Byzantine Medicine and medical Practitioners in the West: the Case of Michael Dishypatos

Résumé
REB 54 1996 Francep. 201-220.
J. Harris, Byzantine Medicine and medical Practitioners in the West : the Case of Michael Dishypatos.
— On suppose habituellement qu’après 1204 Byzance a perdu son ancienne prééminence dans le domaine médical. La preuve que de nombreux médecins grecs exerçaient en Occident va à rencontre de ce point de vue. Beaucoup de documents contemporains parlent en termes favorables de ces médecins émigrés qui ont souvent obtenu la protection de patrons riches et influents. Cet article s’intéresse spécialement à l’un d’eux, Michel Dishypatos, qui fut jugé pour sorcellerie en 1417. Quoique les actes du procès attribuent à Dishypatos des pratiques difficilement compatibles avec une saine activité de médecin, on défend l’hypothèse que sa condamnation résulte davantage d’une intrigue politique que d’un désaveu de sa conduite professionnelle. Au contraire sa présence dans le duché de Savoie au service du Duc et d’un riche bourgeois, Jean Lageret, constitue une preuve supplémentaire que la médecine byzantine inspirait encore un grand respect en Occident quelques années avant la chute de Constantinople.

Abstract
It seems to be generally assumed that, after about 1200, Byzantium lost its former ascendancy in the field of medical practice. The abundant evidence for Greek physicians practising in the West during the fifteenth century, however, challenges this view. Many contemporary documents speak of these émigré physicians in most complimentary terms and they often obtained the patronage of the wealthy and influential. This article concentrates on one of them, Michael Dishypatos, who was tried for sorcery at Chambéry in 1417. Although the trial document attributes to Dishypatos practices which are hardly compatible with good medical practice, it is argued that his condemnation was the result of political intrigue rather than dissatisfaction with his professional conduct. On the contrary, his very presence in the Duchy of Savoy, in the service of the Duke and of a wealthy bourgeois, Jean Lageret, is further evidence that Byzantine medicine still commanded high respect in the West in the last years before the fall of Constantinople.
Summary: It seems to be generally assumed that, after about 1200, Byzantium lost its former ascendancy in the field of medical practice. The abundant evidence for Greek physicians practising in the West during the fifteenth century, however, challenges this view. Many contemporary documents speak of these émigré physicians in most complimentary terms and they often obtained the patronage of the wealthy and influential. This article concentrates on one of them, Michael Dishypatos, who was tried for sorcery at Chambéry in 1417. Although the trial document attributes to Dishypatos practices which are hardly compatible with good medical practice, it is argued that his condemnation was the result of political intrigue rather than dissatisfaction with his professional conduct. On the contrary, his very presence in the Duchy of Savoy, in the service of the Duke and of a wealthy bourgeois, Jean Lageret, is further evidence that Byzantine medicine still commanded high respect in the West in the last years before the fall of Constantinople.

Byzantine medicine has attracted considerable attention from scholars in recent years but it is fair to say that this interest has generally been focused on the period before 1200. It often appears to be assumed that thereafter medical practice was in decline, just as the empire was in political decline, and that the Byzantine medical tradition was equalled and excelled by that of the West.

This article seeks to modify this picture by examining a body of evidence which suggests that Byzantine medicine was still flourishing in the decades before and after the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and that it

* I would like to thank Miss J. Chrysostomides, John Chrysostomides and Melissa Bryan for their help during the writing of this article. The opinions expressed in it and any errors it may contain, however, are the sole responsibility of the author. I am also pleased to acknowledged the financial support of the British Academy, the Central Research Fund of the University of London, the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, the A.G. Leventis Foundation and the Leverhulme Trust.


was still highly respected in the West. It concerns the many Greek physicians who practised in Western Europe in that period and, in particular, one called Michael «de Dicipatis», the subject of a lengthy parchment document in the Archives Nationales in Paris the text of which is given as an appendix below 2.

The manuscript concerns one of the darkest episodes in the long reign of Amedeo VIII, first Duke of Savoy (1391—1434): the disgrace and downfall of his one-time counsellor, the wealthy bourgeois and Doctor of Laws, Jean Lageret of Chambéry. These events are well-known from several extant documents, published by François Mugnier and Francesco Cognasso3, which record Lageret’s trial and condemnation in September 1417 on charges of lèse majesté and sorcery. The Archives Nationales document, however, was apparently unknown to either of these authors. It records the trial of the physician Michael by the commissary of the Bishop of Grenoble as Lageret’s accomplice in his alleged necromancy.

Mugnier, the first to make a study of Lageret’s trial, speculated as to Michael’s nationality, as his surname was clearly not a local one. In the absence of any specific clue, he concluded, not unreasonably, that he was Jewish as were most of the other physicians in Savoy during that period 4. From the additional documents later cited by Cognasso, however, it emerges that Michael «de Dicipatis» was originally from Constantinople 5. Given that information, it seems much more likely that the physician was a Greek, for his surname, as given in the documents, is clearly an attempt to reproduce the common Byzantine patronymic of «Dishypatos» 6. This assumption, namely that he was of Greek origin, is confirmed by the document from the Archives Nationales.

At first sight it may seem strange for a Byzantine physician to have found his way to the town of Chambéry. His presence was, however, part of a wider trend for his compatriots to be found in the West in the later Middle Ages, first as ambassadors seeking allies against the Ottoman


4. Mugnier, Procès, p. xii.

5. Cognasso, Processo, p. 166, citing Archivio di Stato, Turin, Sezione Camerale, Tesorieri di Savoia, Reg. lxi, f. 597, where he is described as «Michel de Discipatis alias de Gasolua de Costantinopoli».

6. Dishypatos was originally a title meaning «one who has served twice as consul» (ὑπατος). From the twelfth century, however, it came to be used as a surname: N. Oikonomidès, Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles, Paris 1972, p. 295.
Turks and later as refugees, escaping from the hopeless situation in the East.

The policy of seeking Western aid against the Turks had been embarked upon by the Byzantine government during the fourteenth century as they found themselves incapable of stemming the Ottoman expansion into the Balkans. Increasing numbers of imperial embassies were despatched to persuade Western rulers to send help to their fellow-Christians. By 1399 the situation had become so critical, with Constantinople isolated and under siege, that the Emperor Manuel II himself left his capital and toured Northern Italy, France and England to solicit aid in person.

Many, however, had little hope that this policy, or anything else, could ultimately save Constantinople and they preferred to plan their own escape. Manuel II’s nephew, John VII Palaeologus, secretly negotiated with the French King in 1397, offering to hand over Constantinople in return for a pension and a castle in France. The scholar and courtier, Demetrius Cydones, took Venetian citizenship and spent his last years in Italy, in spite of being urged by Manuel II to return to Constantinople.

Some went still further afield. A nobleman called Paul, from Vlachia in Thessaly, visited Amiens and Bruges in 1426 claiming that he had been ruined by the depredations of the Turks and soliciting alms. He later settled in England where the King provided him with an annual pension. Such people can hardly be blamed for their readiness to desert their country. By 1400 it must have been obvious that it was only a matter of time before Constantinople fell to the Turks. Moreover, the fact...
that the city had already declined into a state of virtual ruin must also have impelled many to abandon it for ever 12.

Among these refugees and ambassadors were several members of the Dishypatos family. In 1406 an Alexius «Bissipatus» or Dishypatos was in Paris trying to raise money for the beleaguered Byzantine capital 13. The brothers John, George and Manuel Dishypatos represented the Byzantine Emperor at the Council of Basle in 1434-7 and George was later present in Florence Cathedral on 6 July 1439 when the union of the Eastern and Western churches was proclaimed 14. Later, after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, a number of individuals of the same name settled permanently in the West. Another George Dishypatos took his family to live in Italy and George Palaeologus Dishypatos took service with the French King, Louis XI, as captain of the castle of Touques 15.

In all probability Michael Dishypatos the physician had left his native country for the same reason: to seek security and a better life elsewhere.

The Duchy of Savoy was an obvious choice as a place of refuge. In 1326 its ruling house had formed a marriage alliance with the Byzantine Palaeologi when the daughter of Count Amedeo V had become the wife of the Emperor Andronicus III 16. The dynastic link was reinforced when Iolanda, daughter of Theodore, Marquis of Monferrat, married into the House of Savoy for Theodore was also a Palaeologus and had inherited Monferrat from his mother 17.

These family connections inclined the rulers of Savoy favourably towards Byzantium. In 1366 Amedeo VI, the so-called «Green count», led a fleet to the aid of his cousin, the Emperor John V, recapturing Gallipoli from the Turks and delivering John from the clutches of the Hungarians. Later, in 1462, the Duke of Savoy offered hospitality and support to his daughter-in-law Charlotte Palaeologina, Queen of Cyprus.


15. Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Armario 34, tom. 6, f. 68v-69r; Du Cange, Historia Byzantina, p. 256; M. Renet, Les Bissipat du Beauvaisis, Mémoires de la Société académique d'archéologie, sciences et arts du département de l'Oise 14, 1889, p. 31-98.


who had been ejected from her kingdom by a usurper. Michael Dishypatos may well, therefore, have hoped for patronage at the court of Amedeo VIII.

There is another factor to be borne in mind when accounting for the presence of Dishypatos at Chambéry in 1417. Not only were Greeks in general to be found in increasing numbers in Western Europe, but physicians in particular were frequently to be encountered there. They obtained positions in cities as far apart as Florence, Ragusa, Venice and Coventry and, significantly, they were often to be found in attendance on the wealthy and powerful who could chose to whom they wished to entrust their health. Thomas Frank or Le Franc, a native of Corone in the Peloponnese, lived and worked in London and Tours between 1436 and 1456 and numbered among his patients the Cardinal Bishop of Winchester, a prosperous Genoese merchant and, finally, the King of France, Charles VII. Nor was he an isolated case. The Milanese courtier, Francesco Filelfo, had a physician and scribe called Demetrius Xanthopoulos in his service and another called Demetrius «de Cerno» seems to have attended on Lucia Visconti, Countess of Kent in 1424. Serapion, who worked in a similar capacity for the King of Scotland between 1455 and 1462, sounds from his name also to have been of Greek extraction.


22. *The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*: John Stuart and George Burnett, VI, Edinburgh 1883, p. 3, 12, 580, 625, 641; VII, Edinburgh 1884, p. 34, 144, 150. One could perhaps add the grimly named Armenian surgeon, Jehan «Sans Pitié», who was in Bruges in 1462: Archives Départementales du Nord, Lille, B2045, f. 267v.
As a physician, therefore, Michael Dishypatos was not an isolated instance but an example of a much wider trend. Moreover, that trend was not restricted to fifteenth century. Greek physicians had, in fact, been found practising outside their own country for centuries. During the Roman period they had penetrated all over the Empire and beyond its borders and, just as in the fifteenth century, they were often employed by the wealthy and powerful, by Roman emperors and Persian kings.

The success with which these people established themselves on foreign soil and obtained the patronage of kings and nobles, both in antiquity and in the Middle Ages would suggest that they offered, or were believed to offer, a higher standard of medical practice than was available locally.

This is confirmed by further evidence for a widespread respect for Greek medical practice in the West in the centuries after the disappearance of imperial rule there. Theodore of Tarsus, a Byzantine monk who was Archbishop of Canterbury between 668 and 690, was apparently regarded as an expert in the field of medicine by his English flock. His Poenitentiale contains advice on how to combat dysentery and, even after his death, his opinion on the best time to bleed a patient was quoted as authoritative. In the same way, a tenth century Old English book of medical lore cites certain medicinal recipes which, it says, were sent to Alfred, King of Wessex (871-99), by the Patriarch of Jerusalem. As a result, many western medical texts of this early period contain recognisably Greek elements and numerous medical loan words passed from Greek into western vernacular languages.

Byzantine expertise had always been based on the wealth of ancient Greek medical literature, composed of the writings of such authors as Hippocrates, Dioscorides and Galen and those of the fifth and sixth century physicians, Paul of Aegina and Alexander of Tralles. These works had been preserved in Constantinople long after all knowledge of it had been lost in the West. Their value was clearly recognised and succeeding

25. Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England: O. Cockayne, Rolls Series, II, London 1865, p. 288-291. This is not as far-fetched as may be thought, since we know from Alfred’s contemporary biographer that the King received letters from the Patriarch of Jerusalem: Asser, Life of King Alfred: W.H. Stevenson, London 1904, p. 77, 328.
generations took care to ensure that these texts were regularly copied. This was even a matter of imperial policy: the Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913-959) ordered that the works of the medical authors be compiled into a complete synopsis and the resulting epitomes, the work of Theophanes Nonnos or Chrysobalantes, survive as a textbook of Byzantine medicine 27.

These texts were not merely preserved in Byzantium but also widely studied and read, being taught, along with Plato, Homer and Thucydides, to students in higher education 28. Any educated Byzantine would, therefore, have been expected to know something of medicine and the authors of literary histories clearly enjoyed airing their erudition in this field. Nicephorus Blemmydes recorded in his autobiography that he had studied medicine for seven years. Michael Psellos wrote in minute detail on the symptoms attending the last illness of the Emperor Romanus III and Anna Comnena faithfully reported the debate among the physicians as to the nature of the malady afflicting her father, Alexius I 29.

The knowledge of medicine thus preserved and taught in Byzantium was not used only to garnish the scholarly writings of the literati but also practised in everyday life. The Emperor Manuel I Comnenus, the nephew of Anna Comnena, was competent enough to act as a surgeon on the battlefield if specialists were in short supply 30. Some holy men, like St. Theodore of Syceon, are recorded by their hagiographers to have effected cures not by miracles but by means of wise prescriptions, in much the same way as Theodore of Tarsus and the Patriarch of Jerusalem counselled the Anglo-Saxons 31.

Though Byzantine medicine was in no way innovative and, for the most part, merely followed the wisdom of the ancients, nonetheless in comparison with the situation in the early medieval West, it was, at least, based on an established body of written knowledge as opposed to oral tradition and superstition and was therefore practised along relatively scientific lines.

This is clear from the evidence that the Byzantines were enlightened enough to practise human dissection to further their knowledge of the

---

body as well as from the organisation of the public hospitals in Constantinople. These hospitals were not mere hostels where untrained monks nursed the sick but medical centres where courses of treatment were administered. The twelfth century typicon or foundation charter of the hospital attached to the monastery of the Pantocrator stipulated that although it was to be the monks who maintained the hospital of fifty beds, treatment was entrusted to professional, secular physicians, brought in from outside and including at least one woman doctor to care for the female patients and a resident teacher to give instruction in the medical art. The same document gives us some idea of the type of treatment given, laying down rules for the diet of the patients and the baths which they were to take.

It might be objected, however, that the superiority of Byzantine medicine over that of the West belongs to the period of the heyday of the Empire and cannot be taken to account for the presence of Michael Dishypatos at Chambéry in 1417. By that time Byzantium had been overshadowed by the West not only in terms of political power but also in many aspects of technology too, as the Byzantines were themselves aware. Indeed, Cardinal Bessarion went so far as to claim the only hope for the Empire lay in its young men being sent to the West for education.

As far as medicine was concerned, the West had gone a long way towards catching up by 1400. Most of the works of the classical Greek medical authors, once the exclusive preserve of the Byzantine and Islamic worlds, were now available in Latin translation, having been rediscovered after the Norman conquest of Byzantine South Italy in the eleventh century. In Italy, at least, public hospitals, similar to those in Constantinople, existed by 1400 and human dissection was used to teach anatomy in the universities of Florence and Bologna. Further afield, the English poet Chaucer could portray the physician in his Canterbury Tales.


Tales as a man well versed in the writings of Hippocrates, Dioscorides and Galen.

Even so, despite the fact that the West was no longer the «poor relation» in this field, Constantinople retained something of its pre-eminence in medical matters right up to its capture by the Turks in 1453. Byzantine scholars remained assiduous in preserving and copying the texts which underlay their medical tradition. The hospitals carried on functioning as centres of treatment. Although they tended to shrink in size during the Palaeologan period, this was due more to lack of money than of medical skill, and foundations like the hospital for women attached to the monastery of Lips, continued to be established or re-established.

Constantinople continued to be regarded as a medical centre by outsiders during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, attracting both students and patients. The Italian Peter of Abano, for example, who later wrote widely on medicine, philosophy and astronomy, completed his education there. That people were prepared to travel from far afield to the Byzantine capital for treatment emerges from the report of the captain of a Venetian galley on a voyage from Trebizond in 1413. Among the passengers was a Turk who was making the journey in order to have his eyes attended to in Constantinople.

Indeed, this renown seems to have lingered on for centuries, long after the fall of Byzantium. Under Turkish rule, the physicians of Chios were so highly regarded by their overlords that the islanders were given special privileges. This reputation extended to the West where Greek physicians continued to be employed. Demetrius Rhodocanacis of Chios became one of the medical advisers of the English King, Charles II (1660-85) and a Demetrius of Smyrna practised for nine years at the

Ospedale di Santo Spirito in Rome. As late as the seventeenth century, the work of a thirteenth century Byzantine writer was still used in the medical faculty of the University of Paris.

Considering the high reputation of Byzantine medicine, it is not surprising that those who could afford it preferred Greeks to native practitioners. The quality of western medical practice was by no means uniform and, especially outside Italy, there were still plenty of examples of physicians like Roger Clerk of London who, in 1382, attempted to cure a sick woman by hanging strips of parchment around her neck. By contrast, the surviving documents concerning the émigré Greek physicians of the fifteenth century are often extraordinarily positive in tone. In 1487 the Venetian Council of Ten described George Gavriopoulos as a «most skilful surgeon» (cyrurgicus solertissimus) and the Florentine government praised Christodoulos of Thessalonica for his successful treatments of eye disorders. This continuing respect for the Byzantine medical tradition would, therefore, account for the patronage enjoyed by Michael Dishypatos and others in Western Europe at this time.

Yet that does not necessarily mean that Dishypatos was a worthy representative of that tradition. On the contrary, the account of his trial contained in the manuscript from the Archives Nationales referred to earlier, presents him as a charlatan who practised on the credulity both of his patron, Jean Lageret, and of a large number of other people. He was not, it was claimed, a professional physician at all but a runaway Dominican monk who had put it about that he was skilled in medical matters when he arrived in Chambéry in around 1415.

His activities in Savoy, as described at his trial, were not so much those of a physician as of an astrologer. He claimed that he could tell the fortune of anyone who supplied him with their date of birth and predicted a number of disasters which would soon befall the town. He carried around a Greek book which no one else could read from which he drew

---


Dishypatos’ motive in all this, according to the trial document, was simply the extortion of money. A certain Antonio Morelli was relieved of four gold scudi for a copper paten upon which was stamped the image of a man and a woman, the man having his arms around the woman’s neck and holding a two-edged sword and an arrow. This article was guaranteed to ensure that Morelli would marry a wealthy lady called Roseta, regardless of any reluctance on her part.

Dishypatos’ relationship with Lageret was presented in much the same light. He was said to have, on one occasion, stolen a book from Lageret’s house, carried it off to Grenoble and sold it. When the book was missed and Lageret’s servants were searching high and low for it, Dishypatos announced that he knew who had the book and that he would disclose all on payment of a certain sum. Lageret’s mother promptly gave him three florins and the Greek then told her the name of the man to whom he had sold the book in Grenoble, having, of course, taken the precaution of giving a false name at the time of the transaction.

However, it was not merely for petty extortion that Dishypatos was indicted in 1417 but also for the more serious charge of sorcery in collaboration with Lageret. At the heart of the accusation lay a series of metal images, similar to that which he had produced for Morelli. They were commissioned by Dishypatos for Lageret from a local goldsmith, Henri de Collognia; items which the trial document carefully lists.

These included a statuette of an armless, crowned man which Dishypatos had made by the goldsmith Henri and which he presented to Lageret at Christmas 1416. It was allegedly used to conjure up demons in Lageret’s house. A whole group of such figurines were designed to increase Lageret’s influence over the Duke of Savoy and, when carried into Amedeo’s presence, were supposed to make him well disposed towards his secretary. One took the form of a statuette of a young man which was held to cause the Duke to grant any request that Lageret might make. Another figurine permitted Lageret to alter the personal

49. Below, p. 216.
health of the Duke according to his own advantage. Another enabled him to guard his property against any damage the Duke might plan against it and a fourth to protect his own person from such designs. Lageret’s political power was to be further enhanced by another figure, designed to make him universally popular among rich and poor alike.

There is little sign of Dishypatos practising as a physician in all this. However, one set of images, which seem to have been related to the signs of the Zodiac, did have a medical purpose. They included effigies of a crab and a scorpion, a two-headed man and a lion on a ducat. According to the account of Lageret’s trial, published by Cognasso, the lion protected the bearer against diseases of the kidney and the scorpion guarded pregnant women against miscarriage. Yet all this is a far cry from the advanced Byzantine medical tradition with its rational courses of treatment.

The picture given of Dishypatos at his trial, therefore, is hardly one either of a responsible or of a skilled medical practitioner. It should, however, be treated with great caution. It is, after all, the case for the prosecution and therefore bound to present the defendant in the worse possible light.

Moreover, by its own admission all the details contained in it were derived from Dishypatos’ own confession. There can be no doubt as to how that confession was obtained. The contemporary account of expenses incurred in connection with the trial, published by Mugnier, include a payment of twenty six florins to Pierre Varambon and his clerk for their attendance at the castle of Le Bourget between 21 August and 28 September 1417 for the examination and torture of both Lageret and Dishypatos. Some indication of the methods used can also be found in these accounts. Among the items purchased for the examination were long ropes, a set of heavy irons and some «boots» (calige), all probably instruments of torture. Lageret suffered so badly that physicians had to be called to attend on him. The damning case contained in the trial

54. Below, p. 217, 218. Cf. Cognasso, Processo, p. 171: «... Aliam figuram tenentem ensem in manu, ad effectum quod quociens ipse dominus Johannes ipsam super se portaret in presentia inimicorum suorum, dicti eius inimici non haberent velle seu voluntatem ipsum dominum Johannem delatum offendi... unam rem seu figuram ad effectum et finem quod quociens dominus Johannes delatus eam portaret in presentia dicti domini nostri Sabaudie Ducis... mutare tur ad sanitatem vel infirmitatem, rigoremque vel dulcedinem, ad arbitrium et voluntatem dicti domini Johannis...».
57. Below, p. 217. The crab, which was one of those which Henri de Collognia later admitted to having made, was probably that given by the Duke of Savoy to Pierre Galliard, after the trial: M. Bruchet, Inventaire partial du tresor des chartes de Chambéry à l'époque d'Amédée VIII, Mémoires et documents de la Société savoisienne d'histoire et d'archéologie 39, 1900, n° 678, p. 387; Dufour and Rabut, Orfèvres, p. 385-386.
59. Below p. 218 : «... predictaque confessus fuit predictus magister Michael fore vera».
60. Mugnier, Procès, p. xx-xxi.
61. J. Garnier, Inventaire-sommaire des archives départementales antérieures à 1790 (Côte d'Or), series B, II, Dijon 1873, B7164, p. 82.
document was apparently based solely on these confessions with no witness statements being even referred to.

Furthermore, one cannot help but be struck by the contrast between the way Dishypatos was represented at his trial and the warm welcome he received when he first arrived in Chambéry in 1415. At that time he was so highly thought of as to be engaged by the city council as physician to all the citizens. The arrangement was that he was to treat the wealthy for a moderate fee and the poor for the love of God. In return he was to receive twelve florins a year to cover his board and lodging. The hiring of a Greek physician by a city council in this way was by no means unique. The government of Ragusa engaged Andreas Spata of Constantinople on similar terms a few years later, the only difference being that in Ragusa the physician's entire salary was paid by the commune. That Dishypatos was entrusted with such a position can only mean that he had made a favourable impression and this point is reinforced by the fact that he was later permitted, in September 1416, to attend on the Duke himself and was paid twenty florins for his services.

If Dishypatos was not the swindler described in the trial, what was the motive behind his condemnation? One likely explanation is that he was an unfortunate victim of the internal politics of Savoy. One author has suggested that the charges against Lageret were motivated by jealousy of his wealth and success. He certainly had built up an extensive property base both in Chambéry and in the land around, including houses, vineyards and mills and he was also involved in the textile trade. After his condemnation in September 1417 all his property and moveable wealth passed to Amedeo VIII who then proceeded to redistribute it as he wished. Some went to the church, some to trusted friends and counsellors. The main

63. B. Krekic, Dubrovnik (Raguse) et le Levant au moyen âge, Paris 1961, n° 1365, p. 398 n° 1368, p. 399 ; C.N. Sathas, Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce, V, Paris 1884, p. 221.
64. Cognasso, Processo, p. 166, citing Archivio di Stato, Turin, Sez. Camerale, Tesorieri di Savoia, reg. LXI, f. 597 : «Magistro Michaeli de Discipatis alias Gasolua de Constantinopoli, medico habitatori Chamberiaci, dono sibi facto per dominum suis exigen-tibus serviciis».
65. Marie-José, Capitaliste, p. 467 : «... on est en droit de se demander si, en fait, Lageret n'a pas été davantage la victime de sa fortune et des jalousies qu'elle faisait naître, que de sa propre crédulité».
67. CHAPPERON, Chambéry, p. 244.
beneficiary of the episode was, therefore, the Duke himself. It would not be the last time that the prosperity of a subject aroused the jealousy of a ruler.

Seen in this light, Dishypatos was not so much a sinister and unscrupulous trickster as a victim of circumstances. His condemnation may well have been prompted merely to provide a case against the principal victim, Lageret. As it was, he escaped relatively lightly. While the unfortunate Lageret was paraded through the streets in a cart, beheaded and his head impaled on a stake 69, Dishypatos at least escaped with his life. He was deprived of all clerical privileges, obliged to perform public penance in the church of St. Léger in Chambéry as well as in Grenoble and sentenced to life imprisonment in the castle of Le Bourget 70. Yet one may well speculate that had it not been for his association with Jean Lageret, Dishypatos might have prospered like his co-professionals and compatriots 71.

From the point of view of the historian, therefore, the important point about the account of Dishypatos’ trial contained in the document from the Archives Nationales, is not the farcical antics which it attributes to Dishypatos but the fact that it attests another individual trained in the medical tradition of the Byzantine world finding his services in demand in the West. Even on the eve of its downfall, Byzantium still had something of its legacy to pass on.

69. Cognasso, Processo, p. 172; Mugnier, Procès, p. XV, n. 2; L. Menabrea, Histoire municipale et politique de Chambéry, Paris and Chambéry 1847, p. 140, n. 2 citing Archives Municipales, Chambéry, Comptes des Syndics, 1417-1418: «Libravit pro precio unius equi cadrigae ad traynandum dominum Johannem Lagereti super quadam cadriga a domo hereticorum usque ad plotum et furcas per villam Chamberiaci».
70. Below, p. 218.
71. Thomas le Franc, for example, died a natural death in 1456 and was buried with great honour at Lyons: P.M. Kendall and V. Ilardi, Dispatches and Related Documents of Milanese Ambassadors in France and Burgundy, 1450-1483, I, Athens OH 1970, p. 246-248.
In nomine Domini, Amen. Nos Michael Esminois, licentiatus in legibus et bacallarius in decretis, iudex et commissarius in hac parte deputatus tam a reverendo in Christo patre et domino, domino Aymone, Dei et Apostolice Sedis gracia episcopo Gracianopolis quam a reverendo fratre Poncio Fangeronis, sacré theologae magistro ordinis inquisitore hereticæ pravitatis notum scire presentibus facimus universis etc. Anno nativitatis eiusdem Domini millesimo quatercentesimo decimo septimo et die Mercurii quindecima mensis Septembris.

Comparentibus coram nobis iudicaliter provido viro Johanne Berthallerii, notario procuratore substituto dicti domini nostri episcopi Gracianopolis petente et requiente in quadam inquisitionali causa formata et aliquemodo ventilata coram nobis instante dicto viceprocurente contra dominum Michaelem de Discipatis delatum diffiniri iusque dici et dictum delatum puniri secundum exigenciam suorum demeritorum; necnon dicto magistro Michaelae de Discipatis petente eciam in ipsa causa diffiniri et ratum suum confitente sibi misericordiam fieri; tandem nos, iudex et commissarius prefatus, habito pio renunciato et concluso in dicta causa ad nostram sentenciam diffinitivam processimus in hune qui sequitur modum.

In primus quod dictus magister Michael est et fuit de partibus Grecie oriundus. Item quod prefatus magister Michael fuit religiousus in religione Fratrum Predicatorum ordinis beati Dominici et habitum dicte religionis pluribus annis portavit et in dicta religione cum aliis religiosis in pluribus conventibus dicti ordinis permansit professionem dicte religionis faciendo. Item quod ex post et post professionem predictam per eum factam, habitu dicte religionis dimisso per plures et diversas religiones vagavit, in statu seculari incedendo et apostatando.

Item quod prenominatus magister Michael a duobus annis citra apud Chamberiacum venit moraturus et in loco duos annos vel circa moram traxit. Item quod dum dictus magister Michael fuit in loco Chamberiaciae solus pecunias per cavillaciones et decepciones a gentibus extorquere, dixit et publice predicavit et significavit se esse medicum et in medicina expertum. Item et publice significavit et publicavit se esse expertum ad pronoscicandum et indicandum de futuris de quibus nemo indicare potest, nisi solus Deus, videlicet quod isto anno debeat esse magna pestis in villa Chamberiaca etiam quod in dicta villa Chamberiaca debeat esse magnum scandalum de incendio vel alio sinistro. Item et quod mulieres

---

73. This word is illegible.
sequerentur viros ad comerquandum cum ipsis et multa alia apud eum impossibilita verba scire protulit ut gentes ad suas fatuitates magis inclinarentur. Item quod per verba dicti magistri Michaelis deceptoriae et eis mediantibus pluris personae infirmitatem patentes ad eundem magistrum Michaelem recurrerunt pro sanitate obtinenda, ac a quibus idem magister Michael plurias pecunias indebitate et iniuuste exigit et habuit. Quomodo erat et est idem magister Michael absque eo in sciencia medecine esset vel fuerit expertus. Item et pluris personae ad eum recurrerunt pro indiciis de suis fortunis et infortunis habendis ipseque magister Michael quod plurimis indicia pluribus personis tradidit, scripsit et scribi fecit mediantibus peccunias per eum habitis ac receptis indebite et iniuuste quin divinatoriae et mathematice deceptoriae procedebat et processit in predictis idem magistrum Michael. Item quod prefatus magister Michael ----------------------------- 74 quam habebat sub verbis et litteris Grecis scriptum dicebat et false asserebat, dixitque et assuerit pluribus personis et clericis, noticiam verborum Grecorum non habentibus, eundem librum fore librum astrologiae et legendo in eodem dicebat se studere in astrologia, gentes decipiendo et falsum commutando. Item et prelibatus magister Michael in astrologia non expertus ad maiorem deceptionem et cavillationem pluribus personas de nocte secum fecit ire ad montes ac ibidem vigilare ad videndum astra, dicendo quod noticiam astrorum habebat, et ibidem scribi fecit et faciebat numerum horarum ut fama sua magis exaltaretur. Item prefatus magister Michael predictis falsitatis, decepctionibus, tromperiis et cavillationibus non contentus currians peccunias a gentibus diversi modo extorquere, dixit pluribus personis se scire et posse facere quod una mulier et unus homo adinvicem matrimonium contrahebant, vellent aut nollent, et de facto convenit et pactum fecit cum quodam bastardo de Conte nuncupato seu Anthonio Morelli pro ipse trautante quod idem bastardus haberet in uxorem quandam mulierem que Rosseta appellatur et quam dictus bastardus in uxorem habere affectabat quia dives, ipsa que bastardus propter hoc promisit dicto magistro Michaeli solvere et dare decem scuta auri et de quibus baliter tradidit ipse bastardus quatuor scuta auri. Item quod dictus magister Michael ad complendum promissa per eundem et ad complendum matrimonium predictum, fieri et fabricare fecit unam patenam seu rotonditatem de cupro et in eadem impressari et fieri fecit duas ymagines seu figuras, videlicet unam ad similitudinem hominis et aliam ad similitudinem mulieris et que figura hominis tenebat figuram mulieris amplampanetam per collum cum brachio destro tenens in eadem unum ense et cum alio brachio tenebat unam sagitam econtra figuram mulieris.

Item quod prelibatus magister Michael mala malis cumulando et ad peiora procedendo convenit pactaque et convencionces fecit cum domino Johanne Lagereti, legum doctore, mediantibus peccunias dicti domini Johannis quod ipse magister Michael faceret et fabricaret figuras et ymagines, virtutes et potestates que sequuntur habentes seu habere debentes. Et primo unam figuram aeream que figura talem efficaciam et virtutem haberet quod quandocumque dominus Johannes Lagereti super se portaret in presencia domini nostri, Ducis Sabaudie, dictus dominus noster Sabaudie Dux haberet dictum dominum Johannem multum in gracia sua et quandocumque videret eum in tanta alacritate et iocunditate esset, ac si videret Deum. Item unam aliam figuram cuius efficax virtus talis esset quod quandocumque dictus dominus Johannes super se portaret in presencia prefati domini nostri de omnibus supplicationibus, postulationibus et requisitionibus.
tionibus per ipsum factis dicto domino nostro, Sabaudie Duci, ipso volente aut nolente obediret et acceptaret omnes postulaciones dignas et indignas quorum-cumque et qualitercumque essent requeste. Item unam aliam figuram habentem virtutem quod quandocumque dictam figuram super se portaret dictus dominus noster Dux in presencia dicti domini Johannis deduceretur tamquam agnus mansuetus et mitis, et mutando dictam figuram ab uno loco ad alium locum dictus dominus noster iuxta mutacionem dicte figure ad arbitrium dicti domini Johannis corpus illustre dicti domini nostri mutaretur tunc ad sanitatem tunc ad infirmitatem ita et taliter quod dictus dominus non posset contradicere dicto domino Johanni aliquo modo. Item unam aliam figuram cuius virtus esset custodie castrum et domum dicti domini Johannis ita et taliter quod quandocumque dominus noster Dux vel alius alter vellet facere aliquod sinistrum adversus dictum dominum Johannem, non posset facere. Item unam aliam figuram que custodiret dictum dominum Johannem ab omni periculo itinerum et a manibus inimicorum suorum ita et taliter quod intoitus et exitus suus esset tutus et tutissimus ab omni lesione. Item unam aliam figuram habentem virtutem quod omnes homines ipsum diligerent et ad suam postulacionem et requisitionem corda populorum, nobilium et innobilium inclinarent. Item unam aliam figuram cuis virtus esset talis quod quandocumque tractaretur de aliquo matrimonio de innobili muliere ad nobilem virum de divite ad pauperem, de diffamato ad benefamatum disponentur tales effectus quod corda virorum et mulierum non possint contradicere in contractacione matrimonii qualitercumque et quandocumque. Item quod pro premissis,accionibus et conventionibus adimplendis et perficiendis prefatus magister Michael mediantibus pecuniis dicti domini Johannis aurii et argentii ipsi magistro Michaeli traditis, ipse magister Michael fabricari et fieri fecit ymagines seu figuras sequentes : primo unam figuram leonis super uno ducato ; item unam figuram de cupro deauratam super uno collo habens duo capita et vultus ad similitudinem unius scorpionis ; item super uno ducato laniato unam figuram seu ymaginem ad similitudinem unius hominis a vombilico in super et que figura habebat cor de supra ombilatum habebatque etiam capud et unam coronam argentii de super que corona erat deaurata et tota figura et erat dicta figura sine bracchis et manibus. Item et firi fecit dictus magister Michael unum anullum capud ad similitudinem unius hominis et fuit dictum capud esmaliatum de vorrazino. Item fecit firi et fabricari idem magister Michael pro dicto domino Johanne Lagereti circa Festum Nativitatis Domini ultimo lapsum, unam aliam figuram ad similitudinem unius hominis a vombilico in super et que figura habebat cor de supra ombilatum habebatque etiam capud et unam coronam argentii de super que corona erat deaurata et tota figura et erat dicta figura sine bracchis et manibus. Item et firi fecit dictus magister Michael unum anullum cupri in quo fecit impressari unum capud ad similitudinem unius hominis. Item et firi fecit prefatus magister Michael quando aliam figuram ad similitudinem unius hominis ab omblicalo in super de cupro et in brachio sinistro, quod erat de cupro, tenebat unum ensem argentii et brachium dextrum eciam erat argentii et erat dicta figura tota deaurata. Item fecit firi dictus magister Michael unam rotonditatem de cupro ad modum unius patene et in eadem impressari et firi duas ymagines seu figuras, unam ad similitudinem hominis, aliam ad similitudinem mulieris et tenebat figura hominis figuram mulieris amplexatam per collum cum brachio destro tenens unum ensem et in alio brachio tenebat unam sagitam econtra cor mulieris. Item fecit firi dictus magister Michael aliam figuram ad similitudinem unius cancri de rubio esmaliatum. Item fecit firi idem magister Michael pro dicto domino Johanne Lagereti unam figuram ad formam unius tartuge que habere deberet talem virtutem quod quandocumque ipse dominus Johannes ipsam figuram super se portaret, dominus noster Dux in presencia dicti
domini Johannis deduceretur tamquam agnus mansuetus et mitis et mutando dictam figuram de uno loco ad alium locum dictus dominus noster Dux iuxta mutationem dicte figure ad arbitrium dicti domini Johannis corpus illustre dicti domini mutaretur tunc ad sanitatem tunc ad infirmitatem ita et taliter quod dictus dominus Dux non posset contradicere voluntati dicti domini Johannis Lagereti. Item fecit ipse delatus seu fieri fecit pro dicto domino Johanni Lagereti unam figuram seu ymaginem ligneam de cypresso, oliva, ficu et ulmo cuius virtus esse debet custodire castrum et domum dicti domini Johannis ita et taliter quod quandocumque dictus dominus noster Dux vel alius alter vellet facere aliquod sinistrum adversum dictum dominum Johannem hoc facere non posset. Item et prefatus magister mediantibus pecuniiis et aliis per dictum dominum Johannem Lagereti sibi traditis figuris predictas in villa Chamberiaci et diocesi Gracianopolis fieri et fabricari fecit ut supra, et eas dicto domino Johanni tradidit, dicendo et asserendo ac jurando quod dicte figure seu ymagines virtutes, efficacias et potestates suprascriptas habebant. Item quod predictus magister Michael in predictis figuris faciendis processit per sortiligia demonum invocationes et per nigromanciam ac mathematicam seu divinacionem et alias contra fidem catholicam non solum magistratem humanam, verum eciam divinam offendendo et in crimina, heresis et lese magestatis incidunt. Item quod prenominatus magister Michael talia et similia ac peiora delicta et crimina facere est assuetus et non solum in Ducatu Sabaudie, verum etiam per plures alias patrias et regiones per eas vagando et potissime in partibus Provincie. Item quod prefatus magister Michael nuper quendam librum qui vocatur Innocencius in domo et studio dicti domini Johannis Lagereti caput et secum deportavit apud Gracianopolem ubi eum vendidit certo precio per eum habitum dicto domino Johanne Lagereti inscio et invitto et propter hoc furturn renuttendo. Item cum dictus liber peteretur per gentes dicti domini Johannis Lagereti, dictus magister Michael dixit quod bene sciret dicere et vatecinare qui dictum librum habebat si ipsi, magistro Michaeli, darentur peccunic. Quibus verbis auditis mater dicti domini Johannis Lagereti dicto magistro Michaeli tres florenos misit et quos recipit idem magister Michael, quibus per eum receptis nominavit illum cui venderat dictum librum in Gracianopoli vendendo enim dictum librum non suo proprio nomine sed sub nomine alieno vendidit eius nomen proprium mutando et in hoc falsum et crimen falsi comitendo. Item quod prefatus magister Michael predictis delictis et criminibus nefandissimis per eum ut supra perpetratis venit et est ab omni privilegio cleri tonsura et omnibus sacerdotalibus ordinibus depoendus, privandus, destituendus et degradandus curieque seculari renuntiendus et tradendus pro iusticia subeundo de predictis. Item quod predicta omnia et singula sunt vera, notoria et manifesta et de ipsis et eorum quolibet est vox publica et fama tam apud Chamberiacum quam alia loca circonvicina, predictaque confessus fuit predictus magister Michael fore vera. Quare petit et requiret prefatus procurator substitutus episcopalis prefatum Michaelum delatum causantibus predictis nefandissimis delictis per eumdem delatum commissis ab omni privilegio cleri tonsura et omnibus sacerdotalibus ordinibus deponi, privari, destituiri et degradari ipsumque alias puriri, corrigi et condempnari iuxta exigenciam suorum demeritorum et sit et taliter quod ceteris cedat in exemplum et alias super predictis debitam iusticiam ministeri ministri vestri domini commissarii officium implorando. Visis in super responsionibus super ipsis articulis repetitis vicibus et perseveranter factis in dicto processu contentis et descriptis; visis in super commissionibus nobis factis per dictos dominos episcopum et inquisitorem in dicto processu etiam descriptis; visis in super omnibus
aliis in dicto processu inquisicionali contentis et descriptis et auditis omnibusque
ipse delatus dicere voluit et proponere ad eius deffensionem habitoque pro
renunciato et concluso in ipsa causa ex nostro incumbenti officio canonicatoque
consilio plurium in talibus expertorum sedendo pro tribunali more maiorum nos-
trorum ad iura redendum in loco subscripto ad hoc per nos electo sacrosanctis
scripturis coram nobis et in nostro conspectu positis ut de vultu Dei nostrum rec-
tum prodeat iudicium et occuli nostri in hiis et alii semper videant equitatem
non declinantes a dextris neque a sinistris sed equo libamine causam pensantes
et equale iudicantes Dei nomine invocato et venerabile signo crucis premisso
dicentes: In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, Amen.

Presidente racionis imperio in animo iudicantis sedet in examine veritatis pro
tribunali iusticia et quasi rex in solio iudicii retitudo de cuius ore procedit gla-
dius bisacutus cuius etiam aspectu terribili proprie voluntatis discipatur arbit-
trium reproborum. Hec enim fuit eterne providencia iudicis de cuius vultu recta
iudicia prodeunt ut recti iudices eligantur in orbe, qui terram iudicent, iusticiam
diligent et eorum occuli respicient equitatem. Unde cum per confessionem spon-
taneam dicti magistri Michaelis delati coram nobis judicialiter, legitime et perse-
veranter repetitis vicibus factam nobis commissario et iudici prefato sufficienter
et clare constet ipsum delatum a tempore sua adolescentie virum utique quam
plurimum fallacem varium et mendacem malorumque morum ac detestabilis
conversacionis et vice principali et detestabila criminis de quibus intitulatus
fuit, potissime apostasie nedum a religione sed a fide furti perjurii falcitis et
sortilegiis comississe per expressam invocationem demonem potissime
Belzabur, principis demonum, Sathane et Aquarem, quasdam imaginibus et figu-
ras quaram in processu fit mentio cum candelis cere nove thure, mura et ligno
aloe, ad malos et damnapatos effectus thurefficasse et exortisasse et ipsis mal-
gnis spiritibus contra fidem catholicam sacrissimam damnabiliter offerendo pro
ut premessa in primo, secundo, tertio, sexto, septimo, nono, decimo, undecimo,
duodecimo, decimotertio et in alii sequentibus articulis inquisitionalibus et res-
ponsionibus per ipsum delatum easdem titulis factis plenus continetur per hanc
nostram in hiis scriptis diffinitivam sentenciam ipsum delatum qui propter dicta
eius facinora ipso iure maioris excommunicacionis incurrit laqueum et omni
honore et beneficio se reddidit crudenter indignum pronunciamus et declaramus
fuisse et esse excommunicatum tociusque ordinis ecclesiastici omnique officio et beneficio ecclesiastico fore privandum, quem propterea ab
easdem deponimus et mandamus et licet exigentibus dictis eius facinoris dic-
tante iusticia videretur ipse delatum actualis sive solemnis degradacionis pene
plectendus et potestati secularis brachii relinquendus animaversione debita
puniendus. Quia tamen semita pertinacia eius errores agnoscent et agnoscedo
revoceans unitati fidei catholice recurrendo determinacioni sancte Dei eccle-
sieque ad se reeduntur non claudit gremium se submittit. Nos premissest et alii
apparentibus ex processu cum matura deliberacione pensatis, ipsum delatum ad
peragendum salutarem penitenciam admittentes eadem nostra diffinitiva sen-
tenciam condemnmamus ad instalandum presoribus parrochialis ecclesie Sancti
Leodegarii, Chamberiaci cum mitra in capite eius graviora facinora designante
una die sabati dum missarum agentur solemnna sine pallio seu clamide, calci-
mentis et zona et pariforma una alia die sabati in civitate Gracianopolis ante
dominum episcopalem, et post hec ipsum perpetiis carceribus detenendum fore
decernimus et ad perpetuorum carcerum penam comedendumque panem doloris
et bibendum aquam tristicie, eadem nostra sentencie condemnmamus execucion-
em vero huiusmodi sentencie nostre coureario Gracianopolis seu eius locunte-
nenti, necnon Stephano Rosseti, sigilliffero curie officialatus Chamberiarci et ipsorum cuilibet insolidum committimus precipientes eisdem et cuilibet ipsorum quatenus per se seu alium vel alios huiusmodi sentenciam nostram exequionii debite demandarum non postponant. De quibus omnibus premissis dictus procurator episcopalis petiti et nos eodem fieri concessimus publicum instrumentum. Lata lecta et publicata fuit huiusmodi nostra sentencia apud Burgetum in castro dicti loci, videlicet in stupha dicti castri presentibus testibus nobilibus viris et circumspecto domino Johanne Tarditi, in legibus licenciato, Petro de Varambone, Andrea de Submonte, domicello, Petro Maceti, notario, Petro de Combis, clerico, ad hec vocatis et rogatis.

Verum cum Bartholomeus Girardi quondam notarius morte preventus sentenciam superscriptam grossare et in formam publicare reddigere requirit. Id circa ego, Guillielmus de Baus de Gracianopoli, secretarius dalphinianus, publicus apostolica et imperiali auctoritatibus notarius et commissarius ad papirus et prothocolla dicti quondam Bartholomei Girardi notarii levandum, grossandum et in formam publicam reddigendum auctoritate iudicaria specialiter deputatus dictam sentenciam per dictum quondam notarium receptam et sua propria manu scriptam et improthocollatam sit et prout in suis prothocollis ipsam reperii nichil addito, remoto vel mutato, extrahi, levari, scribi et in hanc formam publicam reddigi per alium notarium fidelem coadiutorem meum feci ad instanciam et requisicionem procuratoris episcopalis supranominati. Deinde facta collacione de instrumento huiusdem cum originali prothocollo dicte sentencie hic me manu propria subscripti et signo meo solito signavi in fidem et testimonium omnia premissorum.

Et ad maiorem premissorum roboris firmitatem sigillum maius curie officialatus Gracianopolis hinc instrumentum est appensum.

Jonathan HARRIS
University College London