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# Rufinus's Version of Eusebius's Origen and the Politics of Martyrdom

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MICHAEL HANAGHAN AND  
STEPHEN C. CARLSON

Rufinus's depiction of Origen in the *Historia ecclesiastica* varies from Eusebius's depiction of Origen. For much of the twentieth century, this was attributed either to Rufinus's negligence or censoriousness as a translator or to his personal admiration for the third-century theologian, but recent scholarship has come to appreciate Rufinus as an author in his own right. This article re-examines the often-subtle changes Rufinus made to Eusebius's portrait of Origen in Book 6 of the *Historia ecclesiastica* in detail and contextualizes them within the politics of martyrdom around the turn of the fifth century. This article pays particular attention to the changing and increasingly pliable nature of the concept of martyrdom in late antique Italy, especially as it was manipulated by Chromatius of Aquileia, who sponsored Rufinus in translating the church history and brokered the dispute between Rufinus and Jerome. In particular, this article argues that Rufinus presents the Christian confessor as a martyr in a studied attempt to bolster Origen's reception in the Latin West against repeated attacks against his unorthodox views, principally by Jerome.

## RUFINUS THE TRANSLATOR

Origen's most prolific exponent at the turn of the fifth century was Rufinus of Aquileia.<sup>1</sup> Over a ten-year period from 397 to 407, the presbyter translated many of Origen's important works of theology and exegesis, including the provocative *De principiis* and the homilies and commen-

1. Still unsurpassed is the biography of Rufinus by Francis X. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345–410): His Life and Works* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1945).

taries on Joshua, Judges, Psalms 36–38, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Romans.<sup>2</sup> Rufinus was more than just an industrious translator of Origen's works. In the epilogue to his Latin translation of Pamphilus and Eusebius of Caesarea's *Apologeticum pro Origine*, he publicly contended that Origen's writings had been falsified by heretics.<sup>3</sup> Rufinus's championing of Origen's speculative theology provoked a public breach with Jerome and fueled the First Origenist Controversy.<sup>4</sup>

As Elizabeth A. Clark observed, the controversy between the former friends was more than a dispute about Origen's theology; it touched on other matters as well, for "only portions of Jerome's and Rufinus's diatribes on these subjects actually concern Origen."<sup>5</sup> These other topics included episcopal jurisdiction, proper translation technique, the role of the academy and the church in theology, the rigorousness of asceticism, and the authorship of the *Apologeticum*.<sup>6</sup> The last of these especially irked Jerome, who sternly criticized Rufinus for attributing the defense of the teaching of Origen to the "holy martyr Pamphilus" without any hint of Eusebius's involvement, despite the fact that both Pamphilus and Eusebius had written the work:<sup>7</sup>

The preface itself informs us that you also translated the book of Pamphilus, the martyr, in defense of Origen. You are doing your utmost to prevent the church from condemning a man whose faith is confirmed by a martyr. . . . If the whole work is the production of Pamphilus, why not translate the rest of the books? If it is the production of someone else, why

2. On the dating of Rufinus's translations, see Caroline P. Hammond, "The Last Ten Years of Rufinus's Life and the Date of His Move South from Aquileia," *JTS* (n.s.) 28 (1977): 372–429.

3. René Amacker and Éric Junod, eds., *Pamphile et Eusèbe de Césarée, Apologie pour Origène suivi de Rufin d'Aquilée sur la falsification des livres d'Origène*, SC 464 (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2002), 3; Thomas P. Scheck, *St. Pamphilus, Apology for Origen, with the Letter of Rufinus, On the Falsification of the Books of Origen*, FC 120 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2010). A sixth book solely by Eusebius was also composed. Only the first book that Rufinus translated survives.

4. See generally, Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).

5. Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 14.

6. Itemized by Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 14–16. Clark then pivots to the main contribution of her book, which is the network of social relations among the protagonists as evidenced by their abundantly preserved letters to one another.

7. Ruf. *Apol. Orig. praef.* (SC 464:24): *Et quamvis non meam de eo sententiam sed sancti martyris Pamphili sciscitatus sis, et librum eius quem pro Origene in graeco scripsisse traditur transferri tibi poposceris in latinum, tamen non dubito futuros quosdam qui et in eo laesos se putent si nos aliquid pro eo vel alieno sermone dicamus.* See also Scheck, *St. Pamphilus*, 5, 15.

change the name? You are silent. The facts will speak for themselves: clearly those who believe a martyr were going to hate the chief of the Arians.<sup>8</sup>

Jerome had correctly identified that Rufinus's minor alteration was aimed at strengthening the credibility of Origen by attributing his *Apologeticum* solely to the saintly martyr Pamphilus, a claim which Jerome rejected in favor of his own sole attribution of the work to the questionably Arian Eusebius.<sup>9</sup> Despite their sharp differences on the details, both parties agreed that the martyrdom of a writer went a long way towards vouchsafing the writer's orthodoxy.<sup>10</sup>

Following the *Apologeticum*, Rufinus began a decade-long program of translating Origen's theological and exegetical words. Midway through this program, he translated Eusebius's *Historia ecclesiastica* at the behest of Chromatius, the bishop of Aquileia.<sup>11</sup> Given the fact that Rufinus's translations of Origen's works bookended this project and that he had already

8. Hier. *Ruf.* 1.8 (ed. Pierre Lardet, *Saint Jérôme, Apologie contre Rufin*, SC 303 [Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1983], 24, 26: *Docet ipsa praefatio et Pamphili martyris librum pro defensione Origenis a te esse translatum. Et hoc agis totis viribus, ut, cuius fidem martyr probat, Ecclesia non refutet. . . . Si totum opus Pamphili est, cur reliquos libros non transfers? Si alterius, cur nomen immutas? Taces. Ipsae res loquentur: videlicet ut crederent martyri, qui arianorum principem detestaturi erant;* trans. adapted from John N. Hritz, "The Apology Against the Books of Rufinus," in *Saint Jerome, Dogmatic and Polemical Works*, FC 53 [Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1965], 68–69)

9. So also C. Michael Chin, "Rufinus of Aquileia and Alexandrian Afterlives: Translation as Origenism," *J ECS* 18 (2010): 617–47, here 626: "This view of authorial presence also explains why Jerome exempts Pamphilus from authorship, since Pamphilus's status as a martyr makes him, to Jerome, unlikely to have been a heretic, and hence unlikely to have participated in heretical authorship." See also Jeremy M. Schott, "Afterward: Receptions," in *Eusebius of Caesarea: Tradition and Innovation*, ed. Jeremy M. Schott and Aaron P. Johnson (Cambridge, MA: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2013), 351–65.

10. The rhetoric of martyrdom in late antiquity was an important way of bolstering the *bona fides* of the heroes of the faith. See generally Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, Haskell Lectures on History of Religions (n.s.) 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). For background on conceptions of martyrdom in earlier Christianity, see generally Candida R. Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom: Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions*, The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012).

11. The standard edition remains that of Theodor Mommsen with Eduard Schwartz, eds. *Eusebius Werke*, vol. 2, *Die Kirchengeschichte; Die Lateinische Übersetzung Des Rufinus*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., GCS 6 (Berlin: Akademie, 1999). On this work, see the introduction and translation by Philip R. Amidon, *Rufinus of Aquileia: History of the Church*, FC 133 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2017). On the dating of Rufinus's translation, Hammond, "Last Ten Years," 373, assigns the bulk of the work to 402, about halfway through Rufinus's productive decade of translation.

become embroiled in fierce dispute with Jerome over Origen, Rufinus's version of Origen in the *Historia ecclesiastica* was therefore deeply political, flanked by Rufinus's translation of other Origenist works, and right in the midst of his heated dispute with Jerome over Origen.<sup>12</sup>

The effect of the Origenist controversy upon Rufinus's translation of the *Historia ecclesiastica* has long interested scholars, but for much of the twentieth century this interest was largely concentrated on philological and dogmatic concerns. John Oulton, for example, published a study of Rufinus's translation technique in the *Historia ecclesiastica* in the wake of his own translation of Eusebius's church history.<sup>13</sup> Oulton charged the presbyter with "continually taking unjustifiable liberties with the original. He omits, abbreviates, transposes, expands according to taste: and perhaps his favourite method is to produce a kind of paraphrase which gives the general sense."<sup>14</sup> Even more alarming was Oulton's judgment that Rufinus "was an unfaithful exponent of Eusebian theology."<sup>15</sup> Oulton's verdict was not entirely negative. He called attention to a set of vivid details added to various martyrdom accounts in the *Historia ecclesiastica*.<sup>16</sup> The changes to Eusebius's account of the life and work of Origen in Book 6 led him to suppose that Rufinus had supplemented the account with details derived from an independent source.<sup>17</sup> Oulton's interest in Rufinus was narrowly historical: Rufinus was only important as an independent and reliable source for the history of Origen's era or for the philology of Origen's

12. Cf. John Ernest Leonard Oulton, "Rufinus's Translation of the Church History of Eusebius," *JTS* 30 (1929): 150–74, here 174: "Thus it will be seen that Rufinus's translation of the *Church History* is tinged by the circumstances of his career."

13. Hugh Jackson Lawlor and John Ernest Leonard Oulton, *Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea: The Ecclesiastical History and the Martyrs of Palestine*, 2 vols. (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1927).

14. Oulton, "Rufinus's Translation," 150.

15. Oulton, "Rufinus's Translation," 152–53. The main reason for this conclusion is that Rufinus censors the subordinationism of Eusebius in Book 1, which effects a kind of de-Origenization of the history. Interestingly, Carla Noce, "Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica* in Syriac and Latin: A First Comparison," *Aramaic Studies* 14 (2016): 98–117 has shown that Rufinus is less censorious of Eusebius's subordinationism than his Syriac translator.

16. Oulton, "Rufinus's Translation," 169–73.

17. Oulton, "Rufinus's Translation," 160–64, examining passages in *Hist.* 6.2.5, 6.3.1, 6.3.4, 6.3.9, 6.4.3, 6.8.3–5, 6.16.3–4, 6.19.15, 6.23.2, 6.23.4, 6.31.1, and 6.36.3.

works.<sup>18</sup> Overall, Oulton maintained that “where questions of theology or orthodoxy enter in, Rufinus is simply not to be trusted.”<sup>19</sup>

In a 2008 article Mark Humphries revitalized interest in Rufinus’s “translation” and continuation of Eusebius’s *Historia ecclesiastica* by considering Rufinus as an author in his own right. Humphries summarized Rufinus’s reputation in early twentieth-century scholarship with the Italian adage, *traduttore traditore*.<sup>20</sup> As this saying goes, the translator is a traitor,<sup>21</sup> and it is clear that Oulton viewed Rufinus as more of a traitor to Eusebius than a translator.<sup>22</sup> While Oulton’s view reflects a normative and negative evaluation of Rufinus’s duties as a translator with respect to his source, the immediate and positive reception of Rufinus in late antiquity and the Middle Ages reveals that his translation has independent value.<sup>23</sup>

In the 1980s, scholarship began to consider Rufinus’s literary treatment of Eusebius’s history on its own terms. Torben Christensen, for instance, called for a rehabilitation of Rufinus as a translator with a particular *ars interpretandi*.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, Françoise Thelamon explored how

18. For other scholars of this period who regarded Rufinus, a mere translator, as unworthy of detailed consideration, see Thomas C. Ferguson, *Rufinus of Aquileia and the Beginnings of Nicene Historiography*, VC Supplements 75 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 88.

19. Oulton, “Rufinus’s Translation,” 158.

20. Mark Humphries, “Rufinus’s Eusebius: Translation, Continuation, and Edition in the Latin *Ecclesiastical History*,” *J ECS* 16 (2008): 143–64, esp. 147.

21. Even this translation is a betrayal. As Roman Jakobson once pointed out, “If we were to translate into English the traditional formula *Traduttore, traditore* as ‘the translator is a betrayer,’ we would deprive the Italian rhyming epigram of all its paronomastic value. Hence a cognitive attitude would compel us to change this aphorism into a more explicit statement and to answer the questions: translator of what messages? betrayer of what values?” (Roman Jakobson, “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation,” repr. in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. [London: Routledge, 2012], 126–31, here 131).

22. A somewhat more positive evaluation is Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 183: “Thus Rufinus in unobtrusive ways shows his admiration for Origen and for the Origenist monks of his own era.”

23. Noted by Humphries, “Rufinus’s Eusebius,” 148–49, and Laetitia Ciccolini, “La version latine de l’*Histoire ecclésiastique*,” in *Eusèbe de Césarée: Histoire ecclésiastique; Commentaire*, ed. Sébastien Morlet and Lorenzo Perrone, vol. 1, *Études d’introduction* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2012), 243–56.

24. Torben Christensen, “Rufinus of Aquileia and the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Lib. VIII–IX, of Eusebius,” *Studia Theologica* 34 (1980): 129–52, and Christensen, *Rufinus of Aquileia and the Historia Ecclesiastica, Lib. VIII–IX, of Eusebius* (Copenhagen: The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 1989), esp. 132–33. Christensen, “Rufinus of Aquileia,” 137–39 documents changes that are present throughout the whole work. For instance, Rufinus often improves Eusebius’s at times convoluted style, and he deploys intratextual (and intertextual) allusions not present in Eusebius’s Greek to connect different parts of the narrative.

aspects of Rufinus's translation supported the pastoral concerns of his patron Chromatius in the face of the Gothic invasion.<sup>25</sup> Since Humphries's article, the trend toward a more literary and contextual understanding of Rufinus's version has accelerated.<sup>26</sup> Rather than evaluating Rufinus as a betrayer of his source material, scholars now tend to see Rufinus as faithful to the specific historical and theological context in which he completed his translation in the early fifth century.<sup>27</sup> For example, C. Michael Chin has argued that, while Rufinus purged Origen and Eusebius of their subordinationism, he nonetheless exhibited a non-textual fidelity to Origenism.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, Thelamon has shown how the differences between Rufinus's and Eusebius's descriptions of Constantine was due to their particular approach, choices, and style, rather than Rufinus's failures as translator.<sup>29</sup> More recently, Michael P. Hanaghan has demonstrated how Rufinus's depiction of pagan tetrarchic tyrants is consistently more negative and gruesome than Eusebius's, as Rufinus tries to connect the Theodosian response to the (supposedly) pagan usurpation of Eugenius to the persecutions of the early fourth century.<sup>30</sup> Stephen C. Carlson has shown how Rufinus inserts Origenist tropes into his translation of the Papias chapter in Book 3 of Eusebius's church history.<sup>31</sup> Scholars have similarly recognized

25. Françoise Thelamon, "Une œuvre destinée à la communauté chrétienne d'Aquilée: L'*Histoire ecclésiastique* de Rufin," *Antichità Altoadriatiche* 22 (1982): 255–71. She further investigates religious reasons for his selection of events in "Rufin historien de son temps," *Antichità Altoadriatiche* 31 (1987): 41–59.

26. Cf. FC 133:8, arguing that Rufinus "aims for a narrative that will be more coherent to his readers and listeners, and display more clearly the unity of the church in faith and order, than would be true (he evidently thinks) of one that cleaved more closely to the text of the original."

27. The basic dilemma is discussed well by Sébastien Morlet, *addendum* to Ciccolini, "La version latine," in *Eusèbe de Césarée*, 256–66. It must be noted that philological interest in Rufinus still remains in the scholarship. For example, Edoardo Bona, "Origene nella versione di Rufino del VI libro dell'*Historia* di Eusebio: interventi e differenti accentuazioni," in *La biografia di Origene fra storia e agiografia*, ed. Adele Monaci Castagno (Villa Verucchio: Pazzini, 2004), 289–310 points out the Rufinus added items of linguistic and bibliographical interest to Eusebius's account of Origen.

28. Chin, "Rufinus," esp. 634–45. According to Chin, Rufinus's translational ethos itself embodies Origenism, and this is demonstrated by several suggestive parallels between Rufinus's literary career and Origen's theology.

29. Françoise Thelamon, "Constantin 'religiosus princeps': La construction d'un modèle dans l'*Histoire ecclésiastique* de Rufin d'Aquilée," *Antichità Altoadriatiche* (2014): 81–93.

30. Michael P. Hanaghan, "Rufinus' Blood Pagan Tyrants," *VC* 75 (2021): 22–42.

31. Stephen C. Carlson, "Rufinus's Origenization of Eusebius in His Translation of the *Historia ecclesiastica*," in *Perspectives on Origen in the History of his Reception*, ed. Alfons Fürst, *Adamantiana* 21 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2021), 151–60.

that Rufinus's inclusion of Origenist thought is bound up in his position in the Origenist controversies of the late fourth and early fifth century.<sup>32</sup>

Sabrina Antonella Robbe has provided the most extensive treatment to date of how Rufinus altered Eusebius's presentation of martyrdom and persecution.<sup>33</sup> Robbe stresses the literary character of Rufinus's text, with particular focus on how he updated the Eusebian accounts to fit his Theodosian context. Robbe's monograph on Rufinus's treatment of Eusebius includes a careful analysis of all the martyrdom accounts in Eusebius's *Historia ecclesiastica*, from Ignatius to the "Great Persecution," emphasizing how Rufinus made them his own, enhanced their pathos by exacerbating gory details and using evocative and dramatic language, all of which is consistent with a proper "literary translation" of his day.<sup>34</sup> For Robbe, Rufinus should be viewed as a "man of his times, who reinterprets the narrated facts based on shared categories of thought (the new concept of martyrdom, the providential interpretation of persecution)."<sup>35</sup> Robbe only briefly considers Rufinus's treatment of Origen himself, perhaps because her focus is on actual martyrs rather than someone who did not technically die a martyr, as Rufinus knew about Origen.

This article argues that Rufinus enhances the martyr-like aspects of Origen's life, from boyhood to death, to make him more palatable in the Latin West, especially for church leaders like Rufinus's patron, Chromatius, who deeply admired martyrs and used the cult of martyrs to develop the importance of their see. It begins by examining Chromatius's celebration of martyrs and Rufinus's relationship to the Aquileian bishop, the addressee of his Latin *Historia ecclesiastica*. It then embarks on a series of close readings of Rufinus's description of Origen, which show how Rufinus consistently and subtly alters Eusebius's Greek to present Origen as a martyr.

32. E.g., Christensen, "Rufinus of Aquileia."

33. Sabrina Antonella Robbe, *Ecclesiasticam historiam in latinum vertere: Rufino traduttore di Eusebio di Caesarea: persecuzioni e martiri*, Supplementi Adamantius 5 (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2016); and Robbe, "Finalità e tecniche della traduzione della *Historia ecclesiastica*: Alcuni esempi," in *L'Oriente in occidente: L'opera di Rufino di Concordia*, ed. Maurizio Girolami, Supplementi Adamantius 4 (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2014), 179–200.

34. Robbe, "Finalità," 182.

35. Robbe, *Ecclesiasticam historiam*, 266: "In fine, Rufino è un uomo dei suoi tempi, che reinterpreta i fatti narrati in base a categorie di pensiero condivise (il nuovo concetto di martirio, l'interpretazione provvidenziale della persecuzione) e risente degli orientamenti peculiari della produzione agographica e apologetica coeva (luoghi comuni, modelli di santità)."

## CHROMATIUS, RUFINUS, AND THE CULT OF MARTYRS

In the mid- to late fourth century, the cult of martyrs became increasingly important in Italy and the Latin West. The beginning of this process is credited to Damasus, bishop of Rome (366–384), who revitalized the cult of martyrs by reconstructing their tombs in the catacombs under the city.<sup>36</sup> These efforts were intended to promote Christian unity in the wake of significant schismatic and heretical unrest by using martyrdom to foster orthodoxy.<sup>37</sup> In the decades that followed, the cult of martyrs came to be used in northern Italy to support new episcopal hierarchies.<sup>38</sup> Chromatius of Aquileia was one bishop to take this opportunity to develop the authority of his see by celebrating the martyrs.<sup>39</sup> His sermons, once all but ignored as being authored by Pseudo-Jerome, speak to his strong interest in and respect for martyrs. A short survey will suffice.

In *Sermon 5*, Chromatius expounds a statement in 1 Kings 20.28 that the Lord is God of the mountains and not of the valleys (*quoniam Deus montium sit et non vallium*) as follows: “Mountains are patriarchs, mountains are prophets, apostles are mountains too, martyrs are mountains.”<sup>40</sup> This schema asserts that martyrs can be usefully classed alongside holy prophets and apostolic and ecclesiastical fathers. *Sermon 7*, which survives only as a brief, yet illuminating introductory fragment, was likely devoted to the importance of two local martyrs (*Serm. 7.1–3*): “Today is

36. Marianne Sághy, “Martyr Cult and Collective Identity in Fourth-Century Rome,” in *Identity and Alterity in Hagiography and the Cult of Saints*, ed. Ana Marinkovi and Trpimir Vedriš, Bibliotheca Hagiographica 1 (Zagreb: Hagiographica, 2010), 17–35.

37. Marianne Sághy, “*Scinditur in partes populus*: Pope Damasus and the Martyrs of Rome,” *Early Medieval Europe* 9 (2000): 273–87, esp. 274: “Damasus’ management of the cult of the martyrs was connected with his polemic against rival Catholic factions.” See also Sághy, “Martyr cult,” 18.

38. Alan Thacker, “Popes, Patriarchs and Archbishops and the Origins of the Cult of the Martyrs in Northern Italy,” *Studies in Church History* 47 (2011): 51–79, esp. 53.

39. As Thacker, “Popes,” 62, argues that, at some point in the late fourth century, Chromatius delivered a sermon welcoming apostolic relics to his see on an occasion that may well have coincided with the dedication of the newly built local basilica. Compare Chromat. *Serm. 26.1*, line 4: *Perfecta est basilica in honorem sanctorum, et velociter perfecta* with lines 9–10: *reliquias sanctorum accepimus*. Chromatius’s statement that “the basilica was completed in honor of the saints and quickly completed” implies some saintly assistance in the timely completion of the works. Clearly, his see of Aquileia was on the rise.

40. Chromat. *Serm. 5.21* (ed. Joseph Lemarié, *Chromace d’Aquilée, Sermons*, vol. 1, SC 154 [Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1969], 168): *Montes sunt patriarchae, montes sunt prophetae, montes et apostoli, montes martyres*.

the birthday of the holy martyrs Felix and Fortunatus, who adorned our city with glorious martyrdom."<sup>41</sup>

In *Sermon* 8, Chromatius refers to Christ as the "prince of the martyrs,"<sup>42</sup> an epithet that he repeatedly employs in *Sermon* 19, which focuses on that theme.<sup>43</sup> In that sermon, martyrs are credited with double grace for giving up their soul and body to passion.<sup>44</sup> He details the significance of Christ's clothing on the way to the cross as described in Matt 27.27–28: "But we are able to recognize in the purple tunic that the church is indicated, which remaining on Christ the king, shines with regal glory."<sup>45</sup> The same glory is shared by martyrs: "Also in the red cloak we are able to pay attention to the glory of the martyrs which is indicated, these martyrs anointed with their own special gore and decorated with their blood, shine just like the precious red on Christ."<sup>46</sup> The Aquileian bishop's chromatic interest is in keeping with the increased interest in colors found in late antique texts,<sup>47</sup> but it also gestures at the red of the depictions of martyrdom in his church in Aquileia. The bloody colors link martyrs to Christ, even as Chromatius recognized that the outward appearance of the martyrs was secondary to their inner faith.<sup>48</sup>

In *Sermon* 21, he specifically links martyrs to persecution and considers them alongside confessors:

41. Chromat. *Serm.* 7.1 (SC 154:182): *Natale est hodie sanctorum martyrum Felicis et Fortunati, qui civitatem nostram glorioso martyrio decorarunt.*

42. Chromat. *Serm.* 8.2 (SC 154:188): *princeps martyrum.*

43. Chromat. *Serm.* 19 (ed. Joseph Lemarié, *Chromace d'Aquilée*, Sermons, vol. 2, SC 164 [Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1971], 20). See also Chromat. *Serm.* 19.1.31 (SC 164:20.31). For discussion, see Lellia Cracco Ruggini, "Il vescovo Cromazio e gli ebrei di Aquileia," *Antichità Altoadriatiche* 12 (1976): 353–81, esp. 369n40.

44. Chromat. *Serm.* 19.2 (SC 164:22.58–59).

45. Chromat. *Serm.* 19.2 (SC 164:20.33–35): *Possumus autem in tunica purpurea etiam Ecclesiam significatam cognoscere, quae in Christo rege manens, gloria regali refulget.*

46. Chromat. *Serm.* 19.2 (SC 164:20.51–54): *In chlamyde quoque coccinea etiam gloriam martyrum significatam advertere possumus, qui cruore proprio tincti ac sanguine martyrii decorati, velut coccum pretiosum in christo refulgent.* Chromat. *Serm.* 29.4 (SC 164:130.62–64) uses similar language to describe heaven: *congregatio sanctorum quae sanguine martyrum glorioso velut rosa preciosa refulget* ("[there will be] a gathering of holy men, which shines with the glorious blood of martyrdom like a precious rose").

47. See the seminal study of Michael Roberts, *The Jeweled Style: Poetry and Poetics in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 112, which notes "the late antique taste for gorgeous display of brilliance and color."

48. Chromat. *Serm.* 19.2 (SC 164:22.59–61): *Caro deforis sanguine martyrii cruciatur, intus anima confessione fidei decoratur* ("Flesh grows outwardly red through the blood of a martyr, but inwardly the soul is adorned by the confession of faith").

Nevertheless, this bitterness of persecution has great sweetness, since the sweet glory of martyrdom is reached through persecution. For even trees which have bitter roots, are accustomed to produce sweet fruit. And so, persecution seems bitter, but produces the sweet fruit of salvation, since it returns those who are persecuted, as confessors or martyrs.<sup>49</sup>

The connection between confessors and martyrs may also be detected in the list of ecclesiastical graces in *Sermon 24*, where martyrs are listed next to confessors.<sup>50</sup> Chromatius clearly considers both confessors and martyrs as key ecclesiastical figures worthy of deep admiration.

In this context, it is worth returning to Chromatius's relationship with Rufinus. According to Rufinus's *Apology against Jerome*, this relationship stretched as far back as the early 370s, when Chromatius was still a presbyter.<sup>51</sup> In that text, Rufinus spoke confidently of the specific forms of worship that take place in the holy church of Aquileia, over which Chromatius became bishop.<sup>52</sup> During the Origenist controversy, Rufinus attempted to isolate Jerome by positioning him against martyrs and repeatedly accusing him of failing to respect martyrs and confessors.<sup>53</sup> Chromatius intervened on Rufinus's behalf, writing to Jerome in private to urge him to be silent.<sup>54</sup> Jerome refused.

Given their long history, their shared connections to Aquileia, and their mutual relationship, Rufinus knew well that Chromatius had a strong, public interest in accounts of martyrdom and considered martyrs alongside the leading figures of Christianity. When Chromatius asked Rufinus to translate Eusebius's history, the opportunity presented itself for Rufinus to enhance Eusebius's martyrdom stories in line with Chromatius's interests. As Robbe has shown, Rufinus's version is consistently gorier than Eusebius's.<sup>55</sup> This broadly aligns with Chromatius's emphasis on the martyrs' bloody suffering, such as in *Sermon 19*, analyzed above. As we will see, translating Eusebius's history also provided Rufinus with the opportunity

49. Chromat. *Serm.* 21 (SC 164:42–44.39–49): *Quae tamen amaritudo persecutionis habet magnam dulcedinem, quia persecutione ad dulcem martyrii gloriam pervenitur. Nam et arbores radices amaras habent, sed dulces fructus procreare consuerunt. Sic et persecutio quidem amara videtur, sed procreat dulcem fructum salutis, dum, hos quos persequitur, aut confessors reddit, aut martyres.*

50. Chromat. *Serm.* 24.3 (SC 164:72.57).

51. Ruf. *Apol.* 1.4. On the long relationship between Rufinus and Chromatius, see Robert McEachnie, *Chromatius of Aquileia and the Making of Christian City* (Oxford: Routledge, 2017), 47–60.

52. Ruf. *Apol.* 1.5.

53. Ruf. *Apol.* 2.30, 35, 37, and 43.

54. Hier. *Ruf.* 3.2.

55. Robbe, *Ecclesiasticam historiam*, *passim*.

to enhance Eusebius's portrayal of Origen and to make the great theologian more like a martyr.

Accordingly, Rufinus and Chromatius fit well within the changing nature of the concept of martyrdom in the early fifth century, which became increasingly pliable as the absence of imperial persecution meant that Christians could no longer celebrate martyrs who had been killed recently for their faith. In her 2014 dissertation, Diane Fruchtman examined how three early fifth-century authors—all contemporaries with Rufinus—Prudentius, Paulinus of Nola, and Augustine promoted “living martyrs,” defined as those “who earned their status by some other means than dying in persecution.”<sup>56</sup> For example, Paulinus could celebrate Nola's local saint Felix, who, like Origen, died of old age, as enduring *martyrium sine caede* (martyrdom without blood).<sup>57</sup> More recently, Adam Ployd has detailed how Augustine expanded the concept of martyrdom to deny death-seeking Donatists veneration as martyrs.<sup>58</sup> Both of these studies examine how Christian writers claimed (or denied) the mantle and prestige of martyrdom for contemporaries. Our study shows that the pliability of martyrdom as a concept could also be deployed for individuals such as Origen who died during the age of persecution, but who, like Prudentius's Felix, were not killed for their faith. Rufinus's project is thus inextricably bound up in local Italian church politics and the Origenist controversy and hence is a valuable source of insight on Origenism at the turn of the fifth century.

## THE MARTYR WITH NO CLOTHES

Eusebius begins his biography of Origen with the Severan persecution that claimed the life of Origen's own father.<sup>59</sup> Origen is associated with martyrdom beginning with his swaddling clothes (ἐξ αὐτῶν . . . σπαργάνων).<sup>60</sup> Martyrdom motivates the boy to seek out danger:

When the pyre of persecution was ignited to a great inferno, and as countless numbers were wreathed with crowns of martyrdom, such an ardor

56. Diane Shane Fruchtman, “Living in a Martyrial World: Living Martyrs and the Creation of Martyrial Consciousness in the Late Antique Latin West” (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2014), quotation taken from the abstract.

57. Fruchtman, “Living,” 2, 155.

58. Adam Ployd, “*Non poena sed causa*: Augustine's Anti-Donatist Rhetoric of Martyrdom,” *AugSt* 49 (2018): 24–44.

59. Eus. *H.e.* 6.1 (GCS 6:2.518).

60. Eus. *H.e.* 6.2.2 (GCS 6:2.518). If Eusebius intended to foreshadow his mother's hiding his clothes with the term, Rufinus did not take up this invitation but translated it with a different image as *ex ipsis incunabulis*.

for martyrdom seized Origen's soul, still just a boy, that he was eager to close in on the dangers, leap forward and rush into the fight.<sup>61</sup>

Lest one think that Origen's early encounter with martyrdom was merely mental, Eusebius reassures the reader that "his departure from life was not far off at all,"<sup>62</sup> but providence, by way of Origen's mother, intervened to temper his zeal (*προθυμία*). Up to this point, Rufinus closely follows Eusebius, but now Rufinus elaborates Origen's eagerness to join the fray in the Eusebian account by specifically linking Origen's near martyrdom to a death wish:

Origen, then still a little boy, burned with such desire for attaining martyrdom that he willingly placed himself in danger and rushed headlong into the midst while others took up the fight, such that it seemed that he was wanting to pursue death itself and die prematurely.<sup>63</sup>

Like Eusebius, Rufinus depicts Origen as being so caught up with his desire for martyrdom that he seeks out danger recklessly (*ut sponte se periculis ingereret*), rushing like a warrior into the fight in a manner reminiscent of epic (*praeceps in medium rueret*).<sup>64</sup> Eusebius limits himself to mentioning that Origen came close to death, but Rufinus specifically claims that Origen appeared to want his own death (*insectari ipsam mortem et rapere velle videretur*). The verb *rapere* is ideally suited to the circumstances, given its capacity to describe a sudden or premature death.<sup>65</sup> Rufinus extends the martyrdom language of Eusebius's account where it frames the story by further claiming that the intervention of Origen's mother prevented his

61. Eus. *H.e.* 6.2.3 (GCS 6:2.520): εἰς μέγα δὴ οὖν τῆς τοῦ διωγμοῦ πυρκαϊᾶς ἀφθείσης, καὶ μυρίων ὅσων τοῖς κατὰ τὸ μαρτύριον ἀναδοιμένων στεφάνοις, ἔρωσ τοσοῦτος μαρτυρίου τὴν Ὀριγένους, ἔτι κομιδῆ παιδὸς ὑπάρχοντος, κατεῖχε ψυχὴν, ὡς ὁμόσε τοῖς κινδύνοις χωρεῖν προπηδᾶν τε καὶ ὁρμᾶν ἐπὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα προθύμως ἔχειν.

62. Eus. *H.e.* 6.2.4 (GCS 6:2.250): ἦδη γέ τοι σμικρὸν ὅσον αὐτῷ καὶ τὰ τῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ βίου ἀπαλλαγῆς οὐ πόρρω καθίστατο.

63. Ruf. *Hist.* 6.2.3 (GCS 6:2.251): *multis ea tempestate martyrio coronatis in tantum ardorem capessendi martyrii puerulus tunc adhuc Origenes exarserat, ut sponte se periculis ingereret et aliis in certamine positus praeceps in medium rueret, ita ut insectari ipsam mortem et rapere velle videretur, quam et adipisci omnimodis potuisset, nisi quod dispensatione domini ad utilitatem multorum putatur pro totius ecclesiae aedificatione servatus per sollicitudinem matris, quae gloriosae mortis eius desideris impediuit.* All translations of Rufinus are the authors', but phrases borrowed from Amidon will be readily apparent.

64. Cf. Sil. 5.607 (ed. Josef Delz, *Silius Italicus, Punica* [Stuttgart, Teubner, 1987], 134), where Hannibal's burning desire to close quarters with Flaminius prompts him to charge *praeceps ruit in medios*.

65. LSJ *s.v.* I.3 "to carry off suddenly or prematurely by death."

“glorious death” (*gloriosae mortis*), a phrase heavily loaded with martyrdom symbolism.<sup>66</sup>

Rufinus also alters the narrative structure of Eusebius’s account of how Origen’s passion for martyrdom grew. Eusebius’s version begins with Origen being passionate for martyrdom (6.2.3). His mother manages to calm him down somewhat (6.2.4–5), but this only lasts until Origen discovers that his father Leonides has been imprisoned, whereupon he burns again for martyrdom (6.2.5).<sup>67</sup> Rufinus keeps the first two steps the same: Origen is passionate; his mother calms him down. Then in Rufinus’s version Origen burns once more for martyrdom. This renewal of his passion is not caused solely by Origen’s discovery of his father’s imprisonment but arises inadvertently from his mother’s prayers that he look after himself and spare her the distress and potential heartbreak of losing her son:

when she initially asked him with motherly pleading that he think of himself and spare his mother, he was in fact made all the more passionate by her prayers in his love of martyrdom, especially because he had learned that his father was imprisoned in chains.<sup>68</sup>

In both accounts, Origen is prevented from pursuing martyrdom by his mother, who hides all his clothes and so keeps him housebound. Eusebius states this as follows: “by hiding all his clothes she compelled him to stay at home.”<sup>69</sup> Rufinus details the furtive actions of Origen’s mother:

66. Cf. Macc 2.6.19 (eds. Robert Weber and Roger Gryson, *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, 5th ed. [Stuttgart, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007], 1492): *at ille gloriosam mortem magis quam odibilem vitam amplectens voluntarie praeibat ad supplicium*; Cypr. Pat. 10.192 (PL 4:629), *tot denique prophetae interfecti, tot martyres gloriosis mortibus honorati, qui omnes ad caelestes coronas patientiae laude venerunt: neque enim potest accipi dolorum et passionum corona, nisi praecedat in dolore et passione patientia*; Cypr. Pat. 12.2.1 (PL 4:328–29): *in carcere beati fratres nostri ad immortalitatem gloriosae mortis exitu transeunt*; P.-Nol. *Carm.* 24.567 (ed. Wilhelm von Hartel, *Paulinus Nolanus: Carmina*, CSEL 30 [Vienna: Tempsky, 1894], 225); Prud. *Peri.* 10.61 (ed. Johannes Bergman, *Aurelli Prudentii Clementis: Carmina*, CSEL 61 [Vienna: Tempsky, 1926], 373). Ammianus likely alludes to Christian uses of the phrase in his description of martyrdom (22.11.10, ed. Wolfgang Seyfarth, *Ammianus Marcellinus* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1999], 1.227): *qui deviare a religione compulsi pertulere cruciabiles poenas ad usque gloriosam mortem intemerata fide progressi et nunc martyres appellantur*.

67. Eus. *H.e.* 6.2.5 (GCS 6:2.520): *ὅτε γνοὺς ἀλόντα τὸν πατέρα δεσμοτηρίῳ φυλάττεσθαι ὄλος ἐγένετο τῆς περὶ τὸ μαρτύριον ὀρμῆς*.

68. Ruf. *Hist.* 6.2.5 (GCS 6:2.521): *cum . . . ille ex his precibus inflammator ad amorem martyrii redderetur, maxime ex eo, quod patrem iam teneri cognovisset in vinculis*.

69. Eus. *H.e.* 6.2.5 (GCS 6:2.520): *τὴν πᾶσαν αὐτοῦ ἀποκρουσμένην ἐσθῆτα οἴκοι μένειν ἀνάγκην ἐπήγεν*.

And so since she had presaged that he wanted to expedite matters and rush out before dawn to settle the contest, she entered the bedroom of her sleeping son at night, stole all the clothes which he could go out wearing in public, and secreted them away, in order that he be compelled by this to remain at home. Impeded by his mother's tricks, since he was unable to do anything about it nor however would his mind suffer to be quiet, he dared to do something beyond his years. He wrote a letter to his father.<sup>70</sup>

In Rufinus's account, Origen's mother is a far more formidable adversary, who uses foresight to anticipate her son's actions. Rufinus stresses the secretive manner with which Origen's mother operated, using the participle *furata* together with the *sub-* compound verb *subtraxit* to convey a degree of latency in the action.<sup>71</sup> His account is more convincing. Origen's mother has not hidden his entire wardrobe, as in Eusebius's version (τὴν πᾶσαν αὐτοῦ ἐσθῆτα), but merely what he can wear when he is out and about. Ultimately, these changes support Rufinus's claim that Origen could not pursue martyrdom (*cum nihil aliud agere potest*) despite his overwhelming zeal to do so.

Stuck at home, Origen writes to his father imploring him to pursue martyrdom. Eusebius's summary of the letter is succinct: "Make sure you do not think of anything else on our account."<sup>72</sup> Rufinus follows Eusebius's quotation verbatim but then adds further support for his claim that Origen was unable to overcome his mother's restrictions: "He wrote to his father that he was being detained by his mother's designs."<sup>73</sup>

## ORIGEN AND THE MARTYRS

At a mere eighteen years of age, Eusebius tell us, Origen won a great reputation for himself by offering comfort to martyrs wallowing in prison, and

70. Ruf. *Hist.* 6.2.5 (GCS 6:2.521): *etenim cum maturare eum velle et antelucanum prorumpere ad agonum certamina praesensisset, noctu cubiculum filii dormientis ingressa omnia indumenta, in quibus procedi ad publicum poterat, furata subtraxit, ut per hoc domi residere necessitate cogeretur. ille maternis impeditis dolis, cum nihil aliud agere potest nec tamen mens quiescere pateretur, audet aliquid supra aetatem. epistulam scribit ad patrem.*

71. For this capacity in Latin *sub-* verbal compounds, see A. A. Zaloznjak and A. D. Shmelev, "Sociativity, Conjoining, Reciprocity, and the Latin Prefix *com-*," in *Reciprocal Constructions*, ed. V. P. Nedjalkov (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007), 223.

72. Eus. *H.e.* 6.2.6 (GCS 6:2.520): ἔπεχε μὴ δι' ἡμᾶς ἄλλο τι φρονήσης.

73. Ruf. *Hist.* 6.2.6 (GCS 6:2.521): *epistulam scribit ad patrem se quidem maternis artibus detineri.*

even while they were being led to their deaths.<sup>74</sup> This behavior incurred significant personal risk to Origen, mitigated only by the assistance of providence. Rufinus elaborates on Eusebius's account:

At that time his reputation spread far and wide to all, both unbelievers and the faithful, at home and abroad, especially owing to his actions for the blessed while they were imprisoned under torture, not only strengthening them for martyrdom with words and encouragement of a perfect and spiritual instruction, but even relieving their suffering by his many kind acts and assistance from the punishments of the chains and the squalor of jail.<sup>75</sup>

There are two main differences from Eusebius's version. The first concerns the reach of Origen's fame. For Eusebius his fame reaches the faithful,<sup>76</sup> while for Rufinus it explicitly extends to unbelievers and spreads both at home and abroad. Second, Eusebius keeps Origen's kind acts towards them separate from alleviating their suffering while in jail and under torture, instead noting only his presence (συνῆν) among them during their torture and imprisonment. This is markedly distinct from the specificity of Rufinus's claim that Origen's actions directly alleviated their torture and incarceration (*multis suis officiis ac ministeriis e vinculorum poenis et squalore carceris sublevabat*), and in any case Rufinus goes on to include a passage that is directly comparable to Eusebius's praise of Origen's presence (Ruf. *Hist.* 6.3.4: *ante tribunalia iudicum et in ipsis eorum cruciatibus aderat*).

In both accounts of Origen's charity towards the martyrs, his actions immediately prior to their martyrdom are dramatic. Eusebius records how close Origen came to death:

But he was also with the holy martyrs after that as they were led to death, acting with much boldness and closing in on the dangers, such that as he was already approaching the martyrs courageously and with much boldness greeting them with a kiss, the enraged crowd of people around him would

74. Eus. *H.e.* 6.3.4 (GCS 6:2.526): οὐ μόνον γὰρ ἐν δεσμοῖς τυγχάνουσιν, οὐδὲ μέχρις ὑστάτης ἀποφάσεως ἀνακρινόμενοι συνῆν, ἀλλὰ καὶ μετὰ ταύτην ἀπαγομένοις τὴν ἐπὶ θανάτῳ τοῖς ἀγίοις μάρτυσιν, πολλῇ τῇ παρρησίᾳ χρώμενος καὶ ὁμοσε τοῖς κινδύνοις χωρῶν ὥστε ἤδη αὐτὸν προσιόντα θαρσαλέως καὶ τοὺς μάρτυρας μετὰ πολλῆς παρρησίας φιλήματι προσαγορεύοντα πολλάκις ἐπιμαίνει ὁ ἐν κύκλῳ τῶν ἔθνῶν δῆμος μικροῦ δεῖν κατέλευσεν, εἰ μὴ τῆς θείας δεξιᾶς βοηθοῦ καθάπαξ τυγχάνων παραδόξως διεδίδρασκεν.

75. Ruf. *Hist.* 6.3.3–4 (GCS 6:2.527): *quo in tempore perfamosissimum apud omnes vel incredulos vel fideles domi forisque nomen eius effectum est, praecipue per id, quod sanctos omnes in confessionis vinculis positos non solum sermone et cohortatione perfectae et spiritalis doctrinae ad martyrium roborabat, verum etiam multis suis officiis ac ministeriis e vinculorum poenis et squalore carceris sublevabat.*

76. Eus. *H.e.* 6.3.3 (GCS 6:2.527): καὶ μάλιστα διαβόητον ἐκτήσατο παρὰ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως ὀρμωμένοις ὄνομα.

have almost stoned him to death, except that he happened to escape once for all miraculously by the help of the divine right hand.<sup>77</sup>

Rufinus's version is again more detailed:

Often finally he was even present before the judges' tribunal and during their torture, suffering together with them mentally and emotionally in front of the profane questioning of the judges, and longing, by his expression and nodding, if it can be said, as to suggest stronger responses to them. And when they had been sentenced, he showed the same loyalty, exposing him to all the dangers and not shaking in fear at the final inspections of the persecutors, but even greeted the martyrs with kisses, such that an attack would be made against him by the gentiles, but he would escape protected by the divine right hand of providence to the admiration of all.<sup>78</sup>

Rufinus presents Origen as suffering alongside the martyrs. The use of the participle *conpatiens* underscores his claim that Origen underwent the same emotional turmoil, even if he ultimately eluded the martyrs' fate. There is no equivalent expression for this claim in Eusebius's account, which simply notes that Origen was with (συνῆν) the martyrs during their interrogation and accompanied them on their way to their execution. The phrase *eadem fiducia* may be read as indicating that Origen showed the same loyalty to the martyrs as he had before, namely that even once they were sentenced to death he did not abandon them but escorted and comforted them on their way to execution. But it also gestures at the broader similarity that Rufinus wants to assert between Origen and the martyrs, that his *fiducia* was no different from theirs. As at Ruf. *Hist.* 6.3.3 (*apud omnes vel incredulos vel fideles*), emphasis is again placed on how widespread the praise of Origen is, as his actions garner him the "admiration of all" (*admiratione omnium*). Rufinus's account is also more vivid and dramatic. While Eusebius simply states that the martyrs were examined while Origen was there (ἀνακριοιόμενοις συνῆν), Rufinus creates a more

77. Eus. *H.e.* 6.3.4 (GCS 6:2.526): ἀλλὰ καὶ μετὰ ταύτην ἀπαγομένοις τὴν ἐπὶ θανάτῳ τοῖς ἁγίοις μάρτυσιν, πολλῇ τῇ παρηρησία χρώμενος καὶ ὁμόσε τοῖς κινδύνοις χωρῶν· ὥστε ἤδη αὐτὸν προσίοντα θαρσαλέως καὶ τοὺς μάρτυρας μετὰ πολλῆς παρηρησίας φιλήματι προσαγορευόντα πολλάκις ἐπιμανεῖς ὁ ἐν κύκλῳ τῶν ἔθνῶν δῆμος μικροῦ δεῖν κατέλευσεν, εἰ μὴ τῆς θείας δεξιᾶς βοηθοῦ καθάπαξ τυγχάνων παραδόξως διεδίδρασκεν.

78. Ruf. *Hist.* 6.3.4 (GCS 6:2.527): *saepe denique etiam ante tribunalia iudicium et in ipsis eorum cruciatibus aderat, adversum profanas interrogationes iudicium affectu eis ac mente conpatiens, vultuque et nutibus, si dici potest, velut firmiores eis responsiones subicere gestiens. sed et cum sententiam suscepissent, eadem fiducia utebatur, omnibus se periculis inserens nec trepidans persecutoribus intuentibus extremis quoque oculis martyres salutare, ita ut nonnumquam pro bis etiam impetus in eum gentilium fieret, sed divina dextera cum admiratione omnium protectus evaderet.*

elaborate scene, complete with judicial tribunal, judges, profane questions, and responses from the martyrs. This dramatic tone continues in the climactic description of Origen's kissing of the martyrs, which uses the historic infinitive *salutare* to draw attention to his action and the resulting divine protection that enables him to avoid retribution from the hostile crowd. Such details extend Rufinus's account, while drawing attention to the bravery and courage of Origen as he consoled the martyrs and stood up to their persecutors.

## THE DEATH OF ORIGEN

Rufinus knew that Origen did not die a martyr. That much is clear from Eusebius, *H.e.* 6.39.5, which relates the final years of Origen with a detailed description of his tortures—but not his death—at the hand of his Roman persecutors. Yet as his rewrite of Eusebius's conclusion to Origen's life shows, Rufinus says that Origen suffered like a martyr for his public Christian witness, even more so than in Eusebius's account.

In one set of changes, Rufinus heightens the punishment enacted upon Origen. While Eusebius recites the events that “happened to Origen” during the persecution (τὰ δὲ Ὀριγένει κατὰ τὸν διωγμὸν συμβάντα), Rufinus talks about the things “done against him” (*in hac persecutione quanta adversum Origenen gesta sint*).<sup>79</sup> Eusebius characterizes the demon that attacked Origen as “evil” (πονηροῦ), which Rufinus enhances with the superlative *pessimus*.<sup>80</sup> Eusebius states that the “judge” (δικαστοῦ) ordered that Origen in no way be put to death (μηδαμῶς αὐτὸν ἀνελεῖν), and Rufinus increases the criticism of the judge by calling him a “persecutor” (*persecutore*) and noting that he also refused to let his punishment cease (*ut nec interficus praestaretur nec poena cessaret*).<sup>81</sup> In a note of pathos, Rufinus adapts Eusebius's description of the letters Origen wrote about the experience from “full of help for those needing to be lifted up” (πλήρεις τοῖς ἀναλήψεως δεομένοις ὠφελείας) to “full of tears and every kind of pity” (*omni miseratione et lacrimis plenas*).<sup>82</sup>

79. Eus. *H.e.* and Ruf. *Hist.* 6.39.5 (GCS 6:2.594–95).

80. Eus. *H.e.* and Ruf. *Hist.* 6.39.5 (GCS 6:2.594–95).

81. Eus. *H.e.* and Ruf. *Hist.* 6.39.5 (GCS 6:2.594–95).

82. Eus. *H.e.* and Ruf. *Hist.* 6.39.5 (GCS 6:2.594–95). James Corke-Webster, *Eusebius and Empire: Constructing Church and Rome in the Ecclesiastical History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 183, observes: “As Origen's mother hinders his attempted martyrdom ‘for the help (*ōpheleian*) of the many,’ prompting Origen's first pastoral epistle to his father, so his eventual inconclusive martyrdom produces missives ‘filled with help (*ōpheleias*) for those in need of restoration.’” This

As for the suffering that Origen received under torture, Rufinus simultaneously streamlines Eusebius's description and amplifies its echoes of other martyrdoms. Eusebius talks in great detail about his punishments: "chains and tortures against his body and punishments under iron in the inner parts of the dungeon, and that he was stretched out for many days at a time with feet under four places in the stocks."<sup>83</sup> Rufinus recasts this description to "he endured new crosses, new kinds of punishments and tortures unheard of in all the ages."<sup>84</sup> The final three-word phrase *inaudita tormenta pertulit* calls to mind Rufinus's description of the martyrdom of Potamiaena verbatim: "indeed then she endured calculated and unheard of forms of torture (*inaudita tormenta pertulit*) and then she was finally consumed by punishments of fire together with her revered mother Marcella."<sup>85</sup> Like Potamiaena, Origen undergoes cruel and unusual forms of tortures, and Rufinus's qualification of Origen's tortures with the phrase *saeculis omnibus* draws her martyrdom into a competitive framework, which Origen's suffering outdoes. His suffering under torture draws on her example of martyrdom, but his punishments go beyond whatever horrors Potamiaena suffered.

In a similar way, Rufinus adds *novas cruces* ("new crosses") to Eusebius's lists of punishments, a torture that recalls Jesus's paradigmatic suffering. In line with this *imitatio Christi* of Origen's passion, another set of changes underscores that Origen suffered for his public Christian witness. Eusebius states that Origen was tortured "on account of the word of Christ" (διὰ τὸν Χριστοῦ λόγον); Rufinus changes this to "in defense of the name of Christ" (*pro nomine Christi*) and adds that his torture was because he was renowned for his teaching of the faith and the truth (*in doctrina fidei et veritatis opinatissimus videbatur*).<sup>86</sup>

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intratextual connection is lost in Rufinus in both places. In the earlier instance, Rufinus changes "for the help of many" (εἰς τὴν πλείστον ὠφέλειαν) to "for the building up of the entire church" (*pro totius ecclesiae aedificatione*).

83. Eus. *H.e.* 6.39.5 (GCS 6:2.594–95): δεσμὰ καὶ βασάνους τὰς κατὰ τοῦ σώματος τὰς τε ὑπὸ σιδήρῳ καὶ μυχοῖς εἰρκτῆς τιμωρίας, καὶ ὡς ἐπὶ πλείστοις ἡμέραις τοὺς πόδας ὑπὸ τέσσαρα τοῦ κολαστηρίου ξύλου παραταθεῖς διαστήματα.

84. Ruf. *Hist.* 6.39.5 (GCS 6:2.594–95): *novas cruces, nova poenarum genera ac saeculis omnibus inaudita tormenta pertulerit utque pro eo.*

85. Ruf. *Hist.* 6.5.1 (GCS 6:2.531): *deinde etiam pro martyrio exquisita atque inaudita tormenta pertulerit atque ad ultimum una cum venerabili matre Marcella ignis supplicii consummata sit.* The term *tormenta* is also used in reference to bishop Alexander's suffering and martyrdom in *Hist.* 6.5.3.

86. Eus. *H.e.*, and Ruf. *Hist.* 6.39.5 (GCS 6:2.594–95).

## CONCLUSION

The aftershocks of Chromatius's decision to commission Rufinus to translate Eusebius in the middle of the Origenist controversy were still reverberating generations later when the *Martyrologicum Hieronymianum* was composed.<sup>87</sup> A detailed calendar of martyrs and their feast days, the *Martyrologicum* is prefaced with forged correspondence between Jerome and the bishops Chromatius and Heliodorus.<sup>88</sup> The inclusion of Chromatius as one of the bishops speaks to the reception of his specific interest in the cult of martyrs, and at the very least the author of the *Martyrologicum* plainly viewed Chromatius as a suitable proxy authority for such a request.<sup>89</sup> The first letter, in the names of Chromatius and Heliodorus, the first bishop of nearby Altinum, describes how Theodosius the Great held a supposed Gregory of Córdoba in high esteem as an authority—an Arian bishop appointed by Constantius II—owing to his daily commemoration of martyrs.<sup>90</sup> Consequently, all agreed that Chromatius and Heliodorus should write to Jerome asking for the martyrological calendar from Eusebius's archives.<sup>91</sup> The second letter, Jerome's supposed reply, provides an account of how Eusebius collected his material about the martyrs. Specif-

87. Views as to where and when vary considerably. J. Dubois, *Les martyrologes du Moyen Âge latin* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1978), 29 claims that it was composed in the fifth century in northern Italy, most likely near Aquileia. Felice Lifshitz, *The Name of the Saint: The Martyrology of Jerome and Access to the Sacred in Francia, 627–827* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 13–29 argues for authorship following the fourth Council of Mâcon in 627–628. Lifshitz's argument has been well received.

88. This argument dates back to Joannes Molanus, *Usuardi martyrologium* (Leuven: 1583), chapter 2: *Nam epistolam Chromatii et Heliodori ad Hieronymu[m], et huius ad eosdem responsam . . . ipsorum tantu[m] nomine conscriptas puto, atque ex parte confictas: re vera autem ipsorum non esse* ("For the letter of Chromatius and Heliodorus to Jerome, and his response to them . . . I think were only written in their name, and so were concocted on their behalf [i.e., in their attribution]: indeed, they were not actually written by them"). Hippolyte Delehaye, *Commentarius perpetuus in Martyrologium Hieronymianum ad recensionem* H. Quentin, *Acta sanctorum* 64.2.2 (Bruxelles: Soc. Des bollandistes, 1931), xiii: *cuius auctor probabilius et ipsas epistulas pseudo-Chromatii et pseudo-Hieronymi fabricasse videtur* ("the author of the *MH* quite probably it seems made up these letters as Pseudo-Chromatius and Pseudo-Jerome"). Chromatius and Heliodorus are the addressees of the genuine prefaces of Jerome to Tobit and to the Books of Solomon.

89. This is surely bound up with the role of Aquileia in the church politics of this period, but Chromatius's interest in martyrs makes the attribution more compelling.

90. Lifshitz, *Name*, 139; AASS 64.2.2:lxxxii. Lifshitz, *Name*, 21 argues that this Gregory of Córdoba never existed but stems from a misreading of Isidore of Seville's note about Gregory of Elvira in his *De viris illustribus*.

91. Lifshitz, *Name*, 139; AASS 64.2.2:lxxxii.

ically, when Constantius II visited Caesarea and asked what he could do for the church there, Eusebius replied that the church was wealthy, and wanted for nothing, but instead requested that he be provided with all records relating to martyrs (Ps.-Hier. *Mart. Hier.* praef.): “Hence it happened that a suitable author undertook to compose a church history, as a careful historiographer revealing the festal days of all the provincial martyrs.”<sup>92</sup> Pseudo-Jerome then explains that he has compiled the *Martyrologicum* in response to Chromatius and Heliodorus’s request:

And since you are keen to recall every day the names of those who offered themselves as a sacrifice to God, on the very day, when the sacrifice was offered, that they became victors over the devil, the martyrs flourishing in their triumph and rejoicing reached Christ, their king, for this reason we have compiled the festal celebrations of individual months and individual days, as you deigned to request, believing that the recollection of our insignificance would be endless since on every day through every moment of the year there will be a festive celebration of our saints’ names.<sup>93</sup>

Pseudo-Jerome explicitly claims that the *Martyrologicum* is not Eusebian, but derived from reading Eusebius’s history, which relied on the imperial archival material that Eusebius obtained with Constantius’s support. This claim may well be an inaccurate indication of the sources of the *Martyrologicum*, but it nonetheless indicates that the notion that a *Martyrologicum* could be constructed from Eusebius’s history was feasible.

In the preface to his *Historia ecclesiastica*, Rufinus claims that Chromatius’s request to translate Eusebius’s Greek history was aimed at distracting the local population of Aquileia from the Gothic incursions. If Rufinus’s claim is accurate (and there is no reason to doubt it, at least in part), then Chromatius may well have been trying to give Rufinus a suitable public reason for the translation that would mask the ecclesiastical politics involved. Chromatius surely expected Rufinus to “lop off” (*de truncare*) Eusebius’s Arian sympathies,<sup>94</sup> and he may even have anticipated that Origen would

92. AASS 64.2.2:lxxxii: *Unde factum est ut idoneus relator existens ecclesiasticam historiam retexere, omnium festa martyrum provincialium omnium Romanorum diligens historiographus declararet.* Cf. Lifshitz, *Name*, 140.

93. AASS 64.2.2:lxxxii: *Et quoniam omni die sacrificium Deo offerentes eorum nomina meminisse studetis qui, die ipso quo offertur sacrificium victores diaboli extiterunt, martyrii sui triumpho pollentes atque ovantes ad regem suum pervenerint Christum, hac de causa, singulorum mensium singulorumque dierum festa conscripsimus ut iubere dignati estis, perennem nostrae parvitas memoriam fore credentes cum diebus omnibus per tota anni spatia sanctorum fuerit nominum festivitas celebrata.* Cf. Lifshitz, *Name*, 140.

94. Hier. *Ruf.* 1.7 (CCSL 79:6).

get some improvement. After all, the timing of Chromatius's request for a history came at a convenient opportunity to rehabilitate Origen following the death of Anastasius, the anti-Origenist bishop of Rome, in 401.

Rufinus did not claim that Origen died a martyr, but he did the next best thing. He told the story of Origen's life in such a way that Origen lived and suffered like a martyr. Rufinus's reinvention of Origen as a martyr in the late fourth century speaks to the reinvention of martyrdom in Italy by Damasus, Ambrose, and Chromatius. These leaders exploited the popular piety for martyrs by finding the memorials of martyred Christians, no matter how obscure, and building churches to house their cults. In short, they reinvented and reinvigorated their martyrdoms. Rufinus executes the same project but in a literary arena, reinventing and reinvigorating Origen as a virtual and virtuous martyr in his creative translation of Eusebius's *Historia ecclesiastica*.

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