

The Illustrious Virgin Cecilia: A Translation of *Passio Sanctae Caeciliae* from
Medieval Latin to Modern English

by

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ABSTRACT:

This project is a scholarly translation of the *Passio* (life and martyrdom) of St. Cecilia, now the patron saint of music, from medieval Latin into modern English. Although Cecilia is a significant saint, no published English translation of the full text of her life currently exists. The introduction traces her legend from its murky beginnings in the late 5th century until its collection in an early published work by the 15th-century Italian humanist Mombritius. This text is collated for punctuation and divisions with the most recent (1910) edition of the *Passio*, by Hippolyte Delehaye. Also in the introductory section are further explanations of some aspects of the legend and its history. Some important images and themes found in the text and addressed here include miraculous crowns of flowers, reference to a phoenix, the hagiographical significance of Cecilia's virginity, and her outspoken theological arguments. Lastly, this introductory section also addresses the process of translation by focusing on a short passage of the *Passio* which has been the most controversial and significant section, the key on which Cecilia's association with music rests. Using this passage, the process of how the translation was approached and edited is explained. This includes choices made concerning format and footnotes, as well how hagiographical tradition and purpose must be taken into consideration and integrated with the development of the legend over time to form a context from within which to finally translate the text. The second section of the project is the actual finished translation, which includes grammatical and thematic footnotes where appropriate.

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I. List of Figures

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Figure 3. *Wedding of St. Cecilia. The Beaupre Antiphonary*, Vol.II. Flanders, 1290.

II. Acknowledgements

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III. Preface

The challenges of translation are manifold, but central to the success of a translation are the aims of the translator: “A translation has to be judged in terms of its consistency with these aims and not on something it was never meant to be” (*Connolly, Routledge 175*). This translation of the *Passio Sanctae Caeciliae* was motivated by a desire to create an accessible source for those who might want to learn more about the legend and development of St. Cecilia, but who do not have the linguistic background to access the text in Latin. Although scholars of Latin and of hagiography have used and translated the text, no one has yet published a full translation of this text into modern English. Although the hagiographical tradition is not widely read or understood today, I believe that one important way to encourage the study of hagiography—of which there has been a renaissance of sorts in recent years—is to create more resources for those who are interested, but less well-versed in the Latin language. Many medieval Latin manuscripts have yet to be translated; some have not even been read.

Cecilia was a fairly popular saint, the patron saint of music, and her tradition is still alive today. Translating her legend into modern English will also help to translate it into the context of our world, and into the lives of those who might otherwise never have occasion to encounter it, thus keeping it accessible and alive even in a time when Latin is no longer the universal language of academia: “The life of the original is inseparable from the risks of translation; entity dies if it is not subject to

transformation” (Steiner 261). With the reader in mind, I have included footnotes explaining a few of the words with specific or technical meanings for the work; these words are noted throughout the following introduction.

Because hagiography is not only temporally removed from modern life, but little-known or used within it, extra care must be taken to appreciate how it may have been intended to be read and thus how best to translate it faithfully. That said, for the translation to succeed as more than merely a servile imitation, there must be some amount of identification and transfer, and thus appropriation. There is an appropriation of meaning as the translator labors first to understand the text, then to find suitable words and phrases to express this meaning in the target language, and also an appropriation of experience as he or she seeks to present a text that, while preserving as much of its original personality as possible, connects with speakers at the time and place of the target language. The translator struggles to grasp all the intricacies of form, sense, and suggestion, while still striving to create a readable text, original as a creation in the language to which it is translated. This tension between “domestication” and “foreignization” is currently one of the most contentious issues in the field of translation, and for good reason. As D.F. Cram has said, “Bland translation theory steers a middle course between the two; a robust theory must come to grips with *both* of them” (Linguistic Aspects of Translation lecture 23 November 2005). The following effort is an exploration of how this might practically be done.

IV. Introduction

Background and origins of hagiography

In the days of the early church, the stories of both local and more popular saints were often recorded to provide examples and encourage members of the church in their own holiness. Sometime in the fourth century, church leaders began to read excerpts from collections of these stories or martyrologies¹ at services on the feast-days attributed to the saints; by the fifth century, entire legends would be used as part of the services (Gerould 13). This tradition continued, and throughout the centuries, these stories were recounted. Longer versions were eventually collected as reading material and perhaps entertainment. Some legends² would have been read only by monks or nuns as part of their liturgical cycle, while others circulated more widely among the general population. Cecilia's story is thought to have been one of the former. The tradition of recording saints' lives continued to grow in popularity despite the difficulties and cost of producing books before the development of printing (see below, on the manuscript tradition), and eventually³ became known as its own genre: hagiography,⁴ or holy writings.

¹ Martyrology: a catalog of saints, which may include their names, feast days, and brief accounts of their lives.

² Legend: a written account of a saint's life.

³ Although the practice developed much earlier, according to the OED, the first recorded instance of the word "hagiography" in English occurs in 1812.

⁴ The definition of hagiography as a genre covers a lot of ground. For practical purposes, hagiography is generally defined as the study of saints' lives. Gerould's definition includes subject matter and intention: "The saint's legend is a biographical narrative, of whatever origin circumstances may dictate, written in whatever medium may be convenient, concerned as to substance with the life, death, and miracles of some person accounted worthy to be considered a leader in the cause of righteousness; and, whether fictitious or historically true, calculated to glorify the memory of its subject" (Gerould 5). Delehaye writes, "The term then must be confined to writings inspired by religious devotion to the saints and intended to increase that devotion" (*Legends* 3).

The Cult¹ and Legend of St. Cecilia

Its Origins

The story of St. Cecilia's identity as a martyr is an interesting one, and mysterious in its inception. Hippolyte Delehaye, a prominent scholar of saints' lives, called it "the most tangled question in all Roman hagiography" (Connolly, *Mourning* 24, translated from Delehaye, *Etude sur le légendier romain* 74). Her story emerges unexpectedly at the end of the fifth century: after "complete silence about her" in the fourth and fifth centuries, when other saints' lives and cults are documented," suddenly, at the end of the fifth century, there begins to appear a flood of evidence that she is accorded a great veneration by the Roman Church" (Connolly, "Legend I" 9).² This question of origins will probably never be solved. To complicate matters, some of the earliest mentions we do have of her are confusing: in the Hieronymian, or Roman, Martyrology of the fifth century, for example, she is mentioned on four different dates—in one, her name is in a masculine form (Connolly, "The Legend I" 6 and *Mourning* 27).

Although the earliest extant³ texts of her legend date from the eighth century, we do know that the form of the legend originates in the fifth century, for the language and events of her story are based partially on a MS⁴ from A.D. 486,⁵ and her legend is the source for a biography of Pope Urban I⁶ in the early sixth century, at which point it must already have been in circulation (Connolly, "Legend I" 6). The age of martyrs had

¹ Cult: traditions and rites surrounding the person of a saint.

² For documentation of some of this evidence, see Connolly, *Mourning Into Joy*, pp. 24ff.

³ Extant: in existence today.

⁴ An abbreviation for manuscript; the plural form is MSS.

⁵ Victor of Vita's *Historia Persecutionis Provinciae* (Moloney 13).

⁶ *Liber pontificalis*.

ended centuries earlier, in CE 311, with Galerius's edict of toleration (Connolly, *Mourning* 24). At the time Cecilia's legend arose, then, no new martyrs were being created in Italy, nor had they been for over a century.

There are other unresolved difficulties in determining the story's antecedents. Though some of the characters have historically established identities, for others (including Cecilia) we can find no historical basis. Cecilia's husband, Valerian, his brother, Tyburtius, and their guard, Maximus, are saints in their own rights, about whom we know nothing but their burial place at the cemetery of Praetextatus (Connolly, *Mourning* 28). There are stories surrounding them as well, but these are independent of (and sometimes contradict) their roles in Cecilia's legend.

The varied and numerous inconsistencies between the events and people of the legend and known history, as well as the elusive beginnings of her cult, suggest that there is little of what we would consider historical truth in Cecilia's myth. In any case, the text as hagiography, "inspired by religious devotion to the saints and intended to increase that devotion" (Delehaye 3), does not require historical authenticity. This lack would not have been troubling in the least. In fact, as Gerould writes in his general history of hagiography, "it almost seems as if the influence and popularity of saints were in inverse ratio to their authenticity" (6). One can draw parallels here to current movies or books "inspired by a true story," but enhanced with plot lines and characters that make for a more dramatic and interesting tale.

As noted above, there will most likely never be a definitive answer to the question of how Cecilia's cult began, but several theories have been proposed. Delehaye has suggested that the tomb of a donor located at the site of the church

traditionally associated with St. Cecilia at Trastevere, Rome, was so long venerated that it was eventually taken for the tomb of a martyr. More recently, Thomas Connolly, in a pair of articles featured in the journal *Studi musicali* (“The Legend of St. Cecilia: I, the Origins of the Cult,” and “The Legend of St. Cecilia: II, Music and the Symbols of Virginity”) and in his 1994 book *Mourning Into Joy*, has proposed that Cecilia’s legend is based in part on that of the pagan goddess *Bona Dea* (“good goddess”) at the site of the church at Trastevere containing Cecilia’s tomb. He also draws a connection between Cecilia’s name (in its Latin form, *Caecilia*) and the Latin word for blindness, *caecitas*, which was one of the ailments the goddess was noted for healing.

Its Collection

From the fifth century onward, then, Cecilia’s life was collected in manuscripts. Versions of her *Passio*¹ are included in such famous collections as Ælfric’s *Lives of Saints*, Jacobus de Voragine’s influential thirteenth-century collection *Legenda Aurea* (*The Golden Legend*), and Chaucer’s *The Second Nun’s Tale*, in his fourteenth-century *The Canterbury Tales*. Until the advent of printing in the fifteenth century, written accounts such as these were painstakingly copied by scribes to create new manuscripts; each copy of a work was therefore costly of time, labor, and money. Because of this, it is uncertain how many laypeople would have had access to her story in written form.

In addition to the labor-intensive nature of the manuscript tradition, the individual scribe’s involvement in each new copy of a work meant that, over time, changes made their way into the text. Mistakes, additions, or omissions made by one

¹ Passion (Latin *passio*): an account of a saint’s life and death by martyrdom.

scribe (sometimes unintentionally, sometimes to fix or “improve” the text) would later be copied by others. In fact, research has shown that the average number of emendations made during the process of recopying a text is one per page. These changes form a sort of lineage, and textual analysts compare different manuscript versions of the same story, using methods such as paleography¹ and collation.² By so doing, they can often extrapolate back in time to reconstruct the earliest versions of a text, comparing the changes that occur, grouping texts that share the same changes, and noting when a change first appeared. Of course, these methods are limited by the availability and number of the extant texts.

Fortunately, we are able to tell that Cecilia’s story has changed little from its original version, due to the fact that no less than 168 extant manuscripts of her *Passio* still exist (see bibliography [*BHLms*] for access to the Bollandists’ site listing these manuscripts and their locations). This number is remarkably high—many Old English texts survive in only one copy—and reflects both the popularity of Cecilia’s legend and that of saints’ lives in general as reading material. The particular version that forms the basis for this edition was collected in the late-fifteenth century by an Italian layman named Bonino Mombrizio (or the Latin name he gave himself for his scholarly work, Boninus Mombritius) in his work titled *Sanctuarium*. Although Mombritius’s motivations for producing his edition, as well as his source materials, are lost in history, his collection of over 326 saints’ lives is the largest and one of the most important of the period, covering stories from the first century to the fifteenth.

¹ Paleography: the study of handwriting to determine a text’s period and geographical location.

² Collation: comparing versions of a text to note where and how they differ from one another.

The *Sanctuarium*'s publication can be narrowed to sometime during the period 1478 to 1480, based on the fall from power of its dedicatee (Frazier 117). Mombritius collected a range of legends, from the ancient to the near-contemporary, but left them almost untouched, even in cases of obvious mistakes made by previous scribes. In accordance with manuscript tradition as described above, this preservation of the text as it stood is notable because it is a significant departure from the practice of the time, in which those transcribing would often make corrections or changes based on their own judgment: "The ability, first, to recognize a significant manuscript and, second, to take such care in transcribing it, places Mombrizio among the handful of exceptionally aware textual critics in the second half of the fifteenth century" (Frazier 106).

The *Sanctuarium* experienced widespread popularity and success upon its publication and again with the renewed popular interest of the 1600's. At least part of this later success can be attributed to the positive assessment of Mombritius's "scrupulousness" given by Jean Bolland, a prominent seventeenth-century Catholic scholar, in the introduction to his own first volume of saints' lives. Mombritius's collection, the *Acta Sanctorum [Lives of the Saints]*, was taken over by a movement—the Bollandists—who continued the publication of saints' lives after Bolland's death; the Bollandist Society still exists today, and continues to publish supplements to the work.

Less attention has been paid to the *Sanctuarium* in the modern period, as the study of hagiography has gone out of fashion until recently, but its earlier successes mean that there are many extant copies of the text available to scholars today. The last

edition of Mombritius' collection (edited and published by the Benedictine monks of Solesmes) was collated with a later version referred to as *Bosius* and published at Paris in 1910. It is this printing, located in the Duke Humfries room at the Bodleian library, on which the translation below is based. There also exists a later edition by Delehaye, copyrighted 1936, which I have used for section divisions and for collation, especially with problematic or nonsensical words. Delehaye's edition is more thoroughly edited and collated with two other MSS¹ (cited as *Parisino* 10861 and *Carnotensi* 144), but I was not able to find a copy of it until I had already completed a rough translation of Mombritius' version. Most books on the subject refer to Delehaye's edition, however, and future iterations of this project or work on the *Passio* would probably benefit from its greater clarity.

Connections

Music

Although she is now, as she was throughout the middle ages, the patron saint of music, Cecilia was not always associated with song. The shift in association is illustrated by images of Cecilia, which sometime in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth centuries begin to picture her either holding or actually playing an organ (Connolly, *Mourning* 196). The most common explanation of this link has been the fact that for Cecilia's feast-day readings, the text of her story omitted the words *in corde suo* ("in her heart") from the passage about Cecilia's song (Connolly, "Legend I" 4). In this scenario, one might argue that her entire association to music is based on a mistake.

¹ MSS: an abbreviation for "manuscripts"; the singular form is MS.

Recently, however, Connolly has defended what he sees as Cecilia's foundational relationship to music even before this explicit shift in understanding that made the organ one of her symbols. He argues from the premise that music, especially as perceived by the medieval worldview, was an integral part of the heavens and the heavenly. In this worldview, the physical world was believed to be "founded on simple mathematical proportions which themselves created musical sounds...Jacobus distinguished...between *musica divina* proper...and *musica caelestis*, which is the music of angels and saints" (Rastall 169). Likewise, virgins were closely associated with angels due to their purity and asexuality. If, in order to hear heavenly song,

the mind must be fixed on God and spiritual things, the reason must be freed from all worldly things and illuminated by grace to behold God and spiritual matters, and 'þe wyl & þe affeccion' must be purged of worldly love and inflamed with love of the Holy Spirit (ll.15-22) (Walter Hilton, *Of Angels' Song*, as quoted in Rastall 162),

then Cecilia (and her own inward, soulful singing) made a perfect candidate for association with heavenly music. She was fulfilling "the proper activity of all angels, and of the souls of the saints, ...the praise of God, the *laudes dei*" (Rastall 163). Nor would this association stop at heavenly music, as hymns sung by mortals paralleled this angelic practice (Rastall 166). This background sheds new light on the possible avenues for Cecilia's association with music—that is, that the connection might be a deep and appropriate one, rather than simply a misattribution.

Development

Earlier classical texts (including Cecilia's) tended to have a more meditative focus overall, with long passages of exposition and discussion that were often deleted by later writers (Winstead 7). Along with this shift in focus came fluctuations in the attention paid to saints' lives as a whole. In general, the stories of saints continued to surge in popularity for several centuries, dropping off during the Renaissance and reviving again in the early modern period. Towards the later medieval period, the passions are often largely focused on bloody scenes of martyrdom, with little attention and time spent on the saints' holy works or life.

For example, Jacob de Voragine's thirteenth-century version of Cecilia's story in the *Legenda Aurea* "plays up the element of conflict in the legend, drastically cutting the scenes in which converts are instructed but retaining a substantial amount of confrontational dialogue from Cecilia's trial and even more from the debate between the persecutor and Cecilia's principal converts" (Reames 493). He also dramatizes Cecilia's holiness by making her even more impervious to pain. Chaucer's later Middle English translation draws on Voragine's (among others), and while it emphasizes some of the traditional aspects of the saint, its entire second half is close to an outline of the *Passio*—shorter and less involved. These are only a few examples, but they do give some indication of the reading audience's shift in attention.

The Story of St. Cecilia

An overview of the Passio

Cecilia's *Passio* is typical fare for hagiography, including such "standard ingredients" as the refusal to participate in pagan rituals, debating the antagonist, affirming the fundamental tenets of Christianity, destroying or denouncing idols, performing miracles, and enduring excruciating torments (Winstead 5). Cecilia's main accomplishments within her story seem to be that she preserves her chastity, defends her theology against the persecuting authorities, and converts hundreds of people before her execution, which is surrounded by miracles.

The story begins with a preface in defense of hagiography, detailing the theological usefulness of saints' lives as demonstrations of God's power and describing martyrdom as a fulfillment of God's victory over Satan and death. This typical approach places the story within a historical context and tradition; the legend itself is defended as a sort of witness, testifying to God's presence in the world through the actions of the saints.

Following this general overview, the first half of the text's main body deals with the three principal characters: Cecilia; her husband, Valerian; and his brother, Tyburtius. Cecilia is introduced as a young, pious virgin of noble birth who has dedicated her life and body to God. This also is typical of the genre (see discussion of themes, below, for Cecilia's significance as a young, noble virgin). Cecilia reveals her previous commitment to her husband on their wedding night, converting him to a life of Christian chastity and belief by describing the angel of God that accompanies her.

If he dare lay a hand on her, she threatens Valerian, “you, most beloved, will lose by death the blossom of your youth” (*Passio* 4). Following his pilgrimage and baptism by Pope Urban I, as dictated by Cecilia, Valerian brings his brother, Tyburtius, to Cecilia, whereupon he is converted as well. This is the longest section of the text, and includes much theological discussion, which gives the author of the *Passio* room to develop Cecilia as a theologian, and also to communicate these arguments to the audience for their own edification. These passages, especially, tend to be edited out in later versions of the legend based on this text, such as those of Ælfric, Jacob de Voragine, or Geoffrey Chaucer.

The second half concerns the martyrdom of Cecilia, Valerian, and Tyburtius. None of them goes down without a fight; they all give theologically sophisticated defenses of their faith to the prosecuting (and persecuting) governor, Almachius. They also manage to convert not only their supposed executioner, Maximus, but his guards as well. Valerian, Tyburtius, and Maximus are then martyred, followed by Cecilia. She is supposed to be roasted in the bath at her house. When God protects her from the heat, the executioner is sent to behead her. Allowed only three strokes, however, he fails to separate her head from her body. Cecilia remains alive for three days, during which time she donates her house to her followers, after which her body is taken to be buried with other leaders in the church, described as her equals.¹

¹ See *Mourning Into Joy* for the connection between these events and the locations of Cecilia’s cult in Trastevere and at Callistus.

Themes

1. Virginit

According to Karen Winstead in *Virgin Martyrs: Legends of Sainthood in Late Medieval England*, “by the sixth century, the Christian heroine was almost invariably a virgin; what is more, she was almost always a pretty, young virgin with a distinguished pedigree” (9). This is consistent with the view that legends are products of their period (*Saints and Their Cults* 37-8); at the same time Cecilia’s cult originated, there also arose a cult surrounding virgin martyrs in general. Influenced in part by devotion to Mary the mother of Jesus, Christians associated virginity with purity and holiness. In his articles and in *Mourning Into Joy*, Connolly explores the connections between virginity, holiness, and music as a precedent for Cecilia’s later association with music.

Although she also secretly consecrated herself to God at an early age, St. Cecilia loved the man who sought to marry her, and she married him. The story of St. Cecilia thus banishes attempts to set up a false opposition between consecrated virginity and human love. Her spousal bond with Valerian became the basis of her spousal response to Christ, establishing virginity as inclusive of many relationships. (*Women in Chant* 14, 15)

Cecilia’s story is especially interesting for its portrayal of the coexistence of virginity and love—both divine and human—as complementary, rather than mutually exclusive.

2. Nobility

Cecilia is also typical in exemplifying the culturally important value of social status. The author emphasizes Cecilia's nobility several times within the text. A particularly apt example of the subtlety with which the theme is incorporated is the use of the word *clarissima* to introduce Cecilia. Literally translated as "most bright" or "most famous," during the Late Antique period (the third to the fifth century) it also became a title of senatorial rank: "To become or remain a member of the senatorial aristocracy with the rank of *clarissimus*, it was necessary to possess a certain amount of income" (Salzman 22). So common a claim to status was the title, which indicated an ordinary rank of senator, that in inscriptions it was often abbreviated, "V.C." (*vir clarissimus*). Cecilia's ownership of property also allows her to model generosity; although the *Passio* indicates that she donated her house to her followers, popular tradition held that the church at Trastevere was in fact her house, given to the church. But the aristocracy of virgin-martyrs, a common feature of legends such as Cecilia's, represented a nobility of soul as well as position.

3. Theological authority

Throughout the text, and based in some part on the above virtues, Cecilia is portrayed as possessing a spiritual knowledge and wisdom greater than those around her. When she is called before Almachius to recant, the people grieve that a girl *tam elegans...et tam sapiens et nobilis* ("so elegant...so wise and noble" [section 25]) should be killed. These qualities grant her influence, as well as the authority to declare Almachius' power *quasi uter uento repletus* ("just as a bag full of wind" [section 29]) and to criticize him thus:

Nescio ubi tu oculos amiseris : Nam quos tu deos dicis : ego et omnes qui oculos sanos habent saxa uidemus esse : et ærumentum : et plumbum. (“I do not know where you might have lost your eyes, for what you say are gods, I and all who have sound eyes see to be stones, and bronze, and lead” [section 30]). Within the text her criticism is portrayed as justified, indicating not pride but a firm spiritual standing: *Cecilia dixit : de his mecum loquere : quia tirocinii tempus fratrem tuum tibi prohibet dare responsum.* (“Cecilia said: ‘Speak with me about these, because his season of inexperience hinders your brother from giving to you a response’” [section 13]).

Imagery

The use of imagery in Cecilia’s *Passio* brings with it a sense of the wonder of the supernatural; Delehay described it as being “‘illuminated by mystical glimmerings’” (Delehay, *Etude* 78, as translated in Connolly, *Mourning* 59, 289n75).

1. Light

The example of *clarissima* proves useful here, as it carries with it the sense of “most bright” or, as I have chosen to translate it, “illustrious” (see also below, *Translation in Practice*). Connolly emphasizes this aspect of the legend, citing it as evidence of the Christian cult’s interaction with the pagan tradition of *Bona Dea Oclata*, “the good goddess with the eye,” with its emphasis on sight and the healing of blindness.

Cecilia’s name may also have some relevance here, with its similarity to the Latin *caecitas*, or “blindness.” There are references throughout the legend to eyes and clarity of sight—physical eyes are compared to spiritual sight (section 17), and Maximus is offered an opening of his eyes to see the glory of martyrdom (section 23). Cecilia tells the prefect Almachius that he has “lost his eyes” because he believes

stone idols to be deities (section 30), and Jesus is mentioned as a healer of physical afflictions including blindness (section 13). Clear sight, then, has a spiritual source; it is only after they have converted that Valerian, Tyburtius, and others are able to see the angel and the heavenly crowns of flowers, and it is only after their conversations with Cecilia and her converts that more people are able to see the wisdom of what at first looks like the foolish path of martyrdom.

2. The crown of flowers

Both the figure and the scent of flowers had long associations with religious tradition (some of it dating back even to pagan times). In particular, heaven was associated with flowers, and therefore, “that which comes from heaven was asserted to share in the pleasantness of the odor of bliss, and also those who were in harmony with God were marked by the absence of unpleasant odors even in death” (Davidson, “Heaven’s Fragrance” 110). The crowns that Cecilia and Valerian receive are indeed so associated with heaven and the spiritual realm that no one who is not saved is able to perceive them. Cecilia participates in the latter part of this tradition as well.

According to Maderno, sculptor of the famous statue of Cecilia at Trastevere, when her tomb was opened the body lay as he later portrayed it (see Figure 1), uncorrupted and sweet-smelling.



Figure 1. The Martyrdom of Saint Cecilia, by Stefano Maderno, at Santa Cecilia in Trastevere. Rome, 1599.

Roses and lilies, from which the crowns given to Cecilia and Valerian are made, are imbued with particular significance as well. Even before the advent of Christianity, the rose had been used to symbolize feminine beauty and love: “In classical legend it had been said that the rose first blossomed when Venus rose from the waves or that it had sprung from the blood of Adonis....In the early Christian tradition the rose became the symbol of the blood of martyrs or of Christ Himself” (Woolf 288). Later in Christian tradition, the rose became explicitly associated with Mary—virgin, mother, bride—and it was out of this connection that the idea of the rosary¹ developed. The rose, then, is associated with both love and martyrdom, Christ and Mary, death and immortality. The lily, on the other hand, is a symbol of heraldry and of virginity, “as in St Bernard’s exclamation: ‘O Mary, thou art the violet of humility, the lily of purity, the rose of love’” (Wilkins 110). The crowns’ invisibility to Tyburtius before his conversion reinforces both the flowers’ heavenly origin, and their representation of the mysteries of heaven, which the unsaved cannot comprehend. The flowers, then, are appropriately chosen to reflect the values and tensions of Cecilia’s story.

3. The phoenix

The phoenix, best-known for its asexual reproduction through death by flame and consequent rebirth from the ashes, also has associations with the sun and light.

According to van den Broek, within the Christian tradition it also serves as a harbinger of day and, symbolically, of Christ’s resurrection and return. Although the

¹ A string of beads used for counting prayers—especially the Roman Catholic rosary, a type of worship.

phoenix has not been one of the major images associated with Cecilia, connections within the text support its symbolic significance within the story. The phoenix is explicitly mentioned in section 22, in which the body perishes *ut in puluerem reductum sicut phoenix futuri luminis aspectu resurgat* (“so that having been reduced to dust, it may rise again with the appearance of the coming light just as a phoenix does”). In section 24, she also has a phoenix carved on Maximus’s tomb. Cecilia, with her preaching that converts hundreds, is herself shown as one who

heralds the approaching ‘day of the Lord.’ The *Passio* infers that in this she resembles the phoenix, the mythical bird of resurrection that heralds the light of Christ....Since, in early Christian art, the phoenix became associated with the proclamation of the gospel, the *Passio*, the earliest document to crystallize the meaning of Cecilia for European culture, draws a powerful connection between singing, mystical knowledge, and Cecilia’s keeping the gospel in her heart. (*Mourning* 71)

The phoenix was also associated with virginity. As van den Broek argues, among other pieces of evidence, “In the apse of S. Agnese fuori le Mura in Rome, the bird occurs in a medallion on the robe of St. Agnes. This saint...has become the model of the Roman virgins, as shown, for instance, by several liturgical texts” (van den Broek 388). Again, the phoenix is associated with virginity through asexuality or bisexuality, “in connection with the idea of the true, perfect human being in whom the male and the female elements have recovered their original unity” (van den Broek 389). This idea fits with both Edenic and Platonic views of wholeness, and, again, we see a model here for Cecilia’s capacity to engage in loving relationship with God and her husband while still remaining a virgin.

Translation in Theory

Translation is negotiation and compromise. In the case of Cecilia's *Passio*, because the goal of this translation is a scholarly yet accessible English version of her story, and because its intended audience is those who are interested in either Latin or hagiography, I have left my translation fairly literal. I found that the best way to proceed was to begin with a quite literal rendition and return to the text a second time with a general sense of the legend's progression and style; this helped me to keep my own various iterations consistent, and also provided me with a base from which to build stylistic smoothness in the English version. I have, however, erred on the side of "foreignization" in leaving Cecilia a native of an alien culture; so unfamiliar to most of us are her story and its purpose that I did not wish to cloud the distance by cloaking her in words that seemed to bring her closer to our own lives than she in fact is. It is important not to forget this distance, even while reading the text as a story. In fact, Cecilia's story in its original function, read and recited in Latin, was most likely a scholarly and religious resource rather than a piece of popular entertainment.

Hopefully, then, we can draw some slight correlation between ancient audiences' understanding of Cecilia as a role model at a distance from them in her holy accomplishments, and our own perceptions of this legend, separated from us not only by time and space, but also outlook. We may not look to her story, as past audiences did, for direct confirmation of God's power at work in the world through miraculous events and mass conversions, but we can approximate some measure of this reading by going to other texts and historical accounts of how hagiography was used.

Translation in Practice

The following is an illustration of the translation process, with a short excerpted passage and some of the concerns and decisions regarding its translation:

The Text

Huius uocem audiens Cecilia uirgo
clarissima absconditum semper
euangelium Christi gerebat in pectore
et non diebus non noctibus a colloquiis
diuinis : et oratione cessabat.

hæc Valerianum quendam iuuenem
habebat sponsum : Qui in amorem uirginis
urgens animum :

diem constituit nuptiarum. Cecilia uero
subtus carnem cilicio erat induta : desuper
auratis vestibus tegebatur...

uenit dies : in quo thalamus collocatus est
: et *cantantibus organis illa in corde suo*
solī domino decantabat dicens :

The Translation

Hearing the call of Christ, the *illustrious* virgin
Cecilia constantly carried the gospel of Christ
concealed in her heart,
and ceased neither day nor night from divine
discussions and prayer.

This maiden had a certain youth, Valerian, as a
fiancée, who, urging his spirit/mind/heart toward
love of her,

set the day of the marriage. In truth, Cecilia
wore a hair shirt near her skin, under her clothes;
above this, she was dressed in golden
garments...

The day that was settled on for the marriage
came, and *she sang with the celebrating*
organs, calling in her heart to the Lord alone.

In this short passage, there are several significant or tricky passages that I have italicized. First, the word “clarissima.” As mentioned above, the literal translation, or semantic equivalent, would be “most bright” or “most famous.” There is an additional layer of contextual consideration, however; the aristocracy of virgin-martyrs came to be a standard feature proving their nobility of soul as well as position, and Cecilia was portrayed as a proper leading lady, using contemporary values—to the 6th century, at least. In addition, “clarissima” is a titular term (see above, *Nobility*). How, then, to translate it? I have tried to choose an option with the best connotative equivalence; my word of choice, “illustrious,” carries implications of brightness as well as holiness, prestige, and even light; it is also a word we associate with formality and titles, and thus the best fit for the Latin term.

Second, in one of the most controversial aspects of Cecilia’s story, her association with music is based entirely on the passage, *cantantibus organis illa in corde suo soli domino decantabat dicens* (“with celebrating organs the maiden was singing, calling to the Lord alone in her own heart”). The text here is grammatically ambiguous; the passage can be translated to mean either that Cecilia is singing in her heart (therefore, silently), or singing along with the wedding instruments and calling to God silently. The question is more important than it might seem at first. Within the larger tradition of the *Passio*, some people have interpreted the passage to mean that Cecilia was singing “in her heart” as opposed to the outward, worldly music of the wedding organs. This is the interpretation that became accepted and led to her association with music and organs, as shown in later depictions of the saint (compare figures 2 and 3).

This interpretation may have been supported by the omission of the words *in corde suo* when Cecilia’s legend was read at Vespers and Lauds (Connolly, “Legend I”

4); many scholars now attribute her association with music to this omission and a consequent misunderstanding of the passage. Recently, however, other scholarship has suggested that Cecilia's position as a virgin in the church may have been enough to associate her with music, and that only later did she become associated with actual singing and playing (see *Mourning Into Joy* for the full description of this argument). These are only a few of the difficulties of translation, but they help to illustrate some of the more technical considerations in translating. Cecilia's is a story with a history of its own, and it is only in understanding the history and context of this journey through time that we can fully understand the significance of what the authors and preservers of this work were trying to say. As I have worked with this text, I've tried to find a balance between informing the audience of these factors and creating a work that can be read, and perhaps even enjoyed, as a narrative.



Figure 2. The earliest known depiction of St. Cecilia, from the Archbishop's Chapel. Ravenna, c. 500.



Figure 3. Wedding of St. Cecilia. The *Beaupre Antiphonary*, Vol.II. Flanders, 1290.

V. Passio Sanctae Cæcilie

Mombritius' page numbers are marked by title bars; the section divisions of Delehaye's edition (also used for reference within the translation and introduction) are indicated by bold-faced Arabic numbers within the text itself. Symbols are reproduced as they appear in the Solesmes text of Mombritius, and are as follows:

| Incorrect division of word in Mombritius

|#| Page division in Mombritius

† Incorrect/nonexistent form or word in Mombritius

—Solesmes Page #—

#. Delehaye section number

—Solesmes Page 1—

1. Humanas laudes et mortalium infulas uidimus¹ aut æræ² inciso conscriptas : aut auro radiantibus litteris ad posteritatis memoriam commendatas. Et ista attendens : miror quare non erubescimus militum Christi uictorias silentio tegere : et non ad laudem Imperatoris eorum quo pacto pugnaverint contra hostes et uicerint scedulis saltem uilibus tradere : et ad incitandos animos bellatorum diligentius³ explicare. Multa bona talium narrationum scripta coniectant.⁴

1. We see human glories and mortal signs of rank⁵ committed to writing either by inscription in bronze or by letters shining with gold, entrusted to the memory of posterity. And attending closely to those words, I am amazed at how we do not blush for shame that we obscure the victories of Christ's soldiers with silence; and do not relate the agreement under which they fought against the enemy for the glory of their commander, and conquered them with their humble proclamations in all events; and do not more painstakingly set this forth to inspire the spirits of the warriors. These words, once written of such stories, gather together many good things.

¹ Correct form in Del.—*videmus*.

² Perhaps an over-correction of *ære*; as time passed, “æ” was sometimes simplified to simply “e,” and this might be a former scribe's inaccurate attempt to restore the word.

³ Correct form in Del.—*diligentius*.

⁴ Del. *convectant*.

⁵ Secular accomplishments, probably Roman.

*Laus dei est : cum ista leguntur memoria
sanctorum excolitur : ædificatio mentibus
traditur : honor martyribus exhibetur .
hinc infidelibus nascitur mæror : incredulis
liuor : indisciplinatis angustia : et sanctis
omnibus† cum Christo gaudentibus gloria.*

The glory is God's: he is honored by the history of the saints when those things are read; the house¹ is delivered to others' minds;² respect is shown to the martyrs. From this reading springs grief for the unfaithful, spite³ for the unbelieving, anxiety for the undisciplined, and glory for all the saints rejoicing with Christ.

*Solus diabolus ingemiscit : qui uidet
pugnam suam eo usque armis cælestibus
debellatam : ut ex ipsa pugna ille melius
uictor extiterit : qui putatus est uictus.
Denique cogitabat⁴ se tunc hostis sanctos
dei occidendo uincere. illi autem melius
occisi uincebant : dum accusati non
escusabant : interrogati illico
confitebantur : damnati gratiam
referebant. Sic denique legimus antiquas
domini uictorias celebratas : quando dixit
inimicus: Persequar et comprehendam :
partibor spolia replebo animam meam.
Interficiam gladio : dominabitur manus
mea. Sed extendit deus dexteram suam : et
deuorauit eos terra : et | populum suum
sanguinis sui precio liberauit.*

Satan alone groans—he who sees that his own battle was subdued with heavenly arms, up to the point that from that very battle the victor has rightly arisen—Satan who, reckoned, has been defeated. In fact, at that time he thought he was conquering his enemies, God's saints, by slaying them. Those who were killed, however, kept conquering him all the more: while impugned, they did not make excuses; questioned, they confessed on the spot; found guilty, they returned kindness. Thus finally we read the time-honored celebrated victories of the Lord, when the enemy spoke: “I will hunt you down and catch you. I will divide the spoils, I will renew my life. I will destroy you with the sword—my hand will dominate.” But God stretched out his own

¹ The meaning here seems to be metaphorical; perhaps a reference to the Ciceronian idea of a “house of memory”—one remembers by building a “house” and populating it with people and things.

Ædificatio is also the ancestor of the English word “edification,” one meaning of which is a building up through instruction. Cf. Romans 14:19 NKJV, “Therefore let us pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which one may edify another.” Vulgate: “itaque quae pacis sunt sectemur et quae aedificationis sunt in invicem.” Cf. also 1 Corinthians 14:12 NKJV, “Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual *gifts*, *let it be* for the edification of the church *that* you seek to excel.” Vulgate: “sic et vos quoniam aemulatores estis spirituum ad aedificationem ecclesiae quaerite ut abundetis.”

² That is, the stories are passed on and preserved.

³ May also be translated as “envy.”

⁴ Here and elsewhere in the text, I have translated the Latin imperfect tense as either present or past, for consistency of the tenses. There are also instances in which a special sense of the present, called the “historic present,” is used by Latin writers to emphasize the vividness of a story that has taken place in the past. Again, I have generally translated these instances using the perfect tense—sometimes present tense—to avoid awkwardness in the English.

right hand, and the earth consumed them, and he freed his people with the price of his own blood.¹

*2. denique nunc iacet sub sanctorum
podibus inimicus :et dans mugitum per
lunaticos et inerguminos clamat : et pœnas
incendii quas patitur indicat :atque se
flammarum atrocitate aduri commemorans
approbat : quod omnes sancti quos pro
Christi nomine persecutus est regnent .*

2. Finally now the enemy lies under the feet of the martyrs,² and giving a roar through the lunatics and prisoners, he cries out and declares the retribution of flame that he suffers. And keeping in mind that he himself burns with the fury of the flames, he confirms that all the martyrs whom he persecuted for Christ's name rule.

*In tantum denique non sunt mortui : ut
morituris donent uitam : tristibus gaudium
exhibeant languentibus præbeant
medicinam :atque ipsum humani generis
inimicum ex obsessis corporibus
proferentes in ipsum reuocant tormenta :
quae passi sunt. Et illi quidē†
momentaneum perpessi laborem :
æternam gloriam tenent : illum uero
nunquam finiendis ardentem incendiis
uident perpetuæ ignominiae mancipatum.
Clamat se ardere diabolus : ut tu intelligas
: quia bene refrigeratur sanctus. Clamat
saluatum se infirmus : ut tu intelligas
sanctos saluatori esse coniunctos.*

In this sense, then, they are not dead, so that they may grant life to those who will die. To the sorrowful they may present joy, to the languishing they may offer healing, and the saints, advancing on the Enemy of the human race by means of their besieged bodies, call the torments which they endured back upon him. And indeed those martyrs have endured to the full a transitory burden, but they hold eternal glory: truly, they see Satan glowing with fire which will never be done burning, enslaved to his everlasting disgrace. Satan cries out that he burns so that you may understand that the martyr is rightly made cool.³ The weak man proclaims himself saved, so that you may understand that the martyrs have been united to the savior.

*Sic enim ad patrem dixisse legimus
dominum nostrum saluatorem : Volo pater
ut ubi ego⁷ sum : et isti sint mecum.
Excitatur ergo per hæc animus ad medelam
: quando suæ iudicia⁸ ostendit.*

In fact we read that our Lord Savior has spoken to the father thus: "I wish, Father, that where I am, even there they may be with me."⁴ Now through these things the spirit is raised to health, since Christ reveals the sentence⁵ of

¹ Cf. I Corinthians 6:20, NKJV: "For you were bought at a price..." Vulgate: "empti enim estis pretio magno."

² Cf. Genesis 3:14,15, Psalm 110:1, Matt. 22:44, Mark 12:36, 1 Corinthians 15:25.

³ This description has particular significance given the method of Cecilia's martyrdom; see section 31.

⁴ Cf. Luke 23:43, NKJV: "And Jesus said to him, 'Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.'" Vulgate: "et dixit illi Iesus amen dico tibi hodie mecum eris in paradiso."

⁵ or "proof" (see below, 26n5).

⁷ The use of both "ego" and "sum" here reinforces the sense of Christ's identity as "I am." Cf. Exodus 3:14 NKJV, "And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And He said, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you,'" Vulgate: dixit Deus ad Mosen ego sum qui sum ait sic dices filiis Israhel qui est misit me ad vos."

⁸ Del. *iudicia*.

his own health.¹

Patulum enim sui pectoris præbet auditum : dum suæ salutis probamenta per eos : qui uere sunt copulati saluti cognoscit. Hanc fidem tenuerunt apostoli : quos e uestigio exercitus martyrium persecutus : uictorias suas ad regem uictoriosissimum reportarunt. ipse enim triumphali crucis suæ lauacro usque hodie antecedit omnium in se credentium mentes. Hunc secuti sunt priores apostoli : post apostolos martyres. Post martyres confessores.⁴ post confessores sacerdotes. post sacerdotes uirgines. post uirgines uiduæ. post uiduas continentes. omnibus patent Christi uestigia. Ideo denique omnibus clamat. Venite ad me omnes qui laboratis : et onerati estis : et ego uos requiescere faciam.

3. *Huius uocem audiens Cecilia uirgo clarissima⁷ absconditum semper euangelium Christi gerebat in pectore : et non diebus non noctibus a colloquiis diuinis : et oratione cessabat. hæc Valerianum quendam iuuenem habebat sponsum : Qui in amorem uirginis urgens animum : diem constituit nuptiarum. Cecilia*

Indeed the spirit presents the open listening of its own heart, while it learns the proofs of its own salvation through those who are truly united in salvation. The apostles whom others followed to martyrdom from the footprint of the host held this faith; they reported their victories to their king most victorious. Indeed, he himself is now always before the minds of all who believe in him, with the triumphant bath⁵ of his cross. The earlier apostles followed this man; after the apostles came the martyrs; after the martyrs, pious monks; after monks, priests; after priests, virgins; after virgins, widows; after widows, the chaste. The footsteps of Christ are open to all. For that reason, finally, he calls to all: “Come to me all you who labor, and you who have been burdened, and I will make you rest.”⁶

3. Hearing the call of Christ, the illustrious virgin Cecilia constantly carried the gospel of Christ concealed in her heart, and ceased neither day nor night from divine discussions and prayer. This maiden had a certain youth, Valerian, as a fiancée, who, urging⁹ his heart toward love of her, set the day of the marriage¹⁰. In truth, Cecilia wore a hair shirt

¹ I.e., he shows his followers how to be spiritually healthy in joining with him in his resurrection. Just as earlier we see that the martyrs are united to Christ through their suffering, akin to His, so here we see that they also participate in his resurrection—perhaps marking martyrdom as a sort of baptism. Cf. Mark 10:39, NKJV: “Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized,” Vulgate: “Iesus autem ait eis calicem quidem quem ego bibo bibetis et baptismum quo ego baptizor baptizabimini.” Cf. also Romans 6:8-9, NKJV: “Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him,” Vulgate: “si autem mortui sumus cum Christo credimus quia simul etiam vivemus cum Christo. scientes quod Christus surgens ex mortuis iam non moritur mors illi ultra non dominabitur.”

⁴ This word can also mean those who confess Christianity, or the lower clergy.

⁵ Again, a reference to the cleansing power of death by martyrdom, and the connection of this holy death with baptism and thus with resurrection. For the significance of this connection within the context of Cecilia’s story, see section 31 for Almachius’ attempt to martyr her in her baths.

⁶ Cf. Matt. 11:28, NKJV: “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Vulgate: “venite ad me omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis et ego reficiam vos.”

⁷ See the introduction for a more complete discussion of the significance of *clarissima*.

*uero subtus carnem cilicio erat induta¹ :
desuper auratis vestibis tegebatur.*

near her skin, under her clothes; above this,
she was dressed in golden garments.

—Solesmes Page 2—

*Parentum |1| enim tanta uis et sponsi circa
eam erat exestuans: ut non posset amorem
sui cordis ostendere :et quod solum
Christum diligeret euidentibus aperire.*

Indeed so great was the force of her parents
and bridegroom seething about her that she
was not able to show the love of her own
heart, and because she always chose Christ
alone, she could not disclose this love with
evident signs.

*Quid multa ? uenit dies : in quo thalamus
collocatus est : et cantantibus organis illa
in corde suo soli domino decantabat dicens
: Fiat cor meum et corpus meum
immaculatum : ut non confundar : et
biduanis ac triduanis ieiuniis orans
commendabat domino : quod
timebat. Inuitabat angelos precibus :
lachrymis interpellabat apostolos : et
sancta omnia Christo famulantia agmina
orabat : ut suis etiam deprecationibus
adiuuarent suam commendantem domino
pudicitiam.*

Why should I say more?⁴ The day that was
settled on for the marriage came, and she
sang with the celebrating organs, calling in
her heart to the Lord alone:⁵ “Let my heart
and my body be made spotless,⁶ that I may
not be confounded.” And with two-and-three-
day fasts, praying, she entrusted to the Lord
that of which she was afraid. She summoned
angels with her prayers; with her tears she
disturbed the apostles; and entreated all the
sacred processions attending on Christ that
even now, while she was entrusting her
chastity to the Lord with her supplications,
they would encourage her.

⁹ The marriage would have been arranged, not made for love.

¹⁰ Valerian’s character is more active here than in, say, Ælfric’s *Lives of Saints*, which doesn’t mention his participation in the wedding planning.

¹ Pluperfect passive; the usual order of the verb components is here reversed.

⁴ Literally, “What many things?”

⁵ See the introduction for a more complete discussion of the significance of this passage to tradition of St. Cecilia and her association with music.

⁶ Cf. NKJV Psalm 51:10: “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”
Vulgate Psalm 50:12: “cor mundum crea mihi Deus et spiritum stabilem renova in visceribus meis.”

4. *Sed cum hæc agerentur uenit uox¹ in qua suscepit una cum sponso suo cubiculi secreta silentia : Et ita eum alloquitur : O dulcissime atque amantissime iuuenis est mysterium : quod tibi confitear Si modo tu iuratus asseras tota te illud obseruantia custodire . Iurat Valerianus sponsus se illud nulla omnino prodere ratione : nulla necessitate detegere.*

Tunc illa ait : Angellum dei amatorem habeo : qui nimio zelo corpus meum custodit. Hic si uel leuiter senserit : quod tu polluto amore contingas me :statim contra te suum furorem exagitat : et amittes florem tuæ gratissimæ iuuentutis. Si autem cognouerit quod me sincero animo dilligas : et virginitatem meam integram illibatamque custodias : Ita quoque te dilliget⁴ sicut et me : et ostendet tibi⁵ gratiam suam.

5. *Tunc Valerianus nutu dei timore correptus ait : Si uis : ut uere credam sermonibus tuis : Ostende mihi ipsum angelum : Et si probauero quod uere angelus sit : faciam quod hortaris. Si autem uirum alium dilligis : et te et illum gladio feriam.*

4. But while these things were going on a voice² came, which she received together with her bridegroom within the private silences of the bedroom, and she addressed³ him thus: “O sweetest and most loving youth, there is a mystery which I may confide to you, but only if you, having given your word, should pledge to guard all things regarding it.” The bridegroom, Valerian, swore not to betray the secret by any reckoning; nor to reveal it under any dire circumstance.

Then Cecilia said, “I have an angel, a lover of God,⁶ who guards my body with extreme jealousy. This angel, if he senses that you lay hands on me even lightly in polluted love, immediately rouses his fury against you, and you will lose the blossom of your very pleasant youth. If, however, he should realize that you love me with a pure spirit and preserve my virginity untouched and intact, so too he would regard you as he does me, and show his favor to you.

5. Then Valerian, having been swept away by fear according to the will of God, said, “If you wish that I should truly believe your speeches, show me the angel himself. And if I accept that it truly is an angel, I will do what you urge. If, however, you love another man, I will slay both you and him with my sword.”

¹ Del. *nox*.

² Or possibly “night came”—see above, 30n4.

³ Lit. “if he will have sensed.”

⁴ Del. *diligat*.

⁵ Del. *tibi*.

⁶ Grammatically, this sentence could also be translated, “I have an angel of God as a lover.” Virgin saints’ stories often make comparisons between divine love, God’s love for his church and people as the bride of Christ [and the romantic love of husband and wife. (Cf., for example, Isaiah 62:5, NKJV: “For as a young man marries a virgin, / So shall your sons marry you; / And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, / So shall your God rejoice over you,” Vulgate: “habitabit enim iuuenis cum virgine et habitabunt in te filii tui et gaudebit sponsus super sponsam gaudebit super te Deus tuus.” Cf. also Rev. 21:2, 9).

*Tunc beata Cecilia dicit ei : Si consiliis
meis promittas¹ te acquiescere : et
permittas² te purificari fonte peremni³ : Et
credas unum deum esse in cælis uiuum et
uerum : poteris eum uidere.*

*Dicit ei Valerianus. Et quis est : qui me
purificet : ut ego dei angelum uideam.*

Then blessed Cecilia spoke thus to him: “If
you should promise to assent to my
counsels and allow yourself to be purified
with the everlasting fountain,⁴ and believe
the one God to be true and alive in heaven,
then you will be able to see the angel.”

Valerian said to her, “Who is he who would
purify me, so that I may see the angel of
God?”

¹ Del. *promittas*.

² Correct form in Del.—*permittas*.

³ Correct form in Del.—*perenni*.

⁴ Cf. John 4:13, 14: “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.’” Vulgate: “respondit Iesus et dixit ei omnis qui bibit ex aqua hac sitiet iterum qui autem biberit ex aqua quam ego dabo ei non sitiet in aeternum sed aqua quam dabo ei fiet in eo fons aquae salientis in vitam aeternam.”

Respondit ei Cecilia. Est senior qui nouit purificare homines : ut mereantur uidere angelum.

Dicit ei Valerianus : et ego ubi hunc senem requiram?

Respondit si Cecilia : Vade in tertium miliarium ab urbe Roma uia quæ Appia nuncupatur : illic inuenies paupe | res transeuntibus petentes auxilium. De his enim mihi semper cura fuit. et optime huius¹ mei secreti socii sunt. Hos tu cum uideris dabis eis benedictionem meam dicens : Cecilia me misit ad uos : ut ostendatis mihi sanctum Vrbani senem : quoniam ad ipsum habeo secreta mandata quæ perferam. Hunc tu dum uideris : indica ei omnia uerba mea. Et dum te purificauerit induet te uestibus nouis et candidis : cum quibus mox ut ingressus fueris : uidebis angelum sanctum etiam tui amatorem effectum : et omnia quæcumque ab eo poposceris : impetrabis.

6. Tunc Valerianus perrexit et secundum ea signa quæ acceperat inuenit sanctum Vrbani episcopum : qui iam bis confessor factus inter sepulcra martyrum latitabat. Cui cum dixisset omnia uerba Cecilie : gaudius est gaudio magno : et ponens genua sua in terra expandit manus suas ad cælum : et cum lachrymis dixit : Domine Iesu christe seminator casti consilii. suscipe seminum fructus : quos in Cecilia seminasti .

Domine Iesu christe pastor bone : Cecilia famula tua quasi ouis tibi. argumentosa²

Cecilia answered him, “He is an aged man who knows how to purify people, that they may be deserving to see the angel.”

Valerian said to her, “And where may I seek this old man?”

Cecilia answered him, “Go to the third milestone from the city of Rome on the way which is called Appia;³ there you will find the poor begging assistance from those passing by. Indeed I have always been concerned⁴ for these poor, and they are my best secret allies of this man. After you have seen these give them my blessing, saying, “Cecilia sent me to you, that you might reveal to me the holy old man Urban, for I have secret orders I will convey to him.” When you have seen this man, reveal all of my words to him. And provided that he has baptized⁵ you, he will clothe you with new white garments,⁶ with which soon, just as you have advanced, you will see the holy angel, made your friend also. And whatever you ask⁷ from him, you will obtain it all.”

6. Then Valerian proceeded, and according to the signs which he had received discovered the holy bishop Urban who, having been made a confessor⁸ twice already, was hiding among the graves of the martyrs. And after Valerian had spoken all Cecilia’s words to him, Urban rejoiced with great delight and, placing his knees on the ground, spread his hands to heaven, and spoke with tears: “Lord Jesus Christ, sower⁹ of chaste¹⁰ intention, sustain the fruits of the seeds which you sowed in Cecilia.

Lord Jesus Christ, good shepherd, your

¹This could refer either to Christ or to Urban, who is first mentioned soon after.

² “Most medieval Latin dictionaries define *argumentosa* in relation to *argumentum* – hence, ‘capable in argument,’ ‘well-stocked with material,’ ‘ingenious,’ ‘persuasive,’ ‘eloquent.’ Discussing the significance of the combination *apis argumentosa* as applied to Cecilia, Thomas H. Connolly points out the bee’s traditional associations with virginity (because it was believed to reproduce asexually), the bringing of light (because it produced the wax for candles), and prophecy, wisdom, and eloquence (because honey was thought to be related to manna, the ‘food of angels’ provided by God); see part I of Connolly’s long article, *Studi musicali* 7 (1978), esp. note 48” (Reames 507).

³ A Roman road built in 312 BCE to South Italy. Later, it became a pilgrim route to Rome and Jerusalem (Portella); Sant' Urbano Church still exists at its third milestone.

⁴ Lit., "concern has always been to me."

⁵ Lit. "purified," but "baptized" is supported by the Christian context and reference to baptism rituals.

⁶ Cf. Galatians 3:27, NKJV: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ," Vulgate: "quicumque enim in Christo baptizati estis Christum induistis." White garments are also associated with purity and perhaps heaven in the Bible: cf. Revelation 3:5, NKJV: "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels," Vulgate: "qui vicerit sic vestietur vestimentis albis et non delebo nomen eius de libro vitae et confitebor nomen eius coram Patre meo et coram angelis eius."

⁷ Lit., "will have asked."

⁸ "In this context *confessor* means one who has publicly proclaimed the Christian faith in the face of persecution, and probably endured torture, imprisonment or some other kind of punishment as a result" (Reames 519nl.48).

⁹ Cf. Matthew 13:1-30, the parables of the sower and the weeds—this is one way in which martyrdom follows God's plan to bring those who suffer closer to him. In the *Passio*, there follows a litany of ways in which Cecilia, the martyr, is related to Jesus through his different scriptural aspects.

¹⁰ In a sense, martyrdom itself is chastity, avoiding the contamination of the world. The importance of chastity and virginity is connected to the idea of spiritual purity, and has its source in the ultimate purity, Christ himself.

deseruit : Nam sponsum quem quasi leonem ferocem accepit :ad te quasi agnum mansuetissimum destinavit.Iste enim huc nisi crederet non uenisset. Aperi ergo domine cordis eius ianuam sermonibus tuis :ut te creatorem suum esse cognoscens renunciet diabolo et pompis eius. et idolis eius.

maidservant Cecilia is just as a sheep to you; she abandoned rhetoric, for the bridegroom she received who was as ferocious as a lion, she fixed to you as the tamest sheep.⁹ For that man, unless he believed, would not have come. Therefore, Lord, open the door of his heart with your words, that recognizing you to be his creator, he may reject the devil, and his pageantries, and his idols.”

7. hæc et his similia orante sancto Urbano episcopo subito ante faciem ipsorum apparuit senior indutus niueis uestibus tenens titulum in manibus aureis litteris scriptum :Quem uidens Valerianus nimio terrore correptus : cadensque in terram

7. While the holy bishop Urban prayed these and things similar to these, suddenly before their faces an old man¹⁰ appeared, clothed in snowy-white garments, holding a written tablet with golden letters in his hands. Seeing him, Valerian was seized with excessive

⁹ Recalling Jesus’ role as a shepherd, as well as Biblical imagery of ferocious animals becoming tame in the kingdom of God—cf. Isaiah 11:5-7, 65:24-25.

¹⁰ “Modern commentators have generally assumed that the mysterious old man is St. Paul, since the quotation comes from one of his epistles (Ephesians 4:5-6). However, some of the chant texts in the medieval office for Cecilia raise the possibility of a more figurative reading which links him with Cecilia’s angelic visitors and even takes him as a manifestation of Urbans’ own kinship with angels” (Reames 507).

quasi mortuus factus est : Lege inquit huius libri textum ut purificari merearis :et uidere angelum cuius tibi aspectum Cecilia uirgo deuotissima repromisit.

Tunc Valerianus respiciens in terra legere cœpit. Scriptura autem tituli hæc erat : Vnus deus. una fides. unum baptisma.unus deus et pater omnium : qui super omnes est : et per omnia. et in omnibus nobis. Cumque hæc intra se legisset : dicit ei senior :Credis ita esse an adhuc dubitas? Tunc Valerianus uoce magna clamabat dicens : Non est aliud quod uerius possit credi sub cælo.hæc ubi dixis |2| set Valerianus : ille senior ab oculis eorum ablatus est.Tunc sanctus Vrbanus baptizauit eum : et edocens eum omnem fidei regulam remisit eum ad Ceciliam diligenter instructum.

8. *Veniens igitur Valerianus indutus candidis uestimentis : Ceciliam in cubiculo orantem inuenit :et statnem iuxta eam angelum domini pennis fulgentibus alas habentem et flammeo aspectu radiantem : duas coronas ferentem manibus coruscantes rosis et liliis albescentes : e quibus unam dedit Cecilie et alteram Valeriano dicens :*

terror and fell² to the ground as if struck dead;³ the old man said, “Read the text of this book that you may deserve to be purified, and to see the angel whose vision the most faithful maiden Cecilia promised you.”

Then Valerian, gazing at the ground, began to read. The composition of the title, moreover, was this: “One God⁴, one faith, one baptism. One God and father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in us all.” And when he had read these words to himself, the old man said to him, “Do you believe it is so, or do you still doubt?” Then Valerian cried out with a great voice, saying, “Truly, there is not another thing which can be more rightly believed under heaven.” When Valerian had said this, that old man was carried from their sight. Then holy Urban baptized Valerian, and thoroughly teaching him all the rule of faith, he sent him back to Cecilia diligently prepared.

8. And so when Valerian came to her, clothed in white garments, he found Cecilia praying in the bedroom, and standing near her an angel of the Lord, having wings with gleaming feathers and shining with a fiery aspect, bearing two crowns in its hands. They were crowns glittering with roses and gleaming with lilies, one of which he gave Cecilia and the other to Valerian, saying,

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Istas coronas immaculato corde et mundo corpore custodite :quia de paradiso dei eas attuli ad uos :et hoc uobis signum erit : Nunquam marcidum aspectus sui adhibent florem : nunquam minuunt sui suauitatem

“Guard the crowns with a spotless heart and a clean body, for I brought them to you from God’s paradise,⁵ and this will be a sign to you: their appearances never present a withered blossom, never lose the sweetness of

² Lit., “falling,” but translated to avoid a dangling participle. It could also have been translated “fallen,” a coordinate participle.

³ Lit., “as if he became dead.”

⁴ Ephesians 4:5-6, Vulgate: “unus Dominus una fides unum baptisma unus Deus et Pater omnium qui super omnes et per omnia et in omnibus nobis.”

⁵ “The fragrance of flowers is implied in the depictions of heaven as a garden. Flowers would hence be used to represent a condition of heaven.” (Davidson 111). (For more on heaven as a paradisaical garden, see “The Garden of Paradise” pp.1-27 and “Heaven’s Fragrance”pp. 110-127 in *The Iconography of Heaven*, ed. Clifford Davidson).

*odoris :nec ab aliis uideri poterunt nisi ab
eis : quibus castitas placuerit :sicut et
uobis probata est. Et quia tu Valerianæ
consensisti consilio castitatis : misit me
Christus filius dei ad te : ut quam uolueris
petitionem insinues.*

their scent.² Nor will they be visible to others, except those who are the sort satisfied to be chaste.³ In this way chastity will be⁴ proved to you. And because you agreed with the plan of Valerian's chastity, Christ the son of God sent me to you, that you may suggest whatever petition you wish."⁵

*hæc ille audiens : adorant⁶ et dixit : Nihil
mihi dulcius in hac uita extitit : quam
unicus mei fratris affectus : nam impium
mihi est : ut me liberato germanum meum
In⁷ periculo perditionis aspiciam.hoc
solum omnibus petitionibus meis antepono
: et precor : ut fratrem meum Tyburtium :
sicut et me liberare dignetur : et faciat nos
ambos in sui nominis confessione
perfectos.*

Hearing these things, Valerian worshiped and said : "There is nothing sweeter to me in this life than the singular condition⁸ of my brother, for it seems to me wicked that, after being freed, I observe my brother in danger of destruction. I value this alone above all my petitions, and I beseech you that he may deign to free my brother Tyburtius even as he did me, and make us both completed through a confession of faith in his name."

*Audiens hæc angelus lætissimo uultu dixit
ad eum.Quoniam hoc petisti quod melius
est quod in te Christum implere delectat :
sicut te per famulam suam Ceciliam
lucratus est dominus : ita per te quoque
tuum lucrabitur fratrem : et cum eodem ad
martyrii palmam pertinges.*

Hearing these things, the angel said to him with a most cheerful countenance, "Because you asked for this, which is the better since it delights Christ to fulfill it for you—just as the Lord gained you through his handmaiden Cecilia, so likewise through you he will win your brother : and with the same act you will attain the palm of martyrdom."⁹

² The heavenly and spiritual realm's incorruptibility can spread to the physical—see introduction for a discussion of the crowns' meaning and of the tradition surrounding Cecilia and many other saints' bodies.

³ Lit., "the sort whom chastity has satisfied."

⁴ Lit., "it has been proved."

⁵ Lit., "you wished."

⁶ Correct form in Del.—*adoravit*.

⁷ Correct form in Del.—*in*.

⁸ or "affection."

⁹ Palms had significance both to the pagan world, as symbols of athletic victory, and to Christians as they recalled Palm Sunday (see below, 41n4).

9. *his itaque finitis sermonibus aspectus angeli migravit ad cælos. Et illis epulantibus in Christo atque in ædificatione sancta sermocinantibus : Tiburtius Valeriani frater aduenit : Et ingressus quasi ad cognatam suam osculatus est caput sancte Cecilie : et ait : Miror hoc tempore roseus¹ hic odor et liliorum unde respiret : Nam si tenerem ipsas rosas aut ipsa lilia in manibus : haberem² nec sic poterant tantæ mihi suauitatis odora in fundere. Confiteor uobis : ita sum reffectus : ut putem me totum subito renouatum.*

Dicit³ ei Valeri | anus : Odorem iam meruisti me interpellante suscipere : modo te credente promereberis et ipso roseo aspectu gaudere et intelligere : cuius in ipsis rosis sanguis florescit et liliis : cuius corpus albescit : Coronas enim habemus : quas⁴ tui oculi uidere non ualent : floreo colore et niueo candore uernantes.

Dicit ei Tiburtius : In somnis hæc audio : an in ueritate ista tu loqueris Valeriane?

9. And so, when these discussions were finished, the vision of the angel departed to heaven. And while they were feasting in Christ and discussing in divine edification, Tiburtius, the brother of Valerian, arrived. And after coming in as if to his own kinswoman, he kissed holy Cecilia's head, and said, "I am bewildered as to where this scent of roses and lilies comes from at this time, for if I were holding the roses or lilies themselves in my hands, I would not hold such a scent, nor could smells of such great sweetness pour out on me. I confess to you that I am thus restored so that I believe my whole self has been suddenly renewed."

Valerian said to him, "You already deserved to receive that fragrance, although you were interrupting me; provided that you believe, you will deserve to rejoice in that same rosy vision and to understand in whose roses and lilies blood blossoms and the body grows bright.⁵ Indeed, we have crowns which your eyes cannot see; we are flourishing⁶ with floral color and snowy whiteness."

Tiburtius said to him, "I hear these things in dreams—can it be, Valerian that what you say you speak in truth?"

¹ Literally "rosy scent."

² A corruption of the MS; the correct form is *haberem*.

³ Mombritius's text is internally inconsistent in its tenses during these speeches; for clarity, I've rendered all indications of response, question and speech as simple past tense in English.

⁴ Correct form in Del.—*quas*.

⁵ Cf. Matthew 17:2, NKJV: "and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light," Vulgate: "et transfiguratus est ante eos et resplenduit facies eius sicut sol vestimenta autem eius facta sunt alba sicut nix."

⁶ Literally "carry on or undergo the process proper to spring;" this brings to mind Easter and associates the martyrs with Jesus' resurrection even before they have died.

*Respondit Valerianus : In somnis nunc
usque uiximus : nam modo in ueritate
sumus : et fallacia in nobis nulla est : Dii
enim quos colimus ad omnem fidem
dæmonia comprobantur.*

Valerian answered, “Until now we lived in dreams, for only now are we in truth, and there is no deceit in us.³ Indeed, the gods whom we worship according to all faith are proven to be demons.”

Dicit Tyburtius unde hoc nosti?

Tiburtius asked, “From whom did you find this out?”

*Valerianus respondit angelus deo docuit
me : quem et tu uidere poteris si purificatus
fueris ab omni sorde idololorum†¹*

Valerian answered, “The angel from God showed me, whom you will also be able to see if you have been purified from all the idols’ filth.”

*.Dicit ei Tyburtius et si potest fieri ut
uideam angelum dei : quæ mora est
purificationis?*

Tyburtius said, “And if it can happen that I may see the angel of God, what is the delay for my purification?”⁴

*Respondit Valerianus : Nulla. hoc tantum
tu mihi sponde quod omnia idola deneges :
et credas unum deum esse in cælis.*

Valerian answered, “Nothing. Only promise me this : that you deny all idols, and believe there is one God in heaven.”

*Tyburtius respondit : Non intelligo qua
intentione ista prosequeris.*

Tyburtius answered, “I do not understand with what intention you pursue those things.”

10. *Cecilia dixit : Miror ut non intelligas
figuras fictiles : gypseas : ereas² : ligneas
atque lapideas : uel cuiuscumque metali
deos esse non posse : quas araneæ texunt :
et aues stercorant : in quorum capitibus
solent sibi ciconiæ nidos instruere : quos
damnaticii faciunt :*

10. Cecilia said, “I am amazed that you do not realize that the statues of clay, plaster, bronze, wood, marble, or of whatever metal, cannot be gods. Spiderwebs and bird excrement cover them; storks are accustomed to build nests in their heads, these statues which the condemned make.

¹ Correct form in Del.—*idolorum*.

² Del. *aereas*.

³ Cf. Psalm 32:2, NKJV: “Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, / And in whose spirit there is no deceit.” Vulgate Psalm 31:2, “*beatus homo cui non inputabit Dominus iniquitatem nec est in spiritu eius dolus.*”

⁴ Cf. Acts 8:36, NKJV: “And the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’” Vulgate: “*et ait eunuchus ecce aqua quid prohibet me baptizari?*”

Nam ad omne metallum pro criminibus damnatici mittuntur¹ Ergo a damnaticiis initium accipientes : quomodo possunt dii uel estimari : uel credi? Inter mortuum quoque et simulacrum nulla distantia est. Sicut enim mortuus omnia membra² habet : spiritum tamen nec uocem non potest habere nec sensum : sic et hæc uana numina omnia quidem habent membra : sed omnia fatua et caduca noscuntur et deteriora : quoniam homines mortui comprobantur : quia hominum membra dum uiuerent et oculis uiderunt : et audierunt auribus : et ambulauerunt pedibus : ore locuti sunt : manibus palpauerunt : et odorem naribus assumpserunt. Isti autem a morte cæperunt : et in morte perdurant : quia nunquam nec uixisse : nec posse uiuere comprobantur.

Tunc cum omni alacritate Tyburtius ait : Qui ita non credit : reus est.

Hec³ dicente Tyburtio |3| sancta Cecilia osculata est pectus eius et dixit : hodie te uere mecum fateor esse cognatum. Sicut enim amor dei fratrem tuum coniugem fecit : ita te mihi cognatum contemptus faciet idolorum., Vnde quia paratus es ad credendum : uade cum fratre tuo : ut purificationem accipias : per quam merearis angleicos⁴ uultus aspicere : et omnium tuarum⁵ ueniam inuenire culparum.

II. *Tunc dicit fratri suo Tyburtius : Obsecro te frater : ut dicas mihi : ad quem me ducturus es.*

Valerianus respondit : Ad magnum uirum Vrbantum nomine : in quo est aspectus angelicus : ueneranda canicies : sermo

(For sentenced criminals are sent to every mine for their crimes). Therefore, taking their beginnings from the damned, can they be either valued or trusted as gods? There is no difference between the dead and a statue. Indeed, in the same way a dead body has all its limbs, yet has neither breath nor a voice—nor can it have sense—just so, these vain divinities also have all their limbs, but are all known to be ridiculous, perishable and inferior, because dead men are confirmed to be men, since while the members were living the men saw with their eyes, and heard with their ears, and walked with their feet, spoke with their mouth, felt with their hands, and breathed scent with their noses. Those statues, however, began from death and continue in death, because they have never lived, nor are they proven able to live.”

Then Tyburtius said with all eagerness, “He who does not believe so is guilty.”

After Tyburtius said these things, holy Cecilia, having kissed his heart, also said, “Today I truly acknowledge you as kin with me. For just as the love of God made your brother my husband, so your contempt of idols will make you a kinsman to me. Whence go with your brother, since you have been prepared for believing, that you may receive purification, through which you may deserve to look on angelic countenances and to find pardon for all your sins⁶.”

11. Then Tyburtius said to his brother, “I entreat you, brother, that you tell me to whom you are about to lead me.”

Valerian answered, “To a great man by the name of Urban, in whom is an angelic countenance. His white hair demands respect;

¹ Correct form in Del.—*mittuntur*.

² Correct form in Del.—*membra*.

³ Del. *hæc*.

⁴ A corruption of the MS; the correct form is *angelicos*.

⁵ A corruption of the MS; the correct form is *tuarum*.

⁶ “esp. the fault of unchastity: Verg., Ov., Tac.” (Cassell’s 160).

uerus et sapientia conditus.

his speech is true and seasoned with wisdom.”

dicit ei Tyburtius : Tu illum Vrbanum dicis : quem Papam¹ suum christiani nominant. Hunc ego audio iam secundo damnatum : et iterum pro ipsa re : quendam nactus est latebram : ubi se fouendo dicitur prædicare. Iste si inuentus fuerit : sine dubio atrocibus dabitur flammis : et ut dici solet centenis : et nos simul cremabimur : si ad illum fuerimus inuenti : et dum quærimus diuinitatem in cælis latentem : incurremus furorem exurentem in terris.

Tyburtius said to him, “You mean that man Urban whom the Christians call their Pope? I hear already that this man, condemned a second time and again before the event, found a certain hiding place where it is rumored that he preaches through cherishing. That man, if discovered, will without a doubt be given to the fierce flames, even as he is in the habit of saying a hundred times that we will be burned if we have been found near him. And while we seek divinity concealed in heaven, we will meet with burning madness on earth.”

— Solesmes Page 4—

dicit ei Cecilia: Si ista esset una uita : et non . alia : iuste istam perdere timeremus. Si autem est uita longe hac melior : et quæ nunquam finiri potest : ut quid istam perdere timeamus? quando per huius perditionem ad illius acquisitionem attingimus.

Cecilia said to him,⁵ “If that life were the only one and none other existed, we would rightly be afraid to waste it. If, however, there is a life better by far than this one, which can never be finished, why should we be afraid to lose this life? For through the destruction of this life we reach the achievement of that one.”

Tyburtius respondit : Adhuc nunquam hoc audiui. Ergo est altera uita præter istam.

Tyburtius answered, “Until now I have never heard this—then there *is* another life besides this one.”⁶

Dicit ei Cecilia : Et hoe² quod in hoc mundo uiuitur uita est : In qua humores tumidant³ : dolores extenuant. ardores exiccant : aeres morbidant : escæ inflant : ieiunia macerant : ioci soluunt : tristitiæ consumunt : sollicitudo coarctat : securitas hebetat : diuiciæ iactant : paupertas deiicit : iuuentus extollit : senectus incuruat : frangit infirmitas : mæror consumit : et his omnibus mors furibunda succedit : et i a⁴

Cecilia said to him, “And this life which is lived in this world is a life in which fluids rise: sorrows diminish it; flames dry it out; winds bring illness; foods bloat; famines exhaust; jests scatter; sadnesses consume; anxiety constricts; comfort deadens; riches toss one about; poverty brings down; youth inflates; old age makes crooked; infirmity weakens; grief devours; and along with all these, furious death follows. And so life sets

¹ *Papa* originally meant “father,” but its capitalization here and the context of the church within which this MS was composed link the idea of a spiritual father to the position of Pope.

² Del. *hoc*.

³ Carnotensi —*humidant*.

⁴ Correct form in Del.—*ita*.

⁵ Here begins Cecilia’s first theological defense of the Christian faith.

⁶ Conveniently for the text, Tyburtius seems quite easily convinced. Those who convert seem persuaded by the mere assertion of theological points, especially from Cecilia—perhaps a sign that

*uniuersis gaudiis carnalibus finem ponit :
ut cum esse desierit : nec fuisse putetur.
Pro nihilo enim computatur iam omne
quod non est : illa autem uita quæ isti uitæ
succedit : aut perpetuis tribulationibus
datur iniustis : aut æternis gaudiis iustis
offertur.*

the limit to all carnal delights, so that when it has come to a close, it is considered not to have existed. Indeed, everything which does not exist now is already reckoned as nothing. The life which follows this life, however, is either given to everlasting tribulations for the unjust, or offered to the just with eternal rejoicing.”

*12. Respondit Tyburtius : Et quis ibi fuit :
et huc ueniens nobis potuit hoc indica | re :
ut merito possimus ista asserentibus
credere?*

12. Tyburtius answered, “And who was there, or who coming here could show this to us, that we may rightly be able trust those asserting these things?”

*Tunc beata Cecilia erigens se stetit : et
cum magna constantia dixit : Cæli
terræque maris : et hominum ac uolucrum
repentium pecudumque creator : ex
semetipso antequam ista omnia faceret
genuit filium : et protulit ex uirtute sua
spiritum sanctum. Filium : ut crearet
omnia : spiritum : ut uiuificaret uniuersa.
Omnia quæ facta sunt filius ex parte³
genitus condidit : uniuersa autem quæ
condita sunt ex patre procedens spiritus
sanctus animauit.*

Then blessed Cecilia, stirring herself, stood, and said with great firmness, “The creator of heaven and earth and of the sea, of men and flying creatures, of creeping things and of animals, before he created all these things from himself begot a son, and brought forth out of his power the Holy Spirit⁴—the son, so that he might create all things; the spirit, that it might bring all to life. The son, begotten of the father, founded all things which were made; the holy spirit, however, proceeding from the father, brought to life the whole which was founded.”

*Dicit ei Tyburtius : Certe unum deum esse
in cælis asseritis : quomodo nunc tres esse
testaris?*

Tyburtius said to her, “Certainly you claim that there is one God in heaven; how do you now testify that there are three?”

*Respondit Cecilia : Vnus deus est in
maiestate sua quem ita in sancta trinitate
diuidimus : ut uno homine dicimus esse
sapientiam unam quam sapientiam dicimus*

Cecilia answered, “There is one God in his majesty whom we distinguish thus in holy trinity, so that by one person we mean he is one wisdom; we mean he has that wisdom

they recognize spiritual authority even before they are fully converted (Tyburtius, for instance, has already been deemed virtuous enough to merit seeing the crowns of flowers). In addition, this is the first of many instances in which *ille* forms (translated “this”) are used to mean (the heavenly life, and forms of *iste* (“that”—in general, used to refer to things more distant in space or relation) to mean the current, earthly one. This might be an indication that the future life is in actually closer and more true than the earthly life, which “seems to be” more important but is not.

³ Correct form in Del.—*patre*.

⁴ Cf. The Nicene Creed: “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made...And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.”

habere ingenium memoriam et intellectum. Nam ingenio adinuenimus : quod non didicimus : memoria tenemus : quod docemur : intellectu aduertimus quidquid uel uidere nobis contigerit. uel audire : Quid modo facimus ? nunquid non ista tria una sapientia in homine possidet. Si ergo homo in una sapientia trium possidet nomen : quomodo non deus omnipotens in una deitate sua trinitatis obtineat maiestatem.

Tunc Tybrutius prostratus in terra cœpit clamare dicens : Non mihi uidetur humana lingua rationem reddere : sed puto quod angelus dei per os tuum loquatur.

Et cum multas gratias ageret : quod breuiter unum deum esse in tribus :†personis euidentius ostendisset : conuersus ad fratrem suum dixit : De deo uno mihi satisfactum esse confiteor : superest : ut ad inquisitionem meam ut cœperat sermo percurrat.

13. *Cecilia dixit : de his mecum loquere : quia tirocinii tempus fratrem tuum tibi prohibet dare responsum. Me autem quam ab ipsis cunnabulis² Christi sapientia docuit : ad quancumque³ causam quærere uolueris imparatam habere non poteris.*

which is innate, that which is a recollection, and that which is understanding. For by nature we discover what we did not learn; we hold in memory what we are taught; by the intellect we notice whatever we happen to see or hear. What do we do now? Is it possible that wisdom will not hold those three together in man's mind? ¹ Therefore, if a man will hold those three names together in wisdom, just so God, omnipotent in his deity alone, may hold fast the greatness of the trinity."

Then Tyburtius, prostrated on the earth, began to cry out, saying, "I do not think that human language delivers reason, but I believe what the angel of God utters through your mouth."

And after he gave great thanks because God had briefly revealed more clearly that he is one God in three persons, the converted one said to his brother, "For my part, I confess that I am satisfied about one God; it remains for the conversation as it had begun to run through toward my inquiry."

13. Cecilia said, "Speak with me about these things, for his season of inexperience hinders your brother from giving⁴ you an answer. I, however, am one whom Christ's wisdom taught from my earliest years; whatever cause you wished to strive toward, you will not be able to manage it if you are not prepared. "

¹ The three aforementioned types of wisdom or mind: memory, reason, and will (*memoria, intellectus, ingenium*).

² The correct form is *cunabulis*.

³ Correct form in Del.—*quancumque*.

⁴ Lit. "to give."

Dicit ei Tyburtius : hæc inquisiui : quis inde huc ueniens aliam : quam nobis indicatis uitam ostendit?

Tyburtius said to her, “I sought these things: who, coming here from there, shows us another life than that which you⁷ show us?”

Cecilia dixit : Vnigenitum filium suum de cælis pater per uirginem misit ad terras : qui stans super montem sanctum clamauit uoce magna dicens : Venite ad me omnes populi : Curritque ad eum omnis exus : omnis ætas : omnisque condicio : Tunc omnibus dixit : Pœnitentiam |4| agite per ignorantiam uestram : quia appropinquauit¹ regnum dei : quod auferat regnum hominum. Regnum autem suum deus uult participare credentibus in se : in quo eo² fit excelsior quisque : quo fuerit sanctior. Ibi³ peccatores æternis cruciatibus et sempiternis incendiis consumuntur : Iusti uero perpetuæ gloriæ splendorem accipiunt : et gaudiis quæ nullo fine poterunt concludi⁴ succedunt.

Cecilia said, “The father sent his only begotten son from heaven to earth by means of a virgin⁸—the God who, standing over the holy mountain, proclaimed with a great voice, saying, ‘Come to me, all peoples.’ And those of every gender, every age, and every condition ran to him. Then he said to all, ‘perform repentance for your ignorance, for the kingdom of god has come near, which sweeps away the kingdom of men. Moreover, God wishes to share his kingdom with those who believe in Him, by whom each who was the more holy becomes the more exalted. In his kingdom sinners are consumed with eternal tortures and everlasting flames; the just, however, receive the brilliance of perpetual glory, and they advance in joys which cannot be bounded by any limit.

Nolite itaque o filii hominum istius⁵ uitæ gaudia fugitiua quærere : ut illius uitæ gaudia æterna teneatis: quæ isti⁶ uitæ succedit. In ista enim uita paucis tempore uiuitur : in illa autem uiuitur in æternum. Audientes hæc increduli populi : omnes una uoce dixerunt : Quis ibi fuit et quis inde huc ueniens poterit dicere uera esse quæ asseris.

Therefore, O sons of men, do not seek the fleeting joys of this life, so that you may hold the eternal joys of that life which follows this one. Indeed, in this life there is life only within a short period; in that life, though, it survives into eternity.’ The unbelievers, listening to these things, all asked with one voice who there was and who, coming from there to here, would be able to speak the truths which you assert.

¹ Perfect tense in Latin, translated as present perfect in English.

² Lit. “in him by whom.”

³ Lit. “there.”

⁴ Lit. “joys which can be bounded by no limit.”

⁵ Lit “that.”

⁶ Lit “that.”

⁷ plural.

⁸ See introduction for a discussion of virginity as a theme in the *Passio Sanctae Caeciliae* and the hagiographic tradition.

Tunc filius dei dixit eis : Si ostendam uobis mortuos qui resurrexerunt : ignorantes quod mortui fuerint¹ : non creditis ueritati. Ite ergo nunc et quos inueneritis mortuos afferte : et resurgentes ipsi asserant nobis omnia uera esse quæ dixi.

Then the son of god spoke to them: ‘If I should show you the dead who rose, ignorant that they had died, you would not believe in the truth. Therefore go now and bring the dead whom you will³ come upon, and rising, they may assert to us all the things I said were true.’

Tunc populi attulerunt corpora mortuorum : Quæ ille quasi dormientia² sola uoce excitans : suscitabat : clamabatque omnibus dicens : Si uerbis meis non creditis : uel uirtutibus credite. Denique ne occasionis uestigium dubietati remaneret : cum populis ad sepulchra pergebat : Et illis etiam quatruiduanis ac fœtentibus mortuis uitam quam amiserant reuocabat. Transmeabat maria super undas ambulans pedibus siccis : Imperabat uentis : tempestates arcebat : atque sæuientes procellas ac turbines compescebat. Restituebat cæcis uisum : mancis reddebat dexteram : claudicantibus gressum :

Then the people brought the bodies of the dead, which, as Jesus was stirring them with only his voice, were waking up as if merely sleeping, and were proclaiming, speaking to all: ‘If you do not believe our words, believe our character if you like.’ Finally, lest a trace of an opportunity for doubt might remain, he proceeded with the people to the tombs;⁴ now too calling back the life which they had lost to those deceased, four days dead and reeking. He was crossing the oceans and walking with dry feet over the waves;⁵ he was commanding the winds, warding off storms, and holding back raging gales and whirlwinds;⁶ he was restoring sight to the blind, returning to the crippled their dexterity⁷, to the limping their step;

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¹ Perfect subjunctive, as if *mortui* were simply an adjective rather than a participle.

² Correct form in Del.—*dormientia*.

³ Lit. “will have.”

⁴ There are no direct correlation here to events in the Bible, but see Mark 5 for the story of the possessed man living in the tomb.

⁵ Cf. Matthew 14:25 NKJV, “Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.” Vulgate: “quarta autem uigilia noctis uenit ad eos ambulans supra mare”; cf. Exodus 14:22 NKJV, “So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry *ground*, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left,” Vulgate: “et ingressi sunt filii Israhel per medium maris sicci erat enim aqua quasi murus a dextra eorum et leva.”

⁶ Cf. Matthew 8:26-27 NKJV, “But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. So the men marveled, saying, “Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?””, Vulgate: “et dicit eis quid timidi estis modicæ fidei tunc surgens imperauit uentis et mari et facta est tranquillitas magna. porro homines mirati sunt dicentes qualis est hic quia et uenti et mare oboediunt ei;” cf. Mark 4:39, “Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm,” Vulgate: “et exurgens comminatus est vento et dixit mari tace obmutesce et cessauit uentus et facta est tranquillitas magna.”

⁷ Lit. “right hand.”

mutis uocem dabat : et surdis auditum. Paraliticos uerbo sanabat : leprosos uerbo inundabat : infirmos curabat : lunaticos instaurabat : et dæmones effugabat. Sed quia in hunc impiissimi zelo moti sunt : eo quod ipsos populi relinquentes eius uestigia sequerentur : sternentes¹ tamen uestimenta sua ante pedes eius. et clamantes : benedictus : qui uenit in nomine domini inflammati postea aduersus eum pharisæi : cuidam Pilato præsidii eum tradiderunt magum eum esse. et sceleratissimum asserentes : atque tumultuosa sedicione egerunt : ut eum crucifigeret :

14. Quod ille præuidens mun | dum proficere ad salutem : permisit se et² teneri : et illudi et uerberari. pariter et occidi. Ideo denique tentus est : qui peccatum non fecit : ut dimiteretur genus hominum : quod tenebatur uinctum in nodo peccati. Benedictus maledicebatur. ut nos a maledictionibus tolleret. Illidi se passus est : ut nos ab illusionem dæmonum quæ in hoc mundo uersatur auferret. Spineam in capite coronam accepit : ut sententium³ capitale quæ ex spinis peccatorum nobis debebatur eriperet.

he was giving voice to the speechless, and hearing to the deaf. Jesus was healing the paralyzed with a word—with a word he was immersing⁴ the lepers, curing the infirm, healing the insane, and driving out demons. But because the most wicked were provoked against him with jealousy, consequently the people, abandoning the wicked themselves and following his footsteps, were still scattering their clothes before his feet.⁵ And they were crying, “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!”⁶ Afterwards the pharisees were inflamed against him; they surrendered him to the governor, a certain Pilate, claiming he was a sorcerer and a most criminal man, and they accomplished with a tumultuous riot that Pilate crucified him.

14. Because Jesus,⁷ foreseeing that he would help the world toward salvation, allowed himself to be held, and mocked, and beaten, and likewise killed—for that reason, finally, he was arrested who committed no sin—that the race of men, which was being held bound in a knot of sin, would be released. He, the blessed, was cursed⁸ to lift us from the curses. He allowed himself to be struck to remove us from the illusion of the demons, which moves about in this world. He accepted the thorny crown on his head to take away the mortal sentence which was owed⁹ as a result of the thorns of sins.

¹ Present participle in Latin, translated as imperfect tense in English.

² Polysyndeton (repetition of conjunctions), emphasizing the passive infinitives as a list.

³ Correct form in Del.—*sententiam* (accusative singular vs. *sententium*, genitive plural).

⁴ Cf. 2 Kings 5.

⁵ The triumphal entry into Jerusalem; cf. Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-44; John 12:12-19.

⁶ Cf. Matt. 21:9; Vulgate: “benedictus qui venturus est in nomine Domini.”

⁷ Lit. “that man.”

⁸ Lit. “was being cursed.”

⁹ Lit. “was being owed.”

*Fel in escam suscepit : ut dulcem gustum
primi hominis unde mors mundum
inuaserat commutaret.*

*Aceto potatus est : ut acredinem qua
sanguis noster inferbuerat in se susciperet
:et ipse biberet passionis calicem : qui
nostris passionibus debebatur. Expoliatus
est : ut nuditatem parentum nostrorum
quam serpentis consilio factam doluerat :
niueo uestimentorum tegmine operiret. In
ligno suspensus est ut ligni
præuaricationem ligno suæ tolleret
passionis. Mortem quoque ad se uenire
permisit : ut eam aduersum se luctantem
prostrerneret : Et quæ per serpentem
regnum inuenerat : cum ipso serpente
prostrata fieret captiua per christum.*

*Denique cum uniuersa elementa creatorem
suum in cruce leuatum conspicerent terrore
nimio tremuerunt. Nam ex uno latere terra
mouebatur : ex alio templa findebantur et
saxa. Fugit dies. sol expauit : et fuscatus
est : et lugubrem totum præbuit mundum.
Luna pallidos sui luminis uultus⁷ :
sanguinea nube contextit. Stellæ sydereo⁸
radiantes aspectu omnes pariter
nigruerunt Dedit mugitum terra : et quasi
parturiens cæpit multos parere de
sepulchris : qui darent testimonium hoc :
quod descensus saluatoris ad inferos*

He accepted bitterness in his food to transform man's first sweet¹ tasting, whence death had invaded the world.²

He drank vinegar³ to accept into himself the sting from which our blood had boiled, and he himself drank the cup of suffering⁴ which was owed for our suffering. He was plundered to cover with his white robe of vestments our parents' nakedness, brought about by the counsel of the snake, at which he had felt pain. He was hung on a tree to lift the wood's transgression, on the wood of his own suffering.⁵ He allowed death to come, even to himself, to lay low that which was struggling against him. And death, which had come into the kingdom through the serpent, was itself laid low with the serpent,⁶ made captive through Christ.

Finally, when all the elements witnessed their¹¹ own creator lifted up on the cross, they shuddered with great terror. For on one side the earth was being shifted; on the other, temples and stones were being split. Daylight fled. The sun was frightened and darkened, and showed the world all gloomy; the moon concealed the pale face of its own light with a blood-red haze; the stars shining with a heavenly appearance all together grew dark; the earth gave a rumble. And just as if it were laboring, the earth began to bring forth many people from their graves—people who might

¹ A reference to the garden of Eden and Adam and Eve's eating of the forbidden fruit, describing the tempting taste of the forbidden fruit; perhaps also a reference to the Medieval idea of "peccatum felix" (the "lucky sin/mistake"), i.e. that Adam's fall from perfection was a good thing because it allowed Jesus to enact salvation, an even better outcome.

² Adam is often portrayed as the representation of humanity, the mirror image of Jesus that must be redeemed; cf. I Corinthians 15:21-22, NKJV: "For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." Vulgate: "quoniam enim per hominem mors et per hominem resurrectio mortuorum. et sicut in Adam omnes moriuntur ita et in Christo omnes vivificabuntur."

³ Cf. Matt. 27:48, Mark 15:36, John 19:29.

⁴ Cf. Mark 14:35-57, Luke 22:41-43, Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.

⁵ In the middle ages, it was believed that the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden also provided the wood used to build the cross.

⁶ Cf. 26n2 (Genesis 3:14,15) and 26n6 (Rom. 6:8-9).

⁷ Accusative plural; *vultus* is often poetically plural. A possible reference to the belief that the moon had two faces, one dark, one bright.

⁸ The scribes would have written it this way to sound more Greek and technical—the classical Latin form is *sidereo*.

*diabolo regnum eripuit : et moriendo mortem tenuit et edomuit : et ligauit et suorum subdidit pedibus amulorum
Inde est : quod pro nomine eius uerberati gaudemus et in persecutionibus gloriamur : quia uitæ nostræ isti caducæ et miseræ æterna uita succedit : illa quam dei filius resurgens a mortuis suis apostolis demonstrauit :*

Quibus uidentibus¹ : ascendit in cælum. Hoc si trium testium doceret assertio : sapientium mentes dubitare non poterant. At uero cum non solum duode |5| cim discipulis sed plus quam quingentis simul se demonstrare dignatus est: ambiguitatis nulla penitus uestigia dereliquit. Hi autem qui hæc in uniuersum mundum prædicare missi sunt signis et uirtutibus magnis sua dicta firmabant. Nam et omnes ægritudines in eius nomine curauerunt : Effugauerunt dæmonia : et uitam mortuis reddiderunt.

15. *Nihil puto tibi remansisse : quod quæras : nisi ut istam uitam animo et corde despicias : et illam uæhementius et fortius quæras. Qui enim filium dei crediderit : et præceptis eius adhæserit : dum deposuerit corpus : a morte non tangitur : sed a sanctis angelis in gremio suscipitur. et ad paradisi preducitur² regionem.*

give this testimony: that the descent of the savior to Hell snatched away a kingdom from the Devil, and that Jesus by perishing held death and conquered it, bound it and placed it under the feet of his own servants.⁴ It is because of this that we rejoice when beaten for his name, and glory in persecutions, since eternal life follows this, our unsteady and miserable life—that life which the son of God rising from the dead revealed to his apostles.

After they saw him, he ascended into heaven. If the statement of three witnesses might claim this, the minds of the wise could not doubt it. But surely Jesus left utterly no traces of ambiguity when he deigned to show himself not only to the twelve disciples, but to more than fifty people at the same time. Moreover, these men, who were sent to preach these things to the whole world,⁵ confirmed their words with signs and mighty works. For they even cured all sicknesses in his name; drove away demons; and restored life to the dead.

15. I believe that nothing remains for you to ask, except how you might despise this⁶ life with your heart and soul and seek that other life more fervently and boldly. Indeed, he who has believed the son of God and clung to his precepts, until he has put aside the body, is not touched by death but is received by the holy angels in God's lap⁷ and led to the place of paradise.

¹¹ Cf. Matt. 27:51, NKJV: "Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split," Vulgate: "et ecce velum templi scissum est in duas partes a summo usque deorsum et terra mota est et petrae scissae sunt."

¹ This is an ablative absolute involving a continuing relative—very rare.

² Correct form found in Del.—*perducitur*.

⁴ Cf. 26n2.

⁵ Cf. Matt. 28:19, NKJV: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," Vulgate: "euntes ergo docete omnes gentes baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti."

⁶ See above for note on "iste...ille" translated as "this...that."

⁷ Or "womb," or "bosom;" for feminine imagery of God in the Bible, cf. Num. 11:12, Deut. 32:11-12, Deut. 32:18, Ruth 2:12, Neh. 9:21, Isa. 31:5; Isa. 42:14, Isa. 46:3-4, Isa. 49:14-15, Isa. 66:9, Isa. 66:12-13, Hosea 11:1-4, Hosea 13:8, Psalm 17:8, Psalm 22:9-10a, 71:6; Mt. 23:37, Lk. 13:18-21, Lk. 13:34, Lk. 15:8-10, 36:7, 57:1, 91:1, 4.

*Inde est : quod ipsa mors cum diabolo agit
ut diuersis occupationibus hominum
obliget mentes : et uariis incautos
necessitatibus occupet : Et nunc de damno¹
formidare facit nunc de lucro inuitat : nunc
de sepulchro incitat : nunc de gula excitat :
et de uniuerso genere suasionis de ista sola
uita facit homines miseros cogitare : ut eos
exeuntes de corpore inueniat nudos : nihil
secum præter peccata portantes. hæc tibi
breuiter explicui : Sed quid tibi deesse
consideras : quære.*

Thence it is that death, who herself works with the Devil so that he may bind the minds of men to different activities, and capture the incautious with various bonds. So² at one moment³ he causes them to fear loss, the next, he summons avarice; at one he inspires death, at the next, excites the appetite; and from that entire type of persuasion he makes wretched men think only about this life, so that he comes upon them naked, passing from their body carrying nothing with them besides their sins. These things I have explained to you briefly. But ask whatever⁴ you think you lack.”

16. *Tunc Tyburtius pedibus eius prostratus : ingenti flætu et lachrymis dixit : Si de ista uita ulterius uel mente tractauero : in illa uita non inueniar. habeant stulti labentis temporis lucrum. ego qui usque hodie sine causa uixi : iam non sit sine causa quod uiuo*

16. Then Tyburtius, prostrated at her feet, said with great wailing and tears, “If I have gotten ahead⁶ in this life, or concerning the mind, I will not be found in that life. Let the foolish have the benefit of fleeting time. Therefore, may the ‘I’ who lived up to today without cause, no longer exist without a purpose for which I live.”⁷

: et his dictis ad fratrem suum conuersus ait : miserere mei frater carissime : et rumpe moras : quarum nexus non patior. Dillationes⁵ timeo : pondus ferre non possum. Obsecro te perduc me ad hominem dei : ut me purificans illius uitæ participem faciat.

And turning to his brother with these words, he said, “Pity me, brother dearest, and destroy the obstacles whose constraints I do not allow. I fear delays—I cannot bear the burden. I entreat you, guide me to the man of God so that he, purifying me, may make me a partaker of that life.”

¹ The correct form found in Del.; Momb.—*dampno*.

² Lit. “and;” translated to show that this is an elaboration on the previous idea.

³ Lit. “now,” but translated for a clearer sense of sequence in English.

⁴ Lit. “what thing.”

⁵ Correct form in Delehay—*dilationes*.

⁶ Lit. “managed further.”

⁷ Lit. “with respect to which I live.”

Tunc Valerianus perduxit fratrem suum ad Papam Vrbānum : Cui cum narrasset in uniuersa quæ fuerunt dicta uel facta : gratias referens deo : suscepit Tyburtium cum omni gaudio : et baptizans eum secum esse præcepit : quoadusque albas¹ deponeret : Quem perfectum doctrina sua per septem dies Christo militem consecrauit.

Then Valerian led his brother to Pope Urban, to whom he had related in their entirety the things which had been said or done, giving back the credit to God. After this, Pope Urban received Tyburtius with all joy and, baptizing him, he instructed Tyburtius to remain³ with him until he might lay down the garments which, completed, by his own teaching consecrated with passion rated the soldier to Christ over seven days.

denique gratiam consecutus est domini : ut angelus dei uideret quotidie² : et omnia quæ poposcisset a domino protinus consequeretur.

Finally, he attained the grace of the Lord, so that the angel of God was appearing to him daily, and all the things which he had asked from the Lord he immediately obtained.

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Verum quia multum est : ut omnia per ordinem prosequentes : quæ et quanta per eos dominus mirabilia fecerit conscribamus : ad gloriosas passiones eorum articulum reuocemus.

For the truth is great, so that pursuing all things through order we may write which and how many wonderful things the Lord made through them; we may recall the moment up to their glorious passions.⁴

17. Turgidus Almachius urbis præfectus sanctos dei fortiter laniabat : et inhumata corpora eorum iubebat derelinqui. Tiburtius uero et Valerianus ad hoc uocabant⁵ quotidie : ut pretiosas martyrum facerent sepulturas : eleemosynis⁶ et pietatibus insistentes.

17. Almachius the city prefect, inflamed, boldly pulled to pieces the holy ones of God, and ordered their unburied bodies to be abandoned.⁷ Truly, Tyburtius and Valerian called upon this man daily that they might make expensive burials of the martyrs, persevering in acts of mercy and tenderness.

¹ *alba, albae, f.*: full-length white garments with long sleeves and cinctures (belts) used in the Christian liturgy.

² For all instances of this word, the correct form is in Del.—*cotidie*.

³ Lit. “to be.”

⁴ Used here, as in the title of the work, in the sense of “sufferings.”

⁵ Del. *vacabant*, “were unoccupied.”

⁶ Correct form in Del.—*elemosynis*.

⁷ Within ancient pagan cultures, this was considered a great dishonor—the spirits of the dead were not thought to be able to rest until their bodies were properly buried.

Interea ut solitum est : bonos odio habent mali : et indicant uniuersa Almachio : quæ per eos dominus circa egentes ageret : uel quam studiose quos ille occidi iusserat sepelirent : tenti ab aparitoribus Almachio præsentantur : Quos Almachius his protinus aggressus est uerbis : Cum uos nobilitatis titulus clarissimos¹ fecerit nasci : cur per nescio quam superstitionem infelices uos et degeneres exhibetis?

Meanwhile, as is the habit, the evil hold the good with hatred, and they declared² to Almachius all those things the Lord conducted through Tyburtius and Valerian concerning the needy, or how eagerly they buried those whom Almachius had ordered killed. They were presented to Almachius, held by his officers. Almachius immediately attacked them³ with these words:⁴ “Seeing that you were nobly born,⁵ why do you show yourselves to be wretched and contemptible by I-don’t-know-what superstition?”

Nam facultates uestra uos audio per nescio quas uiles personas expendendo consumere : ac pro sceleribus suis punitos cum omni gloria tradere sepulturæ : ex quo datur intelligi : quod conscii uestri sunt quibus pro coniuratione honestas traditis sepulturas.

For I hear that you exhaust your resources by paying for I-don’t-know-what worthless characters, and hand them over with all glory to the grave, punished for their crimes—from which it is understood⁶ that your accomplices are those to whom you deliver distinguished burials for conspiracy.”

Respondens Tyhurtius†⁷ dixit Vtinam dignentur nos ut seruos suos computare : quorum tu estimas nos esse collegas : Qui contempserunt quod uidetur a se†: et non est : et inuenerunt illud quod uidetur non esse : et est.

Tyburtius, answering, said, “If only they would think it fit to count us as their servants—those whose associates you consider us.⁸ They are those who disdained what appeared to them,⁹ and is not, and found that which seems not to be, and is.”

¹ Referring to a formal status of law and prestige; cf. *viri clarissimi* in introduction.

² Lit. “declare.”

³ Lit. “whom Almachius immediately attacked...”—translated to preserve the fact that it is the subjects of the previous independent clause (Valerian and Tyburtius), not the officers, who are referred to.

⁴ There follows from this point an extended theological discussion between Tyburtius, Valerian, and Almachius—it constitutes a large part of the Passio, in which even much of the action that takes place is mentioned in dialogue rather than narrated.

⁵ Lit. “Seeing that the title of the nobility caused you to be born noble.”

⁶ Lit., “it is given to be understood.”

⁷ Correct form in Del.—Tiburtius.

⁸ Lit., “estimate us to be”—Almachius is comparing their value to that of the people he considers not even worthy to be buried; Tyburtius turns this estimation on its head.

⁹ Lit. “what is seen by them.”

Almachius praefectus dixit : Quid est : quod uidetur esse : et non est?

Tyburtius dixit : Omnia quæ in isto mundo sunt : quæ inuitant homines ad mortem perpetuam per læticiam temporalem.

Almachius¹ dixit : et quod non uidetur esse et est? Tyburtius dixit : Vita quæ futura iustis : et pœna quæ debetur iniustis : ex utroque latere uerum esse nouimus quod ueniant et infelici dissimulatione quod oculis cordis nostri scimus uidere oculis corporis nostri subducimus : ut contra conscientiam :† nostram quæ bona sunt malis sermonibus obumbremus : et quæ mala sunt bonis sermonibus adornemus. Almachius dixit : Non puto quod mente tua loquaris.

Tyburtius dixit : Quia animalis homo non percipit quæ sunt spiritus dei.

Spiritualis autem indicat†² omnia : ipse autem a nemine iudicatur.

18. *Tunc ridens praefectus iussit ammoueri Tyburtium : et applicari Valerianum cui et dixit : Quoniam non est sani capitis frater tuus : tu saltem poteris sapienter dare responsum.*

Dicit ei Valerianus : Auditus tuus errorem parit : quia uiam sermonis nostri non potes intueri.

The prefect Almachius asked, “What is that which seems to be and is not?”

Tyburtius said, “All those things in this world which entice men to everlasting death through temporal joy.”

“And what does not seem to be, and is?”

“The life to come for the just,³ and the punishment which is owed the unjust—we know the truth to be that they may come from either side and by unfortunate trickery; we disregard seeing with the eyes of our body because we know with the eyes of our heart, so that against our conscience we darken things which are good with evil rumors, and embellish things which are bad with noble speeches.”

“I do not believe what you speak⁴ from your mind.”

“That is because the living man does not perceive the things which are of the Spirit of God.⁵ The spiritual man, moreover, judges all things, but is himself judged by no one.”⁶

18. Then the prefect, ridiculing Tyburtius, ordered him to be taken away and placed near Valerian, to whom he also spoke: “Seeing that your brother is not of sound mind, you at least should be able to answer sensibly.”⁷

Valerian said to him, “Your listening begets error, because you cannot see the path of our speech.”

¹ Correct form in Del.—*Almachius*.

² Correct form in Del.—*iudicat*.

³ Lit. “the life which will happen.”

⁴ Lit. “that which you speak.”

⁵ Lit., “which are the spirit of God.”

⁶ Cf. 1 Cor. 2:15 NKJV “But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one”; Vulgate: “spiritualis autem iudicat omnia et ipse a nemine iudicatur.”

⁷ Lit. “will be able to give an answer sensibly.”

Præfectus dixit : Nullus sic errat : sicut uos erratis : qui relictis rebus necessariis et utilibus ineptum sectamini otium : respuentes gaudia : execrantes læticiam : atque contempnentes omne: quod uitæ blandimento concessum est. Illud tota mentis auiditate suscipitis : quod saluti contrarium inueniri potest et gaudiis inimicum.

The prefect said, “No one errs as do you who, having forsaken necessary and useful things,¹ continually pursue foolish peace, rejecting enjoyments, cursing happiness, and disdaining everything which was granted for the delight of life. You undertake that with a whole-hearted zeal of the mind—that which can be discovered the antithesis of health² and the enemy of joys.”

Valerianus ad hæc respondit : Iocantes et ridentes et uariis diuitiis affluentes uidi glatiali³ tempore transire per campos : in quibus campis stabant rustici pastinantes : et cum omni studio sarmenta frangentes : atque spinosa rosarum sarculo animose et cautissime componentes. Alii quoque taleas inserebant : alii radicitus noxia quæque truncabant : cunctaque ruris opera labore nimio excolentes. Tunc illi qui deliciis fruebantur et epulabantur⁴ : cæperunt laborantes irridere : ac dicere : Infelices et miseri istum superfluum laborem abicite : et nobiscum gaudentes deliciis uos et uoluptatibus exhibete.

Valerian responded to these things, “I saw that people, jeering and mocking and abounding with various riches, were crossing through the plains with slow time; in these⁵ plains peasants were standing, plowing and breaking brushwood with all eagerness, and also very carefully and energetically arranging prickly roses⁶ with a hoe. Some likewise were planting arbors; others were thoroughly pruning anything harmful, and improving all the works of the farm with their outstanding labor. Then those who were enjoying pleasures and feasting began to aggravate those laboring, and to say, ‘Cast away that unnecessary work, you who are unlucky and miserable, and show yourselves rejoicing in pleasures and delights with us.’⁷

¹ Ablative absolute; Lit., “necessary and useful things having been forsaken.”

² Dative case, Lit., “to health...to joys.”

³ From *glacialis*, -e, adj.: icy, frozen over.

⁴ Carnotensi 144—*epulabantur*.

⁵ Lit., “which.”

⁶ Lit., “the prickly [parts] of roses”—thorns.

⁷ Cf. the parable of the vineyard workers, Matthew 20.

Quare sicut insani duro labore deficientes. uitæ uestræ tempora tristissimis occupationibus fatigatis : Et hæc dicentes soluebantur super eos risu : et dabant plausum manibus multis increpationibus insultantes. Hæc illis agentibus : imbriferis atque algidis mensibus serena tempora successerunt. Et ecce floribus rosis uernantes campi : nemoribus pampineis ornabantur. et crispas botrionum sertas exhibebant, suo partu sarmenta : et uario genere taleæ arborum meliflua¹ poma gignebant : in quibus uidemus usque hodie abundare gratiam : et fructum pariter et decorem.

Why are you passing away in hard labor just like the insane? You exhaust the seasons of your life with the dreariest occupations.’ And saying these things they were loosened with laughter above the others, and were applauding with many hands, scoffing with rebukes. After those events happened, fair weather conditions followed with cold and rainy months, and behold: the fields were flourishing with rose blossoms; they were dressed with forests wrapped with vines, and the shoots were producing curly garlands of grapes for its own offspring, and from a different stock of trees they were begetting sweet apples, those arbors in which we see grace abound all the way until today, and in which we see fruit and beauty together.

Tunc gaudentibus illis qui putabantur uani : cæperunt flære omnes | qui uidebantur urbani : et qui in sua fuerant sapientia gloriati. in nimia pestilentia perierunt : et sera pœnitundine mugitum sui cordis gemitumque reddentes : sibi inuicem loquebantur : Isti sunt quos habuimus in derisum : laborem ipsorum putabamus obprobrium : uitam eorum execrabamur ut miseram : personam eorum iudicauimus indignam : et conuentum eorum sine honore. Isti autem inuenti sunt sapientes : et nos uani : quando nec ipsi laborauimus : nec ipsis laborantibus auxilium pro labore præstitimus. Quinimo eis in deliciis positi risimus : et credidimus dementes :

Then, while those thought² vain were rejoicing, all those who seemed urbane and who were boasting in their³ own wisdom began to weep. They died in an overwhelming plague, and with overdue repentance they returned, bellowing and groaning in their heart.⁴ They spoke to themselves in turn, saying, “Those are the ones whom we held in derision. We thought their labor was a disgrace; we cursed their life as miserable; we judged their character unworthy, and their assembly without honor. But they have been found wise, and we have been found vain, since we ourselves neither labored, nor did we supply assistance for those people suffering for labor. In fact we, placed among luxuries, ridiculed them and believed them crazy—

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quos nunc fulgentes aspicimus et florentes.

those whom we now see resplendent and flourishing.

19. *Ad hæc Præfectus ait : Sapienter te quidem uideo prosecutum : sed non ad*

19. To these things the Prefect said, “I see you

¹ Correct form in Del.—*melliflua*.

² Lit., “those who were believed to be vain.”

³ Ablative singular in reference to the group.

⁴ Again, singular to signify a collective sense, where the group is in agreement or feeling the same way.

*interrogationem meam uideris dedisse
responsum.*

have indeed given your description wisely,
but you do not seem to have responded to my
inquiry.”

*Valerianus dixit : Stultos nos et insipientes
esse dixisti : quod facultates nostras
egentibus damus : aduenas suscipimus :
uiduis opem ferimus. orphanis subuenimus
inhumata corpora tegimus : et honestas dei
martyribus tradimus sepulturas. Insipientes
nos esse et insanissimos iudicas : quod non
cum lætantibus lætamur : neque cum
uoluptuosis deliciis resoluimur : aut
ignobiles uulgi oculis nos illustres et
nobiles ostendamus. Veniet tempus : in quo
fructum huius nostræ tristitiæ colligamus :
ut nobis gaudentibus¹ lugeant hi : qui nunc
in suis gaudiis extolluntur.*

Valerian answered, “You said we are stupid
and foolish because we give our resources to
the needy; we support foreigners², we bear
influence for the widowed. We come to
rescue the orphans, we cover unburied
bodies,³ and we deliver God’s honorable
burials to martyrs. You judge us as foolish
and quite demented because we are not
gladdened with those who are rejoicing, nor
relaxed with delightful pleasures; or you may
judge us ignoble in the eyes of the rabble, and
we may show ourselves illustrious and noble.
The time will come in which we collect the
fruit of this our sorrow, so that, when we
rejoice, these men who are now raised in their
own joy might mourn.

*Tempus enim seminandi modo est : qui in
ista seminauerint gaudia : in illa uita
luctum et gemitum metent. Qui autem nunc
seminauerit lachrymas temporales : in illa
uita sunt gaudia sempiterna messuri.*

For the time to sow⁴ is now: those who sow⁵
with joy in this life will reap grief and sighing
in the life to come.⁶ Those who sow temporal
tears now, however, will be reaping⁷ eternal
delights in that other life.”

20. *Præfectus dixit : Ergo et nos et
inuictissimi⁸ Principes æternam habebimus*

20. The Prefect said, “And so, even we and
the most invincible princes will have eternal

¹ Ablative absolute.

² The Bible often calls on people to support and defend the poor and needy; cf., for example, James 1:26-27, NKJV: “If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one’s religion is useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” Vulgate: “si quis autem putat se religiosum esse non refrenans linguam suam sed seducens cor suum huius vana est religio. religio munda et immaculata apud Deum et Patrem haec est visitare pupillos et uiduas in tribulatione eorum immaculatum se custodire ab hoc saeculo.”

³ Here we see burial put on a par with helping widows and orphans (the latter are Biblical injunctions given by Jesus, but the former is not mentioned in that sense in scripture). We might also draw a connection here to the significance of burial in pagan culture (see 45n3), which requires the body’s burial before the spirit may pass on to its final destination.

⁴ Lit., “to be sowing.”

⁵ Lit., “will have been sowing.”

⁶ Cf. Psalm 126:5-6, NKJV: “Those who sow in tears / Shall reap in joy. / He who continually goes forth weeping, / Bearing seed for sowing, / Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, / Bringing his sheaves with him.” Vulgate: “qui seminant in lacrimis in exultatione metent. qui ambulans ibat et flebat portans ad seminandum sementem veniens veniet in exultatione portans manipulos suos”.

⁷ Lit., “are about to be.”

⁸ Use of this word is connected to the Sol Invictus/Mithraism cult popular at Rome and among Roman soldiers from Britain to Babylon.

luctum : Vos uero perpetuum possidebitis gaudium?

grief, while you will truly inherit perpetual joy?”

Valerianus respondit : Quid enim estis uos aut Principes uestri? homunciones¹ estis tempore nostro nati : tempore uestro expleto morituri : tantum deo rationem reddituri : quam uobis tradit summam potestatis.

Valerian answered, “Who are you or your princes? You are small men, born in our time; when your time is finished² you will die and return³ to God only an account, which is the height of power he delivers to you.”⁴

Almachius dixit : Quid uerborum circuitu in⁵ moramur? Offerte diis libamina : et abscedite illæsi :

Almachius said, “What do we delay by this circling of words? Offer drink offerings to the gods, and withdraw uninjured.”

Responderunt ambo : Nos non diis sed deo quotidie sacrificium exhibemus

They both answered, “We present sacrifice daily—not to the gods, but to God.”

Almachius respondit : Quis est deus : cui uestrum uos dicitis tradere famulatum?

Almachius answered, “Who is your God? To whom do you call to deliver your obedience?”

Re |6| sponderunt ambo : et dixerunt : et quis est deus alius : ut de deo nos interroges? Est enim alius præter unum?

They both answered and said, “And who is this other god, that you should interrogate us about God? For is there another besides the one?”

Almachius dixit : ergo Iouis dei nomen non est?

Almachius said, “So the name of Jove is not the name of a god?”

Valerianus respondit : Nomen corruptoris atque stupratoris hominis. Homicidam illum uestri auctores commemorant : et crinosum litteræ uestræ demonstrant. hunc tu deum miror qua fronte locutus sis : nisi ab omni peccato alienus sit : et sit omnibus uirtutibus plenus?

Valerian answered, “It is the name of the corruptor and raper of man. Your authors remember that one, the killer of men, and your books reveal the guilty one.⁶ I am amazed with what effrontery you called him a god—unless he is a stranger to⁷ every sin, and full of all virtues?”

Almachius dixit : Ergo omnis mundus errat : et tu cum fratre tuo uerum deum nostis?

Almachius said, “So all the world errs, and you with your brother know the true God?”

¹ Correct form in Del.—*homunciones*.

² Lit., “with your time having been finished.”

³ Lit., “you will be dying.”

⁴ Lit., “which height of power he delivers to you.”

⁵ why is in before the verb here?

⁶ Within Greek mythology, it was accepted that Zeus (Jove’s Greek forebear) often seduced mortal women, sometimes by taking on the form of an animal. Those who worshipped these gods knew of these characteristics; cf., for instance, “The Women of Trachis:” “You have witnessed terrible dyings / And untold calamities. / Behind it all is no one but Zeus” (207).

⁷ Lit., “from.”

Valerianus respondit : Innumerabilis multitudo christianitatis sanctitatem suscepit : et magis uos pauci estis : qui sicut astulæ de naufragio remansistis : ad nihil aliud nisi ut in ignem mitamini.

21. *Tunc iratus Almachius iussit : eum fustibus cædi. Ille autem statim ut exutus est : cœpit gaudere dicens : Ecce hora quam semper potaui : ecce dies omnimodo festiuitate iucundior : Cumque cæderent eum : uox præconiarum super eum clamabat dicens : Deos et deas blasphemare noli.*

Ille autem clamabat populo dicens : Ciues Romani uidete. ne uos a ueritate ista mea plaga reuocet. Sed state uiriliter : et deos lapideos quos colit Almachius in calcem conuertite : quia in æterna tribulatione erunt omnes : qui colunt eos.

22. *Tunc Assessor præfecti Tarquinius lacca⁵ dixit præfecto : Inuenisti occasionem : tolle eos : Nam si moras feceris : et de die protraxeris : omnes facultates suas erogabunt⁶ : et punitis eis tu nihil inuenies.*

Tunc iussit carnificibus : ut ab eis ducerentur ad pagum : ubi erat statunculum Iouis : et iussit : ut si noluissent sacrificare : ambo fratres pariter capitalem sententiam subirent. Tunc gloriosi martyres tenti a maximo corniculario præfecti : ducebantur ad

Valerian answered, “So a countless multitude received the sanctity of Christianity, and you few are greater—you who remained just as splinters from a shipwreck, for no other purpose³ except that you may be hurled into the fire?”

21. Then an angry Almachius ordered him to be struck with a staff. As Valerian was undressed, however, he at once began to rejoice, saying, “Behold the hour which I always drank;⁴ behold the day in all ways pleasanter than festivity.” And while they were striking him, a crier’s voice was crying out above him, saying, “Do not blaspheme the gods and goddesses.”

Valerian, however, was crying out to the people, saying, “Watch, Roman citizens, lest that blow of mine recall you from truth. But stand manfully and turn the stone gods which Almachius worships into dust, because all who worship them will be in eternal tribulation.”

22. Then the prefect’s advisor, Tarquinius Lacca, said to the prefect, “You have found an opportunity—destroy them. For if you should delay,⁷ and would prolong it concerning the day, they will expend all their resources and after they are punished, you will find nothing left.”⁸

Then he ordered the executioners that they be led by them to a country district where there was a small statue of Jove, and he decreed that if they refused to sacrifice,⁹ both brothers together would incur the death penalty. Then the glorious martyrs, held by the highest officer of the prefect, were led to the country

³ Lit., “towards nothing else except.”

⁴ Perhaps a metaphorical image suggesting anticipation and a savoring of the experience.

⁵ A proper name? Del.—*Lacca*.

⁶ Correct form in Del.—*erogabunt*.

⁷ Lit., “make hindrances.”

⁸ Especially in Late Antiquity, a key part of the prosecution was the subsequent seizure of the criminals’ assets for the state treasury.

⁹ Lit., “had refused to sacrifice.”

pagum.

Qui Maximus cœpit flære super eos dicens : O iuuentutis flos purpureus : o germanus fraternitatis affectus : quem impia definitione uolentes ammittere quasi ad epulas festinatis.

Tunc Tyburtius dixit : Nos nisi pro comperto haberemus alteram uitam esse perpetuam : quæ huic uitæ præsentis succedit : nunquam nos istam ammittere gauderemus.

Dicit ei Maximus : et quæ potest esse altera uita?

Respondit Tyburtius : Sicuti | uestitur uestimentis corpus : ita uestitur anima corpore. Sicut expoliatur uestimentis corpus : ita expoliatur anima corpore. Et corpus quidem quod terrenum sæmen per libidinem dedit : terreno uentri redditur : ut in puluerem reductum sicut phœnix futuri luminis aspectu resurgat : Anima uero ad paradisi delicias. si sancta est perferatur : ut in deliciis affluens tempus suæ restorationis expectet.

23. *Dicit ei Maximus : Optarem et ego⁶ contemnere uitam hanc : si putarem certum apud me habere : quæ loqueris.*

Dicit ei Valerianus : Quia nihil tibi dicis superesse : nisi ut probes uera esse : que diximus : in hora qua nos dominus faciat istam corporis tunicam et a gloriosam⁷ nominis sui confessionem deponere :

district.

There Maximus began to weep over them, saying, “O purple⁴ flower of youth; O true affections of brotherhood, which with a wicked ruling they wish to lose as if you hasten toward a banquet.”

Then Tyburtius said, “Unless we held it as proven that the life which follows this present one is eternal, we would never rejoice to lose this life.”

Maximus said to him, “And what can this other life be?”

Tyburtius answered, “Just as the body is clothed with garments, so the soul is clothed with the body. Just as the body is stripped of clothes, so the spirit may be despoiled of the body. And in fact the body, which earthly seed produced through wantonness, is restored to its earthly womb—so that having been reduced to dust, it may rise again with the appearance of the coming light just as a phoenix does;⁵ the spirit may truly rise again to paradise’s delights. If a holy soul should be borne through so that she is abounding in luxuries, she would look toward the time of her own restoration.”

23. Maximus said to him, “I would choose to disdain this life, if I were to believe that I have a sure thing before me—that which you say.”

Valerian said to him, “Because you say that nothing is left for you unless you should approve what we say to be true: in the hour in which the Lord would make us lay down that garment of the body by a glorious confession

⁴ A significance color and a reference to Marcellus’ funeral in Aeneid 6.884, Aeneid 5.79.

⁵ See introduction for a full discussion of the phoenix imagery in the legend.

⁶ Occasionally the text supplies a personal pronoun for emphasis, even when the subject is indicated by the verb.

⁷ Because of the *a* preceding them, I have translated *gloriosam* and *confessionem* as ablative, although their forms are nominative (Del. has a different sentence structure here).

*aperiat oculos tuos : et faciat te uidere cum
quanta gloria illa uita suscipitur : si tamen
promittas nobis : quod ex animo ad
pœnitentiam erroris tu uenias.*

of the faith of his name, if you should still
promise us that you would come sincerely¹ to
the repentance of error, may he open your
eyes and make you see with how much glory
that life is undertaken.”

*Tunc Maximus denotabat se dicens :
Fulminibus igneis consumar : si ex hac
hora non illum solum deum confitear : qui
alteram uitam facit huic uitæ succedere.
Hoc tantum uos mihi quod promisistis
ostendite.*

Then Maximus indicated himself, saying,
“May I be destroyed by fiery lightning if from
this hour I should not confess only the God
who causes that other life to follow this one.
Only show me this, which you promised.”

*Dicunt ei ambo fratres : Impetra a
carnificibus : ut domum tuam nos ducant :
et hodierni diei inducias explica :*

Both brothers said to him, “Convince² the
executioners to lead us to your house³ and
extend us reprieves for today,

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*ita ut nos custodiant in domo tua. Illic ad te
venire faciemus†⁴ purificatorem : qui te
hac nocte purificet. Statim ut purificauerit :
faciat te uidere hoc : quod tibi promisimus.*

so that they guard us in your house. There we
will have the purifier come to you—he who
may purify you this night. As soon as he has
purified you, it immediately causes you to see
this thing which we promised you.”

*Quod cum impetrasset Maximus duxit eos
domum suam : ad quorum prædicationem
et ipse Maximus cum omni domo sua et ipsi
carnifices crediderunt. Tunc Sancta
Cæcilia uenit ad eos nocte cum
sacerdotibus. et uniuersi baptizati sunt.
Igitur cum aurora nocti finem daret : facto
mane silentio Cæcilia dixit : Eia milites
Christi abiicite opera tenebrarum : et
induimini arma lucis. Certamen bonum
certauistis : cursum consumastis⁵ : fidem
seruastis. Ite ad coronam uitæ : quam dedit*

When Maximus had achieved this he led
them to his home—led those according to
whose preaching Maximus, along with all his
house and the executioners themselves,
believed.⁷ Then Saint Cecilia came to them in
the night with priests and they were all
baptized. Therefore, when daybreak gave the
finish to night and the morning silence
occurred, Cecilia spoke:⁸ “Quick! Soldiers of
Christ, cast down the works of darkness and
put on the armor of light.⁹ You fought the
good fight; you finished the course; you

¹ Lit., “from the heart/spirit.”

² Lit., “Obtain from the executioners (by asking).”

³ Accusative of destination.

⁴ Correct form *faciemus*.

⁵ Correct form in Del.—*consummastis*.

⁷ Cf. Acts 10, in which a Roman centurion is converted to Christianity through a vision.

⁸ “Thomas Connolly suggests a larger symbolic reading of this speech and the imagery that surrounds it in the legend (*Mourning Into Joy* 75-76, 206-11).

⁹ Cf. Romans 13:12, NKJV “The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.” Vulgate: “nox præcessit dies autem adpropiauit abiciamus ergo opera tenebrarum et induamur arma lucis;” “On the symbolism that may be present here, see the note to lines 134-7 of the Roman curia/Franciscan abridgement” (Reames 513).

*nobis deus iustus iudex : non solum nobis :
sed et omnibus : qui diligunt aduentum
eius.*

24. *Locus igitur qui uocabatur pagus
quarto milliario ab urbe situs erat : in quo
per templi ianuam transitus erat : ut omnes
qui ingrederentur : si Ioui tura non
ponerentur : punirentur. Venientibus ergo
|7| sanctis offeruntur tura : et recusant.
Recusantes ponunt genua : feriuntur gladio
: proiiciunt corpus temporale : et
martyrium suscipiunt sempiternum.*

*Tunc Maximus iratus asserebat dicens :
uidi angelos dei fulgentes sicut sol : in qua
hora uerberati sunt gladio : et egredientes
animas eorum de corporibus quasi uirgines
de thalamo¹ : quas in gremio suo
suscipientes angeli : remigio alarum
suarum ferebant ad caelos.*

protected the faith.⁵ Go to the crown of life
which God, a just judge, gave to us—and not
to us alone, but to all who love his arrival.

24. Therefore, the location which is called the
country district has been situated at the fourth
milestone from the city; it is the place in
which there was a crossing through the door
of the temple, so that all who enter, if they
should not place frankincense to Jove,⁶
would be punished. Consequently,
frankincense is presented to the incoming
saints, and they reject Jove. Rejecting him,
they place their knees on the ground; they are
struck with the sword; they throw down the
temporal body, and accept perpetual
martyrdom.”⁷

Then Maximus, enraged, asserted, “I saw
angels of God shining like the sun in the hour
in which the martyrs were struck with the
sword, and their spirits passing from their
bodies just like virgins from the bedroom;
they are those whom the angels accept in their
bosoms—with the rowing of their wings⁸ they
bore the martyrs to heaven.”

¹ Note the marriage imagery used here to describe the saints in their relation to both God and their own deaths.

⁵ Cf. 2 Timothy 4: 7-8, NKJV: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”
Vulgate: “bonum certamen certavi cursum consummavi fidem servavi. in reliquo reposita est mihi iustitiae corona quam reddet mihi Dominus in illa die iustus iudex non solum mihi sed et his qui diligunt adventum eius.”

⁶ This construction is technically passive in the Latin.

⁷ They earn the positive status of being a martyr.

⁸ Cf. Aeneid 1.301.

Ista cum lachrymis narrante Maximo : plurimi crediderunt. et ab idolorum errore conuersi se suo creatori rediderunt. Igitur cum peruenisset ad Almachium : quod Maximus cornicularius cum suis factus fuisset christianus : iussit eum tandiu¹ plumbatis tundi : quandiu redderet spiritum. Quem sancta Cæcilia iuxta ubi Tyburtium et Valerianum sepelierat : in nouo sacrophago² sepeliuit : Et iussit : ut in illius sculperetur phœnis³ ad indicium fidei eius : qui se resurrectionem inuenturum phœnicis exemplo suscepit.

25. *Factum est autem post hæc : cæpit Almachius quærere facultates amborum : pro qua inquisitione sanctam Cæciliam quasi Valeriani coniugem præcepit arctari : Quæ cum uniuersa quæ remanserant pauperibus ex eorum facultatibus fideliter tradidisset : ipsa quoque ut tura poneret : cæpit compelli.*

After Maximus related those things with tears, a great number believed, and turned from the error of idols, and returned themselves to their creator. Therefore when Maximus had come to Almachius, because Maximus his assistant had become Christian along with his men, Almachius ordered him to be beaten with lead balls until he returned his spirit. It was he whom holy Cecilia buried in a new coffin, near where she had buried Tyburtius and Valerian.⁴ And she commanded that a phoenix should be carved on his coffin as a witness of the faith of him who strove to discover the resurrection, taken up by the example of the phoenix.⁵

25. After these things, however, it happened that Almachius began to seek the resources of both brothers; before the investigation, he instructed saint Cecilia, as the wife of Valerian, to pack up. When she had faithfully handed over all the things which remained from their resources to the poor, she also began to be compelled to offer incense.

¹ Correct form in Del.—*tamdiu* (and see next section, Del. —*quamdiu*).

² Correct form in Del.—*sarcophago*. "In the *Passio* there is no ambiguity at this point; Cecilia buries Maximus next to Tiburce and Valerian, in a "novo sarcofago" on which she has the emblem of a phoenix carved, as an indication of his faith in the resurrection ... The vaguer wording in the Roman curia/Franciscan account, on the other hand, can be translated either 'his own tomb' or 'her tomb'" (Reames 523 n142-3).

³ Correct form in Del.—*phoenix*.

⁴ The martyrdom of Maximus (and especially those of Tyburtius and Valerian) is given a short treatment in the text. Cecilia's martyrdom is the main event, but even the discussion devoted to it is dwarfed by comparison to the time spent arguing theology. In Cecilia's legend, evangelism to her audiences—and the audience of the text—is the primary focus.

⁵ See introduction for a discussion of the significance of the phoenix in the text.

Tunc apparitoribus qui eam hoc facere compellebant dixit : Audite me ciues et fratres : uos ministri estis iudicis uestri : et uidetur uobis : quod ab eius impietate alieni esse mereamini. Mihi quidem gloriosum est et ualde optabile omnia pro Christi confessione perferre tormenta : quia cum hac uita nunquam digna sunt habere amicitias sed de uestra satis doleo iuuentute : quam sine sollicitudine gerentes facitis quidquid uobis fuerit ab iniusto iudice imperatum.

Tunc illi flætus et uoces dederunt : quod tam elegans puella et tam sapiens et nobilis etiam optaret occidi : Et rogabant eam dicentes : ne tale decus ammitteret : nec tantam pulchritudinem uersaret in moretem :

26. *quibus flæntibus atque animum eius reuocare cupientibus : ita respondit : hoc non est iuuentutem perdere : sed mutare. Dare lutum : et accipere aurum. Dare habitaculum uile et paruum : et accipere domum magnam et amplissimam ex lapidibus pretiosis et auro constructam. dare angulum breuem et oppressum : et accipere forum lucidum et margaritis cælestibus coruscantem. dare lapidem uilem qui pedibus conculcatur : et accipere lapidem preciosum : qui in diademate regio libranti resplendet aspectu. Hodie si uobis aliquis offerret : ita ut partem summam nummorum gratanter ferret oblatam : nunquid non et uos curreretis ad talem mercaturam : et omnes patentes² et notos et affines : et propinquos et caros et amicos faceretis uobiscum concurrere? Quicumque autem uos lachrymis reuocarent : eo quod omnes nummos uestros daretis intrepidi : nunquid non derideretis eos ut ignorantes? Vos autem curreretis exultantes : propterea quod daretis ad commutationem auri preciosi æramentum uile : et nullius summæ*

Then she said to the civil servants who were compelling her to do this, “Listen to me, citizens and brothers: you are the agents of your judge, and it seems to you that due to his impiety you may deserve to be foreigners.¹ It is indeed glorious and greatly desirable for me to endure all torments for the creed of Christ, because with this life they are never worthy of dignity to have friendships, but I suffer enough from your youth—how without concern you are carrying out and doing whatever was ordered by the unjust judge.”

Then those men uttered cries and weeping, because so elegant a girl, and one besides so wise and noble, would still choose to be killed. And they asked her not to lose such a great honor, or turn such great beauty into death.

26. She answered those men, who were weeping and longing to call back her spirit, thus: “This is not to destroy youth, but to change it—to give mud and receive gold; to give a small and worthless dwelling, and receive a great and very large house constructed from expensive jewels and gold; to give a humble and oppressed corner, and receive a bright open space, and one shimmering with heavenly pearls; to give a mean stone which is trampled by the feet, and receive a precious jewel which radiates with a twinkling aspect in the royal crown. If anyone should offer to you today thus: that he would bring the greatest share of money, presented with joy—surely it cannot be that you would not run to so great a trade, and make all your parents and friends and neighbors and relatives and acquaintances and dear ones run to it with you? And moreover, whoever would call you back with tears, undaunted, even to the point that you should give all your money—would you not mock them as ignorant? On the contrary, you would hurry, exulting, because you might give worthless bronze toward an exchange of precious gold.

¹ As opposed to pious citizens.

² Correct form in Del.—*parentes*.

iacturam : et tamen pondus ad pondus uos accipere ratularem.

Deus autem non dat pondus ad pondus : sed quod simplum acceperit : centuplum reddet : insuper et uitam æternam.

Et his dictis ascendit super lapidem : qui erat iuxta pedes eius : et dicit omnibus : Creditis hæc : quæ dixi :

At illi omnes una uoce dixerunt : Credimus Christum filium dei uerum deum esse : qui te talem possidet famulam.

Dicit eis Cæcilia : Ite ergo : et dicite infelici Almachio me inducias petere : et non urgeat meam passionem. Et huc in domum meam uenire faciam : qui uos omnes faciat uitæ æternæ participes. Et ita domino procurante completur.

27. *Tunc ueniens papa sanctus Vrbanus baptizauit in domo eius amplius quam quadringentos promiscui sexus : et conditionis et ætatis : quos inter clarissimus uir erat nomine Gordianus.*

And you would rejoice to accept the sacrifice of nothing very great, and yet an exchange pound for pound. God, however, does not give pound for pound, but what you might have received onefold, he will return a hundredfold—and in addition, eternal life.”¹

And after saying these things, she ascended above the block which was near her foot, and said to all, “You believe these things which I said.”

But they all said with one voice, “We believe that Christ, the son of God, is truly God—who is the master of you, such a handmaiden.”

Cecilia said to them, “So go and tell the miserable Almachius I beg a reprieve, and he may not pursue my suffering. And I may manage to have come here into my house, he² who may make you all sharers of eternal life.” And so, she was filled with the attending Lord.

27. Then the holy pope Urban baptized more than 400 of mixed gender, status, and age in her house, among whom the most illustrious was named Gordianus.

— Solesmes Page 9 —

Hic sub umbratione nominis sui domum sanctæ Cæcilie suo nomini dicauit : ut in occulto ex illa die ex quo ibi baptisma Christi celebratum est : ecclesia fieret : ita ut et papa urbis Vrbanus illic moraretur : licet occulte tamen quottidie redemptionis christi ibi crescerent lucra et infinita

This man dedicated saint Cecilia house’s under the cover of his own name for hers, so that from the day when the baptism of Christ was celebrated there in secret, a church was created. And so it was that Pope Urban of Rome would stay in that church; although it was hidden, still daily Christ’s redemption’s

¹ Cf. Matthew 19:29, NKJV “And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life,” Vulgate: “et omnis qui reliquit domum vel fratres aut sorores aut patrem aut matrem aut uxorem aut filios aut agros propter nomen meum centuplum accipiet et vitam æternam possidebit;” cf. also Mark 10:30, “NKJV “who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life;” Vulgate: “qui non accipiat centies tantum nunc in tempore hoc domos et fratres et sorores et matres et filios et agros cum persecutionibus et in saeculo futuro vitam æternam.”

² That is, Pope Urban.

fierent diaboli detrimenta.

28. *Sed cum hæc agerentur : Almachius
Cæciliam sibi præsentari iubet : Quam
interrogans ait : quod tibi nomen est?*

*Respondit : Cæcilia. Almachius dixit :
Cnius¹ conditionis es? Cæcilia dixit :
Ingenua nobilis clarissima. |8| Almachius
respondit : Ego te de religione interrogo.
Cæcilia dixit : Interrogatio tua stultum
sumit initium : quæ duas responsiones una
putat inquisitione concludi. Almachius dixit
: Vnde tibi tanta præsumptio respondendi?
Cæcilia dixit : De conscientia bona : et fide
non ficta .*

29. *Almachius dixit : Ignoras cuius
potestatis sis?*

*Cæcilia respondit : Tu ignoras cuius
potestatis sis. Nam et ego si me interroges
de tua potestate : ueris tibi assertionibus
manifestabo.*

dicit ei Almachius : Dic si quid nosti.

*Cæcilia respondit : Omnis potestas
hominis sic est : quasi uter uento repletus :
Quem si acus pupugerit : omnis rigor
cervicis eius euanescit. Et quidquid in se
rigidum habere cernitur incuruatur.*

*Almachius dixit : Ab iniuriis cæpisti : et in
iniuriis perseueras.*

*Cæcilia respondit : Iniuria non dicitur :
nisi cum uerbum fallentibus irrogatur.
Vnde aut iniuriam doce : si falsa locuta
sum : aut te ipsum corripe calumniam*

gains would increase there, and endless
defeats of the Devil would occur.

28. But while these things were being done,
Almachius himself ordered Cecilia to be put
on display. Interrogating her, he said, “What
is your name?”

She answered, “Cecilia.”

“Of what status are you?

“A free-born illustrious noblewoman.”

“I ask you about religion.”

“Your interrogation takes a foolish beginning;
it thinks that two answers are contained with
one question.”

“From where is so great a presumption as
that of your answering?

“From good conscience, and with faith
unfeigned.”

29. Almachius said, “Do you not know of
whose power I am?”

Cecilia answered, “You do not know of
whose power you are. I, on the other hand, if
you should question me about your power,
will reveal it to you with true statements.”

Almachius said to her, “Speak, if you have
learned anything.”

Cecilia answered, “All the power of men is
thus: just as a bag full of wind which, if a
needle should puncture it, all the stiffness of
its neck vanishes.² And whatever is discerned
to be rigid is bent.³

Almachius said, “You began with insults, and
in insults you persist.”

Cecilia answered “It is not called insult unless
the word is burdened with deceptions.⁴
Wherefore either point out where the injury is
from, if I have spoken falsehoods, or arrest

¹ Correct form in Del.—*cuius*.

² Wineskins and other bags would have narrow “necks.”

³ That is, the neck which before had been visibly stiff would then droop with the loss of air.

⁴ Lit., “the words inflicted with deceivings.”

inferentem.

*Almachius dixit : Ignoras quia dominii⁴
nostri inuictissimi principes iusserunt : ut
qui se non negauerint esse christianos
puniantur : qui uero negauerint
dimittantnr⁵ ?*

*Cæcilia respondit⁶ : Sic Imperatores uestri
errant : sicut et nobilitas tua :
Sentientiam enim quam ab eis prolatam
esse testaris uos sæuientes et nos
innocentes ostendit. Si enim malum esset
hoc nomen : nos negaremus : uos uero ad
confitendum suppliciiis urgeretis.*

*Almachius dixit : Pro pietate sua hoc
noluerunt statuere : quomodo uitæ uestræ
possit esse consultum.*

*Cæcilia respondit : Nihil tam impium :
nihilque tam inimicum innocentiae quam ut
reis omnibus tormenta adhibeatis : ad
confitendum qualitatem sceleris. Locum.
tempus. consocios socios omni examinatione
perquiritis. Vos uero quos innocentes scitis
: nominis tantum crimen impingitis. Sed
nos scientes sanctum nomen : omnino
negare non possumus. Melius est enim
feliciter mori : quam infeliciter uiuere. Nos
enim uera dicentes : uos torquemus : qui
mendacium elaboratis audire.*

*Almachius dixit : Elige tibi unum e duobus
: Aut sacrifica : aut nega te christianam
esse : ut copiam euadendi suscipias.*

Tunc surridens beata Cæcilia dixit : O

yourself for bringing a false accusation.”

Almachius said, “Are you ignorant that our invincible masters have ordered the leaders that those who have not denied that they are Christians might be punished; that truly, those who deny him may be let go?”

Cecilia answered, “Thus your commanders err, as do your nobility. For you bear witness to the way of thinking which was advanced from them, and which shows us to be innocent and you to be raving. For if this name were evil, we would deny ourselves. Truly you would press us with tortures toward confessing.”

Almachius said, “They did not wish to establish this for their own loyalty, how it may be possible to take thought for your life.

Cecilia answered, “Nothing is so wicked and harmful to innocence as that you should employ torture in all things in order to confess the character of crime. Place, time—you search for associated accomplices with every examination. In truth you know who is innocent of the account of such great crime you bring against them. But we, knowing the holy name, are altogether unable to deny it. For it is better to die happily than to live unhappily. Indeed, we are speaking truths—we torment you who take pains to listen to a lie.”

Almachius said, “Choose for yourself one of the two: either sacrifice, or deny that you are a Christian, so that you may accept the opportunity of escaping.

Then, smiling, the beautiful Cecilia said, “O

⁴ Correct form in Del.—*domini*.

⁵ Correct form in Del.—*dimittantur*.

⁶ “The ultimate source behind Cecilia’s two speeches in these lines is Tertullian’s long, complex argument in the *Apology*, 2.4-20, against the tactics that were used to prosecute Christians. The original points are considerably obscured even in the *Passio* because Tertullian’s statements have been greatly reordered and condensed, and some of them simply misunderstood by copyists; and the sense is even cloudier in this later, still more abbreviated version” (Reames 525 nl.164-172).

iudicem necessitate confusum : qui uult ut negem : me esse in | nocentem : ut ipse me nocentem faciat. Si uis damnare : cur hortaris negare? Se uis absolvere : quare uis inquirere?

judge,¹ troubled by your bonds, who wish that I would deny that I am innocent so that he himself may make me a criminal: if you wish to condemn me, why do you urge me to deny it? You wish to free yourself; how do you wish to investigate me?”

Almachius dixit : Accusatores præsto sunt : qui te christianam esse testantur. Si negaueris : compendiosum dabis accusantibus finem. Si autem negare nolueris : dementiae tuæ reputabis quando sententiae subiacebis.

Almachius said, “The accusers are ready—those who bear witness that you are a Christian. If you have denied it, you will allow a profitable end to your accusers. If, however, you have refused to deny it, you will think over your madness when you lie exposed to judicial sentence.

Cæcilia respondit : Horum mihi accusatio motiua est : et tua pæna uictoria. Noli me ut dementem arguere : sed te ipsum increpa : qui christum me existimas denegare.

Cecilia answered, “The motive of these people is their accusation of me, and your punishment is their victory. Do not wish to prove that I may be mad, but rebuke yourself, who suppose that I deny Christ.”²

30. *Almachius dixit : infelix ignoras quoniam interficiendi et uiuificandi mihi ab inuictistimis³ principibus potestas data est? Vt quid cum tanta superbia loqueris?*

30. Almachius said, “Wretched one, do you not know that the power for killing and restoring to life was given to me by invincible leaders? So what will you say with such great arrogance?”

Cæcilia respondit : Aliud est esse superbum : aliud est esse constantem. Ego constanter locuta sum non superbe : quia superbiam et nos fortiter execramur. Tu autem si uerum audire non times : iterum docebo te falsissime nunc locutum.

Cecilia answered, “It is one thing to be arrogant; it is another to be steadfast.⁴ I spoke firmly, not proudly, for we and ourselves strongly detest pride. If, however, you are truly not afraid to listen, I will again show that you spoke most falsely.”

Almachius dixit : Quæ sum falsissime prosecutus?

Almachius said, “What things did I wrongly pursue?”

Cæcilia respondit : hoc quod principes tuos uiuificandi et interficiendi tibi tradidisse asseris potestatem.

Cecilia answered, “This thing which you claim your leaders have given you, the power of reviving and destroying.”

Almachius dixit : Ergo mentitus sum?

Almachius said, “Then did I lie?”

¹ Accusative of exclamation.

² Lit., “suppose me to.”

³ Correct form in Del.—*invictissimis*.

⁴ See introduction for further discussion of Cecilia’s textual authority to make this distinction.

Cæcilia respondit : Contra ueritatem publicam si iubes probo te esse mentitum :

Cecilia answered, “If you command against the common truth, I prove that you lied.”

Almachius dixit : Doce.

Almachius said, “Prove it.”

Cæcilia respondit : Dixisti principes tnos¹ uiuificandi : et interficiendi tibi copiam tribuisse : cum solam mortificandi scias tibi traditam potestatem. uitam enim uiuentibus tollere potes mortuis autem dare non potes. Dic ergo : quia Imperatores tui mortis te ministrum esse uoluerunt. Nam si quid plus dixeris : uideberis frustra mentitus.

Cecilia answered, “You have said that your leaders assigned you the ability to kill and revive, when you know only the killing power was bestowed on you. For you are able to remove life from the living; you are not able to give life, however, to the dead². Say therefore, that your rulers wished you to be a minister of death. For if you should have said anything more, you will be seen as having lied for nothing.”

Almachius dixit : Depone iam audaciam tuam : et sacrifica diis.

Almachius said, “Now lay down your audacity, and also sacrifice to the gods.”

Cæcilia respondit : Nescio ubi tu oculos amiseris : Nam quos tu deos dicis : ego et omnes qui oculos sanos habent saxa uidemus esse : et ærementum³ : et plumbum.

Cecilia answered, “I do not know where you have lost your eyes, for what you say are gods, I and all who have sound eyes see to be stones, and bronze, and lead.”

Almachius dixit : Meas iniurias phylosophando contempsisti : sed deorum ferre non possum.

Almachius said, “I hate my injuries in philosophizing, but I cannot bear it of the gods’.”

Cæcilia respondit : ex quo os aperuisti : non fuit sermo quem non probauerim iniustum stultum et uanum : Sed nequit deesse : etiam exterioribus oculis te cecatum ostendi. Cum quod omnes lapides uidemus esse et saxum inutile : hoc tu deum esse testaris. Do : si iubes : consilium : Mitte manum tuam et tangendo [9] disce hoc saxum esse :

Cecilia answered, “From when you opened your mouth, there was not a speech which I have not proven unjust, foolish, and empty. But it cannot be missing; furthermore, I showed that your physical eyes are blind.⁴ Since what we all see to be stones and useless rocks, you swear to be a god, I grant this plan if you decree: send your gang, and by touching they will learn that this is stone

¹ Correct form in Del.—tuos.

² Lit., “to those having died.”

³ Correct form in Del.—aeramentum.

⁴ Lit., “I showed you with exterior eyes blinded.”

si uidendo non nosti. Nefas est enim : ut totus populus de te risum habeat. Omnes enim sciunt deum esse in cælis. Ista autem figuras saxeas per ignem melius in calcem posse conuerti : quæ modo sui otio pereunt : ut neque tibi pereunti neque sibi ne in ignem mittantur poterunt subuenire.

(if you did not know by seeing). For it is a violation of the divine law that the whole nation laughs¹ about you. That is to say, everyone knows that God is in heaven, that those stone figures, moreover, can be quite changed through fire into chalk; figures which pass away this way in peace, so that they are able neither to save you from dying, nor themselves from being hurled into the fire.”²

31. *Tunc iratus uæhementer Almachius iussit eam domum suam reduci : et in sua domo flammis balnearibus concremari :*

31. Then Almachius, violently angry, commanded her to be taken back to her home and consumed by fire in her own house, by the bathhouse flames.

Cumque fuisset in calore balnei sui inclusa : subter : incendia nimia lignorum pabula ministrarent die integro et tota nocte quasi in loco frigido illibata perstitit sanitate : ita ut nec una pars membrorum eius saltem sudoris signo labasset. Quod cum audisset Almachius : misit qui eam ibidem in ipsis balneis decollaret.

And when she was imprisoned in the heat of the bath, under the overwhelming conflagration of wood, and they attended to fuel during the day and all night, she stood firm, untouched in her wellbeing as if in a cool spot, so that not even one part of her limbs had so much as wavered with a sign of sweat. When Almachius had heard this, he sent men who might behead her in the same place—in her own baths.

Quam spiculator tertio percussit : et caput eius amputare non potuit. Sic autem seminecem eam cruentus carnifex dereliquit : cuius sanguinem omnes bibleis linteaminibus³ populi qui per eam crediderant extergebant.

The axe-wielder struck her for a third time, and he could not cut off her head. Thus the bloodthirsty executioner left her half-dead, her whose blood all the people who had believed through her were wiping with papyrus linen cloths.

¹ Lit., “has laughter.”

² Lit., “lest they are hurled into the fire.”

³ “The Latin word *linteaminibus* means linen cloths. Its modifier, *bibleis*, comes either from *bibulus*, meaning ‘thirsty, absorbent,’ or from *bibleus*, a term used in medieval Latin to mean papyrus or, more obscurely, fabrics made from hemp or cotton, perhaps woven in a pattern resembling rushes” (Reames 527 nl.202).

Per triduum autem quo superuixit. non cessauit omnes mulieres quas enutrierat : et quas educauerat in fide dominica confirmare : quibus et diuisit uniuersa : quæ habuit : et sancto papæ Urbano tradidit commendatas : cui et dixit : Ad hoc mihi triduanas propositi inducias : ut istas tuæ beatitudini traderem : et hanc domum meam ecclesiæ nomine consecrares¹.

32. *Tunc sanctus Urbanus corpus eius auferens : cum diaconibus nocte sepeliuit eam inter collegas suos episcopos : ubi sunt omnes confessores et martyres collocati. Domum autem eius in æternum : sanctæ ecclesiæ nomini tradidit : in qua domini beneficia² exhuberant ad memoriam beatæ Cæciliæ usque in hodiernum diem.*

For three days, however, she survived. She was not remiss toward all the women whom she had nurtured and whom she had taught in faith to keep the Lord's day, with whom she also divided all she had, and bequeathed to the holy Pope Urban suitable things. To him she also said, "For this I asked a three-day delay for myself, so that I might deliver those things with your blessing, and you might dedicate my house in the name of the church."

32. Then the holy Urban, bearing her body with the deacons in the night, interred her among her associates, the bishops themselves, where all the Christians and martyrs are gathered. She gave her house, however, to the name of the holy church forever, in which the good works of the Lord are fruitful for the remembrance of blessed Cecilia, all the way into the present day.

¹ "In this construction, *nomen* evidently means 'legal title.' In the manuscripts that have *nomen* in the ablative rather than the dative case, the phrase can be translated 'consecrate my house forever in the name of the church,' or 'on behalf of the church'" (Reames 527 nl.208).

² "The term *beneficia* had a wide range of meanings in medieval Latin, including 'good works,' 'donations,' and 'liturgical services' or 'sacraments'" (Reames 527 nl.213).

VI. Appendices

A. Biblical references

Old Testament:

Genesis 3:14,15
Exodus 3:14
Numbers 11:12
Deuteronomy 32:11-12, 18
Ruth 2:12
2 Kings 5
Nehemiah 9:21
Isaiah 11:5-7; 31:5; 42:14; 46:3-4; 49:14-15; 62:5; 65:24-25; 66:9,12-13
Hosea 11:1-4; 13:8
Psalms 17:8; 22:9-10^a; 23; 32:2; 51:10; 71:6; 110:1; 126:5-6

New Testament:

Matthew 8:26-27; 11:28; 13:1-30; 14:25; 17:2; 20; 21:1-11; 22:44; 23:37; 27:48, 51; 28:19
Mark 5; 10:39; 11:1-11; 12:36; 14:35-57; 15:36
Luke 13:18-21; 15:8-10; 34; 36:7; 19:29-44; 22:41-43; 23:43; 57:1; 91:1,4
John 4:13, 14; 12:12-19; 19:29
Acts 8:36
Romans 6:8-9; 13:12, 14:19
1 Corinthians 6:20; 14:12; 15:21-22, 25
Galatians 3:27
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