

**SEAS, SAINTS, AND POLITICS: THE ROLE OF THE  
SUPERNATURAL IN STATE-BUILDING AND CULTURE-  
FORGING IN THE WORLD OF STEFAN NEMANJA**

The relationship of the early Serbian state of Raška with its coastal neighbours was complex and fluid and never completely resolved.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, Slavs established themselves on the Dalmatian coast among longer-established communities (some still speaking a form of Latin), and Serbs were a recognised part of this Slav population. A nineteenth-century set of costume illustrations printed in Germany (Fig. 1) depict ‘Serbs of the Adriatic’ in a variety of dress that says something of their own diversity, surely resulting from a long history of settlement and intermarriage.

Already in 1148 the Serbian prince Desa Urošević had conquered three of a string of coastal entities, Duklja, Travunia, and Zahumlja (Fig. 2), adopting the title Prince of Primorje, ‘the Coast’ or ‘Maritime lands’. Venetian charters call him *Dux*. Desa co-ruled Serbia with his brother Uroš II Prvoslav till 1153, and alone until 1162 when deposed by the Byzantine emperor Manuel. For the next 24 years Duklja was ruled by Mihailo III Vojislav as king, and Travunia by a military commander Grdeša. The period was one of constant wrestling for control of Dalmatia further north between Hungary, Byzantium, and Venice, a contest from which these statelets could not remain unaffected. When Manuel died in 1180, the way was open for Nemanja, Grand Zupan of Raška since 1168, to secure Serbia’s independence from Byzantium and reassert control of the coast. He first captured Bar and other Adriatic settlements, and in 1186 completed the conquest of the three polities, annexing Duklja (by now increasingly known as Zeta) to his own core Serbian state of Raška and giving the three lands to his eldest son Vukan. Though subordinate to his father, an inscription in the church of St Luke in Kotor calls Vukan ‘King of Duklja, Dalmatia, Travunia, Toplica, and Hvosno’. This is dated 1195, a year before Stefan’s abdication. It was left to Stefan’s successors to consolidate his gains, though the city of

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<sup>1</sup> Histories of the Serbian lands before and after Nemanja include John Van Antwerp Fine, *The Early Medieval Balkans: A critical survey from the sixth to the late twelfth century* (University of Michigan Press, 1991) and *The Late Medieval Balkans: a critical survey from the late twelfth century to the Ottoman conquest* (University of Michigan Press, 1994).



Fig. 1. 'A man from Karlobag', one of a set of ethnographic illustrations by Archduke Ludwig Salvator of Austria, Peter Maixner, Emil Lauffer, and Guido Manes, *Die Serben an der Adria. Ihre Typen und Trachten* ('The Serbs in the Adriatic. Their types and costumes') (first pub. Prague, Heinrich Mercy, 1870).

Сл 1. 'Човек из Карлобага, етнографске илустрације Надвојводе Лудвига Салватора из Аустрије, Петер Макснер, емил Лауфер и Гвидо Манес, *Die Serben an der Adria. Ihre Typen und Trachten* ('The Serbs in the Adriatic. Their types and costumes') (first pub. Prague, Heinrich Mercy, 1870).

Kotor, while submitting to Stefan, retained its republican constitution and the sovereign right to make treaties and wage war. The city-state of Ragusa, alias Dubrovnik, likewise remained independent following a truce in 1186.

This ebb and flow of power reflects the economic and political realities of the Adriatic coast and especially the interdependence between a string of maritime trading cities and the hinterlands from which they drew much of their produce. Already in the early ninth century Bar dominated Duklja (which marched with Byzantine lands along the coast of present-day Albania), Kotor Travunia, and Dubrovnik Zahumlja. Immediately north of Zahumlja was Paganja, and then Dalmatia stretching from just south of Split to the Istrian border – a client state of the Franks, whose emperor Charlemagne died in 814. Serbia sat behind the coastal mountains which alternately sheltered and hemmed in Duklja, Travunia, and Zahumlja. Lying on the headwaters of the Drina, Serbia prospered as a conduit for goods passing between the middle Danube and the customers beyond seas of these states' port-cities.

Control of the coast closest to Raška consequently brought nascent Serbia into direct contact with the powers of Venice, the Papacy, and by Nemanja's time the Normans, whose kingdom of Sicily included Apulia. Already Raška marched by land with the greater states of Hungary, Bulgaria, and its nominal overlord Byzantium. Now it was also open more than ever to seaborne ideas and practices from Italy and elsewhere in the West. For example, as Ćirković



Fig. 2. Emergent political entities on the Adriatic coast. Based on maps by Nada Klaić, in Huw M. A. Evans, *The Early Mediaeval Archaeology of Croatia, AD 600-900*, British Archaeology Reports 539 (Oxford, Archaeopress, 1989), p. 81, and Charles R. Bowlus, *Franks, Moravians and Magyars. The Struggle for the middle Danube, 788-907* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, 1995), Map 4 (Wikipedia Commons, Hxseek, 2009).

Сл. 2. Политичке силе на Јадранској обали, по картама Наде Клаић, у: Huw M. A. Evans, *The Early Mediaeval Archaeology of Croatia, AD 600-900*, British Archaeology Reports 539 (Oxford, Archaeopress, 1989), 81, и Charles R. Bowlus, *Franks, Moravians and Magyars. The Struggle for the middle Danube, 788-907* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, 1995), Map 4 (Wikipedia Commons, Hxseek, 2009).

pointed out in his magisterial history,<sup>2</sup> Nemanjić family endowments continued the Raška school of architecture: namely churches with a dome over a rectangular foundation, following the models of Romanesque churches on the Adriatic coast (Fig. 3). Models from the coast and Italy were also applied to the sculptural elements which decorated church doors and windows.

From Italy, too, came saints' cults, particularly a reinforced devotion to Nicholas, the greater part of whose remains had been translated in 1087 to Bari from his home city of Myra on the southern coast of Asia Minor. Dynastic marriages linked Apulia and the Dalmatian states, and the Normans saw the Adriatic coast as a springboard for attacks on Byzantium, which had begun six years earlier. Moreover, the translation of Nicholas' remains to Bari reflects the importance of the Adriatic crossing in the Roman Empire and its successors' lines of communication, and also southern Italy's centuries-old place in Magna Graeca.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Sima M. Ćirković, *The Serbs*, trs. Vuk Tošić (Oxford, Blackwell, 2004), p. 61..

<sup>3</sup> Mainland Greece kept a close eye on its Italian colonies, called *Magna Graeca* in Polybius' Histories, trs Evelyn S. Shuckburgh (London, Macmillan, 1889, repr. Bloomington



Fig. 3. The church of the Apostles Peter and Paul, Ras.

Сл. 3. Црква Светих Апостола Петра и Павла у Расу

The Norman kings, pressing in on weakening Byzantium, were still depicted on coins and in frescoes wearing Byzantine robes, with inscriptions in Greek lettering.

Asia Minor also gave two other saints to the Adriatic city-states. To Kotor, also known as Cattaro and successor to the Roman town of A(s)crivium, came St Tryphon (Fig. 4). In 1166, shortly before Nemanja's conquest, the level of offerings allowed a new church to be consecrated. Tryphon, commemorated in the West on November 10 and in the East on February 1, was a supposed martyr at Nicaea under the Decian persecution and his relics were first buried in his native city of Lampsacus on the Hellespont (modern Lapseki; widely represented as 'Campsada'). From there they were translated to Constantinople and then to Rome in the Hospital of the Holy Ghost in Sassia where they became associated with relics of a virgin, Nympha of Palermo.<sup>4</sup> Tryphon's name is derived from the Greek *τρυφή*, 'softness, delicacy'. His legend makes him a goose-herd.<sup>5</sup> In popular devotion he is a patron of gardeners and winegrowers, and prayers attributed to him are used against infestations of rodents and locusts.<sup>6</sup> Emperor Leo VI the Philosopher (died 912) delivered a eulogy on Tryphon, and *circa* 1005 the monk Theodoric of Fleury wrote an account based on earlier legends, giving him a companion, Respicius. Tryphon, Respicius, and Nympha subsequently came to share a joint feast on November 10. Tryphon's relics arrived in Kotor

1962), 2.39.1.

<sup>4</sup> Gabriel Meier, 'Tryphon, Respicius, and Nympha', *Catholic Encyclopedia* [hereafter *CE*] 15 (New York, Robert Appleton Company, 1913).

<sup>5</sup> The Latin text is in Thierry [Theodoric] de Fleury (ed.), *Acta Martyrum: Analecta Bollandiana* 27 (1908), pp. 7-10, 15; 28, p. 217; the Greek text was published by Franchi de Cavallieri, *Hagiographica*, Studi e Testi 19 (Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1908).

<sup>6</sup> In the Great Euchologion ('Book of Prayers') of the Orthodox churches.

during the winter of 808/9 when the boat transporting them to Venice was forced to seek shelter in a storm. Magnates of the city led by by Andreaccio Saracenis negotiated for their purchase and paid 200 Roman solidi for the shrine and 100 for a gemmed crown above it. On January 13 clergy and people went by ship to Porto Rose to fetch the body, and Saracenis gave the money to build the cathedral, which Porphyrogenitus reported was circular. In 968 the saint's head was stolen, and not returned from Constantinople until 1227.<sup>7</sup>

To Dubrovnik (Ragusa) came St Blaise (Fig. 5), as a compromise patron when the Greek and Latin Christians vetoed each other's saint – Sergius and Bacchus respectively. Blaise's head reliquary is said to have come from Byzantium in 1026, and there is also a hand relic of the saint.<sup>8</sup> However, chroniclers of the city such as Rastic and Ranjina attribute his veneration to a vision in 971 to warn the inhabitants of an impending attack by the Venetians, whose galleys had dropped anchor in Gruž and near Lokrum. Blaise was believed to be a bishop of Sebastea in Armenia (modern Sivas in Turkey), martyred under emperor Licinius and the prefect Agricolaus.<sup>9</sup> Among his supposed miracles was the healing of a boy near to death after a fishbone stuck in his throat. The boy's mother brought him food and candles in prison, from which the blessing of St Blaise for those with throat complaints still involves being touched on the throat by crossed candles. Blaise's aid for throats is first invoked in the medical writings of Aëtius of Amida (modern Diyarbakir in southern Turkey), a Byzantine court physician at the end of the fifth, or the beginning of the sixth century.<sup>10</sup> His feast falls in February – on the third in the West and the eleventh in the East.



Fig. 4. St Tryphon, patron of Kotor. Undated icon said to be Greek but in the Serbian style showing the saint with vine cutting.

Сл. 4. Св. Трифун, патрон Котора. Недатирана икона можда грчка али у српском стилу, представља свеца који сече винову лозу.

<sup>7</sup> Frederick Hamilton Jackson, *The Shores of the Adriatic. The Austrian Side: The Küstenlande, Istria and Dalmatia* (London, John Murray, 1908), hereafter Jackson, 'Adriatic', pp. 379-80.

<sup>8</sup> Jackson, 'Adriatic', pp. 338, 344-45.

<sup>9</sup> E. H. Vollet, 'Blaise (Saint)', *Grande Encyclopédie*, in *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca*, 'Auctarium', 1969, p. 278, col. 665b.

<sup>10</sup> *Aetii Medici Graeci Contractae ex Veteribus Medicinae Sermones* 16 (Venice, Gryphius, 1549), *tetrab.* ii. *serm.* iv. 50, p. 404.



Fig. 5. St Blaise, patron of Dubrovnik. Statue with modern restoration showing saint as protector of the city's cathedral.

Сл. 5. Св. Блез, патрон дубровника, недавно рестаурирана статуа која приказује светитеља као заштитника градске катедрале

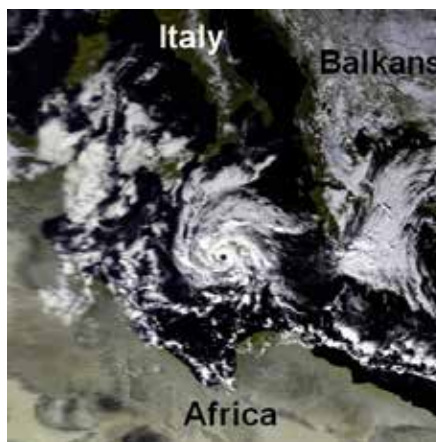


Fig. 6. Satellite image of a 'Medicane' tropical cyclone.

Сл. 6. Сателитски снјимак 'Медикан' тропског циклона

Further pointer to the importance for Stefan of staying on good relations with his Italian- and German-dominated Catholic neighbours. Sainthood was equally available to the common people in the daily struggle to make a living in often hostile environments. Sailors of Stefan's new territories on the Adriatic were at the mercy both of Dalmatia's rocky coasts and the hurricane-force storms now known as 'Medicanes' (Fig. 6). Saints' legends around sea-calming go back to the story of Christ calming the sea of Galilee. Two concern St Nicholas, by Stefan's time firmly established in Bari and drawing crowds of pilgrims, and consequently hugely important in the entire region. He was particularly attractive to merchants as a saint of fair dealing and generosity.<sup>11</sup> In one of his legends Nicholas appears to sailors battling to keep their ship afloat during a storm – a popular subject for votive images, Orthodox and Catholic (Figs. 7, 8). In the other, as fully developed in Stefan Nemanja's day,<sup>12</sup> the devil takes the form of

<sup>11</sup> Graham Jones, 'St Nicholas, icon of mercantile virtues: transition and continuity of a European myth', in Richard Littlejohns and Sara Soncini (eds), *Myths of Europe in Transition* (Amsterdam, Rodope, 2006), pp. 73-88, hereafter Jones, 'Nicholas'.

<sup>12</sup> Miracle 10 in the account of Robert Wace (1100-1174), '*Vie de saint Nicolas*',

Artemis disguised as a nun – note the double impersonation, a likely clue to the absorption of an earlier narrative. The nun asks pilgrims (suggestively, in one version, sailors) to take an offering of holy oil to the saint's church at Myra. Nicholas then appears (Fig. 9) and warns them to throw the oil overboard, for in fact it is oil that burns on water and stone – Greek Fire. They do so, and the oil explodes into flame a safe distance from their ship.

A good case can be made generally for the appropriation into the Nicholas narrative of ideas associated earlier with Greek Artemis and Poseidon.<sup>13</sup> Nicholas' legend told how he destroyed Artemis' temple at Myra, while the *Life* of his sixth-century namesake, St Nicholas of Sion, with whom he became conflated, describes how the latter cut down a sacred cypress that still grew at the temple site.<sup>14</sup> In classical times, Artemis was often identified with the moon deity Selene,<sup>15</sup> whose name shares a common root with that of Greek Helen: another reminder of the complexity of belief and understanding in the transition from Late Antique to medieval, and a good point at which to move to my major case-study.<sup>16</sup>

It concerns the empress Helena, whose joint feast with her son Constantine is celebrated in these meetings here in Niš, a city brought into the Serbian realm in the Nemanjic era. No legend is more challenging than the story of Helena carrying home with her to Italy the nails of the Crucifixion, found by her together with Christ's Cross. Whereas the first accounts of her discoveries in Jerusalem speak of two nails or three, for Gregory of Tours (c.538-594) there were four, those driven into Jesus' palms and two into his feet.<sup>17</sup> Ambrose (340-397) had

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discussed in Françoise Hazel Marie le Saux, *A Companion to Wace* (Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2005), pp. 51-78, followed by Jacobus de Voragine (1230?-1298?), *The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints*, trs William Granger Ryan (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993), 1, pp. 21-27. A useful overview of the background, including the hagiography, is in a homilistic article by Petr Chudoba, 'The Life of St Nicholas the Wonderworker, Part 4 – Nicholas vs Artemis', online at < <http://saintjohnorthodox.org/Saint%20Nicholas%20Book%2004%20-%20Nicholas%20vs%20Artemis.pdf> >, accessed January 23, 2015.

<sup>13</sup> Jones, 'Nicholas'.

<sup>14</sup> Cited by Helen Saradi, 'The Christianization of pagan temples in the Greek hagiographical texts', in Johannes Hahn, Stephen Emmel, and Ulrich Gotter (eds), *From Temple to Church: Destruction and renewal of local cultic topography in Late Antiquity* (Leiden, Brill, 2008), pp. 113-34, p. 131.

<sup>15</sup> Robin Hard, *The Routledge Handbook of Greek Mythology: Based on H.J. Rose's 'Handbook of Greek Mythology'* (Hove, Psychology Press, 2004), p. 46; N. G. L. Hammond and Howard Hayes Scullard (eds), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (2nd edn, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991), 'Selene', pp. 970-71; Mark P. O. Morford and Robert J. Lenardon, *Classical Mythology* (8th edn, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 64, 219-20.

<sup>16</sup> For word-play with Helen in the worship of Artemis, Graham Jones, 'The power of Helen's name: Heritage and legacy, myth and reality', in Miša Rakocija (ed.), *Niš and Byzantium. Seventh Symposium, Niš, 3-5 June 2008. The Collection of Scientific Works VII* (Niš, University of Niš, 2009), pp. 351-70, hereafter Jones, 'Power', p. 354.

<sup>17</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Glory of the Martyrs*, trs. Raymond van Dam (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1988), hereafter Van Dam, 'Martyrs', 5. The Latin text is Jacques-Paul Migne, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Patrologia Latina* [hereafter PL] 71 (Paris, 1879), cols 705-800, Ch. 5, on p. 710. For the varying number of nails, Anatole Frolov, *La culte de la relique de la Vraie Croix. Recherches sur le développement d'un culte*, Archives



Fig. 7. Bicci di Lorenzo (1373-1452), 'St Nicholas of Bari Rebuking the Storm'. Predella from an altarpiece made for the church of S. Niccolo in Cafaggio, Florence (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum).

Сл. 7. Бичи ди Лоренцо (1373-1452), Св. Никола смирује олују, део олтар за цркву Св. Никола Кафађо, Фиренца (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum).

spoken of two: 'Helena sought the nails with which the Lord was crucified, and found them. From one nail she ordered a bridle to be made, from the other she wove a diadem.'<sup>18</sup> The subsequent fate of the former is disputed. One tradition identifies it with the Holy Nail still suspended from the apsidal ceiling of Milan's Duomo, the successor to Ambrose's cathedral, in the 'Holy Cloud', Santo Chiodo. Another claims it to be the relic venerated in the cathedral of Carpentras in Provence. Both 'holy bridle bits' (Santo Morso and Saint-Mors) are in a bridle shape, but the latter has been described as made out of two of the nails, not one. As for the diadem nail, tradition identifies it with the supposed Holy Nail forming the inner band of the Iron Crown of Lombardy, kept in the chapel of Theodelinda in Monza cathedral some 15km from Milan.

The third or fourth nail is claimed by Rome's Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, the Heleniana, built around a room in Helena's residence, the Sessorian Palace, which she supposedly adapted to a chapel. It is claimed the nail disappeared when the Vandals sacked Rome in 455 together with the *titulus*, the wooden panel promoted as that affixed to the Cross by Pilate bearing Jesus' accusatory title 'king of the Jews'. The narrative has it rediscovered during repairs in 1492 inside a lead coffer containing the inscription and a piece of the Cross, hidden in the basilica's apse. However, as Willem Drijvers has pointed out, the earliest reference to Helena having brought a relic of the Cross to Rome dates only from about the year 1100.<sup>19</sup>

de l'Orient Chrétien 7 (Paris, Institute Français d'Etudes Byzantines, 1961), pp. 167-69. For crucifixion methods, see Piers Mitchell and Matthew Maslen, *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, April 2006.

<sup>18</sup> Ambrosius, *De obitu Theodosii oratio*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, PL 16 (Paris, 1845), cols 1385-1406, at 47 (col. 1401).

<sup>19</sup> Jan Willem Drijvers, 'Helena Augusta, the Cross and the myth' [online repub. of



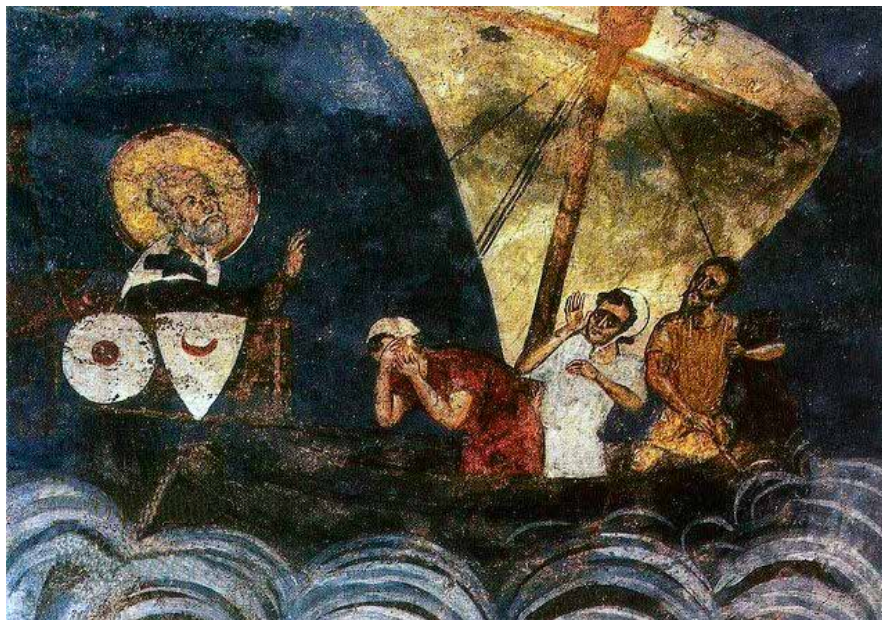


Fig. 8. St Nicholas rebuking the storm. Fresco in Boyana Church, Sofia, circa 1259.

Сл. 8. Св. Никола смирује олују, фреска у Бојани, Софија, око 1259.

Indeed, in his view it is unlikely that the discoveries which led to the legend of the *Inventio Crucis* took place during her lifetime, but during the five years or so between her death and that of her son.<sup>20</sup>

Whatever the truth of the *Inventio* story, it seems probable that Helena, having completed her imperial tour of the eastern provinces in 327, returned to her home at Rome, possibly visiting the nascent Constantinople *en route*.<sup>21</sup> It appears she had taken ship to Brindisi (Brundisium), from where she could take the Appian Way to Rome, for according to Gregory three nails arrived safely with Helena; the fourth she had thrown into the raging Adriatic. Gregory explained that huge waves in this sea had wrecked many ships and killed many sailors. By offering one of the four nails to the sea, Helena had calmed it. From then on, sailors could navigate the sea in safety – clearly a pious triumph of hope over experience in the mind of a man who lived in central Gaul more than 200km inland.

‘At that time huge waves disturbed the Adriatic Sea, on which so many ships were wrecked and so many men were drowned that it was called the whirl-

article ‘Helena Augusta: Cross and myth. Some new reflections’, in *Millenium 8, Yearbook on the Culture and History of the First Millennium C.E.* (2011), pp. 125-74], hereafter Drijvers ‘Reflections’, pp. 23-24, citing Sible de Blaauw, ‘Jerusalem in Rome and the cult of the Cross’, in R. L. Colella *et al* (eds), *Pratum Romanum. Richard Krautheimer zum 100. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden, 1997), pp. 55-73, pp. 65-66.

<sup>20</sup> Drijvers, ‘Reflections’, pp. 28-29.

<sup>21</sup> Hans A. Polsander, *Helena: Empress and Saint* (Chicago, 1995), pp. 139-48.



Fig. 9. St Nicholas foils Artemis. Font, 1150-1200, St Nicholas church, Brighton, England.

Сл. 9. Св. Никола руши Артемидин храм, 1150-1200, црква Св. Николе, Брајтон, Енглеска

pool of sailors. The far-sighted empress, concerned over the disasters of these miserable men, ordered one of the four nails to be thrown into the sea. She relied upon the pity of the Lord that he was able easily to calm the savage rolling of the waves. Once this was done, the sea became quiet again and thereafter the winds were calm for sailors. From then until today, once sailors have piously set sail on the sanctified sea, they have time for fasting, praying and reciting psalms.<sup>22</sup>

Leaving aside the credibility of throwing overboard one of those most prized of relics (Gregory's word *deponi*, 'placed', could have the sense of 'dipped'<sup>23</sup>), clearly Gregory had doubts about the story. 'Here is a rationale to account for the Lord's four nails,' he added. 'Two were driven in his palms and two in his feet. The question arises, why were there nails in his feet, which seem [in iconography] to hang from rather than stand on the holy cross? But a hole was clearly drilled in the upright post, and into this hole the end of a small board was inserted. The holy feet were nailed on top of this board as if they were the feet of a standing man.'

Gregory still appears to haver. 'The question arises, what was done with these nails? Two, as I said earlier, were inserted in a bridle, the third was thrown into the sea. Some claim that the fourth was affixed to [the diadem or helmet on] the head of a statue of Constantine which, so they say, is supposed to rise about the entire city [of Constantinople], with the result that what one might call a helmet of salvation crowns the entire fortification over which it towers. Some claim that this bridle has great power... The emperor Justin was tricked by a ma-

<sup>22</sup> Van Dam, 'Martyrs', p. 25.

<sup>23</sup> Herbert Thurston, 'Holy Nails', *CE* 10 (1911).

gician. When the ghost of a demon had been sent against him, for two nights he endured unbearable threats; but when on the third night he placed the bridle on his head, the enemy no longer had the means of threatening him.<sup>7</sup>

It seems Gregory had picked up, and perhaps elaborated, a story he had heard, possibly from his chaplain, possibly in person. In 594, the year before his death, he visited Rome to visit the tombs of the apostles and pay respects to his namesake the Pope, Gregory the Great. Sailors' superstitions are famous and persistent, and encompassed the Crucifixion. As late as the last quarter of the fourteenth century and the first quarter



Fig. 10. Nemesis, emblem of Justice, with her bridle, following the tracks of men. Andria Alciato, *Emblemata* (Lyons, Guillaume Rouille, 1550), p. 34.

Сл. 10. Немесис, амблем Правде, Андрија Алкијато, *Амблематика* (Лион, Гијом Руж, 1550), 34.

of the fifteenth, a gold ring with an inset wolf's tooth fashioned into a heart's shape and probably made in England or France only two or three generations after Nemanja's death, was given an engraved inscription which included two of Christ's last words on the Cross, '*Consum[m]atum e[st]*'. This phrase is said to have been used as a charm to calm storms, and since the ring is large and storms would only endanger the wearer at sea it has been concluded by Sarah Bercusson that it probably belonged to a man, perhaps a merchant.<sup>24</sup> The letters 'CE', the abbreviation commonly standing for the phrase, also occur, for example on a Norwegian magical rune-stick from early thirteenth-century Bergen. Commentators on this talismanic object also consider the words a popular charm, in this case particularly to staunch blood – an objective shared with charms associated with Longinus, the Roman centurion and convert who it was said pierced Christ's side as he hung on the cross.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> London, Victoria and Albert Museum, M. 816-1902, unknown provenance, curatorial notes on-line at <<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O121231/ring-unknown/>>, accessed December 18, 2014. The phrase was combined with the words '+ Buro + Berto + Berneto +', a magical charm to appease toothache. Combinations of charms are not unusual, according to the author of these notes. See also John Cherry, 'Exhibit 647', in Jonathan Alexander and Paul Binski (eds), *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200-1400* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1987), pp. 484-5 (with plate), also citing Charles Oman, *Catalogue of Rings in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 1930), p. 115, no. 757; John Cherry, 'Medieval rings', in A. Ward et al., *The Ring* (London, 1981), no. 131; and S. Bury, *Jewellery Gallery Summary Catalogue* (1982), p. 187.

<sup>25</sup> Mindy Macleod and Bernard Mees, *Runic Amulets and Magic Objects* (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2006), p. 157.

The crucifixion is embedded in the European magical lexicon, therefore. As one scholar of talismans has written, ‘Among the phrases we find that are quite comprehensible and derive from the holy scriptures, the following are perhaps the most common... the phrases found most frequently on countless seals, medals, rings and tokens:

*Christus vincit + Christus regnat + Christus imperat*

*Christus natus est + Christus passus est + Christus crucifixus est + Christus lancea perforatus est*

*Vincit leo de tribu Juda, radix Dauit, alleluia.*<sup>26</sup>

Gregory’s anecdote includes no reference to words accompanying the casting of Helena’s Crucifixion nail into the waves, but he does call the nails ‘superior to all metal’. Helena’s ‘reinforcement’ of Constantine’s bridle was to ‘more easily disperse’ ‘hostile peoples’.<sup>27</sup>

Traditions endowing iron and iron artefacts with magical properties were well developed and reported in Late Antiquity and continued to the modern age. Pliny the Elder in his ‘Natural History’ stated that coffin-nails fixed to the door-lintel were a protection against ‘nocturnal prowling spirits’ (‘nightmares’ in another translation). Against noxious drugs it was only necessary to trace a circle around the patient with iron, or to carry an iron sword around them. Moreover, ‘a light prick’ with a sword with which a man had been wounded were reputed to alleviate ‘sudden pains which bring a pricking sensation in the side and chest’.<sup>28</sup> According to a later folk-saying: ‘If a horse be shod with shoes made from a sword wherewith a man has been slain, he will be most swift and fleet, and never, though never so hard rode, tire.’ Iron-rust closed wounds, cured pimples, hæmorrhage and ulcers, and refreshed eyelids.<sup>29</sup> Cast-off horseshoes found on the road were a remedy for hiccoughs, and so on.<sup>30</sup> In Bavaria an alleged popular cure for hernia in children was to take a nail from a cast-off horseshoe and when a new moon came on a Friday drive it with three blows into an oak or pear-tree, thrice invoking the name of Chris.<sup>31</sup> Here the tree stands for the Cross, but veneration of trees in ancient Germanic cultures is very likely in the mix also.

Such beliefs were surely rooted in the metal’s magnetic qualities. However, the legend of Helena and the ‘fourth nail’ of the Crucifixion has a further dimension. It is clearly to do also with the sea, and particularly with storms and the fear of shipwreck and drowning. The use of incantations, magic-imbued objects, and sacrifice to calm the sea occurs in many cultures. Even nature was pressed into service against itself. It is said that the herb pennyroyal would be scattered

<sup>26</sup> Claude Lecouteux, *Le Livre des Talismans et des Amulettes* [‘The High Magic of Talismans and Amulets: Tradition and Craft’] (Paris, Éditions Imago, 2005).

<sup>27</sup> Van Dam, ‘Martyrs’, p. 24.

<sup>28</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, Loeb Classical Library edn (10 vols, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press), hereafter ‘Pliny’, 9, trs. H. Rackham (LCL 394, 1952), 34:44-46, at pp. 236-37.

<sup>29</sup> Pliny, 9, 34:45, at pp. 237-39.

<sup>30</sup> Pliny, 8, trs. W. H. S. Jones (LCL 418, 1963), 28:81.263-66, at pp. 176-77.

<sup>31</sup> G. Lammert, *Volkmedizin und medizinischer Aberglaube in Bayern: und den angrenzenden Bezirken* (Würzburg, Julien, 1869), p. 120.

by sailors around their ships to calm stormy seas.<sup>32</sup> Propitious times for sailing were studied – ‘halcyon days’ referred to a mythical bird of ancient Greece that sailors believed nested on the seas, calming them with magical powers until its eggs hatched.<sup>33</sup> Variants of the Jonah story, in which ‘unlucky’ persons are cast overboard to propitiate whatever gods are raising the storm, are well attested. A *bylina* or poetic epic song from northern Russia interestingly brings together the human sacrificial element with the efficacy of metal. It also witnesses to a belief among fishermen that the performance of *bylini* could have a magical calming effect on the sea.<sup>34</sup> ‘They tell the *bylina* about Dobrynja to calm down the blue sea, and for you all to hear, good people.’<sup>35</sup>

Sadko built thirty ships,/ Thirty ships, thirty scarlet ones...  
He sold the wares of Novgorod, /He received great profits,  
He filled forty-bucket barrels with red gold and pure silver..  
On the blue sea bad weather arose,/ The scarlet ships stood still on the blue sea,  
The wind drove the waves and tore the sails/ And smashed at the scarlet ships...  
Sadko the merchant, the rich guest, then spoke/ To his družina...:  
‘Hail to you, my brave družina!/ For a long time we’ve travelled through the sea,  
But we haven’t paid tribute to the Sea Tsar.

It seems the Sea Tsar is demanding tribute from us...  
Pick up a forty-bucket barrel of pure silver/ And lower the barrel into the blue sea’...

The wind drove the waves and tore the sails/ And smashed at the scarlet ships,  
But the ships didn’t move from their place on the blue sea.  
Then his brave družina/ Took a forty-bucket barrel of red gold  
And lowered the barrel into the blue sea.

The wind drove the waves and tore the sails/ And smashed at the scarlet ships,  
The scarlet ships still didn’t move / From their place on the blue sea.

Sadko the merchant... spoke:

‘It seems the Sea Tsar is demanding/ A living person as a tribute to the blue sea.  
Brothers, make some wooden lots,/ I myself will make one on gold, on red gold,  
All of you sign your names,/ Cast the lots on the blue sea.

If someone’s lot goes to the bottom,/ That person must go into the blue sea...<sup>36</sup>

Calming by words or presence was a common trope. Northern sailors said Óðinn could calm the sea with his words,<sup>37</sup> and for a time after conversion to

<sup>32</sup> Jacki Smith, *Coventry Magic with Candles, Oil and Herbs* (San Francisco, Red Wheel/Weiser, 2011), p. 184.

<sup>33</sup> Pliny, 3, trs. H. Rackham (LCL 353, 1940), 10:32, at p. 220.

<sup>34</sup> James Bailey and Tatyana Ivanova (eds), *An Anthology of Russian Folk Epics* (Armonk, New York, M. E. Sharpe, 1998), p. 132.

<sup>35</sup> Lauri Honko (ed.), *Religion, Myth and Folklore in the World’s Epics: The Kalevala and its Predecessors* (Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 1990), p. 298, citing Pavel Rybnikov, *Pesni, sobrannye P. N. Rybnikovym* [Songs Collected by P. N. Rybnikov] (1861-1867), 139. For a commentary on the genre, Margaret Ziolkowski, *Soviet Heroic Poetry in Context. Folklore or fakelore?* (Lanham, Maryland, University of Delaware Press, 2013), especially pp. 61-90.

<sup>36</sup> Dobrynja and Alyosha Popovich, ‘Onega Bylinas’, published online at <<http://www.arttrusse.ca/byliny/sadko.htm>>.

<sup>37</sup> Karen Jolly, Edward Peters, and Catharina Raudvere (eds), *Witchcraft and Magic*

Christianity Norwegian seafarers continued to call on Thor when in danger at sea.<sup>38</sup> Jesus twice calmed a storm for his fishermen disciples, once with words, and on another occasion merely by his presence,<sup>39</sup> perhaps an echo of Jewish tradition about God's conquest of the primordial sea at Creation.<sup>40</sup> Philostratus wrote that people believed that Apollonius of Tyana had power over the seas.<sup>41</sup> Aesculepius (Serapis), it was said, answered the prayers of Aelius Aristides by saving him and his companions from a deadly storm.<sup>42</sup> In addition to Stella Maris, the Virgin Mary was also called 'Our Lady of the Waves' and became the patroness of many seaside chapels. She was believed to have saved many ships from wreck by guiding them to port or calming a storm. Fishermen considered St Antony one of the most powerful saints for protection and many Portuguese ships carried a statue of him.

Gregory's story brings together several elements, therefore. It references the use of metal to calm the sea, the biblical tradition of Jesus' power to calm the waves, saintly intervention, and the human sacrificial element, since the nail emblemises the theology of Christ's atoning sacrifice on the Cross. A further possibility is that Gregory, or rather his informant, had picked up a transfer to Helena of an aspect of maritime beliefs associated with the Greek Helen and her mythical brothers the Dioscuri twins, Castor and Pollux.

Gregory was writing from a Gallic perspective. Nevertheless, it must remain likely that he was here transmitting a story rooted in pan-Mediterranean attitudes, not least those of the sailors with Greek cultural backgrounds who might be found throughout the ports of *Mare Nostrum*. A recent study of the mentality of the Greek-Roman and Byzantine worlds in relation to navigation has pointed out the perceived contrasts between safe land and dangerous sea, sweet countryside and dreadful sea, and the likely grounding of this fear in the importance of coastwise shipping tied to *terra firma*.<sup>43</sup> The author also points out the usual lowly birth of seamen and rowers. While in his view this led to sea

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*in European, 3, The Middle Ages* (London, Bloomsbury, 2002), p. 116.

<sup>38</sup> Sandra Kynes, *Sea Magic: Connecting with the Ocean's Energy* (Woodbury, Minnesota, Llewellyn Worldwide, 2008), p. 28, citing Fletcher S. Bassett, *Legends and Superstitions of the Sea and of Sailors in All Lands and at All Times* (Chicago, Belford, Clarke, 1885), p. 14. See also pp. 379ff for 'Sacrifices, offerings, and oblations'.

<sup>39</sup> This paragraph from Adam Winn, *The Purpose of Mark's Gospel: An early Christian response to Roman Imperial Propaganda*, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe* 245 (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2008), hereafter Winn, 'Mark', p. 112.

<sup>40</sup> Winn, 'Mark', citing discussion by William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1974), pp. 175-76; John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York, Doubleday, 1994), 2:930-32.

<sup>41</sup> Philostratus, *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, 1, Books 1-5, Loeb Classical Library 16 (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1912), 4.13.

<sup>42</sup> P. Aelius Aristides, *The Complete Works II* (Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, 1935), p. 268, 'Hymn to Serapis', 33.

<sup>43</sup> Salvatore Cosentino, 'Mentality, technology and commerce: Shipping amongst the Mediterranean islands in late antiquity and beyond', in Demetrios Michaelides, Philippe Pergola, and Enrico Zanini (eds), *The Insular System of the Early Byzantine Mediterranean. Archaeology and History*, British Archaeological Reports, International Series 2523 (Oxford, Archaeopress, 2013), pp. 65-76, hereafter Cosentino, 'Shipping', pp. 65-66.

and seafaring starting to become potentially dangerous for the elites, it might be thought also to underline the susceptibility of crews to superstition and magical strategies.

Furthermore, he asserts, Christian scriptures added to this negative image of the sea. 'The pagan fear of tempests continued to be one of the most terrifying experiences for humans in Christian imagery, so that the sea-storm became the metaphor par excellence for expressing the difficulty of life. Like the pagan emperors before, now Jesus acted as a *kynernētēs*, a steersman, the only steersman able to rescue mankind from the storms of history.' Citing the Nicholas legends, he adds that 'Christian hagiography appropriated very soon the anti-marine theme'.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, a 'sort of brief manual on nautical meteorology', written around the second half of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century, showed a complete redefining of stars and constellations with names of Christian saints. Among various prescriptions on when to sail, this text noted that 'it must be known that sailors keep from setting out on their routes on Tuesday and on Friday, for they honour them before the others. Some people will hardly ever sail on Saturday on account of the commemoration of the dead on that day, and it being the day for funerals.'<sup>45</sup> Gregory himself reflected this negative perspective, typically using the turbulent sea as a symbol of dangers and misfortunes in life.<sup>46</sup>

There was no greater fear for maritime travellers than shipwreck in a storm – a fear which would have been as acute in Nemanja's day as in any age earlier, for ship technology had advanced little. A fear-inducing feature of Mediterranean storms were the electrical discharges known in the later Middle Ages as St Elmo's Fire and earlier attributed to the Greek Helen and her brothers.<sup>47</sup> A first-century description by Pliny<sup>48</sup> was still referred to in Gregory's own century, presumably because seamen continued to link the phenomenon with the trio. In *De Ostentis*, 'On Signs in the Heavens', the Byzantine clerk John Lydus ('the Lydian') (490-c.550) revisited the passage. On land and sea, he writes, stars are found showing 'certain efficiencies'. Navigators at sea call one such 'appearance or condition' 'Helen'. This was a light often seen on soldiers' spear-tips and on the mast and other parts of ships, giving off a hiss like snakes, and flitting like birds in the unlucky vessel as it sank or falling into the drier parts and setting the boat on fire. Even so, as in other circumstances 'the property of the deity shows providence' (John uses the Greek word translated into Latin as *numen* rather than *deus* for god or an allusion to the Christian godhead). For immediately appear 'two stars named Castor and Pollux' which immediately cause the 'star' called Helen to flee.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Cosentino, 'Shipping', p. 67.

<sup>45</sup> Cosentino, 'Shipping', pp. 73-74, citing Sp. Lambros, *Neos Ellēnomnēmōn* 9 (1912), pp. 174-77.

<sup>46</sup> Van Dam, 'Martyrs', citing G. de Nie, 'The spring, the seed and the tree: Gregory of Tours on the wonders of nature', *Journal of Medieval History* 11 (1985), pp. 89-135, pp. 101-11.

<sup>47</sup> Jones, 'Power', pp. 358-63.

<sup>48</sup> Pliny, 1, trs. H. Rackham (LCL 330, 1938), 2:37.101, at pp. 244-45.

<sup>49</sup> John the Lydian, Περὶ διοσημειῶν, *De Ostentis* ['On Signs in the Heavens'], in Ioannes Lydus, *Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, B. G. Niebuhr (ed.) (Bonn, Weber, 1837), ch. 5, here ch. 22 in Section 2, at p. 278. Greek text is Ioannis Laurentii Lydi, *Liber de*

Another fifth-century revisiting of this sailor-lore was by Lactanius Placidus, a grammarian, scholiast on the *Thebaid* by Statius, a poet writing in Latin in the final decade of the first century but raised in the Greek cultural milieu of the Bay of Naples.<sup>50</sup> The latter wrote, ‘Not otherwise [than in grief] in a blind hurricane at night, when the north-wester’ blows, does a ship know that she will perish, so soon as the brethren of Therapnae [the Dioscuri] have fled the sails their sister’s fire has doomed.’<sup>51</sup> Lactanius commented: ‘when they saw the star Helen - which it is said is Urania<sup>52</sup> - such is the power of the fire that... if this star was rooted in a ship, the sailors knew they should fall... [but] are saved by the beneficial twin stars.’

In his *Propempticon*, ‘Send-off poem’, to Maecius Celer, Consul Suffect in 101, taking ship from Rome to Alexandria in May/June<sup>53</sup>, Statius also wrote, ‘Ye Gods whose delight it is to preserve adventurous ships, and to assuage the angry perils of the gusty sea, make the waters smooth and calm... Bring forth your favouring stars, Oebalian brethren [a reference to the warm springs of Baiae], and sit upon the twin horns of the yard-arm; let your light illumine sea and sky; drive far away, I pray, your Ilian sister’s [i.e. Helen of Illium, Troy] tempestuous star, and banish her wholly from the heavens’.<sup>54</sup>

The distinction between Helen’s threatening light and those of her brothers had clearly fallen away by the time the fire was attributed to St Elmo, pet-name of Erasmus, bishop of Formiae on the bay of Naples, though in the seventeenth century both were still collectively known to French seamen as *feu d’Helene*.<sup>55</sup> I have argued that the name ‘St Elmo’ may have developed from the Greek ‘Elene’ via attribution of the fires to Constantine’s mother, St Helena.<sup>56</sup>

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*Ostentis et Calendaria Graeca Omnia*, Curtius Wachsmuth (ed.) (Leipzig, B. G. Teubner, 1897), pp. 11-12. New critical trs. of *De Mensibus*, *De Ostentis* and *De Magistratibus* in Anastasia Bandy, Demetrios J. Constantelos and Craig J. N. de Paulo (eds), *The Works of Ioannis Lydus*, Vols. 1-4 (Lewiston, New York, Edwin Mellen Press, 2013).

<sup>50</sup> P. Papinius Statius, 3, *Lactantii Placidi ut dicitur Commentarios in Statii Thebaida et Commentarium in Achilleida*, ed. Ricardus Jahnke (Leipzig, B. G. Teubner, 1898), *Commentarius in Librum VII*, p. 377. The most recent edn of the commentary is Robert Dale Sweeney (ed.), *Lactantii Placidi in Statii Thebaida commentum. 1: Anonymi in Statii Achilleida commentum. Fulgentii ut fingitur Planciadis super Thebaiden commentariolum*, Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana (Stuttgart, Teubner, 1997).

<sup>51</sup> Statius, with an English Translation by J. H. Mozley (2 vols, London, William Heinmann, 1928), hereafter ‘Statius’, 2, *Thebaid Bk 7* (pp. 132-93), lines 791-93 at p. 190, English trs. p. 191.

<sup>52</sup> Jones, 2015 Niš conference proceedings, forthcoming.

<sup>53</sup> Lionel Casson, ‘Maecius Celer’s ship’, *The Classical Review* 18.3 (December 1968), pp. 261-62.

<sup>54</sup> ‘Statius’, 1, *Silvae*, Bk 3, 2 (pp. 154-65), lines 8-12 at p. 156, English trs. p. 157.

<sup>55</sup> Estienne Cleirac [1583-1657], *Les Us et Coutumes de la Mer* (Bordeaux, Guillaume Millanges, 1647): ‘que les mariniers nomment *Saint Nicolas, Sainte Claire, Saint Helene...*, les Castellans *san Elmo*, les Italiens... *luce S. Hermo...*’; Antoine Oudin [1585-1653], *Recherches Italiennes et Françaises* (Paris, A. de Sommaville, 1640), pt. 2 (1642) : ‘*feu d’Helene: Sant’Ermo*’. Cited by Jan Fennis, *Trésor du Language des Galères: Dictionnaire Exhaustif* (Tübingen, Max Niemeyer, 1995), p. 915.

<sup>56</sup> Jones, ‘Power’, pp. 360-61, following Jones, ‘Holy wells and the Cult of St Helen’,



Gregory's report of the tradition that Helen's namesake, Constantine's mother, calmed a storm with holy iron instead of threatening disaster with supernatural fire is a crucial piece of evidence in that direction. Van Dam's comment on the bridle and diadem is suggestive, that the association between these relics and Constantine 'neatly represented a fundamental confusion in Byzantine political philosophy between Christ and the emperor, who both acted as mediators with God'.<sup>57</sup>

In the same vein, Gregory's narrative also recalls the suggestion that the nails in Constantine's bridle were intended to bring to mind the bridle of Nemesis, by which that deity of fate restrained headstrong rulers (Fig. 10). Spirit of divine retribution against those who succumb to hubris, her name is related to the Greek word *νέμεριν*, 'to give what is due'. An account of the Greek Helen made Nemesis her mother,<sup>58</sup> while Nemesis was understood in one strand of Greek myth to be the daughter of Oceanus, personification of the great ocean which the Greeks believed girdled the known world landmass. This was the story at Rhamnous, for example. Here, on a remote mountain top on the rocky north-east coast of Attica north of Marathon, strategically overlooking a narrow stretch of the Euboean channel, stood a sanctuary of Nemesis and Themis, a double cult known from the sixth century BCE.

Nemesis' figure appears on coins of Faustina II, consort of the emperor Marcus Aurelius (161-175 CE). Faustina was one of the empresses who bore the title *Mater Castrorum* or 'Mother of the Army' – literally 'of the Camps' In the same century a lapsed Christian was reported as attending to the sacrifices at the altar of the two Nemeses at Smyrna,<sup>59</sup> and the early second century CE poet Mesomedes wrote a hymn to Nemesis in which he addressed her as 'winged balancer of Justice' and noted her 'adamantine bridles' that restrain 'the frivolous insolences of mortals'.<sup>60</sup> Her reputation lived on into the fourth century, when Ammianus Marcellinus included her in a digression on Justice following his description of the death of Gallus Caesar.<sup>61</sup> Nemesis and her bridle link aptly to the nail(s) in the bridle of Constantine via Theodoret's comment that

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*Landscape History* 8 (1986), pp. 59-76. The probable etymology was demonstrated by Otto Skutsch, 'Helen, her name and nature', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 107 (1987), pp. 188-93, based on his T. B. L. Webster Memorial Lecture, Stanford University, April 1985.

<sup>57</sup> G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une Capitale. Constantinople et ses Institutions de 330 à 451*, Bibliothèque Byzantine, Études 7 (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1974), pp. 37-39, 405-09.

<sup>58</sup> e.g. in the compilation of myths called *Bibliothèque*, Aubrey Diller, 'The Text History of the *Bibliotheca* of Pseudo-Apollodorus', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 66 (1935), pp. 296-313), pp. 296, 300.

<sup>59</sup> In the martyrology known as the *Acts of Pionius, Martyrium Pionii*, set in the so-called Decian persecution of 250-51: Hippolyte Delehaye, *Les Passions des Martyrs et les Genres Littéraires* (Brussels, Bureaux de la Société des Bollandistes, 1921), pp. 15-46.

<sup>60</sup> Mesomedes of Crete, 'Hymn to Nemesis', trs. A. Z. Foreman, pub. online at 'Poems Foudnin Translation', <<http://poemsintranslation.blogspot.co.uk/2011/05/mesomedes-hymn-to-nemesis-from-greek.html>>, accessed January 18, 2015.

<sup>61</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, *Roman Antiquities*, trs. J. C. Rolfe, Loeb Classical Library (1935), Vol. 1, 14.11.25.

the latter fulfilled a prophecy of Zechariah: 'In that day that which is upon the bridle of the horse shall be holy to the Lord' or 'There shall be upon the bridles of the horses holiness unto the Lord Almighty.'<sup>62</sup>

No fewer than eight Serbian royal consorts were named Helena, Јелена, after the woman who gave birth to the future emperor Constantine at Niš. It would be a neat if unlikely sidelight if one or more encountered Gregory's story.<sup>63</sup> H el ene d'Anjou, wife of Nemanja's grandson Stefan Uroš I (ruled 1245-1276) and mother of kings Dragutin and Milutin, may have come from Gregory's part of the world, after all,<sup>64</sup> and for a time ruled Zeta and Travunia. She was buried in February 1314 in the church of St Nicholas in Shkod er. If she herself had not encountered the storms of what Statius called 'the furious Adriatic',<sup>65</sup> her seafaring subjects most certainly had.

Грејем Џонс

МОРА, СВЕТИТЕЉИ И ПОЛИТИКА: УЛОГА НАДПРИРОДНОГ У СТВАРАЊУ  
ДРЖАВНОСТИ И КУЛТУРЕ У СВЕТУ СТЕФАНА НЕМАЊЕ

У настојањима да успостави стабилну српску државу, Стефан Немања је користио различите стратешке позиције од значаја на Балкану. Околности у којима се нашао, а које су истовремено допринеле великој шизми, затим Крсташким ратовима, разуме се допринеле су и апропријацији (или боље речено дипломатској размени) светитеља, реликвија, легенди и патрона. Близина Јадранског мора доприносила је солидном развоју трговачких канала, размени. Стога се у тексту испитују околности у којима је дошло до размене између државе Стефана Немање и Византије. Испитују се и околности у Нишу у периоду владавине Стефана Немање.

<sup>62</sup> Theodoret of Cyrhus, *Ecclesiastical History*, trs. Philip Schaff in *Theodoret, Jerome, Gennadius, and Rufinus: Historical Writings, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd Series, 3 (Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1892), 1.7; Zechariah 14.20.

<sup>63</sup> They were Helena of Rascia (Јелена Урошевић Вукановић), queen consort of B ela II of Hungary (1131-1141); H el ene d'Anjou, queen consort of Stephen Uroš I of Serbia (1245-1276); Helena Doukaina Angelina, queen consort of Stefan Uroš II Milutin (1273-1284); Helena of Bulgaria (Елена), empress consort of Stephen Uroš IV Dušan (1332-1355); Helena Gattilusio, despotitsa consort of Stefan Lazarevi  (1405-1427); Helena Palaiologina of Morea, despotitsa consort of Lazar Brankovi  (1456-1458); Maria of Serbia (*Jelena*), queen consort of Stephen Tomaševi  of Bosnia (1461-1463); and Helen of Serbia (Јелена Карађорђевић), princess consort of Prince John Constantinovich of Russia (lived 1886–1918). Helen of Zadar (Јелена Славна), queen consort of Michael Krešimir of Croatia (946-969); Helena (Јелена Лижпа, 'the Beautiful'), Hungarian princess, queen consort of Dmitar Zvonimir of Croatia (1075-1089); and Jelena Gruba, queen regnant of Bosnia (1395-1398), should also be noted.

<sup>64</sup> Her mother Mathilde's parents were Marguerite of Courtenay and Heinrich, count of Vianden in Luxembourg: Gordon McDaniel, "On Hungarian-Serbian relations in the thirteenth century: John Angelus and Queen Jelena", *Ungarn-Jahrbuch* 12 (1982-1983) (Munich), pp. 43-50. The Courtenay seignury lay in what is now Loiret, a department actually some way east of Anjou.

<sup>65</sup> 'Statius', 1, *Silvae*, Bk 3.,2, line 87, at p. 194, trs. p. 195. '*Quos tibi currenti praeceps gerat Hadria mores.*'