

The Dux and the Nun

Hagiography and the Cult of Artemios and Febronia in Constantinople

AUDE BUSINE

In sixth-century Constantinople, incubation was a very popular practice, and many shrines in martyria or churches welcomed sick people who would bed down, hoping to be healed by a saint during a dream.¹ A church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist, located in an area called Oxeia, hosted incubation rituals surrounding a pair of martyrs, Artemios and Febronia.²

1 On Christian incubation, see the classic studies of L. Deubner, *De incubatione capita quattuor* (Leipzig, 1900); M. Hamilton, *Incubation: The Cure of Disease in Pagan Temples and Christian Churches* (London, 1906); and, more recently, R. Wiśniewski, "Looking for Dreams and Talking with Martyrs: Internal Roots of the Christian Incubation," in *Studia Patristica*, vol. 63, *Papers Presented at the Sixteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies Held in Oxford 2011*, ed. M. Vinzent (Leuven, 2013), 203–8; F. Graf, "Dangerous Dreaming: The Christian Transformation of Dream Incubation," *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 15 (2014): 117–42; I. Csepregi, *Temple Sleep in Byzantium: The Formation of Christian Incubation Miracle Collections* (Cambridge, forthcoming; draft version available at www.etd.ceu.hu/2008/csepregii.pdf, accessed 20 July 2016); G. H. Renberg, *Where Dreams May Come: Incubation Sanctuaries in the Greco-Roman World* (Leiden, 2017), 2:745–807.

2 See V. S. Crisafulli, J. W. Nesbitt, and J. Haldon, *The Miracles of St. Artemios: A Collection of Miracle Stories by an Anonymous Author of Seventh Century Byzantium*, trans. V. S. Crisafulli (Leiden, 1996), 8–27, and discussion below. We have no mention of the use of this healing shrine after the eighth century, and the medical cult seems to have declined after the Iconoclast controversy; see C. Mango, "On the History of the *Templon* and the *Martyrion* of St. Artemios at Constantinople," *Zograf* 10 (1979): 1–13, reprinted in *Studies on Constantinople* (Aldershot, 1993), no. 15, esp. 1; V. Déroche, "Pourquoi écrivait-on des recueils de miracles? L'exemple des Miracles de Saint Artémios," in *Les Saints et leur sanctuaire*

Their healing activities are attested in a seventh-century collection of forty-five miracles performed by Artemios (*BHG* 173), a few passages in which allude to Febronia as his female counterpart. Hagiographical texts have recorded Artemios's and Febronia's lives and passions, but do not mention their medical cult in Constantinople. Several versions of the *Passion of Artemios* (*BHG* 169y–z; 170–71c) say that this former dux of Egypt, close to Emperor Constantius II, was beheaded in Antioch by Emperor Julian and that his relics were subsequently transferred to Constantinople. As for Febronia, her *Passions* (*BHG* 659h) depict her as a young nun from Nisibis tortured under Diocletian because she refused to apostatize and marry a Roman soldier. At first sight, none of these hagiographical narratives carries any trace of the importance that the saints had in the imperial capital.

The aim of this article is to propose a fresh reading of Artemios's and Febronia's dossiers, studied here together for the first time. Artemios's career, death, and subsequent cult are still being debated by scholars.³ His

à Byzance: Textes, images et monuments, ed. C. Jolivet-Lévy, M. Kaplan, and J.-P. Sodini (Paris, 1993), 95–116, esp. 114–16.

3 For overviews and divergent reconstructions, see, e.g., J. Dummer, "Fl. Artemius Dux Aegypti," *APf* 21 (1971): 121–44, reprinted in J. Dummer and M. Vielberg, *Philologia sacra et profana: Ausgewählte Beiträge zur Antike und zu ihrer Wirkungsgeschichte* (Stuttgart, 2006), 172–99; F. Scorza Barcellona, "Martiri e confessori dell'età di Giuliano l'Apostata: Dalla storia alla leggenda," in *Pagani e cristiani da Giuliano l'Apostata al sacco di Roma: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi*

Passions enable historians not only to picture Emperor Julian himself as a cruel, bloodthirsty persecutor but also to make conjectures about the Arians' obscure history and martyrial cults. So far, no satisfactory explanation has been offered as to why an unpopular fourth-century commander in Egypt, linked to the Arian party, came to be venerated many years later in Constantinople as an orthodox healer saint. Febronia's dossier is much more scant and, until recently, little attention has been paid to the Constantinopolitan healing activity of the nun from Nisibis.⁴

Surprisingly, the *raison d'être* for the close association of Artemios and Febronia, whose lives and deaths originally had nothing in common, has never been discussed in modern scholarship, even by those examining the foundation of their cult. This article is the first to consider the links between Artemios's and Febronia's hagiography and their cult on the ground. To that end, the etiology of their hagiographical narratives will be analyzed, so that we can understand when, why, and how these legends arose. I will begin by reconsidering the issue of the transfer of both martyrial cults from Nisibis and Antioch to the capital. In doing so, I will revise the traditional claim that the *dux* of Egypt was executed at Antioch and that his martyrial cult initially developed within the Arian community of Antioch. I will then turn to the local context in Constantinople for the fictions of the martyrs' deaths. Drawing on the analysis of both pagan and Christian evidence, I propose a new solution to questions about the origin and development of Artemios and Febronia's joint medical cult. I will argue that this cult did not begin with the importation of the relics of the foreign martyrs but was

the prolongation of a traditional local cult. This new reading of Artemios's and Febronia's *Passions* will shed light on the strategies behind hagiographical discourses created long after the events described. Those texts, works of fiction, were intended to ensure the development of the saints' cult, guaranteeing their reception as proper Christian saints.

From Antioch and Nisibis to Constantinople?

The first question to address in investigating the development of a martyrial cult is whether its origin lies in the commemoration of genuine martyrs, a commemoration eventually made material by relics. As is well known, the little city of Byzantium was not a place where Christians were persecuted. Thus, relics of many foreign saints were imported to Constantinople, which needed martyrs to assert its status as the Christian city par excellence.⁵ We will begin by analyzing the tales of the martyrdom of Artemios and Febronia and probe the circumstances in which their cult was supposedly transferred from Antioch and Nisibis, where they are said to have been tortured, to Constantinople.

As regards Artemios, modern scholars are unanimous in believing that his medical cult originates in a borrowed martyrial cult first developed by the Arian community in Antioch after the *dux*'s execution.⁶ The problematic evacuation of Artemios's heretical identity—the shift “from villain to saint,” as Samuel Lieu formulated it—is explained as the result either of a loss of memory over time or of deliberate counterpropaganda by orthodox authorities seeking to take over the Arians' promotion of their martyrs.⁷ It should

(*Rende, 12/13 novembre 1993*), ed. F. E. Consolino (Soveria Mannelli, 1995), 53–83; S. N. C. Lieu (introduction) and M. Vermes (translation), “[John the Monk], *Artemii passio* (*The Ordeal of Artemios*), *BHG* 170–71c, *CPG* 8082,” in *From Constantine to Julian: Pagan and Byzantine Views*, ed. S. Lieu and D. Montserrat (London, 1996), 210–62, esp. 221; S. N. C. Lieu, “From Villain to Saint and Martyr: The Life and After-life of Flavius Artemios, *Dux Aegypti*,” *BMGS* 20 (1996): 56–76; G. Marasco, “L'imperatore Giuliano e l'esecuzione di Fl. Artemio, *dux Aegypti*,” *Prometheus* 23 (1997): 59–78; D. Woods, “The Final Commission of Artemios the Former *dux Aegypti*,” *BMGS* 23 (1999): 1–24; H. C. Teitler, “Ammianus, Libanius, Chrysostomus, and the Martyrs of Antioch,” *VChr* 67 (2013): 263–88, esp. 270–78.

4 See now M. Kaplan, “Une hôtesse importante de l'église Saint-Jean-Baptiste de l'Oxeia à Constantinople: Fébronie,” in *Byzantine Religious Culture: Studies in Honor of Alice-Mary Talbot*, ed. D. Sullivan, E. A. Fisher, and S. Papaioannou (Leiden, 2011), 31–52.

5 See, e.g., H. A. Klein, “Sacred Relics and Imperial Ceremonies at the Great Palace of Constantinople,” in *Visualisierungen von Herrschaft: Frühmittelalterliche Residenzen: Gestalt und Zeremoniell*, ed. F. A. Bauer (Istanbul, 2006), 79–99; R. Ousterhout, “Sacred Geographies and Holy Cities: Constantinople as Jerusalem,” in *Hierotopy: The Creation of Sacred Space in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, ed. A. Lidov (Moscow, 2006), 98–116.

6 Already in A. Dufourcq, “Gestes d'Artemios,” in idem, *Étude sur les “Gesta martyrum” romains*, vol. 5 (Paris, 1888), 183–90, esp. 187–90. See now, e.g., Lieu, “From Villain to Saint,” 73; Crisafulli, Nesbitt, and Haldon, *Miracles of Artemios*, 3–4.

7 See Crisafulli, Nesbitt, and Haldon, *Miracles of Artemios*, 4: “It was Artemios' reputation as a worker of cures that led first to his acceptance among the non-Arians and eventually to the translation of his relics to Constantinople”; Lieu, “From Villain to Saint,” 75; Artemios “was whitewashed on a larger scale.” The Arian

be noted, however, that in the Constantinopolitan shrine, Artemios was usually perceived not as a foreign martyr but mainly as a physician, or as acting in other roles such as officer and butcher.⁸ The *Miracula* identify the saint only twice as “dux and *augustalis*” in Egypt.⁹ This identification with the Egyptian commander stems in all likelihood from hagiographical evidence, which similarly presented Saint Artemios as “dux of the city of the Alexandrians” (τὸν δοῦκα . . . τῆς Ἀλεξανδρέων) and then both as *dux* (δοῦξ) and *augustalis* (αὐγουστάλιος).¹⁰

In attempting to explain the presence of Artemios’s medical cult in Constantinople, historians usually follow the scenario found in hagiography, describing the dux Artemios’s arrest by Julian in Antioch, his ordeal and then death by decapitation in the Syrian metropolis, and finally the transfer of his remains to Constantinople.¹¹ The most famous version, known under the title *Artemii Passio*, was written by a monk called John, probably shortly before the *Miracula*, between 658 and 668.¹² The same story is found in an older and shorter version, referred to here

as *Martyrium Artemii* and probably dating from the sixth century.¹³ Whoever he may be, the author of the *Artemii Passio* claims to have improved and supplemented the shorter text by consulting such authors as Eusebius, Philostorgius, Socrates, and Theodoret.¹⁴ Both versions of Artemios’s martyrdom relate that Julian, after asking the former dux of Egypt to join him in Antioch, had him imprisoned, tortured, and finally beheaded. As for the transfer of his relics to Constantinople, the *Passions* tell that Artemios’s remains were collected and taken to the capital by a woman called Ariste, looking for a place of noble burial.¹⁵ This story, attested at the earliest to the course of the sixth century, is deemed reliable by most scholars because they suppose that hagiographers retrieved it from earlier (partly lost) historical works (see below).

But the link between the tragic end of the dux and his presence in Constantinople as a healer saint is less obvious. The hagiographical portrait of Artemios tortured by Julian in Antioch in 363 for no other reason than his being a Christian is fundamentally at odds with his depiction in preserved fourth-century sources.¹⁶ As far as the historical Artemios is concerned, papyrological evidence attests that he had been *dux Aegypti* in 358–59.¹⁷ Yet the circumstances of his condemnation, and specifically the place and the date of his death, remain unclear. Suffice it here to recall that in a letter to the people of Alexandria, Julian himself mentions a riot caused by the anti-pagan policy of George, the Arian bishop of Alexandria.¹⁸ The anger of the populace was

Alexandrian bishop George was similarly turned into an orthodox saint; see D. Woods, “The Origin of the Cult of St. George,” in *The Great Persecution: The Proceedings of the Fifth Patristic Conference, Maynooth, 2003*, ed. D. V. Twomey and M. Humphries (Dublin, 2009), 141–58.

8 *Mir.* 2, 23, 40, 42, 44, etc. See Crisafulli, Nesbitt, and Haldon, *Miracles of Artemios*, xiii–iv.

9 *Mir.* 16: δοῦξ καὶ αὐγουστάλιος εἰς Ἀλεξανδρείαν τὴν χώραν; *Mir.* 17: δοῦξ καὶ αὐγουστάλιος. I use here the edition of A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Varia Graeca Sacra* (Saint Petersburg, 1909), 1–75. Vincent Déroche is preparing a new edition and French translation.

10 Δοῦξ; *Art. Pass.* 19, 35; αὐγουστάλιος: 35. The *Artemii Passio* (BHG 170–71) (? John Damascene CPG 8082) is edited by B. Kotter, *Johannes von Damaskos: Die Schriften*, vol. 5, *Opera homiletica et hagiographica* (Berlin, 1988), 202–45; the text is almost fully translated by M. Vermes in Lieu and Vermes, “[John the Monk],” 224–56. While Artemios is known as dux already in fourth-century historical sources (see below), *augustalis*, a late equivalent of *Praefectus Augusti*, seems to be a later addition; see Teitler, “Ammianus, Libanius,” 276. This statement can explain why the healer is presented in the *Miracles* as wearing military clothing (e.g., *Mir.* 14).

11 See, recently, H. C. Teitler, *The Last Pagan Emperor: Julian the Apostate and the War against Christianity* (Oxford, 2017), 47–48. The dux is often referred to in modern scholarship as Artemios. I use the Greek name Artemios, which appears much more frequently in ancient evidence.

12 I simplify here a much more complex textual tradition; see Dufourcq, “Gestes d’Artemios”; Lieu, “From Villain to Saint,” esp. 60–66.

13 *Martyr. Artem.* (BHG 169y–z), edited by J. Bidez, *Philostorgius, Kirchengeschichte: Mit dem Leben des Lucian von Antiochien und den Fragmenten eines arianischen Historiographen*, GCS [21], 3rd rev. ed. by F. Winkelmann (Leipzig, 1981), 166–75; translated by P. R. Amidon, *Philostorgius, Church History* (Atlanta, 2007), 179–84. For the date, see Lieu, “From Villain to Saint,” 63.

14 *Art. Pass.* 3–4.

15 *Martyr. Artem.* 14; *Art. Pass.* 68.

16 Some have tried to resolve this contradiction by considering that there were two Artemioses, one a criminal and one a martyr; see P. Batiffol, “Fragmente der Kirchengeschichte des Philostorgius,” *RQ* 3 (1889): 252–89, esp. 253–54; followed by F. Dvornik, *The Idea of Apostolicity in Byzantium and the Legend of the Apostle Andrew* (Cambridge, MA, 1958), 229.

17 The date and the title are given by a papyrus reporting the proceedings of the senate of Oxyrhynchus in 360: *POxy* 8:1103, l. 3: τοῦ κυρίου μου τοῦ λαμ(προτάτου) δοῦκος Φλ(αοῦ) Ἀρτεμίου. See Dummer, “Fl. Artemios Dux Aegypti” (n. 3 above), 124.

18 Julian, *Ep.* 60 = Socr., *HE* 3,5–25 (= Sozomen, *HE* 4,3.4–25).

triggered by the profanation of temples and objects of worship as well as by the actions of troops sent against them. According to Julian, the bishop of Alexandria was supported by Emperor Constantius II and assisted by the στρατηγός τῆς Αἰγύπτου—a phrase that translates *dux Aegypti* into Greek.¹⁹ In Christian sources committed to the pro-Nicean side, Artemios is similarly depicted as a cruel man close to Arian authorities.²⁰

Ammianus Marcellinus briefly mentions Artemios's death sentence (*supplicio capitali multatus est*) as a consequence of the dreadful crimes (*atrocium criminum*) committed by the former dux (*ex duce Aegypti*) in Alexandria.²¹ Without explaining how or where Artemios was executed, Ammianus twice connects the message of his death and the lynching of George.²² If we follow the *Historia acephala*, George's murder should be dated to December 361, soon after the news of the death of Constantius II had reached Alexandria.²³ Ammianus's assumption that Artemios died before George makes the story of the execution of the dux by Julian in Antioch impossible, as the emperor did not arrive in the Syrian metropolis before July 362. Ammianus is usually accused of deliberately misdating the event to avoid reporting all the emperor's misdeeds at the same time.²⁴ However, it is not clear that we

should so quickly reject the fourth-century historical account and place more stock in sixth-century hagiographical narratives.

The first explicit mention of the involvement of Julian in the death of Artemios is found in the following passage of Theodoret's *Church History*, dated to the mid-fifth century:²⁵

There is still the case of Artemios, who was commander of the troops in Egypt. He had obtained this command in the time of Constantius, and had destroyed most of the idols. For this reason, Julian not only stripped him of his property but ordered his decapitation as well.²⁶

In comparison with the other martyrs in Antioch whose stories he relates, Theodoret says relatively little about Artemios. It is important to note that the church historian does not mention the place of Artemios's execution, and an even more striking omission is the fact that he died as a martyr. Since the suggestion was first made by Henry Gwatkin, moderns have assumed that Theodoret here draws on a lost chronicle written in Antioch during the 360s by an author who was a Homean (moderate Arian).²⁷ Yet postulating a lost and anonymous work as a potential source does not

19 See H. J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions: A Lexicon and Analysis* (Toronto 1974), 117–18, 155, 162, 185–86; “στρατηγός,” LSJ, s.v. For an alternative identification of Julian's unnamed officer, see Woods, “The Final Commission of Artemios” (n. 3 above), though Woods is usually not followed.

20 See *Vita Pachomi* 137–38 (ed. A. J. Festugière, *Les moines d'Orient*, vol. 4.2, *La première vie grecque de Saint Pachôme* [Paris, 1965]), where Artemios is presented as a cruel commander harassing Bishop Athanasius during his exile in Egyptian monasteries; “Syriac Index” of “Festal Letters” of Athanasius 32 (a. 360), ed. M. Albert and A. Martin, in “*Histoire acéphale*” et *Index syriaque des Lettres festales d'Athanasie d'Alexandrie*, SC 317 (Paris, 1985), where the Arian dux is said to have done violence to a virgin named Eudaimonis as he was seeking to discover the hiding place of the Nicean bishop.

21 Amm. 22.11.2 (J. Fontaine, *Ammien Marcellin: Histoire*, vol. 3, *Livres XX–XXII*, texte établi, traduit et annoté par Fontaine, avec la collaboration de E. Frézouls et J.-D. Berger [Paris, 1996]). This chapter is placed after the story of Julian in Antioch; see J. den Boeft, D. den Hengst, and P. de Jonge, *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus*, book 22 (Leiden, 1995), 196.

22 Amm. 22.11.3, 8.

23 *Hist. aceph.* 2.9–10 (28 Choiak = 24 December).

24 E.g., “Artemios 2,” *PLRE* 1:112; Dummer, “Fl. Artemios Dux Aegypti,” 132–39; den Boeft, den Hengst, and de Jonge, *Philological and Historical Commentary*, 201–2; Marasco, “L'imperatore

Giuliano” (n. 3 above); T. D. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality* (Ithaca, NY, 1998), 53, 234–36; Woods, “The Final Commission of Artemios,” 22–24. See the reservations of Lieu, “From Villain to Saint,” 73; Teitler, “Ammianus, Libanius” (n. 3 above), 270–78.

25 According to N. H. Baynes, “The Death of Julian the Apostate in a Christian Legend,” *JRS* 27 (1937): 22–29, the other church historians' silence about Artemios is explained by his Arianism.

26 Theodoret, *HE* 3.18: Καὶ Ἀρτέμιον δὲ (στρατηγός δὲ οὗτος τῶν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ στρατιωτῶν ἐγεγόνει), ἐπειδὴ πλεῖστα τῶν εἰδώλων συνέτριψε τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐκείνην ἐν τοῖς Κωνσταντίου χρόνοις λαχῶν, οὐ μόνον τῶν ὄντων ἐγύμνωσεν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς τὸ λοιπὸν ἐστέρησε σῶμα (my translation; ed. A. Martin, *Théodoret de Cyr, “Histoire ecclésiastique,” Livres III–V*, SC 530 [Paris, 2009]).

27 See H. M. Gwatkin, *Studies of Arianism: Chiefly Referring to the Character and Chronology of the Reaction Which Followed the Council of Nicaea*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York, 1900), 220; followed by H. C. Brennecke, *Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer; der Osten bis zum Ende der Homöischen Reichskirche* (Tübingen, 1988), 128 n. 74; T. D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, MA, 2001), 8; Martin, *Théodoret de Cyr*, 43, 53–54. On the Homeans, see Brennecke, *Studien*. I will return to this conjectured chronicle below.

strengthen an argument.²⁸ Besides, it is unnecessary in this case, given that the church historian provides no information beyond what he could read in the letter of Julian, either directly or via Socrates's quotation.²⁹

I am convinced that the location of the event in the Syrian metropolis, never mentioned in preserved Antiochene sources such as John Chrysostom, is an extrapolation by the hagiographers. This (mis)reading of Theodoret, and its chronological implications, can be explained by the placement of the chapter on Artemios: it follows iconic events that occurred during Julian's stay in Antioch, such as the expulsion of Babylas's relics from his shrine in Daphne (*HE* 3.10) and the fire at Apollo's temple (*HE* 3.11). But in Theodoret's text, events are not always presented in chronological order. Elsewhere, the church historian confesses to breaking the order (τάξις) of the facts "in order to preserve the unity of the narration" (τὴν τοῦ διηγήματος ἀρμονίαν φυλάττων).³⁰ Artemios's case, about which little is said, was probably added at the end of Julian's dossier as further evidence of the emperor's crimes. The silence of Theodoret about the place of Artemios's death is therefore consistent with Ammianus's early dating, linked to the assassination of Bishop George. Significantly, it also corroborates the nonhagiographical testimony of the *Chronicon Paschale* (seventh century), which locates Artemios's execution not in Antioch but in Alexandria:

And Artemios who was Dux of the diocese of Egypt, since in the period of his office under Constantius the Augustus of blessed memory [ἐπὶ τοῦ μακαρίτου Κωνσταντίου τοῦ Αὐγούστου] he had displayed great zeal on behalf of the churches, had his property confiscated and his head cut off in the Alexandrian

28 For a critique of similar arguments, see P. Van Nuffelen, "Socrate de Constantinople et les Chroniques," *JÖB* 54 (2004): 53–75; idem, review of A. Martin et al., *Théodoret de Cyr, Histoire ecclésiastique*, I (2006); G. Sabbah et al., *Sozomène, Histoire ecclésiastique III* (2005), in *Antiquité tardive* 15 (2007): 410–16.

29 Theodoret uses the same wording as Julian when he refers to Artemios as στρατηγός. The Latin transliteration is specified later in the chapter heading: Theodoret, *HE* 3.18 *kephalaion*: Περὶ Ἀρτεμίου τοῦ δουκός.

30 Theodoret, *HE* 2.17.2.

city [ἐν τῇ Ἀλεξανδρείῳ], since Julian bore a grudge against him.³¹

We are therefore entitled to conjecture that Artemios could have been condemned to death in Egypt before Julian's stay in Antioch,³² shortly after the recently acclaimed emperor took drastic measures in Chalcedon against Constantius II's (mostly Arian) entourage.³³

Let us consider the arguments supporting the hypothesis that the martyrial cult of Artemios first appeared among the Arians in Antioch, sometime before the final condemnation of Arianism in 380. Scholars since Franz Görres have postulated that the story of the execution of the dux of Egypt by Julian was recorded in the above-mentioned Antiochene chronicle, possibly compiled by an unknown Homean author under the Arian Emperor Valens (364–378).³⁴ This lost and anonymous chronicle, supposedly presenting an accurate picture of what occurred in the Syrian metropolis, would presumably have been the source of the accounts of Philostorgius, and consequently of the hagiographers deriving from him, as well as of Theodoret (see above) and the *Chronicon Paschale*.³⁵

31 *Chron. Pasch.* a. 363 = *Anonymous Homean Chronicle* F 36 (ed. P. Batiffol, "Un historiographe anonyme arien du IV^e siècle," *RQ* 9 [1895]: 57–97): Ἀρτέμιος δὲ δούξ ὢν τῆς κατ' Αἴγυπτον διοκῆσεως, ἐπειδὴ περ ἐν τοῖς καιροῖς τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀρχῆς ἐπὶ τοῦ μακαρίτου Κωνσταντίου τοῦ Αὐγούστου ζῆλον πολὺν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ἐνεδείξατο, ἐν τῇ Ἀλεξανδρείῳ ἐδημεύθη καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀπετμήθη, μνησικακήσαντος αὐτὸν τοῦ Ἰουλιανοῦ. I quote here the English translation of M. and M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 AD* (Liverpool, 1999), 39.

32 Cf. Lieu, "From Villain to Saint," 73: "We cannot rule out Egypt as his place of execution."

33 On these trials, see Amm. 22.3.1–12, and Boeft, den Hengst, de Jonge, *Philological and Historical Commentary*, 17–35; H. C. Teitler, "Avenging Julian: Violence against Christians during the Years 361–363," in *Violence in Ancient Christianity: Victims and Perpetrators*, ed. A. C. Geljon and R. Roukema (Leiden, 2014), 76–89, esp. 77–80. In this respect, my "Les martyrs de Julien à Antioche: L'exemple du Dux Artemios," in *Une Antiquité noire ou heureuse? Colloque International de Besançon 12 et 13 novembre 2014*, ed. S. Ratti (Besançon, 2015), 119–35, is now out of date.

34 See F. Görres, "Arianer im officiellen Martyrologium der römischen Kirche," *ZWTh* 30 (1887): 220–49, esp. 236–49, followed by Dufourcq, "Gestes d'Artemios" (n. 6 above), 188–89, and all subsequent scholars.

35 According to H. C. Brennecke, "Christliche Quellen des Ammianus Marcellinus?," *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 1

But there is absolutely no evidence that Philostorgius ever recorded Artemios's life or death.³⁶ We should recall that his lost *Church History*, dated to the end of the fourth century, is known from, on the one hand, a ninth-century epitome by Photius and, on the other, the incomplete large quotations by the author of the *Artemii Passio*.³⁷ It is worth repeating that this passion was structured entirely on the short version, which ignored Philostorgius. In the *Artemii Passio*, the anti-Nicene church historian functioned merely to provide the historical backdrop that made the story complete. The name of Artemios does not occur in Photius's summary, neither when he mentions George's murder nor when he relates the misdeeds of Julian in Antioch. In the *Artemii Passio*, Artemios is actually associated only once with a quotation from Philostorgius, when the hagiographer connects the saint with Constantius II's translation of the relics of Timothy, Andrew, and Luke from lands beyond the Danube to Constantinople.³⁸ Yet in Photius's summary of Philostorgius's treatment of the same event (*HE* 3.2.2), as in several other sources locating these events between 336 and 357, the emperor alone is implicated.³⁹ Richard Burgess has convincingly shown that the author of the *Artemii Passio* here falsifies the sequence of Philostorgius's chapters as a means to involve the martyr in Constantius II's glorious act.⁴⁰ He needed merely to add three words: "the historian (Philostorgius) recalls what follows about Constantius

and the martyr [καὶ τοῦ μάρτυρος]."⁴¹ It follows that we must abandon the idea that the author of the *Artemii Passio* found historical data about Artemios's life and death in Philostorgius's pro-Arian *Church History*, itself taken as stemming from an earlier and reliable anonymous Homean chronicle.

In a similar vein, I do not follow Pierre Batiffol⁴² when he includes among the fragments of the same lost chronicle the passage of the *Chronicon Paschale* concerning Artemios.⁴³ It has generally been assumed that the adjective μακαρίτης ("of blessed memory") qualifying Constantius II in this text was laudatory, and therefore proof of the text's Arian origin.⁴⁴ However, the letter of Julian applies the same label to Constantius II (τὸν μακαριώτατον Κωνσταντίον), merely because it was the conventional way to name a deceased emperor.⁴⁵ Moreover, this text differs from other evidence in that it explicitly places Artemios's execution in Alexandria, though we would expect an Antiochene chronicle to praise a man tortured in Antioch and not elsewhere. This passage of the *Chronicon Paschale* appears to me simply to draw from Julian/Socrates and Theodoret, without any detectable Arian influence.

Thus, no preserved source attests to the veneration of Artemios by the Antiochene Arian community. Furthermore, except in late hagiographical extrapolations of Theodoret's text, nothing indicates that the dux of Egypt died as a martyr in Antioch; consequently, there is no evidence that his cult was ever transferred from the Syrian metropolis to Constantinople.

(1997): 226–50, this Homean work is also the source of Ammianus's account.

36 See Teitler, "Ammianus, Libanius," 272; *pace* Scorza Barcellona, "Martiri e confessori" (n. 3 above), 55: "sicuramente (Philostorgio) dedicava molto spazio al racconto della vicenda del *dux Aegypti* Artemio"; Marasco, "L'imperatore Giuliano," 65.

37 Philostorgius's text has been reconstructed by Bidez, *Philostorgius* (n. 13 above); trans. in Amidon, *Philostorgius* (n. 13 above), and B. Bleckmann et al., *Philostorge: "Histoire ecclésiastique,"* ed. J. Bidez, trans. É. Des Places, rev. B. Bleckmann, D. Meyer, and J.-M. Prieur (Paris, 2013).

38 Philostorg., *HE* 3.2a = *Art. Pass.* 17.

39 E.g., *Chron. Pasch.* a. 357. For ancient sources and modern bibliography, see D. Woods, "The Date of the Translation of the Relics of SS. Luke and Andrew to Constantinople," *VChr* 45 (1991): 286–92; R. W. Burgess, "The *Passio S. Artemii*, Philostorgius, and the Dates of the Invention and Translations of the Relics of Sts Andrew and Luke," *AB* 121 (2003): 5–36.

40 Burgess, "The *Passio S. Artemii*," followed by Teitler, "Ammianus, Libanius," 274, *pace* Woods, "Date of the Translation."

41 Philostorg., *HE* 3.2a = *Art. Pass.* 17: ὁ δὲ τὴν ἱστορίαν γράφων τοιαῦτα περὶ Κωνσταντίου καὶ τοῦ μάρτυρος φάσκει.

42 Batiffol, "Un historiographe anonyme arien," 88, followed by, e.g., Brennecke, *Studien* (n. 27 above), 129. For similar reservations regarding the reconstruction of this chronicle from excerpts of the *Chronicon Paschale*, see R. W. Burgess, *Studies in Eusebian and Post-Eusebian Chronography* (Stuttgart, 1999), 122–26; F. Winkelmann, "Zur nacheusebianischen christlichen Historiographie des 4. Jahrhunderts," in *Polypleuros nous: Miscellanea für Peter Schreiner zu seinem 60. Geburtstag*, ed. C. Scholz and G. Makris (Munich, 2000), 404–14; T. C. Ferguson, *The Past Is Prologue: The Revolution of Nicene Historiography* (Leiden, 2005), 62–74.

43 *Chron. Pasch.* a. 363 = *Anonymous Homean Chronicle* F 36 (ed. Batiffol [n. 31 above]).

44 See, e.g., Brennecke, *Studien*, 127–30.

45 Ferguson, *The Past Is Prologue*, 74–78, similarly undercuts seemingly positive depictions of Constantius II as a proof of a text's Arian origin.



Let us now turn to the reasons for Febronia's enigmatic presence in Artemios's healing shrine. Because they focused on their hero, the *Miracles of Artemios* remain silent about Febronia's origin and personality. However, we can reasonably conjecture that this Constantinopolitan healer saint was identified with the homonymous Mesopotamian nun represented in hagiographical sources as martyred under Diocletian.⁴⁶ The author of the *Miracula*, who never alludes to Febronia's life and death, accords with this assumption insofar as he twice describes Febronia in the costume of a nun.⁴⁷

Little is known of Febronia's role in Constantinople beyond those brief mentions, though her cult is well attested on the empire's eastern borders and in the Latin West.⁴⁸ She also features in the Constantinopolitan *Synaxarion*, where it is recorded that she was celebrated in the Oxeia church on 25 June—that is, the day after the feast of the nativity of Saint John the Baptist.⁴⁹ An often overlooked text might indicate that some contemplated building a monument to house her body: the *Anthologia Graeca* has preserved a funerary epigram

46 The story has been preserved in many languages: Greek (*BHG* 659h), ed. P. Chiesa, *Le versioni latine della "Passio sanctae Febroniae": Storia, metodo, modelli di due traduzioni agiografiche altomedievali* (Spoleto, 1990), 368–95; Syriac (*BHO* 302), ed. P. Bedjan, "Histoire de Fébronie," in *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, vol. 5 (Paris, 1895), 573–615, trans. in S. Brock and S. Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women of the Syrian Orient* (Berkeley, 1987), 150–76; Latin (*BHL* 2843–44); Georgian, Armenian, Arabic, etc. I follow here F. Halkin, "L'œuvre de Guarimposus hagiographe napolitain. III. La passion de Ste Fébronie. *BHL* 2843," *AB* 76 (1958): 164–70, and Chiesa, *Le versioni latine*, 353–55, which state that the text was originally written in Greek and then translated in Syriac, and not the other way around as has usually been assumed since J. Simon, "Note sur l'original de la passion de Sainte Fébronie," *AB* 42 (1924): 69–76. On this dossier, see Kaplan, "Une hôtesse importante" (n. 4. above), 36–42.

47 *Mir.* 6: ἐν σχήματι μοναστρίας "in the habit of a nun"; 45: μοναχικὴν στολὴν ἐστολισμένην "dressed in monastic garb."

48 See L. C. Sandoz, "'Cachez ce sein . . .,' ou comment dire le corps des Saintes dans le récit hagiographique," in *Langages et métaphores du corps dans le monde antique*, ed. J. Wilgaux and V. Dasen (Rennes, 2008), 43–58; J.-N. Saint-Laurent, "Images de femmes dans l'hagiographie syriaque," in *L'hagiographie syriaque*, ed. A. Binggeli (Paris, 2012), 201–24, esp. 214–19. Nowadays, Febronia is still venerated in Sicily; see M. Stelladoro, *Santa Febronia: Vergine e martire sotto Diocleziano* (Gorle, 2011).

49 *Synax. Const. mensis iunii* 25.

dedicated to a nun named Febronia (εἰς Φεβρωνίαν μοναχίην).⁵⁰ Indeed, other details in the epigram correspond to what we know about Febronia: it describes the pious woman's choice to preserve her chastity by marrying Christ instead of a man and also alludes to oil lamps (vv. 7–8), which were used in the martyr's incubation shrine (see below).⁵¹

But in distinction to their treatment of Artemios, the *Miracula* do not mention the presence of any of Febronia's relics,⁵² and nothing in her story suggests that she was ever transferred to Constantinople. Stories of her martyrdom, the oldest of which seems to date back to the early seventh century,⁵³ locate the torment of Febronia within the monastic communities of Nisibis: under Diocletian, they say, this young nun of outstanding beauty refused to marry a Roman soldier and to renounce her faith. As a result, she was beheaded after being subjected to gruesome tortures, including the cutting off of her breasts and tongue and the removal of seventeen teeth. Her remains were carried into a nearby convent, where she came to be venerated.⁵⁴ We are told that the bishop of Nisibis tried to take Febronia's body in order to transfer it to his newly built church. Notwithstanding the reluctance of the nuns to pull apart the corpse of Febronia and the miraculous intervention of the martyr herself to impede the process, the bishop succeeded in

50 *Anth. Graec.* 15.34, vv. 7–8: ἔμπα γε μὴν αἰὼν ἡμετέρου βιότου | ἄρκιος εἶη θεῖον ἐπὶ προέμεν θάλαμόν μιν | Χριστοῦ, τόν ῥα νυὸν σεμνὸν ἔλ' ἀφθορίης | λαμπάδ' ἐλαίω φαιδρύνουσα φιλοπτωχείης. "But in any case the space of our life would suffice to send her forth to the holy bridal chamber of Christ, whom she took as the bridegroom of her chastity, keeping bright her lamp with the oil of love for the poor" (*The Greek Anthology*, ed. and trans. W. R. Paton, Loeb [1916–18; reprint, London, 1953], 5:140 [Greek text], 141 [translation]). The text is attributed to a deacon named Arethas, sometimes identified as the homonymous ninth-century bishop; see M. D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres: Texts and Contexts*, *WByzSt* 24 (Vienna, 2003), 113–14.

51 For an alternative identification, see Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry*, 113–14, who suggests that the dedicatee of the epigram was Hypatia-Febronia, a character who plays a role in one of the miracles performed by St. Symeon of Lesbos. See also A. Alexakis, "A Meeting of Hypatia with St. Febronia," in Sullivan, Fisher, and Papaioannou, *Byzantine Religious Culture* (n. 4 above), 19–30.

52 The part of the church dedicated to Febronia is described as a chapel (*Mir.* 33: εὐκτήριον).

53 See Kaplan, "Une hôtesse importante," 37.

54 *Passio Febroniae* (*BHG* 659). Unless otherwise specified, I refer here to the edition of the Greek text by Chiesa, *Le versioni latine*.

collecting a single tooth of the martyred young nun.⁵⁵ At first sight, the whole story seems to have been shaped in the Nisibian context for a local audience, providing the worshippers with a tale of the origins of the cult of a local celebrity as manifest both in the monastery where the remains of her body were kept and in the episcopal church of Nisibis where a tooth was displayed in a golden reliquary.

Given the scarcity of evidence, nothing beyond conjecture can be said about how Febronia's cult was imported to the healing shrine at the Oxeia. Michel Kaplan has hypothesized that her veneration could have been promoted in Constantinople at the prompting of Emperor Heraclius.⁵⁶ During military expeditions against the Persians, Nisibis was reoccupied by the Byzantines between 629 and 639; the emperor, known for carrying off other relics into the capital, might then have come in contact with Febronia. According to Kaplan, this moment may have provided the impetus to offer the first account of the saint's legend written in Greek, as the Nisibian nuns sought to dissuade the Roman administration from taking away Febronia's relics.⁵⁷ Significantly, one of Heraclius's daughters may have been named Febronia;⁵⁸ this could be evidence for imperial interest in the cult of the Mesopotamian saint. The nun with mutilated breasts would then have been installed, even without remains, as the companion of Artemios in the Church of Saint John the Baptist.



In short, tracing the conditions in which the medical cult of Artemios and Febronia developed in Constantinople remains a hazardous enterprise. There is no certainty that both healer saints came to be venerated there following their importation from the places where they were allegedly martyred. For Artemios, the hagiographical scenario of his tortured body being transferred from Antioch proves to be mistaken, and no

evidence exists that the homonymous unpopular officer condemned to death was ever venerated as a martyr in the Syrian metropolis. And from Febronia's scant dossier, we can only speculate about the circumstances in which the cult of the Mesopotamian martyr was imported into Constantinople, presumably without relics, at the impetus of Emperor Heraclius. We must therefore look for an alternative explanation for the rise of Artemios's and Febronia's joint healing cult united in a popular incubation center in Constantinople.

From Artemis Phosphoros to Artemios and Febronia

Another approach is to leave aside the stories of the sufferings of the martyrs, whose functions will be analyzed in the last part of this article, and focus on the rituals performed in the healing cult devoted to Artemios and Febronia. Artemios's *Miracles* (BHG 173) attest that an incubation cult was practiced within a Church of Saint John the Baptist and Prodomos located in an area called Oxeia (ὄξεϊα, "steep"). The text, written in the mid-seventh century by an anonymous compiler, gives a detailed and colorful picture of the arrival of pilgrims, their various ailments, and their subsequent miraculous recovery attributed to the saints' intervention during their sleep.⁵⁹ Because the shrine has not been preserved, its location and layout are known through literary evidence only.⁶⁰ According to Artemios's *Miracles*, the Oxeia incubation center, whose name implies a location on a slope, was located not far from the Domninos porticoes and probably near the actual Süleymaniye mosque (see map).⁶¹ Artemios

55 *Pass. Febr.* 41.

56 Kaplan, "Une hôtesse importante," 45–47.

57 *Ibid.*, 46.

58 See C. Mango, "On the History of the *Templon*" (n. 2 above), 12 n. 17; see also Brock and Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women*, 151, and Kaplan, "Une hôtesse importante," 46, who nevertheless point out the lack of reliable evidence about this information, as the imperial Febronia is documented only in the *menaea* and *synaxaria* and is unknown to historical sources.

59 See, e.g., Déroche, "Pourquoi écrivait-on des recueils de miracles?" (n. 2 above), 97 for the date; Lieu, "From Villain to Saint" (n. 3 above), 56–60; Crisafulli, Nesbitt, and Haldon, *Miracles of Artemios* (n. 2 above), 7–27; Csepregi, *Temple Sleep in Byzantium* (n. 1 above).

60 For conflicting reconstructions, see, e.g., N. H. Baynes, "Topographica Constantinopolitana," *JHS* 31 (1911): 266–68; C. Mango, "On the History of the *Templon*"; Crisafulli, Nesbitt, and Haldon, *Miracles of Artemios*, 9–19.

61 *Mir.* 34: πλεσιόν τῶν Δομνίνου ἐμβόλων. I follow here R. Janin, *Constantinople byzantine: Développement urbain et répertoire topographique*, 2nd rev. ed. (Paris, 1964), 400–401, map I; A. Berger, "Mokios und Konstantine der Große: Zu den Anfängen des Märtyrerkults in Konstantinopel," in *Antecessor: Festschrift for Spyros N. Troianos zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. V. A. Leontaritou et al. (Athens, 2013), 165–83, esp. 172; contra C. Mango, who locates the shrine near the actual Grand Bazaar ("On the History of the *Templon*," 2).

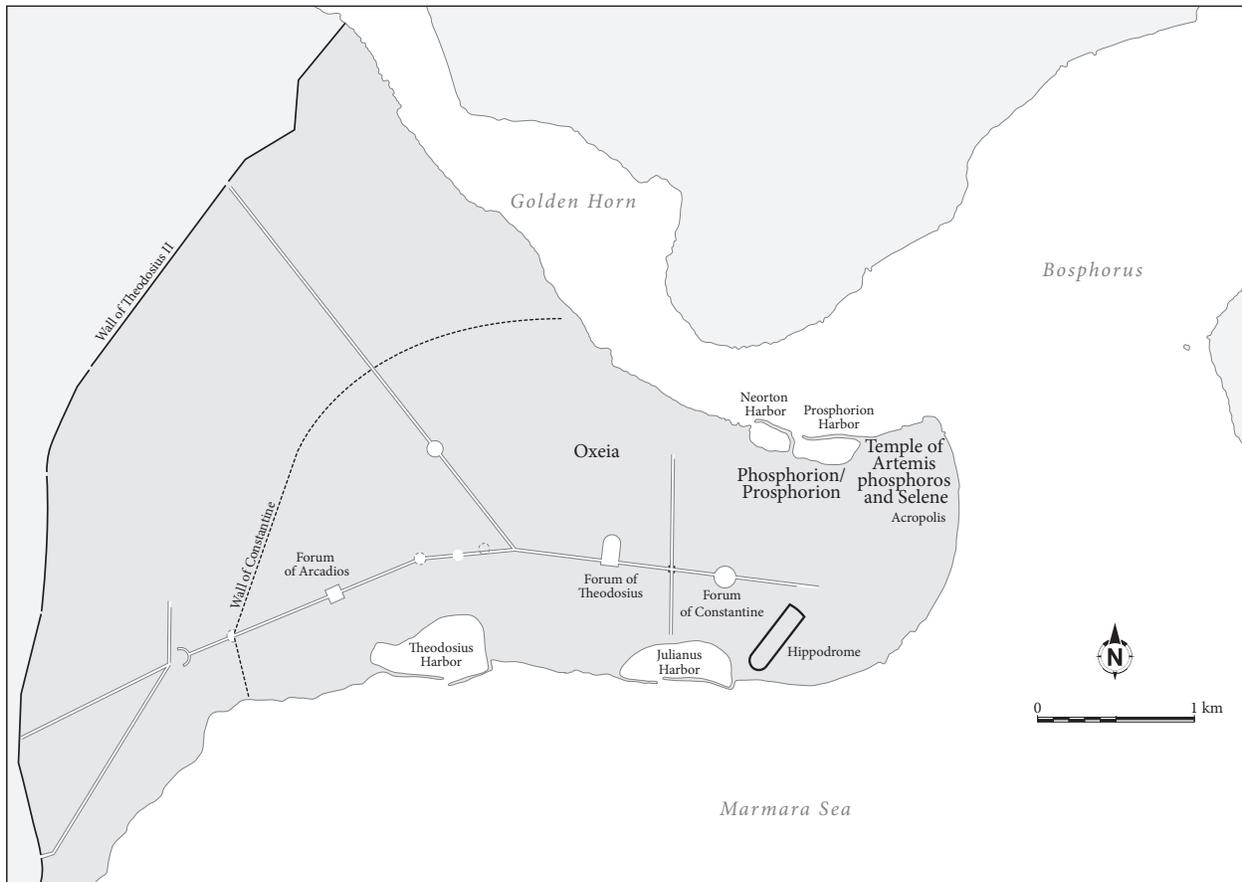


Fig. 1. Constantinople (map after F. Tessier 2003, UMR 7572).

and Febronia each occupied an aisle of the church.⁶² In addition, Artemios's relics were kept in a coffin placed in a crypt,⁶³ probably below the main altar, a placement suggesting that the building, possibly constructed in the early sixth century under Emperor Anastasius I,⁶⁴ was designed from the start as a *martyrion*.⁶⁵

I believe that this medical cult hosted in the Church of Saint John the Baptist allowed people to keep practicing some age-old rituals honoring a

local ancestral healing deity. Although the retrieval by Christians of former traditional religious practices is a matter of vigorous scholarly debate, medical saints, including in Constantinople, often appear to be somehow connected to their pre-Christian predecessors.⁶⁶ Moreover, despite having its own roots and specificities,⁶⁷ Christian temple sleep appears to have taken over its function, language, and imagery from

62 *Mir.* 24.140.

63 *Mir.* 33, 34. Some passions, as attested by the Ter Israel Synaxarium, specify that the coffin was lead, which would imply that it was dated to before the seventh century: see C. Mango, "On the History of the *Templon*," 5; Déroche, "Pourquoi écrivait-on des recueils de miracles?," 97–98 n. 9.

64 *Scrip. orig. Cpl.* 41; T. Preger, ed., *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1907), 235–36.

65 See C. Mango, "On the History of the *Templon*," 5.

66 Deubner, *De incubatione* (n. 1 above), 56–64; J. Gessler, "Note sur l'incubation et ses survivances," *Le Muséon* 59 (1946): 661–70; Déroche, "Pourquoi écrivait-on des recueils de miracles?," 96 n. 4 (with bibliography); Csepregi, *Temple Sleep in Byzantium*, 23–29.

67 See Wiśniewski, "Looking for Dreams"; Graf, "Dangerous Dreaming"; and Renberg, *Where Dreams May Come*, 745–807 (all n. 1 above), who all argue against the "pagan" origin of Christian incubation.

pagan incubation.⁶⁸ Christian healers were therefore often venerated in, or next to, sites that had been dedicated for centuries to traditional gods—for example, Asclepius in Athens and Aegae, the Dioscourai in Constantinople, Apollo and Artemis Sarpedonios in Seleucia, and Isis in Menouthis.⁶⁹ Artemios and Febronia's cult at Constantinople, like the cults in other incubation centers, may also have its origins in an earlier medical cult and not in the importation of new martyrs. A study of the local context over time enables us to assert that the couple Artemios–Febronia was substituted for a local Artemis Phosphoros. To support this statement, I will rely on a two-pronged approach. First, I will highlight some overlapping features of the old and the new cults in Byzantium,⁷⁰ such as healing practices, dedication of lamps, and common duties and abilities of those named in the cult, as well as the persistence of their names. Second, I will compare this transition from Artemis to healing saints with other similar cases.

Artemis is attested in Byzantium as a protecting, saving, and lunar goddess, sometimes represented bearing torches or a lunar crescent.⁷¹ Her origin goes back in all likelihood to the foundation of the city, when Megarian settlers brought along their saving goddess, Artemis, with the epithet φωσφόρος (light-bearer), as they did in several colonies in Propontis.⁷² In ancient

Byzantium, Artemis Phosphoros was often assimilated, confused, or associated with Hecate.⁷³ The Byzantine Phosphoros played an important role throughout history. It was told that at the siege of the city by King Philip II in 340/39 BCE, Hecate Phosphoros arose by night to repel the Macedonian armies.⁷⁴ This version of the legend identifies the eponymous goddess as Hecate, but in Megara and Athens, a similar miracle was performed by Artemis Phosphoros,⁷⁵ so both identifications were possible. In memory of this epiphany, the citizens of Byzantium presumably erected a statue of the goddess bearing torches (λαμπαδηφόρος) and named after her the neighboring harbor Phosphorion (Φωσφόριον),⁷⁶ a noun that elsewhere denotes a shrine of Artemis Phosphoros.⁷⁷

According to the second-century CE *periegetes* Dionysus of Byzantium, on the European side of the Bosphorus, not far from Apollo's shrine, was a shrine dedicated to Artemis Phosphoros (τέμενος Ἀρτέμιδος Φωσφόρου) where the goddess was worshipped each year, together with Aphrodite Praeia ("gentle").⁷⁸

68 See, e.g., V. Nutton, "From Galen to Alexander: Aspects of Medicine and Medical Practice in Late Antiquity," in *Symposium on Byzantine Medicine*, ed. J. Scarborough, *DOP* 38 (1984): 1–14, esp. 7; J.-M. Sansterre, "Apparitions et miracles à Ménouthis: De l'incubation païenne à l'incubation chrétienne," in *Apparitions et Miracles*, ed. A. Dierkens (Brussels, 1991), 69–83; Csepregi, *Temple Sleep in Byzantium*, 23–29.

69 See the overview by Csepregi, *Temple Sleep in Byzantium*.

70 On the need to study similarities between pagan and Christian cults over long periods, I follow here P. Sauzeau, "De la déesse Héra à la Panaghia: Réflexions sur le problème des continuités religieuses en Grèce et en Grande-Grèce," *RHR* 3 (2007): 289–317; contra Renberg, *Where Dreams May Come*, 807, who argues that the shared elements in Greek incubation and Christian suppliant sleep provide no evidence for a pattern continuing from a pagan temple to a Christian shrine.

71 See L. Robert in N. Firatli, *Les stèles funéraires de Byzance gréco-romaine, avec un appendice de Louis Robert* (Paris, 1964), 153–59 (with previous bibliography); D. Chiekova, *Cultes et vie religieuse des cités grecques du Pont gauche (VI^e–I^{er} siècles avant J.-C.)* (Bern, 2008), 170–76; M. Dana, "Entre Crimée et Bosphore: D'une parthenos à l'autre," *Mètis*, n.s. 10 (2012): 286–308, esp. 301–2.

72 On Artemis Soteira/Phosphoros at Megara, see P. Lévêque and C. Antonetti, "Au carrefour de la Mégaride: Devins et oracles," *Kernos*

3 (1990): 197–209, esp. 198; Dana, "Entre Crimée et Bosphore," 301–2 (with previous bibliography). As in Megara, Artemis was represented in the civic coinage of Byzantium: in Megara, see R. S. Poole, *A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum*, vol. 11, *Attica, Megaris, Aegina* (London, 1888), 122 no. 48; 124 nos. 55–56; in Byzantium, see E. Schönert-Geiss, *Die Münzprägung von Byzanzion*, vol. 2, *Kaiserzeit* (Berlin, 1972), 35–36, nos. 1908–75.

73 Dana, "Entre Crimée et Bosphore," 301–2, stresses the impossibility of making clear distinctions between the two goddesses. On Artemis Soteira/Phosphoros/Hecate at Erythraea: F. Graf, *Nordionische Kulte: Religionsgeschichtliche und epigraphische Untersuchungen zu den Kulturen von Chios, Erythrai, Klazomenai und Phokaia* (Rome, 1985), 228–36.

74 Hesych., *FGrHist*, 390 F 1, 27; Stephanus Byzantius, s.v. Βόσπορος.

75 In Megara: Pausanias 1.40.2; in Athens: Clemens, *Stromateis* 1.163.2.

76 Hesych., *FGrHist*, 390 F 1, 27 (ed. Jacoby); Steph. Byz., s.v. Βόσπορος.

77 E.g., in Didyma: *I. Didyma* 29, l. 15: τὸν Φωσφόριον (ed. R. Rehm, *Didyma*, vol. 2, *Die Inschriften* [Berlin, 1958]); in Kabyle: *IGBulg.* 3.2.1731, l. 29: τὸ Φωσφόριον (G. Mihailov, *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria Repertae*, vol. 3.2, *Inscriptiones inter Haemum et Rhodopem Repertae; Fasciculus Posterior: A Territorio Philippopolitano usque ad Oram Ponticam* [Sofia, 1964]). See Robert in Firatli, *Les stèles funéraires*, 158; K. Tuchelt, *Vorarbeiten zu einer Topographie von Didyma* (Tübingen, 1973), 37–38; Chiekova, *Cultes et vie religieuse*, 173.

78 Dion. Byz., *Anapl. Bosp.* 36: τέμενος Ἀρτέμιδος Φωσφόρου καὶ Ἀφροδίτης Πραείας, ἢ κατ' ἔτος θύουσι Βυζάντιοι; R. Güngerich, *Dionysii Byzantii Anaplus Bospori* (Berlin, 1927), 16.

Malalas mentions a similar temple, dedicated to Artemis Selene (the moon), on Constantinople's acropolis.⁷⁹ Constantine ordered that this temple, together with the temples of Helios and of Aphrodite, should no longer receive revenue.⁸⁰ Possibly associated with the lunar goddesses Hecate and Selene, these Artemisian sacred places were located in the area named after the epiphany of the Phosphoros. It is relevant to note here that this harbor, the oldest of the city,⁸¹ was known by three names: besides its theophoric name, people used to call it Bosporion, in reference to the mythological episode of Io transformed into a heifer by Zeus and chased by Hera,⁸² as well as Proosphorion, in reference to its location near a cattle market.⁸³ According to Eustathius of Thessalonike,⁸⁴ the alteration of *Bosporion* to *Phosphorion* reflected not mere phonetic confusion but rather a deliberate intention to celebrate the nocturnal epiphany of the Phosphoros during Philip II's siege. As Madalina Dana suggests, this multiple naming was probably also a means to

stress the localness of the Byzantine Phosphoros.⁸⁵ As time passed, the three names apparently came to refer indifferently to the guardian deity of Byzantium.⁸⁶

The area hosting Artemis/Hecate Phosphoros's cult seems to have witnessed healing activities and dedication of lamps over a long period, as recent excavations in the Phosphorion harbor have unearthed numerous Roman and Byzantine lamps as well as medical instruments.⁸⁷ Because such artifacts are often found in pagan and Christian medical shrines, we can surmise that the area surrounding the Proosphorion hosted a medical cult as well.⁸⁸ The healing specialization of Artemis Phosphoros is closely paralleled in a second-century CE oracle found in Ephesos: when petitioners asked how to overcome a plague, Apollo enjoined them to erect in their city a golden statue of the Ephesian Artemis with torches (l. 8: λαμπάσι πυρσοφόροις) so that, during the night, "she would deliver them from affliction and dissolve the poison of pestilence" (ll. 6–7: ἀλύξει πῆματα καὶ λοίμοιο . . . φάρμα[κ]α λύσει).⁸⁹ Similarly, in several places Artemis Phosphoros seems to have been associated with the dedication of lamps (e.g., in Delos, where lamps with the effigy of a goddess Phosphoros have been excavated),⁹⁰ as well as with incubation (e.g., in Messene, where Pausanias saw a statue of Artemis Phosphoros in the Asklepieion, the medical shrine of Asclepius).⁹¹

79 Mal., *Chron.* 13.13: τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος σελήνης; I refer here to the edition of J. Thurn, *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia*, CFHB—Series Berolinensis 35 (Berlin, 2000). On Artemis as moon goddess, see M. Christopoulos, "The Light Imagery of Divine Manifestation in Homer," in *Light and Darkness in Ancient Greek Myth and Religion*, ed. M. Christopoulos, E. Karakantza, and O. Levaniouk (Lanham, MD, 2010), 91–164, esp. 137, 140.

80 Mal., *Chron.* 13.13: Καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ χρόνῳ ὁ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς Κωνσταντῖνος τοὺς ὄντας ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει τρεῖς ναοὺς ἐν τῇ πρῶν λεγομένη ἀκροπόλει τοῦ Ἡλίου καὶ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος σελήνης καὶ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης ἐκέλευσεν ἀχρηματίστους τοῦ λοιποῦ διαμεῖναι. "In that year the emperor Constantine gave orders that the three temples in Constantinople on what was formerly known as the Acropolis—the temple of Helios, of Artemis the moon, and of Aphrodite—should remain in the future without revenues"; *The Chronicle of John Malalas: A Translation*, trans. E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, and R. Scott, ByzAus 4 (Melbourne, 1986), 176.

81 On this harbor, see N. Günsenin, "City' Harbours from Antiquity through Medieval Times," in *Between Continents: Proceedings of the Twelfth Symposium on Boat and Ship Archaeology, Istanbul 2009*, ed. N. Günsenin (Istanbul, 2012), 99–105, esp. 100–102; P. Magdalino, "The Harbors of Byzantine Constantinople," in *Stories from the Hidden Harbor: Shipwrecks of Yenicapı*, ed. Ö. M. Koç and Z. Kızıltan (Istanbul, 2013), 11–15, esp. 13–14.

82 Steph. Byz., s.v. Βόσπορος. See Dana, "Entre Crimée et Bosphore," 303 n. 64.

83 Ps-Codinus, *Patria* 3.149. See P. Magdalino, "Maritime Neighborhoods of Constantinople: Commercial and Residential Functions, Sixth to Twelfth Centuries," *DOP* 54 (2000): 209–26, esp. 226 n. 107.

84 Eust., *Comm. in Dionys. Perieg.* 142.

85 Dana, "Entre Crimée et Bosphore," 303–4.

86 See Janin, *Constantinople byzantine* (n. 61 above), 17, maps 2, 3; Magdalino, "Harbors of Byzantine Constantinople," 13.

87 See the preliminary results presented by R. Asal and S. Eskalen in "The Proosphorion Harbor in the Light of the Marmaray Archaeological Excavations" (<http://sgsymposium.ku.edu.tr/rahmiasalsuleymaneskalen>, accessed 2 February 2018).

88 See B. Caseau, "Les hôpitaux byzantins: Modernité et flexibilité," in *Les établissements hospitaliers en France du Moyen Âge au XIX^e siècle: Espaces, objets et populations*, ed. S. Le Clech-Charton (Dijon, 2010), 221–34, esp. 227.

89 R. Merkelbach and J. Stauber, "Die Orakel des Apollon von Klaros," *Epigraphica Anatolica* 27 (1996): 1–53, no. 11. On this text, see F. Graf, "An Oracle against Pestilence from a Western Anatolian Town," *ZPapEpig* 92 (1992): 267–79; A. Busine, *Paroles d'Apollon: Pratiques et traditions oraculaires dans l'Antiquité tardive (I^{er}–VI^e siècles)* (Leiden, 2005), 175–76.

90 See P. Bruneau, *Les Lampes*, Exploration archéologique de Délos 26 (Paris, 1965), 99–100.

91 Paus. 4.31.10. See P. Sineux, "À propos de l'Asclépieion de Messène: Asclépios poliade et guérisseur," *REG* 110 (1997): 1–24, esp. 9, 21–22. On Artemis's link to Asclepius via display of her

These specifics of Artemis Phosphoros's cult are found in the nearby Christian incubation shrine of Artemios and Febronia.⁹² Indeed, an original feature of Artemios is his specialization in the cure of male inguinal and testicular hernias. Febronia's cures are far less lavishly documented, but the author of the *Miracles of Artemios* says in passing that she likewise was in charge of female patients suffering from genital afflictions.⁹³ Incubation rituals were there accompanied with the dedication of votive lamps, sometimes next to Artemios's relics. Just as in pagan incubation centers,⁹⁴ oil lamps were offered in the Oxeia church as a votive gift before or after a successful incubation, and they also played here a particular role in the miraculous healings.⁹⁵ The similarity between pagan and Christian use of votive lamps had already alarmed some Christians, who were suspicious of the possible pagan origin of such religious practices.⁹⁶ Interestingly, Artemis Phosphoros's and Artemios–Febronia's cults are linked not only by particular rituals but also by the date of the annual festivals. We know that festivals called either Phosphoria⁹⁷ or Bosporia⁹⁸ were annually organized in Byzantium in honor of the Phosphoros. They consisted of torchlight races performed by youths and held during the goddess's eponymous month,

healing power, see Y. Morizot, "Artémis, l'eau et la vie humaine," *BCH Suppl.* 28 (1994): 201–16, esp. 211–12.

92 On the cult, see also P. Maas, "Artemioskult in Konstantinopel," *BNJ* 1 (1920): 377–80; Lieu, "From Villain to Saint" (n. 3 above), 56–60; Crisafulli, Nesbitt, and Haldon, *Miracles of Artemios* (n. 2 above), 19–26; S. Efthymiadis, "A Day and Then Months in the Life of a Lonely Bachelor: The Other Byzantium in *Miracula S. Artemii* 18 and 22," *DOP* 58 (2004): 1–26.

93 *Mir.* 24, 45. The imbalance in existing evidence does not mean that Febronia played only a subsidiary role in the cult, as she appears several times with John the Baptist and Artemios as the equivalent of her male counterparts: e.g., in *Mir.* 22.132. See Kaplan, "Une hôtesse importante" (n. 4 above), 32–33.

94 On the dedication of lamps in pagan cult until the sixth or perhaps seventh century, see R. MacMullen, *Christianisme et Paganisme du IV^e au VIII^e siècle*, trans. Franz Regnot (Paris, 1998), 84–85 (originally published as *Christianity and Paganism in the Fourth to Eighth Centuries* [1997]).

95 E.g., *Mir.* 4, 15, 19, 34, 37.

96 See Jerome, *Contra Vigilantium* 4, quoted by MacMullen, *Christianisme et Paganisme*, 161.

97 Hesychius Alexandrinus, s.v. Φωσφόρεια· έορτή.

98 A. Łajtar, ed., *Die Inschriften von Byzantion*, vol. 1, *Die Inschriften* (Bonn, 2000), l. 4: τὰ Βοσπόρια

Bosporios⁹⁹—that is, in June.¹⁰⁰ And the annual feasts organized in honor of Saint John the Baptist and Febronia were, just like the Bosporia, organized in June, on the 24th and the 25th, respectively.¹⁰¹

The similarities between the old and the new medical cult, including the identity of their sacred calendars, are not the only elements that support the claim that Artemis Phosphoros was replaced by Artemios and Febronia. First, the hypothesis is given credence by the carryover of the names. Though the old theories systematically linking a saint to a specific pagan god have (correctly) been rejected,¹⁰² the similarity of Artemis and Artemios here should not be overlooked:¹⁰³ elsewhere, in the same context of incubation, the name of a fictitious healer saint, Cyrus (Κύρος), derives in all likelihood from the title κυρά (mistress) qualifying the goddess (the Golden Lady or Isis) that the saint eventually replaced at Menouthis.¹⁰⁴ The likeness of the appellations Artemios and Artemis has never been pointed out by modern scholars, who have instead relied on the story of the translation of the *dux's* relics from Antioch (discussed above). However, once we acknowledge that

99 See *ibid.*, ll. 1–6: Ὀλυμπιόδωρος Μενδιδῶρου στεφανωθεὶς | τῆι λαμπάδι τῶν ἀνή|βων τὰ Βοσπόρια τὸ | ἄθλον Ερμῆι καὶ Ἡρακλεῖ ("Olympiodoros son of Mendidoros, winner of the torch race of the youths organized during the Bosporia, dedicated his prize to Hermes and Heracles"). See Robert in Firatli, *Les stèles funéraires*, 154; Dana, "Entre Crimée et Bosphore," 304–6; A. Robu, "Associations dionysiaques, communautés rurales et cultes à Byzance à l'époque impériale," *Dialogues d'histoire ancienne* 2016, no. 1 (Suppl. 15): 251–66, esp. 254.

100 For the date, see C. Trümpy, *Untersuchungen zu den altgriechischen Monatsnamen und Monatsfolgen* (Heidelberg, 1997), 147.

101 Kaplan, "Une hôtesse importante," 34. In addition, the shrine hosted every Saturday an all-night vigil (*pannychis*) that was supervised by a lay sodality and that included a banquet for the fellow incubants: see *Mir.* 15, 18, 19, 22, 29, 33, 36, 39, 40, 41, etc.

102 See M. Van Uytenghe, "L'hagiographie: Un 'genre' chrétien ou antique tardif?," *AB* 111 (1993): 135–88, esp. 136 n. 2; *idem*, "L'origine, l'essor et les fonctions du culte des Saints: Quelques repères pour un débat ouvert," *Cassiodorus* 2 (1996): 143–96, esp. 144–45 (with bibliography).

103 On homonymy as a hinting at (but not proving) continuity between cults, see, e.g., Sauzeau, "De la déesse Héra à la Panaghia," 296.

104 See Sansterre, "Apparitions et miracles" (n. 68 above); J. Gascou, "Les origines du culte des Saints Cyr et Jean," *AB* 125 (2007): 241–81. At Eleusis, Demeter's name was similarly transferred onto Saint Demetrios, who gradually became the local patron of agriculture and heir to the pagan mother goddess; see H. Kloft, *Mysterienkulte der Antike: Götter, Menschen, Rituale* (Munich, 2010), 25.

martyrdom narratives about the alleged foreign origin of Artemios's cult should not be given much credit, there is nothing that prevents us from explaining this obvious homonymy as resulting from an alteration of the name of the healing goddess—as happened, for example, in Cyrus's and John's Egyptian incubation shrine.

At first glance, the name Febronia has no obvious link with Artemis Phosphoros. Nonetheless, one can find clues in the names of the characters who have roles in her legend. Given that Febronia's story is a piece of fiction, scholars have neglected to analyze those names in a historical perspective, for they have agreed with the sentiment expressed by Sebastian Brock: “[N]eedless to say, one will search in vain for any confirmation that these persons ever existed.”¹⁰⁵ However, by studying the names of nonhistorical characters the historian can gain some worthwhile information, as the choice of fictitious agents reflects the environment in which the hagiographer lived.¹⁰⁶ I am convinced that some names in Febronia's *Passion* were inspired by the Artemisian context in which Febronia's healing cult developed. Indeed, among the characters created by the hagiographer, some Roman officers have plausible Graeco-Roman names, such as the prefect Anthimos, his nephew Lysimachos, and Primos, Lysimachos's cousin. Some nuns have eastern-sounding names, such as Bryenis, Thomais, and Febronia. And strikingly, a senator playing a subsidiary role is called Proosphoros (Προσφόρος), a very rare name that refers precisely to Artemis's epithet and to sacred geography in Byzantium. Without a link between Artemis Phosphoros and Febronia, it is difficult to explain why such an uncommon name appears in the *Passion* of the nun of Nisibis. In addition, the names of three other personages—namely, Selenos (Σέληνος),¹⁰⁷ the brother of Anthimos; Aitheria (Αιθήρια), one of the

nuns; and Hieria (Ίέρεια), the daughter of a senator—are actually derived from attributes of Artemis as Selene, Aitheria, and Hieria.¹⁰⁸ The borrowing of Artemis's epithets in Febronia's story should be seen as evoking the Constantinopolitan context in which her cult developed. It is worth recalling here that the memory of Artemis in Constantinople did not fade after traditional cults were officially prohibited. In the sixth century, a street near her temple was still called “the Deer,” which is one of Artemis's attributes.¹⁰⁹ According to Malalas, Artemis's temple had been transformed into a gambling house for dice players by Theodosius I, but “this area was still called ‘the temple’ until now” (that is, the sixth century).¹¹⁰

The transition from Artemis Phosphoros into the couple Artemios–Febronia is additionally supported by the commonality of the goddess's and the saints' duties and aspects.¹¹¹ In the above-mentioned oracle regarding a plague, Apollo describes the light-bearer Artemis as chaste (l. 16: Ἀρτεμιν ἀγνήν), providing deliverance from affliction (ll. 6–7: ἀλύξει πῆματα) and aiding the birth and growing up of mortals (l. 4: μαῖα καὶ αὐξήτειρα βροτῶν).¹¹² The role of the light-bearer deity as a healer and guardian of childbirth is echoed in Artemios's and Febronia's specialization in curing genital illnesses. While Artemios was solicited by male patients suffering from testicular injuries and hernias, Febronia appears to have taken over Artemis's preoccupation with female fertility.¹¹³

That an Artemis gave way to a female healing saint has a meaningful parallel in Seleucia, in Cilicia, where Saint Thecla took over the site of the medical cult

105 Brock and Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women* (n. 46 above), 151.

106 Cf. J.-M. Spieser, “Le culte de Saint Démétrius à Thessalonique,” in *Des dieux civiques aux saints locaux*, ed. S. Destephen, B. Dumézil, and H. Inglebert (Paris, 2015), 275–91, esp. 277: “On peut se rappeler l'idée, largement répandue et généralement juste, que, lorsque des détails concrets s'inscrivent dans un texte dont la valeur historique est faible, ce n'est pas sans raison, mais celle-ci est à chercher dans la stratégie de l'auteur du texte plutôt qu'à considérer comme souvenir ou écho d'un lointain passé.”

107 See the Bollandists' edition in the *AASS* (Σέληνος) and in the *Synax. Const. mensis iunii* 25 (Σέληνος). Chiesa, *Le versioni latine* (n. 46 above) chose the variant Σελίνος, with iotacism.

108 On Artemis Σελήνη, see, e.g., Cornutus, *De nat. deor.* 65; Plutarch, *QConv.* 3.659a and the temple on the acropolis of Constantinople mentioned by Mal., *Chron.* 13.13 (see above). On Artemis Αιθήρια, see, e.g., Artemidorus, *Oneir.* 2.34.6–8. On Artemis Ίέρεια, see, e.g., Paus. 7.44.2.

109 Mal., *Chron.* 13.38: ἡ δὲ πλησίον ῥύμη τὸ ἐλάφιν.

110 Ibid.: ὅστις τόπος κέκληται ἕως τῆς νῦν ὁ ναός. In the eighth century, two statues of Artemis were still exposed in Constantine's and Arcadius's fora: *Parastaseis* 8, 20.

111 On the shared qualities of deities and saints as a sign of continuity between traditional and Christian cults, see Sauzeau, “De la déesse Héra à la Panaghia.”

112 Merkelbach and Stauber, *Die Orakel*, no. 11.

113 On Artemis's relation to the reproductive cycle, see, e.g., Plut., *QConv.* 3.658–59. See S. Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, MA, 1995), 44–45.

of Apollo and Artemis Sarpedonios.¹¹⁴ According to one of Thecla's hagiographers, it was the virgin Artemis (τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος . . . παρθένου οὔσης) herself who passed on her curative powers to the pious healing saint.¹¹⁵ In Ephesos, the Virgin Mary, described by Cyrillus of Alexandria as "purifier of the temple of Artemis" (τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος καθαιρέτα),¹¹⁶ explicitly replaced the old poliadic goddess and assumed her attribute as "light-bearer" (φωτοφόρος).¹¹⁷ The replacement of Artemis by holy Christian figures, whether Thecla, Mary, or Febronia, was surely facilitated by the goddess's classical qualities of being chaste (ἀγνή) and a virgin (παρθένος), two virtues congruent with the Christian ideal of female holiness.¹¹⁸ This shift from Artemis to a Christian figure was sometimes dramatized by Christian writers, as shown in a sixth-century *ex eventu* prophecy: in an oracle supposedly given to Augustus, Artemis moans when asked about the fate of her sacred precinct because she anticipates the arrival soon of Christ.¹¹⁹



114 See C. Nissen, "Un oracle médical de Sarpédon à Séleucie du Calycadnos," *Kernos* 14 (2001): 111–31.

115 *BHG* 1718m; ed. G. Dagron, *Vie et Miracles de Sainte Thècle* (Brussels, 1978), appendix, 420, ll. 163–69.

116 Cyril. Alex., *Hom.* 11, *Encomium in sanctam Mariam Deiparam*, PG 77, col. 1032 B.

117 *Ibid.*, col. 1032 C. The Virgin Mary is also described as a light-bearing torch in the Akathistos Hymn; see V. Limberis, *Divine Heiress: The Virgin Mary and the Making of Christian Constantinople* (London, 1994), 149–58, esp. 157.

118 On Artemis ἀγνή, see, e.g., *IGBulg.* 1², 306, and *ICallatis* 32 (ed. A. Avram, *Callatis et territorium*, vol. 3 of *Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris Graeciae et Latinae* [Bucharest, 1999]); on Artemis παρθένος, see, e.g., Antoninus Liberalis, *Met.* 2.6; *IG* 12.5.215; *Bulletin épigraphique*, 1964, no. 193 = *SEG* 23, 220, etc.

119 *Tüb. Theos.* 51 (ed. Erbse) = 1.52 (ed. Beatrice): H. Erbse, ed., *Theosophorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, Teubner (Stuttgart, 1995), 33–34; P. F. Beatrice, *Anonymi Monophysitae Theosophia: An Attempt at Reconstruction* (Leiden, 2001), 25. See L. Foschia, "Les mythes de la fin du paganisme dans le monde grec (III^e–VI^e siècles)," in *Mythes et sociétés en Méditerranée orientale: Entre le sacré et le profane, Actes du colloque international Delphes, 19–21 octobre 2000* (Lille, 2005), 89–104, esp. 97–98; A. Busine, "The Discovery of Inscriptions and the Legitimation of New Cults," in *Historical and Religious Memory in the Ancient World*, ed. B. Dignas and R. R. R. Smith (Oxford, 2012), 241–56, esp. 245.

All in all, an analysis of the specifics of the cult and attributes of Artemis Phosphoros sheds light on how the cult of Artemios and Febronia arose in Constantinople. As attested by external evidence, the Byzantine Artemis's duties of healing were thrust on the pair of healer saints in two ways: through the alteration of the goddess's name into that of a homonymous martyr and through her replacement by a pious Christian virgin with similar virtues. Yet it remains hard to reconstruct the steps of the transformation of a poliadic god into two Christian saints. I propose here that it resulted from a long process, involving uninterrupted cultic practices in the area of Artemis Phosphoros's worship—that is, around the Phosphorion harbor and the acropolis—just as happened in Roman and Byzantine Corinth at the so-called Fountain of the Lamps, a site where hundreds of lamps were dedicated by both pagans and Christians, sometimes simultaneously.¹²⁰ Then, in the course of the sixth century, the popular Constantinopolitan medical cult, whether pagan or Christian, would have been taken by ecclesiastical authorities and transferred to the Church of Saint John the Baptist at the Oxeia, about 1.5 kilometers west of the area dedicated to Artemis Phosphoros.¹²¹ This shift might have been contemporaneous and ultimately linked to the silting up of the Phosphorion. Be that as it may, Artemios's presumed relics were then officially translated to the new incubation shrine in the nearby Oxeia, where other local saints, such as Lukillianos,¹²² were already venerated. Soon thereafter, the cult of Febronia was imported there as well and associated with that of the male healing saint.

The Making of Hagiographical Legends

Even after accepting that Artemios and Febronia were substituted for the healing goddess Artemis Phosphoros, we still must determine how their role as medical saints in Byzantium and the stories of their martyrdom and transfer to the capital are related.

120 See R. M. Rothaus, *Corinth: The First City of Greece; An Urban History of Late Antique Cult and Religion* (Leiden, 2000), 126–34.

121 See Brock and Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women* (n. 46 above), 151; Déroche, "Pourquoi écrivait-on des recueils de miracles?" (n. 2 above), 97–98 n. 9.

122 See Berger, "Mokios und Konstantine der Große" (n. 61 above), 171–72.

Let us recall that reciting passions was part of various celebrations during which the clergy sought to provide worshippers with a shared identity.¹²³ Inserting martyrs into the grand history of the persecuted church also contributed to creating a local Christian history that could be made relevant to a specific city.¹²⁴ In this attempt, historical accuracy was not the main concern of hagiographers, who instead aimed at extolling exemplary heroes who embodied Christian virtues. For these reasons, the Christianization of the traditional cult of Artemis Phosphoros led to the creation of stories granting her Christian substitutes the status of martyrs. In this final section of the paper, I will analyze the ways in which these *Passions* were elaborated in practice as well as the various functions these narratives fulfilled in the Constantinopolitan context.

The legend of Febronia is purported to have been recorded by one of her fellow nuns, Thomais,¹²⁵ although scholars have rightly questioned the text's authenticity and historical value.¹²⁶ It seems to have been composed not earlier than the sixth century, when the cult of Febronia was attested in Nisibis.¹²⁷ Thus, the attestation of a *comes* under Diocletian is anachronistic, as is the mention of a flourishing monastery at the beginning of the fourth century, since cenobitic monasticism had not developed in North Mesopotamia at that time.¹²⁸ As in many hagiographical accounts, the tale of the adventures and bravery of the young nun also integrates episodes borrowed from the Greek novel.¹²⁹ On close inspection, this text appears to belong to the literary genre of the "passion épique," devoid of historical value and aimed rather at supporting the paradigm of

female holiness.¹³⁰ Set against the backdrop of monastic life in East Syria, the lengthy descriptions of tortures undergone by the nun were intended to underscore the significance of suffering as a reenactment of the passion of Christ. All the same, there is not even a hint that the historical nun around whose name this passion was woven ever existed. Nevertheless, the *Passion* as it was constructed in the Nisibian context appears to function as the foundation myth of the local cult of Febronia, both in the convent where her body was kept and in the episcopal church of Nisibis, to which the bishop managed to bring one of the nun's teeth.

As the story of Febronia's life and martyrdom does not connect the Mesopotamian nun and her Constantinopolitan cult, scholars have traditionally assumed that the text of Febronia's passion has no connection with her cult in Constantinople. However, I am convinced that whatever Heraclius's intervention in this event, implanting the Nisibian nun in the capital as a medical saint involved altering the original version of her martyrdom by adding names linked to Artemis, such as Selene, Aitheria, Hiereia, and above all Proosphoros, which echoes the epithet of the local Artemis together with the place where she was venerated (as discussed above). In the same vein, it should be noted that the name of the woman who carried out the relics of Artemios, Ariste, albeit relatively common, is also an epithet of Artemis.¹³¹ That hagiographers borrowed local names known by their audience in order to enliven fictitious characters is attested in other hagiographical works.¹³² Using this device, Febronia's hagiographers have multiplied the characters playing a role in the story, who were given names derived from various epithets of the Byzantine Artemis whom the tortured

123 On the importance of the reading of martyrdom and miracle stories in forming collective memory, see A. M. Yasin, *Saints and Churches in the Late Antique Mediterranean: Architecture, Cult, and Community* (Cambridge, 2009), 240–50 (245–50 for miracles).

124 See R. A. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1990), 90–95; A. Busine, "Les représentations chrétiennes de l'histoire des cités dans l'Orient romain," in *Des dieux civiques aux saints locaux*, ed. S. Destephen, B. Dumézil, and H. Inglebert (Paris, 2015), 235–48.

125 *Pass. Febr.* 43.

126 See, e.g., Brock and Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women*, 150; Kaplan, "Une hôtesse importante" (n. 4 above), 35; Saint-Laurent, "Images de femmes" (n. 48 above), 214–17.

127 On the date, see Kaplan, "Une hôtesse importante," 38.

128 Brock and Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women*, 151, 154.

129 See Saint-Laurent, "Images de femmes," 214–15.

130 See F. Halkin, "La passion grecque des Saintes Libyè, Eutropie et Léonis, martyres à Nisibe," *AB* 76 (1958): 293–315, esp. 299–300; Brock and Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women*, 150.

131 On Artemis ἀρίστη, see, e.g., *SEG* 18.87; Paus. 1.29.2

132 E.g., in the *Life of Abercius* of Hierapolis, the *Passio of Ariadne* of Prynnessos, the *Life of Porphyry* of Gaza, and the *Passio of Basil* of Ancyra. See P. J. Thonemann, "Abercius of Hierapolis: Christianisation and Social Memory in Late Antique Asia Minor," in Dignas and Smith, *Historical and Religious Memory in the Ancient World*, 257–82; idem, "The Martyrdom of Ariadne of Prynnessos and an Inscription from Perge," *Chiron* 45 (2015): 145–68; A. Busine, "From Stones to Myth: Temple Destruction and Civic Identities in the Late Antique Roman East," *JLA* 6 (2013): 325–46; eadem, "Basil and Basilissa at Ancyra" (forthcoming). See also H. Delehay, *Les passions des martyrs et genres littéraires* (Brussels, 1921), 177.

nun replaced. A similar process is seen in the retention for centuries of Artemisian terms in the geography of the Christian capital (discussed above). Consequently, the text as we read it now should be viewed as a reshuffling of the original eastern version, which was modified so that the past life of the new healer saint could be tied to the local tradition of miraculous healing in Constantinople.



The making of the legend of Artemios took a somewhat different course. Artemis's male successor, like her female successor, Febronia, needed for cultic and cultural reasons to be the hero of an edifying story that would grant qualities congruent with the Christian ideal of sainthood. Let us recall that fictitious hagiography, like a historical novel, attributes imaginary facts to real characters, thereby remaining rooted in history, topography, or both. In most cases, the only data that can be derived with any certainty from these fictional compositions are the name of the saint, the existence of the sanctuary, and the date of his or her celebration day.¹³³ Drawing on the name of Artemios and the sanctuary where he performed miracles together with Febronia, hagiographers invented a life for the healer saint. In doing so, they were inspired by reading in Theodoret that a homonymous *dux Aegypti* was beheaded by Emperor Julian.¹³⁴ It is worth noting that the identity of the male Christian healer was at the time subject to speculation: some clients of the shrine were surprised to “have heard recently” (ἐναγχος ἀκηκόαμεν) that Artemios had been *dux*, because they thought that he had instead been a physician, just as other medical saints were assumed to be.¹³⁵ The success in identifying the Christian healer with the fourth-century *dux* is certainly linked to the latter's condemnation by Julian, who over time had become the iconic pagan persecutor. Increasing the list of Julianic martyrs,¹³⁶ the unpopular military officer close to the Arian party was then turned into a martyr

tortured in Antioch by the apostate emperor for no other reason than that he was a Christian.

In order to produce a piece of fictitious hagiography, the terse account of the church historian was expanded, just as the entire *Passions* of Marcellos of Apamea (*BHG* 1026, 1027) and Basil of Ancyra (*BHG* 242) were built from single passages of Theodoret¹³⁷ and Sozomen,¹³⁸ respectively. Usually, narratives conclude with the heroic resistance of the saint, his overlong interrogation, and a detailed description of his ordeal.¹³⁹ As Artemios refused to renounce his faith, Emperor Julian burned his back, crushed him between stone slabs until his eyes popped out of their orbits, and finally had him beheaded.¹⁴⁰

In creating the story, Artemios's hagiographers incorporated elements borrowed from legends of other martyrs. Thus, the *dux's* destiny was related to that of Eugenios and Makarios, two more famous Antiochene priests who, after a vivid debate in which they had mocked the pagan doctrines of neo-Pythagoreans and Hermes Trismegistos, were arrested by Julian and subsequently tortured and exiled:¹⁴¹ while the *Passions* devoted to Eugenios and Makarios (*BHG* 2126, 2127) do not mention Artemios, we are told here that the motive for the *dux's* martyrdom was precisely his objection to Julian's ill-treatment of these Antiochene priests.¹⁴²

In short, the story of Artemios was based on the account of Theodoret and then embroidered with hagiographical topoi and elements borrowed from other martyrdom stories. It is important to remember here that as far as the historical Artemios is concerned, the authors of the short and long *Passions* relied only on the scarce data they found in Theodoret. The author of the longer *Passion* then enhanced the story summarized in the earlier version with substantial borrowings from church historians, mainly Philostorgius. That is why he also integrated into his story events unrelated to the life of Artemios, such as the civil war between

133 H. Delehaye, *Les légendes hagiographiques* (Brussels, 1927), 108.

134 Theodoret, *HE* 3.18.

135 *Mir.* 24.

136 On the process of “julianisation des légendes,” see Dufourcq, “Gestes d’Artemios” (n. 6 above), 242. See also B. de Gaiffier, “Sub Iuliano Apostata’ dans le martyrologe romain,” *AB* 54 (1956): 5–49.

137 Theodoret, *HE* 5.22. See H. Delehaye, “Saints et reliquaires d’Apamée,” *AB* 53 (1935): 225–44; Busine, “From Stones to Myth.”

138 Soz., *HE* 5.11.7–11. See H. C. Teitler, “History and Hagiography: The *Passio* of Basil of Ancyra as a Historical Source,” *VChr* 50 (1996): 73–80; Busine, “Basil and Basilissa.”

139 See Delehaye, *Les passions des martyrs*, 234–87.

140 *Martyr. Artem.* 9–11; *Art. Pass.* 60–66.

141 *Martyr. Artem.* 2, 8; *Art. Pass.* 35–38, 39.

142 *Martyr. Artem.* 2–4; *Art. Pass.* 35–36.

Constantine II and Constantius and the tyrannical rule of Caesar Gallus.¹⁴³



Whether by retrieving an account of a local martyrdom or by elaborating a new story, these tales of the deeds of the pair of healer saints also served to illustrate several features of their cult and personalities. For in addition to its cultic and cultural functions, hagiography fulfilled etiological functions similar to those of classical mythography.¹⁴⁴

The first element that stories helped legitimize was the presence of the heirs of Artemis Phosphoros in the medical shrine of the Oxeia. In the case of Artemios, his *Miracles* allude several times to the casket containing the remains of the healer saint,¹⁴⁵ since the presence of relics was necessary for the purpose of the cult. However, some people doubted that the coffin placed in the Church of Saint John the Baptist really held the martyr's body.¹⁴⁶ Therefore, the end of the tale of the dux's martyrdom provided reassurance by explaining how the relics had arrived in Constantinople: a woman called Ariste had claimed the dead body of the Antiochene martyr, put it in a casket, and brought it to Constantinople, so as to find a worthy place to bury and worship him.¹⁴⁷ Interestingly, this etiological episode has evolved through time: the synaxary of Ter Israel specifies that a deacon named Aristus (*sic*) deposited the corpse of Artemios with great pomp in the Oxeia church,¹⁴⁸ just as the *Vitae* of the local Byzantine saints Mokios, Akakios, and Lukillianos give their stories new conclusions and relocate their places of martyrdom.¹⁴⁹

Similarly, the detailed description of the torture of the young nun—notably when Selenos enjoined the removal of her teeth, which were later placed on her chest in the casket¹⁵⁰—justifies why the martyrial cult in the episcopal church in Nisibis was organized around the reliquary preserving a tooth of Febronia. The reading of the same story in Constantinople could also have helped pilgrims understand why Febronia's medical shrine in the church at the Oxeia did not contain any of her relics.

The second element elucidated by hagiography is the gift of healing attributed to the pair of Constantinopolitan saints replacing Artemis Phosphoros. Febronia's *Passion* relates that when the nun's tooth was transferred with great pomp into the new episcopal church, sick and disabled people crowded in masses in order to be cured and were miraculously healed by contact with her relic.¹⁵¹ These remote healing miracles, which were told in the church in the Oxeia, resonate with Febronia's medical powers in Constantinople. From this perspective, another way in which the nun is said to have been tortured—by the removal of her breasts¹⁵²—could also explain her special focus on curing diseases of women's genitals.

Unlike for Febronia, there was no tradition attributing miraculous healings to Artemios.¹⁵³ In asserting his medical power, his *Passions* confine themselves to stating that before the dux died, God provided him the gift of cure.¹⁵⁴ This mention sufficed to connect the story of the dux's death to his current activity as a medical saint. However, the *Passions* never clarify why the saint especially cured men's guts and genitals. As it was assumed that saints' healing powers were most effective when applied where in their own bodies they had suffered mutilation, Artemios—who lost his eyes—would have been expected to specialize in ophthalmological

143 *Art. Pass.* 7–15.

144 See Busine, "From Stones to Myth," for a similar analysis of hagiographical texts. On the functions of classical mythography, see, e.g., S. R. F. Price, "Memory and Ancient Greece," in Dignas and Smith, *Historical and Religious Memory in the Ancient World*, 15–36.

145 See *Mir.* 26, 27, 40, 41, etc.

146 See Déroche, "Pourquoi écrivait-on des recueils de miracles?" (n. 2 above), 111: it is precisely why in *Mir.* 40 Artemios summoned a monk to see *de visu* that he really lived in the coffin.

147 *Martyr. Artem.* 14; *Art. Pass.* 68.

148 *Synaxarium Ter Israelis* in Bidez, *Philostorgius* (n. 13 above), 48: *Illud magna cum pompa in ecclesia sancti Iohannis Baptistae condiderunt, in loco qui dicitur Oxia.*

149 See Berger, "Mokios und Konstantine der Große" (n. 61 above). In Thecla's sanctuary in Seleucia, literary traditions and

modification of sacred spaces underwent a parallel evolution; see Dagron, *Vie et Miracles de Sainte Thècle* (n. 115 above), 53–54.

150 *Pass. Febr.* 41.

151 *Ibid.*

152 *Ibid.*, 27.

153 I do not follow Csepregi, *Temple Sleep in Byzantium* (n. 1 above), 175–76, when she states that we can find a trace of a 4th-century tradition about Artemios's medical powers in the *Life of Pachomius* 138, which relates that the dux interpreted the bleeding of his nose as God's message that he was wrong in being Arian.

154 *Martyr. Artem.* 12; *Art. Pass.* 66.

diseases.¹⁵⁵ This seeming error was smoothed over by the author of *Miracles*, who details that the injuries inflicted on Artemios's eyes also affected the remaining parts of his genitals.¹⁵⁶



The martyrdom stories also serve to make Artemios's and Febronia's characters capable of embodying the virtues of martyrs. The legend of Febronia's heroic resistance to Roman soldiers attracted by her beauty was already circulating in the East, and the image of the virtuous virgin matched the ideal of the pious and chaste Christian woman. For Artemios, however, more work had to be done.

Because the passage in Theodoret on which the whole story was elaborated was not explicit about the life and deeds of the military officer killed by Julian, hagiographers had to invent a story elevating their hero to the level of a saint. First, they needed to justify the dux's conspicuous closeness to the Arian emperor Constantius II, whose character had been blackened by Nicene propaganda. To make Artemios a perfect orthodox martyr, his hagiographers attributed to him a role in Constantius II's transfer of the relics of the apostles Andrew, Luke, and Timothy.¹⁵⁷ We are told that it was this noble task, and not his allegiance to the Arian party, which earned him the military governorship of Egypt as a reward.¹⁵⁸ The author of the *Artemii Passio* added another point enabling him to assert Artemios's sainthood: namely, that Artemios was an eyewitness to the conversion of Constantine.¹⁵⁹ This claim, allegedly borrowed from Eusebius (who in fact never mentions Artemios in his works), betrays the faultiness of the author's historical guesses: this link between the martyr and the first, and Nicene, Christian emperor is highly improbable, as it would make Artemios a man in his eighties when he was martyred by Julian.

Furthermore, by connecting Eugenios's and Makarios's arrest to the motive for Julian's anger against Artemios, hagiographers aimed at providing a religious

pretext for the dux's death.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, Artemios's arrival in Antioch is attributed not to any crimes committed but to his assignment to Syria because of his just and blameless conduct.¹⁶¹

Such deconstruction of the dux's martyrdom narratives enables us to understand each episode of his life as decidedly not merely offering descriptions of what happened but as providing needed explanations of key features. The unpopular dux of Egypt has actually nothing in common with the medical saint named Artemios, except the homonymy that made it possible for the Constantinopolitan healer to be linked to a martyr under Julian. From Theodoret's passage a fiction was built up that sought on the one hand to confer on the dux qualities congruent with his status of saint and, on the other, to provide a Christian etiology both for Artemios's presence in Constantinople and for his healing powers.



This article has shown that Artemios's and Febronia's medical cult did not originate with the importation of foreign martyrs but is rather to be understood as the prolongation of an ancestral cult devoted to the Byzantine Artemis Phosphoros. Paralleling what happened in other Christian incubation centers, the dux and the nun gradually assumed a set of powers, duties, and abilities whose benefits had formerly been provided to the residents by the light-bearing virgin goddess. While Artemios owes to Artemis his name and some characteristics, such as incubation and the dedication of votive lamps, his female partner inherited the goddess's focus on the cure of women and children, and more particularly the healing of their genitals.

There was a need in sixth-century Constantinople to reassert the legitimacy of the pair of saints who specialized in curing bowels and genitals. It remains difficult to determine with precision the circumstances in which Artemios's invented relics were officially transferred to the Church of Saint John the Baptist in the Oxeia quarter. It is equally hard to explain exactly how

155 I borrow this observation from Vincent Déroche's unpublished research ("Le culte: rites, milieu, histoire" [2014], n. 11).

156 *Mir.* 24, ll. 4–6.

157 *Martyr. Artem.* 16; *Art. Pass.* 16–18.

158 *Martyr. Artem.* 16; *Art. Pass.* 18.

159 *Art. Pass.* 4.

160 See B. de Gaiffier, "Les martyrs Eugène et Macaire, morts en exil en Maurétanie," *AB* 78 (1960): 24–40.

161 *Martyr. Artem.* 2; *Art. Pass.* 35. *Art. Pass.* 36 adds that in his anger, Julian falsely accused Artemios of the murder of his brother Gallus in order to have a good reason to jail him.

the cult of the pious nun from Nisibis was installed as successor to that of the virgin goddess. Be that as it may, at a time of strong competition between healing shrines,¹⁶² the clergy of the Christian healing shrine at the Oxeia needed to provide its clientele with stories that bestowed on the healing saints virtues appropriate for holy martyrs. Febronia's eastern story was taken and altered through the injection of elements referring

162 See Déroche, "Pourquoi écrivait-on des recueils de miracles?" (n. 2 above), on competition between Artemios and the physicians. More generally, see A.-M. Talbot, "Pilgrimage to Healing Shrines: The Evidence of Miracle Accounts," *DOP* 56 (2002): 153–73; H. Peregrine, "The Earliest Hospitals in Byzantium, Western Europe, and Islam," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35.3 (2005): 361–89; Caseau, "Les hôpitaux byzantins" (n. 88 above); I. Csepregi, "Changes in Dream Patterns between Antiquity and Byzantium: The Impact of Medical Learning on Dream Healing," in *Ritual Healing: Magic, Ritual and Medical Therapy from Antiquity until the Early Modern Period*, ed. Csepregi and C. Burnett (Florence, 2012), 131–45.

to the local cult in which the pious nun henceforth played a role; Artemios's *Passion* was a fictional construct based on a couple of lines in Theodoret's *Church History* that were later combined with extraneous martyrdom traditions. These fictions could then give a new meaning to the existence of the incubatory practices performed in the Church of Saint John the Baptist. Such hagiographical narratives are thus powerful, but in ways that should not be misunderstood: far from constituting reliable evidence for writing the history of persecutions, these stories have functions intrinsically related to the cult context in which they were told.

Université Libre de Bruxelles
CP 133/01
50 av. F. D. Roosevelt
B- 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium
aude.busine@ulb.ac.be

✂ I WISH TO THANK COLLEAGUES WHO, through advice and criticism, contributed to this article, among them Polymnia Athanassiadi, Bruno Bleckmann, Jean-Michel Carrié, Ildikó Csepregi, Michel Kaplan, Jean-Marie Sansterre, Hans Teitler,

Peter Van Nuffelen, and Robert Wiśniewski, as well as the anonymous reviewers of *DOP*. I also thank Vincent Déroche and Michel Kaplan for having generously shared with me some unpublished works.

