

A FAKE INSCRIPTION OF THE EMPRESS EUDOCIA AND PULCHERIA'S RELIC OF SAINT STEPHEN

In her thorough discussion of St. Peter's Chains Vera von Falkenhauzen has dwelt on the legend associating that relic with the Empress Eudocia, wife of Theodosius II¹. In fact – if one can speak of facts in such matters – the learned Empress had nothing to do with the famous Chains, but she did bring from Jerusalem a relic of St. Stephen, whose story I shall attempt to disentangle in the following note.

In or shortly before 1889 the French scholar G. Doublet visited the town of Safranbolu in Paphlagonia and was shown in the Greek church of St. Stephen the copy of an inscription. «La pierre», he says, «a disparu». He published the copy as follows²:

Σωτήρ φανεῖς, Στέφανε, ἀλγεινῶν πόνων
λαιοῦ γόνατος καὶ ποδὸς οἰκτρᾶς φίλης,
θεῖον ναὸν δωροῦμαι³ κλεινῆι τῇ πόλει
τοῦ Θεοδώρου, κράντορος παλαιφάτου,
δωρούμενη ληφθέντα δῶρον σὸν πόδα
αὐτῷ μένειν, σύσσημον ἀλήστου μνείας

BΣ ΕΥΔ ΦΙΕ ΘΑΡΓ

Here is Doublet's translation: «O Saint-Etienne! toi qui visiblement m'as sauvée des cruelles douleurs que je souffrais, moi, ta misérable amie, dans le genou gauche et dans le pied, je fais don de ce temple divin à la glorieuse ville de Théodore, l'illustre guerrier. Et ton pied que j'avais reçu moi-même en cadeau, je le donne à cette église, afin qu'il y reste et que l'on s'en souvienne à jamais».

For the interpretation of this text Doublet turned to L. Duchesne,

¹ V. VON FALKENHAUSEN, *Petri Kettenfeier in Byzanz*, in *Fest und Alltag in Byzanz*, ed. G. PRINZING – D. SIMON, Munich 1990, pp. 129–144.

² *Inscriptions de Paphlagonie*, in *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 13 (1889), p. 294f.

³ As we shall see, the «correct» reading is δωροῦμαι.

who declared the last line suspect, especially the figure (date?) 515 and the Attic month Thargelion, but was satisfied with the rest of the inscription, which he ascribed to Eudocia, wife of Theodosius II. He also concluded that Safranbolu, being the city of Theodore, was the same as Euchaita, and if the latter was renamed Theodoropolis only in the reign of John I Tzimiskes⁴, it may have been known earlier by that name on an unofficial basis.

Once launched into print with Duchesne's blessing, the Safranbolu inscription has enjoyed and continues to enjoy remarkable success. William Ramsay was greatly exercised by it and devoted several pages to demonstrating that Safranbolu could not have been Euchaita. The latter, he opined, was at Çorum (not quite right, but closer to the truth)⁵. The inscription was accepted by H. Leclercq⁶, H. Delehaye, who, however, explained that it did not refer to Euchaita⁷, F. Halkin⁸, D. Gorce in his edition of the Life of St. Melania⁹, E.D. Hunt¹⁰, K.G. Holum¹¹, P. Maraval¹² and, with complete assurance, by E. Livrea¹³. It is also, presumably, for the same reason that on the *Classical Map of Asia Minor* by W.M. CALDER and G.E. BEAN (London 1958) the site of Safranbolu is marked Germia Theodorias. Scholars who have expressed scepticism have been fewer: I can name only the obscure Gabrielides (see below), Chr. Marek¹⁴, K. Belke¹⁵, R. Merkelbach and J. Stauber¹⁶. D. Feissel has prudently

⁴ Actually, the name Theodoropolis appears to have been given to Euchaina or Euchaneia (Çorum), often confused with Euchaita. See N. OIKONOMIDES, *Le dédoublement de S. Théodore et les villes d'Euchaita et d'Euchaneia*, in *Analecta Bollandiana* 104 (1986), pp. 327–335.

⁵ *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, London 1890, pp. 21, 52–53, 319–322.

⁶ Art. *Eukhaita*, in *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, V/2, Paris 1922, pp. 704–705.

⁷ *Acta Sanctorum, Nov. IV* (1925), p. 23.

⁸ *Inscriptions grecques relatives à l'hagiographie*, in *Analecta Bollandiana* 71 (1953), p. 96.

⁹ *Vie de Sainte Mélanie*, Paris 1962 (Sources Chrétiennes, 90), p. 246 n. 1.

¹⁰ *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, AD 312–460*, Oxford 1982, p. 233.

¹¹ *Theodosian Empresses*, Berkeley 1982, p. 186 n. 52.

¹² *Lieux saints et pèlerinages d'Orient*, Paris 1985, p. 368.

¹³ *La slogatura di Eudocia in un'iscrizione paflagone*, in *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 113 (1996), pp. 71–76.

¹⁴ *Stadt, Ara und Territorium in Pontus-Bithynia*, Tübingen 1993 (Istanbuler Forschungen, 39), p. 191 nr. 11: «Die Abschrift scheint mir verdächtig».

¹⁵ *Paphlagonien und Honorias*, Vienna 1996 (Tabula Imperii Byzantini, 9), p. 268: Probably of the 19th century, but does it refer to the wife of Theodosius II or to Eudocia Makrembolitissa, wife of Constantine X and Romanus IV?

¹⁶ *Steinepigramme aus dem griechischen Osten*, II, Munich 2001, p. 308 nr. 10/02/99: Metrical faults too serious.

suspended judgment¹⁷.

None of the above excellent scholars appears to have asked the obvious question: What was Eudocia doing at Safranbolu? Did she go there on holiday? Assuming she was in possession of an important relic of St. Stephen (in addition to the one, as we shall see, that she was to give to her sister-in-law Pulcheria), she must have been passing through those parts on her return journey from Jerusalem in 439. It is reasonable to assume that she would have followed the so-called «Pilgrim's Road», which cut diagonally across Asia Minor in the direction of Antioch. That road, however, was nowhere near Safranbolu¹⁸. We must assume, therefore, that on a whim she took a lengthy detour to visit an obscure locality (ancient name unknown) and, once there, built a church in honour of St. Stephen to which she donated her precious relic.

Safranbolu, which has few, if any ancient remains, has not attracted much attention on the part of European travellers. A.D. Mordtmann, who visited it in 1856, says that it passed for («gilt für») medieval Theodoroupolis. It had a separate Greek «ghetto» called Granköi (read Kiranköy) of about 250 families with a church of St. Stephen, built in 1805. He was shown there a relic of St. Stephen's right (*sic*) foot, on whose authenticity he was unwilling to pass judgment. No word about an inscription¹⁹. The Greek settlement multiplied – it is said to have numbered 3,000 before the exchange of populations in 1922 – and in 1871 built a much bigger church of St. Stephen with a dome and two bell-towers. It must have been the new church that Doublet visited. He failed, however, to see in it another inscription – a genuine epitaph, that was probably brought in from the surrounding countryside²⁰. Eventually St. Stephen's was turned into a mosque, which is still standing minus the bell-towers, and on either side of the central door is our Eudocia inscription, carved twice in neat 19th-century characters, in capital letters on the left and lower case on the right (Pl. I-2)²¹. It differs from

¹⁷ *Bulletin épigraphique*, 1998, No. 659 = *Revue des études grecques* 111 (1998), p. 711.

¹⁸ See D. FRENCH, *Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor*, Fasc. 1: *The Pilgrim's Road*, Oxford 1981 (BAR Internat. Series, 105), map 4 (Zonguldak sheet).

¹⁹ A.D. MORDTMANN d. Ä., *Anatolien. Skizzen und Reisebriefe aus Kleinasien (1850-1859)*, ed. F. BABINGER, Hannover 1925, p. 253f.

²⁰ Published by E. LEGRAND, *Inscriptions de Paphlagonie*, in *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 21 (1897), p. 92.

²¹ For the photographs reproduced here, taken by Ms. Vildan Gök, I am very grateful to Dr. M.I. Tunay. Poor photo in Chr. KYRIAKOPOULOS, *Σαφράνπολη -*

Doublet's copy in having δομοῦμαι instead of δωροῦμαι in line 3 and ΘΑΡΗ instead of ΘΑΡΓ in the last line, conveniently glossed into *Karamanlidika*: πὲς γιοὺς ὀνπὲς σενεσιντέ, ἀπολτὲ η' («In the year 515, April 8»). I do not know why Thargelion (May/June) was thought to be April.

One does not have to be an expert in Late Antique poetry to see that the Eudocia inscription belongs, not to the world of the 5th century²², but to that of 19th-century *ellinismos*. It is in «Byzantine» dodecasyllables with little regard for the quantity of vowels and starts with a nominative absolute (φανεῖς), i.e. Stephen, followed by the first-person δομοῦμαι, i.e. Eudocia. These incongruities were pointed out long ago by one A. Gabrielides, who ascribed the poem to a «half-educated schoolmaster» (ἡμιαθῆς διδάσκαλος)²³. Attention should also be drawn to the rare word κράντωρ (line 4), which Doublet was mistaken to translate «guerrier» and Livrea as «eroe», «santo». Κράντωρ means «ruler», *princeps* or *effector* (as in the epigram quoted by Pausanias, 8.52.3), and is correctly defined in what was probably the standard Greek dictionary for Greeks that the «half-educated schoolmaster» might have consulted²⁴. In other words, he described Theodore as a ruler, not as a warrior saint. The remarks of the worthy Gabrielides may throw some light on this little puzzle. After saying that in his day Safranbolu was called Theodoroupolis, he adds that he did not know who the Theodore in question was. An old schoolmaster (a different one?) told him the following story. The Empress Eudocia, wife of Theodosius, fell ill and proceeded to that town for a change of air in the year 515 (*sic*). There she got better and attributed her cure to the left foot of St. Stephen, which she had brought with her. She made a gift of the relic to the town, whose governor was called Theodore. Gabrielides adds that the relic was still preserved and extended from the left knee to the tip of the foot – quite a sizeable assemblage of bones. In other words, the inscription reflected the local legend as it was told in the 19th century and the nature of the relic that was kept there at the time.

Δάδυβρα (*sic*), 2nd ed., Thessaloniki 1988, fig. 6 on p. 201. For the Eudocia inscription, *ibid.*, pp. 88, 101 and fig. 7 on p. 202. I am indebted to Dr. Vasso Pennas for a copy of this somewhat incoherent publication.

²² The contrast with the genuine hexameter inscription of Eudocia in the baths of Gadara (*Suppl. epigr. gr.* 32, No. 1502) could hardly be more striking.

²³ Περὶ τῆς ἐπαρχίας Νεοκαυαρείας, in *Ξενοφάνης* 1 (1896), pp. 132–133. I am indebted to D. Feissel for bringing this scarce publication to my attention.

²⁴ *Λεξικὸν τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς γλώσσης ἐπίτομον*, ed. K. GARPOLAS, Athens 1839.

There remains a curious coincidence that has not gone unnoticed. Eudocia did dislocate her foot during her first visit to Jerusalem (438-439) and was allegedly healed by the prayers of St. Melania offered in front of certain unspecified relics. The story is told in the original Life of Melania²⁵, whose Greek text was first published in 1903, and so could not have been known to the author of the Safranbolu inscription. He might, however, have been aware of the Metaphrastic version, which repeats the same tale²⁶. No source known to me specifies that Eudocia injured her *left* knee and foot.

After eliminating from the dossier the inscription of Safranbolu, we may consider a related incident that has to do with St. Stephen's relics, this time at Constantinople. First, however, we may set down certain facts that appear to be reasonably well established:

December 415: St. Stephen's relics are found at Kapher-Gamala near Jerusalem and are temporarily deposited in the Sion church. News of the discovery echoes throughout the Christian world and some dispersion of small fragments, notably to the West, immediately takes place²⁷.

c. 416: Aurelian, Praetorian Prefect of the East, 399, 414-416 (i.e. at the very time of the invention) builds a church in honour of the Saint on his estate at Constantinople in the expectation of obtaining some of the relics, but his wish is not satisfied, which is rather odd, considering his influential position²⁸.

439: At Jerusalem a martyrium of St. Stephen outside the north gate of the city, built either by Eudocia or bishop Juvenal (or both) is dedicated on 15 May. The Saint's remains (presumably the major part of them) are deposited there²⁹. On returning to Constantinople the same year, Eudocia gives her sister-in-law Pulcheria a relic of St. Stephen (body part unspecified), which is laid in Pulcheria's basilica of St. Lawrence at Blachernai³⁰.

²⁵ Ed. GORCE, cit., p. 244.

²⁶ PG 116, col. 788: Τὸν γὰρ πόδα τῆς βασιλίδος ἐπηρείᾳ δαιμονος τὴν ἀρμονίαν παρατραπέντα ἐκείνη [Melania]... εὐχῇ μόνῃ πρὸς τὸ εὐθές ἐπανήγαγε.

²⁷ See S. VAN DER LINDE, *Revelatio sancti Stephani*, in *Revue des études byzantines* 4 (1946), pp. 178-217.

²⁸ See A. CAMERON - J. LONG, *Barbarians and Politics at the Court of Arcadius*, Berkeley 1993, p. 74. The source (*Vita Isaaci*) is relatively late, but appears credible.

²⁹ See, e.g., E. HONIGMANN, *Juvenal of Jerusalem*, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 5 (1950), pp. 225-227.

³⁰ MARCELLINUS COMES, *Chronicon*, s.a. B. Croke's comment on this passage in *The Chronicle of Marcellinus*, Sydney 1995, p. 83 is somewhat confused.

*Mid-9th century or earlier*³¹: The cult centre of St. Stephen at Constantinople, including his relics, has shifted to the district of Constanti(ni)anae.

The problem I should like to examine is whether there occurred a translation to Constantinople of a major relic of St. Stephen, namely his right arm or hand, as early as 427/428 (or possibly 421). The only authority for such a translation is the Chronicle of Theophanes, which under AM 5920 (= AD 427/428) relates the following story. In return for a large sum of money and a gold jewelled cross to be erected on the site of Calvary, the archbishop of Jerusalem (unnamed, but given as Praylius in the rubric) sent to Constantinople Stephen's right χείρ (let us call it arm). The relic was conveyed to Constantinople by the holy man Passarion³². Pulcheria, apprised in a vision, went out to meet it and built a wonderful church (*οῖκον ἐνδοξόν*) in the Imperial Palace wherein she deposited it³³.

The date 427/428 is certainly not to be taken very seriously. Theophanes' chronology for the relevant period is hopelessly muddled: he places the invention at Kapher-Gamala in 426/427 instead of the correct 415 and is completely mixed up about the succession of Jerusalem's bishops. Having no other material for AM 5920, he may simply have inserted there the story of the relic's *adventus*, which he derived, perhaps, from a hagiographic source. A. Frolow arbitrarily changed the date to 420³⁴, whereas K. Holm, for reasons of his own, has argued vigorously that the incident occurred, not in 427/428 (the 20th year of Theodosius II counting from his accession in 408), but in 421 (the 20th year from his proclamation as Augustus on 10 January 402)³⁵.

There can be no doubt that a chapel of St. Stephen did exist in the Imperial Palace, more precisely in the part of the palace called Daphne. It is attested in the reign of Zeno (474-491) when it received a copy of

³¹ Seeing that the supremely silly *translatio* to Constanti(ni)anae was rendered into Latin by Anastasius Bibliothecarius. Text in *PL* 41, col. 817f.

³² Passarion died in extreme old age in Oct./Nov. 428: CYRIL OF SCYTHOPOLIS, *Vita Euthymii*, ed. E. SCHWARTZ, Leipzig 1939 (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur, 49/2), pp. 26-27.

³³ Ed. C. DE BOOR, pp. 86-87; repeated by CEDRENUS, Bonn ed., I, p. 592.

³⁴ *Numismatique byzantine et archéologie des Lieux Saints*, in *Mémorial Louis Petit*, Bucarest 1948, p. 84.

³⁵ *Pulcheria's Crusade, AD 421-22*, in *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 18 (1977), p. 163. See further K.G. HOLM - G. VIKAN, *The Trier Ivory*, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 33 (1979), esp. p. 127f.

St. Matthew's Gospel written in the hand of Barnabas that had been found in Cyprus³⁶, an incident dated by Victor Tunnunensis to 488³⁷. From the reign of Heraclius onwards the chapel in question is repeatedly mentioned as a venue for imperial coronations and weddings³⁸ and it figures prominently in the Book of Ceremonies³⁹. There is, however, no independent confirmation that it had been built by Pulcheria. That, it may be thought, is not too serious an objection, but what is odd is that the famous *dexia* plays no part whatever in imperial ceremonial⁴⁰, indeed is never alluded to, unless I am mistaken, until the 12th century, when it appears, along with a multitude of other relics, in the *capella imperatoris*, i.e. St. Mary of the Pharos⁴¹. That being so, I am a little surprised that Ioli Kalavrezou should describe St. Stephen's arm as «enriching imperial ceremonial and strengthening the position of the emperor»⁴².

Furthermore, the very translation as described by Theophanes finds no corroboration in other sources (for Proclus see below). This has been shown at length by J. Wortley⁴³, to whose demonstration we may add one further text, namely the 9th-century⁴⁴ Brussels Chronicle, which devotes particular attention to the arrival of saints' relics at Constantinople. For the reign of Theodosius II it records only that «the relics of the

³⁶ THEODORUS ANAGNOSTES, *Kirchengeschichte*, ed. G.C. HANSEN, Berlin 1971 (Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte, 54), p. 121, Nr. 436. Cf. CEDRENUS, I, p. 619; ALEXANDER MONACHUS, *Laudatio Barnabae*, ed. P. VAN DEUN, Turnhout-Leuven 1993 (Corpus Christianorum. Series Graeca, 26), p. 118 (in the chapel of the palace).

³⁷ *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auct. ant.*, XI, p. 191.

³⁸ THEOPHANES, ed. DE BOOR, pp. 299, 300, 769; CONSTANTINUS PORPHYROGENITUS, *De Cerimoniis*, Bonn ed., I, pp. 196–197, 208, 212, 628.

³⁹ See J. EBERSOLT, *Le Grand Palais de Constantinople*, Paris 1910, pp. 52–53.

⁴⁰ The contents of St. Stephen's chapel, listed in *De Cerimoniis*, p. 640, were limited to «the great cross of St. Constantine», three sceptres and a few other objects of secular ceremonial.

⁴¹ P. RIANT, *Exuviae sacrae Constantinopolitanae*, Geneva 1877, II, pp. 211–212, but absent from the comprehensive listing by ANTONY OF NOVGOROD, *Kniga Palomnik*, ed. Chr. LOPAREV, *Pravoslavnyj Palestinskij Sbornik* 51 (1899), pp. 18–19.

⁴² *Helping Hands for the Empire*, in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. H. MAGUIRE, Washington, DC 1997, p. 66.

⁴³ *The Trier Ivory Reconsidered*, in *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 21 (1980), pp. 381–394.

⁴⁴ It is usually dated to the 11th century, but its final part is a bare list of emperors from Basil I to Romanus III, no doubt added by a later copyist. The fact that the Brussels Chronicle is the only Byzantine text to give the exact date of the first Russian attack on Constantinople (860) strongly suggests that it was compiled soon after that event.

holy martyrs Stephen, Laurence and Agnes were deposited in the martyrium of St. Laurence»⁴⁵. The same information is repeated in a contaminated manuscript of the Epitome of Theodorus Anagnostes, which adds that the deposition took place on a 21 September, καὶ τελεῖται μέχρι σήμερον ἐκεῖσε τῇ αὐτῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἡ μνήμη αὐτῶν⁴⁶. The commemoration of 21 September has not survived in our liturgical sources of the 9th–10th centuries (Typicon of the Great Church, Synaxarion), which suggests that it may have been of earlier date and had fallen into desuetude.

Theophanes, as we have seen, describes the despatch of St. Stephen's arm as a thanks offering for the gold jewelled cross of Golgotha. This piece of information has been taken at face value and connected with the introduction of a new design on the reverse of gold coins, namely that of a victory holding a long jewelled cross, which can be dated to 420 or 422⁴⁷. Whether the long cross was meant to refer to that of Golgotha I am unable to say, but there is a serious objection to this *rapprochement*: the monumental jewelled cross erected on the rock of Golgotha is prominently displayed in the famous apse mosaic of S. Pudenziana, dated by art-historians to the 390's⁴⁸. Frolow, who was aware of the difficulty, buried it in a footnote in which he boldly stated that the mosaic, or at any rate its central part, cannot belong to the pontificate of Siricius (384–399) or even to its restoration (?) in the early 5th century, but should be ascribed to Hadrian I (772–795)⁴⁹ – a most unlikely view. We are faced with a clear choice: either the mosaic is later than 420 or the story of Theophanes is false.

An edifice of speculation based on the sermons of Proclus (bishop of Cyzicus resident at Constantinople, 426–434, then Patriarch of Constantinople, 434–446) has been constructed by F. J. Leroy on the assumption

⁴⁵ F. CUMONT, *Anecdota Bruxellensia*, I: *Chroniques byzantines du MS 11376*, Gand 1894, p. 21.

⁴⁶ PG 86/1, col. 216A. The passage in question has been excluded from Hansen's ed. He does not state his reasons for doing so. The text in PG goes back to cod. Paris. gr. 1440, s. XVI.

⁴⁷ This issue is dated by the legend VOT XX MVLT XXX. Strictly speaking, the *vicennialia* of Theodosius should have fallen in 422, but his 15th anniversary was celebrated in 415 and his 30th in 430. Discussion by Ph. GRIERSON – M. MAYS, *Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, Washington, DC 1992, pp. 142–143, with a preference for 420.

⁴⁸ For the dating evidence see G. MATTHIAE, *Mosaici medioevali delle chiese di Roma*, Rome 1967, pp. 68–69.

⁴⁹ *Numismatique*, cit., p. 86, n. 4.

that Theophanes' account was true⁵⁰. He alleges that Proclus' Homily 12 (on the Resurrection) was delivered in the chapel of St. Stephen built by Pulcheria («en quelque sorte paroisse impériale») and contains a precise reference to the mosaics that decorated it; that the Laudation of St. Stephen (Homily 17) was spoken upon the translation of his relic to Constantinople (thus excluding a date in 421) or its first anniversary; and that two sermons wrongly attributed to John Chrysostom, namely PG 62, coll. 933-934 (on St. Stephen) and PG 50, coll. 715-720 (*In proditionem Iudei*) are also by Proclus and belong to the same group. Of the four texts in question we may eliminate Homily 17, which says nothing specific, and *In proditionem Iudei*, which manifestly refers to Daphne, the suburb of Antioch, not the Daphne palace at Constantinople⁵¹. Homily 12 and the short piece PG 63, coll. 933-934 do allude to the «virgin Empress», i.e. Pulcheria, in vague terms. The former, which contains only a fleeting reference to Stephen, lauds the Empress's liberality (to new baptizands?) and, incidentally, says nothing about mosaics⁵². The passage that has been interpreted as pointing to St. Stephen's palace chapel and the relic kept in it occurs in PG 63, coll. 933-934⁵³. Stephen, we are told here, fought the Jews when he was alive; now that he is dead, he is taking up arms against heretics (Nestorians?). The prize he received then was similar to the one he is receiving now: «Stephen is in the palace, for the Empress, who is a virgin, has stored him in her chamber [or in her heart?]. Stephen is among magistrates, for he has made the Emperor's father the son of a man who has shown hospitality to strangers. Stephen is in charity towards the poor, for he has become the bountiful and faithful provider of widows and orphans» (ἐν βασιλείοις Στέφανος· ἐθαλάμευσε γὰρ αὐτὸν ἡ βασιλίς καὶ παρθένος· παρὰ ἄρχουσι Στέφανος· τὸν γὰρ τοῦ ξενοδοχήσαντος παῖδα βασιλέως πεποίηκε πατέρα· ἐν φιλοπτωχίᾳ Στέφανος· χηρῶν καὶ δοφανῶν πλούσιος γέγονε καὶ πιστὸς οἰκονόμος). Proclus (if it is he) does appear to be alluding to certain contemporary circumstances, while representing Stephen as the champion of the poor, presumably for

⁵⁰ *L'homilétique de Proclus de Constantinople*, Città del Vaticano 1967 (Studi e testi, 247), esp. p. 158.

⁵¹ It speaks of springs of water, groves of trees and the «Pythian demon» taking flight at the Cross: PG 50, coll. 715-716.

⁵² Unless Leroy had in mind the sentence, PG 65, col. 788B, τὸν ἐπίγειον οὐρανὸν τὸν ὄρωμενον ἐκαλλώπισεν, whatever exactly that may mean.

⁵³ HOLUM, *Theodosian Empresses*, cit., p. 104, n. 116, uses this passage as his *argument massue* to refute Wortley's criticism (as in n. 43 *supra*).

having been one of the seven chosen to minister to widows (Acts, 6. 1–5). For the emperor's father the obvious candidate is the Persian eunuch Antiochus, who acted as guardian of Theodosius II⁵⁴, but we do not happen to know whose son he was. The last sentence may refer to the setting up of a charitable institution bearing St. Stephen's name. But what are we to make of the statement that Pulcheria «housed» (ἐθαλάμευσε) Stephen? Is it to be taken literally and, if so, does it necessarily imply that she had deposited Stephen's relic in the Imperial Palace rather than in her church of St. Laurence built on her estate of Pulcheriana, or should it be understood metaphorically? A parallel is provided by Homily 12, PG 65, col. 788B: «She has mortified her own flesh against the passions; she has housed (ἐθαλάμευσεν) the crucified One in her spirit». Here, certainly, the meaning is metaphorical.

To conclude this part of our discussion, I can see no firm grounds to give credence to Theophanes' story and several reasons for disbelieving it. The only well-attested relic of St. Stephen in 5th-century Constantinople is the one that was brought by Eudocia in 439. The conjunction of Stephen and Laurence was not, of course, fortuitous. The two deacon-martyrs were often thought as a pair and were represented side by side in mural paintings. Their remains were allegedly laid in the same tomb in the Pelagian basilica of S. Lorenzo fuori le mura, and there is a text of uncertain date concerning the «coniunctio corporum... Stephani et Laurentii facta Romae sub Theodosio iuniore»⁵⁵. Seeing that Eudocia exercised, so to speak, patronal rights over St. Stephen's bones, one can readily see why Pulcheria, who was not exactly on friendly terms with her, might have wished to establish a prior claim on the Protomartyr – hence the invention of the story related by Theophanes.

For some time Stephen's relics remained at St. Laurence's. In speaking of them, Marcellinus Comes uses the present tense, «in basilica sancti Laurentii positae venerantur». His Chronicle, as it survives today, extended to 534⁵⁶. There is also a neglected reference in the Miracles of Sts.

⁵⁴ The chronology of Antiochus' career is uncertain. According to J.R. MARTIN-DALE, *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, II, Cambridge 1980, p. 102, he was dismissed by Theodosius II in or shortly after 421. J. Bardill argues, however, that he remained in service until 439: in G. GREATREX – J. BARDILL, *Antiochus the Praepositus*, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 50 (1996), p. 197.

⁵⁵ *Acta Sanctorum, Aug. II* (1735), pp. 528–530.

⁵⁶ It is, of course, possible that in this passage he neglected to update the first edition of 518.

Cosmas and Damian (6th century?). The story concerns a Syrian woman called Martha who, while a patient in the miraculous shrine, was subjected to lesbian advances from one Christina, who was possessed by a demon. The Saints appeared to Martha in a vision, bidding her not only to avoid Christina, but to go home «for the sake of our brother St. Stephen, for she happened to be the wife of a cleric of St. Laurence's»⁵⁷. A *synaxis* of St. Stephen in St. Laurence's on Wednesday of Easter week is recorded in the 9th/10th-century Typicon of the Great Church⁵⁸. By that time, however, the cult of St. Stephen had migrated to his church at Constanti(ni)anae, which became the venue of his *synaxeis* of 27 Dec. (martyrdom), 2 Aug. (translation) and 15 or 16 Sept. (invention). Following a suggestion by J. Pargoire⁵⁹, this move has been attributed to the initiative of the princess Anicia Juliana (d. 527/528). That has often been stated as a fact, but is only a supposition, which may or may not be right. I shall not discuss the matter here so as to spare the honorand a great deal of tedium without the prospect of a clear solution.

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⁵⁷ L. DEUBNER, *Kosmas und Damian*, Leipzig-Berlin 1907, p. 131.

⁵⁸ Ed. J. MATEOS, *Le Typicon de la Grande Église*, Roma 1962 (Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 165), II, p. 102.

⁵⁹ *À propos de Boradion*, in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 12 (1903), pp. 488-490.



Pl. 1



Pl. 2