

Cyprian of Antioch
Confession and Martyrdom
Translation of the
Coptic version

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The following is a relatively simple English version of the above-mentioned texts contained in a book that used to belong to the Monastery of Michael the Archangel at Phantou near Hamouli in the Fayyum and has since found its way into the Pierpont Morgan Library (USA) with the designation M 609. The texts occupy fols. 53r to 100v.

The text on each page is written in two columns of between 28 and 32 lines. There is a diagonal tear at the bottom of each page with the result that several lines in one of the columns can no longer be read, e.g. on page 4 the right-hand column is affected and page 5 the left, and I have indicated this gap simply by dots without specifying the number of the partially or wholly missing lines, usually between 3 and 5.

The text is cited in W. E. Crum *Coptic Dictionary* as Mor 18, which means vol. 18 of the photograph edition.¹

The texts have a colophon, which comes after the double title at the end of the two texts: it is faint, but there is a transcription of both in A. van Lantschoot *Receuil des colophons des manuscrits chrétiens d'Égypte* (1929) p. 50 and it can be found at the end after the two texts. It contains no information about the date of the texts, the scribe, the donor or the translator.

Of the first text, the **ΜΕΤΑΝΟΙΑ** (Confession or Repentance)², there is a Greek version (probably the original). An excellent edition and translation of this text has been prepared by Ryan Bailey *Confession of Cyprian of Antioch* (2009), and the Greek texts of the **ΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΑ** can be found in Margaret Gibson *Apocrypha Arabica* (1901).³ I refer to them throughout as 'Bailey' and 'Gibson' respectively. Reference is also made occasionally to the English translation of the Syriac version by Agnes Lewis *Select narratives of holy women* (1900) pp. 185-203, referred to as the 'Syriac'.

The two texts clearly form a unit as can be seen from the joint title at the end of the two texts as well as the continuous pagination of both texts from **α** to **ϥϥ**, with the appropriate quire numbers: quire **α** ends on

1 H. Hyvernat *Checklist of Coptic Mss in the P. M. Library* (1919) no. xiv

2 'Confession' can also render **ἑομολογία**.

3 It is preceded by a text bearing the title **πρᾶξις**, generally understood as *Conversion*. Bailey p. 8 n.21 has a note on the trilogy of texts: *Confession, Conversion and Martyrdom*. For an English version of Dr Gibson's text cf. <https://www.academia.edu/search?q=acts%20of%20cyprian>

page 15, and so on.

Bailey's notes on the content of the text are far beyond what I could have hoped or wanted to achieve, and I will merely add occasional notes about the Coptic and the Greek. The Coptic translation is by no means a full or faithful version of the Greek text available to us, but we not know what Greek text was available to the translator. I have introduced paragraph divisions of my own.

The translation has been made from photocopies of the photographic edition of the M 609 texts made available by Christian Askeland and Ronald Hurlocker:

<https://ia803205.us.archive.org/33/items/PhantouLibrary/m609%20Combined%20%28Bookmarked%29%20.pdf>. Missing pages were kindly supplied by Dr Alin Suci.

It is by no means an optimal translation, and a much better one would be made from a text edited on the basis of the original or a photographic edition.

The numbers in brackets throughout the translation are the pages numbers of the Coptic text.

Cyprian is a fictional character whose memory survived into the European Middle Ages by association with Justina.⁴ Her fame appears to have been eclipsed by the notoriety of Cyprian, who ironically was grafted on to an historical character, perhaps Georg Sabellius (Faustus Iunior). The history of Sabellius can be found in *Das Volksbuch von Dr Faustus*, published in 1580, and was used by Christopher Marlowe (in an English version) for his play written in 1597, *The tragical historie of Dr Faustus*, and towards the end of the 18th cent. by J.W. Goethe in *Faust I and II*. The association between Cyprian and Faust was made by Pedro Calderón de la Barca in *El magico prodigioso* (1637).

The name of Cyprian has become more or less synonymous with magic, and among the works connected with his name *Libro de San Cipriano* is said to have been 'delivered' by a German monk Jonas Sufurino from a Hebrew parchment: the 1905 edition of it has a lurid woodcut of an attractive young woman *en déshabille* seated on an elaborate chair with a book of magic open on her lap. A tribute to the enduring power of a certain type of fiction !

I have made no reference to the work previously done on the Coptic Cyprian texts by F. Bilabel, Oscar von Lemm and L. Kakósy, all referenced in Bailey's work, for the simple reason that I have been unable to consult any of it.

4 Jacopo de Voragine *Aurea Legenda* ed. Th. Graesse (1850) ch. 142

METANOIA

This is the confession of Cyprian the magician, who became a Christian in Antioch because of Justina the virgin. He then became a bishop of the city of Nicomedia. And finally he obtained the crown of martyrdom with Justina the virgin in the time of the emperor Diocletian on 20 Thout⁵ in peace. Amen.

[Those who find difficulty in the mysteries of] Christ, let them look upon my weakness and my tears and know the accuracy of the words that I have written with them. Those who take pleasure in demonic forms, what they have in them are vanities and mockeries. For there is none among the demons who will be able to intimidate you more than they intimidated me and you will not be able to enquire into all their mysteries for the cause of their energy and know them as I did, (2) these which are called gods. I, Cyprian, am the one who was offered to Apollo when a boy and instructed from childhood in matters deceit, the things done by the dragon. Before I was fully seven years old I made my way in the mysteries of Mithra. And though an Athenian proselyte and not a citizen by birth, the zeal of my parents made me a citizen in that place.⁶ When I was fifteen,⁷ I became a servant of Demeter and I processed before her with lamps. The young woman known as the Virgin, I mourned her in radiant garments. I made offerings to Pallas in the place on high.⁸ I served the serpent [of Pallas . . .] (3) I went to Olympas, the greeting⁹ which is called the mountain of the gods. I learned the mysteries of the image, . . .¹⁰ which speaks and which interprets the meaning of the sounds made in a demonic vision. I saw in that place types of trees and plants while the gods looked upon their energies . . .¹¹ which are in them and different voices which are established by opposing energies. I also saw in that place lines of demons. some singing hymns, others making deceitful snares, and others causing disturbances. I saw ranks of gods and goddesses standing in rows. I spent forty days and forty nights in that place eating only the trees in it.

5 1 Oct.

6 The text is not easy to read, but it is clear that the writer has used the Egyptian and the Greek words for 'citizen', Where the Greek describes him as 'epêlytos', the Coptic uses 'prosolytos'.

7 Gk. 'ten'

8 The Acropolis.

9 Unless this refers to the greeting of the neophyte, I do not know what it means-

10 I am not certain of the reading: **ⲬⲈ** [· ·] **ⲧⲌⲠⲞⲩ ⲛⲛⲘⲞⲧ**, but it may refer to the 'type' of sound

11 The difficulty of the passage is due to the obscurity of meaning and the faded visibility of the text.

After sunset (4) evil spirits were sent from that place by kings in the guise of soldiers, each one performing actions¹² on earth and with all nations.

When I was fifteen, I was taught by the priests and the seven faces of prophecy of the devil, namely these which he¹³ tells me mouth to mouth. For they are what make each of the demons effective. My parents were eager for me to know all the power of the devil. He instructed me in how the earth was firm in its foundations. He instructed me about the disposition of the air and the ether. I investigated the sea down to Tartarus. I then went to Argos and celebrated the festival of Hera. I learned about the distinction between men and women and about casting hate in the midst of brothers and companions . . . (5) . . . and water and again water and ether in this way. I travelled to a city called Thaeis,¹⁴ which is the land called Lacedaemon. I learned the mystery of Hydios¹⁵ and Artemis about the division of darkness and light and the stars and the paths and the Pleiades and the North Stars¹⁶ and the army of . . . Kronos, they will be able to stir them¹⁷ more than the other stars, when some of them make uneven courses. I then went to a people called Phrygians and from them learned the art of enquiry. I learned to understand their language and the art of augury and the language of the ravens and the birds that they keep and the signs of the animals and the art of divination from the priests. (6) These which tell people about the future and the trees that speak and the stones that are on the graves and the doors. I learned them all, each one of them. I also learned about the limbs that move quickly according to their energy and the sinew that stretches and becomes less¹⁸ and the things that consume each other and the casting of projectiles for the sake of words and the numbers which come on fingers throwing them and the words that leap from the human mouth suddenly. I made things from my words and found them to be true. I also studied false sicknesses as being not true. Also oaths that are heard in the same way as those that are not heard and agreements as disagreements and a dispute as peace. Nothing was hidden from me . . . (7) . . . appearance, whether a matter of knowledge or reckoning¹⁹ of some sort or deceit or idol worship or mechanical or craftsmanship or difficult to know down to the least illnesses which old women cause by

12 Translates **ΕΡΕΠΟΥΑ ΠΟΥΑ ΕΙΡΕ ΝΖΕΝΕΡΓΙΑ**

13 Presumably the devil.

14 Gk text: Elis.

15 Not in Gk text. Adonis ?

16 Crum 230a

17 If one understands the verb as **ΤΩΖ**.

18 This may be an unattested form of **ΩΧΒ** cf. Crum 841b. The same form occurs later in the text.

19 Crum 528a

casting the evil eye.²⁰

I . . . in my heart . . . all . . . I gained experience of dark places under the earth, those which the demons of the air made a single one and things upon the earth in them, and how they are angry with people. Also the stars in which they take pleasure and on which they fall and which are the laws they love and which they run away from and which are the spirits that they oppose. I also learned of that place . . . (8) . . . is darkness.²¹ And the things which are in communion with souls and unreasonable creatures including fish. And the various activities generated by them: the activity of one is running, of another knowledge, of another memory, of another fear, of another silence and guile, of another unwanted desire, of another forgetfulness. Another is very active so that it causes trouble²² and many other things of this sort. I came to know about stones of earthquakes and rains in that place as well as earth putting forth and sea in storm. They are active in their appearance, like someone carrying a great burden. I saw . . . (9) . . . bitterness of the poison that comes from their mouths that they may kill those on earth, a poison of which the spirit in the air partakes and one which causes all this mischief to people, like those who enjoy them, who take pleasure in them all, because of the help which is supplied to the beasts under the earth. I saw a land . . . to it. I was also taken to a place there, the place where the spirits change form and take shape. This is where the dragon created him with a deceptive appearance in opposition to the ordinance of God, so that the evil spirits serve men who are part of their community for the same impious purposes. For impious piety is produced there with (10) unreasonable knowledge and iniquitous justice and unstable stability.

I saw there the spirit of deceit in a form that was multiple. The spirit of fornication had three faces, one blood-coloured, one the colour of a garment, and one rotten like the flame of a fire. The spirit of anger is like a hard stone, ugly in the form of a beast. The spirit of deceit has many tongues joined together covering him. The spirit of hatred is like a blind man whose eyes are the back of his head, running at all times after the light, his feet hanging behind his head . . . intestines . . . (11) Envy is like zeal but different from it. It has a tongue as sharp as a sickle. The spirit of wickedness is like a dessicated bone with tongues on it. The place of darkness of his eyes which are struck by arrows and prepared at all times to make their way to

20 Lit. 'for the sake of casting the evil eye'. The following text omits the episode of Cyprian's visit to Memphis at the age of twenty, except for his departure.

21 The Coptic possibly has **ΑΡΙΘΜΟΣ** and certainly has **ΚΑΚΕ**, which suggest a distant connection with the Greek passage towards the end of §2 in Bailey where the words 'arithmos' and 'kakôsis' occur, but I do not understand it.

22 The word here is 'stasis', which usually means 'rebellion'. The Greek phrase it translates has the word 'ochlos' meaning 'uncontrolled mob', and the translator seems to have transferred the meaning.

do evil . . . the other one on his chest, they being things that draw to themselves the earth with stones. I also saw it coming rather weakly because it was distorted. ²³It does not set them up and does not eat anything. The spirit of ignorance is what a man does and it provides what is pleasing when he lacks shamelessness . . . his body being in the form of the bird called the Harpê,²⁴ the pupils of his eyes (12) sunk in his head so that they cease entirely to operate. The spirit of commerce is like a short strong man whose body is diseased: there is a disc on his neck and all the things he has are in it. Vanity is like a man well-nourished and sleek but boneless. The idolater is like a spirit flying under the firmament, his wings on his head and thinking that he covers²⁵ everyone with them, while he has no limbs to cover himself. The spirit of hypocrisy has taken the form of an ascete, who toils at his work beset by great pains, but they flow over him in secret, surrounding him and circling him like a . . . The spirit of . . . (13) . . he was without stability, being longer than his whole body. I saw the likeness of stupidity with a head as small as a nut, a heart that is fixed and loosened,²⁶ quite unable to carry his head. I also saw there the likeness of passion of wicked things, each one of them doing . . . coming . . . lie down with evil, each of the demons measuring the world with it, they being upon it. I also saw there the form of vainglory and virtue and justice in which there was no value. Among those whom the demons met were Greek philosophers. They were crooked and lacked firmness. Some were like dust, others like shadows, if (14) they stop appearing. For in the service of . . . ²⁷ they cause the demons to be active deceiving them so that I will be unable to tell you all the details unless²⁸ I write a multitude of books. But I will tell you some things to give you an idea of the zeal of my impiety.

When I was thirty I left Egypt for the land of the Chaldeans so that . . . how it lay. Those there said of it that it was set up on the building. The wise among them were saying: "He is upon the light". I learned from them the difference between stars and plants. Some are beneficial and others harmful. Their ranks are distributed like battle lines. I was told . . . (15) . . . spiritual. And their singleness which they have towards men. These divided for me the ether into three hundred and sixty-five parts, each one having its nature in common with hylic energies, viz. our bodies obeying their commander and their advice, giving a sign to the one who . . . words, namely the acts performed through sacrifices and libations. Some of them do

23 In view of the Gk text I am inclined to think that the word might be **ΟΛΚ**⁺, cf. Crum 522a.

24 Species of eagle.

25 Unusual writing: **ΖΟΒΟC**, cf. Crum 658b

26 Translates **ΕCΚΗ ΛΥΩ ΕCΒΗΛ ΕΒΟΛ**

27 There are 4 letters that look like **CHTE**, but I cannot identify the word.

28 Gk conjunction often meaning 'lest'. English 'unless' fits the sense better

not obey, but they keep the disposition which they have towards these words of light. I was also told that they consent to take part in the counsel that is of hylic darkness. They see the counsel of the light and preserve it. I also saw the mediators in their midst. I wondered at the spirits of darkness that are in the air.

(16) They have a difference in their life. I learned of the agreements made between them. I was very surprised that they were seized and that there were dispositions and eagerness and commands and a good thought in that place with the result that they enjoy fellowship with each other. The ruler of that place of wisdom, who knows all wicked wisdom, filled his heart with guile and all impiety from the air, but from the earth he caused their heart to learn how to speak under the earth. He caused purpose to be full of every deed of mischief, this one who gave the earth no rest. He also caused them to discard their own natures and abandon God and stop serving him. He was eager . . . error . . . He . . . (17) . . . vanity. If you believe me, I saw the devil himself face to face. I made him appear through a sacrifice. If you take my word, I greeted him mouth to mouth. I spoke with him. He thought I was one of his retinue. He called me an intelligent boy, at ease by his side and . . . the small . . . After all the things which he promised to give me in life because I was very honoured in his sight. He promoted me to the force under him. When I came coming forth, he called out my name: "Very zealous Cyprian, be a strong man and add to the things which you are doing." When he arose, he . . . ²⁹. All the archons were astonished and submitted to me. (18) He looked like the flower of joy that is decorated with pearls. There was a crown on his head bound with stones of this sort,³⁰ the light of which spreads over that field. His robe too cast forth rays³¹ in such a way that the place in which he was sitting moved. There were many ranks, different from each other, standing at his throne, bending their heads, with their energies, in submission to him. He put on a great display, illuminating the place and inspiring fear in everyone. He made for himself forms of stars and trees and animals in opposition to God. He fought with his angels, thinking that perhaps through them he would lead men astray . . . (19) . . . them all with things of delusion, he troubled at heart by these things and thinking that he creates people through them, as if bringing them out of what does not exist that they may exist. For this reason, when the demons appeared through an image of their power. So, how are we to assume the forms of . . .and their other spirits, like wool and linen, with looms on them and a dye and a workplace ,

29 The text clearly reads **ΑΓΦΟΙ ΕΒΟΛ**, but I cannot identify the verb. The final letter seems to represent the pronominal object, thus making it Coptic and not Greek. The Gk text here reads *προέπεμψέ με*

30 The aforesaid. cf. Crum 173a

31 Imperfect with direct object.

with tools³² to work on them ? They put them over them and create shadows in place of forms. For this reason he asks down to an ant that they give it to him as a sacrifice and water and wool and fruit. He demands all things on earth that he might use them to produce (20) fantasy shadows. Like those that call, we remember their forms in our heart. We see them but they are not visible and we speak with them but they do not speak.³³ This then is the manner of the devil: he fashions the forms that are offered to him in sacrifice and assumes them together with his own. He provides rain but he does not give it for them to drink. He makes fire but it does not burn for heating. He provides fish but it is not for eating.³⁴ He assumes the appearance of other matter and appears in cities, houses, the countryside, hills and towns. He also assumes the form of roses and flowers of the air, which are made into the robes of the idols as fantastic garments for the men who serve . . . He . . . (21) which I will say later. I, Cyprian, am the one who wishes to turn to God and repent that I knew the dragon from the time when he came into being as a material substance.³⁵ I knew his whole power and arrogance. For I am looking through the darkness of my impiety. I came to know through it the holy virgin Justina, for all the demons in the darkness . . . and . . . something . . . them . . . Christian, the dragon who boasts of all these things, for he will not be able to do what a gnat can do. I was persuaded by this pious woman that the king of darkness, when he promises great things, is lying. The dragon was crushed like a worm by Justina. The king of the demons left the woman alone. He dared not attack her. He who was attended by many spirits and their number (22) was unable to break a wooden plank of the door of the young girl. He who thought himself to be lord of all was enfeebled³⁶ by a woman. He who said that he knew the earth was made an object of ridicule by a young woman. He who was wondrous and great in mischief was unable to change the mind of a woman. He who thought of himself as roaring like a lion, inspiring fear, was now a source of mockery in the outer courtyard of the young woman, like a gnat.

When I came to Antioch from the land of the Chaldaeans, working miracles through my magical skill, I used a great many erotic potions of desire with power to counteract envy and jealousy . . . (23) his name was Aglaitos. He asked me daily about a young girl called Justina, whom he wished³⁷ to overpower that he might do with her as he wished. For in those days of

32 Crum 363b

33 The sense requires the addition of a negative.

34 The meaning of **ΝΤΟΥΩΜ ΜΜΟϞ ΑΝ** is clear, but I am not sure how to parse it.

35 I do not know how to translate **ΚΑΤΑ ΟΥΝΝῚΩΒ**.

36 Lit. 'his strength was destroyed'.

37 Lit. 'so that he might overpower her'

the rule of impiety and pomp of the devil, she³⁸ revealed to me all the ranks that he had given to me to serve me. I sent . . . then . . . But the one I sent was like . . . ³⁹ of Aglaitos, thinking that he would achieve something. The faith of the girl thwarted his power. The young man spent many wakeful nights with all the different potions I had made and the mischief of the devil and his leading archons and fought with her, but Aglaitos did not succeed with the young woman. But I myself, it was like a miracle⁴⁰ when I saw all the powers (24) brought to nought by the young woman. But the devil was nevertheless unable to turn aside desire and angrily tried repeatedly to achieve his goal. I said to him that if nature in its entirety were his to command, at least he could remove our desire so that they would not mock us when we persist in doing what we cannot. So he called on the spirit of fornication and severely rebuked him, ordering him to do what I suggested to him or make an effort to see if Aglaitos could not be freed from his desire. He could do many things, but was unable to be effective in this matter. God revealed to us that the devil was unable to oppose nature but was vain about nature, like a lame person or a cripple who . . . (25) . . . concern⁴¹ of the young man overcame thought and it stimulated nature to desire even more. There was a great conflict between myself and the demons and among the demons, who began to deceive each other. I was presumptuous about the ordinance of the dragon. But when he saw his weakness, he said nothing. [I cried] aloud . . . of Aglaitos and he was powerless. He wanted to make a likeness of the girl. When he brought in her likeness, a deceptive creation, there was nothing about her that resembled Justina. I recognized the deception and strongly condemned the devil.

Finally he made the demon of fornication and the likeness of the face of Justina. When he brought it to Aglaitos, the latter was overjoyed and called out: "Welcome, beautiful Justina." (26) At that moment the demon dissipated like smoke when he heard the name of Justina and went away, and this made the young man afraid. I myself was present, people, when this happened. I experienced her faith and the ineffectualness of the devil. For this reason I was disturbed and kept a short vigil. I sat beside her in the form of a woman. I became a bird. But when I went to the . . . the vision left and I once again became Cyprian, my magical skill having become inactive. I once turned Aglaitos into a sparrow, He went and perched on Justina's roof, When Justina looked up, he stopped being a sparrow. That wretch on the roof on the roof was about to be destroyed . . . (27) . . . in weakness and she taught him to remain calm and serve God

38 I take the subject of **ΝΤΑΚΟΥΩΝΖ** to be Justina.

39 The word is clear enough: **ΘΕΙΜΕ**, but I do not know what it means. Is it perhaps related to **ΖΜΜΕ** 'guidance' cf. Crum 677b

40 I cannot parse **ἸΝΝΕΟΥΨΠΗΡΕΤΕ ΕΙΝΑΥ** . . .

41 Perhaps [**ΡΟ**]ΟΥΨ

and she cast him down. She was overcome by neither illness nor torture nor loss. During all of this the devil was unable to turn her back. Often when she was ill and had been abandoned by the doctors, her parents . . . and she . . . of violence, he having a fever. What have we not done to her or what have we not tried against her ? But she chased away the energies of the demons through the sign of the Cross. I caused her parents to be ill and I destroyed the livestock and their beasts of burden.⁴² She encouraged them not be distressed. She persuaded them they would recover when God blessed the other . . . (28) Everyone knew the anger she felt and they cried out for her to be given to the young man not to be corrupted but to be married according to the law. Justina, with the Cross of Christ, cured their ailments that they might stop bothering her. The devil brought pestilence to many people in the town. He promised them that it would stop if Justina were to lie with Aglaitos, People called out to Justina for this. She prayed, and they became calm. She drove the plague out of the city. They returned and gave praise to God the Christ. They⁴³ cursed me greatly as a conspirator, so that those whom I knew did not have.⁴⁴ Finally, when I discovered that nobody could overcome the Cross that was in Christ, I came to my senses, and my hear became firm: "I Cyprian am in my senses." I said to the devil: "The one who . . . men . . ." (29) . . . of your own weakness. If you are overcome by the shadow of Christ, what will you do when he appears in person ? What will you be like when he stands opposite you ? If the sign of his death has made you quite weak, where will you be found in your⁴⁵ energies. If the sign is made, . . . then you will also⁴⁶ not be able to do anything ? Nor will you be able to make your judgement yourself. I now understand your wicked error. I⁴⁷ recognize your illusion and know your weakness. For you give nothing in truth, but rest⁴⁸ is illusion. A . . . of your types and the laws you have passed is transient, opposing piety with them as you do. Together with those that have no substance, but with error (30) and deceit you ruined my heart. You have led my soul astray. You have thwarted my hope. You have brought down the order of my logic for salvation. You have made it worthless. You have wasted my life with evil. You have killed the substance of my being. I was in great error. I became old. I walked in great ignorance. I handed myself over to you of my own accord.

42 Lit. 'yoke-bearers', cf. Crum 243a

43 Read **αγχαζογ**.

44 The Greek 'so that . . . I had misgivings about meeting my acquaintances'. Perhaps the translator wanted to write: 'so that I was unable to meet those I knew'.

45 Gk 'its'. i.e. of the Cross.

46 This is how I understand **κεογα**.

47 The small diplê in the margin usually indicates direct speech. In the first part Cyprian rebukes the devil ('You . . .) and in the second part shifts the focus to himself ('I . . .). The entire episode is somehow reminiscent of the martyr-governor interview(s) that are a standard feature of martyrologies.

48 The translator seems to have misread **ἀπόλαυσις**

I did nothing with what I had learned . . . education which I had, I gained nothing from it. I listened to you. I lost my goods and property. I followed your deceit and lost my soul. I wasted the wealth of my parents for your sake. If I had given what I wasted to the poor and widows, I would have generated for myself a . . . Woe . . . (31). . . I thinking of myself that I was alive. I did not know that with my wealth I had bought a burial for myself and a life of danger because I was your servant. It is therefore necessary for me to call upon the Christians. It is fitting for me to prostrate myself at the feet of those who worship God, for they will be able . . . on me . . . necessary . . . Leave me, polluted wrongdoer. Go away from me, lawless enemy of God. Do not come near, my opponent."

While I was saying this, he came towards me very angrily to kill me. He leaped on me, with the intention of throttling me. I gave up the struggle, while he was beating me on the ground with great anger, and when all hope of life had left me, I thought of the word which the maiden used to say (32) I cried out: "God of Justina, help me." At that moment, when I said this, I was revived and stretched forth my hand and blessed myself. He left me like an arrow or an insect⁴⁹ that settles on a beast. He stood before me, a sword drawn in his hand threatening me: "I will kill you". When I understood the power of Christ, he went away angrily, saying: "Christ is not able to save you from my hands. For he hates all the impious and they are abominable to him. He has helped you now deceitfully that he may hand you over later to me to die. When he was about to abandon you, I will tell you because you despise my power: he will use you very badly. And you will know . . . the Lord . . . be . . . Behold . . . you have . . . (33) . . your heart to him and he will be unable to be of use to you." When he said this to me, I became afraid. For he spoke with me threateningly and hard-heartedly. For this reason I beg you, worshippers of God here,⁵⁰ pity my wretchedness. Tell me about Christ, if there is a power of my . . . beg him to . . . that I may cease from my impiety, in which I was formerly trapped."

Many were silent, until one opened his mouth and said: "Courage, Cyprian. For in this Christ will receive you to him. What you have done was done in ignorance." I replied: "Did not the devil said that Christ would cast me down among the impious ? And that I was worse than all of them ?" He then said: " . . . you know (34) the devil, what a violent creature he is. Do you believe his words, Cyprian. There is no guile in Christ because he is the source of all love and there is no deceit in him. So that you may know that he is the source of goodness. He is the creator of all. He was among men for their sake and suffered death for us, so that through him we would be . . . and we might reconcile them to him through the Cross. He prepared hope for

49 Crum 23b. This image is absent from the Greek.

50 On the subject of Cyprian's public confession cf. Bailey note 51.

us. He taught us through Jesus Christ about how we will rise from the dead. If Christ died for the impious, he will forgive you for your sins. Bless Christ in his mercy and do not be concerned about what you have done. If he . . . crucify . . . (35) about them, for my father forgives them. They do not know what they have done. So how will he not forgive all the sins we have committed in ignorance. Do not be afraid or apprehensive. But rise and go to our father the bishop." When he said this, my heart . . . are they true, these words that you saying to me?" He persuaded me with many other words from the Scriptures.

At this point I began to confess my sins and my impieties before everyone: "Will he forgive all my wrongs, men of Antioch? For I have committed countless misdeeds, and I cannot tell them all. The women whom I cut open for the demons or⁵¹ (36) the women of noble birth whom I took prisoner. I caused them to abandon their cities, their houses and their husbands. After they had become pregnant from adultery, I gave them medicine. Small children feeding off their mothers' milk, I buried them beneath the earth. Some I suffocated.⁵² Others I beheaded for the dragon, who promised me that this would give me strength. Those who had reached the age of maturity . . . young people and those older than them. I buried them beneath the earth for the idol who is called as follows: *He is one among the gods*. I removed the head of boys for Hecate, who is called Virgin. Young girls who had not married, I offered their blood to Pallas . . . Others . . . (37) . . . many other demons I persuaded⁵³ them with a sacrifice of this sort so that in this way I would make my way to the devil and be able to speak freely to him. Just as I was about to make my way to the devil and speak freely to him, I brought⁵⁴ to him the blood of every animal in a gold vessel.⁵⁵ He [received it] from me, . . . sprinkled . . . head . . . , he threw over me, saying: "Since you have done this, I too will give you power over all the souls of men and all irrational creatures." I killed countless numbers of men, doing this favour for my male and female friends, and there was nothing but loss in them all these favours, for they are illusions and not true. My acts of violence, on the other hand, have served me⁵⁶ because (38) they were true, since the demons, when they activated them, but they were of no use, for they were unable to give substance to them. If I gave someone gold, he would be active for three days only. For this reason, those to whom I told the deceit, they then gave them to those who took from them and sustained no loss. The acts of fornication committed and the

51 There are several letters after $\bar{\eta}$, but I cannot read them.

52 Read $\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$.

53 Translates: NEITEIOE

54 Corrected

55 Greek word quite common in Coptic, but here in an unusual writing: CRAIOC .

56 Translates $\alpha\gamma\alpha\zeta\epsilon\rho\alpha\tau\omicron\upsilon \epsilon\rho\omicron\iota$ cf. Crum 567b.

shameful desires for young men, I bent their souls to me and many others with me too numerous to mention. The arts which I practised and the acts of fornication and quarrelling and destruction and all manner of death. The one who is able to write them, how, my beloved, will God forgive me for all the sins and abominations I have committed? And how will he have mercy on us . . . (39) . . . a hope that I would do this, but I have committed so many offences. About which of them am I to be silent and which to publish?⁵⁷ The destruction of a people or the guileful disposition, my friends and strangers? Those I whom killed or the others whom I destroyed? Our persecutions . . . [Chris]tians? Or virgins whom I have debauched? Or the churches I have demolished? Or the devastation of the houses of prayer? Or the destruction of worthy women, which is more serious than all my thoughts and everything I said against the mysteries. For in those wicked days I made them tell me about them. When I listened to them, I used to laugh at them and make fun of them and told others about them. The holy scriptures (40) I scorned as falsehoods. I used to throw them into the fire and burn them. And people who spent time in church, I would rip them open like the lions. Was it hatred or scorn of baptism or enmity that I felt for the churches and clerics? Or suspicion of them? Or the suggestions I made to give them⁵⁸ to men who would do them harm? Or the prayers which I mocked . . . them by means of them and the derision I expressed for the saints of God? Or perhaps the blasphemy with which I blasphemed against Christ? Or the gospels with which I found fault and seized the people who read them (to tell them) that these words for me are not fixed, which is Christ to forgive me first? Or what will he concede to me . . . first . . . (41) . . . not suffice for me to apologize for them. For I do not know that I will live another twenty years. And I will hardly be able to repent for a single matter. The time left to me is of this sort that I will die in my countless impieties. Tell me, my friends, what to do . . . the way in which I . . . repent . . . I kno[w] . . . For I know the fear of the priests. For this reason I am not bold enough to express myself freely among them. I know the grace of the gospels, but will not dare to touch them, while my heart reproaches me. I understand that the faith of Christ is immortal, but I have no way of supplicating the holy power that he might forgive me. I am also aware of the order of the church, but I am ashamed to make my way inside . . . in its . . . (42). I know God. How am I to apologize to him? I want to be pious, but my impiety is too strong for me. I wish to listen to those who call me 'servant of God' but I do not know if he is willing to receive me or take me to him for payment. I give myself to him of my own accord. I indent myself to him as a servant. I do not want honour with him. Only let him take me for nothing. If he does

57 This translation is based on understanding **ΝΤΑΚΑΑΩ** as 1st p. conjunctive of **ΚΩ** <εἶπαί> followed by **ΑΩ**

58 I have understood **ΕΠΤΑΑΥ** as the preposition+article+*status pronominalis* of †

not⁵⁹ want to forgive me, I blame only myself. Only let him look on me that I am impious. I know that I deserve eternal punishment. I do not reject his punishment if he orders it. Only let me be worthy of being under his authority, if he wishes to kill me, but I ask him not to leave me behind.⁶⁰ The time . . . you . . . (43). . . Justina the maiden. I sentence myself to die, but let me just see how they worship. Tell me, my friends, if it were possible for a stranger like me to prostrate myself from afar and see his divinity that I might wither my soul and my heart in my grief . . . who are called Iannis and Iambres, who when practising their magic, confessed a finger of God.⁶¹ But I never believed that God existed. If those of God forgive me, then it is because they knew him in truth. How will he forgive me when I refused to acknowledge his existence? For was I not boasting of my impiety (44) when I said this? For I am not worthy of his grace, but I know that he loves the truth. Who is able to tell you of the sea of impiousness perpetrated by me? Who is able to write to you the great abyss of my blasphemy? Who is able to tell you the great god of my sinfulness? Who can tell you the storehouse of evil appointed in me? Many have drowned because of it. I am not the only one to have been destroyed nor did I cast myself alone into the darkness but took many with me. For how many am I to mourn or which am I to . . .? Those whom I . . . (45) . . . or those whom I made like myself? I was a teacher in the midst of the impious. I revealed myself to be zealous herald of evil. I acquired countless students. I instructed⁶² many in drinking potions that they may kill many. Thinking of them, I [did] something I myself saying that they will be of use to my fellow-man, but I was responsible for their eternal destruction. I made many magicians for their sake because they asked me, young men from childhood to old age. I made them xxx in their wickedness. The old people, I persuaded them to be full of vanity. The foreigners I persuaded to emigrate to distant lands. They came to me because of magic. Some also did (46) good things and they progressed in their piety. I hindered them and, taught them the mysteries as a priest and the demons as a temple servant. I taught them deceit and made them see visions so that I might lead them astray as prophet. I made the great perfect sacrifice in which a hecatomb⁶³ is offered. As I had great power. I left nothing undone, and this included teaching everyone who wanted to know. At the same time I prophesied to many that they might be like me. I killed many I opposed. Some fell down and died because of me. I became a prophet⁶⁴ to those who stood against me.

59 The line is incomplete. and I take it that **AN** is in the missing part.

60 Lit. 'I do not ask him to leave me behind'.

61 Ex. 8, 19.

62 For **ΤΟΥΝΟΥ**- cf. Crum 74a

63 I understand the peculiar **ΩΗΖΙ ΜΑΣΕ** to mean simply 'hecatomb'.

64 Read 'traitor': the translator has misread or perhaps, more improbably, deliberately misunderstood, **ΠΡΟΔΟΤΗΣ** as **ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ**

Some asked me . . . I made them . . . (47) . . . the wind to let them sail. I caused others to migrate to a far-off land, flying and travelling⁶⁵ by road. I also took control of the winds and released them against payment for those who wanted. I caused ships to sink. Others I caused to come ashore for amusement. I caused water to flow . . . from their husbands and went to places of fornication and those who wanted to fornicate with them. Others who were pregnant, I allowed them to give birth in comfort. I did death a favour. I handed over healthy houses to salvation.⁶⁶ I caused him to lay them waste. I guilefully murdered friends. I had no mercy on them. I caused many to lose good servants of their choice so that⁶⁷ some who wanted to be like me asked me (48). The demons bade me especially to act for them, rejoicing over me.

Tell me, my friends, if there is teaching that I should escape ? Or is it better for me to choose death through a snare rather than live, while I remember wicked deeds of this sort, even if I cannot do them again. For I deserve to die badly more than any man. I wanted therefore to hear of the power of Christ and to die a death appointed for me forever. The one who has his desire, I will tolerate him that I may spend my days alive.⁶⁸ For I know that all hope of life has been taken from me. I do not wish to say any more, lest . . . (49) . . . for they are more burdensome, so that you do not get up and leave this place. I am not worthy to reveal things greater than these lest you hear them lest the house recede from us. I will give you some idea⁶⁹ of what sort of impious person I am and my soul which is in my . . . darkness . . . I counselled the spirits in the air to compete with the spirits on earth and I caused a rift between them. I was in the midst of them, and they admired me. It is not possible for me to offer details and my mouth would not be able to count them. And they bring no benefit to the ears that hear them. How will you say to me that Christ will receive me, when you do not know the impious things I have done. You have brought up the Jews, that they received forgiveness. (50) I am worse than those who killed Christ and those fought against his divinity. Perhaps also the demons, who were active in them until they did this. I am worse than them. I am very thankful to you. I no longer hope to be saved after having revealed this great impiety. You have raised the possibility of a pardon for me. But I am wicked in the sight of God and man. I know that I said I am greater than Christ and used to laugh at him, saying that he was an idiot who knew nothing. Even those who are dead, I caused them to live and the lame to be like

65 There are letters after **ΜΟΟΨΕ** that I cannot read, but the first one seems to have been changed: **ΡΩ ΑΝ**.

66 Rather than **εογχα** one might expect something like **εωχλ**, cf. the parallel Gk εἰς ὄλεθρον.

67 I think the reading might be **[ετρ]εγ-**

68 Seems to have misunderstood the Gk ταύτην ἔχων ἐπιθυμίαν ἀνέχομαι ἔτι τοῦ ζῆν

69 A clumsy sentence: **ΕΙΝΑΝΟΥΧΕ ΔΕ ΜΠΕΤΕΝΖΗΤ ΜΜΑΤΕ ΝΘΕ ΝΝΟΙ ΛΥΩ ΕΕΙΜΕ**

those who run. I stopped many from believing in Christ that he was God. And when I said this, I did not let anyone confess that we were Christian . . . (51) through the devil. I used to call him the stupid idiot who knew nothing, not only of what was hidden but what was revealed. How will you persuade me that Christ will receive me to him after I have committed these impious acts against him. I will not be able⁷⁰ to repent for so many wicked deeds or for those whom I have prevented from being saved . . . [whom] I persuaded to slaughter others. I carried out many despicable desires and induced many to other acts of debauchery. I conspired against them and bewitched them and seized them. Those whom I violated, I brought forth their souls to the outer darkness. Thus, it is enough for me only that I have been able to know the true divinity and will remain silent, (52) knowing that he knows me. I asked Christ for a favour so as not to fall into impiety worse than this. Do I think it is possible for me to make my way to God ?⁷¹ I will not say this, for the thought will hinder me from being forgiven. But you will rather cast me into eternal punishment."

After these words I fell silent and wept bitterly. Those with me also began to weep, knowing that what I said was true. Many tears were shed by all because I thought this. As is fitting, I will not make my way to Christ, for I am unworthy of the holy life. I tore my tunic and placed earth on my head. I wept in great mourning and indescribable weeping. I cried out: "Have mercy on me, for I, poor wretch, am lost." Then . . . everyone . . . to me . . . (53)⁷² Do not say: "I am lost". For these things can be resolved because you committed the sins in ignorance. You thought that you were making progress in matters of worship. and that you have pleased the devil. Ignorance is your defence. Why do you pluck out your flesh in self-destruction ? Why are acting in this way ? . . . weeping and . . . lamenting ? . . . Listen to me, the one who loves you,⁷³ and be silent that I may speak with you⁷⁴ and fortify your heart. I know many who have done things like you, but out of choice and resolve they made their way to Christ, and he took them in. You are just like them ! He will certainly receive you to him like them. Why are you making yourself worthy of . . . ⁷⁵ and punishing your (54) body and soul, even though you are in a great sickness ? Beware of the devil who makes the heart faithless lest you receive it. As you know more than me, he is a malefactor. Are you not aware that

70 For **NEΩ**- cf. Crum 541b

71 There is no syntactic indication that this is a question, but the sense seems to require one.

72 According to the Greek the following words of encouragement are spoken by Eusebius. part of whose name may be read in the Coptic . . . **HE** . . .

73 Coptic says this twice: **ΠΕΤΜΕ ΝΜΟΚ ΑΥΩ ΕΤΟΥΑΦΚ**.

74 Read **ΝΜΜΑΚ** for **ΝΜΜΟΚ**.

75 The Greek is *συγκόπτεις ἐαυτὸν* '(how long are you going) to beat yourself up' and the reading of the Coptic **ΦΑΥΦΑΥ** is clear enough, but I can make little sense of it.

before the cock crowed at night he deceived you. He went away angrily from you. He said to you that he is the one who hates the things that are mine. He helped you cunningly. Later he would abandon you. And I was to with you as I wish.⁷⁶ Now then you deserve to know this: where Christ is, there is mercy. Therefore, I bless you with it, and bless your heart so that you will . . . (55) the appeal⁷⁷ of life. Call on Christ and he will receive you so that you will know his goodness. He does not ask for gifts from you and he does not need time to be merciful to you. For his help will not be illusory through an intermediary. His disciple Paul say . . . in their heart for justice. I praise you, Cyprian, as you have confessed him in your heart and with your mouth and because, after the faults you have committed and those you did not commit, you have revealed them. So, I am silent, my friends. I have persuaded them to do this so that you may expose the thought of the enemy and your heart may be . . .⁷⁸ to piety. Arise, Cyprian, for you yourself are a man. (56) Know the error in which you have been and the ignorance in which you have been and the youth of nature. Know the impetus of the enemy and the evil of the demons. We will not teach you about those who dare to do them, what sort are those who dare to trick people with them. Why do you not teach yourself? You are clever enough! So that you do not ruin or waste excessively by weeping. Enhance your conscience so that ignorance does not deceive me. I have struggled with myself. I have extended the beliefs⁷⁹ of my heart because I have done them against my intention. They are activated in me by a fire that consumes many men and cities and people. They do not reproach it because of the fire. But you . . . (57). . . error, for this is what has led you astray and many others. Do not reproach this conscience as the excuse for your impiety, but the error and the dragon. Have we not seen many whose hearts have gone astray and become mad and plotted against themselves and as Akhab⁸⁰ did, who killed himself because of Odysseus . . . their own mother, and Medea too killed her children. Theseus also rose up against Hippolytus. Hipales told him this about Alexander that Ilios would be destroyed because of Helen.⁸¹ Nor did Agamemnon, when he received Aegistheus into house, know that he would be deceived by him. Nor did Perdiccas know that he would be punished by a double desire, wishing to achieve what he vowed to . . . (58) Oedipus . . . he did not know his prayer to achieve the glory for which he had toiled. Later he regretted it, for he had killed his father and become king in his place. He generated for himself

76 This passage can be understood far better by consulting the Greek text.

77 Guess: **CMMAY**, perhaps unattested form of **CMMG**, cf. Crum 336a

78 Crum 433b suggests **TACO** (causative of **ACAI**) 'make light'. The only instance of the word.

79 Guess: **NETIΘE**

80 The Gk has 'Ajax'.

81 Different from the Greek. I can make little sense of the Coptic. Hipales seems to be unknown.

ruin in great mourning. And besides, he married his mother and lived in common with her without knowing. . . . Similarly, . . . they were all laughed at by the dragon. . . life under stress. Again many considered the generation of the times, as it is possible for human beings. They pass the world by without giving themselves at all to error. You too, Cyprian, look at the distress of my heart and know that your turning to God will be for you a great [thing ?] Water . . . (59) . . . not know that he has brought the heart of many people of this sort down with him. He will say that they are all mine because of their ignorance. Or what will I say ? That he is guilty of the destruction of people. Has he turned and set them or not at all times. You have been a demon of a . . . world of . . . you knew the power of Christ and persisted in your impiety, Perhaps you might be reproached for having no hope of life there. Having now learned of this power, you have now rejected the enemy. It is clear that if you had turned, you would not have abandoned impiety. Now therefore it is enough for you as you weep that Christ (60) has received you to himself and is satisfied with you. Acquire for yourself the thought of your heart which is strong and come to repentance. For this is his wish. You can give many more to Christ in my name than you led astray and instruct them in what is good for them. " I said to him; "I will not cease in these matters, for my soul reproaches me that I have abandoned them all and not done them. For the memory of Justina in my heart is greater than all these things, for I plotted villainously. Will Christ forget her distress and forgive me ? This one for whose sake I killed children, I practised magic on their liver and various defiled things which I say about women. I call upon you, my father Eusebius teach me . . . the holy scriptures . . . Christ . . . (61) and repent to God and God forgives him his sins."⁸²

Eusebius said to me: "The apostle of Christ, Paul, even though he was not a magician, was a persecutor. He was among the foremost persecutors⁸³ of his brothers, and⁸⁴ approved of the murder of Stephen, the first martyr . . . in the . . . of the high priests . . . fleeing . . . from the whole of the countryside and the cities. When he returned, he became a chosen vessel and thus confessed: "Christ has had mercy on me for what I did in my ignorance. It is written in the Acts of the Apostles:⁸⁵ *Many who practised sorcery brought their books of magic and burned them in a fire, and Christ accepted their repentance from them.* When they were baptized, the sins of their impiety were forgiven and they (62) became free from the punishment they deserved. If it is also fitting for me to recall Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, the one who came to know God and who saw him (God) in the furnace in which the three saints were

82 Cyprian wants Eusebius to show a scriptural passage in which God forgives the sinner his sins.

83 Crum 459a: only examples of **ⲧⲱⲒⲙ** with **ⲛϥⲁ**.

84 Coptic **ⲕⲉⲡⲉⲣ** does not fit the sense here.

85 Acts 19, 19. Slightly deviant version.

enclosed, that it (furnace) was unable to overcome them.⁸⁶ And after these things, he became impious and was thrown out of his kingdom. He became a beast among men.⁸⁷ After repenting, he was established so that the power of his kingdom was in his hands as before, he became himself once more, together with the other things written after this. Manasse the king of Israel, and many things which they deserved.⁸⁸ After they had come to know God, they acknowledged the wicked things. They repented and were forgiven. The great punishment to which they were to be subjected, they escaped, even though they . . . down . . . (63) holy places were defiled. The whole of Israel down to the appearance of Christ was laid waste many times, and he received it to himself in his great mercy and goodness. Even now present repentance is very powerful in the church which generates anew daily so that it receives to it those who had been enfeebled by sin, they having turned⁸⁹ from . . . to the Gospel . . . on earth like light so that wrongdoers will be forgiven by it⁹⁰ and not reproached. For this reason we too are instructed by Peter: "You will forgive your brother not seven times but seven times seventy." How will he not forgive you who enables man to grasp his great repentance and goodness with you too ? For the Ninevites he passed a sentence (64) of death⁹¹ for having been excessively impious to you, not just one but all of them. When they converted, they repented. When he brought destruction on them. You also, Cyprian, call upon him in great pleading to forgive you, and he will not abandon you. He granted paradise to the thief for a short time⁹² because of his great faith. You too, will he not forgive you, submerged in a sea of wickedness, if you call him in truth. Read the prophets and you will understand Christ. For he says to Israel in Hosea:⁹³ "Will I leave you to Adama and Seboeim ?" Now he has come upon the word,⁹⁴ teaching us about his Christhood:⁹⁵ "My heart now moves against me in myself. My thought is troubled", revealing you in this way as one ready to receive to him those who repent. For he say . . . (65) . . . I will therefore not bring upon him any evils in his days. Even though he said from himself: "I will bring death upon him." Why ? "Because Jezebel secretly killed Nabouthe the Israelite for his sake." How will you not think to yourself that you can be saved when you are surrounded by these mercies, so that no-one will say: "I have no salvation of them . . . will tell you simply that

86 The Coptic slightly different from the Greek.

87 Daniel 4, 25ff.

88 The word is faint but looks like **ΑΣΙΩΜΑ**, an unusual form of the verb, even for Coptic.

89 Possibly **ΑΥΚΑ[Τ]ΤΟΥ ΕΒΟΛ**, but there is more than one letter missing.

90 This probably refers to a missing fem. noun a few lines earlier, which may perhaps be **ΜΕΤΑΝΟΙΑ**.

91 The Coptic seems to read: **ΑΦΖΟΡΙΖΕ ΕΧΩΟΥ ΝΟΥΠ · ΟΕΕC** (64) **ΜΙΑ ΝΗΜΟΥ**

92 Probably translates Gk ῥοπτή, the meanings of which range from 'propensity' to 'weight'. Bailey translates 'at a decisive moment'.

93 Hos. 11, 8 : the Coptic form seems to be **Τῆνωσχε**.

94 Gk. εὐθὺς ἐπάγει 'then immediately adds'.

95 Sounds like a hermeneutic addition.

[God] is useful . . . I do not wish the death of the sinner as much as that he turns from death to life."⁹⁶ Repent therefore with your whole heart and he will say to you: "If you spend a hundred years in your impieties and repent in your heart also in your life for one day, you will not die, says the Lord, but you will live in my presence. For it is not possible for God to lie. He is the source of truth. Is he going to change his words on your account, Cyprian ? (66) He who did not spare his son for the human race, will his goodness be overcome because of you alone ? He left the ninety-nine on the hill, that is the ranks that are in heaven, and came down for the one who is lost."⁹⁷ So, for your sake, is he going to . . . ⁹⁸ his goodness ? He was crucified for the human race, so how is he going to hesitate to give himself for an impious man so that he might believe in him. Will you glorify him or is to cast you away from him ? The sinners he receives to himself, though they do not believe in him. How therefore will he not be generous to you ? He did not turn his face from the thief who blasphemed him. How is he going to turn away from you when you beg him to forgive you ? If God is greater than his angels, he is surely greater than them in his generosity. If all the ranks of heaven . . . (67) . . . not you. Have courage, Cyprian. Christ did not come for the sake of the righteous but because of repenting sinners. Just repent as is fitting and you will see him with his hands outspread and receiving you joyously. For when he found the lost sheep, not only did he rejoice over the lost sheep, but he put it on his [shoulders] like a beloved son . . . and you too, you say that he will turn me away. Just make a fruit worthy of repentance. And then you will recall that you will be like a son and heir of the kingdom. He rains upon sinners and the righteous and he causes his sun to shine upon the good and the bad. And you too say that he will reject me. He does good (68) to those who do not believe in him. You sigh over your sins, how then will he not receive you to him. For he has said through Isaiah: "If you turn and repent and sigh, you will be saved."⁹⁹ And you, Cyprian, if you turn and repent with fruitful things, he will give you grace to be enjoyed together with eternal joy. For the teacher Paul says: "This one wants everyone to live and enter into knowledge of the truth."¹⁰⁰ This is just some of the teaching I will impart to you, Cyprian. When you come to the masters, you will hear an accurate account of the truth of repentance from them. You will say: "I am a disciple before the dogma of teaching for the sake of the holy faith in which you will be instructed. For they grudge nothing and help everyone who wants . . . (69) . . . to them for the sake of vainglory. You will see in that place a holy liturgy. For

96 Ez. 33, 11.

97 ⲉϥϥⲟⲣⲙ : read ⲉⲡⲉⲧϥⲟⲣⲙ.

98 Greek word means 'reduce'. I cannot read the Coptic

99 Is 30, 15

100 1 Tim. 2, 14

we do not clash cymbals or play instruments. We will not be able to hear their clapping. You will not hear the clapping of hands, this which causes some ears to become weak. Nor will you witness flutes producing dissolute melodies or drums. which [respond]¹⁰¹ to them. with many sounds of music not conducive to good order, not a voice of the soul. This which causes the heart of some to become disturbed by the sounds. Nor will sacrifices and faces will wash them. No wood or fire will consume irrational bodies. Nor armed priests, as if they were in battle fighting against dumb beasts. Nor will there be temple servants tricking their way to victory.¹⁰² They do not say that they are clever. and they do not say to those (70) they wish to teach : "Leave some days and come to hope¹⁰³ in this" that they may receive payment from them not in a frame of mind that is free. They are first to teach them other principles, casting them forth into the thoughts of men that they receive things, but not like the sophists who cause the heart to progress and rise among the weaknesses which they have fashioned. If you make your way in a seemly fashion to approach the foundation¹⁰⁴ of wisdom, you will be called to the knowledge that love is what strengthens the foundation and is the fortification of the building. Pray therefore and build on the foundation of the works . . . until they kill them.¹⁰⁵ You will not hear their polluted¹⁰⁶ words from the mouth of anyone or deceitful laughter or eye that is xxx upon the multitude. You will not see . . . nourishment they . . . (71) You will see the All at rest and a humble state, these things from which one will be taught when he (one) sees children of one age, who have a mother of this same good rank with the elders. So that they might think of the little ones who . . . ,¹⁰⁷ adorned with gatherings of angels, all standing around her . . . they being in . . . You will also see priests and youths wearing crowns in order at the table of the saints, who have a following. The one singing will recite the psalm thus, his words clear, they leading him and . . . the place of souls,¹⁰⁸ purifying his mouth and ears of mundane words that he might listen attentively to the Gospels. Do not be ashamed (72) to make your way to it openly. Arise and break your fast, for it is the third day that you have not eaten. Let us go with each other to church and pray at the time of evening. Let us then go in the morning to the assembly full of joy. It is the custom to make of the week¹⁰⁹ the remembrance of

101 Perhaps [ⲟϥⲱ]ϩⲃ. The Gk is quite different.

102 The Greek reads 'temple servants turning the strength of bulls'.

103 I am not sure of this word, but it might be ϩⲉⲗⲱⲓⲥ.

104 The Coptic uses the Greek word: κρητις

105 This is the text I can read but not understand: **ⲛⲛⲉϩⲃⲏⲅⲉ ⲉⲧⲟⲟⲙ ⲉⲧⲛ . . . ϩⲁⲛⲧⲟϥⲕⲟⲛⲥⲟϥ** Perhaps ' . . . on the things for the power which . . . until they prepare them for burial.' I cannot locate anything of the sort in the Greek.

106 ⲁⲓⲁⲁⲁⲙ

107 The reading is not clear

108 The text appears to read: **ⲉϥⲥⲱⲕ ⲙⲙⲟⲓ ⲉϥⲛⲱ ⲡⲙⲁ . . .**

109 Coptic omits 'first day'.

the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

After that day, the Lord's Day, let us go to the bishop¹¹⁰ and do the things of which we have already spoken. Have courage and be strong, Cyprian. For perhaps those whom you have misled, you can save more than them. I too, remember me when good happens to you, when you have interpreted the dreams of the night for the benefit of many. I then arose and took . . . (73) . . . [I embraced] my father and those angels. Now his son, who would be my age, we were at the same school together, learning our letters from a man of great piety. I do not think there has been another like him. He took me to his house, which is in their midst, I accompanying them. He prepared for me . . . it is fitting for me to [desire]. . . . We went . . . that . . . like the chorus of angels singing the praises of God, in harmony with each other: in the vocabulary of each line was 'Alleluia', so that I might believe that they were not human, but a host angels in their nature, giving voice wondrously. For the prophets were prophesying through them and others, apostles, as if they needed no humans to interpret the things (74) which they had written. Their words were concise, being written and light . The multitude marvelled at us as we were going into the church, for it was the Sabbath. As¹¹¹ I was about to enter the church, I prayed on the way: "Lord, if you make me worthy to be called your servant, let me hear a verse from the holy scriptures relevant to my goal." When I was at the door of the church, the psalmodist was calling out: "You have seen the Lord. Do not be silent, Lord, or distant from me." In the prophets is: "Behold, my son whom I love." And with the har of the Psalmodist: "My eyes have anticipated the dawn to meditate on your words."¹¹² And in the prophets: "Do not be afraid Jacob . . ."¹¹³ and Israel . . . (75) . . . curse the law. And the hieropsaltes David: "Who will be able¹¹⁴ to speak the glory of your greatness, as they listen to all your blessings ?"

This was followed by the Gospel lection and the sermon of the bishop. Then the archdeacon ordered the catechumens to leave. A deacon responded . . . : "Go . . . servant (?) of the one who was crucified, how then do wish to cast me out ? The deacon said: "But before you receive the seal of perfection ?" I replied and said to him: "It is the Lord Jesus Christ who shamed the demons and saved the maiden Justina. He granted me . . . : " I will not go from this place without having received the seal of perfection." The deacon Asterius went hastily and

110 Coptic ΠΑΠ[ΑC] uses the same word as the Gk text. The term was first used in Eusebius *Historia Ecclesiastica* Bk 7 ch. 7, 7

111 Much of what follows is not in the Greek text of the *Metanoia*, and it looks as if the Greek text known as Πρῶξις (Gibson pp. 64 ff.) had been added to the Gk text from which the Coptic translation was made. The Greek text is cast in the 3rd person. The Coptic is clearly part of the *Metanoia* and is in the 1st person.

112 Ps. 119, 148

113 Perhaps Jer. 30, 10.

114 Used earlier: ΝΕΦ-, cf. note 70.

(76) told the bishop. Thereupon the bishop blessed me. I prostrated myself at his feet and begged him, saying: "Blessed Anthimus, blessed servant of Christ. I wish to become a soldier of Christ and I wish my name to be written in the ranks of his kingdom." Anthimus the bishop thought that I had gone to the church to bewitch people. He said to me: "Cyprian, let those outside be enough for you. Spare the church of God, for the power of Christ God is invincible." I said in reply: "I know that it is invincible from my experience with the many demons I sent against the holy maiden Justina to beguile her. Through the power of her prayers she dismissed them in great shame. Therefore, I call upon you to receive . . . (77) the entire law." He prayed over me so that the whole church marvelled at what had happened. In this way he gave me the gift of baptism, blessing me with the grace of heaven. He said to me: "Go, my son. The Lord be with you. Christ has received you to himself." I, Cyprian, went home. I destroyed all the statues of my magic . . . upon . . . great evil. How am I to bless God with my mouth, which I used in order blaspheme when calling upon demons. But I will entreat you the pious to help me in the struggle of my grief so that I may be worthy to belong to the number of the saints.

When all these things were suddenly completed, the¹¹⁵ maiden Justina heard what had happened and shaved the hair of her head. And all her possessions . . . her chamber (78) and her bedchamber and the dowry of her maidenhood, she administered them and gave them as charity to the needy and this in want, because my repentance through her was a double salvation. I too gave my wealth to the poor¹¹⁶ and those in need. Aglaitos submitted to the devil and burned the books which he had, because he pierced himself with the sword of death, for Christ had joined through Justina the double salvation. I was with my father Eusebius the presbyter of the church. I obtained the seal of Christ and I fought to make progress to announce to everyone that they should meditate and turn to the God of truth.¹¹⁷

Eight days after enjoying the gift of baptism, I became a good herald¹¹⁸ . . . mysteries of Christ. In the completion¹¹⁹ . . . (79) of the mysteries of Christ. When I advanced in the good ranks, I achieved the office of deacon. At Pentecost my pitiful self was the source of many cures. By driving out the demons¹²⁰ from those being oppressed, I healed sicknesses . . . I caused them to shriek with pain before everyone in unison: "We are Christians." A year later I

115 Contact with the Greek text is resumed at this point.

116 Interesting spelling: **ϩⲏⲣⲉ**, which is not in Crum 664a or Kasser *Compléments au Dictionnaire Copte* (1964) 96b

117 Contact with the Greek text is once again broken.

118 Perhaps **ⲕ[-]ⲣϯ**

119 Perhaps **ⲡⲬⲱ[ⲕ**

120 The Greek **ΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΟΝ** and Coptic **ⲣⲉϩⲱⲗⲗⲁⲣⲉ** mean the same thing, cf. Crum 583b

became an assistant bishop. After this, when sixteen years were completed, the truly blessed bishop convened a holy synod, which he announced to all the surrounding cities and assembled the bishops and (80) counselled for them a pardon to the benefit of the church. And while that holy man was still alive, he assigned the episcopal throne to me. Some time later the blessed man died in a good old age. He gave me his holy flock, and there was great stability in the churches. I, Cyprian, I ordained Justina and made her a deaconness and appointed her.¹²¹ Then I made her mother of virgins.¹²² I continued my daily progress in instruction. I preached repentance to God. I seized¹²³ . . . the . . . (81) towards the great flock of Christ. I became firm in the holy prophecies, sowing the seed of piety. I was plucking out the roots of wickedness. One was becoming blessed. I was progressing towards faith. The entire congregation, I was urging from the countryside and the cities, ministering to their error, preaching to them the upright faith and seizing for myself many from the snares of the Enemy.

121 The Gk uses the term 'nominate'. Neither specifies a title (Gibson p. 71).

122 Gibson p. 71 has the term ἀσκητήριον

123 The verb that springs to mind is **ῥα[ρπα]ζε**, but it is only a guess. In the last few lines of the text the word **ῥωπη**, which has the same meaning, is used of 'snatching souls' from the snares of the devil.

ΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΑ

(82) *The martyrdom of St Cyprian. In peace. Amen.*¹²⁴

During the reign of Diocletian after all these things had taken place, the one who rages with hatred of good, the enemy of truth at all times, the serpent who is full of evil poison, namely the teacher of impiety, traduced me to Eutolmios the Count of East through people who are agents of his wickedness. They said to him: "This man Cyprian is eager to destroy the glory of the gods and opposed the worship of the emperors. He has bewitched many of us, he and a maiden called Justina, raising ... (83) sending letters and puzzles throughout the world and deceiving many with his words." The Count was then filled with rage and ordered Cyprian and Justina to be shackled together and the magistrates and their assistants in every city to seal¹²⁵ them and [...] Cyprian, saying: "Are you the teacher of Christians who gathered everyone to himself in his times by the power of his magic and his teaching about the gods. Now through the power and magic of the Crucified One you reveal yourself and close people's ears with wicked deceit, honouring and extolling the Crucified One more than the living gods."

(84) Cyprian replied: "How do you set yourself ... glory of your arrogance ... For, as ... I was a captive of the devil, living in the shadows of Greek philosophy, I began to corrupt many people and caused many to be deceived by the devil. Christ saved me through the holy maiden as follows: ¹²⁶ a lawyer named Aglaitos fell in love with this maiden and made strenuous efforts and spent much time but was unable to endure it any longer because she would not comply with his wishes, he came to me and asked for a respectable¹²⁷ magic remedy. He wanted to know if she could not endure his attentions at all. So he asked me to prepare it for her ...

(85) ... to her a demon. Thereupon she caused him to wither through the Cross of Christ. He was not the only one. I sent three demons, including the arch-demon. They were all laid low by the sign of the Cross. I thus became eager to understand the power of the Cross .. I swore .. through the angels. He¹²⁸ then revealed to me the power of that sign. I knew him be the head of all wickedness and the one who loves all evil. So, I sobered up from all the bitter pleasures in which I had lost myself and made a determined effort¹²⁹ and brought my magic books to the

124 The early part of the text reveals no close similarities between the Coptic and the Greek.

125 Presumably in the sense of 'guard them closely'

126 I have re-arranged the syntax, which in the Coptic is: 'When Christ saved me through . . .' The salvation of Cyprian is the indirect result of Aglaitos' consultation. The Coptic account is highly truncated.

127 I do not know what the Greek word is meant to convey here. Perhaps 'magic potion for a chaste maiden' ? Sort of aphrodisiac. The translation of the sentence following is a paraphrase, but also only a guess.

128 It is difficult to say if this refers to the devil or Christ. In this extremely rapid conversion process, 'he' may refer to Christ and 'him' to the devil.

129 I understand the Greek word intended here to be something like ἐπιζήτησις

Bishop who was before me. In the presence of all the town dignitaries (86) I threw them on to the fire and burned them. For this reason I beg you to desist from idol mania and come into the house of God, the place where God is piously glorified, and consider the . . . of Christ."

The Count, when he heard this, was filled with rage and seethed with anger. At the same time he rebuked Cyprian and, after considering what to do, ordered Cyprian to be hung on the rack and flayed. The blessed maiden too was struck on the face with thongs of leather, both in the presence of each other. The maiden cried aloud with the brave Cyprian:¹³⁰ "I give glory to my Lord Jesus Christ that I am one who has become worthy of this grace, I who was formerly a stranger . . ." (87) . . . soldiers who were beating them desisted from their labours. But the pious heroine was praising God and looking forward to help from the Lord. The governor ordered them to stop beating her, but increase the flaying of Cyprian. The saint was not in the least concerned and glorified God . . . He replied and said to the Count: "Why do you hesitate, who have rejected God, wicked malefactor, who have been turned away like a fugitive from the hope in Christ and become alien to the kingdom of heaven."¹³¹ "I will increase your punishment with more torture." He then ordered him to be taken down from the rack, bound and thrown into prison. And (88) the blessed maiden too. He ordered her to be tortured in the house of Terentinus. When she arrived, the house was illuminated by the grace of God. After some time the Count ordered them to be brought out and he said to Cyprian: "Do not die badly a result of the deceit and wickedness of this man who is dead." Cyprian replied: "Those worthy to die in this way for Christ live forever." The Count, on hearing this, ordered a frying pan three cubits long¹³² to be brought and pitch, wax and fat to be lit under it. When it was blazing, he ordered Cyprian and the maiden to be thrown into it. When it had no effect on Cyprian . . . (89) . . . beside him, the engineer of wickedness having made her weak. Cyprian then said to her: "Come beside me, lamb of Christ, who opened the gates of heaven for me and instructed me about the glory of Christ. She showed the power of the demons to be worthless and trampled on the authority of their leader and made her way to the vessel and [. . .] breath of dew¹³³ of the air cooled them so that Cyprian cried out: "Glory to be to God on high and peace on earth among men, for when the devil fell from the heavens, peace filled every place. Christ himself, when he came upon earth among men,¹³⁴ he himself slew the apostate dragon. For

130 Not in the Greek

131 The next words are spoken by the Count, so there is obviously some link missing, such as 'The Count then said:'

132 The Gk text in Gibson specifies no dimensions. Crum 139b also offers the terms 'frying cauldron' for $\lambda\alpha\kappa\eta\tau\epsilon$.

133 The words NIBE NIWT are clear, but not what comes before them. The Greek texts are quite different from each other, but both contain 'dew'.

134 The phrase 'when the devil fell from the heavens' is repeated here and is clearly a dittography. The two Greek versions are quite different from each other. The Coptic is closer to Gibson p. 75 n. 23.

through the power of Christ and the Cross which he bore, he has given us (90) mercy and pity. But he made the devil superintendent¹³⁵ in hell. For this I thank you, God of my fathers and Lord of my spirit. In that you have made us worthy to complete our end, we thank you and entreat your goodness to inhale the burnt offering of our sacrifice as if it were incense of great price." When the Count heard this, he replied: "I curse you and your wicked soul."¹³⁶ Athanasius, an adviser of the Count and elect priest of the temple,¹³⁷ said: "Let your highness order me, and I will make my way to the cauldron in the name of the gods so that you may know I am victorious over the power of the one called Christ." The Count told Athanasius to do what he had just said. Athanasius went to the vessel, crying out in a loud voice . . . (91) . . . [salv]ation to all men."¹³⁸ As he said this, he approached the steam coming the vessel and was overcome by the fire. His entrails and intestines all gushed out. When the martyrs saw what had happened, they began to glorify God in great joy. [The Count] thereupon called out ". . . perhaps¹³⁹ . . . my great companion, for he killed him." Thereupon he called Terentinus his kinsman and said to him: "What am I to do with these wretches?" Terentinus replied: "Do nothing to these holy people and do not oppose the truth, for the power of the Christians is unbeatable. Send them instead to the emperor and tell him what they have done."

The Count wrote a report to the emperor Diocletian, as follows: (92) "I have arrested Cyprian and a maiden in the East so that your majesty may know their crime through this communication. I have inflicted great tortures and many blows on the, but they have not persuaded them. I am now sending them to your majesty." When Diocletian read this memorandum, he was astonished at the punishment suffered by Cyprian and Justina. He decided with his companions that to inflict any more torture would be pointless, and they began to realize that the power of Christ was truly invincible. The emperor said to Cyprian: "The teacher from Antioch and Justina have chosen for themselves¹⁴⁰ this vain heresy of the Christians and have abandoned life and chosen death. For this reason I [order] them to . . . (93) . . . holy Justina. They were taken to Gallus, the river of Nicomedia. They asked leave from the soldiers escorting them to stop and pray. Cyprian opened his mouth and said: "I glorify you, Christ. I praise and bless your holy name that you may make me worthy . . .

135 I understand ΠΜΝΗΙ (Crum 66b) in this sense, the meaning of the whole being that Christ put the devil in charge of hell. Not in the Greek.

136 The Greek is quite different.

137 This detail is absent from the Greek.

138 According to the Greek text he invokes Heracles and Asclepius.

139 Greek: ὄντως τάχα. What follows this is an admission that the power of Christ is invincible, but the only matter of concern to him is that it has killed his friend Athanasius.

140 ΝΑΙ: I assume that the text should read ΝΑΥ.

[every]one knows that you are Christ God. We are your people." Afterwards he blessed himself with the seal of Christ. He took the maiden and placed her to his right and asked the soldiers to behead her first. After the execution the saint blessed the Lord Jesus Christ and nobly completed his own martyrdom, he and the maiden. (94) A man called Theoctitus, a companion of Cyprian, returned from a long period abroad. He went to meet Cyprian and greeted him. Fulvian, adviser to the Count sent to destroy them, was watching the road of the saints, and when he saw Theoctitus doing this, he ordered him to be beheaded together with the saints. So all the blessed saints underwent martyrdom. He ordered their bodies to be cast to the dogs for three days.¹⁴¹ Christian sailors heard about Cyprian, that he had completed his martyrdom . . . (95) . . . stopped, moored at the shore for six days. They watched the soldiers guarding the bodies of the saints for, being honoured by them, they kept watch day and night until they stopped and forgot.¹⁴² They made their way to remove the bodies of the saints, for they revered the bodies more than precious stones . . . and took them to a Christian, a very wealthy woman named Rufina and member of a distinguished family. She received the body and took it to a well-known place.¹⁴³ All those who made their way to the bodies of the saints were cured of every ailment and gave glory to God. Their martyrdom (96) took place under the consulship of Diocletian in the great city of Nicomedia on 20 Paope. the Lord ruling over us, to whom glory, honour and worship forever. Amen

ΤΜΕΤΑΝΟΙΑ ΝΚΥΠΡΙΑΝΟΣ · Σ ΤΕΦΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΑ ΑΥΧΩΚ

The confession of Cyprian and his martyrdom.

The end

Θ
 ΣΡΣ ΣΥΝ ΝΤΑΥΕΡΗΤ ΜΠΕΙΧΩΩΜΕ ΕΠΤΟΠΟΣ
 ΜΠΑΡΧΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ ΜΙΧΑΗΛ ΕΦΑΝΤΑ ΠΩΣ ΠΝΟΥΤΕ
 ΣΜΟΥ ΕΠΕΝΤΑΡΦΙΠΕΦΡΟΟΥΨ · ΑΥΩ ΝΑΨ ΝΑΨ
 ΝΤΕΦΩΕΒΙΩ ΜΠΕΦΕΡΗΤ ΖΝΘΙΛΗΝ ΝΤΠΕ ΖΑΜΗΝ
 ΕΣΕΨΩΠΠ

141 This episode is different from the Greek and Syriac episodes. On the Persian custom of leaving corpses to be denuded of flesh by animals, cf. <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/burial-iii>

142 I take this to mean that after six days the attention of the guards became less scrupulous.

143 The Greek and Syriac versions mention two things absent from the Coptic account: the *hypomnemata*, the account of the trial on which the martyrology was based, and Rome as the final burial place. However, it is interesting to note that the phrase **ΕΥΜΑ ΕΥΨΟΕΙΤ ΕΡΟΨ** 'to a well-known place' translates the Greek phrase ἐν ἐπισημῷ τόπῳ.

Cross. With God. This book has been donated¹⁴⁴ to the the monastery of Michael the Archangel at Phanta. Lord God, bless the one responsible for it and give him the reward for his donation in heavenly Jerusalem. Amen.

So be it.

144The verb **ЄPHT** means 'vow, promise' but in this 'donate' may be more appropriate.