

The Tradition of the Image of Edessa

MARK GUSCIN

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

at the University of London

(Royal Holloway and Bedford New College)

August 2014

Candidate's declaration:

I confirm that this PhD thesis is entirely my own work. All sources and quotations have been acknowledged. The main works consulted are listed in the bibliography.

Candidate's signature:

Date: 4 March 2015

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Charalambos Dendrinis, and my advisor Dr David Gwynn, without whose support, suggestions and advice I would never have been able to finish this thesis. Sincere thanks are also due to my two examiners, Professor Miri Rubin and Professor Andrew Louth, for their valuable insight and excellent advice. I would also like to thank Professor Justin Champion for his help.

Thanks are owed to the following persons and institutions for studentships, grants and bursaries awarded towards my research and field trips: Hellenic Institute, Royal Holloway, University of London for The Nikolaos Oikonomides and the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomaios I fees-only Studentships in Byzantine Studies (2009-2014).

Thanks are also due to Brother Ioannis of the Monastery of Saint John on the island of Patmos, the staff at the Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies in Thessalonike for their extra efforts on my behalf, and the monks of Mount Athos for granting access to their libraries and manuscripts. Special thanks in this regard are due to Father Theologos of the Holy Monastery of Iveron, Father Chrysostomos of the Holy Monastery of Koutloumousiou, Father Kallistos of the Holy Monastery of Grigoriou, and all the monks at the Protaton. I would also like to thank Dr Ekaterina Gedevanishvili and Dr Tamar Gegia from the National Institute of Manuscripts in Georgia, George Apostolou in Cyprus, Professor Glenn Peers from the University of Texas, John Chapman for his invaluable aid while in Mani, the librarians at El Escorial, Dr Sophia Kapetanaki from the University of Peloponnese, Dr Robert Ousterhout from the University of Oregon, and last but not least Professor Emeritus Cyril Mango.

My deepest gratitude goes to my family – Rocío, Joshua and Catherine – who patiently endured my numerous fieldtrips while carrying out research, for their love and unflinching support over the years. It is to them that this study is dedicated.

Abstract

The Image of Edessa was an image of Christ, which according to tradition was of miraculous origin. It was taken from Edessa (mod. Sanliurfa, Turkey) to Constantinople in 944, and disappeared from known history in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade in 1204. It generated, however, a vast amount of literature and hundreds of copies in churches all over the Byzantine world. This thesis is a study of the literature, paintings, icons and other aspects related to the Image of Edessa. It examines how it was used as a tool to express Christ's humanity and for various other purposes, and how some of the related literature became completely decontextualised and was used as a magical charm, especially in the West.

The thesis comprises an **Introduction**, six **Chapters (1-6)** and **Conclusions**. The **Introduction** presents the aims, scope, approach and structure of the thesis. **Chapter 1** is a detailed critical survey of the historical sources. **Chapter 2** is devoted to an analytical study of one of the most important texts, traditionally known as *Epistula Abgari*, including previously unpublished versions. **Chapter 3** contains an analysis of the references to the Image and how it is dealt with in the huge body of literature concerning St Alexis. **Chapter 4** examines the terminology used to describe the Image in the sources and analyses its physical characteristics. **Chapter 5** investigates the Image of Edessa and the Abgar correspondence in the West, the Image's relationship with the Veronica story and its use as a magical amulet. **Chapter 6** explores the paintings and icons of the Image, also based on my fieldwork in churches and monasteries in the sphere of Byzantine influence. The **General Conclusions** summarise the findings of the research and suggest areas for further investigation. **Appendix I** contains a new edition and translation of the *Narratio de imagine edessena*, and **Appendix II** presents a chronological table showing the development of the tradition of

the Image over the course of the centuries. The thesis is accompanied by a DVD with facsimiles of manuscripts, icons and other archaeological evidence cited therein.

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Introduction

The present thesis is a study of the Image of Edessa, an image of Christ, which according to tradition was of miraculous origin. The aim of the thesis is to show the importance of the Image in the art, literature and popular tradition of both Eastern and Western Europe since the advent of Christianity, how it was used as a key element in the defence of the use of icons in the Orthodox Church, how it was used in the West in arguments both for and against the inherent truth of the Bible; how it inspired novels and even classical music; how the Image, together with the Abgar letters which also form part of the story, was used as a magical amulet both publicly and privately; and how all these uses converge to respond to a basic psychological and human need, even within the realms of a spiritual faith, to see and touch the object of belief.

According to the underlying legend, Abgar, the king of Edessa and contemporary of Jesus of Nazareth, suffered from a skin disease, and thanks to one of his messengers who was passing through Jerusalem, found out that there was a miracle worker and healer in the city. Abgar decided to write a letter to Christ and invite him to come and live in Edessa (the setting was just a few days before the crucifixion, and Abgar knew that the Jews were planning to kill Jesus). The messenger, Ananias or Hanan, returned to Jerusalem. Most accounts relate that, following Abgar's orders, Ananias tried to sketch Christ's face to take back to Edessa, but was unable to as Jesus kept looking this way and that (in other versions, Jesus calls him over before he has time to paint his likeness). Eventually Jesus sent one of the disciples to call Ananias over, and before the messenger could hand over the letter from Abgar, Jesus told him of its contents. Jesus then wrote a reply to Abgar explaining that it was impossible for him

to go to Edessa as he had a mission to fulfil. When he had ascended into heaven, however, he would send one of his disciples to cure Abgar and lead him into all truth.

Before Ananias could leave, Jesus fulfilled the second part of Abgar's request. Asking for a cloth, he wiped his face with it and left a miraculous imprint of his features on it. At first, the letters (from Abgar to Jesus and the reply) were the central part of the story; copies were made, and eventually used as a kind of talisman to ward off evil. The text developed over time — perhaps the most significant early addition was the promise that the city of Edessa would be invincible to enemy attacks. Later versions contain detailed instructions concerning when to carry and read the letter in order to obtain personal safety.

Meanwhile, Ananias took the cloth with Christ's image back to Edessa. Abgar touched it to his whole body and was cured from his skin disease, except for a small spot that was left on his forehead and which eventually disappeared when the king accepted baptism. He had the cloth with the image on it placed in a niche above the city gate, in the place of a pagan idol. Abgar died, as in turn did his son. When his grandson became king he reverted to paganism. Wishing to destroy the Image of Edessa, he placed a pagan image back in the niche.

The bishop was made aware of the king's intentions and bricked the Image up into the niche, together with a lighted lamp, and covered it with a tile and bricks just like the rest of the wall. The hiding place was so successful that the Image fell out of knowledge and memory, until the Persians under King Khusro (Chosroes) attacked Edessa in 544. The attackers were tunnelling their way under the city walls when the city's bishop had a dream in which a woman told him about the Image and where to find it. Following her instructions, he took the Image to where the Persians were lighting a fire, and the flames were blown back onto the invaders, defeating them.

The Image was kept in Edessa even when the city was lost to the Byzantine Empire and was thus conveniently far removed from the iconoclastic crisis. Towards the middle of the tenth century it was finally taken to Constantinople. After a ceremonious arrival, it was kept in the Boucoleon and, apart from making an appearance in some pilgrims' lists of relics they had seen, is hardly mentioned again. After the sack of the capital during the Fourth Crusade in 1204, the Image of Edessa disappears from known history.

The Image itself and the related texts are significant in numerous aspects of our history; they cover a period of almost two thousand years, from the textual origins in Eusebius (and the legendary origins dating back to the life of Christ in Jerusalem) to the most recent painted icons. Edessa was in fact the first kingdom in the world to adopt Christianity as its official religion (most probably ca.200 AD), and both the Image and the supposed letter from Abgar to Christ and the latter's reply are major components in the argument to establish the early arrival of the new religion in the area. This in itself is a generally ignored and yet essential detail in the early history of Christianity.

The Image played a major role in the Iconoclast crisis. It was used as proof that Christ miraculously produced his own image on a cloth and therefore showed himself to be circumscribable (*περιγραπτός*). This became an irrefutable argument which legitimised holy images in general. The actual Image survived the crisis as it was not in Constantinople at the time, but safe in the Arab city of Edessa. After being taken to Constantinople and assigned its own day in the Synaxarion (16 August), the Image was caught up in the events of 1204 and the sack of Constantinople by the Crusaders. Despite its loss, the Image retained its importance and apotropaic functions in churches throughout the Orthodox world, and is still regularly included in icon-painting patterns. The very use of the Image as a protective force, placed over an archway in memory of its placing over the gateway to Edessa, forms part of the complex story of how pagan

customs were adopted and taken over by the Church; an ancient Greek custom of placing statues of the Gods at the gate or in a niche above it to protect the city was simply adapted to Christian use by replacing the pagan deity with the Image of Edessa¹. The idea of the face of Christ being imprinted onto a linen cloth is also present in western Christianity (especially so in Roman Catholic countries); we should not forget that the Abgar legend was in existence centuries before the legend of the Veronica became popular in the West.

Apart from the use of the Abgar correspondence to show the very early coming of Christianity to the kingdom of Edessa, the letters have also been employed to further arguments concerning the canon of the New Testament in fields as far apart as medieval Georgia and eighteenth-century England. Christ's answer to Abgar was used from very early times as a magical amulet, initially because of the promise to safeguard the city of Edessa from enemy attacks and later, absolutely decontextualised and with numerous "magical" additions, to keep the bearer safe from thunder, lightning and other evils both natural and manmade, in consonance with so many other medieval magic charms. The legend therefore also forms part of the study of popular and learned attitudes to magic and the often blurred line between officially accepted religion and the general practice thereof among the populace; a conflict which we still come across today, especially in southern Europe.

The Image of Edessa and the Abgar legend therefore cover a broad range of fields and historical periods, and unfortunately their importance has more often than not been limited to iconography in areas of Byzantine influence.

The present thesis examines the textual and artistic tradition of the Image of Edessa. It aims at presenting and analysing all that is known and has been published on

¹ Cf. Arja Karivieri, 'Magic and Syncretic Religious Culture in the East', in *Religious Diversity in Late Antiquity*, ed. David M. Gwynn and Susanne Bangert (Leiden 2010), p. 404: "Another form of protective image, the *apotropaion*, was usually placed by the gate of a city or a building to avert

the subject to date, adding new findings from my own research and re-interpreting existing knowledge. Apart from my own book on the Image of Edessa, published a few years ago², there are no studies devoted entirely to this subject. There are books and studies concerning Edessa (especially the history of Christianity in the city)³, and in recent years the Image and the Abgar correspondence have taken up a significant part of several books in various languages on the face of Christ, icons, relics and art⁴. In addition, numerous articles concerning just about every aspect of the Image and the letters have appeared in journals⁵, though by their very nature, they are limited to

evildoers. This could be placed in niches in city walls, near to the gates. The Greeks erected stationary *apotropaia* especially to Apollo and Herakles”.

² Mark Guscini, *The Image of Edessa* (Leiden 2009).

³ The earliest academic book devoted to the subject in general is W. Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents relative to the earliest establishment of Christianity in Edessa and the neighbouring countries from the year after our Lord's Ascension to the beginning of the fourth century* (Edinburgh 1864; repr. New York, no year given). This was followed by a landmark study of the Abgar legend and its relationship to the new religion in the area: Joseph Tixeront, *Les Origines de l'Église d'Édesse et la Légende d'Abgar, Étude Critique suivie de deux textes orientaux inédits* (Paris 1888), which was the object of severe criticism (most of which is unfounded) in another book published the following year: J. P.P. Martin, *Les Origines de l'Église d'Édesse et des Églises Syriennes* (Paris 1889). A large proportion of Ernst von Dobschütz's seminal work *Christusbilder, Untersuchungen zur christlichen Legende*, 2 vols. (Leipzig 1899) was devoted to the Image of Edessa, and included for the first time critical editions of the related texts as they stood towards the end of the nineteenth century. The subject then seemed to lose its interest for scholars until 1970, when J. Segal published the unsurpassed history of the city, *Edessa 'The Blessed City'* (Oxford 1970; repr. Piscataway 2001), with a profound analysis of the Abgar legend. For more recent publications see below, notes 4-5.

⁴ Segal, *Edessa*; Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeiter der Kunst* (Munich 1990), translated into English as *Likeness and Presence: a History of the Image before the Era of Art* (Chicago 1994); Alain Desreumaux, *Histoire du roi Abgar et de Jésus* (Turnhout 1993); Jacinto González, *La leyenda del rey Abgar y Jesús, Orígenes del cristianismo en Edesa* (Madrid 1995); Herbert Kessler and Gerhard Wolf (eds.), *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation. Papers from a Colloquium held at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence, 1996* (Bologna 1998); Glenn Peers, *Sacred Shock: Framing Visual Experience in Byzantium* (Pennsylvania 2004); Andrea Nicolotti, *Dal Mandylion di Edessa alla Sindone di Torino. Metamorfosi di una leggenda* (Torino 2011), translated into English as *From the Mandylion of Edessa to the Shroud of Turin: The Metamorphosis of a Legend* (Leiden 2014).

⁵ Kurt Weitzmann, 'The Mandylion and Constantine Porphyrogenitus', *Cahiers Archéologiques* 11 (1960), pp. 163-184; Patrick Considine, 'Irish Versions of the Abgar Legend', *Celtica* 10 (1973), pp. 237-257; Jan Nelson, 'The Holy Mandylion of Edessa and the Legend of Saint Alexis', in *Medieval Studies in Honor of Robert White Linker*, ed. Brian Dutton, J Woodrow Hassell and John E Keller (Valencia 1973), pp. 155-161; Nicole Thierry, 'Deux notes à propos du Mandylion', *Zograf* 11 (1980), pp. 16-19; Averil Cameron, 'The History of the Image of Edessa; the Telling of a Story', *Okeanos: Essays Presented to Ihor Sevcenko* (= *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 [1983]), pp. 80-94; Getatchew Haile, 'The Legend of Abgar in Ethiopic Tradition', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 55 (1989), pp. 375-410; Évelyne Patlagean, 'L'entrée de la Sainte Face d'Édesse à Constantinople en 944', *La religion civique à l'époque médiévale et moderne (Chrétienté et Islam), Colloque, Nanterre, France (21.06.1993)*, Collection de l'École française de Rome 213 (Rome 1995), pp. 21-35; Bernard Outtier, 'Une forme enrichie de la Légende d'Abgar en arménien', in *Apocryphes arméniens: transmission – traduction – création – iconographie, Actes du colloque international sur la littérature apocryphe en langue arménienne, Genève 18-20 septembre 1997*, ed. Valentina Calzolari Bouvier, Jean-Daniel Kaestli and Bernard Outtier (Lausanne 1999), pp. 129-146; Melita Emmanuel, 'The Holy Mandylion in the iconographic programmes

discussing specific aspects of the overall story. Thus there is very little that takes on a general view and most articles are often limited in terms of original research. The present thesis aims to fulfil both aims, in the sense that it is a detailed critical study of just about everything we know about the Image of Edessa, its origins and sources. It is extensively based on original research both textual and artistic, analysing and re-interpreting hitherto unpublished texts and unrecorded frescoes and icons. Admittedly, no study of this kind can claim to be complete; there are without doubt further unknown versions of the legend in monastic archives and pictorial depictions of the Image in churches and monasteries not studied before. In addition, I have often come across depictions in churches that have been described in some detail in the literature but with no mention of the Image. It is hoped that this thesis will also serve as a starting point for further research on various unanswered questions concerning the Image of Edessa and its tradition in East and West.

As part of my work in recent years I have collected and examined a large amount of material, including original manuscripts on Mount Athos, at the Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies in Thessalonike, at the National Libraries of Portugal, Spain and France (in Lisbon, Madrid and Paris respectively), and microfilms and/or printed and digital facsimiles of manuscripts housed in the British Library in London. For unpublished textual material cited in the thesis I have adopted, unless stated otherwise, the conventions of diplomatic editions (expanding abbreviations and

of the churches at Mystras', in *Eastern Christian Relics*, ed. Alexei Lidov (Moscow 2003), pp. 291-298; Sebastian Brock, 'Transformations of the Edessa Portrait of Christ', *Journal of Assyrian Academic Studies* 18/1 (2004), pp. 46-56; Sysse Gudrun Engberg, 'Romanos Lekapenos and the Mandilion of Edessa', in *Byzance et les reliques du Christ* ed. J. Durand and B. Flusin (Paris 2004), pp. 123-139; Emran El-Badawi, 'Tales of King Abgar: A Basis to Investigate Earliest Syrian Christian Syncretism', *Journal of Assyrian Academic Studies* 20.2 (2006), pp. 1-20; Irma Karaulashvili, 'The Abgar Legend Illustrated: The Interrelationship of the Narrative Cycles and Iconography in the Byzantine, Georgian and Latin Traditions', in *Artistic Interchange between the Eastern and Western Worlds in the Medieval Period*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Pennsylvania 2007), pp. 220-243; Alexei Lidov, 'The Mandylion over the Gate. A mental pilgrimage to the Holy City of Edessa', in *Routes of Faith in the Medieval Mediterranean, Proceedings of an International Symposium*, ed. Evangelia Chatzetryphonos (Thessalonike 2007), pp. 179-192; Bernard Flusin, 'L'image d'Édesse, Romain et Constantin', in *Sacre Impronte e Oggetti "Non*

contractions), to show the idiosyncracies of the scribes. For the chapter on the paintings and icons of the Image of Edessa, I have conducted field work in a number of countries making up what was once the Byzantine Empire.

In terms of structure the thesis comprises an **Introduction**, six **Chapters (1-6)**, **Conclusions** and two **Appendices (I-II)**. The **Introduction** presents the aim and scope of the thesis and a critical survey of previous scholarship on the subject. **Chapter 1** provides a comprehensive overview of historical references to the cloth. It should be pointed out that previous literature tended to be selective in terms of material in support of the author's expressed purpose while the majority of primary sources were often omitted. The most complete and most frequently quoted source is the *Narratio de imagine edessena*, written under the auspices of the Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, most probably within a year or two of the Image's being taken to Constantinople in 944. The *editio princeps* of this text was published by Ernst von Dobschütz in 1899⁶. This is now replaced by my own critical edition published in 2009⁷, which was based on a number of additional MSS unknown to the eminent German scholar, including the early and excellent witness MS *Athos Stavronikita* 18, and introducing corrections to the *editio princeps*. A revised edition of this text, with additional previously uncollated witnesses, can be found in **Appendix I** to the thesis.

Chapter 1 is a study of the complete collection of extant historical references to the Image, written at different times and in many different places. In this sense it puts all available evidence into perspective to enable us to proceed to a more detailed analysis of specific aspects of the Image's history, depictions and nature.

Chapter 2 examines in detail the text generally referred to as *Epistula Abgari*. It seems to me that this conventional title is inaccurate not only because the text contains

Fatti da Mano d'Uomo" nelle Religioni: Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Torino 18-20 maggio 2010, ed. Adele Monaci Castagno (Alessandria 2011), pp. 253-278.

⁶ *Christusbilder*, vol. 2, pp. 39-85.

⁷ Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 8-69 (including facing-page translation into English).

much more than the letter of Abgar but also because there was in effect no such text – the extant versions generally given this name are so different from each other that each one seems to have been written and adapted for a particular occasion. Moreover, this chapter includes editions of four previously unpublished texts related to the Abgar legend with their corresponding translation. One of these texts is adorned with two beautiful miniatures of Jesus writing his reply to Abgar.

Chapter 3 is devoted to a study of the *Life of St Alexis* and its numerous versions, ranging from Syriac and Greek to English, Spanish and Italian. This text is virtually unknown to scholars who have studied the Image of Edessa. The legend of St Alexis takes him to Edessa for a period of seventeen years, which in turn leads to a mention of the Image of Edessa in the majority of versions. The text is transmitted in a number of manuscripts preserving the Greek as well as the medieval Spanish, Portuguese and French versions, which I have examined, while other versions were published in little known nineteenth-century editions. The importance of these versions of the text, which have never been analysed as a group before, is that they prove that Edessa was known for and often identified by the Image.

Chapter 4 discusses the voluminous terminology used to describe the Image of Edessa in the many different textual sources. This has never been attempted before, except for incomplete lists of words. More importantly, scholars seem to have deliberately avoided investigating the word τετραδάπιλον although it is probably the most significant term used to define the cloth. The second half of this chapter, which takes this term as a point of departure, is perhaps the most controversial part of the whole thesis and, indeed, of all studies related to the Image of Edessa. My analysis of what I have called the “minority” descriptions of the cloth suggest that in the opinion of a minority of authors, it was a large cloth, much larger than a simple face cloth, that the image on the cloth had bloodstains and that the image itself was in fact a full-body

image of Christ, or even his own burial cloth, an idea analysed by von Dobschütz, generally accepted as the fundamental point of departure of all studies concerning the Image of Edessa⁸.

Chapter 5 discusses the Western tradition of the Image. It is mainly based on original research in hitherto unexamined manuscripts and depictions. Unpublished texts from the British Library and the monastery of El Escorial in Spain are analysed together with previously unknown images from Valencia and Vic in Spain. A separate section is devoted to an original analysis of how the Abgar correspondence (and to a lesser extent, the Image itself) became completely decontextualised from its legend and origins and was turned into a magical charm in the West and remained in use as such until relatively recent times.

Chapter 6 is an account of my own fieldwork in various areas in Europe and Anatolia in search of unrecorded depictions of the Image of Edessa, including Mount Athos, the Mani in the south and the Byzantine towns in the north of Greece, Istanbul and Cappadocia, Georgia and the FYROM. Similar work was done on my behalf in Cyprus. The main difficulty in this kind of fieldwork is locating churches in remote areas and securing access and permission to take photographs of recorded or unrecorded material. With very few exceptions, I was able to fulfil these tasks thanks to the kind help of local priests and members of the archaeological or municipal services. By recording various previously unpublished paintings and icons of the Image of Edessa I discovered that the immense range of styles and shapes used to depict the Image make previous attempts to date copies by their shape and features largely inaccurate and no

⁸ Very few people seem to have actually read the original German text, as this section of the book is not mentioned in any later study. The original edition is not easy to find (although it can now be obtained as a reprint from various on-line and print-on-demand publishers). There are no translations of the book into English; virtually every article and book on the subject quotes the edition, although none of them even mention the fact that von Dobschütz devotes a hefty section of his analysis to the identification of the cloth with the burial shroud of Christ, albeit for highly doubtful and improbable reasons.

longer valid. Moreover, beyond a few stylistic features limited to certain areas it is very difficult to establish dating parameters for the many different Mandylion types.

The **Conclusions** summarise the findings of the research and point to areas for future study. The thesis closes with two **Appendices (I-II)**, a full **bibliography**, and **Plates** with facsimiles of MSS and photographs of archaeological evidence cited therein (placed on a DVD).

Chapter 1

Historical sources

1.1 The Origins of the Image

No definite or convincing theory as to the Image's origins has been postulated to date. Scholars who have attempted to provide an answer regarding the Image's origins have come up with different sources, dates and reasons, none of which have offered more convincing arguments than any other. For this reason it is imperative that we re-examine the sources and analyse what authors both ancient and modern have to say about it⁹.

The *Narratio de imagine Edessena* dates the origins of the Image of Edessa to the time of Christ himself, shortly before his passion, as do the vast majority of sources. It should be pointed out that the *Narratio de imagine Edessena* itself gives two possible versions for the origins of the Image, one the regular Abgar story (i.e. the king sends a messenger to paint a picture but Jesus miraculously imprints his facial features onto a cloth and sends it back to Abgar), while the second version stages the imprint story in the garden of Gethsemane; when Christ was sweating blood (Luke 22:43-44),¹⁰ he was handed a cloth to wipe his face on and the image of his face was miraculously transferred onto the cloth.

⁹ Cf. Ilaria Ramelli, 'Dal mandilion di Edessa a la sindone', *Ilu. Revista de Ciencias de las Religiones* (1999), p. 185: "Molto più problematico appare invece stabilire quando, in che circostanze e da dove la sacra Immagine sia pervenuta a Edessa, poiché le fonti si fanno qui più scarse e più leggendarie".

¹⁰ The textual evidence for the sweating of blood in the original gospel attributed to Luke is meagre, although the verse and the tradition are evidently old. Cf. Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart, 1971), p. 177: "The absence of these verses in such ancient and widely diversified witnesses as **ϐ**^{(69vid), 75} **Ⲡ** **A** **B** **T** **W** **syr**^s **cop**^{sa bo} **arm**^{mss} **geo** **Marcion** **Clement** **Origen** *al*, as well as their being marked with asterisks or obeli (signifying spuriousness) in other witnesses (**Δ**^c **Π**^c **892**^{c mg} **1079** **1195** **1216** **cop**^{bo mss}) and their transferral to Matthew's gospel (after 26.39) by family 13 and several lectionaries (the latter also transfer ver. 45a) strongly suggests that they are no part of the original text of Luke. Their presence in many manuscripts, some ancient, as well as their citation by Justin, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Eusebius and many other Fathers, is proof of the antiquity of the account".

There was without doubt a king reigning over Edessa when Christ was alive, and he was called Abgar (there was a long line of kings with this name and the monarch contemporary with Christ is usually numbered as Abgar V). This Abgar most probably reigned from AD 13 to 50. He is mentioned by Tacitus in a rather unfavourable light¹¹:

Igitur excitis quorum de sententia petitus rex, positisque castris apud Zeugma, unde maxime pervius amnis, postquam inlustres Parthi rexque Arabum Acbarus advenerat, monet Meherdaten barbarorum impetus acris cunctatione languescere aut in perfidiam mutari: ita urgeret coepta. Quod spretum fraude Acbari, qui iuvenem ignarum et summam fortunam in luxu ratum multos per dies attinuit apud oppidum Edessam.

He then called for those at whose suggestion a king had been requested from Rome, encamped at Zeugma where the river was most easily fordable, and awaited the arrival of the leading men of Parthia and of Abgar, king of the Arabs, and reminded Meherdates that the impulsive enthusiasm of barbarians soon fades in the face of delay, or even turns into treachery. He should therefore move his plans on quickly. The advice was ignored through the perfidy of Abgar, as he delayed the foolish young prince for several days in the city of Edessa. The prince thought that the highest position just meant self-indulgence¹².

The existence of an Abgar ruling at Edessa and contemporary of Jesus does very little, however, to establish a first-century origin for the cloth. Mirković states the case quite succinctly: “In conclusion we must say that the portrait of Jesus began to play a role in the reception process of the Abgar legend only after the middle of the sixth century. It seems very unlikely that Eusebius purposefully excluded the reference to the portrait”¹³.

¹¹ *Annalium ab Excessu Divi Augusti Libri XII*:12, ed. C. D. Fisher (Oxford 1906), p. 238.

¹² All translations in the thesis are mine unless otherwise stated.

¹³ Alexander Mirković, *Prelude to Constantine (= Studies in the Religion and History of Early Christianity 15)* (Frankfurt 2004), p. 36.

Tixeront links the origins of the legend to the establishment of Christianity in Edessa¹⁴, or at least to the first known preaching of the religion in the city¹⁵. With the legend as it stands this would seem to be a logical conclusion, although it is not necessarily applicable to either the correspondence (even accepting that it does not date from the time of Christ) or to the Image. The arrival of Christianity in Edessa is not directly linked to the origins of the Image, for no source attributes the Image's source to the city. On the other hand, it is possibly related to the arrival of the Image. The religion most probably took hold in Edessa before the Image was taken there, but it is highly unlikely that the Image was there before Christianity was established, as if there were no trace of the new religion there would surely have been no reason to take the Image there. Unfortunately, if the Image's early history is not to be found in Edessa, there is no clue at all as to where it might otherwise have been. The present state of affairs is summarised as follows by Mirković: "Unless there is a dramatic discovery in the area of Syriac studies, we will probably never know more about the origins of the Abgar legend"¹⁶.

¹⁴ Tixeront, *Les Origines*.

¹⁵ J.P.P. Martin dates Christianity in Edessa to as early as Pentecost, in *Les Origines*, pp. 12-13: "On peut donc affirmer, dès le jour de la Pentecôte, il y eut des Chrétiens en Médie, en Mésopotamie, chez les Parthes, et à Édesse", and "Toutes les vraisemblances se réunissent donc pour montrer que le christianisme a dû s'implanter de très bonne heure dans la haute Mésopotamie, en particulier à Édesse". Cf. G. Bonet Maury, 'La Légende d'Abgar et de Thaddée', *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 16 (1887), p. 281: "... les évangélistes du Christ arrivèrent à Édesse sous le règne d'Abgar VII bar Izate (108-115)"; Arthur Voobus, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Levant* (Louvain 1958), p. 7: "If, by the beginning of the second century, Christianity had already won converts among the inhabitants of the mountain village in Hadiab, then there can be no doubt that the Christian faith had been established before the end of the first century in Edessa and also in Osrhoene, which were on the highway connecting Arbel and Syria", and G.A. Williamson, *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine, Translated with an Introduction* (New York 1965), p. 70: "It would, indeed, be surprising if Christianity, which spread over almost the whole Empire with such remarkable rapidity, should have been withheld from an area so near Palestine, and one where a similar dialect was spoken. Let us not forget that while Edessa is only 180 miles from Antioch, the starting-point of all Paul's journeys, Ephesus is 500, Rome over 1,000 and Spain 2,000". Cf. also Emran El-Badawi, 'Tales', pp. 1-20.

¹⁶ Mirković, *Prelude*, p. 114.

1.2 Eusebius and Egeria

Two of the earliest texts concerning the apocryphal correspondence between Jesus and Abgar make no mention of the image that eventually became much more significant than the letters¹⁷. The earliest surviving written account of the Abgar legend dates from the beginning of the fourth century, in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*¹⁸, although this version of the legend is not exactly the same as the later ones. The historian dates the events to the year 340 of the Seleucid era, which coincides with AD 30¹⁹, i.e. just before the crucifixion.

Eusebius does not name the person that Jesus will send to Abgar, at least not when the letter is quoted. He says elsewhere that it was Thaddaeus²⁰, one of the seventy-two, who was sent by Thomas. Neither does Eusebius make any mention of Jesus' promise (at the end of the letter sent in reply to the king) to keep the city of Edessa safe from any enemy attack. The promise was most probably added shortly after the middle of the fourth century, when Edessa became a Roman outpost on the borders of Persian territory. The main point, however, is that Eusebius does not refer to any image or portrait. The historian claims that his account is based on documents kept in

¹⁷ For a convincing explanation of why the letters cannot be accepted as genuine, cf. Joseph Tixeront, *Les Origines*, pp. 138-140. In direct response to Tixeront, J.P.P. Martin, on the other hand, argues that while the actual text of the letters might not be genuine, it is not unlikely that Abgar and Jesus were actually in contact, *Les Origines*, p. 107: "Il nous paraît impossible également d'admettre que la correspondance de Jésus et d'Abgar ne repose pas sur quelques relations entre Jésus-Christ et le Toparque de l'Osrohoène". Martin's affirmation seems most unlikely and is purely conjectural.

¹⁸ For critical editions cf. *Histoire Ecclésiastique* I, ed. Gustave Bardy (Paris 1952) and *Eusebius Werke*, vol 1, ed. Ivar A. Heikel (Leipzig 1902). The earliest MSS both date from the eleventh century (MSS *Vaticanus* 149 and *Mosquensis* 50), which is two hundred years after the restoration of icons, although it is most unlikely that the text is an iconophile interpolation as Eusebius does not mention the Image of Edessa, just the letters. Neither would the narrative gain anything from such an interpolation.

¹⁹ Desreumaux, *Histoire*, p. 13, suggests A.D. 28-29.

²⁰ Thaddaeus must logically be equated with Addai, but was he one of the twelve apostles, or in accordance with other versions one of the seventy-two? J.B. Segal, *Edessa*, p. 65, would keep the two separate. He states that Addai could very well have been a historical personage, who brought Christianity to nearby Adiabene and possibly even to Edessa at the end of the first century or the beginning of the second. Addai was unknown to the Greek Church and simply identified with Thaddaeus. Thaddaeus is not mentioned in Egeria's version of the story; Thomas is named, but not directly as the apostle who was sent to Edessa. An inscription discovered near Edessa and published in 1914 (Max von Oppenheim and Hiller von Gærtringen, 'Höleninschrift von Edessa mit dem Briefe Jesu an Abgar', *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* [1914], pp. 817-828), identifies Thaddaeus and Thomas as one and the same person, as do the independently preserved versions of the Abgar correspondence in three Athos MSS (*Protaton* 83, *Vatopedi* 928 and *Docheiariou* 235).

the city of Edessa and that he translated the letters directly from the Syriac, a claim that can never be established with any certainty²¹. If it is true, then we must assume that the records he consulted did not contain any reference to the Image either.

The second earliest text concerns Egeria, a nun who went on a pilgrimage to visit the holy places towards the end of the fourth century²². Her origins seem to lie in the north-west of Spain²³. She kept a record of her visits and experiences, which has unfortunately not come down to us complete, although the account of her visit to Edessa has survived²⁴.

Egeria records the story of Abgar as related to her by the local bishop. The letters to and from Jesus are mentioned but not quoted. The bishop read them to her and gave her copies; the text seems to suggest that he gave her the originals in his keeping (*epistolas ipsas sive Aggari ad Dominum sive Domini ad Aggarum*), although it would be more prudent to assume that she meant original copies. Egeria puts on record that she already had copies of the letters in her homeland, but that the ones she saw and heard in Edessa were longer (*nam vere amplius est quod hic accepi*). The letters are not reproduced in Egeria's account of her visit to Edessa and we do not know the text of the copies she had back home, so neither can we know for sure what additions the Edessa letters had. It could very well be that the longer text consisted of the promise of

²¹ E. Schwartz, 'Zu Eusebius Kirchengeschichte', *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 4 (1903), p. 65, claims that Eusebius deliberately invented the "translation" to claim independence for the church in Edessa.

²² Segal, *Edessa*, p. 66, mistakenly places her pilgrimage in the "middle of the fifth century".

²³ Segal, *Edessa*, p. 183, prefers Southern Gaul, although her place of birth is confirmed in the seventh-century letter of Valerius to the monks of El Bierzo, edited by Agustín Arce, *Itinerario de la Virgen Egeria* (Madrid 1980), pp. 8-17 (with facing page translation into Spanish): "Quae extremo occidui maris Oceani litore exorta orienti est facta cognita". The standard work in English on Egeria - J. Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels* (Warminster 1999³) - states concerning her origin (p. 3): "She may have been a Gaul from Aquitaine, or a Spaniard from Galicia". Three years later, in *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades* (Warminster 2002), p. 1, the same author is less committal: "Egeria herself, who probably came from the Atlantic coast ...".

²⁴ Critical edition by Agustín Arce, *Itinerario*. The text itself survives in just one MS, *Arezzo* VI.3, copied in the 11th century at Monte Cassino. It was still there in 1532, but does not figure in the inventory of 1650. It appeared at Arezzo in 1788, but was lost again when the monastery was dissolved by the Napoleonic troops and rediscovered in 1884 (cf. Arce, *Itinerario*, pp. 35-36). Given that there is only one textual witness, and that the episode forms a logical and inherent part of the diary and is western, not from

invincibility. In fact, when the bishop tells Egeria the story of Abgar, he recounts the Persian attack and how Abgar prayed at the city gates: *Domine Iesu, tu promiseras nobis, ne aliquis hostium ingrederetur civitatem istam*, showing that the promise was at least known in the city at the time.

In the surviving account, Egeria does not mention Thaddaeus/Addai in connection with Abgar, but her account of the legend is hardly complete. No mention is made either of Abgar's illness or of Ananias in Jerusalem. What is even more significant is that Egeria knows nothing about an image or portrait of Christ. No matter how patchy or summarised the rest of the account is, had the bishop known anything at all about the Image (or had it been openly present in the city), Egeria would surely have included such a holy object in her writings, although Andrew Palmer argues that this silence should not be understood as definitive²⁵.

The promise that God would defend Edessa is mentioned in the Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite (although no mention is made of either the Abgar-Jesus correspondence or the Image). This text was written in Syriac in the very early sixth century²⁶:

... they could not gain the mastery of our city since the promise of Christ given to the believing king Abgar could not be annulled. He said, "Your city shall be blessed and no enemy shall ever have mastery over it"²⁷.

the Orthodox world, and does not even mention the actual Image, there is no reason to believe it might be an interpolation related to the restoration of images after the iconoclast crisis.

²⁵ Andrew Palmer, 'The inauguration anthem of Hagia Sophia in Edessa: a new edition and translation with historical and architectural notes and a comparison with contemporary Constantinopolitan Kontakion', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 12 (1988), p. 129: "the argument from the silence of Egeria can hardly be conclusive; there are some very curious silences in travel literature. Herodotus does not mention the Sphinx in Egypt, though he describes the pyramids around it from his own observations. The Image may be a good deal older than Runciman (who is followed in this by Averil Cameron) thinks".

²⁶ Cf. Frank Trombley and John W. Watt, *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite* (Liverpool 2000), p. xxviii.

In conclusion, the fact that the Image is not mentioned in the written histories of Eusebius and Egeria is a very difficult hurdle to overcome, should one wish to argue in favour of an origin dating before they wrote (especially when both Eusebius and Egeria do mention the Abgar/Christ correspondence), although it should not be taken as definitive in itself. There is a possibility that the Image is obliquely referred to when Egeria reports the bishop's words about Abgar, "Ecce rex Aggarus, qui antequam videret Dominum credidit ei, quia esset vere filius Dei" (Behold King Abgar, who believed that the Lord was the true Son of God before he saw him). In none of the versions of the legend does Abgar actually lay eyes on Christ in person, so if the verse is understood literally it could mean that Abgar believed before he saw the Image of Christ. If the story as told in the *Narratio* is based on any kind of truth, the Image was hidden away when Eusebius and Egeria wrote, and so would have remained unknown to all. Furthermore, the dangers of the *argumentum ex silentio* are well known and rarely conclusive²⁸.

1.3 The Doctrine of Addai

The image first appears in the Syriac work known as the *Doctrine of Addai*, which in its present form would appear to date from about AD 400²⁹. In the Syriac tradition the text is simply known as Labubna, named after the scribe (real or imaginary) who copied the text and signed it at the end. Drijvers states that the text is "clearly meant to defend orthodox beliefs at Edessa against all kinds of heretics pretending that orthodoxy goes

²⁷ Trombley and Watt, *The Chronicle*, p. 6. The divine promise to keep Edessa safe is also mentioned in sections 36, 58 and 60 of the Chronicle.

²⁸ Cf. Martha C. Howell and Walter Prevenier, *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods* (New York, 2001), 73-74: "Another difficulty with argument from silence is that historians cannot assume that an observer of a particular fact would have automatically recorded that fact. Authors observe all kinds of events but only record those that seem important to them".

²⁹ Mirković, *Prelude*, p. 8, dates it to ca.500. The text is edited in *The Teaching of Addai*, translated by George Howard (London 1876; repr. Michigan 1981). Cf. also Daniel Deleanu, *The Doctrine of Addai the Apostle – The Syriac Version* (Toronto 2012); idem, *The Doctrine of Addai the Apostle – The Armenian Version* (Toronto 2012); translations with some explanatory notes but no introduction or analysis.

back to Edessa's first apostle sent by Jesus himself"³⁰. According to Ilaria Ramelli³¹, certain traditions in this text may go as far back as the first century AD.

According to this version, which as Runciman states "seems to be an emended and enlarged edition of the documents that Eusebius saw at Edessa"³², Abgar sent to Jesus a messenger named Hanan (apparently the same person as Ananias), who was an artist. In Eusebius' account, Ananias is a very minor character; he is hardly mentioned at all, and when he is, he is described as a *ταχυδρόμος* or messenger, whereas in the Doctrine of Addai he is a high official in Abgar's court, a scribe and artist.

In the Doctrine, Hanan painted a portrait of Christ and took it back to Edessa. The Image therefore is certainly present in this version of the legend, although under a very different format from the later *ἀχειροποίητος* descriptions. The Syriac tradition of a painted portrait also survives in the "Chronicle of 1234"³³, in which it is said that Abgar ordered his messenger to bring back an icon of Christ on a "piece of wood", although in the end the image is actually transferred onto a cloth. Irma Karaulashvili's article³⁴ is misleading at this point. In her insistence on following Averil Cameron on all points³⁵, Karaulashvili omits to mention that the "Chronicle of 1234" goes on to narrate how the messenger found it impossible to paint the portrait, so Christ took a piece of linen cloth and applied it to his face, miraculously leaving an imprint thereon; the source Karaulashvili uses to try and show that the Image was a wooden board actually states it was a cloth.

³⁰ H.J.W. Drijvers, *Cults and Beliefs at Edessa* (Leiden 1980), p. 33.

³¹ Ilaria Ramelli, 'Possible historical traces in the *Doctrina Addai*', *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 9.1 (January 2006), available on-line at <http://bethmardutho.cua.edu/Hugoye/Vol9No1/HV9N1Ramelli.html> (last accessed: 12 December 2012).

³² Steven Runciman, 'Some Remarks on the Image of Edessa', *Cambridge Historical Journal* 3 (1931), p. 240. Mirković, *Prelude*, p. 31, calls it a "conglomerate of stories taken from a variety of sources". Cf. Santos Aurelio, *Los Evangelios Apócrifos* (Madrid 1956), p. 663, who attributes the differences between Eusebius and the Doctrine of Addai to there being two ancient versions, different but parallel.

³³ Cf. Hans Drijvers, 'The Image of Edessa in the Syriac tradition', in *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation, Papers from a Colloquium held at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence, 1996*, ed. Herbert Kessler and Gerhard Wolf (Bologna 1998), pp. 13-31.

³⁴ Karaulashvili, 'The Abgar Legend', p. 222.

Desreumaux suggests that the episode of the portrait in the Doctrine is “la réponse à la question des deux princes, réponse que la prédication de l’apôtre traduit toutefois en clair: Le corps est la pourpre pure de sa divinité illustre; c’est grâce à lui que nous pouvons voir sa divinité cachée”³⁶.

The promise to make the city invincible also appears in Jesus’ reply to Abgar in the Doctrine – an early example of the lengthy process that led to the letter’s use as a general talisman or good luck charm. The promise was also mentioned in a letter from Darius to Augustine in 429:

Adfuit Deus regi, sanatus est, et amplificato petitionis munere, per epistolam non modo salutem ut supplici, sed etiam securitatem ut regi transmisit; iussit insuper eius urbem ab hostibus in perpetuum esse ac semper immune³⁷.

And so God visited the king, and the king was cured. He received more than he had asked for, as not only did God give him health as to a supplicant through the letter, but also safety as to a king; for he also decreed that his city would be safe forever from enemies.

Another significant difference between Eusebius’ account and the Doctrine of Addai is that in the latter Jesus’ reply to Abgar is an oral message (although the content is virtually the same, excepting the addition of the last sentence promising that the city will never fall into enemy hands), whereas Eusebius has Christ answer in writing.

It seems, therefore, that the early version of the legend in the Doctrine is proof of how the story developed and evolved over the years; the painted portrait of Christ (with no hint of a miraculous origin) and the lack of a written letter from Christ to Abgar were both features that were replaced in just about all later versions by the miraculous image

³⁵ Cf. Averil Cameron, *Changing Cultures in Early Byzantium* (Aldershot 1996), p. 88: the Image of Edessa “never actually looked like a cloth at all”.

³⁶ Desreumaux, *Histoire*, p. 31.

and the written letter, which became a significant element in itself. The importance of the Doctrine lies in the very early mention of an image of Christ (AD 400) and the fact that it shows how the legend developed and was in a constant state of flux.

1.4 A Syriac hymn

The Image is mentioned, albeit in a strangely obscure way, in a Syriac hymn which dates to the first half of the sixth century³⁸. The original cathedral of Edessa had been destroyed by the floods of 525, and the hymn celebrates the opening of the new building eight years later. There is some doubt and debate about the exact meaning of the verses that mention an image not made by human hands. Drijvers translates the relevant verses as follows:

Like an image not made by hands is the marble
with which its walls are suitably overlaid.
And from its brightness, polished and white,
light gathers in it like the sun.

and concludes that “strophe nine of the Syriac hymn does not refer to the Holy Face, the *acheiropoietos* icon”³⁹. Whitby is in agreement with this, stating that “its reference to a picture not made by human hands refers to natural patterns in the marble on the church walls”⁴⁰.

Palmer translates the strophe as follows⁴¹:

³⁷ PL 33, col. 1022.

³⁸ For the original text see *Codex Vaticanus Syriacus* 95, ff. 49-50. Cf. André Grabar, ‘Le témoignage d’une hymne syriaque sur l’architecture de la cathédrale d’Edesse au VI^e siècle et sur la symbolique de l’édifice chrétien’, *Cahiers archéologiques* 2 (1947), pp. 41-68, and Palmer, ‘The inauguration anthem’, pp. 117-168.

³⁹ Drijvers, ‘*The Image*’, p. 20.

⁴⁰ Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History*, p. 325.

⁴¹ ‘The inauguration anthem’, pp. 117-168. The translation of the hymn is on pages 131-133 and the Syriac text on 156-157.

Imprinted with a picture not made by hands, marble snugly clads its walls; the luminosity of its polished whiteness forms a kind of reservoir of sunlight

and in a later publication as follows⁴²:

The marble of it is imprinted with an image not made with hands / and its walls are fittingly clad. And it is polished and made white by its brightness, light brims within it like the sun.

The problem lies in the fact that in the original Syriac, the lack of the definite article before “image not made by hands” means that the marble could be like “an image not made by hands” or like “*the* image not made by hands”. In the dedication hymn for Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, used by Palmer as a comparison for the Syriac verses, no mention is made of such an image. It could be argued that patterns in marble look nothing like an image of the face of Christ, and so the simile would make no sense, but the comparison is not necessarily one of the physical aspect of the two objects – it could just as well be a comparison of their non-human origin⁴³.

I would argue that it is reasonable to assume that any reference, either direct or indirect, to an (or the) image not made by human hands in sixth-century Edessa must be a reference to the face of Christ known as the Image of Edessa. At the very least, any reference to an image not made by human hands in the city of Edessa would immediately have brought to mind the image of Christ, and the author of the poem must have been aware of this. Palmer admits a “possible indirect allusion” to the Image of

⁴² Palmer, ‘The *Logos*’, p. 131.

⁴³ For a similar miracle of an image (of the Virgin) appearing on marble at Lydda, cf. Eirene Harvalia-Crook, ‘A witness to the later tradition of the Florilegium in The Letter of the Three Patriarchs (BHG 1386): an anonymous collection of icon stories (Hierosolymitanus S. Sabas gr. 105)’, in *Porphyrogenita: Essays on the History and Literature of Byzantium and the Latin East in Honour of Julian Chrysostomides*, ed. Charalambos Dendrinos, Jonathan Harris, Eirene Harvalia-Crook and Judith Herrin (Aldershot 2003), p. 353.

Edessa⁴⁴, and in his edition of the Acts of Thaddaeus (in 2009) associates this “image” in the marble with the origin of the Image of Edessa itself, stating that “It is beginning to seem likely that it was also in the Cathedral of Edessa that the concept of a linen towel imprinted with a Christ-image not made with hands was first developed ... by a poet in the service of the Church with an associative imagination nourished by divine learning”⁴⁵.

1.5 The Acts of Mar Mari

Possibly the earliest reference to an image with a miraculous origin in relation to the Abgar legend can be found in the Syriac work the *Acts of Mar Mari*⁴⁶. The main text dates from the late sixth or early seventh century⁴⁷, although it is also possible that the first chapters (among which the story of Abgar and the Image is told) are a later addition from the times of the Iconoclast controversy. We should bear in mind, however, that the effects of Iconoclasm were hardly felt in the area and the text was not written simply in order to justify the veneration of images⁴⁸. If we take the text at its word, it must have been written before the events of 944, as the narration states that the Image is still kept in Edessa.

This version of the legend has Abgar send various artists to Jerusalem to paint the likeness of Christ, although none of them were able to do so (no reason is given for this). Jesus applies a linen cloth (*sedona* in the original, no doubt from the Greek *σινδών*) to his face and miraculously leaves an image of it thereon; the interesting part is

⁴⁴ Palmer, ‘The *Logos*’, p. 129.

⁴⁵ Palmer, ‘The *Logos*’, p. 135.

⁴⁶ Introduction and French translation in Christelle and Florence Jullien, *Les Actes de Mar Mari, l’apôtre de la Mesopotamie* (Turnhout 2001). The Syriac text together with a Latin translation was published by J. B. Abbeloos, *Acta Sancti Maris Assyriae, Babyloniae ac Persidis seculo I apostoli Syriace sive Aramaice, juxta Manuscriptum Alqoschianum adjectis aliorum codicum lectionibus variantibus versione latina et annotationibus illustrata* (Leipzig 1885).

⁴⁷ Jullien and Jullien, *Les Actes*, pp. 53-55.

⁴⁸ Jullien and Jullien, *Les Actes*, p. 55: “Le corps des *Actes de Mar Mari* se développe d’ailleurs en dehors de cette controverse”.

that miraculous powers are here attributed to the image, while no mention is made of such power for the letters⁴⁹.

There is also a disputed reference to the Image in Edessa (although nothing is said of its origins) in MS 8273 of the Church of the Forty Martyrs in Mardin (Turkey)⁵⁰, in a text called the *Life of Daniel of Galaš*, attributed to Jacob of Sarug (ca.450-520). According to Drijvers, however, the reference is an interpolation⁵¹. Palmer convincingly argues that this kind of reasoning is circular, in the sense that Drijvers starts from a belief that there was no image of Christ in Edessa at this time, hence any references thereto must be an interpolation, whereas Palmer states that if there is a reference to an Image of Christ in Edessa at this time then the Image must have been there⁵².

1.6 The Acts of Thaddaeus

The next significant text is the Acts of Thaddaeus, which Palmer dates to 609-726⁵³. Lipsius, who edited and published the text, states that the additions to Eusebius' version were made towards the end of the fourth century⁵⁴.

A new edition and detailed study of the Acts of Thaddaeus was published by Palmer in 2009⁵⁵; the translation of the Greek text contains certain additions which Palmer claims “bring out the potential of this story for illustrating what Paul means by ‘putting on Christ’”. In these additions Palmer understands that the cloth with the image

⁴⁹ Jullien and Jullien, *Les Actes*, p. 67: “Le linge fut emporté comme source de secours et déposé dans l’église d’Édesse, jusqu’à ce jour”.

⁵⁰ Nicolotti, *Dal Mandylion*, pp. 24-25.

⁵¹ Han Drijvers, ‘The Image’, pp. 17-18.

⁵² Andrew Palmer, ‘The *Logos* of the Mandylion: Folktale, or Sacred Narrative? A New Edition of *The Acts of Thaddaeus* with a Commentary’, in *Edessa in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit: Religion, Kultur und Politik zwischen Ost und West. Beiträge des internationalen Edessa-Symposiums in Halle an der Saale, 14-17 Juli 2005*, ed. Lutz Greisiger, Claudia Rammelt and Jürgen Tubach (Beirut 2009), p. 186: “This is a flawed, because circular, argument: precisely this passage does claim that there was such a thing, ca.410, as an image which gave a blessing and it cannot be dismissed on the grounds that no other text of that period mentions such a thing. If the alleged ‘interpolation’ is removed, the journey of David and Mari to Edessa lacks motivation, since the icon is their reason for going to Edessa”.

⁵³ Andrew Palmer translated (with an introduction) a Greek version of the Abgar legend in an appendix to Desreumaux, *Histoire*, p. 137.

⁵⁴ Ricardus Lipsius, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* (Darmstadt 1959), p. cvii.

⁵⁵ Palmer, ‘The *Logos*’, pp. 117-207.

of Christ was transformed into a mask, and that “Thaddaeus fitted the mask sent by Jesus over Abgar’s wet features ... the mask of Christ had become the seal by which Christ marked the one who belonged to him”⁵⁶. This kind of personal interpretation of the text adds little to our understanding of the original as it is purely speculative and not based on any information we do have concerning the Image.

The Acts tell us that Lebbaios was a native of Edessa who came to Jerusalem when John the Baptist was preaching, he was baptised and took the name of Thaddaeus, before he was chosen as one of the twelve disciples. The Acts then tell the story of Abgar. The king’s letter to Christ is a fairly free adaptation of Eusebius’ version, although nothing substantial is modified. Instructions are given to Ananias to bring a description of Christ:

Παραγγείλας τῷ Ἀνανία ὁ Ἄβγαρος ἱστορήσαι τὸν Χριστὸν ἀκριβῶς, ποίας εἰδέας ἐστίν, τὴν τε ἡλικίαν καὶ τρίχα καὶ ἀπλῶς πάντα.

Abgar told Ananias to record Christ’s exact appearance, what he looked like, his stature, his hair and everything in detail.

The cloth that Jesus wipes his face with and onto which his image is miraculously transferred is called both *τετράδιπλον* and *σινδών*⁵⁷. Jesus’ reply to Abgar is oral, not written, and much shorter than other versions:

Εἰρήνη σοὶ καὶ τῇ πόλει σου, ὅτι διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθον, παθεῖν ὑπὲρ τοῦ κόσμου καὶ ἀναστῆναι καὶ ἀναστήσαι τοὺς προπάτορας. Μετὰ δὲ τὸ ἀναληφθῆναί με εἰς οὐρανοὺς ἀποστελῶ σοὶ τὸν μαθητὴν μου Θαδδαῖον, ὅστις φωτίσει σε καὶ ὀδηγήσει σε εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν καὶ σὲ καὶ τὴν πόλιν σου.

⁵⁶ Palmer, “The *Logos*”, p. 127.

⁵⁷ Cf. chapter 4, pp. 167-186, concerning the various different words used to describe both the image and what it was imprinted onto.

Peace to you and your city, as this is what I came for, to suffer for the world, to rise and to raise our forefathers. When I have been taken up to heaven I will send you a disciple of mine called Thaddaeus, who will enlighten you and lead both you and your city into all truth.

1.7 Procopius and Evagrius

The Greek historians Procopius and Evagrius wrote of the Persian attack on Edessa in the mid-sixth century, albeit in differing ways. Procopius wrote in the middle of the sixth century, shortly after the failed Persian attack. He does not mention the miraculous role of the Image in the defence of the city⁵⁸, and informs his readers that the promise of the city's invincibility was unknown in the first versions of the letter. He adds (not without a touch of sarcasm) that since everyone believed in the promise, God had to honour it so as not to make believers look foolish⁵⁹:

Τούτο τῆς ἐπιστολῆς τὸ ἀκροτελεύτιον, οἱ μὲν ἐκείνου τοῦ χρόνου τὴν ἱστορίαν συγγράψαντες οὐδαμῆ ἔγνωσαν. Οὐ γὰρ οὖν οὐδέ πη αὐτοῦ ἐπεμνήσθησαν. Ἐδεσσηνοὶ δὲ αὐτὸ ξὺν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ εὐρέσθαι φασίν, ὥστε ἀμέλει καὶ ἀνάγραπτον οὕτω τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἀντ' ἄλλου που φυλακτῆριον ἐν ταῖς πόλεως πεποιήνται πύλαις. Καὶ μοί ποτε ἔννοια γέγονεν ὡς εἰ ταῦτα, ἅπερ ἐρρήθη, ὁ Χριστὸς ἔγραψεν, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐς τοῦτο δόξης ἄνθρωποι ἦλθον, ὡς μήποτε αὐτοῖς πλάνης τινα σκῆψιν διδοίη.

⁵⁸ The fourteenth-century historian Nicephorus Callistus states that Procopius did indeed tell the story of the Image, PG 147, col. 760: "Ἐτι ὁ εἰρημένος ἱστορεῖ Προκόπιος, ὅσα δὴ καὶ τοῖς πάλαι ἱστόρηται περὶ τῆς εἰκόνης Χριστοῦ, ἣτις Ἀυγάριω τῇ τοπάρχῃ Ἐδέσσης ἐστάλη. It is possible that Nicephorus is quoting from some lost lines of Procopius, although more likely that he is quoting from memory and mistakenly attributes the story of the Image to the historian.

⁵⁹ *Bellum Persicum* II: 26-27; ed. J. Haury and G. Wirth, *Procopius, Bellum Persicum* (Leipzig 1962-1963), pp. 268 ff.

Those who wrote the history of the time had no knowledge whatsoever of the final sentence of this letter. They make no mention of it anywhere. The inhabitants of Edessa say that they found it with the letter and doubtless had this one inscribed on the gates of the city in place of the other one. I would doubt that Christ wrote this, but given that people came to believe he had, he let it be so, so as not to give reasons for believing it false.

Drijvers concludes that Procopius did not mention the Image “not because he was not interested in miracles, but because such an image simply did not exist”⁶⁰, although despite his silence, both von Dobschütz and Runciman suggest that the legend has a historical foundation⁶¹.

Writing towards the end of the sixth century, the historian Evagrius Scholasticus tells the story of how the portrait of Christ saved the city of Edessa when the Persians attacked in AD 544. He gives no account of how the Image came to be in Edessa and mentions nothing of its origins, but does take it for granted that his readers would know exactly what he was referring to.

In Evagrius’ account (*Ecclesiastical History*, Book IV:27)⁶², the story seems to be based on Procopius’ earlier account, although with a significant addition not found in the source: the intervention of the Image of Edessa as the miraculous solution for setting ablaze the wood underground. This is the earliest mention of the Image’s presence in Edessa in a historical work, as opposed to a text specifically devoted to the Image itself. A detail sometimes overlooked is that Evagrius takes knowledge of the Image for granted. The fact that it needs no introduction or explanation seems to suggest that it is older than the time he was writing about.

⁶⁰ Hans Drijvers, ‘The Image’, p. 18.

⁶¹ Cf. Ernst Kitzinger, ‘The Cult of Images in the Age before Iconoclasm’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8 (1954), pp. 83-150, repr. in idem, *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West* (Indiana University Press 1976), p. 103.

⁶² Cf. Michael Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus* (Liverpool 2000), pp. 225-228.

Procopius does mention the difficulties in lighting the fire, although Evagrius, in his eagerness to relate the role of the Image, eliminates various details. According to Whitby⁶³, “the *acheiropoietos* miracle is then inserted, quite smoothly, at the point where Procopius describes the defenders’ problems with igniting the material in their mine”.

Julian Chrysostomides is of the opinion that the whole episode of the intervention of the Image in Evagrius is a later interpolation⁶⁴. She claims that Evagrius follows Procopius closely in telling of the miraculous fire that defeated the invading Persians (although Procopius mentions no image), diverging only to tell how the Image Christ had sent to Abgar was brought to kindle the fire:

Ὡς δ’ οὖν ἐς πᾶσαν ἀμηχανίαν ἦλθον, φέρουσι τὴν θεότευκτον εἰκόνα, ἣν ἀνθρώπων μὲν χεῖρες οὐκ εἰργάσαντο, Ἀγβάρῳ δὲ Χριστὸς ὁ θεός, ἐπεὶ αὐτὸν ἰδεῖν ἐπόθει, πέπομφε. Ταύτην τοίνυν τὴν παναγίαν εἰκόνα κατὰ τὴν εἰργασμένην σφίσι ἐσαγαγόντες διώρυγα, ὕδατι τε ἐπικλύσαντες, ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ κατὰ τῆς πυρᾶς καὶ τῶν ξύλων ἀφείσαν. Καὶ παρατύκα τῆς θείας δυνάμεως τῇ πίστει τῶν δεδρακότων ἐπιφοιτησάσης, ὅπερ ἦν ἐκείνοις πρῶην ἀδύνατον, ἐξηνύετο, παρατύκα γὰρ ἐσεδέξαντο τὴν φλόγα τὰ ξύλα, καὶ λόγου θᾶπτον ἀπανθρακωθέντα τοῖς ὑπερτέροις μετεδίδοσαν, ἅπαντα τοῦ πυρὸς ἀμφινεμομένου.

⁶³ Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History*, p. xxx.

⁶⁴ See J.A. Munitiz et al. (eds.), *The Letter of the Three Patriarchs to Emperor Theophilus and Related Texts* (Camberley 1997), pp. xxvi ff. Brock, ‘Transformations’, p. 49 note 10, does not agree: “Whitby convincingly refutes the view of J. Chrysostomides ... that the passage was an interpolation of the eighth century”.

So, when they reached a situation of complete despair, they brought the divinely made image, which human hands had not created. Christ in his divinity had sent it to Abgar, who wished to see him. They took the holy image into the ditch that had been dug and sprinkled it with water, and then sprinkled the pyre and wood too. Divine power immediately came down to through the faith of those who so acted and brought about what was impossible before-the wood immediately caught fire and became ash quicker than you could say it. Everything caught fire and they attributed it to heaven⁶⁵.

According to Chrysostomides, this is where the story should have come to an end, but apparently then Evagrius returns to Procopius' version and the difficulties of lighting the fire. This would thus indicate that the reference to the Image was not part of the original text, but dates to the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787. After suggesting the interpolation theory, Chrysostomides summarises with no room for doubt: "It is clear, then, that the story of the *acheiropoietos* was added to the text of Evagrius' *Ecclesiastical History* later, and that the story was not current in the sixth century at all"⁶⁶.

Convinced therefore that the Image of Edessa was an invention of the eighth century (necessary for the argument under development about the three Eastern Patriarchates), Chrysostomides goes on to claim that the two references in John Damascene are also deliberate interpolations or scribal annotations in the margin, that somehow came to be incorporated into the text.

Michael Whitby devotes a whole appendix in his translation of Evagrius to refuting Chrysostomides' arguments⁶⁷. His own statements can be summarised as follows:

⁶⁵ Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History* IV:28.

⁶⁶ Munitiz, *The Letter*, p. xxviii.

⁶⁷ Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 323-326.

1. Evagrius' account is not as close to Procopius' as Chrysostomides would have us believe. He had a different story to tell (the miraculous destruction of the Persian mound) and so his focus was quite different from that of Procopius.
2. The alleged contradiction in setting the wood on fire and then returning to the unburnt wood can be solved by assuming two different stages in the fire: "an initial blaze deep inside the mound followed by a slower smouldering process".
3. Chrysostomides claims that Evagrius' failure to quote his source for the story of the Image is contrary to his own habit, hence the story must be a later interpolation. However, Evagrius does not always cite his sources (he does not do so for the next miracle in his history, in Sergiopolis), and even then, his use of the phrase *λέξω δὲ τὰ γινόμενα* to introduce the story of the icon after recording what Procopius had written would seem to indicate that he did indeed have his own source for the episode.
4. Procopius' silence about the Image is not significant as it was possibly not a well-known story until some time after the events related (or maybe the Image did not even exist before this time).
5. The Image is not mentioned in Evagrius' chapter headings, but neither are many other events related in his history, such as Apamea and Sergiopolis.

In summary, Whitby concludes that Chrysostomides' attack was based on a narrow-minded point of view, because if the story about the Image is taken out the whole narrative structure is undermined⁶⁸. As far as the origin of the Image is concerned, Whitby offers no solutions, although he does say "it is not impossible that

⁶⁸ Cf. Ester Brunet, 'Le Icone Acheropite a Nicea II e nei Libri Carolini', in *Sacre Impronte e oggetti "non fatti da mano" d'uomo nelle religioni*, ed. Adele Monaci Castagno (Alessandria 2011), p. 206: "Questa tesi [scil. Chrysostomides'] è stata fortemente contrastata da Michael Whitby na sua traduzione commentata dell'opera di Evagrio, con argomentazioni circa la struttura del testo che risultano a mio parere convincenti".

every holy object in the city was exploited to assist the process” (scil. of lighting the fire), suggesting at least that the Image did exist at the time of the siege.

It seems that the interpolation theory is a further example of what Palmer calls “circular reasoning”. Beginning with a belief that there are no references to the Image before the Iconoclast controversy, upholders of this theory are then forced into arguing that all such references must be interpolations. It would seem much more logical, when faced with various texts describing the existence of a portrait of Christ (whether man-made or miraculous), to accept that there was indeed such an image in Edessa.

1.8 The *Epistula Abgari*

A fascinating Greek text known as the *Epistula Abgari* is the subject of the following chapter (below, pp. 108-137), due to the detailed discussion of its dating and the fact that just about every known version of the text is unique – there appears to have been no standard text.

1.9 The Piacenza Pilgrim and the Image of Edessa in Egypt

An anonymous record of a pilgrimage in AD 570 records something that sounds very much like the Image of Edessa in Memphis in Egypt. Although historically attributed to Antoninus of Piacenza, it was most probably a journey undertaken under the auspices of the saint (Figure 1.1 shows one of the MSS containing this text: *Reims* 1392, f. 233^v):

In Memphi fuit templum, quod est modo ecclesia, cuius una regia se clausit ante Dominum nostrum, quando cum beata Maria illic fuit, et usque hactenus non potest aperiri. Ibi enim vidimus pallium lineum, in quo est effigies Salvatoris, quem dicunt tempore illo tersisset faciem suam in eo et remansisset imago ipsius ibi, quae singulis temporibus adoratur. Quem

adoravimus et nos, sed propter splendorem non potueramus intendere, quia, quantum intendebas, inmutabatur in oculis tuis⁶⁹.

There was a temple in Memphis, which is now a church, one of whose doors closed in the presence of our Lord when he was there with blessed Mary, and it cannot now be opened. We saw there the linen cloth on which is a likeness of the Saviour – it is said that in those times he wiped his face with it and his image remained thereon. It is venerated at certain times. We also venerated it, but on account of the brightness we could not see it very well; the more you looked, the more it changed to your eyes.

According to the seventh-century Coptic bishop John of Nikiou, there was a cloth called a “mandil” in Egypt:

And likewise in the days of this patriarch Timothy there took place in the city of Alexandria an event, great and very terrible and exceedingly strange. Now there was a house in the eastern quarter of the city, in a place called Arutiju, to the right of the church of the holy Athanasius. And in this house there dwelt a Jew, named Aubaruns, and he had a chest in which were the mandil and towel of our Lord Jesus Christ, wherewith He girded Himself when He washed the feet of His disciples. His kindred gave it (the chest) to this Jew. He indeed did not open it; for though he often wished to open it he could not. For when he touched it, (fire) descended threatening to consume him who wished to open it. And he heard the voices of angels singing the praises of Him who was crucified on the cross, the Lord, the King of Glory. And as this Jew was terrified, he, his mother, and wife, and children went to the patriarch Timothy and told him (regarding it). And forthwith he proceeded with crosses, and gospels, censers and lighted waxen candles, and he came to the place in which the chest was. And forthwith the lid of the coffer opened, and he took with great veneration the notable mandil and

⁶⁹ Critical edition of the text in J. Gildemeister, *Antonini Placentini Itinerarium* (Berlin 1889). English translation and commentary in Wilkinson, *Jerusalem*, pp. 129-151, although the translation here is my own.

towel and conveyed them to the patriarchal palace, and placed them in the Church of the Tabenniosites, in a holy place. And an angel descended from heaven and closed until this day the lid of the brazen coffer wherein the mandil and towel had been. And all the inhabitants of Alexandria were indignant, and went to the Persians and besought them to open the lid of the coffer, but they could not. That Jew indeed and all his household became Christians then as was befitting⁷⁰.

The towel in this text is the one Jesus used when washing the disciples' feet, and the "mandil" seems to be a separate object, although no image is mentioned on the cloth. The name Aubaruns seems to be a distant recollection of Abgar and the "mandil" of the Image of Edessa⁷¹. There are no further references to the Image of Edessa ever having been in Egypt, although it was certainly known – the partial remains of a Mandylion with a Syriac inscription related to the Abgar legend was recently uncovered at Deir al-Surian in Egypt (see below, p. 293). So we can only conclude that if such a cloth ever existed in Egypt it was either a copy of the original or a deliberate fake⁷². Either way, in the words of Otto Meinardus⁷³, "Today, traditions of the sacred napkin with the imprint of the face of Christ are completely extinct among the Copts".

There seems therefore to have been a tradition of a face of Christ on a cloth in Egypt, although the tradition was lost long ago. If the tradition is based on any kind of historical fact (and the pilgrimage text seems to suggest it was), the image could well have been a copy of the Image of Edessa.

⁷⁰ Translation from R. H. Charles, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu translated from Zotenberg's Ethiopic Text* (London 1916).

⁷¹ Cf. Cameron, 'The History', p. 87: "Surely this is a garbled version of the Abgar legend, and it links Abgar with a cloth".

⁷² Cf. Robin Margaret Jensen, *Face to Face: Portraits of the Divine in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis 2005), p. 136: "Although multitudes of copies of the original portrait were made (possibly one found its way to Egypt where it was seen by the Piacenza pilgrim) ...".

1.10 The Oxford and Cairo Fragments of the Abgar correspondence

MS *Oxoniensis Bodl. Gr. Th.* b 1 and *Papyrus Cairo* 10,736 contain a unique version of the Abgar correspondence, although the poor state of the papyrus fragments means that little can now be read⁷⁴ (see Figures 1.2 and 1.3). The two have been identified as proceeding from the same document (confirmed by the same unidentified hand on the verso of both), and dated to the sixth or seventh century.

The transcription and translation of *Papyrus Cairo* 10,736 is as follows:

[Αβ]γαρου τ[ου] αυτου βασιλεως
αυτων ανεστα
τουτων αναγνωσιν αρ ν επ
ε[ρ]γον του βασιλεως των παρα του Χ[ριστο]Υ
5 τονεμενω ανεγνω δε επι αυτου
καιος ο σημειοσαμενος
υσας δε ο βασιλευς Αβγαρος εξειστη
στηκοσιν αυτω μεταστασιν

(of Ab)gar the king himself

what they had sent

on reading it

before the king about the Christ

read it for him

written

When king Abgar heard this he was amazed

those who were with him

⁷³ 'The Sacred Linen Cloths of Christ's Passion in Egypt', *Coptic Church Review* 4.24 (2003), p. 111.

⁷⁴ Both are loose leaves.

The transcription and translation of the Oxford fragment containing the correspondence is given below:

προς με
κουσται μοι οτι
διωκουσιν σε
τιν σμικροτατη

5

ταυτα ο

ριος ει οτι επιστευσας εν εμοι μη κως με

ι γαρ περι εμου οτι οι εωρακοτες με ου μη πιστευ

10

ν εμοι και οι μη εωρακοτες με αυτοι

ουσιν και ζησονται περι δε ου εγραψας μοι

παντα δι α

σταλην εντα[υ]θα πληρωσαι και μετα το πληρωσαι

αναλημφθηναι προς τον αποστειλαντα με

15

κ πειδαν αναλημ οι τινα

των μαθητ ιασηται

και ζωνν κα αρασχηται

πολε

to me

I have heard that

persecute you

small

this

for believing in me without (having seen) me.

about me that those who see me will not believe

in me) and those who have not seen me

(believe and live. As for what you wrote to me

everything I was sent here for
and after fulfilling this
be taken up to the Father who sent me.
When I have been taken one of my
disciples who will cure
give life and
city

The two fragments were analysed by Rolf Peppermüller⁷⁵, who reached the following conclusions:

1. The account seems to refer to an earlier version than that of Eusebius or the present *Doctrina Addai*.
2. The text is not a simple copy of Eusebius.
3. It appears that the *Doctrina Addai* as it now stands takes the same view as these papyrus texts but is not a word-for-word translation, as there are certain differences between the two.
4. The *Doctrina Addai* has additions compared to the papyrus text, but also omissions. The papyrus texts would seem to be a translation of a lost earlier Syriac source than the *Doctrina Addai*.

If a Greek version independent of Eusebius did indeed exist, then the tradition of the Abgar legend is more complicated than previously assumed, although the strongest influence in later times proceeds from Eusebius' text. Taking these fragments into account, and the differences in the correspondence mentioned by Egeria, it would appear that there never was an original authoritative text of the Abgar legend. From the

very beginning it was open to modification and adaptation. The text recorded by Eusebius became “standard” thanks to the historian’s own reputation, rather than any innate quality of the text itself.

1.11 Theophylact Simocatta

Two interesting stories about the Image of Edessa are told by Theophylact Simocatta, who wrote in the early seventh century about what had happened during the twenty-year reign of the emperor Maurice (582-602). Not much is known about the historian’s life, although the name Simocatta probably means “snub-nosed cat” and could be taken as a reference to his physical appearance⁷⁶.

In Book ii.3.4-6, Theophylact recounts the Battle of Solachon, which took place in 586. Just when the Persian army came into view, the Roman commander Philippicus displayed the image of God incarnate, which was not made by human hands or painted:

ταὐτὸ ὁ στρατηγὸς τῶν σεβασμίων περιπέπλων γυμνώσας, τὰς τάξεις ὑπέτρεχε, κρείττονος καὶ ἀνανταγωνίστου θράσους ἐντεῦθεν μεταδιδούς τῇ στρατεύματι.

He stripped it of its sacred coverings and paraded it through the ranks, thereby inspiring the army with a greater and irresistible courage⁷⁷.

Shortly before Easter in 588, as told by Theophylact in book iii.1.10-12 of his history, Priscus was appointed commander in the east, replacing Philippicus. He did not respect any of the usual traditions that the army was used to, and as a result a mass of

⁷⁵ Rolf Peppermüller, ‘Griechische Papyrusfragmente der Doctrina Addai’, *Vigiliae Christianae* 25 (1971), pp. 289-301.

⁷⁶ Cf. Michael Whitby, *The History of Theophylact Simocatta* (Oxford 1986), p. xiii.

⁷⁷ Whitby, *The History*, p. 46. For the critical edition of the text cf. C. de Boor, *Theophylacti Simocattae Historiae* (Leipzig 1887).

soldiers gathered round his tent, willing to express their discontent with swords and stones.

Priscus enquired as to the cause of the commotion, and in answer was told, “the unity of the whole array has been overthrown, the camp is leaderless”⁷⁸. The general had no idea what to do, and tried to calm the soldiers down by having the image of God incarnate, the *ἀχειροποιήτος* image carried among them. The plan did not produce the desired effect however, and the soldiers even threw stones at the Image.

The image that Philippicus paraded before his soldiers is not specifically referred to as the Image of Edessa (Whitby suggests it could either be the Edessa icon or the Camouliana one), although it is named as *ἀχειροποιήτος* when Priscus tried the same method under different circumstances. Furthermore, the setting of the story is near Edessa, making it highly unlikely that the image in question was not the Image of Edessa. The language used to describe the image in each case is virtually identical, and it is stretching the imagination to think that Theophylact was in fact referring to two different objects.

1.12 George of Pisidia

A similar use of the image is recounted in the seventh-century poet George of Pisidia. The emperor Heraclius took the image in his hands and showed it to the troops who were about to fight the Persians⁷⁹:

λαβὼν δὲ τὴν θεῖαν τε καὶ σεβάσμιον
μορφὴν ἐκείνην τῆς γραφῆς τῆς ἀγράφου,
ἦν χεῖρες οὐκ ἔγραψαν, ἀλλ’ ἐν εἰκόνι
ὁ πάντα μορφῶν καὶ διαπλάττων λόγος

⁷⁸ Whitby, *The History*, p. 73.

⁷⁹ *Georgii Pisidae Expeditio persica, Bellum avaricum, Heraclias*, ed. Immanuel Bekker (Bonn 1836), p. 9.

ἄνευ γραφῆς μόρφωσιν ...

Taking the divine and venerable form,
the expression of what cannot be expressed,
which hands have not made, but to which the word
gave form, shaping and making everything
but not painted ...

1.13 The *Nouthesia Gerontos*

This text was written before 787, perhaps even before 770, and is one of the few texts that survive from the First Iconoclasm⁸⁰. The text relating to the Abgar legend is as follows:

Ὁ γέρων ἔφη· “Ἐφανέρωσεν ἑαυτὸν ὁ κύριος καὶ θεὸς ἡμῶν καὶ τὰς πολλὰς αὐτοῦ τελεῶν
θαυματουργίας, ἀπήλθεν ἢ βοή αὐτοῦ εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν καὶ ἐθαύμασαν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.
Βασιλεὺς δέ τις ὀνόματι Αὐγαρος πόθῳ θείῳ ἐπειγόμενος τοῦ ἰδεῖν αὐτόν, καὶ διὰ τὸ εἶναι
αὐτόν Ἀσσύριον οὐκ ἴσχυεν. Καὶ πέμψας τοὺς ἀποστόλους αὐτοῦ εἰς πρεσβείαν λέγοντες
5 αὐτῷ· Ἐλθέ πρὸς ἡμᾶς· ἀκούομεν γὰρ τὰ μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαστά, ἃ ἐργάζει ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις.
Δεῦρο λοιπὸν καὶ ἐν ἡμῖν, ἵνα πιστεύσωμεν ὅτι σὺ εἶ τὸ φῶς καὶ ἡ δόξα τῶν ἔθνων. Καὶ φησιν
πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὁ κύριος· Οὐκ ἀπεστάλην εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰσραήλ. Καὶ ἦν αὐτοῖς εἰπὼν ὁ
βασιλεὺς· Ἐὰν ἔλθῃ εὖ καὶ καλῶς· εἰ καὶ μὴ γε, τῆς μορφῆς αὐτοῦ ἀπαραλλάκτως τὴν
εἰκόνα ἀγάγετε μοι, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῇ κατάσχω μου τὸν πόθον. Καὶ πολλὰ κοπιάσαντες, οὐκ ἴσχυον
10 τὴν ἀγίαν αὐτοῦ ἐξεικονίσαι μορφὴν. Ἰδὼν δὲ τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν Χριστὸς, ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν, καὶ
ἐπιλαβόμενος σινδῶνι καὶ ταῖς οἰκείαις χερσὶν ἐπιθεὶς ἐν τῷ ἀχράντῳ αὐτοῦ προσώπῳ, καὶ ἄνευ
ὑλῆς καὶ χρωμάτων ἐγένετο ἡ ἀχραντος αὐτοῦ εἰκὼν. Καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὴν τοῖς ἀποσταλείσιν
παρὰ Αὐγάρῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ ἠυλόγησεν αὐτοὺς τε καὶ τὴν πόλιν, ἐδράσας αὐτῆς καὶ τὰ

⁸⁰ Preserved in *Mosquensis Historici Musei* 265 (9th/10th c.). Edited by B.M. Melioranskij, *Georgij Kiprianin i Ioann Ierusalimianin, dva maloizviestnych bortsza za pravoslavie v VIII niekie* (St Petersburg 1901), pp. V-XXXIX.

15 θεμέλια, καθὼς καὶ ὁ θεοφόρος πατὴρ ἡμῶν Ἐφραὶμ διηγεῖται ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς διαθήκης αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀψευδὴς ἐστὶν ὁ λόγος.

The old man said, “When our Lord and God revealed himself and his many wonderful miracles, his fame spread over the whole land and people were amazed. A certain king, called Abgar, was filled with a godly desire to see Jesus but as he was Assyrian, he could not. He sent some messengers with the mission to say to him, ‘Come to us. We have heard about the great wonders that you work among the Jews. Come and live with us so that we might believe you are the light and glory of the nations’. And the Lord replied to them, ‘I was only sent to the house of Israel’. The king had told them, ‘If he comes, fine and good. If he does not, bring me the exact image of his form so that I might fulfil my desire’. No matter how hard they tried they were not able to produce an image of his form. Seeing their faith, Christ our Saviour took hold of a linen cloth and with his own hands placed it on his undefiled face, and without paint or any other matter his undefiled image was imprinted onto the cloth. He gave it to the messengers King Abgar had sent, blessing them, the king and the city, strengthening the foundations of the city, as our God-bearing father Ephraim tells us in his writings-and the word is true”.

The legend is slightly different to later versions in that both Abgar’s message to Jesus and the reply are oral, and the content of the message is both shorter and different (as would befit a supposedly oral “admonition”). Emphasis is placed on the fact that the resulting image was a miraculous intervention and involved no paint or artistic skills. The image was imprinted onto a *σινδῶν* or linen cloth.

1.14 Moses Khorenats’i

Moses Khorenats’i is a disputed case. The writer himself – an Armenian who set out to enhance the history of his country – claims to be a follower of Mesrob, which would place him in the fifth century, and thus constitute very early evidence for the existence of the Image. Internal considerations, however, suggest a date in the eighth century. The

fifth-century date was accepted by William Cureton in the nineteenth century⁸¹ and more recently by Ilaria Ramelli⁸² and Alexander Mirković⁸³, although it was decidedly rejected towards the end of the nineteenth century by Auguste Carrière⁸⁴.

Moses offers an interesting (but doubtless unhistorical) origin for Agbar's name. He states that it was originally Avak-äir, which means 'a great man', but neither the Greeks nor the Syrians could pronounce it and so they called him Abgar. Both letters in Moses' account are written rather than spoken and there is no record of the promise of invincibility, although the Image is mentioned. No details are given; it is simply stated that Hanan took Jesus' letter back to Abgar along with the image of Christ, which "is still in the city of Edessa" (when Moses wrote). If the account dates to the fifth century, then it is one of the earliest references to the Image of Edessa, but nonetheless it would not clarify any of the important questions.

Regardless of when the account was written, Moses successfully makes the legend thoroughly Armenian: Abgar is a king of Armenia, Thaddaeus travels round Armenia after converting Abgar etc. This is an interesting example of how the legend was adapted to prove a point – in this particular case, a political one, namely that Armenia was the first kingdom to officially adopt Christianity.

The fact that Moses mentions the Image of Edessa is not a conclusive argument against the early date of the text, as it is mentioned in others dating to the fifth century and even earlier. The later dating for the historian is because there are references in his work to events from the seventh century, although these could well be additions to the text. In any case, the date is not so important as far as the Image of Edessa is concerned,

⁸¹ Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents*, p. 194. The book is in English although the translation of Moses Khorenats'i is in French, copied from a previous edition published in France.

⁸² Ramelli, 'Dal Mandilion', p. 173.

⁸³ Mirković, *Prelude*, p. 120.

⁸⁴ 'La légende d'Abgar dans l'Histoire d'Arménie de Moïse de Khoren', in *Centenaire de l'École des langues vivantes* (Paris 1895), p. 358 : "... nous avons dû conclure que l'Histoire d'Arménie ne pouvait pas avoir été écrite avant les premières années du VIII^e siècle". Cf. Valentina Calzolari, 'Réécriture des textes apocryphes en arménien: l'exemple de la légende de l'apostolat de Thaddée en Arménie', *Apocrypha* 8 (1997), pp. 97-110.

as Moses tells us nothing new about the Image. The significance of this text lies in the fact that it shows how once again the story was adapted to prove a political point in favour of Armenia.

1.15 The *Narratio de imagine edessena*

Among the various different texts concerning the history and origins of the Image of Edessa, the longest and most detailed is without doubt the *Narratio de imagine edessena*. This version of the legend is attributed within the text itself to the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (905-959). The text was most probably written by a courtier under Constantine's close supervision, a view followed by Alfred Rambaud⁸⁵ – the attribution in this case would depend on how literally we understand the meaning of the word “author”. In his monumental and often overlooked study of the emperor's life and works, Arnold Toynbee does not even mention the work to dismiss the authorship thereof⁸⁶. The emperor's authorship was upheld by a number of scholars⁸⁷, including Paul Hetherington, who discusses the text of the *Narratio* remarking that⁸⁸ “we can be confident that we are reading the words of someone who was present when the image arrived in the Great City on the evening of 15 August 944, and who could have talked with members of the party that had escorted it”⁸⁹.

⁸⁵ Alfred Rambaud, *L'Empire grec au dixième siècle. Constantin Porphyrogénète* (Paris 1870), p. 106: “L'ouvrage n'est pas de Constantin VII; mais il a été certainement écrit sous son inspiration”.

⁸⁶ Arnold Toynbee, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and his World* (Oxford 1973).

⁸⁷ See Bernard Flusin, ‘Les reliques de la Sainte-Chapelle et leur passé impérial’, in *Le trésor de la Sainte-Chapelle*, ed. Jannic Durand and Marie-Pierre Laffitte (Paris 2001) p. 27: “C'est lui [scil. Constantine Porphyrogenitus] que écrit le récit de la translation du *Mandyliion*”; Glenn Peers, ‘Masks, Marriage and the Byzantine Mandyliion: Classical inversions in the Tenth Century’, *Intermedialités* 8 (2006), p. 16: “The text was very likely written by the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitos”; and Évelyne Patlagean, ‘L'Entrée’, p. 28: “En somme, rien n'oblige à mettre en doute l'attribution du ‘récit’ à Constantin VII”.

⁸⁸ Paul Hetherington, ‘The image of Edessa: some notes on its later fortunes’, in *Byzantine Style, Religion and Civilization, in honour of Sir Steven Runciman*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Cambridge 2006), p. 194.

⁸⁹ Gudrun Engberg, ‘Romanos Lekapenos’, argues that the emperor Romanos Lekapenos had the Chalke church built specifically for the relic and that Constantine Porphyrogenitus later had it moved to the Pharos chapel.

This text was one of the documents taken over by Symeon Metaphrastes (lived in second half of tenth century) and used, with no changes, in his Menologion composed some time in the second half of the tenth century. He and his team rewrote many earlier accounts of saints' lives and related events, generally including more detail. Christian Høgel identifies three main differences in the way Symeon reworked the older texts⁹⁰; in earlier versions each month had a very similar number of texts, but in the reworking the balance was lost and some months were over twice as long in general as others; the earlier versions often had various texts for one day and very few blank dates, whereas Symeon's version left many days with no texts. In addition, the new version has fewer texts related to Mary. As an example of the above differences, the months of September and August could be compared. The year in both the Menologion and the Synaxarion begins on 1 September, thus making the volume corresponding to August the last one. In the Metaphrastic Menologion September has twenty-five texts, whereas in August there are only four. Given that the first months consistently have more texts (September has 25, October 27, November 27, December 23 and January 20) than the later ones (8 in February, 2 in March, 3 in April, 1 in May, 3 in June and 4 each in July and August), the most evident reason would appear to be quite simply that Symeon's work was incomplete when he died. It is therefore significant that he left the *Narratio de imagine Edessena* of the Image of Edessa untouched, simply copying it into his account for the feast day of 16 August. There was at the time either no more detail available than that contained in the court-produced version, or if there was, we must assume that Symeon simply did not see the need for changing the version he had received.

⁹⁰ Christian Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes: Rewriting and Canonization* (Copenhagen 2002), pp. 89-126.

Von Dobschütz published a critical edition of the *Narratio de imagine Edessena*⁹¹, and my own augmented text was published in 2009, with sixteen MSS unknown to, not used by or incorrectly collated by von Dobschütz, four of which date from the eleventh century and five from the twelfth⁹². Since then I have included a further five witnesses, including a truly excellent eleventh-century MS from the monastery of Stavronikita on Mount Athos (Figure 1.4). This is possibly the most accurate witness to what could be called the majority text, with only one unique individual reading: in chapter 22 it reads *γραφίδος* where all the other MSS have *σφραγίδος*.

My research was conducted over a series of visits to the libraries on Mount Athos, using the original MSS in the cases of the Protaton (Figure 1.5), Dionysiou (Figure 1.6 for Dionysiou 54), Iveron (Figure 1.7), Philotheou (Figure 1.8) and El Escorial in Spain (Figure 1.9). For the MS in Megiste Lavra as well as for Pantokratoros (Figure 1.10) and Vatopedi (Figure 1.11), I used the microfilms at the Patriarchal Institute for Patriarchal Studies. I used high resolution digital photographs and microfilm copies for the MSS in Messina (Figure 1.12), Milan (Figures 1.13-1.15), Patmos (Figures 1.16-1.17), Naples (Figure 1.18), Kalymnos (Figure 1.19) and the Benaki Museum in Athens (Figure 1.20). A second MS at El Escorial (Th-III-17 gr. 456) is now lost, while the sixteenth-century MS in Turin⁹³ was damaged by fire in 1904, and the folios containing the *Narratio* have since been lost⁹⁴. I also consulted two of the Paris MSS used by von Dobschütz: *BN gr. 1474* and the illustrated MS *BN gr. 1528* (under sigla X and W respectively, in this and von Dobschütz's edition) (Figures

⁹¹ Von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, vol. 2, pp. 39-85.

⁹² Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 8-69 (including facing-page translation into English). Since then an article concerned mainly with the *Narratio* has been published by Flusin, 'L'Image', although it contributes nothing new or interesting to what is already known.

⁹³ Recorded in Robert Sinkewicz, *MS Listings for the Authors of the Patristic and Byzantine Periods* (Toronto 1992), microfiche p. B 04.

⁹⁴ Personal communication from the library: "Le comunico che il ms. C.IV.19 é stato parzialmente distrutto nell'incendio che devastò la Biblioteca Nazionale di Torino nel 1904: é stato restaurato nel 1960 e le carte che rimangono sono solamente 100".

1.21 and 1.22 – the text with the miniatures in 1.21 does not correspond to the *Narratio* but rather to the previous text).

Given the length of the text, I have included the complete edition and translation in Appendix I below (pp. 320-382). For ease of reference I have maintained the *sigla codicum* from von Dobschütz's printed edition, while for the Athos and other MSS not previously collated I have used a more obvious reference system (e.g. L1 is *Megiste Lavra* 429, L2 is *Megiste Lavra* 644 etc.).

Von Dobschütz does mention two manuscripts from Mount Athos (*Dionysiou* 54 and *Protaton* 36), although the readings he provides from these two witnesses are incomplete and in places inaccurate. I have corrected his incomplete readings from *Neapolitanus* II C 25 (under siglum H) and *Florentiensis BML gr.* IX.33 (under siglum I), and added the variant readings for the correspondence from Agbar to Jesus and Jesus to Abgar, which are missing from the critical apparatus while the variants for the rest of the text are included, in *Vaticanus Chigiani Gr.r.* VII. 50 (under siglum R). Two of the MSS unknown to von Dobschütz's edition are quite unique in their readings: *Pantokrator* 99 is a truncated version, while *Mediolanensis* D52 *sup.* contains unique readings concerning the arrival of the Image in Constantinople in the tenth century.

Von Dobschütz identified a text included at the end of two versions of the *Narratio de imagine Edessena*, which he called 'Liturgical Tractate'. Rather than treating it as a separate text as von Dobschütz did, I have embedded it within the text of the *Narratio*, just before the last chapter, exactly where it is found in all the witnesses excepting *Mediolanensis* D52 and *Parisinus BN gr.* 1474, where it is included as a separate text after the *Narratio*. Von Dobschütz records readings from the latter MS for the main body of text but unexplainably fails to mention that the Liturgical Tractate is also included in the codex. For the tractate I have included the testimony of three MSS from Mount Athos, unknown to von Dobschütz, and also that of *Mediolanensis* D52.

Apart from the above-mentioned MSS with their unique readings (abbreviated versions and the additional information in one of the Milan MSS), we could very broadly identify two main textual traditions. The first major differences can be found in the Abgar-Jesus correspondence. The versions contained in *Parisinus BN* gr. 1474 (under siglum X), *Iveron* 595 (under siglum Iv), L2, L3 and Mi3 are different from those in all the other codices; they mention the healing of the deaf man (Mark 7:31-37) and the *haemorrhoussa* (the woman who had been afflicted with haemorrhage recorded in Mark 5:21-43, Matthew 9:18-26 and Luke 8:40-56), and there are variations in vocabulary when expressing the same idea⁹⁵. In Jesus' reply, the disciple to be sent to Abgar is named (Thaddaeus). The additional 'Liturgical Tractate' included in chapters 31-36 can be found in all these MSS except Mi3; it is also in Mi2 but after chapter 37 (i.e. as a genuine addition, not part of the main text as in the others) and Be (which is the only MS containing the shorter version of the Abgar-Jesus correspondence that names the disciple Thaddaeus, as do the longer versions).

Naming the unnamed has been an eternal temptation for copyists and writers⁹⁶. Some of the additions in the MSS that transmit the longer text of the *Narratio* concern such names for the otherwise anonymous: in chapter 28, V, X, L2, Iv, Pa, Mi3 and Be name the patriarch Theophylactus and in the same chapter V, X, L2, L3, Iv, Pa, Va, Mi3 and Be provide the name Andreas for the otherwise anonymous man who is cured.

The names of essential characters are sometimes added when the shorter text makes do with a pronoun or no name: to give just a few examples, in chapter 13, codices L2, L3, Iv, Pa and Mi3 add *Θαδδαίου* after *τοῦ ἀποστόλου*; in chapter 16, codices V, X, L2, Iv, Pa and Mi3 insert the name *Εὐλάλιος* where the other MSS just mention

⁹⁵ E.g. Edessa is described in this group as *βραχυτάτη* and in all the other witnesses it is *σικροτάτη*.

⁹⁶ Cf. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan, 'Names for the Nameless', in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (Oxford 1993), pp. 546-548.

the bishop; and in chapter 23, codices V, X, L2, L3, Iv, Pa, Mi3 and Be replace βασιλεύς with ἄναξ Ῥωμανός.

Other additions and readings common to most or all of this group of MSS include explanatory comments such as καὶ αὐτὸν θεραπεύσαι after δύνασθαι in chapter 3, αὐτοῦ καλοῖς after τοῖς ἄλλοις and τὸ ἀκάθαρτον καὶ δαιμονιώδες ἄγαλμα after τοῦτο οὖν in chapter 15, and pious additions such as ἁγία καὶ σεβασμία εἰκόν where all other witnesses read simply εἰκόν in chapter 16 and τὸ ἅγιον καὶ τιμαλφέστατον ἀπεικόνισμα for the simpler τὸ ἅγιον ἀπεικόνισμα in chapter 24.

Høgel suggests that the lengthy Metaphrastic Menologion was shortened into a more workable version on Mount Athos, shortly after the Monastery of Megiste Lavra was founded in the middle of the tenth century⁹⁷. This would presumably indicate an Athonite origin for the Synaxarion, the abridged version, of which numerous MSS can be found in the various libraries on Athos⁹⁸.

This difference is evident in the two versions of the history of the Image of Edessa; namely, the *Narratio de imagine Edessena*, as used in its entirety in the Metaphrastic Menologion, and in a shorter version contained in the Synaxarion. It is clear that the Synaxarion is based on the fuller Menologion version (at least in the case of the Image of Edessa) from the story of how the inhabitants of Edessa discovered that the Persians were digging a tunnel. The author explains how the bishop “went to the place where the Persians were digging, given away by the noise of the bronze utensils”, which by itself makes little sense, as no details have been given in the Synaxarion about what the bronze utensils were or how they could give the Persians away. It is only in the longer *Narratio de imagine Edessena* (and Menologion) version that the story makes sense, as it reveals that a bronzesmith lived above the place where the Persians were

⁹⁷ Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes*, pp. 153-154.

digging and the rattling of his utensils gave them away. The details were simply incorporated into the shorter Synaxarion version but without the necessary explanatory information.

There are also summaries of the Synaxarion version of the legend (i.e. a summary of a summary), as can be seen in a MS from the Athonite monastery of Iveron⁹⁹. This text is reduced to the bare minimum of the Abgar legend, not even quoting the entire correspondence but including the rather laconic summary of Abgar's letter to Christ: "Blessed are you, Abgar, and thrice blessed, because you have believed without seeing me, and the rest of what is in the letter", presupposing knowledge of the complete text.

The *Narratio* is undoubtedly the most complete version of the Abgar legend; it even provides different versions of the story to explain the same event. Since von Dobschütz published his seminal work with a critical edition of the text towards the end of the nineteenth century, further witnesses to the text have been discovered, contributing to our knowledge of this fundamental version of the story, and it is essential that they are all recorded and studied.

1.16 The Menaion

Mention should also be made of the liturgical hymns in the various versions of the Menaion. There would appear to have been no standard text or canon for these hymns, as each MS and edition contains unique verses, together with some that are common. Von Dobschütz edited various hymns corresponding to 16 August¹⁰⁰, when the translation of the Image from Edessa to Constantinople is commemorated in the Eastern

⁹⁸ Cf. Cyril Mango (ed.), *The Oxford History of Byzantium* (Oxford 2002), p. 222: "We know for certain that he [scil. Constantine Porphyrogenitus] commissioned an extensive hagiographical calendar known as the Synaxarion", in the mid-tenth century.

⁹⁹ *Iveron 797* (15th c.), ff. 199^a-200^a, edited and translated by Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 112-115.

¹⁰⁰ *Christusbilder*, vol. 2, pp. 119-126.

Churches. Hymns in three MSS now in Paris were published by Venance Grumel¹⁰¹, and I edited more of these texts from the MSS on Mount Athos¹⁰².

The Menaion texts consist of poetical and hymnical devotion to the saint or event commemorated on the day in question, and as such provide little in the way of historical information or physical descriptions of the person or object in question. This is clear from the following excerpt from the Menaion texts celebrating the Image of Edessa:

Κατὰ τὴν θεῖαν φύσιν, σῶτερ, ὁ ὑπάρχων πάντῃ ἀνείδεος καθὸ βροτὸς δὲ κἄν θεάνθρωπος, γραπτὸς ἀχρωμάτιστον τυπίσας σεαυτὸν τοῦ φωτισμοῦ σου τοῦ προσώπου τῆς αὐτοψίας τὸν σὸν οἰκέτην οὐκ ἀπεδοκίμασας.

5 Αὐτοχαράκτῳ πρωτοτύπῳ τοῦ σωτήρος ἐξ εἰκονίσματι ὁμοιομόρφῳ θεουργῷ μορφῇ προσενατίζοντες οἱ πάντων δεσποτῶν ἐξηρημένοι, μετ' αἰδοῦς τε καὶ εὐλαβείας ὡς πεποιθότες ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ σκέπονται καὶ κραταιοῦνται.

Ἐπεὶ Μωσῆα τὸν θεόπτην θεογράφους πλάκας δεξάμενον ἐμεγαλύνθη, πανσεβάσμιε τοπάρχα, δεξάμενος σεπτὴν ἐπιστολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου μακαρίζουσάν σε τῆς εὐσεβείας πεπιστευκότα, ἅς οὐδόλως ἔβλεψας θαυματουργίας.

O Saviour, in your divine nature you are without visible shape, but as a mortal you took on the form of man. You imprinted an image of yourself with no paint and you did not spurn the form of a servant, even in your light-giving and supernatural face.

Looking in awe at the self-imprinted prototype of the Saviour in a representation, the same as the divine form, we have no other Lord. Trusting in it with praise and blessings, people are protected and strengthened.

¹⁰¹ *Parisinus Coislinus* 218 (11th c.), *Parisinus graecus* 1569 (12th c.) and *Parisinus graecus* 13 (13th c.); cf. Venance Grumel, 'Léon de Chalcedoine et le canon de la fête du saint Mandilion', *Analecta Bollandiana* LXVIII (1950), pp. 135-152.

¹⁰² Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 124-137 (with facing page translation).

Most worshipful one, you have been glorified above Moses who saw God and received the tablets written by God. You received a sacred letter of God's word from the ruler, blessing you. He believed in your piety and you deigned to cure him.

1.17 Gregory Referendarius

A little known version of the Abgar legend is also included in a sermon by Gregory Referendarius (the official overseeing the relationships between the patriarch and the emperor)¹⁰³. Preserved in a so far *codex unicus*, *Vaticanus graecus* 511, the text must have been written shortly after the arrival of the Image of Edessa in Constantinople in 944. The text was published with a translation into French by André-Marie Dubarle¹⁰⁴ and a corrected version was published in my own book with a translation into English¹⁰⁵.

The main difference in the sermon by Gregory Referendarius compared to the other texts concerns the moment when Jesus pressed a cloth to his face and left the imprint of his features thereon. The *Narratio* actually includes two versions: the “traditional” Abgar legend, namely that Jesus did this when the messenger from Abgar came to him, and a second version which took place while Jesus was praying and sweating blood in Gethsemane. In Gregory Referendarius' sermon this second version replaces the traditional one involving Ananias and his trip to Jerusalem.

¹⁰³ Cf. Rodolphe Guiland, 'Le décanos et le référendaire', *Revue des Études Byzantines* 5 (1947), pp. 90-100, esp. p. 97: "A partir du VII^e siècle, le nom de référendaire semble avoir été plus spécialement donné à l'ecclésiastique chargé de porter à l'empereur les communications du patriarche".

¹⁰⁴ André-Marie Dubarle, 'L'Homélie de Grégoire le Référendaire pour la Réception de l'Image d'Édesse', *Revue des Études Byzantines* 55 (1997), pp. 5-51.

¹⁰⁵ Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 70-87.

Gregory himself claims to have obtained his information from the archives in the city of Edessa:

Αἴται μὲν αἱ ἐπιστολαί. Ἐπεὶ δὲ μνήμη μορφῆς ἐν ἑκατέραις αὐτῶν σεσιώπηται καὶ ἢ τῆς παραδόσεως φήμη καὶ ἄνωθεν ἐπεκράτει πείθειν οὐδὲ τοὺς ἄγαν ἰκάνωτο συνετοὺς καταλαβεῖν, τὰ Αἰδεσσα ζήλω καιόμενοι τὰς ψυχὰς συνελάθημεν, τὰ ἀμφὶ τὸν Ἄβγαρον πραχθέντα εὐρεῖν ἐν τοῖς ἐκεῖσε οὐκ ἀπελπίζοντες κώδιξι. Καὶ ἀνεύρομεν ἐντεύξει πολλῇ σύρα γεγραμμένους συλλαβῆ καὶ φωνῆ, ἀφ' ὧν ἄπερ ἀπήτει ἀναλαβόμενοι, πρὸς τὴν ἐλλάδα διάλεκτον μετεφράσθη. Ὡδε καὶ ἀνατέτακται.

So much for the letters. Since there is no mention of an image in either letter and the voice of tradition has not been able to convince wise men or help them understand, we went to Edessa, our souls burning with zeal, hoping to find in the manuscripts there what Abgar had done. And we found a great number of manuscripts written in the Syriac language, from which we copied what was asked of us and translated it into Greek. This is what it says ...

The value of this witness lies in the fact that it was written shortly after the arrival of the Image in Constantinople, and ignores the traditional version of the origin of the imprint on the cloth (i.e. Christ taking the cloth and drying his face with it in order to fulfil Abgar's request for an image). Instead, Gregory places the moment of the imprint directly in the passion of Christ, during the prayer and agony in Gethsemane. This could very well have been an attempt to explain the presence of bloodstains on the cloth.

1.18 *Contra Patarenos*

This text was written by the Pisan scholar Hugh Eteriano, adviser on Western Church affairs to Emperor Manuel I Comnenus (1118-1180). Eteriano, who lived in Constantinople ca.1165-1182, came across a heretical group among the western

inhabitants of the city, which prompted him to write the *Contra Patarenos*¹⁰⁶. Patarenes was an alternative name for Cathars, and this text is of considerable importance to an understanding of the relationship between the western Cathars and older Byzantine dualist movements. The version of the Abgar legend contained therein is mainly based on the *Narratio*, although for the actual origins of the cloth only the Gethsemane story is used:

Igitur Iesus circa tempus sue passionis cum in oratione pernoctaret, quando sudor eius, ut Luchas scribit, factus est sicut gutte sanguinis in terram cadens, a quodam discipulorum suorum gausape quesivit. Quocum abstersa facie, o ineffabilis dispensatio perfecte salvatoris Christi, effigiem gausape impressam super servavit, quod quidem tradidit apostolo Thome precipiens ei ut post ascensionem suam principi Abgaro illud per Taddeum mitteretur.

And so about the time of his passion, when Jesus spent the night in prayer and his sweat, as Luke writes, became like drops of blood falling to the ground, he asked one of his disciples for a towel with which he wiped his face. O wondrous providence of Christ the perfect saviour! The towel preserved the image impressed on it. He handed it to the apostle Thomas, ordering him to send it by Thaddaeus to prince Abgar after his ascension¹⁰⁷.

Just as with the sermon by Gregory Referendarius, the importance of the text is due to the sole attribution of the origin of the Image to the passion of Christ and is a further example of how this “new” version, first told as an alternative in the *Narratio*, took over as the only valid version in some circles. The association of the Image of Edessa with the passion of Christ as opposed to an earlier episode in his life is one of

¹⁰⁶ Edited and translated into English by Janet Hamilton, Sarah Hamilton and Bernard Hamilton, *Hugh Eteriano, Contra Patarenos* (Leiden 2004).

¹⁰⁷ Hamilton, Hamilton and Hamilton, *Hugh Eteriano*, pp. 171 (Latin text), 188 (English translation).

the many developments and interpretations of what people saw on the cloth and concluded about its origins.

1.19 The icon at St Catherine's Monastery in Sinai

Not a written source, but of equal or greater interest and importance in the history of the image, is the icon to be found at Saint Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai (Figure 1.23). The icon is divided into four: on the upper left is Thaddaeus, dressed in a white robe, opposite Abgar, dressed in a dark blue tunic. Both are identified by inscriptions. Abgar is holding the Image of Christ, a small piece of cloth with a small head imprinted on it. The cloth has just been handed over by a figure on the king's right (the viewer's left), most probably to be identified with Ananias. The four figures depicted under Thaddaeus and Abgar are Paul of Thebes, Anthony, Ephraim the Syrian and Basil.

According to Kurt Weitzmann¹⁰⁸, the icon is made up of the two wings of a triptych, joined together when the central portion was lost. This portion must have depicted the actual Image of Edessa, at least on the top half of the lost section. The lower section would probably have shown more standing figures like the surviving ones under Thaddaeus and Abgar. The cloth Abgar is holding in the surviving portion is most probably a miniature of the larger version. The face on the miniature is somewhat rounder than later depictions of the face of Christ on the Mandylion.

Weitzmann dates the Sinai icon to the middle of the tenth century¹⁰⁹, and then suggests that the portrait of Abgar is in fact modelled on the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus. The purpose is clear: "to represent Constantine in the guise of King Abgarus as the new recipient of the Mandylion"¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁸ Weitzmann, 'The Mandylion', p. 167.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. André Grabar, 'La Sainte Face de Laon', *Seminarium Kondakovianum* (1935), p. 22: "l'histoire de l'art chrétien ignore le Mandylion avant le XI^e ou le XII^e siècle".

¹¹⁰ Weitzmann, 'The Mandylion', pp. 183-184. For a later example of a similar occurrence, cf. Charalambos Dendrinos, 'Manuel II Palaeologos in Paris (1400-1402): Theology, Diplomacy and Politics', in *Greeks, Latins and Intellectual History 1204-1500*, ed. Martin Hinterberger and Chris

This icon once again shows the importance and flexibility of the Abgar legend. Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus is portrayed as the new Abgar, receiving the Image of Edessa in the capital just as King Abgar had done in Edessa. The story is adapted to the current circumstances, as it would be so many times in the future.

1.20 Codex Skylitzes

The miniature of the Mandylyon in the Skylitzes Codex, *Matritensis graecus Vitr.* 26-2, f. 131^f, is one of the best known and most often discussed images of the cloth. According to the literature, it is the “gentle usurper”, Emperor Romanus I Lecapenus (920-944), who receives the cloth in Constantinople (Figure 1.24), although the inscription on the miniature names only the Mandylyon itself and elsewhere it is Constantine VII who takes the glory for the translation of the cloth from Edessa (as, for example, in the *Narratio de imagine edessena*, attributed to Constantine).

I examined the original MS in Madrid and later worked with the excellent facsimile edition¹¹¹. The Mandylyon itself is vertical, with tassels at the top. The face (with no neck or shoulders) seems to stand out from the cloth as the emperor leans forward to kiss the image. The person holding the cloth for the emperor is also holding a much larger reddish cloth, an outer wrapping for the actual Image of Edessa; this could actually be the cloth described in chapter 33 of the *Narratio de imagine edessena* (this chapter is not found in all the extant MSS; for a new edition of this text see below, Appendix I, pp. 320-382):

ἔξῃν μόνῳ τῷ ἀρχιερεὶ τῇ ἀγία καὶ ἀχράντῳ εἰκόνι προσεγγίζοντι προσκυνεῖν τε καὶ ἀσπάζεσθαι καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο αἶρειν ἀπ’ αὐτῆς τὴν ἐπικειμένην λευκὴν ὀθόνην καὶ πορφυρίζουσιν ἑτέραν περιτιθέναι.

Schabel (Leuven 2011), p. 400: “The scene of the royal reception at Charenton is alluded to in the meeting of the Magi, with Melchior, capturing Manuel’s features ...”.

¹¹¹ *Joannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Athens 2000).

only the bishop was allowed to draw near the holy and undefiled image, to revere it and to kiss it, and then to take off the white linen cloth that was covering it and wrap it in another, purple one.

There is pictorial evidence of other sacred objects being handled with cloths in Byzantium; the reverse side of a twelfth-century icon of the Mandylyon currently preserved at the Tretyakov State Gallery in Moscow shows two angels handling relics of the crucifixion with veiled hands (Figure 1.25).

The dating of Codex Skylitzes has led to much scholarly debate. Weitzmann dates it to the fourteenth century¹¹², Karaulashvili to the twelfth¹¹³ while in the companion study volume to the facsimile edition, Pedro Bádenas de la Peña sums up the situation thus: “The theories which seem most likely ... allow us to locate the period of the MS’s production between 1175 and 1250, which ... clearly indicates that we are unable to propose a precise date”¹¹⁴. I would conclude that a late twelfth or early thirteenth-century date seems the most likely solution.

1.21 Armenian versions of the legend

The legend of the correspondence between Jesus and Abgar was current all over Europe until the nineteenth century. There are numerous different versions of the story itself and the actual letters, apparent from the earliest times. As has been stated above (pp. 41-43), as far back as the fourth century the pilgrim nun Egeria observed that the copies of the letters she was presented with in Edessa were not the same as the ones she had seen in her native country.

¹¹² Weitzmann, ‘The Mandylyon’, p. 183.

¹¹³ Irma Karaulashvili, ‘King Abgar of Edessa and the concept of a ruler chosen by God’, in *Monotheistic Kingship – the Medieval Variants*, ed. Aziz Al-Azmeh and János M. Bak (Budapest 2004), p. 181.

¹¹⁴ *Joannis Scylitzae*, p. 51.

Von Dobschütz gives what he calls a Latin Armenian version of the whole Abgar story¹¹⁵, in which, while the letters offer nothing new, there are some details added to the known Greek versions of the legend. At the beginning of the story we are told that Abgar was the son of Casme, and that the encounter between his messenger Ananias and Jesus took place on the sixth day before the passion (i.e. the Sunday of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem). It was impossible for Abgar's messengers to paint Jesus' portrait as his appearance changed from that of a thirty-year-old man to that of an old man and then a twelve-year-old boy. The clean white cloth that would become the Image of Edessa (described as a "pannum mundissimum niveo candore nitentem") was handed to Jesus in Gamaliel's house and sent to Ananias by followers of Thomas, together with the letter from Jesus to Abgar.

The journey back to Edessa took them twelve days, although on the sixth day at the twelfth hour (i.e. the time when Jesus died on the cross) they heard loud noises that made them afraid. In Edessa the cloth with the image is placed in a well for safekeeping, whose waters then work miraculous cures. I worked directly with the MS containing this text at the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris (*Parisinus BN lat. 2688*), and an analysis of the miniatures therein is given below (pp. 214-216).

A further development of this Armenian version can be found in the Armenian MS *Erevan Matenadaran 3854*, copied in 1471¹¹⁶. As in the *Epistula Abgari* the king's messenger is accused of being a spy when he comes to Jerusalem, and like the version in *Parisinus BN lat. 2688*, the cloth is placed in a well in Edessa, although the Armenian story includes details not found in any other version of the Abgar legend.

¹¹⁵ Von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, vol. 2, pp. 143-152. The text is from *Parisinus BN lat. 2688* (13th c.), a rare western version of the legend. The miniatures are also dealt with in Isa Ragusa, 'The Iconography of the Abgar Cycle in Paris ms. Lat 2688 and its relationship to Byzantine cycles', *Miniatura 2* (1989), pp. 35-51. Brock, 'Transformations', p. 54, mistakenly assumes that in this text the cloth is called a "sindon" – it is actually called "sudarium" once, at the end of the story, and "pannum mundissimum" in the actual body of the text.

¹¹⁶ Edited and translated into French by Outtie, 'Une forme enrichie', pp. 129-146.

In Jesus' reply to Abgar, he promises to send both Thaddaeus and Thomas to Edessa, and the letter includes the seals and the apotropaic additions (on the use of the letter as a magical charm, see below, pp. 219-238). The most significant variations, though, are firstly the story of the money used to pay Judas Iscariot for his betrayal: the money was originally made by Abraham's father who used it to buy a cave in Edessa¹¹⁷, and it eventually came into the possession of Abgar. Abgar sent it to Jesus in gratitude for the image, who in turn sent it to the priests, and this was precisely the thirty pieces of silver paid to Judas Iscariot. This establishes a link between Abgar and Abraham, who believed God's promise, and shows the contrast between his good intentions and the use of the money made by the priests. The second major variation consists of Abgar's reaction to the crucifixion of Christ; he gets together an army of Armenians and Albanians and attacks Jerusalem with the intention of killing everyone. An apparition of Jesus himself, however, makes him change his mind and return to Edessa, where he lived out his days as a good Christian.

Once again, the eminently flexible nature of the Abgar legend comes to light, as the story is changed to adapt it to local circumstances and tastes. The geographical extension of the legend is also apparent; it reached Armenia and was sufficiently well-known as to be further adapted and appreciated.

1.22 MS *Tarragonensis* 55

An anonymous Latin text in MS *Tarragonensis* 55, dated to the end of the twelfth century¹¹⁸, written by a pilgrim who spent a relatively long time in Constantinople,

¹¹⁷ The cave where according to tradition Abraham himself was born is now a pilgrimage centre in Sanliurfa (Edessa).

¹¹⁸ The text was edited by Krijnie N. Ciggaar, 'Une Description de Constantinople dans le *Tarragonensis* 55', *Revue des Études Byzantines* 53 (1995), pp. 117-140. Cf. Bernard Flusin, 'Didascalie de Constantin Stilbès sur le Mandylion et la Sainte Tuile', *Revue des Études Byzantines* 55 (1997), pp. 63-64.

mentions the Image, although as the cloth was kept in great secrecy the author was not able to see it. Miraculous attributions are given to the cloth. The text reads as follows:

Est in eadem civitate gloriosa figure domini nostri Ihesu Christi vultus ab eodem in linteolo, ut aiunt Greci, hoc modo compositus. Supradictus Abgarus rex adesse civitate nimio estuabat desiderio videndi preclaram faciem Domini. Cognito Ihesu desiderio regis accepit linteum et involuit faciem suam ex eo et remansit forma et figura vultus eius in linteo. Sic ergo figuratam
5 faciem in linteo suam Salvator transmisit regi Abgaro, ut ibi conspiceret qualis eius vultus esset. Hoc linteum preciosissimum domini Ihesu vultu et attactu insignitum maiori pre ceteris reliquiis in palatio veneracione observatur, maiori diligentia tenetur ita ut semper sit clausum aureo vase et obfirmatum diligentissime. Et cum cetera omnes reliquiae palatii cunctis quibus temporibus ostendantur fidelibus, istud linteum in quo continetur nostri redemptoris vultus figuratus nulli
10 demonstratur, nulli aperitur, nec ipsi Constantinopolitano imperatori. Quodam enim tempore apertum habebatur illud vas ubi tam sancta res erat et assiduo terremotu civitas omnis cepit concuti mortemque propinquam omnibus minari. Intimatum est superna visione hoc tantum malum illi civitati non defuturum donec illud linteamen quod in se figuram Domini continebat vultus clausum occultaretur et ab humanis obtutibus absentaretur. Factumque est. Clauso in vase
15 aureo et diligenter reserato sancto illo linteo, et terremotus cessavit et omnis malicia celi quievit. Ex illo temore nullus fuit ausus illud vas aperire nec quid esset intus aspicere, credentibus omnibusatque timentibus terremotu omnia concuti si ceperit illud aperiri.

There is in the same glorious city the face of our Lord Jesus Christ on a linen cloth, made by Jesus himself in the following way, as the Greeks say. The above-mentioned King Abgar was in the city burning with a great desire to see the beautiful face of our Lord. Jesus knew of the king's desire and so took a linen cloth and wrapped his face in it – the form and figure of his face was imprinted onto the cloth. The Saviour thus sent his face to King Abgar on the linen cloth, so that he might see what he looked like. This wonderful linen cloth with the face of the Lord Jesus, marked by direct contact, is kept with greater veneration than the other

relics in the palace, and held in such great esteem that it is always kept in a golden case and very carefully locked up. And when all the other palace relics are shown to the faithful at certain times, this linen cloth on which the face of our redeemer is depicted is not shown to anyone and is not opened up for anyone except the emperor of Constantinople. The case that stored the holy object used to be kept open once, but the whole city was struck by continuous earthquakes, and everyone was threatened with death. A heavenly vision revealed that the city would not be freed of such ill until such time as the linen cloth with the Lord's face on it should be locked up and hidden away, far from human eyes. And so it was done. The sacred linen cloth was locked away in a golden case and carefully sealed up, and then the earthquake stopped and the heaven-sent ills ceased. From that time on nobody has dared to open the case or to see what might be inside it, as everyone believes and fears that if anyone tries to open it the whole city will be struck by another earthquake.

Such secrecy around the Image and the fact that hardly anybody could see it coincides exactly with what is said in the Greek 'Liturgical Tractate', which forms part of some versions of the *Narratio de imagine Edessena*. The fact that the original Image of Edessa was not available for the public gaze is most probably a key factor behind the immense variations in its depiction (see below, pp. 262-307) and the various different descriptions given in the textual evidence. Nobody, or almost nobody, was able to confer with the original.

1.23 Arabic and Coptic versions

The legend grew all over Europe and the Middle East, leaving extant versions of the story, the correspondence, or both, in various different languages. Yassa Abd al-Masih

gives examples of the correspondence in Arabic and Bohairic¹¹⁹. In MS 266 of the collection from Wadi'n-Natrun, the following note is included with the letters:

Hail, Abgar, who was worthy to behold the image of Adonai made without ink on cloth (mandil), the image of the worker of miracles. It was not effaced or burnt when it was tested by fire and water before the great multitude.

Other Coptic versions of the correspondence, making no mention of the image¹²⁰, are analysed with reference to the use of the correspondence as a magical amulet below (pp. 228-229).

1.24 Later Syriac versions

The Image is also mentioned in some other later Syriac texts, brought to light by Han Drijvers¹²¹. The twelfth-century Chronicle of Michael the Syrian Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch tells the story of one Athanasius bar Gumoyê, who paid a tribute to the Arabs for the city as the treasury had no money. He took the Image of Edessa into his house as a guarantee until the money was all paid back. While he was in possession of the Image, he had a copy made and gave this back, keeping the original for himself. Drijvers states that if the painted copy fooled the authorities, the original must have looked very much like a painting.

The Abgar-Jesus correspondence and the Image are also mentioned in the thirteenth-century Syriac text known as the Chronography of Bar Hebraeus¹²². In this work, the painter's name sent by Abgar to Jerusalem was John, and he successfully

¹¹⁹ Yassa Abd al-Masih, 'An unedited Bohairic Letter of Abgar', *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie du Cairo* 45 (1947), pp. 65-80.

¹²⁰ E. Drioton, 'Un apocryphe Anti-arien: La version copte de la Correspondence d'Abgar, Roi d'Edesse, avec Notre Seigneur', *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, ser. 3.1 (21) (1915-1917), pp. 306-371.

¹²¹ Drijvers, 'The Image', pp. 21ff.

¹²² Ernest W. Wallis Budge, *The Chronography of Gregory Abû'l Faraj, commonly known as Bar Hebraeus* (London 1932; repr. Piscataway 2003).

painted the portrait of Christ on a “tablet”. The Chronography also tells how, in the time elapsed from 699 to 704, Dionysius the Patriarch “also built in Edessa a baptistery, and he placed in it the image of Christ which had been sent to Abhghâr the king”¹²³. The text also describes Abgar as the “friend of Christ”¹²⁴. The Syriac tradition of the Image being a simple human painting with no miraculous qualities survived for a long time.

1.25 Ethiopian versions

Versions of the Abgar correspondence and legend were also popular in Ethiopia, as can be seen from various Ethiopian MSS. According to Getatchew Haile¹²⁵, there are four Ethiopic versions: the longer version, the Synaxarion version¹²⁶, the “older version” (so called by Haile despite its sole existence in a nineteenth-century MS)¹²⁷ and the “short version” which he edited and translated¹²⁸.

The two MSS used for the longer text can be dated to the eighteenth or nineteenth century¹²⁹. The legend as a whole, and in particular the correspondence, is full of later additions – those in Abgar’s letter to Christ are mainly of a theological nature: emphasis on Jesus’ humanity, greetings to the Father and the Holy Spirit, the Virgin, Jerusalem and all those who have followed Christ. Abgar lists numerous Old Testament miracles that Christ worked, and insists on how the Jews have always been stubborn and slow to believe.

¹²³ Wallis Budge, *Chronography*, p. 105.

¹²⁴ *Chronography*, p. 269, despite the page number being given as 369 under Abgar in the index.

¹²⁵ ‘The Legend’, p. 375.

¹²⁶ Edited and translated by Sylvain Grébaud, ‘Les Relations entre Abgar et Jésus’, *Révue de l’Orient Chrétien*, ser. 3.1 (21) (1918-1919), pp. 73-87 (critical edition of Ethiopian text), pp. 190-203 (translation into French).

¹²⁷ Edited by August Haffner, ‘Eine äthiopische Darstellung der Abgar-Legende’, *Orientalische Studien Fritz Hommel zum sechzigsten Geburtstag am 31* (Leipzig 1918), pp. 245-251.

¹²⁸ Haile, ‘The Legend’, pp. 375-410. A French translation by Beylot of this same text can be found in Desreumaux, *Histoire*, pp. 147-152.

¹²⁹ Cf. Pierluigi Piovanelli, ‘Exploring the Ethiopic Book of the Cock, an apocryphal passion gospel from late antiquity’, *Harvard Theological Review* 96.4 (October 2003), pp. 427-454.

A very interesting point in Jesus' reply to Abgar, after wiping his face with a cloth and leaving an imprint of his face thereon, is that miraculous power is attributed not only to the letter but also to the image:

This image is of me and none other. Submerge it in the ocean and see if it disappears. Burn it in fire, and see if it is damaged. Thus will you understand that this image is my own strength and not that of any other. This image will bring about anything you wish for. It will answer all your requests in my name.

Not only this, but Jesus speaks to the image on the cloth and the image answers:

Our Lord Jesus said to the image, "Go with the messengers to Abgar the Nazarene". The image replied to our Lord and said, "I am going, o Word of the Father's justice". After saying this, the image left with the messengers and went to Abgar.

Haile provides the original text and an English translation for the versions he calls "Shorter" and "Older". The shorter version is preserved in two MSS¹³⁰, although Haile also states that there could very well be more¹³¹. Jesus' letter to Abgar (or possibly letters, as the text seems to suggest there was a letter and then a "missive") contains the magical formulas at the end, an explanation of the six (and not seven) seals attached and no mention of the Image.

The older version is also preserved in two MSS¹³² and contains several significant differences from other versions of the legend. When Ananias returns to Edessa bearing Jesus' letter, his shoes are damaged and while he is busy repairing them

¹³⁰ MSS *EMML* (Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library) 2050, ff. 86^b-87^b (19th c.) and *EMML* 2180, ff. 13^a-15^b (18th c.).

¹³¹ Haile, 'The Legend', p. 377: "No attempt has been made to search for other copies of it in the uncatalogued microfilms of the huge *EMML* collection".

¹³² *D'Abbadie* 214, ff. 81^a-86^b (16th c.) and *EMML* 6953, ff. 138^b-141^a (15th c.).

an angel appears to him and asks him three times (reminiscent of Jesus' threefold question to Peter in John 21:15-17) if he has fastened his shoes. After three positive answers the angel disappears.

Abgar then sends his messenger back to Jerusalem to paint the likeness of Christ, which he does. But on the next day Jesus' appearance changes and the painting is rendered useless. This happens three times until Jesus finally imprints his face on a cloth and gives it to the messenger to take back. On the return journey, the servant drops the Image and it falls onto a rock, where another image of the face is reproduced (and which, according to the story, can be seen to this day).

1.26 Irish versions

There are some minor differences recorded in the Abgar legend in Irish MSS¹³³. In Codex *Leabhar Brecc* 146.3.28, ff. 146-147 (ca.1200), for example, we read that there were two people named Thaddaeus, one an apostle and the other a disciple (it was the disciple who went to Edessa). Abgar's illness was a swollen leg and there is no mention of leprosy. The differences do not appear to have any theological or historical import, but the fact that there were versions of the Abgar legend in Gaelic show how widespread knowledge of the story once was.

1.27 Later Greek references

The legend is present in various Greek chronicles, but with scant importance for establishing the actual history of the Image. Such examples would be George the Monk, George Hamartolos, Leo the Deacon and the anonymous Continuator of the Chronicle of Theophanes (10th c.)¹³⁴. Towards the end of the eleventh century, George Cedrenus,

¹³³ Considine, 'Irish Versions', pp. 237-257.

¹³⁴ For critical editions of these texts cf. Georgios Monachos, *Chronicon*, edited by C. de Boor, *Georgii Monachi Chronicon* (Leipzig 1904), vol. 1, p. 321, vol. 2, p. 740; Leo the Deacon, *Historiae*

in his *Compendium Historiarum*, tells the story of Abgar at some length, based on, and often quoting *verbatim*, the account recorded in the Synaxarion. Nicetas Choniates (ca.1155-1215) mentions the episode briefly (*Historia Byzantina* II:12), while Nicephorus Callistus (ca.1266-1335) paraphrases the Abgar legend and correspondence (*Historia Ecclesiastica* II:7) and then the attack on Edessa as told by Procopius (*Bellum Persicum* II: 26-27) and Eusebius of Caesarea (*Historia Ecclesiastica* XVII:16), contributing nothing new or of any significance to the history.

1.28 Constantine Stilbes

Perhaps one of the most interesting of the later versions is to be found in the *Didaskalia on the Mandyllion and the Holy Tile* by Constantine Stilbes, written just a few years before the Fourth Crusade. The text is preserved in one known MS (*Oxoniensis Barocci gr. 25*, dated to the 13th/14th c.) (Figure 1.26). Nothing is known in this text about the agony in Gethsemane; the image was produced when Abgar's messenger was in Jesus' presence in Jerusalem, although there were two different missions: the first to take the letter to Jesus and a second one to obtain a portrait.

The letters from Abgar to Jesus and from Jesus to Abgar are quoted as texts in the first and second persons, although the texts themselves do not resemble the better-known versions at all¹³⁵:

Ἄσθενής εἰμι, φησί, καὶ ἐπίσκεψαι ἐν φυλακῇ τῇ στενοῦντι καὶ συμπιέζοντι τοῦ σώματος περιφράγματι καὶ ἐρύματι καὶ πρὸς με τοὺς πόδας εὐθνον τοὺς ὠραίους, εἰρήνην τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν μαχομένων τοῦ σώματος χυμῶν καὶ ἀγαθὰ εὐαγγελιζόμενος, ἄλας σοι τὰς πύλας τῆς Ἐδέσσης ἀναπετάννυμι. Λεπρὸς ἐγώ, εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἴσελθε τοῦ λεπροῦ· παράλυτος, καὶ τὸ

Libri X, edited by C.B. Hase, *Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis Historiae Libri decem* (Bonn 1828), p. 160; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, edited by C. de Boor (Leipzig 1883), pp. 461-462.

¹³⁵ Edited with a French translation by Flusin, 'Didascalie', pp. 53-79.

5 τῆς κατακλίσειός μοι ζήτησον δάπεδον. Εἴπου γε βούλει καὶ τῶν ἐπιβούλων Ἰουδαίων ἀποδραμεῖν ὡς ἄνθρωπος ὁ θεάνθρωπος, ἢ Ἐδεσσά σοι καταλυτήριον ἐρυμνόν, ὡς καὶ σοῦ τὸ μεγαλοδύναμον ταύτης ἔσται τοῖς θεμελίοις, πεπίστευκα, λίθος ἀτίνακτος καὶ συνδέτης ἀκρόγωνος τῇ τῶν τειχέων περιβολῇ. Ἐπιστέλλει γοῦν ὡς <ἐν> Ἱερουσαλήμ τὰ τῆς οἰκονομίας τερματωθῆναι χρεῶν· Οὐ παραιτοῦμαι τοὺς φονευτάς, φησί. Τὸ γάρ μοι πάθος
10 ἐκούσιον καὶ ἔκδηλον, εἰ μὴδὲ τὸ παρὰ σοὶ ζητοῖην κρησφύγετον τὸ ἀνεπιχειρήτῳ τε καὶ ἄσυλον.

I am ill, he says, so come to visit me groaning and imprisoned in the walls and the enclosure of my body, direct your graceful steps towards me, announcing peace and good for the illness that afflicts my body. I will open wide all the gates of Edessa for you. I am a leper, come into a leper's house. I am a paralytic, come and seek where I lie down on the ground. And as you are both divine and human, if you wish as a man to escape the plotting Jews, Edessa will be a safe place for you to live in. I believe that your omnipotence will be an unshakeable rock for the city's foundations, and the cornerstone that binds the circle of its walls together. He wrote that he had to bring the economy of salvation to completion in Jerusalem. I will not shun my murderers, he says. My passion is my own will and is manifest, and so I will not seek an unassailable place of refuge with you.

These versions of the Abgar correspondence are without doubt curious variations, but despite their apparent presentation as direct quotations it is hardly likely that Constantine Stilbes considered them to be the original letters.

1.29 Anonymous references

An anonymous description of the relics in Constantinople from ca.1150¹³⁶ tells us that in a box or container there was a “mantile, quod visui Domini applicatum, imaginem vultus eius retinuit”. The use of the word “mantile” seems to be a reference to the

¹³⁶ Cf. Paul Riant, *Exuviae sacrae Constantinopolitanae*, 2 vols (Geneva 1878, 1879; repr. with introduction by Jannic Durand, Paris 2004), vol. 2, pp. 211-212.

Mandyllion, and the story of Jesus leaving an imprint of his face on a cloth certainly reminds us of the Image of Edessa. Much more precise is an anonymous description of the city of Constantinople dating from ca.1190¹³⁷, which mentions:

Manutergium regi Abgaro, a Domine per Thadeum apostolum, Edesse missum, in quo ab ipso Domino sua ipsius transfigurata est ymago.

A cloth sent to King Abgar of Edessa by the Lord in the hands of the apostle Thaddaeus, onto which the Lord transferred his own image.

There is no doubt that this cloth is the Image of Edessa; the description is as clear as can be. The text in question is simply a list of relics that the author saw, or more probably heard about, in the city; it tells us nothing of the legend or the appearance of the cloth, and so is difficult to relate to any other text except other lists of relics.

1.30 Antonius of Novgorod

Much less clear is the reference in a text written just four years before the fateful events of the Fourth Crusade, when Antonius, Bishop of Novgorod, left an account of his visit to Constantinople. The Latin translation of the text states that in the “Palatium Buccaleonis” he saw a “linteum faciem Christi repraesentans”¹³⁸. This could have been the Image of Edessa, or any painting of the Holy Face or copy of the Mandyllion; no mention is made of the image having any special “not made by human hand” properties, and no mention is made of Abgar, Edessa or the related legends either.

¹³⁷ The Latin text is transmitted in *Parisinus BN lat.* 6186 f. 117^v, edited by Riant, *Exuviae*, vol. 2, pp. 216-217.

¹³⁸ In Riant, *Exuviae*, vol. 2, pp. 218-230.

1.31 The *Legenda Aurea*

The Abgar story is also included in the *Legenda Aurea*, compiled by Jacobus de Voragine in the mid-thirteenth century. The legend forms part of the lives of Saints Simon and Jude¹³⁹; the linen cloth Christ imprints his face onto (with no mention of washing) is called a “*vestimentum lineum*” (a linen garment), and the text also includes a physical description of Jesus (presumably based on the Image of Edessa):

Fuit enim bene oculatus, bene superciliatus, longum vultum habuit et acclivis, quod est signum maturitatis.

He had large eyes, full eyebrows, a long and pronounced face, which is a sign of maturity.

This description coincides to a certain degree with the Letter of Publius Lentulus, analysed below (pp. 249-256), which describes the physical appearance of Christ¹⁴⁰. The Latin *bene oculatus* corresponds to the Greek *εὐόφθαλμος*, although the other terms do not seem to come from the same source (*bene superciliatus* is not the same as *μελαινας δέ γε τὰς ὀφρῦς εἶχεν καὶ οὐ πάνυ ἐπικαμπεῖς* and *longum vultum habuit et acclivis* does not appear to be related to *οὐ στρογγύλην ἔχων τὴν ὄψιν*). As we shall see, there are actually very few coincidences among the different physical descriptions of Christ.

1.32 A fourteenth-century illustrated Menologion

A Menologion copied in Thessalonike between 1322 and 1340 (as it was made for Demetrios Palaeologos) and now housed in Oxford, *Bodleianus theologicus graecus* f.

¹³⁹ For a critical edition of the Latin text with an Italian translation, cf. *Legenda aurea*, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni, 2 vols (Florence 2007), vol. 2, pp. 1212-1220.

1¹⁴¹, contains very little text and instead attempts to tell the stories for the day in pictures. The illustration for the feast day of St Diomedes was the same as for the Mandylion (16 August); the illustration is entitled Diomedes although the actual depiction is of the Image of Edessa (Figure 1.27). The miniature shows a figure in bed (presumably Abgar) and above/behind two people holding up a rectangular cloth with the face of Christ. The cloth is white, although the gold background is visible in the nimbus, deliberately left unpainted so that it would also be gold. No neck or shoulders are visible; in fact, the circle containing the face cuts off the beard right at the bottom of the chin. The miniature by itself would not make much sense without either an explanation or a previous knowledge of the legend, and might have been used together with an oral telling of the story, although from just one illustration it is impossible to define which version, if any, was in the artist's mind.

1.33 A nineteenth-century mystic: Jacob Lorber

The Abgar legend continued to undergo modifications and additions as late as 1844, when a mystic under the name of Jacob Lorber “completed” the other letters exchanged by Jesus and the King of Edessa through a vision¹⁴². Lorber was born in 1800 in Styria (now Slovenia), and died in 1864. He supposedly “heard” this and numerous other “lost” texts from an inner voice¹⁴³.

The second exchange of correspondence in Lorber's writings involved Abgar's son who had become very ill. In reply to the king's request for his healing, Jesus answered that he would do something even better than cure him – he would let him die so as to inherit eternal life! Further letters inform us how Abgar's son indeed died just as Jesus had foretold. Then Abgar found out that the Jews intended to crucify Jesus and

¹⁴⁰ *Athens, National Library MS 2583, f. 183^r (14th/15th c.) and Athos, Koutloumousiou 144, f. 289^v (14th c.).*

¹⁴¹ The codex contains 60 folios and measures 126 x 95 mm.

¹⁴² Jacob Lorber, *A Correspondence of Jesus with the King of Edessa* (Salt Lake City 1986).

offered to inform his friend Tiberius Caesar so that help could be sent before it was too late. Needless to say, Jesus refused the offer.

1.34 The Lead Codices of Jordan

On 3 March 2011 the newspaper *The Jewish Chronicle* published an interview with a metallurgist named Robert Feather, who, according to the author of the article, was trying to authenticate a collection of 20 metal books which, it said, could be linked to the Kabbalah and were in the possession of an Israeli Bedouin farmer named Hassan Saeda, who claimed that they had been found by his great-grandfather in a cave a century ago. The article stated that the Israel Antiquities Authority “absolutely doubted their authenticity”, stating that the books are a “mixture of incompatible periods and styles without any connection or logic. Such forged motifs can be found in their thousands in the antiquities markets of Jordan and elsewhere in the Middle East”.

The finding led to various popular articles¹⁴⁴ but so far no academic publications to analyse the books and texts, even if they are a fake, which seems more than likely. The only book published so far on the subject¹⁴⁵ claims that the codices are genuine but gives no real arguments, and gives a “critical” edition of the Greek text, which opens with the following nonsensical words:

ΑΠΟΤΗΝΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗΠΙΟΨΟΑΙΛΙΣΑΒΨΟΤΣΟΙΓΟΡΑΒΓΛΣΑΙΛΙΣ

and continues so for over forty pages. The above sample is translated as “Of the epistle that we, King Abgar, the son of King Ma’nu, sent to our Lord Jesus”. The author

¹⁴³ Cf. Jesse Russell and John Cohn, *Jakob Lorber* (London 2012).

¹⁴⁴ E.g. Robert Pigott, ‘Jordan battles to regain ‘priceless’ Christian relics’, *BBC News*, 29 March 2011; Adrian Blomfield, ‘Jordan vows to recover artefacts as important as Dead Sea Scrolls’, *The Telegraph*, 29 March 2011; Chris Lehmann, ‘Could lead codices prove “the major discovery of Christian history?”’, *Yahoo News*, 30 March 2011.

¹⁴⁵ Daniel Deleanu, *The Jordan Lead Codices; The Gospel of Abgar, The Critical Edition* (Toronto 2012).

states that “Since the text of the Gospel of Abgar has been given to me in a photographic form by an anonymous person, I am not aware of any other details. I also do not possess the copyright for the photos of the original text, hence the transliterated form in which it has been reproduced in this volume”¹⁴⁶. This is more the material of a historical novel than a serious study, although as with the extended correspondence in the previous section, it shows that the legend is alive enough as to mean something even to a twenty-first century forger.

1.35 The Fourth Crusade and the fate of the Image of Edessa

Steven Runciman famously remarked that “There was never a greater crime against humanity than the Fourth Crusade”¹⁴⁷. The claim might well be an exaggeration but there is no doubt that it ranks very high on the list. There is no reason to repeat the background and story of the crusade in any detail here. Constantinople finally fell to the crusaders in April 1204, and for three days there was little more than plunder and killing to describe. Oaths had been sworn to the effect that the soldiers could only take items of lesser value as plunder, churches and priests would be respected and women would not be raped; the oaths were thrown to the wind in the face of so great a temptation. As Mayer states, “for the relic hunter it was the chance of a lifetime”¹⁴⁸. Relics had been taken back from previous crusades, but they mainly consisted of stones and soil from the holy places in and around Jerusalem: Gethsemane, Calvary, the Holy Sepulchre, the tomb of Lazarus and Bethlehem. A piece of the true cross was taken to Genoa along with the plate on which John the Baptist’s head had been placed, while Venice acquired the body of Saint Nicholas and a rock from which Christ preached¹⁴⁹.

¹⁴⁶ Deleanu, *The Jordan Lead Codices*, p. 6.

¹⁴⁷ Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, vol. 3: *The Kingdom of Acre* (Cambridge 1954), p. 130.

¹⁴⁸ Hans Eberhard Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* (Stuttgart 1965), translated into English as *The Crusades* (Oxford 1988²), p. 203.

¹⁴⁹ Jonathan Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople* (London 2004), pp. 52-53.

The defenders of Constantinople carried some amazing relics into battle; one of them was an icon of the majesty of the Lord:

In hac mirabiliter fabrefacta est maiestas Domini

On this icon the majesty of the Lord was wonderfully fashioned¹⁵⁰

This could hardly refer to the image of Edessa though, as the text continues with a description of what was held inside the icon: a tooth Jesus lost as a child, a piece of the lance used to pierce his side on the cross, part of the burial shroud and relics from thirty martyrs. The reference to the majesty of the Lord could just mean that Christ was portrayed thereon.

One of the main eyewitness accounts of the conquest and sacking of Constantinople in 1204 has come down to us in the form of the account by the French knight Robert de Clari, preserved in a unique MS in the Royal Library of Copenhagen (MS 487, ff. 100^v-128^r). De Clari mentions the relics found in just one church (the Blessed Virgin of the Pharos): two large pieces of the true cross, the iron of the lance that pierced Christ's side on the cross, a crystal phial with his blood, the tunic he wore on the way to Calvary, two of the nails from the crucifixion, the crown of thorns, part of the robe of Our Lady and the skull of John the Baptist. Innocent III was satisfied by the conquest of the city although outraged at the sacking of so many Christian treasures.

During the sack of the queen of cities, the high altar of Hagia Sophia was broken into pieces so that many different people could take their own souvenir back home. The four horses that can still be seen in Venice were at least retained in one piece. Eyewitness accounts reveal that bishop Nivelon of Soissons' personal hoard included the

head of the first martyr, Stephen, a thorn from the crown of thorns, a finger of the doubting apostle Thomas, which had been placed in the Lord's side, a belt of the Virgin Mary and the head of John the Baptist (one of the many). Bishop Conrad of Halberstadt took many pieces of the true cross and the head of James, the brother of Jesus. No mention is made of the Image of Edessa in any of the lists of relics and treasures taken back to Europe¹⁵¹. It seems to have quite simply vanished. And yet the amount of plunder that found its way into the churches of France and the rest of Europe was enormous, much greater than has ever been recorded. In the words of Jonathan Phillips¹⁵²:

So much more material must have gone back to northern Europe than has been recorded. Some items the Greeks managed to take with them. Robert of Clari wrote that the Church of the Blessed Virgin of the Pharos in the Bucoleon palace contained the grave cloth in which Christ was wrapped and which clearly displayed his features¹⁵³. The crusaders could have seen this precious relic during their visits to the city in the latter half of 1203, but as an object that was easily transportable it must have been spirited away the following April because, as Robert lamented, no one knew what had become of it.

¹⁵⁰ *The Chronicle of Alberic of Trois Fontaines*. The Latin text of the whole chronicle in MGM SS 23 (Leipzig 1925), pp. 631-950, and an English translation of the part relating to the Fourth Crusade in Alfred J. Andrea, *Contemporary Sources for the Fourth Crusade* (Leiden 2000), pp. 291-309.

¹⁵¹ Although Brock, 'Transformations', p. 47, has no doubts that it was taken by the Crusaders: "The mandylion remained in Constantinople until 1204, when it was part of the spoils seized by the Crusaders who infamously sacked the city. Its subsequent fate is totally unknown ...". Peers, 'Masks', p. 14, states that the Mandylion was "last noted in the loot taken to Paris after the taking of Constantinople in 1204", although no source is given for this affirmation. Cf. Isa Ragusa, 'Mandylion – Sudarium, the Translation of a Byzantine relic to Rome', *Arte Medievale* II s. V 2 (1991), pp. 105, note 14: Robert de Clari's "description of the confusion and destruction that accompanied the fall of Constantinople makes one realize how easily such a piece could have disappeared". Sources for the Fourth Crusade list numerous relics, but have almost nothing to say about icons. Cf. Michele Bacci, 'Pisa Bizantina: Alle origine del culto delle icone in Toscana', in *Intorno al Sacro Volto: Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo (secoli XI – XIV)*, ed. Anna Rosa Calderoni Masetti, Colette Dufour Bozzo and Gerhard Wolf (Venice 2007), p. 141: "tuttavia, stupisce come le pur numerose fonti ... sui singoli episodi della Quarta Crociata ... siano estremamente laconiche, se non completamente tacite riguardo alle traslazioni di immagini ..."

¹⁵² Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade*, p. 263.

¹⁵³ Phillips is mistaken here, as de Clari locates the gravecloth at the church of Blachernae, in a different part of Constantinople.

De Clari does not mention the Image of Edessa by name at any point in his work, although in the section in which he recounts the marvels of Constantinople, he mentions a “tuile” and a “touaile”, each in a casket hanging from a chain¹⁵⁴. The tile and a cloth would seem to recall the Image of Edessa, although the knight then recounts the origin of the cloth¹⁵⁵: there was a holy man in the city, who was repairing a widow’s roof tiles with a cloth wrapped around him. The Lord appeared to him and asked for the cloth, enveloped his face in it and gave it back with a miraculous imprint of his face on it. The holy man hid the cloth under a tile and the image was also imprinted on the tile.

The similarities to the Abgar legend are obvious – Jesus wiping his face with a cloth and an image of his face appearing on the cloth, which was then transferred onto a tile – although the differences are much greater. Abgar has become a holy man in Constantinople and repairs roofs; Jesus “appears” to him and asks for the cloth himself for no apparent reason. Edessa is not even suggested, although Edgar Holmes concludes that this is a “variant on the legend of the Image of Edessa”¹⁵⁶.

An obvious question is raised. Was de Clari aware of the Image of Edessa, did he make the changes to the legend (and the changes are substantial), or was he told the story as he transmits it (about another relic), thus remaining unaware of the existence of the Image of Edessa? It seems almost impossible to believe that the knight meant his readers to think of the Image of Edessa from the story he tells. He makes no mention of Abgar or Edessa, does not link the story to the time of Christ’s life, and knows nothing about Ananias and the journey to Jerusalem¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵⁴ The text was edited with a modern French translation by Jean Dufoumet, *Robert de Clari: la Conquête de Constantinople* (Paris 2004). An English translation can be read in Edgar Holmes, *The Conquest of Constantinople* (Columbia University 1936; repr. Medieval Academy of America 1996).

¹⁵⁵ Identifying the “tuile” and “touaile” as the Keramidion and the Mandyllion without at least mentioning the problems with the subsequent account of the origins recorded by de Clari, as Michele Bacci does in ‘Relics of the Pharos Chapel: a view from the Latin West’, in *Eastern Christian Relics*, ed. Alexei Lidov (Moscow 2003), p. 242, and Runciman in ‘Some Remarks’, p. 251, is at the very least misleading.

¹⁵⁶ Edgar Holmes, *The Conquest*, p. 104.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Ragusa, ‘Mandyllion – Sudarium’, p. 105, note 14: “Some scholars have identified the mandyillion as among the relics listed in inventories of the Sainte-Chapelle, but I do not believe it could

Runciman states that the Image of Edessa did not disappear in the immediate aftermath of the sack of the city¹⁵⁸. He claims that the relic came into the possession of Louis IX of France in 1247 when the emperor transferred all the remaining relics (those he had not already sold) to the king. Included in the list of these relics was a certain “sanctam toellam tabulae insertam”¹⁵⁹.

Was this “sancta toella” the Image of Edessa, the Mandylion? The description is certainly not the most obvious one; there were so many more definite ways of identifying the cloth that such a non-descript name must at least make one doubt that this was in fact the Image brought from Edessa in 944. Runciman continues, saying that the Image was taken to Paris and its subsequent history is unknown until 1792, when it was destroyed by revolutionaries. In an article published in 1983, Averil Cameron states that the Image was “most probably” taken to France in 1247, adding that if it was not, it remained hidden¹⁶⁰, although in a later publication she insists, on three different occasions, that it was definitely removed westwards to the Sainte Chapelle¹⁶¹. The only textual reference she provides to support this repeated claim is a chapter in Nicetas Choniates’ account of the sack of Constantinople¹⁶², although the text in question makes no mention of the Image of Edessa. Grabar states categorically: “Car c’est en 1204 que le Mandylion d’Abgar fue enlevé de Constantinople et transporté en Occident”, going on to say that the original was taken to Paris and everyone who says otherwise is mistaken¹⁶³. According to the same article, the Image’s later history is unknown.

The Paris theory is also adopted by Paul Hetherington¹⁶⁴ and by Gerhard Wolf, who suggests Paris or Rome¹⁶⁵. The Paris theory, however, is based on two assumptions

have remained there unacknowledged, particularly since copies of the Holy Face were venerated elsewhere in France”.

¹⁵⁸ Runciman, ‘Some remarks’ p. 251.

¹⁵⁹ For the full list of relics sold in 1247, see Riant, *Exuviae*, vol. 2, pp. 133-135.

¹⁶⁰ Cameron, ‘The History’, p. 93: “If it was not transferred to France, its history is equally silent”.

¹⁶¹ Averil Cameron, *The Byzantines* (Oxford 2006), pp. 38, 50, 71.

¹⁶² Given as “Choniates, *Hist.* pp. 647-51 ed. Van Dieten”.

¹⁶³ Grabar, ‘La Sainte Face’, p. 17.

¹⁶⁴ Hetherington, ‘The image’, pp. 192-205.

that are by no means certain. The first is that Robert de Clari mentions the Image (as a “touaile”, together with the tile), and the second that “sanctam toellam, tabulae insertam” in the list of relics in the possession of King Louis IX also refers to the Image. Hetherington¹⁶⁶ adduces an engraving of the Sainte Chapelle Châsse¹⁶⁷, in which two cases are shown and said to contain a piece of the Holy Sepulchre and the Mandyllion. And yet the original text in Morand, from whom Hetherington takes the engraving, speaks of stones or soil from the sepulchre in one case, which can hardly be equated with the “tuile” mentioned by de Clari, and Morand does not in fact mention the Mandyllion at all; in the original he describes the content of the box simply as “Une Ste. Face”¹⁶⁸. So the theory that the Image of Edessa went to Paris in 1247 holds much less water than some would claim. The story that de Clari tells of the origins of the “touaile” is completely unrelated to the Image of Edessa, so much so that it is impossible to identify the two. It therefore seems unlikely that the “sancta toella” obtained by Louis IX was the Mandyllion.

Another *tabula* relic is mentioned in a text attributed to Abbot Gérard of Saint-Quentin en l’Isle. I examined the MS at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris¹⁶⁹. Among other relics of the passion obtained by King Louis of France, the text lists a “tabula quedam qua, cum deponeretur Dominus de cruce, eius facies tetigit”; the *Trésor de la Sainte Chapelle* exhibition catalogue automatically assumes this is a reference to a different tradition about the origin of the Image of Edessa¹⁷⁰, although the only grounds for this assumption would seem to be the use of the word *tabula*, which as explained above, most probably has nothing to do with the Image of Edessa. There are traditions

¹⁶⁵ Wolf, ‘From Mandyllion to Veronica’, in Kessler, *Holy Face*, p. 166.

¹⁶⁶ Hetherington, ‘The image’, pp. 200-201.

¹⁶⁷ Taken from S.J. Morand, *Histoire de la Sainte-Chapelle Royale du Palais* (Paris 1790), between pp. 40-41.

¹⁶⁸ Morand, *Histoire*, p. 41.

¹⁶⁹ The text and MS (*nouv. acq. lat* 1423, f. 173^f, 13th c.) are briefly described in Jannic Durand, *Le trésor de la Sainte Chapelle* (Paris 2001), p. 46.

¹⁷⁰ Durand, *Le trésor* p. 70: “Gérard de Saint-Quentin ... qui dépend visiblement d’une autre tradition sur l’origine de l’image”.

that link the Image of Edessa to the Passion story, but this would not appear to be one of them; it seems to refer more to the *titulus*, although the reference would be obscure.

If the Image of Edessa did survive the sack of Constantinople in 1204, it was presumably brought to Western Europe. One of the few claimants for the survival of the Image of Edessa down to our own days is the Mandyllion of Genoa, in Italy. The claim has been made on various occasions, leading to the publication of various books on the subject¹⁷¹. According to this theory, the Mandyllion was kept in Constantinople for 418 years, i.e. from 944 to 1362, when it was taken to Genoa. In other words, not only did the Image survive the sack of the capital in 1204, but remained in the city for a further century and a half.

The Genoa Mandyllion is kept in a golden frame and only brought out once a year, at Pentecost. The frame is a work of art in its own right (Figure 1.28). Bearing an inscription with the words TO ΑΓΙΟΝ ΜΑΝΔΗΛΙΟΝ, there is no doubt as to what is believed to be inside. There are ten miniatures depicted on the frame, telling the story of the Mandyllion, each with its corresponding inscription. The ten inscriptions are as follows (Figures 1.29-1.38):

1. ὁ Αὔγαρος πρὸς τὸν Χ(ριστὸ)ν τὸν Ἀνανιαν ἀποστελλων
2. ὁ Ἀνανίας τὸν Χ(ριστὸ)ν μὴ δυνάμενος ἱστορῆσαι
3. νιπτόμενος ὁ Χ(ριστός)
4. ὁ Χ(ριστός) τὸ μανδηλιον και τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τῷ Ἀνανία διδούς
5. ὁ Ἀνανίας το μανδηλιον και την ἐπιστολὴν τῷ Αὔγαρω διακομίζων
6. ὁ Αὔγαρος τὸ εἶδωλον καταλυσας, την εικονα ἱστησι τοῦ Χ(ριστο)ῦ
7. ὁ επισκοπος ἀποκαλυφει δια του κεραμιδιου το μανδηλιον εντειχιζει
8. ἀποκαλυφει τὸ μανδηλιον διακαλυπτει τοῦ κεραμιδιου εχοντος τὴν εικονα

¹⁷¹ Cf. especially *Intorno al Sacro Volto: Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo (secoli XI – XIV)*, ed. Anna Rosa Calderoni Masetti, Colette Dufour Bozzo and Gerhard Wolf (Venice 2007), and Colette Dufour Bozzo, 'Il Sacro Volto di Genova: Problemi e aggiornamenti', in Kessler, *Holy Face*, pp. 55-68.

9. ὁ ἐπίσκοπος το ελαιον τῷ πυρι επιχεων τοὺς Περσας κατεκαυσε
10. τοῦ μανδηλίου διακομ(ιζομένου εἰς) τ(ήν) Κωνσταντινουπολιν ... ἰάθη

1. Abgar sending Ananias to Christ
2. Ananias is unable to paint Christ
3. Christ washing himself
4. Christ gives the Mandyllion and the letter to Ananias
5. Ananias taking the Mandyllion and the letter to Abgar
6. Abgar takes the idol down and puts the icon of Christ (in its place)
7. The bishop hides the Mandyllion in the wall covering it with a tile
8. The Mandyllion reveals the tile with an image
9. The bishop pours oil on the fire and burns the Persians
10. The Mandyllion is taken to Constantinople and ... was cured

The face of Christ preserved on what is claimed to be the original Mandyllion is in fact a painting. X-rays were taken in 1974 to see if there was anything underneath the painting, and even what is there is a man-made image. If the Mandyllion of Genoa is the original Image of Edessa, then it was always a simple painting and never resembled anything like an *ἀχειροποίητος*. It is much more likely that what is kept in Genoa today is a copy of the Image (it was recently carbon dated and found to date from the thirteenth century¹⁷²).

The same could also be stated for another claimant to being the original Image of Edessa, namely the cloth kept today in the pope's private Matilda Chapel in the Vatican¹⁷³. This too is clearly a painting, similar in many ways to the Genoa icon, possibly even denoting a common origin. At a recent exhibition of Vatican treasures,

¹⁷² Richard Owen, 'Is This the Face of Christ?', *The Times*, 28 May 2004.

¹⁷³ Two post-Fourth Crusade texts quoted by Brock, 'Transformations', p. 47, mention that the "piece of pure linen" in one case and "mandila" in the other, sent to by Christ to Abgar in Edessa, were in Rome.

the icon was presented as the original Image of Edessa not made by human hands¹⁷⁴, but as with the Genoa image, this would be a self-contradiction. In another exhibition held in Cleveland, Baltimore and London in 2010 and 2011, the Vatican Mandylion was more accurately described as of “unknown date and place of origin”¹⁷⁵.

The sixteenth-century monastery of Moldovita in Romania is covered with beautiful frescoes both inside and out. The outer south wall depicts the siege of Constantinople in 1453, and the Image of Edessa is shown on the city walls together with an icon of the Virgin, presumably in an attempt to defend the city from the Turks (Figure 1.39). However, no conclusions can be drawn from this as the scene is mixed with pictures from previous attacks on the city, most notably that of the Persians in 626 – which must have been related in the artist’s mind to the attack on Edessa in 544, when the Image, according to the accounts, miraculously saved the city.

And so we are left with a frustrating lack of clear proof. There is no reason to believe that the Image of Edessa came to Paris as the *sancta toella* or that it is kept in Genoa or Rome to this day. It simply vanished from all known accounts. Logic dictates that if it did survive, it came west with the returning Crusaders as part of the plentiful booty they brought back with them, but no more can be historically asserted.

1.36 Conclusions

The vast amount of contemporary literature attesting to the Image’s presence in Edessa from the early fifth century until the mid-tenth century, when the Image was translated to Constantinople, is more than sufficient proof of its existence at this time in whatever form. Arguments for an even earlier existence come up against the silence in early

¹⁷⁴ Cf. *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* newspaper (26 January 2006): “One of the priceless objects revealed ... was the Mandylion of Edessa, which Catholic tradition holds to be the oldest known representation of Christ”.

sources (especially Eusebius and Egeria, who do record the letter from Christ to Abgar); although the *argumentum ex silentio* can never be taken as conclusive.

Han Drijvers' conclusion that "there probably was no ancient image of Christ at Edessa",¹⁷⁶ requires further elaboration. If "ancient" means before the fifth century but not afterwards, then it should hold a caveat against the argument from silence, whereas if "ancient" can also include the fifth century, then Drijvers' conclusion is not valid. Further down in the same article he agrees that the Evagrius passage¹⁷⁷ must be a later interpolation simply because it is an isolated phenomenon¹⁷⁸. Yet the witness of other texts shows that it is most definitely not isolated. He then states that "an image of Christ, probably a painted icon, may have existed in Edessa sometime in the seventh century or even earlier"¹⁷⁹.

According to Averil Cameron, "the most likely assumption remains that such an image came into being, or that the existing picture acquired the status of an *acheiropoietos*, some time in the late sixth century"¹⁸⁰. This leaves the door open to its existence before the sixth century, which is in any case proven by early texts. Cameron's reference to the acquisition of "the status of an *acheiropoietos*" is entirely anachronistic, as if such a status were a clearly defined possibility for an icon. Jenkins, on the other hand, ironically describes the Mandylion in the following terms, in reference to the translation of 944: "And the Holy Towel was handed over. It was

¹⁷⁵ Cf. the exhibition catalogue *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in Medieval Europe*, ed. Martina Bagnoli, Holger A. Klein, C. Griffith Mann and James Robinson (London 2010), p. 198.

¹⁷⁶ Drijvers, 'The Image', p. 17.

¹⁷⁷ See above, pp. 52-55.

¹⁷⁸ Drijvers, 'The Image', p. 19.

¹⁷⁹ Drijvers, 'The Image', p. 20.

¹⁸⁰ 'The Mandylion and Byzantine Iconoclasm', in Kessler, *Holy Face*, p. 39. In the same article Cameron states that before the iconoclastic period, "There were as yet no Byzantine representations of the image, apart from the locally made copies" (p. 48); in other words, there *were* copies. Whatever "locally made copies" means (everything made is local in relation to where it is made), if they exist, they count as representations.

conveyed with speed and reverence to Constantinople, and was added to a host of relics, equally authentic and authoritative”¹⁸¹.

So what conclusions can we draw from the evidence examined so far about the origins of the Image of Edessa? The *Narratio de imagine Edessena*, the Synaxarion, the Menaion, the Sermon of Gregory Referendarius and the Doctrine of Addai all attribute the origin of the image on the cloth to the time when Christ was alive. Such an affirmation cannot be taken at face value, although it should be pointed out that it is not an essential element for an ἀχειροποίητος image. Robert de Clari, for example, mentions an image of Christ not made by human hands in Constantinople, centuries after Jesus’ life and death.

No convincing explanation has been given of the Image’s supposedly later origins, despite all the attempts by authors who have written the history of the Image and by scholars who have studied it over the last few decades. None of the theories proposed has any solid basis in fact and they all differ one from the other. The safest, and at the same time the most disappointing, conclusion is to say that the origins of the Image of Edessa cannot be established with any certainty.

The same conclusion holds for the Image’s disappearance from Constantinople in 1204. It is not mentioned again as present in the city after the Fourth Crusade, and yet it cannot be identified in the lists of relics that came westwards with the returning soldiers either. Cameron and Hetherington clearly state that the Mandylion came to Paris and was lost as a consequence of the French Revolution, although there is no clear textual evidence for this; it is actually most unlikely that the cloth found its way into the Sainte Chapelle. The final destination of the Image of Edessa is as unclear as are its origins.

¹⁸¹ Romilly Jenkins, *Byzantium, the Imperial Centuries* (New York 1966), p. 247.

What the immense body of textual witnesses does show, however, is the great flexibility of how the Abgar legend and the story of the Image of Edessa was adapted to different times, places and circumstances to create identity and purpose.

Chapter 2

The Epistula Abgari

The text generally known as the *Epistula Abgari* is a version of the Abgar/Jesus letters and Image of Edessa legend that has been traditionally dated to the eleventh century (i.e. after the other main versions: the *Narratio de imagine Edessena*, the Sermon of Gregory Referendarius, the Synaxarion and the Acta Thaddaei)¹⁸², although a recent article claimed a sixth-century origin for the text¹⁸³. In this chapter we shall look closely at the various versions, showing how there seems never to have been a standard text thereof. Three previously unpublished and rarely, if ever, mentioned versions of the text are edited and translated below. One of them contains two previously unpublished miniatures of Christ writing his reply to Abgar's letter. The full text of the so-called *Epistula Abgari* has only been previously edited once, by Ricardus Lipsius¹⁸⁴. He based his text on a single MS in Vienna¹⁸⁵; the second MS he mentions is from Vatopedi on Mount Athos¹⁸⁶ but as Lipsius himself admits, it is just a fragment containing the letter of Abgar to Jesus and part of the reply from Jesus to Abgar. During my *in situ* examination of the Vatopedi MS I confirmed that the section in question is right at the end of the codex and the last folio is severely damaged. The truth is that there are several MSS on Mount Athos that contain the Abgar-Jesus correspondence in isolation and decontextualised, with no further texts or explanations¹⁸⁷. This would seem to be

¹⁸² Ernst von Dobschütz, 'Der Briefwechsel zwischen Abgar und Jesus', *ZWT* 41 (1900), p. 436. A year earlier the same author dated the apocryphon to between 750 and 945: *Christusbilder*, vol. 1, pp. 203-207.

¹⁸³ Irma Karaulashvili, 'The Date of the Epistula Abgari', *Apocrypha* 13 (2002), pp. 85-111.

¹⁸⁴ Lipsius, *Acta*, pp. 279-283.

¹⁸⁵ *Vindobonensis bybl. Caesar. theol. gr.* 315 (olim 207) (saec. XII, ut videtur), ff. 59^v-62^v.

¹⁸⁶ *Vatopedi* 704 (12th c.), f. 320^v (Figure 2.1).

¹⁸⁷ E.g. *Protaton* 83 (12th c.), ff. 288^v-290^f (Figure 2.2) and *Docheiariou* 235 (18th c.) (Figure 2.3), whose pages are unnumbered. I studied both these MSS *in situ* and edited and translated the texts in Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 116-123.

the case with the Vatopedi MS, and also with other MSS all over Europe¹⁸⁸. This does not mean that the MSS in question contain the text called the *Epistula Abgari* by Lipsius; even the name of the text is misleading, because the isolated letters are indeed the *Epistula Abgari*, whereas the text edited by Lipsius contains narrative after the letters. The substantial differences between the MSS used by Lipsius (in the correspondence) also show that the two texts are not related by anything more than the subject matter. It appears, therefore, that the text edited by Lipsius and designated under the somewhat unfortunate title *Epistula Abgari* is a text preserved in a single MS.

The only other known text that is generally designated by the same name is the one contained in the amulet roll, the majority of which is presently held in the Collection of the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York¹⁸⁹. The MS, text and miniatures have been amply described in articles by Glenn Peers¹⁹⁰ (the author of a forthcoming monograph on the subject), while the miniatures themselves were earlier described by Sirarpie de Nersessian¹⁹¹. In 2007 Peers argued that the origins of the roll lay in St Catherine's on the Sinai Peninsula¹⁹², while two years later he claimed the roll was from Trebizond¹⁹³. Establishing a parallel between King Abgar in the kingdom of Edessa and Alexius III, Emperor of Trebizond from December 1349 until his death in 1390, Peers

¹⁸⁸ E.g. MS *Matritensis* BN 4637 (15th c.), ff. 95^r-95^v (Figure 2.4) and MS *Matritensis* BN 4644 (15th c.), ff. 32^r-32^v (Figure 2.5).

¹⁸⁹ *Pierpont Morgan* 499. Both this MS and the Vienna scroll are clearly magical amulet rolls; this aspect of the Abgar legend is discussed in detail below (pp. 219-238), with an analysis of the various different descriptions of the seals at the end of Christ's letter to Abgar (pp. 239-244). In this chapter I deal only with the actual text of the so-called *Epistula Abgari* and its unity or disunity.

¹⁹⁰ 'Magic, the Mandyion and the Letter of Abgar', in *Intorno al Sacro Volto: Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo (secoli XI – XIV)*, ed. Anna Rosa Calderoni Masetti, Colette Dufour Bozzo and Gerhard Wolf (Venice 2007), pp. 163-174; idem, 'Art and Identity in an Amulet Roll from Fourteenth-Century Trebizond', *Church History and Religious Culture* 89.1-3 (2009), pp. 153-178. I am grateful to Professor Peers for letting me see a copy of his translation of the text and his analysis of the miniatures.

¹⁹¹ Sirarpie de Nersessian, 'La Légende d'Abgar d'après un rouleau illustré de la Bibliothèque Pierpont Morgan à New York', in eadem, *Études Byzantines et Armeniennes: Byzantine and Armenian Studies* (Louvain 1973), pp. 175-181.

¹⁹² Peers, 'Magic', p. 163.

¹⁹³ Peers, 'Art and Identity', p. 153.

dates the roll to the late fourteenth century¹⁹⁴, adding that the Mandylyon was used as proof of the incarnation and God's protection of humanity¹⁹⁵. Der Nersessian's work is much earlier, and as the first published article on the scroll it is descriptive (the roll was used as a talisman) and more concerned with the miniatures than with the text (the miniatures are not original in style)¹⁹⁶.

Below is an edition of the Pierpont Morgan text¹⁹⁷:

2.1 MS *Pierpont Morgan* 499

Ἐπιστολή τοῦ δικαίου Ἀβγάρου βασιλέως Ἐδέσσης πρὸς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν πεμφθεῖσα μετὰ Ἀνανίου κούρσορος εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα.

Ἀβγαρος βασιλεύς τοπάρχης πόλεως Ἐδέσσης Ἰησοῦ σωτήρι ἀγαθῷ ἱατρῷ
5 ἀναφανέντι ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις χαίρειν. Ἦκουσταί μοι τὰ περὶ σοῦ καὶ τῶν σῶν ἰαμάτων, ὡς
ὅτι ἄνευ φαρμάκων καὶ βοτανῶν ποιεῖς θεραπείας καὶ λόγῳ μόνῳ τυφλοῖς τὸ ὄραν χαρίζεις,
κυλοῖς τὸ περιπατεῖν, κωφοῖς τὸ ἀκοῦειν καὶ ἀκάθαρτα δαιμόνια ἀπελαύνεις. Καὶ τοὺς ἐν
μακρονοσία βασανιζομένους θεραπεύεις καὶ γυνή οὔσα ἐν ῥύσει αἵματος ἔτη ἰγ' ἀψαμένη σου
10 ἰάθη καὶ συγκύπτου εἰς χαμαὶ ὠρθαίσω· καὶ νεκροὺς ἐγείρεις. Καὶ ταῦτα ἀκούσας περὶ σοῦ
Κύριε, ἐνενόησα ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου ὅτι εἶς ἐκ τῶν δύο εἶ· ἢ ὅτι θεὸς εἶ ὁ ποιῶν ταῦτα ἢ ὅτι υἱὸς εἶ
τοῦ θεοῦ καταβὰς ἐξ οὐρανῶν ἐνεργῶν ταῦτα. Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο δέομαί σου καὶ παρακαλῶ διὰ

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Peers, 'Art and identity', p. 178: "Alexios and his kingdom were comparable to Abgar and Edessa, faithful kings in the middle of unbelievers who led their Orthodox subjects through the favour God promised his own".

¹⁹⁵ Peers, 'Magic', p. 171: "... the Mandylyon is a key point in the relationship between God and humanity".

¹⁹⁶ Der Nersessian, 'La Légende', p. 180: "... les illustrateurs de l'*Epistula Abgari* n'avaient pas créé un cycle nouveau, mais ... ils avaient copié en grande partie les miniatures ornant le *Narratio* de 944" (i.e. the miniatures in the Moscow Menologion).

¹⁹⁷ The transcription and translation are my own (as are all the transcriptions and translations in this chapter unless otherwise indicated); photographs of the MS are included in Figure 2.6.

γραμμμάτων καὶ παρακλήσεών σε ἕως ἐμοῦ ἔλθειν μὴ ἀπαξιώσεις με ἵνα καὶ τὸ πάθος ὃ ἔχω
θεραπεύσης καὶ τῇ πόλει μου ποιήσης τὸ ἱκανὸν πρὸς τὸ μηδένα τῶν ἐχθρῶν κατισχυῆσαι αὐτῆς
ἕως τῆς συντελείας. Ἐνηρέχθη δέ μοι ὅτι καὶ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καταγογγύζουσί σε καὶ βούλονται
15 σε ἀνελεῖν. Ἔστιν οὖν μοι πόλις βραχυτάτη σεμνή, ἣτις ἀρκέσει ἀμφοτέροις ἡμῖν· ἔρρωσθαί
μοι καὶ ἐλέησον κύριε θεέ μου.

Μακάριος εἶ, Αὔγαρε, καὶ ἡ πόλις σου, ἣτις καλεῖται Ἔδεσσα, μακάριος εἶ ὅτι
ἐπίστευσας εἰς ἐμὲ μὴ ἑωρακώς με. Γέγραπται γὰρ οἱ ἑωρακότες με αὐτοὶ πιστεύουσι καὶ
ζήσονται ἐν ἐμοί· ἐπειδὴ μὴ ἑωρακώς με ἐπίστευσας ὑγίεια ἐτοιμασθήσεται σοι διαπαντός.
20 Περὶ οὗ δὲ ἔγραψάς μοι τοῦ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς σέ, δέον ἐστὶ δι' ὃ ἀπεστάλην ἐνταῦθα τοῦ πληρῶσαι,
καὶ ἀναληφθῆναί με πρὸς τὸν ἀποστείλαντά με πατέρα· εἶτα ἀποστελῶ σοι ἓνα τῶν μαθητῶν
μου, ὀνόματι Θαδδαῖον τὸν καὶ Θωμᾶν, ὅστις καὶ τὸ πάθος σου θεραπεύσει καὶ ζωὴν αἰώνιον
σοι παρασχῆ καὶ τῇ πόλει τὸ ἱκανὸν ποιήσει πρὸς τὸ μηδένα τῶν ἐχθρῶν κατισχυῆσαι αὐτῆς
ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἵωνος, ἀμήν.

25 Καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἔκλινα οὐρανοὺς καὶ κατήλθον διὰ τὸ σῶσαι τὸ γένος τῶν ἀνθρώπων,
ὠκῆσα δὲ μήτραν παρθενικὴν, ἵνα τὴν παράβασιν τὴν ἐν τῇ παραδείσῳ ἐξαλείψω. Καὶ
ἐμαντὸν ἐταπείνωσα ἵνα ὑμᾶς μεγαλύνω.

Αὕτη δέ μοι ἡ ἐπιστολή, ὅπου ἂν εὔρεθῆ, ἢ ἐν ὁδῷ ἢ ἐν οἴκῳ, ἢ ἐν δικαστηρίῳ ἢ ἐν
φόβῳ ἢ ἐν λύπῃ ἢ ἐν θαλάττῃ, ἢ ἐν κυνηγίῳ ἢ ἐν καταπολεμῆσει ἐχθρῶν ἢ ἐν ἀλλῇ παντοίᾳ
30 περιστάσει ὅμοια τούτοις λυθήσονται ταῦτα πάντα τὰ πάθη. Ὁχύρα γὰρ ἔστι καὶ βεβαία καὶ
ἀσφαλῆ πρὸς πᾶσαν ἴασιν καὶ βοήθειαν. Ἔστω δὲ ὁ φορῶν μου τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ταύτην ἀγνός,
καθαρός, ἀμώμος ἀπεχόμενος ἀπὸ παντὸς πονηροῦ πράγματος καὶ ἔξει αὐτὴν εἰς ἴασιν ψυχῆς
καὶ σώματος εἰς φυλακτήριον ἀσφαλείας ... ὅτι ὀλόγραφος ἔστι τῇ ἰδίᾳ μου χειρὶ καὶ
ἐσφράγιζα αὐτὴν σφραγίδας ἑπτὰ, αἵτινες ὑπερτεταγμένοι εἰσίν· Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ θεὸς ἐν
35 δυσι φύσεσι γνωριζόμενος τέλειος θεὸς καὶ τέλειος ἄνθρωπος.

ΙΣ ΧΣ

Ψ + Χ

Ε Υ

Ρ Δ

40

ΝΙ ΚΑ

Ὁ μὲν σταυρός δηλοῖ ὅτι ἐκὼν ἐπάγη ἐν αὐτῷ. Τὸ ψ δηλοῖ ὅτι ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος οὐκ εἰμί, ἀλλὰ ἄνθρωπος τέλειος καὶ θεὸς ἀληθινός. Τὸ δὲ Χ δηλοῖ ὅτι ἀναπέπαυμαι ὑπὲρ τῶν Χερουβίμ. Τὸ Ε δηλοῖ ὅτι ἐγὼ θεὸς πρῶτος καὶ πλήν ἐμοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος. Τὸ Υ δηλοῖ ὅτι ὑψηλὸς βασιλεὺς καὶ θεὸς τῶν θεῶν. Τὸ Ρ δηλοῖ ῥύστης ἐγενόμην τοῦ γένους τῶν ἀνθρώπων.
45 Τὸ Δ δηλοῖ δι' ὄλου καὶ διηνεκῶς ζῶ καὶ διαμένω καὶ βασιλεύω εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν.

Δεξάμενος ὁ Αὔγαρος τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἐπιστολήν, ἐχάρη χαρὰν μεγάλην καὶ μαθῶν ὅτι καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐπήγονται τοῦ ἀποκτεῖναι τὸν αὐτὸν κύριον, πέμπει οὖν ὁ Αὔγαρος ταχυδρόμον τῇ τέχνῃ ζωγράφον ἐπὶ τὸ λαβεῖν τὸ ὁμοίωμα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ εἰσελθόντος τοῦ
50 ταχυδρόμου εἰς τὰ προπύλαια Ἱεροσολύμων, ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς. Καὶ διαλεχθεὶς μετ' αὐτοῦ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· κατάσκοπος εἶ ἄνθρωπε. Ὁ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν εἶπεν· οὐκ εἰμί, κύριε, ἀλλὰ ἄνθρωπος εἰμί ἀπεσταλμένος ὑπὸ Αὐγάρου τοῦ τοπάρχου πόλεως Ἐδέσης θέλων θεάσασθαι Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζωραῖον καὶ λαβεῖν τὸ ὁμοίωμα τῆς μορφῆς αὐτοῦ.

Καὶ συνετάξατο αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰσελθεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν συναγωγὴν καὶ θεάσασθαι αὐτὸν ἐκεῖ
55 καθεζόμενον καὶ διδάσκοντα τοὺς ὄχλους. Καὶ εἰσελθόντος τοῦ ταχυδρόμου εἰς τὸ ἱερόν καὶ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὁρῶν ἐπὶ τῆς συναγωγῆς καθεζόμενον καὶ τοὺς ὄχλους διδάσκοντα, ἀνέβη εἰς ὑπερανεστηκότα τόπον, πρὸς τὴν μορφὴν ἀπεσκόπει τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. Ἐπὶ τῆς σινδόνης ἀνιστορήσαι ταύτην βουλόμενος, θεία δὲ τις δύναμις τουτῷ περιγινομένη καὶ ἀπείργεν αὐτὸν πρὸς τὴν ταύτης κατάληψιν. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς γνοὺς τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ τὸν τοῦ ταχυδρόμου
60 σκοπόν, πέμψας ἓνα τῶν αὐτοῦ μαθητῶν, Θαδδαῖον λεγόμενον τὸν καὶ Θωμᾶν μετεκαλέσατο αὐτὸν καὶ αἰτήσας ὕδωρ ἐνίψατο τῷ προσώπῳ καὶ λαβῶν σινδόνα καὶ ἀπομορξάμενος ἀνετυπώθη ἐν τῇ σινδόνῃ τὸ θεῖον αὐτοῦ ἐκτύπωμα παραχρήμα· ἦν ἐπιδοὺς τῷ ταχυδρόμῳ πρὸς τὸν Αὔγαρον ἐξαπέστειλεν· ὃ τεραστίου φοβεροῦ καὶ ὑπερφυοῦς καὶ ὅλως θεοπρεποῦς.

Ὁ δὲ ταχυδρόμος τὴν σινδόνα λαβῶν ὁδοῦ ἤψατο. Γεγόμενος δὲ ἐν τῇ Ἱεραπόλει
65 κατήντησεν εἰς κεραμᾶριον καὶ ἔκρυψεν τὴν σινδόνα μετὰ τοῦ θεανδρικοῦ ἐκτυπώματος. Ἐδὺ δὲ ὁ ἥλιος καὶ τῆς ἑσπέρας καταλαβούσης ἐφάνη στύλος πυρὸς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἕως τοῦ τόπου οὗ ἦν ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ δεσπότη Χριστοῦ. Ἴδὼν δὲ ὁ καστροφύλαξ τὸ θαῦμα ἐφώνησε φωνῇ μεγάλη καὶ πλῆθος ἐξελθόντος λαοῦ ἐδόκουν τὸ κεραμᾶριον ὑπὸ πυρὸς καταφλέγεσθαι. Πλησίον δὲ τούτου γενομένου τῷ ταχυδρόμῳ περιέτυχον Ἀνανία καὶ κατασχόντες αὐτόν,
70 αὐτουργὸν ἐκεῖνον τοῦ ἐμπρησμοῦ γενέσθαι κατηγοροῦν τοῦ κεραμαρίου. Ὁ δὲ τὴν τοῦ κυρίου αὐτοῦ διαγγείλας ἀποστολήν ἀφείθει. Ἐκεῖνοι περιεργαζόμενοι τῷ θεάματι τοῖς κεραμίσις προσήγγισαν.

Τὸ δὲ ἓν κεραμίδιον ὑφελόμενοι εὗρον μετατυπωθεῖσαν τὴν θεανδρικήν εἰκόνα Χριστοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ, λαβόντες τὸ κεραμίδιον ἐσίγησαν. Ὁ δὲ ταχυδρόμος πάλιν τὴν σινδὸνα λαβὼν διήνευε τὴν ὁδόν. Καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ μιλίων ἕξ τῆς πόλεως Ἐδέσης γεγενῆμενος εὗρε χήρας τινὸς υἱὸν γυναικὸς συρόμενον προσαιτοῦντα καὶ τούτῳ περιτρεψάμενος τῆς εἰκόνας ἐφάψασθαι μελήσας μηδέν.

Ἄλλὰ μὲν τῇ χειρὶ τῇ σινδόνι προσπελάσας εὐθέως ἤλλετο καὶ περιπάτει καὶ εἰσελθὼν δρομαῖος πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ τῶν δὲ προστυχόντων πάντων ὁρώντων καὶ θαυμαζόντων ἔλεγον πρὸς ἀλλήλοις· Οὐχ ἔστι οὗτος ὁ συρόμενος, υἱὸς τῆς χήρας; Ἄλλοι ἔλεγον ὅτι ὅμοιος αὐτῷ ἔστιν. Τῆς δὲ περὶ αὐτοῦ φήμης διαδοθείσης πανταχοῦ ἀνηρέχθη καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ Αὐγάρῳ τὰ περὶ τοῦ παιδός. Ὁ δὲ ἀποστείλας μετακαλέσατο αὐτὸν καὶ φησὶν· Πῶς ἰάθης τέκνον; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· Ὡς ἀπὸ μιλίων ἕξ τῆς πόλεως ἤμην προσαιτῶν συρόμενος. Καὶ ἀψαμένου μου τινὸς ἰάθη. Ὁ δὲ Αὐγαρος ὑπέλαβεν ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς ἔστιν. Εἰσελθόντος οὖν τοῦ ταχυδρόμου καὶ ἐπιδόντος τοῦ Αὐγάρου. Καὶ ὡς μόνον ἐπελάβετο αὐτῆς παρακρήμα ἐκαθηρίσθη τῆς λέπρας· καὶ ἀνέστη χαίρων καὶ ὑγιαίνων καὶ δοξάζων τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν ποιοῦντα θαυμάσια μεγάλα ἐν δόξῃ τε καὶ ἐξαίσια, ὧν οὐκ ἔστιν ἀριθμὸς.

Μετὰ οὖν τὸ ἀναληφθῆναι τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ πληρωθῆναι ἀπέστειλε Θαδδαῖον ἐν Ἐδέσῃ τῇ πόλει τοῦ ἰάσασθαι Αὐγαρον καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν πνευματικὴν οἰκονομίαν κατὰ δὲ ὑποσχέμενα ἀπεστάλην ὁ Θαδδαῖος ὁ ἀπόστολος πρὸς τὸν Αὐγαρον καὶ λαλήσας αὐτῷ τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου ἐκατέβησαν ἀμφότεροι εἰς τὴν πηγὴν τὴν λεγομένην Κερασά δοξάζοντες καὶ εὐλογοῦντες τὸν θεὸν, ἀμήν. Μετὰ δὲ τὸ βαπτίσαι αὐτὸν Θαδδαῖος ὁ ἀπόστολος προσηύξατο οὕτως· τείχος ἡμῖν Ἐδέσης καὶ ἀψευδῆς ἐπαγγελία σὺ ὑπάρχεις Χριστέ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὁ εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζων οὐκ ἀποτύγχανει ἀλλ' ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον, ὅτι συ εἶ ὁ ἀνορθῶν τοὺς κατερραγμένους καὶ ἐγείρων τοὺς πεπτωκότας καὶ σοὶ τὴν δόξαν ἀναπέμπομεν τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ Υἱῷ καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

The letter of Abgar the just, king of Edessa, to our Lord Jesus Christ, sent to Jerusalem with the messenger Ananias.

Abgar the king and ruler of the city of Edessa to Jesus the saviour, the good healer who has appeared in the city of Jerusalem – greetings. I have heard about you and your cures, about how without medicine or herbs you heal people and by your word only you give sight to the blind, make the lame walk and the deaf hear and you expel unclean demons. You cure those

who are tortured by lengthy illnesses and you healed a woman who had had a blood flow for thirteen years and who touched you, and you straightened one who was bent to the ground and you raise the dead. I have heard all this about you, Lord, and knew in my heart that either you are God doing this or the son of God, who has come down from heaven to do this. I am therefore writing to you to ask you and beg you to come to me and not reject me, to heal my suffering, and see to it that none of my enemies ever conquer my city until the end of the age. I have also heard that the Jews are murmuring against you and seek to destroy you. I have a city that is small but holy, and large enough for both of us. Heal me and take pity on me, my God.

Blessed are you, Abgar, and blessed is your city, which is called Edessa, blessed are you for believing in me without having seen me. It is written that those who see me will believe and live in me, and since you have believed in me without having seen me, good health is stored up for you for all time. As for what you wrote to me about coming to you, I have to fulfil what I was sent here for and then be taken up to the Father who sent me. Then I will send you one of my disciples, who is called both Thaddaeus and Thomas, who will cure you and give you eternal life. He will see to it that no enemies ever conquer your city until the end of the age, Amen. I left heaven and came down to save mankind, and I dwelt in a virgin mother to wipe away the sin that was committed in the Garden of Eden. I humbled myself in order to glorify you. This is my letter and wherever it is found, on the road or at home, in a court of justice or if you are in fear or suffering or at sea, when hunting or fighting enemies or in any other situation similar to these, all these sufferings will be loosened. It is a firm, sure and safe help against all illnesses. May he who bears it be holy, pure and guiltless, innocent of all evil deeds and it will be for him a cure of the soul and the body like a sure phylactery. It is written entirely by my own hand and I have sealed it with seven seals which are attached. Jesus, Christ and God, made known in two natures, perfect God and perfect man.

IΣ ΧΣ

Ψ + Χ

Ε Υ

Ρ Δ

ΝΙ ΚΑ

The cross means that I was willingly fastened to it. The Ψ means that I am not merely a man, but both perfect man and true God. The Χ means that I rest on the Cherubim. The Ε means that I am God first, and there is no other God apart from me. The Υ means that I am a great king and God of gods. The Ρ means that I became the deliverer of mankind. The Δ means that I live through the ages and eternally and exist and rule forever and ever, Amen¹⁹⁸.

When Abgar received the letter from our Lord, he rejoiced greatly and learnt that the Jews were plotting to kill the Lord himself, and so he sent another messenger, an artist by trade, to paint a portrait of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the messenger was coming to the gate of Jerusalem, Jesus went out to meet him. He spoke to him and said, “You are a spy”. The messenger answered, “No, my Lord, I was sent by Abgar the ruler of the city of Edessa who wishes to see Jesus of Nazareth to paint the likeness of his form”.

Jesus then told him to go into the synagogue to see him sitting there and teaching the crowds. The messenger went in to the temple and seeing Jesus sitting in the synagogue and teaching the crowds, he went up to a higher place from where he could see the form of Jesus. He wanted to paint it on the linen cloth, but some divine power was on him and made it impossible for the messenger to paint him. Jesus knew in his spirit what the messenger was trying to do and sent one of disciples, known as both Thaddaeus and Thomas, to call him to him. He asked for water, washed his face and taking the linen cloth he dried himself and his divine imprint was immediately formed on the linen cloth. He gave it to the messenger to take back to Abgar – o fearful and supernatural wonder, entirely from God!

¹⁹⁸ The explanations (apart from the cross) all depend on the first letter of the relevant Greek word. Ψ is the first letter of ψιλός (mere), Χ is the first letter of χερουβιμ (Cherubim), Ε is the first letter of the first person pronoun (I), Υ is the first letter of ‘great’ in Greek, and Ρ is the first letter of ρύστης (deliverer). Δ is the first letter of various words used to express eternity: δι’ ὅλου καὶ διηλεκτῶς ζῶ καὶ διαμένω.

The messenger took the linen cloth and went on his way. He came to a city called Hierapolis, came upon a tile factory and hid the linen cloth with the imprint of the God-man. The sun set and in the evening a column of fire appeared from heaven over the place where the image of Christ the master lay. The city guard saw the wonder and called out in a loud voice, and the crowds of people coming out thought that the tile factory was on fire. As they came towards the messenger, they discovered Ananias and questioned him, accusing him of what was happening in the tile factory. He explained to them his mission from the Lord and they came closer to the tiles to see what this wonder was.

They took one of the tiles and found the image of the God-man Christ imprinted on it, and so they took it away and remained silent. The messenger took the linen cloth again and continued on his way. And when he came to within six miles of the city of Edessa he came across the son of a widow, crippled and begging. He turned to him and thought nothing of touching the image.

He brought his hand close to the linen cloth and immediately leapt up and walked around. He ran to his house while everyone was looking on and wondering, saying to each other, "Is this not the cripple, the son of the widow?" Some said it just looked like him. The news about the young man him spread everywhere and came to King Abgar. The king called for him and said, "How were you cured, child?" He said, "I was crippled, begging about six miles from the city. Something touched me and I was cured". Abgar realised it was Christ. The messenger came in and gave the cloth to Abgar¹⁹⁹. And as soon as he took hold of the cloth his leprosy was immediately cleaned. He got up healthy, rejoicing and praising our Lord Jesus Christ, who works such great wonders in glory and power, and there is no limit to them.

After our Lord Jesus Christ was taken up into heaven he sent Thaddaeus to the city of Edessa to cure Abgar and to fulfil the spiritual economy, Thaddaeus the apostle was sent to Abgar and spoke the word of the Lord to him. They went together to the fountain called Kerassa praising and blessing God, Amen. After baptising him, Thaddaeus the apostle prayed thus: Christ our God, you are the wall of Edessa and the true promise, whoever hopes in you will

¹⁹⁹ My own conjecture for an otherwise senseless text.

never be let down but shall have eternal life, for you are the one who straightens the crooked and lifts up the fallen. We give glory to you, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit forever and ever, Amen.

2.2 MS *Scorialensis* Ω-IV-32, ff. 155^v-156^v

This text is previously unpublished, and to my knowledge it has never been mentioned in the literature. The MS dates from the fifteenth century and consists of 156 folios, containing the Nicaean Creed, the *Lives* of Sts Eupraxia, Catherine, Cosmas and Euphrosyne, a sermon by John Chrysostom and the so-called *Epistula Abgari*²⁰⁰ (Figure 2.7). The text reads as follows (I have intervened in the punctuation and corrected erroneous accents, breathings, grammatical errors and joining of words):

Τὰ ἀντιγραφέντα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πρὸς Ἀύγαρον

Δέον πρῶτον δι' ὃ ἀπεστάλην παρὰ τοῦ πέμψαντός με πληρῶσαι, ἀναληφθῆναί με πρὸς τὸν ἀποστείλαντά με. Καὶ μετὰ τὸ ἀναληφθῆναί με ἀποστελλῶ σοι ἓνα τῶν μαθητῶν μου, ὀνόματι Θαδδαῖον, τὸν καὶ Λεββαῖον, ὅστις θεραπεύσει καὶ τοὺς σὺν σοι καὶ ζωὴν σοι παράσχει καὶ τῇ πόλει σου, ἣτις καλεῖται Ἔδεσσα, πρὸς δὲ ποτέ τινα αὐτῆς κατισχύειν τῶν ἐχθρῶν. Γέγραπται δὲ περὶ ἐμοῦ ὅτι μακάριοι οἱ ἰδόντες με καὶ πιστεύσαντες καὶ τρισμακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες με καὶ πιστεύσαντες· ἐπειδὴ σὺ μὴ ἔωρακίως με πεπίστευκας, ἠτοιμάσθη σοι σωτηρία ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος καὶ τῆ οἴκῳ σου πρὸς σωτηρίαν τῶν βλεπόντων σε. Καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἔκλινα οὐρανοὺς καὶ κατήλθον διὰ τοῦ γένους τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὥκησα δὲ παρθενικὴν οἴκησιν, ἵνα τὴν παράβασιν τὴν ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ ἐξαλείψω. Ἐαυτὸν ἐταπείνωσα, ἵνα ὑμᾶς μεγαλύνω. Αὕτη δέ μου ἡ ἐπιστολή, ὅπου εἰάν προβληθῆ, εἴτε ἐν δίκῃ ἢ ῥιγῶσιν, εἴτε εἰς ὁδὸν ἢ πυρέσουσιν· ἢ καταδεσμῶν ἔχουσιν ἢ ὑπέμβρασιν φαρμάκων πάθωσιν ἢ ὅσα τούτοις ὅμοια, διαλυθήσονται. Ἔστω δὲ ὁ φορῶν αὐτὴν ἀγνός, ἀπεχόμενος ἀπὸ παντὸς πονηροῦ πράγματος καὶ λεγέτω αὐτὴν εἰς ἴασιν εἶναι καὶ χαρὰν βεβαίαν. Διότι ὀλόγραφος γέγραπται τῇ ἰδίᾳ μου

²⁰⁰ Cf. E. Miller, *Les Manuscrits Grecs de l'Escorial* (Paris 1848; repr. Amsterdam 1966), pp. 488-489.

15 χειρί. Ἐρρωσο· μετὰ τῆς σφραγίδος τῆς ἐμῆς, ἐσφράγισα δὲ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἑπτὰ σφραγίσιν αἵτινες ὑποτεταγμένοι εἰσὶν αὗται + Ψ Ε Ζ Θ Υ Δ

Δεξάμενος οὖν ὁ Αὔγαρος τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου ἐπιστολὴν, Ἰουδαῖοι ἐπήγον τὸ ἀποκτείνει τὸν Ἰησοῦν. Καὶ πέμψας ὁ Αὔγαρος ταχυδρόμον, τῇ τέχνῃ ζωγράφον ἐπὶ τὸ λαβεῖν τὸ ὁμοίωμα τοῦ Κυρίου, καὶ εἰσελθόντος τοῦ ταχυδρόμου τὰ προπύλαια Ἱερουσαλήμ, ὑπήντησεν
20 αὐτῷ αὐτὸς ὁ Κύριος. Καὶ διαλεχθεὶς λέγει αὐτῷ· Κατασκοπὸς εἶ ἄνθρωπε. Ἐκεῖνος δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸ εἶπεν· Ἀπεσταλμένος εἰμὶ παρὰ Αὐγάρου θεάσασθαι τὸν Ναζωραῖον καὶ λαβεῖν τὸ ὁμοίωμα αὐτοῦ.

Τῇ δὲ ἐξῆς ἐκαθέζετο ὁ Κύριος Ἰησοῦς διδάσκων τοὺς ὄχλους. Ὁ δὲ ταχυδρόμος εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὰ προπύλαια ζωγραφῶν τὸ ὁμοίωμα τοῦ Κυρίου, καὶ μὴ δυνάμενος καταλαβεῖν
25 τὸ ὁμοίωμα τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὠθήσας αὐτὸν εἶπεν· Εἴσελθε καὶ ἀπόδος ἣν περιέχεις σινδόνα ἀπὸ τοῦ Αὐγάρου. Καὶ εἰσελθὼν ἔμπροσθεν πάντων ἔπεσεν εἰς τοὺς πόδας τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἀποδώσας αὐτοῦ τὴν σινδόνα. Καὶ λαβὼν αὐτὴν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐπέθετο ἐπὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνεζωγραφήθη. Καὶ ἐγένετο τὸ ὁμοίωμα αὐτοῦ, ὥστε θαυμάσαι τοὺς καθεζομένους πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ· καὶ δούς Θαδδαίου τοῦ ἀπόστολου ἀπέλυσεν αὐτοὺς ἐν
30 Ἐδέσση τῇ πόλει τοῦ ἰάσασθαι πάσαν νόσον καὶ πάσαν μαλακίαν τοῦ Αὐγάρου.

Ἐλθὼν οὖν ὁ αὐτὸς Θαδδαῖος ὡς ἀπὸ σταδίου ἐνὸς τῆς εἰρημένης πόλεως Ἐδέσσης συρόμενός τις εὐρέθη πρὸς αὐτὸν κατὰ τὸν τόπον. Καὶ δούς αὐτοῦ χεῖρα ὁ Θαδδαῖος ἤλλετο καὶ περιεπάτησεν καὶ ἀπῆλθεν δρομαῖος πρὸς τὴν ἰδίαν μητέρα, καὶ θεαθεὶς ὑπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει οἰκούντων, ἐπὶ τῷ γεγονότι θαύματι ἔλεγον· Οὐκ ἔστιν οὗτος ὁ υἱὸς τῆσδε τῆς χήρας ὁ
35 συρόμενος;

Καὶ εὐθέως ἀπηνέχθη περὶ αὐτὸ Αὐγάρῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ. Καὶ μετακαλεσάμενος τὸν παῖδα ἠρώτησεν αὐτὸν· Πῶς καὶ τίς ἰάσατό σε; ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν ὅτι Ἀπὸ σταδίου τῆς πόλεως ἐγενόμην, καὶ τίς ἤψατό μου καὶ ἠγέρθη. Ὁ δὲ Αὔγαρος ὑπέλαβεν ὅτι ὁ Κύριος ἐστίν, καὶ πέμψας εὗρεν Θαδδαῖον μετὰ τοῦ ταχυδρόμου. Καὶ ἐλθόντων αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ παλάτιον
40 ἐδέξατο αὐτοὺς Αὔγαρος κατακείμενος ἐπὶ κλίνης αὐτοῦ χρόνους ἕξ. Καὶ δεξάμενος ὁ Αὔγαρος τὴν σινδόνα εἰς τὰς ἰδίας χεῖρας αὐτοῦ εὐθέως ἤλλετο καὶ περιεπάτησεν.

Καὶ ἔφη πρὸς τὸν Θαδδαῖον· Τί ἔτι χρεῖαν ἔχων. Ὁ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν εἶπεν· Χρεῖά σου ἐστὶν βαπτισθῆναι. Καὶ εὐθέως καταβὰς ἐπὶ τὴν πηγὴν τὴν καλουμένην Κέρασσα ἐβαπτίσθη αὐτὸς καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ
45 ἁγίου Πνεύματος, νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

The reply from Jesus to Abgar.

First I have to fulfil what I was sent here for by the one who sent me and then be taken up to the one who sent me. When I have been taken up, I will send you one of my disciples who is called both Thaddaeus and Lebbaios, who will cure you and give you and those with you life. He will see to it that no enemies ever conquer your city, which is called Edessa. It is written about me that blessed are those who see me and believe, but thrice blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe. Since you have not seen me but have believed, you and your household will be saved in both body and soul in order that all who look on you will be saved. I left heaven and came down through mankind, I dwelt in a virgin mother to wipe away the sin that was committed in Adam. I humbled myself in order to glorify you. This is my letter and wherever it is read, in a court of justice or if you are shivering, on the road or if you have fever, if you are bound in chains or suffering from an overdose of medicine or anything else like this, you will be freed from it. May he who bears it with him be holy and keep himself from all evil deeds and may he read it for sure cures and joy. It was all written by my own hand. Farewell, and I have sealed this letter with my own seal, and these seven seals are as follows + Ψ E Z Θ Υ Δ.

When Abgar received the letter from our Lord, he found out that the Jews were plotting to kill the Lord, and so he immediately sent a messenger, an artist by trade, to paint a portrait of the Lord. When the messenger was coming to the gate of Jerusalem, the Lord himself went out to meet him. He spoke to him and said, “You are a spy”. The messenger answered, “I was sent by Abgar to see the Nazarene and paint his likeness”.

The next day the Lord Jesus sat down to teach the crowds. The messenger went in the gate and was painting the likeness of Jesus. He could not draw the form of his face and so he²⁰¹ urged him forwards and said, “Go in and give him the linen cloth you have from Abgar”. So he went in and in front of all the people he fell at Jesus’ feet and gave him the linen cloth. The Lord took it and placed it over his face, and it was imprinted onto it. The likeness of Jesus was transferred onto the cloth and all who were sitting with him in the synagogue were amazed. He

gave it to Thaddaeus the apostle and sent them to the city of Edessa to cure all Abgar's illnesses and diseases.

This same Thaddaeus came to within a quarter of a mile from the city of Edessa and came across a cripple at that place in front of them. Thaddaeus took him by the hand and he immediately leapt up and walked around. He ran homewards to his mother and was seen by everyone who lived in the city; they spoke about the wonder that had taken place and said, "Is this not the cripple, the son of the widow?"

And the news about this came straight to king Abgar. The king called for the boy and questioned him: "How were you cured and by who?" He said, "I was begging about a quarter of a mile from the city. Something touched me and I was made straight". Abgar realised it was the Lord and sent for Thaddaeus; he found him with the messenger. They came to the palace where Abgar received them, lying on his bed as he had been for six years. He got up and took the linen cloth into his hands – he immediately jumped up and walked around.

And he said to Thaddaeus, "What else do I need?" Thaddaeus answered, "You need to be baptised", and going straight down to the fountain called Kerassa, Abgar was baptised together with his wife and children in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and for evermore, Amen.

2.3 The Vienna Scroll

This hitherto unpublished scroll, *Nationalbibliothek Palat. Suppl. gr.* 116, has only been briefly described in comparison to the Pierpont Morgan scroll²⁰². The Vienna scroll measures 285 x 15 cm, and contrary to the Pierpont Morgan scroll, provides information about the original scribe, patron and place of production. It was written by Thomas the Patrologus, whose inscription is partially preserved, so the scroll most probably dates to the mid-sixteenth century. At the beginning of the *Letters* is a miniature of the Mandyllion. The scroll is fragile and much of the text is illegible; of the illustration of

²⁰¹ There is no subject for this verb.

²⁰² Peers, 'Magic', p. 169.

the Mandyllion all that can now be made out is the outline of the cloth²⁰³. The phonetic transcript leads us to think that the text could either have been dictated, or copied from an equally faulty MS (e.g. Ἦκοστέ for Ἦκουσταί, χολοὺς for χωλοὺς and κυνηθῆς for κινηθεῖς). One of the most interesting points is that the magical use of the letter is personalised, for the servant Antonius²⁰⁴; this is also the case with the version of the Abgar letter on Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 4469²⁰⁵.

What can still be read of the text of the Vienna scroll is as follows:

Ἦκοστέ μου τὰ παρὰ σοῦ καὶ τῶν σῶν ἱαμάτων καὶ διδασκαλίας ὅσα λυσιτελεῖ καὶ σωτηρίῳ καὶ τοιαῦτα ποιεῖς ὅσια ἄλλος οὐδεὶς πεποίκεν πο[τέ] ... νεκροὺς ἐγείρης μόνῳ τῷ λόγῳ, πνεύματα πονηρὰ διώκεις· λεπροὺς καθαρίζεις, τυφλοὺς ποιεῖς ἀναβλέπειν· παραλύτους σφιγγ χολοὺς ἀνορθεῖς, δαίμονα ἐπιτίμας ἦν βραβεύεις ἀφε ἐξουσία παρέχεις

5 ἐκκαύθητί μου νῦν ἡ ψυχὴ· καὶ συνδεδέται πρὸς σὲ ποθῶ καὶ πιστεύω ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ τοῦ ζῶντος θεοῦ υἱὸς δι' οὗ δὲ μὴ ἀπαξιώσεις με ἐλθεῖν πρὸς τὸν δούλον σου ἐμέ. Ἄλλ' ἐν ἐλπίδι καὶ φθόνος τίνα καὶ κυνήται κατὰ σοῦ· τῶν ἀρχιερέων ζηλοτυπούντων κατὰ λαβε πρὸς τὸν οἰκέτην σου· ἡ γὰρ μικρὰ ἐστὶν ἡ πόλις πρὸς τὴν σὴν ὑψηλότητα ἀλλ' ἀρκεῖ τὰ ὡς ἐν ἧ καὶ σοι ἴνα καὶ τὸ πάθος ὃ ἔχω θεραπεύσεις καὶ τοὺς παρ' ἐμοὶ πόνους ἀποδράσεις καὶ τῇ πόλει σου

10 ζῶντων παρέξις] ... ἀμὴν καὶ ἐλέησον Κύριέ μου.

Ἐπιστολὴ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς Αὔγαρον τὸν βασιλέα τῆς Αἰδέσης

Μακάριος εἶ, Αὔγαρε, καὶ ἡ πόλις σου, ἣτις καλεῖται Ἐδέσσα, μακάριος ὅτι

15 ἐπίστευσας εἰς ἐμέ μὴ ἑωρακίως με. Γέγραπται γὰρ μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες, καὶ τρισμακάριοι ὑγεία σοι διαπαντός. Περὶ αἴψες ἐλθεῖν πρὸς σέ ἀπεστάλμαι ἐνταῦθα ἦν τὸν τοῖς οἰκονομία πληρ ἀναληφθῆναί

²⁰³ Photographs of the roll are included in Figures 2.8-2.11.

²⁰⁴ Although in the Oxyrhynchus papyrus it is Abgar's letter to Christ that is personalised with a request for the cure of a certain Epimachus.

²⁰⁵ See below, pp. 226-227.

- πρὸς τὸν ἀποστείλαντά με πατέρα. Καὶ μετὰ τὸ ἀναληφθῆναί με ἓνα τῶν μαθητῶν μου, ὀνόματι Θαδδαῖον, ὅστις καὶ τὸ πάθος σου θεραπεύσει· ζωὴν αἰώνιον καὶ εἰρήνην σοι παρασχῆ
- 20 καὶ ποιήσει τῇ πόλει σου τὸ ἰ..αυὸ. πρὸς τὸ μηδένα τῶν ἐχθρῶν σου ..τοιχη ... αὐτῆς ἕως τῆς συν...ίας τοῦ αἰ...ος μῆθεν ἀποτρε νενα Καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἔκλινα οὐρανοὺς καὶ κατήλθον διὰ τὸ γένος τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὥκησα δὲ παρθενικὴν μήτραν, ἵνα βασιν τὴν π σ καὶ τὴν ἐπικειμεν..... ταπεινῶ φρι μεγ οἱ εἰς π οντες ησα· στολη πρὸ εἰς χαρὰ βαίαν, εἴτε ἐν εἴτε ἐν δ ρίω
- 25 εἴτε ἐν φρυκι καὶ πυρε ἢ δαιμο...ωσι ἢ τούτοις ἔσται δὲ καὶ τῇ π λὴν τα ἀγνός καθαρός τὸς πονηρο προ καὶ αὐτὴν εἰς ἰασίν καὶ χ καὶ βεβαίαν ἀσφάλειαν εἰς τὸν δοῦλον τούτου Ἐπιφάνιον ἅμα συμβίας αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτοῦ διὸ τῆς ὄλο σφ δο τῆς ε σφ Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ υἱὸς θεοῦ γνωριζόμενος καὶ καὶ ἄνθρωπος· + X Ψ E Υ Ρ Δ·
- 30 Ὁ μὲν σταυρὸς δηλοῖ ὅτι ἐκὼν ἐπάγη ἐν αὐτῷ. Τὸ ψ δηλοῖ ὅτι ὑψηλὸς λεὺς ἀλλὰ ἄνθρωπον κατὰ ἀλήθειαν. Τὸ δὲ Χ δηλοῖ ὅτι ἀναπέπαιμαι ὑπὸ τῶν Χερουβίμ. Τὸ Ε δηλοῖ ἐγὼ θεὸς πρῶτος καὶ πλήν ἐμοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος. Τὸ Υ δηλοῖ ὑψηλὸς βασιλεὺς καὶ θεὸς τῶν θεῶν. Τὸ Ρ δηλοῖ ῥύστης ἐγενέμεν τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος. Τὸ Δ δηλοῖ δι' ὅλου καὶ ζῶ καὶ διαμένω εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.
- 35 Ὁ δὲ δεξάμενος ὁ Αὐγάρος τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ λέγων· ἐπύγονται οἱ φονευταὶ καὶ ἐργόμονες οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀποκτεῖναι τὸν Ἰησοῦν, πέμπει οὖν παρευθὴ ὁ Αὐγάρος ταχυδρόμον καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ τέχνη ἱστορήσαι τὸ ὁμοίωμα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἐλθόντος τοῦ ταχυδρόμου εἰς τὰ προπύλαια ἔστι ἔνθεν κακειθεν ὑπήντησεν τοινῦν ὁ Ἰησοῦς. Καὶ διαλεχθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· κατασκοπὸς εἶ ἄνθρωπε. Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο περισκοπᾶς τὰ
- 40 τύχα τῆς πόλεως. Ἐκεῖνος ἔφη· οὐκ οἶμαι κατασκοπὸς κυρίε ἀλλ' ἀπεσταλμένος εἶμαι ὑπ' Αὐγάρου βασιλέως Ἐδέσης· ἦλθον θεάσασθαι τὸν Ἰησοῦν Ναζωραῖον καὶ συνέταξεν αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς παραγένεσθαι ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ καὶ θεάσασθαι αὐτόν ὅταν διδάσκει τοὺς ὀχλοὺς. Ἀπελθὼν δὲ ὁ ζωγράφος ἐνόπιον πάντων ἔπεσεν εἰς τοὺς πόδας τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἀποδίδει σινδόνα αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦ· καὶ λαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὕδωρ ἀπονίψατο εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ καὶ λαβὼν
- 45 τὴν σινδόνα ἐζωγραφήθη τὸ ὁμοίωμα αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ σινδόνι ἀπαραλάκτως ὥστε θαυμάζην πάντας τοὺς θεασαμένους· καὶ δέδωκεν αὐτὴν τὸ ταχυδρόμῳ. Ὁ δὲ λαβὼν τὸ ὁμοίωμα αὐτοῦ μετὰ χαρᾶς ἀπηλθὲν ὁ ζωγράφος μετὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τῶν ὁμοθυμαδὼν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπήρχοντο τῆς ὁδοῦ καὶ φθάισαντο ἐγγὺς τῆς πόλεως ἣν γὰρ ἐσπέρας οὔσης ἤμηναν δὲ ἔξω τῆς πόλεως ἐν ἄγροις καὶ ῥαμηθίοις καὶ φοβηθέντες ἔκρυψαν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

50 ἀναμεταξὺ δύοιν κεραμιδίων καὶ ἐκοιμήθησαν. Ἔδει γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ἐφάνη στύλος πυρὸς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἕως τοῦ τόπου οὗ ἦν ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ καστροφύλαξ τὸ θαῦμα ἐφοβήθη καὶ ἐφωνήσε φωνὴν μεγάλην· καὶ ἦλθεν ὄχλος ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως καὶ ψηλαφήσαντες εὔρον τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκ τε ἀπαραλλάκτως εἰς ἓν τῶν κερα..... ἠσύχασαν.

55 Ὁ δὲ ταχυδρόμος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ λαβὼν τὴν σινδόνα μετὰ τοῦ ὁμοιώματος ἀπηήλθον φθασαντες ταχυδρομηῆσαι ἀπὸ μιλίου ἐνὸς τῆς πόλεως Ἀιδέσης συρόμενός τις εὐρέθη κατὰ τόπον ἐκεῖνον παραντίκα ἤλλετο· ἐτίρχε δὲ ἐπὶ τὴν ἰδίαν μητέρα καὶ θεαθῆς ὑπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου ἐθαύμαζον πάντες ἐπὶ τῇ γεγονότι, οὐχ οὗτος, ἐλεγόντες, ὁ χολὸς ὁ πρὸς τὸν πυλῶνα συρόμενος, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς χειρας; Ἄλλοι ἔλεγον οὗτος ἔστιν· οἱ δὲ πληροφορηθέντα πῶς αὐτὸς
60 ἔστιν.

Ἀνήγγειλα τῷ βασιλεῖ Αὐγάρῳ περὶ τοῦ παιδὸς τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς ἰάσεως καὶ προσλεσάμενος τὸν παῖδα εἶπον αὐτῷ· λέγει παῖς συ πῶς ἰάθης; λέγει ὁ παῖς· ἀκουσον βασιλεῦ· ἐν τῷ ὁδῷ ἐκαθεζόμεον ὁρῶ ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον καὶ τὸν ἄχραντον εἰκόνα ἐβάσταζον τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ὡς ἐκ θείας τινὸς κινηθεὶς ἠψάμην τὴν εἰκόνα, καὶ
65 παραχρήμα ... θην· ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Αὐγαρος ὑπέλαβεν ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰάσαι αὐτόν. Τοῦ οὖν ταχυδρόμου ἐλθόντος ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ ἔδωκεν τὴν εἰκόνα τῷ Αὐγάρῳ καὶ δεξάμενος ὁ Αὐγαρος τὴν σινδόνα εἰς τὰς χειρας αὐτοῦ κατακείμενος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς κλινός· εὐθέως ὑγίει μηδὲν σχῆμα ἐμφανίσας μικρὸν τῆς νοσοῦ.

Μετὰ δὲ τὸ αναληφθῆναι τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἀπεστάλλη Θεαδδαῖος ὁ
70 ἀπόστολος καὶ λαλήσας πρὸς Αὐγαρον τοὺς λόγους τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κατεβήσαν ἀμφότεροι ἐπὶ τὴν πηγὴν τὴν λεγομένην Κερασάν καὶ ἐβάπτισεν τὸν Αὐγαρον πανικὴ καὶ ἠγίασ ... εὐχαριστὸν τῷ θεῷ· μετὰ δὲ τὸ βαπτίσει τὸν Αὐγαρον ὁ μὲν Θεαδδαῖος ἀπηήλθεν κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. Ὁ δὲ Αὐγαρος ἔστησεν τὴν εἰκόνα τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὴν πύλην τῆς πόλεως ἵνα πᾶς τίς πρότερον τὴν εἰκούσα τιμὴν
75 ἀπονέμει τῇ εἰκόνι· γράψας καὶ ἐπιγραφὴν ὅτι κύριος θεὸς ὁ εἰς σε ἐλπίζων οὐκ ἀποτυγχάνει ἀλλ' ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον καὶ φῶς δικαιοσύνης ἐπα..... αὐτόν· ὅτι σύ ἐλεεῖς τοὺς καταραγμένους τοὺς πεπτωκότας καὶ σοὶ τὴν δόξαν ἀναπέμπομεν τῷ πατρί καὶ τῷ υἱῷ καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι νῦν καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

I have heard about you and your cures, and your teachings which are good even for salvation, and the things you do that nobody else has ever done. You raise the dead by your word only, you chase out evil spirits, you clean lepers, you restore sight to the blind, you heal paralytics, you straighten the lame, you rebuke demons ... you judge ... you have power, the soul is lit up with honour and bound to you in desire, and I believe that you are the Christ, the son of the living God, through whom I beg you not to reject coming to me, your servant, as one unworthy, but rather in hope and desire and longing for you. The high priests are jealous so come to your servant. My city is small for your mightiness but is sufficient for you, and you will cure my illness and heal the sick with me and give life to the city ... Amen and have mercy on me, my Lord.

The letter from our Lord Jesus Christ to Abgar the king of Edessa

Blessed are you, Abgar, and blessed is your city, which is called Edessa, blessed are you for believing in me without having seen me. For it is written that blessed are they who have not seen and yet believe, and thrice blessed, health for you for all time. As for coming to you I was sent here for be taken up to the Father who sent me. When I have been taken up, I will send you one of my disciples called Thaddaeus, who will cure your illness and give you eternal life and peace and will see to it that none of your enemies your city for all time. I left heaven and came down for the sake of mankind, and I dwelt in a virgin mother to the sin I humbled whether in or (similar) to these holy and pure for healing sure safety for his servant Anthony and his through the Jesus Christ and revealed as the son of God and and man. + X Ψ E Υ P Δ.

The cross means that I was willingly fastened to it. The Ψ means that great (ki)ng but a real man. The X means that I rest on the Cherubim. The E means that I am God first and there is no other besides me. The Υ means that I am a great king and God of gods. The P means

that I became the deliverer of mankind. The Δ means that I live through the ages and eternally and exist forever and ever²⁰⁶.

When Abgar received the letter from our Lord Jesus Christ, he said that the Jewish murderers and leaders were plotting to kill Jesus, and so he immediately sent a messenger, and with him an artist, to paint a portrait of our Lord Jesus Christ. When the messenger was coming to the gate of Jerusalem, the overlooker was inside Jesus went out to meet him. He spoke to him and said, “You are a spy, and you have come to spy on the city walls”. The messenger answered, “I am not a spy, Lord, but rather I was sent by Abgar the king of Edessa. I came to see Jesus of Nazareth”.

Jesus then told him to go to the synagogue and see him as he taught the crowds. He left in front of everyone the artist fell at the Lord’s feet and gave the linen cloth to Jesus. Jesus washed his face with water and took hold of the linen cloth and his exact likeness was imprinted onto it. Everyone who saw it was amazed and he gave it to the messenger. He took it with joy and the artist left with men of a like mind.

They set out on the road and came close to the city. It was evening and they stayed outside the city in the countryside and amidst the bushes. They were afraid and so hid the image of the Lord Jesus Christ between two tiles and went to sleep. The sun had already set and a column of fire appeared from heaven and over the place where the image of our Lord Jesus Christ was. The city guard saw the wonder and was afraid. He called out in a loud voice, and the people of the city went out and after searching they found the exact image of our Lord Jesus Christ from on the (ti)le. The messenger and those who were with him took the linen cloth with the likeness and went on their way.

They came to within a mile of the city of Edessa and a cripple who happened to be in that place jumped up and ran to his mother. All the crowd saw him and were amazed at what had happened, saying “Is this not the cripple at the gate, the son of the widow?”

The news about the boy and his cure came to king Abgar. He called for him and said to him, “Tell me, child, how were you cured?” The boy said, “Listen, o king. I was sitting on the

²⁰⁶ See above, note 198.

road when I saw a man coming and they were carrying the immaculate image of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as if moved by some divine power I touched the image, and I was immediately cured. When Abgar heard this he realised that Christ was coming to cure him. The messenger came into the palace and gave the image to Abgar. Abgar took the linen cloth into his hands as he was lying on his bed, and immediately no sign was left of his illness.

After our Lord Jesus Christ was taken up into heaven Thaddaeus the apostle was sent and he spoke to Abgar the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. Both of them went down to the fountain called Kerassa and he baptised Abgar together with all his household thanks to God. After Abgar had been baptised Thaddaeus went away to preach the gospel. Abgar placed the image of our Lord Jesus Christ over the doorway of the city so that everyone would pay homage to it. He also wrote an inscription, "Lord God, whoever hopes in you will never be let down but will have eternal life and the light of justice will shine on him. Because you pity the broken and the fallen, to you we give the glory, to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

2.4 MS *Grottaferrata Badia Greca 8* (gr. 285)

This fourteenth-century MS has never been edited or even mentioned in the literature. It contains two miniatures of Christ writing the reply to Abgar; the text is incomplete, and breaks off in the middle of the reply, so we do not know if the original text was just the two letters or if it continued with a brief history of the Image, as do other texts of the so-called *Epistula Abgari*. The text ends in the middle of a sentence (the last word is *καὶ*), then at the bottom of the folio is B b VIII, followed by a table of contents for the whole MS in Latin, in a much later hand. The notes in this postscript describe the text as *Epistola Abgari ad Jesum et responsio Domini ad Abgarum*, although this was written after the missing folios were lost; this is evident from the numbers on the folios (the postscript folios are numbered in direct continuation after the end of the Greek text and

describe the whole as *Fragmentum Codicis*) and also from the fact that the Greek text comes to an abrupt end in the middle of a sentence.

The first miniature (f. 45^r) shows Jesus writing the answer with the messenger holding a board for the writing. Jesus is sitting on a throne, and above him is written:

ὁ Χριστὸς ὅταν ἔγραψεν τὴν ἐπιστολὴν πρὸς τὸν Αὐγάρου

Christ is writing in the letter ἐπιστολὴ Αὐ and above the messenger an inscription identifies him as the ὁ ταχυδρόμος.

In the second miniature (f. 46^r) Christ is sitting on the same throne and writing on a tablet too (although a different shape from the first). Instead of the messenger is a kind of plant or tree. Above Christ is written: Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὅταν ἔγραψεν τὴν ἐπι, and quite cleverly, in the letter Christ is writing the continuation of these words στολὴν πρὸς τὸν although the name Αὐγάρου is missing.

The text is replete with numerous errors, mostly due to confusion of sounds. Given that the edited text of the letters has been seen many times, I give a diplomatic edition of the text from the MS (Figures 2.12-2.15).

(f. 45r) Ἐπιστολὴ Αὐγάρου

Ἄκουστέ με τὰ περὶ σοῦ, καὶ τῶν σῶν ἰαμάτων, ὅσῳτι ἄνευ φαρμάκεις, καὶ βοτάνου ποιῆς θεραπείας, ὅτι λόγῳ μόνων τυφλοῖς τὸ ὄραν χαρίζεις, κωφοῖς τὸ ἀκοῦειν, χολῆς τὸ περιπατῆν, λεπρούς καθαρίζεις, καὶ τὰ ἀκάθαρτα πνεύματα ἀπελαύνεις, καὶ τὸν υἱὸν τῆς χεῖρας ἐκ νεκρῶν ἤχειρας καὶ ταῦτα πάντα ἀκούσας περὶ σοῦ Κύριε, διενσήθη ἐν τῇ καρ-| (f.

5 45v) δία μου ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ κατὰβὰς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ ποιῆς ταῦτα. Διὰ τοῦτω δεῶμέ σου, διὰ γραμμμάτων, εἰς ἐμοῦ ἔλθειν, μὴ ἀπαξιώσεις, ἵνα καὶ τὸ πάθος, ὃ ἔχω

θεραπείσης καὶ ὑγίαν καὶ ζωὴν αἰώνιον μοι παράσχεις. Ἄκουστε δὲ μοι καὶ τοῦτω ὅτι οἱ
ῥοιούδαιοι κατὰγογγίζουσίν σοι, καὶ βούλονται σοι ἀνελεῖν. Πόλης οὖν ἐστὶν μοι βραχυτάτη
σεμνή, ἥτις ἀρκέσοι ἀμφωτέρεις· ἐρρωσθαί μοι κέλευσον κυριῆ μου. |

- 10 (f. 46r) Μακάριος εἶ, Αὔγαρε, καὶ ἡ πόλης σου, ἥτις καλεῖται Ἐδέσσα, μακάριος εἶ, ὅτι
ἐπίστευσας εἰς ἐμέ μὴ ἐώρακώς με. γέγραπται γάρ, μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες με καὶ
πιστεύσαντες· | (f. 46v) ἐπίδη οὖν σὴ μὴ ἐώρακώς με πεπίστευκας εἰς ἐμέ ὑγίαν
ἐτημασθήσετέ σοι. Περὶ [οὔ] δὲ ἐγραφας τοῦ ἐλθυναί με πρὸς σέ, δέον ἐστὶν δι' ὃ ἀπέσταλμε
15 ἀποστείλαντά με π[ατέρα·] δικαιοσύνην, καὶ μετὰ τὸ π[λη]ρῶσαι ἀναληφθῆναί με π[ρὸς] τον
ὄνόματι Θαδδαῖος, ὅστεις καὶ τὸ πάθος σου θερ[α]πεύσει, καὶ ὑγίαν καὶ ζω[ὴν] αἰώνιον σοι
παράσχοι· [ποι]ῆσαι δὲ καὶ τὴν πόλη σο[υ τὸ] ἱκανὸν πρὸς τὸ μηδένα | (f. 47r) ἐχθρῶν σου
κατισχύσαι αὐτῆς, ἐὼς τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος, ἀμήν.

- Καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἔκλῃνα οὐρανοῦς, καὶ κατήλθον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, διὰ τὸ σῶσαι τὸ γένος τῶν
20 ἀνθρώπων, καὶ ὄκησα μέιτραν παρθενικὴν, ἵνα τὴν παράβασιν τὴν ἐν τῷ παραδίσω ἐξαλήψω.
Εἶ ταπεινοσα δὲ ἐμαυτὸν, μορφὴν δούλου λαβων, ἵνα ἡμᾶς μεγαλύνω. | (f. 47v) αὕτη δέ μου
ἡ ἐπιστολή, ὅπου ἐὰν προβληθεῖ εἶται ἐν δίκει, εἶται ἐν δικαστηρίῳ, ἢ ἐν σποιλαιαῖς, ἢ ἐν ταῖς
πλαταῖαις τῆς γῆς· εἶται ἐν ὄρεσιν, ἢ ἐν θαλάσσει, ἢ ἐν πυρὶ, ἢ ἐν ποταμῷ, ἢ ἐν λύμνῃ, ἢ ἐν
πηγῇ, ἢ ἐν πυρρέσθωσιν, ἢ φρικιῶσιν, ἢ δαίμονιῶσιν, ἢ ἐκβράζωσιν, ἢ κατὰ δεσμὸν ἐχούσιν, ἢ
25 ἐν αρρωστία κατακεῖμενοι κακῶν ἢ ἐν πράσει, ἢ ἐν φυλακῇ, ἢ πεποιθήκωσοι φαρμάκων ἢ ὅσα
τούτοις ὅμεια, διαλυθήσονται. Ἔστω δὲ ὁ φορῶν ταύτην μου τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἀγνός καὶ [hic
des. mut.]

The letter of Abgar

I have heard about you and your cures, about how without medicine or herbs you heal people. By your word only you give sight to the blind, make the deaf hear, the lame walk, you heal lepers, you expel unclean spirits and you raised the son of the widow from the dead. I have heard all this about you, Lord, and realised in my heart that you are the son of God who has come down from heaven to do this. I am therefore writing to you to ask you to deign to come to me and heal my suffering, and give me health and eternal life. I have also heard, Lord, that the

Jews are murmuring against you and seek to destroy you. I have a city that is small but holy, sufficient for both of us. Heal me and take pity on me, my Lord.

Blessed are you, Abgar, and blessed is your city, which is called Edessa, blessed are you for believing in me without having seen me. It is written that blessed are those who have not seen me and yet believe, and since you have believed in me without having seen me, good health is stored up for you. As for what you wrote to me about coming to you, I have to fulfil all justice, which is what I was sent here for, and then be taken up to the Father who sent me. When I have been taken up, I will send you one of my disciples called Thaddaeus, who will cure you and give you health and eternal life. He will also see to it that no enemies ever conquer your city until the end of the age, Amen.

I left heaven and came down to earth to save mankind, and I dwelt in a virgin mother to wipe away the sin that was committed in paradise. I humbled myself and took on the form of a servant in order to glorify you.

This is my letter and wherever it is read, in a court of justice or in the senate house, in caves or on the roads of the land, on mountains or at sea or in a fire or in a river, in a port or at a fountain, if you have fever or you are shivering, bewitched or foaming at the mouth, or held in chains or lying ill, or in a difficult situation or in prison or suffering from medicine or anything else like this, you will be freed from it. May he who bears my letter with him be holy and [end mutilated].

2.5 Is there a standard version of the *Epistula Abgari*?

The first thing that comes to mind after reading the different versions of the so-called *Epistula Abgari* are the significant differences between all of them. The version published by Lipsius is generally accepted as the standard version, but the only reason for this is that it is the only published version.

Not even the letters of Abgar to Jesus and the reply coincide. In Pierpont Morgan 499 two additional cures are added to the list of Jesus' healing miracles: the

woman who had suffered from a blood flow for twelve years and the person bent over. In this same version, Abgar requests Jesus to make his city invincible, whereas in other witnesses this promise comes only as an initiative from Jesus. The Escorial MS omits Abgar's letter to Jesus, starting directly with Christ's reply. The text in the Vienna scroll is completely different: Abgar writes that Jesus' teaching is good for salvation and that nobody else does what he does. The king does not wonder whether Jesus is God himself or the Son of God, but directly believes that he is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Finally, Edessa is described by its king as small for Jesus' greatness. Both the Vienna Scroll and the Grottaferrata MSS omit the introductory phrase to Abgar's letter, starting directly with the sentence "I have heard about ...". Abgar also realises in the latter that Jesus is the Son of God who has come down from heaven.

The differences continue in Jesus' reply to Abgar. In the Lipsius version, Christ adds to the obligation of fulfilling his mission (as expressed in the *Narratio*, the *Synaxarion*, etc.) being given into the hands of sinners, crucified and rising on the third day. Not only will Christ make the city of Edessa invincible, but also larger. This version contains the longer text of the letter, explaining how Christ came down from heaven, the instructions for its use and the seals and their explanation. This is typical of the use of the letter as a magical amulet, but can also be found in this MS and even in one *Synaxarion* text²⁰⁷.

The Pierpont Morgan text gives two names for the disciple Jesus intends to send (Thaddaeus and Thomas). The ending is original to this manuscript, as special emphasis is laid on the fact that Jesus wrote the letter with his own hand, and on the Christological statement that he was made known in two natures, as perfect God and perfect man.

²⁰⁷ *Iveron* 433 (15th c.), ff. 215^r-218^r. I edited and translated the text in Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 96-97.

The Escorial MS opens the text with Christ's reply, and omits the blessing of Abgar for having believed without seeing Christ. The second name of Thaddaeus is given here as Lebbaios. The identification of the disciple is not a simple matter: Thaddaeus is listed as one of the twelve disciples in two of the four canonical gospels (Mark 3:18 and Matthew 10:3), although several (mainly western) MSS of both gospels have the name Lebbaios instead. Some have a conflated reading, i.e. Thaddaeus also called Lebbaios. Luke and John replace Thaddaeus with a second Judas (not Iscariot). All three names are Semitic, and according to Raymond E. Brown they can hardly all refer to the same person despite the later creation of the composite name Judas Thaddaeus²⁰⁸.

The text of Christ's reply to Abgar is damaged in the Vienna scroll, although the interesting detail is the personal use of the magical power in the letter, for the slave Antonius. The Grottaferrata text of the reply is the only one to explain how Christ took on the form of a servant when he came down from heaven.

The differences between the seals and their explanations in these texts and others are analysed in greater depth below (pp. 239-244). The differences in the MSS continue in the rest of the story of how the Image is imprinted onto the linen cloth and how the messenger comes back to Edessa (excepting of course, the Grottaferrata text, which breaks off in Jesus' reply to Abgar), despite coinciding in the basic aspects of the story. The first novelty is to be found in the Pierpont Morgan, Escorial and Vienna texts, in which Jesus accuses the messenger of being a spy (there is an added detail in the Vienna scroll; Jesus tells him he has come to spy on the walls of the city). The messenger's explanation seems to satisfy Christ in all the texts.

The story of how the cloth was hidden between the tiles and the Image miraculously transferred onto one of them is in all the witnesses except El Escorial,

²⁰⁸ Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1 (New York 1997), p. 198.

although the details, vocabulary and phraseology are different in each case. A comparison of a short extract from each manuscript illustrates the point:

Lipsius	The Vienna scroll	Pierpont Morgan
<p>Καὶ ἰδὼν ὁ καστροφύλαξ τῆς πόλεως τὸν στύλον τοῦ πυρός, ἐφώνησεν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ· καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ὁ λαὸς τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἰδόντες τὴν ἐν σινδῶνι εἰκόνα τοῦ κυρίου, ἤθελον αὐτὴν λαβεῖν καὶ ψηλαφήσαντες εὗρον, ὅτι ἀνεζωγραφήθη εἰς ἓν τῶν κεραμιδίων. Καὶ ἔλαβον τὸ κεραμίδιον ἐσίγησαν ἑάσαντες τοὺς ταχυδρόμους πορεύεσθαι.</p>	<p>Ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ καστροφύλαξ τὸ θαῦμα ἐφοβήθη καὶ ἐφώνησε φωνῇ μεγάλῃ· καὶ ἦλθεν ὄχλος ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως καὶ ψηλαφήσαντες εὗρον τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκ τε ἀπαραλλάκτως εἰς ἓν τῶν κερα..... ἠσύχασαν. Ὁ δὲ ταχυδρόμος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ λαβὼν τὴν σινδῶνα μετὰ τοῦ ὁμοιώματος ἀπῆλθον.</p>	<p>Ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ καστροφύλαξ τὸ θαῦμα ἐφώνησε φωνῇ μεγάλῃ καὶ πλήθος ἐξελθόντος λαοῦ ἐδόκουν τὸ κεραμίδιον ὑπὸ πυρὸς καταφλέγεσθαι. Πλησίον δὲ τούτου γενομένου τῷ ταχυδρόμῳ περιέτυχον Ἄνανια καὶ κατασχόντες αὐτόν, αὐτοῦργον ἐκείνου τοῦ ἐμπρησμοῦ γενέσθαι κατηγοροῦν τοῦ κεραμάρου. Ὁ δὲ τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου αὐτοῦ διαγγραφήν ἀποστολὴν ἀφείθει. Ἐκεῖνοι περιεργαζόμενοι τῷ θεάματι τοῖς κεραμίσις προσήγγισαν. Τὸ δὲ ἐν κεραμίδιον ὑφελόμενοι εὗρον μετατυπωθεῖσαν τὴν θεανδρικήν εἰκόνα Χριστοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ, λαβόντες τὸ κεραμίδιον ἐσίγησαν. Ὁ δὲ ταχυδρόμος πάλιν τὴν σινδῶνα λαβὼν δῆλυνε τὴν ὁδόν.</p>
<p>The city guard saw the column of fire and called out in a loud voice, and the people of the city went out and saw the image of the Lord on the linen cloth. They wanted to take possession of it and when they laid hands on it they saw that the image had been transferred onto one of the tiles. They took the tile in silence and let the messengers go on their way.</p>	<p>The city guard saw the wonder and was afraid. He called out in a loud voice, and the people of the city went out and after searching they found the exact image of our Lord Jesus Christ from on the (ti)le. The messenger and those who were with him took the linen cloth with the likeness and went on their way.</p>	<p>The city guard saw the wonder and called out in a loud voice, and the crowds of people coming out thought that the tile factory was on fire. As they came towards the messenger, they discovered Ananias and questioned him, accusing him of what was happening in the tile factory. He explained to them his mission from the Lord and they came closer to the tiles to see what this wonder was. They took one of the tiles and found the image of the God-man Christ imprinted on it, and so they took it away and remained silent. The messenger took the linen cloth again and continued on his way.</p>

The differences in the story of the cripple who was healed outside Edessa are also surprising. In the version published by Lipsius, the cripple was a mile away from Edessa, was cured by touching the linen cloth and ran to his mother. When Abgar questions him he says that something touched him. In the Pierpont Morgan MS, the

cripple, who is further identified as the son of a widow, was six miles out of Edessa. He was cured by stretching out his hand to touch the linen cloth, and ran to his own home. When questioned by Abgar, he also says something touched him. In the Escorial MS, the distance from the city where the cripple was encountered is one stadium, less than a mile. He was cured when Thaddaeus reached out and gave him his hand (i.e. there was no contact here with the linen cloth; the miracle is worked by Thaddaeus), and ran to his mother. Finally, in the Vienna scroll the distance from the city is one mile (as in Lipsius), although no reason or explanation is given for his cure – he simply jumps up and runs to his mother. When questioned by the king, however, the explanation is more detailed than in any other of the witnesses: he was sitting by the road when he saw a man coming with the image, and moved by some divine inspiration he touched the image and was cured.

By comparing the ending of the text in each version, it becomes even more apparent that they are all independent versions:

Lipsius	El Escorial	Pierpont Morgan	Vienna Scroll
<p>Μετά δὲ τὸ ἀναληφθῆναι τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἀπέστειλε Θαδδαῖον ἐν Ἐδέσσει τῇ πόλει τοῦ ἰάσασθαι Αὔγαρον καὶ πάσαν μαλακίαν. Ἐλθὼν οὖν ὁ Θαδδαῖος καὶ λαλήσας αὐτῷ τὸν λόγον τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ κατηχήσας ἐκατέβη ἐπὶ τὴν πηγὴν τὴν λεγομένην Κερασσά καὶ ἐβάπτισεν αὐτὸν πανοικί, καὶ εὐθέως ἐκαθαρίσθη αὐτοῦ τὸ πάθος. Καὶ ἠγαλλιάσατο τῷ Πνεύματι δοξάζων καὶ εὐλογῶν τὸν θεὸν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων. Ἀμήν.</p>	<p>Καὶ ἔφη πρὸς τὸν Θαδδαῖον· Τί ἔτι χρειὰν ἔχων. Ὁ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν εἶπεν· Χρεία σου ἐστὶν βαπτισθῆναι· καὶ εὐθέως καταβάς ἐπὶ τὴν πηγὴν ἢ καλουμένην Κερασσά ἐβάπτισθη αὐτὸς καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων. Ἀμήν.</p>	<p>Μετά οὖν τὸ ἀναληφθῆναι τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ πληρῶσθαι ἀπέστειλε Θαδδαῖον ἐν Ἐδέσσει τῇ πόλει τοῦ ἰάσασθαι Αὔγαρον καὶ πάσαν τὴν πνευματικὴν οἰκονομίαν. Κατὰ δὲ ὑποσχέμενα ἀπεστάλην ὁ Θαδδαῖος ὁ ἀπόστολος πρὸς τὸν Αὔγαρον καὶ λαλήσας αὐτῷ τὸν λόγον τοῦ Κυρίου ἐκατέβησαν ἀμφότεροι εἰς τὴν πηγὴν τὴν λεγομένην Κερασσά δοξάζοντες καὶ εὐλογῶντες τὸν θεόν, ἀμήν. Μετά δὲ τὸ βαπτίσαι αὐτὸν Θαδδαῖος ὁ ἀπόστολος προσηύξατο οὕτως· Τεῖχος ἡμῶν Ἐδέσσης καὶ ἀψευδῆς ἐπαγγελία σὺ ὑπάρχεις Χριστέ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὁ εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζων οὐκ ἀποτυγχάνει ἀλλ' ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον, ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ ἀνορθῶν τοὺς κατερραγμένους καὶ ἐγείρων τοὺς πεπτωκότας καὶ σοὶ τὴν δόξαν ἀναπέμπομεν τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ Υἱῷ καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι εἰς τοὺς</p>	<p>Μετά δὲ τὸ ἀναληφθῆναι τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἀπεστάλη Θαδδαῖος ὁ ἀπόστολος καὶ λαλήσας πρὸς Αὔγαρον τοὺς λόγους τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κατέβησαν ἀμφότεροι ἐπὶ τὴν πηγὴν τὴν λεγομένην Κερασσάν καὶ ἐβάπτισεν τὸν Αὔγαρον πανοικῆ καὶ ἠγίασεν ... εὐχαριστῶν τῷ θεῷ· μετὰ δὲ τὸ βαπτίσαι τὸν Αὔγαρον ὁ μὲν Θαδδαῖος ἀπῆλθεν κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. Ὁ δὲ Αὔγαρος ἔστησεν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὴν πύλην τῆς πόλεως ἵνα πᾶς τις πρότερον τὴν εἰκόνα τιμῆν ἀπονέμει τῇ εἰκόνι· γράφας καὶ ἐπιγραφὴν ὅτι Κύριος θεός ὁ εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζων οὐκ ἀποτυγχάνει ἀλλ' ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον καὶ φῶς δικαιοσύνης ἐπα..... αὐτόν· ὅτι σὺ ἐλεεῖς τοὺς καταραγμένους, τοὺς πεπτωκότας καὶ σοὶ τὴν δόξαν ἀναπέμπομεν τῷ</p>

		αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων. Ἀμήν.	Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι νῦν καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων. Ἀμήν.
After our Lord Jesus Christ was taken up into heaven he sent Thaddaeus to the city of Edessa to cure Abgar and all sicknesses. Thaddaeus came and spoke the word of the Lord to him, taught him and took him to the fountain called Kerassa and baptised him together with all his household. Abgar was immediately freed from his suffering. He rejoiced in the spirit, praising and extolling God forever and ever. Amen.	And he said to Thaddaeus, “What else do I need?” Thaddaeus answered, “You need to be baptised”, and going straight down to the fountain called Kerassa, Abgar was baptised together with his wife and children in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and for evermore, Amen.	After our Lord Jesus Christ was taken up into heaven he sent Thaddaeus to the city of Edessa to cure Abgar and to fulfil the spiritual economy, Thaddaeus the apostle was sent to Abgar and spoke the word of the Lord to him. They went together to the fountain called Kerassa praising and blessing God, Amen. After baptising him, Thaddaeus the apostle prayed thus: Christ our God, you are the wall of Edessa and the true promise, whoever hopes in you will never be let down but shall have eternal life, for you are the one who straightens the crooked and lifts up the fallen. We give glory to you, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever, Amen.	After our Lord Jesus Christ was taken up into heaven Thaddaeus the apostle was sent and he spoke to Abgar the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. Both of them went down to the fountain called Kerassa and he baptised Abgar together with all his household thanks to God. After Abgar had been baptised Thaddaeus went away to preach the gospel. Abgar placed the image of our Lord Jesus Christ over the doorway of the city so that everyone would pay homage to it. He also wrote an inscription, “Lord God, whoever hopes in you will never be let down but will have eternal life and the light of justice will sh(ine) on him. Because you pity the broken and the fallen, to you we give the glory, to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

The differences I have highlighted are the major ones among the versions in the MSS. It is true that the basics of the story coincide (as they do in all the texts – the *Narratio*, the *Synaxarion*, etc.), but even when the versions of the *Epistula Abgari* are telling the same story, the vocabulary and the expressions employed are so different that it makes it difficult to postulate a common origin. Even the name provided by Lipsius is misleading, as the text he edits contains much more than the letters. Equally misleading is his claim to have used two MSS, because as explained above, the second is a damaged witness containing only the Abgar-Jesus correspondence (as is the Grottaferrata MS). Ernst von Dobschütz, in his study of the Abgar correspondence²⁰⁹,

²⁰⁹ Von Dobschütz, ‘Der Briefwechsel’, p. 436.

lists six Greek MSS as witnesses for the *Epistula Abgari*; one is the text edited by Lipsius, but the others are either the *Narratio de imagine Edessena* or just further isolated copies of the two letters copied out of context, with no surrounding text, i.e. not versions of the Lipsius text at all.

I would argue that there is in fact no such common text as the *Epistula Abgari*, at least in the sense as the title is used by Lipsius and by all those who have written about it using his edition as their basis. All these articles and papers concern nothing more than the MS used by Lipsius, accepting it as if it were a standard text in various witnesses. As a result the article by Karaulashvili concerning the date of the text²¹⁰ loses much of its force as it can only be taken as a reference to the Lipsius text.

All the other versions were individually composed – they would appear to have been based on the Abgar to Jesus letter and the reply (the Escorial version even ignores the letter from the king of Edessa), followed by a version of the story of the Image. I would postulate that each version was written for the occasion in question: the Pierpont Morgan scroll was written in the context of the minuscule empire of Trebizond, surrounded by hostile forces on all sides, as a plea for divine protection against the enemy (in memory of the divine promise to protect the city of Edessa against its enemies)²¹¹. The Vienna scroll seems to have been a private magical text, prepared for an otherwise unknown Antonius. Apart from the Abgar letters and legend (individualised to include the name of Antonius), other texts in the scroll are similarly personalized: a general prayer to ward off spells for Antonius and his family and an exorcism prayer from the liturgy of Basil in favour of Antonius and his household. The scroll was produced in the Sinai Peninsula²¹². We have no further data concerning the recipient of the scroll and so cannot tell if it was produced because of a specific danger

²¹⁰ Karaulashvili, 'The Date'.

²¹¹ Cf. Peers, 'Art and identity', p. 178: "Christ was the wall ... of Edessa and Trebizond both".

²¹² Cf. Peers, 'Magic', p. 169.

he was facing or whether it was just produced for general protection against evil and bad luck.

The Escorial text is a heavily reduced version in comparison thereto; according to the postscript it was copied in October 1435 under the rule of Thomas in Achaëa²¹³; this refers to Thomas the son of Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus (r. 1391-1425). Thomas was Despot of Mystra from 1428 to 1460, when the Turks finally conquered the area. No mention is made of the Emperor himself, which makes it quite possible that the MS was copied in Mystra rather than Constantinople. As such, the situation in Morea was similar to that of Trebizond, a small and weak Christian kingdom surrounded by enemies. The Abgar legend was especially attractive in these circumstances as Christ was seen as both protector of Edessa and the place where the legend was copied.

The Vienna MS used by Lipsius for his edition of the text was dated therein to the twelfth century, although it seems more probable that it dates from the second half of the thirteenth century. Nothing is known about the MS before it came into the hands of the Hungarian humanist János Zsámboky (Johannes Sambucus, 1531-1584). There are no other magical or related texts in the codex; it contains, among other pieces, *Capita adhortatoria ad monachos in India* by Johannes Carpathius, and the anonymous *Narratio de virginis moribus et forme corporis*. It was written on Oriental paper rather than parchment, which “can be understood as an argument of Cypriot origin”²¹⁴. The

²¹³ Diplomatic text and edition in Miller, *Les manuscrits*, p. 499.

²¹⁴ Personal correspondence from Professor Ernst Gamillscheg, National Library of Austria, dated 13 May 2013. The content of the MS is compared to other versions of the Abgar legend in Lipsius, *Die Edessenische Abgar-Sage Kritisch Untersucht* (Braunschweig 1880), esp. pp. 16, 21, 59, 62, although no details about the MS itself are given. The text from this MS seems to have been the basis for an Arabic translation of the legend: cf. R.J.H. Gottheil, ‘An Arabic Version of the Abgar Legend’, *Hebraica* 7 (1890-91), pp. 268-277. The MS in question is kept at the library of Columbia College, is “quite late” and it is “impossible to tell the exact date of the original text” (Gottheil, ‘An Arabic Version’, p. 271). In reference to the Arabic text, and therefore also applicable to the text in the Vienna MS it is based on, he says, p. 268: “the chief interest of the writer lies in the legend regarding the image of Jesus, rather than in that of the letters between him and Abgar”. In the Arabic MS the cloth the image was imprinted onto is

Kingdom of Cyprus throughout the thirteenth century was in the hands of Frankish kings and the Catholic Church, coexisting with the Orthodox authorities and faith although not always in peace and harmony. This feeling of oppression of the island's religion and being ruled by a foreign dynasty may have led to a comparison with the situation of Abgar and his adopting a new religion while surrounded by hostility to it, and therefore to the copying of the related legend. We should not forget, however, that the Vienna MS is not a magical scroll and the text of the Abgar legend contained therein is therefore most probably a copy from another, now lost, source, which may not even have been of Cypriot origin. We cannot adopt these conclusions about the purpose of the text as confidently as we can with the specific scrolls.

We do not know if either the Vatopedi text (the partial version used by Lipsius) or the Grottaferrata MS contained anything beyond the correspondence between Abgar and Christ. Given that there were so many MSS containing the decontextualised letters without the legend, it is difficult and perhaps unnecessary to speculate on the circumstances of and reasons behind their copying. If each version was adapted at the time of writing, which seems to be the only viable explanation, the dating of each text cannot go beyond the date of the MS it was first written in.

These versions are all valuable additions to the larger textual tradition of the Image of Edessa legend (and three of them have miniatures too), although they should be taken as separate texts, each composed for a special individual occasion. The Abgar legend was well known and available in many different formats and abbreviations; these texts are yet further proof of the great flexibility of the Abgar legend and how it was used in different circumstances and in different places to create individual identities and serve specific purposes.

called السفينة, which means "ship" or "vessel"; Gottheil, p. 276, says that this is "undoubtedly a mistake" and suggests the more expected مندیل.

Chapter 3

Saint Alexis and the “ymago sanguinea”

The Life of Saint Alexis, the rich young man who abandoned his wife on the eve of their wedding to live a life of poverty for God, once enjoyed great popularity²¹⁵ as its transmission in several languages shows, including Syriac, Ethiopian, Greek, Irish, English, German, Old Norse, Flemish, Provençal, Latin, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Polish and Serbian²¹⁶.

The earliest known versions are in Syriac, surviving in MSS dating from the fifth and sixth centuries²¹⁷. The first text is dated to no later than 475²¹⁸. These stories keep Alexis within Edessa, where he dies and is buried, and are relatively free of the more popular details that crept into the later versions. Most stories tell how the saint was born in Rome into a wealthy family, and left his (untouched) bride on their wedding night to devote himself to God. He found his way to Edessa, where he spent seventeen years as a beggar at a church door. In the later versions, a talking image informed the keeper who he was and told him to bring the saint inside. Alexis then came back to Rome where he spent a further seventeen years at his parents' house (unrecognised) – his mother and father only realised who the beggar was when he died. Known as the Man of God, Alexis gave rise to a vast amount of popular literature²¹⁹ and

²¹⁵ Cf. Amiaud, *La légende syriaque de Saint Alexius, l'Homme de Dieu* (Paris 1889), p. XXVIII: “Il n’y a peut-être pas de saint dont l’histoire ait été plus populaire par tous les pays que l’a été celle de Saint Alexis”.

²¹⁶ Cf. Christopher Storey, *An Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Alexis Studies* (Geneva 1987), pp. 61-83.

²¹⁷ Edited by Amiaud, *La légende*.

²¹⁸ Amiaud, *La légende*, p. XLVII.

²¹⁹ E.g. Nicolas Wiseman, *The Hidden Gem* (London 1859), Henri Ghéon, *Le pauvre sous l’escalier* (Paris 1925) and Benjamín Jarnés, *Vida de San Alejo* (Madrid 1928). Wiseman, *ibid.*, p. 78, makes mention of Christian learning in Edessa and how Abgar received this directly from Christ: “But in Edessa these all flow alike into one deep yet crystal cistern, filled by King Abgar with the flood of life fresh from its source”.

even to an opera (written by Stefano Landi), a cantata (by Rimsky Korsakov) and an oratorio (by Camilla de Rossi). The developments in the story are studied by Amiaud²²⁰, although what interest us here are the references to the Image of Edessa when Alexis arrives in the city.

The Image of Edessa is mentioned in most later versions of the saint's life, both in Greek, Latin and the numerous translations into the vernacular languages, when the city is first brought into the story. The earliest versions, however, in Syriac, lack all references to the Image²²¹ and so are not discussed here. The image not made by human hands in the city of Edessa could only be the Image of Edessa; but despite the references to Edessa and the image, the many different texts of the legend of St Alexis have not been associated with Mandylion studies in the literature, with a single exception²²²; hence this chapter is essentially original in the field of Image of Edessa studies.

3.1 The Greek texts

The earliest extant Greek text concerning the saint would appear to be the one attributed to Joseph the Hymnographer²²³, although it makes no mention of either Edessa or the Image.

²²⁰ Amiaud, *La légende* pp. I-LXXIX.

²²¹ C.E. Stebbins, 'Les origines de la légende de Saint Alexis', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 51.3 (1973), pp. 497-507, explains how two legends were drawn together, that of the nameless Man of God in Edessa and the initially separate story of Alexis.

²²² A short article by Jan Nelson, 'The Holy Mandylion of Edessa and the Legend of Saint Alexis', in *Medieval Studies in Honor of Robert White Linker*, ed. Brian Dutton, J. Woodrow Hassell and John E. Keller (Valencia 1973), pp. 155-161. Over half the article is devoted to a summary of the known history of the Image; the conclusion is that the inclusion of the Image in the legend of St Alexis was not successful in the west because of the confusion with the legend of the Veronica. None of the literature about the Alexis legend goes beyond merely mentioning the Image of Edessa; the marriage of the two fields of study has been long overdue.

²²³ Cf. Amiaud, *La légende* p. XXXI. The hymn was published in the *Menaion of Rome*, vol. IV, pp. 99-105 (Rome 1888) and a Latin translation can be seen in the *Acta Sanctorum Julii*, tom. IV (Société des Bollandistes: Brussels 1725), pp. 247-248.

Symeon Metaphrastes' original Menologion text is lost, although the supposed Metaphrastic version given by Massman²²⁴ makes no mention of the Image on the saint's arrival in Edessa:

πλοιαρίῳ δὲ ἐντυχὸν τὴν ἐμπορίαν πρὸς Λαοδίκειαν τῆς Συρίας ποιούμενῳ, ἐν τούτῳ ἐξέπλεε· κάκειθεν ἐκβὰς τῆς νηὸς, ὁδοιπόροις συνήντησε τὴν ὁδοιπορίαν καὶ αὐτοῖς πρὸς Ἔδεσαν ποιούμενοις καὶ μετ' αὐτῶν διηνεκέως τῆς ὁδοῦ μῆκος κατέλυσεν·

He found a boat on its way to Laodicea in Syria and went on board. When he got off, he fell in with some travellers and went with them all the way to Edessa.

The Greek text edited by Fernando María Estevez Pereira²²⁵ and dated by him to the ninth century at the very latest, introduces the city of Edessa in the saint's life in the following way:

κατέλαβεν Ἔδεσαν τὴν μεσοποταμίαν (πόλιν), ἔνθα κείται ἡ ἀχειροποίητος (εἰκὼν) τοῦ χαρακτῆρος τοῦ δεσπότη τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἣν ἔδωκεν Ἀβγάρῳ ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ

He came to Edessa, a city in Mesopotamia, where the image, not made by human hands, of the impress of our Lord Jesus Christ lay; while he was still alive he had given it to Abgar.

However, it is an otherwise unknown image of the Mother of God that speaks concerning the admission of Alexius into the church:

καὶ ἰδοὺ ἡ εἰκὼν τῆς Θεοτόκου εἶπεν πρὸς τὸν προσμονάριον

And behold, the image of the Mother of God spoke to the caretaker

²²⁴ H.F Massmann (ed.), *Sanct Alexius Leben* (Leipzig 1843), pp. 176-179, from MS *Monacensis Aug. S. Ulr.* pp. 192-200.

²²⁵ 'La Légende Grecque de l'Homme de Dieu Saint Alexis', *Analecta Bollandiana* 19 (1900), pp. 241-256.

One of the Paris MSS²²⁶ varies from the text edited by Estevez Pereira in the order of words only (as far as the mention of the Image is concerned), although the reference to how it came into the hands of Abgar is more complete:

Καὶ συνώδευσεν αὐτοῖς μέχρις οὖν κατήντησαν τὴν Ἔδεσσαν Μεσοποταμίας τῆς Συρίας, ἔνθα κεῖται τοῦ δεσποτικοῦ χαρακτήρος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἡ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκὼν ἣν ἔδωκεν Ἀβγάρῳ ἐν τῇ κατὰ σάρκα ἐπὶ γῆς οἰκονομία αὐτοῦ.

And so he travelled with them until they came to Edessa, in Mesopotamia in Syria, where the impress of our Lord Jesus Christ, the image not made by human hands, lay; while he was still in the flesh on earth he had given it to Abgar.

Another MS in Paris, edited by Margarete Rösler²²⁷, introduces the Image of Edessa in a somewhat different way:

Καὶ ἔλθων ἐν Αἰδέσση τῇ πόλει εἰς τὴν ἀχειροποίητον τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ ἄχραντον εἰκόνα καὶ προσκυνήσας ἐκαθέσθη ἐν τῇ νάρθηκι τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς δεσποίνης ἡμῶν τῆς ἁγίας Θεοτόκου ...

And coming to the city of Edessa, to the stainless image of our Saviour Christ, not made by human hands, he venerated it and sat in the narthex of the church of Our Lady, the Holy Mother of God ...

One of the variants recorded by Rösler²²⁸ among the Greek witnesses contains a unique description of the Image. The MS in question is *Parisinus BN gr. 897*, which states:

ἔνθα ὁ ἀχειροποίητος κεῖται τοῦ βασιλέως τῶν ὅλων χαρακτήρ

²²⁶ *Parisinus suppl. gr. 136* (16th c.), f. 67^r, examined *in situ*.

There lies the impress of the king of all, not made by human hands.

As for the MSS from Mount Athos, the textual variations are numerous. None of these MSS have been previously published²²⁹.

Megiste Lavra 1824 (16th c.), f. 114^v makes no mention of the city of Edessa or of Abgar, simply stating that Alexis came to Mesopotamia, where the *ἀχειροποίητος τοῦ δεσπότητος εἰκὼν* was.

Megiste Lavra 1817 (15th c.), ff. 117^v-118^r describes Edessa as a fortress (*κάστρον*) rather than a city (*πόλις*)²³⁰ and then explains how the Image came to be there in slightly more detail:

ἡ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκόνα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τὴν ὁποία ἔσταλην ὁ Χριστὸς ἀπὸ τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ εἰς τὸν τοπάρχην Αὐγαρον

The icon of our Lord Jesus Christ, not made by human hands, which Christ sent from Jerusalem to the ruler Abgar.

Megiste Lavra 1509 (16th c.), ff. 45^r-45^v is virtually identical to the Paris MS, while the text in *Megiste Lavra* 1142 (15th c.), f. 150^v is similar to MS 1824 from the same monastery – although it tidies up the grammar and describes Abgar as king (*βασιλεὺς*) rather than ruler (*τοπάρχης*). MSS *Megiste Lavra* 499 (16th c.), ff. 181^v-197^v and 467 (16th c.), ff. 163^r-185^v transmit the same text, including the grammatical (or phonetical) peculiarity *ἡ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκόνα*, rendering the latter word in vernacular.

²²⁷ *Parisinus gr.* 1488 (11th c.), ff. 154-157, in *Die Fassungen der Alexius-Legende mit Besonderer Berücksichtigung der Mittelenglischen Versionen* (Vienna 1905), pp. 111-112.

²²⁸ Rösler, *Die Fassungen*, p. 127.

²²⁹ I collated all of them either in person or from microfilms; I used colour photographs sent to me from the monastery of Koutloumoussiou, and consulted the others on microfilm at the Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies in Thessalonike.

²³⁰ Cf. John Haldon, *The Palgrave Atlas of Byzantine History* (Basingstoke 2005), p. 77: “The cumulative result of these changes was that the ‘city’ effectively disappeared, and in its place there evolved the middle Byzantine *kastron* or fortress-town. ... In many contemporary sources the traditional

The former MS adds another error in the article: *εἰς τῶν βασιλέα Αὔγαρον* for *εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Αὔγαρον*.

Megiste Lavra Θ24 (16th c.) f. 108^v is damaged precisely where the Image of Edessa is mentioned, although sufficient remains to be able to read that it is described as

<ἡ ἀχειροποίητος τοῦ δεσποτικοῦ χαρακτήρος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

the master's impress, our Lord Jesus Christ, <not made by human han>ds

The extended version of the story in *Megiste Lavra* 1139 (17th c.), ff. 41^v-52^v and *Megiste Lavra* 1084 (15th c.), ff. 299^v-315^r makes no mention of Edessa or the Image, while the legend contained in *Megiste Lavra* 650 (copied in 1627), ff. 377^v-384^r and *Vatopedi* 632 (15th c.), ff. 312^v-331^r has the saint come to the city of Edessa but no mention is made of the Image. There are various other Athonite MSS that mention Edessa but make no reference to the Image: *Dionysiou* 3694 (17th c.), f. 178^r; *Dionysiou* 3794 (17th c.), f. 30^v; *Panteleimon* 5620 (15th c.), f. 118^r; *Iveron* 4246 (15th c.), f. 15^v; and *Philotheou* 1848 (15th c.), f. 154^r²³¹.

One of the earliest Athonite MSS is *Megiste Lavra* 139 (12th c.), in which the life of St Alexis takes up ff. 96^v-111^r. The description here is similar to the ninth-century text edited by Estevez Pereiro:

κατέλαβον Αἰδεσσαν τὴν μεσοποταμίαν Συρίας, ἔνθα ἐστὶν ἡ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκόνα τοῦ δεσποτικοῦ χαρακτήρος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἣν ἔδωκεν Αὐγάρι ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ

Greek word for city, *polis*, is replaced by the new term, even when, in the later tenth and eleventh centuries, urban life began to flourish once more".

²³¹ The numbering in this MS is on the left hand folio, so that when studying the text, f. 154^r is on the left and f. 154^v on the right.

He came to Edessa in Mesopotamia, in Syria, where the image, not made by human hands, of the impress of our Lord Jesus Christ was; while he was still alive he had given it to Abgar.

This text, with minor variations, can also be found in *Dionysiou* 3823 (16th c.), *Docheirariou* 2767 (16th c.)²³², *Xeropotamou* 2541 (17th c.) and *Xenophontos* 35 (14th c.).

As is well known, hand-copied MSS were still being produced on Mount Athos as late as the nineteenth century; among the later witnesses for the life of St Alexis is *Vatopedi* 95 (18th c.), ff. 47^v-65^v. This version explains how ἡ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκὼν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ was kept in the city (Edessa is not named as such – the image is in Mesopotamia and the city is referred to as τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν). Neither is Edessa named in *Vatopedi* 261 (17th c.) ff. 168^v-182^v: it is referred to as τὸ κάστρον τῆς Μεσοποταμίας τῆς Συρίας but is clearly identified as Edessa by the presence of ἡ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκόνα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Exactly the same text can be found in *Vatopedi* 212, ff. 333^r-343^r, which may have served as the exemplar for *Vatopedi* 95.

Another seventeenth-century MS contains the same text with an explanative gloss incorporated into the text to make the identification of the city clear. The MS in question is *Vatopedi* 89, ff. 63^r-89^r and the gloss reads τὸ ὁποῖον κάστρον λέγεται Ἔδεσα. The city is also named (but in this case just before the reference to τὸ κάστρον) in *Vatopedi* 83 (17th c.), ff. 85^v-99^r.

There are three MSS containing the Life of St Alexis at the monastery of Koutloumousiou on Mount Athos. Codex 150 (16th c.), f. 9^r.13-17 (Figure 3.1) reads as follows:

²³² The copyist of this particular MS was confused by the geographical locations: τὴν τῆς τῆ ἔνδεσαποταμίας τῆς συρίας.

καὶ ἦλθε μετ' αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν Ἔδεσαν τὸ κάστρον· ἐκεῖ ὅπου εὐρίσκετον ἡ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκόνα τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰ(ησοῦ) Χ(ριστοῦ).

And he came with them to the city of Edessa, where the image of Our Lord Jesus Christ, not made by human hands, is to be found.

This text, with minor variations, is preserved in the following Athonite MSS: *Dionysiou* 3696 (17th c.), *Dionysiou* 3757 (17th c.), *Iveron* 4589 (17th c.), *Iveron* 4578 (16th c.) and *Docheiariou* 2801 (17th c.). Of these, *Dionysiou* 3696 and *Iveron* 4589 have the more correct εἰκὼν while the others have the vernacular form, εἰκόνα.

Koutloumousiou 156 (16th c.), f. 328^f.10-13 (Figure 3.2) presents further variations on the text:

καὶ συνοδηπόρισεν μετ' αὐτοῦ· μέχρι τῆς Αἰδεσινῶν πόλεως· τῆς Μεσοποταμίας· ἔνθα ἡ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκὼν τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰ(ησοῦ) Χ(ριστοῦ) ὑπάρχει.

And he travelled with him to the city of the Edessenes in Mesopotamia. This is where the image of Our Lord Jesus Christ, not made by human hands, lies.

Koutloumousiou 177 (17th c.), f. 117^f.3-6 (Figure 3.3) reads:

ἔφθασεν εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν εἰς τὴν Ἔδεσαν τὸ κάστρον· ἐκεῖ ὅπου ἦτον ἡ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκόνα τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰ(ησοῦ) Χ(ριστοῦ).

He came to Mesopotamia, to the city of Edessa where was the image of Our Lord Jesus Christ, not made by human hands.

Another sixteenth-century MS at Koutloumousiou (180) also contains the Life of St Alexis, but its state of preservation is so poor that it cannot even be handled without serious risk of loss. It has not been microfilmed for storage and so its textual witness is probably lost for ever.

Original and variant texts can be found in other MSS from Mount Athos. Just like *Vatopedi* 95 above, *Dionysiou* 3833 (17th c.), f. 141^f refers to Edessa as τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν, while the title of the text is quite different in *Iveron* 4503 (17th c.): λόγος θαυμαστός τοῦ Ἀλεξίου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τοῦ θεοῦ. The phonetic transcription is poor in this MS: ει for ἡ and ἡκονα for εἰκόνα, and the identification of the city is also unique: καὶ ὁποῖον κάστρον ὀνομάζεται Ἐδεσσα.

There are three Greek MSS containing the Life of St Alexis at the monastery of El Escorial in Spain. The first is MS X-IV-10 (12th c.), where on f. 188^v.9-13 (Figure 3.4) the text reads:

καὶ συνόδοιπóρος γέγωνεν μετ' αὐτοῦ· μέχρις οὗ κατέλαβεν Ἐδεσσαν τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν· ἔνθα ἡ ἀχειροποίητος κεῖται τοῦ δεσποτικοῦ χαρακτήρος τοῦ Κ(υρίου) ἡμῶν Ἰ(ησοῦ) Χ(ριστοῦ), ἣν ἔδωκεν Ἀβγάρῳ τοπάρχει· ἔτι ζῶντος αὐτοῦ·

And travelling with him he arrived in Edessa in Mesopotamia. This is where the imprint of Our Lord Jesus Christ lies, not made by human hands, which he gave to Abgar the ruler while he was still alive.

The second MS is Y-II-11 (14th c.). Folio 208^v.8-9 (Figure 3.5), where Edessa is mentioned, has been seriously damaged by humidity, but is still partly legible:

μέχρις οὗ κατήντησ[εν]· [καὶ] τὴν Ἔδεσαν Μεσοποταμίας ἔνθα κείται τοῦ ἁγίου κ[αὶ]
δεσποτικοῦ χαρακτήρος τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· ἡ ἀχειροποίητος ἣν ἔδωκεν
Ἀβγάρι· ἐν τῇ κατὰ σάρκα ἐπὶ γῆς οἰκονομία αὐτοῦ

until he came to Edessa in Mesopotamia, where the sacred imprint of Our Lord Jesus Christ lies; the image not made by human hands, which he gave to Abgar while he was still in the flesh on earth.

The third Escorial MS is Y-II-13 (13th c.), f. 28-32 (Figure 3.6). The text is very similar to the first:

καὶ συνοδοιπόρος γενόμενος μετ' αὐτοῦ μέχρις ἂν κατέλαβεν Ἔδεσαν τὴν
Μεσοποταμίαν· ἔνθα ἡ ἀχειροποίητος κείται τοῦ δεσποτικοῦ χαρακτήρος τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν
Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· ἣν ἔδωκεν Ἀβγάρι.

And travelling with him he arrived in Edessa in Mesopotamia. This is where the imprint of Our Lord Jesus Christ lies, not made by human hands, which he gave to Abgar.

A critical edition of the Greek versions of the Life of St Alexis remains an urgent *desideratum*. It would be an enormous undertaking, as there are literally hundreds of MSS containing the text; for the purposes of this chapter I have studied *in situ* MSS at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, El Escorial in Spain, and the monasteries of Koutloumousiou, Megistis Lavra, Iveron, Panteleimon, Docheiariou,

Xenophontos, Xeropotamou and Vatopedi on Mount Athos. Just the differences in the references to Edessa and the Image would seem to suggest a complex textual tradition²³³.

3.2 The Latin versions

The many Latin versions of the legend of St Alexis refer to the Image on a linen cloth when first bringing the city of Edessa into the story. The Life published in the *Acta Sanctorum* states²³⁴:

deo prosperante pervenit Laodiceam et inde iter arripiens abiit Edessam Syriae civitatem, ubi sine humano opere imago domini nostri Jesu Christi in sindone habebatur.

He came to Laodicea with godspeed and from there travelled to Edessa, a city in Syria, where lies the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, not made by human hands, on a linen cloth.

An alternative text from MS *Bruxellensis* II 992²³⁵ makes the identification even clearer:

ibi sine manu factam imaginem dominatoris videlicet vultum domini nostri J. Ch. vidit, quem Abgaro regi in civitate dedit.

²³³ A limited edition was published by Rösler: *Die Fassungen*, using three Greek MSS from the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris: *Parisini graeci* 1604 (11th c.), 897 (12th c.), 1632 (14th c.). The text is published in columns, alongside a Latin text based on *Bruxellensis* II 992 (11th c.), *Parisinus lat.* 11104 (12th c.) and *Oxoniensis Bodleianus Canonici Misc.* 244, and a French text from *Parisinus BN* fr. 412 (15th c.).

²³⁴ *Acta Sanctorum Julii*, tom. IV (Société des Bollandistes: Brussels 1725), pp. 251-253.

There he saw the image of our Lord not made by human hands, more specifically the face of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he had given to Abgar, king in the city.

The speaking image, which in previous versions is said to be of the Theotokos, is here just said to exist in honour of the Mother of God:

Imago, quae in honore sanctae dei genetricis Mariae ibidem erat, paramonario ecclesiae dixit,

The image in honour of Mary, the holy Mother of God, was there and said to the church caretaker,

This could very well be a reference to the Image of Christ mentioned earlier in the same text as no other images are spoken of between the two references, although it could also be a completely different one, in honour of and also depicting the Theotokos; the text allows for either supposition. The texts in the *Legenda Aurea*²³⁶ are substantially the same as these. In comparison with the somewhat chaotic state of the Greek witnesses, the Latin textual tradition seems relatively stable. I consulted five MSS in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris²³⁷ and found the text to be basically as in the MS used for the Acta Sanctorum. The only differences were in *lat.* 5572, where a short hymn to St Alexis is included after the Life, and in *lat.* 11104, where the relative clause “quae data fuerat Abgaro rege in vita sua” is added after the words “in sindone”.

²³⁵ Cf. W. Foerster and E. Koschwitz, *Altfranzösisches Übungsbuch* (Leipzig 1951), p. 299.

²³⁶ *Legenda aurea*, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni (Florence 2007), vol. 1, p. 696.

²³⁷ *Parisini latini* 5290 (13th c.), ff. 139^r-142^f; 5298 (12th c.), ff. 43^v-46^v; 5356 (13th c.), ff. 128^v-131^v; 5572 (11th c.), ff. 47^r-51^r; and 11104 (12th c.), ff. 165^r-169^f.

What is arguably the oldest Latin version of the legend, to be found in Visigothic handwriting in the tenth-century MS *Emilianense* 13 and an eleventh-century MS now kept in Paris²³⁸, mentions neither Edessa nor any kind of image. The text reads as follows:

Invenit naviculam parvulam et ascendens in eam perrexit ad insulam que vocatur Laudocia. Ibi est civitas que vocatur Erea. Est civitas illa in extremis locis.

He found a small boat and boarding it came to the island known as Laodicea. There is a city there called Erea. It is an extremely remote city.

Neither is there an image to warn the caretaker to take Alexis into the church – this mission is fulfilled by a night vision, or dream.

The different Latin versions given by Massman²³⁹ include the *Vita S. Alexii e Surii De probatis sanctorum historiis* (Colon. 1579), in which Edessa is introduced with the following description:

donec Edessam Mesopotamiae urbem, ubi domini Jesu imago servatur non manu facta, quam ipse dedit Abagaro in vita sua, pervenit.

He came to the city of Edessa in Mesopotamia, where there is an image of Jesus not made by hands, which he gave to Abgar while he was still alive.

²³⁸ Edited by Luis Vázquez de Parga in '¿La más antigua redacción latina de la leyenda de San Alejo?', *Revista de Bibliografía Nacional* II.3-4 (Madrid 1941), pp. 245-254. The *Emilianense* MS was copied at San Millán de la Cogolla and is now at the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid, while the

The speaking image is also clearly described as that of the Mother of God in this text:

imago ipsius beatae virginis sic aedis custodem est allocuta

The image of the blessed Virgin spoke thus to the doorkeeper of the building ...

In the fourteenth-century Latin verse version of the Life of Saint Alexius²⁴⁰ we read the following lines:

Hinc iter arripiens Edisse (venit) in urbem,
in qua sanguinea domini serva(ba)tur ymago
non manibus facta, sed vultu tracta decore.

Travelling from here (he came) to the city of Edessa

Where the bloodstained image of the Lord is kept

Not made by human hands, but decorously formed by the face.

And once again, the image that speaks to the custodian is that of the Virgin:

Notificare volens eius vitam pia virgo

eleventh-century version was copied at Santo Domingo de Silos and is now at the BNF, *Latin nouv. acq.* 2178. It was classified as the life of an anonymous saint in the BNF catalogue.

²³⁹ Massman, *Sanct Alexius*, pp. 157-208.

²⁴⁰ Massman, *Sanct Alexius*, pp. 176-179, from cod. *Monacensis Aug. S. Ulr.* 111.

Dixit custodi domini genitricis ymago

The pious virgin wished to inform about his life

And so the image of the Lord's mother said to the custodian

The significant detail in this version is the use of the word *sanguineus* to describe the Image of Christ at Edessa²⁴¹. The word was common in the Augustan poets and from its obvious etymology means “bloody” or “bloodstained”. Such is the force of the word in Tibullus 1.5.49²⁴²:

sanguineas edat illa dapes

may she eat a bloody meal

and Ovid, *Metam.* 13:85²⁴³:

hunc ego sanguineae successu caedis ovanter

eminus ingenti resupinum pondere fudi

In his pride at the bloody slaughter, I then hurled a huge stone

²⁴¹ Von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, vol. 2, p. 196, was aware of this and some other Alexis texts, and suggests that the word ‘sanguinea’ was used to fill out the line or under the influence of the sweating of blood in Gethsemane or the Veronica legend: “Der Zusatz sanguinea c, vielleicht zunächst nur Füllung für den Vers, weist doch auf eine Vorstellung wie in 56b (Gethsemane) oder in der jüngeren Veronicalegende”. Such a choice of word simply to fill out the line seems most unlikely.

²⁴² *Tibulli Aliorumque Carminum Libri Tres*, ed. John Percival Postgate (Oxford 1914), p. 15.

²⁴³ *P. Ovidi Nasonis Metamorphoses*, ed. R. J. Tarrant (Oxford 2004), p. 373.

at him from a distance and laid him flat

From the context the meaning can only be bloody in the sense of bloodstained – an image cannot be said to be bloodthirsty. If the Image of Edessa was bloodstained in this version, this would mean that its origin lies in the garden of Gethsemane, as told in the alternative story in the *Narratio* and as the only version in the sermon by Gregory Referendarius.

3.3 The vernacular versions

In the vernacular translations, the Image is mentioned in the Old Italian version from the twelfth-century MS *Biblioteca Comunale di Ascoli Piceno XXVI.A.51 f. 130^a-151^a*²⁴⁴:

In Lauditia non demora
geune em Siria em drectura
laove nn'era bella figura
de Cristu Deu statura
in una ecclesia per ventura
de regina mundo cura:
et era una figura in illo domo
ket no era facta ja per mano de homo

He tarried not in Lauditia

²⁴⁴ Edited by Ernesto Monaci, *Antichissimo Ritmo Volgare sulla Leggenda di Sant'Alessio* (Rome 1907).

but came direct to Siria
where there was a beautiful image
of the divine person of Christ
kept in a church
devoted to the queen of the world
and it was an image in this church
not made by human hands

Edessa is not named in this version, although we are told that the church and image(s) were in Syria. The MS is mutilated and the part where an image speaks to the church doorman is lost. There is no mention of blood on either of the images, though the reference to the image containing the *statura* of Christ is curious. The story of St Alexis was still popular in Italy in the late sixteenth century, as can be seen from the beautiful extended edition of the story published in Florence in 1554, together with eight woodcut illustrations (Figure 3.7).

The Old English versions mention an image on Alexius' arrival in Edessa – some stating it was the image of the Mother of God, others of her son²⁴⁵. The *Laud* 622 MS²⁴⁶ states:

At þat chirche is an ymage
Of oure lefdy upon a stage

²⁴⁵ Cf. F. J. Furnivall, *Adam Davy's Five Dreams about Edward II, edited from the Laud Ms. 622 in the Bodleian Library* (London 1878), p. 34.

²⁴⁶ Dated to the fourteenth century: cf. Furnivall, *Adam Davy's*, p. 7.

While MS *Bodleian Vernon*²⁴⁷ describes the image in this way:

þat chirche was of ur ladi
þer-Inne was a great celli
an ymage of hire sone
maked of a wonder werk

The British Library MS *Harley 4775*, f. 118^f narrates the story of Alexius' arrival in Edessa as follows²⁴⁸:

... and fro thens he came in to a Cyte of Adyce in Surrie where the ymage of our lorde was made in a clothe withouten werke of mannes hond.

The idea of a bloodstained image can be inferred from an early Spanish version. MS 9247 at the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid contains various hagiographical texts, the Life of Saint Alexius taking up ff. 84^a-89^d²⁴⁹. The MS was copied in 1380²⁵⁰. The names of the cities given therein are unique to this version and cannot be identified with any known place: leaving Rome Alexius found a boat in a place called Chaples and came to another city known as Magnia. The latter city, whatever the reason for calling it thus, must be Edessa as the text continues:

Entonçe salió de la barca e faló gentes que levavan bestias cargadas, con que entró en aquella çiudad. E andó tanto que legó a la Yglesia de Santa María. E alí vio él huna ymagen en

²⁴⁷ Dated to ca.1400: cf. Furnivall, *Adam Davy's*, p. 17.

²⁴⁸ Edited by Rösler, *Die Fassungen*, pp. 113-117.

²⁴⁹ Edited by Carlos Alberto Vega, *La Vida de San Alejo, Versiones Castellanas* (Salamanca 1991), pp. 63-82 (see Figure 3.8).

²⁵⁰ Vega, *La Vida*, p. 64.

forma de crucifixu que non fuera fecho con mano de hombre, ante la dio Nuestro Señor Abagarón hun rey en su çiuadat.

Then he disembarked and spoke to some people who were driving laden animals and he went into the city with them. And he walked so far that he came to the Church of Holy Mary. And there he saw an image in the form of a crucifix, not made by human hands, which Our Lord had once given to Abgar, the king of the city.

The image not made by human hands given by Our Lord to King Abgar means the Image of Edessa. However, the most noticeable element in this description is that the image is described as “en forma de crucifixu”, in the form of a crucifix. At first sight this would appear to refer to the actual physical shape of the image (i.e. it was shaped like a cross), although this would not make much sense, as it would then not be an image of Christ but rather a cross-shaped piece of cloth. It must have been an image of Christ crucified, namely Christ on the cross or Christ after the crucifixion. It would be quite logical for such an image to be bloodstained too.

A second old Spanish version is contained in the fifteenth-century *Flos sanctorum*, kept as MS 419 at the Lázaro Galdiano Foundation in Madrid²⁵¹. The city in Syria where Alexius went is called Odiosse, i.e. Edessa. We are then told that

estava la ymagen de Nuestro Señor Jhesu Christo que es dicha Verónica.

there was the image of Our Lord Jesus Christ called the Veronica

This appellation is quite remarkable, linking the Image of Edessa to its western counterpart, the Veronica (see below, pp. 245-248). The Veronica image, according to

²⁵¹ Edited by Vega, *La Vida*, pp. 87-96.

the legend, was formed while Jesus was on his way to Calvary and usually shows the face of Christ stained with blood from the crown of thorns (also present). It could be a result of simple confusion between the two legends, or it could suggest that the Image of Edessa was a bloodstained image of Jesus.

The story of Alexis remained popular in Spain for some time, as can be seen in an eighteenth-century version of the story (with a woodcut engraving but no mention of Edessa or the image)²⁵².

From a purely literary point of view, the classical French poem on the Life of St Alexis is perhaps the most valuable of the vernacular versions. It is also the most ambiguous when it comes to describing the image in Edessa. The textual history of the poem is not simple: the oldest version dates from the eleventh century²⁵³, followed by a thirteenth-century poem preserved in MSS in Paris and Oxford²⁵⁴, and another thirteenth-century version, also edited by Gaston Paris²⁵⁵.

Stanza XVIII in the oldest version is remarkably ambiguous about the image in Edessa, which is neither specified as showing Jesus or his mother²⁵⁶.

Puis s'en alat en Alsis la citet
Por une imagene dont il odit parler,
Qued angele firent par commandement Deu
El nom la virgene qui portat salvetet,
Sainte Marie, qui portat Damnedeu.

²⁵² See Figure 3.9.

²⁵³ The oldest known copy is in the twelfth-century St Alban's Psalter. A copyright-protected image of f. 39^r, containing the reference to the image, can be seen at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/stalbanspsalter/english/translation/trans059.shtml> (last accessed: 3 July 2014). Text edited by Gaston Paris, *La Vie de Saint Alexis* (Paris 1917).

²⁵⁴ *BN fr.* 2162 and *Oxoniensis Bodleianus Canonici Misc.* 74, edited by Charles Stebbins, 'A Critical Edition of the 13th and 14th centuries old French poem versions of the Vie de Saint Alexis', *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie*, Band 145 (Tübingen 1974), pp. 3-68, and *Romania* 92 (1971), pp. 1-36, respectively.

²⁵⁵ 'La Vie de Saint Alexis', *Romania* 8 (1879), pp. 163-180.

Then Alexis went to the city of Edessa
because of an image he had heard of
which angels made at God's command
in the name of the Virgin who brought salvation
Holy Mary, who bore God.

The French text is best understood as stating that the image was made “in the name of the Virgin”, i.e. it could either be an image of Christ or of his mother. A modern Spanish translation mistakenly understands this reference as an image of the Virgin:

De allí se fue a la ciudad de Edesa
A causa de una imagen de la que oyó hablar
Y que unos ángeles habían hecho por mandato divino,
Una imagen de la Virgen, la que nos trajo la salvación,
Santa María, la que nos trajo al Señor²⁵⁷.

From there he went to the city of Edessa
Because of an image he had heard of
And which some angels had made by divine command,
An image of the Virgin, who brought us salvation,
Holy Mary, who bore us the Lord.

The thirteenth-century version in *Parisinus BN fr.* 2162, however, clearly links the image to the one sent to Abgar, in stanzas XII and XIII:

²⁵⁶ Paris, *La Vie*, p. 4.

Tant va par ses jornees qu'il ne fu retenus,
C'an pangne et a travail est a Hrohais venus,
La trova une ymage dont Diex fait grans vertus.
Es vos dant Alexin dedens Rohais entrés,
La trova una ymage de grant atorité
Del fil Dieu Jhesu Crist qui siet en maiesté
Si com le ancisor le vos on[t] raconté,
Ainc ne fu faite d'ome carmement engené.
Li fix Dieu le tramist un roi de la cité,
Abagarons ot non de si grant dignité
Com li escriis raconte u nos l'avons trové.

He journeyed far with no delay
With difficulty and travail he came to Edessa
And found an image there through which God works great miracles
And so Alexis came into Edessa
And found there an image of great authority
Of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who sits in majesty
As our forefathers told you
It was not made by mortal man.
The Son of God sent it to a king of the city,
Abgar, a most worthy man
According to the texts we found.

Neither the other thirteenth-century version (*BN fr. 25408*) nor the fourteenth-century poem make any mention at all of the image, although they do include the talking image of the Mother of Christ. The eleventh-century poem is therefore the only

²⁵⁷ Millán Urdiales, *La Vie de Saint Alexis, poema anónimo del siglo XI, traducción y estudio*

version that attributes the reason for Alexis' going to Edessa in the first place to the image.

A French prose version of the legend²⁵⁸ (Figure 3.10) echoes the reading of *Matritensis BN 9247*, with the enigmatical reference to the image of a crucified man:

La vit il une ymage en forme de crucefis, qui onques navoit este fete de meins d'omme.
Ainz l'avoit nostre sires donnee a Agabaron, le roi, en sa cite.

He saw there an image in the form of a crucifix, which was not made by human hand.
Our Lord had given it to Abgar, the king, in his city.

The leading role played by the Image of Edessa in the legend of Saint Alexis is clearest in the two Old Portuguese versions in *Codices Alcobacenses* 181 and 462²⁵⁹, both dating from the fifteenth century²⁶⁰. The MS numbers are given as 36 and 266 in the University of Illinois publication, although in the National Library of Portugal catalogues and in the actual library reference system the MS numbers are 181 and 462, respectively²⁶¹.

According to the beginning of Codex 181, the Life of Saint Alexis was translated into Portuguese and copied by Fr. Estevão Annes, a monk at Alcobça Monastery. The Life starts on f. 153^r, and the reference to Edessa can be found on f. 153^v:

gramatical y literario (Oviedo 1996), p. 59.

²⁵⁸ *Parisinus BN fr. 412* (15th c.), ff. 167^r-170^f. Edited by Rösler, *Die Fassungen* pp. 118-155.

²⁵⁹ Edited by Joseph H. D. Allen, *Two Old Portuguese Versions of the Life of Saint Alexis* (Urbana 1953), pp. 45-53 and 55-65 respectively.

²⁶⁰ I consulted both MSS *in situ*.

²⁶¹ Cf. *Inventário dos Códices Iluminados até 1500*, vol. 1: *Distrito de Lisboa* (Lisbon 1994), p. 75 and 145 respectively, and also *Inventário dos Códices Alcobacenses*, 5 vols (Lisbon 1930), vol. 2, p. 147 for Codex 181 (Codex 462 was added to the collection after 1930 and so is not included in this catalogue).

Edalj tomou o camjnho. foise ahũa cidade da terra de
Siria que chamavã Edissa. em aqual cidade sta afigura de nosso
senhor jhesu christo. em hũu pano. nõ pintada. nõ feyta por mãao
de nõ hũu homẽ. que a hi pintasse nõ fezesse.

And so he set out and came to a city in the land of
Syria, called Edessa. In this city was the figure of our
Lord Jesus Christ on a cloth, but not painted, not made by
human hand which painted or fabricated it.

Codex 462 (which is numbered 266 by the actual copyist) was translated and
copied by Fr. Hylario de Lourinhã, who describes himself as a Cistercian monk at
Alcobaça. The life of St Alexis is contained on ff. 67^v-74^v, and the mention of Edessa
on f. 69^r:

foise ahũa çidade da terra desiria que chama
uã edissa Em na qual cidade esta afigurad
a afigura²⁶² de nosso senhor Jhesu Christo ã hũu pan
o nom pijntada nem feyta por mãõ. de nem
huũ homẽ que ahy pijntasse nem fezesse.

He came to a city in the land of Syria, called
Edessa. In this city was the figure
the figure of Our Lord Jesus Christ on a cloth,
but not painted, not made by human
hand which painted or fabricated it.

In these versions the description of the Image when first mentioning Edessa is very clear and in both cases it is most probably this image that speaks to the church caretaker (even though it is described as an image in honour of Mary it is not said that the image was *of* the Virgin).

An Old Provençal verse translation has no mention of either Edessa or the image of Christ when Alexis escapes from his home and bride, although there is an image that talks to the doorkeeper²⁶³:

La forma de la magestat
La cual fo fayta ad honor
De la mayre nostre Senhor

The image of majesty
Which was made in honour
Of the mother of our Lord

An image of majesty would seem to suggest an image of Christ, as in the French poem, made in honour of his mother (but not *of* his mother).

The later Ethiopian versions of the legend include an interesting variation on the Edessa section of the Alexis legend²⁶⁴. The Acts (transmitted in three MSS, one dating from the sixteenth century and the other two from the eighteenth) do not even mention the name Alexis, preferring the denomination “Man of God” throughout. This Man of God was born in Constantinople, the son of the emperor Theodosius II (408-450). The

²⁶² The dittography shows that this codex was copied from one with the same wording: cf. Allen *Two Old Portuguese Versions*, pp. 2-3.

²⁶³ Edited by Hermann Suchier: *Denkmäler Provenzalischer Literatur und Sprache* (Halle 1883), pp. 125-155.

saint does not flee from his bride to Edessa but rather to Armenia, where there is no mention of any image; the Virgin Mary appears to a good priest to tell him to take the Man of God into the church.

It is only in a secondary version of the Ethiopian Synaxarion (contained in *Vat. Cerulli Aeth. 25*)²⁶⁵ that Edessa and the Image are mentioned, although the king of Edessa to whom Jesus sent the Image is named Eugenius. Even so, the Image is silent in this version and once again it is the Virgin who appears to a priest to tell him to take the saint inside the church.

3.4 Blood on the Image of Edessa

Certain Latin versions of the Alexis legend describe the Image of Edessa as a bloodstained image; there are further possible references in this sense. A supposedly bloodstained Mandylicon existed at Saint Pierre de Corbie in France²⁶⁶ – it was stolen from the church in 1970 and never recovered, although it could possibly have survived in a private collection after sale on the black market. There are some photographs at the Archives des Monuments Historiques (Figures 3.11 and 3.12) and a lithograph by Charles Hugot dating from 1846 (Figure 3.13). The image (known in Corbie in its time as a Veronica) was supposedly of Byzantine origin, brought back to France by Robert de Clari, although there is no hard evidence for this. The face is indeed similar in style to other known Mandylicon copies, such as Genoa and Rome, although Durand dates the Corbie image to the fifteenth, possibly the fourteenth century²⁶⁷. Moreover, the crown

²⁶⁴ Cf. Enrico Cerulli (trans.), *Les Vies Éthiopiennes de Saint Alexis l'Homme de Dieu* (Louvain 1969).

²⁶⁵ Cerulli, *Les Vies*, gives no date for this MS; according to Bruce Metzger, *New Testament Studies: Philological, Versional and Patristic* (Leiden 1980), p. 132, it dates from the fifteenth century.

²⁶⁶ Cf. Jannic Durand, 'Une prétendue relique de Constantinople: la "Véronique" de Corbie', in *The Material and the Ideal, Essays in Medieval Art and Archaeology in Honour of Jean-Michel Spieser*, ed. Anthony Cutler and Arietta Papaconstantinou (Leiden 2007), pp. 205-218.

²⁶⁷ Durand, 'Une prétendue relique' p. 216: "sans doute au XIVe ou, plus vraisemblablement encore, au XVe siècle".

of thorns and the bloodstains were, according to Durand, added even later, making the lost Corbie image a literal and physical example of how the Mandyllion was turned into the Veronica.

There is another Mandyllion originally from Georgia and now kept in Paris that evidences four clear wounds and bloodstains from each wound on the forehead²⁶⁸. Based on the Georgian inscription the triptych dates from the last quarter of the seventeenth century and is in private hands²⁶⁹. The central panel of the triptych shows Christ the Man of Sorrows, naked, but with no wounds and hence not necessarily directly related to the Passion (Figure 3.14). The nimbus contains the words *ὁ ὄν*, like many copies of the Image of Edessa²⁷⁰.

In this case, the Image of Edessa is on the back of the triptych (Figure 3.15). The bloodstains on the forehead are not related to the agony in Gethsemane (as in the second version of the origin of the image in the *Narratio de imagine edessena* and the sermon by Gregory Referendarius) as the wounds are clearly visible. Also, underneath the cloth is the crown of thorns, making the link to the Passion evident.

The idea of a bloodstained Image of Edessa can be dated back to the tenth-century Greek text attributed to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the *Narratio de imagine edessena*. The idea of a cloth being pressed to Jesus' face during his agony in the garden of Gethsemane was introduced into the story as an alternative version to the traditional

²⁶⁸ Cf. Ioanna Rapti, 'Images du Christ, reliques des saints: un triptyche géorgien inédit', in *Byzance et les Reliques du Christ*, ed. Jannic Durand and Bernard Flusin (Paris 2004), pp. 191-222.

²⁶⁹ Rapti, 'Images' p. 193.

²⁷⁰ The words *ὁ ὄν* come from the declaration of the name of God given in Exodus 3:14 in the Septuagint version: the Hebrew אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה is rendered as *ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὄν*. The Jerusalem Bible translation appears to be based more on the Septuagint ("I am he who is") than on the Hebrew (e.g. New International Version "I AM WHO I AM"). The use of the phrase on the Mandyllion is a surprising declaration of the divinity of Christ on an icon showing his humanity. Cf. John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology* (New York 1974), p. 158: "In the Byzantine tradition the inscription around the halo surrounding the head of Jesus says 'The One who is', the equivalent of the sacred name YHWH, the name of God, whose person is revealed, but whose essence is inaccessible. It is neither God's indescribable divinity nor His human nature alone which is represented on an icon, but the person of God the Son who took flesh". Cf. Theodore Studite, Antirrheticus III: 34, PG 99 405A: Παντὸς εἰκονιζομένου, οὐχ ἡ φύσις ἀλλ' ἡ ὑπόστασις εἰκονίζεται.

failed portrait attempt, and indeed is given as the only origin of the facial imprint on the cloth in the sermon by Gregory Referendarius. The question that needs asking is why was a new version of the origin of the Image introduced into the story? If the cloth was pressed to Jesus' face during his agony in Gethsemane, when he was sweating blood, the answer would seem to be that there was a need to explain blood or bloodstains on the cloth.

There is also a text that might possibly explain the bloodstains on the cloth, by attributing its origin to the crucifixion²⁷¹. The text in question is a list of relics that King Louis of France managed to purchase in two lots, written by Gerard of Saint Quentin in ca.1245²⁷². Among other relics of the passion obtained by King Louis of France, the text lists a *tabula quedam qua, cum deponeretur Dominus de cruce, eius facies tetigit*; the *Trésor de la Sainte Chapelle* exhibition catalogue automatically assumes this is a reference to a different tradition about the origin of the Image of Edessa²⁷³, although the only grounds for this assumption would seem to be the use of the word *tabula*, which as explained above (pp. 100-102), most probably has nothing to do with the Image of Edessa.

3.5 Conclusions

The legend of St Alexis is a significant and largely unknown source for information concerning the Image of Edessa. The Greek texts are interesting and show that a critical edition of the story is urgently needed, although the references do little in themselves in the way of providing new data. What the texts do show us is that the Image was so well

²⁷¹ The text was edited by E. Miller, *Journal des Savants* (1878), 292-309 and included in F. Mely, *Exuviae Sacrae Constantinopolitanae III. La Croix des premiers croisés, la Sainte Lance, la Sainte Couronne* (Paris 1904), pp. 102-112. See also Holger A. Klein, 'Eastern Objects and Western Desires: Relics and Reliquaries between Byzantium and the West', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 58 (2004), pp. 283-314 and J. Durand, 'La Sainte Toile ou Véronique', in *Le trésor de la Sainte Chapelle* (Paris 2001), ed. Jannic Durand and Marie-Pierre Laffitte, p. 70.

²⁷² The text and MS (*nouv. acq. lat.* 1423, 13th c., f. 173^v) are briefly described in Jannic Durand, 'La Sainte Toile', p. 46. I worked with the MS *in situ*.

known that it became symbolic of Edessa, the city where the Man of God went to live in poverty. In other words, the city of Edessa was identified by the Image of Christ; the two were intimately linked in the popular imagination, to such an extent that the very identity of Edessa was defined by the Image.

The Latin versions, however, do provide further information about the Image, describing it as bloodstained, while certain medieval French and Spanish translations state that the cloth contained the image of a crucified man. This links the origins of the Image to the passion of Christ rather than an episode with a messenger sent by King Abgar just before the crucifixion. This could be inspired by the sweating of blood in Gethsemane, as in some of the Greek versions of the Abgar legend, or because blood was visible on the Image and needed an explanation – or indeed, both.

The idea of the bloodstained Image of Edessa is further developed in the following chapter, which takes a much closer look at what exactly medieval writers understood the Image to be, and what the many different terms used to describe both the image and the cloth it was imprinted onto can tell us about the nature of the object.

²⁷³ Durand, 'La Sainte Toile', p. 70: "Gérard de Saint-Quentin ... qui dépend visiblement d'une autre tradition sur l'origine de l'image".

Chapter 4

The terminology used to describe the Image of Edessa and alternative ideas concerning the nature of the Image

There are many words in the different texts used to describe both the image of Christ on the cloth and the cloth itself. In this chapter we examine the most important of these terms in an attempt to understand more precisely what the Image of Edessa was, or at least what it represented and meant for the authors of these texts and their audiences.

4.1 Τετράδιπλον

Perhaps the best way to begin this analysis is with a word coined specifically for this image, τετράδιπλον, first used in the seventh-century Acts of Thaddaeus. To our knowledge, the word is a *hapax* in terms of its use with reference to an object in the whole of known Greek literature. This in itself is highly significant, for it reflects a unique property of the object in question, something that differentiates it from other similar objects, in this particular case from other likenesses of Christ. Modern scholars have by and large ignored this word and its significance²⁷⁴. The word is common in

²⁷⁴ Cf. inter alia Runciman, ‘Some Remarks’, pp. 238-252; Cameron, *Changing Cultures*, Chapter XI; Cameron, ‘The History’, pp. 80-94, and the whole series of presentations included in Kessler, *Holy Face*. An excellent article on the meaning of the word is the unpublished ‘On the meaning of tetradiplon’ by Professor Daniel Scavone of the University of Southern Indiana, to whom I am grateful for letting me see his text. A recent exception to this silence is to be found in Andrea Nicolotti, ‘Forme e vicende del Mandilio di Edessa secondo alcune moderne interpretazioni’, in *Sacre Impronte e Oggetti “Non Fatti da Mano d’Uomo” nelle Religioni: Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Torino 18-20 maggio 2010*, ed. Adele Monaci Castagno (Alessandria 2011), pp. 279-307, although so many alternatives for the meaning of τετράδιπλον are offered that it turns out to be inconclusive: “piegato in quattro” (folded in four), “composto di quattro strati” (made up of four layers), and even the incorrect “con quattro angoli” (with four corners) and “quadrato” (square), among others. A supposed parallel from Exodus 28:16 is given, where the reference is to a piece of cloth folded to form a square; in the Septuagint the words are τετράγωνον and διπλοῦν, but this shows precisely what τετράδιπλον is not - if it had meant square or with four corners, then the word τετράγωνον would have been used. The fact that a new word is used instead

texts related to the Abgar legend and can be seen in the Synaxarion, the Acta Thaddei and in George Cedrenus among others, as a compound form with *ράκος*. It is avoided in the *Narratio de imagine edessena*.

At first sight, the word seems easy to understand – it is made up of two elements, the words for “four” (tetra) and “fold over in two” (diplon). However, does this mean folded over in two four times (resulting in sixteen layers), or folded in four so that there were four layers, or eight layers (i.e. four double layers)?²⁷⁵ The fact that the word is only used for the Image of Edessa means that there is nothing it can be compared to, and the fact that we do not know exactly what the Image of Edessa looked like means that it is not a straightforward task to understand the exact meaning of *τετράδιπλον*²⁷⁶.

Διπλοῦς means folded in two. There are no other numerical terms like *τετράδιπλον* with a numerical prefix, i.e. *τρίδιπλον*, *πεντάδιπλον* or *ἑξάδιπλον*. There are, however, similar words formed from numerical roots and *πλάσιος*. *διπλάσιος* means double or twice as much, *ἑξαπλάσιος* means six times as large, etc. Could *τετράδιπλον* mean four times as large (i.e. the opposite of folding something up, which effectively makes it smaller)? This seems unlikely, as there is no point of comparison in any of the texts (four times as large as what?) and if this was what the authors wished to express, they would surely have employed the word *τετραπλάσιος*.

If *διπλοῦς* means folded in two, producing two layers, then *τετράδιπλον* could either mean folded over in two four times (producing sixteen layers), or folded over in

shows that the meaning of *τετράδιπλον* is different. Nicolotti gives an even more diffuse and confusing attempt at an explanation in *Dal Mandylion*, pp. 48-50, apparently not understanding that if the word is only applied to the Image of Edessa, the only sources for modern dictionaries are the texts that refer to the Image of Edessa.

²⁷⁵ Palmer, ‘The *Logos*’, p. 205, adopts the translation “a folded cloth with four layers”, in accordance with M. Langes (ed.), *Ο Μέγας Συναξαριστής* (Athens 1982⁵), vol. VIII (August), p. 264. This translation without doubt signifies a larger cloth than the part exposed with the face of Christ. Palmer also relates the word to the Diatesseron, Tatian’s harmony of the four gospels.

²⁷⁶ A recent Spanish study by González, *La Leyenda*, p. 169, note 25, translates the word as “plegado en cuatro partes” (folded into four parts), which is quite meaningless and shows the difficulties inherent in understanding exactly what this elusive term means.

such a way as to produce eight layers, i.e. four double layers, which actually involves only three folding actions. This said, there is a way to fold a large cloth that does involve four folding actions and results in four double layers: the cloth would be folded in half, and then folded a further three times by quarters.

As pointed out above, *τετράδιπλον* is a word used specially for the Image of Edessa, and for no other object. It must therefore be significant in establishing an idea about the actual appearance of the cloth, for if the Image was folded over any number of times it cannot have been imprinted onto wood. No matter what exact number of folds is involved in making a cloth *τετράδιπλον*, it is clear that the use of this word means that the cloth was reasonably large, larger at least than the amount of cloth needed for a facial image. As already mentioned, this point has been ignored in most recent works on the Image of Edessa, and yet seems to be absolutely fundamental in understanding its nature.

4.2 Ἀχειροποίητος

Another word that is usually (though not exclusively) linked to the Image of Edessa is *ἀχειροποίητος*, meaning “not made by human hands”²⁷⁷. It is used in all versions of the Abgar legend (Evagrius uses the circumlocution ἤν ἀνθρώπων μὲν χεῖρες οὐκ εἰργάσαντο).

The word *ἀχειροποίητος* seems to be a specifically Christian coinage, first used in the New Testament (Mark 14:58, 2 Cor. 5:1, Col. 2:11)²⁷⁸. It does not appear at all in the Septuagint, possibly as there was no word in Hebrew to be so translated. The positive form *χειροποίητος* can be found, usually in the context of ridiculing statues of

²⁷⁷ The meaning is given as “prodigioso” in the *Nuovo Dizionario Patristico e di antichità cristiane*, vol. A-E, (Genova-Milano 2006), p. 53, quoted in Emanuela Fogliadini, *Il Volto di Cristo: Gli Acheropiti del Salvatore nella Tradizione dell’Oriente cristiano* (Milano 2011), p. 47.

²⁷⁸ Cf. Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, vol. 1 (New York 1994), pp. 439 ff.; Georges Didi-Huberman, *Devant l’Image*, p. 225: “En déclarant de telles images «productions divines», «non faites de main d’homme»-selon une adjectivation, *acheiropoiëtos*, inaugurée par saint Paul pour justement définir la «circoncision spirituelle» des chrétiens ...”; and Palmer, ‘The *Logos*’ p. 130: “The word, found three times in the New Testament ... and before that nowhere in Greek literature, pagan or

false gods, e.g. Is. 2:18: *καὶ τὰ χειροποίητα πάντα κατακρύψουσιν* (“and the idols will totally disappear”)²⁷⁹; or establishing prohibitions, e.g. Lev. 26:1: *οὐ ποιήσετε ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς χειροποίητα* (“Do not make idols ... for yourselves”). The word used in the Hebrew text of both Isaiah and Leviticus (the latter without the article) is *האליה* – translated as “idols” by Lisowsky²⁸⁰ and “worthless gods, idols” by Brown, Driver and Briggs²⁸¹. The Vulgate translates the word as “*idolum*” in Leviticus and the plural form “*idola*” in Isaiah; both this and the Septuagint translation evidence a very specific meaning of the term, limited to *gods* made by human hands.

In secular Greek the word was used as the opposite of *αὐτοφυής*, something that occurs or is produced in nature²⁸². In the New Testament, the Letter to the Hebrews (9:11) uses a compound negative form with an explanation: *καὶ τελειότερας σκηνῆς οὐ χειροποιήτου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως* (“the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation”).

The Gospel of Mark (14:58) distinguishes between the temple that was built by humans and the temple that Christ will erect in its place: *ἐγὼ καταλύσω τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον τὸν χειροποίητον καὶ διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν ἄλλον ἀχειροποίητον οἰκοδομήσω* (“I will destroy this man-made temple and in three days will build another, not made by man”). The Vulgate uses the circumlocution “*non manu factum*”, Latin lacking the flexibility of Greek to accommodate the idea. The word is also used in 2 Cor. 5:1 to describe the dwelling place God has prepared for believers in heaven, and in Col. 2:11 referring to a spiritual circumcision, as opposed to the physical ritual circumcision in Judaism.

The adjective *ἀχειροποίητος* could not have been loosely applied to an icon that was obviously painted, although the earliest description of the Image’s origins, in the

Jewish, is the negative version of the frequently attested compound adjective *χειροποίητος*, meaning ‘hand-made’.”.

²⁷⁹ All Bible translations are from the New International Version (New York International Bible Society 1978).

²⁸⁰ *Concordantiae Veteris Testamenti Hebraicae et Aramaicae* (Stuttgart 1958).

²⁸¹ *The Brown, Driver and Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Boston 1906, Massachusetts 2004⁸).

Doctrine of Addai (dated to ca.400), states quite clearly that Hanan, the king's archivist and artist, "painted the portrait of Jesus with choice pigments"²⁸³. There is no hint whatsoever of a miraculous origin for the Image in this version.

No matter what the reason for this statement is (had the author seen the Image? If so, and if he saw that it was a painting, why did all later versions change the whole story?), it is very clear that all later versions are in total and complete disagreement with this. They are all adamant that it was most definitely not a painting, but rather an *ἀχειροποίητος*, an image not made by human hands.

Some of the copies of the *Narratio de imagine Edessena* on Mount Athos, however, seem to have been in doubt about this fact. When Abgar expresses his new-found belief with reference to the Image on the cloth, the text states that *ἐπεγίνωσκεν οὐ διὰ χρωμάτων ὑλικῶν τὴν σύστασιν ἔχουσαν*, although in the first-hand texts of *Megiste Lavra* 429 and *Iveron* 595 the negative is a later addition (*μὴ* in L1 and *οὐ* in Iv). *Megiste Lavra* 644 omits the negative altogether, as does von Dobschütz²⁸⁴, thus expressing the idea that Abgar realises the Image is in fact a painting. In the light of the rest of the same text in the same MS, this can only be seen as a mistake by the copyist, corrected elsewhere to preserve the general sense. No matter what the Image of Edessa was, the author of this particular text wanted to express the fact that it was *not* a painting, and so the phrase adopted at this point should reflect this.

Michael Whitby offers an interesting possibility for the roots of this word being applied to the Image of Edessa²⁸⁵: Procopius describes the Persian mound that the defenders in Edessa successfully set fire to as a *λόφος χειροποίητος*, and given that it was destroyed with divine aid through the Image, this came to be known as *ἀχειροποίητος*.

²⁸² E.g. Hesiod, *Thebaid* 813.

²⁸³ Translation by Howard, *The Teaching*, p. 9.

²⁸⁴ Von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, vol. 1, p. 57.

²⁸⁵ Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History*, p. 227.

Hans Belting finds the word unnecessarily complicated, stating that “an image not made by human hands is a contradiction in itself, since such an image is at the same time not only no image, but the very contrary of an image”²⁸⁶. He tries to show that the word *ἀχειροποίητος* actually means that the image in question is not an image at all, but an actual body. Such thought is without doubt far from the intentions of the writers who described the Image of Edessa as not made by human hands – all they meant is that the Image is not a painting but an image miraculously produced by the divine power in Jesus.

Andrew of Crete (ca.660-740) makes it clear that the image was not a painting²⁸⁷:

Πρῶτον μὲν τὴν Αὐγάρῳ τῷ τοπάρχῳ πεμφθεῖσαν ἐν ῥάκει σεβασμίαν εἰκόνα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἐκμαγεῖον οὖσαν τοῦ σωματικοῦ αὐτοῦ χαρακτήρος καὶ μηδὲν ἀποδέουσιν τῆς ἐκ τῶν χρωμάτων γραφῆς ...

First of all, the sacred image of our Lord Jesus Christ that was sent to Abgar the ruler, which is an imprint of his bodily form and owes nothing at all to work with paint ...

Unlike the word *τετράδιπλον*, the term *ἀχειροποίητος* is not used exclusively for the Image of Edessa. Other miraculous icons are described as not made by human hands, such as the icon of Camouliana, while Leo the Deacon tells us that there was a monastery called *Ἀχειροποίητος*²⁸⁸.

²⁸⁶ ‘In Search of Christ’s Body. Image or Imprint?’, in Kessler, *Holy Face*, p. 5.

²⁸⁷ *S. Andreae Cretensis de SS. Imaginum Veneratione*, cf. PG 97, cols. 893-904.

4.3 Εἰκόν

The Image of Edessa is constantly referred to in the texts as an εἰκόν, a word which I have not translated by the obvious “icon”, preferring instead “image”. The reason for this is that the word “icon” today suggests a painted image; reading the texts concerning the Image of Edessa it becomes clear that it is not described as a painted image (except in the Doctrine of Addai), but rather as a miraculous image, and so I decided it was better to avoid any possible misunderstanding.

The Septuagint uses this word in the creation account (Gen. 1:26-27: ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ’ εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν ... κατ’ εἰκόνα θεοῦ ἐποίησεν αὐτόν), where it must signify similarity and not a painted image or the exact essence of something or somebody else. New Testament usage of the word has two different connotations: a representation of the emperor on a coin (Mark 12:16), but also “the very essence of a thing made visible in its image”²⁸⁹, as in 2 Cor. 4:4: ... τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ. The use of the word εἰκὼν in reference to the Image of Edessa is to be taken in this second sense.

4.4 Mandyllion

After the Image was taken to Edessa in the mid-tenth century a new name for the whole object (i.e. cloth and image) appeared: Mandyllion²⁹⁰. In texts, the word is used mainly in the Menaion hymns and it also figures in a fourteenth-century Athonite typikon, describing the image of Christ on a coin: ἐν νόμισμα μετὰ μανδυλλίου²⁹¹. No coins are

²⁸⁸ Leo the Deacon, *Historia* III-8, ed. C.B. Hase (Bonn 1828), p. 47: ὃν ἐπιβάς ἐξαυτῆς ὁ Νικηφόρος τῇ τῶν Ἀβραμιτῶν, ἣν καὶ Ἀχειροποίητον ὀνομάζουσι, προσέσχε μονῆ.

²⁸⁹ Paul Alexander, *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople: Ecclesiastical Policy and Image Worship in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford 1958), p. 39.

²⁹⁰ Karaulashvili, ‘King Abgar’, p. 182, says that “the term *acheiropoiotos* was substituted by the *Mandyllion*”. This is not strictly true, as the former never fell out of use; it was complemented by the new term, but not replaced.

²⁹¹ The typikon was edited by Philipp Meyer, *Die Haupterkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* (Leipzig 1894; repr. New York 2005). For the references to the coins with the Mandyllion image see pp. 201-202. According to Meyer, the document was written under Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus (r. 1391-1425) and Patriarch Anthony IV (1389-1390, 1391-1397), in 1394. The text is a letter calling the monks

known to specifically depict a Mandyllion; the reference could be to a medal (of which no examples are known either) or to a coin simply showing the face of Christ (such as the golden solidi hammered under Justinian II [685-695, 705-711]) (see below, pp. 292-293). If this is the case, it would mean that the influence of the Mandyllion was such that any face of Christ was associated with it.

The tenth-century anonymous Theophanes Continuatus specifically uses the word as an alternative to *ἐκμαγείον* (see below, p. 184)²⁹², while the term is also found in Michael Glykas²⁹³. It is, of course, very often qualified as “holy” or “sacred” (*ἅγιον, ἱερόν*), the inscriptions *par excellence* on virtually all visual depictions of the Image of Edessa.

There are various theories about the origins of the word, although the most probable solution is that it derives from the Latin *mantilium*, a general word for a large cloth²⁹⁴. Isidore of Seville (ca.560–636) defines the homonym “mantelia” thus:

Mantelia nunc pro operiendis mensis sunt; quae, ut nomen ipsud indicat, olim tergendis manibus praebebantur²⁹⁵.

Mantelia are now used for covering tables; but as the name itself shows, they were once used for drying hands.

In other words, the meaning seems to have changed from a smaller to a larger cloth from classical times to Isidore’s day. The Greek term *μανδύλιον* is used for a

on Athos to order after internal disputes, and giving orders for the tributes they had to pay the Protos. Most are expressed in wine and oil, but two monasteries are also ordered to pay a coin with a Mandyllion (Lavra and Chiliandariou).

²⁹² Theophanes Continuatus VI:48, *Theophanes continuatus: Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius monachus*, ed. Immanuel Bekker (Bonn 1838), p. 432: τοῦ ἁγίου δὲ ἐκμαγείου ἤτοι μανδηλίου.

²⁹³ *Annales* IV, ed. B.G. Niebuhr (Bonn 1836), p. 588.

²⁹⁴ Ramelli, ‘Dal mandilion’, p. 179, attributes the origin of the word to the Latin *mantilium* but with some influence from the Arabic *mandil*.

²⁹⁵ *Etymologiae* XIX: 26.6, bilingual Latin and Spanish edition by José Oroz Reta, Manuel Marcos Casquero and Manuel Díaz y Díaz, 2 vols. (Madrid 2000³).

monk's mantle²⁹⁶, and *μανδήλη* is attested as a fifth-century transliteration of the Latin "mantele"²⁹⁷. With such antecedents it seems unnecessary to insist on an Arabic origin for the word (mandil – small cloth), although various studies do precisely this²⁹⁸. It would certainly seem more logical that the main influence would be from Greek and Latin²⁹⁹. It could also be related to the Greek *μανδύη*, used of a monk's cloak by Leo the Deacon³⁰⁰. What is possibly the earliest use of the term in relation to the Image of Edessa can be found in the poem *Digenis Akritas*³⁰¹, the date of which remains unsolved. The Spanish edition I used dates this text to the tenth or eleventh century³⁰² while Bingham Hull's translation dates it to "about the eleventh century"³⁰³. Mavrogordato dates it more precisely to the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-54)³⁰⁴. The reference in question can be found in Book III: 150-152:

Οὐ παρ' ἡμῶν τὸ Νέευμα ὑπάρχει τὸ μανδίλιν
ὃς βασιλεὺς ἐγένετο μετὰ τῶν Ἀσσυρίων,
καί, διὰ πλῆθος ἀρετῶν, θαυμάτων ἠξιόθης;

Is not Naaman's mandilin with us,
he who was king of the Assyrians,

²⁹⁶ Cf. G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford 1961), p. 826.

²⁹⁷ Cf. Lampe, *Lexicon*, p. 825.

²⁹⁸ Cf. Herbert Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing, Picturing God's Invisibility in Medieval Art* (Philadelphia 2000), pp. 77-78.

²⁹⁹ Cf. Segal, *Edessa*, p. 215, note 1: "the Greek term seems to emerge only during the Moslem period, and most scholars therefore regard it as derived from Arabic *mandil*, handkerchief. It has been suggested, however, that it is the Greek *μαντίλιον* that is earlier, and from it have been derived the Aramaic *mantila* and the late Greek *μανδήλη*". Cf. also Runciman, 'Some Remarks', p. 248: "Mandil was a word long engrained in the Arabic language, though probably it was originally derived from the Latin 'mantile' or 'mantilium', our 'mantle'". The Greek term can be found in inventory lists dating from the 5th and 6th centuries, although the lack of context makes a specific translation beyond the generic "sheets" impossible: cf. Panagiota Sarischiouli, *Berliner Griechische Papyri: Christliche literarische Texte und Urkunden aus dem 3. -8. Jh. n. Chr.* (Wiesbaden 1995), pp. 158-184, 192-194.

³⁰⁰ *Historia*, V:5, ed. C.B. Hase (Bonn 1828), p. 83: *μανδύη τῆ τοῦ μοναχοῦ Μιχαήλ καὶ θείου αὐτοῦ ...*

³⁰¹ The Grottaferrata text was edited and translated into Spanish by Juan Valero Garrido, *Digenis Akritas* (Barcelona 1981).

³⁰² Garrido, *Digenis Akritas*, p. 39.

³⁰³ Denison Bingham Hull, *Digenis Akritas, the two-blood border lord* (Ohio 1986), p. x.

³⁰⁴ John Mavrogordato, *Digenes Akrites, edited with introduction, translation and commentary* (Oxford 1956; repr. 1999), p. lxxxiv.

and who thanks to his great virtues was judged worthy of miracles?³⁰⁵

If the object in question is the Mandylion, who then was Naaman king of the Assyrians? According to Mavrogordato, he can hardly be equated with Abgar. He must be the Naaman cured by the prophet Elisha, and the “mandilin” must be the towel he dried himself with after bathing in the River Jordan. This seems reasonable in itself, although the argument falls through when we read the account of Naaman’s healing in 2 Kings 5, quite simply because no towel is mentioned; Naaman washes in the river and is cured, but we are not even told that he dried himself. Mavrogordato’s argument that “Edessa was such a well-known clearing-house of religious legend that there may have been many relics there that we have not heard of”³⁰⁶ holds no water as the supposed towel of Naaman exists nowhere beyond his own imagination. In conclusion, despite the somewhat obscure reference and the slightly different spelling of the word, the general context of the poem would seem to suggest that the “mandilin” is indeed the Image of Edessa³⁰⁷; in fact, the word is only used in reference to the cloth of the Abgar legend³⁰⁸.

A valid question that seems not to have been asked is what led to the use of a new name to describe the Image after its translation to Constantinople. Does the term Mandylion reflect a special property of the cloth that was only noticed once it was in the capital? If so, it is not easy to ascertain exactly what this property was.

³⁰⁵ Translation from Mavrogordato, *Digenes Akrites*, p. 53.

³⁰⁶ Mavrogordato, *Digenes Akrites*, p. xxxv.

³⁰⁷ Most scholars at least admit the possibility of the reference: cf. Valero Garrido, *Digenis Akritis* p. 128, note 3: “Puede referirse a la Sagrada Imagen de Edesa”; and Corinne Jouanno, ‘Digénis Akritis, le héros des frontières. Une épopée byzantine. Version de Grottaferrata’, *Revue des études byzantines* 58 (2000), p. 303: “peut-être même trouve-t-on une allusion au mandylion d’Édesse”. Elizabeth Jeffreys (ed.), *Digenis Akritis: The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions* (Cambridge 1998), p. xxxviii, is decidedly against the identification: “Grégoire ... identified, wrongly, the towel of the Arab holy man Naaman (G3.150) with the *mandylion* rescued from Edessa in 944”, while others leave no room for doubt: Emilio Redondo García, *Historia Universal de la Edad Media* (Barcelona 2002), p. 401: “Incluso, en el poema existe una mención inequívoca al *mandylion*”. Jeffreys is mistaken: any reference to a “mandilin” in Edessa at this time can only be a reference to the Mandylion, unless the author is deliberately trying to mislead his readers.

4.5 Sudarium / σουδάριον

This word is used once to refer to the cloth in the Latin version of the Abgar legend contained in MS *Parisinus BN lat. 2688*, not in the main body of text but right at the end. The use of this word to describe the Image of Edessa (i.e. the cloth the image was imprinted onto) is rare in both Latin and Greek sources. Examples of its use in Greek can be found from the ninth century, in George the Monk (Hamartolos):

Ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἐν Ἐδέσῃ τῇ πόλει ἡ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκὼν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παράδοξα ἐργαζομένη θαύματα, ἣν αὐτὸς ὁ Κύριος ἐν σουδαρίῳ τῆς οἰκείας μορφῆς τὸ εἶδος ἐναπομαζάμενος διὰ Θαδδαίου τοῦ ἀποστόλου σίζουσεν τὸν χαρακτήρα τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης μορφῆς αὐτοῦ Αὐγάρῳ τοπάρχῳ τῆς Ἐδεσενῶν πόλεως ἀπέστειλε, καὶ τὴν νόσον αὐτοῦ ἰάσατο³⁰⁹.

The image of Christ not made by human hand is in the city of Edessa, made in a wondrous manner. The Lord himself wiped his face with a cloth (sudarium) and the image of his mortal nature was imprinted thereon. He sent it to Abgar, the ruler of Edessa, in the hands of the apostle Thaddaios, and cured his illness³¹⁰.

And in the Letter of the Three Patriarchs to Emperor Theophilos³¹¹ (also dating from the ninth or tenth century):

Καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Κύριος καὶ Σωτήρ τῶν ὅλων, ἔτι ἐπὶ γῆς πολιτευόμενος, τὸ ἐκμαγεῖον τῆς ἀγίας μορφῆς αὐτοῦ ἐν σουδαρίῳ τινὶ ἀγίαις χερσὶν αὐτοῦ ἰδίαις, τὸν ἰδρώτα τοῦ ἀχράντου

³⁰⁸ Cf. Gudrun Engberg, 'Romanos Lekapenos', p. 123 : "the word *mandilion* is exclusively connected with the story of Christ and King Abgar".

³⁰⁹ *Chronicon* V, PG 110, col. 920.

³¹⁰ Andrew Palmer mistakenly assumes that the author is identifying the Mandyllion with the sudarium found in the otherwise empty tomb of Christ on Easter Sunday according to John 20:6-7; Palmer, 'The Logos' p. 155, note 118: "... in which the Mandyllion is identified with the Soudarion found in Christ's tomb after his Resurrection". The text in question makes no such claim.

³¹¹ Ed. Munitiz et al, *The Letter*.

προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἀπομαζάμενος ἐν αὐτῷ, αὖθις ὁ χαρακτήρ ἐν αὐτῷ τῆς ἁγίας μορφῆς αὐτοῦ ἐναπτομάττεται, τὰ χαρακτηριστικὰ αὐτοῦ πάντα ἰδιώματα, ὡς ἐν χρώμασι τισὶ θεία αὐτοῦ ἐνεργεῖα ἀναδείκνυται, ὡς δέον εἰπεῖν, ἀπαράλλακτον αὐτὸν τὸν ἔνθεον χαρακτήρα ἀποσιώζων τῷ ἐν τῷ σουδαρίῳ θαυματουργήματι· οὕτως γὰρ ἐγένετο εὐδοκία τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς ἐπὶ γῆς ὄφθη καὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις συνανεστράφη.

And the Lord himself and Saviour of all, while he still lived on earth among men, <left> the impress of his divine face on a towel. Having with his very own divine hands wiped off the sweat of his immaculate face with it, instantly the image of his divine face was imprinted on it. All his personal features were shown, drawn as it were with colours by means of his sacred energy, as we have to say, preserving unaltered his divine characteristics by this miracle on the towel. For it happened thus by favour of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who was *seen upon earth and conversed with men*³¹².

The word *sudarium* is Latin in origin, and its root is linked to its use, not what it was made of or where it came from. The Latin *sudor* means “sweat”, which relates the cloth to a use of cleaning or wiping sweat from the face or hands. Its uses in classical Latin are, however, manifold, including a bath towel³¹³, a cook’s cloth to dry his face³¹⁴, a cloth in which a woman hides her face³¹⁵, a cloth Nero used to cover his mouth and protect his voice³¹⁶ and a towel used at the barber’s³¹⁷.

The Latin *sudarium* was adopted in a transliterated form into Greek, the Hebrew of the Talmud (*sudar*) and Syriac (*sudara*). The English language does not possess an exact equivalent of the word – all translations leave something out or suggest something that is not inherent in the original word, as such a cloth is no longer in use in the English

³¹² Text and translation from Munitiz, *The Letter*, pp. 32-35.

³¹³ Catullus 12 and 25; for poem 12 see the edition by C. J. Fordyce (Oxford 1961), p. 9. Fordyce omitted poem 25 as he considered it (and others) indecent; the text can be found in the complete critical edition *Poesías*, ed. Miguel Dolç (Madrid 1990), p. 23.

³¹⁴ Petronius, *Satyricon* 67, ed. Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, 2 vols., (Madrid 1990), vol. 2, p. 24.

³¹⁵ Petronius, *Satyricon* 67.

³¹⁶ Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum - Nero XXV*, ed. Mariano Bassols de Climent, 4 vols., (Barcelona, 1968), vol. 3, pp. 91-92.

speaking world. The word in Greek appears four times in the New Testament. It can be found twice in the fourth Gospel, first in the account of the raising of Lazarus (John 11:44): ἐξῆλθεν ὁ τεθνηκὼς δεδεμένος τοὺς πόδας καὶ τὰς χεῖρας κειρίαις καὶ ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ σουδαρίῳ περιεδέδετο (“The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face”). Then again in the account of the burial cloths (although it is not the main burial cloth) seen in the tomb on the Sunday morning after the crucifixion (John 20: 6-7): ἔρχεται οὖν καὶ Σίμων Πέτρος ἀκολουθῶν αὐτῷ καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον, καὶ θεωρεῖ τὰ ὀθόνια κείμενα, καὶ τὸ σουδαρίον, ὃ ἦν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ, οὐ μετὰ τῶν ὀθονίων κείμενον ἀλλὰ χωρὶς ἐντετυλιγμένον εἰς ἓνα τόπον (“Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus’ head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen”).

The word appears again in the parable of the pounds, in the Gospel of Luke 19:20: καὶ ὁ ἕτερος ἦλθεν λέγων, Κύριε, ἰδοὺ ἡ μνᾶ σου ἣν εἶχον ἀποκειμένην ἐν σουδαρίῳ (“Then another servant came and said, Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth”). As a loan word in the Hebrew of the Talmud, the word is given a very similar use: Rabbi Abba keeps money in his *sudar*, which he wore on his shoulder³¹⁸. The fourth time the word appears in the New Testament is in the Acts of the Apostles. Speaking of the cures that God carries out through Paul, we are told (Acts 19:12) that ὥστε καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀσθενούντας ἀποφέρεσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ χρωτὸς αὐτοῦ σουδάρια ἢ σμικίνθια καὶ ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι ἀπ’ αὐτῶν τὰς νόσους (“so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them”).

³¹⁷ Martial 11: XXXIX, ed. W.M Lindsay (Oxford 1902), pages unnumbered.

³¹⁸ Kethuboth 67b, online version available at http://www.come-and-hear.com/kethuboth/kethuboth_67.html#67b_53 (last accessed: 11 July 2014).

According to José O’Callaghan, who studied in detail the meaning of the term *sudarium* in ancient times³¹⁹, the cloth was made of linen and used mainly by villagers. One of its domestic uses was that of a towel, which coincides exactly with the use mentioned in the poems of Catullus (see above, note 311).

4.6 Σινδών

Σινδών means “good quality cloth”, in a very general definition. Herodotus employs the word to describe the cloths used in the process of mummification³²⁰:

κατειλίσσουσι πάν αὐτοῦ τὸ σῶμα σινδόνης βυσσίνης τελαμῶσι κατατετμημένοισι

they roll the whole body up in fine linen cut into bands

and again to mean a surgeon’s bandages³²¹:

καὶ σινδόνης βυσσίνης τελαμῶσι κατειλίσσοντες

and wrapping (him) up in bands of the finest linen

In ecclesiastical Greek it is also used of the linen cloth covering the altar³²², while in the New Testament it immediately brings to mind the burial shroud of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels (John prefers τὰ ἰθόνια, which Luke also uses as a synonym of

³¹⁹ ‘El sudario en los papiros griegos de época romana’, *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 22/23 (1973), pp. 147-150.

³²⁰ Herodotus 2:86, *Herodoti Historiae*, (2 vols) ed. Charles Hude (Oxford 1908), pages unnumbered.

³²¹ Herodotus 7:181.

³²² Lampe, *Lexicon*, p. 288.

σινδών)³²³. The word can also be found twice in the Septuagint: in Judges 14:12, when Samson offers a reward for anyone who can solve his riddle: δώσω ὑμῖν τριάκοντα σινδόνας; and again in Proverbs 31:24, in the context of the activities of the perfect wife³²⁴: σινδόνας ἐποίησεν. The underlying Hebrew word in each case is לְבָשֶׁת, which is translated somewhat unfortunately as “under-garment” by Lisowsky³²⁵ and as “linen wrapper” by Brown, Driver and Briggs³²⁶, who relate it to a possible Assyrian influence (*sudinnu*, meaning “garment”). The Vulgate is of no help in understanding the word here, as it opts for the simple transliterations *sindones* and *sindonem* respectively. The Hebrew לְבָשֶׁת is also used in Isaiah 3:23, where the Septuagint opts for τὰ βύσσιννα and the Vulgate maintains *sindones*. As with sudarium, the Old Testament use of the word does not lead to a very specific meaning, while the predominating influence from the New Testament suggests the burial cloth of Christ.

This could very well be the reason why the *Narratio de imagine edessena* deliberately avoids the word. The anonymous author of this text, and possibly its promoter, Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, must have wished to make it clear that the Image of Edessa was not to be confused with Christ’s burial cloth³²⁷. The two items are often listed as separate relics in pilgrims’ recollections; e.g. the anonymous *Descriptio*

³²³ Ὁθόννη is the word used for the Image of Edessa by Nicephorus the Patriarch in the unpublished *Refutatio et Eversio*. I consulted one of the two known MSS of this text *in situ*, *Parisinus gr.* 1250 (13th c.), f. 179^r: ὡς αὐτὸ ὁ σωτῆρ λαβὼν ὀθόννην λαμπρὰν ... ἀπομαζάμενος εἶδος ἐκπέμπει τῷ πιστεῖ αἰτήσαντι τῶν Ἐδεσσηνῶν ἡγεμόνι. The word σινδών is also used in the enigmatic passage unique to Mark’s Gospel, in which a young man clad only in a σινδών flees naked, leaving the cloth behind (Mark 14:51-52). For an analysis of this difficult passage, see Harry Fledderman, ‘The Flight of a Naked Young Man’, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 41 (1979), pp. 412-418, and Raymond E. Brown, ‘The Relation of the “Secret Gospel of Mark” to the Fourth Gospel’, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 36 (1974), pp. 466-485. For linen cloths as a symbol of life as opposed to wool, which represents death, cf. Kathleen Corrigan, ‘Text and Image on an Icon of the Crucifixion at Mount Sinai’, in *The Sacred Image East and West*, ed. Robert Ousterhout and Leslie Brubaker (Chicago 1995), p. 55: “Linen ... is made from a plant and therefore has nothing of death in itself”.

³²⁴ The *Handy Concordance of the Septuagint with various readings from Codices Vaticanus, Sinaiticus and Ephraemi* (repr. London 1970, no date given for original printing) mistakenly gives this second reference as Proverbs 29:42 (which does not exist).

³²⁵ *Concordantiae*, p. 989.

³²⁶ *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 690.

sanctuarii Constantinopolitani, dating to ca.1190, includes both the burial cloth and the Mandylion³²⁸, and the lists of relics in Constantinople in 1201 by Nicholas Mesarites also differentiates the burial shroud with the full-body image of a naked man and a further cloth that seems to be the Image of Edessa and the tile³²⁹. The burial cloths are described as follows:

Ἐντάφιοι σινδόνες Χριστοῦ· αὗται δ' εἰσὶν ἀπὸ λίνου, ὕλης εὐώνου κατὰ τὸ πρόχειρον, ἔτι πνέουσαι μύρα, ὑπερτεροῦσαι φθορᾶς, ὅτι τὸν ἀπερίληπτον νεκρὸν γυμνὸν ἐσιμυρνημένον μετὰ τὸ πάθος συνέστειλαν.

The burial cloths of Christ: these are made of linen, a cheap and easy to find material. They are still fragrant with myrrh and defy corruption since they held the uncircumscribable naked body, sprinkled with myrrh, after the passion.

After the ten relics from the passion, the following is listed:

καὶ τὸν νομοδότην αὐτὸν ὡς ἐν πρωτοτύπῳ τετυπωμένον τῷ χειρομάκτρῳ καὶ τῇ εὐθρύπτῳ ἐγκεκολαμμένον κεράμῳ ὡς ἐν ἀχειροποίητῳ τέχνῃ γραφικῇ.

The lawgiver himself as if imprinted on a towel as a prototype, and engraved on the delicate tile by some art not made by human hands.

³²⁷ If this is so, it would in turn mean that the use of the word *did* lead to people thinking the Image was the burial shroud, otherwise there would be no need to avoid it.

³²⁸ Cf. Riant, *Exuviae*, vol. 2, pp. 216-217: “pars linteaminum, quibus crucifixum Christi corpus meruit involvere” and “manutergium, regi Abgaro, a Domino Edesse missum”.

³²⁹ Ed. Augustus Heisenburg, *Nikolaos Mesarites, die Palastrevolution des Johannes Komnenos* (Würzburg 1907), pp. 30-31.

This deliberate avoidance of the word usually related to the burial shroud of Christ shows that the confusion certainly did exist; von Dobschütz was well aware of this and devotes a section of *Christusbilder* to the idea of the full-body image on the Mandylyon (further analysed below, pp. 187-192). The *Narratio de imagine edessena* might avoid the word, but it is very common in other versions of the legend: it is used in the verse introduction to all the Synaxarion texts for 16 August, the feast day of the Mandylyon in the Orthodox Church:

ἐν σινδόνι ζῶν ἐξεμάξαι σὴν θέλων
ὁ νεκρὸς εἰσθὺς ἔσχατον τὴν σινδόνα.
ἀχειρότευκτον χειρότευκτον σὸν τύπον
χέρει κέραμος, παντοτεύκτα Χριστέ μου.

In life you wiped your form onto a linen cloth

In death you were placed in the final linen shroud.

A manmade tile bears your form, not made by human hands,

My Christ, creator of all.

It can also be found in the Acts of Thaddaeus³³⁰, the Nouthesia Gerontos³³¹, the Acts of Mar Mari³³² and the miniatures in the Moscow Menologion³³³ (Figures 4.1 and 4.2). In a military harangue dated 958, Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus explains how he is sending the army water consecrated by contact with various relics to give them

³³⁰ Critical edition by Lipsius, *Acta*, pp. 273-278. I consulted the Paris MS of this text *in situ* (*Parisinus gr.* 548 [11th c.], ff. 160^v-165^r).

³³¹ Critical edition by Melioranskij, *Georgij Kiprianin I*, pp. V-XXXIX.

³³² Introduction and French translation in Jullien, *Les Actes*.

³³³ *Mosquensis Synodicus gr.* 183 (Vlad. 382) (11th c.). Cf. Alexei Lidov and Anna Zhakarova, 'La storia del re Abgar e il Mandylyon nelle miniature del Menologio di Mosca del 1063', in *Intorno al Sacro*

added strength³³⁴. Among the relics is τῆς θεοφόρου σινδόνης, the God-bearing shroud. Whatever the exact meaning of θεοφόρου in the context (possibly bearing an image of God, or having been in contact with Christ and therefore in a sense “imbued” with his divinity), given the avoidance of the word σινδών in the *Narratio*, written under the auspices of the same Constantine VII, it seems unlikely that he would use this word to refer to the Image of Edessa.

4.7 Ἐκμαγεῖον

This is another common word, which can mean both the object on which an impression is made (in this case, the linen cloth) and the actual image itself (in this case, of Christ’s face), although its use does not imply any special properties of either³³⁵. It is used in the sermon by Gregory Referendarius³³⁶, in Codex Skylitzes³³⁷, the Chronicle of Leo the Grammarian³³⁸, George the Monk³³⁹ and Symeon Metaphrastes³⁴⁰.

Volto: Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo (secoli XI – XIV), ed. Anna Rosa Calderoni Masetti, Colette Dufour Bozzo and Gerhard Wolf (Venice 2007), pp. 73-80.

³³⁴ Edited by R. Vari, ‘Zum historischen Exzerptenwerke des Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos’, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 70 (1908), pp. 75-85. For a summary and discussion, cf. H  l  ne Ahrweiler, ‘Un discours in  dit de Constantin VII Porphyrog  n  te’, *Travaux et m  moires* 2 (1967), pp. 393-404, and C.M. Mazzucchi, ‘La testimonianza la pi   antica dell’esistenza di una sindone a Constantinopoli’, *Aevum* 57 (1983), pp. 227-231. The letter is contained in MS *Mediolanensis Bibliotheca Ambrosiana* B 119 sup, copied in 959, just one year after it was written, among other similar compositions (ff. 141-161). The Emperor seems to have had a special taste for this kind of document.

³³⁵ Cf. Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing*, p. 71: “The term   κμαγεῖον [sic], used widely between the eighth and tenth centuries to designate the Holy Face of Edessa, captures this indeterminacy. Plato had deployed the word to mean both a likeness and its impression, and Philo Judaeus extended the usage to describe physical images of immaterial beings, Adam as an image of God, for instance”.

³³⁶ Edited by Dubarle, ‘L’Hom  lie’, pp. 5-51 and Guscin, *The Image*, pp. 70-87.

³³⁷ f. 130^r. I consulted the original MS *in situ*.

³³⁸ Critical edition by Immanuel Bekker, *Leonis Grammatici Chronographia* (Bonn 1842).

4.8 ῥάκος

A word often used to refer to the cloth is ῥάκος or ῥάκκος. Its classical usage meaning “rag” or “tatters”³⁴¹ makes it an unlikely candidate to describe a holy cloth with a miraculous image of Christ, although it is precisely this usage that makes us realise the meaning had changed over time and must have come to signify “cloth” in general. The word can be found in John Damascene³⁴², and is often used as a compound: ῥάκος τετράδιπλον in the Synaxarion, and τὸ ἱερόν ῥάκος in the *Narratio de imagine edessena*.

4.9 Other terms

Some words common to just about all the different texts refer exclusively to the image on the cloth and not the cloth itself: such words are μορφή³⁴³, ἀπεικόνισμα, ὁμοίωμα, ἀπαύγασμα³⁴⁴ and ἐκτύπωμα. Compound forms are common in all the texts, e.g. in the *Narratio*: ἐκτύπωμα τοῦ θείου ἀπεικονίσματος. Other words refer specifically to the cloth, such as the Latin *manutergium*³⁴⁵ and the Greek ὀθόνη in the *Narratio de imagine edessena*, Constantine Stilbes, the sermon by Gregory Referendarius and Nicephorus

³³⁹ PG 109, col. 980.

³⁴⁰ PG 109, col. 812.

³⁴¹ Cf. Homer, *Odyssey* 6.178: δὸς δὲ ῥάκος ἀμφιβαλέσθαι, *Homeri Opera* vol. 3, ed. David B. Munro and Thomas W. Allen (Oxford 1920), p. 108; Herodotus 3.129: καὶ ῥάκεσι ἐσθήμενον, *Herodoti Historiae* vol. 1, ed. Charles Hude (Oxford 1963), pages unnumbered.

³⁴² *De Imaginibus Oratio I*, ed. Bonifatius Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 3 (Berlin 1975), p. 114.

³⁴³ Cf. Alain Besançon, *L'Image Interdite: une histoire intellectuelle de l'iconoclasme* (Librairie Arthème Fayard 1994), translated into English as *The Forbidden Image: an intellectual history of iconoclasm* (Chicago 2000), p. 84: “morphē theou, ‘the form of God’, means ‘the divine quality’”; and Marie-José Mondzain, *Image, Icône, Économie: Les sources Byzantines de l'imaginaire contemporain* (Paris 1996), translated into English as *Image, Icon, Economy – the Byzantine Origins of the Contemporary Imaginary* (Stanford 2005), p. 86: “morphé means ‘a perceptible form’”. The variety of interpretations seems to be as broad as the choice of words used in Greek for the icon.

³⁴⁴ Cf. Besançon, *L'Image*, p. 84: “the word ‘brightness’ (apaugasma) is borrowed from the Book of Wisdom”.

³⁴⁵ Cf. Isidore, *Etymologiae* 19:26: “Facietergium et manitergium a tergendō faciem vel manus vocatum”.

Callistus³⁴⁶. The seventh-century History by Theophylact Simocatta employs a term used nowhere else for the Image of Edessa: ἵνδαλμα³⁴⁷.

Equally significant is the deliberate omission of this word and of *σινδών* in the *Narratio de imagine edessena*. This is by far the longest text about the Image and it uses just about every other word common to other texts to refer to the cloth and the image thereon, and also various different combinations of these descriptions. The omission of these words cannot be coincidental. As stated above, a possible reason for this is to avoid confusion with the burial shroud of Christ in the case of *σινδών*, although the same reason cannot be applied to the omission of the word *τετράδιπλον*.

As will be seen below (pp. 262-307), in relation to the painted depictions of the Image, what really stands out is the great variety of words and phrases, and combinations thereof, used to describe a piece of cloth with an image of a face (and sometimes neck and shoulders) on it. This shows what a central role the image played in Byzantine religious life, and the great imagination employed in the numerous texts that refer to it. There are no similar cases with any other icons either in the east or the west.

4.10 Alternative ideas about the Image

The great majority of texts describe the Image of Edessa as an image of the face of Christ on a piece of linen cloth. Most texts also tell the story of the image's origin as lying in Jesus' pressing a cloth to his face in response to a request from King Abgar of Edessa shortly before the Passion. Most depictions of the cloth, as will be seen in

³⁴⁶ The plural form *τὰ ἰθόνια* is used in John's Gospel (20:7) as the equivalent of the Synoptic *σινδών*. Luke 24:12 also uses *τὰ ἰθόνια* as the equivalent of *σινδών* – it is true that the verse is not found in some of the better MSS of the Gospel, although it is ancient and this does not affect the linguistic argument.

³⁴⁷ *Historiae*, II:3 and III:1, ed. C. de Boor, *Theophylacti Simocatta Historiae* (Leipzig 1887), pp. 71 and 114 respectively.

chapter six of this thesis, show the face of Christ on a cloth (even though the shape of the cloth itself differs greatly).

There are exceptions, however. As we will see below (pp. 262-307), some depictions of the Image show Christ's neck, shoulders and even chest. The *Narratio de imagine edessena* offers two versions of the origin, the traditional one and another from the garden of Gethsemane, while the sermon by Gregory Referendarius only gives the second version³⁴⁸. The early Syriac versions say the image was a painted portrait on a wooden tablet, while all the later versions ascribe a miraculous origin to the image, which was impressed onto a linen cloth.

My intention in this section is to look at the minority or unique texts and depictions, which very often give us a very different idea of what the Image of Edessa was. The best place to start is without doubt Ernst von Dobschütz's work on the images of Christ³⁴⁹, hailed in just about every study on the subject as the benchmark for all future research and publications and the conclusions and analyses of which nobody has ever seriously put in doubt.

The first different attribution is the idea that the image of Christ on the cloth was much more than a facial image – it was in fact a full-body image. Ordericus Vitalis in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*³⁵⁰ gives a somewhat confusing reference to the image sent by Christ to Abgar:

Abgarus toparcha Edessae regnavit; cui dominus Iesus sacram epistolam destinavit, et pretiosum linteum, quo faciei suae sudorem extersit, et in quo eiusdem Salvatoris imago mirabiliter depicta refulget; quae Dominici corporis speciem et quantitatem intuentibus exhibet.

³⁴⁸ For descriptions of these two texts, see above, pp. 71-77 (*Narratio*), 80-81 (Gregory Referendarius). The *Narratio* is re-edited below, Appendix I, and the sermon by Gregory Referendarius in Guscin, *The Image*, pp. 70-87.

³⁴⁹ Von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*.

Abgar the ruler reigned at Edessa; the Lord Jesus sent him a sacred letter and a beautiful linen cloth he had wiped the sweat from his face with. The image of the Saviour was miraculously imprinted onto it and shines out, displaying the form and size of the Lord's body to all who look on it.

The first impression from the text is that Jesus only dried his face on the cloth, in which case the cloth would show only a facial image, but then we are told that those looking at the cloth could see an image of the Lord's body. This would appear to be an internal contradiction in the text, although von Dobschütz was convinced that Orderic referred to a full-body image³⁵¹.

The same author also refers in passing to another Latin text, which however, is much clearer on this aspect. The account by the pilgrim Gervase of Tilbury³⁵², whose version of the letter sent by Jesus to Abgar, dating from the beginning of the thirteenth century, reads as follows:

Sed quia me corporaliter videre desideras, en tibi dirigo linteum, in quo faciei mee figura et tocius corporis mei status continentur.

As you wished to see what I look like, I am sending you a linen cloth on which the form of my face and my whole body can be seen.

As to how a full-body image could be seen on the cloth, Gervase also gives an explanation:

³⁵⁰ *Historia Ecclesiastica* IX:13, ed. Marjorie Chibnall, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, 6 vols (Oxford 1969-1980), vol. 5, p. 287.

³⁵¹ Von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, vol. 1, p. 184: "Das gleiche aber thut der soeben erwähnte lateinische Traktat, aus dem offenbar Ordericus die Vorstellung geschöpft hat, dass es sich um eine Darstellung Christi in ganzer Figur handle".

Traditur autem ex archivis auctoritatis antiquae, quod dominus super linteum candidissimum toto corpore se prostraverit et ita virtute divina non tantum faciei sed etiam totius corporis dominici speciosissima effigies linteo impressa sit.

There is a story in trustworthy documents that in the past the Lord laid his whole body down on a clean linen cloth and the beautiful form, not only of his face but of his whole body, was imprinted onto the linen.

The reference to Jesus laying his whole body down on a clean linen cloth is much more reminiscent of the burial shroud than of the Abgar legend. It is clear that the interpolation in the text was made either by Gervase himself or someone before him but no earlier than in 769³⁵³. The main question is: Why? Did the idea of the full-body image arise from confusion with another object, and if so, which object? Or was it just fanciful imagination? These questions are impossible to answer with certitude, although I would be more inclined to think that there must have been another object with a full-body image of Christ that was identified with the Image of Edessa.

There are other texts that suggest the Image of Edessa was indeed a full-body image of Christ. In a Latin tractate, also edited by von Dobschütz³⁵⁴, containing the Abgar legend and the correspondence, the following can be read:

³⁵² *Otia Imperialia* III:23, ed. S.E. Banks and J.W. Binns, *Gervase of Tilbury, Otia Imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor* (Oxford 2002), p. 596 for Latin text and p. 597 for facing page translation.

³⁵³ Cf. Banks and Binns, *Otia* p. 595, note 2: "Gervase's source is an interpolated Latin version of an ancient sermon, probably written originally in Greek ... The original must date from before 769, since the sermon was drawn on by Pope Stephen III in his speech against the iconoclasts at the Lateran Synod of that year ... The text at this stage asserted that only Christ's face was miraculously imprinted on a cloth. At some date between 769 and c. 1135, when the sermon seems to have been used by Orderic Vitalis (HE ix.11), an interpolation was made to the effect that not just the face but the whole body of the Lord was imprinted on the cloth".

³⁵⁴ Cf. von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, vol. 2, pp. 130-140. The two MSS used by von Dobschütz date from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; there is another earlier MS with the text in question, unknown to von Dobschütz, namely *Codex Vossianus Latinus* Q69 (10th or 11th c.).

Si vero corporaliter faciem meam cernere desideras hunc tibi dirigo linteum, in quo non solum faciei mee figuram, sed totius corporis mei cernere poteris statum divinitus transformatum. Quem cum intuitus fueris ardorem tui animi refrigerare poteris. In patris mei sapientia, bene valeas per cuncta secula.

If you really want to see what my face looks like, I am sending you this linen cloth, on which you will be able to see not only the form of my face but the divinely transformed state of my whole body. When you have seen it you will be able to soothe your burning desire. May you fare well for all time in the wisdom of my Father.

It is probable that this text was the source used by Gervase of Tilbury for his own version of the Abgar legend.

Mention has already been made above (pp. 90-91) to the *Didaskalia* on the Mandylion and the Holy Tile, a text written by Constantine Stilbes. Towards the end of this version of the Abgar legend, when Abgar sees both the Image and the tile for the first time, we read the following³⁵⁵:

τὰς εἰκόνας ὄρῳ ἀφεθείσας πόρρωθεν ἐπ’ αὐτόν, οἶαι καὶ τῶν σωματικῶν στοιχείων τὸ εὐκραῆς καὶ ἑαρινῆν κατάστασιν σχεδιάζουσι. Θεοπτίαν τὸ πρᾶγμα λογίζεται καὶ ὑπὸ πέτρα τῷ κεράμῳ θεοῦ πρόσωπον καταθρεῖ, εἴποι τις ἐμβαθύνων, ὀπίσθια, τὸ κατὰ γε τὴν ἐν ἐσχάτοις σάρκωσιν μὀρφωμα ἢ τὸ μετὰ τὴν ὑπόστασιν ὕπισθεν ἦκον καὶ ὑστεροχρονοῦν ἀπεικόνισμα· αὐτοπρόσωπον νομίζει παρ’ αὐτῷ γενέσθαι τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ὅλον διὰ τῶν συμβόλων κομίζεσθαι τὸν θεάνθρωπον, ἦπου καὶ τὸ διττὸν τῶν αὐτοῦ θαυματίζεσθαι φύσεων, διὰ τε τοῦ γήινου κεράμου διὰ τε τοῦ τῆς ὀθόνης λεπτοῦφοῦς καὶ διαφανοῦς.

He saw the images being brought towards him from afar, shaping the gentle springtime of youth to his bodily elements. He thought he was seeing a heavenly vision, as if in the solid tile he was looking down on the face of God, or if you were to go deeper into the matter, God’s

back, the human form he took on in the last times after he became flesh, a form from a later time. He believed it was Jesus himself coming, the whole divine man coming via the symbols, or that he was given to wonder at the two natures through the clay tile and the finely-woven transparent cloth.

The tone of the passage is clearly poetical, and even though Abgar is depicted as imagining Christ in person coming to him through the two images, it is at the same time interesting that once again, a full-body image is brought into the story when talking about the depiction on the cloth.

One of the textual variations in the Acts of Thaddaeus also suggests that the Image of Edessa was in fact a full-body image. Palmer dates this Greek text to between 609 and 726³⁵⁶, while Lipsius, who edited and published the text, states that the additions to Eusebius' version were made towards the end of the fourth century³⁵⁷. The Acts tell us that Lebbaïos was a native of Edessa who came to Jerusalem when John the Baptist was preaching – he was baptised and took the name of Thaddaeus. He was then chosen as one of the twelve disciples. The Acts then tell the story of Abgar – the king's letter to Christ is a fairly free adaptation of Eusebius' version, although nothing substantial is modified. Instructions are given to Ananias to bring a description of Christ just as in the Synaxarion, but the instructions are somewhat shorter:

Παραγγείλας τῷ Ἀνανία ὁ Ἄβγαρος ἱστορῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν ἀκριβῶς, ποίας εἰδέας ἐστίν, τὴν τε ἡλικίαν καὶ τρίχα καὶ ἀπλῶς πάντα.

Abgar told Ananias to record Christ's exact appearance, what he looked like, his stature, his hair and everything in detail.

³⁵⁵ Cf. Flusin, 'Didascalie', p. 76.

³⁵⁶ Cf. the appendix to Desreumaux, *Histoire*, p. 137.

There is an interesting variant in one of the two MSS Lipsius used for his edition of the Acts of Thaddaeus. In MS *Vindobonensis bybl. Caesar. hist. gr.* 45 (olim 14), which he dates to the ninth or tenth century, this same paragraph ends with the words *πάντα αὐτοῦ τὰ μέλη* (his whole body) – i.e. Abgar is telling his artist to bring back a painting of the whole body of Christ. In his recent edition of the Acts³⁵⁸, Palmer describes this addition as a “whole phrase, not in P, which would have been deliberately excised only by a consistent abbreviator”; i.e. it is an interpolation. However, the fact that the addition was not part of the original text in no way lessens its importance as historical testimony for what one anonymous writer thought about the Image of Edessa; if it is to be ignored simply because it is an interpolation, this would be attributing to the original text a historical value it does not possess.

A further text that clearly suggests that the Image of Edessa showed the whole body of Christ was recently discovered in a Georgian MS on Mount Sinai (N/Sin-50)³⁵⁹. According to this text, there was an inscription in Syriac (“I am revealed by him who you see here”) at the feet of the image, and the “icon of God stood upright”. The article by Karaulashvili, however, is confusing and incorrect in places; she claims that the image seen by the sixth-century pilgrim of Piacenza in Egypt (cf. above, pp. 57-59) was in fact also a full-length image of the body of Christ³⁶⁰, whereas the text itself makes no such claim. Her dating of the development of the idea of the full-body image to a period “subsequent to this” therefore makes no sense. In fact, she gives no date for the Georgian MS transmitting this text³⁶¹.

³⁵⁷ Lipsius, *Acta* p. cvii.

³⁵⁸ Palmer, ‘The *Logos*’, p. 168.

³⁵⁹ Cf. Karaulashvili, ‘The Abgar Legend’, pp. 224-229; cf. esp. p. 225: “According to the Georgian chronicler, it depicted the full-length luminous figure of Christ”.

³⁶⁰ Karaulashvili, ‘The Abgar Legend’, p. 228.

³⁶¹ It actually dates from the early tenth century: S. H. Rapp, *Studies in Medieval Georgian Historiography: early texts and Eurasian contexts*, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, vol. 601, tom. 113 (Louvain 2003), p. 300: “The *Royal Lists* were written down no later than the start of the tenth century, when the N/Sin-50 manuscript was copied”.

A further minority view of what the Image of Edessa was is also given by von Dobschütz: in this case, he states that according to some texts the Image was in fact the burial shroud of Christ³⁶². This idea, so openly recorded by the great German scholar, is often hushed up today as it would appear to equate the Image with the Shroud of Turin, a highly controversial subject for so many scholars³⁶³. It is, however, openly accepted in a nineteenth-century book on Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus³⁶⁴. However, this controversy only arises if it is assumed that the burial shroud of Christ (and there definitely seems to have been a burial shroud) is indeed one and the same as the cloth now known as the Shroud of Turin: this argument lies beyond the scope of this thesis and was probably not implied by von Dobschütz (despite the fact that this would also explain the idea of a large cloth with a full-body image). The description of the Image of Edessa as the burial shroud of Christ is for the present purpose not related to the debate about the Shroud of Turin.

That the burial cloth of Christ survived and was kept by Christ's followers is suggested in various texts. The four canonical Gospels do not say anything about what

³⁶² Von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, vol. 1, p. 137: "Als vereinzelte Absonderlichkeit steht endlich die Schilderung von der Entstehung des Bildes da, welche der ältere unserer nach auf ein weisses Linnentuch hin, das dann nicht nur sein Gesicht, sondern seine ganze Figur aufweist. Die auffallende Vorstellung scheint auf irgend welche fremden Einflüsse zu führen. Wahrscheinlich ist es die Legende von dem Abdruck des h. Leichnams in den Grabtüchern, welche hier innerhalb der Abgarlegende diese eigenartige Gestalt gewonnen hat".

³⁶³ Averil Cameron, for example, in her desire to establish that the Image of Edessa is most definitely not the Shroud of Turin, is led to deny any similarities. As the Shroud of Turin is made of linen, she denies that the Image of Edessa was a linen cloth; cf. Cameron, *Changing Cultures*, p. 88: "[it] never actually looked like a cloth at all", with the vast majority of the sources against her. Cf. also eadem, *The Sceptic and the Shroud – an Inaugural Lecture in the Department of Classics and History delivered at King's College London on 29th April 1980*. Others, however, see the Shroud of Turin as a true acheiropoietos; cf. Belting, 'In Search', p. 9: "The mere possibility that the Holy Shroud may be an original (and that this origin can be proven by modern science) is reason enough to awake the old expectations of the Holy Face. The case of its age is not finally settled, since the proof of its fourteenth century origin may be the result of replacing the original weaving by one piece added in the Middle Ages". No matter what the Shroud is or is not, and regardless of when it dates from, it is not a painting: cf. J.H. Heller and A.D. Adler, 'A Chemical Investigation of the Shroud of Turin', *Canadian Society of Forensic Sciences Journal* 14.3 (1981), pp. 81-103; E.J. Jumper and R.W. Mottern, 'Scientific Investigation of the Shroud of Turin', *Applied Optics* 19.12 (1980), pp. 1909-1912 and E.J. Jumper, 'An Overview of the Testing Performed by the Shroud of Turin Research Project with a Summary of Results', *IEEE* (1982) (= *Proceedings of the International Conference on Cybernetics and Society, October 1982*), pp. 535-537, among others.

³⁶⁴ Rambaud, *L'Empire Grec*, p. 107: "... le Saint-Suaire de Jésus-Christ, autrement dit l'Image d'Édesse". The identification has been suggested more recently by Ian Wilson, *Shroud* (London 2010).

happened to the burial cloths after the resurrection. The first reference can be found in the Gospel of the Hebrews, an apocryphal work that is only known from quotations in other writers – the original is lost. Jerome says it was originally written in Hebrew, but he also affirms that only the letters were Hebrew, while the language was Chaldean or Syriac³⁶⁵. As for its age, Clement of Alexandria and Origen prove that this Gospel did exist in the middle of the second century, and it is quite possible that it is earlier³⁶⁶.

In his *De Viris Illustribus* 2, Jerome quotes the following passage from the Gospel of the Hebrews:

Evangelium quoque, quod appellatur secundum Hebraeos, et a me nuper in Graecum Latinumque sermonem translatum est, quo et Origenes saepe utitur, post resurrectionem Salvatoris refert: Dominus autem cum dedisset sindonem servo sacerdotis, ivit ad Iacobum et apparuit ei.

The gospel called *According to the Hebrews*, which I recently translated into Greek and into Latin, and which Origen uses frequently, recounts this after the resurrection: “But the Lord, after giving the shroud to the priest’s servant, went to James and appeared to him”.

The Life of St Nino of Georgia also related how the burial cloths were kept by the disciples. The textual tradition is complex³⁶⁷. There are various versions in Georgian, which in spite of being written at many different periods in history, do not show great textual differences, reflecting the copyists’ faithfulness. There is also an Armenian version by Djouansher, which according to its translator into English, F. C.

³⁶⁵ Aurelio de Santos Otero (ed.), *Los Evangelios Apócrifos* (Madrid 1956), p. 30.

³⁶⁶ Santos Otero, *Los Evangelios* p. 30.

³⁶⁷ The different versions can be found in *Studia Biblica et Ecclesiastica* 5 (1903).

Conybeare, “represents a text written before the end of the fifth century”³⁶⁸. The translation reads:

And they found the linen early in Christ’s tomb, whither Pilate and his wife came. When they found it, Pilate’s wife asked for the linen, and went away quickly to her home in Pontus; and she became a believer in Christ. Some time afterwards the linen came into the hands of Luke the Evangelist, who put it in a place known only to himself. Now, they did not find the sudarium, but it is said to have been found by Peter, who took it and kept it, but we know not if it has ever been discovered.³⁶⁹

Another author who relates how the cloths were saved is Ishodad of Merv. Merv is an oasis in what is today Turkmenistan. Born in the ninth century, Ishodad was bishop of Hedatta in the Church of the East, commonly (and inaccurately) referred to as Nestorian. In approximately 850, Ishodad wrote his *Commentaries on the Gospels*³⁷⁰.

Ishodad’s commentary on the Gospel of John states the following:

... but they gave the garments and linen clothes to Joseph the Senator; for it was right that they should be returned to him, and be kept for him as the lord of the grave, and as he who brought them for His honour.

Joseph the Senator is Joseph of Arimathea, logically related to the burial shroud as the Gospels say that it was he who bought it. When the text calls him “lord of the grave”, it must mean “owner of the tomb”.

Finally, there is also a reference to an image on the burial shroud of Christ in the so-called Spanish Mozarabic Liturgy. This liturgy, which would be better called the

³⁶⁸ *Studia Biblica*, p. 68.

³⁶⁹ *Studia Biblica*, p. 11, translation by Wardrop.

³⁷⁰ The original texts in Syriac with an English translation were published by Margaret Dunlop Gibson, *Horae Semiticae*, vols. 6-7 (Cambridge 1911).

Visigothic, Toledan or Isidorian liturgy, survived the Arabic invasion in 711 only to be finally abolished under Alfonso VI in the eleventh century. There is a passage in the liturgy for the first Saturday after Easter, which reads as follows³⁷¹:

Ad monumentum Petrus com Iohanne cucurrit recientaque in lintheaminibus defuncti et resurgentis vestigia cernit.

Peter ran to the tomb with John and saw the recent imprints of the dead and risen one on the cloths.

The context of the passage is clear and cannot be denied – the two disciples are running to the tomb after it has been reported empty, and saw something related to Jesus on the burial cloths. The doubtful point comes when we try to analyse exactly what the two disciples saw. The Latin word is *vestigia*. The normal meaning of this word is “footprint” or “track”, although it can also mean “trace”, “mark”, “sign” or “token” – this is much more general. The first meaning can be dismissed as inappropriate in the context, which leaves us with some kind of mark or sign of Christ, something clearly related to his death and resurrection. This could indeed be blood (death) and an image of Christ (resurrection). The only point relevant to the argument here is that there are numerous texts that state how the burial shroud of Christ was kept.

Von Dobschütz relates the Image of Edessa to the burial shroud of Christ because of the use of the word “sudarium” in certain related documents, and also because of Gervase of Tilbury (see above, pp. 188-189). However, neither of these reasons stand up to examination. The cloth on which the Image of Edessa was imprinted is called a sudarium in only a few texts (see above, pp. 177-180), and despite certain

³⁷¹ *Missale mixtam secundum regulam beati Isidori dictum Mozarabes*, ed. Melchor Gorrício (Toledo 1500), f. 316^v. For a general overview of the liturgy, see Jordi Pinell, *Liturgia Hispánica* (Barcelona 1998).

medieval texts that confuse the two words, this word is only used in relation to the burial of Christ in the fourth Gospel (John 20:6-7), and is not the burial shroud but rather another cloth that had covered Jesus' head before the burial and the use of the full shroud. Secondly, the text by Gervase of Tilbury does indeed seem to suggest an imaged burial shroud (Christ "laid down" his body on a linen cloth and a full-body image was formed), although it is never stated clearly that the burial shroud is meant.

Despite von Dobschütz's weaker arguments in this regard, there are other reasons for arguing that at times some writers did indeed think the two cloths were one and the same. The repeated use of the word *σινδών* in various texts (see above, pp. 180-184), the same word used by the three Synoptic Gospels for the burial shroud of Christ, was what most probably led the author of the *Narratio de imagine edessena* to avoid the use of the word. The presence of blood on the Image of Edessa (as suggested by the alternative origin in the garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus used the cloth to wipe the bloody sweat from his face, in both the *Narratio* and the sermon by Gregory Referendarius) could suggest either an origin in the garden of Gethsemane or a post-crucifixion origin of the image, which would be backed up by the descriptions of the image in the French and Spanish versions of the legend of St Alexis, in which the Image of Edessa is described as that of a crucified man (see above, pp. 196).

Indeed, for either (or both) of these theories to hold any water at all, the cloth on which the image was imprinted would have to be much larger than a simple face cloth. This idea has already been seen in the use of the word *τετράδιπλον* and can be expanded by other texts. One of the authors in question is John Damascene, writing in the eighth century³⁷²:

³⁷² *De Fide Orthodoxa*, ed. Bonifatius Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 2 (Berlin 1973), pp. 206-208. Cf. also Andrew Louth, *St John Damascene: tradition and originality in Byzantine theology* (Oxford 2002), p. 186: "John also appeals to apostolic unwritten traditions, as in the

Ὁ κύριος, Αὐγάρου τοῦ τῆς Ἐδεσσηνῶν πόλεως βασιλείοντος ζωγράφον ἀποστείλαντος τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου ὁμοιογραφῆσαι εἰκόνα καὶ μὴ δυνηθέντος τοῦ ζωγράφου διὰ τὴν ἀποστίλβουσαν τοῦ προσώπου λαμπρότητα, αὐτὸς ἱμάτιον τῷ οἰκείῳ προσώπῳ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ζωποιοῦ ἐπιθεὶς ἐναπεμάξατο τῷ ἱματίῳ τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἀπεικόνισμα καὶ οὕτως ἀπέστειλε τοῦτο ποθοῦντι τῷ Αὐγάρῳ.

Abgar, king of the city of Edessa, sent an artist to paint the Lord's image but could not do so because of the shining brilliance of his face. The Lord therefore placed a large cloth on his divine and life-giving face and wiped his own imprint onto it. He sent this to Abgar in answer to his request.

The word ἱμάτιον is usually used to define a cloak or outer garment³⁷³.

Leo the Deacon refers to the Image as follows³⁷⁴:

Θαδδαίου τοῦ ἀποστόλου Ἀβγάρι πρὸς τοῦ Σωτήρος τῷ τῆς Ἐδέσσης ἀποσταλέντος τοπάρχη, ὡς αὐτὸν τῆς συνεχούσης παρέσεως διὰ τοῦ θεανδρικοῦ ἀπαλλάξειεν ἐκτυπώματος, ἐνταυθοῖ παροδεύοντος τὸν πέπλον, ἧ τῆς αὐτοῦ μορφῆς τὸ εἶδος ἀρρήτως ὁ Χριστὸς ἀνετίπωσε, κεράμοις ἐν ἀποκειμένοις πρὸ τοῦ ἄστεος κατακρύψαι.

The apostle Thaddaeus was sent by the Saviour to Abgar, the ruler of Edessa, to cure him by means of the theandric image from the paralysis that afflicted him. While he was passing by there, he hid the cloth on which Christ had ineffably imprinted the image of his face among some tiles lying outside the town³⁷⁵.

case of prayer facing East, and also to the story about the Mandylion, the cloth in which the Lord himself impressed his features for King Abgar of Edessa”.

³⁷³ In the *Life of Brutus*, Plutarch uses the word as the equivalent of the Roman toga. Herodotus (4:23) uses it as a garment: τοῦτο ἐπεὶ γένηται πέπλον, σακκέουσι ἱματίοισι. In Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* 19:10 (PG 33 col. 1076), it means a spiritual garment: ἐνδεδυμένος τὸ ἱμάτιον σωτηρίου Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.

³⁷⁴ *Historia* IV, ed. C. B. Hase, *Leo Diaconus Historiae Libri X* (Bonn 1828), p. 70.

³⁷⁵ Translation from Alice-Mary Talbot and Denis F. Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon* (Washington 2005), p. 121.

Reference should also be made to a wall painting (now lost) at Mateič in the FYROM, part of a cycle of murals depicting the Abgar Legend; the cloth seen in this painting is very large (Figure 4.3), large enough to justify either von Dobschütz's explanations of the Image as a full-body image and/or the burial cloth of Christ. The murals, dated to between 1356 and 1360³⁷⁶, make up a series of paintings showing Christ's conversation with Abgar's messenger, Christ giving the cloth to the messenger and the latter giving the cloth to Abgar. It would also be possible to identify the second scene as the first, as the messenger giving the cloth to Christ (presumably after Christ had asked for it). This explanation is upheld by Vladimir Petković³⁷⁷, who at the time was also able to read the inscription on this painting: τὴν σινδῶνα ἔχης ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀβγάρου – “here you have the cloth from Abgar”. Not only is the cloth depicted as large, but it is also called σινδῶν – the same word used by the Synoptic Gospels for the burial shroud of Christ.

4.11 Conclusions

Both the analysis of the terms used to describe the Image of Edessa and the cloth it was imprinted onto, and certain texts concerning the Abgar legend, show that there were various perceptions of the icon's appearance and size. The coining of a new word, τετράδιπλον, which is only ever used in the context of the Image of Edessa, whatever its exact meaning may be, without doubt suggests a large cloth, an idea supported by other authors who describe a full body image on the cloth (Ordericus Vitalis, Gervase of Tilbury and Constantine Stilbes).

³⁷⁶ V. Durić, *Visantijske freske u Jugoslaviji* (Belgrade 1974), pp. 214-215, note 83, quoted in Christopher Walter, ‘The Abgar Cycle at Mateič’, *Studien zur Byzantinischen Kunstgeschichte* (1995), p. 221. The same date is given by Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, ‘The Holy Face of Edessa on the Frame of the *Volto Santo* of Genoa: the Literary and Pictorial Sources’, in *Interaction and Isolation in Late Byzantine Culture*, ed. Jan Olof Rosenqvist (Uppsala 2004), pp. 118-119. The author of this latter article constantly refers to “sondon” instead of “sindon”.

³⁷⁷ ‘Abgarova legenda u freskama Matejića’, *Prilozi z. Lit* 12 (1932), pp. 11-19, also quoted in Walter, ‘The Abgar Cycle’, p. 221.

Is there a pattern behind these different terms, or can we learn anything about the Image itself from the words used to describe it? The key point here is the use of *τετράδιπλον*, which no matter what it does or does not mean in detail, certainly implies a cloth large enough to be folded over various times. As I have already stated, the very fact that a new word was brought into play to describe a “simple” piece of cloth makes it clear that something special and inherent in the object needed describing.

The possible presence of bloodstains on the Image (suggested by the alternative version of the Image’s origins in Gethsemane, when according to an early interpolation in Luke’s Gospel Jesus sweated blood) relates it to the passion rather than the messenger from Abgar. This is related to some of the descriptions of the Image of Edessa found in the huge body of St Alexis literature (analysed above, pp. 138-166), where it is called an *ymago sanguinea* (bloodstained image) and the image thereupon is twice described as that of a crucified man (necessarily after the passion)³⁷⁸. A bloodstained image of Christ’s face could be the result of confusion with the Veronica, which according to tradition was formed on the way to the crucifixion, but the various references to the full body and the crucified man cannot be included in such confusion.

The frequent use of the word *σινδών* in the texts, coupled with the above, inevitably leads to a discussion of the burial shroud of Christ. As expressed above (pp. 193-194), this argument should be kept separate from the debate around the object known as the Shroud of Turin; the discussion in hand is the possible relationship between the Image of Edessa and the burial shroud of Christ (which according to ancient literature existed, as shown above), and not whether the Shroud of Turin is the burial shroud of Christ. Literature concerning the Shroud of Turin was published in

³⁷⁸ Linking the Novgorod Mandylion (Figure 6.148) to the Passion, cf. Ioannis Spatharakis and Emanuel Klinkenberg, ‘The Pictorial Cycle of St. John the Evangelist in Crete’, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 89.2 (1996), p. 423: “A most impressive visual evidence of the connection between the Mandylion and the Passion of Christ can be seen in the superb double-sided icon from Novgorod, variously dated from 1130 to 1200. One side shows the Mandylion and the other the Arma Christi, instruments from the Passion”.

peer-reviewed scientific journals after the scientific examination of the cloth in 1978 (see above, p. 193, n. 363) up to and including the carbon dating of the same ten years later, according to which the cloth is medieval. Since then it has in general been restricted to literature of a more religious and much less academic nature, which has led some scholars of the Image of Edessa into unnecessary fields of debate in order to distance their own studies from such literature, and even to contradicting what is known about the Image of Edessa just because it might be used to try and identify the Image with the Shroud of Turin³⁷⁹.

However, the fact remains that there is a secondary current of texts and descriptions that would make the Image of Edessa something quite different from a mere facial image of Christ produced before the passion. These texts and descriptions do not coincide with the majority, but they do exist and they should not be dealt with in the light of a different controversial object. Once again, what these different texts show is the immensely flexible nature of the Image of Edessa and how it could be, and indeed was, adapted to the needs and circumstances of specific times and places.

³⁷⁹ Cf. Mondzain, *Image*, p. 205, dismissing the Shroud of Turin as a “work of art bearing all the characteristics of a fraud designed to provoke popular piety and to obtain all the familiar benefits of pilgrimages to miracle-working relics”.

Chapter 5

The tradition of the Image of Edessa and the Abgar correspondence in the West

This chapter examines the transmission, reception, use and transformation of the Image of Edessa and the Abgar correspondence in Western Europe. It explores the general use of the expanded version of the letter Christ sent to Abgar as a magic charm to ward off evil and its later life, how at certain times it lost all relation to the actual Abgar legend, became decontextualised and survived as an amulet quite independently of Edessa and its original eastern setting. The material includes hitherto unpublished texts and little known editions of the Abgar–Christ correspondence, together with depictions of the Image of Edessa.

5.1 The Abgar Correspondence and the Image of Edessa in the West

In this section we look at the forms and extent to which the Abgar–Christ letters were transmitted in the West separately from the use of Jesus’ reply as a magical amulet³⁸⁰. One of the earliest western references to the legend appears in the so-called *Libri Carolini*, composed by Theodulf of Orleans towards the end of the eighth century as a considered statement of the Frankish Church concerning image worship, in response to the report on the Second Council of Nicaea (787), which put a temporary end to iconoclasm in the East³⁸¹. The Latin translation of this report was faulty, as it made no distinction between the Greek terms *λατρεία* (used for divine worship) and *προσκύνησις*

³⁸⁰ An important article for this aspect is Cora E. Lutz, ‘The Apocryphal Abgarus-Jesus Epistles in England in the Middle Ages’, in eadem, *Essays on Manuscripts and Rare Books*, (Connecticut 1975), pp. 57-63.

(veneration for images), translating both by *adorare* and thereby causing grave misunderstanding in the West³⁸².

Libri Carolini, Book IV, Chapter X is devoted to the Abgar letters and the Image of Edessa. The text starts by pointing out that the Abgar episode is not included in any of the four canonical Gospels, and is therefore apocryphal, while the Image is dismissed as ‘*imaginem quamdam*’ (‘a certain image’). The text shows that the legend was indeed known in the West, although only in high ecclesiastical circles and not necessarily among the common people. The *Libri Carolini* survive in just two MSS and, though others may have been lost in the course of time, it seems that they were not circulated widely³⁸³. A somewhat more extensive knowledge of the Abgar legend is shown by the fact that it is transmitted in an Anglo-Saxon poem³⁸⁴. Based on Eusebius’ text, it consists of 204 lines and it is generally ascribed to Aelfric, archbishop of York (1023-1052).

The Abgar legend and correspondence were involved in the definition of the Biblical canon from early times. Declared to be apocryphal in the fifth century³⁸⁵, it was included in two eleventh-century Georgian MSS otherwise containing only the four Gospels – a deliberate attempt to argue that the episode was considered as canonical³⁸⁶. The correspondence played a significant role in defining what the Biblical canon was and meant in seventeenth and eighteenth-century England; in other words, in new reactions to the Bible and Christianity that became evident during the Enlightenment. In 1660 Samuel Fisher (1605-1665) published a pamphlet entitled *Something Concerning*

³⁸¹ Ed. A. Freeman and P. Meyvaert, *Opus Caroli Regis contra synodum* (Hannover 1998).

³⁸² For an excellent summary of the *Libri Carolini*, cf. Michael Angold, *Byzantium, The Bridge from Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (London 2001), pp. 106-112. Cf. also Besançon, *L’Image*, pp. 151-152.

³⁸³ Cf. Angold, *Byzantium*, p. 107.

³⁸⁴ G. Stephens, *Abgarus-Legenden paa Old-Engeisk* (Copenhagen 1853).

³⁸⁵ Cf. Ernst von Dobschütz, *Das Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis in kritischem text herausgegeben und untersucht* (Leipzig 1912), p. 13.

*Agbarus, Prince of the Edesseans*³⁸⁷, to attack the accepted idea of the Biblical canon by arguing for the historical authenticity of the Abgar legend and other apocryphal texts such as Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans³⁸⁸. The fact that the legend was selected by Fisher as one of the main arguments against the authority of the Biblical canon shows that it was known well enough to attain this purpose.

A somewhat different purpose lies behind the use of the letters by Dr Conyers Middleton, an English clergyman, who was born in Yorkshire in 1683 and died in 1750³⁸⁹. The majority of Middleton's works were published posthumously in five volumes (London, 1755), although his comments on the Abgar correspondence were not included. These comments are preserved in *British Library, Add. 32459*, ff. 46^r-49^v, entitled 'Essays and other papers of Dr Middleton, generally in his own hand or corrected by him'³⁹⁰. These pages seem to have been written by Dr Middleton himself, as the text has been heavily corrected and the hand that introduced corrections is the same as that which copied the original text (Figures 5.1-5.5). The notes appear as follows:

Among the spurious pieces, which were forged within the 3 centuries, I should mention in the 1st place the letter pretended to have been written by Abgar, King of Edessa in Syria, to Christ, and the letter of Christ in answer to it.

³⁸⁶ Cf. Zaza Skhirtladze, 'Canonizing the Apocrypha: The Abgar Cycle in the Alaverdi and Gelati Gospels', in Kessler, *Holy Face*, pp. 69-93.

³⁸⁷ Cf. Justin Champion, 'Apocrypha, Canon and Criticism from Samuel Fisher to John Toland, 1650-1718', *Judaean-Christian Intellectual Culture in the Seventeenth Century – A Celebration of the Library of Narcissus Marsh 1638-1713*, ed. Allison P. Coudert, Sarah Hutton, Richard H. Popkin and Gordon M. Weiner (Dordrecht 1999), pp. 91-118.

³⁸⁸ Cf. Champion, 'Apocrypha', p. 101: "The intention of the work in destabilising the authenticity of the established Bible was further highlighted in the last section where Fisher included a short list of places in the authorised version where mistranslation had corrupted the original meaning".

³⁸⁹ For a biographical sketch of Middleton, see Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'From Deism to History: Conyers Middleton', in *History and the Enlightenment*, ed. John Robertson (Padstow 2010), pp. 71-119.

Middleton shows right from the start that he has no doubt the letters are fakes. He then explains how we came to have the text at all:

These letters were first published by Eusebius, who copied from the originals, and translated them into Greek from the Syriac, in which they were written, and lay, as he affirms, in the archives of the city of Edessa, where they were preserved.

He then gives a short history of the legend and correspondence's acceptance:

The credit of this story and the two epistles is rejected and derided by many, both Papists and Protestants, yet is defended by some Protestants eminent for their learning and because of their antiquity, especially by Dr. Cave and the learned Grabe, who endeavour to establish the authority by many plausible arguments and testimonies and to refuse all the objections which have been alleged by the learned who reject it.

Middleton's purpose is therefore evidently the opposite of Fisher's; he sets out from the start to show that the letters are fakes and lacking in any historical worth. Placed within the context of these works, I would suggest that his criticism of the Abgar legend belongs to the end of his life. Middleton had spent the greater part thereof

³⁹⁰ See digital facsimile at <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/manuscripts/DESC0010.ASP?CollectionID=27&NStart=32459&CollectionName=AddandstrHead=Add.%2032459> (last accessed: 6 August 2011).

attacking orthodoxy and defending deism, at times trying to reconcile the two when there was some possibility of material and professional advancement (let us not forget he was, after all, a clergyman), but in 1747, “where he had nothing left to hope or fear from the clergy, he decided to cast caution aside. He would publish and be damned”³⁹¹. The early Church Fathers came in for especially virulent attacks; “the traditions passed on by these men”, said Middleton, “quite apart from their inherent improbability, could have no value; nor, of course, could the miracles for which they were the only authority”³⁹². Middleton’s dismissal of the Abgar legend would appear to fit in very well with the writings from this period of his life, although in the end it would remain unpublished.

Just as convinced as Middleton of the letters’ absolute lack of authenticity is the author of a tract written in Latin in 1758 and entitled *Dissertatio Historica de Christi ad Abgarum Epistola*. The author, John Isaiah Christian Heine, presented the work towards his PhD (see Figure 5.6). The text contains an introduction to the Christ–Abgar correspondence, followed by an explanation of why Christ’s letter cannot be genuine. No mention is made at all of the Image of Christ that usually accompanies the letters. Over a hundred years before Tixeront most effectively explained why the letters could not be genuine³⁹³, Heine came to same conclusion for the same reasons (p. 9):

Qui hancce scripsit epistolam, legisse videtur Mathaei Evangelium; ordinem enim narrationis ipsius Matth. 10:5 studiose servavit; Evangelista habet, *Τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέπουσι, καὶ χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσι, λεπροὶ καθαρίζονται, καὶ κωφοὶ ἀκούουσι, νεκροὶ ἐγείρονται*, cfr. verba epistolae *Τυφλοὺς ἀναβλέπειν ποιεῖς, χωλοὺς andc.*

³⁹¹ Trevor-Roper, ‘From Deism’, p. 101.

³⁹² Trevor-Roper, ‘From Deism’, p. 103.

³⁹³ Tixeront, *Les Origines*, pp. 138-140.

Whoever wrote this letter had evidently read the Gospel of Matthew; he carefully preserved the order of the narrative in Matth. 10:5; the Evangelist has, The blind shall see, and the lame shall walk, lepers shall be cleansed and the deaf shall hear, the dead will be raised, cf. the words of the letter, You make the blind to see, the lame etc.³⁹⁴

The conclusion, repeated throughout the tract, is clearly stated (p. 10):

Ergo a Christo non est scripta illa epistola.

Therefore this letter was not written by Christ.

The text of the letters can also be found in various western MSS, usually with no introduction or contextualisation, and often with no argument either for or against its authenticity (although their very inclusion in the MSS would appear to show they were considered as genuine). Among these MSS is the beautiful sixteenth-century Spanish MS *Scorialensis* h.iv.26, ff. 12^v-13^v, preserving a hitherto unedited version of the letters (Figures 5.7-5.9). The text is reproduced below in its original medieval Spanish form;

³⁹⁴ The passage from Matthew's Gospel also served as inspiration for the late third/early fourth century *Acts of Phileas*, ed. Herbert Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford 1972), pp. 328-344. In column VI (ed. cit. p. 334), Phileas replies to the question of what Jesus did to show his divinity: Λεπρούς ἐκαθάρισεν, τυφλοὺς ἐποίησεν βλέπειν, κωφοὺς ἀκούειν, χωλοὺς περιπατεῖν, ἀλάλους λαλεῖν, ἡμιζήρους ὑγιεῖς ἐποίησεν, δαίμονας ἀπὸ τῶν πλασμάτων κελεύων ἐξήλασεν, παραλυτικούς ὑγιεῖς ἐποίησεν, νεκροὺς ἀνεζώωσεν, καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἐποίησεν ("He cleansed lepers, made the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the mute speak, the withered to be well again, he drove demons from his creatures at a command, he cured paralytics, raised the dead to life, and performed many other signs and wonders").

there is no need to translate it as the text contains the standard version of the two letters (although there is no mention of the promise to keep the city of Edessa safe from its enemies).

CARTA DEL REY ABAGARO A CHRISTO nuestro redemptor ABAGARO Rey de Edessa à Iesus Salvador benigno, que en la region de Ierusalen aparecio en carne, embia salud.

Dicho me han las maravillas y curas milagrosas que aveys hecho, sanando sin medicinas ni yervas a los enfermos, y es fama que alumbrays a los ciegos y haceys andar a los lisiados y coxos, limpiays a los leprosos, alcançays los dominios y espíritus malignos: days salud a los que tienen largas y prolijas enfermedades y vida a los muertos. En oyendo esto de vos pensé ser una de dos cosas, o que vos soys Dios que aveys vajado del cielo, o que soys a lo menos hijo de Dios que obrays estas cosas tan estupendas y milagrosas. Por tanto me ha parecido de escriviros esta carta y suplicaros afectuosamente que tomeys trabajo de venirme a ver, y de curarme desta dolencia que tanto me fatiga. Y también he savido que los judíos están mal con vos, y murmuran de vuestras obras, y procuran haceros algún grave daño. Aquí tengo una ciudad, que aunque es pequeña, es cómoda y noble, y vastará para todo lo que ubieremos menester los dos.

A esta carta de Abagaro respondió Christo nuestro Salvador en esta forma.

Bien aventurado eres, o Abagar, porque sin averme visto, has creído en mí: que esso está escrito de mí, que los que me vieren no creeran en mí, y los que no me vieren creeran, y alcançaran la salud. En lo que me escribes, que deseas que te vea, hagote saber que todas las cosas para que fui embiado se han de cumplir en esta tierra donde vivo y en cumpliendolas, tengo que volver al que me embio. Despues que yo fuere partido, te embiare alguno de mis discipulos para que te libre de essa dolencia congoxosa y te de vida a ti y a los que tienes contigo.

The text of the letters is followed by a page and a half of comments edited and translated here for the first time:

Estas cartas pone Eusebio Cesariense en su historia, las quales dice que halló en los archibos públicos de la ciudad de Edessa (en la qual reynó el dicho Abagaro) con la historia de sus hechos y que estavan en lengua siriaca, de la qual él las trasladó en Griego. S. Agustin hace mencion de ellas: y S. Efren diacono de la misma ciudad de Edessa, en su testamento; y Teodoro Estudita en una epistola que escribe al Papa Pascual, hablan dellas honoríficamente.

El Cardenal Baronio dice que Christo nuestro Señor embio a Abagaro un retrato y imagen suya hecha no por mano de hombres sino milagrosamente y que por ella obró Dios muchos milagros y dio grandes victorias a los cristianos contra los infieles sus enemigos.

En cumplimiento de lo que el Señor prometio a Abagaro en su carta, escribe Eusebio, que despues de subir al cielo, embio a uno de sus setenta discipulos, llamado Thadeo, a Edessa para curar al rey y a todos los otros enfermos de aquella ciudad, y alumbrarla con la luz del evangelio y convertirla a su fe, como lo hizo.

Eusebius of Caesarea includes these letters in his history, saying that he found them in the public archives of the city of Edessa (where the aforesaid Abgar reigned) together with the story of his deeds, in the Syriac language. He translated them into Greek. St Augustine mentions them, and St Ephrem, deacon in the same city of Edessa, does the same in his testament. Theodore Studite mentions them in a letter he wrote to Pope Pascual, and they all speak of them with honour.

Cardinal Baronius says that Christ our Lord sent a portrait to Abgar, an image of himself not made by human hands but rather miraculously. God worked many miracles through it and gave great victories to the Christians over their enemies the infidels.

In fulfilment of what the Lord promised Abgar in the letter, says Eusebius, after being taken up into heaven he sent one of his seventy disciples, called Thaddaeus, to cure the king and

the other sick in the city, and to illuminate it with the light of the gospel and convert it to faith in him, and so he did.

The comments are interesting in that they attribute great importance and power to the image, and state that Thaddaeus was one of the seventy disciples. The letter from Christ to Abgar can also be found in Latin in MS *Matritensis BN 172* (15th c.), ff. 43^r-43^v, once more out of context and this time with no introduction or notes, not even the letter from Abgar to Jesus. This is usual when the letter contains the magical charm texts but this is a short version that makes no mention whatsoever of the letter's magical properties, not even the promise to keep Edessa safe (Figures 5.10 and 5.11). The two letters are also preserved in two further codices in the same Library: MS 74 (16th c.), ff. 49^v-50^r, once again detached from the Abgar legend as a whole (Figure 5.12) and MS 3488 (17th c.), f. 8^v (Figure 5.13), with the curious addition 'Jesus adoretur' ('may Jesus be adored') following Abgar's letter to Christ. This was not meant to be part of the letter, however, but rather a pious interjection by the scribe, as other texts in the MS are followed by similar phrases (e.g. 'Viva Jesus'). The texts in these two MSS do not include the promise to safeguard Edessa nor any hint of magic either in the reply to Abgar. The Abgar-Christ letters are also transmitted out of context in two fifteenth-century Greek MSS in the *Biblioteca Nacional* in Madrid: MS *gr.* 94 (4637), f. 95^r (Figure 5.14) and MS *gr.* 101 (4644), ff. 31^v-32^r (Figure 5.15). MS 94 (4637) was copied in Milan in the early 1460s by Constantine Lascaris, taken to Messina at the end of the century, came into the hands of the Duke of Uceda in 1690 and was acquired by the *Biblioteca Nacional* in 1712³⁹⁵. MS 101 (4644) was also copied by Constantine Lascaris, this time in Messina in 1490 (although some fragments belong to another hand), and followed the same route to the *Biblioteca Nacional* as MS 94 (4637).

The letters were not unknown in England either. MS *British Library, Lansdowne 440*³⁹⁶ must be dated sometime after 1688-1689 when Dr Cave's *Historia Literaria*, mentioned therein, was published in two volumes; mention is also made of Bishop John Pearson, who died in 1686. Ff. 25^r-25^v contain English versions of the Abgar-Jesus correspondence, with interesting comments hitherto unpublished (Figures 5.16 and 5.17). The text reads as follows:

The Letter of Agbarus King of Edessa to our blessed saviour

We have heard of thee and of thy cures that they are wrought by thee, without physick or herbs, tis also reported thou makest the blind to see, the lame to walk and clensest the lepers, castest out unclean spirits and devils, curest those that are afflicted with daily diseases and raisest the dead: hearing all this of thee, I thought one of these two things, either that thou art God who cam'st down from heaven to do these cures, or the SON of GOD who dost them, whereby I beseech thee hereby to vouchsafe to com unto me, and cure the disease with which I am opprest. I have also heard that the Jews slander and persecute thee but I have a city, very small indeed, but honest, which may suffice us both.

EUSEBIUS, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, affirms he copied these two letters out of the records of the city of Edessa and translated them out of the Chaldee.

THE answer of Jesus to the letter of King Agbarus.

BLESSED art thou, because thou hast believd in me, when thou thyself hast not seen me, for it is written of me, Therefore those that see me believe not in me: that those that see me not may believe and live. But as to thy request of my coming to thee, I must here compleat my mission and then be taken up to him that sent me; but after my ascension I will send one of my disciples to cure thy disease and minister life to thee, and to those who are with thee.

³⁹⁵ Cf. Gregorio de Andrés, *Catálogo de los Códices Griegos de la Biblioteca Nacional* (Madrid 1987), p. 176.

³⁹⁶ *Manuscripts in the Lansdowne Collection* (London 1819), p. 121.

These letters are also admitted for true by many very learned and judicious men, particularly Dr. Cave in his *Historia Literaria*, and Pearson in *Vindication of Ignatius*.

The text, which is interesting in itself, shows that the Abgar correspondence was occasionally the subject of learned debate in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The texts are short, especially Jesus' reply (almost a summary), and make no mention of any magical properties of the letters. Dr Cave was mentioned in the notes by Dr Middleton; the *Historia Literaria* was published in London in two volumes in 1688 and 1698 respectively. The *Vindiciae Epistolarum S. Ignatii* was published by Bishop John Pearson in Cambridge in 1672.

A copy of the Abgar to Jesus letter, without Jesus' reply, was added sometime in the fifteenth century to a thirteenth-century MS copied in England and preserved today in Yale Library, Marston Collection 252³⁹⁷. The original MS contains the *Gesta Alexandri Magni*, although the prologue was apparently damaged and replaced by four unrelated folios including a remedy for a sick horse and the Abgar letter, thus associating the letter with magic and cures, although Abgar's letter contains only a request for a cure and the text is a "faithful copy of the letter as it occurs in Eusebius-Rufinus"³⁹⁸.

A large selection of versions of the Abgar correspondence was published by Ernst von Dobschütz³⁹⁹. Apart from the Greek versions, he included various versions from Latin MSS together with a fourteenth-century Italian version⁴⁰⁰. French versions of the letters are extant in *Parisinus BN français 15219, Suppl. 738* (16th c.), ff. 46^r-46^v, and *Parisinus BN français 2810* (15th c.). The text in the latter codex, however, is not

³⁹⁷ The MS is described, with a photograph, in Lutz, 'The Apocryphal', pp. 61-62 and Plate 4, opposite p. 58.

³⁹⁸ Lutz, 'The Apocryphal', p. 62. Rufinus translated Eusebius into Latin in the early fifth century and this is how the legend was disseminated in the West.

³⁹⁹ 'Der Briefwechsel zwischen Abgar und Jesus', *ZWT* 41 (1900), pp. 422-486.

⁴⁰⁰ Von Dobschütz, 'Der Briefwechsel', p. 476.

the Abgar legend but rather the *Fleur des estoires de la terre d'Orient* (ff. 226^r-267^v), although the miniature on f. 230^r (Figure 5.18) shows the messenger presenting the Mandyllion to King Abgar. The style, the dress and the background are entirely western in nature. On f. 230^v the text confuses the Mandyllion with the Veronica:

La cite du roy Agar, au qui le Seigneur mande la Veronique, qui maintenant est à Romme.

The city of King Abgar, to whom the Lord sent the Veronica, which is now in Rome.

There are two further French MSS, one in Paris, MS *BN 50* (15th c.), f. 225^r, containing a miniature of Christ giving the letter to Ananias (Figure 5.19) while the text tells the story of Thaddaeus' preaching in Edessa and mentions the letters (hence the miniature) but not the Image; and the other in Brussels, MS *Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique 9017* (15th c.), f. 335^r, which transmits the Abgar story and contains a miniature of the baptism of the king (Figure 5.20)⁴⁰¹. The latter codex was illustrated by the Master of Girart de Roussillon by order of Philip the Good in 1462. As with the Paris miniatures, this scene is placed in a decidedly western-looking city and the clothing follows the same style.

The memory of the Abgar letters and the story of the Image of Edessa (separate from its magical connotations) did not completely die out in the West, although it did become limited to academic books and discussions. As we shall see, the use of the letters as a popular magical charm or amulet survived much longer and with a much

⁴⁰¹ *Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique 9017* (15th c.), f. 335^r. Cf. Etelvina Fernández González, 'Del santo Mandilyon a la Verónica: sobre la vera icona de Cristo en la edad media', in *Imágenes y Promotores en el Arte Medieval: Miscelánea en Homenaje a Joaquín Yarza Luaces*, ed. María Luisa Melero (Barcelona 2001), p. 358: "... el apóstol Judas Tadeo bautiza al soberano, convertido al cristianismo, después de haberse curado de la lepra".

wider scope, although this sometimes involved the letters quite devoid of their original context and no doubt its bearers had little or no idea of either the legend behind the correspondence or the Image of Edessa. The major and so far the only exception to this is MS *Parisinus BN lat.* 2688 (13th c.). The text, edited and published by von Dobschütz⁴⁰², who calls it a Latin Armenian version of the Abgar legend, is accompanied by eight miniatures showing the Image of Edessa, which have been partially analysed and discussed by Ragusa and Tomei⁴⁰³. Ragusa focuses on the relationship of the Paris miniatures to Byzantine examples⁴⁰⁴, while Tomei uses the miniatures to suggest that the Mandyllion came to Rome in 1208⁴⁰⁵. F. 70^v shows the artist in Jerusalem trying, unsuccessfully, to paint a portrait of Christ, while f. 75^r in the Paris manuscript (Figure 5.21) shows something not portrayed in any of the other illustrated witnesses to the Abgar story⁴⁰⁶, namely, Jesus and the cloth immediately after his face has been miraculously transferred onto the linen. The actual cloth shown here is larger than in the other miniatures. There is a full-page miniature on f. 77^r (Figure 5.22) showing how the cloth was found again at Hierapolis, although the city is identified in this MS as ‘Menpente’. It seems to be in a kind of frame, with the cloth flowing out of the back. The episode of the cloth and tiles being hidden in the well, whose waters then become miraculous, is depicted on f. 79^r (Figure 5.23), in which the face is seen in the same frame while the rest of the cloth flows around it. There are four miniatures showing Abgar and his courtiers receiving and worshipping the Image, on f. 82^r (Figure

⁴⁰² Von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, vol. 2, pp. 143-152.

⁴⁰³ Isa Ragusa, ‘The Iconography of the Abgar Cycle in Paris ms. Lat 2688 and its relationship to Byzantine cycles’, *Miniatura* 2 (1989), pp. 35-51; Alessandro Tomei, ‘Il manoscritto lat. 2688 della Bibliothèque Nationale de France: la Veronica a Roma’, in *Medioevo: immagine e racconto. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma 27-30 settembre 2000*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Parma, 2003), pp. 398-406.

⁴⁰⁴ Ragusa, ‘The Iconography’, pp. 40-41: “This paper will not discuss the complete Abgar cycle in Paris, but only those scenes related to Byzantine examples”.

⁴⁰⁵ Tomei, ‘Il manoscritto’, p. 404: “Dire che questa prevalenza sia da attribuire all’arrivo a Roma del *Mandyllion* trafugato nel 1204 del palazzo imperiale bizantino, anche se fortemente suggestivo, non è del tutto lecito”.

5.24), f. 85^r (Figure 5.25), f. 86^v (Figure 5.26) and f. 87^v (Figure 5.27), where the linen is once again out of its frame. It is only in this version (f. 96^f) (Figure 5.28) that Abgar's widow takes the Image of Edessa to Jerusalem (there is no mention of its stay in Constantinople) and, according to Ragusa, was included in the story "to distance it from the Byzantine tradition"⁴⁰⁷. Not only is this the only complete and original western version of the Abgar legend, but it also changes the details of the story to make it more western and less eastern⁴⁰⁸; it is, therefore, of great importance as it is the only fully westernised and illustrated version of the legend.

If the texts related to the legend, letters and image are scarce in the West, even more so are the pictorial depictions of the Mandylion. There are a few examples in Italy: in the early fourteenth-century church of San Giovanni Evangelista in San Cesario de Lecce (Figure 5.29), and the mid/late fourteenth-century example from the crypt of the church of San Francesco in Irsina (Figure 5.30)⁴⁰⁹. Probably the best-known Mandylion in Italy is the one in Monreale in Sicily, dating from the twelfth century, although the Byzantine influence is so heavy that the image can hardly be described as western in its origins. What is definitely western is the restoration of the mosaic: "Christ's face has a decidedly 'modern' look and his beard appears to be oddly embedded in a kind of collar-cum-cravat such as might be devised by a nineteenth century artist"⁴¹⁰ (Figure 5.31).

⁴⁰⁶ I.e. Gelati and Alaverdi in Georgia: cf. below, pp. 296-299; and the Pierpont Morgan scroll: cf. above, pp. 110-117.

⁴⁰⁷ Ragusa, 'The Iconography', p. 47.

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. Ragusa, 'Mandylion – Sudarium', pp. 97-106, which argues that the Vatican Mandylion was a deliberate attempt to present the relic as a western rival to the Image of Edessa, and MS lat. 2688 formed part of this. Despite the fact that everyone would know that the Image had been in Constantinople, this fact was deliberately omitted in favour of Jerusalem and Rome.

⁴⁰⁹ Analysed together with other faces of Christ (not the Mandylion) in Marina Falla Castelfranchi, 'Il Mandylion del Mezzogiorno Medioevale', in *Intorno al Sacro Volto: Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo (secoli XI – XIV)*, ed. Anna Rosa Calderoni Masetti, Colette Dufour Bozzo and Gerhard Wolf (Venice 2007), pp. 187-208.

⁴¹⁰ Ernst Kitzinger, 'The Mandylion at Monreale', in *Arte Profana e Arte Sacra a Bisanzio*, ed. Antonio Iacobini (Rome 1995), p. 575.

A unique case of a western Mandyllion can be seen in the recently restored church of Saint Leger in Terres de Chaux, France. The church was built in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Two angels are holding the cloth with Christ's face over the arch of the choir (Figures 5.32-5.34). The cloth is not identified by any kind of inscription, although the type and style clearly depict a Mandyllion, and not a Veronica. The two angels holding the cloth rather than a single woman, the absence of the crown of thorns on Christ's head and the sharply pointed forked beard and hair show that this painting was inspired by eastern depictions of the Image. Another well-known French Mandyllion is the Holy Face of Laon (Figure 5.35), although it is not western in origin; it comes from the Balkans⁴¹¹.

The lack of knowledge about Abgar and the Mandyllion comes to the fore when depictions thereof are labelled as 'Veronicas'. Such is the case with a clay tile dating from ca.1800 (Figure 5.36), measuring 20.7 x 20.7 cm, presently kept in the National Ceramics Museum in Valencia, Spain⁴¹². The tile shows a man holding a cloth with the face of Christ on it, and is identified as St Judas Thaddaeus. The museum catalogue⁴¹³ and the technical information card for the piece both identify the cloth on the tile as a Veronica, but no explanation is given for why Judas Thaddaeus would be holding the cloth rather than Veronica herself. The Abgar legend and how Thaddaeus came to have a cloth showing the face of Christ were here forgotten, despite the text related to this tile; the Spanish *gozos* (joys, from the Latin *gaudium*) are religious poems sung on the feast day of saints. The verses corresponding to Judas Thaddeus are:

⁴¹¹ Cf. the exhibition catalogue *Byzantium, Faith and Power*, ed. Helen C. Evans, (New York 2004), p. 174, where the Holy Face of Laon is said to be "Slavic". Cf. also Grabar, 'La Sainte Face', pp. 5-36, esp. pp. 14-16.

⁴¹² Museo Nacional de Cerámica y de las Artes Suntuarias González Martí, Inventory No. CE1/08903. The tile was made in L'Horta Nord in the province of Valencia.

⁴¹³ Inocencio Pérez Guillén, *Pintura Cerámica Religiosa: paneles de azulejos y placas* (Madrid 2006), p. 191.

Si en vuestro rostro el Señor
copió su más fiel traslado:
Judas Thadeo sagrado,
dadnos consuelo y favor⁴¹⁴

If on your face the Lord
copied the most faithful imprint:
Holy Judas Thaddeus,
grant us consolation and favour

Still in the city of Valencia, in the church of San Nicolás Obispo, there is a chapel devoted to St Judas Thaddaeus, and in the chapel a statue of the saint holding the Image of Edessa and a plaque on the wall showing the Image. As far as I am aware, this church has never been mentioned in the literature on the Image of Edessa. The original church dates from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, although the decoration is later, dating to the seventeenth century. The statue of St Judas Thaddaeus (Figure 5.37 and detail, 5.38) is from the late seventeenth century. The saint holds the image of the face of Christ on a piece of cloth while bloodstains are depicted on Christ's forehead, presumably from the wounds caused by the crown of thorns and thereby evidencing the artist's confusion with the Veronica. The saint also holds an axe, a reference to the traditional belief of how he was martyred. The plaque on the wall (Figure 5.39), which parishioners touch as an aid to their prayers to the saint, depicts the face on the cloth clearly inspired by the face on the Shroud of Turin (the two cloths are identified as one

⁴¹⁴ Pérez Guillén, *Pintura*, p. 192.

and the same on the church's web site⁴¹⁵). The chapel and its images represent a late version of the legend, mixing distinctly western traditions therein.

If MS *Parisinus BN lat.* 2688 is the only complete western textual version of the Abgar legend, the equivalent in art is surely the altarpiece of Santa Clara, today held in the Episcopal Museum of Vic in Spain (Figure 5.40). The painting was completed in 1414, and is generally considered one of Lluís Borrassá's (ca.1360-ca.1425) masterpieces. Very little is known of the artist's life. The picture depicts the letter from Jesus being presented to King Abgar, who is healed by its touch. The text of Christ's reply to the king can be read on the letter in Latin. Behind Abgar and the letter is the Image of Edessa, the face of Christ on a small white cloth. The style of the painting is entirely western.

The Abgar scene is just one of various depictions on the altarpiece, which measures 610 x 422 cm, and is crowned by the crucifixion⁴¹⁶. Other scenes include St Dominic rescuing the fishermen and other images taken from the *Legenda Aurea*; this is presumably where the painter obtained the information about the Abgar legend for the depiction. No inscriptions are evident on the painting; we can suppose that not everybody who saw the Abgar scene would immediately know exactly what it was.

With some notable exceptions, it seems that the Abgar legend was virtually unknown, at least on a popular level, in the West. From the hundreds, if not thousands, of depictions of the Mandylion in Orthodox churches, and the hundreds of MSS and different versions of the legend in the East, we find a smattering of texts and pictorial references in the West. Even when we do find them, they are often misunderstood and

⁴¹⁵ http://www.sannicolasvalencia.com/san_judas.htm (last accessed: 20 November 2012): "En nuestra parroquia existe una gran devoción por San Judas. El lienzo con la Santa Faz de Cristo, que nuestra imagen de San Judas lleva en sus manos, es la Sábana Santa, con que se envolvió el cadáver de Jesús. Según una tradición San Judas, por encargo de Jesús se presentó en la ciudad de Edesa (Asia Menor) para curar a su rey, llevando consigo el sagrado lienzo".

⁴¹⁶ A high resolution picture of this masterpiece, with the possibility of zooming in on details, is accessible online at <http://cultura.gencat.cat/patrimoni/retauleadvocacio/index.htm> (last accessed: 7 July 2014).

seen as the Veronica, due to ignorance of the original story. On the other hand, the use of Christ's letter as a magical amulet was much more widespread in the West, though the letter was often used out of context, with no reference to the legend behind it or even to Abgar's letter that gave rise to the 'magical' reply. This is examined in the next section.

5.2 Jesus' letter to Abgar as a magical amulet

The supernatural power of Jesus' letter to Abgar was suggested as early as the first known mention of the correspondence, that is, in Eusebius: the letter contains the promise to heal Abgar, and so its association with healing is central. In addition, some MSS describe the reply from Jesus as 'short but very powerful' (*ὀλιγοστίχου μὲν πολυδυνάμου*)⁴¹⁷. The meaning of the word 'magic' is usually nowadays associated with something considered anti-Christian, something that most Christian denominations would condemn (among fundamentalist evangelical circles even popular stage magicians are often condemned), although this is more a matter of the word itself than the actions that lie behind it⁴¹⁸. Wearing medals of saints to protect the bearer constitutes magic even when condoned by the Church, the use of holy water for healing purposes is magic even when approved by the Church, even though people who indulge in such practices would no doubt argue that their actions are unrelated to magic⁴¹⁹. A

⁴¹⁷ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* I:XIII.

⁴¹⁸ The bibliography on magic in the ancient and medieval world is immense; fundamental reading for this section includes Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London 1971); Jeffrey Spier, 'Byzantine Magical Amulets and their Tradition', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 56 (1993), pp. 25-62; Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith (ed.), *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (New York 1994); Henry Maguire (ed.), *Byzantine Magic* (Washington 1995); Anastasia Vakaloude, *Η μαγεία ως κοινωνικό φαινόμενο στο πρώιμο Βυζάντιο (4ος-7ος μ.Χ. αι.)* (Athens 2001); Don C. Skemer, *Binding Words: Textual Amulets in the Middle Ages* (Pennsylvania 2006); Peers, 'Magic'. For an explanation of the sacred/magical nature of specifically biblical texts, cf. Julio Trebolle Barrera, *La Biblia judía y la Biblia Cristiana: Introducción a la historia de la Biblia* (Madrid 1993), pp. 145-146.

⁴¹⁹ Hence the title of a book like Morton Smith's *Jesus the Magician* (San Francisco 1978) is deliberately provocative, appealing as it does to the twentieth-century understanding of the word "magician" (closer to "trickster" or "illusionist" than Jesus' actions actually expose). This said, some of Jesus' actions, like the cure of the blind man by means of the anointing of mud and washing the eyes

good example of magic condoned by the Church can be regularly seen in north-west Spain, in the village of San Andrés de Teixido, where the faithful offer up wax figures of ailing bodily parts and even of sick cows to the saint in the local church (Figure 5.41); this is undoubtedly pure magic under the guise of Christianity. In the same way, people who carried the Abgar letter with them as protection against the evils listed therein would no doubt have considered their doing so as a Christian act rather than a magical one⁴²⁰. The association of King Abgar and the letters he wrote to and received from Christ with the force of magical protection had such an effect in the east that in the modern Georgian language the word *avgaroz* is used to denote all kinds of amulets for protection⁴²¹. The general idea in medieval times seems to have been that some people could definitely call upon and use supernatural power; if it came from God it was good, and logically, if the same power came from the Devil, it was evil.

The Abgar letter's inherent 'power' was soon expanded from the basic text in Eusebius to include a promise to keep the city of Edessa safe from enemies who attacked it. This led to its being placed over the gateway not only of the city of Edessa

(John 9), can in fact only be described as magical methodology regardless of the theology underlying the story. For an analysis of magic in the early church, how the Fathers reacted to it and the difficulties of defining what was magic (i.e. worked by demons) and what was miraculous (i.e. worked by God), cf. Maguire, *Byzantine Magic*, esp. chapter 3; idem, 'Magic and the Christian Image', pp. 51-72, and chapter 4; Alexander Kazhdan, 'Holy and Unholy Miracle Workers', pp. 73-82. The difficulties involved in establishing definitions are expressed in Thomas, *Religion*, p. 57: "The line between magic and religion is one which it is impossible to draw in many primitive societies; it is equally difficult to recognize in medieval England". Cf. Karavieri, 'Magic', p. 404: "The Church was also concerned about everyday magic, the use of incantations and amulets ... Those wearing phylacteries, protective amulets, should be expelled from the Church".

⁴²⁰ Cf. Richard P. H. Greenfield, 'A Contribution to the Study of Palaeologan Magic', in *Byzantine Magic* (ed. Henry Maguire), Washington 1995, p. 148: "... for most people involved with these things, whether as clients or practitioners, there was no obvious barrier, no clear divide that distinguished what they were doing in their own minds or in those of their peers from any other religious, and so in this context Christian, activity". Carla Sfameni sees no solution to the problem of definition; cf. 'Magic in Late Antiquity: The Evidence of Magical Gems', in *Religious Diversity*, p. 438: "Modern scholars continue to debate the relationship between magic and religion, but no definition is universally accepted", and again on p. 439: "It is difficult to give a clear definition of magic because there was no single ancient view of magic and the concept of magic itself changed in different contexts and periods".

⁴²¹ Cf. Lidov, 'The Mandylion', p. 181.

but also of other cities⁴²²; in fact, this was the Christianisation of a previous pagan custom of placing a protective image (*apotropaion*) over city gates⁴²³. One such inscription was found over the doorway to a house in Ephesus, dated to the fifth or sixth century⁴²⁴ (Figure 5.42). Another was discovered in Philippi in 1914, with fragments from both letters, but almost immediately lost again during the First World War⁴²⁵. The inscription, which contains a unique reading in comparison with all other known texts of the letters (’Ιδοὺ after [ποιῶν] ταῦτα in Abgar’s letter), cannot be dated with any certainty⁴²⁶. Another copy of Christ’s letter engraved in Greek on stone was found by a tomb at Kirk Mağara, near Edessa, dated to the fifth century⁴²⁷. It should also be recalled that while the pilgrim nun Egeria makes no mention of the letter being placed over the gate, the supernatural power of the letter is evident in her narration of the attack on Edessa in 545⁴²⁸:

Quod cum dixisset tenens manibus levatis epistolam ipsam apertam rex, ad subito tantae tenebrae factae sunt, foras civitatem tamen ante oculos Persarum, cum iam prope plicarent

⁴²² Cf. Alexei Lidov, ‘Holy Face, Holy Script, Holy Gate’, in *Intorno al Sacro Volto: Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo (secoli XI – XIV)*, ed. Anna Rosa Calderoni Masetti, Colette Dufour Bozzo and Gerhard Wolf (Venice 2007), pp. 145-162; idem, ‘The Mandyllion’, pp. 179-192.

⁴²³ Cf. Karavieri, ‘Magic’, p. 404: “Another form of protective image, the *apotropaion*, was usually placed by the gate of a city or a building to avert evildoers. They could be placed in niches in city walls, near the gates. The Greeks erected stationary *apotropaia*, especially of Apollo and Herakles”.

⁴²⁴ Paul Trebilco, *The early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* (Tübingen 2004), p. 48, note 223.

⁴²⁵ Cf. Denis Faissel, *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de Macédoine* (Paris 1983), pp. 185-189; Charles Picard, ‘Un texte nouveau de la correspondance entre Abgar d’Osroène et Jésus-Christ gravé sur une porte de ville à Philippes (Macédoine)’, *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 44 (1920), pp. 41-69. Lidov, ‘Holy Face’, pp. 145-162, states that the fragments are “now preserved in the local archaeological museum of Philippi” (p. 146); he mentions the above publications that claim they were lost in the First World War but does not mention when, or if, the fragments were rediscovered. In a personal communication dated 29 November 2011, he said “I have not seen the plates with this inscription myself. Yet some Greek colleagues said that they are in the storage of the museum in Philippi”.

⁴²⁶ Faissel, *Recueil* p. 189: “une date postérieure à Eusèbe mais difficile à préciser”, although cf. Picard, ‘Un texte’, p. 54: “l’inscription de Philippes doit être vraisemblablement rapprochée du début du V^e siècle”. An earlier date was suggested by Bernard Hassoulier, ‘Un nouvel exemplaire de la célèbre correspondance apocryphe entre Abgar, dynaste d’Édessa, et Jésus Christ’, *Comptes-rendus des séances de l’année, Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, 64^e année, No. 2 (1920), p. 89: “L’inscription de Philippes date vraisemblablement de la fin du quatrième ou du début du cinquième siècle”.

⁴²⁷ Segal, *Edessa*, p. 66: “On epigraphic grounds this inscription is to be ascribed to the fifth century, although it may be earlier” (the inscription is reproduced on Plate 31b of the book).

⁴²⁸ Cf. Arce, *Itineratio*, p. 236.

civitati, ita ut usque tertium miliarum de civitate essent: sed ita mox tenebris turbati sunt, ut vix castra ponerent et pergirarent in miliario tertio totam civitatem.

When he said this and the king was holding up the open letter in his hands, a thick darkness suddenly overcame the outskirts of the city before the Persians' eyes. They were drawing close to the city, about three miles away, and they were so blinded by the darkness that they could hardly make camp and besiege the city from three miles away.

The bishop of Edessa took Egeria to the city gate to read her the letter and still followed the same custom whenever there was danger; hence the protective force of the text was activated. The supernatural force of the letters at Edessa is also evident in a twelfth-century epic poem telling the story of the First Crusade⁴²⁹:

Haec ibi temporibus permansit epistola multis
Atque ea ab adversis tutavit menia cunctis
Nam si barbaricus furor illuc adveniebat
Baptisatus eam puer alta in arce legebat
Moxque vel in pacem gens ex feritate redibat
Aut terrore fugam divino tacta petebat.

This letter remained there for a long time
And defended the walls from all the city's enemies,
And if a barbarian fury came thereto
A baptised boy read the letter from a high archway
And people would soon become pacified from their fierceness
Or touched by divine terror would flee.

The placing of the letter over a city gate, or over the door of a private household, was clearly done in memory of the text's protecting the city of Edessa, generalising the promise made to Abgar and his city and extending it to wherever the letter was placed. According to the sixth-century Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, the letter of Christ magically protected Edessa from Persian Kawad's attack in 503:

Kawad, king of the Persians, (now) considered coming against Areobindus at Edessa. The Tayy king Nu'man was also urging him on because of what had happened to his caravan, but a tribal chief from Nu'man's (city of) Hirta who was a Christian said, 'Your majesty should not trouble to go to war against Edessa, for over it there is an irrevocable declaration of Christ whom they worship, that no enemy shall ever gain control of it'⁴³⁰.

This protective function is especially clear in the Philippi inscription, in which Jesus' reply is not addressed specifically to Abgar, or rather the king's name is omitted so that the letter is endowed with a more general application, although it should also be noted that the text at the beginning of the reply is conjectural and based on the space available⁴³¹. Other inscriptions with the letter(s) have been found at Gurdju (Pontus II), dated to the fourth or fifth century, and Euchata (Pontus I). The Abgar letters were still sufficiently well-known when the Ephesus lintel was discovered to warrant a short notice in the Daily Express (2 May 1900)⁴³².

⁴²⁹ Cf. C. W. Grocock, *The Historia Vie Hierosolimitane of Gilo of Paris and a Second, Anonymous Author* (Oxford 1997), pp. 134-135, and Skemer, *Binding Words*, p. 98, note 74.

⁴³⁰ Trombley and Watt, *The Chronicle*, p. 71.

⁴³¹ Picard, 'Un texte', p.44.

⁴³² Cf. *The Daily Express*, 2 May 1900. Mirković, *Prelude*, p. 2, mistakenly attributes the occasion to the discovery of a "papyrus fragment" in Ephesus, although the fact that it was indeed the lintel is confirmed by Francis Crawford Burkitt, *Early Eastern Christianity (St. Margaret's Lectures, 1904)*, (London 1904), p. 15.

A Coptic version of Christ's letter to Abgar exists on a wooden tablet, presently MS *Manchester Ryl. Copt. Suppl.* No. 50, which was most probably meant to be hung over a doorway to protect the house⁴³³. I inspected the board in person and photographed it for the first time ever (Figure 5.43). It measures 45.5 x 12 cm, and is approximately 1.3 cm thick. There are ten complete lines of text, and a further half line on the lower right. The text reads as follows (in translation)⁴³⁴:

Copy of the letter from Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who writes to Abgar, the king of Edessa: Greetings! Blessed are you and that which is good shall happen for you, and blessed is your city whose name is Edessa. Although you have not yet seen, you have believed; you shall receive according to your faith and your good will. Your diseases shall be healed and if you have committed any sins as a man they shall be forgiven you, and Edessa shall be blessed forever. The glory of God shall grow in her people and faith and love shall grow in her streets. I, Jesus, have written and commanded these words: Because you have loved much I will put your name in eternal memory and honour and blessing of all the generations who shall come after you in your whole country, and they shall hear it unto the end of the world! I, Jesus, have written this letter with my own hand. In the place where you fix this manuscript there shall be no power of the adversary nor shall any activity of the impure spirit be able to come near or fall upon that place. Farewell in peace forever! In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

On the verso of the tablet (Figure 5.44) is a Greek invocation to the Trinity, and the scribe's name: Paul, from Megaloktēma in the nome of Oxyrhynchus. This hand has been dated to the late seventh or early eighth century, and we can assume that the same

⁴³³ Cf. Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala and Amalia Zomeño, 'Abgari regis fabulæ versio iuxta narrationem magnæ ecclesiæ Edessæ aedificationis', *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 5 (2008), p. 148 (whose title is in Latin while the main text of the article is in Spanish); Søren Giversen, 'Ad Abgarum: The Sahidic Version of the letter to Abgar on a wooden tablet', *Acta Orientalia* 24 (1959), pp. 78-79.

⁴³⁴ Adapted from Giversen, 'Ad Abgarum', pp. 72-75 (Coptic with facing page English translation).

is valid for the Coptic text⁴³⁵. There are nail holes in the wood, presumably for hanging it over a doorway or on a wall. The interesting detail is that in relation to the Coptic text of the Abgar letter, the nail holes are at the bottom of the wood. On the reverse side, below the scribe's name, can be seen remains of Greek letters under the two lines identifying the scribe (Figure 5.45), although nothing can now be made out. The Abgar letter could have been a rewriting on a previously used wooden board.

In the text there is no mention of either the Image or the Abgar legend, although some knowledge thereof is assumed from the mentions of Edessa and how the city will be protected by Christ's promise. The primary use of the text is apotropaic, showing how the use of the letters (and later the Image) was adapted for magical and protective purposes.

This protective function of the letter was later taken over by the Image (it was the image, not the letter, that was placed over the city gate of Edessa in the *Narratio de imagine edessena*), and this is most probably behind the placing of the Mandylion over an archway in so many churches⁴³⁶. The custom of placing Christ's letter to Abgar over a doorway, analogous to the Jewish *mezuzah*, was apparently still evident in rural England until the eighteenth century⁴³⁷.

⁴³⁵ I would like to thank Miss Danae Bafa, doctoral student at University College London, for dating this hand and kindly offering a transcription of the inscription on the verso lines. Giversen, 'Ad Abgarum', p. 78, states that: "Since the characters are written on wood, it is not possible from a paleographical point of view to state with any certainty from what date the present handwriting is".

⁴³⁶ Cf. Michele Bacci, *Il pennello dell'evangelista: Storia delle immagini sacre attribuite a san Luca* (Pisa 1998), pp. 71-72: "In ogni caso ciò che più ci interessa sottolineare è che le qualità magiche o semimagiche che l'immagine poteva esser chiamata ad esprimere costituivano comunque una conseguenza della funzione primaria dell'immagine edessena, quella cioè di porsi come il simbolo fondante della coesione interpersonale, interétnica e interreligiosa della comunità cittadina, in quanto capace di definire con le proprie origini leggendarie e le proprie virtù prodigiose l'eccellenza di Edessa 'città santa'".

⁴³⁷ Cf. Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents*, p. 155. The idea is repeated in Picard, 'Un texte', p. 43: "... dont la persistance est attestée, jusqu'au XIX^e siècle de notre ère, en Angleterre notamment"; Mirković, *Prelude*, p. 2; Fernández González, 'Del santo Mandilyon', p. 354 note 6: "Esto puede explicar el hábito generalizado en Inglaterra de colocar, hasta el siglo pasado, a la puerta de las casas el texto de la referida carta". Cureton wrote in the nineteenth century and referred to the "last century", i.e. the eighteenth century. Picard and Fernández González wrote in the twentieth century (Mirković in the twenty-first) and seem to have understood that Cureton did so too. Cureton himself attributes the information to Jeremiah Jones, *New and Full Method of settling the Canonical Authority of the New Testament* (Oxford 1798), vol. II, p. 6: "The common people in England have it [scil. the letter] in their

The use of icons to defend cities was a widespread custom in the medieval Christian world. The Image itself defended Edessa against the Persians in the sixth century, while during the attacks on Constantinople in 1204 and 1453 icons were carried around the city walls and even into battle⁴³⁸. This use of icons and relics was not limited either to Constantinople or even to the east: when the Franks invaded Spain in 541, the inhabitants of the city of Zaragoza paraded the tunic of St Vincent (a local deacon martyred under Diocletian) around the walls and the invaders withdrew⁴³⁹.

As the letter from Christ to Abgar took on more of a magical nature, however, additions to the text accrued. One of the earliest versions to do so is *Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 4469* (Figure 5.46)⁴⁴⁰, dated to the late fifth century. The Oxyrhynchus letter from Abgar to Jesus basically follows the Eusebius text, except for an addition (partly in Coptic, partly in Greek) at lines 21-24, interrupting the request to come and heal Abgar with a personal request to come quickly and heal a certain Epimachus:

ΕΚΘΕΡΑΠΙΕΤΕΝ ΕΠΙΜΑΧΕ ΠΩΗΡΕ ΛΙ [] ΙΑ ΤΑΧΤ ΤΑΧΤ ΤΑΧΤ ΙΝΑ
ΘΕΡΑΠΙΕΥΣΙΣ ΕΠΙΜΑΧΕ ΠΩΗΡΕ [] Μ ... ΤΑΧΤ ΤΑΧΤ ΤΑΧΤ

houses, in many places, fixed in a frame with our Saviour's picture before it, and they generally, with much honesty and devotion, regard it as the word of God, and the genuine epistle of Christ". Cureton also says that "I have a recollection of having seen the same thing in cottages in Shropshire".

⁴³⁸ For 1204 cf. *Chronica Albrici Monachi Trium Fontium*, ed. Paulus Scheffer-Boichorst, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptorum*, vol. 23 (Hanover, 1874), pp. 631-950. There is an English translation of the part relating to the Fourth Crusade in Alfred J. Andrea, *Contemporary Sources for the Fourth Crusade* (Leiden 2000), pp. 291-309. For 1453 cf. Roger Crowley, *Constantinople, the Last Great Siege, 1453* (London 2005): "All the most holy icons of the city were brought out from their shrines and chapels"; and Steven Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople 1453* (Cambridge 1965), p. 121: "... a last appeal was made to the Mother of God. Her holiest icon was carried on the shoulders of the faithful round the streets of the city, and everyone who could be spared from the walls joined in the procession". For earlier occasions, cf. Robert Ousterhout, 'The Virgin of the Chora: an Image and its Contexts', in *The Sacred Image East and West*, ed. Robert Ousterhout and Leslie Brubaker (Chicago 1995), p. 95: "The Virgin was credited with the salvation of the city on several occasions, checking the Avar attack of 626 and the Arab siege of 717. In each instance, apparently a procession bearing the Virgin's robe around the walls preceded the victory".

⁴³⁹ Cf. Gregory of Tours, *Historia Francorum* III:29, and E. A. Thompson, *The Goths in Spain* (Oxford 1969), p. 15.

⁴⁴⁰ Edited with an introduction, translation and notes by F. Maltomini, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vol. LXV (London 1998), pp. 122-129.

Heal Epimachus son of [], quickly quickly quickly, heal Epimachus son of [],
quickly quickly quickly

The letter then resumes with the expected text, with more additions at the end:

Ἔδεσσα καὶ Ἔδεσσα ε[] [] [] τουτῆ ἀπελ[] [] εστα [] ἐν καενδοξα
. ου . [] νον καὶ σκεπασου ὅτι σοὶ ἐλπίς ἡμῶν. θεράπευε ταχὺ ταχὺ ταχὺ (magical
characters) φωνὴ κ(υρίου)υ διακόπτοντος φλόγα πυρός. Ιαω Σαβαωθ Ελωε Αδωναι. ζωη
θεραπέυεις ταχὺ ταχὺ ταχὺ

Edessa and Edessa ... and protect, because you are our hope. Heal quickly quickly
quickly (Magical characters). The voice of the Lord who splits the flame of fire. Ioa Sabaoth
Eloe Adonai. Life. Heal quickly quickly quickly.

The additions are quite remarkable in that they personalise Abgar's request to
Jesus and apply it to the bearer⁴⁴¹. It is usually Christ's letter to Abgar that was used as
an amulet, but here it is the king's letter that is adapted. The magical characters (for
which the editor refers to the plates) could possibly represent the seven seals in later
magical versions of Christ's reply, although the symbols are quite different and they
would be out of place in Abgar's letter. They are more likely to be magical symbols but
unrelated to the seals. This text was no doubt used as an amulet, to be carried with the
petitioner not only for specific healing actions but for general protection.

Another similar personalised version of the correspondence (Jesus' letter to
Abgar) can be found in a Coptic parchment fragment in Vienna, which at the end of the
epistle adds the words 'God, Jesus Christ, heal Christodora the daughter of Gabrilia.

⁴⁴¹ Cf. the sixteenth-century Vienna Scroll, which personalises Christ's letter to Abgar with a promise
for the health of a son of Antonius, analysed above, pp. 120-126.

Amen, let it be so quickly quickly!’⁴⁴². The ‘quickly quickly’ (ταχὺ ταχὺ) motif seems to have been a standard formula, added to the personalised plea for healing⁴⁴³. The use of the actual text of the letter was not essential for invoking the power that lay therein. A sixth- or seventh-century Coptic amulet contains the following extraordinary text (in translation)⁴⁴⁴:

Give me, all of you, the second letter that our Lord Jesus Christ, the son of the ever-living God, wrote to him, to Abgar the king, the king at the city, to give deliverance through Ananias the messenger, the copyist, that it might give health to those who are in every infirmity, whether an infirmity from illness or a potion or magic or a drug. In general, it must deliver from everything evil, becoming a source of healing for those who are in every infirmity, in the peace of God, Amen. Jesus Christ, help!

The rest of the amulet contains a prayer attributed to Elijah the Tishbite, and the SATOR AREPO palindrome⁴⁴⁵. The amulet suggests that the text of the Abgar letter was so well-known that a reference to it was sufficient to unleash its power; the text itself was not necessary. We should assume that the ‘second letter’ refers to Jesus’ reply to Abgar, in other words Abgar’s letter to Christ was the ‘first’ letter, rather than two letters written by Christ himself. The promises for protection are the same, in sense at least, as the additions to the actual text of the letter.

⁴⁴² Cf. Drioton, ‘Un apocryphe’, p. 308. The scroll in question is *Regn.* 55 (no date given). There is a further reference to a Coptic magical scroll with the Abgar letter in E. A. Wallis Budge, *Amulets and Superstitions* (London 1930, repr. New York 1978), p. 132: “One contains a copy of the apocryphal letter of King Abgar to Christ, and the first words of each of the Four Gospels (Oriental 4919 (2))”.

⁴⁴³ The formula can be paralleled in Egyptian love spells: cf. Karavieri, ‘Magic’, p. 412: “You holy names and powers, be strong and carry out this perfect spell. Now, now. Quickly, quickly”, and is still used in modern Greek: *πρωί πρωί, γρήγορα γρήγορα, ποτέ ποτέ ποτέ*.

⁴⁴⁴ *Vindobensis* K 8302 (*Rainer* AN 191), translated by Marvin Meyer in Meyer and Smith, *Ancient*, pp. 113-115.

⁴⁴⁵ The five-line Roman magic square SATOR AREPO TENET OPERA ROTAS was a palindrome readable in four directions. The literal translation is ‘Arepo the sower guides the wheels by his work’, although the letters can be rearranged to spell out PATER NOSTER in cruciform, with the letters A and O (i.e. *alpha* and *omega*) on the ends of the arms of the cross. Cf. Skemer, *Binding Words*, pp. 116-117.

Another amulet version is the *Gothenburg Papyrus*⁴⁴⁶, containing a fragment of the Abgar letter with some unique readings. Apart from the full name and title of Jesus (Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Υἱὸς Θεοῦ καὶ υἱὸς Μαρίας), the version includes the assurance that Jesus himself wrote the letter (ἐγὼ Ἰησοῦς χειρὶ [leg. χειρὶ] τῆ ἐμῆ ἔγραψα) and more importantly, a hint of the magic charm aspect in the sentence ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαι ἀποθέσθαι διόλου διαμαρτίαν [leg. διαμαρτίαν], κ(αι) ὅπου δ' ἂν προβληθῆ μου τὰ γράμματα, the first part of which is unique to the version in this fragment.

Carrying magical amulets was a widespread practice in the Middle Ages⁴⁴⁷, inherited from the ancient world. Magical and protective amulets were common in all ancient civilisations, whether as carved stones or written texts. Examples of textual amulets are numerous in the Middle Ages, from the smallest of fragments to scrolls measuring over five meters in length, such as the *Pierpont Morgan Scroll*, with some even reaching almost six meters. Such is the fifteenth century scroll written by Percival of Coverham Abbey in Yorkshire (Figures 5.47 and 5.48)⁴⁴⁸.

The magical additions to the Abgar letter are also present in the Anglo-Saxon Latin MS *British Library Royal 2.A.xx*⁴⁴⁹ (Figure 5.49). At the end of Jesus' reply to Abgar, the following words were added:

⁴⁴⁶ Herbert Youtie, 'A Gothenburg Papyrus and the Letter to Abgar', *The Harvard Theological Review* 23 (October 1930), pp. 299-302.

⁴⁴⁷ Cf. Thomas, *Religion*, p. 33: "The most common of these amulets ... was intended to serve as a defence against the assaults of the Devil and as a preservative against thunder, lightning, fire, drowning, death in child-bed and similar dangers", and p. 212: "Some of the other charms ... were debased versions of Christian prayers or barely intelligible bits of semi-religious verse, describing supposed episodes in the life of Christ or the saints". Cf. also 'Christian Charm Discovered on 1,500-year-old Tax Receipt', *Medievalists.net*, on-line journal dated 11 September 2014 at <http://www.medievalists.net/2014/09/11/christian-charm-discovered-1500-year-old-tax-receipt/> (last accessed: 12 January 2015).

⁴⁴⁸ Described by W. H. Legge, 'A Decorated Mediæval Roll of Prayers', *Reliquary* 10 (1904), pp. 99-112.

⁴⁴⁹ *Royal 2.A.xx*. According to the British Library on-line catalogue description, the MS contains liturgical and devotional collections in Latin, with later Anglo-Saxon and other glosses. Descriptions of the MS can be found in the *Catalogue of Ancient Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London 1884), pt. ii, p. 60; W. de G. Birch, *An Ancient Manuscript belonging to Newminster* (Cambridge 1889), app. A, p. 101; F. E. Warren, *Antiphonary of Bangor* (London 1895), Pt. ii, p. 97, and the whole of the original Latin text (without the glosses and additions) is printed in the appendix to the *Book of Cerne*, ed. A. B. Kuypers (1902) and in Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents*, p. 154. The history of this private prayer-book is by no means certain, but the nature of the ornament and various liturgical points show so much

Siue in domu tua siue in ciuitate tua siue in omni loco nemo inimicorum tuorum dominabitur et insidias diabuli ne timeas et carmina inimicorum tuorum destruuntur. Et omnes inimici tui expellentur a te siue a grandine siue tonitrua non noceberis et ab omni periculo liberaueris, siue in mare siue in terra siue in die siue in nocte siue in locis obscures. Si quis hanc epistolam secum habuerit secures ambulet in pace. Amen.

Whether in your home or in your city or in any place, none of your enemies will have dominion, and you need not fear the treacheries of the devil and the curses of your enemies will be broken, and all your enemies will be driven away from you. Whether in hail or thunder, you will not be injured, and you will be free from all dangers, whether on sea or on land, whether in day or in night, or in strange places, whoever has this letter with him will go about safely in peace. Amen⁴⁵⁰.

MS *British Library Cotton Galba A.xiv*, which also dates from before 1066, contains Christ's reply to Abgar, out of context and with no hint given of the rest of the legend. The magical properties of this copy of the letter are reduced to one sentence at the end: 'salvus eris, sicut scriptum est, qui credit salvus eris' (You will be saved, as it is written, whoever believes will be saved)⁴⁵¹.

Celtic influence as to make it probable that it was written in Mercia or Northumbria, while added collects prove it to have belonged in the tenth or eleventh century to a Benedictine monastery. Cf. also Christopher M. Cain, 'Sacred Words, Anglo-Saxon Piety, and the Origins of the Epistola salvatoris in London, British Library, Royal 2.A.xx', *All Kinds of Writing, Syriac Articles in English* (no date), on-line journal at http://www.syriacstudies.com/AFSS/Syriac_Articles_in_English/Entries/2010/12/8_Sacred_Words_Anglo-Saxon_Piety_and_the_Origins_of_the_Epistola_Christopher_M._Cain.html (last accessed: 1 July 2014).

⁴⁵⁰ Translation from Cain, 'Sacred Words', pp. 168-189. Cain dates the MS to the late eighth or early ninth century and states that "the source of the addition ... in the manuscript is obscure". Patrick Considine dates the manuscript to the seventh century, Considine, 'Irish Versions', p. 238, while Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents*, p. 154, says it is "very antient" (sic).

⁴⁵¹ This early eleventh-century manuscript was edited by Bernard James Muir, *A Pre-Conquest English Prayer Book (BL MSS Cotton Galba A.xiv and Nero A.ii)* (Woodbridge 1988), Christ's letter, which is in the former of the two witnesses mentioned in the book title, is on p. 47.

Another version of the letter with magical additions can be found in Oxford, MS *Bodl. Lat. Liturg.* f. 9 (31 357), ff. 82^r-83^r (Figures 5.50-5.52), which is datable to the very early fifteenth century and copied for Catherine of France (1401-1437), who later married Henry V of England (1386-1422)⁴⁵². With the exception of a few sentences this version of the letter remains hitherto unpublished⁴⁵³:

Beatus es, Abgare rex, qui me non vidiste et in me credidiste. Multi sunt qui me viderunt et in me non credidierunt. Sed propter quod misiste ad me ut veniem, scito quod cum impletum tempus fuit incipiendi a patre meo quia oportet me implere omnia propter que missus sum. Et cum revertar ad patrem meum deinde tibi que mitto, item mittam tibi epistolam manu mea scriptam et ubicumque fueris et eam semper te portaveris, salvus eris a grandine a flumine a tonitruo et ab omni periculo et nemo inimicorum tuorum dominabitur tibi. Et insidias diaboli non timebis. Carmina inimicorum tuorum destruentur et inmundi spiritus a te excellentur⁴⁵⁴ et salvus eris in civitate, in domo, in via, in agro et ubicumque fueris.

Blessed are you, King Abgar, as you have not seen me and yet you have believed in me. There are many who have seen me and not believed in me. About the request that you sent me, however, asking me to come to you, you should know that when the time for beginning was fulfilled by my father, because I should fulfil everything I was sent for. And when I return to my father, then what I am sending you, I will also send you a letter written in my own hand, and wherever you go and take it with you, you will be safe from hail, rivers, thunder and all danger, and none of your enemies will be able to overcome you. Neither shall you fear the wiles of the devil. The spells of your enemies will be destroyed, unclean spirits will be driven away from you and you will be safe in the city, in your house, in the country and wherever you may go.

⁴⁵² Cf. John C. Hirsh, 'Latin Prayers as a Lesson in Writing and Devotion for a Lady of Standing', *Chaucer Review* 41.4 (2007), pp. 445-454, and Skemer, *Binding Words*, p. 103.

⁴⁵³ With the exception of a few sentences in Skemer, *Binding Words*, p. 103, note 87.

⁴⁵⁴ I.e. expellentur.

A section of the text appears to be missing, or the copyist has jumbled up some text in the middle section, which contains two anacoloutha. The letter starts immediately after the preceding text, with no introduction or title and nothing to indicate the break in the text except for a horizontal cross. Similarly, at the end of the text only a capital letter indicates the beginning of the next text, a travel amulet starting with the words ‘*Jesus autem transiens per medium illorum ibat*’⁴⁵⁵. It is interesting that here the power of the letter lies in the bearer simply carrying it; there is no need to read it. The same idea is present in MS *Canterbury Cathedral Add. 23* (13th c.), which consists of a single sheet of magic and charms⁴⁵⁶ (Figure 5.53). Once again, Christ’s letter to Abgar is decontextualised and no reference is made to either the legend or to Abgar’s letter. At the end of the letter, the following apotropaic formulas are added:

Iterum vero mitto tibi epistolam istam manu mea scriptam et ubicumque fueris vel perrexeris semper illam tecum portabis, et salvus eris a grandine, a pluvia, a tonitruo, a fulgure, ab omni periculo. Nemo inimicorum tuorum et accusationes destruentur. Inmundi spiritus expellentur salvus eris in civitate in domo in agro in mari in ventis validis in tempestate in carceribus in obscuris locis in omnibus periculis fiat fiat. Amen.

I am sending you this letter written in my own hand so that wherever you are or wherever you go, if you take it with you, you will be safe from hail, rain, thunder, lightning and all dangers. None of your enemies⁴⁵⁷ and their accusations will fall through. Unclean spirits will be driven out and you will be safe in the city, in your house, in the countryside, at sea, in

⁴⁵⁵ For a different interpretation of this kind of amulet, cf. Thomas, *Religion*, p. 276: “The inscription, *Jesus autem transiens per medium eorum ibat*, on the noble coined by Edward III, was taken by some to constitute immunity against both theft of the coin and harm to its owner”.

⁴⁵⁶ Cf. Lutz, ‘The Apocryphal’, p. 153, edition of text in Skemer, *Binding Words*, pp. 285-304.

⁴⁵⁷ There is clearly a lacuna in the text here (none is indicated in the edition).

strong winds, in storms, in prison, in dark places and in all danger. May it be so, may it be so, Amen.

The list of dangers is much more complete than in the previous MSS, although the choice of words at the beginning of the addition would seem to suggest a common origin. An interesting detail in the Canterbury MS is the special emphasis placed on the seals and the figures, promising further protection against various means of death; the seals also play a significant role in the magical Abgar letters discussed below (pp. 239-244).

In the Bodleian and Canterbury MSS, the letter is completely decontextualised and no references are made to the Abgar legend, although the beginning of the letter refers to a previous letter from Abgar to Christ. The important part of the letter, especially in the magical scrolls, are the (supposed) words of Jesus promising protection to the bearer and/or reader of the letter in various different situations of danger. In other words, the apotropaic aspect of the letter has replaced the legend in importance. Perhaps the text of the letter could not be disassociated from its original version (while still retaining the semblance of being the letter from Jesus to Abgar) any more than by simply entitling the text as the Abgar letter but containing no further reference to the legend behind the name. This kind of text can be found in a fifteenth-century French amulet roll from an (unspecified) private collection⁴⁵⁸. The text reads as follows:

Ait Abgarus rex mitto tibi epistolam meam et in manu mea scriptam, ut ubicumque ambulaveris sive in domo sive in civitate sive in flumine sive in omni loco non agitaberis vel ab igne vel ab aqua non oporteat te timere inimicus tuus vel adversarius non dominabitur tibi neque incidias diaboli tenebris de omnibus in mundum periculis liberaberis.

⁴⁵⁸ Edited (with no further details about the MS) in Skemer, *Binding Words*, pp. 305-307.

King Abgar said, I am sending you my letter written in my own hand, so that wherever you may go, whether at home or in the city or on a river or anywhere, you will not be troubled by fire or water, you should not fear your enemy or the wiles of the devil, your adversary will not overcome you and you will be freed from all darkness and dangers in the world.

As is evident from this text, the reference to the Abgar episode is limited to the barest mention of the king's name. The part of the letter referring to the first letter and the request for Christ to come to Edessa is now lost and the main body of the text contains only the apotropaic additions – in other words, the additions have taken over and eliminated the original letter. Furthermore, the letter is presented as though it were Abgar himself and not Christ promising all the advantages to be obtained from the letter. It would seem that the memory of the original story had become so blurred that only the name of Abgar was now associated to the magical words.

In opposition to the magical versions of the letter with no reference to the legend that lay behind their creation, one of the most interesting magical versions of the letter can be found in a fifteenth-century Synaxarion codex from Mount Athos, *Iveron 433*, ff. 215^a-218^a (Figure 5.54)⁴⁵⁹. This is, as far as I am aware, the only example of a duplicated version of the letter within a regular Synaxarion text, in the sense that the apotropaic text appears within the context of the entire Abgar legend. Christ's letter to Abgar finishes with the promise to keep the city safe from its enemies and after repeating the introductory phrase 'For it is written about me' it continues as follows (col. a, lines 24 ff.):

⁴⁵⁹ *Iveron 433* (15th c.), ff. 215^a-218^a. The text was edited by Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 96-97.

Γέγραπται γὰρ περὶ ἐμοῦ, μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες με καὶ πιστεύσαντες, ἐπεὶ δὲ σὺ μὴ ἑωρακίως με πεπίστευκας, ἠτοίμασθαί σοι σωτηρία ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος, καὶ τῇ οἴκῃ σου πρὸς σωτηρίαν τῶν βλέπόντων σε. Καὶ γὰρ ἔκλινα οὐρανοὺς καὶ κατήλθον, διὰ τὸ γένος τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ᾗκησα δὲ παρθενικὴν οἴκησιν ἵνα τὴν παράβασιν τὴν ἐν τῇ παραδείσῳ ἐξαλείψω, ἑαυτὸν ἑταπείνωσα, ἵνα ὑμᾶς μεγαλύνω. Αὕτη δὲ μου ἡ ἐπιστολή, ὅπου ἐὰν προβληθῇ, εἴτε ἐν δικαστηρίῳ εἴτε ἐν ὁδοῖ, ἢ ἐν πυρέσσουσιν, ἢ φρικτιῶσιν, ἢ ὑπέρβασιν φαρμάκων πάθωσιν, ἢ ὅσα τούτοις ὅμοια ἔσονται διαλυθήσονται. Ἔστω δὲ ὁ φορῶν αὐτὴν ἀγνὸς καὶ καθαρὸς ἀπεχόμενος ἀπὸ παντὸς πράγματος, καὶ λεγέτω αὐτὴν εἰς ἴασιν εἶναι καὶ χαρὰν βεβαίαν, διότι ὀλόγραφος γέγραπται τῇ ἰδίᾳ μου χειρὶ μετὰ τῆς σφραγίδος τῆς ἐμῆς· ἐσφράγισα δὲ τὴν ἐπιστολήν μου ταύτην ἑπτὰ σφραγίσιν, αἵτινες ὑποτεταγμέναι γράμμασιν ἑβραϊκοῖς σημανθείσας, αἵτινες μεθερμηνευόμεναι, τοῦτο δηλοῦσι· Θεοῦ Θεῶν Θεῖον Θαῦμα + Ψ Ε Υ Ρ Α Δ. Ὁ μὲν σταυρὸς δηλοῖ ὅτι ἐκὼν ἐπάγη ἐν αὐτῷ. Τὸ ψ δηλοῖ ὅτι ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος οὐκ εἰμὶ ἀλλ' ἄνθρωπος κατὰ ἀλήθειαν. Τὸ ε δηλοῖ ἐγὼ θεὸς πρῶτος καὶ πλήν μου οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος. Τὸ υ δηλοῖ ὑψηλὸς βασιλεὺς καὶ θεὸς τῶν θεῶν. Τὸ ρ δηλοῖ ῥύστης ἐγεγόμεν ἡ τοῦ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένους. Τὸ α δηλοῖ ἀναπέπαυμαι ὑπὸ τῶν Χερουβίμ. Τὸ δ δηλοῖ διόλου καὶ διηλεκτῶς καὶ διαπαντὸς καὶ διαμένων εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.

For it is written about me, blessed are those who have not seen me and yet believe. You have not seen me and yet you have believed, and so the salvation of your soul and body and your household is stored up for you and for the salvation of those who look on you. I came down from heaven for the sake of mankind, to dwell in a virgin in order to wipe away the sin that was committed in the Garden of Eden. I humbled myself in order to glorify you. This is my letter and wherever it is read, whether in a court of justice or on the road, if you have fever or you are shivering or are suffering from an overdose of medicine or anything else like this, you will be freed from it. May he who bears it with him be holy and clean and kept safe from all trouble. May it be read to heal and give great joy, because the text was written by my own hand and I have sealed my letter with my own seal, seven seals in Hebrew letters, which are given below, and when translated mean, godly wonder of the God of Gods + Ψ Ε Υ Ρ Α Δ. The cross means that I underwent it willingly. The Ψ means that I am not merely a man (ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος) according to appearances but in truth. The Ε means that I am God first (ἐγὼ θεὸς πρῶτος) and

besides me there is none. The Υ means that I am a mighty king (ὕψηλός βασιλεύς) and God of Gods. The Ρ means that I became the deliverer (ρύστης) of the human race. The Α means that I rest (ἀναπέπαυμαι) on the Cherubim. The Δ means that I am eternal, everlasting, perpetual, and I exist (διόλου καὶ διηνεκῶς καὶ διαπαντός καὶ διαμένων) for ever and ever⁴⁶⁰.

The magical version of the letter can be found in other Greek witnesses⁴⁶¹, although this is the only version I know of that forms part of a longer text concerning the Abgar legend.

Don C. Skemer argues that the latest development of the Abgar letter was the so-called *Heavenly Letter*⁴⁶². It is true, as we have stressed, that Christ's letter to Abgar developed as a magical charm completely out of context in relation to the original legend, and there are even examples of the letter mentioning Abgar's name but containing only the magical additions and no part of the original text. The *Heavenly Letter*, however, is an entirely different text and bears no textual relation whatsoever to the Abgar correspondence. This is evident from the text of the letter, which can be read in an eighteenth-century copy from my own collection (Figures 5.55-5.57).

Robert Priebsch suggested that the letter from heaven originated towards the end of the sixth century in Spain or the neighbouring parts of Gaul, which at the time formed part of the same Visigothic kingdom⁴⁶³. The Abgar letter could not be described as a heavenly letter of any kind, as it was (according to the legend) written on earth

⁴⁶⁰ See above, note 198.

⁴⁶¹ E.g. *Protaton* 83 (12th c.), ff. 288^v-290^r (Figure 2.2), and *Docheiariou* 235 (18th c.), whose pages are unnumbered. I studied both these manuscripts *in situ* and edited and translated the texts in Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 116-123.

⁴⁶² Skemer, *Binding Words*, pp. 96-105. The author constantly calls the Abgar letter “a heavenly letter”, which is not correct, as according to the legend it was written during Jesus' earthly life, in a specific physical location, namely Jerusalem.

⁴⁶³ *Letter from Heaven on the Observance of the Lord's Day* (Oxford 1935), p. 19. Cf. also Hippolyte Delehaye, ‘Note sur la légende de la lettre du Christ tombée du ciel’, *Bulletin de l'Académie Royale de Belgique: Classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques et de la classe des beaux-arts* (1899), pp. 171-213; Clovis Brunel, ‘Versions Espagnole, Provençale et Française de la Lettre du Christ tombée du Ciel’, *Analecta Bollandiana* LXVIII (1950), pp. 383-396 and W.R. Jones, ‘The Heavenly Letter in

while Christ was still alive, while according to the related stories these later epistles came down from heaven and were found in miraculous circumstances. The actual text itself of the *Heavenly Letter* bears no relation to that of the original Abgar cycle, although some later versions share some of the apotropaic promises. For example, a version of the *Heavenly Letter*, whose discovery was suitably ‘modernised’ and left by an angel at Magdeburg in 1783, promises that ‘... that man who carries this letter with him, and keeps it in his house, no thunder will do him any harm, and he will be safe from fire and water ...’ (Figure 5.58).

These same apotropaic promises can be found in another version of the *Heavenly Letter* with perhaps the most interesting origin attributed⁴⁶⁴: the letter was supposedly found in Christ’s wounds by one Joseph of Barmophe (probably a corruption of Joseph of Arimathea) when the dead body was taken down from the cross. The text reads as follows:

Ioseph of Barmophe founde this lettre uppon our lord iesu crist woundes at the takynge downe of the cros The which was wryting be our lord ffyngers And who that bere this lettre uppon hym shall not deye of no euel dethe. Nor of no fals take of man or woman nor of no fals Iuge be Iuged nor no venym ne fyre nor water nor lightnyng nor thondrying shal not be overcom And yf þat a woman be with childe bere this uppon hyr neither þe woman ne þe childe shal not perrysh.

The similarity of the apotropaic promises, however, is not sufficient to claim that the *Heavenly Letter* is a late development of the Abgar letter, for the origin, situation, content and force of the two are radically different.

Medieval England’, *Medievalia et Humanistica* 6 (1975), pp. 163-178. None of these authors suggest any relation to or even make any mention of the Abgar letters.

The Image of Edessa eventually replaced the letters in just about all aspects, even as a magical talisman. It is the Image itself to which magical powers are attributed in the Acts of Mar Mari⁴⁶⁵:

Le linge fut emporté comme source de secours et déposé dans l'église d'Édesse, jusqu'à ce jour⁴⁶⁶.

The linen cloth was taken as a source of aid and placed in the church of Edessa, where it is kept to this day.

The same idea can be found in the so-called longer version of the Ethiopic version of the Abgar legend⁴⁶⁷:

This image is of me and none other. Submerge it in the ocean and see if it disappears. Burn it in fire, and see if it is damaged. Thus will you understand that this image is my own strength and not that of any other. This image will bring about anything you wish for. It will answer all your requests in my name.

Not only this, but Jesus speaks to the image on the cloth and the image answers:

⁴⁶⁴ Cf. László Sándor Chardonnens and Rosanne Hebing, 'Two Charms in a Late Medieval English Manuscript at Nijmegen University Library', *The Review of English Studies*, New Series 01/2010 (2010), pp. 1-12. This author also describes the Abgar correspondence as a "heavenly letter".

⁴⁶⁵ Introduction and French translation in Jullien and Jullien, *Les Actes*.

⁴⁶⁶ Jullien and Jullien, *Les Actes*, p. 67.

⁴⁶⁷ Edited and translated by Sylvain Grébaud, 'Les Relations entre Abgar et Jésus', *Révue de l'Orient Chrétien* 3 Ser. i (21) (1918-1919), pp. 73-87 (edition of Ethiopian text), 190-203 (translation into French). Cf. Wallis Budge, *Amulets*, p. 197: "The Ethiopians believed that Moses, Solomon, Christ and His Apostles and Disciples were all magicians, and therefore the Books of the Old and New Testaments and copies of them were often regarded as amulets".

Our Lord Jesus said to the image, ‘Go with the messengers to Abgar the Nazarene’. The image replied to our Lord and said, ‘I am going, o word of the Father’s justice’. After saying this, the image left with the messengers and went to Abgar.

The magical power of the image is also evident in the thirteenth-century work by Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia*⁴⁶⁸. In Book III: 26 we read the following:

In Edissa equidem civitate, ob presentiam sancte ymaginationis Christi, nullus hereticus vivere potest, nullus paganus, nullus ydolorum cultor, nullus Iudeus; sed nec locum illum barbari possunt invadere.

As a result of the presence of the holy image of Christ, no heretic can live in the city of Edessa, no pagan, no idolater, no Jew; and barbarians cannot invade the place.

Gervase does continue with a description of the powers of the letter, too, although the magical virtues thereof have also clearly been transferred to, or shared with the Image.

5.3 The seals on Christ’s letter to Abgar

Seals in themselves enjoy a lengthy tradition as magical objects. There are protective seals from the Hebrew world⁴⁶⁹, Persia⁴⁷⁰ and Muslim North Africa⁴⁷¹. The seals appended to some versions of Christ’s letter to Abgar were no doubt believed to contain some kind of magical power, together with that of the text itself. The power of seals (although not specifically the Abgar ones) is further shown at the end of the Canterbury

⁴⁶⁸ Ed. Banks and Binns, *Otia*, p. 608.

⁴⁶⁹ The three seals of the three angels, protecting Adam, Eve and Lilith: cf. Wallis Budge, *Amulets*, pp. 224-225.

⁴⁷⁰ Cf. Wallis Budge, *Amulets*, pp. 125-126.

amulet text⁴⁷², where the seals and figures have their own legends. This amulet contains the Abgar letter but the inclusion of the seals to the text thereof is limited to the East. The seals are unknown in the Latin versions of the letter and in the western vernacular versions – they are to be found only in the Greek, Georgian and Armenian versions. There was no fixed version of the seals themselves; they vary from one text to another, as do the explanations. Sometimes the explanations do not even correspond to the seals in the same letter. The seals are usually mentioned in studies and articles about the particular text in question, but no detailed comparative study has yet been undertaken. Some of the texts with the seals included in this first original analysis were not available before they were published in my own book on the Image of Edessa.

The seals appear in two miniatures of texts related to the Abgar legend: *Pierpont Morgan* 499 (Figure 5.59) and the *Gelati Gospels* in Georgia (Figure 5.60). In other MSS they are either larger than the rest of the text (e.g. the *Alaverdi gospels* [Figure 5.61] and *Athos Protaton* 83 [Figure 5.62]), or in red so that they stand out (e.g. *Athos Docheiariou* 235 [Figure 5.63]). In the aforementioned Synaxarion MS with the magical version of the letter (*Athos, Iveron* 433), the seals are a later addition in red in the margin, although the explanations thereof form part of the original text (Figure 5.54). The seals and the explanations in the Pierpont Morgan scroll can be seen above (pp. 110-117). The seals in this manuscript are different from all others in that in the illustration the contracted form of Jesus Christ (Ἰ[ησοῦ]ς Χ[ριστῶ]ς) is present, and the word NIKΑ (conquer) at the end; these would appear to be magical additions conferring on the text, the seals and their bearer even greater protection. The fact that one of the miniatures in this text is devoted exclusively to the seals shows the great importance they were given.

⁴⁷¹ Cf. Wallis Budge, *Amulets*, p. 40, for an amulet known as the Seven Seals, coinciding in number with the seven seals on the letter from Christ to Abgar.

⁴⁷² Skemer, *Binding Words*, pp. 301-304.

The seals in the *Gelati Gospels* are given in Greek, despite the text being in Georgian, and coincide with the Pierpont Morgan scroll: + Ψ X E Υ P Δ. The explanations given in Georgian also coincide with the Pierpont Morgan scroll, i.e., they depend on the Greek words, not the translation into Georgian:

The + Cross reveals that I was willingly nailed on it.

The ψ (Ψ) reveals that I am not a mere man, yet a man in full truth.

The χ (Χ) reveals that I rest above the Cherubim.

The ε (Ε) reveals that I am the first God, and there is no other [God] besides Me.

The υ (Υ) reveals that I am the highest Lord and the God of Gods.

The ρ (Ρ) reveals that I became a Redeemer of the race of man.

The Δ (Δ) says, that I am altogether truthful and perpetual and alive and shall abide forever⁴⁷³.

In contrast, the seals in the Armenian version⁴⁷⁴ are translated and made up of the first letters in Armenian words:

X: the cross (*xač'*) to which I was nailed by humans.

S: not just (*sosk*) man, but true God and true man.

K': overlooking the Cherubim (*K'erovbēic'*), resting on them.

Ē: I (*es*) am God and there is no other apart from me.

V: God is above (*veragoyn*) all gods.

P': Saviour (*P'rič'*) and life of the world.

⁴⁷³ Text from Irma Karaulashvili, *The 'Epistula Abgari': Composition, Redactions, Dates* (unpublished PhD thesis, Central European University, Budapest, Department of Medieval Studies, 2004).

⁴⁷⁴ Outtie, 'Une forme enrichie', p. 137. Outtie gives the Armenian text and French translation; my English translation is based on the French text.

B: Whole (*bovandak*) and alive I am eternal.

The explanations are similar to the others, except for the penultimate one. The letter in this Armenian version also contains the promises for safekeeping for the bearer. The explanations in the Georgian gospel MS of Alaverdi are reduced to an absolute minimum:

These are the seven seals: †YECϞ†D. The Cross, the Resurrection of Souls, the Hope of Christians, Eternal Life, the Ascender towards the Light of Heaven, the Cross, the Glory of Christ. This is the explanation of these seals⁴⁷⁵.

The seals are also translated into Georgian and the explanations are based on this language. Another Georgian manuscript contains a fuller explanation of the seals⁴⁷⁶:

And I have sealed this epistle with seven seals, which are written below:

‡ (X) ϣ (Ψ) ‡ (X) ‡ (E) օ (Υ) ϣ (P) ρ (Δ)

The explanation of each Seal is:

The Cross shows that I was willingly nailed to the cross.

The ϣϣϣ (Ψ) predicts the hidden secrets, because He became a man truly revealed, and not hidden.

The ‡ϣϣ (X) predicts His resting on the Cherubim.

The ‡ϣϣ (E) says: “This is the first God, and there is no other [God] besides Him.”

The օϣϣ (Υ) says that He is the highest Lord and the God of Gods.

The ϣϣϣ (P) says that I became a Redeemer of the race of man.

The ρϣϣ (Δ) says, that I am great, and high, and powerful, and alive forever.

⁴⁷⁵ Text from Karaulashvili, *The ‘Epistula Abgari’*.

⁴⁷⁶ *Sinai* 78 (10th c.). Text from Karaulashvili, *The ‘Epistula Abgari’*.

The explanations basically coincide with those in the Pierpont Morgan scroll, with the addition of the ‘prediction of secrets’ in the second seal. A very similar explanation can be found in the thirteenth-century Largvisi Gospels, also from Georgia⁴⁷⁷:

+ , Ψ, X, E, Υ, P, Δ

This is the explanation of the Seals:

The + Cross reveals that I was willingly nailed on it.

The ἰο reveals that I am not a mere man, yet a man in full truth.

The ο reveals that I rest above the Cherubim.

The ϩϷ reveals that I am the first God, and there is no other [God] besides Me.

The ζ reveals that I am the highest Lord and the God of Gods.

The Ϟϣω reveals that I became a Redeemer of the race of man.

The ϩϩϩϩ reveals that I live eternally, perpetually and forever and that I shall abide forever.

Six of the seven seals in the Synaxarion MS with the magical additions (*Iveron* 433) are the same as the Pierpont Morgan scroll (+ Ψ E Υ P Δ) while the third seal (X) is replaced by A in the penultimate place. There are some interesting points to mention in relation to this MS, mainly the inclusion of the four *thetas*: Θεοῦ Θεῶν Θεῶν Θεῶν (godly wonder of the God of Gods) immediately before the expansion of the seals as in all other Synaxarion texts⁴⁷⁸, the variation in the order of the seals and the use of A

⁴⁷⁷ Text from Karaulashvili, *The ‘Epistula Abgari’*.

⁴⁷⁸ Although no magical property is suggested in the Synaxarion. Cf. the unique depiction of the four thetas on a painted Mandyllion in the monastery of Varlaam at Meteora (Figure 6.149). For a similar text, see Eirene Harvalia-Crook, ‘A Witness to the Later Tradition of the *Florilegium* in *The Letter of the*

rather than X to explain the resting on the Cherubim (the A is the first letter of the Greek verb ἀναπέπαυμαι, meaning ‘to rest’).

In the late witness *Docheiariou* 235, the seals are the same as in the Pierpont Morgan scroll, although the order is different: + Ψ Υ Ε Χ Ρ Δ. The explanation of the seals in this MS leaves much to be desired - the explanation for the letter Υ is out of order and the grammar in the sentence about the Cherubim and Seraphim is faulty (this version is unique in mentioning the Seraphim).

The seals in the Lipsius text are also similar to in the Pierpont Morgan scroll, although the last one is an A rather than Δ. The meaning is the same, although the letter stands for the Greek word αἰῶνας rather than the various words beginning with Δ.

In the Escorial MS, the seals are presented although no explanations are given:

μετὰ ταύτης σφραγίδος τῆς ἐμῆς ἐσφράγισα δὲ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἑπτὰ σφραγίσιν αἰτίνας
ὑποτεταγμέναι εἰσὶν αὐτε + Ψ Ε Ζ Θ Υ Δ

I have sealed this letter with my own seal, and these seven seals are as follows + Ψ Ε Ζ
Θ Υ Δ

The lack of explanations is frustrating as it would have been interesting to see what was meant by Z and Θ. In the Vienna Scroll the seals Ψ and X are given in the reverse order, although the explanations are the same.

Three Patriarchs (BHG 1386): An Anonymous Collection of Icon Stories (*Hierosolymitanus S. Sabas gr. 105*), in *Porphyrogenita: Essays on the History and Literature of Byzantium and the Latin East in honour of Julian Chrysostomides*, ed. Charalambos Dendrinos, Jonathan Harris, Eirene Harvalia-Crook and Judith Herrin (Aldershot 2003), p. 348.115-116: θαῦμα θαύματος θαυμαστότερον.

Some of the seals seem to have been more or less common to all the known versions of the letters containing them, although there are always variations and incongruences. This shows the very fluid nature of the seals, just as with the actual text of the magical version of Christ's letter to Abgar, of which no two versions are exactly the same. Just as with the text of the letters themselves, there seems to have been no fixed or standard version – everything was adapted according to the needs of the moment. It seems that this was not a linear development – the text did not develop as time passed by, as there are versions with no magical additions that are later than the texts with the variations, and the use of the letter as an amulet was an early development.

5.4 The relationship of the Eastern Mandylion with the Western Veronica

The tradition of the imprinting of Christ's face onto a linen cloth is better known in the West from the legend of Veronica and her cloth (sometimes called the Vernicle). This story too is apocryphal (it is not in the canonical Gospels) and late (the story of the imprinting of Christ's face onto the cloth dates from the thirteenth century). By way of introduction, the incorrect interpretation of the name Veronica as 'vera icona' is surprisingly widespread⁴⁷⁹; the name Veronica is in fact nothing more than the Latin transcription of the Greek name Βερενίκη, a dialectical form derived from Φερενίκη, i.e. 'the bearer of victory'.

⁴⁷⁹ E.g. Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing*, p. 11; Fernández González, 'Del santo Mandilyon', in the title of the article and again on p. 360; Georges Didi-Huberman, *Devant l'Image* (Paris 1990), p. 227; and Gerhard Wolf, 'From Mandylion to Veronica', in Kessler, *Holy Face*, p. 156. Gervase of Tilbury is unique in attributing the meaning of the name to the fact that the woman walked doubled up, *Otia Imperialia* III:25, ed. Banks and Binns (Oxford 2002), p. 604: " .. propter diutinam passionem fluxus curva indecens; unde a varice, poplitis vena incurvata, Varonica (quia incurvata) docta est" ("as a result of her prolonged suffering from the haemorrhage she walked doubled up, and so she was called Veronica ['the bent one'], from *varix*, the name of the bent vein in the knee").

It has been argued that the story of Veronica and her cloth is a development of the Abgar legend⁴⁸⁰. This, however, is a misinterpretation of the evidence. The stories are radically different. Veronica was a woman whom Jesus encountered on the way to Calvary, wiped his face and saw that an image of his face had been imprinted onto the cloth (hence these images usually, but not always, show the crown of thorns and bloodstains)⁴⁸¹; while Abgar was a man, a king, who never met Jesus – Christ imprinted his face onto a cloth just before the passion (this is so even if the Gethsemane version is accepted). In depictions of the Veronica it is almost always Veronica herself who is holding the cloth, whereas except for the icon from St Catherine's in the Sinai Peninsula, Abgar is never shown holding the Mandylion. There are numerous depictions of the Image of Edessa held up by two angels, one on either side of the cloth; a well-known Veronica that is also held up by two angels, just like the Mandylion, is the Face of Christ by Albert Dürer, dating from 1513 (Figure 5.64). In the end, we could argue that all that the two images have in common is a possible desire to explain the existence of a piece of linen cloth with an image of Christ imprinted thereon.

It is also true that the two images were often confused in both literature and art. The Mandylion at the Romanian skete of the Prodromos on Mount Athos shows the face of Christ with the crown of thorns (Figure 6.83) (see below, p. 285), although no bloodstains. As mentioned above (p. 156), a fifteenth-century Spanish manuscript of the Life of St Alexis describes the image in Edessa as follows:

estava la ymagen de Nuestro Señor Jhesu Christo que es dicha Verónica

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. Wolf, 'From Mandylion', pp. 153-180, and Fernández González, 'Del santo Mandilyon', pp. 353-371.

there was the image of Our Lord Jesus Christ called the Veronica

The aforementioned MS *Parisinus BN français* 2810 (15th c.), f. 230^v, also states that the Lord sent the Veronica to King Abgar. Confusing the two images, however, is not equivalent to one developing from the other. The Abgar legend and the Image of Edessa survived in the West, albeit in a limited way, at the same time as the Veronica story was growing in popularity, while Veronica, although accepted as a saint in the Orthodox Church, is never related to the Mandyllion. The fact that in some versions of the Veronica legend she is portrayed as a princess of Edessa⁴⁸² is a further example of the confusion between the two, but does not show that the western version had its roots in the eastern.

As for art, the vast majority of pictorial depictions of the Mandyllion are to be found in churches, whereas the majority of Veronicas are paintings, nowadays in art galleries. As for the literature, there is surprisingly much more written in the west concerning the Mandyllion than there is about the Veronica; scholarly books are surprisingly scarce in this field, and one of the few devoted specifically to the Veronica seems to have been written with the sole purpose of provocation⁴⁸³.

⁴⁸¹ Although in the *Legenda Aurea*, in the text where Veronica's cloth heals the emperor Tiberius, the origin of the image is not specified anywhere; it is just said that Jesus imprinted his image onto the cloth. Cf. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni (ed.), *Legenda Aurea*, 2 vols. (Florence 2007), vol. 1, p. 398.

⁴⁸² Cf. L. C. Casartelli, 'The Origin of the Church of Edessa', *The Dublin Review* 104 (1889), p. 348.

⁴⁸³ Ewa Kuryluk, *Veronica and Her Cloth* (Oxford 1991). A couple of quotations will suffice to prove the point; pp. 7-8: "The fifteenth-century double portraits of Veronica and Christ show a human pair but evoke a cosmic couple, with the woman-cloth functioning as the womb and earth, and Jesus' head as the sun, penis, child"; pp. 90-91: "While King Abgar and Jesus communicated with each other by means of correspondence – language – the Hemorrhissa and Christ came into contact by touching each other. An official relation between two public men was thus replaced with a private affair, intimate and even embarrassing – a love story of sorts; action moved from center to backstage, and a straightforward account about a sick king, a famous healer and messengers travelling between Syria and Palestine turned into an erotic reverie". Further on in the book (p. 126), we are told that Christ and Veronica hold the napkin like a couple walking their child. The book also contains obvious errors; the etymology of Veronica is once again given as "vera icon" (p. 8), and the "menaeon" (sic) is confused with the Synaxarion (p. 57). A more reasonable account of Veronica and the cloth can be found in Fogliadini, *Il Volto di Cristo*, pp. 163-189.

Despite the lack of a direct relationship between the two cloths (although as pointed out above, the basic idea of an image of Christ on a piece of cloth is clearly the same), it is worth mentioning two lesser known types of Veronica. Both are related to Spain and to the Spanish colonies in Latin America. The first is a double sided icon with a face of Christ on a cloth on the front (Figures 5.65 and 5.66). Nobody is holding the cloth and there are no bloodstains or crown of thorns. The interesting detail is the back of the icon, which shows the feet of Christ with the nail wounds and surrounding bloodstains. The icon dates from the fourteenth century and is kept at the monastery of Santa Clara, in Tordesillas⁴⁸⁴. Even though there are no wounds on Christ's face, the presence of the feet with the holes made by the nails clearly links the icon to a moment *after* the crucifixion. The second little-known type of Veronica shows three faces (representing the Trinity), but with each eye apart from the two at the edges to be taken on two different faces, i.e. instead of six eyes, there are only four. A good example of this can be seen at Santa María la Real de Nieva in Segovia (Figure 5.67). This kind of three-headed image was not limited to the Veronica, but could also be seen on paintings representing and even explaining the Trinity (e.g., at the church of Santa María de la Caridad in Tulebra [Figure 5.68]). The three-headed image was condemned by the Papacy in 1628 and again in 1745, but remained popular even after this in distant Catholic countries such as Mexico⁴⁸⁵.

There are some western Veronicas that look distinctly like the Mandylion, such as the miniatures in MS *Parisinus BN français* 105 f. 8^v, dating from the first half of the

⁴⁸⁴ Cf. F. Español Bertrán, 'Santa Faz y llagas en los pies', in *Maravillas de la España Medieval* vol. 1 (León 2001), ed. Isidro Bango Torviso, p. 131.

⁴⁸⁵ Cf. R. Petazzoni, 'The pagan origins of the three-headed representations of the Christian Trinity', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* IX (1946), pp. 135-155, and Musa Ammar Majad, 'Breve historia de las representaciones trifaciales y tricéfalas en Occidente', *Editorial Letralia Colección Internet* (September 2008).

fourteenth century⁴⁸⁶ (Figure 5.69) and MS *Parisinus BN français* 9123 f. 4, dating from 1315-1335⁴⁸⁷ (Figure 5.70).

It seems, therefore, that the details of the Veronica and Abgar legends are too different for one to have developed from the other. To reinforce this point, the Abgar legend continued to be known in the West to the same limited extent even after the full development of the Veronica story. As argued above, all that the two icons have in common is the attempt to explain the existence of an image of Christ on cloth whose origin could only be explained in the Middle Ages by resorting to the miraculous.

5.5 The Image of Edessa and the letter of Publius Lentulus

Another document also related to the search for the physical appearance of Christ is the so-called letter of Publius Lentulus, a late apocryphal text. Publius Lentulus was alleged to have been consul during the reign of Augustus (63 BC- 14 AD)⁴⁸⁸, and is said to have been Governor of Judea before Pontius Pilate (although no such procurator is known). The reasons against its authenticity are well summarised by Edward Robinson⁴⁸⁹:

The result of our enquiry into the authenticity of the epistle of Lentulus may be summed up in a few words. In *favour* of its authenticity we have only the purport of its inscription; there is no external evidence whatsoever. *Against* its authenticity we have the great discrepancies and contradictions of the inscription; the fact that no such official person as Lentulus existed at the time and space specified, nor for many years before and after; the utter silence of history in respect to the existence of such a letter; the foreign and later idioms in the style; the

⁴⁸⁶ Cf. <http://mandragore.bnf.fr/jsp/rechercheExperte.jsp> (last accessed: 29 June 2013), adding the MS reference.

⁴⁸⁷ Cf. <http://mandragore.bnf.fr/jsp/rechercheExperte.jsp> (last accessed: 29 June 2013), adding the MS reference.

⁴⁸⁸ Cf. *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, ed. P. A. Brunt and J. M. Moore (Oxford 1967), p. 20.

⁴⁸⁹ 'On the letter attributed to Publius Lentulus, respecting the personal appearance of Christ', *Biblical Repository* 2 (Andover 1832), pp. 392-393. David Freedberg, *The Power of Images* (Chicago 1989), p. 210, states the earliest possible date as the thirteenth century. Fernández González, 'Del santo Mandilyon' p. 368, prefers the eleventh or twelfth century.

contradiction in which the contents of the epistle stand with established historical facts; and the probability of its having been produced some time not earlier than the eleventh century.

A complete critical edition of the Latin text was published by von Dobschütz⁴⁹⁰. There are significant variations in the transmission of the text, although the basic description of Christ remains the same. Despite its obvious nature as a secondary, medieval text, its interest lies in the question as to whether the text could be in any way related to the Image of Edessa; in other words if the face and appearance of Christ on the Mandyion influenced the description given in the letter (the letter is much later than numerous depictions of the Image, so influence the other way round is unlikely)⁴⁹¹. The first step is to see the text itself.

MS *British Library Lansdowne 440*, which contains an English version of the Abgar correspondence, is also witness to an unpublished English translation of the Lentulus letter (f. 25^f) (Figure 5.16):

PUBLIUS LENTULUS

His letter to the Senate of Rome describing the person of our Saviour Jesus Christ

⁴⁹⁰ Von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, vol. 2, pp. 308-330.

⁴⁹¹ Such is the conclusion reached by John Oliver Hand, Catherine Metzger and Ron Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych* (Yale University Press 2006), p. 40; Jensen, *Face to Face*, p. 135: "Lentulus's description also more or less agrees with the details of Jesus' features in a famous account of a 'from life' portrait of Jesus; the miraculous image acquired by King Abgar of Edessa, ..."; Cora Lutz, 'The Letter of Lentulus Describing Christ', *The Yale University Gazette* 50 (2) (1975), p. 97, is even more direct: "One can only conclude that, whatever its origin, there was an early portrait that men of the East believed to have been made in a miraculous manner during Christ's lifetime and which they guarded and revered ... the letter of Lentulus, apocryphal though it is, also belongs in this tradition". José Pijoán, *Arte cristiano primitivo, Arte bizantino hasta el saqueo de Constantinopla por los cruzados en el año 1204*, vol. VII of *Summa Artis, Historia General del Arte* (Madrid 1935, repr. 2000), p. 174, takes this one step further and says that the traditional image of Christ as we know it today with a beard, moustache and long hair, comes from the Image of Edessa: "lo que nos interesa es que, sin duda alguna, la imagen tradicional de Jesús con bigote, barba y cabellos largos debió de conformarse con el retrato famoso de Edessa". For a contrary point of view, cf. *The Image of Christ – The Catalogue of the Exhibition "Seeing Salvation"*, ed. Gabriele Finaldi (London 2000), p. 94: "The description therefore follows the traditional way of depicting Christ and was presumably written while looking at such an image. This makes assessing its impact on artists' representations difficult to judge. Indeed with the

There appear'd in these our days a man of great virtue, nam'd Jesus Christ: who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted for a prophet, but his own Disciples call him the Son of God. He raises the dead and cures all manner of diseases, a man of stature, somewhat tall or comely, with a very revered countenance, such as the Beholders may both love and fear, his hair of the colour of a chestnut full ripe, plain to his ears, whence downward it is more orient, curling and waving about his shoulders, in the midst of his head is a seam or partition of his hair like the Nazarites, his forehead smooth and very delicate, his face without spot or blemish, beautified with a lovely red, his nose and mouth so form'd as nothing can be reprehended, his beard thickish, in colour like his hair, not very long but forked. His look innocent and mature, his eyes gray, clear and quick, in reproving he is terrible, in admonishing courteous and fairspeken, pleasant in conversation mixt with gravity, it can't be remembered that any have seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep. In proportion of body most excellent, his hands and arms delectable to behold, in speaking very temperate, modest and wise, a man for his singular beauty surpassing the children of men.

Greek versions of the text are preserved in the following eighteenth- and nineteenth-century MSS on Mount Athos⁴⁹²; *Panteleimon* 636 (19th c.) (Figures 5.71-5.72), *Docheiariou* 236 (18th c.) (Figures 5.73-5.74), *Dionysiou* 286 (19th c.) (Figures 5.75-5.77) and *Vatopedi* 207 (18th c.)⁴⁹³ (Figures 5.78-5.79). Immediately after the Lentulus letter, MS *Panteleimon* contains further apocryphal texts, including Pilate's sentence against Christ and the correspondence between Pilate and the emperor Tiberius.

exception of the details relating to the colour and style of Christ's hair and eyes, the letter gives few specifics that would be of any use to someone actually constructing a portrait".

⁴⁹² These MSS are not mentioned by M. Geerard, *Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti* (Brepols 1992), p. 189.

⁴⁹³ This MS is mistakenly attributed to the 16th century by Sophronios Eustratiades and Arcadios (Deacon of the Monastery of Vatopedi), *Catalogue of the Greek manuscripts in the library of the monastery of Vatopedi on Mt. Athos* (Cambridge 1924; repr. New York 1969), p. 44.

To the best of my knowledge the Greek versions of the letter have never been published. There are two different traditions: a longer version that is faithful to the Latin original and another shorter text, not based on any previously known textual tradition. The edition below is based on the four Athonite MSS.

Di *Athos Dionysiou* 286 (18th c.)

Do *Athos Docheiariou* 262 (18th c.)

Ἡ ἐπιστολή Πουβλίου τοῦ Λεντούλου ἀπεσταλμένη ἐκ Ἱερουσαλήμ πρὸς τὴν γερουσίαν τῆς Ῥώμης.

Ἐφάνη κατὰ τοὺς ἡμετέρους χρόνους ἄνθρωπος τις ἐκ μεγάλης ἀρετῆς, ὅστις ζῆ κατὰ τὸ παρόν, καλούμενος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. Ὁ λαὸς προφήτην τῆς ἀληθείας τὸν ὀνομάζει, οἱ δὲ ἀπόστολοι αὐτοῦ υἱὸν θεοῦ λέγουσιν, ἀνασταίνει νεκροὺς, ἰατρεύει ἀρρώστους. Εἶναι μέτριος 5 κατὰ τὸ μέγεθος καὶ κατὰ πολλά ἰσχυρὸς τῆ ὄψει καὶ γλυκὺς λίαν, καὶ τόσον εἶναι μεγαλοπρεπῆς τῆ εἴδει ὅπου οἱ βλέποντες αὐτὸν ἀναγκάζονται νὰ τὸν ἀγαπῶσι καὶ νὰ τὸν φοβοῦνται. Ἔχει τὰς τρίχας τῆς κεφαλῆς κατὰ τὸν χρωματισμὸν τοῦ παμπεξύρου λεπτοκαρού, καταβαίνουσιν ἕως τὰ ὦτα, καὶ ὑπὸ τὰ ὦτα ἕως τοὺς ὀμους ἔχουσι τὸ χρῶμα 10 τῆς γῆς, ἀλλὰ λαμπρότερον. Ἔχει εἰς τὸ μέσον τοῦ μετώπου τῆς κεφαλῆς τὰς τρίχας, κατὰ τὴν συνήθειαν τῶν Ναζηραίων. Τὸ μέτωπον ἔχει μέγαλον ἀλλὰ κατὰ πολλὰ ἰλαρόν. Τὸ πρόσωπον εἶναι χωρὶς ρυτίδα ἢ στίγμα, συντροφιασμένον ἀπὸ εὖποιον χρῶμα. Μέτριον ἔχει τὴν ῥίναν καὶ τὸ στόμα, χωρὶς ψόγους τινός. Τὸν πύγωνα στυμνὸν κατὰ τὸ χρῶμα τῶν 15 τριχῶν τῆς κεφαλῆς, ὄχι μαῦρον ἀλλὰ ἐσχισμένον κατὰ τὸ μέσον. Τὸ βλέμμα του εἶναι σοβαρὸν καὶ χαριέστατον. Οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ χαριτωμένοι καὶ καθαροὶ καὶ γλυκύτατοι, καὶ ὅταν ἐλέγχει καταπλήττει καὶ ὅταν διδάσκει ἀρέσκει καὶ ἀγαπᾶται ἀπὸ ὅλους, καὶ εἶναι χαρούμενος μεσοβαρόν. Δέν τὸν εἶδε τινὰς νὰ γελάσει, τὸν εἶδε ὅμως καὶ ἔκλαυσεν. Ἔχει τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τοὺς βραχίονας κατὰ πολλὰ ἰσχυροὺς. Κατὰ τὰς συναναστροφάς, ἱκανοποιεῖ πολλά, ἀλλὰ σπανίως βλέπεται καὶ ὅταν συναναστρέφεται εἶναι σωφρονέστατος, εἰς τὴν ὄψιν καὶ εἰς 20 τὸ φαινόμενον εἶναι ὀλομορφότατος ἄνθρωπος ὅπου νὰ ἐφάνη εἰς τὴν γῆν.

1. Ἡ deest Do Πουβλίου add. ἀξιωματικοῦ ἀνδρὸς Do ἐκ τῆς ἀγίας πόλεως Ἱερουσαλὴμ Di 2. Ῥώμης add. καταφρασθεῖσαι ἐκ τοῦ λεκτικοῦ Do 3. ἐκ μεγάλης Di ὅστις deest, <ζῆ κατὰ τὸ παρόν> Di 4. τὸν ὀνομάζει προφήτην τῆς ἀληθείας Do 5. αὐτοῦ] τοῦ ἀνθρώπου Do 7. μεγαλοπρεπὲς τῆ εἴδει] κατὰ τὸ εἶδος μεγαλοπρεπὲς Do 8. φοβούμεντες add. ἐν ταυτῇ Do κατὰ τὸν χρωματισμὸν] τοῦ παρομοίας μὲ τὸν χρωματισμὸν Do παμπεξύρου] παμξύρου Di 9. καταβαίνουσιν] αἵτινες καταβαίνουσιν Do καὶ ὑπὸ] ἀπὸ δὲ Do ἕως τοὺς ὄμους] ἕως εἰς τοὺς ὄμους Do τῆς γῆς] τῆς ἐρυθρῆς γῆς Do 10. λαμπρότερον Di τῆς κεφαλῆς desunt Do 11. τοῦ Ναζηραίου Di ἰλαρὸν] ἴλεον Do 12. ἔχει τὴν ῥίνα καὶ τὸ στόμα] τὴν ῥίνα καὶ τὸ στόμα ἔχει Do 13. ψέγους Di στυμνὸν] πιμνὸν Di κατὰ] καὶ κατὰ Do 15. ὅταν] ὅ Di 16. καὶ deest Do τὸν deest Di 17. τινὰς] τινὰς ποτέ Di τοὺς βραχίονας καὶ τὰς χεῖρας Do 18. ὠραίους] ὠραία Do 19. ὀλομορφότατος] ὀλομορφότερος Do

P Athos Panteleimon 636 (19th c.)

V Athos Vatopedi 207 (18th c.)

Ἐπιστολή τὸν χαρακτήρα τοῦ Σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ περιγράφουσα

Ἐστάλη Λατινιστί παρὰ Π(ουβλίου) Λεντούλου τότε διοικητοῦ Ῥωμαίων ἐν Ἰουδαίᾳ. Εὐρέθη δὲ μεταξὺ τῶν χειρογράφων τοῦ Βατικάνου.

Ἐνταῦθα ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ εὐρίσκεται ἤδη τις ἄνθρωπος μεγάλων ἀρετῶν κάτοχος, καὶ
 5 ὀνομάζει ἑαυτὸν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν. Οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι ξένοι νομίζουσιν αὐτὸν προφήτην, οἱ δὲ ὅπαδοι
 αὐτοῦ τιμῶσιν αὐτὸν ὡς υἱὸν τοῦ ἀθανάτου θεοῦ. Ἐγείρει νεκρούς, θεραπεύει πάσας τὰς
 ἀσθενείας διὰ λόγου μόνον καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν. Εἶναι μέγας τῆ σόματι καὶ
 εὐσημος, τὸ πρόσωπον εἶναι ἰλαρὸν καὶ σεμνοπρεπές, τὴν δὲ κόμην καταβαίνουσαν μέχρι τῶν
 ὀμῶν εἰς πλοκάμους ἐλικοειδεῖς, καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μετώπου διηρημένων. Τὸ δὲ χρῶμα αὐτῆς
 10 τοιοῦτον, ὁποῖον δύσκολον γὰ περιγραφθῆ. Τὸ μέτωπόν του εἶναι μακρὸν καὶ ὀμαλόν, αἱ
 παρειαὶ χαριτόρρυθμοι, ἡ ῥίνα καὶ τὸ στόμα σύμμετρα, τὰ γένηα δασέα, διηρημένα, καὶ τὸ
 χρῶμα τῆς κόμης ἔχοντα, καὶ μάκρος ἐνὸς δακτύλου. Τὰ ὄμματα ζωηρότατα. Ἐλέγχει
 εὐκοσμίως καὶ προτρέπει ἰλαρῶς, οἱ λόγοι του εἶναι πλήρεις χαρίτων καὶ τὰ ἔργα αἰδέσιμα,
 ποτέ δὲν τὸν εἶδε τις γελῶντα, πολλάκις δὲ κλαίοντα. Ἡ μετριότης καὶ σύνεσις αὐτοῦ
 15 ἐξαιρετοί. Καὶ τέλ(ει)ος εἶναι ἄνθρωπος, ὃς καὶ διὰ τῆς εὐτελοῦς αὐτοῦ ὠραιότητος καὶ τῶν
 θείων τελειότητων ὑπερβαίνει πάντα ἄνθρωπον.

2. Λατινιτί P τοῦ τότε P τῶν Ῥωμαίων P 3. χορογράφων V 4. τις ἄνθρωπος ἤδη P μεγάλων] μεγίστων P 7. τὸ σῶμα V εὐσχημος P 8. πρόσωπον εἶναι ἰλαρὸν] πρόσωπον του εἶχε ἰλαρὸν P σεμνοπρεπέ P καταβαίνουσαι P 9. πλοκαμὸν P τοῦ deest P 10. Τὸ μέτωπόν ... ὀμαλὸν desunt P 11. τὰ γένεια] τὰ δὲ γένεα P 12. προτρέπων P 14. γελούντα P κλάζοντα V ἢ σύννεσις P ἐξάιρετοι] ἐξάιρετος αἱ ἔλι.. sic P Καὶ τέλος deest P 15. ὅς καὶ desunt P καὶ] του P 16. πάντως ἀνθρώπων P

The shorter version in the Vatopedi and Panteleimon MSS comes from a different source, different from both the Latin text and the longer, more literal Greek translation. Even when the two Greek versions agree in sense, they sometimes differ in vocabulary; the longer text has *ἰατρεύει ἀρρώστους* whereas the shorter one reads *θεραπεύει πάσας τὰς ἀσθενείας* and adds the extra detail that the healing took place through only Jesus' word and the laying on of hands (*διὰ λόγου μόνου καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν*). The shorter text refers to Jesus' followers as *ὄπαδοι* while the longer text uses the more traditional *ἀπόστολοι*, 'apostles'. The difference between the two versions concerning the colour of Jesus' hair is curious; the longer text tells us that it was the colour of a ripe hazelnut (*κατὰ τὸν χρωματισμὸν τοῦ παμπεξύρου λεπτοκαρύου*), while the shorter version simply states that the colour was difficult to describe (*δύσκολον γὰ περιγραφθῆ*). The two texts even contradict each other; the Latin version and the longer translation say that Christ was of average stature ('*statura procerus mediocris*', *μέτριος κατὰ τὸ μέγεθος*), while the shorter text tells he was tall (*μέγας τῆ σῶματι*).

The shorter version is not related to any other known descriptions of Christ either. There is a physical description of Christ in *Athens, National Library* 2583, f. 183^r (14th/15th c.) and *Athos, Koutloumousiou* 144, f. 289^v (14th c.)⁴⁹⁴. The text in these two MSS also states that Jesus was tall – “full seven spans tall” (*τὴν γε μὴν ἡλικίαν, εἶπουν ἀναδρομὴν τοῦ σῶματος, ἑπτὰ σπιθαμῶν ἢν τελείων*). A span is the distance from the tip of

⁴⁹⁴ The Athens MS was edited by Panagiotis Fragkiadakis, *A study of the Byzantine description of the physical appearance of Jesus Christ and the Theotokos: Athens, National Library* 2583, f. 183^r

the thumb to the tip of the outstretched little finger, which at most could be calculated at 25 cm. This would mean Jesus was 1.75m tall. The way the height is expressed, however, is completely different from the translations of the Lentulus letter. The text did not influence the translations of the Lentulus letter, as can be seen from other words and expressions: Christ's hair is described as blond (*ἐπίξανθον ἔχων τὴν τρίχαν*), his eyes as joyful and his nose as long (*εὐόφθαλμος δ' ἦν καὶ ἐπίρριν*), very different from the Lentulus letter (*οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ χαριτωμένοι καὶ καθαροὶ καὶ γλυκύτατοι* and *ἡ ρὶν καὶ τὸ στόμα σύμμετρα*).

Neither is the shorter translation of the Lentulus letter related to the descriptions of Christ by Andrew of Crete⁴⁹⁵, Ulpian the Roman⁴⁹⁶, Nicephorus Callistus⁴⁹⁷, Hippolytus of Thebes⁴⁹⁸ or in the Letter of the Three Patriarchs⁴⁹⁹. It seems to be an original and previously unknown variation on the letter, possibly based on an unknown Latin version as it does claim to be a translation of the Lentulus letter as found in the Vatican archives. It is translated below:

A letter concerning the appearance of Jesus Christ the Saviour

It was sent in Latin by P<ublius> Lentulus, a Roman official in Judea at the time. It was found among the manuscripts in the Vatican.

(unpublished MA dissertation, Hellenic Institute, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2006). The *Athos, Koutlounousiou* MS was not collated for this edition; I studied it *in situ* in 2002.

⁴⁹⁵ PG 97, cols 1302-1304.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ulpian the Roman*, ed. M. Chatzidakis, 'Ἐκ τῶν Ἐλπίου τοῦ Ῥωμαίου ἀρχαιολογομένων ἐκκλησιαστικῆς ἱστορίας περὶ χαρακτήρων σωματικῶν', *Ἐπετηρὶς Ἐταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 14 (1998), pp. 393-414.

⁴⁹⁷ PG 145, cols. 748-749.

⁴⁹⁸ PG 117, col. 1056.

⁴⁹⁹ Munitiz, *The Letter*. Cf. also the section on the description of Christ's physical appearance by Christopher Walter in this volume, pp. lxvi-lxviii. The height of Christ and the colour of his hair and beard vary greatly in all the different descriptions, although even when they coincide with this translation of the Lentulus letter, the vocabulary and expressions used are so different that any direct relationship is most unlikely.

At that time in Judea there was a man possessed of great virtue, called Jesus Christ. Some people called him a prophet, but his followers honour him as the son of the eternal God. He raises the dead, heals all sicknesses by his word only and by the laying on of hands. He is tall and handsome, his face is gracious and worthy of respect, his hair falls down to the shoulders in curls, parted on his head. The colour of his hair is difficult to describe. His forehead is broad and smooth, his cheeks are gracefully ruddy, his nose and mouth are of moderate size, his beard is thick and forked, of the same colour as his hair, and one digit long. His eyes are very lively. He reproaches gently and walks joyfully, his words are full of grace and his works are irreproachable. Nobody has ever seen him laugh, although he has often been seen to weep. His moderation and understanding are excellent. In short, he is a man, and on account of his perfect beauty and the perfect gods he is superior to all mankind.

One of the best-known pictorial depictions of Christ painted according to the Lentulus letter is a lost fifteenth-century work by Jan van Eyck, although many later copies survive (Figures 5.80-5.81). The dependence of this portrait on the Lentulus letter is traditional⁵⁰⁰. Another portrait of Christ that is without doubt inspired by the letter can be found on a Dutch diptych (Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent, INV. BMR S 2), dating from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century (Figure 5.82)⁵⁰¹. There can be no doubt about the inspiration because the left hand side of the diptych contains the Latin text of the letter, with the painted face on the right. The face is in profile, which makes comparison with the Mandylion very difficult.

It is true that certain details describing Jesus' personality and manners in the letter cannot be represented in a portrait. The colour of the hair and eyes varies from one copy of the Image to another; all that could possibly be taken from the letter and applied to a portrait are the details about the hair and beard. A face with no blemish is standard

⁵⁰⁰ Cf. Fernández González, 'Del santo Mandilyon', p. 368.

to the majority of portraits, even if there are blemishes on the original human subject, and a perfect nose and mouth are almost impossible to define as tastes change over time; the nose and mouth on the Dutch diptych certainly do not seem perfect by twentieth or twenty-first century standards of beauty. The Dutch diptych does indeed show straight hair to the ears, which then becomes wavy further down, but given that it is a profile, we cannot see if the beard is forked. Even if we imagine this portrait turned round so that it is facing us, it does not immediately remind us of any known copy of the Image of Edessa. The top of the head on the diptych seems to be balding.

It is indeed difficult to ascertain whether the Image of Edessa had any influence on the writing of the description of Christ contained in the Publius Lentulus letter⁵⁰². The only clues would seem to be the parting in the hair, the curly hair below the ears and the forked beard, features which are present on the majority of copies of the Image of Edessa. This would seem to suggest that whoever composed the letter of Publius Lentulus did either have a copy of the Image before him, or was describing one from memory. However, in the nineteenth century, broadsheets were published containing the Letter from Heaven, the Abgar correspondence and the Publius Lentulus letter all together (see Figure 5.83).

5.6 Conclusions

Curiosity about and the subsequent search for the physical appearance of Christ was evident in Christendom from very early times. There are no descriptions of any kind in the New Testament and human curiosity together with Christological questions soon led

⁵⁰¹ Cf. *The Catalogue of the Exhibition "Seeing Salvation"*, ed. Gabriele Finaldi (London 2000), pp. 94-97.

⁵⁰² Emanuela Fogliadini has no doubt on this point, in *Il Volto di Cristo*, p. 82: "La presentazione del volto di Cristo [scil. in the Letter of Publius Lentulus] ricalca fedelmente quella degli autori bizantini e si presenta conforme al *Mandylion* e al Santo *Keramion*".

to a desire to know what Jesus of Nazareth actually looked like. This took the form of the stories of images made by Christ himself and texts supposedly by eye-witnesses and also forms part of the wider human curiosity about other details and people in the Biblical story, from names for the nameless to the parents and grandparents⁵⁰³. The related stories were adapted to and arose from their respective times and places: the Abgar legend in the East with its inherent power as an icon to defend cities, and later, when both Edessa and Constantinople had in fact fallen to enemy Muslim forces, as a miraculous image capable of defending individuals, and the Veronica in the West, where the bloodstained face of Christ fitted in much better with the distinctly Catholic taste for images depicting his suffering and agony.

The importance of the Image of Edessa in this context cannot be overstated, and indeed, it has been argued, with some force and certainty, that the traditional image of Christ as Christians see him today in all means of expression – i.e. with long hair and a beard – has its roots in the face on the cloth in Edessa. Despite the difficulty of establishing whether later stories of the image of Christ are in fact developed from the Image of Edessa, all the related texts and icons form part of a lengthy and lasting tradition concerning an image of Christ on cloth whose earliest and most significant example is the Image of Edessa. Before the historically ascertained presence of the Image in Edessa in the fifth century, the majority of images of Christ were portrayed in a more Roman fashion; the face was generally that of a young beardless youth⁵⁰⁴. After the Image became known, the artistic depiction of Christ took on a new air, in line with what can be seen thereon. While it might not be possible to categorically state that it was the Image of Edessa that led to this generalised change, the fact that the change took place at the same time as the Image came to light certainly makes it probable.

⁵⁰³ E.g. names for the two thieves crucified with Christ and the Protoevangelium of James, concerning Mary's parents.

Without the tradition of the Image and its great diffusion in the Orthodox world, there might have been no legend of Veronica or letter of Publius Lentulus, and today's accepted image of Christ might be completely different.

Not only did the Image of Edessa play a significant role in the development of the depiction of Christ, but also in the story of the canon of the New Testament. The question of the canon was never entirely solved and even today varies in different denominations and different countries. The Abgar legend was never a serious contender for canonicity, although it did take a part in the various related arguments. It seems to have had a deeper significance in Georgia, where in two eleventh-century illustrated Gospel MSS the Abgar story is most definitely canonised, although there were no supporting arguments for including the legend in the canon and its inclusion therein had no further effects in other areas. As explained above, the authenticity of the legend in seventeenth and eighteenth-century England was both defended and derided in relation to the New Testament canon, used to evidence the mistaken nature of the canon (if historical episodes were omitted) and to ridicule the miraculous tales told by the Church Fathers.

The legend and its significance may have remained beyond the reach of the common man's understanding at this time, but so did the rest of the learned arguments (and even some of the basic ones) concerning Christianity in general. Among the wise and learned, the Abgar legend (both the correspondence and the Image) were well-known enough to be used as fodder for arguments of various shades and colours.

The influence of the Abgar legend was also widely felt in the diverse world of medieval magic. Protective (or apotropaic) statues and magical charms were common in the ancient world and rather than abandoned in favour of Christianity they were more

⁵⁰⁴ See Jensen, *Face to Face*, pp. 142-153.

often than not assimilated into the new religion. This was the case with the statues of pagan gods at city gates, a function taken over first by the Image of Edessa over the city gates and continued (at least in essence) by the placing of depictions of the icon on the upper part of church arches.

The use of magical texts as charms, carried or worn by travellers or simply by adherents of a given belief, can be attested in both the pagan Roman and Greek world and also in Jewish history (Hebrew *mezuzot* and phylacteries), and once again, they were Christianised rather than eliminated. The earliest text of Christ's letter to Abgar contained nothing that could be construed as magical; the promise to safeguard Edessa was an early addition and became the gateway for a whole series of additional promises to keep the reader or bearer safe from all kinds of danger. The letter eventually became decontextualised and only the name Abgar remained, together with the additions that turned it into a magical charm.

What immediately stands out from this secondary use of the legend and Image is the immense diffusion it must have once enjoyed in order to convey meaning and sense in a context that was far removed from the original setting. It is hard to imagine that country folk in eighteenth-century England who kept copies of the Image and the letter in their homes were aware of the origins of their keepsakes; this could be compared to many Orthodox and Catholics today who know who the patron saint of their particular profession or feast day is but have little or no idea of when or where the saint in question lived. They most probably made an association of the name Abgar with safekeeping from danger. The use of magical amulets and texts is still very much alive; even within the various different Churches of different communion, although nowadays they shy away from the term "magic" as more related to superstition (i.e. with negative

tones). This addresses a very human need for divine protection in order to feel safe and secure in an unsafe and insecure world.

The same conclusion could in fact be applied to just about every aspect of the whole Abgar legend – its dissemination and influence in all Christendom is immense. From the easternmost extremes of the Orthodox world to the north of England, from the earliest days of the Church to our own times, it has made itself felt and been used in fields as diverse as the canon of the New Testament and the reliability of the Church Fathers, magic and superstition and the search for the physical appearance of Jesus of Nazareth.

Chapter 6

Fieldwork in Byzantium

This chapter discusses fieldwork I carried out in Turkey, Greece, especially the Mani peninsula and the north, including Mount Athos, the FYROM and Georgia. Similar work was done in Cyprus on my behalf⁵⁰⁵. This is part of an ambitious project to build up a data base with images and descriptions of the Image of Edessa as depicted all over what was the world of Byzantium and beyond. In some areas, especially Mani, recording the icons is essential as many churches are literally falling down and will soon be lost forever. Damage to icons is ongoing in Cappadocia despite efforts towards preservation for tourists. I have preserved the Greek forms of the church names (i.e. Agios rather than St) for churches in Greece as these are the forms by which the buildings are generally identified and it sounds contrived to use westernised forms.

6.1 Cappadocia

In 1935 André Grabar stated that there was only one Mandylion in Cappadocia⁵⁰⁶; by 1980 the number had increased to four⁵⁰⁷ – an error that has been corrected in recent years. It is true that the Image of Edessa does not proliferate among the rock cut churches of the Anatolian plains, and yet despite attention to the two icons in Sakli church, most of the others lack studies or remain unpublished. In 2009 I spent two weeks studying the iconography of the churches in Cappadocia and the little that is left of Edessa's Christian heritage (the city today is known under the name of Sanliurfa). Various interesting discoveries were made on the trip.

⁵⁰⁵ By lawyer George Apostolos, to whom I am most grateful.

⁵⁰⁶ Grabar, 'La Sainte Face', p. 23.

⁵⁰⁷ Thierry, 'Deux notes', pp. 16-19: "On connaît quatre représentations du Mandylion en Cappadoce". The first illustration in this article is entitled "Karanlik Kilise, Abraham et le Mandylion"

The best preserved icons in Cappadocia are to be found in the so-called Dark Church, or Karanlik, in the main Goreme complex (Figure 6.1). In the north apse is the Mandylion, heavily damaged and yet even so, the best preserved in the whole of Cappadocia (Figure 6.2). According to Spiro Kostof, the church dates from “the Middle Byzantine Phase (about 1020-1130)”⁵⁰⁸. Most of the face is missing, although this would appear to be due to falling plaster rather than deliberate damage. From what is left, we can see long brown hair falling behind the neck and shoulders of Christ, an elongated face and a forked beard. The neck is clearly visible, as is the nimbus with a cross. The cloth is displayed flat, with no knots or angels to hold it up as there are on some other copies. Above the cloth is written TO ΑΓΗΟΝ ΜΑΝΛΗΝ, and underneath this, IC XC (the contracted form of I[HCOY]C X[PICTO]C). The icon measures 88 x 40 cm (40 cm. is the height in the middle of the cloth, slightly more at the edges).

The position of the Mandylion in the Dark Church is unique in this and other areas, not so much for its physical location (the fifth bay in the southern apse) as for what accompanies it: it is directly below Abraham, who is blessing with his right hand and holding a scroll in the left (Figure 6.3). In the words of Halis Yenipinar, “The placing of Abraham in a part of the bema is very rare and carries a Eucharistic connotation as the prefiguration of Christ”⁵⁰⁹. According to Sharon Gerstel⁵¹⁰, the placing of the Mandylion in this position, and over or below the prothesis niche as opposed to over an arch (which is related to its placing over the gateway in Edessa), and close to other icons associated with the Incarnation, shows that it was thereby linked to the Eucharist (see also below, pp. 311-312).

although the actual photograph does not correspond to this description – it shows a seriously damaged Pantocrator.

⁵⁰⁸ *Caves of God, Cappadocia and its Churches* (Oxford 1972), p. 274.

⁵⁰⁹ *Paintings in the Dark Church* (Istanbul 1998), p. 70.

⁵¹⁰ *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries: Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary* (London and Seattle 1999), pp. 68-77.

One of the most outstanding details is without doubt the presence of the roundels and designs on the tasselled cloth. There are three on each side and one underneath the face; the middle ones on each side are brownish in colour, whereas the others are grey. The fact that there are seven roundels has led some to think that they represent the seven seals of the letter from Christ to Abgar⁵¹¹, although only four (and a half) roundels are visible on the Mandylion in St Catherine's (Goreme Chapel 21 – Figure 6.4), thirteen are present on the higher Mandylion in Sakli church (Figure 6.5), and eight can be seen on the miniature in the Alaverdi Gospels in Tblisi, Georgia (Figure 6.6), thus disproving this theory.

The damage to the Mandylion in Chapel 21 (St Catherine's) is much more severe (Figure 6.4). Comparing the photograph used by Nicole Thierry in 1980⁵¹² (Figure 6.7) and the photograph used by Catherine Jolivet-Levy in a more recent article⁵¹³ (Figure 6.8) with the one I took myself in 2009 (Figure 6.4), we can see that much of the damage is recent.

This image, placed directly above the prothesis niche, is slightly larger than the Dark Church icon, measuring 96 x 46 cm. Kostof makes no reference to this chapel either in the main text of his work or in the dating list, while Jerphanion simply refers to the Mandylion in this church as “une image de Jésus-Christ, en buste”⁵¹⁴. All that is left visible on the face is the red hair and the lines showing that the neck was also present, similar to the two icons in Sakli church (see below, pp. 265-266). What stands out on this Mandylion is the fact that it is completely off-centre – the designs on the cloth are

⁵¹¹ Cf. Lidov ‘The Mandylion’, p. 187: “The form of the roundels provides an answer. Most probably they represented seven seals”. Lidov reaches this conclusion based on the higher Sakli Mandylion, although it has thirteen roundels altogether. He repeats the theory in Lidov, ‘Holy Face’, p. 145.

⁵¹² Thierry, ‘Deux notes’, Fig. 3, p.17.

⁵¹³ ‘Note sur la représentation du Mandylion Dans les Églises Byzantines de Cappadoce’, in *Intorno al Sacro Volto: Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo*, ed. Anna Rosa Calderoni Masetti, Colette Dufour Bozzo and Gerhard Wolf (Venice 2007), p. 142. This photograph is inverted left to right in comparison with the original.

parallel on both sides – moving inwards from the outside are the tassels, three vertical blue lines, geometrical decoration with circles inside, another series of three lines like the previous one and the white space in the centre for the face.

The face, however, is displaced to the top right; the circle the face is in is almost touching the blue line on the right, leaving enough room on the left for the identification IC XC. Four roundels are complete (heavily damaged); three underneath the face and one to the left, while the roundel to the top right does not even fit onto the cloth. The presence of only five (or four and a half) roundels speaks against their representing the seven seals on the letter from Christ to Abgar. The only logical explanation for this asymmetrical Mandylion would appear to be that the artist must have started with the face itself rather than the cloth.

The only church in Cappadocia with two icons of the Mandylion is Sakli, the aptly named Hidden Church; it was only discovered in 1957. Access remains difficult, as the church is half way down a cliff face and is usually locked to the public (Figure 6.9). Kostof dates it to the same period as the one for the previous church, ca.1020-1130⁵¹⁵, adding that the figural programme was superimposed on an earlier aniconic decoration in the tenth or eleventh century. The ceiling indeed preserves the aniconic decoration, consisting of a grid system with roundels and a large cross.

The lower of the two depictions is the more heavily damaged, precisely as it is more accessible (Figure 6.10). It is directly above the prothesis niche in the wall, just as in Chapel 21. It measures 73 x 46cm (the height is just 33 cm in the middle). The colours on both Sakli icons are the same as what can still be seen on the Mandylion in St Catherine's chapel, and we can assume that they are all from the same period. The face on the lower Sakli icon has been deliberately scratched away and most of the rest

⁵¹⁴ Guillaume de Jerphanion, *Une Nouvelle Province de l'Art Byzantin-Les Églises Rupestres de Cappadoce*, Tome Premier, Deuxième Partie (Paris 1932), p. 475. Jerphanion dates the church to the second half of the eleventh century.

has faded. Faint remains of three roundels are visible, although there were originally no doubt more.

The other Sakli Mandylion has survived damage much better thanks to its position high up over an arch (Figure 6.5). The measurements are the same as the other icon in the church, and only the eyes have been hacked out – the rest is well-preserved. There are seven reddish roundels, three to the left of the face in a diagonal line and four on the right, two at the top and two at the bottom. There are also six fainter roundel outlines, four on the right and two on the left. They appear to form no particular pattern, and no intentional meaning appears to be evident. The distinctly round face and beard (although it is forked too) remind us more of the earlier Sinai Mandylion than the later icons. The neck is again depicted in Sakli; the different shade from the background is just visible.

One of the characteristics of post-Iconoclastic icons of Christ is to highlight the incarnation, the fact that the eternal Word did indeed become flesh. A good example of this is the miniature in the Chludov Psalter showing Christ wearing an apron to wash the disciples' feet (Figure 6.11)⁵¹⁶. The positioning of the Mandylion in Sakli is also designed to emphasise the incarnation; to the left of the icon is the Archangel Gabriel announcing the birth of Jesus and the Virgin Mary spinning wool, while to the right is Isaiah prophesying the birth of the Messiah (Figure 6.12). A similar position is evident in a late thirteenth-century example in the St Euthymios chapel in Thessalonike (Figure 6.13)⁵¹⁷. The association of Mary with the Mandylion is relatively commonplace, perhaps to emphasise the birth of Jesus and therefore his humanity as the theological charge of the icon. This relationship is taken even further in a now lost sixteenth- or seventeenth-century icon from the Monastery of the Acheiropoietos in Lambousa in

⁵¹⁵ Kostof, *Caves*, p. 273.

⁵¹⁶ MS *Mosquensis Hist. Mus.* D.129.

Cyprus (Figure 6.14), in the part of the island occupied by Turkey since 1974. The icon depicts Mary with open arms, showing the Mandylion in the same attitude as she adopts with the infant Jesus in the Hodegetria icons.

Not too far away from the main Goreme valley complex in Cappadocia lies the Soganli valley with its churches. There are two Mandylia in Soganli. The first is to be found in the church of St Barbara, and it is the most damaged of all the surviving icons, hardly recognisable as a face of Christ (Figure 6.15). It is smaller than the other icons in Cappadocia, measuring just 68 x 31 cm (height at edges). The church is dated by Kostof to the “Transitional Phase (ca.950-1020)”⁵¹⁸, and more specifically, the nave decoration is dated by inscription to the reign of Constantine VIII and Basil II, probably sometime between 1006 and 1021. This seems more realistic than the dating on the panel outside the church, suggesting the church was built in the fifth or sixth century.

The Mandylion is portrayed in a most unusual position, *underneath* the prothesis niche in the north wall (Figure 6.16). Inside the niche is St Sabas on the back wall while Sts Kosmas and Damianos are on the sides. There are no traces at all left of the face of Christ on the Mandylion; there are two roundels on either side of where the face once was, and three reddish blotches in the facial area. In fact, it is only recognisable as the Mandylion because of the cloth. Jerphanion mentions the niche and the three saints depicted therein, stating that “sous laquelle est peinte une serviette brodée, tendue aux quatre coins”⁵¹⁹. Was the icon already so damaged that he did not realise it is in fact a Mandylion? It would appear he did not even take it for an icon of Christ. In fact, earlier in the same work⁵²⁰, he refers to this and other images as “pechguirs, ou serviettes

⁵¹⁷ The frescoes are attributed to the Thessalonian hagiographer Manuel Panselinos and dated to between 1282 and 1328: cf. Ioannis Tassias, *Saint Dimitrios* (Thessalonike 2007), pp. 106-107.

⁵¹⁸ Kostof, *Caves*, p. 270.

⁵¹⁹ Jerphanion, *Les Églises*, Tome Deuxième, Premier Partie, p. 324.

⁵²⁰ Jerphanion, *Les Églises*, Tome Deuxième, Premier Partie, p. 170.

brodées, dont on fait encore usage en Turquie”. This is surely a mistaken identification of what is clearly a Mandylion.

The second Mandylion in the Soganli Valley (or what little is left of it) is in the church of Karabaş (Figure 6.17). Kostof dates the church to the Middle Byzantine phase (1020-1130)⁵²¹. On the west wall, above the inside of the main door (Figure 6.18) – a unique position for the Mandylion – are the remains of a cloth and a face within a nimbus (Figures 6.19-6.20). The floral design just visible is similar to that on many other examples⁵²².

A tantalising detail came to light during the excellent restoration of Karsi Kilise (St John according to a sign at the church) in Gülsehir in 1995 (Figure 6.21). The decoration is dated by inscription to 25 April 1212, under Emperor Theodore I Lascaris (r. 1205-1222), and so is placed by Kostof in the “Late Byzantine Phase (from the late 12th century)”⁵²³. In the same position as the Mandylion at St Barbara in the Soganli valley, i.e. under the niche, the tasselled side of a cloth is clearly visible (Figure 6.22). The tassels are on the bottom (all that remains) rather than the sides, although this can be paralleled on other depictions of the Mandylion, including the mural in the church of the Protaton on Mount Athos (Figure 6.23), two later portable icons from the same church (Figures 6.24-6.25), the miniature in MS *Vaticanus Ross.* 251 (Figure 6.26), the fourteenth-century mural in Gradanica in Kosovo (Figure 6.27) (only one side knot remains but the tassels are on the bottom), the Mandylion in the church of the Zoodochos Pige in Mani (Figure 6.28) and the portable icon of Neruk Rostov (Figure 6.29). It would appear that the restoration work of 1995 has brought to light the remains

⁵²¹ Kostof, *Caves*, p. 272. A detailed description of the church and complex can be found in Lyn Rodley, *Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia* (Cambridge 1985; repr. 2010), pp. 193-202.

⁵²² I would like to express my gratitude to Catherine Jolivet Levy, who first identified these remains as a Mandylion and informed me of the same in personal correspondence (January 2011). The icon was almost identified by Jerphanion, *Les Églises*, Deuxième Tome, Première Partie, pp. 340-341: “Plus haut, au-dessus du grand arc, deux anges, porteurs de sceptres, lèvent la main vers un médaillon, aujourd’hui effacé, qui devait contenir une image de Jésus-Christ”.

of a previously unknown and unrecorded Mandyllion. Only one corner of the cloth survives, so no conclusions can be drawn about the image of Christ or the inscriptions, if there were any.

One of the aniconic churches in the region is St Stephen's at Keselik monastery, to the south of Goreme. Jerphanion thought that the few images in the church (Figure 6.30) dated from after the iconoclastic period⁵²⁴, although Restle more recently has shown that the images were painted at the same time as the iconoclastic decoration⁵²⁵. Kostof mentions the Communion of the Apostles on the south wall (Figure 6.31), the cross on the ceiling (Figure 6.32) and the Cross of St Euphemia, but fails to mention the fascinating disembodied face of Christ above the prothesis niche in the bema (Figure 6.33). This face of Christ is in the same place as the Mandyllion in St Catherine's (Chapel 21) in Goreme (although it is on the left, whereas in St Catherine's it is on the right), and as far as I am aware, has not been recorded before.

The face of Christ is heavily damaged, by graffiti, falling plaster and what would appear to be deliberate damage to the eyes. The portrayal is crude, only black is used against the natural background colour of the plaster. The face lies in the middle of a series of concentric circles, with various lines moving from the edges of the face to the outer circle, making it look somewhat like a spider's web. The hair is shoulder-length, there are traces of a short beard, and the neck is clearly visible, as in other copies of the face of Christ. The round face and rounded beard would suggest an earlier rather than later date within the period proposed by Kostof.

The number of wall paintings depicting the Mandyllion in Cappadocia has grown since the churches in the area were first described in detail by Jerphanion in the early

⁵²³ Jerphanion, *Caves*, p. 275.

⁵²⁴ Jerphanion, *Les Églises*, Tome Deuxième, Première Partie, p. 146: "En somme le décor tout entier paraît dû à ces derniers [les iconodules]: et si on lui a donné quelque apparence iconoclaste, c'est sans doute par mesure de prudence, ou pour obéir à des prescriptions de l'autorité".

twentieth century. Those within easy reach have been seriously and deliberately damaged (some in recent times, such as the painting in St Catherine's chapel), while the more inaccessible (i.e. higher up from the ground) have been better preserved. The remains of a previously undocumented Mandylyon uncovered during restoration work at Karsi Kilise give hope for further discoveries. Possibly the most significant aspect of the wall paintings in Cappadocia is the position in the churches – representing the Incarnation at Sakli, the Incarnation in the Dark Church and in previously unrecorded positions underneath the prothesis niche at St Barbara and the aforementioned newly discovered remains, and above the main door (no doubt representing the original protective position over the gateway at Edessa) at Karabaş.

6.2 Hagia Sophia in Trabzon (Trebizond) and in Istanbul

The church of Hagia Sophia in Trabzon (Figure 6.34) is a beautiful example of thirteenth-century Byzantine architecture and painting⁵²⁶. The Mandylyon is over the entrance to the west porch; the right half of it has fallen away (Figures 6.35 and 6.36). No features are visible on the face of Christ, although the reddish-brown hair recalls the icon in the church of Sakli in Cappadocia. There is an angel on the left-hand side of the cloth, which leads us to suppose that there was most probably one on the other side too. No roundels are visible on what remains of the cloth.

The case of the Mandylyon in Hagia Sophia in Istanbul involves research with a slant that seems much more related to detective work. A visit to the Great Church, now a museum, reveals no sign whatsoever of the icon; the main clue lies in an old

⁵²⁵ M. Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor* (New York 1967), reference in Kostof, *Caves*, 290, no page number given.

⁵²⁶ An analysis of the church and the city can be found in Antony Eastmond, *Art and Identity in Thirteenth-Century Byzantium: Hagia Sophia and the Empire of Trebizond* (Aldershot 2004), to which could be added a photograph and description of the Mandylyon.

engraving, published in 1680⁵²⁷. The engraving (Figure 6.37) shows the apse of the cathedral, with icons of the Virgin and Child, the archangels Michael and Gabriel, and on the soffit of the bema, the Image of Edessa. Grelot, true to his western point of view, mistakenly identifies the icon as a Veronica⁵²⁸. Enough can be seen on the engraving to distinguish the face of Christ on a cloth, and two protruding locks of hair, one on each side of the head.

Restoration work on the site was undertaken in 1847 by Gaspar Fossati and his younger brother Giuseppe⁵²⁹. Apart from the very necessary architectural work, mosaics were uncovered and shown to Sultan Abdul Medjid (r. 1839-1861), who had entrusted the brothers with the project. The Sultan was overwhelmed and gave instructions to display all the ancient mosaics, although the two brothers were less sure that the Sultan's tolerance towards Christian imagery would be shared by his subjects, and the icons were accordingly plastered over⁵³⁰. They remained so until the 1930's, when permission was given by the secular government to uncover them again. As can be seen from photographs taken in 2009 (Figures 6.38-6.39), the mosaics of the Virgin and Child and the Archangel Gabriel are once again visible, but the area where the Holy Face was depicted by Grelot back in the seventeenth century is blank.

Matters are complicated by a photograph taken during the Byzantine Institute's work during the 1930's⁵³¹, in which the exact area where Grelot places the Image of

⁵²⁷ In Guillaume Joseph Grelot, *Relation Nouvelle d'un Voyage de Constantinople* (Paris 1680), accessible online at <http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/grelot1680> (last accessed: 1 July 2014)

⁵²⁸ Grelot, *Relation Nouvelle*, p. 148: "L'image de la face sacrée du Sauveur sur un voile de Sainte Veronique".

⁵²⁹ A full and beautifully illustrated account of the work is given in Gaspard Fossati, *Aya Sofia Constantinople* (London 1852), digital edition on CDR by the University of California (Berkeley 2005).

⁵³⁰ Fossati, *Aya Sofia* digital edition; Introduction by David Sullivan, p. 3.

⁵³¹ Reproduced in Natalia Teteriatnikov, *Mosaics of Hagia Sophia, Istanbul: the Fossati Restoration and the Work of the Byzantine Institute* (Washington 1998), p. 40. Neither this book nor Helen Evans, *Byzantium revisited: the Mosaics of Hagia Sophia in the Twentieth Century* (4th Annual Pallas Lecture, University of Michigan, 9 February 2006, available on-line at http://humanitiestj.yolasite.com/resources/Evans_PallasLecture%255B1%255D.pdf&rct=j&frm=1&q=&esrc=s&sa=U&ei=BS_WU6muK8Gn0QWGX4DwBA&ved=0CBQOFjAA&usg=AFQjCNEmmaWFonJ6ix-DPbhJMzw-mq1KzQ [last accessed: 28 July 2014]) make any mention of the Image of Edessa as recorded by Grelot, during the Fossati restoration work or during the Byzantine Institute's work in the

Edessa (Veronica in his list of mosaics) appears to reflect the light of the camera flash (Figure 6.40). Plaster would not reflect the light in such a way, whereas golden mosaic tesserae would; the top of the apse arch does indeed seem to be covered by golden tesserae, despite some apparent plaster between the top and the archangel.

A close look at the photograph in Teteriatnikov's book reveals discolouring in the mosaic at the top of the arch (Figure 6.40), also evident in the colour photograph in the standard guidebook to the museum (Figure 6.41)⁵³². The discolouring can be seen more clearly when highlighted (Figure 6.42)⁵³³ and seems to coincide exactly with the shape of the Mandylion on Grelot's engraving. There was heavy loss of mosaics in the earthquake of 1894, although it cannot have affected this area too much as the golden tesserae are still visible where Grelot shows the Mandylion. It is also true that nobody would have put the tesserae in place after Grelot copied his engraving in the late seventeenth century, so the obvious question to ask is what could have happened to the Mandylion, if it existed as shown in the engraving.

It has been suggested that the Mandylion mosaic had already disappeared when the Fossati brothers were working in Hagia Sophia⁵³⁴, and it is certainly true that the brothers make no mention of the mosaic in their report. This may well be true, although it does not help understand what might have happened to the icon. The fate of another mosaic in Hagia Sophia could bring us nearer to solving the mystery; the mosaic of

1930's. Neither does the series of reports by Thomas Whittemore, who directed the work in Hagia Sophia in the 1930's: *The Mosaics of St Sophia at Istanbul: Preliminary Report on the Year's Work, 1931-1932: The Mosaics of the Narthex* (Oxford 1933), *Second Preliminary Report, Work Done in 1933 and 1934: the Mosaics of the Southern Vestibule* (Oxford 1936), *Third Preliminary Report, Work Done in 1935-1938: the Imperial Portraits of the South Gallery* (Oxford 1942), *Fourth Preliminary Report: Work Done in 1934-1938: the Deesis Panel of the South Gallery* (Oxford 1952). Whittemore sadly died before finishing his detailed report on the Apse mosaics.

⁵³² Spanish version: *Santa Sofía, El Museo de Kariye* (Istanbul 2007), p. 23.

⁵³³ This photograph was sent to me by Professor Robert G. Ousterhout (University of Pennsylvania), personal correspondence January 2011. I am most grateful to Professor Ousterhout for all his help in this matter.

⁵³⁴ Cf. Cyril Mango, 'Documentary Evidence on the Apse Mosaics of St Sophia', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 47.2 (Berlin 1954), pp. 395-396: "At that time both the archangels were extant, and between them, in the crown of the arch, a figure of the Mandylion or Holy Face of Edessa. During the restoration

Emperor Alexander, which was also sketched by Fossati, but was presumed lost (possibly in the 1894 earthquake) until it was rediscovered in 1958⁵³⁵. The mosaic had simply been painted over rather than plastered over.

However, Mango saw the apse mosaics for himself at first hand and close quarters in 1964, atop scaffolding measuring almost 30 metres high. In the detailed report written after this inspection⁵³⁶, he denies the presence of the Mandyllion⁵³⁷. What he says about the golden mosaic tesserae being in place seems to be confirmed, and it is very difficult to argue against an expert who has seen and examined the arch in question in person and at very close quarters, although two points would still require clarification: (a) why would Grelot have invented the presence of a Mandyllion, albeit mistakenly identifying it as a Veronica? His engraving of the apse is very exact in all other details – the Virgin and child, the two angels on either side – and the whole could have been considered an invention until these mosaics were rediscovered in the 1930's exactly as drawn by Grelot; and (b) the discolouring visible on the photographs of the bema arch which seems to coincide exactly with at least part of what would have been Grelot's Mandyllion.

A possible solution to the enigma was provided by Robert Ousterhout⁵³⁸. He suggested, while admitting that a Mandyllion in this position would make perfect programmatic sense, that the discolouration was already present in the golden mosaic bed in the seventeenth century and this led Grelot to fantasise and see an *acheiropietos*

of St Sophia by the Fossati brothers in 1847-48, all the mosaics, including those in the apse, were again revealed, but it seems that both Michael and the Mandyllion were already missing”.

⁵³⁵ Cf. Paul A. Underwood and Ernest J.W. Hawkins, ‘The Mosaics of Hagia Sophia at Istanbul – the Portrait of the Emperor Alexander’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 15 (1961), pp. 187-217.

⁵³⁶ Cyril Mango and Ernest J. W. Hawkins, ‘The Apse Mosaics of St Sophia at Istanbul, Report on work carried out in 1964’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 19 (1965), pp. 113-151.

⁵³⁷ Mango and Hawkins, ‘The Apse Mosaics’, p. 115, note 1: “Grelot erroneously represented a Mandyllion in the soffit of the bema arch”. This opinion was stated even more clearly in a personal communication to me in February 2011: “In my opinion Grelot’s Veronica never existed for the simple reason that the 6th-century plain gold ground is still intact at the crown of the bema arch”.

⁵³⁸ Professor of Byzantine Art and Architecture and Director of the Center for Ancient Studies, University of Pennsylvania. Various personal communications in February 2011.

of an acheiropoietos. His visual record was then made hurriedly, and engraved by someone else. This hypothesis is very imaginative; it could even be true, although it is now impossible to be verified. Despite the technical difficulties involved, I would suggest another close-up inspection to see if Grelot's Mandyllion was painted over in gold in a similar way to the Alexander mosaic. Mango must have been aware of the painting and discovery of the Alexander mosaic in 1964 (six years had elapsed since it was uncovered), although this does not necessarily mean that he inspected the area for signs of similar painting over.

The date of the apse mosaics is usually considered to be ninth-century, from shortly after the end of the Iconoclast crisis⁵³⁹, although in his 1954 article, when he accepted the one-time existence of the Mandyllion, Cyril Mango argues that the Mandyllion must date from after 944, when it was translated there from Edessa⁵⁴⁰. This argument is not solid, as the Mandyllion was known in Constantinople before this date, and there is no reason to assume that the mosaic is later than the others in the apse. His later dating of the whole series to 867 does not include the Mandyllion, as in his 1964 report he no longer accepted even its existence and loss.

The possible existence of a Mandyllion in Hagia Sophia in Istanbul remains unsolved. The enigma would require further close-up inspection of the site; given the height of the arch, this would not be simple. The use of the Mandyllion in Trebizond is possibly related to the production of the Pierpont Morgan magic scroll (see above, pp. 110-117) – a small kingdom surrounded by enemies more conscious than previously of the need for divine protection. There are no other depictions of the Mandyllion in the churches standing in Istanbul, or in the churches and monasteries in and around Trabzon.

⁵³⁹ Cf. Charles Rufus Morey, 'The Mosaics of Hagia Sophia', *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (March 1944), pp. 201-210.

⁵⁴⁰ Mango, 'Documentary Evidence', p. 399.

6.3 Sanliurfa (Edessa)

The scant nature of the remains of Christianity in Edessa is well attested⁵⁴¹: what were once the city's churches have been converted to mosques or other public buildings. The fish pools mentioned by the fourth-century pilgrim nun Egeria are still present (Figure 6.43), although they are, of course, not related to Christianity in any way.

Some Byzantine mosaics have recently come to light during excavation work for pipelines. The Turkish archaeologist in charge of the excavations and preservation of the mosaics, Mehmet Onal, kindly agreed to let me examine them at close quarters (Figures 6.44-6.46). While discussing the find over a cup of ubiquitous tea, Dr Onal mentioned a mosaic of the Image of Edessa, which was kept in storage at the museum. The museum curator, also present, said that it had been found in the basement of a house during rebuilding work and taken to the museum in exchange for a small sum of money. It was not on show and there are no plans to put it in the main body of the collection. When I asked for permission to see and photograph the mosaic, he said that a permit would have to come from the Ministry of Culture in Ankara; I duly obtained this permit after the trip, but despite numerous letters and e-mails requesting the photograph, and various phone calls to the Ministry with a Turkish interpreter, the answer has been silence. Dr Onal did inform me that a photograph had been published in a local magazine; a search in all the city's bookshops (not particularly numerous) led me to what was possibly the last copy of the publication⁵⁴².

The magazine itself (p. 48 shows the photograph of the mosaic together with a Greek inscription of the Abgar letter and translation thereof into Turkish), and Dr Onal and the museum curator (in person) confidently state that the mosaic is a copy of the

⁵⁴¹ Cf. Segal, *Edessa*, pp. 256-257.

⁵⁴² Mehmet Kurtoglu, 'Mabet Şehir Urfa', *Sanliurfa kültür sanat tarih ve turizm dergisi* yıl 2 sayı 3, (Ocak 2009), pp. 46-50.

Image of Edessa (Figure 6.47 – taken from the magazine). The long hair, pointed beard and large eyes are certainly consistent with the Image, and to the viewer's right of the face there are remains of the halo, whose gold has been removed. Antony Eastmond's⁵⁴³ initial reaction was that "the icon is early (pre-eighth/ninth century), based on the consistent size of the tesserae (Middle Byzantine mosaics tend to use smaller tesserae for faces)"⁵⁴⁴.

My own search for similar mosaics revealed two pieces with a very similar style. The first is the mosaic of St Zacharias at Poreč (Croatia) (Figure 6.48). The large eyes, the size of the tesserae, the pointed beard and the way the hair parts and hangs over the shoulders, coincide in both mosaics. The second example is to be found in the Monastery of St Catherine's in Sinai, in the apse behind the iconostasis. The mosaic depicts the Transfiguration and the face of Christ is surprisingly similar to that on the Edessa mosaic (Figure 6.49). Both mosaics can be dated to the sixth century⁵⁴⁵. If the mosaic is indeed part of what was once a larger Image of Edessa, it is indeed a highly significant find as it would be one of the earliest of all known copies of the Image⁵⁴⁶.

In the Historical Museum in Sanliurfa, a statue outside in the garden is noticeable because it so obviously has a Christian cross on it (Figure 6.50). The museum provides no information about the statue, although it was presumably found in Edessa. The establishment of Christianity in the city could help here with an

⁵⁴³ AG Leventis Reader in the History of Byzantine Art (Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London).

⁵⁴⁴ Personal communication dated 13 September 2010.

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. Ernst Kitzinger, 'Some reflections on portraiture in Byzantine Art', *Recueil des travaux de l'Institut d'Études Byzantines* I (Belgrade 1963), p. 188, repr. in idem, *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West* (Indiana University Press 1976), p. 259 for Poreč; and Corinna Rossi, *The Treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine* (Vercelli 2006), pp. 74-75, for the Transfiguration mosaic.

⁵⁴⁶ I later came across an unpublished and decidedly non-scholarly article on Internet entitled 'Face of the God Man', by Philip Dayvault, at <http://www.datument.com/article-face-of-the-god-man.html> (last accessed: 15 July 2014). The article claims a first or second-century date for the mosaic. The author saw the mosaic in the museum of Urfa in 2002, and reproduces low-quality photographs of the same from the back too. The measurements are approximately 18 x 15 cm, and it was apparently torn out of a wall. No justification is given for such an early dating. The article ends with a request for financial aid to self-publish a book on the subject.

approximate date. Edessa is generally held to have been the first officially Christian kingdom. If the stories in the *Narratio de imagine Edessena* and the Synaxarion are taken at face value, then Christianity was established in Edessa very soon after the crucifixion of Christ. However, the correspondence between Jesus and Abgar is not genuine, which in turn means that it cannot be used to argue for such an early link between the city and the new religion.

Yet “every legend is based on a substratum of fact, however distorted or tenuous”⁵⁴⁷. Even though there was a king of Edessa called Abgar at the time when Christ lived, general opinion seems to equate the official coming of Christianity to the city during the reign of a different Abgar, namely Abgar VIII the Great (177-212)⁵⁴⁸. There was definitely a Christian church in Edessa during the reign of Abgar the Great, and the philosopher and poet Bardaisan, a contemporary of Abgar, was most probably a Christian of sorts, or at least had some strain of Christian belief mixed up in his own philosophies and ideas⁵⁴⁹. There were even heretics in Edessa at the end of the second century – Valentinians and Marcionites – which means that they must have been established there some time before. Tixeront estimates that Christianity was first preached in Edessa in the decade from AD 160 to 170⁵⁵⁰ (see above, pp. 44-46).

There are other signs of the use of a cross during the reign of Abgar VIII, this time from coins⁵⁵¹. A bronze coin in the Ashmolean Museum collection dating from

⁵⁴⁷ J. B. Segal, ‘When did Christianity come to Edessa?’, in *A Felicitation Volume for Professor J. D. Pearson*, ed. B.C. Bloomfield (Mansell 1980), pp. 180.

⁵⁴⁸ According to Ilaria Ramelli, ‘Possible historical traces’, p. 25, “In fact, it is even possible that Abgar the Great was a Christian himself”.

⁵⁴⁹ Cf. Tixeront, *Les Origines*, p. 11: “quoi qu’il en soit, Bardesane était certainement chrétien vers la fin du II^e siècle”.

⁵⁵⁰ Tixeront, *Les Origines*, p. 15.

⁵⁵¹ Despite Steven K. Ross’s mistaken statement in *Roman Edessa: Politics and Culture on the Eastern Fringes of the Roman Empire, 114-242 CE* (Abingdon 2001), p. 134: “... no Christian symbols appear on the coins of Abgar VIII or any Edessan ruler”. Arguing for the presence of the cross, which seems very clear, cf. John J. Gunther, ‘The Meaning and origin of the name Judas Thomas’, *Le Museon* 93 (1980), p. 129, note 86, based on T. S. Bayer, *Historia Osrhoene et Edessena ex nummis illustrata*, vol. iii (St Petersburg 1734), p. 173: “For a period Abgar’s tiara on coins actually seems to feature the Christian cross”.

179-192 clearly shows Abgar wearing a tiara with a cross (Figure 6.51)⁵⁵². The use of the cross is therefore evident on both coins and at least one surviving decorative fountain from Edessa, showing the establishment of the religion in the area.

The scarce Christian remains from the city that was home to the Image of Edessa are limited to crosses on coins and a piece at the history museum. If the sixth-century mosaic fragment is a depiction of the Image then it would be among the earliest known; although not enough survives around the face to affirm without doubt that it is the Image of Edessa.

6.4 Mani

Two of the main challenges in Mani are finding the churches and then securing access to the ones that are kept under lock and key. As for the locked churches, sometimes the key can be obtained from neighbouring houses (Agios Iohannis in Keria, Agios Sotiras in Gardenitsa), while at other times it is kept under a stone near the door or in a niche in the wall.

A much deteriorated Mandylion can be seen in the small thirteenth-century church of Agioi Anargyroi in Nomitsi, in the Exo Mani (Figure 6.52). The cloth is knotted at both sides and is therefore similar in shape to the late twelfth-century Mandylion at the church of the Panagia Phorbitissa in Asinou, Cyprus (Figure 6.53), although the Cypriot cloth is not knotted, being rather held up by (painted) nails⁵⁵³. Other knotted Mandylia (and therefore of a similar shape) can be seen at the early fourteenth-century church of Christ Soter in Veria (Greece) (Figure 6.54)⁵⁵⁴, the 1347

⁵⁵² The coin is shown and described in the on-line catalogue at <http://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/6491> (last accessed: 7 July 2014). A further example can be seen in Wayne G. Sales, *Ancient Coin Collecting IV: Roman Provincial Coins* (Iola 1998), p. 61. Neither publication mentions the cross on the tiara.

⁵⁵³ Cf. Vivien Seymer, W.H. Buckler and Mrs W. H. Buckler, 'The Church of Asinou, Cyprus, and its Frescoes', *Archaeologia* 83 (1933), pp. 327-350.

⁵⁵⁴ This is the only Byzantine church in Veria that is regularly open to the public and where there are no restrictions on taking photographs.

Mandyliion in the church of Agios Ioannis in Kalogerou (Crete)⁵⁵⁵, the chapel of Agios Euthymios in the church of Agios Dimitrios in Thessalonike (Figure 6.13)⁵⁵⁶, the fourteenth-century church of Agios Nikolas Orphanos in the same city (Figure 6.55) and the fourteenth-century church of the Holy Apostles in Pyrgi, Chios (Figure 6.56). Very little can be seen of the face on the cloth at Agioi Anargyroi.

The Mandyliion in the church of Agios Demetrios in Keria represents the saddest part of Mani. A door no more than 50 cm high is the way into a church half of whose roof has collapsed and whose interior is ruined, except for the icons in the single apse (Figures 6.57-6.58). The Mandyliion, situated directly above the conch (Figure 6.59), is cracked down the middle. The expected inscription IC on the left of the face has disappeared, while on the right the corresponding XC can be seen, together with the crudely inscribed TO ΑΓΗΟΝ ΜΑΝΔΙΑΗ. The face is clear, with brown hair and beard; the neck is visible too. Drandakis dates the church and its paintings to ca.1300⁵⁵⁷.

Possibly the most interesting Mandyliion in Mani is to be found in the church of Agios Georgios in Karynia. Dated to 1281, what immediately stands out are the two hands holding up the cloth, coming down out of nowhere from the top of the mural. The head and halo are larger than the cloth and clearly stand away from it at the top. The neck is clearly visible on this excellently preserved Mandyliion (Figure 6.60).

The hands holding the cloth up can also be seen in the diminutive thirteenth-century church of Agios Nikolaos in the village of Briki (Figure 6.61)⁵⁵⁸. Only the hand to the viewer's right is now visible (Figure 6.62). The face is contained within the cloth

⁵⁵⁵ Cf. Konstantin Kalokyris, *The Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete* (original Greek publication Heraklion 1957, English translation New York 1973), p. 107.

⁵⁵⁶ For a detailed description of this church cf. R. F. Hoddinot, *Early Byzantine Churches in Macedonia and Southern Serbia* (London 1963), pp. 125-154.

⁵⁵⁷ *Μάνη και Λακωνία*, vol. 2 (Athens 2009), pp. 372-376.

⁵⁵⁸ Drandakis, *Μάνη*, vol. 2, p. 551, states that the hands are Veronica's: "Αγίας Βερονίκης, πὸ εἰκονίζεται κτατόντας μετὰ δὺὸ χέρια τὸ ἱερὸ ὕφασμα". This seems unlikely – there is no reason to think of Veronica at all in this purely Orthodox context. The hands are either an artistic depiction with no deeper meaning, or represent Ananias or Abgar holding the cloth.

in this example of the Mandylion. The hands holding up the cloth would appear to be a feature limited only to Mani.

An angel is depicted holding up a later (eighteenth-century) Mandylion in the church of the Zoodochos Pige, in the village of Karnata, although in this case the hands are turned upwards (as the angel's upper torso is depicted) rather than downwards as if the hands were coming from heaven. The church is fully painted with frescoes from 1787 by Anagnostes Kalliergakis of Proastio and Philippakis of Androuvitsa, both of whom were active in a number of Mani churches at that time. Another detail that makes this Mandylion interesting is the fact that Christ is shown with the upper half of his torso (Figure 6.28)⁵⁵⁹.

A much deteriorated Mandylion in the church (which from the outside is just a pile of stones) of the Archangel Michael looks at first sight (there is no light inside the church as there are no windows) as if there is a hand holding up the cloth on the left, but closer inspection reveals that it is more probably the wall underneath from where paint has fallen off. No signs of hands are visible on the other side of the cloth (Figure 6.63). The murals are dated to 1278 by an inscription.

The murals in the twelfth-century church of Episkopi (Figure 6.64) are in an excellent state of repair and include a Mandylion, a Keramion and a further face of Christ below this⁵⁶⁰. The images in question are on the left and right columns above the iconostasis (Figure 6.65), dividing the nave and the bema, thus symbolically separating

⁵⁵⁹ Cf. Drandakis, *Μάνη*, vol., p. 551: “ὁ Χριστὸς εἰκονίζεται μέχρι τοῦ μέσου τοῦ στήθους”.

⁵⁶⁰ The church is normally locked, although an open window on one side is accessible, from where photographs of the Keramion and the face of Christ can be easily taken. There is an open window on the other side too (where the Mandylion is), but it is not accessible without risking a serious fall. This led to a mistaken appraisal of the murals on the Svetlana Tomekovic web site of Byzantine art (www.ica.princeton.edu/tomekovic/main) (last accessed: 22 May 2010); the face of Christ underneath the Keramion was taken for the Mandylion, as these photographs were taken from the window and not from inside the church; from the accessible window the Mandylion is almost invisible. The mistake has been

the spiritual and terrestrial realms⁵⁶¹. The Mandylyon is on the viewer's left (Figure 6.66), and is well preserved apart from the inscription on the left and Christ's mouth. On the right of the face we can clearly read XC and ΜΑΝΔΗΛΗΝ (vertical), and we could therefore suppose that the lost inscription to the left of the face would be IC and vertically, ΤΟ ΑΓΙΟΝ.

The shape of this Mandylyon (and that of the corresponding Keramion) is almost square, quite different from the horizontal copies at the top of an arch. The reason for this is most probably as simple as the place chosen for the murals – on the columns rather than over the arch⁵⁶².

The portrayal of Christ's hair is original; as opposed to the long locks of hair falling on both sides of the head (as on the majority of icons of the Mandylyon), there is only hair on one side of the head (the viewer's right). The same depiction appears on the Keramion (6.67) – no attempt has been made to make the latter a mirror reflection of the former, as was done for example in the miniature in MS *Vaticanus Ross. 251* (Figure 6.26). The inscription on the Keramion has been perfectly preserved: IC XC across the top (just as we can imagine for the Mandylyon), and vertically, ΤΟ ΑΓΙΟΝ on the left and ΚΕΡΑΜΗΔΗΝ on the right. The colour is reddish brown, in imitation of a tile, while the Mandylyon cloth is ivory or cream.

What really makes this set of images unique is the third face of Christ, directly underneath the Keramion (Figure 6.68). The background this time is blue, and although the lower part of the image has been lost, the inscription can still be made out. Across

partially corrected and both the Keramion and the face under it are now described simply as frescoes showing Christ.

⁵⁶¹ Cf. Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing*, p. 84.

⁵⁶² Irma Karaulashvili, 'The Abgar Legend', p. 235, associates these murals with others of a similar "quadrangular" shape; the miniatures in the Moscow Menologion (Figure 6.69), the Gelati Gospels (Figure 6.70), *Vatican Cod. Ross. 251* (Figure 6.26), and the lost mural of Spas Neredita (Figure 6.71).

the top, just as on the Mandylyon and the Keramion, the letters IC XC, and vertical lettering on the left and right which most probably reads O ANTIΦΩΝΗΤΗΣ. Christ Antiphonetes was a special icon owned by Empress Zoe (d. 1050), which she used for divining the future according to changes in its skin colour⁵⁶³. Zoe even had coins minted showing Christ Antiphonetes. A mid-fourteenth century icon of Christ Antiphonetes is today held in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (Figure 6.72). The church therefore shows three well-known icons of Christ, which makes one wonder what was shown in the lost icon under the Mandylyon⁵⁶⁴. Damage to the column makes this question impossible to answer.

A Mandylyon can also be seen in the thirteenth-century church of Agios Ioannis in Kastania⁵⁶⁵ (Figures 6.73-6.74). The face of the icon is entirely missing (although the damage appears to be from a state of abandonment rather than deliberately inflicted). The design on the cloth consists of stars, each within its own square. The letters IC are visible above the cloth to the left.

Some of the post-Byzantine Mandylia in Mani are also most interesting and deserve recording. Such is the case of the church of Agios Ioannis (Chrysostomos in this case) in the village of Skoutari, in the east of the Mani peninsula. The murals can be dated by inscriptions in the church to 1750; the artists were Anagnostes of Langada and Nikolaos of Nomitsi. The Mandylyon (Figure 6.75) is almost square, and in this case it would seem to be the artist's choice to paint it so, as it is in the usual place on the arch above the Mother of God, where there was plenty of room to make it as rectangular as

⁵⁶³ Cf. Michael Psellos, *Chronographia* VI, ed. Émile Renauld, *Chronographie ou histoire d'un siècle de Byzance (976-1077)*, 2 vols. (Paris 1926-1928), pp. 65-67; John Duffy, 'Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals to the Theory and Practice of Magic: Michael Psellos and Michael Italikos', in *Byzantine Magic*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington 1995), pp. 88-89.

⁵⁶⁴ Cf. Herbert L. Kessler, 'Configuring the Invisible by copying the Holy Face', in Kessler, *Holy Face*, p. 149: "The ... church of Hagios Jannakis at Episkopi in the Peloponnesos carried the argument still further, subsuming a third icon and (originally) possibly a fourth into the same argument".

the artist wished. Two angels are holding the cloth up, one on either side. The inscription to the left and right of the cloth reads TO ΑΓΙΟΝ ΜΑΝΔΗΛΙΟΝ. What is most noticeable on this icon is the fact that Christ's neck and clothed shoulders are clearly visible – according to some a sign of an early Mandyllion⁵⁶⁶, but here there is no doubt that we are dealing with a very late (eighteenth-century) example.

A very similar but much earlier Mandyllion can be seen in the church of Agios Nikolaos in Milea (Figures 6.76 and 6.77). Drandakis dates it to the middle of the eleventh century although he makes no mention of the Mandyllion⁵⁶⁷. The position and shape are the same as in Skoutari; two angels hold the cloth up (although there is no inscription), and Christ's shoulders are also outlined. It looks as if the icon was never finished, as the outlines of Christ's body down to his chest are visible, but appear not to have been painted.

Another late Mandyllion is painted in the church of the Metamorphosis of the Saviour (the paintings can be dated to 1725 by an inscription in the church) (Figures 6.78-6.79). No neck is visible and the long brown hair protrudes sharply to each side of the head. The attempts at depicting folds in the cloth are very poor, and it would appear to be held up by painted nails (the one on the left is still visible).

Another eighteenth-century icon of the Mandyllion, in the church of Agios Ioannis in the village of Platsa⁵⁶⁸, is without doubt the smallest Mandyllion in Mani (it is too high up to measure, although I would estimate it is no more than 30 cm across). The painting is simple to the point of being child-like, Christ has two small dots for eyes,

⁵⁶⁵ The church is described in Drandakis, *Μάνη*, vol. 1, pp. 433-437.

⁵⁶⁶ André Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantin* (Paris 1957), translated into Spanish as *La Iconoclastia Bizantina* (Madrid 1998), p. 55: “La cabeza de Cristo destaca en el disco del nimbo crucífero, y – signo de arcaísmo de este tipo iconográfico – el cuello está representado”.

⁵⁶⁷ Drandakis, *Μάνη*, vol. 1, p. 217.

⁵⁶⁸ The church is described in Drandakis, *Μάνη*, vol. 2, pp. 661-667.

short hair (and a beard), while one of the two angels (really just faces with wings) at the sides of the cloth has a grinning mouth (Figure 6.80).

In conclusion, among the numerous Mandylia in Mani, two details stand out: the unique feature of hands holding the cloth from above, seen nowhere else, and the example showing Christ almost down to his waist. This adds to the great variety of models existing for what is in essence no more than the face of Jesus on a piece of cloth.

6.5 Mystra

The later enclave of Mystra is better preserved in general than anything in Mani, although despite this, the murals are sadly lacking in most churches. One of the exceptions is the second east chapel in the fourteenth-century church of Hagia Sophia (built between 1350 and 1370) in the upper part of the city. The visitor's eye is immediately drawn to the large mural depicting the Dormition of the Virgin, and most eyes miss what is directly underneath this scene – the scanty remains of what must have been a huge Mandylion (approx. 1.8 m across) (Figures 6.81-6.82)⁵⁶⁹. All that is left is part of the cloth at upper left, part of Christ's halo and a hint of his hair. Nothing is left of the face, and no further conclusions can be drawn from these remains⁵⁷⁰.

The Mandylion can also be seen at three other churches in Mystra: the fourteenth-century churches of the Hodogetria and Peribleptos, and the fifteenth-century church of the Pantanassa⁵⁷¹.

⁵⁶⁹ The photograph is inverted in Emmanuel, 'The Holy Mandylion', p. 302.

⁵⁷⁰ Cf. Emmanuel, 'The Holy Mandylion', pp. 291-298.

⁵⁷¹ They are described and photographed in Emmanuel, 'The Holy Mandylion'.

6.6 Mount Athos

One of the most interesting examples of the Mandyliion on Mount Athos can be found at the Romanian skete of the Prodromos. The skete dates from the mid-nineteenth century, and the icon looks contemporary (Figure 6.83). It is the only Mandyliion I have seen in the Orthodox world in which Christ is wearing the crown of thorns (though there are no bloodstains or other signs of the passion). In the west, Christ's face with the crown of thorns on a cloth would be clearly identified as a Veronica, but this icon is just as clearly identified by its inscription – SF (i.e. Sfanta) MAHRAMA, the Holy Mandyliion. This takes the cloth out of the Abgar legend (a few days before the passion) and places it right in the middle of the narrative of Christ's crucifixion and death. As far as I am aware, neither this Mandyliion nor any of the following icons are mentioned in the published literature.

One of the most spectacular paintings of the icon can be found over the archway at the entrance to the monastery of Docheiariou; a large sixteenth-century Mandyliion greets all those who come in (Figure 6.84). The face of Christ is bearded, while the long hair is split into two on each side of the face. The golden halo bears the letters $\delta \omega \nu$ ⁵⁷², and there is a great extension of cloth on each side of the face, filled with various groups of three black dots arranged in the form of a triangle.

The seventeenth-century Mandyliion in the church at the monastery of Dionysiou (Figure 6.85) has several features in common with the Docheiariou one; the same golden halo with the same inscription $\delta \omega \nu$ (although at Docheiariou the article is on the left of the face, and at Dionysiou it is above), the same extended cloth on either side of the face and the same black dots (although at Dionysiou there are other designs in addition). The Dionysiou Mandyliion identifies the subject with the traditional

⁵⁷² For an explanation of the inscription, see above, p. 164 note 270.

contracted form of the sacred name IC XC, absent at Docheiariou. Christ's hair is divided into two on the left but there is only one lock on the right.

There is a small and deteriorated Mandylion in the Megiste Lavra monastery, painted onto the wall in the courtyard and protected from the elements by a glass cover (Figure 6.86). The hair is split into two on both sides of the face, and just visible inside the light blue halo are the letters IC XC.

Probably the oldest (twelfth- or thirteenth-century) and most damaged Mandylion on Athos is in the church at the Protaton, in Karyes, the administrative 'capital' of Mount Athos (Figure 6.23). Christ's face (with a halo) is on a grey cloth with horizontal red stripes and golden tassels at the bottom. The cloth is held up by two angels, although little more than the arms and legs of the one on the left now remain. The inscription too is damaged – all that can now be read is *ν μανδύλι*.

The beautiful Mandylion at the monastery of Stavroniketa was painted by Theophanes the Cretan in 1546 (Figure 6.87). It shows an almost thoughtful Christ on an intricately designed cloth (damaged to the lower right of the face). The cloth shown is also much wider than those in the Protaton and Megistes Lavras.

A different model is evident in two later versions in the Koutloumousiou monastery and hanging in a frame in the church at the Protaton. Similarities in the design of the cloth and in certain facial features suggest that the two were painted by the same artist, or that the later one is a copy of the earlier. Christ's hair (divided into two locks on either side of the face) is much longer than in other paintings, and his lips are painted very red, seeming almost to be pouting. There are also tassels at the bottom rather than on the side of the cloth (Figures 6.24 and 6.25). These two features are also imitated on certain souvenir icons of the Mandylion for sale in the town of Ouranoupolis, from where the boats leave for Athos (Figure 6.88).

A spectacular version of the Mandylion can be seen in the recently painted refectory at the monastery of Koutloumousiou. The whole room was painted during the 1990's, and the far end (from the main door) is presided over by a truly impressive Mandylion (Figures 6.89-6.90). A stern looking Christ is portrayed with his hair brushed behind his shoulders. Three crimson strips take the place of the letters *ὁ ὤν* evident on other paintings, while the cloth itself is white with blue stripes. The cloth is tied into knots at the upper corners and suspended on golden hooks, while Christ's garment is artistically blended into the cloth itself.

Athonite monasteries also hold smaller painted icons on wood, such as the three at Iveron measuring 14.5 x 11.5, 24.5 x 20.5 and 31.5 x 23 cm respectively (Figures 6.91, 6.92 and 6.93). One of the three can be dated to 1782 from an inscription on the icon itself, while another bears a more complete inscription than most others: *Τὸ ἅγιον μανδύλιον τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*

The Athonite Mandylia are in general late and evidence little in the way of originality. The one exception to this is the Romanian skete of the Prodromos, where on the Mandylion the face of Christ is depicted with the crown of thorns, clearly linking the Abgar legend and the related image to the passion of Christ. This is a unique representation of the Image of Edessa.

6.7 North-West Greece and the FYROM

The Mandylion in the Church of the Anastasis tou Christou in Veria (as it is called on the sign outside the building), or Christ Sotir (according to Thanasis Papazotos⁵⁷³) or simply Christ (according to Sharon Gerstel⁵⁷⁴) dates, along with the other wall paintings in the church, from the early fourteenth century (see Figure 6.54). Both the church and

⁵⁷³ *Wandering in Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Veria* (Athens 2007), pp. 20-25.

⁵⁷⁴ Gerstel, *Beholding*, pp. 105-107.

the paintings are well described⁵⁷⁵ (the paintings can be dated to 1314 by an inscription over the main door, the Dormition of the Virgin is in an excellent state of preservation, and the painter – Kalliergis – devoted most of his talent to the study of colour). One should point out the form of the cloth, one of the many hanging and knotted types that became common in Greece and Cyprus from the mid-thirteenth century onwards. There is another similar Mandyllion in the church of Agioi Theodoroi in Veria, dating from the eighteenth century⁵⁷⁶.

In Kastoria there are various Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches, some of which have depictions of the Mandyllion. One of the most interesting is to be found in the church of Agios Nikolaos tou Kasnitze (Figure 6.94), dating from the late twelfth century⁵⁷⁷. The Mandyllion is suspended, which would make it one of the earliest recorded of this type (Figure 6.95).

In the same church there is what is most probably a Keramion, painted above an arched recess on the east wall of the narthex, and previously unrecorded (Figure 6.96). The dating is presumably the same as for the rest of the church (i.e. late twelfth century). The painting is heavily damaged and no inscriptions are visible; the rectangular shape suggests a Keramion, although the tile usually reflects the shape and features of the Mandyllion itself. The different format for the Mandyllion and Keramion is rare; it can be paralleled at the church of Agios Demetrianos in Dali (Cyprus), analysed below (p. 301).

Another previously unrecorded Mandyllion in Kastoria can be found in the church of Taxiarchis Mitropoleos (Figures 6.97-6.98). The church itself dates from

⁵⁷⁵ Cf. Papazotos, *Wandering*, p. 22: “Due to their quality and the fact that they are signed, the wall-paintings in the church of Christ Sotir in Veria are a true landmark in the study of the Palaiologan Renaissance”.

⁵⁷⁶ Cf. Papazotos, *Wandering*, p. 46.

⁵⁷⁷ Cf. Gerstel, *Beholding*, pp. 90-91.

ca.1000, although the paintings are mid-fourteenth century⁵⁷⁸. The decoration on the cloth is unlike any other in the area, but similar to the Mandylion in Kastania, in Mani (Figure 6.74). This discovery adds another example to the knotted suspended type.

There is an interesting wall painting in the church of the Agioi Anargyroi in Kastoria, dating from the second phase of painting in the building in the late twelfth century⁵⁷⁹. The setting seems ideal for a Mandylion: the Annunciation is shown with Gabriel on the left and the Virgin on the right, leaving the space directly over the arch free for the cloth. This indeed is where the Image of Edessa is found in so many other churches. However, instead of the cloth with Christ's face we find a semi-circle with Christ Pantocrator – a most unusual place for this icon (Figure 6.99). Gerstel calls the image the Ancient of Days in a half medallion⁵⁸⁰.

As for the Mandylion in Hagia Sophia in Ohrid (FYROM), as far as I am aware there were no previous good colour photographs of the painting available in the literature⁵⁸¹. The wall painting dates from the eleventh century, and this is one of the earliest depictions of the Mandylion showing Christ's neck, shoulders and part of the chest (Figures 6.100-6.101)⁵⁸². The Mandylion is above Christ Pantocrator (a rare positioning), and is flanked, as on so many other examples, by two angels. Other examples of the icon showing Christ's shoulders and chest are described above, in the section on Mani.

There is a dearth of descriptions and photographs of the icons in general in this area, and especially concerning the Image of Edessa. New examples of both the Mandylion and the corresponding Keramion have been recorded herein, although the

⁵⁷⁸ Personal information from an employee at the Byzantine Museum in Kastoria.

⁵⁷⁹ Gerstel, *Beholding*, p. 88.

⁵⁸⁰ Gerstel, *Beholding*, p. 89.

⁵⁸¹ Gerstel even seems unaware of its existence in her description of the church, *Beholding*, pp. 83-84.

⁵⁸² Cf. Alexei Lidov, 'The Mandylion and Keramion as an Image-Archetype of Sacred Space', in *Eastern Christian Relics*, ed. Alexei Lidov (Moscow 2003), p. 269: "A depiction not only of the neck but also the shoulders of Christ provides an extremely rare detail, which deserves a special consideration".

morphology of the two is different and they do not face each other as they do in so many other churches where both are present. Colour photographs are provided for the first time of the interesting Mandyllion in Ohrid, an early example showing Christ's neck and shoulders, suggesting something quite different from just the facial image. Obtaining permission to take photographs in the FYROM is not a simple task and this could explain the lack of earlier pictures.

6.8 Georgia

Iconoclasm had a very limited effect on Georgia due to the distance from the capital⁵⁸³, and so some of the icons in the country are very early. Georgia was also the only country in the Byzantine periphery to show an interest in icons⁵⁸⁴. Georgian art and architecture is not strictly Byzantine, although the two are intimately related⁵⁸⁵. Tradition in the country holds that the miraculous copy of the Mandyllion on the tile (the Keramion) was taken there by St Antony of Martkophi⁵⁸⁶ (for modern icons showing St Antony with the image, see Figures 6.102 and 6.103). It is therefore somewhat surprising that there are no known depictions of the Keramion in Georgian churches.

The earliest image of Christ in Georgia is without doubt the Anchiskati icon. Dating from the sixth or seventh century, the original encaustic painting on a wooden board measures 105 x 71 cm, and is 4.6 cm thick (Figure 6.104). The current revetment dates from the nineteenth century, although it was first covered in the twelfth century by

⁵⁸³ Cf. J. M. Roberts, *History of the World* (London 1992⁹), p. 343: "In 730, therefore, an edict forbade the use of images in public worship. A persecution of those who resisted followed; enforcement was always more marked at Constantinople than in the provinces".

⁵⁸⁴ Cf. Tania Velmans, 'La Periferia Oriental del Mundo Bizantino', *Il Viaggio dell'icona dalle origini alla caduta di Bisanzio* (Milan 2002), translated into Spanish as *El Viaje del Icono desde los orígenes hasta la Caída de Bizancio* (Milan 2003), p. 85. Ethiopian icons generally date from the fifteenth century onwards and so are post-Byzantine.

⁵⁸⁵ Cf. Cortés Arrese, *El arte bizantino* (Zaratamo 1999), p. 84: "... las arquitecturas armenia y georgiana no son bizantinas en el sentido estricto del término; se trata de familias separadas de arquitectura religiosa del oriente cristiano, especialmente a partir del siglo X".

Queen Tamar, and again on various subsequent occasions. One of the inscriptions (from the eighteenth century) even claims that the Anchiskati icon is the true original Image of Edessa, thus making Georgia home to both the Mandylion and the Keramion⁵⁸⁷. The icon is now held at the Museum of Fine Arts in Tblisi⁵⁸⁸.

The icon is a painting on wood and shows no immediate link to the Mandylion (i.e. there is no cloth). And yet according to Pucko⁵⁸⁹, “On doit de fait reconnaître son lien avec Édesse: elle est du type ‘acheiropoiète’”. According to the description by Š. Armiranašvili⁵⁹⁰:

L’image du Sauveur est tellement endommagée que beaucoup de détails relatifs au style et à l’originalité de l’icône en question restent peu clairs. Le Sauveur de cette icône est du type acheiropoiète: les gros yeux largement ouverts, les sourcils arqués typiques des monuments des VIe-VIIe siècles en sont caractéristiques. On ne peut pas voir si les sourcils étaient réunis. Le nez est allongé, droit, et ne produit pas d’impression de pesanteur. Le contour des moustaches et de la barbe n’est plus visible. Le Sauveur avait les cheveux séparés par une raie, le visage était jaunâtre, selon saint Jean Damascène, était caractéristique des représentations du Sauveur dans la peinture syrienne; il la désigne du terme spécial *sitochrous*. La figuration en question du Sauveur représente donc, sans aucun doute, par son contenu iconographique et par certains traits stylistiques, un monument très ancien d’iconographie, non postérieur au VIIe-VIIIe siècle, étroitement lié à la peinture syrienne.

⁵⁸⁶ Cf. Ekaterine Gedevanishvili, ‘The Representation of the Holy Face in Georgian Medieval Art’, *Iconographica* V (2006), pp. 11-12.

⁵⁸⁷ Gedevanishvili, ‘The Representation’, p. 12. The inscription reads as follows: “This icon not made by human hands was first translated from Edessa to Constantinople, and when Leo the Isaurian and the other iconoclasts appeared, at that time it was translated from there and brought to Klarjeti, to the bishopric church of Ancha”. Cf. Karaulashvili, ‘King Abgar’, p. 188.

⁵⁸⁸ No photographs are permitted in the museum, and there are no reproductions of the icon available at the small museum shop. There is a life-size copy of the icon just outside the main museum door, where people light candles and say prayers (Figure 6.105).

⁵⁸⁹ V. Pucko, ‘Les *imagines clipeatae* chrétiennes primitives et l’icône du Sauveur d’Ançi’, *Revue des Études Géorgiennes et Caucasiennes* 2 (1986), pp. 197-210.

⁵⁹⁰ Š. Armiranašvili, *Beka Opizari* (Tblisi 1956, original in Russian).

The Anchiskati icon would appear to be a copy of the Image of Edessa⁵⁹¹ – most probably the oldest known copy (unless the Edessa mosaic is understood to be a Mandylion). Another early copy of the Holy Face is the image in the eighth-century church of Telovani (Figure 6.106). This style of depicting the face of Christ in a circle is known as a *clipeata* image. According to André Grabar, the *clipeata* image was typically used for portraits of a sovereign, for his subjects to pay homage to⁵⁹². It seems that this kind of image was specifically used to portray the triumph of Orthodoxy and iconophile convictions, and indeed, the *clipeata* image of Christ appears various times in the ninth-century Chludov Psalter miniatures to express the victory over the iconoclasts (Figures 6.107-6.108)⁵⁹³.

Nevertheless, there are various supposedly *clipeata* images of Christ that are completely unrelated to the triumph of Orthodoxy after iconoclasm, either because they are earlier than the Iconoclast crisis or just because they are not related to the question of image veneration. An example of an image of this kind from before the Iconoclast controversy is the disembodied face of Christ on an icon of Sts Sergius and Bacchus, originally from St Catherine's in Sinai but today kept at the Kiev Museum of Western and Oriental Art (Ukraine). The icon dates from the seventh century (Figure 6.109). Even earlier is the face of Christ at the spring of Nicodemus (Salamis, Cyprus) (Figure 6.110). It was discovered in the 1930's and has been dated to the sixth century – it has been virtually inaccessible since the Turkish occupation of Northern Cyprus in 1974, although an artist made a copy shortly after the icon's discovery and this can be seen at the Medieval Museum in Limassol (Figure 6.111).

⁵⁹¹ Karaulashvili, 'The Abgar Legend', p. 224, remains unconvinced: "It is difficult to estimate whether this Ancha icon reflects the plausible original form of the Edessan image of Christ. Nevertheless, the fact that from the thirteenth century onwards this icon is considered to be the *Keramidion* makes it worthy of special attention".

⁵⁹² Grabar, *L'Iconoclasme*, p. 232.

⁵⁹³ For a summary of the history of the *clipeata* image, cf. Belting, *Likeness*, pp. 107-114.

Given the definition and functions of the purely *clipeata* images as described by Grabar and Belting, i.e. to celebrate the triumph of Orthodoxy after the Iconoclast crisis, we could question the application of such an epithet to images like Telovani, Salamis and the Sergius and Bacchus icon. All they have in common is the round shape, whereas the function and purpose is completely different. None of the three icons mentioned celebrates any kind of victory, and none are related to the iconoclast controversy.

And yet the face in these images is most definitely an Image of Edessa type – all that is missing is the cloth. In fact, some early examples of the Mandylion are nothing more than the encircled face of Christ placed in the middle of a piece of cloth, as can be seen on the partial remains of the image in the church of Deir al-Surian in Egypt, uncovered in the 2001-2002 excavations and dating to ca.800⁵⁹⁴ (Figure 6.112). The lower part of a face in a circle can be seen on a cloth, identified as the Image of Edessa by the accompanying Syriac inscription reading “and he sent him the image” (Figure 6.113). According to Karaulashvili, the fact that Abgar and the Mandylion are shown next to Constantine and the cross turns the cloth into a “military relic”⁵⁹⁵; the Image was certainly used to defend the city against enemies, but an active attacking role is not attested before the sixteenth century in Russia, so Karaulashvili’s conclusion seems somewhat anachronistic.

Also of a definitely Mandylion type are certain examples of coinage (necessarily round) from Byzantium. The best-known examples are the golden solidi from the reign of Justinian II (r. 685-695, 705-711) (Figure 6.114). The face of Christ (which was abandoned on coins during the Iconoclast crisis and was later adopted once again) displays all the features typical of the Image of Edessa: long hair and beard, oval-shaped

⁵⁹⁴ For a detailed description of the campaign and the results, cf. Karel Innemée and Lucas van Rompay, ‘Deir al-Surian (Egypt): New Discoveries of 2001-2002’, *Hugoye Journal of Syriac Studies* 5.2 (2002), accessible on-line at <http://syrc.com.cua.edu/Hugoye/Vol5No2/HV5N2InnemeVanRompay.Html> (last accessed: 7 July 2014).

⁵⁹⁵ Karaulashvili, ‘King Abgar’, p. 182.

face and large open eyes. The neck and shoulders, so evident on the coin, are also to be seen on many examples of the Image of Edessa. It is true that on the solidus one of Christ's hands is in a blessing position and the other holds a book, so much more typical of a Pantocrator image, although the Mandylyon was certainly associated with coinage. A fourteenth-century typikon from Mount Athos twice mentions coins with a Mandylyon: *ἐν νόμισμα μετὰ μανδυλίου*⁵⁹⁶ (see above, pp. 173-174). The document is internally dated to the reign of Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus (r. 1391-1425) and more specifically to May 1394⁵⁹⁷. The document concerns the restoration of order on Mount Athos after internal disruption and the tributes each monastery has to pay to the Protos; mostly expressed in measures of oil and wine, although two houses, the Lavra and Chilandari, are also ordered to pay the coin with the Mandylyon. It is impossible to know exactly what kind of coins the typikon is referring to, but the association between the Image and coinage is made clear⁵⁹⁸.

I would therefore propose the revision (or rather non-use) of the term *clipeata* image in relation to faces of Christ dating from before Iconoclasm. They do not represent any kind of victory and are much more closely related to the face of Christ as depicted on the Image of Edessa.

The image at Telovani is likewise unrelated to the Iconoclast question. It is seriously damaged (and this damage would appear to be deliberate – Figure 6.106);

⁵⁹⁶ The typikon was edited by Philipp Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* (Leipzig 1894; repr. New York 2005). The references to the coins with the Mandylyon image are on pp. 201-202.

⁵⁹⁷ Cf. Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden*, p. 61.

⁵⁹⁸ Cf. Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing*, p. 82: “An allusion to coins struck from a matrix may actually have been intended; for the clipeate image looks ever so much like depictions on current coinage. Referring to just such a representation, the fourteenth-century typikon of Manuel Palaeologus II on Mt. Athos alludes to the *τὸ νόμισμα μετὰ μανδυλίου*” (sic).

what can still be seen shows us a “half-image of Christ inscribed in a circle”⁵⁹⁹. The inscription on this image is unique in the Christian world: “The Holy Face of God”⁶⁰⁰.

A particularly striking Holy Face (Figure 6.115) can be seen in the church of the Assumption in the cave monastery of Vardzia, roughly three hundred kilometres from Tblisi, in the area of Meshketi. The church and its murals date from 1184-1186, and in the words of Ghivi Gaprindashvili,

[are] a remarkable relic of Georgian monumental art. When comparing them with other works of the period, so as to establish the stylistic peculiarities of the frescoes of various monuments, researchers are greatly aided by the precise dating, and the individual manner of execution, evident in the elegance of the figures, the masterly rendering of pose, gesture and movement, the psychological expressiveness of the faces⁶⁰¹.

The face of Christ is shown without the cloth, giving rise to a much larger face than would otherwise have been possible. According to Gedevanishvili⁶⁰², remains of the blue background paint are still visible. The placing of the Mandyllion on the tympanum above the door recalls the Image above the gateway into Edessa⁶⁰³, although the scene of the communion of St Mary of Egypt above the Holy Face endows it with a Eucharistic meaning, possibly even relating Christ to the bread of communion. The typical Mandyllion features are present on the Vardzia Holy Face – the wide open eyes and long nose, and the long hair with a parting on the top of the head. The heavily damaged Mandyllion at Gelati Monastery (1291-1293) is also in a tympanum in the

⁵⁹⁹ Cf. Gedevanishvili, ‘The Representation’, p. 18.

⁶⁰⁰ Gedevanishvili, ‘The Representation’, p. 19. According to Tania Velmans, *Byzance, les Slaves et l’Occident. Etudes sur l’art paléochrétien et medieval* (London 2000), p. 288, the image at Telovani is “la plus ancienne image du Mandyllion”.

⁶⁰¹ *Vardzia: History, Architecture, Wall painting, Applied arts* (Leningrad 1975), p. 23.

⁶⁰² Gedevanishvili, ‘The Representation’, p. 15.

⁶⁰³ Gedevanishvili, ‘The Representation’, p. 15, and Grabar, ‘La Sainte Face’, pp. 30-31.

western wall of the narthex. Only the edges of the cloth and the outline of the head now remain⁶⁰⁴.

A large Mandyliion can be seen at the church of Timotesubani (Figure 6.116). The Mandyliion has been amply studied and analysed by Ekaterine Gedevanishvili⁶⁰⁵, who concludes that its poor state of preservation is due to its having been painted directly over another scene depicting the torments of the wicked in hell. It is the only part of the original murals (dating from the early thirteenth century) that has been repainted (towards the end of the same century), which explains the large dimensions (not originally intended for the Mandyliion). The repainting was related to the south entrance into the church – coming in through this door the faithful were immediately faced with the image, the triumphant light of the world shining out in hell.

The Mandyliion at Timotesubani is heavily damaged and little can be seen of the face. The clothed shoulders are clearly visible⁶⁰⁶, as is the original red colour of the nimbus (symbolising the Resurrection⁶⁰⁷). The shoulders are a typical feature of the Mandyliion in Georgia⁶⁰⁸ and can be seen in the twelfth-century icons at Ikvi (Figure 6.117), Pavnisi and Tsaldashi. The Ikvi Mandyliion is heavily damaged, although enough can still be seen to establish a certain similarity with the icons at Agios Ioannis in Skoutari and Agios Nikolaos in Milea, both in Mani in Greece, especially with respect to the outline of the shoulders.

⁶⁰⁴ Cf. Gedevanishvili, 'Some thoughts on the depiction of the Ecumenical Councils at Gelati', *Iconographica* VI (2007), p. 56.

⁶⁰⁵ 'The Holy Face in the Murals of Timotesubani', *Georgian Antiquities* 1 (2002), 79-84, revised and repr. as 'Encountering the Resurrection, The Holy Face at the Timotesubani Murals', *Intorno al Sacro Volto: Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo (secoli XI – XIV)*, ed. Anna Rosa Calderoni Masetti, Colette Dufour Bozzo and Gerhard Wolf (Venice 2007), pp. 181-186.

⁶⁰⁶ Despite the apparent contradiction between Gedevanishvili's two articles: in the early version she states that "it had been painted without a neck", whereas in the edited later version of the article, it is said that it is a "huge image of Christ with shoulders" – if the shoulders are present, obviously the neck must have been there even if it is not now discernible.

⁶⁰⁷ Cf. Gedevanishvili, 'The Holy Face', p. 183.

⁶⁰⁸ Cf. Gedevanishvili, 'The Representation', p. 22.

The thirteenth-century Mandylion at the church of the Archangels in Tanghili is relatively well preserved⁶⁰⁹. It is set within a square frame, which *pace* Gedevanishvili, would appear to depict the cloth of the Mandylion – few icons of the Mandylion in Georgia show the cloth with tassels. A similar Mandylion is preserved at the monastery church of Kobairi, now lying within the borders of Armenia (Figure 6.118). The icon also dates from the thirteenth century. Christ's neck and shoulders are clearly depicted on this icon.

The later (fourteenth-century) Mandylion at the church of St George in Ubisi (Figure 6.119) is an exception to the Georgian tradition of not emphasising the cloth. The tassels are clearly visible on the sides of the rectangular cloth (Figure 6.120), while the decoration on the cloth itself recalls that of the large icon at the monastery of Docheiariou on Mount Athos (Figure 6.84). The Mandylion in Ubisi is in the highest place in the apse, and forms an entity with the Trinity – God the Father (as the Ancient of Days), the Son (as the Pantocrator) and the Holy Spirit (Figure 6.121). This is very rare, if not entirely unique, in Mandylion iconography and would appear to lay emphasis on the Incarnation of God. This Mandylion seems to have been painted over a previous one, with a larger halo. The larger circle is still clearly visible, around the later face and halo.

While at the National Centre of Georgian Manuscripts I was able to personally examine and study the two MSS known as the Alaverdi and Gelati Gospels, both of which contain pictorial cycles concerning the Abgar legend and the sending of the image of Christ to Edessa. Much has been written about these two MSS; of particular

⁶⁰⁹ Cf. Tania Velmans, 'Deux missions du CNRS en Géorgie: décoration originale des absides médiévales', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'année-Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, 123e année, N. 3 (Paris 1979), p. 528 and Fig. 8.

interest is the article explaining how the inclusion of the Abgar correspondence in a Gospel MS is an attempt to canonise the episode⁶¹⁰.

The Alaverdi Gospel MS can be dated to the year 1054⁶¹¹. Skhirtladze's description of the location of the miniatures relating to the Abgar episode is mistaken⁶¹², while he in turn claims to correct an earlier description. The first miniature is on f. 316^v and takes up a whole folio. In this beautiful and richly coloured illustration, King Abgar, lying on a bed (and with a halo), hands his letter to the messenger (Figure 6.122). On f. 318^f Christ, wearing red and blue, writes the reply while the same messenger (identified by the red clothing) looks on (Figure 6.123).

The actual Mandylion is depicted on f. 320^v (Figure 6.6). A white rectangular cloth with red tassels imitating Georgian writing holds the face and uncovered neck of Christ against the nimbus with a cross, and the usual inscription IC XC. There are eight red roundels; seven larger ones, three down each side and one underneath the face, with two concentric circles, and an identical but smaller one (missing the outer circle) above, between IC and XC. The interesting aspect about this particular miniature is that the cloth is set against a much larger golden board or panel, which itself seems to arise out of a rectangular red, blue and golden box or casket, resembling in this aspect the way the body of Christ rises out of a similar casket in numerous Man of Sorrows icons⁶¹³. The gateway to the city of Edessa is shown on f. 321^v and the final miniature from the series is the baptism of Abgar by Thaddeus on f. 323^v. The king is shown completely naked and with disproportionately large feet.

⁶¹⁰ Skhirtladze, 'Canonizing', pp. 69-93. Interest within Georgia in the Mandylion and the Abgar legend recently led to the publication of a critical version (in Georgian only with a two-page summary in French) of the Abgar-Christ correspondence: Nestane Tchkhikvadzé, *Epistula Abgari, Les anciennes redactions géorgiennes* (Tbilisi 2007).

⁶¹¹ Skhirtladze, 'Canonizing', pp. 78-79.

⁶¹² Skhirtladze, 'Canonizing', pp. 79-80.

⁶¹³ Cf. among the numerous examples that could be cited, the sixteenth-century Man of Sorrows icon at the Monastery of Iveron on Mount Athos (Figure 6.124), and the fifteenth-century Akra Tapeinosis by Nikolaos Tzafouris (Figure 6.125).

The text in the MS is similar to the wild type known as the *Epistula Abgari* (see above, pp. 108-137), while the text of the correspondence contains nothing too different from the Greek versions (one small difference is that the promise to keep Edessa safe from Abgar's enemies is extended to the whole country). Jesus' reply contains the magical formula and the seals – the text is analysed in the chapters of this thesis concerning the *Epistula Abgari* (pp. 108-137) and the development of the letter as a magical amulet (pp. 219-239)⁶¹⁴.

The dating of the Gelati gospels is a much more debated matter; Skhirtladze concludes it was copied in the mid-twelfth century⁶¹⁵. In comparison to the Alaverdi MS, the miniatures here are much smaller and more numerous (there are ten altogether). The first is on f. 287^r and shows Abgar giving his letter to his messenger, while on f. 287^v Christ receives the letter. Folio 288^v shows Christ handing over his own reply to the messenger (Figure 6.126) (in the Alaverdi Gospels Christ is depicted writing the reply), while a somewhat obscure miniature on f. 289^r shows the hand of God reaching down from heaven (Figure 6.127). The cross and six letters (in Greek) representing the seven seals on Christ's letter are shown beneath; the artist must have intended some relationship between the two, although it is difficult to see exactly what this relationship is.

The fifth miniature contains two scenes (Figure 6.128); the actual details are not perfectly clear, although Abgar is lying in bed in both. According to Skhirtladze, the upper scene shows Abgar receiving the envoy and in the lower one he is directing the painter to return to Jerusalem to paint a portrait of Christ. This would seem to be the case, despite the lack of inscriptions on the scenes. In the upper scene Abgar is talking to one person at the foot of his bed while another is at his side; in the lower scene he

⁶¹⁴ The Georgian texts were translated in Karaulashvili, *The 'Epistula Abgari'*.

⁶¹⁵ Skhirtladze, 'Canonizing', p. 81.

talks to a group of four people at the foot of the bed. The colours of Abgar's clothing and bed are interchanged in the two scenes. On f. 290^r Christ receives the messenger, although the only person spoken to by Abgar in the previous scene wearing brown (as the messenger is) has white hair and a white beard, while the messenger has short dark hair on f. 290^r.

Folio 290^v has three scenes in one: an envoy comes to Christ, who washes his hands (not his face) and then hands over the cloth (Figure 6.129). The next miniature (f. 291^r) shows the column of fire descending at Hierapolis (Figure 6.130), and the last two can be found on f. 292^r. The first shows the healing of the paralytic and then Abgar receiving the Mandylion (Figure 6.70) and is the only miniature in the Gelati Gospel MS to actually show the cloth with the miraculous imprint of Christ's face. The last miniature depicts the baptism of Abgar.

The text in the Gelati MS is also a version of the wild text *Epistula Abgari*, and the text of the correspondence is what we could call "standard" (the promise to keep Edessa safe from Abgar's enemies is here limited to the city). Jesus' reply also contains the magical formula and the seals.

The importance of the Mandylion in Georgia is evident from the numerous copies and related texts. The age of the icons of Christ (especially the Anchiskati icon and the Holy Face at Telovani) and the inclusion of the Abgar legend in two illustrated Gospel manuscripts show how deeply the Image of Edessa is rooted in the religion and culture of the country, which lay on the limits of Byzantium.

6.9 Cyprus⁶¹⁶

The island of Cyprus contains some of the most original, unique and fascinating icons of the Image of Edessa. The most original feature is without doubt the extremely elongated nature of some paintings of the Mandylion, and the corresponding Keramion too.

The church of Agios Sozomenos in the town of Galata (Figure 6.131) is an excellent example of this; it is post-Byzantine, dating from the year 1513. The Mandylion is on the south wall over the portal, and shows Christ with large, wide open eyes, neck and shoulders (wearing a robe). The cloth is unusually long – almost two metres (Figure 6.132) – as is the Keramion over the north wall (Figure 6.133). The tile is bright red, and the face of Christ is more or less identical (the mouth is smaller on the Keramion, and while the neck is visible, the shoulders are not). The church is described in some detail by Andreas and Judith Stylianou⁶¹⁷, although neither the Mandylion nor the Keramion are mentioned.

Also in the town of Galata is the sixteenth-century church of the Archangel, or Panagia Theotokos. The Mandylion is on the south wall over the door, and is of similar dimensions to the one in the church of Agios Sozomenos (Figure 6.134). No neck or shoulders are visible. The Keramion is also similar (Figure 6.135). Stylianou mentions both the “Holy Handkerchief” and the “Holy Tile” in this case⁶¹⁸.

The church of Panagia tou Arakou in Lagoudera contains the most complete Byzantine paintings on the whole island of Cyprus, dating from the late twelfth century. Painted gold on a blue background, the Keramion is over the north door and shows a distinctly sad Christ, with a neck but no shoulders depicted (Figure 6.136). The facial expression is different on the Mandylion (Figure 6.137), which apart from a slight crack

⁶¹⁶ I would like to express my sincere thanks to George Apostolou, who visited the churches in Cyprus and took the corresponding photographs on my behalf.

⁶¹⁷ *The Painted Churches of Cyprus* (Stourbridge 1964), 42-44.

running up through the cloth, is perfectly preserved. The beard on the Keramion is pointed but not parted, whereas on the Mandylion it is divided into two, and both neck and clothed shoulders can be seen on the Mandylion. The Keramion and the Mandylion face each other over the dome of the church, thus showing that “the original and offset are equal representations of the archetype because the image exists not *in* them but *through* them”⁶¹⁹.

The early fourteenth-century church of St Demetrianus at Dali (Figure 6.138) also contains both a Mandylion and a Keramion. The Mandylion is on the south wall over the door and is quite heavily damaged; the left side is all but gone (Figure 6.139). The cloth is held up at the corners, a similar shape to the Mandylion in the church of Panagia Phorbiotissa at Asinou in Cyprus (Figure 6.53) and also to Agioi Anargyrioi (Figure 6.52) and Agios Nikolaos in Briki (Figure 6.62), in Mani, Greece. The face in the corresponding Keramion on the west wall (Figure 6.140) is painted so as to be identical to the Mandylion, although the knotted cloth looks much smaller than the tile (precisely because it is knotted at the corners).

The Mandylion at the church of Panagia Phorbiotissa in Asinou (Figure 6.53) is dated to the early twelfth century, much older than Agios Demetrianos, and is immaculately preserved⁶²⁰. The neck of Christ is portrayed, overlapping the nimbus at the bottom. The long hair is only shown on the viewer’s right, while the hair on the left is neatly tucked behind the neck.

Dating from 1474 is the Mandylion at the church of the Archangel Michael in Pedoulas, painted in a local post-Byzantine style (Figure 6.141). An expressively sad face of Christ exhibits some features in common with other icons from the island, notably the hair on the viewer’s left being tucked away behind the head. This particular

⁶¹⁸ Stylianos, *The Painted Churches*, p. 48.

⁶¹⁹ Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing*, p. 83.

icon is original in that the letters IC XC are on the lower part of the cloth, instead of the much more usual location at the top.

The church of Agia Paraskevi in Paphos (formerly known as Agia Christina) dates from 1411, and the Mandyion therein, on the south wall, is exceptionally well preserved (Figure 6.142). The face of Christ is disembodied; no neck or shoulders are visible. The cloth is depicted as held up by pins or nails at the two top corners⁶²¹.

There are three wall painted icons of the Mandyion in the chapels that form part of the monastery of Agios Ioannis Lampadistis, in the village of Kalopanayiotis. The church and its chapels were built over a long period of time, from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries. The Mandyion on the column in the middle of the nave facing east towards the altar (Figure 6.143) shows the neck of Christ, while the icon over the portal in the middle wall, facing west, is a facial image only, with two locks of hair to the viewer's right and just one to the left (Figure 6.144).

The third Mandyion, on the south wall over the portal, is also a face-only image, although this time there are two locks of hair on each side of the face. The shape of the cloth is also unique in this case; instead of an excess of cloth on each side of the face, as we can see on many other examples, what we have here is a face at the top of a vertical rectangle (Figure 6.145), and a field of empty cloth underneath the face. This could be quite simply due to the space available for painting the icon and which it had to take up (Figure 6.146).

The Mandylia on Cyprus show once again how the Image was adapted to local conditions and identity. The original features are extremely long depictions of the cloth (and the corresponding Keramion), unique to the island. The examples on Cyprus are essential for understanding the pictorial flexibility and evolution of the Image of Edessa.

⁶²⁰ Stylianos, *The Painted Churches*, pp. 51-67, devotes sixteen pages to the wonders of this church but makes no reference to the Mandyion.

⁶²¹ The electrical lighting seen on the photograph leaves much to be desired.

6.10 Conclusions

Attempts to date variations of the Mandylicon have been made by Grabar⁶²² and more recently by Karaulashvili⁶²³. Grabar's theories can be summarised as follows: a rectangular cloth, often with tassels and spread out on a surface, can be dated to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, whereas in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the cloth is suspended either by the corners or a row of rings at the top. The nimbus is typical of the Comnenian period (1081-1185), and the gentle and serious facial expression⁶²⁴ is typical of the Macedonian (867-1057) and Comnenian periods. Long cheeks and a long beard on a Mandylicon mean that it dates from before the fourteenth century. A long thin nose, large eyes, schematic hair and red cheeks are typical of the twelfth century. Grabar also states elsewhere⁶²⁵ that the presence of the neck of Christ on a Mandylicon shows the image is early.

Karaulashvili is more succinct. She states that according to *opinio communis*, the earliest types consist of a *clipeata* image stretched on a flat surface, the second type is a suspended cloth (from the second half of the thirteenth century onwards – which contradicts Grabar), whereas the third type, the knotted cloth, first appears in the fourteenth century. She then tries to provide examples that do not fit in with this; the St Catherine's icon, which is on a "suspended or curled cloth", and a similar depiction in Codex Skylitzes. However, the Sinai icon can hardly be described as suspended in the sense meant with the Mandylicon – it is held by Abgar/Constantine.

It is true that Grabar wrote in the 1930s, when for instance only one copy of the Mandylicon was known in Cappadocia, and to his credit he cites the Mandylicon at Sopočani in Serbia as an isolated example of a suspended cloth dating from the early

⁶²² Grabar, 'La Sainte Face', pp. 5-36.

⁶²³ Karaulashvili, 'The Abgar Legend', pp. 229-230.

⁶²⁴ Grabar, 'La Sainte Face', p. 18: "à la fois douce et grave".

thirteenth century (Figure 147)⁶²⁶. There are a further two Mandylion icons at Sopočani (Figures 6.148-6.149), neither of which is suspended either from the corners or from a row of rings along the top.

Let us now look at Grabar's various dating categories in more detail. First of all: "a rectangular cloth, often with tassels and spread out on a surface, can be dated to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries". Both Sakli Mandylia in Cappadocia are rectangular on a surface, with tassels, and yet both date from the eleventh century. Still in Cappadocia, the Mandylion icons in St Catherine's Chapel and in the Dark Church also fit this description, and are also dated to the eleventh century.

The next description is that "in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the cloth is suspended either by the corners or a row of rings at the top". This is certainly true of later icons, especially images on Mount Athos, but is contradicted by the eleventh-century Mandylion in the Dark Church (Cappadocia), the twelfth-century Mandylion of Episkopi (Mani) and the thirteenth-century icon at the Protaton (Mount Athos), all of which are suspended by the corners. Grabar makes no mention of the Mandylia suspended by a pair of hands (Briki and Karinia in Mani, both from the thirteenth century) or the numerous examples of an angel at each side of the cloth holding it up (the Protaton on Mount Athos and Skoutari in Mani are good examples).

The next clue is that the nimbus is "typical of the Comnenian period", although it is evident on numerous examples both earlier and later than the period claimed by Grabar. The "gentle and serious facial expression" would have required a more detailed identification by Grabar as this is something that is subject to the viewer's own interpretation on virtually all examples.

⁶²⁵ Grabar, *L'Iconoclasme*, p. 55.

⁶²⁶ Grabar, 'La Sainte Face', p. 16.

Grabar then continues with two physical descriptions of the actual face on the cloth, which can be used for dating purposes. The first is that “long cheeks and a long beard on a Mandylion mean that it dates from before the fourteenth century”, and the second is that a “long thin nose, large eyes, schematic hair and red cheeks are typical of the twelfth century”. Again, in many cases whether a nose or beard is long is purely subjective. The long nose, long beard and long cheeks tend to come together on examples with an elongated face, which means the two descriptions contradict each other. Large eyes are evident on many examples from before and after the twelfth century, and the Mandylions in the pre-twelfth century Sakli Church in Cappadocia are generally red in colour. As for Grabar’s last statement that the presence of a neck means the Mandylion is early, this is disproven by various later examples from Mani.

In conclusion, what can really be highlighted from all the Mandylion copies we have examined, both early and late, is the huge variety of shapes and forms that arose from what is after all a simple legend of the face of Christ imprinted onto a cloth. There are rectangular cloths, square cloths, elongated cloths (in Cyprus), cloths held up by angels, cloths held up by hands descending from above, and knotted cloths. There are long faces, round faces, pointed beards, split beards, longer hair, shorter hair, wide open round eyes and smaller eyes, faces with a neck, faces with a neck and shoulders and disembodied faces. The hair can be further subdivided into variations involving two locks on each side of the head, one lock on one side and two on the other and no locks visible as the hair is tucked behind the head. The beard is sometimes rounded with the chin, sometimes longer and divided into two.

Christ’s nimbus is shown with and without the Greek inscription $\delta \ \acute{\omicron}\nu$, whose letters vary in position from one image to another. There is even a seventeenth-century Mandylion in the monastery of Varlaam (Meteora, Greece), whose inscription is

actually the four *thetas*, $\theta\theta\theta\theta$ (Figure 6.150), as recorded in the Synaxarion summary of the *Narratio de imagine edessena*⁶²⁷ – the only image I have seen with this inscription.

With such a huge variety of typologies covering a period of seven or eight centuries, it seems impossible to date examples with specific features characteristic to each Mandyliion. The most that can be done at this stage is to group certain types together according to their origin; it would appear that all Russian examples show nothing more than the face of Christ and never the neck or shoulders, e.g. the Novgorod image, dating from the mid-twelfth century (Figure 6.151)⁶²⁸ and an embroidered Mandyliion known as the Moscow Aer, dating from 1389 (Figure 6.152)⁶²⁹.

The extremely elongated Mandyliion is only to be found in the town of Galata in Cyprus, while the hands descending from above to hold the cloth are apparently limited to a few churches in Mani. Angels holding the cloth can be found throughout the Byzantine world, as can knotted and rectangular cloths. Decorations on the cloth vary from the roundels in Cappadocia and Georgia to flower-like paintings and fold marks in other examples.

Just as with the very broad range of terminology generated by the Abgar legend and the Mandyliion, art too has depicted the cloth in a huge variety of different ways. This can only be the reflection of a hugely fertile imagination in matters of religion, in a particular subject that was so much dearer to the Byzantine heart than to our own.

⁶²⁷ For a critical edition of the Synaxarion text cf. Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 88-111 (with facing page translation in English). The letters stand for the words $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\omega\nu\ \theta\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu\ \theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\alpha$. The four θ are also present on the inner robe worn by monks on Mount Athos (as shown to me in the Monastery of Stavroniketa).

⁶²⁸ For a complete analysis of this icon, cf. Gerhard Wolf, 'The Holy Face and the Holy Feet: preliminary reflections before the Novgorod Mandyliion', in *Eastern Christian Relics*, ed. Alexei Lidov (Moscow 2003), pp. 281-287.

⁶²⁹ For a description of the Aer cf. the exhibition catalogue *Byzantium, Faith and Power 1261-1557*, ed. Helen C. Evans (The Metropolitan Museum of Art 2004), pp. 318-319.

General Conclusions

It would be no exaggeration to state that the Image of Edessa was an object that was actually treated as a holy person (as indeed were certain relics); it had its own feast day and its own *akolouthia*, and prayers were addressed to it for intercession⁶³⁰. Certain icons (e.g. the Genoa Mandylion and the Mandylion in the collection of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II – which is discussed below, p. 308) are surrounded by scenes from the Abgar legend, in the same style as some icons of saints are surrounded by scenes from their lives, thereby equating the cloth with the saints themselves⁶³¹. The attribution of the qualities of a saint to the Image of Edessa shows the immense importance attached to it, as if it were Christ himself rather than a representation thereof.

The ‘journey’ of the Image over the centuries, in its various forms and traditions, is summarised in **Appendix II** below (pp. 380-386), in an attempt to place its development in a historical context. The overall vision and impression obtained from this outline and from the discussion in the thesis is the tenacity of the tradition of the Image of Edessa, its wide dissemination, transformation and major influence in diverse and varied fields of history and expressions of faith over such a broad geographical area. It was used to construct identity and meet various purposes in diverse countries at different times.

The effect of the Image can also be seen beyond the scope of what has been examined above, in objects and places not mentioned in the thesis. For example, it appears on photographs showing the Image on the banner carried by Bulgarian troops in

⁶³⁰ Cf. Velmans, *Il viaggio*, p.13. For the prayers and intercessions addressed to the image, cf. Guscini, *The Image*, pp. 124-140.

⁶³¹ Cf. Cynthia Hahn, ‘Icon and Narrative in the Berlin Life of St. Lucy (Kupferstichkabinett MS. 78 A 4)’, in *The Sacred Image East and West*, ed. Robert Ousterhout and Leslie Brubaker (Chicago 1005), p. 72: “Alternately, in a form familiar to Byzantinists, icons are at times surrounded by narrative frames detailing the life of the saint”.

World War I (Figure C.1), a 1970 postage stamp from Czechoslovakia (Figure C.2)⁶³² and even hanging in a chapel in Lincoln Cathedral in England in 2012 with no explanation or description of what it is (Figure C.3). King Abgar V (r. 4 BC-AD 7 and AD 13-50) is shown on the obverse of the 100,000 dram Armenian bank note, issued in 2009, pointing to the royal banner with the Mandylion; the reverse of the note shows Thaddaeus handing the Image to the monarch (Figure C.4). Special mention should be made of the Mandylion in the collection of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II (Figure C.5). Dating from the eighteenth century, it is clearly a copy of a Simon Ushakov (1626-1686) icon; the faulty inscription is a detail that Ushakov would never have permitted (TON ΑΓΙΟΝ ΜΑΝΔΥΛΙΟ). The icon was obtained by Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, from Prince Ludwig Kraft Ernst von Oettingen-Wallerstein as repayment for an outstanding loan⁶³³. In a MS kept in Harburg Castle in Germany there is a catalogue of Prince Ludwig's art collection as it was in 1817-1818, and where this icon is described (pp. 16-17)⁶³⁴. Hungarian composer Franz Liszt (1811-1886) had a Mandylion icon in his bedroom, which can now be seen at the Liszt Ferenc Memorial Museum in Budapest (Figure C.6). The icon dates from the seventeenth century and hangs over a prie-dieu (a prayer desk for private use). It bears the following inscription: 'IMAGO CHRISTI SALVATORIS AD IMITATIONEM EIUS QUAM MISIT ABGARO QUAE ROMAE HABETUR IN MONASTERIO S. SILVESTRI' (The image of Christ the Saviour, a copy of the one he sent to Abgar, which is kept at the

⁶³² See http://colnect.com/es/stamps/stamp/128337-Mandylion_16stol_Lukov-Slovak_folk_icon-Czechoslovakia (last accessed: 7 July 2014)

⁶³³ Cf. Ernst von Dobschütz and Lionel Cust, 'Notes on Pictures in Royal Collections – Article III The Likeness of Christ', *Burlington Magazine* 18.5 (London 1904), pp. 517-528.

⁶³⁴ Cf. Lorne Campbell, *The Early Flemish Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen* (Cambridge 1985), pp. xlviix-ix.

monastery of St Sylvester in Rome). This is in fact the Vatican copy, which was taken from St Sylvester in 1870⁶³⁵.

Above all the Image of Edessa was used diachronically to express meaning. Like other devotional objects, icons (including murals) were often used to express further ideas, not always easy for the non-initiated to identify and/or interpret in what they depicted⁶³⁶, as in the case of wall paintings placed in a specific iconographic programme in a church. A good example of this is the change in the depiction of the crucified Christ in the ninth century, from a fully clothed figure reigning in glory from the cross to a suffering human wearing only a loincloth, which underlines the humanity of Christ. This is related to the Iconoclast controversy. Iconoclasts argued that Christ, as God, was uncircumscribable and that to depict him in any kind of icon was to deny his divinity, while iconophiles argued in turn that not to depict the life and death of Christ was to deny his humanity, as his human body was undeniably circumscribable⁶³⁷. According to all the different versions of the origin of the Image (whether Jesus providing a portrait for the painter, or a letter to the messenger sent by Abgar, or the disciples giving him a cloth to wipe off his bloody sweat in Gethsemane), it was produced by Christ on earth and showed his human nature. This made it the perfect argument against the iconoclasts, as not only was Christ showing himself to be circumscribable but also to be authorising the existence and production of images of himself. The whole issue of the Iconoclast controversy and its impact on the Byzantine world in general is complex and has been debated in detail⁶³⁸; I have limited the discussion in this thesis to the role of the

⁶³⁵ Cf. Imre Kovács, 'Liszt's Devotional Image: A 17th century Abgar Image and its Two Possessors', *Acta Historiae Artium* 44 (2003), pp. 339-348.

⁶³⁶ Cf. Betsy L. Chunko, 'The Status of Holy Face Icons in Byzantium', *Jefferson Journal of Science and Culture* 1 (2011), pp. 88-89: "Byzantine icons were socially recuperative – that is, the complex systems of meaning so simply presented depended upon the viewer's understanding of aspects of religious doctrine in order for the image to fully function in its cultural context".

⁶³⁷ Cf. Kathleen Corrigan, 'Text and Image on an Icon of the Crucifixion at Mount Sinai', in *The Sacred Image East and West*, ed. Robert Ousterhout and Leslie Brubaker (Chicago 1995), p. 48.

⁶³⁸ An excellent recent book that takes a very balanced look at the problem and lays certain myths to rest is Leslie Brubaker, *Inventing Byzantine Iconoclasm* (Bristol 2012).

Image of Edessa in this context. This could lead to a more detailed study of the controversy from the point of view of this particular icon and how specific icons affected the underlying theological arguments in the debate.

The city of Edessa was in Syria, one of the Miaphysite areas (together with Egypt, Syria, Armenia and Ethiopia). Miaphysites were sometimes confused (especially by their opponents) with Monophysites, although the difference is significant; the Miaphysites preserved the original terminology of Cyril of Alexandria, emphasising that Christ was both human and divine in one nature, whereas the more extreme Monophysite view held that Christ had one divine nature, which virtually absorbed his humanity. This was the view held by the priest Eutyches (ca.380-ca.456) and the minority that followed him⁶³⁹. The Image of Edessa contributes to showing this difference, as an image of the face of Christ imprinted by Christ himself was more than sufficient proof of his human nature; if the Miaphysites had not accepted the humanity of Christ, the Image would surely not have been held in such high esteem in Edessa. The role of the Image of Edessa as a depiction of the human Christ in the midst of the Miaphysite controversy, and indeed, in the much more general and complex field of the Christological debate, is a field for further detailed study.

The placing of the Image in iconographic schemes in churches is often said to be related to the Eucharist (see above, p. 262). In the Dark Church in Cappadocia, for example, the unusual presence of Abraham in the bema together with the Image is said to have Eucharistic connotations. The exact meaning of this, however, is not immediately clear. The link between Abraham and the Eucharist is a reference to the near sacrifice of his son Isaac, by which Abraham is said to prefigure the Father's sacrifice of his Son on Calvary, re-enacted in the body and blood symbolism of the

⁶³⁹ For the Miaphysites, Monophysites and the complex controversy over the nature of Christ at this time, cf. W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement: Chapters in the History of the Church*

Eucharist. This could then be a further reference to the humanity of Christ (it was the human body of Christ that was sacrificed on the cross) or could even link the image to the Passion, as other sources do. One should always exercise extreme caution, however, when attributing such meanings, as it is not always clear exactly why the artist placed the Image together with, in this case, Abraham, and much less so how many people would understand this significance through mere observance.

According to some scholars, the placing of the Image of Edessa by other icons related to the Incarnation also related it to the Eucharist⁶⁴⁰. In Sakli Church in Cappadocia, it is placed between the Annunciation and Isaiah prophesying the birth of the Messiah (Figure 6.12) – to my mind this has very little or nothing to do with the Eucharist, and everything to do with the birth and humanity of Christ. Even when the Image of Edessa is found close to the prothesis niche, this too is related to his birth and sacrifice on the cross rather than the Eucharist⁶⁴¹. I would suggest that ever since the end of Iconoclasm, the main theological significance of the Image of Edessa in Byzantium was to stress the human nature of Christ, in both his birth and sacrifice on the cross, and that this meaning remained with it and was expressed in its positioning in churches. This also makes much more sense than a supposed link to the Eucharist, which in itself would serve no particular purpose. When a clear link to the Eucharist is intended for an icon or mural, it is made evident, as in the case of the early fourteenth-century image of the Virgin at the Chora Monastery in Istanbul, which is located between depictions of the miracle at the wedding in Cana (turning water into wine) and the multiplication of the loaves, i.e. bread and wine, which would immediately suggest

in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries (Cambridge 1972), and John Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions: The Church 450-680 AD* (Crestwood, New York 1989).

⁶⁴⁰ Gerstel, *Beholding*, pp. 68-77. For symbols and icons representing the Eucharist see Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge 1992).

⁶⁴¹ Cf. Karl Christian Felmy, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/religion-past-and-present/prothesis-chapel-SIM_024718?s.num=4 (last accessed: 7 July 2014).

an obvious link to the Eucharist⁶⁴². The origins of the Image, however, and its depiction of Christ in his earthly life make it ideal to show to any who might have doubted that he was indeed fully human and could be depicted as such.

In other cases the Image of Edessa is shown facing the Keramion, the tile on which according to the *Narratio de imagine Edessena* the face of Christ was miraculously imprinted from the original cloth. The meaning of this placing of the two images is not clear or easy to define. According to Herbert Kessler, the two images facing each other show the unchanging nature of the appearance of Christ⁶⁴³; this could be applied to the icon Kessler was first describing (*Vaticanus Ross.* 251, f. 12^v), where the two icons appear to be deliberate mirror images of each other, although he then applies the same explanation to icons in churches. He goes on to state that the faces show the unchanging likeness of the prototype even when they are on different materials and imprinted or engraved in different ways. It is difficult to gauge how many people would have understood such a meaning, and even more so to guess at the artist's original intentions. A possible interpretation of an icon does not necessarily mean that this very interpretation lay in the artist's mind when he produced the representation. It becomes even more difficult to accept an interpretation according to which two deliberately different faces show that the original is unchanging.

Alexei Lidov adopts a much simpler interpretation, explaining that the two images merely recall the miracle told in the *Narratio* "that occurred in the niche over the gates of Edessa – the imprint of the divine face, without being drawn, on the tile

⁶⁴² Cf. Ousterhout, 'The Virgin', pp. 98-99.

⁶⁴³ Cf. Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing*, p.83: "At Lagoudhara, for instance, a copy of the Keramion, facing the Mandyliion across the central domed space, establishes that the original and offset are equal representations of the archetype because the image exists not *in* them but *through* them". Kessler also claims the same for the Mandyliion and Keramion in the church of Episkopi in Mani, although in this case the two do not face each other (cf. Figure 6.65).

covering this niche”⁶⁴⁴. Paul Hetherington would seem to disagree with these interpretations by stating that the Keramion “... always took a subsidiary place to the *mandylion* image”⁶⁴⁵. Given that in many such cases it is almost impossible to determine the artist’s intentions, as we have stressed, I would conclude, following Lidov, that the presence of the two images merely reflects the miraculous story as told in the *Narratio* and other versions.

Moreover, the Image of Edessa and the underlying Abgar legend and correspondence have served as a tool in the hand of those who defended numerous different and varied causes. It was used to support the claim by the city of Edessa to be the first city/state to adopt Christianity as the official state religion, and subsequently modified to construct the Christian identity of Armenia (by making Abgar king of Armenia rather than Edessa), and subsequently to disassociate the Image from Constantinople and identify it rather with Rome. In the *Narratio de imagine edessena*, an anonymous man uttered the following words under the influence of the Image: “Receive your glory and joy, Constantinople, and you, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, your kingdom” (see below, p. 373). The Image was thus used politically to justify Constantine’s taking the throne. The story was open to change in order to accommodate the necessary identification with a certain city or region. As explained above (pp. 203-206), in the seventeenth century the “truth” of the Abgar legend was used as a tool to attack the Biblical canon, and a century later to ridicule the miraculous nature of early church stories. As recently as the nineteenth century, the legendary nature of the Abgar story was employed to question the very existence of the historical Jesus of Nazareth⁶⁴⁶.

⁶⁴⁴ ‘A Byzantine Jerusalem. The Imperial Pharos Chapel as the Holy Sepulchre’, in *Jerusalem as a Narrative Space*, ed. Annette Hoffmann and Gerhard Wolf (Leiden 2012), p. 90.

⁶⁴⁵ Hetherington, ‘The image’, p. 197.

⁶⁴⁶ J.P. Mendum and P.M. Bennet, *Revelations of Antichrist: Concerning Christ and Christianity* (Boston 1879), esp. pp. 145-167.

Vocabulary related to the Image was also employed to argue for and against specific purposes. The avoidance of the word related to the burial shroud of Christ in the *Narratio de imagine Edessena* denotes a definite refutation of the identification of the two objects, while the coining of a new word, *tetradiplon*, regardless of its exact meaning, shows how original terms became necessary to describe what must therefore have been an object with certain specific properties that were otherwise difficult to define.

One of the most fascinating uses of the Image and the Abgar legend, nevertheless, lies in their use as a magical amulet. The magical formulae contained in adaptations of the Abgar letters (both the one sent by Abgar to Christ and the reply) address a deep human need for protection when in danger⁶⁴⁷. This belief is as human and alive today as it ever was: from lay good luck charms to religious symbols used for protection⁶⁴⁸. This is borne out by the amulets containing one or both of the Abgar letters (sometimes with personalised requests and prayers), designed to be worn or carried by individuals, and also by copies of the whole Abgar legend written in times of danger, appealing to the divine promise of invincibility given to the city of Edessa. The borderline between magical practice and Christianity may be impossible to define, if it even exists⁶⁴⁹, but this never impeded the proliferation of superstitious acts and objects

⁶⁴⁷ According to some theories of anxiety relief, people turn to magical beliefs when there is a sense of uncertainty and potential danger and there is little to do about it. Magic is used to restore a sense of control. In support of this theory, research indicates that superstitious behaviour is invoked more often in high stress situations: cf. Giora Keinan, 'The effects of stress and tolerance of ambiguity on magical thinking', *Personality and Social Psychology* 67 (1) (1994), pp. 48-55. In this regard, the Malinowsky hypothesis, defined in Stanley Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality* (Cambridge 1990), p. 22, states "that magic ritualizes man's optimism when there is a hiatus in man's knowledge, that magic is invoked and practiced to fill in the gap of anxiety and uncertainty when the limits of technical control are reached".

⁶⁴⁸ For an example of the belief in amulet protection in the twentieth century from the world of Judaism, the hostages' ordeal at Entebbe (Uganda) in 1976 was attributed by some to the "collective inefficacy of their *mezuzot*": cf. Martin Gordon, 'Mezuzah: Protective Amulet or Religious Symbol?', *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Thought* 13 (1977), p. 7.

⁶⁴⁹ Cf. John Rees Lewis, *Amulets: The Psychology of Magical Thought in a Contemporary Context* (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Sussex, 2000), p. 298: "The question of magic vs religion dissolved; there is no distinction".

made to protect the bearer, a practice that is still widespread today⁶⁵⁰. The use of both the letters and the Image itself in this regard is still evident today in the placing of the latter at the top of an arch, reminiscent of its apotropaic position over the gateway of the city of Edessa.

The psychological benefits of the use of amulets have been described by Hildburgh⁶⁵¹: the mere possession of an amulet can help people to achieve their aims, such as for example the presence of a medal of St Christopher in a vehicle can lead a driver to react better in an emergency, and people tend to remember the one time an amulet ‘works’ rather than the numerous occasions when it does not. Hildburgh remarks that “the employment of amulets seems ... [to be] based upon, fostered and perpetuated, by reason of certain deep-seated human instincts ...”, adding that an amulet is a “tangible symbol of hope, pleasurably fortifying the spirit of the person who employs it”. This whole analysis is applicable to the use of the Abgar letters and the Image of Edessa itself as one of the earliest examples of Christian protective amulets, appealing as they do to a very human need in times of adversity.

The Image of Edessa also plays a seminal role in the ongoing general fascination concerning the physical appearance of Christ. There is no single reliable physical description of him in whom so many millions have placed their faith over the centuries, and those that exist more often than not contradict each other. The Abgar legend is the earliest version of the story of how Christ himself imprinted his face onto a piece of linen cloth, followed in the west by the tales of Veronica and her cloth and the textual approximations found in the Letter of Lentulus and other texts. This curiosity is an integral part of human nature, and once again shows how the Image helps fulfil this essential part of our being and inquisitiveness. Even though the Image of Edessa may

⁶⁵⁰ Cf. Rees Lewis, *Amulets* p. 298: “The first surprise was to discover just how widespread [amulet use] appears to be”, and “amulet use may be the norm rather than the exception”.

not be as well-known in the west as it once was, the search for the physical face of Christ is still capable of arousing controversy. The television series *Son of God*, which was first aired in the United Kingdom in 2001, produced a computer-generated reconstruction of the face of Christ (Figure C.7) which led to various criticisms and heated debate. Other books and articles have since continued the controversial search⁶⁵².

The present thesis has explored the story of the Image of Edessa offering as full an account as possible of its tradition through the ages. Given its scope and limits certain aspects were not fully examined and it is hoped that they will be researched in depth in the future. The first *desideratum* is a critical edition of the Greek version of the *Life of St Alexis*, a major undertaking, which would shed light on the Image of Edessa by way of detailed comparison and analysis of the many different versions of the *Life* in all the languages it was translated and adapted into in search of further evidence of the Abgar story transmitted therein.

In relation to the search for the physical appearance of Christ (whose original is of course impossible to determine), an in-depth study of the Veronica legend, the Publius Lentulus letter and an overall analysis of the textual evidence, beyond what is discussed in the present thesis, are all called for. This study could also include artistic representations of Christ and his image as portrayed throughout history, even down to the twentieth century in films and television series – an extension of how the physical appearance of Christ is related to places and cultures (e.g., the blond Christ with blue eyes in the western world and the black Christ in African Churches).

As far as fieldwork is concerned, the possibilities for further research are almost endless. My own work has covered large tracts of land, but even where work is done

⁶⁵¹ ‘The Psychology Underlying the Employment of Amulets in Europe’, *The Folklore Magazine* 62 (1951), pp. 231-251.

⁶⁵² Cf. William Mosley, *What Color was Jesus?* (Chicago 1987); Giles Wilson, ‘So What Colour was Jesus?’, *BBC News Online Magazine* (27 October 2004), available online at

there are always more churches and previously unknown depictions of the Image of Edessa. I have included Mount Athos (though not all the monasteries), Mani (where there are many churches I was unable to visit), various different towns in NE Greece, Ohrid (in the FYROM), Cyprus, Turkey and Georgia. Similar fieldwork is required in the rest of Byzantine and Orthodox world (especially in museums and churches): Crete, Russia, Romania, Bulgaria, the Balkan countries and also in Syria, Palestine and Egypt. A data base could be created to hold photographs of all known depictions of the Image of Edessa in all these territories, classified by geographical area, date and type.

Further textual work is always possible. If during the research carried out for this thesis several previously unknown and unpublished texts related to the Abgar legend and the Image were uncovered, it would seem only logical that there are further similar discoveries waiting to be made.

A significant element in this thesis is the analysis of modern scholarship in relation to the Image and how some scholars have been led to avoiding and even misrepresenting certain aspects thereof (e.g. ignoring von Dobschütz's discussion of the Image as the burial cloth of Christ) in order to distance both themselves and the object from anything related to the Shroud of Turin. However, as pointed out in the thesis (pp. 200-201), even if, as a few texts claim, the Image of Edessa is a large bloodstained cloth depicting a crucified man, this does not in itself equate it with the Shroud of Turin. Certain theories are repeated among scholars and become unquestionably accepted; such is the case with the idea that the Mandylion ended up in Paris, whereas the actual evidence for this affirmation has been shown to be very meagre, so much so that in fact the theory can be dismissed. Uncovering new evidence always leads to a reappraisal of what has been stated before.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/3958241.stm> (last accessed: 10 July 2014), and Michele Bacci, *The Many Faces of Christ: Portraying the Holy in the East and West, 300 to 1300* (London 2014).

Any study of the Image of Edessa, the present thesis among them, inevitably raises as many questions as it answers and opens up numerous doors to future research in history, culture and the spirituality of the living Church of Christ. Some of these doors have been left ajar in our study, allowing us to catch a glimpse of possible future research and where the work carried out herein might lead to. The role of the Image within the immense and ongoing consequences of the debate over Iconoclasm and the nature of Christ, and on a different level the search for what Jesus of Nazareth actually looked like (a field involving the study of other icons, especially the Veronica, and other texts describing Christ, down to the present day), are mentioned, although each of these subjects could constitute an entire thesis on its own merit. The role and meaning of the Image in icon programmes in churches has also been mentioned; this too is a subject that could be studied in much greater depth. Some doors have been opened more fully, such as the use of the Image and related texts as an amulet and the consequent study of magic in Christianity, how the Image was used for political purposes to create and justify national identity, and the geographical study of depictions of the Image, although there still remains an immense amount of work to be done. It is virtually impossible to say the final word on a subject as immense as the Image of Edessa, covering two thousand years of history. The theological, canonical, magical/psychological and cultural aspects of its tradition are still very much a force to be reckoned with in both the Orthodox world and beyond.

Appendix I

An edition and translation of the *Narratio de imagine Edessena*

The edition of the Greek text of the *Narratio de imagine Edessena* below is based on all extant MSS previously recorded or newly discovered during my research. No attempt has been made at this stage to explore the manuscript tradition in terms of the relation of the MSS and construct a *stemma codicum*. For this reason I have adopted the term *deest/desunt* rather than *omisit/omiserunt* in the *apparatus criticus* to record words/phrases absent in the extant MSS consulted for this edition.

Sigla codicum⁶⁵³

- A Parisinus graecus 1475 (saec. XI), ff. 122-136
- B Vaticanus graecus 2043 (saec. XI/XII), ff. 200^a-220^b
- Be Atheniensis, Benaki Museum 141 (saec. XII), ff. 128^b-138^b
- C Mosquensis Synodicus 9 (saec. XI), ff. 192-209
- D Vaticanus graecus 822 (saec. XII), ff. 208^a-225^b
- Di1 Athos Dionysiou 54 (saec. XII), ff. 197^a-214^a
- Di2 Athos Dionysiou 145 (saec. XVI), ff. 524^a-538^a
- E Parisinus graecus 1548 (saec. XII), ff. 134-146
- F Romanus Vallicellianus B 14 (saec. XIII) ff. 235^b-245^a
- G Vaticanus Ottobonianus graecus 87 (saec. XIII/XIV), ff. 147-152
- H Neapolitanus II C 25 (saec. XIV), ff. 100-107
- I Florentiensis BML gr. IX.33 (saec. XIV), ff. 384^a - 397^b
- Iv Athos Iveron 595 (saec. XVI), ff. sine numeris
- K Parisinus Coislinianus graecus 307 (saec. XVI), 1552 ff. 525-535
- Ka Kalymnos 3 (saec. XIII), ff. 252^a-304^b (desunt ff. 259^a-300^b)
- L1 Athos Megistes Lavras 429 (saec. XI), ff. 240^a-255^a
- L2 Athos Megistes Lavras 644 (saec. XII), ff. 287^a-308^a
- L3 Athos Megistes Lavras 1966 (an.1668), ff. 39^b-55^a
- La Laurentianus graecus IX.33 (saec. XIV), ff. 384^a-397^b

⁶⁵³ An additional MS, *Scorialensis* Th-III-17 gr. 456, contained the *Narratio de imagine Edessena* but is now lost.

- Me Messinensis, Biblioteca Regionale Universitaria, S. Salvatoris graecus 49 (70) (saec. XII), ff. 225^a-244^b
- Mi1 Mediolanensis Ambrosianus graecus C 186 inf. (saec. XI), ff. 143^b-158^a
- Mi2 Mediolanensis Ambrosianus graecus D52 sup. (saec. XI), ff. 81^b-103^b
- Mi3 Mediolanensis Ambrosianus graecus D 107 sup. (saec. XIV), ff. 208^b-223^b
- P1 Patmiensis graecus 258 (saec. XI), ff. 108^b-123^b
- P2 Patmiensis graecus 252 (saec. XII), ff. 201^b-214^b
- Pa Athos Pantokratoros 99 (saec. XVI), ff. 193^a-223^b
- Ph Athos Philotheou 80 (saec. XIV), ff. 22^b-39^a
- Pr Athos Protaton 36 (saec. XII), ff. 222^a-238^a
- Q Mosquensis Synodicus 160 (saec. XI), ff. 171-188
- R Romanus Vaticanus Chigiani R VII 50 (saec. XI), ff. 162-176
- S Taurinensis B II 24 (saec. XI), ff. 154-166
- Sc Scorialensis Y-II-1 graecus 319 (saec. XIII), ff. 123^a-134^b
- St Athos Stavronikita 18 (saec. XI), ff. 328^a-340^a
- T Taurinensis B IV 8 (saec. XI), ff. 115-129
- U Parisinus graecus 1527 (saec. XII), ff. 165-179
- V Vindobonensis Historicus graecus 45 (saec. XI), ff. 194^a-208^a
- Va Athos Vatopedi 635 (saec. XV), ff. 455-476
- W Parisinus graecus 1528 (saec. XII), ff. 182-197
- X Parisinus graecus 1474 (saec. XI), ff. 212-227
- Y Parisinus graecus 1176 (saec. XII), ff. 252-262

Κωνσταντίνου ἐν Χριστῷ βασιλεῖ αἰωνίῳ βασιλέως Ῥωμαίων διήγησις ἀπὸ διαφόρων ἀθροισθεῖσα ἱστοριῶν, περὶ τῆς πρὸς Αὐγαρον ἀποσταλείσης ἀχειροποιήτου θείας εἰκόνης Χριστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ ὡς ἐξ Ἑδέσης μετεκομίσθη πρὸς τὴν πανευδαίμονα ταύτην καὶ βασιλίδα τῶν πόλεων Κωνσταντινούπολιν.

1. Κωνσταντίνου – Ῥωμαίων desunt I L3 Mi2 Mi3 Sc V X Κωνσταντίνου] Κωνσταντίνω D βασιλεῖ αἰωνίῳ desunt Di2 Q R S T U W Y αἰωνίῳ deest Di2 L2 L3 βασιλέως] καὶ βασιλεῖ D Ῥωμαίων] add. τοῦ πορφυρογεννήτου L2 L3 διήγησις] add. πάνυ θαυμαστή καὶ ψυχωφελῆς L2 L3 Mi3, add. θαυμαστή καὶ ψυχωφελῆς A B C D E F X διήγησις – ἱστοριῶν desunt P2 2. πρὸς] εἰς Di2 θείας deest Pr 3. Χριστοῦ] Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ H I Iv Ka L1 L2 L3 Me Mi2 Mi3 P1 P2 Ph Pr Sc Χριστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν] τοῦ κυρίου καὶ θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ K Va 4. ἐξ deest Va, ἐξ Ἀιδέσης Di2 ταύτην deest T καὶ βασιλίδα desunt C D Di1 E G Mi1 Ph, καὶ βασιλίδα τῶν πόλεων desunt Mi2 τῶν πόλεων] πόλιν I Sc, τῶν deest G Post Κωνσταντινούπολιν add. κύριε εὐλογῆσον C, πάτερ εὐλογῆσον G Mi1, εὐλογῆσον πάτερ Di2 Va Y, δέσποτα εὐλογῆσον Mi3

1-4. Λόγος ἱστορικὸς διήγησιν ἔχων περὶ τῆς ἀχειροποιήτου μορφῆς τοῦ ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, τὸ διὰ τίνος καὶ πότε καὶ διὰ ποίαν αἰτίαν ἀπεστάλη πρὸς Αὐγαρον (Ἄγβαρον V)· καὶ ὅπως θεία προμηθεῖα διεκομίσθη καὶ ἀπεδόθη πρὸς τὴν θεοφύλακτον καὶ βασιλίδα τῶν πόλεων Pa V

1-3. desunt Pa, 1 2 et 3 usque ad καὶ τῶν desunt Be

1. Οὐκ ἄρα μόνος αὐτὸς ἀκατάληπτος ἦν ὁ συναϊδίος τῷ Πατρὶ Θεὸς Λόγος, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ πλείω σχεδόν, ἢ καὶ πάντα τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ, τῷ αὐτῷ τῆς ἀκαταληψίας γρόφῳ περικαλύπτεται, οὐ μόνον ὅσα τὸ πᾶν τοῦτο δημιουργῶν ὑπεστήσατο, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅσα ἐν τῷ
 5 μίαν ἐκείνην ἐνήργει τῆς αὐτοῦ θεότητος δύναμιν. Καὶ χρηὶ πάντως τὸν ἑαυτὸν μὴ ἀγροῦντα καὶ τὰ ὑπὲρ αὐτὸν μὴ εἰδέναι γινώσκοντα, μὴ εἰς τὰ ἄμετρα καυχᾶσθαι μηδὲ κενεμβατεῖν ἀμαθῶς καὶ ἢ πάντα εἰδέναι φιλονικεῖν, ἢ μηδὲ εἶναι ἄπερ αὐτὸς οὐ κατεῖληφε. Τοίνυν καὶ
 10 περὶ τοῦ ἐκτυπίματος τῆς θεανδρικής τούτου μορφῆς, ὃ ἀγράφως ἀνετυπίθη τῷ ὑπερφυεῖ τοῦ δρῶντος βουλήματι, εἰς τὸ ὑποδεξάμενον ὕφασμα καὶ τότε μὲν τῷ Αὐγάρῳ ἀπεστάλη πρὸς
 15 Ἰασιν, νῦν δὲ ἐξ Ἑδέσης πρὸς τὴν βασιλεύουσαν ταύτην τῶν πόλεων οἰκονομία πάντως θεοῦ, πρὸς σωτηρίαν αὐτῆς καὶ φυλακὴν μετενήνεκται, ὡς ἂν μηδενὸς τῶν καλῶν ἐνδεῆς δοκῆ, ἐν πᾶσιν ὀφείλουσα πάντων κρατεῖν. Οἶμαι δεῖν τὸν εὐσεβῆ καὶ δίκαιον ἀκροατὴν τε καὶ θεατὴν, τὴν ἱστορίαν μὲν τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα ἀκριβῶς μαθεῖν ἀπαιτεῖν καὶ τῆς ἀρχαιολογίας ἐθέλειν ἀπαραποίητον τὴν γνώσιν λαβεῖν, τὴν δὲ αἰτίαν τοῦ πῶς ἐξ ἰκμάδος ὑγρᾶς δίχα χρωμάτων καὶ
 15 τέχνης τῆς γραφικῆς ἐναπεμόρχθη τὸ τοῦ προσώπου εἶδος ἐν τῷ ἐκ λίνου ὕφασματι καὶ πῶς τὸ

ἐξ ὕλης οὕτως εὐφθάρτου τῷ χρόνῳ διαφθορὰν οὐκ ἐδέξατο καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα ὁ φυσικῶς δῆθεν
 ἐπιβάλλων τοῖς πράγμασι φιλεῖ πολυπραγμόνως διερευνᾶν τῷ ἀνεφίκτῳ τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ σοφίας
 παραχωρεῖν, εἰδώς, ὡς, εἴ τις πάντα φιλονεικήσῃ τῷ νῷ διαλαβεῖν ἀκριβῶς, εἰς τὴν παντελεῖ
 ἀγνωσίαν ὡσθεὶς καὶ εἰς ἄβυσσον ἀκαταληψίας ἀποπεσὼν, κινδυνεύσει περὶ τὰ καίρια
 20 ζημιωθεὶς τὰ μεγάλα, ἵνα μὴ δόξῃ τὰ μικρὰ συγχωρεῖν. Ὅσοι οὖν τῶν περὶ τὴν πίστιν ὀρθῶν
 καὶ θερμότερων περὶ τὸν ζῆλον ἐνταῦθα συνελθύθατε, δεῦτε, ἀκούσατε, καὶ διηγήσομαι ὑμῖν,
 ἅπερ τῇ δεούσῃ βασάνῳ ἕκαστα πολυπραγμονήσας, καὶ οὐκ ἀταλαιπώρως περὶ τὴν τῆς
 ἀληθείας διαγενόμενος ζήτησιν, ἀπὸ τε τῶν ἱστορίας γραψάντων, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐκεῖθεν ὡς
 ἡμᾶς ἐλθόντων, ἅ ὡς δι' ἀπορρήτων τῇ μνήμῃ παρ' αὐτοῖς διασώζεσθαι ἔλεγον, ἀκριβῶσαι
 25 ἐξίσχυσα.

1. Οὐκ ἄρα] Οὐ γάρ Mi2 μόνον G H L1 Ph Pr Va Θεὸς Λόγος] λόγος καὶ θεὸς D 2. τὰ deest Pr Va
 καὶ deest Iv L2 L3 Mi3 V X τὰ πάντα H γρόφῳ] αὐτῷ G 3. ὅσα ὁ τὸ πᾶν L3 4. προσλήμματι]
 προστάγματι Y ὁμιλήσας D 6. μὴ ἀγνοοῦντα καὶ τὰ ὑπὲρ αὐτὸν desunt Me ἄμετρα] ἡμέτερα Mi1
 7. κενεμβατεῖν] κενεμματεῖν Sc φιλονικεῖν G W, φιλονικεῖ Me μὴδὲ εἶναι] μὴ εἰδέναι Mi1 μὴδὲ] μὴ Di2
 Pr U Y 8. εἶναι] εἰδέναι X κατείληφεν Mi2 9. ἐνετυπώθη A¹ Di1 Di2 L2 L3 Iv Mi2 Mi3 Q R S T U
 Va W X Y 10. εἰς] ἧς Di2 L1 L2 L3 Pr Va Y 11. οἰκονομίαν C 12. μετενήνεγκται B 13.
 ὀφείλουσαν Di2 I Ka L1 Mi1 P2 Ph Pr Sc Va Y Καὶ οἶμαι Iv L2 Mi3 14. τε καὶ θεατὴν desunt Iv μὲν
 τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα ἀκριβῶς desunt P2 τῶν deest D μαθεῖν deest C Di1 Mi1 St 15. ἐθέλειν] ἐλθεῖν Di1
 Di2 L1 L3 Pr Va 16. τέχνη B 17. ἐναπεμύρθη] ἐναπεμορφώθη A B C D Di1 H I K Ka Me Mi1 Mi3
 P2 Pr Q R S Sc St T U Va W Y, ἐναπεμάχθη V², ἐναφίθη D λήνου V, λίνων U Y 18. φυσικὸς Di2 ὁ
 φυσικῶς δῆθεν ἐπιβάλλων desunt B Me 19. πράγμασι deest Q Y, πράγμασιν Di2 Na πολυπραγμόνος Pr
 ἐπιβάλλων τοῖς πράγμασι φιλεῖ πολυπραγμόνως διερευνᾶν] ἐπιβάλλων καὶ πολυπραγμόνως διερευνῶν Di2 20.
 παραχώρειτω Di2 ὡς deest Ph φιλονεικήσῃ G Q R U, φιλονεικήσει Di1 Di2 Iv Ka L1 L2 L3 Ph St Va
 21. εἰς τὴν – ὡσθεὶς desunt Ph ἀγνωσίαν ὡσθεὶς καὶ εἰς desunt U 23. τῶν deest Iv L2 L3 Mi3 ὀρθοὶ Iv
 L2 L3 V X θερμότεροι Iv L2 L3 Mi3 V X 24. τῇ deest Ph 25. πολυπραγμανήσας F 26. εἰς ἡμᾶς
 Di1 Di2 Iv L1 27. τὴν μνήμην D καὶ παρ' αὐτοῖς Va

2. Τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν
 ἀνορθώσει πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐκδημήσαντος, ἦν, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ προφήτου φωνήν, πλήθος εἰρήνης ἐπὶ
 τῆς γῆς καὶ τὸ πολύαρχον διεσκέδατο, ὡσπερ ὑπὸ μιᾶς ζώνης, τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἀρχῆς, ἀπάσης
 διαζωσθείσης τῆς οἰκουμένης καὶ ὑφ' ἐνὶ ταπτομένης σημάντορι. Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πᾶσαι πάντων
 5 καὶ πρὸς πάντας ἐπιμιξίαι ἐγίνοντο ἀδεῶς καὶ οὐ μεμερισμένως τὴν γῆν οἰκεῖν ἐδόκουν οἱ
 ἄνθρωποι, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐνὸς Δεσπότης κτήμα τυγχάνουσαν, ὡς καὶ ἐνὸς τὴν πᾶσαν οὔσαν
 δημιουργοῦ, τῷ πρώτῳ τὸν αὐχένα δοῦλον ὑποκλίναντες πρὸς ἀλλήλους εἰρήνευον. Διὸ καὶ ὁ
 τῆς Ἐδέσης τὸ τηρικᾶτα τοπάρχης Αὐγαρος, τῷ τῆς Αἰγύπτου ἐξηγουμένῳ φίλος καὶ
 γνώριμος ἦν καὶ παρ' ἀλλήλους οἱ ἑκατέρων ἐφοίτων διάκονοι. Ὅθεν καὶ κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν

10 ἐκεῖνον, καθ' ὃν ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν καὶ Θεὸς τὸ πατρικὸν βούλημα πληρῶν, τὴν σωτήριον
 διδασκαλίαν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις προϋτίθετο καὶ διὰ τῶν ὑπερφύων καὶ παραδόξων θαυμάτων εἰς
 τὴν περὶ αὐτὸν πίστιν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐπέστρεφε, συνέβη τῶν τοῦ Αὐγάρου ὑπηρετῶν τινα
 Ἀνανίαν ὀνομαζόμενον, πρὸς τὴν Αἴγυπτον διὰ τῆς Παλαιστίνης ἰόντα περιτυχεῖν καὶ
 θεάσασθαι πόρρωθεν τὸν Χριστὸν τὰ πλήθη τοῖς λόγοις τῆς πλάνης ἐξέλκοντα καὶ τὰ τῶν
 15 θαυμάτων ἐπιτελοῦντα παράδοξα. Ὡς οὖν τὴν ἐπ' Αἴγυπτον πορείαν διήνυσε καὶ περὶ ὧν
 ἐπετέτραπτο διαλαβῶν ἀνθυπέστρεφεν ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀρθρίτιδι χρονίῳ
 τυραννόμενον ἦδει καὶ μελαίνῃ λέπρᾳ ἐκδαπανώμενον καὶ διπλὴν συμφορὰν, μᾶλλον δὲ
 πολλαπλὴν τὴν νόσον ποιούμενον, οἷς καὶ ταῖς ἀπὸ τῶν ἄρθρων ὀδύναις συνείχετο καὶ τοῖς τῆς
 λέπρας ἐταλαιπώρει κακοῖς. Προσῆν δὲ καὶ ἡ τῆς ἀμορφίας αἰσχύνῃ, δι' ἣν οὐδὲ θεατὸς τοῖς
 20 ἀνθρώποις σχεδὸν ἦν. Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μόνον κλινήρης τὰ πολλὰ διετέλει, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς
 κατ' ἐπίσκεψιν ἐρχομένους τῶν φίλων ὑπ' αἰσχύνῃς ἐναπεκρύπτετο. Διὰ τοῦτο πάλιν ἐν τῷ
 ὑποστρέφειν, ἀκριβέστερον περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν διαγινῶναι ἐσπούδασεν, ἵν' ἔχοι βεβαίως
 ἀπαγγεῖλαι τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ, ὡς ἂν ἴσως κάκεῖνος τῆς δι' αὐτοῦ ἰατρείας ἀξιοθῆ. Εὗρεν οὖν
 πάλιν τὸν Κύριον ἐπὶ τῶν αὐτῶν, νεκροὺς ἀνιστῶντα, τυφλοῖς τὸ βλέπειν δωρούμενον, χωλοὺς
 25 ἄρτίους δεικνύντα καὶ πάντα τοὺς ὀτιοὺν ἀσθενούντας ῥωννύοντα.

2. [σει πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐκδημή] deest G ἐνδημήσαντος B Di1 F H I Iv L1 L2 L3 Mi1 Mi2 P1 P2 Pr R Sc Va
 3. τὸ deest L3 X διεσκέδασται B Me ὡσπερ] ὡστε G ζώνης] ῥώμης R 5. τοῦτο] τοῦ Sc ἀδεῶς]
 ἀδαιῶς Me 6. οἰκεῖν τὴν γῆν Di2 7. καὶ κτήμα Mi1 πᾶσαν οὖσαν] πανουροῦσαν G, οὖσαν deest D 8.
 δούλῳ Di1 Di2 Q R St U ὑποκλίναντος D Αἰδεσης Di1 εἰρήνευσαν L3 Va τὸ deest Iv L2 L3 X
 10. καὶ γὰρ ἀλλήλοισ Di2 L2 Iv ἑκατέρου Mi2 Mi3 V 11. Κύριος καὶ Θεὸς ἡμῶν Mi3 ἐκπληρῶν Va
 12. προετίθετο C ὑπερφυῶς G 13. θαυμάτων] πραγμάτων τε καὶ θαυμάτων L2 L3 Mi3, πραγμάτων τα
 καὶ θαυμάτων Iv περὶ αὐτῶν F ἐπέστρεφεν Mi2 14. τινα ὑπηρετῶν τι L3 15. πόρρωθεν] πόρρω Mi3
 πόρρωθεν θεάσασθαι Di2 Q R U Va, θεάσασθαι πόρρω V X, πόρρωθεν deest I 16. τοῖς λόγοις desunt Di2
 ἐξέλκον H 18. ἀνθυπέστρεφε H, ἀνθυπέστρεφον Sc ἐπεὶ τὸν Κύριον Di1 Di2 L1 L3 Sc Va χρονία L3
 Mi3 St V X, διχρονία L2, διχρονίῳ P1, κλινήρης δὲ add. St ἡδῆ Di2 20. πονούμενον L2 οἷς καὶ ταῖς
 ἀπὸ] οἷς καὶ ἀπὸ Pr, οἷς καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ P2, οἷς] corr. von Dobschütz ὅς συνείχεται G 21. ἡ τῆς ἀμορφίας]
 καὶ τις ἀμορφίας L3 22. τοῖς deest Iv L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μόνον] Καὶ οὐ μόνον Iv L2 L3 Mi3, Καὶ
 οὐδὲ μόνον Va, Ἀλλ' οὐ μόνον Mi2, Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μόνον προσιτός C, Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ προσιτός μόνον Di1 St, Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ
 προσιτός μόνον Mi1 23. φύλων Pr ἐναπεκέκρυπτο Iv L3 24. περὶ τῶν αὐτοῦ C Mi1 25. ἔχει Iv L2 Pr
 βεβαίως] βεβαία Me, ἀκριβῶς καὶ βεβαίως H ἐπαγγεῖλαι Di1 Iv L2 Va τῆς ἑαυτοῦ δι' αὐτοῦ Iv 27.
 δωρούμενον] δωρούμενος Mi1

3. Ὡς οὖν ἐπιστώθη καὶ ἔγνω ταῦτα φανερώς ὑπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου τελούμενα, τῷ Αὐγάρῳ
 ὑποστρέψας ἐγνώρισε καὶ διὰ πλειόνων ἅ τε εἶδεν ἅ τε ἤκουσεν ἀνεδίδαξεν. Ὅθεν ὡς μεῖζον
 τοῦ ἔργου τὸ πάρεργον παρεμπορευσάμενος καὶ ὡς εὐαγγελίων αὐτῆ καταταγγελεὺς δεξιῶν, τῆς

προσηκούσης αποδοχής κατηξίωτο καὶ τῶν εὐνουστάτων εἰς ἐγνωρίζετο. Καὶ ἐπεὶ τὸ κάμνον
 5 αἰεὶ ὡς ἄρπαγμα ποιεῖται τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν, τῆς ἰατρείας καὶ τῆς ἐλπίδος περισαινούσης τὸν
 ἄνθρωπον, σπουδαίως περὶ τὴν θήραν τοῦ μνησθέντος πείθει ὁρμῶν. Καὶ ὁ Αὐγαρος πρὸς τὸ διὰ
 γραφῆς μετακαλέσασθαι διανέστη τὸν ἰᾶσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα λεγόμενον δύνασθαι καὶ παραχρῆμα
 τὴν πανταχοῦ περιφερομένην ταύτην ἐπιστολήν πρὸς τὸν Κύριον ἔγραψεν, οὕτωςι περιέχουσαν.

1. οὖν deest I Sc 2. ἐγνώρισε] ἐγνώρισεν Mi2 4. ἀγγελίων X αὐτῆ deest Pr 6. ἰατρείας] ἱστορίας
 Di1 Di2 I Q U, λατρείας Iv L2 L3 Sc καὶ deest Iv L2 L3 σπουδαίως B Be 7. μνησθέντος Ka Mi1 ὁ
 deest Sc πρὸς τῆ Iv L1 L2 Pr, πρὸς τὸν Sc καλέσασθαι Pr θήραν] θύραν P2 μνησθέντος]μνησθέντος P2
 8. δύνασθαι] καὶ αὐτὸν θεραπεῦσαι add. Be V, ὡς δύνασθαι καὶ αὐτὸν θεραπεῦσαι Iv L2 L3 Mi3 καὶ δὴ
 παραχρῆμα Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 V X παραυτίκα Ph 9. τὸν deest L2 L3 οὕτωςι περιέχουσαν desunt Sc

Epistula Abgari secundum codd. A B Be C Di1 Di2 G H I L1 Me Mi1 Mi2 P1 P2 Pa
 Ph Pr Q R Sc St U V Va W Y

4. Αὐγαρος τοπάρχης Ἐδέσης, Ἰησοῦ Σωτῆρι ἀναφανέντι ἀγαθῷ ἰατρῷ ἐν πόλει
 Ἱεροσολύμων, χαίρειν. Ἦκουσταί μοι τὰ περὶ σοῦ καὶ τῶν σῶν ἰαμάτων, ὡς ἄνευ φαρμάκων
 καὶ βοτανῶν ὑπὸ σοῦ γινομένων. Ὡς λόγος, τυφλοὺς ἀναβλέπειν ποιεῖς, χωλοὺς περιπατεῖν,
 λεπροὺς καθαρίζεις καὶ ἀκάθαρτα πνεύματα καὶ δαίμονας ἀπελαύνεις καὶ τοὺς ἐν μακρονοσίᾳ
 5 βασιανιζομένους θεραπεύεις καὶ νεκροὺς ἐγείρεις. Καὶ ταῦτα πάντα ἀκούσας περὶ σοῦ, κατὰ
 νοῦν ἐθέμην τὸ ἕτερον τῶν δύο· ἢ ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ θεὸς καὶ καταβάς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ποιεῖς ταῦτα, ἢ ὅτι
 Υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ ποιῶν ταῦτα. Διὰ τοῦτο τοῖνυν γράψας, ἐδεήθην σου σκυληῖναι καὶ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς
 με καὶ τὸ πάθος ὃ ἔχω θεραπεῦσαι. Καὶ γὰρ ἤκουσα ὅτι καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι καταγογγύζουσι σου καὶ
 10 βούλονται κακῶσαι σε. Πόλις δὲ σμικροτάτη μοί ἐστι καὶ σεμνή, ἣτις ἐξαρκέσει ἀμφοτέροις
 τοῦ κατοικεῖν ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἐν αὐτῇ.

1. Αὐγαρου – χαίρειν desunt Pa ὁ τοπάρχης Mi2 ἀγαθῷ ἀναφανέντι ἰατρῷ H L1 P1, ἀγαθῷ ἰατρῷ
 ἀναφανέντι Be Mi2 3. ὑπὸ σοῦ γινομένων desunt B Me γενομένων H Pr Ὡς γὰρ ὁ λόγος Di1, Ὡς ὁ
 λόγος B Me Q R U, Ὡς γὰρ λόγος Be Mi2 Pa τυφλοῖς Pa V 4. δαίμονια Pa 5. ἐλαύνεις Be H I Ka L1
 Me Mi1 Mi2 P P1 P2 Ph Pr R Sc St Va, ἐκβάλλεις Pa 6. πάντα deest L1 P1 7. ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ Di1 Mi1
 Mi2 8. τοῖνυν deest Ph 9. σου] σε B Me R 10. ἐξαρκεῖ V Be Mi2 Pa V 11. ἀμφοτέροις ἡμῖν Be Di1
 Di2 H I Ka L1 Me Mi1 Mi2 P1 P2 Pa Ph Pr St Va ἐν αὐτῇ ἐν εἰρήνῃ Be Mi2 Pa

Αὐγαρος τοπάρχης Ἐδέσης, Ἰησοῦ Σωτῆρι ἀναφανέντι ἀγαθῷ ἰατρῷ ἐν πόλει Ἱεροσολύμων,
 χαίρειν. Ἦκουσταί μοι τὰ περὶ σοῦ καὶ τῶν σῶν ἰαμάτων, ὡς ἄνευ φαρμάκων καὶ βοτανῶν
 ποιεῖς θεραπείας καὶ ὅτι τῷ λόγῳ μόνῳ τυφλοῖς τὸ ὄραν χαρίζῃ, κυλλοῖς τὸ περιπατεῖν, κωφοῖς
 τὸ ἀκούειν καὶ λεπροὺς καθαρίζεις καὶ τὰ ἀκάθαρτα δαιμόνια λόγῳ ἀπελαύνεις καὶ τοὺς ἐν
 5 μακρονοσίᾳ βασανιζομένους θεραπεύεις καὶ γυναῖκα αἱμορροῦσαν σοῦ ἀψαμένην ἰάσω καὶ
 νεκροὺς ἐγείρεις. Καὶ ταῦτα πάντα ἀκούσας περὶ σοῦ, κύριε, ἐνενόησα τῇ καρδίᾳ μου, ὅτι εἷς
 ἐκ τῶν δύο εἶ· ἢ ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ θεὸς καὶ καταβὰς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ποιεῖς ταῦτα ἢ ὅτι Υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ
 ποιῶν ταῦτα. Διὰ τοῦτο δέομαί σου διὰ γραμμῶν καὶ παρακαλῶ σε, ἕως ἐμοῦ ἐλθεῖν μὴ
 ἀπαξιώσης, ἵνα καὶ τὸ πάθος ὃ ἔχω θεραπεύσης. Ἀνηρέχθη δέ μοι ὅτι καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι
 10 καταγογγύζουσι σοὺ καὶ βούλονται σε ἀνελεῖν. Ἔστιν οὖν μοι πόλις βραχυτάτη καὶ σεμνή,
 ἣτις ἐξαρκέσει ἀμφοτέροις ἡμῖν τοῦ κατοικεῖν ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἐν αὐτῇ. Ἐρρωσθαί με κέλευσον,
 κύριέ μου.

1. τοπάρχης] βασιλεὺς Mi3 X Ἐδέσης πόλεως Mi3 X Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ X ἀγαθῷ ἰατρῷ desunt Mi3 X
 2. Ἱεροσολύμοις Mi3 X 6. αἱμορροῦσας Iv 8. ὁ deest X 11. βραχυτάτη πόλις Mi3 12. καὶ deest L2
 L3 Mi3 ἀρκέσει Mi3 X ἡμῖν deest L3 13. τοῦ κατοικεῖν ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἐν αὐτῇ desunt Mi3 ἐν αὐτῇ
 desunt L2 L3

5. Ἐπεὶ οὖν ὁ Ἀνανίας τῆς τε πρὸς τὸν κύριον αὐτοῦ εὐνοίας σαφῆ παρείχε τεκμήρια καὶ τῆς
 ὁδοῦ ἐτύγχανεν ἔμπειρος καὶ τὴν γραφικὴν τέχνην ἠπίστατο, δι' αὐτοῦ τὴν τοιαύτην
 ἐπιστολὴν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐξαπέστειλεν, ἐπισκῆψας αὐτῷ, ὡς εἰ μὴ δυναθῆι πείσαι διὰ τοῦ
 γράμματος πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐλθεῖν τὸν Χριστόν, κἂν τὸ ὁμοίωμα τῆς μορφῆς αὐτοῦ
 5 μεταγραφάμενον ἀκριβῶς, ἀγαγεῖν πρὸς αὐτόν, ἵν' ὡς ἐν σκιᾷ γοῦν διδαχθεῖη, μὴ δι' ἀκοῆς
 μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τῆς ὕψεως, οἷός ἐστιν ὁ τῶν μεγάλων τούτων τεραστίων δημιουργός. Καὶ
 δὴ τὴν Ἰουδαίαν καταλαβὼν ὁ ἀποσταλεῖς, εὔρε τὸν Χριστὸν ἐν ὑπαίθρῳ τῷ συρρεύσαντι
 δῆμιρ διαλεγόμενον καὶ τερατουργοῦντα τὰ τῶν θαυμάτων ἐξαίσια. Διὰ δὲ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν
 10 ἄλλου κατ' ἄλλην χρειᾶν ἐληλυθότων, μὴ οἷός τε ὡς ὁ Ἀνανίας πλησιάσαι τῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἐπὶ
 τινα πέτραν μικρὸν ἀνεστηκυῖαν τῆς γῆς, οὐ πόρρω τῆς τοῦ Κυρίου διατριβῆς ἀπελθῶν
 ἐκαθέζετο. Καί, ὡς ἦν αὐτῷ καταφανῆς ὁ Σωτὴρ τοῦ πλῆθους ἀποκεκριμένος καὶ ὑπερανέχων
 τῶν πολλῶν, εὐθύς ἐκείνῳ μὲν τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς, τῷ δὲ χάρτη τὴν χεῖρα προσήρειδε καὶ τὴν τοῦ
 φαινομένου μετέγραφεν ὁμοιότητα.

1. ὁ deest Di2 τῆς τε desunt U 2. ζωγραφικὴν Iv L3 Pa Sc V X^(m2) ἐπίστατο P2¹ 3. ἀπέστειλεν Pr, ἐξαπέστειλε Sc 4. τὸ deest L1 P1 5. μεταγραφώμενος A B C Di1 Di2 I Ka L1 Me Mi1 P2 Q Sc U Va 6. διὰ deest L3 οἷός τέ ἐστιν Iv L2 L3 7. δὴ deest Mi1 8. τὸν Χριστὸν] τὸν Κύριον Di2 L2 Pr Va συρεύσαντι Pr 9. τερατουργοῦντα] συνήθως add. Iv L3 Mi3 Va X ἄλλου] ἄλλον Sc 10. ὁ deest C 11. τοῦ Κυρίου] τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Pa 12. ὡς deest Pa καταφανεί L1, αὐτὸ φανῆς H ἀποκεκρυμένος Pa 13. ὑπερέχων L2 Mi3 V X 14. προσήρειθεν A B Be Me Mi2 Pr Sc V, προσείρειδε Pa

6. Ἔγνω οὖν ταῦτα τῷ πνεύματι ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ τὸν Θωμᾶν μετακαλεσάμενος, “Ἀπελθε, φησί, “πρὸς τόνδε τὸν τόπον καὶ τὸν ἐπὶ τῆς πέτρας καθεζόμενον ἄνθρωπον καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν μορφὴν μεταγράφοντα, ἄγαγε πρὸς με, ἐπιφερόμενον καὶ ἦν οἴκοθεν ἦλθεν ἔχων ἐπιστολήν, ἵνα τὴν τοῦ ἀποστείλαντος αὐτὸν ἐκπληρώσῃ διαταγὴν. Ἀπελθὼν οὖν ὁ Θωμᾶς καὶ τὸν Ἄνανιαν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἃ ἤκουσεν εὑρεῖν διαπραπτόμενον ἐπιγινούς, ἤγαγε πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν. Πρὸ δὲ τοῦ λαβεῖν τὴν ἐπιστολήν παρ’ αὐτοῦ, εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς παρουσίας τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἐπιστολῆς. Εἶτα λαβὼν ταύτην καὶ διελθὼν, ἑτέραν ἐπιστολήν πρὸς Αὔγαρον ἀντεπέθηκεν ἐπὶ λέξεως οὕτως ἔχουσαν·

1. τῷ deest L2 ὁ Χριστὸς] ὁ Ἰησοῦς B Di2 Q U, ὁ Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Di1 I St 2. φησὶν A Di1 L1 Pr Ἔπελθε, φησὶ] ἔφη πρὸς αὐτὸν· ἄπελθε Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 3. τὴν ἐμὴν μορφὴν] τῆς ἐμῆς μορφῆς ὁμοίωσιν Be V, τὴν τῆς ἐμῆς μορφῆς ὁμοίωσιν Iv L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 Pa X μορφὴν deest Ka ἐπιφερόμενον] ἐπιφέροντα Pr Va, deest B Me 4. ἦλθεν deest Va ἐπιστολήν] ἐπιστο Di2 (lacuna) 5. οὖν deest Sc ὁ deest Ph ὁ ἀπόστολος Θωμᾶς Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 6. ἤγαγεν αὐτὸν Iv L2 L3 Mi3 V X παρ’ αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐπιστολήν Be Iv L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 Pa V X 7. τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸν παρουσίας αὐτοῦ Be Iv L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 V X, τῆς πρὸς αὐτοῦ παρουσίας αὐτοῦ Pa 8. ἑτέραν ἐπιστολήν desunt Mi3 καὶ διελθὼν] διελθὼν τέ Ph 9. πρὸς Αὔγαρον desunt B, πρὸς τὸν Αὔγαρον Iv L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 V X ἐπέθηκεν B Me λέξεων Ph ἔχουσα P2 ἔχουσαν οὕτως Di1 Mi1

Epistula Iesu secundum codd. A B Be C Di1 Di2 G H I L1 Me Mi1 Mi2 P1 P2 Pa Ph Pr Q R Sc St U V Va W Y

7. Μακάριος εἶ, Αὔγαρε, πιστεύσας ἐν ἐμοί, μὴ ἑωρακίως με. Γέγραπται γὰρ περὶ ἐμοῦ, τοὺς ἑωρακίως με μὴ πιστεύειν ἐν ἐμοί· καὶ ἵνα οἱ μὴ ἑωρακότες με, αὐτοὶ πιστεύσωσι καὶ ζήσωνται. Περὶ δὲ οὗ ἔγραψάς μοι ἔλθειν πρὸς σέ, δέον ἐπὶ πάντα, δι’ ἃ ἀπεστάλην ἐναυθῆ, πληρῶσαί με, καὶ μετὰ τὸ πληρῶσαι ἀναληφθῆναι πρὸς τὸν ἀποστείλαντά με Πατέρα. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἀναληφθῶ, ἀποστελῶ σοι ἕνα τῶν μαθητῶν μου, ὅστις τὸ πάθος σου θεραπεύσει καὶ

ζωὴν αἰώνιον καὶ εἰρήνην σοὶ καὶ τοῖς σὺν σοὶ παράσχοι καὶ ποιήσει τῇ πόλει σου τὸ ἱκανὸν πρὸς τὸ μηδένα τῶν ἐχθρῶν κατισχύσαι αὐτῆς.

2. μὴ deest Ka 3. ζήσονται A B Di2 I Me Mi1 P2 Q R Sc U Va W ἐπὶ] ἐστὶ A² B C Di2 I Iv Mi2 Pa Ph Pr Q V Va, ἐστὶν Sc πάντα deest Iv 4. δι' ὃ B Me ἐνταῦθα deest Mi2 με deest B Me Ph καὶ μετὰ τὸ πληρῶσαι desunt Ph ἀναληφθῆναι με B, ἀναληφθῆναι με καὶ Me 5. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἀναληφθῶ desunt P2 ἀναληφθῶ Di1 σοὶ deest Sc ἕνα Pa 6. μου] ὀνόματι Θαδδαῖον add. Be θεραπεύσοι A B L1 Me P1 P2 Pr, θεραπεύσοι Q R εἰρήνην πᾶσι τοῖς σὺν σοὶ Pa αἰώνιον] add. σοὶ Me 7. παράσχει C Di2, παράσχει Di1 I Mi1 Sc, παράσχουσι U ἱκανὸν Pa

Epistola Iesu secundum codd. Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X

Μακάριος εἶ σύ, Αὐγάρε, καὶ ἡ πόλις σου ἣτις καλεῖται Ἔδεσα· μακάριος εἶ ὅτι ἐπίστευσας εἰς ἐμέ, μὴ ἑωρακίως με. Ὑγιεία ἐτοιμασθήσεται σοὶ διαπαντός. Περὶ δὲ οὐ ἔγραψάς μοι τοῦ ἐλθεῖν με πρὸς σέ, δέον ἐπὶ πάντα δι' ἃ ἀπέσταλμαι ἐνταῦθα πληρῶσαι καὶ μετὰ τὸ πληρῶσαι ἀναληφθῆναί με πρὸς τὸν ἀποστείλαντά με Πατέρα· ἀποστελῶ δέ σοι ἕνα τῶν
5 μαθητῶν μου ὀνόματι Θαδδαῖον, ὅστις τὸ πάθος σου θεραπεύσει καὶ ζωὴν αἰώνιον καὶ εἰρήνην σοὶ καὶ τοῖς σὺν σοὶ παράσχει καὶ τοῖς σοῖς πᾶσι· καὶ ποιήσει τῇ πόλει σου τὸ ἱκανὸν πρὸς τὸ μηδένα τῶν ἐχθρῶν κατισχύσαι αὐτῆς.

3. δέον ἐπὶ πάντα] δέον ἐστὶ Iv L2 L3 Mi3 δι' ὃ L2 Mi3 X 4. καὶ μετὰ τὸ πληρῶσαι desunt Mi3 με deest L3 5. δὲ deest Iv Θαδδαῖον] Θαδδαῖον ἀπόστολον τὸν καὶ Λεββαῖον L3 Mi3 X σου τὸ πάθος Mi3 6. καὶ τοῖς σὺν σοὶ παράσχει] παράσχοι καὶ τοῖς σὺν σοὶ Mi3 8. αὐτῆς] αὐτῆς ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ κόσμου Mi3 X

8. Ἐπιδοὺς οὖν τῇ Ἀνανία τὴν τοιαύτην ἐπιστολὴν ὁ Χριστός, ἐπεὶ καὶ περὶ τοῦ τὴν ἑτέραν ἐντολὴν τοῦ κυρίου αὐτοῦ εἰς πέρας ἀγαγεῖν ἔγνω διαμεριμνῶντα αὐτὸν καὶ φροντίζοντα, τουτέστι τὴν τοῦ εἶδους αὐτοῦ ὁμοιότητα πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ἀπενεγκεῖν, νιψάμενος ὕδατι τὸ πρόσωπον ὁ Σωτὴρ, εἶτα τὴν ἀπὸ τούτου ἰκμάδα ἐν τῇ ἐπιδοθέντι αὐτῇ χειρομάκτρῃ
5 ἀπομαξάμενος, ἐντυπωθῆναι τὸν αὐτοῦ χαρακτῆρα ἐν αὐτῇ ἠκονόμησε θείως καὶ ὑπὲρ λόγον καὶ τοῦτο τῇ Ἀνανία ἐπιδοὺς, τῇ Αὐγάρῃ ἐπιδοῦναι προσέταξεν, ὡς ἂν τοῦ τε πόθου παραμύθιον καὶ τῆς νόσου αὐτὸ σχῆ. Ὡς οὖν ὑποστρέφων μετὰ τούτων ὁ Ἀνανίας, εἰς τὸ κάστρον Ἱεραπόλεως ἔφθασεν, ὃ τῇ μὲν τῶν Σαρακηνῶν φωνῇ Μεμβίχ λέγεται, τῇ δὲ τῶν Σύρων Μαβούκ, ἔξωθεν τοῦ τοιοῦτου καταλύσας πολιέματος, σωρείας κεράμων νεωστὶ

10 κατασκευασθέντων ἐκεῖσε κειμένης, ἐνταῦθα τὸ ἱερόν ἐκεῖνο ῥάκος ὃ Ἄνανίας ἀπέκρυψε. Καὶ
περὶ μέσας νύκτας πῦρ ἐφάνη πολὺ τὸ τοιοῦτον χωρίον κυκλοῦν, ὡς ἐντὸς τοῦ ἄστεος δοκεῖν
πάντα τὰ περίξ πυρὶ καταφλέγεσθαι καὶ περὶ ἑαυτῶν ἤδη δείσαντας ὑπεξελθεῖν καὶ
διερευνᾶσθαι περὶ τῆς ὀρωμένης πυρκαϊᾶς. Ἐκεῖσε δὲ τὸν Ἄνανιαν εὔρεθέντα, συνείχον ὡς
15 αὐτουργὸν τοῦ τολμῆματος καὶ διερευνῶντο περὶ τοῦ πράγματος καὶ τίς τε εἴη αὐτὸς καὶ ποῖ
βαδίζει καὶ ὅθεν, διεπυθάνοντο.

1. τῷ – ἐπιστολὴν desunt St 2. διαμεριμόντα B, διαμεριμονούτα Pa V X 3. τουτέστιν B Be L1 Mi1,
τοῦτ' ἔστιν V 4. ὕδατι deest Pa ἐν deest Iv L2 Mi3 5. αὐτῷ deest B Me χειρομάκτρῳ B Ka Me X,
χειρομάκτρῳ Pa αὐτοῦ X, ἑαυτοῦ Me χαρακτήρα] ἄγιον χαρακτήρα Be Iv L2 L3 Pa 6. ὀκονόμησεν Be
τούτῳ τῷ L1 P1 7. ἐπιδοῦναι] ἀποδοῦναι Be H L1 Pa Ph Mi1 V, ἐπιδοθῆναι C Di2 L1 Pa Q U τοῦ τε]
τοῦτο Di1 πόθου] πόνου I αὐτὸ] αὐτῷ B Me ἀποσχῆ] Be σχῆ] add. κατείχεν δὲ ὃ Ἄνανίας καὶ ὕπερ
εἰκόνημα ἀνετύπωθεν Mi2² 8. μετὰ τουτῶν desunt H ὃ τῆ – Μαβούκ desunt Mi3 ὃ deest L1 9. τῶν
(i) deest L1 L2 Μειμίχ B V¹, Μειμίχ L1 P1 Pr Va, Μειβρίχ Iv λέγεται] ὀνομάζεται Di1 Mi1 St
Μαβούμ C ἔξωθεν τοῦ τοιοῦτου καταλύσας πολίσματος desunt Va 10. τούτου καταλύσας τοῦ πολίσματος
Pa σωρήας Pa 11. ἐκεῖσε deest Mi2, τῶν ἐκεῖσε Va ῥάκος ὃ Ἄνανίας] ὁμοίωμα καὶ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν
Mi2² ἀπέκρυψεν Be L1 L2 Mi3 P Pr Q V 12. μέσας] μέσ Pr μέσας νύκτας] τὸ μέσον τῆς νυκτὸς Pa
τοιοῦτο Mi2 περικυκλοῦν Di1 Di2 I Q U ὡς τοὺς ἐντὸς Be Iv L2 Mi3 Pa, ὡς τοὺς τόστού (sic) Mi2 13.
ἑαυτῶν] αὐτῶν Mi2² ἤδη deest Iv 15. ὡς deest P1 διερευνῶντο A L1 L2 V X 16. ποῖ] ποῦ Pa

9. Ὡς δὲ τῷ ἀλλοκότῳ τῆς αἰτιάσεως ὃ Ἄνανίας διηπορεῖτο, τέως τε ὅθεν εἴη καὶ πόθεν
ἔρχεται καὶ τί ἐπιφέρεται διεσάφησε καὶ ἀποθέσθαι ἐν τοῖς κεράμοις ἐδήλωσε τὸ
ἐπιφερόμενον, ὅθεν ἐδόκει ἀνάπτεσθαι καὶ ἡ φλόξ. Εὐθύς δὲ ἐκεῖνοι τὴν τῶν λεγομένων
διαγνώναι βουλευθέντες ἀλήθειαν καὶ τὸν τόπον διερευνησάμενοι, εὗρον οὐ μόνον τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ
5 Ἄνανιου ἐκεῖσε ἀποτεθέν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ πλησιάζοντι τῶν κεράμων ἐν ἑτέρῳ ἐκτύπωμα
τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπεικονίσματος, παραδόξως καὶ ὑπὲρ νοῦν ἐπὶ τὸ ὄστρακον ἀπὸ τοῦ ὑφάσματος τῆς
ἀγράφου μεταγραφείσης μορφῆς. Ὁ καὶ θεασάμενοι καὶ θάμβους ὁμοῦ καὶ ἐκπλήξεως
γενόμενοι ἔμπλεω, διὰ τε τοῦτο καὶ διὰ τὸ μηδαμοῦ πῦρ εὔρεθῆναι καιόμενον, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῆς ἐν
τῇ μορφῇ λαμπηδόνης δόξαι τὴν φλόγα ἐκπέμπεσθαι, τὸν μὲν κέραμον τὸν ἀπομαξάμενον ἐν
10 ἑαυτῷ τὸ θεῖον ἐκτύπωμα, κατέσχον παρ' ἑαυτοῖς, ὡςπερ τι κειμήλιον ἱερόν καὶ πολύτιμον
θησαυρὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀραθέντος τὴν περὶ αὐτὸ στοχασάμενοι θεῖαν ἐνέργειαν· τὸ πρωτότυπον δὲ
καὶ τὸν τούτου διάκονον δείσαντες κατασχεῖν, ἀπέστειλαν πρὸς τὸν Αὔγαρον. Καὶ νῦν ἐστὶ
σωζομένη καὶ τιμωμένη παρὰ τοῖς τῆς τοιαύτης πολίχνης οἰκήτορσιν ἢ ἐν τῷ κεράμῳ μορφῇ,
τῆς μορφῆς τῆς ἀγράφου ἢ ἀγραφος, καὶ τῆς ἀχειροτεύκτου ἢ ἀχειρότευκτος. Ὁ δὲ Ἄνανίας

- 15 τὴν προκειμένην αὐτῆ πορείαν διηγητικῶς, τῆ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ τὰ μεταξὺ διετράνωσεν, ἀποδοῦς καὶ ἃ ἐπέφερετο σωτήρια σύμβολα.

1. αἰτήσεως Di2 τέως τε ὄθεν] τέως δὲ ὄθεν τε Di1 H Iv L1 L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 P1 Pa Pr V Va X, τέως τε ὄθεν δὲ Ka Sc 2. διεσάφησεν Be L1 Mi2 Mi3 P Sc ἀποθέσθε Pa 3. καὶ deest X δὲ deest Be L2 Mi2 Mi3 Ph V X 4. βουληθέντες διαγινῶναι Di2 καὶ deest Pr ἐρευνησάμενοι Pa 5. ὑπὸ] ἀπὸ Pa 7. ὑφάσματος τῆς ἀγράφου] ὁμοιότητος Mi2² 8. θαμβός Di2 L2 Pa ἔμπλεοι Be L2 L3 Pa V X 9. καὶ deest Pa τῆς ἐν desunt B Me, ἐν deest Di2 10. ἐν deest Di1 11. τι deest C Mi1 P2 παρ' ἑαυτοῖς κατέσχον Ka θεῖον θησαυρὸν καὶ πολῦτιμον Ph 12. αὐτὸν B Me, αὐτοῦ L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V (περὶ deest Pa), ἑαυτοῦ X τὸ deest L3, τὸν B 13. διάκονον] διάκονον ἤγουν τὸν Ἀναβίαν Be Pa V 14. ἀπέστειλον Di1 τιμωμένη Di1 τοῖς τῆς τοιαύτης] τοῖς τοιαύτης Ka L3 Pa¹ Va, τοῖς τοιαύτοις Pa² τοῖς deest Be πολίχνοις Pa 15. τῆς μορφῆς desunt Va ἔγγραφος Mi3 X 16. χειρότεκτος Mi3 X 17. πορείαν] τρίβον Pa

10. Καὶ οὗτος μὲν ὁ παρὰ τῶν πλειόνων λεγόμενος λόγος περὶ τῆς ἐν τῆ ὑφάσματι ταύτης ἀγράφου μορφῆς τοῦ Σωτήρος ἡμῶν. Λέγεται δὲ τις καὶ ἕτερος περὶ τούτου λόγος, οὔτε τὸ πιθανὸν ἐκφεύγων, οὔτε μαρτύρων χρηστῶν ἀπορῶν. Διὸ καὶ τοῦτον ἐκθήσομαι, ἵνα μὴ τις ὑποτοπίαση ἐν τῆ ἀγνοεῖν με τοῦτον, κρατύνειν τὸν ἕτερον. Καὶ πάντως οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν ἐν 5 τοσοῦτῳ χρόνῳ πλαναῖσθαι πολλὰκις τὴν ἱστορίαν. Περί μὲν γὰρ τὸ καίριον τῆς ὑποθέσεως, ὁμοίως πάντες συμφέρονται καὶ ὁμολογοῦσιν, ἀπὸ τοῦ Κυριακοῦ προσώπου τὴν ἐν τῆ ὑφάσματι ἐκτυπωθῆναι παραδόξως μορφὴν. Περί τι δὲ τῶν τοῦ πράγματος, ἥτοι τὸν καιρὸν διαφέρονται. Ὁ οὐδὲν τῆ ἀληθείᾳ λυμαινεται, εἴτε πρότερον, εἴτε ὕστερον γέγονεν. Ἐχει δὲ οὕτως καὶ τῶν λόγων ὁ ἕτερος.

1. οὕτως A Be Me P V τῆς ἐν τῆ ὑφάσματι ταύτης ἀγράφου μορφῆς] τῆς τοιαύτης μορφῆς Mi2² 2. μορφῆς] θείας μορφῆς Be Iv L2 L3 V X τοῦ Σωτήρος ἡμῶν] τοῦ κυρίου καὶ θεοῦ καὶ Σωτήρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X Λέγεται δὲ τις καὶ] Λεγέσθω δὲ καὶ Di2, Λέγεται δὲ καὶ Pa 3. μαρτύρων χρηστῶν] μαρτύV¹, μαρτυριῶν Be Pa V² 4. ὑποτοπίαση Be Mi3 X, ὑποτοπία Pa ἀγνοεῖν με] ἀγνοῆν Pa¹, ἀγνοεῖν με Pa² με deest L3 Pa, μὲν X τοῦτο Be V 5. πολλὰκις deest Mi2 6. γὰρ deest L3 ὁμοίως deest P2 7. ἐκτυπωθῆναι παραδόξως μορφὴν] ἐκτυπωθεῖσαν μορφὴν Mi1 8. παραδόξως deest St τι δὲ] δὲ δὲ L3 τι deest C Mi1, τὲ L2 Pr τῶν τοῦ πράγματος, ἥτοι τὸν καιρὸν διαφέρονται] τὸν τοῦ πράγματος καιρὸν διαφέρονται Di1 Mi1 St τῶν deest Mi3 X, τὸν Be C Sc ἥτοι τὸν desunt C 9. λυμαινεται Va X, μολύνεται Pr εἴτε (1)] εἶπερ Mi1 10. οὕτω L3 τῶν λόγων] τὸν λόγον B Me ὁ deest Iv L1 Pr

11. Ἐν τῆ μέλλειν, φασί, τὸν Χριστὸν ἐπὶ τὸ ἐκούσιον πάθος ἐλθεῖν, ἠνίκα τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ἀσθένειαν ἐνδεικνύμενος, ἀγωνιῶν ὠρᾶτο καὶ προσευχόμενος, ὅτε καὶ τοὺς ἰδρωτὰς αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ θρόμβους σταλάσσειν αἵματος ὁ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου λόγος ὑποσημαίνεται, τηρικαῦτα, φησί, ἀπὸ

5 τινος τῶν μαθητῶν λαβόντα τὸ νῦν βλεπόμενον τοῦτο τεμάχιον τοῦ ὑφάσματος, τὰς τῶν
 ἰδρώτων λιβάδας ἐν αὐτῇ ἀπομάξασθαι· καὶ εὐθέως ἐντυπωθῆναι τὴν ὀρωμένην ταύτην τοῦ
 θεοειδοῦς ἐκείνου εἶδους ἐκτύπωσιν, ὃ τῇ Θωμᾷ παραθέμενος μετὰ τὴν εἰς οὐρανοὺς αὐτοῦ
 ἄνοδον, διὰ Θαδδαίου τῇ Αὐγάρῳ ἀποστεῖλαι προσέταξε, τὴν διὰ τῶν γραμμάτων ὑπόσχεσιν
 ἐκπληρῶν. Μετὰ οὖν τὸ ἀναληφθῆναι τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς,
 10 δὸς ὁ Θωμᾶς τῇ Θαδδαίῳ τὴν ἀχειρόγραφον τοῦ Κυριακοῦ προσώπου ἐκμόρφωσιν, πρὸς τὸν
 Αὐγαρον ἐξαπέστειλε.

1. φασίν Mi2 Χριστὸν] add. καὶ θεὸν ἡμῶν Be Iv L2 Mi3 Pa V X τὴν deest C Mi1 2. ἀσθένιαν Pa
 ὀρᾶτο Iv L1 Va 3. θόμβους Di1 σταλάσσει I αἵματος σταλάσσειν Pa 4. ἀποσημαίνεται B Me
 τηνικαῦτα] τὸ τηνικαῦτα Be L2 V X φησίν deest Sc, φασιν L3 Ph λαβόντα] λαβὼν Va τὸ deest Pr
 νῦν deest Ph 5. τοῦτο deest Va τεμάχιον Iv L1 Va 6. τὴν ὀρωμένην deest P2 ἐκείνου εἶδους desunt Sc
 7. ἐντύπωσιν Pa 8. τοῦ Αὐγάρου Q U ἀποστεῖλαι] ἀποσταλῆναι Mi1 προσέταξεν Mi2 11.
 ἐξαπέστειλεν Be L1 Mi2 P2 Q Sc V

12. Καταλαβὼν τοίνυν ὁ Θαδδαῖος τὴν Ἔδεσαν, ἔμεινε πρῶτον παρά τινι τῶν αὐτόθι
 Ἰουδαίων. Τωβίας οὗτος ὠνόμαστο. Καὶ δὴ πρὸ τῶν λόγων, ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων θέλων ἑαυτὸν
 γνωρίσαι τῇ Αὐγάρῳ ὁ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μαθητής, τοὺς ἀσθενούντας τῆς πόλεως ἐπικλήσει μόνῃ
 Χριστοῦ ἐθεράπευσεν. Ὅθεν ταχὺ τῆς φήμης διαδοθείσης, ὅπερ ἐπὶ τῶν τοιούτων συμβαίνειν
 5 φιλεῖ, τὰ γὰρ παράδοξα τῶν πραγμάτων πολλοὺς ἔχει τοὺς περὶ αὐτῶν ἀπαγγέλλοντας,
 ἔφθασε καὶ πρὸς τὸν Αὐγαρον διὰ τινος τῶν αὐτοῦ δυναστῶν Ἀβδοῦ καλουμένου, ἢ περὶ τῆς
 ἐνδημίας τοῦ ἀποστόλου Χριστοῦ ἀκοή. Λογισάμενος οὖν εὐθέως ἐκ τῆς ὑποικουρούσης ἐν
 αὐτῇ ἐλπίδος τοῦτον ἐκείνον εἶναι, ὃν ἀποστεῖλαι πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς διὰ τῆς γραφῆς
 ἐπηγγείλατο καὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ τελειώτερον τὰ περὶ τοῦ Θαδδαίου μαθίων, ἀγαγεῖν αὐτὸν πρὸς
 10 αὐτὸν διωρίσατο. Ὁ οὖν Τωβίας ἐλθὼν ἐγνώρισε ταῦτα τῇ ἀποστόλῳ, κακεῖνος ἐν δυνάμει
 πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀπεστάλθαι εἰπὼν, τὸ ἐξῆς πρὸς τὸν Αὐγαρον παρεγένετο. Ἐν δὲ τῇ μέλλειν κατὰ
 πρόσωπον αὐτῇ ἐμφανίζεσθαι, ἐπὶ τοῦ ἰδίου μετώπου οἶον ἀναστηλώσας τὴν τοιαύτην
 ἐμφέρειαν, οὕτως εἰσήει πρὸς Αὐγαρον. Ὁ δὲ πόρρωθεν αὐτὸν προσιόντα ἰδὼν, κρεῖττον ὄψεως
 φῶς ἀκτινοβολοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς ὄψεως αὐτοῦ ἐξαλλόμενον ἐδόκει ὄρᾶν, ὃ τὸ ἐπικείμενον ἠφίει
 15 ὁμοίωμα. Ὅθεν τῇ ὑπερβάλλοντι τῆς ἀστραπτούσης λαμπηδόνος καταπλαγεῖς καὶ ὡσπερ ἐν
 λήθῃ τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν συμπτωμάτων γενόμενος καὶ τῆς πολυχρονίου παρέσεως τῶν μελῶν, τῆς
 κλίνης ἀθρόως ἀνέθορε καὶ πρὸς ὑπαντῆν τὰ παρειμένα μέλη τρέχειν ἐξεβιάζετο, ταῦτο πάθος
 παθῶν τρόπον ἕτερον τοῖς ἐν τῇ ὄρει Θαβὼρ τὴν ἀστράψασαν μορφήν θεασαμένοις.

1. ἔμεινεν V 3. γνωρίσαι ἑαυτὸν Pa 4. Χριστοῦ deest Pa "Ὄθεν ταχὺ τῆς φήμης] "Ὄθεν τοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς φήμης Di2 5. συμβαίνει φιλεῖν Ka 6. περὶ αὐτῶν desunt Mi2 ἀπαγγ usque ad ἐδεδίειν cap.14 desunt Be καὶ deest Mi3 7. Ἄμδου B Di1 L1 L2 Pa Pr 8. ἀκοή Pa εὐθέως] add. ὁ Ἄγβαρος V, add. ὁ Αὔγαρος Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa Va X εὐθέως deest Ph ἐποικουρούσης V 9. ἐκείνον] αὐτὸν Ph ἐπηγγείλατο] add. τὸν Τοβίαν μετεκαλέσατο Mi2 10. παρ' αὐτοῦ] παρὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἄβδου Iv Mi3 V X, παρὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἄμδου L2 L3 Pa Va τελειότερον L3 Pr 12. δυνάμει] add. Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V Va X τῇ ἐξῆς L1 L2 L3 Mi2 P1 Pa Pr V Va X 13. αὐτῶ] αὐτὸν Pa, αὐτοῦ P2 15. ἀκτινοβολοῦντα B Me Pa 16. ὅ τι Pa ἀφίει L2 Iv, ἠφίκει Ph 17. ὑπερβάλλον τῆς Iv L2 L3 καταπλαγῆς X 18. αὐτῶν B Pa 19. ἀθρόον Ph ἀνέθωρε Di2, ἀνέθορεν Mi2 ὑπατήν X μέλει Di1 20. ταυτὸ] ταυτὰ τὸ L3 ἕτερον τρόπον Pr 21. ἀστράπτουσαν Iv L2 Mi3 X θεασαμένοις μορφῆν Iv L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 V X, θεασαμένοις δόξαν Pa θεασάμενος A¹ B Di1 Me Mi1 P1 Q U

13. Λαβίων τοίνυν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀποστόλου τὸ τοιοῦτον ὁμοίωμα καὶ σεβασμίως αὐτὸ τῇ κεφαλῇ περιθεις καὶ τοῖς ὄμμασι καὶ τοῖς χεῖλεσι καὶ οὐδὲ τ' ἄλλα τῶν τοῦ σώματος μερῶν στερήσας τῆς τοιαύτης προσψαύσεως, ἔγνω παρευθὺ τὰ μέλη πάντα θαυμασίως ἀναρρωννύμενα καὶ τὴν εἰς τὸ κρεῖττον μεταβολὴν εἰσδεχόμενα καὶ τὴν λέπραν ἐκκαθαυρομένην καὶ ὑποφεύγουσαν, εἰ 5 καὶ ἔτι ἐν τῷ μετώπῳ λείψανόν τι ταύτης μικρὸν ὑπελείπετο. Διδαχθεὶς οὖν τὸν τῆς ἀληθείας λόγον τότε πρὸς τοῦ ἀποστόλου τρανότερον καὶ περὶ τῶν παραδόξων τοῦ Χριστοῦ θαυμάτων, τῶν τε θείων παθῶν καὶ ταφῆς καὶ τῆς ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστάσεως καὶ τῆς εἰς οὐρανοὺς ἀναλήψεως καὶ ὁμολογήσας ἀληθῆ Θεὸν τὸν Χριστόν, περὶ τῆς ἐν τῇ ὀθόνη ἐκτυπίσεως τῆς μορφῆς ἐπυνθάνετο, ἐπέιπερ αὐτὴν ἀκριβέστερον ἐπιστάς, ἐπεγίνωσκεν οὐ διὰ χρωμάτων 10 ὑλικῶν τὴν σύστασιν ἔχουσαν καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ κατεπλήττετο δύναμιν, ὑφ' ἧς παραδόξως ἐξανέστη τῆς κλίνης καὶ συνηριθμεῖτο τοῖς ὑγιαίνουσι. Πρὸς ταῦτα ὁ Θαδδαῖος τὸν καιρὸν τῆς ἀγωνίας ἐδήλου καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῶν ἰδρώτων ἀχρωμάτιστον μόρφωσιν καὶ τὴν τῆς ἀφίξεως τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸν τοῦ Κυρίου εἰσήγησιν καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὅσα τὸ φθάσαν τῆς ἱστορίας ἐδήλωσεν.

1. τοίνυν] add. ὁ Αὔγαρος Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa Va ἀποστόλου] add. Θαδδαίου Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa ὁμοίωμα] ἄγιον ὁμοίωμα Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa τῇ] add. τε Di1 L1 L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 Pa Sc 2. παραθεις Pr καὶ τοῖς χεῖλεσι καὶ τοῖς ὄμμασι I ὄμμασιν Iv Pr U χεῖλεσιν U οὐτὲ Pa τὰ ἄλλα Iv L2 L3 3. μερῶν] μελῶν Iv Mi3 X μέλη] μέρη Iv 4. ἀναρρωννύμενα B, ἀναρωννύμενα V εἰς] πρὸς Iv L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 Pa V X 5. ἀποφεύγουσαν Di1 L1 Pr, φεύγουσαν Mi3 μετώπῳ V 6. ὑπελείπετο Me Pa τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας Ph παρὰ τοῦ ἀποστόλου τότε Va 7. πρὸς] παρὰ Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa Va V X τρανότερον X 8. τε] καὶ L3 ταφῆς] τῆς ταφῆς Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 9. ἀληθῆ Di1 τὸν Χριστόν θεὸν P2 περὶ τῆς – ἐπυνθάνετο] ἐπυνθάνετο περὶ τῆς – μορφῆς Di1 Mi1 St τῇ deest Di1 10. ἐφιστάς A B C Mi1 P2 Pr Q U 11. ἐπεγίνωσκε C Di1 Iv¹ Mi1 Mi3 Pa Ph Pr V² X Va οὐ deest A B C Iv¹ L1¹ L2 Me¹ Mi1 Mi3 P1 P2 Sc (οὐ ἔχουσαν A) οὐ] μὴ L1² Pa Pr V οὐ διὰ] δίχα Mi2 13. ὑγιαίνουσιν B C L1 Me Mi1 P1 Pr Sc V ταῦτα] add. καὶ Ph τῆν] τῶν B 14. τοῦ deest Q U 15. τ' ἄλλα Di1 Di2 Mi2 Pr Sc

14. Ὡς οὖν ἀπό τε τούτων ἀπό τε τῆς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ Θαδδαίου τὰ λυποῦντά τε ὑπεξίστατο καὶ τὰ παρειμένα οἰονεὶ συνεσφίγγετο καὶ ἡ ἀμορφία διεσκεδάννυτο καὶ πάντα πρὸς ὑγίαν ἀνέτρεχε, τῷ πανταχόθεν θάμβει ὁ Αὔγαρος συνεχόμενος, “Ἐπ’ ἀληθείας”, ἔφη, “γνήσιος εἶ μαθητῆς Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ, τοῦ δίχα 5 φαρμάκων καὶ βοτανῶν θεραπεύοντος. Καὶ ἐγὼ τοσοῦτον τῇ περὶ αὐτὸν στοργῇ καὶ πίστει συνδέδεμαι, ὥστε εἰ μὴ ἐδεδίεν τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς τῶν Ῥωμαίων δυνάμεως, οἱ τοῖς ὑπὸ σφᾶς οὐκ ἀνέχονται κατ’ ἀλλήλων ὀπλίζεσθαι, τάχα ἂν κατὰ τῶν σταυρωσάντων τὸν Κύριον Ἰουδαίων ὄπλα ἐκίνησα, καὶ παρεστησάμην καὶ ἠνδραποδισάμην αὐτούς. Νῦν δὲ ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ πάθος αὐτοῦ ἐδιδάχθην ἐκούσιον καὶ πέπεισμαι ὡς οὐκ ἂν, μὴ βουληθέντος αὐτοῦ, κατίσχυσαν 10 οἱ ἀγνώμονες κατ’ αὐτοῦ, οὐδὲν προσπεριεργάζομαι. Δέομαι δὲ καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ βαπτίσματος ἀξιωθῆναι καὶ πανοικί προσοικειωθῆναι καὶ ἀνατεθῆναι τῷ Δεσπότη Χριστῷ”. Πολλὰ τοίνυν ἐπιτελέσας πρότερον θαύματα ὁ τοῦ Κυρίου ἀπόστολος καὶ πάντας ἀπὸ τῶν νόσων αὐτῶν ἰασάμενος, ἐν οἷς ἦν καὶ ὁ πρῶτος τὴν περὶ αὐτοῦ φήμην τῷ Αὔγαρῳ ἀνενεγκῶν, ὃν ποδαλγικοῦ παθήματος ἠλευθέρωσε, προσήγαγε τῇ θείᾳ κολυμβήθρᾳ τὸν Αὔγαρον καὶ τὰ 15 νενομισμένα ἐπ’ αὐτῇ τελέσας, ἐβάπτισεν αὐτὸν τε καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ τούτου τῆς καθάρσεως ὕδατος, καθαρὸς ὅλος καὶ ὑγιής, ἀφανισθέντος ἀθρόως καὶ τοῦ ὑπολειφθέντος μικροῦ λειψάνου τῆς λέπρας ἐν τῷ μετώπῳ αὐτοῦ.

1. Ὡς οὖν – τῷ ὀνόματι] Ἐν τούτων οὖν πάντα ἐκ τε τῆς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Pa ἀπὸ τε τούτων desunt Ph 2. τοῦ Θαδδαίου] τοῦ ἀποστόλου Θαδδαίου Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X τε deest C Mi1 3. συνεσφίγγοντο C Mi1 ἔτρεχε A L1 L2 L3 Q U, ἀνέτρεχεν Mi2 V 4. ἀληθεία B, ἀλληθείας Di1 ἔφη deest Mi2 5. Ἰησοῦ] add. Χριστοῦ Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Ph Va V X τοῦ (1) deest St, τοῦ Υἱοῦ desunt Ph 6. ὥστε] ὡς Ph 7. ὑπερέχων L1 Pr τῶν deest Me τοῖς] τοὺς Di2 Iv L2 L3 Va X ὑπὸ σφᾶς] τὸ σφᾶς Sc 8. τάχα] τάχει Sc 9. καὶ ἠνδραποδισάμην desunt Di2 I Ph Pr Q U Va 11. κατίσχυσαν – αὐτοῦ desunt Pa περιεργάζομαι I L1 P1 Sc δὲ] add. λοιπὸν Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa Va V X 12. προσοικειωθῆναι A B, προσοικειωθῆναι Va ἀνατεθῆναι] ἀναθεῖναι Di2 L3 Va καὶ ἀνατεθῆναι desunt Be I Pr Va 13. θαύματα πρότερον Di2 14. ἀπόστολος] add. Θαδδαῖος Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X πάντας] πάντων Mi2 15. ἀνενεγκῶν] add. ὀνόματι Τωβίας Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X ὃν] add. καὶ H Iv Mi3 Pa V X ποδαλγικοῦ] ποδαλγικοῦ Be Mi3 V X, ποδαλγικοῦ Pr ἠλευθέρωσεν A Be Mi2 P1 P2 Q Sc V 16. προσήγαγεν P1 Q Sc τὰ deest Sc 17-20 desunt Mi2 18. αὐτοῦ] add. εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X Καὶ ἐξῆλθεν] Καὶ καὶ ἐξῆλθεν Di2 19. ἀθρόως καὶ τοῦ ὑπολειφθέντος desunt A 20. αὐτοῦ deest Mi1

15. Ἐντεῦθεν παντοίως τιμῶν καὶ σεβόμενος τὸ τοιοῦτον ὁμοίωμα τῆς τοῦ Κυρίου μορφῆς, καὶ τοῦτο τοῖς ἄλλοις ὁ τοπάρχης προσέθηκεν. Ἐκ τῶν παλαιῶν τῆς Ἐδέσης πολιτῶν τε καὶ

οίκιστῶν τῶν ἐπισήμων τινὸς ἑλληνικῶν θεῶν ἄγαλμα πρὸ τῆς δημοσίας πύλης τῆς πόλεως
ἀνεστήλωτο, ἣ πάντα τὸν ἐντὸς τοῦ ἄστεως γενέσθαι βουλόμενον ἀναγκαῖον ἦν προσκυνῆσαι
5 καὶ νενομισμένας εὐχὰς τινὰς ἀποδοῦναι καὶ οὕτως ἔχεσθαι τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει ὁδῶν τε καὶ
ἀγυῶν. Τοῦτο οὖν τότε ὁ Αὐγάρος καθελὼν καὶ ἀφανισμῷ παραδούς, εἰς τὸν τῆς ἐκείνου
στάσεως τόπον τὴν ἀχειροποίητον ταύτην εἰκόνα τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπὶ σανίδος
κολλήσας καὶ διὰ τοῦ νῦν φαινομένου χρυσοῦ καλλωπίσας, ἀνέστησεν, ἐπιγράψας ἐν τῷ
χρυσῷ ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα· Χριστέ ὁ θεός, ὁ εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζων οὐκ ἀποτυγχάνει. Ἐθέσπισέ τε
10 πάντα τὸν διὰ τῆς πύλης ἐκείνης διέρχεσθαι μέλλοντα, ἀντὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς ἐκείνης στήλης τῆς
ἀχρήστου καὶ ἀνωφελούς, τὸ προσήκον σέβας καὶ τὴν ὀφειλομένην προσκύνησιν καὶ τιμὴν
ἀπονέμειν τῇ πολυθαυμάστῳ θαυματουργῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰκόνι καὶ οὕτως εἰς τὴν πόλιν
Ἐδέσης εἰσέρχεσθαι. Καὶ διετηρήθη τὸ τοιοῦτον τῆς τοῦ ἀνδρὸς εὐσεβείας οἷον προχάραγμα
καὶ ἀνάθημα μέχρι τῆς ἐν τῷ βίῳ παροικίας αὐτοῦ τε τοῦ Αὐγάρου καὶ τοῦ τούτου υἱοῦ, ὃς τῆς
15 βασιλείας καὶ τῆς εὐσεβείας τῆς πατρικῆς κατέστη διάδοχος. Ἄλλ' ὁ τούτων υἱὸς τε καὶ
υἱωνὸς τῆς μὲν πατρίας καὶ παππίας ἀρχῆς διάδοχος γέγονεν, οὐ μὴν καὶ τῆς εὐσεβείας
κληρονόμος ἐγένετο ἀλλ' ἀπελάκτισεν, ὡς εἶπειν, τὴν εὐσέβειαν καὶ πρὸς τοὺς δαίμονας καὶ
τὰ εἰδῶλα ἠϋτομολήσῃ. Διὸ καὶ οἰοεὶ τὸ ἀνταπόδομα τοῖς δαίμοσιν ἀνταποδιδούς, ἐβουλήθη,
ἐπεὶ ὁ πάππος αὐτοῦ τὴν εἰδωλικὴν ἐκείνην στήλην ἀφανισμῷ παραδέδωκε, τὴν αὐτὴν
20 καταδίκην καὶ τῇ τοῦ Κυρίου εἰκόνι προσαγαγεῖν. Ἄλλ' οὐκ ἐπέτυχε τῆς θήρας ὁ δόλιος. Ὁ
γὰρ ἐπίσκοπος τοῦ τόπου τοῦτο προγνούς, τὴν ἐνδεχομένην ἔθετο πρόνοιαν καὶ ἐπεὶ ὁ τόπος,
καθ' ὃν ἀνέκειτο ἡ εἰκὼν, κυλινδροειδοῦς ἡμισφαιρίου σχῆμα διέσωζεν, θρυαλλίδα πρὸ τῆς
εἰκόνος ἄψας καὶ κέραμον ἐπιθείς, εἶτα ἔξωθεν τιτάνῳ καὶ πλίνθοις ὀπταῖς ἀποφράξας τὸ
ἐμβαδόν, εἰς ὁμαλὴν ἐπιφάνειαν τὸ τεῖχος ἀπηύθυνε. Καὶ ἐν τῷ μὴ ὁρᾶσθαι τὴν φθονομένην
25 μορφήν, ἀπέστη τῆς ἐγχειρήσεως ἐκεῖνος ὁ δυσσεβής. Ὁ δὲ κέραμος διὰ τοῦτο, οἶμαι, πρὸ τῆς
εἰκόνος τεθῆναι πρὸς τοῦ ἱερέως διώριστο, ὡς ἂν μὴ τινα σῆψιν ἐκ τοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκοδομῆς
εὐρώτους καὶ τῆς ἐκ τοῦ τιτάνου νοτίδος ἐγγενέσθαι ἐν τῷ ὑποδοχεῖ τῆς εἰκόνος ὑφάσματι καὶ
τὴν ἐκ τοῦ χρόνου βλάβην προσδέξῃται.

Cap. 15 deest Mi2 2. τοῖς ἄλλοις] τοῖς ἄλλοις αὐτοῦ καλοῖς Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 3. πολιτῶν Di1 Di2
Iv L2 L3 Pa Pr τινὸς] add. δὲ Iv L2 L3 Pr ἑλληνικῶς C Di1 Mi1 4. τῆς deest Pr ἣ] ὁ V πάντα
deest Va ἄστεως] ἄστεως B 5. εὐχὰς τινὰς ἀποδοῦναι] τινὰς εὐχὰς ἀποδοῦναι Di1 Di2 Mi1 St Va, τινὰς
ἀποδοῦναι εὐχὰς Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 6. τε καὶ ἀγυῶν desunt Pr Va, καὶ deest Sc ἀγυῶν V X
Τοῦτο οὖν τότε] Τοῦτο οὖν τὸ ἀκάθαρτον καὶ δαιμονιώδες ἄγαλμα τότε Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 V X, Τοῦτο οὖν τὸ
ἀκάθαρτον καὶ δαιμονιώδες τότε ἄγαλμα Pa τότε deest Di1 L1 Pr Va 7. ἀφανισμῷ] παντελεῖ ἀφανισμῷ
Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X τὸν] τὸ Be 9. καλλωπίσας χρυσοῦ Ph 10. ἐλπίζων] ἐλπίσας B Me

ἀποτυγχάνει] add. ποτε Be Mi3 V X 11. διὰ τῆς πύλης desunt Pr, διὰ deest L2 Iv Mi3 X μέλλοντα
διέρχεσθαι Pr, μέλλοντα εἰσέρχεσθαι Va 12. προσείκον Pa 13. τιμὴν καὶ τὴν προσκύνησιν I τιμὴν] τὴν
τιμὴν Q U Di2 L3 ἀπονέμει Pa τῆ πολυθαυμάστῳ] τῆ τιμίᾳ καὶ πολυθαυμάστῳ Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V
X θαυματουργῶ] καὶ θαυματουργῶ Be Pa V X τοῦ deest Pa 14. Ἔδεσαν Iv L2 X διετηρήθη Di1
τὸ deest B Di1 Di2 K Me Mi1 Mi2 P2 Q R S Sc T U W Y 15. εὐσεβείας] add. θέσπισμα Be Iv L2 L3
Mi3 Pa V X 16. τοῦ Αὐγάρου desunt C, Αὐγάρου καὶ τοῦ τούτου desunt Mi1 τούτου deest C τε deest
Ph 17. υἰωνός] οἰωνός Pr 18. καὶ παππῆρας desunt Pa μὴν] add. δὲ C Di1 H Mi1 St 20. ἐκ τοῦ ἀπὸ
τῆς] ἀπὸ τοῦ τῆς Va ἠὲτομολήσεν Be L1 Mi3 P1 Q Sc V, αὐτομολήσεν Pa, αὐτομολήσεν Pr 21. ἐπεὶ]
usque ad καὶ τῶν cap.22 desunt Be τὴν εἰδωλικὴν] τὴν μιᾶρὰν καὶ εἰδωλικὴν Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 22.
παραδédωκε] παρédωκε Di1 Pa 23. τοῦ τόπου desunt Mi1 24. προγνούς] add. ἐκ θείας ἀποκαλύψεως Iv L2
L3 Mi3 Pa V X ἡ deest Sc ἡ εἰκόν] add. τοῦ σωτήρος Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 25. διέσωζε Di2 H I Iv
Ka L2 L3 Mi3 Pa Ph P2 V Va X, διέσωσεν Pr τῆς εἰκόνας] τῆς θείας εἰκόνας Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 26.
ἄψας] ἀνάψας Iv L2 L3 Mi3 V X, ἀναγράψας Pa πλήνθοις V ὄπαῖς A 27. ὁμαλὸν Di1 Pa Pr Va,
ὁμαλὴν Di2 L3 ἀπηύθυνεν V, ἐπηύθυνε Di2 L2 Pa Pr Q U 28. ἐκεῖνος] ἐκείνης Iv L2 L3 X πρὸς τοῦ
ιέρεως desunt Di2 ιέρεως] ἀρχιερέως Iv 30. Εὐρωτος Q, ἐβρωτός V ἀπὸ τῆς – ἐκ τοῦ desunt Ph τοῦ
τιτάνου] τῆς τιτάνου L1

16. Ἐρρει τοίνυν ὁ χρόνος διὰ μέσου πολὺς καὶ τῆς ἐξ ἀνθρώπων μνήμης ἀπερρῦη καὶ ἡ
ἀναστήλωσις τῆς ἱεράς ταύτης εἰκόνας καὶ ἡ ἀπόκρυψις. Ὡς οὖν ἐν τοῖς οἰκείοις καιροῖς
Χοσρόης ὁ τῶν Περσῶν βασιλεὺς τὰς τῆς Ἀσίας πόλεις πορθῶν καὶ πρὸς τὴν Ἔδεσαν
ἔφθασε· καὶ πρὸ ταύτης πηξάμενος χάρακα, πᾶσαν μηχανὴν ἐκίνει καὶ πᾶν τὸ πρὸς ἄλλωσιν
5 πόλεως ἐπιτήθειον ὄργανον ἐξηρτύετο, ἐτεκταίνετο δὲ πάντα τὰ πρὸς ἀφέσεις βελῶν,
κατασεῖσεις τειχῶν, διαθραύσεις πυλῶν. Ἐν τσοῦτῳ κινδύνῳ οἱ Ἐδεσσηνοὶ γεγονότες,
ἐπενόουν μὲν τὰ δυνατὰ καὶ αὐτοὶ πρὸς ἀντιπαράταξιν, διεπρεσβεύοντο δὲ περὶ βοήθειας καὶ
πρὸς τοὺς Ῥωμαίων στρατηγούς. Ἰλίω δὲ, ὁ τότε τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν στρατευμάτων ἡγούμενος
καὶ καθ' ἑαυτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν πολεμίων πονούμενος, τοῖς ἐν Ἐδέσῃ συμμαχίαν πέμψαι οὐχ οἶός τε
10 ἦν. Διὰ γραμμάτων δὲ παρεθάρρυνε, τῆς τοῦ Κυρίου ἀναμιμνήσκων ἐπιστολῆς καὶ τῆς
ἄψευδοῦς ἐν αὐτῇ ἀποφάσεως, δι' ἧς ἀπόρθητον τηρεῖσθαι τὴν πόλιν καὶ λέγεται καὶ
πιστεύεται. Οἱ δὲ Πέρσαι μετὰ τῆς ἐμφανοῦς ἐπιθέσεως καὶ τὰ ἀφανῶς ἐπενόουν
ἐπιβουλεύοντα. Καὶ πόρρωθεν ὀρύττειν ἀρξάμενοι, δι' ὑπονόμων ἔνδον γενέσθαι τῆς πόλεως
ἐτεχνάζοντο. Ὡς δὲ ἦσαν οἶον ὑφυδρῶν κολυμβηταὶ τοῦ τείχους ἐντὸς ὑπὸ γῆν, ἐκ τοιαύτης
15 αἰτίας καταφανῆς τοῖς ἔνδον γέγονεν ἡ ἐπιβουλή· συνέβη κατ' ἐκεῖνο τὸ μέρος ἔνδον τοῦ
τείχους χαλκῆα οἰκεῖν, οὗ τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκίαν αἰωρούμενα σκεύη χαλκᾶ ἦχον ἀπετέλει, τῶν
Περσῶν ὑπὸ γῆν κοπτόντων καὶ ἐκφορούντων τὸν χοῦν. Ἐν ἀμηχανίᾳ οὖν καὶ τῆ ἐσχάτῃ
ἀπογνώσει οἱ τῆς πόλεως καταστάντες πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν καταφεύγουσι καὶ μετ' ὀδύνης καρδίας
καὶ δακρῶν ἐξεζήτουν αὐτόν. Φαίνεται τοίνυν διὰ νυκτὸς τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, Εὐλάλιος δὲ οὗτος ἦν,

20 γυνή τις εὐσταλῆς καὶ κοσμία κρείττων ἢ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον ὑποτιθεμένη αὐτῇ τὴν
 ἀχειροποίητον εἰκόνα λαβεῖν τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ λιτανεῖαν μετ' αὐτῆς ποιήσασθαι· καὶ πάντως
 δεῖξαι τὸν Κύριον τὰ θαυμάσια αὐτοῦ. Ὁ δὲ ἐπίσκοπος παντελῶς ἀγνοεῖν ἔλεγεν εἰ ἔστιν ὄλως
 εἴτε παρ' αὐτοῖς εἴτε παρ' ἄλλοις τισὶν ἢ τοιαύτη εἰκὼν. Τότε λέγει πρὸς αὐτὸν ἢ ἐν γυναικείῳ
 φαινομένη τῇ σχήματι, ὅτι ἐπάνω τῆς πύλης τῆς πόλεως ἐν τῷδε τῷ τόπῳ διὰ τόνδε τὸν
 25 τρόπον ἢ τοιαύτη εἰκὼν ἀποκέκρυπται.

1-12 (πόλιν) desunt Mi2 1. ὁ deest Va πολὺς] add. ἔτη· ἐπέκεινα τῶν πεντακοσίων Iv L3 Mi3 V
 ἀπερρύει P2¹ 3. τῶν deest Pa 4. ἔφθασεν Mi1 V ἐκείναι B Ph 5. ὄργανον deest Pa ἐξηρτύτο Me
 7. οἱ Ἄιδεσθηοὶ Di2, οἱ deest H γεγονότες] οἱ γεγονότες X καὶ αὐτοὶ τὰ δυνατὰ Di1 Mi1, αὐτοὶ τὰ δυνατὰ
 St πρὸς] add. τὴν B Di2 L1 L2 8. ἀνπαράταξιν A περὶ deest Di2 δὲ περὶ βοηθείας desunt Pa
 διεπρεσβεύοντο καὶ πρὸς τοὺς Ῥωμαίων ἀρχηγούς περὶ βοηθείας Ph 9. στρατηγούς] βασιλεῖς τε καὶ
 στρατηγούς L2 L3 Mi3 X, βασιλῆς τε καὶ στρατηγούς Iv 10. πονούμενος] ἠγούμενος Pa συμμαχίαν] add.
 μὲν Iv L2 L3 Pa V X 11. παρεθάρρυνε] διεθάρρυνε Di1, παρεθάρρυνεν Me Sc ἀναμιμνήσκειν P2 12. ἐν
 αὐτῇ] αὐτοῦ Iv L2 L3 Mi3 V X ἀψευδοῦς deest Va ἀπόρητον P2 13. ἐπιθέσεως] ἀποφάσεως B Me
 14. ἐπιβουλεύματα Di2 15. οἶον deest H ἱφυδροὶ L3 Va X 16. γέγονεν ἢ ἐπιβουλή· συνέβη κατ' ἐκεῖνο
 τὸ μέρος ἔνδον τοῦ τείχους desunt Di2 17. ἐπιβουλία Pr συνέβη] add. γὰρ Mi3 X χαλκέα] add. τινὰ Iv
 Mi3 L2 L3 X τὰ deest Ka Pr 19. καὶ ἐκφορούντων desunt Pr Va 20. καταφεύγουσιν Pr 21. ἐζήτουν
 Mi3 Pa V X 24. μετ' αὐτῆς] μετὰ ταύτης Pa V X καὶ deest Di2 Pa τὰ θαυμάσια αὐτοῦ] καὶ νῦν τὰ
 θαυμάσια αὐτοῦ ὡς αἰεί Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X ἐπίσκοπος] add. Εὐλάλιος Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 25. εἴτε
 παρ' αὐτοῖς desunt Ka ἀγνοεῖν deest B Me 26. τοιαύτη deest Iv L2 L3 Pa εἰκὼν] ἀγία καὶ σεβασμία
 εἰκὼν Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X γυναικείῳ] γυναικίῳ A B Pa ὅτι deest B Me 27. τῆς πόλεως desunt Pr
 Va τῷδε deest Pr 28. ἀποκέκρυπται] κέκρυπτε B, ἀποκέκρυπτε Me

17. Ἐωθεν οὖν ὁ ἐπίσκοπος τῇ ἐναργεῖ τῆς ὄψεως πεπειθίως, μετὰ λιτῆς πρὸς τὸν τόπον ἐλθὼν
 καὶ διερευνησάμενος εὗρε τὴν θεῖαν ταύτην εἰκόνα ἀδιαλώβητον καὶ τὴν θρυαλλίδα ἐν τοῖς
 τοσοῦτοις μὴ ἀποσβεσθεῖσαν ἔτεσι καὶ ἐν τῇ πρὸς φυλακὴν ἐπιτεθέντι πρὸ τοῦ λύχνου κεράμῳ
 ἐπεκτυπωθὲν ἕτερον ὁμοίωμα τοῦ ὁμοιώματος, ὃ καὶ μέχρι τοῦ νῦν ἐν Ἐδέσῃ τυγχάνει
 5 σωζόμενον. Λαβὼν οὖν μετὰ χεῖρας τὸ θεῖον τοῦτο τοῦ θεανθρώπου Χριστοῦ ἀπεικόνισμα καὶ
 ἐπὶ κρείττονος ἐλπίδος γενόμενος ἔρχεται κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν τόπον, καθ' ὃν οἱ Πέρσαι
 διορύττοντες ἀπὸ τοῦ τῶν χαλκωμάτων ἤχου κατάφωροι καθεστήκεσαν. Καὶ ἀρξαμένων
 ἔνδοθεν ὀρύττειν τῶν τῆς πόλεως, ὡς ἐγγυὺς ἀλλήλων ἐγένοντο, ἀπὸ τῆς λυχνίας ἐκείνης
 ἔλαιον ἐπιστάξαντες εἰς τὸ κατὰ τῶν πολεμίων αὐτοῖς εὐτρεπισμένον πῦρ καὶ κατὰ τῶν ἐν τῇ
 10 ὑπονόμῳ Περσῶν ἀφέντες, πάντας ἀπίλεσαν. Καὶ τῆς ἐντεῦθεν ῥυσθέντες ἐπιβουλής, πρὸς
 τὰς ἐκτὸς τοῦ τείχους μηχανὰς τὴν ὁμοίαν πείραν προήνεγκαν καὶ ταύτας ἀθρόως κατέφλεξαν
 καὶ πολλοὺς τῶν ἐν αὐταῖς πολεμίων ἀνάλωσαν. Ἦδη δὲ ἀνατεθαρρηκότες καὶ λίθων ἀφέσεις

15 συχρῶν ἀπὸ τῶν τειχῶν ἐπεποίηγτο, ὑφ' ὧν καὶ τὸν στρατοπεδάρχην τοῦ πολεμίου
 στρατεύματος συνέβη πεσεῖν καὶ ἄλλους πολλοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ. Οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν
 20 ἔξωθεν ὑπὸ τῶν Περσῶν ἀναφθεῖσαν κατὰ τῶν ἔνδον πυράν, ἣν ἄπειρος ὕλη ἐλαιῶν τε καὶ
 ἄλλων συχρῶν κατακοπέντων δένδρων ὑπέτρεφε, κατ' αὐτῶν γενέσθαι ἢ τῆς συμμάχου θείας
 εἰκόνας πεποίηκε δύναμις· ὡς γὰρ ἄνωθεν ὁ Εὐλάλιος τοῦ τείχους ταῖς οἰκείαις ἐφαπλώσας
 ταύτην παλάμαις τὴν πόλιν διώδευεν, ἐξαίφνης, ὡς κατὰ τὸν τόπον τοῦτον ἐγένετο, βίαιος
 ἄνεμος ἐγερθεὶς κατὰ τῶν ἀναφλεγόντων τὴν τοιαύτην πυρκαϊᾶν τὴν φλόγα ἐπέστρεψε καὶ
 20 ἐδίωκε τούτους καὶ ἐνεπύριζεν, ὡς τοὺς Χαλδαίους τὸ πρίν.

1. οὖν] δὲ B ὁ deest Va ἐπίσκοπος] add. τὴν πάσαν Mi2² 2. εὖρεν V ἀδιαλύβητον] add. καὶ
 κεχαρμένην Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 3. θρυαλλίδα] θρυλίδα C, θρυαλλίδα ὡ τοῦ θαύματος Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V
 X τοῖς deest Ph τοσοῦτοις] add. χρόνοις Pa ἀποσβεσθήσαν U Pa² ἔτεσι] ἔτεσιν A B L1 Me Mi2 P1
 P2 Pr Q Sc U, deest Pa, χρόνοις V 4. κέραμι] πρὸ τοῦ λύχνου I ἐκτυπωθὲν Iv L2 Mi2 Pa V X ὁμοίωμα
 τοῦ ὁμοιώματος] ὁμοίωμα τοῦ πρώτου ὁμοιώματος ἀπαράλλακτον Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X (ἀπαράλληκτον X)
 5. μετὰ] κατὰ L2 L3 Iv Pa οὖν μετὰ χεῖρας] οὖν ὁ ἐπίσκοπος Εὐλάλιος μετὰ χαρᾶς Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X
 χεῖρας] χαρᾶς Mi2 6. Χριστοῦ] λόγου Mi3 8. κατάφοροι] κατάφοροι A¹ C Di2 Mi1 Pa St, καὶ τάφοροι V,
 κατάφοβοι B καθεστήκασι B L2 L3 Me Mi3 Pa X 9. τῶν] τὸν B ἐγένοντο ἀλλήλων Iv 10.
 ἐπιστάξαντες] ἐπιστάξας Iv L2 καὶ κατῶν Ka αὐτοῖς] αὐτῆς Pa 11. τῷ deest I ὑπόμῳ H πάντες Pa
 ἀπόλεσαν] add. ἄρδην Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 12. τὰς] τὰ Di1 Di2 L2 L3 Iv Sc μηχανὰς] χηχανὰς Q
 προσήνεγκαν B L3 Mi3 V X 13. ταῦτας] πάντας L1 ἀθρόως] ἀθρόας C Mi1 ἀνάλωσαν] ἀνήλωσαν Pa
 14. ἀπὸ τῶν τειχῶν desunt Me τειχῶν] τοιχῶν B 15. στρατοπαιδάρχην Pa πολεμίου] // // // // // μίου Q,
 μιανοῦ Di2 16. δὲ] add. τούτους Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X 17. ἣν] ἡ L2 L3 X ἄπειρος] ἄπειλος L2
 ἄλλων] τῶν ἄλλων V 18. κατακοπέντων] καταπεσόντων A C Di1 Di2 I Mi1 P2 Q Sc St U ὑπέτρεφεν
 Mi2 19. πεποίηκε δύναμις desunt Q U ὁ deest Di2 Iv Pa ταῖς οἰκείαις τοῦ τείχους A B C D Di1 Di2 E
 F G H I K L1 Me Mi1 P1 P2 Ph Pr Q R S Sc St T U Va W Y 20. ἐφαπλώσας Ka διώδευεν V,
 διώδευσε Di1, διώδευε Mi1 Mi3 21. τοῦτον deest Di2 ἐξεγερθεὶς Di2 L1 κατὰ] καὶ B Me φλεγόντων
 Mi3 X 22. ἐπέστρεψεν Mi2

18. Ταῦτα οὐκ ἀμάρτυρός ἐστι λόγος, εἰς ἠδονὴν ἀκοῆς ἢ ἀπάτην παρ' ἡμῶν συμπλασθεῖς,
 ἀλλὰ τρεῖς ὁμοῦ πατριάρχαι, Ἰωβ Ἀλεξανδρείας, Χριστοφόρος Ἀντιοχείας καὶ Βασίλειος
 Ἱεροσολύμων ἀνέγραψαν καὶ οὕτως ἔχειν ταῦτα ἐγνώρισαν Θεοφίλιον γράφοντες τῷ βασιλεῖ
 5 εἰς τὰς ἱερὰς εἰκόνας ἐξυβρικότι ὅτε διὰ πολλῶν ἀποδεικνύντες τὸ τῶν θείων εἰκόνων ἱερὸν καὶ
 σεβάσμιον καὶ περὶ τούτου διέλαβον. Καὶ ἔξεστι τῷ βουλομένῳ τὴν πολύστιχον ἐκείνην
 ἐπιστολὴν ἀναλέξασθαι καὶ περὶ τούτου μαθεῖν. Ἀλλὰ καὶ τῇ Εὐαργίου ἐκκλησιαστικῇ
 ἱστορίᾳ εἴ τις φιλοπόνως ἐνέτυχεν, ἔγνω πάντως οἷα περὶ τῆς ἱερᾶς ταύτης εἰκόνας κατὰ τὸν
 τέταρτον λόγον φησί.

1. ἐστι] ἐστιν V, ἐστιν ὁ Pa εἰς] ἢ εἰς Mi3 ἀπάτην] ἀγάπην Pa παρ' ἡμῶν] παρ' ἡ Pa 2. συμπλασθεῖς] συμπλακεῖς L2 Mi3 X, συμπαθεῖς Di1 3. Βασιλείος] add. ὁ Sc 4. γράψαντες Ph τῷ deest Pr Va εἰς deest A B C Di1 Di2 I Ka Me Mi1 Pr Q Sc St U 5. ἀποδεικνύοντες] ἀποδεικνύοντες C, ἀποδεικνύοντες Di1 Di2 Q, ἀποδείξω V X, ἀποδείξω ἀποδεικνύοντες L3 Mi3 Pa 6. τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἐκείνην τὴν πολύστιχον Ph 7. τούτων Iv L1 L2 P1 Pa Pr Mi3 V Va X τῇ Εὐαγγελίου ἐκκλησιαστικῇ ἱστορίᾳ] τὴν Εὐαγγελίου ἐκκλησιαστικῇ ἱστορίᾳ Di2 8. ἐνέτυχεν ἔγνω] ἀνέγνω οἶδε Di2 εἰκόνος ταύτης Mi3 9. φησὶν Di2 H I Iv L2 L3 Me Mi2 Mi3 Pa Ph Pr Va V

19. Ἀναγράφει γὰρ ὡς μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων ὁ Χοσρόης καὶ τοῦτο πεποίηκε θέλων περιφανῶς ἐλέγξει ψευδῆ τὸν παρὰ Χριστιανοῖς θρυλλούμενον περὶ τῆς τοιαύτης πόλεως λόγον, ὡς εἶη ἀπόρθητος. Ξύλων γάρ τι μέγα χρῆμα καὶ πλήθος ἄπειρον ἐν βραχεῖ τῇ τοῦ στρατεύματος πολυχειρία συναθροίσας ἐξ ἐπιτάγματος καὶ ταῦτα κατὰ δύο τοίχους πηξάμενος κύκλῳ τῆς πόλεως, εἶτα χοῦν κατὰ τὸ μέσον ἐπεμβαλὼν καὶ ἀντιμέτωπον ἄλλο τεῖχος οἰκοδομῶν, ὑψηλότερος ἐγένετο τῶν τῆς Ἐδέσης τειχῶν καὶ ὡς ἐξ ὑπερδεξίων τὰ βέλη κατὰ τῶν ὑπὲρ τῆς πόλεως προκινδυνεόντων ὅσον οὔπω ἀφίεσθαι ἔμελλεν. Ὅπερ οἱ Ἐδεσηνοὶ ὡσπερ ὄρος ἀντικρὺ τῶν τειχῶν ὀρῶντες ἐξεγειρόμενον, δι' οὗ ὡς ἐκ τοῦ ἰσοπέδου τοὺς πολεμίους ἐπιβῆναι τοῦ ἄστεος ἤλπιζον, ἐν ἀμηχανία καίπερ ὄντες, ἀντιμηχανώμενοι δὲ ὁμῶς τὰ δυνατὰ καὶ αὐτοί, διώρυγα ἐπεχείρουν πρὸ τοῦ νεοσυστάτου ἐκείνου τεύχους οὐράσθαι, ὡς ἂν εἰ δυνθεῖεν τὰ πρὸ τοῦ χόματος ὑφάψαι σταυροῖματα πρὸς τὴν διώρυγα τὸν χοῦν ὑποσπάσωνται καὶ οὕτως τὸ μέγα τεῖχος ἐκεῖνο, οἷον ἐξ ὄνειρου ἀναπλασθέν, θάπτον κατενεχθῆ καὶ διαρρηθῆ. Ἐπεὶ δὲ τὸ μὲν ὄρυγμα διήνυστο, πῦρ δὲ τοῖς ξύλοις ἐνιέντες τοῦ σκοποῦ διημάρτανον, μὴ δυναμένου τοῦ πυρὸς διὰ τὸ συμπεπιλημένον ἔνδον εἶναι τὸν χοῦν καὶ τὰ ξύλα ἔτι χλωρὰ κενούτινος δίχα τῆς ὕλης ἐμπεριδράξασθαι, τὴν ἱερὰν ταύτην εἰκόνα εἰς τὴν νεότευκτον ἐκείνην τάφρον εἰσαγαγόντες καὶ ὕδωρ ἐκ ταύτης καθαγιάσαντες καὶ τοῦτο τῇ πυρᾷ καὶ τοῖς ξύλοις προσεπιρράναντες, ἐνεργὸν γενέσθαι τὸ πῦρ κατεπράξαντο. Καὶ τῇ πίστει τῶν δεδρακότων τῆς θείας συνεπιλαβομένης δυνάμεως, ὡς ἔλαιον τὸ ὕδωρ ἐγένετο τῷ πυρὶ καὶ ἐξῆψε τὴν φλόγα καὶ κατανάλωσεν ἅπαν τὸ προστυχόν. Τότε οὖν ὁ τῶν Περσῶν βασιλεὺς τὴν ἄλωσιν τῆς πόλεως ἀπογνοὺς καὶ τὴν βοήθειαν ὅθεν ἔσχον μαθὼν πρὸς συμβιβάσεις ἐχώρησε καὶ σπονδὰς εἰρηνικὰς ποιησάμενος, πρὸς τὰ οἰκεία ἀνθυπενόστησεν.

1. Ἀναγράφει] Ἀναγράφη C Di1 ὁ Χοσρόης] add. κακῶν θέλων γὰρ ὁ ἀλάστωρ Iv L2 L3 Pa V Va X κακῶν καὶ τοῦτο πεποίηκε θέλων γὰρ ὁ ἀλάστωρ Mi3 παρὰ τοῖς Ka 3. γάρ deest Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V Va μέγα τι Di1 H L1 L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 P1 Pa Ph Pr Va 5. τοίχους] τεύχους Di2 Iv L1 L3 Pa St Va, στοίχους Mi2 τὸ deest H Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa 6. ἐγένετο I Iv L2 L3 Pa τῆς deest Ph 7. ἐξ deest L3 St ὑπὲρ deest Pr Va 9. ἐγειρόμενον X ὡς deest Ph 10. ἀντιμαχόμενοι Iv L2 L3 X 11. διώρυγα Di1 I L2 Q X νεοστάτου A B C Di2 12. τὴν] τὸν H 13. ὑποσπάσαντα B Me οὔτω L3 Pa 14. κατενεχθῆναι A,

κατενεχθεί X μὲν deest Pa ὄρυγμα] add. τούτοις Mi2 15. ἀνιέντες Di2 I 16. συνπεπιλημένον A, συμπεπηλημένον L2 L3 X, συμπεπιλέγμενον Pa κενού] κοινού A¹ δίχα] δήθεν Pr Va 17. νεότακτον B 19. προσεπιρράναντες] κατέπιρράναντες Pa 20. ἐπιλαβομένης Pa 21. κατηνάλωσεν Pa 22. Περσῶν] Περσῶ Q¹, Περσῶν Q² ὄθεν] ἦν B Me 23. συμβιβάσας P1, συμβάσεις Ka ἐχώρησεν Mi2 ποιησάμενος] ποιούμενος Mi2

20. Ἐμελλε δὲ ἄρα καὶ οὗτος οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν εὐεργεσίας τυχεῖν ἀπὸ τῆς ἱεράς ταύτης εἰκόνας, τῆς τῶν πολεμίων αὐτοῦ εὐεργέτιδος καὶ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ ἀναιρέτιδος. Τὸ γὰρ τούτου θυγάτριον ὑπὸ δαιμονίου πνεύματος συσχεθὲν καὶ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἐκστὰν καταστάσεως, ἐβόα συνεχῶς δι' αὐτοῦ ἐνεργούμενον. Εἰ μὴ ἐξ Ἐδέσης ἢ ἀχειροποίητος ἔλθῃ εἰκὼν, ἐντεῦθεν τὸν ἔνοικον
5 τούτου μὴ ἐξελεύσεσθαι. Ὅπερ ἀκούσας ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς πολιορκίας ἀναλογισάμενος, οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδ' αὐτὸν ἢ παράδοξος ἐξαίφνης ἰσχὺς καὶ τὸ θάρσος διέλαθε τῶν Ἐδεσσηνῶν, γράφει παραχρῆμα πρὸς τε τὸν τῆς πόλεως προεξάρχοντα καὶ πρὸς τὸν μητροπολίτην Εὐλάλιον καὶ πρὸς τὸ κοινὸν τῆς πόλεως ἀποσταλῆναι θάπτον αὐτῷ τὸ θεῖον καὶ πανσθενὲς ἀπεικόνισμα, προσθεῖς καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν, τὴν τῆς θυγατρὸς συμφορὰν καὶ
10 παντοίως ἀξιώων τε καὶ βιαζόμενος μὴ ἀποτυχεῖν τῆς αἰτήσεως. Οἱ δὲ τότε τοῦ Περσικοῦ ἦθους ἄπιστον ὑπονοοῦντες καὶ ὑποπτεύοντες δόλῳ βούλεσθαι τὸν Πέρσην τὴν αὐτῶν ὑφέλεσθαι ἰσχὺν καὶ μὴ προέσθαι τὴν προστάτιν καὶ εὐεργέτιδα προνοούμενοι, ἀλλὰ μὴδὲ τὴν εἰρήνην λῦσαι τῆς τοιαύτης προφάσεως ἔνεκα, βουλὴν βουλεύονται συνετὴν καὶ λυσιτελοῦσαν αὐτοῖς. Μεταγράψαντες γὰρ ἴσην κατὰ πάντα καὶ ὁμοίαν ὡς ἐνῆν εἰκόνα τῆς ἀγράφου
15 γραπτῆν καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἐμφερὲς κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἀπεικάσαντες πρὸς τὸν αἰτησάμενον ἀποστέλλουσιν. Ὡς δὲ ἐντὸς τῶν τῆς Περσίδος ὁρίων ἐγένοντο οἱ τὴν εἰκόνα διακομίζοντες, εὐθέως διὰ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως θυγατρὸς ὁ δαίμων ἀνέκραξε θάπτον ἐξέρχεσθαι καὶ διαμείβειν τὴν οἴκησιν τῆς τοῦ ἐρχομένου δυνάμεως ἔνεκα, μόνον εἰ τὸ μετακληθὲν ἀποστραφεῖν ὁμοίωμα καὶ μὴ τοῖς βασιλείοις μὴδὲ τῇ πόλει Περσῶν προσπελάσῃ καὶ πρὸς τοῦτο πολλὰ τοῦ
20 βασιλέως ἐδεῖτο καὶ καθικέτευεν. Ὑποσχομένου δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως, ἐξελθόντος ἀπὸ τῆς κόρης τοῦ δαίμονος καὶ ἐν ὑγιεῖ καταστάσει γεγυίας τῆς βασιλείου παιδός, ὁ Χοσρόης, εἴτε τὴν τοῦ αἰτησαμένου δαίμονος ἀξίωσιν ἐκπληρῶν καὶ τὴν ὑπόσχεσιν ἐμπεδῶν εἴτε τὴν τοῦ ἐρχομένου δύναμιν δεδιὼς διὰ τὸ φαῦλον αὐτοῦ τῶν ἔργων καὶ μυσαρὸν, ἀποστείλας ὑποστρέψαι πρὸς τὴν
25 ταύτην ἐκπέμψαντας.

1. Ἐμελλεν V¹ τυχεῖν] μεταλαχεῖν Iv L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 Pa V X 5. εἰκὼν ἔλθῃ Pa τὸν] τὸ Pa Pr 6. πολιορκίας] λυορκίας Pa ἀναλογισά//πομενος Pa 7. ἰσχὺς ἐξαίφνης Mi3 διέλαθεν V γράφη Q 8. ἐξάρχοντα Pr, ἐξάρχοντα Va 9. τὸ (1)] τὸν Mi2 10. ἀπεισκονισμα Pr τὴν (2) deest Pa καὶ deest Pa

V X 11. τοῦ deest H 12. βουλεύεσθαι Iv L2 V X 13. ἐαυτῶν Di2 προίεσθαι L3, πορείεσθαι Pa
 14. ἔνεκα βουλῆν] ἔνεκα καὶ βουλῆν L1 15. Μετεγγράψαντες V, Μεταγγράψαντες X 16. ὡς ἐνῆν ὁμοίαν
 Iv L2 L3 X ἀγράφτου Di2 17. ἀποστέλλουσι L2, ἀποστέλουσιν Di1 18. ἐντὸς B 19. ἀνέκραξε Iv
 L2 Mi3 Pa V Va X, ἀνέκραξεν Mi2 Pr ἀνέκραξε ὁ δαίμων Di1, ἀνέκραξεν ὁ δαίμων Mi1 St 20. εἰ
 μετακληθὲν τὸ ὁμοίωμα ἀποστραφεῖν H ἀποστραφεῖν] ἀποστρεφῆν Sc 21. καὶ μὴ] add. δὲ Iv L2 L3 St
 προσπελάσει Περσῶν Mi2 Mi3 Pa V X, προσπελάσει Περσῶν Iv L2 L3 22. τοῦτο] τούτω Iv L2 X τοῦ
 deest Pr Va 23. καὶ τοῦ δαίμονος ἐξελθόντος τῆς κόρης Ph ἐξελθόντος] καὶ ἐξελθόντος L2 L3 Mi3 V X
 ὑγῆ X, ὑγεί B 24. τοῦ βασιλείου παιδὸς Pa, τοῦ βασιλέως παιδὸς I Sc 25. ἐμποδῶν P1 Pr Q, ἐμπαυδῶν Di1
 δεδειῶς X, δεδοῖς Pa 26 – 28 desunt P2 26. ἀφ' ἧς] ἐξ ἧς Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X ἀποστείλας ὑποστρέψαι
 πρὸς τὴν, ἀφ' ἧς ἐξῆλθε, πόλιν] ἀποστείλας πρὸς τὴν ἀφ' ἧς ἐξῆλθε πόλιν ὑποστρέψαι Di1 Mi1 St 27.
 ἐκέλευσεν Mi2 Pr V προσθεῖς καὶ δῶρα Iv L2 L3 Mi2 Mi3 Pa V X 28. ἐκπέψαντας] ἐκπέψας Mi3

21. Ἦν οὖν παρὰ τοῖς Ἐδεσηνοῖς ὁ πολύτιμος ὄλβος οὗτος, ὁ ἀκένωτος θησαυρός, ἡ εἰκὼν ἢ
 πρωτότυπός τε καὶ ἄγραφος, τιμωμένη αἰὲ πρὸς αὐτῶν καὶ ἀντιφρουρούσα αὐτούς. Ἐπεὶ δὲ
 πρὸς τὴν βασιλεύουσαν ταύτην τῶν πόλεων τὰ πανταχόθεν συνερρύηκεν ἀγαθώτατά τε καὶ
 5 ἀποθησαυρισθῆναι καλῶν, ὁ τῆς Ῥωμαίων κυριεύων ἀρχῆς Ῥωμανὸς σπούδασμα ποιεῖται δι'
 ἑαυτοῦ ταύτης κατευμοιρῆσαι καὶ καταπλουτηῆσαι τὴν βασιλεύουσαν. Καὶ δὴ κατὰ διαφόρους
 καιροὺς ἀποστείλας πρὸς Ἐδεσαν ἠτεῖτο ταύτην αὐτῇ μετὰ τῆς αὐτογράφου τοῦ Κυρίου
 ἐκπεμφθῆναι ἐπιστολῆς καὶ ἀντιδιδόναι καθυπισχεῖτο αὐτοῖς εἰς ἀντάλλαγμα Σαρακηνούς τε
 10 μέχρι διπλῆς ἑκατοντάδος τὸν ἀριθμὸν καὶ ἀργύρου ἐπισήμου χιλιάδας δύο πρὸς μυριάδι μιᾷ. Οἱ
 δὲ τῆς Ἐδέσης μὴ λυσιτελεῖν αὐτοῖς ἔλεγον τὴν φύλακα καὶ φρουρὸν τῆς οἰκείας πόλεως
 ἀργυρίου καὶ θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀλλάξασθαι.

Cap. 21 deest P2 1. οὗτος ὄλβος B Me ὁ ἀκένωτος] ὁ καὶ ἀκένωτος X, καὶ ἀκένωτος Iv L2 Mi3 ἢ
 εἰκὼν] εἰγκὼν (sic) Mi2 2. πρὸς] παρ' B αὐτὸν Ka 4. συνερρύηκεν] συνερρῆ Di2, συνερρῆκατε Ka
 ἀγαθώτατα] ἀγαθότατα Ka Q, ἀγαθά Di2, ἀγιώτατα Iv L3 Mi3 Pa Ph Pr V Va X τε (1) deest Pr X δὲ]
 τε B 5. ἱερὰν ταύτην εἰκόνα] ἱερὰν εἰκόνα ταύτην Pr Va, ἱερὰν καὶ ἄχραντον ταύτην εἰκόνα καὶ ἀχειροποιήτου
 Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa X θησαυρισθῆναι Iv L2 L3 Pa X, συναθροισθῆναι Mi3 6. κυριεύων deest Mi3
 σπούδασματα Iv 7. κατευμαρῆσαι Pr 8. αὐτῇ] αὐτῶν Mi2 9. ἀντιδιδόναι] add. αὐτούς B 10.
 τάλλαγμα Sc μέχρι] καὶ μέχρι Di1 ἀργύρου] ἀργυρίου L2 L3 12. τὴν φύλακα] τὸν φύλακα L1 καὶ
 φρουρὸν desunt Iv καὶ θνητῶν] τε καὶ θνητῶν Pa

22. Ὡς δὲ ὁ μὲν ἐπέκειτο καὶ αὔθις αἰτῶν, οἱ δὲ πολλακίς τὴν δέησιν παρεκρούοντο, τέλος
 κατὰ τοῦ ἑξακισχιλιοστοῦ τετρακοσιοστοῦ πεντηκοστοῦ δευτέρου ἔτους τῆς τοῦ κόσμου
 γενέσεως, ὁ τῆς Ἐδέσης ἀπέστειλεν ἀμνηρᾶς, ἀξιῶν ἐγγράφῳ ἀσφαλείᾳ διὰ σφραγίδος
 χρυσῆς ἐχούσης τὸ βέβαιον, τὸν βασιλέα κατεγγυήσασθαι τοῦ μὴ πολεμῶς ἐπέρχεσθαι τὰ

- 5 τῶν Ῥωμαίων στρατεύματα κατὰ τῶν τεσσάρων τούτων πόλεων, φημί δὴ τοῦ Ῥοχᾶν, ὅπερ τὴν Ἔδεσαν ἢ βάρβαρος ὀνομάζει φωνή, τοῦ Χαράν, τοῦ Σαρότζι καὶ τῶν Σαμοσάτων, μηδὲ ληΐζεσθαι τοὺς τούτων ἀγροὺς ἢ τοὺς ἐν αὐτοῖς κατοικοῦντας ἀνδραποδίζεσθαι, ἀπολυθῆναι δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ τοὺς διακοσίους ἀπὸ τῶν ὁμοφύλων Σαρακηνοὺς μετὰ τῆς προϋπεσχημένης τοῦ ἀργυρίου ποσότητος καὶ ἀνταποδοῦναι αὐτὸν τὴν ἐπιζητούμενην εἰκόνα καὶ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τοῦ
- 10 Χριστοῦ.

Cap. 22 deest P2 1. αἰτῶν] ζητῶν B Me, ἐτῶν Di1 ἀπεκρούοντο Ka 2. κατὰ] add. τὸν χρόνον C Di1 Mi1 St τοῦ] τὴν B Me ἑξακισχιστοῦ A τετρακοσιοστοῦ deest C L1 P1 πεντηκοστοῦ deest B C Me Mi1 δετέρου L2 τοῦ ἑξακισχιλιοστοῦ τετρακοσιοστοῦ πεντηκοστοῦ δευτέρου] τὸ ἑξακισχιλιοστὸν τετρακοσιοστὸν πεντηκοστὸν δεύτερον Di2 H Ph Sc Va ἔτος Di2 Mi2 Sc Va ἔτους τῆς τοῦ κόσμου γενέσεως] τῆς τοῦ κόσμου γενέσεως ἔτους Di2 3. τοῦ deest Mi1 Mi2 4. διὰ deest Sc σφραγίδος] γραφίδος St χρυσης σφραγίδος I ἐχούση Mi2 5. πολεμίους Di2 Pa 6. φημί δὴ desunt H Ῥουχᾶν Mi2 7. Χαράν] Χοράν C, Χοράν Di1 Mi1 St, Χαυχαράν V, Χαχαράν Iv L2 L3 Mi3, Χουράν Pa Σαρότζι] Σαρότζη Di2 H I Ka Q Sc, Σαροτζί L3 Pa V X, Σαρότ Pr¹, Σαρότσι Pr², Σαροτζί Di1 Iv L1 L2, Σαρόζιν Ph 8. αὐτοῖς] αὐτῆς C, αὐτῇ Di1 Mi1 9. Σαρακηνούς Pa προϋποσχημένης V¹, προϋποσχημένης Pa 10. αὐτὸν] αὐτῷ H Ka Mi1 Pa εἰκόνα] ἀχειροποίητον εἰκόνα Be Mi3 Pa V X, αὐτῷ ἀχειροποίητον εἰκόνα Iv L2 L3 Va 11. ἐπιστολὴν] ἰδιόγραφον ἐπιστολὴν Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V Va X

23. Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς τῇ ἐφέσει τοῦ τοιούτου καλοῦ πρὸς πάντα ὑπέιξας τὰ προβαλλόμενα καὶ δοὺς τὰ αἰτούμενα, Ἀβράμιον τὸν θεοφιλῆ τοῦ Σαμοσάτου ἐπίσκοπον ἐνταῦθα κατ' ἐκεῖνο καιροῦ ἐπιχωριάζοντα, ἐπὶ τῇ ἀναλήψει τῆς θείας εἰκόνας καὶ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς Χριστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν ἐξαπέστειλε. Σκοπῶν δὲ καὶ ὁ ἀποστείλας καὶ ὁ διακονούμενος μὴ κατασοφισθῆ περι
- 5 τὴν ἀπόδοσιν καὶ ἀντὶ τῆς ἀγράφου καὶ ἀληθοῦς ἢ μεταγραφείσα τότε διὰ τὴν Περσικὴν περίστασιν τούτῃ ἐπιδοθῆ, ἀμφοτέρας ταύτας μετὰ καὶ ἑτέρας τῆς ἐν τῇ τῶν Νεστοριανῶν ἐκκλησίᾳ τιμωμένης πάλαι καὶ αὐτῆς, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἀπὸ τῆς πρωτοτύπου μεταληφθείσης, ἐπιζητήσας, πρὸς πίστωσιν ἔλαβεν. Αἱ καὶ αὖθις ἀνταπεδόθησαν, μόνης ἐγκρατηθείσης τῆς κυρίας καὶ ἀληθοῦς.

Cap. 23 deest P2 1. βασιλεὺς] ἄναξ Ῥωμανός Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X ὑπέιξας τὰ προβαλλόμενα καὶ δοὺς τὰ αἰτούμενα desunt X ὑπέιξας τὰ προβαλλόμενα] ὑποδείξας Mi3 2. καὶ δοὺς τὰ αἰτούμενα desunt Di1 L2¹ αἰτούμενα] αἰτήματα Pa V τοῦ Σαμοσάτου] τοῦ Σαμοσάτων V, τῶν Σαμοσάτων Ph ἐνταῦθα] add. τὸ Iv L2 L3 3. ἐκεῖνο] ἐκείνου Q U V¹ 4. Χριστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ] τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ Pa ἑξαπέστειλεν Be L1 Mi1 Mi2 P1 Pr Sc καὶ (1) deest C H Mi1 6. ἢ deest C D Di1 Di2 E F G H I Iv K L1 Me Mi2 Mi3 P1 P2 Pr Q R S Sc T U W Y, ἢ μετεγγραφείσα V, ἢ μεταγραφείσα X καὶ deest L3 7. ἑτέρας] add. μιᾶς Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 V X ἐκκλησίας A Di1 I Mi1 P1 Pr Q 9. ἔλαβόν L2 Αἱ] Ἄμα καὶ L1 ἀντεπεδόθησαν A C Di1 Q Sc, ἀντεδόθησαν Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X 10. ὑποκρατηθείσης Ph

24. Ἄλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν ὕστερον. Τότε δὲ στάσις παρὰ τῶν ἐν Ἑδέσῃ πιστῶν διηγείρετο καὶ θόρυβος τὴν πόλιν κατεῖχε συχνός, μὴ μεθιέντων ἀφαιρεθῆναι τὰ τιμιώτατα τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς καὶ τῆς ἐνεγκαμένης αὐτῶν φυλακῆρια, ἕως ὃ τῶν Σαρακηνῶν ἀφηγούμενος τοὺς μὲν πείσας, τοὺς δὲ βιασάμενος, τοὺς δὲ καὶ ἀπειλαῖς σφαγῆς δεδιξάμενος ἐπιδοθῆναι αὐτὴν
5 κατεπράξατο. Βροντῶν δὲ καὶ ἀστραπῶν μεθ' ἑτοῦ λαβροτάτου κατὰ τινα τύχην ἢ πρόνοιαν αἰφνιδίως καταρραγισῶν ἐν τῷ μέλλειν ἐξέρχεσθαι τῆς Ἑδέσης τὴν εἰκόνα καὶ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ, πάλιν οἱ καὶ πρότερον ἀντεχόμενοι τούτων ἀνεκινούντο καὶ τὸ θεῖον ἐπισημαίνεσθαι τοῖς πραπτομένοις διεβεβαίουν μὴ κατὰ θείαν βούλησιν γίνεσθαι τὴν ἐντεῦθεν τῶν ἀγιοτάτων τούτων μετάστασιν. Ἄλλὰ τοῦ τῶν Σαρακηνῶν ἀρχηγοῦ, ὑφ' ᾧ τὸ πᾶν τῆς
10 ἐξουσίας ἀνέκειτο, ἐμμένειν τοῖς ὁμολογημένοις κρίνοντος δεῖν καὶ ἐκπληροῦν τὴν ὑπόσχεσιν, ἐξῆλει τῆς πόλεως τὸ τιμαλφέστατον ἀπικόνισμα καὶ τὸ Χριστόγραφον ἐπιστόλιον καὶ πρὸς τὰ ἐνταῦθα διεκομίζετο.

1. Ἄλλὰ deest Di2 Τότε] Ὅτε L3 δὲ] add. πάλιν Be Mi2 Pa V 2. κατεῖχεν Mi2 ἀφαιρεθῆναι] ἀφεθῆναι L2 L3 X 3. τιμιώτατα] βασιμώτατα Iv¹, τίμια ὄντως καὶ σεβασμιώτατα Iv² Ph τῆς ἐνεγκαμένης] τοῖς ἐνεγκαμένοις Pa 6. τύχην] τέχνην D Di1 E F G H K P1 P2 Pr R S Sc T W Y 7. τὴν εἰκόνα] τὴν ἁγίαν εἰκόνα Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa X οἱ καὶ] add. θεῖον βούλημα Pa V, add. τὸ θεῖον βούλημα Iv L2 L3 X 9. θείαν βούλησιν] θεῖον βούλημα Be Mi2, τὸ θεῖον βούλημα Mi3 10. μετάστασιν τούτων Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 V X 11. ἐμμένειν] ἐμμένειν A, ἐμμένειν οὖν Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X 12. κρίνοντος Di1 L1 τὸ τιμαλφέστατον] τὸ ἅγιον καὶ τιμαλφέστατον Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X, τὸ ἀγιοτάτον καὶ τιμαλφέστατον Be καὶ τὸ] οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X ἐπιστολίδιον V 13. διεκομίζοντο Pa

25. Καὶ δὴ τὴν ὁδὸν διανύοντες οἱ ταῦτα ἐπιφερόμενοι τὸν Εὐφράτην κατέλαβον καὶ πάλιν θόρυβος οὐδενὸς τῶν προτέρων ἐλάττων ἐγείρεται, ὡς εἰ μὴ τι σημεῖον θεόθεν δειχθῆ, οὐδ' ἂν εἴ τι γένηται, προῖσιντο τὰ συνεκτικὰ τῆς ἀσφαλείας αὐτῶν. Δίδεται τοίνυν σημεῖον αὐτοῖς ἀπίστοις οὖσι καὶ ἐκπειράζουσιν. Ἡ γὰρ ναῦς, μεθ' ἧς τὸν Εὐφράτην περαιωθῆναι αὐτοῖς
5 προῦκειτο, ἔτι πρὸς τὰ τῆς Συρίας ὀρμιζομένη μέρη, ὡς μόνον εἰσηλθὼν ἐν αὐτῇ οἱ ἐπίσκοποι τὴν θείαν εἰκόνα καὶ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἐπικομίζόμενοι, ἔτι τοῦ σάλου τοὺς στασιώτας κατέχοντος, ἐξαίφνης χωρὶς ἑρετῶν, χωρὶς τοῦ κυβερνῶντος ἢ ἔλκοντος, πρὸς τὴν ἀντιπέρας κατῆρε γῆν, μόνῳ τῷ θεῷ κυβερνωμένη βουλῆματι. Ὁ δὴ τοὺς προστυχόντας καὶ ἰδόντας ἅπαντας, θάμβους ἐπλήρωσε καὶ ἐκπλήξεως καὶ ἐκόντας παραχωρήσαι τὴν ἐκπεμψὴν ἔπεισεν.

1. Εὐφράτην] Ἐφράτην Pr κατέλαβον] κατέλαβον ποταμόν Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X, ποταμόν κατέλαβον Va 2. ἐλάττων deest L3 σημεῖον] add. λεγόντων Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X θεόθεν deest Ph 3. γένοιτο Ka

προΐσιντο] προΐσιν τὸ B, προήσιντο C Di1 Iv L3 Pa Ph St X, πρόσιντο Di2 5. περαιωθῆναι τὸν Εὐφράτην Ph Εὐφράτην] Ἐφράτην Pr πρὸς deest Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X 7. τοῖς στασιώταις Mi2, τοὺς στασιαστὰς Ph 8. τοῦ deest H κυβερνήτος B Me ἢ ἔλκοντος desunt Iv P2 ἀντιπέραν Pa St, ἀντιπέρα H 9. κυβερνωμένῳ Ph ἅπαντα Pr θάμβος P2

26. Ἐντεῦθεν καταλαμβάνουσι τὰ Σαμόσατα οἱ τῶν φερομένων διάκονοι. Ἦσαν δὲ ὁ τῶν Σαμοσάτων καὶ τῆς Ἐδέσσης ἀρχιερεὺς καὶ ὁ τούτου πρωτοπρεσβύτερος καὶ ἕτεροί τινες τῶν εὐλαβεστέρων Χριστιανῶν, οἷς καὶ ὁ τοῦ ἀμνηρᾶ ὑπηρέτης συνῆν, ὃς ἀπὸ Ῥώμης κατωνομάζετο. Ἐνταῦθα ἐπὶ τινὰς ἡμέρας χρονοτριβήσαντες, πολλῶν ἐκεῖσε θαυμάτων 5 γεγονότων, εἶχοντο τῆς ὁδοῦ καὶ πάλιν ἄπειρα θαύματα ἐτελεῖτο ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ὑπὸ τῆς ἱεράς εἰκόνας καὶ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Τυφλοὶ γὰρ ἀπροόπτως ἀνέβλεπον καὶ χωλοὶ ἐδείκνυντο ἄρτιοι. Κλινῆρεις τε πολυχρόνιοι ἤλαντο καὶ οἱ ξηρὰς ἔχοντες τὰς χεῖρας ὑγιούντο καὶ συνελόντι φάναι, πᾶσα νόσος καὶ μαλακία ἐδραπετεύετο καὶ ἐδόξαζον ὑγιαζόμενοι τὸν θεὸν καὶ ἀνύμνουν αὐτοῦ τὰ θαυμάσια.

1. Ἐντεῦθεν] Ἐνταῦθα Di1 Mi1 St καταλαμβάνουσιν B Be Pr 2. καὶ τῆς] καὶ ὁ τῆς Be C Di1 L3 Iv Mi1 Mi2 Mi3 St V X 3. ὁ deest P2 4. ἐπὶ] ἔτι Pa Pr τινος Mi2 πολλῶν] καὶ πολλῶν Va 5. γεγονότων] γενομένων Mi2 6. ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐτελεῖτο B Me ὑπὸ] add. τε L2 L3 Va X 7. καὶ deest L2 Mi3 8. ἤλαντο] ἤλαντο A, εἶλαντο B, ἤλλοντο Be Iv V Va X, ἤλλοντο Mi3 Pa, ἤλοντο L3 οἱ deest Sc συνελόντα Di1 Iv L1 L2 L3 Mi1 Mi3 P2 Ps St 9. πᾶσα μαλακία Mi2 P2 ὑγιαζόμενοι deest H ὑγιούμενοι Pa, οἱ ὑγιαζόμενοι Be Di2 I Me Mi1 Pr Sc τὰ θεῖα θαυμάσια P2

27. Ἦδη οὖν τὸ πολὺ τῆς ὁδοῦ διανύσαντες φθάνουσι καὶ εἰς τὴν τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου μονῆν, ἣ τὰ Εὐσεβίου κατωνομάζεται ἐν τῇ τῶν Ὀπτιμάτων λεγομένῳ τυγχάνουσαν θέματι. Ἐν τῇ ναῷ δὲ τοῦ τοιοῦτου φροντιστηρίου ἀγιοπρεπῶς ἢ τὴν τερατουργὸν εἰκόνα κρύπτουσα θήκη ἐναποτίθεται καὶ πολλοὶ προσελθόντες ἐξ εἰλικρινοῦς διαθέσεως ἀπὸ τῶν οἰκείων νόσων 5 ἰάθησαν. Ἐνθα καὶ τις προσῆλθεν ὑπὸ δαίμονος ἐνοχλούμενος, ᾧ καθάπερ ὄργανῳ τὸ πονηρὸν ἀποχρώμενον πνεῦμα, καὶ πολλὰ τῶν εἰς ἔπαινον ἡκόντων τῆς εἰκόνας καὶ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς δι' αὐτοῦ ἐκφωνοῦν, ἐπεὶ καὶ πάλαι· “Οἶδαμέν σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ” πρὸς τὸν Κύριον ἔλεγον, οἱ τῆς ὁμοίας μερίδος αὐτῷ. Τέλος καὶ τὰδε οἰονεὶ ἀπεφοίβαζεν, “Ἀπόλαβε”, λέγον, “ἢ Κωνσταντινούπολις, δόξαν καὶ χαρὰν καὶ σύ, Κωνσταντίνε Πορφυρογέννητε, τὴν 10 βασιλείαν σου”. Καὶ τούτων ῥηθέντων, ἰάθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἀπελύθη παραχρῆμα τῆς τοῦ δαίμονος ἐπιθέσεως. Τούτων δὲ πολλοὶ καθεστήκασιν μάρτυρες τῶν ῥημάτων. Τοῦ γὰρ βασιλέως εἰς τιμὴν καὶ ὑπάντησιν τοῦ ποθουμένου τοὺς πρώτους σχεδὸν τῆς ἐν τέλει βουλῆς ἀποστείλαντος καὶ τούτοις τῶν ἐκ τῆς δορυφόρου τάξεως συνεξεληθόντων πολλῶν, συνέβη

μαγίστρους καὶ πατρικίους μετὰ τῶν ἐκ τῶν ὑποβεβηκυῶν τάξεων εἶναι τοὺς ἀκουστάς τε καὶ
 15 μάρτυρας. Καὶ ἐπεὶ τὰ ῥηθέντα τὴν ἔκβασιν θάπτον ἐδέξαντο, ἀπορήσαι ἄξιον πόθεν ἢ
 πρόγνωσις τῷ δαίμονι προσεγένετο. Οὐ γὰρ ἔχειν πιστεύονται ταύτην οἴκοθεν, τῆς θείας δόξης
 ἀπολισθήσαντες καὶ σκότος ἀντὶ φωτὸς χρηματίσαντες. Ἦ δὴ γλῶσσαι, ὅτι καθάπερ τῷ Βαλαάμ
 ἢ θεία δύναμις ἐχρήτο διακόνῳ τοῦ τότε προαγορεύματος καὶ ἄλλοτε ἄλλοις οὐκ ἄξιους
 20 πολλάκις τοῦ πράγματος, κατ' οἰκονομίαν πάντως τινὰ σοφὴν καὶ εὐμήχανον, οὕτω καὶ νῦν ἢ
 ἐν τῷ θείῳ ἀπεικονίσματι δύναμις τῷ δαίμονι ἀπεχρήσατο καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ τὰ μετ' ὀλίγον
 ἐκβησομένα προεδήλωσεν. Ἀλλὰ τούτου μὲν οὕτως συμβάντος μεταξὺ μνησθῆναι ἴσως οὐκ
 ἄκαιρον. Ἐπὶ δὲ τὰ ἐχόμενα τῆς διηγήσεως βαδιούμεθα.

1. διανύσαν Sc καὶ deest Di2 3. τυγχάνουσα Ph θεάματι Mi3 4. τερατοργὸν εἰκόνα] ρατοργὸν εἰ A²
 6. ἀποχρίμενον deest P2 7. ἠκόντων] ἠκότων Q, ἠκότων Di2 8. ἐπεὶ] ἐτεί Me καὶ deest L3 πάλαι]
 οἱ πάλαι Iv L2 εἶ] εἷς Pa ὁ deest Pa 9. μερίδος αὐτῷ] μερίδος αὐτῶν Pa, μερίδος αὐτοῦ Mi1
 ἀπεφοίβαζεν] ἀπεφοίβασεν V X Pa Mi3 Be, ἀπεφοίβαζε H 10. ἢ deest A B C Di1 H Iv L1 L2 L3 Me Mi1
 P1 Pa Pr St Va 11. τούτων ῥηθέντων] τούτου ῥηθέντος L2 L3 12. καθεστήκασι Be V 13. μάρτυρες
 deest B Me τῶν ῥημάτων desunt Pr Va ῥημάτων] add. αὐτήκοι B βασιλέως] add. Ῥωμανοῦ Be Iv
 L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V Va X ὑπάντησιν] ἀπάντησιν Pa 14. ἀποστείλαντος] ἀποστείλατος Q¹, add. πρό γε
 τούτων τὸν παρακοιμώμενον αὐτοῦ V X, add. πρό γε τούτων θεοφάνην τὸν παρακοιμώμενον αὐτοῦ Be Iv L2 L3
 Mi3 Pa Va (πρό γε] πρὸς Iv) 15. συνελθόντων Be 16. ἐκ τῶν desunt Di2 L2 Me Q U τοὺς τοὺς Mi3
 17. Καὶ deest B Me ἐδέξατο Mi3 18. ταύτην πιστεύονται Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X πιστεύονται]
 πιστεύον B Me 21. προαγορεύματος] προαγορεύοντος Pa ἄλλοτε] ἄλλος τε Be ἄλλοτε ἄλλοις οὐκ ἄξιους]
 ἄλλοις ἄλλοτε ἀναξίος Pa τινὰ deest Ka 23. δι' αὐτοῦ] διὰ τοῦτο Iv L1 L3 P1 P2 Ph Pr Me Mi2 Sc Va,
 δι' αὐτοῦς Di2, διὰ τούτου B² 24. οὕτω C I μεταξὺ deest Pa 25. ἴσως deest Mi3 ἐχόμενα] ἐχόμεν Q¹
 βαδιούμενα B, βαδιούμεν Me

27 secundum Mi2

Ἦδη οὖν διανυσάντων αὐτῶν τὸ πολὺ τῆς ὁδοῦ ὁ πιστὸς ὄντως καὶ θεοφιλὴς καὶ μέγας
 βασιλεὺς Ῥωμανὸς μεγαλοπρεπῶς τιμῆσαι καὶ διὰ τῆς προαπαντῆς τὸ θεῖον βουλόμενος
 ἀφομοίωμα στέλλει Θεοφάνην πατρικίον καὶ παρακοιμώμενον, ὃς τὰ τοῦ κοινοῦ ἤδη διοικῶν
 καὶ δόξης εἶπερ τις τετυχηκῶς τῷ ἀπατηλῷ τῆς δόξης οὐκ ἠπατᾶτω πτερῷ καὶ τὸ τῆς
 5 δυνάμεως οὐκ ἐπ' ἄλλων ἐχρήτο ταλαιπωρία τὸ γὰρ δόξης ἔχειν θεόθεν ἐπίστευε. Θεοῦ δὲ
 δῶρον τοῖς ἐναντίοις ἀπηύχετο καταχρησασθαι ὅθεν ὑπερβαλλούσης τιμῆς διὰ ταῦτα τῆς
 ἐξαπάντης ἀπήλαυε, μάλιστα δὲ ἀφ' οὗ φοβοῦ μεγάλου καὶ προσδοκωμένου κινδύνου τῆς
 πολυανθρώπου λέγω καὶ μυριάνδρου ἐφόδου τῶν Ῥῶς Βυζαντίοις ἐκκρεμασθέντος παραδόξαν
 ἐπὶ τὸν Εὐξείνου ναυσὶν ὀλίγαις τοῦ ἱεροῦ πλησίον ἀπηνητηκῶς πυρὸς καὶ θαλάσσης καὶ ξίφους

10 παρανάλωμα θείῃ τὴν πόλιν διέσωσε. Τοῦτον τοίνυν ὁ πιστὸς καὶ θεϊότατος βασιλεὺς Ῥωμανὸς ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ θείου μορφώματος ἀπαντῆ ἑξαπέστειλεν ἥ καὶ οἱ πρῶτοι σχεδὸν πάντες τῆς ἐν τέλει ἐπηκολούθουν βουλῆς τοῦτο μὲν ἐπιθυμία τῆς θείας καὶ σεβαστῆς ἐκτυπώσεως, τοῦτο δὲ πόθῳ τῇ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐχόμενοι καὶ στοργῇ ἀπολιμπάνεσθαι τούτου πανταχοῦ μὴ βουλόμενοι· ὁ δὲ ἅμα τῶν ἐκ τῆς δορυφόρου τάξεως συνελθόντων μετὰ τῶν ἐκ τῶν

15 ὑποβεβηκότων καταλαμβάνουσιν ἁμοῦ τῆς ἡμέρας ὀψὲ τὴν τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου μονῆν ἥπερ τὰ Εὐσεβίου ἰνόμασται ἐν τῇ λεγομένῃ τῶν Ὀπτιμάτων τυγχάνουσαν θέματι. Τῆς δὲ ἁγίας εἰκόνος φθασάσης ἐν μονῇ ἑτέρα ἢ τοῦ Ἀνδρείου κατονομάζεται ἅμα πρῶτῳ τῇ ἐπαύριον πεζοὶ τὴν πορείαν ποιησάμενοι ἅπαντες μετὰ γε πλείστων κηρῶν ὑπαληλιμμένων χρυσῶ καὶ δοξολογίας ἀπήντησαν καὶ αὖθις τὴν προπομπὴν τῇ σεβασμίῳ ποιούμενοι εἰκονίσματα· ἐν τῇ

20 εἰρημένῃ τὰ Εὐσεβίου μονῇ ὑπεστράφησαν καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ ναῶ τοῦ τοιοῦτου φροντιστηρίου ἁγιοπρεπῶς ἢ τὴν τερατουργὸν κρύπτουσα θήκη ἐναποτίθεται καὶ ταύτην ἀποκαλυφθεῖσαν τῆς θήκης μετὰ δεούσης δοξολογίας θεασάμενοι προσεκύνησαν καὶ πολλοὶ προσελθόντες ἐξ εἰλικρινοῦς διαθέσεως ἀπὸ τῶν οἰκείων πόνων ἰάθησαν. Ἐνθα καὶ τις προσῆλθεν ὑπὸ δαίμονος ἐνοχλούμενος, ἥ καθάπερ ὄργανῳ τὸ πονηρὸν ἀποχρόμενον πνεῦμα, καὶ πολλὰ τῶν εἰς

25 ἔπαινον ἠκόντων τῆς εἰκόνος καὶ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς δι' αὐτοῦ ἐκφωνοῦν, ἐπεὶ καὶ πάλαι· “Οἶδαμέν σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ” πρὸς τὸν Κύριον ἔλεγον, οἱ τῆς ὁμοίας μερίδος αὐτῷ. Τέλος καὶ τὰδε οἶονεὶ ἀπεφοίβασεν, “Ἀπόλαβε”, λέγον, “Κωνσταντινούπολις, δόξαν καὶ χαρὰν μεγάλην καὶ σύ, Κωνσταντῖνε Πορφυρογέννητε, τὴν βασιλείαν σου”. Καὶ τούτων ῥηθέντων, ἰάθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος παραχρῆμα τῆς τοῦ δαίμονος ἐπιθέσεως καὶ τούτων ἀκουσताὶ τὲ καὶ μάρτυρες οἱ

30 προειρημένοι τῶν ἐκ τῆς βουλῆς καὶ ὅσοι παρετύχον ἅπαντες. Καὶ ἐπεὶ τὰ ῥηθέντα τὴν ἑκβασιν θάπτον ἐδέξαντο, ἀπορήσαι ἄξιον πόθεν ἢ πρόγνωσις τῷ δαίμονι προσεγένετο. Οὐ γὰρ ἔχειν ταύτην πιστεύονται οἴκοθεν, τῆς θείας δόξης ἀπολισθήσαντες καὶ σκότος ἀντὶ φωτὸς χρηματίσαντες. Ἦ δὴλον, ὅτι καθάπερ τῷ Βαλαὰμ ἢ θεία δύναμις ἐχρηῆτο διακόνῳ τοῦ τότε προαγορεύματος καὶ ἄλλοτε ἄλλοις οὐκ ἀξίοις πολλάκις τοῦ πράγματος, κατ' οἰκονομίαν

35 πάντως τινὰ σοφὴν καὶ εὐμήχανον, οὕτω καὶ νῦν ἢ ἐν τῇ θείῳ ἀπεικονίσματι δύναμις τῷ δαίμονι ἀπεχρήσατο καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὰ μετ' ὀλίγον ἐκβησομένα προεδήλωσεν. Ἀλλὰ τούτου μὲν οὕτως συμβάντος μεταξὺ μνησθῆναι ἴσως οὐκ ἄκαιρον. Ἐπὶ δὲ τὰ ἐχόμενα τῆς διηγήσεως βαδιούμεθα.

28. Τῇ πέμπτῃ ἐπὶ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Αὐγούστου μηνὸς συνήθως τῶν βασιλείων τὴν ἑορτὴν ἀγόντων τῆς μεταστάσεως τῆς Ἀειπαρθένου καὶ Θεομήτορος ἐν τῷ πανσέπτῳ ταύτης κατὰ Βλαχέρνας ναῶ, περὶ δειλῆς ὀψίας κατέλαβον ἐκεῖσε οἱ τῶν τιμίων τούτων διάκονοι καὶ ἀπετέθη ἐν τῷ ὑπερίῳ εὐκτηρίῳ τοῦ τοιοῦτου θείου ναοῦ ἡ ἔνδον ἔχουσα τὴν εἰκόνα καὶ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν κιβωτός. Καὶ προσελθόντες οἱ βασιλεῖς ἔξωθεν ταύτην σεβασμίως ἠσπάσαντο προσκυνήσαντες. Εἶτα μετὰ τιμῆς καὶ δορυφορίας καὶ λαμπάδων συχνῶν πρὸς τὴν βασιλείον τριήρην ταύτην διακομίσαντες σὺν αὐτῇ κατέλαβον τὰ βασιλεία καὶ ἐν τῷ ἐκεῖσε θείῳ ναῶ, ὃς Φάρος ὠνόμασται ἴσως διὰ τὸ οἶον ἱμάτιον λαμπρὸν κεκαλλωπίσθαι αὐτὸν περιττῶς, ταύτην ἀπέθεντο. Τῇ δὲ ἰκνουμένη τῶν ἡμερῶν, ἣτις ἐξκαιδεκάτῃ τοῦ μηνὸς ἦν, μετ' αἰδοῦς καὶ εὐλαβείας πάλιν τὸν ἀσπασμὸν καὶ τὴν προσκύνησιν ποιησάμενοι καὶ λαβόντες αὐτὴν ἐκεῖθεν οἱ τε ἱερεῖς καὶ οἱ νεάζοντες βασιλεῖς, ὁ γὰρ γέρων οἰκουρὸς δι' ἀσθένειαν κατελείπετο, μετὰ ψαλμῶν καὶ ὕμνων καὶ δαψιλοῦς τοῦ φωτὸς διὰ τῆς πρὸς θάλασσαν καθόδου εἰς τὴν βασιλείον τριήρην αὐθις ἐνθήμενοι, τῆς πόλεως ἐν χρεῖ σκεδὸν τὴν εἰρεσίαν ποιούμενοι, ἵνα τρόπον τινὰ διαζώσῃ τὸ ἄστυ διὰ τῆς ἐν θαλάσῃ πορείας αὐτῆς, ἐκτὸς τοῦ πρὸς δύσιν τείχους τῆς πόλεως προσωμίσθησαν, ἐνθα τῆς νεῖος ἐκβάντες, πεζοποροῦντες οἱ τε βασιλεῖς καὶ πάντες οἱ τῆς γερουσίας βουλῆς καὶ ὁ τῶν ἱερῶν κατάρχων μετὰ παντὸς τοῦ τῆς ἐκκλησίας πληρώματος, τῇ προσηκούσῃ δορυφορία, ὡς ἄλλην κιβωτὸν μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ ταύτην, τὸ τῶν ἀγιωτάτων καὶ τιμίων φρουρὸν σκευὸς παρέπεμπον. Καὶ τὰ ἐκτὸς τοῦ τείχους μέχρι τῆς Χρυσῆς διελθόντες πύλης, εἶτα ἐκεῖθεν ἐντὸς γεγονότες τοῦ ἄστεος μετὰ μετεώρων ψαλμῶν καὶ ὕμνων καὶ ᾠδῶν πνευματικῶν καὶ ἀπείρου λαμπάδων φωτὸς τὴν πάνδημον συγκροτοῦντες παραπομπὴν διὰ μέσης τῆς πόλεως τὴν πορείαν διήνυσον, ἀγιασμοῦ μεταλαβεῖν καὶ κρείττονος σθένους τὴν πόλιν διὰ τοῦτο πιστεύοντες καὶ ἀβλαβῆ καὶ ἀπόρθητον εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα συντηρηθήσεσθαι. Τοῦ δὲ σχολάζοντος ὄχλου πρὸς τὴν θέαν συντρέχοντος καὶ ὡσπερ κύματα μακρὰ τοῦ δήμου πολλαχόθεν κινουμένου τε καὶ συρρέοντος, ἄνθρωπός τις τὰς βάσεις παρειμένος καὶ ἀσθενῆς ἀπὸ χρόνου μακροῦ, τοῖς οἰκείοις διακόνοις ἐπεριδόμενος διανέστη πρὸς τὸ τὴν θεῖαν εἰκόνα διερχομένην ἰδεῖν. Καὶ ἅμα τῇ θεᾷ παραδόξως ὑγιασθεὶς καὶ γνοὺς ἰσχυροποιηθέντα τῶν βάσεων αὐτοῦ τὰ σφυρὰ προσέδραμεν αὐτοποδὶ βαδίζων καὶ κατησπάζετο τὴν τῆς εἰκόνας σορὸν καὶ ἐμεγάλυνε τὸν θεὸν τὸ θαῦμα τὸ ἐπ' αὐτῷ διηγούμενος, ὃν οἱ συμπαρόντες ἅπαντες θεασάμενοι καὶ τῶν ῥημάτων αὐτοῦ ἐπακούσαντες, δόξαν ἀπέπεμψαν τῷ ἐπὶ πάντων Θεῷ, τῷ ποιοῦντι ἀεὶ θαυμάσια καὶ ἐξαίσια.

1. πέμπτῃ ἐπὶ δεκάτῃ] πεντεκαιδεκάτῃ Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X, πέμπτῃ ἐπὶ δεκατοῦ Mi2 3. κατὰ Βλαχέρνας desunt B Me κατὰ Βλαχέρνας] κατὰ Βλαχέρνας Di1 Q V², τῷ ἐν Βλαχέρνας Di2 δειλῆς ὀψίας] δειλῆν ὀψίαν B C Di1 Di2 I Iv L2 L3 Mi1 Mi2 Mi3 Pa Sc St Va, δειλῆν ὀψίαν V, δῆλῆν ὀψίαν X,

δειλῆς ὀψίαν A Ka P2 Q 7. τριήρην] τριήρη C Di1 H Mi1 Mi2 Ph Q Sc St, τρίηριν Di2, deest Pa 8. θείῳ
 ἐκεῖσε Di1 Iv L2 Q 9. Φάρος] Φώρος B Me κεκαλλωπίσθαι] καὶ καλλωπίσθαι Di1 αὐτὸν] αὐτῷ A B
 Be Ka Me P2 Q V, αὐτὸ H Iv L2 Pa Pr 10. ἀπέθεντο] ἀπέθεν Sc, ἀπέθετο Be δὲ deest Di2 L3 Q δὲ
 ἰκνουμένη] δὲ δικνουμένη L2 Mi3 V X, δὲ διικνουμένη L3, δὲ δὲ ἰκνουμένη Iv, δὲ δὲ ἰκνουμένη Pa, δεδι ἰκνουμένη
 Va 12. ποιησάμενοι] ποιούμενοι Mi2 βασιλεῖς] add. σὺν τῷ Θεοφυλάκτῳ πατριάρχῃ Be Pa V, add. σὺν τῷ
 πατριάρχῃ Θεοφυλάκτῳ Iv L2 Mi3 Va X 13. κατελείπετο] κατελίπετο B Ka, ὑπελείπετο Be Iv L3 Mi2 V,
 ὑπελίπετο X L2 Mi3 14. τριήρην] τριήρειν B, τριήρη C Di1 H Mi2 Q Ph St, τρίηριν Di2 Pr, τριήρι Sc, deest
 Pa 15. ἐν χρῆ σκεδὸν] ἐγγὺς Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X 16. διαζώση] διασώζη Ka X διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης
 πορευομένης H πορείαν Q ἐκτὸς] ἐντὸς Pa 17. ἔνθα] add. δὴ L2 L3 Mi3 X, add. ἐκ Iv νεὼς] νηὸς Pa
 V πεζοποροῦντες οἱ τε βασιλεῖς] οἱ τε βασιλεῖς πεζοποροῦντες Pa, καὶ πεζοποροῦντες οἱ τε βασιλεῖς Va 18.
 καὶ πάντες οἱ τῆς γερουσίας βουλῆς desunt Sc ἱερῶν] ἱερέων Pr V Va X 19. προσηκούση] add. προσηγορία
 καὶ Mi3 ἐκτὸς Pa 20. ἀγίων H 22. γεγονότος Ph τοῦ ἄστεος γεγονότες St 23. ἀπείρου] ἀπείρων C
 Mi1 Pr St Va πάνδημον] add. ἐκείνην Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa X 24. διήνουν τὴν πορείαν Ph 25. τοῦτο]
 τούτοι C, τούτου Di1 Va διὰ τοῦτο] ἐντεῦθεν Ph τὸν deest H 27. πανταχόθεν H κινουμένου] κινουμένα
 Mi1 κινουμένου τε] συνκινουμένου Pa τε deest Ka 28. ἄνθρωπος τις] add. Ἀνδρέας τοῦνομα Be Iv L2
 L3 Mi3 Pa V Va X μακροῦ] add. τυγχάνων Be Iv L2 Mi3 Pa V X, add. τυγχανῶν L3 30. θέα] add. ἐν
 τῷ τοῦ Φόρου λιθοστρώτῳ πλακίωματι Be Iv L2 Mi3 Pa V X ὑγιασθεῖς] ὑγιασθεῖ V X, ὑγιωθεῖς Di1 Di2 I
 L3 Me Mi1 Mi2 P1 Va 31. αὐτοποδὶ] αὐτῷ ποδὶ A I Me Pr, αὐτὰ ποδὶ B, αὐταποδὶ Q τῆς εἰκόνης] τῆς
 ἀγίας εἰκόνας Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V Va X 32. τὸ ἐπ' αὐτῷ desunt Mi3 ἐπ' αὐτῷ] ἐπ' αὐτὸ Va 33.
 ἀπέπεμψαν] ἀνέπεμψαν P2 34. ἀπέπεμψαν] ἀνέψαν A, ἀνέπεμψαν Di1 L2 Mi3 Pa καὶ deest H P1² Pa

29. Τοσαύτη δὲ χύσις δακρύων ὑφ' ἠδονῆς καὶ πρεσβεία καὶ δέησις πρὸς θεὸν καὶ εὐχαριστία
 παρὰ πάσης τῆς πόλεως γέγονε τῆς θείας εἰκόνας καὶ τῆς σεβασμίας ἐπιστολῆς διὰ μέσου
 διερχομένων τοῦ ἄστεος, ὅσῃν οὐκ ἔνι λόγῳ ἐνδείξασθαι, ὡς ἠττωμένου τοῦ λόγου τῆς ὀψεως.
 Τὰ γὰρ ὑπερβολὴν ἔχοντα τῶν πραγμάτων, ὄραν ἔστι μᾶλλον ἢ ἀκούειν καλόν, ἐπεὶ κατόπιν ὁ
 5 λόγος τῶν πραγμάτων εἴωθεν ἔρχεσθαι. Τὴν πρὸ τοῦ Αὐγουστείου τοίνυν φθάσαντες ἀγορὰν οἱ
 τῆς πανηγύρεως ἔξαρχοι καὶ τῆς εὐθείας ὁδοῦ μικρὸν πρὸς τὰ λαιὰ παρεκνεύσαντες, τὸ τῆς
 θείας Σοφίας θεοῦ ἐπώνυμον ἱερὸν καταλαμβάνουσι τέμενος καὶ τῶν ἀδύτων τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου
 ἐντὸς τὴν τιμίαν εἰκόνα καὶ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἀποτίθενται.

1. ὑφ' ἠδονῆς desunt Mi2 θεὸν] τὸν θεὸν Be Iv L2 L3 Pa X 2. εὐχαριστία] add. καὶ αἶνος Be Iv L2 L3
 Mi3 V Va X πάσης deest P2 γέγονεν A B C D I L1 Me Mi2 P1 Sc καὶ τῆς] καὶ Pa 3. ἐρχομένων
 L1 P1 Pa τοῦ ἄστεος] τῆς πόλεως Ph ὅσῃν – ὀψεως desunt Pa οὐκ ἔνι] οὐκ ἔστι Iv L2 Mi3 V X, οὐκ
 ἔστιν L3 4. ἠττωμένου] add. δῆθεν Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X πράγματων] τραύματων Mi2 5. ἔστιν Di2 Pa
 Pr ἐπεὶ κατόπιν – ἔρχεσθαι desunt Pa 6. Αὐγουστείου] Αὐγουστίου F Pa V, Αὐγούστου C Mi1 P2 τοίνυν]
 δὲ Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Pa V X πανηγύρεως] πόλεως Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X 7. πρὸς τὰ λαιὰ desunt Pa λαιὰ]
 παλαια L1 9. ἀποτίθενται] ἐπατίθενται B, ἀνατίθεντα C

30. Ἐνταῦθα δὲ παντὸς τοῦ τῆς ἐκκλησίας πληρώματος προσκυνήσαντος καὶ τὰ εἰκότα
 τιμήσαντος, ἐξῆλθον πάλιν ἐκεῖθεν μετὰ τοῦ φόρτου τοῦ ἱεροῦ οἱ τελούντες τὴν πρόοδον καὶ τὰ
 τῶν βασιλείων καταλαμβάντες ἀνάκτορα ἐν τῷ κατ' ἐπωνυμίαν τρικλίνῳ χρυσῷ ἐπὶ τοῦ
 βασιλείου θρόνου, ἐν ᾧ περὶ τῶν μεγίστων χρηματίζειν εἰώθασιν, τὴν θείαν εἰκόνα τέως
 5 ἰδρύνουσιν ἁγιασθῆναι πάντως καὶ τὴν ἀνακτορικὴν καθέδραν καὶ δικαιοσύνης ὁμοῦ καὶ
 χρηστότητος ἐπιεικῶς μεταδοῦναι τοῖς ἐπὶ ταύτης ἐφεζομένοις οὐκ ἀπεικότως πιστεύσαντες.
 Ἐκτενοῦς δὲ συνήθως γεγονυίας δεήσεως, ἦρθη μετὰ τὴν ταύτης συμπλήρωσιν ἐντεῦθεν
 πάλιν ἡ θεία εἰκὼν καὶ ἐν τῷ προρρηθέντι τοῦ Φάρου ναῶ ἐν τῷ δεξιῷ πρὸς ἀνατολὰς
 ἀνιερώθη καὶ ἀνετέθη μέρει εἰς δόξαν πιστῶν, εἰς φυλακὴν βασιλέων καὶ εἰς ἀσφάλειαν ὅλης
 10 τῆς πόλεως καὶ τῆς τῶν Χριστιανῶν καταστάσεως.

1. προσκυνήσαντος καὶ desunt Pr καὶ τὰ εἰκότα τιμήσαντος desunt H P2 2. ἐκεῖθεν πάλιν Be Iv L2 L3
 Mi3 V X 4. ἐπὶ τοῦ βασιλείου θρόνου desunt Va ἐν ᾧ] add. οἱ βασιλεῖς καθεζόμενοι Va (cf. Pa)
 μεγίστων] add. πράγματων Be Iv L2 L3 Mi3 V Va X 5. εἰώθασιν] εἰώθασιν A Sc St X, εἰώθησαν οἱ
 βασιλεῖς καθεζόμενοι Be V, εἰώθασιν οἱ βασιλεῖς καθεζόμενοι Iv L2 L3 Mi3 Va X 7. ταύτης] ταύταις F L1
 P1 Ph Pr πιστεύσαντας Di1 Mi1 St Ἐκτενοῦς] κτενοῦς A¹ γεγονυίας] γενομένης Va 8.
 συμπλήρωσιν] ἐκπλήρωσιν I πάλιν deest I Mi3 καὶ ἐν τῷ desunt Iv 9. Φάρου] Φώρου Me τοῦ Φάρου
 ναῶ] ναῶ τοῦ Φάρου I ἀνιερώθη] ἀφιερώθη I L2 Sc 10. φυλακὴν] φυλακτήριον L2 L3 X καὶ deest Be
 Iv Mi2 Mi3 V X 11. ὅλης] add. τῆς οἰκουμένης καὶ B Me καταστάσεως] add. ἣ πρέπει δόξα τιμὴ καὶ
 προσκύνησις νῦν καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμὴν X, add. ἣ πρέπει δόξα τιμὴ καὶ προσκύνησις νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ
 καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμὴν Iv L2 L3, add. ὅτι αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμὴν Mi3

30 secundum Pa

Ἐνταῦθα δὲ τοῦ τῆς ἐκκλησίας πληρώματος προσκυνήσαντες ἐξῆλθον ἐκεῖθεν τελούντες τὴν
 πρόοδον καταλαμβάντες τὰ βασιλεία ἐν τῷ χρυσοτρικλίνῳ ἐπὶ τοῦ βασιλείου θρόνου, ἐν ᾧ οἱ
 βασιλεῖς καθεζόμενοι περὶ τῶν μεγίστων πραγμάτων χρηματίζειν εἰώθεισαν, ταύτην
 ἀποτίθενται καὶ προσήκουσαν τιμὴν ἀπονεύσαντες, καὶ ἐκτενοῦς γεγονυίας δεήσεως, ἦρθη
 5 μετὰ τὴν ταύτης συμπλήρωσιν ἐντεῦθεν πάλιν ἡ θεία εἰκὼν καὶ ἐν τῷ προρρηθέντι τοῦ Φάρου
 ναῶ, ἐν τῷ δεξιῷ πρὸς ἀνατολὰς ἀνιερώθη καὶ ἀνετέθη μέρει εἰς δόξαν πιστῶν, εἰς φυλακὴν
 βασιλέων, εἰς ἀσφάλειαν ὅλης τῆς πόλεως καὶ τῆς τῶν Χριστιανῶν καταστάσεως ἐν Χριστῷ
 Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, ᾧ ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων,
 ἀμὴν.

31-36 desunt A B C D Di1 Di2 E F G H I K Ka L1 Me Mi1 P1 P2 Ph Pr Q R S Sc St T
U Va Y, 31 – 37 desunt Mi3 Pa, 31 – 36 post 37 Mi2 W

31. Περὶ τῆς ἁγίας καὶ ἀχειροποιήτου θείας εἰκόνας Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν, ὅπως ἐτιμᾶτο ἐν Ἐδέσῃ τῇ πόλει παρὰ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ κατοικούντων. Περὶ τῆς ἐν Ἐδέσῃ ἀχειροποιήτου καὶ θείας μορφῆς Χριστοῦ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν πολλαὶ μὲν καὶ διάφοροι δόξαι ἕως ἡμῶν πεφοιτήκασιν, ὅπως τε τὸ κατ' ἀρχὰς ἀπεικόνιστο καὶ τίνος αἰτήσαντος καὶ
5 τίνων διακονησάντων καὶ πῶς μὲν ἀπολιόρκητος ἡ πόλις, ἐν ἧπερ ἀπέκειτο, ἐφυλάττετο, πῶς δὲ καὶ κατὰ καιροὺς παρὰ πιστῶν ἀνδρῶν ἀποκρυπτομένη θαυματουργοῦσα πάλιν ἀνεκαλύπτετο, ἅπερ οὐ παρέργως τῷ θειοτάτῳ καὶ μεγάλῳ ἡμῶν βασιλεῖ Κωνσταντίνῳ τῷ Πορφυρογεννήτῳ φιλοπονηθέντα καὶ συλλεγέντα καὶ βίβλοις ἐναπογραφέντα εἰς προσθήκην ἐπαινετῆς πράξεως μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων αὐτοῦ μεγίστων κατορθωμάτων τῷ χριστιανικῷ
10 παραδέδωκε πολιτεύματι καλῶς γε περὶ τούτου διανοηθεὶς καὶ περὶ τῶν μεγίστων θεοπνεύστως καὶ ὑψηλῶς λογισάμενος. Ἄλλ' ἐπειδὴ οὐ μέχρι τούτου ἔστη, παρεξέτεινε δὲ τὰ τῆς ἐρέυνης καὶ μεθ' ὁποίας τιμῆς παρὰ τοῦ ἐν Ἐδέσῃ χριστωνύμου λαοῦ ἤγγετο ἢ παροῦσα δηλώσει διήγησις.

1. τοῦ θεοῦ] τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ θεοῦ Iv L2 L3 X 3. ἡμῶν] ἡμῶν Iv L2 L3 X ἡμῶν θεοῦ Mi2 4. πεφοίκασιν Mi2
8. Κωνσταντίνῳ τῷ Πορφυρογεννήτῳ desunt Mi2

32. Λέγεται τι τοιοῦτον περὶ αὐτῆς ὡς τῇ πρωτερουσίῃ Κυριακῇ τῆς πρώτης τῶν ἁγίων νηστειῶν ἑβδομάδος τοῦ τῆς πόλεως ἀρχιερέως μετὰ παντὸς τοῦ ἱερατικοῦ καταλόγου καὶ τοῦ πολιτικοῦ λαοῦ ἐν τῇ τῆς ἐκκλησίας σκευοφυλακίᾳ συναθροισμένου προὔτιθετο μὲν θρόνος, ἐπετίθετο δὲ ἐπ' αὐτῇ ἢ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ τιμία καὶ ἀχειροποίητος εἰκὼν ὀθόνη
5 περικαλυπτομένη λευκῇ. Τέσσαρες δὲ τῶν ἐπισκόπων εἰ τύχοιεν παρεῖναι εἴτε πρεσβύτεροι μετέωρον τὸν θρόνον αἶροντες ἐξίασι τοῦ σκευοφυλακίου τοῦ μὲν ἀρχιερέως προπορευομένου καὶ ταῖς χερσὶ τὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ σημεῖον ἐπιφερομένου. Καθ' ἑκάτερα δὲ τούτου σκήπτροις χρυσοῖς ἢ τιμῇ ἀφωσίωτο καὶ ἀπὸ τούτων ριπίδες λειτουργικαὶ δυοκαίδεκα στοιχηθὸν διετάπτοντο καὶ μετὰ ταύτας θυμιατήρια μετὰ ἀρωμάτων τοσαῦτα καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς λαμπάδες ἰσάριθμοι τοῦ
10 ἀρχιερέως κατὰ τινὰς τόπους ἀφωρισμένους ἐν τῇ τοιαύτῃ προόδῳ τρίτον ἰσταμένου καὶ τὸν λαὸν τῷ τύπῳ τοῦ σταυροῦ ἐπισφραγίζοντος καὶ πάλιν τῆς πορείας ἀπαρχομένου.

1. Λέγεται] add. γάρ Iv L2 L3 X 4. προυτίθεται L3 μὲν deest Iv ἀπετίθετο L3 ἐπ' αὐτῷ] ἐν αὐτῷ Be V καὶ θεοῦ desunt Mi2 5. καὶ ἀχειροποίητος desunt Mi2 ὀθόνη] ὀθό////// πανταχοθέν X, ὀθόνη πανταχοθέν Iv L2 L3 8. χρυσοῖς] χρυσοῖς δυσι V, δυσὶν Be Mi2 9. στιχῆδον Be Mi2 V 10. μετ' ἄρωμάτων Mi2

33. Οὕτως τοίνυν τῆς ἱερᾶς ταύτης προπομπῆς ἐπιτελουμένης μέχρι τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου κατελάμβανον, τοῦ συνεπομένου λαοῦ τὸ “Κύριε ἐλέησον” ἐπιφθεγγομένου. Εἶσω δὲ τῶν ἀδύτων τῆς θείας καὶ ἀχράντου εἰκόνος ἀποτεθείσης καὶ αὖθις ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς μεθ' οὐπερ ἐν χερσὶ κατεῖχε τιμίου σταυροῦ τὸ τοῦ λαοῦ ἐπεσφράγιζε πλήθος κατὰ τε ἀνατολὰς δεξιὰ τε καὶ εὐώνυμα. Ἐντεῦθεν αὐτὴν μεταφέροντες μεθ' οὐπερ ἐπωχεῖτο θρόνου ἐν τῇ πρὸς ἀνατολὰς τῆς ἱερᾶς τραπέζης ἐτέρα, βραχυτέρα μὲν, ὑψηλοτέρα δὲ προσπεπηγμένη τραπέζῃ, προσανετίθεσαν· καὶ δὴ τῆς ἱερᾶς μυσταγωγίας ἐπιτελουμένης καὶ τῶν θείων μυστηρίων πάντων ἀξιουμένων, ἐξῆν μόνῳ τῷ ἀρχιερεὶ τῇ ἁγίᾳ καὶ ἀχράντῳ εἰκόνι προσεγγίζοντι προσκυνεῖν τε καὶ ἀσπάζεσθαι καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο αἶρειν ἀπ' αὐτῆς τὴν ἐπικειμένην λευκὴν ὀθόνην καὶ πορφυρίζουσιν ἐτέραν περιτιθέναι. Ἐντεῦθεν ὁ θεϊότατος οὗτος θρόνος ὑπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἱερέων αὖθις αἰρόμενος μετὰ τῆς ὁμοίας προπομπῆς καὶ προόδου ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἀπεκομίζετο σκευοφυλακίᾳ.

1. Οὕτω L3 τοίνυν deest Mi2 3. θείας καὶ desunt Mi2 ἐπιτεθείσης L3 5. δεξιὰ τε] καὶ δεξιὰ Iv L2 L3 X 9. ἁγία καὶ desunt Mi2 10. αὐτὴν Be

34. Εἴθ' οὕτως τῇ μέσῃ ἐβδομάδι τῶν ἁγίων νηστειῶν ἐν τῇ Τετάρτῃ τῶν ἡμερῶν συγκεχώρητο μόνῳ τῷ ἀρχιερεὶ εἰσιέναι τε καὶ τὴν θήκην ἐν ἣπερ ἐπέκειτο διανοίγειν καὶ σπόγγῳ ἀνεπάφῳ διαβρόχῳ ὕδατι ταύτην ἐναπομάπτειν καὶ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ σπόγγου ἀποθλιβόμενον διαδιδόναι παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, ἐξ οὐπερ τὰς ὕψεις ἐπιχρῖόμενοι τοῦ ἐκεῖθεν ἁγιασμοῦ ἐνεπίμπλαντο. Ἄλλ' ἢ μὲν τοιαύτη προπομπὴ τε καὶ τελετὴ κατὰ μόνας τὰς τῶν ἁγίων νηστειῶν ἐτελεῖτο ἡμέρας, ἅτε δὴ τῇ ἐγκρατεῖα τῶν πολλῶν κεκαθαρμένων καὶ τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς διορατικὸν τηλαυγέστερον κεκτημένων τῆς ἐκ τῶν παθῶν ἐπιπροσθούσης ἀγλῆος καὶ διὰ τοῦτο χερσὶν ἀσπίλοις τῶν τιμίων ἐφαπτομένων καὶ ἱερῶς ταῖς ἱεραῖς καὶ θείαις ἡγουμένων προσιέναι τελεταρχαίαις. Κατὰ δὲ τὰς ἄλλας τοῦ ἐνιαυσιαίου κύκλου ἡμέρας τῆς μὲν τοιαύτης ἀπείχοντο τελετῆς, ὅτι μὴ θέμις πυκνότερον προσιέναι τοῖς ἀπροσίτοις, ὡς μὴ τῷ ῥάστῳ τῆς ἐγγύτητος καταχαυνωθῆναι τὸ τῆς πίστεως ἔντονον. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ θυρίσιν ἢ παλαιὰ τῆς θείας μορφῆς

περιστέλλετο θήκη, ὡς μὴ θεατὴν εἶναι πᾶσιν ὅτε καὶ ἡνίκα βούλονται, ἐν δυσὶ ταύταις τῆς ἐβδομάδος ἡμέραις, Τετράδι τέ φημι καὶ Παρασκευῇ, διὰ τῶν πεπερονημένων λεπτοτάτων σιδήρων, ἃ παρ' ἐκείνοις σκῆπτρα ὠνόμαστο, τῶν τοιούτων θυρίδων ἀναπεπτασμένων, ἐβλέπετο μὲν παρὰ παντός τοῦ συνεληλυθότος πλήθους καὶ ταῖς εὐχαῖς ἕκαστος ἐξιλεούτο τὴν ἐκείνης ἀκατάληπτον δύναμιν, οὐ μὴν δὲ ἠφίετό τινι προσεγγίσει ἀλλ' οὐδὲ χεῖλεσιν ἢ ὄμμασι τοῦ ἱεροῦ προσψαῦσαι μορφώματος, ὡς ἐντεῦθεν τοῦ θεοῦ φόβου τὴν πίστιν αὐξήσας φοβερωτέραν καὶ φρικωδεστέραν τὴν πρὸς τὸ τιμώμενον τιμὴν ἀποδείκνυσθαι.

1. οὕτω L3 ἀπέκειτο Mi2 3. ἀπομάπτειν Iv L2 L3 X 4. δίδοναι Iv L2 L3 X 5. ἐπίμπλαντο X 15. Πεπερονησμένων Be 17. ἀναπεπετασμένων Be X 19. ὄμμασιν Be V 20. τὸ] τὸν L2 L3 X

35. Οὕτως μὲν οὖν ἐτελείτο ἡ τῆς ἀγίας καὶ ἀχειροποιήτου εἰκόνας τοῦ Χριστοῦ πρόοδος καὶ τοιαύτη προπομπὴ καὶ λαμπροφορία κατεφαιδρύνετο. Οὐκ οἶδαμεν δὲ οἷστισι τρόποις καὶ αἰτίαις, ὅσον δ' οὖν καταλαβεῖν δυνατὸν, διὰ μὲν τοῦ θρόνου τὴν κατὰ πάντων ἐξουσίαν τῆς θεότητος, διὰ δὲ τῶν σκῆπτρων τὸ τῆς βασιλείας μέγεθος ὑπογράφοντες καὶ ταῖς μὲν ῥιπίσι τὴν τῶν ἐξαπτερύγων καὶ πολυομμάτων πρὸς τὸ θεῖον αἰδῶ καὶ τιμὴν ὑπεμφαίνοντες, τοῖς δὲ ἀρώμασι καὶ θυμιατηρίοις τὴν τοῦ κενωθέντος δι' ἡμᾶς μύρου μυστικὴν καὶ ὑπὲρ ἔννοιαν εὐωδίαν ὑποχαράττοντες. Αἱ λαμπάδες τὴν ἐν φωτὶ αἰδίῳ καὶ ἀπροσίτῳ κατοικίαν ἠνίττοντο, ἢ πρὸς τὸν ναὸν εἴσοδος τὴν εἰς τόνδε τὸν κόσμον αὐτοῦ παρουσίαν. Τί δὲ καὶ ἡ ἔνδον τῶν ἀθεάτων ἀπόθεσις καὶ ἡ μυστικὴ τελετή; τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν θυσίαν αὐτοῦ ὑποφαίνουσι καὶ τὸ τοῦ πάθους καὶ τοῦ θανάτου ἐκούσιον. Τί δὲ καὶ οἱ ἱερεῖς; πρὸς ὁμοίωσιν τῶν ἀγγελικῶν ἐκλαμβάνονται τάξεων, ἐν οἷς ἐπωχούμενος δημιουργὸς τῶν ὅλων ἀνεκρηύττεται. Τὰς δ' ἐπικειμένας διττὰς ὀθόνας οὕτως ὑποληπτέον· διὰ μὲν τῆς λευκῆς εἴτε τὸ καθαρὸν καὶ σαφὲς καὶ πᾶσι κατάδηλον ὡς εἶη θεὸς τοῦδε τοῦ παντός, παραγωγέυς τε καὶ συνοχεύς καὶ αἰεὶ ὄν καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχων αἰεὶ τοῦτο γὰρ κοινῶς ἀνωμολόγηται, εἴτε τὸ μέγα καὶ ὑπέρφωτον ἐκεῖνο φῶς, ὅπερ καὶ ὡς ἱμάτιον ἀναβάλλεται καὶ κατοικεῖν ἐν αὐτῇ κηρύττεται καὶ φῶς εἶναι κόσμου πιστεύεται καὶ φῶς εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐληλυθέναι δείκνυται. Διὰ δὲ τῆς πορφυρίζουσας τὸ ἀκατάληπτον οἶμαι καὶ ἀθέατον τῆς ἀνεκφράστου οὐσίας τό τε τῆς ἀκαταληψίας σκότος, ὅπερ καὶ ἀποκρυφὴν αὐτοῦ ἔθετο, διεῖργον τὴν γεννητὴν φύσιν τῆς ἀγεννήτου καὶ ὑπὲρ ἔννοιαν. Ἡ δὲ γε ἀπὸ τοῦ ἱεροῦ θυσιαστηρίου πρὸς τὸν τοῦ σκευοφυλακίου οἶκον ὑποστροφὴ καὶ μετάστασις ἢ μετὰ τὴν συμπλήρωσιν τῆς αὐτοῦ οἰκονομίας πρὸς οὐρανούς ἀνύψωσις καὶ ἀνάβασις, ἣν καὶ μετὰ τῆς αὐτῆς τιμῆς καὶ λαμπροφορίας ἀναθειάζουσι τῇ δεσπότῃ κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν τὸ σέβας καὶ τὴν τιμὴν ἀπονέμοντες.

1. deest Be καὶ ἀχειροποιήτου desunt Mi2 2. τοιαύτη προπομπή L2, τοιαύτη προπομπή Iv λαμπροφορία Iv καταφαιδύνετο Be δὲ deest Mi2 4. θεότητος] add. αἰνιττόμενοι Be Iv L2 L3 Mi2 8. ἡνίττοντο] αἰνιττόμενοι X, αἰνιττόμενοι Iv L2 L3 9. Τί] Τίς Iv L2 L3 X 11. ὑποφαίνουσι] ἀποφαίνουσιν V, ὑποφαίνουσιν Be Mi2 καὶ τοῦ] καὶ τὸ τοῦ Iv L2 L3 οἱ deest Mi2 12. εὐαγγελικῶν V 13. ἀνακηρύττεται Iv ἀποληπτέον Mi2 15. ὡσαύτως] ὡς οὕτως V 16. κοινῶς] add. πᾶσιν Mi2 μέγα καὶ desunt Mi2 20. γεννητήν] add. αὐτοῦ Mi2 21. δέ] μέντοι Mi2 21. τοῦ deest Be V 23. καὶ (2) deest Iv L2 L3 24. ἀποθειάζουσι L2 L3

36. Ἡ μὲν οὖν τῆς ἱερᾶς ἐκείνης καὶ θείας εἰκόνας πολυειδῆς προπομπή καὶ προέλευσις τοιούτοις προχαραττομένη αἰνίγμασι τοιαύτας ἔσχε καὶ τὰς τῆς ἀληθείας ἐκβάσεις. Εἰ δέ τινες μυστικώτερον τούτων καὶ ὑψηλότερον νενοήκασιν, ἀλλ' ἡμῖν γε τέως ἢ κατὰ δύναμιν ἐγχείρησις πρὸς ἀποδοχὴν τοῦ πονήματος.

1. ἐκείνης καὶ θείας desunt Mi2 4. ἐγχείρησις] add. ἐπαρκέσει Be Mi2

37. Ἄλλ', ὃ θεῖον ὁμοίωμα τοῦ ἀπαραλλάκτου πατρὸς ὁμοιώματος, ὃ χαρακτήρ τοῦ χαρακτῆρος τῆς Πατρικῆς ὑποστάσεως, ὃ σεπτὴ καὶ πάντιμε σφραγὶς τοῦ ἀρχετύπου κάλλους Χριστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν· ὡς γὰρ ἐμψύχῳ σοι πιστῶς διαλέγομαι· σῶζε καὶ φρούρει ἀεὶ τὸν εὐσεβῶς καὶ πράως ἡμῶν βασιλεύοντα καὶ τὴν τῆς ἐπιδημίας ἀνάμνησιν λαμπρῶς ἐορτάζοντα, ὃν τῇ παρουσίᾳ σου ἐπὶ τὸν παππῖον καὶ πατρῖον θρόνον ἀνύψωσας. Φύλαττε τὸν τούτου βλαστὸν εἰς διαδοχὴν τοῦ γένους καὶ τῶν σκήπτρων ἀνώλεθρον. Βράβευε τῇ πολιτείᾳ εἰρηναίαν κατάστασιν. Τὴν βασιλίδι ταύτην τῶν πόλεων ἀπολιόρκητον διατήρησον καὶ δὸς ἡμᾶς εὐαρεστοῦντας τῷ ἀρχετύπῳ σου Χριστῷ τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ ἐπουρανίῳ εἰσδεχθῆναι βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ δοξολογοῦντας καὶ ἀνυμνοῦντας αὐτόν, ὅτι αὐτῷ πρέπει δόξα καὶ ἡ προσκύνησις εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

Cap. 37 deest Pa Mi3 1. θεῖον] θείων B, add. καὶ ἄχραντον Be Iv L2 L3 X πατρὸς] τοῦ πατρὸς Iv L2 L3 Mi2 V X χαρακτήρ] χαρακτήρ F¹ 4. περιφρούρει Iv L2 L3 τὸν εὐσεβῶς] τῶν εὐσεβῶν P2 5. τὴν τῆς] τῆς σῆς Me Ph τῆς] add. σῆς Be H I Ka Mi1 P1 P2 Sc St 6. Φύλαττα Sc 7. Βράβευσε B Βράβευε τῇ πολιτείᾳ εἰρηναίαν κατάστασιν] Εἰρηναίαν κατάστασιν βράβευε τῇ πόλει Pr Va 8. εἰρηναία Q Τὴν βασιλίδι ταύτην] Τῇ βασιλίδι ταύτη Be Mi2 V X 9. σου] add. κάλλει Be Iv L2 L3 V X οὐρανίῳ Mi2 10. δοξολογοῦντας] add. ἀσιγήτως Iv L2 L3 X 11. πρέπει] εἰ X καὶ ἡ προσκύνησις desunt X, ἡ deest Sc

προσκύνησις] add. νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ καὶ Be Iv L2 L3 V Ἄμην] add. τῷ συντελεστῇ τῶν καλῶν θεῶν χάρις ἔτους ζ ρ
κ η μήνος σεπτεβρίω, θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον καὶ Ἰγνατίου πόνοσ Di2

Narration on the Image of Edessa

The story of the holy image of Christ, our God, which was not made by human hands, and how it was sent to Abgar. The story was written by Constantine, Emperor of the Romans in Christ the eternal king, and also tells how the image was brought from Edessa to the most blessed queen of cities, Constantinople.

1. Not only was the God the Word, coeternal with the Father, beyond all understanding by himself, but also most or even all of his works are covered by the same dark veil of incomprehensibility. This is true not only for what he did as creator of everything, but also for when he took on our nature according to the divine dispensation, in that original and unique power of his divinity. Whoever is not unaware of himself, and whoever realises that he does not know what is above him, must neither boast excessively nor tread on air like an ignorant by contending that he either knows everything or that the things he has failed to understand do not exist. And so, as far as the figure of his divine and human form is concerned, which was transferred with no artistic intervention onto the cloth that received it by the supernatural will of its maker, and was then sent to Abgar in order to heal him, it has now been transferred from Edessa to this ruling city by God's all-encompassing dispensation, for its salvation and protection, so that it may not seem to be deficient in anything, as it should always be mistress of everything. I think that every pious and just listener should insist on learning the story in all detail for himself, and wish to obtain genuine knowledge about the ancient tradition. How the form of a face could be imparted onto the linen cloth from a moist secretion with no paint or artistic craft, and how something made from such a perishable material was not destroyed with time, and whatever else the supposed investigator of natural causes

is wont to enquire into with curiosity: these questions he should yield to God's inscrutable wisdom, knowing that if someone attempts to understand everything in all detail, he will be thrust into complete ignorance, and falling into the pit of unknowing, will be in mortal danger by losing the important things in his concern not to appear to admit those that are of no account. So, all of you who have come together here with upright faith and enthusiastic zeal, come and listen, and I will tell you what I have been able to verify after carefully and duly checking each detail, both from the writers of history and from the local people who have come here and told us what their memory has preserved as if by secret tradition.

2. In the times when our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ came to us to raise up our fallen race, the world was at peace in accordance with the prophet's voice, polyarchy had been disbanded and the whole inhabited world was as if under one belt - Roman rule - and subject to one ruler. And so all dealings of all peoples with others were carried out in peace and men did not appear to inhabit a divided world, but were all under one master, just as the universe is under one creator. Everybody bowed his neck in submission to the emperor and lived in peace with one another. This was why the ruler of Edessa at the time, Abgar, was a friend and acquaintance of the leader of Egypt, and messengers from both places visited each other frequently. So it happened at that time when our Lord and God was fulfilling his father's will, teaching men about salvation and turning them to faith in him through his wonderful and marvellous miracles, one of Abgar's servants, called Ananias, happened to be travelling through Palestine to Egypt. He saw Christ from afar, drawing the crowds out of error with his words and carrying out wonderful miracles. When Ananias reached Egypt and fulfilled what he had been entrusted

with, he went back to his master. He was aware that Abgar was afflicted with chronic arthritis and worn out by leprosy. This double, or rather multiple illness meant that the joints in his limbs caused him pain, and the sufferings from the leprosy made him wretched. He was ashamed of being so disfigured, and so hardly anybody was admitted to see him. Not only did he spend most of his time in bed, but in shame he also hid away from any friends who came to see him. On his way back, Ananias made efforts to find out more about these things so that he would be able to tell his master something definite, and maybe even Abgar would be considered worthy of being cured by Jesus. He found the Lord again preoccupied with the same issues, namely raising the dead, restoring sight to the blind, healing lame limbs and curing whoever was ill.

3. Once he knew for sure that these things were being done by the Lord, he went back to Abgar and let him know about this, telling him in all detail what he had seen and heard. The extra work he had done was greater than his main mission, and he had given good news to Abgar, therefore he was deemed worthy of a fitting reception and reckoned among his most trustworthy servants. Since the sufferer always seizes on the promise of healing, and man is always cajoled by the hope of being healed, Abgar made haste to communicate with this man he had been told about. He decided to write a letter to the man who was said to be able to perform such cures and ask him to come to him. The letter was soon well-known everywhere, and its contents were as follows.

Abgar's letter to Jesus according to codd. A B Be C Di1 Di2 G H I L1 Me Mi1

Mi2 P1 P2 Pa Ph Pr Q R Sc St U V Va W Y

4. Abgar the ruler of Edessa to Jesus the saviour, the good healer who has appeared in the city of Jerusalem - greetings. I have heard about you and your cures, that you carry out without medicine or herbs. I am told that you make the blind see, the lame walk, you cleanse lepers and cast out unclean spirits and demons, you cure those who are tortured by lengthy illnesses and raise the dead. Having heard all this about you, I have come to the conclusion that one of the following things is true - either you are God and have come down from heaven to do these things, or you are the Son of God doing them. I have therefore written to you to ask you to take the trouble to come to me to cure the sickness I have. I have also heard that the Jews are murmuring against you and want to do you harm. I have a small but noble city, which is enough for both of us to live in peace.

Abgar's letter to Jesus according to codd. Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X

Abgar the ruler of Edessa to Jesus the saviour, the good healer who has appeared in the city of Jerusalem - greetings. I have heard about you and your cures, that you carry out without medicine or herbs. It is said that you give sight to the blind, make the crippled walk, the deaf hear, you cleanse lepers and cast out unclean demons by your word, you cure those who are tortured by lengthy illnesses, you healed the woman with a haemorrhage who touched you, and you raise the dead. Having heard all this about you, Lord, I have realised in my heart that you are either God and have come down from heaven to do these things, or you are the Son of God doing

them. With this letter I therefore beg and entreat you not to deem me unworthy of your coming, so that you may cure the sickness I have. It has reached my ears that the Jews are murmuring against you and want to do away with you. I have a small but noble city, which is enough for both of us to live in peace. Order that I may be healed, my Lord.

5. Since Ananias had given clear proof of his affection towards his master, and given that he already knew the route, and knew how to paint, Abgar sent him to take this letter to Jesus. He instructed him that if he could not persuade Christ to come to him with the letter, he should carefully copy the likeness of his form and take that to him, so that he could at least learn through a faint shadow what the author of these great wonders looked like, and not merely hear about him. Ananias set out on his mission and reached Judea, and found Christ in the open air speaking to the crowd who had gathered, and working wonderful miracles. Ananias could not get near Jesus because of the crowd, who had come from different places for different reasons, and so he went and climbed onto a rock that stood out a little above the ground and sat down, not far from where the Lord was speaking. He was able to distinguish the Lord among the crowd as he stood out from the people, and immediately set his eyes on Jesus and his hand to the parchment, and started to copy the likeness of what he could see.
6. Christ realised in his spirit what was happening and called Thomas over. “Go over there”, he said, “and bring me the man sitting on the rock and painting my form. He should bring the letter he brought from his home, so that he can fulfil the orders of the one who sent him”. Thomas went away and recognised Ananias from what he

had heard he was doing, and took him to Jesus. Before he took the letter from him, Christ told him why he had come, and the content of the letter. He then took it and read it, and wrote another letter to Abgar, reading verbatim as follows:

**Jesus' letter to Abgar according to codd. A B Be C Di1 Di2 G H I L1 Me Mi1
Mi2 P1 P2 Pa Ph Pr Q R Sc St U V Va W Y**

7. Blessed are you, Abgar, for believing in me without having seen me. For it is written about me that those who see me will not believe in me, so that those who have not seen me can believe and live. As for what you wrote to me about coming to you, I have to fulfil everything I was sent here for, and after fulfilling this be taken up to the Father who sent me. When I have been taken up I will send you one of my disciples, who will cure your illness and give eternal life and peace to you and those with you. He will also do for your city all that is necessary so that no enemy will prevail over it.

Jesus' letter to Abgar according to codd. Iv L2 L3 Mi3 X

Blessed are you, Abgar, and your city, which is called Edessa. You are blessed because you have believed in me without having seen me. Good health is stored up for you forever. As for what you wrote to me about coming to you, I have to fulfil everything I was sent here for, and after fulfilling this be taken up to the Father who sent me. I will send you one of my disciples, called Thaddaeus, who will cure your illness and give eternal life and peace to you and to all those with you. He will also do for your city all that is necessary so that no enemy will prevail over it.

8. Christ gave this letter to Ananias. Since he knew Ananias was anxious and concerned about the other order his lord had given him, namely to take back to him a likeness of Jesus' face, the Saviour washed his face in water and wiped the liquid from it onto a cloth that he had been handed, and arranged in a divine way beyond understanding for his own likeness to be imprinted upon the cloth. He gave it to Ananias and told him to give it to Abgar, so that he might have some consolation for his desire and for his illness. On his way back with these objects, Ananias reached the stronghold of Hierapolis, which in Arabic is called Membich and in Syrian Mabouk. He settled down for the night outside the town, next to a pile of tiles that had recently been made, and hid the holy cloth there. Around midnight a great fire appeared around the place, and in the city people thought that the whole area was on fire. They were afraid for themselves and left the town to find out what was the blaze that they had seen. There they found Ananias and arrested him as the author of the deed. They investigated the event and asked him who he was, where he was going and where he had come from.

9. Ananias did not know why they were asking him about such strange things, and so he openly told them where he was from, where he had come from, and what he was carrying with him. He told them he had placed what he was carrying among the tiles, from where the flames seemed to be springing. They immediately wished to find out the truth about what he had said and searched the place. Not only did they find what Ananias had put there, but on one of the tiles that was touching it, another figure of the divine representation, his form miraculously and wonderfully transferred onto the tile from the unpainted cloth. When they had seen this, they

were filled with fear and amazement. They could not find any fire burning, rather the flames seemed to proceed from the light in the figure. They kept the tile which had received the divine imprint for themselves as a sacred heirloom and valuable treasure, and guessed from what they had seen that it contained divine energy. They were afraid to retain the original image and its bearer and sent them on to Abgar. Even now, that image on the tile is still preserved and venerated by the inhabitants of this town, being an icon not painted by human hands after another image not painted by human hands either. Ananias completed the journey that lay before him and told his lord everything that had happened on the way. He also gave him the symbols of salvation he had brought with him.

10. This is the story according to most sources, regarding the image of our Saviour on the cloth not painted by hand. However, there is another version, which is not improbable and does not lack reliable witnesses. For this reason I shall present this second version so that nobody assumes I gave preference to the first one out of ignorance of the second. It would not be at all strange if confusion has arisen in the story over such a long time. All the sources agree on the main fact, that the form on the cloth was miraculously transferred from the Lord's face. They disagree on some of the details, such as when this took place. Whether it happened earlier or later does not alter the truth of the matter. The other version is as follows.
11. It is said that when Christ was about to willingly undergo suffering, he displayed human weakness and prayed in anguish. The gospel tells us that his sweat fell like drops of blood and then it is said that he took this piece of cloth, which can still be seen, from one of his disciples, and wiped off the streams of sweat on it. The figure

of his divine face, which is still visible, was immediately transferred onto it. He gave it to Thomas and told him to send it to Abgar with Thaddaeus after his ascension into heaven, thus fulfilling what he had promised in the letter. When our Lord Jesus Christ was taken up into heaven, Thomas gave the image of our Lord's face that was not painted by hand to Thaddaeus, and sent him to Abgar.

12. Thaddaeus came to Edessa and at first stayed with one of the Jews from the city, who was called Tobias. The disciple of Christ wished to make himself known to Abgar first by works rather than words, and so he cured the sick in the city just by calling on Christ. The word got round quickly, as normally happens in cases such as this one – there are many people to talk about wonderful deeds. Abgar heard about where the apostle of Christ was staying through one of his officials called Abdos. He immediately thought from the hope that lay hidden in him that this was the person whom Jesus had promised to send in the letter. He found out more about Thaddaeus from Abdos, and ordered him to be brought before him. Tobias went and told the apostle, and Thaddaeus answered that he had been sent to him in power and at once went in to see Abgar. Just before he came into the king's presence, he placed the likeness on his own forehead and went in thus to Abgar. The king saw him coming from afar and seemed to see a light shining out of his face, too bright to look at, sent forth by the likeness that was covering him. Struck by the bright shining light, and as if he had forgotten about his illness and the longstanding paralysis of his limbs, he quickly got up from his bed and forced his limbs to run to meet the apostle. He felt the same, although in a different way, as those who saw the figure flashing with lightning on Mount Tabor.

13. He received the likeness from the apostle and with great reverence put it round his head, on his eyes and on his lips, and did not omit any of the rest of his body. He knew immediately that his limbs had been miraculously healed, and changed for the better. His leprosy was cleansed and left him, except for a small spot that was left on his forehead. He heard the word of truth more clearly from the apostle, and all about the wonderful miracles of Christ, his divine passion and burial, his resurrection from the dead and his ascension into heaven. He confessed that Christ is truly God and asked about the figure of his form imprinted upon the linen cloth. When he understood it in detail, he realised it had not been created with natural colours, and was amazed at its power through which he had miraculously risen from his bed and was now numbered among the healthy. Thaddaeus in reply told him about the time of Christ's agony and how the form had come about from the drops of sweat, with no paint involved. He also explained how his coming to the king had been ordained by the Lord, and the other details that have already been told in our story.
14. After Abgar's pain had been taken away, and his paralysed limbs were tautened and his deformity had disappeared, and everything was tending towards good health from this and from Thaddaeus laying on his hands in the name of Jesus Christ, the king was completely astounded and said, "Truly you are a real disciple of Jesus the Son of God, who cures without medicine or herbs. I am bound by such love and faith in him that if I did not fear Roman power, which does not permit its subjects to wage war against each other, I would willingly have taken up arms against the Jews who crucified the Lord, have conquered them and sold them into slavery. Now that I have learnt about his willing passion, I am convinced that those cruel people

would not have been able to do anything to him against his will, and I will not go into the matter any further. I pray to be considered worthy of divine baptism and to join and dedicate myself with all my household to Christ the Lord”. The Lord’s apostle worked many other wonders and cured everyone of their sicknesses, among whom was the one who had first told Abgar about him. He cured him of the gout. He then took Abgar to the sacred baptismal font. He performed the prescribed rites over him and baptised him, his wife and his children, and everyone else in his household. Abgar came out of the divine water of cleansing completely clean and healthy. The spot of leprosy that had been left on his forehead entirely disappeared.

15. From that moment on Abgar honoured the likeness of the Lord’s form and held it in great honour. And in addition to everything else, the ruler did the following. A statue of a certain Greek god had been erected before the public gate of the city by the ancient founders and preeminent citizens of Edessa. Everyone who wished to enter the city had to worship the statue and say some prescribed prayers, and thus walk down the city streets and roads. Abgar took this statue down and destroyed it, and placed the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was not made by human hands, in its place, fixed to a wooden board and adorned with the gold that can still be seen. He had these words inscribed on the gold, “Christ, God, whoever hopes in you will never be let down”. He decreed that everybody who was going to pass through the gate had to pay the proper respect, due homage and honour to the wonderful miracle-working image of Christ, instead of the old, useless and worthless statue, and thus enter into the city of Edessa. The custom and devotion of this pious man were maintained during Abgar’s own life and that of his son, who inherited both his father’s kingdom and his piety. His son’s son, Abgar’s grandson,

however, inherited his father's and his grandfather's rule, but not their piety. He let piety slip, so to speak, and went over to demons and idols. Just as his grandfather had destroyed the statue of the idol, as if to make up for this to the demons he wanted to mete out the same treatment to the image of the Lord. This wicked man did not get what he wanted, because the bishop of the city realised in advance what would happen and took appropriate measures. Given that the place where the image was kept was shaped like a cylindrical semicircle, he showed great foresight and lit a lamp in front of the image and put a tile on top of it. He then sealed the surface off with gypsum and baked bricks, finishing the wall off on the same level. As the image Abgar's grandson desired was no longer anywhere to be seen the impious man gave up his plan. I would think that the priest gave orders to put a tile in front of the image so that no decay from the building's mould and no damp from the gypsum could make the cloth with the icon on it deteriorate and suffer the damage done by time.

16. After a long time had elapsed, people forgot all about how the holy image had been set up and how it had been hidden. And so when Khusro, the king of the Persians, was in his time conquering the cities of Asia, he came to Edessa, set up an armed camp, brought up every kind of machinery and got everything ready for taking the city. He planned everything for casting missiles, shaking walls and smashing gates. Finding themselves in such danger, the people of Edessa thought of everything they could do against this hostile demonstration, and sent for help to the Roman generals. The commander in chief of the Roman army at the time was Ilion. He was being attacked by the enemy too and so was not able to send aid to those in Edessa. He tried to encourage them in writing, reminding them of the Lord's letter and the

unfailing promise it contained, because of which it was said and believed that the city would be saved from being sacked. Along with the direct attack, the Persians were also planning a few surprises. They started to dig at a distance and contrived to get inside the city through underground passages. When they were inside the walls, like underwater swimmers under the ground, their plot was revealed to those inside the walls in the following way. A bronzesmith lived at that particular point within the walls, and the bronze utensils hanging up in his house all made a noise when the Persians were digging and taking the earth out. The city's inhabitants were at a loss and had absolutely no idea what to do and thus made recourse to God, seeking him with broken hearts and tears. At night the bishop – Eulalius – had a vision of a well-dressed and adorned woman, better looking than any human being, telling him to get the image of Christ that had not been made by human hands and parade it in a procession, and the Lord would certainly demonstrate his wonders. The bishop answered that he did not even know if the image existed, and if it did whether it was there or anywhere else. The one who had appeared to him in the form of a woman told him that it was hidden away above the city gate in such and such a place, and in such and such a way.

17. The bishop was encouraged by the clarity of the vision and went to the place in solemn procession. He searched and found the sacred image unharmed, and the lamp that had not gone out after so many years. Another likeness of the first likeness had been formed on the tile that had been placed in front of the lamp for protection, and it is still kept in Edessa even today. He took the divine representation of the divine and human Christ in his hands, and his hopes grew as he made his way towards the place where the Persians had been betrayed by the

noise of the bronze utensils. The city's inhabitants started to dig there, and as they drew near each other they dribbled oil from the lamp onto the fire that they had made ready against their enemies. Throwing it at the Persians who were in the tunnel, they killed them all. And saved from this attack, they decided to try the same trick against the machines outside the walls - they burnt them all easily and killed many of the enemy who were in them. They took heart and launched stones from the wall, and as a result the commander of the enemy army fell and many others with him. This was not all. The Persians had lit a fire outside the walls to use against those inside, fed by numerous olive and other trees they had cut down. The power of the sacred image fighting with the defenders turned the fire back onto them. For as Eulalius was going round the city on top of the walls, holding the image outstretched in his hands, when he arrived at that spot a strong wind suddenly blew up and turned the flames back on those who were lighting the fire. It pursued them and burnt them up, just as happened to the Chaldeans in the past.

18. This story does not lack witnesses - we did not invent it to entertain or deceive people. Three patriarchs together - Job of Alexandria, Christopher of Antioch and Basil of Jerusalem - wrote about it and stated that it happened so in a letter to the emperor Theophilus, who treated sacred images with violence. They were explaining that sacred images are holy and worthy of respect, and told this story as well. And it is possible for anyone who so wishes to read their long letter and learn all about it. If anyone has carefully examined Evagrius' history of the church he will know what it says about this sacred image in the fourth book.

19. He writes that Khusro did this and other things, openly desiring to prove that what the Christians kept repeating about the city was false, namely that it was unconquerable. With the vast number of hands available in his army, he ordered a large amount of wood, or rather an infinite amount, to be gathered together in a short time. He stuck them in the ground in a double wall around the city and filled in the space in the middle with earth, thus building a counter-wall that was higher than the walls of Edessa, and planned to cast missiles at those who were risking their lives more than ever in the city's defence. Seeing this going up opposite their walls like a mountain, from which the enemy hoped to assault the city as if on level ground, the people of Edessa did not know what to do. However, doing their best, they started to dig a ditch in front of that newly constructed rampart in an attempt to set fire to the palisade in front of the earth, so as to make the earth collapse into the ditch. Thus the great wall, which had been created as if in a dream, would immediately fall down and be destroyed. They managed to dig the ditch, but failed to carry out their plan of setting fire to the wood. The wood would not catch fire for lack of ventilation space as earth was piled up inside the palisade and the wood itself was still green. And so they took the holy image into the recently dug ditch, blessed some water with it and sprinkled it onto the fire and the wood, thus making the fire catch. Through the faith of those who were doing this, with the help of the divine power, the water became like oil to the fire and ignited the flame and burned everything it touched. The king of the Persians then despaired of taking the city. Finding out where their help was coming from, he reached an agreement, made peace offerings, and returned home.

20. Not much later he would himself see the benefits of the holy image, the benefactor of his enemies and the destroyer of his own people. His daughter was possessed by an evil spirit and in an unnatural state, constrained by the spirit at work in her, she would cry out that unless the image that was not made by human hands came from Edessa, the spirit inside her would never be cast out. When the king heard this, he thought about the siege, for he had not failed to notice the sudden inexplicable strength and courage of the inhabitants of Edessa. He immediately wrote to the governor of the city, to bishop Eulalius and to the citizen community, requesting the divine and almighty representation to be sent to him as soon as possible. He explained the reason – the case of his daughter – and begged and urged them not to ignore his request. The inhabitants of Edessa, knowing the deceitful nature of the Persian character and suspecting the Persians of wanting to steal their strength by trickery, did not plan on letting their protector and benefactor go, yet neither did they want to break the peace just for this. They therefore drew up a clever plan for their own benefit. They painted an image as similar as possible in all details to the unpainted image, and sent it in accordance with the request. When the ones who were carrying the image came within Persian territory, the demon inside the king's daughter immediately cried out, saying that he would leave quickly and find another place to dwell because of the power of the one who was approaching, but only if the likeness that had been summoned turned back and did not come near the palace or the city of the Persians. He begged and requested this from the king with great insistence. When the king had given his word, the demon left the girl, and thus the girl was restored to health. Khusro, in order either to fulfil what the demon had asked for and to keep his promise or in fear of the power of the one who was approaching, as his own deeds were evil and abominable, sent orders for the image

to be returned to the city it had come from. He also sent personal gifts to the people who had sent it.

21. And so this great wealth, this inexhaustible treasure, this original and unpainted image was in Edessa, always venerated by its people and protecting them in return. Since all good and great things came to the capital city from all over, it was God's will that this holy image too should be kept here with the other good treasures. The Roman emperor Romanus made it his own priority to possess this image and enrich the queen of cities. He had already sent to Edessa on various different occasions and asked for the image to be handed over together with the letter written by the Lord. He promised to give them up to two hundred Saracen prisoners and twelve thousand coins of pure silver in return. The inhabitants of Edessa replied that it was not in their own interest to exchange the guardian and protector of their city for silver and mortal men.

22. The emperor kept on asking and insisting, but the people kept rejecting his request. Finally, six thousand four hundred and fifty two years after the creation of the world, the emir of Edessa sent to ask that the emperor should guarantee securely in writing with a gold seal for confirmation that the Roman armies would not attack the following four cities – Rochan (this is the name of Edessa in the barbarians' language), Charan, Sarotzi and Samosata – nor plunder their fields or take their inhabitants prisoner. The two hundred Saracens from the same tribe would have to be handed over to him together with the promised amount of money, and then he in turn would hand over the image the emperor wanted and the letter of Christ.

23. The emperor in his desire for this wonderful object accepted all the conditions and gave them everything they had demanded. He then sent Abramios, the God-fearing bishop of Samosata, who was visiting Constantinople at the time, to get the divine image and the letter of Christ our God. Both the one who sent him on the mission and the one who went were concerned lest some kind of trick be played on them during the handing over, and the copy made for the Persian incident were given instead of the true unpainted image. To avoid any kind of ill faith, he sought out both these images and another one which was revered in the church of the Nestorians and had apparently been copied from the original some time before. These two were then given back and he kept only the genuine and true article.
24. However, this happened later. Meanwhile, a revolt arose among the faithful in Edessa and great unrest took hold of the city, as they did not want to let their sacred objects and their homeland's safeguard be taken away. In the end, the Saracen leader had it handed over by persuading some, forcing others, and frightening yet others with threats of death. When the image and the letter of Christ were about to leave Edessa, thunder, lightning and a terrible rainstorm suddenly struck, by some chance or providence. The ones who had resisted before were stirred up again and claimed that the divine will was clear from what had happened – God did not wish these most holy objects to be removed. But the leader of the Saracens, who held absolute power, judged it necessary to abide by what had been agreed and keep his promise, and so the most precious image and the letter written by Christ left the city and were brought here.

25. The bearers of these objects went their way and came to the Euphrates, and once again there was an uprising, no smaller than the first time. They refused to give up the key to their safety no matter what happened, unless a sign came from God. And a sign was given to them in their unbelief as they tested God. The ship that was intended to ferry the bearers across the Euphrates was still moored on the Syrian side, while the rioters were still in the grip of tumult. Yet as soon as the bishops who were carrying the divine image and the letter had boarded, suddenly, with no rowers, no helmsman and no other ship to tow it, their boat set off for the land on the other side, guided only by the will of God. This filled all the onlookers who were present with fear and amazement, and convinced them to allow the departure to go ahead.
26. The bishops of Samosata and Edessa, who were bearing the objects, then came to Samosata together with the latter's senior presbyter and various other pious Christians, among them the emir's servant who was named after Rome. They stayed there for a few days; many miracles took place and they went on their way. The holy image and the letter of Christ worked many further extraordinary miracles along the way. Blind people unexpectedly recovered their sight, and the lame were seen to be healthy. People who had been ill in bed for a long time jumped up, and those with withered hands were healed. In short, every illness and disease was cured, and the ones who had been cured praised God and sang his wonders.
27. When they were nearing the end of their journey they came to the monastery of the most holy Mother of God, which is called *ta Eusebiou*, in the so-called theme of the Optimatoi. The casket that contained the miracle-working image was reverently

placed in the church of the monastery, and many people coming forward with pure intention were cured of their illnesses. One who came in was possessed by a demon, and was used as an instrument by the evil spirit to proclaim the praises of the image and the letter just as in the past another of his kind had said to the Lord, “We know who you are, the Holy One of Israel”. Finally the spirit uttered the following words, “Receive your glory and joy, Constantinople, and you, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, your kingdom”. The man was cured on saying this and was freed immediately from the aggression of the demon. There are many witnesses to these words - the emperor had sent the leaders of his council to honour and greet the desired object, and many bodyguards had come too, and it so happened that some magistrates and patricians as well as people from the lower ranks saw and heard it. Given that what was said soon came to pass, it is fitting to wonder where the demon got his foreknowledge from. Those who have slipped away from divine glory and gone over to darkness instead of light are not believed to be able to prophesy naturally. It is clear that just as the divine power once used Balaam as a servant to prophesy, and other often unworthy people on other occasions according to some wise and well contrived dispensation, so on the present occasion too the power in the divine representation used the demon, which is why it foretold the events that were soon to take place. It is not out of place to recall this as it turned out so, but let us now go back to the story in order.

27 according to cod. Mi2

They had already covered the major part of the journey and the truly faithful emperor Romanus, loved by God, wishing to splendidly honour the likeness with a

reception far from Constantinople appointed Theophanes the patrician and chamberlain, who was already in charge of public administration. Though endowed with glory as much as anyone, he was not tricked by the deceitful wing of glory, and did not abuse his power to the misery of others, believing that his glory was given by God. He did not wish to use a gift from God against his enemies, and so enjoyed the great honour of receiving the image, especially since the time when on account of the great fear and expected danger - I mean the invasion of the myriad hoards of the Rus - he set up a barrier of fire, sea and sword with some ships on the Euxine near Hieron and thus saved the city⁶⁵⁴. The faithful and God-fearing emperor Romanus thus sent him to receive the divine likeness, and almost all the leading men of the Senate followed him in their great desire to see the divine and sacred image, both because of their love for him and because of their wish not to be found wanting in their respect for him at any time. Theophanes, with his entourage and those of inferior rank, late in the day reached the monastery of the most holy Mother of God, which is called *ta Eusebiou* in the theme called after the Optimatoi, the sacred image having arrived in another monastery, known by the name of Andreios. Early the next morning they all went on foot, holding numerous candles decorated with gold, proclaimed the glory, and once again held a procession in honour of the revered image. They then went back to the above-mentioned monastery of *ta Eusebiou*, where the casket that concealed the miracle-working image was reverently placed in the same church of the monastery, and when it was uncovered from the casket they saw and worshipped it with due reverence. Many people coming forward with pure intention were cured of their illnesses. One came in who was possessed by a demon, and was used as an instrument by the evil spirit to

⁶⁵⁴ For the story of Theophanes, only recorded here in all the *Narratio de imagine Edessena* MSS, cf. Romilly Jenkins, *Byzantium: The Imperial Centuries* (New York 1966), pp. 250-251.

proclaim the praises of the image and the letter, just as in the past another of his kind had said to the Lord, “We know who you are, the Holy One of Israel”. Finally the spirit uttered the following words, “Receive your glory and joy, Constantinople, and you, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, your kingdom”. The man was cured on saying this and was freed immediately from the aggression of the demon. There are many witnesses of these words - the emperor had sent the leaders of his council to honour and greet the desired object, and many bodyguards had come too, and it so happened that some magistrates and patricians as well as people from the lower ranks saw and heard it. Given that what was said soon came to pass, it is fitting to wonder where the demon got his foreknowledge from. Those who have slipped away from divine glory and gone over to darkness instead of light are not believed to be able to prophesy naturally. It is clear that just as the divine power once used Balaam as a servant to prophesy, and other often unworthy people on other occasions according to some wise and well contrived dispensation, so too on the present occasion the power in the divine representation used the demon, which is why it foretold the events that were soon to take place. It is not out of place to recall this as it turned out so, but let us now go back to the story in order.

28. On the fifteenth day of the month of August, while the emperors were celebrating the customary feast of the Dormition of the ever-virgin mother of God in the church devoted to her in Blachernae, the bearers of the holy objects arrived in the evening, and the chest holding the image and the letter was placed in the upper chapel of this godly church. The emperors went up to the chest, and greeted and worshipped it although they did not open it. Then they conveyed it to the royal ship with honour, due escort and many lighted lamps, and so came with it to the palace. They placed it

there in the divine chapel called Pharos, possibly because it is lavishly adorned like a brilliant cloak. On the following day, the sixteenth of the month, they again kissed and worshipped it with the due respect, and then the priests and the young emperors (the elder emperor had stayed at home as he was ill) picked it up with psalms, hymns and bright lights. They took it down the road to the sea and once again placed it in the royal ship, rowing around the city so that it might in some way preserve the city by its sea circuit. They moored outside the city's western wall, where they disembarked. The emperors, all the members of the senatorial council, the patriarch and the whole body of the clergy went on foot with a fitting escort. They went with the box holding the precious and sacred objects as if it were another ark of the covenant or something even greater. They proceeded outside of the walls up to the Golden Gate and then went into the city, forming a procession with lofty psalms, hymns and spiritual chants and the light of countless torches as they made their way through the centre of the city, believing that in this way the city would be made holier and stronger, and would be kept unharmed and unassailable for all time. Everyone who could ran towards the spectacle, and the crowds gathered together from all over like huge waves. A lame man, who had been ill for a long time, leant upon his servants and stood up to see the divine image as it went past. He was miraculously cured just by looking at it, and when he realised that his legs had been made firm he ran up to the container on his own feet, embraced it and praised God, telling of the wonder that had been worked in him. Everyone who was there saw him and heard what he said, and gave glory to Almighty God, who always works wonders and marvels.

29. So much weeping for joy, so much intercession, prayer to God and thanksgiving took place throughout the city as the divine image and the sacred letter went through the centre of the city, that it is impossible to describe in words – for the power of words is defeated by sight. For things that are superlative are better seen than heard, since speech tends to fall short of the reality. When the leaders of the celebration came to the square before the Augusteion, they turned off the main street and went to the sacred precinct named after the divine wisdom of God, and placed the esteemed image and the letter in the innermost recesses of the sanctuary.
30. When all the clergy had worshipped and paid due respect, those who had made the procession came out again carrying their holy burden, and made their way to the palace. They put the divine image in the hall called the Chrysotriklinos, on the emperor's throne, from which the greatest decisions are usually taken. Not unreasonably, they believed that the emperor's throne would be made holy and that justice and uprightness would be given to all who sat on it. After completion of the usual litany, the divine image was taken from there again and taken to the above-mentioned chapel of Pharos. It was consecrated and placed on the right towards the east for the glory of the faithful, the safety of the emperors and the security of the whole city together with the Christian community.

30 according to cod. Pantokrator 99 (which ends here)

When the members of the clergy had worshipped, they came out in procession and made their way to the palace. They put the divine image in the Chrysotriklinos, on the emperor's throne, on which the emperors sit and make the greatest decisions.

They paid due reverence, and after due completion of the litany the divine image was again taken from there and removed to the above-mentioned chapel of Pharos. It was consecrated and placed on the right towards the east for the glory of the faithful, the safety of the emperors and to safeguard the whole city together with the Christian community in Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be the glory and the power, now and always and for ever and ever, Amen.

31-36 only in codd. Be Iv L2 L3 Mi2 V X and W (in Mi2 and W after 37)

31. About the holy and divine image, which was not made by human hands, of Jesus Christ our God, and how it was honoured in the city of Edessa by those who lived there. Many different opinions have been handed down to us about the divine form of Christ the true God in Edessa, which was not made by human hands - about how the image came about in the first place, at whose request, who kept it and how the city where it was kept was safe from attack, how it was hidden and found again working miracles by faithful men at various times. Our excellent and great emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus gathered all these traditions together and wrote them all down in books in great detail, a most praiseworthy deed among the other great things he left to Christian society. He thought about this and meditated on the great events with divine and lofty inspiration. But since he did not stop there, he extended his research. The present narrative will make clear with what honour the image was treated by the Christian people of Edessa.
32. One such story tells about how, on the first Sunday of the first week of Lent, the bishop of the city together with all the priests and lay people gathered together in

the sacristy of the church. A throne was set up and the sacred image of Christ and God, which was not made by human hands, was wrapped in white linen and placed on the throne. Four bishops, if they happened to be present, or priests, lifted the throne up and came out of the sacristy with the bishop at their head, bearing the sign of the cross in his hands. Honour was paid by golden sceptres on each side and twelve ritual fans arranged in order. Then came the same number of censers with sweet-smelling incense and the same number of torches. The bishop would stop three times during the procession at certain specified places, bless the people with the sign of cross and then keep on going.

33. When the sacred procession was over, they took the image to the sanctuary, while the people followed behind singing Lord have mercy. The holy and undefiled image was placed in the innermost recesses, the bishop once more made the sign of the cross over the people with the precious cross he was holding in his hands, to the east, to the right and to the left, facing the east. They then picked it up again with the throne on which it was carried and placed it on the smaller but more elevated table to the east of the holy altar. When the holy liturgy had been celebrated and all the divine mysteries had been duly performed, only the bishop was allowed to draw near the holy and undefiled image, to revere it and to kiss it, and then to take off the white linen cloth that was covering it and wrap it in another, purple one. Then the divine throne was picked up by the same priests and taken back by the same route, with the same procession, and placed in the holy sacristy.

34. The next part was as follows. On the fourth day of the middle week of Lent the bishop alone was permitted to go in and open the chest in which the image was

kept. He wiped the icon with an unused sponge that was soaked in water and gave the water that he then squeezed out to all the people; they anointed their faces with it, and were filled with its holiness. This kind of procession and ritual, however, was only carried out during the days of Holy Lent, when the people were purified by self-control, and had acquired a much clearer vision in their souls, shining through the enveloping mist of suffering. This was why they touched the holy objects with unstained hands, and believed that they attended the holy and divine rites in a holy way. They abstained from this ritual on the other days of the yearly cycle, because it is not lawful to approach the unapproachable too often by habit, and so that the intensity of their faith would not slacken through easy proximity. The ancient chest containing the divine image was enclosed behind doors so that it would not be visible to everyone whenever they wanted, although these doors were opened two days every week, namely Wednesday and Friday, with fine pins of iron, that they called sceptres. The image was beheld by all the congregation, and everyone propitiated the image's limitless power in his prayers, although nobody was allowed to draw near and touch the holy form with his lips or his eyes. Thus did fear of God increase their faith and make people shudder with a greater fear for the revered object.

35. Such was the way in which the procession of the holy image of Christ, which was not made by human hands, was organised, made splendid by the torchbearing cortège. We do not know exactly why or for what reason, although it seems reasonable to assume that the throne represented the divine power over all, the sceptres kingly greatness, the fans indicated the divine praise of the six-winged and many-eyed beings, while the censers and the incense were a radiance of the

mystical myrrh, sweet-smelling beyond our comprehension, that is poured out for our sake. The torches represented his abode in eternal and unapproachable light, and the entrance into the church his coming on earth. But what can we say about its being placed among unseen things and the mystical rites? They show his sacrifice for us when he was among us and that he willingly underwent the passion and death. What about the priests? They are like the ranks of angels by whom he is borne aloft and acclaimed the creator of all in their midst. The two linen cloths on it should be understood as follows. The white cloth is the clear and obvious fact, known to all, that he is God, producer and container of this universe, who ever is and is ever the same; this is generally acknowledged. It could also represent that great light above lights that he puts on like a cloak, and in which he is proclaimed to live, and is believed to be the light of the world and is shown to have come into the world as light. I would think that the purple cloth represents the incomprehensible and invisible nature of his unutterable being and the darkness that cannot be understood, which hides him away and separates his begotten nature from the unbegotten one that is beyond understanding. The return and removal from the holy altar to the sacristy represent his lifting up and ascension into heaven after fulfilling his mission. They revere this with the same honour and torchbearing, giving worship and honour to the Lord as far as they can.

36. With such mysteries was the manifold and diverse procession of that sacred and divine image designed, and such were meanings of the truth they represented. Other people might have more mysterious or elevated thoughts than these, but we have fulfilled our undertaking as best we could in order to gain approval for our efforts.

37. But, o divine likeness of the likeness of the unchanging Father, o form of the Father's person, o holy and venerable seal of Christ, our God's archetypal goodness - I speak to you in faith as if you had a living soul - save and keep always our noble and gentle ruler, who keeps the feast of your coming in due fashion, the one you placed on his father's and grandfather's throne in your presence. Keep his offspring safe for the family succession and the security of rule. Bring to the people a state of peace. Keep this queen of cities free from siege. Make us pleasing to your image, Christ, our God, to receive us into his heavenly kingdom, praising him and singing hymns, for to him is due honour and worship for ever and ever. Amen.

Appendix II

The development of the Image of Edessa over the centuries

The first column in this table shows major historical events related to the Image; it does not intend to be a detailed history of either Byzantium or the Image, but rather serves to place the other columns in context. All dates are AD. The second column shows the texts related to the Image, together with the author (if known). The third column concerns the terminology used to describe the Image in the sources, while the fourth column is devoted to visual depictions of the Image.

Century	Historical events	Texts	Terminology	Visual depictions
1 st	ca.30-33 – Ministry and death of Jesus of Nazareth. According to later texts, King Abgar V of Edessa sent a messenger/ painter to Jerusalem to take down the likeness of Christ. This proved to be impossible so Jesus sent Abgar a miraculous image produced by wiping his face on a cloth.			
2 nd	177 – Abgar VIII the Great becomes King of Edessa. ca.190 – A church building is recorded in Edessa, traditionally the first officially Christian kingdom.			
3 rd	217 – Roman emperor Caracalla assassinated near Edessa. 260 – The Roman army suffers total defeat by the Persians at the Battle of Edessa; emperor Valerian is taken captive.			

4 th	330 – The formal consecration of the city of Constantinople.	Early 4 th century – Eusebius' <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> recounts the Abgar legend and reproduces the letters but makes no mention of the Image. Late 4 th century – pilgrim nun Egeria visits Edessa, records the letters but makes no mention of the Image.		
5 th		At the very beginning of the century, the Syriac <i>Doctrine of Addai</i> narrates the story of the Image, but as a painting with no miraculous intervention. Inscriptions of Abgar letters over house doorway in Philippi, and at Kırk Mağara (Turkey). Personalised version of Abgar letter in magical charm (<i>Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 4469</i>).		
6 th	525 – Serious floods in Edessa. Future emperor Justinian has the cathedral of Hagia Sophia built in the city. 544 – The Persian army under Khusro I attacks the city of Edessa; according to tradition the Image plays an active role in the successful defence of the city.	The Syriac <i>Acts of Mar Mari</i> includes a miraculous origin for the Image on a piece of linen. Shortly after the attack, historian Procopius makes no mention of the Image's defence of the city. Towards the end of the century, historian Evagrius describes the Image's role in the defence in detail. A Syriac hymn refers to an image not made by human hands in the cathedral of Edessa. 570 – Anonymous Piacenza pilgrim text records what is most probably a copy of the Image in Egypt. According to the Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, the	Syriac <i>sedona</i> (i.e. <i>σινδών</i>) in the <i>Acts of Mar Mari</i> . Evagrius describes the Image as <i>θεότευκτον εικόνα</i> . The anonymous Piacenza pilgrim text describes the cloth in Egypt as <i>pallium lineum</i> .	Mosaic of face of Christ from Edessa. Anchiskati icon, Georgia.

		letter of Christ magically protected Edessa from Persian Kawad's attack in 503.		
7 th	639 – Edessa falls under Islamic rule. 673 – The Arabs besiege Constantinople.	Historian Theophylact Simocatta mentions the Image not made by human hands near Edessa, as does contemporary poet George of Pisidia. The <i>Acts of Thaddaeus</i> describe the miraculous transfer of Christ's image onto the cloth. Papyrus fragments: MS <i>Oxford Bodleian Gr. Th. b 1</i> and <i>Papyrus Cairo 10,736</i> (originally the same MS) containing the Abgar correspondence.	Unique description of the Image as ἵδαλμα in Theophylact Simocatta. ἀχειροποίητος used in all Greek texts. τετράδιπλον (folded in four/folded over four times) and συνδών in <i>Acts of Thaddaeus</i> .	
8 th	717 – The Arabs besiege Constantinople. 726-787 – The first phase of Iconoclasm.	The <i>Nouthesia Gerontos</i> emphasises the miraculous origin of the Image. Moses Khorenats'i transfers the Abgar legend to Armenia, stating that the Image is still in Edessa (some date the text and writer to the fifth century). Wooden amulet with Abgar letter in Coptic. Magical additions to Abgar letter in Latin in MS <i>British Library Royal 2 A XX</i> .	συνδών found in the <i>Nouthesia Gerontos</i> . John Damascene describes the Image as a ἱμάτιον (cloak or large cloth). He also uses ῥάκος and related compound forms.	Face of Christ, Telovani, Georgia.
9 th	815 to 843 – The second Iconoclastic crisis. 867 – Basil I becomes emperor and starts Byzantine recovery.	Earliest mention of the image in a Greek life of St Alexis.	σουδάριον used by George the Monk and the Letter of the Three Patriarchs.	
10 th	944 – The Image of Edessa is taken by Romanus Lecapenus from Edessa to Constantinople. 971 – Eastern Bulgaria becomes a Byzantine province.	Shortly after the Image arrives in Constantinople, Gregory Referendarius writes a sermon concerning the arrival and history of the Image (origin in Gethsemane), and the <i>Narratio de imagine Edessena</i> is written	The new term <i>Mandyllion</i> is used for the Image after its translation to Constantinople. Gregory Referendarius uses ἐκμαγεῖον and ὀθόνη. The <i>Narratio de imagine Edessena</i> deliberately avoids	Painted icon panel from St Catherine's (Sinai) shows emperor Constantine VII as King Abgar receiving the Image.

		under the auspices of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus.	using both τετράδιπλον and σινδών. It uses ὀθόνη, ἱερὸν ῥάκος, ἐκτύπωμα τοῦ θείου ἀπεικονίσματος and other general terms indistinctly.	
11 th	1017 – Basil II restores the rest of Bulgaria to imperial rule. 1071 – Byzantine defeat at Manzikert and loss of Anatolia. 1081 – Alexios I, first emperor in the Comnenian dynasty, becomes emperor.	The <i>Narratio</i> version of the story is summarised in the Synaxarion, most probably on Mount Athos. Georgius Cedrenus bases his version of the legend on the Synaxarion in the <i>Compendium Historiarum</i> . Anglo-Saxon poem about Abgar legend, by Aelfric, archbishop of York.	τετράδιπλον and ῥάκος in Synaxarion and Cedrenus.	Mandylicon icons in Karanlik (Dark Church), St Catherine’s Chapel, Sakli, St Barbara, Karabaş in Cappadocia. Mandylicon at Hagia Sophia in Ohrid (FYROM) shows Christ’s neck and shoulders. The Alaverdi Gospels (Georgia) include an illustrated version of the Abgar legend, “canonising” the legend.
12 th	1185 – The Normans conquer Thessalonike.	Hugh Eteriano writes the Latin <i>Contra Patarenos</i> , giving the Garden of Gethsemane as the origin of the Image. In the <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i> , Ordericus Vitalis describes the Image as that of a full body. The anonymous Latin text in MS <i>Tarragonensis 55</i> emphasises the secrecy and miraculous nature of the Image. Constantine Stilbes, in the <i>Didaskalia on the Mandylicon and the Holy Tile</i> , gives an original version of the Abgar correspondence.	<i>Effigies</i> found in <i>Contra Patarenos</i> . Ordericus Vitalis calls the cloth <i>linteum</i> . MS <i>Tarragonensis 55</i> describes the Image as <i>forma et figura</i> . ὀθόνη in Constantine Stilbes. ἐκμαγεῖον and ὀθόνη in <i>Codex Skylitzes</i> .	Unique Mandylicon in Western church of Saint Leger in Terres de Chaux, France. Four-fold patters of Christ images at church of Episkopi, Mani, including the Mandylicon, Keramion, Christ Antiphonetes and a lost image. The Gelati Gospels (Georgia) include an illustrated version of the Abgar legend, “canonising” the legend. Miniature of the Mandylicon in <i>Codex Skylitzes</i> .
13 th	1204 – The Army of the Fourth Crusade attacks and captures Constantinople. The <i>Partitio Romaniae</i> establishes Latin kingdoms in the Empire. Establishment by Byzantine dynasties of empires of Nicaea	The version of the Abgar legend in the <i>Legenda Aurea</i> includes a physical description of Christ. Gervase of Tilbury, in the <i>Otia Imperialia</i> , says that the full-body Image is the result of Christ laying out his body on a linen cloth.	The <i>Legenda Aurea</i> describes the cloth as <i>vestimentum lineum</i> . Gervase of Tilbury calls the cloth <i>linteum</i> .	The frame of the Genoa Mandylicon shows an artistic depiction of the Abgar legend in ten scenes. The Holy Face of Laon (Slavic origin). Mandylicon icons in Gülsehir in Cappadocia, and

	and Trebizond and the Despotate of Epiros. The Image was either lost in the sack of Constantinople or taken westwards as part of the plunder, although there is no documentary proof of either. 1261 – Michael III Palaeologus reconquers Constantinople. End of Latin empire.	A Latin and westernised version of the whole legend can be found in MS <i>Paris BNF lat.</i> 2688, omitting Constantinople. Magical additions to Abgar letter in Latin in MS <i>Canterbury Cathedral Add.</i> 23.	MS <i>Paris BNF lat.</i> 2688 describes the cloth as <i>pannum mundissimum niveo candore nitentem</i> in the main text and <i>sudarium</i> in the postscript.	Hagia Sophia in Trabzon (Trebizond). Eight miniatures of the legend in MS <i>BNF Paris lat.</i> 2688. Mandylia held up by hands at Agios Georgios in Karynia, and Agios Nikolaos in Briki, Mani.
14 th		Nicephorus Callistus paraphrases the Abgar legend and correspondence and the attack on Edessa as told by Procopius and Eusebius of Pamphilus. Illustrated MS Pierpont Morgan 499 (a magical scroll) narrates the Abgar legend. <i>Grottaferrata Badia Greca</i> 8 (gr. 285) contains the Abgar correspondence but is partly lost. Latin poem about St Alexis describes the Image of Edessa as “bloodstained”. A Spanish MS states that the image is that of a “crucified man”.	<i>ὀθόνη</i> found in Nicephorus Callistus. <i>σινδών</i> used in <i>Pierpont Morgan</i> 499.	An illustrated, textless Menologion MS with a miniature of the Image was copied in Thessalonike between 1322 and 1340. A lost mural at Mateiç (FYROM) shows the Image as a very large cloth. <i>Grottaferrata Badia Greca</i> 8 (gr. 285) contains two miniatures of Christ writing to Abgar. “Knotted” Mandylia at Christ Soter in Veria (Greece), Agios Ioannis in Kalogerou (Crete), the chapel of Agios Euthymios in the church of Agios Dimitrios in Thessalonike, the church of Agios Nikolaos Orphanos in the same city and the church of the Holy Apostles in Pyrgi, Chios.
15 th	1430 – Thessalonike falls to the Turks. 29 May 1453 – The Turks capture Constantinople. The last emperor, Constantine XI, falls in the battle. 1461 – Trebizond also falls to the Turks.	Magical additions to Abgar’s letter in Latin in MS <i>Bodl. Lat. Liturg.</i> f. 9 (31 357). Unique example of magical additions to Synaxarion text in MS <i>Athos Iveron</i> 433. MS <i>Scorialensis</i> Ω-IV-32 narrates the Abgar legend.	<i>σινδών</i> used in MS <i>Scorialensis</i> Ω-IV-32.	Rare western depiction of Abgar and letter on Vic Altarpiece, Spain.

		A French MS states that the image is that of a “crucified man”.		
16 th		Vienna <i>Nationalbibliothek Palat. Suppl. gr. 116</i> (a magical scroll) narrates the Abgar legend.	<i>σινδών</i> found in MS Vienna <i>Nationalbibliothek Palat. Suppl. gr. 116</i> .	The monastery of Moldovita in Romania shows the image in Constantinople in 1453. Western miniature in MS <i>Parisinus BN français 2810</i> shows messenger presenting Image to Abgar.
17 th		Samuel Fisher (1605-1665) publishes <i>Something Concerning Agbarus, Prince of the Edesseans</i> to attack the accepted idea of the Biblical canon by arguing for the historical authenticity of the Abgar legend. English translation of the Abgar letters in MS <i>British Library, Lansdowne 440</i> .		Georgian triptych shows Image with wounds and bloodstains on forehead. Statue of St Judas Thaddaeus holding the Image in the church of San Nicolás Obispo, Valencia, Spain. Engraving of Mandylion in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, no traces of which are now visible.
18 th		Versions in Ethiopian MSS attribute magical powers to the Image. Conyers Middleton dismisses the Abgar story as mere legend as part of his attack on early church miracles.		Mandylion showing body of Christ down to the waist at Zoodochos Pige, in Karnata, Mani.
19 th		Mystic Jacob Lorber “completes” the Abgar correspondence with further letters.		Tile in Valencia, Spain, shows St Judas Thaddaeus holding the Image. Mandylion at skete of the Prodromos, Mount Athos, shows Christ wearing crown of thorns.
20 th -21 st		Popular fiction concerning the Image: Robert Wise, <i>The Scrolls of Edessa</i> (New York 1987); R. Malate O’Brien, <i>Mandylion Acheiropoietos</i> (New York 2001), among others.		

		The faked Lead Codices of Jordan show the Abgar legend is not entirely forgotten. A book published in 2013 claims that Jesus was the son of King Abgar, thereby putting an end to the “Christian fairy tale” ⁶⁵⁵ .		
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⁶⁵⁵ Ralph Ellis, *Jesus, King of Edessa: The biblical Jesus rediscovered in the historical record* (Cheshire 2013).

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Alcobacense 181
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Royal 2A XX
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Mat. Graecus Vitr. 26-2
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Mat. gr. 94
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Emil. 13
- John Rylands University Library,
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Man. Ryl. Copt. Suppl. 50
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Ambros. B119 sup.
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Mosq. Syn. gr. 9
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Vat. Cerulli Aeth. 25

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