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Jerome, Vigilantius, and the Cults of the Saints

Hieronim, Vigilancij in kult svetnikov

Abstract: While the publication of a new critical edition of Jerome's *Contra Vigilantium* in 2005 has renewed interest in recent years, there remains much work to be done on several issues concerning the text. The argument that Jerome was tacitly endorsing Vigilantius's theological perspective because Jerome did not respond with a clear explanation of his position is not entirely convincing, not least because this argument fails to take into account the genre of the text. Because Jerome's purpose was primarily to attack and undermine the position of Vigilantius, Jerome's doctrine is veiled beneath his scathing rhetoric. This study provides a close reading of *Contra Vigilantium*, considering the genre of the text, Jerome's rhetoric, and its implications. It also examines how Jerome's other works and letters provide insight into Jerome's position in *Contra Vigilantium*, and his understanding of the cults of the saints and relic practices.

Keywords: relics, saints, Jerome, theology, Vigilantius, Victricius

Povzetek: Čeprav je objava nove kritične izdaje Hieronimovega dela *Contra Vigilantium* leta 2005 obnovila zanimanje zanj, ostaja veliko vprašanj v povezavi z njim še vedno odprtih. Argument, da je Hieronim potihem odobral Vigilancijev teološki pogled, ker naj prvi ne bi jasno izrazil svojega lastnega prepričanja, ni povsem prepričljiv, saj premislek te vrste ne upošteva zvrsti besedila. Hieronimov primarni namen sta bila napad in spodkopavanje Vigilancijevega pogleda, zato je svoj nauk zakril pod ostro retoriko. Prispevek ponuja podrobno branje dela *Contra Vigilantium*, pri tem pa upošteva zvrst besedila, Hieronimovo retoriko in njene implikacije. Analizira tudi, kako druga Hieronimova dela in pisma pomagajo k razumevanju *Contra Vigilantium* in na sploh njegovega pojmovanja čaščenja svetnikov in relikvij.

Ključne besede: relikvije, svetniki, Hieronim, teologija, Vigilancij, Viktricij

1. Introduction

1600 years after Jerome wrote his *Contra Vigilantium*, allegedly in a single night in Bethlehem, a new critical edition of the text was published (CCSL 79C, vi.).¹ Of all Jerome's works, the *Contra Vigilantium* has been deemed his rudest, most abusive, most violent, and least structured polemic (Lössl 2005, 100). Thus, it seems hardly a credible source for reconstructing the position of Vigilantius. Nevertheless, the text has been used to promote a view of Vigilantius as a true Christian, a proto-Protestant, over and against the 'paganising' medieval, vulgar Catholicism' of Jerome (100). Of course, this is too simplistic by far, even if one ignores the disparaging use of terms.

Since the *Contra Vigilantium* is the only known source for his thought, much of the scholarly attention given to the text has been focused on recovering the beliefs of Vigilantius. Jerome's position has received little consideration by comparison, and though his *vitae* of the saints Paul, Hilarion, and Malchus have been examined at length, there is little in the scholarly literature that discusses Jerome's doctrine of the cults of the saints specifically.² In his analysis of the *Contra Vigilantium*, one notable scholar argued that Jerome was tacitly endorsing Vigilantius' position because Jerome did not respond with a coherent explanation of his doctrine of the power of the saints or their relics.³ The genre of the text, however, needs to be taken into account. Jerome is not writing a primarily theological treatise, but a personal polemic, an invective, meant to attack and undermine the position and person of Vigilantius, such that Jerome's position is veiled, as it were, under layers of vituperation.⁴

Nor is Jerome engaged in a systematic theology of the cults of the saints.⁵ Jerome is not concerned with defending his own or the Church's beliefs as he is concerned with excoriating Vigilantius. His numerous personal insults make this clear: Jerome calls Vigilantius »insane (*insanum caput*)« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 5), »drunk and drowsy (*ebrius et dormiens*)« (5), »from the stock of tramps and bandits (*de latronum et conuenarum natus est semine*)« (4) »a living dog (*canis uiuens*)« (6), »an inarticulate viper (*elinguis uiperæ*)« (15). He says that Vigilantius »vom[ed] up [his text] while snoring between hangovers (*quos inter crapulam stertens euomit*)« (3) and even implies that demons possess Vigilantius himself (5).

In order to recover Jerome's thought, we must begin by prying back some of these layers by digging underneath the name-calling and classical allusions.⁶ Then

¹ Translations are based on the work of Amy Oh (2013), with few modifications.

² For Jerome's hagiographical works, see, for example, Coleiro 1957; Gray 2017; Šubrt 2014; Weingarten 2005.

³ Indeed, Lössl states, »Jerome reveals little of a positive teaching of his own« (2005, 103) in the *Contra Vigilantium*, and that Jerome »has no real alternative theology to offer to explain this new martyr cult« (2005, 115).

⁴ This is not to say that the *Contra Vigilantium* is Jerome's only polemical work, or that his taste for rhetoric isn't evident in his other writings. Yet it is surprising that Jerome's own doctrine of the cults of the saints as presented in this text has not been the focus of concerted scholarly attention.

⁵ For more on the development of the cults of the saints in Late Antiquity, see Brown 1981 and Wiśniewski 2019.

⁶ For an excellent analysis of the numerous classical allusions Jerome employs throughout the text, see

Jerome's own opinion does emerge, and it looks very different from the opinion he accuses Vigilantius of holding. Jerome's rhetoric carefully identifies himself with apostles, martyrs, and even emperors, thereby claiming their agreement with his orthodox views. In contrast, he paints a portrait of Vigilantius as the heir of a multitude of heretical figures, including Eunomius (8; 10), Montanus (8), and Jovinian (1). In this reconstruction of Jerome's doctrine of the cults of the saints, drawing on the *Contra Vigilantium* and other texts from his vast oeuvre, I shall focus on a few main points, all of which were contentious vis-a-vis Vigilantius: the honor due to saints and martyrs, the location of the souls of the dead and their intercession on behalf of the living, and the efficacy of the relics of the saints.

2. Jerome's Thought on the Saints in *Contra Vigilantium* and Other Works

A letter to Riparius, a presbyter in Gaul, dated 404, gives a preview, as it were, of some of Jerome's rhetorical flourish in dealing with Vigilantius: »You tell me that Vigilantius (whose very name 'Wakeful' is a contradiction: he ought instead to be described as 'Sleepy') has again opened his fetid lips and is pouring forth a torrent of filthy venom upon the relics of the holy martyrs; and that he calls us who cherish them 'ashmongers' and 'idolaters' who pay homage to dead men's bones.«⁷ Jerome proceeds to address the distinction between veneration or honour and worship. To worship (*colere*), to adore (*adorare*), and to serve (*servire*) are inappropriate verbs to describe the glory due to the saints. Rather, Jerome states, »We honour (*honoramus*) the relics of the martyrs in order to adore him whose martyrs they are; we honour the servants so that the honour of the servants may overflow to the Lord«.⁸

This distinction is also found in the *Contra Vigilantium*. In what seems to be a direct quotation from Vigilantius' work, he hints none too subtly that the honour given to the relics of the saints is crossing over into worship: »Why is it necessary not only that you honour (*honorare*) with such great honour, but also that you worship (*adorare*) that »I don't know what« which you revere (*colere*) while carrying it around in a bit of vessel? /.../ Why do you kiss and worship dust wrapped in linen?«⁹ Further, Vigilantius states, »We see that a virtually pagan rite (*ritum gentilium*) has been brought into the church under the pretext of religion«.¹⁰

Oh 2013, 75ff.

⁷ »Ais Uigilantium, qui /.../ hoc uocatur nomine - nam Dormitanti rectius diceretur - os fetidum rursus aperire et putorem spurcissimum contra sanctorum martyrum proferre reliquias et nos, qui eas suscipimus, appellare cinerarios et idololatrias, qui mortuorum hominum ossa ueneremur.« (Hier., *Ep.* 109.1) English translation based on NPNF2.

⁸ »Honoramus autem reliquias martyrum, ut eum cuius sunt martyres, adoremus, honoramus seruos, ut honor seruorum redundet ad dominum.« (Hier., *Ep.* 109.1) See also Oh 2013, 190.

⁹ »Quid necesse est tanto te honore non solum honorare, sed etiam adorare illud nescio quid quod in modico vasculo transferendo colis?... Quid puluerem linteamine circumdatum adorando oscularis?« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 4)

¹⁰ »Prope ritum gentilium videmus sub praetextu religionis introductum in ecclesiis.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 4)

Jerome's response is clothed in his castigation of Vigilantius: »Who, you insane man, has ever worshipped (adoravit) martyrs? Who considered a human being to be God?«¹¹ Jerome's rhetorical tool here serves to render his opponent's arguments ridiculous. He cites the apostolic examples of Paul, Barnabas, and Peter, who refused to be worshipped as gods since »honour was being given to them when it was owed to God«. ¹² Jerome further accuses Vigilantius of desiring worship for himself »so that Vigilantius alone, drunk and drowsy, may be worshipped.«¹³

Jerome goes on to defend the practice of relic translation by appealing to the tradition of the church. He mentions the translations of the relics of Andrew, Luke, and Timothy by Emperor Constantius; and the translation of the relics of the prophet Samuel by Emperor Arcadius (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 5). While Jerome's view of Constantius is ambiguous, the point he makes is not: if the emperors treat relics with such honour and respect, how much more ought ordinary people reverence the saints. The people who celebrated the translation of Samuel were worshipping Samuel instead of Christ, Jerome dismisses out of hand with characteristic irony, rendering Vigilantius' claims farcical.¹⁴

Jerome also addresses the location of the souls of the apostles and martyrs, stating, »You say that the souls of the apostles and martyrs have come to rest either in the lap of Abraham, or in a place of refreshment, or under the altar of God and that they are unable to leave their tombs and be present where they wish.«¹⁵ Vigilantius objects to the notion that the souls of the saints could be »multiplied and travel at will along with each fragment of their bodies« (Hunter 1999, 425). Again, Jerome answers with sharp rhetoric: »Will you set down the laws for God?«¹⁶ Quoting Scripture, he refers to the apostles and martyrs, »Of them, it is written: ›They follow the Lamb wherever he goes.‹ If the Lamb is everywhere, then those who are with the Lamb must be believed to be everywhere.«¹⁷ This is one of the most significant positive formulations in the whole *Contra Vigilantium*: Here, Jerome states outright his belief that the saints can be present in places other than those mentioned by Vigilantius. Saints can be present with their remains, and indeed, seem-

¹¹ »Quis enim, o insanum caput, aliquando martyres adoravit? Quis hominem putavit deum?« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 5)

¹² »... sed quod sub gentilitatis errore honor eis deo debitus deferretur.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 5)

¹³ »ut solus Vigilantius ebrius et dormiens adoretur.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 5)

¹⁴ »Are the people of all churches foolish, who went to visit holy relics and received them with as great a joy as if they were seeing a living being in the flesh so that crowds of people might be joined together from Palestine all the way to Chalcedon and resound in one voice in praise of Christ? It *must* have been the case (*videlicet*) that these people adored Samuel instead of Christ - Samuel who was Christ's Levite and prophet.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 5)

¹⁵ »Ais enim uel in sinu Abrahae uel in loco refrigerii uel subter aram dei animas apostolorum et martyrum consedisce nec posse suis tumulis et ubi uoluerint adesse praesentes.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 6) The *sinus Abrahae* and the *locus refrigerii* seem to be synonymous for Jerome.

¹⁶ »Tu deo leges pones /.../?« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 6)

¹⁷ »/.../ de quibus scriptum est: ›Sequuntur agnum quocumque uadit.‹ Si agnus ubique ergo et hi qui cum agno sunt ubique esse credendi sunt.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 6)

ingly without their remains, »everywhere (*ubique*)«. Jerome does not linger on this point, perhaps because it is pretty radical, but it is a point to which I shall return.

Vigilantius also doubts that the dead can intercede on behalf of the living. Jerome writes, »You say in your little pamphlet that while we live, we can pray for one another reciprocally; after we have died, however, one's prayer on behalf of another cannot be heard.«¹⁸ Jerome again points out the absurdity of this position: if the apostles and martyrs can intercede on behalf of the living while they are living, will they not be able to do so once they have achieved »their crowns, their victories, and their triumphs?«¹⁹ »Will they have less power after they have begun their life with Christ?«²⁰ Jerome's defence of this argument is a bit weak here, but the same point can be found in his other works. Throughout his consolatory letters, the Hieronymian position is that the saints are not only present with Christ, but they are also reigning with Christ (O'Connell 1948, 88–89). Indeed, the saints are better able to intercede on behalf of the living now that they are no longer solicitous for themselves.²¹ Another example of this is found at the end of Jerome's account of the life of Paula: for Jerome, Paula is united to Christ by her faith and works, such that she may »more easily obtain« what she asks for (Cain 2010, 128).²² Of course, Paula will ask for petitions on behalf of the living, seeing as she has already attained her reward.

Another critical point, and one that appears not to have been examined in the scholarship on this text, is Jerome's firm belief in the efficacy of relics. Vigilantius seems to object to the signs and miracles occurring at the basilicas of the martyrs because they are superfluous. Where the people are already Christian believers, what need is there for such signs and wonders? »/.../ as if the critical question to answer is for whom they occur, not by what miracle«, Jerome huffs in reply.²³ Turning Vigilantius' own words against him, Jerome answers: »tell me how in the vilest dust and ash, the ›I-don't-know-what‹, there is such a significant presence of signs and power.«²⁴ Jerome dares Vigilantius only to enter the basilicas of the martyrs, where the presence of the saints will cleanse him of the demons which are prompting his attacks on these pious practices.²⁵

¹⁸ »Dicis in libello tuo quod dum uiuimus mutuo pro nobis orare possumus. Postquam autem mortui fu-
erimus, nullius sit pro alio exaudienda oratio /.../« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 6)

¹⁹ »Si apostoli et martyres adhuc in corpore constituti possunt orare pro ceteris quando de se adhuc debent
esse solliciti, quanto magis post coronas, uictorias et triumphos?« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 6)

²⁰ »/.../ et postquam cum Christo esse coeperint, minus ualebunt?« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 6)

²¹ See, for example, Hier., Ep. 75.2 to Theodora on the death of her husband Lucinius: »Sed gaudeas re-
gnare cum Christo /.../ Ille iam securus et uictor te aspicit de excelso et fauet laboranti et iuxta se locum
praeparat eodem amore et eadem caritate /.../« »rejoice as well that he now reigns with Christ /.../
Victorious now and free from care he looks down on you from on high and supports you in your struggle,
nay more, he prepares for you a place near to himself; for his love and affection towards you are still
the same /.../« See also O'Connell 1948, 76.

²² See Hier., Ep. 108.33: »Fides et opera tua Christo te sociant. Praesens facilius, quod postulas, inpetrabis.«

²³ »/.../ quasi nunc hoc quaeratur, quibus fiant, et non qua uirtute fiant.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 10)

²⁴ »/.../ sed responde quomodo in uilissimo puluere et fauilla nescio qua tanta sit signorum uirtutumque
praesentia.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 10)

²⁵ »ingredere basilicas martyrum et aliquando purgaberis.« (Hier., C. *Vigil.* 10)

Jerome confesses his trepidations in defence of the power of relics: »Whenever I am angry and think something evil in my mind, and a phantasm deceives me at night, I do not dare to enter the basilicas of the martyrs.«²⁶ Though Jerome does not elaborate here, it seems that he believes the power and presence of the saints to have a connection with their relics, such that he fears not the evil thought or the phantasm in the night but entering those places where the saints are most efficacious.

How is this reconcilable with Jerome's earlier statements that the saints are with Christ wherever he is and can be everywhere?²⁷ Jerome does not answer in this text, so we must look to his other writings. In a letter dated c. 405 to Theophilus, Jerome praises Theophilus's treatise on the Eucharist and the accompanying liturgical ephemera. Jerome indicates that not only is the Eucharist itself to be honoured and revered, but that »the sacred chalices, veils, and other accessories used in the celebration of the Lord's passion are not mere lifeless and senseless objects devoid of holiness, but that instead, from their association with the body and blood of the Lord, they are to be venerated (*ueneranda*) with the same awe as the body and the blood themselves.«²⁸ Christ in his divinity is not confined to a specific place, and nevertheless, the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is different somehow, and that presence extends to all of the accessories used in the celebration of the mass.

The saints are also not limited in their power by the location of their earthly remains. At the end of the *Vita Hilarionis*, after describing the theft of Hilarion's body from Cyprus, where he died, and its relocation to Palestine by one of his disciples, Jerome describes the 'strange dispute' (*miram /.../ contentionem*) between the people of Palestine and Cyprus, »the one contending that they have the body, the other the spirit of Hilarion.«²⁹ »And yet«, Jerome closes the life, »in both places great miracles are wrought daily, but to a greater extent in the garden of Cyprus, perhaps because that spot was dearest to him.«³⁰ This notion can also be seen in Jerome's letter to Julia Eustochium, where, in encouraging the latter to the life of virginity, Jerome exhorts her: »Rarely go abroad, and if you wish to seek the aid of the martyrs, seek it in your own chamber.«³¹ One need not go on pilgrimage to faraway places because the aid of the saints can be sought in any place.

If there is a contradiction here in Jerome's thought on the presence of the saints, it ought not to be surprising. The saints may be present everywhere, and

²⁶ »Quando iratus fuero et aliquid mali in meo animo cogitauero et me nocturnum phantasma deluserit, basilicas martyrum intrare non audeo.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 12)

²⁷ This is another of Lössl's critiques: that Jerome is inconsistent in his argument on this point (2005, 112).

²⁸ »Mirati sumus in opere tuo utilitatem omnium ecclesiarum, ut discant, qui ignorant, eruditi testimonio scripturarum, qua debeant ueneratione sancta suscipere et altaris Christi ministerio deservire sacrosque calices et sancta uelamina et cetera, quae ad cultum dominicae pertinent passionis, non quasi inania et sensu carentia sanctimoniam non habere, sed ex consortio corporis et sanguinis domini eadem, qua corpus eius et sanguis maiestate ueneranda.« (Hier., *Ep.* 114.2)

²⁹ »Cernas usque hodie miram inter Palaestinos et Cyprios contentionem, his corpus Hilarionis, illis spiritum se habere certantibus.« (Hier., *V. Hilar.* 47 [PL 23, 53])

³⁰ »Et tamen in utrisque locis magna quotidie signa fiunt, sed magis in hortulo Cypri, forsitan quia plus illum locum dilexerit.« (Hier., *V. Hilar.* 47 [PL 23, 53–54])

³¹ »Rarus sit egressus in publicam: martyres tibi quaerantur in cubiculo tuo.« (Hier., *Ep.* 22.17)

yet their bodily remains, their clothing, and the locations of their earthly lives have a specific other power to work miracles. Jerome does not define how these phenomena are reconcilable, just as he does not define how Christ's presence in the eucharist differs from Christ's presence in all creation. He also does not echo the more radical thought of Victricius of Rouen, who argues that »the relics of the saints are, in effect, consubstantial with God« (Clark 1999, 365–399; 366).

Victricius of Rouen, in a sermon dated 396, gives a much more robust, if still unsystematic, theological explication of the saints.³² Jerome agrees with Victricius on many points, including that the saints can be present everywhere and yet are present in their relics in a more substantive way. Addressing the martyrs, Victricius states, »I knew that you are everywhere by the merit of your virtue: heavenly brilliance is not cheated out of any place on earth.«³³ Victricius believes in the efficacy of the relics of the saints to heal,³⁴ and he acknowledges the relationship between the living and the dead.³⁵

Victricius takes his theology of the saints much farther than Jerome, however. He gives a fuller explanation of how the saints are everywhere, arguing that they are joined to the divinity of Christ by adoption.³⁶ The saints are »entirely with the Saviour in his entirety.«³⁷ Therefore, the saints are joined to the Trinity itself, such that the only difference between them and the three trinitarian persons is that the saints have an 'acquired' (*indemptam*) divinity, while the persons of the Trinity are divine by nature: »You see then /.../ that the Father and the Son have by property of nature what the saints have by the unity of the gift they have received.«³⁸ For Victricius, the saints are the same (*idem*) as the »ineffable substance of the godhead« (*inenarrabilisque substantia deitatis*), though by gift and by adoption rather than by nature and property.³⁹

³² As Clark rightly points out, Victricius' argument is »unusually difficult to follow« (1999, 368), both because of the genre of the text and because of his penchant for rhetorical flourish.

³³ »Merito uirtutis ubique uos esse noui: nullo enim terrarum spatio caelestis claritudo fraudatur.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 1)

³⁴ »If the hem of the Saviour's garment cured when lightly touched, it is beyond doubt that the dwelling places of the martyrdoms will cure when we take them into our arms.« »Nam si curauit adtacta leuiter fimbria Saluatoris, procul dubio curabunt amplexata domicilia passionum.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 2)

³⁵ Victricius calls the saints 'advocates' and holds that they have a say in the judgement of souls: »Adsunt aduocati, delictorum nostrorum gesta oratione pandamus. Fauent iudices, possunt mitigare sententiam /.../« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 12)

³⁶ »/.../ it follows that we should believe, by a similar argument, that for those who live in Christ and the church there is one substance of flesh and blood and spirit, by the gift of adoption.« »/.../ sequitur ut in Christo et in ecclesia uiuentibus pari argumento unam beneficio adoptionis et carnis et sanguinis et spiritus credamus esse substantiam.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 7)

³⁷ »/.../ toti cum toto sint Saluatore.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 7)

³⁸ »Uidetis itaque /.../ hoc esse Patris et Filii per naturae proprietatem, quod est sanctis per suscepti muneris unitatem.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 8)

³⁹ »Dico idem esse per beneficium non per proprietatem, per adoptionem non per naturam.« (Victric., *De laude sanctorum* 8)

It is possible that this teaching prompted Vigilantius to speak out against the saints' cults.⁴⁰ Vigilantius is deeply concerned about the proper worship of God and sees the honour being given to the saints as pushing the boundaries of worship inappropriately, even to idolatry. Vigilantius sees martyrs' veneration as a reintroduction of 'pagan' cultural manifestations into the Christian liturgy (Force 2003, 18). Jerome, strikingly, does not refute this. Instead, he argues that it is possible to begin from a place of idolatry or error and be transformed by the Christian message: »Because we used to worship idols, we should not worship God now, because we may seem to worship God with a similar honour once given to idols? That was done for idols and should be detested; this is done for martyrs and should be accepted.«⁴¹ For Jerome, the outward manifestations might look the same, but God rewards each individual according to their faith.⁴²

3. Conclusion

Jerome certainly does not give such a radical explanation of how the saints are efficacious, as does Victricius. Nevertheless, this is not to say that Jerome and Vigilantius are on the same side of this debate.⁴³ Jerome is forced by Vigilantius to think theologically about the cults of the saints, to go beyond his epistolary and hagiographical writings, and deal with some thorny issues: the relationship of the soul and the body, the connection between the living and the dead, the nature of the presence of the saints, and the efficacy of their relics (Force 2003, 24). Vigilantius was not a minor heretic to be dismissed; he was »an active member of an influential group in the western church« (Oh 2013, 36). Indeed, Vigilantius seems to have been in the majority of Gallic clerics in his critiques of the cults of the saints and the increasingly ardent asceticism of those who championed such cults.⁴⁴ While Jerome's desire to be influential in Gallic affairs and his success in such influence is a matter of debate (Mathisen 2009), it is clear, at least in this regard, that Jerome's position won out over his opponent.⁴⁵ Gennadius of Marseilles, in his *Liber ecclesiasticorum dogmatum* written around the year 470, includes this

⁴⁰ This point is debated in the scholarship on Victricius and Vigilantius. David Hunter sees Vigilantius' articulation of his critique of the cults of the saints as responding to both the practice and theology of Victricius (1999, 423). However, according to Paul Force, following Élie Griffe, Vigilantius was responding to the development of the cult of St. Saturninus in Toulouse and the attitude of Bishop Exuperius (2003, 20–21).

⁴¹ »Et quia quondam colebamus idola, nunc deum colere non debemus, ne simili eum uideamur cum idolis honore uenerari? Illud fiebat idolis et idcirco detestandum est, hoc fit martyribus et ideo recipiendum est.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 7)

⁴² »/.../ secundum fidem suam habent mercedem.« (Hier., *C. Vigil.* 7)

⁴³ For more on the relationships between Victricius, Vigilantius, and Jerome, see Force 2003, 24; Hunter 1999, 409–413; Trout 1999, 200–209.

⁴⁴ »Vigilantius's opinions were received with sympathy by many Christians in Gaul, especially within the ecclesiastical hierarchy.« (Hunter 1999, 403)

⁴⁵ Feiertag offers some tantalizing hints of the ways the Jerome's thought and language are used and promoted by Gallic figures (1985 [CCSL 79C], x–xix).

entry: »The bodies of the saints and especially the relics of the blessed martyrs are to be honoured *as if they were the actual remains of Christ* [...] If anyone thinks differently, he is to be considered a Vigilantian and not a Christian.«⁴⁶

Abbreviations

- C. Vigil.** – *Contra (Adversus) Vigilantium* [Feiertag 2005].
CCSL – Corpus Christianorum Series Latina.
CSEL – Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.
Dogm. – *Liber ecclesiasticorum dogmatum*.
NPNF – Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.
PL – Patrologia Latina.
V. Hilar. – *Vita Hilarionis*.
Victric. – Victricius Rotomagensis.

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⁴⁶ "Sanctorum corpora, et praecipue beatorum martyrum reliquias, ac si Christi membra sincerissima honoranda...Si quis contra hanc sententiam uenit, non christianus sed Vigilantianus credatur." (Gennad., *Dogm.* 39 [CCSL 79C, xviii]) Emphasis added.

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