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IT'S IN THE POST:  
TECHNIQUES AND DIFFICULTIES  
OF LETTER-WRITING IN ANTIQUITY  
WITH REGARD TO AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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When Augustine's pen-friend, Bishop Paulinus of Nola, whom Augustine had never met, died in 431, one of Paulinus's priests wrote: 'those who were unable to see him in the body, just wanted to touch his letters. For he was delightful and charming in his letter-writing'.<sup>1</sup> This identification of the letter with the person or body of the letter-writer is critical for understanding the role that the letter played in classical and Christian antiquity. Both Augustine, who died one year before his pen-friend, and Paulinus were heirs to a vast and vibrant culture of letter-writing, in which the pagan Latin authors Cicero and Pliny, for example, rather than the convert Paul of Tarsus, were held up for emulation. And the Romans, at least the upper-class ones, rather than the Greeks, were the consummate letter-writers.<sup>2</sup> Early Christian bishops were to use the letter as a powerful means of maintaining their social and administrative networks, and particularly if they went into hiding or exile, as they often did (Cyprian of Carthage and John Chrysostom being two famous examples), the letter was a life-line back to their communities and to the civilised world.

Paul's oft-cited words to the Colossians—'For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit' (Col 2:5)—contained no new sentiments. Cicero's letters to his life-long friend Atticus, for example, abound in similar passages:

Since I left Rome I have not let a day pass so far without sending you some sort of letter, not that I have had a great deal to write about but just to talk to you in absence. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than that, when I can't do it face to face.<sup>3</sup>

Although I have nothing to write to you, I write all the same because I feel that I am talking to you.<sup>4</sup>

So it was that Bishop Ambrose of Milan came to speak of the letter as a 'sermo cum absentibus',<sup>5</sup> a talk with those who are absent, and that the letter was viewed as half a conversation or dialogue.<sup>6</sup> It could in fact be regarded as a highly personal method of communication, such that Cyprian of Carthage, writing from his hiding place to his people during persecution, assured them: 'I am visiting you in the way that I can, by this letter of mine'.<sup>7</sup> Augustine himself begged John, bishop of Jerusalem, to pay him a visit by letter.<sup>8</sup> This stylised talk or visit originally was confined to one subject and was meant to be brief, but in the case of Augustine, for example, we find letters which are treatise-length, and indeed the bishop of Hippo himself is sometimes unsure whether he is writing a theological tractate or a letter.<sup>9</sup>

This idea of the letter as half a dialogue highlights the ambiguity of the letter-writing genre, beset as it was with the writers' fears—unfortunately all too well-

grounded, as I shall mention later—that their literary productions would not arrive, would fall into the wrong hands, or would be misconstrued. Partly to assuage such fears, they often sent gifts with their letters: the letter was consequently not a stand-alone communication. Augustine received such items as bread,<sup>10</sup> hairshirts,<sup>11</sup> medicines<sup>12</sup> and a tunic<sup>13</sup>, while he himself sent his own works as gifts to correspondents.<sup>14</sup> The sending of gifts was to escalate in later periods, where we find such items as clocks, elephants, eunuchs and, unfortunately, rotten fish arriving with the letter-bearer.<sup>15</sup> The same ambiguity is evidenced in the role of the letter as a carefully crafted literary production, destined not only for the eyes and ears of the proper recipient, but also possibly for a larger audience. Cicero writes to Atticus that he does not want ‘our familiar chat to get into strangers’ hands’,<sup>16</sup> and Augustine writes to the primate of Africa, Aurelius, that ‘There are many things ... which I would not want to come to you by letter’.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, Bishop Gregory of Nyssa, writing in fourth-century Cappadocia, speaks of friends who regard a circulated letter as a particular treasure: some had read it numerous times and memorised it; others had put it on their writing-tablets.<sup>18</sup> One of Augustine’s correspondents tells him: ‘The illustrious lord, Volusian, read to me the letter of Your Beatitude; in fact, at my insistence, he read it to many others’.<sup>19</sup> The identity and role of the letter-bearer, of course, played a part in the delivery of the letter, and some letters, like many of those of the late-antique pagan writer Symmachus (AD 370–384), contained no information: the real news was to be conveyed by the bearer.<sup>20</sup> (This is what I call the ‘I am here and you are there and spring is coming’ type of letter.) But in general we are correct in thinking of letter-writing in antiquity, and indeed beyond, as a kind of ‘public intimacy’,<sup>21</sup> and of letters themselves as ‘intimate and confidential and intended for publication’.<sup>22</sup>

### *Production*

I now wish to discuss aspects of the technical production of letters in antiquity, and before doing so, have to confess that the illustration of Augustine that featured on the invitation to this lecture is very misleading. It is, of course, much later than the bishop of Hippo, being from the twelfth century. Showing the bishop sitting and writing is a stylised attempt to present him as responsible for his works in an unmediated way. Nothing, however, was further from the truth. Very little of Augustine’s letters would have come into being in this way and, for the most part, we have to think of him dictating to stenographers, who then passed on their work to secretaries, who in their turn wrote out the letters in full in several copies. For the onerous task of preparing the writing materials—wax tablets equipped with a stylus; papyrus, or parchment, with the necessary inks, plumes and sharpeners<sup>23</sup>—was considered incompatible with the task of devising the contents of the letter.<sup>24</sup> In some cases, the stenographer and the secretary were the same person,<sup>25</sup> and we know that the seven shorthand writers who worked for Origen in Caesarea in Palestine in the third century also took turns as copyists, and that

girls trained as calligraphers were part of his workforce.<sup>26</sup> Officials like Cicero or Pliny, and certainly the late-antique Christian bishops, had a large number of secretarial staff at their disposal and, as a rule, wrote themselves by autograph only when necessary, or when familiarity or assurances of authenticity were required. A telling example of this from classical antiquity is one of Cicero's letters to Atticus, which he began by dictating, then went on to say: 'But here I go back on my own hand, for what follows is confidential'.<sup>27</sup> These men spent a great deal of their waking life dictating: we find Cicero telling Atticus that, being forced to take a walk to refresh his voice, he dictated his letter while walking;<sup>28</sup> Pliny the Younger, writing admittedly eulogistically of the literary output and sober lifestyle of his uncle, maintains that the only time the old gentleman took off from his work of dictation was in his bath—that is, when he was under water.<sup>29</sup> Augustine's acerbic correspondent Jerome informs us how, under pressure of time, he came to dictate a thirteen-page letter at night to stenographers—and these were certainly not paid overtime rates:

I dictated this letter, talking quickly, during one short night ... wishing to show my detractors that I too could say the first thing that comes into my head ... I extemporized as I spoke, and by the light of one small lamp poured forth my words in such profusion, that my tongue outstripped my secretaries' pens and my volubility baffled their shorthand tricks. I say this so that those who make no excuses for lack of ability may make some for lack of time.<sup>30</sup>

Elsewhere Jerome complains that he has only two stenographers at his disposal,<sup>31</sup> and that in Palestine, there is a great shortage of copyists in the Latin tongue.<sup>32</sup> But then Jerome liked to complain. However, it is clear that stenographers, secretaries and copyists often worked under immense pressure, thus multiplying the chances of error: it would not have been unusual for them to hear something wrongly or write it wrongly, as Augustine complains they must have done on one occasion.<sup>33</sup>

Not all letter-writers were as scrupulous as Cicero in addressing the letter and noting its day and place of despatch. If Augustine had been as scrupulous, he would have avoided much nasty correspondence with Jerome and others. As it was, he had to resort on several occasions to appending to the dictated letter a note saying that he had signed in his own hand,<sup>34</sup> or else instructing the recipient to look for signs of authenticity as follows: 'I have sent this letter sealed with the seal that imprints the face of a man looking sideways'.<sup>35</sup>

We have already seen that one medium of letter-writing was the wax tablet. In some respects a cumbersome tool, it had the advantage of being economical in that it could be re-used time and again. Papyrus and parchment were widely used as well, and it is not unusual to find the letter-writer complaining about shortages of either or both.<sup>36</sup> It is a threatened shortage of papyrus, real or imagined, which impels Augustine to write to his wealthy patron as follows:

This letter does not indicate so much my lack of paper [papyrus] as it bears witness to my abundance of parchment. I sent the ivory tablets I have along with a letter to your uncle. After all, you will more readily excuse this scrap of hide [parchment] because what I wrote to him could not be postponed, and I thought it also most inappropriate not to write to you. But I beg you, if any of our tablets are there, to send them on account of such needs.<sup>37</sup>

It is clear, however, that papyrus shortages could be used as an excuse for not writing, or for writing only short letters, as a dry comment from Jerome illustrates: 'I do not think', he retorts to a correspondent, 'that there is a shortage of paper [papyrus] when the [papyrus] business is being looked after well in Egypt'.<sup>38</sup> Not only wax tablets but also parchment and papyrus were recycled, to the extent that recipients sometimes annotated the letters that they had received and sent them back to the writer.<sup>39</sup> As a rule, it seems that in Augustine's time in North Africa, official letters were written on parchment, and that for more routine letters or for communications involving familiarity, papyrus was used. Thus a papyrus letter that Augustine and his fellow bishop Alypius sent to a physician in another province in Africa was not answered. The bishops were concerned that they had caused offence: 'Let him [sc. the physician] know', they write to another bishop, '... that we are accustomed to write lengthy letters to our close friends, not only to lay persons, but also to bishops, just as this one was written, so that they may be written quickly and that the paper [papyrus] may be more easily held when they are read'.<sup>40</sup> I note just briefly here that the scroll or *volumen* had been overtaken by the book or *codex* by late antiquity,<sup>41</sup> just as papyrus was overtaken by parchment.<sup>42</sup>

The role of the copyist in the production of the large number of letters that circulated in antiquity was absolutely crucial. Not only in this pre-Xerox age did the letter-writers make a copy or copies of what they sent to their correspondents, but they also had copies made of what they received. Single and multiple copies had to be checked and corrected, then either archived or sent on to their next destination. Copying before the days of cut-and-paste was a labour-intensive exercise, and some aspects of it now seem to us to be quite pointless (not unlike some modern photocopying practices). It was not uncommon to quote a few lines from a letter previously received to which one was now replying.<sup>43</sup> The extremes to which this could be taken are well documented by Augustine's letter to his student Licentius, who had been with him in Italy and who was a would-be poet. Licentius had sent Augustine a poem, about five pages long, which was full of classical pagan references. This annoyed Augustine, but what would annoy a modern reader is the fact that it is a superlatively bad piece of poetry. In remonstrating with his pupil for combining Christian and pagan ideas, Augustine has his staff copy the whole poem into his reply, thus preserving for us a work that we could well have done without. Elsewhere Augustine has his staff copy large slabs of the works of Bishop Ambrose of Milan into a letter (Letter 147) for the benefit of its recipient, an African laywoman. This is perhaps understandable: if, as

Augustine writes elsewhere, he himself had no access to the works of Cicero,<sup>44</sup> then she would not be expected to have copies of the works of Ambrose to hand.

There are several references in the letters of Augustine to copies of letters that cannot be found in his filing system.<sup>45</sup> This was not always seen as catastrophic, as a letter from Paulinus of Nola to Augustine demonstrates:

If you have a copy in your files I ask you to send it, or at least redo it for me, something that is easy for you. For, even if a written version is not extant, because you perhaps did not want to have a short letter among your books as causing too much disorder, write it anew for me ...<sup>46</sup>

Let us note at this point that our letter is not yet in the post. Apart from the signing and/or sealing of the letter, strictly speaking, it had to be furnished at the beginning with a greeting from the writer to the recipient.<sup>47</sup> This was all the more important when, as in the majority of cases, the letter had been dictated. Improper, incomplete or missing formulaic greetings could have serious consequences. An early example from Christian antiquity is the anonymous letter received by Cyprian of Carthage 'in the name of the church', which aroused the bishop's ire in no small measure. He returned it to its supposed writers for clarification and signature before replying to its contents.<sup>48</sup> Augustine's correspondence with Jerome, which I shall speak about in more detail soon, was marred, among other problems, by the lack or ambiguity of salutation formulas, such that at one point Jerome wrote acidly: 'if the letter is yours, write openly or send better copies'.<sup>49</sup> Augustine for his part replies to a schismatic bishop: 'I have received a letter that seems probably to be yours, for someone who is clearly a Catholic Christian brought it, and he would, I think, not dare to lie to me'.<sup>50</sup>

### *Despatch*

The Roman imperial postal system, the *cursus publicus*, was a sophisticated network but it was available only for official business correspondence.<sup>51</sup> Classical Latin letter-writers like Cicero and Pliny, and, later on, bishops such as Augustine, had to rely on their own contacts for the safe transmission of their letters. (The *cursus publicus* was available to bishops only in connection with their attendance at church councils summoned by the emperor, but even then some bishops refused to avail themselves of the privilege in order to preserve their independence.<sup>52</sup>) It was a delicate task to find a letter-bearer, for, as Cicero wrote: 'There are so few who can carry a letter of any substance without lightening the weight by perusal'.<sup>53</sup> Since it was not uncommon for bearers to stay some days at their destination to wait for a reply to be written, enjoying hospitality as they waited, and giving first-hand accounts of the writer of the letter that they had delivered, the choice of postman was critical. I say postman, because, although in Christian antiquity we have evidence of elite or consecrated women carrying letters, like the two who took one of Augustine's letters to another bishop together with Augustine's gift of relics to him (Letter 212), the

bearers were, as a rule, male. Often a hierarchical system was used, whereby, as in the case of Cyprian, church correspondence was transmitted by various orders of the clergy.<sup>54</sup> But this differed from region to region and from period to period. Hence in 451 we find a different hierarchy stipulated in canon 11 of the ecumenical Council of Chalcedon:

subject to examination, all paupers and needy persons are to travel with ecclesiastical letters or letters of peace only, and not of commendation, since it befits only reputable persons to be provided with letters of commendation.<sup>55</sup>

The key selection criteria for a bearer, according to Augustine, were reliability, quick obedience and demonstrated prior travel experience.<sup>56</sup> When a trustworthy bearer was found, there was indeed cause for rejoicing, because such a person was himself, in Augustine's words, 'like a living and intelligent letter'.<sup>57</sup> This role of the bearer is highlighted by the fact that, as I have said, several of the letters of the pagan Symmachus contained no information at all, and the real news was meant to be delivered verbally by the trusted postman. Augustine's letter-bearers included various ranks of the clergy, even bishops, and as well laypeople, imperial officials and public servants.<sup>58</sup> Not all of these turned out to be the equivalent of living and intelligent letters, as we shall see.

We find various words used for the receptacles in which letters were posted: 'sealed packet',<sup>59</sup> 'baggage',<sup>60</sup> 'packages'.<sup>61</sup> Some letters were sent as sealed documents.<sup>62</sup> Multiple letters from the same author or from other writers often travelled in the same bag, and were not always delivered to the right destination, as Cicero tells us:

A package was brought to me. I undid it to see if there was any letter for me. There was nothing, but there was a letter to Vatinius and another to Ligurius. I gave instructions for these to be forwarded to the addressees.<sup>63</sup>

We have to assume that, given the sometimes over-dimensional size of the gifts (think of elephants), some of these bags or packages could be very large and more like small containers.

Once found, a suitable bearer might have to depart at very short notice if he were travelling by sea and dependent on the right wind. Thus we find constant references in antique letters about the haste and even the bullying of the bearer. Augustine complains about a man who expected him to pen a reply in under 24 hours,<sup>64</sup> and Paulinus of Nola writes a few things that, he says, come to his mind in a rush 'because of the haste of the letter carrier, who is already running to the ship'.<sup>65</sup> The exaggeration of this last comment should, however, put us on our guard, because often the purported haste of the bearer is used as a commonplace to cover for a less-than-elegant style. Here is an example:

While I was dictating this [it is Augustine speaking], the courier, who was already waiting for the wind, was strongly pressing me in order that he



might set sail. And so, if you read something expressed clumsily or without refinement or if you find the whole of it to be such, pay attention to my teaching but pardon my expression.<sup>66</sup>

The common dread in antiquity of travelling by sea, especially when the sea was pronounced unnavigable in winter (the *mare clausum* phenomenon), is well known.<sup>67</sup> Many of Augustine's letter-bearers to destinations in Africa would also have travelled on foot through sometimes difficult terrain, and there is no denying that this occupation could be both stressful and dangerous. According to examples given in one recent scholarly estimate, the sea voyage from the Roman port of Ostia to Africa (270 nautical miles) took two days,<sup>68</sup> the journey on foot from Ravenna to Milan (288 km) took eight days, and journeys with heavy vehicles, powered by oxen, mules, donkeys and horses, took somewhere in between.<sup>69</sup> Travel by fast horse was not only the most expensive option but also limited the amount of baggage one could take.<sup>70</sup> Augustine himself hated travel, and in this he was probably not alone among his contemporaries.

Whatever of that, let us assume that our letter is now in the post, in the best scenario entrusted to a bearer who is himself 'like a living and intelligent letter', and that, one way or another and after whatever lapse of time, it arrives safely in the right hands. What then?

When the bearer arrived, depending on the contents of the letter, he either handed it over to the addressee or read it aloud, or else it was read aloud by another person. In this context, the Latin words *legere* (to read) and *audire* (to hear) are practically synonymous.<sup>71</sup> We find two laymen entrusted by Augustine with a letter for a schismatic bishop in the same town of Hippo, reporting back to Augustine that, although the recipient had at first refused to have them read it to him, he subsequently relented and they were allowed to deliver it orally (Letter 107). A different case of oral delivery occurred when Augustine's letter to the Greek-speaking bishop John of Jerusalem was delivered, and the recipient had to listen to the letter through an interpreter.<sup>72</sup> The personal and extra-epistolary role of the bearer is illustrated by Augustine's reply to the woman Ecdicia, who had put on widow's weeds although her husband was still alive. After reading her letter, he says, he had 'asked the bearer of it about the points that remained to be asked'.<sup>73</sup> Although letter delivery could be a hit-and-miss process, as we shall see in a moment, it was also the case that it could be sophisticated or lucky. One of the letters that Augustine sent to Paulinus of Nola was in fact delivered to the recipient in Rome, where the bearer ran into him (Letter 94.1), and Augustine tells us on one occasion that he received a letter *en route* from Hippo to another town.<sup>74</sup>

We are not going to stand still at happy endings, however. The next section of this paper is called:

*What could go wrong?*

We have already seen that the processes of dictation and copying were not without inherent problems. These processes were more over open to abuse when the authenticity of a letter could not be guaranteed, because either the person who wrote or dictated it did not sign it, or did not provide it with the necessary formula of salutation. Forgery was rife: Augustine denounces one letter outright as a forgery,<sup>75</sup> and tells us elsewhere of a synodical letter from a group of bishops, who, in order to beef up their numbers on paper, inserted the name of a dead bishop among the signatories (Letter 141.1).<sup>76</sup> (Here, unfortunately, I cannot go into the *blatantly* fictional letters that were composed, particularly in the Middle Ages, such as letters from heaven, from the virgin Mary, or even from the devil.<sup>77</sup>) Given the volume of letters emanating from the office of a bishop such as Augustine, it is not surprising that some letters were misfiled or not filed at all. Then we have the problems associated with the letter-bearer. The example that Cicero gives of boys (by which he means household slaves) losing a letter along the way cannot have been an isolated incident.<sup>78</sup> More serious is his tale that a bearer had been mugged and the letter stolen.<sup>79</sup> Other examples of what could go wrong are not too dissimilar from the vagaries of a modern postal system; indeed, sometimes the problems look worse than those of Australia Post and e-mail combined: we have numerous examples of several letters arriving at once,<sup>80</sup> or arriving in the wrong order, the latter generating suspicion or confusion. In yet other cases, the letters do not arrive at all,<sup>81</sup> or are delivered after an inordinate lapse of time (nine years in the case of one of Augustine's letters).<sup>82</sup> Then there are the inevitable delays because of weather,<sup>83</sup> or else the courier leaves too early,<sup>84</sup> precluding the carriage of the letter, or he does not set out at all.<sup>85</sup> So thick and fast is the momentum of this postal traffic that, when a letter goes astray, Augustine cannot remember who the bearer was in order to find out what has happened, and the bearer of another letter was never seen by him.<sup>86</sup> Then again, the sheer volume of a bishop's workload could take its toll on the efficiency of his correspondence: 'from the time I received your letter', writes Augustine to an African monk, 'I am not sure that I have replied before now. We have been, after all, tied up and torn apart by so many concerns that I am also not sure about this.'<sup>87</sup>

The *cause célèbre* in Christian antiquity of what could go wrong in letter-writing is, of course, the exchange between Augustine and Jerome.<sup>88</sup> Between 394 and 395, Augustine wrote to Jerome in Bethlehem a letter (Letter 28) that was delivered nine years later, after it had done the rounds in Italy and other places. (Probably we have to assume that the bearer was trying to score a journalistic scoop.) In the meantime, Jerome had heard with great displeasure that Augustine had attacked him in a book. In 397, Augustine wrote to Jerome (Letter 40), and again the letter did not arrive. Instead, it was found the following year on an island in the Adriatic, whereupon it was copied and sent on to its proper recipient. In 403, Augustine wrote to Jerome (Letter 71), mentioning three previous letters of his that Jerome had not answered. This *did* provoke Jerome to reply (Letter 72.1), complaining of the frequency of Augustine's letters (which arrive, he complains, without signature), and expressing

his (feigned) amazement at the fact that so many people in Rome and Italy have read Augustine's letter to him and he himself has not. Soon after, Jerome wrote to Augustine (Letter 75.21.22) asking to be left in peace. A little later Augustine replied, explaining what had happened with the notorious letter and promising to pull his socks up and ensure that in future his letters were delivered directly to Jerome.<sup>89</sup> After a particularly bad start, this correspondence ended in a happy relationship (although, or perhaps because, the two men never met face to face), culminating in Jerome's congratulations to the bishop of Hippo on having conquered the *hæretics*.

Well done! You are famous throughout the world. Catholics revere and embrace you as the second founder of the ancient faith.<sup>90</sup>

Just because a letter was finally and successfully posted, however, does not mean that it has come down to us. This is the last link in the chain of events that could go wrong. It could be misfiled by the recipient, or not kept for whatever reason, deliberately destroyed if its contents were thought to be heretical; it could be genuinely lost, or regarded as unworthy of preservation by a later compiler.<sup>91</sup> Conversely, its text could be revised, 'improved', by the recipient, who, after its successful posting and arrival, was considered its owner.<sup>92</sup> If and when it was translated, it could suffer a different fate. The work of my colleague, Dr Youhanna Nessim Youssef, in comparing the fate of Greek works translated into Syriac on the one hand, and translated into Coptic and Arabic on the other, gives every indication that the Syriac translations were intended mainly for a scholarly audience, whereas the Coptic and Arabic versions were aimed at church-goers, and the translators added or subtracted from the original Greek at will.<sup>93</sup> If we consider the physical preservation of letters, papyrus, rather than parchment, would have been responsible for the deterioration or disappearance of many pieces.<sup>94</sup> Roughly 300 of Augustine's letters have survived, nearly 30 of which came to light only 25 years ago, and we have to assume that the total we have today is only a small proportion of what he wrote over a 40-year period.<sup>95</sup> For example, his contacts with Africa Proconsularis, the administrative hub of the church in North Africa, must have been constant, yet we have only four letters from the bishop of Hippo to Bishop Aurelius of Carthage, the primate of Africa, during a period of more than 30 years.<sup>96</sup> (Similarly, if it is estimated that Augustine could have preached around 8000 times, we therefore possess only about one-fourteenth of his sermons.<sup>97</sup>) Here the parallel between the correspondence of Augustine and that of the sixth-century eastern patriarch Severus of Antioch is instructive: much like Augustine, Severus was active over a period of about 40 years, and we know that he wrote no fewer than 3759 letters, of which only around one-sixteenth survives.<sup>98</sup> Selectivity is also evident in the surviving letter collection of Gregory the Great, which unfortunately includes only letters written during his episcopate in Rome, whereas we would very much like to know also what he wrote when acting previously as papal legate in Constantinople.<sup>99</sup>

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, I refuse to brood on the high mortality rate of the antique letter, or on the range of potential disasters that accompanied not only its production and delivery but also its preservation and transmission. It remains for me rather to justify briefly the use to which we can put these epistolary artefacts, which for the most part have survived in a haphazard and incomplete manner.

The subject matter of a letter collection, even a partially transmitted one such as Augustine's, could be wide-ranging: from him we have letters of consolation, and of instruction on biblical and moral matters, as well as letters of intercession, for example on behalf of people displaced because of the Vandal invasions or of free people sold into slavery. We have letters to fellow bishops and clergy, to imperial officials, and to lay people. This range provides us with a window on a bishop's world like no other, and helps to round out the picture we have gained of an early Christian bishop from his polemical, dogmatic, homiletic or exegetical works.

Professor Graeme Clarke, who is representing the Australian Academy of the Humanities at this lecture, is recognised internationally for his expertise in translating and commenting on the letters of Bishop Cyprian of Carthage. Over the past eight years in the Centre for Early Christian Studies at Australian Catholic University, my colleagues and I have also subjected various letter-writing bishops to scrutiny. Dr Geoffrey Dunn has also worked on Cyprian of Carthage, Dr Wendy Mayer on John Chrysostom, Dr Youhanna Nessim Youssef and I on Severus of Antioch, Dr Chris Hanlon on Gregory the Great, and Dr Bronwen Neil on Pope Martin I. We are now embarking on various projects involving early papal correspondence (which has been strangely neglected by scholars), beginning with the letters of Pope Innocent I (Dr Dunn) and Pope Leo the Great (Dr Neil), and we are using the letters of John Chrysostom, Augustine and Leo as a focus for a long-term project on poverty and welfare in Christian antiquity. My point is that, only if we are aware of the techniques and difficulties of the letter-writing genre in classical and Christian antiquity, are we in a position to make a judicious and responsible use of the surviving epistolary artefacts in order to investigate theological, spiritual, political, social and economic questions in the early church. Above all, however, we have to remember that it is not all over when it's in the post.

## Endnotes

The following abbreviations are used: ACW (Ancient Classical Writers); CPL (Clavis Patrum Latinorum); NBA (Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana); Teske (R Teske, trans., *The Works of Saint Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century*, Letters 1–99, 2/1 (Hyde Park, NY, 2001); vol. 2, Letters 100–155 (2/2) appeared in 2003; vol. 3, Letters 156–210 (2/3) in 2004; and vol. 4, Letters 211–270, and 1\*–29\* (2/4) in 2005; PL (Patrologia Latina); SC (Sources Chrétiennes). For a select bibliography on Augustine's letters, see M Pellegrino, introduction to *Sant'Agostino Le Lettere* I/1, NBA 21/1 (Rome, 1969, 2nd edn, 1992); F Mortgenstern, *Die Briefpartner des Augustinus von Hippo. Prosopographische, sozial- und ideologiegeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Bochum, 1993); R B Eno, 'Epistulae', in A D Fitzgerald et al. (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1999), pp. 298–310; D E Doyle, *The Bishop as Disciplinarian in the Letters of St. Augustine* (Patristic Studies 4) (New York, 2002); J Davjak, 'Epistulae', in C Mayer (ed.), *Augustinus-Lexikon*, Bd. 2 (Basel, 1996–2002), col 893–1057. For studies on the 29 letters discovered in 1981, see *Les Lettres de Saint Augustin découvertes par Johannes Divjak*, Communications présentées au Collège des 20 et 21 septembre 1982 (Études Augustiniennes) (Paris, 1983). On Augustine in general, see P Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (London, 1967; rev. edn, 2000), A D Fitzgerald et al. (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages*, passim, with lit.; C Mayer (ed.), *Augustinus-Lexikon*, passim.

- 1 Uranius, *De obitu Paulini* (CPL 207); PL 53, 864B: Nam qui corpore eum videre non poterant, saltem eius epistolas contingere cupiebant. Erat enim suavis et blandus in litteris ...
- 2 On this, see D R Shackleton Bailey (trans. and intro.), *Cicero's Letters to Atticus* (Harmondsworth, 1978), p. 22.
- 3 Letter 139 (VII.19), written in Capua, 26 January 49 BC; in D R Shackleton Bailey (ed.), *M. Tullius Cicero Epistulae ad Atticum*, vol. 1. Libri I–VII (Stuttgart, 1987), p. 276: Ut ab urbe discessi, nullum adhuc intermisi diem quin aliquid ad te litterarum darem, non quo haberem magno opere quid scriberem sed ut loquerer tecum absens, quo mihi, cum coram id non licet, nihil est iucundius. Trans. Shackleton Bailey, p. 291.
- 4 Letter 295 (XII.53), written in Tusculum, 22 May 45 BC; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 2. Libri IX–XVI, p. 510.1–2: Ego, etsi nihil habeo quod ad te scribam, scribo tamen quia tecum loqui videor. Trans. Shackleton Bailey, p. 506.
- 5 Book 7, Letter 48.1; *Sancti Ambrosii Episcopi Mediolanensis Opera*, vol. 20. Discorsi e Lettere 2/2, ed. G Banterle (Milan–Rome, 1988), p. 74: Epistolarum genus propterea repletum, ut quidam nobis cum absentibus sermo sit, in dubium non venit.
- 6 See G Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections* (Typologie des Sources du Moyen Âge Occidental, fasc. 17) (Turnhout, 1976), p. 13.
- 7 Letter 43, written in 251; CCL 3B, p. 200.10–11: quomodo possum visito vos litteris meis. Trans. G W Clarke, ACW, vol. 44 (New York NY–Ramsey NJ, 1984), p. 61.
- 8 Letter 179.1; NBA 21/2, p. 884.
- 9 See, for example, the case of Letter 140, so lengthy that in *Retractationes* 2.6 Augustine described it as a book; and further on epistolary brevity see J Sykutris, 'Epistolographie', in *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Supplementband 5 (Stuttgart, 1931), col. 193; E Paulo Arns, *La technique du livre d'après Saint Jérôme* (Paris, 1953), pp. 97–98; Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections*, pp. 19–20; and M Zelzer, 'Die Briefliteratur. Kommunikation durch Briefe: Ein Gespräch mit

- Abwesenden', in L J Engels & H. Hofmann (eds), *Neues Handbuch der Literaturwissenschaft 4, Spätantike* (Wiesbaden, 1997), pp. 322 and 347.
- 10 Letter 25.5; NBA 21/1, p. 144. On blessed bread as a common gift accompanying letters in Gaul, see S Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus von Nola. Kommunikation und soziale Kontakte zwischen christlichen Intellektuellen* (Hypomnemata Bd. 134) (Göttingen, 2002), pp. 428–29.
  - 11 Letter 218.4; NBA 23, p. 612.
  - 12 Letter 230.6; NBA 23, p. 718.
  - 13 Letter 263.1 and 4; NBA 23, pp. 920 and 924.
  - 14 See, for example, Letter 231.6; NBA 23, pp. 726–27 (Augustine sends a copy of his *Confessions*).
  - 15 On this, see M. Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid. Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop* (Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs 2) (Aldershot-Brookfield VT, 1997), pp. 32–34.
  - 16 Letter 5 (I.9.1), written in Rome, March or April 67 BC; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 1, p. 12. 6–7: nostrum familiarem sermonem in alienas manus devenire. Trans. Shackleton Bailey, p. 35.
  - 17 Letter 22.2.9; NBA 21/1, p. 114: multa sunt ... quae nollem per litteras ad te venire ... Trans. Teske 1, p. 62.
  - 18 Letter 14.4; *Gregorii Nysseni Epistolae*, ed. G. Pasquali (ed. altera) (Leiden, 1959 = *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* 8/2), p. 47. 9–12:  
διεξιούσα γὰρ τὰς πάντων χεῖρας ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἴδιος ἐκάστου  
πλοῦτος ἐγίνετο, τῶν μὲν τῇ μνήμῃ διὰ τῆς συνεχοῦς ἀναγνώσεως τῶν δὲ δέλτοις  
ἐναπομαζαμένον τὰ ῥήματα...
  - 19 Letter 136.1; NBA 22, p. 136: Vir illustris Volusianus Beatitudinis tuae mihi litteras legit, imo me quidem cogente pluribus legit ... Trans. Teske, vol. 2, p. 210. On the ambiguity between the private and public function of the letter, see G W Clarke, ACW, vol. 43 (New York NY-Ramsey NJ, 1984), pp. 8–9, with regard to Cyprian.
  - 20 See further M R Salzman, 'Travel and Communication in *The Letters of Symmachus*', in L Ellis & F L Kidner (eds), *Travel, Communication and Geography in Late Antiquity* (Aldershot-Burlington VT, 2004), p. 81 and n. 1.
  - 21 This is Margaret Mullett's phrase (*Theophylact of Ochrid*, p. 17).
  - 22 A Morey and C N L Brooke, *Gilbert Foliot and his Letters* (Cambridge, 1965), p. 13 (cited in Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid*, p. 16).
  - 23 See Paulo Arns, *La technique*, pp. 29–35 on these materials.
  - 24 See further Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections*, p. 42 with n. 136.
  - 25 See, for example, Evodius, Letter 158.1 to Augustine; NBA 22, p. 638.
  - 26 Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.23 (SC 41, p. 123.2). See further R. C. Hill, *Reading the Old Testament in Antioch* (Leiden-Boston, 2005), p. 11 n. 35.
  - 27 Letter 234 (XI.24.2), written in Brundisium, 6 August 47 BC; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol 2, p. 453.1–2: Sed ad manum meam redeo; erunt enim haec occultius agenda. Trans. Shackleton Bailey, p. 450.
  - 28 Letter 43 (II.23.1), written in Rome, August (?) 59 BC; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 1, p. 87.3–5.
  - 29 Book 3, Letter 55; *Pline le Jeune. Lettres*. Tome 1er, Livres 1–3, ed. A-M Guillemin (Paris, 1961), p. 108: in secessu solum balinei tempus studiis eximebatur; cum dico

balinei de interioribus loquor, nam, dum destringitur tergiturque, audiebat aliquid aut dictabat.

- 30 Letter 117.12; *Saint Jérôme. Lettres*, Tome 6, ed. and trans. J Labourt (Paris, 1958), p. 87. 8–20: Haec ad brevem lucubrationem celeri sermoni dictavi, volens ... ut ostenderem obractoribus meis, quod et ego possim quicquid venerit in buccam dicere ... Extemporalis est dictio, et tanta ad lumen lucernulae facilitate profuse, ut notario manus lingua praecurreret, et signa et verborum volubilitas sermonum obueret. Quod idcirco dixi, ut qui non ignoscit ingenio, ignoscat vel temporari. See Paulo Arns, *La technique*, pp. 59–61 on the remuneration of Jerome's stenographers.
- 31 Letter 27\*.3; NBA 23A Suppl., p. 224.
- 32 Letter 172.2; NBA 22, p. 820.
- 33 Letter 265.1; NBA 33, p. 932.
- 34 Letters 238, 239 and 241.
- 35 Letter 59.2; NBA 21/1, p. 512: Hanc epistolam signatam misi annulo qui exprimit faciem hominis attendentis in latus. Trans. Teske, vol. 1, p. 242.
- 36 A charming example is Cicero's Letter 97 (V.4.4) to Atticus, written on 12 May 51 BC; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 1, p. 172.1–4. On the widespread use of papyrus in classical and Christian antiquity, see N Lewis, *Papyrus in Classical Antiquity* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 84–94; p. 91 n. 8 on the fact that both papyrus and parchment were in use in Christian antiquity, and on papyrus shortages away from towns.
- 37 Letter 15.1; NBA 21/1, p. 72: Non haec epistola sic inopiam chartae indicat, ut membranas saltem abundare testetur. Tabellas eburneas quas habeo, avunculo tuo cum litteris misi. Te enim huic pelliculae facilius ignoscas, quia differri non potuit quod ei scripsi, et tibi non scribere etiam ineptissimum existimavi. Sed tabellas, si quae ibi nostrae sunt, propter huiusmodi necessitates, mittas peto. Trans. Teske, vol. 1, p. 44. For the custom of returning tablets to the writer, cf. Cicero, Letter 313 to Atticus (XIII.8), written in Tusculum, 9 June 45 BC; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 2, p. 519.1–2: 'I really have nothing to write about, as you have just left and sent me back my tablets soon after' (trans. Shackleton Bailey, pp. 521–22).
- 38 Letter 7.2; in J Labourt (ed. and trans.), *Saint Jérôme. Lettres*. Tome 1 (Paris, 1949), p. 22.4–5: Chartam defuisse non puto Aegyptio administrante commercia ... See Paulo Arns, *La technique*, pp. 13–14.
- 39 See, for example, Augustine, Letter 118.5.34; NBA 21/2, p. 1174 (parchment).
- 40 Letter 171; NBA 22, p. 810: Sciat sane porlixas epistolas ad familiarissimos nostros, non solum laicos, verum etiam episcopos sic, quo modo haec scripta est, ad eos scribere nos solere, ut et cito scribantur et charta teneatur commodius cum leguntur. Trans. Teske, vol. 3, p. 119.
- 41 On both forms, see Paulo Arns, *La technique*, pp. 118–28, and S Mratschek, 'Einblicke in einen Postsack. Struktur und Edition der "Natalicia" des Paulinus von Nola', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 114 (1996), pp. 167–68 with lit.
- 42 On this development, see Paulo Arns, *La technique*, pp. 23–29.
- 43 See, for example, Augustine, Letter 138.1.2; NBA 22, p. 170.
- 44 Letter 118.2.9; NBA 21/2, p. 1138.
- 45 For example, Letters 4, 149.1.2, 162 and 164.
- 46 Letter 121.3.14; NBA 21/2, pp. 1228–30: ... si habes relatam in schedis, rogo ut mittas, aut certe retexas eam mihi; quod tibi facile est. Man etsi scripta non exstat,

quia forte brevis epistola, ut tumultuaria tibi inter libros tuos haberi spreta sit, renova eam mihi ... Trans. Teske, vol. 2, p. 148.

- 47 On these formulaic salutations in Latin and Greek letter-writing respectively, see C D Lanham, *Salutation Formulas in Latin Letters to 1200: Syntax, Style, and Theory* (Münchener Beiträge zur Mediävistik und Renaissance-Forschung 22) (Munich, 1975, 2nd edn, Eugene OR, 2004); M Grünbart, *Formen der Anrede im byzantinischen Brief vom 6. bis zum 12. Jahrhundert* (Wiener Byzantinische Studien Bd. 25) (Vienna, 2005), both with literature on Christian antiquity. Cf. A A R Bastiaensen, 'Le ceremonial épistolaire des chrétiens latins. Origines et premiers développements' (Graecitas et Latinitas Christianorum Primaeva. Supplementa, fasc. 2) (Nijmegen, 1964), pp. 5–45 for ceremonial address also in the body of the letter, particularly with regard to Cyprian.
- 48 Letter 33; commentary by G W Clarke, ACW, vol. 44, pp. 144–52.
- 49 Letter 68.1; NBA 21/1, p. 552: ... si tua est epistola, aperte scribe, vel mitte exemplaria veriora. Trans. Teske, vol. 1, p. 260.
- 50 Letter 93.1.1; NBA 21/2, p. 806: Accepi epistolam, quam tuam esse mihi non incredibile visum est; attulit enim eam, quem catholicum christianum esse constaret, qui, ut opinor, mihi mentiri non auderet. Trans. Teske, vol. 1, p. 377.
- 51 The classic study of A M Ramsey, 'The speed of the Roman imperial post', *Journal of Roman Studies* 15 (1925), pp. 60–74, has recently found a spate of successors, such as A Kolb, *Transport und Nachrichtentransfer im Römischen Reich* (Klio Beihefte N.F. Bd. 2) (Berlin, 2002), and the contributions to the volume *L'information et la mer dans le monde antique*, sous la direction de Jean Andreau et de Catherine Virlouvet (Collection de L'École française de Rome 297 (Rome, 2002), particularly S Crogiez, 'Le *cursus publicus* et la circulation des informations officielles par voie de mer', pp. 55–67, and E Paoli-Lafaye, 'Messagers et messages. La diffusion des nouvelles de l'Afrique d'Augustin vers les régions d'au-delà des mers', pp. 233–59, esp. p. 245 n. 62 on episcopal use of the *cursus publicus*; L Ellis-F L Kidner, *Travel, Communication and Geography in Late Antiquity*.
- 52 See Kolb, *Transport und Nachrichtentransfer*, pp. 87–92.
- 53 Letter 13 to Atticus (I.13), written in Rome, 25 January 61 BC; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 1, p. 17.8–10: quotus enim quisque est qui epistularum paulo graviorem ferre possit nisi eam perfectione relevavit? Trans. Shackleton Bailey, p. 46.
- 54 On which see Clarke, ACW, vol. 43, p. 225.
- 55 In N.P. Tanner (text and trans.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, *Nicaea to Lateran V* (London-Washington DC, 1990), p. 92: Omnes pauperes et indigentes auxilio, cum proficiscuntur, sub probatione epistolis ecclesiasticis pacificis tantummodo commendari decrevimus, et non commendaticiis litteris, propterea quod commendaticiae litterae personis honoratioribus solummodo conceduntur. On the role of the letter-bearer, see P Hatlie, 'Redeeming Byzantine epistolography', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 20 (1996), pp. 213–48 at p. 221 n. 27 (lit.); E Paoli-Lafaye, 'Messagers et messages'; and cf. M-Y Perrin, 'Ad implendum caritatis ministerium. La place des couriers dans la correspondance de Paulin de Nola', *Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'École Française de Rome, Antiquité* 104 (1992), pp. 1049–68; Mratschek, *Die Briefwechsel*, pp. 302–7.
- 56 Letter 166.1.2; NBA 22, p. 720.
- 57 Letter 186.1.1; NBA 23, p. 78: ... tamquam per viventem atque intelligentem epistolam. Trans. Teske, vol. 3, p. 209.



- 58 For details, see E Paoli-Lafaye, 'Messagers et messages', *passim*.
- 59 For example, Augustine, Letter 11\*.2: 'involucrum ... signatum'; NBA 23A Suppl., p. 90. This receptacle contained a letter, memoranda and books.
- 60 *Ibid.*: 'sarcinas'; NBA 23A Suppl., p. 92. This baggage also contained books.
- 61 For example, Cicero, Letter 220 to Atticus (XI.9), written in Brundisium, 3 January 43 BC; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 2, p. 432.5; *id.*, Letter 295 (XII.53), written in Tusculum, 22 May 45 BC; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 2, p. 510.6–7. In both of these, Cicero uses the word 'fasiculus'.
- 62 For example, Augustine, Letter 88.2; NBA 21/2, p. 754: *fasiculum in aluta signatum*.
- 63 Letter 220 (XI.9.2) to Atticus, written in Brundisium, 3 January 47 BC; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 2, p. 432.5–7. Trans. Shackleton Bailey, p. 433. Cf. Letter 295 (XII.53) to Atticus, written in Tusculum, 22 May 45 BC, on sending one's letters to another to have them forwarded. For a clever reconstruction of the contents of a postal bag see S Mratschek, 'Einblicke in einen Postsack'.
- 64 Letter 94.8; NBA 21/2, p. 888.
- 65 Letter 121.1.1; NBA 21/2, p. 1214: ... De paucis quae nunc iam ad navem currente litterarum perlatore, et mihi in ipsius festinatione properanti in mentem venerunt ... Trans. Teske, vol. 2, p. 141.
- 66 Letter 205.4.19; NBA 23, p. 476: *cum ista dictarem, perlator iam ventum exspectans, me vehementer, ut navigaret, urgebat. Itaque si quid hic incondite atque inculte dictum legeris, let is totum ita perspexeris, doctrinae da operam, linguae veniam*. Trans. Teske, vol. 3, p. 385. Cf. Letter 245.1; NBA 23, p. 838.
- 67 On travel in general in antiquity, see the works mentioned in n. 52 above, and D Gorce, *Les voyages, l'hospitalité et le port des lettres dans le monde chrétien des IV et V<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris, 1925); L Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World* (Baltimore-London, 1994). On Augustine's own travels, see O Perler & L Maier, *Les voyages de Saint Augustin* (Itudes Augustiniennes) (Paris, 1969). See further Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid*, p. 16 on travel difficulties associated with the Byzantine letter.
- 68 Pliny, *Natural History*, 19.1.3; see further Kolb, *Transport und Nachrichtentransfer*, p. 318.
- 69 Procopius, *Gallie Wars*, 1.15.19; see further Kolb, *Transport und Nachrichtentransfer*, p. 310.
- 70 See, for example, Jerome to Aurelius, Letter 27\*.2; NBA 23A Suppl., p. 224.
- 71 On this point with regard to the Middle Ages, see further Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections*, p. 54; pp. 53–55 on delivery in general; and cf. Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid*, pp. 31–41, for Byzantium.
- 72 Letter 179.5; NBA 22, p. 888.
- 73 Letter 262.1; NBA 23, p. 900; trans. Teske, vol. 4, p. 203.
- 74 Letter 20\*.17; NBA 23A Suppl., p. 174.
- 75 Letter 22\*.11; NBA 23A Suppl., p. 202.
- 76 On the whole question of forgery in antiquity, see the classic work by W Speyer, *Die literarische Fälschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 1. Abt., 2. Teil) (Munich, 1971); pp. 171–295 on forgery in Christian antiquity.
- 77 On this phenomenon, see Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections*, p. 14 with n. 20.
- 78 Cicero, Letter 28 (II.8.1) to Atticus; in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 1, p. 63.1–5.

- 79 Cicero, Letter 132 (VII.9.1) to Atticus' in Shackleton Bailey (ed.), vol. 1, p. 259.3–p. 260.1. On the dangers of travel in antiquity, perceived or real, see above.
- 80 See, for example, Cicero, Letters 30 (II.12) to Atticus, 86 (IV.11), 96 (V.3), 125 (VII.2), 165 (VIII.15)—four at once, it seems; Augustine, Letters 99, 200, and 19\*.
- 81 For example, Augustine, Letters 145, 149, 159, 161, 180, 202A, 6\*, and 16\*.
- 82 See the discussion of the correspondence between Augustine and Jerome in what follows.
- 83 For example, Augustine, Letters 97.1; NBA 21/2, pp. 908, and 104.1.1; NBA 21/2, p. 1000.
- 84 For example, Augustine, Letter 38.3; NBA 21/1, p. 298.
- 85 For example, Augustine, Letter 40.5.8; NBA 21/1, p. 310.
- 86 Both cases are mentioned in Letter 149.1.2; NBA 22, p. 458.
- 87 Letter 145 1; NBA 22, p. 352: Nam ex quo sumpsi epistolam tuam, nini nunc primum rescripsisse me nescio; tantis enim curis obstricti et distenti sumus, ut etiam hoc nesciam. Trans. Teske, vol. 2, p. 311.
- 88 Much has been written on this subject. The most recent works, replete with former literature, are R Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus und ihr Streit um den Kanon des Alten Testaments und die Auslegung von Gal.2.11–14* (VigChr Suppl. 21) (Leiden-New York-Cologne, 1994); A Fürst, *Augustinus Briefwechsel mit Hieronymus* (Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum Ergänzungsband 29) (Münster, 1999), esp. p. 108. For introduction and English translation, see C White, *The Correspondence (394–419) between Jerome and Augustine* (Lewiston NY-Lampeter, 1990); for introduction and German translation, see A Fürst, *Augustinus & Hieronymus. Epistulae mutuae* (Fontes Christiani 41) (Turnhout, 2002). Cf. E Paoli-Lafaye, 'Messagers et messages', pp. 242–43.
- 89 Letter 82.5 32 and 36; NBA 21/2, pp. 712 and 716.
- 90 Letter 195 (written in 418); NBA 23, p. 308: macta virtute; in orbe celebraris, Catholici te conditorem antiquae rursus fidei venerantur atque suscipiunt ... Trans. Teske, vol. 3, p. 309.
- 91 On the incomplete surviving correspondence between Augustine and Paulinus, for instance, see P Courcelle, 'Les lacunes de la correspondance entre Saint Augustin et Paulin de Nole', *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 53 (1951), pp. 253–300.
- 92 See Constable, Letters and Letter-Collections, pp. 16 and 51–52.
- 93 Y N Youssef, 'Letter of Severus of Antioch to Anastasia the deaconess', *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte* 40 (2001), pp. 126–36.
- 94 See Paulo Arns, *La technique*, p. 28.
- 95 On this, see Zelzer, 'Die Briefliteratur', pp. 346–47.
- 96 See further my paper, 'The horizons of a bishop's world: The letters of Augustine of Hippo', forthcoming in W Mayer, P Allen & L Cross (eds), *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 4 (Strathfield, 2006).
- 97 Se F van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop. The Life and Work of a Father of the Church* (E T B Battershaw & G R Lamb) (London-New York, 1961), p. 247; P P Verbraken, 'Lire aujourd'hui les Sermons de saint Augustin', *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 119 (1987), pp. 829–39; G. Lawless, 'Augustine and his critics', in J T Lienhard, E C Muller & R J Teske (eds), *Augustine. Presbyter Factus Sum* (Collectanea Augustiniana) (New York etc., 1993), pp. 4 and 22 n. 2; H R Drobner, 'Studying

- Augustine. An overview of recent research', in R Dodaro & G Lawless (eds), *Augustine and His Critics. Essays in Honour of Gerald Bonner* (London-New York, 2000), p. 33 n. 15.
- 98 See P Allen, 'Severus of Antioch and pastoral care', in P Allen, W Mayer & L Cross (eds), *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 2 (Brisbane, 1999), pp. 387–89.
- 99 See the forthcoming study by C P Hanlon, 'The horizons of a bishop's world: The letters of Gregory the Great', in W Mayer, P Allen & L Cross (eds), *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 4 (Strathfield, 2006). The letters of Gregory have recently received their first annotated English translation: *The Letters of Gregory the Great*, trans. J R C Martyn, introduction and notes by C P Hanlon, 3 vols (Toronto, 2004).