"… IBI ET COR TUUM" (Jer. *Ep*. 22.30): ROMAN CHRISTIAN TOPOGRAPHY AND STATEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN IDENTITY IN JEROME[1]

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Abstract: Arguing that Jerome's famous dream (Ep. 22.30) constitutes a significant statement of authorial Christian identity this paper contextualises that passage within wider contemporary discourse. The intersection of Church politics and monumental building is examined, specifically the construction of S. Paolo fuori le mura and the development of a network of martyr shrines. Having established the extent to which Jerome's dream engages with this Roman-Christian topography the paper will consider similarities between this passage and two others from Jerome's epistolary canon, Epp. 22.26 and 60.18.

In 382 Jerome moved to Rome, where he was to stay for nearly three years as bishop Damasus' secretary.[2] As part of his literary activity during that period he sent letters to a circle of noble Roman Christian women advising them on Christian teaching and Biblical interpretation.[3] Arguing that Christian discourse on space and the sacred was of particular importance to Damasus' episcopate I will attempt in this article to show how Damasus' changes to the topography of Rome can be seen to resonate with the issues and language in particular of *Ep*. 22.30, which I will single out as an example of Jerome's literary activity in Rome during that time. After examining the passage I

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[1] This article grew out of my M.Phil. thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham, UK in October 2006. I am very grateful to Dr. Mary Harlow, my supervisor at Birmingham, for the kind guidance she gave me during the composition of my degree, and to my external examiners and the 'Religion in Late Antiquity' seminar group at Cardiff who offered careful thoughts and comments. Needless to say, any errors in this paper are entirely mine.

[2] Compare Hier. *Ep*. 123.9.1 (CSEL 56:82): *Ante annos plurimos, cum in chartis ecclesiasticis iuuarem Damasum, romanae urbis episcopum, et orientis atque occidentis synodicis consultationibus responderem...*; J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome. His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London, 1975) 80-90; S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis* (Stuttgart, 1992) 142-153.

[3] For details compare Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis*, 154-180.

shall draw attention to some other passages, which will allow me to expand further on my theme.

Jerome produced *Ep*. 22 in 384, during his time in Rome. The letter, the longest in Jerome's epistolary canon, is addressed to Eustochium, the daughter of his long time friend and protégé, Paula.[4] John Kelly saw this letter as part of a campaign to promote asceticism in which Jerome engaged during his time in Rome; it was not intended as private correspondence, but rather as a platform to set out his vision of what ascetic Christianity should entail. As the subtitle of his commentary suggests, Neil Adkin is going even further and considers *Ep*. 22 as a manual of the virginal life with which Jerome tried to raise his profile as an ascetic teacher. In this work Jerome offers his addressee examples of 'incorrect' behaviour, which he castigates in high rhetorical style,[5] before presenting her with historical instances of behaviour which he hopes she will mimic.[6] A recurring theme is the juxtaposition between things of the world and things of the spirit, as Jerome notes towards the beginning of the letter,[7] with particular emphasis on those who are virgins 'in the flesh, not in the spirit.'[8] Similarly, Jerome is at pains to point out how the actions of the body will have direct consequences on the spirit of the virgin.[9] Throughout the piece Christian and non-Christian literary traditions are conflated. While in Kelly's opinion the letter is broadly 'discursive and lacking in regular plan,'[10] Adkin has divided it into two broad sections. The first deals with temptation, the second with 'general conduct'. Chapter 30 falls midway through the second part.[11] In this chapter Jerome relates an account of a dream he experienced in which he was brought before a tribunal and ordered to confess his faith. The judge denied that Jerome was a Christian, labelled him a 'Ciceronian', and ordered him to

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[4] Compare Kelly, *Jerome* 100-101; for an introduction and commentary see now also N. Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity. A Commentary on the Libellus de Virginitate Servanda (Letter 22)* (Cambridge, 2003).

[5] Note Adkin's characterisation of *Ep*. 22 as 'a masterpiece of rhetorical virtuosity' (*Jerome on Virginity*, 59).

[6] For 'sham' virgins see e.g. *Ep*. 22.5-6 (CSEL 54:150); for historical precedents (Virgin Mary) *Ep*. 22.31-2 (CSEL 54:190-192). Particularly striking are the comparisons between the wealth of Roman ladies and the poverty of Christ 'naked and dying' (*Ep*. 22.32), and Jerome's remarks about the clergy of Rome (*Ep*. 22.28 [CSEL 54:186]). J. Curran provides a detailed examination of the Christian milieu in Rome with express reference to this letter, which is awash with cutting satirical observations; see J. Curran, 'Jerome and the Sham Christians of Rome,' in: *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48 (1998) 213-227.

[7] *Ep*. 22.3 (CSEL 54:146): *Quamdiu hoc fragili corpusculo continemur, quamdiu habemus thesaurum istum in uasis fictilibus et concupiscit spiritus aduersus carnem et caro aduersus spiritum, nulla est certa uictoria.*

[8] *Ep*. 22.5 (CSEL 54:150).

[9] Compare e.g. *Ep*. 22.17 (CSEL 54:165) on incorrect fasting practices leading to lust, or *Ep*. 22.18 (CSEL 54:167) on the mutual exclusiveness of being married to Christ and being married to a man. For more analysis of the spirit-body dichotomy present in the letter, including Jerome's erotically charged use of the *Song of Songs* see P. Cox Miller, 'The Blazing Body: Ascetic Desire in Jerome's Letter to Eustochium,' in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 1 (1993) 21-45.

[10] Kelly, *Jerome* 101.

[11] Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, 10-11.

be beaten. Unseen intercessors pleaded with the judge and Jerome was allowed to go free after making a vow regarding the status of non-Christian texts.[12]

Two specific elements of the dream story contain material which seems particular to the time and place in which it was composed, and merit further examination here. Several commentators have noted similarities of the account with martyr narratives.[13] At the same time it has been suggested that the purpose of the dream narrative is some sort of exposition of Jerome's attitude to non-Christian literature.[14] While there is some disagreement as to why Jerome expressed himself using the language of martyrdom and what exactly the dream tells us about the Classical canon all commentators would still agree with Pease's seasoned statement that Letter 22 expresses a 'definite moral purpose'.[15] Whatever its multifaceted literary purpose, the letter was a comment on and criticism of contemporary attitudes, and if we wish to understand the meaning of these two elements of the dream narrative then we must also contextualise it within the discourse on which Jerome was drawing and the place in which he was writing it.[16]

Rome in the early 380s was a city with a rich spatial discourse to which Christians had begun to make significant contributions. Krautheimer estimates that by the time Constantine entered Rome in 312 approximately a third of the city was Christian.[17] And, characteristically, the Roman church throughout the fourth century was multi-centred. Before the construction of the Lateran and other Constantinian churches the prime sites of attendance were often private residences, dubbed *tituli* after the name plate that identified the owner of the property.[18] As late as the fifth century a list of Roman presbyters produced at a synod identifies them both by their name and by their *titulus*.[19] Thus even after the construction of great churches these pre-Constantinian buildings were still in use. Baldovin has speculated that the fluidity of Roman worship

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[12] *Ep.* 22.30 (CSEL 54:191): *Ego, qui tanto constrictus articulo uellem etiam maiora promittere, deiurare coepi et nomen eius obtestans dicere: 'domine, si umquam habuero codices saeculares, si legero, te negaui.'*

[13] Compare e.g. Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, 292; B. Shaw, 'Judicial Nightmares and Christian Memory,' in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11 (2003) 533-563, 547-548; M. Allen, 'The Martyrdom of Jerome,' in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3 (1995) 211-213.

[14] Compare N. Adkin, '"Adultery of the Tongue": Jerome, Epist. 22.29.6f.,' in: *Hermes* 121 (1993) 100-108; H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics: A Study of the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers* (Gotenburg, 1958) 311; Miller, 'The Blazing Body,' 40; Shaw, 'Judicial Nightmares,' 147; D. Wiesen, *St. Jerome as a Satirist: A Study of Christian Latin Thought and Letters* (New York, 1964) 126 note 52; A.S. Pease, 'The Attitude of Jerome Towards Pagan Literature,' in: *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 50 (1919) 150-167.

[15] Pease, 'The Attitude of Jerome Towards Pagan Literature,' 155.

[16] My use of the word 'discourse' or 'Christian discourse' does not mean that I deny the plurality of discourses, but rather that I intend the term 'discourse' to carry a sense of the many varied and competing manners of expression that combine to make a nexus of 'discourses'. In deploying the term in this way I am following the work of Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire. The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley, CA, 1991).

[17] R. Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City* (Princeton, 2000) 18.

[18] Compare J. Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship in Jerusalem, Rome and Constantinople from the Fourth to the Tenth Centuries* (PhD, Yale, 1982) 161; Krautheimer, *Rome* 18.

[19] Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 173.

shown by these buildings suggests a tradition stemming back to persecution by the civil authorities.[20] Considering late antique prescriptions against heretics Maier has argued that the focus of a persecuted group on a private space perpetuated a sense of community among that group.[21] That particular *tituli* represented specific communities is hinted at by their locations; unevenly distributed through the densest neighbourhoods the *tituli* were site-specific areas of worship.[22] Significantly, Krautheimer dubs them 'community centres'.[23] The presence of *tituli* in Rome is one of the clearest signs that Roman Christianity during that period was multi-centred, and it suggests – to use a relatively new and not entirely unproblematic concept – a corresponding diversity of 'Christian identities'.

Intriguingly, Jerome hints at this household worship in his commemoration of Lea when he refers to her as *monasterii princeps*.[24] The letter also begins with a reference to his own private, domestic, Biblical study when he remembers explaining the Psalms to Paula: 'We had begun to read the Psalms and were convened to teach.'[25] Maier has speculated that aristocratic ascetic households, such as the one that is referred to in this passage, offered the opportunity of resistance (against officialdom) and of asserting and professing an individual Christianity.[26] Thus Christianity in late fourth-century Rome was multi-centred. In *Ep.* 23 Jerome refers to two domestic conventicles of private Christian worship, and we can assume that there were more.

Further differentiations within the Christian community at Rome are witnessed by the continued dispute over the episcopacy. Salzman has noted that the growth of Christianity among the elite of Rome did not necessarily do a great deal to break down their traditional roles as patrons: 'Christian bishops and leaders of this time sought to create a "fit" between Christian and aristocratic attitudes, values, beliefs … [or] *mentalité.*'[27] After the death of Julius the two rival claimants to the episcopate, Liberius and Felix, became associated with specific areas of the city.[28] For example, upon his return from exile in 358 Liberius constructed a basilica near the market of Livia. It has recently been suggested that the construction of this church should be linked to similar benedictions made by Julius in the same area and that continuing Julius' building program was a significant element in Liberius' claims to legitimacy.[29] The dispute between Liberius and Felix was perpetuated after Liberius' death in the

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[20] Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 255.

[21] H. Maier, 'The Topography of Heresy and Dissent in Late Fourth-Century Rome,' in: *Historia* 44 (1995) 232-249, 243.

[22] Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 254.

[23] Krautheimer, *Rome* 18.

[24] *Ep.* 23.2 (CSEL 54:212*): Ita eam totam ad dominum fuisse conuersam, ut monasterii princeps, mater uirginum fieret.*

[25] *Ep.* 23.1 (CSEL 54:211): *Legere coepissemus et docere cogeremur.*

[26] H. Maier, 'Private Space as the Social Context of Arianism in Ambrose's Milan,' in: *The Journal of Theological Studies* 45 (1994) 72-93, 77.

[27] M. Salzman, 'Elite Realities and Mentalités: The Making of a Western Christian Aristocracy,' in: *Arethusa* 33 (2000) 347-362, 355.361.

[28] J. Curran, *Rome. Pagan City and Christian Capital* (Oxford, 2000) 130.

[29] Curran, *Rome* 136-137.

election of Damasus and Ursinus in 366. Curran notes that the appearance of Ursinus' supporters in the *basilica Iuli* to demand Ursinus' election shows a link between the physical possession of certain Christian holy sites and authority within the Christian community.[30] Damasus' supporters, by contrast, formed a nucleus of strength in a *titulus* before moving on to take the Lateran. What is striking about this dispute is how the territorial possession held by Damasus and Ursinus corresponded to that held by Liberius and Felix. One held the majority of the city, the other gathered his supporters across the Tiber.[31]

While the third quarter of the fourth century was witness to two separate disputes over episcopal elections, the similarities regarding topographical power bases seem to indicate that these disputes were subsumed within one broad conflict enacted between different factions of the city. The role of members of the aristocracy in this dispute is hinted at in the account of a massacre of supporters of Ursinus in which the assailants are described as *quadrigarii* and *arenarii*.[32] Cracco Ruggini asserts that Damasus' income alone would not have been enough to pay for this support, and suggests that he must have the backing of other rich aristocrats.[33] It would seem then that Damasus' election to the episcopate was due in no small part to the traditional patronage systems which Salzman claims continued when Christianity became socially and politically more prevalent in Rome, and that the actions of Damasus' supporters were just one aspect of aristocratic factional fighting originating in pre-Damasian times. They fought using the names of the very same charioteers' on whom the nobles so enjoyed betting.[34]

In a city torn apart by competing Christian factions the influence of aristocratic patronage seems to have played a significant role in the election of the bishop and it is with this in mind that we should observe Damasus' episcopacy. Particular attention should be paid to the growth of martyr shrines and to the construction of the church of S. Paolo fuori le mura. The martyr shrines constructed by Damasus were adorned with verse inscriptions that Dennis Trout has described as 'an unabashed assertion of Roman primacy ... whose hagiographic poetry constructed models of episcopal leadership and church unity deemed apposite for a Christian flock rent by schism and discord.'[35] The *epigrammata* (Trout refers to them as *elogia*) were composed by the bishop and expensively carved. The *Liber Pontificalis* states that 'here he searched for and discovered the bodies of many saints and also celebrated them in verses'[36] and it seems that these *epigrammata* were the proof of Damasus' intention to eulogise Christian martyrs in the Roman hinterland.[37] As each martyr was 'discovered', they

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[30] Curran, *Rome* 138-139.

[31] Curran, *Rome* 139.

[32] Compare L. Cracco Ruggini, 'Rome in Late Antiquity: Clientship, Urban Topography and Prosopography,' in: *Classical Philology* 98 (2003) 366-382, 373.

[33] Cracco Ruggini, 'Rome in Late Antiquity,' 374.

[34] Cracco Ruggini, 'Rome in Late Antiquity,' 376.

[35] D. Trout, 'Damasus and the Invention of Early Christian Rome,' in: *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33 (2003) 517-537, 518.

[36] *Liber Pontificalis* 1.39 (ed. T. Mommsen, *MGH. Gesta Pontificum I. Liber Pontificalis* [Berlin 1898] 83.34-35): *hic multa corpora sanctorum requisiuit et inuenit, quorum etiam uersibus declarauit.*

[37] Curran, *Rome* 148-149.

were commemorated with a structure and an epigram. These 'verses', rich in allusions to Virgil and Ovid, commemorate the passions of the Roman martyrs thereby '[dressing] a peripheral early Christian subculture in the ... language of classical poetry'[38] and creating Christian myths of a united Roman Church. Thus in the wake of his disputed succession Damasus consciously fostered an image of Roman Christianity that was united, permanent and bound to Augustan pagan literature. In Curran's view 'Damasus was appealing for an end to the kind of divisions which had tarnished his own and Liberius' episcopates.'[39] And Salzman observes that the elites of Late Antiquity still clung to the Classical canon.[40] Indeed the various extant artefacts that display a mixture of pagan and Christian influence suggest an attitude to these traditions that can be called syncretistic.[41] The Classical allusions present in the epigrams' 'appeal' indicate that the audience Damasus wished to reach was the aristocratic stratum of Rome, the progenitors of factional fighting. The fact that Damasus presented this 'Christianisation' through topographic statements is another indication of the importance of space and location to Christian identity in Rome and to his own episcopal election.

The pattern of Christian burial in the Roman suburbs demonstrates an internalisation of this appeal to unity. Spera has noted a distinct change in elite Roman attitudes to their own burial places.[42] Before the fourth century, elite Romans built mausoleums on private property in the suburbs, but the growth of Christian ownership of suburban land curtailed this practice and building began inside collective cemeteries. The tombs of members of the elites maintained markings of status and wealth, but the main determinant of the status of the grave seems to have been its proximity to the tomb of a martyr.[43] The influence of martyr shrines in the location of these tombs is a further indication of the importance of topography to Christian identity in late fourth century Rome. The shift in burial patterns demonstrates how Damasus' Romanisation of the martyrs conflated with aristocratic traditions of wealth and prestige to create a highly nuanced discourse that placed elite culture and martyrdom within a sacred nexus. This nexus was then internalised and expressed topographically through the construction of a prestigious tomb.

Another case where it is possible to see this unifying discourse in operation is in the construction of S. Paolo fuori le mura, 'the most important and conspicuous church building of ... late fourth century [Rome].'[44] The building of this church of Paul is

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[38] Trout, 'Damasus and the Invention of Early Christian Rome,' 523.

[39] Curran, *Rome* 153.

[40] Salzman, 'Elite Realities and Mentalités,' 353.

[41] An example of such syncretism can be found on the Projecta Casket, in which a scene from the Toilet of Venus is placed above an inscription containing the phrase *'vivatis in Christo'*; see for this J. Elsner, 'Art and Architecture,' in: A. Cameron, P. Garnsey (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History XIII. The Late Empire (AD 337-425)* (Cambridge, 1998) 746.

[42] L. Spera, 'The Christianisation of Space along the Via Appia: Changing Landscape in the Suburbs of Rome,' in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 107 (2003) 23-43.

[43] Spera, 'The Christianisation of Space, 35.

[44] Krautheimer, *Rome* 42. Stephen Cooper (*Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians* [Oxford, 2005] 41-87) incorporates a useful chapter on St. Paul in fourth-century Roman art noting how images of Paul in iconography stress *concordia* between Peter and Paul as well as evolving through our period

symptomatic of a shift in Christian thought during this period. A movement towards regarding Peter and Paul in concord demanded a dedication to Paul as striking as that offered to Peter.[45] The building of the church was commissioned by the three emperors ruling at the time (Gratian, Valentinian II and Theodosius I). Though scholars disagree over the extent of Damasus' involvement in the project,[46] there is agreement that the bishop's influence in the construction of the church can be seen in the way that it appears to echo elements of contemporary Roman Christianity. For example, Curran has noted how the belief of a concord between Peter and Paul (themselves two rivals for honour of being first Bishop of Rome) was useful to Damasus in his attempts to bring unity in the wake of his dispute with Ursinus.[47] On a similar theme, the columns of the aisle are newly carved in a Corinthian style and reflect a 'new, classical emphasis in Roman church design.'[48] The decision to carve new columns in a classical style should be compared with the use of classical quotations on Damasian *epigrammata*.[49] The tacit evocation of Christian unity and the use of the Classical past suggests that the same audience intended for the *epigrammata* of the martyr tombs also influenced the construction of S. Paolo fuori le mura.

The presence of *tituli*, domestic ascetic communities and generations of episcopal disputes outline the importance of space and location to Roman Christians in the fourth century. The development of topographic significance and the formation of Christian

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to show Peter and Paul as recipients of Christ's Law in the *traditio legis* scene (55). Another form of Pauline iconography is the *Christus Magister* scene in the Domitilla, in which Peter and Paul stand by Christ's side as he teaches the other apostles and disciples. Paul is recognisable by his balding head and long pointed beard causing Cooper to connect him with the pre-Christian philosopher-teacher, the *doctor mundi*. The development of the concepts of *concordia* and the *magister Paulus* scenes are likely linked to orthodox Christian responses to the challenge posed by heretical sects like the Marcionites and the Manicheans. Theodore De Bruyn (*Pelagius' Commentary on St. Paul's epistle to the Romans* [Oxford, 1993] 15) speculates that '[the] conflict with the Manichees may, in fact, have contributed to the "renaissance" of Pauline studies.' According to this model, assertion and propagation of the ideas of *concordia* between Peter and Paul (and hence between Church tradition and teaching) were orthodox responses to heretics' claims of superior gnosis derived from interpretations of Paul and non-canonical texts. It should therefore be acknowledged here that Damasus' construction of San Paolo fuori le mura also owes something to this conflict between groups claiming authority in Pauline interpretation, as well as the aristocratic influences noted above. The aristocrats were not the only people to form factions in Rome.

[45] Krautheimer, *Rome* 42. The same wish to portray concord between the apostles would lead Jerome to his dispute with Augustine over Jerome's commentary on *Galatians* (Hier. *Ep.* 56.3; compare Kelly, *Jerome* 118; St. Rebenich, *Jerome* [London, 2002] 45), in which he argued that the dispute between Peter and Paul in Gal 2:11-14 was staged. For the differences and similarities of design between St. Peter's and S. Paolo fuori le mura see R. Krautheimer, S. Corbett, A.K. Frazer, *Corpus Basilicorum Christianorum Romae* V (Vatican City, 1977) 281-285.

[46] See e.g. the contrast between Curran, *Rome* 146 and Krautheimer, *Rome* 42.

[47] Curran, *Rome* 152-153.

[48] Krautheimer, *Rome* 43-45.

[49] In depth discussion of the columns can be found in Krautheimer et al., *Corpus Basilicorum* 118-124. For further discussion on the re-use of classical architecture (and *spolia* in particular) see B. Brenk, 'Spolia from Constantinople to Charlemagne: Aesthetics versus Ideology,' in: *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41 (1987) 103-189, and M. Jones, 'Genesis and Mimesis: The Design of the Arch of Constantine in Rome,' in: *Journal of Architectural Historians* 59 (2000) 50-77 (and their bibliographies).

identity were clearly interconnected, as is illustrated by the circumstances of Damasus' construction of martyr shrines complete with *epigrammata*. This monumental building programme was a topographic articulation of a Roman Christian identity based on martyrdom and pre-Christian Latin literature and art. This identity was then internalised and typified by the changes in burial pattern and the construction of S. Paolo fuori le mura. The unification of Roman Christianity undertaken by Damasus was based on an exploitation of pre-existing Roman discourse on space and the overlaying of that discourse with Damasus' own vision of what Roman Christianity should be.

This contemporary discourse on identity, martyrdom and the classical canon is the background to Jerome's time in Rome and is the compositional context of *Ep*. 22. As has already been noted, the epistle was addressed to noble Roman Christian women. In this series of prescriptions, warnings and exhortations the dream stands out through its use of narrative. The oneiric setting of the narrative is a striking literary device, and, as many commentators have noted, the connection between sleep and visions is a recurring theme in ancient Christianity and can be traced back to pre-Christian antecedents.[50] When Jerome finds himself before the tribunal it is significant that the judge and the observers are never seen. The light is so bright that Jerome dare not look up from his prone position. This combination of oneiric setting and restriction of visual contact with the protagonists grant the passage a disturbing and ethereal mood. The mysteries of this dream and its obvious importance in the argument of *Ep*. 22 have excited commentators, who have generally addressed themselves to working out what its 'moral purpose' might be.

In recent years Neil Adkin has denied that the dream is principally about Jerome's use of the classical canon[51] or over-eloquence[52] and has instead argued that the dream actually concerns the assiduous study of the Bible he undertook from then on.[53] In this case the crux of the dream lies in the line, 'and thereafter I read the divine [books] with more eagerness than I had previously read mortal ones' (*et tanto dehinc studio diuina legisse, quanto mortalia ante non legeram*).[54] With this the dream account concludes

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[50] For example, in his classic discussion of Gregory the Great's *Vision of St. Benedict* Pierre Courcelle notes that the phrase '*intempesta noctis hora*' is instrumental in setting the scene for Benedict's vision, as it evokes a host of connotations with previous Latin works connecting night-time and sleep with increased understanding of spiritual mysteries (*La consolation de philosophie dans la tradition littéraire: antécédents et postérité de Boèce* [Paris, 1967] 357). More recently, Shaw ('Judicial Nightmares') has drawn out the importance of literary representations of dreams in the construction of a 'social memory' of the martyr passions. Erin Ronnse ('Rhetoric of Martyrs: Listening to Saints Perpetua and Felicitas,' in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 14 (2006) 283-327, 292-293) cautions that ancient dream theory was complex, and preconceived notions of the significance of dreams to ancient writers can encourage the modern commentator to miss the subtleties of dream narratives.

[51] Compare N. Adkin, 'Some Notes on the Dream of St. Jerome,' in: *Philologus* 128 (1984) 119-126; 'Some Features of Jerome's Compositional Technique in the *Libellus de Virginitate Servanda* (Epist. 22),' in: *Philologus* 136 (1992) 234-255; 'Jerome's Use of Scripture Before and After His Dream,' in: *Illinois Classical Studies* 20 (1995) 183-190; 'Jerome's Vow "Never to Reread the Classics": Some Observations,' in: *Revue des études anciennes* 101 (1999) 161-167.

[52] Adkin, 'Adultery of the Tongue,' 103.

[53] Adkin, 'Jerome's Use of Scripture,' 183.

[54] *Ep*. 22.30 (CSEL 54:191.11).

and the significance which Adkin attaches to this line is backed up with references to increased scriptural quotations after the time of the supposed dream.[55] Thus the vow in the dream is reduced to little more than a *somnii sponsio*, a rhetorical flourish.[56] However, in the dream Jerome appears to relate reading explicitly with identity. The judge's charge against him directly addresses which texts he reads most closely and, consequently, whose tenets he follows with more alacrity: *Mentiris, ait, Ciceronianus es non Christianus*.[57] And his vow at the end of the chapter links reading with the power to deny the Lord: *Domine, si unquam habuero codices saeculares, si legero, te negaui*.[58] These themes of identity are expressed in a reference to Matthew 6:21 (which incidentally is also taken from a manual on how to live the Christian life: the Sermon on the Mount): 'In the place where your treasure is, there is also your heart (*ubi enim thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum*).[59] If, as Adkin suggests, the dream is about reading and understanding texts, then Jerome also leads us to believe that the texts which we read are crucial for the formation of our identities.

It is in this context that Adkin's observations on Jerome's compositional technique should be considered. Salzman has noted the continued importance of the classical canon and of classical *paideia* to late antique aristocracy,[60] and this observation is also implicit in Adkin's assertion that Jerome's Latin style was primarily designed to impress.[61] In an informative article Adkin picks apart the construction of *Ep*. 22, developing understanding of the manner in which Jerome conflates Biblical and Classical texts. Having observed how Jerome derived parts of his work from (among others) Athanasius, Terence, Ignatius, and Tertullian,[62] he concludes that Jerome was conspicuously lacking in 'originality of form', even by the standards of his own, imitative day.[63] In Adkin's eyes the derivative nature of Jerome's works was disingenuous in the extreme and amounted to little more than wholesale plagiarism and 'pilfered tinsel'.[64] It cannot be denied that Jerome's compositional technique in *Ep*. 22 and other works involves a form of literary piracy. But Adkin shows little desire to contextualise Jerome outside his scholarly influences and hence his suggestion that Jerome's 'own intellectual inadequacy'[65] led him to plagiarise the work of others rests on uncertain foundations. What proof is there for such an assumption?

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[55] Adkin, 'Jerome's Use of Scripture,' 189.

[56] Adkin, 'Jerome's Use of Scripture,' 184; 'Jerome's Vow,' 166. The phrase *somnii sponsio* occurs in the *Apologia aduersus libros Rufini* 1.30-31 (CCSL 79:12): *dixi me saeculares litteras non lecturum: de futuro sponsio est, non praeteritae memoriae abolitio ... tu a me somnii exigis sponsionem , ego te uerius strictius que conueniam*.

[57] *Ep*. 22.30 (CSEL 54:190.11).

[58] *Ep*. 22.30 (CSEL 54:191.4).

[59] *Ep*. 22.30 (CSEL 54:190.11).

[60] Salzman, 'Elite Realities and Mentalités,' 353; compare for this now also C. Chin, *Grammar and Christianity in the Late Roman World* (Philadelphia, 2008).

[61] Adkin, 'Jerome's Vow,' 164.

[62] Adkin, 'Some Features of Jerome's Compositional Technique,' 235.236.247-248.

[63] Adkin, 'Some Features of Jerome's Compositional Technique,' 254.

[64] Adkin, 'Some Features of Jerome's Compositional Technique,' 251.252.

[65] Adkin, 'Some Features of Jerome's Compositional Technique,' 252.

If Adkin's contentions are examined in the light of the context of the composition of *Ep*. 22, it is possible to develop a slightly more sympathetic, or at least more comprehensible, view of Jerome's motivations. As has been shown above, Jerome lived in Rome during a time when a bishop with a power base in a certain aristocratic faction was trying to legitimise his authority through the creation of a specifically Roman and Christian hinterland. It is evident from the *epigrammata* produced by Damasus and the foundation of S. Paolo fuori le mura that the discourse of the time was shading towards a consolidation of Christian tradition with the pagan canon. The discussion of identity that forms the backbone of the dream (*Christianum me esse respondit … mentiris, ait, Ciceronianus es non Christianus*) should be considered as part of this specifically Roman discourse. In the light of this it becomes even more significant that Jerome should have been dubbed '*Ciceronianus*'. This is the first time ever in the history of literary discipleship that this expression was used. While bearing in mind Eleanor Leach's warning that reconstructions of the interrelationship of ancient culture must impose 'historical probability as a limit on such reconstructions'[66] it is nevertheless possible to draw tentative parallels between Jerome's use of the Classical canon in his adornment of his Christian text and Damasus' decoration of the tombs of the martyrs and Paul with Classicising epigrams and Corinthian columns.

Part of the Damasian attempt to create a Christian identity that was Roman was the prominence of martyrdom in Roman Christian identity, and it is significant that the discourse of martyrdom is present in *Ep*. 22.30 in the form of the martyr-derivative language of the work. As both Allen and Adkin have noted, the language of martyrdom infused the dream narrative. Allen pointed out that the pattern of the dream mirrors Christ's trial (the presentation before the tribunal; the demand of *condicio*; the scourging; the return to life)[67] while Adkin has noted that the demand for a *condicio* (*interrogatus condicionem christianum me esse respondi*)[68] has a technical sense connected to 'confessing' one's religion while Jerome's response was 'the martyr's standard reply'.[69] It is striking that both Damasus' monuments and Jerome's text represent a conflation of Classical art and the theme of Roman Christian martyrdom. While it may be going too far to say that one was influenced by the other it is clear that both belong to a specific socio-geographical framework.

Through this consideration of the wider Roman context of *Ep*. 22.30 it is possible to utilise the dream passage to reveal the 'moral purpose' that led to its composition. In his analysis of Christian judicial nightmares Shaw denied that Jerome's narrative was self-fashioning.[70] Shaw, however, was concerned rather with the tropes of the dream, the martyr narrative, and in this case the dream of Jerome is derivative. Reading the passage with reference to Damasus' Christianisation project I suggest that Jerome's dream narrative is indeed self-fashioning, in the manner in which it allows Jerome to

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[66] E.W. Leach, *The Rhetoric of Space: Literary and Artistic Representation of Landscape in Republican and Augustan Rome* (Princeton, 1988) 4.

[67] Allen, 'The Martyrdom of Jerome,' 212.

[68] *Ep*. 22.30 (CSEL 54:190.10).

[69] Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, 292.

[70] Shaw, 'Judicial Nightmares,' 548.

critique the classicising elements of aristocratic Christian discourse and effectively to address these identity issues. The text allows Jerome the arena in which to respond to the Damasian discourse, and the consolidation of this discourse is cemented with the phrase, *ubi enim thesaurus tuus, ibi et cor tuum*.[71] The references to Classical, Biblical and Patristic texts which Adkin derides as 'pilfered tinsel' should perhaps be seen as evidence that Jerome was quite comfortable with their use in his reaction to aristocratic Christian discourse in Damasian Rome. He was able to use all resources at his disposal safe in the knowledge that in his heart his treasure would always be *diuina*.

The preceding analysis of *Ep*. 22.30 has suggested that the focus of this chapter on text and tradition bears comparison with contemporary topographic developments in Rome; the discussion of Christian identity that takes place in this dream should therefore be contextualised within this wider discourse. The multiple themes of place, text, and identity in *Ep*. 22.30 are attendant upon wider contemporary events, in particular Damasus' expression of Roman Christianity, for example through the construction of martyr shrines and of S. Paolo fuori le mura. Given the significance of topographic statements of identity in fourth-century Christianity and also Jerome's susceptibility to contemporary discourse on Christian identity it might be useful to investigate the manner in which Jerome deploys topographic description in his own Epistles. In the following discussion of *Ep*. 60.18 and *Ep*. 22.26 two descriptions of buildings will be examined and contextualised in order to explore further this discourse of identity, text and tradition.

Ep. 60, Jerome's famous *consolatio* addressed to Heliodorus, bishop of Altinum, on the death of his nephew Nepotianus,[72] reaches its climax with an expansion of Jerome's authorial eye to peruse all the ills of the world. Jerome begins the passage by recalling Xerxes inspection of his army: 'Xerxes the most powerful king … looking from high ground upon the untold host (*Xerxes, ille rex potentissimus … cum de sublimi loco infinitam hominum multitudinem et innumerabilem uidisset exercitum*).[73] The perhaps not immediately obvious purpose of this passage is to demonstrate that raising oneself improves one's aspect. That this is indeed the purpose of the passage becomes clearer as the text continues: 'Oh, if we could but get up into a watch-tower so high that from it we might behold the whole earth spread out under our feet in order that I could show you the ruins of the world.[74]

Jerome's imaginary ascent into the watchtower in this passage reduces the expanse of the world to an easily conceivable size. In his manipulation of distance, aspect and scale this passage presents an impossible image.[75] This creation of a world where things

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[71] *Ep*. 22.30 (CSEL 54:190.11).

[72] The definitive study of the letter is by J. H. D. Scourfield, *Consoling Heliodorus. A Commentary on Jerome Letter 60* (Oxford, 1993); for the passage discussed below compare pp. 223-224.

[73] *Ep*. 60.18 (CSEL 54:573.6); for the classical source (Herod. 7.44-6) and the possible reception of the story in other ancient consolatory writings see Scourfield, *Consoling Heliodorus*, 223.

[74] *Ep*. 60.18 (CSEL 54:573): *O si possemus in talem ascendere speculam, de qua uniuersam terram sub nostris pedibus cerneremus! iam tibi ostenderem totius mundi ruinas*.

[75] But one that is quite common in ancient literature. Courcelle traces it back to Plato (*La consolation de philosophie*, 358).

do not behave as they ought recalls Jerome's determination to build an oneiric world of obscured vision and divine judgement in *Ep*. 22.30. The same ethereal mood pervades both pieces.[76]

The similarity of Jerome's use of metaphor in *Ep*. 60.18 and in *Ep*. 22.30 naturally draws this study towards examining other similarities between the two passages, and particularly the contexts of their composition. While Courcelle notes that this section of *Ep*. 60 has a clear debt to the 'Dream of Scipio' in Cicero's *De re publica*,[77] it also appears to have a close relationship to the Biblical book of Habakkuk. The first two chapters of Habakkuk depict the prophet complaining to God about the 'destruction and violence before [him].' Contemplation of the world has led Habakkuk to question God. This is how the Biblical (Vulgate) text represents his view and God's response:

> 'I will stand on my watch and fix myself on the fortification; I will look to see what he may say to me and what answer I am to give to this complaint. And the Lord answered me: "Write down the vision and explain it on the tablets in order that it may be run through, so that he will have read it, because as yet the vision is far off, and it will be visible at the end and will not deceive..."' (Hab 2:1-3).

> *super custodiam meam stabo et figam gradum super munitionem et contemplabor ut uideam quid dicatur mihi et quid respondeam ad arguentem me et respondit mihi Dominus et dixit scribe uisum et explana eum super tabulas ut percurrat qui legerit eum quia adhuc uisus procul et apparebit in finem et non mentietur.,,*

The resonance of Jerome's use of *specula*, and its connotations of ascension, with the opening phrase of this passage (*super custodiam meam stabo et figam gradum super munitionem*) is too powerful to be accidental. Indeed, in his commentary on this passage, written a few years before *Ep*. 60, Jerome explicitly links Habakkuk's raised aspect to his ability to prophesy:[78]

> '"I will stand," he said, "on my watchtower" … on this elevated place for my prophecy, and I shall see to what follows after the captivity of the people and the destruction of the city and the Temple, and that which follows thereafter.'

> *'Stabo' inquit 'in specula mea' … in prophetiae meae sublimitate, et uidebo post captiuitatem populi, et euersionem ciuitatis et templae, et deinceps quid sequatur.*

By occupying an elevated standpoint (*sublimitas*) Habakkuk gains foreknowledge. As in *Ep*. 60.18 physical ascension results in a sight (this time it is called a prophetic

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[76] Intriguingly, Jerome accepts that the textual evocation of this vision will never be as powerful as seeing it in reality would be: 'Language is inadequate to a theme so vast and all that I can say must fall short of the reality:' *Vincitur sermo rei magnitudine, et minus est omne quod dicimus* (*Ep*. 60.18 [CSEL 54:573]). While this may be the case, the fact remains that the language that is deployed is very powerful.

[77] Courcelle, *La consolation de philosophie*, 355.

[78] Hier. *Comm. in Abacuc* 1.2 (CCSL 76A: 580.68f.).

'vision') that would be impossible to achieve on the ground. The intertextual nature of this section of *Ep*. 60 allows Jerome to use the *specula* topos to evoke the book of Habakkuk and its central theme - the punishment of the world through the actions of hostile armies - and to link it to *Ep*. 60's recurring theme of contemporary suffering. This use of intertextuality to critique contemporary events has been noted above in the manner in which Jerome adapted the archetypal martyr narrative in *Ep*. 22.30 to develop a response to Damasus' unifying Christian-Roman discourse.

The correspondence of Habakkuk and *Ep*. 60.18 also allows Jerome to consider questions of identity in a fashion reminiscent of *Ep*. 22.30. The writing of the vision onto tablets, for example, is a key motif in Habakkuk. In his *commentaria*, however, Jerome rejects the Jewish understanding of this passage as a historical account of a prophecy and argues instead for a more allegorical understanding. Explicitly linking this passage to 2 Corinthians 2-3 he writes:[79]

> 'But I believe those tablets, concerning which the apostle says to the Corinthians: "You are our letter, written on our hearts: which is known and read by every man … because it is the letter of Christ … and written not with ink but with the living spirit of God, not on stone tablets but on the fleshy tablets of the heart..."'

> *Tabulas autem puto illas de quibus et apostolus loquitur ad Corinthios: 'Epistola nostra uos estis, scripta in cordibus nostris: quae cognoscitur et legitur ab omnibus hominibus: ... quoniam estis epistola Christi ... et scripta non atramento, sed spiritu Dei uiuentis, non in tabulis lapides, sed in tabulis cordis carnalibus...'*

For Jerome, Habakkuk's tablets prefigure those of Paul, i.e. the revelation and the word of Christ written on the heart of every Christian. That this passage is concerned with Christian identity is suggested by its explicit juxtaposition of Jewish and Christian interpretations of Habakkuk. In addition, the use of the word *cor* in this passage is reminiscent of the final moments of *Ep*. 22.30 where Jerome reminds Eustochium that *ibi et cor tuum*. In *Ep*. 22.30 the heart is expressly linked to themes of identity, and it would seem that Jerome is making the same connection here in *Ep*. 60. Thus Jerome's deployment of the *specula* topos in *Ep*. 60.18, as well as evoking Habakkuk's theme of divine punishment, constitutes a strong statement of Christian identity by alluding to the Christian's trust in Christ, the *uisum*. By connecting *Ep*. 60.18 to Habakkuk Jerome formulates a Christian identity that is intended to offer hope to his correspondent Heliodorus and to strengthen his faith by reminding him of contemporary Christian eschatology. Once again it is possible to see the interplay of writing, identity and contemporary critique written into Jerome's letters.

Finally, if we go back for a moment to *Ep*. 22, we find that the image of the tower occurs already in *Ep*. 22.26. There Jerome addresses Eustochium as follows:[80]

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[79] Hier. *Comm. in Abacuc* 1.2 (CCSL 76A:580.75).
[80] *Ep*. 22.26 (CSEL 54:182.1f.).

'Why need the doors of your heart be closed to the Bridegroom? Let them be open to Christ … Daniel in his upper room (for he could not continue [with his prayers] below) had his windows open towards Jerusalem. Do you too keep your windows open, but only on the side where light may enter and whence you may see the city of God.'

Quid enim necesse est ut cordis tui ostia clausa sint sponso? aperiantur Christo … Danihel in cenaculo suo (neque enim manere poterat in humili) fenestras ad Hierusalem apertas habuit. et tu habeto fenestras apertas, sed unde lumen introeat, unde uideas ciuitatem Dei.

In this passage an allegory is constructed through distortion of space and the body. Jerome utilises the motif of Daniel's residence upstairs (*in cenaculo*) as a metaphor for Eustochium's contemplation. A bizarre twisting of space results in Eustochium sitting in a room in her heart in her chest. In a manner that recalls *Ep*. 22.30 'light' (*lumen*) is a key element of description here, for from here Eustochium will be able to see the city of God (*ciuitas Dei*), which is (in this context) the (heavenly) Jerusalem. Jerome here plays tricks with the concepts of body and location in order to make an epistemological point: only by shutting herself away will Eustochium gain knowledge of God. Strikingly, however, she is not simply shutting herself away from the outside world. By placing the room with the windows and doors inside Eustochium's heart (!) Jerome ensures that when Eustochium locks the windows and doors, she locks out her own body. As in the comment of the judge later on in *Ep*. 22.30 (*ibi et cor tuum*), the heart is shown to be intimately connected with identity and belief. The significance of these points is summed up in Jerome's next phrase, utilising Jeremiah 9:24: 'Do not open those windows of which it is said, "death entered through your windows"' (*ne aperias illas fenestras de quibus dicitur, 'mors intrauit per fenestras uestras'*).[81]

Clearly, there are two types of 'windows' here, those that allow one to see God, and those that bring death. The fact that Eustochium closes the windows to her body indicates that it is from the body that death comes. In this passage Jerome deploys Jeremiah in the same way he used Habakkuk; intertextual allusions draw out themes on the purpose of the Christian life. In *Ep*. 60.18 the 'watchtower' was a trope that recalled God's response to Habakkuk's complaint, while in *Ep*. 22.26 the 'windows' represent different ways of approaching the temporal world, and whether one lives for God or for 'death'. This statement is made using an extended metaphor replete with images connected to ocular experience (*fenestras, lumen, uideas*) and bound up with notions of ascension (*superioribus*). In *Ep*. 22.26, as in *Ep*. 60.18, the setting of this highly ocular scene within a specific topographical frame grants Jerome the literary space to pivot the passage around the quote from Jeremiah presenting the reader with an exposition of his ascetic vision and the axioms on which it is based. In this passage the image of the watch-tower and the windows is used to discuss the nature of asceticism and the scriptural foundation for this crucial part of Jerome's Christian identity.

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[81] *Ep*. 22.26 (CSEL 54:182.5).

To conclude: The purpose of this paper was to place *Ep*. 22.30 within its wider compositional context. As I have suggested, the similarity of themes (martyrs, Classical / Biblical texts, Christian identity) that are present in *Ep*. 22.30 as well as in Damasian attempts to Romanise Christianity in Rome suggests a direct link between them, and to some extent excuses Jerome from Adkin's charge of 'pilfering tinsel'. The manner in which *Ep*. 22.30 resonated with Damasian rhetoric on space and identity is echoed in Jerome's use of watchtowers and the process of ascending as a trope through which to explore his own Christian identity. In the two watchtower passages considered in this paper Jerome took a pressing contemporary issue – the ravaging of Barbarians in the provinces in one case and the role of the body in asceticism in the other – and asserted a Christian identity through the construction of a building. The fact that these buildings exist only in the text (indeed, they could not be built outside it) should not prevent us from seeing them as an emulation of Damasus' propagation of Christian identity through monuments. One of the key elements of Damasus' monumental building programme was the inscription of those tombs with *epigrammata* which heavily referenced both Augustan literature and the martyr's history. These *epigrammata* were statements of Damasus intent and his identity. Jerome's use of intertextual allusions to Habakkuk, Daniel and Jeremiah fulfil the same purpose of overwriting the textual buildings with expressions of identity culled from a literary past.

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