

Introduction

For she alone always knows how to defeat nature,
first by giving birth, and second, by battle.
For just as she then needed to give birth without a seed,
so does she now give birth to salvation without weapons
in order that she may be found to be a virgin through both acts,
as immutable in battle as she was when giving birth.¹

This short passage describes two main characteristics of the Byzantine Virgin Mary: she is the young woman who gave birth to Christ, the Son and Word of God, and also the fearless warrior who defended Constantinople from its enemies from about the early seventh century onward. The author, George of Pisidia, who celebrated the defeat of the Persian and Avar siege that took place in 626 CE, viewed both of these events as miraculous. Mary's virginity, which remained intact throughout the conception and birth of Christ, bore witness to his divine nature while her humanity assured the reality of the incarnation. It was also her virginity, according to George, which provided her with the strength to defeat potential invaders of the imperial city. This powerful and paradoxical figure was thus a dominant figure in the doctrine and devotion of the Eastern Roman empire, with her cult flourishing in Constantinople especially from about the sixth century onward.

As noted in several recent publications,² there has been an explosion of interest in the Virgin Mary during the last few decades.³ Articles, monographs and proceedings of conferences have approached Eastern Christian manifestations of her cult in various ways, focusing on texts, feasts, relics and material objects that were produced in Mary's honour throughout the

¹ George of Pisidia, *Bellum Avaricum*, ed. Pertusi 1959, 176.4–9 (my own translation). For further discussion of this passage, see Whitby 2020, 406–7.

² For example, Cameron 2004, 1–2; Cameron 2011, 1–3; Mullett 2011, 279–81; Harvey 2019, 344–5.

³ Two important collections of essays that approach the Virgin Mary from a broader interdisciplinary perspective are Boss 2007 and Maunder 2019.

Byzantine centuries.⁴ The early Christian and Byzantine period (between approximately the second and seventh centuries) remains the most closely studied, since late antique and patristic scholars view Mary as important for theological, liturgical and historical reasons.⁵ Controversy continues, however, over questions such as the period when Marian devotion began,⁶ the extent to which emperors or empresses were involved in promoting the cult,⁷ and whether or not it became a focus of theological controversy.⁸ Several recent studies, such as Thomas Arentzen's book on Romanos the Melodist's treatment of the Virgin, explore her transition in the course of the sixth century from theological symbol to multifaceted woman.⁹ The middle and late periods of Byzantine history remain less studied, although several conferences and their proceedings offer new approaches.¹⁰ Bissera Pentcheva's book on Mary's role as defender of Constantinople, along with her commemoration through relics, icons and processions, from the beginning of the seventh century until about 1204, provides analysis of these aspects of the cult.¹¹ There is no comparable study of the Virgin's ongoing veneration in the late Byzantine period (c. 1204–1453); however, various articles address manifestations of Marian devotion, including the pictorial representation of the Virgin's life in the fourteenth-century mosaics of the Chora monastery in Constantinople and her celebration in later hymns and homilies.¹² The whole field is opening up, but much work on the surviving textual, liturgical and material evidence remains to be done.

⁴ See, for example (in order of publication), Vassilaki 2000; Swanson 2004; Vassilaki 2005; Pentcheva 2006; Brubaker and Cunningham 2011; Allen, Külzer and Peltomaa 2015; Arentzen and Cunningham 2019.

⁵ Good introductions to this period include Shoemaker 2002; Maunder 2008; Shoemaker 2016a.

⁶ Those arguing for a very early date include Shoemaker 2016a and Kateusz 2019. Scholars who see the Council of Ephesus (431 CE) as a major watershed for the Byzantine Marian cult include Cameron 2004, 8–9; Price 2004; Price 2007.

⁷ For scholarly controversy concerning whether the future empress Pulcheria played an essential role in the events leading up to the deposition of the patriarch Nestorios in 431, see Holum 1982; Limberis 1994; Cooper 1998; Price 2004; James 2005.

⁸ For example, during the period of Iconoclasm (c. 730–87 and 815–43). For recent views on this subject, see Parry 1996, 191–201; Kalavrezou 2000; Tsironis 2000; Brubaker and Haldon 2011, esp. 32–3, 199–212.

⁹ Arentzen 2017. The PhD thesis that formed the basis of this monograph can be found in Arentzen 2014.

¹⁰ Brubaker and Cunningham 2011; Arentzen and Cunningham 2019. ¹¹ Pentcheva 2006.

¹² Lafontaine-Dosogne 1964 (1992); Lafontaine-Dosogne 1975; for texts, see for example the important verses called 'enkomia' that were inserted into the so-called *epitaphios threnos* of Holy Saturday *Orthros* in about the fourteenth century and which express the lament of the Mother of God at the cross, see Eustratiades 1937–8; Touliatos-Banker 1984; Detorakis 1987–9; Ševčenko 2011, 249, nn. 9–10.

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This book does not pretend to cover every aspect of the cult of the Virgin Mary during the early and middle Byzantine periods.¹³ However, it does engage with the idea that Mary was a multifaceted figure – or to use Averil Cameron’s memorable words, a model of extraordinary ‘capaciousness’ that was ‘all things to people at different times and places’.¹⁴ To some extent, the message was determined by purpose, intended audience or viewer, and physical setting or context. Liturgical texts, such as homilies and hymns, emphasised the Christological importance of the Virgin although they also began to weave intercessory invocation and prayer into this theological context from about the late fifth century onward.¹⁵ Historical texts, which were concerned mainly with political or military events, meanwhile described the Virgin’s role in defending the imperial city from its external foes.¹⁶ Mary appears as a powerful figure in both contexts, assuming a more symbolic than realistic aspect – although hymnographers such as Romanos sometimes portrayed her human and maternal qualities.¹⁷ I have chosen to focus on three important categories of Marian literature in Byzantium: homilies or sermons, hymns and hagiography (including not only *Lives* of the Virgin or of saints, but also miracle stories and apocalyptic narratives). Other, less religious or liturgical sources, such as histories, chronicles, poems and epigrams, must await a separate study. The sheer amount of surviving material, much of which remains to be critically edited and translated into modern languages, forbids universal coverage in the present work. I also regret that material or art historical evidence can only be mentioned briefly, or in passing, here – however, a forthcoming monograph will soon offer new approaches to this large field.¹⁸

The scope of this book, in terms of chronology and geographical boundaries, reflects my choice of literary material. Although the years 400 and 1000 CE represent rough boundaries for the study, it will be necessary occasionally to stray earlier or later by a few centuries in order to

¹³ Throughout this book, I define the ‘early’ period of Byzantine as lasting roughly from 330 to 843; the ‘middle’ as c. 843–1204; and the ‘late’ as 1204–1453. For discussion of various alternatives to this system, see *ODB*, vol. 1, 345–62.

¹⁴ Cameron 2004, 20. ¹⁵ See Chapters 1 and 2.

¹⁶ See Pentcheva 2006, 61–103, for texts and bibliography on the Persian and Avar siege of 626, for example. Some homiletic texts, such as Theodore Synkellos’ homily on the same siege, also portray the Virgin Mary in such terms; see Theodore Synkellos, *De obsidione*.

¹⁷ For the kontakia of Romanos the Melodist, see Maas and Trypanis 1963 (1997); Grosdidier de Matons 1964–81; Maisano 2002; Koder 2005; Eng. trans. Lash 1995; Barkhuizen 2012.

¹⁸ Leslie Brubaker is currently working on a separate volume that will follow this one; it will cover the material evidence, including churches, icons and other artefacts that commemorated the Virgin Mary in Byzantium. See also Acknowledgements, viii–ix, and Conclusion, 218.

include a few, but significant, sources that influenced the Greek religious texts that we will be examining. I decided, for example, to include Syriac religious poetry, including the second-century *Odes of Solomon* and the hymns and sung homilies of the fourth-century writer Ephrem the Syrian, owing to the fact that these works – along with the fifth- and sixth-century Syriac texts that followed them – provided such an important foundation for the sixth-century hymnographer Romanos the Melodist.¹⁹ The works that survive in the Georgian hymnbook which is known as the *Ancient Iadgari* were originally written in Greek; these are thus precious survivals of hymns that were sung in Greek churches and monasteries of Jerusalem and Palestine between about the fourth and sixth centuries. My study focuses inevitably on Constantinople between the fifth and tenth centuries since this is where and when the majority of Greek Marian texts were produced. However, some regional preachers and hymnographers, a few of whom (like John of Damascus and Kosmas of Maïuma) lived under Muslim rule in Palestine, also contributed to the tradition. The choice of texts may in some ways be arbitrary, but it reflects the direction that this book has taken in its exploration of the development of Greek Marian religious texts during the early and middle Byzantine periods. I have chosen to stop at the end of the first Christian millennium because of the wealth of texts that survives before that date. This is not to say, however, that later material, including the homilies of the twelfth-century writer James of Kokkinobaphos, are not important too.²⁰ I hope that future studies, including the forthcoming edition of these works by Elizabeth Jeffreys, will fill this gap.²¹

The aim of the present book is therefore to examine Mary's multifaceted aspect in Byzantine homilies, hymnography and hagiography between about 400 and 1000 CE. If we approach these separate, although closely related, literary genres on the basis of their particular liturgical or didactic aims, we see interesting developments in all three. First, it is noticeable that the earliest hymns and homilies that were composed in honour of the

¹⁹ On the question of Syriac influence on the kontakia of Romanos the Melodist, see Grosdidier de Matons 1977, 16–27; Papoutsakis 2007; Petersen 1985; Gador-Whyte 2013; Gador-Whyte 2017, 12–13; Arentzen 2017, 39.

²⁰ James of Kokkinobaphos, *Homilies*; for discussion, see Linardou 2004; Linardou 2007; Jeffreys 2019.

²¹ Elizabeth Jeffreys is currently working on a critical edition of the *Homilies*; see Jeffreys 2019. I am grateful to Professor Jeffreys for sharing the forthcoming text and translation of the *Homilies* with me. The two illustrated manuscripts, Cod. Paris. Gr. 1208 and Cod. Vat. Gr. 1162, that contain the *Homilies* are now digitised and available online at: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b55013447b/ffimage> and https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1162.

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Virgin Mary praised above all her role in the Christological mystery. Such texts, most of which were intended for delivery in liturgical contexts, used not only discursive, but also poetic and typological, language in order to teach Christians that a human, but perpetually virginal, woman conceived and gave birth to Jesus Christ, the Word of God. The inclusion of intercessory invocation and prayer to Mary began slowly but was in place by the beginning or middle of the sixth century. In subsequent centuries, but especially after about the beginning of the eighth, preachers and hymnographers also displayed an interest in legendary narratives, first expressed in apocryphal texts such as the *Protevangelion of James* and (several centuries later) various accounts of Mary's death or dormition and assumption into heaven, which they embellished with dialogue, monologue and other dramatic rhetorical devices.²² Such narrative freedom developed further in the surviving hagiographical texts, some of which departed significantly from the canonical Gospels in their accounts of Mary's life. The form, or genre, of individual texts does seem to have played a part in how Byzantine writers shaped their content.²³ I argue therefore that the Virgin's many aspects depend first on the literary genres that portray her, and second on the stage of cultic development in which they appear.

The richest and most developed phase begins after about the end of the ninth century when the whole range of Mary's qualities becomes visible. She remains above all a symbol of the incarnation in this period; however, this aspect may be overlaid with human and maternal characteristics, as she weeps at the foot of Christ's cross, and with monastic virtues, as she becomes a model of asceticism for Byzantine monks and nuns. An additional (and fascinating) quality of leadership also appears in a few hagiographical texts such as the probably late tenth-century *Life of the Virgin* that is falsely attributed to Maximos the Confessor, which describes Mary directing the activities of both female and male followers of Jesus.²⁴ To some extent, however, this wide expanse of Marian portraiture remains dependent on individual writers' choices of literary form, potential audiences and contexts of writing. I therefore argue throughout this book that

²² *Protevangelion of James* (CANT 50), ed. Tischendorf 1876; de Strycker 1961; trans. Elliott 1993 (2004); various Greek dormition accounts are listed at CANT 100; cf. Jugie 1944; Mimouni 1994 (2011); Shoemaker 2002. The title, 'Protevangelion' was only given to this work in the sixteenth century according to a Latin translation prepared by Postel 1552 (1570).

²³ Cunningham 2011a; Cunningham 2016.

²⁴ Georgian *Life of the Virgin* 94–102, ed. and trans. Shoemaker 2012, 121–9. The scholarly controversy surrounding the dates and authorship of this text is treated in Chapter 5, 192–4.

the Virgin Mary presented herself to Byzantine readers or auditors in the symbolic forms that they expected: although she became an increasingly compassionate and human interlocutor for Christian devotees, she encompassed in her person a full spectrum of theological, devotional and even polemical reflection that had developed over more than a millennium.

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It is worth providing a short overview of the history of the cult of the Virgin in the late antique and Byzantine worlds, especially in view of the controversial areas in this field that were mentioned above. Although Stephen Shoemaker presents a forceful case for Marian devotion in the centuries preceding the Council of Ephesus in 431,²⁵ the textual evidence remains patchy. Shoemaker sets this phenomenon within the wider context of the emerging cult of saints, arguing that the lack of evidence concerning relics, shrines or other testimony of Marian devotion before the middle of the fifth century may be ‘simply a matter of serendipity’.²⁶ He cites a number of apocryphal and heterodox literary sources, beginning with the mid to late second-century narrative known as the *Protevangelion of James*, as evidence for Mary’s importance as a holy figure in her own right.²⁷ Such texts include several gnostic texts including the *Gospel of Mary*,²⁸ as well as early accounts of the Virgin’s dormition and assumption that survive only in Ethiopic, Old Georgian and Syriac.²⁹ All of these sources, suggests Shoemaker, have escaped the notice of scholars who tend to focus on more ‘orthodox’ or mainstream Christian ones.³⁰ The suggestion that Marian devotion developed first – and indeed flourished – in heterodox Christian communities during the first four centuries of the common era is intriguing; it is reinforced by the late fourth-century father Epiphanius of Salamis’s polemic against an otherwise unattested sect called the Kollyridians, who appear to have commemorated the Virgin Mary annually with a service at which bread was offered to God in her name.³¹

²⁵ Shoemaker 2016a; cf. Kateusz 2019. ²⁶ Shoemaker 2016a, 17.

²⁷ *Protevangelion of James*, ed. Tishendorf 1876, de Strycker 1961, trans. Elliott 1993 (2004). On the likely late second- to early third-century date for the *Protevangelion of James*, see Cullmann 1991, 423–4; Elliott 1993 (2004), 49; Vuong 2013, 32–9.

²⁸ *Gospel of Mary*, ed. Wilson and MacRae 1979; Shoemaker 2016a, 75–87. Shoemaker’s view that the ‘Mary’ of this Gospel should be identified with Jesus’ mother rather than with Mary Magdalen is not widely accepted by apocryphal scholars; see Norelli 2009, 69–70.

²⁹ Shoemaker 2016a, 100–45. ³⁰ Shoemaker 2016a, 2.

³¹ Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* 79.1.7, ed. Holl 1933, vol. 3, 476; Shoemaker 2016a, 145.

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Shoemaker does not neglect other, more mainstream, textual and material evidence in support of an early cult of the Virgin Mary. However, whereas the evangelists, apostolic fathers and early patristic writers mention her frequently, this is almost always in connection with her roles as ‘Second Eve’ and virginal mother of Jesus Christ. Second-century theologians, including especially Justin Martyr and Irenaeus of Lyons, saw Mary as the antitype of Eve: whereas the latter disobeyed God and thereby helped to bring about the Fall of humankind from divine favour, the former obeyed him and initiated a new creation and redemption.³² The qualifications of the female person who would thus reverse the disastrous consequences of God’s gift of free will, by using it in the way that he intended, needed further justification – especially in response to questions about Mary’s background that were circulating among pagan and Jewish opponents of Christianity.³³ It is likely that the *Protevangelion of James* was compiled partly in response to this challenge; its primary purpose is to describe, with the help of a highly symbolic and theological narrative, the purity of the young woman who gave birth to Christ, the Son of God.³⁴ As Trinitarian and Christological doctrine developed further in the course of the third and fourth centuries, Christian teachers began to focus more on Mary’s role as ‘Theotokos’ or ‘birth-giver of God’. Gregory of Nyssa, for example, describes her mysterious role as follows in his homily on the Nativity of Christ:

O, what a marvel! The Virgin mother becomes and remains a virgin. Do you see the novelty of nature? In the case of other women, there is no mother as long as she remains a virgin. When she has become a mother, she does not have virginity. But in this case, the two titles have come together in this fashion. For the same woman is at once both mother and virgin. And neither has virginity hindered the birth, nor has the birth undone virginity. For it was fitting that [Christ], having entered human life in order to make us all incorruptible, should himself originate from an incorruptible birth.³⁵

³² Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 100.4–5, ed. Marcovich 1997, 242–3; trans. Falls 2003, 152; Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* 3.22.4, ed. Sagnard 1952, vol. 3, 378–83.

³³ The main pagan opponent, according to Origen, was the philosopher Celsus. According to Origen, Celsus questioned the circumstances surrounding Jesus’ birth, suggesting that Mary was a poor Jewish woman who committed adultery with a Roman soldier named ‘Panthera’; see Origen, *Contra Celsum* 1.28–32, ed. Borret 1967 (2005), 162–5, 268–71. On Jewish questioning of the Virgin birth, see Vuong 2013, 44–51; cf. Shoemaker 2016, 54, who doubts that the *Protevangelion of James* was composed mainly for apologetic reasons.

³⁴ Vuong 2013; Shoemaker 2016a, 54.

³⁵ Gregory of Nyssa, *Homily on the Nativity of Christ*, ed. Mann 1975, 273. 9–20 (my own translation).

Shoemaker is certainly correct in suggesting that devotion to the Virgin Mary existed in Christian circles well before the Council of Ephesus took place in 431. However, the nature of such veneration differed – at least in the mainstream Church – from that which was offered to martyrs and saints in that Mary’s importance lay in her role as the mother of Jesus Christ. The lack of relics and shrines in her honour also sets her apart from other holy people in this period.³⁶ The Fathers reflected on the Virgin’s purity, acceptance of God’s will and miraculous conception of Jesus, discerning prophetic and typological witness to her unique place in the history of salvation throughout the Old Testament. Even if some heterodox groups such as the Kollyridians expressed devotion to the Virgin Mary in more tangible ways, it is likely that her Christological role remained their primary impetus. In other words, whereas early Christians celebrated Mary’s role as mediator of salvation and instrument of the incarnation, they did not yet appeal to her in the way that they addressed martyred saints, as intercessors and miracle workers.

It might be useful at this point to define some terms concerning Mary’s relationship with the rest of humankind, which will be used throughout this book. I have chosen to follow Brian Reynolds’s useful distinction, for example, between the terms ‘mediation’ (*mesiteia*) and ‘intercession’ (*presbeia*).³⁷ Although these terms are often used synonymously, they indicate different activities on the part of the Virgin Mary. According to Reynolds, mediation refers to Mary’s role in cooperating with God in order to distribute grace and redemption to humankind through the incarnation of Christ. Although this definition is expressed in Roman Catholic language, it applies equally to the Eastern Christian view that Mary, who was chosen by God from the beginning of creation to give birth to his Son, the Word and Messiah, played an essential role in his dispensation for salvation. ‘Intercession’ meanwhile refers to Mary’s intervention on behalf of humanity, either collectively or individually, before God. Owing to her privileged position as Christ’s mother, which allows ‘free speech’ (*parresia*) with him, the Virgin intercedes on behalf of sinners, seeking to alleviate or even abolish their just punishments. Whereas mediation thus occurs at the point of Mary’s acceptance of the incarnation – and continues to play a part in the process of human salvation – intercession takes place at

³⁶ On the development of the cult of saints in early Christianity, see Brown 1981; Markus 1994; Booth, Dal Santo and Sarris 2011; Dal Santo 2012.

³⁷ Reynolds 2012, 152–3.

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discrete moments in human history when Christians turn to the Mother of God for help or healing.

The theological significance of the Virgin, as birth-giver of God and mediator of salvation, became controversial in Constantinople at the beginning of the fifth century. It is in this period, at some point after about 400, that the first feast in honour of the Virgin was established: it was celebrated on 15 August in Jerusalem and Palestine, but during the Nativity cycle (probably on 26 December) in Constantinople.³⁸ Preachers including Hesychios of Jerusalem and Attikos of Constantinople began to deliver high-flown, but well-grounded, theological orations in honour of the Virgin, as we shall see in Chapter 2. Such panegyric language, in which the epithet ‘Theotokos’ featured, reflected the Alexandrian theological tradition according to which Christ remained the divine Word of God even after assuming human flesh in the incarnation.³⁹ It is this theological message that provoked Nestorios, who was appointed bishop of Constantinople in 428, along with his presbyter Anastasios, to preach against the use of the epithet ‘Theotokos’ for the Virgin Mary. The historian Socrates relates the story as follows:

Preaching in the church one day, Anastasios warned his hearers that ‘No one must call Mary “Theotokos”, for Mary was but a human being and it is impossible that God could be born from a human being.’⁴⁰

The subsequent struggle between Nestorios and his opponents, including especially the patriarch of Alexandria, Cyril, is well covered in secondary literature.⁴¹ The role that the empress Pulcheria (the sister of Theodosios II) played in this conflict, however, remains unclear. Kenneth Holm, Vassiliki Limberis and Kate Cooper together constructed a persuasive case for Pulcheria’s bid to harness popular devotion to the Theotokos, which included her role as a model of asceticism, in order to strengthen her own imperial and civic claims as female ruler.⁴² This hypothesis rests especially on a text known as the *Letter to Cosmas*, which was written in support of

³⁸ Scholars believe that the feast ‘in memory of Mary’ was celebrated in Constantinople in connection with the Nativity of Christ, either on a Sunday before Christmas or on the day after (26 December). The latter is attested in the tenth-century *Typikon of the Great Church*, ed. Mateos 1962, vol. 1, 158–61. See also Jugie 1923b; Jugie 1944, 172–212, esp. 175–7; Capelle 1943; Constan 2003, 135.

³⁹ Recent scholarship has provided nuance to the concept of separate ‘Antiochene’ and ‘Alexandrian’ Christologies; see Daley 2015; Daley 2018, 174–99; however, some aspects of this categorisation remain useful: see Grillmeier 1975, 167–439; Hofer 2019, 461.

⁴⁰ Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 7.32.1–2, ed. Hansen 1995, 380. 1–3, trans. Constan 2003, 52; cf. Evagrius, *Ecclesiastical History* 1.2, ed. Bidez and Parmentier 1898, 7–8.

⁴¹ See, for example, Young 1983, 213–65; McGuckin 1994 (2004); Wessel 2004.

⁴² Holm 1982; Limberis 1994; Cooper 1998.

Nestorios and after his exile to Egypt, perhaps between c. 435 and 450.⁴³ Richard Price has shown, however, that the date and polemical tone of this text, when compared with earlier sources, undermines Holum's case. It appears that Pucheria's enmity towards Nestorios and promotion of the Marian cult represent later elaborations in the historical record.⁴⁴ Further, whereas later Byzantine historians and chroniclers assigned the discovery of the Virgin's robe in Palestine, its translation to Constantinople and the building of the Blachernai shrine, along with that of the Chalkoprateia, to Pulcheria, historians now believe that these activities took place somewhat later, during the reign of Leo I and his consort Verina.⁴⁵

Two aspects of the scholarly controversy concerning the empress Pulcheria remain significant for our purposes. First, the questions concerning gender, patronage and imperial piety remain applicable to the Marian cult – whether or not they should be examined in relation to this early fifth-century ruler. I shall return to these questions throughout the present book since they should be posed at every stage of the cult's development in Byzantium. Second, it is clear that the Christological controversy that involved the Theotokos in the first half of the fifth century was, at least in part, a reaction to growing devotion to the Virgin as a holy figure in her own right. The homilies and hymns that can be dated to this period do not yet appeal to Mary as protector or intercessor, as we shall see in Chapters 1 and 2; however, the shift that allowed doctrine to become infused with devotion even in theological and liturgical contexts was beginning to take place, perhaps justified by the Christological controversies of the early fifth century.

The Third Ecumenical Council thus provided an incipient cult of the Virgin Mary with the seal of ecclesiastical approval.⁴⁶ It can be no accident that churches and shrines in honour of the Theotokos quickly followed, in both Palestine and Constantinople. The church of the Kathisma, which has recently been excavated at a site halfway between Jerusalem and

⁴³ The text tells the story of Nestorios' expulsion of Pulcheria from the sanctuary of Hagia Sophia, where she was in the habit of receiving communion. When the patriarch told her that this space was reserved for priests, she responded, 'Why? Have I not given birth to God?' Nestorios then answered, 'You have given birth to Satan!', thereby incurring her permanent displeasure. See Nau 1919 (1974), 279; Price 2004, 32–3.

⁴⁴ Price 2004; James 2005; Price 2008. ⁴⁵ Mango 1998, 65–6.

⁴⁶ Note, however, Richard Price's recent suggestion that scholars have exaggerated the focus that Mary, as Theotokos, received at the Council of Ephesus in 431. This Council did not issue a doctrinal definition concerning the status of the Virgin Mary; the only documents that affirm her role as Theotokos are Cyril of Alexandria's *Second and Third Letters to Nestorius*, as well as his *Homily IV, On the Virgin Mary*, which was delivered at Ephesus soon after the condemnation of Nestorios. See Price 2019, 71–4.