

Rufinus of Aquileia and Paulinus of Nola

Writing to Sulpitius Severus in 404 A.D., Paulinus of Nola informed him that Rufinus of Aquileia was a man « truly saintly and piously learned, and on this account joined to me in intimate affection¹ ». The statement poses a problem in tracing the genesis and development of this friendship, based primarily, it would seem, on mutual friendships as well as spiritual and exegetical interests. There are positive evidences of contact between the two men which include a considerable, mostly unpreserved, correspondence, and the reception by Paulinus of some of the works of Rufinus. Strangely enough in his book on the friendships of Paulinus, P. Fabre dismisses the relationship with Rufinus in cavalier fashion², a procedure that hardly does justice to the above quoted statement, and which leaves an unnecessary gap in our understanding of the intimate history of several early fifth century figures.

By 400 A.D. Paulinus had certainly been informed of the character and activities of Rufinus by Melania the Elder in the course of her visit to Nola on her return from Jerusalem³. A cousin of Paulinus⁴, Melania had left family and possessions in Italy to journey to the Holy Lands in 372⁵. After various experiences in Egypt, she had evidently met

1. Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 28, 5 (CSEL 29, 246) : « Rufinum presbyterum... vere sanctum et pie doctum, et ob hoc intima mihi affectione conjunctum ».

2. P. FABRE, *Saint Paulin de Nole et l'amitié chrétienne* (Paris, 1949), p. 187 : « Laissons de côté les deux billets à Rufin, dont l'authenticité demeure douteuse, et où, même s'ils étaient vraiment de Paulin, il n'y aurait pas grand chose à relever, sinon la trace d'une sollicitude affectueuse qui rapprocherait de lettres plus intimes ces demandes de renseignements... » What makes this statement the more strange is the excellent excursus Fabre has devoted to proving authenticity of these letters (*Epp.* 46 and 47) in his *Essai sur la Chronologie de l'Œuvre de saint Paulin de Nole* (Paris, 1948), pp. 88-97.

3. Cf. F. MURPHY, « Melania the Elder : A Biographical Note » in *Traditio* 5 (1947), pp. 59-77.

4. In describing Melania for Sulpitius Severus in 400, Paulinus said : « Unde te dignior visa est, cuius fides illi magis quam noster sanguis propinquat... » (*Ep.* 29, 5 ; CSEL 29, 251). Although Card. Rampolla maintains that Paulinus and Melania were first cousins (M. Card. Rampolla del Tindaro, *Santa Melania giuniore, senatrice romana*, Roma, 1905, pp. 106-107), S. Beissel has indicated that they were rather related by the marriage of Paulinus' sister Pontia to the father of Melania Sr. (« Die Hingabe eines ausserordentlich grossen Vermögens, » *Stimmen aus Maria Laach* 61 (1906), pp. 480-481). Cf. F. MURPHY, *op cit.*, p. 62.

5. Born in 341/2, married in 356, widowed at 22 in 364, Melania departed for the Orient in 372, leaving her son Publicola behind her. She was settled in Jerusalem soon after 375, and returned to the West in 400, according to Paulinus' *post quinque lustra*. (*Ep.* 29, 6). She visited Augustine in 404, and seems thence to have returned to Jerusalem where she died in 409/10. Cf. E. SCHWARTZ, « Palladiana » *ZntW* 27 (1936), pp. 166-167 ; F. MURPHY, *op cit.*, pp. 66-67, and 74-75.

Rufinus of Aquileia sometime in the late 370s, and under his guidance had founded a double monastery in Jerusalem⁶. A woman of courage and forthright conviction, she had served as a support of Rufinus in the course of his difficulties with St. Jerome over Origen⁷. However there is no record of her direct contact with her cousin Paulinus until her visit to Nola on her return to the West in 400⁸.

There does not seem to have been much opportunity for a meeting of Paulinus and Rufinus before the turn of the fifth century, as is apparent from a quick glance at the careers of the two men.

Born in Concordia in 345, Rufinus spent his student days in Rome as a companion of St. Jerome. On the completion of his studies he joined a group of ascetics in Aquileia, and was baptized there in 369 or 370⁹. He departed for the East late in 372. He suffered in the persecution that followed the death of Athanasius (May, 373); then spent several years studying under Didymus the Blind, and Gregory Nazianzen, as well as visiting the desert Fathers in Egypt¹⁰.

By 380 he was settled in Jerusalem as the head of a double monastery founded there by Melania the Elder¹¹. Immediately upon the cessation of the first phase of his quarrel with St. Jerome over Origen¹², Rufinus had returned to the west bringing with him a considerable library of Greek ecclesiastical writings¹³. At the importunings of friends he had set about translating several of these, including the *Peri Archon* of Origen¹⁴. As a result he was attacked by the friends of Jerome in Rome as a champion of Origenism¹⁵. But he had meanwhile made friends of Apronianus and Avita, relatives of his patroness Melania the Elder¹⁶.

6. Paulinus speaks of Rufinus as Melania's *spirituali in via comitem* (Ep. 28, 5). M. Villain takes it to mean her '*compagnon dans son voyage aux Lieux Saints*' ('*Rufin d'Aquilée*', NRTh 64(1937), pp. 30-32). However, there is no evidence of a common journey of the two in Palestine or Egypt. The most obvious meaning of the phrase is '*her companion in the spiritual life*' or in modern terms, her spiritual director.

7. Cf. F. MURPHY, *Rufinus of Aquileia* (Wash., 1945), pp. 32ff., 39ff., 51f., 78.

8. This visit is described by Paulinus in his Ep. 29, 12-13 (CSEL 29, 258-261). For the date see P. FABRE, *Chronologie*, pp. 32, 37, 38.

9. Cf. F. MURPHY, *Rufinus*, pp. 2-23.

10. In 401, Rufinus noted that he had been away from Aquileia *ferè triginta annos* (Apol. adv. Hier, I, 4: PL 21, 543). Hence the better date for his original departure for the East is 372. Cf. F. MURPHY, *Melania*, pp. 66-67. For his experiences in the persecution, cf. his own *Ecclesiastical History* 2, 3 (ed. Mommsen, *Eus. Werke* II, ii, Leipzig, 1909, p. 1005: '*quae praesens vidi loquor; et eorum gesta refero quorum in passionibus socius esse promerui...*').

11. Cf. F. MURPHY, *Melania*, pp. 70-71.

12. Cf. M. VILLAIN, '*Rufin d'Aquilée. La querelle autour d'Origène*', RSR 37 (1937), pp. 5-37, 165-195; F. MURPHY, *Rufinus*, p. 59-81.

13. Referring to the pseudo-Clementine literature, Rufinus speaks of it as '*a part of the booty — and in my opinion no small one — that I have carried off from the libraries of the Greeks, and which I am collecting for the use and advantage of my countrymen*', *Praef. ad Gaudendum* PG I, 1205-1206.

14. Cf. F. MURPHY, *Rufinus*, pp. 92ff.

15. *Ibid.*, 97ff.

16. Palladius in his *Hist. Lausiaca* 54 (ed. C. Butler, Cambridge, 1898, p. 146) gives Melania

and through them he seems to have come into contact with Pinian and Melania the Younger, the grand daughter of the great ascetic, as well as to have been well received by Pope Siricius (384-399)¹⁷. Rufinus departed from Rome for Aquileia in the spring of 399, and appears to have remained in the north of Italy under 407 or 408.

Paulinus on the other hand was born in Bordeaux between 351 and 355¹⁸. A pupil of the celebrated poet Ausonius he had taken a prominent part in the Roman civil service, acting as governor of the Campania in 381¹⁹. Converted and baptized sometime before 389, he had retired to his estates in Spain with his wife Teresa until 394, when he was ordained a priest by Bishop Lampius of Barcelona²⁰. He then decided to take up residence in Nola at the shrine of St. Felix, which he was to render immortal by a series of *Carmina Natalicia* written each year in connection with the January 14th feast day of the saint²¹. On his passage through Rome in 395, Paulinus was not well received by Pope Siricius²². Still he does seem to have returned to the Eternal City in 398 for the feast of the apostles, June 29, and to have made a yearly pilgrimage there, there-after²³. It is thus quite possible that the two men were then acquainted with each other, through their mutual friends Apronianus and Avita. But there is no sign of such in the correspondence of Paulinus at this time. Nor is there any evidence of an immediate attempt on the part of Paulinus to get in touch with Rufinus as a result of information he must have received about him from Melania in 400.

During the first two years of his stay in the north, Rufinus was fully occupied with several new translations, as well as in defending himself in the renewed controversy with Jerome. He was in Milan, late in 400, where he challenged Eusebius of Cremona face to face as an agent of

the Elder credit for the conversion of Apronianus, the husband of her niece Avita. But Rufinus had been on close terms with him since 398; and had translated nine homilies of Origen on Psalms 36, 37 and 38 for Apronianus in 399 stating expressly they would 'offer him certain precepts for an emended way of life, and teach first the way of penance and conversion, then, that of purgation and progress', *Praef.* (PG 12, 1310).

17. Jer. *Apol.* III, 21 (PL 23, 472) 'Siricii iam in Domino dormientis profers epistolam et viventis Anastasii dicta contemnis'; *ibid.* 24 (475) : 'Quia Siricii habes epistolam...' Evidently on departing for the north, Rufinus had received a testimonial letter from Pope Siricius, which would indicate that he was held in esteem by that pontiff.

18. F. FABRE, *Saint Paulin de Nole*, pp. 13-16.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-26.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36; for the date, cf. *Chronologie*, p. 38.

21. Cf. P. FABRE, *Chronologie*, 'Les Natalicia', pp. 113ff. [ed. in PL, 61, 462-690; and in G. von Hartel, CSEL, 29, 2].

22. Writing to Sulpitius Severus in 396, Paulinus describes the stir caused by his passage through Rome; but refers to the 'quantum nobis gratiae dominicae detrimentum faciat Urbici papae superba discretio' (*Ep.* 5, 14). Siricius was known not to favor indiscriminate monastic dedications due to the number of irregularities as well as suspicious of heresy to which they gave rise. Cf. P. FABRE, *Paulin de Nole*, p. 38 n. 1.

23. Paulinus, *Ep.* 17, 1 : 'Romani ad venerabilem solemnitatis apostolicae diem profecti sumus'. For the date, cf. P. FABRE, *Chronologie*, pp. 25ff.

Jerome²⁴. There is considerable probability of his having visited his relatives in Concordia, as well as Bishop Gaudentius in Brescia, and his former spiritual director Jovinus, now Bishop of Pavia. But he seems to have confined his activities to the north of Italy²⁵. Meanwhile Paulinus was exceptionally well received by the successor of Pope Siricius, Anastasius (399-402)²⁶.

But it is that pope who professed a complete lack of interest in Rufinus, his person and his whereabouts²⁷.

Paulinus seems to have preserved a purposefully strict neutrality in the events surrounding the quarrel over Origen. That he might have been drawn into the troubles was possible due to the fact that Jerome's chief agent in Italy from 398 until after 401 was Eusebius of Cremona, evidently a former associate of Paulinus in the Roman civil service²⁸. On the part of Rufinus was the close association of the priest of Aquileia with the family of Paulinus through his cousins, the two Melanias, Avita, Albina, etc.; and through the messenger for several letters in their subsequent exchange, Cerealis, a man who played an active part in protecting the interests and reputation of Rufinus in the second phase of the Origenistic quarrel²⁹. P. Courcelle seems to have exhausted the

24. Eusebius acting as an agent of Jerome had evidently prevailed upon Pope Anastasius to inaugurate an anti-Origenistic campaign. He carried the letter of the Pope to Bishop Simplician of Milan (*Ep. ad Simp.*, CSEL 55, 195), together with a falsified copy of Rufinus' translation of the *Peri Archon*. Rufinus complains in his *Apol. adv. Hier.* 19 (PL 21, 557): « Hoc si in foro positus, vel negotiis saecularibus commississet iste (Eusebius) qui de monasterio Romam quasi calumniandi peritissimus missus est, norunt omnes, quid consequeretur ex legibus publicis ejusmodi criminis reus. Nunc vero quia saecularem vitam reliquit, et a tergiversatione illa actuum publicorum ad monasterium conversatus est, et adhaesit magistro (Jerome) nobili, ab ipso edocetur iterum pro modestia furere, insanire.... » Rufinus details the confrontation of Eusebius with the falsification, *ibid.*, 20 ff. (558ff.) Cf. F. MURPHY, *Rufinus*, pp. 129-133.

25. In his *Apol. ad Anastasium* (PL 21, 623) Rufinus speaks of « Tam longi itineris labor fragiliorem me reddit ad iterandos labores » as a reason for his not returning to Rome. Jerome ridicules the idea: « Sicque praetendit longi itinero lassitudinem quasi triginta annis semper cucurrerit aut biennio Aqueleiae sedens praeteriti itineris labore confectus sit » (*Apol.* II, 2: PL 23, 426). In the Prologue to his *Dialogue of Adamantius*, Rufinus speaks of a « brevis otii apud Patavium... dum venerabili patri Jobino visendi redderemus officia (ed. W.V.S. Bakhuizen, *Dialog des Adamantius*, Leipzig, 1901).

26. Paulinus, *Ep.* 20, 2 (PL 61, 217-218): « Sciat veneratio tua sanctum fratrem tuum papam Urbis Anastasium amantissimum esse humilitatis nostrae; nam ubi primum potestatem caritatis suae nobis offerendae habere cepit, non solum suscipere eam a nobis, sed ingerere nobis piissima affectione properavit. Nam brevi post ordinationem suam epistolae de nomine nostro, plenas et religionis et pietatis, et pacis, ad episcopos Campaniae misit... »

27. Anastasius, *Ep. ad Joan. Hier.* (PL 21, 632): « Itaque, frater carissime, omni suspicione seposita, Rufinum propria mente perpende, si Origenis dicta in Latinum transtulit, ac probavit, nec dissimilis a reo est, qui alienis vitis praestat assensum. Illud tamen tenere te cupio, ita haberi a nostris partibus alienum, ut quid agat, ubi sit, nec scire cupiamus. Ipse denique vide-rit, ubi possit absolvi ». This letter was written in the early part of 401.

28. Cf. P. COURCELLE: Paulin de Nole et saint Jérôme, in *Rev. des Etudes Latines* 25 (1947), pp. 264-266: L'amitié de Paulin et d'Eusèbe de Crémone.

29. Jerome complains of the activities of Cerealis in his *Apol.* I, 6 (PL 23, 401): « Obiciunt mihi sectatores eius Cerealiaque arma expediunt fessi rerum (Virg., *Aen.* I, 177) quare *Peri Archon* libros Origenis noxios in Latinum sermonem verterim ». *Apol.* III, 3 (PL 23, 459): « Idcirco Cereales et Anabasi tui per diversas provincias cucurrerunt, ut laudes meas legent ? » Paulinus, on the other hand, refers to Cerealis in his letter to Rufinus (*Ep.* 47, 1) as :

implications of this evidence in his essay on the friendship of Paulinus for Jerome³⁰. He has likewise there demonstrated that the reference to a « man well travelled in the Egyptian desert and versed in natural lore » mentioned in Paulinus' letter to Amandus and Delphinus, does not have Rufinus in mind, as has been taken for granted all along ; but does mean Jerome³¹. Courcelle points out the fact that at least from 400 on, there is a lessening of interest in Paulinus on the part of Jerome ; and he attributes this to the friendship of Paulinus for Rufinus³².

By 404 Paulinus does display a great interest in Rufinus and his accomplishments. In a letter to Sulpitius Severus³³, answering his request for information regarding « the annals not of one nation alone, but of the whole human race, » Paulinus confesses his own incompetence and lack of interest in historical studies. « Even in times past, » he avows, « when I read things that should not be read, I gave a wide berth to historical writers ». He assures his correspondent however that « what I do not myself possess, I have requested of the richer endowment of a like minded brother. And the very notice which you had sent me, jotted down as a reminder in my letters, I directed to the priest Rufinus, the spiritual director of Melania³⁴...

« If this man has not published anything on these matters which are lacking, and which properly concern you — the lack of agreement in the chronology of years and reigns — a man well versed in scholarly and sacred letters, rich in both Greek and Latin, I am afraid that we seek it in vain of anyone else in these regions³⁵ ».

« tibi tam bonus filius, comes, discipulus, adiutor accesserit, et tu illi pater ac magister omnis boni donatus a Domino... »

30. « Paulin et la controverse entre Jérôme et Rufin », in P. COURCELLE, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-280.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 271-273. The passage in Paulinus' letter to Sanctum et Amandum (*Ep.* 40, 6) regarding the « pelican » is taken from Jerome's letter to Sunnia and Fretela (*Jer., Ep.*, 106, 63). Unfortunately the dating of both these letters is uncertain.

32. P. COURCELLE, *op. cit.*, pp. 274ff. traces the growing less intimacy on the part of Jerome for Paulinus to the friendship progressing between Paulinus and Rufinus from 400 on. Even though Jerome refers the noble Julianus to the example of Paulinus in foresaking the world (*Jer. Ep. ad Julianum*, 118, 5) in 406, by that time there is a definite all but estrangement between the two. Courcelle maintains that this was primarily due to the effect Jerome felt that Melania the Elder had on Paulinus after her return to the West in 400.

33. Paulinus, *Ep. ad Severum* 28, 5. P. FABRE, *Chronologie* dates this letter as of 402/4 giving preference to the latter date (pp. 41-42). The chronology is bound up with the date of publication of the *Chronicle* of Sulpitius Severus, which would seem to be in 403.

34. Paulinus, *Ep.* 28, 5 (CSEL 29, 245) : « Praeterea autem jussisti... quae de annalibus non unius gentis, sed generis humani fugerent, ego videlicet quasi peritior edocerem ; sed... Numquam enim in haec investiganda et colligenda mihi contentum studium fuit. Nam etiam in tempore veteri, quo videbar legere nec legenda, ab historicis scriptoribus peregrinatus sum. Attamen nunc operis tui curam gerens, quo tu pro utilitate fidei nostrae inspiciendis et conferendis praeteritorum temporum rationibus occupatum indicasti, quod de me non habui, de fratris unanimi opulentiore thesauro petivi ; et ipsam adnotationem, quam commonitorii vice miseris litteris meis inditam, direxi ad Rufinum presbyterum, Melani spiritali in via comitem... »

35. *Ibid.* « Si ille has quae merito te permovent de annorum sive regnorum non congruente calculo hiantis historiae causas non ediderit, qui et scholasticis et salutaribus literis Graece juxta ac latine dives est, vereor ne apud alium in his regionibus frustra requiramus ».

Paulinus was evidently aware of Rufinus' historical interests as exhibited in his translation of the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius undertaken at the request of his own Bishop, Chromatius of Aquileia in 402 and 403³⁶. However, he does not seem to have possessed a copy of it; nor does he then give certain evidence of being on close terms with Rufinus, for he goes on to inform Sulpitius: « Should he (Rufinus) deign to satisfy my presumption in his regard, on the first opportunity, if the Lord favor us, I will forward to you whatever he may write for me on this matter³⁷ ». There is no indication that Sulpitius Severus used the Rufinian translation; nor is there evidence of a direct answer given to Paulinus by Rufinus³⁸.

However in 406, Rufinus had turned a hand to the translation of the pseudo-Clementine literature, translating the *Recognitiones* for Bishop Gaudentius of Brescia³⁹. There is good reason to believe that while occupied with this matter⁴⁰, he had made contact with Paulinus,

36. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* ed. by E. Schwartz and T. Mommsen, *Eusebius Werke* II Band, Teil I-III: *Die Kirchengeschichte* (Leipzig, 1903-1909). Rufinus' continuation in Bks. 10 and 11 is contained in Teil II, pp. 957-1040, edited by Mommsen. In his preface, Rufinus says that he wrote: « tempore quo disruptis Italiae claustris Alarico duce Gothorum se pestifer morbus infudit et agros armenta viros longe lateque vastavit » (ed. Mommsen, p. 951). Alaric twice invaded Italy, in 401/2 and in 408 (cf. O. SEECK, *Regesten der Kaiser und Päpste*, Stuttgart, 1919, pp. 304 and 314). As Bishop Chromatius who requested the work was dead by 407, the History must have been undertaken upon the first invasion of Alaric, hence in 402/3.

37. Paulinus *Ep.* 28, 5: « Quod si praesumptioni de se meae satisfecerit prima occasione, si Dominus faverit, transmittam unanimitati tuae utcumque mihi super hac ratione rescripserit ».

38. Sulpitius Severus introduced into his *Chronicle* two passages, one on the marks of Christ's footsteps preserved in the Church of the Ascension in Jerusalem (Bk. II, 33) and the other on the finding of the true Cross by the Empress Helena (Bk. II, 34). Both passages are taken from Paulinus *Ep.* 31, 4 and 5, written according to Fabre (*Chronologie*, pp. 39-40) in 403. It is presumed that Paulinus received this information from Melania the Elder who visited him in Nola on her return from Jerusalem in 400, bringing a particle of the true Cross which she received from Bishop John of Jerusalem (Paulinus, *Ep. ad Severum*, 31, 1): « partem particulae de ligno divinae crucis... Quod nobis bonum benedicta Melania ab Hierusalem munere sancti inde episcopi Johannis attulit... » M. Villain (Rufin d'Aquilée) in RSR 27 (1937), p. 189) believes that Paulinus got the story from Rufinus; but this is hardly possible because of the grave divergences in the story as told by Rufinus (H.E. 10, 7-8) and that in the Paulinus and Sulpitius Severus version. From the original request of Severus for information from Paulinus: « quae de annalibus non unius gentis, sed generis humani fugerent... » it would appear that Sulpitius is looking for information not for his Chronicle, but for a further work: « Attamen nunc operis tui curam gerens, quo te pro utilitate fidei nostrae inspiciendis et conferendis praeteritorum temporum rationibus occupatum indicasti... » (Paul. *Ep. ad Severum* 28, 5).

39. Cf. F. MURPHY, pp. *Rufinus*, 195-201: E. Schwartz, « Unzeitgemässe Beobachtungen zu den Clementinen », *Zntw* 31 (1932), pp. 165ff.

40. It is most probable that Rufinus had brought with him from Jerusalem the first copies of this pseudo-Clementine literature to be met with in the West, acquainting those of his friends who knew Greek — Bishop Gaudentius of Brescia, the matron Silvia, and eventually Paulinus of Nola with the original. Cf. E. SCHWARTZ, *op. cit.*, p. 165. Rufinus had himself originally translated the so-called « Letter of Clement » into Latin, which serves as a prologue to twenty books of *Homilies* (ed. 8. Rehm, *Die Pseudo-Klementinen* I, 663-42 (Leipzig, 1953, pp. 5-22). Rufinus says in his *Praef. in Recog. Clement. ad Gaudentium* (CSEL, 68, 42): « epistulam sane, in qua idem Clemens ad Iacobum fratrem domini scribens... ideo huic operi non praemisit, quia et tempore posterior est et olim a me interpretata et edita ». Cf. F. MURPHY, *Rufinus*, 112-115.

hand had even encouraged him to return to his study of Greek by attempting himself a translation of « St. Clement »⁴¹. This is indicated in the first of four letters that serve as a preface to the *De Benedictionibus Patriarcharum* which is certainly an original work of Rufinus⁴². Two of these letters are from a Paulinus, requesting, in the first, an explanation of the Blessing of the Patriarch Jacob on his son Juda ; and in the second, that on the other eleven of his sons. Though there is a slight chance that the attribution of these letters to Paulinus of Nola is a forgery, this is hardly a worth while supposition. Short of forgery, there is every reason to accept these letters as authentic productions of Paulinus of Nola. In style and character they fit in admirably with the rest of the Paulinian corpus, as had been pointed out for Sacchini by Le Brun⁴³, and in recent times against Reinelt by M. Philip⁴⁴. What should really decide the matter is the fact that at this very time, Paulinus was intent upon obtaining an explanation of this text. In a letter to Desiderius, which Fabre dates as of 406⁴⁵, Paulinus says :

« On the matter about which you wrote to me... I confess that I dare not touch with even a finger the weight of such great names and mysteries. But you... if you have received an explanation of that benediction whereby the Patriarch illuminated, despite his bodily blindness, addressed his son in a prophetic spirit, elucidate for me in writing the mysteries of the kingdom, and the sacred things hidden during the centuries⁴⁶... »

41. Paulinus, (*Ep.* 46, 2) says : « Credo enim in translatione S. Clementis praeter alias ingenii mei defectiones hanc te potissimum imperitiae meae penuriam considerasse... » indicating that he has sent a copy of an attempted translation on his part to Rufinus.

42. W. Baehrens, in his studies on the mss. - tradition of the Homilies of Origen on the Old Testament in their Latin translation, has proved conclusively that the fragmentary seventeenth Homily appended to Rufinus' rendition of the sixteen Homilies of Origen on *Genesis* is the result of a ninth century attempt to complete the Origen corpus on *Genesis*, by borrowing from Rufinus' own *De Benedictionibus* (*Überlieferung und Textgeschichte der lat. erhaltenen Origeneshomilien zum A.T.*, TU 42, I Leipzig, 1916). Jerome states that Origen's commentary on *Genesis* extends down as far as 4 : 24. H. MORETUS, « Les Bénédictiones des Patriarches », *BLÉ* (1909), pp. 405-411 had arrived at the same conclusion.

43. F. SACCHINI, *Divi Paulini ep. Nolani opera, cum notis...* Antwerp, 1622, p. 833 had questioned the authenticity. He was answered by Lebrun (*Dissertatio de epistolis S. Paulini*, reprinted in *PL*, 61, 753) ; and by L. DE TILLEMONT, *Mém. pour servir à l'hist. eccles.*, Venice, t. XIV, p. 730.

44. P. REINELT, *Studien über die Briefe des hl. Paulinus von Nola* (Breslau, 1904), claims they cannot be authentic letters of Paulinus 1) because they do not quote the Scriptures as often as Paulinus ordinarily does ; 2) that the language is not Paulinian ; 3) and that the subscriptions are likewise questionable. His thesis on all three counts has been ably refuted by M. PHILIP, *Zum Sprachgebrauch des Paulinus von Nola*, Erlangen, 1904, 67-70 ; and again by P. FABRE, *Chronologie*, pp. 88-91.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 51ff.

46. Paulinus, *Ep.* 43, 3 : (CSEL, 29, 365) : « De quo autem mihi scripseras... me fateor tantorum nominum et mysteriorum pondera nec digito ausum tangere... Tu vero... si accepisti intellectum benedictionis illius quo filios suos propheticis spiritu patriarcha in caecitate corporis luminatus alloquitur, expone mihi rescripto mysteria regni et sacramenta a seculis reposita... »

In his request to Rufinus, then, Paulinus confides :

« At the very time when I was engaged in these writings, there fell under my eyes, as I was starting my proposed reading, that chapter of *Genesis* in which Judas is blessed by Jacob. And because the Lord had given me this most opportune occasion, it has pleased me, after a time, to knock on the gates of your heart. Therefore if you love me, indeed because you love me much, I ask that you write to me how you understand this Blessing of the Patriarch⁴⁷... »

In the second of these letters, acknowledging the receipt of the *Benediction of Judas*, and requesting that on the other eleven, Paulinus confesses that he was interested in having the work of :

« an author of great grace and praise ; for if those who think of me beyond my merit, consider consulting me, I wish to respond with things inspired by you, rather than with my own ineptitudes⁴⁸ ! »

With this as contributory evidence to the authenticity of the pieces, it would seem that the only reason for further doubt is their absence in the original Paulinian corpus. But they were rather preserved with the work of Rufinus to which they obviously belong⁴⁹.

In the first of these two letters from Paulinus, then, the priest of Nola states that he had recently received a brief communication from Rufinus brought « by the servant of our common children⁵⁰... » We know that Rufinus had left Aquileia in 407, and had joined Avita and Apronianus, Pinian and Melania the Younger, all relatives of Paulinus, on their estates in the Campania. He must have arrived shortly after they had returned from a visit to Paulinus at Nola⁵¹. Hence his hosts had urged Rufinus to get into contact with Paulinus, using the services of their messenger.

47. Paulinus, *Ep.* 46, 3 : (CSEL 29, 387) : « In tempore sane quo scripta haec scribebantur, cecidit sub oculis, incidens proposita lectione, capitulum illius ex Genesi, quo Judas a Jacob benedicitur. Et quia Dominus opportunissimam hanc occasionem dederat, pulsare post tempus fores cordis tui placuit. Ergo si me amas, immo quia multum amas, rogo ut scribas mihi ut intelligis ipsam Patriarcharum benedictionem ».

48. Paulinus, *Ep.* 47, 2 : (CSEL 29, 388) : « Sane importunitate... coactus, ut Benedictiones duodecim Patriarcharum, cujus jam principium mihi exposita circa personam Judae Prophetia, triplici ut iussum est interpretatione, conscriptis paginis, edidisti, per reliquos filios distributam digneris exponere, ut et ipse per te fiam conscius veritatis, et magnae gratiae ac laudis auctorem habeam, si his qui de me super me propter operis consulendum me putaverunt, divina potius et tuo spiritu quam de meo sensu inepta respondeam ».

49. These two letters of Paulinus (*Epp.* 46 and 47) are preserved in two mss. containing the *De Benedictionibus Patriarcharum* of Rufinus, now in the Vienna Nationalbibliothek — the Vindobonensis 847 (theol. 682) and a hand written copy of the codex Murbacensis (prob. ix s.), Vienna 6189, pp. 168ff. made by the Apostolic nuncio Jos. Firraeus at Lucerne in 1718, Cf. Hartel, CSEL 20, praef. XIX-XX ; H. MORETUS, « Les Bénédictions... » BLE (1909), p. 31.

50. Paulinus, *Ep.* 46, 1 : « Unde refectos nos quamvis brevi epistula, attamen tua, per puerum communium filiorum fatemur... »

51. This visit is record by Paulinus in his *Carmen natalicium* 13 (CSEL 30, 156-157) which P. Fabre dates as of Jan. 407 ; see *Chronologie*, p. 114.

It is even possible that Rufinus visited Nola himself⁵². But at any rate, whether in person or by post, he had urged Paulinus to re-apply himself to the study of Greek. He had evidently introduced him to the pseudo-Clementine literature which Rufinus himself had brought into the West. He had encouraged Paulinus to try his hand on at least a part of this literature.

In his « Brevis Epistula » then, Rufinus had evidently acknowledged the receipt of this translation endeavor. Then, responding to an invitation to visit Nola, he confided to Paulinus that he was in the « throes of solicitude and the uncertainty of delay, considering going to Rome⁵³ ». This must have been late in 407.

Rufinus spent the Lent of 408 in the monastery of Pinetum, close to Terracina⁵⁴. It must have been that year, for the Cerealis whom Paulinus used as a messenger to send his second letter to Rufinus had been returning to Rome⁵⁵. This had to be before October 408, when Alaric invested the environs of the city⁵⁶.

From this correspondence there emerges an insight into the close feeling that existed between the two men dating from at least 404. Paulinus assures Rufinus that, if he had not taken advantage of the journey of Cerealis, even though the latter could give him no certainty that he would reach Rufinus in his voyage to Rome, « we judged that it would be as culpable of us, as it would be sorrowful to you, that we did not write through him who is equally yours and ours... Hence we confided

52. In pressing Rufinus to visit him, if only to assist him in the study of Greek, Paulinus asks that the Lord may aid him « ut *divinus* consortio tuo perfruar » (Ep. 46, 2) ; in the same letter he also states : : « Quo magis ego misericordia Dei ut *plenior* mihi copiam tui tribuat... » It might be unduly stretching the meaning of these comparatives to take them to signify that Rufinus had been in Nola for a short period. Cf. J. CHAPMAN, « On the date of the Clementines » ZntW 9 (1908), p. 33, who believes that Rufinus had given Paulinus lessons in Greek when they were together, and that Paulinus had translated some parts of the *Recognitiones* as an exercise.

53. Paulinus, Ep. 46, 1 : « sed tamen rursus adfectos, quia etiamnum nunc vos in aestu solitudinis et incerto morarum Romam peti indicastis... » The reading adopted by Hartel is « Romam pati ». The alternative reading 'peti' is contained in the *ms. Vind.* 847. In either case, the meaning is difficult to decipher. Cf. P. FABRE, *Chronologie*, pp. 93ff.

54. Ruf. Ep. ad Paulinum 2 (PL 21, 313-314) : « Quia autem quadragessimae diebus in monasterio Pineti positus, haec rescripsi ad te ». Rufinus had also spent the Lent of 398 in the monastery at Pinetum translating the last two books of the *Periarchon* for Macarius (Ruf. Praef. ad Reg. Basilii, PG 103, 485-486). This has led some of the older scholars to conclude that the *De Benedictionibus* were also written at his period. However Tillemont had thought the early date impossible (*op. cit.*, 14, 127). This is concurred in by J. BROCHET, *S. Jérôme et ses ennemis* (Paris, 1905), p. 376 ; P. FABRE, *Chronologie*, pp. 92ff. Cf. F. MURPHY, *Rufinus*, pp. 204ff.

55. Paulinus, Ep. 47, 1 : « Etsi incertum mihi fecit filius Cerealis quod ad te perrecturus foret in tempore quo ad sanctum Petrum revertitur », and Rufinus in his reply from Pinetum remarks : (PL 21, 311-312) : « Commune quidem filium Cerealem mundum videram, sed is conscius quid mihi doloris infligeret si reddere moraretur literas tuas permisit ad me... »

56. In April, Arcadius had ordered that the walls of the fortresses facing Illyria be strengthened against the barbarian invasions ; this could well be the occasion Rufinus took for his departure from Aquileia. In October 408, the troops of Alaric deployed in the vicinity of Rome Cf. O. SEECK, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt* 5 (Leipzig, 1924), pp. 371-416.

this letter not to chance, but to faith... For he [Cerealis] desired you as you should be desired by one understanding his advantage in your company⁵⁷ ».

In reply Rufinus assures Paulinus that although Cerealis did not come to him personally, he did manage to get the letter delivered, « conscious as he was of the pain he would inflict on me if he delayed in the delivery of your letters⁵⁸ ».

He refers to the number of times he has excused himself from having to respond by letter to requests for explanations of the Scriptures, feeling that he had frequently enough given Paulinus a sign of his lack of skill and uncultured language⁵⁹.

In his second letter (*Ep.* 41), Paulinus spoke of a rumor he had heard that Rufinus was about to return to the Orient. He begged him not to leave Nola unvisited. Unfortunately, Rufinus does not respond to this challenge. He merely states that he composed the second part of the *De Benedictionibus* at the monastery of Pinetum during Lent, and admits that « I could not hide my feeble efforts from the brethren present there. They, rather, thinking that something which could please you must be of some worth, demanded that I describe these things for them also. So while asking me for (spiritual) food, you have likewise placed it before others⁶⁰... »

As a final token of his respect for Paulinus, Rufinus greets him : « Vale in peace, brother, most beloved server of God, and Israelite in whom there is no guile⁶² ».

57. Paulinus, *Ep.* 47, 1 : « Tamen per eum qui aequae tuus ac noster est non scribere tibi, tam culpabile nobis, quam tibi triste futurum iudicavimus... Itaque... commissimus epistolam istam non casui sed fidei... desiderat enim te quantum debes desiderari ab intelligente commodum suum de consortio tui ».

58. Ruf., *Ep. ad Paulinum* 2 (PL 21, 311-312).

59. *Ibid.* « Quas cum legens erga tui ut soleo desiderium magis ac magis crescerem, inveni ad ultimum illud te imperare, inde excusavi frequenter apud te, ne de scripturarum scilicet interpretationibus aliquid a me posceres per literas respondere ; et quo magis a poscendo desisteres, signum tibi imperitiae meae, et ineruditi sermonis, semel atque iterum dedi ».

60. Paulinus, *Ep.* 47, 1 : « Nobis autem etsi pro tua caritate praesumptio sit, quia remeaturus ad Orientem, non feres invisus nobis abire... » Rufinus, *Ep. II ad Paul.* « Quia autem Quadragesimae diebus in monasterio Pineti positus, haec rescripsi ad te, etiam Fratribus qui aderant, ineptias meas celare non potui ; sed et ipsi magnum putantes aliquid esse, quod tibi placere potest, extorserunt tamen, ut haec describerent sibi. Sic me et cum escas tuas poscis, etiam aliis propinas ». There is some indication in the Greek *Vita* of Melania the Younger that the whole Pinian party had made an attempt to visit Nola before sailing for Africa, probably in 411. But there is no explicit mention of Rufinus in the *Vita* ; and the party only set sail after his death. Cf. T. Card. Rampolla, *op. cit.*, pp. 54 and 201.

61. Rufinus, *Ep. II ad Paul.* : « Vale in pace frater amantissime Dei cultor, et Israelita in quo dolus non est, mei memor esto, gratia plene homo Dei ». Cf. P. COURCELLE, *op. cit.*, p. 277, n. 4, where he points out the obvious appropriateness of this description of Paulinus, which contrasts so strongly with the character of Jerome in his regard.

62. Cf. H. MORETUS, « Les Bénédictiones des Patriarches », BLE (1909), pp. 398ff ; A. WILMART, « Le commentaire des bénédictiones de Jacob attribué à Paulin de Milan », RB 32 (1920), pp. 57-59. Five of Rufinus' contemporaries proved interested in the subject : besides, Paulinus of Milan (ed. PL 20, 715-732), Gregory of Elvira (*Tractatus Origenis de Libris SS. Scriptu-*

Attempts at discovering a model, or the sources whence Rufinus drew his material for the *De Benedictionibus* have proved unavailing⁶². There are echoes of Origen all through the work, as one would expect from a man so steeped in Origenistic exegesis. But primarily, it is an original piece, extremely well written, and full of solid spiritual advice and good sense⁶³.

Resolving the problem posed by Rufinus in the matter of the word *cilicium*, Rufinus suggests that as the original Greek word *helika* was probably retained in the Latin text, some officious scribe, ignorant of Greek, had mistakenly changed it to *cilicium*⁶⁴. He points out, however, that although it is easy enough to amend the text, it is not easy to discover the meaning of the passage itself, unless the whole context be taken into consideration. He concludes that, since certain sections of the prophecy can only refer to the person of Juda, and others, only to Christ, there must be both an historical and a mystical sense involved, so that frequently « the interruption of the historical sense may bring out the hidden meaning of the mystical sense⁶⁵. »

In proceeding to the remaining prophecies, Rufinus states that he is setting out to give a three-fold interpretation.

« as we have done in other instances — thus the Benedictions present the material of history ; the Prophecy, dogmatic and mystical matter ; while the Correction of morals, and the admonition, direct our style along moral lines⁶⁶. »

In the course of his explanations, then, he stresses the existence of a natural law within man, which accuses everyone who sins, and reminds him that the sin he commits is evil. He points out the irascible, concupiscible and rational appetites at the source of sin. And he makes enlightening remarks about confession of sin ; about extorting meanings from

rurum, ed. P. Batiffol and A. Wilmart, Paris, 1900), Ambrose (*De Patriarchis*, ed. C. Schenkl, CSEL, 32, 2, 123-160), Augustine (*Contra Faustum*, CSEL, 25, 367-370), and Jerome (*Lib. hebraicarum quaest. in Genesim* ed. PL, 23, 1004-1010). But Rufinus depends on none of these works.

63. Cf. F. MURPHY, *Rufinus*, pp. 206ff.

64. Rufinus, *Ep. I ad Paul.* (PL 21, 299) : « Arbitror ergo, quod hic ipse Graecus sermo in Latinis exemplaribus antiquitus positus est, ut et alia nonnulla, et per tempus ab scriptoribus non intelligentibus pro *ἑλικά cilicium* dici putatum est ».

65. *Ibid.*, 4 : « Sicut in complurimis caeteris, etiam in hoc capitulo sentiendum est, ut alterno intellectu expositio dirigatur, et interruptio Historialis intelligentiae Mystici sensus prodat arcanum ». Though Rufinus sets out primarily to discuss the historical and mystic meaning, he cannot forbear from pointing out the moral lessons involved. He speaks of the stole bathed in wine as the Church of Christ ; and refers to the fact that the knowledge of God and the tenets of faith are not enough ; the activities of one being instructed must be affected. Finally he speaks of a daily « martyrdom of conscience, which is suffered unceasingly from within ».

66. *De bened.* II (PL 21, 314) : « Quae res nobis et tripartitam, ut et in aliis fecimus, explanationis materiam subicit, ita ut benedictiones historiae locum servant : prophetia vel mysticum, atque dogmaticum ; morum correptio, et oburgatio moralem dirigat stylum ».

the Scriptures; about the reaches of humility; and about fidelity in one preaching the Gospel⁶⁷. He concludes with a graceful apology to Rufinus:

You will grant us pardon, if, poor in the grace of wisdom, and still present in this flesh, we have been able to give but an unworthy explanation of these things; for it is your too great charity that causes us to dare betray our incompetence in public. Had I not acceded to this, however, hold me guilty of an enormous fault⁶⁸.

We have no final knowledge as to whether the two friends ever really saw each other. All that we do know is that Rufinus fled south with Pinian and Melania the Younger, and their retinue, before the armies of Alaric⁶⁹. By August of 410 they were in Sicily, where in the preface to his translation of Origen's *Homilies on the Book of Numbers*, Rufinus describes the burning of Rhegium which he witnessed from Sicily across the straits⁷⁰. He was dead by the end of the year⁷¹.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between Rufinus of Aquileia and Paulinus of Nola proved to be a true, profitable and lasting friendship on the pattern discussed by P. Fabre, despite his surprising omission of the fact in his book on the friendships of Paulinus. There can be little doubt that when Rufinus spoke of the priest of Nola as « an Israelite in whom there is no guile », he was contrasting him with the experiences he had had with members of the faction of St. Jerome. And though our positive data for the exchange of sentiment, knowledge of each other, and of

67 Cf. F. MURPHY, *Rufinus*, 210ff.

68. *De Bened.* II (PL, 21, 336): « Quae si nos pauperes scientiae gratia, et in carne adhuc positi, minus digne potuimus explanare, veniam dabis; quia hoc ipsum ut imperitiam nostram prodire audeamus in publicum, nimia caritas tua facit; cui si non obtemperem maximum mihi dona delictum ».

69. Ruf., *Praef. ad lib Orig. in Num.* (ed. W. Baehrend, *Origenes Werke* VII, Leipzig, 1921, p. 2): « quamvis amantissimus filius noster Pinianus, cuius religiosum cœtum pro amore pudicitiae profuguum comitatur... »

70. *Ibid.* « In conspectu etenim ut videbas etiam ipse nostro Barbarus, qui Regini oppidi miscebat incendia, angustissimo a nobis freto, quando Italiae solum Siculo dirimit, arcebat... »

71. It is Jerome who supplies the death notice: « *Scorpiusque* inter Enceladum et Porphyriionem Trinacriae humo premitur et *hydra* multorum capitum contra nos aliquando sibilare cessavit, datumque tempus quo non haereticorum respondere insidiis, sed scripturarum expositioni incumbere debeamus, aggrediar Ezechielem prophetam ». (PL, 25, 16-17: *Praef. ad Ezech.*) The Commentary was written in 411, at the time when Jerome had just received news of the sack of Rome and the deaths of his friends Marcella and Pammachius. Cf. F. MURPHY, *Rufinus*, pp. 218ff.

mutual friends is limited to the conjectured testimony of Melania the Elder in 400, to the definite attestation of personal esteem expressed in Paulinus' letter to Sulpitius Severus in 404, and to the correspondence over the *De Benedictionibus Patriarcharum* in 407 and 408, it is sufficient to postulate a considerable personal correspondence, unpreserved, and an exchange of literary productions between the two men. The friendship of Paulinus did Rufinus a final good turn in helping to convince modern Church historians of an earlier generation that the priest of Aquileia was not quite the villain painted by St. Jerome. « If these authorities » — Paulinus, Gennadius, Sidonius, etc. — concludes Tillemont, « are not sufficient to have us regard Rufinus as a saint, as a Father of the Church, or as an object of our veneration, they do supply reasons for not condemning him lightly, for not speaking of him but with great moderation and reserve⁷²... »

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72. M. DE TILLEMONT, *op. cit.*, XII, p. 318.