

Barbara K. GOLD : **Gender Fluidity and Closure in Perpetua's Prison Diary.**

Perpetua's *Passio*, a prison diary or narrative, tells the remarkable story of a young Roman Christian woman awaiting martyrdom in the arena in Carthage. This article focuses on the gender ambiguities and fluctuations in the *Passio*, both in language and in narrative structure. With a particular focus on Perpetua's fourth vision, in which she "becomes male" (*masculus*), the article explores the gendered language of the text, the implications of Perpetua's brief transformation into a male body, the different gender choices made by Perpetua and by her editor, and the role that gender plays as a structuring narratological device.

Mots-clés :

Perpetua, Vibia – *Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis* – narrative closure – narrative structure – prison diary – gender, ambiguity – gender, transgression – gender, identification – gender, transformation – martyrdom – Carthage – Christianity – martyr, Christian – visions and dreams – *masculus* – masculinizing – narratology