that of the LXX, Jerome here presents the lemma according to the LXX in full,[67] following his own.[68] In his commentary, Jerome focuses on paraphrasing and explaining the sense of the passage in a relatively straightforward fashion. Jerome does refer to the Hebrew once in order to explain a difference between his own rendering and that of the LXX. What is most striking about Jerome's treatment, however, is the way in which he utilizes both versions side by side in constructing his expanded paraphrase.

The substance of Jerome's paraphrase of v. 17 may be given as follows: the prophet warns the people of Jerusalem that they should gather[69] whatever possessions they have outside[70] into a fortified city,[71] in preparation for a long siege.[72] The prophet warns not of a distant future punishment, but of an impending captivity. Therefore, says the prophet: gather[73] your possessions,[74] both from outside[75] and from the land,[76] in confusion,[77] since whatever you have is fit for confusion.

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nian and Lucianic recensions of the Greek OT. According to Ziegler's text, however, the original version of the LXX lacked this word entirely, along with the following phrase, "haec dicit dominus."

[67] Jerome's presentation of the LXX indicates that his copy contained some corrections in the direction of MT; e.g., LXX (*iuxta* Ziegler): ἐν ἐκλεκτοῖς; Jerome's LXX: "in munitione" (MT = במצור). LXX (*iuxta* Ziegler): ἐν θλίψει; Jerome's LXX: "et tribulabo eos" (MT = והצרותי להם).

[68] The biblical lemma according to the Hebrew as given in the commentary differs in one detail from Jerome's IH version: in v. 18, IH has "ita ut inveniantur," whereas the commentary lemma has only "ut inveniantur." Differences like this can be seen occasionally in Jerome's exegetical works, but it is difficult to assess their significance because of interference in transmission between the commentaries and the IH translation; see Jay, *L'exégèse*, 92–95.

[69] Cf. "Congrega" (imperative) in Jerome's Hebrew-based lemma.

[70] "quicquid habet foris substantiae"; cf. "foris substantiam suam" in the LXX-based lemma.

[71] "in urbem munitissimam"; cf. "in munitione" in the LXX-based lemma.

[72] "longae obsidioni"; cf. "in obsidione" in Jerome's Hebrew-based lemma.

[73] "Congrega" (imperative); cf. Jerome's Hebrew-based lemma.

[74] "substantiam tuam"; cf. "substantiam suam" in the LXX-based lemma.

[75] "foris," as in the LXX-based lemma.

[76] "terra," as in the Hebrew-based lemma.

[77] "in confusionem"; cf. "confusionem tuam" in the Hebrew-based lemma. By "confusionem," Jerome may perhaps mean, "disgrace"; see Souter, *Glossary*, 71.

For v. 18, Jerome starts off with a Hebrew comment. In place of the
LXX's "supplantabo," which in Hebrew is "cole" (קולע), Aquila and
Symmachus put σφενδονίσω ("I will sling"). This is the meaning that
Jerome adopted in his Hebrew-based lemma (i.e., "longe proiciam" =
IH version),[78] and it is the basis for the paraphrase that he gives of
v. 18 ("et est sensus . . ."), with which he concludes his discussion.

Jerome makes no attempt to derive an explicitly Christian spiritual
meaning from this text. Yet, at least one important point can be made
from Jerome's treatment of the contextual sense of the passage. Jerome
weaves elements from both the LXX-based version and the Hebrew-
based version into his expanded paraphrase of v. 17. We cannot tell
if he cited the whole of the LXX's lemma simply to show the numer-
ous differences between that version and his own, or if he chose to
cite the whole text of the LXX precisely because he wanted to use it
in his explanation. Either way, once the biblical text had been given
according to both versions, Jerome felt free to combine them together
into a single whole. Often, Jerome keeps his interpretation of the LXX
separate from his exegesis of the Hebrew. Here, however, Jerome merges
the edition of the LXX together with the Hebrew to create a single
exposition of the text.[79]

> Jer. 13:18–19.   (18) *Dic regi et dominatrici*—sive *dicite regi et potentibus*—:
> *humiliamini, sedete, quoniam descendit*—sive *sublata est*—*de
> capite vestro corona gloriae vestrae!* (19) *Civitates austri clausae sunt
> et non est, qui aperiat; translata est omnis Iudaea*—sive *translatus
> est omnis Iuda*—*transmigratione*—sive *captivitate*—*perfecta.*

In Jer. 13:18–19, the prophet delivers a threat of exile to the king and
to the נבירה (MT). Jerome's comments on these verses can be divided
into two sections: first, he explains the contextual sense of the passage
by paraphrasing the text and giving select clause-by-clause commentary;
second, he reports a previously suggested Christian spiritual interpreta-
tion, which he modifies on the basis of the Hebrew.

Having presented the biblical lemma, with a selection of translation
alternatives derived from the LXX,[80] Jerome starts off with a short

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[78] Most modern commentators agree with Jerome's interpretation of קולע here. For
a defense of the basic sense of the LXX ("I will supplant, uproot"), see G. R. Driver,
"Linguistic and Textual Problems: Jeremiah," *JQR* 28 (1937–38): 107.

[79] On this practice in the *Comm. Is.*, see Jay, *L'exégèse*, 143.

[80] For the first alternative, Jerome's singular verb ("dic") and "dominatrix" clearly
agree with MT (אמר . . . לנבתרה) over against the LXX-based "dicite" and "potentibus"

paraphrase: God tells the prophet that he should tell Jehoiachin and his mother, who is called "dominam," "dominatricem," or "reginam" (see below), that they should humble themselves and sit in dust, because they have squandered their royal dignity, and so will be handed over to the king of Babylon. Jerome says that the phrase "civitates austri" refers to the tribe of Judah and to Jerusalem, since they are in the south. He explains that "non est, qui aperiat" means that they will be surrounded by a siege. The words "transmigratione perfecta" Jerome takes to signify that, in being deported, Judah is receiving fully what it deserves. This exegesis treats the passage within the background of the story of Judah's history as told in the Bible, although Jerome does not use any phrase such as *iuxta historiam* in order to classify it formally.

Jerome next reports a Christian spiritual interpretation, which he introduces in a negative way, saying: "delirat in hoc loco, qui . . . intellegit." The errant interpretation is one in which, following the version of the LXX, the "king" and "rulers" are Christ and the apostles or angels.[81] Jerome also reports an interpretation whereby (1) the "civitates austri" are Hell ("infernum"), which is open to no one ("clausae sunt"); and (2) the glory of Judah, which had been removed, was fulfilled in the Passion of Christ. It is not clear from Jerome's presentation whether he approves or disapproves of these last spiritual identifications. Yet, Jerome rounds off this discussion by returning to the first spiritual reading, regarding Christ and the angels/apostles. Apparently, he wants to show his readers at greater length why it would be impossible to see angels or apostles in this verse.

As Jerome explains, the Hebrew word behind the LXX's "potentibus" is "gebira" (נבירה), which was translated by Aquila and Symmachus as "dominatricem" and "dominam."[82] Earlier, Jerome had said that the word for the queen mother was "dominam," "dominatricem," or "reginam." We now see that the first two options are Aquila and

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(εἴπατε . . . δυναστεύουσιν). This is true also for the second alternative rendering: "descendit" = ירד, whereas "sublata est" = καθῃρέθη. The last two alternative renderings, however, reflect more finely nuanced variations: "Iudaea" versus "Iuda" (MT = יהודה, LXX = Ιουδας); and "transmigratione" versus "captivitate" (MT = הגלת, LXX = ἀποικίαν). In each case, the first option matches Jerome's IH version.

[81] It is clear from the way he introduces it that this interpretation did not originate with Jerome. It is not, however, found in the extant works of Origen, nor is it in any other Christian source we have been able to identify.

[82] There is some difficulty in reconstructing precisely the original Greek terms used by Aquila and Symmachus for this word. See Field II, 607; and Ziegler, 216.

Symmachus. The third, as it turns out, matches the Targum (מלכתא).
Jerome is in agreement with the vast majority of commentators, ancient
and modern, in referring נבירה to the queen mother.[83] Also like Jerome,
most commentators have identified the king as Jehoiachin (e.g., Rashi,
Kimchi, Volz, Holladay, McKane, Lundbom), although a few have
favored Jehoiakim (e.g., Calvin, Duhm). According to Jerome, the LXX
put "potentibus" because they thought that the word "geburoth" (i.e.,
נבורות, "powers")[84] was there. Yet, the Hebrew word is נבירה, and it
is singular, so that it must refer to the queen mother, not to angels or
apostles. This is why the proposed spiritual interpretation is incor-
rect. Jerome uses the Hebrew in this case to expose as false a specific
Christian spiritual reading that was not founded on the Hebrew.[85] As
stated above, the rest of the spiritual interpretation, where the Hebrew
was not in question, Jerome may have accepted.

> Jer. 15:12.   (12) *Numquid foederabitur ferrum ferro ab aquilone et aes?* Symma-
>   chus: *numquid nocebit ferrum ferro ab aquilone et aes?* LXX et
>   Theodotio: *si cognoscet ferrum et operimentum aeneum?*

Jer. 15:10 is a lament offered by the prophet in response to his own
difficulties. According to MT, 15:11 begins the Lord's reply to Jeremiah
(אמר יהוה),[86] this being continued in vv. 12 and following. The text of v. 12
is difficult,[87] and it has yielded numerous emendations from modern
commentators.[88] One of the issues at stake is the meaning of the first

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[83] On this term, and the important role played by the mother of the queen in biblical
literature, see Niels-Erik A. Andreasen, "The Role of the Queen Mother in Israelite
Society," *CBQ* 45 (1983): 179–94.

[84] Cf. Jastrow, 205.

[85] Cf. Jer. 23:18. On occasion, Jerome uses the Hebrew to correct the "pious errors"
of Christian readers who base themselves solely on the LXX (see *Comm. Is.* 63:1: "multi
pio errore lapsi putant . . ."; cf. *Comm. Am.* 4:12–13). On the other hand, Jerome can
also use the Hebrew to Christian advantage, as at Jer. 23:36b–40, where he argues
that only the Hebrew text properly signifies the mystery of the trinity, by including the
words "dei viventis, domini exercituum, dei nostri."

[86] According to the text preserved by the LXX, v. 11 can be taken as a continuation
of the lament of the prophet. Jerome acknowledges this in his comments on 15:11:
"Possunt haec et ex persona Hieremiae accipi."

[87] German commentators have been particularly negative about the possibility of
reading MT as it stands; e.g., Duhm, 134 (on v. 12 MT): "Das ist heller Unsinn"; Volz,
173: "v. 12 ist, so wie er dasteht, ganz dunkel"; Rudolph, 104 (on v. 12 MT): "der
vielgedeutete Vers gibt keinen Sinn." Commentaries written in English, on the other
hand, tend to be more optimistic about reading MT at v. 12; for a recent example,
see Lundbom.

[88] See Condamin, 132–33, and Holladay, 454–55.

word, which in the Leningrad Codex appears as הֵרַע. This word is
normally understood today to derive from a root רעע, meaning, "to
smash."[89] This sense, however, was not perceived by the ancient ver-
sions, and this may have contributed to the textual difficulties that they
reflect. In light of the divergent readings among the Greek versions,
Jerome presents all of the options in full in the lemma, before going
on to explain the origins of all the confusion.

The cause of the diversity, Jerome says, is clear ("Varietatis causa
perspicua"): the Hebrew word in the present passage, "iare" (ירע),
depending on how it is pronounced ("pro ambiguitate enuntiationis"),
can relate either to "friendship" or to "evil." Moreover, if a "daleth"
is put instead of the "res,"[90] then the word refers to "knowing" or
"recognizing." In other words, the LXX and Theodotion have read
ידע, thus producing "cognoscet."[91] Symmachus read ירע as vocalized
in MT, as a Hiphil of רעע, i.e., "nocebit." Jerome, who follows Aquila
(ἁρμόσει) without citing him, interprets ירע as a verbal form of רֵעַ,
"friend" (perhaps יִרַע), meaning "will be joined to."[92] Thus, Jerome
has sorted out the Greek evidence by appealing both to the potential
ambiguity of the consonantal Hebrew text and to a textual error based
on the similarity of the Hebrew letters ד and ר.

Yet, in spite of all this critical analysis, Jerome the commentator
does not take the final step and settle on a single, correct reading. As a
translator, of course, he was forced to choose one option as the best. In
this case, he chose to go with Aquila, whose interpretation is followed
in the IH version, and is likewise presented anonymously as Jerome's
own rendering in the biblical lemma above. But in the commentary
proper, Jerome wraps up his discussion of the Hebrew with three differ-
ent paraphrases, one for each of the Hebrew options given: the prophet
should not be surprised if the people are hostile to him, since he must
speak hard words to the people, and it is expected that iron will harm
iron (following Symmachus); or, how can the Babylonians, who are
hard like iron, be united in friendship with the people of Israel, who

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[89] I.e., II רעע (KB, 1270); cf. Ps. 2:9. See also Rashi, ירוצץ, and Kimchi, ישבר.
[90] The confusion of the two letters arises from their similarity, as Jerome observes:
"'res' littera, quae 'daleth' litterae similis est."
[91] Kennicott, *Vetus Testamentum*, 112, lists three medieval Hebrew manuscripts that
read ידע, to which De Rossi, *Variae lectiones*, 82, adds at least three more. In addition,
the Arabic version of the OT reflects the reading ידע.
[92] Cf. II רעה (KB, 1262); and Jastrow, 1475.

are also hard and ungovernable (following Aquila); or, the people of
Israel, who are like the hardest iron, are unworthy of the knowledge
of God (following the LXX and Theodotion). One is not certain at
the end of the discussion if Jerome is presenting options because he is
not sure which is correct, or if he regards all of these interpretations
as somehow deriving legitimately from the passage.

> Jer. 17:21–27.   (21) *Haec dicit dominus: custodite animas vestras et nolite portare*
> *pondera in die sabbati nec inferatis per portas Hierusalem!* (22) *Et*
> *nolite eicere onera de domibus vestris in die sabbati et omne opus non*
> *facietis et sanctificate diem sabbati, sicuti praecepi patribus vestris!*
> (23) *Et non audierunt nec inclinaverunt aurem suam et induraverunt*
> *cervicem suam*—et quod in Hebraico non habetur: *super*
> *patres suos*—, *ne audirent me et ne acciperent disciplinam.* (24) *Et*
> *erit, inquit, si audieritis me, dicit dominus, ut non inferatis onera*
> *per portas civitatis huius in die sabbati, et si sanctificaveritis diem*
> *sabbati, ne faciatis in ea omne opus,* (25) *ingredientur per portas*
> *civitatis huius reges et principes sedentes super solium David et*
> *ascendentes in curribus et equis, ipsi et principes eorum, viri Iuda et*
> *habitatores Hierusalem, et habitabitur civitas haec in sempiternum.*
> (26) *Et venient de civitatibus Iuda et de circuitu Hierusalem et de terra*
> *Beniamin et de campestribus et de montuosis et ab austro portantes*
> *holocaustum et victimas*—sive *thymiamata*—*et sacrificium*—sive
> *manna*—*et tus et inferent oblationem*—sive *laudem*—*in domum*
> *domini.* (27) *Si autem non audieritis me, ut sanctificetis diem sabbati*
> *et ne portetis onus et ne inferatis per portas Hierusalem in die sabbati,*
> *succendam ignem in portis eius et devorabit domos Hierusalem et non*
> *extinguetur.*

Jer. 17:21–27 is an admonition to observe the Sabbath. Most modern
commentators deny the authenticity of the passage, assigning it to the
post-exilic period.[93] Jerome does not make any such suggestion. Because
the passage is found in the Hebrew text, he considers it to reflect the
genuine voice of the prophet Jeremiah. Only one phrase, "super patres
suos" in v. 23, is rejected by Jerome, and this because it is not found

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[93] E.g., Duhm, Giesebrecht, Rudolph, Holladay, Carroll, and McKane. Objections
to the passage include: that Jeremiah does not elsewhere emphasize the Sabbath, and
would be unlikely to attach so much importance to it here; that Jeremiah was not as
positively inclined towards Temple worship as is reflected in this passage; that the
repetitive style is unlike Jeremiah; and that the Sabbath theology presented here fits
better historically in the post-exilic context. For a recent defense of the passage as
coming from Jeremiah, see Lundbom, 802–04; cf. also S. R. Driver, *Introduction to the
Literature of the Old Testament* (New York, 1913), 258: "The style is, however, thoroughly
that of Jeremiah."

in the Hebrew text, but only in the LXX (ὑπὲρ τοὺς πατέρας αὐτῶν). Jerome cites this phrase in the lemma, but with the caveat, "quod in Hebraico non habetur," and he omits it altogether when he comes to discuss v. 23. Jerome's treatment of this long lemma contains a number of Hebrew comments of different sorts. What is significant about Jerome's treatment here is the particular way that he uses each type of Hebrew observation.

Jerome's first comment after giving the biblical text relates to the length of the lemma itself. Jerome decided to give the whole passage in its entirety because he did not want to cut up ("ne . . . discerperem") this injunction concerning the Sabbath, so that he could explain all of it at once.[94] Jerome does tie the passage together around the theme of the Sabbath, but he also works through the text verse-by-verse, and usually clause-by-clause, giving paraphrases, brief comments, and citations from elsewhere in the Bible, primarily applying a Christian spiritual and moral interpretation to the Sabbath theme.

Jerome takes the prohibitions stated in vv. 21–23 in a moralizing sense. One should not carry "burdens," namely sins, nor should one bring them into the gates of Jerusalem, which are said to be the virtues.[95] It is also forbidden merely to "take" these burdens (sins) out of the house, since they should not be carried, but rather thrown out entirely. The words "omne opus ne faciatis" relate either to ignoble work, or to work that is driven by materialism, bringing to mind 1 Cor. 6:13: "esca ventri et venter escis; deus autem et hunc et illa destruet."[96] The end of v. 22 teaches that we must conduct every moment of our life in sanctification, just as our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did. As v. 23 says, however, the people did not listen. The phrase "non inclinaverunt aurem suam" refers to the ear of the mind, not the flesh; and "induraverunt cervicem suam" means that they rejected the yoke of the law, and "per μεταφορὰν" behaved like wild animals.

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[94] This represents Jerome's general tendency, especially as his career progressed, to move away from the highly fragmented approach of the Roman grammarians towards an exegetical technique that paid more attention to the connections between words, phrases, and sentences; see pp. 72–73. Larger lemmata are not uncommon in the *Comm. Ier.* (e.g., 18:1–10 and 29:14–20), but there are also places where Jerome breaks the text up into smaller units—as with Jer. 25:19–26, which Jerome divides into 12 lemmata. Cf. Jay, *L'exégèse*, 80–83.

[95] Regarding the "burdens" of Jer. 17:21 as sins, cf. Origen, *Fr. Jer.* 11.

[96] Jerome also alludes to John 6:27, in order to show that there is a kind of food for which the Christian should work.

The moral interpretation that Jerome gives to the first three verses sets the stage for his moral and spiritual treatment of the rewards promised for obedience in vv. 24–26.

"Videamus," Jerome says, "quod sit praemium eorum, qui non portant onera in die sabbati et sanctificant illum." To the obedient, kings will come whose hearts will be in the hand of God (cf. Prov. 21:1), who will sit on the throne of David, imitating the pattern of Christ ("ut Christi imitentur exemplum"), and who will mount horses and chariots, like the chariots of God in Ps. 67:18 (MT 68:18). The mention of Jerusalem at the end of v. 25 calls to Jerome's mind Ps. 75:3 (MT 76:3), which he cites, giving the etymology for "Salem": "'Factus est in Salem,' id est 'in pace,' 'locus eius et habitatio eius in Sion.'" The etymology for "Salem" (שלם) was already found in the Greek tradition,[97] and Jerome uses it as part of his image of God's church inhabiting the city forever (v. 25: "et habitabitur civitas haec in sempiternum").

Moving into the first half of v. 26, Jerome continues with his spiritual interpretation, weaving in two more Hebrew etymologies. Both of these etymologies were available in Greek, although Jerome assigns to them special significance here in accordance with the needs of his exposition. First, the standard etymology for Benjamin, "filius dextrae,"[98] Jerome gives as "filius est virtutis et dextrae," in keeping with the moral thrust of his interpretation.[99] Second, the word "campestribus," which Jerome correctly identifies as the Hebrew "Sefela" (שפלה), is said to signify the "plain understanding of *historia*" ("planam historiae . . . intellegentiam"),[100] over against the "montuosis," which Jerome says stand for lofty dogmas.[101] Jerome concludes the first half of v. 26 by connecting "ab austro" to Hab. 3:3, where God Himself is said to come "ab austro,"[102] expelling all cold by his heat and light. Thus, in the first half of v. 26, Jerome gives Hebrew etymologies, which fit seamlessly into the spiritual exposition.

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[97] E.g., Philo, *L.A.* 3.79; and OS I.198.51.

[98] E.g., OS I.178.84; 201.52; and Origen, *Hom. Jer.* 19.13.

[99] Jerome appears to be following Origen, who says: Βενιαμίν, τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς δεξιᾶς (δεξιὰ δὲ πάντα τὰ κατ᾽ ἀρετὴν ἐργαζόμενα) (*Fr. Jer.* 11).

[100] See OS I.296.9 (πεδινή); cf. OS I.55.16–17 ("humilis sive campestris").

[101] Jerome's interpretation of these words differs entirely from that of Origen.

[102] The parallel works only in Latin. Even though Jerome used "ab austro" in both places, the phrase here in Jer. 17:26 is מן הנגב, whereas at Hab. 3:3 it reads מתימן. Jerome must have remembered that he had used "ab austro" at Hab. 3:3, but he did not take the time while writing the Jeremiah commentary to check and see what the underlying Hebrew in Habakkuk had been.

In the second half of v. 26, however, Jerome's Hebrew comments function differently. As he begins to work through the different offerings that will be brought, Jerome starts out with more spiritual applications: he takes "portantes holocausta" to mean that people will consecrate themselves to God, and he elucidates "victimas" (or "thymiamata")[103] by quoting Ps. 50:19 (MT 51:19), "sacrificium domino spiritus contribulatus"; 2 Cor. 2:15,14, "Christi bonus odor sumus, in omni loco"; and Ps. 140:2 (MT 141:2), "dirigatur oratio mea sicut incensum in conspectu tuo." But when Jerome comes to "sacrficium," he is compelled to explain his translation purely at a linguistic level: in place of Jerome's "sacrificium," the LXX put the Hebrew word itself, "manaa" (μαναα, מנחה), which also came into the old Latin Bible as "manaa"—as Jerome says—by the terrible practice, even negligence, of the scribes who produced the old Latin version.[104] Jerome does not give a spiritual sense to this word, but instead moves on to the next term in the biblical text, "tus," which he identifies as "tus de Saba" on the basis of the parallel passage in Jer. 6:20. Again, no spiritual application is made. Then, for the final offering, Jerome says that the Hebrew is "thoda" (תודה), which can be translated "gratiarum actionem," but which the LXX rendered as "laudem" (αἴνεσιν).[105] Once more, Jerome does not attach any spiritual meaning. He does return, however, to a Christian sense for the last three words of the verse, which he quotes as "in domum David" (he means "in domum domini"; see the lemma above). These words, Jerome says, clearly refer to the church. In this way, Jerome concludes his treatment of the "rewards" section: "Haec sunt praemia eorum, qui sanctificant sabbatum et nullo pondere praegravantur."

Jerome finishes the discussion of this lemma with his treatment of v. 27, taking up yet another Hebrew matter. Jerome appeals to the Hebrew in order to clarify the actual meaning of "domos" in v. 27: "'domos' sive 'vicos' Hierusalem—quos LXX ἄμφοδα, Aquila et Symmachus βάρεις, id est 'turritas domos,' interpretati sunt, appellanturque Hebraice 'armanoth' (i.e., ארמנות)." Without any further application, Jerome

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[103] The first option, "victimas," seems to reflect Jerome's preferred choice (IH version = "victimam"), and the second option, "thymiamata," is the rendering of the LXX (θυμιάματα).

[104] Aquila has δῶρον for מנחה. The Targum has קרבנין, which can have the sense of "sacrificium." This meaning was regularly associated with מנחה elsewhere in the LXX, as shown by the common use of θυσία as a translation equivalent (see HR, 664–65).

[105] Jerome probably is in agreement with Aquila here; see p. 103.

proceeds directly to the last words of v. 27, "et non extinguetur," explaining them through 1 Cor. 3:13,15. In conclusion, Jerome tells his readers that, if "our Judaizers" (i.e., Christian interpreters who favor a literal and contemporary application of the Sabbath) want to reject the figurative interpretation ("explanationem tropicam"), they must either become Jews and submit to circumcision, or as Christians they must refute Jesus himself, who told the paralytic on the Sabbath to pick up his mat and walk (see John 5:1–18).

As illustrated by his final comment, what holds this exposition together is Jerome's spiritual or figurative reading of the Sabbath, throughout which Christian texts and themes are brought in freely. The particular usages of each kind of Hebrew comment in this exposition are very illuminating. The proper name etymologies, given for "Salem," "Beniamin," and "Sefela," are worked into the moral/spiritual interpretation, so that the etymological meanings contribute something to the deeper sense. The non-proper name Hebrew words, however, do not yield any Christian or spiritual/moral signification. When Jerome explains the meanings of מנחה, תודה, and ארמנות, he is interested only in resolving the straightforward lexical issues, and he does not try to derive any deeper signification. The proper name Hebrew etymologies belong to the spiritual and moral exposition, but the explanations of non-proper name Hebrew words do not.

Jer. 19:1–3a.   (1) *Haec dicit dominus: vade et sume lagunculam figuli testeam et de senioribus populi ac de senioribus sacerdotum* (2) *et egredere ad vallem filii Ennom, quae est iuxta introitum portae fictilis*—sive *Charsith*—, *et praedicabis*—sive *clamabis* vel *leges*—*ibi verba, quae ego loquar ad te*, (3a) *et dices: audite verbum domini, reges Iudae et habitatores Hierusalem!*

These verses introduce the account of Jeremiah's prophecy uttered at the Valley of Ben-Hinnom, where the prophet delivers his message of judgment in conjunction with a symbolic act, the breaking of a potter's vessel (see 19:1–13). As part of his simple explanation of this passage, Jerome comments on three Hebrew words, employing the Hebrew to solve three different kinds of problems.

To begin with, Jerome reports that the LXX put "doliolum" (βîκον, i.e., small jar) in place of the Hebrew "bocboc" (בקבק), which he had translated "lagunculam" ("flask"). The only hexaplaric witness available is Aquila, who put στάμνον ("earthen jar," "jar"). The Targum rendered the word זלוע ("pitcher"). It is difficult to tell if Jerome's "lagunculam" is quite in agreement with Aquila or the Targum, since it is hard to know

specifically what types of vessels could have been meant by these various terms in late antiquity. It is possible that Jerome's rendering reflects his understanding of the word as referring to a thin-necked vessel, which would agree with what we know of the term בקבק in earlier times.[106] That בקבק referred at least to some kind of thin-necked vessel in late antiquity is suggested by the Syriac ܒܩܒܩܐ, "narrow-necked jug," and the Aramaic בוקא, "pitcher" (cf. modern Hebrew, בקבוק, "bottle"). In this brief comment on בקבק, we see how Jerome uses his knowledge of Hebrew, in conjunction with his familiarity with the *realia* of the holy land, to identify a physical object mentioned in the biblical text.

Next, Jerome explains why he translated חרסית as "fictilis."[107] All of the hexaplaric versions—Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion—had transliterated the word, "Harsith" (αρσειθ), whereas the LXX had transliterated it "Charsith" (χαρσιθ). According to Jerome, this is a typical example of how the LXX transcribe the Hebrew letter ח: "'Harsith,' pro quo LXX iuxta morem suum pro adspiratione 'heth' litterae addiderunt'chi' Graecum, ut dicerent 'Charsith' pro 'Harsith,' sicut illud est pro 'Hebron,' 'Chebron,' et pro 'Hieriho,' 'Hiericho.'" In fact, Jerome goes on to say, the Hebrew word "Harsith" means "fictilis." Although it was once common to connect חרסית with חרס, "sun" (cf. Job 9:7), thus producing the "sun-gate" or the "east gate" (so KJV),[108] the vast majority of modern commentaries follow Jerome in interpreting חרסית to mean "of clay" or "earthen," often pointing out a connection between חרש in 19:1 and חרסית in 19:2.[109] Thus, Jerome

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[106] Kelso, "Ceramic Vocabulary"; cf. chap. 3, n. 170. According to Kelso, the בקבק was a thin-necked vessel that could be either ceramic or metal. In addition to its mention here, the בקבק is also found at 1 Kings 14:3, where it used to store honey. The word is thought to have an onomatopoetic origin, since a "gurgling" sound, represented by this root as shown by the Arabic and Syriac cognates, would have been heard when pouring liquid out of this vessel (cf. A. M. Honeyman, "The Pottery Vessels of the Old Testament," *PEQ* 71 (1939): 79–80). For a recent illustration, see P. J. King and L. E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville, 2001), 144.

[107] In his transliteration, Jerome agrees with the Qere against the Ketiv. See chap. 3, n. 81.

[108] Cf. also p.Erub 5:1, 22c: שער חריסית שהוא מכוון כנגד זריחת החמה היך מה. דאת אמר האומר לחרס ולא יזרח (Job 9:7).

[109] E.g., Blayney, Keil, and Holladay. Calvin takes חרסית to be "east gate" based on חרס, "sun," but he is open to the possibility of a word play between חרש and חרסית, as he explains regarding חרסית: "Et tamen non repugno quin Propheta alludat ad illud חרש, de quo dixerat, et ita vocet 'portam orientalem,' ut tamen sit quasi 'porta fictilis.' Nam ש et ס sunt literae affines, ut satis notum est." That חרס, like חרש, could mean "potsherd" is certainly true of post-biblical Hebrew (cf. Jastrow, 504), and no doubt reflects Jerome's perspective. See pp. 118–19.

not only tells the reader the correct meaning of the word, but he also uses the Hebrew to explain the origin of the transliteration found in the LXX.

Lastly, having given a brief explanation of vv. 1–2, Jerome justifies his handling of קראת in v. 2b. For the Hebrew וקראת, he put "et praedicabis—sive clamabis vel leges" in the lemma. Jerome had used "praedicabis" in the IH version, so why all three options here? As he explains, the Hebrew word "carath" can signify three things: proclaiming, crying out, and reading. Jerome had already made this comment at Jer. 2:2 and Jer. 3:12. Because some of Jeremiah's prophecies were read from a scroll (e.g., Jer. 36), perhaps Jerome thought that "to read" might be a possible meaning for קרא in these passages. It is also true that Jerome liked to show off his knowledge. It may be that the occurrence of קרא here simply gave Jerome an opportunity to parade further his abilities in Hebrew.[110]

> Jer. 20:3. (3) *Cumque inluxisset in crastinum, eduxit Phassur Hieremiam de nervo et dixit ad eum Hieremias: non Phassur vocavit dominus nomen tuum, sed pavorem undique.*

When Pashhur, the "chief officer" (פקיד נגיד) in the Temple, heard Jeremiah deliver a prophecy of judgment against Jerusalem (19:14–15), he struck the prophet and put him in the "stocks" (מהפכת) at the Upper Benjamin Gate in the Temple (20:1–2). Immediately after his release, Jeremiah prophesied doom and exile against Pashhur (20:3–6), introducing the prophecy with what appears to be a symbolic name change applied to Passhur (v. 3). Jerome's commentary on this verse focuses entirely on explaining this change of name.

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[110] Barr, "St. Jerome's Appreciation of Hebrew," 291, says of Jerome: "Again, there are times at which he appears to cite the same piece of information which he has cited elsewhere, rather in the fashion of one who, knowing a few significant facts, brings them forward at every opportunity." While it is certainly true that Jerome likes to repeat himself regarding certain Hebrew matters, it cannot be concluded from this that all he knew were a few significant facts about Hebrew. In the *Comm. Ier.* alone, Jerome shows a wide range of Hebrew knowledge, often touching on minor details. In reality, it is quite difficult to know what to tell readers (or hearers) of one language about the original text of a foreign book, even (or especially) if the book is already well known in translation. Jerome should not be faulted for trying to capitalize on interesting linguistic points when he thought he found them. He certainly does not make this observation about קרא every time it appears in Jeremiah; קרא occurs over 30 times in Jer. 1–30. It would be interesting to study Jerome's spiritual exegesis, to see if he ever presents the same allegory on more than one occasion.

Jerome refers the reader to his previous discussion of the name "Phassur" (פשחור) at 20:1–2, where he had given as its meaning, "oris nigredo." Jerome is probably in this instance following Origen, who gives the same etymology for the name (*Hom. Jer.* 19.14: τοῦ Πασχὼρ τοῦ ἐπωνύμου τῆς μελανίας τοῦ στόματος),[111] although Origen gives a different interpretation of the etymology than Jerome. According to Origen, Pashhur's "blackness of mouth" points to his being the source of false teaching among his companions (cf. v. 4, σὺν πᾶσι τοῖς φίλοις σου).[112] For Jerome, on the other hand, Pashhur has "blackness of mouth" in that he wields unjust power ("habebis oris nigredinem et iniquae imperium potestatis"). As Jerome explains, "Phassur" will lose his power and will be led as a captive to Babylon. This judgment is signified by the new name that the Lord gives to him, which in MT appears as מגור מסביב.

The interpretation of this new name is difficult, particularly because the meaning of מגור is unclear.[113] As one possibility, the LXX, along with Theodotion and the second edition of Aquila, translated the word μέτοικον, "resettling," as if it were related to נור, "to dwell as a foreigner."[114] This meaning seems to fit well with the content of the prophecy (i.e., exile), and it is the basis for Origen's exposition of the new name.[115] In fact, McKane has suggested that vv. 4–6 are secondary

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[111] The etymology presumed by Origen, and taken over by Jerome, is based on the elements פ, "mouth," and שחור, "black." Contrast this with OS I.204.25: Πάσχωρ ἐλεύθερος.

[112] Origen, *Hom. Jer.* 19.14: τίνες οὖν οἱ φίλοι τοῦ Πασχὼρ τοῦ ἐπωνύμου τῆς Μελανίας τοῦ στόματος; πάντες οἱ τοὺς λόγους αὐτοῦ παραδεξάμενοι, οἱ συμμελανωθέντες τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ τῷ μεμελανωμένῳ, οἱ δόγματα μελανότητος παραδεξάμενοι.

[113] Another difficulty involves the question of whether מגור מסביב is supposed to be a direct play on the name פשחור. Since J. D. Michaelis, *Supplementa ad Lexica Hebraica* (Göttingen, 1792), 2089, the most common suggestion has been that פשחור is being read as if it were the Aramaic סחור, "all around" (cf. Targum, Rashi). Of course, this leaves the פ unaccounted for, so that others have attempted to supply an Aramaic equivalent based on the root פוש. E. Nestle, "Ein aramäisch-hebräisches Wortspiel des Jeremia," *ZDMG* 61 (1907): 196–97, proposed פוש, "to remain" ("bleiben, dauern"), whereas Holladay suggested פוש, "to be fruitful." According to this approach, the name פשחור is being reshaped according to the Aramaic פש סחור, which is translated into Hebrew as מגור מסביב. For a complete survey of the problem, see McKane, 461–64. In light of the tenuous nature of these reconstructions, most recent commentators have given up on trying to connect פשחור linguistically to מגור מסביב (see Condamin, Bright, and McKane).

[114] The LXX also omit מסביב, either because it was absent from their *Vorlage* (Janzen, *Studies*, 73), or due to homoeoarcton (מ . . . מ; Lundbom).

[115] *Hom. Jer.* 19.4: εἶτα λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰερεμίας, ἃ πείσεται ὁ Πασχὼρ. τί λέγει αὐτῷ; οὐ Πασχὼρ ἐκάλεσε τὸ ὄνομά σου ἀλλ᾽ ἢ Μέτοικεν. διότι τάδε λέγει κύριος. μέλλει μετοικίζεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων ὁ Πασχὼρ οὗτος εἰς Βαβυλῶνα.

to the text of Jeremiah, having been added by someone who, like the
LXX, interpreted מגור with reference to the exile. Yet, despite the obvi-
ous connection between the LXX's μέτοικον and the theme of exile in
the following verses, few interpreters have actually adopted the meaning
"exile" for מגור, perhaps because there are other, more straightforward
words that could have been used (e.g., שבי in v. 6), if the idea of "exile"
or "captivity" had been intended.

By far, the most common meaning assigned to מגור at Jer. 20:3 is
"terror." This is the meaning given by Jerome, and it is supported by
Rashi (יראה) and David Kimchi (פחד).[116] Blayney recommended "ter-
ror all around" for מגור מסביב, although he offered no support. Carroll
translates "terror all around," but likewise without discussion. Lundbom
describes the meaning "terror" for מגור as having "gained acceptance."
KB, 544, lists the present passage under "I מגור," "fright, horror," with
the possible sense here of "object of horror, atrocity" (cf. KB, 185, "נור
III," "to be afraid"). Although the phrase מגור מסביב occurs elsewhere
in Jeremiah (6:25, 20:10, 46:5, 49:29; cf. Ps. 31:14, Lam. 2:22), none
of these usages is sufficiently clear to determine the exact meaning. In
the end, the strongest argument in favor of "terror" for מגור at Jer. 20:3
is the fact that Jerome, Rashi and Kimchi read it that way. That מגור
means "terror" in this passage is a Hebrew tradition that was handed
down to biblical scholars of late antiquity and the Middle Ages, and
through them has come into modern scholarship.

> Jer. 21:13–14.   (13) *Ecce ego ad te, habitatricem vallis solidae atque campestris,*
> *ait dominus, qui dicitis: quis percutiet*—sive *terrebit*—*nos et quis*
> *ingredietur domos nostras?* (14) *et visitabo super vos; quodque*
> *sequiter: iuxta fructum studiorum vestrorum, dicit Dominus*, in
> LXX non habetur. *Et succendam, inquit, ignem in saltu eius et*
> *devorabit omnia in circuitu eius.*

Jer. 21:11 introduces a divine oracle against the royal house of Judah.
In 21:12, we see the charge against Judah: the house of David has not
governed with justice, but has allowed oppression to go unchecked. Vv.
13–14, then, contain the divine threat. Even though the royal house in
Jerusalem may think itself secure, God is against it (v. 13), and he will
punish it for its misdeeds (v. 14). Already in the lemma, Jerome has
identified two Hebrew-related issues: the meaning of יחת ("percutiet"
or "terrebit") and the absence of the phrase "iuxta fructum studiorum

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[116] Kimchi: מגור מסביב...פחד יהיה לך מכל סביבותיך. See p. 121.

vestrorum, dicit Dominus" from the LXX, both of which receive some mention in the commentary to follow. In addition, Jerome gives an analysis of the diverse interpretations available in Greek for the Hebrew word צור ("solidae"). This, in fact, is where he begins his discussion.

In order to explain the phrase "habitatricem vallis solidae atque campestris," Jerome gives the various Greek options for the key word in dispute, צור. The LXX put "Sor" (Σορ), Symmachus used "petram" (πέτρα), Theodotion translated "obsessam" (συνεχομένη), the first edition of Aquila gave "solidam" (στερεά), and the second edition of Aquila, "Tyrum" (Τύρος). Both the LXX and Aquila's second edition are taking צור to be a reference to the place, "Tyre" (צוֹר). Symmachus' πέτρα and 1st Aquila's στερεά represent the vocalization צוּר,[117] as perhaps does Theodotion's συνεχομένη, which seems to presume a passive participle form of צור. Jerome does not supply any translation equivalencies that were not available in Greek,[118] but he does show his Hebrew knowledge by supplying the two vocalization possibilities for צור: "'Sor' enim sive 'Sur' lingua Hebraea et 'Tyrum' et 'silicem' et 'coartatem' sonat.'" In his translation in the lemma, as in the IH version, Jerome follows the first edition of Aquila, that is, "O inhabitant of a strong (or dense) and level valley."

Yet, after presenting the Hebrew data, Jerome proceeds to give three different expositions, based on the various interpretations of צור. First, Jerusalem has been surrounded by a blockade ("obsidione")—following Theodotion. Or, second, Jerusalem is surrounded by the Babylonian army, just as Tyre is surrounded by a great sea—in accordance with the LXX and 2nd Aquila. Or, lastly, Jerusalem thinks that it is impregnable like a hard rock ("petrae"), in view of the strength ("soliditate") and size of its defenses—combining Symmachus and 1st Aquila. Most modern scholars agree with Symmachus and take צור as "rock,"[119]

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[117] On στερεός for צור in Aquila, see J. Reider, rev. N. Turner, *An Index to Aquila* (Leiden, 1966), 221.

[118] Even apart from the onomastica (e.g., OS I.198.65), all of the evidence was available in the *recentiores*. Theodoret interprets Σορ according to the meanings taken from Symmachus and Theodotion: Σορ δὲ συνοχὴ ἑρμηνεύεται, καὶ πάλιν πέτρα· συνέχεται δὲ ὑπὸ ὀρῶν ἥδε ἡ πόλις.

[119] Some commentators, e.g., Duhm and Carroll, have argued that this text represents a fragment of an oracle, previously addressed to some other nation or place, which has now been applied to Jerusalem. Duhm doubts that the original recipient can be identified, but suggests that the LXX took it to be Tyre. Carroll, on the other hand, points out the similarities between this text and the oracles against Moab at

although Holladay, referring to Jerome's commentary, suggests that the text is also hinting at "Tyre." Since Jerome chooses Aquila for his translation, but gives three alternative interpretations in his discussion (". . . sive . . . aut . . ."), we may wonder if Jerome is simply unsure of the word's meaning, and is therefore providing multiple interpretations just to be safe; or rather if he sees the potential ambiguity of the Hebrew here as a carrier of multiple meanings (cf. Jer. 15:12).

Having completed his treatment of צור, Jerome continues to work through the passage, offering brief explanations and paraphrases along the way. For מי יחת in v. 13, where in the lemma he gave "quis per-cutiet—sive terrebit," Jerome uses "terrere" in his paraphrase, even though "terrebit" reflects the LXX (πτοήσει), and it was "percutiet" that he used in the IH version.[120] When he reaches the beginning of v. 14, Jerome includes in his paraphrase the words that were absent from the LXX ("et reddam vobis fructum malitiae vestrae").[121] Jerome goes out of his way to make several more observations in this section: God—not the Babylonian king, as the people suppose—is the one who ultimately brings the punishment. Jerusalem is likened to a "forest" ("saltus," יער) whose trees do not bear the fruit of good works, so that it will be burned. Beautifully ("pulchre") the text says that Jerusalem is a "vallis . . . campestris," because as such it will be accessible to its enemies; it is not a "montem excelsum" (cf. Isa. 40:9), which would be difficult for the enemy to ascend and take.[122] At this, Jerome has finished working through all of the text. He has obviously expanded on the passage through his comments in order to draw lessons from the text, but he has so far stayed within the sphere of the context of Jeremiah and Jerusalem.

Next follows Jerome's Christian spiritual interpretation: "Quicquid ad domum regiam et ad urbem metropolim prophetatur, referamus ad

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Jer. 48:8b, 21a, and 28–29. Almost everyone, however, agrees that in its present context the oracle must be addressed to Jerusalem, and that צור is to be interpreted as "rock" or the like.

[120] Both Jerome and the LXX seem to be interpreting יחת as a Hiphil form of חתת (cf. KB, 365). Most modern commentators, following the Peshitta and the Targum, read the word as deriving from נחת, "to descend"; see McKane.

[121] According to our manuscripts, the words "visitabo super vos" (ופקדתי עליכם) are also lacking in the LXX, but for some reason Jerome does not include them as part of the omission.

[122] Jerome also refers to the "visio vallis Sion" at Isa. 22:1 with reference to "ascending."

ecclesiasticum ordinem et principes ecclesiarum."[123] Those church leaders in particular are in view who give themselves over to pride, luxury, and lewdness. One might expect that this ecclesiastical interpretation would serve to conclude the discussion, but Jerome has one final comment to make. At first sight, this last statement seems to return to the "historical" plain, dealing with Old Testament Jerusalem and its kings. But it is probable that Jerome intends for it to be understood as part of the Christian application. Jerome concludes: it is not as if the royal house will be spared just because it is descended from David, since there were in fact only a few Judean kings who actually pleased God (e.g., David, Hezekiah, and Josiah), whereas most of the royal descendants of David provoked God to anger. Jerome likely means this to be taken as a metaphor for wayward presbyters and bishops.

> Jer. 22:10–12. (10) *Nolite flere mortuum neque lugeatis super eum! Fletu plangite eum, qui egreditur, quia non revertetur ultra nec videbit terram nativitatis suae!* (11) *Quia haec dicit Dominus ad Sellum, filium Iosiae, regem Iuda, qui regnavit pro Iosia patre suo, qui egressus est de loco isto: non revertetur huc amplius,* (12) *sed in loco, ad quem transtuli eum, ibi morietur et terram istam non videbit amplius.*

The present passage begins (v. 10) with a command not to weep for the dead, but instead to weep for "the one who goes" (להלך, "eum, qui egreditur"). This is followed, in vv. 11–12, with a divine oracle predicting the exile of "Shallum," the son of king Josiah. Many modern interpreters consider vv. 11–12 to be a prose commentary on the poetic pronouncement in v. 10.[124] Opinions differ as to the origin and reliability of vv. 11–12,[125] but as they stand now, they clearly belong with v. 10; and since they were present in Jerome's Hebrew text, he did not question their authenticity. According to v. 11, "Shallum," the son of Josiah, is to be identified with "the one who goes" mentioned in v. 10. The primary exegetical problem faced by Jerome in this passage is: who is "Shallum"?

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[123] Cf. *Comm. Ier.* 30:18–22: "Quicquid in priore populo fiebat carnaliter, in ecclesia spiritaliter conpleretur"; and *Comm. Ezech.* 13:1–3a: "Quidquid autem eo tempore israelitico populo dicebatur, hoc nunc refertur ad ecclesiam, ut prophetae sancti sint apostoli et apostolici viri, prophetae autem mendaces atque furiosi omnes haeretici."

[124] E.g., Duhm, Volz, Rudolph, Carroll, and McKane. For an alternative view, see Lundbom.

[125] See McKane, 522–25.

The most common view today is that "Shallum" is another name for Jehoahaz, since Jehoahaz is the son of Josiah (בן יאשיהו מלך יהודה) who immediately succeeded him as king (המלך תחת יאשיהו אביו; cf. 2 Kings 23:30–34, 2 Chron. 36:1–4). According to this interpretation, vv. 10–12 warn not to weep for Josiah, who has just died at Megiddo, but to weep for the new king, Jehoahaz, who will be taken to Egypt only three months into his reign, never to return.[126] It is usually argued that "Shallum" was his given name, and that "Jehoahaz" was his "throne name," just as Eliakim received the throne name "Jehoiakim" (2 Kings 23:34) and Mattaniah was given the throne name "Zedekiah" (2 Kings 24:17).[127] This interpretation is sometimes questioned on the basis of 1 Chron. 3:15, which lists the sons of Josiah as: the first-born Johanan, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, and the fourth Shallum. If Shallum, the youngest son, is Jehoahaz, why was he made king first?[128] Also, since Jehoiakim and Zedekiah are throne names, must not "Shallum" likewise be a throne name, leaving "Jehoahaz" to be his given name?[129] And why do we know nothing about the first-born, Johanan? Nevertheless, despite these uncertainties, the prevailing opinion among modern scholars is that "Shallum" in Jer. 22:11 is to be identified as Jehoahaz.

Jerome begins his treatment by laying out the main options. Josiah, he says, had three sons: Jehoahaz ("Ioachaz"), Jehoiakim ("Ioiacim"), and Zedekiah ("Sedeciam"). The first of these was led into captivity by Pharaoh Neco ("Pharao Nechao"), who set up in his place his brother

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[126] This view was anticipated by Theodoret: Σελλὴμ, οὐχ ὥς τινες ὑπέλαβον, τὸν Ἰωακεὶμ λέγει, ἀλλὰ τὸν Ἰωάχαζ. Οὗτος γὰρ ἐβασίλευσεν ἀντὶ Ἰωσίου τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ· τοῦτον καὶ εἰς Αἴγυπτον δορυάλωτον ἐπήγαγεν ὁ Φαραὼ Νεχαώ· ὁ γὰρ Ἰωακεὶμ ἐν τῇ Ἱερουσαλὴμ κατεσφάγη· καὶ τοῦτο ἡμᾶς αὐτὸς οὗτος ὁ προφήτης διδάσκει, καὶ τῶν Βασιλειῶν ἡ τετάρτη, καὶ ἡ τῶν Παραλειπομένων δευτέρα; and by Ibn Ezra, as Kimchi relates: והחכם רבי אברהם בן עזרא פירש כי שלום הוא יהואחז כי במצרים מת. The identification of "Shallum" with Jehoahaz was also made by Ephraem: ܐܠܦܙ ܗܘ ܫܠܘܡ ܒܪ ܝܘܫܝܐ.

[127] This suggestion goes back at least to Blayney. Cf. also Duhm, Volz, Bright, Holladay, and Lundbom. See A. M. Honeyman, "The Evidence for Regnal Names among the Hebrews," *JBL* 67 (1948): 13–25.

[128] In order to avoid this difficulty, Blayney recommends that the Chronicles text be emended to fit better with Jer. 22:10–12; cf. E. L. Curtis and A. A. Madsen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Chronicles* (Edinburgh, 1910), 100–01. Carroll, 423, suggests: "Josiah had been killed at Megiddo opposing the Egyptian forces of Pharaoh Neco, so the installation of his youngest son as king by the common people may have represented an anti-Egyptian gesture" (2 Kings 23:30 says that Jehoahaz was made king by the עם הארץ).

[129] See Holladay.

Eliakim, whose name was changed to Jehoiakim. When Jehoiakim died, his son Jehoiachin ("Iechonias") became king, but this king was led into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar ("Nabuchodonosor"), who then established Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, on the throne. It was this Zedekiah who was led into captivity when Jerusalem was captured.

Next, Jerome makes the following claim: the "Hebrews" think that the name "Shallum" is appropriate for all the sons of Josiah, since "'Sellem' sive 'Sellum'" means "consummation" or "completion," and the kingdom of Judah came to an end with these sons. Jerome, however, disagrees with this interpretation, arguing rather that "Shallum" is Zedekiah, since the previous chapter had been about Zedekiah (Jerome cites 21:1), and because Zedekiah was the very last king, under whose rule the kingdom of Judah truly came to an end. Furthermore, Zedekiah was taken into exile by Nebuchadnezzar, never to return, and he was likewise a son of Josiah. In this way, Jerome seems to have resolved the exegetical issue and also corrected the view of the "Hebrews" at the same time.

Yet, there are two complications that must be noted. First, as Loius Ginzberg noted, the position that Jerome attributes to the "Hebrews" ("Hebraei putant") is not found in any Rabbinic documents, the extant Rabbinic interpretation being the very one that Jerome presents as his own.[130] In *p.Sheq* 6:1, 49b, it says: צדקיהו שצידק עליו מדת הדין שלום שבימיו שלמה מלכות בית דוד. The same tradition is found in *Hor* 11b and is reflected in the Targum to 1 Chron. 3:15.[131] Therefore, whatever source Jerome might mean here by "the Hebrews," whether a written document or a personal teacher, it does not reflect the standard view that actually appears in Rabbinic texts. The standard Rabbinic view is the one that Jerome himself holds, which differs, incidentally, from what is found in the only Greek commentator extant on this passage, Theodoret of Cyrrhus.[132] Either Jerome is relying on a source that had

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[130] See L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 6 (Philadelphia, 1938): 382. Jerome regularly refers to contemporary Jews as "Hebrews" when transmitting Jewish exegesis, e.g., Jer. 7:30–31: "traduntque Hebraei ex hoc loco . . ."; Jer. 15:17–18: "Haec Hebraei ex persona Hierusalem dici arbitrantur"; Jer. 20:14–18: "Hebraei . . . supputant"; Jer. 29:21–23: "Aiunt Hebraei. . . ."

[131] In *Hor* 11b, it is stated several times that Shallum is Zedekiah, one reason given for the name being that: שלמה מלכות בית דוד בימיו (i.e., "the kingdom of David was 'completed' in his days"). The Targum to 1 Chron. 3:15 adds after the name Shallum: דשלימת מלכותיה דבית דויד ביומוי.

[132] See note 126 above. Origen gives the etymology of the name "Shallum" as Εἰρήνη (*Fr. Jer.* 60), although Origen is referring to the Σαλὼμ of Jer. 32:7 (cf. Jer. 1:1).

a different view from that which has been transmitted in the Rabbinic corpus, or Jerome is misrepresenting what he learned, perhaps to make himself appear to be correcting "the Hebrews," rather than merely following them.[133]

As for the second complication, Jerome changes his mind on this passage later in the commentary. Jer. 22:18–19 forbids lamenting for Jehoiakim, causing Jerome to conclude: "aperitur aenigma, quod prius videbatur occultum, et inter tres fratres ambiguum solvitur, ut non sit sermo de Ioachaz neque de Sedecia, sed proprie de Ioiacim." The reference to Jehoiakim in 22:18–19 causes Jerome to rethink his previous position on which of the three brothers was the subject of 22:10–12. If Jerome was working through the book at a quick pace, as was his custom,[134] it is not surprising that he did not go back and revise his comments on 22:10–12.

> Jer. 22:13–17. (13) *Vae, qui aedificat domum suam in iniustitia et cenacula sua non in iudicio, amicum suum opprimet frustra et mercedem eius non reddet ei*; (14) *qui dicit: aedificabo mihi domum latam et cenacula spatiosa, qui aperit sibi fenestras et facit laquearia cedrina pingitque sinopide!* (15) *Numquid regnabis, quoniam confers te cedro? Pater tuus numquid nonne comedit et bibit et fecit iudicium et iustitiam tunc, cum bene erat ei?* (16) *Iudicavit causam pauperis et egeni in bonum suum; numquid non ideo, quia cognovit me? dicit dominus.* (17) *Tui vero oculi et cor ad avaritiam et ad sanguinem innocentem fundendum et ad calumniam et ad cursum mali operis.* LXX: (13) *O qui aedificas domum tuam non cum iustitia et cenacula tua non in iudicio! Apud eum proximus operatur gratis et mercedem ei non reddet.* (14) *Aedificasti tibi domum parvulam, cenacula perflatilia, distincta fenestris et contignata cedro et lita sinopide.* (15) *Numquid regnabis, quia tu contendis contra Achaz, patrem tuum? Non comedent et non bibent; melius erat tibi facere iudicium et iustitiam bonam.* (16) *Non cognoverunt, non iudicaverunt iudicium humili neque iudicium pauperis. Nonne hoc est ignorare te me? dicit dominus.* (17) *Ecce non sunt oculi tui recti nec cor tuum bonum, sed ad avaritiam tuam et, ut sanguinem innocentem effundas, et ad iniquitatem et homicidium, ut facias ea.*

These verses present an oracle of woe directed against Jehoiakim, as becomes clear in the judgment pronounced in vv. 18–19. Jerome presents the biblical lemma in full both according to the Hebrew and according to the LXX. Jerome's comments on this passage may

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[133] Cf. Vaccari, "I fattori," 472.
[134] See Penna, *Principi e carattere*, 18–20.

be divided into three sections: his treatment of the text following the Hebrew, his criticism of the LXX in comparison with the Hebrew, and his treatment of the text according to the LXX.

Jerome prefaces his discussion of the Hebrew text with an explanation for the double lemma. He has put both editions in their entirety, Jerome says, in order to show clearly both the accuracy of the Hebrew ("Hebraica veritas") and the difficulty of the common Latin version ("difficultas vulgatae editionis").[135] After this comes a brief survey of the historical context of the passage. As Jerome explains, the message is against Jehoiakim, whom Pharaoh Neco set up in place of his brother, Jehoahaz, since Jehoahaz had been taken in chains to Egypt. The account given in Kings and Chronicles ("tam Regum quam Par alipomenon . . . historia") says that Jehoiakim ruled for eleven years in Jerusalem cruelly and impiously. Furthermore, no description is given of Jehoiakim's burial here, as is customary in Scripture, since this will be taken up in the following verses.[136] Instead, in this passage, the prophet laments over Jehoiakim, because the king trusts in injustice and thinks that his royal position will last forever. Jerome then works through the passage, strictly following the Hebrew version, and making only brief comments along the way, recasting much of the text into the form of direct speech paraphrase (. . . "ait sermo divinas" . . . "inquit" . . .).

When he has finished his explanation of the passage according to the Hebrew version, Jerome turns his attention to the LXX. "Iuxta LXX vero," he says, "quem sensum habeant, intellegere non possum." Jerome finds the beginning of v. 15 in the LXX especially problematic. Although the rest of the passage in the LXX at least partly holds together, the phrase "Numquid regnabis, quoniam tu contendis in Achaz patre tuo,"[137] clearly makes no sense at all ("manisfestum est,

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[135] Like Jerome, McKane, 529, does not see much value in the LXX on this passage: "It is obvious that no appeal should be made to this text for any emendations of MT." Holladay, on the other hand, favors the LXX in its reading of Αχαζ for אורי in v. 15 (see below).

[136] "Nec tamen eius sepultura narratur hanc habente scriptura sancta consuetudinem . . . de quo dicemus in posterioribus." In his comments on vv. 18–19, Jerome says: "Pulchreque 'sepultura asini' dicit eum sepeliendum, ut aliis verbis significet insepultum, hoc est a bestiis avibusque lacerandum. Haec est enim asini sepultura."

[137] The differences between how Jerome renders this phrase here and how he renders it in the lemma ("quia" vs. "quoniam," and "contra" vs. "in") suggest that he is looking at the LXX in Greek and is at least here giving an *ad hoc* translation into Latin. Perhaps the text in the lemma is the old Latin version based on the LXX, and the quotation given here is Jerome's own rendering of the Greek LXX into Latin;

quod nullum sensum habeat"), and the rest of the verse is so broken up and confused that without the Hebrew truth it would be totally unintelligible ("ut absque veritate Hebraicae lectionis nullam intellegentiam habeant"). The main problem with this verse, as Jerome sees it, is that the LXX have put Αχαζ in v. 15 where the Hebrew has "araz" (אֶרֶז), which means "cedar."[138]

Nevertheless, despite the difficulties presented by the LXX, Jerome is able to derive a spiritual meaning from them: "Possumus autem hunc locum iuxta ἀναγωγὴν ... accipere." According to this sense, the passage is directed against heretics, who build a house that is small, not great and wide with the richness of the church. Heretics do not build with justice and discernment, but are eager to plunder other people's things. The phrase "cenacula perflatilia" shows that heretics are carried about by every wind of teaching (cf. Eph. 4:14); "distincta fenestris" means that they do not possess a lasting, solid edifice; the reference to "cedar" in v. 14 teaches that, although the beams from which they are constructed appear beautiful, they nevertheless will quickly rot and collapse in the rains of persecution; and from "lita sinopide" (i.e, "besmeared with red ochre") we learn that heretics claim to adhere to the suffering and blood of Christ, but instead anger his father (i.e., God). Jerome makes several more comments about heretics, based on phrases or ideas taken from Jer. 22:13–17. He does not, however, go through every word of the passage and supply a Christian spiritual sense. Once he has demonstrated how it is done, he is content to leave off his exposition with, "ceteraque his similia." Almost as if to justify the length of his anagogical interpretation, Jerome concludes by explaining that obscure matters should be discussed more extensively ("obscura latius disserenda sunt").

Because Jerome gave the biblical lemma in two forms, according to the Hebrew and according to the LXX, it was easy for him to divide his interpretation into two distinct units. First came the Hebrew-based exposition, which was essentially situated within the context of the book of Jeremiah, illuminated by the *historia* narrated in Kings and Chronicles. Then, after a transitional criticism of the LXX from the perspective of

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cf. Jerome's "quoniam" in the Hebrew lemma (= IH version) and "quoniam" in the quote here.

[138] "'Achaz' ... pro quo in Hebraeo scriptum est 'araz,' et hic sermo 'cedrum' significet." Jerome agrees with Symmachus in his interpretation of the Hebrew; see p. 104.

the Hebrew, Jerome gave a Christian spiritual ("anagogical") interpretation of the passage according to the LXX. The obscurity of the LXX was not an impediment to its yielding a spiritual meaning.

> Jer. 23:18.   (18) *Quis enim affuit in consilio domini et vidit et audivit sermonem eius? Quis consideravit verbum illius et audivit?*

Jer. 23:16–22 presents a critique of prophets who have claimed to speak for God, when in fact they have not received their messages from God at all, but have simply spoken of their own accord. These prophets promise peace, but in reality God is angry and will bring judgment against Judah (vv. 19–20). As for v. 18, some have taken it to be a general denial that any have stood בסוד יהוה (cf. Job 15:8), in which case the verse is certainly not an original part of this passage.[139] Others (e.g., Kimchi, Driver, BHS, and Carroll) assume that v. 18 should be understood with specific reference to vv. 16–17, understanding or inserting מהם after מי, "Who *among them* has stood," i.e., "Who among these false prophets?" This is how Jerome takes the verse. The most significant Hebrew issue in v. 18 is the proper interpretation of סוד.

Jerome translates בסוד ("bassod") as "in consilio," but he gives the Greek evidence for סוד as well: The LXX and Theodotion put "substantiam" or "subsistentiam" (i.e., ὑποστήματι), Symmachus used "sermonem" (ὁμιλία ?), and Aquila translated "secretum" (ἀπορρήτῳ ?).[140] Both the Targum (רז) and the Peshitta (ܐܪܙ) essentially agree with Aquila; only Jerome attaches the sense "consilio" to סוד.[141] In his exposition of the verse (see below), Jerome seems to use "consilio" in the sense of "counsel" or "deliberation," whereas many modern interpreters perceive in this verse a heavenly "council" where the prophet would be privy to God's deliberation (e.g., Carroll, Holladay, Lundbom). A few recent commentators have also favored Aquila's interpretation ("secret"), either together with Jerome's reading (Giesebrecht, סוד as "die vertrauliche Unterredung"), or in place of it (McKane, סוד יהוה as "Yahweh's secrets").

After Jerome has presented the evidence for סוד, he sums up the sense of the passage ("et est sensus"): Do not believe the false prophets who

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[139] E.g., Condamin and Rudolph. In addition to v. 18, some also delete vv. 19–20, since they are repeated in Jer. 30:23–24 (e.g., Giesebrecht). Lundbom regards vv. 18 and 21–22 to be the primary poem, around which the rest of the text has developed. See McKane, 580–81 and Lundbom, 193–94.

[140] See Field II, 633.

[141] This meaning is associated with סוד in Rabbinic Hebrew (see Jastrow, 961).

say that the Lord has spoken to them, that you will have peace and that
evil will not come. For how could they know the secrets ("secreta") of
God? Or how could they have learned the Lord's counsel ("consilium")?
Or how did the message ("sermo") of the divine order come to them?
As is evident, Jerome has given three different paraphrases, one each
for himself, Aquila, and Symmachus. It is not clear whether Jerome
thinks that the Hebrew text communicates all of these meanings at
once (cf. 15:12, 21:13–14).

For his final comment, Jerome states that "some of ours" ("quidam
nostrorum," i.e., "orthodox Christians") think that they have found in
this passage a place where the text discusses the "substance" ("substan-
tia") of God. This is the last sentence of Jerome's treatment of Jer. 23:18.
Apparently, he thinks it is obvious from the previous discussion that
such an interpretation is entirely dependent on the LXX, and cannot
be reconciled with the Hebrew truth. Yet, Jerome does not drive home
this point, but leaves it for his readers to recognize.[142]

> Jer. 25:26c.   (26c) *Rex Sesach bibet post eos.*

This last clause of Jer. 25:26 comes at the end of a divine oracle, in
which the prophet is given a list of nations that will be forced to drink
the cup of God's wrath (vv. 15–26). It is generally agreed that "Sesach"
(ששך) is a way of referring to Babylon, since it stands in the last and
climactic position in this passage, and because it is used in parallel with
Babylon in Jer. 51:41. Jerome provides a full exposition for this short
text, and as the centerpiece of his exegesis he explains why Babylon
is called "Sesach."[143]

Jerome first notes that these words are absent from the LXX ("in LXX
non habetur"), and then he immediately begins to explain the sense
("hunc habet sensum"): God will make all the surrounding nations sub-
mit to Babylonian authority. He will make them drink from the cup of
Babylon, as it says in Jer. 51:7: "calix aureus Babylon inebrians omnem
terram." Yet, the last king of Babylon will also be judged, with Cyrus
the Persian being the one to make him drink from the cup of wrath.

How, then, can "Sesach" stand for Babylon? The answer, Jerome
explains, is obvious to anyone with even a little understanding of the
Hebrew language:

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[142] Cf. n. 85.
[143] Theodoret, for his part, merely says: βασιλεὺς Σησακ . . . τὸν Βαβυλώνιον οὕτως
ἡγοῦμαι κληθῆναι.

> sicut apud nos Graecum alfabetum usque ad novissimam litteram per ordinem legitur, hoc est 'alfa, beta' et cetera usque ad 'o,' rursumque propter memoriam parvulorum solemus lectionis ordinem vertere et primis extrema miscere, ut dicamus 'alfa o, beta psi,' sic et apud Hebraeos primum est 'aleph,' secundum 'beth,' tertium 'gimel' usque ad vicesimam secundam et extremum litteram 'thau,' cui paenultima est 'sin.' Legimus itaque 'aleph thau, beth sin,' cumque venerimus ad medium, 'lamed' litterae occurrit 'chaph'; et ut, si recte legatur, legimus 'Babel,' ita ordine commutato legimus 'Sesach.'

The practice of mixing up the letters of the alphabet, matching first with last, second with second to last, etc, was apparently common for children learning Greek. This same custom, Jerome says, is in use among the "Hebrews" (contemporary Jews), and it serves as the basis for the proper deciphering of "Sesach" as Babylon. Only the consonants are factored in to the creation of the new name, since the vowels are not written, in accordance with the idiom of the Hebrew language ("iuxta ἰδίωμα linguae Hebraeae"). The reason for the altered name, according to Jerome, is that the prophet did not want to stir up animosity against himself among the incoming Babylonians. This is likened to Paul in 2 Thess. 2:5–8, who discreetly refers to the Roman Empire simply as "qui tenet nunc." Just as Paul avoided explicitly mentioning the Roman Empire in order to save the young church from persecution, so also Jeremiah prudently ("prudenter") used "Sesach" in place of Babylon.

Having given such a long and drawn-out treatment for so short a clause, Jerome feels the need to justify himself. He admits that he has spoken on this text longer than he should, considering the brevity appropriate for commentaries ("commentariorum brevitas"),[144] but he asserts that he needed to offer such a detailed explanation to prevent the Greeks and Latins from scoffing at him, since this clause is lacking from their codices. Yet, it is pointless for them to doubt his interpretation, because later on the prophets says: "Quomodo capta est Sesach et conprehensa est inclyta universae terrae, quomodo facta est in stuporem Babylon inter gentes?" (51:41). This proves that "Sesach" is the same as Babylon.

Lastly, Jerome reports the interpretation offered by "allegorical interpreters" ("allegorici interpretes"). According to this approach, the nations listed in 25:15–26 comprise all the nations that the Devil has made drunk with the chalice of sin. Yet, like Babylon, the Devil himself

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[144] See pp. 71–72.

will eventually be made to drink punishments, as in 2 Thess. 2:8 and
1 Cor. 15:26 (both of which Jerome cites). It is also possible that the
various names of the nations can be transferred "sub ἐτυμολογίαις suis"
to the names of the various "powers" (cf. 1 Cor. 15:24), such that each
individual name matches up with a certain vice. But Jerome does not
elaborate on this interpretation, perhaps concerned that he has spent
too much time on this text already.

The device whereby the letters of the Hebrew alphabet were matched
first and last, second and second to last, etc. (i.e. את בש), is called
"atbash."[145] In addition to the two occurrences of ששך, Jer. 25:26 and
Jer. 51:41, other possible examples of this phenomenon in Jeremiah
include Jer. 51:1 (לב קמי for כשדים, cf. LXX: Χαλδαίους) and Jer.
25:25 (זמכי for עילם, if the reading זמכי is correct; see Rudolph and
Holladay). The "atbash" order is known in later times to have been
used in teaching, as shown by the story of Akiba's education:[146]
חזר ללמוד תורה הלך הוא ובנו וישבו אצל מלמדי תינוקות א״ל רבי
למדני תורה אחז רבי עקיבא בראש הלוח ובנו בראש הלוח כתב לו אלף
בית ולמדה אלף תיו ולמדה תורת כהנים ולמדה. The 'atbash' reading of
ששך at Jer. 25:26 is found in *NumR* 18.21: ששך בא״ת ב״ש בבל, as well
as in Rashi and David Kimchi.[147] As a technique, "atbash" would later
receive particular attention in kabbalistic literature.[148] Jerome was clearly
in line with the Rabbinic exegetical tradition in seeing an "atbash" at
Jer. 25:26.

Among modern scholars, there has been a general reluctance to
believe that an "atbash" could have been employed in the time of
Jeremiah. Some have followed Blayney, who connected ששך with שכך,
"to sink down," and who did not even consider the "atbash" interpreta-
tion worth mentioning.[149] Others have suggested that, despite its later

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[145] Cf. B. J. Roberts, "Athbash," *IDB*, vol. 1, 306–07.

[146] *ARN* 6.2; cf. pp. 81–82.

[147] Rashi identifies the "atbash" as a form of "gematria" (נימטריה). Kimchi also explic-
itly calls this "atbash," and he cites the Targum in support of identifying "Sesach" as
Babylon. By way of contrast, Ephraem says that ܐܟܝܪܝܐ (the Peshitta's rendering of
ששך) at Jer. 51:41 means ܐܟܘܝܪܐ, "hammer," and refers to the people of Babylon.

[148] See G. Scholem, *Kabbalah* (New York, 1978), 338.

[149] Blayney, 160–61, states: "That *Sheshach* means Babylon, appears clearly from
Ch. li. 41. But among the reasons that have been assigned for this name, I have met
with none that I think satisfactory." Among his predecessors, both Calvin and Buxtorf,
Lexicon, follow Jerome's "atbash" reading. Cf. Keil, who agrees with Blayney in con-
necting ששך to שכך, but who also defends the idea that ששך is an authentic "atbash"
deriving from Jeremiah himself.

interpretation, ששך did not originate as an "atbash," but was simply the name of an actual king,[150] or else a genuine, pre-exilic alternative for Babylon.[151] Yet, the greatest number of modern interpreters have accepted that ששך is an "atbash," but have concluded that it must be a later addition to the text, probably reflecting post-exilic exegetical tendencies.[152]

In recent years, however, there has been some openness to the possibility that ששך really did function as an "atbash" in the pre-exilic or exilic period.[153] Still, it has been repeatedly observed that the usage at Jer. 51:41, where ששך is clearly identified as Babylon (as Jerome noted), makes it difficult to argue that concealment was the original motive for the "atbash," as Jerome suggested. In light of this, some scholars have put forth alternative reasons why an "atbash" might have been used here: for example, Carroll thinks that the "atbash" may be "an echo of magical rituals of an incantatory nature" (500); and Richard Steiner supposes ששך to be a popular pre-exilic name for Babylon, used by an exilic editor as part of a mock lament.[154]

We may sum up by saying that there seems to be a general consensus today that ששך at Jer. 25:26 is an "atbash" for בבל, as explained by Jerome. While the majority of recent commentators still take this to be a sign of the late date of the clause, a few have been willing to believe that the "atbash" is pre-exilic or at least exilic. Among this last group, however, Jerome's explanation for why the "atbash" was used has not been widely followed.

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[150] Giesebrecht, for example, proposed that ששך was the Hebrew form of the name of a certain monarch, *Arschâkâjâ*.

[151] See Nicholson on Jer. 51:41. Cf. also Gouge, Gataker, et al., who said that Babylon was given this name because of an idol supposedly worshipped there named "Sheshac" or "Shak" (cf. Dan. 1:7).

[152] E.g., Duhm, Driver, Condamin, Rudolph, Holloday, McKane, and Janzen, *Studies*, 122. Support for deleting ששך from Jer. 25:26 has been found in the absence of the entire clause from the LXX. Some limits have been placed on the potential date of the addition by the discovery of a Hebrew manuscript from Qumran (4Q Jer^c) containing the clause; see *DJD* 15 (1997): 193.

[153] Some contemporary scholars have sought to find connections between ancient Israelite literary culture and the exegetical techniques of early Judaism; see especially M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford, 1985): 464, who gives an interpretation of Jer. 25:26 similar to that of Jerome. The cryptographic writing of personal names was apparently practiced as early as the seventh century BCE in Mesopotamia; see J. Tigay, "An Early Technique of Aggadic Exegesis," in *History, Historiography, and Interpretation*, ed. Tadmor and Weinfield (Jerusalem, 1983): 179.

[154] R. C. Steiner, "The Two Sons of Neriah and the Two Editions of Jeremiah in the Light of Two *ATBASH* Code-Words for Babylon," *VT* 46 (1996): 83. Cf. also Lundbom.

Jer. 27:1.   (1) *In principio regni Ioacim, filii Iosiae, regis Iuda, factum est verbum hoc
              ad Hieremiam a domino dicens.*

The basic content of Jer. 27:1–22 (MT) is found in the edition of the
LXX at Jer. 34:2–22, except that the present verse, Jer. 27:1 (MT), is
totally absent from the LXX. This verse is problematic for another
reason as well. The oracles and events of chap. 27 clearly take place
in the reign of Zedekiah (e.g., 27:3, 12; 28:1), not Jehoiakim. Since
Jer. 27:1 is virtually identical to 26:1, it is usually argued (e.g., Duhm,
Rudolph, Carroll, McKane, and Janzen, *Studies*, 14, 45) that 27:1 was
borrowed from 26:1 by a later hand. The consensus among modern
commentators is that 27:1 is a secondary addition to the text that
presents an impossible chronology for chap. 27.[155]

Jerome notes right away that this verse is lacking in the LXX ("Hoc in
editione LXX non habetur"). Yet, because it is was in his Hebrew text,
he does not doubt that it is original to Jeremiah. According to Jerome,
this verse is connected not to what follows, but to what precedes it. Jer.
27:1 points back to chap. 26, and reaffirms that the events narrated
in that chapter belong to the reign of Jehoiakim. Jerome agrees that
chap. 27 is addressed to Zedekiah, but he solves the problem by mak-
ing 27:1 refer backwards. The LXX, Jerome conjectures, omitted the
verse because they did not want to appear to be repeating themselves,
considering that they had already given this same information at the
beginning of chap. 26 (i.e., 26:1, which he quotes in full). Although
Jerome does admit that "multi putant sequentis capituli esse princi-
pium," he insists that they are mistaken.

Jerome's suggestion is highly implausible. The phrase ממלכת בראשית
יהויקם clearly introduces a heading rather than a conclusion, and לאמר
at the end of the verse can only point forward. It may be asked, since
the verse is absent from the LXX, and so absent from the texts of
most Christian commentators, who are the "many" to whom Jerome
refers, who (rightly) recommend taking 27:1 with what follows? As it
turns out, Theodoret comments briefly on the verse, taking 27:1 with

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[155] Some have attempted to reconstruct a plausible text for 27:1; e.g., Holloday, who
argues that the literary unity between chaps. 27 and 28 suggests that chap. 27 at one
time had a proper date formula. Keil, on the other hand, assumed that only the word
"Jehoiakim" in 27:1 was in error, and that the verse could be fixed simply by correcting
it to "Zedekiah." In favor of this suggestion, the hexaplaric reading preserved under
asterisk, the Syriac version, and three medieval Hebrew manuscript readings have
צדקיהו at 27:1 (see Kennicott, *Vetus Testamentum*, 129). Most scholars, however, see this
merely as a later attempt to correct the problem.

what comes after, merely saying in explanation that the prophet, having finished the previous narrative, transitions now to a different one that is chronologically earlier. For this interpretation, Theodoret may be reflecting an already established Antiochene exegetical position, as might have been available to Jerome through the commentary of Diodore of Tarsus.[156] If so, then Jerome was attempting to correct what he perceived to be an error in the Greek tradition. Although there is no rabbinic evidence for this issue from Jerome's time, we can observe in a later era that both Rashi and Kimchi, like Theodoret, take Jer. 27:1 with chap. 27. According to Rashi, God prophetically revealed to Jeremiah that Nebuchadnezzar would become king three years before he actually took the throne, i.e., in 608 BCE—that is, at the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim. If one were to defend MT as it now stands,[157] such a solution is at least less awkward than what Jerome says. Not only does Jerome disagree with his Greek Christian predecessors, but he also appears to run counter to the Hebraic tradition as it was transmitted to the Middle Ages. Jerome recognized the problem of relating 27:1 with the rest of the chapter, but his solution in this case seems less plausible than what he was attempting to correct.

> Jer. 31:2   (2) *Haec dicit dominus: invenit gratiam in deserto populus, qui remanserat gladio; vadet ad requiem suam Israel.* LXX: *Sic dixit dominus: inveni calidum in deserto cum his, qui perierant gladio; ite et nolite interficere Israhel!*

Jer. 31 is a collection of salvation oracles, introduced in v. 1 by an announcement of the future renewal of the covenant between God and Israel, בעת ההיא נאם יהוה אהיה לאלהים לכל משפחות ישראל והמה יהיו לי לעם ("In tempore illo . . . ero . . ."). The description of future restoration is clearly picked up again in v. 4, with עוד אבנך ("rursumque aedificabo te"), and is continued in vv. 5–6. The nature of vv. 2–3, however, is not so clear. On the one hand, vv. 2–3a might be taken

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[156] See chap. 3, n. 171.

[157] Few have attempted to defend 27:1, with "Jehoiakim." Calvin says that the prophecy of Jer. 27 was given to Jeremiah during the reign of Jehoiakim, but that Jeremiah was instructed not to deliver it until Zedekiah's reign, for the prophet's sake, so that he would deliver his message with greater eagerness. More recently, Jer. 27:1, with the reading "Jehoiakim," was defended by H. A. C. Hävernick, *Handbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, vol. 2, pt. 2 (Erlangen, 1844): 217, who argued that chap. 27 consists of three different prophetic oracles: one delivered to Jehoiakim (vv. 1–11); one given to Zedekiah (vv. 12–15); and one addressed to the priests and people (vv. 16–22).

as a reference to a past deliverance.[158] On the other hand, they could be read as a future prediction, along the lines of vv. 1 and 4–6.[159] Jerome accomodates both perspectives, translating the verb מצא with a past tense ("invenit"), but rendering הלוך as future ("vadet"), perhaps inspired by the use of the "prophetic" formula, כה אמר יהוה, at the beginning of v. 2.

Yet, although past and future are woven together in his expositions, it is not the chronology of the passage that warrants for Jerome a detailed discussion. Rather, Jerome's attention is drawn to a linguistic problem involving the Hebrew. The edition of the LXX differs so much from the Hebrew that Jerome feels compelled to present the lemma according to both versions. The key difference that Jerome discusses derives from confusion between manuscripts in three languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Only after Jerome has resolved this complicated textual issue does he move on to his explanation of the meanings of the texts.

Jerome begins his treatment with the Old Latin version of Jer. 31:2, with which his readers would already be familiar. For מצא הן מדבר, the Old Latin read "inveni lupinos in deserto." As Jerome explains, the Latin codices absurdly have put "lupinos" here for the Greek θερμον, which can mean either "heat" (θερμός) or "lupine" (θέρμος).[160] The LXX meant "heat," whereas the Latin version understood "lupines." But even "heat" is not found in the Hebrew text, which instead has "hen," that is "grace."[161] The LXX (mistakenly) thought that the last letter was "m," since "hen" with an "n" is "grace," but with an "m" it is "heat."[162] In other words, the Hebrew text has חֵן, "grace," which the LXX mis-read as חֹם, "heat" (i.e., θερμόν). The Old Latin version, then, read the LXX as θέρμον, "lupine," and translated it as "lupinos."

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[158] As Carroll, 589, says: "The images suggest a miraculous escape from destruction, though without defining what the catastrophe may have been (the exile? the terrible storm of Yahweh? the time of Jacob's distress?)." The Targum, following this line of thought, identifies the past deliverance as the Exodus: כדנן אמר יוי דיהב רחמין לעמא דאסיק ממצרים סופיק צורכיהון במדברא.

[159] E.g., Cornill, who also emends מדבר to מסנר (see Isa. 42:7), translates the line: "Gnade fand im Gefängniss ein Volk dem Schwerte Entronnener." The verb מצא in v. 2 would have to be taken as a "prophetic perfect"; cf. McKane.

[160] Jerome attributes this confusion to the ambiguity of the Greek word. The two words do, however, differ in accent.

[161] Jerome cites Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion (χάριν) in support of the meaning "grace."

[162] As Jerome says: "Soli LXX posuere 'calidum' putantes ultimam litteram 'm' esse. Si enim legamus 'hen' per litteram 'n,' 'gratia' dicitur; si per 'm,' 'calor' interpretatur."

Having explained the source of the error, Jerome proceeds to give
the sense of the Hebrew text ("est autem sensus iuxta Hebraicum"):
those of the Jews who endured under the Roman sword ("Romano
remanserat gladio"), and were able to avoid God's anger, found grace
in the desert of the gentiles ("invenit gratiam in deserto gentium"), in
that they are saved within the church among the multitude of nations.
In this way, Israel will enter the rest for which it has hoped, and which
the oracles of the prophets promised.

In addition, Jerome offers a second interpretation, this time accord-
ing to the LXX ("porro iuxta LXX haec intellegentia est"): The Lord
found the apostles and their associates "warm" ("calidos") and alive,
in a desert of nations that lacked the "warmth" ("calorem") of life.
Because of this, God commands his angels not to destroy Israel entirely,
saying, "Go and do not kill Israel" ("ite et nolite interficere Israhel"),
since there are some who are alive and are warm with the ardor of
faith, and who have turned away from the coldness of disbelief and
death. These are the ones that the Lord will find in the desert!

Jerome makes it his first task to untangle the various readings for
הן found in the different editions. Through his order of presentation
and his attention paid to the textual issue, Jerome gives pride of place
to the Hebrew; but he does not totally exclude the LXX, whom he
even expounds. Because Jerome considers Jer. 31 to relate so directly
to the time of Christ and the apostles, the Hebrew-based interpreta-
tion already moves from the Jews under Roman rule to the salvation
of Israel in the church. In his LXX-based exposition, Jerome begins
immediately with the apostles.

> Jer. 32:30a   (30a) *Erant enim filii Israhel et filii Iuda iugiter*—sive *soli*—*facientes*
> *mala in oculis meis ab adulescentia sua.*

Jer. 32:30a, which corresponds to 39:30 in the LXX,[163] is part of a
larger explanation (32:26–35) for the destruction of Jerusalem and the
Babylonian exile. The great wickedness of Judah (and previously, Israel)

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[163] Jerome notes near the end of his comments on this lemma that the second
half of the verse is absent from the LXX and has been supplied by himself from the
Hebrew. Many modern commentators (Duhm, Giesebrecht, Cornill, Peake, Holladay,
and McKane) take the shorter text of the LXX to be original, and regard the second
half of the verse in MT to be a gloss on the first half. Others, however, think that the
longer text of MT is original, and that the shorter text of the LXX arose *via* haplog-
raphy (e.g., Lundbom). Cf. Janzen, *Studies*, 16.

has roused God's anger and has brought about its downfall. The main
Hebrew issue addressed by Jerome in this verse is the interpretation
of the word אך.

For the Hebrew היו בני ישראל ובני יהודה אך עשים הרע בעיני, the
LXX put ἦσαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ισραηλ καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ Ιουδα μόνοι ποιοῦντες τὸ
πονηρὸν κατ᾽ ὀφθαλμούς μου, translating אך as μόνοι, i.e., "soli." In
his IH version, Jerome had rendered the word "iugiter," which he
gives as the first alternative in the lemma here in the commentary.
Jerome begins his discussion by giving the Greek evidence for אך:
for the Hebrew word "ach," Aquila translated πλήν, which in Latin
represents the conjunction "verumtamen" ("nevertheless"); the LXX,
Theodotion, and Symmachus' first edition all rendered it μόνοι;[164] and
the second edition of Symmachus put διόλου (i.e., "iugiter," in the
sense of "continually"), which Jerome says is the right meaning of the
Hebrew in this passage.[165]

Next, Jerome re-quotes the lemma, from "filii Israhel" to "malum,"
using only "iugiter," and then gives a paraphrase of the text (". . . in-
quit . . .") in order to clarify the sense. All twelve tribes, Jerome ex-
plains, did evil without ceasing, and were thoroughly persistent in their
wicked deeds. Of course, that this continual evil was tolerated for so
long might lead us to question God's justice. Jerome answers this objec-
tion at the end of his treatment of the lemma, where he points out
that it is precisely because the people had done wrong continually
from their youth that the following text, Jer. 32:31—which talks about
God's anger and wrath—is justified. With good reason Scripture con-
tinues on into the next verse ("merito scriptura contexit").

Yet, in moving ahead to Jerome's conclusion, we have skipped over
part of his discussion. After first raising the question of God's justice,
but before resolving it at the end, Jerome offers an interpretation of the
text according to the LXX. If one looks at the wording of the LXX,
"soli facientes malum" (μόνοι ποιοῦντες τὸ πονηρὸν), a question arises
("oritur quaestio"): Were there not in those times other nations that
did evil? Could it be that Israel and Judah were the "only" ones who
sinned, as the LXX say? It is as if the objection raised above against
the Hebrew text reminded Jerome to point out that the version of the

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[164] On the first and second editions of Symmachus, see chap. 3, n. 71.
[165] With reference to the second edition of Symmachus, Jerome says: "quem et nos
in praesentiarum secuti sumus, ut diceremus 'iugiter.' Dicamus igitur primum iuxta
Hebraicum: . . ."

LXX is also not without its problems. The solution that Jerome provides ("sic solvitur") for μόνοι in the LXX is that "only" the one who has known God and has turned away can truly sin, whereas those who have never believed merely offend God out of carelessness. Jerome illustrates his point by referring to David, a holy man who fell into sin, and who later repented by saying, "tibi soli peccavi et malum coram te feci" (Ps. 50:6, MT 51:6). Obviously, this would fit Jerome's argument better if it read "solus" instead of "soli."

Of the various meanings of the particle אך, there is still not complete agreement as to its usage in Jer. 32:30. The new Koehler-Baumgartner (KB, 45) lists three principle senses for אך: affirmative or emphasizing ("yea, surely"), restrictive ("only"), and antithetic ("however, but"). The most common view among recent interpreters is that אך means "only," and that it restricts עשים, thus: "the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah have been doing only evil."[166] This interpretation of אך matches the LXX, Theodotion, and the first edition of Symmachus—but as Jerome read them, μόνοι went with οἱ υἱοὶ Ισραηλ καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ Ιουδα. There are also modern interpreters who take אך in an affirmative or emphasizing sense; thus, Holladay II, 205: "the children of Israel and the children of Judah have indeed been doing evil." One can recognize in Aquila's translation (πλήν) the antithetic usage of אך, although it does not really fit the present context and has not been adopted by any modern commentators.

The sense "continually" ("iugiter"), derived by Jerome from Symmachus' second edition (διόλου), is not a common meaning for the word אך, although it could be justified based on Deut. 28:29, where אך is used as if equivalent to כל הימים.[167] This meaning may have been assigned to אך in view of the context (cf. "ab adulescentia sua"), and Jerome seems to have followed it because it fits the sense of the text. Considering how he presents this interpretation ("secunda quippe Symmachi, quem et nos in praesentiarum secuti sumus"), Jerome probably had no notion that אך could mean "continually" apart from 2nd Symmachus (διόλου) on this passage.[168] We may observe, in conclusion, that

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[166] See Calvin, Giesebrecht, Condamin, Rudolph, Carroll, Lundbom. Cf. D. J. A. Clines, *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (Sheffield, 1993), 1:239.

[167] There is no evidence for the *recentiores* on אך in Deut. 28:29. Both at Deut. 28:29 and Jer. 32:30 the Targums translate אך with ברם, which does not add any clarity.

[168] One must also consider that διόλου can mean "altogether," which is a better-attested meaning for אך; cf. Deut. 16:15; Isa. 16:7, 19:11; Job 19:13. It is possible that

Jerome's treatment of the Hebrew word אך guides his whole discussion of this lemma, both in his explanation of the Hebrew sense, and in his dealing with the text according to the LXX.

From the above selection of passages, it is clear how central a place Hebrew language data played in Jerome's biblical exegesis. Of course, Hebrew matters are not addressed explicitly in the discussion of every lemma in the *Commentary on Jeremiah*—although the impact of the Hebrew is always felt through Jerome's Hebrew-based translation. But the true importance that Hebrew philology had for Jerome is most evident in those places where he singles out some issue in the Hebrew text for examination. It is remarkable how often Jerome's whole treatment of the biblical lemma is structured around the Hebrew information that he chooses to highlight.

In considering the broader context of Jerome's Hebrew philology, we have attempted to view Jerome from two different vantage points: (1) how does Jerome's Hebraic scholarship fit into the landscape of modern research on the Hebrew text of Jeremiah? And, (2) what role do Hebrew language observations play in Jerome's whole approach to interpreting the biblical text. We may conclude with a few observations that arise from asking these two questions of Jerome's *Commentary on Jeremiah*.

First, as to the quality of Jerome's Hebrew philology in comparison with modern scholarship, the monk of Bethlehem overall receives high marks. With surprising frequency, Jerome engages the Hebrew text in a manner plausible even by today's standards. He certainly approaches the text critically, with a remarkable aptitude for untangling complicated problems (e.g., 15:12, 31:2). He is interested in literary context (e.g., 6:26, 7:17–19, 32:30a), as well as historical background (e.g., 6:1, 22:10–12, 22:12–17, 25:26c), and excluding the proper name etymologies, he almost always selects real problems in the Hebrew text to discuss. Many of Jerome's comments on the Hebrew are well in line with modern scholarship (e.g., 3:2a, 7:17–19, 13:18–19, 19:1–3a), or at least can be placed squarely on the map of contemporary positions on a Hebrew exegetical issue (e.g., 5:7–9, 9:22, 23:18). In other cases, Jerome's analysis

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when "2nd Symmachus" put διόλου, the intended meaning was "altogether" rather than "continually." Theodoret, however, gives a paraphrase of Jer. 32:30 that seems to follow along the lines of Jerome's reading of 2nd Symmachus: ἀεὶ γάρ με παροξύναντες διετέλεσαν, ἀφ᾽ ἧς ἡμέρας ᾠκοδόμησα αὐτὴν, ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης. If ἀεὶ derives from Theodoret's reliance upon Symmachus' διόλου, then Theodoret, like Jerome, understood διόλου in this passage to mean "continually."

is suggestive for later solutions (e.g., 1:11–12, 6:2–4a, 25:26c), or else he transmits information used by subsequent interpreters to clarify the text (e.g., 5:22–24, 8:18, 21:13–14). On the whole, the impression left by Jerome is that of a competent Hebrew scholar whose literary and critical sensibilities are quite similar to our own.

Yet, Jerome's scholarship also suffered at certain points from the limitations of his environment, both in terms of the presuppositions that he held and the tools that were available to him. For example, despite Jerome's zeal to get back to the original reading, he was hampered by his belief that the Hebrew text in his possession in the fourth century was at all times the original text of Jeremiah. The Greek and Latin texts of the Bible known to Jerome varied greatly one from another, whereas the Hebrew text was essentially uniform, all of which makes Jerome's assumption not unreasonable in his day. But we now see that his evaluation of the fourth century Hebrew text was too high, forcing him at times to offer awkward explanations of the Hebrew (e.g., 27:1). Likewise, although Jerome generally chose important Hebrew issues to discuss, he did not always do so, especially with reference to proper name etymologies. Jerome believed that the etymologies of Hebrew names could be used as entryways into the spiritual sense of the text. This led him to make numerous observations about Hebrew etymologies that would have no place in a modern commentary on Jeremiah. Furthermore, without the help of ancient near eastern languages, and the modern study of comparative Semitics, Jerome was forced to rely almost exclusively on context when his own knowledge was lacking and his late antique authorities conflicted. There are passages where Jerome clearly would have benefited from the modern study of Semitic languages (e.g., 4:15, 7:17–19, 15:12). In sum, despite the enduring value of his work, Jerome did not fully overcome the limitations of his time and place.

Still, Jerome's foundational role must be kept in mind when assessing his Hebrew philology. He had very little to use by way of models in applying an analytical approach to the study of the Hebrew Old Testament. It is only natural that he had shortcomings that would need to be corrected by later scholars. Overall, we are able to trace a direct line of continuity and development from Jerome to modern scholarship on the Hebrew Bible.

Second, regarding the function of the Hebrew component in Jerome's interpretive method, we may confirm in general the consensus view, that Hebrew language data serve as part of Jerome's literal explanation

of the text.[169] Throughout the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, Jerome tends to
discuss matters pertaining to regular Hebrew words when he wants to
follow the basic meaning of the text itself (*ad litteram*) according to the
historical narrative that it presupposes (*iuxta historiam*).[170] Jerome asso-
ciates Hebrew philology with historical background information (see
pp. 43–44 above), the identification of *realia* (e.g., 2:18, 19:1–3a), and
especially paraphrase (e.g., 2:33–34, 7:17–19, 9:22, 15:12, 23:18, 31:2,
32:30a), which is Jerome's primary tool for expounding the literal sense.
By "literal," however, Jerome does not mean simply the sense based on
the words, since the spiritual meaning may also be linguistically derived
(see below). Instead, Jerome seems to conceive of the meaning *ad litteram*
as being that sense which accords both with the wording of the passage
and with the context of the book as a whole. Because Jeremiah was a
prophet who condemned Judah for idolatry, warned them of the Babylo-
nian invasion, and promised national restoration, the "literal" sense will
generally have matters such as these for its subject. The spiritual sense,
by contrast, is an application of the wording or general situation of the
text to a Christian spiritual theme, often presupposing some kind of
analogy.[171] Jerome connects the spiritual sense to the translation of the
LXX (e.g., 13:18–19, 22:13–17), because this version was the church's
traditional text, upon which the traditional spiritual readings known to
Jerome had been expounded. On the whole, even in the *Commentary on
Jeremiah*, where Jerome does not usually give a double lemma,[172] one
sees a general tendency to associate the literal sense with the *hebraica
veritas* and the Christian spiritual sense with the LXX.

Yet, as Pierre Jay has noted for the *Commentary on Isaiah*, this tendency
is not absolute.[173] On the one hand, Jerome may weave the LXX into

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[169] See Vaccari, "I fattori," 472–73; Penna, *Principi e carattere*, 3, 38; Jay, *L'exégèse*,
142–47; and Pennacchio, *Propheta insaniens*, 171.

[170] The two terms most often connected to literal exegesis in Jerome are *littera* and
historia; see Jay, *L'exégèse*, 132–42. Jerome himself associated Hebrew learning with
"literal/historical" interpretation; e.g., "historiae Hebraeorum tropologiam nostrorum
miscui" (*Prol. Comm. Zach.* cf. *Comm. Zach.* 6:9–15).

[171] E.g., 4:11–12a: just as *iuxta historiam* Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, so also
iuxta tropologiam the "Adversarial Power" destroys God's church.

[172] See above n. 14.

[173] Jay, *L'exégèse*, 142–47. According to Jay, the general connection between the *hebraica
veritas* and the literal sense is based on the fact that Jerome associated the "Hebrew
truth" with Jewish exegesis, which he thought of as literal. This is undoubtedly true,
especially for Jewish exegesis appropriated positively. Yet, Jerome does not normally
link the *hebraica veritas* to "Jewish literalism" in the perjorative sense, which is often

his literal paraphrase (e.g., 2:21, 10:17–18). On the other hand, Jerome frequently draws on Hebrew proper name etymologies for the spiritual sense (e.g., 2:7, 2:18, 6:1, 17:21–27, 20:3),[174] which appears to contradict our previous observation about the association between the "Hebrew truth" and "literal" interpretation. In point of fact, the Hebrew proper name etymologies have an entirely different place in Jerome's exegesis from the rest of his Hebrew scholarship.

As we saw in the previous chapter, Jerome inherited a longstanding tradition of interest in the etymologies of Hebrew names, going back through Origen at least to Philo. Much of this material was available to Jerome in the form of *onomastica*, and he could have picked up other traditional etymologies from Greek commentaries, especially those of Origen. Proper name etymologies already served as jumping-off points for allegorical interpretation in the Greek exegetical tradition,[175] and Jerome seems to have taken over this usage into his own commentaries.[176] In other words, because the explication of Hebrew etymologies had already been established as a key component in the discovery of a "higher" sense, Jerome, whose exegesis was especially derivative in the area of spiritual interpretation, employed them for that purpose as well, even though the rest of his Hebrew scholarship operated on a different plain.

Indeed, apart from this one area, Jerome generally employs his knowledge of Hebrew to elucidate the wording of the text as part of his explanation of the contextual ("literal") meaning. When interpreting the biblical text *ad litteram*, Jerome provides whatever linguistic, contextual, or historical information necessary to be able to express the sense of the passage through paraphrase. Hebrew language issues tend to arise when something in the wording of the Hebrew needs to

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described using a term such as *carnaliter*; see *Comm. Ier.* Prol. Bk. 6; 30:18–20; 31:23–24; cf. Vaccari, "I fattori," 476–77.

[174] Cf. Jay, *L'exégèse*, 292–93; Dines, "Jerome and the Hexapla," 425; and Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 129–30.

[175] See Grabbe, *Etymology*, 19–48; R. P. C. Hanson, "Interpretations of Hebrew Names in Origen," *VC* 10 (1956): 103–23; and De Lange, *Origen*, 117–18.

[176] Jerome would have been predisposed to look for significnce in etymologies simply on the basis of his "grammatical" training; see Jullien, *Le professeurs*, 218–21; Jakobi, *Die Kunst der Exegese*, 96–102; and Mühmelt, *Griechische Grammatik*, 61–65, 73–83 (on mythological proper names). But his frequent use of proper name etymologies in spiritual exegesis suggests that the Philonic-Christian tradition was determinative for his appropriation of this aspect of *grammatice*. See also Mark Amsler, *Etymology and Grammatical Discourse in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 1989): 82–118.

be clarified before the paraphrase can be given. It is in this capacity that Jerome's Hebrew philology seems the most like modern scholarship. It is also here, in his *ad litteram* Hebrew philology, that Jerome is the most skillful and creative.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Jerome's decision to base his exegesis of the Old Testament on the Hebrew text marked his approach as unique among early Christian commentators. In addition to his *iuxta Hebraeos* translation, Jerome also put his Hebrew to use in numerous exegetical works dealing with the Old Testament, including treatments of Genesis, the Psalms, and the prophetic books. Hebrew scholarship served as the foundation for these projects. In the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, his last exegetical work, we can see clearly and fully appreciate Jerome's method as a philologist, the extent and nature of his Hebrew knowledge, and the ways in which Hebrew shaped his overall engagement with the biblical text.

Jerome's approach to scholarship developed out of the training in classical *grammatice* that he received as a youth in the school of the prominent grammarian, Aelius Donatus. The tradition of *grammatice*, understood broadly as "literary interpretation," stretched back at least to the Greek scholars who worked on classical texts in conjunction with the library at Alexandria in the third and second centuries BCE. This tradition came into the Latin world through figures such as Varro and Quintilian, and in Jerome's time was still the foundation for advanced literary education. Jerome absorbed the "grammatical" approach while at school studying pagan authors, and he also encountered this tradition in Greek form as he read Greek Christian commentators, like Origen and Diodore of Tarsus, who had already appropriated elements of this tradition for the sake of biblical interpretation. Jerome, therefore, was not the first Christian to use the tools of pagan scholarship for biblical research. Yet, as a native Latin speaker who also studied Greek and understood the complexities of linguistic exegesis, he was the first to apply his training in pagan scholarship to the study of Hebrew. The tradition of *grammatice* provided Jerome with a methodological framework for his Hebrew scholarship, showing him what kinds of questions would be profitable to ask of the text, and guiding him in how those questions could be answered.

The four parts of *grammatice*, in their Latin form as given by Varro, were *lectio* (reading aloud), *enarratio* (explanation), *emendatio* (textual

criticism), and *iudicium* (literary judgment). Each of these components impacted Jerome's Hebrew philology in some way. In particular, the aspects of each component that touch most closely on the interpretation of the text's meaning received special emphasis in Jerome's work. For example, from the practice of *lectio*, Jerome learned to pay attention not only to the sounds of words, but also to the intended tone of statements, and to the relationship between the pauses read in the text and the division of sentences into clauses. Jerome's training in *emendatio* taught him to solve exegetical difficulties by recourse to textual criticism, with the Hebrew text of his day as the standard of truth. Jerome made the most extensive use of practices associated with *enarratio*: the explanation of difficult words; the elucidation of the subject matter of the text by providing "background" information; rhetorical and grammatical analysis; and the exposition of the sense through paraphrase. Through his training in *iudicium* Jerome developed a keen sense for good style, and he applied this literary sensibility in at least a limited way to the Hebrew text of Jeremiah, offering occasional praise for the wording of passages, and drawing a stylistic comparison between the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah. Furthermore, the aspect of *iudicium* that dealt with evaluating the authenticity of works helped Jerome to see the implications of Hebrew study for the question of the "authenticity" of various disputed biblical documents, such as the *Epistle of Jeremiah*. Yet, of the components of *enarratio, iudicium* was the least prominent in Jerome's Hebrew scholarship. Although he was clearly sensitive to the Hebrew Bible as literature, and he showed some appreciation for the text on this level, Jerome did not devote much discussion in his *Commentary on Jeremiah* to such matters. Because of Jerome's overall focus on the "message" of the text, his appropriation of the classical grammatical tradition was tilted towards exegesis. Jerome applied this tradition to the explication of the Hebrew text of the Bible, using it to establish a sense that could be employed to teach doctrine and morals, and de-emphasizing matters like style and culture, which were also elements of *grammatice* as it was practiced by pagan grammarians. With this "expositional" focus within the system of *grammatice*, Jerome developed a distinctively Christian Hebrew philology.

Although Jerome owed his philological method to the pagan grammarians, he learned the Hebrew language itself primarily from Jewish sources. The nature of these sources, and Jerome's access to them, also had a profound impact on his Hebrew scholarship.

Hebrew survived as a spoken vernacular all the way down to at least the beginning of the third century CE, in the form of Middle (or "Mishnaic") Hebrew. After that time, the Jewish communities that had continued to use Hebrew as their primary daily language adopted Aramaic for this purpose, and Hebrew took a more limited role. At no point, however, did Hebrew cease to be actively employed. Evidence exists for spoken and non-academic written Hebrew in late antiquity and the Middle Ages, and the corpus of rabbinic literature itself testifies to the extensive use of Hebrew in Jerome's time for the composition and redaction of rabbinic documents, the development of the liturgy, synagogue exposition, and what underlies all of this, the reading of Scripture. From what we can tell, Hebrew reading instruction began with a thorough grounding in the alphabet, and then moved straight into reading the Hebrew Scriptures along with a teacher. The teacher would break the text up into manageable units, instruct the students on correct pronunciation, and then translate into a known language (e.g., Aramaic or Greek), in order to make clear, segment-by-segment, what the Hebrew meant. In some cases, written translations seem to have been used. Although the language had changed in various ways, the study of the Scriptures in Hebrew had continued in an unbroken chain from biblical times all the way to Jerome's day.

According to his own testimony, Jerome began his study of Hebrew with a Jewish convert to Christianity whom he met in the desert of Chalcis, having already been exposed there to the Semitic language known to him as "Syriac." Jerome began by learning the alphabet, and by the time he came to Rome in 382, he had acquired at least the rudiments of the language. During his time in Rome, Jerome continued his Hebrew studies and started to speak more confidently about the priority of the Hebrew text. By 391, Jerome began his translation of the Old Testament *iuxta Hebraeos*, which he would complete in 405, after which time he dedicated most of his exegetical efforts to the Old Testament, with the Hebrew as his base. Jerome seems to have had some contact with the Jewish communities that still used Hebrew actively: one can find in Jerome traces of his exposure both to certain liturgical practices, like chanting the Psalms, and to some non-biblical works written in Hebrew. These no doubt helped to re-enforce the Hebrew that he was learning. Nevertheless, Jerome's primary means of learning Hebrew were the personal teachers whose assistance he sought throughout his life, and the Greek hexaplaric versions, Aquila,

Symmachus, and Theodotion. The foundation for Jerome's knowledge
was laid by reading along with Jewish instructors, who could explain the
text to Jerome in Greek piece by piece. From here, Jerome developed
his comprehension, and especially his vocabulary, by reading along with
the hexaplaric versions, which he used like dictionaries.

It is significant that most of Jerome's Hebrew study took place in
Greek. He probably conversed with most of his teachers in Greek;
when they gave the meaning of a Hebrew word, they gave it in Greek.
Likewise, Jerome learned much from the Greek translations, as in
384, when he reports that he was devoting his energies to comparing
Aquila's literalistic translation with the Hebrew text. In light of this, it
is not surprising that Jerome took seriously previous Greek scholarship
on Hebrew matters, as found, for example, in the commentaries of
Eusebius and Origen, or in the *onomastica*. Throughout his life, Jerome
consulted Greek scholarship in his Hebrew philology, much like a mod-
ern scholar consults dictionaries, grammars, and concordances. In the
Commentary on Jeremiah, many of the Hebrew proper name etymologies
are also found in the *onomastica* or in Origen. For non-proper name
Hebrew words explicitly cited and discussed in the commentary, the
only written Greek sources from which Jerome seems to have drawn
are the hexaplaric versions, whose readings he cites faithfully, even to
disagree with them. In the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, Jerome employs his
own knowledge of Hebrew, acquired from Jewish teachers and from his
own extensive reading, to make intelligent use of the Greek editions:
sometimes following them, but at other times correcting them.

Jerome explicitly cites and discusses a total of seventy-six non-proper
name Hebrew words in the *Commentary on Jeremiah*. In thirty-nine cases
(group #1), the meaning that Jerome assigns to the word is matched
by one of the Greek versions, and Jerome does not say anything in
his discussion beyond what was available in Greek. In most of these
cases, Jerome does choose to follow one meaning out of multiple
Greek options, e.g., choosing to follow Aquila instead of Symmachus
or Theodotion. Although in certain instances Jerome admits that he is
not sure about the meaning of the Hebrew, one may generally assume
that Jerome's choice reflects his own personal understanding of the
Hebrew word. Yet, in these first thirty-nine cases, Jerome does not say
anything that clearly goes beyond the Greek evidence. For another group
of words, however, Jerome does go beyond the Greek: in twenty-four
instances (group #2), Jerome's rendering of the Hebrew word agrees
with one of the hexaplaric versions, either cited by him or known from

other sources, but in his discussion he gives clear evidence of having consulted the Hebrew text himself, providing details about the Hebrew that could not have been learned from the Greek translations. This leads to our final category, eleven Hebrew words explicitly cited by Jerome (group #3), for which he gives a meaning different from what is found in Greek (with two other words being possibly independent, but conclusive evidence is lacking). This final group of words demonstrates that Jerome knew Hebrew even apart from his use of the hexaplaric versions. Furthermore, within each of these groups of Hebrew words, specific examples were found of parallels between Jerome's comments and the interpretations given in rabbinic texts or in the Targum. These examples help to situate Jerome's non-Greek translations into the Hebraic/Rabbinic understanding of Hebrew in late antiquity.

Jerome learned Hebrew for the most part through Jewish sources, primarily his Jewish teachers and the Greek translations of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. The existence of translation parallels between Jerome and the hexaplaric versions does not in any way imply that Jerome could not read Hebrew, as has sometimes been suggested. Indeed, it would be odd if Jerome frequently assigned to Hebrew words meanings unknown to "the three." If one looks at Jerome's commentary, it becomes clear that he was making critical use of the Greek evidence based on his own knowledge of Hebrew. Jerome's major contribution to Hebrew philology was his combination of the Greek versions with rabbinic scholarship to form a coherent method.

Although Jerome does not discuss details of the Hebrew text for every passage, the impact of the Hebrew is felt throughout the *Commentary on Jeremiah* through the Hebrew-based translation upon which it is founded. Moreover, in most cases some issue from the Hebrew does come in for discussion, whether focusing on a specific Hebrew word, giving the general sense of the text according to the Hebrew, or reporting a quantitative difference between the Hebrew text and that of the LXX. The significance of Hebrew for Jerome's exegesis can best be seen when he chooses a specific Hebrew word for examination. In these cases, Jerome often organizes his entire discussion of the lemma around the Hebrew issue at hand.

Jerome expounded the biblical text at both the literal and spiritual levels. The literal (*ad litteram*) meaning followed the wording of the text within the flow of the book as a whole, against the backdrop of the historical narrative (*historia*) presupposed by the text. The spiritual sense (*intellegentia spiritalis, tropologia*, etc.) was an application of the wording

or situation of the passage to a Christian spiritual theme, often pre-
supposing an analogy between text and Christian application. Jerome
usually associated Hebrew language data with the literal exposition,
partly because the exegesis he had encountered among the Jews was
"literal" (i.e., it dealt with the nation of Israel, its kings, the Temple, the
Babylonians, etc.), and partly because the literal exposition was where
he explained the contextual sense of the words, for which Jerome the
"grammarian" turned to linguistic data as part of his whole philologi-
cal system.

On the other hand, Jerome generally associated the spiritual sense with
the LXX. The LXX had served as the traditional Bible of the church,
and the Christian commentaries on which Jerome relied for much
of his spiritual exposition used the LXX, or at least the Old Latin version
based upon the LXX. Yet, far from being non-textual, Christian spiritual
exegesis was often based on a very careful reading of the details of the
text. In this regard, Hebrew proper name etymologies had served as a
possible source for "higher" interpretation all the way back through the
Christian tradition to Philo. Hebrew etymologies had served as jumping-
off points for allegory in Origen, and Jerome for his part continued this
practice. Thus, although Jerome usually dealt with Hebrew language
data as part of his literal exposition, guided in this by his training in
grammatice, he frequently appealed to Hebrew proper name etymologies
for the sake of spiritual or allegorical interpretation.

Viewed from a modern perspective, the interpretations that Jerome
derived from Hebrew etymologies seem unsuitable to proper philological
method. Yet, much of Jerome's work on the Hebrew text of Jeremiah
at the literal level compares favorably with modern scholarship on the
book. To be sure, Jerome's absolute confidence in the originality of
his Hebrew text *vis-à-vis* the text represented by the LXX cannot be
sustained, and he would have benefited greatly from today's knowledge
of comparative Semitics. But often Jerome's solution to a difficulty in
the Hebrew concurs with the decisions of modern commentators, or
at least is one of the options supported today. Even when Jerome does
not seem to get the right answer, his observations frequently move in
the right direction, or else he reports information that modern com-
mentators have used to explain the issue. The principles and tools that
Jerome learned from the "grammatical" tradition infused his Hebrew
philology with credibility and enduring value. Although he certainly
could miss the mark on particular passages, Jerome's work on the

Hebrew text reflects that of a competent Hebrew scholar whose literary and critical sensibilities are much like our own.

The quality of Hebrew scholarship found in Jerome's Old Testament commentaries has important implications for the modern study of the Hebrew Bible. Jerome's exegetical works contain important ancient traditions related to the Hebrew text; furthermore, these traditions are presented by Jerome in a systematic fashion, that is, organized around the biblical text and critically analyzed. Although not all of the perspectives on philological matters from late antiquity are valid (in fact, the evidence is not always uniform), there are a great number of highly plausible readings of the Hebrew text found in the ancient witnesses. It would, of course, be ill advised to neglect modern discoveries in comparative Semitics and read the Hebrew Bible exclusively through Jerome, the Rabbis, and the ancient versions. One might argue that such a procedure would not even be in keeping with Jerome's own principles of comprehensive research. At the same time, the interpretations of the Hebrew text found in Jerome (and other ancient sources) should certainly be given no less attention than is given, for example, to the vocalizations found in Medieval Masoretic manuscripts. Modern scholarship on the Hebrew Bible should take seriously the traditions of late antiquity. For these traditions, Jerome is one of the most valuable resources.

Jerome's importance to the history of Christian Hebraism cannot be overemphasized. He collected all the information he could from the Greek sources available to him, and added to this all that he learned from the Jews of his day. In the Middle Ages, Jerome's work became a major resource for the study of the Hebrew text. Later, his curiosity and diligence served as an example to Christian Hebraists of the Renaissance. Even today, Jerome remains an important witness to the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in antiquity. The extent of his researches into the Hebrew of the Old Testament makes him unique among early Christian interpreters. Although in other respects Jerome's exegesis can appear derivative and eclectic, in the area of Hebrew philology Jerome is indeed original and exhibits a remarkable coherence of method.

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INDEX OF ANCIENT SOURCES

1. *Bible*

Old Testament

New Testament

Pseudepigrapha

2. Greek and Latin Authors and Works

3. *Rabbinic Works*

GENERAL INDEX