

On the representation of visions in Coptic hagiographical texts

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I certify that (i) any material in this thesis which is not my own work is properly identified and acknowledged, (ii) the thesis complies fully with the University of Oxford regulations on academic integrity, and (iii) no part of the thesis has ever figured in material successfully submitted for the award of any other degree.

Short Thesis Abstract

My thesis examines the functions of visions of heavenly beings in Coptic hagiography and their relationship to the cult of saints in Egypt. I use six saints' hagiographical traditions as case studies: Kollouthos, Menas, Phoibammon of Preht, Merkourios, Viktor, son of Romanos, and James the Persian. My source base includes all the Coptic hagiographical texts in these saints' traditions which contain visions experienced by them prior to their deaths and/or visions of them appearing posthumously to laypeople. I am thus able to understand the functions of visions through the writers' choices in presenting them, and through that how they were perceived and utilised within the cult of saints.

I achieve two aims. Firstly, I address the lack of attention that Coptic hagiography has received in both Late Antique and Byzantine Studies and Egyptology, showing that it contributes significantly to our understanding of the cult of saints. Secondly, I focus on visions because, where supernatural phenomena within hagiography have been studied, there has been an overwhelming emphasis on posthumous miracles, meaning that the functions of other phenomena have gone unexplored.

The thesis begins with a close examination of my source base and the issues inherent in the creation, transmission, and historicity of hagiographies in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, I contextualise my source base using archaeological evidence of the cult of saints, demonstrating in detail what we can learn from these texts and how to negotiate the issues with them. Then, in Chapters 3 and 4, I perform narratological analysis of the visions experienced by martyr saints and by laypeople, comparing them to illustrate that saints were portrayed as idealised Christians and that laypeople were instructed through visions how to participate in the cult in order to be allowed access to the divine.

Long Thesis Abstract

My thesis examines the functions of visions of heavenly beings in Coptic hagiography and their relationship to the cult of saints in Egypt.

Hagiography is a type of text in which writers claim to record the lives, deaths, and posthumous miracles performed by Christian saints. Coptic is descended from Egyptian and was used during the first millennium AD, before it was supplanted by Arabic following the Arab conquest of Egypt in the mid-seventh century. Christian saints were venerated in shrines throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe, and the recitation of hagiography to congregations at the shrines formed part of that veneration.

Visions are miraculous events that are witnessed by characters, often during miracles such as healing. I argue that writers followed certain conventions when having characters witness visions depending on whether they are saints who have not yet been martyred or laypeople to whom saints are appearing posthumously.

The thesis uses the hagiographic traditions of six martyr saints. All their traditions include visions experienced by the saints during their lifetimes and experienced by supplicants in which the saints posthumously appear. These six saints are: Kollouthos, Menas, Phoibammon of Preht, Merkourios, Viktor, son of Romanos, and James the Persian. While there is no certainty that any of them ever existed, there were cults dedicated to them that left behind archaeological and textual evidence. The study of them therefore provides an insight into the cult of saints regardless of whether any of these men existed.

Three archaeological sites have been found. They are a church complex dedicated to Kollouthos in Antinoopolis, the pilgrimage centre of Abu Mina dedicated to Menas, and a monastery at Deir el-Bahari dedicated to Phoibammon. There is evidence of cult activity at each of these sites that I analyse in conjunction with the hagiography to develop a comprehensive picture of how these elements of the cult of saints interplayed.

The main evidence that I use in my thesis is hagiography. All the hagiography studied in this research has been previously edited and translated into one or more of the modern languages English, French, and German. Even though some of the texts relating to different saints are found in the same manuscript, they have been published according to the saint associated with them rather than according to the manuscript to which they belong.

The saints included in the thesis are claimed to have been martyred in the fourth and fifth centuries. The hagiography preserved in Coptic dates from the sixth to tenth centuries,

although it is likely that the texts in the later manuscripts are copies or versions of earlier material. As a result, instead of providing an historical account of their lives, the hagiography provides an insight into the cults of the saints at the time that the extant texts were committed to parchment.

For Kollouthos, I use one complete encomium preserved in Pierpont Morgan Codex M591, which is kept in the Pierpont Morgan Library, and other, fragmentary, texts. These fragmentary texts are an encomium preserved in B.N. P 12916, fol. 76 and ÖNB K 9524–9526, which are kept in the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris and Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna respectively, and three miracle collections preserved in Or. 3581 B(38), B.N. P 12915, fols. 21–25 and 25bis and Borg. Copt. 109, and P.9036 (BKU I 189), which are kept in the British Library, Bibliothèque nationale Paris, the Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, and the Berlin Papyrussammlung respectively.

For Menas, I use a mostly complete martyrdom, miracle collection, and encomium, all of which are preserved in Pierpont Morgan Codex M590, with there being a second version of the miracle collection in MS IFAO copte. inv. 315-22, which is kept in the Institut français d'archéologie orientale in Cairo. There is also an additional miracle collection preserved in Pierpont Morgan Codex M585, fol. 38r-49v.

For Phoibammon, there is one martyrdom and one miracle collection, both preserved in Pierpont Morgan Codex M582, kept in the Pierpont Morgan Library.

For Merkourios, there is a martyrdom preserved in BM Or. 6801, fol. 2a-31a and an encomium and miracle collection preserved in BM Or. 6802, fol. 25a-43b and BM Or. 6802, fol. 1a-24b respectively which are kept in the British Library. There is a further encomium preserved in Pierpont Morgan Codex M588, fol. 27vb22–31r and a further fragment of a miracle preserved in K 09456, which is kept in Vienna.

For Viktor, there are four martyrdoms and an encomium found in BM MS. Oriental No. 7022, which is kept in the British Library. There are also several fragments, from an encomium preserved in K 09446, p. 135/136, K 09447, p. 139/140, and K 09448, p. 141/142, and from a miracle collection preserved in K 09442, p. 19/20 and K 09443, p. 47/48, which are kept in the Papyrussammlung in Vienna. There is also a miracle collection preserved in Pierpont Morgan Codex M591, fols. 34v-49v, and an encomium preserved in I.1.b.656+714 (5681, Copt. 18/1 and 18/2), which is kept in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow.

For James, there is a single martyrdom preserved in Cod. Vat. Copt. 59, fols. 156–212, which is kept in the Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana.

I achieve two aims in my thesis. Firstly, I address the lack of attention that Coptic hagiography has received in both Late Antique and Byzantine Studies and Egyptology, showing that it contributes significantly to our understanding of the cult of saints. Hagiography preserved in Coptic has been neglected in scholarship in favour of that preserved in Greek. This is a pity because, while Greek was the administrative language in Egypt prior to the Arab conquest, texts preserved in Coptic testify to local, Egyptian cults. This comes from the fact that, especially away from the capital Alexandria, Coptic was used for everyday and even legal and administrative purposes as well as for the veneration of saints. Likewise, in Egyptology, literature in Coptic is generally omitted from literary studies, with there being an overwhelming focus on that in Middle Egyptian, Late Egyptian, and Demotic, with little regard for later developments during Egypt's Byzantine and Early Islamic history. I address this lack of scholarly attention, not only by analysing the texts, but also by analysing the cult sites, to provide a holistic view of the saints' cults in Egypt. This is a novel, interdisciplinary approach that situates the analysis of visions narrated in these texts within the contexts in which they are claimed to have occurred by writers and which the congregants would have found familiar.

Secondly, I focus on visions because, where supernatural phenomena within hagiography have been studied, there has been an emphasis on posthumous miracles, meaning that the functions of other phenomena have gone unexplored. Visions have only been addressed as part of miracles and as dreams, meaning that waking visions – of which I show that there are many – have not been studied comprehensively. While I acknowledge that the two phenomena of visions and miracles are related, as within hagiography they frequently occur together, I demonstrate that they are distinct and that visions play a particular part.

The introduction justifies the parameters of the thesis, which are: the language choice of Coptic, the topic of visions, and the choice of case studies. It explains the scholarly focuses on hagiography preserved in Greek and the study of miracles, and how the aims of the thesis address these problems. It explains the scholarship that has involved the study of texts preserved in Coptic so far and how the thesis brings it more in line with the study of texts preserved in Greek. It discusses the role of visions in Christian, Byzantine, and ancient Egyptian cultures to justify the focus of the thesis on them. It also discusses the relationship between dreams and visions, and how the thesis expands upon existing scholarship by including waking visions. Finally, it explains the features of the visions in the case studies that are analysed to determine how they are presented and how they function in hagiography.

The first chapter introduces the case studies. It summarises the saints' stories according to the surviving hagiography. It then outlines the hagiographic corpus, explaining the content, manuscripts, transmission, and dating for both that which has survived in Coptic and that which has survived in other languages. It therefore situates the saints' traditions within all the textual evidence known to have survived regardless of language. The amount of textual material preserved in Coptic and in other languages varies for each saint, with only one text preserved in Coptic of which there is a Greek and a Syriac version for James, and versions of texts preserved in Coptic, Greek, Arabic, Ethiopic, Old Nubian and many other languages for Menas.

The second chapter outlines the documentary and archaeological evidence of the shrine sites and cult activities relating to the saints. It explains the excavation history, layout, and development of the sites, before analysing the cult activities that may have taken place there and determining the roles that the saints seem to have had in their respective communities. This contextualises the saints' traditions and the textual evidence within the physical practices of the cult of saints in Egypt, and establishes that there is a dissonance between the textual and archaeological evidence that requires them to be analysed together to develop as comprehensive and accurate a picture of the cult of saints as possible. This therefore establishes the challenges posed by the different kinds of evidence and mitigates them, and also presents the environment in which the visions in the hagiography are set.

The third chapter outlines the visions experienced by saints while they were alive, which are presented in the encomia and martyrdoms. It analyses the features of the visions to determine the conventions and function for the presentation of visions experienced by saints. This enables comparison with the visions experienced by laypeople in the following chapter.

The fourth chapter outlines the visions experienced by supplicants at saints' shrines, which are presented in the encomia, martyrdoms, and miracle collections. It analyses the features of the visions to determine the conventions for the presentation and function of visions experienced by laypeople. It compares these findings with the visions experienced by saints to present a comprehensive picture of how visions are presented and function, and how they vary according to whether they are being experienced by saints or supplicants. This illuminates the content of visions and how they were used by the writers depending on which characters were experiencing them and how the audience would have related to them, and thus what the audience would have expected if they experienced visions themselves. The analysis in Chapters 3 and 4 combined with the textual and archaeological context from Chapters 1 and 2 demonstrates what the textual evidence includes and occludes, and relates these decisions by the writers to what audiences were primed to expect from their own experiences.

The conclusion summarises the findings of the thesis about the presentation and function of visions in Coptic hagiography and situates them within broader scholarship to contribute to both the study of hagiography and the study of miracles, in the first instance by engaging with material that has been neglected because of the language in which it is preserved, and secondly by demonstrating how visions and miracles can be seen as distinct phenomena.

My thesis provides a comprehensive understanding of how the cult of saints functioned and was perceived based on a novel synthesis of archaeological and textual evidence. The thesis also develops upon previous scholarship on miracles in hagiography by focusing on visions and encompassing all their occurrences rather than only focusing on dreams. It therefore provides a full understanding of both the phenomenon's presentation in texts and the reasons behind this. I can thus propose how visions varied according to whether they were being experienced by saints or lay supplicants, and how the lay audiences of the texts were primed to react should they experience visions of the saints whom they were celebrating.

I determine that visions have a distinct function in hagiography. While a key event within such texts is always miracles, visions signal to the audience that miracles are about to occur because they happen first. The study of visions therefore results in an understanding of how they direct the audience to a particular response. Characters' behaviour while experiencing visions demonstrates the gold standard of how to react to a saint should one experience a vision, which is portrayed to congregations as a real possibility, even a necessity if they need help such as healing.

While the overarching function of visions is to foreshadow miracles, writers also made further distinctions. I show that characteristics of visions varied according to which characters were experiencing them. For instance, the sanctity of saints meant that they did not have to be within a consecrated area in order to witness visions, and that they could safely interact with unearthly beings such as angels. Laypeople, meanwhile, were presented with the message that saints were idealised, aspirational characters because the lay characters in hagiography, those more identifiable with themselves, did have to be in consecrated areas like shrines and could not safely interact with angels without saints acting as intermediaries.

Finally, I demonstrate the importance and utility of applying an interdisciplinary approach to the study of any phenomenon presented in texts. This is because there are discrepancies between the practices that the writers of hagiography suggest occurred at shrines and the archaeological evidence for how shrines functioned. This indicates that the two were both part of the veneration of Christian saints, but that the function of texts was to present them

as idealised, heroic figures who would appear to congregants in times of need and thus to advertise the benefits of visiting and donating to the shrines. Additionally, I show that some practices known from the archaeological record were not considered appropriate for inclusion in texts, such as the use of divination, which retained pagan associations from their use within the Classical and ancient Egyptian cultures.

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My parents have continued to support me diligently, with some bewilderment at what I'm doing I'm sure, but primarily with pride and without asking too many questions about when I would actually submit my thesis. So, to them, I will be eternally thankful because otherwise I don't think that any of my degrees would have happened.

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intense psychological trauma of having my worst experiences cast in an entirely new light by Sarah Jones at the Disability Advisory Service and my mental health specialist Susi Lee. I'm painfully aware that my mental health has improved no end since I started my sessions with Susi and that I'm – strangely enough – finishing my DPhil better in that regard than I started it.

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The one piece of advice for anyone who comes after me, who finds themselves reading either my thesis or the monograph that will hopefully come from it? Don't expect your finished thesis to reflect your initial plan. And know that that's ok. Every thesis changes a lot before it is complete, but there will be something of what you originally intended there, be it topic, approach, or source base. It'll just have been through a lot more refinement than you ever thought possible or necessary.

Abbreviations

<i>Arch.Anz</i>	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
<i>BIFAO</i>	<i>Bulletin De L'Institut Français D'archéologie Orientale</i>
<i>BSAC</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte</i>
<i>BSR</i>	<i>Papers of the British School in Rome</i>
<i>CNRS</i>	<i>Centre national de la recherche scientifique</i>
<i>CSCO</i>	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium</i>
<i>CSLA</i>	<i>Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity</i>
<i>ERC</i>	<i>European Research Council</i>
<i>JbAC</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
<i>JÖB</i>	<i>Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik</i>
<i>MDAIK</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo</i>
<i>ODB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i>
<i>OrChr</i>	<i>Oriens Christianus</i>
<i>SOC</i>	<i>Studia Orientalia Christiana Collectanea</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

Introduction: A Vision to Study Visions

1: Background of the Thesis

1.1: Aims of the Thesis

The extent of scholarship on hagiography has varied greatly, with texts that have survived in different languages receiving different amounts of attention and having different approaches applied to them¹. Scholarship on hagiography that has survived in Latin and Greek has developed beyond philological editions². Since the 1960s, it has also moved beyond the mining of the texts for historical information, and now applies an enormous number of historiographical approaches to texts, especially in the fields of cultural and social history³. This includes the increasingly prevalent approach of gender, particularly regarding female saints, for whom the threats of marriage or rape are pivotal to their journeys to sainthood, and female prophets, the reception of whom has not always been favourable⁴. More recently, studies have included the relationship between hagiography and other kinds of texts, like Charis Mesis's application of elements of the novel to hagiography⁵.

Meanwhile, scholarship on hagiography that has survived in other languages is less developed. While this is for practical reasons – many texts in other languages remain unavailable and few practitioners are researching them or possess the required linguistic knowledge to do so – that does not make it any less of a necessity that research into hagiography redresses this imbalance⁶. The current imbalance includes hagiography preserved in Coptic, which has received very little attention in both Egyptology and Late Antique and Byzantine Studies. As Arietta Papaconstantinou highlights, hagiography in Coptic has ‘suffered from a bad reputation’ ever since Hippolyte Delehaye's condemnation of it as ‘inferior’ in his 1922 article⁷. While philological editions made in the last thirty years are arguably more accurate and comprehensive than those made over a century ago, it is making them which remains the focus rather than thematic

¹ Efthymiadis, S. 2011: 1, 9-10.

² Efthymiadis 2011: 3; Lequeux, X. 2011: 385.

³ Kaplan, M. and Kountoura-Galaki, E. 2014: 389, 395-401; Saradi, H. G. 2014: 419; Efthymiadis 2011: 5; Harvey, S. A. 2009: 612, 614.

⁴ Neil, B. 2021: 3, 24, 39, 50; Davis, S. J. 2001: 4-5; Germond, P. 1996: 354; Harvey 2009: 605.

⁵ Mesis, C. 2014: II, 317-19, 327.

⁶ Emmel, S. 2007: 84.

⁷ Papaconstantinou, A. 2011: 323, 330.

studies⁸. The wider application of Coptic hagiography in scholarship would be beneficial to the study of the Late Antique and Byzantine world, as not only would it have a significant impact on shortcomings in current scholarship but, as Matthew Dal Santo highlights, it is essential to stop treating Byzantine Christianity, and indeed hagiography, as homogenous⁹. Stephen Emmel's comment that 'Coptic literature was entirely religious in character and almost entirely Christian' encourages that homogenous view, and propagates the idea that nothing can be gained from studying literature that has survived in Coptic, including hagiography¹⁰. Meanwhile, thematic studies of literature exist in Egyptology, but the focus is invariably on that from the Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom, and Graeco-Roman period, written in Middle Egyptian, Late Egyptian, and Demotic respectively¹¹. Especially where Egyptology and Late Antique and Byzantine Studies intersect, often scholars lack the background required to address the limited research that has been done on material preserved in Coptic. This is because Egyptologists are usually trained in Egyptian philology, but there is a disconnect between those who specialise in linguistic and textual studies and those who specialise in archaeology. Further, few Egyptologists are trained in Late Antique or Byzantine history and archaeology. Meanwhile many Byzantinists are not trained in Egyptian philology, including Coptic, or history. Thus, the first aim of this thesis is to perform a thematic study of the content of hagiography that has survived in Coptic to bring scholarship on those texts, of which there are many that, while published, have not been studied further, in line with thematic studies which have been done on other material. This is essential for both Egyptology and Late Antique and Byzantine Studies, as in the former Coptic literature exemplifies how Egyptian culture developed in Christianised form, and in the latter it demonstrates the relationship between Coptic Christianity and Christianity elsewhere.

Hagiographical texts are diverse and many subdivisions have been delineated in scholarship, including *Lives*, encomia, martyrdoms, and miracle collections, although it is further evidence of the emphasis on that which has survived in Greek that its classification is considered the basis and hagiography which has survived in other languages is considered peripheral¹². Mostly, each of these kinds of text are represented from the different regions and languages, in different quantities from different periods of Late Antique and Byzantine history, and they each have their own distinct characteristics as well as shared features and functions¹³. While

⁸ E.g. Hilken, A. 2020a: 269-74; Hilken, A. 2020b: 349-89; Schenke, G. 2013: 204-76; Budge, E. A. W. 1915: 231-55, 809-27; Emmel 2007: 85.

⁹ Dal Santo, M. J. 2012: 158-9, 232-3; Eade, J. and Sallnow, M. J. 1991: 5; Efthymiadis, S. 2014: 3, 11.

¹⁰ Emmel 2007: 83.

¹¹ E.g. Parkinson, R. B. 1998: ix, 27-53; Lichtheim, M. 2006: III, 117-25.

¹² Efthymiadis 2011: 1; Hinterberger, M. 2014a: 25-8; Papaconstantinou 2011: 324.

¹³ Flusin, B. 2011: 199; Brock, S. P. 2011: 259; Papaconstantinou 2011: 324; Martin-Hisard, B. 2011: 286-7; Cowe, S. P. 2011: 299, 303, 307; Swanson, M. 2011: 345; Lunde, I. 2011: 369-70.

hagiography can and is being researched from various cultural perspectives, the most work, probably unsurprisingly, has been done on what it says about the saints¹⁴. This includes saints' relationship to urban spaces like cities and the associated symbolism of the holiness of the desert and heaven, as well as the posthumous miracles that saints perform for lay supplicants¹⁵. The cultural studies currently being applied to hagiography that has survived in Latin and Greek on what might be termed supernatural phenomena often focus on those posthumous miracles. This is useful for understanding how the lay audience of hagiographies, which were recited to congregations on saints' feast days, was expected to participate in the cult of saints¹⁶. However, it leaves a crucial aspect of this participation untouched. In Eastern Christianity, when saints performed posthumous miracles, they usually appeared in visions while doing so¹⁷. So, it stands to reason that the audience was expected to anticipate visions if they required the services of martyr saints. Yet, these visions have only been studied as an aside from miracles, in order to generate a typology of them, when they should be studied as a separate phenomenon so that their function as a feature in hagiographical narratives and their role in early Christian beliefs and practices alongside other phenomena like miracles can be better understood¹⁸. Only recently has this been attempted briefly by Bronwen Neil, but only for dreams in miracle collections and histories rather than for visions or in hagiography as a whole¹⁹. Histories also had a political function as well as a religious one and were not produced or received in the same contexts as hagiography, so a full study of hagiography is required separately before any comparison can be made with other kinds of text²⁰. Neil does, however, highlight the continued relevance of dream narratives to many religions and cultures that justifies the further analysis of phenomena such as visions²¹. The second aim of this thesis is therefore to introduce into scholarship the study of visions as a phenomenon which has until now been incorporated into that of miracles but not studied in its own right. This will allow the relationship between visions and miracles to be determined and for the function or functions of visions in hagiography to be identified. It will therefore also be possible to understand what writers were conveying to audiences about how they should participate in the cult of saints and what they were to expect by doing so, particularly in terms of interacting with the saints.

¹⁴ Hinterberger, M. 2014b: II, 211.

¹⁵ Saradi 2014: 419-420; Cupane, C. 2014: 56-7, 58-9, 61-2; Booth, P. 2020: 24, 38; Déroche, V. 2000: 164; Csepregi, I. 2005: 97; Van Dam, R. 1993: 84.

¹⁶ Booth, P. 2013: 71; Thompson S. E. 1993a: 37-40, 64; Thompson, S. E. 1993b: 47-51, 82-3; Papaconstantinou 2011: 327.

¹⁷ Poux, C. (unpublished): 20.

¹⁸ Déroche 2000: 164; Constantinou, S. 2014: 21; Montserrat, D. 1998: 271.

¹⁹ Neil 2021: 135; 161-2.

²⁰ E.g. Neil 2021: 163.

²¹ Neil 2021: 187, 195-9, 202.

1.2: Visions in the Thesis

As scholarship on miracles has focused on those performed by martyr saints, the research in this thesis will focus on visions in which martyr saints appear. The use of martyr saints, which have already been extensively studied, will demonstrate new insights relating to visions and thus prove that they are a phenomenon that should be studied in their own right. This will be as reflective as possible of how visions were presented in the cult of saints in Coptic tradition because martyrs are more numerous than saints who were not martyred²². It will also demonstrate the continued importance of visions in the Coptic Church²³.

The research will also study the lay characters to whom the martyr saints appear. The term used to refer to these characters will be ‘laypeople’, although it will encompass any non-martyr saint characters who experience posthumous visions of martyr saints, including pilgrims, high status individuals like archons, and clergy. While the saints interact with and may even perform miracles for laypeople while they are alive, the analysis will focus on the saints appearing in visions and performing miracles posthumously. The visions studied will not be determined by the texts in which they appear, such as miracle collections or encomia, but instead by whether the saints have been martyred before they occur and are thus appearing posthumously. This will provide the broadest range of posthumous visions and also enable the thesis to show in precisely what narrative contexts the phenomenon is found.

The study of visions experienced by laypeople in comparison with those experienced by martyr saints will allow the function or functions of visions in hagiography to be more fully understood, based on whether their presentation varies according to the character or characters who witness them. In order for the visions experienced by martyr saints and laypeople to be as comparable as possible, case studies will be used in which martyr saints both experience visions while alive and appear in visions posthumously. These case studies encompass saints with a variety of backgrounds, such as the occupation that they are said to have had before they died and places that they are said to be from, as well as saints who performed a variety of posthumous miracles, and therefore will provide a wide range of visions for analysis. They are: Kollouthos of Antinoopolis, Menas of Abu Mina, Phoibammon of Preht, Merkourios, Viktor, son of Romanos, and James the Persian.

²² Meinardus, O. F. A. 2002: 25.

²³ Meinardus 2002: 94-9.

It should be acknowledged that not every saint who performed posthumous miracles, and thus appeared in visions, is portrayed as having had similar experiences themselves while alive²⁴. This further justifies the consistency and comprehensive detail that can be achieved through using saints who can be included in both the analysis of visions experienced by saints and the analysis of visions experienced by laypeople. The case studies will comprise of all the hagiography attested for the chosen saints which has survived in Coptic and which includes visions, and so will consist of encomia, martyrdoms, and miracle collections, although the focus will be on texts which include visions. Even though the three types of hagiographical text probably had different functions, they all shared the functions of celebrating the saints and encouraging participation in the cult of saints. The use of the largest possible number of texts between the case studies will allow for a comprehensive study of visions and their functions within these texts. If there are multiple versions of the same visions in different texts, these will be treated as a single vision with any notable variations indicated.

The visions analysed in this thesis will also be limited to those which can be compared across all the case studies. This means that visions like those experienced by the parents of saints will not be included, as they are not universal to hagiographical narratives that have survived in Coptic. Kollouthos' father and Menas' mother experience visions before the saints are martyred, the former during the saint's lifetime and the latter prior to his birth, but the parents of the other saints included in the thesis do not²⁵. Likewise, visions that are not directly related to the tradition of a saint, either during their life or posthumously, will not be included, such as that in which the patriarch Athanasius sees John the Baptist and Elisha, whose bones are moved to Alexandria so that Julian the Apostate is able to build at their original resting place, because this demonstrates what the writer wanted to convey about the emperor rather than part of Merkourios' story²⁶.

It is not only martyr saints who experience visions and perform posthumous miracles in hagiography, as angels do so in texts like the *Discourse on Abbaton* and the encomium on the archangel Raphael²⁷. However, this thesis remains limited to comparing visions experienced by martyr saints and in which martyr saints appear while acknowledging that there is significant scope for a wider study of visions in which holy characters like angels appear. Meanwhile, within this thesis, the appearances of unholy characters like demons will be limited to when they appear within the contexts of the visions being included, such as when they are exorcised.

²⁴ Kaplan, M. 2000: 169, 187, 188.

²⁵ Thompson 1993a: 60; Drescher, J. 1946: 42-4.

²⁶ Budge 1915: 824-5.

²⁷ Budge, E. A. W. 1914: I, 225-54; Budge 1915: 526-33.

There are also visions in other Christian texts. These do not share the same form as those found in hagiography, so it is not necessarily possible to analyse them in the same way. Of particular note are the formless divine visions of Evagrius Ponticus in the third and fourth centuries CE, which result from intense, ‘pure’ prayer²⁸. This relates to the experiences of monks and other clerical figures rather than to the experiences of martyr saints, and in religious writings other than hagiography, although they too supposedly experienced visions of the kind analysed in this thesis²⁹. As this thesis is a study of narrative, these formless visions may be acknowledged in the wider context of Christianity in Egypt but not within the relationship of writer and audience being crafted by hagiographers. They are also rather contentious within Christian theology because they can be interpreted as thoughts or mental images of demons or relating to them, thus being identified with the vices or misguided thoughts that lead to sin should one fail to lead an ascetic life³⁰.

It has been discussed whether posthumous miracles, and therefore visions, occur in the Bible, and in fact divine revelation has received more scholarly attention than visions in hagiography³¹. Much of this has concentrated on the New Testament, but there has been discussion of the presence of visions in the Hebrew Bible as well³². For example, Gregory of Nyssa wrote on Moses’ experiences of theophany, and distinguished between the necessity of knowledge of God for salvation and Moses’ desire to see God³³. This establishes visions as a phenomenon that could have both a positive and negative impact depending on the context of their occurrence and characters’ response to them. Therefore, it was essential for the writers of hagiography to frame visions as a lesson in behaviour and expectations for their audience: How to behave in order to witness a vision that was beneficial and how much direct engagement with higher powers to expect. This allowed them to present the role of saints but also of the Church as intermediaries to ensure that the audience was engaging with figures like saints appropriately³⁴. Gregory of Nyssa wrote of God as unknowable, and as revealing enough to those who seek him to encourage them to continue to do so, thus demonstrating the promise of revelation as a means of control, and treated Moses’ experiences as an allegory of the struggles that Christians should endure to experience theophany for themselves³⁵. The relationship between the Bible and

²⁸ Harmless, W. 2004: 353; Tobon, M. 2021: 181; Cain, A. 2016: 251.

²⁹ Harmless 2004: 169, 312-13; Harrison, K. E. 2021: 356; Cain 2016: 246-7; Muehlberger, E. 2018: 183.

³⁰ Harrison 2021: 355-8; Cain 2016: 252-4; Ramelli, I. 2018: 290; Stadel, S. M. 2019: 344-5, 351-2; Tsui, K.-Y. 2020: 112-13, 115; Costache, D. 2020: 724-5; Flack, R. 2020: 163, 164, 165-7; Neil, B. 2020: 287; Neil 2021: 104-6.

³¹ Batluck, M. D. 2021: 7.

³² Oberhelman, S. M. 2021: I, 393.

³³ Artemi, E. 2021: 143, 146-7.

³⁴ Cain 2016: 245.

³⁵ Artemi 2021: 144-5, 148-9.

hagiography has been debated in scholarship, with some considering them to be competing and others considering hagiography to have been directly influenced by the Bible³⁶. Mark Batluck observes that revelatory experiences are known in the Gospels, which he argues ‘epitomize the very things that Jesus’s followers understood to be most central to his life and ministry’ such as his resurrection following the crucifixion and the dialectal nature of visions between those witnessing them and those appearing in them³⁷. He suggests that such experiences encourage the audience to reflect on the phenomena in the texts³⁸. Marc van Uytenghe suggests that hagiography should be seen as a continuation of the narrative and features seen in the Bible, and it is certainly more likely that hagiography was influenced by the Bible rather than in competition with it³⁹. Given Batluck’s observation, this continuation would include phenomena found in the Bible, like visions.

However, visions are prevalent in many religions and cultures, rather than being unique to Christianity, with David Engels and Alex Nice observing that Cicero went as far as to say that ‘there was no ancient civilisation which did not practise divination’⁴⁰. Thus, within Christianity, they were considered contentious because of their pagan background, particularly where dreams were concerned because oneiromancy was a form of divination common in the ancient world, including Egypt, and because of Neoplatonic ideas about dreams as prophetic being viewed by some as heretical, particularly following the Origenist controversy, but also regarding other visionary, prophetic practices like the use of oracles⁴¹. Some, like Maximus the Confessor, argued that dreams were not inherently sinful, but that the individual’s response, such as taking a dream as prophecy, was⁴². In fact, the perception of dreams in Byzantium was nuanced based on the audience and supposed dreamer, with an example being that Maximus the Confessor was tried on account of a dream that he had had nine years prior, about which he had written to and received a positive response from Pope Theodore⁴³. This nuance is defined by Martti Nissinen and observed by other scholars as the active seeking of information by manipulating the natural world through magic or divination being considered sinful, for example using certain techniques to guarantee a response from a deity, but the passive reception of information as being

³⁶ Van Uytenghe, M. 1976: 104.

³⁷ Batluck 2021: 1-2, 137.

³⁸ Batluck 2021: 2.

³⁹ Van Uytenghe 1976: 105, 106, 108-9.

⁴⁰ Engels, D. and Nice, A. 2021: I, 15-16; MacDermot, V. 1971: 1, 2, 4, 11.

⁴¹ Engels and Nice 2021: I, 21-3; Neil 2021: 2; Prada, L. 2016: II, 1221-2; Prada, L. 2017: 4; Neil 2020: 280, 282, 284; Grünbart, M. 2021a: I, 153, 159; Oberhelman 2021: I, 386, 389, 394; Neil 2021: 41-2.

⁴² Neil 2020: 291.

⁴³ Neil 2020: 281, 287; Neil 2021: 1.

acceptable because it did not result from manipulation⁴⁴. Such a definition is, however, problematic, as it can be argued that praying for aid or information or practising incubation is active even though Nissinen places visions and dreams in the passive category⁴⁵. His distinction thus needs the refinement that, in Christianity, it was still considered the will of God or a saint to respond to such pleas, rather than them being bound to the will of the supplicant⁴⁶. Further, this potential problem in the distinction of positive and negative visions was used to signpost saints as especially holy because they received visions unbidden, while laypeople could not do this, thus indicating the importance of the intercession of the clergy and saints for them to access God⁴⁷. This dichotomy is not even solely an issue for Christianity, as divinatory practices in the ancient world, such as consulting oracles, also required the intercession of an intermediary⁴⁸. In this way, while prophecy was also considered contentious between the prophets of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, the act of receiving prophecy was usually viewed as divine and accepted, hence saints receive prophecies from angels in very much the same way in hagiography⁴⁹.

Scholarship has tended to focus on categorising visions and dreams in the ancient world and on identifying aspects of them that survive into Christian practice. This has resulted in extensive studies on dreams but not on visions, which would include dreams but also waking sensory experiences. Neil attempted to circumvent this problem by categorising revelatory experiences as ‘dream-visions’, but her evidence still consists primarily of dreams⁵⁰. She also asks how dreams and visions are distinct from divination, but focuses so much on dreams that she does not effectively express this – divination could, then, be understood as any practice which reveals information, be that oneiromancy or something else, and visions and dreams are one way in which the information gained can manifest⁵¹. Scholarship has also focused on arguing whether or not they were truly considered to be negative, rather than on how visions were utilised in Christian tradition generally and how writers employed them⁵². Neil’s recent study of dreams in the ancient world focused on dreams rather than on visions, but it applied the study of gender to them, thus showing that a social or cultural approach is suitable for such phenomena⁵³. However, she states that dreams are appropriate for a social study because they are an accurate

⁴⁴ Nissinen, M. 2017: 14-15; Engels and Nice 2021: I, 15-16, 19; Grünbart 2021a: I, 154; Grünbart, M. 2021b: I, 446; Neil 2021: 11.

⁴⁵ Nissinen 2017: 15; Oberhelman 2021: I, 395.

⁴⁶ Neil 2021: 161.

⁴⁷ Brandes, W. 2021b: II, 798; Neil 2021: 25.

⁴⁸ Renberg, G. H. 2016: I, 6; Neil 2021: 75.

⁴⁹ Brandes, W. 2021a: I, 284; Oberhelman 2021: I, 386; Brandes 2021b: II, 799; Neil 2021: 25-6.

⁵⁰ Neil 2021: 11.

⁵¹ Neil 2021: 11-14, 52.

⁵² Oberhelman 2021: I, 386.

⁵³ Neil 2021: 3-6.

representation of men and women's desires, particularly of social elites, whereas in hagiography they represent what writers wanted their audience to think about such phenomena within a certain cultural context, making it less useful than it might at first seem to apply psychoanalytical approaches to them⁵⁴. It is well-documented that visions were acknowledged to exist within the early Christian world and, as they are found in hagiography that was intended to preach messages of faith to congregations, it is essential to understand precisely how they were understood and used in a Christian context. Additionally, within scholarship there has been a disconnect between studies of divination, dreams, and visions in the Classical world and in the ancient Near East⁵⁵. Large volumes focused on categorisation have attempted to amend this, but close studies of areas such as Egypt whose traditions were themselves a combination of ones which had come before and which were contemporary are yet to be attempted⁵⁶. The second aim of this thesis will therefore also address this wider imbalance⁵⁷.

As for miracles, Van Uytenghe notes that, in the Hebrew Bible, there is only one example of a prophet performing a posthumous miracle, an individual being resurrected upon contact with the bones of Elisha⁵⁸. Meanwhile, miracles are more prevalent in the New Testament, although it has been argued that they became less so because their performance was not without the risk of accusations of thaumaturgy to those performing them and the phenomenon of visions and the cult of saints more generally was not without criticism from figures like Augustine in the West and Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria in the East, with Athanasius emphasising the need for individuals to practise ascetic behaviours⁵⁹. Visions are noted in the Bible as having been experienced by the apostles, although in Christian tradition this did not continue past Pentecost, while in Gnostic tradition it did as a means for them to fulfil their apostolic duties⁶⁰. In Gnostic tradition, instead of the resurrection of Christ being the important phenomenon for the apostles to have witnessed, it was having been blessed by the Lord with visions, which singled out Matthew, Mary Magdalene, and Judas Thomas⁶¹. Elaine Pagels focuses on the political implications of limiting the witnesses of Christ to those who saw him resurrected and of denying this based on his subsequent appearances in visions⁶². While the visions are of Christ and not of martyred saints, it does show that there was a precedent in

⁵⁴ Neil 2021: 7-8, 18.

⁵⁵ Nissinen 2017: 6; Engels and Nice 2021: I, 15-16; Grünbart 2021a: I, 153, 155; Renberg, G. H. 2015: 234.

⁵⁶ Renberg 2016: I, 19-21; Nissinen 2017: 6-7.

⁵⁷ See 1.1.

⁵⁸ Van Uytenghe, M. 2000: 68; see Chapter 2: 2.1.5.

⁵⁹ Van Uytenghe 2000: 68; Van Uytenghe, M. 1981: 207; Moreira, I. 2000: 18; Gwynn, D. M. 2021: 28-30; Brakke, D. 1998: 446, 478; Gwynn, D. M. 2012: 107, 113, 148; Anatolios, K. 2021: 135.

⁶⁰ Moreira 2000: 22; Pagels, E. H. 1978: 422.

⁶¹ Pagels 1978: 415, 422; Koester, H., Pagels, E. H., and Emmel, S. 1988: 244, 251.

⁶² Pagels 1978: 416-17.

Christian tradition for the occurrence of visions and that the phenomenon was a significant one. According to Van Uytfanghe, there was a shift to miracles, and therefore visions, being found in the cult of saints instead, which was perhaps a less contentious place⁶³. Indeed, similarities with miraculous healing in Graeco-Roman tradition have been identified in hagiography preserved in Coptic, such as the *Life* of Onnophrius. Candace Buckner observes that, while the relationship of the sinful soul with the ailing body in a narrative about healing is Christian, the physical surgery and post-surgical advice imparted by the saint to Timothy, a monk with a sick liver, is reminiscent of Classical tradition, particularly of the healing cult of Asclepius⁶⁴. While she suggests that this narrative was originally composed in the fourth century, it survives in two seventh century manuscripts with the two extant versions being almost identical⁶⁵. Nonetheless, her observation is sound, as St Artemios physically heals supplicants in his hagiography which has survived in Greek, Viktor does so in his hagiography which has survived in Coptic, and Kollouthos provides advice on avoiding sin in order to remain well after healing supplicants in his hagiography which has survived in Coptic. As in elsewhere in Christian traditions and practices, elements of earlier traditions were adopted, either consciously or subconsciously, into Christian narratives of healing miracles, including the practice of incubation and the effect that dreams could have on the body⁶⁶. This thus shows a specific circumstance in which earlier traditions, including visions, were used in Christian tradition. However, in hagiography, neither healing nor prophecy is the sole purpose of visions and miracles, and yet these two categories or types of dream are what scholarship has focused on, so a broader view is required to understand in full the functions that visions had in these texts⁶⁷.

It is clear that visions were a contentious topic in early Christianity, but that they were nonetheless embraced as a feature to include in hagiographical narratives because they could be used to encourage positive, so-called Christian behaviours within the audience. Additionally, as a phenomenon they were embedded within the culture of the Mediterranean world and so were ripe for adaptation by a new religion. The presence of visions as a phenomenon distinct from miracles elsewhere in Christian tradition as a narrative feature in texts and as a topic of study or contention by Late Antique and Byzantine writers provides further justification for them to be studied in their own right. Additionally, the focus of scholarship on divine revelation rather than on visions in hagiography shows further the omission that needs to be addressed by the research in this thesis.

⁶³ Van Uytfanghe 2000: 68; Van Uytfanghe 1981: 216-17.

⁶⁴ Buckner, C. L. 2021: 195-6, 197-9.

⁶⁵ Buckner 2021: 192-3.

⁶⁶ Buckner 2021: 196-7, 200; Renberg 2016: I, 7.

⁶⁷ E.g. Neil 2021: 16-17.

2: *Hagiography in Coptic*

In Byzantine Egypt, Greek was the prestige language, used in legal and administrative contexts⁶⁸. This began with the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great and continued throughout Greek, Roman, and Byzantine rule⁶⁹. Initially, the form of Egyptian under Greek and Roman rule was Demotic, which after the first century CE ceased to be used in legal and administrative contexts⁷⁰. The earliest texts attested in Coptic are five Biblical literary texts and one documentary text from the third century, with more documentary texts being found from the fourth century onwards⁷¹. Generally, the further from Alexandria that legal and administrative matters were performed, the more Coptic was used rather than Greek, such as in the Thebaid⁷². Initially, legal texts had to be written in Greek and those written in Coptic follow an epistolary format, which Jean-Luc Fournet argues represents that distinction, although both languages were used for communication and legal texts could include Coptic summaries of their content⁷³. This shows that the use of the two languages was distinguished in a legal context. While Leslie MacCoull suggested that this situation is merely the result of a dearth of evidence having survived in Coptic, the fact that the situation is specific to legal documents would suggest otherwise, and indeed Papaconstantinou emphasises the significance of choosing one language over another in a bilingual society⁷⁴. It is possible that there was a law forbidding the use of any language other than Latin and Greek in legal contexts, but no law either forbidding or permitting the use of the vernacular has survived and legal texts were written in other languages like Aramaic elsewhere in the empire⁷⁵. There may have been legal restrictions for the use of Coptic, as there eventually were for Demotic, but no evidence has been found⁷⁶. As there does not seem to be a legal background to the use of Greek rather than Coptic in legal texts, Fournet proposes that it resulted from dialecticism and that either orthographical or phonological variations would have made it difficult to use Coptic – although this does not explain why legal texts could have Coptic summaries and why they were eventually also written in Coptic⁷⁷. The increased use of Coptic may have been a natural progression, as it can also be observed in the production of

⁶⁸ Beaucamp, J. 2007, 'Byzantine Egypt and imperial law': 282.

⁶⁹ Fournet, J.-L. 2019: 3.

⁷⁰ Fournet 2019: 3-4.

⁷¹ Fournet 2019: 6-10.

⁷² Fournet 2019: 10-14, 90; Beaucamp 2007: 277.

⁷³ Fournet 2019: 20-1.

⁷⁴ Fournet 2019: 24-5; Papaconstantinou 2011: 324.

⁷⁵ Fournet 2019: 25-9.

⁷⁶ Fournet 2019: 63.

⁷⁷ Fournet 2019: 42, 44-5.

literature – at least, based on what has survived – and so may show a gradual increase in the use of it in writing, given that it will have already been spoken⁷⁸. Coptic seems to have proliferated in legal contexts following the Arab conquest, perhaps because Greek was being superseded by Arabic and Coptic was more familiar than the new language being introduced⁷⁹. However, as Fournet points out, this proliferation began a century before the conquest, meaning that it may have been a facilitator but was not the cause and that Coptic would have become more widely used if Egypt had remained part of the Byzantine Empire.

Additionally, Greek was also widely used in the Church, meaning that there were many contexts in which initially it superseded Coptic for what may have been practical reasons or unintentionally⁸⁰. Until now, scholarship has worked to undo the ‘literary *topoi*’ that monks in Egypt did not know Greek, but otherwise whether monasticism contributed to the increased use of Coptic has not been studied in depth⁸¹. Papaconstantinou calls the distinction in scholarship between texts that have survived in Greek and Coptic ‘artificial’ to an extent, which is true because material could be designated by other aspects like geography rather than language⁸². Additionally, Jacques van der Vliet agrees with this and argues that the relationship between Greek and Coptic in Egypt was ‘complementary rather than competitive’, and he is right that the rejection of Chalcedonian theology was not a rejection of Greek language or culture⁸³. However, to counter both Papaconstantinou and Van der Vliet, there is clear evidence that the two languages were used distinctively in bilingual Egypt and that the range of contexts and amount in which Coptic was used fluctuated, probably due to a range of factors.

By the time that most surviving manuscripts containing hagiography in Coptic were created, Egypt had been conquered by the Arabs, adding Arabic into the equation⁸⁴. Over the next few centuries, Arabic replaced Greek as the prestige language⁸⁵. Meanwhile, Coptic continued to be used, including in contexts from which it had previously been excluded, such as formal Christian literature and legal and administrative texts⁸⁶. Papaconstantinou has argued that the continued use of Coptic and setting of hagiography during the period in which Egypt was under Roman rule were deliberately done by writers to create a distinctly Coptic or Egyptian identity⁸⁷. This is similar to Fournet’s argument that Egyptian was used in administrative texts to

⁷⁸ Fournet 2019: 49.

⁷⁹ Fournet 2019: 76, 96-7.

⁸⁰ Fournet 2019: 58-9.

⁸¹ Fournet 2019: 112-15.

⁸² Papaconstantinou 2011: 324.

⁸³ Van der Vliet, J. 2009: 286.

⁸⁴ Sijpesteijn, P. M. 2007: 437; Papaconstantinou 2007: 364.

⁸⁵ Sijpesteijn 2007: 438, 446; Emmel 2007: 84.

⁸⁶ Papaconstantinou 2011: 333.

⁸⁷ Papaconstantinou, A. 2006: 69, 84; Papaconstantinou 2011: 334.

undermine Greek⁸⁸. However, Fournet presumes that the development of the use of Coptic in legal and administrative texts was deliberate and targeted, rather than that it was more convenient for many people and spread in a more organic fashion. Van der Vliet considers ideas like those of Papaconstantinou and Fournet to be anachronistic, transplanting modern tensions between Copts and Muslims in Egypt and Egyptian nationalism onto Late Antiquity and Byzantium based on the arguably greater impact that Pharaonism has had on Copts⁸⁹. Nonetheless, his counterargument is itself anachronistic in that it focuses on nineteenth century European perceptions of Egypt and of the Coptic Church as the source for ideas like Papaconstantinou's and Fournet's, and does not consider the dynamic during the Byzantine and Early Islamic periods between the Coptic Church and other Churches or Islam⁹⁰. While there is no evidence for the anachronistic 'Coptic nationalism' prior to the Arab conquest, Van der Vliet's dismissal of the distinction between Coptic Christians and Greek Orthodox Christians in Egypt ignores the prevalence of these two Churches in different places, the latter further south and in the desert and the former in the north and in urban centres like Alexandria. Admittedly, given that the use of Coptic in the cult of saints in Egypt may have continued from before the Arab conquest, the development observed by Fournet seems to have been practical or non-deliberate as opposed to part of an agenda, but a contemporary distinction between two traditions can be observed and Van der Vliet is treating Christianity, in Egypt at least, as homogenous, which is precisely what Dal Santo warned against⁹¹. The continuation of traditions and of language use in the Church context after the Arab conquest, as Papaconstantinou suggests, must indicate that Coptic Christians viewed themselves as a distinct group in some way, if not to the extreme that Van der Vliet criticises scholarship for thinking⁹². Additionally, the arrival of the Caliphate actually benefited the Coptic Church in some ways because it created a separation between it and the primarily dyophysite Byzantine Empire, although the claim that Egyptians supported the invading Arabs and helped them to defeat the Byzantine forces is probably an exaggeration given that contemporary sources or sources from a few decades after the Arab conquest do not corroborate it and more literary sources celebrating the end of Byzantine rule may have been being pragmatic⁹³. The continued use of Coptic by the Coptic Church under both Byzantine and Arab rule does, however, justify distinguishing hagiography preserved in Coptic.

⁸⁸ Fournet 2019: 1-2.

⁸⁹ Van der Vliet 2009: 284-5.

⁹⁰ Van der Vliet 2009: 286.

⁹¹ See 1.1.

⁹² Papaconstantinou 2006: 65.

⁹³ Van der Vliet 2009: 287-8; Sijpesteijn 2007: 442-3; Papaconstantinou 2006: 67-8, 70.

While Greek and Coptic can therefore be viewed as two traditions that existed alongside one another, it must be noted that not everything written in one language was translated into the other, and a lot of saints attested in Coptic hagiography are not in any hagiography extant in Greek⁹⁴. However, that does not mean that these saints were never attested in Greek hagiography, only that if they were none of it has survived or been found. While there can be made an association between the use of Greek and Chalcedonian Christianity, that is a simplification of the complex linguistic, religious, and cultural situation in the Byzantine world, including in Egypt⁹⁵. As the extant hagiography which has been provenanced for the case studies used in this thesis comes from either the Fayoum or Upper Egypt rather than Alexandria, regardless of where they claim shrines dedicated to the saints to have been, it could instead be proposed that they belonged to a certain linguistic, religious, and cultural milieu. This means that studying this corpus in its own right and within its context of production and reception is essential for understanding not only the role of these texts within the cult of saints in Egypt but also in the milieu in which they specifically were produced and received, rather than versions from other provenances or in other languages which may have existed once but no longer do so. This and the greater attention to Greek material within current scholarship mean that the thesis will focus on Coptic hagiography in order to align the study of its content with current scholarship on the early Christian world. In addition, there are a lot of saints in the Coptic Christian tradition who have received minimal or no attention in scholarship, and most or all the hagiography pertaining to them survives only in Coptic⁹⁶.

Whether the use of Coptic in hagiography and in documentary texts was deliberate or not, there remains the issue of which language hagiographies were originally written in. This is an issue regardless of which saints, texts, or regions are being researched and is one which ultimately does not have a solution. There has long been a perception within scholarship that all Coptic hagiography is translated or copied from Greek, for example Delehayé concluded that martyrologies in Coptic were translated from originals from Alexandria because he considered that epic writing was only of Greek origin⁹⁷. Story cycles from earlier in Egyptian history, like the Demotic *Setne I* and *Setne II*, and older stories from Pharaonic times, like *King Cheops and the Magicians* found in Papyrus Westcar, the *Tale of Sinuhe* known from many versions, and the misadventures of *Wenamun*, all prove that epic writing was present in Egyptian tradition⁹⁸.

⁹⁴ E.g. S00080; S00641.

⁹⁵ Van der Vliet 2009: 286; Beaucamp 2007: 271.

⁹⁶ Harvey, S. A. 1993: vii-viii; Depuydt, L. 1993c: xiii; Brown, P. 1981: 82.

⁹⁷ Papaconstantinou 2011: 324-5, 330-1.

⁹⁸ Parkinson 1998: 21-6, 102-5; Lichtheim 2006: I, 215-16, 222-3, II, 224, III, 125-7; Simpson, W. K. 2003: 13-14, 54-5, 116, 453-4, 470-1, 490.

Treatment of hagiography preserved in Coptic as ‘*misérable littérature*’ has made it ‘more neglected’⁹⁹. Additionally, within scholarship on literature, Coptic has not been studied as much as other, contemporary languages or earlier phases of Egyptian¹⁰⁰. Likewise, the linguistic and cultural relationship between Coptic and earlier Egyptian material is often neglected, with a notable but albeit limited exception being the etymological studies performed by Enzo Lucchesi but thematic studies still being lacking¹⁰¹.

It is fundamentally impossible to know in which language a hagiographical text was originally composed, although it is likely that some texts were composed in Coptic and some translated from Greek¹⁰². Where that which has survived in Coptic is concerned, in some cases versions in other languages like Greek and Syriac are virtually identical save for superficial variations, like the martyrdom of Merkourios, and the martyrdom of James up until the saint’s execution, after which the Coptic version continues the narrative¹⁰³. In other cases, versions in other languages are very different or do not exist. As will be seen in Chapter 1, scholars have attempted to date many of the so-called original versions of the texts included in this thesis, but the extant texts, where dateable by colophon or palaeography, post-date these supposed origins by centuries¹⁰⁴. As such, all that can be determined is when most of the extant texts used in this thesis themselves were written or copied, rather than any versions that came before them. It is not even known whether earlier versions existed, never mind what language or languages in which they would have first been committed to writing. Instead of reflecting an earlier narrative which may or may not have existed, the surviving hagiography reflects the attitudes of its own writers or copyists, and what these people considered to be pressing matters within the Church or the cult of saints at the time¹⁰⁵. However, whatever language the hagiography studied in this thesis was originally written in, if the versions that have survived are indeed copies or translations of some earlier written tradition, is not a concern because this research is focusing on what the case studies show about the cult of saints in Egypt at the time that the extant texts were written or copied in Coptic and the religious and cultural milieu in which they were written, and whether they possess distinctive characteristics compared to contemporary hagiography provenanced to elsewhere, like Alexandria, or preserved in other languages such as Greek. While Papaconstantinou observes the use of Greek loan words in a religious context and Fournet

⁹⁹ Lucchesi, E. 1978: 274; Booth, P. 2020: 24; Rogozhina, A. 2015: 2, 282.

¹⁰⁰ Booth 2020: 38; Emmel 2007: 83; Tait, W. J. 1996: 175; Papaconstantinou, A. 2007: 351.

¹⁰¹ Lucchesi, E. 1973: 2.

¹⁰² Papaconstantinou 2011: 323.

¹⁰³ E02774; Budge 1915: 810-20; Fiey, J.-M. 2004: 108; Devos, P. 1953: 158; Devos, P. 1954, 1954: 213; Alcock, A. (unpublished): 1-2.

¹⁰⁴ Emmel 2007: 86-7; Papaconstantinou 2007: 352.

¹⁰⁵ Gray, C. 2017: 107; Turner, P. 2011: 13; Grig, L. 2004: 1, 5, 24.

likewise in a legal context, this may have simply been practical and not evidence of attempts to Hellenise Coptic texts¹⁰⁶. While Fournet observes that features like conjunctions and interrogatives were also borrowed from Greek into Coptic, his claim that Greek ‘touches the very framework of the Coptic language’ is an exaggeration, as Coptic retains its own vocabulary, morphology, and grammar from earlier Egyptian, and is actually relatively similar to Demotic. In fact, while the Coptic script is based on the Greek alphabet, it includes letters based on Demotic for sounds that Greek does not have¹⁰⁷. Fundamentally, the question of language is less important than that of culture, as to whether hagiography that has survived in Coptic is distinct from that in other languages, such as Greek, or whether the only difference is in fact linguistic. If the latter were the case, then the similar hagiography could be said to come from the same cultural milieu, but if the former were the case, then the linguistic distinction may actually be evidence of more complex differences.

Related to this is the issue of dating. Papaconstantinou states that Coptic hagiography was composed between the fourth and eighth centuries, while the extant versions are preserved in manuscripts dating between the ninth and thirteenth centuries¹⁰⁸. The manuscripts that have been dated in the case studies used in this thesis may show that this is a generalisation, as the earliest of those has been dated to either the seventh or the eighth century by its palaeography¹⁰⁹. Tito Orlandi proposed that, initially hagiography was copied from Greek into Coptic, before composition in Coptic started in the mid-fifth century, but this is based on stylistic similarities between martyrological and homiletic cycles which, as Papaconstantinou points out, presupposes that the production of the texts in question was entirely linear¹¹⁰. Likewise, it cannot be known whether Coptic hagiography went through a process of redaction to achieve the level of homogeneity that they now share, and whether this would have happened quickly or been gradual¹¹¹. It is likely instead that there is overlap and, as with the language that hagiography may have originally been composed in, it is not possible to know when it was originally written and whether there have been any changes or elaborations that make using internal information in the texts for dating impossible¹¹². The issue of dating also includes periodisation, as Stephanos Efthymiadis observes¹¹³. He states that this is because of the ‘timelessness’ of many features within hagiography, but actually that preserved in Coptic presents something of the opposite

¹⁰⁶ Papaconstantinou 2006: 82; Fournet 2019: 71.

¹⁰⁷ Quack, J. F. 2017: 79.

¹⁰⁸ Papaconstantinou 2011: 323.

¹⁰⁹ E03174.

¹¹⁰ Papaconstantinou 2011: 331-2.

¹¹¹ Papaconstantinou 2011: 333.

¹¹² Efthymiadis 2011: 9.

¹¹³ Efthymiadis 2011: 8.

problem. As Chapter 1 will show, the texts studied in this thesis refer to events that happen significantly before their apparent date, like the persecution under Diocletian, meaning that the writers or copyists were deliberately situating them in a certain point in time. It is thus essential to analyse these texts based on what can be inferred about the time that they have been dated to rather than how they portray what by the time of their creation were already historical events. As with the languages in which hagiography may have been composed, in the research presented in this thesis, the date of any original version of a text that has not survived is not an issue because the texts are being analysed for the social, religious, and cultural insights that the presentation of visions within them provide for the time at which the extant versions were created, rather than for a time before¹¹⁴.

Another term that could be applied to the texts used in this thesis rather than ‘Coptic hagiography’ would be ‘Egyptian hagiography’. This would distance the research from the linguistic argument and place the emphasis on saints and/or cults that are only known in Egypt and therefore justify research of early Christian tradition within Egypt in its own right. However, the texts used in this thesis reflect a variety of saints, all of whom have a tradition within the Coptic language that is complementary to but distinct from the traditions elsewhere. While it cannot be known whether the saints’ traditions were first written down in Coptic, the focus on Coptic can be justified for the material that has survived, especially where either most or all the extant hagiography pertaining to a saint has survived in Coptic. It would therefore be more appropriate to retain the term ‘Coptic hagiography’ to reflect the particular language in which these texts have survived, and to facilitate the identification of its own tradition and how it compares to those in other languages, such as Greek. Further, using the terms ‘Egyptian hagiography’ and ‘Coptic hagiography’ both suggest that the saints used as case studies in this thesis were originally or primarily venerated in the Coptic Church, which is not necessarily the case. However, the use of ‘Egyptian hagiography’ would also necessitate the inclusion of hagiography that has survived in Greek, which would limit the capacity of the research to address the imbalance of scholarship on texts which have survived in Greek and Coptic. In order to understand the characteristics of hagiography preserved in Coptic, it is necessary to focus on texts in that language. Within the study of hagiography, the distinction between traditions seems to be made through the languages in which texts are written, so to clearly situate the texts used in this thesis within wider scholarship, the term ‘Coptic hagiography’ will be used.

¹¹⁴ Papaconstantinou 2011: 325.

3: Research

3.1: Research Questions

In order to determine how visions are presented in hagiography preserved in Coptic and address the aims of the thesis, the need for the thematic study of Coptic hagiography and the need for a thematic study that encompasses more than miracles, the research will answer four research questions. These questions will show that hagiography within the tradition of the Coptic Church reflects that that tradition is a distinct part of Byzantine, Christian, and Egyptian culture and should be acknowledged as such. They will also show that visions should be treated as a separate phenomenon because they have their own form and functions which were part of the performance of the cult of saints in shrines due to their use in such spaces and by the writers to express the Church's authority there.

The four questions are:

1. Is there is a specifically Coptic tradition for visions in hagiography?
2. What conventions are there for visions in Coptic hagiography and do these differ according to whether saints or laypeople are experiencing them?
3. What are the narrative functions of visions in Coptic hagiography and do they vary according to whether saints or laypeople are experiencing them?
4. How do the narrative functions of visions in Coptic hagiography relate to the operation of shrines and the exercising of authority within them?

3.2: Approaches

Two approaches will be used in this thesis to answer the research questions and to address the many problems that are inherent in hagiographical texts as historical sources.

The historical and linguistic changes that took place in Egypt demonstrate how it is essential to problematise hagiography preserved in Coptic as sources. In fact, three historical periods need to be considered when analysing them:

1. The period according to the texts in which the saints allegedly lived.
2. The period according to the texts in which the saints' miracles are said to have occurred.

3. The period in which the extant hagiography was created, transmitted, and preserved.

All these periods overlap, but the historicity of what is claimed in the texts is problematic given that the function of the texts was to celebrate the saints and promote their shrines¹¹⁵.

To consider these historical periods' relationship to the textual analysis, an interdisciplinary approach will be used. Messis and Ingela Nilsson note the necessity of combining the analysis of narratives like hagiography with historical context, although focus on theory rather than on material culture¹¹⁶. The hagiographical texts from the case studies will be analysed alongside material culture. This will not only enable the situation of the texts within the context in which they were created and received, but will facilitate a comprehensive, holistic study of how they were used by writers to engage audiences with the cult of saints in Egypt¹¹⁷. This is essential because hagiography was created to be performed in a devotional context and celebrate the saints rather than to be an accurate historical account¹¹⁸. The texts will be contextualised according to the tradition of each of the six saints included in this thesis, based on the archaeological remains and manuscripts of documentary and hagiographical texts that have survived¹¹⁹. Where texts in multiple languages have survived, these will be presented to consolidate the contextualisation while retaining the focus on that which has survived in Coptic. As a result, the research will bring together material that has not been studied together before and apply an approach to the study of hagiography whose utility has only recently been acknowledged in scholarship but which has only been applied in a limited capacity¹²⁰. Aatje Hidding focuses on establishing the physical space in which the audience experienced the cult of saints, but only as far as enabling her own audience's understanding of the environment rather than studying how that environment was utilised by writers to engage their contemporary audience with the cult of saints¹²¹. Lucy Grig meanwhile analyses texts and images to understand the role of the veneration of martyrs in Christianisation¹²². While the visualisation of holy figures is important within Christianity and thus necessitates the use of iconography, Grig's approach needs to be expanded across all the material culture that bears witness to the cult of saints to

¹¹⁵ Depuydt 1993c: xii; Eade and Sallnow 1991: 14.

¹¹⁶ Messis, C. and Nilsson, I. 2018: 4, 5.

¹¹⁷ Brown, P. 1971: 81; Van Pelt, J. 2018: 140.

¹¹⁸ Keskiäho, J. 2015: 14; Kritzinger, P. 2011: 36; Delehay, H. 1962: 115; Hidding, A. 2020: 15; Van Uytanghe 1976: 103, 105; Brown, P. 1995: 63, 68; Grig 2004: 1.

¹¹⁹ Neil 2021: 135.

¹²⁰ Hidding 2020: 68; Brown 1995: 60.

¹²¹ Hidding 2020: 68-9.

¹²² Grig 2004: 3.

understand the control of the reception of the cult and of martyrdom by writers, especially given her insistence on the importance of the ‘material setting of the liturgy’¹²³.

As well as an interdisciplinary approach, a comparative approach will be used to identify how visions experienced by martyr saints and those experienced by laypeople are presented. This has already been done in gender-based studies of dreams in the ancient world, and so is ripe for being applied to different social and religious distinctions between characters¹²⁴. As Grig points out, martyr narratives – and therefore by extension other hagiography – have repeated motifs and features that could be used in the writers’ exercising of control¹²⁵. While individual writers may not be knowable as individuals, their authorial voices can be accessed through the narrative features that they chose to include in their work¹²⁶. These features can then be analysed to determine how they shape the narratives in which they occur and the response of the writers’ intended audiences¹²⁷. The analysis of the narrative features that writers used to present visions will enable the research to comprehensively determine the function or functions of visions and thus how they were used to engage the audience with the cult of saints, and will show that they are far from the ‘simple narrative devices or mere superstition’ that Neil acknowledges is a tempting viewpoint¹²⁸.

As such, the comparative approach used in this thesis will employ narratology, the analysis of narratives and their features¹²⁹. Narratology is already being applied within Byzantine Studies, although more to what Messis and Nilsson call ‘factual’ texts and other forms of literature than to hagiography, and has been applied in even more limited fashion within Egyptology, and so its use here has a foundation in both fields but will innovate them¹³⁰. Studies of hagiography tend to overlook the role of the author, despite the fact that someone chose to include certain information or features in the texts and not others, and also the audience, for whom the texts were intended¹³¹. The application of detailed analysis of the features that writers used will look past the admittedly very apparent ‘absurdity’ in the narratives to identify precisely the effects that they intended for those features to achieve¹³². Hagiography was created to convey the idealised lives of characters in order to edify the audience in some way, so it is crucial to not

¹²³ Edwards, M. and D-Vasilescu, E. E. 2017: 2; Grig 2004: 38.

¹²⁴ Neil 2021: 9.

¹²⁵ Grig 2004: 39; Cupane, C. and Krönung, B. 2016: 3-4.

¹²⁶ Krueger, D. 2004: 9.

¹²⁷ Skedros, J. C. 1999: 4; Grig 2004: 4-5.

¹²⁸ Neil 2021: 22.

¹²⁹ Bal, M. 2017: 3; Richter, T. S. 2005: 239.

¹³⁰ Messis and Nilsson 2018: 1-3; Richter 2005: 242-3, 254-8; Cupane and Krönung 2016: 3, 6-7; Van Pelt 2018: 137-8; Cox, A. 2014: 25.

¹³¹ Hinterberger 2014b: 211; Efthymiadis, S. and Kalogeras, N. 2014: II, 247-8; Efthymiadis 2014: 9.

¹³² Papaconstantinou 2011: 323.

view these texts as objective, factually accurate historical sources, but instead to understand how the writers created them and the nuances behind their functions¹³³. In fact, the use of narratology supports this, because it facilitates the focus on the elements that signpost texts as fictional¹³⁴. Certainly, as Bryan Ward-Perkins has observed, these texts could simply be enjoyed as good stories, but the crafting and precision that went into creating them needs to be studied to understand exactly how they are a distinct set of hagiographies with their own commonalities and cultural milieu¹³⁵. At a macrolevel, the linking of martyrologies through repeated characters and story elements to create what are called ‘cycles’ is viewed as ‘very typical’ of Egypt¹³⁶. In this thesis, the similarities and roles thereof between hagiographical texts preserved in Coptic at a microlevel will be identified through the study of the particular phenomenon of visions, to show how useful and necessary such studies are.

Five features will be analysed and compared across the case studies to show the similarities and differences in the presentation of visions experienced by different characters. The first will be the terminology used to refer to visions, specifically whether visions are signposted explicitly with terms or implicitly through the fact that a deceased or heavenly being is appearing to a living character. The second will be the sensory description of visions, including which senses are evoked and the descriptions themselves. The third will be the characters who appear in visions, meaning who and what they are, such as particular saints, angels, or Christ. The fourth will be the locations in which visions occur, such as whether they occur in saints’ shrines or other locales. And the final feature will be the behaviour that characters exhibit while experiencing visions, and whether any of it is involved in invoking visions or necessitated by interacting with certain characters or by certain situations. These features will show in effect the gold standard of how martyr saints were intended by writers to be perceived and treated by participants in the cult of saints.

Possible reasons for why the presentation of these features may vary between characters include the sanctity of those characters, therefore whether writers distinguished between martyr saints and lay audiences. Other possible reasons are the gender of characters witnessing visions, their origin, meaning whether they are from Egypt or from elsewhere, and their occupation and status¹³⁷.

¹³³ Papaconstantinou 2011: 325; Hinterberger 2014b: 212; Efthymiadis and Kalogeras 2014: 247; Efthymiadis 2014: 14; Kaplan and Kountoura-Galaki 2014: 389.

¹³⁴ Messis C 2014: 313-14.

¹³⁵ See 2; Ward-Perkins, B. 2020: 15, 21; Bowman, G. 1991: 100.

¹³⁶ Papaconstantinou 2011: 329-30; Papaconstantinou 2006: 75.

¹³⁷ Booth 2020: 36.

The analysis of how the narrative features contribute to the representation of visions in Coptic hagiography will show ‘the relationship between the vision, the agent that sees, and that which is seen’, highlighting the ways that visions were conceptualised and visualised by writers and thus how they functioned within hagiography and within the cult of saints¹³⁸. This will be done qualitatively, as while narratology was founded as a quantitative approach, that would move too far from studying the techniques themselves to then create a morphology, like Stavroula Constantinou’s study of healing miracles and visions¹³⁹. In the words of Marina Warner, studies of morphology lose the ‘flavour’ of the content of literature¹⁴⁰.

3.3: Structure of the Thesis

The thesis will be divided into four chapters. The first two will contextualise the case studies using the interdisciplinary approach, and the second two will analyse the visions within the texts and their context of production and reception using narratology. The chapters will be as follows:

1. Saints and Sources

The first chapter will introduce the saints whose traditions are used in the thesis. It will explain the origins of the saints and outline their lives as they are claimed to have happened in the surviving hagiography. This chapter will also outline the hagiographic corpus used in the thesis, explaining the content, manuscripts, transmission, and dating for both that which has survived in Coptic and that which has survived in other languages. It will therefore situate the saints’ traditions within all the textual evidence known to have survived regardless of language.

2. Shrines and Cults

The second chapter will outline the archaeological evidence of the shrine sites and cult activities relating to the saints being used in the thesis. It will explain the excavation history, layout, and development of the sites, before analysing the cult activities that may have taken place there and determining the roles that the saints seem to have had in their respective communities. This will contextualise the saints’ traditions and the textual evidence within the physical practices of the cult of saints in Egypt, and establish that there is a dissonance between the textual and archaeological evidence that requires them to be considered together to develop a more

¹³⁸ Bal 2017: 135.

¹³⁹ Messis and Nilsson 2018: 1; Constantinou, S. 2014: 25; Neil 2021: 16.

¹⁴⁰ Warner, M. 1995: xviii.

comprehensive and more accurate picture of the cult. This will therefore establish the challenges posed by both sets of evidence and mitigate them, and also present the environment in which the visions in the hagiography are set.

3. Visions Experienced by Saints

The third chapter will outline the visions experienced by saints while they were alive, which are presented in the encomia and martyrdoms. It will analyse the features of the visions to determine the conventions for the presentation of visions experienced by saints. It will also determine what seems to have been the function of visions experienced by saints, which will enable comparison with the function of visions experienced by laypeople in the following chapter. This will illuminate the content of visions and how they were used by the writers depending on which characters were experiencing them and how the audience would have related to them, and thus what the audience would have expected if they experienced visions themselves.

4. Visions Experienced by Laypeople

The fourth chapter will outline the visions experienced by supplicants at saints' shrines, which are presented in the encomia, martyrdoms, and miracle collections. It will analyse the features of the visions to determine the conventions for the presentation of visions experienced by laypeople. It will also determine what seems to have been the function of visions experienced by laypeople. It will compare these findings with the visions experienced by saints to present a comprehensive picture of how visions are presented and function, and how they vary according to whether they are being experienced by saints or supplicants. This combined with the textual and archaeological context from Chapters 1 and 2 will demonstrate what the textual evidence includes and occludes, and relate these decisions by the writers to what audiences were primed to expect from their own experiences.

Finally, the conclusion will synthesise the findings of the analysis of visions and their function(s) within their context.

Ultimately this thesis will prove definitively that it is crucial for scholarship to research visions in their own right and hagiography preserved in Coptic within its own cultural and religious milieu, and that significant insights are currently being omitted from scholarship due to both Late Antique and Byzantine Studies and Egyptology focusing elsewhere.

Chapter 1: Saints and Sources

1: Introduction: Chapter Aims

This chapter will introduce the case studies being used in this thesis and situate the saints within their textual traditions, including texts that have survived in Coptic and in other languages. The case studies have been chosen according to the criteria established in the Introduction¹. The saints who have been chosen are: Kollouthos of Antinoopolis, Menas, Phoibammon of Preht, Merkourios, Viktor, son of Romanos, and James the Persian (also known as James the Dismembered). A varying number of texts has survived in Coptic for each of them, but most of them include visions experienced by both the saints while alive and posthumously by supplicants to their shrines, and therefore provide the scope required to assess whether there are variations between the visions experienced by different characters. The six case studies present saints of a range of backgrounds who perform a variety of miracles. This will give the broadest selection of visions possible to achieve the aims of the thesis².

The textual evidence associated with these saints comprises both hagiographic and documentary texts. This chapter will present the hagiography because it provides the narratives of the lives of the saints according to their traditions. Hagiography is an umbrella term referring to texts written about holy individuals like saints but also other figures such as angels³. There are many kinds of hagiographical text, including martyr cycles which narrate the deaths of martyrs, *Lives* which narrate the lives of holy figures like martyrs and abbots, and posthumous miracles which concern miracles supposedly performed by saints following their deaths. Documentary texts, meanwhile, provide evidence of saints' veneration at sites and will be used in Chapter 2 as part of the analysis of archaeological sites for both their associations with particular saints and the presence of cult practices at them⁴. These two chapters will show that, while documentary texts give an insight into how sites functioned, hagiography was written to convey messages about the saints regarding their sanctity, their capabilities, and the proper way for supplicants to approach them and interpret their visions of them. It must therefore be noted that hagiography is not necessarily reliable or comprehensive in providing information about the actual practices and administration at shrines and understanding of those things comes from documentary texts

¹ See Introduction: 1.2.

² See Introduction: 1.1.

³ Harvey, S. A. 2009: 603.

⁴ E.g. Papaconstantinou, A. 2001: 63-4, 123, 147-8, 205; Uljas, S. 2019: 10; P.Lond 4 1419; E02224; Delattre, A. 2008: 131; Delattre, A. 2010: 171-2.

and archaeology. Instead, hagiography focuses on the role of saints in resolving supplicants' problems, which may be considered realistic by a modern audience like illness, injury, injustice, emotional torment, and social conflict, and also those which may seem unrealistic but are presented as no less real experiences like demons and magic. This focus justifies the saints' rightful veneration⁵. The introduction of the hagiography in this chapter will therefore allow Chapter 2 to present the potential dissonance between what is shown in the textual evidence and what is shown in the archaeological evidence, and thus begin to demonstrate that hagiography does not necessarily provide an accurate idea of the scale or locations of the cults of individual saints.

2: Hagiographic Corpus

This section will problematise the hagiography used in this thesis as historical sources. It will begin by presenting the issues of creation and transmission that arise from the extant manuscripts, before outlining the manuscripts and hagiographies that are attested for each of the saints studied to place those issues in context.

2.1: Creation and Transmission of Manuscripts

Firstly, the issues that are inherent to the known manuscripts and the texts within them must be discussed. These manuscripts long post-date when the saints are claimed to have been martyred and first been venerated⁶. This strongly suggests that these texts are copies and versions of earlier narratives rather than originals, which is supported by some of them also being known from other, sometimes earlier and usually fragmentary, versions in Coptic or versions in other languages⁷. This thesis focuses on the dates of the manuscripts rather than when the texts were originally composed, as the manuscripts are what has survived and any original versions can never be identified definitively⁸. As Hippolyte Delehaye stated of martyrdoms, but which is applicable to hagiography generally, rather than chronological references, the focus was the audience and the incorporation of the events described into the collective memory⁹.

⁵ Verrone, K. E. 2002: 46-9; Thompson, S. E. 1993a: 68-70; Thompson, S. E. 1993b: 53; Weidmann, F. 1991a: 6; Weidmann, F. 1991b: 7; Budge, E. A. W. 1914: I, 19, 58, 271, 311; Schenke, G. 2013: 272-3.; Alcock, A. (unpublished): 21.

⁶ See Table 1 and Figure 1; Moss, C. 2013: 15.

⁷ E00666; E01222; E01223; E02774.

⁸ Davis, S. J. 2008: 86

⁹ Delehaye, H. 1966: 313; Karlin-Hayter, P. 1991: 271.

Hagiographies celebrated the idealised form of saints¹⁰. Their historical utility comes from what can be read between the lines, as they show how early Christianity functioned in their contemporary and local environment¹¹. As John Haldon states, ‘collections of miracles offer some of the most valuable insights into the attitudes and beliefs of ordinary people’, although more precisely they show what ordinary people were told to believe¹². These texts therefore are sources for the perception of the saints and their cult, rather than an historical account of the saints themselves¹³.

It is therefore useful to consider how hagiographies may have come into being. As the first, or indeed previous, versions are unknown, this involves speculation, but it is nonetheless useful for understanding what preceding material writers may have had access to and how these narratives might have developed.

Throughout history, texts have continually been ‘re-appraised and re-interpreted to fit new contexts’¹⁴. Some biographic and geographic parameters of hagiographic narratives may have originated in the legal proceedings of martyr saints’ trials and been developed into commemorative stories, although this is debated in scholarship¹⁵. Variations between extant versions of texts can be attributed to the use of the same narrative by different writers in different locations, with alterations to suit the locality¹⁶. This reproduction can be viewed as a cult act, with Derek Krueger considering the ‘hagiographer as devotee’¹⁷. Further, as Aatje Hidding notes, the circulation of these texts will have created a collective past for the Christian community in which they were circulated as well as having presented idealised Christian role models¹⁸.

It has been proposed that the narratives in hagiography were originally part of an oral tradition¹⁹. Alexander Kazhdan stated that narratives about a saint generally began to be transmitted orally a generation after the saint’s death, meaning that any original written versions would have been centuries earlier than the extant ones²⁰. Krueger describes the writing of

¹⁰ Keskiäho, J. 2015: 16; Ward-Perkins, B. 2020: 3.

¹¹ Gray, C. 2017: 107; Turner, P. 2011: 13; Shin, M. S. 2018: 16; Davis 2008: 112; Van Uytfanghe, M. 1976: 103, 106; Grig, L. 2004: 1, 5, 24.

¹² Haldon, J. F. 2008: 263.

¹³ Keskiäho 2015: 14; Kritzinger, P. 2011: 36; Delehay, H. 1962: 115; Hidding, A. 2020: 15; Van Uytfanghe 1976: 103, 105.

¹⁴ Keskiäho 2015: 2.

¹⁵ Bremmer, J. N. 2017: 48-9; Payne, R. 2011: 91; Hidding 2020: 75-6; Rebillard, É. 2020: 3, 5, 34-6; Papaconstantinou, A. 2011: 328-9.

¹⁶ Bremmer 2017: 47-9.

¹⁷ Krueger, D. 2004: 49.

¹⁸ Hidding 2020: 78.

¹⁹ E.g. Moss 2013: 235; Ward-Perkins 2020: 21; Efthymiadis, S. and Kalogeras, N. 2014: II, 249; Efthymiadis, S. 2014: 7.

²⁰ Kazhdan, A. P. 1991: II, 1308; III, 1828.

hagiography as a ‘written rehearsal of oral acts of glorification’²¹. However, beyond these inferences there is no proof that the surviving texts originated in an oral tradition. By its nature, hagiography is intermodal, combining written and spoken elements in which the speaker recites a narrative and addresses the audience, exemplified particularly by *encomia*²². Additionally, the episodic structure of hagiography, references by the narrators to breaks, and references by the narrators to writing down the narrative as though it is being spoken in the moment, indicate that the texts may have been recited to an audience over a period of days and that they indeed originated from an oral tradition²³. But, given the length of time since the saints’ supposed deaths and the writing of the extant texts, it is more likely the writers wanted to convey speech because the texts were supposedly read aloud to an audience²⁴. Hagiography should therefore be seen as a fluid, changing phenomenon rather than as static, unchanging texts, of which modern scholars have only a small amount and therefore a small window into the context in which they were written and the messages conveyed within them²⁵. Further, the cult of saints should be seen as a changing phenomenon which shaped and was shaped by the texts that were produced in association with it²⁶.

Vincent Déroche is correct that the interpretation of miracle collections presents many problems for modern scholars²⁷. Hagiographical texts are unreliable as historical sources and there has been much debate about which, if any, are accurate accounts of historical events or how accurately they demonstrate the audience’s beliefs²⁸. But the existence of production indicates the significance of the saints to the culture and locality in which the surviving texts were produced, as narratives only continue to be transmitted because there is a reason for them to be²⁹. However, it must be remembered that these texts were not intended as historical sources, but as commemorative documents that could be recited to an audience in order to convey certain messages³⁰. It is consequently critical to the study of hagiography that its contemporary function, and the consequent effects on the writers’ narrative choices, is more widely acknowledged³¹. As Marina Warner states, it is necessary to understand the history of stories to

²¹ Krueger 2004: 92.

²² Thompson 1993a: 50-1; Thompson 1993b: 39-40; Harvey, S. A. 1993: vi.

²³ Zakrzewska, E. D. 2011: 308; Budge 1914: I, 1, 20, 26, 34, 46, 253, 272, 279, 287, 300; Uljas 2019: 44-9, 58-9, 60-1, 84-9, 98, 100-1; Drescher, J. 1946: 11, 14, 21, 111, 112, 115-16; Thompson 1993a: 68-70, 71-2, 76-8, 83; Thompson 1993b: 53, 54, 55, 58-60, 64; Weidmann 1991a: 4; Weidmann 1991b: 4; Hidding 2020: 78.

²⁴ Hägg, T. 2012: 99; Davis, S. J. 2001: 3; Harvey 1993: v.

²⁵ Harvey 1993: xvi.

²⁶ Rogozhina, A. 2015: 233.

²⁷ Déroche, V. 1993: 95.

²⁸ Moss 2013: 91-2; Dal Santo, M. J. 2012: 5.

²⁹ Pratsch, T. 2005: 1; Behlmer, H. 2016: I, 24.

³⁰ Rebillard 2020: 4; De Temmerman, K. 2010: 23; Gray 2017: 107.

³¹ Krueger 2004: 28.

understand their intended effect on the audience, rather than viewing them through a lens for which they were never intended³². Saints were considered to continue to live, and this ‘continuing presence’ was a key aspect of their cults³³.

It remains debated in scholarship whether audiences perceived visions as real experiences which they could have or whether they accepted that they were a narrative trope. However, it was evidently accepted that visions were a medium by which saints could be claimed to continue to interact with the world. This would allow moral messages to be imparted via the narratives, which were based on the plight of the lay characters, in order to discourage certain behaviours (such as excessive drinking) and encourage others (such as donating to saints’ shrines). So, visions in hagiography can be viewed as instructing the audience on how to behave generally and when needing the intervention of a saint³⁴. The setting and performance of narratives in saints’ shrines would have presumably established the realism of the saints’ posthumous appearances by emphasising the environment in which the lay audience should anticipate experiencing visions³⁵. As Daniel H. Williams points out, such texts were ‘written by Christians for Christians’ and would have required certain audiences and contexts in order to be understood³⁶.

The manuscripts and the texts which are found within them are outlined in Table 1. They are arranged by saint, although in some manuscripts the texts of more than one saint are found. The timeline of the manuscripts that have been dated is then shown in Figure 1.

Saint	Manuscript	Provenance	Date	Current location	Text(s) in manuscript
Kollouthos	Pierpont Morgan Codex M591 fols. 94r-121v	The Monastery of the Archangel Michael in the Fayoum	9th century CE – colophon	Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City	Encomium (E00666)
	B.N. P 129 ₁₆ , fol. 76 and ÖNB K 9524–9526	Unknown	9th/10th century CE – palaeography	Bibliothèque nationale, Paris and Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna respectively	Encomium (E00667)

³² Warner, M. 2003: 4.

³³ Keskiäho 2015: 24; Brown, P. 1981: 3.

³⁴ MacDermot, V. 1971: 1; Keskiäho 2015: 24; Hidding 2020: 70.

³⁵ Krueger 2004: 92; Moss 2013: 235.

³⁶ Williams, D. H. 2019: 411.

	British Library Or. 3581 B(38)	Unknown	9th century CE – palaeography	British Library, London	Fragment of a miracle (E00668)
	B.N. P 129 ₁₅ , fols. 21–25 and 25bis and Borg. Copt. 109	The White Monastery (potentially from Panopolis)	10th century CE – palaeography	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris and Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome respectively	Miracles (E03173)
	P.9036 (BKU I 189)	Unknown	7th/8th century CE – palaeography	Berlin Papyrussammlung	Miracle (E03174)
Menas	Pierpont Morgan Codex M590, fol. 1r–18v (E01221), fol. 19r–49v (E01222), and fol. 50r–68v (E01223)	The Monastery of the Archangel Michael in the Fayoum	9th century CE – colophon	Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City	Martyrdom (E01221), Miracles (E01222), Encomium (E01223)
	Pierpont Morgan Codex M585, fol. 38r–49v	The Monastery of the Archangel Michael in the Fayoum	Unknown	Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City	Miracles (E01001)
	MS IFAO copte. inv. 315-22	The White Monastery	11th century CE – unclear why	Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Cairo	Miracles
Phoibammon	Pierpont Morgan Codex M582, fol. 1r–20v (martyrdom), 21r–30v (miracles)	The Monastery of the Archangel Michael in the Fayoum	9th/10th century CE – unclear why	Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City	Martyrdom (E02109) (E00239), Miracles (E00240)

Merkourios	BM Or. 6801, fol. 2a-31a	Unknown	Unknown	British Museum, London	Martyrdom (E01863)
	BM Or. 6802, fol. 1a-24b (miracles), 25a-43b (encomium)	Unknown	Unknown	British Museum, London	Encomium (E01864), Miracles (E01865)
	ÖNB K 09456	Unknown	Unknown, although Gesa Schenke claims that it is datable to the 9th-11th century CE	Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna	Fragment of a miracle (E01848)
	Pierpont Morgan Codex M588, fol. 27vb22–31r	The Monastery of the Archangel Michael in the Fayoum	9th century CE – colophon	Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City	Encomium (E01861)
Viktor	BM MS. Or. No. 7022, fol. 1a-11a (first martyrdom), 11b-15a (second martyrdom), 15a-19b (third martyrdom), 19b-26a (fourth martyrdom), 26b-59a (encomium)	The Monastery of Merkurios at Tebo/Apollonos Ano/Edfu (donation noted by colophon)	10th century CE – colophon	British Museum, London	Martyrdom (E05111), Martyrdom (E05112), Martyrdom (E05113), Martyrdom (E05114), Encomium (E04643)
	ÖNB K 09446, p. 135/136; ÖNB K 09447, p.	Unknown	9th-11th century CE – layout and script	Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna	Encomium (E01715)

	139/140; ÖNB K 09448, p. 141/142				
	ÖNB K 09442, p. 19/20; ÖNB K 09443, p. 47/48	Unknown	9th/10th century CE – layout and script	Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna	Miracles (E01850)
	Pierpont Morgan Codex M591, fols. 34v–49v	The Monastery of the Archangel Michael near Hamouli in the Fayoum	9th century CE – colophon	Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City	Encomium (E01862)
	I.1.b.656+71 4 (5681, Copt. 18/1 and 18/2)	Touton in the Fayoum, the White Monastery (donation noted by colophon)	10th century CE – colophon	Pushkin Museum, Moscow (rest of codex in Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and in Berlin)	Encomium (E07043)
James	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59, fols. 156–212	Unknown	9th century CE – colophon	Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome	Martyrdom (E07053)

Table 1: Manuscripts containing texts used in the thesis

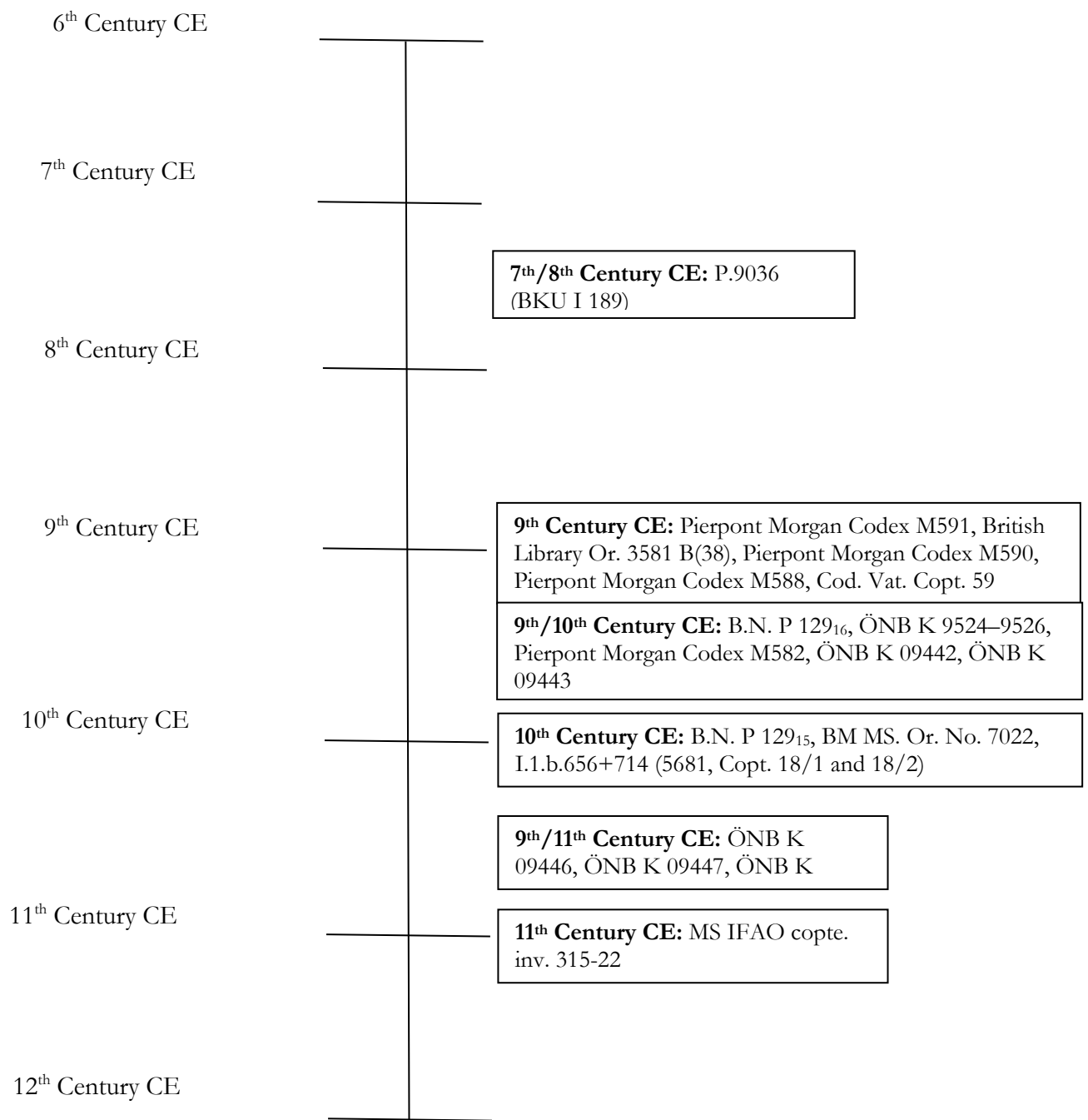


Figure 1: Timeline of (dated) manuscript production

2.2: *Kollouthos*

The most complete manuscript in the hagiography of Kollouthos preserved in Coptic is the parchment codex Pierpont Morgan Codex M591, with an encomium on folios 94r-121v and a martyrdom on folios. 88vi-92vii, which has a colophon dating it to 14 February 861³⁷. The martyrdom does not include any visions and so will not be used in this thesis. Leo Depuydt argues that the colophon records the donation of the manuscript, presumably based on its location at the bottom of the final folio and the naming of the site where it was found³⁸. Hidding even suggests the date of the composition of the encomium based on its authorship by Isaak of Antinoopolis, disregarding the fact that the text was probably attributed to a bishop in order to legitimise it but not necessarily written by one³⁹. When it was written is debated, with claims ranging between the seventh and eleventh centuries⁴⁰. Further, Isaak of Antinoopolis is only known from another, incomplete encomium of Kollouthos preserved in Arabic⁴¹. The Pierpont Morgan and British Library manuscripts and four manuscripts in Arabic commemorate the saint on 24 Pašons (19 May), while the encomium preserved in Arabic and attributed to Isaak of Antinoopolis does so on 14 Khoiahk (10/11 December) instead⁴². Gesa Schenke suggests that the encomium attributed to Isaak of Antinoopolis was preserved as an example of the kind of sermon that was used when martyrs' stories were read aloud, although this assumes that those elements of the texts are real and not added as part of the narrative to make it more engaging or more realistic for the audience⁴³.

Originally, the manuscript was acquired as two separate lots and numbered M591 and M608, but it has been reunified and is now known only as M591⁴⁴. The manuscript contains a combination of seven homilies and hagiographic texts, including the aforementioned encomium and martyrdom of Kollouthos, an encomium of Viktor, and a martyrdom of Paese and Thekla⁴⁵. The encomium of Kollouthos is paralleled in BL Or. 7558(40), in which with only the saint's vision of the archangel Gabriel survives⁴⁶. There are also fragments preserved in ÖNB K 5881,

³⁷ E00666; Reymond, E. A. E. and Barns, J. W. B. 1973: 20; Lantschoot, A. van 1929: 20; Depuydt, L. 1993a: I, 301, no. 157; Depuydt, L. 1993b: xi.

³⁸ E00666; Depuydt 1993a: I, 301, 303-4, 305, no. 157; Depuydt 1993b: ix; see Table 1.

³⁹ See 2.1; Hidding 2020: 79-80.

⁴⁰ Worp, K. A. 1994: 283, 296, 312; Fedalto, G. 1988: II, 639.

⁴¹ Schenke 2013: 114; Emmel, S. and South, K. H. 1996: 5; Zanetti, U. 1996: 18; Timm, S. 1984-92: I, 113.

⁴² Schenke 2013: 114; Zanetti 1996: 18.

⁴³ Schenke 2013: 16; see 2.1.

⁴⁴ Depuydt 1993a: I, 280, no. 142; 305, no. 157.

⁴⁵ Depuydt 1993b: x.

⁴⁶ Emmel and South 1996: 7, 8-9; Schenke 2013: 113, 146-9.

K 5882, K 5967, and K 5970, which predominantly recount the lives of the saint's parents⁴⁷. There is a fragmentary version of the martyrdom in the codex Berl. 9755, but this does not contain any visions⁴⁸. Schenke has stated that the Berlin manuscript is datable to the ninth century, but it is recorded in the Berlin Papyrussammlung as dating to the tenth century⁴⁹.

There is another encomium, in the fragmentary parchment codex accessioned in two pieces as B.N. P 129¹⁶, fol. 76 and ÖNB K 9524–9526 in Paris and Vienna respectively and believed to have been found in the region of Panopolis (modern Akhmim)⁵⁰. This encomium celebrates the establishment of a shrine at Pneuait, in that area, on 20 November but without a year⁵¹. Peter Grossmann dates this text (although it is unclear whether he is referring to the text or the manuscript) to the sixth century CE⁵². However, Schenke dates the manuscripts to the ninth or tenth century CE⁵³. This second encomium also survives complete in Arabic in British Library Or. 4723⁵⁴.

The remaining manuscripts are fragmentary and contain miracles. One is P.9036 (BKU I 189), which has been dated to the seventh or eighth century CE on palaeographic grounds, which contains a single miracle and is of uncertain provenance⁵⁵. The other two fragmentary miracle manuscripts, Or. 3581 B(38) in the British Library and B.N. P 129, fols. 21–25 and 25bis and Borg. Copt. 109 in Paris and Rome, have been dated to the ninth and tenth century respectively based on their palaeography, and are believed to have come from the region around Panopolis⁵⁶.

There is also the beginning of a martyrdom preserved in B.N. Copte 78, fols. 16–17, which has been dated based on its palaeography to the ninth century⁵⁷. This martyrdom does not include any visions, so it will not be included in this thesis⁵⁸.

Ugo Zanetti argues that there are references to Kollouthos in Ethiopic in the Ethiopian Synaxarium, which dates to around 1400 CE and is found in the manuscript d'Abbadie 66-66bis, and that there is a reference to him in Éth. 128, both from the Bibliothèque Nationale. In these manuscripts, the name *Kotolos* is mentioned in the context of martyrdom, based on Zanetti's

⁴⁷ Schenke 2013: 113, 138.

⁴⁸ Reymond and Barns 1973: 20.

⁴⁹ E00664; Berliner Papyrusdatenbank 2021.

⁵⁰ E00667.

⁵¹ Grossmann, P. 2014: II, 269; Grossmann, P. 2010a: 20; Hidding 2020: 84.

⁵² Grossmann 2014: II, 269-70; Grossmann 2010a: 23-4.

⁵³ E00667; Schenke 2013: 186-8

⁵⁴ Youssef, Y. N. 2011: 123, 130, 133.

⁵⁵ E03174.

⁵⁶ E00668; E03173.

⁵⁷ E00665.

⁵⁸ See 1.1.; see Introduction: 1.2; Reymond and Barns 1973: 145-50; E00664; E00664.

restoration⁵⁹. It seems, based on the extant evidence, that Kollouthos was not well known outside of Egypt⁶⁰.

The extant manuscripts preserved in Coptic all recount miracles, mostly healing, suggesting that, at least when these manuscripts were made, healing was a focus of the cult of Kollouthos. The inclusion of visions as part of these miracles also shows that there was an emphasis on the saint's presence as part of the shrines' healing function. The naming of shrines in different places – in this case Antinoopolis and Pnueit – also suggests that hagiography was a means of legitimising shrines.

2.3: *Menas*

The hagiography of Menas has survived in Sahidic and in Greek⁶¹. Meanwhile, liturgical texts have survived mostly in Bohairic, but also with one antiphonary in Sahidic in Pierpont Morgan Codex M575⁶². Gerald Browne argued that the hagiography follows a Coptic archetype, although this is unconvincing as his previous argument was that a miracle by Menas was translated from Greek⁶³. The survival of material in both Greek and Coptic may be chance, or it may be because Menas' shrine at Abu Mina was close to Alexandria and the Mediterranean. The latter interpretation seems more likely, as manuscripts containing Menas' hagiography have been found in many other languages.

There are many manuscripts containing texts written in Arabic, the most recently discovered of which are ML.MS.166 and Ms.Mar.Mena.2, and Ethiopic, which are MS. Brit Mus. Or. 689, MS. d'Abbadie 92, and MS d'Abbadie 179⁶⁴. These contain miracles and abridged versions of the encomium that exists in Coptic, which coupled with the languages involved suggests that they are later copies, and their provenance is unknown⁶⁵. The manuscripts containing texts preserved in Coptic have received considerable scholarly attention for over a century, while the Arabic miracle collection was published in 1993 by Felicitas Jaritz, including twenty-five manuscripts⁶⁶. The miracles published by Jaritz are, apart from two, also found in the

⁵⁹ Zanetti 1996: 11.

⁶⁰ Zanetti 1996: 22.

⁶¹ Devos, P. 1960c: 336; Sadek El Gendi, S. 2017: 21; Wortley, J. 2013: 42-3, no. 47.

⁶² Takla, H. N. 2017: 161; Bacot, S. 2020: 44; Depuydt 1993a: I, 108, no. 58.

⁶³ Browne, G. M. 1994: 4.

⁶⁴ Devos 1960c: 339-40.

⁶⁵ Drescher 1946: 126; Takla 2017: 162-3; Kaufmann, C. M. 1910b: 48-9; Devos, P. 1959: 455, 457, 459, 461, 463; Devos, P. 1960a: 158-60.

⁶⁶ Takla 2017: 165-8.

Coptic manuscripts. There are also three missing miracles supposed to exist by Jaritz, of which none are found in Coptic⁶⁷. Meanwhile, all but one Ethiopic manuscript (MS No. 1 Hist.) has not been edited⁶⁸.

There is also material surviving in Old Nubian in British Museum Or. MS. 6805, which seems to have been translated from Greek, five miracles in Latin which are also known from Coptic, and a Greek miracle recorded as *BHG* 1322zj which is also known in Syriac, as well as versions in Armenian, Middle Bulgarian, and Old Slavic⁶⁹. Much of this material dates from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. This suggests a later transmission of the tradition of Menas to the West and a focus on miracles⁷⁰.

Two encomia of Menas have survived, one in Greek and the other in Coptic. The Greek encomium is found on the verso of P.Cair.Masp. 1.67024, which is dated to 551 CE and was found in Aphrodito. It is part of the Dioskoros Archive and, according to the text at least, was written by Dioskoros and is entitled ‘εἰς τὸν ἅγιον Μηνᾶν ἰσόψηφα ἐγκώμι’ (‘isopsephic encomia for Saint Menas’)⁷¹. The plural in the title may suggest that this papyrus was part of a larger manuscript⁷². The Coptic encomium is found in Pierpont Morgan Codex 590 on folios 50r–68v⁷³. While James Drescher dated M590 to the sixth century, Schenke records that the colophon dates its donation to 892/3 CE⁷⁴. This encomium is attributed to John, archbishop of Alexandria, referring to either John III or John IV, who lived in the seventh and eighth centuries respectively⁷⁵. Schenke considers the latter the ‘most likely’⁷⁶. However, it is more likely that John of Alexandria is an attribution to legitimise the text. The Coptic encomium also seems to be a translation of the Greek one, albeit with a more detailed account of the saint’s origin and backstories of the supplicants⁷⁷.

Along with the aforementioned encomium, most of the hagiography of Menas in Coptic has survived in Pierpont Morgan Codex M590. Folios 1r-18v contain a martyrdom⁷⁸. Like the

⁶⁷ Jaritz, F. 1993: 213, 221, 231-4.

⁶⁸ Drescher 1946: 105; S00073.

⁶⁹ Cannuyer, C. 1997: 139; Browne 1994: 1-4; Surius, L. 1575: 242-7; Ghewond, A. 1874: II, 67-73; Jagić, V. 1909: 392; Wortley 2013: 42-3, no. 47; Budge E. A. W. 1907: II, 242-3, no. 425; Devos 1960c: 335.

⁷⁰ Menas is still considered to be a protector of Christians (Saint Mena Coptic Orthodox Monastery 2005: 48-52). A notable example of this is a narrative from the Second World War. During the North African campaign, at the Battle of El Alamein in June 1942, the Allied forces, including Greeks, were outnumbered by the German army near to a church dedicated to the saint. So, the saint appeared in the German camp accompanied by camels and terrified the German forces so that the Allies triumphed (Saint Mena Coptic Orthodox Monastery 2005: 52-6).

⁷¹ E00206.

⁷² Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents 2021.

⁷³ Drescher 1946: 126; E01223; Depuydt 1993a: I, 251, no. 125; Bacot 2020: 44.

⁷⁴ E01223; Lantschoot 1929: 39; Depuydt 1993a: I, 250, no. 125; see 2.1.

⁷⁵ Drescher 1946: 126.

⁷⁶ E01223.

⁷⁷ Drescher 1946: 126-7.

⁷⁸ Depuydt 1993a: I, 250-1, no. 125; Drescher 1946: 97.

encomium, it seems to have been translated from Greek, but the Coptic text is so fragmentary that Drescher reconstructed it, albeit only using a fourteenth-century Arabic version (Simaika, I, No. 1003 (Graf, No. 7143)).

Folios 19r-49v contain a fragmentary collection of seventeen posthumous miracles. Drescher stated that only the first, second, third, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth were preserved and the fourth and fourteenth partially preserved⁷⁹. However, Paul Devos later transcribed and translated the eighth and tenth miracles and compared them with versions found in MS IFAO copte inv. 315-322 from the White Monastery library⁸⁰. Both versions of the miracles have been attributed to the archbishop Theophilus of Alexandria. The Greek miracles are attributed to his predecessor Timotheus, which may be a mistake for a supposed benefactor of the shrine, Timothy Aelurus, but nonetheless all these attributions were likely made by the writers to associate the texts with well-known religious figures⁸¹. The miracles in M590, according to Drescher's limited access to the Greek material, contain different place names to the Greek miracles translated by Delchaye, and the Greek collections never contain more than thirteen miracles⁸².

There are three edited manuscripts which contain miracles of Menas in Coptic⁸³. MS IFAO copte inv. 315-322 contains many miracles that are also found in M590, although with different numbering, suggesting that the miracles included in collections could vary. The fifth miracle in MS IFAO copte inv. 315-322 is the fourth in M590. The second miracle is the sixth in M590. The third is the second in M590. The fourth is the third in M590. And the sixth miracle in MS IFAO copte inv. 315-322 is the eighth in M590 and was edited by Bacot and Devos⁸⁴. Finally, little has survived of MS London, British Museum Or. 5439 (2) (also known as P.Lond.Copt. I 340) and the only publication was by Walter Crum in 1905, although there are no visions in the surviving fragment⁸⁵. There is also a fourth, unedited manuscript in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin (MS. or. Oct. 409, f. 27, 28), which contains part of what is the eleventh miracle in M590 and has been dated to the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. Because it has not been edited, even though it contains a miracle that has not been preserved in the other three manuscripts it will not be used in this thesis.

⁷⁹ Depuydt 1993a: I, 251, no. 125; Drescher 1946: 107, 116-17; E01222.

⁸⁰ Devos 1959: 454-62; Devos 1960a: 156-7; Devos, P. 1960b: 285-301; Bacot 2020: 43.

⁸¹ Drescher 1946: 104, 108; Bacot, S. 2011: 7.

⁸² Drescher 1946: 104-5.

⁸³ Bacot 2020: 43-4.

⁸⁴ Bacot 2011: 35; Devos 1960b: 285-301; Drescher 1946: 107.

⁸⁵ Crum, W. E. 1905: 156-7.

Like Pierpont Morgan Codex M591, M590 was found in the site of the Monastery of the Archangel Michael near Hamouli in the Fayoum⁸⁶. The presence of a martyrdom, miracles, and an encomium in a single manuscript suggests that this material was being collated for or at the monastery. Additionally, the final Coptic text is another miracle collection in another manuscript found at the same site. Two miracles, neither attested elsewhere, survive in Pierpont Morgan Codex 585 on folios 38r–49v⁸⁷. The manuscript is anonymous but contains a reference to Damian the archbishop of Alexandria, which Drescher argued showed the miaphysite perspective of the text⁸⁸. This could have been to make a Theodosian claim over Abu Mina, as in the eighth century it was disputed which confessional faction owned the shrine⁸⁹. Schenke states that the date of the manuscript is ‘obscure’⁹⁰. There is no colophon, so Depuydt suggests that it dates to between 822/3 CE and 913-14 CE as those are the earliest and latest dates found in colophons in the manuscripts from Hamouli⁹¹.

2.4: *Phoibammon*

Only two hagiographies of Phoibammon of Preht have survived. The martyrdom is found in Pierpont Morgan Codex M582 on folios 1r-20v and a collection of eleven miracles on folios 21r-30v, and fragments from *Mark* are found on folios i, 31, and 32⁹². The martyrdom has also survived in three other fragmentary manuscripts, but M582 is intact save for minor damage to a few leaves⁹³. The other manuscripts are: part of a papyrus leaf (British Library Or. 6012), three fragmentary pages of a papyrus codex (British Library Or. 7561, fol. 67-9), three papyrus fragments (British Library Or. 7561, fol. 114, 116, and 117), and seven fragmentary papyrus leaves (Bayerische Landesbibliothek, Hs. koptisch 3, fol. 52-8), although while notes on the latter were made they were reported lost by Ariel Shisha-Halevy in 1975⁹⁴. There are also unedited versions of the martyrdom and of encomia in Arabic and Ethiopic, although some of these concern Phoibammon of Bushim instead. The miracle collection, meanwhile, is known only from M582⁹⁵.

⁸⁶ See 2.2; Depuydt 1993a: I, 253, no. 125.

⁸⁷ E01001; Depuydt 1993a: I, 250, no. 125; 336, no. 166; Bacot 2020: 44.

⁸⁸ Drescher 1946: 149-50.

⁸⁹ E.g. Evetts, B. T. A. 1910: 42-5, 111, 119-23.

⁹⁰ E01001.

⁹¹ Depuydt 1993a: I, 336, no. 166.

⁹² Verrone 2002: 5-6; E02109; Depuydt 1993a: I, 454-5, no. 262.

⁹³ Uljas 2019: 3; Verrone 2002: 5.

⁹⁴ Uljas 2019: 4; Shisha-Halevy, A. 1975: 150.

⁹⁵ Spanel, D. B. 1991: VI, 1963.

Pierpont Morgan Codex M582 has been dated to between the early ninth and early tenth centuries (822CE-913/14CE), which seems to be based on its palaeography and perhaps the dates of the other Pierpont Morgan Codices as even though the writer's name is given as Kollouthos the Stylite there is no date in a colophon⁹⁶. Schenke suggests that Kollouthos the Stylite was Hermopolitan due to the references in the miracle collection to a shrine at Thone, which has been identified with Tuna el-Gebel near to Hermopolis (Shmoun, modern El-Ashmunein)⁹⁷. Alternatively, the collection may advertise that site in the same way that the fragmentary encomium of Kollouthos seems to advertise a site at Pnueit. Like the other Pierpont Morgan manuscripts, M582 was discovered in 1910 at the site of the Monastery of the Archangel Michael before being purchased for Pierpont Morgan in Paris in 1911⁹⁸.

While the only complete version of the martyrdom and the only known version of the miracle collection are in the same manuscript, they have been edited separately. Kerry Verrone translated the miracle collection into English in 2002 and Sami Uljas translated into English and edited the martyrdom in 2019. None of the fragmentary versions of the martyrdom have been edited.

2.5: *Merkourios*

The hagiographies of Merkourios rarely refer to Egypt⁹⁹. However, for the third miracle in his encomium in BM Or. 6802, with the people of a city deciding where to take his body, Ernest A. Wallis Budge interpreted the city as Edfu¹⁰⁰. As no place names are mentioned, he probably based this on the colophon of the other manuscript (BM Or. 6801), which records the saint's martyrdom being written in Esna¹⁰¹. The colophon is not necessarily, however, where the

⁹⁶ E02109; Verrone 2002: 5; Uljas 2019: 27; E00240; Verrone 2002: 3; Depuydt 1993a: I, 267, no. 134.

⁹⁷ Schenke, G. 2016: 501; Uljas 2019: 9-10, no. 29; Kessler, D. 1981: 19, 108.

⁹⁸ Depuydt 1993a: I, 455, no. 262; Verrone 2002: 5.

⁹⁹ One narrative about Merkourios which definitely concerns Egypt was written in 2014 by Archpriest Pavel Nedosekin of Brussels (Nedosekin, P. 2014; Psarev, A. 2020). It is set between 2004 and the death in 2006 of Mother Erini the abbess of the Convent of Merkourios in Cairo (Sharobeem, H. 2006). Mother Erini apparently regularly experienced visions of the Virgin and of Merkourios, so this narrative is grounded in wider traditions of the convent (Meinardus, O. F. A. 2002: 10, 96). A monastery of Merkourios at Giza and named in the history attributed to Abu Salih may be the same site, but as Mother Erini's convent is in Old Cairo on the opposite bank of the Nile it may not be (Evetts and Butler 1895: 173, no. 2, 177). The narrative concerns the removal of land from the convent by the Egyptian Ministry of Defence, and how Merkourios took the abbess to visit then-president Hosni Mubarak and demanded it be returned. It is notable that the saint associated with the death of Julian the Apostate also confronts the president who resigned following the Egyptian Revolution in 2011 (Osman, T. 2013: 2-3, 7, 210).

¹⁰⁰ Budge, E. A. W. 1915: ix, xi, 830.

¹⁰¹ Budge 1915: 827, 830.

narrative is set, and Egypt is not the setting in the Greek martyrdom¹⁰². However, the existence of hagiographies preserved in Coptic suggests that the saint was venerated in Egypt.

Budge stated that the manuscripts came from a monastery dedicated to the saint either at Edfu or Esna. As the material was either acquired by Budge or bought by the British Museum in 1907 from Robert de Rustafjaell, who sold manuscripts and antiquities from Egypt to various institutions, both of whom provided dubious provenances, this claim is unreliable¹⁰³. There was no site dedicated to Merkourios at Edfu but based on the colophon of British Museum MS. Oriental 6801 there was a church dedicated to him at Esna¹⁰⁴. According to the history attributed to Abu Salih the Armenian, there were three sites dedicated to Merkourios, including Deir el-Fakhuri at Esna¹⁰⁵. The mentions in the colophons of Merkourios' hagiography may be recontextualising the saint in Egypt or refer to those versions of the texts, as the Greek version of his martyrdom does not mention Edfu or Esna¹⁰⁶.

Hagiographies of Merkourios survive in Syriac, Greek, and Coptic and share a narrative of the saint's murder of Julian the Apostate. The emperor was killed in battle against the Persians, but his death was also attributed to divine justice¹⁰⁷. An early version of this narrative is Sozomen's fifth century account of a vision experienced by the succeeding emperor Jovian of Merkourios departing to kill Julian¹⁰⁸. In later versions in Greek and Coptic, the vision is attributed to Basil of Caesarea instead¹⁰⁹. The oldest known Greek version of this narrative is found in 13.25 of the sixth century *Chronicle* of John Malalas, which is fragmentary and contains chronological errors and inaccurate citations¹¹⁰. The emperor was killed in 362/3 AD and Malalas recorded three versions of his death¹¹¹. There is also an Ethiopic version of Basil's vision, which is included in Budge's edition of the Coptic hagiography of Merkourios in an appendix¹¹². Additionally, an Armenian narrative of similar events is known, in the only surviving copy of Faustus of Byzantium (originally written in Greek), although it concerns the killing of the emperor Valens by the saints Theodore and Sergius. In the 1930s, Norman Baynes argued that the 'Valens' was the title of the emperor and therefore of Julian, but more recently Christopher

¹⁰² Delehaye, H. 1909: 92.

¹⁰³ Budge 1915: xxiv; Bierbrier, M. L. 2019: 76-7; 405-6.

¹⁰⁴ Timm 1984-2007: III, 1148, 1152-3, 1181-93; Budge 1915: 827; O'Connell, E. R. 2013: 246.

¹⁰⁵ Gabra, G. and Takla, H. N. 2010: 225-6; Timm 1984-2007: II, 703-8, 811-15, III, 1181, 1183, VI, 2883; Meinardus, O. F. A. 1999: 11; Evetts, B. T. A. and Butler, A. J. 1895: 143, 368.

¹⁰⁶ Delehaye 1909: 92.

¹⁰⁷ Rebenich, S. and Wiemer, H.-U. 2020: 11; Wiemer, H.-U. 2020: 207; Binon, S. 1937: 11-14; Peeters, P. 1921: 75.

¹⁰⁸ E02775; Walter, C. 2003: 108.

¹⁰⁹ Walter 2003: 108; E02775; O'Leary, D. L. 1937: 202; Jeffreys, E., Croke, B., and Scott, R. 1990: 215.

¹¹⁰ E02775; Jeffreys, E., Jeffreys, M., and Scott, R. 1986: 181-2; Treadgold, W. T. 2007: 241, 244, 248-9; E02775; Jeffreys et al. 1990: 181, 199.

¹¹¹ Jeffreys et al. 1990: 152, 215.

¹¹² Budge 1915: xi, 1161-87; Greer, R. A. 1991: xii.

Walter has pointed out that there was an emperor Valens¹¹³. Walter argues that the narrative of Theodore and Sergius is not a copy of those of Merkourios¹¹⁴. It can be seen how figures in this emperor-killing legend could have been conflated or interchanged, as Basil of Caesarea and Valens were contemporaries and their interactions were recorded by such writers as Sozomen. Furthermore, Valens was presented by Late Antique historians as the new Julian, who persecuted Christians by tolerating their enemies and also died in battle¹¹⁵.

In Greek, there are three versions of a martyrdom of Merkourios, two pre-metaphrastic and one metaphrastic¹¹⁶. The pre-metaphrastic ones are BHG 1274 and 1275, with the former surviving in six manuscripts edited by Delehaye in 1909, and the latter in four manuscripts edited by Stéphane Binon in 1937¹¹⁷. The metaphrastic version is dated to the tenth century and survives in the manuscript BHG 1276. In his synthesis of all eleven manuscripts, Efthymios Rizos observes limited variation in content and length. There are no posthumous miracles. Rizos also notes that, despite Julian the Apostate having known Basil of Caesarea, thus justifying Basil's association with the emperor's death, that narrative has not survived in any version of the Greek martyrdom and the Greek versions date to at least a century after Basil's time in office¹¹⁸.

A greater amount and variety of hagiography has survived in Coptic. This is found in the manuscripts BM Or. 6801, fol. 2a-31a and BM Or. 6802, fol. 1a-43b, both edited by Budge in 1915. BM Or. 6801, fol. 2a-31a contains a martyrdom that includes an account of the murder of Julian the Apostate by Merkourios as its conclusion¹¹⁹. Throughout this thesis, BM Or. 6801, fol. 2a-31a will be referred to as 'the martyrdom of Merkourios'. Apart from the death of Julian, this martyrdom is identical to the Greek one save for a few details¹²⁰. This suggests that the Greek

¹¹³ Peeters 1921: 69-70; Baynes, N. H. 1937: 24-5; Walter 2003: 54.

¹¹⁴ Walter 2003: 54.

¹¹⁵ Kahlos, M. 2019: 66-8, 69.

¹¹⁶ E02774; Binon 1937: 29.

¹¹⁷ Delehaye 1909: 92-3; E02774; Binon 1937: 29, 30-31.

¹¹⁸ Greer 1991: xii.

¹¹⁹ Budge 1915: xlv-xlix, 231-55, 283-99, 809-27, 855-71.

¹²⁰ The following differences between the Greek and the Coptic martyrdoms can be noted, with the numbering corresponding to the 13 events designated by Efthymios Rizos for the Greek version (E02774):

2. Instead of torture and imprisonment, in the Coptic version Christians who do not sacrifice to the pagan gods are threatened with death (Budge 1915: 810).

3. In the Coptic version, the name Sartorninos is rendered as Sardonicus but as the rest of the information regarding the saint's family is the same it is probably intended as the same individual (Budge 1915: 811).

4. Instead of Merkourios' hand being stuck to the sword with blood, in the Coptic version it slips presumably with the blood being presented as a lubricant instead (Budge 1915: 811).

6. In the Greek version, the name of the individual who reports Merkourios' refusal to sacrifice is given as Katellos, but this character receives no name in the Coptic version (Budge 1915: 813-14).

7. In the Greek version, Merkourios' hair is described as blonde, but in the Coptic version it is described as red (Budge 1915: 814-15).

9. Instead of a fire being lit beneath the saint, in the Coptic version burning coals are placed upon his body (Budge 1915: 817).

11. Instead of burning spears piercing the saint's cheeks, in the Coptic version a hot instrument is placed beneath his limbs and burning torches are thrust into his sides (Budge 1915: 819).

and Coptic martyrdoms come from a shared tradition. The Coptic martyrdom contains a colophon naming the writer as ‘Aurelius Victor’, the deacon of a church of Merkourios in Egypt, but while it is dated to the seventeenth year of the indiction, no further information is given¹²¹.

BM Or. 6802 contains posthumous miracles on folios 1a-24b and an encomium on folios 25a-43b. Throughout this thesis, these will be referred to as ‘the miracles of Merkourios’ and ‘the British Museum encomium of Merkourios’ respectively. The opening of the encomium attributes the text to Acacius of Caesarea, whom Budge suggests to be the ‘one-eyed’ bishop who took office in 340¹²². There is no colophon in either the encomium or the miracles. Like BM Or. 6801, fol. 2a-31a, BM Or. 6802, fol. 1a-43b is of unknown date.

There is also a fragment of a miracle preserved in the parchment codex K 09456 edited by Walter Till in 1935-6. Throughout the thesis, K 09456 will be referred to as ‘the miracle fragment of Merkourios’. Schenke proposes that the manuscript dates to the ninth to the eleventh century, presumably based on its palaeography as there is no colophon and its provenance is unknown¹²³. However, the Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek lists the manuscript as of unknown date¹²⁴. It is currently housed in the Papyrus Collection in Vienna. Schenke also suggests that it is a fragment from an encomium.

The final manuscript is Pierpont Morgan codex M588, fol. 27vb22–31r, which contains an encomium, as well as, on folios 1r-8r, another version of the martyrdom in BM Or. 6801¹²⁵. The encomium was edited by Frederick Weidmann in 1991. Therefore, throughout this thesis M588, fol. 27vb22–31r will be referred to as ‘the encomium of Merkourios’. It is the only manuscript relating to Merkourios with a provenance, having been found with the other manuscripts from the Pierpont Morgan collection. It has a colophon providing the date 8 March 842 and writer Zacharias¹²⁶. It is attributed to Basil of Caesarea, which the writer may have done because it contains the second example of the narrative of the death of Julian the Apostate preserved in Coptic¹²⁷.

12. Like in the Greek version, in the Coptic version the saint’s body is considered to be like dead following the torture during the journey to his execution, although in the Coptic version there is no indication that his body is in pieces. Additionally, in the Greek version the saint’s death is given as 25th November but in the Coptic version it is given as 20th November, perhaps being a mistake given that all the Greek versions record the same day (Budge 1915: 820).

¹²¹ Budge 1915: 827; Lantschoot 1929: 205-6.

¹²² Budge 1915: 855; S01323; Drinkwater, J. 2005: 39.

¹²³ E01848.

¹²⁴ Österreichische Nationalbibliothek 2020.

¹²⁵ Depuydt 1993a: I, 254-5, no. 126.

¹²⁶ Lantschoot 1929: 8-9.

¹²⁷ Weidmann 1991a: 3; Weidmann 1991b: 3.

2.6: *Viktor*

Viktor is attested in seven texts across five manuscripts. He is the protagonist in five texts and accompanies other saints in two. One is the martyrdom of Paese and Thekla in Pierpont Morgan Codex 591, fol. 49r–88r, in which Paese witnesses the torture and healing by an angel of Viktor. The other is the posthumous miracles of Claudius who, according to these miracles, had a shrine in Egypt in the area around Antinoopolis near to those of Viktor and Kollouthos. Viktor appears alongside Claudius in the first miracle and his shrine is robbed in the third miracle¹²⁸.

The manuscript BM MS. Oriental No. 7022, fol. 1a-59a contains four martyrdoms and one encomium and is held in the British Museum¹²⁹. All five texts are attributed to Celestine of Rome, while the manuscript has a colophon dating it to 951 CE¹³⁰. The martyrdoms form a continuous narrative despite being presented separately, with the narrative of each beginning where the previous one ended¹³¹. The encomium continues the narrative by beginning with the saint's posthumous miracles¹³². The colophon of the encomium mentions a monastery dedicated to Merkourios, which seems to suggest a similar provenance for British Museum MS. Oriental 7022 to the British Museum manuscripts containing hagiographies of Merkourios. This led Budge to suggest that there was a church dedicated to Viktor in Esna and Edfu even though there is no evidence for that among the twelve sites dedicated to Viktor according the history attributed to Abu Salih¹³³.

There are two fragmentary encomia in K 09446, p. 135/136; K 09447, p. 139/140; K 09448, p. 141/142 and I.1.b.656+714 (5681, Copt. 18/1 and 18/2), translated by Till and Alla Elanskaya. There is also one fragmentary miracle collection in K 09442, p. 19/20; K 09443, p. 47/48, also translated by Till¹³⁴. All the material translated by Till is leaves from the same parchment codex, held in Vienna, the layout and script of which suggest a ninth to eleventh century date. The two leaves translated by Elanskaya are held in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow and were previously in St Petersburg, and belong to the same codex as fragments in the National Library in Paris and Berlin. This manuscript contained two encomia on Viktor, the first of which was attributed to John Chrysostom, and the second to Theodore of Jerusalem. These

¹²⁸ Constantine of Assiut, Second Encomium on St Claudius, lines 3-4, ed. Godron, G. 1970: p. 620; lines 67, p. 642.

¹²⁹ Horn, J. 1988: xli.

¹³⁰ Budge 1914: I, 299, 355; Lantschoot 1929: 184-5.

¹³¹ E05111; E05112; E05113; E05114.

¹³² E04643.

¹³³ Budge 1914: I, xii, xviii, 355; Timm 1984-2007: III, 1148-54; see 2.4; Evetts and Butler 1895: 372.

¹³⁴ Elanskaya, A. I. 1994: 75-84; Till, W. C. 1935-6: I, 45-51, 51-5; Horn 1988: xlii, xlviii.

two encomia are treated as a martyrdom and an encomium by Jürgen Horn¹³⁵. The colophon states that the manuscript was produced in Touton in the Faiyum on behalf of the White Monastery, in year 656 of the Era of Diocletian (939/940 CE)¹³⁶. There are two fragments held in Turin, totalling eight pages, which contain text similar to that published by Elanskaya¹³⁷.

Finally, there is a brief encomium in Pierpont Morgan Codex M591, folia 34v–49v which has been translated by Alan Scott and is attributed to Theopempus of Antioch¹³⁸. This codex also contains the encomium of Kollouthos translated by Thompson, the martyrdom of Kollouthos that does not contain visions, and the martyrdom of Paese and Thekla, supporting the idea that these hagiographies were collated¹³⁹. This encomium of Viktor repeats much of the narrative in the other surviving texts, but with the saint explicitly as a child.

Like Kollouthos, there is limited textual evidence for Viktor that is not preserved in Coptic. There is one unpublished Arabic translation of the encomium attributed to Theopempus of Antioch¹⁴⁰. Meanwhile, the textual material that has survived in Greek is all administrative, mostly tax receipts¹⁴¹.

2.7: *James*

There is an attestation of James in the church calendar of Ioane Zosime, which was compiled in Georgian in the tenth century and based on fifth to seventh century prototypes from Palestine¹⁴². In this calendar, James is celebrated on 12, 27, and 28 November¹⁴³. O’Leary claimed that James’ feast day in Egypt was 23 November, although according to calendars preserved in Syriac and his martyrdom corroborates with the calendar of Ioane Zosime so he may have been incorrect¹⁴⁴.

The only hagiography for James known is his martyrdom, about which there is little scholarship. This martyrdom survives in primarily Syriac, Greek, and Coptic, but has also been translated into Armenian, Arabic, Georgian, and Latin. It has been criticised for its ‘chronologie fantaisiste’ and its ‘abondance de détails qui “n’a pas cessé de faire illusion”’, demonstrating the

¹³⁵ Horn 1988: xlii, xlvii.

¹³⁶ Elanskaya 1994: 75-6.

¹³⁷ Rossi, F. 1893: 106-9, 119-20; Horn 1988: xlv-xlvi.

¹³⁸ Scott, A. B. 1993a: 133-52; Scott, A. B. 1993b: 103-18.

¹³⁹ See 2.2; Thompson 1993a: 47-83; Thompson 1993b: 37-64; E01862.

¹⁴⁰ Depuydt 1993b: xi; Horn 1988: li.

¹⁴¹ S00749.

¹⁴² Garrite, G. 1958: 381, 396, 397.

¹⁴³ S01660.

¹⁴⁴ O’Leary 1937: 161; Fiey, J.-M. 2004: 108; Devos, P. 1953: 157, 159; Devos, P. 1954: 221; Alcock (unpublished): 19.

unreliability of hagiography as accurate records of events¹⁴⁵. The Syriac martyrdom survives in twenty-four manuscripts, including Vatican Syr. 161, which is theorised to be the oldest and has been dated to the ninth century¹⁴⁶. While it has been published a number of times between the mid-eighteenth and early twentieth centuries, there is no critical edition¹⁴⁷. The Syriac martyrdom is supposedly the original from which the Greek was copied, according to Paul Devos, who edited three of the four extant Greek versions¹⁴⁸. The four extant Greek versions are BHG 772, 772a, 772b, and 772c, with the latter unedited. The only differences between the Greek and Syriac versions are a prologue in the Greek version and that, in the Syriac version, after the saint is beheaded fire from heaven descends upon his remains and the bloodstained ground¹⁴⁹. Both the Syriac and the Greek versions end with the saint's death and burial.

The Coptic version exists only in Codex Vatican Coptic 59 on folios 156–212, which is kept in the Vatican and is dated by its colophon to 824 CE¹⁵⁰. This version was translated into Latin by Giuseppe Balestri and Henri Hyvernât in the early twentieth century and into English by Anthony Alcock in an unpublished translation that is available online.

In the Coptic version, after the saint's death, his relics are taken to the village of Paim near to Oxyrhynchus in Egypt. This addition suggests that it was felt necessary to justify the veneration of James in Egypt. The same kind of account is not known for Merkourios and in the tradition of Viktor he was executed in Egypt, so this was not a requirement for all foreign saints. It also seems that the addition was integrated throughout the Coptic version, as in James' first vision, Christ says to him 'I will cause your name to be famous everywhere, even as far as Egypt, the place where your body will remain'¹⁵¹.

The Coptic martyrdom of James is the only text in this thesis which has survived in Bohairic instead of Sahidic. Bohairic is the dialect of Coptic that has remained in use for the longest, including now, when Coptic is no longer found anywhere other than in liturgical texts. It became more prevalent in the eleventh century, but the ninth century was early in its use and Sahidic was still the main dialect¹⁵².

¹⁴⁵ See. 2.1; Fiey 2004: 108; Devos 1953: 157.

¹⁴⁶ E07154; Fiey 2004: 108.

¹⁴⁷ E.g. Assemani, S. E. 1748: I, 242-58; Lagrange, F. 1852: 189-207; Bedjan, P. 1890-7: II, 539-58.

¹⁴⁸ E06642; Devos 1953: 158; Devos 1954: 213.

¹⁴⁹ Devos 1954: 228; E06642.

¹⁵⁰ E07053.

¹⁵¹ **οὐτος ἡναερε πεκραν ερσωιτ ἄεν καὶ νιβεν ὑα ἐρηνι ἐτχωρα νχνημι πιμα ἐτερε πεκσωμα ναοῦος Νῆντq**; Alcock (unpublished): 9-10; Balestri, G. and Hyvernât, H. 1907-50: II, 33-4.

¹⁵² Depuydt, L. 2010: 737.

3: Background

In this section, the discussion will move from that of the manuscripts and issues thereof to the content of the case studies. It will begin by synthesising briefly the narratives of the saints' *Lives* as they are presented in their hagiographies. The synthesis of the saints' lives will introduce the saints and the visions that they experience, which will explain certain qualities and associations that are exhibited in their own visions and those in which they appear to others.

Then, the historicity of the texts will be problematised through the analysis of their and the more general presentation in hagiography of historical events considered key within Coptic Christianity. Finally, it will broaden the discussion of the unreliability of hagiography to the origins of the saints as they are evidenced in historical sources and debated in scholarship. The saints' origins are not being used to argue whether or not they were real, historical figures, but to demonstrate the impossibility of making such an argument. This will further contextualise the case studies and show that the writers or copyists of this thesis' corpus and their audience were equally affected by issues of historicity.

3.1: Lives

This section will present briefly the synthesised *Lives* of the saints, including a summary of their experiences of visions, before Chapter 3 focuses specifically on their visions of heavenly beings.

3.1.1: Kollouthos

According to the encomium in Pierpont Morgan Codex M591, Kollouthos was a wealthy Wunderkind born to elderly parents in a situation reminiscent of Abraham and Sarah in the Hebrew Bible and Zacharias and Elizabeth in the New Testament¹⁵³. He was a pious child, reading the scriptures and following an ascetic lifestyle¹⁵⁴.

The encomium is the only text that contains a vision experienced by Kollouthos. When he is twelve years old, the angel Gabriel appears to him and prophesies his martyrdom¹⁵⁵. By the end of the year, Kollouthos' parents have died and he has inherited their wealth. He also starts to perform healing miracles, albeit accidentally¹⁵⁶. Kollouthos becomes famous for healing anyone in

¹⁵³ Hidding 2020: 80-1.

¹⁵⁴ Thompson 1993b: 41-3.

¹⁵⁵ Thompson 1993b: 43-4; Hidding 2020: 82.

¹⁵⁶ Hidding 2020: 81.

need without claiming payment and in his posthumous miracles is a ‘silverless’ saint like Cosmas and Damian¹⁵⁷. By the time of Diocletian’s edict, Arian is the governor and married to the saint’s cousin. This governor seems to have been ‘cast in the role of the villain’ in hagiography, persecuting various saints¹⁵⁸. When Kollouthos refuses to sacrifice to the pagan gods, Arian imprisons him for three years and his wife refuses to see him. The Synaxarium provides a more detailed version of this family drama¹⁵⁹.

Finally, the saint is executed by fire, which is described only briefly in both the encomium and the martyrdom in Pierpont Morgan Codex M591¹⁶⁰. Alternatively, in the second encomium Kollouthos’ death is bloodier, with a servant collecting some of the blood presumably as a relic¹⁶¹. This indicates that different texts had different focuses and therefore different levels of detail¹⁶². Following the saint’s death, his shrine is established, and the rest of the encomium comprises of posthumous miracles¹⁶³.

The encomium of Kollouthos in Pierpont Morgan Codex M590 also includes a vision experienced by Kollouthos’ father of an angel the night before Kollouthos’ vision of the archangel Gabriel¹⁶⁴.

3.1.2: *Menas*

Similarly to Kollouthos, according to the encomium in Pierpont Morgan Codex M590, Menas was born to wealthy, elderly parents¹⁶⁵. After they died, he was drafted into the army¹⁶⁶. When Diocletian’s edict was passed, he became a desert hermit and camel-herd. Eventually, he returned to Alexandria to be martyred¹⁶⁷. In the encomium, Menas’ former regiment took the saint’s remains, and were protected by them until they put them on a camel and the site where that camel lay down was where the shrine was built¹⁶⁸. The martyrdom adds that Menas instructed his sister to collect his remains and to take them to Alexandria for burial¹⁶⁹.

¹⁵⁷ Schenke 2013: 273; Meinardus, O. F. A. 1971: 372.

¹⁵⁸ Hidding 2020: 71.

¹⁵⁹ Hidding 2020: 82-3, n. 327.

¹⁶⁰ Hidding 2020: 70-3; Thompson 1993a: 67; Thompson 1993b: 51; Reymond and Barns 1973: 29, 149.

¹⁶¹ E00667.

¹⁶² E.g. Hidding 2020: 74.

¹⁶³ Thompson 1993b: 51.

¹⁶⁴ Thompson 1993b: 46.

¹⁶⁵ Bacot 2020: 11; Drescher 1946: 40, 131; Sadek El Gendi 2017: 22-3.

¹⁶⁶ O’Leary 1937: 194; E01223.

¹⁶⁷ Drescher 1946: 102, 109-10; Bacot 2020: 12-13.

¹⁶⁸ Drescher 1946: 140-1; Bacot 2020: 13-14.

¹⁶⁹ Drescher 1946: 102.

Menas' mother experiences a vision during the feast of the Holy Virgin¹⁷⁰. At the church, she hears a voice from the baby Christ in the image of the Virgin Mary. The presence of a miracle-working icon may suggest that this version of the narrative dates to the sixth century at the earliest¹⁷¹. According to the Coptic encomium, Menas' name derives from the 'Amen' that his mother heard during her vision¹⁷².

In his surviving Coptic hagiography, Menas experienced four visions. One is from the miracle collection in M590, and the other three are from the encomium in the same manuscript. The first vision in the encomium and the vision in the miracle collection are versions of the saint being incited to martyrdom by an angel, and the other two are visions of Christ while the saint is en route to being martyred. Unlike Kollouthos, Menas does not perform miracles while alive, which might suggest that healing miracles performed by a saint while they were alive was, in the hagiographer's imagination, limited by occupation.

3.1.3: *Phoibammon*

Little is claimed in Phoibammon's surviving hagiography about his early life¹⁷³. It has been suggested that he was born in Touho, which is modern Taha el-Amida in Upper Egypt. According to his martyrdom, he confessed at his military posting in Preht and was executed in Assiut. He was rebuked by his parents for his faith and had a pious sister called Sarah¹⁷⁴.

There is some confusion surrounding the date of the saint's death, if he ever existed. It is currently held that he died in the early fourth century¹⁷⁵. However, the martyrdom describes how he was killed in the first year of Diocletian's rule, in 284, which was before the edict was issued¹⁷⁶. The writer or copyist probably intended to decry Diocletian rather than provide an accurate date¹⁷⁷.

Phoibammon experiences ten visions in his martyrdom. He sees demons and angels, and duels with magicians. Much of his experiences involve his relationship with his parents, perhaps justifying his association with punishing parents for wrongdoing through harm befalling their children.

¹⁷⁰ Drescher 1946: 133; Sadek El Gendi 2017: 21-2.

¹⁷¹ Kazhdan 1991: II, 977-8, 1282.

¹⁷² O'Leary 1937: 194; Drescher 1946: 133; Sadek El Gendi 2017: 22.

¹⁷³ Spanel 1991: VI, 1963.

¹⁷⁴ Uljas 2019: 90-3, 118.

¹⁷⁵ S00080; Uljas 2019: 79-81.

¹⁷⁶ Verrone 2002: 1.

¹⁷⁷ See 1.2.

3.1.4: *Merkourios*

According to Merkourios' hagiography, he was a soldier in the Martusian regiment of the Roman army during the reign of Decius¹⁷⁸. O'Leary records his date of commemoration on 21 November with the acknowledgement that in the Basilian Menology he is commemorated on 25 November¹⁷⁹. Merkourios is sometimes known as 'of the Two Swords', notably in the name of a church in Old Cairo¹⁸⁰.

Both the British Museum martyrdom and encomium give accounts of the saint's life. The encomium preserved in the Pierpont Morgan codex does not¹⁸¹. The encomium is more detailed, but otherwise has the same structure and content as the martyrdom¹⁸². This may be because of the verbal, public celebratory nature of encomia.

Merkourios' father was saved by an angel and converted to Christianity¹⁸³. The saint was part of the army that Decius led against so-called barbarians, and turned the tide of battle with a sword received from the archangel Michael, which earned him favour with the emperor. However, Merkourios then refused to sacrifice to the pagan gods, so Decius had him tortured and executed, with angels appearing throughout his tortures to heal him.

Like Menas, during his lifetime Merkourios does not perform miracles, further suggesting that, in the hagiographer's imagination, that feature of saints' lives was limited by their supposed occupations.

3.1.5: *Viktor*

According to his hagiography, Viktor was the son of Romanos, the pagan governor of Antioch, and a Christian¹⁸⁴. Romanos experienced a vision of the Devil, who 'fill[ed] [his] heart' when his son confessed his faith¹⁸⁵. Alternatively, the Devil may have imbued Romanos with anger at his son without appearing to him.

Viktor was favoured by Diocletian while the emperor was Christian. However, this seems to have been a conflation of emperors, as Diocletian was never Christian but Julian the Apostate

¹⁷⁸ E02774; Budge 1915: 811.

¹⁷⁹ O'Leary 1937: 201.

¹⁸⁰ Meinardus 1999: 188; Gabra, G. and Alcock, A. 1993: 129; Meinardus, O. F. A. 1973b: 117.

¹⁸¹ Schiappa, E. 2010: 117; Thompson 1993a: 47-83; Thompson 1993b: 37-64; Drescher 1946: 35-72, 126-49.

¹⁸² Budge 1915: 856-71.

¹⁸³ O'Leary 1937: 201.

¹⁸⁴ O'Leary 1937: 278.

¹⁸⁵ See 3.2.2; Budge 1914: I, 263.

was before becoming pagan¹⁸⁶. In Viktor's hagiography, he fell out of favour when Diocletian became pagan. He was tortured in many cities across Egypt before finally being martyred¹⁸⁷.

In his hagiography, Viktor experiences twelve visions. Four of these are in the encomium in M591 and the rest are in BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 (three in the first martyrdom, three in the second, and two in the third). The encomium in M591 suggests that Viktor was a child, which is plausible given that Kollouthos' vision of the archangel Gabriel takes place when he is twelve, although the texts in BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 do not specify his age.

The encomium in M591 also links Viktor to Cosmas and Damian because he buries their mother after she is killed for supporting her sons' martyrdom. Susan Ashbrook Harvey also links Viktor to Theodore the General¹⁸⁸. However, unlike Cosmas and Damian, Theodore is not mentioned in the tradition of Viktor.

3.1.6: James

James is known as James the Persian, as well as James the Dismembered, James Intercisus, and Jacob¹⁸⁹. According to his martyrdom, he served under Yazdegerd I and Bahram V in the city of Beth Lapat, and was martyred under Bahram V in 421CE¹⁹⁰. He and his family converted to Christianity, then he converted back to Zoroastrianism but was persuaded by his family to convert again to Christianity¹⁹¹. Following this second conversion, he was executed. James experiences two visions during his martyrdom, in both of which Christ appears.

In the martyrdom preserved in Coptic, James' relics are exhumed and taken to Jerusalem, where they are acquired by Peter the Iberian, and brought to the area around Oxyrhynchus¹⁹².

3.2: The Historicity of Hagiography

This section will show that hagiographical texts are best approached not from the perspective of the historical events that they purport to record, such as Diocletianic martyrdom, but in terms of how the inclusion of such events shaped the cult and community within the contexts of the

¹⁸⁶ Wiemer 2020: 209, 210, 214, 216; Bowman, A. K. 2005: 69; Barnes, T. D. 1982: 195; Rogozhina 2015: 68; Wright, W. C. 1923: 142-53; Rebenich and Wiemer 2020: 2-3, 7-8; Baker-Brian, N. and Tougher, S. 2012: xiii.

¹⁸⁷ O'Leary 1937: 279-80.

¹⁸⁸ Harvey 1993: x.

¹⁸⁹ O'Leary 1937: 194.

¹⁹⁰ Devos 1953: 157; Fiey 2004: 107, 108.

¹⁹¹ Delaney, J. J. 1982: 308a; Lagrange 1852: 189.

¹⁹² O'Leary 1937: 161; E07053.

texts' performance and reception¹⁹³. It will begin by drawing the discussion from the saints' lives in the preceding section into the problems of the saints' origins, before expanding into the wider problem of historicity by explaining how the phenomena of martyrdom and persecution and doctrinal schism are approached in Coptic hagiography.

3.2.1: Origins of Saints

It is impossible to know from where saints originated, like it is impossible to know whether they even existed¹⁹⁴. Nonetheless, it is necessary to consider the speculated origins of Menas, Phoibammon, and Merkourios, as there are issues, such as conflation with other saints of the same name, that should be clarified.

Firstly, Menas may have been conflated with another saint from Phrygia with the same name¹⁹⁵. There were several martyrs called Menas, with none attested in Egypt from Diocletian's reign, although it is debatable whether martyrs existed and whether they would have been martyred under Diocletian if they did¹⁹⁶. In 1946, Drescher disputed Delehaye's arguments that there could only be one Menas and that he could only be Egyptian¹⁹⁷. According to the hagiography of Menas, he was born in Egypt and later stationed in Phrygia as part of his military unit¹⁹⁸. While the hagiography preserved in Coptic states that he was martyred in Alexandria, there are also claims that he was martyred in Phrygia or that he was born in Phrygia, although in attempting to resolve these contradictions Sherin Sadek El Gendi relies on late nineteenth and early twentieth century discussions and so may be conflating the evidence as well¹⁹⁹. The number of martyrs called Menas and the contradictory narratives do suggest that there was a conflation between two different saints.

Delehaye concluded that the name 'Menas' is Egyptian, which may be based on its similarity with that of the god Min even though he rightfully objected to the unlikely idea of Min being a saint's namesake²⁰⁰. Christian Cannuyer observed the similarity between 'Menas' and the Egyptian name 'Meni', although as the latter was attested during the reign of Seti I (1306-1290

¹⁹³ Harvey 2009: 605-6.

¹⁹⁴ See 1.2; Shin 2018: 16.

¹⁹⁵ Sadek El Gendi 2017: 22; Bacot 2020: 10-11; Drescher 1946: ii.

¹⁹⁶ O'Leary 1937: 197-200; Krause, M. 1991: V, 1590; Delehaye, H. 1922: 31.

¹⁹⁷ Delehaye, H. 1910: 126-7.

¹⁹⁸ Krause 1991: V, 1589-90.

¹⁹⁹ O'Leary 1937: 195 279-80; Krause, M. 1978: col. 1131; Finneran, N. 2002: 87; Sadek El Gendi 2017: 22-3.

²⁰⁰ Drescher 1946: iii-v; Delehaye 1910: 126-7; Delehaye, H. 1927: 201.

BCE) this is equally unlikely²⁰¹. In fact, Drescher showed that the name ‘Menas’ was common in Phrygia²⁰².

Three Egyptian saints share Menas’ name. They are an abbot from the Monastery of Apollo at Bawit, a bishop of Tmuis, and a martyr from a monastery in Akhmim. They may have been named after the martyr²⁰³. The limited evidence of these three saints suggests that they all post-dated significantly the persecution under Diocletian in which Menas was supposedly killed. The abbot of the Monastery of Apollo is known only from an icon, whose provenance is uncertain and which is associated with Bawit on stylistic grounds²⁰⁴. This is debated by Martin Krause based on the icon of the bishop Abraham in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin which is claimed to have been excavated at Bawit even though the museum records it as ‘probably’ being from the Monastery of Phoibammon, presumably due to its depicting Abraham²⁰⁵. The bishop of Tmuis lived in the eighth century and is known from the Synaxarium and the *HP*²⁰⁶. Finally, the martyr of Akhmim is mentioned in the Synaxarium as being martyred after the Arab conquest²⁰⁷.

Secondly, Phoibammon of Preht has been conflated with other saints of the same name. Spanel records ‘at least four martyrs’ called Phoibammon²⁰⁸. Phoibammon of Preht seems to have mostly been conflated with another martyr Phoibammon and with a nobleman from Letopolis²⁰⁹. According to Antoine Khater and Oswald H. E. Burmester, he is also conflated with an ascetic called Phoibammon, who is not included in more recent discussions by Schenke and Uljas as he was not a martyr²¹⁰. The military background of Phoibammon of Preht, the supposed date of his death, and his association with false oaths and children indicate that he is the Phoibammon referred to in the martyrdom and miracles in Pierpont Morgan Codex M582²¹¹.

The Phoibammon from Letopolis is referred to in the *Difnar* hymn as ‘the victorious soldier’ ‘πινάτοι νρεϋβρο’, which is probably a conflation with Phoibammon of Preht²¹². There is further evidence of these two Phoibammons being conflated in Arabic sources, as a narrative

²⁰¹ Cannuyer, C. 2020: 95; Cannuyer 1997: 139.

²⁰² Drescher 1946: iv.

²⁰³ See 2.2; O’Leary 1937: 199; Coquin, R.-G. 1991a: V, 1588; Coquin, R.-G. 1991b: V, 1589; Coquin, R.-G. 1991c: V, 1589; Sadek El Gendi, S. 2017: 22.

²⁰⁴ Coquin 1991a: V, 1588; Du Bourguet, P. M. 1971: 40, 43, 45, 139; Belting, H. 1994: 96, 97 fig. 48; Rutschowskaya, M.-H. 2004: 251.

²⁰⁵ Krause, M. 1971: 108, no. 17; Belting 1994: 93, 94 fig. 45; Staatliche Museen zu Berlin 2021.

²⁰⁶ E.g. Evetts 1910: 34; Coquin 1991b: V, 1589.

²⁰⁷ Coquin 1991c: V, 1589.

²⁰⁸ Spanel 1991: VI, 1964; Bachatly, C., Khater, A., and Burmester, O.H.E. 1981: 11.; Schenke 2016: 498, no. 8; Uljas 2019: 10-11.

²⁰⁹ Thompson 1993a: 66-7; Thompson 1993b: 51; Spanel 1991: VI, 1964; Verrone 2002: 1.

²¹⁰ Bachatly et al. 1981: 11.

²¹¹ See 2.3; Schenke 2016: 498-9; Uljas 2019: 11.

²¹² O’Leary, D. L. 1926-30: II, 28. Crum, W. E. 1939: 190b, 215a, 295b, 783a; Uljas 2019: 11; Bachatly et al. 1981: 12.

in Vat. Ar. 172 is similar to that found in M582 but is attributed to a bishop of Letopolis and an encomium in the same manuscript is attributed to a bishop of Touho, where Phoibammon of Preht was allegedly born²¹³. As Uljas says, it is ‘little wonder’ that it is difficult to allocate the correct Phoibammons to cult sites²¹⁴.

Finally, Merkourios’ origin has been debated. His name is found in Syriac sources as one of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste and given as ‘Mar Qurios’ (or ‘Kyrios’) in the *Life of Eusebius of Samosata*²¹⁵. Paul Peeters theorised that his cult originated in that of the Forty Martyrs, as Kyrion provides ‘spiritual leadership’ to the other martyrs in their *passio*²¹⁶. According to Merkourios’ hagiography, his military unit was based in Armenia, where the Forty Martyrs were stationed²¹⁷. Further, Basil of Caesarea is believed to have established a shrine to the Forty Martyrs, based on a homily that he delivered in 373 CE²¹⁸. This makes Merkourios’ association with the Forty Martyrs look likely, given that he and Basil are associated in the legend of the death of Julian the Apostate²¹⁹. However, the homily does not mention Kyrion²²⁰. Additionally, it has been debated whether the *passio* or Basil’s homily is the oldest surviving source in Greek concerning the Forty Martyrs²²¹. Patricia Karlin-Hayter concluded that the *passio* was the older text and thus Basil’s source for his homily, although she is over reliant on the *passio* as an historical source²²². While the homily was probably written by Basil, given that it dates to within his lifetime and he produced similar works, there are no mentions of the cult site of the Forty Martyrs after the fourth century²²³. Additionally, much of the narrative in Basil’s homily was used in later hagiographies of the Forty Martyrs. Jean Bernardi suggests that the cult site had been newly founded and that Basil sought to familiarise the local people with the martyrs, but it is more likely that he was legitimising the existence of a shrine²²⁴.

Instead of the homily, Merkourios’ name is more convincing evidence of his origin, as in the Syriac vision by Jovian, the saint is ‘Mar Kur’, one of the Forty Martyrs, presumably Kyrion²²⁵. This makes it seem that Merkourios was associated with the death of Julian the Apostate from early on and that his name became ‘Mar Qurios’ upon his tradition being

²¹³ Spanel 1991: VI, 1964.

²¹⁴ Uljas 2019: 11-12.

²¹⁵ Walter 2003: 108.

²¹⁶ Peeters 1921: 74-5; Maraval, P. 1999: 200; E02774; E01303; Karlin-Hayter 1991: 262, 275.

²¹⁷ E02774; Karlin-Hayter 1991: 249.

²¹⁸ E00718; Allen, P. 2003: 56, 67; Fedwick, P. J. 1981: 10, no. 48; Karlin-Hayter 1991: 249, 273.

²¹⁹ See 2.5; Walter 2003: 108.

²²⁰ Karlin-Hayter 1991: 276.

²²¹ E02774; Allen 2003: 67.

²²² Karlin-Hayter 1991: 250, 254, 263, 264-70, 291.

²²³ Fedwick 1981: 5-19; E02774; Maraval 1999: 193, 195-208.

²²⁴ Allen 2003: 67-8; Bernardi, J. 1968: 84.

²²⁵ Peeters 1921: 73; Walter 2003: 108.

transmitted in Syriac. However, in Syriac the title ‘ܡܪ’ ‘mar’ ‘lord’ did not refer to saints although it did refer to members of the church hierarchy and to God²²⁶. Meanwhile, the title ‘ܐܒܐ’ ‘abba’ referred to saints, as well as to members of the church hierarchy and to God in the Lord’s Prayer²²⁷. It therefore seems that, if the Syriac title ‘mar’ was prefixed to Kyrion’s name, that it was a sign of respect but not of sainthood, and that it became amalgamated with the name so that in Greek it is ‘Μερκούριος’ and in Coptic ‘ΜΕΡΚΟΥΡΙΟΣ’²²⁸. The possible development of Kyrion’s name into Merkourios and the association with the death of Julian the Apostate is somewhat convincing in showing that Merkourios’ cult developed out of the Levant and that he was associated with the Forty Martyrs.

It is therefore clear from this section that hagiography is unreliable in terms of what it shows about historical events and even the development of saints’ cults. What it does show is how the cults were being presented at the time that the extant texts were written or copied. Additionally, this section demonstrates how contemporary writers and audiences were subjected to the same issues that face scholars today, and how that compounds the issues of which one must be aware when using hagiographies as historical sources.

3.2.2: Martyrdom and Persecution

Christianity is not the only religion in which saints are celebrated, as for example this also happens in Islam²²⁹. Neither is the concept of martyrdom unique to Christianity, as it is also found within Judaism and Greek and Roman tradition, but it is significant within Christianity²³⁰. And it remains alive today. For example, Christians killed by Islamic extremists are often celebrated as martyrs²³¹. As Candida Moss says, attacks against Christians are considered attacks against Christianity, and have contributed to a narrative of persecution as old as the religion itself²³². While it is true that there are attacks against Christians now and that there were persecutions in Antiquity, they are not part of a single agenda but instead have resulted from different agendas at different times, such as that of Julian the Apostate, and the scale of

²²⁶ Payne Smith, J. 1902: 298a.

²²⁷ Payne Smith 1902: 1b, 2a.

²²⁸ Delhaye 1909: 234, 237; Weidmann 1991a: 3; Budge 1915: 231; Walter 2003: 43, 54; Woods, D. J. 1999.

²²⁹ Helmecke, G. 2015: 156.

²³⁰ Moss 2013: 30, 39, 44, 55-6, 60, 73, 79; Grig 2004: 8-11; Brettler, M. 2002: 3, 5, 10, 11-12, 13-15; Honigman, S. 2014: 59, 76; Williams 2019: 403; Thomas, G. S. R. 1969: 248-9; Horbury, W. 2017: 426-7, 428, 431, 439-40.

²³¹ Moss 2013: 2, 20; Bennett, W. J. 2016: xiv.

²³² Moss 2013: 3, 5, 13, 127-8, 215; Williams 2019: 403, 415; Frend, W. H. C. 1965: ix; Fournier, É. 2019: 1-2; Morehouse, N. 2019: 44; Bowman, G. 1991: 102.

persecution in Antiquity has probably been exaggerated²³³. Most of the sources for persecution are, additionally, hagiographies, with most considered to be inauthentic²³⁴. However, some scholars, such as William J. Bennett, use the narrative of continuous persecution to demonstrate the ‘endurance’ of Christianity. While Bennett is right that hagiography is a reminder of Christianity’s ‘spiritual roots’, that does not make it an accurate representation of the historical experiences of Christians and, though he claims to acknowledge the limitations of these sources, he treats them as reliable when the time between the persecutions and their creation demonstrates how events were presented by writers to their contemporary audience, not how they took place²³⁵. While persecution is important in Christian history, it has been shown that its severity is exaggerated. Instead of being seen solely as victims, as they are presented in hagiography, Christians should be understood as part of a complex social, political, linguistic, and cultural environment in which they were sometimes in positions of power and sometimes the victims of persecution²³⁶.

Equally, it was possible for non-Christians to support Christians, such as the power that the Islamic rulers of Egypt could give either the Chalcedonian or anti-Chalcedonian leadership²³⁷. Further, writers such as John of Nikiou and George the Archdeacon framed the Arab conquest as the punishment for the Byzantine leaders’ lack of faith²³⁸. It can therefore be seen that there is more within Christian history than persecution and that persecution became a tool used by Christian writers²³⁹.

Within hagiography, the milieu of persecution may have garnered admiration from the audience for the saints, and it may have reaffirmed their faith by presenting their world as hostile²⁴⁰. Increasing numbers of martyr stories are attested as the cult of saints grew. It has been suggested that this is because shrines needed to attract business away from their rivals, given that most surviving texts have been dated to periods in which Christians were not persecuted²⁴¹. This supports the view that hagiographies were later constructions and written in response to contemporary social, political, cultural, and religious issues rather than to convey historical facts²⁴². Martyrdoms being a later construct is further supported by the detailed depictions of the

²³³ See 2.1; Moss 2013: 8, 16, 18, 127, 129-30, 159, 241; Grig 2004: 8, 12; Rogozhina 2015: 59; Shin 2018: 15; Hidding 2020: 2; Rebenich and Wiemer 2020: 2; Digeser, E. D. 2019: 25; Morehouse 2019: 44; Mayer, W. 2019: 317.

²³⁴ Grig 2004: 13; Rebillard 2020: 1-2.

²³⁵ Bennett 2016: xiv, 77, 83, 86, 91; Williams 2019: 407; Hidding 2020: v, 1, 2, 4-5, 7; Papaconstantinou, A. 2006: 77; Van Uytendaele 1976: 103.

²³⁶ E.g. Papaconstantinou 2006: 65; Bagnall, R. S. 1993: 321-5.

²³⁷ Papaconstantinou 2006: 68; Mayer 2019: 318-19; Fournier 2019: 4; Booth, P. 2021a: 143; Wood, P. 2021: 81-2.

²³⁸ Papaconstantinou 2006: 70-1.

²³⁹ Moss 2013: 3, 19, 20.

²⁴⁰ Hidding 2020: 10; Ward-Perkins 2020: 9.

²⁴¹ Papaconstantinou 2006: 73; Moss 2013: 19, 216, 234-5, 245.

²⁴² E.g. Moss 2013: 76; Delehay 1962: 101; Nasrallah, L. S. 2003: 20; Bennett 2016: xiv; Honigman 2014: 63.

tortures of saints depicted in Coptic hagiography, which show that writers were emphasising their suffering to elicit an emotional response from the audience²⁴³. This is apparently unusual within martyrdoms, despite the gory deaths met by most of the apostles and acts by the Romans such as throwing Christians to wild animals²⁴⁴. Indeed, the tortures are not realistic, as any one of them would be lethal, such as the removal of the tops of Paese and his sister Thekla's skulls and the pouring of boiling pitch onto their brains²⁴⁵.

Papaconstantinou notes the similarities between martyr cycles specifically and proposes that the writers or copyists were working from 'blueprints' within a network²⁴⁶. This idea can be applied to other kinds of hagiographical texts more widely, as there are similarities that appear to have been motifs. One similarity that supports this is that many martyrs were supposedly executed under Diocletian²⁴⁷. Yet, he was not the only emperor to persecute Christians, with others being Decius, Julian the Apostate, Valerian, Aurelian, and Heraclius²⁴⁸. Even though persecutions are presented as targeting Christians, the emperors' relationships with Christianity were probably more 'multi-faceted' than is generally conveyed in texts or interpreted in scholarship²⁴⁹. As the edict passed during Diocletian's reign specifically targeted Christians, it seems that it held particular significance in the Christian collective, cultural memory²⁵⁰. However, as it is uncertain whether the saints really existed and the surviving texts post-date the reigns of these emperors by centuries, it is likely that Diocletian was employed as the archetypal persecuting ruler, enabling the persecution of Christians to be presented as a continuous phenomenon and to give it a single inciting event²⁵¹. In hagiography preserved in Coptic, Diocletian's life story was changed to make him the Devil's protégé²⁵². Thus, hagiography does not 'prove' the aggression towards Christians as Ionut-Alexandru Tudorie suggests but, as he later acknowledges, 'the Christian milieu tended to present this *momentum* in Church history by exaggerating the harshness'²⁵³.

²⁴³ Papaconstantinou 2006: 76; Moss 2013: 4.

²⁴⁴ Delehay 1922: 148; Moss 2013: 6-7, 127.

²⁴⁵ Mayer 2019: 318; Hidding 2020: 10; Reymond and Barns 1973: 66, 174.

²⁴⁶ E.g. Papaconstantinou 2006: 74-5; Moss 2013: 87-8.

²⁴⁷ Papaconstantinou 2006: 75; Mayer 2019: 318; Rogozhina 2015: 54.

²⁴⁸ Grig 2004: 8-11; Kahlos 2019: 61; Drinkwater 2005: 39; Rogozhina 2015: 54; Rebenich and Wiemer 2020: 2; Bennett 2016: 82; Shin 2018: 26, 28-9; Thomas 1969: 253; Fournier 2019: 6; Morehouse 2019: 44-6; Booth, P. 2021b: 398, 408.

²⁴⁹ E.g. Booth 2021b: 398, 408.

²⁵⁰ Tudorie, I.-A. 2014: 105, 107, 109; Moss 2013: 15, 154-9; Bennett 2016: 84-9; Shin 2018: 1; Williams 2019: 408; Frend 1965: 477, 480-1; Digeser 2019: 27, 31; Rogozhina 2015: 57.

²⁵¹ Moss 2013: 15, 16; Rogozhina 2015: 52, 54, 66, 92; Hidding 2020: 2, 4-5; Delehay 1962: 105; Papaconstantinou 2006: 79, 80.

²⁵² Rogozhina 2015: 66-8.

²⁵³ Tudorie 2014: 112, 117.

This focus on Diocletian is highlighted by the use of the dating systems ‘the Era of Diocletian’ and ‘the Era of the Martyrs’ in Coptic texts and the alternative name of the Coptic Church of ‘the Church of the Martyrs’²⁵⁴. The emperor reigned from 284/5 CE to 304/5 CE and texts referring to ‘the Era of Diocletian’ are known from a year or two after his death until the twelfth century, with an isolated example from the fourteenth century²⁵⁵. Texts referring to ‘the Era of the Martyrs’, meanwhile, are not attested until the late eighth century, with the last attestation coming at a similar time to that of ‘the Era of Diocletian’²⁵⁶. Leslie S. B. MacCoull has suggested that a stele records ‘the Era of the Martyrs’ ten years earlier than the earliest known reference, although Roger Bagnall and Klaas Worp disagree based on MacCoull’s significant editing of the text and are probably right considering that MacCoull acknowledges how unusual the surviving date formula including ‘the Era of the Martyrs’ would be²⁵⁷. These dating systems, the increase in the production of hagiography, and the alternative name of the Coptic Church indicate an increased emphasis on the persecution as a defining experience, and that the use of that experience was more important than the accurate representation of it²⁵⁸.

It can therefore be seen how the persecution of Christians was a ‘malleable rhetorical label’ used by hagiographers²⁵⁹. In their reaction to religious persecution, Christians took ownership of it by promising great rewards to those who suffered and died in Jesus’ name²⁶⁰. Papaconstantinou argues that this was done to generate an ‘Egyptian’ identity following the Arab conquest so miaphysite Christians could differentiate themselves from Chalcedonians and from the Romans who had ruled Egypt prior to the conquest²⁶¹. This is plausible given the distinctive nature of hagiography which has survived in Coptic and the lack of mention of Islam which focuses the texts on the past rather than on the present²⁶². The use of the persecution of Christians is clearly a multi-layered exercise, one of creating a collective, cultural narrative and also one of inspiring individuals’ faith.

The use of the persecution relates to the presentation of the visions researched in this thesis because they are either experienced by or involve the appearance of martyr saints. Visions thus complement the use of a collective narrative in what Bennett considers a reminder of the

²⁵⁴ MacCoull, L. S. B. and Worp, K. A. 1990: 376, 381-2; Rogozhina 2015: 60; Mikhail, M. S. A. 2014: 129; Harvey 1993: vii.

²⁵⁵ Bagnall, R. S. and Worp, K. A. 2004: 63-4, 67, 68-81; MacCoull and Worp 1990: 380-1, 384; Mikhail 2014: 130, 132, 194; Bowman 2005: 67, 87.

²⁵⁶ Bagnall and Worp 2004: 82-6.

²⁵⁷ MacCoull, L. S. B. 1998: 204, no. 1; Bagnall and Worp 2004: 87.

²⁵⁸ Rogozhina 2015: 59-60; Bagnall and Worp 2004: 68; MacCoull and Worp 1990: 386.

²⁵⁹ Fournier 2019: 2; Mayer 2019: 317, 320; Digeser 2019: 36-7; Shin 2018: 16; Frend 1965: xi-xii; Rogozhina 2015: 54.

²⁶⁰ Williams 2019: 405-6.

²⁶¹ Papaconstantinou 2006: 81, 86; Papaconstantinou 2011: 334-5; Mayer 2019: 319.

²⁶² See Introduction: 2.

‘roots’ of Christianity²⁶³. They contribute to specific incidents within the whole event of persecution that justify the veneration of martyrs within the cult of saints and encourage participation in the cult through presenting experiencing visions of martyr saints as a necessary exercise.

3.2.3: *The Council of Chalcedon*

Another way that hagiography could foster a sense of community was in presenting relationships between different Churches to the audience. For instance, Viktor is one of various saints allegedly from Antioch known in Coptic, with another being Claudius. Based on the *History of the Patriarchs* (HP) there was a close relationship between the miaphysite patriarchates of Alexandria and Antioch²⁶⁴. There was even a Syrian monastery, Deir el-Surian, in Wadi al-Natrun that would have presumably furthered interactions between anti-Chalcedonian Christians²⁶⁵. Like persecution, however, the nature of relationships and reasons for them were not necessarily accurately represented, instead with the emphasis being on encouraging further participation in the cults of the saints being celebrated in the texts. There was also an emphasis on setting narratives in an environment that was either familiar to the audience or that they would have heard of, showing where they needed to be in order to experience visions and thus the role of intercession that the Church played in accessing God.

Harvey argues that the emphasis on the settings of Egypt and Antioch in hagiography established regional identity²⁶⁶. Writers in Egypt and Syria seem to have also considered themselves part of what Maged Mikhail calls ‘an anti-Chalcedonian federation’²⁶⁷. Anna Rogozhina argues that hagiography preserved in Coptic contained an implied anti-Chalcedonian argument²⁶⁸. However, this implication comes from the fact that these texts were produced in a miaphysite environment rather than from their content. While writers probably wanted to demarcate how ‘divinely cherished and protected’ Egypt was, the extent of persecution of anti-Chalcedonians prior to the Arab conquest has likely been exaggerated like the persecution of Christians by the Romans²⁶⁹. Bernhard Palme also points out that Egypt was not divided solely between Chalcedonian and anti-Chalcedonian Christians, as other religions such as Judaism were

²⁶³ Bennett 2016: xiv, 77, 83, 86, 91.

²⁶⁴ Booth 2021a: 139; Davis 2008: 91, 95-6; Allen, P. 2013: 187, 189, 196-7; Mikhail 2014: 191-3; Wood 2021: 15, 20; Booth, P. 2017: 171.

²⁶⁵ Wipszycka, E. 2015: 141-2; Mikhail 2014: 192; Booth 2017: 167-8.

²⁶⁶ Harvey 1993: xi.

²⁶⁷ Mikhail 2014: 192.

²⁶⁸ Rogozhina 2015: 37.

²⁶⁹ Harvey 1993: xi; Palme, B. 2012: 84, 86; Booth 2017: 154, 158; Booth 2021b: 400, 405-5; see 3.2.1.

also present, meaning that the polarised view of Egypt often presented in scholarship is too simplistic²⁷⁰. Further, the Alexandrian patriarchate did not experience a ‘continuous, orthodox succession’ following the schism but instead rule by patriarchs from both sides, from the late sixth century simultaneously²⁷¹. There were also some dioceses, such as Hermonthis and Koptos, which were ruled by dyophysite and miaphysite bishops simultaneously²⁷². It is also impossible to know the extent to which ordinary people acknowledged doctrinal divisions, so such divisions must be treated as concerns of those in episcopal or secular power²⁷³.

Further, the schism is in the case studies only referred to in the martyrdom of James to justify Peter the Iberian’s need to flee from the Chalcedonian patriarch Proterius in Alexandria, who was in actuality a contemporary of Peter’s as found in the *Life* of Peter the Iberian²⁷⁴. According to the *Life*, Peter was in hiding from the Chalcedonians in Egypt and performing miaphysite activities in Oxyrhynchus and the Thebaid in the mid-450s, not long after the Council in 451 CE and during Proterius’ time as patriarch of Alexandria, following an attempt in Alexandria by Proterius to have him killed²⁷⁵. The writer or copyist of the Coptic version of the martyrdom of James seems to have used these figures to legitimise and make realistic the narrative of the saint’s relics being brought to Egypt, specifically to the vicinity of Oxyrhynchus. While Peter and Proterius both lived in the fifth century and James was supposedly martyred in 421 CE, making it plausible in the martyrdom that he could have been taken to Egypt during the 450s when Proterius and Peter were both in Egypt, in the part of the martyrdom that is shared with Syriac and Greek the martyrs are exhumed during the reign of Shapur²⁷⁶. This presents a problem, as Shapur III died in 388 and until the brief reign of Shapur-i Shahrvaraz in 630 there is no other king by this name²⁷⁷. Additionally, ‘Shapur’ was probably originally a title that later became used as the personal name of three kings of Persia, so it may be intended as the archetypal name for a Persian ruler and persecutor after Shapur II, similarly to the attribution of persecution of saints venerated in Egypt to Diocletian²⁷⁸. This is further evidence that historical figures were used to support the narrative of James being brought to Egypt and that that was the focus of the Coptic version of the text rather than historical accuracy.

²⁷⁰ Palme 2012: 89-92.

²⁷¹ Booth 2021a: 142; Booth, P. 2018: 53; Vivian 1999: 9; Booth, P. 2019: 693, 704-5, 707; Palme 2012: 87; Booth 2017: 152, 168, 174.

²⁷² Booth 2017: 187.

²⁷³ Booth 2017: 160.

²⁷⁴ Alcock (unpublished): 21.

²⁷⁵ Horn, C. B. and Phenix, R. R. Jr. (eds.) 2008: lxxviii, 127, 129; Horn, C. B. 2006: 93, 95; Meyendorff, J. 1989: 168.

²⁷⁶ Alcock (unpublished): 20; S01660.

²⁷⁷ Pourshariati, P. 2008: 57-8, 204-5.

²⁷⁸ Shahbazi, A. S. 2002; see 3.2.1.

In Coptic, references to Chalcedon are usually found in the hagiography of confessors and monks²⁷⁹. One example is the *Life* of Samuel of Kalamon, in which the Chalcedonian patriarch Cyrus is referred to negatively and the miaphysite one Benjamin positively²⁸⁰. Another example is the *Life* of the monk Longinus of the anti-Chalcedonian Ennaton complex of monasteries near Alexandria²⁸¹. A final example is Abraham of Farshut, the archimandrite of the Pachomian monastic federation²⁸². While Frederick G. Holweck suggested that Abraham of Farshut has been conflated with Abraham of Scete, they are celebrated on different feast days (the former on 12 February and the latter on 4 January)²⁸³. As Holweck recorded over thirty saints called Abraham, they are probably separate figures, especially as O’Leary and more recently James Goehring do not mention any conflation between the two²⁸⁴. Maybe confessors or monks were deemed an appropriate voice for anti-Chalcedonian views because martyrs were seen as fighting against those who condemned Christianity in its entirety, such as the Romans²⁸⁵.

Additionally, the texts used in this thesis post-date the Council of Chalcedon²⁸⁶. They date to after the Arab conquest of Egypt in the seventh century, so the schism may have been less of a concern²⁸⁷. The shift in focus from the Byzantine Empire to the Caliphate is demonstrated by the attempt within the *HP* to attribute a supposed lapse in contact between the Alexandrian and Antiochian patriarchates to tensions with the Caliphate, although there is no other evidence for such tensions, and also by the interference in the patriarchate of Alexandria by the patriarchate of Antioch and the caliphal seat of Baghdad²⁸⁸. Of relations outside of Antioch and Alexandria, the *HP* is unforthcoming, which indicates that these two patriarchates were the primary concern of its writers, especially given that the Coptic Church also had a strong, ruling, relationship with the churches in Nubia and Ethiopia²⁸⁹.

So, instead of Egypt-focused narratives as Harvey proposes, the case studies present unity between anti-Chalcedonian Churches, which would explain why saints associated with Antioch are found in hagiography preserved in Coptic²⁹⁰. This unity would have supported the

²⁷⁹ Davis 2008: 91, 93, 96-7; Booth 2020: 30-1.

²⁸⁰ O’Leary 1937: 243; Alcock, A. 1983: 6, 79; Goehring, J. E. 2012: 55; Budge, E. A. W. 1928: II, 474; E05276; Booth 2021b: 399-401.

²⁸¹ O’Leary 1937: 180; E07055; Gascou, J. 1991: 954-5, 956; Depuydt, L. 1994: 269, 276, 286; Orlandi, T. and Campagnano, A. 1975: 46-93; Vivian, T. 1999: 24-9; Booth 2017: 159.

²⁸² Coquin, R.-G. and Martin, M. S. J. 1991: 1092; Munier, H. 1936: 29-30; Goehring 2012: 1, 36-7.

²⁸³ Holweck, F. G. 1924: 5-7.

²⁸⁴ O’Leary 1937: 63-4.

²⁸⁵ Papaconstantinou, A. 2011: 326.

²⁸⁶ Rogozhina 2015: 37; see Figure 1.

²⁸⁷ Palme 2012: 82; Sijpesteijn, P. M. 2007: 437; Booth 2021a: 140, 154; Booth 2019: 693, 698, 707; Kennedy, H. 1981: 31-2, 33, 38.

²⁸⁸ Booth 2021a: 145, 147-8, 150, 155.

²⁸⁹ Booth 2021a: 140-1, 152-3; Mikhail 2014: 194-7; Wood 2021: 20; Finneran 2002: 123.

²⁹⁰ Harvey 1993: xii; Rogozhina 2015: 107, 133-4.

role of the Church in enabling congregations to engage with martyr saints through visions by presenting the Church's, and by extension shrines', institutional power and influence as part of a network through which higher powers could be accessed.

4: Content and Functions of Texts

This section will provide the conclusion to Chapter 1, summarising the discussion and findings and explaining how they will inform the contextualisation in Chapter 2 and analysis of visions in Chapters 3 and 4.

4.1: Content of Texts

This chapter introduced the texts that will be used in Chapters 3 and 4. It has provided the date and provenance of each manuscript where that is known, as well as alternative versions of texts preserved in both Coptic and other languages to give a full picture of the extant material²⁹¹. The texts have also been placed within the context of their production and reception. This has problematised them as primary sources because of their uncertain authorship and idealisation of figures who may or may not have existed²⁹². Another problem is the exaggerated events, the tortures and the persecutions, depicted in them²⁹³. This demonstrates some of the messages within the texts, namely the collective memory of the persecution and the martyr saints as idealised Christians.

This chapter also further problematised the treatment of saints as historical figures by showing the conflation and contested versions of their origins²⁹⁴. It has thus been made clear that the saints were characters used by writers. The texts were not intended to accurately represent historical events and instead convey implicitly the historical reality in which the cult of saints operated and how the saints were perceived by the writers who used them and their audiences.

It has been shown that many of the texts narrate the saints' lives, which provides background to the saints' characters before they appear in posthumous miracles. As part of this background, the saints experience visions. While the texts have much in common, the

²⁹¹ See Table 1 and Figure 1.

²⁹² See 2.1.

²⁹³ See 3.2.1.

²⁹⁴ See 3.2.3.

individualisation of the saints suggests that writers were consciously trying to appeal to audiences. This already presents an idea of the relationship between texts and shrines. It also justifies the use of the corpora to establish the conventions for visions experienced by saints in Chapter 3 and those for visions experienced by laypeople in Chapter 4. In this thesis will therefore be provided a comprehensive comparison of visions experienced by these characters.

4.2: Roles of Texts

As the history and content of the corpora have been established in this chapter, Chapter 2 will establish the contexts in which they were used. It will do this by introducing the archaeological evidence associated with each saint, including objects, iconography, and shrines. As it is believed that the texts would have been read aloud to congregations at shrines, it is necessary to understand the context of the texts' reception through these shrines' locations and functions. This will in turn contextualise the visions experienced by laypeople, which will be presented and analysed in Chapter 4, as these are usually set in saints' shrines and thus suggest the importance of these spaces to the cult of saints. Chapter 2 will also introduce the cultic practices evidenced in the archaeology to demonstrate how interactions with the saints fit into the shrine environment. The texts can therefore be seen as a guide for how laypeople should interact with saints should they experience visions of them, but also as an indicator of the choices and motivations of the writers based on whether the textual and archaeological evidence present similar activities at the shrines. Chapters 1 and 2 combined will present the historical and material context in which the cult of saints was experienced in order to analyse holistically the representation of visions experienced by saints and laypeople and their functions within hagiography preserved in Coptic²⁹⁵.

²⁹⁵ See 1.1.

Chapter 2: Shrines and Cults

1: Introduction

1.1: Chapter Aims

Saints' shrines are the cornerstones of their cults, where their hagiographies were read aloud, and where those hagiographies claimed their relics to be kept and miracles performed. As such, the hagiographies of the six saints studied in this thesis relate closely to sites at which people engaged with their cults. This means that the textual evidence of hagiography and the archaeological evidence of shrines are connected and necessitate a combined approach when studying phenomena associated with the cult¹. The texts not only mention the sites in their narratives but also in their meta-commentary, such as when referring to celebrating feast days². Additionally, some hagiography assigns considerable importance to the sites named, especially for legitimisation such as in the martyrdom of James that claims that God predestined that his shrine would be established at Oxyrhynchus³. So, this chapter will argue that we need to consider the archaeological evidence alongside the hagiographical evidence introduced in Chapter 1.

In this thesis, 'archaeological evidence' refers to any material remains, ranging from objects to structures, as distinct from textual evidence. The archaeological evidence presented in this chapter will concern both cult sites and the cult activities that took place therein. 'Textual evidence' refers to both hagiography and documentary texts. Hagiography narrates the experiences of holy figures like saints and angels, whereas documentary texts record administrative and legal information and provide an insight into the practicalities that went into running institutions like the churches and saints' shrines to which they refer or at which they are found⁴. The two kinds of textual evidence are distinct in the information that they convey, although both they and archaeological evidence are porous categories: manuscripts can be found *in situ* and there are literary elements in documentary texts⁵. For example, child donation documents show through their formulaic nature and their legal declarations that they, like

¹ Ward-Perkins, B. 2020: 4.

² Thompson S. E. 1993a: 37-40, 64; Thompson, S. E. 1993b: 47-51, 82-3.

³ See Chapter 1: 2.7.

⁴ Papaconstantinou, A. 2007: 352.

⁵ Ward-Perkins 2020: 4.

hagiography, could be written to convey particular messages as well as to record information⁶. Meanwhile, hagiography focuses on the active role of saints appearing to supplicants in order to resolve their issues, such as illness, injury, or mistreatment, whereas there is archaeological evidence that activities took place at shrines to resolve such issues without the appearance of saints being required⁷. This chapter will therefore introduce the archaeology and documentary texts to establish the similarities and disparities between what they and hagiography show.

While hagiography was introduced in Chapter 1, it will in this chapter demonstrate the dissonance between what the textual and archaeological evidence show. This dissonance is clearly seen in the numbers of shrines dedicated to each saint claimed in the textual evidence and identified in the archaeological record. An example of this is the cult of Phoibammon. His hagiography refers to four shrines, but none of them have been found⁸. Meanwhile, a shrine dedicated to him but which is not mentioned in his hagiography has been found at Deir el-Bahari⁹. The dissonance is also seen in the cult practices presented in the hagiographical evidence and suggested by the documentary and archaeological evidence, which will be used to determine the function of the cult of each saint and how this affected their portrayal in hagiography. This demonstrates that, while hagiography gives a general idea of what was claimed about saints' lives and the kinds of issues that they were believed to resolve, it does not necessarily accurately show the scale or locations associated with the cults of individual saints.

The combination of disparate evidence into one systematic and original view facilitates the study of visions within hagiographical texts in the context in which the narratives were set and written, which will provide a comprehensive understanding of how visions are presented and function in the textual evidence and how they fitted into the practices of the cult as indicated by the archaeological evidence. This will broaden our understanding of the mechanics of hagiographical texts and make a significant contribution to scholarship which has so far focused primarily on miracles, disregarding visions as a distinct phenomenon.

⁶ Schenke, G. 2016: 497; *P. KRU* 86, lines 18-36; *P. KRU* 96, lines 18-58; Papaconstantinou, A. 2002b: 526; *P. KRU* 97, lines 55-9; *P. KRU* 76, lines 70-6; Papaconstantinou, A. 2020: 55-6; Ward-Perkins 2020: 4.

⁷ Papaconstantinou 2007: 350.

⁸ Uljas, S. 2019: 9-10.

⁹ Spänel, D. B. 1991: VI, 1964-5; Papaconstantinou, A. 2001: 214; Atiya, A. S. 1991: V, 1586.

1.2: Saints with and without Identified Shrines

It should be noted that the degree of material preservation of archaeology in the desert is significantly better than in the Nile Valley or the Delta due to the dry environment, and where material in the Nile Valley or Delta is preserved, it is often more difficult to access due to being under agricultural land or urban settlements or to having already been disturbed¹⁰. In addition, the Nile Valley has become more saline since the construction of the Aswan High Dam and the water table is rising, so much material has not survived¹¹. The lack of archaeological evidence for sites mentioned in the textual evidence does not necessarily indicate that they did not exist. However, likewise, the mention of sites in texts does not prove that they did.

There is archaeological evidence for shrines dedicated to three of the saints included in this thesis: Kollouthos, Menas, and Phoibammon¹². Meanwhile, there is limited archaeological and textual evidence relating to the other three saints. It is possible that shrines named in the hagiography of the other three saints were never built. However, given that they are all celebrated in Coptic texts that have been found in Egypt, shrines dedicated to Merkourios, Viktor, and James may have been constructed there. This is because Coptic was not used outside Egypt, so, the survival of hagiography in it suggests that saints were known and even venerated there, as presumably the texts were produced in devotional contexts to perpetuate their cults.

2: Archaeological Evidence of Shrines

2.1: The Shrines

This section will outline the material remains of shrines that have been found and compare them to what is mentioned in the hagiography. The first three sections, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, and 2.1.3, will be ordered according to the shrines that have been located. 2.1.4 and 2.1.5 will focus on comparing the cult practices that are mentioned in the textual evidence and attested in the archaeological evidence, and as such will be ordered according to the practices instead because some need to be discussed within the context of multiple saints' traditions.

¹⁰ Bard, K. A. 2015: 56; Kemp, B. J. 2006: 48, 54, 115; Frösén, J. 2009: 79-80, 81; Bard, K. A. 2014: 3, 32; Keenan, J. 2009: 60-1; Cuvigny, H. 2009: 30-1, 32, 34-5; Papaconstantinou 2007: 351.

¹¹ Bard 2015: 56; Cuvigny 2009: 32; UNESCO 2021a; UNESCO 2021b.

¹² Grossmann, P. 2014: II, 241; Grossmann, P. 2015: 1; Godlewski, W. 1986: 17.

2.1.1: Extant and Attested Shrines

The sites in Egypt that will be named and discussed, either as places where shrines dedicated to the saints included in this thesis have been found, or where shrines are claimed to have been located based on the hagiography, are indicated in Figures 2 and 3.



Figure 2: The sites in Egypt named in hagiography (author's own creation in Google My Maps)



Figure 3: Close-up view of the sites Thone, Hermopolis, and Antinoopolis (author's own creation in Google My Maps)

In the Greek and Coptic hagiography of Menas, the location of his shrine is repeatedly given as near to Alexandria, so this most likely refers to Abu Mina, whose name literally means ‘Apa Menas’ in Arabic¹³.

In the hagiography of Kollouthos, all but one of the surviving miracles refer to his shrine as being in Antinoopolis, where one of the largest known Late Antique shrines has been excavated as part of a church complex. This site has been identified through documentary texts found there as being dedicated to him. References made to Kollouthos in documentary texts have also been found elsewhere throughout Egypt. Many come from Middle Egypt, the area around Antinoopolis, the Faiyum, including Arsinoë, and places such as Aphrodito, Abydos, Hermopolis, and Panopolis, and include a rental contract, receipts, taxes, and an entry in a fiscal codex¹⁴. In one of the surviving miracles, preserved in the manuscript ÖNB K 9524, a shrine at Pnueit is named, although no archaeological evidence of this has yet been found¹⁵. Pnueit is within the bishopric of Panopolis (modern Akhmim), approximately 160km south of Antinoopolis¹⁶.

Meanwhile, no shrines mentioned in the hagiography of Phoibammon, Merkourios, Viktor, and James have so far been identified. Shrines dedicated to Menas, Viktor, and Merkourios are depicted in the wall paintings in the Church of St. Anthony in the Eastern Desert, although it cannot be said whether they represent real places¹⁷.

In contrast, the only shrine dedicated to Phoibammon that has been identified is not mentioned in his hagiography. In his miracle collection, references are made to shrines at four

¹³ Drescher, J. 1946: 4-5, 17, 23, 26, 102-3, 114, 118, 119; Bacot, S. 2020: 10.

¹⁴ Papaconstantinou 2001: 122-4.

¹⁵ Schenke, G. 2013: 188-9.

¹⁶ Grossmann, P. 2010a: 24, 26; Hidding, A. 2020: 84; Schenke 2013: 186-7, 188-9; Grossmann 2014: II, 241.

¹⁷ Meinardus, O. F. A. 1972: Pl. I-VI, 313, Figs. 1-2, 314, Fig. 3.

different locations¹⁸. The first is Touho, modern Taha el-Amida, north of the city of Minya¹⁹. According to the miracle collection, Touho was renamed Theodosiopolis when the emperor Theodosius rebuilt the shrine there²⁰. However, there is no other evidence of a name change, so this was probably included to add status to the site by associating it with a Christian emperor²¹. The second location is Thone, modern Tuna el-Gebel, which is near to Hermopolis (modern El-Ashmunein). Sami Uljas proposes that it is one of three Hermopolitan shrines dedicated to a Phoibammon based on various accounts, fiscal documents, and contracts²². Gesa Schenke argues that the shrine at Tuna el-Gebel would have been associated with a monastery, although acknowledges that it remains unidentified²³. Additionally, as by this time Phoibammon of Preht had become conflated with at least two other saints of the same name, it is unclear to whom the shrine would have been dedicated²⁴. The third location is a chapel near to Antinoopolis in an unidentified place called Pshosh south of the city²⁵. And the fourth location is Assiut where, according to Phoibammon's martyrdom, he was executed²⁶. Touho is the northernmost site and Assiut is the southernmost, with c. 126km (78 miles) between them.

The shrine dedicated to Phoibammon that has been located belongs to the Monastery of Phoibammon at Deir el-Bahari, near to the settlement of Djeme in the 18th Dynasty temple of Medinet Habu²⁷. While it is not known for certain that the site was dedicated to Phoibammon of Preht rather than to another Phoibammon, Walter E. Crum showed that it was probably dedicated to him because the dedication on the ostrakon *O.Crum* 455 follows the dates for Ascension and Pentecost, which are only compatible with his memorial day on 1 Paone, although this is the only clue to suggest which Phoibammon the monastery may be dedicated to²⁸. The site is considered important based on the large amount of documentary texts found there, but this may indicate the partiality of that evidence. The lack of inclusion of this site in the hagiography may show that the writer/copyist of the surviving miracle collection wanted to draw attention to other sites, or at least claim that they existed.

The three shrines that have been found are part of larger building complexes. The shrine dedicated to Kollouthos is part of a healing sanctuary and church complex, that dedicated to

¹⁸ Garel, E. 2020: 80-1.

¹⁹ Google b (n.d.); Uljas 2019: 9; Schenke 2016: 502.

²⁰ Verrone, K. E. 2002: 6.

²¹ Uljas 2019: 9; Kessler, D. 1981: 19, 108.

²² Papaconstantinou 2001: 205; Uljas 2019: 10.

²³ Schenke 2016: 501.

²⁴ See Chapter 1: 3.2.1.

²⁵ Uljas 2019: 9-10.

²⁶ Schenke 2016: 501; Uljas 2019: 9.

²⁷ Spanel 1991: VI, 1964-5; Papaconstantinou 2001: 214; Atiya 1991: V, 1496, 1586.

²⁸ Crum, W. E. and Winlock, H. E. 1926: I, 110; Crum, W. E. 1902: 41-2, no. 455; Spanel 1991: VI, 1964; Uljas 2019: 12; see Chapter 1: 3.2.2.

Menas forms the core of a pilgrimage centre, and that dedicated to Phoibammon is part of a monastery. There is no mention within the hagiography of shrines being part of larger institutions, so evidently the shrines and the veneration of the saints therein were their focus rather than the recording of institutional activities²⁹.

As for the remaining three saints, no shrines have been identified in Egypt. For Merkourios and Viktor, Ernest A. Wallis Budge argued that the colophons of their hagiography identify shrines based on where the manuscripts were either written or dedicated, but the narratives themselves do not mention their location. There is no known shrine associated with Merkourios, even though De Lacy O'Leary claimed that 'a great church was raised in his honour in Caesarea' and Budge argued that the account of the translation of the saint's relics in his encomium referred to Edfu³⁰. There is a church dedicated to Merkourios in Cairo, which also houses a sanctuary dedicated to James³¹. Merkourios does not seem to have been well-known or popular in Egypt prior to the Arab conquest in the seventh century, but became more prevalent from the ninth century, perhaps showing an increase in popularity due to his role as a protector of Christians³². However, this claim is based on the mentions of twenty-seven cult sites in Egypt in the history attested from the twelfth and thirteenth century and attributed to Abu Salih the Armenian³³.

While Viktor's trial and execution are claimed to have taken place in Egypt in his hagiography, the only reference to a shrine in Egypt is in the miracle collection of Claudius³⁴. In the miracle of the three thieves, Viktor's shrine is a walkable distance from that of Kollouthos in the area of Antinoopolis³⁵. Meanwhile, according to Arietta Papaconstantinou, there are textual references to three shrines outside Egypt³⁶. These are Maiuma near to Gaza, Antioch, and Rome. The presence of a shrine at Maiuma is suggested only by an item on the Madaba mosaic map calling it 'The (place) of Saint Victor'³⁷. The shrines in Rome and Antioch are referred to in a single miracle³⁸.

²⁹ Thompson 1993a: 68-70; Thompson 1993b: 53; Schenke 2013: 218-19; Drescher 1946: 31-2, 122-3; Budge, E. A. W. 1915: 266-7, 838-9; Budge, E. A. W. 1914: I, 63-4, 65-6, 316-17, 318-19; Verrone 2002: 40-1; Alcock, A. (unpublished): 24; Balestri, G. and Hyvernât, H. 1907-50: II, 57-9.

³⁰ O'Leary, D. L. 1937: 202; see Chapter 1: 2.5.

³¹ Meinardus, O. F. A. 1999: 188-9; Gabra, G. and Alcock, A. 1993: 129, 132.

³² MacCoull, L. S. B. 1982: 407, 409.

³³ Papaconstantinou 2001: 146; Evetts, B. T. A. and Butler, A. J. 1895: ix-x, 368.

³⁴ Budge 1914: I, 63, 316-17; Constantine of Assiut, Second Encomium on St Claudius, lines 1-6, ed. Godron, G. 1970: p. 642; see Chapter 1: 3.1.5.

³⁵ Constantine of Assiut, Second Encomium on St Claudius, lines 1-6, ed. Godron 1970: p. 642.

³⁶ Papaconstantinou 2001: 66.

³⁷ Piccirillo, M. and Alliata, E. 1999: 93, no. 125.

³⁸ Budge 1914: I, 65-6, 318-19.

James' martyrdom claims that there is a shrine dedicated to him near to the city of Oxyrhynchus. As his story originated in Persia, there might be a shrine dedicated to him there, but there is no evidence and little archaeological work has been done on martyr shrines in the Iranian Empire, although many churches and monasteries have been found³⁹. Additionally, while martyrs in Persia were considered to heal supplicants, this was done at 'highly symbolic points in the landscape' as well as in shrines⁴⁰. There are no other attestations of James' name apart from the Church Calendar of Ioane Zosime⁴¹.

In Nubia, there are also churches dedicated to some of the saints included in this thesis, which are outside the scope of the thesis but demonstrate how widely these saints were known. There is one church dedicated to Kollouthos and three dedicated to each of Menas and Merkourios⁴². This indicates that there may have been more shrines in Egypt than those which have been excavated, especially in along the floodplain and thus where archaeology would be less well preserved than in the desert.

2.1.2: The Location and Excavation of the Shrines at Antinoopolis, Abu Mina, and Deir el-Bahari

The city of Antinoopolis was founded by Hadrian to honour the deceased Antinous. It is in Upper Egypt in the modern governate of Minya⁴³. In the Byzantine and early Islamic periods, Antinoopolis was the capital of the Thebaid⁴⁴. It was discovered in 1965 and originally excavated by Manfredo Manfredi, with the church of Kollouthos excavated by Sergio Donadoni in 1966⁴⁵. The site has been excavated since 2008 by a team from the Istituto Papirologico 'G. Vitelli', led by Guido Bastianini and Rosario Pintaudi. Documentary evidence on parchment and ostraca in Greek and Coptic was found at the church and 'le matériel copte d'Antinoé est particulièrement abondant et varié'⁴⁶. The textual evidence includes literary texts, such as biblical excerpts, and documentary texts like funerary inscriptions and oracular tickets⁴⁷. The oracular tickets and funerary inscriptions address Kollouthos by name, indicating that the church was dedicated to him⁴⁸. The church and shrine are within a complex site located in the northern necropolis⁴⁹. The

³⁹ See Chapter 1: 2.7; Cassis, M. 2002: 66; Payne, R. 2011: 90, 105-6.

⁴⁰ Payne 2011: 90, 92.

⁴¹ See Chapter 1: 2.7; Garrite, G. 1958: 381, 396, 397.

⁴² Youssef, Y. N. 2013: 80.

⁴³ Google a (n.d.).

⁴⁴ Atiya 1991: I, 144; Hidding 2020: 68.

⁴⁵ Grossmann 2014: 241; Grossmann, P. 2010b: 165.

⁴⁶ Delattre, A. 2010: 171.

⁴⁷ Delattre 2010: 171-2; Delattre, A. 2008: 131.

⁴⁸ Delattre 2008: 131, 152-3; Delattre, A. 2014: 356; E01309; E01310.

⁴⁹ Grossmann, P. 2008: I, 47.

use of a part of the city that did not contain domestic dwellings suggests that the shrine was seen as an environment where the dead intersected with the living⁵⁰.

There is another site, including a basilica (designated as D3), within the city⁵¹. Peter Grossmann considers this a healing complex due to the presence of what he has interpreted as ‘incubation rooms’ based on their equal sizes along the northern wall of the atrium and the presence of *klines* (‘long and broad resting beds’) in some of them and in the naos of the church⁵². However, he has interpreted spaces in other sites as being for incubation without such features being present⁵³. The lack of consistency in whether these *klines* are within the rooms, as well as their placement in the naos, suggests that they were not used specifically, or exclusively, for incubation⁵⁴.

Grossmann supposes that D3 was associated with Kollouthos because he is the only healing saint associated with Antinoopolis, although there is no evidence to support his suggestion⁵⁵. As only the city is referred to in the saint’s hagiography, it is unclear whether one or both sites were dedicated to him. However, the documentary evidence and oracle tickets at the shrine in the necropolis clearly indicate that that site was definitely dedicated to the saint Kollouthos⁵⁶. No such evidence has been found at the basilica, although neither funerary inscriptions nor oracle tickets are to be expected in a city’s main basilica⁵⁷. It may be that documentary evidence has not survived, but given the amount at the shrine on the outskirts one might have expected to find something. In addition, the only archaeological evidence of both sites being dedicated to Kollouthos identified by Grossmann is the base of an Aswan Group White platter, which is similar to a fragment found in the church⁵⁸. As these finds are limited, they cannot reliably support the idea that the basilica was dedicated to Kollouthos. If it were, then it may have been a rival shrine to that on the outskirts, which would explain why it is not mentioned in the surviving hagiography. However, in the absence of any clear indication, the basilica may have been dedicated to a different saint.

The basilica could have been dedicated to any of a variety of saints, including Mark the Evangelist, Julian and Basilissa, and Justus⁵⁹. A Greek document from Antinoopolis concerning the settlement of a family dispute and dated to the mid-sixth century mentions Mark the

⁵⁰ Hidding 2020: 68; Krueger, D. 2010: 6.

⁵¹ Grossmann 2014: II, 272-3.

⁵² Grossmann, P. 2011: 82; Grossmann 2010b: 184, 192.

⁵³ Grossmann, P. 1998: 288; Grossmann 2014: II, 242.

⁵⁴ Grossmann 2014: II, 260.

⁵⁵ Grossmann 2014: II, 273.

⁵⁶ E01148; Delattre 2010: 171; Delattre 2014: 355; Hidding 2020: 67.

⁵⁷ Grossmann 2014: II, 273; Grossmann 2010b: 184-93.

⁵⁸ Grossmann 2011: 85.

⁵⁹ E04327; E07135; S01172.

Evangelist⁶⁰. While there were churches dedicated to Mark across Egypt, if the basilica was not dedicated to Kollouthos, then it is more likely to have been dedicated to Julian and Basilissa because their martyrdom is set in Antinoopolis and claims that their relics are kept in a cathedral there, which may refer to the basilica⁶¹. Finally, Justus is another martyr saint associated with Antinoopolis, although all the lists of churches, administrative documents, and an amulet which name him have, where provenanced, been found in Oxyrhynchus, making it difficult to associate the basilica with him⁶². As the church complex on the outskirts of Antinoopolis is the only site clearly associated with Kollouthos, the basilica will not be discussed in this thesis.

While over fifty inscriptions referring to Menas have been found across Egypt, such as in Polydeukia, Oxyrhynchus, and the Thebaid, including documents like contracts and objects like lamps, Abu Mina is the cult site referred to in his hagiography⁶³. It is near to Mareotis (Arabic Maryût), a lake about 45km south-west of Alexandria⁶⁴. It has been excavated by the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI) in Cairo since 1905 and much discussion even now is based upon the earliest work undertaken by Carl Maria Kaufmann⁶⁵.

In order to understand the geographical and cultural milieu in which Abu Mina existed compared to the other shrines, it is necessary to digress and discuss its neighbour Abu Qir. As Menas was celebrated in many languages and regions and Abu Mina is located close to Alexandria rather than further south like the shrines of Kollouthos and Phoibammon, Menas' shrine and hagiography existed in a somewhat different cultural context⁶⁶. Abu Mina is about 65km south-west of Abu Qir, the shrine of the saints Cyrus and John, so pilgrims may have visited both sites during the same journey⁶⁷. The modern port of Abu Qir is 2km west of the ancient site⁶⁸. Unlike at Abu Mina, there limited material remains at Abu Qir, although objects like jewellery have been found⁶⁹. Much of the 'Magnus Portus' of Alexandria is now underwater and covered by the twentieth-century breakwaters and military buildings on Cape Silsileh in the eastern harbour⁷⁰. The harbour was submerged following various natural phenomena, including the earthquake that destroyed the Pharos lighthouse and silting up of the Canopic branch of the Nile. The area has been explored since the eighteenth century, with many maps and theories

⁶⁰ P.Lond 5 1708, lines 165-6; Griggs, C. W. 1990 17, 19-20; Davis, S. J. 2004: 3; Cannuyer, C. 2001: 16; Watterson, B. 1988: 23.

⁶¹ Evetts and Butler 1895: 366; Alwis, A. P. 2011: 3, 212; E07135; Halkin, F. 1980: 295-6.

⁶² S01172.

⁶³ Papaconstantinou 2001: 147-8.

⁶⁴ Bangert, S. 2007: 27; Grossmann 1998: 281.

⁶⁵ Grossmann, P. 2007: 45-6; Bangert 2007: 27; Grossmann 2015: 1; Grossmann 1998: 282.

⁶⁶ See Chapter 1: 2.3.

⁶⁷ Google c (n.d.); Montserrat, D. 1998: 257.

⁶⁸ Goddio, F. 2021a.

⁶⁹ Breccia, E. 1914: 136-9; Montserrat 1998: 260; Goddio, F. and Masson-Berghoff, A. 2016: 15, 26.

⁷⁰ Goddio, F. 1998: 12.

about the submergence of the archaeological sites being produced, although most of these are inaccurate due to an earlier overreliance on textual evidence⁷¹. The excavation of Albert Daninos in 1917 seems not to have been published⁷². Abu Qir was explored by Prince Omar Toussoun in 1933 with many of his findings being confirmed by recent excavations done by the Institut Européen d'Archéologie Sous-Marine (IEASM)⁷³. In 1961, a colossal statue was discovered near to the Qait-Bey fort, and the subsequent survey report published in 1975 by UNESCO concluded that there was a wealth of unexplored archaeology⁷⁴. Underwater excavations by the IEASM led by Franck Goddio and supported by the Egyptian Department of Underwater Archaeology since 1992 have accurately mapped the Magnus Portus of Alexandria and produced a topography of the submerged area⁷⁵. Since 1996, the same is being done for Abu Qir⁷⁶.

Unlike Menas, all Cyrus and John's surviving hagiography is preserved in Greek⁷⁷. Most of this is Sophronius' account which was composed between 610 and 614 CE and records seventy healing miracles at Abu Qir, including Sophronius himself being cured of an eye disease⁷⁸. Like Kollouthos, Cyrus and John were 'silverless' saints who healed supplicants without requesting payment⁷⁹. The miracles are organised according to the place of origin of the supplicants, ranging from Alexandria to Constantinople, suggesting that Sophronius was trying to convey the shrine's popularity⁸⁰. There are also three fragmentary homilies attributed to Cyril of Alexandria recounting the translation of the saints' relics from Alexandria to the Monastery of Metanoia, near to Abu Qir, and another, 'little-known' anonymous miracle collection set in the 630s⁸¹. This other miracle collection contains five miracles and is found in folios 366v-369v of a manuscript kept on Mount Athos⁸². The manuscript is a menologium and the date has been debated as being between the tenth and twelfth centuries⁸³. This miracle collection is notable because it refers to Cyrus of Phasis positively, whereas Sophronius was a doctrinal rival of Cyrus⁸⁴. Phil Booth has proposed that this lesser-known miracle collection represents an attempt

⁷¹ Goddio and Masson-Berghoff 2016: 17, 20, 30-1; Goddio, F. 2021b; Goddio, F. 2021c; Goddio, F. 2007: 3, 8; Goddio, F. and Bernard, A. 2004: 18; Goddio 1998: ix; Vrettos, T. 2001: 216-17; Haas, C. 1997: 348.

⁷² Breccia 1914: 139; Montserrat 1998: 257-8.

⁷³ Goddio 2007: 5; Goddio 2021a; Goddio and Masson-Berghoff 2016: 17-18, 25; Stanley, J.-D., Warne, A. G. and Schnepp, G. 2004: 920.

⁷⁴ Goddio and Bernard 2004: 21.

⁷⁵ Goddio 2021b; Goddio 1998: 1; Goddio 2021c; Goddio 2007: 1; Goddio and Masson-Berghoff 2016: 17-18.

⁷⁶ Goddio 2021a; Goddio 2021c; Goddio 2007: 1; Goddio and Masson-Berghoff 2016: 17-18, 27.

⁷⁷ See Chapter 1: 2.3; Gascou, J. 2006: 10-11; S00406.

⁷⁸ S00406; Booth, P. 2013: 68-9; Neil, B. 2021: 93.

⁷⁹ Meinardus, O. F. A. 1971: 372; Meinardus, O. F. A. 2002: 40.

⁸⁰ Booth 2013: 69.

⁸¹ E03563; Booth, P. 2016: 509.

⁸² Déroche, V. 2012: 199-200. Déroche 2012: 199-200; Booth 2016: 509.

⁸³ Déroche 2012: 200.

⁸⁴ Booth 2016: 509.

to disassociate the cult of Cyrus and John with Sophronius. This may have been done at Cyril's behest, as the miracle collection dates to about twenty years after Sophronius' work, when Sophronius was the Patriarch of Jerusalem and Cyril was the Patriarch of Alexandria, with the content set early in their reigns⁸⁵. This explanation is more likely than the lesser-known miracle collection being composed solely because Sophronius was a patriarch outside Egypt and the cult site of Abu Qir was in Egypt, as saints were venerated across regions and their hagiography written or copied in various languages, notably that of Menas⁸⁶.

The proximity of Abu Mina and Abu Qir would be justification for them to have a rivalry, based on Sophronius' presentation of the shrine of Cyrus and John as Chalcedonian and the fact that Abu Mina seems to have been anti-Chalcedonian⁸⁷. However, it is too much for Dominic Montserrat to have suggested only from the difference in the amount of and language of textual evidence that there was a conscious effort at Abu Mina to attract so many pilgrims that the shrine of Cyrus and John ran out of money, as it is unlikely that the denomination of visitors was checked or that it affected which shrines they chose to visit⁸⁸. That being said, while the hagiography of Menas preserved in Coptic does not mention Abu Qir, Sophronius' account of the miracles of Cyrus and John mentions Abu Mina once, Menas once, and includes three supplicants called Menas from Alexandria⁸⁹. The claim that supplicants would visit Abu Qir rather than Abu Mina even if they were named after Menas may suggest a rivalry or a confessional divide, especially in the fifty-first miracle of Cyrus and John prior to which Menas failed to heal a dying supplicant⁹⁰. It is possible that the sites had economic reasons to be rivals given their proximity. However, there is no further evidence of rivalry.

This digression has established the geographical and cultural milieu in which Abu Mina existed, as involving closer interaction with other shrines and denominations of Christianity than the shrines of Kollouthos and Phoibammon.

The monastery at Deir el-Bahari has a long excavation history, dating back to Giovanni Belzoni in 1817 and later being undertaken by Auguste Mariette in the 1850s and 1860s, to name examples⁹¹. In 1894/5, the Egypt Exploration Fund (now Egypt Exploration Society) conducted excavations under Édouard Naville on the 18th Dynasty mortuary temple of Hatshepsut, the upper levels of which had been reused for the Monastery of Phoibammon⁹². This predated

⁸⁵ Booth 2016: 509, 511.

⁸⁶ See Chapter 1: 2.3.

⁸⁷ Booth 2013: 74-5.

⁸⁸ Montserrat 1998: 263-4.

⁸⁹ E07665; E07696; E06044; E06259; E07549.

⁹⁰ E07696.

⁹¹ Godlewski 1986: 14, 16-17; Krueger, F. 2020: 150.

⁹² Godlewski 1986: 17, 21.

scholarly interest in Christian Egypt, so the monastery was destroyed to access the Pharaonic temple, and without the process being documented. From 1977-9, a Polish-Egyptian conservation mission from the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology in Cairo documented the inscriptions, graffiti, and images from the monastery and used photographs and texts from British archives to reconstruct it⁹³. It is therefore possible to get an overall idea of the appearance of the monastery, but the function of spaces within it can only be hypothetical. As a result, the archaeological evidence pertaining to Phoibammon is less reliable and less useful than that of Kollouthos and Menas.

2.1.3: The History and Layout of the Shrines at Antinoopolis, Abu Mina, and Deir el-Bahari

The most thorough presentation of the church complex of Kollouthos has been given by Grossmann⁹⁴. However, he relies heavily on texts for his chronology rather than on the archaeology and treats the texts as more accurate than they probably are, so his theories cannot be taken as conclusive. Likewise, he makes many suggestions about the purposes or associations of archaeological sites based on limited or contestable evidence. Therefore, much of the layout of the church complex is speculative.

Prior to the excavation of the church, at the beginning of the twentieth century Albert Gayet identified what he called a ‘temple of Isis’ based on the rests of some large columns, although these are now considered to be parts of a pylon or triumphal arch⁹⁵. However, there is no further indication that there was a pagan cult at the site, so it seems that the cult of Kollouthos did not usurp an older one. A layer of earth was put between the walls of the crypt, apparently to raise the ground, and, as that was done during the construction of the building, the potsherds within it date the earliest occupancy of the site to the fifth century CE⁹⁶. This means that the site post-dates the supposed execution of Kollouthos by at least a century⁹⁷. The church has been dated to the sixth century and, following Donadoni’s excavation, in October 2010 it and the team’s repairs to the crypt were found to have been damaged by looters⁹⁸.

The church is in the area designated C₁ in the north of the necropolis, considered to be the original area of the site⁹⁹. It was smaller than the neighbouring area A in the south, which has

⁹³ Godlewski 1986: 7, 20.

⁹⁴ Grossmann 2014: II, 241; Grossmann 2011: 81; Grossmann 2010b: 183; Grossmann, P. 2010c: 165.

⁹⁵ Gayet, A. 1902: 11; Grossmann 2010c: 165.

⁹⁶ Grossmann 2010c: 167; Hidding 2020: 92.

⁹⁷ See Chapter 1: 3.2.2; Crum, W. E. 1929: 325; Grossmann 2014: II, 268.

⁹⁸ Grossmann 2014: II, 269; Grossmann 2010c: 165.

⁹⁹ Grossmann 2014: II, 244, 268.

received limited excavation, but was enlarged on its western and south-western sides into the area C₂ and to the south to include further structures and a courtyard¹⁰⁰. The area C₂ borders to the west the area D. South of area D, area B borders the west of area A.

Grossmann proposes that the church in area C₁ was originally a burial chapel, based on the presence of the earlier crypt¹⁰¹. However, as he points out, this would not have been a chapel for regular liturgical services but for the celebration of the deceased and festival days, and so perhaps would not lend itself to becoming a cult centre¹⁰². Nevertheless, as the site did become a cult centre, that may have developed from or repurposed the burial chapel, or it was not a burial chapel in the first place. However, as supposed martyrs' tombs were places to celebrate the deceased, it would make sense for a burial chapel to become a cult centre¹⁰³. This idea is more plausible than Grossmann's suggestion that relics of Kollouthos caused 'unexpected miracles' and inspired the establishment of the cult, which is a narrative device in some hagiography¹⁰⁴.

The site seems to have been occupied without interruption until at least the Arab conquest, as a final boundary wall was constructed around the northern necropolis on its northern and eastern sides that may be of a later date¹⁰⁵.

In discussing Abu Mina, again there will be a digression discussing Abu Qir in order to further establish the geographical and cultural milieu of the shrines as distinct from that of the shrines dedicated to Kollouthos and Phoibammon. The origin of the shrine of Cyrus and John has been debated, leading to an understanding of Sophronius' account as 'polemical claims' to promote Abu Qir and place it within a doctrinally Chalcedonian setting¹⁰⁶. Montserrat proposed that Abu Qir 'presents a striking continuum of religious usage' as a place of healing and pilgrimage because there was a cult of Isis there during the Roman period, when Abu Qir was called Menouthis¹⁰⁷. This cult is referenced in the prologue of Sophronius' miracle collection, in which he claims that the relics of Cyrus and John were moved there by Cyril to prevent the use of the pagan cult for healing, which resulted in its submergence beneath the sea¹⁰⁸. Likewise, the same claim is made in the homilies attributed to Cyril¹⁰⁹. There are sculptures which evidence this cult, which are now held in the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria¹¹⁰. As such, Montserrat

¹⁰⁰ Grossmann 2014: II, 244-5.

¹⁰¹ Grossmann 2014: II, 268.

¹⁰² Muyser, J. 1937: 96; Lucius, P. E. and Anrich, G. 1904: 318; Kötting, B. 1965: 24; Krause, M. 1998: 115; Grossmann 2014: II, 268.

¹⁰³ Lucius and Anrich 1904: 318; Krueger 2010: 6.

¹⁰⁴ Wiśniewski, R. 2019: 27-8; Grossmann 2014: II, 275; Nau, F. 1903: 295.

¹⁰⁵ Grossmann 2014: II, 246.

¹⁰⁶ Booth 2013: 69-70.

¹⁰⁷ Montserrat 1998: 259; Goddio 2007: 3; Goddio and Masson-Berghoff 2016: 26.

¹⁰⁸ Gascou, J. 2007: 243; Booth 2013: 69; Booth, P. 2020: 28; Lampada, D. 2015: 54, 56.

¹⁰⁹ E03563; Booth 2013: 69.

¹¹⁰ Breccia 1914: 138, 166.

observed that the cult of Isis survived the destruction of other local pagan shrines, such as that of Serapis at Canopus, in the late fourth century¹¹¹. He may have been correct that the site retained its healing function, however he did not dwell on his other proposal that Isis of Menouthis was an oracle, based on the Isiac aretology found at Oxyrhynchus (P.Oxy. XI 1380.63) and its epithet of Isis of Menouthis being ‘truthful’¹¹². It is possible that in the site becoming Christianised the oracle was disbanded, or at least not recorded in the surviving hagiography, given that some saints’ shrines did have oracles¹¹³. However, given that all that supports Montserrat’s suggestion is an epithet, it remains uncertain whether this cult of Isis did function as an oracle. This digression has continued the contextualisation of Abu Mina by relating it to its neighbour Abu Qir and establishing the geographical and cultural milieu in which the shrine operated.

Little is known about the foundation of Abu Mina. The most thorough outline of the site is by Peter Grossmann, which presents the same issues as his work on the shrine of Kollouthos¹¹⁴. That being said, his suggestions of the layout and function of some spaces are more secure because the site has been studied by a number of scholars¹¹⁵.

Three structures within the boundary wall have been identified as churches, partly due to the site following ‘the principles of classical town planning’¹¹⁶. The first structure is a small church that Grossmann claims to have been built above the saint’s tomb and dates to the fifth century, to which a baptistry was added on the west side and a structure termed ‘the Great Basilica’ to the east¹¹⁷. The identification of the baptistry seems accurate because there is a *piscina* in the floor and a water supply from a tank in the north-west¹¹⁸. The second structure that has been identified as a church replaced the first. It is referred to as ‘the Martyr Church’ and has been dated to the reign of Justinian in the sixth century. Between the Martyr Church and the Great Basilica was a narthex, which has stairs into the crypt to the north¹¹⁹. Grossmann assumes that the north stairs are for ascending out of the crypt and another set of stairs at the east are for descending into it¹²⁰. The identification of the crypt seems certain based on its location relative to the other structures, and it seems to have been expanded as the site grew¹²¹.

¹¹¹ Goddio and Masson-Berghoff 2016: 26-7; Montserrat 1998: 258.

¹¹² Stadler, M. A. 2017: 234-5, 237; Heyob, S. K. 1975: 48; Montserrat 1998: 258.

¹¹³ Grossmann 2014: II, 280.

¹¹⁴ Grossmann 1998: 281-302.

¹¹⁵ See. 2.1.2; Abdel-Aziz Negm, M. 1993: 129; Ward-Perkins, J. B. 1949: 37; Kaufmann, C. M. 1910a: 59, 62, 76, 84, 103.

¹¹⁶ Grossmann 1998: 287.

¹¹⁷ Grossmann 1998: 283.

¹¹⁸ Grossmann 1998: 284.

¹¹⁹ Grossmann 1998: 286.

¹²⁰ Grossmann, P. 1989: 142.

¹²¹ Ward-Perkins 1949: 39.

Two structures outside the boundary wall have also been identified as churches: the North Basilica and the East Church. Grossmann proposes that the North Basilica was for miaphysite visitors based on it having a tripartite sanctuary, which is usual for Egyptian churches but not seen elsewhere at Abu Mina¹²². He further justifies his proposal by the church being outside the fortification wall, based on the fact that in Rome following the Arian controversy, ‘the losing parties’ were relegated to the suburbs¹²³. However, the occupation of Abu Mina post-dates this by at least two centuries and there is no reason to assume that the sanctuary had a different structure for doctrinal reasons. The structure could have been because of the period that the sanctuary was constructed or because it had a particular use. The North Basilica seems to have been neighboured by a small chapel, beneath which is a burial chamber. Mohamed Abdel-Aziz Negm dated this chapel to the end of the seventh century or later, based on a *kubrus* being present before the building was plastered¹²⁴. Grossmann claims that the East Church is surrounded by ‘small monks’ hermitages’¹²⁵. The uniformity of these structures supports his idea, but equally they could have been accommodation for workers or for incubation.

There is a structure beside the Great Basilica described by Grossmann as ‘palace-like’, with a small atrium to the north and a reception hall to the south and on both sides symmetrically arranged chambers¹²⁶. Even though he has not identified any private rooms, he claims that this was the home of the *begoumenos*. He also claims that this building was accessible only via the church and thus must have held private liturgical ceremonies, which is more likely¹²⁷. Along the northern and eastern sides of the Great Basilica is a small court with a building at one end, which Grossmann has identified as the accommodation of the staff known as *philoponoï*, based on its similarities to the spaces that he has interpreted as monk cells¹²⁸. This is more likely than his claim about the ‘palace-like’ building, because this building is divided into two-room spaces which may have functioned as accommodation.

The surrounding area grew into a town¹²⁹. The north-south street was colonnaded, and has therefore been identified as the *embolus* (main approach) to the churches. The road leads into the ‘Pilgrims’ Court’, which was surrounded with colonnaded porticos, with the churches and baptistry to the south and *xenodochia* (rest houses) to the north¹³⁰. Further out from the

¹²² Grossmann 1998: 295-6.

¹²³ Grossmann 1998: 295-6.

¹²⁴ Abdel-Aziz Negm 1993: 136-7.

¹²⁵ Grossmann 1998: 296.

¹²⁶ Grossmann 1998: 290-1; Renberg, G. H. 2016: II, 769-71.

¹²⁷ Grossmann 1998: 291.

¹²⁸ Grossmann 1998: 291; Wipszycka, E. 1970: 512.

¹²⁹ Krueger 2010: 9; Grossmann 1998: 286.

¹³⁰ Grossmann 1998: 287; Jensen, R. M. 2020: 150-1.

ecclesiastical area are houses, suggesting that this was where residents lived and in which Grossmann has identified workshops based on the finds of wine presses and pottery kilns¹³¹. While Tom Devonshire Jones is right that pilgrimage was a source of pressure on the places which pilgrims visited, it could also be economically beneficial, as the town that developed at Abu Mina illustrates how pilgrimage could support shrines as well as other businesses¹³². There are also burial sites, which Grossmann uses to suggest that the entire site was viewed as the burial place of the saint because it was forbidden to bury the dead within the boundaries of towns. However, there is also a cemetery to the south containing family tombs, including the remains of children, which may indicate that different cemeteries served different groups or were used at different times¹³³. There was also a northern cemetery, although that has been heavily disturbed by over-laying modern tombs¹³⁴.

In the north are two public baths built in the ‘style of Roman bath buildings’¹³⁵. Grossmann suggests that, because they are within the ecclesiastical area, they were only used on religious occasions, but it seems that no other bathhouses have been identified. A bathhouse was found in the 1985/6 season by Abdel-Aziz Negm and dated to the third or fourth century based on pottery finds¹³⁶. It is unclear whether this is one of the baths discussed by Grossmann or a different one.

Like the foundation of Abu Mina, little is known about its end. James Drescher theorised that the site fell out of use following the Arab conquest because ‘the number of pilgrims must have steadily dwindled’, and Grossmann reports that the buildings in the town dated to the sixth century exhibit evidence of having been destroyed by fire during the Persian and Arab invasions in the seventh century¹³⁷. As Grossmann relies on textual rather than archaeological evidence and there is no further evidence of violence, as, for example, he admits that no human remains have been discovered, it is possible that the site was abandoned earlier¹³⁸. It is more plausible that the site declined through a combination of reasons. Alexandria’s use as a port decreased through the eighth and ninth centuries due to increased naval conflict in the Mediterranean; and the focal point of trade moved to Fustat under the Tulunid Dynasty; and, because of environmental factors, primarily the rising sea level and subsiding coastline, the Canopic branch of the Nile

¹³¹ Grossmann 1998: 293.

¹³² Devonshire Jones, T., Murray, L., and Murray P. 2013: 455-6.

¹³³ Kaufmann, C. M. and Falls, J. C. E. 1906: II, 102-3.

¹³⁴ Kaufmann and Falls 1906: II, 97; Grossmann 1998: 293.

¹³⁵ Grossmann 1998: 292.

¹³⁶ Abdel-Aziz Negm, M. and Kosciuk, J. 1990: 442, 445.

¹³⁷ Drescher 1946: xxxi; Grossmann 1998: 296; Altheim-Stiehl, R. 1992: 88-9; Sijpesteijn, P. M. 2007: 437.

¹³⁸ Grossmann 1998: 297.

silted up which cut Alexandria off from Egypt's waterways¹³⁹. There also seems to have been more construction at the site in the eighth century, with the Martyr Church being rebuilt¹⁴⁰. The site then seems to have deteriorated and been resettled once more during the Fatimid Dynasty, but by the fourteenth century no longer be occupied. Grossmann states that a 'text of some reliability' from the fourteenth century records the movement of Menas' relics from Abu Mina to the church of Saint Menas in Cairo¹⁴¹. It is unlikely that the saint's relics were ever in Abu Mina, given that the site significantly post-dates his supposed execution and the uncertainty over whether the saint existed¹⁴². It is even less likely that they would have been found following several phases of construction and destruction. The text mentioned by Grossmann is probably an attempt to legitimise the church in Cairo.

Finally, the bishop Abraham of Hermonthis (Armant in Coptic) is believed to have founded the Monastery of Phoibammon at Deir el-Bahari while Damian was the archbishop of Alexandria in the sixth century¹⁴³. Unlike some contemporary bishops, Abraham is not named in the Synaxarium or the *History of the Patriarchs*¹⁴⁴. However, his life has been reconstructed by Martin Krause based on the documentary evidence from the archive at the monastery, which is approximate because it uses indiction cycles rather than an 'absolute scale'¹⁴⁵. There are over 1,300 ostraca and some papyri, with most still unpublished¹⁴⁶. Many mention Abraham by name or are addressed to or from him. Abraham can be associated with a *lašane* (village official) of Djeme called Peter son of Palou, who witnessed a solar eclipse on the 14 of Phamenoth (10 of March) of the fourth indiction, which has been dated reliably to 601 CE based on the Coptic calendar, indictions, and records of total eclipses whose path of totality passed near mid-Egypt¹⁴⁷. Krause suggested the following chronology for Abraham's life: birth in the 540s, consecration as a bishop in the 590s, and death in the 610s¹⁴⁸. Renate Dekker has pointed out that Abraham is last attested in 619 and argues that he died in 621 during the Persian occupation¹⁴⁹. Abraham also left a will, which is preserved in Greek on papyrus and has been translated into modern languages a number of times and was most recently studied by Esther Garel¹⁵⁰. He may have also

¹³⁹ Stanley et al. 2004: 922, 923, 926, 928; Chica, C. 2016: 135; Haas 1997: 347-8; Vrettos 2001: 216-17; Haas 1997: 347-8; Goddio 2007: 8.

¹⁴⁰ Grossmann 1989: 173-82.

¹⁴¹ Grossmann 1998: 298; Sadek El Gendi, S. 2017: 24.

¹⁴² See Chapter 1: 3.1.2.

¹⁴³ Booth, P. 2018: 22; Papaconstantinou 2002b: 511; Dekker, R. 2017: 80; O'Connell, E. R. 2006: 122-3.

¹⁴⁴ Booth 2018: 44.

¹⁴⁵ Booth 2018: 45-6; Godlewski 1986: 64; Dekker 2017: 80; Krause, M. 1969: 59.

¹⁴⁶ O'Connell 2006: 124, 127-8; Booth 2018: 46.

¹⁴⁷ Crum, W. E. 1939 148a; Allen, E. B. 1947: 268-9; Booth 2018: 46; Stern, L. 1878: 12; Gilmore, G. and Ray, J. 2006: 190-1.

¹⁴⁸ Booth 2018: 47; Krause 1969: 59.

¹⁴⁹ Dekker, R. 2016: 26-8.

¹⁵⁰ Booth 2018: 44; Krause 1969: 58-9; Garel 2020: 9-10.

had a will written in Coptic, as suggested by Ewa Wipszycka's translation of 'that it be also written in Greek words'¹⁵¹.

There is some debate over whether Abraham founded the monastery. The key documents are *P. KRU* 105 and *O.Crum* Ad. 59 (the latter re-edited in 2013 by Tonio Sebastian Richter as *O.Lips.Copt I* 10)¹⁵². The former is an incomplete Coptic deed in which a village (the name is not preserved, but presumably Djeme) recognises the right of the founders of the monastery to choose their leader¹⁵³. The latter is a letter addressed to the patriarch Damian and identified as being from Abraham based on its provenance and the greeting and blessing formulae¹⁵⁴. This would make Abraham and his successors the beneficiaries of *P. KRU* 105. However, *P. KRU* 105 does not mention Abraham by name¹⁵⁵. Dekker argues and Krause argued that Abraham must have been a beneficiary, as he was the monastery's first abbot¹⁵⁶. Another issue with *P. KRU* 105 is that the second-person plural is used throughout¹⁵⁷. Dekker's argument that all the monks who founded the monastery are the intended beneficiaries is compelling, as presumably Abraham would have had subordinates¹⁵⁸. Therefore, it is most likely that Abraham was the founder as there are logical explanations for the language in *P. KRU* 105.

Further, there has long been a debate in scholarship over whether there was one or two Monasteries of Phoibammon. Based on inscriptions in the desert between Djeme and the pagarchy capital Hermonthis that name the *topos* of Phoibammon, Charles Bachatly suggested that a monastery founded in the fourth century in the mountain of Hermonthis was dedicated to Phoibammon and was part of the Pachomian federation, with no other monastery in the mountain having been explored before or since his excavation¹⁵⁹. Krause argued that the fourth century was too early, that there is no evidence that either the monastery at Hermonthis or the one at Deir el-Bahari were part of the Pachomian federation, and that documentary texts instead indicate that there were two monasteries: That the one in the mountain of Hermonthis was earlier and, when it was abandoned in the sixth century, the one at Deir el-Bahari was founded¹⁶⁰. Frederic Krueger supports Krause's arguments by saying that no Monastery of Phoibammon which was part of the Pachomian federation is known¹⁶¹. Additionally, for there to be a fully-

¹⁵¹ Dekker 2017: 80; Wipszycka, E. 2015. 120, no. 22.

¹⁵² Garel 2020: 54; Krueger 2020: 152.

¹⁵³ Garel 2020: 54.

¹⁵⁴ Dekker 2017: 81; Krause, M. 1956: I, 29-31.

¹⁵⁵ Wipszycka, E. 2009: 237-8.

¹⁵⁶ Dekker 2017: 82; Garel 2020: 55; *P. KRU* 65, line 35.

¹⁵⁷ MacCoull, L. S. B. 2010: 449; Dekker 2017: 172.

¹⁵⁸ Dekker 2017: 82.

¹⁵⁹ Krueger 2020: 150-1.

¹⁶⁰ Krueger 2020: 151-2.

¹⁶¹ Krueger 2020: 152.

fledged monastery so early would be strange, following Ramez Boutros' and Christian Décobert's three phases of monastic occupation, as the first phase ('la christianisation') begins in the fourth century and the disappearance or relocation of monasteries is what characterises the second phase ('les mutations'), beginning in the sixth century¹⁶². The monastery at Hermonthis has been dated using ceramics to the fourth to sixth centuries, so the theory of relocation is plausible. It has been suggested that the move happened because of the popular ancient cults and sites that existed on the Theban West Bank, which would be similar to the suggestion for why Abu Qir was established as the cult site of Cyrus and John, but there is no evidence to support the idea¹⁶³. In that case, then the letter in *O.Crum* Ad. 59 concerns the move from Hermonthis to Deir el-Bahari, which is plausible as in it Abraham expresses regret at abandoning his former home, presumably the first Monastery of Phoibammon¹⁶⁴. As Krueger points out, the relocation of the monastery does not mean that the site in the mountain of Hermonthis was abandoned completely, especially as the neighbouring Topos of Ezekiel was still being visited in the eleventh century and pilgrims' inscriptions are found at the Monastery of Phoibammon at Deir el-Bahari which date to the tenth to thirteenth centuries, long after it was abandoned¹⁶⁵.

There is less to say about the layout of the Monastery of Phoibammon than there is about the sites dedicated to Kollouthos and Menas, given the limited archaeology that remains¹⁶⁶. All of what can be said about the functions of the rooms at the Monastery of Phoibammon is speculation and scholarship has been limited¹⁶⁷. Based on sketches made and photographs taken by Western travellers, Włodzimierz Godlewski proposed that the episcopal residence and the chancellery were in the northernmost part of the upper terrace of the Pharaonic temple, above the chapel of the Nocturnal Sun¹⁶⁸. Godlewski supported this with a division of the space into two recorded by Robert Hay, which was not evident while he was at the site¹⁶⁹. In one part of the space, Godlewski observed the presence of ostraca relating to Abraham and his successor Viktor, and the presence of a wooden box containing papyri that included testaments, donation documents, and economic documents. In the other, he observed that the space was isolated from the rest of the monastery and held a dominant position above the site, so may have been Abraham's residence¹⁷⁰. He further supported this with the proximity of the monastery's archive,

¹⁶² Boutros, R. W. and Décobert, C. 2000: 78, 79, 86.

¹⁶³ Boutros and Decobert 2000: 89; see 2.1.3.

¹⁶⁴ Krueger 2020: 168; Garel 2020: 59-60.

¹⁶⁵ Krueger 2020: 154.

¹⁶⁶ See 2.1.2.

¹⁶⁷ Godlewski 1986: 32-3, Pl. I; Papaconstantinou, A. 2002a: 87-9; Schenke 2016: 497.

¹⁶⁸ Dekker 2017: 81; Godlewski 1986: 46, 64-5.

¹⁶⁹ Godlewski 1986: 46.

¹⁷⁰ Godlewski 1986: 46, 65.

although, given that the site remained occupied after Abraham's death and the monastery was destroyed without being documented, this may not be where Abraham originally established the archive¹⁷¹. There is therefore some evidence that the chancellery was located here, although there is less evidence for the abbot's residence as that is based solely on the relationships between spaces by the time that Godlewski was excavating it.

Finally, the Monastery of Phoibammon at Deir el-Bahari and Djeme were both abandoned at the end of the eighth century, and this has never been thoroughly explored¹⁷². The eighth century forms the end of the second ('les mutations') and beginning of the third ('les survivances') phases of monastic occupation delineated by Boutros and Décobert¹⁷³. Boutros and Décobert suggest that the abandonment of monasteries during the eighth century was because of the Arab conquest leading to increased financial pressure upon and violence towards such communities, especially during the insurrections in Upper Egypt of the 780s, although the increasing Islamisation of Egypt or change of political and economic actors in the country could have simply gradually led to fewer Christian recruits and patrons for the monastery¹⁷⁴. Nonetheless, the site was occupied for a similar duration and over similar dates to the other two, so perhaps that period was the peak of the use of saints' shrines. It may therefore be fair to suggest that the original versions of the surviving hagiography were composed during this *floruit* of the shrines. While there is no textual or archaeological evidence either way, the hagiography emphasises worship taking place in shrines through its spoken, sermon medium, as well as through the miracles and visions happening in shrines¹⁷⁵.

2.1.4: Evidence of Cult Practices at the Shrines at Antinoopolis, Abu Mina, and Deir el-Bahari

There is a dissonance between what the textual and archaeological evidence suggest about the cult practices that took place at the surviving shrines, although more for some practices than for others. One practice found in both is incubation, whereby supplicants would sleep at a shrine in the hope of experiencing a vision of the saint to whom it was dedicated and a miracle to help them¹⁷⁶. It is still practised in some churches in Egypt today¹⁷⁷. It could be argued that this is a divinatory practice, given that the saint imparts advice while appearing but, as incubation is

¹⁷¹ Godlewski 1986: 58, 65.

¹⁷² Papaconstantinou 2002b: 511; Krueger 2020: 154; Boutros and Décobert 2000: 92, 93.

¹⁷³ Boutros and Décobert 2000: 78.

¹⁷⁴ Boutros and Décobert 2000: 91, 92-3.

¹⁷⁵ E.g. Weidmann, F. 1991a: 3; Weidmann, F. 1991b: 3.

¹⁷⁶ Kazhdan, A. P. 1991: II, 992; Lucius and Anrich 1904: 252-3.

¹⁷⁷ Meinardus 2002: 95.

usually practised to elicit healing, it should be treated separately¹⁷⁸. Gil Renberg's study supports this, as he considers therapeutic and divinatory incubation as distinct types¹⁷⁹. There are many examples of incubation in the hagiography of Kollouthos and fewer for Menas and Phoibammon, indicating the relationship between the occupation that a saint was claimed to have had while alive and the miracles that they performed. Menas and Phoibammon do appear to supplicants incubating at their shrines, but these instances are relatively few when compared to Kollouthos. For example, Menas appears to a would-be rapist from whom he saved a female pilgrim and Phoibammon heals a man¹⁸⁰. So, healing miracles are generally associated with saints claimed to be physicians and protective miracles are generally associated with saints claimed to be soldiers. The choices of individual hagiographers should also be taken into account, as the surviving texts may be only a small reflection of what was presented about each saint. As Kollouthos was claimed to be a physician while alive, the examples of incubation in which he appears include healing injuries, fertility, curses, and also resolving social issues such as a deacon's loss of status¹⁸¹. Menas and Phoibammon, meanwhile, perform protective miracles and not necessarily at their shrines, which confirms that incubation was primarily associated with healing. Examples include Menas' saving of a pilgrim who had been eaten by a crocodile, another who had been murdered and dismembered, and of female pilgrims facing sexual assault, and Phoibammon's pursuit of robbers¹⁸². As well as demonstrating the relationship between occupations and experiences that saints were claimed to have while alive and the posthumous miracles that they perform, this range of miracles also suggests that within the hagiography of Menas there was an acknowledgement of his shrine's visitation by pilgrims instead of locals like the shrine of Kollouthos, and thus that he was responsible for protecting them on their journeys.

According to Grossmann, at Kollouthos' shrine, the four rooms south of the church were used for incubation when the court, which, like the basilica, he identifies as containing *klines*, was full or if the weather was inclement¹⁸³. However, the *klines* could have been outside seating rather than used for sleeping. If the four rooms were used for incubation, then that would show it to be possible for the spaces used for incubation to be separated from the main space of worship, and for them to have been arranged practically to allow for the practice to happen but also to prevent it from interrupting any other practices, such as liturgies, taking place

¹⁷⁸ Wiśniewski 2019: 77; Ritner, R. K. 2008: 215; Frankfurter, D. 2018a: 132; Renberg 2016: I, 6-7, II, 793; Neil 2021: 87, 91.

¹⁷⁹ Renberg 2016: 21.

¹⁸⁰ Drescher 1946: 31-2, 122-3; Verrone 2002: 46-9.

¹⁸¹ Schenke 2013: 188-9, 272-3; Thompson 1993a: 56-8, 76-8; Thompson 1993b: 43-4, 58-60.

¹⁸² Devos, P. 1959: 456, 458, 460; Drescher 1946: 14-17, 30, 112-13, 121-2; Verrone 2002: 50-1.

¹⁸³ Grossmann 2014: II, 242, 278.

in the church. Grossmann also observed that it was possible to lock the rooms from the inside based on a horizontal bore hole found in the doorjamb of Room No. 2, which is the best preserved¹⁸⁴. The ability to lock the door from the inside would support the idea that someone could sleep inside the room. Plus, a drawn composition of fighting soldiers on the north wall of Room No. 2 would suggest that it was not simply used for storage. The composition, while most of its eighteen figures are intricate, is drawn straight onto the wall with no background¹⁸⁵. This indicates that the room was not used formally for liturgy but was a space that people occupied. Grossmann also proposes that supplicants may have incubated in the church provided they paid accordingly, although he bases this on the miracle collection of Saint Artemios of Antioch, for whom there is no evidence of veneration in Egypt¹⁸⁶.

Abu Mina seems to be similar to the shrine of Kollouthos in terms of incubation, albeit on a larger scale due to being visited by pilgrims from all over the Mediterranean and the Levant rather than seemingly being restricted to the local population. There are two kinds of structure which may have housed pilgrims on the route into the site's centre. First are places that Grossmann calls 'hostels', and second is the 'peristyle-house', which Grossmann suggests was for the poor due to its not having separate rooms but instead perhaps sleeping space in the porticoes¹⁸⁷. He further suggests that half of this structure was intended for men and the other half for women and children, although there is no evidence to support that. It is likewise possible that this space was used for incubation, but Grossmann argues somewhat compellingly that a different structure was devoted to the incubation of the sick. This is a two-storey semi-circular building that he calls 'the southern *hemicyclium*' that is near to the churches but away from the route into the centre¹⁸⁸. This structure contains rooms which may have housed sick patients, which makes sense because it would have kept them separate from anyone else visiting the site. Other studies of Abu Mina have focused mainly on the church and neighbouring buildings, so the interpretation of other areas such as the southern *hemicyclium* is limited to Grossmann's work¹⁸⁹. While his suggestion for the function of this building is logical within the context of the site, it is based only on inferences about a structure that in his joint report with Jack Kosciuk he admits has an unknown function¹⁹⁰.

¹⁸⁴ Grossmann 2014: II, 245, 260-1.

¹⁸⁵ Grossmann 2014: Pl. XVa, 298.

¹⁸⁶ S01128; Grossmann 2014: II, 278.

¹⁸⁷ Grossmann 1998: 286.

¹⁸⁸ Grossmann 1998: 288; Grossmann 2007: 47.

¹⁸⁹ See 2.1.3; Grossmann, P. and Kosciuk, J. 2005: 42-3; Kaufmann 1910a: 67-70, 78, 97, 101, 107; Deichmann, F. W. 1937: 76-7; Abdel-Aziz Negm 1993: 129, 135.

¹⁹⁰ Grossmann and Kosciuk 2005: 42.

Finally, at the Monastery of Phoibammon at Deir el-Bahari, a space that can be interpreted as having been used for incubation has not been identified with certainty. The archaeological evidence for incubation is limited, but the child donation documents attest to incubation happening at the monastery¹⁹¹. Naville and Godlewski proposed that Room F is the refectory, which makes sense because they also proposed that the neighbouring Room G is the kitchen¹⁹². There are no inscriptions in Room F, but there are eleven images, most of which are crosses, one a monk, and the rest seals of Solomon¹⁹³. The images suggest that the space was instead used for veneration. Room F is roughly twice the size of Room G, so it could have contained more people. While that would make it possible for it to be the refectory, because of the holy images it was probably a space for gathering for prayer or for incubation. Arietta Papaconstantinou more specifically interprets Room F as where supplicants would have stayed¹⁹⁴. She argues that it would be a practical place for this as it was located near to the entrance to the monastery in the eastern wall of the Pharaonic temple. This space may have been for healthy visitors, given Grossmann's logical proposal that unwell supplicants were housed separately at Abu Mina¹⁹⁵.

Incubation seems to have been a prerogative for sick visitors to shrines, which is supported by the emphasis on healing miracles in hagiography. While the textual evidence suggests that healing was predominantly done by healing saints, it seems instead that supplicants were welcome to approach any saint for healing, either locally or via pilgrimage. Additionally, in hagiography, shrines are represented as a single space which houses valuables, the saint's relics, and where supplicants sleep, whereas in practice they were part of larger structures with different spaces for different functions.

While not evidence specifically for incubation, the church complex of Kollouthos at Antinoopolis has been shown to have the function of healing by the finds of metal plaques depicting body parts there, which is a form of votive offering known throughout the Mediterranean world¹⁹⁶. Like incubation, there is evidence of this practice in Kollouthos' hagiography, when a woman whose breasts he exorcises uses all her silver to create a pair of breasts to be a votive offering at his shrine and some of the offerings found are indeed breasts¹⁹⁷. Similarly, figurines depicting women who are pregnant or suckling infants have been found at

¹⁹¹ Papaconstantinou 2020: 56.

¹⁹² Godlewski 1986: 32-3, Pl. I.

¹⁹³ Godlewski 1986: 100-1, Pl. III.

¹⁹⁴ Papaconstantinou 2002a: 87, 89.

¹⁹⁵ Grossmann 1998: 288.

¹⁹⁶ Frankfurter 2018a: 128.

¹⁹⁷ E03173; Schenke 2013: 219; Frankfurter 2018a: Pl. 5.

Abu Mina, of which David Frankfurter notes the number and diversity¹⁹⁸. They may relate to healing pregnant women or infants or to aiding couples in conception. Frankfurter states that there are no mentions of such figurines in any textual evidence, but, while that is true of Menas' hagiography, the votive offering of the silver breasts in Kollouthos' hagiography could be comparable¹⁹⁹. Further, prayers for conception could still be viewed as healing, specifically the issue of infertility. Presumably, the associations of votive offerings and incubation with healing done by a saint made them acceptable to include in hagiography, although the precise healing – of injured body parts or conception – may or may not have been mentioned in the hagiographies of specific saints.

There are three cult practices, one at each shrine, for which there is no evidence in the hagiography. Firstly, there was an oracle cult at the shrine of Kollouthos²⁰⁰. He is the only saint included in this thesis for whom there was one, although there is evidence of six other such cults in Egypt during the Byzantine period, including at Oxyrhynchus and Assiut²⁰¹. None of the visions experienced by supplicants in Kollouthos' hagiography concern oracles: If a supplicant asks a question of the saint, the saint appears and provides explicit instructions, for instance when telling a woman whose breasts are possessed by a demon how to perform an exorcism²⁰². Meanwhile, documentary evidence of an oracle at the shrine has been found in the form of over two hundred tickets. Oracle tickets follow the format of a written question about a life decision to be made or an illness being experienced and two answers on separate documents, one positive and one negative, which would then be taken to the church where one was chosen by an interceding priest and the other discarded, with the discarded answers remaining there²⁰³. It is theorised that the two answers were sealed in an urn and chosen at random, but archaeological evidence of such vessels has not been found so the priest may have made the choice deliberately or by a different, unknown random means²⁰⁴. Many of these tickets ask for help with health issues²⁰⁵. It suggests that that aspect of Kollouthos' cult was also a feature of the oracular practices there regardless of whether they were included in his hagiography, indicating the importance of Kollouthos' role as a healer.

¹⁹⁸ Frankfurter 2018a: 34-35, fig. 1, 129, Pl. 1.

¹⁹⁹ Frankfurter 2018a: 34.

²⁰⁰ Grossmann 2014: II, 280; Kocar, A. 2018: 202, 207.

²⁰¹ Papaconstantinou, A. 1994: 282; Papini, L. 1998: 393; Luijendijk, A. 2014: 50; Kocar 2018: 196.

²⁰² Schenke 2013: 218-19.

²⁰³ Delattre 2010: 172; Papaconstantinou 2001: 125; Delattre 2008: 152-3, 162; Wiśniewski 2019: 75; Grossmann 2014: II, 280; Papaconstantinou 1994: 281; Černý, J. 1985: 41-2; Papini 1998: 393, 395; Hidding 2020: 67; Ripat, P. 2006: 307; Frankfurter, D. 2018b: 211, 213, 215-16; Naether, F. 2010: 380.

²⁰⁴ Naether 2010: 379; Frankfurter 2018a: 130.

²⁰⁵ Hidding 2020: 93.

Additionally, *sortes* (also known as ‘lot books’), consisting of two palimpsest fragments from a parchment codex, have been found at the site, from a practice posited to be an expansion on or subgenre of the use of tickets²⁰⁶. The fragments come from books containing similar questions to those found on tickets and ten possible answers to each one that were presumably chosen at random and claimed to be so by a guiding force²⁰⁷. Annemarie Luijendijk has interpreted a sixth-century *sortes* booklet seemingly related to the fragments found in Antinoopolis as gospels of Mary, the Mother of Christ. She bases her interpretation on the fact that two answers in the fragments are identical to the equivalent answers in the booklet, and other answers are the same although presented in a different order²⁰⁸. Luijendijk notes the literal meaning of ‘gospel’ as ‘good news’ and the greater prevalence in *sortes* of good news rather than bad²⁰⁹. The incipit of the booklet relates it to Mary, which Luijendijk plausibly interprets as a reference to the good news imparted to her of Christ’s conception, which, as the ultimate good news, would presumably give a good impression of the booklet²¹⁰. While the study of this booklet does not definitively prove that the fragments also relate to the Virgin, there is an oracle ticket from the shrine of Kollouthos of a similar date to the booklet that invokes her²¹¹. Luijendijk then proposes the provenance of the booklet, for which the only certainty is that it came from an art dealership in New York City in the 1980s. She is right to highlight that the manuscript is unlikely to have come from Lower Egypt due to the poorer preservation of organic materials like parchment there compared to Upper Egypt, and that the manuscript was not torn up and discarded at a rubbish tip like those found at Oxyrhynchus²¹². However, she makes many assumptions in attributing it to the shrine of Kollouthos at Antinoopolis, which result from the geography of Egypt, the size of the booklet, and Mary’s association with healing, rather than focusing on its similarities to the fragments found there²¹³. Nonetheless, it is plausible, based on its content, that the booklet belonged to a manuscript or cultural tradition that included material produced or kept at the shrine and it certainly evidences the use of oracles in shrines dedicated to martyr saints.

It is therefore clear that oracular practices and incubation were both present at the site²¹⁴. This indicates that the oracle was deliberately not mentioned in the hagiography of Kollouthos.

²⁰⁶ Luijendijk 2014: 2, 4, 5, 7; Hidding 2020: 94; Papini 1998: 395; Frankfurter 2018b: 217, 219.

²⁰⁷ Papini 1998: 393-4; Luijendijk 2014: 4; Kocar 2018: 199; Frankfurter 2018b: 217.

²⁰⁸ Luijendijk 2014: 7.

²⁰⁹ Luijendijk 2014: 26-7.

²¹⁰ Luijendijk 2014: 28.

²¹¹ Luijendijk 2014: 30.

²¹² Luijendijk 2014: 47-8.

²¹³ Luijendijk 2014: 48-9, 53, 72.

²¹⁴ Papini 1998: 395.

Frankfurter considers this omission in hagiography as evidence that oracles were not considered to be pagan or viewed negatively²¹⁵. Indeed, their omission may have simply been done to focus on the saint's active role in resolving problems. However, it is more likely to be because such oracular practices in Egypt (as well as elsewhere) remained associated with paganism, despite the Christian characteristics of the invocations in the tickets themselves, and therefore would not have been included in texts that presented saints as idealised Christians even if it was practised at shrines in reality²¹⁶. Bronwen Neil rejects the designation of Christian practices such as these as 'oracular' due to the pagan connotations of the term, but as the use of tickets at sites such as the church of Kollouthos resembles oracular practices from both Pharaonic and Graeco-Roman Egypt it is evidently, consciously or not, a continuation or adoption of pagan practices²¹⁷. Meanwhile, the writers emphasised the benefits of Christianity and a Christian shrine to the audience, and perhaps also made the hagiographies more orthoprax and a presentation of an ideal Christian environment rather than a reflection of the reality. However, oneiromancy was also practised in Pharaonic and Graeco-Roman Egypt and yet visions of saints experienced during dreams were included in hagiography²¹⁸. This suggests that practices with pagan associations could become part of Christian traditions provided that they could be suitably accommodated within Christian frameworks, such as the appearances of saints in incubating supplicants' dreams, and therefore that oracular practices did not develop this²¹⁹. Additionally, it is possible that the occurrence of some visions for saints and supplicants while awake would make them less associated with oneiromancy, which relied on practitioners being asleep²²⁰. Visions, whether conceptualised as pagan or Christian, form part of what Martti Nissinen terms 'divine-human communication'²²¹. Dreams and visions appear to prophets in biblical texts²²². This exemplifies the phenomena in a distinctly Judaeo-Christian context and shows that there was justification for them to be acceptable within Christianity. It is therefore possible that, despite the pagan history of oneiromancy, dreams and visions were not denounced like other forms of divination or magic because they were materialised through grace rather than mortals' willpower²²³. The divine caused them to happen, whereas divination and magic are humanity

²¹⁵ Frankfurter 2018a: 132.

²¹⁶ Neil 2021: 77, 79; Štubňová, S. 2017: 260-1; Kazhdan 1991: I, 661; Papaconstantinou 1994: 281; Prada, L. 2016: II, 1221-2; Prada, L. 2017: 4; Renberg 2016: 4; Frankfurter, D. 1997: 129; Davis, S. J. 2008: 18; Ripat 2006: 310; Frankfurter 2018a: 88; Frankfurter 2018b: 216.

²¹⁷ Neil 2021: 134; Černý 1985: 41; Papaconstantinou 1994: 282; Luijendijk 2014: 5; Frankfurter 2018a: 88.

²¹⁸ Szpakowska, K. 2011a: 509; Prada 2016: 1221-2; Prada 2017: 4.

²¹⁹ Frankfurter 2018a: 133; Neil 2021: 87, 90.

²²⁰ Prada, L. 2013: 85, 98-9; Szpakowska 2011a: 509.

²²¹ Nissinen, M. 2017: 10.

²²² Nissinen 2017: 18, 24, 27, 29.

²²³ Nissinen 2017: 15.

acting on the divine to achieve desired knowledge or a desired effect respectively²²⁴. So, while magic and miracles both cause supernatural phenomena to happen, for one a human is the agent and for the other the divine is, showing how they intersect and are differentiated within Christianity, and thus how certain practices could be included in formal Christian texts and others could not.

The second cult practice concerns the shrine of Phoibammon. While healing seems to have been achieved through incubation at the shrines of Kollouthos and Menas, there appears to have been a different method at that of Phoibammon. One reason that Naville and Godlewski proposed that Room G was the kitchen was that it contained the remains of stone vessels carved from the Pharaonic columns and coated on the interior with waterproof mortar²²⁵. While these vessels may have been used for cooking, the waterproofing could also indicate that they were used for ritual ablutions as, according to Papaconstantinou and Schenke, at this shrine healing was achieved through washing in basins²²⁶. Their explanations do not rely solely on the vessels, as while the hagiography does not mention ritual ablutions, one of the child donation documents and the self-donation document of Petronios, son of Georgios do²²⁷. Additionally, the role of donated children included filling vessels for this purpose. This combination of evidence makes it clear that ritual ablutions took place at the site, although, as only four documents refer to the basins ‘λογτηρ/λογτηριον’, it is unclear how common it was²²⁸. If the vessels were used for cooking, then one might expect the donated children to do more than fill them with water, literally ‘scattering with the water at’ ‘πνογυκ μνημοογ ενλογτηρ’²²⁹. Equally, the scattering of the water rather than the use of the verb ‘to fill’ ‘μογε’ could have ritually cleaned the vessels as well as providing the means for supplicants to ritually clean themselves²³⁰. This and the location of Room G would make it a practical place for ritual ablutions because it is next to Room F, where supplicants may have stayed. It is therefore more likely that Papaconstantinou’s and Schenke’s interpretations of the vessels and the space are correct. If the saint’s shrine was contained in the same room in which the basins were found, then the washing would have been an act of purification before approaching it. However, in the two mentions of the practice in the donation documents, the washing is presented as sufficient to heal alone²³¹. The fact that only

²²⁴ Nissinen 2017: 11, 13, 20.

²²⁵ Godlewski 1986: 33.

²²⁶ Papaconstantinou 2002a: 87-9; Papaconstantinou 2020: 60; Schenke 2016: 497.

²²⁷ *P. KRU* 91, lines 11-12; *P. KRU* 104, line 19.

²²⁸ *P. KRU* 80, line 38; *P. KRU* 93, line 32; Crum, W. E. and Steindorff, G. 1912: 413.

²²⁹ Crum 1939: 249a.

²³⁰ Crum 1939: 208a.

²³¹ *P. KRU* 91, lines 11-12; *P. KRU* 104, line 19.

two donation documents include this while the rest include healing by the saint, does, however, suggest that the general view was that the saint interceded directly, although there is no mention of the need for purification in the hagiography or in the donation documents²³².

It therefore seems that ritual ablutions were practised to facilitate healing at the shrine of Phoibammon. Perhaps it is not mentioned in the hagiography because the monastery at Deir el-Bahari, where it was practised, is not mentioned. Alternatively, if the ritual ablutions were familiar to the audience, the writers may have focused on the saint as the agent of healing rather than on accurately representing cult practices, as otherwise miraculous powers may have been attributed to the water rather than to the saint²³³.

The third cult practice is based at Abu Mina. In the first church, Grossmann states that at the apexes of the tetraconch were niches, which he proposes contained reliquaries through which oil was poured before it was bottled or before pilgrims touched it to be healed²³⁴. While flasks which would have contained such oil and been taken from the site by pilgrims, termed *eulogiai*, have been excavated in all manner of places, there is no evidence at Abu Mina for reliquaries²³⁵. Grossmann's argument is based on the building type of the first church having 'no tradition in Egypt' and being found often in Syria, and likewise on examples of reliquaries known from Syrian rather than Egyptian churches²³⁶. The practice which he describes may have spread into northern Egypt, but the presence in Egypt of a building type more common in Syria does not guarantee that other aspects of the cult of saints in Syria were present²³⁷. This is therefore a potential cult practice, which demonstrates another way that supplicants may have been healed without incubation in the wider cult of saints. Niall Finneran argues that water was used instead of oil based on a large pool which may be what others have interpreted as the bathhouse, but while Grossmann is speculating based on practices from elsewhere, his suggestion has more of a precedent than Finneran's²³⁸.

It may not be surprising that practices other than incubation or votive offerings of thanks were not included in hagiographical texts, as they did not represent the encouragement of and gratitude for the appearance of saints, which is what is emphasised in hagiography. The intention of the writers may have therefore been to incorporate that encouragement along with the different occupations and experiences that the saints are claimed to have held while alive,

²³² E.g. *P. KRU* 86, line 34.

²³³ Eade, J. 1991: 64.

²³⁴ See 2.1.3; Grossmann 1998: 284-5; Montserrat 1998: 258; Lucius and Anrich 1904: 289-9.

²³⁵ Bangert 2007: 27; Grossmann 1989: 65; Brown, P. 1995: 61.

²³⁶ Grossmann 1998: 284-5; Grossmann, P. 1983: 168-70.

²³⁷ See 2.1.2; Bangert, S. 2010: 307.

²³⁸ Finneran, N. 2002: 88; see 2.1.3.

perhaps to differentiate them and justify the veneration of particular saints when it seems from the archaeology that many aspects of shrines were similar regardless of the saints to whom they were dedicated. Hagiography is therefore an exercise in encouraging the veneration of particular saints, and its creation, reception, and copying is also a cult practice, rather than an exercise of accurately portraying cult practices or shrine layouts.

2.1.5: Relics of the Saints

In some of the hagiography included in this thesis, the relics of a saint play a role in the narrative as demarcating the place close to which pilgrims encounter the saint and experience their visions of them. This is another aspect of the cult of saints which necessitates using both textual and archaeological evidence to form a full understanding of what is presented in hagiography and the reality.

The veneration of relics has been practised since the fourth century CE²³⁹. Peter Brown emphasised how small relics were, but they could actually be ‘the body of a saint, or part of it, clothing, or any object connected with the saint’²⁴⁰. Relics were believed to convey spiritual power based on the relationship of the deceased from whom they came with the divine, and this spiritual power was considered capable of healing or ensuring protection²⁴¹. Lucy Grig highlights the role of the cult of relics in allowing the cult of saints to reach new audiences and providing a focus for veneration²⁴². Relics therefore became part of cultic activity in their own right as a point at which the human and the divine intersected²⁴³.

While the Bible does not refer to relics directly, it does refer to the healing power of the corporeal remains of figures like the prophet Elisha, so it is plausible that the belief in the healing power of relics stemmed from or was justified with passages in the Bible²⁴⁴. The practice of visiting saints’ shrines to be healed may therefore have been prevalent in hagiography because that was a key function of relics²⁴⁵. Further, the fact that the remains of Elisha, who according to the Bible had performed healing miracles during his lifetime, retained this capability provides more justification for the presentation of the remains of saints who performed healing miracles as being able to do the same thing, such as Kollouthos²⁴⁶. However, this justification is limited

²³⁹ Wiśniewski 2019: 1, 8, 21, 23; Krueger 2010: 5.

²⁴⁰ Brown, P. 1981: 78; Devonshire Jones et al. 2013: 489; Grig, L. 2004: 88.

²⁴¹ Krueger 2010: 5; Neil 2021: 137.

²⁴² Grig 2004: 86-7.

²⁴³ Cox Miller, P. 2009: 2, 8, 62, 95.

²⁴⁴ Wiśniewski 2019: 9-10, 125, 127.

²⁴⁵ E.g. Moss, C. 2013: 236.

²⁴⁶ See Chapter 1: 3.1.1; Wiśniewski, R. 2020: 156.

given that many martyr saints do not perform healing miracles while alive in their hagiographies, such as Menas and Merkourios²⁴⁷. The Bible alone does not justify the existence of the cult of relics, as Robert Wiśniewski points out that there is no healing through such means in the New Testament save for one instance each of the garments of Jesus and Paul the Apostle healing laypeople upon being touched, which is reminiscent of the miracle in the encomium of Kollouthos where his garment heals a blind man when it touches his eyes²⁴⁸. Additionally, some pre-fourth century hagiography refers to the burial of martyrs' remains and the gathering in the burial place to celebrate their lives²⁴⁹. Even further, while the appearance of deceased saints at their shrines is not universal within Christianity, it seems to have been believed by the writers and/or copyists of the hagiography included in this thesis that the dead 'did manifest themselves to the living', particularly during incubation in shrines and primarily for healing²⁵⁰. One problem that the use of relics for healing presents is that it is reminiscent of magic, which is where the relationship between the deceased and the divine was emphasised, apparently resulting in it being acceptable to include relics in hagiography²⁵¹. This is another example of where magic and miracles intersect and supports the hypothesis that practices that had or could be given recognisably Christian associations could be referenced in hagiography, while others apparently remained too resemblant of paganism²⁵².

Relics had functions other than healing, as exemplified in an account of divination by Gregory of Tours of the Lord being asked to reveal the outcome of a battle, with Wiśniewski observing that the prayer took place at the altar, which would probably have been close to where the relics were kept²⁵³. However, this seems to be a more tenuous example of the use of relics, as God was being prayed to directly. Instead, the focus was the books of the Bible being consulted as part of the divination. Wiśniewski acknowledges that in the context of divination the Bible may have functioned as a 'sacred object' rather than as a 'sacred text', and its use would be less contentious than oracular practices, given their pagan associations²⁵⁴. Additionally, the setting may have helped to ensure that the passage presented as the answer was not accidental, but revealed by God²⁵⁵. One question then is why laypeople would have used divination such as oracles but, as Wiśniewski suggests, the use of the Bible would have perhaps depended on the

²⁴⁷ Wiśniewski 2019: 34.

²⁴⁸ Wiśniewski 2019: 10; Thompson 1993: 64; Thompson 1993b: 49.

²⁴⁹ Wiśniewski 2019: 11-12; Krueger 2010: 5.

²⁵⁰ Poux, C. (unpublished): 20; Wiśniewski 2020: 247-8.

²⁵¹ See 2.1.4; Cox Miller 2009: 37, 38, 61.

²⁵² Nissinen 2017: 13, 15, 20.

²⁵³ Wiśniewski 2020: 27, 70, 102, 252.

²⁵⁴ See 2.1.4; Wiśniewski 2020: 138; Kocar 2018: 203.

²⁵⁵ Wiśniewski 2019: 75.

spiritual specialisms of members of the clergy. However, it is more likely that the higher literacy rate among the clergy is the reason²⁵⁶.

As well as providing an example of how relics could be involved in divination, Gregory of Tours wrote a list of shrines where relics supposedly caused miracles. This list is doubtfully accurate, based on Gregory's inclusion of saints whose supposed graves were identified after his death. Instead, like the hagiography included in this thesis, it is a representation of the practices that were taking place at shrines and associated beliefs. Wiśniewski's caution in believing purely from Gregory of Tours' account that divination took place in shrines is warranted, and it is fair to suggest that such practices did not require practitioners to be in shrines, whereas being healed did due to the need to be in proximity to relics, or at least where relics were claimed to be, as according to hagiography saints appeared at any shrine dedicated to them regardless of whether relics were claimed to be there.

Nonetheless, relics were significant within the hagiography used in this thesis when the presence of the saint's physical remains was particularly important²⁵⁷. The martyrdom of James is an example of a relic being the body of a saint²⁵⁸. Even though not all a saint's remains were required for the desired effect of relics to be felt, the implication is that all James' dismembered remains were taken to Egypt²⁵⁹. The emphasis of the narrative on his body parts being taken to the shrine site predetermined by God therefore indicates that, at least in writing, relics legitimised the shrines in which they were housed²⁶⁰. Similarly, there are claimed to be relics of Merkourios in various places, including parts of his skull in the Monastery of Dionysiou on Mount Athos²⁶¹. The use of relics for such legitimisation was especially important for saints whose existence – or connection to an area – was in doubt. Therefore, the less plausible the historicity of a saint was, the more insistence there was on places associated with them and relics were a useful tool for this. It may also be that the saint's body already being dismembered meant that the further transportation was not seen as heinous but instead that its distribution and veneration was part of Christian worship²⁶². Derek Krueger suggests that the fragmented remains of saints may have been analogous to the Eucharist, although while relics were celebrated there does not seem to have been the same specific ritual associated with them as with the Eucharist, and in hagiography preserved in Coptic the Eucharist is not mentioned but relics are²⁶³.

²⁵⁶ Wiśniewski 2020: 149; Kocar 2018: 204.

²⁵⁷ Wiśniewski 2020: 156, 162, 235-6.

²⁵⁸ Alcock (unpublished): 20.

²⁵⁹ Krueger 2010: 5.

²⁶⁰ E.g. Moss 2013: 236.

²⁶¹ Meinardus, O. F. A. 1973b: 112.

²⁶² Cox Miller 2009: 52.

²⁶³ Krueger 2010: 7-8.

Relics were considered significant in the martyrdoms of Persian saints preserved in Syriac²⁶⁴. While the Coptic version of James' martyrdom uses the transportation of the saint's relics to legitimise his veneration in Egypt, relics in texts without a Persian origin can also be significant²⁶⁵. Therefore, the legitimisation of the veneration of James in Egypt is more likely to be due to the general importance of relics²⁶⁶. The miracle collection of Phoibammon, for example, includes the saint's garment as a relic. The holy power within it is made clear when it alone is sufficient to exorcise the demon tormenting the emperor's daughter²⁶⁷. Physical contact with relics was therefore presented as being even more powerful than being in proximity to them, as a profound, sensory experience²⁶⁸.

Given that relics were considered to be vessels for saints' holy power and that they could be used to legitimise shrines in hagiography, one might assume that there was evidence of them in the archaeological record. Supposed relics were still being found in Egypt in the 1990s, although their identification as such was debated between monks and archaeologists²⁶⁹. Meanwhile, there is no evidence for a shrine dedicated to James in Egypt²⁷⁰. As the Coptic version of his martyrdom is the same as the Syriac and Greek versions until the translation of his relics to Egypt, it seems to have functioned as legitimisation rather than as a statement of fact²⁷¹. This may stem from the greater emphasis on relics in the traditions of Persian saints than Egyptian ones²⁷².

In the history attributed to Abu Salih, there is a claim that Viktor's relics are in two different monasteries in the region of Assiut and that those of Kollouthos are in a monastery in Assiut²⁷³. Meanwhile, Grossmann has argued for the presence of the relics of Kollouthos and Menas at their shrines²⁷⁴. Aatje Hidding has also discussed the possible location of Kollouthos' relics and, like Grossmann, disregards that they may never have existed and bases her argument on hagiographical evidence alone²⁷⁵. She then concludes that the actual location of the relics is unimportant and instead focuses on a '*lieu de mémoire*', which is arguably the surviving shrine in

²⁶⁴ Payne 2011: 92-3.

²⁶⁵ Meanwhile, an example of a saint's body outside of Persia being presented as a relic can be found in Athanasius' *Life of Antony*, in which the saint's body is hidden to avoid it becoming venerated.

²⁶⁶ Wiśniewski 2019: 102.

²⁶⁷ Verrone 2002: 21.

²⁶⁸ Wiśniewski 2019: 124; Krueger 2010: 5; Cox Miller 2009: 3.

²⁶⁹ E.g. Meinardus 2002: 51, 56.

²⁷⁰ See 2.1.1.

²⁷¹ See Chapter 1: 2.7 and 3.1.6; Ward-Perkins 2020: 11.

²⁷² Payne 2011: 93.

²⁷³ Evetts and Butler 1895: 251.

²⁷⁴ Grossmann 2014: II, 269; Grossmann 1998: 282.

²⁷⁵ Hidding 2020: 87-90.

Antinoopolis based on the amount of documentary evidence found there and additions to the site over time²⁷⁶.

Hagiography indicates that supplicants must incubate near to where saints' relics are kept, although this does not reveal what was thought in reality²⁷⁷. Grossmann has interpreted an underground chamber beneath the church of Kollouthos in Antinoopolis as a burial chamber due to the presence of up to three human burials there. He adds that the tomb shaft would have been difficult to descend, making visiting the space unlikely, which he considers alongside the number of burials to suggest that this was the resting place of local people or church founders²⁷⁸. Instead, he prefers a theory of the saint's relics being moved between cult sites²⁷⁹. While the hagiography associated with Kollouthos places his birth, life, and death mainly in Antinoopolis, there is no evidence that the church was constructed until at least the sixth century CE, which is two centuries after his supposed death. If Kollouthos did exist, his relics would have been kept elsewhere, or subject to *inventio*, a narrative of his relics' 'miraculous discovery', once the church had been built²⁸⁰. Grossmann also suggests that the saint's original tomb may have been in one of the caves in the mountains outside of Antinoopolis, although there is no archaeological evidence to associate them with him²⁸¹. Grossmann states that there is textual evidence to support this theorised earlier shrine in a cave, but there is no mention of such a site in the surviving hagiography. He further suggests that Kollouthos' relics were moved from Antinoopolis to Pneuait based on the single miracle that has survived in the manuscript ÖNB K 9524 in which a childless couple visiting the shrine at Antinoopolis is told to go to the new one at Pneuait: 'Have you not heard that Jesus, the compassionate, has sent me to this village which is called Pneuait in the district of Panopolis?'²⁸². This miracle does not say anything about relics. Hidding also accepts the content of this text without questioning the lack of archaeological remains despite emphasising the value of combined textual and archaeological evidence²⁸³. She does, however, observe this text as an example of 'the expertise of Late Antique hagiographers to link the present landscape to past historical or legendary events' based on the connection by the narrator of Kollouthos' blood being spilled during torture to the presence of a well at Pneuait.

²⁷⁶ Hidding 2020 90.

²⁷⁷ Wiśniewski 2020: 235; Haldon, J. F. 2008: 277.

²⁷⁸ Grossmann 2014: II, 254-5, 269.

²⁷⁹ See 2.1.3; Grossmann 2014: II, 273-5.

²⁸⁰ Wiśniewski 2019: 104.

²⁸¹ Hidding 2020: 87; Grossmann 2014: II, 276.

²⁸² ΜΠΕΤΝΩΩΤΗ ΔΕ ΑΠΝΑΗΤ ΙΣ ΤΗΝΟΟΥΤ ΕΠΕΙΓΜΕ ΕΤΟΥΜΟΥΤΕ ΕΡΟΨ ΔΕ ΠΝΕΥΕΙΤ ΕΜ ΠΤΩΨ ΨΥΜΙΝ; Grossmann 2010a: 24, 26; see 2.1.1; Schenke 2013: 186-9.

²⁸³ Hidding 2020: 68, 84-5, 86.

Otto Meinardus, meanwhile, theorised that Kollouthos' relics were kept in Al-Fant. He has, however, confused Kollouthos with a namesake, a priest from Al-Fant whose martyr story is preserved in the Ethiopian Synaxarium. This is not a case of saints with the same name being conflated during Antiquity, but rather recently by a scholar²⁸⁴.

As there is no mention of Kollouthos' relics in his surviving hagiography, the legitimisation of his shrine using them was apparently unnecessary, perhaps because it was already located somewhere associated with the narrative of his life. This contradicts Frankfurter's claim that relics had to be present at a site and instead indicates that their inclusion in texts had a particular function and was done when necessary, rather than that they were a critical aspect of any saint's cult²⁸⁵.

Similarly to Kollouthos, Menas' shrine at Abu Mina was legitimised through being near to Alexandria, where he was supposedly martyred, but also, like James, through the claim that his shrine site was predetermined by God²⁸⁶. John Bryan Ward-Perkins and Grossmann both argued that the shrine was established at the site of the saint's tomb, based only on the saint's hagiography²⁸⁷. No remains that could be attributed to the saint have been found at Abu Mina, and the space which Grossmann claims to have been the saint's tomb was later remodelled, with the *hypogaeum* (an 'under-ground burial place') being 'transformed into a semi-domed niche (*arcosolium*)', suggesting a change in the function of the space²⁸⁸. Additionally, if Grossmann's interpretation of the space as an *hypogaeum* is correct, then, like the church of Kollouthos, there may be too many burials, as he interprets there to be three galleries each with space for seven burial caves. Furthermore, he provides more evidence that this space was not the saint's tomb by stating that the *cataract*, a vertical tube that often was installed in Western churches to establish a connection between the relics and the sanctuary, was not present²⁸⁹. That being said, if a *cataract* was a Western tradition, then perhaps Abu Mina should not be expected to have had one. Even further, the *hypogaeum* seems to predate the Christian site, as small statuettes of monkeys and stelae of Horus-Harpocrates were found there²⁹⁰. Its date and its pagan associations would make it an unlikely place to keep a saint's relics.

There has also been some discussion over whether there were relics of Phoibammon. While, as with the other saints included in this thesis, it cannot be proven whether Phoibammon

²⁸⁴ Meinardus 1999: 317; Hidding 2020: 89, no. 359.

²⁸⁵ Frankfurter, D. 1998: 3-4.

²⁸⁶ See Chapter 1: 3.1.2; Drescher 1946: 5, 103; Sadek El Gendi 2017: 23.

²⁸⁷ Grossmann 1998: 281; Ward-Perkins 1949: 38.

²⁸⁸ Grossmann 1998: 282.

²⁸⁹ Grossmann 1998: 286.

²⁹⁰ Grossmann 1998: 282; Kaufmann 1910a: 71, figs. 24-9.

of Preht existed, there is no guarantee that the shrine at Deir el-Bahari would have housed his relics. In his surviving miracle collection, the shrine at Touho is claimed to contain his garments²⁹¹. The importance of the shrine at Deir el-Bahari has been attributed to the exceptional find of the archive, and the importance of the shrine at Touho can be attributed to its prominence in the miracle collection, neither of which makes for a more compelling case than the other. As there are more shrines associated with Phoibammon attested in his hagiography, if the claim to possess relics was indeed used to legitimise shrines, then Phoibammon's relics – or the claim to possess them – would have been more valuable than those of Kollouthos and Menas.

As for the shrine at Deir el-Bahari, in Room G, there is a large niche which Naville and Godlewski suggest may have been used for cooking²⁹². However, within this niche are inscriptions and images which are more suggestive of veneration²⁹³. There are two inscriptions, the shortest of which (no. 28) proclaims the writer to be praying to 'you', presumably either the saint, Christ, or God²⁹⁴. The other, longer inscription (no. 27) lists four sins, including 'forgetfulness' *πωβυ* and 'gluttony' *ϣαϥε* before making declarations such as 'Mercy is light, glory is virginity'. Included among these declarations is one that can be translated as 'martyrdom is your injustice', if the prefix to 'injustice, violence' *νβονς* is read as the second person possessive. These two inscriptions therefore suggest that this niche was a space for veneration. Further, the images are also focused on veneration²⁹⁵. Godlewski describes them as crosses and male figures praying²⁹⁶. This is even more convincing when one considers that the discussion in 2.1.4 concluded that ritual ablutions were practised in Room G, which would make sense if it was the shrine because it would have formed part of the veneration of the saint. Papaconstantinou went further and suggested that this niche was the location of the saint's relics²⁹⁷. While this niche seems to have served a function of worship, it is a leap to propose that relics were kept there. Room G was probably the shrine and the niche the focal point of veneration in it.

No relics associated with the saints included in this thesis have been found. They may never have existed, and within physical worship seem to have been unnecessary, whereas within hagiography the claim of a shrine's ownership of them was used for legitimisation.

²⁹¹ See 2.1.1.

²⁹² Godlewski 1986: 32, Pl. I; see 2.1.4.

²⁹³ Godlewski 1986: 101-2, Pl. II, Pl. III.

²⁹⁴ Godlewski 1986: 151, Pl. III.

²⁹⁵ Godlewski 1986: 101-2, Pl. II.

²⁹⁶ Godlewski 1986: 33, 101-2.

²⁹⁷ Papaconstantinou 2002a: 88.

2.2: Other Archaeological Evidence

This section will present the material remains pertaining to the saints studied in this thesis that have not been found at the shrines discussed in the preceding sections.

2.2.1: Objects Associated with the Cults of the Saints

While objects that may evidence cult practices at each of the surviving shrines were discussed in 2.1.4, there are others found elsewhere that also provide evidence of veneration of their associated saints. They may show that cult practices were not limited to the shrines, and that the shrines were a layer of the cult of saints with other practices forming personal, private acts of veneration.

Among the most well-known objects associated with any saint are the Menas flasks. However, this is from archaeological finds rather than from texts, in which they are not mentioned. They are pilgrim flasks upon one side of which is usually a depiction of Menas standing between two camels, reflecting how in his Coptic martyrdom those animals, through divine intervention, determined the site of his shrine, and a cross or small inscription naming him²⁹⁸. These flasks were produced between the fifth and seventh centuries, based on archaeological evidence from Abu Mina such as the stylistic features, and on finds nearby at Kom el-Dikka which can be dated by their stratigraphy²⁹⁹. One hundred and forty-two flasks were excavated at Kom el-Dikka between 1961 and 1981, which suggests that the shrine received local visitors and thus that it served the local community as well as pilgrims³⁰⁰. In total, most known *eulogiai* are Menas flasks and over seven hundred are known³⁰¹.

The findspots for these flasks have a wide distribution, including in north-western Europe, which suggests that pilgrims visited from far afield³⁰². The precise provenance of the finds in Europe is unreliable, but ‘finds have been reported in most central European countries’, including two in Britain, one of which was at Meols on the Wirral peninsula, which suggests that

²⁹⁸ Bangert 2007: 27; Bangert 2010: 306; Du Bourguet, P. M. 1971: 86, fig. 17; Bacot 2020: 14; Drescher 1946: 5, 103; Grossmann 1998: 299; Cannuyer, C. 1997: 142.

²⁹⁹ Davis, S. J. 2001: 118; Bangert 2007: 27; see 2.1.3; Dal Santo, M. J. 2011: 38; Ritter, M. 2020: 264.

³⁰⁰ Kiss, Z. 1989: 14; Anderson, W. 2004: 81.

³⁰¹ Ritter 2020: 264.

³⁰² Drescher 1946: xi; Anderson 2004: 79-80; Bangert 2007: 29; Grabar, A. and Fourmont, D. 1958: 7-9; Hahn, C. 1990: 85; Maraval, P. 1985: 240; Bangert 2010: 306-7; Delahaye, G.-R. 1997: 160.

exchanges were taking place³⁰³. This is further supported by the fact that the area, based on thousands of metal finds there, was occupied from the Roman period to the fourteenth century³⁰⁴. However, trade links that led to the presence of the Menas flask there cannot be gauged with any certainty given that there is no evidence of a settlement at Meols, despite the quantity of finds. While it is possible that pilgrims travelled vast distances on pilgrimages, it is not possible to know how the flasks arrived in Britain, when they arrived, how many stages of movement were involved, and how the final owner acquired it³⁰⁵.

Menas flasks are not themselves contact relics, relics which are claimed to have been in contact with the saint's relics, given that relics either are or have supposedly had contact with the body of the saint³⁰⁶. Additionally, it has been shown that the claim of possessing relics legitimised shrines, whereas Menas flasks were removed from the site. This means that their function was to demonstrate the saint's power or spread word of it³⁰⁷. This does not necessarily mean that they spread the saint's cult, but at least knowledge of it. These flasks must therefore instead be understood as *enlogiai*, which could transmit holy power similarly to relics and were 'souvenirs' that often contained what are termed 'secondary relics' or 'contact relics', such as oil, earth, or water from shrines³⁰⁸. However, there is no evidence that these 'secondary relics' were considered in Egypt to have healing properties from contact with relics³⁰⁹. It has been argued that these flasks' contents were the *enlogiai* rather than the flasks, but as the contents was contained within the flasks for transportation presumably the holy power was believed to still be effective³¹⁰. These flasks contained oil from the lamps which burned in the shrine, which may have been a protective amulet³¹¹. While shrines were considered to be places of great power where saints wrought their miracles, therefore perhaps meaning that the saint's power was tied to that locale, as proposed by Montserrat, there must have been a reason for pilgrims to take *enlogiai* from the shrines³¹². While it is estimated that only 0.1% of *enlogiai* remain, they show enough distribution to indicate that their purpose was to be removed from sites³¹³. Montserrat's discussion centres on the shrine of Cyrus and John and his argument is based on the fact that

³⁰³ Bangert 2010: 307; Anderson 2004: 81; Thompson, F. H. 1956: 48-9; Harris, A. 2003: 148, Pl. 19.

³⁰⁴ Harris 2003: 153.

³⁰⁵ Thompson 1956: 49.

³⁰⁶ See 2.1.5; Devonshire Jones et al. 2013: 489.

³⁰⁷ Donceel-Voûte, P. 1995: 184-5.

³⁰⁸ Ritter 2020: 255; Papaconstantinou 2007: 361.

³⁰⁹ See 2.1.4; Vikan, G. 1998: 234; Frank, G. 2008: 833; Ritter 2020: 255, 257; Hahn 1990: 85; Maraval 1985: 239; Wilber, D. N. 1940: 90.

³¹⁰ Ritter 2020: 260-1.

³¹¹ Devonshire Jones et al. 2013: 14; Grossmann 1989: 65; Maraval 1985: 238; Clark, G. 2004: 150, 152; Davis 2001: 115; Vikan 1998: 235; Hahn 1990: 86; Ritter 2020: 254-7.

³¹² Hahn 1990: 85; Montserrat 1998: 270.

³¹³ Ritter 2020: 255.

little archaeology has been found there, so he proposed that Abu Qir was considered to be an especially spiritually powerful place. Nonetheless, he acknowledged that there being no *enlogiai* seems strange when compared to the neighbouring Abu Mina. However, he concluded that this is because of how spiritually powerful the shrine of Cyrus and John was seen to be and thus that pilgrims would have not required *enlogiai*³¹⁴. This disregards the fact that there is little surviving archaeology at Abu Qir because it became submerged while there is an exceptional amount of surviving archaeology at Abu Mina³¹⁵. The number and wide distribution of Menas flasks instead suggests that Abu Mina was more important than Abu Qir, regardless of the scale of the archaeological remains at either site. Additionally, *enlogiai* seem to have functioned as proof that a pilgrim undertook a pilgrimage, so they would be expected to be found away from Abu Qir, rather than at Abu Qir itself.

It is perhaps too far to propose that ampullae from the shrine of Menas or from other shrines in the Near East were representative of the baptism or renewal of pilgrims, given that many pilgrims would have been Christian already, despite the depictions of the conversion through the Eucharist (found in hagiography preserved in Greek but not found in Coptic) or sheer aggressive persuasion (the norm in Coptic) of pagans or Jews in hagiography³¹⁶. Instead, Cynthia Hahn is probably more accurate in her suggestion that *enlogiai* marked out pilgrims from their peers, although the belief in their ability to heal and protect away from the shrine should also be considered³¹⁷. It has been proposed that these flasks were given away for free in order to encourage donations in return to the shrine, but it is unlikely that these objects were given away as ‘disinterested gift[s]’ without the anticipation of donations to the shrine, as they had to be produced in the first place³¹⁸. Instead of Vicky Foskolou’s claim that there were no economic motivations in the creation of *enlogiai*, they probably did form part of the economy of shrines, as suggested by Max Ritter, based on the fact that shrines seem to have anticipated greater rewards for their good work, termed ‘counter-gifts’ by Ritter³¹⁹. These flasks would have functioned as advertising for the shrine for pilgrims to take home with them.

Grossmann theorises that the production of the flasks was related to Abu Mina’s local industry of wine and pottery production³²⁰. While that may have been the origin of the practice of making the flasks, they presumably had a greater importance, given that the production of

³¹⁴ Montserrat 1998: 271.

³¹⁵ Goddio 2021a; Goddio 1998: 1, 8; Vrettos 2001: 216-17; Haas 1997: 348; see 2.1.3.

³¹⁶ Hahn 1990: 91; Krueger, D. 2004: 110; Csepregi, I. 2005: 99-101; Budge 1915: 270-1, 842-3.

³¹⁷ Hahn 1990: 87.

³¹⁸ Caner, D. F. 2013 26; Foskolou, V. 2013: 60-1.

³¹⁹ Foskolou 2013: 80-1; Ritter 2020: 269.

³²⁰ Grossmann 1998: 298.

such ‘souvenirs’ was known at various sites throughout Late Antiquity, of which Abu Mina is the most well-known and has been the most fruitful from the perspective of archaeological excavation³²¹. As has been seen from Menas’ hagiography, he was presented as protecting pilgrims on their journeys so the acquisition of a Menas flask for their return journey may have been appealing for pilgrims. However, as none of his hagiography mentions the flasks, perhaps because there the saint takes an active role, the texts rendered the representation of the Menas flasks unnecessary and demonstrate the hagiographers’ focus on his role at the shrine rather than any other practices³²². This is reminiscent of the lack of mention of the oracle at Kollouthos’ shrine in his hagiography, although given the Christian associations of *eulogiai* in the case of Menas it is probably because of the presentation of the saint as an active agent in his hagiography rather than associations with paganism³²³. Additionally, the removal of *eulogiai* from shrines therefore distributed the saint’s power, which would have been conducive to bringing further business to the shrine but not to its perpetuation as a necessary centre for accessing the divine. As such, the silence about *eulogiai* in hagiography supports the message that supplicants and pilgrims needed to visit the shrine to experience the saint. Therefore, taken in conjunction with the portrayal of visions experienced by pilgrims in hagiography, *eulogiai* may also have been implicitly understood as a souvenir of a successful encounter with the saint and thus of engagement with the divine through the intercession of clergy at the shrine.

There is some archaeological material associated with Merkourios, albeit a small number of inscribed objects incomparable in quantity or distribution to the Menas flasks. This material comprises of one inscribed lamp from Luxor, one from the Theban area, and one from an unknown provenance, and a prayer on papyrus of unknown provenance³²⁴. All the inscriptions are Greek rather than Coptic, which may indicate a wider participation in the cult of Merkourios in Egypt. The only other objects found that are potentially, albeit not reliably, associated with Merkourios were found in Cyprus³²⁵. While this might be comparable to Menas flasks, only two amulets have been found which is much less suggestive of habitual pilgrimage or trade³²⁶. Pavlos Flourentzos theorises that the first amulet, a pendant found at Amathous, is a ‘Solomon’ pendant given their prevalence in Cyprus³²⁷. The inscription gives no further clues as to the identity of the rider and thus the accuracy of Flourentzos’ suggestion, although the figure that is mounted upon

³²¹ Bangert 2010: 293; Ritter 2020: 264; Vikan 1998: 240.

³²² E.g. Drescher 1946: 11-12, 14-17, 24-5, 111, 112-13 118-19.

³²³ See 2.1.4.

³²⁴ Papaconstantinou 2001: 145.

³²⁵ S01323.

³²⁶ E01326.

³²⁷ Flourentzos, P. 2002: 367.

a horse and wielding a spear to slay a demon is reminiscent of the imagery of Merkourios invoked in his hagiography, and, as seals of Solomon have been found at the Monastery of Phoibammon at Deir el-Bahari, perhaps objects associated with Solomon could be associated with other saints as well³²⁸. The second amulet was found at Salamis. It is described by Alessandro Palma di Cesnola as a ‘very early work’, which Paweł Nowakowski disputes given the iconography of the rider, which is similar to that on the first amulet, although without demons being vanquished or an inscription³²⁹. It is therefore not possible to suggest whether either of these amulets depicts Merkourios specifically, or another saint or a general protective figure.

Like Merkourios, for Viktor there is some archaeological evidence. Inscriptions in Greek and Coptic referring to him have been found in at least eighteen locales in Egypt, including Djeme, Arsinoe, Elephantine, and Oxyrhynchus³³⁰. These include administrative documents such as receipts, tax registers, deeds, contracts, and fiscal codices³³¹. They also include amulets and funerary inscriptions³³². And, like Merkourios, an inscribed lamp has also been found bearing his name in Medamud near Thebes (modern Luxor)³³³.

This section has illustrated that objects are equally useful in understanding the practices of the cult of saints in Egypt and how they related to what was portrayed in hagiography. The Menas flasks highlight that the economic and religious functions of the cult sites could contradict each other, and that it is religious motivations that are shown in what writers chose to include in and omit from hagiography. This section has likewise demonstrated that the hagiography of saints for whom no shrines have been located is equally key to understanding the veneration of the cult of saints in Egypt as the hagiography of saints for whom shrines have been located. While there are no shrines to compare with what is claimed in the hagiography of Merkourios and Viktor, the presence of objects inscribed with their names in addition to their Coptic hagiographic texts indicates that they were actively venerated in Egypt, although the limited archaeological evidence makes it impossible to determine the location and scale of their veneration. As such, this justifies the use of the hagiography of saints for whom there is limited archaeological evidence of cults in Egypt for the study of phenomena such as visions, as it still contributes to an understanding of the environment in which worship took place and in which the texts narrating these phenomena were written.

³²⁸ See 2.1.4; Flourentzos 2002: 365-6; Budge 1915: 247, 826; Weidmann 1991a: 6; Weidmann 1991b: 7.

³²⁹ Palma di Cesnola, A. 1884: 115, no. 41, Pl. XV, no. 63; E01326.

³³⁰ S00749; Papaconstantinou 2001: 62.

³³¹ Papaconstantinou 2001: 63-4; P.Lond 4 1419; E02224.

³³² P.Oxy. 8 1151; E02285; KSB 1 473; E01302; KSB 1 434; E04082.

³³³ Papaconstantinou 2001: 65.

2.2.2: *Iconography of the Saints*

There are two saints in this thesis for whom there is iconography. The first is Menas, whose depiction on Menas flasks is usually the motif of him standing between two camels³³⁴. Hippolyte Delehaye noted the similarity between this and the image of the god Horus and crocodiles and this observation is still made today given the ‘master of animals’ motif that is arguably present³³⁵. However, the relationship between Horus and crocodiles is more complex than this suggests: While crocodiles represent Horus’ enemy Seth and therefore the motif shows Horus’ dominance, Horus can also be depicted as a falcon-headed crocodile and as a two-headed deity with Seth, which represents when they are cooperating to protect the Egyptian king³³⁶. As Abu Mina does not seem to have usurped a pagan cult site, this similarity is probably a coincidence and only an indicator of the saint’s particular relationship with camels. Krause calls it ‘untenable’ that the iconography of Menas was derived from representations of Horus and Meinardus is probably right that depictions of saints spearing crocodiles come from those of Saint George spearing the dragon³³⁷. It is possible that Menas’ iconography was affected by both Egyptian and Christian influences, although the extent of either cannot be known. This suggests that this image of the saint was recognisable to visitors to the shrine but also was disseminated via the flasks to the places from which pilgrims came. So, iconography was a way of spreading the knowledge of saints’ cults or even the cults themselves. Pilgrim flasks are not unique to the cult of Menas or to Egypt, and attempts to classify such objects based on their iconography has had ‘limited success’ in assigning flasks to particular production or distribution centres due to the diversity of the figures depicted on them³³⁸. That being said, the common motif on Menas flasks makes them distinctive regardless of their findspots and sets them apart from those that are damaged and have unclear imagery³³⁹.

The reverse side of Menas flasks, meanwhile, seems to have conveyed a range of messages, judging by the diverse images on them. This suggests that the primary focus on these flasks was Menas, which as they seem to be *enlogiai* from his shrine makes sense, and that the images on the reverse were decorative or intended to broadcast something that the flasks guaranteed an audience. One of the most common images, appearing on sixteen published

³³⁴ Bangert 2010: 306; Cannuyer 1997: 141; see 2.1.5.

³³⁵ Delehaye, H. 1927: 201; Cannuyer, C. 2020: 97; Cannuyer 1997: 144, 150.

³³⁶ Wilkinson, R. H. 2003: 199, 202.

³³⁷ See 2.1.3; Krause, M. 1991: V, 1590; Krause, M. 1978: col. 1132; Meinardus 1999: 96; Meinardus 2002: 33.

³³⁸ Grabar and Fourmont 1958: 7-9; Metzger, C. 1981: 5, 7, 9, 17; Anderson 2004: 80.

³³⁹ Anderson 2004: 81, 83.

Menas flasks, is that of Saint Thekla ‘among the beasts’³⁴⁰. This could be the Saint Thekla who was martyred in Asia Minor and whose martyrdom is preserved in Greek, for which Stephen Davis makes a reasonable argument based on the geography of her martyrdom and the uncertain geography of Menas’ life given the contradictory narratives found in his hagiography³⁴¹. However, an alternative interpretation is that this is a conflation with the Thekla whose martyrdom survives in Coptic and recounts her death in Alexandria along with her brother Paese³⁴². That being said, given that the Saint Thekla who was martyred in Asia Minor faced beasts as part of her martyrdom and the Thekla who was martyred in Alexandria did not and that there is a small shrine dedicated to the former near to Lake Mareotis at At-Tum, it is more likely that Davis is right in his identification of the Thekla on the Menas flasks³⁴³. Either way, in contrast to Sophronius’ account of Cyrus and John, this suggests that shrines advertised one another and shared economic benefits. An alternative interpretation that would also be mutually beneficial for Menas’ and Thekla’s cults is that healing shrines could be gendered spaces, as, in Saint Artemios’ tradition, he heals men and Saint Febronia heals women, so there could have been space for Thekla to heal women at Menas’ shrine³⁴⁴. There is support for this in the Greek version of the miracles of Menas, attributed to Timothy of Alexandria, in which the saint saves a woman called Sophia from being raped by a soldier, before she visits both his and Thekla’s shrines³⁴⁵. The Coptic version of this miracle does not include mention of Thekla’s shrine³⁴⁶.

Davis provides a timeframe of the production of the Menas flasks from 480 to 560 CE and Susanne Bangert one from 500 to 640 CE³⁴⁷. This coincides with the peak of the Christian cult of images, particularly at shrines where incubation was practised. This would support Matthew Dal Santo’s criticism of Leslie Brubaker’s argument that the cult of images did not flourish until the seventh century, an argument which does not consider images of saints in all media but only painted portraits and is thus limited in scope³⁴⁸. Further, the Menas flasks are not an isolated case of a saint’s iconography being presented and distributed at this time, as objects that depict other saints are attested³⁴⁹. And it seems that, as has been observed of Saint Phocas at Sinope and Saint Isidore at Chios, such depictions varied enough to distinguish the saints, even

³⁴⁰ Davis 2001: 117; Dal Santo 2011: 34; e.g. Metzger 1981: 35 no. 76, 39 no. 97, 94 fig. 63, 103 fig. 80; Ritter 2020: 264; Higgins, S. 2019: 69-70.

³⁴¹ Davis 2001: 122.

³⁴² Reymond, E. A. E. and Barns, J. W. B. 1973: 56-61, 75-6, 167-70, 181-2.

³⁴³ Dagron, G. 1978: 247; Ritter 2020: 264.

³⁴⁴ Crisafulli, V. S. and Nesbitt, J. W. 1997: xiv.

³⁴⁵ E07443.

³⁴⁶ Bacot, S. 2011: 70-1.

³⁴⁷ Davis 2001: 118; Bangert 2007: 27; see 2.2.1.

³⁴⁸ Dal Santo 2011: 31-3; Brubaker, L. 1998: II, 1215, 1217, 1253-4.

³⁴⁹ Dal Santo 2011: 33.

though these two were both considered protectors of seafarers. It is therefore possible that images were becoming an increasingly necessary component of the cult of saints in order for saints to be recognised, especially if they were to be imagined in visions. Hagiography preserved in Greek, such as that of Cosmas and Damian and that of Symeon the Younger, includes supplicants being shown images of the saints who appeared to them after their visions and positively identifying them, although such episodes have not survived in Coptic³⁵⁰. This suggests that the description of the saint during their appearance, and the knowledge of the audience of the iconography of the saint, was considered to be sufficient by the writers and/or copyists of the hagiography used in this thesis.

While Menas flasks are perhaps the most distinctive object to depict iconography for Menas, depictions of him are also found on the pyxis with the accession number 1879, 1220.1 in the British Museum, dated to the sixth century, and proposed to have been made in Alexandria although acquired in Italy³⁵¹. This depiction is a more ornate version of that on the flasks, with the saint flanked by two camels and additionally surrounded by an archway and other figures, such as angels. The depiction on the pyxis seems to fit into a standard Coptic type, with the saint being short-haired and beardless, according to the description in 1927 of a pyxis in the Vatican by Edward Capps Jr, although the accuracy of that is not without question given that neither the Vatican pyxis nor that depicting Menas have been reliably provenanced to Egypt³⁵². What has more reliable provenance, meanwhile, is paintings of Menas in the church in Djeme³⁵³. Given that there are over fifty inscriptions naming Menas throughout Egypt, the presence of paintings of him in a church in Djeme is not surprising, although one might have expected instead paintings of Phoibammon given the proximity of the monastery at Deir el-Bahari³⁵⁴. The wall paintings can be determined to depict Menas based on the surviving parts of the inscriptions captioning the images³⁵⁵. This certainly suggests that he was known in Upper Egypt, although that is potentially unsurprising given that he was also known across the early Christian world³⁵⁶.

The other saint included in this thesis for whom there is iconography is Merkourios. His iconography shares similarities with that of other military saints, including those whose hagiography survives predominantly or solely in Greek and those whose hagiography survives predominantly or solely in Coptic³⁵⁷. Merkourios is described in his hagiography as either

³⁵⁰ Dal Santo 2011: 43-4.

³⁵¹ British Museum 2021.

³⁵² British Museum 2021; Capps, E. Jr. 1927: 331-2.

³⁵³ Wilber 1940: 86; Atiya 1991: V, 1496, 1586.

³⁵⁴ See 2.1.2.

³⁵⁵ Wilber 1940: 91-2, Fig. 1, Fig. 3.

³⁵⁶ See Chapter 1: 2.3.

³⁵⁷ White, M. M. 2011: 386; Meinardus 2002: 33-4.

wielding a spear, mounted on horseback, or both. This description appears in images too, as the icon B.49 from the Sinai depicts a figure on horseback that, based on the inscription that names him, ‘the saint Merkourios’ ‘ο αγνος ηρκυρηος’, may be Merkourios and, if it is, is claimed by Leslie MacCoull to be the earliest equestrian representation of him³⁵⁸. This is, however, debatable. There are two icons of Merkourios in the collection from the Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai recorded by the University of Michigan, Princeton University, and Alexandria University with the one discussed by MacCoull being Michigan Inventory Number 372 and the other being Michigan Inventory Number 1408³⁵⁹. The former has been dated to the tenth century and the latter is undated. There are also potentially two other icons that depict Merkourios. One is Copt. 66 from the Biblioteca Apostolica in the Vatican which is dated tentatively to the ninth or tenth centuries and is considered to depict the saint even though the caption of that and the depiction of Saint Theodore Stratelates are reversed despite their names being present in the icons³⁶⁰. The other is Or. 6801 in the British Museum, which is dated to the tenth or eleventh centuries, and which MacCoull states is captioned wrongly in Jules Leroy’s book as another saint – which seems to be accurate, as it is captioned as Saint Theodore Stratelates but in Leroy’s description is said to be part of a parchment including a eulogy and homilies to Merkourios and there also seems to be a caption indicating Julian the Apostate in the image, which would be appropriate given the saint’s association with his death³⁶¹. Finally, Merkourios is depicted alongside other ‘warrior-saints’ such as Saint George and Saint Theodore Stratelates in a church excavated by Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt in Tebtunis³⁶².

The horseback description is a motif associated with military saints, in which there is variation in that some saints, especially Saints George, Demetrius, and Theodore Stratelates, are in Eastern tradition depicted with a smaller figure behind them³⁶³. Meinardus proposed that this small figure is part of the iconographic representation of saints in locations under Muslim rule, but there is no such depiction of Merkourios³⁶⁴. Nonetheless, the depiction of Merkourios fits into the wider iconographic tradition of military saints³⁶⁵. While the two amulets found on Cyprus have been theorised to depict Merkourios, as one is uninscribed and the inscription on the other gives no indication of which saint is being shown, it would be more logical to attribute

³⁵⁸ MacCoull 1982: 407.

³⁵⁹ Princeton University, *The Icons of Sinai* 2017c; Princeton University, *The Icons of Sinai* 2017a; Princeton University, *The Icons of Sinai* 2017b.

³⁶⁰ MacCoull 1982: 412; Leroy, J. 1974: 184, Pl. 105.1, Pl. 105.2.

³⁶¹ See Chapter 1: 2.5; MacCoull 1982: 412; Leroy 1974: 188-9, Pl. 106.1.

³⁶² Boutros, R. W. 2005: 127.

³⁶³ Meinardus, O. 1973a: 142-4, 148-54, 155; Dal Santo 2011: 40.

³⁶⁴ Meinardus 1973a: 155; Meinardus 2002: 35.

³⁶⁵ Walter, C. 2003: 281.

this to the wider tradition demonstrated by Meinardus and further explored by Christopher Walter³⁶⁶. As such depictions seem to have also entered hagiography in Egypt that is preserved in Coptic only for military saints, this suggests that writers, artists, and audiences perceived a difference between saints who were portrayed as having been physicians while alive and those who were portrayed as having been soldiers. However, while a distinction was made between saints' written and iconographic depictions based on the miracles that they were believed to perform and the relationship between this and roles that they were claimed to have held while alive, Walter's discussion concerning ranks in the terrestrial army and titles thereof shows that titles do not necessarily correspond with roles that saints are said to have held while serving – apart from Merkourios – which indicates that the depiction of military saints was intended to inspire awe within the audience or depict the saints as protectors, rather than be accurate³⁶⁷.

The depictions of Merkourios are similar to descriptions of his appearance in hagiography and also to the appearance of Menas in hagiography, and for Menas may also be reflected iconographically on tokens and icons although the example in Leroy's book is poorly preserved and so lacks a name, and the book has proven to have inaccurate labelling³⁶⁸. This similarity may be because the cults and traditions of both of these saints were known in Greek before they reached Egypt, which would be further justified by their similarity to depictions of Greek military saints such as Demetrius³⁶⁹. It could therefore be asked why Menas was depicted with camels on Menas flasks, especially when the flasks may have had a protective purpose. The depiction may have been to distinguish him from other military saints using a part of his tradition that was identifiable based on his hagiography. This would consequently support the idea that the intention of these flasks' production was to advertise the saint's cult, and as there were other military saints venerated across the Mediterranean and Levant, the depiction of him with camels would have clearly distinguished him. The production of the flasks between the fifth and seventh centuries would perhaps suggest that this was a time at which the cult was felt to need this kind of advertisement, or that the flasks' production was stopped contemporaneously to the Arab conquest for reasons relating to that event.

These depictions of saints present the problem of how it was possible for deceased individuals to appear in visions³⁷⁰. It is possible that the iconography such as that found on Menas flasks was an indication of what audiences were supposed to see, which was reaffirmed by

³⁶⁶ See 2.2.1.

³⁶⁷ Walter 2003: 279-80.

³⁶⁸ Weidmann 1991a: 6; Weidmann 1991b: 7; Budge 1915: 264-5, 836-7; Drescher 1946: 14-17, 24-5, 112-13, 118-19; Devos 1959: 456, 458, 460; Dal Santo 2011: 35-6; Leroy 1974: Pl. 106.2.

³⁶⁹ Walter 2003: 89.

³⁷⁰ Dal Santo 2011: 40-2.

the iconography of various saints in a range of media. Perhaps it was valuable for an image of each saint that was standardised in some way to be broadcast not only to make saints identifiable to potential visitors and donors to shrines, but also to create a consensus of what should be seen in visions and thus make the experience seem more realistic to the audience and maybe even more familiar and comfortable, to support the veneration of saints as healers, helpers, and protectors.

3: Functions of Shrines and Fulfilled by Saints

3.1: Functions of Shrines

As has been shown in this chapter, the surviving shrines all seem to have functioned as places of healing³⁷¹. That does not mean that that was their only function, as the shrine of Kollouthos also had an oracle which, while addressing many questions about cures for illnesses in the oracle tickets, is not mentioned in the saint's hagiography and was also asked questions about life and business choices, or to settle disputes³⁷². Shrines also seem to have been part of larger institutions such as monasteries or churches³⁷³. It could therefore be that individual characteristics of the saints were emphasised elsewhere in these institutions and that shrines had a specific function, in which case the hagiography functions as a synthesis of all the roles fulfilled by saints or an opportunity to emphasise particular roles. It should also be noted that, within hagiography, shrines are not mentioned as being part of larger institutions, which suggests that either they did not have to be, or that the emphasis in these texts was on the roles of the saints and on the functions of the shrines, to encourage veneration of the saints and visitation of their shrines by showing that they were effective spaces for healing regardless of the different roles of the saints. This therefore enabled the enrichment of the institutions associated with the shrines, and continued to present them as performing a crucial role in the intercession between worshippers and the saints.

³⁷¹ See 2.1.4.

³⁷² Delattre 2010: 172; Papini 1998: 393, 395.

³⁷³ See 2.1.1; 2.1.3.

3.2: Roles Fulfilled by Saints

As shown by the textual evidence, there was a relationship between the occupations that saints were claimed to have had while alive and the roles that they were claimed to perform as part of their cults³⁷⁴. Therefore, an example of the dissonance between textual and archaeological evidence is that this variation is not clearly exemplified by most of the shrines that have been found. For example, the documentary evidence found at the shrine of Kollouthos shows that oracular practices took place there³⁷⁵. However, none of the hagiography included in this thesis mentions such practices. The focus of the textual evidence on healing rather than on other practices such as oracles or ritual ablutions suggests that it was edited to be more orthoprax rather than written to reflect the functions of the shrines, given the pagan and demonic associations of divination³⁷⁶. It therefore seems to be that saints' hagiography focused on only elements of their cults that were not related to pagan practices and thus emphasised the saints as idealised Christians and sought to inspire or justify their veneration, rather than providing an accurate reflection of their roles within their cults in practice. In reality, similarities and differences in the roles of saints between the hagiographical and documentary and archaeological evidence seem to have resulted from a practical standpoint, given that the shrines must have had functions within their larger sites and within their communities and given that hagiography emphasised the active roles of saints in solving problems faced by these communities³⁷⁷. Hagiographers emphasised the religious role of the shrines and thus encouraged participation in saints' cults, while in reality there were also economic activities happening whose inclusion in hagiography would have undermined the promotion of the need for the clergy to intercede on behalf of laypeople wishing to access the divine. Additionally, hagiography reflects the individuality of the saints to encourage the worship of their individual cults, whereas the functions of shrines may not have varied so widely in practice because the problems faced by their local communities were probably similar.

It has also been seen in this chapter that it is possible for the textual and archaeological evidence to show similarities, such as the apparent practices of incubation at the shrines of Kollouthos and Menas, the spaces for which may have been identified, and the practice being

³⁷⁴ See Chapter 1: 4.2.

³⁷⁵ Delattre 2010: 172; Papini 1998: 393, 395.

³⁷⁶ Kazhdan 1991: I, 661.

³⁷⁷ Devonshire Jones et al. 2013: 455-6; Atiya 1991: V, 1586.

attested in the hagiography³⁷⁸. Nonetheless, the dissonance between the textual and archaeological evidence demonstrates why it is essential for the two to be considered side-by-side in a study of the presentation and practices of a phenomenon, in this case visions, within the cult of saints³⁷⁹. It is only now that both forms of evidence have been analysed that it is possible to understand what the textual evidence reveals and what it occludes. As a result, the following chapters will be able to analyse the visions within the context of their creation and reception, and will provide a comprehensive understanding of how they are presented and functioned in the hagiography and how they fitted into the physical practices that have been indicated by the archaeological evidence.

³⁷⁸ See 2.1.4; Grossmann 2014: II, 242; Grossmann 1998: 288; Grossmann 2007: 47; Thompson 1993a: 71-2, 76-8; Thompson 1993b: 55, 58-60; Drescher 1946: 12, 31-2, 111, 122-3.

³⁷⁹ See 1.1.

Chapter 3: Visions Experienced by Saints

1: Introduction

1.1: Chapter Aims

The textual and archaeological evidence of the cult of saints in Egypt has been outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, providing the context in which the cult was celebrated and in which the hagiography of saints was written and recited¹. This includes the contextualisation of the spaces in which visions were recounted and claimed to occur. As those chapters provide a fuller combined picture of the cult of saints in Egypt into which an analysis of the visions can now be placed, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 will offer a thorough and comprehensive analysis of visions that could not be achieved with textual analysis of the hagiography alone. This will enable the thesis to illustrate how in various physical and spiritual contexts the presentation of visions by writers and/or copyists varied according to the recipients of visions in the texts. This will illustrate how messaging and the environment of the cult of saints informed the decisions made by writers and enhanced the audience's experience of particular features in the narratives.

This chapter will demonstrate how visions act as a mark of distinction by which saints were elevated and separated from laypeople due to their sanctity during their trials and executions². An example of the distinction between saints and laypeople conveyed in visions is the capacity for saints to see holy, non-human characters such as angels, and another is the ability of saints to experience their visions anywhere rather than in already consecrated space like a church or shrine³. These distinctions therefore also show that, as well as the two groups of characters being viewed and treated as distinct by writers and audiences, there were means by which this distinction was indicated that were consistently used by writers and thus presumably consistently recognised by the audience, which were in use at least when the surviving hagiographical texts were written⁴.

¹ See Chapter 1: 1.1; see Chapter 2: 1.1.

² Ward-Perkins, B. 2020: 9.

³ Uljas, S. 2019: 76; Drescher, J. 1946: 109, 139; Thompson, S. E. 1993b: 43-4.

⁴ See Chapter 1: 2.1.

1.2: Visions

This section will situate the thesis within the wider historiography on dreams and visions. Firstly, it will outline previous scholarship on this topic in a Late Antique and Byzantine context because that is the one in which material preserved in Coptic is generally viewed. Integrated into this outline will be a summary of the terminology found in Coptic and Greek texts that was used in Late Antiquity and Byzantium to refer to the phenomena being discussed, particularly those preserved in Coptic hagiographical texts. Additionally, the ancient Egyptian context of Coptic texts, which commonly receives only limited acknowledgement and attention, will be introduced.

1.2.1: The Study and Terminology of Byzantine Visions

Visions and dreams hold a key place in Christian tradition and the ancient Mediterranean world⁵. Otto Meinardus explained that many visions of biblical figures are found in the Coptic Synaxarium, as well as visions which led to the election of patriarchs in the Coptic Church whenever there was a dispute over who should be chosen, such as Demetrius being elected in the second century because his predecessor Julian was instructed as such by an angel⁶. Visions have retained their relevance to Coptic Christians into modern Egypt, as in the latter half of the twentieth century there was an especially high number of reports of these phenomena⁷.

Visions have been studied typologically but not as narrative episodes in their own right. Visions form part of miracles, for which patterns have been studied and comparisons made for a long time⁸. Miracles and the healing that commonly results from them have received significant scholarly attention within the study of Latin and Greek hagiography⁹. Therefore, the study of a related phenomenon will complement past and current research and provide a new perspective on early Christian tradition by two contributions. The first is the study of hagiography preserved in Coptic rather than that preserved in Latin and/or Greek. The second is the study of visions as a separate phenomenon from miracles. Within this thesis, visions are considered distinct from miracles, as they are widely considered to be a sensory experience but not the actual change brought about by the miracle, such as destruction or healing, and thereby form part of the wider miraculous experience. A number of case studies in this thesis will involve visions as part or

⁵ Moreira, I. 2000: 4, 18; Csepregi, I. 2002: 89; Mohr, H. 2006; Nasrallah, L. S. 2003: 7, 30; Meinardus, O. F. A. 2002: 94.

⁶ Meinardus 2002: 94, 96 ; CopticChurch.net 2022b.

⁷ Meinardus 2002: 93, 95.

⁸ Déroche, V. 2000: 164.

⁹ Csepregi, I. 2005: 97; Van Dam, R. 1993: 84.

prerequisites of miracles, but the miracles themselves will only be observed for narrative purposes.

Studies of visions in the ancient world have suggested that they formed part of a key experience for religious societies that pre-dated ‘the emergence of intellectual knowledge’¹⁰. The argument by scholars like Violet MacDermot, using Egyptian, Greek, and Jewish traditions as examples, that the perception of visions as a revelation in the ancient world indicates a lack of self-consciousness and intellectual thought in those undergoing the experience and those witnessing it discounts the value that visions had in these societies by dismissing them as an exercise born out of ignorance rather than a useful tool for participants¹¹. This argument comes from the application of the role of visions and dreams in our modern society and their place in the human mind rather than from an appreciation of how visions were actually used by worshippers and those who could exercise control over them¹². While the study of the visionary experience in terms of psychology and society can be useful, this chapter and the following one will demonstrate that the presentation of that experience in writing was a conscious, intellectual exercise and that visions were used by writers to direct the behaviour of worshippers within religious practices and institutions. The interdisciplinary study of this thesis will realign both the contextual and the critical approaches currently being applied to visions in Late Antiquity using Coptic case studies, and will propose that it would be beneficial to scholarship to consider visions in a new narrative, literary way while also contextualising the phenomenon according to its presentation and audience¹³.

In English, the term ‘vision’ describes three phenomena: the sense of eyesight; a concept within the mind of an artist; and the appearance of something, often religious and/or prophetic, witnessed by an individual or group¹⁴. The third phenomenon is that which is being researched in this thesis.

The Coptic term for ‘vision’ employed in the case studies used in this thesis is generally ‘*ἑορμα*’, the Greek loanword ‘*ὄραμα*’. Specifically, it can mean ‘vision’ or ‘dream’, and more broadly ‘something that is seen, a sight, a spectacle’¹⁵. The experiences described are thus predominantly visual¹⁶. However, voices are heard, touch is felt, and sweet smells are described,

¹⁰ MacDermot, V. 1971: 1.

¹¹ MacDermot 1971: 1, 2, 4, 11.

¹² Dodds, E. R. 1965: 69.

¹³ Keskiäho 2015: 11.

¹⁴ MacDermot 1971: 1; Nissinen, M. 2017: 20.

¹⁵ Liddell, H. G. and Scott, R. 1996: 1244b.

¹⁶ Oberhelman, S. M. 2021: I, 387.

often in great detail, making the experience a more complex one than its nomenclature suggests¹⁷.

Jesse Keskiaho summarises the phenomenon of dreams and visions as ‘represent[ing] a break with the everyday perception of man, and allow[ing] him perhaps the most concrete experience of the other’¹⁸. It should also be noted that not every dream can be considered to be a vision, but that visions may manifest within dreams¹⁹. Dreams and visions are consistently treated as distinct in scholarship, however the distinction is rarely defined and in fact they are not distinguished in the New Testament²⁰. In Greek, waking visions and dream visions were distinguished with separate terms. The term for a waking vision is ‘ὄναρ’ and that for a dream vision is ‘ὕπαρ’²¹. These terms were originally used in Homeric poetry but were subsequently used in saints’ *Lives*²². There might have also been some distinction in Egypt, but this is mainly supposed through MacDermot’s speculation about the importance of waking experiences to visions²³. Given that both are still considered to be ‘visions’, they can be understood as subsets of a wider phenomenon rather than separate phenomena, so within this thesis visions and dreams will be treated as ‘a single phenomenon’, enabling the analysis of as many variables as possible within the texts involved and a full understanding of how and why writers presented visions as manifesting in the way that they did²⁴.

The most detailed discussion of the differences between dreams and visions was given by Alexander Kazhdan in the *ODB*. He defined ‘dreams’ and the related ‘dream visions’ as ‘significant sensory phenomena’ and emphasised their informative function and acceptance within church doctrine²⁵. This shows the utility of studying visions within the context of the cult of saints and Church institutions in which audiences encountered narratives about them. Kazhdan defined ‘visions’ as predominantly visual, describing them as ‘supernatural phenomena viewed primarily by prophets and saints’, but did not preclude laymen from experiencing them – which would necessitate their experiences being guided through the direction of the clergy²⁶. The main difference in the definitions of ‘visions’ and ‘dream visions’ is that it is necessary for visions to have a visual element and not for dreams. It may therefore be posited that a phenomenon experienced by a character may be termed a dream if it is explicitly stated in the narrative that

¹⁷ MacDermot 1971: 1; Harvey, S. A. 2006: 1.

¹⁸ Keskiaho 2015: 3.

¹⁹ Walde, C. 2006.

²⁰ Oberhelman 2021: I, 394; Constantinou, S. 2014: 21; Le Goff, J. 1985: 172; Neil, B. 2021: 2.

²¹ Narro, Á. 2018: 346, 347.

²² Narro 2018: 363.

²³ MacDermot 1971: 56.

²⁴ Moreira: 2000: 5.

²⁵ Kazhdan, A. P. 1991: I, 661.

²⁶ Kazhdan 1991: III, 2179.

that character is asleep during it. So, visions and dreams are not mutually exclusive, but part of the same miraculous phenomenon of sensory experience. However, it can be argued that ‘vision’ is a more appropriate term than ‘dream’ within hagiography, despite the latter’s acceptance in Church doctrine²⁷. This is because the doctrinal acceptability of dreams and visions varies across Abrahamic and pagan religious traditions²⁸. In Byzantine tradition, visions are generally associated with the Church and Christianity, whereas dreams retain pagan associations alongside their Christian ones, and there are therefore contemporary issues with the acceptance of the phenomena perceived within them and the practices of dream interpretation (oneiromancy), which was used in pre-Christian traditions, including in Egypt²⁹. The Greek term ‘ὄραμα’, however, covers both something seen while awake or asleep³⁰. The term’s wide-ranging applicability provides an explanation as to why it is the most common term used also in the Coptic hagiographical texts discussed in this thesis. This term, ‘ὄραμα’, is indeed the one most frequently used to describe visions experienced by characters in hagiography. It can be contrasted only with the term ‘φάντασμα’, which is something imagined and invisible³¹. The latter, presented as ‘*phantasia*’, also has an association with demons entering sleepers to deceive them and with ‘fantasy’³². This makes the latter term less appropriate for use in hagiography, based on the fact that writers treat the saints as though they, and therefore their posthumous appearances, were real and therefore the acknowledgement of them as a product of the imagination would be counterintuitive³³. The distinction between ‘vision’ and ‘dream’ in the term ‘ὄραμα’ is therefore one of scholarship only and this thesis will show how and when terms were applied to visions and thus how writers used them as part of their direction of their audience’s experience of the phenomenon.

Kazhdan also discussed typology in the *ODB*. The types of dreams that he identified in Byzantine tradition were: ‘*hypnion*’, caused by distress from daily life; ‘*phantasma*’, witnessed between the states of dreaming and waking; ‘*oneiros*’, symbolic and requiring interpretation; ‘*horama*’, a ‘prophetic vision’; and ‘*chrematismos*’, an informative dream in which the dreamer witnesses God or another divine figure, such as a saint, which further supports the idea that ‘*horama*’ or ‘ὄραμα’ is the most widely applicable term for visions used in texts. *Oneiros* is further subdivided in the *Oneirokritikon* into two categories: theomatic and allegorical, the first where

²⁷ Kazhdan 1991: I, 661.

²⁸ Kesiahho 2015: 3.

²⁹ Kazhdan 1991: I, 661; Oberhelman 2021: I, 387; Prada, L. 2016: II, 1221-2; Prada, L. 2017: 4.

³⁰ Neil 2021: 12.

³¹ Liddell and Scott 1996: 1916a.

³² Krönung 2014: 46; Harrison, K. E. 2021: 354.

³³ E.g. Hidding, A. 2020: 70; Weidmann, F. 1991a: 4; Weidmann, F. 1991b: 4; Scott, A. B. 1993a: 133; Scott, A. B. 1993b: 103.

things which are seen are as they seem and the second being symbolic, with its meaning varying according to all manner of characteristics of the dreamer³⁴. Clearly, the issues of terminology and typology of dreams are not new. Like Kazhdan, Isabel Moreira provides a range of terminology for dreams that is used in Merovingian hagiography, however she observes that these terms are ‘primarily descriptive’, necessitating the further study of the circumstances in which writers used terms and thus their role within the presentation of visions in the cult of saints³⁵. The three kinds of dream that could be considered analogous to the ‘*oneiros*’ and the ‘*horama*’ are: ‘*somnium*’, an “‘enigmatic” dream’ requiring interpretation; ‘*visio*’, a ‘prophetic dream’ which did not require interpretation; and ‘*oraculum*’, in which a figure of holy authority such as a priest or a saint ‘revealed the future to the dreamer’³⁶. Moreira notes that ‘*somnium*’ and ‘*visio*’ were used interchangeably. She also discusses oneirological terminology, but these were predominantly pagan, with Christian treatises on the matter being a rarity³⁷. Dominic Montserrat also discussed types of visions, but identified two that relate specifically to healing miracles, and therefore do not provide broad enough scope for this thesis given that audiences were presented with narratives concerning many kinds of miracles³⁸.

Distinctions made in hagiography underline the utility and validity of using typologies of these phenomena in scholarship³⁹. However, within scholarship there is variation in what is considered to be the appropriate typology for visions⁴⁰. Stavroula Constantinou provides one typology: Temptation, prophecy, revelation, premonition, warning, edification, and healing⁴¹. Healing miracles are particularly common in collections of posthumous miracles⁴². There is notable overlap of function between the types that Constantinou proposes, particularly the visions associated with imparting information to the one(s) experiencing them. Hubert Mohr meanwhile distinguished between ‘prophetic’ visions, those which provide perception of future events, and ‘imaginative’ ones of mythic or historical people, events, places etc⁴³. He approaches this from a social and psychoanalytical perspective, similarly to MacDermot, thus interpreting visions literally rather than considering their cultural or religious associations, whether they are presented as real or not. So, while he does consider them to be ‘social events’, he does so from the perspective of the visions happening rather than how they are presented in accounts. The

³⁴ Nasrallah 2003: 29.

³⁵ Moreira 2000: 6.

³⁶ Moreira 2000: 6.

³⁷ Moreira 2000: 17.

³⁸ Montserrat, D. 1998: 271.

³⁹ Booth, P. 2013: 83.

⁴⁰ Oberhelman 2021: I, 387; Neil 2021: 14.

⁴¹ Constantinou 2014: 23.

⁴² Kazhdan 1995: 80.

⁴³ Mohr 2006.

presentation of visions in accounts of them is therefore in significant need of study in order for the phenomenon to be understood from cultural and religious perspectives. Scholarship is gradually approaching doing this, so this thesis will provide a framework in which it can be done. For example, Mohr identifies different participants in visions, the mediums (or visionaries), the co-visionaries, and the audience. He also distinguishes between visions that happen within a culture or faith's established boundaries and those that do not, which as an observation supports the argument that certain phenomena would have been emphasised and others suppressed within hagiography according to their Christian and pagan associations⁴⁴.

While the aim of this thesis is to establish conventions of visions, this does not involve providing a definitive typology, as this presents problems with classification due to the complexity of the phenomenon and its use in the texts, especially as often it performs more than one function and it is not possible to know definitively the function(s) intended by the writers who wrote and/or copied the texts⁴⁵.

Constantinou refers to the large number of visions in Byzantine hagiography and their close association with miracles⁴⁶. Visions are a form of miracle that can be experienced by both saints and worshippers, and often happen alongside other miracles, as is the case in the sample texts used in this thesis. Kazhdan defined miracles as 'extraordinary events, either beyond the range of corporeal nature or extremely unlikely'⁴⁷. His definition implies that miracles are more physical in nature than visions. He also stipulated that miracles can only be performed through holy means, limiting this performance to God, the Virgin Mary, and saints known for enacting thaumaturgical phenomena. While the devil could perform acts equitable to miracles, including generating visions, their demonic origin made them undoable⁴⁸. As such, this thesis focuses on visions in which heavenly beings appear, in order to understand their relationship with and prove how they are distinct from miracles.

Demonic origins of visions are acknowledged as possible in the writings of Tertullian, which say that visions are demonic, holy, or result from the soul⁴⁹. He also classified ecstatic experiences separately. Perhaps ecstatic visions should be considered as a subset of visions, given that they involve characters having the same sensory experience, albeit 'self-induced' and a 'condition of rapture'⁵⁰. This suggestion is supported by Laura Nasrallah's statement that 'in

⁴⁴ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4.

⁴⁵ Ryan, W. F. 1999: 6.

⁴⁶ Constantinou 2014: 21.

⁴⁷ Kazhdan 1991: II, 1378.

⁴⁸ MacDermot 1971: 78; Kazhdan, A. P. 1995: 74.

⁴⁹ Keskiäho 2015: 5.

⁵⁰ Krönung, B. 2014: 41.

antiquity, dreams, prophecies, visions, and oracles were understood to be part of the same basic phenomenon', that of the 'communication of the divine with the human'⁵¹. Within antiquity, the gods were believed to be in a constant state of communication with humanity, and then within Christianity this communication became specific to a chosen few, although the issue of with whom the gods should communicate was present prior to Christianity and is also found in Gnostic interpretations of visions of the resurrected Christ⁵². Therefore, the study of visions will illustrate how the intercession of the clergy in laypeople's understanding of visions and access to the divine was practised in the cult of saints.

Rapture is a feeling of dissociation, of one part of one's consciousness still being within one's body and the other being outside it observing⁵³. Thus, ecstasy does not describe visions, but the state in which the body is when they occur⁵⁴. The inducement of such visions was part of ascetic practice for establishing contact with the divine, although not for forcing that power to act according to the practitioner's desires, using techniques like meditation and fasting⁵⁵. The state of ecstasy can be considered similar to that of sleep, which provides another demonstration that dreams as well as ecstatic visions should be considered as visions rather than as separate phenomena⁵⁶. Ecstatic visions should therefore not be viewed negatively but instead as a form of the phenomenon which writers could use⁵⁷.

Miracles in the Bible are well-known, but visions occur as well and for the early church fathers formed the basis of the Christian theology on dreams⁵⁸. While dreaming in the Bible begins with Adam's sleep while God made Eve, there was an emphasis on prophecy, on the experience of figures such as Daniel⁵⁹. This provided justification for dreams and visions to be perceived as a means for God to impart information to humanity⁶⁰. The perception of dreams and visions as such a means also facilitated the idea that they would only manifest to people chosen by God such as martyrs⁶¹. However, while the idea of restricted access to divine revelations was present in Late Antique Christianity, being attested from the fourth century, from studying the sixth- and seventh-century literature, Moreira argues that it did not 'supplant' the idea of open access⁶². While it is arguable that institutionalised control of revelations was

⁵¹ Nasrallah 2003: 1, 31; Nissinen, M. 2017: 10.

⁵² Nasrallah 2003: 1-2, 31, 60; Pagels, E. H. 1978: 418, 423.

⁵³ Welte, F. M. 2006a; Auffarth, C. 2006.

⁵⁴ Krönung 2014: 45.

⁵⁵ Krönung 2014: 41-2; Nissinen 2017: 11, 13, 20.

⁵⁶ Krönung 2014: 43; Welte 2006a.

⁵⁷ Dodds 1965: 71-2.

⁵⁸ Moreira 2000: 18.

⁵⁹ Moreira 2000: 18-19.

⁶⁰ Moreira 2000: 20.

⁶¹ Moreira 2000: 20, 31; Pagels 1978: 417; Brown, P. 1995: 57-8; Campenhausen, H. von 1969: 178, 183.

⁶² Moreira 2000: 20; Brown, P. 1971: 80; Brown, P. 1981: 58, 50.

needed within the Church, the presence of visions experienced by laypeople in hagiography shows that the concept of open access remained, which is perhaps due to ingrained associations between dreaming and divine healing, the popularity of the cult of saints, and the impossibility of policing the ingrained associations within the cult⁶³. While open access continued within the cult of saints, nevertheless the writers of the texts studied in this thesis were trying to impose certain conditions on who could experience the divine, and where and how those experiences could be had⁶⁴.

This section has outlined the historiography on dreams and visions in Late Antiquity and Byzantium and thereby established the present emphasis in scholarship on dreams and on hagiography that has survived in Greek, which necessitates the study of visions and of hagiography that has survived in Coptic. It has situated the research presented in this thesis into the wider scholarship on the topic and has determined the approach that will be taken, namely that dreams and visions will be treated as a single phenomenon manifested in different ways rather than as separate phenomena, which seems to reflect the perception at the time that the textual evidence being used was created. This section also integrated the outline with explanations and critiques of terminology that was used in hagiography that has survived in Coptic and Greek and a proposal that the Greek loan word into Coptic ‘*ἁπορρομα*’ may be the most frequently used in the case studies because of its wide applicability.

1.2.2: Visions in Ancient Egypt

This section will determine whether the phenomenon of incubatory healing and visionary experience in Egypt is part of a continuous tradition, and through that whether any pre-Christian elements are found in the narration of the phenomenon. While hagiography preserved in Coptic follows the wider hagiographical tradition present across the early Christian world, the concept of divine visionary experience – as well as dream interpretation – was not new to Egypt, existing in its pre-Christian traditions long before Christianity was introduced there⁶⁵. It cannot necessarily be argued that visions in hagiography preserved in Coptic are a direct continuation of those found in earlier Egyptian tradition, as there are significant cultural and religious differences between the two. However, this section is necessary for any pre-Christian influence over the phenomenon of visions and narration of it to be established. This will root the thesis fully in the historical and cultural context behind visions in Coptic hagiography, through both visions in

⁶³ Moreira 2000: 21; Brown 1981: 51-2, 70-1, 75; Buckner, C. L. 2021: 195-200.

⁶⁴ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4; Berger, K. 1992: 204.

⁶⁵ Szpakowska, K. 2011a: 509; Prada, L. 2013: 85, 98-9.

Christian tradition explored in the previous section and visions in Egyptian tradition explored here.

Visions as waking and dream experiences are attested in numerous texts considered within Egyptology to be literary, and ancient Egyptians perceived dreaming as a wake-state on a different plane⁶⁶. An example is the vision of the recently deceased (and apparently assassinated) Amenemhat I by his son and heir, Senwosret I, in *The Teaching of King Amenemhat* on P. Sallier II (P. British Museum EA 10182)⁶⁷. A later example is the Demotic *Stories of Setne Khaemwas*, in the first of the two narratives of which the deceased Naneferkaptah warns Setne against taking the magical but cursed Book of Thoth⁶⁸. When he does not heed this warning, Setne experiences a lengthy vision in which he interacts with a seductress via all his senses, before finding himself naked in the street⁶⁹. In the second narrative, Setne's visions are prophetic rather than deceptive⁷⁰. Prophecy in ancient Egyptian literature does not always involve visions, such as that of Djedi in the story of *King Khufu and the Magicians* on Papyrus Westcar, a magician who foretells (albeit not historically accurately) the order of the latter kings in the 4th Dynasty⁷¹. Even further, the idea of fate is explored in *The Doomed Prince*, in which a prince tries to escape the various means by which it has been prophesied that he will die – with the ending unfortunately having been lost⁷².

Dreams also do not have to be prophetic. In *The Tale of Sinuhe*, the protagonist describes his flight from Egypt following the death of the king as a dream: 'I was like the manner of a dream' 'iw=i mi ššmw rswt'⁷³. Of the extant versions of this tale, the description of Sinuhe's flight as a dream is found on the Ramesside Ashmolean Ostrakon as well as once on the Berlin papyrus, which may demonstrate a cultural shift in attitudes towards dreams⁷⁴. The description has been interpreted in various ways but may have indicated Sinuhe's mental state during his actions⁷⁵. A different interpretation can be offered by an alternative version of the text, in which Sinuhe describes his actions as 'it was like a plan of God' 'iw=ø mi šhr ntr', which may also indicate a dream but is more likely to indicate his feelings of helplessness⁷⁶. There are also non-literary examples of the concept of divine visionary experience in pre-Christian Egypt in spells,

⁶⁶ Lloyd, A. B. 2006: 71; Tribl, G. G. 2011: 26, 28; El-Kilany, E. and Elgammal, I. 2020: 94.

⁶⁷ Parkinson, R. B. 1998: 203, 206.

⁶⁸ Lloyd 2006: 83-4.

⁶⁹ Lichtheim, M. 2006: III, 134-6.

⁷⁰ Lloyd 2006: 85-6.

⁷¹ Lloyd 2006: 75.

⁷² Lloyd 2006: 79-80.

⁷³ Parkinson, R. B. 2006: 146; Ray, J. D. 1987: 89.

⁷⁴ Parkinson 2006: 145, 150.

⁷⁵ Szpakowska, K. 2011b: 65.

⁷⁶ Parkinson 2006: 148-9.

like P. London-Leiden, a Demotic text from the Theban Magical Library, which explain how to invoke a vision of a deity, which shows that it was usually considered necessary to invoke visions, presumably because this is a context of divination⁷⁷.

Visions as dreams are a particularly strong part of ancient Egyptian tradition, with oneiromancy being practised for a long time⁷⁸. Oneiromancy was not the only form of divination practised in ancient Egypt and it was not unique to Egypt, also being practised as part of Greek and Roman religion⁷⁹. The practice involved the use of dream books or dream manuals, which functioned as *omina*, as termed by Assyriologists and as also used in Egypt, and provided prophetic interpretations for specific conditions in dreams⁸⁰. No meaning has been ascribed to dreams by science in the same way as by oneiromancy, but that does not mean that the practice does not provide insights into how ancient Egyptians perceived and approached the phenomenon of dreams⁸¹. John D. Ray identified two types of dream: narrative and static. The first involves unfolding action and the second a message presented in words, although he identified these based solely on Demotic dream-books, making them unsuitable for a universal classification of dreams⁸². Engy El-Kilany and Islam Elgammal instead report three kinds, based on both the content and how the dreams come about: those in which gods would instruct; those which contained a warning; and those which were invoked by a ritual⁸³. While dreams have been shown to be incorporated as part of literary texts, it is perhaps better to try to classify them according to their content or functions rather than according to the literature in which they appear, as Ray attempted to do⁸⁴. There are, however, broad similarities between these proposed types and how dreams in both ancient Egypt and Byzantium are understood in scholarship, which does not indicate whether they were understood similarly by the ancient Egyptians and the Byzantines.

The earliest, firm attestation of oneiromancy in ancient Egypt comes from the Ramesside age in the New Kingdom, and the practice continued into the Graeco-Roman Period⁸⁵. In Egypt, oneiromancy was practised by specialists who required literacy and training, such as physicians, scribes, and priests, although the specifics are unknown given that the pre-Graeco-Roman

⁷⁷ Nissinen 2017: 11, 13, 30; Ritner, R. K. 2008: 32, n. 143, 99, 215; Love, E. 2016: 131, 134; Dieleman, J. 2005: 26, 41.

⁷⁸ Tribl 2011: 24; Prada 2017: 4-5; Szpakowska 2011a: 509-10, 517.

⁷⁹ Prada 2017: 6-7; Renberg, G. H. 2015: 234.

⁸⁰ Quack, J. F. 2006: 175-6, 182; Szpakowska 2011a: 510; Prada, L. 2012: 167; Prada 2017: 6-7.

⁸¹ Tribl 2011: 24.

⁸² Ray 1987: 91-2; Tribl 2011: 26.

⁸³ El-Kilany and Elgammal 2020: 95.

⁸⁴ Ray 1987: 92; Szpakowska, K. 2003c: 8.

⁸⁵ Szpakowska 2011a: 509; Quack 2006: 175, 179; Prada 2012: 167.

evidence for it is limited⁸⁶. That is not to say that dreams are not attested as part of broader divinatory and funerary practices from earlier in Egypt's history, as letters to the dead dating between the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period refer to dreams, specifically to the ability of the dead to interact with the living (either positively or negatively) within them⁸⁷. Dreams developed a less savoury reputation during the Middle Kingdom, with spells being used to repel them. They maintained their role as 'liminal space' between the living, the divine, and the dead into the time during which oneiromancy was practised⁸⁸. There seems to have been a democratisation of prophetic dreams, with pharaohs in the New Kingdom being recorded as having them, generally during respite while in battle, and by the Ramesside age this experience was no longer the prerogative of the king⁸⁹. It has been argued that, during the Roman Period, dream incubation was practised as well as dream interpretation, based on its inclusion in the second tale in the Setne cycle which is Roman in date⁹⁰. While Gil Renberg suggests that incubation in Pharaonic Egypt was prophetic rather than therapeutic, other scholars have argued that the practice was also concerned with healing, not just the invocation of dreams, which developed into Asklepios in Egypt and making it either a precursor of incubation in saints' shrines or evidence that the practice was present in Egypt before the arrival of Christianity⁹¹. The issue with the study of dream interpretation in ancient Egypt is that more than half of the extant evidence for the practice comes from the Graeco-Roman Period alone, and yet scholars arbitrarily focus on only a single period such as the New Kingdom and thus prevent a diachronic study from being done⁹².

Further, ecstatic dreams or visions may have been known in ancient Egypt. The goddess Hathor was equated with drunkenness and sensory experiences which resulted from it, most notably in the text *The Destruction of Mankind* in which she was placated from killing all humanity by being tricked into drinking herself unconscious⁹³. While Kasia Szpakowska's exploration of whether ancient Egyptians induced dreams concludes that intoxicating substances did not play a significant role in invoking such experiences, it seems to have been a possibility⁹⁴. One suggestion is the use of the blue water lily (called a 'lotus' in Egypt, although native to Egypt and

⁸⁶ El-Kilany and Elgammal 2020: 96; Renberg 2015: 235, 246; Ray 1987: 90; Szpakowska 2003c: 63.

⁸⁷ Szpakowska, K. 2010: 24; Szpakowska 2011a: 509; Szpakowska, K. 2003b: 112; El-Kilany and Elgammal 2020: 94.

⁸⁸ Szpakowska 2011a: 509; Szpakowska 2003b: 111; Szpakowska 2011b: 63, 64-5; Prada 2017: 4; El-Kilany and Elgammal 2020: 93; Szpakowska 2010: 23, 38.

⁸⁹ Szpakowska 2011a: 509-10; Prada 2012: 168; Szpakowska 2003b: 111-13; Prada 2017: 4; Renberg, G. H. 2016: I, 77-8.

⁹⁰ Szpakowska 2011a: 517; Lloyd 2006: 85; Renberg 2016: I, 79.

⁹¹ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4; Szpakowska 2011a: 517; El-Kilany and Elgammal 2020: 93-6; Renberg 2016: I, 74, 77, 213.

⁹² Prada 2012: 167-8, 176; Prada 2017: 4; Ray 1987: 85; Szpakowska 2003c: 61.

⁹³ Szpakowska, K. 2003a: 225, 234; Lichtheim 2006: II, 198-9.

⁹⁴ Szpakowska 2003a: 236.

taxonomically distinct from the Indian lotus) which is considered to have narcotic effects⁹⁵.

Iconographic evidence may indicate that the ancient Egyptians were aware of the narcotic properties of this plant, although its usage was symbolic and so that evidence is unreliable. More reliable are the many medical texts which include the use of the plant⁹⁶. The idea of the ancient Egyptians using drunkenness to induce a state of euphoria is, however, more secure, and this state was distinguished from regular drunkenness which suggests that it was considered possible to induce a higher, sensory experience which may be equated with a vision⁹⁷.

There were also spells to send dreams to others, to cause them to have particular sensory experiences while asleep⁹⁸. This involved summoning the spirit of a dead person and having them act upon the target of the spell, with the spirit being required to act in different ways according to the target, like a reverse of dream interpretation⁹⁹. This is a practice that is not evidenced in Christianity.

Finally, the association between dreams and demons in ancient Egypt should be considered. David Frankfurter considers demonology in Christian Egypt to preserve that from earlier Egyptian tradition, although whether this was done consciously can be debated¹⁰⁰. Nightmares were considered an assault by demons in the same way that good dreams could be the result of interaction with a deity or a deceased loved one¹⁰¹. Unlike in Byzantine tradition, however, the Egyptians also had to fear the malevolent dead¹⁰². While there is limited evidence of nightmares in ancient Egypt in narratives or in art, there are a lot of spells to ward them off and the ancient Egyptians did not generally depict negative phenomena in writing or images lest that would cause them to come about¹⁰³. Instead, different members of the dead with different characteristics were considered to be different kinds of demonic beings¹⁰⁴. Lower members of society were demons in the next life, and Alessandro Roccati observes a distinction in the register of Egyptian used by magicians when addressing gods and when addressing demons that reflects this¹⁰⁵. Nevertheless, demon society as perceived by ancient Egyptians became more organised and attained a layer of divinity below that of the gods over time, becoming resemblant of the Christian understanding of them¹⁰⁶. So, ultimately, in ancient Egypt demons and other

⁹⁵ Szpakowska 2003a: 226.

⁹⁶ Szpakowska 2003a: 227.

⁹⁷ Szpakowska 2003a: 228.

⁹⁸ Quack, J. F. 2011: 130.

⁹⁹ E.g. Quack 2011: 130-1, 135.

¹⁰⁰ Frankfurter, D. 2018: 85.

¹⁰¹ Szpakowska 2011b: 63, 64; Neil 2021: 135.

¹⁰² Szpakowska 2010: 24-5, 38; Szpakowska 2011b: 63, 67.

¹⁰³ Szpakowska 2010: 22; Szpakowska 2003c: 159; Oppenheim, A. L. 1956: 231.

¹⁰⁴ Roccati, A. 2011: 89; Zandee, J. 196: 200-8, 217-19.

¹⁰⁵ Roccati 2011: 92-3.

¹⁰⁶ Roccati 2011: 95-6.

malevolent entities that plagued sleepers were a different kind of threat to those which would possess people and make false prophecy or do them harm in Christian thought¹⁰⁷.

This section has expanded the contextualisation of visions in hagiography preserved in Coptic by acknowledging the role of dreams and visions in earlier Egyptian culture. Previous studies of hagiography found in or concerning Egypt have not done this and instead focused on the Byzantine or Classical origins of various features of hagiography. This section has therefore established that dreams and visions were a part of Egyptian culture long before the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine periods, and thus that it is possible that something of that may have survived into narratives preserved in Coptic. Such considerations will be taken throughout the analysis, with an emphasis on what has also been determined in this section: That aspects of hagiographic narratives are not necessarily Egyptian in origin and that they should not be argued to be if it seems unlikely, but that they might be.

This section has determined that the phenomenon of incubatory healing and visionary experience is part of a continuous tradition in Egypt¹⁰⁸. These continuities might inform the popularity of dream healing in Egypt, as elsewhere, but there is no detectable Egyptian or pre-Christian inflection of incubatory visions as they are narrated in hagiography. It might be that pre-Christian elements have been deliberately omitted, but that is impossible to know. Nonetheless, this section has established that it is the Christian context of visions which is operative at the level of text.

2: Visions Experienced by Saints

This section will analyse the visions in the case studies which are experienced by saints, in order both to identify the narrative features and conventions thereof for such visions and in preparation for the analysis of the visions experienced by laypeople in Chapter 4. Table 2 below shows the visions each saint experiences and the manuscripts and texts in which they are found. The analysis will be structured thematically according to different features. This will allow direct comparison between each saint's visions and to ascertain the conventions that were followed in the creation of the surviving versions of the texts. The analysis will begin by providing the context in the saints' respective traditions in which they experience their visions. It will then analyse the use of each feature using historiography and determine the conventions used by writers in incorporating it into the narratives.

¹⁰⁷ See 1.2.1; Roccati 2011: 89.

¹⁰⁸ Prada 2013: 85; Prada 2012: 169.

Saint	No. vision	Text	Vision description	Translation	Coptic transcription
Kollouthos	1	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Kollouthos	The young boy Kollouthos enters one of his family's fields when the archangel Gabriel appears	M591 Fol. 100vA-Fol. 102rA, translation after Thompson 1993b: § 29- 32, p. 43-4	M591 Fol. 100vA- Fol. 102rA, Ed. Thompson 1993a: § 29-32, p. 56, line 17 - p. 58, line 13
Menas	1	Miracles of Menas	An angel appears to Menas while he is a hermit in the desert and encourages him to complete his martyrdom	M590 Fol. 19v-Fol. 20r, translation after Drescher 1946: 109	M590 Fol. 19v- Fol. 20r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 8, col. B, line 33 - p. 9, col. B, line 30
	2	Encomium of Menas	Menas hearing the voice of the Lord while he is a hermit in the desert encouraging him to complete his martyrdom	M590 Fol. 56v-Fol. 57r, translation after Drescher 1946: 135	M590 Fol. 56v- Fol. 57r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 48, col. A, line 12 - p. 49, col. B, line 1
	3	Encomium of Menas	Menas is being taken on a ship to be sentenced and executed when Christ speaks to him	M590 Fol. 60v-Fol. 61r, translation after Drescher 1946: 139	M590 Fol. 60v- Fol. 61r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 56, col. A, line 12 - p. 56, col. B, line 10

	4	Encomium of Menas	Menas is imprisoned overnight while awaiting his sentencing and execution when Christ appears to him	M590 Fol. 61r, translation after Drescher 1946: 139	M590 Fol. 61r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 57, col. A, line 7 - p. 57, col. A, line 23
Phoibammon	1	Martyrdom of Phoibammon	Phoibammon is imprisoned in the barracks overnight after confessing his faith when the archangel Gabriel appears to him	M582, Fols. 3v-6r, translation after Uljas 2019: §32-70, p. 84-9	M582, Fols. 3v-6r, Ed. Uljas 2019: §32-70, p. 44, col. A, line 31 - p. 49, col. B, line 19
	2	Martyrdom of Phoibammon	Phoibammon is being taken on a ship to stand trial when Christ speaks to him	M582, Fols. 9r-9v, translation after Uljas 2019: §113-23, p. 94-6	M582, Fols. 9r-9v, Ed. Uljas 2019: §113-23, p. 55, col. B, line 4 - p. 56, col. B, line 19
	3	Martyrdom of Phoibammon	While imprisoned with other martyrs, Phoibammon recounts a vision that he experienced to them	M582, Fols. 10v-11r, translation after Uljas 2019: §139-43, p. 98	M582, Fols. 10v-11r, Ed. Uljas 2019: §139-43, p. 58, col. B, line 8 - p. 59, col. A, line 12
	4	Martyrdom of Phoibammon	The archangel Gabriel appears to Phoibammon	M582, Fols. 15r-15v, translation	M582, Fols. 15r-15v, Ed. Uljas 2019: §211-222, p.

			and protects him while he is being tortured in the furnace of the baths	after Uljas 2019: §211-222, p. 107-8	67, col. A, line 12 - p. 68, col. A, line 19
	5	Martyrdom of Phoibammon	After Phoibammon is blinded during his torture, the archangel Gabriel restores his sight and blinds the dux who ordered the torture	M582, Fols. 17v-18r, translation after Uljas 2019: §256-60, p. 112-13	M582, Fols. 17v-18r, Ed. Uljas 2019: §256-60, p. 72, col. B, line 6 - p. 73, col. A, line 34
	6	Martyrdom of Phoibammon	Phoibammon prays before he is executed and the archangel Gabriel appears to him	M582, Fols. 19r-20v, translation after Uljas 2019: §274-91, p. 115-18	M582, Fols. 19r-20v, Ed. Uljas 2019: §274-91, p. 75, col. B, line 17 - p. 78, col. B, line 4
	7	Martyrdom of Phoibammon	When Phoibammon is beheaded, Christ and his angels descend from heaven to take his soul back with them	M582, Fol. 20v, translation after Uljas 2019: §293, p. 119	M582, Fol. 20v, translation after Uljas 2019: §293, p. 78, col. B, lines 19-24
Merkourios	1	Martyrdom of Merkourios	While Merkourios is fighting in battle, a man of light appears to	BM Or. 6801 Fols. 4a-b, translation after Budge 1915: 811	BM Or. 6801 Fols. 4a-b, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 233, lines 14-24

			give him a sword		
	2	Martyrdom of Merkourios	In the night following Merkourios' victory in battle, an angel appears to reveal his future martyrdom to him	BM Or. 6801 Fols. 5a-b, translation after Budge 1915: 812	BM Or. 6801 Fols. 5a-b, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 234, lines 7-23
	3	British Museum Encomium of Merkourios	The angel of the Lord comes to Merkourios while he is sleeping with his fellow soldiers	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 29a-31a, translation after Budge 1915: 859-60	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 29a-31a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 287, line 3 - p. 288, line 25
	4	British Museum Encomium of Merkourios	While Merkourios is fighting in battle, the archangel Michael appears to give him a sword	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 31a-b, translation after Budge 1915: 860-1	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 31a-b, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 288, line 32 - p. 289, line 8
	5	Martyrdom of Merkourios	While Merkourios is imprisoned after confessing his faith, an angel appears to promise that Christ will protect him	BM Or. 6801 Fol. 9a, translation after Budge 1915: 815	BM Or. 6801 Fol. 9a, Ed. 1915: p. 237, line 28 - p. 238, line 2

	6	Martyrdom of Merkourios	An angel of the Lord appears to protect Merkourios while he is being tortured with knives and coals	BM Or. 6801 Fols. 11a-b, translation after Budge 1915: 817	BM Or. 6801 Fols. 11a-b, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 239, lines 29 - 34
	7	British Museum Encomium of Merkourios	The archangel Michael appears to and protects Merkourios while he is being tortured on the rack	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 38a-39a, translation after Budge 1915: 866-7	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 38b-39a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 294, line 27 - p. 295, line 25
	8	British Museum Encomium of Merkourios	Another telling of how an angel of the Lord appears to and protects Merkourios while he is being tortured with knives and coals	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 39b-40a, translation after Budge 1915: 868	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 39b-40a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 296, lines 11 - 18
	9	Martyrdom of Merkourios	Merkourios, weak from torture, is being carried on an animal to his place of execution while Christ accompanies and reassures him	BM Or. 6801 Fol. 14b, translation after Budge 1915: 820	BM Or. 6801 Fol. 14b, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 242, lines 20-6

	10	British Museum Encomium of Merkourios	Another telling of how Christ accompanies and reassures Merkourios on the way to his execution	BM Or. 6802 Fol. 43a, translation after Budge 1915: 870-1	BM Or. 6802 Fol. 43a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 299, lines 3-9
Viktor	1	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Viktor	Angels habitually visit Viktor while he is a child because of his piety	M591 Fol. 35rB, translation after Scott 1993b: § 2, p. 103-4	M591 Fol. 35rB, Ed. Scott 1993a: § 2, p. 134, lines 7 - 10
	2	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Viktor	Viktor comes across the body of the martyrs Cosmas and Damian's mother Theodote and hears the voice of God tell him who she is, so he buries her	M591 Fols. 37rB-37vA, translation after Scott 1993b: § 8, p. 105-6	M591 Fols. 37rB-37vA, Ed. Scott 1993a: § 8, p. 136, lines 19-30
	3	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Viktor	Viktor requests that he is punished for burying Theodote's body instead of his servants and Christ protects him while he is beaten	M591 Fols. 40rA-40rB, translation after Scott 1993b: § 15, p. 108	M591 Fols. 40rA-40rB, Ed. Scott 1993a: § 15, p. 139, lines 23 - 34

	4	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Viktor	After the emperor's jealousy of Viktor's new tunic, the saint resolves not to wear it again and Christ appears to him in the form of a child	M591 Fols. 42vA-43vB, translation after Scott 1993b: § 24-6, p. 110-11	M591 Fols. 42vA-43vB, translation after Scott 1993a: § 24-6, p. 143, line 3 - 144, line 13
	5	First Martyrdom of Viktor	Christ habitually visits Viktor when he refuses to sacrifice to the pagan gods or be married	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 3a, translation after Budge 1914: I, 258	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 3a, Ed. Budge 1914: vol. 1, p. 5, line 34 - p. 6, line 2
	6	Second Martyrdom of Viktor	The archangel Michael appears to and protects Viktor while he is being tortured in a bathhouse furnace	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 14a, translation after Budge 1914: I, 276-7	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 14a, Ed. Budge 1914: vol. 1, p. 24, lines 13-29
	7	Second Martyrdom of Viktor	The archangel Michael raises Viktor through the floor of the baths to startle the dux	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 14a-b, translation after Budge 1914: I, 277	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 14a-b, Ed. Budge 1914: vol. 1, p. 24, line 34 - p. 25, line 4
	8	Third Martyrdom of Viktor	At the camp where Viktor has been exiled in the Thebaid,	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 17b-19b,	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 17b-19b, Ed. Budge 1914: vol.

			Christ appears to him in the guise of an elderly man and receives his hospitality	translation after Budge 1914: I, 283-6	1, p. 30, line 9 - p. 33, line 18
James	1	Martyrdom of James	After being tortured by his body being pierced with sharpened reeds and imprisoned, James is visited by Christ and healed by a chorus of martyr saints	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 170-2, translation after Alcock p. 9-10	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 170-2, Ed. Balestri and Hyvernât, vol. 2: p. 33, line 3 – p. 34, line 18
	2	Martyrdom of James	While James is being executed by dismemberment, Christ appears to him and he surrenders his spirit before he is finally beheaded	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 192-4, translation after Alcock p. 18-19	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 192-4, Ed. Balestri and Hyvernât, vol. 2: p. 47, line 30 – p. 50, line 10

Table 2: The visions experienced by the saints

2.1: Context of Visions

This section will provide an outline of the narrative context in which each saint experiences visions, including at what point in the saints' lives and in which text they occur.

Kollouthos' vision occurs early in his life, although not before the writer has established his overwhelming piety. This may have distanced the saint from the audience so that members of the audience would understand that they must lead Christian lives but cannot expect to attain the sanctity of a martyr saint. This would imply that a purpose of the text is to celebrate the saint and demonstrate his and God's power and develop reverence in the audience rather than demonstrate how to live a Christian life that was practical for a layperson. The case studies included in this thesis will show that it is unusual for a martyr saint to only experience a single vision in their hagiographical tradition. It may simply be chance that only one vision experienced by Kollouthos has survived, as all the manuscripts apart from M591 contain posthumous miracles in which he appears to others¹⁰⁹.

All the other saints included in this thesis have more than one vision. Four of them, Menas, Phoibammon, Merkourios, and James, have visions as adults. This establishes that within hagiography preserved in Coptic it is appropriate for saints to learn of their martyrdom at different stages in their lives. Two of the visions experienced by Menas are different versions of the call to martyrdom, which alongside the vision of Kollouthos suggests that such a call is required in Coptic hagiography¹¹⁰. The other two visions experienced by Menas occur following one of the versions of the call to martyrdom in the narrative of the saint's martyrdom and take place at different points on the saint's journey to his trial and execution¹¹¹. This shows that, in the narrative of a martyrdom, it can be necessary for the saint to receive encouragement, which would perhaps have humanised these saints for their audiences, to make them aspirational but also in some way relatable. Additionally, by the time of the surviving manuscripts, the writers and/or copyists were writing an established form of text, which itself was also influenced by biblical and patristic models, so the suffering and doubts experienced by the saints mirror those experienced by characters in biblical texts and situate them within the wider context of Christian culture¹¹². This fits the saints into an established prophetic model recognisable to the audience by assimilating them to biblical heroes. This assimilation strengthens the cult of saints by collapsing the time between the type, the biblical heroes, and antitype, the martyr saints now venerated in the cult. The saints are thus relatable to the audience from a religious standpoint and the members of the audience are made participants in the model, as witnesses to the heroes.

The experiencing of visions as adults, as is the case for Menas, Merkourios, and Phoibammon may indicate that it is military saints who tend to experience visions as adults,

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 1: 2.2.

¹¹⁰ See Chapter 1: 3.1.2.

¹¹¹ See Chapter 1: 3.1.2.

¹¹² See 1.2.; Krueger, D. 2004: 15, 18, 33.

while other saints could encounter them as children¹¹³. Meanwhile, James, who is not a soldier, but receives his visions as an adult might suggest that saints experienced visions whenever writers deemed most appropriate.

The only other saint included in this thesis who experiences a vision during childhood is Viktor. The involvement of Phoibammon's parents in his martyrdom as they try to dissuade him from Christianity may indicate that he was also relatively young compared to the other saints, although he was already a soldier. However, Viktor was the youngest of the saints discussed here at martyrdom. There is variation in his tradition over whether he was a child or an older youth, but in all the texts that narrate his martyrdom he is very young¹¹⁴. Viktor could be considered a military saint due to his family background but was himself not a soldier at the time of his martyrdom, which suggests that the occupation that saints were claimed to have in their traditions did not dictate at what age they were believed to experience their visions. Apart from his age, however, Viktor seems to have visions at the same stages in the narrative as the other saints included in this thesis. He has visions that inform him of his destiny as a martyr, and then visions as part of healing miracles that protect him while he is being tortured¹¹⁵. He does not have a vision imminently before or upon the moment of his death, however, as the hagiographic account of Kollouthos shows, visions were not an absolute necessity in the narrative of saints' lives¹¹⁶. So, there was a range of possible moments during the narrative in which it was considered appropriate for saints to experience visions, but it was not necessary for them to experience all of them and writers could choose according to what was deemed most appropriate for the individual account. These moments seem to have been: the calling to become a martyr, during their trial and torture, and at the moment of their death. The moments could be mapped onto biblical precedent, such as prophets being tormented by their enemies like Daniel, and indeed the first martyr Stephen, and provide a form of legitimisation for the cult of saints¹¹⁷. Martyrological texts more generally, not exclusively Coptic ones, also contain visions experienced by the martyrs, including at such moments. Like Coptic hagiography, saints in other traditions do not have to experience visions at all three of these moments, for instance, in the long version of his Greek martyrdom, Demetrius is crowned by an angel when he is imprisoned after confessing his faith but does not experience further visions¹¹⁸. Other examples come from the hagiographic tradition of Cosmas and Damian. While they are taught medicine by the Holy Spirit and so not

¹¹³ See 2.1.

¹¹⁴ Scott 1993a: 143; Scott 1993b: 110.

¹¹⁵ Scott 1993a: 139; Scott 1993b: 108; Budge, E. A. W. 1914: I, 24, 276-7.

¹¹⁶ See 2.1.

¹¹⁷ Harvey, S. A. 2009: 604; Papaconstantinou, A. 2006: 77.

¹¹⁸ E01344.

directly called to martyrdom, this interaction signals their sanctity, and while they are being tortured Christ saves them from drowning¹¹⁹. The latter vision occurs in their Coptic martyrdom where in Greek versions the saints miraculously escape torture without experiencing visions, perhaps showing that visions at these moments are generally typical of Coptic hagiography and show an emphasis on the active role of heavenly beings and the assimilation of martyr saints with biblical heroes in the cult of saints in Egypt¹²⁰.

2.2: Analysis of Visions

2.2.1: Terminology Referring to Visions

In most of the visions experienced by saints discussed, the vision is not explicitly referred to as such by a particular term in the narrative, but indicated through the saint's vivid encounter with a heavenly being.

In contrast to most of the other case studies, in the tradition of Merkourios, the term used for 'vision' is not the Greek loan word 'ἑορομα', as might be expected, but 'ὀπτασία', which does not specifically refer to spiritual visions but nonetheless does mean 'sight' or 'vision'¹²¹. This may have been chosen by the writer for variety, or to emphasise the visual aspects of what the saint was experiencing. Likewise, one vision experienced by Viktor uses the term 'ἑορομα'¹²². Another vision is referred to as 'a great wonder' 'οὔνοβ νυπηρε' (the usual Coptic term to express a 'miracle'), attesting to the close relationship of miracles and visions¹²³. Bettina Krönung has argued that the use of sensory verbs such as 'to see' rather than terms meaning 'vision' reflects the negative attitude towards dreams in the New Testament and in early Christian literature¹²⁴. Perhaps instead it was felt unnecessary to indicate explicitly with terminology like 'ἑορομα' that visions were happening because the audience could not expect to have experiences exactly like those of martyr saints. It therefore seems that audiences were expected to infer the occurrence of visions, based on the appearance of an angel or Christ. This was probably because saints were idealised Christians

¹¹⁹ E06712; E03560; E07077.

¹²⁰ Harvey, S. A. 2009: 610.

¹²¹ See 1.2; Budge, E. A. W. 1915: 288; Liddell and Scott 1996: 494a.

¹²² Scott 1993a: 143.

¹²³ Scott 1993a: 139.

¹²⁴ Krönung 2014: 45-6; Frenschkowski, M. 1998: 9-10; Berger 1992: 204.

undergoing greater hardships and demonstrating greater piety than was expected of the lay audience, rendering the explicit signposting of visions redundant.

The sense of sight was most often the one used to indicate visions¹²⁵. Often, the usual verb for ‘to see’ or ‘to look’ in Coptic, ‘**ⲛⲁϣ**’, is used¹²⁶. The most common, and also visual, verb used is ‘to appear’ ‘**ⲟϣⲱⲛⲉ**’, which presumably indicates the arrival of a character and thus the beginning of a vision. Characters who appear from heaven can also ‘come’ ‘**ⲉⲓ**’ down from there, indicating the movement between heaven and earth undergone by the characters appearing and that they are physically descending to the character seeing them¹²⁷.

Meanwhile, there is generally no particular term used to indicate the end of visions. This demonstrates that the occurrence of the vision was more important than any, what may be considered by a modern audience, narrative continuity. If a verb is used to indicate the departure of the character(s) who appeared in a vision, usually it is ‘to hide’ ‘**ⲉⲟⲡ**’. In the visions experienced by Phoibammon, a different verb is used, suggesting that vocabulary was at least partly down to the choice of the writer or copyist. This verb is ‘**ⲡⲁⲩⲟϣⲱⲛⲉ**’, which literally translates as ‘to make to not appear’, which can be used as a synonym for ‘**ⲉⲟⲡ**’, though the two verbs ‘**ⲟϣⲱⲛⲉ**’ ‘to appear’ and ‘**ⲡⲁⲩⲟϣⲱⲛⲉ**’ ‘to disappear’ nicely frame the occurrence of visions¹²⁸. Visions can also explicitly end with characters ascending back to heaven. The vision in which Christ and angels escort Phoibammon to heaven ends with ‘**ⲁϣϣⲓⲧϣ ⲉⲉⲣⲁⲓ ⲉⲛⲙⲡⲏⲥ**’ ‘they took him up to heaven’¹²⁹. The ascent to heaven can be phrased in various ways, including the aforementioned example and ‘**ⲁϣⲃⲱⲕ ⲉⲉⲣⲁⲓ ⲉⲛⲙⲡⲏⲥ ⲉⲛ ⲟϣⲉⲟⲟϣ**’ ‘he ascended to heaven in glory’¹³⁰.

More rarely, it is possible for neither the appearance nor disappearance of the character(s) appearing in a vision to be indicated, leaving the understanding that a vision is happening entirely to the context within the narrative. An example of this is when an angel heals Phoibammon from being blinded while he is being tried and tortured and then blinds the dux at the saint’s request. The angel does not explicitly appear, but must have done so in order to heal the saint. Likewise, the angel does not explicitly disappear, but presumably must have done by

¹²⁵ See 1.2.1 and 1.2.2.

¹²⁶ Crum, W. E. 1939: 233b.

¹²⁷ E.g. Uljas 2019: 78.

¹²⁸ Crum 1939: 695a; Uljas 2019: 49, 89.

¹²⁹ Uljas 2019: 78.

¹³⁰ Scott 1993a: 144.

the time that the dux has confessed his faith in Christ, been healed, and then reneged on his confession and started having Phoibammon tortured again.

2.2.2: Sensory Description of Visions

The appearance of characters in visions presents the experience as a physical one. Nonetheless, the sensory description of visions still emphasises the sense of sight, which seems to signal the occurrence of a vision before other senses embellish the experience¹³¹. An example of the emphasis on sight is James' first vision, in which the only verb associated with the senses involves sight even though it is not the only sense in the experience, given that the saint experiences touch when the martyr saints remove the sharpened reeds from his body. This emphasis may be based on the importance of sight that Gudmund Björck observed in Greek tradition, whereas hearing is predominant in Judaism with mostly auditory revelations in the Hebrew Bible and visual ones in the New Testament¹³². Where prophets see visions of God in the Hebrew Bible, he is obscured, which would support the idea that there is a level of sanctity that humans must not witness, or indicate that God simply cannot be seen, thereby making Christ the form of God considered safe or possible for humans, at least saints, to see¹³³. Sight was also the predominant sense in ancient Egypt, given that the verb 'rs' 'to wake' and the noun 'rswt' 'dream' are both followed by an eye determinative (D4 in Gardiner's sign list)¹³⁴. However, as in Greek tradition there is an emphasis on the appearance of one character to another and that does not happen in posthumous miracles in the West this must be at least partly the reason for it happening in the East¹³⁵. More recently, Moreira has used the dream of Adam to argue that, in both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, God 'favored the medium of dreams, visions, and invisible voices to guide his chosen people', which further demonstrates that Björck's distinction was too simplistic and that the use and role of the senses in Christian thought was more complex¹³⁶. Hans Urs von Balthasar observed that the three senses through which visions were usually perceived were hearing, sight, and touch, and it will be shown in this thesis that smell was also used¹³⁷. Balthasar proposed that the inclusion of smell and taste related to liturgical practice, but that does not seem to be the case in this thesis¹³⁸. The inclusion of smell

¹³¹ See 2.2.1.

¹³² Björck, G. 1946: 312-13; Balthasar, H. U. von 1965-83: I, 261; Kirk, K. E. 1931: 11-12; Batluck, M. D. 2021: 3.

¹³³ Kirk 1931: 12.

¹³⁴ Tribl 2011: 26; Szpakowska 2003c: 15-16; Gardiner, A. H. 1957: 450.

¹³⁵ Björck 1946: 311; Balthasar 1965-83: I, 261; Poux, C. (unpublished): 25-6.

¹³⁶ Moreira 2000: 18-19; Kirk 1931: 11-12.

¹³⁷ See 1.2.1; Balthasar 1965-83: I, 261.

¹³⁸ Balthasar 1965-83: I, 262.

may be from either Christian or ancient Egyptian tradition, as within both a sweet scent symbolises divinity, and its use in Christianity stemmed from earlier traditions around the Mediterranean¹³⁹. A sweet odour can also indicate martyrdom, so it could signal both the sanctity of the character appearing and the status of the saints as martyrs¹⁴⁰.

The second most common senses are hearing and touch. In his second vision, Menas hears a voice, ‘**ΔΥΣΜΗ ΨΩΠΕ ΕΧΩΡ ΕΒΟΛ ΘΝ ΤΠΕ**’ ‘a voice befell upon him from heaven’, which shows that visions do not have to include the sense of sight¹⁴¹. Menas’ third vision also includes a disembodied voice: ‘**ΔΥΣΜΗ ΔΕ ΨΩΠΕ ΨΑ ΠΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΣ ΑΠΑ ΜΗΝΑ**’ ‘a voice befell to the holy Apa Menas’¹⁴². The voice is identified as that of ‘the Saviour’ ‘**ΠΣΩΤΗΡ**’¹⁴³. Given that the voice in the second vision experienced by Menas refers to ‘my kingdom’ ‘**ΤΑΜΝΤΡΡΟ**’, it can be inferred to be either the Lord or Christ, suggesting that voices as visions experienced by martyr saints must belong to one of the Holy Trinity, rather than to an angel¹⁴⁴.

Gabriel came into physical contact with Kollouthos when he ‘**ΑΦΑΜΑΣΤΕ ΜΜΟΦ ΑΦΤΟΥΝΟΦ**’ ‘seized him and raised him’¹⁴⁵. Gabriel heals Phoibammon from being blinded by touch in the same way as healing saints such as Kollouthos heal supplicants: ‘At once, Gabriel laid his hand upon his face, and straightaway he regained his sight’¹⁴⁶. In Merkourios’ second and third visions, the angel who appeared ‘touched’ ‘**ΑΦΤΕΒΣ**’ the saint to wake him and in the seventh vision he ‘kissed’ ‘**ΑΦΑΣΠΑΖΕ**’ the saint and ‘made the sign of the cross’ ‘**ΑΦΣΦΡΑΓΙΖΕ**’ over him to heal him¹⁴⁷. Likewise, in Viktor’s final vision, Christ kissed or embraced him, ‘**ΑΦΑΣΠΑΖΕ ΜΜΟΦ**’, as well as on two other occasions¹⁴⁸. The sign of the cross may not have been physically in contact with the saints, but it would have been close to them. The arguably more intimate actions of kissing and making the sign of the cross over the saints are both expressed by Greek loan words, which may be because they are activities taking place within a religious context and, in the case of kissing, not intended to have romantic or erotic connotations¹⁴⁹. Another suggestion that can therefore be

¹³⁹ Iannarilli, F. 2018: 119, 124, 125-6; Wegner, J. W. 2001; Harvey 2006: 2, 202, 205; Robinson, K. R. 2019: 157, 158.

¹⁴⁰ Robinson 2019: 159.

¹⁴¹ Drescher 1946: 48, 135.

¹⁴² Drescher 1946: 56, 139.

¹⁴³ Drescher 1946: 56, 139.

¹⁴⁴ Drescher 1946: 49, 135.

¹⁴⁵ Thompson 1993a: 57; Thompson 1993b: 44.

¹⁴⁶ **ΝΤΕΥΝΟΥ ΑΓΑΒΡΙΝΛ [ΑΓΑΒΡΙΝΛ] ΧΕΣΤΟΤΦ ΕΒΟΛ ΘΜΠΕΦΣΟ ΝΤΕΥ<ΝΟΥ> ΑΦΝΑΥ ΝΚΕΣΟΠ**; Thompson 1993a: 59, 69; Thompson 1993b: 45, 53; Ulfas 2019: 72.

¹⁴⁷ Budge 1915: 234, 295.

¹⁴⁸ Budge 1914: I, 22, 31, 33.

¹⁴⁹ Smits, L. 2019: 2-3; Penn, M. P. 2002: 155, 157.

made about hagiography that has survived in Coptic is that terms associated with the semantic field of religion are Greek loan words, which are technical terms used in the Coptic translations of the New Testament and so may have been the most logical terms to use. It can therefore be seen that visions are more complex than the designation of ‘vision’ might imply.

The holy characters can also affect the physical space around them, which lay characters sometimes notice even if they do not witness the vision, such as Christ causing a cloud to form upon the boat transporting Phoibammon to Assiut: ‘And, just then, the boat came to a halt in the middle of the river. And behold, a cloud spread upon the boat. Then the boat was still, and Lord Jesus spoke to the blessed Apa Phoibammon’¹⁵⁰. Gabriel also shakes the bathhouse where the saint is imprisoned in the furnace. While the guards do not see the light that he causes to illuminate the furnace, they are aware of the shaking: ‘The soldiers who were standing above the ones stoking the fire trembled with fear and were amazed by what they heard’¹⁵¹.

2.2.3: Characters Who Appear in Visions

When holy characters appear in visions, their appearance is primarily indicated through the presence of light illuminating the setting before they enter it. For example, before James sees Christ and the chorus of saints, light shines in his prison cell: ‘A great light shone in his cell and he saw a chorus of saints, the Lord Jesus Christ in their midst’¹⁵². Likewise, when the archangel Gabriel appears to Kollouthos, the field is ‘ερωγοειν’ ‘lit up’ by the holy light emanating from him: ‘νερε παγγελος νεχ ακτι(ν) νογοειν εβολ’ ‘The angel was casting forth rays of light’¹⁵³. In fact, it seems that these characters were conceptualised, at least by some writers, as having been made of light rather than simply emanating it. In Merkourios’ first vision, the ‘man of light’ ‘ρωμε νογοειν’ is probably an angel¹⁵⁴. This reinforces the importance of the sense of sight in visions when compared to the other senses.

Writers were able to embellish these descriptions and incorporate them further into the events of the narrative. When the archangel Michael rescues Viktor from the furnace, he is emanating light from his ‘wings of light’ which then ‘turn into a meadow’¹⁵⁵. The archangel lifts

¹⁵⁰ αγω ντεγνοϋ απχοι σωϣτ εντμητε μπειερο αγω εις ογκλοολε ασπωρυ εβολ ειςμ πχοι τοτε απχοι σωϣτ απχοεις ις ψαδε μπημακαριος απα φοιβαμων; Uljas 2019: 56.

¹⁵¹ μματοι δε εταξερατοϋ ειςιν νεττωκ αγστωτ ειτενεοτε αγω νεγρωπηρε ετβενετογσωτμ εροοϋ; Uljas 2019: 67-8.

¹⁵² ογνιϣτ νογωινι αρωαι εν πιμα εναρσοτπ ερογν νρητϣ; Balestri and Hyvernats 1907-50: II, 33.

¹⁵³ Thompson 1993a: 43, 56-7; Thompson 1993b: 434, 56; Pagels 1978: 419.

¹⁵⁴ Budge 1915: 233.

¹⁵⁵ νεγτνε ν ογοειν νερε πτενε ειρε ν ογστωδε; Budge 1914: I, 24.

the saint onto these wings, suggesting that not only is he protecting the saint from the fire but also that he is providing the saint with a more pleasant environment while he is in the furnace. This bridges the association of the characters appearing to saints with light with the association of light with heaven and the pleasantness of that environment.

Additionally, the use of light shows the holiness of the characters appearing to the saints, which was presumably something that the writers would have wanted to focus on to show the audience the great sanctity of the saints through the figures who appeared to them. This is not unique to hagiography, but a feature of Christian thought, as evidenced by the formless light that would supposedly be experienced upon entering into ‘pure prayer’, according to Evagrius Ponticus¹⁵⁶. An example of the representation of the relationship between light and holiness is when James calls the Lord ‘my light’ ‘ΠΑΟΥΩΙΝΙ’ as well as ‘my salvation’ ‘ΠΑΝΘΕΜ’, placing the imagery in a wider Christian context¹⁵⁷.

Where the holy characters who appear to saints are described in more detail than just light, it is appropriate to the situation that they are in and most commonly in contexts of conflict. When Merkourios sees the archangel Michael on the battlefield, his attire and sword are also described: ‘He saw a man of light, and the man was tall, and he was dressed in a gorgeous apparel, and he held a drawn sword in his right hand’¹⁵⁸. A later vision is even more specific, describing the angel’s garb as ‘ΟΥΘΩΚ’, which Ernest A. Wallis Budge terms ‘a panoply of war’ and which literally translates as ‘girdle’ or ‘breastplate’¹⁵⁹. As these contexts involve saints who are presented as having been soldiers during their lifetimes, this may have emphasised their combative occupation and foreshadowed the protective role that that would enable them to have in their posthumous miracles, similarly to how Kollouthos’ accidental performance of healing miracles foreshadows his role as a healing saint¹⁶⁰. Angels may also be described as ‘taking the form’ of a character like a soldier, although the terminology used indicates their holiness rather than a desire to deceive the character seeing them. Three different words for ‘form’ may be used. The Greek loan word ‘CΗΜΑ’ ‘dress, fashion, manner, appearance’ is associated with Christian, monastic activities rather than with deception, which supports the earlier suggestion about such vocabulary loaned from Greek¹⁶¹. The Coptic words ‘CMOT’ and ‘EINE’, both meaning ‘likeness’

¹⁵⁶ Harmless, W. 2004: 353.

¹⁵⁷ Balestri and Hyvernat 1907-50: II, 47.

¹⁵⁸ Ἀγγελὸς ἐγὼν με νοσοῦν ἐρχοσε ἐγὼν ἐν βωσῷ ἐμπρεῖω οὐ δὶ αὐτῶν τε Ν οὐχ ὅτι ἐστοκμ ἐν τερβίχ νοῦν αὐτῶν; Budge 1915: 233.

¹⁵⁹ Budge 1915: 287, 859; Crum 1939: 662a.

¹⁶⁰ Hidding 2020: 81.

¹⁶¹ Liddell and Scott 1996: 1745a-b.

are more likely to be used in situations involving characters changing their appearance, so ‘*σχῆμα*’ may refer to a character’s holy appearance or behaviour more broadly than simply the shape that they have taken¹⁶².

An instance outside of a battle context is the appearance of Christ to Viktor looking like a twelve-year-old child, apparently matching the saint in age, who is described as a ‘holy little boy’ ‘*μψυρὲ ψνμ ετοῦδαβ*’¹⁶³. This may have been done to emphasise the purity and innocence of the young saint. In contrast, later Christ looks like an elderly man: ‘the lord Jesus came to him, having changed his apparel and taken the appearance of a grey-haired old man, who had come from a far-distant place’¹⁶⁴. Viktor shows him compassion. Instead of describing characters’ appearances, the rest of the description in this vision is of emotions or of actions, with the two characters ‘embracing’ ‘*ωλμ*’ or ‘kissing’ ‘*ἵπι*’ and the saint being moved to emotion by this elderly man’s supposed plight¹⁶⁵. Later on, while the two men are talking, the saint also shows his emotion and therefore his compassion for others by weeping: ‘he wept’ ‘*αῤριμε*’¹⁶⁶. This may highlight the saint’s virtues. It therefore seems to be the reception by the saint that prompts Christ to reveal himself and reiterate what the future has in store for him, and this may serve as an example of Christian virtues for the audience to emulate.

When the angels who appear are named, the archangel Gabriel would be a logical choice by a writer. His role in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam is as the messenger of God, most clearly shown by the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary¹⁶⁷. The use of this archangel to deliver to a saint the revelation that they will be martyred therefore situates the saint’s tradition within that of the Bible. It could be that the archangel Michael appears to Merkourios instead of Gabriel because he is a military saint, although that raises more questions about why Gabriel appears to Phoibammon. It may instead be specifically because the archangel comes to the saint’s aid while he is in battle, which seems to function as the announcement of the saint’s destiny as a martyr and also suit the angel’s role as a protector¹⁶⁸. It may also have something to do with the fact that the archangel Michael was venerated in Upper Egypt as well as elsewhere across the Eastern Christian world¹⁶⁹. There were monasteries dedicated to both the archangels Michael and Gabriel

¹⁶² Crum 1939: 80b, 340b.

¹⁶³ Scott 1993a: 143; Scott 1993b: 110.

¹⁶⁴ *ἀφεί ψαροϋ νβί πχς ις εαϋψιβε μ περσχῆμα αῤξι μ πεινε ν οὔρμ μ σκίμ νάλλο νταφεί ἐν οὔμα εφοῦννῃ*; Budge 1914: I, 30.

¹⁶⁵ Budge 1914: I, 30.

¹⁶⁶ Budge 1914: I, 31.

¹⁶⁷ Ten Hacken, C. and van Loon, G. J. M. 2015: 174, 177; Webb, G. 2001; Webb 2002; Ten Hacken and van Loon 2015: 174, 177; Youssef, Y. N. 2013: 82.

¹⁶⁸ Butler, K. 2010; Youssef 2013: 82.

¹⁶⁹ See Chapter 2: 2.1.1; Awad, H. 2018: 371; Papaconstantinou, A. 2007: 354-5, 358; Arnold, J. C. 2013: 2.

in the Fayoum, for the former near to the village of Hamouli and for the latter at Naqlun, but it seems that in Egypt Michael's cult was more widespread than Gabriel's because the latter is known only from the monastery at Naqlun¹⁷⁰. Additionally, more of the monastery at Naqlun has survived, and the site is still in use by a monastic community today¹⁷¹. Meanwhile, the manuscripts from the monastery at Hamouli are all that has survived of that site¹⁷². However, the veneration of the archangel Michael in Upper Egypt therefore cannot be the only reason that he appears to saints, nor can it be the saints' experience in battle as Viktor himself is not a soldier but a son of one¹⁷³. In miaphysite Christianity, Michael can be equated with Christ and in Christianity more generally with the Holy Spirit and God¹⁷⁴. However, as Viktor is also visited separately by Christ, this justification for the appearance of the archangel Michael seems unlikely here¹⁷⁵. That suggests that the choice of which archangel appears to which saint is based on the fact that both Viktor and Merkourios appear posthumously to punish emperors and therefore appear to fight for Christians against the highest-ranking pagan in the Roman world¹⁷⁶. Even though Michael and Gabriel rank closely at the top of the hierarchy of angels in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and Gabriel is the angel of vengeance who smote Sodom and Gomorrah, Michael is the leader of the army of heaven against darkness¹⁷⁷. So, while Gabriel was considered in tradition to destroy settlements of sinners, he was not the archangel tasked with destroying the arguably worst of the sinners, the leaders, and his role in hagiography therefore focused more on his revelatory function than his punitive one. Meanwhile, even though Phoibammon punishes the emperor Theodosius in his miracle collection, he only does so when the emperor breaks an oath rather than as a response to the treatment of Christians¹⁷⁸.

In none of the visions experienced by Menas does the character appearing receive the same amount of description as in the vision experienced by Kollouthos. This suggests that it is not necessary for either angels or Christ to be described in such texts, presumably because – especially in a church setting – there were already images of these characters available, as has been shown to be the case for at least Menas and Merkourios¹⁷⁹. It may therefore be that the angel Gabriel's 'glad face' in the vision experienced by Kollouthos was included to show the audience how the angel was not to be feared by the saint. The only description of the appearance

¹⁷⁰ Emmel, S. 2005: 64; Depuydt, L. 1993a: ci; Godlewski, W. 2015: 128.

¹⁷¹ Godlewski 2015: 130.

¹⁷² Emmel 2005: 64; Depuydt 1993: ci.

¹⁷³ Awad 2018: 371; Papaconstantinou 2007: 354-5, 358.

¹⁷⁴ Awad 2018: 372; Davidson 1994: 194; Tycner-Wolicka, M. 2013: 73.

¹⁷⁵ Scott 1993a: 103-4; Scott 1993b: 134; Uljas 2019: 67-8, 107-8.

¹⁷⁶ See Chapter 1: 2.6; see Chapter 1: 2.5; Wiemer, H.-U. 2020: 208.

¹⁷⁷ Davidson 1994: 117, 193, 194; Butler 2010; ten Hacken and van Loon 2015: 174; Arnold 2013: 4, 8.

¹⁷⁸ Verrone, K. E. 2002: 18-21.

¹⁷⁹ See Chapter 2: 2.2.2; Davis, S. J. 2008: 107.

of something that Menas perceives in his visions is given of the martyrs that he sees ascending to heaven in his second vision: ‘He lifted up his eyes and saw the saints who had finished their fight’¹⁸⁰. They are described as ‘being crowned by the angels and taken up to heaven, shining more brightly than the sun’¹⁸¹. The crowning is presumably symbolic of their martyrdoms being completed, which is explained by the angel Gabriel when he appears to Kollouthos, and the ascent to heaven is a reinforcement that their physical bodies have died and that they are receiving their promised reward of joining the Lord in heaven. As with angels who appear, the light is emanating from the saints, as they are described with the compound verb ‘**πορροειν**’ that translates into English literally as ‘to make light’ and by extension as ‘to shine’, indicating that they are the source of it rather than reflecting it from the angels or the heavens, and it therefore illustrates their sanctity especially now that they have completed their martyrdoms and thus their earthly activity¹⁸². This description therefore informs and encourages the saint witnessing the vision, showing that the description of characters appearing in visions to martyr saints are described where the writer believed that it would be of use within the narrative as well as to visualise characters for the audience.

Martyr saints seen by other martyr saints only appear in conjunction with Christ and function as a chorus. In James’ first vision, Christ is accompanied by martyr saints who are explicitly called ‘**χορος**’¹⁸³. The only exception in the case studies is one instance in the Pierpont Morgan encomium of Viktor in which Cosmas requests that someone buries his martyred mother Theodote’s body. However, this seems to be a feature of the opening to Viktor’s encomium which establishes the persecution of the Christians by Diocletian, as, contrary to what Susan Ashbrook Harvey states, Cosmas’ plea is not heard by Viktor, and instead the saint chances upon Theodote’s remains later and is told by God to bury them, which implies that he is unaware of Cosmas’ message and therefore that Harvey overemphasises the importance of the episode as a what Peter Brown terms ‘dramatic intervention’ of a holy man when it should instead be viewed as the inciting event for the rest of the narrative¹⁸⁴. This shows that Cosmas’ voice was heard by laypeople instead of by a saint, and that as a martyr he could posthumously appear without having a similar negative effect to an angel, as the people are afraid of the consequences of burying a martyr rather than of him. Nonetheless, Harvey argues that a theme in the encomia of both Viktor and Kollouthos is social justice. For Kollouthos, this takes the

¹⁸⁰ ἀφῆι ννεφβαλ ἐραι ἀφναγ [ε] νετογααβ νταχχωκ εβολ μπεγαγων; Drescher 1946: 48, 135.

¹⁸¹ ἐρε παγγελος ἡκλον ἐχωογ ἐγχι μμοογ ἐνεμνηγε ἐγρογοειν ἐβογε ε πρη; Drescher 1946: 48, 135.

¹⁸² Crum 1939: 480b.

¹⁸³ Balestri and Hyvernats 1907-50: II, 33.

¹⁸⁴ Harvey, S. A. 1993: ix; Scott 1993a: 136; Scott 1993b: 105-7; Brown 1971: 81.

form of healing that he performs for laypeople while he is still alive¹⁸⁵. While this is not subtle, the theme for Viktor is more subtle and based around his burial of Theodote's body.

As the main characters who appear to saints are angels and Christ, and with other martyrs usually functioning as a chorus to these characters, it seems that writers considered it necessary for the characters appearing to be holier than the characters to whom they are appearing. Additionally, the different characters who appear serve different functions. Angels inform the saints of their fate and protect and heal them from tortures. While angels are the lowest members of the celestial hierarchy and thus the closest to humans, they are themselves not human and, true to the literal meaning of 'ἄγγελος' as 'messenger', function as go-betweens for martyr saints and Christ or God, as they are the celestial beings who are usually sent to earth by God to protect humanity and often take human form while doing so in Christian tradition¹⁸⁶. Christ appears in a more encouraging role while saints are actually completing their martyrdoms, such as Merkourios, but also if they are having doubts, like Menas. This suggests that there are certain stages in a saint's life and martyrdom in which an audience would anticipate the appearance of Christ, but that there are also certain aspects of character development and emotional engagement of the audience with the character's plight that would justify the appearance of Christ. As a child, Viktor may have been presented as particularly pure and thus able to experience visions of Christ without being in these situations. This is supported by how he is the only saint who is described while alive in a way used to describe saints appearing posthumously: 'ἀγνάγ επεφθο νθε νογαγγελος ντε πνογντε' 'they [his servants] saw that his face was like (that of) an angel of God', implying that there is something particularly pure and holy about him¹⁸⁷. While James' first vision seems to be similar to those experienced early in the narratives of the other saints, it is Christ who appears to him¹⁸⁸. While Christ's speech uses a lot of the imagery that is common when saints are first learning of their martyrdom, such as the experience being a contest, his primary role is still to escort James closer to his execution than provide him with any particular information, especially as it is actually the chorus of saints who heal James by removing the sharp reeds piercing his flesh, suggesting that saints and angels perform a healing role and not Christ. Overall, this indicates that the holy character who appears in a saint's vision is directly related to the closeness of the saint to his martyrdom and also to the function of the vision, whether it is to provide information or emotional support or physical

¹⁸⁵ See Chapter 1: 3.1.1.

¹⁸⁶ Meinardus 2002: 20; Liddell and Scott 1996: 7b..

¹⁸⁷ Scott 1993a: 137; Scott 199b: 106.

¹⁸⁸ Alcock (unpublished): 9-10; Balestri and Hyvernat 1907-50: II, 33-4.

protection to the saint¹⁸⁹. It also therefore seems, based on the amount of torture that saints experience when angels and Christ appear to them, that Christ's appearance and role is also affected by the degree of the saints' suffering as well as their closeness to death.

Phoibammon, Viktor, and Merkourios also experience visions that are seen by other characters. In Merkourios' third vision, when the laypeople with Merkourios are said to also have seen the angel, it seems to have been inappropriate for them to do so because following the vision they are struck down as though dead¹⁹⁰.

For Phoibammon, one instance is when he recounts a vision that he has experienced to other saints while in prison and one of those saints, a deacon named Origen, says that he has seen the same vision¹⁹¹. However, when both Menas and Phoibammon are being transported on ships, other characters are unable to see Christ appearing to the saint¹⁹². This may be because the characters surrounding the saint are sinners and pagans, and therefore do not deserve to see Christ. So, when Christ appears and speaks to Phoibammon on the ship, the guards are aware that the ship has stopped but cannot see or hear Christ for themselves. That being said, the crowd gathered at Phoibammon's execution seems to be able to see and hear the angel Gabriel, as while the saint and angel speak with each other they also address the crowd¹⁹³. Most of the address of the crowd and attending guards comes from the saint and most of what the angel says is directly to the saint, however when the angel first descends from heaven the crowd bears witness to his actions and speech: 'Just then Gabriel descended from heaven, and when he approached the crowd, there came about a great sound so that the foundations of the bath shook. And Gabriel cried out with a mighty voice...Then the entire crowd fell upon each other, heaving become shaken with fear of the angel'¹⁹⁴. The bathhouse shakes with the mighty sound of the archangel's descent, which is what the crowd seems to witness instead of the angel himself, but then the angel tells the crowd directly to leave him and the saint alone until he is done speaking with the saint. The frightened reaction of the crowd shows that they hear this message loud and clear and that they understand that they have received this message from an angel. It is therefore possible for laypeople to see angels and that the effect is a profound and discomfiting one. The negative effect upon laypeople of seeing an angel would therefore reinforce that only martyr saints should see angels, even if it is within the realms of possibility for

¹⁸⁹ Budge 1915: 242, 299, 820, 870-1.

¹⁹⁰ Budge 1915: 288, 860.

¹⁹¹ Uljas 2019: 58, 98.

¹⁹² Uljas 2019: 95.

¹⁹³ Uljas 2019: 116-18.

¹⁹⁴ ΝΤΕΥΝΟΥ ΑΓΑΒΡΙΝΛ ΕΙ ΕΠΕΣΧΤ ΕΒΟΛ ΕΝΤΠΕ ΑΥΩ ΝΤΕΡΕΨΩΝ ΕΞΟΥΝ ΕΠΜΗΝΥΕ ΑΥΝΟΒ ΝΕΡΟΟΥ ΨΩΠΕ
ΕΩΣΤΕ ΝΣΕΝΟΕΙΝ ΝΒΙ ΝΣΝΤΕ ΝΤΣΙΟΟΥΝ ΑΥΩ ΑΓΑΒΡΙΝΛ ΩΨ ΕΒΟΛ ΕΝ ΟΥΝΟΒ ΝΣΜΗ ΔΕ...ΤΟΤΕ ΑΠΜΗΝΥΕ ΤΗΡΥ ΕΞ
ΕΙΔΕΝ ΝΕΥΕΡΗΥ ΕΑΥΨΤΟΡΤΡ ΕΤΒΕΘΟΤΕ ΜΠΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ; Uljas 2019: 76.

other characters to do so too. Support for this argument comes in the form of the *Discourse on Abbaton*, which concerns the angel of death (his name in English is usually spelled ‘Abaddon’ and in Greek he is known as ‘Apollyon’) and how his appearance was so frightful that it was changed to be less so¹⁹⁵. Admittedly, as Abaddon is equated with the places Sheol and Hell and is closely associated with Satan, he may be a particularly frightening angel to behold, but it does seem that at least the appearance of angels is not something that mortals should witness¹⁹⁶. It therefore appears that the saints’ sanctity is a significant contributing factor to determining which characters writers can have appear to them.

The one instance in the tradition of Viktor where another character experiences a vision that he is experiencing occurs in the martyrdom of Paese and Thekla, in which Viktor is used as a role model to inspire Paese to seek martyrdom. While Viktor is experiencing the vision, it is narrated from the perspective of Paese¹⁹⁷. The torture that Viktor is experiencing when this vision occurs is another version of his ordeal in the furnace of the bathhouse. Paese sees an angel standing beside Viktor, encouraging him through the torture and then releasing him from it, which reinforces that a martyr saint seeing an angel is not a horrifying experience, unlike when laypeople see one¹⁹⁸. While it is not explicit that Paese sees Viktor being released, the *dux* and the crowd watching the torture clearly sees that the saint is now free, so as the martyrdom is actually that of Paese and his sister, it is reasonable to assume that he can see the angel’s actions here as well. This supports the idea that this was a function of angels who appeared in visions. It also shows that it was possible for martyr saints to be portrayed as seeing characters who appeared to other martyr saints, and that this could function as their call to martyrdom, as following his vision Paese is enthused by the Holy Spirit¹⁹⁹.

This section has shown that the heavenly beings who appear to martyr saints must always be on a higher level of sanctity than they are. Additionally, the holiest character appearing is the primary character who appears in the vision, as when martyr saints appear they accompany other figures and function as a chorus, and angels perform the same function when accompanying Christ. The moment at which a vision occurs determines whether the heavenly being who appears is an angel or Christ²⁰⁰. The call to martyrdom and tortures during a saint’s trial usually involve the appearance of angels, as they function as messengers and healers, while the moment of a saint’s death involves the appearance of Christ, the one by whose side the saints will sit now

¹⁹⁵ Budge 1914: I, x-xi, lxxiii-lxxii; Davidson 1994: 1; Frankfurter 2018: 221.

¹⁹⁶ Davidson 1994: 1-2.

¹⁹⁷ See Chapter 1: 2.6.

¹⁹⁸ Reymond, E. A. E. and Barns, J. W. B. 1973: 40, 156-7.

¹⁹⁹ Reymond and Barns 1973: 40, 157.

²⁰⁰ See 2.1.

that they have completed their martyrdoms. However, the heavenly being who appears is also determined by the suffering and sanctity of the saints, with those undergoing particularly gruesome tortures, like James, or who are especially young and pious, like Viktor, experiencing visions of Christ at moments when the other saints experience ones of angels. This emphasises the role of a martyr as someone who was persecuted for their Christian faith, and the piety that is expected of saints and to which the audience can only aspire. This emphasis interacts with both the collective Christian memory of the persecution being propagated in hagiography and the moments at which saints experience visions to reinforce the mapping of the hagiographical structure and protagonists onto earlier, historical and biblical, precedents, ultimately justifying the veneration of the saints²⁰¹.

2.2.4: Locations in Which Visions Occur

The case studies show that martyrs did not need to be in consecrated space, such as a church, in order to witness a vision. For example, Kollouthos was in a field on his family's property. While his family is pious, he is the most so by being predestined to become a martyr, being chosen by God. This status may have conferred any holiness upon the setting required for him to be able to witness a vision. Kollouthos experienced his vision alone even though he was accompanied by two servants to the property, thus further showing the importance of his own sanctity to the experience. It may, however, also be that the information being imparted to the saint by the angel was not for anyone else to hear, and so he had to be the sole witness of the vision. Menas and Phoibammon both experienced visions while on ships being transported to their trials²⁰². Saints also experienced visions while in prison, such as James, and while locked in bathhouse furnaces, such as Phoibammon and Viktor²⁰³. Merkourios even experienced visions while on the battlefield²⁰⁴. The ability of saints to experience visions seemingly anywhere may be for the practical reason that the saints' own shrines have not yet been constructed because that cannot happen in the narrative until the saints are dead because, whether supported by archaeology or not, in hagiography shrines are intended as the resting place of saints' remains and therefore consecrated via the existence of their relics and the will of God. However, there may be a less practical reason behind the ability of saints to experience visions away from shrines – otherwise, it could be argued that they should simply visit the shrine of a preceding saint to experience

²⁰¹ Harvey 2009: 604.

²⁰² Drescher 1946: 139; Uljas 2019: 84, 94.

²⁰³ Alcock (unpublished): 9-10; Uljas 2019: 107-8; Budge 1914: I, 276-7.

²⁰⁴ Budge 1915: 860-1.

visions in the way that layperson supplicants do. This reason is that martyr saints, by their nature, do not need to visit or have a relationship with consecrated space to experience visions because any space they enter becomes consecrated, at least while they occupy it seeing as if this consecration were limitless perhaps the next passing layperson would also experience visions there. It is more likely that visions being possible in a given location is due to the saints' presence than the presence of the entities appearing to them. Even though it could be argued that the appearance of a holy character either consecrates a space or renders consecration unnecessary, as this thesis has shown so far that saints can experience visions of not only any holy entity ranging from other martyr saints to angels, to archangels and even to Christ, but also of demons and the Devil, that does not provide a sufficient explanation. Ergo, it would be more practical for saints to consecrate the space around them. Thus, it can be said that saints can experience visions anywhere by passively consecrating the space around them. Since this feature is never addressed by any of the writers, it cannot be argued to be being done deliberately by the saints.

The same can be said of the times when visions happen. Phoibammon experiences his first vision at night and others during the proceedings of his trial, which would presumably be during the day²⁰⁵. In the third vision experienced by Viktor, Christ appears in the guise of a child at the saint's home during the night, but there are no indications that the saint is asleep²⁰⁶. So, while visions may manifest as dreams in Byzantine tradition, for saints in hagiography preserved in Coptic they manifest while they are awake regardless of the time of day and therefore cannot be considered to be dreams, or if they are dreams that is of less importance than the broader fact that they are visions being witnessed by a saint. Likewise, the habitual nature of some of the visions experienced by Viktor implies that their location was not important to their occurrence and that he was experiencing them because of who he was.

2.2.5: Behaviour during Visions

The visions that saints experience give the audience an idea of how saints were expected to behave during such experiences. This can be divided into behaviour before visions take place, in whatever circumstances necessitated their occurrence, and behaviour during visions once the holy characters are appearing to the saints.

While visions signal that a miracle is imminent, for visions to occur in the first place they must be invoked. Martyr saints mostly do not invoke their visions, which may have shown the

²⁰⁵ Uljas 2019: 84-9.

²⁰⁶ Scott 1993a: 143; Scott 1993b: 110.

audience that a martyr saint's power, and their active role in exercising said power, followed their death when they were aiding others in posthumous miracles; and moreover, that their death was a prerequisite to the activation of these things. Thus, martyr saints may have been seen as passive participants in their own narratives while they were alive and angels and Christ were seen as the active agents facilitating the saint's journey.

Often, the saints' situations indirectly invoke their visions; for example, Merkourios' visions of the archangel Michael on the battlefield, or Phoibammon and Viktor's visions of the angel while being rescued from furnaces. This is contrasted by Phoibammon, who directly invokes seven of the ten visions that he experiences and James, who invokes both of his²⁰⁷. They do this through prayer, which would have shown the audience that even the holiest of humans, while constrained by their mortality, had to pray in order to receive attention and help from the heavenly beings. Since Phoibammon is often engaged in duels with magicians, and is also often tortured, this may simply imply that, in situations where a saint has agency in the proceedings, the saint can directly invoke their visions, while in situations where they are a recipient of others' actions, the saint's visions are indirectly invoked in order to help them. Furthermore, as James is helped by Christ and a chorus of martyr saints, rather than by an angel, the heavenly beings who appear to him may indicate how his situation was more dire than most and thus led to him invoking help from an especially higher power. Additionally, the use of Christ by the writer may have been done to demonstrate the piety and importance of this foreign saint whose relics were transported to Egypt and therefore justify this ostensibly unusual treatment²⁰⁸.

Once saints' visions are happening, their behaviour continues to be indicated by whether or not they participate in dialogue with the character which appears before them. This might have shown audiences exactly when such interaction was appropriate or necessary, and that, as there were expectations of the behaviour of saints experiencing visions, there would also have been expectations surrounding how laypeople behaved when experiencing visions too. The saint's participation in the interaction varies. For instance, in all four of Menas' visions, he has no speech, while the character appearing before him speaks either directly or indirectly²⁰⁹. It may be expected for there to be direct speech at the point when the saint is martyred to emphasise that what was foretold earlier is coming to pass, but instead the emphasis seems to be on the death of the saint itself and his following ascent to heaven²¹⁰. The tradition of Merkourios is similar, as he

²⁰⁷ See Chapter 1: 3.1.6.

²⁰⁸ See Chapter 1: 3.1.6; see Chapter 2: 2.1.5.

²⁰⁹ Drescher 1946: 8-9, 48-9, 56.

²¹⁰ Drescher 1946: 57.

only speaks in one vision, while the characters which appear before him speak when he does not, either while providing healing or information to further his journey towards his martyrdom.

Meanwhile, in Kollouthos' vision there is a discussion as he asks the angel 'who are you' when the angel appears before him, to which the angel then provides both an answer, as well as the other information about the saint's destiny²¹¹. The question asked by Kollouthos tends to refer to the glory of the character appearing and the fear that they inspire in the saint, for in full the saint says 'Who are you, my lord, with this great glory and this great fear surrounding you? For when I saw you, I was afraid.'²¹² This may have served to give the audience an idea of how they should emotionally react to witnessing an angel, given that it was already established in the previous section that it would probably be an overwhelming experience for them. It also gives the angel the opportunity within the narrative to respond and in doing so reveal Kollouthos' destiny to him.

In contrast, Phoibammon engages in direct discourse with either the character appearing or other people present in seven of the ten visions that he experiences, which may have emphasised his active or combative role in proceedings. However, it might not have necessarily shown that he was a military saint, because Menas and Merkourios are also military saints but do not speak during their own visions. In Phoibammon's first vision, he also receives an extended version of the kind of speech given to Kollouthos by Gabriel, including information about how the angels hate humanity for their corruption, and also about how the world will end²¹³. Perhaps the writer used this amount of detail to emphasise how exceptionally pious the saint must have been, even though he and Kollouthos are spoken to by the same archangel. The angel's speech could also have made the audience afraid of angels' wrath and in fact explain why the lay characters had such a profound negative reaction to the angel when Phoibammon was executed, given that not only is the archangel Gabriel a powerful heavenly being but is also characterised in this martyrdom as despising humanity²¹⁴.

While verbs of speech, primarily 'παρεει' 'he said' are used throughout the visions experienced by saints, in the visions experienced by James the Greek 'ερψαλιν' 'to sing psalms' is used. It can therefore be argued that the writer wanted to be absolutely clear about what James was saying in response to Christ, perhaps also to emphasise further his piety and the real physical healing that had just happened through the following focus on different parts of James' body. This could have been in-keeping with the theme of dismemberment as well. Therefore, it can be

²¹¹ Thompson 1993a: 57.

²¹² ΝΤΚ ΝΙΜ ΠΑΧΟΕΙΣ ΕΡΕ ΠΕΙΝΟΒ ΝΕΟΟΥ ΚΩΤΕ ΕΡΟΚ ΜΗ ΠΕΙΝΟΒ ΜΦΟΒΟΣ ΕΒΟΛ ΧΕ ΝΤΕΡΙΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΚ ΔΙΡ ΖΟΤΕ

²¹³ Ullas 2019: 85-9.

²¹⁴ See 2.2.3.

said that James has direct speech as part of these experiences, which combined with his invocation of the visions, provides him with agency in these events, contrasting to the impression that he emits as being a passive recipient of Christ's appearance. However, James does not speak during his second vision, which limits his active role. As James' second vision occurs during his execution, he probably did not speak for the same reason as Menas and Phoibammon do not during their executions. The speech that occurs in these visions can also be used to further support the idea that the other martyr saints who appear with Christ in James' first vision function as a chorus rather than as characters in the way that James and Christ do, for apart from providing healing they have neither direct nor indirect speech²¹⁵.

The behaviour of saints prior to and during the visions that they experience indicates that they are mostly passive recipients of the actions of others until they are martyred, and that once they are acting posthumously – having averted their mortal human coil – they take on the active role currently occupied by the holy characters appearing to them.

3: Conventions for Visions Experienced by Saints

3.1: Features and Functions of Visions

This chapter analysed the visions experienced by martyr saints to establish conventions which will be compared with visions experienced by laypeople in the next chapter²¹⁶. There are many similarities between the visions experienced by saints, but also some differences. The similarities are broad and the differences specific, indicating that there were expectations of hagiographical narratives and that writers could individualise the saints as long as they met those expectations. There seem to be features of these narratives that are particular to Coptic hagiography, such as the moments at which saints experience their visions and the characters who appear at these moments. It may therefore be that this was part of the expectations of the genre itself, or that such features were known and shared across networks of hagiographers in Egypt and were thus included in many texts. It can thus be said that Coptic hagiography, while sharing similarities with other traditions, was also distinguished by certain aspects of the texts' structure and content.

There are a range of points in a saint's life at which they may experience visions: when their destiny as martyrs is revealed to them; during their trials and tortures; and at their deaths. It

²¹⁵ Alcock (unpublished): 10.

²¹⁶ See 1.1.

is not, however, necessary for saints to experience visions at all these stages and writers could include visions at the moments which are pertinent for an individual saint's story, such as Merkourios receiving his first visions of the archangel Michael on the battlefield and Kollouthos' only vision being when his destiny is announced and the rest of the narrative of his life focusing on his healing miracles.

Visions experienced by martyr saints are rarely referred to using terminology, perhaps because it was unnecessary for visions experienced by these idealised Christians undergoing extreme experiences to be signposted explicitly. Where terminology is used, the Greek term 'ὄραμα', meaning 'dream, vision, sight' is usually chosen. This seems to be part of a wider trend of religious terminology generally consisting of Greek loan words rather than equivalent terms in Coptic, with the exception of the word for 'God', 'ΝΟΥΤΕ', which was arguably entrenched from earlier Egyptian culture unlike terms specific to Christianity²¹⁷. Instead of terminology that refers specifically to visions, martyr saints' visions are indicated with sensory vocabulary, most often related to the sense of sight, such as 'ΝΑΥ' 'to see' and 'ΟΥΩΝΘ' 'to appear'. This demonstrates the overall importance of sight within visions, which is further supported by the description of the characters who appear to saints in their visions. The holy characters who appear, if they are described, are usually primarily described in terms of the light emanating from them, which also reinforces their sanctity.

The holy characters who appear to martyr saints must be on a higher level of sanctity than human beings. This shows that martyr saints were considered to be the holiest of human beings, so the holy characters who appeared to them had to be angels or Christ. When other martyr saints who have already died appear, they are usually in the company of Christ and therefore functioning as a chorus. Generally, angels appear as messengers and healers during a saint's journey to martyrdom, while Christ appears towards the end of that journey to escort the saint to heaven. Christ can also appear to saints who are suffering extreme torment and to saints who are particularly innocent as determined by their youth, as he does to James and Viktor. Additionally, when archangels appear to saints, it is usually Michael who appears to military saints, and Gabriel to other saints.

There is no specific location in which saints must experience visions. This indicates that saints are so holy that they do not need to be in sanctified places and perhaps that they passively consecrate the space around them. This passiveness extends to saints' behaviour regarding visions, as usually these experiences are indirectly invoked by the saints' situations and saints do

²¹⁷ Crum 1939: 230b.

not actively engage in the experiences once they are happening but instead receive the speech and actions of the holy characters appearing to them. This thus places emphasis on the saints' posthumous actions, as they gain agency once they are deceased and therefore the martyrdom is presented as a transition that places saints alongside angels and Christ and in a position to help the lay audience.

The fact that the visions occur at all seems to be noteworthy. The beginning of a vision is usually indicated with statements like 'the saint saw' or 'the angel appeared', but their end is not. When visions are marked as coming to a close, characters may 'ascend to heaven' or 'disappear'. This shows that the occurrence of visions and their functions are more important than what may be considered narrative continuity.

The function of visions experienced by saints and recited to audiences is threefold. Firstly, it indicates the superior piety and resilience of these characters and serves as inspiration to the congregations to whom hagiography was read. Therefore, the visions analysed in this chapter also demonstrate idealised Christian behaviour, which audiences would have experienced in the environment in which visions were set and recounted²¹⁸. This may have been intended to inform the everyday behaviour of the audience, although as congregations would have heard sermons on more occasions than simply saints' feast days, the emphasis may have been more on presenting the saints as inspirational, aspirational characters than on showing the lay audience how to lead pious lives. The superior piety of the saints compared to the audience would have reinforced the authority of the shrine and the Church and the clergy within them. Visions therefore establish a strict hierarchy between laypeople and the clergy and between earth and heaven, thus instructing the audience that in order to access the heroic, aspirational saints for themselves they need to abide by that hierarchy. The second function of visions is to signpost that miracles are about to take place, usually the healing or otherwise rescuing of saints from tortures so that they can continue through their trials until their martyrdoms without suffering. This would also have served as inspiration to the audience as a further demonstration of the power of Christianity and benevolence of figures such as angels and Christ, but it would also reinforce the hierarchy of the Church and earth and heaven through which characters were appearing and the experiences that saints had to have in order to be superior to them and require the mediation of the clergy to interact with the audience. Chapter 4 will develop the analysis from how the saints were situated above the audience and the Church's authority was expressed as necessary for accessing them, to precisely how the audience was told to access the saints on earth. Third and finally, the visions that saints experience are a way of establishing their

²¹⁸ See 1.1.

individuality as characters within a similar set of events, which in turn explains the kinds of miracles that they perform when they appear posthumously, as will be seen in Chapter 4.

As well as highlighting ways in which saints could be presented as individual characters, this chapter has shown that there are generic ‘norms’ which had to be observed by writers, such as the occasions at which visions were expected to occur and which characters could appear in visions to fulfil particular functions. There are also generic similarities which are not necessarily related to the occurrence of visions, such as the confessions by the saints and the tortures that they experience, like the rack and being locked in bathhouse furnaces²¹⁹. Like visions, the number of such experiences and the detail with which they are related varies, but most notable is that they happen in the traditions of all the saints included in this thesis. This thus raises the question of how the generic similarities that have been outlined in this section were maintained as they are what allows the texts to be considered as a genre²²⁰. The writers of these texts may have read each other or, if the texts are later copies, the earlier versions. Who was specifically reading whom can only be suggested, given that most of the surviving manuscripts used in this thesis do not include the name of a writer or copyist in a colophon but instead an attribution to a notable Church figure which is unlikely to be accurate²²¹. However, it is likely that the writers were reading hagiography given that its production seems to have been a prevalent part of the cult of saints and that it was available pertaining to many saints in many languages and would thus be a sensible thing to have read prior to contributing to what Vincent Déroche calls ‘un context plus polémique qu’on ne l’imaginerait de prime abord pour un texte pieux et édifiant’²²². He argues that miracles – and therefore, one can assume, the visions that occur in conjunction with them – were written in an established format to make them acceptable²²³. While the Church hierarchy may have found an established structure to be acceptable, much of the functions of hagiography as summarised in this subsection actually seem to have been aimed at lay audiences so instead perhaps the familiarity of the content and consistency of the texts’ messages, and thus the credibility of the events within them, should be emphasised²²⁴. It must therefore be supposed that writers and copyists were reading each other’s material. Marc Van Uytfanghe, as has been proposed in this chapter, argues that the variations in the narratives are a result of the personal choices of the writers within a somewhat standard framework²²⁵.

²¹⁹ E.g. Reymond and Barns 1973: 158, 161; Budge 1915: 866-7; Budge 1914: I, 276-7; Uljas 2019: 107-8.

²²⁰ Booth, P. 2020: 24.

²²¹ See 1.2; Krueger 2004: 2.

²²² Déroche, V. 1993: 114; Booth 2020: 32-3.

²²³ Déroche 2000: 164.

²²⁴ Van Uytfanghe, M. 2000: 136; Krueger 2004: 2, 108.

²²⁵ Van Uytfanghe 2000: 136; Booth 2020: 32-3; Harvey 2009: 605.

3.2: Implications of Visions Experienced by Saints

This chapter has demonstrated two things. Firstly, that visions experienced by saints include features which are common across case studies and therefore across cults, and that writers could incorporate them in ways which indicated that saints were part of the wider tradition of the cult of saints in Egypt but also expressed the saints' individuality²²⁶. It is possible that the texts studied have been filtered through a particular lens, for instance those found at the Monastery of the Archangel Michael at Hamouli which may have been copied into a set of codices either to preserve or standardise them²²⁷. As similarities have been observed across the texts, regardless of the manuscript in which they are found, any lens through which they have been filtered or movement of which they are part seems to be the same or similar, meaning that conclusions can be reliably drawn from them within their context, although without any knowledge of the textual material which has not survived and whether that differed from what has.

Secondly, this chapter has confirmed that hagiography preserved in Coptic shares features in common with hagiography preserved in other languages, such as Greek, but that it also has its own characteristics. This chapter thus shows that it is possible to study visions as a phenomenon distinct from miracles, as insights have been provided into the presentation of the cult of saints in hagiography through focusing on visions alone. It has also justified the approach of this thesis of considering dreams as a subset of the phenomenon of visions based on the similarities between the two, and will continue to do so in Chapter 4²²⁸. Insights have also been provided into the functioning of the cult of saints through the contextualisation of the hagiography within the environment within which it would have been produced and experienced in the first two chapters of this thesis, as without this the place of hagiography within the cult would be less clear because the ways in which it illuminates and obscures information would not be understood²²⁹.

²²⁶ See 3.1.

²²⁷ E.g. Harvey 2009: 607.

²²⁸ See 1.2.1.

²²⁹ See Chapter 1: 1.1; see Chapter 2: 1.1.

3.3: Looking Forward to Visions Experienced by Laypeople

In conclusion, this chapter has begun the thorough and comprehensive analysis of visions by determining the conventions for various narrative features in those experienced by martyr saints. It has demonstrated how saints were portrayed as figures removed from laypeople based on their sanctity and their extreme experiences when being tried and executed.

Chapter 4 will continue the analysis by focusing on visions experienced by laypeople approaching the martyr shrines of those saints discussed in this chapter. It will compare the representation of visions experienced by laypeople with that of those experienced by martyr saints to determine how it varies and why, based on the context of the texts' production and reception established in Chapters 1 and 2²³⁰. These two chapters will ultimately show how the environment in which the cult of saints existed informed the decisions made by the writers about the presentation of visions in order to maximise engagement by the audience. They will also illustrate how the presentation of visions varied according to the characters experiencing them, and how writers used the phenomenon to convey different functions and messages to the audiences of the hagiographic narratives.

²³⁰ See Chapter 1: 1.1; see Chapter 2: 1.1.

Chapter 4: Visions Experienced by Laypeople

1: Introduction

1.1: Chapter Aims

Chapter 3 began the thorough and comprehensive analysis of visions. As Chapters 1 and 2 contextualised the environment within which these narratives were created and experienced, Chapters 3 and 4 are providing an analysis of visions that could not be achieved with only textual analysis of the hagiography. They show how that environment informed the writers' decisions about the presentation of visions in order to maximise the engagement by the audience with this feature of the narratives and with the cult of saints.

Chapter 3 demonstrated how saints were portrayed as removed from laypeople based on their sanctity and on the extreme nature of their experiences when being tried and executed, but also as relatable through their assimilation with biblical precedents¹. This chapter will corroborate that, while also showing how laypeople were presented to be relatable to the lay audience and how the saint and lay characters were used to present different messages. As explained in the Introduction, the visions of saints experienced by laypeople are found in a variety of different texts, not just miracle collections, but all are set after the saints have been martyred and thus are posthumous². The visions that laypeople experience provide lessons of morality and piety to the audience, after visions experienced by saints establish their power to assist laypeople. An example of the distinction between saints and laypeople with respect to their visions is that laypeople do not experience visions of higher, heavenly beings, such as angels or Christ. They are restricted to visions of martyr saints only. Another example is that laypeople can experience visions only in consecrated space like saints' shrines³. These distinctions were consistently marked out by writers and thus easily recognisable by the audience, who probably grew to expect them⁴.

¹ See Chapter 3: 2.1; see Chapter 3: 2.2.3.

² See Introduction: 1.2.

³ Budge, E. A. W. 1914: I, 59-60, 311-12; Budge, E. A. W. 1915: 280, 851-2; Thompson, S. E. 1993a: 68-70, 71-2, 76-8; Thompson, S. E. 1993b: 53, 55, 58-60.

⁴ See Chapter 3: 1.1.

1.2: Saints' Posthumous Miracles and Visions as Experienced by Laypeople

The study of visions in scholarship has covered a range of topics, although not the nature of visions experienced by particular characters⁵. The study of miracles, meanwhile, has focused on those performed by saints posthumously and experienced by supplicants at shrines, particularly those preserved in Greek hagiographic texts⁶.

Derek Krueger observes that the miracles performed by holy men and women, including martyr saints, were used to promote their cults⁷. He uses the *Miracles of Artemios* as an example of the pervading image of 'a world of miraculous healing, desperate supplicants, and the dissemination of stories'⁸. This means that John Haldon is probably right that 'collections of miracles offer some of the most valuable insights into the attitudes and beliefs of ordinary people'⁹. As Isabel Moreira observes, dreams and healing shrines had a long association and fulfilled a need within their community.¹⁰ That is not to say that in hagiography preserved in Greek saints only perform healing miracles posthumously, given miracles such as Demetrios' protection of Thessaloniki and Thekla's protection of Seleucia¹¹. Meanwhile, Bryan Ward-Perkins argues that it is impossible to know the exact role of hagiography in encouraging cult, although he suggests that some hagiographical narratives survived purely because they were good stories, and so it would have been beneficial to writers to produce texts enjoyed by the audience because then the messages would be received effectively¹². So, the role of hagiography seems to have been that of both advertisement and entertainment. Likewise, it probably varied between cults and across time according to what was desired and required¹³.

While scholarship has focused on what hagiography shows about cult practice, the textual studies that have taken place generally disregard these texts' historical inaccuracy and unreliability. Chapter 2 showed that 'hagiography probably reflected existing cult practice', although selectively so, as what is reflected in the textual evidence is not necessarily reflected in the archaeological evidence¹⁴. Given that the texts were performed in the context of feasts taking place at shrines, the narratives of visions are sanctioning visionary experiences while also

⁵ See Chapter 3: 1.2.

⁶ E.g. Booth, P. 2020: 24, 38.

⁷ Krueger, D. 2004: 63.

⁸ Krueger 2004: 64; Déroche, V. 1993: 98; Davis, S. J. 2008: 112; Frankfurter, D. 2018: 106.

⁹ Haldon, J. F. 2008: 263; Ward-Perkins, B. 2020: 3, 5; Papaconstantinou, A. 2020: 58, 61-2.

¹⁰ Moreira, I. 2000: 110; see Chapter 3: 1.2.1.

¹¹ Skedros, J. C. 1999: 4, 132; Johnson, S. F. 2006: 7; Festugière, A. J. 1971: 13; Dagron, G. 1978: 297, 299; Ward-Perkins, B. 2022: 505-7.

¹² Ward-Perkins 2020: 14, 19.

¹³ Ward-Perkins 2020: 20.

¹⁴ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4; Ward-Perkins 2020: 20.

differentiating between Christian and pagan practices, as well as between saints and laypeople. The content expressed by the writers to the audience should be treated, as John Wortley says, as ‘the scenery and trappings in the theater’, as indicative of the writers’ intentions rather than of actual practice or belief¹⁵. Instead of solely reflecting the practices of the cult, hagiography should be seen as another practice that took place at shrines, and that the creation and recital of it was an activity that involved writers making decisions based on their audience¹⁶. It is thus essential to study phenomena presented in hagiography within the context of the texts’ production and reception.

As well as being places of cult practice and where entertaining narratives were experienced, there was a transactional element to visiting shrines, as in return for the saints’ assistance a favour could be expected in return, such as a donation¹⁷. This is also reflected in the hagiography, as some characters provide donations upon being aided and others remain at the shrine as thankful servants for the rest of their lives¹⁸. While Louise Blanke distinguishes between visits to local shrines and pilgrimages to shrines further afield, within hagiography preserved in Coptic such a distinction is not made where donations or lifelong servitude are concerned, and instead whether lay characters do one or the other is determined by wealth and status¹⁹. Matthew Dal Santo observes that shrines ‘vindicate[d] the authenticity of the pilgrim’s experience against detractors’, presenting the miracles and visions experienced by pilgrims as genuine²⁰. Additionally, as pilgrimage can be understood as a ritual act itself, the presentation of the experiences of pilgrims in hagiography may have reinforced and perpetuated that²¹. Stephen Davis approaches the relationship between pilgrimage and hagiography through re-enactment, which places the audience in locations named in the narratives and thus equates them with the characters and their experiences, using the examples of Christ’s passion and ‘the feast of the desert of Shenoute’²². While Davis concentrates on the concept of the *imitator Christi*, how the particular saint being venerated during the re-enactment is equated with Christ, hagiography instead portrays the saints as individuals and therefore justifies why each one should be venerated²³. Re-enactment thus provides another example, alongside the recitation of hagiography, of the performative aspect of the cult of saints. The audience of hagiography would

¹⁵ Wortley, J. 2001: 59; see Chapter 1: 2.1; see Chapter 1: 3.2.2.

¹⁶ Moreira 2000: 109.

¹⁷ Eade, J. and Sallnow, M. J. 1991: 24.

¹⁸ Schenke, G. 2013: 218-19; Budge 1915: 270-1, 842-3; Drescher, J. 1946: 31-2, 122-3.

¹⁹ Blanke, L. 2020: 228.

²⁰ Dal Santo, M. J. 2012: 232.

²¹ Davis 2008: 111; Frankfurter 2018: 107.

²² Davis 2008: 112, 114.

²³ Davis 2008: 119; Turner, V. and Turner, E. 1978: 33.

occupy the space in which the saint would appear and identify with the characters who experienced visions of the saints in the narratives. Davis' study, however, focuses on Biblical readings rather than hagiographical ones, which explains his focus on Christ rather than on saints venerated as part of the cult of saints²⁴. As David Frankfurter has indicated, the role of hagiography should not be underestimated²⁵. While scholarship has focused on the presentation of pilgrimage, hagiography also presents shrines as spiritual and social hubs within their communities and the instructions for behaviour therein would not be relevant only to pilgrims²⁶. After all, hagiography instructs the audience on how to behave when interacting with saints should they visit a shrine while in need²⁷. As a result, hagiography referring to pilgrims' experiences not only provided validation of the writers' claims about the saints' posthumous appearances but also helped to make the re-enactment experience even more spiritual than it already was by establishing expectations of interaction with the figures being venerated²⁸. It thus 'served as an orientation point' for the writers and the messages that they wished to convey in the ritual setting²⁹.

The analysis in this chapter will provide an in-depth understanding of the role of a specific facet of hagiography, the visions experienced by laypeople, in comparison with the similar experiences of saints, in the performance of the cult of saints in Egypt.

2: Posthumous Visions of Saints Experienced by Laypeople

This section will analyse the visions experienced by laypeople³⁰. The visions are presented below in Table 3, which shows in how many visions each saint appears and also the manuscripts and texts in which they are found. The visions marked by asterisks are fragmentary, and so supplement those which are complete. As in Chapter 3, the analysis will be structured according to the different features which are identified, as this will allow for direct comparison between the visions in which the saints appear with the visions experienced by the saints. This will provide the fullest possible understanding of how visions were presented in Coptic hagiography. Also as in Chapter 3, the analysis will first provide the context in their respective traditions in which the laypeople experience their visions, such as whether they are seeking healing or committing a transgression. It will then for each feature describe its occurrence, analyse it using historiography,

²⁴ Davis 2008: 119.

²⁵ Frankfurter 2018: 106.

²⁶ Frankfurter 2018: 109.

²⁷ Moreira 2000: 108; Meyendorff, J. 1989: 92.

²⁸ Turner and Turner 1978: 16, 33, 34; Eade and Sallnow 1991: 25.

²⁹ Frankfurter 2018: 71-2.

³⁰ See Chapter 3: 3.1.

and determine the conventions that writers seem to have used when incorporating it into the narratives.

Saint	No. Vision	Text	Vision description	Translation	Coptic transcription
Kollouthos	1	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to and heals a man who injured his foot while drunk	M591 Fol. 110vA-Fol. 111vA, translation after Thompson 1993b: § 65-8, p. 53	M591 Fol. 110vA-Fol. 111vA, Ed. Thompson 1993a: § 65-8, p. 68, line 29 - p. 70, line 2
	2	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to an impatient patient who has waited for a month to be healed and chastises him before healing him	M591 Fol. 112vA-Fol. 113rB, translation after Thompson 1993b: § 74-6, p. 55	M591 Fol. 112vA-Fol. 113rB, Ed. Thompson 1993a: § 74-6, p. 71, line 14 - p. 72, line 16
	3	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to a deacon who has been falsely slandered and restores his status	M591 Fol. 116rB-Fol. 118rA, translation after Thompson 1993b: § 89-92, p. 58-60	M591 Fol. 116rB-Fol. 118rA, Ed. Thompson 1993a: § 89-92, p. 76, line 9 -p. 78, line 15
	4	Second Encomium of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to a childless couple at his shrine in Antinoopolis and	ÖNB K 9524r, col. I, line 15– col. II, line 25, translation after Schenke 2013: 187; E00667	ÖNB K 9524r, col. I, 15–col. II, 25, Ed. Schenke 2013: p. 186, col. A,

			tells them to go to Pneueit		line 15 – col. B, line 25; E00667
5	Second Encomium of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to the childless couple at his shrine in Pneueit and instructs them on how to conceive	ÖNB K 9524v, col. I, line 7–col. II, line 23, translation after Schenke 2013: 189; E00667	ÖNB K 9524v, col. I, 7–col. II, 23, Ed. Schenke 2013: p. 188, col. A, line 7 – col. B, line 23; E00667	
6	Miracles of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to a woman with possessed breasts and instructs her on how to exorcise the demon	B.N. P 12915 Fol. 22v, col. I, line 7–col. II, line 5, translation after Schenke 2013: 219; E03173	B.N. P 12915 Fol. 22v, col. I, 7–col. II, 5, Ed. Schenke 2013: p. 218, col. A, line 7 – col. B, line 5; E03173	
7	Miracles of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to an archon who has accused his servants of theft and tells him where to find his lost property	B.N. P 12915 Fol. 24r, col. I, line 5–col. II, line 8, translation after Schenke 2013: 225	B.N. P 12915 Fol. 24r, col. I, 5–col. II, 8, Ed. Schenke 2013: p. 224, col. A, line 5 – col. B, line 8	
8	Miracles of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to a lame man and tells him to visit a prostitute in order to be healed and redeem her soul	Borg. Copt. 109 p. 229 col. I, line 15-p. 231 col. I, line 16, translation after Schenke 2013: 249-53	Borg. Copt. 109 p. 229 col. I, 15-p. 231 col. I, 16, Ed. Schenke 2013: p. 248, col. A, line 15 - p. 252, col. A, line 16	

	9	Miracles of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to a reformed prostitute to confirm that she has made the right decision	Borg. Copt. 109 p. 244 col. I, lines 5-16, translation after Schenke 2013: 267	Borg. Copt. 109 p. 244 col. I, 5-16, Ed. Schenke 2013: p. 266, col. A, lines 5-16
	10*	First Fragmentary Miracles of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to and heals a young widow from an evil spell cast by her now deceased husband	P.9036 (BKU I 189)v, col. I, line 27–col. II, line 24, translation after Schenke 2013: 273; E03174	P.9036 (BKU I 189)v, col. I, 27–col. II, 24, Ed. Schenke 2013: p. 272, col. A, line 27 – col. B, line 24; E03174
	11*	Second Fragmentary Miracles of Kollouthos	Kollouthos appears to and blinds men who are attacking his shrine because the wife of one of the men is visiting it	Or. 3581 B(38)v, col. I, line 6–col. II, line 25, translation after Schenke 2013: 209; E00668	Or. 3581 B(38)v, col. I, 6–col. II, 25, Ed. Schenke 2013: p. 208, col. A, line 6 – col. B, line 25; E00668
Menas	1	Martyrdom of Menas	An angel of the Lord appears to the archbishop of Alexandria and instructs him on where to bury Menas	M590 Fol. 17v, translation after Drescher 1946: 102-3	M590 Fol. 17v, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 4, col. B, line 7 - p. 4, col. B, line 25
	2	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas repossesses some camels after their owner reneged	M590 Fol. 21r, translation after Drescher 1946: 111	M590 Fol. 21r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 11, col. A, line 12 - p.

			on his promise to donate them to his shrine		11, col. B, line 9
	3	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas appears to the former owner of the camels in his home	M590 Fol. 21r-Fol. 21v, translation after Drescher 1946: 111	M590 Fol. 21r-Fol. 21v, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 11, col. B, line 10 - p. 12, col. A, line 19
	4	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	A murderer is trapped by light, preventing him from disposing of the pilgrim he killed and dismembered during the night	M590 Fol. 22v, translation after Drescher 1946: 112	M590 Fol. 22v, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 14, col. A, line 1 - p. 14, col. A, line 18
	5	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas appears to the murderer and resurrects his victim, and the murderer repents	M590 Fol. 22v-Fol. 24r, translation after Drescher 1946: 112-13	M590 Fol. 22v-Fol. 24r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 14, col. A, line 27 - p. 17, col. A, line 2
	6	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	A servant-boy recounts a vision in which Menas saved him from drowning after he threw himself overboard for losing his master's silver dish	M590 Fol. 26r, translation after Drescher 1946: 115-16	M590 Fol. 26r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 21, col. A, line 24 - p. 21, col. B, line 23

	7	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas saves a pilgrim from being eaten by a crocodile and tells his brothers the good news	M590 Fol. 35r-v, translation after Devos 1959: 456, 458, 460	M590 Fol. 35r-v, Ed. Devos 1959: 456, 458, 460
	8	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas appears to a possessed man and his family on the way to Abu Mina, takes the man to the shrine himself, and punishes the demon to exorcise it	M590 Fol. 44v-Fol. 45r, translation after Drescher 1946: 118-19	M590 Fol. 44v-Fol. 45r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 24, col. A, line 27 - p. 25, col. A, line 26
	9	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	The possessed man's family hears Menas' voice as he punishes the demon	M590 Fol. 45r, translation after Drescher 1946: 119	M590 Fol. 45r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 25, col. B, line 7 - p. 25, col. B, line 30
	10	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas appears to a female pilgrim to save her from being raped by the man with whom she is staying by petrifying his hand	M590 Fol. 47v, translation after Drescher 1946: 121-2	M590 Fol. 47v, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 30, col. A, line 9 - p. 30, col. B, line 28
	11	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	An angel of the Lord guides the woman saved	M590 Fol. 48r, translation after	M590 Fol. 48r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 31, col.

			from rape by Menas to the saint's shrine	Drescher 1946: 122	A, line 18 - p. 31, col. A, line 27
	12	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas appears to the would-be rapist at his shrine when he repents and heals him	M590 Fol. 48r-Fol. 48v, translation after Drescher 1946: 122-3	M590 Fol. 48r-Fol. 48v, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 31, col. B, line 18 - p. 32, col. A, line 32
	13	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas and the archangel Michael provide water to multitudes of people during a drought	M590 Fol. 49r-Fol. 49v, translation after Drescher 1946: 125	M590 Fol. 49r-Fol. 49v, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 33, col. B, line 11 - p. 34, col. A, line 23
	14	Second Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas appears to the archbishop of Alexandria to urge him to complete the construction of his shrine	M585 Fol. 38r-Fol. 38v, translation after Drescher 1946: 150-1	M585 Fol. 38r-Fol. 38v, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 73, col. B, line 15 - p. 74, col. A, line 9
	15	Second Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas appears to a workman in financial need to promise him wages if he continues to work	M585 Fol. 40r-Fol. 40v, translation after Drescher 1946: 152	M585 Fol. 40r-Fol. 40v, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 77, col. A, line 25 - p. 78, col. A, line 16
	16	Second Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas appears to the workman for a second time and pays him	M585 Fol. 40v-Fol. 42r, translation after	M585 Fol. 40v-Fol. 42r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 78, col. A,

			with a clay brick which turns to first bronze and then gold	Drescher 1946: 152-3	line 17 - p. 81, col. B, line 9
	17	Second Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Menas appears to the archbishop about a man who has kept the agape due to the saint for himself	M585 Fol. 49r, translation after Drescher 1946: 159	M585 Fol. 49r, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 95, col. A, line 7 - p. 95, col. B, line 3
	18	IFAO Miracles of Menas	Menas causes an idol-worshipper's mare to give birth to a foal with three feet after he prays to the saint to cure his mare's barrenness	MS IFAO copte. inv. 315-22 Fol. 315r, translation after Bacot 2011: 33	MS IFAO copte. inv. 315-22 Fol. 315r, Ed. Bacot 2011: p. 42, col. A, line 31 - col. B, line 13
	19	IFAO Miracles of Menas	Menas appears to a female pilgrim to save her from molestation by a soldier on the way to his shrine	MS IFAO copte. inv. 315-22 Fol. 319v- Fol. 320v, translation after Bacot 2011: 37-8	MS IFAO copte. inv. 315-22 Fol. 319v- Fol. 320v, Ed. Bacot 2011: p. 60, col. B, line 26 - p. 64, col. A, line 19
	20*	First Pierpont Morgan Miracles of Menas	Another version of Menas appearing at his shrine to the man from whom he repossessed his camels	M590 Fol. 21v, translation after Drescher 1946: 111	M590 Fol. 21v, Ed. Drescher 1946: p. 12, col. A, line 19 - p. 12, col. A, line 11

Phoibammon	1	Miracles of Phoibammon	A demon is cast out of emperor Theodosius' daughter when the emperor lays the saint's garment upon her	M582, Fols. 21v-22r, translation after Verrone 2002: 19, 21	M582, Fols. 21v-22r, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 18, col. B, line 33 - p. 20, col. B, line 1
	2	Miracles of Phoibammon	Phoibammon appears to a man who habitually visits his shrine but has been forbidden from doing so	M582, Fols. 23r-23v, translation after Verrone 2002: 25, 27	M582, Fols. 23r-23v, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 24, col. B, line 32 - p. 26, col. A, line 32
	3	Miracles of Phoibammon	Phoibammon appears in the guise of a soldier to the man who had been forbidden from his shrine who is now travelling to the shrine	M582, Fols. 23v-24r, translation after Verrone 2002: 27, 29	M582, Fols. 23v-24r, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 26, col. B, line 11 - p. 28, col. A, line 19
	4	Miracles of Phoibammon	Phoibammon appears to a healed man about an offering of oil that he owes the shrine for having been healed there	M582, Fol. 24v, translation after Verrone 2002: 31	M582, Fol. 24v, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 30, col. B, lines 10-35
	5	Miracles of Phoibammon	Phoibammon appears again to the man who	M582, Fol. 25r, translation after	M582, Fol. 25r, Ed. Verrone

			offered oil at his shrine and assures him that all his shrines are equally effective	Verrone 2002: 33	2002: 32, col. A, lines 8-28
	6	Miracles of Phoibammon	A slandered farmworker who intends to swear an oath at Phoibammon's shrine sees the saint and Serine and decides not to swear the oath	M582, Fols. 25v-26r, translation after Verrone 2002: 35, 37	M582, Fols. 25v-26r, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 34, col. B, line 2 - p. 36, col. A, line 21
	7	Miracles of Phoibammon	A thief who has stolen a lamp from the shrine is unable to find his way home and hears voices telling him to return it	M582, Fol. 26v, translation after Verrone 2002: 39	M582, Fol. 26v, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 38, col. A, line 31 - col. B, line 7
	8	Miracles of Phoibammon	A supplicant sees saints, including Phoibammon and Hatre, gathered at a feast for Hatre	M582, Fol. 27r, translation after Verrone 2002: 41	M582, Fol. 27r, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 40, col. A, line 19 - col. B, line 6
	9	Miracles of Phoibammon	Phoibammon torments a man into confessing at the feast for Hatre after he swears an oath	M582, Fol. 27r, translation after Verrone 2002: 41	M582, Fol. 27r, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 40, col. B, lines 16-28

	10	Miracles of Phoibammon	Phoibammon casts a demon out of a man who is bringing a dropsical man to the shrine	M582, Fols. 28r-28v, translation after Verrone 2002: 45, 47	M582, Fols. 28r-28v, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 44, col. B, line 6 - p. 46, col. A, line 26
	11	Miracles of Phoibammon	Phoibammon appears to the dropsical man who was brought to his shrine by the possessed man	M582, Fols. 28v-29r, translation after Verrone 2002: 47, 49	M582, Fols. 28v-29r, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 46, col. A, line 32 - p. 48, col. A, line 35
	12	Miracles of Phoibammon	Phoibammon pursues some robbers and then takes the pilgrims whom they robbed to their stolen goods	M582, Fol. 29v, translation after Verrone 2002: 51	M582, Fol. 29v, Ed. Verrone 2002: p. 50, col. A, line 21 - col. B, line 18
Merkourios	1	Martyrdom of Merkourios	The emperor Julian is killed by Merkourios and his soldierly companions with a spear	BM Or. 6801 Fols. 20b-21a, translation after Budge 1915: 826	BM Or. 6801 Fols. 20b-21a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 247, lines 26-34
	2	Martyrdom of Merkourios	The bishop Basilius of Cappadocia and his companions see a vision prophesying Julian's death	BM Or. 6801 Fols. 21a-b, translation after Budge 1915: 826	BM Or. 6801 Fols. 21a-b, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 247, line 34 - p. 248, line 15

			three days before it happens		
	3	Miracles of Merkourios	Merkourios' body refuses to move on its bier during a dispute about where to bury it	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 3b-4a, translation after Budge 1915: 830-1	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 3b-4a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 258, line 29 - p. 259, line 13
	4	Miracles of Merkourios	Merkourios promises a poor man that his newly-baptised peers will help him	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 4a-5a, translation after Budge 1915: 831-2	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 4a-5a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 259, line 28 - p. 260, line 31
	5	Miracles of Merkourios	Merkourios appears as an archon to the same poor man after his oxen is gored by another and heals it	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 5b-7a, translation after Budge 1915: 833-4	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 5b-7a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 261, line 19 - p. 262, line 30
	6	Miracles of Merkourios	After the poor man becomes the steward of Merkourios' shrine, the saint warns him about a thief who has stolen wood being used to build the shrine	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 10a-11a, translation after Budge 1915: 838-9	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 10a-11a, ed. Budge 1915: p. 266, line 21 - p. 267, line 16
	7	Miracles of Merkourios	Merkourios appears to and impales a Jew who has ridden a	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 13b-15a, translation after	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 13b-15a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 270,

			mule into his shrine	Budge 1915: 842-3	line 25 - p. 271, line 32
	8	Miracles of Merkourios	Merkourios appears to an archon and tells him that he will conceive a son	BM Or. 6802 Fol. 17a, translation after Budge 1915: 845	BM Or. 6802 Fol. 17a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 274, lines 3-14
	9	Miracles of Merkourios	Merkourios appears as a general to the lovestruck son of another archon who hired the services of a magician to guarantee him the daughter of the original archon in marriage	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 19b-20b, translation after Budge 1915: 848-9	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 19b-20b, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 276, line 17 - p. 277, line 17
	10	Miracles of Merkourios	Merkourios appears to the original archon whose daughter has been struck ill by the magician	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 21b-22a, translation after Budge 1915: 850	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 21b-22a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 278, line 23 - p. 279, line 8
	11	Miracles of Merkourios	The magician accounts how Merkourios has captured and bound him as punishment for making the	BM Or. 6802 Fol. 22b, translation after Budge 1915: 851	BM Or. 6802 Fol. 22b, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 279, line 30 - p. 280, line 3

			archon's daughter ill		
	12	Fragmentary Miracle of Merkourios	Merkourios appears to an impatient patient, chastises him, and instructs him on how to be healed	K09456 V0b, translation after Till 1935-6: I, 41	K09456 V0b, Ed. Till 1935-6: I, p. 40, line 28 - p. 41, line 6
	13	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Merkourios	Merkourios appears to a man about his avarice to tell him to donate to his shrine	M588 Fol. 28vB, translation after Weidmann 1991b: § 6-7, p. 5	M588 Fol. 28vB, Ed. Weidmann 1991a: § 6, p. 4, line 29 - § 7, p. 4, line 38
	14	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Merkourios	Merkourios appears to a young man who was wounded while working on the saint's shrine when the Devil threw him from a great height	M588 Fols. 29rA-29rB, translation after Weidmann 1991b: § 11, p. 6	M588 Fols. 29rA-29rB, Ed. Weidmann 1991a: § 11, p. 5, lines 22-6
	15	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Merkourios	Merkourios attacks barbarians who have kidnapped people from outside his shrine	M588 Fols. 29vA-29vB, translation after Weidmann 1991b: § 15, p. 7	M588 Fols. 29vA-29vB, Ed. Weidmann 1991a: § 15, p. 6, lines 16-24
	16	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Merkourios	Merkourios leads the kidnap victims home	M588 Fols. 29vB-30rA, translation after Weidmann	M588 Fols. 29vB-30rA, Ed. Weidmann

				1991b: § 16-17, p. 7	1991a: § 16-17, p. 6, lines 25-37
17	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Merkourios	Merkourios heals a woman whom he made ill for being too greedy to donate to his shrine after she repents	M588 Fol. 30rB, translation after Weidmann 1991b: § 20, p. 8	M588 Fol. 30rB, Ed. Weidmann 1991a: § 20, p. 7, lines 22-7	
18	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Merkourios	Another version of how bishops foresaw Julian the Apostate's death, by seeing that he has taken his spear from where it is kept	M588 Fol. 30vB, translation after Weidmann 1991b: § 23, p. 8	M588 Fol. 30vB, Ed. Weidmann 1991a: § 23, p. 8, lines 14-17	
19	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Merkourios	The bishops see Merkourios carrying his spear stained with Julian the Apostate's blood	M588 Fol. 30vB, translation after Weidmann 1991b: § 23, p. 9	M588 Fol. 30vB, Ed. Weidmann 1991a: § 23, p. 8, lines 19-22	
20*	Miracles of Merkourios	Merkourios moves on his bier to protect the poor man from being attacked	BM Or. 6802, Fol. 2a, translation after Budge 1915: 829	BM Or. 6802 Fol. 2a, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 257, lines 6-7	
21*	Miracles of Merkourios	Merkourios attacks a pagan archon for stealing bricks intended for the saint's shrine to	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 8b-9b, translation after Budge 1915: 836-7	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 8b-9b, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 264, line 26 - p. 265, line 16	

			use on his own property		
	22*	Miracles of Merkourios	Demons take possession of people at a religious celebration following the magician's punishment	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 22b-23b, translation after Budge 1915: 851-2	BM Or. 6802 Fols. 22b-23b, Ed. Budge 1915: p. 280, lines 6-32
Viktor	1	Fourth Martyrdom of Viktor	Viktor's friend Horion beheads him when the executioner fails, before seeing the saint ascend to heaven	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 26a, translation after Budge 1914: I, 298	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 26a, Ed. Budge 1914: vol.1, p. 44, line 33 - p. 45, line 8
	2	British Museum Encomium of Viktor	Viktor appears to a man whom he resurrected as a child after his parents reneged on their promise to donate him to the shrine	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 31b, translation after Budge 1914: I, 308	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 31b, Ed. Budge 1914: vol. 1, p. 56, lines 6-9
	3	British Museum Encomium of Viktor	Viktor appears to a woman with possessed breasts and instructs her on how to be exorcised	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 32a- b, translation after Budge 1914: I, 310-11	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 32a- b, Ed. Budge 1914: vol. 1, p. 57, line 15 - p. 58, line 12

	4	British Museum Encomium of Viktor	Viktor catches a workman after the Devil throws him from a great height while he was working on the saint's shrine	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 33a- b, translation after Budge 1914: I, 311-12	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 33a- b, Ed. Budge 1914: vol. 1, p. 59, line 6 - p. 60, line 2
	5	British Museum Encomium of Viktor	Viktor appears to and heals a man who is sick with a swollen body	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 34a- b, translation after Budge 1914: I, 313-14	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fol. 34b, Ed. Budge 1914: vol. 1, p. 60, line 30 - p. 61, line 30
	6	British Museum Encomium of Viktor	Viktor appears to Constantine's general, who is ill with a tumour or ulcer, at his shrine in Antioch and instructs him to go to his shrine in Rome	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 36a- b, translation after Budge 1914: I, 316-17	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 36a- b, Ed. Budge 1914: vol. 1, p. 63, line 13 - p. 64, line 15
	7	British Museum Encomium of Viktor	Viktor appears to and heals Constantine's general at his shrine in Rome	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 37a- b, translation after Budge 1914: I, 318-19	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 37a- b, Ed. Budge 1914: vol. 1, p. 65, line 3 - p. 66, line 3
	8	British Museum Encomium of Viktor	Viktor appears to a man with a skin disease and	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 39b- 40a, translation	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 39b- 40a, Ed. Budge

			instructs him on how to be healed	after Budge 1914: I, 320-1	1914: vol. 1, p. 68, line 5 - p. 69, line 1
	9	British Museum Encomium of Viktor	The writer recounts his vision in which Viktor told him to provide the sermon part of the encomium	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 52b-53a, translation after Budge 1914: I, 342-3	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 52b-53a, Ed. Budge 1914: vol.1, p. 88, line 24 - p. 89, line 11
	10	British Museum Encomium of Viktor	Viktor comes to the avaricious son of a charitable man to persuade him to repent and make donations to the shrine like his father	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 56b-58a, translation after Budge 1914: I, 349-51	BM MS. Oriental No. 7022 Fols. 56b-58a, Ed. Budge 1914: vol. 1, p. 95, line 25 - p. 97, line 26
	11	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Viktor	The martyr Cosmas pleads for his mother, Theodote, to be buried and the voice of the Lord directs Viktor to her body	M591 Fols. 36vB-37rB, translation after Scott 1993b: § 7, p. 105	M591 Fols. 37rA-37rB, Ed. Scott 1993a: § 7, p. 136, lines 1-18
	12	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Viktor	Viktor appears to and rebukes Diocletian and his entourage, including his own father Romanos	M591, Fols. 45rB-46rA, translation after Scott 1993b: § 31-4, p. 113-14	M591, Fols. 45rB-46rA, Ed. Scott 1993a: § 31-4, p. 146, line 6 - p. 147, line 2

	13	Pierpont Morgan Encomium of Viktor	Viktor appears to his friend, Martenianus, who is said to have travelled to Egypt and gathered the records of the saint's trial to write his martyrdom	M591, Fols. 49rA-49vB, translation after Scott 1993b: § 44-6, p. 117-18	M591, Fols. 49rA-49vB, Ed. Scott 1993a: § 44-6, p. 151, line 5 - p. 152, line 5
	14	Pushkin Encomium of Viktor	Viktor habitually appears to the man whom he resurrected as a child as that man works his way up the clerical ranks at the shrine	I.1.b.656+714 (5681, Copt. 18/1 and 18/2), Fol. 18a, translation after Elanskaya 1994: 82	I.1.b.656+714 (5681, Copt. 18/1 and 18/2), Fol. 18a, Ed. Elanskaya 1994: p. 77, col. B, line 36 - p. 78, col. A, line 6
	15*	Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Encomium of Viktor	Another telling of how Viktor appears to and rebukes Diocletian and his entourage, including Romanos	K 09447, p. 139, translation after Till 1935- 6: I, 54	K 09447, p. 139, Ed. Till 1935-6: I, p. 49, lines 15-25 - p. 50
	16*	Miracles of Viktor	Another telling of how Viktor appears to a woman with possessed breasts and instructs her	K 09442, p. 20, translation after Till 1935-6: I, 2; E01850	K 09442, p. 20, Ed. Till 1935-6: I, p. 46, line 19 – p. 47, line 5; E01850

			on how to be exorcised		
James	1	Martyrdom of James	James appears to Peter the Iberian in Alexandria while the abbot is under threat from the Chalcedonian patriarch to encourage him to continue travelling to Oxyrhynchus rather than flee back to Jerusalem	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 201-2, translation after Alcock p. 21-2	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 201-2, Ed. Balestri and Hyvernat, vol. 2: p. 53, line 8 – p. 54, line 14
	2	Martyrdom of James	James appears to Peter the Iberian and his companions at Paim, after they have successfully hidden from the Chalcedonian patriarch's soldiers	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 202-4, translation after Alcock p. 22-3	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 202-4, Ed. Balestri and Hyvernat, vol. 2: p. 54, line 29 – p. 56, line 12
	3	Martyrdom of James	James appears to Peter's companions when they steal his body to chastise them before his relics	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 204-7, translation after Alcock p. 23-4	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 204-7, Ed. Balestri and Hyvernat, vol. 2: p. 56, line 12 – p. 57, line 26

			fly back to his site of his shrine		
	4	Martyrdom of James	James appears to a pious virgin to instruct her to inform the local priest about his relics and have his shrine built	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 207-9, translation after Alcock p. 24	Cod. Vat. Copt. 59 Fols. 207-9, Ed. Balestri and Hyvernât, vol. 2: p. 57, line 27 – p. 59, line 9

Table 3: The visions experienced by the laypeople

2.1: Context of Visions

This section will provide an outline of the narrative context in which laypeople experience visions of each saint, and the relationship of the visions to the posthumous miracles performed by the saints for those laypeople.

Previous study of visions has concentrated on generating a typology of them rather than focusing on their relationship to miracles. While this is a useful exercise, typologies do not clearly distinguish between visions of holy beings, like angels and Christ, and unholy beings, like demons – apart from what can be inferred by the names assigned by each scholar, such as temptation visions termed by Stavroula Constantinou – and often there is overlap between types, making it unclear how effective generating typologies is³¹. Additionally, when scholars have created typologies of visions and of miracles, regardless of what they devise they tend to focus on analysing healing miracles because of how common they are, which means that miracles and visions that cannot be designated as ‘healing’ have not been as thoroughly studied, and likewise the relationship between different types of miracles and visions have received limited attention³².

It is crucial that the relationship between miracles and visions and between different types of both phenomena is acknowledged, in order to develop scholarship beyond the generation of typologies and into the understanding of the function that these phenomena had in hagiography. Therefore, in this thesis the posthumous miracles and visions will be distinguished according to their functions, and as broadly as possible, in order for their content to be

³¹ See Introduction: 1.2; Booth, P. 2013: 83; Constantinou, S. 2014: 23.

³² Kazhdan, A. P. 1995: 80.

effectively analysed and compared. The close connection of miracles and visions was presumably expected by both writers and audiences of Coptic hagiography, as most of the posthumous miracles studied here are accompanied by visions. Only two miracles in the hagiography of Kollouthos, one in that of Menas, two in that of Phoibammon, and one in that of Merkourios do not include visions. This shows that it was considered normal or expected by writers and audiences when the extant texts were produced to present these phenomena together. It is possible for them to be presented separately, as only one of the four visions in which James appears is accompanied by a miracle, and one of the visions in which Kollouthos appears, to a reformed prostitute, does not accompany a miracle³³. Mostly, visions of the martyr saints in these texts precede the miracles that those saints perform. Visions can continue for the duration of their associated miracles, but they usually begin before the miracles do. This indicates that a function of visions in hagiography preserved in Coptic was to signal to the audience that a miracle was about to occur.

Further, the type of miracle is usually indicated by the vision that precedes it, which will be shown throughout the analysis. The posthumous miracles that occur in the texts studied can be divided into three categories: healing, protection, and punishment. Visions, meanwhile, are usually informative, encouraging, or chastisement, or often a combination of these. Informative visions involve the saint imparting instructions or information to the lay characters, such as how to go about being healed or which shrine they should visit, with an example of each being found in a narrative of Kollouthos in which he explains to a couple how to conceive a child³⁴. Where the instructions concern healing or when preceding a protective miracle, the visions are also either encouraging, if the suppliant has done nothing to deserve their predicament, or chastisement if their predicament is a result of their own poor behaviour or sin. An example of the former is when Menas saves a Samaritan woman from being raped while she travels to his shrine and an example of the latter is when Kollouthos, while healing a man, chastises him for drinking so much alcohol that he fell from a roof and mutilated his foot³⁵. Punishing miracles are also accompanied by chastising visions, which highlight the sins or crimes committed and warn the characters involved and through them audience that the wrongdoing should not be repeated or there will be more severe consequences. The man who attempted to rape the Samaritan woman experiences one such miracle, when Menas petrifies his hand to protect the woman, whom he is threatening with a sword³⁶. In order to heal his hand, the attempted rapist goes to

³³ Alcock (unpublished): 23-4; Schenke 2013: 266-7.

³⁴ Schenke 2013: 186-9.

³⁵ Drescher 1946: 30, 121-2; Thompson 1993a: 68-9; Thompson 1993b: 53.

³⁶ Drescher 1946: 30, 121-2.

Menas' shrine and repents, at which point the saint has him promise not to attempt such a crime again before he heals him³⁷.

In the martyrdom of James, he appears in three visions unaccompanied by miracles. In these, James appears to characters to inform them of where to take his relics and to encourage them to persevere through dangerous situations³⁸. This is no doubt a result of the function of his martyrdom because the Coptic version of it justifies the translation of his relics from Persia to Egypt. Even the punishing miracle that he performs relates to the function of the martyrdom, because he appears to chastise – and so, verbally punish – Peter the Iberian's companions for stealing his relics instead of leaving them at the shrine site preordained by God, thus reiterating that his relics are predestined to be kept and venerated in Egypt³⁹. Alternatively, perhaps he has not yet developed his full potential as a saint because he has not yet reached his future shrine where he would presumably be expected to perform all three categories of miracle: healing, protecting, and punishing. However, the fact that he appears in visions means that he is not simply a relic being carried to its final destination but an active participant in the journey. This indicates that, prior to being buried at their shrines, saints could appear in visions to support the burial process. That does not mean that every saint appeared in visions in this way, as while being carried to their resting-places by their sisters, Menas and Phoibammon do not appear in visions, perhaps because they do not need to aid or encourage their sisters in the burial process.

Further, saints can be distinguished based on the type of miracles that they perform for laypeople, and therefore by the visions in which they appear to them, by the occupations that they are presented as having had during their lifetimes. This may provide another explanation as to why it was appropriate for James to primarily appear in visions without performing miracles, as he was presented as having been an official at the Persian court, making appearing and speaking to lay characters fit more with his apparent occupation than any particular type of miracle⁴⁰. Kollouthos was presented as having been a physician who performed healing miracles during his lifetime, and the majority of the posthumous miracles that he performs are healing ones. He only performs one combined protective and punishing miracle when pagan villagers threaten his shrine and the wife of one of the villagers within it, and only appears in a vision without a miracle to affirm the prostitute Maria's decision to cease prostituting herself⁴¹. Similarly, saints who were not considered to have been soldiers (including the Virgin Mary)

³⁷ Drescher 1946: 31-2, 122-3.

³⁸ Alcock (unpublished): 21-2, 22-3, 24; Balestri, G. and Hyvernât, H. 1907-50: II, 53-4, 54-6, 57-9.

³⁹ Alcock (unpublished): 23-4; Balestri and Hyvernât 1907-50: II, 56-7.

⁴⁰ See Chapter 1: 3.1.6.

⁴¹ Schenke 2013: 208-9, 266-7.

protected their cities from attack or went on military campaigns⁴². Meanwhile, the three saints who are presented as having been soldiers during their lifetimes, Menas, Phoibammon, and Merkourios, perform some healing miracles but primarily perform protective and punishing ones⁴³. Ward-Perkins argues that Menas' repertoire of miracles is unrelated to his role as a soldier because of their diversity, but most of them do fit into these two classifications⁴⁴. It is therefore clear that martyr saints were portrayed as being able to perform whatever miracle was needed in a given situation, but that they usually performed miracles associated with the occupation that they were claimed to have had. Finally, Viktor seems to be midway between healing and military saints, as in his tradition his father was a governor under Diocletian but the saint was martyred before he could follow in his father's footsteps, and he performs all three types of miracle but primarily healing ones⁴⁵.

As most of the posthumous miracles performed by the saints in their burial shrines involve visions, it can be argued that this was a common phenomenon in Coptic hagiography. Given that visions are almost as prevalent as miracles in these texts, it is therefore necessary to analyse them both within the context of the miracles with which they occur and as separate phenomena, to understand the functions that they had and how writers used them to engage their audience. This is particularly true for visions experienced by lay characters, as those are the characters with whom the lay audience will have most identified and which would therefore function as a crucial means for writers to convey their messages.

2.2: Analysis of Visions

2.2.1: Terminology Referring to Visions

Visions experienced by saints were rarely referred to by specific terminology. Meanwhile, in visions experienced by laypeople, the opposite is the case. This supports the idea that signposting was not required for experiences that were considered to be beyond the audience, but that it was required for situations that members of the congregation were told that they might experience and should be prepared for⁴⁶.

⁴² Ward-Perkins 2022: 506-7, 509-10.

⁴³ Ward-Perkins 2022: 501.

⁴⁴ Ward-Perkins 2022: 502, 511.

⁴⁵ See Chapter 1: 3.1.5.

⁴⁶ See Chapter 3: 2.2.1.

The most common term used, like in the few instances where visions are signposted in Chapter 3, is ‘**ἑορῶμα**’ ‘vision’, which indicates that the emphasis on the sense of sight in visions was universal. The only other term used in visions experienced by laypeople is the Coptic noun ‘**πακοῦ**’ ‘dream’, which occurs in a single vision in which Merkourios appears, although alongside ‘**ἑορῶμα**’ ‘vision’ rather than instead of it⁴⁷. So, as well as showing the importance of the sense of sight, the terminology used remains largely Greek even where there is an equivalent term in Coptic. Alternatively, ‘**πακοῦ**’ ‘dream’ could have been used specifically because the layperson who experiences this vision does so while he is asleep and ‘**ἑορῶμα**’ ‘vision’ is a more general term that doesn’t specify sleep or wakefulness⁴⁸. However, as terms that specifically refer to dreams are not otherwise used for visions experienced by characters while they are sleeping, it was more likely the choice of the writer to include a different term in this instance.

Bettina Krönung argues that terms such as ‘**ἑορῶμα**’ ‘vision’ are used to indicate that characters are experiencing visions as part of ecstasy⁴⁹. Supplicants in Coptic hagiography are often asleep when visions occur because they are incubating at a shrine, with Kollouthos regularly explicitly causing sleep to come upon them himself⁵⁰. Krönung observes that, in hagiography preserved in Greek, specific terminology is often avoided in favour of phrases like ‘he saw in his sleep’, and also the relationship between sleep and ecstasy⁵¹. This, coupled with the prevalence of prophecy in a performative devotional context and its association with ecstasy in the pre-Christian Mediterranean world, including Egypt, may indicate that Christian writers wanted to distance themselves from earlier practices⁵². However, while similar variations are found in the hagiography preserved in Coptic being used in this thesis, it seems to be choices made by the writers, rather than as Krönung proposes a reflection of the ‘widespread negative judgment of dreams’ found in the New Testament and early Christian literature⁵³. While God and angels may be seen at night, it is not while those witnessing them are asleep⁵⁴. Visions in dreams are in fact rare in the New Testament, only occurring five times in the Gospel of Matthew and four times in the Acts of the Apostles⁵⁵. The reflection in hagiography preserved in Coptic of experiences that were being advertised to laypeople seems to have extended beyond

⁴⁷ Crum, W. E. 1939: 302b; Budge 1915: 248.

⁴⁸ Černý, J. 1976: 139; Liddell, H. G. and Scott, R. 1996: 1244b.

⁴⁹ Krönung, B. 2014: 45; see Chapter 3: 1.2.1; see Chapter 3: 2.2.7.

⁵⁰ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4; Schenke 2013: 189; Thompson 1993b: 53, 58-9.

⁵¹ Krönung 2014: 45; Krönung, B. 2012: 75, 77-8; e.g. Moschos, J. 2010: 27, 28; Berger, K. 1992: 204.

⁵² Nissinen, M. 2017: 172-3, 181.

⁵³ Krönung 2014: 46; Frenschkowski, M. 1998: 9.

⁵⁴ Berger 1992: 204.

⁵⁵ Le Goff, J. 1985: 172.

the explicit signposting that visions were happening and included certain cult practices that also related to visions.

The inclusion of cult practices from the shrines that were supposed to enable supplicants to experience visions was perhaps the writers' way of including practices that they could present as Christian to be orthoprax, but the inclusion of incubation could additionally have shown the audience the necessity of being in certain circumstances to experience visions and thus reinforced the need for intercession by either saints or members of the Church hierarchy to experience the power of God⁵⁶. The association of visions with dreaming and sleeping may have also been a way for writers to convey the feeling of experiencing a vision to readers and listeners to further foster a sense of realism when demonstrating the power of martyr saints or even to convey something that they themselves believed to be real. However, the existence of many visions in which supplicants are awake shows that dreams were one way in which visions could manifest but did not have any specific qualities to distinguish them from waking visions, at least in hagiography that has survived in Coptic.

As with visions experienced by saints, those experienced by laypeople include a variety of terms other than those specifically meaning 'vision' to indicate that they are happening, with the emphasis continuing to be on the sense of sight. For example, like the characters who appear to the saints while they are alive, saints often 'appear' 'ΟΥΩΝΘ' to laypeople⁵⁷. They are usually perceived by laypeople using verbs of sight, like 'ΝΑΥ' 'to look' and 'ḠΩΥΥ' 'to look, to see'⁵⁸. The miracle collection of Phoibammon includes one use of the Greek loan word 'ΘΕΩΡΕΙ' 'to behold, gaze at, wonder at, view', in the context of a feast day at the saint's shrine⁵⁹. As seeing is not limited to religious experiences, it was probably acceptable to use the Coptic verbs normally, with the writer then choosing to use a Greek one in an explicitly religious context. This keeps the emphasis on the visual experience of visions⁶⁰.

Saints also often physically enter the space occupied by laypeople using verbs of motion like 'ΒΩΚ' 'go' and 'ΕΙ' 'come'. This reiterates how the saints are mobile between heaven and earth in order to appear posthumously, and also how they usually make themselves known before performing miracles, making their presence a key part of the narratives of posthumous miracles. Saints also can enter the scene in a more sudden and imposing fashion, by 'standing' 'ἀερεα' over the characters to whom they are appearing, as James does to Peter the Iberian's

⁵⁶ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4; Klaniczay, G. 2014: 217-18; Booth 2013: 27, 71.

⁵⁷ E.g. Drescher 1946: 118, 123.

⁵⁸ E.g. Budge 1915: 248, 262; Weidmann, F. 1991a: 5.

⁵⁹ Verrone 2002: 20, 26, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 46; Liddell and Scott 1996: 786b.

⁶⁰ Krönung 2014: 45; see Chapter 3: 2.2.1; see Chapter 3: 2.2.2.

companions when they steal his relics: ‘α φηεθογαβ οσι ερατq σαπυωι μμωογ’ ‘The saint stood over them’⁶¹. This is, however, not limited to cases where saints appear to those who have done wrong.

Also like visions experienced by the saints, usually their commencement is narrated but their conclusion does not have to be. In the few places where the ends of visions are narrated, again the writers focus on the sense of sight by usually using the verb ‘to hide’ ‘εοπ’⁶². This shows that it was not felt necessary for the characters appearing in visions to explicitly depart, thereby placing the emphasis on the appearance of those characters and thus the occurrence of visions. In these narratives, the arrival of the character appearing in a vision was an important event, leading to the occurrence and function of visions being emphasised more than narrative coherence, suggesting that any messages contained within visions and the miraculous events accompanying or following them were more of a focus than their relationship with the narratives in which they occurred, therefore indicating that the narratives were vessels for messages of piety and celebrations of the saints’ power and benevolence.

It can be seen that the same terms, where used, are found in visions experienced by saints and those experienced by laypeople. This shows that the difference in the portrayal by writers of visions experienced by these different characters was not in the terminology that was used, but in its frequency and the reasoning behind that frequency.

2.2.2: The Sensory Description of Visions

While it has been established that saints could be seen and heard in visions experienced by laypeople, these were not the only senses to which writers referred⁶³. Sight and hearing were the most prevalent of the senses included by writers and sometimes the only ones used, for example in the martyrdom of James, but the inclusion of others indicates that writers had some choice in how they portrayed characters’ experiences of visions. The sensory description in visions also evidences that there were similarities in the ways that visions witnessed by saints and by laypeople were presented, as the same vocabulary and thus the same experiences are portrayed in both cases.

The next most frequent sense evoked after sight and hearing is touch. Hans Urs von Balthasar suggested that touch is the prerogative of particularly holy characters like the apostles,

⁶¹ Balestri and Hyvernatt 1907-50: II, 56.

⁶² E.g. Budge 1914: I, 65.

⁶³ See 2.2.1.

and indeed it is determined by the character appearing, in this case a holy character, whether or not touch occurs⁶⁴.

Especially when healing supplicants, saints often make physical contact with them. Kollouthos' touching of supplicants is also reminiscent of what a physician may actually have done, which perhaps added further emphasis to his role in his tradition as a healer. That being said, he only touches laypeople in three miracles, showing that this was not considered essential and that the sense of touch was secondary to those of sight and hearing. An example is the first miracle in the Pierpont Morgan encomium, in which the saint uncovers a man's mangled foot and then touches it and makes the sign of the cross over it to heal it: 'αφορες νεϋτηηβε εως αϋεφραγιζε μμοϋ' 'He put his fingers upon it and made the sign of the cross over it'⁶⁵.

Additionally, Kollouthos' use of touch is reminiscent of his own interaction with the archangel Gabriel, as in the second miracle in the Pierpont Morgan encomium he pulls a crippled man to his feet: 'The holy one grasped his hand and raised him to his feet and he became as one who had never been sick'⁶⁶. As well as these connotations of touch within Kollouthos' encomium, Candace Buckner observes how healing through touch may be a survival from Classical tradition, especially the cult of Asclepius, as there are depictions on stelae of him healing individuals by touching them⁶⁷. This may also explain why touching to heal was particularly done by healing saints in hagiography, although as aspects of the saints' cults which were noticeably pagan in origin were not included in hagiography, this may be a feature which writers felt that they could present as Christian through its prevalence in the cult of saints but also in its logic for healing saints⁶⁸.

Healing is not the only result the writers presented of saints touching laypeople. As shown by the final vision in the tradition of Kollouthos, this sense was also used to present punishing miracles, as he blows into the faces of pagan villagers attacking his shrine to blind them: 'αϋνιϋε εϋοϋϋμ πεϋϋο αϋρβλλε τηροϋ' 'He blew into their faces and they all went blind'⁶⁹. This kind of touch is more usually found in miracles performed by soldier saints, as they perform more protective and punishing miracles than healing saints do⁷⁰. The incident in which Menas saves a Samaritan woman from being raped by an innkeeper is an example of this because

⁶⁴ Balthasar, H. U. von 1965-83: I, 261.

⁶⁵ Thompson 1993a: 69.

⁶⁶ ΠΠΕΤΟΥΑΔΒ ΔΕ ΑΔΑΜΑΞΤΕ ΝΤΕϋΒΙΧ ΑϋΤΑϋΟϋ ΕΡΑΤϋ Αϋ<Π> ΘΕ ΝΟΥΑ ΜΠΕϋϋΩΠΕ ΕΝΕϋ; Thompson 1993a: 72; see Chapter 3: 2.2.2.

⁶⁷ Buckner, C. L. 2021: 201.

⁶⁸ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4.

⁶⁹ Schenke 2013: 208.

⁷⁰ See 2.1.

he petrifies the man's hand, still holding the sword he was using to threaten the woman, and then takes the woman from the room⁷¹. The verb showing that Menas is 'grasping' the woman's hand is the same used when Kollouthos pulled the crippled man to his feet, 'ΜΑΣΤΕ' 'to grasp', suggesting that there were expected terms for particular interactions⁷². Another example is when Menas saves a man who had been eaten by a crocodile and then heals him from his injuries⁷³. In both of these cases, however, much of the touch is actually applied to the characters being protected, with the saint not even touching the crocodile and it releasing the man solely out of fear of the saint: 'When the crocodile saw the holy martyr, it let go of the man because it was afraid'⁷⁴. This shows that the priority of punishing miracles was not actually punishment, but instead the removal of the threat to the character being saved by the saint by punishing a wrongdoer and therefore that punishing and protective miracles are closely related.

The only saint included in this thesis whose punishing miracles, while still protecting others, are graphically violent and place more emphasis on punishment than protection is Merkourios, demonstrating that distinguishing the two kinds of miracle is still appropriate despite their close relationship. Some of the sensory description includes the aftermath of violence with events left to the audience's imagination, like the bloodied spear following the death of Julian the Apostate: 'πεφμερες τολμ εμ πεφςνοφ' 'His [Merkourios'] spear stained with his [Julian's] blood'⁷⁵. However, most of it is explicitly about the violence happening, such as the impalement of the Jew Gaipos, in which his internal organs fall out: 'He thrust his spear into the middle of him, and his bowels came out'⁷⁶. Lethal punishment is not the only kind meted out by Merkourios, as for lesser crimes – like enchanting a young woman so that she is deathly ill until she marries a certain young man – he beats people⁷⁷. Merkourios is not the only saint to harm wrongdoers, given that Phoibammon torments a man into confessing, albeit without further detail: 'He did not stop tormenting him until he confessed to what he had done'⁷⁸. However, Phoibammon forgives the man after he does confess, whereas Merkourios has to be dissuaded from killing Gaipos by an angel⁷⁹. This propensity for violence seems to be part

⁷¹ Drescher 1946: 30.

⁷² Crum 1939: 9a.

⁷³ Devos 1959: 458.

⁷⁴ ΠΤΕΡΕΠΕΜΣΑΞ ΝΑΥ Ε ΠΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΕΤΟΥΑΑΒ ΑΚΑ ΠΡΩΜΕ ΕΒΟΛ ΕΒΟΛ ΧΕ ΑΦΡΩΤΕ; Devos 1959: 458.

⁷⁵ Weidmann 1991a: 8.

⁷⁶ ΑΦΣΟΚΥ Μ ΠΕΦΚΟΥΝΤΑΡΙΟΝ Ε ΤΜΗΝΤΕ ΝΣΗΤΥ Α ΝΕΦΜΑΣΤ ΕΙ ΕΒΟΛ ΜΜΟΦ; Budge 1915: 270-1.

⁷⁷ Budge 1915: 276.

⁷⁸ ΜΠΕΦΛΟ ΕΦΒΑΣΑΝΙΖΕ ΜΜΟΦ ΨΑΝΤΕΦΣΟΜΟΛΟΓΕΙ ΜΠΕΝΤΑΦΑΑΦ; Verrone 2002: 40.

⁷⁹ Budge 1915: 271.

of Merkourios' tradition, although he does also offer protection, such as when he kills a horde of barbarians to save kidnapped people⁸⁰.

Healing can also be conveyed with graphic description, which is reminiscent of some of Artemios' treatments of genital diseases in his tradition, preserved in Greek, such as the third miracle in which the Amastrian's testicular boil bursts spectacularly⁸¹. Viktor's healing of a woman with possessed breasts, a man with a pus-filled skin disease, and Constantine's general who is afflicted with an ulcer or tumour are rather graphic when compared to the other posthumous healing miracles included in this thesis. The woman's breasts and the man effectively deflate. The woman's breasts are said to have 'assumed their usual shape' 'ἃ ΝΕΚΕΚΙΒΕ ΡΤΕΥΞΕ ΝΚΕΟΝ', literally 'made their manner of another time' which presumably means the time before they were possessed⁸². The man is said to have 'ceased to discharge pus and his bed was with water', and the pus must have been what was causing his body to swell as pus in this miracle is literally 'bad water'⁸³. Finally, the ulcer or tumour bursts and Constantine's general vomits up the pus that has presumably gathered in his gut: 'He found that the diseased portion of his inward parts had burst, and he vomited from his mouth a large quantity of pus, and he became immediately just like one who was not diseased at all'⁸⁴. So, it is either a disappointment or a relief that the same level of description does not occur when Viktor cures another man of leprosy⁸⁵. Perhaps the graphic descriptions of healing in the tradition of Viktor were considered acceptable because of his intermediary position between healing and military saints, as even though such descriptions are known for saints from a range of backgrounds in hagiography that has survived in Greek, this is not the case for that which has survived in Coptic⁸⁶.

Further, when saints who were presented as having been soldiers during their lives heal supplicants, they do not touch them. Menas' hand is instead 'extended over the body of the man' 'ἀφ᾽ετοοτῆ ἐβόλ ἐμ πσωμα μ πρωμῆ' when he heals the pilgrim who had been eaten by a crocodile. Another example of a healing saint not touching a supplicant whom they are healing is Viktor, who, arguably very wisely, touches the man whose body has swollen with pus with a rod instead of his hand: 'And he stretched out the rod which was in his hand, and laid it upon the

⁸⁰ See Chapter 1: 2.5; Weidmann 1991a: 6.

⁸¹ E.g. Crisafulli, V. S. and Nesbitt, J. W. 1997: 83.

⁸² Budge 1914: I, 58.

⁸³ ἀφλο ἐφωγο ἐβόλ ν οὔμογ ν βωων ζωστε ντε πεφβλοβ ζωρη ἐν οὔμοογ; Budge 1914: I, 61.

⁸⁴ ἀφε ἐ πεφωωπε ἀφωῶ ἐμ πεφσα ν ζοῦν ἐτε πεχαλκίνωπε ἀφκα βόλ ν οὔμνηυε ν μογ ν βωων ἐν τεφ ταπρο ἀφr ὅε ντεγνογ οὔζωσ μ πεφωωπε ἐ πτηρη; Budge 1914: I, 65-6.

⁸⁵ Budge 1914: I, 68.

⁸⁶ Neil, B. 2021 91.

sick man’, thus behaving somewhat between a healing and a military saint⁸⁷. The sense of touch therefore reiterates that, while both healing and military saints were presented as able to perform any kind of miracle, there were expectations based on the occupations that they supposedly had while alive that established what the audience should anticipate from their interaction with a saint depending on the kind of assistance that they need and the kind of saint that appears to them.

The other sense, apart from sight and hearing, which is used is smell. It is used much less frequently than touch, only occurring in visions experienced by laypeople in the traditions of Viktor and Merkourios. It has already been established in Chapter 3 that a sweet smell is a hallmark of holy characters such as angels and of heaven, and supposedly accompanied the presence of relics⁸⁸. Additionally, incense was considered in biblical texts to ‘demarcate sacred space, sacred action, and sacred identity’⁸⁹. So, the fact that saints were believed to also have this quality demonstrates how holy they were considered to be when compared with the laypeople to whom they were appearing⁹⁰. The sense of smell occurs twice in posthumous appearances by Viktor, when he exorcises the demon from Kallieutropia’s breasts and when he cures a man of leprosy. In both instances, the smell is described as ‘a strong and sweet smell’ ‘ΟΥΝΟΒ ΝCΤ ΝΟΥΨΕ’, thus showing that the specific scent is indicative of holiness and does not vary according to the characters smelling it⁹¹. In the second, it is also described as being like ‘exquisite incense’ (literally ‘choice incense’) ‘ΟΥΘΥΜΙΑ ΕΨCΟΤΠ’ which probably added emphasis⁹². The same choiceness and sweetness are found in the tradition of Merkourios when he appears to the father of a deathly ill maiden⁹³. In all these instances, the scent is only smellable after the saints have left and the visions ended, further indicating its connection with heaven as perhaps it shows that the saints were returning there, similarly to how in other visions angels and saints are seen ascending⁹⁴.

So, saints and laypeople experienced the same senses in visions with the same relative importance being assigned to them by writers, with sight the most and smell the least important. This perhaps established the sensory experience of visions that the audience should expect if they were to experience one, especially in terms of touch as that not only differed between whether laypeople were being healed or punished but also between the saints who appeared.

⁸⁷ ΔΨCΟΟΥΤΗ ΕΒΟΛ Μ ΠΕΡΑΒΛΔC CΤ ΕΝ ΤΕΨΒΙΧ ΔΨΚΑΔΨ ΕΧΜ ΠΕΨΨΩΠΕ; Budge 1914: I, 61.

⁸⁸ Harvey, S. A. 2006: 64, 113; see Chapter 3: 2.2.2.

⁸⁹ Harvey 2006: 15

⁹⁰ See Chapter 3: 2.1; see Chapter 3: 2.2.2.

⁹¹ Budge 1914: I, 58, 68.

⁹² Budge 1914: I, 68.

⁹³ Budge 1915: 279.

⁹⁴ Thompson 1993a: 58; Budge 1915: 288; Till 1935-6: I, 49; Balestri and Hyvernats 1907-50: II, 34; Budge 1914: I, 45; see Chapter 3: 2.2.1.

This further reinforced the distinction between different saints and miracles and, therefore, while not as prevalent as sight and therefore arguably not as important, was a key indicator in the kind of experience that awaited supplicants rather than the occurrence of visions in the first place.

2.2.3: Characters Who Appear in Visions

John Wortley argues that the physical qualities of the characters who appear in visions in Christian tradition are ‘beside the point’ as the physical resurrection of those making posthumous appearances was not what hagiography was about⁹⁵. Given the prevalence of ideas of resurrection and the communication of the living with the dead in both Roman and Egyptian culture, posthumous visions and miracles cannot have been considered strange by the audiences of these texts⁹⁶. However, Wortley therefore characterises such visions as spiritual, as communicative but not physically interactive, whereas in fact the previous section has already shown that physical interaction was common, regardless of the fact that saints were not appearing in their still buried (and sometimes dismembered) bodies⁹⁷. His observations also ignore the characteristics of those appearing such as their appearance, and how that might relate to the interaction. One observation of Wortley’s that has been confirmed is that the dead would appear to the living to fulfil certain needs, although in Coptic hagiography the dead in question are invariably saints, suggesting that the possibility of laypeople appearing to laypeople noted by Wortley is a Western tradition⁹⁸.

As has been observed in this chapter, different saints appeared for different purposes⁹⁹. The descriptions of saints are also related to the occupations that they were claimed to have had while alive and the types of miracles that they were performing.

Kollouthos is described as surrounded by light, with his face also emitting light, smiling, wearing white, and wearing a crown of light: ‘He was casting forth beams of light, while there was a crown of light on his head which was shining more than the sun, his face relaxed in a smile’, ‘wearing a luminous garment like snow, while his face shone like the sun’, ‘in a beautifully white habit, his face casting forth beams of light, while a crown which was shining like the sun was on his head...a relaxed, smiling face’¹⁰⁰. The crown is presumably a testament to his

⁹⁵ Wortley 2001: 59.

⁹⁶ Wortley 2001: 59, 60; Donnat, S. 2019: 46, 57-8, 61.

⁹⁷ See 2.2.2.

⁹⁸ Wortley 2001: 60; Donnat 2019: 46.

⁹⁹ See 2.1.

¹⁰⁰ ἀκτὴν ἀκτὴν ποιοῦν ἐβόλ ἐρε οὐκλὸν ποιοῦν εἰδὴ τεταπὲ ἐρ οὐοῦν ἐσοῦρε πρὶ ἐρε περὶο νατὶ
νσωβε; ἐφωρὶ πογῶβω ποιοῦν νῆ πογῶβω ἐρε περὶο ρ οὐοῦν νῆ μπρ; εἰ οὐσχημα ἐφογοβῶ

martyrdom and therefore a symbol of his sanctity. The presence of light in his appearance is also emphasised, which suggests that when appearing posthumously he looks similar to the angel Gabriel and confirms the association of light with the sanctity of holy characters, including angels and saints¹⁰¹. Like Kollouthos, descriptions of Viktor focus mainly on the emanation of light from his person, ‘ΕΥΝΕΧ ΔΑΤΙΝ Ν ΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΕΒΟΛ’ ‘emitting rays of light’, or glory ‘ΕΥΦΟΡΕΙ Ν ΟΥΝΟΒ ΝΕΟΟΥ’ ‘arrayed in great glory’¹⁰². As he is the son of a general (*stratelates*) rather than a soldier himself, he may not be considered a military saint and thus not be presented as such. He is however distinguished from the healing saint Kollouthos by being ‘ΕΥΒΟΛΕ Ν ΟΥΠΟΡΦΥΡΑ’ ‘clothed in purple’, which probably reflects that in his hagiographic tradition he has a personal relationship with the emperor Diocletian¹⁰³. His purple garb may also represent a trophy from combat, in which his martyrdom was his victory over the pagan emperor who tortured him. Alternatively, the tunic could be a reference to the regal one that his mother gifted to him and which enraged the emperor, although that tunic is woven with gold rather than being purple so that possibility is less likely¹⁰⁴. It is most plausible that the purple tunic signifies Viktor and Diocletian’s relationship because, when the saint appears to Diocletian, Romanos, and the emperor’s entourage, his tunic ‘ΑΥΡ ΠΕΣΜΟΤ ΝΟΥΔΕΤΟC’ ‘took the shape of an eagle’, which is a symbol for the Byzantine Empire and thus equates Viktor with the emperor¹⁰⁵. As such, Viktor’s rank and role during his life is reflected in the very specific descriptions of his attire. The other addition to his attire compared to that of Kollouthos is that Viktor carries a staff, which also emanates light, ‘ΕΡΕ ΟΥΞΑΡΒΑΟC Ν ΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΘΝ ΤΕΥΒΙΔ’ ‘there was a staff of light in his hand’, and which has already been acknowledged as a means by which he can heal¹⁰⁶. The appearance of healing saints may have been intended to put supplicants, and by extension the lay audience, at ease, as suggested by the analysis of the guises taken by the healing saint Artemios whose hagiography survives in Greek¹⁰⁷. However, the variation in Artemios’ appearance observed by Virgil S. Crisafulli and John W. Nesbitt is actually more reminiscent of military saints in hagiography preserved in Coptic, suggesting that healing saints were not considered to need to put supplicants at ease because of the role that they performed, whereas military saints

ΚΑΛΩC ΕΡΕ ΠΕΥΘΟ ΝΕΧ ΔΑΤΙΝ ΝΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΕΒΟΛ ΕΡΕ ΟΥΚΛΟΜ ΕΥΡ ΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΝΘΕ ΜΠΡΗ ΘΙΔΝ ΤΕΥΑΠΕ...ΟΥΘΟ ΕΥΝΑΤΗ ΝCΩΒΕ; Thompson 1993a: 69, 71, 77.

¹⁰¹ Thompson 1993a: 56; see Chapter 3: 2.2.3.

¹⁰² Budge 1914: I, 57, 59, 61.

¹⁰³ Budge 1914: I, 61; see Chapter 1: 3.1.5; Dunn, C. 2013; Andrews, E. 2015; Scultz, C. 2013.

¹⁰⁴ Scott 1993b: 109.

¹⁰⁵ Scott 1993a: 146; Soucek, P. 1997: 411; Redford, S. 2004: 395.

¹⁰⁶ Budge 1914: I, 57; see 2.2.2.

¹⁰⁷ Crisafulli and Nesbitt 1997: xiv-xv.

performed a greater variety of roles and thus their appearance was used to indicate whether they appear for healing, protection, or punishment.

For saints who were presented as having been soldiers during their lifetimes, writers emphasised that occupation and therefore their protective and punitive roles rather than their sanctity. For example, Menas is described as being *‘ἐϋτάλην ἐγέστο νογῶντι ἐφ’ ἡμεροῦ νογῆται’* ‘mounted on a white horse and in the guise of a soldier’¹⁰⁸. Sometimes the horse is ‘a spiritual horse’ *‘ἐνεϋστο μπηκοί’* and other times it is ‘a ghostly horse’ *‘πεϋστο μπηά’*, showing that, despite resembling a living soldier, the saint is now a denizen of heaven¹⁰⁹. Like the use of terminology to refer to visions, perhaps this was considered necessary signposting for characters who appeared to laypeople without emanating holy light. The only time that a military saint is dressed differently, Phoibammon is celebrating the feast day of another saint, Hatre, and therefore garbed appropriately for that in a crown that presumably demonstrates his status as a martyr: *‘ἐϋτάλην ἐνεϋστῶν ἐρε θηκλὸν ννοῦν θιδεν νεγάπηγε’* ‘mounted on their horses, while wreaths of gold were on their heads’¹¹⁰. The topic of saints’ alleged occupations following them into the afterlife has only been dealt with for those who were supposedly soldiers, by Ward-Perkins¹¹¹. He considers this phenomenon as unlikely because these saints foreswore their occupations in life by confessing their faith, but acknowledges that other saints, like healing ones, do seem to have carried over their earthly occupations¹¹². However, as martyrdom is conceptualised as a battle or contest, the choice by hagiographers to only depict military saints in military attire is notable¹¹³. Perhaps the saints’ prioritisation of their faith was not an issue for hagiographers, as saints who were once soldiers for the Roman Emperor became soldiers of the King of Heaven instead, given that they are almost always described as appearing posthumously in military garb and/or armed¹¹⁴. As Ward-Perkins notes, in Sophronius’ *Miracles of Cyrus and John*, John only appears posthumously in military garb once, but as he does so, he can be compared with Phoibammon’s appearance at the feast of Hatre¹¹⁵. Additionally, while Ward-Perkins argues that the attire of a healing saint was more appropriate for John at his and Cyrus’ healing shrine, which is certainly logical, in the surviving Coptic hagiography, soldier saints are either described as dressed like soldiers or minimally, never as resembling the attire of

¹⁰⁸ Drescher 1946: 77, 78.

¹⁰⁹ Devos 1959: 456; Bacot, S. 2011: 62-4.

¹¹⁰ Verrone 2002: 401; Ward-Perkins 2020: 7.

¹¹¹ Ward-Perkins 2022: 491.

¹¹² Ward-Perkins 2022: 491-2.

¹¹³ E.g. Reymond and Barns 1973: 33.

¹¹⁴ E.g. Ward-Perkins 2022: 492-4, 511.

¹¹⁵ Ward-Perkins 2022: 494.

Kollouthos. This shows that, while military attire was usually used by writers for the posthumous appearances of such saints, it could vary based on the context of individual miracles, thus indicating that there was indeed a connection between saints' worldly careers and their afterlives but that there was also nuance in descriptions of them.

Gilbert Dagron and Matthew Dal Santo have both proposed that the images of saints presented in hagiography and those in iconography bore similarities, or were related symbols of an iconographic tradition, while acknowledging that the evidence is limited¹¹⁶. Despite the limited extant iconography for the saints included in this thesis, there is enough to determine that they were correct to an extent, demonstrating further the importance of the sense of sight and, as Dagron put it, 'an immense desire to visualize'¹¹⁷. There are depictions in various media of equestrian warrior saints, which are similar to the descriptions found in hagiography¹¹⁸. Like the cult practices included in hagiography, perhaps the inclusion of elements like horses and weapons being wielded reinforced the images that the audience would have been accustomed to and generated a somewhat standardised idea of what they should expect should they experience their own visions of such saints¹¹⁹. That is not to say that all iconography is reflected in hagiography, as while the image of Menas accompanied by camels was popular, especially on Menas flasks, he only associates with camels three times during his hagiographical tradition: as a camel-driver to earn an income while he lived as a hermit, when camels indicated where his body was to be buried and shrine built, and when he posthumously reclaimed his camels following the failure of the man to whom he had entrusted them to donate their young to his shrine. This indicates that the motif of him being accompanied by camels was used in iconography as a way of distinguishing him from other military saints, who were also martyred as soldiers rather than after deserting the army¹²⁰. Meanwhile, such iconography does not seem to have existed – or, at least, has not survived – in Egypt for non-military saints. Perhaps it is because the emphasis in their hagiographic iconography is on light. Many holy beings were depicted in devotional spaces, so holy light was familiar to audiences, such as in the nimbus or aureola used to indicate holiness in saints and the Holy Family¹²¹.

Mary Farag observes in the story of the founding of the church of the Virgin Mary at Koskam a more involved relationship between the character appearing and iconography, as the

¹¹⁶ Dagron, G. 1991: 23-4, 26; Dal Santo 2012: 164, 228.

¹¹⁷ Dagron 1991: 25.

¹¹⁸ See Chapter 2: 2.2.2.

¹¹⁹ Walter, C. 2003: 90, 157, 162; White, M. M. 2011: 386; Meinardus, O. F. A. 2002: 35; Meinardus, O. F. A. 1973a: 142-4, 148-54, 155; Dal Santo 2012: 223, 231; Ward-Perkins 2022: 495-7.

¹²⁰ See Chapter 2: 2.2.2.

¹²¹ Godlewski, W. 2004: 163; Hodak, S. 2008: 230-2; Dijkstra, J. H. F. and van Loon, G. J. M. 2013: 143-52; Bolman, E. S. 2016: 129-50; Hall, E. and Uhr, H. 1985: 567; Rigaux, D. 2000; Farag, M. K. 2021: 171.

Virgin herself appeared to demand that an icon be made of her. Further, Dal Santo points out the utility of physical descriptions' similarities to iconography in justifying that the saints were appearing at all¹²². The possibility of these two media being presented with such a close relationship reinforces that the materiality of sites and saints must have interacted with their presentation in texts for the audience¹²³. Further, Farag remarks that iconography, specifically paintings but presumably other forms as well, can convey the holiness of saints 'in the absence of relics'¹²⁴. While it has been established that the claim that a particular shrine possessed a saint's relics was a powerful one, this would have been a means of maintaining its legitimacy should the presence of relics be questioned.

Military saints may be accompanied by angels, usually when protecting lay characters so perhaps alluding to the comradeship they would presumably have experienced in the army, but also perhaps indicating the overwhelming number and might of the Lord's army to those who would threaten Christianity. This is supported by the entourage likewise being dressed in military attire, such as when they appear alongside Menas¹²⁵.

Angels just by themselves never appear to laypeople directly, showing that the emphasis remains on the role of the martyr saints as the active agents whom the audience should venerate and to whom they should turn to for aid. This also reinforces how laypeople can only safely experience visions of martyr saints, because on the few occasions when they do see angels while martyr saints are experiencing visions of them, it has a profoundly negative effect on them. This therefore demonstrates the saints' sanctity and the need for them to intercede in order for laypeople to engage with holy beings, heaven, and the power and benevolence of the Lord¹²⁶. This is reinforced by the fact that an angel can appear directly to the archbishop of Alexandria, as he instructs him to build a shrine dedicated to Menas, showing that the clergy did not require the same intercession as laypeople¹²⁷. Should angels ever appear to laypeople without it being an overwhelming, negative experience, they appear in disguise, such as the angel who guides the Samaritan woman to Menas' shrine in the guise of a monk: **ΠΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ ΜΠΧΘΕΙΣ ΕΦΟ Μ ΠΕΣΜΟΤ ΝΟΥΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ** 'The angel of the Lord was in the form of a monk'¹²⁸. If a true angelic appearance was considered to be too dangerous for laypeople to encounter, and indeed as frightening as demonstrated by the *Discourse on Abbaton*, then this would explain their changing appearances to

¹²² Dal Santo 2012: 223.

¹²³ Farag 2021: 163, 165, 171.

¹²⁴ Farag, M. K. 2019: 261.

¹²⁵ Drescher 1946: 14, 21.

¹²⁶ E.g. Uljas 2019: 76.

¹²⁷ Drescher 1946: 4.

¹²⁸ Drescher 1946: 31.

shield humans from such an experience¹²⁹. While the emphasis in hagiography was on the saints, who were eligible to encounter angels, and therefore give an insight into the mechanics of the cult of saints, showing how writers were imparting messages about the need for intercession by members of the clergy for members of the congregation. Additionally, Dal Santo notes that in the sixth and seventh centuries, hagiographers were under ‘pressure’ to prove that it was truly saints who were appearing *post mortem* and not angels taking their forms¹³⁰. This is because there were conflicting arguments about whether saints’ souls were active or inactive after death. As a consequence, some ways of describing saints ceased to be used during the sixth century, such as referring to them literally as ‘angels’¹³¹. Certainly, in the hagiography included in this thesis the hagiographers are distinguishing clearly between saints and angels. Further, if saints appearing posthumously truly were supposed to be understood as really being angels in a more palatable form, then presenting the saints as idealised Christians while they were alive would have been less effective both in encouraging the audience to venerate the saints as heroic figures of their own community, but also as providing the message of the necessity of intercession for the lay audience to access their cult.

James is described differently to all the other saints. The description is provided in two of the four visions and focuses on the saint’s Persian dress, ‘wearing Persian dress as in the portrait of the prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Children’, which is more evidence of the function of the Coptic version of his martyrdom being to justify the translation of his relics to Egypt¹³². In both of these visions, he is also accompanied by other saints ‘singing psalms’ **ἐγερψαλιν** and partaking in worship¹³³. This may have been encouraging other characters to play their part in establishing his shrine or emphasising that acts of worship towards the saint and thus his relics belonged in Egypt.

It is also possible for multiple saints to appear at once with an equal active role¹³⁴. Viktor appears alongside Claudius in the latter’s posthumous miracle collection, to tackle a trio of thieves robbing shrines around Antinoopolis¹³⁵. This was presumably because both of their shrines were robbed, although other saints’ shrines were as well. So, perhaps Viktor was chosen as a companion for Claudius by the writer because of their shared military background and also

¹²⁹ Budge 1914: I, x-xi, lxxiii-lxxii; Davidson, G. 1994: 1; Frankfurter 2018: 221; see Chapter 3: 2.2.3.

¹³⁰ Dal Santo 2012: 233.

¹³¹ Dal Santo 2012: 233-4.

¹³² **ἐγερφορίν μπσχημα ννιπερσής μπσμοτ ντζωγραφία ντε δανιέλ πιπροφήτης νεν νιγ ναλογ ναγιος**; Balestri and Hyvernat 1907-50: II, 54, 58; see Chapter 2: 2.1.5; see Chapter 1: 2.7; see Chapter 1: 3.1.6.

¹³³ Balestri and Hyvernat 1907-50: II, 54, 58.

¹³⁴ See Chapter 3: 2.2.3.

¹³⁵ Constantine of Assiut, Second Encomium on St Claudius, lines 3-4, ed. Godron, G. 1970: p. 620.

their shared supposed origin of Antioch, as in Claudius' martyrdom (but nowhere in the surviving hagiography of Viktor) it is claimed that the two were martyred together¹³⁶. Additionally, the story of Claudius' martyrdom is similar to that of Viktor, suggesting that they were either conflated or that it was drawn from a collective pool of narratives¹³⁷. Serine, probably the Saint Sirenos claimed to have a martyr shrine at Oxyrhynchus, appears once in the miracle collection Phoibammon alongside the eponymous saint¹³⁸. Similarly, at the shrine of Hatre, Phoibammon is seen speaking with Hatre and punishes a man for swearing falsely¹³⁹. As both Sirene and Hatre are attested in even less known narratives than Phoibammon, perhaps less well-known saints could be supported by appearances in the traditions of better-known ones. Pairs of saints are also attested in the posthumous miracles of Saint Artemios, with the most notable perhaps being when he is accompanied by Febronia to heal a woman's affliction¹⁴⁰. This is similar to the appearance of Viktor alongside Claudius, as the accompaniment was appropriate to the particular situation that required the saints' attention. The same is also true for Phoibammon and Hatre, as the man who swore falsely following Phoibammon's warning did so in the names of both saints¹⁴¹.

There are two visions in which writers of hagiography claim to have encountered the saints themselves. The writer of the miracle collection of Phoibammon claims to have witnessed the miracle take place¹⁴². He met pilgrims from Antinoopolis en route to the shrine at Touho who were robbed, and the saint appeared to both pursue the robbers and lead the pilgrims to their stolen possessions. Likewise, the writer of the British Museum encomium of Viktor claims that the saint appeared to him directly and instructed him to provide the sermon included in the text¹⁴³. Such claims of personal experiences with the saint served to make the saint's appearances and power more tangible and lend additional credibility to the narratives being recited¹⁴⁴. Similarly, Viktor appears posthumously to his friend Martenianus, who allegedly travelled to Egypt following Viktor's execution and took all the records of the trial in order to write a martyrdom. The saint appears to him while he is ill on his deathbed and reassures him: 'ἀπαικαῖος ἀπὰ βικτωρ ἀσπᾶζε μμοῦ νταπρο θι ταπρο' 'the just Apa Viktor kissed him mouth to mouth'¹⁴⁵. This positions hagiographers, usually members of the clergy, as being so

¹³⁶ CopticChurch.net 2022a.

¹³⁷ Adotta una Guglia 2022.

¹³⁸ Verrone 2002: 34; E00240; S00134.

¹³⁹ Verrone 2002: 40; E00240; S00133.

¹⁴⁰ Crisafulli and Nesbitt 1997: xiv.

¹⁴¹ Verrone 2002: 40-1.

¹⁴² Verrone 2002: 50.

¹⁴³ Budge 1914: I, 88.

¹⁴⁴ Hinterberger, M. 2014b: 213; Messis, C. 2014: 316, 328-9; Neil 2021: 92.

¹⁴⁵ Scott 1993a: 151.

close to saints that they do not require intercession themselves, and therefore places them in a position of superiority over the audience and enhances the impression that the narratives are reliable and essential instructions to inform the audience's beliefs and behaviour¹⁴⁶.

The descriptions of the characters who appear in visions experienced by laypeople further illustrate the emphasis in hagiography on the sense of sight, which would have enabled the audience to visualise the saints appearing in visions and performing miracles in narratives which they received aurally. This would have given them an idea of what to expect if they experienced visions, but also allowed writers to control how the saints were perceived. Writers also used descriptions not only to demonstrate the different miracles that saints typically performed, but also to reinforce the role of the Church and its clergy, and of the saints, in how the audience was expected to access God, by limiting the range of sacred characters that laypeople could encounter.

Further, this section has shown that the heavenly beings who appear to laypeople must, like those who appear to martyr saints, always be on a higher level of sanctity than they are. However, laypeople are limited to experiencing visions of martyr saints, which reinforces the need for a human agent to intercede between them and the divine. Additionally, unlike the characters who appear in visions to saints, the holiest character appearing is not necessarily the primary character in the vision¹⁴⁷. Usually, martyr saints appear in visions alone, or may be accompanied by other martyr saints, but often military saints will be accompanied by angels. Even where accompanied by a character on a higher level of sanctity, the martyr saint or saints are the primary characters appearing in visions to laypeople while the angels are also disguised to make them safe to see, emphasising the need for intercession between laypeople and heaven, and thus showing the authority of the Church in enabling their access to the holy¹⁴⁸.

2.2.4: Locations in Which Visions Occur

Unlike saints, whose visions occurred in a variety of settings, most of the visions experienced by laypeople happen at the saints' shrines¹⁴⁹. For example, all the visions within the tradition of Kollouthos take place at the saint's shrine. The only vision that occurs outside the shrine, but still in proximity to it, is the last one, which makes sense within the context of that narrative because the characters who experience the vision had the intention of destroying the shrine and

¹⁴⁶ Hinterberger 2014b: 215.

¹⁴⁷ See Chapter 3: 2.2.3.

¹⁴⁸ Haldon, J. F. 2008: 277.

¹⁴⁹ See Chapter 3: 2.2.4.

therefore the saint allowing them to enter it would have been counterintuitive, threatening the safety of the shrine and undermining the accepted purposes of visiting such shrines as elucidated to the audience throughout the narratives of all the manuscripts¹⁵⁰. This indicates that hagiographers wanted the audience to understand that it was necessary for laypeople to be in or around sacred space in order to experience visions, as part of the intercession that was conveyed in these texts¹⁵¹. Alice-Mary Talbot shows that most posthumous miracles in hagiography preserved in Greek require contact with or proximity to saints' relics, which presumably would include being at the shrine where those relics were claimed to be held¹⁵². This is therefore a precedent within hagiography or within Byzantine Christianity more broadly, as Max Ritter observes that the holiness of places was an important belief which justified travelling to certain locations or possessing *enlogiai* from such locations¹⁵³. So, the setting of the visions presents the practical importance of the shrines within their respective saints' cults and their key role in the benefits that the saints bring to communities, rather than the saints being accessible generally and the shrines only having a ceremonial role within the cult.

The intercession that is demonstrated in hagiography is not unique to a Christian context, particularly in Egypt. For instance, in the New Kingdom, deified human beings like Amenhotep and Imhotep were visited for help such as healing, with a sanctuary dedicated to both of them in the Pharaoh Hatshepsut's funerary temple at Deir el-Bahari, and the monastery dedicated to Phoibammon occupying the former temple area¹⁵⁴. Gil Renberg observes that this is different to Asklepios, where priests were not intermediaries¹⁵⁵. It is therefore arguable that incubation at saints' shrines in Egypt was part of a continuum of engaging with holy figures, at least specifically for healing¹⁵⁶. Renberg argues that this is unlikely, but the similarities between practices in Pharaonic and Christian Egypt, especially when considered alongside those which hagiographers chose to exclude, suggests that he is wrong. An example of a similarity is the parallels between the couple who incubate at the shrine of Kollouthos and are told by the saint how to conceive a child, and Setne's wife Mehusekhe in *Setne II* having a dream that instructs her on how to conceive¹⁵⁷. This potentially provides a context within Egyptian history and culture for the figurines found at Abu Mina of pregnant or nursing women, although the inclusion of

¹⁵⁰ Schenke 2013: 208.

¹⁵¹ See 2.2.3.

¹⁵² Talbot, A.-M. 2002: 159.

¹⁵³ Ritter, M. 2020: 257

¹⁵⁴ Renberg, G. H. 2016: I, 449, 466, II, 749.

¹⁵⁵ Renberg 2016: II, 617.

¹⁵⁶ Renberg 2016: I, 22, II, 745, 753.

¹⁵⁷ Schenke 2013: 186-9; Lichtheim, M. 1980: III, 138.

votive offerings in Kollouthos' hagiography indicates that writers felt that such figurines were acceptable in a Christian context, as a sign of thanks for a healing miracle performed by a saint¹⁵⁸.

Where laypeople experience visions of saints away from shrines and therefore seem to disprove the need to be in sacred space, they do in fact still have a relationship with that space. Similar situations are related in the posthumous miracles of Saint Artemios written in Greek¹⁵⁹. These relationships can take various forms, as will be seen in the following discussion.

One relationship that characters can have with shrines is to be involved with their construction, such as the archbishop responsible for building Menas' shrine in the saint's encomium¹⁶⁰. It could be suggested that the angel appeared instead of the saint to instigate the building of the shrine, but it was also possible for saints to fulfil this purpose because that is what happens in the martyrdom of James, with James appearing to both Peter the Iberian and the virgin Theodora¹⁶¹. These visions show a relationship with the consecrated space of the shrines because those locations have been chosen for the purpose by God and the characters who experience the visions are responsible for taking the saints' bodies to the appropriate places and having the shrines constructed. In contrast to these examples, at the end of the fourth martyrdom of Viktor, when the saint is finally executed, his friend and executioner Horion witnesses his soul ascend to heaven¹⁶². Viktor's body also bleeds milk and honey following his decapitation. This is similar to the claim by the writer of the martyrdom of Paese and Thekla to have seen them ascend to heaven and archangel Raphael gathering up their blood¹⁶³. In the other case studies included in this thesis, such phenomena are not presented, so it was presumably the choice of the writers whether the saints would be seen posthumously immediately following their deaths, and demonstrate a relationship of the characters who witness these visions with the saints or their bodies. Alternatively, as the saints were alive until the moment of the visions, they may have still been passively consecrating the space around them and allowing certain, pious individuals to see them. Additionally, once a saint is deceased their body or body parts become relics, making the space around them sacred.

Another relationship that laypeople can have with shrines is the intention of visiting them, and it is to protect pilgrims from harm en route to his shrine that Menas mostly appears, such as to the woman threatened with rape by the innkeeper and the man murdered for the gold

¹⁵⁸ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4.

¹⁵⁹ Crisafulli and Nesbitt 1997: xv; Ward-Perkins 2020: 6.

¹⁶⁰ Drescher 1946: 4.

¹⁶¹ Balestri and Hyvernat 1907-50: II, 54, 58.

¹⁶² Budge 1914: I, 45.

¹⁶³ Raymond, E. A. E. and Barns, J. W. B. 1973: 78.

that he was going to donate to the shrine¹⁶⁴. Phoibammon, meanwhile, returns the belongings of pilgrims who are robbed on their way to his shrine and even appears to characters who wish to visit his shrine but have not even left their home yet¹⁶⁵. This presentation of the saints as protectors of visitors to their shrines may even have encouraged the taking of *eulogiai* to guarantee protection for the journey home¹⁶⁶.

The final relationship that laypeople can have with shrines is when they have taken something that belongs to it or promised to donate something and then reneged on that promise. Saints then appear to them to claim what is rightfully theirs. For example, a thief steals from Phoibammon's shrine and then is unable to find his way home and is spoken to by the saint's disembodied voice¹⁶⁷. The same can be said of Julius, the man who promised to donate camels to the shrine of Menas, as the saint took the camels for himself and then appeared to Julius after he broke his promise¹⁶⁸. Likewise, when Peter the Iberian's companions steal James' body from the site predestined for his shrine, the saint appears to them to chastise them before his remains (contained within a stone trough) fly back to the site¹⁶⁹. Unlike when Kollouthos blinds the villagers attacking his shrine, James does not perform a punishing miracle against Peter's companions because they stole his body through love for him rather than with ill intent. It could even be argued that the emperor Julian the Apostate had a relationship with the shrine of Merkourios as an extension of the portrayal of his persecution of Christians, making him a direct threat to the bishops who witness his death and any Christian saint killing him viable¹⁷⁰. The particularly high number of visions that take place outside of consecrated space compared to healing saints in hagiography preserved in Coptic suggests that military saints are more mobile¹⁷¹. The same can, however, be said for Saint Artemios in his posthumous miracles preserved in Greek, which means that a saint's capacity to appear some distance away from their shrine is not necessarily limited by their associations, such as healing or the military, in hagiography not preserved in Coptic, as Saint Artemios is a healing saint¹⁷².

As well as emphasising the importance of incubation for participation in the cult of saints, the various relationships that laypeople have with the shrines could also convey ideas of the memorialisation of the people who built or funded them. While no dedicatory inscriptions

¹⁶⁴ Drescher 1946: 14, 30.

¹⁶⁵ Verrone 2002: 26, 30, 50; Ward-Perkins 2020: 7.

¹⁶⁶ See Chapter 2: 2.2.1.

¹⁶⁷ Verrone 2002: 38; Ward-Perkins 2020: 7.

¹⁶⁸ Drescher 1946: 11, 12.

¹⁶⁹ Balestri and Hyvernât 1907-50: II, 56-7.

¹⁷⁰ See Chapter 1: 2.5; Budge 1915: 247-8; Weidmann 1991a: 8.

¹⁷¹ Ward-Perkins 2020: 7.

¹⁷² Déroche, V. 1993: 98.

have been identified at the shrines of the saints discussed in this thesis, they are known from devotional spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean world¹⁷³. There is certainly a focus on donations in some martyrdoms and posthumous miracles, such as the man who had a plate made to donate to the shrine of Menas and Church figures being told to construct the shrines in the traditions of Menas and James¹⁷⁴. This may have reiterated the importance of the physical environment in which the audience experienced these narratives from a social, community standpoint as well as a religious one, and encouraged further participation in the local cult.

When visions occur, the experiences of laypeople vary less than those of saints. Whereas saints experienced visions during the day and night according to whatever circumstances led to them happening, laypeople generally experience them at night and while asleep. This probably reinforced to the audience the practice of incubation which may have happened at the extant shrines and emphasised its importance for interacting with the saints¹⁷⁵. For instance, in the surviving hagiography of Kollouthos, most of the visions take place at night and all but three of them explicitly present the supplicants as asleep. In fact, in two visions in the tradition of Kollouthos and one in that of Phoibammon the saints are even said to have ‘ΕΝ ΠΙΝΗΒ ΕΞΩ’ ‘brought sleep upon’ the laypeople¹⁷⁶. Meanwhile, in less than half of the visions in which Phoibammon appears it is explicitly ‘night’ ‘ΕΥΨΕ’ or ‘evening’ ‘ΡΟΥΞΕ’, although not necessarily at the saint’s shrine and not necessarily when the laypeople are asleep, which may demonstrate that incubation was primarily for healing and thus more often shown in the hagiography of healing saints¹⁷⁷. The hagiography of Kollouthos also shows that in certain circumstances sleep was not necessary, as the saint appears to a man who has waited at the shrine for a month to be healed and is complaining about it. While the man was clearly practising incubation and not receiving the desired result, the saint does not just appear to him while he is awake to heal him but also to chastise him for his impatience and lack of faith¹⁷⁸. This would have demonstrated that the saint’s power extends beyond the need for supplicants to incubate but that the practice is part of the protocol that should be followed at the shrine. Likewise, it is not explicit whether the childless couple is awake in their first vision at Antinoopolis, but they are asleep in their second after travelling to Pneuait¹⁷⁹. If they were not explicitly asleep, which may have been a conscious choice by the writer, then it may serve as a subtle indicator of the necessity of incubation but

¹⁷³ Yasin, A. M. 2009: 226.

¹⁷⁴ Drescher 1946: 21, 115-16; Alcock (unpublished): 24; Balestri and Hyvernati 1907-50: II, 57-9.

¹⁷⁵ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4; Montserrat 1998: 271.

¹⁷⁶ Thompson 1993a: 69, 77; Verrone 2002: 46.

¹⁷⁷ Verrone 2002: 26, 30, 38, 46.

¹⁷⁸ Thompson 1993a: 71.

¹⁷⁹ Schenke 2013: 186, 188.

how it would have no benefit at the shrine at Antinoopolis now that it had been superseded (at least within the narrative of that encomium) by the one at Pnueit as the saint only appears to direct the couple to the new shrine. Meanwhile, while the supplicants who experience visions of Menas do so in a wider variety of circumstances than those who experience visions of Kollouthos, there remains an emphasis on incubation because most of them take place at night and in some of them the supplicants are asleep, although without Menas having caused the sleep¹⁸⁰. The greater number of visions in which laypeople are asleep in contrast to saints, alongside the frequent use of terminology referring to visions, shows a clear distinction between the experiences of saints and laypeople. As has already been observed in 2.2.1, Krönung interprets this as conveying a negative attitude towards dreams¹⁸¹. Instead, it actually reinforces the need to highlight that visions are happening for characters who are similar to the audience, and merely shows that they lack the sanctity that saints have¹⁸². So, this flagging of the occurrence of visions is not a judgement of the phenomenon but a narrative tool to indicate that they are happening and that the audience should pay heed to them.

This section has shown that it is crucial for laypeople to be in or have a relationship with the consecrated space of saints' shrines in order to experience visions, reinforcing the message of intercession. It has also shown that writers used hagiography to encourage certain cult practices like incubation, evidencing the relationship that these practices had with the intercession of the clergy in the audience's ability to experience the saints and the divine. While the use of an oracle also requires the intercession of an agent such as a priest at the oracle's location, clearly the omission of such practices from hagiography supports the idea that hagiographers focused on practices that they felt could be presented as Christian¹⁸³.

2.2.5: Behaviour during Visions

As the visions that saints experience showed the audience how saints were expected to behave, the visions that laypeople experience showed the audience how they ought to behave should they wish to have or find themselves having visions. And, as with saints, this can be divided into behaviour before and during visions¹⁸⁴.

Visions experienced by supplicants signal that the saints are about to perform miracles and, like visions experienced by the saints themselves, they must be invoked. Unlike the visions

¹⁸⁰ Drescher 1946: 12, 95; Bacot 2011: 42.

¹⁸¹ Krönung 2014: 46.

¹⁸² See 2.2.1; Krönung 2014: 45.

¹⁸³ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4.

¹⁸⁴ See Chapter 3: 2.2.5.

experienced by saints, most of those experienced by laypeople are directly invoked by those laypeople. This accompanies the message about the need to be in the consecrated space of shrines, as many visions, especially those that precede healing miracles, are invoked through incubation. There are many examples of this in the tradition of Kollouthos, such as the childless couple, the woman with possessed breasts, and the man who badly injured his foot during his drunken mishap¹⁸⁵. However, the need for incubation is not determined by the kind of saint who appears to supplicants, but by the kind of miracle, as other saints also perform healing miracles following incubation, such as the military saint Phoibammon¹⁸⁶. The only healing miracles which are not invoked are the most extreme ones whereby the character being healed is actually deceased, like the dismembered pilgrim resurrected by Menas, or at least very badly injured, like the pilgrim who is eaten by a crocodile¹⁸⁷. The most extreme healing miracles can be argued to also overlap with punishing miracles, in the case of the murderer who dismembered the pilgrim, and protection miracles, in that of the pilgrim eaten by the crocodile, and therefore not be limited to incubation at a saint's shrine.

Visions may be invoked through supplicants speaking directly in prayer, although often the act of incubation is sufficient. Renberg distinguishes between passive revelatory experiences like omens and active ones, in which participants had to engage in order to get a result¹⁸⁸. So, incubation seems to be part of the invocation ritual to get saints' attention and aid, and may be another part of the continuum of worship from pre-Christian Egypt as prayers could be used to solicit responses in similar contexts then¹⁸⁹. It is even possible, if the vessels found at the Monastery of Phoibammon were used for purification, that other ritual acts like purification were still practised as part of the cult of saints¹⁹⁰.

A gender distinction between male and female supplicants may be made in regard to incubation. Male supplicants of all manner of occupations and social strata, and clergymen and laymen alike, are found incubating in the texts studied. Comparatively fewer female supplicants practise incubation and those who do can be characterised as either having independent wealth or being accompanied by a man. This includes a dropsical woman who is healed by Kollouthos through a disgraced deacon, who functions as a person for the deacon to be seen healing in order to restore his reputation¹⁹¹. Merkourios appears to an archon who has brought his deathly

¹⁸⁵ Schenke 2013: 189, 219; Thompson 1993b: 53.

¹⁸⁶ Verrone 2002: 47, 49.

¹⁸⁷ Drescher 1946: 112-13; Devos, P. 1959: 456, 458, 460.

¹⁸⁸ Renberg 2016: I, 3-5.

¹⁸⁹ Renberg 2016: II, 622-3.

¹⁹⁰ See Chapter 2: 2.1.4.

¹⁹¹ Thompson 1993a: 76.

ill, enchanted daughter to the saint's shrine, which is arguably a result of practicality given that she seems to be unresponsive at this point in the narrative¹⁹². Even the prostitute to whom Kollouthos appears is in effect accompanied by the chief of the shrine who speaks to her before she experiences her vision¹⁹³. The two women with possessed breasts, helped by Kollouthos and Viktor respectively, and the uncharitable woman made ill and then cured by Merkourios, meanwhile, are independently wealthy, shown by the donations that they make to the shrines once healed¹⁹⁴. This gendered distinction may have reflected the audiences that writers witnessed or expected at shrines, or regardless of the reality they may have intended to reinforce gender roles or perceptions.

Meanwhile, visions in which saints appear to laypeople are often indirectly invoked when they precede protective and punishing miracles. This may be because the laypeople being protected can be unable to ask for help, like the servant-boy saved from drowning by Menas, and those who require punishment do not acknowledge this and therefore would not directly invoke a vision, such as the Jew Gaipos who rides a mule into Merkourios' shrine¹⁹⁵. A rare example of a punishing miracle being invoked is the result of irony, as Menas punishes an idol-worshipper for his arrogance in praying to him to make his barren mare give birth by causing a foal with three hooves instead of four to be born¹⁹⁶. Protective miracles may also be invoked, where the layperson needing protection is able to request it, such as the Samaritan woman whom Menas saves from being raped at her lodgings¹⁹⁷. Military saints are invoked more for laypeople who are in immediate danger, as opposed to who are unwell. This however then begs the question of why the murdered pilgrim is not saved before his death, but Sophia and the Samaritan woman are saved before they are raped. This indicates that from the writer's and the audience's perspective resurrection was seen as a – albeit extreme – form of healing. This would mean that a murdered individual could be saved and apparently experience no lasting physical or psychological trauma from being killed, but a raped individual may not have been seen as restorable in the same way, and therefore rape would have had to be prevented from occurring in the first place. The relationship between different types of miracle and vision and invocation demonstrates that laypeople were expected to play an active role in their visions when they wanted or needed them to happen and therefore be proactive in their own wellbeing and, by extension, salvation. It also

¹⁹² Budge 1915: 274.

¹⁹³ Schenke 2013: 266.

¹⁹⁴ Schenke 2013: 218; Budge 1914: I, 57-8; Weidmann 1991a: 7.

¹⁹⁵ Drescher 1946: 115-16; Budge 1915: 842-3.

¹⁹⁶ Bacot 2011: 42.

¹⁹⁷ Drescher 1946: 121-2.

demonstrates the dangers of wrongdoing, as saints were presented as appearing to mete out divine justice of their own accord.

The kind of help that saints are invoked for varies mostly based on their gender. Women are only healed or protected from issues that can be seen as primarily affecting them, whereas men receive a greater range of help. Male supplicants are healed from all manner of injuries, from broken limbs to being murdered and dismembered, and also from all manner of threats, from crocodiles to robbers to slanderous colleagues¹⁹⁸. Women, meanwhile, are only healed from injuries affecting the women-specific parts of their anatomy such as their breasts, and while it is not clear which spouse within the childless couple helped by Kollouthos was unable to have children, the associated phenomena of pregnancy and childbirth could lead it to be interpreted as a woman-specific matter¹⁹⁹. Women are also only protected from threats that primarily affect them, usually sexual assault or other harm from their husbands or suitors, such as the enchanted widow, enchanted maiden, and the wife of the pagan villager²⁰⁰. The only exception to this is the prostitute whom Kollouthos encourages to give up her sinful occupation, but even so prostitution is viewed as mostly practised by women and so can be seen as a predominantly female sin or affliction²⁰¹. Additionally, while male supplicants may have had an active role in the situation that they need help with, such as becoming drunk and falling from a roof, or may not have done, such as being eaten by a crocodile, women never have an active role. Even the prostitute is encouraged by male characters to change her ways. If women are possessed, it is through the will of a demon, if they are enchanted, they are never aware of or consent to it, and if they are physically threatened, they have done nothing to goad their would-be attacker.

The behaviour that was encouraged of laypeople also extends to how they should behave in the space in which these narratives were set and in which they would have experienced them. Where shrines are disrespected, either through items therein being stolen or the threat of damage, saints act as they do in visions that precede other punishing miracles. Again, an example is Merkourios' punishment of the Jew Gaipos, but another is Kollouthos' blinding of the pagan villagers attacking his shrine²⁰². However, these situations are more complex than simply punishing those who disrespect the shrine, as the saints are also protecting those within it from further harm, including the staff member whom Gaipos attempts to trample and the pagan woman seeking healing in Kollouthos' shrine. So, as well as being another situation in which saints performed protective and punishing miracles, they are also presented as perfectly capable

¹⁹⁸ Thompson 1993a: 68-70, 76-8; Drescher 1946: 14-15; Devos 1959: 456, 458, 460.

¹⁹⁹ Schenke 2013: 218.

²⁰⁰ Schenke 2013: 208, 272; Bacot 2011: 62-4; Budge 1915: 276.

²⁰¹ Schenke 2013: 266; Harvey, S. A. 2009: 609.

²⁰² Budge 1915: 842-3; Schenke 2013: 209.

of protecting their own sacred space, which would have perhaps encouraged respect of the shrines that audiences were visiting. These audiences would have presumably been Christian if they were listening to these narratives in Christian devotional spaces, so the encouragement of respect seems to have come from the message that disrespect, especially of sacred spaces, was a non-Christian behaviour and thus to be avoided. However, as some interlopers' faiths in these texts are not specified or appear to be Christianity, like the thief who steals from Phoibammon's shrine, the warnings could have been intended for anyone²⁰³.

Once laypeople are experiencing visions, their behaviour is indicated by their dialogue with the saint appearing to them. As in visions that saints experience, whether or not dialogue happens is the prerogative of the character who is appearing. This shows the laypeople's subservient position in the hierarchy of the Christian faith. The precise nature of the interaction that laypeople are expected to have with saints also depends on the type of vision and miracle occurring. Those performed by Phoibammon show that supplicants do not have to speak while being healed, although the healing miracles performed by Kollouthos, a healing saint, usually involve a spoken interaction and therefore establish that a verbal recognition of the saint and expression of gratitude for being healed were considered polite, as can be seen in the example of the lame man whom Kollouthos chastises for being impatient²⁰⁴.

Occasionally, saints do not speak at all, in which case the characters to whom they are appearing also do not speak or speak minimally, suggesting that the writers or copyists of hagiography preserved in Coptic used dialogue to reinforce the saints' power, authority, and expertise and to focus the audience's attention on them. This is particularly the case with punishing miracles, as in protective miracles the layperson(s) being protected may express their gratitude or wonder at their saviour, like the Samaritan woman saved by Menas²⁰⁵. However, gratitude does not have to be expressed verbally, as it is also shown by donations like that made by the woman whose breasts Kollouthos exorcises and by the reformed prostitute²⁰⁶. In the tradition of Merkourios, when he does not speak, he is presented as following the idea that actions speak louder than words. While he is massacring barbarians who have kidnapped people, he does not speak, as he is presumably focused on killing his enemies²⁰⁷. Similarly, but somewhat less violently, the saint does not speak while he is assaulting the magician in his shrine²⁰⁸. It therefore seems to be that the people who have conversations with the saint, regardless of their

²⁰³ Verrone 2002: 39.

²⁰⁴ Thompson 1993a: 71-2.

²⁰⁵ Drescher 1946: 30

²⁰⁶ Schenke 2013: 219, 266.

²⁰⁷ Weidmann 1991a: 6.

²⁰⁸ Budge 1915: 280.

actions, have not behaved badly enough to preclude the success of a conversation, such as the young man who hires the magician and is also beaten by Merkourios²⁰⁹.

The behaviour that is encouraged of the audience through the lay characters who experience visions is focused on acknowledging the power, benevolence, and sanctity of the saints. Laypeople are shown to be expected to participate in being helped by invoking healing and protective miracles unless they are unable to, and thus encouraged to engage with the cult of saints as worshippers. Likewise, their interaction with saints is expected to primarily express their gratitude for being helped. Further, there are gendered distinctions in the help that laypeople are presented as needing, which may have reflected the role of women in the community or their role in the eyes of the writers. Women's role in the Church hierarchy was extremely limited, to roles like deaconesses who would mainly perform tasks deemed unseemly for male clerics like visiting sick women, although there were notable female monks, ascetics, donors, and martyrs²¹⁰. Additionally, deaconesses were not present universally, and were not known in Egypt²¹¹. What female laypeople had in common with female holy characters was their sexual vulnerability, and female monks commonly acquired male characteristics, showing that women needed to demonstrate their supposed societal role or men's roles in order to be accepted within the Church²¹². The positioning of female lay characters, and thus women in the audience, beneath female holy characters operated similarly to the positioning of male lay characters by showing the audience that they did not have the sanctity of the holy figures whose gender they shared. To do this, writers placed female lay characters in more specific roles than male lay characters, as victims who needed help and as patrons who could donate to shrines, reflecting the ways in which female laypeople could interact with the Church²¹³. Female lay characters are conveyed as being vulnerable and as having certain roles because of their gender, as ailments that are healed are associated with their woman-specific body parts and the dangers that they face as pilgrims are invariably sexual in nature. There is, however, limited evidence, despite scholars' determination to prove the contrary, for the sexes incubating separately, so their engagement with the cult of saints does not seem to have varied in practice but in the aid that they were expected to request²¹⁴.

This section has determined how laypeople behave prior to and during the visions that they experience and made comparisons with the behaviour of saints from the previous

²⁰⁹ Budge 1915: 276.

²¹⁰ Clark, E. A. 1990: 254, 260; Davis, S. J. 2001: 4-5; Brakke, D. 2006: 185; Goehring, J. E. 1999: 113, 197.

²¹¹ Wipszycka, E. 2007: 338.

²¹² Neil 2021: 4, 110; Davis 2001: 4-5; Brakke 2006: 184-5; Germond, P. 1996: 354; Ainalis, Z. D. 2018: 276.

²¹³ Clark 1990: 253, 258.

²¹⁴ Renberg 2016: II, 628.

chapter²¹⁵. Unlike saints, who are mostly passive participants of the actions of others until they are martyred, laypeople are encouraged to invoke their visions and thus achieve access to the saints through active participation in the saints' cults. It is once their visions have begun that they become passive recipients of the saints' speech and actions, thus not only showing that saints take on an active role following their deaths, but also indicating that there was a limit to the extent that audiences were expected to participate in the cult – that they had to show faith in order to receive a vision but that the saint appearing to them was to be understood as the intercessor who would then either provide aid or redirect them onto the righteous path.

3: Conventions for Visions Experienced by Laypeople

3.1: Features and Functions of Visions

This chapter analysed the visions experienced by laypeople and compared them with those experienced by saints in the previous chapter.

There is a more limited range of contexts in which laypeople experience visions compared to those in which saints experience them, reflected by the three types of visions and miracles which laypeople may experience: healing, protective, and punitive. Laypeople must either require the help of a saint or to be redirected onto the righteous path by a saint in order to experience a vision, which shows that, while writers were encouraging the veneration of the saints, they were also expressing the controlled environment of the cult in which laypeople could engage with them²¹⁶.

Further, the power and sanctity of the saints when compared to the lay characters is shown in the need for clear signposting that visions are taking place. Terminology that specifically refers to visions is regularly used. While there were ways in which saints were made to be relatable to the audience, such as assimilating them to biblical heroes, their experiences as martyrs did create a distinction between them and laypeople. This distinction meant that saints' visions did not need to be explicitly labelled as such. Meanwhile, the lay characters were meant to reflect the kind of people who may be in the audience and the kind of issues that affected them, so writers distinguished explicitly between visions and reality much more regularly. It cannot be said whether the audience believed that visions were real or not, but perhaps writers were making

²¹⁵ See Chapter 3: 2.2.5.

²¹⁶ Harvey, S. A. 2009: 617.

the lay characters' experiences relatable by grounding them in reality while they made the saints' experiences relatable by grounding them in historical and religious events that would have been familiar to contemporary audiences, with the assimilation of saints to biblical heroes being another layer of distinction between saints and laypeople²¹⁷.

Like visions experienced by saints, there is also an emphasis on visions as primarily visual experiences, which is supported by both the prevalence of sight-related sensory vocabulary but also by the use of light to indicate the saints' holiness. However, this varies more than for visions experienced by saints, as the descriptions of saints depends on the kind of saint that they are and thus emphasises the different miracles that they most commonly perform, such as military saints mostly performing protective and punishing ones. This evidences that the roles and appearances of saints as portrayed in posthumous miracles were related to characteristics found for their characters in narratives in which they are alive.

The role of saints is also shown, apart from the services that they can perform for laypeople, to be related to their humanity. While they have died and now sit alongside Christ in heaven, they are the only holy characters that laypeople can safely experience visions of, meaning that they function as intermediaries between laypeople and Christ. This role is also shown by the need for laypeople to experience visions in consecrated space and demonstrate their need for miraculous intervention with appropriate behaviours. This highlights the relationship between visions and miracles, as the miracles are what the laypeople need to happen to help their situation or correct their behaviour, but visions precede almost all the saints' posthumous miracles, showing the importance of the direct engagement of the saint as a conduit for holy intervention and also to edify the audience.

The placement of visions shows that they function to signal that a miracle is imminent. The focus of visions experienced by laypeople was on positioning the audience, who could identify with those characters, beneath the saints and therefore reinforcing ideas of intercession and hierarchy in the devotional context in which these texts were received. Alongside this, the behaviours of the lay characters presented in their visions also encourage engagement with the cult of saints and its practices, as it is through these that the lay audience is told that they can experience visions of – and miracles performed by – the saints whom they are venerating. Not only that, but the analysis has shown that there is a gendered aspect to the writers' positioning and instructing of the audience, with there being particular expectations of the contexts in which men and women should find themselves in need of saints' assistance that perhaps reflect their roles in society as perceived by the writers. This chapter has thus shown the close relationship

²¹⁷ See 1.2.

that hagiography has to the cult of saints and its involvement in cult practices and as a cult practice itself²¹⁸.

This chapter has also reinforced the idea of generic ‘norms’ which was established in Chapter 3. Given the functions of visions in which saints appear, the lay characters to whom they appear also seem to reinforce their individuality rather than be intended as characters themselves, as while the issues with which they need aid may be familiar to the audience and ground the narratives in reality, the specifics vary according to saint. The military saints usually protect lay characters from violence and healing saints usually heal ill, with both also punishing those who need it, such as those who are ill through their own immoral choices or those who choose to do harm to others. Even more specifically, when Phoibammon punishes laypeople, it is because they have sworn false oaths. So, like in Chapter 3, the question can be asked how the generic similarities that have been outlined in this section and in the conclusion of Chapter 3 were maintained²¹⁹. As was expressed there, it is these similarities which allow these texts to be considered as a genre, after all. Even though the hagiography discussed comprises of different kinds of text rather than solely martyrdoms or miracle collections, the fact that there are similarities between them indicates that they were being generated as part of a wider tradition or network of hagiographers and hagiographies within Egypt, similarly to the grouping of martyrologies into cycles observed by Papaconstantinou²²⁰. It is possible that the writers of these texts were reading each other or, if the texts are later copies, were reading the earlier versions and changing them to reflect their contemporary socio-political and religious environment. In that way, the creation of hagiography can be viewed as a collective activity, with multiple authors contributing over time to different versions of a text²²¹. The specifics can only be suggested, as most of the surviving manuscripts used in this thesis do not include the name of a writer in a colophon but instead an attribution to a notable Church figure²²². Likewise, it is not possible to know how reflective of Coptic hagiographic tradition the extant texts are, as they be a small selection which resulted from a very narrow path of transmission through a process such as standardisation, given that many of the manuscripts in which they are found were excavated in the same context²²³. As the emphasis in these texts seems to have been on imparting messages to lay audiences, the importance of the familiarity of the content and consistency of those messages

²¹⁸ See Chapter 2: 1.1; see Chapter 2: 2.1.4.

²¹⁹ See Chapter 3: 3.2.

²²⁰ See Introduction: 3.2; Papaconstantinou, A. 2011: 325.

²²¹ Harvey 2009: 617.

²²² See Chapter 3: 1.2.

²²³ See Chapter 3: 3.2; Papaconstantinou 2011: 324; Rébillard, É. 2020: 55.

should be noted, and variations were presumably the personal choice of writers to make individual saints appealing and justify their veneration within a somewhat standard framework²²⁴.

3.2: Implications of Visions Experienced by Laypeople

This chapter has demonstrated two things which were also demonstrated in Chapter 3. Firstly, it has demonstrated that visions experienced by laypeople and by saints include features which are common across case studies and therefore across cults, and that writers could incorporate these features in ways which indicated that saints were part of the wider tradition of the cult of saints in Egypt but also in ways which expressed the saints' individuality²²⁵. Secondly, it has confirmed that hagiography preserved in Coptic shares features in common with hagiography preserved in other languages, such as Greek, but that it also has its own characteristics. This chapter and Chapter 3 have therefore shown that it is possible to study visions as a phenomenon distinct from miracles, as insights have been provided into the presentation of the cult of saints in hagiography through focusing on visions alone. It has also justified the approach of this thesis of considering dreams as a subset of the phenomenon of visions, especially in this chapter, given the emphasis placed by the writers on incubation. The contextualisation of the hagiography within the environment of its production and reception has also shown how practices were portrayed in or occluded from hagiography, and provided political, religious, and social reasons as to why hagiographers would have chosen to include certain realities from the cult of saints while excluding others²²⁶.

3.3: Looking Back to Visions Experienced by Saints

In conclusion, this and the previous chapter have provided the thorough and comprehensive analysis of visions. They did this by determining the conventions for various narrative features in the representation of visions experienced by martyr saints and by laypeople. This chapter has further shown how saints as characters were portrayed as relatable but also as removed from laypeople based on their sanctity, and how laypeople were portrayed as a representation of the kinds of people who may have been found in the audience. Visions are a crucial part of the

²²⁴ Harvey 2009: 615.

²²⁵ See 3.1.

²²⁶ See Chapter 1: 1.1.; see Chapter 2: 1.1.

portrayal of saints and laypeople and the impartment of messages to the audience to reinforce how they are expected to participate in the cult of saints in order to benefit from it. Visions also show the wide variety of ways in which the audience was told that they could benefit from participating in the cult of saints through the resolution of issues that would have been familiar to them.

The messages in the texts also impart more nebulous principles, primarily Christian models of behaviour in the saints which the audience was encouraged to imitate, albeit to a lesser extent. Where visions are concerned, these messages show the audience the gold standard for how to interact with the saints and reaffirm the Church's authority by demonstrating the audience's need for intercession in order to access the divine.

Finally, the texts propagate ideas of community through a shared past and shared culture. Visions contribute to this by being an experience through which the audience is told that they can engage with historical events that are presented as pivotal in the cult of saints in Egypt, through interactions with characters whom they are told experienced them for themselves while representing Christianity against its adversaries.

Chapters 3 and 4 ultimately show how the environment in which the cult of saints existed informed the decisions made by the writers about the presentation of visions in order to maximise the engagement by the audience with this feature of the narrative, so that they understood how they should participate in the cult of saints. This understanding was gained by the presentation of the phenomenon of visions varying according to the characters experiencing them.

Conclusion: The Last Revelation

1: Aims and Approaches of the Thesis

Hagiography preserved in Coptic has long been neglected in scholarship in favour of that preserved in Greek, despite the insights that can be gained into Byzantine and Early Islamic Egypt, particularly into aspects in those texts specific to the Coptic Church or to Egyptian culture¹. This has pervaded to the point where some scholars have dismissed Coptic hagiography as having no features of its own or as being derivative of Greek hagiography². If these ideas were true, then there would be nothing to gain from applying to hagiography preserved in Coptic the kind of thematic studies that have been done on that preserved in Greek and Latin³. Instead, it has been shown in this thesis that that is a very worthwhile exercise.

While hagiography is no doubt deeply unreliable in terms of the historical accuracy of the events recorded within it, the choices made by the writers about what to depict and how to depict it reveal the functions of the texts and their relationship to the cult of saints⁴. The research in this thesis focused on one phenomenon which has received limited scholarly attention, but has generated significant insights into those functions and that relationship that establish how the writers presented the cult of saints and encouraged their contemporary audience to participate in it. This thesis thus achieved its two aims of applying a thematic study to hagiography preserved in Coptic and of expanding on scholarship which has otherwise focused on miracles. It did this by addressing four research questions using a corpus that consisted of a range of hagiographical texts from the traditions of a range of saints.

Two approaches were applied to the source base to answer the research questions and to address the many inherent problems with hagiographies as historical sources⁵. Chapters 1 and 2 used an interdisciplinary approach to contextualise the surviving manuscripts within the chosen saints' hagiographical traditions and within the extant material culture of the cult of saints, creating a clear picture of the environment in which the texts were created and received which has hitherto not been done in scholarship despite scholars like Ingela Nilsson, Aatje Hidding, and Lucy Grig noting its necessity⁶. While the texts do contain historical information, that

¹ Rogozhina, A. 2015: 282.

² Delehaye, H. 1922: 148.

³ See Introduction: 1.1.

⁴ Keskiäho, J. 2015: 14; Kritzinger, P. 2011: 36; Delehaye, H. 1962: 115; Hidding, A. 2020: 15; Van Uytendaele, M. 1976: 103, 105; Brown, P. 1995: 63, 68; Grig, L. 2004: 1.

⁵ See Introduction: 3.2.

⁶ Messis, C. and Nilsson, I. 2018: 4, 5; Hidding 2020: 68-9; Grig 2004: 3, 38; Edwards, M. and D-Vasilescu, E. E. 2017: 2.

information must be inferred and concerns the environment in which they were created and received, as the information presented explicitly in the texts as historical fact is unreliable because their content illuminates and occludes what the writers saw fit⁷. As a result, these first two chapters of the thesis provide a fuller combined picture of the cult of saints in Egypt in which visions were presented, and thus enable a more thorough and comprehensive analysis than the use of textual evidence alone. Following that, Chapters 3 and 4 presented the comparative, narratological analysis of visions of holy characters experienced by martyr saints and by laypeople. This analysis enabled the functions of such visions within hagiography to be determined and thus how the audience was to understand their role in engaging with the cult of saints⁸. Narratology has been used in Byzantine Studies and Egyptology before, but in a much more limited fashion than the scale and complexity presented in this thesis⁹. As such, both of the approaches used to achieve the aims of this thesis have been innovative and demonstrate the necessity for interdisciplinary, combined research within both Byzantine Studies and Egyptology.

2: Answers to the Research Questions

The four questions answered by the research presented in this thesis are:

1. Is there is a specifically Coptic tradition for visions in hagiography?
2. What conventions are there for visions in Coptic hagiography and do these differ according to whether saints or laypeople are experiencing them?
3. What are the narrative functions of visions in Coptic hagiography and do they vary according to whether saints or laypeople are experiencing them?
4. How do the narrative functions of visions in Coptic hagiography relate to the operation of shrines and the exercise of authority within them?

The answers to the second and third research questions will enable the first to be answered as comprehensively as possible by explaining the conventions and narrative functions of visions in Coptic hagiography, and thus whether these form a distinct hagiographical tradition. These research questions will be answered by the textual analysis that was applied to the case studies using the approach of hagiography. The final research question will be answered by the

⁷ See Chapter 2: 3.2.

⁸ Bal, M. 2017: 3; Krueger, D. 2004: 9; Skedros, J. C. 1999: 4; Grig 2004: 4-5.

⁹ Messis and Nilsson 2018: 1-3; Richter, T. S. 2005: 242-3, 254-8; Cupane, C. and Krönung, B. 2016: 3, 6-7; Van Pelt, J. 2018: 137-8; Cox, A. 2014: 25.

contextualisation that was applied to the case studies included in this thesis using an interdisciplinary approach.

2.1: Answers from the Narratological Analysis

Chapters 3 and 4 showed that there are conventions for how visions in which holy characters appear are depicted by writers, and also that these depictions vary according to whether saints or laypeople are witnessing those visions. This surely means that the functions of visions experienced by these characters were different as well. The variations indicate that writers established different expectations for these two different sets of characters in hagiography preserved in Coptic. Saints are presented as having a closer relationship to heaven and personal interactions with heavenly figures like angels and Christ, whereas laypeople are presented as requiring intercession in order to access the saints, as unable to access more powerful holy beings, and as being expected to actively participate in the cult of saints in order to benefit from it¹⁰. So, the function of visions experienced by saints is to emphasise their sanctity and position them as objects of veneration within the cult¹¹. This expands into a message to the audience that says that one must be a saint to have unmediated access to Christ and God. This is reinforced in visions experienced by laypeople, as while one function is to instruct them on how to participate in the cult, essentially establishing a gold standard for interaction with saints, which is presented as a very real, even necessary event, another is to demonstrate the necessity of the clergy as intermediaries between laypeople and saints and of saints as intermediaries between laypeople and Christ and God¹².

There is also a function shared between visions experienced by saints and those experienced by laypeople, which is to signal the occurrence of miracles. Most of the miracles experienced by saints while they are alive and by laypeople performed posthumously by saints in the case studies are preceded by visions, showing that writers and audiences considered them to be a key component of these miraculous, hagiographical narratives, and which highlights how it is essential to analyse similar or related phenomena distinctly rather than solely considering them side-by-side as has previously been done in scholarship in order to understand fully the nuances behind their forms and functions. As well as signalling imminent miracles, visions also provide moral and spiritual lessons to the audience about God and the saints' power and benevolence

¹⁰ See Chapter 3: 3.1; see Chapter 4: 3.1.

¹¹ Frankfurter, D. 2018a: 108, 126.

¹² Ward-Perkins, B. 2020: 5; Gwynn, D. M. 2021: 29; Cain, A. 2016: 245.

based on how the characters experiencing miracles are treated and the kind of miracles that they experience, thus showing how visions have a specific didactic role alongside the physical changes wrought by miracles¹³. Consequently, focusing on miracles alone in research yields less detailed conventions for the experiences of different characters as the physical changes progress the narrative and resolve whatever issue is at hand, but do not serve a further function, whereas the features of the visions that accompany miracles provide more information. Visions are thus more of a narrative tool than miracles because they convey more narrative information and define the relationships between the characters performing and experiencing miracles.

The features examined in order to answer the second and third research questions enable the first, about whether hagiography preserved in Coptic is part of a distinct tradition, to be answered. This thesis has shown that there were commonalities across the case studies, and therefore that there was a wider network of the cult of saints across Egypt that integrated motifs and features like miracles and descriptions¹⁴. These features establish the cult of saints in Egypt, and the hagiography preserved in Coptic that represents it, as distinctly Egyptian in terms of differences between this hagiography and that found in other languages in the contemporary Byzantine and Early Islamic world, such as the lack of mention of ritual practices like the Eucharist, particular circumstances in which the Council of Chalcedon is mentioned, and the relationship between the occupations that saints are claimed to have had and the miracles that they perform and ways that they are described when they appear in visions. It is therefore clear that the cult of saints is more regionalised and locally inflected than is appreciated in scholarship.

2.2: Answers from the Contextualisation

As for the fourth research question, the narrative functions of visions in hagiography preserved in Coptic relate to the operation of shrines and the exercising of authority within them through the fact that it is saints who are appearing in visions to the lay characters, who will have been the most identifiable to the lay audience. While the lay audience, pilgrims and congregants, may have been presented as equals amongst themselves through the lay characters in these texts, they were in fact being positioned below other parties involved in the cult of saints¹⁵. The role of saints was to justify the presence of the shrines named in the texts, although their primary function was to inspire the audience by presenting to them the ideal behaviour for Christians to follow. The

¹³ Ward-Perkins 2020: 5.

¹⁴ See Chapter 3: 3.2.

¹⁵ Eade, J. and Sallnow, M. J. 1991: 4.

presentation of this ideal behaviour makes it appear as though the texts are intended to benefit the audience, whereas in fact it benefited the writers and the cult. This is because writers were shaping the experiences that the audience should expect by saying that only saints can experience unmediated visions, thus necessitating the audience's engagement with shrines in order to have these experiences¹⁶. This necessity of engagement both encouraged participation in the cult at particular shrines, but also established the authority of the clergy and of the writers as intermediaries for lay congregants in controlling practices in what was shown in Chapter 2 to be a diverse and at times unorthoprax cult in which the authority exercised through texts deliberately emphasised the saints as objects of veneration and omitted unorthoprax elements of the cult which can only be understood from material culture and documentary texts¹⁷. The contextual approach used in this thesis therefore shows the potential gap between the 'authored' version of a cult, or that presented by writers in non-documentary texts about the cult of saints, and actual cult practice. So, not only was hagiography used to shape the expectations of the audience in their participation in the cult, it also reinforced Christian norms in an environment where the reality was more complex.

Most broadly, hagiography was a means for the writers to convey collective cultural narratives. The extant texts seem to have functioned to garner an emotional response from the audience by presenting the persecution of Christians in graphic detail and the martyrs as idealised Christians, and thus through the combination of saints' cults 'instilled' in participants a combined, Christian identity. It was this identity that the writers employed in showing the audience their place in the strata of the Christian hierarchy – but not solely based on that on earth, the clergy and the theologians, but including that in heaven. The inclusion of martyr saints, angels, and Christ reinforced the lay audience's lowly place and their reliance on the intercession of those immediately above them in order to access in the afterlife those who were unattainable in this life. So, it is clear, based on the textual and archaeological evidence presented in this thesis, that it is inaccurate to refer to the cult of saints and its associated practices like pilgrimage and incubation as merely folk religion that is distinct from and inferior to orthodox practice, as has been done even by proponents of the study of the Coptic Church¹⁸. Instead, the cult of saints was a complex, dynamic, diverse part of Christian tradition, practice, and belief over which writers used hagiography to exercise authority.

¹⁶ Eade and Sallnow 1991: 7, 11; Eade, J. 1991: 51, 56-7.

¹⁷ Papaconstantinou, A. 2007: 351; Eade and Sallnow 1991: 5, 6-7; Eade 1991: 73-4; Bowman, G. 1991: 103-4, 106.

¹⁸ Frankfurter 2018a: 3.

3: Final Thoughts

To conclude, this thesis has proved definitively that research on both visions and hagiography preserved in Coptic must be prioritised within scholarship. Visions are clearly a phenomenon within their own right and need to be treated as such in order for their forms and functions within not only hagiography, but in the operation of the cult of saints, to be fully comprehended. Likewise, hagiography that has survived in Coptic deserves attention in its own right, and that what are doubtless entertaining stories are also complex exercises by writers with social and religious purposes serving to promote the cult of saints in Egypt and the audience's participation in it¹⁹. It is evidently distinct in how writers employed it to engage their audience with the cult of saints, and so it needs to be viewed within its own cultural and religious milieu using a contextualising, interdisciplinary approach. Ultimately, significant insights are currently being omitted from scholarship due to both Late Antique and Byzantine Studies and Egyptology focusing elsewhere.

¹⁹ Ward-Perkins 2020: 15.

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E01862, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, 'Coptic Encomion on *Viktor (son of Romanos, Egyptian martyr, S00749), attributed to Theopempus of Antioch, relating stories from the saint's childhood to his martyrdom in Egypt, in the district of Antinoopolis (Middle Egypt), as well as two miracles connected to his cult in Antioch, composition believed to date from the 6th/7th century, the manuscript is dated to 14 February AD 861.' Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E01862>.

E02109, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, 'Coptic Martyrdom of Apa *Phoibammon (soldier and martyr of Assiut, S00080), presented by Kolouthos, the Stylite, giving an account of his family background, trial, and martyrdom in Assiut (Upper Egypt) which includes other

- soldiers *Orsunouphios and Ischerion (soldiers and martyrs from the garrison of Esna, S01200), as well as *Belphios, Origen, and Peter (soldiers and martyrs from the garrison of Aswan, S01201), datable to the 6th/7th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E02109>.
- E02224, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Greek fiscal codex from the village of Aphrodito (Upper Egypt), mentioning a topos and a church dedicated to *Viktor (presumably the son of Romanos, S00749), dated to the year 716–717 AD.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E02224>.
- E02285, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Greek amulet from Oxyrhynchos (Middle Egypt), invoking the help of *Mary (Mother of Christ, S00033), *John (the Evangelist, S00042), *Serenos/Sirenos (probably a martyr of Oxyrhynchos, S00134), *Philoxenos (saint with cult at Oxyrhynchos, S00443), *Viktor (presumably the Egyptian martyr, son of Romanos, S00749), *Ioustos/Justus (presumably the soldier and martyr of Antinoopolis, S01172), and all saints (S01151), datable to the 5th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E02285>.
- E02774, Efthymios Rizos, Cult of Saints, ‘In the fifth century or later, the Greek Martyrdom of *Merkourios (soldier and martyr of Caesarea, S01293) recounts the legend of a soldier who excelled at war, having received a sword from an angel, and was promoted to general by the emperor Decius. He suffered martyrdom at Caesarea of Cappadocia (Asia Minor) after refusing to participate in a sacrifice. Probably written in Cappadocia.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E02774>.
- E02775, Efthymios Rizos, Cult of Saints, ‘In the mid-6th-century, John Malalas in his Greek Chronicle records the legend that *Merkourios (soldier and martyr of Caesarea, S01293) was sent by Christ to kill the emperor Julian the Apostate, and that this was revealed in a vision to *Basil of Caesarea (bishop of Caesarea, S00780). Written in Antioch or Constantinople.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E02775>.
- E03173, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Collection of Coptic Miracles of *Kollouthos (physician and martyr of Antinoopolis, S00641) seemingly associated with his shrine in Antinoopolis (Middle Egypt) mentioning the presence of his bones, incubation, and donations in return for healing and insight; presumably written in the 6th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E03173>.
- E03174, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic Miracle of *Kollouthos (physician and martyr of Antinoopolis, S00641) concerning the healing of a young widow suffering under a magic spell caused by her late husband, possibly associated with the burial shrine at

Antinoopolis (Middle Egypt); presumably written in the 6th century.’ Accessed at <http://csa.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E03174>.

E03560, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic fragments of the Martyrdom of *Kosmas and Damianos (brothers, physicians martyrs of Syria, S00385), and of their brothers *Anthimos, Leontios and Euprepios (S01544), with their mother *Theodote (S01544) in Antioch, relating numerous miracles which occur during their trial and martyrdom; written presumably in the 5th century.’ Accessed at <http://csa.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E03560>.

E03563, Efthymios Rizos, Cult of Saints, ‘Three fragmentary Greek homilies of the 5th or 6th centuries, attributed to Cyril of Alexandria, refer to the translation of the relics of *Kyros and Ioannes/Cyrus and John (physician and soldier, martyrs of Egypt, S00406) from the shrine of *Mark (the Evangelist, S00293) in Alexandria to the church of the Evangelists at the monastery of Metanoia, between Kanopos and Menuthis (Lower Egypt). The author refers to the story of the martyrs and the identification of their relics. The new shrine (martyrion) aims at preventing the locals from visiting pagan shrines for healing.’ Accessed at <http://csa.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E03563>.

E04082, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic funerary inscription of unknown Egyptian provenance, invoking a number of saints, such as Apa *Pshoi (S01245), Apa *Paul (S00089), Apa *Sourous (S01584), Apa *Petros (bishop and martyr of Alexandria, S00247), Apa *Biktor (presumably Viktor, the son of Romanos, Egyptian martyr, S00749), and Apa *Phobammon (soldier and martyr of Assiut, S00080), datable to the 6th–8th century.’ Accessed at <http://csa.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E04082>.

E04327, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Greek document from Antinoopolis (Middle Egypt) concerning the settlement of a family dispute, mentioning the church of Apa *Mark, the Evangelist (S00293), dated between 1 May 567 and 30 April 568.’ Accessed at <http://csa.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E04327>.

E04643, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic Encomion on *Viktor (son of Romanos, S00749), attributed to Celestinus, bishop of Rome (ob. 432) and supposedly presented on the saint's feast day at his martyr shrine in Rome, built by the emperor Valentinian III (present in the audience), recounting numerous miracles performed by the martyr at his shrine; of very uncertain date.’ Accessed at <http://csa.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=S00749>.

E05111, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic Martyrdom of *Viktor (son of Romanos, S00749), relates the saint's conflict with his father Romanos at Antioch and his subsequent arrest

and transportation to Alexandria, ordered and organised by Diocletian; written presumably during the 6th/7th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E05111>.

E05112, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic Martyrdom of *Viktor (son of Romanos, S00749), the second Martyrdom, relating the saint’s imprisonment and trial at Alexandria under Armenios, his tortures and miraculous recoveries, a visiting journey into heaven to be greeted by the saints, as well as his eventual transport to the south of Egypt for further trial south of Antinoopolis (Middle Egypt); written presumably in the 6th/7th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E05112>.

E05113, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic Martyrdom of *Viktor (son of Romanos, S00749), the third Martyrdom, relates the saint’s transport to the south of Antinoopolis (Middle Egypt) for further trial, as well as his final banishment to an abandoned former military camp at Hierakonpolis (Upper Egypt) where he receives a visit from Christ who lays out the saint’s future cult; written presumably in the 6th/7th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E05113>.

E05114, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic Martyrdom of *Viktor (son of Romanos, S00749), the fourth Martyrdom, relates the saint’s interaction with the dux Sebastianos, his miraculous strength during tortures, his contest with a magician who converts to Christianity, and his eventual beheading causing miracles; written presumably in the 6th/7th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E05114>.

E05276, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘The Coptic Life of *Samuel of Kalamun (monk, monastic founder and healing saint, S01991), presented by Isaak, a monk and priest at the monastery of *Mary (Mother of Christ, S00033) founded by Samuel at Kalamun (in the Fayum) on the saint’s feast day, relating his asceticism and sanctity, his visions of angels, his special bond with the Virgin Mary to whom he dedicated his monastic church, his gift of prophecy, and his miraculous healing powers, referring to the ascetic as a martyr without being beheaded; presumably written in the later 8th c.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E05276>.

E06044, Julia Doroszewska, Cult of Saints, ‘Sophronius of Jerusalem, in his Miracles of the Saints Cyrus and John (5), recounts how *Kyros and Ioannes/Cyrus and John (physician and soldier, martyrs of Egypt, S00406) healed from an occlusion a certain philoponos Menas, director of a confraternity in Alexandria of *Andrew (the Apostle (S00288), at their shrine at Menouthis (near Alexandria, Lower Egypt). Written in Greek in

Alexandria, 610/615.’ Accessed at

<http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E06044>.

E06259, Julia Doroszewska, Cult of Saints, ‘Sophronius of Jerusalem, in his Miracles of the Saints Cyrus and John (7), recounts how *Kyros and Ioannes/Cyrus and John (physician and soldier, martyrs of Egypt, S00406) healed, at their shrine at Menouthis (near Alexandria, Lower Egypt), the weakness of the legs of a certain Menas of Alexandria.

Written in Greek in Alexandria, 610/615.’ Accessed at

<http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E06259>.

E06642, Christodoulos Papavarnavas and Nikolaos Kälviäinen, Cult of Saints, ‘Greek version of the Martyrdom of *Jacob/James the Dismembered (martyr of Persia under Bahram V, ob. 421, S01660).’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E06642>.

E06712, Nikolaos Kälviäinen, Cult of Saints, ‘The so-called ‘Asian’ Life of *Kosmas and Damianos (brothers, physician martyrs of Syria, S00385) is written in Greek, perhaps in Constantinople or elsewhere in the East, possibly in the 4th century or later.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E06712>.

E07043, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic fragment of an Encomion on *Viktor (presumably son of Romanos, S00749), attributed to John Chrysostom, from the White Monastery (Upper Egypt), relating the miracle of the death and resurrection of a boy killed after his parents refuse to donate him to the saint's shrine as they had promised, a miracle resulting in the self-donation of the entire family as servants at the shrine of the saint; written most likely during the 6th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07043>.

E07053, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic Martyrdom of *James/Iakobos the Dismembered (S01660), relating the circumstances of the translation of his remains, first from Persia to Jerusalem, and then, with Peter the Iberian, from Jerusalem via Alexandria to Oxyrhynchos in Middle Egypt, where a martyr shrine is built for his relics that soon becomes a successful healing shrine; most likely written sometime during the 6th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07053>.

E07055, Gesa Schenke, Cult of Saints, ‘Coptic Life of the monk Apa *Longinos (S02743) and his spiritual father Apa *Loukios (S02743) who share their feast day on 27 January, from the monastery of the Archangel Michael near Hamuli in the Fayum; written in the late 5th/early 6th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07055>.

- E07077, Nikolaos Kälviäinen, Cult of Saints, ‘The Greek so-called ‘Arabian’ Martyrdom of *Kosmas and Damianos (brothers, physician martyrs of Syria, S00385), and their brothers and companion martyrs *Anthimos, Leontios and Euprepios (S01544), survives in two recensions, the common original of which was probably composed in the 5th-6th century, perhaps in Rome, or in Cilician Aigai, or elsewhere in the East.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07077>.
- E07135, Efthymios Rizos, Cult of Saints, ‘The Greek Life and Martyrdom of *Ioulianos and Basilissa (martyrs of Antinoopolis in Egypt, S01341) recounts the celibate marriage of its heroes, and the martyrdom of Ioulianos alongside several companions. It mentions the establishment of their shrine at the great church of Antinoopolis, and their feasts on 21 June and on Epiphany Day (6 January). Written in Antinoopolis (Egypt), probably in the 6th century.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07135>.
- E07154, Sergey Minov, Cult of Saints, ‘The Martyrdom of *Jacob the Dismembered (martyr in Persia, ob. 421, S01660) is produced by an anonymous Syriac-speaking writer in Persia, possibly, during the 5th or 6th century. It describes the martyrdom of the Christian Jacob in the city of Bet Lāpāt in Khuzistan during the reign of Bahram V (r. 420-438).’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07154>.
- E07443, Efthymios Rizos, Cult of Saints, ‘The Greek Miracles of *Menas (3), ascribed to Timothy of Alexandria, recounts how Menas (soldier and martyr buried at Abu Mena, S00073) rescued a woman, travelling alone to his shrine, from being raped by a soldier; she also visited a shrine of *Thekla (follower of Paul the Apostle, S00092) in the same area. Written in Greek in Alexandria, probably in the 5th/6th c.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07443>.
- E07549, Julia Doroszewska, Cult of Saints, ‘Sophronius of Jerusalem, in his Miracles of the Saints Cyrus and John (41), recounts how *Kyros and Ioannes/Cyrus and John (physician and soldier, martyrs of Egypt, S00406) healed from a monstrous deformity a certain boy Menas, named after *Menas (soldier and martyr buried at Abu Mena, S00073), at their shrine at Menouthis (near Alexandria, Lower Egypt). Written in Greek in Alexandria, 610/615.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07549>.
- E07665, Julia Doroszewska, Cult of Saints, ‘Sophronius of Jerusalem, in his Miracles of the Saints Cyrus and John (46), recounts how *Kyros and Ioannes/Cyrus and John (physician and soldier, martyrs of Egypt, S00406) healed from blindness two men who came to their sanctuary in Menouthis (near Alexandria, Lower Egypt), sending them to

the pool of Siloam in Jerusalem. The great sanctuary of *Menas (soldier and martyr buried at Abu Mena, S00073), near the Mareotis, is also mentioned. Written in Greek in Alexandria, 610/615.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07665>.

E07696, Julia Doroszewska, Cult of Saints, ‘Sophronius of Jerusalem, in his Miracles of the Saints Cyrus and John (51), recounts how *Kyros and Ioannes/Cyrus and John (physician and soldier, martyrs of Egypt, S00406) healed a certain Georgios from a cataract and delivered him from death during a pestilence, all at their sanctuary at Menouthis (near Alexandria, Lower Egypt). He also mentions veneration of *Paul (the Apostle, S00008) and *Menas (soldier and martyr buried at Abu Mena, S00073). Written in Greek in Alexandria, 610/615.’ Accessed at <http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07696>.

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