



Perpetua's Passions: Multidisciplinary Approaches to the Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis

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CHAPTER

Perpetua's Passions: A Brief Introduction

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Abstract

Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis is one of the most interesting documents of Roman imperial times. No other single text can convey as vivid an impression of the impact of an imperial persecution upon the individual, from arrest, to courtroom, to prison, to execution in the amphitheatre. The text also provides wonderful material on the dreams of the martyrs and their expectations and fears of death and the afterlife. This introductory chapter first examines various aspects of the text, such as its authorship and manuscript tradition, in order to gain a better understanding of its various aspects and thus improve our understanding of the text as a whole. It then draws attention to ways we can 'think with' this text. How should we approach this text? What can it mean to us today in a time of persecutions and martyrdoms? The text in its original and translated version is also provided at the end of the chapter.

Keywords: [Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis](#), [Christianity](#), [Roman Empire](#), [imperial persecution](#), [martyrs](#)

Subject: [Archaeology](#), [Religion in the Ancient World](#)

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One of the most interesting documents of Roman imperial times is the *Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis*.¹ 'This extraordinary and moving text preserves at its heart the first preserved autobiographical account written by an ancient woman. No other single text can convey as vivid an impression of the impact of an imperial persecution upon the individual, from arrest, to courtroom, to prison, to execution in the amphitheatre. This text also provides wonderful material on the dreams of the martyrs and their expectations and fears of death and the afterlife.'² It is hard to disagree with this recent assessment. Yet the text has received relatively little attention outside the world of students of early Christianity and those interested in the position of women in antiquity.³ It is the aim of this volume to remedy this situation and to focus on this document in two different, if sometimes overlapping, ways. The first part of the Introduction will study various aspects of the document, such as its authorship and manuscript tradition, in order to gain a better understanding of its various aspects and thus improve our understanding of the text as a whole. The second part will draw attention to ways we can 'think with' this text. How should we approach this text? What can it mean to us today in a time of persecutions and martyrdoms? In this brief introduction we would like to

introduce the reader to the base facts about this document but also to some of the ways the document has been used and approached in later times.

1. Date, Place, Title, Texts, Composition, and Genre

On 7 March 203 a small group of Christians was executed in the amphitheatre of Carthage.⁴ The year is attested only relatively late,⁵ but it cannot be far wrong, as the date of the martyrdom is given as the 'birthday of Geta Caesar' (*Passio* 7.9), the son of the ruling emperor Septimius Severus, which was indeed 7 March or close to that date.⁶ Within a decade an account of the execution was written, as is clear from the mention of Geta, whose memory was assiduously eradicated everywhere in the empire after his death at the end of 211.⁷ A study of the Latin prose rhythm of the *Passio* points to the same period.⁸

Although the account is nowadays known as the *Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas*, this was not its original title. The older manuscripts mostly lack the beginning and/or the title, but the *Codex Einsidlensis 250* (c. XII) has the title *Passio sanctorum Revocati Saturni Perpetuae et Felicitatis* and a lost *codex Laureshamensis* bore the title *Passio sancti Saturnini et sancti Saturis, Felicitatis et Perpetuae*. In these titles it is the male rather than the female martyrs that come to the fore.⁹ The modern title was introduced by one of the more eminent scholars and book collectors of the seventeenth century, Lucas Holstenius (1596–1661), who was also librarian of the Vatican.¹⁰ He had discovered the *Passio* in the library of the Benedictine Monastery of Monte Cassino,¹¹ but it was published only after his death, in 1663.¹² The next year, the French scholar Henri de Valois (Valesius: 1603–76), republished the edition, but also added an abbreviated version, the so-called *Acta*, to which we will return shortly.¹³ This version had been widely known in the Middle Ages, and many of its manuscripts carry the title *Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* or put the two female martyrs ahead of the other members of Perpetua's group.¹⁴ That is undoubtedly why our *Passio* has received its current title. In the course of the following centuries more manuscripts were discovered, but it would last until 1936 before the Dutch scholar van Beek published the first critical edition of the *Passio* and the *Acta*,¹⁵ and this edition is the basis of the working text of the *Passio* presented in this volume.

In 1889, however, it became clear that the textual tradition of *Perpetua* was more complicated than hitherto suspected, when a Greek translation was discovered in the library of the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Its discoverer, J. Rendel Harris (1852–1941), claimed that it was the original version and that the Latin translation was made half a century later.¹⁶ Although some prominent scholars have still supported the Greek priority in recent decades,¹⁷ it was noted virtually immediately that this could not be correct,¹⁸ and the most recent edition accepts the priority of the Latin version.¹⁹ This does not mean that the exact position of the Greek translation in the textual tradition is crystal clear. Its (better) preservation of both the place of origin of Perpetua, Thuburbo Minus (*Passio* 2.1), and the name of the deceased pro-consul Minicius Opimianus,²⁰ the predecessor of the procurator Hilarianus (6.3),²¹ suggests that it goes back to a rather early stage in the transmission of the original Latin text, certainly before the extant Latin version. The translation may well date from shortly after AD 260, since, like the shorter Latin *Acta* (below), it locates the martyrdom during the consulate of Valerian and Gallienus (1), and the persecutions under Valerian seem to have stimulated an extraordinary interest in *Perpetua*.²² Moreover, the translator skillfully replaced less technical Latin terms in the description of Perpetua's fight against the Egyptian, with the correct Greek ones. As Robert has convincingly argued, the description reflects a recent performance of the Pythian Games in Carthage,²³ probably in the winter of 202–3,²⁴ but such expertise regarding the games is hardly to be expected in Byzantine times when they had been abolished. We also know that Cyprian (*Ep.* 75) corresponded with Bishop Firmilianus of Caesarea in Cappadocia and that the proceedings of the Council in Carthage of 256 may well have been translated into Greek around that time.²⁵ Although this demonstrates contacts between Carthage and Greek speaking Asia Minor, this is as far as we can go at the present moment.

In addition to the *Passio*, there is the already mentioned shorter Latin version, which, unlike the *Passio*, contains a report of the interrogation of Perpetua and her group, but pays much less attention to the visions of Perpetua. The *Acta* were very popular in the Middle Ages, as is demonstrated by the large number of sometimes rather early manuscripts. Modern scholars distinguish two versions of the *Acta*, which van Beek calls A and B, but Amat calls I and II,²⁶ of which version B/II is more laconic and therefore sometimes thought to be older, although its more abbreviated and hagiographic form hardly warrants that conclusion.²⁷ Until the year 2007, all references to Perpetua and Felicitas in sermons attributed to Augustine and Quodvultdeus referred to the *Passio*, not the *Acta*, which was seen as a sign that the *Acta* were hardly earlier than the fifth century.²⁸ The 2007 discovery of a twelfth-century manuscript with a corpus of sermons ascribed to Augustine, amongst which there was a fuller version of the already known Sermon 282 on Perpetua and Felicitas, changed this picture.²⁹ In the sermon we twice find an expression from version II (Amat = B van Beek) of the *Acta*. As these expressions do not occur in the rest of known classical Latin literature,³⁰ the corollary must be that Augustine almost certainly knew a version of the *Acta*. It is clear that the new discovery will stimulate debates about the relationship between the *Passio* and the *Acta*, as can also be seen in this volume.³¹ It would be too early, though, to try to resolve this debate here.

Let us now return to the *Passio*. Its popularity somewhat overshadows the fact that it is a rather strange text, as it combines three different authorial voices.³² There is the general editor, who wrote the introduction and narrates the presentation of Perpetua and her group (*Passio* 1–2), the death of Secundulus (14), the pregnancy of Felicitas (15), the execution (16–21), and the conclusion (21.11). He was not Tertullian, as has often been suggested,³³ but he was certainly closely connected to Tertullian, and shared many of his views, as the contributions of den Boeft (Chapter VIII) and Ameling (Chapter III) in this volume show.³⁴ The second author is Perpetua herself, who evidently kept a diary in prison, in which she recorded her experiences and visions since her arrest.³⁵ This may surprise the modern reader, but letters from imprisoned Christians are well attested since the letters of Paul and Ignatius; and Saturus, the third author,³⁶ also wrote his own account of his vision (11.1: *ipse conscripsit*).³⁷ After the transfer of the group from the dark and hot (3.5–6) municipal prison to a military prison (7.9), probably in the centre of Carthage,³⁸ the director of the prison, the *optio* Pudens,³⁹ began to ‘honour’ (*magnificare*) them and to allow visitors (9.1). It seems reasonable, therefore, to assume that both Perpetua and Saturus either started or continued their writings within this prison which, given the circumstances, cannot have been too uncomfortable. Yet though Perpetua’s diary seems basically authentic, the editor did somewhat edit her text.⁴⁰ In the end we cannot be wholly sure to what extent we have access to the *ipsissima verba* of this remarkable young woman.

Unfortunately, many modern students of Perpetua do not look any further than the well-known collection of martyrs’ acts by Musurillo with its translations.⁴¹ Yet this collection is not only unreliable and incomplete,⁴² but it also suggests a unity that originally was not there. The genre of the martyrs’ acts only gradually developed over time,⁴³ and the name *Acta Martyrum* is a modern invention, which was first used in the sixteenth century for Protestant martyrs.⁴⁴ Yet quite a few martyrs’ acts go back to actual court reports, the so-called *acta*, which have given their name to the genre.⁴⁵ Its heart was the interrogation of the martyr, which culminated in his or her confession *Christianus(a) sum*, ‘I am a Christian’.⁴⁶ These reports were evidently available for inspection, as several instances show.⁴⁷ The accessibility of earlier proceedings is also illustrated by Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria, who, after he had been accused of, presumably, less than the required endurance during the persecution of Valerian, issued a letter about his court hearing, in which he supplied a number of, presumably, verbatim quotations from the official recording of the interrogation (Eus. *Hist. Eccl.* 7.11.3–11). The early Christians read these reports in their church services before the sermon in order to edify the faithful,⁴⁸ and that is why a number of them, such as the *Passion of Perpetua*, have been preserved.

2. The Textuality and Literariness of the Passion of Perpetua

Although the *Passion of Perpetua* thus owes its preservation to its use in liturgical contexts and is an important, if often neglected, source for the social and religious history of the Roman Empire and Early Christianity, this volume also aims to shed light on the *Passion's* textuality and literariness. These qualities have been too often neglected or simply seen as functions of the text's doctrinal, religious, and historical aspects (a separate and larger question is how and to what extent genuinely literary analysis may be interconnected with historical studies in general). Indeed, this volume could be said to have two souls: a historical one and a literary one. In this second part of the introduction, we first raise questions concerning the nature of this collection of papers, and then turn to some important implications of engaging in a literary interpretation of the *Passion*.

p. 8 Our volume is not intended to belong to the genre that the community of scholars normally calls a 'companion'. Within classical studies, this editorial practice usually is inspired by the perceived necessity of offering a *mise au point* on a certain author, work, or period. This occurs typically when an author, work, or period have been very much at the centre of scholarly attention and there is such an abundance of critical contributions that it becomes necessary to sum up the *status quaestionis* to make order among different tendencies and to indicate possible new approaches. Take, for example, the well-known series of Oxford, Cambridge, Brill, or Blackwell companions, which bear titles such as *The Companion to the Age of Augustus*, *Companion to Ovid*, or *A Companion to Vergil's Aeneid and its Tradition*. In short, a companion is generally felt to be needed when the study of an author, a text, or a period becomes canonical in a given field, and a general summary and overview is felt necessary. Although the *Passio* has certainly enjoyed a good deal of interest even among scholars whose research is not devoted specifically to the study of early Christianity, a companion would not, in our opinion, be the right instrument to present this text.

There is another reason why this book cannot be defined as a companion. Most of the authors of the eighteen chapters have never previously published on this particular text or, in many cases, not even on related issues. They have been deliberately asked by the editors to take the challenge of confronting the *Passio* and offer their own interpretations using methodologies and critical tools from their own disciplinary areas. In other words, not only is the text selected not a canonical one, but the authors of the essays contained in this volume are for the most part not the people a reader well informed on scholarship about Perpetua might expect to find.

This book, then, does not aim to offer a comprehensive critical assessment on a long studied topic, but rather to present a text that in our opinion contains several extraordinary aspects and therefore deserves attention not just among scholars of early Christianity but also of literature and cultural studies more generally. Hence this volume is something of an experiment, and it arguably follows the logic opposite to that of a 'companion': it does not assert common views but rather challenges them, by eliciting a revision of current methodologies, especially within Latin studies. In fact the debate on this text, not just the debate presented in this volume but also in several earlier studies, seems to invoke a new way of reading not just this particular text but perhaps also its broader context, that is, Latin literature. In our opinion, the *Passio*, for its radical originality, could represent a sort of laboratory for new methods of reading. By challenging the usually taken approaches by classicists, by expanding the canon of Latin texts, relativizing and possibly subverting it, and finally by providing the opportunity to ask fundamental questions about the reading of ancient texts and more generally about the function of literature itself and its link to life.

p. 9 While the discussion of canonical classical authors and texts normally does not raise the rather radical question as to why one has undertaken their study, approaching a text like our *Passio* signals *per se* a deliberate choice. The problem of approaching a non-canonical text becomes central and informs all kinds of analyses. While studying Herodotus or Euripides, Cicero or even Statius, classical scholars do not

need to justify why they are doing so, but things are different when one approaches a text that does not belong to this canon. Readers and critics expect that at the beginning the author of the study will declare why this text is worthy of attention. This point is far from secondary, since it influences the perception and reception of the text itself. The *Passio* has of course been studied mostly in relation to its early Christian context. Particular attention has been traditionally devoted on the one hand to its doctrinal core, including the possible Montanist elements, on the other to the problem of language (Greek or Latin) and authorship (either the one-author thesis, that is, the so called redactor actually composed the whole work, including Perpetua's and Saturus' portions, or the three-authors thesis, that is, we believe in what is said in the text).

One of the aims of this volume is to open this exceptional and relatively understudied text to a more genuinely literary investigation by connecting it to the ancient *spazio letterario* and at the same time aiming to find the place this text deserves within the broader context of western literature in general. Readers of the *Passio*, who are familiar with past studies might acknowledge that they are sometimes marked by a certain tension towards literary theory. Yet the actual text of the *Passio* lends itself to a deeper analysis of its literary structures. This volume intends to develop what is already present *in nuce* in a number of studies of the *Passio*. Moreover, the perspective applied in this collection is in harmony with the most recent trends in the studies of early Christian literature, which take on approaches deriving from postmodern theory and hermeneutical questions in order to read early Christian texts in new and different ways. Frances Young, for instance, by emphasizing textuality in itself rather than the text as source, puts under scrutiny a set of historical questions traditionally raised by past scholarship, related to the reconstruction of the religio-cultural milieu, the discussion of authenticity, authorship and date, or historicity.⁴⁹ Elizabeth Clark puts it incisively: 'Christian writings from late antiquity should be read first and foremost as literary productions before they are read as sources of social data'.⁵⁰

p. 10 Out of the quite vast bibliography, we will briefly make reference to some studies that can be considered landmarks for this kind of approach, such as those by Erich Auerbach (1892–1957), Marie Louise von Franz (1915–98), Peter Dronke, Brent Shaw, and Mieke Bal. In his *Literary Language and its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*, Auerbach was the first to point out the tragic stature of the protagonist of the *Passio* as well as the peculiar style of the text, which oscillates between *sermo humilis* and sublime.⁵¹ A couple of years before Auerbach, in the early fifties, the Jungian psychoanalyst von Franz offered an archetypal reading of the four dreams described in the report by Perpetua.⁵² Although her conclusions have been the object of critical discussions, raised in particular by philologists and historians, von Franz' study has the merit of having shed light on the very deep roots of Perpetua's imagery and visions, also beyond the Christian and classical background. In the eighties, the Cambridge mediaevalist Peter Dronke connected Perpetua to a much larger tradition, namely that of female authors. In his seminal study the *Passio* appears as the first in a long line of female-authored works that have their own textual characteristics and stylistic marks.⁵³ About ten years later, the ancient historian Brent Shaw published an important article in a prominent historical journal, where stress is put on the uniqueness of the *Passio* and its incommensurability with classical rhetoric in any other ancient work; in fact, such a tight link to real life is hardly to be found in other ancient texts.⁵⁴ And finally feminist narratologist Mieke Bal published a study, also in the early nineties, bearing the perfect title 'Perpetual Contest', which emphasizes in a very sophisticated way the internal formal struggles of the text which make it impossible for the narration to take place.⁵⁵

Many contributions collected in the volume are intended to follow the path opened by these studies by investigating the *Passio* as a highly literary work, even if it does not easily fit any classification established according to classical canons. Moreover, as has already been said above, most of the chapters are written by non-specialists, that is, classical scholars who have not previously written on a Christian or non-classical text, and scholars of modern literatures. In our view this represents the most innovative aspect of the project, since the inclusion of scholars of other disciplines responds to the variety of approaches the text

itself evokes, but also raises problems around the legitimacy of applying methodologies that are normally seen as ↪ extraneous or unrelated to the analysis of an ancient text.⁵⁶ In presenting other possible ways of approaching and interpreting the *Passio* we intend also to put under scrutiny traditional readings of ancient literature. Classical philology represents a highly canonized area of study, not just in terms of the texts studied, but also in terms of methodologies, which tend to favour a certain concept of literature, mostly canonical itself. In the case of the *Passio*, for instance, scholars have been puzzled, since they cannot *a priori* reconcile the surprising quality of this text with the different standards in classical literatures.⁵⁷ The genre of the *acta martyrum* or *passiones*, to which the *Passio* has traditionally been assigned, has never been considered worthy of literary attention. Such texts have been classified as *Kleinliteratur*, a German term rather difficult to translate into another language but which indicates a literary production of second rank or minor value, written not necessarily for an educated readership.

In fact, from a certain perspective one might argue that the *Passio* is something like a photo negative of Latin studies, since it contains *in nuce* what Latin literature is generally not, in particular regarding genre and gender. Genre has suffered from many prejudices, since texts like the *Passio* have been considered rather uninteresting from a literary perspective because of their being too much linked to real life. Moreover, as has been argued, the Latin language represents an overwhelmingly masculine culture, which does not leave space for female-authored texts to be fully recognized.⁵⁸ The *Passio* seems to raise all these problems concerning both the status of the text within the general context of Latin literature and the methodologies most applicable to its interpretation. Above all, just as Perpetua shows herself to be ‘unruly’,⁵⁹ the *Passio* seems to rebel against the manner in which scholars, especially classical scholars, attempt to domesticate it.⁶⁰ Here one might consider what we observed on the transmission of the text: it has been marked by serious doubts about the language and the authorship. Due to the scant external testimonies these questions are destined to remain unanswered, although most scholars today are inclined to consider the Latin version the original and to apply the three-authors thesis. Nonetheless, this text continues to puzzle but also to fascinate its readers: in its ambiguity and ↪ nebulosity it seems to elude philology by claiming a unique literary authority. Even the fact that this text is almost always perceived as ‘late antique’—even though it belongs to the middle Roman Empire and its cultural context appears typically Roman, as many chapters in this volume clearly argue—seems to be a sort of deferral. Classicists, perhaps enacting the characteristic homophily of their discipline, that is, the intrinsic difficulty in perceiving texts, problems, and methods outside of current trends in their discipline,⁶¹ in principle tend not to fraternize with this text, which systematically confutes their critical tools and methodologies. Here a distinction has to be made between different traditions: while within Anglo-Saxon academia a certain normativity and canonicity in curricula and reading lists are practised, in terms of the range of texts studied in Europe, especially in Italy, France, and Spain, curricula tend to be less canonical, and teachers often invite their students to investigate so called ‘minor’ authors. Not only is the *Passio* usually absent from reading lists, but it is rarely taken into consideration in discussions of the few female authors of Latin literature, such as Sulpicia. Surprisingly, even feminist classicists, programmatically friends of marginal texts and authors, do not pay attention to Perpetua as a Roman author, classifying her rather under the less canonical label of ‘Christian’ or ‘late antique’ literature.

The essays collected in this volume have been divided into three groups: ‘The Martyr and her Gender’, ‘Authority and Testimony’, and ‘The Text, the Canon, and the Margins’, although the editors are aware that there are other, and perhaps more subtle, ways of distributing the essays. It goes without saying that it is almost impossible to avoid repetitions since all the contributors are dealing with one single and very short text. In presenting this assemblage, though, the editors’ major aim has been to avoid a more superficial division between studies concerned with socio-historical and religious matters and those dealing with theoretical and literary issues, and at the same time to equally distribute contributions that deal *grosso modo* with the following main themes: (auto)biography, testimony, and reception. This does not mean that

(auto)biography, testimony, and reception are treated separately in the chapters, but rather that they are intertwined and strongly interrelated in each of them.⁶²

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Another way of tracing a path through the chapters is to follow three themes present in the *Passio* itself: writing, the body, and death.⁶³ These are perfectly interrelated within the complex textual structure of the *Passio*, which is established by the alternation of authors (the redactor, Perpetua, Saturus, and the redactor again) and the alternation of narrative levels. Particularly intricate, for instance, is the back-and-forth between dreaming and being awake within Perpetua's narration. In fact, the dreams or visions are at the same time written documents (since they are known only through the written report made by the martyr), careful descriptions of the body as a medium of communication (consider the transformation of Perpetua's body into a male one), and prefigurations of the final death.⁶⁴ All these three elements are equally present in the narrative, both in the redactor's portion and in the reports or diaries of Perpetua and Saturus, although they are differently used or described. The redactor's writing belongs to a certain speech genre, that of martyrology or panegyric, while Perpetua's writing is writing of the self, a genre that is basically absent from ancient literature. The body is a fundamental element of the narration: Perpetua's story, but also her father's and Felicitas', is the story of her body, marked by her gender and differently described whether Perpetua herself or the redactor speaks. And writing and body are both connected to the inevitable ending, the death of the martyrs, which can already be deduced from the title *Passio*. Death is always and everywhere present; it gives structure to the text, which can be read as a progressive subversion of social rules, of reality and dream, of gender, and finally of writing itself. The *Passio* represents an *Urtext*, an originary tale where life, writing, and death merge and where the reader can no longer distinguish life from mimesis.⁶⁵

Notes

- 1 Jan Bremmer is responsible for the first part of the Introduction and Marco Formisano for the second part, but both authors have commented on each other's contributions and take responsibility for the whole.
- 2 D. Shanzer, 'Literature, History, Periodization, and the Pleasures of the Latin Literary History of Late Antiquity', *History Compass* 7 (2009), 917–54 at 934.
- 3 For various reasons of this neglect, see Farrell, this volume, Chapter XVI.
- 4 For the evidence, see C.I.M.I. van Beek, *Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis* I (Nijmegen, 1936), 162*–163*. For the amphitheatre, see D.L. Bomgardner, *The Story of the Roman Amphitheatre* (London and New York, 2000), 128–46; J. Patrick, 'On the Lost Circus of Aelia Capitolina', *Scripta Classica Israelica* 21 (2002), 173–88 at 188.
- 5 T.D. Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History* (Tübingen, 2010), 66, 306–7 pleads for the year 204.
- 6 Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, 68.
- 7 For Geta's birth, death, and *damnatio memoriae*, see A. Mastino, 'L'erasione del nome di Geta dalle iscrizioni nel quadro della propaganda politica alla corte di Caracalla', *Annali Fac. Let. Filos. Cagliari* N.S. 2 (1978–9), 47–81; T.D. Barnes, *Tertullian* (Oxford, 1985²), 263–5; H. Heinen, 'Herrscherkult im römischen Ägypten und damnatio memoriae Getas: Überlegungen zum Berliner Severertrondo und zu Papyrus Oxyrhynchus XII 1449', *Röm. Mitt.* 98 (1991), 263–98; E. Varner, *Mutilation and transformation. Damnatio memoriae and Roman imperial portraiture* (Leiden, 2004), 168–84; Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, 67f.
- 8 See especially W. Shewring, 'Prose Rhythm in the *Passio* S. Perpetuae', *JThS* 30 (1929), 56–7, and 'En marge de la Passion des Saintes Perpétue et Félicité', *Revue Bénédictine* 43 (1931), 15–22; Å. Fridh, *Le problème de la Passion des Saintes Perpétue et Félicité* (Gothenburg, 1968), 12–45.
- 9 For the title and its gender implications, see also J.N. Bremmer, 'The Motivation of Martyrs: Perpetua and the Palestinians', in B. Luchesi and K. von Stuckrad (eds), *Religion im kulturellen Diskurs. Festschrift für Hans G. Kippenberg zu seinem 65. Geburtstag / Religion in Cultural Discourse. Essays in Honor of Hans G. Kippenberg on Occasion of His 65th Birthday* (Berlin and New York, 2004), 535–54 at 542.
- 10 P. Rietbergen, 'Lucas Holstenius (1596–1661), seventeenth-century scholar, librarian and book-collector. A preliminary note', *Quaerendo* 17 (1987), 205–30.
- 11 F. Newton, *The Scriptorium and Library at Monte Cassino, 1058–1105* (Cambridge, 1999), 317; A. Serrai, *La Biblioteca di Lucas Holstenius* (Udine, 2000), 62.
- 12 L. Holstenius, *Passio sanctarum martyrum Perpetuae et Felicitatis. Prodit nunc primum e MS. Codice Sacri Casinensis*

- Monasterij. Opera et studio Lucae Holstenij Vaticanae Basil. Canon. et Bibliothecae Praefecti. Notis eius Posthumis adiunctis*, ed. P. Poussin (Rome, 1663), 1–37.
- 13 *Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis, cum notis Lucae Holstenii, Vaticanae Bibliothecae Praefecti. Item, Passio Bonifacii Romani Martyris. Ejusdem Lucae Holstenii Animadversa ad Martyrologium Romanum Baronij. His accedunt Acta Sanctorum Martyrum Tarachi, Probi, et Andronici. Ex codice MS. S. Victoris Parisiensis* (Paris, 1664), 1–37 (*Passio*), 78–87 (*Acta*).
- 14 See the full list in van Beek, *Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, 107*–31*; Weitbrecht, this volume, Chapter VII.
- 15 Van Beek, *Passio*, who, unfortunately, never published the promised second volume.
- 16 J.R. Harris and S.K. Gifford, *The acts of the martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* (London, 1890).
- 17 L. Robert, ‘Une vision de Perpétue martyre à Carthage en 203’, *CRAI* (1982), 228–76 at 256, reprinted in his *Opera minora selecta V* (Amsterdam, 1989), 791–839, who persuaded R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London, 1986), 401; D. Potter, ‘Martyrdom as Spectacle’, in R. Scodel (ed.), *Theater and Society in the Classical World* (Ann Arbor, 1993), 53–88 at 76 note 31 and G. Bowersock, *Martyrdom & Rome* (Cambridge, 1995), 34.
- 18 See the detailed discussions by J.A. Robinson, *The Passion of S. Perpetua* (Cambridge, 1891, reprinted Eugene, OR, 2004), 2–9; P. Franchi de’ Cavalieri, *Scritti agiografici*, 2 vols (Rome, 1962), I, 41–155 (1896¹).
- 19 J. Amat, *Passion de Perpétue et de Félicité suivi des Actes* (Paris, 1996), 51–66, who concludes at 66, after a very detailed discussion, that ‘la traduction grecque est quelque peu postérieure à la *Passion* latine’. Consequently, R. Herzog and P.L. Schmidt (eds), *Handbuch der Lateinischen Literature der Antike IV* (Munich, 1997), 423–6 at 425 notes that ‘die Priorität der lat. Fassung als gesichert gelten darf’ (by A. Wlosok).
- 20 For the name of the pro-consul, see most recently Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, 304–7 (note also Minicius’ name in *Acta* 9.5). For the importance of the Greek text, see most recently the review of Amat’s edition by C. Mazzucco, *RSLR* 36 (2000), 157–67.
- 21 For Hilarianus, see X. Dupuis, ‘Hagiographie antique et histoire: 1’exemple de la Passion de Lucius et de Montanus’, *RÉAug* 49 (2003), 253–65 at 262–3, overlooked by Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, 304f.
- 22 See Bremmer, this volume, Chapter I.
- 23 Robert, ‘Une vision de Perpétue martyre’.
- 24 J. den Boeft and J. Bremmer, ‘Notiunculæ Martyrologicae II’, *VigChris* 36 (1982), 383–402 at 391.
- 25 For this Greek translation, see P. Bernardini, ‘Le Sententiae episcoporum del concilio cartaginese del 256 e la loro versione greca. Nuova edizione nel Corpus Christianorum’, *Cristianesimo nella storia* 27 (2005), 477–98.
- 26 For a good discussion and text, see van Beek, *Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, 104*–44*, 55–73; Amat, *Passion de Perpétue*, 265–303. I quote the *Acta* from Amat’s edition.
- 27 van Beek, *Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, 105*: *videri potest antiquior*, persuasively rejected by Amat, *Passion de Perpétue et de Félicité*, 271.
- 28 Amat, *Passion*, 271; see also F. Dolbeau, *Augustin et la prédication en Afrique* (Paris, 2005), 341, 345.
- 29 I. Schiller *et al.*, ‘Sechs neue Augustinuspredigten. Teil 1 mit Edition dreier Sermones’, *Wiener Studien* 121 (2008), 227–84 at 251–64 (Sermo 282 auct. edited by C. Weidmann).
- 30 *Sermo* 282 auct. 6.2: *in uteri onere = Acta* (II) 9.2: *post onus uteri coronam martyrii perceptura*; *Sermo* 282 auct. 6.3. *virilis virtus = Acta* (II) 9.2: *virili virtuti* (*virtus virilis* also occurs in Paulinus of Nola, *Carmen* 26.159: derived from Augustine?).
- 31 For varying discussions, see the contributions of Farrell (Ch. XVI) and Bremmer (Ch. I) in this volume.
- 32 J.N. Bremmer, ‘Perpetua and Her Diary: Authenticity, Family and Visions’, in W. Ameling (ed.), *Märtyrer und Märtyrerakten* (Stuttgart, 2002), 77–120 at 81–2; M. Formisano, *La Passione di Perpetua e Felicita* (Milan, 2008), 11–22.
- 33 See the convincing arguments of R. Braun, *Approches de Tertullien* (Paris, 1992), 287–99 (= *VigChris* 33, 1979, 105–17) at 322.
- 34 For the theology of the editor, see the contributions of den Boeft (Ch. VIII), Marksches (Ch. XIV) and Waldner (Ch. X) in this volume.
- 35 See the contributions of Waldner (Ch. X), Williams (Ch. II), and Konstan (Ch. XV) in this volume.
- 36 J.N. Bremmer, ‘The Vision of Saturus in the *Passio Perpetuae*’, in F. García Martínez and G.P. Luttikhuisen (eds), *Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome: Studies in Ancient Cultural Interaction in Honour of A. Hilhorst* (Leiden, 2003), 55–73.
- 37 For more examples, see R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (Harmondsworth, 1986), 468–70; Bremmer, ‘Perpetua and Her Diary’, 84; add Cyprian, *Ep.* 15.1.2; 31; 66.7.2; note also Lucian, *Peregrinus* 12: Peregrinus receives books in prison.
- 38 J.U. Krause, *Gefängnisse im Römischen Reich* (Stuttgart, 1996), 261f.
- 39 Cf. *AE* 1894.33, 1914.253; *CIL* VI.531, 1056–58, 2406, 32748; IX.1617 (*optio carcaris* [sic], cf. H. Freis, *Die cohortes urbanae* [Bonn, 1967], 44, 51, 71–5); XIII. 1833, 6739 (*optio cust[odiarum]*: Mainz); Aug. *Sermo* 256.1: *alius dicit de optione, alius de carcere liberates*; I am indebted to Peter Probst for some of these references. For Pudens as a military name, see H. Solin, *Arctos* 35 (2001), 235.
- 40 Thus, convincingly, Th. Heffernan, ‘Philology and authorship in the *Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*’, *Traditio* 50 (1995), 315–25, to be read with the comments by F. Dolbeau, *RÉAug* 42 (1996), 312–3; Formisano, *La Passione di Perpetua e*

- Felicita*, 20f.
- 41 H. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford, 1972).
- 42 For the most up-to-date list of martyrological documents from the period 150–313 that he regards ‘as authentic and/or contemporary either wholly or in significant part’, see Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, 355–9; add S. Lancel, ‘Actes de Gallonius. Texte critique, traduction et notes (ed. Paul Mattei)’, *REAug* 52 (2006), 243–59; P. Canart and R. Pintaudi, ‘Il martirio di san Pansofio’, *Analecta Papyrologica* 16–17 (2004–05 [2007]), 189–245; *P. Oxy.* 70.4759.
- 43 J.N. Bremmer, ‘Perpetua and Her Diary’, 78–80; Formisano, *La Passione di Perpetua e Felicita*, 22–37; Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, 47.
- 44 J. Crispin, *Acta martyrum, eorum videlicet, qui hoc seculo in Gallia, Germania, Anglia, Flandria, Italia, constans dederunt nomen evangelio, idque sanguine suo obsignarunt: ab Wicleffo & Husso ad hunc usque diem* (Geneva, 1556). *Acta Martyrum* as a book title for early Christian martyrs is first used by Th. Ruinart, *Acta primorum martyrum sincera & selecta: ex libris cum editis, tum manuscriptis collecta, eruta vel emendata, notisque et observationibus illustrata* (Paris, 1689). For Ruinart and his collection, see Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, 295–7, 343.
- 45 G. Bisbee, *Pre-Decian Acts of the Martyrs and Comentariorum* (Cambridge Mass., 1982).
- 46 For the confession, see Bremmer, this volume, Chapter I, note 44.
- 47 See the examples in Bremmer, this volume, Chapter I; Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography*, 54–66.
- 48 Aug. *Sermo* 280.1, 282 auct. 2, 394A.1; H. Urner, *Die ausserbiblische Lesung im christlichen Gottesdienst* (Göttingen, 1952), 25–42; B. de Gaiffier, ‘La lecture des Passions des martyrs à Rome avant le IX^e siècle’, *Anal. Boll.* 82 (1969), 63–78; L. Grig, *Making Martyrs in Late Antiquity* (London, 2004), 34–58; Bremmer and den Boeft, this volume, Chapters I and VIII, respectively. This should not prevent us from seeing that heterodox Christians also died as martyrs: R. Macmullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire* (New Haven and London, 1984), 134 note 13; A. Hilhorst, ‘Christian Martyrs outside the Catholic Church’, *J. Eastern Christian Stud.* 60 (2008), 23–36.
- 49 F. Young et al. (eds), *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge, 2004), 5–6, 105–11.
- 50 E.A. Clark, *History, Theory, Text. Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge, 2004), 159.
- 51 E. Auerbach, *Literatursprache und Publikum in der lateinischen Spätantike und im Mittelalter* (Bern, 1958) = *Literary language and its public in late Latin antiquity and in the Middle Ages*, tr. R. Manheim (New York, 1965).
- 52 M.L. von Franz, *Die Passio Perpetuae. Versuch einer psychologischen Deutung* (Zürich, 1951) = *The Passion of Perpetua*, tr. E. Welsh (Dallas, 1980, reprinted Irving, 2004).
- 53 P. Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages: A Critical Study of Texts from Perpetua (203) to Marguerite Porete (1310)* (Cambridge, 1984).
- 54 B. Shaw, ‘The Passion of Perpetua’, *Past & Present* 139 (1993), 3–45, reprinted in R. Osborne (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Greek and Roman Society* (Cambridge, 2004), 286–325 (with a ‘Postscript 2003’).
- 55 Mieke Bal (Ch. VI) has generously agreed to re-publish in this volume a slightly amended version of her work, which is particularly interesting for the purposes of this collection. Strangely enough, her essay has not been discussed very much in later bibliography.
- 56 See especially Bagetto (Ch. XIII), Böhme (Ch. XI), Mesnard (Ch. XVII), and Weigel (Ch. IX) in this volume.
- 57 See Formisano, this volume, Chapter XVIII.
- 58 See J. Farrell, *Latin Language and Latin Culture from Ancient to Modern Times* (Cambridge, 2001), 74f.
- 59 J. Perkins, *The Suffering Self. Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (London and New York, 1995), 105.
- 60 Cf. M. Formisano, Review of P. Habermehl, *Perpetua und der Ägypter oder Bilder des Bösen im frühen afrikanischen Christentum. Ein Versuch zur Passio sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis* (Berlin, 2004²), in *Gymnasium* 113 (2006), 75f.
- 61 For the concept of ‘homophily’ among scholars, see M. Lamont, *How professors think: inside the curious world of academic judgment* (Cambridge, 2009), 8 and *passim*.
- 62 The Epilogue by Warner in this volume represents the best proof of this fact.
- 63 See Formisano, *La Passione di Perpetua e Felicita*, 7–59.
- 64 For a discussion of the concepts of vision and dream, see Habermehl, *Perpetua und der Ägypter*, 74–7.
- 65 For comments and corrections we are most grateful to Candida Moss and Craig Williams.