Who is Behind Incubation Stories? The Hagiographers of Byzantine Dream-Healing Miracles

Ildikó Csepregi

As Roland Barthes once warned us, the historical a[uthor] of a narrative is in no way to be confused with the narrator.[1] In the cas[e] of [hag]iographical writing, caution is even more necessary, for the *narrator of the narrative* ohen assumes the mask of a previous, even imaginary narra[tor], [in] the creation of his own writing *persona*. A particular case in hagiography is the way in which dream healings are recoded, in that hagiographers tell and reshape someone else's narrative. In the ultimate twist, this narrator usually retells a dream, seen by the person or by somebody else, which prescribes a miraculous healing. The dreams of both miracles stories and witnesses/narratives have their own pat[terns].

In this chapter, I examine who shaped the stories of miraculous healing dreams and how, and to what degree of the dreamer/[witness] and storyteller/ narrator/hagiographer (although [the] from may be one and the same at times) in examples from Byzantine incubation miracle collections. These include the fihh-century miracles of Saint Thecla, the complex textual tradition that concerns the miracles of Saints Cosmas and Damian, and finally two seventh-century collections: the *Thaumata* of Cyrus, which tells of the healing miracles of Saints Cyrus and John, and the anonymous corpus of the miracles of Saint Artemius.[2] These collections are thematically unified and chronologically

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R. Barthes, "Structural Analysis of Narratives," in R. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text* (London, 197[7] [pp.] 79–124, p. 111.

[2] The editions of the Greek Christian incubation miracle texts are the following: G. Dagron, *Vie et miracles de sainte Thècle: texte grec, traduction et commentaire*, Subsidia Hagiographica, 62 (Brussels, 1978), abbreviated here as *MT*; L. Deubner, *St. Kosmas und Damian: Texte und Einleitung* (Leipzig, 1907), abbreviated as *KDM*; E. Rupprecht (ed.), *Cosmae et Damiani sanctorum medicorum vita et miracula e codice Londoniensi*, Neue

quite close; they also form a small but homogeneous group with respect to their narrative patterning. Christian incubation cults, together with the way in which the miracles were recorded, are heir to the classical and late antique practice of pagan temple sleep and to the pagan incubation healing stories.[3] Even in the seventh century AD, these narratives are closer in many ways to the Asclepian type of miracle narrative than to other works of Byzantine hagiography.[4] In this chapter, I shall outline how the Christian hagiographer put his personal stamp on the miracles and how he created his own hagiographical *persona* within the characteristic patterns of incubation narratives.

The hagiographer, however conscious he may have been as a composer and however seriously he took the demands of literary value, did not rely only on his own literary taste and stylistic repertoire. The formation of the miracle stories was determined by four factors: the figure of the healer saint, the patient or beneficiary of the miracle, the hagiographer, and the traditional generic rules of miracle narrative—in this case, the pattern of the incubation experience.[5]

The saint shaped the miracle with his or her actions, attributes, and gestures, manifestations that were strongly determined by his or her *Vita*, by earlier

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Deutsche Forschungen, 20 (Berlin, 1935), abbreviated as *CL*; N. Fernandez Marcos, *Los Thaumata de SoPonio: Contribucion al estudio de la incubatio cristiana,* Manuales y anejos de Emerita, 31 (Madrid, 1975), abbreviated as *MCJ*; V.S. Crisafulli and J.W. Nesbitt, *The Miracles of St. Artemios: A Collection of Miracle Stories by an Anonymous Author of Seventh-Century Byzantium*, The Medieval Mediterranean, 13 (Leiden, 1997), abbreviated as *MA*. All of these editions include the Greek texts. See also the French translations of A.-J. Festugière, *Sainte Thècle, Saints Côme et Damien, Saints Cyr et Jean (extraits), Saint Georges*, Collections grecques miracles (Paris, 1971), a partial collection of the miracles of Thecla and of Cyrus and John; and the new complete edition of J. Gascou, *Sophrone de Jérusalem, Miracles des saints Cyr et Jean (BHGF I 477–479)*, Études d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne (Paris, 2006) for Cyrus and John.

[3] The best analysis of classical incubation miracle patterns is R. LiDonnici, "Tale and Dream: The Text and Compositional History of the Corpus of Epidaurian Miracle Cures" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1989).

[4] For the comparison of classical and Byzantine incubation stories, see M. Dorati, "Funzioni e motivi nelle stele di Epidauro e nelle raccolte cristiane di miracoli incubatori," *Syngraphie*, 3 (2001): pp. 91–118.

[5] The scheme of incubation stories is the following: name of the sick person, his provenance and profession, his illness, his way to the healer, the dream encounter, miraculous cure or prescribed remedy, and cure obtained. For how these patterns grew out from the requirements of a votive tablet and how they were enlarged, see LiDonnici, "Tale and Dream"; for an ample selection of Asclepian incubation narratives, see M. Girone, *Iamata: Guarigioni miracolose di Asclepio in testi epigraßci* (Bari, 1998). In the Christian incubation stories, the pattern remained the same, along with those additions permitted by the more lengthy format of a miracle collection.

miracles, and by his or her reputation. The saint's customary characteristics were ohen represented in his or her iconography. The artistic representations that were visible or generally known to the supplicants had an impact on their religious experience and consequently on the narrative itself.

The healer and the patient are important not as individuals but as participants and actors in a cult experience. In the practice of incubation, however, the miracle itself (or the encounter with the healer) takes place in a dream. Unlike other manifestations of Christian saints, the miracle is therefore visible only to the beneficiary of the dream. With the dream being the medium of this religious experience, the dreamer-patient acquires in the formation of the story a greater role than in other fields of Byzantine hagiography. The hagiographer, however much he claims to be an eyewitness, was compelled to rely on the narrative of the dreamer. Dream experiences, and the narrative forms they can assume, were strongly influenced by the dreamer's personality: his faith, fears, expectations, medical and theological knowledge, and the personal elements of his waking world. But the narrative patterns of incubation miracles also influence both the dreamer and the hagiographer. Because the Christian patient, just like the sick pagan supplicant who turned to Asclepius, was conditioned by the stories heard or read about the cult and recorded and listened to in the sanctuary, these narratives fed back into the dream. The hagiographer, on the other hand, hearing a story of a dream cure, located it both consciously as well as involuntarily in the well-tried schemes of incubation narrative.

In this chapter, I will leave aside the role of the healer and the patient in the formation of the story, along with the story patterns characteristic of incubation miracles, and will concentrate on the figure of the narrator, or writer, of the incubation tale. For the reader, the hagiographer is the key figure in the process of molding religious experience into meaningful narrative. In what follows, I shall introduce his role and his person, not only as far as it can be deduced from the stories he wrote but also through his conscious self-presentation. In short, what is the hagiographer to the text?

The Hagiographer as Narrator, Author, Patient, Witness, and Cult Personnel

The above question might be better formulated if we ask in what sense we can regard the hagiographer as an author, narrator, performer, or compiler of the miracle stories. Is he a mere recorder of the text or a creative composer? What is the image he would like to create for himself? What authorial roles (storyteller,

collector, or literary virtuoso) and what analogies for such roles can be found in the narratives themselves?[6]

Even as the recording of miracle narratives enjoyed a long and ongoing tradition, the recorder of miracles is certainly familiar from the cultic and literary context of Greek antiquity. But the precise character of his role is difficult to identify, as Vicenzo Longo points out in a learned chapter.[7] In its original meaning, the Greek word *aretalogos* denoted at the same time a priest recording the wondrous deeds of the god and an official entertainer. The dichotomy implicit in the term reflects the double-faced character of miracle literature itself: its combination of the sacred and the profane.

Apart from their function as propaganda for a cult place or a healer, classical miracle stories, in written and oral form alike, had other important roles. In cases of healing especially, they prepared the pilgrims psychologically, encouraging those who had been waiting for a long time or who had come with those medical problems that might be similar to the ones cured before in the shrine.[8] As the patient's stay in the healing sanctuary could ohen drag out over months and even years, and because the pilgrim's mood was ohen heavily determined by his consciousness of sickness, miracle stories also served to entertain, to divert the attention of sufferers, and even to make them laugh, thus alleviating their condition. Furthermore, these tales also equipped visitors to the cult place with a prefabricated story form, telling them how they might expect to witness the miraculous and in what way they were to tell it, in the immediate ahermath of their experience and then also back home, far from the cult site. It was not just the material of the miraculous that pilgrims took away with them but, more significantly, a template for the pilgrim experience in the form of a narrative code or way of describing the circumstances of dreaming, together with the obligatory attributes of the epiphany and the miracle cure.[9]

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[6] On types of narrator, see W.C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago, 1961), especially Chapters 6–8 for personal versus impersonal narration; and A. Kazhdan, *Authors and Texts in Byzantium*, Variorum Collected Studies Series, 400 (London, 1993).

[7] V. Longo, *Aretalogie nel mondo greco*, vol. 1: *Epigraß e papiri*, Pubblicazioni dell'Istituto di Filologia Classica dell'Università di Genova, 29 (Genoa, 1969), p. 19.

[8] For this aspect of miracle stories in the pilgrim experience, see V. Turner and E. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives,* Lectures on the History of Religions, n.s. 11 (Oxford, 1978).

[9] Cf. Dorati, "Funzioni e motivi," p. 98: "Non si trattava solo di convincere i pellegrini presenti nel santuario della validità di una scelta da loro di fatto già compiuta—recarsi in questo piuttosto che in un altro santuario—ma anche di fornire loro gli strumenti necessari per propagare il messagio una volta allontanatisi da Epidauro e ritornati in patria, dove avrebbero potuto portare non solo la propria personale esperienza, ma una 'memoria' più vasta, per così dire, sintetizzata nelle storie esemplari che le stele avevano fatto loro conoscere."

Writing and telling miracles was a double-faced activity that combined elements of the sacred and the profane, not only in its aspects as religious revelation and entertainment but also because the process itself worked in both directions. As Derek Krueger writes: "[I]n hagiography, authors deployed narrative simultaneously for the improvement of their readers and themselves. These literary acts of the making of saints were doubly generative, producing both the saints and their authors. Composing hagiography made one a hagiographer."[10] Claudia Rapp formulates more markedly the same message: "The hagiographer's function … parallels that of the saint. Both, as it were, provide perfect models of sanctity, one through his writing, the other through his life."[11]

When writing, the incubation hagiographer had to keep in mind these aspects and functions. His task of collecting and recording the dreams and miraculous cures of the doctor saints was also closely linked to his relationship to the cult place. He could be a beneficiary of dreams or the saint's miracle, a former patient or a church professional, a priest or a member of a lay sodality formed around the saint. The character of his affiliation to the cult greatly defined the purpose of his narrative (personal thanksgiving for healing, theological propaganda, etc.), while the means he used to gather the miracles, the sources he drew upon, and finally even the conjunction of literary and personal demands all determined how he put his stories together.

Most scholars of the incubation miracle collections[12] are interested primarily in the hagiographer as a historical figure. Thecla's fihh-century hagiographer has been examined as a figure of ecclesiastical politics and as an antagonist of Basil of Seleucia.[13] The extent of the hagiographer's classical education, rhetorical training, and literary and philosophical knowledge, as well as his intimate relationship to the saint and to the cult, has also been addressed.[14]

Our only incubation hagiographer with a name, Sophronius, the seventh-century hagiographer of the miracles of Saints Cyrus and John (who later

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[10] D. Krueger, *Writing and Holyness: The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East* (Philadelphia, 2004), p. 2.

[11] C. Rapp, "Byzantine Hagiographers as Antiquarians, Seventh to Tenth Centuries," in Stephanos Ehhymiadis, Claudia Rapp, and Dimitris Tsougarakis (eds), *Bosphorus: Essays in Honour of Cyril Mango*, Byzantinische Forschungen, 21 (Amsterdam, 1995), pp. 31–44, at p. 41.

[12] See the collections listed above in note 2.

[13] G. Dagron, "L'auteur des Actes et des Miracles de Sainte Thècle," *Analecta Bollandiana*, 92 (1974): pp. 5–11.

[14] Ibid., passim; and S.F. Johnson, *The Life and Miracles of Saint Thekla: A Literary Study*, Hellenic Studies, 13 (Cambridge, MA, 2006), Chapter 4.

became Patriarch of Jerusalem), has also drawn scholars' attention to his own person—mostly because of the role he played in the Arab capture of Jerusalem.[15] As a hagiographer, he was a member of the circle of friends in Alexandria that had formed around John the Almsgiver and included John Moschos and Leotinos of Neapolis.[16] Sophronius wrote the *Laudes* and the *Miracula Cyri et Johanni* partly under this influence and as a result of his stay in Alexandria and Menouthis, where he had a powerful miraculous experience when his eye disease had been cured by the doctor saints. This personal commitment, just as in the case of Thecla's hagiographer, gives a unique tone to the entire work.

The collections of Thecla and Cyrus and John are the only ones among the incubation corpora that are literary works of art by sole and named authors. The first was transmitted as a work of Basil of Seleucia and the latter, of course, in the oeuvre of Sophronius. They have thus largely escaped the rewriting and interpolation that characterizes other miracle collections.[17] In the material of Saint Artemius, for example, we find that later accretions have greatly transformed the theological message of the miracles. This latter collection, although anonymous, can easily be related to a specific hagiographer-author whose point of view was then adjusted by others, mainly through the straightforward addition of short closing sermons that consist of outbursts against physicians, Jews, pagans, and all sorts of heretics. The hagiographer of Artemius, on the basis of his medical vocabulary and his polemics against doctors, has been regarded by scholars as a physician himself, an ecclesiastical official, or perhaps (and more probably) as a member of a lay sodality attached to the cult; the hagiographer, by the wealth of detail he conveys on the everyday life of the capital and the church building itself, provides a rich source for the social or art historian and attests to a considerable medical knowledge,

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[15] On Sophronius' person and on the identity of Sophronius the Sophistand Sophronius the Patriarch, see P.S. Vailhé, "Sophrone le sophiste et Sophrone le patriarche," *Revue de l'Orient chrétien*, 7 (1902): pp. 361–85 and 8 (1903): pp. 32–69, 356–87; Fernandez Marcos, *Los Thaumata de SoPonio*, pp. 163–4; and C. Mango, "A Byzantine Hagiographer at Work: Leontinos of Neapolis," in I. Hutter (ed.), *Byzanz und der Westen: Studien zur Kunst des europäischen Mittelalters* (Vienna, 1984), pp. 25–41, at p. 25, with reference to the work of C. von Schönborn, *Sophrone de Jérusalem: vie monastique et confession dogmatique*, Théologie historique, 20 (Paris, 1972) versus I. Ševčenko, "La agiografia bizantina dal IV al IX secolo," in André Guillou (ed.), *La civiltà bizantina dal IV al IX secolo* (Bari, 1977), pp. 87–173.

[16] On this circle of hagiographer-friends and their works, see H. Delehaye, *L'ancienne hagiographie byzantine: Les sources, les premiers modèles, la formation des genres* (Brussels, 1991), pp. 51–68.

[17] It would be interesting to investigate further whether and how a named author contributed to the stability of a miracle text.

which, so it seems, was not necessarily a privilege of the medical practitioners. Two recent hypotheses have found him hidden amongst the characters of the miracles.[18] This approach is the closest to what I attempt to do in my analyses below of passages and narrative situations where the hagiographer puts himself forward. When does he reveal his presence and when does he prefer to remain invisible? According to a recent observation:

> [T]he lives of the saints are also the residuum of a process of authorised self-production, of the making of authors. In generating a Christian authorial *persona*, the author was inevitably the subject of his own creative act. Indeed, the authors of early Christian saints' lives and miracle collections reconceived the production of literature as a highly ritualised technology of the religious self.[19]

During the process by which a hagiographer created his *persona*, reflection on the writing self is manifest in the metaphors he uses to describe or characterize his own activity. His choice of metaphors of authorship is not only based on his temper and the level of his self-esteem, but is also linked to the way he perceives his work as a collector, organizer, and redactor of stories who must struggle to select the best tales from the embarrassment of riches at his disposal.

One Metaphors for Writing Incubation Stories

The author is himself a character in the narrative, portrayed interacting with the saint or with the saint's shrine. Subjecting themselves to a variety of models, hagiographers depicted themselves as participants in the religious system they described and endorsed.[20]

The Hagiographer of Saint Thecla

Thecla's hagiographer calls himself a merchant of precious stones (a *topos* of Byzantine hagiography),[21] which speaks to the value of the saint's narrated deeds. Another image of himself, that of a miner for gold, reflects upon the difficulty of

[18] For all these hypotheses, see below.

[19] Krueger, *Writing and Holyness*, p. 2.

[20] Ibid., p. 9.

[21] *MT* 44; for other occurrences, see Dagron, *Vie et miracles de sainte Thècle*, p. 405.

his task in obtaining these treasures, of the chore of carrying off the layers of soil that cover and obscure his precious material.[22]

At the end of the *Vita,* before he embarks upon the saint's miracles, Thecla's hagiographer refers to his hagiographic project and the indispensable help of Thecla. Among his motivations for writing about the miracles, he mentions that he himself was the recipient of the Saint's mercy[23] and, moreover, mentions a request from Thecla communicated through her protégé Achaeus, a friend of the hagiographer (in the words of Dagron, "ami initiateur, sainte inspiratrice"). In the closing section of the corpus, however, the hagiographer addresses a very personal request to Thecla, as if in exchange for his work, that the saint should rescue him from the anger and malevolence of a certain Porphyrius.[24]

Thecla's hagiographer depicts himself as a researcher. He ohen lets the reader know that he has in fact traveled to the home town of the beneficiary in order to question relatives or living witnesses.[25] In short, he claims to have carried out a form of fieldwork. He draws consciously on Herodotus,[26] and his direct references to the historian are complemented by the impression the hagiographer leaves with us of a researcher, a collector of stories, a man who travels in order to learn.[27] He provides the reader with indications at each step that he is offering the fruits of his own personal research, information he has

[22] On Thecla's hagiographer as a historiographer (in the *Vita*) versus the researcher and social observer of the *Miracula*, cf. Dagron, *Vie et miracles de sainte Thècle*, pp. 22–3.

[23] Ibid., pp. 280–281.

[24] Cf. ibid., pp. 16–18.

[25] This is the case with the miracles that happened to some inhabitants of Eirênêpolis (*MT* 33–5) where the hagiographer travels to get information. In *MT* 34, he concludes: "All this I have heard from their compatriots themselves who were perhaps even their relatives"; cf. the closing line of *MT* 26: "There are still people who remember this miracle and they are extremely proud to tell it."

[26] The hagiographer refers to Herodotus in the introduction to the miracles (Dagron, *Vie et miracles de sainte Thècle*, pp. 286–8), where he tells the story of Croesus and quotes the oracle given to him; he also calls Herodotus ἥδιστον (p. 288, line 64) and attests his knowledge of the historian by hinting at other stories without going into details.

[27] Cf. what François Hartog (*Le miroir d'Hérodote: Essai sur la representation de l'autre* [Paris, 1980], pp. 224, 291) writes on Herodotus: "Mais cet travail de repérage et de découpage qui, au mieux, aboutit à un inventaire, plus ou moins complet, de figures inertes, s'il est indispensable, ne suffit pas. Les diverses figures ont, en effet, mises en mouvement par le narrateur, qui intervient de multiples façons, à l'intérieur même de son récit: la lecture doit alors se faire attentive à toutes les marques d'énonciation, qui disposent ces figures et qui, pour le destinataire, les lestent finalment d'un poids spécifique de persuasion. Pour les Histoires, l'affaire se joue, avant tout, entre ces quatre marques, ou ces quatre opérations: *j'ai vu, j'ai entendu*, mai aussi *je dis, j'écris* … Que l'historiant initial, aventuré dans la narration, ait rencontré en elle la fiction, c'est ne pas un accident fortuit: cela meme appartient au procès

sought out directly. In *MT* 28, in the metaphor of carrying away the layers of soil that cover the stories, he specifies that his task aher arriving at the deepest level of miracle stories is to rearrange the memory about them, their order of events, and the place and the way they happened.[28] He ohen incorporates the narrator of a given miracle into the narrative frame.[29]

Sophronius

Sophronius follows the opposite method in handling his sources. He never mentions them, apart from some general and schematic remarks, such as that the healed patient told everyone about the miracle that had happened to him. His compositional model is different from Thecla's hagiographer, who was so keen to name his sources. Sophronius aims to produce a free-flowing narrative, a chain of dream stories created in accordance with his own editorial principles. He foregrounds his own activity as a writer more than the narrator of Thecla's miracles (who subscribed to another image of the narrator-self, that of the Herodotean researcher). Sophronius is reticent about his sources and presents himself as an omniscient narrator. This image Sophronius has of himself is confirmed by the way in which he introduces himself at the beginning of the work—in a riddle, in question-and-answer form, by giving his name, his hometown, and his profession. Immediately aher this quiz, in a short prelude to the miracle collections, he begins with a trope of classical Greek poetry. He lists how other people might praise the saints and concludes: "But for me, for whom words [*logos*] are dearer than my homeland, I am convinced that the martyrs take their pleasure in words, as they themselves are called witnesses of the Word of God."[30] What is more, as Sophronius continues (incidentally confirming Derek Krueger's analysis),[31] the words that narrate saints' deeds also sanctify the

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fondamental. Les 'sources' d'Hérdote sont fictives, en dépit de sa volonté historienne d'aller en 's'enformant', parce que la fiction appartient au procès de la narration primitive se faisant."

[28] Dagron, *Vie et miracles de sainte Thècle*, p. 362, lines 7–8: 6ı̣6ıбp̣novς μνíμμν nı̣̀ c̣(ıv nı̣̀ cóuov nı̣̀ cò ọ̋uως έ̣έvsco …

[29] Cf. the list that Dagron (*Vie et miracles de sainte Thècle*, p. 26) gives for the living beneficiaries of miracles or their descendants. For example, in *MT* 11, someone tells of the miracles that he experienced as a child; in *MT* 19, the son reports the miracle that happened to his mother when she was pregnant.

[30] *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 87.3, col. 388C: ч̣μsῖς 6é oiς 2ọ́oς ésciv cων μῖνων ŵ2ων cıμ̣2φésσspoς … ! nı̣̀ ×ípsıv coHς μpccp̣ς usíθoμı, ως Ώọ́oc ®so/ı 38 39 ×pμμcíσ̣vcsς μpccpsς.

[31] Most elaborated in his *Writing and Holyness*, Chapter 4 ("Hagiography as Devotion").

writer. The image of the oral composer is foregrounded when he refers to his eye disease as a case of Homeric blindness.

The other metaphor Sophronius uses to describe his endeavors is that of Saint Peter, who foolishly attempted to walk on water. Elsewhere Sophronius, who takes his literary enterprise with the utmost seriousness, compares his role and writing method to the activity of the physician, thus perhaps placing himself closer to the work of the doctor-saints. He claims to work "just as the Asclepiadai do, [who] by mixing painful and useful remedies with honey purge those who need purgatives. I imitate them by adding to the previous sweet miracles these following harsh ones, and attaching these to the more pleasant things and making the end delightful" (*MCJ* 32). Behind the simile there might stand not only the professional claim that conforms to the saints' healing function but also the intellectual fascinations of Byzantine medical science.

The Miracles of Cosmas and Damian: Multiple Authors, Multiple Narrators

The larger and better-known collection of Saints Cosmas and Damian (hereinaher *KDM*) is a compilation and multiple redaction of 36 manuscripts presenting 48 miracles from various periods and places, all collected, collated, and published by Ludwig Deubner. The collection in this edition is based primarily on cures obtained through incubation in the church of the Cosmidion in Constantinople, probably between the fihh–sixth and thirteenth centuries. The earliest textual strata may date to the sixth–seventh centuries, but the collection was continuously enlarged until the thirteenth century.[32] Deubner organizes the miracles in their apparent chronological order and distinguishes six separate units.[33]

The London Codex (*Codex Londoniensis*: *CL*) is an alternative version of Cosmas and Damian's miracles written in a simple Greek in an inventory-like way; the manuscript, dating from the tenth century, was found near Edfu in Egypt and now resides in the British Library. Its first owner, Robert de RustaÇaell, had already argued that the London Codex represented an earlier

[32] The most useful guidance on the maze of different versions and transmissions of these miracles is M. van Esbroeck, "La diffusion orientale de la légende des saints Cosme et Damien" in *Hagiographie, Cultures et Sociétés IV–XII. Siècles: Actes du Colloque organisé à Nanterre et à Paris (2–5 mai 1979)* (Paris, 1985), pp. 61–77.

[33] I: *Miracles* 1–10; II: *Miracles* 11–19 (*Miracles* 20 is an addition, which was originally in the fihh series); III: *Miracles* 21–6; IV: *Miracles* 27–32 (this series is supposed to be an extract from a longer collection, probably written by the author of Section III); V: *Miracles* 33–8; VI: *Miracles* 39–47, written by Maximus the Deacon (thirteenth century); *Miracle* 48 was performed in the saints' lifetimes and does not belong to any of the six series.

version of the *Miracles* (and probably an earlier phase of the cult as well), pointing to its unpretentious style and straightforward narration.[34] The editor of the text, Deubner's disciple Ernst Rupprecht, called it the "*antiquissimum quod notimus exemplum graecum*."[35] The *Vita* at the beginning of the *Miracles* introduces the nonmartyr version of the saints' life which belongs to the earliest layer of the tradition. In addition to this, the text twice unmistakably locates the origin of the saints' cult in their hometown and burial place, Pheremma near Chyrresticon in Syria. Besides the 14 miracles that figure in this collection but not in *KDM*, the uniqueness of the London Codex lies in its Egyptian coloring and in its Monophysite leanings. The hagiographer divides the corpus into 47 sections, with each miracle story being given a number and a title; there are no traces of the "units" found in the *KDM* corpus. There is a huge lacuna in the Codex, as *Miracles* 12–20 are missing.

I will compare these two related traditions—the Egyptian and the Constantinopolitan—in the next section and will examine the ways in which the presentation of the narrator changes through time and space. Here I limit myself to a general characterization of the longer and more complex corpus of *KDM*. The hagiographers of Cosmas and Damian's miracles belong to a continuous hagiographic tradition; only in the later layers do we find a personal voice and statements of authorial intentions. The hagiographer of Section III (*KDM* 21–6) places himself in the midst of his fellow pilgrims and listeners, describing himself as a healed patient who recorded the stories he heard while staying at the church. The hagiographer of Section IV (*KDM* 27–32) forsakes this sort of immediacy and instead pictures himself as a *narrator–I* in contrast to the *you* of the reader. In addition, he says this *you*—his audience and the addressee of the collection—is a certain Florentinus, a friend of his who asked or encouraged him to embark on this task of recording miracles. In Section V (*KDM* 33–8), the hagiographer depicts himself with a New Testament parable: he offers his contributions by adding new stories to the saints' known miracles, just as the poor widow once offered her two mites.[36] The thirteenth-century hagiographer who

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[34] R. de RustaÇaell, *The Light of Egypt Pom Recently Discotered Predynastic and Early Christian Records* (London, 1909), p. 90: "The text of the manuscript … in all probability refers back to an original of greater antiquity than those of any the current texts."

[35] Rupprecht, *Cosmae et Damiani sanctorum medicorum vita*, p. vii.

[36] Mark 12.41–4: "And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living"; cf. also Luke 21.1–4.

wrote Section VI of the *KDM* collection (*KDM* 39–47) is the only identified author/compiler in the corpus. Called Maximus the Deacon, he belonged as a monk to the monastery attached to the saints' church in Constantinople. This community of monks, like the monastery complex around the church of Thecla, was certainly a repository for the conservation and transmission of miracle traditions. Maximus' acknowledged goal is twofold: he ambitiously aims to express well-known miracles in a better style and he also wishes to enrich the collection with stories from his own lifetime.[37] He gives a lot of information about his own hagiographical activity, especially in the preface of *KDM* 40: he sees himself as far less insignificant and humble than the nameless hagiographers of the preceding miracle stories.

The Hagiographer of Saint Artemius

Artemius' hagiographer is similar to Thecla's in that he establishes, with the help of the miracles from his own and directly preceding generations, the credit due to the earlier miracle of his saint. In other words, he cites what he could still collect from living witnesses or from their children. It is remarkable that although this corpus is the most medical in its character, with detailed descriptions of the physical features of illness (male hernia), the overture of this collection is also the most aesthetically refined. In the first lines of the collection, the hagiographer defines his role in a long simile about the ecstasy of a man walking in a park full of gorgeous flowers, overwhelmed by the dilemma of what flowers to pick:

> Just as when someone enters a park and beholds the shapes of many delightfully beautiful trees and the variegated hues of different flowers uncloying in fragrance, and to him everything seems praiseworthy; then departing from there and coming to another place, he desires to report the spectacle of excellence to his neighbours also.[38]

The Hagiographer as Characters within the Incubation Miracle Stories

The hagiographers of our collections do not usually stop at self-introduction by comparing their writing activity to that of other professions and situations.

[37] Cf. Festugière, *Sainte Thècle, Saints Côme et Damien*, p. 191, line 1.

[38] Crisafulli and Nesbitt, *The Miracles of St. Artemios*, p. 77.

They consciously reflect on their art of collecting, writing, and organizing the miracles. The highest level of self-display is when the hagiographer writes himself and his enterprise into his stories—sometimes openly, at other times with subtlety and cunning—using his art of structuring and composition to hide himself as a hagiographer and to emerge as a character in the narrative.

The Miracles of Thecla

If we examine closely when and under what circumstances the hagiographer appears in the 46 miracles of the Thecla collection, we come to the following conclusion: the hagiographer comes into sight at certain intervals in the corpus which occur in a fairly regular rhythm (his appearances in the text are in bold face):

Introduction
1–4: victory over ancient pagan deities (Thecla and her immediate cult place)
5–6: saving Seleucia and Iconium (the place of the cult in a larger context)
7–12: the priests of the sanctuary (5)
7–8: Dexianus (contemporary, Thecla's priest already under Symposius)
9, 9b: Menodorus
10: connecting link: Symposius
11: a relative or compatriot of Symposius
12a, 12b: the hagiographer versus Basil, bishop of Seleucia
13–15: noblemen;
15–16: journey by sea and journey by land
18–21: women (4)
21–22: theh
23–5: eye complaints
26–8: Thecla as warrior
26: Thecla appears on her feast day in the sky, upon a carriage in flames, and similarly protects the town of Dalisandrus during a siege
27: she protects the town of Selinunte during a siege
28: she protects her own sanctuary
28–30: she protects of her sanctuary and cult:
29–35: punishment, protection of her people
29: revenge, protection of her cult and feast
30: revenge, protection of her cult
31: the hagiographer, ecla appears and encourages him
32: punishment of Dexianus