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THE ROMAN MARTYRS

Introduction, Translations, and Commentary

Michael Lapidge

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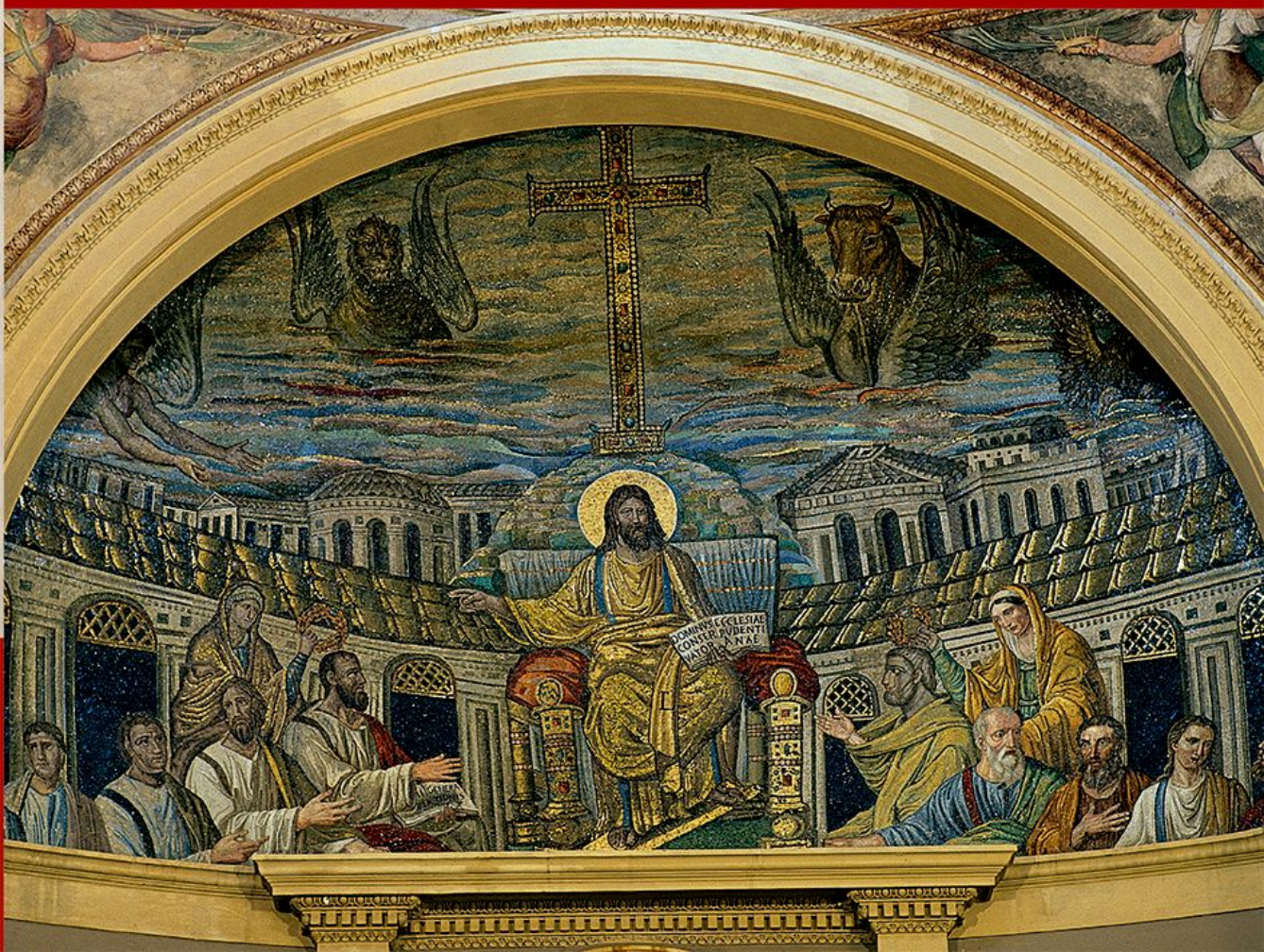

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The Roman Martyrs

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MICHAEL LAPIDGE

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Preface

The present volume contains translations of and commentaries on forty *passiones* of Roman martyrs, composed between roughly AD 400 and AD 700; it does not contain the Latin texts of the *passiones* in question. There are reasons why, at this stage of our research, it would not be possible to provide the Latin texts alongside the English translations: of the forty *passiones*, only one is available in anything resembling a critical edition; the remainder exist mostly in fifteenth-, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century editions (see pp. 40–1). Because most of these early editions are not easily accessible, the *passiones* have been neglected as a literary genre. It is my view that annotated translations represent the first stage in making these texts accessible to a wider scholarly public.

The *passiones* are works of fiction. The stories they relate concerning the martyrdoms of Roman martyrs are wholly invented, and are utterly unreliable as historical evidence. Nevertheless, the *passiones*, almost incidentally, cast fascinating light on many aspects of late antique Rome—its topography, administration, social hierarchy, and legal machinery. Above all, they help to illuminate the many Roman *titulus*-churches and cemeteries which during the centuries in question (fifth to seventh) began to attract increasingly large numbers of pilgrims and visitors. To some extent, the *passiones* are a literary response to this upsurge in pilgrim activity. In any case, these aspects of Roman life can, I think, be studied as well in translation as in the original Latin texts.

My interest in these *passiones* began when I was teaching at the University of Notre Dame (1999–2004), where the Hesburgh Library has exceptionally rich holdings in patristic literature and palaeo-Christian archaeology, and where I had the privilege of teaching a group of enthusiastic young Latinists in annual seminars on the *passiones* of the Roman martyrs. My first debt is to those Notre Dame students, particularly Leslie Lockett, who as my designated research assistant assembled a huge collection of photocopies of relevant texts and studies, and Paul Patterson, who key-boarded the texts of the *passiones* so as to constitute a machine-readable database. Since returning to the UK, I have been able to draw on the advice of Jim Adams and Michael Reeve in matters of Late Latin philology. I owe a great debt to the Bollandists, who for over four centuries have been studying and editing these texts, and whose publications are the indispensable foundation for all work in the field of Late Latin hagiography. The present-day Bollandists, in particular their Director, Robert Godding S.J., very kindly placed the resources of the Bollandists' great library at my disposal, even on occasion acquiring books for my personal use.

Gillian Clark very kindly offered a warm welcome to this book in the series Oxford Early Christian Studies, of which she is a general editor. I am especially grateful to Mark Humphries, who, as the OUP's referee, produced a meticulously detailed report which enabled me to correct numerous errors, and to improve the argument in countless ways. Although he acted anonymously as the OUP's referee, he kindly waived his anonymity so that we were able to discuss many of the issues he had raised; and I would like to add that Mark has been an enthusiastic supporter of this project over many years: indeed, it was his enthusiasm which prompted me to draw together the many years' research and put the work into its final form. Finally, Karen Raith, the desk-editor for religion at the OUP, has been warmly supportive and splendidly efficient in every way. So, too, the OUP's copy-editor, Louise Larchbourne, who worked meticulously through the typescript and helped to clarify the translations at many points, and to identify errors which I had overlooked.

Michael Lapidge

15 February 2017

Contents

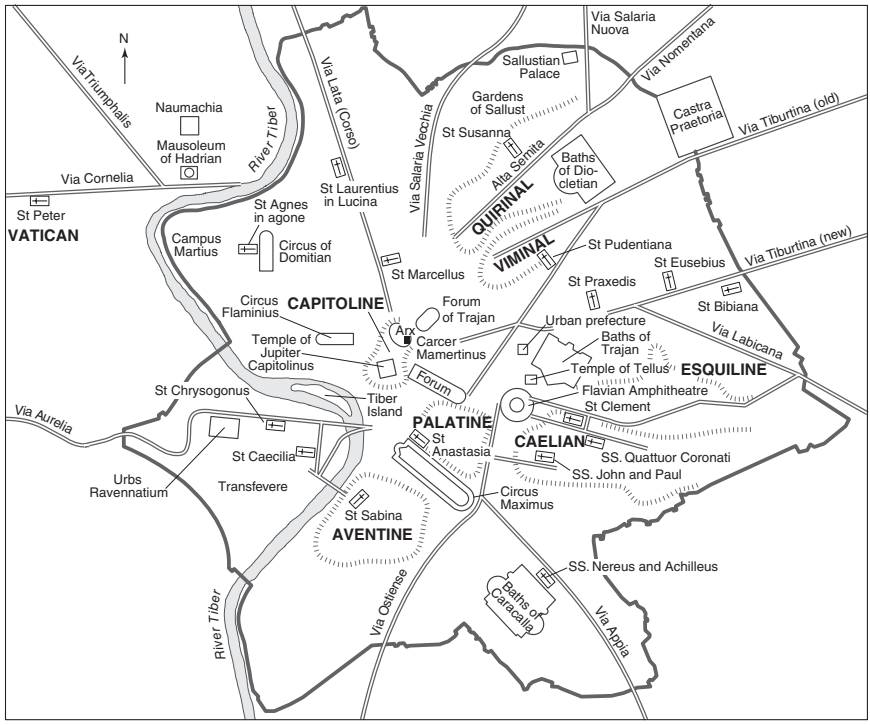
Abbreviations

AB	*Analecta Bollandiana*
Acta SS.	*Acta Sanctorum quotquot orbe coluntur*, ed. Bollandists, 68 vols. (Antwerp, Tongerloo, and Brussels, 1643–1925)
BHG	F. Halkin, *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca*, 3rd ed. (Brussels, 1957)
BHL	[Bollandists], *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1898–1901; with *Supplementum* (1986))
Blaise	A. Blaise, *Dictionnaire latin–français des auteurs chrétiens* (Turnhout, 1954)
BSS	*Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 13 vols. (Rome, 1961–70, with three volumes of appendices, 1987, 2000, 2013)
CCSL	*Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* (Turnhout)
CGL	*Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum*, ed. G. Goetz, 7 vols. (Leipzig, 1888–1923)
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (Berlin, 1863–)
CPG	*Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, ed. M. Geerard, 5 vols. and *Supplementum* (Turnhout, 1983–98)
CPL	*Clavis Patrum Latinorum*, ed. E. Dekkers, 3rd ed. (Steenbrugge, 1995)
CSEL	*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Vienna)
DACL	*Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, ed. F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq, 15 vols. in 30 (Paris, 1907–53)
Du Cange	C. Du Fresne Du Cange, *Glossarium ad scriptores mediae et infimae latinitatis*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1678)
Dufourcq, *Gesta*	A. Dufourcq, *Étude sur les "Gesta martyrum" romains*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1900–7; 2nd ed., Paris, 1988)
EEC	*Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, ed. A. Di Berardino, trans. A. Walford, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1992)
EP	*Enciclopedia dei papi*, 3 vols. (Rome, 2000)
Ferrua and Carletti	Ferrua, A. and C. Carletti, *Damaso e i martiri di Roma* (Vatican City, 1985)
GCS	*Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1897–)
ICUR	*Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae septimo saeculo antiquiores,* ed. G. B. de Rossi, 2 vols. (Rome, 1857–88); and *Nova Series*, 10 vols. (Rome, 1922–92)

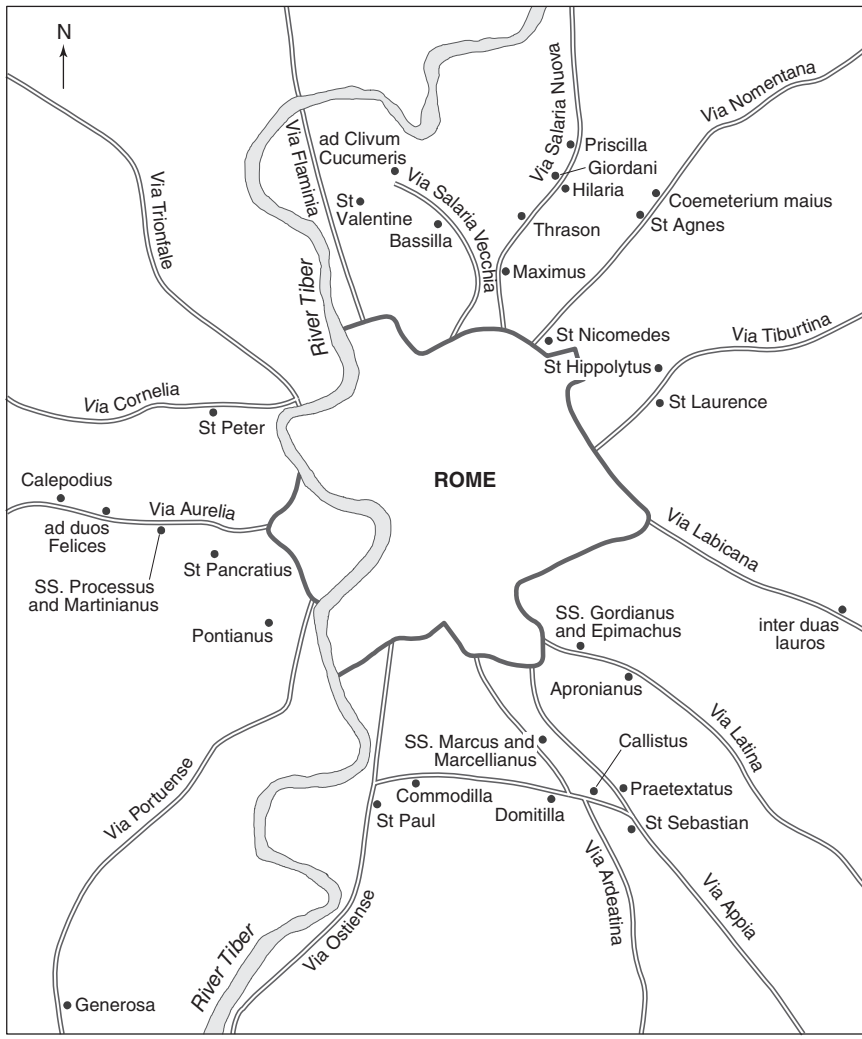
Jones, *LRE*	A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1964)
Krautheimer, *CBCR*	R. Krautheimer *et al*., *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae*, 5 vols. (Vatican City and New York, 1937–77)
Lanéry, 'Hagiographie'	C. Lanéry, 'Hagiographie d'Italie (300–550). I. Les Passions latines composées en Italie', in *Hagiographies* V, ed. G. Philippart, Corpus Christianorum (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 15–369
LP	the *Liber pontificalis*: ed. T. Mommsen, *Liber pontificalis (pars prior)*, *MGH*, *Gesta Pontificum Romanorum* (Berlin, 1898); ed. L. Duchesne, *Le Liber pontificalis: texte, introduction et commentaire*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1886–1957); trans. R. Davis, *The Book of Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis). The Ancient Biographies of the First Ninety Roman Bishops to AD 715*, 2nd ed., TTH 6 (Liverpool, 2000)
LTUR	*Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*, ed. M. Steinby, 6 vols. (Rome, 1993–2000)
LTUR. Suburbium	*Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae. Suburbium*, ed. A. La Regina, 5 vols. (Rome, 2000–8)
MGH	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*
MGH, *AA*	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, *Auctores Antiquissimi*
MGH, *Epistolae*	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolae (in quarto)*
Mombritius	B. Mombritius, *Sanctuarium* (Milan, 1478; ed. monachi Solesmenses, 2 vols. (Paris, 1910))
Niermeyer	J. F. Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus* (Leiden, 1976)
PG	*Patrologiae Graecae cursus completus*, ed. J. P. Migne, 162 vols. (Paris, 1857–66)
PIR^1	*Prosopographia Imperii Romani saec. I. II. III.*, ed. E. Klebs, H. Dessau, and P. Von Rohden, 3 vols. (Berlin 1897–8)
PIR^2	*Prosopographia Imperii Romani saec. I. II. III*, ed. E. Groag, A. Stein *et al*., 2nd ed., 8 vols. (Berlin and Leipzig, 1933–2015)
PL	*Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus*, ed. J. P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844–64)
Platner–Ashby	S. B. Platner, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, rev. T. Ashby (Oxford, 1926)
PLRE	*The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, I. *A.D. 260–395*, ed. A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale and J. Morris (Cambridge, 1971)
RACr	*Rivista di archeologia cristiana*
Richardson	L. Richardson, jr, *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (Baltimore and London, 1992)

SHA	*Scriptores* [rectius *Scriptor*] *Historiae Augustae*, ed. and trans. D. Magie, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1932)
Souter	A. Souter, *A Glossary of Later Latin to 600* AD (Oxford, 1949)
Stotz, *Handbuch*	P. Stotz, *Handbuch zur lateinischen Sprache des Mittelalters*, 5 vols. (Munich, 1996–2004)
TLL	*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (Munich, 1896–)
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians (Liverpool)

Maps



Map 1. The intra-urban churches dedicated to Roman martyrs



Map 2. Suburban cemeteries housing shrines to Roman martyrs

Introduction

The present volume contains translations, with individual introductions and commentaries, of forty *passiones* of Roman martyrs, composed for the most part at Rome itself, during a span of some 250 years, between AD *c.*425 and *c.*675. In sum these *passiones* constitute a substantial body of literature produced at a period when the literature of Rome itself—apart from the great figures of Boethius, Cassiodorus, and Gregory the Great—is not well represented; yet as a corpus they are poorly understood. They usually do not merit even a passing mention in literary histories of the period, such as Schanz–Hosius,[1] Wright–Sinclair,[2] or Conte.[3] As Walter Berschin observed, the Latin *passiones* composed in Italy—and a fortiori in Rome—are largely a question mark.[4] No attempt has ever been made to compile a reliable list of the *passiones* in question.[5] There are, of course, valid reasons for the silence of literary historians. With very few exceptions, the texts are available only in editions dating from the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. No attempt has ever been made to gather them together as a corpus, and only sporadic efforts have been made during the past two centuries to produce reliable scholarly editions. Furthermore, since they were composed centuries

[1] M. Schanz, *Geschichte der römischen Litteratur bis zum Gesetzgebungswerk des Kaisers Justinian*, IV/2: *Die römische Litteratur von Constantin bis zum Gesetzgebungswerk Justinians*, rev. C. Hosius and G. Krüger (Munich, 1920).

[2] F. A. Wright and T. A. Sinclair, *A History of Later Latin Literature from the Middle of the Fourth Century to the End of the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1931). Wright and Sinclair treat named authors only, and provide no discussion of the substantial amount of anonymous literature from the Late Latin period.

[3] G. B. Conte, *Latin Literature: A History*, trans. J. B. Solodow, rev. D. Fowler and G. W. Most (Baltimore, MD, 1999). Conte briefly mentions the proconsular *acta*, and such early texts as the *Passio S. Perpetuae* (pp. 599–600), but provides no discussion of the fictional *passiones* which are the subject of the present volume.

[4] *Biographie und Epochenstil*, II, p. 173: 'Das große Fragezeichen der italienischen Biographie des frühen Mittelalters ist die Passionsliteratur. Wieviele Passionen sind in diesem Land … geschrieben worden?'

[5] A point made forcibly by Claudio Leonardi, 'L'agiografia romana nel secolo IX', in *Hagiographie, culture et sociétés IVe–XIIe siècle* (Paris, 1981), pp. 471–90, at 472. The list in *CPL* (nos. 2156–247) is a helpful beginning, but is far from complete.

after the ending of persecution of Christians, they are worthless as witnesses to the actual trial and execution of Christians in earlier times, and are vitiated by such outrageous errors of chronology that they have earned the contempt of modern historians of the later Roman empire. With few exceptions—the *passiones* of St Sebastian (III) and St Caecilia (IV), both of which were composed at Rome by Arnobius the Younger—they are the work of anonymous clerics who show little sign of advanced training in Latin and who were seldom capable of anything more than pedestrian prose. Yet scholars have long realized that, in spite of their obvious historical and stylistic deficiencies, *passiones* could help to throw light on the concerns and anxieties of the average Roman Christian during the 250 years during which they were being composed—if only they could be reliably dated. In recent years, however, great progress has been made in understanding the chronology of these *passiones*, notably by virtue of the pioneering labours of Cécile Lanéry,[6] and it is hoped that the present volume will contribute to a further stage in our understanding of what was a very popular and very influential, if grossly neglected, genre of Christian–Latin literature.

WHO WERE THE ROMAN MARTYRS?

Many of the *passiones* translated in the present volume concern 'martyrs' whose claims to authenticity are dubious in the extreme. One might consider as 'authentic' martyrs those whose martyrdoms are recorded in the *Depositio martyrum*, hence before *c.*336 (Appendix I, below) or were commemorated by a metrical *titulus* composed by Pope Damasus, hence before 384 (Appendix II, below). On this criterion, those *passiones* devoted to what may be 'authentic' martyrs are the following: the seven sons of St Felicitas, though not St Felicitas herself (I); St Sebastian (III), St Tiburtius (III), SS. Abdon and Sennes (VI and XVI), Pope Sixtus II (VI and XVI), St Laurence (VI and XVI), St Hippolytus (VI and XVI), Pope Cornelius (VII), SS. Nereus and Achilleus (VIII), SS. Protus and Hyacinthus (IX), St Bassilla (IX), Pope Callistus (XII), SS. Agapitus and Felicissimus (XVI), St Agnes (XVII), Pope Marcellus (XX), the Four Crowned Martyrs (XXIV), SS. Marcellinus and Peter (XXIII), St Hermes (XXXII), SS. Calogerus and Parthenius (XXXIII), SS. Felix and Adauctus (XXXV), and SS. Simplicius, Faustinus and Beatrix (XXXVI). Note, however, that the

[6] Lanéry, 'Hagiographie', as well as her two important studies of Arnobius the Younger: 'Arnobe le Jeune' and 'Nouvelles recherches'. There is a helpful assessment of the importance of Lanéry's work, and of the ways in which the *passiones martyrum* were reflected in the construction and decoration of fifth-century Roman churches, by Heid, 'Roms Selbstfindung in barbarischer Zeit'.

statement that these *passiones* treat what may be 'authentic' martyrs does not imply that the narratives which describe their martyrdoms are anything other than pure fiction: although someone named Sebastian may well have been martyred before or during the 'Great Persecution', there is no way of proving that he was chief of staff of Diocletian's palace guard, as he is described in the *passio* bearing his name, let alone that he was martyred in the absurd way that is described in this text.

However, many, perhaps all, of the remaining *passiones* treat martyrs whose martyrdoms are patent fabrications by the authors of *passiones*. The *passiones* were confected to commemorate or publicize the founders either of intra-urban *titulus*-churches, such as St Chrysogonus (II), St Anastasia (II), St Caecilia (IV), Pope Clement (V), St Susanna (XI), St Eusebius the priest (XIII), St Pudentiana (XV), St Praxedis (XV), SS. John and Paul (XVIII), St Sabina (XXXIV), and St Bibiana (XXXVIII), or of sanctuaries or hypogean basilicas in suburban cemeteries, such as St Eugenia (IX), Pope Felix II (XIV), SS. Processus and Martinianus (XIX), SS. Marius and Martha (XXII), St Pancratius (XXV), SS. Rufina and Secunda (XXXI), SS. Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus (XXXII), St Getulius (XXXIX), and St Basilides (XL).

What factors guided the Christian–Latin authors in their choice of subjects for treatment in a *passio*? Why, for example, was no *passio* ever composed for St Ignatius, a genuine Roman martyr who was executed at Rome *c.* AD 140?[7] Or for Pope Fabian (236–50), who was executed during the persecution of Decius in AD 250?[8] Instead of these genuine Roman martyrs, we are provided with *passiones* of many martyrs who were fictitious creations and in many cases cannot be proved ever to have existed. The answer seems to be that *passiones* were only composed to commemorate those martyrs who were venerated in intra-urban, *titulus*-churches, or whose remains could be visited in a prominent tomb or crypt in a suburban cemetery; in other words, that there is a clear link between the composition of *passiones* and the explosion of pilgrim interest in visiting martyrial sites from the late fourth century onwards. This much emerges clearly from a survey of the martyrs commemorated in surviving *passiones*:

> St Felicitas (I): commemorated in an above-ground basilica in her name in the cemetery of Maximus, off the Via Salaria Nuova; her seven sons were commemorated in tombs in the various cemeteries which housed them: Felix and Philip in the cemetery of Priscilla (Via Salaria Nuova); Martial, Vitalis and Alexander in the cemetery of the Giordani (Via Salaria Nuova);

[7] On the martyrdom of St Ignatius, see Bowersock, *Martyrdom and Rome*, pp. 6 and 77–81, and Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, pp. 15–19 (demonstrating that the conventionally accepted date of 117 for the martyrdom of Ignatius is too early).

[8] Fabian was commemorated together with other martyred popes in the famous 'Papal Crypt' in the cemetery of Callistus; but no church or individual shrine in Rome was ever dedicated to him.

Silvanus in the cemetery of Maximus (Via Salaria Nuova); and Ianuarius in the cemetery of Praetextatus (Via Appia).

SS. Anastasia and Chrysogonus (II): Anastasia was commemorated in the *titulus*-church of S. Anastasia on the Palatine, Chrysogonus in the *titulus*-church of S. Crisogono in Trastevere.

St Sebastian (III): commemorated in the Constantinian basilica (originally dedicated to the Apostles Peter and Paul) of S. Sebastiano on the Via Appia; the tomb of St Tiburtius was to be seen in the cemetery *inter duas lauros* on the Via Labicana; and that of SS. Marcus and Marcellianus in the cemetery of Basileus off the Via Ardeatina.

St Caecilia (IV): commemorated in the *titulus*-church of S. Cecilia in Trastevere; also in the crypt of St Caecilia in the cemetery of Callistus on the Via Appia.

Pope Clement (V): commemorated in the *titulus*-church of S. Clemente on the Caelian Hill.

SS. Abdon and Sennes, Pope Sixtus II, Laurence and Hippolytus (VI): the above-ground basilica of SS. Abdon and Sennes, and the crypt which housed their remains, was in the cemetery of Pontianus on the Via Portuense; the tomb of Pope Sixtus II was in the famous 'Papal Crypt' in the cemetery of Callistus on the Via Appia; the Constantinian basilica of St Laurence was on the Via Tiburtina (S. Lorenzo fuori le mura); and the crypt of St Hippolytus could be visited in a nearby cemetery on the Via Tiburtina (there was also a church in his name at Porto).

Pope Cornelius (VII): the crypt of Pope Cornelius was located next to the cemetery of Callistus on the Via Appia.

SS. Nereus and Achilleus (VIII): the hypogean basilica of SS. Nereo ed Achilleo was a prominent feature of the cemetery of Domitilla on the Via Ardeatina; there was also an intra-urban *titulus*-church in their names (formerly called the *titulus Fasciolae*) near the Baths of Caracalla.

SS. Eugenia, Protus, and Hyacinthus (IX): St Eugenia was commemorated in an above-ground basilica built over her tomb in the cemetery of Apronianus on the Via Latina; the tombs of SS. Protus and Hyacinthus were a prominent feature of the cemetery of Bassilla (later called the cemetery of Hermes) on the Via Salaria Vecchia.

SS. Chrysanthus and Daria (X): their tombs could be visited in a crypt in the cemetery of Thrason on the Via Salaria Nuova.

St Susanna (XI): the *titulus*-church of S. Susanna was (and is) located on the Quirinal.

Pope Callistus (XII): there was a church dedicated to Pope Callistus, lying over his tomb in an identifiable crypt, in the cemetery of Calepodius on the Via Aurelia.

St Eusebius the priest (XIII): possibly to be identified with the founder of the *titulus*-church of S. Eusebio on the Piazza Vittorio Emmanuele.

Pope Felix II (XIV): the basilica of this Pope Felix was located at the second mile of the Via Aurelia.

SS. Pudentiana and Praxedis (XV): the *titulus*-church of S. Pudenziana on the Via Urbana on the Esquiline; and the *titulus*-church of S. Prassede on the Via di S. Martino (near S. Maria Maggiore), also on the Esquiline.

SS. Polychronius and others (XVI): for the churches commemorating martyrs celebrated in this *passio*, see above, no. VI.

St Agnes (XVII): commemorated in the great Constantinian basilica of S. Agnese on the Via Nomentana.

SS. Gallicanus, John and Paul (XVIII): the basilica of SS. Giovanni e Paolo (formerly the *titulus*-church of Pammachius) on the Caelian Hill.

SS. Processus and Martinianus (XIX): were buried in a crypt beneath a basilica on the Via Aurelia (site unidentified).

Pope Marcellus (XX): the tomb of Pope Marcellus was located in the hypogean basilica of Pope Silvester in the cemetery of Priscilla on the Via Salaria Nuova; the *titulus*-church of Marcellus (S. Marcello sulla Via Lata) was located in central Rome, just off the present Corso.

SS. Primus and Felicianus (XXI): were martyrs of *Nomentum* (modern Mentana) on the Via Nomentana; their relics were transferred to the intra-urban church of S. Stefano Rotondo on the Caelian Hill during the pontificate of Theodore (642–9).

SS. Marius and Martha (XXII): the martyrs treated in this *passio* were commemorated in several relevant churches, including the basilica and cemetery of St Valentine on the Via Flaminia; the basilica of Asterius in Ostia; and the sanctuary of SS. Marius, Martha, Audifax, and Abacuc on the Via Cornelia (near the present-day hamlet of Boccea).

SS. Marcellinus and Peter (XXIII): the crypt housing the remains of the two martyrs, and the adjacent basilica in their names (SS. Marcellino e Pietro), was located in the cemetery *inter duas lauros* on the Via Labicana.

The Four Crowned Martyrs (XXIV): commemorated in the intra-urban basilica of the SS. Quattro Coronati on the Caelian Hill.

St Pancratius (XXV): commemorated in the basilica and cemetery of S. Pancrazio on the Via Aurelia.

Pope Stephen I (XXVI): was buried in the famous 'Papal Crypt' in the cemetery of Callistus on the Via Appia.

SS. Gordianus and Epimachus (XXVII): the church and cemetery of these two martyrs was located next to the Via Latina.

The Greek Martyrs (XXVIII): were buried in a recently-discovered cemetery beneath the remains of an ambulatory basilica near the Via Ardeatina, identified as that of Pope Marcus.

SS. Eusebius and Pontianus (XXIX): were buried 'at the sixth mile', in a cemetery located between the Via Aurelia and the Via Triumphalis, which has never been identified.

Pope Urban (XXX): was first buried in the cemetery of Praetextatus on the Via Appia, but subsequently translated to the *domus Marmeniae* a mile or so further out on the Via Appia.

SS. Rufina and Secunda (XXXI): were buried in a prominent mausoleum at the ninth mile of the Via Cornelia, the location of which has not been certainly identified.

SS. Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus (XXXII): St Cyrinus was buried in a crypt in the cemetery of Praetextatus; St Hermes in the cemetery of Bassilla (later known by his own name) on the Via Salaria Vecchia; and SS. Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus in distinctive tombs in a cemetery beneath the above-ground basilica in their names at the seventh mile of the Via Nomentana.

SS. Calogerus and Parthenius (XXXIII): were buried in individual tombs in the area known as the 'Region of Gaius and Eusebius' in the vast and frequently-visited cemetery of Callistus on the Via Appia.

SS. Serapia and Sabina (XXXIV): the famous basilica of S. Sabina on the Aventine.

SS. Felix and Adauctus (XXXV): were buried in a prominent and well-decorated hypogean basilica in Gallery B of the cemetery of Commodilla on the Via delle Sette Chiese, just off the Via Ostiense.

SS. Simplicius, Faustinus and Beatrix (XXXVI): were buried in the cemetery of Generosa *ad Sextum Philippi*, at the sixth mile of the Via Portuense, in a well-decorated crypt.

St Symphorosa and her seven sons (XXXVII): were buried in a well-marked cemetery, *ad Septem Fratres*, at the ninth mile of the Via Tiburtina.

St Pigmenius (XXXVIII): was buried in the cemetery of Pontianus on the Via Portuense, and one of the principal actors in this *passio*, St Bibiana, was venerated in a prominent, intra-urban basilica near the present Stazione termini.

St Getulius (XXXIX): was buried in a cemetery near Ponte Sfondato at the twenty-ninth mile of the Via Salaria, and commemorated in a church (no longer identifiable) in the vicinity of the cemetery.

St Basilides (XL): was commemorated in a basilica at *Lorium* (modern Castel di Guido), at the twelfth mile of the Via Aurelia.

It is clear from this survey that every Roman martyr who figures in a Latin *passio* was either commemorated in an intra-urban *titulus*-church, or else was buried in a prominent and decorated crypt or hypogean basilica in a suburban cemetery. All these sites could conveniently be visited by pilgrims who travelled to Rome, as is clear from the seventh-century itineraries (Appendix IV). On the other hand, we know, from the *Depositio martyrum* (Appendix I) and the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* (Appendix III), the names of numerous Roman martyrs for whom no *passio* was ever composed: for example,

St Ignatius and Pope Fabian, both mentioned above, as well as St Timothy (buried on the Via Ostiense); St Gorgonius (Via Labicana); SS. Quartus and Quintus (Via Latina); St Victor (cemetery of Bassilla on the Via Salaria Vecchia); and St Genuinus (*inter duas lauros*). There is no record that a church or sanctuary was ever constructed for these martyrs.[9] The conclusion seems obvious: *passiones* were composed only for Roman martyrs who were commemorated in well-known and accessible Roman churches or sanctuaries. The implication would then seem to be that, in response to the ever-growing numbers of pilgrim visitors, they were composed by clerics either of the individual *titulus*-churches, or by clerics of intra-urban churches who had responsibility for curating the shrines in suburban cemeteries.[10]

MARTYRDOM AT ROME: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Roman *passiones martyrum* portray the confrontation between the imperial government—the emperor and/or his magistrates—and the individual Christian, who struggles heroically to vindicate the Christian faith, but in the end loses the struggle and undergoes capital punishment and martyrdom. The focus of the confrontation is the trial; but the trial is usually preceded by an account of how the Christian was arrested, followed by a description of the torture inflicted during the trial, and then the execution of the Christian at the end of the trial.

The persecution of Christians. At any time between the principate of Nero (54–68) and the early fourth century, an individual Christian in Rome or its environs (and elsewhere in the empire, of course) might be arrested and brought for trial before a magistrate, usually either the urban prefect in Rome, or the praetorian prefect of suburbicarian Italy (or his deputy), or the governor of one of the Italian provinces in the vicinity of Rome. Christians were brought to the attention of magistrates by the process of delation (*delatio*, 'denunciation'); when a Christian was denounced in this manner, the magistrate was obliged to proceed with the trial (called *cognitio*). However, a guiding principle in the trial of Christians, at least in the period before 250, was enunciated in a famous rescript by the emperor Trajan, in response to a query by the Younger Pliny, who at that time was governor of Bithynia, namely that if Christians were formally denounced and the charge against them was upheld, they were to be punished, but they were not to be sought out

[9] See Huelsen, *Le chiese*, s.vv.

[10] For example, we know from a fragmentary inscription found by de Rossi in the cemetery of Domitilla that it was curated by priests of the *titulus Fasciolae* (see *ICUR* I, p. 124 [no. 262], and below, p. 205 n. 12).

(*conquirendi non sunt*), and anonymous denunciations were not to be acted on.[11] If convicted of a capital charge (see below), the Christian in question would be sentenced and executed.

It is simply impossible to know how many individual Christians were tried and executed at Rome as martyrs according to this normal process of law (called *coercitio*), but presumably the number was much smaller than would be suspected from the fictitious *passiones* translated here. For one thing, the informer (*delator*) who denounced a Christian ran considerable personal risk if the charge against the Christian was not proven and the case was dismissed: he [the informer] could be charged with *calumnia* ('malicious prosecution'), involving confiscation of his own property and severe punishment, and might himself undergo torture in order to establish the truth of the claim which he had made against the Christian.[12] For these reasons, legal historians speak of the repression (rather than the persecution) of Christians in the period before 250.[13] But there were three notable occasions during this centuries-long period of time when the principle of *conquirendi non sunt* was abandoned and all Christians living in Rome were at risk of being arrested, tried and executed: namely the empire-wide persecutions, promoted by the emperors Decius (249–51), and by Valerian and his son Gallienus (257–60), and the so-called 'Great Persecution' under Diocletian and Maximian which began in February 303 and continued at Rome until 306, when it was suspended by Maximian's son Maxentius (Diocletian and Maximian having abdicated in 305).[14] Although this 'Great Persecution' continued in the eastern provinces under Galerius and Maximinus, the successors of Diocletian and Maximian, until 312, Christian inhabitants of Rome and the western provinces were no longer at risk. Because these three state-sponsored persecutions figure in a number of the *passiones* (alongside a number of other persecutions which are purely the invention of the authors), they need to be described briefly here.

The persecution under Decius (249–51).[15] In mid-December 249, an edict was promulgated which required all inhabitants of the empire to sacrifice to

[11] Pliny, *Ep*. xcvii. 2: 'Conquirendi non sunt; si deferantur et arguantur, puniendi sunt. . . . Sine auctore vero propositi libelli <in> nullo crimine locum habere debent.'

[12] See Robinson, *The Criminal Law of Ancient Rome*, pp. 100–1, and De Ste. Croix, *Christian Persecution*, p. 120.

[13] See, e.g., Robinson, 'The Repression of Christians'.

[14] There is a vast bibliography on the persecution of Christians; the following studies seem (to me) to be most helpful: *DACL* XIV/1, cols. 523–94 [H. Leclercq], s.v. 'Persécutions'; Jones, *LRE*, pp. 71–6; De Ste. Croix, 'Why were the Early Christians Persecuted?', in his *Christian Persecution*, pp. 105–52; Barnes, *Tertullian*, pp. 143–63; and Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, pp. 556–85.

[15] On the persecution of Decius, see Eusebius, *HE* vi. 39, vii. 1, as well as *DACL* IV/1, cols. 309–39 [H. Leclercq], s.v. 'Dèce (persécution de)'; Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution*, pp. 405–13; Clarke, 'Some Observations on the Persecution of Decius'; Lanata, *Gli atti dei martiri*, pp. 75–6 and 83–5; Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, pp. 567–8; Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, pp. 450–92 and 549–50; J. B. Rives, 'The Decree of Decius and the Religion of Empire', *Journal of Roman Studies* 89 (1999), 135–54; R. Selinger, *Die Religionspolitik*

the gods. The precise wording of the edict has not been preserved, and of its content, only the one clause—the requirement of all inhabitants to sacrifice—is known. The edict was perhaps not intended specifically to flush out Christians, but it certainly had that effect: the earlier principle enunciated by Trajan, that 'Christians were not to be sought out', was suspended, and many Christians were sought out, tried, and executed. Decius himself presided at the trial of Pope Fabian, who was executed on 20 January 250. The entire populace—or perhaps simply those who were suspected of being Christians[16]—was required to obtain certificates from the authorities stating that they had always shown reverence to the gods and had eaten sacrificial meat to prove it. The administrative burden of issuing and recording these certificates must have been horrendous, and, in spite of the Roman passion for record-keeping, the task eventually proved insuperable, and by 251 the persecution had petered out. In any event, Decius himself was killed in battle at *Abritus* in *Moesia Inferior* (Razgad in modern Bulgaria) in June 251; his memory was formally damned by his successor, Trebonianus Gallus, and presumably the edict of persecution was allowed to lapse.[17]

The persecution under Valerian and Gallienus (257–60).[18] In 257, four years after his accession, Valerian resumed the persecution of Christians, but this time aimed his attack at the upper echelons of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Two edicts are in question but, once again, their precise wording has not been preserved. The first edict (257) apparently concerned high-ranking members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and required that they sacrifice to the gods. The tenor of the second (258), which took the form of a rescript (possibly in answer to a query raised by the senate), is known from a letter of Cyprian, which states that 'Valerian sent a rescript to the senate, ordering that bishops and priests and deacons be summarily executed, and that senators and members of the upper classes [who were Christians] were to lose their rank and even to have their property confiscated.'[19] In Rome, Pope Sixtus II and Laurence, his archdeacon, were tried and executed, on 6 and 10 August 258

des Kaisers Decius: Anatomie einer Christenverfolgung (Frankfurt, 1994), esp. pp. 77–140, and *idem*, *The Mid-Third Century Persecutions of Decius and Valerian*, pp. 53–82.

[16] This is the reasonable suggestion of Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, pp. 453–5; cf. Selinger, *The Mid-Third Century Persecutions of Decius and Valerian*, pp. 59–63.

[17] Cf. Clarke, 'Some Observations on the Persecution of Decius', p. 63, n. 1: 'How the persecution ended is a mystery—there is no hint of a sudden, general amnesty. Cyprian's wording suggests it merely petered out.'

[18] Gallienus was Valerian's son and co-emperor. On the persecution of Valerian and Gallienus, see Eusebius, *HE* vii. 11 and Cyprian, *Ep.* lxxx.1, with discussion in Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution*, pp. 423–7; Lanata, *Gli atti dei martiri*, pp. 76–9 and 85–91; Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, pp. 302–3 and 550–1; Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, pp. 568–73; Potter, 'Martyrdom as Spectacle', pp. 56–63; Selinger, *The Mid-Third Century Persecutions of Decius and Valerian*, pp. 83–94; and Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, pp. 77–85.

[19] Cyprian, *Ep.* lxxx. 1. 2: '. . . rescripsisse Valerianum ad senatum ut episcopi et presbyteri et diacones in continenti animadvertantur, senatores vero et egregii viri et equites Romani, dignitate amissa, etiam bonis spolientur' (*CCSL* III C, p. 626); cf. Eusebius, *HE* vii. 11.

respectively, as we know from the correspondence of Cyprian (their martyrdoms are described in *passiones* nos. VI and XVI, where they are erroneously assigned to the principate of Decius); and in Carthage, on 14 September, Cyprian himself was executed. It is impossible to say how many more Christians were martyred at Rome during the Valerianic persecution. In any case, in 258 Valerian himself went on expedition against the Persians, where he was captured, probably in 260, and died in captivity. After the death of Valerian in 260, the persecution of Christians was terminated by Gallienus (although it seems unlikely that he issued a formal edict of toleration), and property confiscated from Christians was restored to them.[20] During the remaining years of the third century, Christians were left in peace,[21] a period of peace which came to an end only with the outbreak of the so-called 'Great Persecution' in February 303.

The 'Great Persecution'[22] began in February 303 and lasted in the eastern empire until 312 or 313, although in the West it had been suspended after two years, by 305 or early 306. The nature of this persecution is clear from the four imperial edicts which were promulgated: the First Edict (23 February 303) specified that all Christian churches were to be destroyed, all copies of the scriptures were to be surrendered, and all ecclesiastical furniture was to be confiscated; the Second Edict, probably issued during spring or summer 303, ordered the arrest of all Christian clergy (there is no evidence that this edict was ever promulgated in the West); the Third Edict, which was perhaps issued to coincide with the vicennalia of Diocletian in November 303, ordered an amnesty for Christian clergy on condition that they sacrificed; and the Fourth Edict, probably issued in January or February 304, required all inhabitants of the empire to sacrifice to the gods (there is little evidence that the Fourth Edict was enforced in the West).[23] Immediately after the publication of the First Edict, the 'Great Persecution' got under way in Nicomedia, when the Christian church opposite the imperial palace was demolished, and many martyrdoms followed during the next decade. In the West, however, the persecution of Christians seems to have been pursued much less vigorously and, according to Eusebius, had not completely expired in the West after two years; that is to say, it was evidently losing its impetus in the West by 305.[24] After becoming Caesar

[20] See L. de Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus* (Leiden, 1976), esp. pp. 175–85.

[21] See Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, pp. 573–4, and Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, pp. 553–6.

[22] The so-called 'Great Persecution' has been extensively studied: most important are the studies by Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution*, pp. 477–535; De Ste. Croix, *Christian Persecution,* pp. 35–78 ['Aspects of the "Great" Persecution']; Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, pp. 592–608; Davies, 'The Origin and Purpose of the Persecution of A.D. 303'; Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, pp. 97–150; and Twomey and Humphries (eds.), *The Great Persecution.*

[23] Corcoran, *The Empire of the Tetrarchs*, pp. 179–82, and De Ste. Croix, *Christian Persecution,* pp. 35–8.

[24] *HE* viii. 13. 10.

(in 306), Constantine allowed full freedom of worship to Christians living under his authority in Britain, Gaul, and Spain and restored any church property which had been confiscated in 303 as a consequence of the First Edict. In mid-306 Maxentius formally ended persecution in Italy and Africa, but did not restore confiscated church property, which was not restored until Miltiades became pope in 311. (In the East, persecution continued under Galerius until his death in 311, and then under Maximinus until 313.) The answer to the question of how many Christians were martyred at Rome during the 'Great Persecution', that is, between 303 and 305, cannot easily be determined.[25] In the *Depositio martyrum*, two martyrdoms are specifically assigned to the year of the ninth consulship of Diocletian and the eighth of Maximian, that is, AD 304: those of Calogerus and Parthenius (XXXIII), and of Bassilla (IX).[26] Probably there were more; but the numbers were no doubt much smaller than what might be inferred from *passiones* such as that of St Sebastian (III).

Finally, several *passiones* refer to a 'persecution' under the emperor Julian 'the Apostate' (361–3): those of Gallicanus, John, and Paul (XVIII), Gordianus and Epimachus (XXVII), and Pigmenius (XXXVIII). This is historical nonsense. Although Julian was a committed pagan, he took no measures against Christians except for forbidding them to hold chairs of rhetoric and philosophy, and closing the church in Antioch as a means of calming disturbances (caused by Christian mobs); certainly he did not mount a persecution in any meaningful sense of the word.[27]

What is striking is that relatively few of the *passiones* translated here are attributed to these three major episodes of empire-wide persecution. Five are attributed to the persecution of Decius, but all these attributions are erroneous: one of them mentions the persecution of Decius, but the martyrdoms in question are described as having taken place under Valerian (XXVIII); another concerns Pope Cornelius, who died in 252, a year after the death of Decius (VII); two others concern martyrs such as Pope Sixtus II and St Laurence, who are known from reliable historical sources (the letters of Cyprian) to have died in 258 during the persecution of Valerian and Gallienus (VI and XVI); finally, one martyrdom is assigned—erroneously—to the

[25] Cf. the comment of De Ste. Croix, *Christian Persecution,* p. 68: 'in the West, where the persecution ceased before it had properly developed, we need not be surprised to find very few martyrdoms indeed, except of volunteers or of those who defied E[dict] 1.'

[26] The author of the *passio* of St Eugenia (IX), in describing the martyrdom of Bassilla, was apparently unaware of the entry in the *Depositio martyrum*; instead, he absurdly assigned Bassilla's martyrdom to the reign of Gallienus.

[27] On Julian's measures against Christians, see Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* xxii. 10. 7 and xxii. 13. 2; for modern studies of his reign, see Robert Browning, *The Emperor Julian* (London, 1975), pp. 159–86, esp. 163: 'In fact there was no persecution'; and G. W. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate* (London, 1978), pp. 79–83.

Decian persecution, namely that of Calogerus and Parthenius (XXXIII); but, as we have seen, these two martyrs are recorded in the *Depositio martyrum* as having been executed under Diocletian and Maximian in AD 304. The martyrdoms in only two *passiones* are attributed to the persecution of Valerian and Gallienus: those of Pope Stephen I (XXVI) and of SS. Rufina and Secunda (XXXI). The martyrdoms in seven *passiones* are assigned to the 'Great Persecution' under Diocletian and Maximian: those of Sebastian (III), Susanna (XI), Pope Marcellus (XX), Primus and Felicianus (XXI), Pancratius (XXV), Felix and Adauctus (XXXV), and Simplicius, Faustinus, and Beatrix (XXXVI). In other words, only ten of the forty *passiones* assign the martyrdoms which they describe to historically-documented periods of persecution; the remainder are assigned to persecutions which, quite simply, are figments of their authors' imaginations.

The charges against Christians. A Christian might in principle be arrested and charged with any one of a number of capital charges:[28] *maiestas* (that is, essentially, treason, but also including slander of the emperor and his family, i.e. *lèse-majesté*),[29] *flagitia* ('abominations'), sorcery, divination and prophecy, sacrilege (*sacrilegium*), atheism, and possibly illegal association (belonging to a secret society).[30] However, the most frequently attested charge, both in historical sources and in the fictional *passiones*, is that of the *nomen Christianum*. The exact legal status of this charge is problematic, and much debated. A. N. Sherwin-White argued that, because of suspected *flagitia*, 'the *nomen* [*Christianum*], active membership of a criminal organization without further proof of individual guilt is constituted a capital charge, by direct magisterial action, that is, by an *edictum* with or without support of a senatorial decree. The charge is enforced by *coercitio*, normally through the procedural form of *cognitio*. The *nomen* then acts as a pointer to the magistrate, indicating a man whom it is proper for him to coerce as a malefactor, if accused.'[31] In other words, the *nomen Christianum* was a useful pointer for prosecuting magistrates, but was not a statutory prohibition; in the words of Olivia Robinson, 'the *nomen* simply defines a class of potential subversives.'[32] Nevertheless, although the statutory position of the *nomen Christianum* in

[28] Robinson, 'The Repression of Christians', p. 285: 'It begins to seem possible that there was no single legal ground for repression, that it fell under different offences at different times.'

[29] On *maiestas*, see Robinson, *The Criminal Law of Ancient Rome*, pp. 74–8, and Chilton, 'The Roman Law of Treason', as well as the earlier but valuable study by De Regibus, 'Storia e diritto romano negli "Acta martyrum",' pp. 145–9.

[30] There is debate among legal historians whether Christians were ever charged with membership of an illegal society (*collegium illicitum*); see Robinson, 'The Repression of Christians', pp. 284–5, and De Ste. Croix, *Christian Persecution,* pp. 123–4.

[31] Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny*, p. 781.

[32] Robinson, 'The Repression of Christians', p. 285. She continues: 'Was the *nomen* a conventional, a customary, classification, a way of referring to the adherents of something—unspecified in general, but particularized when need arose—which could be dangerous to the

Roman law is unclear, the most frequent charge against Christians in the fictional *passiones* is that of the *nomen Christianum*;[33] other charges, notably *maiestas*,[34] *magicae artes*,[35] and *sacrilegium*,[36] can often be inferred, although they are never spelled out. This is probably another respect in which the *passiones* depart from historical reality.

The trial. A trial (*cognitio*) might be conducted in the magistrate's private chambers (*in secretario*), or in public, at one of the venues used for public hearings, such as the portico of the temple of Mars Ultor;[37] but wherever the trial was conducted, the execution of the condemned criminal took place in public. The authors of the fictional *passiones* attempted to recreate the atmosphere and procedures of Roman criminal trials.[38] Unfortunately, they had very little authentic evidence on which to base their accounts. Although the Romans were a nation of bureaucrats, and kept detailed court records (called 'protocols') of all criminal trials, including those of Christians, not a single one of these court records has survived (in Latin) from Rome itself:[39]

state? What do we know of the facts of the repression of Christians?' (*ibid.* pp. 258–66). Cf. De Regibus, 'Storia e diritto romano negli "Acta martyrum",' pp. 139–40.

[33] For examples, see III.3, IV.2, IV.29, VI.3, XVI.7, XVII.5, XXIV.6, XXXIV.1, and XXXVI.1.

[34] Examples of what could have been regarded as *maiestas* include: Caecilia's statement to the prefect Almachius that his emperors are in error: 'Sic imperatores vestri errant sicut et nobilitas vestra. Sententia . . . testaris vos saevientes' (IV.29); the response of Pope Cornelius to the soldiers arresting him, 'Pereant dii daemoniorum simul cum Decio' (VII.3); the insinuation of Polychronius together with the reply of Decius, 'Ergo nos stercora sumus?' (XVI.2); Diocletian and Maximian saying to Primus and Felicianus, 'Vos estis, qui iussa nostra contemnitis et pro nihilo computabis' (XXI.2); the judge Almachius describing Marmenia as someone 'qui praecepta deridet principum invictissimorum' (XXX.14); and the sentence passed against St Sabina: 'Sabinam . . . dominos quoque et Augustos nostros blasphemantem, gladio percuti decrevimus' (XXXIV.14).

[35] The charge of magic could be inferred from the urban prefect's words to Tiburtius, 'Quis ignorat magicam vos docuisse Christum vestrum' (III.82); another prefect's words to St Eugenia, who is described as being 'quasi magicis artibus plena' (IX.20); Nemesius is tried by Valerian on the grounds 'et ut consulem . . . Maximum interficeres tuis magicis artibus' (XXVI.6); the emperor Julian says of St Ianuarius, 'hunc cognovimus magum esse' (XXVII.3); and Vitellius the judge charges SS. Eusebius, Pontianus, and the others with magic: 'Isti confidunt de magia' (XXIX.6).

[36] Examples of sacrilege include the statement of Probus the prefect to Anastasia: 'Hoc sacrilegium nec aures meae admittere queunt' (II.24) and his further statement that she is to die 'ut decet sacrilegam' (II.25); the emperor Trajan's rescript to his urban prefect mentions that the Roman populace is urging that Pope Clement is 'ob criminis sacrilegii accusandum' (V.6); what the emperor Decius says to St Polychronius, 'Tu es Polychronius sacrilegus' (XVI.2); and the emperor Claudius' instructions to his prefect concerning St Valentine, 'fac in eum quod in sacrilegum leges praedixerunt' (XXII.8).

[37] See De Regibus, 'Storia e diritto romano negli "Acta martyrum"', pp. 172–3 (trial *in secretario*), 173–5 (trial *in foro*).

[38] There is valuable discussion of the legal aspects of the trials of Christians by De Regibus, 'Storia e diritto romano negli "Acta martyrum"'; his focus, however, is on pre-Decian *acta martyrum* rather than on the fictional *passiones*, with the exception of the *Passio S. Clementis* (my no. V), mentioned briefly at p. 183 in the context of condemnation *ad metalla*.

[39] Cf. De Ste. Croix, *Christian Persecution,* p. 58: 'There is no trace of any contemporary attempt to preserve records of the deeds of the Roman and Italian martyrs, and as early as the

they had already been lost by the time Prudentius visited Rome *c.*400,[40] and Gregory the Great states in a letter to Eulogius that no accounts of Roman martyrdoms were to be found either in the Lateran archives or in any library in Rome.[41] The form of a protocol or trial record is, however, known from a number of papyrus fragments (in Greek) surviving from Egypt,[42] and from these fragments it is possible to deduce that a protocol consisted of three principal parts: the introduction (κεφάλαιον), which provided the date, the names of the persons involved in the trial, and the name of the presiding magistrate; the investigation or body of the trial itself (ἀνάγνωσις, corresponding to *cognitio* in the Roman *passiones*), consisting of the speeches of the magistrate and the defendants, usually recorded in *oratio recta*, introduced by such verbs as εἶπεν, ἀπεκρίνατο, etc.; and finally the verdict (κρίσις) of the magistrate.[43]

But although no authentic records of the trials of Christian martyrs in the Latin West have survived, there were various literary accounts in Latin—based on, or at least inspired by, authentic but lost protocols—which appear to have been composed before or during the Decian and Valerianic persecutions, and which are thought by modern scholars to preserve a reliable record of martyr trials.[44] These literary accounts are referred to as *acta*; and, in cases where the presiding magistrate was a proconsul (in Africa the senior magistrate was a proconsul, corresponding to the governor in other Roman provinces), are called *acta proconsularia*. Two such *acta proconsularia* are relevant here: those of the Scillitan martyrs [*BHL* 7527], and those of St Cyprian [*BHL* 2037]. The *acta proconsularia* of the Scillitan martyrs record the proceedings of a trial of twelve Christians (six men and six women) who were tried and executed in Carthage on 17 July 180.[45] As in trial protocols, the *acta* begin with a

time of Pope Damasus (366–84) they were already more or less legendary figures, about whom "traditions" circulated, based on no written documents.'

[40] See Lanéry, 'Hagiographie', p. 18, n. 3.

[41] *Registrum epistularum* viii. 28 [to Eulogius, patriarch of Alexandria]: 'nulla [*sc.* gesta] in archiuo huius nostrae ecclesiae uel in Romanae urbis bibliotecis esse cognoui' (*CCSL* CXLA, p. 549).

[42] A convenient list of surviving protocols is provided by Coles, *Reports of Proceedings in Papyri*, pp. 55–63.

[43] For the individual parts of a protocol, see Coles, *ibid.* pp. 29–38 (introduction), 38–49 (speeches), and 49–52 (verdict); see also Delehaye, *Les Passions des martyrs et les genres littéraires*, pp. 125–31; Musurillo, *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs*, pp. 249–51; and Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, pp. 54–66. I have not seen H. Niedermeyer, *Über antike Protokoll-Literatur* (diss. Göttingen, 1918).

[44] See Lanata, *Gli atti dei martiri*, pp. 23–7, and Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, pp. 64–82. In an earlier study, Barnes observed of the *acta* of the Scillitan martyrs, that 'the Scillitani were tried "in secretario": hence, if the *acta* are not pure fiction, they ought to derive from an official record' ('Pre-Decian *Acta martyrum*', p. 528).

[45] Since the martyrs were brought for trial to Carthage, it is clear that their place of origin—*Scilli* (?)—must have been somewhere in the province of *Africa proconsularis*; but its precise location has never been identified, and it is not recorded in Talbert, *Barrington Atlas.*

statement that the trial was held in the year in which Praesens was consul for the second time and Claudianus for the first (corresponding to AD 180),[46] on 17 July, in private chambers (*in secretario*), with Saturninus the proconsul presiding. The interrogation by Saturninus and the replies by the Christians are reported in *oratio recta* (*Saturninus dixit*; *Speratus dixit*, etc.). After the interrogation, during which the Christians refuse to recant, Saturninus remands them in custody for thirty days, to allow them to come to their senses (*moram .xxx. dierum habete et recordemini*); when they are brought back from prison, Speratus, speaking for the others, says simply 'Christianus sum'. Saturninus reads his verdict from a tablet (*decretum ex tabella recitauit*) that, since they have confessed to being Christians and have obstinately refused to return to Roman custom (*ad Romanorum morem*), they are to be executed by sword (*gladio animaduerti placet*); the verdict is then read out by the court herald (*Saturninus proconsul per praeconem dici iussit*).[47] Nearly eighty years later Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, was tried at Carthage before Paternus the proconsul. The *acta proconsularia* of Cyprian are longer and more elaborate—and no doubt further removed from the original but lost protocols—than those of the Scillitan martyrs, insofar as the *acta* record the events of two separate trials, held a year apart, under two successive proconsuls; but in other respects the structure follows that of trial protocols. The *acta* of Cyprian begin with the statement that the trial was held in the year in which Valerian was consul for the fourth time, and Gallienus (his son and co-emperor) for the third (that is, in AD 257), on 30 August, in private chambers (*in secretario*), with Paternus the proconsul presiding. The interrogation then proceeds in *oratio recta* (*Cyprianus episcopus dixit*, *Paternus proconsul dixit*, etc.), as a result of which Paternus banishes Cyprian to *Curubis* (Korba in modern Tunisia), from whence he returns a year later, apparently of his own volition. Then, the *acta* go on to explain, in the consulship of Tuscus and Bassus (AD 258), two officers from the staff of Galerius Maximus, who had succeeded Paternus as proconsul, brought Cyprian before Galerius for trial, which is stated to have taken place on 14 September of the same year. Galerius ordered Cyprian to sacrifice (*caeremoniari*), to demonstrate that he adhered to Roman custom, but he refused. Galerius consulted his legal advisers and

[46] It should be noted that the consular dating given in the text is not entirely accurate: the second consul of 180 was Sextus Quintilius Condianus, not Claudianus: which indicates that we are dealing here with a literary elaboration, not with an authentic trial protocol. The first consul of 180 was correctly C. Bruttius Praesens (*PIR*^{2}, I, pp. 372–3 [no.165]), and the proconsul of Africa in that year was P. Vigellius Saturninus (*PIR*^{2} VIII/2, p. 335 [no. 633]), who is described by Tertullian as the first African governor to have put Christians to death (*Ad Scapulam* 3–4).

[47] Lanata, *Gli atti dei martiri*, pp. 137–44; Musurillo, *Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, pp. 86–9; and Bastiaensen, *Atti e passioni dei martiri*, pp. 100–4. See discussion by Delehaye, *Les Passions des martyrs*, pp. 47–9, and by Barnes, 'Pre-Decian *Acta martyrum*', pp. 519–20, and *idem*, *Early Christian Hagiography*, pp. 64–6.

then read his verdict from a tablet (*decretum ex tabella recitauit*), namely that Cyprian the bishop was to be executed by sword (*gladio animaduerti placet*). Cyprian was led to the place of execution and duly executed; at nightfall his body was recovered (by Christians) and buried triumphantly in the cemetery of Macrobius Candidianus on the Mappalian way.[48]

From these *acta proconsularia*, and perhaps from some of the early *passiones* of African martyrs[49] and other sources as well,[50] the Roman authors of *passiones* derived the structure and detail of their narratives of trial proceedings. But it is also likely that some of the detail derived from familiarity with contemporary trial procedure: the form and procedure of a criminal trial before a prefect or governor probably changed very little between the late second century (when the Scillitan martyrs were tried), and the fifth and sixth centuries, when the majority of the *passiones* were composed.[51] For the later, as much as for the earlier period, no authentic trial protocols survive; but there is a revealing glimpse of a criminal trial in a Greek–Latin school dialogue, composed probably in the late fourth century, to illustrate (and provide the vocabulary for) the sort of scene a traveller to a foreign province might encounter in a strange forum:

> Before dawn, the prefect and the governor and the head of imperial finances and the army commander and the procurator have gone on ahead to the forum. You hear the voice of the herald summoning the decurions and the citizens . . . It turns 9.00 a.m. In come the legal advisers, the lawyers, the advocates, called into the chambers of the judge (who is to preside over the case in which they are

[48] Lanata, *Gli atti dei martiri*, pp. 184–93; Musurillo, *Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, pp. 168–75; and Bastiaensen, *Atti e passioni dei martiri*, pp. 206–31. See discussion by Delehaye, *Les Passions des martyrs*, pp. 62–9, and by Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, pp. 77–82, who suggests that the second part of the trial—that held in 258 under Galerius Maximus—is not based on an authentic protocol but, since the (second) trial and execution were held in public, may be the report of an eyewitness (p. 81).

[49] Such as the *Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* (*BHL* 6633; ed. C. J. M. J. Beek, *Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis* (Nijmegen, 1936)) and the *Passio SS. Montani et Lucii* (*BHL* 6009; ed. F. Dolbeau, 'La Passion des saints Lucius et Montanus: Histoire et édition du texte', *Revue des études augustiniennes* 18 (1983), 39–82).

[50] For example, the so-called *Gesta apud Zenophilum* (cf. *CPL* 244 *ad calc.*) describe the trial of one Victor of Cirta, a deacon of the Donatist church brought before Zenophilus, the governor (*consularis*) of Numidia, in 327 AD; as described, the trial began with questions designed to establish the name and status of the defendant (whether *honestior* or *humilior*): 'quis uocaris?', 'cuius condicionis es?', and 'cuius dignitatis es?' (*CSEL* XXVI, p. 185; see discussion by P. W. Hoogterp, 'Deux procès-verbaux donatistes', *Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi* 15 (1940), 39–112, at 48–50, 108–12, *et passim*); a similar line of questioning is found in a number of the fictional *passiones*.

[51] Cf. the comments of Delehaye, 'L'amphithéatre Flavien', p. 243: 'Les formes d'administration, la procédure criminelle en particulier, n'avaient point subi d'interruption . . . Aussi, la présence de détails techniques et de bonnes formules juridiques dans les Actes des martyrs ne révèle-t-elle nullement l'existence d'une source primitive ?' (p. 243); '. . . au moment où se rédigeaient les Actes, la préfecture urbaine subsistait toujours' (p. 246).

> involved). They plead several cases, each as best he can according to his verbal eloquence. Some of the cases are in their final stages, which I think are going to be wound up today. Then the governor comes down (from his chambers) to sit at the tribunal of the overseer. The tribunal is set up. The judge mounts the tribunal and, through the voice of the herald, asks the people to stand. The accused man, a thief, stands (before the tribunal); he is questioned as he deserves; he is tortured; the interrogator (*quaestionarius*) beats him, his breast is injured, he is strung up, he is beaten with staves, he is flogged, he goes through the entire sequence of tortures, and still denies (his guilt). He is to be punished; he is to die by capital punishment: he is led away to be executed by sword.[52]

The authors of *passiones* did not follow the earlier texts in every respect, and in many cases must have been influenced by their own familiarity with trial procedure, as illustrated in the quoted passage. Thus, in place of the dating by consular year which was an indispensable part of trial protocols and was reproduced as such in *acta proconsularia*, the fictional Roman *passiones* usually begin with a less precise chronological reference to the principate or dominate during which the martyrdom is said to have occurred: 'In the days of the emperor Decius', 'In the days of the wicked emperors Diocletian and Maximian', *vel sim.*: apparently consular datings were considered too technical to be readily understood by the Christian lay audiences for whom the *passiones* were composed. Then, following the arrest of the Christian(s) concerned, and presentation before the magistrate, either in private chambers (*in secretario*) or at a public hearing, the interrogation ensues, as in the protocols and the *acta proconsularia*. In the *passiones*, the interrogation is frequently conducted under torture; as we have seen, torture is not mentioned in the protocols and the *acta proconsularia*, but is very much a part of the trial depicted in the above-quoted schoolbook. Frequently, too, as in the *acta* of the Scillitan martyrs, the martyr is remanded in custody for a period (sometimes a month) in order to come to his senses. In the *passiones*, the magistrate is sometimes described as having repeated his question, as to whether the defendant was a Christian, three separate times. Although no such repetitions are found in the above-cited *acta proconsularia*, we know that it was

[52] A. C. Dionisotti, 'From Ausonius' Schooldays? A Schoolbook and its Relatives', *Journal of Roman Studies* 72 (1982), 83–125, at 104–5: 'ad forum ante lucem … quoniam praefectus, praeses, et rationalis et dux et procurator praecesserant. Audis vocem praeconis citantem decuriones et cives … Fit hora tertia. Ingrediuntur advocati, causidici, scholastici evocati in secretarium iudicis sui. Agunt plures causas, quisque ut potest secundum literarum facundiam. Sunt et causae in temporum finem, quas hodie credo terminandas. Exinde descendit praeses ad tribunal custodis sessurus. Sternitur tribunal, conscendit iudex tribunal, et sic voce praeconis iubet sisti personas. Reus sistitur latro; interrogatur secundum merita; torquetur, quaestionarius pulsat, ei pectus vexatur, suspenditur, †crescit, flagellatur fustibus, vapulat, pertransit ordinem tormentorum, et adhuc negat. Puniendus est; perit poena; ducitur ad gladium'. Cf. MacMullen, 'Judicial Savagery', pp. 155–6.

conventional trial procedure from a letter of Pliny the Younger.[53] In the end, having received affirmative replies to his thrice-repeated question, the magistrate delivers his verdict: but whereas sometimes the verdict is repeated by a court herald (*praeco*), there is no example in the fictional *passiones* of a judge reading out his verdict from a tablet. The martyr is then led out to execution, which in the *passiones* may take forms other than decapitation by sword (see below). In most *passiones*, the body of the martyr is recovered and buried triumphantly by pious Christians, as in the *acta* of St Cyprian.

LITERARY REPRESENTATIONS OF MARTYRDOM: THE 'EPIC *PASSIO*'

The *passiones* translated in this volume are all works of pure fiction,[54] belonging to a genre which was defined by the great Bollandist Hippolyte Delehaye as the 'epic *passio*'.[55] By use of this term Delehaye wished to suggest that the main characters of these fictional works were conceived by their authors as epic heroes: 'The hero belongs to a superior race. The battle from which he emerges as victor raises him above all the other heroes of literary history. But it is not simply a question of a victory by brute force; it consists in flooring a very formidable enemy—the powers of darkness as embodied in paganism. In this struggle the martyr is the champion of God, who fights on his behalf, and renders him invincible;'[56] and again, 'this mortal, even before having made his self-sacrifice, has entered into glory: he is the epic hero' (*le héros d'épopée*).[57]

The 'epic *passio*' could take somewhat different forms. On one hand, it might treat the trial and martyrdom of a single martyr, as in the case of Eusebius the priest (XIII), Pope Felix II (XIV), St Pancratius (XXV), or St Basilides (XL). Typically, however, the principal figure of the story—the 'epic hero' in Delehaye's words—was associated with a number of other persons, who were either Christians to begin with, or who through the hero's preaching and example were converted to Christianity, were baptized, and were subsequently martyred. Sometimes a number of *passiones* were strung together to create what Delehaye on another occasion referred to as 'epic cycles'

[53] *Ep.* x. 96. 3: 'Confitentes iterum ac tertio interrogaui, supplicium minatus; perseuerantes duci iussi'. This practice is alluded to in the *passio* of St Sebastian, where the martyr Castulus is 'tertio appensus, tertio auditus, in confessione Domini perseverans' (III.83).

[54] There is an excellent characterization of the nature and content of Roman *passiones martyrum* by Delehaye, *Étude sur le légendier romain*, pp. 15–41.

[55] For the definition of 'epic' *passiones martyrum*, see Delehaye, 'L'amphithéatre Flavien', pp. 236–52, and esp. *idem*, *Les Passions des martyrs*, pp. 171–226.

[56] Delehaye, *Les Passions des martyrs*, p. 172. [57] *Ibid.* p. 173.

(*cycles épiques*):[58] narratives in which a number of separate martyrdoms are grouped around an individual martyr. Delehaye cites as examples of 'epic cycles' the *passiones* of St Anastasia (II), St Sebastian (III), SS. Nereus and Achilleus (VIII), St Eugenia (IX), and St Polychronius (XVI). And these *passiones*, all of which date from the fifth or very early sixth century, served in turn as models for later epic *passiones*, those of Pope Marcellus (XX), Marius and Martha (XXII), Pope Stephen (XXVI), the Greek martyrs (XXVIII), Pope Urban (XXX), and others.

As we have seen, trial protocols were very brief documents, and the *acta proconsularia* exhibit commendable brevity. With the fictional *passiones*, however, the opposite is the case: many of them are protracted to almost intolerable length by various means, the longest being the *passio* of St Sebastian, which runs to ninety chapters, and involves a large cast of Christians and martyrs. The amplification is achieved by means of speeches—the second part of the original trial protocols—and by the introduction of other Christians who are related somehow to the principal martyr, and who also suffer martyrdom. The narrative structure of these fictional 'epic' *passiones* may be summarized as follows.

In the days of such-and-such an emperor, there was vigorous persecution of Christians. A certain Christian comes to the notice of the authorities. The Christian is accordingly brought for trial before a magistrate. In some *passiones*, the Christian is remanded in the custody of an official of the court, often a prison registrar (*commentariensis*), either in prison or in the official's private residence.[59] The official then tells the Christian that he has a relative (wife, son, or daughter) who is suffering from a serious illness, and asks the Christian for assistance. The Christian is able, with divine support, to cure the illness, whereupon the official asks for himself and his household to be baptized; a priest or bishop is brought and the baptisms are performed. As a result of his conversion and baptism, the newly-converted Christian is himself brought for trial before a magistrate and, after interrogation, is sentenced to capital punishment. Meanwhile the original Christian is also brought for trial; when asked by the magistrate the reasons for such insane behaviour, the Christian delivers a harangue on Christian doctrine, or else enters into a lengthy exchange with the magistrate. In the end, the magistrate remains unconvinced by the Christian's arguments and the Christian is asked to sacrifice; on refusal to sacrifice the Christian is beaten and tortured at length, all the while confessing the faith: so vehemently and inflexibly does the

[58] *Ibid.* p. 222, and *idem*, *Cinq leçons*, pp. 34–5: 'Elles ont ceci de caractéristique qu'au lieu d'être les Actes d'un saint, elles groupent autour d'un martyr célèbre, qui devient comme le héros du cycle, une série d'autres martyrs, qui en réalité n'ont eu avec lui aucune relation, mais qu'on fait évoluer, dans son voisinage, avec d'autres personnages secondaires, réels ou imaginaires entre lesquels on se plaît à établir des liens de famille.'

[59] On this practice, see Robinson, 'Private Prisons'.

Christian refuse to cooperate with the magistrate's requests that his/her behaviour can be described only as 'voluntary martyrdom'.[60] Finally the Christian is executed. Pious Christians recover the martyr's body and give it decent burial. In some *passiones*, divine retribution is visited on the persecuting magistrate.

It will be seen that this simple framework offered many possibilities for expansion: the number of persons who come into contact with the original Christian martyr and then seek to become Christians can be extended so as to create a lengthy concatenation of converts; the ceremony of baptism can be described in detail; the martyr's exposition of Christian doctrine may be drawn out, sometimes to tiresome length, and not infrequently may incorporate detailed denunciation of the pagan gods; and the tortures which the Christian suffers may be described in excruciating detail. The 'epic *passio*' thus became a flexible vehicle for the expression of matters which were of primary concern to the Church between the fifth century and the seventh: exposition of correct Christian doctrine (and the implied rejection of heretical doctrine), denunciation of (continuing) pagan practices, praise of virginity, etc. We may consider briefly the individual elements which provide the framework of individual *passiones*.[61]

Arrest and trial. In a very few cases, a Christian in the *passiones* is brought by means of a denunciation to the attention of a magistrate: thus St Anastasia is denounced, by way of a sort of 'citizen's arrest', before the prefect of *Illyricum* by an unnamed citizen (II.20); Torquatus formally denounces St Tiburtius to the urban prefect (III.77); and the prefect Almachius reminds St Caecilia that there are accusers (*accusatores*) at hand who can testify that she is a Christian ('accusatores praesto sunt qui te Christianissimam esse testantur'): presumably it is these 'accusers' who have been responsible for bringing Caecilia to the attention of the magistrate in the first place (IV.29). The trial itself begins when the magistrate mounts the tribunal; all those present are asked to stand (XXI.2: 'ex officio dictum est: "Adstant"'), and the magistrate, through the voice of a herald (*praeco*) or an interrogator (*quaestionarius*) asks the defendants to be brought in (XXIII.6: the deputy

[60] A helpful term devised by De Ste. Croix, *Christian Persecution,* pp. 45, 131–3, and esp. 153–200 ['Voluntary Martyrdom in the Early Church']. In his discussion of 'voluntary martyrdom', De Ste. Croix specifically excludes the *passiones* which are the subject of the present book: 'Nor have I paid any attention to the considerable quantity of late and fictitious *passiones* in which the martyrs are made to behave in a provocative manner and abuse their judges' (p. 165).

[61] Delehaye (*Les Passions des martyrs*, pp. 173–218) discusses the *topoi* of epic *passiones* under the following headings: 'Les personages' ('L'empereur et son édit', 'Le juge et son personnel'); 'Interrogatoire et discours'; 'Les supplices'; 'Les miracles' (including 'Visions', 'Voix célestes', and 'Chatiment des persécuteurs'). I have modified Delehaye's list of *topoi* to accommodate the Roman *passiones martyrum* translated here (nearly all of Delehaye's examples are drawn from Greek, not Latin, *passiones*).

'iussit Marcellinum . . . et Petrum . . . intromitti sub voce quaestionaria'). In a few *passiones* the magistrate is described as initiating the trial by asking for the Christian's name and rank: thus Sisinnius questioning St Irene: 'Quod tibi nomen est?' (II.15); Almachius asking St Caecilia, 'Quod tibi nomen est? . . . Cuius conditionis es?' (IV.28); the emperor Maximian asking the martyr St Sisinnius 'Quis vocaris?' (XX.4); the prefect Sapricius asking St Tertullinus to state his name and rank: 'Nomen tuum edicito . . . servus es, an ingenuus?' (XXVI.16); Gordianus the deputy asking St Ianuarius 'Quis vocaris, vel ex qua natione te esse ostendis . . . edicito nobis' (XXVII.1); and Almachius the prefect asking Lucinia to state her rank and profession, 'Dicite . . . cuius conditionis estis? aut quae est professio vestra?' (XXX.15). (In other *passiones*, such procedural details are omitted.) Then follows the interrogation itself (sometimes, but rarely, described correctly as *cognitio*). In a few cases, the defendant is remanded in custody for thirty days (as in the *acta proconsularia*) to allow time for reflection (e.g. in the *passio* of St Sebastian, SS. Marcus and Marcellianus are remanded in custody for thirty days: III.4). When the defendant is brought back to the tribunal, the magistrate reads out the sentence, as in the *passio* of St Sebastian: 'Fabianus dictavit sententiam, dicens, "Blasphemator deorum et reus . . . gladio animadvertatur"' (III.82), or in that of Pope Stephen: 'iussitque . . . dicta sententia, capite truncari' (XXVI.19). From these random details it is evident that some at least of the authors of *passiones* had some rough understanding of trial procedure; but it will also be clear that, in comparison with the authors of the *acta proconsularia*, they were not principally concerned to record accurately the details of this procedure.

The emperor. In some of the *passiones*, the trial is conducted by the emperor himself: thus trials are described as being conducted in person by Commodus (XXIX), Decius (VI and XVI),[62] Valerian and Gallienus (XXVI), Diocletian alone (II), and Diocletian and Maximian together (XXI).[63] But whether or not the emperor is shown conducting the trial in person, in most of the *passiones* of Roman martyrs, the historical context in which the martyrdom took place is signalled at the very outset of the *passio* by mention of the emperor(s) under which the events took place, even if the emperor in question takes no further

[62] There is evidence that Decius did conduct trials himself, as in the case of the Christian Celerinus, and Pope Fabian (January 250): see Clarke, 'Some Observations on the Persecution of Decius', pp. 64–5, and Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, p. 568. The authors of the *passiones* in question are most unlikely to have known this.

[63] The depiction in the *passiones* of martyrs appearing before an emperor (or emperors) is not per se historically false: Decius, for example, is known to have conducted the trials of Celerinus and Pope Fabian in person (see previous note). But the involvement of emperors is depicted in absurd terms in some of the *passiones*, for example in that of SS. Primus and Felicianus, where the two martyrs are portrayed discussing at length the Christian verities with *both* Diocletian and Maximian (XXI.2) who, as we know from historical sources, may only have been briefly together in Rome in AD 303, on the occasion of Diocletian's *vicennalia*.

part in the narrative.[64] Unsurprisingly, the majority of *passiones* are situated either during the brief principate of Decius, who initiated a large-scale persecution, or of Diocletian and Maximian, that is to say, during the so-called 'Great Persecution'. I provide a conspectus of the principates and dominates during which the *passiones* are situated: Claudius (41–54): XXII (?); Nero (54–68): XIX; Vespasian (69–79): XXXIV; Domitian (81–96): VIII; Nerva (96–8): V; Trajan (98–117): V, VIII, XXXII; Hadrian (117–38): XXXVII, XXXIX; Antoninus Pius (138–61): I (?), XV; Commodus (180–92): IX, XXIX; Macrinus (217–18): XII; Alexander Severus (222–35): IV, XII, XXX; Philip the Arabian (244–9): XXXIII; Decius (249–51): VI, VII, XVI, XXVIII, XXXIII; Valerian and Gallienus (253–60): XXVI, XXXI; Gallienus alone (260–8): IX; Claudius II 'Gothicus' (268–9): XVI, XXII (?); Numerian (283–4): X; Diocletian alone (284–305): II, XXIV; Diocletian and Maximian (285–305): III, XI, XX, XXI, XXV, XXXV, XXXVI; Constantine (306–37): XVIII; Constantius (337–61): XIII, XIV, XVIII;[65] and Julian (361–3): XVIII, XXVII, XXXVIII.

However, the simple listing of these imperial dates gives a misleading impression of the historicity of the contexts in which the *passiones* are situated. In fact the chronological details provided by the authors of *passiones* are frequently, if not invariably, ludicrously inaccurate.[66] A few examples will illustrate this point. In the *passio* in her name (IX), St Eugenia is said to have been sixteen years old in the year of the seventh consulship of Commodus (i.e. AD 192), hence she was born in 176; but she and her mother Claudia are eventually martyred under Gallienus (sole emperor from 260–8), implying that Eugenia was about eighty years old, and her mother perhaps over 100, at

[64] There are five exceptions to this generalization: St Caecilia (IV), where the narrated events can be assigned to the early third century through the mention of Pope Urban (222–30); St Agnes (XVII), where various details indicate that the martyrdom took place during the 'Great Persecution' under Diocletian and Maximian (which at Rome lasted from 303 until it was suspended by Maxentius in 306); SS. Marcellinus and Peter (XXIII), where the content of an epigram by Pope Damasus quoted by the author allows the martyrdom to be assigned to the 'Great Persecution'; the Greek Martyrs (XXVIII), where no emperor is named, but the events are dated precisely to AD 265 by reference to the consuls of that year; and St Basilides (XL), where no indication whatsoever is given of the date at which the reported events are supposed to have taken place.

[65] It may seem odd that martyrdoms occurred under these two very Christian emperors; but in fact that which allegedly took place under Constantine occurred not in Rome but in Alexandria (XVIII.7), where (one must assume) Constantine's amnesty of Christians was not yet in force; and those which took place under Constantius involved Christians who were deemed by Constantius—a fervent Arian—to be heretics (XIII.2, XIV.3; the martyrdoms described in XVIII in fact took place under the emperor Julian, who is said (XVIII.7) to have been made emperor by Constantius).

[66] An exception is the *passio* of Pope Urban (XXX), where the author, relying on historical sources such as *SHA* and Jerome's Latin translation of Eusebius' Chronicle, has made a conscientious—but not error-free—effort to situate the pope's martyrdom in the early third century. Needless to say, perhaps, modern Roman historians would scarcely regard the *SHA* as a reliable source for third-century history.

the time of their martyrdoms: yet Eugenia's colleague in Rome, Bassilla, the niece of Gallienus, is said to have been baptized by Pope Soter—who held the pontificate from 162–70, a century before Gallienus, and several years before Eugenia was born. In the *passio* of St Polychronius and others (XVI), the emperor Decius (249–51) and an urban prefect named Valerian (!) are said to have presided over the trial and execution of Pope Sixtus II and St Laurence—who we know from reliable sources such as the letters of Cyprian to have been executed in August 258 during the persecution of the *emperor* Valerian, seven years after the death of Decius. The martyrdoms of SS. Marius and Martha (XXII) and their sons are said to have taken place during the principate of 'Claudius'—either the first Claudius (41–54) or Claudius II 'Gothicus' (268–70)—yet the principal character in their *passio* is Pope Callistus (217–22), whose pontificate fell in neither principate. In the *passio* of the Greek Martyrs (XXVIII), the action of which is dated precisely to AD 265, the year of the consuls Valerian and Lucillus, and Valerian—who is distinct from the *emperor* Valerian, who had died in Persia in 260—announces the existence of secret communities of Christians to the emperor Decius, who had died fourteen years earlier in 251. Finally, in the *passio* of Pope Urban (XXX), the 975th year *ab urbe condita* is wrongly dated to AD 230 (it correctly fell in 222) 'in the sixth indiction' (!). Indictions were devised by Diocletian, who abdicated in 305, and were not recorded before AD 313. These are just a few of the absurd errors committed by the authors of the *passiones* in their attempt to provide a plausible chronological framework for their narratives.

The magistrates. It was well within the power of Roman emperors simply to order the execution of criminals without a hearing. Such practice is attributed to Alexander Severus in the *passio* of Pope Callistus (XII); to Antoninus Pius in that of SS. Pudentiana and Praxedis (XV); to 'Claudius' in that of SS. Marius and Martha (XXII); and to Diocletian in that of Pancratius (XXV). However, this practice occurs rarely in the *passiones*, because the sentencing of Christians to execution without trial would have deprived the author of the opportunity of allowing them to expound the doctrines of their faith to the presiding judge, and the Christians' lengthy vindications of their faith are a prominent feature in most *passiones* (see below). Accordingly, therefore, the trials of Christians are depicted as taking place before judges of various ranks. On rare occasions, as we have seen, an emperor is described as conducting a trial himself (always, of course, assisted by legal advisers). However, an emperor's duties prevented him from participating in the day-to-day business of criminal trials, and from the second century onwards the responsibility for conducting criminal trials was delegated to imperial magistrates, notably in the first instance the urban prefect,[67] subsequently the praetorian prefect and his deputies, and then provincial

[67] See Bauman, *Crime and Punishment*, pp. 100–14; Bauman notes (p. 114) that it was Septimius Severus who formally defined the jurisdiction of the urban prefect, empowering him to try all crimes committed within 100 miles of Rome.

governors of various ranks. Thus trials in the *passiones* are most frequently depicted as being conducted by the urban prefect: Publius (I), Lucillius (II), Agrestius Chromatius (III), Fabian (III), Turcius Almachius (IV), Mamertinus (V), Anianus (VIII), Decius (IX), Celerinus (X), Valerian (XVI), Symphronius (XVII), Caesarius (XIX), Laodicius (XX), Calpurnius (XXII), Maximus (XXVIII), Turcius Almachius (XXX), Junius Donatus (XXXI), Libanius (XXXIII), and Dracus (XXXV). With one exception—Junius Donatus, who was urban prefect in AD 257—all of these urban prefects are fictitious. Only in a few *passiones* are trials depicted as being conducted by praetorian prefects: Probus, praetorian prefect of *Illyricum* (II) and Helpidius, praetorian prefect of suburbicarian Italy (XXXIV).[68] Criminal trials might also be conducted by the deputy (*uicarius*) of either prefect, and deputies figure frequently in these Roman *passiones martyrum*: thus Vitellius Anisius, described as the deputy of the praetorian prefecture of the East (*Oriens*), presides in the *passio* of SS. Polychronius and others (XVI); trials are conducted by deputies of the urban prefect of Rome, named Aspasius (XVII), Carpasius (XX), Muscianus (XXII), Serenus (XXIII), Vitellius (XXIX), and Carpasius again (XXX).[69] Finally, as the empire grew beyond manageable size, it was further necessary to delegate jurisdiction in criminal trials to provincial governors of various ranks (*proconsul*, *consularis*, and *praeses*),[70] and several *passiones* represent provincial governors conducting trials of Christians: thus Dacianus, the governor (*proconsul*) of Africa (IX); Nicetius the governor (*consularis*) of Bithynia (II) and Memmius Rufus, governor (*consularis*) of Campania (VIII); and Dulcitius, governor (*praeses*) of Macedonia (II), Promotus, governor (*praeses*) of Valeria (XXI), and Berillus, governor (*praeses*) of Tuscia and Umbria (XXXIV).[71]

The sermons delivered by the martyrs at their trials. All the *passiones* translated here contain some amount of sermonizing in various forms by Christians as they seek to vindicate their belief in the face of uncomprehending magistrates, or to convince non-believers and waverers of the need either to

[68] In two cases, it is not specified whether the prefect conducting the trial is the urban or the praetorian prefect: Marcus (XXVI) and Sapricius (XXVI). In the *passio* of St Eugenia, Philip the prefect of Egypt conducts her trial (IX).

[69] Several trials are conducted by deputies whose prefecture is not specified: Gordianus (XXVII), Clementianus (XXVII), and Annitius (XXX).

[70] See Garnsey, 'The Criminal Jurisdiction of Governors'.

[71] On two occasions, trials are conducted by a magistrate described simply as a 'count' (*comes*), without further specification: Sisinnius (II) and Flaccus (VIII). In two other cases, criminal trials are described as being conducted by magistrates who were members of the imperial *comitium*: thus Paulinus, described as Master of the Offices (*magister officiorum*), in the *passio* of SS. Processus and Martinianus (XIX), and Aurelian, described as Master of Foot and Horse (*comes utriusque militiae*) in the *passio* of SS. Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus (XXXII).

convert to the faith or to be resolute in their belief. But in a small number of *passiones* this tendency is taken to extreme lengths:

SS. Anastasia and Chrysogonus (II): an epistolary exchange in which Chrysogonus succeeds in confirming the faith of Anastasia (II.4–7); Chionia, Agape and Irene harangue Diocletian on the tenets of their faith (II.10–11); Irene harangues Count Sisinnius (II.17); Anastasia debates with Probus, the praetorian prefect (II.21–5), and then debates with Lucillius, the urban prefect (II.32–3).

St Sebastian (III): Sebastian delivers a lengthy sermon to Marcus and Marcellianus and their families on the need to be resolute in their Christian faith (III.9–22); Marcus delivers a sermon to his family on the benefits of Christian faith (III.27–8); Sebastian harangues a group of potential converts in the house of Nicostratus (III.29–30); Tranquillinus (the father of Marcus and Marcellianus, now converted and baptized) debates at length with Chromatius, the urban prefect (III.38–46); Sebastian explains to Chromatius the need for spiritual purity before conversion and baptism can take place (III.51–7).

St Caecilia (IV): St Caecilia debates with Tiburtius her brother-in-law on the need for conversion (IV.10–15); Tiburtius and Valerian (Caecilia's husband) debate with Turcius Almachius, the urban prefect, on the nature of Christian belief (IV.17–20); Caecilia harangues Turcius Almachius on the wickedness of his pagan beliefs and the virtues of the Christian faith (IV.28–30).

SS. Nereus and Achilleus (VIII): Nereus and Achilleus take turns delivering a long harangue to Domitilla, their mistress, on the delights of virginity and the perils of married life and childbirth (VIII.3–8); Domitilla later explains the virtues of virginity to Euphrosyne and Theodora (VIII.21–2).

SS. Chrysanthus and Daria (X): Chrysanthus debates at length with Daria, a Vestal Virgin, on the nature of Christian belief and the absurdities of pagan religion (X.8–13).

SS. Agnes and Emerentiana (XVII): St Agnes explains the reasons for her virginity (and refusal to marry) to the son of the urban prefect (XVII.3); she then makes similar explanations to Symphronius, the urban prefect himself (XVII.6–7).

SS. Primus and Felicianus (XXI): Felicianus explains his faith to Promotus, the governor (XXI.4); Primus then explains his faith to the same governor (XXI.5).

SS. Marius and Martha (XXII): St Valentine debates the nature of Christian belief with the emperor Claudius (XXII.6–7).

Pope Stephen I (XXVI): Nemesius the military tribune debates the merits of Christian belief with the emperor Valerian (XXVI.6).

SS. Rufina and Secunda (XXXI): Rufina engages in debate about Christian belief and the merits of virginity with the prefect Junius Donatus (XXXI.2–4); Secunda is then brought in and continues the debate (XXXI.5–6).

SS. Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus (XXXII): Pope Alexander delivers a sermon on the miraculous nature of Christ to fellow-prisoners (XXXII.11); he then delivers an exposition of Christian faith to Aurelian, the Master of Foot and Horse (XXXII.15).

SS. Calogerus and Parthenius (XXXIII): Parthenius delivers a lengthy sermon on Christian belief as expounded in the gospels to the urban prefect Libanius (XXXIII.4).

St Basilides (XL): St Basilides delivers a lengthy denunciation of the absurdities of pagan religion (XL.3–4).

Some of these 'sermons' reveal an impressive depth of learning, particularly in biblical texts, but also in the intricacies of Christian doctrine.

Tortures and executions. Roman society consisted of two broad classes: the *honestiores* and the *humiliores*.[72] The *honestiores*, or upper classes, were made up of citizens of the senatorial and equestrian orders; the *humiliores*, or lower classes, consisted of freeborn citizens of low income, slaves, and emancipated slaves (*liberti*). At least in the early centuries of the principate, Roman law dealt very differently with these two classes. In capital cases, convicted *honestiores* were sentenced to deportation or relegation (except in cases where the charge was *maiestas*, in which case the sentence was summary execution).[73] *Honestiores* were not subject to torture, at least in the early centuries of the principate. With *humiliores*, however, the law dealt with extraordinary brutality: *humiliores* underwent torture of varying degrees of severity, and when sentenced to death, were typically either burned alive (*vivicomburium* or *crematio*) or exposed to the beasts (*condemnatio ad bestias*);[74] in each case the execution typically took place as part of a spectacle (*munus*) in a public place such as an amphitheatre. Sometimes a sentence of capital punishment was mitigated either to condemnation to work in the mines (*condemnatio ad metalla*) or to work on public building projects, such as roads (*condemnatio ad opus publicum*). When sentenced to death, by contrast, *honestiores* were

[72] On the two broad social classes (*honestiores* and *humiliores*), see Jones, *LRE*, pp. 517–22, and Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege*, pp. 153–72, and 221–8 (*honestiores*); see also Bauman, *Crime and Punishment*, pp. 124–40 ('The Growth of Criminal Jurisprudence').

[73] On the difference between relegation (*relegatio*) and deportation (*deportatio*), see Isidore, *Etym.* v. 27. 28–9, who distinguishes these two forms of *exilium*, according to which someone who was 'relegated' could retain his wealth and property, whereas the person 'deported' could not do so; in short, *relegatio* was non-capital exile, but *deportatio* (or *interdictio aqua et igni*) was a capital sentence. In any case, exile was to a place within the Roman empire, not beyond it, and deportation to an island. See helpful discussion by Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege*, pp. 104 and 111–22.

[74] Cf. the *Sententiae* of the third-century jurist Paulus: 'his [*sc.* honestioribus] antea in perpetuum aqua et igni interdicebatur; nunc vero humiliores bestiis obiciuntur vel vivi exuruntur, honestiores capite puniuntur' (v. 29. 1). On the background to *vivicomburium* in the Republican period, see J. Gagé, '*Vivicomburium*. Ordalies ou supplices par le feu dans la Rome primitive', *Revue historique de droit français et étranger* 42 (1964), 541–73, and (briefly), Cantarella, *I supplizi capitali in Grecia e a Roma*, pp. 236–7.

executed by decapitation, which was thought to be a more humane method of execution; they were not, in any event, expected to undergo the humiliation of being burned alive or savaged by beasts as part of a public spectacle. There were, of course, exceptions to these generalizations;[75] furthermore, over the centuries penalties became harsher, with the result that even *honestiores* were subjected to degrading forms of torture.[76]

The tortures and executions described in the forty *passiones* translated here broadly reflect the practice implied by these generalizations. With few exceptions, the martyrs of the *passiones* are described as belonging to the upper classes. In a very few cases, upper-class martyrs are sentenced to exile, either by relegation, as in the case of Domitilla (VIII.10), or by deportation (Pope Cornelius (VII.1) and the senator Maximus (XI.23), and probably Pope Clement (V.6) and Gallicanus (XVIII.7).[77] Most of the remaining *honestiores* are executed by decapitation (see below). However, in almost every case, martyrs—whether they are *honestiores* or *humiliores*—are described as undergoing torture of various kinds. Here, too, the tortures described fall within the limits of what might have been accepted as common practice in the late Roman empire.[78] The various forms of torture undergone by martyrs may be summarized as follows:

[75] Perpetua, a high-born aristocrat, was executed at Carthage in AD 203 by being exposed to beasts: *Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, vi. 6: 'tunc nos uniuersos pronuntiat et damnat ad bestias'.

[76] See Garnsey, 'Why Penalties became Harsher', esp. pp. 150–2, and MacMullen, 'Judicial Savagery', pp. 162–4.

[77] In the case of Domitilla (VIII.10), the author simply states that she was to 'undergo exile' (*subiret exilium*); the sentence was apparently non-capital exile, or *relegatio*, since Domitilla was allowed to take her household with her to exile in Ponza. In the case of Pope Cornelius, the exile is specified as 'deportation' (VII.1: *exilio deportari*), and similarly in the case of the senator Maximus, the *Comes rei privatae*, who is sentenced to be 'deported' to *Comos* (*Cuma*?): '<Maximum> . . . deportari in civitate C(h)omos' (XI.23). In the case of Pope Clement (V.6), it is merely stated that he is 'to undergo exile' (*subire exilium*); but since the place of exile lies far outside the bounds of the Roman empire on the Black Sea, we may be permitted to assume that *deportatio* rather than *relegatio* is in question here. Gallicanus is sentenced to exile outside of Italy (XVIII.7: 'discede a finibus Italiae'); the author does not specify whether the exile is capital or non-capital, but since the issue involved is the seizure of Gallicanus' property, the sentence is presumably *deportatio* rather than *relegatio*. It is far from clear that the authors of the *passiones* understood the legal distinction between *relegatio* and *deportatio*.

[78] Delehaye describes a number of examples of severe tortures protracted absurdly over many days (*Les passions des martyrs*, pp. 202–6); he concludes, 'Il suffit de lire quelques-unes des nombreuses Passions de cette catégorie pour s'assurer que les hagiographes ne tiennent aucun compte de la vraisemblance' (p. 206). Nearly all Delehaye's examples are taken from Greek *Passiones*. The tortures undergone by Roman martyrs in the *passiones* translated in the present volume fall within reasonable (if brutal) limits, an exception being the eighty-year-old St Primus, who has molten lead poured down his throat, and drinks it as if it were ice-cold water (XXI.5). Among the many examples of preposterous tortures described in *passiones*, the case of St Primus is the only example from a Roman *passio* cited by Delehaye.

Stretching on the rack (horse-frame): VIII.16, X.26, XVI.3, XVI.25, XIX.7, XX.8, XX.19, XXI.4, XXII.12, XXII.18, XXVI.8, XXVI.15, XXVI.17, XXVIII.13, XXIX.6, XXXII.14, XXXII.17, XXXIII.3;

Being raked while on the rack: with iron 'thistles': VI.8, XVI.23, XVI.30; with claws: XVI.3, XX.19, XXII.18, XXXII.17, XXXIII.4;

Flogging and beating:[79] with fists (XXIII.6); with staves (I.5, II.31, IV.21, X.18, XI.28, XII.7, XVI.5, XVI.24, XVI.26, XVI.27, XVI.30, XVIII.8, XIX.7, XX.8, XX.9, XX.17, XX.19, XX.20, XXI.5, XXII.12, XXII.15, XXII.18, XXVI.8, XXVI.15, XXVI.22, XXVII.3, XXVIII.12, XXIX.4, XXIX.6, XXX.18[9], XXXI.6, XXXII.13, XXXIV.11, XXXIX.8; with lead-weighted whips (*plumbatae*): I.5, IV.24, VII.1, VIII.17, XII.8, XVI.9, XVI.23, XVI.24, XVI.27, XVI.31, XX.9, XXI.4, XXIV.22, XXVIII.14, XXIX.11, XXX.13[4], XXX.18[9]; with scorpion-whips (*scorpiones*): XVI.23, XVI.25, XIX.8, XX.8, XXIV.19, XXIV.20, XXX.18[9];

Application of torches or red-hot plates: XVI.3, XVI.24, XVI.27, XXVI.15, XXVI.17, XXVIII.13, XXIX.6, XXXII.17, XXXIV.10.

In addition to these (conventional) methods of torture, there are cases of torture where the martyr's tongue is cut out (XXIX.8, XXXII.14), the martyr's mouth is smashed in with stones (VI.8, XVI.30, XX.8, XXVI.16), his/her hands and feet are cut off (XXII.18), s/he is placed in a boiling cauldron (XXXI.6), the martyr's legs are locked in stocks (X.16, XXIII.6), or the martyr is wrapped tightly in a moist calf-skin, which is then allowed to dry and shrink in the sun (X.16). It should also be noted that, in several cases, virgins are tortured by being forced into prostitution (II.18, XVII.8, and XXXIV.5).

Following the torture, the martyr is executed in various ways. Sometimes (unsurprisingly), the martyr simply dies while being beaten: III.88, IV.24, XVI.31, XVIII.8, XX.9, XXIV.22, XXVI.22, XXVIII.12, XXVIII.14, XXIX.4, XXIX.11, XXXI.8, and XXXVIII.4. In the great majority of cases, however, the martyr is executed by decapitation. I list all the examples which occur in the *passiones* simply to show that, in the imagination of their authors, execution by

[79] Peter Garnsey provides valuable discussion of the various kinds of beating that were inflicted on prisoners (*Social Status and Legal Privilege*, pp. 136–41); and, on the various instruments used in beatings, see *DACL* V/2, cols. 1638–43 [H. Leclercq], s.v. 'Flagellation (supplice de la)'. Essentially, there was a distinction between *verberatio*, a heavy beating, and *castigatio*, a light beating with staves (*fustes*), subsequently described as *fustigatio* (the noun *fustigatio* occurs only once in the *passiones*, at XXXII.13). Beatings were originally administered by 'switches' (*virgae*), but the 'switches' were subsequently replaced by 'staves' (*fustes*), in much the same way as the sword replaced the axe as the instrument of civilian execution (Garnsey, *ibid.* p. 137): the difference being that a *virga* or 'switch' was flexible, but a *fustis* or '(military) staff' was stiff: the former would do more superficial damage, the latter might well break bones. It may be significant that in the *passio* of St Felicitas—arguably the earliest of the *passiones* translated here—St Ianuarius is described as having been 'lashed with switches' (*virgis caedi*: I.3), whereas in the remaining *passiones*, without exception, the beatings involve *fustes* ('staves').

beheading was for the Romans the most common form of capital punishment: I.5, II.8, III.82, IV.31 [failed], VI.4, VII.3, VIII.18, VIII.24, IX.19, X.20, XI.28, XII.6, XIV.3, XVI.3, XVI.18, XVI.26, XVI.31, XVI.34, XVI.35, XVIII.13, XIX.9, XX.6, XX.8, XX.20, XXI.7, XXII.15, XXII.19, XXIII.11, XXV.4, XXVI.11, XXVI.14, XXVI.17, XXVI.21, XXVII.5, XXVIII.12, XXVIII.13, XXIX.8, XXX.15[6], XXX.19[10], XXX.25[16], XXXI.8, XXXII.14, XXXII.19, XXXIV.11, XXXIV.15, XXXV.2, and XL.6. But in several *passiones*, execution is carried out by one of the sentences specified for *humiliores*: thus there are examples of burning alive (*vivicomburium*): II.16, II.31, II.36, VI.7, VIII.25, XVI.28 [on an iron grill], XXVI.13, XXXII.19 [in a furnace], XXXIII.6 and XXXIX.7; and of exposure to beasts (*condemnatio ad bestias*): VI.3, XVI.9, XXI.6 and XXII.13.[80] The *passiones* also describe executions by methods which are not specified in the Roman law-codes, such as death by drowning, usually in the Tiber (II.35, V.7, IX.20, X.20, XI.23, XII.8, XII.9, XXIV.20 [in lead caskets], XXVIII.9, XXXI.7, XXXVI.1, XXXVII.4 and XXXVIII.5), or death by being buried alive (III.83, X.26, XIII.2, XXIII.9 and XXIII.10). A final point: in the period before the fourth century, criminals were frequently executed by crucifixion, but Constantine abolished the use of crucifixion as a means of execution. It is therefore striking that, in all forty *passiones* translated here, there is not a single example of execution by crucifixion.

Christians recover and bury the martyrs' bodies. After the martyrs had been executed, it was necessary for their bodies to be treated reverently, and, in most cases, for them to be buried in the shrines and cemeteries by which they were subsequently known. Authors of the *passiones* accordingly took great care to describe the process of removal of the martyrs' bodies, invariably by stealth and by night, and to specify the places where they were buried. I list these events as they are described in the *passiones*.

*SS. Anastasia and Chrysogonu*s (II): Zoilus recovers and buries the body of St Chrysogonus (II.9); the bodies of Chionia, Agape, and Irene are recovered and buried by men dispatched by Anastasia (II.16–18); Apollonia recovers and buries the body of St Anastasia (II.36).

St Sebastian (III): Irene recovers the body of Sebastian from the Field of Mars after he has been shot with arrows (III.86); Lucina recovers the body of St Sebastian from the Cloaca Maxima and buries it on the Via Appia *ad catacumbas* (III.89).

St Caecilia (IV): Pope Urban recovers and buries the body of St Caecilia on the Via Appia (IV.32).

[80] It is interesting that the proportions of these various means of execution described in the *passiones* are broadly similar to those calculated by J.-P. Callu on the basis of the *Historia ecclesiastica* of Eusebius, where he notes twenty-three examples of decapitation, eleven of burning alive, and five of condemnation *ad bestias* ('Le jardin des supplices', p. 333).

SS. Sixtus, Laurence, and Hippolytus (VI): unnamed Christians recover the body of Pope Sixtus II and bury it in the cemetery of Callistus on the Via Appia (VI.4); Hippolytus recovers and buries the body of St Laurence on the Via Tiburtina (VI.7); unnamed Christians recover and bury the body of St Hippolytus, also on the Via Tiburtina (VI.8).

Pope Cornelius (VII): Lucina and other Christians recover the bodies of Pope Cornelius, Cerealis, and his wife, and bury them on the Via Appia (VII.3).

SS. Nereus and Achilleus (VIII): the priest Nicomedes recovers and buries the body of St Felicula on the Via Ardeatina (VIII.17); the priest Justus recovers and buries the body of St Nicomedes (VIII.17); Auspicius recovers the bodies of SS. Nereus and Achilleus and buries them in the cemetery of Domitilla on the Via Ardeatina (VIII.18); the deacon Caesarius recovers the bodies of Domitilla, Euphrosyne, and Theodora and buries them in Terracina (VIII.25).

SS. Eugenia, Protus, and Hyacinthus (IX): Eugenia recovers the body of Philip her father and buries it in Egypt (IX.16); unnamed Christians recover and bury the body of St Eugenia on the Via Latina (IX.21).

SS. Chrysanthus and Daria (X): Hilaria collects and buries the bodies of her martyred sons, Maurus and Jason, on the Via Salaria (X.20).

St Susanna (XI): Serena Augusta recovers and buries the body of St Susanna on the Via Nomentana (XI.29).

Pope Callistus (XII): unnamed fishermen recover the body of Calepodius and bury it on the Via Aurelia (XII.6); Asterius recovers the body of Pope Callistus and buries it in the cemetery of Calepodius on the Via Aurelia (XII.9); unnamed Christians bury the body of Asterius in Ostia (XII.9).

Eusebius the priest (XIII): the priests Gregory and Orosius recover the body of Eusebius and bury it on the Via Appia (XIII.2); Orosius subsequently recovers the body of Gregory and buries it next to that of Eusebius (XIII.2).

Pope Felix II (XIV): unnamed priests and clerics bury the body of Pope Felix II on the Via Aurelia (XIV.3).

SS. Pudentiana and Praxedis (XV): Praxedis and the priest Pastor bury the body of St Pudentiana in the cemetery of Priscilla on the Via Salaria (XV.4); Pastor the priest buries the body of St Praxedis in the same place (XV.8).

SS. Polychronius and the martyrs of Rome (XVI): Abdon and Sennes recover and bury the bodies of SS. Parmenius, Elymas, Chrysotelus, Lucius, and Mucius in Cordula in Persia (XVI.3); unnamed Christians bury the bodies of Olympiades and Maximus in Persia (XVI.6); Cyrinus buries the bodies of SS. Abdon and Sennes near the amphitheatre in Rome (XVI.10); unnamed Christians recover and bury the body of Pope Sixtus II in the

cemetery of Callistus on the Via Appia (XVI.18); Justinus the priest recovers and buries the body of St Romanus in the *Ager Veranus* on the Via Tiburtina (XVI.26); Hippolytus and Justinus recover the body of St Laurence and bury it on the Via Tiburtina (XVI.29); Justinus recovers and buries the body of St Hippolytus on the Via Tiburtina (XVI.32); Justinus recovers and buries the bodies of Concordia, Irenaeus, and Abundius next to the body of St Laurence on the Via Tiburtina (XVI.32); Justinus recovers and buries the body of Cyrilla next to St Laurence (XVI.34); Justinus and John recover and bury a multitude of Christians, including Theodosius, Lucius, Marcus, and Peter on the Via Salaria (XVI.35).

SS. Agnes and Emerentiana (XVII): the parents of Agnes recover her body and bury it on their own estate on the Via Nomentana (XVII.13); the parents of Agnes also recover and bury the body of St Emerentiana in the vicinity of that of St Agnes (XVII.13).

SS. Gallicanus, John, and Paul (XVIII): unnamed Christians bury the body of Hilarinus at Ostia (XVIII.8); John, Pigmenius, and Flavian bury the bodies of SS. Crispus, Crispinian, and Benedicta in the house of SS. John and Paul (XVIII App. 4); John and Pigmenius bury Terentianus and his son in the house of John and Paul (XVIII App. 6).

SS. Processus and Martinianus (XIX): the matron Lucina recovers the bodies of SS. Processus and Martinianus and buries them on the Via Aurelia (XIX.10).

Pope Marcellus and companions (XX): Thrason and John the priest recover and bury the bodies of Saturninus and Sisinnius on the Via Salaria (XX.8); John the priest recovers and buries the bodies of Papias and Maurus on the Via Nomentana (XX.9); John the priest recovers and buries the body of Crescentianus on the Via Salaria (XX.19); John the priest recovers and buries the bodies of Largus, Smaragdus, and Cyriacus on the Via Salaria (XX.20); Pope Marcellus and Lucina raise up their bodies and rebury them on the Via Ostiense (XX.21); John the priest and Lucina recover and bury the body of Pope Marcellus in the cemetery of Priscilla on the Via Salaria (XX.22).

SS. Primus and Felicianus (XXI): unnamed Christians recover and bury the bodies of SS. Primus and Felicianus at *Nomentum* (XXI.7).

SS. Marius and Martha (XXII): Marius, Martha, and John the priest collect the bodies of Blastus and many other unnamed Christians and bury them on the Via Salaria Vecchia (XXII.3); Marius, Martha, and Pastor the priest recover the body of Cyrinus from the Tiber and bury it in the cemetery of Pontianus on the Via Portuense (XXII.4); unnamed Christians bury the bodies of Asterius and others at Ostia (XXII.14); the matron Savinilla recovers and buries the body of St Valentine on the Via Flaminia (XXII.15); the matron Felicitas recovers the bodies of SS. Marius, Martha, Audifax, and Abacuc and buries them on the Via Cornelia (XXII.19).

SS. Marcellinus and Peter (XXIII): Lucilla and Firmina recover the bodies of SS. Marcellinus and Peter from the 'Dark Woods' and bury them on the Via Labicana (XXIII.12).

The Four Crowned Martyrs (XXIV): Nicomedes recovers the bodies of the five 'Crowned Martyrs' and buries them in his house in *Sirmium* (XXIV.21); Pope Miltiades buries the bodies of four 'Crowned Martyrs' on the Via Labicana (XXIV.22).

St Pancratius (XXV): the matron Octavilla recovers the body of St Pancratius and buries it on the Via Aurelia (XXV.4).

Pope Stephen I (XXVI): Pope Stephen recovers the body of Nemesius and buries it on the Via Latina (XXVI.11); Pope Stephen recovers the bodies of Symphronius, Olympius, Exuperia, and Theodulus and buries them on the Via Latina (XXVI.13); Tertullinus recovers and buries the bodies of twelve members of Stephen's clergy on the Via Latina (XXVI.14); Pope Stephen recovers the body of Tertullinus and buries it on the Via Latina (XXVI.17); unnamed Christians bury the body of Pope Stephen in the cemetery of Callistus on the Via Appia (XXVI.21); Christians recover and bury the body of Tarsicius in the cemetery of Callistus (XXVI.22).

SS. Gordianus and Epimachus (XXVII): unnamed Christians bury the body of Gordianus on the Via Latina (XXVII.5).

The Greek Martyrs (XXVIII): Eusebius the priest recovers and buries the body of Maximus in the cemetery of Callistus (XXVIII.9); Hippolytus recovers the bodies of Eusebius, Marcellus, and Paulina, and buries them on the Via Appia (XXVIII.12); Pope Stephen recovers the bodies of Neon and Maria and buries them on the Via Appia (XXVIII.13); Hippolytus recovers the bodies of Hadrias and his namesake Hippolytus, and buries them on the Via Appia (XXVIII.14).

SS. Eusebius and Pontianus (XXIX): Eusebius, Pontianus, Peregrinus, and Vincent recover the body of Julius and bury it in the cemetery of Calepodius (XXIX.4); Rufinus the priest recovers the body of Antonius and buries it in the cemetery of Calepodius (XXIX.10); Rufinus recovers the bodies of Eusebius, Vincent, Peregrinus, and Pontianus and buries them at a place between the Via Aurelia and the Via Triumphalis (XXIX.11).

Pope Urban (XXX): Fortunatus recovers the body of Lucianus and buries it in the cemetery of Praetextatus (XXX.18[9]); Fabian, Callistus, and Ammonius bury the body of Pope Urban in the cemetery of Praetextatus (XXX.19[10]); Justinus, Fortunatus, and Marmenia rebury the bodies of Pope Urban and Mamilian in the house of Marmenia on the Via Appia (XXX.22[13]); unnamed Christians bury the bodies of Marmenia and her daughter Lucinia next to the body of Pope Urban (XXX.25[16]); Polycarp the priest buries the body of St Savinus (XXX.26[17]); Polemius the priest buries an unspecified number of martyrs in the crypt where St Caecilia was buried (XXX.27[18]).

SS. Rufina and Secunda (XXXI): Plautilla recovers the bodies of Rufina and Secunda, and constructs a mausoleum over them (XXXI.7).

SS. Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus (XXXII): unnamed Christians take the body of Cyrinus and bury it in the cemetery of Praetextatus on the Via Appia (XXXII.14); Severina recovers the bodies of SS. Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus, and buries them on her estate on the Via Nomentana (XXXII.20).

SS. Calogerus and Parthenius (XXXIII): Anatolia recovers the bodies of Calogerus and Parthenius and buries them in the crypt of Pope Sixtus II (XXXIII.6).

SS. Serapia and Sabina (XXXIV): Sabina recovers the body of Serapia and constructs a tomb in which to house it (XXXIV.12); unnamed Christians take the body of Sabina and bury it in the town of Vindena (XXXIV.15).

SS. Felix and Adauctus (XXXV): unnamed Christians bury the bodies of Felix and Adauctus in a gaping hole in the ground off the Via Ostiense (XXXV.2).

SS. Simplicius, Faustinus, and Beatrix (XXXVI): Beatrix, together with the priests Crispus and John, recover the bodies of Simplicius and Faustinus and bury them in (the cemetery of Generosa *ad Sextum Philippi*), on the Via Portuense (XXXVI.1); Lucina recovers the body of Beatrix and buries it with those of Simplicius and Faustinus, *ad Sextum Philippi* (XXXVI.2).

St Symphorosa and her seven sons (XXXVII): Eugenius recovers the body of Symphorosa and buries it in Tivoli (XXXVII.4).

St Pigmenius (XXXVIII): Dafrosa recovers the body of Faustus (XXXVIII.4); the priest John recovers the body of St Bibiana (XXXVIII.4); Concordia recovers the body of John the priest and buries it (XXXVIII.5); Candida recovers the body of St Pigmenius from the Tiber and buries it in the cemetery of Pontianus (XXXVIII.5).

St Getulius (XXXIX): Symphorosa recovers the body of Getulius and buries it on her estate in Sabine territory (XXXIX.8).

It will be seen that, in the minds of the authors of *passiones*, the recovery and burial of martyrs' bodies was an indispensable element of the narrative, for it was the site of the burial which was the focus of pilgrims' interest in these martyrs. At the same time, the authors showed a remarkable lack of originality in thinking up names for the pious Christians who performed this service, so that Lucina and John the priest figure in numerous *passiones*, even when the martyrdoms—judging from the chronology provided by the *passiones* themselves—take place centuries apart. Lucina, for example, who had participated in the burial of SS. Processus and Martinianus during the reign of Nero (54–68), is subsequently involved in the burial of Pope Cornelius (AD 252), in that of St Sebastian during the tetrarchy of Diocletian and Maximian (285–305), and finally in the burial of Pope Marcellus (AD 309–10): a span of

nearly 250 years! But the authors of *passiones* were not bothered by minor chronological discrepancies such as these: for them, the name 'Lucina' was merely a token meaning 'pious Christian matron', and 'John the priest' a token meaning 'pious Christian priest'. The reuse of the names merely indicates that the authors of *passiones* read and borrowed from each other's work.

Divine retribution is visited on the persecutors. In some, but by no means all, *passiones*, the persecuting emperor or magistrate is struck down by divine vengeance following his execution of martyrs. Thus Decius and Valerian, his urban prefect (!), were both struck dead in the Roman amphitheatre, during public games, in the *passio* of SS. Sixtus, Laurence, and Hippolytus (VI.9), and again in the later version of these martyrdoms which passes under the name of St Polychronius (XVI.33); the son of the urban prefect was struck down dead because of his sexual assault on St Agnes (XVII.9); Carpasius the deputy confiscated the house of the saintly Cyriacus and used the baptismal font as a plunge-pool for parties with whores, whereupon he and nineteen other revellers were struck down dead (XX.23); Lampadius the tribune, after having tortured the Four (in fact Five) Crowned Martyrs, was seized by a demon and torn apart while sitting on his tribunal (XXIV.20); after having executed Pope Urban, Carpasius the deputy was seized by a demon and died (XXX.20[11]); after having executed the martyrs Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus, Aurelian, the Master of Foot and Horse, was seized by a sudden demon and died (XXXII.20); while Serapia was being beaten with staves on the orders of the local governor, a splinter from one of the staves lodged in the governor's eye, and three days later he lost the eye (XXXIV.11); having murdered Beatrix, Lucretius was possessed by Satan, and died soon afterwards (XXXVI.2); the emperor Hadrian, having executed St Symphorosa and her seven sons, was possessed by a demon and forced to live underground, but when after a year he emerged into the light of day, he was seized by the demon and died (XXXVII.6). Perhaps the most dramatic example of divine retribution visited on a persecuting emperor is the account of the death of Julian 'the Apostate' in the *passio* of St Pigmenius, where we are told that, as a result of his persecution of Pigmenius, Julian was captured by the Persians and skinned alive, with his skin being used thereafter as a coverlet for the thrones of Persian kings:[81] 'And thus it came about that he who had wickedly mistreated the bodies of the saints in this temporal life, was punished in body on earth with fitting torment, just as his soul was (punished) in hell' (XXXVIII.6).

[81] The story of Julian's skin being used as a coverlet has been lifted from a story told by Lactantius (*De mortibus persecutorum* [*CPL* 91], v. 6) concerning the fate of the emperor Valerian, who was captured and executed in Persia in AD 260.

DATING THE LATIN TEXTS

One of the problems which have always bedevilled the study of Roman *passiones martyrum* is that of dating them. Scholars in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were inclined to believe that the texts, or at least some of them, were contemporary with the martyrdoms they described; but as the Bollandists' work of critical hagiography advanced, culminating in the publications of Hippolyte Delehaye, and the absurd chronological errors which infest the *passiones* were laid bare, doubts grew not only about the early dating of the texts, but about their historical value in general. The realization that they were unreliable—indeed false—witnesses to the events they describe led to their almost total neglect by historians of early Christianity. In recent years, however, there has been a welcome revival of interest in the Roman *passiones*, not only by palaeo-Christian archaeologists (for whom they are an indispensable resource), but also by literary and cultural historians. And as a reflex of this revival of interest, there have been important advances in our understanding of the chronology of the texts themselves, notably through the published researches of Cécile Lanéry,[82] with the result that it is now possible to arrange the texts in an approximate chronological sequence, and to determine which texts belong (roughly) to the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries. I stress that the arrangement is only approximate—no text can yet be confidently assigned to a year, or even to a decade—but it is a beginning nevertheless. The texts translated in the present volume are arranged in approximate chronological order.[83] In what follows I survey the sorts of evidence which underpin this approximate chronological ordering; the evidence which pertains to a particular *passio* is set out in the introduction which accompanies each text.

The earliest surviving fictional *passio* of a Roman martyr is thought to be that of St Felicitas with her seven sons (I), the reason being that the text is apparently referred to by Arnobius the Younger, who was resident at Rome during the years 430–50, in his *Liber ad Gregoriam*; and since it seems likely that the *passio* was composed on the occasion of the embellishment of the tomb of St Felicitas (in the cemetery of Maximus on the Via Salaria Nuova) by Pope Boniface I (418–22), one may deduce that the *passio* was composed *c.*420. Two other important *passiones*—those of St Sebastian (III) and St Caecilia (IV)—were composed by the same Arnobius, as Cécile Lanéry has demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt: hence, by implication, they were composed during the period 430–50. The *passio* of SS. Anastasia and

[82] Notably in 'Hagiographie'; but also in her two important studies of the hagiography of Arnobius the Younger: 'Arnobe le Jeune', and 'Nouvelles recherches'.

[83] My ordering of texts broadly follows that of Cécile Lanéry ('Hagiographie'), with a few exceptions (noted in the individual introductions to the translations); I have also included a few texts (XXVII, XXXV, XXXVI, and XXXIX) not discussed by Lanéry.

Chrysogonus (II) is laid under contribution at various points by Arnobius in his two *passiones*; it was therefore arguably composed before the period of his scholarly activity in Rome, say, *c.*425. The *passiones* of St Sebastian and St Caecilia in their turn were hugely influential on later authors of Roman *passiones martyrum*, notably those of Pope Clement (V), Pope Cornelius (VII), SS. Nereus and Achilleus (VIII), St Eugenia (IX), and SS. Chrysanthus and Daria (X), implying in turn that these works date from a period later than Arnobius' hagiographical activity. For various reasons they may be assigned to the second half of the fifth century: wording taken from the *passio* of Pope Clement (V) was reused *c.*450 by the author of a liturgical *passio* composed for the church of Milan; the *passio* of Pope Cornelius (VII) was arguably composed to coincide with the construction of a basilica dedicated to Cornelius by Pope Leo I (440–61); the pervasive concern with virginity marks the *passio* of SS. Nereus and Achilleus (VIII) as a work of the fifth century, but its verbal debts to the *passio* of St Sebastian (III) point to the second half of that century; the fact that the two eunuch slave-boys Protus and Hyacinthus in the *passio* of St Eugenia (IX) are evidently modelled on SS. Nereus and Achilleus (VIII), in combination with the fact that the *passio* is alluded to by the poet Alcimus Avitus at the very beginning of the sixth century, marks it as a work of the later fifth; and the wide learning of its author, and its Latin style, mark the *passio* of SS. Chrysanthus and Daria (X) as a work of the fifth century. Two further *passiones*—those of St Susanna (XI) and Pope Callistus (XII)—probably belong to the very end of the fifth century: the first of these is indebted at various points to Arnobius' *passio* of St Caecilia, and the second, because it makes no allusion whatsoever to the Laurentian schism (see below), probably dates *ipso facto* from before *c.*500; both of these *passiones* were laid under contribution by the compiler of the first edition of the *Liber pontificalis*, writing *c.*530. The first twelve *passiones* translated in the present volume are therefore probably all to be assigned to the fifth century. Together, they provided the models for subsequent hagiographers, and the *passiones* composed during the sixth century are all marked by their debts to those of the fifth.

Next in the chronological sequence come four texts which were evidently composed at the very beginning of the sixth century, during the campaign of pamphleteering which accompanied the so-called 'Laurentian schism', which convulsed the Church during the years 498–506. When Symmachus (498–514) was elected to the papacy with the support of the emperor Theoderic, a group of Roman senators refused to endorse the election, and preferred instead a local candidate named Laurence. The resulting schism was a violent affair which was settled only in 506, and which resulted in the deaths of a number of Roman clergy. The authors of four *passiones* adumbrated the Laurentian schism in various ways: that of Eusebius the priest (XIII) expressed his partisan support for Laurence by configuring the conflict between

Symmachus and Laurence in terms of an earlier papal conflict of similar intensity between Pope Liberius (352–66) and the antipope Felix II (355–65); the same reconfiguration animates the *passio* of Pope Felix II (XIV), which was very probably composed by the author of the *passio* of Eusebius the priest. Another aspect of the Laurentian schism is reflected in the *passio* of SS. Pudentiana and Praxedis (XV), namely concern with the legitimate process of the establishment and control of *titulus*-churches: the antipope Laurence, who as Caelius Laurentius attended the synod of 499 and signed as *archipresbyter* of the church of St Praxedis (S. Prassede on the Esquiline) was evidently concerned with the freedom from papal control of his own church and that of the associated church of S. Pudenziana. Finally, the *passio* of SS. Polychronius and others (XVI), including SS. Sixtus, Laurence, and Hippolytus, is an ambitious reworking of the earlier *passio vetus* of these same saints (VI); in particular the saint Polychronius was taken from the *Gesta de Xysti purgatione et Polychronii accusatione*, one of the notable pamphlets produced during the Laurentian schism. The schism therefore provides a *terminus post quem* for the composition of the *passio* of Polychronius, which presumably therefore was composed before the death of Pope Symmachus (514). It is likely that the *passio* of St Agnes (XVII) was composed at roughly the same time, probably by a cleric of S. Agnese, at the time the church was being extensively refurbished by the same Pope Symmachus, hence before 514.

Various evidence allows us to date other *passiones* approximately to the sixth century. The original *passio* of SS. Gallicanus, John, and Paul (XVIII) was later redacted so as to emphasize the importance of the (fifth-century) church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo on the Caelian (XVIII, Appendix); given that the redaction is preserved in a manuscript dating from *c.*600, the implication is that the original *passio* is a sixth-century composition. The author of the *passio* of SS. Processus and Martinianus drew on the pseudo-Linus Acts of St Peter, an *apocryphon* which can be securely dated to the earlier sixth century, and probably to the years of the Laurentian schism. And it seems very likely that, in his turn, the author of the *passio* of Pope Marcellus (XX) drew on the *passio* of SS. Processus and Martinianus; but since the *passio* of Pope Marcellus was in its turn laid under contribution by the compiler of the second edition of the *Liber pontificalis*, writing *c.*550, the *passio* of Pope Marcellus may be assigned to the first half of the sixth century.

From the mid-sixth century onwards, however, the chronology of the *passiones* is less secure, and different kinds of dating evidence come into play: whether a *passio* can be associated with the construction or embellishment of an intra-urban or suburban church; whether martyrs' relics were removed from suburban cemeteries to the safety of intra-urban shrines in the face of invasions from external enemies; whether the description of the site of a martyr's burial in one of the seventh-century pilgrim itineraries reveals a debt to a *passio*; and so on. Of primary importance are the debts which these later

(post-550) *passiones* reveal to earlier (pre-550) *passiones*. Some examples: the *passio* of SS. Marius and Martha (XXII) is indebted in many ways to the earlier *passio* of St Polychronius and others (XVI); the *passio* of SS. Marcellinus and Peter (XXIII) may have been composed before or during the Gothic wars (537–60), but before the translation of the saints' relics to an intra-urban church at the end of the sixth century; the *passio* of St Pancratius (XXV) may have been composed at the time of the construction of the church of S. Pancrazio by Pope Symmachus (498–514), but may also be a reflex of the extensive remodelling of that church by Pope Honorius (625–38); the *passio* of Pope Stephen (XXVI) reveals debts to the *passiones* of SS. Pudentiana and Praxedis (XV), Polychronius and others (XVI) and Marcellinus and Peter (XXIII), but was drawn on in turn by the author of the *passio* of the Greek Martyrs (XXVIII), which must have been in existence at the time the 'Malmesbury Itinerary' was compiled in the mid- to late seventh century; and the author of the *passio* of Pope Urban (XXX) derived the character of Turcius Almachius from Arnobius' *passio* of St Caecilia (IV), and that of Carpasius from the *passio* of Pope Marcellus.

The present collection includes a number of *passiones* which were composed by clerics living outside of Rome, and whose texts are eccentric in comparison with the *passiones* composed by clerics resident in Rome, and, because they therefore show few verbal debts to genuinely Roman *passiones*, are extremely difficult to date. For example, the *passio* of SS. Primus and Felicianus (XXI) was apparently composed by a cleric of *Nomentum* (modern Mentana) some thirteen miles from Rome, but was obviously in existence, and had been transmitted to Rome, at the time the saints' relics were translated to the church of S. Stefano Rotondo on the Caelian by Pope Theodore (642–9); the *passio* of the Four Crowned Martyrs (XXIV) was originally composed by a cleric somewhere in Pannonia, where the saints were martyred, but was subsequently redacted at Rome, probably as a result of the prestige of the sixth-century church of SS. Quattro Coronati on the Caelian; the *passio* of SS. Rufina and Secunda (XXXI) was apparently composed by a cleric of Silva Candida, the diocese in which the church of S. Rufina was located, at the ninth mile of the Via Cornelia, possibly in the seventh century; the *passio* of SS. Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus (XXXII) was composed at some time in the mid-seventh century by a cleric of the church of these same saints, at the seventh mile of the Via Nomentana, since the notice of their shrine in the 'Malmesbury Itinerary' is obviously dependent on the *passio*; that of SS. Serapia and Sabina (XXXIV) appears to be the work of a cleric living somewhere in Umbria, perhaps Terni; and the *passio* of St Getulius (XXXIX), who was martyred at Ponte Sfondato, some twenty-nine miles from Rome on the Via Salaria, may have been composed by a monk of the nearby monastery of Farfa, perhaps in the early eighth century. If this dating is correct, the *passio* of St Getulius is the latest of the *passiones* translated in the present volume.

The remaining *passiones* (XXXIII–XL) are all highly derivative, and are based extensively on earlier *passiones*: that of SS. Calogerus and Parthenius, two eunuch brothers, is based on the earlier *passiones* of SS. Nereus and Achilleus (VIII) and SS. Gallicanus, John, and Paul (XVIII); that of St Symphorosa and her seven sons is closely modelled on that of St Felicitas and her seven sons (I); that of St Pigmenius (XXXVIII) is a sort of appendix to the earlier *passio* of SS. Gallicanus, John, and Paul (XVIII), since it draws all of its characters from the earlier work. All these later *passiones* probably belong to the seventh century.

In sum: the earliest of the *passiones* translated here (I and II) were probably composed in the earlier fifth century, arguably during the 420s. They were followed by the two *passiones* composed by Arnobius the Younger (III and IV) during the approximate period 430–50. Various evidence suggests that eight further *passiones* can be assigned to the second half of the fifth century (V–XII). Then follow five *passiones* dating from the period of the Laurentian schism in the early sixth century (nos. XIII–XVII), followed in turn by several (XVIII–XX, and possibly XXIII) which were apparently composed in the mid-sixth century. The remaining *passiones* (XXI–XXII, XXIV–XL) are derivative of those which had been composed by the mid-sixth century, and date approximately from the later sixth or seventh century, with one (XXXIX) possibly having been composed as late as the first half of the eighth century. The dating of the earlier *passiones* (I–XX) to the period before *c*.550 is relatively secure; for those composed after that date (XXI–XL), more precise dating criteria remain to be established.

THE LATIN TEXTS

With very few minor exceptions,[84] the Latin *passiones* translated in this volume are preserved in large numbers of medieval manuscripts, typically between fifty and a hundred, and in some cases, in even larger numbers of manuscripts: the *passio* of St Agnes (XVII) in more than 450, the *passio* of St Sebastian (III) in more than 500. These numbers indicate that the *passiones* of Roman martyrs enjoyed a vast readership during the Middle Ages; but a corollary of the very large numbers of surviving manuscripts is that, with the exception of one text preserved in a single manuscript (St Pigmenius: no. XXXVIII), no edition of a *passio* has ever been based on full collation of all the surviving manuscript evidence: the *passiones* are typically read in editions based on, at most, a handful of manuscript witnesses, and often on only one or two of these. In fact, of the forty *passiones* translated here, only one—the

[84] One redaction of the *passio* of St Pancratius (XXV) is not preserved in any manuscript, and is known only through the printed edition of Mombritius. The *passio* of St Pigmenius (XXXVIII) is preserved in a single manuscript.

passio of SS. Anastasia and Chrysogonus (II)—can be read in a critical edition: and in this case, the edition of Paola Moretti is based on full collation of roughly a quarter (fifty-five) of the more than 200 surviving witnesses. In a majority of cases, the *passio* is available only in an edition printed in earlier centuries, from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth.

The earliest editions still in use are those by the Humanist scholar Bonino Mombrizio of Milan (1424–*c*.1480).[85] (His name is Latinized as Mombritius.) Although he was known in his day for a substantial number of editions of classical authors, his great contribution to hagiography was his *Sanctuarium seu Vitae sanctorum*, printed at Milan in 1478,[86] but the work is now cited from an edition made in 1910 by the monks of Solesmes. This huge work includes 334 *passiones* and *vitae* of saints; some of them are drawn from late medieval compilations such as the *Legenda aurea* of Iacopo da Varazze and the *Speculum historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais. But the *Sanctuarium* also includes a number of cases (some 183) where the source is unknown, and is thought to have been a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century legendary of north Italian origin.[87] These unsourced texts include eleven *passiones* translated in the present volume, which must still be consulted in the edition of Mombritius.[88]

A century later, between 1570 and 1575, Lorenz Sauer (1522–78), a monk of the Carthusian house of St Barbara in Cologne, published his huge *De probatis sanctorum historiis*.[89] (His name is Latinized as Surius.) Sauer had the habit of rewriting the *passiones* and *vitae* which he edited in order to conform to his

[85] See the important entry in the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, ed. A. M. Ghisalberti (Rome, 1960–, in progress) 75 (2011), pp. 471–5 [S. Spanò Martinelli], as well as S. Spanò Martinelli, 'Bonino Mombrizio e gli albori della scienza agiografica', in *Erudizione e devozione: le raccolte di vite di santi in età moderna e contemporanea*, ed. G. Luongo (Rome, 2000), pp. 3–18.

[86] The edition is listed in L. Hain, *Repertorium Bibliographicum*, 2 vols. in 4 (Stuttgart, 1826), nos. *3315, 6716, 8541, *11544, 12378, 12500, *13354, *14873–14875, and 14990. For the date of publication, see T. Foffano, 'Per la data dell'edizione dell "Sanctuarium" di Bonino Mombrizio', *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 22 (1979), 509–11.

[87] See G. Eis, *Die Quellen für das Sanctuarium des Mailänder Humanisten Boninus Mombritius: eine Untersuchung zur Geschichte der großen Legendensammlung des Mittelalters* (Berlin, 1933), with the review by Hippolyte Delehaye in *AB* 53 (1935), 412–22, as well as B. de Gaiffier, 'Au sujet des sources du *Sanctuarium* de Mombritius', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 14 (1979), 278–81.

[88] Mombritius is a principal or important source for the following *passiones*: Pope Clement (V); Pope Cornelius (VII), Eugenia, Protus, and Hyacinthus (IX), Chrysanthus and Daria (X), Susanna (XI), Eusebius the priest (XIII), Pope Felix II (XIV), Gallicanus, John, and Paul (XVIII), Simplicius, Faustinus, and Beatrix (XXXVI), Symphorosa (XXXVII), and Basilides (XL).

[89] *De probatis sanctorum historiis*, 6 vols. (Cologne, 1570–5). On Sauer and his collection, see *DACL* XV/2, cols. 1736–7 [H. Leclercq]; P. Holt, 'Die Sammlung von Heiligenleben des Laurentius Surius', *Neues Archiv* 44 (1922), 341–64; S. Spanò Martinelli, 'Cultura antica, polemica antiprotestante, erudizione sacra nel *De probatis sanctorum historiis* di Lorenzo Surio', in *Raccolte di Vite di santi dal XIII al XVIII secolo*, ed. S. Boesch Gajano (Fasano di Brindisi, 1990), pp. 131–41; and esp. R. Godding, 'L'oeuvre hagiographique d'Héribert Rosweyde', in *De Rosweyde aux "Acta Sanctorum". La recherche hagiographique des Bollandistes à travers quatre siècles*, ed.

own sense of style, with the result that his editions must be used with great caution. Fortunately, there is only one *passio* translated in the present volume for which we are solely dependent on a text published by Surius.[90]

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and later, large numbers of *passiones* of Roman martyrs were published by various Bollandists in the monumental series of *Acta Sanctorum*.[91] As with all scholarly enterprises conducted on such a huge scale over several centuries, the quality of the editions varies substantially: some are merely serviceable, but some are excellent, including those produced by Jean Bolland himself (1596–1665), Daniel Papebroch (1628–1714), and, in more recent times, by Hippolyte Delehaye (1859–1941).[92] Twenty of the *passiones* translated in the present volume are available only, or principally, in the *Acta Sanctorum*.[93]

A few editions were produced during the nineteenth century by distinguished classical and patristic scholars.[94] Several *passiones* were edited to a high standard in the early twentieth century by the great Bollandist, Hippolyte Delehaye, and published outside the pages of *Acta SS.*[95] One text was edited by Pio Franchi de' Cavalieri (1869–1960), one of the leading interpreters of

R. Godding, B. Joassart, X. Lequeux and F. De Vriendt, Subsidia Hagiographica 88 (Brussels 2009), pp. 35–62, at 36.

[90] The one *passio* translated here which is available only in the edition of Surius, is that of SS. Felix and Adauctus (XXXV).

[91] *Acta Sanctorum quotquot in orbe coluntur*, 68 vols. (Antwerp, Tongerloo, and Brussels, 1643–1925), treating saints whose feast-days fall between 1 January and 10 November. A second edition of *Acta SS.*, printed at Venice (1734–60), consisting of 44 vols. extending as far as *Septembris* V [1755], is rare and rarely cited. A third edition, printed at Paris (1863–70), consists of 57 vols. extending to *Octobris* X [1861], is widely available, particularly in North American libraries, and is widely cited. Reference should always be made to the first edition: texts reprinted in the third edition incorporate large numbers of typographical errors which ought to have been corrected by careful proofreading. The same is true, a fortiori, of the electronic version of *Acta SS.* published by Chadwyck–Healey (1999): although this version is said to be based on the first edition, the re-keyboarding of the Latin texts introduced so many uncorrected errors that the electronic versions of the texts simply cannot be cited with confidence.

[92] There is an excellent overview of the Bollandists' enterprise in R. Godding et al., *Bollandistes: Saints et légendes. Quatre siècles de recherche* (Brussels, 2007).

[93] The *passiones* edited by the Bollandists in *Acta SS.* include the following: Sebastian (III), Nereus and Achilleus (VIII), Pope Callistus (XII), Pudentiana and Praxedis (XV), Agnes and Emerentiana (XVII), Pope Marcellus (XX), Primus and Felicianus (XXI), Marius and Martha (XXII), Marcellinus and Peter (XXIII), Four Crowned Martyrs (XXIV), Pope Stephen (XXVI), Gordianus and Epimachus (XXVII), the 'Greek Martyrs' (XXVIII), Eusebius and Pontianus (XXIX), Rufina and Secunda (XXXI), Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus (XXXII), Calogerus and Parthenius (XXXIII), Serapia and Sabina (XXXIV), Simplicius, Faustinus, and Beatrix (XXXVI), and Getulius (XXXIX).

[94] Notably those of Paul de Lagarde, the *passio vetus* of SS. Sixtus, Laurence, and Hippolytus (VI); of Karl Kunstle, St Felicitas and her seven sons (I); of C. Narbey, Pope Clement (V); and of Wilhelm Wattenbach, who published two separate editions of the *passio* of the Four Crowned Martyrs (XXIV).

[95] Delehaye's editions published outside *Acta SS.* include three in his *Étude sur le légendier romain* (Anastasia and Chrysogonus (II), Caecilia (IV), and Pigmenius (XXXVIII)), and one in *AB* (Polychronius and others (XVI)).

Roman *passiones*.[96] Later in the twentieth century, M. G. Mara edited one of the *passiones* translated here (XXXIX), and G. N. Verrando produced editions of two texts based on his collation of numerous manuscripts (VI and XIV).[97] But with the exception of the edition of the above-mentioned *passio* of SS. Anastasia and Chrysogonus (II) by Paola Moretti, none of these could remotely be described as a critical edition.

THE TRANSLATIONS

The translations in the present volume are arranged in approximate chronological order, as that has been established by the important research of Cécile Lanéry. The translations are intended primarily to facilitate consultation of the Latin texts, so that, as far as possible, a sentence of English translation corresponds to a Latin sentence (this is obviously not possible in the case of texts printed by Mombritius, who reproduced the medieval punctuation of his exemplar(s), as was the normal practice in fifteenth-century editions). For the same reason, the translations are closely literal; words supplied in English for the sake of coherence are sequestered by parentheses (), and essential information not present in the original is supplied in square brackets []. When I have departed from the published texts, I have noted the departures in footnotes.

[96] The *passio* of SS. Processus and Martinianus (XIX).

[97] Mara edited the *passio* of St Getulius (XXXIX); Verrando's editions include the *passio vetus* of SS. Sixtus, Laurence, and Hippolytus (VI), and that of Pope Felix II (XIV). Verrando was an archaeologist who inter alia made notable contributions to our knowledge of martyrial shrines on the Via Aurelia; but he was not a trained philologist, and in spite of his diligence in collating manuscripts, his two published editions are worthless.

Texts and Commentaries

I

St Felicitas and Her Seven Sons

c.420; relevant to the cemeteries of Priscilla (Via Salaria Nuova), of the *Iordani* (Via Salaria Nuova), of Maximus (Via Salaria Nuova), and of Praetextatus (Via Appia)

According to the present *passio*,[1] St Felicitas was an aristocratic Roman widow of senatorial rank who was tried and executed for her Christianity, along with her seven sons, during the principate of 'Antoninus'.[2] It is arguably one of the earliest surviving *passiones* of Roman martyrs, and in spite of its schematic and repetitive format, its influence may be seen in later examples of the genre.

The *passio* is brief and its narrative simple. At the prompting of pagan priests, who feared that through her public display of Christian behaviour Felicitas was undermining belief in the traditional Roman gods, she was arrested and tried by the urban prefect Publius (c. 1). At the trial she was accompanied by her seven sons (c. 2). After Felicitas had refused to sacrifice and had been beaten up, her first four sons (Ianuarius, Felix, Philip, and Silvanus) were interrogated by the prefect, and vigorously refused to renounce their Christian belief (c. 3). Then the remaining three sons were interrogated, and they were similarly recalcitrant (c. 4). Antoninus therefore dispatched them to various executioners so that they could be tortured, with the result that all of them—the mother and the seven sons—were executed by various means (c. 5).

The martyrdom of St Felicitas is not recorded in the *Depositio martyrum* of 354 (Appendix I, below), but is commemorated against 23 November in the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*: '<Likewise> in Rome, in the cemetery of

[1] Listed *BHL* 2853 and *CPL* 2187; for studies of the text, see Dufourcq, *Gesta*, I, pp. 223–4; *DACL* V/1, cols. 1259–98 [H. Leclercq]; Delehaye, *Étude sur le légendier romain*, pp. 116–23; *BSS* V, cols. 605–8 [F. Caraffa]; Lanéry, 'Hagiographie', pp. 35–45; and the works by Joseph Führer and Karl Künstle mentioned below (n. 18).

[2] The text names the emperor in question simply as *Antoninus*. This name could in principle apply equally to Antoninus Pius (138–61), Antoninus Caracalla (211–17), Antoninus Geta (211–12), or Antoninus Elagabalus (218–22). But since only the first of these was known as Antoninus (with the epithet 'Pius'), and the last three were usually known by other names (Caracalla, Geta, and Elagabalus respectively), I proceed on the assumption that the emperor intended here is Antoninus Pius; but this is merely an assumption.

Maximus, Felicitas' (Appendix III, p. 657); she is commemorated on the same date, in the Verona, Gelasian, and Gregorian sacramentaries (see Appendix V (b), (c) and (d), pp. 669, 670, 672). From one of the seventh-century pilgrim itineraries, the *Notitia ecclesiarum urbis Romae*, we learn further that the crypt of St Felicitas was located above ground (or: on the upper level (*sursum*)) at the cemetery of Maximus on the Via Salaria Nuova (Appendix IV (a) [§3], p. 660); and on the basis of this information, it was possible for de Rossi to identify the cemetery of Maximus, and especially the crypt of St Felicitas, in the grounds of the Villa Savoia in 1856.[3]

Unlike the mother, however, who is not commemorated in the *Depositio martyrum*, the seven sons are commemorated in that source against 10 July, as follows: 'Felix and Philip, in the cemetery of Priscilla;[4] and in the cemetery of the Giordani (*Iordani*),[5] Martial, Vitalis and Alexander; and in the cemetery of Maximus,[6] Sil(v)anus; and in the cemetery of Praetextatus,[7] Ianuarius'

[3] On the discovery in 1856 of the cemetery of Maximus, and the inscription which permitted identification of the crypt as that of St Felicitas, see de Rossi, 'Scoperta d'una cripta storica', with pls. IX–X (reproduction of the fresco in the crypt showing Felicitas and her seven sons) and XI–XII (de Rossi's reconstruction of the original); see also Styger, *Märtyrergrüfte*, I, pp. 244–8 (with illustration of the inscription and the fragmentary remains of the fresco on p. 245). On the cemetery of Maximus, see Marucchi, *Le catacombe romane*, pp. 427–39; Testini, *Archeologia cristiana*, pp. 250–1; Carletti, *Le antiche chiese dei martiri romani*, pp. 37–9; Pergola and Barbini, *Le catacombe romane*, pp. 121–3; F. Bisconti, 'Maximi coemeterium', *LTUR. Suburbium*, IV, pp. 60–1; and Amore, *I martiri di Roma*, pp. 39–48.

[4] On the cemetery of Priscilla and its saints, see Marucchi, *Le catacombe romane*, pp. 461–558; Testini, *Archeologia cristiana*, pp. 254–60; Carletti, *Le antiche chiese dei martiri romani*, pp. 46–50; Tolotti, *Il cimitero di Priscilla*, esp. pp. 107–34 and 316–21 (the burials of Felix and Philip in the so-called 'basilica of Pope Silvester'); Pergola and Barbini, *Le catacombe romane*, pp. 130–7; R. Giuliani, 'Priscillae coemeterium', *LTUR. Suburbium* IV, pp. 262–9, and Amore, *I martiri di Roma*, p. 59, with discussion of SS. Felix and Philip at pp. 59–60.

[5] On the cemetery of the Giordani (*Iordani*), see Marucchi, *Le catacombe romane*, pp. 453–61; Testini, *Archeologia cristiana*, pp. 252–4; Carletti, *Le antiche chiese dei martiri romani*, pp. 41–6; Pergola and Barbini, *Le catacombe romane*, pp. 125–8; P. De Santis, 'Iordanorum coemeterium', *LTUR. Suburbium* III, pp. 89–93, with fig. 89, and Amore, *I martiri di Roma*, pp. 57–8.

[6] On the cemetery of Maximus, see n. 3.

[7] On the cemetery of Praetextatus, see Marucchi, *Le catacombe romane*, pp. 282–99; Testini, *Archeologia cristiana*, pp. 214–16; Carletti, *Le antiche chiese dei martiri romani*, pp. 99–102; Tolotti, 'Ricerca dei luoghi venerati'; Pergola and Barbini, *Le catacombe romane*, pp. 187–92; Spera, *Il complesso di Pretestato sulla Via Appia*; *eadem*, 'Praetextati coemeterium', *LTUR. Suburbium* IV, pp. 250–61; and Amore, *I martiri di Roma*, pp. 177–8. The crypt containing the remains of St Ianuarius was identified by de Rossi by means of an inscription in Filocalian lettering bearing the legend 'BEATISSIMO MARTYRI IANVARIO DAMASVS EPISCOPVS FECIT' (see Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, pp. 151–2 [no. 24]; *ICUR* V, no. 13871; Ferrua and Carletti, *Damaso e i martiri di Roma*, pp. 35–6 [no. 9]; Trout, *Damasus of Rome*, pp. 125–6; and Appendix II (h), p. 642). This crypt, described as the *cubiculum quadratum*, is designated Ax by archaeologists; the tomb of St Ianuarius is probably to be identified as the 'tomb of the porphyry columns' (Ag') within the crypt: see Tolotti, 'Ricerca dei luoghi venerati', pp. 8–10, 44–8, and 55–7, with pl. III; and Spera, *Il complesso di Pretestato sulla Via Appia*, pp. 198–9, with fig. 181 (the general location of the tomb of St Ianuarius identified by the aforementioned inscription in Filocalian lettering) and 311–15.

(Appendix I, below, pp. 634–5).[8] The alleged relationship between the seven martyrs of 10 July and Felicitas (23 November) is obviously suspicious, but was seemingly clarified by the discovery, in December 1966, in the cemetery of the Giordani (Via Salaria Nuova), of a fragmentary inscription in Filocalian lettering (hence associable with Pope Damasus), apparently referring to the seventh son (the surviving pieces of the inscription do not, alas, include the name of the brother): 'The seventh of the group of brothers . . . / wished to bury his remains here, the holy martyr, / because he knew that the halls of heaven had long been prepared for him.'[9] Given the location of the fragments, the 'seventh brother' must have been one of Martial, Vitalis, or Alexander. The fragmentary epigram thus takes its place alongside other Damasan epigrams commemorating the alleged sons of St Felicitas (Appendix II (h), on St Ianuarius, and II (p), on SS. Felix and Philip).[10] The epigram thus appears to offer proof that the story of St Felicitas and her seven sons was already current in the late fourth century, during the pontificate of Damasus (366–84).[11]

But whether the fragmentary inscription also offers proof that the present *passio* dates from the pontificate of Damasus is more doubtful. In favour of a relatively early dating—to, say, the early fifth century—is the fact that the work was known to Arnobius the Younger, who referred to it in his *Liber ad*

[8] These burials are also recorded in all three seventh-century itineraries translated below, Appendix IV (a), (b) and (c). Gregory the Great, in his *Dialogi* (iv. 56. 1), mentions that there was a church dedicated to a 'St Ianuarius' near the Porta Laurentii ('ecclesia beati Ianuarii martyris iuxta portam Laurentii'), by which he means the Porta Tiburtina (which by the sixth century had become known as Porta Laurentii because of the basilica of St Laurence, which was located just outside the gate (*fuori le mura*)). The identity of the St Ianuarius in question is unknown, and the site of Gregory's church has never been identified (S. Serra, 'Ianuarii (beati) ecclesia', *LTUR. Suburbium*, III, pp. 83–4). It is highly unlikely that the Ianuarius in question was the bishop of Benevento who was buried in catacombs just outside Naples (S. Gennaro); but possibly he was identical with the present St Ianuarius, buried in the cemetery of Praetextatus.

[9] A. Ferrua, 'S. Felicità e i suoi figli', *La civiltà cattolica* 118/2 (1967), 248–51, and (briefly), Fasola, 'Le recenti scoperte', pp. 289–91. The inscription is ed. *ICUR* IX, no. 24310, and by Trout, *Damasus of Rome*, pp. 159–60. The Latin text of the inscription reads: 'SEPTIMVS EX NVMERO FRATRUM . . . / HIC VOLVIT SANCTVS MARTYR SVA CON*dere membra* / ATRI*a quod* CAELI SCIRET SIBI LONG*a parata*'. For the missing words at the end of the first hexameter, Ferrua conjectured CVI NOMEN ALEXAS (implying that the inscription pertained to the martyr Alexander); but this conjecture is doubtful—the name Alexas is not equivalent to Alexander—and, as Ferrua admitted, given Damasus' vacuous diction, the hexameter might just as well have concluded with a bland formula (Ferrua suggested COGNOSCERE DEBES (p. 251, n. 6), which, however, is ungrammatical, if SEPTIMVS is supposed to be the object of COGNOSCERE).

[10] Note, however, that neither of these Damasan epigrams makes any mention of Felicitas, or of the fact that the martyrs were brothers.

[11] Ferrua's conclusions are fully discussed by Février and Guyon, '*Septimus ex numero fratrum*', pp. 375–402, who suggest that the inscription more likely referred to either Vitalis or Martial; and cf. the discussion of Amore, *I martiri di Roma*, pp. 42–8.

Gregoriam [*CPL* 241],[12] composed between roughly 430 and 450, as did Peter Chrysologus in one of his sermons [*CPL* 227], composed *c.*450.[13] It was also known a century and a half later to Gregory the Great.[14] Earlier than these witnesses, however, is an epigram, in Damasan style but not by Damasus himself,[15] which was arguably composed when Pope Boniface I (418–22) embellished the tomb of St Felicitas:

> The fearful day arrived; she arose against the Enemy.
> When she hastened to conquer the wicked weapons of evil,
> her faith alone, which the Almighty directs, was able
> to overcome the executioner's thousand ways of inflicting injury.
> Freed from bodily evils, endowed with Christ as her guide,
> the kindly parent seeks the lofty halls of heaven.
> She follows her guiltless sons through lovely meadows:
> a garland of flowers binds the temples of this conquering woman.
> The heavenly kingdom receives her bloodied soul;
> this tomb covers her limbs, drenched with her own gore.
> If you seek a label, she reveals her distinction in her name:
> so I wouldn't be overwhelmed <by my sins>, this (woman) was my <guide>.[16]

The *Liber pontificalis* records that Pope Boniface I 'built an oratory in the cemetery of St Felicitas, next to her body, and adorned the tomb of St Felicitas and St Silvanus [her son]'.[17] The epigram was presumably composed to adorn this oratory, and was inscribed somewhere within it: it provides evidence that Felicitas was thought to have been martyred together with her sons (lines 7–8), perhaps implying that the story as told in the *passio* was already current by *c.*420. The dedication of the oratory would provide a fitting occasion for the composition of the present *Passio S. Felicitatis* as well.

The *Depositio martyrum* gives no indication that the seven martyrs of 10 July were brothers, and none whatsoever that they were sons of Felicitas, who is not named in the *Depositio martyrum* and who, according to *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, was commemorated on an entirely different day

[12] *Liber ad Gregoriam*, *c.* 5 (*CCSL* XXV A, p. 200); Arnobius here stresses the similarities between the Maccabaean mother and St Felicitas, implying that he was familiar with the present *passio*.

[13] *Serm.* cxxxiv, *De sancta Felicitate* (*CCSL* XXIV B, pp. 818–19).

[14] *Hom. .xl. in Euang.* iii. 3 (*CCSL* CXLI, pp. 21–3).

[15] The poem is largely confected from phrases lifted from Damasus: e.g. *vias . . . mille nocendi* (line 3), *amoena virecta* (line 7), *caelestia regna* (line 9); etc. (some of course are also Vergilian).

[16] *ICL* 8264; Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, pp. 252–3 [no. 72]. As transmitted, the final line is corrupt and incomplete. With de Rossi I read *opprimerer* (for *opprimeret*) in the final line, and supply *uitiis dux*, so that the line, as restored, reads: 'ne opprimerer uitiis dux fuit ista mihi' (so translated). The poem is preserved in three *syllogae*: in that of Saint-Riquier (*ICUR* II, p. 88 [no. 33]), in the Fourth Lorsch *sylloge* (*ibid.* p. 116 [no. 92]), and in that of Verdun (*ibid.* p. 136 [no. 13]).

[17] *LP*, ed. Mommsen, p. 93; ed. Duchesne, I, p. 228; trans. Davis, p. 35.

(23 November). How, then, did the author of the *passio* come to associate the seven martyrs of 10 July with a female martyr of 23 November? In the late nineteenth century it was suggested by Joseph Führer that the association was prompted by the biblical story of the (unnamed) Maccabaean mother and her seven (unnamed) sons, whose refusal to eat pork led to their torture and execution by the cruel king Antiochus (II Macc. 7: 1–42).[18] Various verbal reminiscences indicate that the author of the *passio* did indeed have the Maccabaean story in mind when composing his account of St Felicitas.[19] In any event, the *passio* of St Felicitas is a work of pure fiction,[20] fabricated, on the model of a well-known biblical story, from references to seven martyrs in the *Depositio martyrum* in combination with the name of a female saint.

Text. The *passio* of St Felicitas is preserved in a large number of manuscripts[21] representing several recensions,[22] of which the earliest—*BHL* 2853—is that translated here. There are three editions of *BHL* 2853: that by Mombritius (I, p. 549), which omits cc. 3–4; that by the Bollandists in the *Acta SS.*, *Iulii* III [1723], pp. 12–13; and that by Karl Künstle.[23] The following translation is based principally on the edition of Künstle, with the chapter numbering (and occasional readings) from that of the Bollandists.

1. In the days of the emperor Antoninus,[24] malevolence arose among the high priests (of the pagans); and Felicitas, a woman of senatorial rank

[18] J. Führer, *Ein Beitrag zur Lösung der Felicitas-Frage*, esp. pp. 47–53. Führer's arguments were contested a few years later by Karl Künstle, *Hagiographische Studien*, pp. 84–8; but in more recent times, the debt to II Macc. has been recognized and stressed by Consolino, 'Modelli di santità femminile', pp. 86–8, and by E. Zocca, 'Il modello dei sette fratelli "Maccabei" nella più antica agiografia latina', *Sanctorum* 4 (2007), 101–28.

[19] With the words of Felicitas in the *passio*— 'Look, my sons, at the heavens, and direct your gaze upwards' (*c.* 2)— cf. the mother's words in II Macc. 7: 28: 'I beseech thee, my son, look upon heaven and earth, and all that is in them; and consider that God made them out of nothing, and mankind also.'

[20] It is described by Ferrua ('S. Felicità e i suoi figli', *Civiltà cattolica* 118/2 (1967), 248–51, at 249) as 'una composizione di pura fantasia'.

[21] *BHLms* lists some 115 manuscripts, to which Lanéry ('Hagiographie', pp. 40–1, n. 56) added a further forty.

[22] On the various recensions and their relationship, see Philippart, 'Grégoire le Grand', esp. pp. 269–81 ('Grégoire, lecteur de la *Passio Felicitatis*'); and Lanéry, 'Hagiographie', pp. 43–5.

[23] Künstle, *Hagiographische Studien*, pp. 60–3, followed by a useful *index verborum* (pp. 64–8) and detailed commentary (pp. 68–77). Künstle's edition is based on four manuscripts, of which one—Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Aug. perg. 32, datable to the second quarter of the ninth century (Bischoff, *Katalog*, I, no. 1594)— is the earliest surviving witness to this text; Künstle provides a full description of the manuscript at pp. 14–44.

[24] Presumably the reference is to Antoninus Pius (emperor, 138–61); see n. 2. For the principate of Antoninus Pius, see *SHA*, 'Antoninus Pius', which is probably based on the (lost) *Vitae Caesarum* of Marius Maximus, and is thought to be largely trustworthy. Antoninus Pius is not known to history as a persecutor of Christians, and on at least one occasion wrote to the Greek cities to forbid violent measures against Christians (see Barnes, *Tertullian*, p. 154); but Justin Martyr, in his *Second Apology*, describes the trial and execution before Urbicus, the urban prefect, of three Christians. Q. Lollius Urbicus was urban prefect in the years *c.*150 (see Vitucci,

(*inlustris*),[25] together with her seven thoroughly Christian sons, was arrested. While remaining a widow, she had dedicated her chastity to God. And, devoting herself to prayer by day and night, she provided bountiful instruction for chaste minds from her own experience. The high priests, observing that through her (efforts) awareness of the name of Christ was advancing, accused her before the emperor Antoninus, saying: 'This widowed woman with her sons is insulting our gods to the detriment of our well-being. If she will not venerate the gods, your Excellency should realize that our gods will be so angered that they will not be able to be appeased in any way.'[26] Then the emperor Antoninus charged the urban prefect Publius[27] to compel her and her children to mitigate the anger of their [the Romans'] gods by sacrificing. And so Publius, the urban prefect, ordered her to be brought to him in private; and, urging her in gentle tones to sacrifice, he (nevertheless) threatened death by way of punishment. Felicitas said to him: 'I cannot be persuaded by your blandishments, nor broken by your threats. For I have the Holy Spirit (within me), Who will not allow me to be overcome by the devil. Therefore I am convinced that I shall overcome you while I am still alive; and if I am killed, I shall overcome you better when dead.'[28] Publius said: 'You wretch, if it is pleasant for you to die, at least let your sons live.' Felicitas replied: 'My sons (will) live if they have not sacrificed to idols; but if they have committed so great a sin, they will go to eternal perdition.'

2. On another day Publius was sitting (in tribunal) in the forum of Mars,[29] and he ordered her to be brought (before him) with her children. And he said

Ricerche sulla Praefectura urbi, p. 117) and his executions therefore fell during the principate of Antoninus Pius (indeed, he is the addressee of the *Second Apology*). In any event, trials of Christians were conducted by magistrates of various rank and title, and in such trials the attitude of the emperor may have been relatively unimportant (cf. Barnes, *ibid.*, p. 151: 'the genuine evidence points to the relative unimportance of the emperor's attitude').

[25] On the rank of *illustris*, the most distinguished of the senatorial classes, see Jones, *LRE*, pp. 378–9. As a member of this class, Felicitas ought in legal principle to have been relegated rather than executed (see Introduction, p. 26); but an urban prefect had the freedom to prescribe whatever punishment he wished.

[26] As Lanéry observes ('Hagiographie', p. 40, n. 53), the motif of the sedition of the high priests is first found in biblical Acts, and becomes thereafter a motif in *passiones* of martyrs: cf. those of Pope Clement (V.4) and SS. Agnes and Emerentiana (XVII.11).

[27] There is no evidence for an urban prefect named 'Publius' during the principate of Antoninus Pius (see Vigneaux, *Essai sur l'histoire de la praefectura*, pp. 231–3, and Vitucci, *Ricerche sulla Praefectura urbi*, pp. 117–18); in any case, as Delehaye observed, the name 'Publius' is so common that no significance could be attached to its occurrence here (*Étude sur le légendier romain*, p. 120).

[28] This wording is possibly indebted to Tertullian, *Apologeticum*, *c.* 50.3: 'Sed occidimur.—Certe, cum obtinuimus. Ergo uincimus, cum occidimur, denique euadimus, cum obducimur' (*CCSL* I, p. 169).

[29] The 'forum of Mars' is another name for the famous forum of Augustus (see G. De Spirito, 'Forum Martis', *LTUR* II, p. 307), which acquired the epithet 'of Mars' because its principal monument was a huge temple of Mars Ultor. The temple was flanked by porticoes on either side, which were venues for courts of justice, especially for public prosecutors; see Vigneaux, *Essai sur*

to her: 'Have pity on your sons, (who are) good young men and flourishing in the flower of their early youth.' Felicitas replied: 'Your compassion is wickedness, and your urgings are cruelty.' And turning to her sons she said: 'Look, my sons, at the heavens, and direct your gaze upwards.[30] Christ with His saints awaits you there. Fight on behalf of your souls, and show yourselves to be faithful in the love of Christ.' Hearing this, Publius ordered her to be beaten with fists, saying: 'Have you dared to issue these warnings (to your children) in my presence, so that they will scorn the decrees of our emperors?'

3. Then he summons her first son, named Ianuarius, and was promising him endless good things, and he (also) warned him of the pains of a whipping if he refused to sacrifice to the idols. Ianuarius replied: 'You counsel foolishness. The wisdom of the Lord preserves me, and shall make me overcome all these things.' The judge [i.e. Publius the urban prefect sitting in tribunal] immediately ordered him to be lashed with switches and to be consigned to prison. He then ordered her second son Felix to be brought in. When Publius had urged him to sacrifice to the idols, he said firmly: 'There is one God, Whom we worship, to Whom we offer the sacrifice of sacred devotion. See to it that you do not believe that I, or any of my brothers, will withdraw from the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even if lashings and wicked[31] counsel threaten, our faith cannot be vanquished or changed.' And when he had been removed, he ordered the third son, named Philip, to be brought in. When he had said to him, 'Our lord the emperor Antoninus commanded that you sacrifice to the omnipotent gods', Philip replied and said: 'These are not gods, nor are they omnipotent; but they are empty idols, wretched and senseless; and those who wish to sacrifice to them shall be in eternal danger.' And when Philip had been removed, he ordered the fourth, named Silvanus, to be present; to whom he spoke thus: 'As I see it, this procedure is agreeable to you and your foul mother, that in scorning the commands of the emperors you shall all perish together.' Silvanus replied and said: 'If we fear transitory death, we will incur eternal punishment. And because we truly know what rewards are prepared for the just, and what sort of punishment is appointed for sinners, we accordingly scorn Roman law with confidence, so that we may keep divine commandments by scorning idols, such that, obeying Almighty God, we may acquire eternal life. Those who worship demons will die with them in everlasting fire.'

l'histoire de la praefectura, pp. 123–4 [with n. 2] and 125; Platner–Ashby, pp. 220–3; Richardson, pp. 160–2 with fig. 36; Claridge, *Rome*, pp. 158–9 with fig. 67; Coarelli, *Rome and Environs*, pp. 111–12, with fig. 26 (no. 9); and V. Kockel, 'Forum Augustum', *LTUR* II, pp. 289–95, with figs. 116–17.

[30] Cf. II Macc. 7: 28.

[31] Reading *iniusta* with the Bollandists in lieu of Künstle's *iusta* (which is attested in the Karlsruhe manuscript, the earliest of the surviving manuscripts).

4. And when Silvanus had been removed, he ordered the fifth, Alexander, to be presented; to whom he said: 'You will have pity on your life, still in its infancy, if you are not recalcitrant and if you follow those things which are pleasing to our king[32] Antoninus. Therefore sacrifice to the gods, so that you can be a friend of the august emperors, and have both life and favour.' Alexander replied: 'I am a servant of Christ. I confess Him in my speech, hold Him in my heart, adore Him incessantly. Tender youth, which you see (before you), has white-haired wisdom, and worships the one God. Your gods, together with their worshippers, shall end up in everlasting death.' And when this (brother) had been removed, he [Publius] ordered the sixth, Vitalis, to be brought in. He spoke thus to him: 'Perhaps you will choose to live, and not come to a deadly end?' Vitalis replied: 'Who is it, who hopes to live best? —the one who hopes to have God, or a demon, in his favour?' Publius said: 'And who is a demon?' Vitalis replied: '"All the gods of the pagans are demons, but the Lord made the heavens",[33] and everyone who worships them [the demons].' And when he had been removed, he ordered the seventh, Martial, to come in. He said to him: 'Having become the agents of your own cruel punishment, you scorn the ordinances of the august (emperors), and persist in your own destruction.' Martial replied: 'O if only you could know what punishments are prepared for the worshippers of idols! Thus far God does not hesitate to reveal His anger to you and your idols. All those who do not confess Christ to be the true God shall (end up) in eternal flames.' Then he ordered the seventh (son) to be removed. And, with these proceedings at an end, he reported everything in writing, in due sequence, to Antoninus the king.

5. Then Antoninus sent them to various executioners[34] so that they could be butchered with various tortures. One executioner killed the first brother with lead-weighted whips.[35] Another destroyed the second and third (by beating

[32] During the classical period, the Romans were reluctant to describe their emperors as kings; the use of *rex*, therefore, is a feature of late antiquity. On the Romans' reluctance to use the word *rex* to describe a Roman emperor, see Griffin, *Seneca*, pp. 141–6, and Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, pp. 613–16. The title became wholly appropriate only after the reigns of the Germanic kings Odoacer (476–93) and Theoderic (493–526)—that is, from the late fifth century onwards—although it had been anticipated a century earlier in, for example, the *Vita S. Martini* of Sulpicius Severus, who, writing in the last decade of the fourth century (394–9), described the emperors Constantius and Julian as 'kings' (ii. 5).

[33] Ps. 95: 5 ('omnes dii gentium daemonia, at vero dominus caelos fecit').

[34] The transmitted text (as printed by all editors) here reads *iudices*, 'judges'. But who were these various 'judges'? Publius, in consultation with the emperor, has already sentenced to death the mother and her seven sons (in any case, as urban prefect he himself had the authority to order a capital sentence and was not legally bound to seek the emperor's approval for his sentencing). From this it is clear that the persons described in the transmitted text as 'judges' are not *iudices* but are simply executioners. I suspect therefore that the word *uindices* ('punishers', 'executioners') has been corrupted to *iudices* during the course of transmission.

[35] On *plumbatae* ('lead-weighted whips'), see Gallionio, *Tortures and Torments*, pp. 89–90. Some *plumbatae*, recovered from excavations in Roman catacombs, are illustrated in *DACL* V/2, cols. 1640–2, figs. 4474–5, s.v. 'Flagellation (supplice de la)'.

them) with staves. Another killed the fourth by throwing him over a precipice. Another made the fifth, sixth, and seventh undergo capital punishment, and ordered their mother to be beheaded. And thus by various punishments he [Antoninus] destroyed them all in this life. All of them were made victors and martyrs of Christ; triumphing with their mother, they flew off to eternal rewards in heaven; scorning the threats of men, their punishments and beatings, for the love of God, in the kingdom of heaven they became friends of Christ, Who lives and reigns with the Father and Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

II

SS. Anastasia, Chrysogonus, and Companions

***c.*425; relevant to the *titulus*-churches of St Anastasia and St Chrysogonus**

One of the striking features of the ecclesiastical landscape of Rome in the fifth century—and probably much earlier—was the presence of what are called *titulus*-churches, that is to say, local neighbourhood or parish churches, which were founded on property donated to the Church by well-intentioned (and presumably wealthy) patrons.[1] In records from the late fifth century, notably the *acta* of a synod held in Rome in 499,[2] such churches are identified by the name of the original donor, e.g. *titulus Aemilianae*, where the original donor was an unknown woman named Aemiliana. Furthermore, because the pope—at least in the early centuries following the peace of the Church (which in Italy and Africa began with the cessation of the 'Great Persecution' in 306, and with the restoration of confiscated church property when Miltiades became pope in 311)[3]—attempted to preserve the notion of the unity of all Roman churches, embracing not only the Lateran (and the Vatican) but all the presbyteral or parish churches as well, the practice of celebrating what are called 'stational' masses in these churches developed, whereby the pope and his clergy travelled on foot to the individual churches to celebrate mass on fixed dates of the liturgical calendar.[4] Two of the most prominent *titulus*-churches, whose clergy

[1] On *titulus*-churches, see the fundamental studies by L. Duchesne, 'Les titres presbytéraux et les diaconies', in his *Scripta minora*, pp. 17–43 [originally publ. 1886]; Kirsch, *Die römischen Titelkirchen*, esp. pp. 117–73; Lanzoni, 'I titoli presbiterali di Roma antica', esp. pp. 220–4; Vielliard, 'Les titres romains'; *idem*, *Recherches sur les origines*, esp. pp. 31–7; F. Guidobaldi, 'L'inserimento delle chiese titolari'; and, most recently, Hillner, 'Families, Patronage, and the Titular Churches of Rome'. Hillner points out (pp. 226–8) that whereas earlier scholars such as Kirsch had regarded *titulus*-churches as third-century foundations, more modern research, pioneered by Charles Piétri (*Roma Christiana*, I, pp. 90–6, 569–73) and developed by Victor Saxer ('La chiesa di Roma', pp. 553–71, esp. 554–5 on the *titulus*-churches founded after Pope Silvester), considers many of them to be post-Constantinian.

[2] Printed *MGH*, *AA* XII, pp. 399–415.

[3] See Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, pp. 111–13.

[4] There is a clear and accessible account of the Roman stational liturgy in Willis, *Further Essays*, pp. 1–87. The calendar dates of stational masses are recorded in the early sacramentaries

were signatories to the *acta* of the Roman synod of 499 and at which stational masses were celebrated, were the churches of S. Anastasia on the Palatine, and of S. Crisogono in Trastevere.[5]

The church of S. Anastasia is located on the south-western slope of the Palatine, adjacent to the Circus Maximus and the *Forum Boarium*. The present church, with its Baroque façade, dates from 1721–2 and is a rebuilding of an earlier medieval church. The original (late antique) church of St Anastasia lies beneath this present church; it was built in turn on the first floor of an *insula*, which had served as a store-house for the imperial buildings of the Palatine and was fronted by numerous shops (second–third centuries AD). This original church probably dates from the mid-fourth century;[6] it is recorded as a *titulus*-church from the late fifth century.[7] In any case, we know from a fifth-century epigram preserved in two early medieval *syllogae* that Pope Damasus (366–84) embellished the apse of this church with a 'picture' of some sort (*picturae . . . honore*), possibly a fresco, which was subsequently replaced under Pope Hilarus (461–8) by a lavish mosaic;[8] another metrical inscription records that Longinianus, urban prefect of Rome (402–8), had provided the church with a baptistery.[9] Richard Krautheimer observed that the cruciform shape of the original church, with its semicircular apse, was unique in Rome at this time, although the form is well attested in Asia Minor and elsewhere in Europe.[10] It was in any case an

and lectionaries (see Appendix V); for discussion, see Kirsch, 'Le stazioni liturgiche'; *idem*, *Die Stationskirchen des Missale Romanum*; Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, pp. 105–66; and Quattrocchi, 'Le processioni stazionali'.

[5] The principal evidence for the number of such *titulus*-churches—some twenty-five churches are in question—is provided by the list of signatories to the above-mentioned Roman synod of 499 (printed *MGH, AA* XII, pp. 399–415); the *acta* of the synod are subscribed by seventy-one Italian bishops, followed by sixty-seven presbyters of Roman *titulus*-churches (pp. 410–15); and see Huelsen, *Le chiese*, pp. lxvi–lxxii, 124–5.

[6] On the church of S. Anastasia, see Duchesne, 'Sainte-Anastasie', in his *Scripta minora*, pp. 45–71 [originally publ. 1887]; *DACL* I/2, cols. 1919–24 [J. P. Kirsch]; P. B. Whitbread, 'The Church of St Anastasia in Rome', *American Journal of Archaeology* 2nd ser. 31 (1927), 405–20; Junyent, 'La maison romaine'; Krautheimer, *CBCR* I, pp. 43–63, with pls. VII–X; Brandenburg, *Ancient Churches*, pp. 134–5, with pl. XVI; Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital*, pp. 142–4; M. Cecchelli, 'S. Anastasia, titulus', *LTUR* I, pp. 37–8; A. Cerrito,'Contributo allo studio del *titulus Anastasiae*', in *Marmoribus vestita*, ed. Brandt and Pergola, I, pp. 345–71; and Brandenburg, *Le prime chiese*, pp. 140–2.

[7] On St Anastasia as a *titulus*-church, see Kirsch, *Die römischen Titelkirchen*, pp. 18–23; Lanzoni, 'I titoli presbiteriali di Roma antica', pp. 252–3; and Huelsen, *Le chiese*, pp. 172–3.

[8] *ICL* 901 (inc. 'Antistes Damasus'); the poem is preserved in two *syllogae*: that of Einsiedeln (ed. de Rossi, *ICUR* II, p. 24 [no. 25]) and the Fourth Lorsch *sylloge* (*ibid.* p. 150 [no. 18]). On these *syllogae*, see Appendix II, p. 638.

[9] *ICL* 13329 (inc. 'Qui peccatorum sordes'); ed. de Rossi, *ICUR* II, p. 150 [no. 19] (from the *Sylloge Laureshamensis Quarta*).

[10] *CBCR* I, p. 62: 'il primo stadio di Sant'Anastasia, quale è rappresentato dell'edifice cruciforme, costituisce un'eccezione molto interessante del tipo normale di architettura paleocristiana in Roma.'

important *titulus*-church,[11] because it was here that the crosses for papal stational processions were kept (see Appendix IV (b) [§14], p. 664).

The present church of S. Crisogono in the Trastevere is also the Baroque renovation of a medieval (twelfth-century) church; the late antique church, dating (probably) from the fifth century, lies beneath its modern successors, and was brought to light by excavations conducted between 1906 and 1924.[12] This original church consisted of a large hall which had previously been part of a wealthy *domus*, perhaps that of an original founder named Chrysogonus; parts of this *domus* survive, and may be seen beneath the present church. To the hall or nave were subsequently added a portico to the east and an apse to the west. The nave was decorated with mural frescoes, fragments of which survive. This *titulus*-church of S. Crisogono was sited at an important location for the early Christian community,[13] lying across the Tiber just west of the *Pons Aemilius* on a road leading up to the Via Aurelia (the modern Via della Lungaretta) and St Peter's on the Vatican.[14]

In spite of the presence in Rome of two important churches in the names of these saints, neither Anastasia nor Chrysogonus was a Roman martyr. Neither is recorded in the *Depositio martyrum* as being buried in a suburban cemetery (see Appendix I), and neither is the subject of an epigram of Pope Damasus (see Appendix II). Both were presumably patrons or founders who at some indeterminable time signed over their properties (the transfer being legally recorded in a *titulus* or 'deed') to the Church for the purposes of prayer and assembly. However, with the explosive growth of the cult of martyrs during the fourth century and later, and the increasing prestige of Roman martyrial churches such as those of St Laurence and St Sebastian, and given the fact that nothing whatsoever was known of either Anastasia or Chrysogonus, it was naturally assumed that they must have been martyrs. This assumption cohered during the sixth century at latest, for among the signatories of a synod held by Gregory the Great in 595 are priests of the *titulus sanctae Anastasiae*

[11] See n. 7.

[12] On the discovery and excavation of the original church, see O. Marucchi, 'L'antica basilica di S. Crisogono in Trastevere recentemente scoperta sotto la chiesa attuale', *Nuovo bullettino di archeologia cristiana* 17 (1911), 5–21. The fullest account of the original church is by Mesnard, *La basilique de Saint Chrysogone*, esp. pp. 9–17 (the excavations), 19–32 (the original church), and 33–56 (the cult of St Chrysogonus). Mesnard's reconstruction is followed by Krautheimer, *CBCR* I, pp. 144–64, with pl. XXI; see also B. M. Apollonj-Ghetti, 'Nuove considerazioni sulla chiesa inferiore di S. Crisogono', *RACr* 22 (1946), 235–49; Brandenburg, *Ancient Churches*, pp. 163–5; Guerrini, 'Le chiese e i monasteri', p. 384; A. Pronti, 'S. Chrysogonus, titulus', *LTUR* I, pp. 266–7, with *addenda* at V, p. 236 [G. De Spirito] and VI, p. 7; and Brandenburg, *Le prime chiese*, pp. 174–5.

[13] On S. Crisogono as a *titulus*-church, see Kirsch, *Die römischen Titelkirchen*, pp. 108–13; Lanzoni, 'I titoli presbiterali di Roma antica', pp. 252–3; and Huelsen, *Le chiese*, p. 238.

[14] See Brandenburg, *Ancient Churches*, p. 164: 'It was situated on a vital connection between the city centre and the great church to the apostle on Vatican Hill.'

and of the *titulus sancti Chrysogoni*,[15] where the original founders of the two churches have been elevated to sainthood. Inevitably, curiosity about who these martyrs were led to the composition, probably by a cleric of S. Anastasia, of a *passio* describing their martyrdoms.

When the cleric in question undertook preliminary research to establish the identities of SS. Anastasia and Chrysogonus,[16] he will quickly have discovered that a saint named Anastasia had been martyred at *Sirmium* (in Pannonia, roughly modern Serbia), whence her remains were translated to Constantinople in the fifth century,[17] and that a saint named Chrysogonus was martyred near Aquileia.[18] How then were these non-Roman martyrs to be accommodated in a *passio* designed to illustrate the patron saints of two prominent Roman churches? The author framed his work with St Anastasia as its principal focus, so that in his narrative not only is St Anastasia linked to Chrysogonus and Aquileia (cc. 2–9), but also to the sisters Agape, Chionia, and Irene, who are said to have been martyred at Thessalonica in Macedonia (cc. 10–18), as well as to Theodota, who with her three sons was martyred at Nicaea in Bithynia (cc. 19, 29–31). Even from this brief summary, it is clear that the author of the *passio* has stitched together four separate *passiones*:[19] of Anastasia (*BHL* 410), of Chrysogonus (*BHL* 1795), of Agape, Chionia, and Irene (*BHL* 118), and of Theodota and her sons (*BHL* 8093). The narrative

[15] The *acta* and participants of the Roman synod of 595 are printed as part of the *Registrum* of Gregory the Great: *MGH*, *Epistulae* I, pp. 362–7, with the subscriptions of the presbyters of Roman *titulus*-churches at pp. 366–7; and see Huelsen, *Le chiese*, pp. lxxi–lxxii, and 125.

[16] It is not clear why the author should have wished to link St Anastasia with St Chrysogonus (cf. the similar doubts raised by Mesnard, *La basilique de Saint Chrysogone*, p. 36). From the point of view of the early Roman liturgy, a more appropriate linking might have been St Anastasia and St Sabina, for on Wednesday in *Quinaquagesima* the *collecta* (that is, the gathering for prayers before the pope and his clergy set off for the stational church in question: see R. Hierzegger, '*Collecta* und *Statio*', esp. 517–47) was at S. Anastasia, with the consequent stational mass taking place at S. Sabina, directly up the slope of the Aventine from S. Anastasia (see Appendix V(e), p. 673).

[17] See Delehaye, *Étude sur le légendier romain*, p. 161, who notes that the remains of Anastasia were translated from *Sirmium* to Constantinople by Patriarch Gennadius (458–71). On the church of St Anastasia in Constantinople, see R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin,* I. *Le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique*, III: *Les églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1969), pp. 26–9. Note that the Greek *passio* of St Anastasia (*BHG* 81; Halkin, *Légendes grecques*, pp. 86–157, with mention of the translation of the remains of St Anastasia to Constantinople at p. 157 [c. 40]) is simply a translation, made by one Theodore, of the present Latin *passio*.

[18] On St Chrysogonus and Aquileia, see *DACL* I/2, cols. 2654–83 [H. Leclercq], at 2677; A. Niero, 'I martiri aquileiesi', *Antichità altoadriatiche*, XXII: *Aquileia nel IV secolo* (Udine, 1982), 151–74, at 158–65; G. Cuscito, *Martiri cristiani ad Aquileia e in Istria. Documenti archeologici e questioni agiografiche* (Udine, 1992), pp. 65–80; and Humphries, *Communities of the Blessed*, pp. 73–9 and 221–2.

[19] The various saints are commemorated on different days of the liturgical calendar, as recorded in the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* (see Appendix III): St Chrysogonus on 24 November; SS. Agape, Chionia, and Irene on 3 April; St Theodota on 2 August; and St Anastasia on 25 December.

device which links these disparate works is that St Anastasia is portrayed as an extremely wealthy Roman matron, subsequently a widow, who in her concern to perform works of Christian charity sells all her property and travels to places where Christians are being held in prison, in order to comfort them and distribute alms from her vast wealth. These travels take her from Rome to Aquileia, Thessalonica in Macedonia, and *Sirmium* in Pannonia, and eventually back to Rome, where she is tried and condemned by the urban prefect. The present work is thus an early example of what Hippolyte Delehaye described as an 'epic passion' (*passion épique*),[20] insofar as it relates a sequence of martyrdoms linked together by the person of the one martyr, Anastasia.[21]

The narrative of the amalgamated work is as follows. Following a prefatory chapter in which the author justifies the writing of *passiones* of martyrs, the story begins in Rome where Anastasia, the daughter of a wealthy (pagan) senator named Praetextatus, had leanings to Christianity (c. 2), and sought instruction from a learned Christian named Chrysogonus, who was being held under house arrest by the deputy (*vicarius*) of Rome (c. 3). Anastasia and Chrysogonus exchanged letters (cc. 4–7). At this point Diocletian, stationed in Aquileia, sent orders to Rome for all Christians being held under arrest by the urban prefect to be executed, but for Chrysogonus alone to be sent to him in Aquileia (c. 8). Anastasia therefore followed Chrysogonus to Aquileia. In Aquileia, Diocletian tried Chrysogonus in person and sentenced him to capital punishment; after execution, his body was recovered and buried by a Christian priest named Zoilus (c. 9). Zoilus reported to Anastasia that Chrysogonus had appeared to him in a dream-vision, and instructed Anastasia to go and comfort the sisters Agape, Chionia, and Irene (c. 9). These instructions provide the narrative link between the first part of the *passio*, concerned primarily with SS. Anastasia and Chrysogonus, and the second, concerned with SS. Agape, Chionia, and Irene.

The second part of the *passio* (cc. 10–18, corresponding to *BHL* 118), was translated by the author from a Greek *passio* of three young sisters who were martyred at Thessalonica.[22] It begins in Aquileia, where Diocletian is

[20] Delehaye, *Les Passions des martyrs*, pp. 171–226, and *idem*, *Cinq leçons*, p. 34: 'Pour qui connaît le légendier Romain, rien n'est plus aisé que de classer ce récit à côté d'une série d'autres longues Passions, comme celles de Marius et Marthe, de Marcel, de Nérée et Achillée, de Polychronius, d'Anastasie, d'Eugénie, pour ne parler que des principales. Elles ont ceci de caractéristique qu'au lieu d'être les Actes d'un saint, elles groupent autour d'un martyr célèbre, qui devient comme le héros du cycle, une série d'autres martyrs . . . '.

[21] The amalgamated work is listed *CPL* 2163; for discussion, see Dufourcq, *Gesta*, I, pp. 121–2, 137–9; *DACL* I/2, cols. 1919–24 [J. P. Kirsch]; *BSS* I, cols. 1041–9 [Anastasia], 303–4 [Agape, Chionia, and Irene], IV, cols. 306–8 [Chrysogonus], and XII, cols. 303–5 [Theodota]; Delehaye, *Étude sur le légendier romain*, pp. 151–71; and Lanéry, 'Hagiographie', pp. 45–60.

[22] The *passio* of SS. Agape, Chionia, and Irene (cc. 9–18) was translated by this author from a Greek source (*BHG* 34): see Franchi de' Cavalieri, 'Il testo greco originale', pp. 3–19; Franchi's