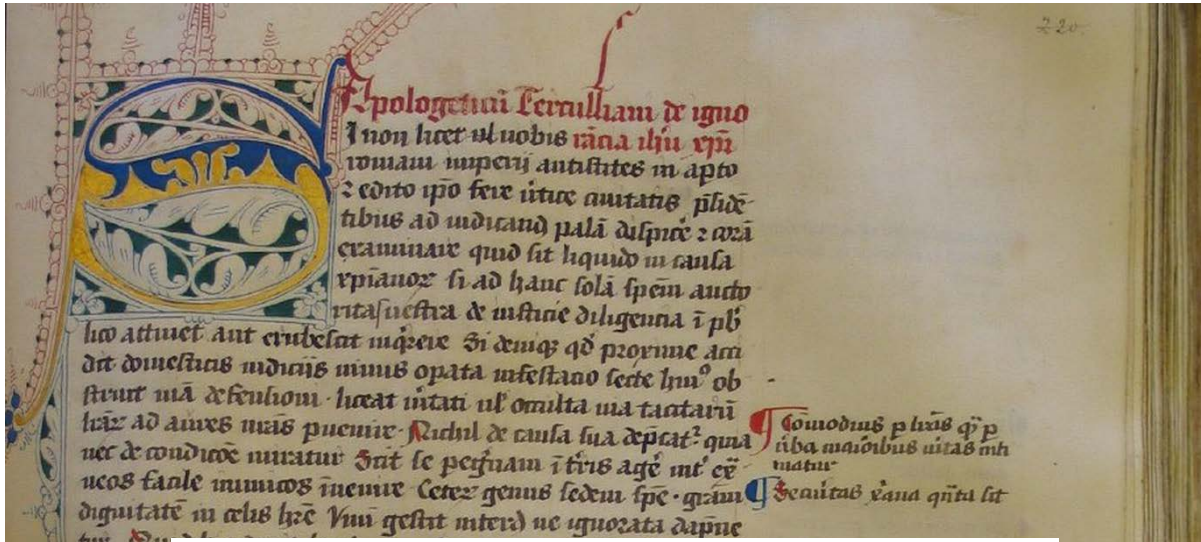


## Tertullian's *Apology*, Opening Sentences



Balliol College, [MS. 79](#). 15th c. Marginalia by William of Malmesbury.

**Si non licet** vobis, Romani imperii antistites, in aperto et edito, in ipso fere vertice civitatis praesidentibus ad iudicandum palam dispicere et coram examinare, quid sit liquido in causa Christianorum, **si** ad hanc solam speciem auctoritas vestra de iustitiae diligentia in publico aut timet aut erubescit inquirere, **si** denique, quod proxime accidit, domesticis iudiciis nimis operata infestatio sectae huius obstruit defensioni: **liceat** veritati vel occulta via tacitarum litterarum ad aures vestras pervenire.

Nihil de causa sua deprecatur, quia nec de condicione miratur.

Scit se peregrinam in terris agere, inter extraneos facile inimicos invenire, ceterum genus, sedem, spem, gratiam, dignitatem in caelis habere.

If it is not permitted to you, governors of the Roman empire, sitting in an open and exalted place almost at the very summit of the city, to judge openly and to publicly examine what is clearly going on in the case of the Christians; if in this instance alone your authority is either afraid or ashamed to make enquiry in public, concerning the diligent use of justice; if finally, as has just now happened, the enmity against this sect, having too much exercised itself in private condemnations, forms an obstacle to their defense, let the truth be permitted to reach your ears even by the secret way of silent writings.

She enters no plea for her cause, because she feels no wonder at her condition.

She knows that she lives as a stranger upon earth, that among aliens she easily finds foes; but that she has her birth, her home, her hope, her honor, and her dignity in the heavens.