

Old Swedish Legends of Saint Barbara

I

The very existence of the virgin martyr Saint Barbara, one of the "quattuor virgines capitales,"¹ is doubtful. A patroness of miners, firework makers, artillerymen, architects, founders, stonemasons, gravediggers, fortifications, magazines, and a protectress against lightning, fire, sudden death, and impenitence, she was alleged to have been killed in the early Christian persecutions.² Historically, her life and martyrdom have not been verified. However, this did not prevent the legend that grew up around her from becoming exceedingly popular. Saint Barbara's story along with accounts of miracles performed through her intercession, exempla revealing her power and glory, and the discovery and translation of her relics are recorded in Oriental (Syriac), Greek, and Latin manuscripts dating from the ninth century onwards (cf. *BHO* 132–134, *BHG* 213–218, *BHL* 913–971, and *BHL* Suppl. pp. 110–114), and in the vernacular, the legend of Saint Barbara was retold in hymns, odes, prayers, stories, and dramas.

The cult of Saint Barbara started in the East, and Barbara was the patron saint of a monastery at Edessa in the fourth century. It then spread to Egypt, to Italy, to France, and to Belgium through the transference of her relics in 985 from Rome to Ghent. The cult finally reached Scandinavia in the twelfth or thirteenth century and became particularly strong in Sweden in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The reason for the devotion to Saint Barbara in Sweden is obvi-

¹ The other three "great virgins" are Saints Catherine of Alexandria, Margaret of Antioch, and Dorothy.

² Kirsch (1907): "The emperor in whose reign the martyrdom is placed is sometimes called Maximinus and sometimes Maximianus; owing to the purely legendary character of the accounts of the martyrdom, there is no good basis for the investigations made at an earlier date in order to ascertain whether Maximinus Thrax (235–238), or Maximianus [286–305] or Maximinus Daza [308–313] (of the Diocletian persecutions), is meant" (285). Most critics, however, argue that she suffered martyrdom in 306 (Wimmer 1980: 1432). The *Greek Synaxary* and Emperor Basil's *Menology* support this opinion (Dunbar 1904: 1: 100).

ous: she was a patroness of miners, and her inclusion among the fourteen or fifteen holy helpers only served to enhance her popularity.³

The cult of Saint Barbara in Sweden has been studied in detail by Hallberg, Norberg, and Odenius (1967). This article is intended as a supplement to their study by presenting an examination of the two Old Swedish adaptations of the legend of Saint Barbara. More specifically, it seeks to determine the sources of the Old Swedish texts through an analysis of the extant Latin versions of the legend.

II

The data of Saint Barbara's *vita* and *passio* derive from a legend composed in the seventh century, perhaps of Egyptian origin (Costelloe 1967: 86). The various later versions of her legend differ in certain details, and the traditions vary as to the place of her martyrdom. The Bollandists (*Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Decembris*) acknowledge the impossibility of establishing a critical text of her *passio* ("Quod peius, de loco ubi passa sit summa est dissensio, aliis eam Nicomediae, aliis Heliopoli vel etiam in Tuscia, immo Romae collocantibus" [1940: 564]); however, its main features may be summarized as follows:

Saint Barbara was the only daughter of the nobleman Dioscorus, a pagan and much devoted to the worship of idols. To protect Saint Barbara from the attentions of importunate suitors, Dioscorus built a tower in which he locked her. Nonetheless, many nobles, who had heard of her beauty, sought her hand in marriage, although they had never seen her. Saint Barbara, however, exasperated her father by refusing the hand even of eminent princes.

Dioscorus then went away on a long journey. Before his departure, he gave instructions for the building of a magnificent bath for his daughter. One day, Saint Barbara went to view the building and no-

³ These holy helpers or auxiliary saints constitute a group of saints who enjoyed a collective cult in the Rhineland in the fourteenth and especially the fifteenth centuries. From the Rhineland area the cult spread to the rest of Germany, Hungary, and Scandinavia. The names of the saints varied from place to place, and in some areas their number was increased, but the principle of their selection seems to have been the efficacy of their intercession against various diseases, and especially at the hour of death in view of supposed revelations that their clients would thus obtain salvation. The list generally comprises Saints Acacius, Barbara, Blaise, Catherine of Alexandria, Christopher, Cyricus, Denys, Erasmus, Eustace, George, Giles, Margaret of Antioch, Pantaleon, and Vitus. For one or other of these were sometimes substituted Antony, Leonard, Nicholas, Sebastian, Roch, or, in areas of Germany and Scandinavia, Dorothy.

ticed that only two windows were being built in the southern side of the bath. In honor of the Holy Trinity, she ordered that a third window be added, promising the workmen that she would take upon herself her father's wrath at their disobedience to his orders. As she walked through the bath, she stroked the marble with her fingers; she traced the sign of the Cross on the marble as if engraved with a sharp tool. Also her footprints remained visible. In contempt, she spat on her father's idols on her way back to the tower.

Dioscorus returned from his journey and saw the third window in the bath. In answer to his questions, Saint Barbara rendered him an account of the significance of the three windows and acknowledged her faith. On hearing of her conversion to Christianity, he drew his sword in rage to kill her. A miracle saved the saint, for the wall opened and closed again after she had slipped through the crack, and she was carried up onto a mountain, where two shepherds were keeping their flocks. Dioscorus pursued his daughter and asked the two shepherds if they had seen her. The good shepherd refused to betray the fugitive, but the wicked shepherd showed her father the saint's whereabouts by pointing with his finger. The deceitful shepherd promptly received his punishment: he was turned into stone and his entire flock into locusts.

Dioscorus dragged his daughter by the hair from the mountain and shut her up in a prison, whereupon he made known her crime to the prefect of the province, Marti(ni)anus. When brought before him, she refused to sacrifice to the heathen idols. Accordingly, he sentenced Saint Barbara to be put to torture to make her recant, and he and Dioscorus supervised her flagellation. However, Saint Barbara remained firm in her faith, and during the night the Savior appeared to her, comforted her, and healed her wounds. The next day, Saint Barbara was subjected to renewed sufferings: burning torches were held to her sides, she was beaten on the head with a hammer, her breast was cut off, and she was led naked through the streets. But divine protection again guarded her against suffering, and the Lord covered her with a white garment. When the cruel torturing failed to make Saint Barbara relinquish her faith, Dioscorus himself executed his daughter on a mountain. In punishment, he was struck by lightning as he descended, and his body was consumed so that not a trace of him was left. Another Christian, Juliana, suffered the death of martyrdom with her. A certain pious man called Valentinus buried the remains of Saint Barbara, and at her tomb many miracles took place.

III

The main point of difference between the various Latin versions of the legend of Saint Barbara is the manner in which Saint Barbara's baptism takes place. Generally, they may be divided into two categories. In one, represented by *BHL* 914 (ed. Mombricitus 1910: 1, 138–140), Saint Barbara baptizes herself in “piscina aquæ” (138);⁴ the other, represented by *BHL* 916 (Jacobus de Voragine's [ca. 1230–1298] *Legenda Aurea* compiled between 1252 and 1260 [ed. Graesse 1890: 898–902]⁵) tells that Saint Barbara corresponded with Origen of Alexandria (ca. 184–252) and was baptized by Origen's messenger.⁶

In contrast to *BHL* 914, which locates the story in Heliopolis (that is, “in regione orientali quæ uocabatur Solis ciuitas”) at the time of the persecution of Christians, *BHL* 916 claims Nicomedia to be the place of Saint Barbara's martyrdom⁷ and includes no mention of the perse-

⁴ *BHL* 913 and 915 belong to this category (Gaiffier 1959: 28, n. 1).

⁵ The legend cannot be ascribed to Jacobus de Voragine, but was added to the *Legenda Aurea* by a later author or authors (in Graesse's edition, the legend is relegated to a sort of appendix [“legendæ superadditæ”]; see n. 11). The *Legenda Aurea* seems to have continually expanded to include additional lives. Cult interest is, of course, a major reason for these additions, but the specific needs of the monastic communities must also have been a primary factor. Legends were the most commonly used literature in daily communal readings, and the “original” corpus of the *Legenda Aurea* could provide only 170 at the most for this purpose. Indeed, Williams-Krapp (1986: 231) notes that an anonymous Latin *Legenda Aurea* print of around 1470 contained no fewer than 448 saints' lives. Reames (1985) draws attention to the fact that the promise in the legend of Saint Barbara that those who honor her memory will receive remission of their sins at the Judgment seems inconsistent and incompatible with Jacobus de Voragine's rather consistent purification of the old legends: “One can hardly imagine Jacobus himself promising, as the chapter on Barbara does (p. 901), that devotion to the saint will ensure the remission of all one's sins at the Judgment. Instead he insists on the necessity of penance, illustrating the greatest mercy of the Virgin and other intercessors with stories in which an unhappy malefactor is restored to life long enough to fulfill this requirement” (160). She draws attention to the fact that when Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464) set out to reform the diocese of Brixen in the Tyrol around 1450, he forbade his clergy to teach the people such “superstitiosa” as were found in the *Legenda Aurea* accounts of Saints Barbara, Blaise (*BHL* 7 *Epitomæ*), Catherine of Alexandria (*BHL* 1667), Dorothy (*BHL* 2324), and Margaret of Antioch (*BHL* 5309) (see also Schreiner 1966: 41–42). As Reames observes: “There is not much question about his meaning, for the chapters singled out as examples have one thing in common: they promise in unequivocal terms that acts of devotion to the saints in question will magically guarantee one's deliverance from certain evils, among them illnesses, poverty, and damnation itself” (50).

⁶ In *BHL* 913a, the baptism was performed by an unknown saint. *BHL* 917 and 921 identify this saint with Origen's messenger, and *BHL* 916 with Valentinus (Gaiffier 1959: 28, n. 1). For a discussion of *BHL* 920, see below.

⁷ So also the *Martyrologium Romanum* and *BHL* 915. Gaiffier (1959), attempting to explain the location of Saint Barbara's martyrdom in Nicomedia, a name which does

cutions. According to *BHL* 916, Saint Barbara pondered the difference between her parents' anthropomorphous gods and the creative power on which the existence of the earth and the sky depends. Her reason told her that the gods of her parents were created things, had had an existence like her own. That existence they owed to an uncreated being. Therefore she despised the pagan gods and longed to know the true God.⁸ A rumor came to Nicomedia that in Alexandria there lived a very wise man, Origen by name. It occurred to her that he was the very man who could teach her the truth, who could confound the pagan Gods, and considered how she might contact him. Since her father was "nobilis et valde potens," she did not reveal her secret to him, and since she had no "curator" who could speak on her behalf, she resolved to send a letter to Origen asking the questions she had contemplated concerning the true God. Origen responded: "[S]cire debes, quod unus est verus Deus in substantia et trinus in personis, scilicet pater et filius et spiritus sanctus." He entrusted a priest, Valentinus, with the letter. In Nicomedia, Saint Barbara's father was told that Valentinus was a skilled physician from Alexandria, a man who could cure souls. He was allowed to visit and converse with Saint Barbara. He instructed her in the Faith and baptized her. We hear nothing further of him.

Next follows the account of Saint Barbara's confrontation with her father about her suitors, her father's journey, the windows, and Saint

not appear until the eleventh century, proposes the following hypothesis: "Plusieurs recensions donnent à 5^{te} Barbe une compagne de matyre, Julienne; or, il existe une vinctime célèbre de la persécution de Maximien, Julienne de Nicomédie" (40-41). Concerning *Civitas Solis*, Gaiffier comments: "Le nom de *Civitas Solis*, traduisant le grec Héliopolis, laissait sans doute perplexes les hagiographes. Mais c'est seulement à l'époque moderne que Nicomédie a évincé pour le bon les autres noms de lieu" (41).

⁸ *BHL* 916: "Erat autem beata Barbara ingeniosa et a tenera aetate vanas cogitationes relinquens coepit divina cogitare. Cum enim semel templum intraret, videns simulacra parentibus suis ait: quid sibi volunt hae similitudines hominum? Respondent parentes: taceas, non hominum, sed Deorum sunt et volunt adorari per illud, quod nescitur et quod non videtur. Barbara dixit: fuerunt quondam homines, quos nunc colimus? Respondent: ita. Ex hoc beata Barbara die noctuque replicabat tacita dicens: si homines fuerunt Dii nostri, ergo nati sunt ut homines, mortui sunt ut homines; si Dii essent, nec nati fuissent nec mortui, quia deitas, ut mihi videtur, nec coepit nec desinit esse. Homo etiam habet originem terrae, quia terra est materia ejus, si ergo homo de terra est et homo Deus est, ergo aliquid praecessit eum, quod ejus origo dicitur; sic aptius dicerem terram Deum. Sed quia nec terra a se est nec coelum a se nec aër a se nec aqua a se, ex quibus quatuor elementis constat homo, sed creaturae sunt, necesse est his esse creatorem. Ecce quanta sapientia in tam juvenili puella. Tandem tradita studiis liberalibus alta transscendebat, sed defuit ei notitia veri Dei, vanos autem Deos occulte sprexit, et cum vidit Diis, scilicet lignis et lapidibus, flectere genua sensibilia insensibilibus mutis, animo valde correxit."

Barbara's flight. Unlike *BHL* 914, according to which both the treacherous shepherd and his cattle turned into a marble statue, only the shepherd turned into stone, whereas his cattle turned into locusts. (This may, however, have seemed a bit too much for the compiler; at any rate, he adds that "[h]oc apocryphum est.") The account of Saint Barbara's torture, healing, and renewed torture is virtually identical with that of *BHL* 914, except that there is no mention of the God-fearing woman, Juliana, who followed Saint Barbara when she was brought forth from the prison and who, after having observed the miracle that had been performed, resolved also to become a martyr.⁹

The conclusion of the legend differs from *BHL* 916 in a few details. According to *BHL* 914, the prefect ordered Saint Juliana to be imprisoned and Saint Barbara to be led naked through the entire region and flogged. "Respiciens uero in cælum beata Barbara martir christi ait: Qui operis cælum nubibus esto adiutor et protector meus: et protege me a facie impiorum: qui me affligunt." The prefect then commanded that Saint Barbara and Saint Juliana be beheaded. At this point, however, Dioscorus reappears in the narrative. In his fury, he again assumed control over his daughter and brought her to a mountain. "Martyr autem chrysti orabat dominum: ut coronam certaminis sui consumaret cum beata Iulliana. Et facta est illi uox dicens: Veni dilecta mea Barbara: et requiesce in regno patris mei in cælis cum Iulliana socia tua et amabili mea." Saint Barbara was subsequently executed by her father. Saint Juliana suffered a similar fate, accomplished by "Centurione in eodem loco." When Dioscorus descended from the mountain, he and the prefect were struck by lightning and extirpated so that not even their ashes were found. But a certain pious man named Valentinus obtained the saints' remains and "posuit ... in Ciuitate in habitaculo religioso," and at the grave many people were cured.

BHL 916, however, relates that when Saint Barbara was ordered to be led naked through the region, she prayed: "[D]omine Deus, qui operis coelum nubibus, adiutor et protector meus esto et tege nudatum corpus meum, ne videatur ab oculis impiorum virorum." God's angel then came and covered her body with a white garment. Seeing this, the prefect commanded that she be killed. Dioscorus took her and brought her to a mountain. Saint Barbara prayed: "[D]omine Jesu

⁹ *BHL* 914: "Quædam uero mulier domini cultrix et timens dominum. nomine Iulliana sequebatur beatissimam Barbaram et uidens mirabilia domini: quæ fiebant in ea: et plagæ eius qui sanatæ sunt: tradidit. semetipsam ad flagellandum."

Christe, cui omnia obediunt, praesta mihi hanc petitionem, ut, si quis memor fuerit nominis tui et famulae tuae faciens memoriam passionis meae, domine, ne memineris peccatorum ejus in die iudicii, sed propitius esto ei, tu enim scis, quia caro sumus.” Saint Barbara’s request was at once ratified by a voice from heaven, and she obtained from God the privilege that her worshippers would not die without having received the Eucharist: “Et facta est vox de coelo ad eam dicens: veni, pulcherrima mea, requiesce in cubilibus patris mei, qui est in coelis, quod postulasti, donatum est tibi.” She was subsequently beheaded by Dioscorus, who himself was struck by lightning as he descended the mountain. “Finita est autem sancta martir Christi Barbara cum sancta Juliana quinta die mensis Decembris imperante Maximiano et praesidente Marciano.”

Both *BHL* 914 and 916 are based ultimately on *BHL* 913, the oldest Latin version of the legend of Saint Barbara in the West,¹⁰ but it is clear that *BHL* 916 made use also of other sources.¹¹ Thus, the idea that Barbara in her tower had corresponded with Origen and might even have been converted through his intervention cannot be attributed to the compiler of *BHL* 916, but originated with the writings of a deacon named Peter (*BHL* 921).

According to *BHL* 921, the legend of Saint Barbara takes place during the reign of Maximinus Thrax.¹² To provide the narrative with a historical frame, the author reproduces a passage allegedly from Bede, which celebrates the merits of the mother of the Emperor Alexander Severus (222–235), Julia Mamaea. It is related that, curious about religious matters, this princess has Origen brought to her. The prestige of the learned Alexandrian is underscored by the phrase:

¹⁰ The text of *BHL* 913 is represented by SKB A 56 (*Breviarium Aboense*) from ca. 1500 (ed. Maliniemi 1957: 179–184).

¹¹ Concerning *BHL* 916, Gaiffier (1959) says: “Nous n’en connaissons qu’un témoin manuscrit: l’Ottonobianus 223, qui comprend la Légende dorée (fol. 1–256^v, XIV^e siècle) et une série de courtes Vies de saints (fol. 257–261, XV^e siècle, cf. *Catal. Lat. Vatic.*, p. 419). Parmi celles-ci figure en tête l’abrégé (*BHL*. 916) suivi de deux miracles (*BHL*. 971, 956). Ces trois textes furent imprimés avec d’autres *Legendae superadditae* dans de nombreux incunables de l’œuvre hagiographique de Jacques de Voragine. Ces *Legendae superadditae* ne sont pas toujours les mêmes ni imprimées dans le même ordre. Th. Graesse [1890] a reproduit en appendice de sa *Legenda aurea* la série qui se lit dans l’incunable décrit sommairement par F. A. Ebert [*Allgemeines bibliographisches Lexicon*, t. I (Leipzig, 1821) col. 872, n^o 10672^b]” (37–38). Gaiffier argues that the imprint may be identified with the edition which appeared between 1474 and 1476 in Basel. This is among the earliest editions of the *Legenda Aurea*; Seybolt (1946: 328) lists it as number six.

¹² For the discussion of *BHL* 921, I rely on Gaiffier (1959: 20–22).

“Origenes Alexandriae, immo toto orbi clarus habetur.” Peter then turns to the history of Maximinus’s persecutions, which were directed especially against the clergy and the family of Julia Mamaea “praecipue propter Origenem.” Just as Origen, responding to Julia Mamaea’s demands, offered instructions in the Faith, so Origen initiated Saint Barbara into the mysteries of the Christian faith. Moreover, in order to lend lustre to the Conversion, Peter describes first Saint Barbara’s doubts about the pagan gods, who are enumerated on the basis of a passage in Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae* (bk 8, ch. 11 [col. 314]). Saint Barbara’s letter, relatively brief, is primarily a panegyric on Origen and a criticism of the pagan gods; Origen’s letter, which is much longer, is in essence a treatise on God, the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Redemption. Finally, Peter modified the topographical data and passed over in silence many of the names; as far as Heliopolis is concerned, it has been replaced by Nicomedia. He appears not to have been the first to introduce this change (see n. 7), but is, nonetheless, anxious to be precise as to the matter of this locality: “Hoc imperante [Maximino], Marcianus presidebat Nicomedia, que civitas a Nicomede rege Bithinie et condita et vocata est.” Moreover, in order to provide details about the voyage of Saint Barbara’s envoy, he notes: “Est autem Alexandria in confinibus Aphrice et Aegi<p>ti constituta, caput regionis illius; Nicomedia vero in provincia Phenicis que est Siria ab oriente habens Arabiam, a meridie Mare rubrum. Quia ergo hee due urbes longe altrinsecus distant, dubitat Barbara nec sperat rei effectum.”

BHL 916 also derives some of its information from *BHL* 920, which forms part of a grand encomium on Saint Barbara composed in the last decades of the fourteenth century by a Flemish Augustinian monk called John of Wakkerzeel (a village north of Louvain).¹³ John of Wakkerzeel’s work comprises, according to Gaiffier (1959), a prologue (*BHL* 918), the legend proper (*BHL* 920), a description of the translation of Saint Barbara’s relics from Egypt to Rome and from Rome to Piacenza (*BHL* 926),¹⁴ an account of twenty-three miracles performed

¹³ Here and in the following I rely primarily on Gaiffier (1959), but also on Derolez (1991).

¹⁴ Cf. Derolez (1991): “The history of the relics of Saint Barbara is confusing. According to one tradition [*BHL* 922–924] her relics were brought from the East first to Constantinople, and then to Venice and Torcello. John of Wakkerzeel, on the other hand, contends that her body was transported to Rome and deposited in the Cemetery of Calixtus. On Charlemagne’s request the body was taken to Saint Sixtus’s monastery in Piacenza, but Pope Honorius I retained the head in Rome” (208). Concerning Saint

by Saint Barbara (*BHL* 932–955), and an *Informatio ex sacra scriptura de genealogia sive origine beatissime virginis ac martiris Christi sponse Barbare* (*BHL* 919); this text, a series of testimonies by Origen (*Dicta Origenis de beata Barbara*), cannot be ascribed to Wakkerzeel, however, but is the work of an anonymous author.

John of Wakkerzeel, a theologian and an important figure in his order (he was professed in 1370, twice held the position of provincial of the province of Cologne [1390, 1397], and in 1392 taught the Sentences at the University of Bologna) appears to have had several reasons for undertaking the work, the primary ones being his devotion to Saint Barbara and his desire to make available a *vita* which did not “superficialiter” treat only her *passio*, but which told also of her conversion, the translation of her relics, and her most significant miracles: “Licet enim nonnulli legendam de beatissime virgines et martyris Barbare passione superficialiter conscripserunt seu ediderunt, pauci tamen modum mire conversionis aut eius sacre translationis vel innumerabilium eius miraculorum enodationis ad spiritualem exercitationem nostre devotionis nobis in scripturis tradiderunt; quinymo huiusmodi materia, videlicet de eius conversione et translatione, in certis mundi partibus nullatenus reperiri potest.” Wakkerzeel claims to have expended great effort to obtain as many sources and as much information as possible by making inquiries and having inquiries made on his behalf in Rome and Piacenza and to have received assistance from the anonymous person who requested that he write the legend.

As for the sources for his legend of Saint Barbara, Gaiffier (1959: 15) argues that Wakkerzeel conflated the texts of *BHL* 913 and *BHL* 921

Barbara's relics, Weale (1872–1873) comments: “Nous disons Sainte Barbe *de Nicomédie*, parce qu'il est certain qu'il y eut plusieurs saintes de ce nom qui ont été confondues ensemble, de telle sorte qu'il est excessivement difficile si non impossible de distinguer entre elles et d'arriver à la vérité sur l'histoire de chacune. Le corps d'une sainte de ce nom est conservé à Kiev ... Celui d'une autre ... se trouve à Torcelli. Le corps d'une troisième Sainte Barbe dont le culte remonte à une époque fort réculée repose à Riéti ...; un autre, à Plaisance, et un autre dans l'ancienne église des Jésuites, à Venise. En 985 une partie considérable des reliques de S. Barbe fut apportée de Rome à l'abbaye de S. Bavon, à Gand. En 1150 la main gauche (*laeva exsiccata*) et une partie du bras furent transférés à l'église de S. Basile, à Bruges, et de là, en 1643 à celle des Augustins, dont le dernier survivant, Bernard de San, la présenta à l'église de S. Jacques en 1810” (11–12, n. 5). Wealès view is shared by Hallberg, Norberg, and Odenius (1967): “Uppgifterna om de viktigaste relikerna äro ... motstridiga och synes icke gå att förklara ... att det varit fråga om smärre relikdelar; snarare synes det vara fråga om relikér från flera helgon med samma namn” (190).

and reproduced virtually all the information he could find in *BHL* 921, except for Origen's long letter, of which he presents only a section: "Sed quia longum est tam multis intendere," he has Origen write, "ad narrationem unius rei redeamus." The phrase appears somewhat clumsy, for, because of this omission, Origen makes no allusion to the Incarnation and the Redemption. However, John of Wakkerzeel is not as preoccupied with abbreviating his text as he may appear at first sight, for he filled this lacuna with new episodes added to the *passio* (cf. below).

Because of the conflicting topographical data in *BHL* 913 and *BHL* 921, John of Wakkerzeel tried to find a solution or a compromise. He begins by identifying *BHL* 913's Heliopolis not with the Syrian, but with the Egyptian city of that name: "fuit in Oriente apud Egiptum dux illustris . . . qui in civitate residebat nomine Solis ad quam Ioseph cum dulcissimo puero Ihesu et matre benedicta eius gloriosissima virgine Maria propter metum Herodis regis veteri dinoscitur historiographorum confugisse testimonio. Insuper et de qua Isaie XIX legitur." He then claims that Heliopolis was founded by the Bithynian King Nicomedes: "Alioquin invenitur ipsa [civitas Solis] a Nichomede rege Bythinie fore condita etiam quia Nichomedia vocata." Later, when he recounts the Christians' military expeditions in Egypt, he again affirms the identity of the two cities (Heliopolis and Nicomedia): "Christicola dicta turma ad urbem nomine Solis seu Nichomedia pervenit." The deacon Peter had remarked that Saint Barbara's envoy had to make a long journey from Nicomedia to Alexandria; John of Wakkerzeel retains the remark, but without omitting or modifying the statement that his Nicomedia (= Heliopolis of Egypt) is not very far from Alexandria. "Et quia hee due urbes, Alexandria videlicet et Nicomedia, altrinsecus longe distant, dubitat perspicuosissima virgo Barbara . . . nuncium . . . debitum sortiri effectum."

John of Wakkerzeel appears also to have used sources other than *BHL* 913 and 921, although his references are vague: "Prefatus insuper venerabilis doctor plura de sancta Barbara iam dictis [*BHL* 921] superaddidit que in urbe sancta litteratorie eidem viro insinuavit se veridice vidisse et legisse in diversis et antiquis valde repperisse scripturis." However, in the account of Saint Barbara's parents, he gives the following information: "Dux iste [Dioscorus] itaque nobilissimam sibi genere duxerat uxorem, antiqua quadam narrante historia, de radice Yesse, que nobis ad salutem Dei et hominis Genitricem dignissime fructificavit, procreatam et coronam cuiusdam regni a progenie in

progenies ei exinde successam possidentem.”¹⁵ Moreover, he gives Saint Barbara’s mother the title of queen and claims that she died when her daughter was very young: “regina pia matre eius defuncta.” Gaiffier (1959: 24–30) argues that this work, the “antiqua historia,” which traces Saint Barbara’s maternal lineage to David’s father, may be the *Liber de amore Christi ad virginem matrem* attributed to Origen and referred to in his *Informatio* (BHL 919), which contains extracts from this work. This text, the so-called *Dicta Origenis*, has a peculiarly scholastic style and is believed to have been composed toward the end of the Middle Ages. About Origen’s *Liber de amore Christi ad virginem matrem* Gaiffier wonders: “A moins que cet extraordinaire *Liber de amore Christi*, dont on ne réussit à découvrir nulle part une seule copie, n’ait existé que dans l’imagination d’un compilateur du XV^e siècle” (30). Indeed, the *Dicta Origenis* are found in only three manuscripts: two manuscripts from the Benedictine abbey of Saint Trond in Belgium dating from the first half of the sixteenth century (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale 21003 and 21004) and a manuscript from the Beguinage of Herentals in Belgium dating from the 1470s (Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Marston 287).¹⁶ Gaiffier (1959: 28) notes that the various pieces of information about Saint Barbara in the two first-mentioned manuscripts coincide with those of the *Informatio*.¹⁷ Among this information is the statement that

¹⁵ See also Villemot (1864: 20–21).

¹⁶ Marston 287 has been discussed by Derolez (1991). He notes that to John of Wakkerzeel’s corpus of texts, the compiler Nicasius de Pomerio, a priest and chaplain of the Altar of the Holy Ghost in the Beguinage of Herentals, a small city in Belgium, east of Antwerp, has added a series of Latin hymns, anthems, verses, and collects in honor of Saint Barbara. He also added two more extensive texts: a genealogy of Saint Barbara (an expansion of the *Informatio*) and a second legend of Saint Barbara. Derolez points out that “[t]his Life is different from the Wakkerzeel version, insofar as here Origen has no role at all in Barbara’s conversion (which is in accordance with the Genealogy, where she is said to have been superior in scholarship to the Greek Church Father), and as there is no mention here of Barbara having been visited by the Child Jesus or by Saint John the Baptist. On the other hand the text, which is said to have been transmitted by reliable persons ‘ex partibus Napulie [!],’ does not mention the country where Barbara lived and was put to death (this contrasts with Wakkerzeel, who states that Barbara lived in Heliopolis, also called Nicomedia, a city in Egypt), but it says that in beauty she did not have her equal in ‘Apulia, Naples, Sicily or Rome,’ which suggests that the anonymous author situates the story in Italy” (204). On the final pages of the manuscript is a long list of gifts bequeathed by God to Barbara as well as a scholarly homily on the Annunciation.

¹⁷ Gaiffier (1959: 27) gives the *incipit* of this text: “Origenes in multis libris scribit multa mirabilia de progenie et vita beatissime regine Barbare. Specialiter namque edidit unum librum qui nuncupatur: *Liber de dilectione et amore*. Hunc enim librum edidit de beatissima et supergloriosissima virgine Dei genitrice Maria, qua scilicet di-

Saint Barbara belonged to the family of Jesse. Moreover, it is specified that Christ revealed himself to her in her tower in the form of a young child and that Saint Barbara was baptized by John the Baptist. It is precisely on these points that John of Wakkerzeel abandons the text of *BHL* 921 and presents the facts in virtually the same manner as pseudo-Origen. John of Wakkerzeel begins by relating the visit of an angel: "Declaravit utique ei angelus universa fidem orthodoxam concernentia, ut prius efficacissime ex prehabitis Origenis legationibus fuerat edocta. Et super hec omnia, narrante ei angelo, de incarnatione Christi." It thus becomes clear why he omitted the part of Origen's letter that dealt with the Incarnation; he foresaw that she would be instructed by a celestial messenger. In the course of these instructions, "apparuit ei [Barbarae] illico Dominus in similitudinem pulcherrimi pueri in quo, magis quam exprimere sufficit, delectabatur." The angel then reveals to her the torments suffered by the Savior, and the Child Jesus changes appearance: "Mutatus est puer quasi totus passus et sanguinolentus." In this way Saint Barbara is initiated into the mystery of the Redemption. The miraculous intervention of John the Baptist corresponds with that related in the *Informatio*, except that John of Wakkerzeel lists examples of similar occurrences in the legends of Saints Agatha, Martin, Nicholas, and Augustine, whereas the compiler of the *Dicta* draws parallels from the Old Testament.¹⁸

lectione dilexit filium suum Iesum Christum, et de eius virginitate, etiam de eius excellenti gratia. In libro quoque prefato scripsit multa de virgine Barbara." Derolez (1991) notes that "[t]he Beinecke manuscript [Marston 287] stands apart in having the following title for this text: 'Incipit brevilocus epilogus de progenie, vita, passione et prerogativa excellentissime <et> gloriosissime virginis et martiris Christi Barbare.' Its text is otherwise close to the one in the Brussels manuscripts, but it offers some remarkable variant readings. One is that an ancestor of Barbara is called *rex de Bohemia* in the Beinecke manuscript, while the Brussels MS 21003 reads *rex de Babilonia*" (213, n. 15).

¹⁸ Cf. Gaiffier (1959): "C'est, pensons-nous, à la suite d'une série de manipulations d'une phrase de la traduction latine de la Passion *BHG* 213 que l'idée du baptême de S^{te} Barbe a pu germer dans le cerveau d'un hagiographe. La Passion *BHG* 213 célébrait les eaux du Jourdain où le Christ avait reçu le baptême des mains de Jean-Baptiste, qui ne se nourrissait que de miel et de sauterelles . . . S'empêtrant dans ce passage, le traducteur écrit: *In quo enim lavacro sancta eius (Barbarae) vertex suscepit sanctum baptismum locuste melle alito et preconem ac precursorem seu baptistam Iohannem (BHL. 913). C'est Barbe qui reçoit le baptême et non le Christ; le rôle de S. Jean reste inexplicable*" (29, n. 3).

IV

The older of the two Old Swedish versions of the legend of Saint Barbara is found in SKB A 110 (*Codex Oxenstiernianus*) from Vadstena. It consists of 300 leaves and is not a single book as such, but rather a collection of six manuscripts. The Swedish *Sermo angelicus*, a collection of miracles, and a translation of the Acts of the Apostles form a unit, the oldest, from 1385. The second book is incomplete and somewhat younger; it contains a translation of the *Vitae Patrum* and a life of Saint Bridget. The legend of Saint Barbara is found along with the Gospel of Nicodemus, a section of Saint Bridget's revelations, and a number of other saints' lives in the third book, written in a hand no later than the beginning of the fifteenth century (ed. Klemming 1877–1878: 307–314).¹⁹ The text of the legend is as follows:²⁰

J dyocleciani ok maximiani daghom. var swa stoort haat ofwer cristna män. at i enom manadhe pintos sywttan thusand. J them dagom var en man som heet dyaskorus riker härtogethe. sitiande i enom stadh som het solampne. i egyptolande. Til hwilken stadh iosep flydhe mz ihesu christo ok hans modher. tha herodes drap meenlöso barnen. Thänne dyaskorus var hedhninge. ok dyrkadhe afgudh. Han hafdhe dottor som heet barbara. fämtan aara gambla. Dyaskorus lät byggia höght torn. at lykkia hona ther inne i. at hon skulde ey skodhas af mannom for hänna stora fåghrind. Tha marghe rike grefwa beddos hona til hionalagh. sagdhe hon sik aldreghe vilia taka man. vtan vilia halda iomfrudom. än tho at hon var hedhen. Ok ther af dröfdhes hänna fadher. En dagh foor han bort. ok hon var i palacio a sino torne. Hon skodhadhe stiärnor ok hymiltungel. ok vndradhe ther vppa Thy at hon viste ey thera skapara. Tha tedhes gudz ängel hänne. ok bewiste hänne ok sagdhe, at gudh skop al thing. ok huru gudz son took mandom af iomfru marie. ok frälste os mz sinom dödh. ok sagdhe Troo stadhelika a christum. Thy at thik tilbör at thola mykit for hans namn skuld. Sidhan kom valencijs präster ok döpte hona. Sidhan thänkte hon vppa korsens tekn. som presten hafdhe signat hona mädher. Ok gik i torneno ok skreff mz höghra thumulfingrenom vppa stenstolpa. ok the blotnadho swa som veeght wax. ok ther syntos kors märke äpter. En dagh vpgik hon i tornet. at bidhia til gudh. ok saa

¹⁹ See Carlquist (1996: 29).

²⁰ Hallberg, Norberg, and Odenius (1967) draw attention to the fact that "[e]n latinsk version av texten i Codex Oxenstierna föreligger i Cod. Ups. C 1 (tidigare under signum I 6^o 6¹⁵ tillhörig Vadstena kloster), nedskrivnen under 1300-talets senare del (f. 181v–183r *Rubr. Barbare virginis. Inc. Tempore maximiani et diocleciani imperatorum fuit apud egiptum dux quidam illustris*). Även denna avslutas med miraklet om den halshuggna köpmannen" (89).

sins faders afgudh. af guld ok silff. thöm sloo hon al sönder. Hon gik til gärninges männena som tornet bygdo. ok bödh them göra thry vindöghon. ther hænna fadher hafde bidhit göra äkke vtan tu. Tha faderen kom ater heem. wardh han wredher gärninges mannomen ok spordhe hwi giordho thry vindöghon. The skyldadho hans dotter som thz hafde waldet. Sidhan saa han siin afgudh sönderbrutin. Han gik til sinna dotter, og sagde mz fulle gäld ok wredhe. Hwi kalladhe thu ater mit budh vm vindöghonen. Älla hwi äru mine gudha sönder slaghne, Barbara sagde. Fadher. ok son. ok then hälghe ande. är sander gudh. som lyuser alle wärldenne. ok än tho at han är thräfalder i personis. Tho är han en i gudhdomsens walde. Ok thy bör ey vara tw vindöghon. vtan thry. at al thing skulu tilföghias sino vpyrilse. Thina gudha bröt iak. for thy at the ärw döfwe, ok dumba. som paulus afwiter romara, at the skipto gudz äro. som odödheliken är. j dödhelika manna liknelse. ok foghla, ok dywra, ok orma liknelse. Faderen vndradhe ther vppa. ok wilde dräpa hona, mz vtdraghno swärdhe. Tha bögdhe sik tornet nidher. ok satte iomfruna lätluka a iordhena. ok hon flydhe til et biärgh. ok gömde sik i enne skrubbo. fadher hænna lop äpter, ok drogh hona fram mz harenö. ok flängde hona hardhelika. swa at blodhet flöt a iordhena. ok lagde hona sidhan i mörkostwfo. Ther tedhes gudz ängel hænne ok sagde. Rädz ey. thy at gudh är mz thik. Annan daghen äpter. drogh han hona fore marcianum höfdhingha. som thit var sänder af kesaranom. ok manadhe han storlika at dräpa sina dotter mz hardhom dödh. Marcianus vndradhe a hænna fäghrind. ok sattes a domstol ok sagde. Troo thu a aldzwaldogha gudha. Barbara swaradhe. Mädhän mannen är ärlikast ofwer al creatwr. ok al likamlik thing äru giordh fore människionna skuld. tho är omögheliket at människian vmwändes i sin skapara. Hwi skal tha skapadh thing hedhras fram fore skaparan. Hwi skalt thu thiin afgudh likna vidher gudh. thär al thing skop. Thina gudha äru blinde ok döfwe Thy at paulus sigher. at en gudh är aldra thinga skapare. Sidhan mz vplyptom handom ok öghom til hymelen. sagde hon. Herra ihesu christe. lät mik ey skilias af thinna hälghe manna kompankap. Thy at iak andwardha mik i thina händer. Marcianus wredher bödh hona föra af klädhom. ok rifwa hænna köt mz iärnkrokom. swa at änkte blifwe quart a benomen. vtan sinor. Ok lät sidhan thörka hænna saar mz haarklädhe. swa at marghe närstandande gräto. Sidhan leddes hon ater i mörkostufwna. Ther tedhes christus ihesu hænne. mz storo lyuse. ok han tok vppa hænne. ok alt hænna köt heltes genstan. Tha sagde helaren christus. Barbara var stark. thy at stoor glädhi är i hymerike. ok iordhrike af thinne pino. Rädz ey höfdhingans hötzlo. Thy at iak är mz thik. ok skal värna thik. Vm morghonen leddes hon til höfdhingan. ok tha han saa hona alla hela vara. sagde han. See huru ware gudha hiälpa thik. Thy at the helto thiin saar. Barbara swaradhe. Thu vsal ok vtan vnderstandilse. Huru

skuldo thine gudha hela mik. som sik siälfwom kunno ey hiälpa. Mik läkte min herra gudh ihesus christus som thu äkke seer. Ok äkke kant thu begripa hans troo lönlük thing Thy at thit hiärta är blint af dyäflenom. Tha bödh han at kötmangara mz gislom som heta skor-piones skuldo flängia hona. Ok sätia til hænna sidho brännande lampo. Sidhan lät han slaa hænna hofwdh mz hambrom at hiarnen vtlöt af näsom ok örom. Tha sagdhe hon mz vplyptom handom til hymilen. Christe. thu som vest at iak for thin kärlek thol thässa pinor. lät mik ey skilias fran thik. Tha bödh marcianus sargha hona ofwer alla kropsens limi. ok afskära hænna spinna. ok genstan fulkompnadhe hænna fadher domarans budh. Hon tholde mz alle späkt, ok siäflükhet. ok mz vplyptom handom til hymelen sagdhe hon. Herra gudh bortkasta mik äkke fran thino änlite. ok tak ey bort af mik thin hälgha anda. Sidhan vände hon sik til domaran. ok sagdhe gladhlika. O grymber domare. Thätta är mik äkke til fordömelse. vtan til äwärdheliken aterlön. Tha bödh marcianus dragha hona nakna kring vm stadhen. ok flängias vppa allom gatom. Ok tha hon swa droghs. badh hon thässaledhes. Herra ihesu christe som hyl hymelen mz skymen. hyl min nakna krop. Tha tedhes hænne ängelen ok holde hona mz hwito klädhe. swa at hon syntes ey vm thre tima. Sidhan leddes hon ater til marcianum. that han kunne äkke meer göra hænne til pino. bödh han halshugga hona. Tha grep hænna fadher hona, ok kastadhe reep vm hænna hals, ok ledde vt af stadhenom vppa pinonna biärgh. Hon badh mz tarom gratande ok sagdhe. Herra ihesu christe hör mina böön. at hwar thän som minnes vppa mina pino. at han skuli ey dröfwat i dödzens tima. vtan mz skriptamalom. ok gudz likama, ledhas til äwärdhelika äro. Tha tedhes christus hænne sighiande. Kom miin vtwalda. Thy at iak girnas thinna siäl fäghrind. Alt hymerikis härskap vänter thik. ok astundar at thu skuli koma. Ok thz som thu beddes. är thik gifwit. Tha stodh hænna fadher mz store gäld. ok hiog hænna hofwdh af i eno hugge. Ok än för än han nidherkom af biärgheno. Tha kom bradher lyughnelder ok sloo han til dödh. swa at näprika hittes askan ater af hanom. Vm sama dagh ok i sama stadh pintes ivliana. Valencius präster som döpt hafdhe sanctam barbam. gik til marcianum. ok beddes thera kroppa. ok iordhadhe them. i ödhyukom. ok laaghom stadh.

The legend of Saint Barbara in SKB A 110 appears to be based on a version closely related to the *BHL* 916 type. Details that point to *BHL* 916 as the source include the statement that Saint Barbara was baptized by the priest Valentinus ("Sidhan kom valencius präster ok döpte hona"), and the fact that Juliana, who shared Saint Barbara's destiny, is not mentioned until the end of the legend ("Vm sama dagh ok i sama stadh pintes ivliana"). Saint Barbara's final prayer is also considerably

closer to *BHL* 916 than *BHL* 914 in that it attributes to the intervention of Saint Barbara a much more precise efficacy:

SKB A 110: Hon badh mz tarom gratande ok sagdhe. Herra ihesu christe hör mina böön. at hwar thän som minnes vppa mina pino. at han skuli ey dröfwas i dödzens tima. vtan mz skriptamalom. ok gudz likama, ledhas til äwärdhelika äro. Tha tedhes christus hänne sighiande. Kom miin vtwalda. Thy at iak girnas thinna siäl fåghrind. Alt hymerikis härskap vänter thik. ok astundar at thu skuli koma. Ok thz som thu beddes. är thik gifwit.

BHL 916: ... orabat ad dominum dicens: domine Jesu Christe, cui omnia obediunt, praesta mihi hanc petitionem, ut, si quis memor fuerit nominis tui et famulae tuae faciens memoriam passionis meae, domine, ne memineris peccatorum ejus in die iudicii, sed propitius esto ei, tu enim scis, quia caro sumus. Et facta est vox de coelo ad eam dicens: veni, pulcherrima mea, requiesce in cubilibus patris mei, qui est in coelis, quod postulasti, donatum est tibi.

BHL 914: Martyr autem chrysti orabat dominum: ut coronam certaminis sui consumaret cum beata Iulliana. Et facta est illi uox dicens: Veni dilecta mea Barbara: et requiesce in regno patris mei in caelis cum Iulliana socia tua et amabili mea.

Finally, SKB A 110, like *BHL* 916, relates that after being stripped of her clothes and ordered to be led naked through the city an angel covered Saint Barbara with a white garment (“Tha tedhes hänne ängelen ok holde hona mz hwito klädhe. swa at hon syntes ey vm thre tima”); *BHL* 914 includes no mention of an angel.

On the other hand, there are also certain details that point to *BHL* 914. Contrary to *BHL* 916, in which the story is located in Nicomedia, SKB A 110, like *BHL* 914 locates it in Heliopolis (“I enom stadh som het solampne”) at the time of the persecution of Christians (“J dyocleciani ok maximiani daghom. var swa stoort haat ofwer cristna män. at i enom manadhe pintos sywttan thusand”). Moreover, as in *BHL* 914, there is no mention of Saint Barbara’s correspondence with Origen, and, as in *BHL* 914, it is stated at the end of the legend that Valentinus buried Saint Barbara’s and Saint Juliana’s bodies (“Valencius präster som döpt hafdhe sanctam barbaram. gik til marcianum. ok beddes thera kroppa. ok iordhadhe them. i ödmyukom. ok laaghom stadh”).

These divergences in SKB A 110 from *BHL* 916 point to a version of

the legend representing an earlier stage in the development of the legend, that is, a precursor to *BHL* 916. As noted above, *BHL* 916, like *BHL* 914, is based ultimately on *BHL* 913, but incorporates information from *BHL* 921 and *BHL* 920. The location of the story in Heliopolis ("solampne") excludes *BHL* 921, which situates it in Nicomedia, as the source of SKB A 110, but makes *BHL* 920 a likely candidate. *BHL* 920's candidacy is further strengthened by the fact that in SKB A 110 Heliopolis is situated in Egypt ("i enom stadh som het solampne. i egyptolande"), to which city Joseph fled with the Child Jesus and the Virgin Mary during Herod's massacre of the innocents ("Til hwilken stadh iosep flydhe mz ihesu christo ok hans modher. that herodes drap meenlöso barnen"). Further details in SKB A 110 that have parallels only in *BHL* 920 include the statements that Barbara was fifteen years old ("fämtan aara gambla") and that in the tower she was visited by an angel: "Tha tedhes gudz ängel hänne. ok bewiste hänne ok sagdhe, at gudh skop al thing. ok huru gudz son took mandom af iomfru marie. ok frälste os mz sinom dödh. ok sagdhe Troo stadhelika a christum. Thy at thik tilbör at thola mykit for hans nampn skuld." Similarly, the information in SKB A 110 that after having fled from her father Saint Barbara "gömde sik i enne skrubbo" appears only in *BHL* 920 ("in montemque transiens cavernosum"), as does the statement that when Saint Barbara with her thumb traced the sign of the cross on the stone pillars of the tower, the stones "blotnadho swa som veeght wax" (308).²¹ The end of the legend in SKB A 110 also shows an affinity with John of Wakkerzeel's grand encomium in that it presents an account of the miracles that took place at Saint Barbara's grave as well as the removal of Saint Barbara's body by heathens to a temple, and the discovery by Christians of her relics and their transportation to Rome.²² Finally, it should be noted that appended to the legend in

²¹ *BHL* 920: "In columnis marmoreis quasi in molli cera dextero pollice vivifice crucis impressit signa ut intuentium mentes incitarentur."

²² "J them stadh tedhe gudh margh iärtekne. Thz sagho hedhninga. ther i sama stadhenom bygdo. The lagdho sancta barbara likama i dyra ark älla skriin. ok hängdo vp i therä mönster mz fira guldlänkar. Framledhes langan tima ther äpter. Tha cristne män bilagdo thän sama stadhen. ok forwnno hedhningana mz gudz hiälp. ok drapo margha af them. Tha komo the til mönstret, ther sancta barbara hwiltes. ok thänkto ther faa rika hafwor. Alle the cristne män som sare varo. Swa braat the komo gynom kirkiodörena. Wordho the hele. ok visto tho ey hwi. Thätta spordhes. ok alle lupu thiit. ok thakkadho ihesu christo. The gingo kring vm kirkiona. ok funno ena ark mz guldlänkiom hängiande. ok kring vm hona lampor. ok en hedhen prester var ther näär. The spordho han hwat thz var. Han swaradhe. Een iomfru het barbara. Hännä likame ligger här iordhadher. Tha han hafdhe saght them hännä pinor. Tha lagdhe han til. J thässo lande räghne siäldon. älla ok aldregh i thorfteikom tima. Vtan tha vi thorfwom

SKB A 110 is a miracle (*BHL* 914 about a decapitated merchant witnessed by three Cistercian abbots), which is included also in John of Wakkerzeel's work.²³

In comparison with *BHL* 920 the legend in SKB A 110 is, however, much abridged, and many details have been omitted. Thus, the information about Saint Barbara's distinguished lineage is not included, and the account of the miraculous transformation of the wicked shepherd into a marble statue and his cattle into locusts has been left out. The account of Saint Barbara's baptism also appears to have been abbreviated. Omitting any reference to Saint Barbara's correspondence with Origen, SKB A 110 begins by relating the visit of an angel. The subsequent visitation of the Savior in the form of a young child is not mentioned, nor is the baptism of Saint Barbara by John the Baptist. Instead, the baptism of Saint Barbara is performed by the priest "valencius," who suddenly and without any introduction appears in the tower—and in the narrative.

On one more point, SKB A 110 differs from *BHL* 920, which relates that when Dioscorus drew his sword to kill Saint Barbara the wall opened and closed again after she had slipped through the crack: "Mox igitur pater furore repletus gladium arripuit ut filiam tam sibi dilectam transfigeret. Ipsa vero non mori Christo rennuens, sed genitori compatiens oravit ad Dominum, et mira Dei gestina clementia; statim abscisus est marmor eam intus suscipiens." According to SKB A 110, the tower bent down, enabling her to flee: "Tha bögdhe sik tornet nidher. ok satte iomfruna lättlika a iordhena. ok hon flydhe til et biärgh." That this is not an invention on the part of the SKB A 110 compiler is evident from the fact that the same detail appears also in the Danish prayer to Saint Barbara in *Visdoms Spejl* (ed. Nielsen 1946–

räghn. tha takom vi arkena ok kastom i flodhena som här löper fram vm stadhen. ok genstan i eno öghnablike. stadhnar aan i hænna gagn. ok vaxer swa stoor. at hon väter alt landet äpter warom vilia. swa at i rättom aanna gang. ma man gaa mz thörrom fotom. alt ther til arken föres bort af aanne. Sidhan flyter vatnet i sin rätta stadh. Tha cristne män hördho thätta. lofwadho the gudh mz store glädhi. Sidhan baaro the dödha cristna manna likama thitit til hænna graf. ok the vprestos til liif. Tha gräto cristnemän for glädhi skuld. ok fiollo a knä ok thakkadho gudhi. ok toko hænna likama mz alle wirdhning, ok hedher ok fördho til room mz storom hedher."

²³ Hallberg, Norberg, and Odenius (1967) note that "[e]n latinsk version av detta mirakel återfinnes i kapitlet De extrema unccione av en inom birgittinmiljö tillkommen sakramentsutläggning från 1400-talets början, De septem sacramentis. Enligt Carl-Gustaf Andrén, som nyligen utgivit denna ur flera synpunkter viktiga skrift, förhåller den sig mycket självständig till den av Robert Geete ederade fornsvenska utläggningen um 'siw sacramenta', som eljest utgör den fornsvenska bearbetningen av den latinska texten. I 'siw sacramenta' saknas också miraklet om den halshuggne köpmannen" (87).

1963: 3, no. 535; "men tornyth bøyde sygh neder thil iorden med teg, oc thw gick vth at vindwet oc flyde for tyn fader vdy ørkenet och skwlde teck ther" [186]) and in tempera on wood from ca. 1470 by an unknown artist (see Kirnbauer 1952: 26, fig.).²⁴

While it is possible that the compiler of SKB A 110 conflated two or more versions of the legend of Saint Barbara, it is unlikely. John of Wakkerzeel's encomium was popular and is found in a number of manuscripts and imprints from the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. Gaiffier (1959: 9–11) lists no fewer than eighteen.²⁵ It was translated and published in French, German, Dutch, and Czech, and by the end of the fifteenth century, there were three editions of the French version, three of the Low German, and two of the Dutch. Moreover, John of Wakkerzeel's work found its way into two imprints (a German and a Dutch) of the *Legenda Aurea*. Given its popularity and distribution, it is probable that variant versions came into existence. Indeed, Derolez (1991) notes that in the Marston 287 manuscript, there is no mention of Origen in connection with Saint Barbara's conversion, nor is there any mention of Saint Barbara having been visited by the Child Jesus or by John the Baptist (see n. 16). While the divergences in SKB A 110 from *BHL* 920 cannot be ignored, they do not significantly exclude *BHL* 920 as the source of the Old Swedish legend.

V

The other version of the legend appears in *Siælinna thrøst* from around 1420, which survives in a Vadstena manuscript, SKB A 108, from ca. 1430–1450 (ed. Henning 1954: 196–199).²⁶ The work is a translation of a Low German adaptation of the *Legenda Aurea*, *Der*

²⁴ Accordingly, the detail about the tower bending down for Saint Barbara would seem to have appeared in versions of her legend circulating in Germany and Scandinavia. Indeed, Heilfurth (1956–1957) cites the episode "[n]ach einem Legendar aus dem späten 15. Jh., vgl.: Der Heiligen Leben und Leiden anders genannt das Passional. Leipzig 1913, Bd. I, S. 188" (6, n. 8).

²⁵ Derolez (1991: 202) draws attention to the fact that while the first four parts of John of Wakkerzeel's work (*BHL* 918, 920, 926, 932–955) occur in a series of manuscripts and in a fifteenth-century printed edition, the *Dicta Origenis* are known only through three manuscripts (cf. above).

²⁶ See Carlquist (1996: 28). The work had previously been edited by Klemming (1871–1873). A modern Swedish edition of the legend of Saint Barbara is found in Fogelkrou *et al.* (1917: 1, 41–44).

große Seelentrost (ed. Schmitt 1959), from the mid-fourteenth century, but augmented with material drawn from the Vulgate, Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, and a number of Swedish works. It consists in the main of an exposition of the Ten Commandments, which are explained through various biblical and profane legends, miracles, and the like. The legend of Saint Barbara is found in the exposition of the Fourth Commandment, where it is stated that "[s]wa finder man oc scrifwat aff sancta barbara / hon wilde oc ey lydha sinom forældrum / j them thingom som mote gudhy war."²⁷ Its text is as follows:

I Maximiani keysara daghum / war een man j nichomedia mæktogher och riker heeth dioscorus / Han war een hedhninge oc dyrkadhe afgudh / Han hafdhe ena dotter dyghdhelika oc ærlika xv ara gambla ok kalladhis barbara / Hænna fadher læt gøra eeth høgt torn oc lykte hona ther inne at hon skulde ey aff mannom sees for hænna wænlek skuld oc fæghrind / Mange store herra beddos hona til hustru / Hon war ey æn døpt / tho throdhe hon oppa wan herra ihesum christum / Hænna fadher foor lankt borth j landit sit ærande Oc mædhan wardh barbara hema j sino torne døpt / Hon gig ther æpter j torneno oc screff korsins tekn j stenstopla mz sinom finger / oc stenane blotnadho som annat wax / oc korsins mærke synis ther æn j dagh / Hon slo sins faders afgudh giordh aff gul oc sølfwer all sunder / j stykke som j torneno waro nær henne Nokot ther æpter kom henna fadher heem / oc wardh thes til radha at han wilde sina dotter manne gifwa / Han gig een dagh j tornit oc berætte henne sin wilia / Sancta barbara saa oppa sin fadher oc saghdhe Ffadher nødh mik ther ekki til at taka man mote minom wilia / Thu skalt thz wita at iak engin annan man wil hafwa æn ihesum christum min kæra herra / Hwilkin min siel hafwer sik vthwalt til een brudhgomma / Tha fadhrin hørdhe at hon war cristin oc sagh sina gudha sunder slaghna wardh han wredher oc galin / rykte sith swærdh och wilde hona dræpa / En aff gudz dygdh vntkom hon tha sins faders gæld / hon kom til eeth bærg / oc gømde sik j ene skrubbo Fadhrin lop æpte oc fan twa herdha som waktadho fææ a sama bærgeno / Han spordhe them ath om the hafdho ther nokra iomfru seeth / Then ene hyrdhen saghdhe ney oc wilde hona ey beropa / æn then andre teknadhe mz sinom finger oc wiste hwar hon sik gømde / Ffadhrin kom thith oc rykte hona fram mz hareno / Oc flængde hona rædhelika swa at hænna blodh fløt nidher a iordhena / oc drogh hona ater mz sik hem / Tha hon saa hyrdhan som hona hafdhe oppenbarat bannadhe hon honom / oc han

²⁷ A translation from the original of the Swedish *Siælinna thrøst* into Danish (*Siæla trøst*) survives in the fragments UUB C 529 and SKB A 109, both from around 1425 (ed. Nielsen 1937–1952). The two fragments do not cover the legend of Saint Barbara.

vmskiptis genstan j een sten // oc all hans faar wordho locuste / Ffadhryn læste hona inne j enom thrangom kamara / Oc annan daghin æpter gig han til rættaren ok kærde ofwer sina dotter at hon war wordhin cristin / Oc gig swa ater oc drogh hona siælfwer for domin oc antwardhadhe hona marciano høfdhinga som keyserin hafde thit sænt / Och beswor han om sina almektogha gudha at han skulle hona mz hardhasta pynom fordarfwa / Thentidh domaren saa henna fæghrind saghdhe han til henna Barbara spar thik siælfwa oc offra warum gudhum eller skal thu antwardhas grymasta pynom Sancta barbara swaradhe / Jak skal offra minom herra ihesu christo som skapat hafwir hymil oc iordh hafwit oc alt thz j them ær Aff thynom diæfwlslikom afgudhum sigher prophetin / The hafwa mun oc tala enkte / Øghon oc see enkte / øron oc høra enkte / hænder oc hanne enkte / fføter oc kunno ey gaa / oc ey ær ande j thera mun / The som them göra skulu wardha them like / oc alle the oppa them thro / Tha vpfyltis domaren mz mykle wredhe Oc bødth hona affklædha oc sla henna lykama mz thyura sinom / Oc gnidha hænnasaar mz hwasso harklædhe / Henna lykame slogx oc vpfyltis aller mz blodhoghum saarum / Epter thessa pyno bødth domarin hona inne lykka j mørkastowone / mædhan han wilde sik bethænka mz hwat pynom han skulde hona fordarwa / Oc sama nattena om mitnatz tyma tedhis war herra henne mz osigheliko skini sighiandis Barbara / war stark oc trøstelikin stoor glædhy skal wardha j hymerike / Oc iordhrike aff thinne pyno Rædz ikke høfdhingans through oc wredhe Jak ær mz thik Oc iak skal taka thik aff alla the pynor oppa thik læggias / Oc genstan war hon heel oc heelbryghdho / oc all henna saar waro lækt at ey syntis nokot til thera / waar herra wælsighnadhe hona oc foor til hymerikis / Oc sancta barbara bleff ater j storum hughnadh oc glædhy / Vm morghonen arla bødth domaren lata hona for sik koma / Tha saa han at all henna saar waro heladh / Oc enkte mark syntis æpter alla the pyno hon hafde tholt / Tha bødth han hona vphængia j een nodhstal / Oc brænna hænnasidhor mz brænnande lampom / Oc bødth sla henna hofwdh mz hambrom swa at blodhin vthfløth at næsom oc ørom / Tha saa sancta barbara vp til hymilin oc saghdhe Herra ihesu christe som weezet oc seer all hiærtas / thu wezt at iak for thin kærlek thol thessa pynor / fforlat // mik ikke / oc ofwer giff mik ey j these stridh / Tha bødth domaren aff skæra hænnaspinna Tha thz war giorth saghdhe hon Herra ihesu christe / bortkasta mik ey aff thino ænlite / Oc tagh ey aff mik thin hælgha anda / Ther æpter bødth domarin ledha hona nakna vm allan stadhin / Oc flængia hona a hwario gatu / Thentidh hon swa leddis vplypte hon sin øghon til hymilin oc saghdhe / Herra gud alzwalogher min wernare oc hielpare / Thu ther hymblana hyl mz skymen / hyl min nakna lykama for thin godhlek / Oc genstan kom gudz ængil oc ferdhe hona j eeth sniohwit klædhe / oc helte aal henna saar / Ther æpter wardh hon ater ferdh

for domarin / Thentidh han saa at hon war karsk oc helbrygdha / oc all henna saar waro lækt / wardh han grymber oc wredher oc bødth hænnæ hofwdh afhugga Tha wardh hon gladh aff allo hiærta oc skyn-dadhe thit hon skulde sina pyno ænda / Mædhan hon leddis badh hon mz gratande tarum innirlika til wan herra oc saghdhe / Herra ihesu christe skapare hymilz oc iordz / thera frælsare och helare oppa thik thro / hör mina bøn oc giff mik thinne thiænisto qwinno som for thina skuld hafwer thessa pynor lidhit the nadh at thu wili werdthoghas giffwa allom them som oppa thit nampn kalla / oc hafwa afminnilse aff minne pyno tyma / Alla synda forlatilse / Oc minz thera synder alregh meer / Oc lath them ey forfaras j dødzsins tyma / Vtan lat them faa scriptamaal / oc thin wælsighnadha lykama / oc ledhas til æwinnelika æro / Tha hørthhis een røst aff hymblenom sighiande swa / Kom min vthwalda oc aldra fægghirsta oc hwila thik j mins fadhers hws j hymerike / Thz thu beddis / thz ær thik wisselika aff mik gifwit / Vnder thessom ordhum kom the hælgha iomfrun til pyno stadhin Oc hænnæ eyghin fadher mz grymtheth oc wredhe hug aff hænnæ hofwdh mz eno hugge Och genstan kom lyongelder aff hymblenom oc vpbrænde fadhrin swa at ey fandz ater eeth been aff honom.

The legend of Saint Barbara in *Siælinna thrøst* is, according to Thorén (1942: 75) a compilation of *Der große Seelentrost*, SKB A 110, and a Latin text, most likely *BHL* 916. Thorén argues that the German text has been used to only a small degree.²⁸

That the legend in *Siælinna thrøst* is based, at least in part, on *BHL* 916 is evident from the location of the story in Nicomedia ("I Maximiani keysara daghum war een man j nichomedia mæktogher och riker heeth dioscorus"), the lack of any mention of the persecution of Christians, and the statement that the wicked shepherd was transformed into stone and his cattle into locusts ("oc han vmskiptis genstan j een sten oc all hans faar wordho locuste").²⁹ Moreover, Saint Barbara's last prayer points to the *BHL* 916 type: "badh hon mz gratande tarum innirlika til wan herra oc saghdhe / Herra ihesu christe skapare hymilz oc iordz / thera frælsare och helare oppa thik thro / hör mina bøn oc giff mik thinne thiænisto qwinno som for thina skuld

²⁸ Thorén (1942) says: "[D]enna legend är . . . en kompilation av *Seelentrost*, KL [= SKB A 110] och någon latinsk text, i detta fall sannolikt *Legenda aurea*. Den tyska texten har endast i ringa grad använts." (75).

²⁹ It should be noted, however, that this statement is found also in *BHL* 920: "Nam eius [Deus] ultione mutatus est pastor ilico in statuum marmoris, ovesque eius facte sunt locuste." According to *Der große Seelentrost*, the shepherd "wart . . . to eime stene vnde darto al sin queck" (131).

hafwer thessa pynor lidhit the nadh at thu wili werdhoghas giffwa allom them som oppa thit nampn kalla / oc hafwa afminnilse aff minne pyno tyma / Alla synda forlatilse / Oc minz thera synder alregh meer / Oc lath them ey forfaras j dædzins tima / Vtan lat them faa scriptamaal / oc thin wælsighnadha lykama / oc ledhas til æwinnelika æro.³⁰

The particular pieces of information that can be traced only to SKB A 110 comprise the statements that Saint Barbara was fifteen years old ("xv ara gambra"), that when she traced with her finger the sign of the Cross on the stone pillars of the tower, the stones "blotnadhō som annat wax," and that after having fled from her father, she "gømde sik j ene skrubbo." The sparsity of detail surrounding Saint Barbara's baptism—*Siælinna thrøst* merely states that while Dioscorus was away Saint Barbara was baptized—also points to SKB A 110 (Thorén 1942: 75–76).³¹

In comparison with both *BHL* 916 and SKB A 110, the legend in *Siælinna thrøst* (and *Der große Seelentrost*) is much abbreviated. The episode about the three windows is omitted, there is no mention of Juliana and Valentinus, and the details about Saint Barbara's miraculous escape from the tower are not included. The compiler was concerned not with the details of Saint Barbara's life, but rather with Saint Barbara's exemplary obedience of the Fourth Commandment ("Alsodane pyne heft de hilge juncfruwe Sunte Barbara geleden, vp dat se neyne affgode drofte anbeden yegen dat bod godes.—Kint leue, dijt schal dij eyn bilde wesen" [132]).³²

³⁰ Saint Barbara's request that her worshippers will not die without having received the Eucharist is found also in SKB A 110, but the prayer in *Siælinna thrøst* is closer to that in *BHL* 916. In *Der große Seelentrost* Saint Barbara's prayer is as follows: "Do vel se vp ere kne vnde helt ere hende vp to gode vnde sprak: 'Here god alweldige, eyn schep- per hemelrikes vnde ertrikes, eyn heylant vnde eyn trost aller lude, wente ik dorch dynen willen, leue here, desse marter lide, so bidde ek dij vor al de lude, de myne marter eren, dat du en rukes to vorgeuen alle ere sunde, also dat du er nummer mer gedenkest'" (132).

³¹ According to *Der große Seelentrost*, Saint Barbara baptized herself: "Do stunt dar eyn vath, dat was ydel. Do bat se vnse heren god, dat he dat vath lete werden vul wateres. To hant was dat vul myt watere. Do dankede se vnseme leuen heren vnde bat en anderwerue, dat he dat water segenen vnde benedien wolde in deme namen der hilgen dreuoldicheit. Dar na trad se in dat water vnde dofte sijk suluen" (131).

³² The Swedish translator renders this concluding statement as follows: "Thessa pyno hafwer the hælgha iomfrun sancta barbara lidhit for thy at hon ey wilde mote gudz budh til afgudh bidia Thy skalt thu taka æpte dømø aff henne / wilia thine forældra thik radha til ont / thu skalt them j thy ekki lydha / lydher thu thøm tha for- tæper thu thina siel."

VI

The above analysis of the Old Swedish legends of Saint Barbara reveals that two versions of the legend circulated in Sweden in the early fifteenth century, John of Wakkerzeel's legend (*BHL* 920), which may be dated to the late fourteenth century and *BHL* 916, which is commonly associated with Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*, but which obviously cannot be associated with this work, since it post-dates *BHL* 920. The older of the two legends, *BHL* 920, served as the source for SKB A 110. Along with *BHL* 916 and *Der große Seelentrost*, SKB A 110 in turn served as a source for the legend in *Siælinna thröst*.

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