I. TITLE

JEROME’S DEFENSE OF TRANSLATING THE VULGATE FROM THE HEBREW

II. THE PROBLEM

Whenever one is able to discover a document heretofore unavailable in English which can bolster an understanding of not only our Scripture but also our theology, it is indeed worthy of investigation. When that same text is from the hand of a Doctor of the Church, it is worthy of our deepest attention as well. Such is the case with the Vulgate prefaces of Saint Jerome. Although read for centuries in Latin, no English version exists. Moreover, no contemporary definitive work on these prefaces in any language exists. The most recent work dates from 1902, and that a brief French work which highlights not so much the content of the prefaces but the form and structure thereof. A fresh study of these Vulgate prefaces is long overdue.

When we speak of the Vulgate we of course are referring to the Latin Bible that has been in common use in the Western Church since the seventh century. Therein, most of the books of the Old Testament are Jerome's translations made from the Hebrew. The only exceptions are the books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Maccabees, and the Psalms, which exist either in the form of an Old Latin text or are corrections by Jerome of the Old Latin. Jerome also revised the
All total, Jerome provides nineteen prefaces throughout the Vulgate Bible. As this project seeks to demonstrate Jerome’s defense of his translation of the Vulgate from the Hebrew, only the prefaces that refer to the translation directly from the Hebrew need be considered. There are fifteen prefaces to look at, those to Genesis through Deuteronomy, Joshua through Ruth, 1 Samuel through 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Tobit, Judith, Esther, Job, Proverbs through Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah through Baruch, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Hosea through Malachi. Within these Vulgate prefaces the unifying theme appears to be Jerome’s justification for his translating directly from the Hebrew as opposed to accepting the established Septuagint. Such an intentional defense for his now accepted translation is the focus of this study.

The dissertation proposed here will build upon the historical influences surrounding Jerome’s life and the direction that they caused him to take with regards to his fresh translation of the Jewish Scriptures from the Hebrew. This will be accomplished through a brief survey of Jerome's life with specific attention to Origen of Alexandria. Particular emphasis will then be placed upon the widespread Christian acceptance of the LXX and the tradition surrounding its writing, as well as the challenges to Jerome's work that arose out of this allegiance. Jerome wrote feverishly to defend his work, and looking at the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim will serve as a point of reference in interpreting the Vulgate prefaces. Building upon the QHG and some of Jerome's correspondence, this work will demonstrate that the heretofore untranslated texts of Jerome’s prefaces serve a vital function in giving the Vulgate version of the Hebrew Bible legitimization as the accepted Word of God. This project will provide translations of these prefaces, as well as commentary on the facets thereof that contribute to Jerome's defense of his

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1 Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatem Versionem, xxix.
Vulgate.

Of all the Christian writers who preceded him, it was Origen to whom Jerome owed the most. In fact Jerome had built his literary career on Origen's biblical scholarship, the scholarship of a man who yet today has saint and heretic applied to him with apparent indiscriminance. But far more important to Jerome than the details of Origen's theology was the example Origen had set of specifically Christian literary activity, at once biblical and ascetic. Christians of Jerome's generation would have no need to appropriate the masterpieces of classical poetry. Origen was their Homer, and Jerome, given half a chance, would be their Virgil.²

Jerome's contact with Origen had the result of refining Jerome's critical faculties and of familiarizing him with the philological and archaeological aspects of Origen's exegesis. Around 389 Jerome wrote the QHG, a critical commentary on some difficult passages of Genesis, which scoured Origen's Hexapla to explain certain expressions in the sacred text. This dissertation will approach the QHG as a work meant as justification for his new translation, one closer to the Hebrew text. It served, along with the Liber de nominibus hebraicis and the Liber de situ et nominibus locorum hebraicorum, as the prominent fruit of Jerome's philological and archaeological approach. But the largest apple, so to speak, of this philological exegesis was the production of the Latin translation of the Old Testament, made directly from the Hebrew.

In early 389, Jerome finished his commentary on Ecclesiastes, which was the first Latin work to take into account the Hebrew text. From 391 onwards he worked intensively on a new Latin translation of the Old Testament, which was meant to be much closer to the Hebrew text. He started with the books of Samuel and Kings, the sixteen prophets, the Psalms, Job, Ezra,

Nehemiah, and the Chronicles. After an illness in 398 he translated the book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, and finally the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Esther, Tobias, and Judith. He did not translate Baruch, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Sirach, and Wisdom, probably because he was hesitating about their canonicity.  

During the time that Jerome had settled in the land of Israel, he immersed himself in Hebrew studies, consorting with Jewish teachers, acquiring Jewish texts, and learning all he could about the Hebrew language and Jewish exegesis of Scripture. Given the climate of the times, that in itself is noteworthy. The end of the fourth century was a time of growing dismay and frustration for Jews who were now subjects of the Christian Empire. As early as the reign of Constantine I, an imperial law in 315 had decreed that Jews could not proselytize. The Emperor Constantius in 338 had enacted a law that Jews who married Christian women that worked in the imperial weaving factories must divorce them. He also threatened with death Jewish men who even sought Christian wives. The same emperor had forbidden Jews to own Christian slaves. Laws like these marked the beginnings of anti-Jewish legislation which gathered momentum with the passing years. By the year 439, Emperor Theodosius II was preventing Jews from undertaking public office, unless it required the expenditure of large sums of money which the Roman authorities would not reimburse. Jews understandably would have had few doubts about the bleakness of their prospects. No clearer sign of the impending Christian-Jewish animosity could be given than, in 388, at Ambrose's prompting, the emperor reversed his decision that

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Christians should pay for the damage they had inflicted on a Jewish synagogue at Callinicum.  

Therefore, that Jerome would devote an entire work to Jewish Scripture and Jewish interpretation thereof is very interesting. The QHG represents what at that point was the most ordered and sustained attempt by any Christian writer to transmit to the Christian Church Jewish scholarship in Jewish terms. When one considers that Jerome labored to learn the Hebrew language and Jewish exegesis in order to complete his Vulgate translation of the Old Testament, then looking at the QHG as a rationale, a justification for his evidently consuming interest in the ways of a people increasingly humiliated and despised by his coreligionists, is a necessary step. 

Because of this willingness to embrace Jewish text in conveying Christian truth, and most importantly because of the extreme reverence with which the LXX was held, hostility towards and incomprehensibility of Jerome's translation of the Bible directly from the Hebrew abounded, and were voiced with some force as versions of the individual books appeared. Most significant of those who opposed Jerome was Augustine of Hippo. He raised the question of the authority of the LXX, which referred not only to the Greek text but also to the Latin translations made from it, in three letters to Jerome. When Augustine composed Epistle 28 in 394 or 395, he had learned, possibly from Alypius, that Jerome was now translating certain books of the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew, rather than revising them from the LXX as had been his previous policy. In this letter Augustine expresses briefly his worries over such an undertaking and asks Jerome rather to continue his revision from Origen’s Hexapla version of the LXX.

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5 As recorded by Ambrose in Epistles 40 and 41.
6 For example, Augustine's Epistles, 71.3-5 (PL 33, 242-3); and Rufinus' Apologia, 2. 24-37 (PL 21, 602B-615C), as cited by H. F. D. Sparks, "Jerome as Bible Translator", in P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans, The Cambridge History of the Bible. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1960, 521.
Augustine rather tentatively states his belief in the supreme authority of the LXX and his
distrust of the later translations from Hebrew into Greek made by Aquila, Symmachus, and
Theodotion at the instigation of the Jews who had come to mistrust the LXX once the Christians
started using it for polemical purposes. Augustine felt that these translations had too much of a
Hebrew bias and that they were surely superfluous, for it was unlikely, if one accepted the story
of its divinely inspired production as he did, that the seventy or so original translators of the
LXX would have been mistaken, experts as they were.

It seems that by this stage Jerome had completed translations from the Hebrew of 1 and 2
Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, Job, the Psalter, and the Prophets. Certainly, his versions of Job and the
Prophets were available in Rome in 394 but it is unclear whether any of them had actually
reached Augustine. By 396 Jerome would have also produced versions of Ezra, Nehemiah and 1
and 2 Chronicles. He had started on this work in around 390, probably before he had completed
his revision of all the Old Testament books from the Hexapla LXX which he had undertaken
when he settled in Bethlehem. His work on this project had led him to realize just how
problematic the LXX text was. Not only was there a wide divergence between different versions
of the LXX, but the LXX, on which all Latin translations were based, differed in many points
from the Hebrew text which had become the official one. Jerome came to believe that there could
be no truth in a text which had so many discrepancies and he ceased to believe that the LXX was
inspired. In fact his new translation, directly from the Hebrew, would be unnecessary if the
LXX text were not so corrupt. And yet there is nothing in any of Jerome's letters, in the QHG,
or in the prefaces to indicate that having begun work with a generally favorable appraisal of the
LXX version he became progressively disillusioned about its value as his writing gathered pace.\(^7\) But his prefaces serve to illustrate the need for a new translation nonetheless.

Jerome repeatedly states that his new translation must not be regarded as intended to destroy the authority of the old, but as correcting its errors. Of course, many people, not only Augustine, did see this as a direct challenge to the authority of the LXX and Jerome’s new versions met with much opposition as they became available over a period of about fifteen years. Only Jerome’s close followers supported him in his undertaking at first, although his version was gradually to gain greater acceptance than the Old Latin translation from the LXX.

Jerome was concerned to explain his intentions clearly to his detractors. One of his chief arguments to his fellow Christians was that he had found that the LXX omitted certain passages which were quoted from the Old Testament by Christ and the apostles. How could this be right? Jerome felt that it was shocking that such errors should be accepted through force of habit.\(^8\) But it was not only in order to correct the text and clarify many passages that Jerome had undertaken his translation; he also saw it as having a polemical purpose. In his *Apology* against Rufinus he said that his version was intended to refute the Jews, for if Christians had a text based on the Hebrew, the Jews would be unable to use certain passages in their anti-Christian arguments which did not exist in the LXX.\(^9\) It was necessary for Jerome to stress this anti-Jewish stance because he was apparently suspected of pro-Jewish tendencies in relying on the Hebrew text.

This dissertation will make use of the QHG, for it functions for Jerome as an apology for the fundamental value of the Hebrew text and Jewish tradition for proper understanding of the

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\(^8\) Vulgate preface to Job.
Scriptures. This task includes the refutation of those who made mistaken conjectures about the Hebrew text, perhaps Antiochene scholars like Eusebius of Emesa and Diodore of Tarsus, who often cited authorities as "the Hebrew" or "the Syrian", but not in such a way as to come to grips with the reality of the Hebrew text itself.\(^\text{10}\) It will focus on Jerome's letters as well, and have a detailed analysis of his Vulgate prefaces. Once more, these prefaces are an untapped source for understanding the historical circumstances surrounding the Bible that was to shape theology for centuries.

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\(^9\) *Apologia adversus libros Rufini* 2.25 (PL 23, 409).

\(^{10}\) This idea is also proposed by Hayward, C. T. R. *Saint Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis*. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1995, 93.
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IV. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As previously mentioned, one of the strongest defenses for the necessity of this research is the paucity of materials available which discuss the role Jerome's Vulgate prefaces played in defending his translation. Related literature is similarly scarce. At times it seems that the most one may hope for is an occasional article discussing a topic that is affiliated with the proposed thesis, be it exegesis, or the LXX, or Jerome himself. The following recent dissertations and publications have endeavored to study one or more of these various aspects, although none of
them discusses our particular problem in any detail. At best they collectively inform the aforementioned lack of research into Jerome’s defense for the translation of the Vulgate from the Hebrew.

James Adair's dissertation looks at the proper texts necessary for rendering a legitimate translation of the Old Testament. As Jerome's defense for the Vulgate was based upon such a need to refer back to the Hebrew, Adair's dissertation is of great interest to this study for its parallel themes. Essentially, he posits that unlike the standard editions of the Greek New Testament, Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia does not present a critical text, but rather prints the text of a single Masoretic manuscript. Since Masoretic variants are of little value, and since many of the manuscripts from the Judean desert are fragmentary, the Old Testament textual critic is forced to rely heavily on the testimony of various ancient versions in the attempt to produce a critical Hebrew text. It is at this point that a methodological problem arises, however. How should the evidence of the versions be used in a textual study of the Old Testament? Adair demonstrates quite well that the common thread in scholarship is the emphasis on the necessity of determining the translation technique of a version before its data can be used text-critically. In his study, 1 Samuel 3 was examined in the Masoretic Text and in the LXX, the Peshitta, Targum Jonathan, and the Vulgate. Each version was compared with the Masoretic Text to see how the translators rendered vocabulary and various grammatical categories. Based on this analysis, a preliminary view of the translation technique of each witness was determined. Numerous variants were evaluated to determine which were significant, that is, which had some probability of reflecting a different Hebrew Vorlage. In the end Adair showed that it was these significant variants, and these alone, that should be taken into account in any attempt to reconstruct earlier forms of the Hebrew Old Testament. As Adair’s study examines the proper texts for
determining an accurate translation, so does this proposed project endeavor to explain Jerome’s rationale for using the Hebrew as the proper text for an accurate translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

In 1990, Michael Herbert Farris submitted his dissertation on the formative interpretations of the seventy weeks of Daniel. It traces the development of the "seventy weeks" over two millennia and accounts for the various understandings that the text seems to allow. In brief, it is a hermeneutical analysis of how Daniel 9:24-27 has appeared to its readers. Central to the methodology is the pursuit of specific texts used by readers and the assumption that each text tradition or translation makes and perpetuates interpretive decisions of enormous importance. Even accidents and ambiguities have had impact on subsequent readers and therefore sensitivity to semantic range is also central to the project.

What is significant in comparison to the proposed study on Jerome's Vulgate prefaces is the amount of time Farris takes detailing the role the Vulgate played in developing an accepted interpretation. He claims that it was only at the beginning of the third century that extended Christological interpretations appeared but by the time of Jerome the approach to the seventy weeks achieved virtual orthodoxy. Alternate readings circulated but the popularity of increasingly sophisticated calculative "proofs" simply overwhelmed other approaches to the passage. Jerome's commentary and Vulgate crystallized earlier traditions and set the form of debate for the middle ages. Though his "Hebrew verity" buttressed the Christological tradition by providing, for example, "Christ will be killed" in vs. 26a, the Christian consensus began to crumble when others took up an authoritative Hebrew text for exegesis. Once more, the defense of the Hebrew text as authoritative for exegesis yields great insight into the proper manner to portray the defense put forward by Jerome in the prefaces. And similar to Adair’s thesis, though
not directly informing the proposed study, Farris’ dissertation provides a scheme by which Jerome’s justifications may be examined and evaluated. In adhering to “Hebrew verity”, both scholars place themselves securely in Jerome’s shadow.

A work that focuses a bit more specifically in relation to the proposed study is Matthew Kraus' dissertation which looks at one of Jerome's works and how it relates to Classical, Christian, and Jewish traditions of interpretation. As the proposed dissertation will spend a chapter setting up the environment which influenced Jerome's writing, Kraus' work provides an excellent model of how to go about such a task. His dissertation demonstrates how Jerome critically employs Christian, Classical, and Jewish learning in his translation of the Bible according to the Hebrew. Starting from a careful textual comparison between Jerome's translation of the Book of Exodus with the Hebrew and the Greek translations, the dissertation delineates three ways in which Jerome engages the Hebrew Bible. First, Kraus proposes that Jerome interprets the Hebrew by itself. Secondly, Kraus thinks that Jerome may compare the Hebrew with the Greek versions, or thirdly, that Jerome may rely on or respond to an exegetical tradition.

Furthermore, Kraus sees Jerome's method of translation reflecting the influence of a Classical philological model. According to this philological method, Jerome seeks to render the sense of the text rather than produce a slavishly literal translation. In addition, like the Classical commentators of his day, he initially concentrates on the semantics and syntax of the text before him. Only when the Hebrew is unclear does Jerome consider the other translations and exegetical traditions. As such, Kraus demonstrates that Jerome’s Vulgate interprets the Bible from a Classical, Christian, and Jewish point of view and that Jerome integrates these traditions through a philological method. Therefore, Jerome's rendition must be understood as more than a plain translation. Rather, it should be read as a text that reflects the intellectual currents of its day.
Such a focus substantiates the need for the initial stages of the proposed research, that of Jerome’s exegetical training.

Brigid Pauline Nugent's 1992 dissertation narrows the study of related works to something even closer to our own, looking at Jerome's prefaces to his Commentaries on the Prophets. Her research into how these commentary prefaces were utilized informs and strengthens the proposed research into the Vulgate prefaces. As it is, prefaces to literary works provide a stage where the author may make peripheral comments of a personal, public, or pragmatic nature before beginning his task proper. Jerome, who wrote prologues to most of his works, used these opportunities to freely share himself, his feelings, and his viewpoints with the reader. As such, Nugent's work aims to situate Jerome's prefaces to his Commentaries on the Prophets within the tradition of Latin prose prefaces. Building on Tore Janson's diachronical study of prose prefaces in Latin literature, she extends it to include prefaces to biblical writings. All in all, she quite clearly shows why the prefaces were of such importance to Jerome and illustrates how and why he departed from the template he inherited from his predecessors.

A companion pair of books by Steffan Olofsson rounds out the survey of recent related works. His texts both serve as valuable contributions within the field of theological exegesis and translation technique in the LXX. They devote particular attention to a certain type of metaphorical divine epithets which are based on inanimate nature. These are contrary to other types of metaphorical as well as non-metaphorical designations of God translated with a vocabulary the basic aim of which is not to render the literal or the metaphorical meaning of the words in context. Olofsson demonstrates that the Greek equivalents which are used are more or less restricted to the translation of these types of epithet and do not always express the difference between the individual words. On the other hand, the Hebrew words as a rule have a
The main equivalent which is employed in most cases. The use of an alternative rendering is based on the desire for variation and does not reflect contextual differences. Most of these metaphors are stereotyped expressions for the protection of God. One and the same translation technique pervades the LXX as a whole, he concludes, perhaps because the choice of epithets is influenced by the prayer-language of the synagogue. To some degree, however, the choice also reflects the poetic vocabulary of the Hebrew of which these designations of God are a part. This technique is in line with a trait in the development of the Hebrew language. Theological and linguistic factors concur in the rendering of these epithets. Otherwise theological exegesis does not seem to be a distinctive feature of the LXX Psalms. The translation is not characterized by a negative attitude to anthropomorphisms nor does the translator generally seek to mitigate certain expressions that seem derogatory to the majesty and honor of God. As a rule unexpected translations are based on the translator’s contextual interpretation or reflect his deficient knowledge of the Hebrew. Although not directly influencing the proposed scope of study, Olofsson does demonstrate a useful method of tracing Hebrew dependency upon the LXX. No other work discusses the issue as well, if at all.

V. PROCEDURE

In discussing the particular method of Biblical interpretation that Jerome employed, it is necessary to reevaluate his influences. What did Jerome learn from previous exegetes, from Origen, from the Jews? How is this illustrated in some of his commentaries or even his prefaces to the Vulgate, if at all? Similar questions drive the discussion surrounding the prefaces. What caused Jerome to write these prologues? Had he read someone else who did a similar thing to Biblical passages? What affect did their apologetic tone have on the acceptance of the Vulgate in light of LXX devotion?
My research plan will progress along two lines of study. First will be a rigorous analysis of works about the influences upon Jerome's exegetical and translational skills, including the level of authority accorded to the LXX in his time. Using an historical-critical methodology, I will use the QHG and Jerome's letters to illustrate some of the defenses that he was mounting against his detractors. Secondly, I will make a careful translation and interpretation of Jerome's prefaces to the Vulgate which provided additional, substantive defense for his translation from the Hebrew in the face of strong opposition.

The figure of Jerome as an amazingly productive exegete of both Greek and Latin predecessors will over the course of the dissertation be made quite apparent. He clearly borrows heavily from previous scholarship, and he mentions this dependency occasionally within his prefaces, but he does not systematically analyze their various arguments in his commentaries. Jerome rather seems to be writing in a hurry, picking up one argument for the interpretation he chooses and quickly refuting an opposing opinion. He often gives the reader several different interpretations and lets the reader choose between them. In everything, he is concerned foremost with the orthodoxy of what he conveys.

Which is why it is so interesting that, despite his intentional distancing from Origen, again and again Origen emerges as the inspiration of Jerome's textual criticism and exegesis of the Scripture even after the outbreak of the Origenistic controversy.\textsuperscript{11} Mark Vessey illustrates that Jerome remembers Origen as a man of three distinctive characteristics, despite his orthodox shortcomings. First of all, Origen was seemingly indefatigable, reading and writing unremittingly

\footnote{11} Cavallera, Ferdinand. \textit{Saint Jerome: sa vie et son oeuvre}. 2 vols. Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1922. Pages 115-127 have a chronologically arranged synopsis of Jerome's remarks on Origen which quite clearly illustrates this point.
in the service of religion. Secondly, Origen worked with a decided fixation on the Bible, of which he was careful to study all relevant versions of the Old Testament in the original languages, as far as he was able. Finally, Origen’s achievements as a biblical scholar were unsurpassed, and the literary legacy he bequeathed to subsequent generations were a precious resource. As Vessey writes, "Latin writers, in particular, are liable to go astray as soon as they leave his company."  

Under such a deep influence of Origen, Jerome began his scholarly work fascinated by the spiritual meanings of the Scriptures, the mystical meanings. This harmonized with his own monastic ideals, but his work with the various philological aspects of the Bible made him more and more interested in the literal or historical meaning of the texts. The undertaking of the Vulgate coincided more or less with the outbreak of the Origenist controversy, during which time Jerome abandoned his chosen mentor whom till then he had idolized. Reaction to his Vulgate was already mixed, and the position of defending his choice to leave Origen placed him in even more difficult waters. To those who reproached him for his past Origenist sins, Jerome defended himself by distinguishing the dogmatistes in Origen from the interpres, claiming to follow only the latter. He even went so far as to disassociate himself from Origen’s hermeneutics, and to listen to the new hermeneutics which the Antiochenes were proposing, making greater use of the philological component of interpretation.  

However, Jerome never intended to adhere totally to this Antiochene criteria, and his detachment from Origen was only partial. On the one hand, he reiterated the typically Antiochene criticism of the arbitrariness of allegorical interpretation, that which stated that  

\[\text{References:} 12 \text{ 141.} \]  
\[13 \text{ 142.} \]  
\[14 \text{ 143.} \]
exegetes freely adjusted the text to meet their own agendas. On the other hand, he reaffirmed the validity of Origen's threefold division of scriptural meanings: historical, moral and spiritual. Not only did the prophetic texts have literal, historical meanings but they also contained enigmas.

Our study will follow in the footsteps of Manlio Simonetti, who quite convincingly demonstrates such a method of exegetical practice dependent upon a combination of Origenistic and Antiochene hermeneutic. He illustrates such activity by using Jerome's Commentary on Jonah. Jerome claims therein that the historical sense and the spiritual, tropological sense is always present in Scripture. This is the same principle that Cyril would formulate in relation to the same book just a few years later. But while Cyril appears to apply the principle coherently, the same cannot be said of Jerome. He rejects here the allegorical interpretation of certain details in the text, but prefers the Alexandrian hermeneutics for the majority of the commentary. At the very beginning he structures an allegory based on the etymology of the name "Jonah". Jerome's adherence to Origen's hermeneutic is so close that he develops what can best be called reckless interpretations of the kind which Antiochenes attacked most fiercely: Jonah fleeing from the presence of God and going to Tarshish (Jonah 1:3), on the basis of the etymology of Tarshish, meaning sea, is taken to be a typos of Christ who through His incarnation abandoned His heavenly home and fled from the heavenly realms to go to Tarshish, that is, the sea of this world. The departing from Joppa, a city of Judah, symbolizes the fact that Christ came in the first

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15 Epist. ad Paulinum 53.7 (PL 22, 544).
16 Commentaria in Ezechielem (PL 25, 147); Commentaria in Amos (PL 25, 1027). Jerome also talks of this in his Epist. ad Hedibiam 120.12 (PL 22, 1267).
17 Commentaria in Isaiah (PL 24, 629).
18 101ff.
19 Commentaria in Jonah (PL 25, 1120ff).
instance to save the Jews, voyaging through storms at sea, as Jerome sees it, through His passion and death.\textsuperscript{20} Despite his denials of Origenist sentiments, this particular commentary, written at the height of the Origenist controversy, is totally Origenistic.

Neither does Jerome's commentary on Matthew escape this charge. Indeed, an interpretation which purports to be deliberately literalist finds despite its brevity no lack of allegorical readings, obviously inherited from Origen. A comparison of the two miracle feedings constructed entirely on numerical considerations emphasizes for Jerome the superiority of the second feeding over the first.\textsuperscript{21} Simonetti concludes that, on the whole, Jerome's exegetical work is more impressive for its philological rigor and the abundance of materials used than for coherence of method or originality of interpretation.\textsuperscript{22} Surely this is an accurate appraisal.

Jerome swore to never read authors of Latin antiquity following his dream, yet he frequently cited such sources as he drew them up from his memory. He swore off Origen but continued to allow Origen's hermeneutic to influence his exegesis. The fact that Jerome often plagiarized from Eusebius should not raise questions of his knowledge of the events he appropriates. Devoting his life to the commentary on the canonical writings of the Old and the New Testament, Jerome did not have much reason to use the Apostolic Fathers and thus might be expected to be indebted somewhat to Eusebius for the accounts in the \textit{De viris Illustribus} relating to them.\textsuperscript{23}

This project will look at the Jewish hermeneutic incorporated in the QHG as wide-ranging in scope and content. Its prominence will strengthen the suggestion that Jerome intended his

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Commentaria in Ionam} (PL 25, 1122ff).

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Commentaria in Epistolam ad Galatas} (PL 26, 116).

\textsuperscript{22} 103.

work primarily as a collection of Jewish traditions and teachings, compiled as the direct result of his own research, whose ultimate aim was to convince his readers of two things. He set out to demonstrate his own scholarly originality: he alone among his contemporaries was capable of comprehending, gathering together, and applying to the urgent needs of the Church’s theology such complex material, which was utterly unfamiliar to his fellow Christians. And he sought to prove beyond any reasonable doubt that knowledge and proper use of those Jewish materials was absolutely necessary for a correct understanding of the Scriptures. Reliance upon the *Hebraica veritas* was firmly rejected by those who, like Epiphanius or Rufinus, recognized the LXX as the only true, legitimate, divinely inspired version of the Old Testament. Moreover, there were those like Augustine who despite doubts about the authority of the LXX nevertheless joined the critics, if for no other reason than because the text was familiar to the congregation of believers.  

So in a word, the QHG was his means of answering his detractors, and insisting against the doubters that *veritas* was most certainly *Hebraica*. It was justification for the Vulgate.

Such a volleying between the verbal skirmishes with detractors and enemies and Jerome's insistent progression beyond all translations to the *Hebraica veritas* is a dominant motif in most of his Vulgate prefaces. And though Hayward’s recent work discusses the QHG and its impact on Jerome’s defense, nothing exists with regard to the Vulgate prefaces, and nothing exists in any detail that discusses Jerome’s justification for his translation of the Vulgate from the Hebrew.

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The Vulgate prefaces appear to be written for the most part as dedications to particular friends, all of whom supported his work. The intrusion of the vital questions of Scripture would probably have called for the abandonment of this form by him, for the dedicatory epistle related principally the writer, the reader, and their concerns. The actual content of the Bible could escape untouched.\textsuperscript{25} In fact, if we gauge the importance of Jerome's prefaces by what they tell the reader concerning the contents of Scriptures, then they are of minimal impact. Yes, Jerome consistently shows himself interested in interpreting biblical facts, biblical events, and biblical figures as accurately as possible, but the burning focus of his interest and involvement is found rather in his own task as translator and the rationale for a new translation.\textsuperscript{26} My thesis, therefore, is that as a whole his prefaces amount to a grand apology for the Vulgate based on the Hebrew, not for the Bible as such.

\textbf{VI. PROBABLE CONTENTS}

The doctoral dissertation will be comprised of an introduction of approximately 20 pages, four chapters of about 45 pages each, and a conclusion of around 20 pages. All told the dissertation will consist of nearly 220 pages.

After an introduction explaining the historical and theological importance of Jerome’s Vulgate, the study will analyze some of the significant influences upon Jerome’s life and thought, most notably Origen of Alexandria. Subsequent chapters will be devoted to the status of LXX devotion in the milieu surrounding Jerome and his response to the critiques of his contemporaries. A final chapter will examine his defense specifically from his Vulgate prefaces.

\textsuperscript{26} Schild speaks of this intentional focus on pages 92-3.
The concluding section will discuss the results of the study.

The title and contents of the proposed dissertation are:

Jerome’s Defense of Translating the Vulgate from the Hebrew

Introduction: The Word of God for the Body of Christ?

I. The Influences Upon Jerome

II. The Influence of the Septuagint in Jerome’s Day

III. The Attacks Against Jerome’s Translation from the Hebrew

IV. The Defense of Jerome from His Prefaces to the Vulgate

Conclusion: The Accepted Word of God for the Body of Christ

The remainder of the dissertation proposal constitutes a brief exposition of the arguments involved in the proposed sections of study.

Introduction: The Word of God for the Body of Christ?

Jerome grew up in a time when the dependency upon Jewish interpretive technique and Hebrew Scripture was almost non-existent. Because of his training, he established himself as perhaps the greatest scholar in the Church within the fifth century, with apologies to Augustine. Certainly his distinction as the *vir trilinguis* lent credence to whatever he produced. Yet great animosity arose at the first publications of his Vulgate translations. How could Jerome dare to replace, if indeed that was his intention, the LXX, the accepted Word of God? This introduction will set the stage for the conflict that was to ensue and the resolution that Jerome would propose within, among other places, his prefaces to the Vulgate. Although work does exist which sparingly examines his justification as detailed in the *QHG* and some of his correspondence, there is nothing concerning these prefaces available.
I. The Influences Upon Jerome.

Jerome was schooled in classical Latin, as well as developing rapidly his knowledge of Greek. While in the Chalcis desert he was taught Hebrew and Jewish exegesis. He dialogued equally well with Alexandrian and Antiochene hermeneutic alike. If one considers all the sources that Jerome claimed to have read, then his personal library must have been quite formidable. Each of these influences played some role in Jerome’s decision to translate the Scriptures directly from the Hebrew, and this chapter will look at them. Most importantly, it will look at the role that Origen played in Jerome’s work. Jerome modeled his work after that of the great Alexandrian, and this chapter will illustrate how Origen influenced Jerome, even after the wake of the Origenist controversy surrounding Jerome.

II. The Influence of the Septuagint in Jerome’s Day.

After seeing what led Jerome to write his prefaces and what methodologies influenced his own, this dissertation will look at why the LXX was held in such high regard in Jerome’s day. How was the LXX perceived in the Early Church? What was it about this text that caused men such as Augustine and Rufinus to oppose Jerome’s new translation with such vehemence? Why did Jerome need to justify himself, not only to his detractors but to his friends as well? This chapter will answer all of those questions.

III. The Attacks Against Jerome’s Translation from the Hebrew.

Once this project has established the authority of the LXX during Jerome’s milieu, it will discuss specifically the challenges made by Augustine and Rufinus to the Vulgate translation. As they are the best known of the detractors to Jerome, their writings are sufficient to demonstrate the impetus for his defenses. In addition to looking at what Augustine and Rufinus have to say, this dissertation will demonstrate Jerome’s response to them as formulated within letters and the
QHG. Such research will be pivotal for comparing with his subsequent defense in the untranslated Vulgate prefaces.

IV. The Defense of Jerome from His Prefaces to the Vulgate.

As the Vulgate prefaces do not exist in any English translation, this chapter will have a great amount of it dedicated to publishing the heretofore unavailable work. Although the translation will not be complete in that the whole of the prefaces will not be translated, sufficient amounts will be rendered when necessary for demonstrating Jerome’s defense of his text. After translating pertinent sections of the prefaces, this project will evaluate their importance in Jerome’s defense of his writing. Many of these prefaces are addressed to Jerome’s friends, not the least of whom are women, including Marcella, Paula, and Eustochium. A look at how these defenses correspond to the defenses Jerome posits in his letters to these women will be mandated here. Also, the new information that Jerome expresses within the prefaces that does not exist in any correspondence or in the QHG will be given special attention.

Conclusion: The Accepted Word of God for the Body of Christ.

In my conclusion I will show how the previous chapters have built a case that shows that the Vulgate Translation of St. Jerome’s was indeed a valid text of the Word of God and came in time to be accepted as such for the entire Body of Christ. It will demonstrate that the prefaces to the Vulgate functioned not as one might anticipate a preface functioning today, with explanations and details of the accompanying text, but rather as a justification for his translation.

VII. UNIVERSITY APPROVALS

No university approval is required.

VIII. MAJOR FIELD APPROVALS

My committee consists of Fr. Kenneth Steinhauser, Mentor/Director, Dr. Bernard Asen,
Reader, and Fr. Frederick McLeod, Reader, all faculty members of the Theological Studies Department at St. Louis University.