

-ERE AND -ERUNT ENDINGS IN ST JEROME'S EPISTLES AND LIVES OF THE HERMITS*

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The careful composition of most of the Epistles and the Lives of the Hermits of St Jerome is conspicuous in the choice between the *-ere* and *-erunt* endings of the third person plural of the Perfect. The extant Epistles are 154 in number and the Lives of the Hermits are three in number: that of Paul written in 374 or 375, that of Hilarion in 390, and that of Malchus written in 391.

IN THE CLAUSULA

In many cases the choice is determined by the exigences of the clausula, both final, at the end of the sentence, and inner, at the end of a separate colon or *membrum*, when the *-ere* and *-erunt* verb is not the last word in either case. In such a case the *-ere* is mostly used to form the basic element of the clausula, the last \check{e} being the inner vowel of the cretic, — — —. Thus:

-ere in final clausula: *restituēre lācrimāe* (11.4; a dichoreus with the last syllable of the cretic resolved into two short ones, or a fourth paeon, a favourite of Aristotle); *appāruere dāpēs* (H.7; cretic-spondee); *fuere pās-tōres* (M.5).

Other places: 14.3.2; 14.5.3; 22.19.6; 45.3.2; 45.4.1; 60.16.3; 64.8.2; 65.14.6; 84.11.4; 112.10.5; 112.17.3; 127.9.2.

-ere needed in inner clausula: *vicere cum saeculo, / quae* (7.6.1); *aedificaverē turrē, / tunc* (21.8.2); *habuere vitam, / quae* (119.5.10); *sumpsere principium: / quorum* (P.1); *resiluere nāviculae, / et* (H.41).

Other examples: 1.9.1; 2,2; 3.2.1; 9.3; 22.29.4; 52.2.2; 54.4.2; 64.16.3; 65.14.2; 71.5.1; 78.8.3; 84.4.3; 84.11.3; 108.2.3; 112.14.5; 119.9.3; 120.1.4; 120.1.14; 122.3.15; 125.14.1; 125.16.1; 127.13.1; 130.12.2; 130.17.2; 133.2.1; 133.8.1; P.9; H.42.

* The quotations from *The Letters* are according to the Vienna *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, Vols. 54 and 55, and are made by reference to the number of the letter, the paragraph and the section; the section only is given in letters of one paragraph. Quotations from the *Lives* are made by reference to Mignes, P.L. XXIII, P = *Vita Pauli*, H = *Vita Hilarionis*, M = *Vita Malchi*.

-erunt needed for inner clausula: in the following six cases only: *appel-laverunt mulieres* (120.5.3); *prophetaverunt prophetae* (120.9.19); *adoraverunt figuras* (121.10.15); *oderunt suos* (125.6.2); *acceperunt cibos* (H.14); *nuntiaverunt patrem* (H.17).

IN NON-CLAUSULA CASES

Clausula considerations apart, Jerome's use of *-ere* and *-erunt* is predominantly Tacitean. As in Tacitus (cf. R.H. Martin, '*-ere* and *-erunt* in Tacitus' in *Classical Review*, April 1946), at the end of the sentence he by far prefers *-erunt*; in a medial position he very often uses *-erunt* with a Present Perfect meaning and *-ere* as an Aorist. Only in the less carefully written letters is *-erunt* recurrently found with an aoristic meaning in a medial position.

In a considerable number of cases *-erunt* with an aoristic meaning is preferred in a medial position to avoid hiatus with the initial vowel of the following word. In a few instances it is used as a variety form, along with *-ere* in the same sentence.

(a) At the end of the sentence:

-erunt: *cecinerunt* (52.3.6); *praeterierunt* (130.19.5); *pependerunt* (H.40). Other places: 1.9.2; 18A.2.2; 18A.7.2; 22.38.1; 54.1.2; 112.7.8; 112.16.3; 119.9.3; 120.1.15; 120.10.4; 121.5.6; 122.1.16; 123.15.4; 125.8.1; 125.16.1; H.1; H.20; H.28.

-ere at the end of the sentence is used only four times: 8.2; 130.6.3; P.8; H.23.

(b) Medial position:

(i) *-ere* with an aoristic meaning:

in quibus olim fuere regna non modica (60.16.4); *nunquam dormire, nunquam mortui sunt* (119.7.11); *obviam processere* (H.25); and 58.5.3; 77.5.2; 77.11.3; 84.1.1; 123.14.5; 129.7.3; 130.4.4; 130.6.3; 130.12.2; 141.14.3; H.1; H.25.

One will note the recurrence in Epp. 77 and 130 which are very rhetorical in style and where a distinction of this kind is therefore to be expected.

-erunt with an aoristic meaning:

Although the instances listed hereunder are more numerous than those in the preceding list for *-ere*, it will be noticed that they are mostly taken from expository and theological letters. Epp. 120 and 121 are written with hardly any eye for style at all:

a) From expository and theological letters: 18A.2.3; 120.1.4; 120.1.15;

120.8.4; 120.9.4; 120.9.11; 120.10.4; 121.1.8; 121.5.4; 121.7.5; 121.8.13; 121.10.5 (4 times); 121.10.15; 121.11.3; 129.1.1; 129.4.2.

b) From other letters and the Lives: 125.8.1; 130.14.5; 147.2.2; 147.10.1 (twice); P.2; P.16; H.12.

-erunt with a present perfect meaning:

in quibus per tanta iam saecula tantorum ingenium sudaverunt (27.13); *qui vivunt et habent testimonium fidei et necdum receperunt promissionem Dei* (119.10.1); and 6.1.1; 17.2.2; 17.3.2; 18A.1.2; 22.6.1 (twice); 22.41.4; 26.4.1. 28.2.1; 40.5; 42.3; 45.2.3; 45.4.1; 52.3.2; 112.11.2; 112.13.1; 112.13.3; 112.20.1; 119.10.1 (three times); 119.10.2; 112.22.3; 120.8.3; 120.10.4; 120.10.13; 121.1.6; 121.2.5; 121.2.6; 121.2.7; 121.2.11; 121.4.4. 121.4.7; 121.10.20; 121.11.6; 121.11.15; 122.1.5; 123.13.2; 123.17.2; 124.15.1; 125.4; 127.2.3; 127.12.1; 128.5.1; 130.6.7; 130.7.10; 130.8.3; 130.14.6; 130.19.6; 133.3.2; 133.14.4; 138.1; 140.7.3; 140.10.1; 140.11.1; 140.16.1; 141.16.4; 141.18.2; 147.3.6; 147.6.2.

(ii) Variety choice:

-erunt is used with an aoristic meaning for variety, *-ere* being used in the same sentence:

aedificaverę turrem, tunc dogmata superbias conflixerunt volentes curiositate non licita in ipsius caeli alta penetrare (21.8.2); *superbiam humilitate vicerunt, tantique fuere meriti, ut captivi victoribus imperarent* (79.2.5); *ad cadaver beati senis substiterunt, adulantibusque caudis circa pedes eius accubuerę* (P.16); *quem postquam patres videre perterriti (erant enim mirae magnitudinis) nuntiaverunt patri* (H.17).

Other places: P.11 (*libaverunt -- transegere*); H.42 (*transiere -- coeperunt*); 123.12.1; 130.14.5.

(iii) Avoidance of hiatus:

This is especially the case when the *-erunt* verb terminates an inner colon and the first word of the next colon begins with a vowel; an *-ere* would have tended to be elided thus weakening the pause necessary between the two cola:

quod sibi praestiterunt, / apud quos erat cruda rusticitas (8.2); *esse coeperunt, / et omnes* (H.24); 7.1.2; 52.3.5; 120.8.10; 121.5.7; 147.3.2; H.22; M.6;

and, not at the end of the colon:

receperunt eum (121.5.7); *fuęrunt animalia* (123.8.2); *venerunt ad eum* (H.26); *venerunt itaque* (H.44); 18A.6.4; 22.11.3; 22.32.2; 120.10.15; 121.10.15; 140.6.2; 147.10.1.