- 19 -

The Comma Calmly Considered -

The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus (485-585): Citizen of Rome, Denizen of Constantinople, Founder of the Vivarium Library

by

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19 - The Comma Calmly Considered : The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus

Contents:

19 - The Comma Calmly Considered : The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus

Introduction

This is the nineteenth paper of the series. This essay has selections from my paper “The Witness of God is Greater.” In this essay, my goal is to highlight some of the amazing evidence that I have discovered in collating sources for my paper. I give some comments in order to direct my readers through these points.

- For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. (Psalm 119:89)

- The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. (Psalm 12:6-7)

- Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. (Psalm 119:105)

- Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (Matt 24:35)

19 - The Comma Calmly Considered : The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus

Brief Remarks : The Complexiones (circa 575) of Cassiodorus

In this paper we will focus on the figure and work of Cassiodorus. This man recognized the times he lived in and sought to rescue manuscripts for Christian posterity.The era of Rome was ending and there was great doubt as to what the future would hold. Cassiodorus, his family was a long time member of the upper classes of Rome, had achieved high office quickly by his talents and his father's reputation. When the Germanic tribes took over Rome, Cassiodorus was again called upon to be a member of the court and counsel. Not only a long time citizen of Rome, Cassiodorus also spent decades in Constantinople with other Roman refugees and intelligentsia who had fled the city of Rome for the safety of Constantinople. But in recounting the social position and talents of Cassiodorus, we must also include his success in creating and populating a library in Vivarium with many Greek and Latin manuscripts from his journeys. Cassiodorus understood that the majority of western Christians would be more comfortable with Latin and so had many Greek manuscripts translated for the library. Although Cassiodorus was educated in the Greek language (which he employed when needed while in Constantinople), he had professional translators (from Constantinople) who could render the Greek of the fathers into Latin with great proficiency. Cassiodorus would then read over these translations and indicate where the Latin could be improved or needed correction. In this regard, Cassiodorus also saw the need for some manuals to familiarize and educate monks and laypersons concerning the classics, learning rhetoric, and understanding the Scriptures. With this in mind, Cassiodorus composed the *Complexiones* about 575 AD.

Let us not forget, that as a figure of the 6th century, Cassiodorus was contemporary with other men we have featured in these papers: Fulgentius and Facundus, I would also include Victor of Capua's Fuldensis Codex (the earliest manuscript that includes Jerome's Prologue), and still within memory the Council of Carthage in 484. According to the theory of the critics, it is Jerome's Latin Vulgate that perpetuated the interpolation of the Heavenly and Earthly witnesses found in I John 5. One needs only to see that in these cases (Council of Carthage, Facundus, Fulgentius) the vulgate translation was not used. So, as we approach the subject of this paper, we ask: was Jerome's Vulgate used by Casssiodorus? Again the answer is no. No, Cassiodorus does not use Jerome's Vulgate Latin in his literal paraphrase of I John 5. Moreover, Cassiodorus gives us the transposed order found in the Old Latin manuscripts with the Earthly witnesses before the Heavenly Witnesses. So, we remind our readers, here again, is another instance where the critic's theory is refuted by the facts.

There are a few other interesting facts concerning this episode of Cassiodorus' *Complexiones*. First off, the critics always insist that some of the proliferation of the Heavenly & Earthly witnesses is a result of these instances when it is found in specific works passed down. Or they say that the interpolation happened later to the manuscript. They provide no evidence for these claims, it is just the usual *ad hoc* arguments they invent. So, in this case, with such a prominent figure as Cassiodorus composing the *Complexiones*, how much use did this composition see in the future ages of the church? Actually, almost zero use by the fathers. It was all but forgotten (mentioned in passing in the 10th century). More to the point, it was deemed lost until Scopione Maffei found a copy in 1712 (and transcribed it and printed it in 1722). The manuscript, Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare 39 (37), is dated to the early 7th century. Not only is it very early, the Latin is clearly written, and the exemplar was probably an holograph written by Cassidorus himself. Being that the date of this manuscript is so close to the time of the work's composition (575), the critics have given up their usual attempts to claim that the text was corrupted (interpolated at a later date). Better yet, this incredible manuscript strikes at the heart of the critics ideological model by the fact that it is the only manuscript of this work in existence. Now, dear Readers, is this not an incredible coincidence? Or maybe it is just another wonderful reminder from heaven, that God preserves his word and reveals this truth in ways that confound the wise in their wisdom.

19 - The Comma Calmly Considered : The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus

I would like to thank the Reference staff at Biblioteca Capitolare of Verona for their kindness in getting me phone snaps of the manuscript pages for this paper and allowing me to post them in this paper.

Note: The *Complexiones* manuscript is indicated as such in the sources of this paper:

1. Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare **39** (37)
2. Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare **XXXIX** (37)

Prayers

19 - The Comma Calmly Considered : The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus

***Prologue: Cassiodorus and the Sixth Century* by J. O'Donnell**

• [O'Donnell] The sixth century after the birth of Christ must unquestionably but regrettably be assigned to the "Dark Ages." This is not the result of any intrinsic deficiency of illumination... [it] is poorly known to us chiefly because it was a fragmented age, following upon the most homogeneous centuries that ancient civilization ever knew. The world was growing more complex again in defiance of the age-long tendency towards centralization and assimilation under the Roman empire. ...Not only is the sixth century an age of fragmentation: it was an age in which fragmentation was perceived and regretted.

• [O'Donnell] The world in which Cassiodorus lived, then, was in many ways new and confusing. In an age when education still centered, for the wealthy native population, on the classics of Roman literature and their images of empire, the world was a puzzling and shattered place....

• [O'Donnell] Cassiodorus began life as the scion of a family that had (perhaps only two generations earlier) eagerly embraced the traditional culture and life of the Roman aristocracy, fitting into a pattern that had not changed significantly for centuries. Cassiodorus' progressing public life, in a peaceable and harmonious kingdom, was rapid and distinguished. But after a thirty-years' progress to the summit of public life as he and his ancestors had known it, Cassiodorus saw his world stood on its ear.

• [O'Donnell] After a lifetime in a closed society whose ways he had mastered, he was whisked away to a gaudy foreign capital where he could not even speak the language. He spent fifteen more years there, a period unfortunately almost hidden from our view. When he emerged from that interlude, however, he changed his plumage once again. For now the man who had spent all his adult life in great cities and political capitals - Ravenna, Rome, Constantinople - went to the opposite extreme. He settled in a tiny monastery on an isolated seacoast with a reputation for shipwreck and piracy, forsook all thought of political affairs, and became a monk, a teacher, and a theologian. Incredibly, this last career was nearly equal in length to his first one; he spent another thirty years of active life at Vivarium. He wrote his last book at the nearly unbelievable age of ninety-two. Thus, despite the frustrations inherent in dealing with limitations and obscurities of the surviving evidence, close scrutiny of the life and works of Cassiodorus can show with some clarity the variety of the man's talents and resilience of his spirit.

• O'Donnell, James J. Cassiodorus. University of California Press: Berkley, 1995, p. 1-13 (selections)

Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator (c. 485 – c. 585)

• Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator (c. 485 – c. 585),[1] commonly known as Cassiodorus, was a Roman statesman, renowned scholar of antiquity, and writer serving in the administration of Theodoric the Great, king of the Ostrogoths. Senator was part of his surname, not his rank. He also founded a monastery, Vivarium, where he spent the last years of his life. Cassiodorus was born at Scylletium, near Catanzaro in Calabria, Italy. His ancestry included some of the most prominent ministers of the state extending back several generations.[2] His great-grandfather held a command in the defense of the coasts of southern Italy from Vandal sea-raiders in the middle of the fifth century; his grandfather appears in a Roman embassy to Attila the Hun, and his father served as Count of the sacred largesses and count of the private estates to Odovacer[2] before transferring his allegiance to Theoderic. Under Theoderic, Cassiodorus' father (who bore the same name), rose to an even higher position, achieving the office of *Praetorian Prefect*, which held, under the Gothic kings, the same influence that it had previously in the court of Rome. Cassiodorus began his career under the auspices of his father. When his father was appointed Praetorian Prefecture, Cassiodorus was given the office of *Consiliarius*. In the judicial capacity of the prefect, his father held absolute right of appeal over any magistrate in the empire (or Gothic kingdom, later) and his son, Cassiodorus, who was the *consiliarius* served as a sort of legal advisor in cases of greater complexity. Evidently, therefore, Cassiodorus had received some education in the law.[3] During his working life he worked as *quaestor sacri palatii* c. 507–511, as a consul in 514, then as magister officiorum under Theoderic, and later under the regency for Theoderic's young successor, Athalaric. (Cassiodorus. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiodorus>)

• Cassiodorus kept copious records and letterbooks concerning public affairs. At the Gothic court his literary skill, which seems mannered and rhetorical to modern readers, was so esteemed that when in Ravenna he was often entrusted with drafting significant public documents. His culminating appointment was as *Praetorian Prefect* for Italy, effectively the prime ministership of the Ostrogothic civil government[4] and a high honor to finish any career. **Cassiodorus also collaborated with Pope Agapetus I in establishing a library of Greek and Latin texts which were intended to support a Christian school in Rome.** Athalaric died in early 534, and the remainder of Cassiodorus' public career was dominated by the Byzantine reconquest and dynastic intrigue among the Ostrogoths. His last letters were drafted in the name of Vitiges. **Around 537–538, he left Italy for Constantinople, from where his successor was appointed, where he remained for almost two decades, concentrating on religious questions.** He notably met Junillus, the quaestor of Justinian I there. His Constantinopolitan journey contributed to the improvement of his religious knowledge. Cassiodorus spent his career trying to bridge the 6th-century cultural divides: between East and West, Greek culture and Latin, Roman and Goth, and between an Orthodox people and their Arian rulers. He speaks fondly in his *Institutiones* of Dionysius Exiguus, the calculator of the Anno Domini era. (Cassiodorus. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiodorus>)

• Cassiodorus' Vivarium “monastery school” was composed of two main buildings: a coenobitic monastery and a retreat, for those who desired a more solitary life. Both were located on the site of the modern Santa Maria de Vetere near Squillace. The twin structure of Vivarium was to permit coenobitic monks and hermits to coexist. The Vivarium appears not to have been governed by a strict monastic rule, such as that of the Benedictine Order. (Cassiodorus. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiodorus>)

• Cassiodorus devoted much of his life to supporting education within the Christian community at large. When his proposed theological university in Rome was denied, he was forced to re-examine his entire approach to how material was learned and interpreted.[12] His Variae [a work by Cassiodorus] show that, like Augustine of

Hippo, Cassiodorus viewed reading as a transformative act for the reader. It is with this in mind that Cassiodorus designed and mandated the course of studies at the Vivarium [“monastery school” founded by Cassiodorus], which demanded an intense regimen of reading and meditation. By assigning a specific order of texts to be read, Cassiodorus hoped to create the discipline necessary within the reader to become a successful monk. The first work in this succession of texts would be the Psalms [Expositio Psalmorum by Cassiodorus], with which the untrained reader would need to begin because of its appeal to emotion and temporal goods.[13] By examining the rate at which copies of his Psalmic commentaries were issued, it is fair to assess that, as the first work in his series [Expositio Psalmorum], Cassiodorus's educational agenda had been implemented to some degree of success.[13] Beyond demanding the pursuit of discipline among his students, Cassiodorus encouraged the study of the liberal arts. He believed these arts were part of the content of the Bible, and some mastery of them—especially grammar and rhetoric—necessary for a complete understanding of Scripture.[13] These arts were divided into trivium (rhetoric, idioms, vocabulary and etymology) and quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy). (Cassiodorus. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiodorus>)

• Cassiodorus' work *Institutiones* was written to guide the monks' studies. To this end, the *Institutiones* focus largely on texts assumed to have been available in Vivarium's library [“monastery school” founded by Cassiodorus]. The *Institutiones* seem to have been composed over a lengthy period of time, from the 530s into the 550s, with redactions up to the time of Cassiodorus' death. Cassiodorus composed the Institutiones as a guide for introductory learning of both”divine”and”secular”writings, in place of his formerly planned Christian school in Rome: “I was moved by divine love to devise for you, with God's help, these introductory books to take the place of a teacher. Through them I believe that both the textual sequence of Holy Scripture and also a compact account of secular letters may, with God's grace, be revealed.[7]” The first section of the Institutiones deals with Christian texts, and was intended to be used in combination with the Expositio Psalmorum [by Cassiodorus]. The order of subjects in the second book of the *Institutiones* reflected what would become the Trivium and Quadrivium of medieval liberal arts: grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. While Cassiodorus encouraged study of secular subjects, he clearly considered them useful primarily as aids to the study of divinity, much in the same manner as St. Augustine. Cassiodorus' *Institutiones* thus attempted to provide what Cassiodorus saw as a well-rounded education necessary for a learned Christian, all in “one work” (Latin: *uno corpore*), as Cassiodorus put it.[8] The library at Vivarium was still active c. 630, when the monks brought the relics of Saint Agathius from Constantinople, dedicating to him a spring-fed fountain shrine that still exists.[9] However, its books were later dispersed, the Codex Grandior of the Bible being purchased by the Anglo-Saxon Ceolfrith when he was in Italy in 679–80, and taken by him to Wearmouth Jarrow, where it served as the source for the copying of the Codex Amiatinus, which was then brought back to Italy by the now aged Ceolfrith.[10] **Despite the demise of the Vivarium ["monastery school"], Cassiodorus' work in compiling classical sources and presenting a sort of bibliography of resources would prove extremely influential in Late Antique Western Europe.**[11] (Cassiodorus. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiodorus>)

• Cassiodorus is rivaled only by Boethius in his drive to preserve and explore classical literature during the 6th century AD.[14][15] He found the writings of the Greeks and Romans valuable for their expression of higher truths where other arts failed.[13] Though he saw these texts as vastly inferior to the perfect word of Scripture, the truths presented in them confirmed Cassiodorus' educational principles. Thus he is unafraid to cite Cicero alongside sacred text, and acknowledge the classical ideal of the practice of rhetoric as practical and ”good".[13] His love for classical thought also influenced his administration of Vivarium. Cassiodorus

connected deeply with Christian neoplatonism, which saw beauty as concomitant [naturally associated] with the “good” [i.e, the Creator]. This inspired him to adjust his educational program to support the aesthetic enhancement of manuscripts within the monastery. Classical learning would by no means replace the role of Scripture within the monastery; it was intended to augment the education already under way. **It is also worth noting that all Greek and Roman works were heavily screened to ensure only proper exposure to text, fitting with the rest of the structured learning.**[17] (Cassiodorus. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiodorus>)

• Cassiodorus' legacy is quietly profound. Before the founding of Vivarium, the copying of manuscripts had been a task reserved for either inexperienced or physically infirm devotees, and was performed at the whim of literate monks. Through the influence of Cassiodorus, the monastic system adopted a more vigorous, widespread, and regular approach to reproducing documents within the monastery.[18] This approach to the development of the monastic lifestyle was perpetuated especially through German religious institutions.[18] This change in daily life also became associated with a higher purpose: the process was not merely associated with disciplinary habit, but also with the preservation of history [and education].[19] During Cassiodorus' lifetime, theological study was on the decline and classical writings were disappearing. Even as the victorious Ostrogoth armies remained in the countryside, they continued to pillage and destroy religious relics in Italy.[14] **Cassiodorus' programme helped ensure that both classical and sacred literature were preserved through the Middle Ages.** (Cassiodorus. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiodorus>)

• [Historia tripartita] ...sometime after 540, Cassiodorus compiled the Historia (ecclesiastica) tripartita, **a church history based on the works of three fifth-century Greek historians: Sozomen, Socrates, and Theodoret. It was then translated from Greek into Latin by Epiphanius, a member of the Vivarium community.** Troncarelli suggests that the sixth century codex BAV, Vat. lat. 5074 [Troncarelli, Vivarium, p. 37-38], where marks in the margin are believed to be in Cassiodorus' hand, shows the process of translation. **Cassiodorus' method was to edit style and orthography from a text already compiled and translated. Cassiodorus indicates in both the preface to the Historia tripartita and in the description of his *Institutiones* that he himself compiled the text, and there is no reason to disbelieve him. Possibly with the help of Epiphanius, Cassiodorus did so from the Greek texts.** The Historia tripartita combines [PAGE 35] an historical narrative of synods and imperial interference with church affairs, short hagiographical anecdotes, and documentation in the form of letters and council acts. The period encompassed in the Historia tripartita runs from Constantine I to Theodosius II, for no other apparent reason than that this is the time also covered by the three Greek church histories. [fn. 3. Described by Cassiodorus in his Institutiones I.XVII:”Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret wrote of the events in the Greek world in the period following the history of Eusebius; with God's aid I have had these works translated by the learned Epiphanius in a collection of twelve books so that eloquent of Greece cannot boast that it possesses an indispensable work that has not been available to us."] (Désirée Scholten, “Cassiodorus' Historia tripartita before the earliest extant manuscripts” in The Resources of the Past in Early Medieval Europe, 2015, p. 34-35)

• Cassiodorus wrote Bible commentaries, and was familiar with Old Latin and Vulgate manuscripts,[106] seeking out sacred manuscripts. **Cassiodorus was also skilled in Greek.** (Johannine Comma. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannine_Comma>.)

Vivarium monastery (founded 544)

• The Vivarium was a monastery, library, and biblical studies center founded c. 544 by Cassiodorus near Squillace, in Calabria, Italy.[1] Cassiodorus also established a biblical studies center on the Bible and a library inside. It became a place of preservation for classical Greek and Latin literature.[2] The Vivarium was meant to build bridges across the cultural fault lines of the sixth century: those between Romans and Goths, between orthodox Catholics and their Arian rulers, between the east and west, between the Greek and the Latin worlds, and between pagans and Christians.

• At the outbreak of the Graeco-Gothic War, Cassiodorus decided to retire from politics and left Italy for Constantinople, where he remained until at least 544. During this time, he focused on the study of religious issues. The Constantinopolitan period contributed significantly to the deepening of his theological knowledge. Around 544, he returned to home, and founded the Vivarium near Scolacium, on the shore of the Ionian Sea. The exact date of its founding is uncertain. In 540, the Roman Senator Cassiodorus retired from the public life within the monastery and ordered to the Benedictine monks to learn about medicinal herbs and to copy various medical texts, including works of Galen, Hippocrates and of the pharmacist Dioscorides.[3]

• After the death of Cassiodorus, the manuscripts housed here were dispersed, some making their way to the Lateran Palace.

• Vivarium monastery. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vivarium_(monastery)>

• [O'Donnell] ...there were many other works published for the monks at the Vivarium, spinoffs from the central purposes of the enterprise. These works divide themselves into two interacting categories, There were, first of all, numerous works that Cassiodorus had translated from the Greek for the use of his monks; and there were the manuscript collections that he made of numerous works of the Greek and Latin fathers for various purposes. We have already seen that throughout the first book of the Institutiones he was mentioning the compilation of manuscript editions of groups of commentaries on individual sections of the Bible. (O'Donnell, Cassiodorus, 1995, p. 214-215)

• [Lapidge] Cassiodorus died well into his nineties, in about 575. What happened to the manuscripts which he had assembled at Vivarium? Evidence of surviving manuscripts suggests that they were dispersed variously rather than that they were transferred *en bloc* to another library. During the past century there has been an understandable scholarly temptation to attribute sixth-century manuscripts of unknown origin to Vivarium, but more recent research treats these attempts with skepticism. We are left with a very small residue of some seven manuscripts which were owned and annotated, arguably by Cassiodorus himself, at Vivarium. [i.e., Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, XXXIX (s. vi/vii).] (Lapidge, "Vanished Libraries of Classical Antiquity" in The Anglo-Saxon Library, 2006, p. 19)

• [Cassiodorus : Institutiones : Book 1. Chap. XIV. The Division of Holy Scripture According to the Septuagint] 4. But since Father Augustine in the second book of Christian Learning gives the following advice, "the Latin copies, i.e., of the Old and the New Testament, if there is need, should be corrected by the authority of the Greek from which all translations have reached us after the Hebrew source," so **I have left you also a complete Greek Bible in seventy-five books** which contains ____ [number] of gatherings of four folios each in the previously mentioned eighth bookcase where **I have systematically collected the various short works of other Greek writers**. In this way nothing that is essential to your instruction in sacred matters will be missing. …The chief products of the Greek translators at the Vivarium were three: the Latin version of the homilies of Chrysostom on Hebrews, which had a considerable medieval vogue; the Latin Josephus, a best-seller for centuries; and the Historia ecclesiastica tripartita, The other translations included chiefly

commentaries on books of scripture for which Latin treatments were not available, but also the work of Gaudentius on music. (Cassiodorus: Institutions of Divine and Secular Learning and On the Soul. Translated with notes and introduction, 2004, p. 138)

***Complexiones* (circa 575)**

• [Cassiodorus] "When I was working on my *Complexiones of the Apostles*, monks suddenly began to clamor, 'What use is it to us to know the thoughts of the ancients, or even your own, if we have no idea [*omnimodis ignoremus*] how to write them down? Neither can we read aloud things written in indecipherable script'" (*De orthographia* 143.1-6). (Translation by O'Donnell, Cassiodorus, 1995, p. 230)

• [Mac Carthy] The work of Cassiodorus, containing the complexiones' or short annotations on the Epp., Acts, and Apocalypse was first published by Scipio Maffei at Florence in 1721. The importance of his testimony for our purpose can hardly be overrated, coming from a man who for learning had no rival in his own time, and who read carefully and commanded his monks to read, the best translations and the original text of the sacred books, with the aid of the Greek and Latin Fathers. It is also good to observe that he could not have taken this passage from any MSS. of the vulg., because his quotations are all from the ancient Latin version.
• Mac Carthy, The Epistles and Gospels of the Sundays Throughout the Year. 1866, vol 2, p. 295)

• [Houghton] Cassiodorus' next writing was the *Complexiones* (CAr cpl), a summary of the whole of the New Testament apart from the Gospels. This only survives in a single manuscript, copied around 700. Cassiodorus divided the text into numbered sections, beginning each part of his commentary with this number followed by a quotation of the first verse of the passage. **These are Old Latin in their affiliation.** Although much of the work is a paraphrase of the biblical text, Cassiodorus drew on numerous sources including the commentaries on Revelation by Victorinus of Poetovio, Tyconius, and Jerome, as well as his contemporary Primasius. (Houghton, The Latin New Testament, 2016, p. 59)

• [O'Donnell] The difference between *complexiones* and the *Expositio Psalmorum* is not merely in the scale, but also in the purpose and the style. In the preface, Cassiodorus put forth this cryptic explanation of his work: *"Breves* of the Apostles, which we can more accurately call *complexiones,* embrace various things summarily, showing what things are treated there, striking a balance between diffuse description and excessive (omissive) brevity" (*PL* 70.1321-1322). What Cassiodorus then promised was a brief narration, summarizing the intentions of the sacred authors, not discussing every word of the text. "This is the difference between *breves* and *complexiones:* that *breves* are an analytical index of what follows, while *complexiones* give a consecutive narration of the same things" (*PL* 70.1322). This seems to mean that Cassiodorus is not intending to provide a set of canons to accompany a text of scripture, but rather an independent work capable of being read on its own.
• [O'Donnell] The purpose of the work, then, is to introduce the reader to the non-evangelical books of the New Testament: "For reasons of brevity I omit mention of some doctrinal disputes, the purpose being to introduce the reader to the text, not to tell him all there is to know" (*PL* 70. 1382A).
• [O'Donnell] The procedure by which this introduction is achieved is formal and simple to a much greater degree than that of the *Expositio Psalmorum.* The scripture was divided up arbitrarily into numbered sections, which are the units of commentary. The numbered sections each begin with a scriptural lemma, the first words of that section of the text. Explanation follows very literally, very directly; what is given is scarcely more than a paraphrase. The actual words of the lemma need not be the subject of the explanation (cf. ad Rom. 9.1 [*PL* 70. 1327B]), nor is every word of the passage considered (cf. ad Rom. 1.18-24 [PL 70. 1323A], where Romans 1.20, a popular text in the middle ages but one neglected in the *Expositio Psalmorum,* is passed over in silence). Throughout the work the purpose of the comments is to clarify and to simplify, with frequent references to parallel texts of scripture, especially the Psalter.

19 - The Comma Calmly Considered : The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus

• [O'Donnell] Insofar as this work fits the categories of early medieval exegesis, it is resolutely literal. There is virtually no allegorical interpretation, not even of individual figures; thus the mention of Noah in I Peter 3.17 is ignored. On the other hand, no part of the text is considered worthy of outright neglect; on I Peter 5.8, Cassiodorus summarizes the contents of the author's personal greetings and commendation of the letter's bearer. The closest he comes to allegory is on Apocalypse 3.1, where he reads a phrase thus: "and in shining vestments, that is, a purified conscience" (*PL* 70. 1408A). Nor is there digression, nor anything not explicitly called for by the text.
• O'Donnell, James J. Cassiodorus. University of California Press: Berkley, 1995, 226-227.

• [Ryan] In the early and central Middle Ages, Cassiodorus' Complexiones all but disappeared. Gryson summarizes their lack of importance in the Middle Ages this:

> • [Gryson] While Cassiodorus was one of the great thinkers of the Middle Ages, and many of his works have been widely distributed, the Complexiones fell quickly into oblivion... It is mentioned neither in medieval library catalogs nor in literary histories of the Middle Ages, the only exception being Liber de scriptoribus ecclesiasticis by Sigebert de Gembloux (Sigebertus Gemblacensis; c. 1030 – 5 October 1112), which depended on the preface of De orthographia. We see only that it was read by no other author during this period. (Gryson (ed.), Commentaria Minora, 101-102)

• [Ryan] Possibly due to its unoriginal, almost non-interpretive, summarizing nature, the Complexiones suffered from a lack of readership. The one extant manuscript, from around 600, was discovered by Scipione Maffei in 1721. (Ryan, A Companion to the Premodern Apocalypse, 2015, p. 117)

HIT:

> • [Cassiodorus: Complexiones] *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God*, etc. He who believes that Jesus is God, is born of God the Father. Such a person is faithful without a doubt. And he who loves the Begetter also loves the Christ who is born of him. We love him when we perform his commandments. His commandments do not seem burdensome to just minds. Rather, they overcome the world when they believe in the one who created the world. **Three mysteries bear witness to this on earth: the water, the blood, and the spirit; which, as can be read, were fulfilled in the Lord's passion. And three bear witness to it in heaven: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one God**. (Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, XXXIX (37), folio 60-61; translated by Sarah Van der Pas, correspondence, January 2023)
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> > • **Latin:** EPISTOLA S. JOANNIS AD PARTHOS. 10. --V, 1. Omnis qui credit quia Jesus est Christus, ex Deo natus est, et reliqua. Qui Deum Jesum credit, ex Deo Patre natus est, iste sine dubitatione fidelis (1373A)est; et qui diligit genitorem, amat et eum qui ex eo natus est Christus. Sic autem diligimus eum, cum mandata ejus facimus, quae justis mentibus gravia non videntur; sed potius vincunt saeculum, quando in illum credunt qui condidit mundum. **Cui rei testificantur in terra tria mysteria: aqua, sanguis et spiritus, quae in passione Domini leguntur impleta: in coelo autem Pater, et Filius, et Spiritus sanctus; et hi tres unus est Deus.** (Cassiodorus, Complexiones, Migne Latina, PL 70.1373)
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> • [Translator] The Latin starting at autem Pater is part of the commentary. The wording is similar to the Scripture because it's paraphrasing (and explaining) it. The next direct quote from the Scripture is in the line that follows (si testimonium hominum etc.), which appears in red in the picture. (Sarah Van der Pas, Professional Latin Translator, correspondence, January 2023.)

19 - The Comma Calmly Considered : The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus

Comments:

• [Lamy] Tischendorf acknowledges that Cassiodorus, a man deeply versed in Holy Scripture, knew the text of the three heavenly witnesses. In his [Cassiodorus'] work entitled Complexiones in Epistolis Apostolorum, which Scipio Maffei edited from an almost contemporaneous manuscript, Cassiodorus thus expresses himself on I. Joan., v. [Latin] Cassiodorus, like St Eucherius, mystically interprets water, blood and spirit, as three symbols concerning the Passion of Christ. To those three earthly symbols in terra, he opposes the three heavenly witnesses in coelo, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one God. Evidently we have here verse 7. Cassiodorus does not cite it textually, but he gives the sense of it. He puts it in opposition to verse 8, for he contrasts in coelo with in terra. The last words:"And these three are one"(Latin: Et hi tres unus est Deus) can be referred only to verse 7, since Cassiodorus refers"the three are one"(Latin: tria unum sunt) of verse 8, to the Passion of Our Saviour. It is also to be remarked that Cassiodorus uses the pre-hieronymian Vulgate and not the version of St. Jerome. Maffei's conclusion is therefore justified when he says: Verse 7 was read not only in Africa, but in the most ancient and the most accurate Codices of the Roman Church, since Cassiodorus recommended to the monks to seek, above all else, the correct copies and to compare them with the Greek. (Lamy, "The Decision of the Holy Office on the Comma Johanneum" in American Ecclesiastical Review 1897, p. 468)

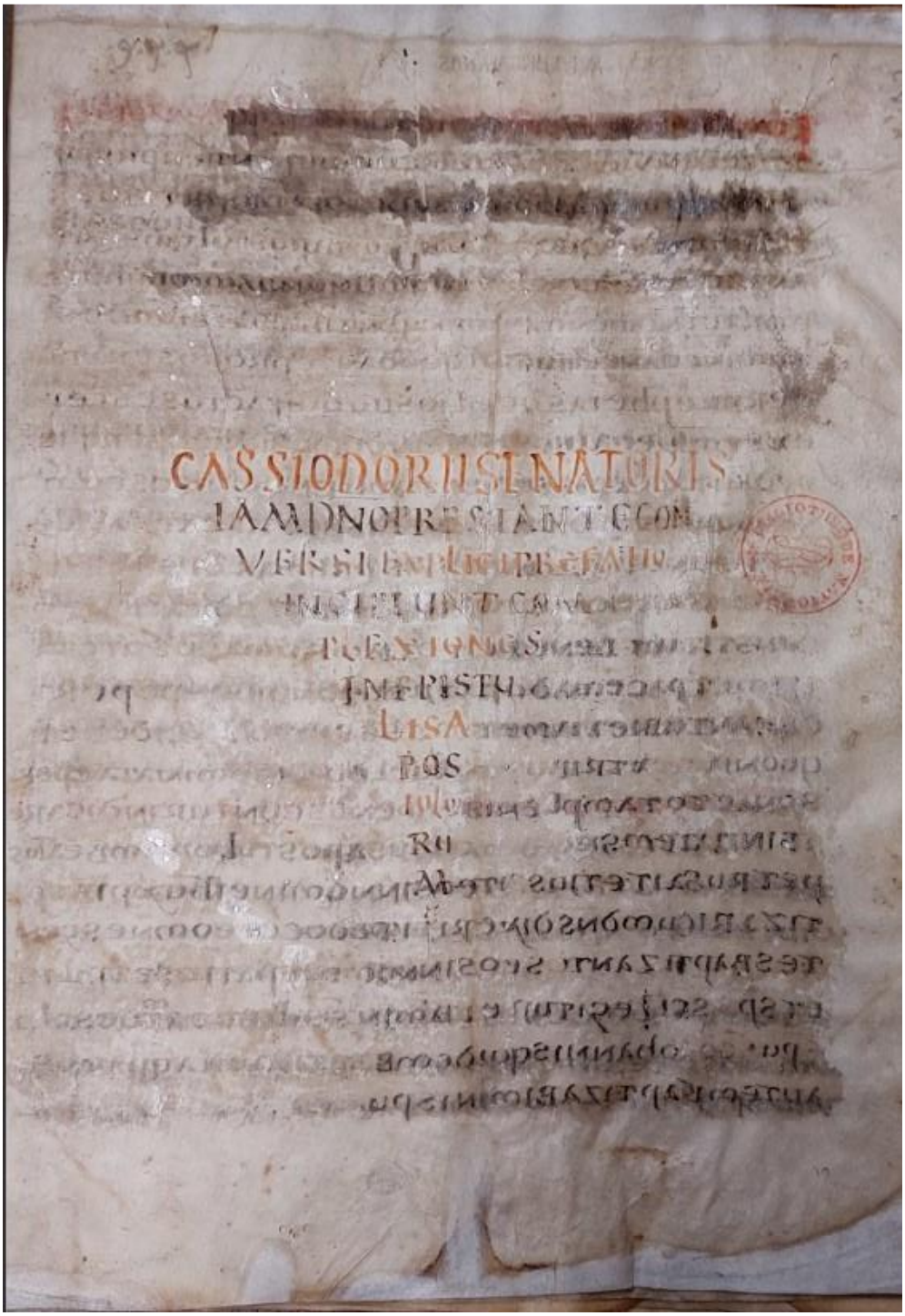
• [Maffei] See this much talked-of place of St. John about the Trinity, about which there is a most vigorous battle at this day. I even composed a book collecting those things brought forward to this question by most of the learned men. The heavenly testimony, as they call it, that he approaches here finds of course a very valid defense from this work of Cassiodorus; as in the end it corresponds to the fact that not only in the African, but also in the most ancient codices of the Roman Church this verse is provided. About those of Africa, at least, there can be no doubt. (Maffei, Istoria teologica delle dottrine, 1742, vol 1, p. 145, fn. a; Translated by Jeroen Beekhuizen, correspondence, March 2020)

19 - The Comma Calmly Considered : The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus

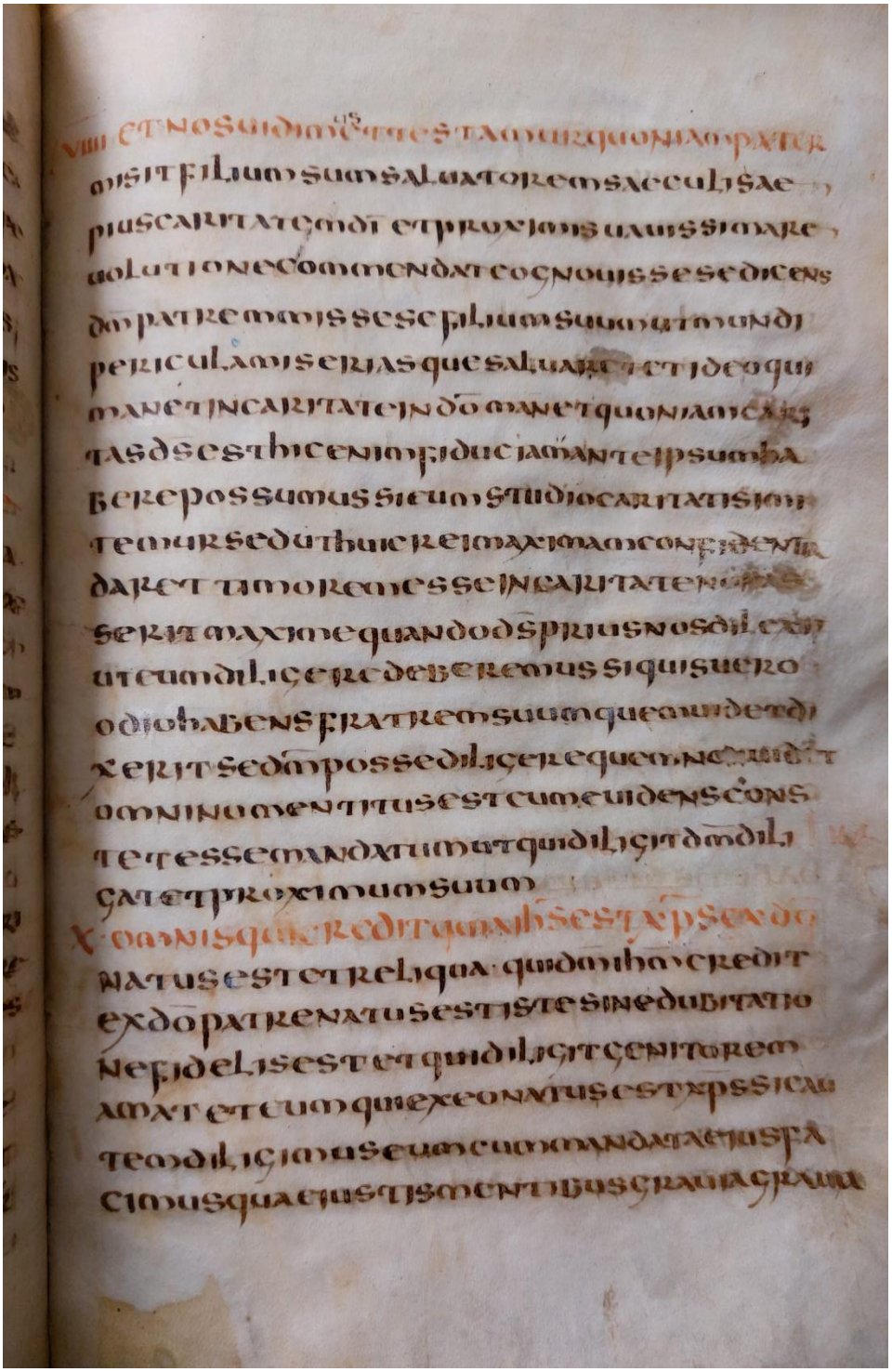
I John 5:6-8 : Transcribed from Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare 39 (37)

CLA 4.496; TM 66604; Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare 39 (37)
Uncial, VI–VII (580 - 620)
Description: Written in Italy and apparently in the North, to judge by the manner of denoting omitted M and by the form of initial A. The note at the foot of the last page (fol. 110v) seems Veronese.
Contents: Cassiodorus, *Complexiones in Epistulas Apostolorum, Actus Apostolorum et Apocalypsum*

Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, XXXIX (37), folio 60-61
f60.line.19 Omnis qui credit quia Jesus est Christus, ex Deo
f60.line.20 natus est, et reliqua. Qui Deum Jesum credit,
f60.line.21 ex Deo Patre natus est, iste sine dubitatio-
f60.line.22 ne fidelis est; et qui diligit genitorem,
f60.line.23 amat et eum qui ex eo natus est Christus. Sic au-
f60.line.24 tem diligimus eum, cum mandata ejus fa
f60.line.25 cimus, quae justis mentibus gravia [gravia]
f61.line.1 non videntur; sed potius vincunt saeculum,
f61.line.2 quando in illum credunt qui condidit mundum.
f61.line.3 Cui rei testificantur in terra tria mysteria:
f61.line.4 aqua, sanguis et spiritus, quae in passione Domini legun-
f61.line.5 tur impleta: in caelo autem Pater, et Filius,
f61.line.6 et Spiritus sanctus; et hi tres unus est Deus.
• Transcribed by Sarah Van der Pas, correspondence, January 2023

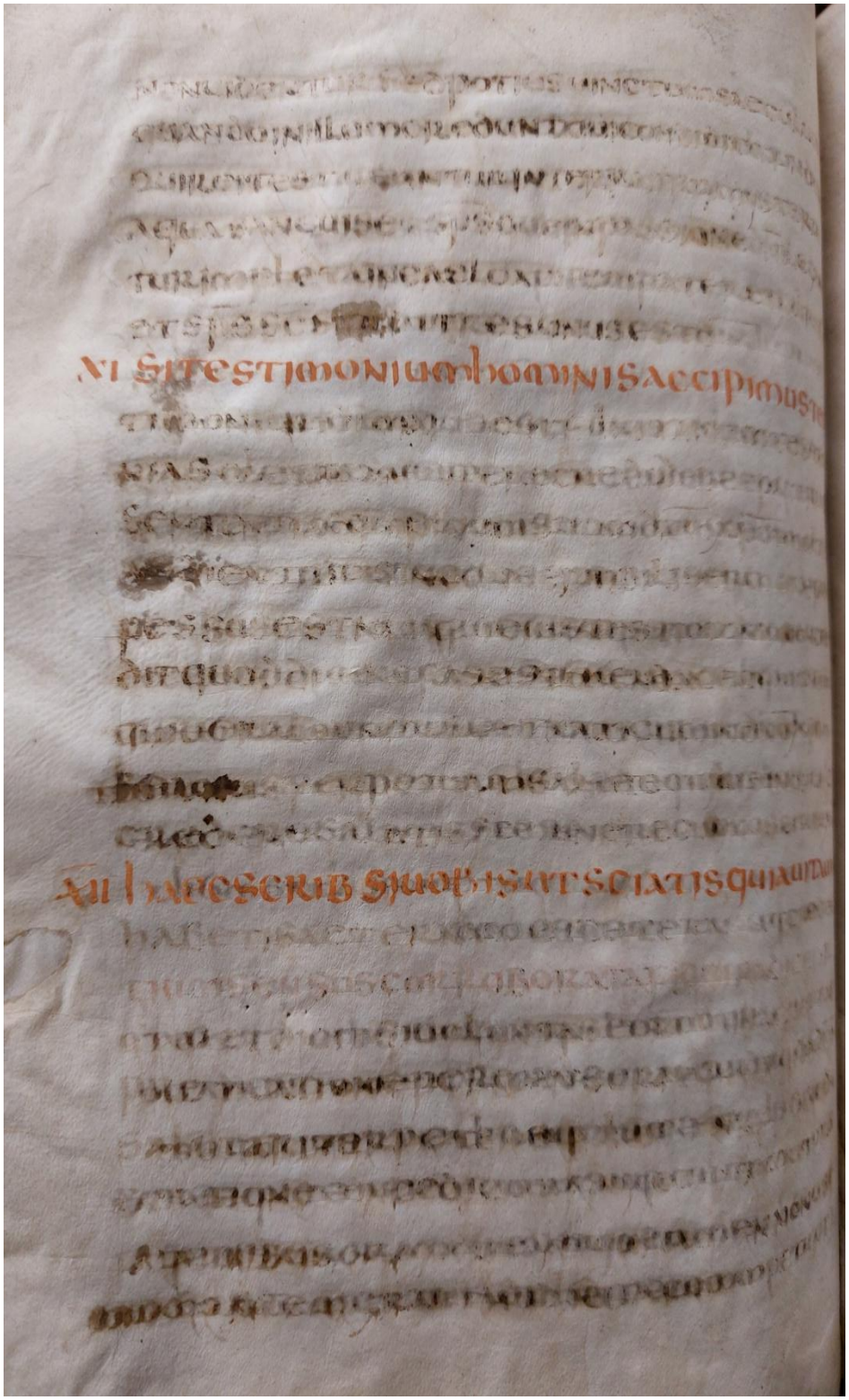


Verona Biblioteca Capitolare 39 (37) CLA 4.496 TM 66604, Title Page.
Image courtesy of Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona, © Fondazione Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona

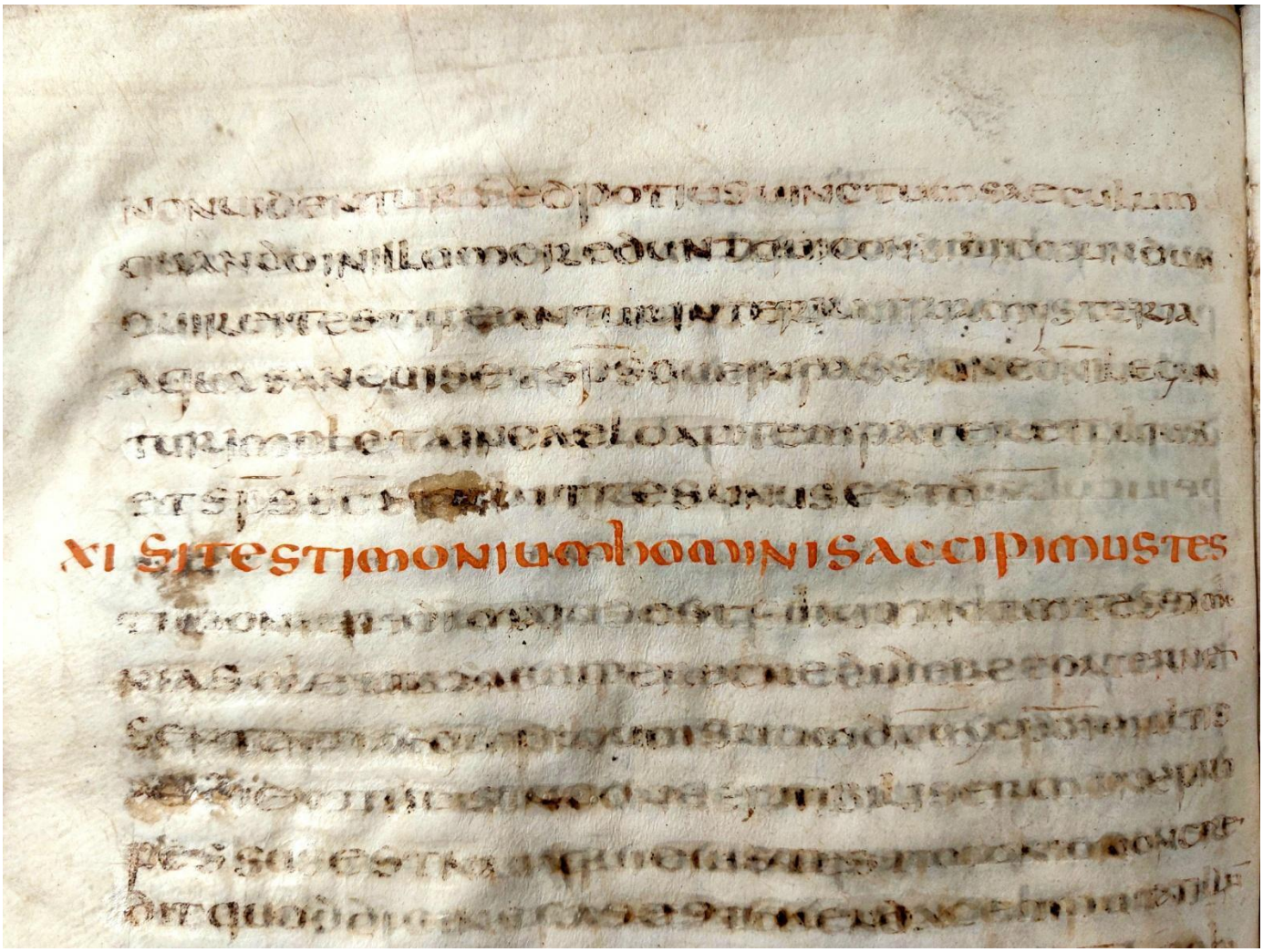


Verona Biblioteca Capitolare 39 (37) CLA 4.496 TM 66604, folio 60.
Image courtesy of Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona, © Fondazione Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona

19 - The Comma Calmly Considered : The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus



Verona Biblioteca Capitolare 39 (37) CLA 4.496 TM 66604, folio 61.
Image courtesy of Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona, © Fondazione Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona



Verona Biblioteca Capitolare 39 (37) CLA 4.496 TM 66604, folio 61. (close up)
Image courtesy of Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona, © Fondazione Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona

19 - The Comma Calmly Considered : The *Complexiones* (circa 575) of Cassiodorus

Appendix: Burgess Refutes Porson's Assumptions (p. 24-27)

The passage in *Complexiones* is this: "*Testificantur in terra tria mysteria, aqua, sanguis, et spiritus*, quae in passion Domini leguntur impleta : *in caelo autem Pater, et Filius, et Spiritus Sanctus ; et hi tres unus est Deus*." We have in this passage of Cassiodorus the seventh and eight verses transposed, as they occur in some manuscripts of the Vulgate; and the latter portion of the passage is clearly the seventh verse, though the term "one" (Greek: ἐν) is translated not literally, (Latin: unum), but periphrastically, *unus Deus* : "and these three are one God" (Latin: et hi tres unus est Deus). Mr. Porson proposes that the heavenly witnesses should be *excluded* from the text of Cassiodorus without any *authority* from MSS and for *reasons* in which he is evidently mistaken :

> On a diligent examination of the *Complexiones*," he says, "I am persuaded, that Cassiodorus found no more than these words in his copy: "There are three that bear witness, the water, and the blood, and the spirit" (Latin: Tres sunt, qui testificantur, aqua, et sanguis, et spiritus ; et hi tres unum sunt). That he gave his own, or rather Eucherius' interpretation of these words, and applied them to the Trinity. Why else did he use the emphatic word *mysteria*, unless he intended some mysterious application? Since he interprets the *spiritus* of the *human breath*, what mystery, what hidden sense do these words contain of themselves? (Porson, Letters to Mr. Archdeacon Travis, in Answer to His Defence of the Three Heavenly Witnesses, I John V 7, 1790, p. 351)

Mr. Porson asks, *why* Cassiodorus used the emphatic word *mysteria*, unless he intended some mysterious application? He certainly did intend a mysterious application of the passage, but not to the Trinity. By the term *spiritus*, he meant, as Mr. Porson observes, the *human breath*, the "the spirit, which he delivered to the Father" (Latin: spiritus, quam Patri tradidit). And this was a great mystery, "great is the mystery of godliness" (Greek: μέγα ἐστὶ τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον) (I Tim 3:16), the Son of God *expiring* on the cross. The *blood* and the *water* issuing from a dead body, were also mysteries, being contrary to nature. They were mysteries too, as significant of the great atonement, which Christ had made by his death. Blood and water were necessary adjuncts to all acts of expiation.

> A supernatural event, clearly showing that the one who had been stabbed was more than a man. For blood will not come out of a dead man even if you stab him ten thousand times. (Euthymius, Gospel of John, 19:34)
>
> > **Greek:** Ὑπερφυὲς τὸ πράγμα, καὶ τρανῶς διδάσκον ὅτι ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπον ὁ νυγείς. Ἐκ νεκροῦ γὰρ ἀνθρώπου, κἂν μυριάκις νύξῃ τις, οὐκ ἐξελεύσεται αἷμα. (Euthymius, Gospel of John 19:34; Migne Graeca, PG 129.1473BC)

That the blood and water, which issued from our Saviour's side, after his death, were mystically understood, but not of the Trinity, in the second century, we see in a passage of Apollinaris [Apollinaris Claudius of Hierapolis in Phrygia (middle of to late century II)]: "the one who had pour out from his side the two things which are cleansing again: water and blood" (Greek: ὁ ἐκχέας ἐκ τῆς πλευρᾶς αὐτοῦ τὰ δύο πάλιν καθάρσια, ὕδωρ καὶ αἷμα… ; Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, vol 1, Chronicon paschale, 1832, ed. Dindorf, p. 14). In this sense Cassiodorus says, that three mysteries were accomplished in our Saviour's suffering on the cross, "filled with the passion of the Lord" (Latin: impleta in passione Domini). Eucherius also applied the three terms to Christ's suffering on the cross, and *not to the Trinity*, as Mr. Portson supposed.

• Burgess, Thomas and Johann Jacob GRIESBACH. [a Vindication of 1 John V. 7. from the Objections of M. Griesbach: In Which Is Given a New View of the External Evidence with Greek Authorities for the Authenticity of the Verse Etc. [with a Facsimile.]], 1823, p. 24-27.

Appendix: Cassiodorus : Institutiones 2.4.8 : I John 5:8

I recently discovered this in Cassiodorus *Institutiones* book 2. Depending on who you read, some scholars say this was a later interpolation (see the curly braces in the Latin text below), or written by Cassiodorus when he revised and expanded his 2nd edition of this work. Either way, it is of little consequence because as you can see the Latin of verse 8 has been corrupted as it was in Eucherius' work reading “water, blood, spirit” contrary to the actual verse which reads: “Spirit, water, blood”. How and in what way the three are to be understood as the persons of the Godhead is not given to us. So, I conclude, that i) if it is a quote, then the manuscript which is being used by the writer is corrupt; ii) it is not a quote, so naturally the verse has only the parts that are important to the writer’s interpretation; iii) what the relationship the three have to the persons of the Godhead is not given indicating that this instance cannot support the “mystical interpretation” theory of the critics. I would add that if Cassiodorus wrote this, then it is another example of how such instances have no bearing on whether “on earth” is in verse 8 and furthermore, whether verse 7 is present in the writer’s manuscript. If Cassiodorus did not write it, I would simply reiterate the above statements about this instance. The scribe is making a point about verse 8. There is no necessity to make assumptions about other verses or if this instance is somehow evidence for the critics because “in earth” is not present in the writer’s text. Finally, this is just another instance demonstrating how irrelevant any interpretation of verse 8 in the passage when considering the authenticity of the Heavenly & Earthly witnesses in I John 5.

• IIII. Arithmetic.

• 8. If you look carefully for the basis of such great matters even the miracles of the Lord become susceptible to numerical explanation. The first number pertains to the one God, as we read in the Pentateuch: "Hear O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone!" (Deuteronomy 6:4). The second number refers to the two Testaments, as it says in the Book of the Kings: "And he made in Dabir two cherubim of ten cubits in height" (I Kings 6:23). **Finally, the sweet reward of all our hope rests in the holy Trinity, not because it is subject to number, but because the power of its majesty displays the usefulness of number. Indeed, unity is understood to be in the essence of the divine, but Trinity is in persons. For it says in the Epistle of John: "There are three things that bear witness: the water, the blood, and the spirit”.** Concerning the four evangelists we also read in Ezechiel: "Within it were figures resembling four living creatures" (Ezechiel 1:5). The fifth number refers to the five books of Moses, as it says in Paul: "In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding" (I Corinthians 14:19). "On the sixth day God made man, in HIs own image and likeness" (Genesis 1:26). Indeed we call the Spirit itself Holy and believe that it is sevenfold; number is necessary to enable us to understand the highest and most omnipotent matters. Now we will take up music that is sweetness in its name and in its particular excellence. (Halporn, J. W. / Vessey, M., Cassiodorus: Institutions of Divine and Secular Learning and On the Soul. Translated with notes and introduction, Liverpool 2004, p. 215-216)

• IIII. DE ARITHMETICA

• 8. {Et si causam tantae rei suptili praescrutatione discutias, nec miracula Domini a virtute numeri redduntur aliena primus ad unum pertinet Deum, sicut in Pentateuco legitur: "Audi, Israel, Dominus Deus tuus Dominus unus est." secundus ad duo pertinet Testamenta, quod ait in Regum: "Et fecit in Dabir duo cherubin decem cubitorum magnitudine." **postrem totius spei nostrae suavissimus fructus in sancta Trinitate repositus est, non quod ipsa sub numero sit, sed illa numeri utilitatem potentia suae maiestatis ostendit. in essentia siquidem Divinitatis monas intellegitur, in personis vero trinitas Comprobatur; legitur enim in epistula Iohannis: "Tria sunt quae testimonium perhibent, aqua, sanguis et spiritus."** de

quattuor evangeliis etiam in Ezechiel legitur: "Et ex medio eorum similitudo quattuor animalium." quintus numerus ad aquinque libros Moysi noscitur pertinere, sicut in Apostolo legitur: "In ecclesia volo quinque verba sensus eloqui." sexto vero die Dominus "hominem" fecit "ad imaginem et similitudinem" suam. nam et ipsum Spiritum sanctum dicimus et credimus septiformem; - et ut res summae atque omnipotentissimae intellegantur, numerus nobis necessarius invenitur.} nuncveniamus ad muscicam, quae ipso nomine et propria virtute suavis est. (Cassiodorus, Institutiones, Book 2.4.8; Mynors, Cassiodorus: Institutiones divinarum et saecularium litterarum, 1937, p. 141-142)

Appendix: Sigebert of Gembloux (c. 1030 – 1112) : Mentions *Complexiones*

• Sigebert of Gembloux (Sigebertus Gemblacensis; c. 1030 – 5 October 1112) was a medieval author, known mainly as a pro-Imperial historian of a universal chronicle, opposed to the expansive papacy of Gregory VII and Pascal II. Early in his life he became a monk in the Benedictine abbey of Gembloux.

• He was born near Gembloux which is now in the Province of Namur, Belgium, about 1030. He was apparently not of Germanic background, but seems to have been of Latin descent. He received his education at the Abbey of Gembloux, where at an early age he became a monk. Later he was for a long time a teacher at the Abbey of St. Vincent at Metz; about 1070 he returned to Gembloux. He was universally admired, and had charge there of the abbey school until his death, occupied in teaching and writing.[1] After his return from Metz he became a violent imperial partisan in the great struggle between the empire and the papacy that culminated in the Investiture Controversy. He was an enemy of the papal pretensions and he took part in the momentous contest between Pope Gregory VII and the Emperor Henry IV. Of his three treatises on this question, being very serviceable to the imperial cause to the contest, one is lost; this was an answer to the letter of Gregory VII, written in 1081 to Bishop Hermann of Metz, in which Gregory asserted that the popes have the right to excommunicate kings and to release subjects from the oath of loyalty. In the second treatise Sigebert defended the masses said by married priests, the hearing of which had been forbidden by the pope in 1074. When Paschal II in 1103 ordered the Count of Flanders to punish the citizens of Liège for their adherence to the emperor and to take up arms against him, Sigebert attacked the proceeding of the pope as unchristian and contrary to Scripture.[2] He died at Gembloux on 5 November 1112.[2]

• Sigebert's most celebrated work is a *Chronicon sive Chronographia*, or universal chronicle, that Auguste Molinier found to be the best work of its kind. It contains many errors and little original information. He desired probably merely to give a chronological survey; consequently, there is only a bare list of events even for the era in which he lived, though the last years, including 1105–1111, are treated in more detail. It covers the period between 381 and 1111, and its author was evidently a man of much learning. The work became in time, the principal source of information with reference to the churches and abbeys of Belgium and Northern France.[2] The first of many printed editions was published in 1513; the best is in Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores vol. VI, with introduction by Ludwig Conrad Bethmann. After Sigebert's death his chronicle was continued by Anselm of Gembloux. The chronicle was very popular during the later Middle Ages; it gained a very high reputation, was circulated in numberless copies, and was used by many writers and found numerous continuators, serving as the basis of many later works of history. Notwithstanding various oversights and mistakes, the industry and wide reading of Sigebert deserve honorable mention. The original autograph manuscript is in the Royal Library of Belgium.[3]

• Sigebert of Gembloux. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sigebert_of_Gembloux>.

> • CHAPTER 40 Cassiodorus, consul and senator, later a monk and abbot, made a treatise on the Psalms, and divided the whole body of the work into three parts, namely, the fifty Psalms. He wrote two books on Institutions, how divine and human lessons should be understood, and a book on etymologies, and he compiled another book on schemata for the priest. **He wrote a book of titles, which he wished to call a collection of the divine Scriptures, Memorial, so that those who are weary of reading protracted things may skim through them briefly. He made combinations in the Epistles of the Apostles, and in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Apocalypse, which are run through with the briefest explanation**. He also compiled the catalog of the Roman consuls. Epiphanius Scholasticus, who reduced the three Histories of Theodoret, Socrates, and Sozomen into one Tripartite History, translated it from Greek into Latin. Last of all, namely in the year 93, he wrote, at the request of his brothers, about orthography, the rules of which he collected from 12 grammatical

nominations; One book about the soul. (Translated by Sarah Van der Pas, correspondence, January 2023)

• **Latin**: CAP. XL. Cassiodorus, consul et senator, postea monachus et abbas, fecit tractatus super Psalmos, et totum operis corpus per tria membra, per Psalmos scilicet quinquagenos, divisit. Scripsit duos libros Institutionum, qualiter divinae et humanae lectiones debeant intelligi, et librum De etymologiis, et alium librum sacerdotis de schematibus collegit. **Scripsit librum titulorum, quem de divina Scriptura collectum voluit nuncupari Memoriale, ut breviter percurrant qui fastidiunt prolixa perlegere. Fecit complexiones in Epistolis apostolorum, et in Actibus apostolorum, et in Apocalypsi, quae sunt brevissima explanatione decursae.** Digessit etiam Catalogum consulum Romanorum. Epiphanium Scholasticum, qui tres Theodoreti, Socratis et Sozomeni, Historias in unum Tripartitam Historiam redegit, de Graeco in Latinum transtulit. Novissime, anno scilicet aetatis XCIII, precatu fratrum suorum scripsit de orthographia cujus regulas de XII nominationibus grammaticis collegit; De anima librum unum.

• Sigebert of Gembloux, De viris illustribus, sive de scriptoribus ecclesiasticis (11th century), <www.thelatinlibrary.com/sigebert.script.html>

Appendix: Scipione Maffei's Discovery of Manuscript

• This is how the occasion that started the search and led to the discovery came about. More than once I had had an exchange of ideas with friends about the "Italian Itineraries" (those works that review all those things that in each city are considered very rare and more worthy of observation), through which almost all those who visit Italy from abroad are used to inquire […]. I showed how in that kind of writing errors were made not only by top-level men, mostly accustomed to copying one from the other, but also sometimes by very notable characters endowed with literary culture: both by presenting extremely different news from reality of things, either by deluding oneself that any person, staying a few days in a city, would be able to perfect his knowledge of the things that are worthy of note in that city. […] I added, however, that all this was to blame not so much on these compilers of guides, almost all foreigners, as on our carelessness, laziness and – must I say it? – sometimes also to the ineptitude and stupidity of our fellow citizens, very many of whom, since they ignore or laugh at everything concerning the knowledge of facts and circumstances, need, in order to become aware of the testimonies of the past that we have before our eyes, may those who seek and illustrate them come from the most remote districts. Taking a cue from these considerations, some very talented young men, who were closely related to me, began to beg me with great insistence that, as far as Verona was concerned, I would not shirk the task of preparing an operetta in which, for convenience foreigners and fellow citizens, I tried to review and explain all the things worthy of being told. While I was meditating on this work, having set out to point out also the most famous and rarest of the manuscript codes and ancient documents conserved by us, the mention of the capitular codes immediately came to mind, which I had sometimes happened to encounter with several writers; and despite the fact that everyone in the city shared the opinion, also handed down by our elders, that nothing at all remained of that very ancient library, nevertheless I went to the cloister of the cathedral church, in order to visit the place where it once stood , and to see if there weren't at least the old shelves. While I searched everywhere in vain, I was informed by several practical persons that nothing was known of the location of the library, and that nothing had been seen or heard of the shelves, either at that time or in old memory.

• Therefore, I still did not give up on the resolution; since in fact I thought that the library existed not only in the age of Guarino (who had brought to light the Sermons of st Zeno from it), and of s. Ambrogio Camaldolese (who in the Hodoeporico defines it as "very famous" and who admired "books of admirable antiquity"), but that at the age of Panvinio "there were still conspicuous traces", and also at the age of s. Charles (whom Paolo Manuzio commends in a letter of dedication for having restored the text of St. Cyprian, "after having brought a codex of great age from Verona"), it seemed incredible to me that not a few relics had survived.

• After a few days, I saw [Carlo Carinelli] arrive with a happy face: he hoped, he said, that something could be discovered in a hiding place, which he wanted both of them to explore. I immediately hurried towards the houses of the Canons, and followed him into a semi-dark room, where he showed me a very tall wardrobe, full of chancery documents, above the top of which certain old papers and wooden book covers protruded from view, thrown on top like waste. Having immediately brought a ladder, and leaning it, I climbed up, intolerant of delays; and I realize that the top of the wardrobe was not closed with boards, but exposed and hollow, in such a way that a sort of large chest was formed there. Having tossed aside a heap of trifles and wreckage, I see that the whole cavity is filled with codices, astounded, I think, by the unaccustomed daylight they had not seen in an immemorial space of time. And what codes, immortal God! [...] I almost lost my mind and my senses with amazement, and it seemed to me that I was dreaming while awake, since I knew that one or two manuscripts of that antiquity are sometimes enough to give fame and prestige to real libraries.

• S. Maffei, Cassiodori senatoris complexiones in Epistolas et Acta Apostolorum et Apocalypsin e vetustissimis Canonicorum Veronensiium membranis nunc primum erutae, Firenze, 1721. p. xxvii-l [27-50].

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[For a full bibliography : See my paper “The Witness of God is Greater”]

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