

THE EGYPTIAN MIRACLES OF SAINTS COSMAS AND DAMIAN IN THE LONDON CODEX (Rupprecht, Lond. Add. 37534 = BHG 373b)

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Summary: Patron saints of doctors, surgeons and pharmacists, Saint Cosmas and Damian were among the most popular and important figures of Byzantine hagiography. They healed through incubation, temple sleep, by giving miraculously medical recipes or performed surgical operations in dreams. Their cult was popular and their worship is attested all over the Mediterranean. The present text is the first modern translation of the oldest version of their miracles, from a 10th or 11th-century Greek codex found in Egypt, now in the British Library (Cod. Lond. Add. 37534). Its simple and unadorned style offers a rich material for examining the emergence of Byzantine hagiography, a precious source of comparison with the better-known, later miracles of Cosmas and Damian and the theological controversies of the time.

The present text is the first modern translation of the oldest version of the miracles of Saint Cosmas and Damian, preserved in a 10th-11th-century parchment codex, now in the British Library.¹ Saint Cosmas and Damian were some of the most emblematic of early Byzantine saints: fic-

1 Cod. Lond. Add. 37534; the codex is fully digitalized and accessible; its Pinakes record: <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/cote/39156/>; its Arca number: 39587. I would here like to thank the British Library to have allowed me to inspect this precious codex back in 2001.

tional but highly famous doctor saints who healed their patients miraculously by dreams, with the practice of incubation.² The trajectory of this pair of physician-saints is perplexing. Their cult and their churches spread quickly from the Near East through Egypt, Byzantium and Rome, and later on the West.³ Subsequent features complemented their legend in each of the major emerging cult places. Because of their popularity, they multiplied: there are three pairs of Saints Cosmas and Damian, the so-called Asian (that is, from Asia Minor), Roman, and Arab pairs, with three different *Passiones*, and three *Vitae*. Each pair has a different place of birth and their own feast day.⁴

The earliest layer of their legend locates them in Syria, calling the town of Cyrrhus their hometown, which also became the place of their peaceful death and burial.⁵ At this phase of the legend, they were healers and miracle workers but not yet martyrs. In their subsequent hagiography, Aegae became the scene of their martyrdom during the reign of Diocletian, under the prefect Lysias. Their cult spread rapidly, as is attested by the churches erected in the honour of the 'Asian' pair: around the year AD 400 a church was dedicated to them in Aleppo, in the fifth century AD two others in Edessa and in Cyrrhus (the latter together with 'their bones'). We know of a Cosmas and Damian church dated to the sixth century AD near Jerusalem, while Johannes Moschus preserved the memory of a church and monastery (where incubation was probably practised) within the city of Jerusalem itself. A knightly order was established in their honour in Palestine, Procopius Carthophylax made mention of a church in the ninth century in Pamphylia, Saint Sabas built a church to them in Cappadocia, there are traces of their cult from the seventh century onwards in Galatia and in Mysia, and important Byzantine

2 Thorough introduction of the Greek practice is by Deubner 1900; Hamilton 1906 and recently von Ehrenheim 2015; Renberg 2017; on Christian incubation: Csepregi 2024.

3 Maraval 1985; Janin 1969; Mango 1994 and for their popularity in Western Europe, of several works, cf. Julien 1980; Julien et al. 1993; Brenk 2007.

4 For disentangling their different legends see Van Esbroeck 1981.

5 Place names are crucial in the understanding of the importance and the extension of their cult and it received major scholarly attention even before the discovery and publication of the London Codex. An overall topography of their miracles can be found in Crum 1908; Maas 1908; Delehay 1902, 185, 791; Deubne, 1907; 91, 93; Van Esbroeck 1981.

ruins were found on the island of Dascalio as well as in Phocis and in Dyrrachium, all dating to before AD 518. A church dedicated to Cosmas and Damian with a spectacular mosaic floor was excavated in the Jordanian town of Gerasa (today Jarash), dating to AD 530 – AD 533. Based on the Greek dedication inscription, the church was built from donations by five individuals under the patronage of Paul, bishop of Gerasa.⁶ On their arrival in Egypt we have evidence that in fourth-century Alexandria, Patriarch Timothy converted a temple of Serapis into a church dedicated to Honorius, the son of Theodosius I, which also became known as the church of Cosmas and Damian. We do not know when this happened, but it definitely happened by the end of the seventh century when John of Nikiu wrote about it. This may or may not be the same church of Cosmas and Damian that we read about in Sophronius's *Thaumata*, written at the beginning of the seventh century.⁷ A rather early known iconographical representation come from Egypt: If their attributes have been correctly identified, the British Museum stucco painting from a sixth-century Egyptian monastic complex in Wadi Sarga seems to portray characteristics of the Arab pair: It represents the Old Testament martyrdom scene of Ananias, Azarias, and Misael in the burning furnace, painted between the figures of Cosmas and Damian.⁸

The earliest Lives and Passions were soon complemented by a collection of miracles – the earliest known miracle collection is the one translated below. The text of these miracle stories was discovered with several other volumes in a codex from Egypt. The edition of the Greek text was done by a disciple of Deubner's, Ernst Rupprecht, in 1935.⁹ As the codex itself was bought in 1935 by the British Museum and eventually became the property of the British Library, scholarly literature refers to this collection either as London Codex/Codex Londoniensis, Rupprecht-text or Egyptian miracles.

About the discovery of the volume we know that in 1907, an Arab shepherd near Edfu found several codices. The excavations following the

6 cf. Deubner 1907: 81; John Moschus, *Pratum Spirituale* 127 (PG 87.3. col. 2990); Hamarneh 1985.

7 Fernandez Marcos 1975; Gasco 2006.

8 Dalton 1916.

9 Rupprecht 1935.

discovery unearthed a (supposed) library from a (supposed) Coptic monastery. News about the finds spread fast, and the English collector Robert de Rustafjaell bought the manuscripts. In addition to the largely Coptic material (among them a Nubian vellum with the miracles of St. Menas from the tenth/eleventh centuries), there was also our Greek manuscript. In 1935, a disciple of Deubner's, Ernst Rupprecht, edited the Greek text.

About the discovery and acquisition of the volume, in *The Light of Egypt*, Rustafjaell writes as follows:

“Here [in Edfu] I met the supposed finder himself, who agreed, for a small remuneration, to take me to the spot where he said he had dug them out. On the last page of two of the manuscript references are made to a monastery to which they were dedicated, named St. Mercurius on the mount at Edfu, and I was greatly surprised when the Arab piloted me to a place about five miles west of Edfu on the fringe of the desert plateau, where, he said, was a Coptic monastery. This monastery proved to be a white building of the Oriental type, standing within its own enclosure, and further partly surrounded by the dark brick ruins of what must have once been a very large building.”¹⁰

It is uncertain if these manuscripts were found where it was claimed or if they belonged to this monastery. Besides the questionable tale of the Arab, it was not uncommon for monasteries to buy up the libraries of other churches. Books could also be transferred to more prominent places for safety or as gifts between various communities. Rustafjaell continues:

“The most important of the Coptic manuscripts is the Apocryphal Narrative of Christ's descent into Hell by the Apostle Bartholomew; this, the Greek manuscript relating to Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian and the small, insignificant-looking Nubian volume of the tenth century [with the Miracles of Saint Menas] were left, because, from their appearance, they seemed to have no particular value compared with

10 Rustafjaell 1909: 4-5.

the larger and better preserved books selected from the find, before I obtained possession of the remainder.”¹¹

The codex contains an alternative version of Cosmas and Damian’s miracles, written in simple Greek, in a manner similar to an inventory. Rustafjaell argued that the London Codex pointed to an earlier phase of the cult, noting the unpretentious style and the straightforward narration.¹² Rupprecht called it ‘the oldest Greek version we know’ (*antiquissimum quod novimus exemplum graecum*).¹³

The London Codex starts with a short preface, with some references to the legendary life of Cosmas and Damian, following the *Vita Asiatica* and does not speak about the saints as martyrs, which motif later became the dominant one. In addition to this, the text unmistakably identifies twice the origin of the saints’ cult by naming their hometown and burial place: Pheremma – near Cyrrhus, confirming thus the hypothesis before the appearance of the London Codex.¹⁴

This short introduction is followed by the catalogue of miracles. The hagiographer divided them into forty-seven sections with each miracle story receiving a unique number and a title. Because of the destruction of the middle of the codex, there is a huge lacuna, with ten folios missing, that would have contained miracles 12–20 (after the missing pages we kept the consecutive numbering, just like Rupprecht and all previous scholars referring to the text). The hand is easily readable, and there are painted floral decorations in colour. An encomium to Archangel Michael is found at the end of the codex written by another hand.¹⁵

This edition naturally calls for comparison with the later, Deubnerian version of the miracles, which has not only survived in a great number of manuscripts but also differs at various points from the London Codex. The Deubner-collection contains 48 miracles, divided into six sections,

11 Rustefjaell 1909: 5.

12 For more on the lives of Byzantine hagiography cf. Ševčenko 1981 and Patlagean 1979.

13 Rupprecht 1935: vii.

14 Cf. footnote 5.

15 The codicological description of the text: *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum in the years MDCCCXVI-MDCCCX*, 1912: 73; Halkin 1935; including some photographs, Rustafjaell 1909: 89–98.

but for chronology we can now disregard the later 5th part and the thirteenth century 6th part of Deubner's collection. Considering that from the London Codex is missing roughly 10 miracles because of the missing folios in the middle, but we include the *in vita* miracles, then we end up with 24 miracles present in both collections, and 14 miracles unique to the London Codex. Interestingly, the first two miracles of the Codex are *post mortem* miracles that took place in Pheremma, at the church built upon the tomb of the saints. These stories in the Deubner-version figure as *in vita* miracles.¹⁶

Another special characteristic is that, unlike in the Deubner texts, the miracles here do not start with short introductions or epilogues, and they end with short doxologies. A further curiosity is, although the Deubner versions are longer, these shorter miracles contain more precise descriptions of the illnesses.

16 For an easier overview cf the table of the corresponding miracles in Csepregi 2024: 203.

The parallel stories of the two collections (without the *in vita* miracles) are the following:

- CL 5 – KDM 1
- CL 6 – KDM 3
- CL 7 – KDM 33
- CL 9 – KDM 6
- CL 11 – KDM 25
- CL 13 – KDM 11
- CL 14 – KDM 27
- CL 21 – KDM 17
- CL 22 – KDM 20
- CL 23 – KDM 9
- CL 24 – KDM 19
- CL 25 – KDM 13
- CL 26 – KDM 23
- CL 28 – KDM 28
- CL 29 – KDM 31
- CL 30 – KDM 32
- CL 33 – KDM 21
- CL 34 – KDM 22
- CL 35 – KDM 26
- CL 36 – KDM 29
- CL 37 – KDM 30

When placed into the larger context of Byzantine hagiography, the uniqueness of the London Codex lies in its Egyptian colouring and in its Monophysite position. This in itself is understandable, because after the synod of Chalcedon (451 AD), a greater part of Egypt remained faithful to the Monophysite credo. But as Cosmas and Damian became more popular and their cult spread, they were re-programmed – while the later versions subscribe to the Chalcedonian creed, this text calls the Monophysite saints as Orthodox. This shift between what is regarded as Orthodox or heretic is not unknown in Byzantine hagiography, but the London Codex gives a good example how a set of miracles attached to the same healers can change its theological standing.¹⁷ “Among the subjects most in the air – hagiographically speaking – at the present time are, on the one hand, that of twin saints and twin gods and, on the other, that of the practice of ‘incubation’ in the shrines of medical saints and divinities” – wrote E.R. Crum in 1908. After more than a century of Cinderella’s sleep, research on incubation miracles is back again.

17 Csepregi 2010; for a similar conclusion cf. Booth 2011.

The life, work, and miracles of the holy healers Cosmas and Damian

[fol. 1 r] [...] by soothing the pain, these benefits of medical action have provided everyone with an eternally inexhaustible grace. Their mother was called Theodothe, whose parents were induced by divine tidings to name her thus as a great gift from God. For she fulfilled the divine command, as the holy root and the tree that grows well, for by the fruit, the tree is known, according to the Saviour's saying.¹⁸ She gave birth to these saints. For the good tree bears good fruit,¹⁹ as the Lord himself says. And they were brought up worthy and godly by their mother, grew up and gave themselves to the craft of healing men, thinking that the wisdom of the world is a handmaiden of the wisdom above, and saying that art is more solid when based on faith that cannot be deceived, [fol. 1 v] they healed diseases, showing the futility of burning and cutting wounds, rejecting human cures, and calling the spells and talismans a deception of mortals, declaring that Christ's power truly conquers all diseases and that by this means alone, both humans with understanding and animals without understanding can be healed, fulfilling the word of David the prophet: "Men and animals you save, O Lord."²⁰ Moreover, they have excelled in all the human qualities, so much so that no one could enumerate their virtues and, turning the divine illumination to their thinking, they have distinguished themselves by miracles and not by profit, as they have accepted no payment from the healed, asking only as payment that they might believe in God and give thanks to him who, by his grace, gives so many gifts to people. The gift they had received they passed on, according to the Saviour's teaching,²¹ given to his disciples, when he said that it was impossible to receive the gifts of God without faith; as the apostle says,²² the saints from long ago²³ [fol. 2 r] through their faith have pleased God [...] rule is eternal and who creates in his image. Thus says

18 Mt 12:33.

19 Mt 7:17.

20 Ps 36:7.

21 Mt 10:8.

22 Cf. Heb 11:4-5 and Rom 4.

23 Cf. Lk 1:70; Acts 3:21.

the Saviour, “My Father worketh all the days of my life, and I also will work”²⁴ – as he renews our bodily frame and makes it shine with his brightness. Laying this task also upon his chosen sons, He has handed this, which continuously works until completion, to them and has said, also to those who in the future will believe Him through these, that: “Whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater works than these.”²⁵ He also said: “I am the light,”²⁶ and he said it to them again: “You are the light of the world.”²⁷ And just as a lantern lights a lantern, we are kindled one by one by encouraging one another [fol. 2 v] [...] diseases were often driven out. Because of their good deeds, people have given praise to the name and image of the saints, and acknowledged the grace that was given to them, until now and until the end of time, helping everybody to pray to God to heal our bodies and give salvation to our souls. And in this, the saints Cosmas and Damian listened to Christ as their Lord and the one who spoke to them: “Let your light shine before men,”²⁸ and that “you may heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons: ye have received freely, ye give freely”²⁹ [...] in all the world [...] [fol. 3 r] [...] as the apostle says: “And without faith it is impossible to please God.”³⁰ And the Lord himself says: “All things are possible to him that believeth.”³¹ These saints had the same faith. And you, listeners, who hear the account of these miracles, should not only rejoice; whatever miracles you hear that the saints have performed, you need to consider them small and slight. Indeed, out of the many, we have chosen to narrate but few for you to lead you who hear to believe the rest. But let us begin the narrative.

The saints Cosmas and Damian, having already healed many patients by the grace given to them by God, did not want it to be known to many, lest they become those who seek the recognition of men, as it is always the habit of saints to hide their virtues. As many people tried to write

24 John 5:17.

25 John 14:12

26 John 8:12.

27 Mt 5:14.

28 Mt 5:16.

29 Mt 10:8.

30 Heb 11:6.

31 Mark 9:23.

down what they had accomplished in their wandering lives, they prevented this by replying: “The grace of these healings belongs to God, the one who operates everything when he wishes and as he wishes; and what he did before is recorded in the gospels, which show that he is the true God.” [fol. 3 v] [...] not being worthy that the saints should conceal the plentiful miracles which they have wrought, since Christ says, “The city which is built on a mountain cannot hide, neither do they light a candle to put it under a bushel,”³² but they took no payment from anyone, as I said.³³

Miracle 1 (Deubner vita 2/3)

A woman named Palladia, long bedridden, spent whatever she had on secular physicians and received no help from them (for she had long been suffering from a semi-tertian fever, was confined to bed, and had lost her bodily strength). Hearing from some people that the medicine of Cosmas and Damian, the healers of Christ, was trustworthy and that they never asked payment for healing, she had her family members lift her bed and carry her from her home to them, for she could no longer walk. And they, learning of her faith and that of her attendants, seeing that it was like the faith of those who had once lowered the paralytic man in his bed to where the Saviour was,³⁴ gave her the same health as a gift of grace in the same hour. She returned to her house with great thanksgiving, [fol. 4 r] pledging to bring them three eggs. But knowing that the saints would not accept payment from anyone, she met with Damian in secret and asked him to receive them. As Damian refused, saying that servants of Christ heal as the Lord commands and not for a fee and that it was well known to her that others have received healing from them freely, she swore to Damian that in the name of Christ the Saviour, he needs to accept the three eggs. Fearing these oaths, he took the eggs, and immediately went and gave [the eggs] to people in need. As long as Damian was alive, Cosmas knew nothing of this. Once he completed his lifetime, Damian departed to eternity with saints to find his rest in Christ. Having

32 Mt 5:14; 4:21.

33 Cf. 1v.

34 Mt 9:2

duly buried the corpse, Cosmas himself was left to help heal all the ailing. He later learned that while still alive, Damian had received eggs from Palladia; he was seized with an unusual sorrow and said to himself: "We who have given up our own, how can we accept another's? The grace of the three cannot be bought with three eggs."³⁵ As he said this, he immediately called his family and friends, asking that when his life ended, not to bury him [fol. 4 v] in the same tomb with Damian, but to bury his body at a distance. But the Lord, who knows the hidden things, stood before Cosmas that night and said: "You did not do the right thing, blaming Damian for the three eggs, because he had respected the oath taken in my name, and asking not to be buried with him. He did not accept the eggs as payment, nor did he break the oath; like Saul who, fearing for his son Jonathan, would have accepted death, had not the people's plea saved him."³⁶ Thus convinced, the saint gave up his sorrow against his brother and told no one of the assurance sent to him by divine foresight lest the gift of prophecy should be attributed to him, as he was already renowned for miracles. Reaching places far and wide, he healed everyone, whatever their illness. In one place, he found a camel tormented by the jealousy of the demon, and he took hold of its leg and restored it to the health it had before the torment, telling those around it that the demon was destroying both man and beast with his jealousy. He also performed many other kinds of healing, which he prevented from being recorded, [fol. 5 r] imitating Christ, who prevented his miracles from being made public, he also fell asleep [i.e., died], leaving him to be separated from his brother, as was said. His friends, wishing to take proper care of his body, were troubled as to what to do about the funeral, as he had instructed them not to bury him with Damian. And behold, the camel whose leg he had healed came running, with a human voice, at God's command, and crying: "Cosmas and Damian have not only become benefactors to you humans but were also given to us animals for salvation. Thus I come here in thanksgiving for all this, having received a voice from God, to tell you what was entrusted to me to tell, that the Lord and King appeared to Cosmas the healer long ago, when he was alone, and commanded that he should in no case be separated in the grave from

35 Rupprecht: *ad trinitatis doctrinam spectare videtur, nisi forte τριῶν corruptum est.*

36 1 Sam 14:24-45.

Damian. So make sure that his corpse will lie beside him. I was forced to tell you this, even against my nature.” Having said this, the camel again recovered its own voice. They all heard this with great joy, and they put the remains of the saints Cosmas and Damian together in the same place, a place called Pheremma, which is in Cyrrhus. There, many healings and miracles have taken place and are taking place for the glory of the exalted God. [fol. 5 v]

Miracle 2 (Deubner vita 4)

About the peasant who swallowed a snake

After their burial, the Christians, thankful to the servants of Christ, built a large and magnificent church on the spot where they were buried. When the church was finished, they came from all over to draw from the ever-abundant grace of their healings, as from some common spring, hastening there daily.

While all this was going on, a peasant who lived in that region, when summer had arrived and was, as usual, ripening spring's seeds in the fields towards maturity, he was heartily reaping the harvest as was his custom. One day, noon came upon him while he was harvesting. Scorched by the blazing sun, he left his work and lay under a tree to cool off. After lying down for a while, he fell asleep sweetly slumbering and did not know that he had accidentally left his mouth open. Crawling there, a serpent reached him and, as the Enemy's weapon from the beginning, acting under his power, descended through the man's mouth into his belly as if in a lair. The peasant, satiated with sleep, awoke and, suspecting no evil, kept reaping the fields until evening. [fol. 6 r] Having gathered a bountiful harvest, he went home satisfied. He had dinner with his wife and went to bed at nightfall, tired from work and trying to sleep when the snake started stirring inside. Amid aches and pains, he thought he had picked up something from the food, so he vomited it all up in spasms. He spent the night sleepless while the snake bit and gnawed at his insides. When his wife woke up at dawn, she called several doctors who were renowned in their profession, but none of them could identify the cause of the internal convulsion. Spending the whole day in pain, unable to eat anything or sleep for even a little while, and besides

belching foul breath from the panting of the venomous beast, making wailing noises, he paced up and down his house, begging his companions to take him to the saving church of the servants of Christ, Cosmas and Damian. So the very same day, they took him to Pheremma, where, as already mentioned, was the tomb of the saints; it was already evening, and going straight to the sanctuary, he raised his hands and cried out: “God of saints Cosmas and Damian, give me deliverance from my pains!” [fol. 6 v] And the saints had pity on him, and while the serpent was resting in him, the peasant lay down in the holy place, trusting in the saints, and waited gladly until the dawn. When it started dawning, he was lying on his back with his mouth open, and he noticed nothing, as he had not before, when the serpent descended. Well, the snake was driven out by the saints and left his mouth, except for the tip of its tail, which remained there until sunlight. Everybody flocked together to see the sight; the man awoke and leaped up, and the serpent fled the multitude of people, left the sanctuary area, and went out of sight while nobody touched it. The peasant and the crowd sang praises and glorified God, who had given such grace through his saints.

Miracle 3 (Deubner vita 5)

About the wife of Malchus

Later, there was a godly man named Malchus, who always spent time in the saint’s church and was also a member of the group of helpers there because of his great faith in the saints. Necessity forced him to start preparing for a trip. Together with his wife, they went to the church of the saints and prayed before the journey for his safe return from [fol. 7 r] abroad and for their union. Setting his wife before the saints, the man said, “Look, I am setting you before the saints while preparing for my way to a foreign land. Stay at home until I come back to you again. If something happens to me to make me linger there, I will send somebody for thee, using agreed signs.” Explaining the agreed signs to her, he departed. But an evil demon had overheard the signs given to the woman. And while Malchus was abroad, the demon, assuming the form of a youth, went to the woman, as if sent by her husband to take her to him, and addressed her with the agreed signal. The woman recognized the signs but looked suspiciously at the strange appearance and

demanded an oath by the saints that the person trying to take her away under the guise of a youth would do her no harm. The demon was delighted to swear by the mighty saints at the altar, saying: “By the power of Cosmas and Damian, I will do you no harm, providing a good journey to deliver you safely to your husband. So he put her on a horse and led her away. They went round and round; the demon left the straight road and led her up a steep, rocky cliff, and then suddenly [fol. 7 v] pushed her from the animal to her death. As she fell, she was intercepted by a rock. Lifting her eyes, she immediately called to the saints: “Servants of God, Cosmas and Damian, do not delay to help me in this distress, me whom my husband has entrusted to you, for you know well that I left my home trusting the oath in you, entrusting you with everything.” And at the woman's word, saints Cosmas and Damian appeared in the shape of horsemen, and others were following them. The demon saw them, started wailing, and disappeared. The saints told the woman to calm down and not be distraught, explaining that they were Cosmas and Damian, whom she had called for help. They immediately took her back to Pheremmma, to the entrance of their church. She told all the people there what happened and, rejoicing with them, thanked the saints and referred glory to Christ, who had given such grace to his saints.

Miracle 4 (-)

The peasant with gangrened feet

While these miracles took place around the consecration of the church of saints Cosmas and Damian long ago, one must not be silent about the following miracles that took place in our country because of them. “One generation shall praise thy works to another),”³⁷ [fol. 8 r] says David the prophet in praise of God, who is now also moving us towards praise by showing, through Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian, the same miracles to us, his descendants.

There once lived a peasant man whose life was always troubled. For, as Solomon says, “a sluggard’s appetite is never filled”³⁸ – and indeed, he

37 Ps 145:4.

38 Pr 13:4.

was not a sluggard when it came to depravity, devoting himself to the company of the pleasure-seekers; all that he earned from peasant work he spent on whores, and since this never ceased, he was always their companion in debauchery. He did not do anything decent and was always busy making God angry. This man was once digging the soil with a two-pronged hoe, as was his custom, and he struck his right foot with the hoe and made a great wound in it. His coworkers lifted him and carried him home, where he lay down and no longer seemed to be distressed about the wound. As night fell, however, the wound started swelling, and the whole body was eventually affected. In the morning, those by his side called a doctor who, seeing that this was not the usual wound, as it was also rapidly rotting, advised him: "If you wish to remain alive and not die suddenly, allow me to cut off the leg on which the wound is; for if I do not cut it off quickly, the condition will spread over the whole body and cause death." Having said this, [fol. 8 v] the doctor went to prepare the supplies and the knife for the cut. The peasant realized the trouble he was in and that he brought this upon himself. He burst into tears, groaned, and said: "Lord and my God, you alone know my sins, that they are unspeakable. But I also know your mercy, that you measure them according to your greatness and compassion. My condition is not fit for human hands. But you can heal me, through thy servants Cosmas and Damian, to whom thou have given the healing that soothes the pain." While he was lamenting and pleading with God with these and similar words, in the middle of the night, the saints appeared to him as physicians and said: "Man, you could you not endure this short time of pain that was brought on you for the sake of chastisement; how will you stand against the everlasting wrath prepared against you?"

But if you want to be saved here and now, repent by swearing an oath, promising us that you will live the rest of your life soberly and obey the rest of God's commandments." And he swore with fear and great joy and made a vow, for he knew they were the saints. And they lifted his foot that was wounded and squeezed out all the pus out of it. And when they had cleansed him, [fol. 9 r] the wound was healed with a single touch so that not even a scar remained to be seen. Then they told him, "Look, now there is nothing wrong with your body. Make your soul healthy, too." Having said this, they left him. As the morning came, the peasant went

out into the field to do his usual work, rejoicing for the salvation of his soul as much as his body, and he spent the rest of his life doing good deeds. At sunrise, the doctor came, bringing the supplies needed for the cut. Hearing that the peasant went out into the field, free from harm, he went all over the countryside to announce the miracle. The man who was cured and all who heard of it praised God, who had given such grace through his saints.

Miracle 5 (Deubner 1)

About the man with dropsy

Then there was the respectable old man who got ill with dropsy. His bloated belly was touching his beard, and he was not able to see anything from the navel downwards. He came to the church of saints Cosmas and Damian, who unflinchingly come to the aid of all; he lay down and, with great sighs, begged to be healed. Seeing that many had gained a cure for their illness before his eyes, he despaired, [fol. 9 v] how only he remains so unfortunate in his illness. After a while, he despaired about recovery, so he decided to return home. His household servants put the equipment they had brought for their needs onto a ship, and he was taken on a stretcher to the harbor; they left him there alone to go back to fetch the boat, where they would put him after they had anchored. Having thus sent his servants, he waited for the boat. The saints came to him, appearing as local inhabitants, and said, “Old man, why are you sitting here alone, all seized by the constraint of illness?” He said he was waiting for the servants to return. They encouraged him to return to the saints’ sanctuary and wait for healing from them. But he angrily lashed out against the saints, saying, “I would rather choose to go and die at home than elsewhere. For even if I should wish to return to those who have no intention of healing me, none of my servants are here.” Again, they encouraged him, gently drilling [fol. 10 r] his character and said, “Do not scorn the saints, old man! Rather, beseech them even more than before, for they can heal you since none of those who come to them are deserted without providence. So obey us, we will take you there.” The man was persuaded, so they picked up the stretcher with the patient to take him back to the church where he had been before and then disappeared. Then, realizing it was the saints, he begged to be healed, much more than

before. At night, they appeared to him in a dream while sleeping. They seemed to have a sharpened razor in their hands. Thus said one to the other: “Make a cut on this wretch, and cut deep, that he may learn to speak with purer words and not to revile us.” So one of them cut, and the stomach that was ripped open by the cut filled the place with much stench and pus. But they did not consider it unworthy to endure the stench. The man awoke from his sleep, saw the healing, and began to worry again about how he was going to [fol. 10 v] to find a cure for the cut. The saints appeared to him again and told him to put the wax salve³⁹ from their church on the cut. He applied it and was completely healed; he returned home again in good health, praising the Lord and glorifying his saints.⁴⁰

Miracle 6 (Deubner 3)

About the man with urinary hesitancy

Later, there was again an old man in pain from urinary retention who suffered unusual pain, as the urine never left his body without agony. So drinking and non-drinking water were both dangerous for him, as sometimes he feared it would flood his passages, and sometimes he feared it would dry them out. The physicians who were called tried many remedies, now ointments, now potions, but nothing worked for the old man. Eventually, he embraced faith and fled to the church sanctuary of saints Cosmas and Damian, and there he pestered them, alone, for three days to bring him a speedy cure. A devotee of the saints, a godly man named Cosmas,⁴¹ once brought a lamb. This lamb was named Cosmas by the church servants after the donor; [fol. 11 r] and it lived in the front courtyard of the church and grazing there. The saints, appearing on the

39 Gr. κηρωτή, “cerate or salve, used medically” (LSJ), from Latin *cera*, wax; a wax salve was a preparation for external application, of a consistency between that of an ointment and a plaster (can be spread upon cloth but does not melt when applied to the skin).

40 Here, it is said that the church of the saints is next to a harbor, where the patient is traveling somewhere. Would Pheremma, today’s archeological site next to A’zaz in Syria, be by a river? Instead, without any specific marking, we have moved (or returned?) to the events in Constantinople – a talented man with servants.

41 A detail missing from the Deubner miracle.

fourth night, said to the one who had urinary retention: “Take a few hairs from Cosmas’ pubic area, throw them in water, and drink them well mixed, and you will be cured immediately.” The old man woke up from his sleep and understood nothing of what was said to him.⁴² At the order of the saints, the lamb came into the place where he was and, stopping in front of him, bleated several times and stood there baaing at the old man. When the servants saw this, they laughed and cried: “Cosmas, what is the matter with you?” The man, recognizing the meaning of the dream by the saints’ grace, called for a barber (for he was not far away), told him to shear off some of the hair around the lamb’s genitals, and drank the wool in a glass of water. The passages in his body opened, and the water flowed out, washing out his urine, so to speak. The man returned home healed, praising God and thanking the saints.

Miracle 7 (Deubner 33)

About the stenographer

Afterward, there was the man who was at the head of the royal archives, [fol. 11 v] he distinguished himself with a shining career at the palace. But a bitter sickness befell him, for he was tormented from within with intestinal spasms, so much so that it seemed as if snakes were biting him. The overwhelming pain and sleeplessness nearly drove him insane, and he had no one to comfort him, for his beloved wife had died shortly before. None of the physicians could tell him either the nature or the cause of the illness, which was relieved by nothing but bathing. However, another disease arose among the servants who bathed with him daily until they all fell ill from frequent bathing. So the servant girls served in their place, but as they were not allowed to go to the men’s baths, they heated water in the house, prepared the bath in the room, and bathed the man there. But it was upsetting to him to have the women see his private parts, which even other men should not see. As it had not improved at all, [fol. 12 r] he sought shelter in the sanctuary church of

42 There is no mention of consulting votive tablets. Could that refer to the practice of a larger, more famous shrine?

saints Cosmas and Damian in Blachernai⁴³ since he was a pitiful sight, for his whole flesh was melted away, and only his skeleton remained visible. His voice was no longer audible, and his eyes were barely detectable from their sockets. His appearance was unrecognizable to those who had known him for a long time. There, in that holy place, he begged the saints to give him a cure for the illness. He no longer had a single servant, as his whole household had left him. Some of those who saw him took pity on him and provided for his needs, but this did not always happen. But then God, who surpasses all in compassion, took pity on him and sent the saints to examine him. They were not repulsed by the terrible stench of the man's grave illness and did not consider him unworthy of assistance but instead appeared as if it were amid a pleasant odor that they exuded. They cut his navel in twain with a metal scalpel, and immediately pus mixed with worms came out. Afterward, he oiled the cut with wax from the holy place, [fol. 12 v] and he fully recovered his health, so he returned to his home, praising God and giving thanks to the saints.

43 This is the Cosmidion - , a church and a monastery-complex erected on the shores of the Golden Horn, which was one of the most beautiful and most frequented churches in Constantinople. According to tradition, it was founded by Paulinus, *magister officiorum* and a schoolmate of Emperor Theodosius II (AD 408-450). the construction of the church may have taken place around 439 AD. Although the role of Paulinus in connection to the church cannot be ascertained, it is sure that the Cosmidion stood in the Paulinus quarter of the city, i.e. on the property of a man called Paulinus. About the monastery adjacent to the church, we do not know exactly when it was built; first known mention of it comes from 518 AD. Procopius described it with enthusiasm in *Buildings* I. vi. 5-8. Michael IV (1034-1041) fortified and enlarged the building complex, and it is at this time that the exterior sacred precinct, gardens, marble mosaics, and a bath were constructed. The privileged status of the church remained as late as 1453, the year of its (supposed) destruction. The exact place of its sanctuary cannot be identified. The building was often named and re-named after the surrounding area - either after the Paulinus quarter or after the Brachys or Lymphidarios quarters. The London Codex repeatedly refers to this church as the church of Cosmas and Damian in the Blachernai (CL7, 17, 18, 20, 37 but also in Deubner KDM 18). It must refer to the famous church of Mary of the Blachernai, and the testimonies of Russian pilgrims confirm the proximity of that church.

Miracle 8 (-)*About the man with a withered arm*

Afterward, there was a man whose arm was withered; his arm was in spasm and gave him no relief whatsoever for three months; the pain from the spasm of the nerves in his right arm tormented him day and night, until, as I said, three months had passed. After that, the right arm gradually dried up and could do nothing according to its nature. His arm was as if it were dead. This man, putting his hopes after God in saints Cosmas and Damian, went to their church, and there, falling into bed, he implored the saints, persevering every hour in instinctive hope of recovery. There was a deer that someone once brought to the saints and was grazing there, wandering among the bedridden. One day, the dry-armed man was lying in his bed while his cloak was hung up by the cuffs, and by God's nudge, the deer came and started to pull it and nibble on it. The man tried to scare it away with words, [fol. 13 r] for he could not do it with his hand; neither those who lay beside him nor their assistants were alarmed by the deer but instead laughed with great cheerfulness. The man, seeing that they were laughing at the animal and not frightening it away, felt ashamed because of this and was compelled to try to move his dry arm little by little, crying and at the same time scolding those around him. He began to frighten the animal, and gradually, his arm became like the other, his arm hand again the right arm God had originally made it to be, the nerves eventually functional and working according to their nature. Then those who had just laughed restrained themselves due to great fear, and they and the man healed sang in harmony, "Lord, have mercy," and hymns to God, who had bestowed such grace on his saints.

Miracle 9 (Deubner 6)*About the chest pain sufferer*

Afterward, an old man suffering from chest pains was lying ill in the church of saints Cosmas and Damian. With great sighs, he spat out pus mixed with blood every hour. As the pain increased day by day, his wife began [fol. 13 v] to prepare his funeral and mourning clothes, as he was blaspheming against the saints. When the pain increased again, instead

of praying to the saints, he used incredibly haughty words. But the saints, who are the servants of the All-generous in all things, were not the least bit angry at his recklessness. Appearing in a dream to someone lying close to him, they told him to tell the old man with chest pains the following: “Stop your slander against us. And stop eating poultry, especially during these days.” For the man had sinned in the sanctuary of the saints, namely, it was the time of the forty days’ holy fasting, and he ate fowl every day. “You shall abstain from eating these things,” they said. “Eat bread, salt, and all kinds of vegetables. And if you respect these two commands, we can heal you.” The man [who had the dream] went to the sick man and told him about the dream, gladly fulfilling the instructions entrusted to him. Having previously cursed, the patient began to pronounce blessings; he gave up eating fowl and ate food fit for fasting, not only then but for the rest of his life. The saints, as they wished, cleansed his gullet of blood and pus and [fol. 14 r] full health was given to him. And he gave much thanks to Christ, who had given such grace to his saints.

Miracle 10 (-)

About Stephanos, the Sophist

Afterward, there was a clever sophist named Stephanos, versed in all disciplines; his moniker was Tarsian orator; he was well-versed in the books of the ancient philosophers, so much so that he was writing pagan books himself. Enraptured by this man’s reputation, many came to him and became his disciples. Some pernicious disease struck him, and in a short time, he was blinded; his eyes were open, and still, he could see nothing. The others, who were wandering in the dark because of him, could see the sun, but, as I said, they could see nothing and considered his blindness a common affliction. Why waste more words? He came to the harbor of salvation, namely the church of saints Cosmas and Damian, and stayed there. In the fifth year, the saints appeared and healed him, telling him his eyes should be pierced with a medicinal knife. Awakening from his sleep, [fol. 14 v] he told the doctors about the provision. The doctors thus pricked his eyes in the places they agreed on while he was

in the sanctuary of the holy place.⁴⁴ After a while, the darkness left his eyes, and he, who used to be dim-sighted for a long time, was now sharp-eyed. He even wrote a book of praise to the saints, giving thanks for the wisdom of God, who had given such grace to his saints.

Miracle 11 (Deubner 25)

About the man who had a wise wife

Afterward, there was a man of a pious nature, keeping God's commandments, living righteously and godly. He had a wise and faithful wife. The devil, desiring to destroy their good concord, planted suspicious thoughts against her in his heart. From then on, the man, jealously suspecting the woman about everything, lived a terrible life. And she could not convince him otherwise, even after taking a dreadful oath. Again and again, the woman urged him not to be upset, saying that she had never betrayed the purity of their marriage, but the man did not believe her; once he became angry, he remained in such a state of mind. Falling a little ill, he went to the church of Cosmas and Damian, who always cure incurable diseases. Lying there [...]

Lacuna: 10 folios missing [post hoc folium iniquitate fortunae inter-ciderunt folia circiter decem].

Miracle 12⁴⁵ (-)

About the cancer patient

[fol. 15 r] [...] he did not lie, he did not perjure himself, as they say: he did not slip up at all. He had a strong faith in every respect and participated in the divine mysteries every time. This man fell into a terrible illness, for he fell ill in the middle of his loins. Amid his groin, the glans of the penis developed an ulcer, a so-called canker sore. In a short time, the pain became severe, and the wound got infested by worms. He bore the pain heroically and resolved to himself that he would not show his

44 It is a great example for surgery performed in the church!

45 Following the consecutive numbering of the miracle 21; the heading is missing and thus conjectural.

ailment to any of the human doctors. He put his hope in saints Cosmas and Damian. As the pain grew worse day by day, his friends urged him to show his pain to doctors. He said he had two doctors who were very knowledgeable in the craft, by which he meant the saints. But they kept pestering him, not understanding whom he meant, and again, he said he had two doctors. He always spoke thus, whenever the pain increased, shaking off human medicine, he hoped in the saints for a cure, and the saints approved of his faith, for they came at night, ready to help, and said to him, "Child, since you expected to be [fol. 15 v] delivered from pain, you will be cured." Awakening from his sleep, he examined his wound and found that the saints' grace had instantly healed him; the wound had not left even a scar, and he had regained his former health. He realized that saints Cosmas and Damian had come to him, and their work healed the disease. He gave thanks to them, but even more to Christ, who had granted them this grace.

Miracle 13 (Deubner 11)

About the man with an abscess

Afterward, there was a man with a corrupt life, for he was always running after the pleasures of the spectacles of the race courses, and there, with corrupt men, he would applaud and encourage the winners. To educate this man and discourage him from evil, the one who desires the greater good sent him a so-called abscess on his chin, which he bore with incredible difficulty. He sought refuge with Cosmas and Damian, the genuine healers of troublesome diseases. He lay down in the holy church of the saints, believing them capable of healing, while he wept, sobbed, and felt terrible pain. They appeared to him. [fol. 16 r] in the middle of the night, he kindly revealed the remedy for the disease, saying to him, "If you want to be cured of this illness, take a cup of cedar oil, drink it, and you will be cured swiftly." Waking up, he thought it was a trifle, some fantasy, and said to himself: "The saints would never command anybody to drink such a thing." As he was thinking, the saints appeared to him again and said for the second time, "If you want to be cured, drink two cups of cedar oil instead of one." The man was no less disdainful about what was said afterward, saying that it was a dreamy fantasy, that the saints do not command doing such things to anyone. Appearing to him a

third time, they instructed him: “If you want to find a cure for your ailment, drink three cups of cedar oil.” He did nothing of the command, saying that the vision was a dream and a fantasy. Appearing for the fourth time, they told him: “Man, why did you not follow the instruction?” He answered them: “Sirs, I was afraid that drinking cedar oil would bring harm.” And they, desiring to heal his soul as well as his body, laughed at him ironically and said, “If you will not drink the three cups of cedar oil, [fol. 16 v] then pour the three cups into a pitcher and go home. At midnight, rise and go to the hippodrome inside the city, and while no one will be looking, dig up a hole, hide the whole pitcher, and go. If you do so, you will see the healing that will take place within you.” The saints said this due to the cursed horse racing and its fame; they wanted to free him from this evil habit and to heal his soul along with his body, as I said before. As he was told, he took the three cups of cedar oil, poured them into a pitcher, and went to the hippodrome at midnight to hide the pitcher. A man saw him as he went there; the man followed him, for he was curious to know what he was doing. He attended everything, considering the time and the place, and when he saw that even those who carried the sick man retreated to stay at a distance from him, he said to himself that this man had to be doing something that was neither proper nor good. The tracker went and quickly gathered a large crowd and surprised the man just as he was burying the pitcher; they tied him up tightly, saying that he was a poisoner and had done all this at the expense [fol. 17 r] of one of the team’s jockeys. They threatened him violently, telling him twice or thrice that if he did not reveal his machinations and the reason for his actions, he would be handed over to the authorities and severely prosecuted for his undertakings. Driven into such peril, the man felt his illness was secondary. His captors said to him: “Explain your meddling to us. If not, tell us why you are here at this hour. Show us if you are free of every evil intent.” So he began to tell his captors everything, namely, “I am not a poisoner at all, but, suffering from a long-standing illness, I called upon saints Cosmas and Damian to cure my affliction. They appeared and told me to drink three cups of cedar oil. But I did not do as I was told and fled from the cedar oil, fearing it would harm me. As I would not drink the three cups of cedar oil, they commanded me to pour them into a pitcher and leave them buried in

this place.” When people heard this, some became indignant, saying. “The saints would never command anybody to drink something like that. They are good, and they ask people [fol. 17 v] to do good and valuable things. So they could not prescribe such a treatment or ask him to do this. Carry out the commandment of the saints before our eyes; convince us that what you say is true, and we will deliver you from all harm.” So he, desiring to prove that he was free from such reproach, took the vessel and said bitterly to himself: “Then I would not drink it at the command of the saints; now I drink it at the command of men. Now that I think of it, I can see that the saints have brought about this end.” And so he drank the three cups of cedar oil. He immediately vomited up and, together with the cedar oil, vomited up all the causes of the sickness and was absolved from the blame of those who were there. Henceforth, he turned away from the spectacle of horse racing and lived his life more concerned with the salvation of his soul than his body, giving thanks to the saints and even more to Christ, the God who effects all healing.

Miracle 14 (Deubner 27)

About the man who fell off his horse and broke his leg

Afterward, there was a messenger, a pious man who was riding a horse and broke his leg when he fell. He called doctors who were said to be good at bandaging [fol. 18 r] and expected them to cure him. They wanted to bandage the leg with splints and apply healing remedies if he would let them. But the patient forbade them to apply remedies until they brought the wax salve from saints Cosmas and Damian and mixed it with their remedies. The overthrowers of all sickness saw his faith, visited him by night, and said that they were the ones he had asked for, saying: “Now we have come to your house.” Filled with joy, he reached for the light in his dreams and encouraged the saints to enter and examine him. They came and asked him what was wrong with him. The man showed them his leg, knee, and bandage on his leg. The saints encouraged him to bear his illness lightly: “For you will recover quickly.” With these words, they untied the bandage on his leg and said to him: “We will come again on the third day and provide you with full health.” Marking his leg and knee with the sign of the cross in the name of Christ, they departed from him. Early in the morning, the doctors who had

bandaged him arrived and, seeing the bandage untied with skill, [fol. 18 v] were greatly astonished. They did not know what to do and asked the man who had untied the bandages. He told them about his dream. They were amazed to see the patient sitting there with a cheerful face, as they had never known such a case, and they were astounded. None dared to touch him, saying: “None of us will lay our hands where the pair of saints have laid their hands.” So they went away without doing anything. On the third day, the saints appeared to the man as promised, this time making a sign of the cross on his hand,⁴⁶ encouraging him to get up. After they got him to stand on his feet and told him to take a quick bath, they abruptly left him. When the day broke, he walked carefully, with his servants holding his hand, and went to the bath. After bathing, he gained such strength that he did not need the help of any servant guiding him by the hand but went home alone and running, giving thanks to saints Cosmas and Damian, but even more, for them, to Christ, the God. [fol. 19 r]

Miracle 15 (-)

About the woman with dropsy

Afterward, a woman was suffering from a horrible disease. Her stomach was hugely bloated from dropsy. She went to the sanctuary church of Cosmas and Damian, who heal complicated ailments with ease, and there she lay down and begged them to find healing. The saints appeared and said to her, “If you want to be healed, stay here and do not leave until you find healing.” After spending a few days in the holy place, an envious demon started to trouble her thoughts, so she returned home. But as the trouble worsened and her stomach became even more bloated, she resumed her good disposition and returned to the church of the benefactors, for it was the will of the Stronger one that she should be saved, and again, she begged the saints to heal her. The bloating of her belly was frightening to see. She was disgusted by all food; she wept and groaned, thinking that death was near. She spent four months in the holy church, and the poor woman was hardly any different from a dead person. On the first [fol. 19 v] of July, when the feast of the saints takes place (according

46 For a while, servants will be leading him by his hand (*cheiragogía*).

to the Roman calendar), one of the priests of the holy church came and asked a servant girl how the dropsy-stricken woman was doing. She replied: "Today before dawn, I saw in my dreams how from the image opposite the entrance, which is engraved and has on the two sides the images of Cosmas and Damian, with the Virgin Mother of God between them, one of the two descended and came to the unfortunate woman in great haste (as he is also pictured on the said image), slipped his hand under the woman's dress and felt the dropsy-stricken woman's stomach and belly. And I somehow forgot how he came down from the image; I supposed he was some monk or one of the deacons, and thinking that he had put his hand on the ill woman for some nefarious purpose, I said to him: "This is not cool, wearing such clothes and groping the nakedness of this woman who is so ill." He answered, "It is not why you suppose I am touching her." Again, I said, [fol. 20 r] "You have come to do this because you see she is ill and cannot guard against such things." And he answered me: "Know well that by the eleventh day from today, when the holy feast day of Euphemia the martyr comes, during these ten days, the pain will gradually diminish, and there will be a final healing from the illness." Corresponding to the servant girl's story, from that day onwards, her stomach subsided little by little, and the sickness receded daily. When the promised day arrived, the disease was entirely banished, and her health was restored completely. So thanks be to the saints, but even more to the one who exercises his power through them, Christ, who is God.

Miracle 16 (-)

About another lame man

Afterward, there was an impoverished man⁴⁷ who was always afflicted by the excess of his poverty, and then another trouble came upon him: the disintegration of his limbs. Driven by the need of poverty, he crept to people's doors on his belly, [fol. 20 v] and that was how he provided for his living. Reaching the church of saints Cosmas and Damian, who offer good deeds in their church, he lay down in the narthex in terrible pain. Then he saw the saints in his sleep, saying, "If you want to be healed of

47 Alas, the previous one is not lame! It may be a sign of extraction.

your affliction, do not neglect your illness, but bear it bravely and wait until the day you receive the promise.” Appearing a second time, they gave him a staff and gently said to him: “Child, by leaning on this, exercise the movement of your legs, always moving your arms as well.” He woke from his sleep to find the staff lying on the mat. Immediately, he believed and did as instructed, and swiftly, his limbs tightened up together, as God the Creator had ordained, and he departed in good health, praising God and giving thanks to his saints.

Miracle 17 (-)

About the priest's maid

The priest of the church of saints Cosmas and Damian in Blachernai⁴⁸ had a servant girl who had a terrible illness. Her jaw was suddenly twisted [fol. 21 r] out of its place towards her face, up to her eyes, and her mouth – as far as the twisted face made it possible – was out of place. She was a frightening sight, for her mouth was gaping. She could neither close nor open it nor make an articulate sound and could not eat anything but salty porridge given to her. Plagued by this strange illness, she stayed in the shrine for nine months, asking the saints, in her thoughts, to intercede. After nine months, she dreamed she saw the two priests of the holy church called Cosmas and Damian, after the names of the saints. It was the saints, the servants of God. They said to her: “A sick person is staying here in our church, unknown to us.” But the woman, unable to utter an articulate voice because of her terrible illness, remained silent.⁴⁹ They said to her with compassion: “We will come again on Friday of the coming week to deliver you from your affliction.” The girl waited for the promised [fol. 21 v] day. When the day arrived, the saints came in the same form, and Damian said to Cosmas: “Brother Cosmas, hold this woman down, lest she start a bad fight.” Cosmas held the woman's legs, and Damian took hold of her head with his left hand, and with his right, he put her jaw back in place and made her healthy again. When the woman woke up and learned how the saints had saved her, she told eve-

48 Mention of the Blachernai again.

49 Deubner rev.: ἐνεσιώπησεν. Nescio an ἐνεσιώπησεν emendandum sit.

ryone there about her dream and how the saints had appeared and restored her health. All who heard and saw praised God, who effects such miracles through his saints.

Miracle 18 (-)

About the two men with cataracts in their eyes

Afterward, there was a man named Thomas,⁵⁰ poor by origin; this was also why he was not skilled in any craft, so he lived on begging. He had a cataract in his eyes, and lamenting both his illness and poverty, he came to the church of saints Cosmas and Damian, the wisest of physicians. The servants of God appeared to him and told him to lie on the left side of the sanctuary. He did as he was told. [fol. 22 r] They appeared and said to him, “If you want to regain your health, borrow twenty gold coins⁵¹ from someone, buy birds, and eat, and you will be healed.” They also appeared to the prospective lender of the money and said: “Out of gratitude to us, lend twenty gold coins to the man who comes to you.” Saying this, they gave him the description of Thomas, who was coming to him, and to Thomas, they gave the name and address of the man who would lend him the money. Thomas rose at dawn, went to the man’s workshop, and sat quietly before him. And the man, recognizing his description and knowing that he was the person who was to show himself, tried to test him and said: “What are you looking for? Why have you come here?” He replied: “I came here tired from my journey, to rest a little here.” He said this because he was ashamed to tell the real reason. So he waited, and the other waited even longer, urging him to say why he had come. With great difficulty, he told him about the dreamy command of the saints. The other one said: “Make a receipt, as far as it is possible for the blind person, but this is what is needed, and take the money. For me, the saints

50 Mention of the Blachernai again! There is also a church in Cyrrhus, from there the patient is directed to Blachernai.

51 Gr. *nomisma*, lat. *solidus*, introduced in the fourth century as a successor to the *aureus*, weighed about 4.5 grams. Although no quantity or species is mentioned, paying 3 × 20 nomismata for “birds” seems pricey. Was the blind man binging on ortolan or some comparable illegal delicacy – or could this version of the text somehow echo the period to which the manuscript is dated, namely the eleventh century when the nomisma’s gold content had fallen to 10 percent? Cf. Kaplanis 2003.

have come to vouch for the loan, which is enough.” Thomas took the twenty coins and went shopping [fol. 22 v] and ate the birds. But there was no improvement, for he was still blind. The saints appeared to him a second time and said again: “If you want to find healing, take the money, buy birds with it, and eat.” Again, he went to the one who had lent him money earlier and receiving another twenty gold coins, he bought and ate birds. But his eyes did not improve. The third time, the saints appeared to him and said: “If you want to be healed, go and borrow twenty gold coins again, eat birds, and you will be healed.” So he borrowed the twenty gold coins again, bought birds, and ate them. But he was no less blind than before. Then he began to curse the saints loudly, pulling his hair out and beating his thighs: “Oh, the cruelty of these two; Cosmas and Damian were not able to help me at all. Why am I in debt up to my neck now? I am in the shackles of debt and illness, wretched me. They were not able to cure it. Why did they make me take out such loans? At least I was free from debt, [fol. 23 r] even though I was sick. And now I wear the handcuffs of debt. Woe is me, how miserable I have become among men!” The holy physicians, however, took no heed of these and such impious words but worked all the more to help him. There was another man of the same name, Thomas, an overseer who administered fertile lands. He also had such a disease, a cataract in his eyes. He visited the church of the saints in Cyrrhus, down in Syria, incessantly beseeching the saints to find him a cure. The saints appeared to him, saying: “If you stay here, you cannot find healing, but go quickly to our home in Blachernai. And if you search, you will find there a man named Thomas, who is suffering from your disease, the cataract of the eyes. Give him one hundred and twenty nomismata, and both of you will find healing for your eyes there simultaneously.” He went joyfully to the church at Blachernai, trusting in the promise of the saints. After some searching, he found Thomas. He asked his name and what his illness was. Thomas started up and first asked him back what his illness was, and then said to him [fol. 23 v] loudly: “Why do you ask my illness and my name?” The other replied: “I was looking for you here. I came here like you, with a cataract in my eye, believing that these saints would heal me.” He replied, “Me, they have not healed; moreover, they have driven me into debt. I have made myself a servant of creditors. I wish I had not received such orders, becoming a servant of

those damned creditors with such abominable friends! Go away quickly if you have come here with cataracts, lest they make you a debtor too, for they will certainly not benefit you.” As he spoke thus, the other Thomas admonished him not to say such things against the saints, for they were good and loved humankind; he told him what the saints had promised him and gave him the hundred and twenty nomismata. On receiving this, Thomas rejoiced greatly and praised the saints with much thanksgiving all day long. The other Thomas had made a bed for himself on the bed where the first Thomas had sent him, so they both slept in one place. In the night, the saints stopped by the one who had received the one hundred and twenty nomismata, and one of them said to him: “So today, I see you are giving thanks, Thomas.” And he praised them with a thousand praises because they had freed him from debts. [fol. 24 r] A particular servant saw Thomas coming out of the church, slapped him in the face, and shouted, “You did not come here while sick for the sake of getting well, but rather because of a troublesome desire for money. Happy is he who makes money without troubling himself. I wish I could be so happy, too.” And that one, terribly disturbed with fear, cried out, and with a great cry, he drove the darkness away from his eyes and saw everything clearly. The other Thomas, however, was dreadfully frightened by this cry, and recovering his sight from this disturbance excitement, he also saw the sun clearly. Through the miracle-working saints, therefore, a single healing had taken place for both. For all these things, however, thanks are not due to the saints but rather to Christ himself.⁵²

52 This was a widespread motif, of the icon of Christ giving surety for a loan in popular Christian legends; cf. Mango 1959: 142; Sharf 1971: 60 n. 61; Nelson & Starr 1939-1944; a Christian merchant suffered a shipwreck and, not having his friend help with a new business, turned to a Jewish moneylender who was a specialist in financing such voyages. The man’s friends warned him from doing any business with a Jew, yet they refused to give the surety. An icon of Christ, however, in a church within the Jewish quarter of Constantinople, the Chalthoprataia, miraculously uttered a voice, stating that it accepts all responsibility. When it became necessary, the surety was abundantly paid, and the Jew in the business converted to Christianity.

Miracle 19 (-)*About the man with pleurisy*

Afterward,⁵³ there was a Nestorian man following the abominable dogmas of a man who separated Christ into two natures according to the flesh, not recognizing his mother as the divine mother. He suffered [fol. 24 v] from the terrible disease mentioned. Doctors who were praised as the best in the profession and who said that the disease was evident and that it was congested in the chest could do nothing to help the problem. The abscess in his chest was bleeding terribly, and the man's life was in danger because of the pus that was constantly oozing from the inside. The man had a daughter living in a convent as a virgin. Since it was not customary for nuns to leave the holy sanctuary at all, the man went to the monastery next to the holy healers' church to see his daughter one last time. As the heretic lay there calling on the saints, someone appeared and, with great anger, demanded of him to confess and say the following: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."⁵⁴ And all the following, until "The Word was made flesh and dwelt in us."⁵⁵ As soon as he had confessed this, the other immediately added: "If the Word is God and the Word was made flesh and dwelt in men, he is not divided into parts but is one, and his nature is one. And the one who brought him into the world, giving birth to God the Word, begotten in the flesh, she is the Mother of God." These things having been said, he vanished. But immediately, [fol. 25 r] the saints appeared and said to him: "We are Cosmas and Damian; we willed that you should make this profession of faith; Christ sent us to give you salvation. If you take fava bean mash, you will soon be healed." The man did so and quickly found deliverance from his sickness. And he confessed to the end of his life rightly that the nature of God the Word was one and not divided⁵⁶ and that the holy Virgin Mary was the Mother of God. He gave thanks for the salvation of his soul and body, first to Christ, the God, and then to the saints.

53 In which it also turns out this is a monophysite collection of miracles.

54 John 1:1.

55 John 1:14.

56 This is a clear monophysite creed.

Miracle 20 (-)*About the man who was spitting blood*

Afterward, there was a certain Menas,⁵⁷ a physician highly experienced in his profession, a man of virtue and versed in his craft, who knew diseases by experience and who himself had fallen seriously ill. He was constantly spitting blood. He had tried all the experience of his art and had taken medication, but it did him no good. The arts of Galen and the methods of Hippocrates were useless to Menas, the doctor who was in the grip of the disease. Since the pain was increasing day by day, the doctor finally fled to the infallible doctors of healing, Cosmas and Damian. When he reached their church, which is located in Blachernai, he drew on a painting a sketch of the features [fol. 25 v] of the disease he suffered within him, asking to be cured. Revealing all this to the saints, he expected them to heal him. After a while, the saints appeared and said to him: “Eat the so-called chidron⁵⁸ and rub your chest with warm oil, and do not cool down during your illness. If you do these things which we have prescribed for you, you will soon be free from pain.” He did as he was instructed and was soon cured. Another man, suffering from the same disease, did the same as Menas was prescribed, doing it with his faith, and he, too, was freed from his disease. For all this, thanks indeed to the saints, but even more thanks to God.

Miracle 21 (Deubner 17)*About the paralyzed heretic*

Afterward, there was a man⁵⁹ who had two illnesses: one was a severe physical ailment, as the joints below his knees were paralyzed down to the feet. The other ailment pertained to his soul, the heresy of the Diphysites. This man went to the venerable church of saints Cosmas and Damian, the healers of Christ. Still, he did not dare to stay within the

57 Blachernai mentioned again; and the patient is himself a doctor.

58 Wheat porridge; unripe wheaten-groats.

59 It is important to compare the two versions, heresy and orthodoxy are reversed! Cf. the earlier Mir. 19 (CL 19), where one can even read the creed about the one nature of Christ; the saints are emphatically monophysites.

church with his sickness of the soul – which he had reckoned with beforehand, knowing full well that he was on the opposite side from the saints; so he lay down in the place called the narthex, weeping and begging for healing. Time passed, and one night, the saints, having made the rounds of the patients lying there, [fol. 26 r] passed him by, alone of all the patients, and one said to the other: “What do you think of this one? He has been here for a while; why do you think he came here, lying here?” The other replied immediately, “Leave the heretic. Has he not delayed us here? We must first heal the orthodox.”⁶⁰ O Word, friend of true life! Oh, human-loving Word! The saints, recognizing his sickness of the soul, persuaded him with these words not to expose his heresy. Then, two days later, appearing on their usual visit to the sick, they ignored him again, and him alone, with pious intent. One asked the other again: “What do you think of this man? For he has been here for a long time.” The other replied angrily: “Do what you think is right. Do what you want yourself. Just make him go away.” The poor impious wretch heard all this. And all of a sudden, they both cut both his thighs. One of them, who brought a sponge and a pitcher, cleaned off the whole cause of the disease, and the stinking discharge that flowed from the thighs filled two cups. The saints put a bandage [fol. 26 v] on him and left him. The man, awakening from his sleep, failed to realize that such a cure had been given him, and his stomach being very troubled, he went out to the proper place, compelled by necessity. There, he saw that he had bandages on both his thighs. Recognizing the healing given him by grace, and though hearing himself mentioned among the healed, his heart was made of stone, he voluntarily remained not corrected. So the benefactors of all reappeared and said to him: “There is nothing wrong with you; go quickly away from our house. For we hate you as the enemy of orthodoxy.” Immediately, he left as he had been ordered. For all this, thanks be to the saints, but even greater thanks be to Christ, the God who loves humans.⁶¹

60 that is the monophysites! *Tous orthodoxountas próton khré therapeusai.*

61 NB: The story is also included in the Deubner collection, KDM 17: the most important difference is that there is the sick Arian! Yet he is called “Exakionite” in the text, which was the name of the Arians under Theodosius I (379–395) (for an explanation

Miracle 22 (Deubner 20)*About the son of Severian*

Afterward, there was a high-ranking man called Severian, who used to be in charge of the public revenue of the district of Arcadia⁶² and was devout and pious. He had a very gentle son. This child was struck by a severe illness, for blood was coming out of his mouth while he was groaning from the depths of his heart. No doctor was able to stop the blood from flowing incessantly, and they were all helpless against the disease. The father gave up expecting them to save his son, [fol. 27 r] and, as I have said, having firm faith in God, he took his son to the saving church of true physicians, Cosmas and Damian, and prayed all night long that they might cure him of his sickness. In the daytime, while the boy lay there, he went home, pausing for a little while in his prayers, but left one of the doctors he knew with his son, not for the sake of healing, but for conversation. The boy, seized with the terror of illness, asked the faithful doctor to prepare a drink to ease his pain. If not, he would drink what was considered the most bitter remedy. For that, he was reasoning, would either help him or make him leave this miserable life. As the boy thus threatened the doctor with such senselessness and would not stop, finally Cosmas and Damian, patrons of all recovery, appeared to the doctor and told him not to offer nor to give to drink the said bitter drink, saying: "We will provide a cure from the disease, without medications." But the boy pressed the doctor again, pestering him to give him the remedy to drink. But the doctor did nothing of what he said, obeying the ordinances of the saints. The boy, badgering the doctor even more, asked

of the name, see Festugière 1971: 134), but the saints are no longer monophysites at all, but champions of "official" orthodoxy. However early and wherever the original layer of CL may be, it was still copied in this way (in Greek, moreover) in a long Diphysite, Coptic medium in the tenth century! Rustafjaell comments: "The change definitely points to a Jacobite country." (p. 97)

62 Arcadia was a division of Egypt. Cf. Rustafjaell 1909: 97, "In a manuscript written in Egypt, we should naturally expect the scribe to claim the honour of the relics for his own country, and, if the text is sound, it is possible that some Egyptian locality lies hidden in it. But without further evidence, it is difficult to come to any safe conclusion. The text certainly bears other traces of its Egyptian origin ... (:). But an Egyptian colouring is given to miracles, which in Deubner's text might be referred to Constantinople. For instance, in Deubner's KDM 20.

him to give him the drink. When he began to accuse him, the doctor told him about seeing the saints in a dream and about their gentle promise, which they had made to him, that they would save the boy; he also told him that no doctor among men could [fol. 27 v] cure his illness. To make good on their promise, two days later, the saints appeared to the boy to restrain the gushing of blood with a single touch on his chest, and the boy spat no more blood. The father took his son and returned home as if he had never been ill. Saints Cosmas and Damian immediately appeared to him, saying, “Your faith has saved your son.” And Severian and his son gave thanks to the saints, and both praised Christ who had given them such grace.

Miracle 23 (Deubner 9)

About Dioscorus, the scholar, Greek turned Christian

Afterward, there was a scholar named Dioscorus, a Hellene by religion, so he harboured madness for idols. This man was suddenly paralyzed, and the pagan priests and those who make oracular talismans have given up on him. Those like him who were adherents of the foolish Hellenic religion took him to the church of the wisest of physicians, saints Cosmas and Damian, not as to the saints, but as to Castor and Polydeuces, whom the Hellenes had long revered as the daimons who cured diseases.⁶³ The saints, however, taking thought for the good of everybody, wanted to heal the man’s soul and body, so one night, when they made their usual

63 There was a long debate whether or not, and of how the Dioscuroi were related to Cosmas and Damian: Harris 1906: 96–104 and Hankoff, 1977; the KDM9 where a pagan visited the saints, addressing them as Castor and Polydeices, led Deubner to believe that the cult predecessors of Cosmas and Damian were the Dioscuroi; in support of his argument he quoted the Byzantine historian from the sixth century AD, Hesychios of Miletos, who referred to a legend that Byzas, the mythical founder of the city who erected a temple next to water for Castor and Pollux who healed his people. Deubner, *De incubatione*, 77. A rejection of Deubner’s fundamental thesis on the basis of the Syriac legend is in Paul Maas’s review of Deubner’s book (Maas 1908: 609–13. Another rejection of the Christian identification of the Dioscuroi from a standpoint different from Maas may be found in Delehay 1904: 427–32; cf. also de’ Cavalieri 1903 and Gartrell 2021. I could also believe that the hagiographer just started from the name Dioscuros and wanted to extend to something even more pagan, this is why inserted the Dioscuroi.

healing rounds among those lying there, he was the only one they ignored. He began to plead with them in a loud voice, saying: "I have also come to you in the hope of finding healing." They said to him: [fol. 28 r] "Why are you clamouring against us here? We are neither Polydeuces nor Castor, as you say. We are not those to whom you came. So be quiet!" After this, they appeared to him again one night as they made their healing rounds among the patients lying there, and again, he was the only one they ignored. This time, he did not just cry out and beg but started crying while imploring them: "Wise healers, I too need healing; that is why I have come to you. Give me healing also, after the others, heal me also." They told him again: "Why do you revile us in vain? We are neither Castor nor Polydeuces, as you say. We are servants of Christ, the only God, Lord and Creator of all things. Our names are Cosmas and Damian. If you want to be healed, come to our God, the only Savior." Hearing these words, the man immediately obeyed them and promised to follow the Lord, Christ the God, steadfastly. Accepting this pledge unhesitatingly, they immediately laid their holy hands on his body and made him whole. Awakening from his sleep, the man sprang up, stood still, and there was nothing wrong in his body; frightened by what he had been told, he went to those who had sent him to pray to Castor and Polydeuces and told them the manner of his recovery, proving their thinking to be a delusion. He joyfully underwent the holy baptism, [fol. 28 v] which the merciful Christ gave as a gift for the salvation of us all, as a bath of regeneration and [...]⁶⁴ has long been foretold. For all these things and this reason, thanks must be given to the saints, but even more so to God, who works through them.

Miracle 24 (Deubner 19/19a)

About the woman with dropsy

Afterward, there was a woman who had fallen in with dropsy of the worst kind, a frightening sight as her belly had swollen to such an enormous size that she was unable to see her lower parts because of her bloated stomach. This woman came to the giving church of the wisest of physicians, Cosmas and Damian. Breathing heavily, moaning and crying, she

64 A larger lacuna with several words missing.

lay there gasping for breath and besieging the saints with supplications. But they, full of the wisdom of God, appeared to a godly man that night, who came to the church to pray; he lay near where the woman lay, and to him, they revealed the cure for the hydropic patient. When he woke at dawn, he told the woman he could cure her illness. The woman begged him not to overlook her in her great distress. He carried something he did not bring himself but was given to him by the saints in his sleep; it was a tiny knife. And with these words, “In the name of the holy physicians Cosmas and Damian,” the man began to make three deep cuts from the upper part of her stomach to the abdomen, where there was the swelling, as expertly as possible, [fol. 29 r] and then he cleansed the whole cause of the suffering by filling twenty cups⁶⁵ to the brim, and on top of these, he filled five more with the water and pus that had been pouring out. For it was his task to do this issuing from Christ to show both the healing of the sickness and the power of the saints, which does not lack anything.⁶⁶ For all this, thanks be to the saints and even more to Christ himself, the God who loves humans.

Miracle 25 (Deubner 13)

Constantine's wife in Laodicea

Afterward, there was a man called Constantine, who had an unusual faith in saints Cosmas and Damian. He took their portraits painted on an icon with him everywhere he went, at home and abroad, and was never separated from it. Once, he was sent from his native city abroad, and there, he lawfully married a woman he loved very much. A terrible disease attacked her. She had an abscess in her right jaw. She constantly lay awake with sighs and wails, the pain not abating even for a little while. Her husband's heart worried about her even more. He had the icon of the saints with him, as was his custom, but forgetting that he had it, he told his wife. “What should I do with you, my wife? If only I had brought the icon of the saints with me now or wax salve from their church, you could pray

65 *Xestēs* is Greek for Roman sextarius, about 546 millilitres.

66 Lay men or strangers performing operations was a common motif in miraculous healing, already among the stories from Asclepius and employed in great number by the Byzantine incubation saints too.

to them and anoint yourself with the salve, and you would have been cured.” Having heard this, [fol. 29 v] the wife prayed to them: “Servants of Christ, Cosmas and Damian, physicians of incurable diseases, deem me worthy to be healed by you, and make me worthy of your holy church soon.” So she was praying as the night came, and she fell asleep. In her dreams, she saw the saints saying, “Why do you cause your husband suffering and distress with your jaw? We are with you two, so you can always revere us.” Waking from her dream, she told her husband in detail what she had heard from the saints in her dream and asked him to bring her their images. The husband remembered that he had the icon with him. So he showed her the icon of the saints, and she exclaimed with joy that they were indeed the ones she had seen in her dreams.⁶⁷ As soon as the night fell, they appeared to her in her dreams, standing by her side and asking her what illness she had. The woman showed them the jaw. They told her, “There is nothing wrong with you, but open your mouth quickly.” She did so, and one of the saints put his finger in her mouth and removed smelly blood mixed with pus from the sore spot. With that, he quickly restored her health. They appeared to the woman again in the night another time and, wanting to show her how firm her husband’s faith was, they said to her: “Put our wax salve under your pillow each time [fol. 30 r] and you will be healed from this illness completely, and no harm will ever come to you again.” The woman did so and lived her entire life in robust health. All the while, she gave thanks to the saints but even more to Christ himself, the God who is at work with healing in each case.⁶⁸

67 Miracles involving the painted image of the saints Cosmas-Damian became an argument for the use of icons at the Second Council of Nicaea, held in 787. The council convened to support icon-worship and the episode reflects the process by which image and relic attain an equal status. In this story, the icon was the means of cure to such an extent that this miracle was quoted during council. cf. Dagon 1991:31.

68 It is interesting to compare this story with the well-known miracle from Deubner’s version. In KDM 13 we read also about the saints’ church in Constantinople, supposed origin from the icon.

Miracle 26 (Deubner 23)*About the man with inflammation in the pubes*

Afterward, there was a man, one of the devout priests, who bravely bore a fearsome illness: he was afflicted in his male parts with a so-called inflammation, so much that he moaned and cried as the disease worsened. Moreover, he was not only saddened by this ailment but worried even more since, day by day, he was expecting the loosening of his intestines. He lay weeping, unable to move. All the doctors brought the medicines of their craft, but nothing worked. Finally, despising the healing from men, he fled to the physicians who abounded in gifts of mercy, the wisest Cosmas and Damian, and as soon as he reached their church, he lay down there and tearfully begged them to find healing. On the third night, the saints appeared and, first laying their hands on his testicles and then withdrawing them, said to him: “Know that from now on, after our touch, [fol. 30 v] your body will never again have such a problem. Be free from all harm! For we are binding your loosening with bandages.” As soon as he woke up from sleep, he examined himself and saw that his illness was gone, and he had become healthy. With hymns, he honored Christ, who had given such grace to his saints.

Miracle 27 (-)*About the man with ophthalmia*

Afterward, there was a man who suffered from terrible ophthalmia. His eyes were so bad that he could see nothing but the shadows of people. He saw the people themselves as if they were trees. He would constantly bow his head and wail, and with dreadful lamentations, he would call himself a wretch and ask for sympathy from everyone, for he suspected that he was going blind. His sickness was so severe that he stopped seeking a remedy from the skill of doctors, so he went to the wisest physicians, Cosmas and Damian, the possessors of the ever-flowing fountain of cures. He stayed in their holy church, begged them to find a cure, and anointed his eyes with the wax salve from that place. And despite his eyes being still inflamed, moisture flowed from his mouth and nostrils, and little by little, he began to see better, no longer deprived of light. For

all this, thanks are due to these saints, but first to Christ, the God who loves humans. [fol. 31 r]

Miracle 28 (Deubner 28)

About the woman with breast cancer

Afterward, there was a girl who had a severe woman's disease, for her whole breast was hard as stone, and she had terrible pains and ailments, which took such a hold of her that she would often fall on the ground and seem to be dying, and the doctors could find no cure. Some thought that a surgical operation could arrest the trouble. But hearing about the scalpel, she became terrified and refused to have the operation, shuddering at the very name of the scalpel, saying: "I have doctors who cure without cutting with a scalpel. I have Cosmas and Damian, saints who heal troubles." But the doctors told her, "Go to them, and when the problem worsens, you will return to us." Yet the patient was not put off by their words; she went to the saints' church, lay down, and prayed there to find help. The girl had a doctor she knew, a very trusted relative, who did not treat her. To him, the all-helpers appeared at night and gave him the following charge: "Pour this medicine into the cut on the girl's breast, and she will be well." Awakening from his sleep, the doctor wondered why the saints had not commanded him to cut open the diseased part of the body first and then pour the indicated medicine into the wound. Pondering these things, he went to the place where the girl was. She seized him and told him about her dream: "That night, I thought I was standing at the church entrance behind you. The saints came to me and said, 'Since you have fled to us, despising the doctors, you will soon find a cure for your affliction.'" Saying this, they both marked [fol. 31 v] my breast with the sign of the cross, providing marks for the with their finger around the breast, and said, 'You will be healed by receiving this medicine.' And after that, I woke up from the dream." The doctor was amazed; he examined the breast and found the cut. He just put the medicine in it as he had been told, and she was freed from the disease. She went home thanking the saints, praising God for having given such grace to his saints.

Miracle 29 (Deubner 31)*About the lame beggar*

Afterward, a God-loving man of noble character was walking along the agora when he saw a lame beggar, dejected and lying there in need of food. Overcome with compassion, he took him to the saving church of Cosmas and Damian, who give plentiful gifts of grace to all. He stayed with him, asking the saints to give the beggar strength [in legs], weeping and moaning as if he were suffering this sickness. The saints heard his pleas and, appearing, healed the crippled man's hands; his legs remained weakened, but he could lean on a stick and limp while begging. The compassionate man who brought him there again pleaded with the saints harshly to grant him complete healing. They appeared again and told him: "It would be well for you to ask for something more suitable and for him to be content with the power given to his hands since he is a beggar, and you do not know the future." For all this, thanks are due to the saints and, above all, to God himself, who loves man.

Miracle 30 (Deubner 32)*About the scholar with an abscess*

Afterward, there was a scholar with a grave illness, for an abscess had formed [fol. 32 r] on his jaw, next to his ear, and was causing him much extraordinary pain. The pain made him a pitiful sight. Seeing his ailment, doctors said his abscess needed to be cut before becoming ripe to heal him quickly. They thought it best to cut it open the next day and perform the necessary drainage thoroughly, lest the trouble should spread to the larynx and suddenly cause the man to choke. That night, saints Cosmas and Damian appeared to one of the doctors and told him to say to the patient: "Do not suffer the doctors to perform the incision, for this remedy will be useless to you; but rather than cutting a vein in your neck apply a different medicine to the abscess. And say also to him, 'Why did you not come to our house, though you often promised to come?'" The doctor went there early in the morning and told him the saints' message. Listening to those words, the man went straight to the church of the saints and stayed there, applying wax salve to the diseased part. But the saints appeared again and said to him, "Your wound does not need wax

salve, but you must apply the medicine of which we spoke.” O the wisdom of the saints! They wanted the wax to heal the illness, but they told him that his wound did not need such plaster so that by putting medicine that caused inflammation on the wound, he might realize his failures, repent of his former life, and be saved in body and spirit. So, he applied the medicine that the saints had commanded. [fol. 32 v] However, as the place swelled and became inflamed after the medicine was applied, the man suffered tremendously, much more than before, and wept, asking the saints to give him healing. In the night, the saints appeared to a priest of pure life and said to him, “Go and say to the suffering scholar, ‘Give up the sexual life you are having with a certain woman, and you will be freed from the disease.’” And they also told the priest the name of the woman. Although he heard the words, the priest said nothing of what was said to the man, believing that what he had seen was a mere dream image. However, the saints appeared again and ordered him to give the same message to the scholar. But he told him nothing of what had been said, for he again believed that the words addressed to him were dream visions. Appearing a third time, not gently but angrily, the saints commanded him to tell the suffering scholar what they had instructed previously. Trembling, the priest finally told him what the saints had said he should tell the scholar. The scholar, realizing his sin and recognizing the woman’s name, vowed to put an end to the affair and promised the saints that he would abstain from the relationship and intercourse with the woman, for they had not been joined in matrimony. Now, the saints instructed him to anoint his wound with wax salve, and he was healed swiftly. He returned home with great joy, [fol. 33 r] rejoicing in his heart for the salvation of his soul rather than his body. He spent the rest of his life praising God, who had given such great grace to his saints.

Miracle 31 (-)

About the other lame man

Afterward, there was a man who was seriously ill: the service of his limbs had loosened, and he was paralyzed from the knees down. He was taken by some pious people and carried to the church of saints Cosmas and Damian, who love people and heal everybody. Being very poor, he had nothing for his needs as he lay in the holy church. Indeed, he might have

died of hunger if it had not been for the fact that there were more godly men lying on the beds next to the church, which had been set up to treat the sick and always helped him with what he needed. There he lay, sighing and in tears, asking the saints for healing. Appearing to him, the overthrowers of diseases Cosmas and Damian addressed him and commanded him, “Abstain from bodily congress and from eating meat, and you will be freed from disease.” Awakening, he obeyed the command of the saints, professing to abstain from both in the future, and his members were tight [and functioning] again. For a while, the man remained in health. After this, however, the thoroughly depraved daemon induced him, [fol. 33 v] to ignore the saints, to return to bodily congress, and to eat meat again. And again, his illness regained strength and was no less lame than before. Reproaching himself, he went to the saints’ church again to beg them for healing. After a few days, the saints appeared again and said to him, “Abstain from bodily congress and meat now, and you will be in perfect health.” Again obeying them, he lived his whole life in the health of body and soul, giving thanks to the saints and through them to God, who had given such great grace to his saints.

Miracle 32 (-)

About the man ill with lamia

Afterward, a man fell ill with a strange disease. As a victim of this so-called lamia, he went to the holy church of Cosmas and Damian, who can cure even strange diseases with ease. This man could not stop eating for a single moment and ate abundantly at all times, in the bath and at home, day and night, and could not restrain himself from food even for a little while. The gorging never ceased, except when sleep overcame him and put him to rest for a little while. But when no food was available, his body would seek to eat more, in vain; when one day, in the bath, he had no food, he would have begun to eat his arm, to no avail, if his servants had not hastily seized him. He thus [fol. 34 r] wasted all his possessions, for he had sold everything he had and became, as I said, a terrible glutton. One night, when he was lying there [in the sanctuary], the saints, making their usual curative rounds among the other patients there, stopped by him, and one said to the other, “Why not look at this one who is lying here?” The other replied, “Leave him alone, as he breathes a fetid breath,

let him exhale this stench which is due to his gluttony.” The patient heard these things. Yet, despite these words, the saints did not ignore him, but at the same hour, one of them appeared, holding a razor and making a small cut under the patient’s throat. And immediately, laying their hands on him, they removed his intestines with an invisible touch. Having cleansed them, as only they could, they put them back as they were before, as they had learned from God the Creator.⁶⁹ And again, one said to the other, “Bind up the cut on his throat.” And by mere touch, the other made the cut and the scar disappear. Awakened from sleep, the man stricken with illness, being the fifth day of the holy week of Easter, said to his servants, “As today is the fifth day of the holy week, as you know, do not let me take food even if I desire to eat until I have partaken [fol. 34 v] in the divine mysteries today.” And that whole day, he ate nothing at all. And when evening came, he went to wash himself in the bath of the saints, which is said to have healing powers.⁷⁰ As he was heading there, he stubbed his foot. Suddenly, he was in terrible pain; his blood was flowing, and because of that, he remembered the rest of the dream and told the people around him. Immediately realizing that the saints healed him, he rejoiced, washed himself, and was strengthened, trusting in the saints. And waiting the rest of the day, he partook of the holy mystery of the holy body and precious blood of Christ. Delivered from the cause of his pain, he lived in health, taking only the necessary food, sufficient but not in excess, as all people do, giving thanks to the saints, but

69 A nice parallel is a miracle from the 7th-century collection of Saint Artemius who ‘once appeared to a man in dream, ready to operate in the manner of a butcher, ‘holding butchers’ tools and a cup ... [and] pierced him with a knife in his lower abdomen and took out all his intestines. Then he cleaned them, washed them off, and twisted them with a rod. And the sick man saw him folding them up and making sausages...’ (Crisafulli & Nesbitt 1997: MA25). Such miraculous surgeries imitating contemporary medical operations (and attesting to the patients’ greatest fears) had been in the repertoire of miracle workers since Antiquity; a similar example from Epidaurus, in Edelstein & Edelstein 1998: T423.25.

70 This is a novelty, that we read about a healing bath in the church. Are we in the Kosmidion? Or somewhere else? The role of the bath is common in Byzantine miracles, mixing the two functions of achieving ritual purity and healing, here the former is emphasized.

even more to Christ, the God who saves through them, the God who loves humans.⁷¹

Miracle 33 (Deubner 21)

About the spleen patient

Afterward, there was a man from an illustrious family, wealthy and well-to-do, who had a diseased spleen since childhood. When he was a young man, no doctor was ever told of his illness, and he refused to disclose it even to his closest relatives. When he reached manhood, [fol. 35 r] the disease took hold of him with immense pain, and his constitution was unable to do anything; his constitution was also all but gone: he could not run, walk, or breathe freely. He did not go to the bath, and when he decided to go, he only moved with great difficulty and panted like a crawler, but when he stopped to rest, he lay on his back because of his difficulty with breathing. He was eating unhealthy food, and even that food he hardly tasted when it was beside him. He always drank excessive amounts of water, his breathing was restrained, and his body moved with his breathing. As soon as the doctors became aware that he was in this condition, they readily informed him of the most expeditious remedy, frequently opening his veins and giving him wholly useless medicines to drink. For his stomach withered for a long time from the pain of starvation, so to speak, scarcely different than petrified. Unable to keep pace with the doctors' ever-changing remedies to bring about the improvement of his wretched body and believing that death was very near in the

71 It is worth noting the emphasis the miracles places on its date, the fifth day of Holy week; beside the symbolism of human-divine food, this abstinence is invigorating in a medical way too, just as it is taking the Eucharist. It is also interesting how his dream is evoked: from pain? The sight of blood? (would his own blood remind him of the Eucharist and from that the food and from that the healing?) The cure is also multi-faceted: fasting is a ritual sign, a sacred act that goes with the holy day. The act of the saints of taking out and putting back the bowels is both medical (miraculous surgery) and, as the text emphasizes, a re-creation of the order created and learned from God. The cause of the illness is finally removed by a combination of three causes: the surgery of the saints, fasting, and the healing grace of Communion, which replaces food and removes gluttony and sickness - but the patient recognizes the healing before Communion takes place. On the Eucharist as medicine cf. Csepregi 2006.

future, he abandoned the doctors, placing all hope into saints Cosmas and Damian and fleeing to their church. There, he lay down, making a bed for himself in a place called the narthex; he prayed with sighs and tears to the saints for healing. At night, he went inside to the railing of the sanctuary, where he would lie down, begging the saints to heal him. After spending a few days there, he thought he would return home, reflecting to himself [fol. 35 v] the fact that the saints had not visited him. He said that being a sinner, he was unworthy to stay there and had been prompted to say and think this by an evil daemon. So he sent his servants for a horse that would take him home, but since they did not reach him in time, he remained in the church again, lying down at the railing to the sanctuary as before. In his dream, someone said, "It will be useful for you to stay here until Sunday." As it was Thursday. He woke up and waited for Sunday, as he had been told. As was his custom, he lay that night near the sanctuary and saw one of the saints coming out of the sanctuary's entrance, noticing him, and going back again without saying a word to him. As he was thinking how the saint had remained silent without saying anything to him, the other saint came out of the same sanctuary entrance, paused with his eyes, looking, then went around the ambon and returned without saying a word. The man got up, found courage in his heart, followed him, and, kneeling before him, asked him to think of a cure. The saint held a nugget of fragrant incense⁷² in his hand and, cutting a little of it off, he was about to pass that to the man. But as if that were not enough, the other took [the frankincense] and broke off a small piece and gave it to him. They both handed it to the man and said, "Anoint this quickly to your stomach and belly, and you will see the effect." Rising, the man took [fol. 36 r] the remedy given to him and used it for anointing as instructed. After two days, he was cured, with no trace at all of his body's illness. He ate as much as needed and regained his physical strength, even more strength than before. When he slept again in the same place, close to the entrance to the sanctuary, saints Cosmas and Damian stopped there again, one at his head, the other at his feet. Recognizing them, the man jumped up again and asked them to grant him [in addition] that he would never have this illness again. The saints marked him with the sign of the cross of Christ and said to him, "You will

72 For θυμίαμα σύνθετον, see Ex 30:7 (LXX).

never suffer from this disease again, provided you abstain from eating any kind of leguminous plants all your life.” And so the man lived in health. After three years, he was stricken with a disease of the jawbone, but it caused him no pain at all, for it had withered away as if petrified. Again, he visited the church of the saints and stayed there, asking them to cure his illness. On the third night, they appeared and said to him, “If you want us to cure this ailment, know that it must be cauterized.” He said: “As you order. Just cure me as you wish.” They said to him, “God gave this disease intending to save your soul. Having this, rectify yourself. For know that through us, you were freed from pain and suffering. Keep yourself from negligence and all swearing, and you shall thus crush your bodily afflictions, and your soul shall be saved again.” The man went away gladly, and though he felt no pain, [fol. 36 v] two months later, he was still not free from his troubles. Then the saints came to him again in his sleep at night and, without him knowing, anointed his jaw with wax. The man awoke from his sleep to find his jaw anointed. And the trouble was soon over as if it had never been there. He rushed to the church of the saints and told everyone what had happened to him through the saints and how he received the salvation of his soul and his body, giving thanks for it to saints Cosmas and Damian, but even more to Christ, the one who works through them to bring about his healings, as the only God.

Miracle 34 (Deubner 22)

About the eye patient with a withered groin

Afterward, there was a man with gluttony who indiscriminately threw everything he found around him down into his stomach, and his stomach had a lot of liquid in it. Some of it had filled the membranes all over his body with blood, causing nasty oozing on his groin and making his testicles swollen and stiff. That swelling had grown into a fleshy tumor next to his testicles and had become very hard. Along with this, a pain in the eyes had also afflicted the unfortunate man. So, distressed by these two diseases, he went without delay to the saving church of Cosmas and Damian, who were ready to heal everyone and begged them to make him worthy of their mercy. Not ten days after he had come to lay there, he saw in his sleep a godly acquaintance named Cosmas giving him a piece

of wax [fol. 37 r] and softening it as much as he could. Handing over this piece of wax, he said that while he gave it to him as wax, it was [actually] snow. When the man was astonished at his words, he again showed him another piece of wax as ice and addressed him, "Now I have given you of that wax which you see as frozen. But I will melt and soften it, and as you see, it has become snow and no longer ice." Waking up, he realized that the stone-like sickness in his testicles was the piece of ice, and with the melting snow, the saints hinted at the way of healing. So the illness and the hardness of his testicles slowly melted and became water there, just as the man had experienced in his dream. Yet as the hardened misfortune melted away, his testicles swelled even more, along with the skin covering them, as the water had no exit. One night, the overthrowers of diseases again stood before the patient with an instrument like a small needle and, by pricking the skin of the testicles, removed the water. As soon as the water flowed away, the swelling subsided completely. By anointing himself with wax salve from the holy place, the man found a speedy cure. Having found a cure for this ailment, the man was still tormented by his eyes. He saw people as if they were shadows, and he could do absolutely nothing about his needs. And he would not suffer to put any remedy into his eyes, allowing only anointing with the wax salve from the wax of the saints. When his relatives and friends [fol. 37 v] wanted to take him home from the church, he told them, "The saints have healed the other illness, and they can also be trusted with the healing of this one. Therefore, I will not at all yield to your advice." The saints realized his faith was strong, appeared to him again, and told him not to resist his advisers but to anoint himself always with wax salve as he saw fit. So when he had anointed himself with it, moisture flowed abundantly from his mouth, nostrils, and eyes; all that fluid was removed from his head, and the man began to see crystal clear. For all this, thanks be indeed to the saints, but even more to Christ, the God who works through them to bring about his healing.

Miracle 35 (Deubner 26)

About the woman with sore breasts

Afterward, there was a sage and saintly woman with a terrible disease in her breast who arrived at the port of salvation, namely the church of

saints Cosmas and Damian. The deacon of the church in the imperial city, a pious man, was in the habit of going to the church on Fridays and praying there in the evenings and at night until Saturday. And while the woman was incessantly asking the saints for healing, the deacon, as was his custom, came to pray on the night before Saturday. As soon as he lay to have a bit of rest, the saints appeared and said to him, "Say to the woman with the breast disease, 'You have been released regarding your breast. Go home [fol. 38 r] in peace, and you will find healing.'" The priest woke up in the middle of the night and, coming to his senses, thought, "How can this be the message of the saints, by which the woman indicated will be healed? How can I provide proof of the healing? If I go and say to the woman, 'You are delivered from your affliction,' she will probably ask me and say, 'Man, I am in the grip of sickness. You deceive me with empty words you never heard from the saints.'" Thinking these things to himself, he began to pray. The saints appeared and again ordered him to say the exact words to the woman. But he felt it was a delusive dream and that the saints' words were just empty chatter, so after prayers, he lay down and slept. For the third time, the saints appeared and, threatening him, said, "Go and immediately tell the woman what we have told you. To convince both you and her, the woman who feels pain in the side of her breast should search under her mattress and find the medicine, which, if she anoints herself with it, will soon rid her of the trouble." So when the morning dawned, the deacon went and said to the woman, "You have been freed from the illness that has been afflicting you." Looking at him with a strained look, the woman said to him, "It is not becoming of you to mock somebody in such distress with deceitful words. For you know that, like many others before me, for some reason, the saints are not releasing me now, even if they want to heal me." And he replied: "I do not say these things of my own accord, but I have come here at the command of the saints to say them. And the medicine that will cure your illness you will find under your mattress, as I have been ordered to tell you." She hurriedly started to search and found the medicine under her mattress. No one knew what it was or what was the fragrance it emanated, filling the place. Immediately anointing herself with it, she quickly got rid of her troubles. She went home, thanking saints

Cosmas [fol. 38 v] and Damian and praising Christ, who had given such grace to his saints.

Miracle 36 (Deubner 29)

About the woman with the sore nipple

Afterward, there was a woman who, being a first-time mother, was ignorant of all things around mothers and newborns. Not only was she afraid to withdraw her breast from her child sometimes, and so the milk inside became engorged and caused her terrible pain; but also, because she delayed showing it to the doctors, instead of milk, it became full of water, and her nipple was aching badly. Finally, the constant pain forced her to go and show herself to doctors, putting aside her shame. Seeing that it was negligence that had caused the trouble, they told her that there was no other way to get rid of the issue but to cut the disease out of her breast with a scalpel. So, the doctors prepared for the operation. Hearing about the scalpel and the operation, the woman preferred to die of the disease rather than endure the scalpel cuts. Her husband sympathized with her and did not want to inflict the scalpel cut on his spouse either. Turning away from the doctors, he led her to the charitable church of Cosmas and Damian, and there, laying her down, he prayed with her and asked the saints to help her. The following night, the saints appeared to the woman's husband dressed as doctors and inquired of him, "Do you know that your wife's breast is to be cut open tomorrow?" He answered them, "No, gentlemen! For you know very well that I have taken her [fol. 39 r] from you to the saints because I do not want my wife to suffer such a thing, lest the scalpel should frighten her." Then the saints appeared to the woman and said, "If you want to be healed, you need an operation." She answered them, "No, gentlemen!" They said to the woman, "If you want to be healed, take some millet,⁷³ crush it, put it on your breast that is causing you pain, and you will be freed from it." When the day broke, the woman told those around her what she had been told. They quickly

73 *Panicum miliaceum*; for medicinal use in antiquity, see Kokoszko et al 2015: 71-104; warming poultices and cataplasms with millet were described by Galen and Oribasius, *ibid.* 94-95.

brought her some millet; she crushed it and put it on herself, as instructed, and she fell asleep when the day had passed. When she got up at midnight to pray, she saw that her breast had burst. Sure enough, she immediately squeezed out all the pus, put a compress on the wound that happened of itself, and was completely healed. She left with her husband, and they hurried to their house, giving thanks to the saints but first to Christ, the God who healed her through them.

Miracle 37 (Deubner 30)

About the man with edema

Afterward, there was a man of high qualities who had a terrible illness. For, close to one part of his buttocks, a so-called edema [χοιράς] developed; for five whole years, he had frequently undergone the operations of physicians and had often had boils removed by medicines. As the disease worsened, the flesh around the edema began to rot, so much so that the man, tormented by the disease, was given up by the doctors, and since the boil started to rot inside, water was coming out of its pores [...].⁷⁴ [fol. 39 v] [...] But as the illness worsened and he no longer expected to be saved by humans, he fled to Blachernai to the divine church of Cosmas and Damian, the all-wise and true doctors.⁷⁵ For he saw in a dream that the saints came to his house and said with joyful faces, “Now that the doctors have given up on you, come to us so that you may have a share with all others in the grace given to us by God.” So following the promise of the saints, he rushed to them, weeping and sighing, and asked to be healed. One night, after his usual prayers, he lay down and fell asleep after a little while. He saw in his sleep the servants of Christ, Cosmas, and Damian, and among them, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the holy Virgin said to them: “It is not this one; yes, it is this one. Heal him quickly!” The man heard the Virgin say these words, but a moment later, he saw her no more. The saints Cosmas and Damian lifted the patient and took him to the infirmary near the church and the resting place for doctors inside; they shut the railings there, made a bed on a mattress, and tried to operate on him. But thinking that his usual doctors were about

74 “Valde incerta” (Rupprecht).

75 This miracle is also set in the church at Blachernai Quarter in Constantinople.

to cut him up again, he protested, shouting, "I will not let you cut me up again after I have fled to these saints. From now on, I do not need any operation from you." And when thereupon one of the saints wanted to cut him, while the other tried to hold him and tie him up, he kicked [fol. 40 r] so that it was impossible to hold him. Thus, one of the saints grabbed his legs and put them between the metal bars of the railing, and the other took the scalpel and cut him, making a two-finger wide cut, while the man shrieked with the pain from the cut. The saints eliminated the root of the trouble, and after dressing the wound, without giving any medicine, they left the man. He said to them weakly, "Look, you have given me the cut. Now, anoint the wound with honey before dressing it since that is what your art requires, for that is what frequent operations have taught me." But the saints said to him, "Now you are teaching us to heal? Wait until you are well, for you are treated the right way." And having done this, they laid him back on his mattress. The man awoke from his sleep, and after feeling the bandage on his wound and discovering the deep cut, he realized that the saints had healed him. He remained in the church, asking them to give him complete health. When Saturday evening arrived, at the sixth hour of the night, as was customary, the wax salve was distributed from the wax salve of the saints; he alone remained lying down so that the bandages of the wound would not be disturbed. Lulled by sleep, at the tenth hour of the night, he saw the saints come to him, soak a cloth with medicine, and put it on the cut. When they put the cloth on, the man felt terrible pain, the spot swelled, [fol. 40 v] drawing rot from his whole body. But when he woke up and untied the bandage that the saints had put on the cut, he saw that the wound was quite fissured, with lots of rotten pus coming out of it, which had soaked the mattress. Putting wax salve on it, he stayed in the church of the saints. After a little while, he was completely healed and decided to return home. The saints reappeared and ordered him not to leave their church until six years had passed. Listening to them, he stayed there and often saw the saints apparent to his own eyes. Thus, enjoying complete openness towards the saints, he once asked them, "Since I have sinned very much, from what sin have I been suffering this illness for all these years?" And they answered him, "First tell us, what do you think yourself?" And he said to them, "I think it was because of the jealousy of the depraved Satan

that I had to endure this sickness. By my sins, I have provoked [...], and the devil [diabolos] has slandered [diaballo] according to his name. For he deceives by bringing the trial of sickness upon us.” They answered him, “You thought right. That is how it is and what happened to you.” And the man became dear to the saints, being commanded to remain for everybody in the holy church of the saints as a servant of the sick there until his death, desiring that everybody would gain protection through the help of the saints and benefit from the manifest benefits of their grace [...] [fol. 41 r] giving thanks to the saints and praising God, who has given inexhaustible grace to his saints.

Miracle 38. (Fragmentary.)

About the man with a blocked larynx

Afterward, there was a priest of the divine church of Cosmas and Damian, a pious man [...]

[fol. 41 v]

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