



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

GORFFENNOL

THE SWANSEA UNIVERSITY HISTORY AND CLASSICS
STUDENT ONLINE RESEARCH JOURNAL



Dissertation Issue 2: March 2016

This journal is published by students and staff of the Department of History and Classics at Swansea University.

The online version of this journal can be found at http://gorffennol.swansea.ac.uk/?page_id=527.

ISSN 2056-7901

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of the publisher, nor be otherwise circulated in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent publisher.

Cover design by Jed Rual

© Swansea University, 2016

We would like to thank SALT (the Swansea Academy of Learning and Teaching) for the generous start-up funding and the College of Arts and Humanities for providing funding to allow for reproduction of the images.

This project would not be possible without them.

**Holy women of the
Roman Christian Empire:
A Study of Pelagia, the Harlot of Antioch**



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

BA Ancient History

Swansea University

by Laura Bailey

Contents

Introduction	5
Chapter One – Pelagia the Harlot	9
Chapter Two – Pelagia the Penitent	16
Chapter Three – Pelagia or Pelagius?	23
Conclusion	32
Bibliography of Ancient Sources	35
Bibliography of Modern Scholarship	36

Introduction

Over the last 40 years, there has been a substantial increase in the amount of scholarship concerning Late Antiquity. Scholars followed the lead of Peter Brown, who in 1971 published an article in the *Journal of Roman Studies*, titled 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity'. This article was an exploration not of the individual holy men themselves, but rather of their function and the role they played in the often turbulent periods of the fifth and sixth centuries AD.¹ He went on to further develop the face of scholarship regarding conceptions about sexuality and sexual behaviour in Late Antiquity with *The Body and Society*, a study of the phenomenon of permanent sexual renunciation, for example celibacy and life-long virginity, among the early Christian men and women. This was a ground-breaking study of the role Christianity played in enforcing sexual renunciation, especially thanks to its in-depth analysis of the sexual lives of Christian women, as this was a topic that had yet to be explored in detail.² This work is still considered to be one of the most comprehensive to date, due to its meticulous scholarship and its use of primary sources, and, in 2008, a revised edition was published to coincide with the twentieth anniversary, suggesting there was newer scholarship to be discussed.³ The inclusion of an exploration of early Christian women led to an increase in scholars exploring their lives and the accounts of their lives, and paved the way for scholars such as Coon, Burrus, Ward, Harvey and Cooper.⁴

It is scholars like these that have led me to my dissertation topic: a study of female ascetics of the fourth century AD, with particular focus on Pelagia of Antioch. When discussing the eccentricities of female Christian ascetics in the fourth and fifth centuries AD, Pelagia of Antioch is a particularly interesting character to examine. *The Life of Pelagia the Harlot of Antioch* is attributed to the deacon Jacob of Edessa, who also features in his own

¹ Brown, (1971).

² Brown, (1989)

³ Salisbury, (1990); Kia-Choong Teo, (2009).

⁴ Coon, (1997); Burrus, (2004); Ward, (1987); Harvey, (2008); Cooper, (1996); Cooper, (2013).

account.⁵ The account was widely circulated and translated into a number of languages, demonstrating its popularity.⁶ It was originally written in Greek, and partial translations have been found in Latin and Syriac, as well as early translations in Georgian, Arabic and Armenian.⁷ As well as this, Petitmengin, the scholar who extensively researched the accounts, found evidence to suggest that the account was famous and known by many living in the Middle Ages, whether in full or in part.⁸ There is controversy over whether Pelagia actually existed, and therefore it is hard to establish if sources are referring to her, or to another Saint Pelagia of Antioch, a virgin martyr. This has been deduced due to the similarities between Jacob's narrative and John Chrysostom's account of an unnamed penitent prostitute, in which a prostitute is described as outshining “all in godly reverence”, before “converting, and bringing down upon herself God's grace”.⁹ There is also mention of a St. Pelagia by Ambrose of Milan, but he refers to the Virgin Martyr, Pelagia, who died aged fifteen after announcing that she did not want any man to touch her, or any man “with wanton look” to defile her.¹⁰

The account of Pelagia's life is one of the most unusual instances of female asceticism due to her role as a penitent prostitute, her relationship with Nonnus, and her transvestism. At the same time it is an interesting account that follows the popular hagiographical motif of the penitent harlot.¹¹ According to Jacob's account, Pelagia began her life in Antioch as an actress and prostitute and was known more widely as Margarito, the Greek word for pearl, because of the jewels, pearls and gold that she wore. One day, the bishop Nonnus had convened with a group of bishops and the deacon Jacob in Antioch, because they had insisted that he teach them so they too could benefit from his wisdom. Whilst they were meeting,

⁵ Jacob, *The Life of Pelagia the Harlot of Antioch*.

⁶ Harvey, (2008) 609-610.

⁷ Mayvaert, (1985).

⁸ Mayvaert, (1985) 1013.

⁹ John Chrysostom, *Homilies on St. Matthew* 67.

¹⁰ Ambrose of Milan, *Epistles* 37.

¹¹ Ward, (1987) 57-58.

Pelagia paraded past, draped in jewels and riding on a donkey, accompanied by servants and young boys and girls. The bishops attempted to avert their eyes from the decadent display of sin, but Nonnus observed her carefully. He was overcome by her beauty and a desire to lead her from a life of sin, and spent the rest of his evening praying to God and fasting. The next day, Pelagia listened to Nonnus' sermon, and was so moved that she asked Nonnus to baptise her. He agreed, and she gave all her possessions to the Church so that they could help the poor. Following the guidance of Nonnus, Pelagia decided to leave Antioch for the desert, where she lived out her life as the monk Pelagius. Whilst there, she was visited by the deacon Jacob, who did not recognise her as Pelagia, and it was only upon her death that everyone realised who she was.¹²

In the fourth and fifth centuries, there was an explosion in the amount of hagiography written and distributed. Crafted, literary hagiographies were becoming increasingly popular, following the publication of *The Life of Antony of Egypt*, written by Athanasius of Alexandria in AD 356.¹³ Jacob's *Life of Pelagia of Antioch* is categorised by scholars primarily as part of the penitent harlot motif series, which includes a number of the most enduring *vitae*, such as the prostitute Thaïs and Mary of Egypt. However, it also falls into the scholarly category of transvestite female saints, who, upon their conversion took up lives disguised as monks.¹⁴ As hagiography grew in popularity, a number of stereotypical characters emerged: the bishop, the monk, the nun, the young virgin, the penitent prostitute, and the pious widow. These stereotypes were an attempt to encourage Christians to conform to an expected practice, and Jacob's account of Pelagia reflects this attempt. Pelagia conforms to the type of the penitent harlot, and it was for this reason that her story was so widely circulated. In encouraging hagiographers to offer repentance to sinners, it encouraged the idea that everyone could be a

¹² Jacob, 1-51.

¹³ Harvey, (2008) 608.

¹⁴ Harvey, (2008) 609.

saint; whether they were a woman, a sinner or a slave.¹⁵ Jacob's account also emulates that of Jesus' acceptance of the female sinner, recorded in Luke 7:39.¹⁶ Although they appear at first glance to encourage the rejection of family life and society's norms, on further inspection it is clear that even those women who, like Pelagia in becoming a monk, distorted convention adhered to Christian norms by remaining under the close guidance of their bishop, in Pelagia's case, Nonnus.¹⁷

This dissertation will focus on Pelagia as a fifth century Christian female ascetic, and will aim to establish how typical her actions were of female ascetics and how typical Jacob's account, *The Life of Pelagia the Harlot of Antioch*, was of the male hagiographers who wrote their accounts during this early Christian period. Although I will be focusing my dissertation on Pelagia, I also intend to compare and contrast her life and the account of it with that of other contemporary Christian female ascetics. This is to demonstrate and explore both the range of Christian female ascetics and the many literary tropes used by early Christian hagiography authors, of which Pelagia is just one example. I intend to look at a number of other female ascetics, including Thaïs, St. Juliana, and Marina, all of whom followed very different forms of asceticism. These women were incredibly different in the branches of asceticism they followed, and the manner in which they became Christian women.¹⁸ My chapters will focus on the comparison of Pelagia with these contemporaries in order to explore issues affecting early Christian female ascetics and their portrayal in hagiography, as well as exploring the account of Pelagia's life to understand the historical, social, cultural and political implications of her life, and of Jacob's account of it.

¹⁵ Harvey, (2008) 615.

¹⁶ Luke 7:39.

¹⁷ Brown, (1995) 58.

¹⁸ Petersen, (1996).

Chapter One – Pelagia the Harlot

The first part of the narrative of *The Life of Pelagia the Harlot of Antioch* concerns Pelagia's life before her conversion. Written by Nonnus' deacon Jacob, he uses this section of the text to set in context Pelagia's life pre-conversion. He begins his account by addressing “my holy fathers and brethren”, meaning the religious community. He then follows by beginning the narrative as follows: Nonnus was in Antioch, having been summoned there for a meeting of bishops by the bishop of Antioch. Nonnus came, along with Jacob, his deacon, and was begged by the other convened bishops to teach them, for he was so wise. As they sat, Pelagia, known as Margarito, processed past the gates of their residence, sat on a donkey covered in bells. She was covered in pearls, necklaces, silk, pendants and anklets. Before her marched a number of servants, and they too wore decadent clothing of golden girdles and necklaces. They wore so much perfume that “the reek of her cosmetics hit everyone in the vicinity”. The bishops were entranced by both her beauty and the shameless manner in which she presented herself “as though she were a man”. The bishops quickly averted their eyes, all apart from Nonnus, who observed her carefully. After she had left, he wept, astonished at her beauty and the spectacle of sin she had shown. He asked the other bishops to use Pelagia's example as a way to better themselves, to live only the most basic of lives and to give themselves completely to God. They left that place and Nonnus proceeded to pray to the Lord, begging for forgiveness. He believed that he had not lived a life worthy of the Lord. He fasted and prayed for an entire day, and, on the Sunday, he gave the Mass that would lead to Pelagia's conversion.¹⁹

Jacob's *Life of Pelagia the Harlot of Antioch* follows the popular penitent prostitute trope. This is a genre of hagiography that showed to the Christian masses how even prostitutes, who resided in the lowest class of society, could be paragons of Christianity. The

¹⁹ Jacob, 1.1-13.

penitent prostitute became a famed literary device, and the texts were distributed around the empire. The female protagonists became romantic anti-heroines; their stories became anti-romances used as Christian allegory to impress upon the Christian population the new idea of sexual morality, and the role that sex played in Christianity.²⁰ This cultural reformation was extremely significant, as society moved from seeing heroines of theology as 'damsels in distress' to seeing sexually empowered women, confident in their own abilities and able to change their own destiny.²¹ The genre began in the deserts of Egypt, where the focus of the stories remained firmly on the male mentor, and his ability to lead the harlot to salvation.²² Thaïs is one of the saints who emerged at this time as a penitent prostitute, and her story is often considered the harshest of the genre because of the lack of "literary flourishes or humane touches" that many of the others exhibit.²³ Thaïs was a prostitute who was sought out by the Abba Paphnutius. He asked her why she was committing such sins, and she was overcome with remorse. Thaïs burned all the goods she had earned through her sins, and was led by the Abba to a monastery of virgins. There he sealed her into a small cell with only an opening for food, and required her to pray by saying only: "You who made me, have mercy upon me". She stayed this way for three years, before the Abba received a sign from God telling him she had been saved. He hurried to the monastery and had her removed from the cell, against her wishes, and twelve years later she died.²⁴

Jacob begins his *Life of Pelagia the Harlot* by addressing the religious community, in a way that shows he is influenced by previous genres of texts. His address is very similar to an invocation to the Muses or pagan Gods of earlier traditions. This was a tradition that had been taken by earlier Christians and remodelled to suit a Christian audience, and to suit the needs

²⁰ Harper, (2013) 222.

²¹ Harper, (2013) 194.

²² Harper, (2013) 220-221.

²³ Ward, (1987) 77.

²⁴ Ward, (1987) 83-84.

of the Church. Even in Christianity, these invocations were seen as a call for inspiration that invited the Muse, or God, to use them as a mouthpiece for their divine messages. This was particularly prominent in epic poetry, such as Homer's *Odyssey*, and *Iliad*. The invocation can also be seen in Virgil's Book One of the *Aeneid*:

O Muse, the causes tell!
What sacrilege,
or vengeful sorrow, moved the heavenly Queen
to thrust on dangers dark and endless toil
a man whose largest honour in men's eyes
was serving Heaven? Can gods such anger feel?²⁵

This invocation is Virgil's way of asking for divine inspiration to adequately explain the events that surrounded Aeneas and his life. In the same way, Jacob invokes by aspiring to write his message and return sinners “to the knowledge of truth”. It is clear that Jacob is a learned man, and therefore it can be assumed that he would have an understanding of classical literature. This shows how theologians and hagiographers were influenced by the style of classical literature, and subverted the stylistic features to better reflect their intentions – in Jacob's case to reflect his Christian faith and desire to influence through his account of Pelagia's life. As seen in the Monastic Law of Pachomius, members of the ecclesiastical community of the Empire were often the only literary people outside of the governmental administration.²⁶ This invocation is a feature that is also used in later literature, and this subversion of style is even seen in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*.²⁷ Milton achieves the same effect as Jacob by referencing the “muse ... of Oreb, or of Sinai”, the rock of Oreb

²⁵ Virgil, *Aeneid*. 1.8-11.

²⁶ Pachomius, *Precepts* 139-140.

²⁷ Milton, (1667) 1.6-16.

being the place where the Midianite Prince Oreb was killed,²⁸ and Sinai the place where Moses received the ten commandments.²⁹ Traditionally an invocation of a muse took place only in poetry, particularly epic poetry, and here Jacob breaks from the considered norm. Jacob also addresses his “holy fathers and brethren”, as a way to greet the religious community he knows will be his primary audience. This shows that Jacob had a plan for his narrative and that he aimed for the monastic communities, that is, those like him, to read and be influenced by Pelagia's wondrous conversion from a life of sin.

Pelagia's entrance is the key scene of the beginning of the narrative, and Jacob dedicates three passages to describing her, her companions, and the effect she had on the bishops and those who viewed her elaborate procession. Pelagia is first known as Margarito, because of the splendour and number of pearls she decorated herself with. Jacob is very descriptive of her clothing, and it is clear from the decadence that Pelagia spends much time and money on her appearance. Jacob describes every detail of her outfit, most of which seems to consist of accessories, such as “armbands, silks, and anklets ... necklaces, and strings of pendants and pearls”, insinuating that Pelagia is rather scantily dressed, only emphasising her embodiment of lust.³⁰ This blatant display of beauty captivated “them in their desire for her”, yet it is not this that amazes them the most, but rather the “shameless fashion” in which she rides through the city on her donkey, adorned with bells. This action mirrors that of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, perhaps a deliberate foreshadowing on Jacob's part to emphasise how Pelagia would be led from her life of sin and follow in the footsteps of the Lord.³¹ In the narrative, Pelagia goes by on her donkey and Jacob describes her as having:

²⁸ Judges 7:25.

²⁹ Exodus 34:29-30.

³⁰ Burrus, (2004) 138.

³¹ Matthew 21:11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19.

her head uncovered, with scarf thrown around her shoulders in a shameless fashion, as though she were a man; indeed in her haughty impudence her garb was not very different from a man's.

This shows that the bishops' shock and amazement was at her blatant disregard for gender roles, and her refusal to be the supplicant woman expected by the Christian Church. This again is foreshadowing on Jacob's part: although she now only dresses as though she were a man, later in the narrative she will embrace manhood fully when she becomes Pelagius the monk. Pelagia does not back down from their stares, but rather embraces them and her performance in the procession. This shows the power she has over people: she is a wealthy, confident woman unafraid of her own sexuality, and that is what most shocks the bishops.³² Only Nonnus remained unperturbed in the presence of this "shameless" display, instead being filled with wonder at the ability of God to create a woman so beautiful, yet sadness at her concession to sin. It is then that he is inspired to teach the bishops, through the example of Pelagia, what God truly desires in his followers. This display of beauty contrasts heavily with her appearance in the desert, which shocks Jacob for an entirely different reason.

Jacob used the *vita* of Pelagia as a way of spreading the teachings of Nonnus, his mentor. It is clear from his description of Nonnus that he idealises the bishop, and that part of his reasoning for writing his account of Pelagia's life was to incorporate Nonnus throughout, in order to help increase the audience able to reach Nonnus' wisdom. Jacob describes Nonnus as "glorious", "chaste", and as having a "perfect way of life". It is clear that Jacob saw Nonnus as a role-model, and was keen for others to see this and to appreciate how great a man Nonnus was, to be able to convert the famed 'Margarito'. Nonnus is inspired when he sees Pelagia at God's abilities in creating so beautiful a woman, yet saddened that Pelagia has so easily succumbed to sin and lust. Pelagia's care in her appearance and

³² Burrus, (2004) 138.

presentation forces Nonnus to look inwards and see that he has not prepared himself for God with the same care and attention that Pelagia prepares herself for her lovers. She dresses up, puts on make-up, adorns herself with ornaments, and ensures her appearance is perfect in order to please those who behold her and to lure in her lovers. Nonnus, however, believes that the same care that Pelagia puts into her appearance should go into ridding the soul of the “dirt of sins”, and to adorn them with good habits to please Christ.³³ After leaving the bishops, having inspired them to seek out ways to better themselves and please God, Nonnus reflects on his own, at length, about his experience. Nonnus prays for forgiveness for not living up to God's expectations, all the while fasting and praying. He prays that the Lord will help Pelagia change her behaviour, using Nonnus as his vessel.³⁴ By writing this, Jacob gives Nonnus divine authority in his actions of converting Pelagia and legitimises his teachings and authority as being words of God. This would have appealed to the monastic communities, and helped Nonnus to be seen as chosen by God. After this, the second section of the narrative takes over: Pelagia's life as a converted Christian.

Jacob's first section of his narrative incorporates a number of techniques to make it an effective and inviting start to the *vita* of Pelagia. He deliberately foreshadows themes and contrasts with ideas in his third section, in order to show the contradictory stages of Pelagia's life: from penitent prostitute to famed ascetic monk. Although the *vita* is Pelagia's, it is, in a sense, also Nonnus', due to Jacob's focus on him, particularly in this section. Jacob uses this section of Pelagia's life to emphasise Nonnus' wisdom and guidance, through the adoration of the bishops and their avid desire to hear his sermon. He also uses Pelagia as a tool in this way, which continues throughout her *vita*, to show how Nonnus was capable of great things and uses Pelagia and Nonnus' teachings to validate Nonnus' role as a “holy father”. This

³³ Coon, (1997) 78.

³⁴ Burrus, (2004) 140.

section is very important in establishing the text as a member of the collection of texts referred to as the penitent prostitute stories: those which follow the trope of a prostitute repenting and living their life as an ascetic. Together these stylistic features provide a strong foundation for the beginning of *The Life of Pelagia the Harlot of Antioch*.

Chapter Two - Pelagia the Convert

Following the natural structure of Jacob's account, the second part of his *vita* is Pelagia's life post-conversion. Jacob dedicates the largest section of the text to the period of her life in which Pelagia is divinely inspired, baptised by Nonnus, and the small amount of time after her conversion before she makes the decision to move to the desert. In this portion of the *vita*, Jacob describes how Pelagia, against her nature, attends Nonnus' sermon, and is so moved by his words that she weeps over her sins. That night Nonnus has a dream in which a black dove, stinking of filth, flies down and he throws it into the baptismal waters. The dove emerges from the waters pure and white, and flies into the heavens. Inspired by his sermon, Pelagia instructs her servants to find Nonnus' address and then, inspired by her new contrition, she writes him a letter asking for help in escaping the clutches of Satan. After receiving a reply, she rushed to meet Nonnus and the rest of the bishops, supplicating herself and proving to them her devotion to change her ways and to be faithful to God. Nonnus was given the archbishop's permission to baptise her, and found a sponsor for her in the head deaconess. He asked her to confess her sins, before exorcising her of them and baptising her. Jacob goes on to describe Satan's arrival in anger at Nonnus' actions, and his attempt to bring Pelagia back to him. However, with Nonnus' support and guidance she sends him away. Two days later Satan appears to her alone, but, still inspired by Nonnus' courage, she again sends him away. The next day, Pelagia reinforces her new faith by ordering her servants to make an inventory of all her possessions, and then she summoned Nonnus and handed it all over to him. She freed all of her servants, and her possessions were dealt with. Many were inspired by the change that had overcome Pelagia, and they too turned to a life of chastity, having listened to her story and feeling compelled to change. Pelagia spent the next few days alone, only eating what the deaconess Romana brought her. Finally Pelagia sought out Nonnus, and asked that he give her his own clothing, after which she revealed her plans and then left for the desert

outside Jerusalem.³⁵

It is clear from Jacob's narrative that he was influenced by earlier genres, particularly that of the Greek novel. The first encounter between Nonnus and Pelagia mimics the first meeting of the hero and the heroine of the Greek romance, but, instead of carnal lust, the "love at first sight" is more of a spiritual yearning.³⁶ Although his narrative is an anti-romance, Jacob follows the structure of early Greek romantic literature, such as in *Leucippe and Clitophon*, casting Nonnus as Pelagia's lover. The memory of Pelagia causes Nonnus to pray and fast in an attempt to free himself from her grasp, but he is plagued by symbolic dreams predicting his role in her salvation. Once Nonnus has baptised her and she is clothed in new pure clothes, Satan appears, cast in the role of the jilted lover who is humiliated by Pelagia's new life as a "bride of Christ".³⁷ Her second temptation takes place in her room, perhaps alluding to the sexual nature of her previous life, but Pelagia remains strong, referring to the room as her "heavenly marriage chamber". Pelagia's conversion is far more than just a change of faith, but rather reflects a submission to Christ in a baptism reminiscent of a marriage, even shown in the way her possessions are given over to the Church, the realm of her new 'bridegroom'. One reason for this similarity is that Greek romances were popular in the East. This was because of the Hellenisation of the Eastern Empire. In Byzantium, for example, at least two romances, *Hysmine and Hysminias* and *Aristandros and Callithea*, emulated the Greek style of Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius, and were written as late as the twelfth century AD.³⁸ This resemblance was particularly popular in hagiography written about virgin martyrs, such as St. Juliana of Nicomedia and Agatha of Sicily. St Juliana of Nicomedia lived in the third century and was born to pagan parents, but secretly converted to Christianity. After being betrothed to a pagan man, she refused to go through with the marriage. Her fiancé

³⁵ Jacob, 1.14-41.

³⁶ Harper, (2013) 226-227.

³⁷ Harper, (2013) 227.

³⁸ Hägg, (1991) 73-80.

was enraged and became her judge, torturer and executioner; because she had not gone through with the marriage she died a virgin martyr.³⁹ Agatha of Sicily was born on Sicily, and, at a young age, she decided to abstain from marriage and dedicate herself to God. Unfortunately, one of the local prefects was not happy about this, and handed her over to a local brothel-keeper, with the task of turning her to adultery. Agatha steadfastly refused, and the brothel-keeper saw that it was an impossible task. Quintian, the prefect, then had her taken to prison, and there he had the guards tear off her breasts with pincers. During the night, St. Peter came to her, disguised as an old man, and cured her wounds. On a later night, she gave her soul up to God, and died peacefully.⁴⁰ Although Pelagia does not adhere to this trope, her *vita* too shows many of the characteristics of a Greek anti-romance, such as her ability to speak and write as though she has been educated, when it is likely that, as a prostitute, she would not have had access to tuition.⁴¹ It is clear to see how hagiography as a genre grew out of the romantic tradition. It is a genre where a protagonist has to battle against trials and tribulations (in Pelagia's case Satan's repeated attempts to sway her) after which their virtue is rewarded and their life ends with death and glorification.⁴² Indeed there is only one important distinction to make, as Thomas Heffernan outlined:

The differences between the heroism of the saint and that of the romance hero [are] analogous to the difference between dependent and autonomous actions: the saint is moved whereas the romance hero moves. The sacred biographer locates the locus for heroism, the correct behaviour of the saint in the gift of Providence. The romance hero is depicted as self-directed, the motivation for correct behaviour coming from personal choice.⁴³

³⁹ Catholic online, *St Juliana* (2015).

⁴⁰ Bokenham, (1992) 157-166.

⁴¹ McAlindon, (1986) 23-24.

⁴² Perkins, (1995) 202; Caner, (2010) 77.

⁴³ Heffernan, (1988) 143.

And this is where Nonnus' role is truly important: he is the one responsible for moving Pelagia. First he moves her to conversion, then he guides her through fighting temptation, and then he supports her decision to move to Jerusalem so she can pursue an uninterrupted life of faith.

In fact, Pelagia's relationship with Nonnus is one of the most important themes in the entire *vita*, not just during her conversion. Although at first this could appear to be a passionate example of *eros*, it is clear from Jacob's background that his intentions were to demonstrate a strong *agapé* love between the two, such as one would exhibit to God. Lynda Coon draws comparison between *The Life of Pelagia the Harlot of Antioch* and *The Song of Solomon*, also known as *The Song of Songs*, a biblical poem often interpreted by theologians – such as the late-second to early-third century Origen of Alexandria – as incredibly erotic.⁴⁴ However, the poem's content – the marriage of a man and woman – would have been understood by monastic audiences as a metaphor for Christ's relationship with the individual soul.⁴⁵ In the same way, monastic audiences would have seen Nonnus as Pelagia's spiritual guide, concerned with her salvation.⁴⁶ This is because a male mentor is a prominent convention of hagiography on female ascetics, such as Abraham, who mentored his niece Maria.⁴⁷ He would have been as much of an inspiration for them as Pelagia was to Christian ascetic women. Nonnus is portrayed throughout as a Christ-like man. This is especially seen when Nonnus first meets Pelagia. She falls to his feet, weeping and wipes the dirt from his feet onto herself. This parallels a story of Jesus as told by Luke, in which a sinful woman weeps at Jesus' feet before wiping his feet clean with her hair and anointing them with perfume.⁴⁸ Furthermore, his teaching is sought out by others, even those considered to be his equals, and his authority is never challenged, but he is shown respect even by those who are

⁴⁴ Song of Songs 1; Matter, (1990) 32.

⁴⁵ Coon, (1997) 81; Tanner, (1997).

⁴⁶ Coon, (1997) xvii.

⁴⁷ Ward, (1987) 85-101.

⁴⁸ Luke 7:36-39.

deemed his superiors, such as the archbishop. In placing Nonnus in this role, Jacob reaffirms biblical depictions of defiled women who submit to the divine power of God through the spiritual guidance and mediation of spiritual men.⁴⁹ Benedicta Ward argues that the relationship between Nonnus and Pelagia is that of a delicate love. Although she does not specify what type of love, it is clear from her analysis of the interactions between the two that she believes it to be a far more romantic love, whilst not excluding the spiritual love that others have interpreted it as. Ward compares it to other stories of “great love in the desert” before establishing that Nonnus and Pelagia's relationship is fulfilled by equality and appreciation of each other, and is in no way diminished by their choice of chastity and solitude.⁵⁰ One example of these 'great loves' is Abba Simeon and his business partner's widow.⁵¹ Before Simeon became a monk, he wished to marry the widow of his deceased friend. The woman put him through elaborate spiritual exercises, before persuading him to become a monk. After this was done, she went on to renounce her husband and enter the faith herself.⁵²

When reading hagiography it is important to remember that they are the histories of saints, and therefore they are ultimately a biased representation of historical reality; literary devices are one way hagiographers show their personal influences on their accounts.⁵³ It was Peter Brown who truly came to appreciate the historical value of these texts, in opposition to Edward Gibbon's views. When discussing Pelagia's conversion, the most prominent literary device is the use of visions and dreams. Throughout this part of the *vita*, Jacob uses symbolism, such as Pelagia riding in on a donkey in the first section, to make his narrative more appealing, and to emphasise God's intentions to the reader. In the second section of his

⁴⁹ Coon, (1997) 84.

⁵⁰ Ward, (1987) 63-65.

⁵¹ Stewart, (1986) 16.

⁵² Rousseau, (2005) 31.

⁵³ Keskiaho, (2015) 217.

narrative, he first does this through the symbolism of Nonnus' dream. Dreams were used in early Christian hagiography to depict sanctity, an idea built on the Hellenistic and biblical tradition of using them in narratives. Gregory of Nyssa believed that there was a realm of dreaming that allowed people to be “taught by divine power”,⁵⁴ and used the biblical example of Joseph, who interpreted the divine dreams from God concerning the two prisoners he resided with, the butler and the baker.⁵⁵ Hagiographers like Jacob used dreams to increase the appeal of their narrative, and, in doing so, to increase the longevity of the saints about whom they chose to write.⁵⁶ Nonnus' dream occurs the night before Pelagia attends his sermon, and he tells it directly to Jacob. Nonnus immediately interprets it as a vision sent by God, though he does not understand the meaning of the dream until after Pelagia's conversion. It is clear that this dream was placed by Jacob to foreshadow Pelagia's conversion. In the dream, she is represented by the dove, befouled by the mud and stench of her sins. It is not until Nonnus catches the dove and throws it into a basin, representing the baptismal waters, that the bird is pure once again and free from sin. It is at this point that the bird flies higher and higher until it's no longer visible, perhaps representing Pelagia's flight to solitude in the desert. It is also significant that Nonnus is the one who receives the dream, and not Pelagia. Often in hagiography, the saint is the character known to receive visions. Jacob's inclusion of divine assistance to Nonnus suggests that he was the one who required guiding, after having his confidence in his own faith so shaken by his reaction to Pelagia's brazen display.⁵⁷

This section of the narrative is important for understanding Jacob's compliance with the conventions of hagiography, in line with my thesis. A number of the literary techniques he uses in this section of the text are inspired by techniques used in Classical literature, which can be seen as problematic due to his aim being to write a Christian hagiography.

⁵⁴ Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* 13.11-12.

⁵⁵ Genesis 40:1-9; Miller, (1994) 49-50.

⁵⁶ Moreira, (2000) 174.

⁵⁷ Moreira, (2000) 174.

However, Jacob reconstructs these devices, in order to use them to comply with his intentions and with Christianity as a whole. In this way, he adapts the conventions for future use as Christian devices, and also widens the appeal of his text, by engaging with those who are used to literature based on the Classical tradition. This section of the narrative is also important for the discussion of Pelagia as an extreme ascetic. Her relationship with Nonnus is often considered to be one of a delicate love that although never acted upon, is nevertheless uncommon amongst ascetic Christians. Therefore, it can be said to make Pelagia even more of an unconventional area of study.

Chapter Three - Pelagia or Pelagius?

The third and final part of Jacob's narrative concerns Pelagia's life after she departs Antioch for the desert outside Jerusalem. This is the shortest part of his *vita*, due to Jacob's lack of direct involvement with this period of Pelagia's life. After Pelagia arranged to leave with Nonnus, Jacob narrated the effect on those whom she left behind, the deaconess Romana, and Nonnus himself. As well as leaving, Pelagia chose to change her gender and live out the rest of her life as the monk, Pelagius, in order to truly rid herself of her past. Three years later, Jacob was getting ready to leave on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but before leaving Nonnus instructed him to keep him in his prayers, and to find the monk by the name of Pelagius. After he had visited the holy sites of Jerusalem, Jacob enquired as to the whereabouts of Pelagius and discovered he resided on the Mount of Olives, just outside the city. He ventured there and Pelagius – or Pelagia – greeted him, overjoyed to see him once again, but Jacob failed to recognise her due to the emaciated appearance that had removed their good looks. He thought of them as ugly, with cavernous eyes and dark coarse skin, but received a blessing from 'the eunuch' regardless. Then Pelagius spoke, asking questions about Nonnus and, after having received news of him, retreated into their cell. Days later, Jacob heard the news that Pelagius had passed away, and joined the funeral procession, witnessing the discovery that Pelagius had all along been the former harlot, Pelagia. Although some tried to hide the discovery, they could not, and the people of Jerusalem buried her with great splendour and praised her as a woman of true faith. Finally Jacob finishes with a prayer for mercy, for all who love God and have done wrong in his eyes.⁵⁸ The main issue raised in this final section of Jacob's *vita* is the issue of Pelagia's transvestism, and how this defies expected gender norms.

⁵⁸ Jacob, 1.42-51.

In the early Christian Church women were confined to certain roles, and their rights were limited within the Church hierarchy. Outside of the Church they had civic rights, but were unable to hold public offices or elect those who could, and they were thought to be unsuitable for roles of responsibility, especially public responsibility.⁵⁹ This is something that is yet again mentioned in the monastic law of Pachomius, in which he outlines how both monks and nuns were to behave in their daily lives, and how women and children were to be treated by members of the order.⁶⁰ Although many females escaped the confines of society, others were compelled to stay. One way they could be involved in helping the church was to act as benefactors. In the very early church, Joanna, wife of Herod's steward Chuza, provides a good example of such patronage. She was a follower of Jesus, and one of the women present at his resurrection,⁶¹ who is also said by Luke to have “ministered to and provided for Him and them out of their property and personal belongings”.⁶² Due to a lack of formal education, women were thought to be easily tempted and swayed to false teachings, and therefore not to be relied upon. Early Christianity offered women greater affirmation than other religious options: Jesus taught and healed women, and women were witness to his resurrection.⁶³ Even St. Paul declared that “there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus”.⁶⁴ This however referred far more to their spiritual equality than their social equality, as Paul was a firm believer that women should remain in their traditional social roles, even declaring that he did “not permit a woman to teach”.⁶⁵ Another way that a woman could take a role in the Church was to become a deaconess. The earliest document that discusses deaconesses at length is the *Didascalia of the Apostles*, a document that originated in the third-Century AD in Syria, but was soon translated and distributed in both

⁵⁹ Clark, (2004) 28.

⁶⁰ Pachomius, *Precepts*.

⁶¹ Luke 24:10.

⁶² Luke 8:3.

⁶³ Clark, (2004) 29.

⁶⁴ Galatians 3:28.

⁶⁵ 1 Timothy 2:12.

Greek and Latin.⁶⁶ In it are listed duties for deaconesses, which included visiting Christian women living in pagan households, and assisting in the baptisms of women, as baptism required full nudity.⁶⁷ Their role was to act as a liaison between Christian women and the Church, a male-dominated environment. One such example of a deaconess was Phoebe, a female deacon mentioned by St. Paul, in AD 58. This was the first instance of a clear mention of a deaconess, and, in his letter to the Romans, he commends “our sister Phoebe, who is the deacon at the church at Cenchreae”.⁶⁸ This showed that women were successfully accepted as a part of Church life, even by St. Paul, who is known for his controversial views on women.

This lack of social freedom meant that women were drawn to a life outside of normal society. Ascetic living offered this freedom, as well as the opportunity to practice their faith and dedicate themselves entirely to God. This was not a way for them to enter the hierarchy of the Church, but rather a divergence of social norms that enabled them to set up their own satellite hierarchy outside of the confines of the Church hierarchy. As a result of this, communities of women emerged in the desert, including the Desert Mothers.⁶⁹ This group of women was a selective group, who we know of only due to a handful of quotes and texts with which they are associated as authors. Known as Ammas, or spiritual mothers, they lived their lives by the same practices as Pelagia and offered wise counsel to others. They lived in great numbers,⁷⁰ and were from a variety of social, economic, and political backgrounds, and they lived united under one commandment “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself”.⁷¹ They desired not to just teach about this commandment, but to truly live it, and

⁶⁶ Harvey, (2008) 395.

⁶⁷ Deweese, (2005) 42.

⁶⁸ Romans 16:1.

⁶⁹ Chryssavgis, (2008) 29.

⁷⁰ King, (1989) 7.

⁷¹ Deuteronomy 6:5.

act as an example of it.⁷² Amma Sarah is one example of a Desert Mother. She is known only through her collection of sayings, one of which includes her own view on gender transformation: “According to nature I am a woman, but not according to my thoughts”.⁷³ Despite this view, Amma Sarah would have likely lived like the other Desert Mothers, in either Syria, Palestine, or Egypt, and in either a small monastic community or as a hermit.

For the most part, these women conformed to their gender, and were successful in providing examples of how to lead a pious, ascetic lifestyle, even in the desert, without the protection afforded to them of being male. These women remained female, though often considered their thoughts or souls that of a male, influenced by the teaching of theologians who claimed that anyone who gave their soul over to God was truly a man. Pelagia is similar to these female ascetics. Ward justifies Pelagia's move away from Antioch to the desert, by explaining the freedom the desert afforded to wealthy women, who could escape the confines of gender by entering monastic tradition there, although it was rare for them to also change their gender.⁷⁴ Pelagia's transvestism is what differentiates her from these Desert Mothers, not her decision to live in a secluded community. Although transvestism was somewhat common, Pelagia's brings into discussion whether she is truly an example of a female ascetic because of it, especially considering that the holiest portion of her life was spent as a man.⁷⁵ This was a far more common phenomenon for female ascetics in the desert, compared to the gender transformation of Pelagia.⁷⁶ In many ways, Pelagia represented this ideal but her gender enabled her to live her life undisturbed, unlike the Desert Mothers, who were questioned and disturbed frequently.⁷⁷

⁷² Earle, (2007) 2.

⁷³ Ward, (1975) 230.

⁷⁴ Ward, (1987) 62-63.

⁷⁵ Burrus, (2004) 145-146.

⁷⁶ Puttick and Clarke, (1993) 19.

⁷⁷ Ward, (1975) 230.

Gender transformation, though not conventionally popular, was not a rare occurrence, especially in the desert communities. For women, it was a way of establishing their authority in monastic tradition. Women were not seen as true leaders in the Church due to their position in society, and the view of the Church that they were responsible for bringing sin to the world. Although there are no particular teachings attributed to Jesus himself regarding the exclusion of women from the Church, the period that followed him, beginning with the teachings of Paul, paved the way for the subordination and eventual exclusion of women.⁷⁸ Philosophers of all religions, such as the Jewish philosopher Philo, argued that men were the superior gender.⁷⁹ Although not the word of God, teachings and opinions like this influenced the way the Christian masses thought, and women were not allowed positions in the Church, as told by Tertullian, a Christian author. In his *On the Veiling of Virgins*, he wrote that:

It is not permitted to a woman to speak in church. Neither may she teach, baptise, offer, nor claim for herself any function proper to a man, least of all the sacerdotal office.⁸⁰

Christianity was often influenced by prevailing social mores and the teachings of leading Christian figures. This teaching from the second century is indicative of the attitudes of the time, and is emphasised by the teachings of later authors and saints, such as Jerome and Ambrose, who firmly believed that there was a spiritual distinction between men and women.⁸¹ Because of this, women who became men through transvestism were offered a freedom by their refusal to conform to gender norms. Pelagia's decision to become the monk Pelagius appears to have been an attempt to disconnect her converted self from her past as a sinful courtesan and lead a truly pious life, unlike other female transvestites. For example, St.

⁷⁸ Kraemer, (2008).

⁷⁹ Philo, *The Special Laws* 4.123.; Baer, (1970).

⁸⁰ Tertullian, *On the Veiling of Virgins* 9.

⁸¹ Ambrose of Milan, *Commentary on the Gospel according to Luke* 10.161; Jerome, *Commentary on Ephesians* 3.5.

Marina lived most of her life as Marinus. After her mother died, Marina and her father chose to move into the monastery, and due to Marina's desire to remain unwed she masqueraded as a man. After her father's death, whilst known only as Marinus, she was accused of raping and impregnating a young girl, and so was removed from the monastery and left to raise the child alone. After four years of living outside of the gates, Marinus was permitted back inside. It was not until after death that Marinus was discovered to have been Marina all along.⁸² This was not a decision taken, like Pelagia's, to separate herself from anything, but rather in error. This decision to change gender meant that in the eyes of the Church she was entitled to a greater spiritual relationship with God as it was believed that men were able to become much closer spiritually with God than women were. In becoming a man, Pelagia was able to live out her life in peace, devoting all her time to God without the societal expectation normally impressed upon women such as marriage and children, without the respect that would be owed to a man in the same position. Although Pelagia could have just become an ascetic female, in changing her gender she separated herself from her past and sought judgement based only on her life as a male ascetic. Her gender transformation meant freedom from the expectations of society and from her past sins.⁸³

Pelagia's transvestism afforded her a number of opportunities that included the solitude not offered to female ascetics, such as the freedom to travel undisturbed and not risk her safety. Transvestite women who partook in this practice were not often condemned by the rest of society, but rather benefited from this lifestyle change. Their gender transformation, such as in Pelagia's case, offered them a closer relationship with God. This is seen towards the end of Jacob's account, when he mentions that although some tried to hide that Pelagia was a woman, the people found out nonetheless and praised God's ability to hide Pelagia's true

⁸² Hourani, (2013).

⁸³ Chryssavgis, (2008) 29-32.

gender.⁸⁴ However, in his *Life of Pelagia the Harlot* Jacob does not explain Pelagia's reasons for changing gender, and so scholars have to reach their own conclusions as to Jacob's decision. Being a man was more prudent for Pelagia, and meant she was unlikely to draw unwanted attention, especially as she was renowned for her beauty as a woman, an idea supported by scholars such as Benedicta Ward, Virginia Burrus and Lynda Coon. In dressing Pelagia as a man, Jacob plausibly explained how she made her journey and assumed a life in solitude without endangering herself.

However, the use of cross-dressing is also a literary device frequently used in Graeco-Roman tales, and in Christian martyr texts. An example of this can be found in the myth of Achilles. Rather than let her son die, Achilles' mother, Thetis, dressed him as a woman and sent him to Skyros. He was revealed when Odysseus offered all the women gifts, and Achilles took the sword and shield in order to defend himself. A detailed version of this story was written by Statius in his *Achilleid*.⁸⁵ This is also shown by Thecla's actions in the second century *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, in order to explain how she, as the heroine, escaped her captors and guardians.⁸⁶ Due to the widespread distribution of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, it is likely that Jacob was inspired by Thecla who chose to change her gender – albeit temporarily in order to journey safely. This came about after she was almost subjected to a death sentence for refusing the advances of a noble man, who had seen her great beauty and tried to rape her in public.⁸⁷ It is likely that Jacob and Pelagia would have understood the perils of undisguised beauty, and therefore taken precautions to prevent such events taking place. Burrus acknowledges the practicality of Ward's argument that Pelagia changed gender for safety, but argues that it can be used in an attempt to explain away the issue of transvestism and

⁸⁴ Bullough and Bullough, (1993) 53.

⁸⁵ Statius, *Achilleid* 1.32-40.

⁸⁶ *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 4.

⁸⁷ Bolich, (2008) 81-82.

normalise cross dressing. She explains this reasoning by quoting Marjorie Garber, who suggests that normalising transvestism ignores the fundamental yet often unconscious eroticism behind the act, and because it rewrites the cultural history of transvestism as an act and eliminates the existence of the transvestite from history.⁸⁸ Pelagia's gender transformation had been foreshadowed by Jacob in the first section of his narrative, when he talks about her defying gender roles. Her entrance into the city of Antioch, riding prominently on a donkey, surrounded by servants and scantily dressed did not conform to the expectations of women at the time, and was considered a masculine display. Jacob himself even says she arrived "as though she were a man", and therefore it could be considered that Pelagia changed her gender merely to garner the respect she felt she deserved as a person, and to fit in to some expectations of society.⁸⁹ That she could only conform when dressed as a man reflects how she was ahead of her times in terms of the presentation of women in society. As Pelagia's story was to be an example, this is an important opinion to consider, yet, I am not sure that her opinion makes sense in the context of the *vita*. Pelagia became a man to escape her past discretions, and to live safely without being questioned. At this time, the only way she could truly do this was on her own.

In this section of the text, there are a number of significant aspects that contribute towards my thesis statement. One vitally significant aspect is that of Pelagia's gender transformation, and the issues it raises. This is significant for the discussion of Pelagia's role as an extreme ascetic Christian, as it can be argued that her transvestism was unnecessary. As shown above, it was perfectly possible for a woman to live a life of faith within society, either as a benefactor of the Church, such as Jesus' follower Joanna, or as a deaconess, such as Phoebe. Furthermore, desert communities of women show that it was feasible for women to live

⁸⁸ Burrus, (2004) 146.

⁸⁹ Jacob, 1.4-6.

outside of the confines of Society, but to stay true to their gender. Although it was not uncommon amongst female ascetics, gender transformation was still deemed an extreme practice. Furthermore, the use of gender transformation as a literary device is also significant for my thesis. The trope is present in both Classical literature and also early hagiography, such as the stories of Achilles and Thecla respectively. This use of the gender transformation trope shows that Jacob was comfortable using literary devices that had already been transformed into Christian devices from Classical literary tradition. Doing so did not affect his aim to write a Christian hagiography, but rather enhanced the narrative, and appealed to an audience familiar with Classical literature.

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I aimed to establish whether Pelagia was an archetypal example of an ascetic Christian woman in the fourth and fifth centuries AD, and whether Jacob's account followed the conventions dictated by earlier hagiography. Ascetic Christianity was prevalent during this time, as a direct response to the conversion of the Empire and the inevitable elimination of martyrs, and Pelagia is just one of the many examples of ascetic women who lived and worshipped during this period.

To ascertain whether this was true or not I explored in my first chapter the conformation of Pelagia as being part of the trope of the penitent prostitute, including her appearance. I aimed to examine whether Pelagia was an extreme example or if other examples like her could also be found from this genre. I did this by exploring Jacob's portrayal of her in the first section of his text, in which he describes her first appearance. I also researched into other penitent prostitutes, such as Thaïs,⁹⁰ to establish the prevalence of such saints. In my second chapter, I explored the extremity of the relationship between Nonnus and Pelagia, to identify whether this contributed to the extremity of her asceticism. I also compared Pelagia with a number of virgin martyr saints, to show how her form of extreme asceticism was merely one form. In my third chapter, I examined Pelagia as a transvestite saint, again comparing her with other gender-transforming saints, such as Marina/Marinus, to establish the frequency of such individuals.⁹¹ I also examined contemporary views on the idea of transvestism to establish how accepted, and therefore commonplace, the practice was. In researching these, I came to the conclusion that by conforming to and traversing the limitations of both tropes, Pelagia can be considered an extreme example of an ascetic female Christian.

⁹⁰ Ward, (1987) 83-84.

⁹¹ Hourani, *The Vita of Saint Marina in the Maronite Tradition*.

In order to affirm whether Jacob adheres to the literary conventions of hagiography, I chose to discuss the classical influence shown on Jacob's narrative, and how far these conventions were altered to comply with Christianity. I started in my first chapter by discussing Jacob's invocation to God, reminiscent of invocations to the muses, and the way in which he specifically addresses his audience, his fellow members of the clergy. I then examined the significance of Nonnus within the structure of Jacob's narrative, and his role as Pelagia's mentor. In most hagiographies there is a male mentor, normally religious, who is instrumental in the conversion of the female saint. In the case of Pelagia it is the bishop Nonnus, who also happened to be Jacob's mentor. Nonnus is as much a protagonist in the *vita* as Pelagia is, due to the prominent role he plays, especially in the first section of the narrative. In this way, Jacob adheres to a convention of hagiography, as it was common for the male saviour to feature, as a way of inspiring other men to take women under their wings and convert them to Christianity. In my second chapter, I moved onto discussing the way in which the structure of the narrative follows that of a Greek romance, with Pelagia and Nonnus as the lovers, and Satan as Pelagia's jilted lover. I also discussed the significance of dreams and visions, also a popular Classical device. This interesting use of rhetorical devices and ancient themes helps to engage the reader. This in turn would have enabled Jacob's account to have reached a wider audience, due to an interesting narrative causing a greater demand. These Classical devices act together to lend Jacob's *vita* a sense of familiarity. Many of the elite and the clergy would have been familiar with Classical literature, and using Classical conventions within a hagiography would have helped to broaden the appeal and to enhance the story. In my third chapter, I discussed how Jacob uses the trope of gender transformation, a trope taken from Classical tradition and adapted by early Christian hagiographers. Influenced by Classical legends such as Achilles, and early Christian narratives such as *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*. In this respect, Jacob helped to enhance the use of Classical literary devices as

Christian devices by writing hagiography, supporting the movement of combining pagan tradition with the Christian, and updating it for a new Christian audience.

I therefore reached the conclusion that although there are a number of similar saints, Pelagia is an extreme example of an ascetic female Christian, due to her behaviour and the way she is portrayed by Jacob. I also deduced from the evidence that Jacob did conform to some of the conventions of a hagiography, whilst at the same time drawing upon wider influences in order to make his text more appealing to a greater audience. It can be said that this did have an effect on the spread of the book, shown through its translation into a number of languages.⁹²

⁹² Mayvaert, (1985) 1013-1016.

Bibliography of Ancient Sources

Acts of Paul and Thecla, in Hennecke, E. and Wilson, R. M. eds. (1965) *New Testament Apocrypha 2*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press.

Ambrose of Milan, *Commentary on the Gospel according to Luke*, trans. Tomkinson, T. (1998) Etna: Centre for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies.

Ambrose of Milan, *Epistles*, ed. Walford, H. (1881) Oxford: James Parker and Co.

Gregory of Nyssa, *Creation of Man*, trans. Wilson, H. A. (1893) Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing Co.

Jacob, *The Life of Pelagia the Harlot of Antioch*, trans. and eds. Brock, S. P. and Harvey, S. A. in Brock, S. P. and Harvey, S. A. (1998) *Holy women of the Syrian Orient*, Berkeley: University of California Press. 40-62.

Jerome, *Commentary on Ephesians*, trans. Heine, R. E. (2003) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

John Chrysostom, *Homilies on St. Matthew*, ed. Philip Scaff (1991) Edinburgh: T & T Clark.

Pachomius, *Precepts*, trans. Veilleux, A. in Veilleux, A. (1981) *Pachomian Koinonia vol. 2: Pachomian Chronicles and Rules*, Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications.

Philo, *The Special Laws*, trans. Colson, F. H. (1939), Loeb Classical Library, London: Heinemann.

Statius, *Achilleid*, trans. Mozley, J. H. (1928), Loeb Classical Library, London: Heinemann.

Tertullian, *On the Veiling of Virgins*, trans. Thelwall, S. (1885) Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing Co.

The English Standard Version Bible, London: Harper Collins, 2011.

Virgil, *Aeneid*, trans. Williams, T. C. (1910) Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Bibliography of Modern References

- Baer, R. A. Jr. (1970) *Philo's Use of the Categories Male and Female*, Leiden: Brill.
- Bokenham, O. trans. Delany, S. (1992) *Legends of Holy Women*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Bolich, G. G. (2008) *Crossdressing in Context Volume 4: Transgender & Religion*, Raleigh: Pysche.
- Brown, P. (1971) 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', *Journal of Roman Studies* 61: 80-101.
- Brown, P. (1989) *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, London: Faber and Faber.
- Brown, P. (1995) *Authority and the Sacred*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bullough, V. L. and Bullough, B. (1993) *Cross Dressing, Gender and Sex*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Burrus, V. (2004) *The Sex Lives of Saints: An Erotics of Ancient Hagiography*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Caner, D. F. (2010) *History and Hagiography from the Late Antique Sinai*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- Catholic online, *St Juliana* (2015) accessed via <http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=6529> [last accessed 01/05/2015].
- Chryssavgis, J. (2008) *In the Heart of the Desert: The Spirituality of the Desert Fathers and Mothers*, Bloomington: World Wisdom.
- Clark, G. (2004) *Christianity and Roman Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Coon, L. (1997) *Sacred Fictions: Holy Women and Hagiography in Late Antiquity*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Cooper, K. (1996) *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealised Womanhood in Late Antiquity*,

- Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Cooper, K. (2013) *Band of Angels: The Forgotten World of Early Christian Women*, London: Atlantic Books.
- Deweese, C. W. (2005) *Women Deacons and Deaconesses: 400 years of Baptist Service*, Macon: Mercer University Press.
- Earle, M. C. (2007) *The Desert Mothers: Spiritual Practices from the Women of the Wilderness*, New York: Church Publishing.
- Hägg, T (1991) *The Novel in Antiquity*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Harper, K. (2013) *From Shame to Sin: The Christian Transformation of Sexual Morality in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Harvey, S. A. (2008) 'Saints' Lives' in Harvey, S. A. and Hunter, D. (2008) *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Heffernan, T. J. (1988) *Sacred Biography*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hourani, G. (2013) *The Vita of Saint Marina in the Maronite Tradition*, accessed via https://www.academia.edu/2642602/The_Vita_of_Saint_Marina_in_the_Maronite_Tradition [last accessed 25/04/2015].
- Keskiaho, J. (2015) *Dreams and Visions in the Early Middle Ages: The Reception and Use of Patristic ideas, 400-900*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kia-Choong Teo, K. (2009) 'Review of *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* by Peter Brown', *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, accessed via <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2009/2009-04-72.html> [last accessed 20/02/2015].
- King, M. H. (1989) *The Desert Mothers*, Toronto: Peregrina Publishing.
- Kraemer, R. S. (2008) 'Women and Gender' in Harvey, S. A. and Hunter, D. (2008) *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 465-492.
- Matter, E. A. (1990) *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval*

- Christianity*, Philadelphia; University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Mayvaert, P. (1985) 'Review of *Pélagie la Pénitente: Métamorphoses d'une légende* by Pierre Petitmengin', *Speculum* 60: 1013-1016.
- McAlindon, T. (1986) 'The Medieval Assimilation of Greek Romance: A chapter in the History of a Narrative Type' in Grabes, H. (1986) *Real: The Yearbook of Research in English and American Literature volume 3*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. 23-56.
- Miller, P. C. (1994) *Dreams in Late Antiquity: Studies in the Imagination of a Culture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Milton, J. (1667) *Paradise Lost*, ed. Leonard, J. (2003) London: Penguin.
- Moreira, I. (2000) *Dreams, Visions and Spiritual Authority in Merovingian Gaul*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Perkins, J. (1995) *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era*, London; Routledge.
- Petersen, J. M. ed. and trans. (1996) *Handmaids of the Lord: Holy Women in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Ann Arbor: Cistercian Publications.
- Puttick, E. and Peter Bernard Clarke, (1993) *Women as Teachers and Disciples in Traditional and New Religions*, New York: E. Mellen Press.
- Rousseau, P. (2005) *The Cultural Turn in Late Ancient Studies: Gender, Asceticism, and Historiography*, Durham: Duke University Press.
- Salisbury, J. (1990), 'Review: Sexuality, Freedom, and the Body Politic', *Journal of Social History* 23: 817-823.
- Stewart, C. (1986) *The World of the Desert Fathers: Stories and Sayings from the Anonymous Series of the Apophthegmata Patrum*, Oxford: Fairacres Publications.
- Tanner, J. P. (1997) 'The History of Interpretation of the Song of Songs', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 154: 23-46.

Ward, B. (1975) *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, Ann Arbor: Cistercian Publications.

Ward, B. (1987) *Harlots of the Desert*, Ann Arbor: Cistercian Publications.

The dissertation editorial team

An editorial team of History and Classics students proofread, edit, and format *Gorffennol*. The team working on the dissertation issue are:

William Clayton (MA Ancient Narrative Literature)

Julia Bradley (third year American Studies)

The student editorial team is coordinated by Dr Evelien Bracke. For more information on us, see

http://gorffennol.swansea.ac.uk/?page_id=26.

GORFFENNOL

Publish your assignment

Gorffennol accepts assignments on any topics, from any year, and from any section of the Department of History and Classics. The only condition is that you received a first class mark on your assignment. We will ask the module coordinator for permission to publish your assignment as well. We will not publish assignments for the same piece of assessments twice (not in the first three years) as we want to publish articles on the majority of our Department's modules on offer, so please check whether something has already been published on your assignment.

To submit a piece of assessment for publication, please send it in Word format to Evelien Bracke (e.bracke@swansea.ac.uk), including your name, student numbers, module title and code for which you wrote the assessment, and the mark you received.