

**EIKASMOS**

*Quaderni Bolognesi di Filologia Classica*

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**TZETZIKAI EPEYNAI**

a cura di / edited by

ENRICO EMANUELE PRODI

PÀTRON EDITORE - BOLOGNA

λοζοχού αν γαύω. ή πρσά τοζ αούσ ιαδα παίπερκαδα. ο αντ δαε  
 ιπτι ούλι: λοζαύσ οίπερκαδα ούλι τον ζαυι ακού κύηλ: ο πρσο  
 ακλίγ τ ερασ ήσ οδοδρότος, ζαυιπλόνεσθι ήσ ακραθεσιν  
 τεόχου τον ακλου. πρε τοζαυ: οιδε, κυ ει ον τοιτε γοοιωκ. εις  
 εζααοχι επον: λυτις, οδαν και πακαλιμα ζαυιαν. αυ  
 ηαδοεαο τυλι π +

✠ λοζαυαυε πασπολλα μοχνησασ γεα φησ  
 αμ ιησθη τωσ κάρια ραι πλοζασ οηκ  
 γοαζαυ γεωρασ οισα και τυκισματα

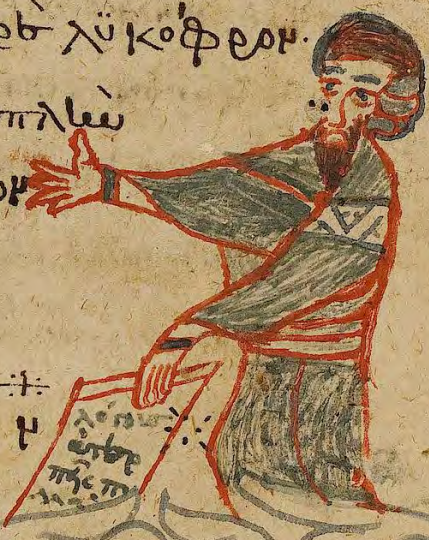
λ' κόφρων

σιν ορθαγη τε κριμμα και λυκοψια.

μόνορ μοισ ιδρωται μορε λυκοφρον.

ουδρι γαρ αλλο πλιω  
μοι λιεωκ

ΛΟ  
 ΓΟ  
 Η



Καυλιαν ή Χελιδν  
 η ορσηλ...

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ὅπου πεισθεὶς ὡς παλαιοῖς αὐτοῖς καὶ τεχνογράφοις,  
οὐδόλως ἐξηρένησα ταῖς Τζετζικαῖς ἐρεύναις,  
ἐν αἴσπερ ἢ ἀλήθεια ἐκ χάους ἀνατρέχει.  
ἀλλ' ἐν ἐρεύναις Τζετζικαῖς τοῦτο τανῦν δεικτέον...

(*Hist.* XII 398, 65-68)

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## Abbreviations

Abbreviations of journal titles follow «L'Année Philologique». Those of the names of ancient authors and the titles of their works follow LSJ<sup>9</sup>, with such exceptions as «Eikasmos» house style dictates; any such exceptions ought to be self-explanatory.

Tzetzes' writings are abbreviated as follows:

- Alleg. Il.* *Allegories of the Iliad*: J.-Fr. Boissonade, *Tzetzae Allegoriae Iliadis. Accedunt Psel-li allegoriae*, Lutetiae 1851
- schol. Alleg. Il.* P. Matranga, *Anecdota Graeca e mss. bibliothecis Vaticana, Angelica, Barberi-niana, Vallicelliana, Medicea, Vindobonensi deprompta*, II, Romae 1850, 599-618, 749
- Alleg. Od.* *Allegories of the Odyssey*: H. Hunger, *Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien zur Odyssee, Buch 1-12*, «ByzZ» XLIX (1956) 249-310; Id., *Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien zur Odyssee, Buch 13-24*, «ByzZ» XLVIII (1955) 4-48.
- Carm. Il.* *Little-Big Iliad (Carmina Iliaca)*: P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Carmina Iliaca*, Catania 1995
- schol. Carm. Il.* *ibid.* 102-243
- De metr.* *On Metres*: J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis Bibliothecarum Oxoniensium*, III, Oxford 1836, 302-333
- Diff. poet.* *On the Differences between Poets*: W.J.W. Koster, *Scholia in Aristophanem*, IA: *Prolegomena de comoedia*, Groningen 1975, 84-94
- Ep.* *Letters*: P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Epistulae*, Leipzig 1972
- schol. Ep.* *ibid.* 158-174
- Exeg. Il.* *Exegesis of the Iliad*: M. Papatomopoulos, Ἐξήγησις Ἰωάννου Γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου εἰς τὴν Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδα, Ἀθήναι 2007
- schol. Exeg. Il.* *ibid.* 417-460
- Hist.* *Histories (Chiliads)*: P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Historiae*, Galatina 2007<sup>2</sup>
- schol. Hist.* *ibid.* 529-569
- Iamb.* *Iambes*: P.L.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae iambi*, «RSBN» n.s. VI-VII (1969-1970) 127-156
- Prol. com.* *Introduction to Comedy*: W.J.W. Koster, *Scholia in Aristophanem*, IA: *Prolegomena de comoedia*, Groningen 1975, 22-38

- S. Lucia*      *Life of St. Lucy: G. Sola, Ioannis Tzetzis hypomnema et S. Methodii patriarchae canon in S. Luciam* (2), «Roma e l’Oriente» XV (1918) 48-53; (3), XVI (1918) 106-115; (4), XVII (1919) 90-105
- schol. Ar. Nub.*      *Scholia to Aristophanes’ Clouds: D. Holwerda, Jo. Tzetzae commentarii in Aristophanem, II: Commentarium in Nubes*, Groningen-Amsterdam 1960
- schol. Ar. Plut.*      *Scholia to Aristophanes’ Plutus: L. Massa Positano, Jo. Tzetzae commentarii in Aristophanem, fasc. I: Prolegomena et commentarium in Plutum*, Groningen 1960
- schol. Ar. Ran.*      *Scholia to Aristophanes’ Frogs: W.J.W. Koster, Jo. Tzetzae commentarii in Aristophanem, III: Commentarium in Ranas et in Aves, argumentum Equitum*, Groningen 1962
- schol. Hermog.*      *Scholia to Hermogenes: J.A. Cramer, Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis Bibliothecarum Oxoniensium, IV*, Oxford 1837, 1-148
- schol. Hes. Op.*      *Scholia to Hesiod’s Works and Days: Th. Gaisford, Poetae Graeci minores, III: Scholia ad Hesiodum*, Oxonii 1820
- schol. Lyc.*      *Scholia to Lycophron: E. Scheer, Lycophronis Alexandra, II: Scholia*, Berolini 1908
- schol. Opp.*      *Scholia to Oppian: U. Cats Bussemaker, Scholia et paraphrases in Nicandrum et Oppianum*, Paris 1849, 260-375
- Theog.*      *Theogony: P.A.M. Leone, Ioannis Tzetzae Theogonia*, Lecce 2019
- Trag. poes.*      *On Tragic Poetry: G. Pace, Giovanni Tzetzes. La poesia tragica*, Napoli 2011<sup>2</sup>

For a complete list of Tzetzes’ works and their respective editions see I.C. Nesseris, Η παιδεία στην Κωνσταντινούπολη κατά τον 12ο αιώνα, diss. Ioannina 2014, II, 515-540.



## Introduction: A buffalo's-eye view

«Tzetzes, Ioannes: classical scholar in twelfth-century Constantinople, known for his acerbic wit and propensity for vulgar insults. He wrote commentaries on many ancient texts, as well as letters and allegorical works. He tried hard to make himself seem like a thoroughly unpleasant person, and succeeded»<sup>1</sup>.

For most Byzantinists and Classicists outside a handful of Tzetzes groupies<sup>2</sup>, this tongue-in-cheek glossary entry in Antony Kaldellis' *Cabinet of Byzantine Curiosities* more or less sums up the received wisdom about John Tzetzes (early 1110s-after 1180)<sup>3</sup>. If anything, it errs – ironically – on the side of seriousness: it leaves out the ridicule. «That lovable buffoon John Tzetzes»<sup>4</sup> easily ends up being the butt of every joke. Standard reference works on Byzantine scholarship – and the undergraduates who dutifully learn them for their exams – relate his claim to be naturally fragrant in spite of “not even taking baths except perhaps two or three times a year” (*schol. Hes. Op.* 412 Gaisford)<sup>5</sup>, or to have extended a scholion “so as to fill the re-

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<sup>1</sup> A. Kaldellis, *A Cabinet of Byzantine Curiosities: Strange Tales and Surprising Facts from History's Most Orthodox Empire*, Oxford 2017, 227.

<sup>2</sup> I borrow the phrase from Aglae Pizzone. I appreciate that serious Tzetzes scholars may not identify with this label; I am no serious Tzetzes scholar myself, so I shall use it nonetheless.

<sup>3</sup> The standard treatments of Tzetzes' life remain G. Hart, *De Tzetzarum nomine vitis scriptis*, Lipsiae 1880; H. Giske, *De Ioannis Tzetzae scriptis ac vita*, Rostochii 1881; C. Wendel, *Tzetzes. I) Johannes*, in *RE VIIA/2* (1948) 1959-2010. New evidence confirming the received wisdom that he died around 1180 is published by A. Pizzone, *Saturno contro sul Mare di Ismaro. Una nuova fonte per l'(auto)biografia di Tzetze*, in A. Capra-S. Martinelli Tempesta-C. Nobili (edd.), *Philoxenia. Viaggi e viaggiatori nella Grecia di ieri e di oggi*, Milano-Udine 2020, 75-94 (“youthful” verses concerning an event that occurred on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1131, and two autograph notes in which he relates being in his seventieth year). For an assessment of Tzetzes' works and their importance, after Wendel, *o.c.* see H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, II, München 1978, 59-63; N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, London 1996<sup>2</sup>, 190-196; F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529-1453)*, in F. Montanari (ed.), *History of Ancient Greek Scholarship from the Beginnings to the End of the Byzantine Age*, Leiden-Boston 2020, 373-529: 452-459 (revised ed. of F. Montanari-S. Matthaios-A. Rengakos (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, I, Brill 2015, 298-455: 378-385); more extensively, I.C. Nesseris, *Η παιδεία στην Κωνσταντινούπολη κατά τον 12ο αιώνα*, diss. Ioannina 2014, I, 158-197 (discussion) and II, 515-540 (complete list of his works, with references).

<sup>4</sup> M.L. West, *Hesiod. Works & Days*, Oxford 1978, 69.

<sup>5</sup> Th. Gaisford, *Poetae Graeci minores*, III: *Scholia ad Hesiodum*, Oxonii 1820, 220: Ἔντιοι δὲ καὶ ἀρωμάτων ἐκ τῶν σωμάτων ὀσμὴν ἀποπνέουσιν, ὥσπερ ὁ Θεόφραστος Ἀλέξανδρον

maintaining unwritten paper of this page” (*schol. Ar. Plut. 677b* Massa Positano)<sup>6</sup>. One scholar might casually mention *unam ex eis prolixis querelis, quae ei propriae sunt* [...] *in qua varias res, quae eius bilem moverunt, amplectitur*<sup>7</sup>, another will call him «più rissoso che polemico»<sup>8</sup>; his most prolific twentieth-century editor evokes «quella sicurezza mista a vuota iattanza, prerogativa del sempre accigliato e scontroso Tzetzes»<sup>9</sup>. Even a sympathetic discussion will nod to his oversized authorial persona: «Tzetzes is not a commentator who believes in keeping a low profile»<sup>10</sup> – to the extent that the lack of such an oversized authorial persona can be taken to speak against Tzetzes’ authorship of a text<sup>11</sup>. While recognizing some of his merits, one influential reference work speaks of his «limited talents and unattractive personality» and «an extremely fluent pen and no desire to hide his cantankerous nature behind a wall of reserve»; «vain, loquacious and quarrelsome [...] he was far from being the expert scholar whose contributions to his subject excuse personal foibles»<sup>12</sup>.

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λέγει τὸν Μακεδόνα· καὶ ἡμῖν δὲ πολλάκις τις διηπίστησεν, ὡς οὐ κεχρημένοις ἀρώμασι καὶ περιχόουσι τὰ ἐντός, καὶ τοι γε μηδὲ λουτροῖς κεχρημένοις, εἰ μή που κατ’ ἐνιαυτὸν καὶ β’ καὶ γ’. See West, *l.c.* (though he mistranslates διηπίστησεν); Wilson, *o.c.* 191. One might compare *Alleg. II. prol. 729; Hist. III 70, 182-184.*

<sup>6</sup> L. Massa Positano, *Jo. Tzetzae commentarii in Aristophanem, I: Prolegomena et commentarium in Plutum*, Groningen 1960, 156: ἵνα τὸν ὑπολειπόμενον ἀγραφή χάσπην τῆς τῆδε σελίδος ἀναπληρώσασαμεν. He was a serial offender, cf. *schol. Ar. Plut. 833b* οὐκ ἂν δὲ οὐ ταῦτα νῦν παρενέγραφον, εἰ μὴ ἐώρων ἀγραφοὺς κινδυνεύοντα τὸν χάσπην ἀπολειφθῆναι διὰ τὸ μὴ δεῖσθαι τὸ τῆδε χωρίον σχολίων, “I would not add this did I not see that the page risks being left blank since this passage does not require scholia”; also *Hist. XIII 496, 611-668*, filled in with a biography of Homer because “there is room on the page”, τόπος ἐστὶ χάσπης (v. 611; but see p. xxiii and n. 77 below). In his defence, he may have been paid by the page, cf. *Hist. IX 264, 271-290* with A. Rhoby, *Ioannes Tzetzes als Auftragsdichter*, «GLB» XV (2010) 155-170: 163-165 on the composition of the *Allegories of the Iliad*. Elsewhere he complains of a lack of paper (*schol. Ar. Ran. 843a* Koster; cf. the end of *Ep. 6*, which however is surely ironical, as remarked by I. Grigoriadis, Ἰωάννης Τζέτζης. Ἐπιστολαί, Ἀθήνα 2011, 275 n. 48), or he notes the need to economise on it and be more concise (e.g. *Hist. V 28, 824-825; VI 50, 382-393; 79, 798-799; X 332, 450-457*).

<sup>7</sup> W.J.W. Koster, *Jo. Tzetzae commentarii in Aristophanem, III: Commentarium in Ranas et in Aves, argumentum Equitum*, Groningen-Amsterdam 1962, 934.

<sup>8</sup> P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milano 1991, 132.

<sup>9</sup> P.L.M. Leone, *Significato e limiti della revisione delle Historiae di Giovanni Tzetzes*, «Aevum» XXXVII (1963) 239-248: 239.

<sup>10</sup> F. Budelmann, *Classical commentary in Byzantium: John Tzetzes on ancient Greek literature*, in R.K. Gibson-Chr. Shuttleworth Kraus (edd.), *The Classical Commentary: History, Practices, Theory*, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2002, 141-169: 143.

<sup>11</sup> The *Timarion*: «I doubt that vain man could have hidden his light under the bushel of anonymity», B. Baldwin, *Timarion*, Detroit 1984, 36.

<sup>12</sup> Wilson, *o.c.* 190-191.

«Vain» as he was, Tzetzes had a higher opinion of himself. Time and again he explicitly ascribes to his works a slew of positive qualities, and opposite, negative qualities to those of his competitors<sup>13</sup>. He boasts of his prodigious memory, which deputizes for a library when he is without books (*Alleg. II. XV* 87-89: ἐμοὶ βιβλιοθήκη γὰρ ἢ κεφαλή τυγχάνει), and of his equally prodigious speed and accuracy when writing from memory, which allows him to write as quickly as lightning, more quickly than if he were copying someone else's book (*Hist. VIII* 176, 173-181; *X* 329, 357-361; *XII* 397, 3-6)<sup>14</sup>. In the *Allegories of the Iliad* (prol. 480-487) he claims that his poem can stand in for Homer, Stesichorus, Euripides, Lycophron, Colluthus, Lesches, Dictys, Triphiodorus, and Quintus of Smyrna in one go and still provide as much detail as them in a conveniently compact format, “so that everyone who wishes, with minimum effort, / may seem to the masses to have read whole libraries”<sup>15</sup>. In the *Theogony* he only provides a précis of divine genealogies, but he informs his patron that, if she wanted a more comprehensive work, he could make a superlative job of it (vv. 27-33)<sup>16</sup>:

κομπάζω τολμηρότερον καὶ λέγω παρρησίᾳ  
ὡς οὐδ' ἂν ἦσαν ἑκατὸν Ὀμηροὶ καὶ Μουσαῖοι,  
Ὀρφέες καὶ Ἡσίοδοι, Ἀντίμαχοι καὶ Λῖνοι

I boast very intrepidly and frankly I declare  
that even if there were a hundred Homers and Musaeuses,  
Orpheuses and Antimachuses, Linuses and Hesiods,

<sup>13</sup> See M. Savio, *Screditare per valorizzare. Giovanni Tzetze, le sue fonti, i committenti e la concorrenza*, Roma 2020, whose monograph draws its title from this recurrent practice. For examples of Tzetzes «discrediting» competitors see the papers by Aglae Pizzone and Frederick Lauritzen in this volume; on the positive qualities which he sees in his own work, that by Ugo Mondini.

<sup>14</sup> On the importance of memory to Tzetzes' work, with an emphasis on the *Chiliads*, see A. Pizzone, *The Historiæ of John Tzetzes: A Byzantine 'book of memory'?*, «BMGS» XLI (2017) 182-207, esp. 190-200.

<sup>15</sup> *Alleg. II. prol. 485-486*: ὅπως πᾶς ὁ βουλόμενος ἐν πόνῳ βραχυτάτῳ / ἀνεγνωκέναι τοῖς πολλοῖς δοκῆ βιβλιοθήκας, transl. A.J. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Iliad*, Cambridge MA-London 2015, 37 (adapted). On the prolegomena to the *Allegories*, see the chapter by Alberto Ravani in this volume. Needless to say, by Tzetzes' time Lesches' *Little Iliad* and the poems of Stesichorus had been lost for the best part of a millennium, but he had limited access through the indirect tradition, and he incorporated fr. 9 Bernabé of the *Little Iliad* in the *Little-Big Iliad*, twice (III 720 = 773, cf. *schol.* 720, p. 242 Leone).

<sup>16</sup> On this and the previous passage see Savio, *o.c.* 25-28, 123-125, and Anna Novokhatko's contribution to this volume, pp. 312-313. On the dynamics of patronage in the *Theogony* see Rhoby, *Auftragsdichter* cit. 166-169.

καὶ πάντες ἄλλοι ποιηταὶ καὶ θεογονογράφοι,  
 κρεῖττον ἂν ἔγραψαν ἐμοῦ τὰ περὶ τούτων πάντα.  
 ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἂν ἦσαν οἱ θεοὶ καὶ ἥρωες ἐκεῖνοι,  
 τὸ γένος ἴσχυσαν αὐτῶν ὥσπερ ἐγὼ διδάξαι.

30

and every other poet and composer of theogonies,  
 they wouldn't have written better than me all about these matters;  
 not even if those very gods and heroes were to hand  
 could they instruct you on their genealogies like I.

In the passage of the *Histories* that gives the present volume its title, he extols “the Tzetzean researches, in which the truth comes running out of chaos” (*Hist.* XII 398, 66-67). More precisely, that entire *Historia* (XII 398, 29-118) acknowledges and corrects a past mistake committed when he had trusted a consensus instead of researching the matter himself, as he has now done. In presenting the situation in this way, Tzetzes dilutes the blame for his mistake, which was caused by others and was shared with everyone (τοῖς πᾶσι, v. 29), and associates himself instead with finding out the truth in his own unique way, with “Tzetzean researches” (66, 68) and “inescapable audits in the Tzetzean manner” (ἐν ἀλαθήτοις λογισμοῖς καὶ Τζετζικῶι τῶι τρόπῳ, 118). He deploys a similar strategy of turning a past liability into a present asset when he deplores his youthful penchant for ‘untechnical’ iambs, *i.e.* the Byzantine dodecasyllable which treats the vowels α ι υ as indifferently long or short (δίχρονοι), contrary to the norms of classical verse<sup>17</sup>. The forthright denunciation of his former error serves to distance the present Tzetzes from his past ignorance and high-light his acquisition of the correct knowledge, in contrast not only to his younger self but also to virtually all his contemporaries. It also underscores his *parrhesia*, from whose scourge he does not exempt even himself<sup>18</sup>.

Another noteworthy trait of the *Historia* just cited is the insistent self-naming (XII 398, *tit.* and vv. 66, 68, 88, 94, 118). In fact, Tzetzes’ name, like his «cantankerous nature», is almost a watermark that shows through every page of his *œuvre*. In the works that have been incorporated into the *TLG* (and many have not), his name occurs 256 times, not counting the adjective τζετζικός (5) with the adverb τζετζικῶς (1) and the comparative τζετζικώτερον (4). Nowhere is this more evident than in the *Histories*, where he names himself 105 times in the verses, five in the titles,

<sup>17</sup> See the chapter by Marc Lauxtermann in this volume, with references.

<sup>18</sup> On Tzetzean *parrhesia* see Savio, *o.c.* 35-38; also *ibid.* 47-49, on Tzetzes’ emphatic correction of another previous howler in the second redaction of the *Introduction to Comedy* (W.J.W. Koster, *Scholia in Aristophanem IA: Prolegomena de comoedia*, Groningen 1975, 33-34).

and 28 in the scholia<sup>19</sup>. Active as he was on a free market of education, without stable patronage or the income granted by an established post, he had to engage in self-promotion on an industrial scale<sup>20</sup> – whence the distaste he elicited from nineteenth- and twentieth-century Northern European gentlemen-scholars with their very different notions of academic decorum.

What he asserts with self-praise or through contrast with scholarly competitors (ancient or modern), he also sometimes underscores through comparison with great men of the past, especially poets. In the opening section of the *Exegesis of the Iliad* he construes a pointedly Tzetzes-like Homer: a poverty-stricken but determined educator who had to keep his poems on loose sheets of paper, in a transparent strategy of alignment between the Poet and himself (*Exeg. Il.* pp. 56, 68-69 Papatomopoulos)<sup>21</sup>. In the *Allegories of the Iliad* and in the *Histories* he claims a detailed physical resemblance with the hero Palamedes and with Cato the Elder – although he has to admit to not sharing their peaceable character (*Alleg. Il.* prol. 724-739; *Hist.* III 70, 173-191). The comparison with Palamedes aligns him with a supremely clever hero – the alleged inventor of the alphabet<sup>22</sup> – who was put to death on false pretexts by an envious schemer<sup>23</sup>. In the Γένος Ἀριστοφάνου that accompanies the second redaction of the *Commentary to Aristophanes*, he alleges a chronological connexion:

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<sup>19</sup> See P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Historiae*, Galatina 2007<sup>2</sup>, 590. I only count occurrences of Tzetzes' name, not self-references which omit the name; some are included (between brackets) in Leone, *l.c.* On Tzetzes' self-naming see also Budelmann, *o.c.* 150-151; Savio, *o.c.* 81-86.

<sup>20</sup> On the socio-economical aspect of Tzetzes' self-promotion (which earlier scholarship had tended rather to view through a psychological, not to say psychiatric, lens) see P.A. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners: A Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 1-57; Savio, *o.c.* 1-86; and already Budelmann, *o.c.* 164-167. On Tzetzes as a teacher see Nesseris, *o.c.* I, 165-197; on the other side of his activity, the «professional poet», see Rhoby, *Auftragsdichter* cit.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Alleg. Il.* XVI 2-6, where Tzetzes compares his new patron Constantine Kotertzes to Pisistratus, who had funded the publication of Homer's poems (*Exeg. Il.* pp. 68-69 Papatomopoulos). See E. Cullhed, *The blind bard and 'I': Homeric biography and authorial personas in the twelfth century*, «BMGS» XXXVIII (2014) 49-67: 58-67; Savio, *o.c.* 30-33; from a different point of view, see T. Braccini, *Riscrivere l'epica: Giovanni Tzetze di fronte al ciclo troiano*, «CentoPagine» V (2011) 43-57: 45-47; C. D'Agostini-A. Pizzone, *Clawing rhetoric back: Humor and polemic in Tzetzes' hexameters on the Historiai*, «Parekbolai» XI (2021) 123-158: 133-135. *Hist.* XIII 496, 611-668 is relevant, too: see A. Pizzone, *The autobiographical subject in Tzetzes' Chiliades: An analysis of its components*, in C. Messis-M. Mullett-I. Nilsson (edd.), *Storytelling in Byzantium: Narratological Approaches to Byzantine Texts and Images*, Uppsala 2018, 287-304: 290-291.

<sup>22</sup> So people said, at least; but subsequent "Tzetzian researches" proved otherwise. See *Hist.* XII 398, 29-118 just discussed on p. xii.

<sup>23</sup> See V.F. Lovato, *Portrait de héros, portrait d'érudit: Jean Tzetzés et la tradition des eikonismoi*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 137-153, esp. 147-148.

like Aristophanes and like Heracles, he is “born on the fourth”, and accordingly “not only toiling for others, but for many, and thanklessly” (*Prol. com.* XXXIb)<sup>24</sup>.

In each of these cases, Tzetzes sets up an implicit comparison between himself and a great intellectual of the past, playing on one facet or another of the complex identity he takes on: typically two such facets together, one illustrating his merits, the other his material hardship or lack of recognition<sup>25</sup>. Nor was his claim to an epic status of sorts limited to his exegetical works, or to extrinsic similarities like physical appearance or date of birth. An example are his misadventures with that latter-day Potiphar the *doux* Isaac, eparch of Beroia, and his wife, which he repeatedly inscribes into the *Little-Big Iliad* (II 137-162; III 284-290, 620-625, 702, 753-758)<sup>26</sup>. There, too, he is arguably less becoming side-tracked by an obsessive grievance than giving heroic status – *qua* matter worthy of a Homeric *parekbasis* – to a defining moment in his life<sup>27</sup>. In the hexameter preface of the *Commentary to Hermogenes* he even imagines a Hesiod-like *Dichterweihe*, with the Muse of Helicon instructing him *qua* her interpreter (Μοισάων ὑποφῆτορ) to quit the lofty peaks of epic exegesis for the grassy vales of a prose author<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Koster, *Prolegomena* cit. 145: διὸ σκώπτοντες αὐτὸν Ἀριστώνυμός τε καὶ Ἀμειψίας ἔλεγον αὐτὸν [*scil.* Aristophanes] κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν γεννηθῆναι τετράδι καὶ ἄλλοις πονεῖν, ὡς ἐκεῖνος ὁ Ἡρακλῆς καὶ ὁ Τζέτζης, μὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, τετράδι γεννηθέντες καὶ ἄλλοις οὐ μόνον πονοῦντες, ἀλλὰ πολλοῖς καὶ ἀχαριστούμενοι. The life of toil of those born on the fourth of the month, like Heracles, is proverbial (Zenob. VI 7 Schneidewin-van Leutsch, Hesych. τ 613 Hansen-Cunningham, Phot. τ 190 Theodoridis, etc.). Tzetzes also styles himself as “born on the fourth” in *Ep.* 87 (τετράδι δὲ, ὡς ἔοικε, γεννηθεὶς ἄλλοις πονῶ) with *Hist.* XII 417, 503-507: see B. van den Berg, *Playwright, satirist, Atticist: The reception of Aristophanes in 12th-century Byzantium*, in P. Marciniak-I. Nilsson (edd.), *Satire in the Middle Byzantine Period: The Golden Age of Laughter?*, Leiden 2021, 227-253: 248; D’Agostini-Pizzone, *o.c.* 147-148; and Aglae Pizzone’s chapter in this volume, p. 24.

<sup>25</sup> On Tzetzes’ «rhetoric of poverty» see Cullhed, *Blind* cit. 57-61 (borrowing the label from R. Beaton, *The rhetoric of poverty: the lives and opinions of Theodore Prodromos*, «BMGS» XI (1987) 1-28), with the important qualifications made by Savio, *o.c.* 32-38, 58-66.

<sup>26</sup> For the story cf. also *schol. Exeg. Il.* 5,20 p. 421 Ppathomopoulos; *schol. Carm. Il.* III 284, p. 224 Leone; and the not-yet-fully-edited *Commentary to Porphyry’s Isagoge* (the relevant passage is published by E. Cullhed, *Diving for pearls and Tzetzes’ death*, «ByzZ» CVIII (2015) 53-62: 57-58). See T. Braccini, *Erudita invenzione: riflessioni sulla Piccola Grande Iliade di Giovanni Tzetze*, «IFilol Class» IX (2009-2010) 153-173: 168-169.

<sup>27</sup> See *schol. Carm. Il.* II 137, p. 178 Leone τὸ σχῆμα ἐπεισοδιακόν, ὃ καὶ παρέκβασις καὶ ἐπένθεσις καλεῖται καὶ ἀποστροφή. Characteristically, the first of these digressions is explicitly introduced as paradigmatic (the second may be the finest piece of humour in the entire Tzetzic corpus). It need not be a coincidence – although Tzetzes does not explicitly make the connexion – that one of the most illustrious Iliadic models for such digressions is Glaucus’ tale about Bellerophon (VI 152-202), who is also the mythical paradigm for the events Tzetzes claims to have experienced.

<sup>28</sup> The text is preserved by *Voss. gr.* Q1, f. 211v, *ed. pr.* K.A. de Meyier, *Codices Vossiani Graeci*, Lugduni Batavorum 1955, 93; an improved text and an English translation in A. Pizzone, *Self-*

But Tzetzes was not Tzetzes' only admirer. Think of that treasure trove of Greek poetry and scholarship, *Ambr. C 222 inf.* The manuscript, copied shortly after Tzetzes' death, «overflows with Tzetzian material»; the exemplar must have been Tzetzes' autograph or a very faithful copy of it, and the manuscript's first owner was clearly fond of him: μακαρία ἡ ὁδός σου Τζέτζη (f. 70r), μακαρία ἡ ὁδός σου καλὲ Τζέτζη (f. 78r)<sup>29</sup>. Tzetzes was not widely acknowledged by his more notable contemporaries: the only mentions known to the *TLG* are in Gregory of Corinth's commentary to Hermogenes<sup>30</sup>, which first references the “silly little verses” of Tzetzes' commentary (φλυαροστιχιδίους : I 3, p. 1098 Walz) but then quotes it three times without opprobrium, including an extensive *historia* in dodecasyllables (V 46, p. 1186 Walz)<sup>31</sup>. That philological dreadnought Eustathios of Thessalonike was not above pinching material from him without attribution<sup>32</sup>. Tzetzes himself complained about plagiarism on several occasions<sup>33</sup>, and he has been vindicated by the discovery in *Laur. Plut.* 32,3, dating to the mid- or late twelfth century, of uncredited extracts from the *Exegesis of the Iliad*, which was written in or not long after 1138 – at most a few decades earlier<sup>34</sup>.

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*authorization and strategies of autography in John Tzetzes: The Logismoi rediscovered*, «GRBS» LX (2020) 650-688: 657-658. The model is Hes. *Th.* 22-34; I wonder whether the exegete's shift from epic to the rhetorical manual in prose may be construed as mirroring Hesiod's own shift from the heights of the *Theogony* to the (notionally) practical agricultural instruction of the *Works and Days*.

<sup>29</sup> For all these see C.M. Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf. (Graecus 886): Il codice e il suo autore*, II: *L'autore*, «Aevum» LXXVIII (2004) 411-440: 420.

<sup>30</sup> Here cited from Chr. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, VII/2, Stuttgartiae-Tubingae 1834. Gregory's citations of Tzetzes are listed and discussed in A. Kominis, *Gregorio Pardos metropolita di Corinto e la sua opera*, Roma-Atene 1960, 29-30.

<sup>31</sup> Tzetzes' original is in J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis bibliothecarum Oxoniensium*, IV, Oxonii 1837, 133; see Kominis, *o.c.* 30.

<sup>32</sup> Examples in Th.M. Conley, *Byzantine criticism and the uses of literature*, in A. Minnis-I. Johnson (edd.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, II, Cambridge 2005, 669-692: 684; Cullhed, *Blind* cit. 58; Id., *Diving* cit. (reversing the intertextual link suggested by N. Agiotis, *Tzetzes on Psellos revisited*, «ByzZ» CVI/1 (2013) 1-8); Id., *Eustathios of Thessalonike. Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, I, Uppsala 2016, 20\*-21\*. On Eustathios' equally covert criticisms of Tzetzes, see D. Holwerda, *De Tzetzia in Eustathii reprehensiones incurrenti*, «Mnemosyne» s. IV, XII (1960) 323-326; M.J. Jeffreys, *The nature and origins of the political verse*, «DOP» XXVIII (1974) 141-195: 150.

<sup>33</sup> *Exeg. Il.* p. 8 with *schol. ad loc.* p. 423 Papathomopoulos; *Ep.* 42 (with *Hist.* VIII 204, 479-492), 56, 78, 79; *schol. Ar. Ran.* 897a Koster.

<sup>34</sup> F. Montana, *The oldest textual witness to John Tzetzes' Exegesis of the Iliad*, in M. Ercoles et al. (edd.), *Approaches to Greek Poetry*, Berlin-Boston 2018, 107-131 (first noticed by C. Wachsmuth, *Ueber die Zeichen und einige andere Eigenthümlichkeiten des codex Venetus der Ilias*, «RhM» n.F. XVIII (1863) 178-188: 187, to little avail). The *terminus post* and *ante quem* of the *Exegesis* are 1138 (death of John's brother Isaac, mentioned at p. 170 Papathomopoulos) and January 1144 (wedding of Manuel I and Irene-Bertha of Sulzbach, mentioned in *schol. Alleg. Il.* IV 67, p. 609 Matranga, but not

His contemporaries Gregory and Eustathios are the inevitable terms of comparison, and the comparison does not tend to be flattering to Tzetzes<sup>35</sup>. Yet it is not altogether fair to pitch «a layman having no direct professional links with the ecclesiastical or the imperial *milieu*» against two archbishops, one of whom a saint<sup>36</sup>. In an oft-repeated phrase, Tzetzes was «one of the first men in European society to live by his pen»<sup>37</sup>; in his own words, he was a νοογάστωρ, someone who earns his sustenance through his intellectual labour (*Ep.* 75)<sup>38</sup>. While the other two men held the coveted chair of rhetoric (μαίστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων) before ascending to the highest levels of the Church<sup>39</sup>, Tzetzes was intermittently Church- and power-adjacent, but he was never elevated into the tenured empireum, and he had to make a living by teaching and writing: academic precariat, if you will, Byzantine-style. He was well aware of this imbalance, and he resented it to no end. Beside his trademark invectives against ignorant rivals (βούβαλοι he calls them, “buffaloes”) and three exuberant

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in the relevant place in our text, as an example of a successful prediction by Tzetzes): see Hart, *o.c.* 11-12; Giske, *o.c.* 48-49, who inclines towards a date near the later end of the interval. Yet we can be more precise. As Wendel had realised (*o.c.* 1961-1962), *Exeg. Il.* p. 22 Papatomopoulos (it is “the seventh year, and soon will be the eighth” since he had to sell his library) and *schol. Exeg. Il.* 5,20, p. 421 Papatomopoulos (he was in his twenty-first year at the time) combine to fix the composition of the text when Tzetzes was 26 or 27 (with some uncertainty due to the ‘inclusive’ reckoning). If he was born in the early 1110s, then, the date of the *Exegesis* must be not long after the *terminus post quem* of the summer of 1138; if the incident on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1131 caught him when he was still in the service of the eparch of Beroia (so plausibly Pizzone, *Saturno* cit. 88), he was no older than 20 at the time, cf. *schol. Exeg. Il.* 5,20, p. 421 Papatomopoulos just cited. The date of the *Exegesis* may have to be pushed slightly forward (to 1140 or so?) if M. Cardin, *Teaching Homer through (annotated) poetry: John Tzetzes’ Carmina Iliaca*, in R. Simms (ed.), *Brill’s Companion to Prequels, Sequels, and Retellings of Classical Epic*, Leiden-Boston 2018, 90-114: 94 n. 11, is right that the *Little-Big Iliad* (cited at *Exeg. Il.* p. 67 Papatomopoulos, and therefore older) was written after the poem *On Metres*, which in turn was written after Isaac Tzetzes’ death in 1138; but it is uncertain whether the scholia to the *Little-Big Iliad* (which probably cite *On Metres* at II 312, p. 201 Leone) were written at the same time as the text, and if they were not (as Philip Rance warns in this volume, p. 435 and n. 23), the argument falls.

<sup>35</sup> Wilson’s none-too-high esteem of Tzetzes has already been illustrated, but even the noticeably more sympathetic Pontani calls Gregory «perhaps the most distinguished grammarian of this age» and Eustathios «perhaps the most learned man of the Byzantine millennium» (*o.c.* 447, 460).

<sup>36</sup> Quotation from Pontani, *o.c.* 452. For Tzetzes’ «middle class» status and how it informed his scholarly practices vis-à-vis his more established colleagues see Agapitos, *Blemish* cit. (comparison with Eustathios on pp. 7-8).

<sup>37</sup> R. Browning, *Homer in Byzantium*, «Viator» VIII (1975) 15-33: 26.

<sup>38</sup> On this passage see Savio, *o.c.* 35-38; V.F. Lovato, *Living by his wit: Tzetzes’ Aristophanic variations on the conundrums of a ‘professional writer’*, «BMGS» XLV (2021) 42-58.

<sup>39</sup> Such, at least, is the vulgate; yet there is no explicit evidence that Gregory was an official professor of rhetoric beside the didactic character of his works and his interest in Hermogenes. One might have drawn the same conclusion about Tzetzes, did he not so emphatically tell us otherwise.



broadside against one such buffalo who was given a cushy post in his place (*Hist.* XI 369, esp. 210-224; *Iamb.* III, IV)<sup>40</sup>, he speaks of his critics as a σοφὴ κουστωδία, a “clever posse”<sup>41</sup>: not just a clique of intellectuals, but one with clear overtones of hostility and gatekeeping. Witness also his repeated references to a life “in the corners” – as we would say, ‘on the margins’ – of academic spaces<sup>42</sup>.

One remarkable thing about Tzetzes in his twelfth-century context is his utter lack of interest in theological matters. Gregory of Corinth and Eustathios of Thessalonike were both churchmen, and both are known for theological as well as scholarly works; the other noteworthy poet of that age, Theodore Prodromos, whose pauperly *persona* is sometimes compared to Tzetzes’, wrote commentaries to the liturgical canons by Cosmas of Jerusalem and John Damascene, like the two archbishops<sup>43</sup>,

<sup>40</sup> The latter are published separately by P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzæ iambi*, «RSBN» n.s. VI-VII (1969-1970) 127-156: 144-146. Yet the *Iambos* – which include a poem in hexameters (III) – constitute a single editorial project with the second redaction of the *Histories*, which they conclude: see Leone *ibid.* 127. It is often repeated that the *Iambos* are three, of which the hexameter poem is the second. In fact they are five (I: vv. 1-22, tit. Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου στίχοι ἰαμβικοί; II: 23-292, tit. Παίδων ἀγωγή συντελής τῶ νῦν βίῳ; III: 293-309, tit. Τοῦ αὐτοῦ στίχοι ἠρωϊκοί; IV: 310-355, tit. Στίχοι ἰαμβικοί τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀμαθοῦς καὶ ἀρρητορεύτου, ὡσπερ φασὶν οἱ θειάζοντες, οἷα ῥήτορας οἴους Ἡρόδοτος λέγει βαρβαροδεστέρους ἔθνεων ἀπάντων; V: 356-360, untitled but clearly demarcated in the mss., as Aglae Pizzone has kindly verified for me), and this is the numeration I use here. On the tirade against the buffalo in *Hist.* XI 369 and in the *Iambos* see Aglae Pizzone’s contribution to this volume. On the passage in *Hist.* XI 369 see also P.A. Agapitos, *Grammar, genre and patronage in the twelfth century: A scientific paradigm and its implications*, «JÖByz» LXIV (2014) 1-22: 13; Id., *Blemish* cit. 22-27. On *Iamb.* III see D’Agostini-Pizzone, *o.c.*

<sup>41</sup> *Schol. Thuc.* I 123,1 v. 6 in *Pal. gr.* 252, f. 45r (M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzæ lettore di Tuciddide. Note autografe sul Codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252*, Bari 1999, 50) and two new occurrences in the passages of the *Allegories from the Verse-Chronicle* and *Logismoi* published by Tommaso Braccini and Aglae Pizzone in this volume (pp. 15 and 62 respectively). A κουστωδία of malicious rivals is also mentioned – twice – in *schol. Ar. Ran.* 507a Koster. See Jeffreys, *o.c.* 150, Luzzatto, *o.c.* 54-55; on Tzetzes’ frequent sarcastic use of σοφός and compounds see Savio, *o.c.* 43-47.

<sup>42</sup> The recurrent words are ἐγγώνιος and ἐγγωνιάζω / ἐγγωνιάω: *Exeg. II.* p. 22 Papat homopoulos, *schol.* 5,20 p. 421 Papat homopoulos; *Ep.* 39 (βίον τὸν πενιχρὸν καὶ ἐγγώνιον), 46 (οἴκουρὸς ἐγὼ καὶ ἐγγώνιος), 58 (ἐγγωνιάζειν γὰρ εἰωθός), and the alternative title of the satirical poem edited by S. Pétridès, *Vers inédits de Jean Tzetzæ*, «ByzZ» XII (1903) 568-570 in *Vind. phil. gr.* 321 (Στίχοι κατὰ διαβολέων τινῶν διασυρόντων αὐτὸν καίπερ ἐγγωνιώντα) as reported by Agapitos, *Blemish* cit. 16 n. 84; cf. *Hist.* I 11, 286 (τὸν φιλογώνιον ... βίον).

<sup>43</sup> Prodromos: partly published by H.M. Stevenson, *Theodori Prodromi commentarios in carmina sacra melodorum Cosmae Hierosolymitani et Ioannis Damasceni ad fidem codicum &c.*, Romae 1888; for the rest see Nesseris, *o.c.* II, 439-443. Eustathios: P. Cesaretti-S. Ronchey, *Eustathii Thessalonicensis exegesis in canonem iambicum pentecostalem*, Berlin-München-Boston 2014. Gregory: F. Montana, *Gregorio di Corinto. Esegisi al canone giambico per la Pentecoste attribuito a Giovanni Damasceno*, Pisa 1995; the commentaries to the other canons are still unpublished, see Kominis, *o.c.* 91-97; F. Montana, *I canoni giambici di Giovanni Damasceno per le feste di Natale, Teofania e Pente-*

not to mention a number of devotional poems. Tzetzes knew the Scriptures well and could quote them fluently for very secular purposes (cf. *e.g.* *Ep.* 57); θεολογίας δὲ ὡς ἀκαταλήπτου πάντη ἀπείχετο, as he says of Socrates (*arg.* I *Ar. Ran.*, p. 692 Koster)<sup>44</sup>. His nearest approach to St John Damascene is the parodic Canon of the Seven Idiots which he wrote to the tune of the saint's canon on the Dormition of the Virgin, Ἀνοίξω τὸ στόμα μου (*schol.* *Ar. Ran.* 990(b) Koster)<sup>45</sup>. One wonders if this lack of theological *élan* was another reason for his lack of preferment in official academe, whose revolving doors with the Church were in frantic activity.

His only incursion into religious literature is a *hypomnema* in praise of St Lucy (*BHG* 996)<sup>46</sup>. Probably commissioned in 1154 by an embassy of Sicilian bishops<sup>47</sup>, this text gives us a valuable glimpse of Tzetzes the prose narrator, complementing

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*coste nelle esegesi di Gregorio di Corinto*, «Koinonia» XIII (1989) 31-49. Under this aspect, Tzetzes' profile is more similar to that of Constantine Manasses, whose 'academic' activity, however, is of a very different kind and extent; see I. Nilsson, *Writer and Occasion in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The Authorial Voice of Constantine Manasses*, Cambridge 2021 (113-141 on Constantine as *grammatikos*). On the possible relationship between Tzetzes and Manasses, revolving around the *sebastokratotrixa* Eirene, see Rhoby, *Auftragsdichter* cit. 167-168.

<sup>44</sup> "However, he held off from theology altogether as something incomprehensible"; cf. *schol. Carm. Il.* I 124, p. 129 Leone, where he boasts that "No-one of my own age in this time has read more books [than I] – except theological ones" (πλὴν μόντοι τῶν θειοτέκτων). On Tzetzes' refusal to impose Christian readings onto his sources cf. his insistent rejection of Michael Psellos' Christianizing allegory of the opening of *Iliad* IV (*schol. Carm. Il.* II 27a, 34, pp. 160, 162-163 Leone; *Exeg. Il.* p. 5 with *schol. ad loc.* p. 420 Papathomopoulos; *Alleg. Il.* IV 47-53), see Frederick Lauritzen's chapter in this volume; cf. also the opening scholion to the *Little-Big Iliad* (p. 101 Leone), where "while being most Christian" (χριστιανικώτατος ὢν) he dismisses the notion that Homer's gods are glorified demons. On his disinterest for Christian perspectives more generally see A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Cambridge 2007, 306-307 (citing the emphatically pagan focus of the *consolatio* in *Ep.* 38).

<sup>45</sup> Koster, *Commentarium* cit. 989-991; see Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 185 and n. 17. This text is a list of seven famously stupid people, subverting the well-known canons of the Seven Sages (Koster, *l.c.*). The play on the liturgical and the literary-critical sense of the word 'canon' is very clever, but the composition may not have endeared its author to his most orthodox readers.

<sup>46</sup> *Ed. pr.* A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Varia Graeca sacra. Сборникъ греческихъ неизданныхъ богословскихъ текстовъ IV-XV вѣковъ*, С.-Петербургъ 1909, 80-97; see now G. Sola, *Ioannis Tzetzi hypomnema et S. Methodii patriarchae canon in S. Luciam* (2), «Roma e l'Oriente» XV (1918) 48-53; (3), XVI (1918) 106-115; (4), XVII (1919) 90-105. Tzetzean authorship is conclusively defended by P.L.M. Leone, *Sull'Hypomnema in S. Luciam di Giovanni Tzetzes*, «Rivista di bizantinistica» I/2 (1991) 17-21: 17-18. The text comes with scholia (Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *o.c.* 97-101), which show none of the usual Tzetzean fingerprints but could still originate from him (so, it seems, Nesseris, *o.c.* II, 526); their main sources are Stephanus of Byzantium, the *Suda*, and the *Etymologica*.

<sup>47</sup> See G. Sola, *Ioannis Tzetzi hypomnema et S. Methodii patriarchae canon in S. Luciam* (1), «Roma e l'Oriente» XIV (1917) 42-50: 45-46; Leone, *Sull'Hypomnema* cit. 19-21.

the «lively and artful prose»<sup>48</sup> of the *Letters*. It stands out for a rhetorically crafted proem in praise of Sicily, replete with learned references to geography, mythology, and history (§1-3), and for St Lucy's quirky comparison of herself to “my ancestor Archimedes” and his machines (§11-12)<sup>49</sup>. Like other Tzetzean works, the *hypomnema* is peppered with hexameters, some Homeric, some custom-made<sup>50</sup>; the author's characteristic erudition is on display also in St Lucy's anecdote about Archimedes' death, where the inventor's last words are recast into their Doric ‘original’ (§12)<sup>51</sup>.

Tzetzes' true object of interest were the classics. Homer first of all: beside the «edutainment»<sup>52</sup> of the *Little-Big Iliad*, *Allegories of the Iliad* and of the *Odyssey*, and *Theogony* (which includes a catalogue of the best warriors of the Trojan War), there is the ponderous *Exegesis of the Iliad*, consisting of an introduction to Homer and an equally fulsome commentary to the first book of the epic. He wrote commentaries to Hesiod's *Works and Days* and the pseudo-Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles*<sup>53</sup>, to several plays of Aristophanes (*Clouds*, *Frogs*, *Plutus* – the ‘Byzantine triad’ – and *Birds*, plus a general introduction to comedy and a plot summary of *Knights*), and to Lycophron's *Alexandra*<sup>54</sup>; an introduction to bucolic poetry and to Theocritus' first *Idyll*, the so-called *Anecdoton Estense* (it is not known if he also produced a commentary)<sup>55</sup>; annotations, whether direct or taken down from lectures, on Pindar, some

<sup>48</sup> Agapitos, *Blemish* cit. 6 n. 27; contrast Sola, *Hypomnema (1)* cit. 49.

<sup>49</sup> See Kaldellis, *Hellenism* cit. 305, and Philip Rance's chapter in this volume (pp. 457-458).

<sup>50</sup> On Tzetzes' «metrical bricolage» see N. Zagklas, *Metrical polyeideia and generic innovation in the twelfth century: The multimetric cycles of occasional poetry*, in A. Rhoby-N. Zagklas (edd.), *Middle and Late Byzantine Poetry: Texts and Contexts*, Turnhout 2018, 43-70: 46-47. On his use of hexameters as a closural device (cf. *S. Lucia* §13) see also Agapitos, *Blemish* cit. 26 n. 134, with an important qualification in D'Agostini-Pizzone, *o.c.* 129-130.

<sup>51</sup> For a similar act cf. *Ep.* 11, discussed by Giulia Gerbi on pp. 142-145 below.

<sup>52</sup> Cullhed, *Eustathios* cit. 11\*; or, as Kaldellis puts it, «classics for dummies» (*Hellenism* cit. 301). See all of *Hellenism* cit. 301-307 on Tzetzes as a «Hellenist». On the *Little-Big Iliad*, often referred to as *Carmina Iliaca*, see P.A.M. Leone, *I “Carmina Iliaca” di Giovanni Tzetzes*, «QC» VI/12 (1984) 377-405; Braccini, *Erudita* cit.; Cardin, *Teaching* cit.; U. Mondini, *Composing the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς. Macro- and microstructure of a Byzantine Homeric poem*, «ByzZ» CXIV (2021) 325-354. On his Homeric «rewritings» see Braccini, *Riscrivere* cit.

<sup>53</sup> Gaisford, *o.c.* 499-654 (but see Nesseris, *o.c.* II, 516); A. Martano, *Scolii e glosse allo Scudo di Eracle dal manoscritto Ambrosiano C 222 inf.*, «Aevum» LXXVI (2002) 151-200. On Tzetzes and his praxis as a commentator see Budelmann, *o.c.* esp. 154-161. A list of his scholarly works can be found in Nesseris, *o.c.* II, 515-519 (commentaries), 523 (didactic poems).

<sup>54</sup> E. Scheer, *Lycophronis Alexandra*, II, Berolini 1908 (together with the *scholia vetera*). See also Wendel, *o.c.* 1978-1981, and Thomas Coward's contribution to this volume.

<sup>55</sup> I. Kayser, *De veterum arte poetica quaestiones selectae*, Lipsiae 1906, 54-97; C. Wendel, *Scholia in Theocritum vetera*, Lipsiae 1914, 7-13 (including the final part, which Kayser had omitted). See also Id., *Überlieferung und Entstehung der Theokrit-Scholien*, Berlin 1920, 9-17.

plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, Nicander's *Theriaka* and *Alexipharmaka*, and Oppian's *Halieutica*<sup>56</sup>; and, in the realm of prose, commentaries on Herodotus<sup>57</sup>, Aphthonios<sup>58</sup>, and Porphyry's *Eisagoge*<sup>59</sup>, as well as annotations on two manuscripts of Herodotus and Thucydides, of the latter of which the autograph survives (*Pal. gr.* 252)<sup>60</sup>. Beside these, he wrote three didactic poems on ancient poetry – *On the Differences between Poets*, *On Tragic Poetry*, *On Comic Poetry*<sup>61</sup> – and one *On Metres* which he dedicated to his brother Isaac, who had also written a metrical treatise before dying an early death<sup>62</sup>. Tzetzes' verse *metaphrasis* of Ptolemy's *Geography* does not seem to have survived beside the lines he quotes in *Hist.* XI 396, 890-997<sup>63</sup>; the epitome of Apollodorus' *Library* in *Vat. gr.* 950, which some have ascribed to him, is not his after all<sup>64</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> See Wendel, *Tzetzes* cit. 1972; Nesseris, *o.c.* II, 516-517. Pindar: one note in dodecasyllables in *Vat. gr.* 1312 is ascribed to Tzetzes (*schol.* Pind. *Isth.* I 51d Drachmann), and it is unclear whether he did more work on him; see Wendel, *Tzetzes* cit. 1971/1972. Keep in mind that the most authoritative manuscript of Pindar's *Olympians* with scholia, *Ambr.* C 222 *inf.*, was copied by a student of Tzetzes' and contains plenty of Tzetzian material, see p. xv above. Aeschylus: S. Allegrini, *Note di Giovanni Tzetzes ad Eschilo*, «AFLPer» IX (1971/1972) 219-233; O.L. Smith, *The A commentary on Aeschylus: author and date*, «GRBS» XXI (1980) 395-399. Sophocles: F. Bevilacqua, *Il commento di Giovanni Tzetzes a Sofocle*, «AFLPer(class)» XI (1973/1974) 559-570. Euripides: D.J. Mastrorarde, *Preliminary Studies on the Scholia to Euripides*, Berkeley 2017, 80-89, and Jacopo Cavarzeran's contribution in this volume. Nicander and Oppian: U. Cats Bussemaker, *Scholia in Nicandri Alexipharmaca cum glossis*, Milano 1974; F. Napolitano, *Esegesi bizantina degli "Halieutica" di Oppiano*, «RAAN» XLVIII (1973) 237-254.

<sup>57</sup> Cramer, *o.c.* 1-138. See now Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit.

<sup>58</sup> See Nesseris, *o.c.* II, 518.

<sup>59</sup> Only partly published by Chr. Harder, *Johannes Tzetzes' Kommentar zu Porphyrius περὶ πέντε φωνῶν*, «ByzZ» IV (1895) 314-318.

<sup>60</sup> Herodotus: M.J. Luzzatto, *Note inedite di Giovanni Tzetzes e restauro di antichi codici alla fine del XIII secolo: Il problema del Laur. 70,3 di Erodoto*, in G. Prato (ed.), *I manoscritti greci tra riflessione e dibattito*. «Atti del V colloquio internazionale di paleografi greca (Cremona 4-10 ottobre 1998)», Firenze 2000, 633-654. Thucydides: Ead., *Tzetzes lettore* cit. See also J. Bértola, *Using Poetry to Read the Past: Unedited Byzantine Verse Scholia on Historians in the Margins of Medieval Manuscripts*, diss. Gent 2021, 11-31, and his contribution to the present volume.

<sup>61</sup> Koster, *Prolegomena* cit. 79-109. The one *On Tragedy* is re-edited with commentary by G. Pace, *Giovanni Tzetzes. La poesia tragica*, Napoli 2011<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis bibliothecarum Oxoniensium*, III, Oxonii 1836, 302-333. Like many other works of Tzetzes', this poem is badly in need of a new edition.

<sup>63</sup> See Chiara D'Agostini's chapter in this volume, pp. 410-414.

<sup>64</sup> J. Michels, *Tzetzes epitomator et epitomatus? Excerpts from ps.-Apollodorus' Bibliotheca, John Tzetzes' Lycophron commentary and Chiliades in Vaticanus gr. 950*, «Byzantion» XC (2020) 115-132. The ascription was first proposed by Richard Wagner (no, not that one) in the *addenda* to his *editio princeps* of the epitome: *Epitoma Vaticana ex Apollodori Bibliotheca*, Lipsiae 1891, xvi.

Not all his commentaries are equally well explored. Several still await a truly critical edition; some, indeed, await any edition at all. They portray a scholar with ecumenical interests, ranging across genres and periods of both poetry and prose (but with a clear focus on technical handbooks in the case of the latter<sup>65</sup>). Especially with regard to poetry, his breadth of coverage is notable, as is his determination to put it on display. In the prolegomena of the *Commentary to Hesiod's Works and Days* he chastises the earlier commentator Proclus for (among other failings) not following the proper order of an introduction: "First of all he ought to have stated the division of poets (*sc.* into genres) and what are their characteristics, and who are the most famous of them; then to tell the life of the one which he had appointed for exegesis, and whose contemporary he was, and how many books he wrote..." (prol. p. 10 Gaisford)<sup>66</sup>. He then proceeds to do just that, as he had done – he reminds us – in the poem *Περὶ διαφορῶς ποιητῶν* and in the *Commentary to Lycophron*, here still attributed to his brother (p. 11)<sup>67</sup>. He offers similar overviews in the *Anecdota Estense* on bucolic poetry, in the didactic poems *Περὶ τραγικῆς ποιήσεως* and *Περὶ κωμικῆς ποιήσεως*, and more than anywhere in the *Prolegomena de comoedia*<sup>68</sup>. In the latter work he sets Aristophanes' poetry against the background of Old Comedy with its history and characteristics, and *en passant* he produces the nearest pre-modern equivalent to a History of Classical Scholarship in Antiquity, from the Pisistratean recension of Homer to the Library of Alexandria, for which he is a crucial source<sup>69</sup>. Not all the material he proffers there is equally reliable<sup>70</sup>, but the cumulative effect

<sup>65</sup> He was clearly aware of the downward shift in subject-matter represented by the commentary to Hermogenes, witness the hexameter paratext in *Voss. gr. Q1* mentioned above (xiv and n. 28).

<sup>66</sup> On Proclus see also Cesaretti, *o.c.* 162-163, highlighting the «Proclomania of learned Constantinopolitans» (so called by A. Angelou, *Nicholas of Methone: the life and works of a twelfth-century bishop*, in M. Mullett-R. Scott (edd.), *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*. «University of Birmingham Thirteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies 1979», Birmingham 1981, 143-148: 144). One of its standard-bearers was Michael Psellos, another of Tzetzes' polemical targets (*Exeg. Il.* p. 5 with *schol. ad loc.* p. 420 Papathomopoulos, *Alleg. Il.* IV 47-52, cf. *Alleg. Od.* prol. 36, 50-40; see Cesaretti, *o.c.* 129-140, and Frederick Lauritzen's contribution to this volume).

<sup>67</sup> Tzetzes had also done something similar, but without the first, 'general' part, in the *Exegesis of the Iliad*. An analysis of the prolegomena of the *Exegesis* is in Cesaretti, *o.c.* 146-151, who remarks the novelty of Tzetzes' «individuazione filologica» of Homer in contrast to Psellos' «decontestualizzazione filosofica»: «Tzetze vuole collocare Omero nel punto e nel posto che gli compete» (p. 146). On the prolegomena of *Exeg. Il.* see also Alberto Ravani's chapter in this volume, pp. 262-264.

<sup>68</sup> Koster, *Prolegomena* cit. 22-38.

<sup>69</sup> See R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship from the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age*, Oxford 1968, 100-102, 127-128; P.M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, Oxford 1972, I, 321-323 with II, 474 n. 198 and 488-489 n. 193; L. Canfora, *La biblioteca scomparsa*, Palermo 1988<sup>5</sup>, 193-196; Wilson, *o.c.* 194-195.

<sup>70</sup> For discussion of one detail see the chapter by Anna Novokhatko in this volume.

remains: the authorial figure that emerges from these works is not a mere exegete of an individual text, but an expert on all of ancient Greek poetry with its history and contexts, who simply serves the reader one slice at a time from a Lucullan banquet of knowledge.

For all his «professional classicism»<sup>71</sup>, Tzetzes devoted a commentary of sorts to one post-classical author: himself. The *Chiliads*, or more properly *Histories*<sup>72</sup>, are ostensibly a commentary on Tzetzes' letters, although both their contents and their presentation in the manuscripts leave room for doubt on which of the two texts, the *Letters* or the *Histories*, is the 'primary' one<sup>73</sup>. It is probably the most notorious of Tzetzes' works: he was just the sort of person to write a 12,668-line exposition in political verse on his own collected letters – and then add scholia to it<sup>74</sup>. He regarded it as his *chef d'œuvre*, ἡ βίβλος Ἄλφα τζετζικῶν πονημάτων (*Iamb.* 1)<sup>75</sup>. Yet this “Book I of the Tzetzean toils” is among the least studied, and least well understood,

<sup>71</sup> Kaldellis, *Hellenism* cit. 301.

<sup>72</sup> Tzetzes' title is Ἱστορίαι; the now common appellation *Chiliads* derives from the *editio princeps* (N. Gerbel, Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζετζου βιβλίον ἱστορικῶν, τὸ διὰ στίχων πολιτικῶν, Ἄλφα καλούμενον, ὃν στίχων τὸ ποσὸν μυριάς μία καὶ δυοχίλιοι ἑπτακόσιοι πεντηκονταεπτά. *Ioannis Tzetzae variarum historiarum liber versibus politicis ab eodem Graece conscriptus et Pauli Lacisii Veronensis opera ad verbum Latine conversus, nuncque primum in luce editus*, &c., Basileae 1546), which segmented the text into sections of a thousand verses each – the 'chiliads' of the title. Whence the reference system currently in use, consisting of the number of the chiliad; the sequential number of the *historia* in the relevant *pinax*, which bears no relation to the sequence of the chiliads; and the number of the verse(s) within the relevant chiliad. So «*Hist.* VII 140, 433-437» = the 140<sup>th</sup> *historia* (of the third *pinax*, in this case), corresponding to vv. 433-437 of the seventh chiliad, i.e. 6,433-6,437 of the entire poem. Whoever next edits the *Chiliads* should consider adopting a more rational system, modelled on the author's own: *pinax*, *historia*, verse (see p. xxiii and n. 77).

<sup>73</sup> So Kaldellis, *Hellenism* cit. 302. The arrangement in the manuscripts differs between the two recensions of the text, A and B, both of which go back to the author. In recension A the order is as follows: i. commentary to the *Letter to Lachanas* (141 *historiai*, *Hist.* I 1-IV 470); ii. *Letter to Lachanas* (*Hist.* IV 471-779); iii. *Ep.* 1; iv. commentary to *Ep.* 1 (23 *historiai*, *Hist.* IV 780-V 201); v. *Ep.* 2-107; vi. commentary to *Ep.* 2-107 (496 *historiai*, *Hist.* V 202-XII 668). In recension B the *Chiliads* are written sequentially, without the *Letters* interspersed, but in the same order, with the same internal partitions, and with the *Iambos* added by way of conclusion. See Leone, *Historiae* cit. xiv-liv; Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 184-186.

<sup>74</sup> Leone, *Historiae* cit. 529-569. Most of them are authorial, but not all: Leone, *ibid.* lvi. Remember that the *Letters* have scholia of their own (Leone, *Epistulae* cit. 158-174). Much like those of the *Chiliads* (Leone, *Historiae* cit. liv-lvi), they often concern the vicissitudes of the text itself: see Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 188-189; Ead., *Self-authorization* cit. 674-676; and pp. xxviii–xxx below.

<sup>75</sup> «His flagship work», Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 183; also, concretely, «das erste der in der vorliegenden Sammlung enthaltenen Werke des T[zetzes]», Wendel, *Tzetzes* cit. 1994 – presumably *qua* his flagship work. On Tzetzes' possible reasons for his choice of the *stichos politikos* see Jeffreys, *o.c.* 150-157; Agapitos, *Blemish* cit. 48-54.

components of his corpus<sup>76</sup>. On its face, it is an omnium gatherum of erudite facts, mostly to do with ancient literature, mythology, and history, purporting to elucidate the classical allusions in the letters. The 23 *historiai* of the second *pinax*, for instance (*Hist.* IV 780-V 201), deal with the grape ἐπιφυλλίς; the rare words βεκεσέληνος and βλιτομάμμας; Melitides and other proverbial μωροί; the word μαμμιάκυθος (a synonym of βλιτομάμμας); silly Makko, with a real-life counterpart; the multiple senses of the word γρῶ (all of the above come chiefly from Aristophanes); the friendship of Peirithoos and Theseus; that of Anacharsis and Solon (both from Plutarch); the ass of Cuma; the Aesopic monkey who tried to pass for a man (both from Lucian); Paris' bowshot in *Il.* XI 369-395; [Eur.] *Rh.* 510-511; *Il.* XVII 175; Aesch. *Sept.* 592; Achilles in Skyros; the contrast of Trojans and Greeks in *Il.* III 2-9; *Il.* XX 196-197; *Il.* VI 127; the Molionidai of *Il.* XI 750; the monster Cacus (from Cassius Dio and Dionysius of Halicarnassus); the centaur Asbolos (from Apollodorus); and a verse by the tyrant Dionysios (*TrGF* 76 F 11, again from Lucian) – all of which are alluded to in *Ep.* 1. But the work is a carefully planned whole. Each of the three sections in which the *Histories* are divided has a *pinax*, a table of contents; as he tells us himself, Tzetzes first formulated the three *pinakes*, determining which allusions in the *Letters* needed to be explained and allocating space accordingly, then he proceeded to write the respective *historiai*<sup>77</sup>. For all his boasting about his ease of improvisation and speed of writing<sup>78</sup>, his insistence on this point brings home for the reader how much thought and care he devoted to the poem.

Like a good many modern commentaries, the *Chiliads* show off simultaneously how sophisticated the commented text is, and how learned the commentator. With both hats on at once, Tzetzes construes for himself an authority both as a classical commentator and as a classic. So the label 'post-classical' which I used in the previ-

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<sup>76</sup> The only recent attempts to investigate the *Chiliads* from a viewpoint other than text-critical are those by Aglae Pizzone: *The Historiai* cit. and *Autobiographical* cit. Earlier see Giske, *o.c.* 12-40 (who first realized that the *Histories* are a commentary on the *Letters*: p. 22); H. Spelthahn, *Studien zu den Chiliaden des Johannes Tzetzes*, München 1904; Wendel, *Tzetzes* cit. 1993-1999. Some more attention has been devoted to Tzetzes' sources: M. Carvalho Abrantes, *Explicit Sources of Tzetzes' Chiliads*, s.l. 2017<sup>2</sup> (*non vidi*), and already Chr. Harder, *De Ioannis Tzetzae historiarum fontibus quaestiones selectae*, Killiae 1886, not to mention the apparatus of sources in Leone's edition.

<sup>77</sup> There is plenty of cross-references within the *Chiliads*, indicating the *pinax* and the *historia* where a certain piece of information is to be found (*e.g.* VI 62, 587-589, including a reference to the heading of the *historia*; VII 120, 198; 137, 377-378). There is also an outline of the general structure of the work (V 23, 186-201) and a few other references to the *pinax*, which make it clear that it existed before (the final version of) the individual *historiai*: VI 50, 382-393; VII 144, 744-750; X 332, 455-457. See Giske, *o.c.* 15, 22-27; Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 187-189. Unfortunately, modern editors omit the *pinakes*, as if they were supposititious material rather than the very framework of the book.

<sup>78</sup> See Jeffreys, *o.c.* 148-149.

ous paragraph is true only in a chronological sense. Leave aside that an author is *ipso facto* construed as a classic – as an *auctor* – when he becomes an object of commentary; the focus of the *Histories* is itself relentlessly classical. In this way the *Histories* classicize the *Letters* too. If the *Letters* «were designed to contain as many *exempla* and references as could be crammed into them for the purposes of pedagogy»<sup>79</sup>, these are – precisely – references: they enrich the ostensible message of the respective letter, but they are not, at least in theory, the whole point of it. The *Histories* upend this ‘original’ perspective to put the classical elements centre stage. They elide the subject-matter, the purpose, the concrete communicative situation of each letter – real or fictional as they may have been<sup>80</sup> – to lift the text onto the plane of the classical past, Greek or (less often) Roman<sup>81</sup>. The *Histories* atomize and filter the *Letters* to make of them something quite different from what they are on their own<sup>82</sup>.

The title of the work points us in the right direction too. This is no run-of-the-mill *Commentary to the Letters*, a genre with which the *Histories* do not fully align<sup>83</sup>. These are histories, in a different sense from the one familiar to us. «In the usage of scholiasts and grammarians, a ἱστορία was (1) any subject matter in a classical text that required elucidation, and then (2) the elucidation itself»<sup>84</sup>. And this is precisely what the *Histories* are and do<sup>85</sup>. Their focus is not on the letter collection as a text, but on one particular aspect of its content, one possessed of autonomous educational

<sup>79</sup> Kaldellis, *Hellenism* cit. 302, cf. Leone, *Epistulae* cit. xviii-xix.

<sup>80</sup> It is clear that some of the *Letters* relate to fictional situations and are designed «als Muster für stylistische Übungen» (Wendel, *Tzetzes* cit. 1992), and others, too, are likely to have been reworked for publication as well as from the first recension of the collected *Letters* to the second (Leone, *Epistulae* cit. ix, xiii-xiv). See the chapter by Giulia Gerbi in this volume.

<sup>81</sup> On the balance of Greek and Roman elements and the general absence of a deep Christian element see Kaldellis, *Hellenism* 303-307; on the *Letters* specifically, Nesseris, *o.c.* I, 164. On the Roman element see also S. Xenophontos, ‘A living portrait of Cato’: *self-fashioning and the classical past in John Tzetzes’ Chiliads*, «EBiz» II (2014) 187-204; V.F. Lovato, *Hellenising Cato? A short survey of the concepts of Greekness, Romanity and barbarity in John Tzetzes’ work and thought*, in K. Stewart-J. M. Wakeley (edd.), *Cross Cultural Exchange in the Byzantine World, c. 300-1500 A.D.*, Oxford-New York 2016, 143-157.

<sup>82</sup> See Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 190, on the *Chiliads* «tearing Tzetzes’ letter collection out of historical contingency»; Grigoriadis, *o.c.* 28. On atomization in Tzetzes’ commentaries see Budelmann, *o.c.* 153-157; also his observations on the self-sufficiency of Tzetzean commentary, «discussions that can be read, perhaps even are best read, without the ancient text in mind» (*ibid.* 157-161).

<sup>83</sup> Witness, for instance, the lack of any prefatory material: see above, p. xxi and n. 67.

<sup>84</sup> A. Cameron, *Greek Mythography in the Roman World*, New York 2004, 90-93 (quotation from p. 91).

<sup>85</sup> With aptly Tzetzic allusiveness, there is also a nod to the more common sense of the word ἱστορία, specifically as the title of Herodotus’ work: Tzetzes’ *Histories* (I prol. 1-3 and 1, 4-105), like Herodotus’ (I 6,1), begin with Croesus.



value and which accordingly both required and deserved explanation. In so doing, the *Histories* display the impressive range of both Tzetzes the letter-writer and Tzetzes the scholar, the latter regaling his readers with detailed access to the concealed treasures of the former through his great learning and didactic impetus<sup>86</sup>.

One last work of “Tzetzic researches” remains to be mentioned. Until recently, the Λογισμοί (something like ‘Audits’) were thought to be lost. All that was known about them was what Tzetzes himself said elsewhere, especially in a note to Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (v. 1328 Koster): in that book, he relates, he «audit[ed] the work of several wise men, fifty-two plays by Euripides, and one hundred nineteen books of wise men from all fields. One book of mine contains the audits of all of them, mostly in iambic metre, but a few also in other metres; and there are other books too containing in a scattered way my audits of other wise men»<sup>87</sup>. Yet it turns out that some extracts on rhetorical topics do survive in a manuscript in Leiden, *Voss. gr. Q1*<sup>88</sup>; what is more, the codex (which also contains the *Commentary to Hermogenes*) is annotated in Tzetzes’ own hand<sup>89</sup>, only the second set of autograph annotations known to have survived<sup>90</sup>. It seems that this work was a miscellany of *adversaria critica*, perhaps originally existing as loose sheets to which Tzetzes kept adding throughout his life and from which relevant sections could be copied into manuscripts according

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<sup>86</sup> Let us not forget that the *Histories*, while extraordinary in the proportion of ‘commentary’ to text (as in many other respects), are not the only instance of Tzetzian self-scholarship. Among his other works, at least the *Carmina Iliaca*, the *Exegesis of the Iliad*, the *Allegories of the Iliad* and of the *Odyssey*, the poem Περί διαφορῶς ποιητῶν, and quite possibly the *Life of St Lucy* (see n. 46 above) come with authorial scholia. Those of the *Exegesis* are often autobiographical or reflect explicitly on the author’s thought processes (see e.g. those discussed at p. xxviii and nn. 34, 44); those of the *Carmina* have a more detached air, as is apparent from the very beginning of the first scholion (Ὁ παρὼν ποιητής, p. 101 Leone), though they are not free from autobiographical obtrusions (e.g. *schol.* III 284, pp. 223-224 Leone). The scholia to the *Exegesis* reflect its status as a work in progress and often contain additions or updates to the main text; those to the *Little-Big Iliad* – by far the bulkiest corpus of Tzetzian self-scholarship after the *Chiliads* themselves – are the scholarly apparatus that accompanies a finished work of high poetry, and more often than not they strike an appropriate tone for epic commentary (and for classroom use). See F. Conca, *L’esegesi di Tzetzes ai Carmina Iliaca, fra tradizione e innovazione*, «Koinonia» XLII (2018) 75-99; Cardin, *Teaching* cit. 104-105 and *passim*; Mondini, *Composing* cit. 330-331 and *passim*; and his chapter in this volume.

<sup>87</sup> Koster, *Commentarium* cit. 1079; transl. Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 663, lightly adapted. On the connotations of the word λογισμοί and of Tzetzes’ self-assumed title of λογιστής (a nod to the title of μέγας λογαριαστής in the Imperial administration) see *ibid.* 670-688.

<sup>88</sup> Meyier, *o.c.* 93; this fact was pointed out with reference to Tzetzes by Nesseris, *o.c.* I, 187-188 and II, 525, and again by Aglae Pizzone, who is now preparing an edition of the text.

<sup>89</sup> Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 653-654.

<sup>90</sup> The other set is to be found in *Pal. gr. 252*, a ninth-century codex of Thucydides: Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 9-42.

to need – as happened with the rhetorical material in *Voss. gr.* Q1<sup>91</sup>. Once again the breadth of Tzetzes' coverage is evident (and duly aggrandized by him)<sup>92</sup>.

Much like some of his modern scholars, Tzetzes was not above excoriating the object of his efforts. Take for example the book epigram that concludes the *Commentary to Lycophron* (and which, in the version transmitted by *Pal. gr.* 18, f. 96v, graces the frontispiece of this volume)<sup>93</sup>:

Λόγους ἀτερεπεῖς πολλὰ μοχθήσας γράφεις  
ἀνιστορήτως βάρβαρα πλέξας ἔπη  
“γωλειά”, “γρόνας”, “οὔσα” καὶ “τυκίσματα”  
σὺν “Ορθαγῆ” τε “κρίμνα” καὶ “λυκοψία”,  
μόνον νέοις ἰδρωῶτα, μωρὲ Λυκόφρον·  
οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο πλὴν νοῖ λήρων λόγοι.

Joyless discourses with much toil you write  
weaving barbaric words – those hapaxes<sup>94</sup>!  
*goleia* (v. 376), *gronas* (20), *ousa* (20), and *tykismata* (349)  
with *Orthage* (538), *krimna* (607), and *lykopsia* (1432):  
they're only sweat for schoolboys, stupid Lycophron!  
Nothing but humbug for the mind<sup>95</sup>, your words.

<sup>91</sup> For an overview of the *Logismoi* and their textual history see Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. (loose sheets: 663-665; work in progress: 666-667).

<sup>92</sup> The claim that he wrote about 52 plays by Euripides stretches credibility. It is unlikely in the extreme that 33 of the lost plays still survived in the twelfth century, and his other works only show little evidence of genuine access to them; contrast Hipponax (p. xxvii below). On his vaunted reading of satyr drama (*schol. Diff. Poet.* 113, p. 90 Koster) see L. Carrara, *Giovanni Tzetze, il dramma satiresco ed il Fortleben di Euripide a Bisanzio: Nuove letture di vecchi testimoni*, «MEG» XXI (2021) 171-214.

<sup>93</sup> Scheer, *o.c.* 398. On this epigram (*DBBE* Type 3725) see C. De Stefani-E. Magnelli, *Lycophron in Byzantine poetry (and prose)*, in Chr. Cusset-É. Prioux (edd.), *Lycophron: éclats d'obscurité*, Saint-Étienne 2009, 593-620: 615-616; on its occurrence in *Pal. gr.* 18, see A. Rhoby, *Ausgewählte byzantinische Epigramme in illuminierten Handschriften*, Wien 2018: 115-118.

<sup>94</sup> ἀνιστορήτως – a reference to otherwise “unattested” words – humorously reverses the first line of the *Alexandra*, Λέξω τὰ πάντα νητρικῶς ἅ μ' ἱστορεῖς: A. Berra and A. Loojenga *ap.* De Stefani-Magnelli, *o.c.* 616 n. 82.

<sup>95</sup> For the sake of consistency I translate the *Palatinus*' νοῖ, understood as the dative singular of νοῦς, as in the Pauline Epistles and in *Exeg. Il.* p. 251 Papatomopoulos and *Ep.* 72. Scheer prints a metrically suspect οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν ἢ κενοῖ λήρων λόγοι, with no variants noted in the apparatus. Rhoby, *Epigramme* cit. 116 prints a more plausible οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο πλὴν <κε>νοῖ λήρων λόγοι, “Nothing but the empty speeches of humbug-talkers”.

Earlier in the *Commentary to Lycophron* he had thunderously exposed the poet for “stealing” words from the iambographer Hipponax and getting the sense wrong to boot (ἀσκέρα, *schol. Lyc.* 855 Scheer): “He is wrong to call sandals ἀσκέρα [...] O Lycophron, be aware that you steal words from Aeschylus, but from Hipponax even more; and either from forgetfulness or ignorance you mix up their meanings. But I will remind this clever poet myself! Don’t you know, O Lycophron, that when you were hogging Hipponax’s book, I was standing behind you and watched you read his words? You found ἀσκέρας there and you took it in that sense, without paying attention nor having the words in mind. But hear what Hipponax says, and learn that ἀσκέρα are not sandals, but felt boots...”, and so forth<sup>96</sup>. The margins of *Pal. gr.* 252 testify to considerable impatience towards Thucydides<sup>97</sup>.

For Tzetzes, learning meant books<sup>98</sup>. Anything worth learning is found in books: either directly, or through book-derived products such as Tzetzes prodigious memory, which deputizes for a library when he is ἀβίβλης, ‘bookless’ (*Alleg. Il.* XV 87-89; *Hist.* VIII 176, 173-181). His typical line of attack against schedographers is that they are ignorant because they do not read books, and that they damage their students’ education because their pointless *schede* divert them from reading books<sup>99</sup>. By contrast, books are where his own, true knowledge originates. Instead of claiming some great man of letters in his scholarly genealogy, he states that his only teacher

<sup>96</sup> Scheer, *o.c.* 277: οὗτος ἀσκέρας τὰ ὑποδήματα κακῶς λέγει [...] ὃ Λύκοφρον, γίνωσκε ὅτι τὰς μὲν λέξεις ἀπὸ Αἰσχύλου κλέπτεις, ἐξ Ἰππώνακτος δὲ πλέον· ἐπιλήμων δὲ ὢν ἢ μὴ νοῶν ταύτας ἄλλην ἄλλως τίθησιν. ἀλλ’ ἀναμνήσω τοῦτον ἐγὼ τὸν σοφὸν ποιητὴν. οὐκ οἶσθα, ὃ Λύκοφρον, ὅτι, ὅτε σὺ τὴν Ἰππώνακτος κατεῖχες βιβλίον, κατόπιν σου ἐστηκώς ἐγὼ ἐώρων σε τὰς αὐτοῦ λέξεις ἀναλεγόμενον καὶ τὸ ἀσκέρας δὲ ἐκεῖσε εὐρηκας καὶ οὕτω τέθεικας μὴ προσχὼν μὴδ’ εἰς νοῦν ἔχων τὰ ῥήματα. ἀλλ’ ἄκουε, πῶς φησιν Ἰππώναξ, καὶ μάθε ὅτι ἀσκέρα οὐ τὰ ὑποδήματα, ἀλλὰ πιλία, κτλ. See E. Degani, *Studi su Ipponatte*, Bari 1984, 80-81. Tzetzes must have read at least Book I of Hipponax’s *Iambs* at first hand, see O. Masson, *Les fragments du poète Hipponax*, Paris 1962, 42-51. He is the most important source for Hipponax’s text beside the papyri, and one or more of his quotations have turned up in every papyrus of Book I published to date. Hipponax is not the only otherwise lost author whom Tzetzes read and quoted (see Wilson, *o.c.* 196), but his reuse of Hipponax is remarkable in both scale and duration. He may have been aware of the rarity of this text in his time and displayed his acquaintance with it as a mark of erudition; there is also an element of self-identification, see Valeria F. Lovato’s chapter in this volume, pp. 202-206.

<sup>97</sup> See Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore cit.*, e.g. 31-38, and Julián Bértola in this volume, pp. 341-346. Cf. the criticisms of Aristophanes in *schol. Ar. Ran.* 25a, 358a, 422, 1144a Koster (Wilson, *o.c.* 194) and of Homer and others in the *Carmina Iliaca* (Braccini, *Riscrivere cit.* 47-50, and Valeria F. Lovato’s contribution to this volume, pp. 190-201).

<sup>98</sup> Savio, *o.c.* 52-53, 58.

<sup>99</sup> E.g. *schol. Ar. Plut.* 9 Massa Positano; *schol. Ar. Ran.* 1160a Koster; *Hist.* VII 143, 500; IX 280, 703-704; XII 399, 225 and 238. See Agapitos, *Blemish cit.* 15, 17-20; Savio, *o.c.* 52-56.

was his father (*Hist.* III 70, 159-172; IV *Ep. ad Lach.* 562-598)<sup>100</sup>; as for the rest – he assures us with typical humblebrag – he is an autodidact, “not having been taught anything by anyone, rather being naturally clever and self-taught, having learnt everything from the reading of books” (*schol. Exeg. II.* 5,20 p. 421 Papathomopoulos)<sup>101</sup>. There is more to this than self-distancing from what we might call ‘conventional academia’. Tzetzes’ rejection of new, skills-based teaching methods is the flip side to his embracing of a book-centred classical education where praxis is nourished by a deep engagement with the ancient texts. The fundamental role of books in his educational project is as apparent from his choice of subject-matter as from his explicit statements in his works, and it is baked into his very biography.

Physical ‘books’, not only disembodied ‘texts’<sup>102</sup>. Tzetzes makes much of his limited access to books in certain moments of his life, such as the financial disgrace that followed his falling out with the eparch of Beroia: the reader needs to pity him for having to work without books, excuse the defects caused by this lack of resources, and (implicitly) admire what he is capable of doing nonetheless<sup>103</sup>. Although his skills as a textual critic were not of the first order, he knew how liable manuscripts are to error, and what a difference an “old” book can make to establishing a reliable

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<sup>100</sup> These two touching descriptions of his father’s wide-ranging instruction are complemented by the more concise statement in *Hist.* V 17, 615-616, which also gives us his father’s name: Michael. That entire *Historia* (V 17, 585-630) is devoted to Tzetzes’ ancestry. His aristocratic maternal family originated in Iberia (today’s Georgia) and was related to two empresses, Maria of Alania and Eudocia Makrembolitissa; his paternal family was much humbler, but Tzetzes’ grandfather – another John – had been a generous host to men of learning in spite of being totally illiterate himself. On Tzetzes’ family see P. Gautier, *La curieuse ascendance de Jean Tzetzes*, «REByz» XXVIII (1970) 207-220; for an analysis of the two autobiographical passages from the *Chiliads* and their implication for Tzetzes’ self-presentation see Xenophontos, *o.c.*; Pizzone, *Autobiographical* cit. 294-303.

<sup>101</sup> Papathomopoulos, *o.c.* 421: καίτοι γε μηδὲν παρὰ μηδενὸς ἤρμηνευμένῳ ἢ θυμοσόφῳς καὶ αὐτομαθῶς ἐξ ἀναγνώσεως βιβλίων πάντα μαθόντι μοι. For context see Cullhed, *Blind* cit. 59.

<sup>102</sup> Compare what Paolo Cesaretti says about Eustathios in Cesaretti-Ronchey, *o.c.* 29\*-30\*.

<sup>103</sup> See *e.g.* *Exeg. II.* pp. 21-23 Papathomopoulos (cannot guarantee the *verbatim* accuracy of a quotation because he is almost wholly bookless), *ibid.* 252 μήτε βιβλίῳ τε βλεπόντων καὶ γραφόντων πλὴν μόνου τοῦ κειμένου τῆς βίβλου τῆς Ὀμηρείας καὶ ταύτης οὐκ εἰς ὀλίγα παρεφθορούιας, “nor am I looking and writing from a book except for the text of Homer’s volume, and it too is damaged in not a few places”; also *Alleg. II.* XV 85-89 (cannot check the author of a verse), *Hist.* VIII 176, 170-181 (cannot tell whether an expression comes from the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*). This last remark devolves into a boast of his prodigious writing speed, even without books: see Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 190-192. Note her remark on Tzetzes’ defiant pose as «a self-sufficient and self-contained literary archive» who does not need constant access to books because his memory makes up for it (*ibid.* 197-198). On the *topos* of booklessness and its implications see especially Savio, *o.c.* 58-65; on the sale of Tzetzes’ books after the events in Beroia see also Philip Rance’s chapter in this volume, pp. 427-430.

text<sup>104</sup>. In part, no doubt, this awareness came from his own bitter experience. The scholia to the *Histories* and the newly discovered autograph annotations to the *Commentary to Hermogenes* in *Voss. gr. Q1* are peppered with insults addressed to the respective scribes because of their bad copying<sup>105</sup>. Tzetzes was remarkably – and remarkably explicitly – concerned with the materiality of his works *qua* written artefacts<sup>106</sup>. He often references the textual state of his writings before they became the manuscript the reader holds in their hands<sup>107</sup>, or the damage which they suffered in some earlier iteration<sup>108</sup>. In one particularly interesting case (*schol. Ep. 1*, p. 159 Leone) he expostulates at length about a scribe, a χοιριδίου υἱός who had failed to follow instructions and copied the text straight from the πρωτότυπον – a rough draft, written τυχαίως καὶ αὐτοσχεδίως [...] ἀτάκτως καὶ πεφυρμένως “as it happened, impromptu [...] without order and mixed up” – unlike the other copyists,

<sup>104</sup> Wilson, *o.c.* 193-194.

<sup>105</sup> *Chiliads*: e.g. *schol. Hist. I 19 tit.*; V 23, 201; VII 149, 831 and 845 (with a request to copy from the πρωτόγραφον rather than from the corrupt copy he is annotating); VIII 161, 35 (ditto); 171, 136; XI 396, *schol. ad schol.* 902; XII 399, 226; 404, 332; XIII 496, 620b, pp. 534, 549-550, 558-559, 564, 565, 569 Leone; see E. Trapp, *Tzetzes und sein Schreiber Dionysios*, «Diptycha» II (1980/1981) 18-22; Agapitos, *Blemish* cit. 20 n. 106; and Yulia Mantova’s chapter in this volume. *Commentary on Hermogenes*: two examples are published by A. Pizzone, *John Tzetzes in the margins of the Voss. gr. Q1: discovering autograph notes of a Byzantine scholar*, <https://cml.sdu.dk/blog/john-tzetzes-in-the-margins-of-the-voss-gr-q1-discovering-autograph-notes-of-a-byzantine-scholar> (4<sup>th</sup> February 2020). Compare the bars he directs at the scribe of the Heidelberg Thucydides, *Pal. gr.* 252: Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit., e.g. 26, 30, 38.

<sup>106</sup> See A. Pizzone, *Cultural appropriation and the performance of exegesis in John Tzetzes’ scholia on Aristophanes*, in D. Manolova-P. Marciniak-B. van der Berg (edd.), *Byzantine Commentaries on Ancient Greek Texts, 12th-15th Centuries*, Cambridge, forthcoming.

<sup>107</sup> E.g. *Ep. 10* (verse letter to his dead brother “crossed out” because of an excess of grief and *dichronoi*); *schol. Hist. IV ep. ad Lach.* 779, p. 548 Leone (humorous verses not copied from the πρωτόγραφος χάρις into the fair copy); *schol. Ar. Ran.* 843b Koster (text of *schol.* 834a first written on a loose sheet attached to the πρωτότυπος τετραδίος, then fitted into the page by writing smaller and tighter). Other references to drafts on loose sheets (*σχεδία*, *σχεδάρια*) abound in the Tzetzean corpus, often with an emphasis on the author’s ease of improvisation: cf. e.g. *Exeg. II* p. 252 Papatomopoulos; *Alleg. Od.* V 103-104; *schol. Ar. Ran.* 843a Koster; *Hist.* VIII 176, 173 and 178. See Leone, *Historiae* cit. liv-lv; Pizzone, *The Historiae* cit. 190-192.

<sup>108</sup> See e.g. the verses in *Laur. Conv. Soppr.* 627 edited by Nunzio Bianchi in this volume, but also *Hist.* V 23, 200-201, VI 63 *tit.* and vv. 597-600 with *schol.* IV 141, 469b p. 547 Leone (missing pages stolen by some soldiers, with a prayer to the reader to buy them back and copy them in if they can) and the heading of the second collection of the *Letters* that precedes *Ep. 70* (somebody took both the *σχεδία* and the fair copy of the first collection, destroying the former and corrupting and jumbling the latter), cf. the headnote to *Ep. 76* (texts brought back together from the *σχεδάρια* “as we happened to find them and as we were able to read them”). See Pizzone, *The Historiae* cit. 188-190, highlighting how Tzetzes uses references to the history of the text to «build a sort of stratigraphy, a ‘biographical’ outline which applies to both the collection and its author» (190).

who complied with Tzetzes' directions and wrote everything in order, including the two tables of contents (πίνακες)<sup>109</sup>. As that very comment proves, Tzetzes inspected the manuscript after copying and warned the future reader about the flaw – while pointing out that the blame did not rest with him.

Recent studies have stressed the role of autography in Tzetzes' self-portrayal, a strategy which makes his writings visually recognisable and construes him as an official whose signature is vested with authority<sup>110</sup>. Another important aspect of this practice is what we may call a poetics of quality control. Tzetzes is not content with sending forth his writings into the world; he takes care that they circulate in a correct form according to his intention. With the author's obtrusive presence in the margins of the manuscript and his performative vituperation of delinquent copyists, the reader is both alerted to what could go wrong and reassured that it has been exactly put right<sup>111</sup>. At the same time as he seeks to control the dissemination (and reception) of his work, Tzetzes inscribes himself into the process of revision, joining it with the other aspects of his authorial self<sup>112</sup>. This is part and parcel of his posture as λογιστῆς τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ νέων, «auditor of the ancients and moderns» (*Iamb.* 360)<sup>113</sup>. He scrutinizes and chastises all alike: rogue scribes, incompetent colleagues, misguided poets, and not least himself, with his youthful errors and precarious circumstances. The result – we are led to understand – is unique, and uniquely valuable<sup>114</sup>.

Tzetzes' «cantankerous nature» is part of his authorial persona just as much as his vast erudition and his educational ardour. It is a seal of authenticity – with the

<sup>109</sup> The passage is discussed by Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 674-676.

<sup>110</sup> See Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 670-688; Ead., *Bureaucratic discourse, signature and authorship in John Tzetzes: A comparative perspective*, «ACME» LXXIII (2020) 43-66.

<sup>111</sup> See especially *schol. Hist.* V 23, post 201, where the work of “cleaning up” the “smelly filth of this crappigrapher (for so he should be called, rather than calligrapher)” is explicitly said to be undertaken for his patron Constantine Kotertzes. Leone, *Historiae* cit. 549 prints κοπρογράφου at v. 3, with no variant noted in the apparatus, but the manuscripts whose digital reproductions are accessible to me (*Par. gr.* 2644, f. 111v; *Vat. gr.* 1369, f. 115v) read κοπρογογράφου, and I am in no doubt that Tzetzes wrote thus: he does use coprophagy as a term of abuse elsewhere (*Hist.* XII 399, 233), but the opposition with καλλιγράφου and the sense of the passage both require κοπρογογράφου. Cf. the other Tzetzean coinage inverting καλλιγράφος, viz. φουλογγράφος, used with reference to himself (note to the *hypothesis* of *Ar. Plut.* in *Ambr.* C 222 *inf.* f. 144v *ap.* Massa Positano, *o.c.* xcii; *schol. Ar. Plut.* 733 Massa Positano; note to *schol. Hermog.* in *Voss. gr.* Q1 f. 115v *ap.* Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 678); see Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 143-144; Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 676-678.

<sup>112</sup> On the secretarial and «bureaucratic» aspects of Tzetzes' self-presentation see Pizzone, *The Historiae* cit. 192-195; Ead., *Self-authorization* cit. 673-676; Ead., *Bureaucratic* cit. 51-53.

<sup>113</sup> Transl. Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 680.

<sup>114</sup> Tzetzes' «retorica dell'eccellenza e dell'unicità» is well brought out by Savio, *o.c.*: e.g. 18, 22-23, 54, 122-123 (quotation from p. 22).

noun to be understood both as true authorship and as unfiltered frankness. It was also a marketing ploy. Look again closely at the drawing from *Pal. gr.* 18 in the frontispiece of this volume. While the scroll in Lycophron's hand bears the opening line of the *Alexandra*, the one in Tzetzes' does not contain the epigram that opens the commentary<sup>115</sup>, as one might have expected, but the closing one: not the presentation of Lycophron and of Tzetzes' own work on him, but the tirade against the poet which we examined a few pages ago. While this thirteenth-century manuscript was, obviously, not produced under Tzetzes' supervision, the artist's choice illuminates the authorial persona that was still felt to emerge from the commentary. In other words: Tzetzes tried hard to make himself seem like a thoroughly unpleasant person, and that shrewd self-advertising campaign very much succeeded.

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*Studia Tzetziana nostris temporibus neglecta fere iacere quis est, quin sciat?*, asked Heinrich Giske in the very first sentence of his 1881 dissertation<sup>116</sup>. Ironically, in the months between his writing that sentence and its publication, another dissertation on a near-identical subject had come out<sup>117</sup>. And Tzetzian studies – Τζετζικὰ ἔρευνα, we should call them (*Hist.* XII 398, 66 and 68) – have not been neglected since then. The second half of the twentieth century has brought a great deal of text-critical work, with previously unpublished texts coming to their *editio princeps* and others, published in unreliable or insufficiently critical editions, redone in line with modern editorial technique. Two names stand out: Herbert Hunger and, especially, Pietro Luigi M. Leone<sup>118</sup>. The turn of the century brought one of the most exciting discoveries on a Tzetzic subject: Maria Jagoda Luzzatto's realization that the bilious scholia to Thucydides' text in *Pal. gr.* 252 were in Tzetzes' own hand<sup>119</sup>, of which we thus gained the first specimen. The new millennium has brought the first translations

<sup>115</sup> Scheer, *o.c.* 1.

<sup>116</sup> H. Giske, *De Ioannis Tzetzae scriptis ac vita*, Rostochii 1881, 1.

<sup>117</sup> G. Hart, *De Tzetzarum nomine vitis scriptis*, Lipsiae 1880.

<sup>118</sup> H. Hunger, *Johannes Tzetzes. Die Allegorien aus der Verschronik. Kommentierte Textausgabe*, «JÖByz» IV (1955) 13-49; Id., *Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien zur Odyssee, Buch 13-24*, «ByzZ» XLVIII (1955) 4-48; Id., *Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien zur Odyssee, Buch 1-12*, «ByzZ» XLIX (1956) 249-310. P.L.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae iambi*, «RSBN» n.s. VI-VII (1969-1970) 127-156; Id., *Ioannis Tzetzae Epistulae*, Leipzig 1972; Id., *Ioannis Tzetzae Carmina Iliaca*, Catania 1995; Id., *Ioannis Tzetzae Historiae*, Galatina 2007<sup>2</sup> (Napoli 1968<sup>1</sup>); Id., *Ioannis Tzetzae Theogonia*, Lecce 2019.

<sup>119</sup> M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide. Note autografe sul Codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252*, Bari 1999, esp. 9-42.

of Tzetzes into modern languages<sup>120</sup>, an impressive number of articles and chapters elucidating his works and his place in the thriving learned culture of Comnenian Byzantium<sup>121</sup>, and the first book-length non-text-critical monograph on Tzetzes since the two of 1881<sup>122</sup>. Discoveries have continued, too: two excerpts on rhetorical topics – one in political verse, one in trimeters – published by Carlo Maria Mazzucchi from *Ambr. M 66 sup.*<sup>123</sup>; a large chunk from the *Accounts* (Λογισμοί), retrieved by Aglae Pizzone in *Voss. gr. Q1* together with the *Commentary to Hermogenes*, again graced by Tzetzes' characteristically cantankerous autograph *marginalia*<sup>124</sup>; most recently, again thanks to Aglae Pizzone, the verse epistle that closes Tzetzes' *Letters*, previously ignored by Leone<sup>125</sup>.

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<sup>120</sup> *Little-Big Iliad*: P.L.M. Leone, *Giovanni Tzetzes. La leggenda troiana (Carmina iliaca)*, Lecce 2015 (Italian); C.A. Messuti, *Tzetzes. La guerra de Troya, también conocida como Carmina iliaca o como Pequeña Gran Iliada*, s.l. 2020 (Spanish, unfortunately based on Lehrs' edition of 1840). *On Tragic Poetry*: G. Pace, *Giovanni Tzetzes. La poesia tragica*, Napoli 2011<sup>2</sup> (2007<sup>1</sup>; Italian). *Allegories of the Iliad and of the Odyssey*: A.J. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Iliad*, Cambridge MA-London 2015; Eid., *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Odyssey*, Cambridge MA-London 2019 (both English). On these last two see the issues raised by D.J. Mastronarde, «BMCRev» 2015.09.45 (<https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2015/2015.09.45/>) and by J. Haubold, «BMCRev» 2020.03.07 (<https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2020/2020.03.07/>). There exists a multi-authored English translation of the *Chiliads* on the *Theoi* website (<https://www.theoi.com/Text/TzetzesChiliades1.html>); I mention it for the sake of completeness, but it relies on an outdated text (Kiessling's of 1826) and it is so full of errors that it should be used with the greatest caution, if at all. Two further English translations are in progress: a selection of literary-critical works (the preface to the *Exegesis of the Iliad*, the verse treatises *On the Differences between Poets*, *On Tragedy*, and *On Comedy*, the prose *Prolegomena to Comedy*, and the *Life of Aristophanes*) by Baukje van den Berg for the «Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library», and the *Little-Big Iliad* by Silvio Bär and Valeria F. Lovato for the «Translated Texts for Byzantinists» series. There are two old translations into Latin: one of the *Chiliads* by Paulus Lacisius in the *editio princeps*, N. Gerbel, *Ioannis Tzetzae variarum historiarum liber versibus politicis ab eodem Graece conscriptus et Pauli Lacisii Veronensis opera ad verbum Latine conversus*, &c., Basileae 1546, and one of the *Little-Big Iliad* in F.S. Lehrs, *Hesiodi carmina, Apollonii Argonautica, Musaei carmen de Herone et Leandro, Coluthi Raptus Helenae, Quinti Post-Homerica*, &c., Parisiis 1840, 4-34.

<sup>121</sup> I shall not attempt to list them, partly because the list would far exceed the bounds of acceptability for one footnote, partly in order not to rouse φθόρος (or accusations of buffalo-hood) in those whom I might inadvertently omit. The footnotes of the chapters included in this volume will provide a reasonably complete overview of recent as well as less recent scholarship.

<sup>122</sup> M. Savio, *Screditare per valorizzare. Giovanni Tzetze, le sue fonti, i committenti e la concorrenza*, Roma 2020.

<sup>123</sup> C.M. Mazzucchi, *L'ex libris di Giovanni Camatero e versi inediti di Tzetzes nel codice ambrosiano M 66 sup.*, «Aevum» XCIII (2019) 441-447.

<sup>124</sup> A. Pizzone, *Self-authorization and strategies of autography in John Tzetzes: The Logismoi rediscovered*, «GRBS» LX (2020) 650-688 – with more to come.

<sup>125</sup> A. Pizzone, *Christmas presents for John Tzetzes: a new verse epistle from the letter collection*, «ByzZ» CXIV (2021) 1305-1322.



This surge of interest was well under way when *John Tzetzes: An International Conference* took place in Venice in September 2018. Twenty-three scholars from all over Europe gathered for two and a half days to discuss Tzetzes' writings and their significance for both Classical and Byzantine Studies. With the inevitable defections and changes of plans and a few, fortunate additions, the present volume represents the outcome of those discussions. We are proud to publish in Open Access, however belatedly, the first collection of essays dedicated entirely to Tzetzes.

We begin with three *anecdota*. Tommaso Braccini reports a manuscript from the Patriarchal library of Alexandria containing what seems to be the entire allegorical preamble to Tzetzes' *Μετρικὴ χρονική*, including its previously unknown final section (vv. 528-633), which he kindly allows to appear here for the first time. Aglae Pizzone regales us with more of the *Λογισμοί* which she has uncovered in the biliously annotated *Vossianus*: a detailed treatment of an obscure but apparently crucial part of good oratory, the *προκατάστασις* (and the endless polemics that surrounded it, *ça va sans dire*). Both of these texts were in fact recorded in the published catalogues of the respective libraries, yet they had escaped the notice of Tzetzic scholars until now. Conversely, the verses against the vandalic "son of a goat" in ms. *Laur. conv. soppr.* 627 were well known, but they had not been published except for a few verses; Nunzio Bianchi finally gives them the full edition they deserve.

The typical Tzetzian polemic which we have seen surface in the final part of the *Allegories from the Verse-Chronicle* and reach a paroxysm in the verses against the *τρῶγου γόνου* is also the subject of Yulia Mantova's article: a taxonomy of the terms of obloquy used by Tzetzes in the scholia to the *Histories*. The polemical verve does not abate in the metrical diatribes explored by Marc Lauxtermann as he untangles the "method in the madness" of Tzetzes' use of the "common syllable" – which, mind, is *not* the same as the *δίχρονοι* the buffaloes dabble in! This section, concerned with topics of a general import in Tzetzes' *œuvre*, continues with Giulia Gerbi's study of fictional or semi-fictional letters in the *Epistles*, which often embed a clear pragmatic setting but do not name an addressee or are not written *in persona Tzetzae*. In the concluding chapter, Jesús Muñoz Morcillo investigates Tzetzes' sophisticated use of *ekphrasis* and its influence on Renaissance artistic theory.

The short third section comprises two papers about Tzetzes' reception of two major figures, one mythological (Thersites, by Valeria Flavia Lovato) and one historical (Alexander the Great, by Corinne Jouanno). References to Alexander abound in the corpus, mixing references to learned sources and to the «popular culture» represented by the *Alexander Romance*. Thersites, on the other hand – like his poetic analogue, Hipponax – can be read as an in-text avatar of Tzetzes' self-definition, in opposition to Eustathius of Thessalonike and his fondness for Odysseus.

The rest of the volume is devoted to Tzetzes' multi-faceted reception of ancient texts, from Homer to Late Antiquity, in chronological order. *Rite coepturi ab Homero*, as Quintilian would say (I 10,46), we begin with a diptych of chapters on two of Tzetzes' Iliadic works: the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς and the *Allegories of the Iliad*. Ugo Mondini examines the *Little-Big Iliad* and their authorial scholia as a piece of didactic literature responding to contemporary concerns about presenting useful information in a synoptic and concise way; Alberto Ravani analyses the prolegomena to the *Allegories* in comparison with the introduction to the *Exegesis of the Iliad* and teases out the ways in which Tzetzes displays not only his skill as an allegorist, but also his knowledge of myth and his talent as a narrator. Frederick Lauritzen's contribution, on the other hand, is squarely allegorical, focussing on a long-distance polemic between Tzetzes and Michael Psellos and its cultural context. Anna Novokhatko rounds off the Homeric material with a discussion of the mysterious Panel of Four which (as Tzetzes claims in the *Introduction to Comedy*) edited the Homeric poems at Peisistratos' behest.

Jacopo Cavarzeran examines the evidence for Tzetzes' exegetical activity on Euripides as attested by *Vat. gr.* 909, where annotations going back to Tzetzes' likely commentary are augmented by material drawn from other works of his. The chapter by Julián Bértola looks at authorial and didactic strategies in Tzetzes' verse scholia on codices of Thucydides and Herodotus (*Pal. gr.* 252 and *Laur. Plut.* 70,3), further proposing Tzetzean authorship for some unattributed material in the *Laurentianus*. While the book epigrams on the fifth-century historians have been edited or re-edited recently, the large commentary to Lycophron which John Tzetzes ascribed to his late brother Isaac (cf. *Ep.* 21) has not been revised in over a century; Thomas Coward offers a sample of what a new edition should look like. The last two chapters explore Tzetzes' reception of technical texts, which literature-focussed Classicist and Byzantinists alike are liable to overlook. With Chiara D'Agostini we dive into Tzetzes' reception of Ptolemy's *Geography* in the context of twelfth-century geographical discourse and (again) a polemic with Eustathios of Thessalonike. Philip Rance investigates the "mechanographers" with whom Tzetzes would, or could, not part even in poverty: the final pages of the volume brim with Anthemios and Pappos, geometry and optics, Archimedes and burning-mirrors, and Tzetzes' real or purported sources.

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I am very thankful to the board of «Eikasmos» for welcoming the volume in their free online Open Access series and for two sharp extra pairs of eyes at proof-reading stage. During the preparation of the volume I had the support of many. I single out three people on whom I relied extensively for (among other things) wise advice, bibliographical assistance, and cat photos: Thomas Coward, Ugo Mondini, and most of all Tzetzes' groupie-in-chief, Aglae Pizzone. The quality of the finished product, and my own sanity while producing it, owe them a great deal. I accept responsibility for any remaining failures of editorship; I mention especially the lack of indexes, which (buffalo that I am!) an excess of other workload has prevented me from compiling. I hope their absence, in an electronic publication, may be somewhat mitigated by the word search function.

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## A neglected manuscript of Tzetzes' *Allegories from the Verse-chronicle*: First remarks

As Herbert Hunger noticed more than sixty years ago in a crucial article<sup>1</sup>, John Tzetzes devoted many efforts to his *Verse-chronicle* (Μετρικὴ χρονικὴ βίβλος), which he wrote in dodecasyllables. He left it unfinished, because, in his own words (*Hist.* XII 399, 249-251), he realized that “everyone hated that which is technical and loved what is barbarous: what a misfortune!” (ἀτελῆ καὶ ταύτην / ἀφῆκα βλέπων σύμπαντας τὸ τεχνικὸν μισοῦντας, / τὰ βάρβαρα δὲ στέργοντας. ὃ συμφορᾶς ἐσχάτης). In Hunger's plausible view, τὸ τεχνικὸν hinted at Tzetzes' dodecasyllable, more ‘pure’ than the average Byzantine dodecasyllable, especially in the use of *dichronoi*, and, in Tzetzes' view, the true heir to the iambic trimeter<sup>2</sup>. Conversely, τὰ βάρβαρα was possibly an allusion to the «primitive political verse» or pentadecasyllable.

This incomplete work, which should have contained “the history of the world” (κόσμου ἱστορία), seems to be largely lost, except for some fragments. Two such fragments (and possibly a third one<sup>3</sup>) are short and are contained in the *Chiliades* (XI 396, 890-997, on Mysia, and XII 399, 259-290, on the Metonic cycle), where they stand out because of their metre. The longest and most important one, which we will

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\* My deepest gratitude goes to Gemma Storti and David Eichert, who generously helped me to improve the English text of this paper. Valeria Flavia Lovato, Enrico Emanuele Prodi, and Marco Barbero were kind enough to read this work in various stages of its writing, and I am very grateful to them for many detailed and valuable suggestions.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. Hunger, *Johannes Tzetzes. Die Allegorien aus der Verschronik. Kommentierte Textausgabe*, «JÖByz» IV (1955) 13-49: 13-17; see also Id., *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, II, München 1978, 59. Previously, the *Verse-chronicle* had been discussed in the general context of Tzetzes' works by G. Hart, *De Tzetzarum nomine vitis scriptis*, Lipsiae 1880, 63, and C. Wendel, *Tzetzes, Johannes*, in *RE* VIIA (1948) 1959-2011: 2000-2001. It is unfortunate that, apparently, I.C. Nesseris did not make use of Hunger's article for the entry about the *Verse-chronicle* in his most useful catalogue of works by Tzetzes: *Η παιδεία στην Κωνσταντινούπολη κατά τον 12ο αιώνα*, II, diss. Ioannina 2014, 515-526: 526 (VII.1).

<sup>2</sup> On Tzetzes' “technical verse”, see the very useful remarks by G. Pace in Giovanni Tzetzes, *La poesia tragica*, Napoli 2007, 31-39. Cf. also Hunger, *Allegorien aus der Verschronik* cit. 13-14; on Byzantine prosody and metrics, see also M.D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres: Texts and Contexts*, II, Wien 2019, 265-383.

<sup>3</sup> Hart, *o.c.* 63, and Wendel, *o.c.* 2000-2001, also ascribed to this work a passage in the *Chiliades* (XII 438, 713-721) dealing with crocodiles.

deal with here, was transmitted by manuscripts as an independent poem, variously entitled Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου ἀλληγορίαι ἐκ τῆς χρονικῆς μετρικῆς βίβλου, or Ἐκ τῆς μετρικῆς χρονικῆς βίβλου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου ἀλληγορίαι, or Τοῦ μακαρίτου Τζέτζου περὶ ἀλληγορίας. In all likelihood, this is an excerpt from the first part of the *Verse-chronicle*, where Tzetzes exposed a typical Greek mythological cosmogony – interpreted, however, in allegorical terms.

Following Hunger's edition, these *Allegories from the Verse-chronicle* consist of 527 verses. After a preamble about the origin of allegory, described as “an Egyptian invention” (εὐρύημα τῶν Αἰγυπτίων, v. 1) brought to Greece by Cadmos, Tzetzes divides “every written *logos*” into three groups: completely false texts, completely true texts, and mixed ones. The first category (like myths about Cronos eating his own children, Athena born from the head of Zeus and so on) makes sense only by means of an allegorical interpretation. The second category (i.e. the completely true texts) does not need any allegory: this is the case for the deeds of the Apostles. The third category has a plausible literal meaning (for instance, Egyptian Thebes has one hundred gates, and each of them, in time of war, has space for two hundred war chariots), but also a more hidden sense (in this case, that the city of Thebes, in time of war, disposed of twenty thousand chariots in total). In the same way, allegorical meanings can be decrypted according to the physical elements (στοιχειακῶς), or according to the passions of the soul (ψυχικῶς), or, finally, according to the “nature of the material facts” (ὡς πραγμάτων πέφυκεν ὑλικῶν φύσις), i.e. following a euhemeristic approach<sup>4</sup>.

The *Allegories from the Verse-chronicle* continue with sections (in apparently desultory order) dedicated to the allegorical interpretation of mythical characters and episodes. The list includes Cronos and Rhea, the birth and childhood of Zeus and his rise to power, Eros, the weddings of Prometheus and Peleus, the birth of Athena, Hephaestus, the episode of the apple of discord, the riot of the gods against Zeus and the bondage of Hera, Laomedon, Phaethon, the bondage of Ares and his liaison with Aphrodite, Atlas, Perseus and the Gorgons, Styx and Cerberos, and finally the fight between Typhon and Zeus. The text of these *Allegories*, as known so far, ended with

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<sup>4</sup> On the use of allegory in Tzetzes, see at least H. Hunger, *Allegorische Mythendeutung in der Antike und bei Johannes Tzetzes*, «JÖByz» III (1954) 35-54: 46-47; P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio: Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milano 1991, 127-204 (esp. 147, 155, 193-194, where he points out that Tzetzes' division of allegory into physical, psychological and historical was heavily indebted to Psellos); P. Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel*, Washington D.C. 2005, 124-127; F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529-1453)*, in F. Montanari-S. Matthaios-A. Rengakos (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, Leiden-Boston 2015, 297-455: 379. See also Lauritzen, this volume.

two verses hinting at the abovementioned μάχη of Zeus against Typhon and the Titans. There is no real conclusion, even if the episode of Typhonomachy might indeed seem appropriate to bring to completion this wide excursus on the allegorical meanings of cosmogonical myths.

Hunger studied and explained the textual tradition of this fragment. The *editio princeps* appeared in 1616, edited and translated into Latin by the French “royal publisher” (*architypographus regius*) and scholar Frédéric Morel as *Ioannis Tzetzae allegoriae mythologicae, physicae, morales*. As Morel himself states in the title page, he obtained the text from a manuscript in possession of the Dutch diplomat Janus Rutgers. Morel hosted Rutgers as a student in Paris in the years 1611-1613 after the latter’s studies at Leiden with Voss, Scaliger, and Heinsius. His manuscript, which featured a badly corrupted text, is lost, and therefore Morel’s edition is a primary witness for its readings (its siglum is **Mo**). Rutgers’ manuscript contained a version of the *Allegories* that reached only up to verse 446, followed by a spurious verse which reads καὶ ταῦτα μὲν οὕτω καὶ ᾧδ’ ἔχει τέλος. Verses 1-147, however, are transmitted also by the late-twelfth-century manuscript Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana C 222 *inf.* (Martini-Bassi 886), siglum **A**, which is very hard to read and probably stems directly from the *milieu* of Tzetzes’ pupils<sup>5</sup>. This manuscript was used by Wilhelm Studemund and Carl Wendel. The next major advance in the knowledge of this little-known work by Tzetzes was the discovery by Hunger of manuscript Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Barb. gr.* 30 (siglum **B**, formerly dated to the fifteenth century but recently ascribed to the twelfth)<sup>6</sup>, containing about eighty plus-verses compared to Morel, but lacking the first part (vv. 41-527). This manuscript also contained scholia and glosses to the text of the *Allegories*<sup>7</sup>. Hunger supposed that, with the addition of the verses transmitted by the *Barberinianus*, the allegorical cosmogony was complete, and that Tzetzes meant for it to function as a preamble to his *Verse-chronicle*. Things, however, are different.

In 2013, Silvia Ronchey (whom I wish to thank once again) was kind enough to share with me her digital images of a low-quality microfilm of manuscript Al-

<sup>5</sup> About the dating and origin of this famous manuscript, see C.M. Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf. (Graecus 886): il codice e il suo autore*, «Aevum» LXXVII (2003) 263-275 and LXXVIII (2004) 411-437.

<sup>6</sup> A description is found in H. Hunger, *Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien zur Odyssee, Buch 13-24*, «ByzZ» XLVIII (1955) 4-38: 8. For the new dating see P.A. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners: a Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 1-57: 39 n. 199. A digital reproduction is available at [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Barb.gr.30](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Barb.gr.30).

<sup>7</sup> For the events leading to the discovery of the lost part of the *Allegories*, see Hunger, *Allegorische Mythendeutung* cit. 45-46.

Iskandariyya, Βιβλιοθήκη του Πατριαρχείου 62 (olim 107). Ronchey was studying this manuscript for the edition of Eustathius of Thessalonike's *Exegesis in canonem iambicum*, which she and Paolo Cesaretti have recently published. The origin of the manuscript was interesting enough: in Ronchey's words, it was «produced within a scholarly circle in Constantinople at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century... the fact that [it was] used for research and élite instruction is shown by the almost constant flow of corrections and *additamenta* of *aliae manus* datable between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century»<sup>8</sup>. The manuscript remained in Constantinople until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when it was presented to Cyril Loukaris, then Patriarch of Alexandria, who brought it to his patriarchal library<sup>9</sup>. As Ronchey pointed out to me, the *Alexandrinus* (for which I propose the siglum C) contains, among many exegetical works and homilies by various authors, also some works by Tzetzes. These texts include parts of his *Allegoriae in Iliadem*, and especially, at ff. 85v-88r, the Ἐκ τῆς μετρικῆς χρονικῆς βίβλου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου ἀλληγορίαι, as already stated by the old catalogue of Moschonas, which however gave no further information<sup>10</sup>. The existence of these passages was interesting enough in itself, since this manuscript apparently was not known to Hunger. A closer inspection has revealed, moreover, that the text of the *Alexandrinus* is the longest and most complete among all surviving testimonies of the *Allegories from the Verse-chronicle*, containing 633 verses written in three columns and accompanied by scholia. After v. 482 at f. 87v the text is written in a smaller hand. C has the first forty verses, which are lacking in B, and also 105 additional verses in the final section. Furthermore, this section culminates with a typical conclusion, which seems to indicate that the allegorical preamble to the *Verse-chronicle* really ended with v. 633.

The *Alexandrinus* is not easy to collate accurately, given the less-than-stellar quality of the reproductions and the unreadable sections in the manuscript, which is marred by stains and faded ink, especially at f. 86r<sup>11</sup>. Nonetheless, a collation reveals something of its stemmatic position.

<sup>8</sup> S. Ronchey, *Eustathios at Prodomos Petra? Some Remarks on the Manuscript Tradition of the Exegesis in Canonem Iambicum Pentecostalem*, in F. Pontani-V. Katsaros-V. Sarris (edd.), *Reading Eustathios of Thessalonike*, Berlin-Boston 2017, 181-197: 181.

<sup>9</sup> See the detailed description in *Eustathii Thessalonicensis exegesis in canonem iambicum pentecostalem*, edd. P. Cesaretti-S. Ronchey, Berlin-München-Boston 2014, 201\*-209\*; see also Ronchey, *Eustathios at Prodomos Petra?* cit. 181-183.

<sup>10</sup> See Th.D. Moschonas, *Κατάλογοι τῆς Πατριαρχικῆς Βιβλιοθήκης*, I: *Χειρόγραφοι*, Salt Lake City 1965<sup>2</sup> (Alexandria 1945<sup>1</sup>), 53.

<sup>11</sup> Here are the *variae lectiones* I managed to gather, compared to Hunger's text: Tit. ἐκ τῆς μετρικῆς χρονικῆς βίβλου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου ἀλληγορίαι; 7 ἀπόρνοις; 8 τεθεικότες; 10 ἐν συμβόλοις; 20 κατεσθίων; 26 ᾶ; 28 οὕτως; 30 φέρη; 35 νομήσας; 43 διεικάδα; 46 τηρῆ; 49

First of all, the existence of an archetype can be postulated from errors that are common to the whole manuscript tradition. Hunger already singled out a number of these errors: v. 20: κατήσθιεν Hunger κατεσθίων **ACMo**; v. 26: ὁ Hunger ἃ **ACMo**; v. 62: τοὺς Hunger οὖς **ABCMo**; v. 141: τροφὸς Hunger τροφή **ABC** τροφῆς **Mo**; v. 263: αὐτὸ Hunger αὐτὸς **BCMo**; v. 312: ὄρμα Hunger ἔρμα **BMo** ἔρμ... **C**; v. 315: καὶ **BCMo**, del. Hunger; v. 419: ἐπομβρίας Hunger διομβρίας **BC** δι'ομβρίας **Mo**; v. 426: ὄρμων ἐλικτηρίων Hunger ὄρμιων ἐλικτριῶν **BCMo**; v. 440: λέγουσιν Hunger λέγοντες **BCMo**; v. 464: παρὺγρων ἐκδρομὸν Hunger παρ'ὺγροῖς ἐκδρομῶν **BC**; v. 482: ὄρκος Hunger ὄρκον **BC**; v. 483: εἰλημμένον Hunger λελειμμένῳ **BC**; v. 505: δεδεγμένον Hunger δεδεγμένος **BC**

Because the *Alexandrinus* is by far the most complete testimony, it seems clear that it is not a *descriptus* of some other extant manuscript. Conversely, neither **Mo**, nor **A**, nor **B** can derive from **C**. **C** and **Mo** lack verses which are transmitted by **B** (183a, 252a, 272a, 403a, 425a, 460, 478), and share many errors which separate them from **A** and **B**. It is possible to point out the following examples (the first *lectio* is the right one according to Hunger): v. 7: ἀπέρονοι **A** ἀπόρονοι **CMo**; v. 35: νοσήσας **A** νομήσας **C** νομίσας **Mo**; v. 75: γραφαῖς **AB** φωναῖς **CMo**; v. 140: Θέμις **AB** Θέτις **CMo**; v. 141: ἴσις **AB** ἴδη **C** Εἶδη\* **Mo**; v. 193: ἀστέρᾳ **B** ἀέρᾳ **C**

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δισμυριοστὸν; 50 εἰσφερούσης; 51 δεικάδα; 55 τὴν, ἣν προεῖπεν, ἀρμάτων δεικάδα; 59 ἵπποβρότου; 62 οὖς; 63 οὐδαμῆ; 64 οὖς; 65 μόνον; 73 οἷ; 74 ποσαπλῶς; 75 φωναῖς; 79 τοῦ; 86 ὁ πετανὸς (?); 87 εὐνοοῦσα; 111 πῶς δὲ and γένει; 128 μακρὰν γράφειν θέλων; 132 ὑλικὴν; 135 μῆν (for γῆν); 140 Θέτις; 141 ἴδη; 151 δὲ; 153 τὸ δὲ φαῖνον; 183a missing; 189 λαμπρὰν; 192 τῶν (for τὸν); 193 ἀέρᾳ; 196 μὲν; 199 γράψαντες; 210 βραχὺ τι κίνημα; 213 ἀήρ τε καὶ γῆ καὶ πάλιν; 215 βραχὺ; 216 πέφηνε; 220 ξύμπας; 227 λαβὼν; 239 πλάττων; 245 γάμων; 252a missing; 255 τὴν; 256 μέσην; 258 ταρταρῶδεις; 263 αὐτὸς; 267 δὲ νόει; 272a missing; 273 αὐτῶν and γράφου (χρονο- added by a second hand); 300 Ἐριχθόνα; 301 ἐξ; 306 συνεζύγη; 312 τὲ and ἔρμ- ended by an abbreviation mark; 315 καὶ; 319 τὸν and μακροῖς; 332 κατωτάτω; 340 ὡς παῖς; 344 Ζεὺς ἄλλ'; 345 ἀτράκτων; 351 τούτων; 352 Ζεὺς, τὸ; 357 οὐπα; 362 διατρέχειν βίῳ; 363 παρεισφρῶν; 377 δι' αὐ; 378 τῶν ὑδάτων; 381 ἡλίου; 383 λαβὼν; 391 πᾶν (for πῦρ); 392 τὴν σύγκρασιν δὲ; 394 θέα; 402 δόμον; 403a missing; 409 ἐκτεταμένους; 410 λεῶν; 414 πόας τε καὶ ζῶα πάντα τρέφει; 418 ἥλιος; 419 καὶ γῆν οὐρανὸν διομβρίας; 422 ἔφθασαν and δὲ (for τε); 423 ἦ; 425a missing; 426 πορπύων and ὄρμιων ἐλικτριῶν; 428 συστροφαὶ δὲ τῶν; 430 διφρευτικῶν (?); 431 χρυσεμπόρων; 435 ταχὺς; 437 περιθραύσασαν; 439 πρὶν (for πῦρ); 440 λέγοντες; 442 καὶ; 446 ἂν τὸν; 447 ἐκπεσὼν; 452 Ἡφαιστικάς μηχαναῖς and συνειγμένους; 454 κεραστικὸν; 460 missing; 461 Ποσειδάωνειος; 462 λύουσα; 464 παρ'ὺγροῖς ἐκδρομῶν; 466 ἐμπύρου; 467 χύσιν; 468 πη (for ὅπη) and ἄλαις; 474 αὐτὸ; 476 ἐφυῶς; 478 missing; 479 Πήδασος καὶ Χρυσάο; 481 αἰθερωθὲν and οὐρανὸς; 482 ὄρκον; 483 λελειμμένῳ; 485 τὸ νέρθεν; 486 Γίγαντα; 488 μάχην (for μένειν); 490 μεσηῖτις (*i.m.* γρ. καὶ μεσῖτις); 492 ἥλιος ἥλιος; 494 νυχθημέρων and περιδρόμων; 496 ἄλλη; 502 κατέσχεν; 505 δεδεγμένος; 506 πρὶν (for πρὸς); 509 ἀθρόως; 516 ἐντειόσει νοῦν; 519 διττοῖς νῦν ἐπέγνωκας; 520 τὸ **C** (-v added by a second hand) and μάθης; 522 κ' ἔχηκεν; 524 νυχθημέρων; 525 αὐλοῖς and εἶπον (for ἔφην).



**Mo**; v. 196: πᾶς **B** μὲν **CMo**; v. 215: βαθὺ **B** βραχὺ **CMo**; v. 216: πέφυκε **B** πέφηγε **CMo**; v. 227: λαχὼν **B** λαβὼν **CMo**; v. 256: μέρους **B** μέσην **CMo**; v. 345: ἀτάκτων **B** ἀτράκτων **CMo**; v. 362: διεκτρέφειν βίον **B** διατρέχειν βίῳ **CMo**; v. 363: παρεισφρεῖν **B** παρεισφρῶν **CMo**; v. 377: τάδ' αὖ **B** δι' αὖ **CMo**; v. 383: λαχὼν **B** λαβὼν **CMo**; v. 403: δρόμον **B** δόμον **CMo**; v. 422: ἔφρασαν **B** ἔφθασαν **CMo**.

Could **Mo** derive from **C**? This possibility is excluded by the fact that **C** features some errors or slight inversions of words, which the careless scribe of **Mo** (which has the true reading) could not have corrected *suo Marte* (for instance: v. 10 ἀσυμβόλοις **Mo** ἀσυμβούλοις **A** ἐν συμβόλοις **C**; v. 210: βραχὺ κίνημά τι **BMo** βραχὺ τι κίνημα **C**; v. 266: νόει δὲ **B** νόει δ' (sic) **Mo** δὲ νόει **C**; v. 357: οὕτω **B** **Mo** οὕπω **C**; v. 431: χρυσεμπύρων **BMo** χρυσεμπόρων **C**).

It is likely, therefore, that **C** and **Mo** both derived from a common subarchetype, whose existence can be also postulated from the readings which the two manuscripts feature at v. 414: ὁ δ' αὖ πῶας φύει τε καὶ ζῶα τρέφει **B** ὁ δ' αὖ πῶας τε καὶ ζῶα πάντα τρέφει **C** ὁ δ' αὖ φύσεις τε καὶ ζῶα πάντα τρέφει **Mo**. Probably πῶας or φύει had already disappeared in the subarchetype; πάντα was added to fill in the verse, and the missing word was later written in the margin or between the lines. **C** and **Mo** both choose a different reading (thinking that πῶας was an alternative to φύει or vice versa), and **Mo** transformed φύει into the accusative φύσεις.

Agreement between **A** or **B** and a member of the family composed of **Mo** and **C**, therefore, can lead to a reconsideration of Hunger's choices: see for instance v. 50 εἰσφερούσης **CB**, v. 74 ποσαπλῶς **CA**, v. 87 εὐνοοῦσα **CBMo**, v. 111 πῶς δὲ **CAMo**, 319 σὺν μακροῖς ἄλλοις λόγοις **CB**.

In the section where **B** and **C** are the only testimonies (vv. 447-527), the latter quite often has readings that are clearly false, but sometimes it also shows *variantes adiaphorae* which need to be evaluated (such as 447: ἐμπεσὼν **B** ἐκπεσὼν **C**; 466: ἐκπύρου **B** ἐμπύρου **C**; 467: χύσις **B** χύσιν **C**; 494: νυχθημέρω **B** νυχθημέρων **C**; 519: διπλοῖς διεπέγνωκας **B** διττοῖς νῦν ἐπέγνωκας **C**; 520: μάθε **B** μάθης **C**); at other times **C** has even better readings, such as 461: Ποσειδώντειος **B** Ποσειδώνειος **C**; 462: λύσσασα **B** λύουσα **C**; 485: τοι νέρθε **B** τὸ νέρθεν **C**. A reading of the *Alexandrinus* in the previous part (v. 394) confirms an important emendation proposed by Paul Speck (θέα for θεά)<sup>12</sup>.

But the most important contribution of the *Alexandrinus* to the *constitutio textus*, of course, consists of the new final verses contained in f. 88r. Unfortunately,

<sup>12</sup> Cf. P. Speck, *Zu Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien aus der Verschronik*, «RhM» n.F. CII (1959) 95-96.

in order to provide a fully reliable edition, one would need to inspect the manuscript in person (possibly with the help of a blacklight for some passages where the ink has faded), or at least to have better reproductions. So far I have not been able to reach either goal, but I trust that this will be possible in the future; for the time being, I hope that even an interim edition, with all its shortcomings, will be of some utility for a better understanding of this little-known fragment from one of the more ambitious – and more unlucky – works by Tzetzes. The text<sup>13</sup> and its translation will be subdivided according to the main allegorical themes discussed by Tzetzes, so as to discuss, albeit very briefly, their significance and the major issues that they raise.

The 'new' verses begin with a concluding line attached, as it seems, to the previous section, where Zeus' victories against Typhon and the Titans are listed. This list is now completed by a reference to Zeus' triumph over the Giants with the help of Heracles' arrows (v. 528: Διός τε νίκην ἐκ βελῶν Ἡρακλέους, "and Zeus' victory by means of Heracles' arrows"), which is duly explained as the victory of the sun, by means of his rays, over the unruly elements. Then follows an allegorizing section about Heracles who injured, again with his arrows, Hera and Hades (as hinted at in the *Iliad*, V 392-400). This is the allegorical interpretation of the episode by Tzetzes:

...Διός τε νίκην ἐκ βελῶν Ἡρακλέους.  
 Κίνδυνος ἦν γὰρ συγκρουβῆναι καὶ πάλιν  
 τὴν εἰδοποιὸν (εἰδοποιῶν ms.) κοσμαγωγὸν οὐσίαν<sup>14</sup>, 530  
 χύσει πυρός τε καὶ καταιγίδων στρόφοις  
 ἔστ' ἂν ὁ λαμπρὸς ἥλιος, γῆς τὸ κλέος,  
 ἀνεῖλεν αὐτοὺς ἐκκενῶν οἷα βέλη  
 τὰς χρυσοειδεῖς τοξικὰς λαμπεδόνας.

...and Zeus' victory by means of Heracles' arrows. For there was danger that the essence which creates the forms and leads the universe [530] would be concealed again by the stream of fire and the twistings of the hurricanes, until the bright sun, the glory of the earth (= Heracles), neutralized them by pouring his splendid golden rays like arrows.

<sup>13</sup> Punctuation is mine; accentuation has been adapted to modern conventions, except in the cases where it can have metrical significance. I use three asterisks to signal places which, despite all efforts on my part, I was not able to read.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. vv. 373-374: κίνδυνον εἶχε συγκρουβῆναι καὶ πάλιν / τὴν ὑλικὴν ἄρθρωσιν εἰς κοσμοργίαν.

Τοξεύματα ταῦτα<sup>15</sup> δὲ ποῦ<sup>16</sup> φρασι<sup>17</sup> πάλιν 535  
 ἐξευστοχοῦντος ἐν βολαῖς Ἡρακλέους  
 Ἦρας τε μαζοῦ δεξιοῦ τριπλῶ βέλει  
 Ἄιδου τε νώτων τοῦ μαιφονωτάτου,  
 ὕφ' ὧν χρόνος τε καὶ στροφή<sup>18</sup> (ms. στροφῶν) νυχθημέρων 540  
 ἔχουσι τὴν κίνησιν ἀρραγεστάτην.  
 Νυχθημέρων γὰρ σφαιρικῶ περιδρομῶ  
 κάτω κατελθὼν ἥλιος γῆς εἰς ζόφον,  
 ἐκ τῶν ὀπισθεν καὶ μερῶν τῆς ἐσπέρας  
 ὡσπερ διώκων ἐν βολαῖς τοξευμάτων,  
 τὴν νύκτα ποιεῖ πρὸς τὸ γῆς ἄνω τρέχειν. 545  
 Νυχθημέρων<sup>19</sup> μὲν οὗτος ἡλίου δρόμος  
 ἐκ δεξιῶν δὲ καὶ μερῶν τῶν τῆς ἕω,  
 πᾶς ἐν λόγοις γὰρ δεξιὰ ταῦτα λέγει,  
 βάλλων σελασμοῖς ἐν τριπλοῖς τὸν αἰθέρα,  
 ὠρῶν μόνη γὰρ ἦν τὸ πρὶν τρικαιρία, 550  
 ποιῶν δρόμοις μὲν ἡμέρας ἀκουσίας

[535] This kind of arrows, I believe, are meant again when Heracles, using the bow, transfixes with a triple dart the right breast of Hera, and the back of most murderous Hades. It is thanks to them that time and the cycle of the days [540] have their unceasing movement. For the sun, in the circular orbit of the days, going down into the darkness of the earth, as if it were chasing the night from behind and from the Western parts by the launch of arrows, [545] causes it to run up over the earth. This is the daily course of the sun, from the right and the Eastern parts – for every learned man calls them “right” – which hits the ether with triple brilliance [550] (for previously there were only three seasons), creating the recalcitrant days through its mobile courses

<sup>15</sup> For the lengthening of short *dichronoi*, even in “technical” iambs, in the final syllable of a word, see Pace, *o.c.* 32.

<sup>16</sup> The accentuation of this indefinite adverb occurs often in Tzetzes: see Pace, *o.c.* 27. In this case, the accentuation can have metrical reasons (the caesura must fall after δέ).

<sup>17</sup> The accent can be explained by the lengthening of ι *in arsi*. See Pace, *o.c.* 29.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Tzetzes, *Schol. Hes. Op.* 412 Gaisford: ...τὴν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἦν ἔφην νυχθημερησίαν περιστροφὴν. The phrase ἡ τῆς ἡμέρας στροφή occurs in Maximos Planudes, *Macrobii commentarii in Somnium Scipionis in linguam Graecam translati*, I 6,60,9 Megas.

<sup>19</sup> Enrico Emanuele Prodi proposes the emendation νυχθήμερος (adjective).

πλάνησι τὴν σφαῖραν δὲ τὴν πᾶσαν τρέχων<sup>20</sup>  
καὶ κύκλον αὐτὸν (αὐτῶν ms.) ἐκπεραίνει τοῦ χρόνου,  
καὶ δέσμα φασὶν τοῦτο τοῦ Προμηθέως  
ἠφαιστίας (ἠφαιστεΐαις ms.) τέχνασιν ἐν τῷ Καυκάσῳ. 555

and going around the whole (celestial) sphere, and it completes the cycle of the year itself, and they call this the chains of Prometheus, [555] (created) by the arts of Hephaestus in the Caucasus.

Among the many observations that could be made, we can limit ourselves to saying that Tzetzes' interpretation of Heracles as an allegory of the sun is different from the traditional, Stoic view of Heraclitus (33-34<sup>21</sup>), shared also by Eustathius (*Comm. in Il.* II pp. 105-106 van der Valk), according to which Heracles is the symbol of the *emphron kai sophos* man. The hero as a symbol of the sun, however, recurs below and elsewhere in Tzetzes (see *De generatione deorum* p. 103 Cramer = 366 Matranga), and also John Galenos (pp. 318 and 359 Flach)<sup>22</sup>.

The final verses of the first section announce the protagonist of the second one, that is Prometheus, the symbol of time. After an initial reference to the Titan's marriage, which he had already dealt with (vv. 289, 318-327) along with Peleus' wedding (also hinted at in a previous section, vv. 328-387), Tzetzes focuses on the myth of Prometheus' imprisonment in the Caucasus. The Titan was tormented by an eagle, which day by day devoured his liver, which was destined to grow again in the night. This episode is interpreted in all three manners of allegory expounded in the prologue: according to the elements, as the life-giving effect of the alternation of night and day and of the celestial rotation, along with the heat and the regulating power of the sun; according to the passions of the soul, as the soul tormented by anxieties by day and resting by night; and according to historical reality, Prometheus is seen as an ancient benefactor of humanity.

Γάμοι Προμηθέως μέν, ὡς καὶ πρὶν ἔφη,  
ἢ σφαιρικὴ κίνησις εἰς χρόνου δρόμον

Prometheus' wedding, as I said before, is the circular movement in the path

<sup>20</sup> Cf. v. 590: πᾶσαν δρομῶν πλάνησι τὴν σφαῖραν δρομοῖς.

<sup>21</sup> See also the commentary in *Eraclito. Questioni omeriche: Sulle allegorie di Omero in merito agli dèi*, a c. di F. Pontani, Pisa 2005, 304.

<sup>22</sup> On whom see Roilos, *o.c.* 128-130.

ἤπερ<sup>23</sup> προμηθῶς πάντα τῷ βίῳ φέρει,  
 καὶ οὐ κατέσχε συγχύσει νικωμένη  
 ὡς ἦν ἔφην γῆν Πηλέως πρὶν ἐν γάμοις<sup>24</sup>. 560  
 Τὰ νῦν δὲ τὴν στήριξιν εἰς χρόνου δρόμους,  
 τὰ πάντα δρῶντος ἐν βίῳ Προμηθέως,  
 τὴν ἦν ἐπεστήριξεν ἡλίου δρόμος  
 εἰς ῥωστικὴν θερμὴν τε καὶ ζωτρόφον  
 κινῶν ἑαυτὸν ἐξ ἐνύγρων οὐσίας, 565  
 ἀλληγοροῦντες φασὶν οὐκ ἀπεικίτως  
 ἠφαιστόδεσμα Καυκάσῳ Προμηθέως·  
 τὸ καυστικὸν γὰρ καὶ ζέον κεκραμένον  
 ῥυθμῷ κατεστήριξε τὴν χρόνου βάσιν.  
 Τὸν ἠπατοτρόκτην δὲ νῦν ὄρνιν μέγα<ν> 570  
 καὶ τὴν ἀνεξάλειπτον ἠπάτων φύσιν  
 καὶ τίς τὸν ὄρνιν πῶς τε τοξεύει μάθε.  
 Τὴν σφαιρικὴν κίνησιν, αὐτὸν τὸν χρόνον  
 τὸ πᾶν προμηθῶς εἰσφοροῦντα τῷ βίῳ,  
 Προμηθεά λεγούσιν οὐκ ἀπεικίτως 575  
 δεθέντα δεσμοῖς οἷς ἔφην Ἥφαιστίοις (τοῦ Ἥφαιστου ms.)<sup>25</sup>.

of time, whereby he providently brings everything to life, although, vanquished by confusion, the movement did not stand, [560] like the earth, as I said before in the wedding of Peleus; but now the fixation made by the path of the sun in the path of time (that is, of Prometheus, who does everything in life), so that it be strengthening, warm and nutritive [565] (and the path of the sun obtains this by mixing itself with the essence of humidity), not without reason they call it allegorically chains of Hephaestus in the Caucasus for Prometheus, since the burning and boiling element, mitigated, has regulated the pace of time. [570] But now learn about the liver-eating bird, and the indelible nature of the liver, and who shot the bird with arrows, and how. The circular movement, time itself, which providently brings everything to life, [575] not without reason they call it Prometheus, tied with the chains of Hephaestus I mentioned above.

<sup>23</sup> C usually marks the iota subscript only with dative articles, but here it is traced with insistence, as if to be sure that the reader will not miss it.

<sup>24</sup> Tzetzes talks about the wedding of Peleus and Thetis at vv. 349-366.

<sup>25</sup> I follow Enrico Emanuele Prodi's suggestion in printing Ἥφαιστίοις. The reading of C presents two problems: a hiatus (but for occurrences of hiatus after an article in the dodecasyllable, see

<O><sup>26</sup> σφαιρικὸς τάχιστος αἰετὸς δρόμος  
 ὃς δεξιῶν μέρους τε καὶ τοῦ τῆς ἔω,  
 ἐν δεξιῶν δὲ καὶ θέσις τῶν ἡπάτων,  
 ἀνατρέχων ἄνω μὲν εἰς τὸν [τῆς]<sup>27</sup> γῆς τόπον 580  
 τὴν ἡμέραν ἄγει τε καὶ κατεσθίει  
 ὡς ἦπαρ οὖσαν δεξιῶν τεθειμένην·  
 ἐν τῷ τρέχειν δὲ τὸν νυκτὸς κάτω κύκλον,  
 ὡς πρὶν πάλιν πρόεισιν ἐντελεστάτη,  
 οὕτω παρραρεῖ καὶ πάλιν δὲ γίνεται<sup>28</sup> 585  
 τοῖς ἐξ \*\*\* σφαιρικοῖς περιδρομοῖς  
 ἔστ' ἂν τὸν ὄρνιν, τὴν φορὰν τῆς ἡμέρας,  
 ὁ κλεινὸς αὐτὸς Ἡρακλῆς καὶ φωσφόρος  
 κτείνῃ βολ\*\*\* (βολαῖσι)<sup>29</sup> τερματώσας τὸν χρόνον,  
 πᾶσαν δραμῶν πλάνησι τὴν σφαῖραν δρόμοις. 590  
 Ψυχῆς Προμηθεὺς ἢ προμηθεῖα πάλιν,  
 ὁ δ' αἰετὸς πέφυκεν ἄλγος φροντίδων·

The very swift eagle is the circular course, which from the right and the Eastern parts – the liver too is located on the right – [580] running over the earth leads and devours the day, located on the right like a liver; the same day, however, in traveling the lower orbit of the night becomes again perfectly intact, [585] and in this way vanishes and returns again by means of the ... celestial orbits, until the noble and light-bringer Heracles with his arrows (?) kills the bird, which is the movement of the day, thus bringing the year to an end, [590] after having travelled across all the celestial sphere through the mobile courses. Prometheus is also the foresight of the soul, and the eagle is the pain of anxieties;

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Lauxtermann, *o.c.* 300-301) and, most of all, the length of the penultimate syllable, which seems hardly acceptable despite the metrical licenses allowed with proper names.

<sup>26</sup> Some initial letters in C are rubricated (vv. 1, 21, 30, 184, 223, 286, 292, 305), and possibly its antigraph (i.e. the subarchetype?) featured similar rubrications. In this case the disappearance of the initial omicron may be due to a blank space which was not filled up by the appropriate 'drop cap', as in the case of the similar false reading of C at v. 468 (πη for ὄπη at the beginning of the verse).

<sup>27</sup> One of the two articles must be deleted for metrical reasons; since the author often uses γῆς without the article (see for instance vv. 532, 542, 545), it seems more advisable to expunge τῆς.

<sup>28</sup> In this poem there seem to be some exceptions to the rule of the stress on the penultimate syllable (e.g. vv. 213, 225).

<sup>29</sup> For the -αῖσι ending, see v. 555.

ἢ νύξ δὲ παύει τῶν μεριμνῶν τοὺς πόνους,  
 ἄν δ' ἡμέρα πρόεισι φροντίδες \*\*\*<sup>30</sup>  
 ἕως θανάων τις ἐκμετρήσῃ τὸν βίον 595  
 πέρας λαβόντος ἡλίου τοῦτο[ν] χρόνου.  
 Ἔην καὶ Προμηθεὺς πρακτικὸς λελεγμένος  
 εὐρὼν τὰ πολλὰ πρὸς τὸ χρήσιμον βίου,  
 στοιχειακῶς δὲ ταῦτα τῶν ἀπροσφόρων,  
 δεσμὰ Προμηθέως δὲ στοιχείων λόγοις 600  
 τοὺς σφαιρικοὺς λέγουσιν εὐτάκτους δρόμους.

while the night causes the pain of worries to cease, if the day arrives the anxieties ... (come back?), [595] until one dying ends his life, the sun having received this limit of time. There was talk also of a real Prometheus, who invented many things useful for life; however, at the elemental level, this is not relevant. [600] By the chains of Prometheus instead, in an elemental sense, they mean the well-ordered circular courses.

The equivalence between the liver-eating eagle and the κατὰ τὸν βίον φροντίδες appears already in Cornutus, 32; this interpretation is shared also by John Galenos in his *Allegory to Hesiod's Theogony* (p. 336 Flach). Prometheus as a benefactor of humanity (γραμμάτων διδάσκαλος, “teacher of letters”, to be precise) is mentioned also in Tzetzes' *Exegesis of the Iliad*, pp. 85-86 Papathomopoulos; in the scholia to the same work there is also a lengthy discussion of the allegorical meanings of the myth of Prometheus, which starts from his historical existence as an Egyptian king (pp. 433-435 Papathomopoulos; see also p. 15). He was worried by the floods of the Nile (the eagle eating his liver), which were controlled with the help of the devices invented by the “historical” Heracles (allegorized by the arrows). Then the scholion delves into the psychic and elemental interpretation, in a very similar way to the *Allegories from the Verse-chronicle*<sup>31</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> Enrico Emanuele Prodi suggests the interesting integration πάρα.

<sup>31</sup> See pp. 434-435 Papathomopoulos: καὶ αὕτη μὲν περὶ Προμηθέως ἀλληγορία ῥητορικὴ καὶ πραγματικὴ ἢ δὲ ψυχικὴ καὶ φιλόσοφος τοιαύτη ἐστίν· Προμηθεὺς ἐστὶν ἡ ἡμετέρα προμήθεια, ἀετὸς δὲ αἰ τοῦ βίου φροντίδες, αἰ τὸ ἡμῶν ἦπαρ κατατρύχουσαι· Ἡρακλῆς δὲ ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ὁ χρόνος τῆς ζωῆς, ὃς πληρωθεὶς τοξεύει τὸν ἀετὸν, ἦγουν τὰς ἡμῶν ἀποπαύει φροντίδας· μετὰ γὰρ θάνατον τῶν πολυμόχθων φροντίδων παυόμεθα. Στοιχειακῶς δὲ προμηθειαν δεῖ σε νοεῖν τὸ κατὰ θεοῦ βούλημα καθ' ἡμᾶς τοιαύσδε κινήσεως τετυχημέναι τὸν οὐρανόν· κατὰ δὲ τοὺς ἐκτὸς τὸ καθ' Εἰμαρμένης βουλὴν οὕτω τὸν οὐρανὸν τυχεῖν τῆς κινήσεως ἣν εἰσαεὶ κινούμενος πέφυκε ... ἀετὸς δὲ ὁ τὸ ἦπαρ ἐσθίων ἢ ἀεικίνητος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κίνησις, ἀπὸ τῶν δεξιῶν ἦγουν ἀνατολικῶν γινομένη, δι' ἣν ὁ νυχθήμερος ἀποτελεῖται καιρός· ὅστις δὴ

The next section is again about Heracles: this time, Tzetzes focuses on his twelve labours.

Ἡρακλέους ἄθλους γε τοῦτο φασί που  
 Εὐρυσθέως ὠθοῦντος εἰς αὐτὸν πόνους·  
 τὸν γὰρ ἀεικίνητον οὐρανοῦ δρόμον  
 τὸν συμπεριστρέφοντα καὶ τὸν φωσφόρον 605  
 Εὐρυσθέα καλοῦσιν ἐκ τῶν φωσφόρων<sup>32</sup>,  
 θέει γὰρ, ὡς ἔφημεν, οὐκ ἔχων στάσιν  
 τόκοις τε φασὶν προδραμεῖν Ἡρακλέους  
 ἀνθ' οὐπερ αὐτῷ προσταγέντων τῶν πόνων.  
 Ὁ Ζεὺς τελῶν γὰρ πνεῦμα τῆς εἰδουργίας 610  
 ἔασε[ν δὲ] κόσμον εἰς διαρθρώσεις τρέχειν  
 λαβόντα (λαβόντες ms.) τὴν σύμπηξιν ἦνπερ νῦν ἔχει,  
 Ἡρακλέους γίγαντος, ἡλίου λέγω,  
 [τούς] σωτηρικοὺς τρέχοντος ἐν ζώοις δρόμους,

They mean this, I believe, by the labours of Heracles, when Euristheus inflicted pains upon him: in fact the perpetual course of the sky, [605] which spins around and brings the light, they call it Eurystheus from the light-bringing (stars), since, as we have said, it runs (*theei*) without pause, and they say that in the birth he preceded Heracles, and because of this the labours were inflicted upon him. [610] For Zeus, being the spirit of specification, allowed the universe to be differentiated, taking the configuration it has now, when the mighty Heracles – the sun, I mean – travels salvific paths

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καιρὸς ὁ νυχθήμερος τὸν χρόνον καὶ τὰ ἐν χρόνῳ ἐσθίει, τοξεύεται δὲ ὑπὸ Ἡρακλέους, ἡγουν ἡλίου· οὕτω γὰρ ὁ χρόνος ἀποπληροῦται διὰ τῆς τοῦ ἡλίου κινήσεως, "...and this one is the rhetorical and historical allegory about Prometheus; the psychic and philosophical one is the following. Prometheus is our foresight, and the eagle the anxieties of life, which devour our liver; Heracles is the sun and the time of life, which when is completed shoots with arrows the eagle, that is, stops our anxieties, for after death we are free from toilsome anxieties. But in an elemental sense, you need to think of "providence" as the fact that the sky obtained this movement according to God's will towards us, while for the pagans it is the fact that the sky obtained its unceasing natural movement according to Destiny's will ... The eagle devouring the liver is the perpetual movement of the sky, happening from the right, that is, from the East, by which the period corresponding to a day and a night is completed; and the period of day and night which eats the year and what's in a year, this is shot with arrows by Heracles, that is, by the sun: for in this way the year is completed by the movement of the sun."

<sup>32</sup> This repetition from the previous verse is somewhat suspect.



ἀλλὰ παρηπάτησε τὴν εἰδουργίαν 615  
 τὸ πῦρ διαρθέν εἰς ἀτάκτους ἐκχύσεις,  
 τὸν οὐρανὸν κινεῖ δὲ καὶ πρὸ ἡλίου  
 κᾶν εἶχε τὴν κίνησιν ἀστατουμένην,  
 ἕως τὸ κλεινὸν πνεῦμα τῆς εἰδουργίας  
 τὴν σύγχυσιν ἔριψε<sup>33</sup>, τὴν Ἄτην, κάτω 620  
 τὸ<v> ἥλιον δ' ἔταξεν ἐν σφαίρᾳ τρέχειν  
 τοὺς δωδεκαπλοῦς ἀθλικοὺς (-πλῶς -κῶς ms.) περιδρόμους,  
 οὗ θερμοῦτος μὲν ἀέρι μεμιγμένη  
 ἐκ τῆς ἕρας τε καὶ χθονὸς πάντα φύει.

amid the Zodiac<sup>34</sup>. [615] But the specification was deceived by the fire that erupted into disordered flows, and it (instead of the sun) moved the sky, although the movement was inconstant, until the noble spirit of the specification [620] threw down Ate, the confusion, and arranged for the sun to travel the twelve-fold orbits of his labours along the (celestial) sphere; and it is the heat of the sun that, mixed with the air, makes everything grow from the ground and from the earth.

The equation between Heracles and the sun is well known (see above), and the final verses are somewhat clarified by the scholia: v. 615 is glossed as πῶς ἠπάτησεν ἡ Ἥρα τὸν Δία, and then v. 620 as τοῦτο δὲ τὸ «αὐτίκα δ' εἶλ' Ἄτην κεφαλής λιπαροπλοκάμοιο», with a quotation of *Iliad* XIX 126, which describes Zeus' anger after he realized that Hera deceived him in order to deprive Heracles of the kingdom that rightfully belonged to him. Tzetzes interpreted the episode through a "historical" allegory in his *Allegories to the Iliad* (XIX 52-80 Boissonade and Matrangala) and *Chiliades* (II 36, 171-214). The final verse (ἐκ τῆς ἕρας τε καὶ χθονὸς πάντα φύει) is glossed as a reference to the mythical Erichthonios (τὶς στοιχειακῶς ὁ Ἐριχθόνιος ὁ ἐκ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς γεννηθεὶς καὶ τοῦ Ἥφαιστου), whose name is interpreted as a compound of ἕρα and χθών also in *Scholia in Lycophronem* 111, 37-45 and above in this same fragment (vv. 298-302). Hunger connected the identification of Heracles' twelve labours with the Zodiac, traversed by the sun in its yearly path, to the method ascribed to Metrodoros of Lampsacus<sup>35</sup>. This identification

<sup>33</sup> The form with a single *rho*, for metrical reasons, occurs also at v. 629. On the use of such «metrical stratagems» by Byzantine poets, see Lauxtermann, *o.c.* 283.

<sup>34</sup> Literally, "amid the animated beings (*zoa*)": I follow Enrico Emanuele Prodi's suggestion for the meaning.

<sup>35</sup> See Hunger, *Allegorische Mythendeutung* cit. 52.

appears also in Tzetzes' *Allegories to the Iliad* (VIII 158-175 Boissonade = VIII 161-178 Matranga), and it is remembered also by Tzetzes' contemporary John Galenos, p. 360 Flach: εὐλόγως δὲ καὶ πάνυ σοφῶς ὁ Ἡρακλῆς λέγεται τὴν Ἥβην λαβεῖν εἰς γυναικα τελέσας τοὺς ἄθλους ἐκείνους τοὺς δώδεκα· τὰ γὰρ δώδεκα ζώδια περιπολεύσας ὁ ἥλιος, καὶ ἀπλῶς τὸν ἅπαντα ζωδιακὸν δι' ἐνιαυτοῦ πληρώσας, ἔκ τοτε πάλιν, ὥσπερ ἐξ ἄλλης ἀρχῆς, ἠβιάσκων ἡμῖν ἀνατέλλει ἐν ἔαρι, “With good reason and in a very wise way it is said that Heracles married Hebe, having accomplished his famous twelve tasks. For the sun, having traversed the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and in a word having completed the whole Zodiac in a year, then being young once again, like a new beginning, rises for us in Spring.”

After a short section about Cypris, interpreted as the force of generation, there is a conclusion (separated from the preceding verses by a *dikolon* and *paragraphos*, followed by a blank space) where Tzetzes, with his usual aggressiveness, dismisses the attacks of his critics.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Ἡ δ' αὖ Κύπρις τε καὶ κεκραμμένη <sup>36</sup> φύσις             | 625 |
| εἰς Κύπρον (Κύπριν ms.) ἦλθεν εἰς πορισμὸν τοῦ κύειν             |     |
| καὶ πάντα γεννᾷ πρὸς τὸ χρήσιμον βίου.                           |     |
| Εἰ δυσσεβῆ τε καὶ περιψυχρα τάδε,                                |     |
| εἰ μέτρα Μούσης δυσσεβοῦς ἐρριμμένης <sup>37</sup>               |     |
| καὶ ῥητόρων λόγων τε (δὲ ms.) καὶ μεταρσίων                      | 630 |
| ἄμοιρα φησὶν ἢ σοφῆ κουστῳδία (κουστουδία ms.),                  |     |
| πεῖθεσθε δ' ὑμεῖς τοῖς σοφοῖς τούτων λόγοις·                     |     |
| ἔστω, δοκεῖτω <sup>38</sup> τοιαδί, κριταὶ λόγων <sup>39</sup> . |     |

[625] And in turn Cypris, the tempered nature, reached Cyprus to provide procreation, and she generates everything for the utility of life. If the gang of the know-all says that these verses are profane and tasteless, rhythms of a profane and careless Muse, [630] bereft of rhetorical and lofty words, and you believe their wise words: well, let it be that way, literary critics!

<sup>36</sup> Tzetzes adopted the form with double *my* for metrical reasons.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Him. *Or.* XLVI 4-6 τίς ἐρριμμένην τε καὶ ἄτιμον μοῦσαν οἷον δὴ τι μέγα καὶ πάγκαλον τῶν σῶν εἴσω παράγειν ὧτων ἀνέπεισεν; Tzetzes, *schol. Hist. IV ep. ad Lach.*, 779, τὰ ἀστείσματα ἐν μόνῳ ἐγράφη τῷ πρωτογράφῳ χάριτι, ἐν τοῖς παρ' ἡμῖν δὲ μεταγραφαί φεῖσι τῆδε οὐκ ἐτέθεσαν ὡς ἐρριμμένα καὶ ἀτελῆ καὶ ἰδιότιδος μούσης καὶ ἀγοραίας.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Lib. *Decl.* XIX 1,33: Βούλεσθε <θῶ>, ὧ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, φείσεσθαί μου τὸν ἄνθρωπον, πρῶγμα ἀμήχανον; ἔστω, δοκεῖτω.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Aeschin. *In Ctesiphontem* 50: Ὑμεῖς δ' ἡμῖν ἔσεσθε τῶν λόγων κριταί.

The reference to the arrival of Aphrodite in Cyprus probably alludes to Hesiod, *Theogony* 193, with a pareymology of the name of the island that is also in John Galenos, p. 310 Flach: εἰκότως δὲ λέγεται τὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ μήδεα ἐν τῇ Κύπρῳ πεσεῖν ἢ καταβληθῆναι, παρόσον ὁ τόπος γονιμώτατός ἐστι καὶ τοῦ κύειν ποριστικός.

The final tirade, instead, is very typical of Tzetzes; another fragment of the *Verse-chronicle* also ends with a rant against his critics (*Chiliades* XI 396, 978-989). The end of the text transmitted by the *Alexandrinus* is particularly remarkable for its evocation of the σοφὴ κουστωδία of Tzetzes' enemies. His commentaries are studied with invectives against this "gang of know-all", identifiable with the "official" teachers operating at the so-called Patriarchal School and Senate of the Philosophers<sup>40</sup>. One of the most graphic is a scholion to Thucydides I 123,2, which reads:

τὰς συγγραφὰς κρίνειν δὲ τεχνικῶν τρόπων  
 σκύλλου τε τοῦδ' καὶ παλαιῶν καὶ νέων  
 Τζέτζου μόνου χάρισμα δυσμαθεστάτου,  
 ἢ φύρσις ὄνπερ καὶ χυδαιότης βίου  
 ἐγγωνιῶντα τῇ Στοᾷ καὶ τῇ Θόλῳ  
 σύρει διαμπάξ, ἢ σοφὴ κουστωδία,  
 ἀνθ' οὗπερ αὐτοῖς οὐδαμῶς συνειστρέχει  
 ὅτι τέ φησι τεχνικῶς δεῖον γράφειν  
 πεζοῖς ὁμοῦ λόγοις τε καὶ τοῖς ἐν μέτρῳ,  
 φύρειν δὲ μηδὲν μηδαμοῦ τὰ τῆς τέχνης.

«To judge according to the criteria of *technē* the writings / of this puppy [scil. Thucydides], of the ancients and the recent authors, / is the prerogative of Tzetzes, the most ignorant man: / as he crawls in a corner of the Stoa or of the Rotunda, / the learned guard, the coarse and confuse / mass of his time, targets and ridicules him / because he never rushes to chime in with their opinions, / and argues that one should write according to the *technē*'s norm / both in poetry and in prose, / not polluting in any respect the principles of the *technē*»<sup>41</sup>.

<sup>40</sup> See M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tuciddide: note autografe sul codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252*, Bari 1999, 52-55, who recalls passages from the *Commentaries to Aristophanes* such as in *Nub.* 242, p. 442,7 Holwerda; in *Ran.* 259a, p. 772,11 Koster, 507a pp. 836,2, 12 and 837,3 Koster (this passage has been translated and discussed also by Agapitos, *o.c.* 28-32); in *Plut.* 1098, pp. 221,19 and 222,5 Massa Positano; *Iambi* 1,80;

<sup>41</sup> Translation by F. Pontani, *Scholarship* cit. 384-385. See also Luzzatto, *o.c.* 49-55.

This passage is followed by a praise of *technai* and a *psogos* of the ignoramuses trying to subvert them:

πηγαὶ γάρ εἰσι τῷ βίῳ καλῶ τέχναι·  
 ὅστις δ' ἀναιρεῖν τοὺς τεχνῶν λόγους θέλει,  
 οὗτος παρεισφρεῖ κοπρεῶνα τῷ βίῳ,  
 ὦν ἐκ συωδῶν, ἐξ ἀτέχνων βαρβάρων.

*Technai* in fact are the sources for good life, / and whoever wants to destroy them, / he introduces a dunghill into life, coming from swinish and ignorant barbarians.

The scholion is in the iambic dodecasyllables that Tzetzes (who was very proud of them) called *technikoi*<sup>42</sup>; and the ‘technical’ dodecasyllable, as stated above, was also the metre of the *Verse-chronicle* and of its preamble constituted by allegories to cosmogonical myths. It may not be a coincidence that this preamble, in the fullest version preserved by the *Alexandrinus* (of which today I tried to provide an interim edition and translation), ends with the proud and scornful mention of the “gang of the know-alls”: the versification of a world chronicle, starting from the mythical cosmogony and its allegorical interpretation, was part of an ongoing and life-long crusade against his ignorant rivals, and the metrical form, far from being a superfluous habit, was for Tzetzes a fundamental component of his being an *entechnos* teacher.

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<sup>42</sup> See Luzzatto, *o.c.* 20.

**Tzetzes and the *prokatastasis*:  
A tale of people, manuscripts, and performances**

Tzetzes' carefully staged outbursts of outrage and wrath at his opponents feature prominently in this volume and, more broadly, in the literature engaging with his work. The anger against (former?) patron Andronikos Kamateros<sup>1</sup> in *Historia* XI 369, 210-245, a piece that includes a tirade in hexameter against an anonymous rhetor-buffalo (vv. 212-224), belongs into the most spectacular instances of such wilfully paraded behavioural trait.

The feud with Andronikos has been variously addressed in modern scholarship, and deservedly so, as it speaks to key points of chronology, patronage and language<sup>2</sup>. And yet a few basic questions still remain unanswered: which kind of relationship existed between Tzetzes and the Kamateroi? What was the actual bone of contention that sparked the quarrel? Which impact did the dispute have, as implied by Tzetzes' words? And finally, how seriously must the whole feud be taken? The last question is particularly crucial, as it raises broader issues of methodology and ways to read twelfth-century texts and cannot be tackled properly before answering the first three<sup>3</sup>. The materials I recently uncovered in the Leiden University Library,

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<sup>1</sup> On Andronikos see below, n. 5.

<sup>2</sup> See G. Hart, *De Tzetzarum nomine vitis scriptis*, Leipzig 1880, 22-23; C. Wendel, *Tzetzes, Johannes*, *RE* VII/A (1948) 1959-2010: 1964-1965; M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide. Note autografe sul Codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252*, Bari 1999, 74 n. 19; P.A. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners: a Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, «MEG» XVII (2017), 1-57: 22-27; M. Savio, *Screditare per valorizzare. Giovanni Tzetze e le sue fonti, i committenti e la concorrenza*, Roma 2020, 50-51. Savio, following Wendel, erroneously identifies the anonymous opponent of Tzetzes in the affair with Andronikos related in *Historia* XI 369 with Gregorios (see below), an identification already refuted by Agapitos, *o.c.* 23 n. 121. More in general on the networks of patronage, including the Kamateroi, see M. Grünbart, *'Tis love that has warm'd us. Reconstructing networks in 12th century Byzantium*, «RBPh» LXXXIII/2 (2005) 301-313.

<sup>3</sup> Together with Chiara D'Agostini we worked on this topic while I was drafting the present

*Vossianus gr.* Q1, which also bears autograph notes by Tzetzes himself, provide a decisive help in clarifying those points.

In the present contribution I will examine this important chapter in the life of Tzetzes on the basis of fresh evidence provided by the commentary on Hermogenes preserved by the *Vossianus*, as well as by the text of the *Logismoi*, contained in the same manuscript<sup>4</sup>. After offering an overview on the difficult relationship between Tzetzes and the brothers Theodoros and Andronikos Kamateros<sup>5</sup>, I will proceed to

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contribution: see C. D'Agostini-A. Pizzone, *Clawing rhetoric back. Humor and polemic in Tzetzes' hexameters on the Historiāi*, «Parekbolai» XI (2021) 123-158.

<sup>4</sup> The commentaries on Hermogenes are only partially published: J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis bibliothecarum Oxoniensium*, IV, Oxford 1837, 1-148; E.C. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, III, Stuttgart 1834, 670-86. They are preserved by seven manuscripts: *Voss. gr.* Q1 (around 1180); *Neap.* II E 5 (late XII-early XIII c.); *Dresd.* Da. 7 (XIII c.); *Bodl.* T. 5. 06 (Misc. 268) (XIV c.); *Arund.* 541 (XV c.); *Cambr.* UL LI V 03 (2201) (XV c.); *Marc. gr.* XI 10 (XV c., only one excerpt). Additionally, *Vindob. Phil. gr.* 130 (XIV c.) contains the scholia on Aphthonios and excerpts from the commentary on the *Issues*, while *Vindob. phil. gr.* 300 (XIV c.) contains a shortened version – possibly authorial – of the whole commentary. For a general presentation of the *Voss. gr.* Q1 and the *Logismoi*, see my *Self-authorization and Strategies of Autography in John Tzetzes: The Logismoi Rediscovered*, «GRBS» LX (2020) 652-690.

<sup>5</sup> In this overview I will leave aside the iambs published by Leone, for which see D'Agostini-Pizzone, *o.c.* On the Kamateroi, see V. Laurent, *Un sceau inédit du protonotaire Basile Kamatéros*, *Contribution à la prosopographie byzantine*, «Byzantion» VI (1931) 253-272 whose mistakes are corrected by G. Stadtmüller, *Zur Geschichte der Familie Kamateros*, «ByzZ» XXXIV/2 (1934) 352-358; P. Gautier, *Michel Italikos. Lettres et discours*, Paris 1970, 39-41; P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*, Cambridge 2002, 212-213. On Andronikos Kamateros: I. Polemis, *The Doukai: A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography*, London 1962, 26-27; J. Darrouzès, *Notice sur Grégoire Antiochos (1160 à 1196). I. Son œuvre. II. Sa carrière. III. La fondation du monastère Saint-Basile*, «REByz» XX (1962) 61-92: 68-69, 73, 81; J. Darrouzès, *Georges et Démétrios Tornikès. Lettres et discours. Introduction, texte, analyse, traduction et notes*, Paris 1970, 43-49 (with family tree); A. Cataldi Palau, *L'Arsenale Sacro di Andronico Camatero. Il proemio ed il dialogo dell'imperatore con i cardinali latini: originale, imitazioni, arrangiamenti*, «REByz» LI (1993) 5-62: 7-11; A. Bucossi, *George Skylitzes' dedicatory verses for the Sacred Arsenal by Andronikos Kamateros and the codex Marcianus Graecus 524*, «JÖByz» LIX (2009) 37-50 and *Andronici Camateri Sacrum Armamentarium. Pars Prima*, Turnhout 2014, ix-xxiv (both with previous bibliography); Agapitos, *o.c.* 22-23. On Theodoros, very little is known, besides Tzetzes' letters; the only details about his life are those from the epitaphios in dodecasyllables penned by Tzetzes, see S. Pétridès, *Építaphe de Théodore Kamateros*, «ByzZ» XIX (1910) 7-10; P. Maas, *Zwei Noten zu dem Epitaph des Tzetzes auf Theodoros Kamateros*, «ByzZ» XIX (1910) 11; E. Kurtz, *Joh. Tzetzes, Epitaph auf Theodoros Kamateros*, «ByzZ» XXV (1925) 144. Andronikos and Theodoros were the sons of Gregorios Kamateros, who had married into the imperial family through Eirene Doukaina making his fortune as a tax collector, according to Niketas Choniates (*Hist.* p. 9, 16-21 Van Dielen). Gregorios had a brother, called Romanos, whose son Michael – a cousin of Andronikos and Theodoros – is mentioned by Tzetzes in *Ep.* 89 (without using the title of *sebastos*, which applied only to Gregorios' branch of the family). To him Michael Italikos sent letter

outline the theoretical-rhetorical background behind the quarrel staged in *Historia* XI 369. In the third part I will focus on tracing a network of manuscripts that has to be seen as the material counterpart of the theoretical stances showcased in the polemic with Andronikos. Finally, I will show how the issues discussed by Tzetzes are not to be read only against rhetorical theory but also, and perhaps more importantly, against performative practices, which had a deep impact on the social standing of literati. This in turn will shed new light on the implications that the dispute with Andronikos might have had for Tzetzes' personal circumstances.

### *Tzetzes, the Kamateroi, and other animals*

The ties between Tzetzes and the Kamateroi are well attested by Tzetzes' letter collection. Although prompted by different occasions, the epistles featuring in the collection resonate with a range of recurring themes, creating, as we shall see, a narrative arc. First, there is a distinctive emphasis on the lack of acknowledgement with which Tzetzes' work was allegedly met. Second – and this becomes particularly apparent by reading the *Epistles* together with the self-commentary provided in the *Historiai*<sup>6</sup> – an ambiguous light is cast on the relationship with the Kamateroi. Behind the overly respectful tone of the letters there lurks a not-too-hidden sense of mockery and banter. As we shall see, such an ambiguity characterizes also the explosive polemic against Andronikos Kamateros.

As mentioned above, Andronikos was not the only member of the Kamateroi family with which Tzetzes was acquainted. *Ep.* 86 and 87 are addressed to Theodoros, Andronikos' brother. *Ep.* 89 to both Andronikos and Theodoros. *Ep.* 90 and 103 to Andronikos alone. In what follows I will proceed to my analysis by grouping the letters by addressee.

### *Theodoros Kamateros*

Although tensions with one member of the family are mentioned already in *Ep.* 69 (p. 98,14-16 Leone), to which I will come back, the first Kamateros that we encounter in the collection is Theodoros, that is Andronikos' brother. *Ep.* 86 and 87, albeit very concise, convey quite clearly Tzetzes' negative feelings toward him.

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22, warning him against the dangers of war upon his departure on a campaign in Dalmatia (Gautier, *o.c.* 52, see also Laurent, *o.c.* 269-270; Stadtmüller, *o.c.* 354; Darrouzès, *o.c.* 49).

<sup>6</sup> On the *Historiai* and their structure, see my *The Historiai of John Tzetzes: a Byzantine 'book of memory'?*, «BMGS» XLI (2017) 182-207.

*Ep.* 86, a short missive (p. 127,10-14 Leone), consists of less than three printed lines and reads as follows<sup>7</sup>:

Τῷ σεβαστῷ κύρῳ Θεοδώρῳ τῷ Καματήρῳ. Ἐχέφρονος προῶγμα ποιεῖς  
καὶ φύσει Θηραμένους, τὰ σὰ μὲν αὐτὸς ἀπολαμβάνων, οὐκ ἀποδιδούς  
δὲ τὰ ἀλλότρια. ἔρρωσο.

To the venerable sir Theodore Kamateros. You behave cunningly and naturally like Theramenes, receiving your own dues, without paying others'. Be well.

Michael Grünbart hypothesizes that Tzetzes might here refer to a book that Theodoros never returned – a common occurrence in the society of Komnenian literati<sup>8</sup>. However, if one looks at the commentary provided by the *Historiai*, there might be more to it. The letter prompts just one entry, *Hist.* XII 416, 493-502, which is devoted to the phrase καὶ φύσει Θηραμένους<sup>9</sup>. Tzetzes provides an unflattering portrait of Theramenes, turning him into a disciple of Euripides, “a deceitful, cunning, always shifting” character (δόλιος, πανουργότατος, ἔνθε κάκεῖθεν ῥέπων, v. 495)<sup>10</sup> who deserved the nickname “cothurn” for his ability always to position himself advantageously regardless of who held power<sup>11</sup>. The verbs chosen by Tzetzes in the letter seem to refer to economic transactions, pointing to Theodoros’ habit of not respecting commitments. This hypothesis seems to be reinforced also by the likely reference to *Iliad* IX 340-343, where it is said that any man ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐχέφρων (341) cares for his belongings. However, the characterization as ambidextrous, which is attached to the nickname “cothurn”, entails also a sexual innuendo, as cothurns were suitable for both men and women<sup>12</sup>. The latter detail is not developed in the *Historia* but is explicitly mentioned in the lengthy passage from the commentary on Aristophanes’ *Frogs* where Tzetzes enlarges on the historical

<sup>7</sup> All the translations, except where explicitly signaled, are mine.

<sup>8</sup> M. Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge zum Briefcorpus des Ioannes Tzetzes*, «JÖByz» XLVI (1996) 175-226: 216. The same assumption seems at stake in Grigoriadis’ modern Greek translation: see I. Grigoriadis, *Ιωάννης Τζέτζης, Ἐπιστολαί*, Athens 2001, 225 and 293 n. 186.

<sup>9</sup> There is an intertextual reference to Ar. *Ran.* 540. The title of the *historia* points to the proverbial nature of the quotation: ἡ λέγουσα καὶ φύσει Θηραμένους. I owe these remarks to Nunzio Bianchi, whom I thank.

<sup>10</sup> On Theramenes, mentioned in a similar context in Eustathios, see V.F. Lovato, *La ricezione di Odisseo e di Omero presso Giovanni Tzetze e Eustazio di Tessalonica*, diss. Lausanne-Turin 2017, 114.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Xen., *Hell.* II 3,29 ss.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Lucian, *Amores* 50.



figure of Theramenes. The passage is relevant to *Ep.* 86 in that it uses the same phrase φύσει Θηραμένους, which comes from Aristophanes but is probably also to be taken as semi-proverbial (*schol. Ar. Ran.* 438/39, p. 844,9-15 Koster)<sup>13</sup>:

Τὸ δὲ πρὸς τὸ ἡδύτερον καὶ ἀπαλὸν καὶ μαλακώτερον καὶ τρυφηλὸν μετατρέπεσθαι περιδεξίου καὶ εὐπεριστρέπτου ἀνδρός ἐστὶ καὶ φύσει Θηραμένους καὶ φυσικῶς ἐκμιμουμένου τὸν Θηραμένην, τὸν καλούμενον διὰ τὸ εὐπερίστρεπτον κόθορνον. προείπομεν δέ, ὅτι ὁ κόθορνος ὑπόδημά ἐστι προσφυῆς καὶ ἀνδράσι καὶ γυναιξίν, ἢ ἐπαμφοτερίζον καὶ κατάλληλον ὄν δεξιῶ ποδὶ καὶ ἀριστερῶ, οἷά εἰσι μέχρι καὶ νῦν τὰ ἱερατικὰ ὑποδήματα.

Turning to the sweetness and to the delicate and more effeminate as well as the exquisite is proper of an ambidextrous and easily pliable man, of a Theramenes in nature, of someone naturally emulating Theramenes, who was dubbed “cothurn” because of his being so pliable. As we have said already, the cothurn was a type of footwear suitable for both men and women, or else suitable for both feet, the right and the left one, just as sacred footwear are up until now.

To sum up, *Ep.* 86 encapsulates the doublespeak characterizing Tzetzes’ letter collection as a whole. Behind praise, there lurks banter, whose multiple connotations are made visible by the self-commentary. In turn, the self-commentary uses erudition and antiquarianism as a façade designed to make raillery look more innocent. Theodoros Kamateros is presented as a double-dealing individual, one that promises and does not deliver, to others’ detriment. At the same time, the few lines may hint at sexual ambiguity, casting an even more unflattering light on the ethical stand of the patron.

*Ep.* 87 is comparable in tone. A bit longer, it conveys Tzetzes’ discontent at his addressee’s behavior. From the short missive it transpires that Theodoros is not maintaining his end of a deal, despite the efforts put by Tzetzes into the work (p. 127,15-20 Leone):

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<sup>13</sup> Theramenes and his nickname are also mentioned at *schol.* 46a, p. 718, 2-4 Koster. As stressed by Koster in the *apparatus fontium* (p. 845), much of this information comes from the *scholia vetera* on Aristophanes. Tzetzes introduces the detail of Theramenes being a disciple of Euripides – an author for whom he did not have much sympathy (cf. *schol. Ar. Ran.* 1328, pp. 1074-1079 Koster).

Ἀρρώστως ἔχω καὶ ἀσθενῶς καὶ πόνοις ἐπιβάλλειν οὐ σθένω, τετράδι δέ, ὡς ἔοικε, γεννηθεὶς ἄλλοις πονῶ· ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ τούτους ἀναπεπτωκότας ὄρῶ, ἀναπεσοῦμαι δὴ καὶ αὐτός. οὐδὲ γὰρ κατὰ τοὺς γεγηρακότας τῶν μύθων, μὴ ἔχων δαιμόνιον, ὠνοῦμαι γρυλλίδιον. ἔρωσο.

I feel ill and weak and I am not up to labouring, and yet, born on the fourth, as it seems, I am labouring for others; however, since I see that those others are leaning back, I will lean back too. For I am not here to get a little grunter, without having the wits, like the old men from the proverbs. Be well.

Tzetzēs elaborates here on his own self-styling as Heracles, since the comparison with the hero runs throughout his work, as testified also by the paratexts to the *Commentary on Hermogenes* present in the *Vossianus*<sup>14</sup>. Once again both the *Historiai* and the commentary on Aristophanes help clarify the idioms used in the letter. In *Historia* XII 417 Tzetzēs unpacks the reference to Heracles, explaining the meaning of the phrase “born on the fourth”, using dodecasyllables instead of political verses (vv. 503-507):

Τὸν Ἡρακλῆν λέγουσι μηνὸς τετράδι  
τεχθέντα πολλὰ τληπαθεῖν ἐν τῷ βίῳ,  
ἄθλους τελοῦντα προσταγαῖς Εὐρυσθέως.  
Ἄφ' οὐπερ ἐκράτησεν ἡ παροιμία,  
ἄλλοις πονοῦσι προσφυῶς λελεγμένη.

They say that Heracles, born on the fourth of the month,  
had to suffer many trials in his life,  
accomplishing the labours by the order of Eurystheus.  
Because of that the proverb became established,  
said fittingly of those who labour for others.

Tzetzēs builds on a well-attested Late Antique and Byzantine tradition, testified to by lexica and collections of proverbs<sup>15</sup>. The second part of the letter, on the

<sup>14</sup> See for instance the iambs closing the commentary, in which Tzetzēs states that with his exegesis he surpassed Heracles' labours (ff. 211v-212r). In her doctoral dissertation Valeria Lovato has aptly stressed how Heracles' labors, which included the dirty task at Augias' stables, could fit very well into the fecal imagery used by Tzetzēs against his opponents (Lovato, *o.c.* 212).

<sup>15</sup> Zenob. *Epitome*, VI 7; Hesych. τ 613 Hansen-Cunningham; *Suda* τ 388 Adler; Phot. τ 190 Theodoridis, based on Philoch. *BNJ* 328 F 85b; Eust. *in Il.* I 469,3-4 Van der Valk. See also the modern

contrary, glossed by *Historia* XII 418, is a highbrow, Atticizing version of a demotic saying introduced by Tzetzes in the self-commentary (vv. 508-509):

Μούσης τῆς τριοδίτιδος φέρεται μῦθος λέγων,  
ἄλλος μὴ ἔχων δαίμονα ἠγόρασε γουροῦνιν.

A saying of the trivial muse is bequeathed, which states:  
another, even if he was without wits, got himself a piglet.

Ἡ γραῖα μὴ ἔχων δαίμονα ἠγόρασε γουροῦνιν – literally, “the old woman bought a piglet, even if she was without spirits” – is a well attested demotic proverb, which circulated in several variants, whereby *διάβολο*, *ἄσπρο* (a silver coin) could also be found instead of *δαίμονα*<sup>16</sup>. There is also a modern version, still in use, where *βάσανα* replaces *δαίμονα*. The meaning of this version is “looking for unnecessary trouble”. Tzetzes, however, seems to point to the idea of trouble taken despite a lack of resources to cope with it. In the paraphrase of the proverb he offers in the letter, *δαιμόνιον* is used instead of *δαίμονα*. *δαιμόνιον* is consistently interpreted throughout Tzetzes’ work, via a schedographic pun, as meaning *ἐπιστημονικόν* given the assonance with *τὸ δαίμον/δαήμον*: this equivalence informs also the lines against Andronikos Kamateros appended to the second recension of the *Historiai*<sup>17</sup>. In one of the *Historiai*, moreover, Archimedes is labelled as *ἄνδρα σαθρὸν καὶ γέροντα δαιμόνιον τοῖς ἔργοις*, “ailing, old man, ingenious in his works” (*Hist.* II 35, 147)<sup>18</sup>.

We cannot know what task Tzetzes is resisting against, but the mention of a piglet can hardly be coincidental, given the pre-eminence of swine imagery in the polemic against the Kamateroi – and against the capital’s literary society at large<sup>19</sup>.

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Greek translation of Grigoriadis, *o.c.* 225, 287 n. 293. On this proverb in the commentaries on Aristophanes, see also B. van den Berg, *Playwright, satirist, Atticist: The reception of Aristophanes in 12th-century Byzantium*, in P. Marciniak-I. Nilsson (edd.), *Satire in the Middle Byzantine Period: The Golden Age of Laughter?*, Leiden 2021, 227-253: 248.

<sup>16</sup> I. Politis, *Παροιμία*, IV, Athens 1902, 106-107.

<sup>17</sup> See D’Agostini-A. Pizzone, *o.c.* and cf. *Exeg. Il.* p. 249, 18-250, 1 Papatomopoulos. On the importance of the mind for Tzetzes’ originality V.F. Lovato, *Living by his wit: Tzetzes’ Aristophanic variations on the conundrums of a ‘professional writer’*, «BMGS» XLV/1 (2021) 42-58.

<sup>18</sup> On Tzetzes’ reception of Archimedes see Philip Rance’s chapter in this volume.

<sup>19</sup> See V.F. Lovato, *Odysseus the Schedographer*, in B. van den Berg-D. Manolova-P. Marciniak (edd.), *Preserving, Commenting, Adapting: Commentaries on Ancient Texts in Twelfth-Century Byzantium*, Cambridge (forthcoming); Pizzone, *Self-Authorization* cit. 668-272. Γουλλιάζω tellingly features in Tzetzes’ commentary on Ar. *Plut.* 302, which is one of the intertexts sustaining the pro-

In the paraphrase Tzetzes uses the sophisticated form γρουλλίδιον, entailing a hint at the myth of Circe and Odysseus, which is also at the heart of Plutarch's unfinished essay *Gryllos*<sup>20</sup>. The short dialogue was read in Constantinople at the time, as shown by references in Eustathios<sup>21</sup>. Moreover, the use of γρουλλίδιον puts the emphasis on the inarticulate voices uttered by the pig, possibly reinforcing the hint at aesthetically unsound uses of rhetoric<sup>22</sup>.

For Theodoros there exists also an epitaph, ascribed to Tzetzes by general consensus<sup>23</sup>. The poem, in iambic metre, was edited by Sophrone Pétridès in 1910 and is preserved by a single manuscript, *Par. gr.* 2926, ff. 5r-v – which interestingly also contains a copy of Aphthonios and Hermogenes<sup>24</sup>. The epitaph is followed by the verses against Skylitzes and Gregorios – the latter, as we shall see, probably to be identified with the protégé of the Kamateroi mentioned in *Ep.* 89 (p. 129,3 and 16 Leone).

Although beginning with an extremely erudite and flattering catalogue of heroes and historical figures who did not manage to escape death despite their inherent greatness and their qualities (1-49), the epitaph shows the same ambiguous tone as the letters. The poem is written in the voice of Theodoros himself (vv. 50-52):

Τὰ μὰ τὸ λοιπὸν τοιγαροῦν σοὶ φραστέον·  
ἐγὼ προελθὼν Δουκικῆς κλῶν ὀσφύος  
καὶ τῆς Καματηρῶν εὐγενοῦς ῥίζουχίας.

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longed simile equating rhetors and schedographers to Circe's pigs (pp. 86,16-87,9 Massa Positano, with further *loci paralleli*).

<sup>20</sup> Tzetzes seems to be the only one to use the term in the diminutive. On the dialogue and its antecedents see K. Jażdżewska, *Tales of two lives in Xenophon's 'Hiero', Plutarch's 'Gryllos', and Lucian's 'Cock'*, «Hermes» CXLIII/2 (2015) 141-152.

<sup>21</sup> *In Od.* p. I, 379,27 Stallbaum.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Hist.* IV 7, 886-890. In the *Exegesis on the Iliad*, Tzetzes uses γρούζειν to define the theories of other competitor exegetes (p. 76,14-18 Papatomopoulos). See also *DELG* s.v. γρου- and M. Casevitz, *Homère en prose: Plutarque et la réutilisation de l'Odyssee dans le traité* Sur le fait que les animaux se servent de raison, in B. Acosta-Hughes et al. (edd.), *Homère revisité. Parodie et humour dans les réécritures homériques*, Besançon 2011, 15-25: 15.

<sup>23</sup> See above, n. 5, for editions and relevant bibliography.

<sup>24</sup> Pétridès, *Épithaphe* cit. The corpus is copied from f. 6r to 238v. *Par. gr.* 2926 is a paper codex from the fifteenth century, which also includes an astronomical treatise by Cleomenes with astronomical tables, diagrams, and drawings (ff. 238-283).

I must then tell you about me in what follows:  
I am born a bud of the Ducal loins  
and of the noble root of the Kamateroi.

The iambs moreover are supposed to accompany an image of the deceased on the tomb prepared by his loving family, an honour that he had not aspired to, since he wanted to have the same burial as his fellow-monks (v. 68-72)<sup>25</sup>:

Οὕτω μετασχὼν ἀμφίων μονοτρόπων  
ἔσπευσον ἀντῶν μὴ παρασπῶν τοὺς ὄρους  
κοινῇ μετασχεῖν καὶ ταφῆς μονοτρόπων·  
τὸ συγγενὲς φίλτρον δὲ τιμᾶ τῷ τάφῳ  
στηλογραφεῖ τε τῇ γραφῇ τῆς εἰκόνοσ.

Thus, partaking in the monastic dress,  
without trespassing their boundaries, I also hurried  
to a common burial, together with the monks;  
yet, my loving family honours (me) with this burial  
and celebrates me with the picture of the icon.

Theodoros' youth is characterized by a love for rhetoric, decadent softness and all things transient. We also learn that fear of death induced him to embrace monastic life, wearing the characteristically black dress of the monks. This seems to have happened after a severe bout of dysentery. The relevant lines are characterized by water- and fish- imagery sustaining the overarching wordplay with the notion of transiency – expressed by the verb ῥεῖν, literally 'to flow'. The whole passage leaves one wondering whether here too there might be a tinge of irony (vv. 54-70):

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<sup>25</sup> The Kamateroi were patrons of the arts and the *Marc. gr.* 524 shows that they sponsored several art objects, among which icons accompanied by inscriptions. The author has been identified with George Skylitzes, possibly the same Skylitzes attacked by Tzetzes in his *Iambs* (see below). In this case we would have a clear case of intellectuals competing for the same patrons and offering the same literary services. On the Kamateroi as patrons and George Skylitzes' epigrams, see A. Rhoby, *Zur Identifizierung von bekannten Autoren im Codex Marcianus Graecus 524*, «MEG» X (2010), 167-204: 179-189. On the genre, see Id., *Inscriptional poetry. Ekphrasis in Byzantine tomb epigrams*, «ByzSlav» LIX/3 Supplementum (2011) 193-204.

Ἡΰχουν μέν, ἠΰχουν συγγενῶν ταῖς ἀξίαις,  
 ἦνθουν δὲ πολλοῖς τῶν ῥεώντων ἐν βίῳ.  
 Πρώταις δὲ λάχναις συσκιῶν ἤδη γνάθους,  
 σφριγῶν ἐν ἀβροῖς καὶ τρυγῶν ἄνθην λόγου,  
 τερπνὸν διήντλουν καὶ γλυκάζοντα βίον·  
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐπισχῶν τὴν πνοὴν δυσεντέρῳ  
 ἐξεῖλκεν ἡμᾶς τῶν ἐνύργων τοῦ βίου,  
 ὡς τεχνικός τις ἰχθυεὺς τὰς ἐγχέλυς,  
 ὁ πάντα θηρῶν τῆς γεώδους οὐσίας  
 τῶν ψυχαρευτῶν πως συνεῖς τὰς πλεκτάνας.  
 Οὕτω Θεοῦ νεύσαντος εἰς σωτηρίαν  
 τὸ τῆς στολῆς μέλασμα σηπιῶν τρόποις  
 χέας ἐμαυτῶ μηχανὴν σωτηρίας<sup>26</sup>  
 ἔσπευσα μακρὰν ἐκδραμεῖν τῶν ἀρκύων·

I used to boast, yes to boast, the honours of my relatives,  
 but I also thrived in many transient life occupations.  
 When my cheeks were darkened by the first hair,  
 bursting in softness and harvesting the flowers of *logos*,  
 I sipped what makes life delicate and sweet;  
 but then, taking the breath from the dysenteric,  
 as a skilled fisherman does with eels,  
 the One who hunts after all things of earthly substance,  
 dragged us out of the watery alleys of life,  
 – Oh, how well does he know the tentacles of the seducers!  
 Thus, with God nodding to salvation,  
 covering myself like a squid  
 in the blackness of the habit, as a stratagem toward salvation,  
 I hurried far away from the nets.

Although expressions of self-derogatory atonement are inherent in the genre<sup>27</sup>, the description of Theodoros as a profligate squid indulging in earthly and sensual pleasures is aligned with his previous characterization as a new Theramenes. The

<sup>26</sup> Pétridès prints σωτηρίαν.

<sup>27</sup> See for instance the poem by Isaakios Komnenos, from the *Barocc.* 131, edited by E. Kurtz, *Ein Gedicht des Sebastokrator Isaac Komnenos*, «BNJ» V (1926/1927) 44-46, on which see now V.F. Lovato, *Isaac Komnenos' poem to the Virgin: the literary self-portrait of a Byzantine prince*, «Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Byzantine Modern Greek Studies» VI (2020) 55-83.

fish simile adds to the ambiguity of the whole poem, all the more so as eels feature among the animal imagery used by Tzetzes to blame his opponents. The scholia on Aristophanes' *Clouds* 559 Koster enlarge on eels and on their habit of 'stirring the pot', both literally and metaphorically<sup>28</sup>:

ἐμνήσθη γὰρ ἐν τοῖς Ἰππεῦσι τῶν ἐγγέλεων. αἱ ἐγγέλυς γὰρ, ὅταν μέλλωσι πιεῖν, ταράσσουσι τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ ἔπειτα πίνουσιν. δηλονότι ἐποίησαν καὶ ἐμὲ ἐκεῖνοι οὕτως· ἐτάραξαν τὰ ἐμὰ ποιήματα κλέπτοντες ἅπ' ἐκείνων τὰς ἐννοίας.

He mentioned the eels also in the *Knights*. For the eels, when they are about to drink, stir the waters and then they drink. Clearly those people did the same to me: they stirred my poems, stealing ideas from them.

Through the Aristophanic text<sup>29</sup> Tzetzes alludes to intellectual theft and to material meddling with his production (ἐτάραξαν τὰ ἐμὰ ποιήματα), something that recalls the circumstances behind the poem edited and commented in this volume by Nunzio Bianchi.

The epitaph helps better understand Theodoros' characterization in the letters also in another respect. When the collection was published, Theodoros was presumably already dead: Andronikos and Tzetzes were about the same age<sup>30</sup> and Theodoros is described as still fairly young in the epitaph. If Grünbart's dating is correct, the letters to Theodoros are from the mid-1150s at the latest, that is to say when Tzetzes and Andronikos were in their forties<sup>31</sup>. The collection was published in the first half of the 1160s: even assuming that Theodoros was much younger than Andronikos, he

<sup>28</sup> The passage from the *Knights* is to be found at v. 886, where, however, the habit of stirring the waters is ascribed to fishermen not to the animals.

<sup>29</sup> On the role of Aristophanes in Tzetzes' polemic attacks see P.A. Agapitos, 'Middle-class' ideology of education and language, and the 'bookish' identity of John Tzetzes, in J. Stouraitis (ed.), *Ideologies and Identities in the Medieval Byzantine World*, Berlin-Boston (forthcoming).

<sup>30</sup> *Ep.* 89, addressed to the brothers Kamateroi, was originally composed before 1157, when we know that Andronikos was eparch as he was registered as such during the Synod of the Blachernae. The title, used later in *Ep.* 103, is not present in the previous letters.

<sup>31</sup> On Andronikos' life (he probably was born around 1110) see above, n. 5. On Tzetzes' date of birth, see now A. Pizzone, *Saturno contro sul mare d'Ismaro. Una nuova fonte autobiografica per la vita di Giovanni Tzetze*, in A. Capra-C. Nobili-S. Martinelli Tempesta (edd.), *Philoxenia. Viaggi e viaggiatori nella Grecia di ieri e di oggi*, Milan 2020, 75-94.

could not possibly have qualified as a young man after that date<sup>32</sup>. The comparison with Theramenes entails therefore a touch of tragic irony, because the audience would have known that profligate habits and reckless morals had led both of them to an untimely death<sup>33</sup>. Dysentery had in fact dubious moral connotations and ancient medicine connected it explicitly with an excessive wine consumption – a recurring detail, as we shall see, in the characterization of Tzetzes' enemies<sup>34</sup>.

### *Theodoros and Andronikos Kamateros*

The same motifs hinted at in the letters to Theodoros – intellectual rivalry, resentment, unauthorized circulation of his work – are to be found also in *Ep.* 89, sent to both Kamateroi brothers. Nikolaos Zangklas has recently shown that this letter is most likely connected with the iambs following the epitaph for Theodoros in the *Par. gr.* 2925, first edited by Pétridès in 1903<sup>35</sup>. In this section I illuminate further aspects shedding new light on the possible links with Theodoros' epitaph and the circulation of texts in Constantinople.

*Ep.* 89, a longer missive (pp. 129,3-130,11 Leone), was prompted by a diplomatic incident with a fellow literatus, Gregorios, who appears to have been one of the Kamateroi's protégés. Tzetzes was shown a letter with some hexameters written by Gregorios, even though authorship was not clearly stated – or so he says. Appalled by their quality, he had composed an impromptu rebuttal in iambs, criticizing the colleague's poem (p. 129,6-9 Leone)<sup>36</sup>. In turn, someone else had let Gregorios know about Tzetzes' criticism, unduly ascribing to him poorly composed lines (ll. 9-15),<sup>37</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> For the date of 'publication' of the collection see Wendel, *o.c.* 1996. The *terminus ante quem* is established on the basis of Andronikos' career, as in 1166 he was promoted from eparch to Droungarios.

<sup>33</sup> Theramenes fell victim to Critias under the regime of the Thirty Tyrants, which he had contributed to create: see Xen., *Hell.* II 3, 56 and cf. F. Hobden, *The Symposium in Ancient Greek Society and Thought*, Cambridge 2013, 152-154.

<sup>34</sup> See Hippocr. *Epid.* VII 82,5, pp. 436,22-438,1 Littré; *Aff.* XXVII 6, p. 238,10 Littré.

<sup>35</sup> S. Pétridès, *Vers inédits de Jean Tzetzes*, «ByzZ» XII/2 (1903), 568-570; and see now N. Zagklas, *Satire in the Komnenian Period: Poetry, Satirical Strands, and Intellectual Antagonism*, in P. Marciniak-I. Nilsson (edd.), *Satire in the Middle Byzantine Period. The Golden Age of Laughter?*, Leiden-Boston 2020, 279-303: 296-301. See also Agapitos, *Blemish examiner* cit. 16 n. 84.

<sup>36</sup> On the whole episode and on Tzetzes' improvisation, see Agapitos, *Blemish examiners* cit. 121-122.

<sup>37</sup> His critics are described as follows in the self-commentary (*Hist.* X 306, 73 Leone): ὡς τεχνικοὶ κηρύττονται τοῖς μεθυσσοκοττάβοις, / καὶ τεχνικὸν μὴ γράφοντες μηδέν, μηδὲ εἰδότες (“they are proclaimed skilled by drunkards busy with kottabos, even if they do not write or know anything skilled”).



In order to clear up the matter Tzetzes asks the Kamateroi to summon a public reading of his iambs (ll. 17-23).

Tzetzes characterizes his critics as drunkards, “vomiting out” the bad lines they ascribe to him (τοῦ στόματος ἀποκοτταβίζων ταυτί, r. 13). As clarified by *Historia* XII 423, referring in turn to *Historia* VI 85, 854-895, this verb alludes to the game of kottabos, played in ancient times during the symposium: the participants had to try to hit a target with the last droplets of wine from their cups. Tzetzes links explicitly the term to drunkenness. But there is more. In one of the scholia on the *Historiai* related to the entry on Theramenes (XII 416, 499, p. 566 Leone), which, as we have seen, comments on the letter to Theodoros, Tzetzes recalls Theramenes’ last words (according to Xen. *Hell.* II 3,56), including the verb ἀποκοτταβίζω:

Φαρμάκου πόσει τελευτᾷ οὗτος κελεύσει Κριτίου ἑνὸς τῶν λ’ ὄντος πρὶν αὐτοῦ ἐρωμένου· ἀποκοτταβίσας μικρὸν τοῦ φαρμάκου, ἀνέκραγε· Κριτίᾳ τῷ καλῷ.

He dies drinking poison by the order of Critias, one of the Thirty, who had previously been his lover: throwing then a bit of the poison like in the game of kottabos, he shouted: “To the beautiful Critias”.

The intertextual parallel can hardly be coincidental, especially given that ἀποκοτταβίζω is a rather rare verb. The Kamateroi and their circle of literati are consistently represented as a ‘basket of deplorables’, yielding to debauchery. Allusions and explicit references in the letters together with the self-commentary create a narrative trajectory around Tzetzes’ relationship with the group. Such an arc moreover is in dialogue with other, more or less occasional works and poems stemming from the same period, thus creating a network of texts in which literature and lived experiences illuminate each other.

Letter 89 also testifies to a fluid circulation of texts, which could present themselves in many forms, from the anonymous waxed tablet to oral transmission. Tzetzes describes Gregorios’ lines as follows (ll. 6-9):

γραμματείου γάρ μοι προσενεχθέντος ἐγκεχαραγμένην ἥρωικὴν ἔχοντος μούσαν, οὐκ εἰδὼς ποῖος ἄρα εἶη ὁ ταύτης πατήρ, ἰάμβους τινὰς πρὸς τὰ παρεσυρμένα τῆς τέχνης ἀπεσχεδίασα.

For I was given a short letter on a tablet containing hexameters engraved upon it and since I did not know who their father was, I improvised some iambs against the sloppiness of their technique.

Reacting to the bad press, Tzetzes asks to be judged on the basis of his ‘authorized’ work (ll. 15-22):

δέομαι ὑμῶν βραχεῖαν τὴν αἴτησιν, τῷ μὲν κυρίῳ Γρηγορίῳ διδάξαι τὸ τῆς περιπετείας ἀκούσιον, ἐν κοινῷ δὲ τῷ συλλόγῳ, εἰ δυνατὸν συμπάροντος καὶ τοῦ ῥαιφερενδαρίου, πρὸ πάντων δὲ καὶ τοῦ ὑμετέρου ἀνεψιοῦ τοῦ φιλοσόφου κυρίου Μιχαήλ, μοῦσαν ἰάμβων ἐμῶν οὐχ ὑπογείως πρὸ χρόνων δὲ τινῶν συγγραφεῖσαν, ὡς ἂν κρησφύγετον μηδαμῇ τῷ διαβάλλοντι γένοιτο, ὑπαναγνῶναι καὶ κρῖναι.

I have a quick ask: first, could you tell sir Gregorios that the incident was unintended and, second, could a book of my iambs, overtly composed a while ago, be read and judged, in a public gathering, if possible in the presence of the referendarios and in front of everyone as well as of your cousin<sup>38</sup>, sir Michael the philosopher, so that it does not remain hidden to anyone of the accusers?

What is striking here is the contrast between improvised iambs (ἀπεσχεδί-ασσα) and the “Muse” of iambs composed οὐχ ὑπογείως, literally ‘not underground’. The term Muse has to be read as a pointer to a proper collection of iambs in book form. ‘Muse’ was used to designate Herodotus’ books – nine in number – already in ancient times. More specifically, however, Tzetzes links the Muse to the written word and to books in particular. In the *Allegories on the Odyssey*, for instance, we read (vv. 104-105)<sup>39</sup>:

οἱ χάρται καὶ αἱ βίβλοι δὲ πάντως καὶ Πιερίαι,  
οἷα Μουσῶν καὶ γνώσεως τελοῦσαι κατοικίαι.

the papers and the books no doubt are the Pierides,  
as they are the abodes of the Muses and knowledge.

<sup>38</sup> The term ἀνεψιός is taken here by Tzetzes as meaning ‘cousin’ instead of ‘nephew’, as he explains in *Hist.* VI 50, 370-381. See also Grigoriadis, *o.c.* 294 n. 297.

<sup>39</sup> The translation is taken from A. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Odyssey*, Washington DC 2019.

The passage is to be compared with a scholion on the *Carmina Iliaca* in which Tzetzes says that αἱ νεωστὶ συναχθεῖσαι βίβλοι were called “Nymphs” and “Muses” (*schol. Carm. Il. II* 465a, p. 208,8-9 Leone)<sup>40</sup>.

Equally, the scholia to the *Batrachomyomachia* ascribe to Tzetzes the following exegesis (*schol. 1*, p. 201,13-15 Ludwig):

Ἐλικῶν δὲ κατὰ Τζέτζην αἱ βίβλοι, εἰς ἃς ἐλίσσονται καὶ συστρέφονται καὶ οἶονεὶ χορεύουσιν αἱ Μοῦσαι· ἀνάγραπτοι γὰρ αἱ γνώσεις ἡμῶν ταῖς βίβλοις γίνονται.

Books are according to Tzetzes the Helicon: in them the Muses turn and whirl, as if dancing; our knowledge is recorded by books.

It is thus possible to draw the conclusion that in the 1150s there was a book of iambs, ‘published’ and authorized by Tzetzes, circulating in the capital<sup>41</sup>. Such a book, however, had been composed ‘some time before’. Iambic poems feature often among Tzetzes’ marginalia. Some are explicitly connected to improvisation<sup>42</sup>; others, however, do not refer to any impromptu or occasional compositional practice and seem to date from the beginning of his career, as shown by the presence of *dichronoi*<sup>43</sup>. It might be that some of them were part of this earlier collection. Such a book of iambs is now lost, but *Ep.* 89 shows that Tzetzes considered it representative of his poetic production, so much so that he asks to be judged on it rather than on the lines improvised on specific occasions and not subject to revision or proper publication in book form. Moreover, the published version works as a non-falsifiable record, preventing that ‘bad lines’ are unduly ascribed to the author.

As mentioned above, *Ep.* 89 seems to be tightly connected with the iambs against one Skylitzes and one Gregorios from *Par. gr.* 2925. Panagiotis Agapitos has recently discovered another version of the poem in the Viennese manuscript *Phil. gr.* 321, where the verses are accompanied by further lines cursing Tzetzes’ opponents in a very characteristic way – the same curse can be found in the autograph notes of the *Vossianus*<sup>44</sup>. The twelve-line poem from the Parisian manuscript is

<sup>40</sup> I thank Valeria Lovato for pointing me to this reference.

<sup>41</sup> The mention of a book of iambs is to be found also in the bibliographical note from the *Ambr. C222 inf.*, *schol. Ar. Ran.* 897, p. 955,2-3 Koster.

<sup>42</sup> See Agapitos, *Blemisher examiners* cit. 37 and n. 194.

<sup>43</sup> See Pizzone, *Saturno contro* cit.

<sup>44</sup> See Agapitos, *Blemish examiners* cit. n. 84, and for the *Vossianus* (θεοῦ ῥομφαία στίλβουσα evoked against the copyist) see f. 113 r.

introduced by a title explaining the circumstances prompting the poem's composition – such details are absent in the *Vindob. Phil. gr.* 321. The iambs are addressed against one Skylitzes and one Gregorios, referred to as imperial secretary. As mentioned above, the former was already identified with Georgios Skylitzes by Pétridès<sup>45</sup>. Georgios Skylitzes, as we saw, was in fact closely connected with Andronikos, for whom he wrote the dedicatory verses of the *Sacred Arsenal* among others. As far as Gregorios is concerned, Agapitos and Zagklas suggest a possible identification with Gregorios Antiochos and posit that he is the same Gregorios as the imperial secretary of *Ep.* 89<sup>46</sup>. As stressed by both scholars, Gregorios Antiochos had also been a secretary in his youth, and he benefitted from Andronikos' patronage. The famous *Escorialensis* Y II 10 preserves two letters by Gregorios Antiochos addressed to Andronikos as well as one letter and one encomium written for the Patriarch Basil Kamateros (1183-1185), who was also a member of the family even though the relationship with our Kamateroi brothers is hard to pinpoint<sup>47</sup>. This network of relationships is most plausible and now further manuscript evidence might shed more light on it. Besides *Par. gr.* 2925 and *Vindob. Phil. gr.* 321, the verses against Skylitzes and Gregorios are also preserved by *Marc. gr.* Z 613, f. 295v, as pointed out by Ilias Nesseris<sup>48</sup>. The verses are introduced by the same title as in *Par. gr.* 2925, but the *Marcianus* provides extra prosopographic information omitted by the *Parisinus* (emphasis mine)<sup>49</sup>:

Στίχοι τοῦ Τζέτζου αὐθωροὶ καὶ πάντη ἀμελέτητοι γεγονότες κατὰ τε τοῦ Σκυλίτζη καὶ Γρηγορίου τοῦ βασιλικοῦ γραμματικοῦ ἐκείνου τοῦ τοῦ Μέλητος, εἰπόντων ἐκείνων μὴ στίχους δύνασθαι τὸν Τζέτζην στιχίζειν τι γενναῖον καὶ ἀξιεπαῖνον. οὐδ' ἅμα τῷ ἀκοῦσαι τῇ ὀρθοπονοίᾳ καίτοι συνεχόμενος ἐσχεδίασε, γράψαντος τούτους τοῦ καὶ τὸ μήνυμα εἰπόντος τοῦ ψόγου.

<sup>45</sup> Pétridès, *Vers inédits* cit. 569.

<sup>46</sup> Agapitos, *Blemish examiners* cit. 24 n. 120; Zagklas, *o.c.* 298 n. 75. On Gregorios Antiochos, see J. Darrouzès, *Notice sur Grégoire* cit.; M. Loukaki, *Grégoire Antiochos. Éloge du patriarche Basile Kamateros*, Paris 1993, 3-28; Bucossi, *Andronici Camateri* cit. xxii.

<sup>47</sup> Loukaki, *o.c.* 29-36.

<sup>48</sup> I.Ch. Nesseris, *Η παιδεία στην Κωνσταντινούπολη κατά τον 12ο αιώνα*, II, diss. Ioannina 2014, 524. The *Marc. gr.* Z 613 is dated to the thirteenth century and preserves the *Odyssey* with the *Batrachiomachia*: see F. Pontani, *Sguardi su Ulisse. La tradizione esegetica greca all'Odissea*, Roma 2005, pl. 10-12. Image: <https://www.internetculturale.it/jmms/iccuviewer/iccu.jsp?id=oai%3A193.206.197.121%3A18%3AVE0049%3ACSTOR.240.10358&mode=all&teca=marciana&viewType=onepage&mediaType=image&objectIndex=610>.

<sup>49</sup> Translation by N. Zagklas, modified with additions.

Verses by Tzetzes composed on the spot and completely unprepared against Skylitzes and that imperial grammarian Gregorios of Meles, when they said that Tzetzes is not able to versify anything noble and praiseworthy; upon hearing these things, he improvised them though distressed by his shortness of breath, when he wrote them down and delivered the message of the *psogos*.

The crucial point in this version of the title is that Gregorios is connected to the Meles family through what appears to be an indication of “sponsorship”, such as the one we find for instance for Michael the rhetor ὁ τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης or Eustathios ὁ τοῦ Καταφλώρον. The Meles family is attested from the eleventh century, when Argyros Meles, educated as a hostage in Constantinople, rose to the highest ranks of the imperial administration under Konstantinos IX<sup>50</sup>. In the twelfth century Stephanos Meles is logothetes of the drome and serves under John II during the campaign in Cilicia of 1137-1138. Michael Italikos and Theodoros Prodromos address letters and poems to Stephanos, describing him as a patron<sup>51</sup>. Given the prominence of Stephanos Meles in the extant sources, two poems preserved in the *Barocc*. 27, ff. 322r-324v have been generally ascribed to him since the Twenties of the last century<sup>52</sup>. The title of manuscript, however, reads just τοῦ Μέλητος. The first poem is a life of Theodore of Stoudios in verse. The second, unfortunately incomplete, revolves around a performance and shows polemic overtones that closely remind one of *Ep*. 89. The most recent editor has interpreted such overtones as related to the author himself, who would be performing an act of self-derogatory humility. This interpretation, however, is mainly due to an emendation that changes the text offered by the manuscript in a crucial point (v. 4)<sup>53</sup>. In what follows I offer a different translation, following the text as it is preserved by the *Baroccianus*<sup>54</sup>:

τί τοῦτο, πάντως ἐσχάτης τολμηρίας·

<sup>50</sup> On Argyros and the social progression of the family in Constantinople, see O. Delouis, *La Vie métrique de Théodore Stoudite par Stéphane Mélès (BHG 1755m)*, «AB» CXXXII (2014) 21-54: 27-33.

<sup>51</sup> See Michael Italikos, *Ep*. 20, 21, 40 with Gautier, *o.c.* 44-45; Theodoros Prodromos, *Carm. Histor.* 68, 69, 70 with W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos. Historische Gedichte*, Vienna 1974, 510-513.

<sup>52</sup> See Delouis, *o.c.* 28, relying on S.G. Mercati, *Stefano Meles è l'autore della vita giambica di S. Teodoro Studita del cod. Barocc. gr. 27*, «ByzZ» XXV (1925) 43-46.

<sup>53</sup> The reading ἄρρα τάων, with an aorist infinitive from ἀείρω and an epic form of article/demonstrative pronoun with partitive function, is normalized in ἀρετάων by Delouis, making therefore the accusative ἄμουσον ἄνδρα very difficult to explain.

<sup>54</sup> *Barocc*. 27 is dated between 1315/16 and 1323/24: see Delouis, *o.c.* 27.

μέσον τοσούτου συλλόγου τῶν πατέρων  
 καὶ ταῦτα πάντων εὐλαβῶν καὶ κοσμίων  
 ἄμουσον ἄνδρα παντελῶς ἄραι τάων  
 ὃν οὐδ' ὅλως ἔστεψαν οἱ σοφοὶ λόγοι 5  
 στέφει χαρίτων, ὡς στέφουσι πολλάκις  
 γνῶσιν διδόντες εὖπονον πρὸς τὸ γράφειν  
 κομφῶς, μελιχρῶς, εὐφυῶς, θαυμασίως,  
 ὃν ῥητορικὴ βίβλος οὐδαμῶς ἔχει 10  
 πονοῦντα μαθεῖν σχημάτων τὰς ιδέας,  
 ἃς Ἑρμογένης ἐκδιδάσκει πανσόφως,  
 ἀλλὰ πιέζει τῆς ἀμαθίας νόσος,  
 ἀλλὰ ταράττει καὶ στροβεῖ καὶ συγχέει  
 ὁ τῶν κυμάτων τῆς ῥαθυμίας σάλος  
 εἰς βυθὸν αὐτὸν καταποντίσαι θέλων. 15  
 Ἄλλ' εἰς τὸν εἰρμὸν αὐθις ἄξω τὸν λόγον.  
 Ἔδει με σιγᾶν, ᾧ καλὴ γερούσια,  
 δι' οὓς προλαβὼν ἐπέφηνα τοὺς τρόπους  
 μήπως λαλήσας εἰς μέσον...

What is this? Absolutely, an act of extreme arrogance:  
 in the middle of such a gathering of fathers  
 all of them pious and moderate,  
 to extol a man without refinement,  
 one whom never ever the wise speeches crowned 5  
 with the crown of graces, as they often crown,  
 offering a grateful task of knowledge, so as to write  
 with elegance, sweetness, nobility, and wonder,  
 him, whom the rhetorical book never had  
 labouring to learn the styles of figures, 10  
 the ones taught by Hermogenes with great wisdom.  
 On the contrary the plague of ignorance drags him down,  
 he is disturbed and agitated and confused  
 by the tossing of the waves of sluggishness,  
 that will soon plunge him into the abyss. 15  
 But now I will bring my speech back on track.  
 Maybe I should have stayed silent, o beautiful senate,  
 because of the ways I have shown you in advance,  
 lest, speaking in the middle...

Meles describes a performance/contest within a σύλλογος which resonates with the circumstances of *Ep.* 89, where proximity to a church environment is also suggested (p. 129, 11-12 Leone). The praise for Hermogenes and the allegation that the ἄμουσος does not know his rhetorical handbooks also remind of Tzetzes' polemic with the close-knit group including the Kamateroi. It would be extremely tempting to see in the ἄμουσος a portrait of Tzetzes 'from the other side'. Although the hypothesis cannot be proven beyond doubt – and surely arguing for it would require more evidence<sup>55</sup> – at least two facts emerge: there are no cogent reasons to ascribe the *Baroccianus* poems to Stephanos Meles rather than to any other member of the family; the verses of the *Baroccianus* show that theoretical and practical knowledge of Hermogenes had a great relevance to performative practices broadly intended.

Going back to the Tzetzes' attack in iambs, the prose introduction from both the *Parisinus* and the *Marcianus* informs us that Georgios and Gregorios had criticized Tzetzes' iambs as vile and not praiseworthy (v. 3 Pétridès). Although afflicted by orthopnoea, Tzetzes had replied immediately, improvising a violent rebuttal, which he had then put in writing and sent as a memento (vv. 4-5 Pétridès)<sup>56</sup>. The iambic poem is a tirade against the τραγίσκοι ("billy goats") and the βονάσσοι ("buffaloes") unwisely defying the leonine Tzetzes. The former are seen as horny animals – both literally and metaphorically – striving to butt their heads against their rivals. Both of them are described as shitty beasts, unusually sprouting faeces from their mouths instead than from their butts (vv. 1-17). The coarse character of these lines would fit well with the allegations levelled against the ἄμουσος. Such behaviours, moreover, are defined by Tzetzes as typical of the young and novel exemplars of their species (vv. 18-19). This detail suggests that Tzetzes' rivals must have belonged to a younger generation, trained in new fashionable rhetorical skills. Such a fact fits with Andronikos' patronage as well as with the age of Georgios Skylitzes, who was born around two decades after Tzetzes and Andronikos. As for Gregorios, much depends on his identification. Gregorios Antiochos belonged to the same cohort as Georgios. Stephanos Meles was logothetes of the drome between 1138 and 1140, which suggests that he could well have had protégés one generation younger than Tzetzes<sup>57</sup>. Finally, if the Georgios and the Gregorios mentioned in the iambs actually belonged to the Kamateroi's circle and if the Gregorios from the iambs is the same as the individual mentioned in letter 89, this would explain why the epitaph

<sup>55</sup> I plan to enlarge on it in a further contribution.

<sup>56</sup> See the translation and commentary by Zagklas, *o.c.* 297-298.

<sup>57</sup> The form ὁ τοῦ attached to the name referred often to the sponsorship of uncles, as mentioned above. See P. Magdalino, *The reform edict of 1107*, in M. Mullett-D. Smythe (edd.), *Alexios I Komnenos*, Belfast 1996, 199-218: 206 and n. 11.

for Theodoros and the lines against Tzetzes' accusers were copied one after the other in the *Par. gr.* 2925. If I am right in thinking that the lines for Theodoros resonate with a certain ambiguity, the combination of both poems becomes somewhat natural, as both testify to the aesthetic and ethical flaws of a powerful intellectual and political network.

*Andronikos Kamateros*

*Ep.* 90 is the first letter of the corpus addressed to Andronikos alone. It is closely connected to *Ep.* 89 in that it provides information on the outcome of the incident described there.

The whole affair with Gregorios and the cohort of critics ended up well for Tzetzes – or at least this is what he wants the readers of the letter collection to think. In the missive he lingers on the result of the ‘public judgement’ he had asked for (pp. 130,14-131,4 Leone):

Πανσέβαστέ μοι σεβαστέ καὶ αὐθέντα, χθὲς περὶ λύχνων ἀφὰς ἡ δύναμις ἀνηγγέλθη μοι τῶν γραφέντων μοι· διὰ γοῦν τῆς σῆς ἀντιλήψεως τῷ ἐμῷ μὲν αὐθέντη, τῷ σῷ δὲ ἀδελφῷ συντόμως σταλήτω ἡ ἐπιστολὴ καὶ τὰ βράχιστα μοι στιχίδια, ἅπερ ἀπεσχεδιάσα νῦν προτροπὴν τοῦ ἐξάρχου κεκτημένα καὶ ἔπαινον, ὅτι τὴν συμμορίαν τῶν ὧν ἡ γραφὴ δηλοῖ στιχουργεῖ. ταῦτα σταλήτω νῦν, “ὄφρα καὶ Ἔκτωρ” ὁ διαβάλλον ἡμᾶς “εἴσεται” ἢ “εἰ καὶ ἐμὸν δόρυ μαίνεται ἐν παλάμησι”, καὶ ὡς ἡμεῖς μετὰ μελέτης οὐ γράφομεν. καὶ βραχεῖς δὲ τινες ἕτεροι στίχοι τούτοις σταλήσονται, οὓς καὶ βασανισάτωσαν τεχνικῶς.

O you, wholly sebastos, my sebastos and lord, yesterday toward nightfall the power of my writing was proclaimed; through your intercession the letter shall be sent at once to your brother, my lord, together with the very short lines I just now created impromptu, which also include the praise for the exarch, since it portrays in verse the crew of those put in the spotlight by my writing. These shall be sent now, “so that Hector too”, who accuses us, “may know whether my spear also rages in my hands” (*Il.* VIII 110-111), and that we do not write preparedly. And some more short lines will be sent to them, which shall also be judged skilfully!

The scholia to the epistle explain, in order to avoid any ambiguity, that τὰ γραφέντα μοι were the verses mentioned in the previous letter (p. 172,4-5 Leone).



The day after the public reading, Tzetzes asks Andronikos to pass on to his brother the letter announcing his victory, together with some new lines he has composed to celebrate the event. Toward the end of the letter, he also adds that he will send further verses to his opponents. As noted by Zagklas, the term he uses – τεχνικῶς – might suggest that he is speaking of dodecasyllables following the rules of ancient iambic meters<sup>58</sup>. Even if we cannot be sure that these verses are the same preserved by the *Par. gr.* 2925 and the *Vindob. Phil. gr.* 321, their content must have been comparable in tone.

There is a second letter addressed to Andronikos in the collection. It is letter 103, again a very short missive, in which Tzetzes interprets a dream allegedly experienced by Andronikos as pointing to his fears of losing the love of the emperor. The epistle, reassuring at face value, ends with a very disquieting mention of the imperial executioner (“But the strong and vigorous intelligence of the emperor, that ruling and marvelous youngster, will prevent the executioner from accomplishing what he wants”: ἀλλ’ ὁ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος σφριγῶν καὶ στεροῦς λογισμός, ὁ ἀρχικὸς καὶ περικαλλῆς νεανίας ἐκεῖνος οὐκ ἔάσει τὸν δῆμιον ὃ βούλεται διαπράξασθαι, p. 149,13-18 Leone).

*Ep.* 90 and 103 are particularly important in the collection’s narrative arc. As stated at the beginning, the outburst against Andronikos in *Historia XI* 369 has attracted much attention given its violent tones, and yet it surely is not the last word in the tense relationship between Tzetzes and his patrons. In reading the collection with the self-commentary one must carefully distinguish different chronologies. While both works were probably published at some point in the first half of the 1160s, the letters and the commentary refer to events spanning across three decades. In other words, the events narrated in the *Historiai* should not be read synchronically, but diachronically together with the collection: they are integral to its narrative.

#### *Other references to the Kamateroi and Historia XI 369.*

Besides the epistles explicitly addressed to the Kamateroi, the letter collection prompts other indirect references to the family, either in the missives themselves or in the self-commentary.

Problems with the Kamateroi are surely at stake in *Ep.* 69, which closes the first instalment, or συναγωγή, of Tzetzes’ letters. The letter, addressed to one John

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<sup>58</sup> Zagklas, *o.c.* 301 n. 89.

Basilakes and dated by Grünbart to 1148-1150<sup>59</sup>, entails a pun capturing the author's mixed feelings toward the family (p. 98,8-17 Leone):

Καθώπλισας ἡμᾶς ταῖς μαχαίραις, γλυκύτατέ μοι δέσποτα καὶ ἀνεψιέ·  
εἰ γὰρ ἡμῖν ὡς στρατιωτικώτεροι ἦσαν ἀχρήσιμοι, ἀλλ' οὖν ταύταις  
τοὺς φίλους ὀπλίσαντες κατ' ἐχθρῶν σωματοφύλαξι τούτοις κεχρή-  
μεθα· πλὴν ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἡμεῖς ἄμοιροι παντελῶς μαχαιρίδων ἐλείφθημεν.  
κατέσχον γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς τὴν τοὺς γραφικοὺς ἀπευθύνουσαν δόνακας  
καὶ τὰς τῷ σεβαστῷ δὲ τῷ Καματηρῷ σταλείσας μαχαίρας χερσὶ τοῦ  
ταύτας ἀποκομίσαντος παρεσχόμεν παιδός· αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐγὼ διὰ τινὰ  
περιπέτειαν τούτῳ τὰ νῦν οὐ προσομιλῶ.

You have armed us with blades, my sweetest lord and cousin; for even if they had been useless to us, in that they were too warlike, nonetheless we would have made use of them as if they were bodyguards, arming our friends against our enemies; besides, we ourselves are not completely without share in some little swords. For I myself did retain the one that sharpens my writing pens while I entrusted the blades sent by the sebastos Kamateros to the hands of the boy who brought them; for I do not meet with him in person due to a certain quarrel.

Once again, the situation is deeply ambiguous. The gift of swords becomes a pretext to emphasize the aggressive character of Tzetzes' poetry. His pens are literally weaponized. Tzetzes also mentions blades sent by Kamateros, which he immediately returned via the same boy who had delivered them. Provided that the blades mentioned in the letter are not just metaphorical in the first place, what was the purpose of the gift? Was it a present to mend things? Or else is this just a pun alluding to the violent disagreements between the two? 'Ρομφαία, a synonym of μάχαιρα, appears time and again in the autograph notes of the *Vossianus* in formulaic insults against the copyists to whom Tzetzes wishes horrendous deaths<sup>60</sup>. In letter 90, as we have seen, he implicitly compares his verses to Hector's spear. Chances are therefore that here too Tzetzes wants to emphasize that he is well equipped to rebut the attacks of the powerful clan, thanks to both his friends/relatives and his pen.

It is now time to look more closely at *Historia* XI 369, which, as we saw, has attracted much attention due to its violent overtones. The *Historia* is associated to

<sup>59</sup> Grünbart, *o.c.* 211-212.

<sup>60</sup> See ff. 81v, 82r, 108r, and see above, n. 44.

*Ep.* 76, addressed to one John Kostomyres<sup>61</sup>, as a thank-you for a letter and a present (ἐπιστολή και ἀποστολή). Taken aback at such generosity and unable to reciprocate in the same way, Tzetzes declares that he will pray for his correspondent. The present mentioned in the letter is nothing but a piece of writing exalting Tzetzes and his rhetorical prowess, as shown by the following passage (p. 112,9-21 Leone):

ἐμετρίαζε γὰρ ἡ γραφή και πρὸς τὸ ταπεινὸν κατεσύρετο, τὸν ὄγκον ἀφεῖσα τοῦ ἀξιώματος, και περὶ τῶν χαμαιζήλων και πηχυαίων ἡμῶν γιγαντιῶντας λόγους ἀνέπλαττεν, οἷας ποτὲ τὰς Ἀλεξάνδρου εἰκόνας ὁ Στασικράτης ἐκεῖνος ὁ Βιθυνός, οὐχ ἑτερόφθαλμον οὐδ' ἑτεροτράχηλον πλάττων ἐκεῖνον, ὡσπερ ἦν ὁ ἀνὴρ, καθὼς και ὁ Λύσιππος πρὸς ἀλήθειαν τοῦτον ἀνέπλαττεν. οὕτω μὲν ἐμετρίαζε ἡ γραφή και πρὸς τὸ ταπεινὸν κατεσύρετο, τοιαῦτα περὶ ἡμῶν ἀναπλάττουσα, κἂν αἱ τῶν ἐνθυμημάτων εὐρέσεις και κεφαλαίων και ἡ ἰδέα τοῦ λόγου, ἔννοιαί τε και μέθοδοι, λέξεις, σχήματα, κῶλα, συνθῆκαι, ἀναπαύσεις, ῥυθμοὶ οὐκ εἶων αὐτὴν ὡσπερ ἐν προσωπεῖῳ τινὶ τῷ μετρίαζοντι συγκαλύπτεσθαι.

For the piece of writing was moderate and inclined toward the humble, smoothing down the pride of honour and created towering discourses, like giants, about my humble being, my nothingness, just like the portraits of Alexander painted by that famous Stasikrates from Bythina, who had represented him without eyes of different colours and without tilted neck, as Lysippus had painted him, according to the truth<sup>62</sup>. Thus, your writing is moderate and inclined toward the humble fabricating such things about myself, even if the disposition of arguments and topics, as well as the form of discourse, the thoughts and the modes, the words, the figures, the clauses, the compounds, the cadences, the rhythms did not allow for it to be completely obscured by moderation as if by a mask.

In the second part of the letter Tzetzes quotes directly from his correspondent's encomium and connects it explicitly to an affair regarding one sir Theodoros (τὰ δέ γε περὶ τὸν κύριον Θεόδωρον), with whom Tzetzes does not wish to discuss anymore. Theodoros should just look into his writings, and in particular into those

<sup>61</sup> Leone's edition has Κοστόμου, but the manuscripts do not allow for this reading. Grünbart, *o.c.* 211, following Darrouzès, suggests a truncated form of Κοστόμυρης. On this name, see E. Trapp, *Die Etymologie des Namens Kostomyres*, «JÖByz» XXX (1981) 169-170.

<sup>62</sup> See A. Stewart, *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics*, Los Angeles 1993, 406.

teaching the *logoi*. This is stated unambiguously in *Historia* XI 372, 406-407, where Tzetzes glosses the oracle ἐμοὶ μελήσει καὶ λευκαῖς κόραις<sup>63</sup> as follows:

Ἐγὼ δ' εἶπον, ᾧ ἔγραψα ταῦτα, λευκὰς νῦν κόρας  
τὰς ἐπινοίας τὰς ἐμάς, αἷσπερ τεχνῶ τοὺς λόγους.

However, I said, where I wrote this, “white crows”  
as my thoughts, through which I present artful speeches.

Equally, at the end of the letter Tzetzes stresses that by reading his books he – seemingly the same Theodoros – will be able to quench his thirst and find precious gems and pearls. As Eric Cullhed has pointed out<sup>64</sup>, the self-commentary once again clarifies that Tzetzes is speaking here about his own books (*Hist.* XI 375, 489-490):

Ὅστρεα νῦν δε λογικὰ τὰς βίβλους ὀνομάζω.  
Μαργάρους πάντως ἐξ αὐτῶν, δοκῶ, νοεῖς τοὺς λόγους.

Here I call the books “oysters of discourse”.  
Surely, you interpret the pearls coming from them, I suppose, as words.

There is not enough evidence to prove beyond doubt that the “sir Theodoros” mentioned in the letter is actually Theodoros Kamateros. However, the tensions implied by Tzetzes are centred around issues of rhetoric and they pave the way to the anger displayed in the *historia*.

To sum up, the complicated relationship with the Kamateroi goes across the whole second part of the letter collection and seems to span across ten years, from the end of the 1140s to the end of the 1150s. The episode narrated in *Historia* XI 369 is only a fragment of the various disagreements that Tzetzes had with the clan. All of them are to be seen against the background of performative practices, ranging from public reciting to poetic contests and the teaching of rhetoric. More importantly, Tzetzes builds a story around these disagreements, carefully disseminating information across the collection *and* the self-commentary. Such a narrative is one with a happy ending for him. The last thing we hear about Theodoros is that Tzetzes is sending him a triumphant letter to celebrate his victory against his poetic rivals,

<sup>63</sup> Cf. *Suda*, σ 1050 Adler.

<sup>64</sup> E. Cullhed, *Diving for pearls and Tzetzes' death*, «ByzZ» CVII/1 (2015) 53-62: 60-61. I borrow his translation of the passage quoted.

while the last picture we have of Andronikos is that of a man horrified at the prospect of being executed by the emperor and in need of Tzetzes' reassuring words.

*Historia XI 369 and the προκατάστασις in the Logismoi and in the Commentary on Hermogenes.*

In this section I look at the theoretical background of Tzetzes' outburst against Kamateros in *Historia XI 369*. As mentioned, Tzetzes' attacks are sparked by a disagreement on the meaning and use of *προκατάστασις* within the treatment of *exordia* in ps.-Hermogenes' *De inventione*<sup>65</sup>. In what follows I will therefore focus on the purport of this rhetorical device in Hermogenes and his Late Antique exegetes. I will then concentrate on the reception of Hermogenes in the *Historiai* as well as on the structure of *Historia XI 369*. Finally, by looking both at the *Commentary* and at the *Logismoi*, I will disentangle the different approaches voiced by Tzetzes and his opponents.

*Προκατάστασις* plays a central role in the *corpus Hermogenianum*. After addressing typologies and technique of *προοίμια* in the first book, the second book of *Invention* introduces a theory of narration, or *διήγησις*<sup>66</sup>. The peculiarity of *Invention*, however, lies in that the second book, despite its proclaimed intentions, is devoted more specifically to the *προκατάστασις*, which marks the transition from the prologue to the narration and the proof<sup>67</sup>.

The term is not easy to translate. Current translations range from «background», «introduction» to «preliminary narrative», «preparation for the proof» or «pre-exposition»<sup>68</sup>. As shown by Antonio Sancho Royo, *προκατάστασις* is not

<sup>65</sup> See Ps.-Herm., *Inv.* II 1,1 with M. Patillon, *Corpus Rhetoricum, Pseudo-Hermogène, L'invention – Anonyme, Synopse des exordes*, Paris 2012, 117, 1-9 (text) and 150 n. 91 (commentary).

<sup>66</sup> See Patillon, *o.c.* xviii-xix for a schematic survey of the contents of the first two books.

<sup>67</sup> See Patillon, *o.c.* xxxii, xlv-l. Cf. also M. Edwards-D. Spatharas, *Forensic Narratives in Athenian Courts*, London 2020.

<sup>68</sup> «Opening statement of the narration»: Edwards-Spataras, *o.c.*; «preparation for the proof»: M.R. Dilts-G.A. Kennedy, *Two Greek Rhetorical Treatises from the the Roman Empire*, Leiden-Köln-New York 1997, 113; M. Bailiff-M.G. Moran, *Classical Rhetorics and Rhetoricians: Critical Studies and Sources*, Westport 2005, 39; «background»: D.H. Berry-A. Erskine, *Form and Function in Roman Rhetoric*, Cambridge 2010, 233; «preparation for the narration»: V. Valiavitcharska, *Rhetoric in the hands of the Byzantine grammarian*, «Rhetorica» XXXI/3 (2013) 237-260; «preliminary statement»: J. Walker, *Michael Psellos on rhetoric: A translation and commentary on Psellos' synopsis of Hermogenes*, «RSQ» XXXI/1 (2001) 5-10: 22.

explicitly theorized as such until the second-third century AD<sup>69</sup>. Besides Hemogenes, we find a treatment of this part of the speech in Apsines (*Rh.* 2) and the Anonymus Seguerianus (244), and then in the late antique commentators on Hermogenes: Sopat, Syrianus, Marcellinus, and Troilus<sup>70</sup>.

I will not delve here into the complexity of the several functions ascribed to *προκατάστασις* by Apsines and the Anonymus Seguerianus, which have been already skilfully summarized by Sancho Royo. However, it is worth recalling that their notion of *προκατάστασις* implies the idea of a biased and subjective narrative, which presents the facts, later detailed in the *διήγησις*, in a way favourable to the speaker. In this respect, according to Apsines, the *προκατάστασις* can also work as a pre-confirmation or pre-accusation as well as a means to introduce the intentions of the speaker, their opponents, and their audience. Along similar lines, according to the Anonymus Seguerianus, *προκατάστασις* can work as a prologue. Moreover, *διήγησις* and *κατάστασις* are not interchangeable: whereas the former presents facts that are unknown to the judges, the latter is an exposition of facts that are already known. As noted by Michel Patillon, this interpretation is picked up later on also by John of Sardis in his commentary on *Invention*<sup>71</sup>. In fact, these nuances – subjectivity and differentiation from *διήγησις* – are absent in ps.-Hermogenes, as we shall see. They are to be found, however, in his later commentators. Troilos explicitly asserts that *προκατάστασις* works as an introduction and a prologue, while Syrianus states that it summarizes the facts included in the *κατάστασις*, which, in turn is a biased, pathetic and expanded exposition as against the simple and objective *διήγησις*.

If we now turn to ps.-Hermogenes himself, his doctrine of *προκατάστασις* is characterized by three main points: (1) The factual equivalence between *προκατάστασις* and *προδιήγησις*; (2) The description of *προκατάστασις* as a narrative presenting the background or temporal antecedents of the facts under consideration, with the aim to pave the way to confirmation (“this happened *in the past* ... *therefore*

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<sup>69</sup> A. Sancho Royo, *El término προκατάστασις en la teoría retórica griega sobre las partes del discurso retórico*, «Habis» XXXVII (2006) 365-385.

<sup>70</sup> Sopat. *Rh.* pp. IV 414,22ff. and VIII 80,22 Walz; Marcell. p. IV 54,25 Walz; Syrian. *in Hermog.* pp. II 64,10ff. and 101,9ff.; Troil. *Prolegomenon sylloge* p. 52.11 Rabe. See Sancho Royo, *o.c.* 369-370. For the anonymous, see M. Patillon, *Anonyme de Séguier. Art du discours politique*, Paris 2005, 46.

<sup>71</sup> Patillon, *o.c.* 150, n. 91.

... ”)<sup>72</sup>; (3) The absolute aesthetic and technical value ascribed to προκατάστασις, so much so that to skip pre-exposition is deemed ἄτεχνον and ἰδιωτικόν<sup>73</sup>.

These are, as we will see, the very same points tackled and challenged by Tzetzes both in the *Historiai* and the *Logismoi*. *Historia* XI 369, however, is not the only passage from the self-commentary dealing with the *corpus Hermogenianum*. In commenting on one of the earliest epistles, *Ep.* 8, addressed to one Andronikos Kalorabdas, presented as a former pupil now away from the capital<sup>74</sup>, Tzetzes offers his own take on the corpus, focusing in particular on the *Types of style* and the *Art of eloquence*. *Historia* VI 79 is characterized by very harsh tones against Hermogenes, who is accused of nullifying the efforts of those from whom he received help (ὠφελήθη, v. 787), like Phoibammon and Minucianus (for the *Issues*)<sup>75</sup> or Dionysius (for the *Types of Style*)<sup>76</sup>. Hermogenes, according to Tzetzes, “pisses into the sewage” (Οὗτος ἐν τῷ λουτρῶνι δε, ὡς ἔοικεν, οὐρήσας, v. 785): we will encounter this image again in the *Logismoi*<sup>77</sup>.

I will not enlarge on this point here as it goes beyond the scope of this paper, but Tzetzes seems to consider Phoibammon not as a later exegete but rather as a competitor of Hermogenes, like Minucianus and ps.-Dionysius of Halicarnassus, from whom the author of the *corpus* allegedly drew inspiration for his own writings.

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<sup>72</sup> The decision-making situations or topics listed by Hermogenes to which προκατάστασις can be adapted are five: migrations; law propositions; war and peace; impiety and murder; and public crimes. See Patillon, *o.c.* 151 n. 93.

<sup>73</sup> These three points are listed also in the summary in political verses of the ps.-Hermogenian treatise offered by Psellos in the eleventh century: *Poem.* 7.127-133.

<sup>74</sup> See Grünbart, *o.c.* 184. The name Kalorabdas is not otherwise attested.

<sup>75</sup> By Phoibammon, whose dating is uncertain (though commonly placed to the fifth-sixth century), we have a treatise on the figures of speech (pp. III, 41-50 Spengel) and prolegomena to Hermogenes' *Types of Style* (H. Rabe, *Prolegomenon sylloge, Rhetores Graeci*, XIV, Leipzig 1931, 375-388). From p. 387,25-32 Rabe we learn that the author of the *prolegomena* had produced also work on the *Issues*. On Phoibammon see W. Stegemann, *Phoibammon*, *RE* 39 (1941), coll. 326-43; G.A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors*, Princeton 1983, 123-124; Id., *A New History of Classical Rhetoric*, Princeton 1994, 222-223, 228-229; C. Pepe, *The Rhetorical Commentary in Late Antiquity*, «AION(filol.)» XL/1 (2018) 86-108: 91. On Minucianus see below.

<sup>76</sup> Since *De ideis* is ultimately a treatise on Demosthenes' style, I would argue that Dionysius is Dionysius of Halicarnassus, author of a *De Demosthene* (see Kennedy, *A New History* cit. 161-166).

<sup>77</sup> Tzetzes' point is, in modern parlance, that Hermogenes had treated these other authors 'like shit', harvesting their work without properly acknowledging it and advancing a much worse model of rhetoric.

Tzetzes also points out that Hermogenes finds support in the dignified intellectuals of his time, the θαυμάσιοι who recognize in him something familiar<sup>78</sup>. The fact is that his pupil should listen to him, Tzetzes, and not to Hermogenes, if he wants to profit from a proper treatment of rhetoric. The highly polemical *Historia* VI 79, 794-817, offers a summary of Tzetzes' own approach, highlighting some of the elements later developed in the quarrel with Andronikos Kamateros:

Κεφάλαια δὲ δίδωσι τριάκοντα καὶ πέντε,  
 ἀφάντου μύλου διάλεστρα καὶ φουῖρον κωλοζώστην. 795  
 Καὶ ταῦτα λέγει μέθοδον δεινότητος τυγχάνειν,  
 ἧ̃ συνεργοῦσι καὶ τινὲς ὡς ὅμοιοι ὁμοίοις.  
 Τζέτζης δέ σοι δεινότητος σκιαγραφεῖ μεθόδους  
 ἐπιτροχάδην, σύντομα, τοῦ χάρτου πεφεισμένος.  
 Μέθοδον σὺ δεινότητος γίνωσκε νῦν μαθῶν μου, 800  
 εἰδέναι πάντα τεχνικῶ, ῥητορικῶ τῷ λόγῳ,  
 ποῦ μὲν οὐ χρὴ κεχρηῆσθαι σε συνόλως προοιμίῳ,  
 ὅπου δὲ χρὴ, ὅποῖον τε καὶ πῶς καὶ μέχρη πόσου,

He gives thirty-five chapters,  
 pies of an obscure mill and ass-buckled oven<sup>79</sup>. 795  
 And he says that these achieve the approach to forceful speaking,  
 and there are some that also agree, as like with like.  
 Tzetzes outlines for you the approaches to forceful speaking  
 cursorily, succinctly, without wasting paper.  
 Now, listening to me, learn the approach to forceful speaking, 800  
 learn to know everything for a skilled and rhetorical speech,  
 where it is not at all necessary to use proems,  
 where on the contrary it is necessary, which one, and how, and up to  
 [which point,

<sup>78</sup> Such “splendid people” are probably the same close-knit group of bombastic and self-entitled rhetors blamed in the iambs that accompany the second recension of the *Historiai*: see P.A.M. Leone, *Ioanni Tzetzae iambi* cit. and Agapitos, *Blemish examiners* cit. 24.

<sup>79</sup> I subscribe here to the hypothesis of K.L. Struve, *Über den politischen Vers der Mittelgriechen*, Berlin 1823, 102-103, according to which Tzetzes presents the theories of his adversaries, literally, as bull-shit. Such imagery characterizes, as we have seen, the whole poem against Georgios and Gregorios. The *scholia* on the *Historiai* stresses that μύλου is used instead of μύλωνος as a wilful barbarism, in tune with the jesting tone (VI 79, 795 Leone).



καὶ ποῦ προδιηγῆσθαι δε καὶ διηγῆσθαι δέον,  
 ποῦ δ' οὐ προδιηγῆσθαι τε οὐδέ γε διηγῆσθαι, 805  
 καὶ ποῦ δὲ ἀγωνίζεσθαι, ποῦ δὲ ἀγὼν οὐ πίπτει,  
 καὶ ποῦ χρεῶν ἐπίλογον, ποῦ δ' οὐ χρεῶν τιθέναι,  
 καὶ πάντα πῶς καὶ πότε δεῖ καὶ μέχρι τίνος γράφειν,  
 ιδέαις ποίαις ἕκαστον καὶ τοῖς ὀκτῶ μορίοις,  
 ἐννοίαις καὶ μεθόδοις δε λέξεσι, σχήμασί τε, 810  
 κάλωις, συνθήκαις, παύσεσι καὶ τοῖς ῥυθμοῖς ὡσαύτως,  
 πάντα πρὸς τὰ προβλήματα γράφοντα κατ' ἀξίαν,  
 κἄν ἐνδοξον τὸ πρόβλημα, κἄνπερ ἐκ τῶν ἀδόξων,  
 κἄνπερ ἀμφίδοξον ἐστί, κἄν τε τῶν παραδόξων.  
 Τοιαύτη μὲν ἡ δύναμις δεινότητος μεθόδου· 815  
 ὁ δ' Ἑρμογένης σὺν αὐτοῦ τοῖς σοφοσυνηγόροις  
 γραφέτωσαν, λαλείτωσαν, ἅπερ αὐτοῖς ἐπέλθη.

and where you need to use the pre-narration and the narration,  
 where you must skip both pre-narration and narration 805  
 and where you must resort to the disputes and where the dispute has  
 [no place,  
 and where you need the peroration and where you do not need it,  
 and how and when and up to which point you must write everything,  
 each point through which idea of style and through the eight parts,  
 thoughts and approaches and words and figures 810  
 and clauses and compounds and pauses and rhythms likewise,  
 writing everything suitably according to the defence,  
 whether it is noble or one of the vile ones,  
 whether it is ambiguous or belongs to the incredible.  
 Such is the power of the approach to forceful speaking; 815  
 as far as Hermogenes and his clever advocates are concerned,  
 let them write and speak whatever occurs to them.

This passage shows very clearly that Tzetzes advocates a flexible approach to the rhetorical devices theorized by Hermogenes, one that customizes the speech, so to speak, according to the relevant occasion, without dogmatic preconceptions.

The same disparaging attitude toward Hermogenes and those who follow him blindly is to be detected straight at the beginning of this *Historia*. Here Tzetzes draws the line between proper rhetoric and what he calls “sophistic”, introducing a distinction that ought to be borne in mind when approaching his work on Hermogenes.

The whole passage from the self-commentary is in fact prompted by the sentence from *Ep.* 8 (p. 7,10-15 Leone):

ναὶ μὴν καὶ περὶ τὴν κυριακὴν θεραπείαν ἡσχολημένος μηδὲ τῶν ῥητορικῶν λογίων ἀμέλει, ἀλλὰ τῇ σῇ βίβλῳ προσέχων γύμναζε μὲν σαυτὸν προγυμνάσμασι καὶ στάσεις γράφειν καλῶς ἐκμελέτα καὶ προοιμίων εὗρεσιν μάνθανε καὶ ιδέαν λόγου ῥητορικοῦ παντὸς διακρίνειν ἐπίσπευδε.

Yes, after taking care of your Sunday worship, don't neglect the sayings of rhetoric, but paying close attention to your book, prepare yourself with the preparatory exercises and work on writing the issues properly and learn how to find proems and attend to assessing the style of any rhetorical speech.

The pupil is invited to train specifically in judicial discourse (l. 15). Tzetzes in fact considers judicial rhetoric as the only genuine kind, whereas Hermogenes' teachings are more suitable for sophistry, as explained by the first words of the *historia* (VI 79, 743-748):

Ῥητορικὴν μὲν γίνωσκε τὴν δικηγόρων τέχνην,  
τὴν βίβλον Ἑρμογένους δὲ σοφιστικὴν μοι κάλει.  
Αὕτη δ' ἡ σοφιστεύουσα ῥητορικῆς ἡ βίβλος 745  
πεντάβιβλος ὑπάρχει μὲν, εἰς πέντε διαιρεῖται,  
εἷς τε τὰ προγυμνάσματα, στάσεις καὶ τὰς εὐρέσεις,  
ιδέας καὶ πρὸς μέθοδον δεινότητος σὺν τούτοις.

Be aware that rhetoric is the art of the lawyers,  
but to me you should call the book of Hermogenes sophistic.  
That book of rhetoric, the sophistic one,  
is five books, is divided into five,  
into the preparatory exercises, the causes and the invention,  
the ideas and with them the approach to forceful speaking.

Given that in the last section of the *Historia* – as we have seen in the passage quoted above – Tzetzes paraphrases again in political verses the advice he gives to Andronikos in the letter's finale (*Ep.* 8, p. 17,15-19 Leone), one is left wondering whether the book he invites his alleged former pupil to consider during his Sunday practice is Hermogenes' or rather his own. Be that as it may, the letter to Andronikos

Kalorabdas testifies to an early interest of Tzetzes for the corpus and, probably, to an early engagement with it in his capacity of teacher.

Once again, we can appreciate how *Historia* XI 369 is connected to many overarching themes of the self-commentary. *Historia* XI 369 is a summary of the *corpus Hermogenianum*. Tzetzes voices his disagreement on several points, comparing his attitude toward Hermogenes to the treatment he had reserved to several authors in the *Logismoi*, in his capacity of “auditor of the ancients and the moderns”<sup>80</sup>. The attack in hexameters against Andronikos and his protégé (vv. 212-222) is encapsulated in the outline of the second book of *Invention*. The actual refutation of Hermogenes, lingering on the technicalities of the προκατάστασις, comes right after the verbal aggression (vv. 223-245):

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Οὗτος ὁ ἀρρητόρευτος ὁ Τζέτζης, τοῦ ὑπάρχου<br>τοῦ ῥήτορα κηρύξαντος τὸν βούβαλον τὸν οἶον,<br>εἰς τὸ περὶ εὐρέσεων ἐν τόμῳ τῷ δευτέρῳ  | 225 |
| τοῦ Ἑρμογένους λέγοντος οἷσπερ διδάσκει λόγοις,<br>μὴ μετὰ τὸ προοίμιον εὐθέως διηγῆσθαι,<br>ἄτεχνον τοῦτο γὰρ φησὶ καὶ τῶν ἀρρητορευτῶν,<br>χρηῆσθαι προκαταστάσει δὲ, τῇ καὶ προδιηγήσει,<br>καὶ τότε πρὸς διήγησιν χωρεῖν, ὡσπερ διδάσκει· | 230 |

This is the utterly un-rhetorical Tzetzes, while the eparch saluted as a rhetor such a buffalo, in the second book on the *Invention* by Hermogenes, who states in his teachings that one shall not proceed to the narration straight after the proem, (for he says that this is not skillful and belongs to the utterly un-rhetorical), but one shall use the pre-exposition and the pre-narration, and then move to the narration, as he teaches.

<sup>80</sup> XI 369, 118-123 focus on Aphthonios’ and Hermogenes’ *progymnasmata* in general; 124-134 on myth; 135-140 on narrative; 141-156 on the different styles; 158-169 on *chreia* and *gnome*; 170-176 on elaboration and constructive reasoning; 177-181 on encomium; 189-197 on the *Issues*; 198-209 on the *Invention*, first and second book in general; 210-222 on the rant against Andronikos, 223-245 on the refutation of Hermogenes’ theory on pre-exposition; 246-432 takes up again the thread of the *Historia* after the digression and include the first reference to the *Logismoi*; 252-433 are focused on book 3 and 4 of *Invention*; 296-305 on the *Art of Eloquence*; 296-434 on the *Types of Style*; 346-358 on Tzetzes tendency to refute the great authors of the past, with a reference to the *Logismoi*.

οὔτος ὁ Τζέτζης ὁ ῥηθεὶς διττῶς ἐναντιοῦται,  
 λέγων, ἢ προκατάστασις καὶ προδιήγησις δὲ  
 οὐ λέγουσιν, ὡς λέγεις νῦν σύ, τὰ προπεπραγμένα,  
 συνοπτικῶς δὲ λέγουσι τὰ μέλλοντα λεχθῆναι,  
 οἷαν τὴν προκατασκευὴν ἔμπροσθεν μέλλεις λέγειν. 235  
 Οὐδ' εἰσαεὶ ἀρμόδιον καὶ τεχνικόν δὲ λέγει,  
 ὡς λέγεις, ᾧ Ἑρμόγενης, χρῆσθαι προκαταστάσει.  
 Ἔστι γὰρ ὅπου τεχνικόν τὸ χρῆσθαι προοιμίῳις,  
 ἐνὶ δυσὶ τε καὶ τρισὶ καὶ τέτρασι πολλάκις·  
 ὅπου δὲ πάλιν μηδαμῶς χρῆσασθαι προοιμίῳι· 240  
 καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ δὲ τεχνικόν σοι λέγει πεφυκέναι,  
 οὐ μόνον τὸ μὴ χρῆσασθαι, ἧ φῆς, προδιηγήσει,  
 ἀλλὰ μηδὲ διήγησιν τὸ σύνολον τιθέναι·  
 ὡς ἀλλαχοῦ ἀρμόδιον μὴ χρῆσασθαι ἀγῶσιν,  
 ἐν ἄλλοις πάλιν τεχνικόν ἐπίλογον μὴ λέγειν. 245

The above-mentioned Tzetzes disagrees twice,  
 stating: pre-exposition and pre-narration  
 do not tell, as you say now, the antecedents,  
 but summarize what it is about to be said,  
 which pre-arrangement you are about to expound. 235  
 Also, he affirms that it is not always fitting and skilled,  
 as you say, Hermogenes, to use the pre-exposition.  
 Sometimes it is skilful to use proems,  
 once, twice and three and four times, and often;  
 sometimes, again, to skip the proem altogether; 240  
 and elsewhere he says that it is skilled for you  
 not only not to use the pre-narration, as you say,  
 but even to skip completely the narration;  
 equally elsewhere is fitting not to use the disputes,  
 whereas on other occasions again it is skilled not to pronounce 245  
 [the epilogue.

As mentioned above, these lines are followed by one of the two passages of the *Historia* referring to the *Logismoi*. As I have shown elsewhere, the *Logismoi*, or *Audits*, are a multilayered work, composed at different stages and based on Tzetzes'

reading notes<sup>81</sup>. The manuscript *Voss. gr. Q1*, which is also the best witness for the commentary on the corpus<sup>82</sup>, has preserved a portion of the *Logismoi* devoted to Aphthonios and Hermogenes. That section has a composite nature: the part dealing with Aphthonios' and Hermogenes' preparatory exercises is in iambs, while the one tackling the other four treatises of the corpus is composed in political verse – but it stops at the beginning of the section on *De ideis*. The portion in political verses was probably composed at a later date, possibly after or around the same time as the *Historiai*, which describe the *Logismoi* as a self-standing book in iambs<sup>83</sup>. This seems to be confirmed also by the role played by the issue of προκατάστασις in the text transmitted by the *Vossianus*.

The treatment of προκατάστασις in Tzetzes' commentary on ps.-Hermogenes is, on the contrary, rather succinct. Although polemical overtones are still present, Tzetzes' exegesis is short and to the point (f. 90r, **fig. 1**):

Περὶ τοῦ προοιμίου πρὶν πρῶτῳ διδάξας τόμῳ,  
 ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ τεχνικῶς τῷδε διδάσκει τόμῳ,  
 μὴ μετὰ τὸ προοίμιον εὐθέως διηγῆσθαι·  
 ἐκ τῶν ἀτέχνων τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ τῶν ἀρρητορευτῶν.  
 Ἄλλὰ προκαταστήσαι τὰ πρῶτα προδιηγήσει,  
 τότε, τῆς διηγήσεως ἀπάρχεσθαι πρεπόντως.  
 Τζέτζης ἔῃ τὸν ἄνδρα δὲ λέγειν ἃ θέλει τῆδε.  
 Λέγει δὲ τὴν διήγησιν πλατύνεσθαι ποικίλως  
 ἄνπερ τρισὶ καὶ τέτρασι κώλοις παλιλλογῶμεν

After previously teaching about the prooimion in the first book,  
 in the second one he skilfully teaches  
 that one shall not proceed to the narration straight after the prooimion  
 – for this comes from the unskilled and utterly un-rhetorical persons.  
 Rather one must first equip the exposition with a pre-narration,  
 and then fittingly start with the narration.  
 Tzetzes allows the man to say what he wants here.  
 However, he does say that the narration is artfully amplified  
 if we recapitulate through three or four clauses

<sup>81</sup> Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit.

<sup>82</sup> For the manuscript witnesses see above, n. 5. The commentary has probably to be dated to the 1140s: see Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 661-662.

<sup>83</sup> See again Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 653-654.

τὰ πεπραγμένα πράγματα καὶ τούτων τὰς αἰτίας,  
καὶ αἰτιῶν τοὺς λογισμοὺς δι' οὓς συνέβη τάδε  
καὶ ὅσαπερ προέγραψα πρὶν ἐν προῦφηγήσει<sup>84</sup>.  
Οὐκ ἔχω δὲ σαφέστερον τοῦ τεχνικοῦ τί λέξαι  
εἰ μὴ που χρήζω φληναφᾶν μακροκομπήροις λόγοις.  
Ταῦτα τὰ τῆδε γὰρ σαφῆ καὶ τῶν αὐτονοητῶν.  
Πρᾶσιότερα καὶ χρήσιμα εἰσὶ τῆ ὑποθέσει  
ἂν μὲν κατηγορῆς τινὸς τὰ προπραχθέντα φαῦλα,  
ἂν δ' ὑπερηγορῆς τινος, χρηστὰ τὰ προπραχθέντα.

the deeds done and their causes,  
and the reasons behind their causes, why they came to be,  
and everything I wrote before with respect to the preliminary outline.  
I can't say here anything clearer than the skilled rhetor,  
unless I want to drag, babbling like a broken record.  
The arguments here are clear and belong to the self-evident ones.  
The antecedents are also useful to the presentation:  
if you accuse someone, the background is bad,  
whereas if you speak for someone, the background is to be good.

Tzetzēs does not counter Hermogenes' arguments here, confining himself to adding few details about the amplification of the narration through a sort of short recap of the antecedents. Toward the end, commenting on *In v.* II 1.2, Tzetzēs moves along the lines of Hermogenes' Late Antique commentators, introducing the concept of subjectivity and biased exposition that are to be found in the general presentation of the subject matter. The perspective on the antecedents obviously changes according to the role of the speaker, either prosecutor or defendant. The influence of the Late Antique rhetorical tradition is to be detected also in the use of the term ἀορητορεύτων, a word that plays a crucial role in the polemic with Andronikos Kalamatēros<sup>85</sup>. In his work on the different sorts of ζητήματα, Sopater stresses that moving directly to the κατάστασις is highly unskilled, especially because emotions are involved (p. 8,58 Walz):

<sup>84</sup> -υφηγήσει is written *in rasura* in Tzetzēs' hand. The term does not occur in Hermogenes, but it is present in his commentator John Sikeliotes (p. 143,4 Walz) and in an anonymous *Prolegomenon* (p. 41,17 Rabe).

<sup>85</sup> See Agapitos, *Blemish examiners* cit. 24-26.



Ἐπειδὴ πάθος ἐστὶν ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ πλάσματι, δεῖ παρατηρεῖν, ὅτι καλὸν ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις τῶν ζητημάτων προκαταστατικοῖς χρήσασθαι νοήμασι, καὶ μὴ ἀπλῶς εἰσβάλλειν εἰς τὴν κατάστασιν· σφόδρα γὰρ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀρρητόρευτον.

As there are emotions in the whole fictional account, one must observe that it is beautiful in such inquiries to use preliminary thoughts and not to simply transition to the exposition, for this is very un-rhetorical.

The word is ironically appropriated by Tzetzes. As pointed out by Agapitos<sup>86</sup>, the key term appears already in *Historia* IX 278, a commentary on letter 59, addressed to the anonymous wife of the Megas Hetaireiarchos in 1147, just before the arrival in Constantinople, in September, of the German troops guided by Conrad III and headed to the Holy Land on the occasion of the Wendish Crusade<sup>87</sup>. The content of the letter – a dream interpretation – and its commentary are not directly related to rhetorical theory. Nonetheless they still pertain to literary performance and to the rituals of intellectual display as practised in the circles of the Kamateroi<sup>88</sup>. In the commentary, as we see in the text quoted below, the term is not yet referred to Tzetzes himself.

As mentioned above, the *Logismoi* further develop the arguments of *Historia* XI 369 as regards the problem of προκατάστασις. The section dealing with the second book of *De inventione* goes from f. 228v to 239v, where the portion devoted to the treatise *On the Types of Style* begins and the manuscript abruptly ends. The various topics are tackled in the form of ζητήσεις<sup>89</sup>. The issue of προκατάστασις is handled in ζήτησις 21, from f. 228v to f. 230v. In the ζήτησις the points of criticism against Hermogenes go from two to three. Whereas in the *Historiai* the issues at stake were (1) the absolute necessity of προκατάστασις and (2) the nature of its content (background events *vs.* a recap of forthcoming arguments), the *Logismoi* also

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> Grünbart, *o.c.* 209.

<sup>88</sup> Dreams and the social game of dream interpretation play a certain role in Tzetzes' letters. We have seen above that ep. 103 revolves around a dream allegedly experienced by Andronikos Kamateros. Recently Mazzucchi has identified a dream narrative copied in the ms. *Ambrosianus* M66 *sup.* in the hand, as he argues, of John Kamateros, the Constantinopolitan Patriarch (f. 311r). The manuscript containing Hermogenes was copied in the tenth century, but twelfth-century hands completed it with glosses (see below). Some of this material can be ascribed to Tzetzes (C.M. Mazzucchi, *L'ex libris di Giovanni Camatero e versi inediti di Tzetzes nel codice Ambrosiano M 66 sup.*, «Aevum» XCIII (2019) 441-448).

<sup>89</sup> See Pizzone, *Self-Authorization* cit. 663-664.



question the identity of προκατάστασις and προδιήγησις. Tzetzes challenges Hermogenes' views by addressing him directly, in a sort of living dialogue with the past (f. 229r-229v, **figg. 2-3**):

καὶ πρὸς τὸν Ἑρμογένη δὲ ταῦτα φησὶ κατ' ἔπος·  
 “Ἐνιαχοῦ προοίμιον, Ἑρμόγενης, οὐ πίπτει,  
 δύο καὶ τρία δ' ἄλλαχοῦ καὶ τέσσαρα πολλάκις.  
 Ἐνιαχοῦ ἄρμόδιον μὴ λέγειν ἐπιλόγους,  
 ἐνιαχοῦ δὲ τεχνικὸν χρῆσθαι τοῖς ἐπιλόγοις.  
 Καὶ οὐδὲ πάλιν ἄρμόδιον καὶ τεχνικὸν ὑπάρχει  
 τοῖς ἀγωνιστικοῖς ἡμῖν κεχρηῆσθαι κεφαλαίοις,  
 οὐδὲ πάλιν ἀνάρμοστον τούτοις ἐστὶ κεχρηῆσθαι.  
 Καὶ οὐδὲ μὲν ἄτεχνον ἐστὶ διήγησις συνόλωσ,  
 οὐδὲ καὶ κατὰ ἔκφρασιν τίθεται πλατυτάτως,  
 καὶ οὐδὲ, ἐκ διηγήσεως κατάρχεσθαι προεπῶδες.  
 οὐδὲ πάλιν, ἀνάρμοστον τοῦτο”, τὸ ἐν καὶ πρῶτον.  
 Δευτέρως, ἀμαρτάνειν σε πάλιν ἐνταῦθα λέγει,  
 ταῦτόν τὴν προκατάστασιν προδιηγήσει φάντα.  
 Καὶ τρίτως, “αἰτιῶμαι σε γράφοντα ταῦτα εἶναι,  
 πρῶτά τε καὶ πρῆσβύτερα, ὧν λέγει τίς προαγμάτων,

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and he tells Hermogenes the following, word by word:  
 “At times, Hermogenes, the opening does not work well.  
 twice and otherwise three times and often four times.  
 At times it is fitting to not pronounce the peroration,  
 at times it is skilled to use the peroration.  
 And, again, it might be fitting and skilled  
 for us to use topics suitable for the debate,  
 or it might be unfitting to use them.  
 And the narration might be altogether unskilled,  
 or it might also be expanded through ekphrasis,  
 and there is where it is suitable to start from the narrative,  
 and where again this is not fitting.” This is the first issue,  
 second, he says that you, again, are wrong when  
 you say that pre-exposition and pre-narration are the same,  
 and third, “I accuse you because you affirm that these are  
 the first and the antecedents of the facts that one narrates,

οὐ μὴν δ' ὧν μέλλει τίς εἰπεῖν ὥσπερ ἐγὼ νῦν λέγω.  
 Καὶ σὺ, ἐν ταῖς ἰδέαις δὲ καὶ τέχνῃ τῆς μεθόδου  
 καὶ ἐν ἑτέροις τόποις δὲ, ἄκων ταῦτά μοι λέγεις  
 δεικνὺς ταῦτα μελλόντων μὲν, οὐ μὴν τῶν παρελθόντων,  
 κᾶνπερ κάκεῖσε σκοτεινῶς καὶ οὐ σαφῶς δεικνύης.  
 Ἄληθινὸν διδάσκων γὰρ λόγον ἐν ταῖς ἰδέαις,  
 μέθοδον τούτου λέγεις μοι, ἀκαταστάτως λέγειν,  
 f. 229v χωρὶς προκαταστάσεως δῆθε καὶ τοῦ προλέγειν  
 ἐκ τῆς προκαταστάσεως τὴν προ μόνην ἐκκόψας  
 ὡς ἂν δοκῆς τί ἕτερον οὐ τὸ αὐτὸ δὲ λέγειν.”

not of those that one is about to narrate, as I say.  
 And you, in the *Types of Style* and in the *Art of Eloquence*  
 and in other passages you say the same as I do, though unwillingly,  
 showing that these parts of the speech belong to the future and not to  
 [the past,  
 even if there too you prove yourself obscure and unclear.  
 For, when you teach the sincere discourse in the *Types of Style*  
 you tell me that its approach consists in an elocution without exposition,  
 that is without pre-exposition and preliminary speech,  
 cutting just the syllable ‘pre’ off the word pre-exposition,  
 in order that you seem to say something else and not the same”.

Tzetzes argues his point on the contents of the προκατάστασις by signalling the corpus’ internal inconsistencies. The first objection is based on *Id.* II 7,18,3-5<sup>90</sup>. There Hermogenes states that moving directly to the answers, without announcing one’s undertaking (τὸ χωρὶς καταστάσεως), is proper of the sincere discourse. Although attested in the manuscript as a title of Book 2, κατάστασις does not feature among the rhetorical terms of *Invention*, but there are two further occurrences in *Types of style* (I 9,14,8; II 9,31,8). In the specific passage mentioned by Tzetzes the term indicates the ‘undertaking’ rather than the exposition proper, so much so that Patillon himself translates it as «annonce du propos»<sup>91</sup>. Tzetzes’ point is therefore that Hermogenes here actually means προκατάστασις and that he is pointing to special circumstances in which the pre-exposition is not required.

<sup>90</sup> Tzetzes uses the term ἀκαταστάτως which comes from John Sikeliotēs’ commentary on the relevant passage (p. 426,18 Walz).

<sup>91</sup> The same translation at I 9,14,8.

ετοις κικ και οιοχοι οιοι και πασι τοις αμυνοιο  
 καταλοιο λαοποδουταιοι κικ πασι ιεροσυλο  
 απαν και ριδορουδου και μασι ζουνοιο δε  
 τζετζο οαμαδουταιοι παντοιοι μαθηματ  
 και κροσ πην κω πομαπαρσο τον εμοδου κικ  
 λετ εδιδασκων ταυτα δε ουχι κικ και οιοχοι  
 αφρασι ουκ εχουσι δε κικ εν εδουσι λογοιο  
 εδου πομαχου πα εν τυχον μακρον τυχα ετου  
 το εκτισ διηγησασα αφηδουταυτα αρματ  
 ποτε δε αυτην οπατο μαρο παρ και ου ποταφει  
 και προσ τον εμοδου δε ταυτα φουσι και επ  
 βνι αχου προσομιον εμοδου ου πι πτελ  
 ουο και τελαδ αμαχου ες ποταρ πομακιο  
 βνι αχου αφμοδιου κικ λετ ε πι λογοιο  
 βνι αχου δε τε χικον χειρωται οιο επι λογοιο  
 και ου παλιν αφμοδιον και τε χικου πτελ  
 τοις αμυνοιο κιοιο κικ κικ και κε φουλοιο  
 ου δε παλιν αφμοδου ταυτο εσι κε χικου  
 και ου κικ αφμοδου εσι διηγησασα οιο  
 ου δε και κατα εκ φρασι ντι θετα ταυτα  
 και ου εκ κικ οιο και αφμοδου περ ποδου  
 ου δε παλιν αφμοδου ταυτο ποβν επρωτ  
 ουτερωσ αφμοδου ποβν παλιν ταυτα αφμο  
 ταυτον ηωτηρο και αφμοδου προδιηγησασα φουτο  
 και ετρωσ αφμοδου ταυτα αφμοδου ταυτα αφμο  
 ηρωταυτα και περ ποβν αφμοδου αφμοδου  
 ου κικ δε αφμοδου αφμοδου αφμοδου αφμοδου  
 και ου εν ταυτο οιο αφμοδου και τε χικου πο με οδοιο  
 και εν ταυτο το ποιο δε αφμοδου ταυτα αφμο  
 αφμοδου ταυτα μελλοντων αφμοδου αφμοδου  
 και περ κικ αφμοδου και αφμοδου αφμοδου  
 αφμοδου διηγησασα οιο λογον οιο αφμοδου  
 με φουτο τουτου ετρωσ αφμοδου αφμοδου αφμοδου

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fig. 2: Leiden University Libraries, Voss. gr. Q1, f. 229r

ηρωίς προκατάσκευαυτ' και ε' προλεγειν  
 εκ της προκατασκευαυτ' προ μου εκκοψασ  
 αουαν οδους λεε' ε' τερον ουτο αυ το δε λεει  
 εκου πδαι μεθ' οδου δε δίδακτατορ ο τε ε' τε' ο  
 συφ' ι' σταυραυτο π' ρ' σταυραυτ' και ου κε' α' σταυραυ  
 λειω' ε' με γενε' οδ' με' τι κε' ε' τοισ' α' ε' ρ' ε' τω  
 αυτω σ' φ' ε' δε' κατα' και' αυ' ου κ' α' α' ο' δε' ε'  
 ε' ου' π' η' πασ' α' ε' χ' ω' ου' αυ' τω' ε' σ' φ' ε' ρ' ε' τω  
 και' κ' τω' φ' α' λ' ε' ρ' ε' τω' και' τω' δι' ου' σ' ι' ου'  
 και' τω' ρ' α' τω' ρ' α' τω' ρ' α' τω' ρ' α' τω' ρ' α' τω' ρ' α' τω'  
 ου' αυ' τω' σ' φ' ε' ρ' ε' τω' ου' αυ' τω' σ' φ' ε' ρ' ε' τω' ου' αυ' τω'  
 π' α' γ' ου' τω' π' ο' λ' ο' σ' τω' α' β' ρ' α' σ' δε' και' α' φ' ο' ρ' μ' η' ρ' ι' α' ο' ρ'  
 η' σ' τ' ο' π' δ' α' ι' με' θ' ο' δ' ου' σ' ου' αυ' τω' δ' α' α' σ' κ' ε' ρ' α' φ' ρ' α' n  
 το' εν' αρχ' α' σ' ω' ο' π' ι' κ' α' ο' σ' ε' ν' κ' e' φ' α' λ' α' ο' s' λ' e' ρ' α' s  
 α' π' ρ' κ' α' τ' α' σ' κ' α' α' ε' γ' η' π' ο' s' ε' π' e' α' δ' α' α' σ' κ' e' ρ' μ' e' λ' e' q'  
 ο' i' ν' e' ο' i' π' α' μ' τ' o' t' e' χ' η' r' i' k' o' i' , π' ρ' ο' e' κ' e' t' i' n' k' a' ρ' ο' u' s' i' n'  
 ο' i' π' t' x' α' o' i' s' u' π' o' χ' o' s' t' i' n' . α' s' t' u' i' a' z' . α' κ' ρ' a' s'  
 σ' μ' o' λ' o' g' e' n' α' s' t' α' λ' u' e' ρ' o' t' e' x' e' ρ' e' s' k' a' n' t' o' u' t' h' e' r'  
 και' ρ' α' α' i' k' e' i' n' q' a' s' d' e' , σ' a' φ' e' s' t' o' n' d' e' k' n' o' s'  
 t' h' n' o' i' α' i' λ' e' p' o' r' a' k' e' i' n' q' o' s' α' i' k' a' t' a' s' a' l' i' k' a' i' s'  
 ο' i' α' i' u' π' o' i' s' i' g' a' ρ' a' φ' a' ρ' o' s' , τ' α' μ' e' λ' o' n' τ' a' ρ' a' n' a' u'  
 α' o' s' k' a' i' t' e' , u' p' o' χ' o' s' t' i' n' τ' e' i' a' i' m' o' n' i' a' u' d' i' a' s' .  
 τ' o' s' a' u' t' o' α' s' t' o' φ' a' ρ' t' a' t' o' u' α' u' t' o' u' e' ρ' a' s' t' i' z' e' s' t' o'  
 φ' e' r' e' t' a' a' e' t' i' a' m' a' t' a' o' p' e' r' e' s' s' o' , ο' u' k' a' t' e' χ' n' i'  
 k' a' i' a' u' t' o' s' i' e' c' c' h' i' k' o' i' s' k' a' i' t' α' i' u' s' a' m' o' n' i' t'  
 o' u' χ' a' i' e' r' o' s' χ' e' i' z' o' m' e' n' , d' i' d' a' x' e' s' a' f' e' s' t' a' s' t' o' s' .  
 ε' ρ' m' o' d' i' o' s' α' i' t' e' χ' n' o' n' k' a' k' i' d' i' q' u' i' π' t' n' u' p' a' r' k' e' n'  
 τ' o' , α' u' t' α' k' a' t' a' s' a' l' i' k' o' s' α' ρ' x' i' α' s' e' i' n' o' u' s' t' o' u' s' t' a' s' e' i'  
 ο' d' i' e' ρ' a' s' a' m' a' ρ' t' a' n' q' d' e' π' a' λ' i' n' o' t' o' c' h' n' o' ρ' e' a' f' i' s'  
 τ' a' u' t' e' t' h' n' u' p' o' k' a' t' a' s' a' l' i' k' o' s' π' ρ' o' d' i' a' g' n' o' s' t' i' c' o' s' λ' e' g' o' n'  
 τ' e' i' t' a' s' , α' u' t' e' π' e' r' i' b' u' t' e' r' η' s' o' n' i' s' i' n' t' e' r' e' l' i' f' o' r' t'  
 o' s' i' n' u' , α' u' t' e' m' e' l' e' q' u' i' s' t' o' p' a' n' , α' m' o' i' s' a' f' a' n' i' s' t' o' n'  
 Δ' i' d' a' x' a' u' t' o' t' o' t' e' c' h' i' k' o' n' , χ' e' i' r' e' s' π' ρ' o' k' a' t' a' s' a' l' i' k' o' s'  
 και' , p' o' t' o' u' s' t' i' n' α' i' t' e' χ' n' o' u' d' e' k' a' i' p' o' u' α' u' t' o' u' π' ρ' o' e' f' e' r' e' s'

εφυμισ



fig. 3: Leiden University Libraries, Voss. gr. Q1, f. 229v

The second allegation of inconsistency is based on *Meth.* 12,1-2. There Hermogenes stresses the need briefly to summarize the arguments that will be presented in the body of the speech. To prove his point, Tzetzes introduces a paraphrasis in political verses of the relevant Hermogenian text (229v):

ἐκ σοῦ περὶ μεθόδου δὲ διδάγματος ὁ Τζέτζης,  
 συσφίγγων ἀποπνίγει σε, καὶ οὐκ ἔῃ δρασκάσαι  
 λέγων· “Ἐρμόγενης δεινὲ, πικρὲ τοῖς εὐεργέταις,  
 αὐτῷ τῷ Θεοδέκτη τε καὶ Μινουκιανῷ δὲ,  
 ἐξ οὗ τὴν πᾶσαν τέχνησιν αὐτὸς ἐσφρατερίσω  
 καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Φαληρέως δὲ καὶ τοῦ Διονυσίου  
 καὶ τῶν ῥητόρων τῶν λοιπῶν ὧνπερ ὁ Τζέτζης οἶδεν  
 οὐς ἀναγῶγος οὐ τιμᾶς σοὺς εὐεργέτας ὄντας,  
 πλυνοὺς ποιεῖς τοὺς ἄνδρας δὲ, καταφοραῖς<sup>92</sup> μυρίαίς” : –

Εἰς τὸ περὶ μεθόδου σου, ταῦτα διδάσκεις γράφων·  
 » “τὸ ἐν ἀρχῇ συνοπτικῶς ἐν κεφαλαίοις λέγειν

Using your *Method* as a chain, Tzetzes  
 chokes you, preventing any escape,  
 saying: “O terrible Hermogenes, bitter towards your benefactors,  
 the very Theodektes<sup>93</sup> and Minucianus,  
 from which you have drawn all your art,  
 just like you did from the Phalaereus and Dionysios  
 and all the other rhetors of whom Tzetzes knows very well,  
 whom you ignorantly fail to honour even though they are your  
 [benefactors,  
 you treat the men as your latrine, discharging your anger on them.”

In your *Method*, you teach the following, saying:

“The device whereby one states synoptically at the beginning, in summary

<sup>92</sup> The term is double-edged, in the vein of Tzetzes: it means both “attack” and “diarrhoea”. The verse echoes Ar. *Plut.* 1061. I thank Nunzio Bianchi for the reference.

<sup>93</sup> Theodektes from Phaselis lived in the first half of the fourth century BC. A pupil of Isocrates, he was active as both poet and rhetor. See: F. Jacoby-J. Bollansée-G. Schepens, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker Continued, IV: Biography and Antiquarian Literature*, Leiden 1999, 395-398; E. Matelli, *Teodette di Faselide, retore*, in D. Mirhady (ed.), *Influences on Peripatetic Rhetoric. Essays in Honor of William W. Fortenbaugh*, Leiden-Boston 2007, 169-186; V. Pacelli, *Teodette di Faselide. Frammenti poetici*, Tübingen 2016.

- » ἄπερ κατασκευάζειν τις εἴτε διδάσκειν μέλλει,
- » οἱ νέοι πάντες τεχνικοὶ προέκθεσιν καλοῦσιν,
- » οἱ παλαιοὶ δ' ὑπόσχεσιν", ὥστε βιάζη ἄκων
- » ὁμολογεῖν ὡς ἀληθῶς Τζέτζης κἀν τούτοις λέγει.  
Καὶ ἐν τῷ εὐκρινείας δὲ, σαφέστερον δεικνύεις  
"ἔννοια" λέγων "εὐκρινεῖς, αἱ καταστατικά γε·
- » διατυποῦσι γὰρ σαφῶς, τὰ μέλλοντα ῥηθῆναι
- » ὡς καὶ τὸ, 'ὑποσχόμενον τρία ἐμὲ νῦν δεῖξαι'".

what one is about to expose or teach,  
is called by all the most recent experts on rhetoric 'preface',  
while the most ancient ones call this 'undertaking'", so that you are  
[unwillingly constrained

to admit that Tzetzes speaks the truth also in these matters.

In the section on clarity, you show it more evidently  
when you say that clear thoughts are expository,  
for they outline clearly what it is about to be said,  
as in "I promised to make three points"<sup>94</sup>.

In the following section, after a short recap of his arguments, Tzetzes explains also why he argues that προκατάστασις and προδιήγησις are not the same. First, both terms *do not* refer to antecedents, but relate to the semantic sphere of anticipation, due to the prefix προ-. Second, this is not to say that they mean the same thing. Although they share the notion of anticipation, they refer to different rhetorical devices. The reason of ps.-Hermogenes' mistake lies in his simplistic reductionism when it comes to rhetorical terminology (f. 230r, **fig. 4**):

ἢ δέ γε προδιήγησις καὶ προκατάστασις δὲ  
οὐ τὰ πρῶτα εἰσὶ καὶ τὰ προγενονότα·  
ἐκεῖνα, πρὸ τοῦ πράγματος φασὲν καὶ παρῆλθοντα  
καὶ ἀποστάντα δὲ φημὶ καὶ ἀποτεθειμένα

Pre-narration and pre-exposition  
are not the earlier facts and what happened before;  
those facts before the event, we also call them foregoing  
and I say what is past and left aside

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<sup>94</sup> Dem. 23,18.

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ὄλου βίβλου συγγραφῆς αὐτοῦ, βραχυγράφηται·  
 ἰδέτε προδιήκοντα καὶ προκατασκευασμένα  
 οὐτὰ περὶ βύθων ἁπλοῦν καὶ τὰ προσηγορεύματα  
 ἕκαστα, πρὸ τοῦ πραγματικοῦ φανερῶς ἐπιπέλαται.  
 Ἐπιποσάντα δὲ φησὶ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐβήθηνα  
 καὶ ἄτι τοῦ ἁπλοῦς, ἐβήθη καὶ τὴν κλῆσιν  
 ἐνοῦσθε προσμαίνοντι πρὸ τῶν μελλόντων  
 ταῦτα, πρὸ τοῦ ἁπλοῦς φησὶ, ἐπὶ προεκθέσει·  
 προθεσείασθαι αὐτοῖς καὶ ἡ προφῆσας  
 καὶ προχρηστικῆς ματ· καὶ προδιὰ τῶν  
 σωσῶν, προδιὰ τῶν ἁπλοῦν καὶ προκατασκευασ-  
 καὶ κατασκευασθῶσιν αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ προκατασκευασ-  
 καὶ ἄλλα, προσφύετα ὀνόματα ὅποσα·  
 πλὴν οὐ χιτῆνο μίσησιν ἀπαιτῶν φησὶ·  
 αἰσούτος, προκατασκευασθῶσιν καὶ τῶν προδιήκον-  
 τῶν βεβήθη ἡρα δε τῶν βεβήθη κενεθῶσιν·  
**Ἄ**πὸρ τὴν προδιήκοντα ἀπλοῦς τῶν κατασκευασ-  
 τότε τοῦ, προεκθέσει· αἶμα, προθεσείασθαι  
 καὶ ἡ ἐπὶ προφῆσας· καὶ προδιήκοντα δὲ  
 σωσῶν τοῖς, προεκθέσει· ἐκλήσασθαι ὁμοίαι·  
**Ὅ**υτῶν προδιήκοντα καὶ τῶν βεβήθη παρὸν μένον  
 τῶν κλήσασθαι ἁπλοῦν, καὶ τῶν τῶν ἁπλοῦν·  
 αἰσούτος κεφάλατι καὶ μένον τῶν ἁπλοῦν,  
 ἅτε τὴν καὶ καὶ νότον μένον ἀφῆσθαι  
 τότε, καὶ ἡ ἁπλοῦν τοῦ τῶν κλήσασθαι δὲ·  
 προχρηστικῆς ἁπλοῦν καὶ προδιὰ τῶν  
 προκατασκευασθῶσιν αὐτοῖς, καὶ κατασκευασθῶσιν  
 καὶ ἁπλοῦν, προκατασκευασθῶσιν ἐπὶ προεκθέσει·  
 σωσῶν, προθεσείασθαι· καὶ τῶν προεκθέσει·  
 αἶμα, προχρηστικῆς ἁπλοῦν, προδιὰ τῶν  
 καὶ κατασκευασθῶσιν αὐτοῖς καὶ τῶν προκατασκευασθῶσιν,  
 καὶ ἁπλοῦν, καὶ τῶν τῶν ἁπλοῦν ἀφῆσθαι κεφάλατι·  
 ἀφῆσθαι τῶν τῶν ἁπλοῦν, καὶ τῶν ἁπλοῦν τῶν  
 ἀφῆσθαι τῶν τῶν ἁπλοῦν, καὶ τῶν ἁπλοῦν τῶν

1. τ. πρὸν μί

fig. 4: Leiden University Libraries, Voss. gr. Q1, f. 230r

καὶ εἰ τὶ τοιουτῶνυμον, ἐσχίκασι τὴν κλῆσιν·  
 ἐν οἷς δὲ προσημαίνομεν τί περὶ τῶν μελλόντων,  
 ταῦτα προὑποσχέσεις τε φαμέν καὶ προεκθέσεις,  
 προθεωρίας σὺν αὐτοῖς καὶ δὴ προὑφηγήσεις  
 καὶ προχαρακτηρίσματα καὶ προδιατυπώσεις  
 σὺν οἷς, προδιηγῆσεις τε καὶ γε, προκαταστάσεις  
 καὶ, καταστάσεις σὺν αὐτοῖς καὶ προκατασκευάς γε  
 καὶ ἄλλα, προσφύεστατα ὀνόματα ὀπόσα.  
 Πλὴν, οὐχὶ ἐν νομίζομεν ἅπαντα πεφυκέναι,  
 ὡς οὗτος, προκατάστασιν καὶ τὰς προδιηγῆσεις·  
 ἀλλ' ἀκουέτω πᾶς φρονῶν καὶ μοίρας τῆς σωφρονῶν,  
 πᾶς θέσθω θύρας δὲ τελῶν βεβήλου κουστωδίας : –

and anything similar is defined in such a way;  
 however, those parts where we pre-announce anything about the future,  
 those we call preliminary undertakings and prefaces,  
 together with preambles and pre-explanations  
 and pre-characterizations<sup>95</sup> and pre-figurations  
 with them, and pre-narrations and pre-expositions,  
 together with expositions and pre-confirmations  
 and all the devices bearing most suitable names.  
 Except that we do not believe that they are all the same,  
 as he does with pre-exposition and pre-narration;  
 but now listen all of you, clever men from the wise lot,  
 and you, all of you coming from the uninitiated squad, just shut up.

At the end of this passage Tzetzes refers to the *κουστωδία*, band or squadron, to be identified with his opponents<sup>96</sup>. The commentary on Aristophanes implies that this gang would often contest Tzetzes' teachings or performances, interrupting him with questions and proving their crassitude in poetic matters. This leads him to

<sup>95</sup> Tzetzes shows a striking consistency throughout his career in his theoretical approach to these matters. He uses this rhetorical device to interpret *Il. I 105* in *Exeg. Il.* p. 197,8-9 Papathomopoulos: τὸ δὲ σχῆμα προχαρακτηρισμός ἐστίν, ὃ παρὰ τοῖς ῥήτορσι προκατάστασις λέγεται ("The figure is pre-characterization, what is called pre-exposition by the rhetors"). Προχαρακτηρισμός is a neologism by Tzetzes.

<sup>96</sup> See Agapitos, *Middle-Class* cit. There is now a further occurrence in the *Allegories from the Verse-Chronicle* (v. 631), edited by Tommaso Braccini in this volume, p. 15.



anticipate several times their possible objections<sup>97</sup>. The members of the squad were apparently also staunch advocates of Hermogenes, just as he states in the *Historiai*.

At the beginning of *Historia* XI 369 Tzetzes lets us know that, whereas Hermogenes' treatises are only five in number, the books written in his defence are as numerous as sixty (v. 103). Andronikos and the anonymous buffalo are obviously part of this pro-Hermogenian gang. The question arises, however, whether it is possible to identify other actors, or at least traces of their approach to Hermogenes. The answer is in the positive, as we shall see in the next section.

#### *Late twelfth-century readers of Hermogenes*

As the *Historiai* and the *Logismoi* make clear, Tzetzes was induced to elaborate on his views regarding προκατάστασις by the violent reaction that his criticism against Hermogenes had caused among fellow rhetoricians, a reaction which – allegedly – had found a sympathetic ear in Andronikos Kamateros. The first question to be asked is then: is there anywhere we can trace signs of the controversy other than in Tzetzes' work?

A good starting point is the work of Gregorios Pardos, bishop of Corinth. Among the treatises that have been bequeathed to us, we find a commentary on Hermogenes' *Art of Eloquence*, in which Tzetzes' exegesis is acknowledged several times. Gregorios famously expresses harsh criticism against Tzetzes' commentary, as shown by the following passage (p. VII/2, 1098,22-28 Walz)<sup>98</sup>:

Λέγει δὲ καὶ ὁ Τζέτζης ἐν οἷς ἔγραψεν εἰς τὴν ὅλην τὴν ῥητορικὴν ἐξήγησιν φλυαροστιχιδίῳ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἦθους προσθήκην λέγει ὁ Ἑρμογένης ἢ τὴν τῶν ῥητόρων τῶν λεγόντων ἢ τὴν τῶν προσώπων τῶν ὑποκειμένων ἐν τοῖς λόγοις.

Tzetzes says, in his silly little verses full of abuse on the whole of the rhetoric, that Hermogenes calls qualification of character either that produced by the speaking rhetors or that of the characters present in the speeches.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. *schol. Ar. Nub.* 242, p. 442,6-7 Massa Positano διὰ δὲ τὴν ἀμαθεστάτην μιᾶν κοῦστωδίαν γράφω ποτὲ καὶ αὐτὸς κατ' αὐτοῦ; The note on *Plut.* 1098, pp. 221,15-223,17 Massa Positano offers a long digression on *dichronoi* and rhetorical compositions, where it is explained that issues of quantity also apply to prose.

<sup>98</sup> Other mentions at pp. 1099,3, 1186,12, and 1157,25 Walz.

These few lines are extremely important as they testify to the fact that by the mid-1150s there was already a published commentary in verse by Tzetzes circulating in Byzantium, given that 1156 is the most likely date for Gregorios' death<sup>99</sup>. Gregorios' text also offers further glimpses into the problematic reception with which Tzetzes' exegesis was met by his contemporaries

The mention of Tzetzes' commentaries prompts further considerations. Gregorios' work on *Id.* is preserved, among other, by the *Laurentianus Plut.* 57,5, a manuscript dated by Carlo Maria Mazzucchi to the late twelfth century but restored one century later<sup>100</sup>. As a witness it is therefore chronologically close to the time when both Tzetzes and Gregorios worked on, and published, their commentary on the corpus. The *Laur. Plut.* 57,5 preserves Aphthonios and the Corpus Hermogenianum together with a series of Byzantine commentaries, including John of Sicily's exegesis on the Περὶ ἰδεῶν<sup>101</sup>.

Among these exegetical works, Rosario Scalia has recently called attention to the catena-commentary on the *Invention* ascribed in some manuscripts to Georgios Diaretos or Sophistes<sup>102</sup>. Scalia lists three manuscripts that mention this elusive figure as the author of the commentary in two further Hermogenian manuscripts, *Vat. gr.* 105 and 901 (following Scalia, **D** and **V**, while the *Laurentianus* is **L**). In fact, the picture is a bit more complex. Let us have first a quick look at the manuscripts involved.

**D** belongs to the Nicaean period and is dated to 1244-1255: it ascribes our commentary on *Invention* to John Doxapatres<sup>103</sup>. **V** dates from the late thirteenth century<sup>104</sup> and, as stressed also by Scalia, it preserves the exegesis κατὰ λήμματα

<sup>99</sup> See A. Kominis, *Gregorio Pardos, metropolita di Corinto e la sua opera*, Rome 1960, 29-30, 35.

<sup>100</sup> See C.M. Mazzucchi, *Longino in Giovanni di Sicilia: con un inedito di storia, epigrafia e toponomastica di Cosma Manasse dal cod. Laurenziano LVII. 5*, «Aevum» LXIV (1990) 183-198: 185.

<sup>101</sup> See S. Papaioannou, *Ioannes Sikeliotes (and Ioannes Geometres); revisited. With an appendix: Edition of Sikeliotes' scholia on Aelius Aristides*, in A. Binggeli-V. Déroche (edd.), *Mélanges Bernard Flusin*, Paris 2019, 659-692: 661.

<sup>102</sup> R.G. Scalia, *La teoria della προκατάστασις nel Περὶ εὐρέσεως dello Pseudo-Ermogene e nei suoi commentatori*, in P.B. Cipolla (ed.), *Metodo e passione. «Atti dell'Incontro di Studi in onore di Giuseppina Basta Donzelli (Catania, 11-12 aprile 2016)»*, Amsterdam 2018, 111-130.

<sup>103</sup> For a description of the manuscript and his contents, see Papaioannou, *o.c.* 661: John Sikeliotes and John of Sardis are also transmitted under the name of John Doxapatres, while Galenos under the name of Gregory of Corinth.

<sup>104</sup> See Papaioannou, *o.c.* 662 and P. Schreiner, *Codices Vaticani Graeci. Codices 867-932*, Vatican City 1988, 87-90.

independently from the commented text. Again, the manuscript contains also the work of Doxapatres (on Aphthonios) and John Sikeliotes.

**D** does not mention Georgios as the author of the commentary, listing instead Doxapatres, at f. 32r<sup>105</sup>. The commentary's authorship is explicitly problematized by the title of **L** (by the twelfth-century century hand), which reads as follows (f. 174r):

Σχόλια εἰς τοὺς περὶ εὐρέσεως τέσσαρας τόμους, ἐκ πολλῶν βιβλίων φιλοπόνῳ μελέτῃ συναθροισθέντα, καὶ εὐφυῶς τοῖς τοῦ τεχνικοῦ συναρμοσθέντα ῥητοῖς. Εἰσὶ δὲ ἢ τοῦ Διαϊρέτου Γεωργίου, ἢ τοῦ λεγομένου Γεωργίου ἀνεπιγράφου καὶ ἀδеспότου.

Scholia on the four books of *Invention*, put together with tireless care from many books and fittingly harmonized to the sayings of the rhetor. They are either from Georgios Diairetes or from the said Georgios nameless and anonymous.

The addition about authorship comes after the same title that is to be found with small variations also in **D**:

Σχόλια εἰς τοὺς περὶ εὐρέσεως τόμους τσσαρας, ἐκ πολλῶν μοι βιβλίων φιλοπονηθέντα καὶ συναθροισθέντα, καὶ εὐφυῶς τοῖς τοῦ τεχνικοῦ συναρμοσθέντα ῥητοῖς. Ἰωάννου τοῦ Δοξαπατροῦ.

**V**, finally, at f. 123v, gives Γεωργίου σοφιστοῦ as the author, without further details. In fact, the authorship of “Georgios” is most doubtful. Already Glockner had pointed out the great similarity or even overlaps between “Georgios” and portions of the commentary ascribed to John of Sardeis by Doxapatres<sup>106</sup>. The attribution to John is accepted also by Patillon and Papaioannou<sup>107</sup>. This is surely not the place to disentangle such a complex issue. What matters to our concerns, however, is that *Laur. Plut.* 57,5 proves the circulation of this commentary on *Invention* in the learned circles of the capital during the twelfth century.

<sup>105</sup> This fact was pointed out already by I. Graeven, *Cornuti Artis Rhetoricae Epitome*, Zürich 1891, XI-XII.

<sup>106</sup> S. Glöckner, *Quaestiones Rhetoricae*, Bratislava 1901, 12-13.

<sup>107</sup> Papaioannou, *o.c.* 661-662; M. Patillon, *Anonyme. Scolies au traité Sur l'invention du pseudo-Hermogène*, Paris 2012, VII. On John of Sardeis see D. Resh, *The first metaphrast: Ioannes, Bishop of Sardeis*, in A. Alwis-M. Hinterberger-E. Schiffer (eds.), *Metaphrasis in Byzantine Literature*, Turnhout 2021, 43-70.

As pointed out by Scalia and as the title of **L** emphasizes, the merits of the commentary consist in combining many sources from several books, safeguarding the consistency between commented texts and exegesis. Such an approach points to a school environment<sup>108</sup> and, above all, is in complete opposition with Tzetzes' stance on the *corpus*, which, on the contrary, extols originality and independence from the Hermogenian tenets.

There is a striking detail in this commentary. As noted again by Scalia, its exegesis stands out precisely when it comes to the stance towards προκατάστασις. The passages highlighted by Scalia show that the commentary goes to some length in order to demonstrate Hermogenes' internal consistency and safeguard the equation of προδιήγησις and προκατάστασις<sup>109</sup>. He even reinforces the idea of κατάστασις – which is absent in Hermogenes himself, as we have seen – to create a double parallel, προδιήγησις : προκατάστασις = διήγησις : κατάστασις. While enlarging on προκατάστασις, moreover, the text tellingly acknowledges also the necessity of an introductory recap, which he identifies with προκατασκευή, or pre-confirmation, which ps.-Hermogenes addresses later in the treatise<sup>110</sup>:

Τούτων δὲ τὸ μὲν καλεῖται προοίμιον, τὸ δὲ προδιήγησις, ὃ καὶ προκατάστασις, τὸ δὲ προπαρασκευή. Καὶ προοίμιον μὲν ἐστὶ μέρος λόγου χρησίμον πρὸς τὰ ὑποκείμενα, προκατάστασις δὲ ἐστὶ ἥγουν προδιήγησις μέρος τοῦ παντὸς λόγου μετὰ τὸ προοίμιον τεταγμένον, δι' οὗ τὰ πρεσβύτερα τοῦ πράγματος ἀφηγοῦμεθα. Προκατασκευή (κατασκευή **L**) δὲ ἐστὶν ἐπαγγελία τῶν μελλόντων κατασκευάζεσθαι κεφαλαίων.

Of these speeches one is called proem, the other a pre-narration, or even pre-exposition, the other still pre-elaboration. And proems are a part of speech useful to the topic at hand, while the pre-exposition is, like the pre-narration, a part of the entire speech placed after the proem by which we narrate the things that precede the fact. On the other hand, the pre-elaboration is the announcement of the points that are about to be elaborated.

Such an equivalence is explicitly denied by Tzetzes, who puts pre-exposition and pre-confirmation on the same footing, against pre-narration. The latter is the only part actually designed, in his opinion, to expound the antecedents, as he explains

<sup>108</sup> Scalia, *o.c.* 111, n. 4.

<sup>109</sup> Scalia, *o.c.* 116-118.

<sup>110</sup> The text is edited by Scalia at p. 117. It can be found at f. 194r, ll. 8-14 in **L**; f. 57r, l.43-57v, l. 5 in **D**. I was not able to locate it in **V**, which is damaged.

further in ζήτησις 25, referring again to the passage from *Id.* II 7,18,3-5 on clarity already mentioned above (f. 231r).

The correspondences highlighted above make this commentary a likely representative of the group of staunch Hermogenian supporters attacked by Tzetzes. If not his historical persona, which is really hard, if not impossible to pinpoint, the exegesis transmitted under his name was probably the one to which Tzetzes' opponents subscribed. Such a hypothesis might be confirmed by another important and hitherto disregarded fact. As I have mentioned above, albeit in passing, one of the most ancient manuscripts of Hermogenes, *Ambr. M 66 sup.*, carries later glosses written in twelfth-century hands as well as verses by Tzetzes on Hermogenes. This manuscript, moreover, according to Mazzucchi, belonged to the library of John X Kamateros, a member of the family who also had been active in rhetoric, so much so that we have a praise of Alexios III by him dated to 1196<sup>111</sup>.

The glosses of *Ambr. M 66 sup.* are extremely rich and become even richer when the manuscript reaches *Invention* II. There, at folia 83r-v, the issue of προκατάστασις is abundantly commented upon. As I was able to ascertain, there is no doubt that the twelfth-century hand glossing *Invention* copied material partly overlapping with the commentary preserved by **L**, **D** and **V**, starting from f. 74r. The text quoted and translated above is to be found at f. 83v. Unfortunately, the manuscript does not seem to provide any authorship for the commentary – but closer inspection will be needed to this effect. The relationship between *M 66 sup.* and the other witnesses of this commentary also needs to be investigated more thoroughly, but this is something that goes beyond the scope of this contribution. What is important to me here is that we see a network of late twelfth-century manuscripts in dialogue with each other, as it were.

*Laur. Plut. 57,5* includes two commentaries, Gregorios' and the commentary on *Invention*, ascribed there to Georgios, which, in different ways, are explicitly or implicitly at odds with Tzetzes' exegesis. *Voss. gr. Q1* transmits the most complete version of Tzetzes' material on Hermogenes, including the *Logismoi*, which refute the very approach to the corpus voiced by the commentary on *Invention* in *Laur. Plut. 57,5*. Lastly, *Ambr. M 66 sup.* bears textual material stemming from both Tzetzes and the exegete on *Invention*. If Mazzucchi is right and it really belonged to the library of one of the Kamateroi, this manuscript represents the material counterpart of the ambiguous relationship between Tzetzes and the family. As patrons and

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<sup>111</sup> See above, n. 88. On John X Kamateros, see Darrouzès, *Georges et Dèmètrios* cit. 48-49. See also I. Van Diëten, *Nicetae Choniatae Orationes et Epistulae*, Berlin 1973, 216-217; E. Kaltsoyianni, *Nikephoros Chrysoberges' Encomium of the Patriarch John X Kamateros: A New Fragment*, «Parekbolai» X (2020) 142-149.

sponsors of the arts, the Kamateroi were at liberty to negotiate their position toward contemporary literary trends, giving alternatively their favour to one or the other.

*From theory to performance: managing audience expectations*

We have a phrase in Italian to capture the essence of unproductive discussions: “questioni di lana caprina”, which literally translates as “goat-wool matters”. I am fully aware that, taken at face value, the debate around pre-exposition in *Invention II* could well fit the bill – pun on billy-goats included. And yet, on the basis of the *Logismoi* and the commentary on Hermogenes, I hope to be able to prove that much more is at stake here than simply the pride of stubborn theoreticians.

As shown by the texts examined above, performance, in different forms, is always very much in the background. The polemic with the Kamateroi is rooted in the rituals of public and courtly display that made Komnean society so lively and fertile. In turn such rituals determined the life of the people involved in them, both in terms of everyday anxieties, hopes, and fears and in terms of long-term social standing. A failed performance could mean not only a loss of prestige but also a loss of income or of prospective students. Not surprisingly such a perspective is present also in ζήτησις 21, dealing with pre-exposition. It informs the last section of the ζήτησις, where the purpose of all the rhetorical devices illustrated in the first part is finally laid on the table (f. 230r-v, **figg. 4-5**):

Οὕτω μὲν προδιδάσκοντες συντόμως πᾶν τὸ μέλλον,  
τὰς κλήσεις ἃς εἰρήκειν νῦν, καλοῦμεν τέχνης λόγους.  
Ἄν δ' εἰς κεφάλαια τινὰ μέλλοντα διαιρῶμεν,  
εἴ τί τι καὶ καινότερον μέλλωμεν ἀφηγεῖσθαι,  
τότε καλεῖν εἰώθαμεν τοῦτο τὰς κλήσεις τάσδε·  
προχαρακτηρισμοὺς ἅμα καὶ προδιατυπώσεις,  
προκαταστάσεις σὺν αὐτοῖς καὶ καταστάσεις ἅμα

Thus, when we indicate preliminarily and succinctly all that is to come, we call words of the art the names that I have mentioned right now. But, if we take up summarily the arguments to come, and we are about to expound something rather new, then we should get used to name the process with the following terms: pre-characterization and pre-figurations and also pre-expositions and expositions,

καὶ ἅμα, προκατασκευὰς καὶ προοικονομίας  
 σὺν οἷς προθεραπείας τε καὶ γε προδιορθώσεις.  
 Ἄλλ' ὁ προχαρακτηρισμὸς σὺν προδιατυπώσει  
 καὶ καταστάσει ἅμα δὲ καὶ τῇ προκαταστάσει,  
 ναὶ μὴν, καὶ τὴν τοῦ λέγοντος ἀσφάλειαν σκοποῦσι,  
 ἀκροατῶν τὸ πλεόν δὲ ἵνα μὴ θορυβῶνται·  
 ἂν φῆς γὰρ, “τέσσαρα ἐρεῖν, ἀκροαταὶ, νῦν μέλλω”,  
 f. 230v ἐν δὲ ἢ δύο φαίης ἂν, ἐκθορυβήσεις τούτους  
 καὶ, ἄλλα ὑποσχόμενος ἕτερα δὲ διδάσκων,  
 καὶ πεφυρμένα λέγων δὲ μὴ προειπῶν ἐκεῖνα,  
 ὁμοίως ἐθορύβησας ἀκροατῶν τὸ πλῆθος,  
 καὶ οὕτω ταῦτα πλεόν μεν ἀκροατῶν φροντίζει.  
 Ἡ δὲ γε προκατασκευὴ σὺν τῇ προθεραπείᾳ,  
 καὶ τῇ προδιορθώσει δὲ προλέγονται ἐντέχνως,  
 ὅτ' ἂν τι μέλλωμεν ἐρεῖν δοκοῦν τῶν καινοτέρων  
 πλεόν τῆς ἀσφαλείας δε φροντίζει τῶν λεγόντων.  
 Ὁ λέγων γὰρ φροντίζει μὲν καὶ τῶν ἀκροωμένων  
 αὐτοῦ δὲ πλεόν νῦν αὐτοῦ, μὴ δόξη καινὰ λέγειν.

together with pre-confirmations and prefatory summary  
 and preparation for the introduction and the setting right by anticipation.  
 But the pre-characterization together with pre-figuration  
 and exposition as well as pre-exposition,  
 although they do protect the speaker,  
 they protect much more the audience, lest they shout their disapproval.  
 For if you say: “Now, my public, I will say four things”  
 f. 230v and then you say one or two, you will provoke an uproar among them,  
 and if you promise one thing and then you teach another  
 and you speak in a disorganized manner, without announcing your topics,  
 equally you cause uproar among the majority of your audience.  
 Thus, these devices are more for the sake of the audience.  
 The pre-confirmation together with the preparation for the introduction  
 and the setting right by anticipation are skilled ways to preface,  
 when we are about to say something that seems new,  
 but they are more for the sake of the speaker.  
 For the speaker thinks about his listeners too  
 but here more about himself lest he does not seem to put forward  
 [novelties.

ὅτι δὲ ἐξ οὗ φάινται, ἐκ τοῦ βίβου τοῦ τοῦ  
καὶ, ἀλλὰ ὑποχόμενοι. ἔτι δὲ διδάσκων  
καὶ περὶ φῦσιν ἀλλήλων, δευτέρως δὲ καὶ  
ὁμοίως ἐφορέησασθε ἀκούσαντες τὸ πλεόν.  
καὶ οὐ τὰ αὐτὰ, πλεονεκτήματα φρονησῶντες.  
ἰδέτε προκτασθε καὶ σὴν πειρατῶν.  
καὶ τὰ προδιαρτάσθε, προλέγουσιν τεχνίταις  
ὅτι ἀπὸ μέλλουσιν ἐργασθῆναι, τὰς καὶ πλεόντων.  
πλεονεκτήματα φρονησῶντες φρονησῶντες λέγουσιν.  
ὁλοκλήρως, φρονησῶντες καὶ ἀκροαμένους  
αὐτοῦ δὲ πλεονεκτήτων, καὶ δὲ καὶ καὶ ἐργασθῶν.  
ἵπποσι κοινῆς ἀδελφῆς καὶ ἀμφότερων  
ἀκροαταῖς, καὶ λέγουσιν. μὲν τὰς γὰρ τὴν χάριτα  
τοσούτῃ ἀμαρτῆρας ὅτε χυρὶ κοινῆς ἀδελφῆς  
ἐργασθῶν τολμήσασθε τεχνίταις, καὶ ἵπποσι ἀδελφῆς  
τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ ἀδελφῆς ἀδελφῆς ἀδελφῆς.

ΚΒ

- » **Θ**υσι ἀμείνων εἰς αὐτὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἀφ' ἑσθῆς
- » ἵπποσι ἐργασθῶν καὶ αὐτῆς ἀδελφῆς περὶ φρονησῶν
- » καὶ παραύτου δὲ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, ἐκ τῶν ἁγίων.
- » οὐ γὰρ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, πόλιν ἑστῆν αὐτοῦ.

**Κ**αὶ αὐτῶν ἀδελφῶν ἐργασθῶν χεῖρας ἐκ τῶν ἀδελφῶν  
καὶ καὶ αὐτῶν ἀδελφῶν ἐργασθῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τῶν ἁγίων  
ἀφ' ἑσθῆς ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ὁμοίως.

ΚΓ

- » **Π**ροδιαρτάσθε ἐξ οὐσῶν τῶν λαμβάνουσιν ἑσθῆς
- » ἐργασθῶν νόμον λέγουσιν, λέγουσιν τοῦ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου  
τοῦ λέγουσιν ἀδελφῶν, ὁλοκλήρως ἐργασθῶν ἐργασθῶν  
ἵπποσι λέγουσιν δὲ φρονησῶν, ἵπποσι ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν  
τῶν οὐσῶν ταῦν ἐργασθῶν, τοῦ οὐσῶν προσημῶν  
προδιαρτάσθε ἐξ οὐσῶν, οὐσῶν αὐτῶν νικητῶν ἀδελφῶν  
προδιαρτάσθε ἐξ οὐσῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν  
ἵπποσι λέγουσιν τὸν νόμον ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν  
προδιαρτάσθε ἐξ οὐσῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν  
λέγουσιν, πόλιν ἵπποσι καὶ ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν  
ὁλοκλήρως ἀφ' ἑσθῆς καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν  
καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν  
καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν  
καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀδελφῶν

ΚΔ

- » **Θ**ὲς κλησὶ ἀκαθάρτων πρὸς τὴν κατατομήν.

fig. 5: Leiden University Libraries, Voss. gr. Q1, f. 230v



Ἡ προοικονομία δὲ ἴση καὶ ἀμφοτέρων,  
 ἀκροαταῖς καὶ λέγοντι μεσότης γὰρ τυγχάνει.  
 Τοσουταπλῶς ἐμάρτηκεν ὁ τεχνικός ἐνθάδε,  
 εἰπεῖν τολμήσας ἄτεχνον, ὡς τίς ἐκ τῶν ἀτέχνων  
 τὸ ἄνευ καταστάσεως ἄρχεσθαι διηγεῖσθαι.

The prefatory summary is equal for both,  
 for it is midway between the speaker and the listeners.  
 So, this is how the rhetorician was wrong here:  
 daring to call unskilled, as if he was one of the unskilled speakers,  
 to start with the narration without exposition.

ζήτησις 21 closes on very detailed considerations on the psychology of listeners and speakers and ways to approach novelty, very much in tune with the conversations on these topics that animated the circles of Komenian literati<sup>112</sup>. There is no space here to delve into the technicalities of this passage. What is relevant to my concerns is that Tzetzes has a keen eye for the reactions of the public. The term he uses, ἀσφάλεια, conveys by itself the dangers of performance, while the audience is represented as boisterous and menacing.

Such concerns are expressed also at the end of the preface to the commentary on *Invention*, where Tzetzes enlarges again on the question whether prologues are absolutely necessary. Four lines are particularly relevant to our topics, as they offer a clue to the kind of performances that Tzetzes and his audiences had in mind (f. 81v, **fig. 6**):

ἐνίοτε καὶ παντελῶς προοίμιον ἐκλείπει.  
 Ἐμπροσθι βασιλέως γὰρ καὶ τινῶν ὑπερόχων  
 οὐ δεῖ προοιμιάζεσθαι καὶ πρὶν ἄρειῳ πάγῳ  
 οὔτε προοιμιάζοντο οὔτ' ἐπιλόγους εἶχον.

Sometimes the prologue is skipped altogether.  
 For in front of the emperor and of other personalities  
 one must not have a prologue, as on the Areopagus in antiquity  
 they had neither prologues nor conclusions.

<sup>112</sup> See A. Pizzone, *History has no end: originality and human progress in Eustathios' second oration for Michael o tou Anchialou*, in F. Pontani-V. Katsaros-V. Sarris, *Reading Eustathios of Thessalonike*, Berlin-Boston 2017, 331-356; Ead., *Audiences and emotions in Eustathios of Thessalonike's Commentaries on Hermogenes*, «DOP» LXX (2016) 225-244.



It becomes clear that exhibitions in front of the Emperor played an important – albeit not exclusive – role in Tzetzes’ considerations. We come thus full circle. In *Historia* XI 369, the rhetor chosen by Andronikos had been celebrated at and by the court. Given the role that performance has in the texts associated to the dispute with the Kamateroi and the relevance of pre-exposition to performative practices, I think that also in *Historia* XI 369 we have to do with a case of a public contest between literati either presenting competing speeches at the court or previously selected (in the case of the ‘buffalo’) for this purpose<sup>113</sup>. The peculiar treatment of pre-exposition chosen by Tzetzes might have played a part in the final outcome of the contest. We are not in a position to hypothesize more. It is lost together with so many other minutiae and everyday concerns that preoccupied the protagonists of this story. There is no doubt, however, that the new texts from the *Logismoi* and the commentary on Hermogenes are helping to partly dispel the mist of time.

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<sup>113</sup> See E.C. Bourbouhakis, *Not Composed in a Chance Manner: The Epitaphios for Manuel I Komnenos by Eustathios of Thessalonike*, Uppsala 2017, 47\*. The issue of courtly culture is discussed again in by M. Mullet, *Performing court literature in medieval Byzantium: tales told in tents*, in M. Pomerantz-E. Birge Vitz (edd.), *In the Presence of Power: Court and Performance in the Pre-Modern Middle East*, New York 2017, 121-141.

**Il figlio di capro e il libro sfregiato.**  
**Versi inediti di Tzetzes (*Laur. Conv. soppr.* 627, ff. 20v-21r)**

Alla pubblicazione della estesa e multiforme produzione di Giovanni Tzetzes (ca. 1110/1112-post 1180)<sup>1</sup> – *incomparabilis memoriae vir atque infinitae pene lectionis*,

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\* Nel corso della stesura di questo lavoro ho avuto il privilegio e il piacere di confrontarmi con amici e colleghi. E in particolare sono grato ad Aglae Pizzone, per la generosa disponibilità e per l'aiuto prezioso prestatomi nell'esegesi di questi versi e nella 'navigazione' tra gli scritti editi e inediti di Tzetzes, e ad Antonio Rollo, al quale sono debitore per l'attenta rilettura del testo e per i molti suggerimenti che mi hanno messo al riparo da sviste e inesattezze. Sono inoltre riconoscente a Menico Caroli per aver letto e migliorato una prima stesura di queste pagine. Il debito di gratitudine verso Rosa Otranto e Massimo Pinto, con i quali mi sono confrontato a più riprese su questi versi, è maggiore di quanto possa qui dire. Sono inoltre grato a Davide Baldi per l'aiuto fornitomi nella decifrazione di alcuni punti non ben leggibili nei fogli del Laurenziano; a Daniele Bianconi e a Tommaso Braccini per alcuni utili spunti interpretativi. In fine, non ultimo, un sincero ringraziamento va a Enrico Emanuele Prodi per i consigli sul testo, per l'incoraggiamento a portare avanti questo lavoro e per averne accolto i risultati nel presente volume. Nel rammarico di non aver sempre saputo o potuto far tesoro di tutti i consigli, vale precisare che dell'interpretazione complessiva, come di imprecisioni ed errori rimasti nel testo, resto naturalmente solo πατήρ.

<sup>1</sup> Per un inquadramento sulla vita e gli scritti di Tzetzes si fa riferimento a C. Wendel, *Tzetzes, Johannes*, in *RE* VII/A (1948) 1959-2010. Per recenti messe a punto sulla sua biografia intellettuale, l'opera e il contesto culturale, oltre ai lavori citati nelle note seguenti, vd. V.F. Lovato, *Ulysse, Tzetès et l'éducation à Byzance*, in N.S.M. Matheou-Th. Kampianaki-L.M. Bondioli (edd.), *From Constantinople to the Frontier. The City and the Cities*, Leiden-Boston 2016, 326-342; P.A. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners: a Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 1-57; A. Pizzone, *Saturno contro sul mare di Ismaro. Una nuova fonte per l'(auto)biografia di Tzetze*, in A. Capra-S. Martinelli Tempesta-C. Nobili (edd.), *Philoxenia. Viaggi e viaggiatori nella Grecia di ieri e di oggi*, Sesto San Giovanni 2020, 75-94; M. Savio, *Screditare per valorizzare. Giovanni Tzetze, le sue fonti, i committenti e la concorrenza*, Roma 2020. Per la sua *scholarship* si rinvia a H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, II, München 1978, 59-63; N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, London-Cambridge 1996<sup>2</sup>, 190-196; M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide. Note autografe sul Codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252*, Bari 1999; F. Budelmann, *Classical Commentary in Byzantium. John Tzetzes on Ancient Greek Literature*, in R.K. Gibson-Ch. Shuttleworth Kraus (edd.), *The Classical Commentary. Histories, Practices, Theory*, Leiden 2002, 141-169; A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium. The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Cambridge 2007, 301-307; F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529-1453)*, in F. Montanari-S. Matthaios-A. Rengakos (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, Leiden-Boston 2015, I, 297-455: 378-385; D.J. Mastronarde, *Preliminary Studies on the Scholia to Euripides*, Berkeley 2017, 77-89.

per dirla con Poliziano<sup>2</sup> – mancano tuttora all'appello, ancorché noti da tempo, gli στίχοι che un copista della prima età paleologa ha trascritto ai ff. 20v-21r del *Laurentianus Conv. soppr. 627* (d'ora in poi **F**), il celeberrimo codice dei romanzieri greci. Alla luce del generale recupero di interesse negli ultimi decenni per la figura di Tzetzes e per la sua produzione, è parso opportuno offrire una *proekdosis* di questi versi, aperta a ulteriori approfondimenti, insieme ad una prima versione di lavoro e ad alcune note di commento.

1. Il Laurenziano (sec. XIII *ex.*-XIV *in.*) è ben noto per essere testimone medievale unico anche e soprattutto per i romanzi di Caritone e di Senofonte Efesio, nonché il solo manoscritto a trasmettere integralmente il libro I del *Dafni e Cloe* di Longo (privo cioè della lacuna dal capitolo 12 a 17 che affligge la restante tradizione)<sup>3</sup>. Benché il codice sia un cimelio assai noto, in quanto *testis unicus* per scritti antichi e bizantini<sup>4</sup>, e benché numerosi studiosi abbiano compulsato le sue carte, collazionato e pubblicato i testi di cui è latore, gli στίχοι in questione sono rimasti negletti, né sembra abbiano suscitato particolare interesse. Meritano dunque di essere tratti alla

<sup>2</sup> Poliziano, *Ep. I 2,5* (S. Butler, *Angelo Poliziano. Letters*, I: *Books I-IV*, Cambridge MA-London 2006, 14).

<sup>3</sup> Descrizione del manoscritto in [E. Rostagno]-N. Festa, *Indice dei Codici Greci Laurenziani non compresi nel catalogo del Bandini*, I: *Conventi soppressi*, «SIFC» I (1893) 172-176 (ripubblicato come primo supplemento al vol. II della ristampa a cura di A. Kudlien del catalogo di A.M. Bandini, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Mediceae Laurentianae*, Lipsiae 1961, 28\*-30\*); per i problemi che il testimone pone quanto a datazione e localizzazione cf. N. Bianchi, *Il codice Laur. Conv. soppr. 627 (F): problemi e ipotesi di localizzazione*, «AFLB» XLIV (2001) 161-181; per un quadro sintetico dei problemi inerenti questo testimone vd. R. Roncali, *Caritone di Afrodizia. Il romanzo di Calliroe*, Milano 2004<sup>2</sup>, 5-9. La storia moderna del Laurenziano è strettamente intrecciata con quella dei romanzi greci: cf. N. Bianchi, *Caritone e Senofonte Efesio. Inediti di Giovanni Lami*, Bari 2004; Id., *Il codice del romanzo. Tradizione manoscritta e ricezione dei romanzi greci*, Bari 2006, capp. III e IV; per un quadro aggiornato si vedano inoltre i contributi di Augusto Guida: *Prove di restauro virtuale sul codice Laur. Conv. soppr. 627*, in S. Lucà (ed.), *Libri palinsesti greci: conservazione, restauro digitale, studio*. «Atti del Convegno internazionale», Roma 2008, 171-177; *Caritone in Vaticana*, in G. Bastianini-A. Casanova (edd.), *I papiri del romanzo antico*. «Atti del convegno internazionale di studi. Firenze, 11-12 giugno 2009», Firenze 2010, 153-163; *Qualche novità dalla pagina macchiata del codice Laur. Conv. soppr. 627 di Longo*, in A. Casanova-G. Messeri-R. Pintaudi (edd.), *e sì d'amici pieno*. «Omaggio di studiosi italiani a Guido Bastianini per il suo settantesimo compleanno», Firenze 2016, 495-504.

<sup>4</sup> Non sarà inutile ricordare che il manoscritto è stato in passato anche al centro di polemiche e clamorose *querelles* filologiche e non solo: cf. R. Pintaudi, *La polemica Courier-Del Furia a proposito del Laurenziano Gr. Conv. Soppr. 627. Documenti di Archivio*, «AATC» XLIII (1978) 201-238; e da ultimo G. Cattaneo, *Per la storia di una lacuna: documenti inediti a proposito dell'Affaire Courier dal carteggio Francesco Del Furia-Sebastiano Ciampi*, «QS» 87 (2018) 215-258.

luce, a testimonianza sia della preziosità del minutissimo scrigno manoscritto che li contiene sia di quanto varia e vivace – nonché in parte ancora da esplorare e pubblicare – fosse la multiforme produzione letteraria di Tzetzes.

Appartenuto all'umanista Antonio Corbinelli (†1425), **F** passò in seguito con la sua biblioteca alla Badia Fiorentina (1424) e da qui, a seguito delle soppressioni napoleoniche delle corporazioni religiose (1809), alla Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, ove tuttora si conserva<sup>5</sup>. In Badia fu letto da Poliziano<sup>6</sup>, tra gli ultimi a saper valorizzare questo codice. Di esso si persero infatti le tracce fino alla sua riscoperta settecentesca<sup>7</sup>, allorché Antonio Cocchi (1695-1758), erudito e scienziato toscano, editore principe del romanzo di Senofonte Efesio (Londra 1726), per primo, a quanto consta, segnalò la presenza tra le carte di **F** degli *στίχοι* tzetziiani: *versusque aliquot τοῦ Ζέτξια (sic)*<sup>8</sup>.

Bisogna attendere gli inizi dell'Ottocento per imbattersi in una nuova segnalazione di questi versi: nella descrizione del Laurenziano posta *in limine* all'edizione delle *fabulae* esopiche, giusta la *recensio* di questo codice, Francesco Del Furia annotava: «eadem pagina [*i.e.* f. 20] habentur versus nonnulli Tzetzae»<sup>9</sup>. Una rilevante segnalazione, indipendente dalle precedenti, risale poi alla fine dello stesso secolo: nella seconda edizione della *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur* di Karl Krumbacher, nella sezione dedicata agli scritti inediti o perduti di Giovanni Tzetzes, si legge: «Im Cod. Laur. Conv. soppr. 627 fol. 20<sup>v</sup> sah ich eine jambische Epistel gegen

<sup>5</sup> Il codice **F**, come gli altri appartenuti al Corbinelli (sui quali vd. A. Rollo, *Sulle tracce di Antonio Corbinelli*, «SMU» II (2004) 25-95), passò per legato testamentario alla Badia, previo usufrutto vitalizio a favore del sodale Iacopo di Niccolò Corbizzi, per essere poi trasferito in Laurenziana a seguito delle soppressioni: R. Blum, *La Biblioteca della Badia fiorentina e i codici di Antonio Corbinelli*, Città del Vaticano 1951, in particolare per **F**: 3, 9, 67 n. 19, 75, 77, 79, 88, 104, 109, 116, 160.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. N. Bianchi, *Poliziano, i romanzi antichi e Senofonte Efesio*, in Id., *Romanzi greci ritrovati. Tradizione e riscoperta dalla tarda antichità al Cinquecento*, Bari 2011, 67-98.

<sup>7</sup> Non vi è alcuna segnalazione di versi tzetziiani nella celebre descrizione del Laurenziano (la prima descrizione a stampa di questo codice) che il padre maurino Bernard de Montfaucon offre nel suo *Diarium Italicum*, Parisiis 1702, 365-366.

<sup>8</sup> La notizia su **F** di Antonio Cocchi si legge autografa nelle carte II<sup>r</sup>-III<sup>r</sup> del codice *Bodl. D'Orville* 319 (sul quale cf. F. Madan, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford*, IV, Oxford 1897, 107 nr. 17197) contenente la trascrizione del romanzo di Caritone. Quest'ultima fu utilizzata per l'*editio princeps* da Jacques Philippe d'Orville (1750), il quale nella *Praefatio* trascrisse integralmente la notizia cocchiana sul codice. La stessa notizia è trascritta, pure autografa di Cocchi, anche nel *Magliab. VIII 1324 Grandi formati* 11 (cc. 78-79) della Biblioteca nazionale di Firenze. Quanto alla grafia Ζέτξια del Cocchi, deve aver tratto in inganno il tratteggio assai simile a quello del *csi* con cui il copista di **F** è aduso a vergare la lettera *zeta*.

<sup>9</sup> *Fabulae Aesopicae* quales ante Planudem ferebantur ex vetusto codice Abbatiae Florent. nunc primum erutae [...] cura ac studio F. De Furia, Lipsiae 1810<sup>2</sup> (Firenze 1809<sup>1</sup>), xxxiv.

einen, der aus einem Versbuch des Tzetzes ein Stück herausgeschnitten hatte»<sup>10</sup>. A tale dichiarazione è fatta seguire la trascrizione di parte dell'*inscriptio* di questi versi, per la cui prima sezione (vv. 1-18, f. 20v) Krumbacher aveva potuto disporre di riproduzioni fotografiche<sup>11</sup>.

Qualche anno dopo, all'interno del catalogo dei codici della Badia fiorentina passati in Laurenziana, Nicola Festa<sup>12</sup> forniva una dettagliata descrizione del manufatto e per i nostri versi una trascrizione integrale dell'*inscriptio* corredata di *incipit* ed *explicit*<sup>13</sup>. Meno di un decennio più tardi, Leo Sternbach pubblicava, traendoli da F (f. 21r), *octo carmina ἀδέσποτα [...] quae ad certos auctores referri possunt*: i primi due, Εἰς τύχην e Ἐπὶ τῇ πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον μεταβολῇ τῶν προαγμάτων, assegnava a Tzetzes (perché trascritti subito dopo i nostri στίχοι dichiaratamente tzetziiani) e in particolare alla sua produzione giovanile<sup>14</sup>, senza tuttavia peritarsi di dare più ampia notizia o trascrizione degli στίχοι che qui interessano, proprio in quanto esplicitamente tzetziiani.

Inediti risultano pertanto ancora nel 1948 nell'ampia e documentatissima voce su Tzetzes di Carl Wendel per la *Realencyclopädie*<sup>15</sup>, ove se ne dà conto con relativa trascrizione di seconda mano di *inscriptio*, *incipit* ed *explicit*<sup>16</sup>. Solo in anni più re-

<sup>10</sup> K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des Oströmischen Reiches (527 - 1453)*, München 1897<sup>2</sup>, 535.

<sup>11</sup> Questi versi non erano segnalati tra i molti scritti ancora inediti di Tzetzes nel *Vorwort* della prima edizione della *Geschichte* (München 1891, 241), datato «München, im Oktober 1890» (x). Solo dopo questa data infatti Krumbacher venne a conoscenza dei versi tzetziiani, come è confermato dallo 'schedone' bibliotecario relativo al codice conservato in Laurenziana: in data 8-10.VIII.1891 è registrato «Karl Krumbacher - München» con l'annotazione «fot. positive le cc. 20<sup>a</sup>-20<sup>b</sup>» (nella parte inferiore del verso del f. 20 si leggono appunto l'*inscriptio* e i primi diciotto versi).

<sup>12</sup> [Rostagno]-Festa, *l.c.* Generalmente attribuita a Rostagno e a Festa congiuntamente (giusta le titolazioni), la descrizione dei codici del fondo *Conventi soppressi* della Laurenziana si deve in realtà al solo Nicola Festa, come si precisa nella premessa di Girolamo Vitelli allo stesso *Indice* (*ibid.*, 130 [= *Supplementa* cit. p 5\*]) e come risulta da una lettera del Festa a Vitelli pubblicata in M. Gigante, *Lettere di Nicola Festa a Girolamo Vitelli*, in *Nicola Festa*, «Atti del Convegno di studi, Matera, 25-26-27 ottobre 1982», Venosa 1984, 61-109: 97 nr. XVI.

<sup>13</sup> [Rostagno]-Festa, *o.c.* 173-174 (= *Supplementa* cit. 29\*).

<sup>14</sup> L. Sternbach, *Spicilegium Laurentianum*, «Eos» VIII (1902) 65-86: 66-67. Più prudentemente Carl Wendel osservava che non è motivo sufficiente a rivendicare la paternità tzetziiana di questi due *carmina* adespoti il fatto che siano trascritti di seguito ai nostri versi dichiaratamente tzetziiani (Wendel, *o.c.* 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Wendel, *o.c.* 2002-2003, nr. 34.

<sup>16</sup> *Inscriptio*, *incipit* ed *explicit* forniti da Wendel sono appunto quelli trascritti in [Rostagno]-Festa, *l.c.* (all'infuori dell'accentazione di ὕαζ al v. 37, che segue correttamente la lezione del codice ed è da intendersi quale correzione implicita di Wendel in luogo di ὄαζ del Festa).

centi, forse anche per la crescente attenzione riservata a Tzetzes e alla sua opera, questi versi hanno trovato segnalazione in repertori della produzione poetica bizantina<sup>17</sup> e nel regesto degli scritti del nostro *grammatikos* accluso alla dissertazione dottorale di Ilias Ch. Nesseris, ove ne viene data anche una parziale trascrizione (vv. 1-6, 29-30)<sup>18</sup>.

Non sembra che alcuno sia tornato di recente su questi versi: la situazione materiale del manufatto, la scrittura in più punti evanida e l'usura del supporto nel margine superiore di f. 21r, e non solo<sup>19</sup>, oltre che forse pure l'errata percezione che questi στίχοι avessero già trovato pubblicazione, potrebbero aver distolto dal darne trascrizione.

2. Questi στίχοι (trimetri giambici, dodecasillabi)<sup>20</sup> ci consegnano una vivace polemica del nostro *grammatikos* contro un "figlio di capro", accusato di aver rovinato il *tomos* dei versi tzetziaco decurtandone una parte. La tagliente maniera di apostrofare e insultare rivali e detrattori, nonché il lessico vario e proteiforme messo in campo per l'occasione, confermano la paternità di questi trimetri (nei quali, peraltro,

<sup>17</sup> I. Vassis, *Initia carminum Byzantinorum*, Berlin-New York 2005, 770: i versi sono segnalati sulla base della descrizione del manoscritto di [Rostagno]-Festa, *l.c.*

<sup>18</sup> I.Ch. Nesseris, Η παιδεία στην Κωνσταντινούπολη κατά τον 12ο αιώνα, II, diss. Ioannina 2014, 515-540 (catalogo delle opere di Tzetzes), 382 n. 71 (la trascrizione parziale dei versi, ivi fornita, si discosta dal manoscritto nei seguenti punti: σε τράγον καὶ 29, δὲ τὸ μάλιστᾶ 30).

<sup>19</sup> Sui problemi posti dalla non facile lettura di alcuni fogli deteriorati di questo testimone cf. Guida, *Prove di restauro* cit.

<sup>20</sup> Sul dodecasillabo bizantino studio di riferimento è quello di P. Maas, *Der byzantinische Zwölfsilber*, «ByzZ» XII (1903) 278-323 (rist. con aggiunte e revisioni nelle *Kleine Schriften*, hrsg. von W. Buchwald, München 1973, 242-288, da cui si cita); cf. inoltre M.D. Lauxtermann, *The velocity of pure iambs. Byzantine observations on the metre and rhythm of the dodecasyllabe*, «JÖByz» XLVIII (1998) 9-33, e A. Rhoby, *Vom jambischen Trimeter zum byzantinischen Zwölfsilber. Beobachtungen zur Metrik des spätantiken und byzantinischen Epigramms*, «WS» CXXIV (2011) 117-142. Utili anche alcuni studi specifici: C. Giannelli, *Tetrastici di Teodoro Prodromo sulle feste fisse e sui santi del calendario bizantino*, «AB» LXXV (1957) 299-336 (rist. in *Scripta minora*, Roma 1963, 255-289); R. Romano, *Teoria e prassi della versificazione. Il dodecasillabo nei Panegirici epici di Giorgio di Pissidia*, «ByzZ» LXXVIII (1985) 1-22; L. Sarriu, *Ritmo, metro, poesia e stile. Alcune considerazioni sul dodecasillabo di Michele Psello*, «MEG» VI (2006) 171-197. Per la metrica bizantina, incluso il dodecasillabo, si veda ora la trattazione di M.D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and Contexts*, II, Wien 2019, 265-383 (*Appendix Metrica*). In particolare per i trimetri giambici di Tzetzes vd. G. Hart, *De Tzetzarum nomine vitis scriptis*, «JCPH» Suppl. 12 (1881), 1-75: 66-75; F. Kuhn, *Symbolae ad doctrinae περὶ δυχρόνων historiam pertinentes*, Vratislaviae 1892, 83-88; P.L.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae iambi*, «RSBN» n.s. VI-VII (1969-1970) 127-156: 130-132; Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry* cit. 289-290; e più diffusamente G. Pace, *Giovanni Tzetzes. La poesia tragica*, Napoli 2011<sup>2</sup>, 31-39.



il ricorso alla terza persona con la reiterata presenza del genitivo Τζέτζου, com'è nello stile dell'autore, funge da effettiva *sphragis*<sup>21</sup> e restituiscono una nuova testimonianza della sua produzione in versi, oltre che una prova non trascurabile dell'attenzione che copisti e filologi d'età paleologa riservarono al nostro *grammatikos*, alla sua opera e al suo insegnamento<sup>22</sup>. I versi in oggetto costituiscono altresì una significativa attestazione di quegli sfoghi autobiografici che ricorrono con frequenza (si pensi soprattutto alle composizioni con finalità didattiche ed erudite) nella scrittura di Tzetzes, ben noto per «the extreme and quite particular presence of his own Self in his texts»<sup>23</sup>.

Questi στίχοι sono stati trascritti da un copista non identificato, la cui scrittura definita «da “cerchia di Planude”» è riconducibile a quella stilizzazione facente capo alla *Fettaugen-mode* detta *beta-gamma*<sup>24</sup>, su due colonne a lettura progressiva orizzontale nella parte inferiore del f. 20v (r. 11 *ex imo*) e in quella superiore del f. 21r (col. 1, r. 10). Il deterioramento di una parte di questo foglio, pur impedendo in

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<sup>21</sup> Su questo coinvolgimento in terza persona, tipico della scrittura del nostro *grammatikos*, cf. M.J. Luzzatto, *Leggere i classici nella biblioteca imperiale: note tzetziene su antichi codici*, «QS» XLVIII (1998), 69-86: 70; Pizzone, *Saturno contro cit.* 83.

<sup>22</sup> Sull'interesse dei dotti di età paleologa per le note tzetziene vd. Luzzatto, *Leggere i classici cit.* 74-76, e soprattutto Ead., *Note inedite di Giovanni Tzetzes e restauro di antichi codici alla fine del XIII secolo: il problema del Laur. 70,3 di Erodoto*, in G. Prato (ed.), *I manoscritti greci tra riflessione e dibattito*. «Atti del V Colloquio Internazionale di Paleografia Greca, Cremona, 4-10 ottobre 1998», II, Firenze 2000, 633-654, e III, 323-330 (tavole). Un altro caso significativo, per esempio, è dato dal *Vind. Phil. gr.* 321 (sec. XIII *ex.*), preziosa miscellanea di testi bizantini, che trasmette, tra i vari materiali tzetziiani, anche un breve poema inedito di cui è annunciata l'edizione da Agapitos, *o.c.* 16 n. 84.

<sup>23</sup> Agapitos, *o.c.* 4, che definisce questo atteggiamento come «autographic syndrome»; sulla *authorial presence* nell'opera tzetziiana cf. le considerazioni di Budelmann, *o.c.* 150-152; F. Benuzzi, *Erudizione, autorità e autorialità: l'esegesi antica alla commedia sulla cattedra di Giovanni Tzetze*, «IFilolClass» XVII (2017-2018) 369-386; e soprattutto A. Pizzone, *Self-authorization and strategies of autography in John Tzetzes: The Logismoi rediscovered*, «GRBS» LX (2020) 652-690 (sono grato all'autrice per avermi dato la possibilità di leggere questo contributo ancora in bozze). Più in generale e di recente sull'autorialità nella letteratura bizantina cf. E. Cullhed, *The blind bard and 'I': Homeric biography and authorial personas in the twelfth century*, «BMGS» XXXVIII (2014) 49-67; A. Pizzone (ed.), *The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature. Modes, Functions, and Identities*, Berlin-Boston 2014.

<sup>24</sup> La definizione «da “cerchia di Planude”» è di G. Cavallo, *Il libro come oggetto d'uso nel mondo bizantino*, «JÖByz» XXXI (1981) 395-424: 415. Sulla stilizzazione *beta-gamma* cf. N.G. Wilson, *Nicaean and Palaeologan hands: Introduction to a discussion*, in *La Paléographie grecque et byzantine. Paris 21-25 octobre 1974*, Paris 1977, 263-267.

qualche punto una più sicura decifrazione, non ci priva tuttavia del senso complessivo di questi versi<sup>25</sup>.

Benché risultino in qualche punto problematici e pure di non pacifica esegesi, questi στίχοι meritano d'essere sottratti all'oscurità e offerti in una prima e provvisoria edizione, accompagnati anche da una traduzione di lavoro che ne agevoli la comprensione: in attesa di ulteriori approfondimenti, varrà senz'altro la pena per ora di leggerli nella loro integrità.

Στίχοι τοῦ Τζέτζου πρὸς τινὰ κόψαντα μέρος τοῦ τόμου τῶν στίχων αὐτοῦ εὐρῶν τοῦτον ἐν τῷ σακελλίου κελλίῳ· ἐγράφησαν δ' οὗτοι καὶ ἐκολλήθησαν εἰς τὸν τόμον ἐκεῖνον ἀντ' ἐκείνων τῶν κοπέντων.

Τόμον σταλέντα τόνδε τῷ σακελλίῳ,  
 τράγου γόνος τις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ποίου τράγου,  
 ἔκειρεν οἴστρω καὶ παρεῖλε τοὺς στίχους,  
 πρὸς ὃν τις εἶπε τὴν σοφὴν παροιμίαν·  
 φύλλα τοπρὶν ἔκειρεν ἀμπέλου τράγος,  
 οἶος πατὴρ σός, ᾧ τεμῶν τὸ χαρτίον,

5

Versi di Tzetzes contro un tale che ha reciso parte del volume dei suoi (*scil.* di Tzetzes) versi dopo averlo rinvenuto nella stanza del sacello. E questi (*scil.* i versi che seguono) furono trascritti e incollati in quel volume al posto di quelli recisi.

Questo libro, allestito per il sacello, un figlio di capro – e di quale capro – recise con furia e ne sottrasse i versi. Contro di lui si riferisca (questa) storiella istruttiva: [5] foglie di vite recise una volta un capro – quale tuo padre, o distruttore del libro,

<sup>25</sup> Nella trascrizione si introduce *iota mutum* anche quando assente (p.es. v. 3), tralasciando di segnalare in apparato questi casi. Dell'uso dello *iota mutum* in **F** discute, in merito a un epigramma di Cristoforo Mitileno, E. Follieri, *Iota mutum: ripristino o eliminazione in alcuni testi bizantini*, in *Scritti in memoria di Carlo Gallavotti*, «RCCM» XXXVI (1994) 271-280 (rist. in Ead., *Byzantina et italograeca. Studi di filologia e di paleografia*, a cura di A. Acconcia Longo-L. Perria-A. Luzzi, Roma 1997, 477-485), ove si rileva che «nel codice fiorentino [*scil.* **F**] lo *iota mutum* è indicato, come *subscriptum*, molto sporadicamente» (275 = 481). Si mantengono a testo le forme univerbate di espressioni avverbiali risultanti da concrezione (articolo + avverbio/aggettivo/sostantivo); da notare, in quest'ultimo caso, che al di sotto di ταμάλιστρα (30) in **F** è presente un segno di *hyphen* (sull'impiego di questo segno, a indicare parole che, normalmente pronunciate separatamente, devono essere invece lette insieme come se fossero una sola, cf. Pace, *Giovanni Tzetzes* cit. 98; *hyphen* si riscontra anche nelle note autografe tzetziene: cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 49 n. 19, 72 n. 8).

|        |  |    |
|--------|--|----|
|        | εἴτ' οὖν τις ἐλήλυθας, εἴτ' ἄλλου μέτα,<br>ἢ δ' ἄμπελος· «Κεῖρόν με, φησίν, ὦ τράγε,<br>βίβρωσκε, τέμνε, κἄν κέρσης πάντα κλάδον,<br>ἀλλ' εἰς θυηλὰς καὶ σφαγὰς τὰς σάς, {ῶ} τράγε,<br>οἴνου σταλαγμοῖς καὶ χοαῖς ἐπαρκέσω». | 10 |
|        | καὶ σὺ τολοιπὸν κἄν τόμον Τζέτζου στίχων<br>πάντα μεμηνῶς σὺ σπαράξης καὶ τέμης,<br>ἀλλ' οὖν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς σου τοῦ κέρως<br>κρουνοὶ πάλιν βλύσειαν ἐμμέτρων λόγων·  | 15 |
| f. 21r | νικᾷ γὰρ αὐτὸ πᾶν βοώμενον κέρως,<br>τὸ τῆς Ἀμαλθείας τε καὶ χρῖον κέρως<br>ἅ τε προεῖδεν ὁ προφήτης πρὶν κέρω,<br>ἐλικτὰ ποικίλα τε καὶ τῶν ὀρθίων<br>κέρως τε πᾶν τῶν ξερξικῶν στρατευμάτων                                | 20 |
|        | καὶ δὴ σὺν αὐτοῖς καὶ λόφον Βυζαντίων<br>κλῆσιν λαχόντα καὶ καλούμενον Κέρως.<br>κερασβολοῦν μὲν τοῦ τράγου τὸ παιδίον<br>σφῶ πατρικῶ κέρωτι καὶ ξίφους πλέον  |    |

**8-11** Cf. Even. *AP IX 75* (versus laudat Tz. *schol. Ar. Plut.* 1129, 227, 5-9 Massa Positano), Leonid. *AP IX 99* | **17-23** de cornibus cf. Sud. κ 1366-1374 Adler | **17** χρῖον κέρως: cf. *LXX ISam.* 16, 13 | **18** ὁ προφήτης: cf. *LXX Dan.* 7, 7 et 8 | **21-22** de promunturio cf. *Plin. Nat.* IV 18 [46], IX 20 [50], *Amm.* XXII 8,8; de sinu cf. *Polyb.* IV 43,7, *Strab.* VII 6,2.

**10** ῶ expunxi | **15** βλύσειεν F | **19** vix dispicitur | **21** καὶ<sup>1</sup> vix dispicitur

che tu vi sia giunto a farlo da solo o con altri – e allora la vite: «Recidimi – dice –, o capro, divorami, tagliami; anche se mi tagli ogni ramoscello [10] basterò tuttavia, capro, per il vino che sarà versato per libare in offerta al tuo sacrificio». Anche tu, dunque, se pure, impazzito, strappassi e tagliassi l'intero libro di versi di Tzetzes, comunque dal corno del tuo stesso padre [15] sgorgerebbero fonti di parole in versi, perché questo (corno) sopravanza tutti i corni celebrati: quello di Amaltea e il corno dell'unzione, i corni che il profeta ebbe dapprima in visione, ricurvi e vari, [20] e ogni corno degli eserciti schierati di Serse, e inoltre, insieme con questi, (sopravanza) anche il colle dei bizantini cui è toccato il nome ed è noto come Corno. E se il figlio del capro, colpendo col suo corno paterno e più grande di una spada,

τόμον διηντέρευσσε τῶν Τζέτζου στίχων 25  
 ἐκεῖνον εὐρὼν κελλίῳ σακελλίου,  
 τοῦτους δ' ἀνήκε πλημμυρήσαν τοὺς στίχους  
 τὸ παιδὸς αὐτοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς πάλιν κέρας,  
 τρεῖς τετράκις τράγου τε καὶ πάλιν τράγου  
 πλέον δὲ ταμάλιστα μυριοτράγων. 30  
 ἀνθ' ὧν παρεῖλε<ς> μετροσυνθέτων λόγων  
 ὁ συλλογισμοὺς ἐκμαθὼν κερατίνους  
 τὸν ἐγκεκρυμμένον τε σὸν φυτοσπόρον,  
 οὗτοι παρεγράφησαν εἰς τομὴν τόμου·  
 τοιαῦτα θρέπτ<ρ>α σῶν κακῶν τοῖς πατράσιν. 35  
 ὅθεν πατήρ πᾶς σωφρόνιζε τὰ τέκνα·  
 υἱοὺς βροτοῖς πρέπει γὰρ, οὐ γεννᾶν ὕας.

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25 διηντόρευσε F | 29 τρα' ... τρά' F | 30 μυριοτρα' F | 31 παρεῖλε F | 35 θρεπτὰ F

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[25] ha trapassato le viscere del libro di versi di Tzetzes, dopo averlo trovato in una stanza del sacello, questi versi, invece, li ha fatti nuovamente sgorgare con abbondanza il corno del padre stesso del ragazzo – tre, quattro volte capro e ancora capro, [30] e assolutamente più capro di quelli che sono mille volte capri! Al posto dei componimenti in versi che hai sottratto, tu che hai appreso dei ragionamenti cornuti e del tuo progenitore nascosto, sono stati aggiunti questi (versi qui) alla parte tagliata del libro: [35] questo è il compenso delle tue malefatte per coloro che ti hanno generato. Perciò, padri, educate bene i figli: ai mortali conviene infatti generare bambini, non suini.

3. Questi στίχοι, trentasette trimetri<sup>26</sup> scritti forse pure sull'impellenza del momento, come più di sicuro in altre occasioni<sup>27</sup>, si segnalano per l'impiego di vari registri espressivi (da quello colto a forme più colloquiali), di metafore e allusioni (p.es. la polisemia di κέρας), di enunciazioni circostanziate o altre più elusive, di espedienti retorici e innovazioni lessicali: soluzioni e risorse che contribuiscono tutte a dare l'idea delle capacità scritte e polemiche (che spesso tendono a coincidere) del nostro *grammatikos*, forse pure non finalizzate a un uso meramente privato e personale.

L'*inscriptio* che precede i trimetri informa su occasione e contenuto degli stessi (il ritrovamento<sup>28</sup> del *tomos* dei versi di Tzetzes da parte di un ignoto malfattore, che ne ha decurtato una parte, e la conseguente perdita di alcuni versi poi sostituiti).

<sup>26</sup> Si tratta di trimetri *atechnoi*, secondo una definizione risalente allo stesso Tzetzes, che li avrebbe usati in una prima e giovanile fase della sua attività, a fronte dei giambi *technikoi*, più osservanti delle norme classiche della prosodia, che si risolse di impiegare in età più matura. Come di norma negli *atechnoi*, anche in questi versi vi è pieno rispetto del parossitismo e di sillaba breve in undicesima sede (per τέχνα 36 va messa in conto *correptio*); per rispetto dell'isometria non sono ammessi piedi trisillabi, tollerati invece nei *technikoi* per un maggiore avvicinamento alle norme classiche. Le vocali *dichronoi* (α, ι, υ) sono usate al posto di una lunga indipendentemente dalla posizione che occupano (cf. φύλλα 5, ἐλήλυθας 7, σύ 12, πάντα 13, ποικίλα 19, ταμάλιστα 30, τά 36); in particolare per ἐλήλυθας (7), oltre che per la terza sillaba, andrà messo in conto allungamento anche per la prima (cf. in proposito Tzetzes, *Exeg. II*, I, 202, ed. Papathomopoulos 255, 9-10: <εἰλήλυθας> ἐλήλυθας καὶ πλεονασμῶ τοῦ ἰῶτα ἐν τῷ εἰ Ἄττικῶς καὶ τοῦ ὀ Ἰωνικῶς εἰλήλυθας). È evitato lo iato, come di norma nei dodecasillabi. La cesura (*Binnenschlüsse* nella definizione di Maas), sia pentemimere (B5) che eptemimere (B7), rispetta la tendenza osservata nel dodecasillabo bizantino (Maas, *o.c.*, 256-265), per cui B5, qui in maggioranza (64%), è sempre preceduta da parola accentata sull'ultima o sulla penultima sillaba (1-4, 6, 9-14, 16, 18, 20-23, 26-28, 31, 32, 35-36), mentre B7 è sempre preceduta da parola accentata sulla terzultima sillaba. Nel caso di B7, enclitiche e particelle sentite come enclitiche garantiscono l'accento sulla terzultima prima di cesura quando precedute da parole parossitone (al v. 37 γὰρ, non accentato in F, è seguito da segno di interpunzione in coincidenza con cesura e andrà considerato enclitico; sulla non ammissibilità della clausola ossitona in B7 nel dodecasillabo, fenomeno noto come "legge di Hilberg", cf. I. Hilberg, *Ein Accentgesetz der byzantinischen Jambographen*, «ByzZ» VII (1898) 337-365); nel caso di B5, il pronome indefinito τις (sempre accentato in F) al v. 2 andrà considerato ortotonico dopo parossitona.

<sup>27</sup> È il caso degli στίχοι dichiaratamente αὐθωροὶ καὶ πάντη ἀμελέτητοι contro Giorgio Scilitze e Gregorio pubblicati da S. Pétridès, *Vers inédits de Jean Tzetzes*, «ByzZ» XII (1903), 568-570; su questi versi, scritti appunto «on the spot and completely without preparation», e l'improvvisazione letteraria nella versificazione bizantina cf. P. Magdalino, *Cultural Change? The Context of Byzantine Poetry from Geometres to Prodomos*, in F. Bernard-K. Demoen (edd.), *Poetry and its Contexts in Eleventh-century Byzantium*, London-New York 2012, 19-36: 31; si veda ora N. Zagklas, *Satire in the Komnenian Period: Poetry, Satirical Strands, and Intellectual Antagonism*, in P. Marciniak-I. Nilsson (edd.), *Satire in the Middle Byzantine Period. The Golden Age of Laughter?*, Leiden-Boston 2020, 279-303: 296-301, e il contributo di Aglae Pizzone in questo volume.

<sup>28</sup> Per εὐθῶν, da intendere quale nominativo assoluto, cf. Sternbach, *Spicilegium* cit. 66.

tuiti dall'autore con quelli che seguono), senza molto aggiungere a quanto si legge negli στίχοι, dai quali si riprendono termini, espressioni e pure il silenzio sulla effettiva identità del responsabile del misfatto. Nuovo è però il dato relativo alla collocazione materiale assegnata ai nuovi versi: sarebbero stati «incollati» (ἐκολλήθησαν) – modalità non indicata nei trimetri – al posto di quelli recisi<sup>29</sup>. Da segnalare ancora l'impiego di κόπτω, verbo assente nei versi, ove di contro ricorrono più volte κείρω (3, 5, 8, 9), anche per l'ovvia assonanza con κέρας, e τέμνω (6, 9, 13). L'*inscriptio* potrebbe essere opera di un copista, che avrebbe riassunto il contenuto dei versi sulla base forse di personali conoscenze e di quanto aveva sotto gli occhi, o più verosimilmente dello stesso Tzetzes, e non solo perché evidentemente meglio di chiunque altro poteva conoscere le dinamiche in oggetto (la collocazione 'avventizia' dei nuovi versi, su cui vd. *infra*), ma anche per alcune affinità espressive col suo *usus scribendi*.<sup>30</sup>

1. L'uso di τόμος, che implica naturalmente l'idea del *volumen*, del rotolo<sup>31</sup> (forma libraria tutt'altro che estranea alla cultura bizantina)<sup>32</sup>, potrebbe qui assolvere alla funzione di conferire una coloritura solenne al dettato, secondo un'analogia formalizzazione riscontrabile nei versi che il nostro *grammatikos* scrive contro una 'donna schedografa' e contro la schedografia in genere: qui, attingendo agli strumenti compositivi della tradizione giambico-comica antica e al lessico dei poemi omerici ed esiodici, viene delineata la figura di una donna, forse pure fittizia, ritratta in sembianze antiche con un τόμος nella mano al posto del telaio e il κάλαμος nell'altra in luogo della spola<sup>33</sup>. È possibile che anche nei nostri στίχοι, e con le stesse

<sup>29</sup> Non è raro che l'*inscriptio* restituisca informazioni non presenti nel testo: cf. Pétridès, *Vers inédits* cit.; Agapitos, *John Tzetzes* cit. 16 e n. 84. Peraltro lo scrupolo con cui il copista di F ha avuto cura di trascrivere questa lunga *inscriptio* è conforme all'attenzione che riserva altrove per simili paratesti: cfr. Bianchi, *Il codice* cit. 168-170 n. 36.

<sup>30</sup> Per τινὰ κόψαντα μέρος dell'*inscriptio* cf. *Hist.* XII 413, 477 μικρὸν κοπέντος μέρος τι...; per la sequenza ἐκέϊνον ἀντ' ἐκείνων cf. *Alleg. Il.* prol. 754-755 ἀντ' ἐκείνης, / ἐκείνην...

<sup>31</sup> Il greco τόμος naturalmente vale anche e innanzitutto 'ritaglio, pezzo' (la radice riconduce a τέμνω), valore probabilmente ben presente a Tzetzes, che al v. 33 si servirà pure di τομή, in stretta e allitterante contiguità con τόμος, per indicare la 'parte recisa' del suo libro (εἰς τομήν τόμου).

<sup>32</sup> Per uno sguardo d'insieme sulla forma del libro a Bisanzio cf. M. Menchelli, *Il rotolo di Patmos e i manufatti più antichi del commento di Proclo al Timeo platonico dalla 'collezione filosofica' all'età dei Paleologi. Studi preliminari sulla trasmissione di un testo filosofico a Bisanzio*, Parma 2016, 5-8.

<sup>33</sup> Si tratta degli στίχοι tzetziiani κατὰ γυναικὸς σχεδογραφούσης (*Vallicell.* F 68 (*gr.* 103), trascritti nel margine esterno di f. 220r): ἀντὶ μὲν ἱστοῦ τὸν τόμον χερσὶ φέρεις / τὸν κάλαμον δ' αὖ ἀντὶ κερκίδος, γύναι (vv. 1-2), «invece del telaio porti in mano il libro, / invece della spola il calamo, donna». Edizione complessiva ne ha dato S.G. Mercati, *Giambi di Giovanni Tzetze contro una donna schedografa*, «ByzZ» XLIV (1951) = J.M. Hoeck (ed.), *Festschrift Franz Dölger zum 60.*

finalità, il libro tzetziano abbia assunto la forma più alta e letteraria del τόμος, tanto più che in questo caso si tratta proprio di un *Versbuch*<sup>34</sup>, come si preciserà più avanti (12, 25, 31), in ossequio peraltro anche ad un ben documentato immaginario letterario che vede appunto nel *volumen* il libro poetico per eccellenza e perfino il tramite iconico dell'investitura poetica<sup>35</sup>. Ma nulla impedisce naturalmente di pensare che la forma di *volumen* fosse quella effettivamente assegnata da Tzetzes all'esemplare ufficiale dei suoi versi<sup>36</sup>.

Resta, ad ogni modo, notizia di non trascurabile rilievo il fatto che Tzetzes avesse provveduto ad allestire una personale raccolta di versi in un unico *tomos*<sup>37</sup>. Di una propria raccolta di giambi parla esplicitamente nell'*Ep.* 89 (μοῦσαν ἰάμβων ἐμῶν οὐχ ὑπογεῖως), che dichiara altresì di aver scritto alcuni anni prima (πρὸ χρόνων δέ τινων συγγραφεῖσαν): nell'epistola, composta prima del 1157, Tzetzes chiede ai suoi detrattori di essere giudicato non sulla base di versi improvvisati e occasionali bensì della sua opera riconosciuta e pubblica, quella μοῦσαν ἰάμβων

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*Geburtstage gewidmet*, 416-418: 418 (rist. in S.G. Mercati, *Collectanea Byzantina*, I, Bari 1970, 553-556: 555). Per una lettura di questi versi si vedano E.V. Maltese, *Donne e letteratura a Bisanzio: per una storia della cultura femminile*, in Id., *Dimensioni bizantine. Donne, angeli e demoni nel Medioevo greco*, Alessandria 2006<sup>2</sup>, 105-127: 113-114 (da cui la traduzione citata); Agapitos, *o.c.* 15-17 (ove si nota tra l'altro che «the terminology describing weaving comes exclusively from Homeric and Hesiodic poems, making the image of female duties appear textually as very archaic», 16), e Savio, *o.c.* 56-58 (se ne rileva l'impronta 'classica' e il carattere fittizio).

<sup>34</sup> Krumbacher, *o.c.* 535.

<sup>35</sup> Come nella celebre miniatura nel cosiddetto "Menologio di Basilio II" in cui la Vergine introduce il *volumen* in bocca a Romano il Melodo dormiente (*Vat. gr.* 1613, p. 78). Per l'immagine di inghiottire il rotolo, molto più antica, cfr. il celebre passo di *Ap.* 10,9, che riprende Ez. 2,9.

<sup>36</sup> Sul modello, per esempio, del *prototypon* della *diataxis* di Michele Attaliato preservato ἐν τῷ σκευοφυλακίῳ τῆς μονῆς, ove si conservavano anche altri documenti/*volumina* di particolare pregio, come i crisobolli imperiali: P. Gautier, *La Diataxis de Michel Attaliato*, «REB» XXXIX (1981) 5-143: 77, rr. 988ss. Sull'impiego di vari supporti scrittori (tra cui vanno messe in conto anche le tavolette) nella produzione tzetziana, nella quale autografia e autorialità risentono delle pratiche burocratiche e della formazione legale del *grammatikos*, si veda ora A. Pizzone, *Bureaucratic discourse, signature and authorship in John Tzetzes: a comparative perspective*, «Acme» LXXIII (2020) 43-66.

<sup>37</sup> Wendel, *o.c.* 2003. Oltre ad un impiego più tecnico di τόμος, quale si troverebbe in *Hist.* XII 399, 243 (su cui si tornerà più oltre: cf. n. 82) e in *Ep.* 106, p. 153,19 Leone (τῷ τόμῳ δὲ τῆς τῶν διακόνων ἀπογραφῆς), nelle altre occorrenze tzetziane il termine sembra ricorrere nell'accezione più comune di 'parte di opera' (cf. *Hist.* XI 369, vv. 204, 205, 225, 255, 260, 262, 272, 273, 291, 292, 305, 334, 337), conformemente all'uso bizantino. Cf. B. Atsalos, *La terminologie du livre-manuscrit à l'époque byzantine*, Thessalonike 1971, 150-151 e 155-157, ove si accenna pure a questi versi (trascrivendone parte dell'*inscriptio* sulla base della descrizione di [Rostagno]-Festa, *l.c.*, e di Krumbacher, *l.c.*): «Il semble bien que cet autour emploie ici le mot [*scil.* τόμος] dans son sens le plus général de "livre", sans aucune référence à sa matière ni à sa forme» (157 n. 1).

ἐμῶν che evidentemente considera rappresentativa della personale produzione poetica e provvista del carattere ufficiale e definitivo di un libro a tutti gli effetti<sup>38</sup>.

Nel caso dei nostri versi, il carattere ufficiale e autoriale del *tomos* poetico viene ad essere rimarcato dalla sua collocazione nel σακέλλιον, al quale è esplicitamente destinato (σταλέντα). Qui σακέλλιον sarà da intendersi non tanto nel senso comune del termine (*LBG*, s.v.: ‘Säckchen, Beutel’), quanto, a giudicare anche dalla enfasi implicita in apertura di versi, nell’accezione più specifica di ‘luogo riposto e destinato ad accogliere beni di valore’, quale era appunto il *sakellion* imperiale o quello di una fondazione monastica<sup>39</sup>. Di conseguenza, la precisazione κελλίῳ σακελλίου al v. 26 – e già nell’*inscriptio*: ἐν τῷ σακελλίου κελλίῳ – induce a interpretare *kellion* non nel senso di ‘cella monastica’<sup>40</sup>, che avrebbe fatto pensare al *kellion* del nostro *grammatikos*<sup>41</sup>, ma in quello più generico di ‘stanza, camera’<sup>42</sup>: un ambiente, dunque, all’interno del *sakellion*, luogo non facilmente accessibile.

Oltre che un esemplare ufficiale, il *tomos* in questione sembra essere anche un esemplare unico, privo di copie conformi: colpa dunque tanto più grave averlo sfregiato. Una situazione che richiama da vicino quella cui andarono incontro le *Historiai*: quando Tzetzes si accinse a rivedere l’opera, una parte di essa non era più reperibile, andata ormai perduta, come ricorda lo stesso *grammatikos*: “alcuni soldati, avendo trovato molti βιβλίδια dei miei scritti all’interno del παλάτιον, nella stanza (ἐν κέλλῃ) di un ὀμιλητής, il quale era morto, se li erano rivenduti, chi per quattro monete di bronzo, chi per sei e così via tutto il resto...” (*Hist.* VI 40)<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> Per l’*Ep.* 89, una sua interpretazione e contestualizzazione, si rinvia al contributo di Aglae Pizzone in questo volume (pp. 30-38).

<sup>39</sup> Il *sakellion* nelle fondazioni religiose sottoposte alla giurisdizione patriarcale aveva la stessa funzione di quello imperiale, cioè di raccolta delle risorse economiche (cf. A. Kazhdan-P. Magdalino, *ODB* III, 1829-1830, s.v. *Sakellion*), ed era presidiato dal *sakellion* (ὁ σακελλίου: cf. J. Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les ὀφρῆκια de l’Église byzantine*, Paris 1970, 62-64, 318-322).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. A.-M. Talbot, *ODB* II, 1120, s.v. *kellion*.

<sup>41</sup> Vale a dire il *kellion* della μονὴ Παντοκράτορος, importante fondazione imperiale comenena nel cuore di Costantinopoli (cf. A.-M. Talbot-A. Cutler, *ODB* III, 1575-1576, s.v. *Pantokrator*), ove Tzetzes risiedette, studiando e insegnando, almeno dal 1147 e ove risulta ancora attivo negli anni successivi al 1155: cf. M. Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge zum Briefcorpus des Ioannes Tzetzes*, «JÖByz» XLVI (1996) 175-226: 219; cf. anche E.A. Congdon, *Imperial Commemoration and Ritual in the Typikon of the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator*, «REB» LIV (1996) 161-200.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford 1961, s.v. ‘chamber, room’.

<sup>43</sup> Il fatto è testimoniato da *schol. Hist.* IV 141, 469, da una nota premessa a *Hist.* VI 63 e soprattutto dalla nota premessa a *Hist.* VI 40 (che qui si è tradotta): Στρατιῶται δὲ ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ βιβλίδια πολλὰ τῶν ἐμῶν πονημάτων εὐρόντες ἐν κέλλῃ τινὸς τῶν ἐμῶν ὀμιλητῶν, τεθνηκότος ἐκείνου, ἀπημπολήρασιν, ὁ μὲν τεσσάρων χαλκῶν, ὁ δὲ ἕξ, καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα ὁμοίως... Vd. in merito P.L.M. Leone, *Significato e limiti della revisione delle Historiae di Giovanni Tzetzes*, «Aevum»



A tal proposito, pur non escludendo una qualche intenzionale amplificazione e artificiosità, forse pure giocate su un lessico formalizzato e burocratico, è utile richiamare qui anche alcuni giambi, presenti nella seconda *recensio* delle *Historiai*, nei quali il nostro *grammatikos*, impiegando un frasario «modelled after the stock phrases used to authenticate official documents»<sup>44</sup>, rivendica di aver «depositato» quei testi “nell’archivio di Tzetzes” (Τζέτζου κατεστρώθησαν ἐν τῷ σεκρέτῳ) non prima di «averli collazionati con l’originale» (ἀντεβλήθη ταῦτα τοῖς πρωτογράφοις)<sup>45</sup>. Benché non sia meglio precisabile il luogo di conservazione, analoghe sembrano essere state invece le dinamiche, che, dobbiamo immaginare, avranno interessato il *Versbuch*: la copia ufficiale, riscontrata sull’originale (poi perduto?) Tzetzes avrebbe infine depositato in luogo sicuro e (quasi) inaccessibile, ἐν τῷ σακελλίου κελλίῳ.

2. Dopo il *tomos*, compare l’altro protagonista di questi versi: con ben studiata simmetria (due τράγου agli estremi e perfetto isosillabismo centrale τίς ἀλλὰ καὶ), è introdotto l’autore del misfatto, la cui identità non è tuttavia meglio precisata, lasciata forse pure volutamente in ombra. Colui che ha avuto l’ardire di sfregiare il *tomos* è qui definito τράγου γόνος (più oltre τοῦ τράγου τὸ παιδίον, 23) con la precisazione ulteriore ποίου τράγου<sup>46</sup>, che, allusiva e elusiva al tempo stesso, presuppone un *tragos*-padre, che ritornerà più esplicitamente nei versi successivi (14, 28). Pur a fronte di tale elusività, si dovrà comunque rilevare che la formula τράγου παῖς/υἰός/τέκνον (e in alternativa κερρατᾶ υἰός) è ben documentata nella scrittura polemica tzetziiana, che attinge sovente al lessico animale (maiale, capro, bufalo) per apostrofare ignoranti e detrattori (tra i quali specialmente i cultori della pratica schedografica tanto in voga al tempo), e viene sovente utilizzata in riferimento ai

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XXXVII (1967) 239-248: 241.

<sup>44</sup> Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 33.

<sup>45</sup> *Iambi*, 358. Per καταστρώννυμι nel valore di ‘eintragen, registrieren’ cf. *LBG*. s.v. e Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 34, di cui si segue qui l’interpretazione. Per σεκρέτον (σήκρητος) nel valore di ‘Verwaltungsbüro, Kanzlei’ cf. *LBG* s.v. Il fatto che alla fine di quei giambi, una vera e propria *sphragis*, Tzetzes si definisca λογιστής τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ νεῶν (*Iambi*, 360), ha indotto a ipotizzare che egli voglia qui, come altrove, accreditare di sé l’immagine pubblica di “revisore di testi antichi e moderni” come fosse un’autoinvestitura della carica di ‘revisore’ statale per eccellenza, quella di μέγας λογαριαστής (Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 24 e *passim*): gli stessi termini λογιστής e Λογισμοί (titolo, quest’ultimo, di un’altra opera tzetziiana fino a poco tempo fa ritenuta del tutto perduta), propri del greco più dotto, hanno il loro corrispettivo burocratico nei demotici λογαριαστής e λογαριασμοί. È plausibile che, «by using governmental formulae, Tzetzes shapes himself as a self-legitimated ‘literary auditor’, allowed to pick holes in the work of both contemporary and past authors» (*ibid.* 687).

<sup>46</sup> Per la clausola καὶ ποίου τράγου cf. *Theog.* 395 καὶ ποίου γένους.

cattivi servigi prestati dai copisti<sup>47</sup>. Non sarebbe pertanto troppo arrischiato pensare che anche qui l'ira di Tzetzes si stia riversando su di un giovane copista al suo servizio incaricato di trascrivere il *Versbuch* in questione e, anche e forse proprio in ragione di questa mansione, tanto più in grado di introdursi nel *sakellion*.

**3-11.** Contro colui che ha reciso i versi (3) Tzetzes invita a opporre un detto istruttivo (τις εἰπέ τὴν σοφὴν παροιμίαν)<sup>48</sup>: il proverbiale racconto del capro reo di aver divorato tralci di vite, evocato in questi versi, presuppone il noto epigramma di Leonida di Taranto (*AP IX 99*), con le relative parole che la vite rivolge appunto al capro stesso<sup>49</sup>, e soprattutto l'epigramma – scritto forse a imitazione del precedente, dal quale riprende il pentametro finale – trasmesso sotto il nome di Eveno di

<sup>47</sup> Si vedano p.es. alcuni casi in cui Tzetzes si rivolge al copista delle sue *Historiai* (talora apostrofandolo anche con l'epiteto κούρβα: *LBG s.v.*, 'Dime'): ὁ τοῦ τράγου παῖς οὐτοσὶ καλλιγράφος (*schol. Hist. I 20*, 559 Leone); καλοῦ τράγου υἱὸς ὁ βιβλογράφος (*schol. Hist. XI 396*, 891 Leone); κούρβας υἱέ, τράγου υἱέ ὄλος αὐτοβόρβορος (*schol. Hist. XII 399*, 226 Leone); μάθε κανόνα τεχνικόν, κούρβας υἱέ τοῦ τράγου (*schol. Hist. XII 404*, 332 Leone); μίαν σελίδα ἄπταιστον, κἂν τέκνον τράγου, πάρεις (*inscr. Hist. XII 411*); υἱέ τοῦ τράγου (*schol. Hist. XIII 480*, 324 Leone). Per l'identificazione dello scriba delle *Historiai* con tale Dyonisios si veda E. Trapp, *Tzetzes und sein Schreiber Dionysios*, «Diptycha» II (1980-1981) 18-22, al quale si deve inoltre il merito di aver riconosciuto nel termine κερατᾶς (*LBG s.v.*: 'Gehörnter, Hahnrei') un'altra espressione di insulto nella scrittura tzetziaca (nella prima edizione delle *Historiai* di P.M.L. Leone, del 1968, sia κερατᾶς che κούρβα erano trascritti come nomi propri): κερατᾶ μιανοῦ υἱέ, τίνα εἰσὶ δὲ ἃ γράφεις καὶ ἃ καταλιμπάνεις καὶ κατεκόπρωσάς μου τὴν βίβλον; (*schol. Hist. X 361*, 971 Leone); ζήτει πάλιν παρέλειψε τοῦ μιανοῦ κερατᾶ ὁ υἱὸς e subito dopo τοῦ τράγου ὁ υἱὸς οὐδὲν ἀνόθευτον ἔῃ (*schol. Hist. XI 385*, 737 e 770 Leone); ἴδετε τοῦ κερατᾶ τὸν υἱὸν πῶς κατέλειψε τὸ πᾶν καὶ ἠχρεῖωσε μοῦ τὴν βίβλον (*schol. ad schol. Hist. XI 396*, 902 Leone). Per l'impiego di τράγος cf. ancora *Hist. II 34*, 105 (χαίρει γὰρ τράγος τοῖς κρημοῖς καὶ τοῖς δυσβάτοις τόποις); *IX 275*, 527 (ὁ πρότραγος τῶν τράγων τε πάντων τῶν ἐν ὑστέροις, su cui cf. *infra*, n. 73); *schol. Ar. Ran.* 507a, p. 835 Koster (ἀλλ', ὃ διασύρων ταῦτα τράγου υἱέ, σεληνιαζόμενε). E si veda anche il τραγίσκος (*LSJ s.v.*: 'young he-goat') che, insieme a τράγος, ricorre più volte nei versi del *Paris. gr.* 2925 (sec. XV) editi da Pétridès, *o.c.*, e ancora *Hist. XII 399*, 240-243 (τραγόπαλον), su cui si tornerà più oltre. Sull'impiego di termini insultanti negli scolii alle *Historiai* cf. il contributo di Yulia Mantova in questo volume. Sugli attacchi ai rivali e le polemiche di Tzetzes cf. Savio, *o.c.*, e anche Lovato, *o.c.*

<sup>48</sup> Per questo costrutto cf. Tzetzes, *Hist.* VIII 242, 87 τὴν παροιμίαν λέγε τις ὑπάρχουσαν τοῦ Τζέτζου.

<sup>49</sup> Ἴξαλος εὐπύγων αἰγὸς πόσις ἔν ποθ' ἄλωϊ / οἴνης τοὺς ἀπαλοὺς πάντας ἔδαψε κλάδους. / τῷ δ' ἔπος ἐκ γαίης τόσον ἄπυε· Κεῖρε, κάμιστε, / γναθμοῖς ἡμέτερον κλῆμα τὸ καρποφόρον· / ῥίζα γὰρ ἔμπεδος οὔσα πάλιν γλυκὸν νέκταρ ἀνήσει / ὅσσον ἐπισπεῖσαι σοί, τράγε, θυομένω, «Una volta l'adulto sposo barbuto della capra distrusse tutti i teneri rami dei tralci di una vite. Una voce dalla terra così gli risuonava: "Rodi pure, o perfido, con le tue mascelle il nostro fertile tralcio. Ma la radice resiste e ancora produrrà il dolce nettare, sufficiente per libare sul tuo sacrificio, o capro"» (trad. M. Gigante).

Ascalona (AP IX 75)<sup>50</sup>, peraltro sicuramente noto a Tzetzes, dal quale è trascritto nel commento *in Plutum* (v. 1129, p. 227 Massa Positano). Da entrambi, ad ogni modo, Tzetzes ricava spunti, tasselli o semplici memorie poetiche, che arricchiscono il dettato e pongono sullo stesso piano il capro proverbiale e il «figlio di capro» che ha oltraggiato il suo *Versbuch* (κεῖρον 8 ≈ κεῖρε AP IX 99,3; κᾶν κέρσης 9<sup>51</sup> ≈ κῆν με φάγης AP IX 75,1; πάντα κλάδον 9 ≈ πάντας ... κλάδους AP IX 99,2; τράγε 8 e 10<sup>52</sup> ≈ AP IX 99,6 e AP IX 75,2).

Ancor prima di riferire questa *paromia*, figura una lunga incidentale polemica a spese del malfattore (6-7): a lui Tzetzes addebita, ancora una volta implicitamente, la discendenza da un padre-*tragos* (οἶος πατήρ σός, 6), dunque con le corna (con tutte le implicazioni deteriori che il termine comporta quando usato offensivamente); a lui rivolge ancora l'accusa di aver reciso, alla pari del ben più noto e proverbiale capro, il χαρτίον, un singolo foglio del *tomos*, contenente i suoi versi<sup>53</sup>. E poco importa che nel compiere questo gesto – sfregiare il *tomos*, ma altresì introdursi nel sacello – il giovane malfattore vi sia giunto da solo (τις ἐλήλυθας)<sup>54</sup> o con la complicità di altri (7).

**12-15.** I versi centrali introducono un nuovo dato: quand'anche l'autore del

<sup>50</sup> Κῆν με φάγης ἐπὶ ῥίζαν, ὅμως ἔτι καρποφορήσω, / ὅσον ἐπισπεῖσαι σοί, τράγε, θουμένω, «Rodimi pure alla base: darò tanto sugo, caprone, / da libare su te quando t'immolano» (trad. F.M. Pontani). Sulla paternità dell'epigramma (che sviluppa un tema già esopico: Aesop. 404, 404<sup>b</sup> Halm = 327 Hausrath-Hunger) cf. J. Geiger, *Euenus of Ascalon*, «SCI» XI (1991-1992) 114-122: 116-118; altri ritengono invece che sia Leonida imitatore di Eveno: cf. M.G. Albiani, *Il capro e il terebinto* (*Theocr. AP VI 336 = Ep. I Gow*), «Eikasmós» VII (1996) 161-163. Sulla fortuna di questo epigramma (tradotto da Ovidio, citato da Svetonio, riprodotto in graffiti pompeiani etc.), oltre alla bibliografia citata, cf. E. Magnelli, *Capri e porci: Priap. 65 e i suoi modelli ellenistico-romani*, «Dictynna» XI (2014) 1-7.

<sup>51</sup> Κέρσης si segnala come recupero di una forma epica (congiuntivo aoristo di κεῖρω), di cui non mancano altri esempi (cf. κέρρα 18, θρέπτρα 35).

<sup>52</sup> Pur al netto delle «metrischen Schrullen» di Tzetzes (Maas, *o.c.* 279 n. 43), il verso 10 non sembra del tutto lineare (tredici sillabe). Piuttosto che immaginare qui una soluzione del trimetro, di norma evitata negli *atechnoi*, si preferisce espungere *exempli gratia* l'interiezione (ῶ): è possibile che ῶ, se di errore si tratti, sia subentrato per distrazione del copista, che ha specularmente duplicato la clausola del v. 8, la quale, nella trascrizione in progressione orizzontale di questi στίχοι in F, viene a trovarsi esattamente al di sopra di questo verso.

<sup>53</sup> Il termine ricorre anche in un passo in cui Tzetzes, nel rievocare la falsa lettera di Priamo a Palamede, caduto vittima di un inganno preparato da Odisseo, ricorda i Τρωϊκὰ γράμματα πρὸς χαρτίον (*Alleg. Il. prol.* 1076), appunto la falsa lettera, cui si farà riferimento qualche verso più avanti col termine χάρτης (*ibid.* 1080, 1081). In generale, per l'uso più antico di χαρτίον cf. M. Capasso, *Volumen. Aspetti della tipologia del rotolo librario antico*, Napoli 1995, 31-34.

<sup>54</sup> Il pronome τις andrà qui inteso alla stregua di εἷς.

misfatto impazzisse del tutto e rovinasse da cima a fondo il libro tzetziaco, ecco che *dal corno del suo stesso padre* – si noti la costruzione speculare ai vv. 14 (αὐτοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς σου) e 28 (αὐτοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς)<sup>55</sup> – zampillerebbero nuovi versi. È possibile che qui Tzetzes alluda alle capacità scritte del *keras* (dai *cornua voluminis* al materiale costitutivo del calamo la metafora scritte del *keras* qui e più oltre spiega bene il linguaggio allusivo di alcuni versi)<sup>56</sup>: nell'immagine della potenza generatrice del *keras*, dunque, che fa sgorgare nuovi versi, è naturalmente implicita quella della metafora creativa del parto poetico, peraltro affacciata fin dall'iniziale *tomos* (1). E non è escluso che in questi στίχοι il rapporto *pater/pais* si carichi anche di un valore metaforico, non affatto estraneo al lessico relazionale che Tzetzes talora riserva a testi e autori antichi<sup>57</sup>, ove ricorre alla figura del *pater/auctor* che concepisce e genera *figli/scritti*.

Tale paternità metaforica potrebbe esplicitarsi invero non solo sul piano del rapporto *autore/testo*, ma forse anche su quello di *maestro/allievo* se, alla luce di quanto sopra notato a proposito dell'epiteto "figlio di *tragos*", il *pais* in questione si trovasse ad essere un giovane al servizio del nostro *grammatikos*, e quindi sotto la sua tutela, proprio come quel παιδόπουλον (*LBG* s.v.: 'Edelknabe, Page, Gefolgsmann, Diener') che in una lettera al *megas chartularius* (*Ep.* 69, assegnabile al 1146)<sup>58</sup> Tzetzes chiede che gli venga affidato perché lo aiuti nella condizione di malattia in cui versa da tempo<sup>59</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. anche il σὸν φυτοσπόρον del v. 33.

<sup>56</sup> Per questa interpretazione di *keras* sono debitore a Aglae Pizzone e soprattutto a Enrico Emanuele Prodi, che qui ringrazio. Quanto al valore di *keras*, cfr. Atsalos, *o.c.* 199 («la pointe du calame») e *LBG* s.v. κέρας, 'Stabende der Buchrolle'.

<sup>57</sup> Nelle note marginali autografe al Tucidide heidelbergense (*Pal. gr.* 252), per esempio, Tzetzes designa lo storico greco come σκύλλος, 'cucciolo' (cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 51 e n. 30, 61 n. 62; il vezzeggiativo si giustifica alla luce del fatto che nella biografia di Marcellino, nota a Tzetzes, si ricorda esplicitamente che Tucidide era ancora παῖς quando Erodoto era già uno storico rinomato). Inoltre, in un passo piuttosto complesso delle *Historiai* (*Hist.* XII 457, 984-985) la metafora relazionale si carica di altre implicazioni: Tzetzes usa l'immagine del marito cornuto in riferimento all'attribuzione di alcuni βιβλία al nome di Archimede: i manoscritti vengono nel seguito definiti παιδιά, mentre la Ἀρχιμήδους ἐγγράφη è la μήτηρ αὐτῶν. Ha richiamato la mia attenzione su questo passo, e sulla possibilità che un'analogia implicazione sia sottesa a questi versi, Aglae Pizzone, cui va la mia gratitudine.

<sup>58</sup> Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge* cit. 204-205.

<sup>59</sup> Στείλατε οὖν μοι διὰ τῆς ὑμῶν ἀντιλήψεως τὸ παιδόπουλον, ἵνα μὴ πάλιν κατασχεθεὶς τῷ συνήθει νοσήματι ἐκμετρήσω τὸν βίον ἔρρημος διακόνου τοῦ κἂν ὕδωρ μοι ἀποκομίσοντος (69,21-24 Leone). Sulla figura del giovane a servizio, la sua condizione servile e i termini con cui era designato (παῖς, παιδίον, παιδίσκος, παιδόπουλον) cf. Y. Rotman, *Byzantine Slavery and the Mediterranean World*, Cambridge-London 2009, 87-89, e R. Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks, 1204-1461*, Leiden-Boston 2016, 245.

**16-20.** Ed ecco che la vendetta di Tzetzes si avvale dell'unico κέρως in grado di reagire all'oltraggio subito, lo strumento scrittorio, scrivendo nuovi versi di denuncia. Quel κέρως eccelle infatti su qualunque altro celebre corno: prodigioso e prolifico qual è, non teme rivali. L'estro tzetziaco si dispiega qui nella polisemia di *keras* (dal significato concreto a quello metaforico, dal simbolismo religioso all'accezione militare, all'uso sofisticato ecc.). Nell'immaginario biblico, cui si attingerà più avanti, il corno è notoriamente simbolo ed espressione di forza e potenza, o anche di salvezza (*Salm* 17,3; *Lc* 1,69)<sup>60</sup>, come del resto anche nel nostro caso, in cui il *keras* poetico ha la meglio ed è più forte, riesce a generare nuovi versi, a preservare il *tomos* e a garantire la paternità degli στίχοι in esso raccolti.

La sequenza di corni celebri e potenti, che nulla possono a confronto del *keras* poetico, si apre con il proverbiale corno di Amaltea<sup>61</sup>, prosegue con "il corno che unge" (17), allusivo dell'episodio biblico di Samuele recante olio nel corno per l'unzione reale di Davide<sup>62</sup>, e passa quindi ai vari corni (indicati dal plurale epico κέρωα) che il profeta Daniele vide nella prima delle sue visioni<sup>63</sup>. Il v. 19 (che apre il f. 21r di **F**, in cui la scrittura alquanto evanida non consente una più sicura decifrazione) funge da trapasso e introduce un ulteriore termine di confronto: il *keras* poetico è superiore ad ogni corno (ora in accezione militare) degli eserciti di Serse (19-20) – ove merita notare l'attributo ξερξικός, che si segnala quale neologismo in

<sup>60</sup> Esempificativo quanto si legge in *Salm* 74,11: «E spezzerò tutte le corna degli empi (πάντα τὰ κέρωα τῶν ἀμαρτωλῶν) e farò che le corna dei giusti (τὰ κέρωα τοῦ δικαίου) saranno innalzate», peraltro ben presente a Tzetzes (cf. *Ep.* 57, p. 84,4-5 Leone e *Hist.* IX 271, 352-353). Sulla polisemia di κέρως e i suoi valori nel Vecchio e Nuovo Testamento cf. W. Foerster, *Grande Lessico del Nuovo Testamento* (ed. ital.), V, Brescia 1969, 349-358, s.v.

<sup>61</sup> Il corno di Amaltea (capra o ninfa nutrice di Zeus) è celebrato quale *non plus ultra* del bello e dell'abbondanza già nella poesia di Anacreonte (fr. 4,1 Gentili = *PMG* 361,1) e divenne proverbiale per indicare una fonte dispensatrice di beni; per l'eziologia di questo *modus dicendi*, usato a indicare persone estremamente fortunate, cf. *Plut. Prov. Alex.* II 27 (*CPG* I, 341 Leutsch-Schneidewin) e anche *Suda* α 1478 Adler.

<sup>62</sup> *ISam* 16: «E il Signore disse a Samuele: "[...] Riempi di olio il tuo corno (πλήσον τὸ κέρως σου ἐλαίου)» (16,1); «Samuele prese il corno dell'olio e lo unse (τὸ κέρως τοῦ ἐλαίου καὶ ἔχρισεν) in mezzo ai suoi fratelli e lo spirito del Signore si posò su Davide da quel giorno in poi» (16,13).

<sup>63</sup> *Dan* 7: «Mentre stavo ancora guardando nelle visioni notturne (ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὄράματι τῆς νυκτός), ecco una quarta bestia» che aveva κέρωα δέκα (7,7) in mezzo ai quali spuntava un altro corno più piccolo (ἄλλο ἐν κέρωα ἀνεφύη ἀνὰ μέσον αὐτῶν μικρὸν ἐν τοῖς κέρωσιν αὐτοῦ, 7,8). Che proprio a questa prima visione Tzetzes voglia alludere, e non alla seconda ove pure appaiono κέρωα (8,1-14: un montone con due corna viene abbattuto da un capro con un corno magnifico, dal quale, spezzatosi, ne spuntano altri quattro), sembra indicare l'avverbio πρῶν (18).

voga in età comnena o quanto meno ben attestato al tempo<sup>64</sup>. E merita pure rilevare che la sequenza di corni fin qui esposta sembra essere, in ultima analisi, non tanto una casuale enumerazione di *exempla* illustri, tra quelli che potevano addursi, quanto piuttosto un esercizio retorico, si direbbe, realizzato su materiali già raccolti ed esposti, come per esempio gli *item* lessicografici di *Suda* dedicati al κέρως, nei quali è dato conto dell'accezione militare del termine (κ 1366 Adler), delle peculiarità morfologiche (κ 1367, 1372), della simbologia veterotestamentaria (κ 1368, 1370, 1371), del mitico corno di Amaltea (κ 1369) e anche del κερασβόλος (κ 1374), su cui si tornerà più oltre (23).

**21-22.** Che anche il promontorio di Bisanzio o uno dei suoi colli (λόφος)<sup>65</sup> avesse nome di 'Corno d'oro' era notizia finora attestata da Plinio, e dalle fonti che ne dipendono<sup>66</sup>. Si tratta comunque di notizia alquanto peregrina, ricavata da fonte non precisabile, e forse tanto più per questo esibita da Tzetzes. Quanto invece alla perifrasi usata in questi versi, essa sembra assommare tasselli ricavati da Polibio (IV 43,7: τὸν κόλπον ... τὸν καλούμενον Κέρως) e Strabone (VII 6,2: τὸ Κέρως τὸ Βυζαντίων), i quali tuttavia fanno entrambi riferimento al κόλπος.

**23.** L'*unicum* tzetziaco κερασβολοῦν coglie l'esecrabile atto che τοῦ τράγου τὸ παιδίον si è accinto a compiere. Il neologismo κερασβολέω può essere naturalmente un calco su κερασβόλος, 'duro, testardo' – la cui prima occorrenza è in un celebre passo del libro IX delle *Leggi* di Platone, ove è esposto il *nomos* con cui è perseguito il saccheggio dei luoghi sacri (853d 5) e il ladro sacrilego (854a 2)<sup>67</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Oltre a *Hist.* VII 138, *tit.* 2, *Ep.* 18, p. 33,8 Leone e *schol. Thuc.* (*Pal. gr.* 252) 1 p. 72 Luzzatto, cf. Teodoro Prodromo, *Carm.* 18,22; Niceta Eugenio, *Dros. et Charicl.* III, 86; Gregorio Antioco, *Ep. II ad Eustath.* 217; Eustazio, *Comm. in Dionysii orbis descript.* 513,13 e 861,15; Manuele Olobolo, *Or. in imp. Mich. Palaeolog.* I, 76,4 Treu; Giuseppe Briennio, *Ep.* 20,22.

<sup>65</sup> Per questo valore di λόφος, attestato fin da Omero ('crest of a hill, ridge': *LSJ s.v.* II), cf. *Od.* XI 596 e XVI 471.

<sup>66</sup> *Promunturium Chryseon Ceras, in quo oppidum Byzantium liberae condicionis, antea Lygos dictum* (*Nat.* IV 18 [46]); *Huius aspectu repente territi, semper aduersum Byzantii promunturium, ex ea causa appellatum Aurei Cornus* (IX 20 [50]); da Plinio deriva la notizia *Sol.* 10,17 (*Veniamus ad promunturium Ceras Chryseon Byzantio oppido nobile, antea Lygos dictum*), da cui verosimilmente dipende *Mart. Cap.* VI 657 (*illic promunturium Ceras Chryseon Byzantio oppido celebratum*). Ammiano Marcellino ricorda invece questo promontorio solo come *Ceras: et Constanti-nopolis, uetus Byzantium, Atticorum colonia, et promunturium Ceras praelucentem navibus vehens constructam celsius turrim, quapropter Ceras adpellatur ventus inde suetus oriri praelidus* (XXII 8,8). Più in generale sul Corno d'oro cf. da ultimo T. Braccini, *Bisanzio prima di Bisanzio. Miti e fondazioni della nuova Roma*, Roma 2019, 17-19.

<sup>67</sup> Con la premessa che «non bisogna dispiacersi se qualcuno dei nostri cittadini sia duro come i semi toccati dalle corna di buoi (τις ἐγγίγνηται τῶν πολιτῶν ἡμῶν οἷον κερασβόλος, 853d 2) e abbia una natura talmente inflessibile da non poterla ammorbidiare» (trad. E. Pegone). Così Plutarco

– ma è altrettanto plausibile che Tzetzes abbia inteso concepire questa forma verbale sulla base della composizione κέρασ + βολέω, nel senso di ‘colpire col corno, incornare’ (sull’esempio di κεραυνοβολέω, ‘colpire col fulmine, fulminare’). Non si può neppure escludere che vi possa implicitamente essere interferenza e sovrapposizione semantica: da un lato, infatti, questo conio lessicale delinea e rimarca la personalità di un *paidion* testardo, indocile – quasi alla stregua, se si volesse leggervi Platone in controluce, di un malfattore – e pure ἀπαίδευτος (secondo l’esegesi corrente di κερασβόλος attestata in una parte della tradizione lessicografica bizantina)<sup>68</sup>, e dall’altro tende ad esplicitare la violenza e la durezza con cui il *keras* del *paidion* ha colpito e trafitto il *tomos*.

**25.** Alla prestantza del *keras* creativo si oppone quella *keras* del *paidion*, in un confronto, si direbbe, all’ultimo corno, che sembra declinare, in più domestiche circostanze, l’opposizione veterotestamentaria tra il corno dei giusti e quello degli empi<sup>69</sup>. Il *keras* del *paidion* va più in profondità di una spada e arriva fino alle viscere del *tomos*, secondo l’immagine evocata da διηντέρευσσε, che qui si segnala come altra peculiarità lessicale di Tzetzes. Finora attestato in un passo delle sue *Allegoriae Odysseae*, infatti, διεντερεύω è un conio di quelli alla maniera aristofanea<sup>70</sup>, il cui antecedente verbale andrà individuato in *Nub.* 166: ὃ τρισμακάριος τοῦ διεντερεύματος (cf. *DGE s.v.* διεντέρευμα: «‘*intestigación*’ e.e. *investigación sobre el intestino* del mosquito»), per il quale si dispone pure del commento tzetziaco (*schol. Ar. Nub.* 166c Holwerda) arricchito da altra neoformazione, διεντερεύσεως (*schol. Ar. Nub.* 166a Holwerda)<sup>71</sup>.

**27-28.** In una sequenza non affatto lineare e perspicua, pure scandita dall’insistito ricorso all’iperbato (τοῦτους ... τοὺς στίχους ... πλημμυρῆσαν ... τὸ ... κέρασ) e a qualche ridondanza (παιδὸς αὐτοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς), si immagina che

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(*Quaest. conv.* VII 2, 700c 4-8) spiega il valore di κερασβόλος in riferimento al passo di Platone: «È chiaro che, credendo che i semi che urtano contro le corna dei buoi diano frutti duri, in senso metaforico definivano così uno caparbio e intrattabile (τὸν αὐθάδη καὶ σκληρὸν ἄνθρωπον), cioè “urta-corna” e “duro-da-cuocere” (κερασβόλον καὶ ἀτεράμονα)» (trad. A. Montalbano).

<sup>68</sup> *Syn.* A κ 282 Cunningham (= Phot. κ 589 Theodoridis, *Suda* κ 1374 Adler): ὅταν οὖν λέγη κερασβόλους, τοὺς ἀπαιδέυτους καὶ σκληροὺς καὶ μὴ πειθομένους τοῖς νόμοις φησί.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. *supra*, n. 60.

<sup>70</sup> Κύκλωψ γὰρ Εὐρυλέοντα τῆς κόμης ἀναρπάσας / θατέρα διηντέρευσσε κάτω βαλὼν τὸ ξίφος (*Alleg. Od.* IX 76-77); con il commento di Hunger *ad loc.*, 309: «die Eingeweide durchbohren». Sulla predilezione per Aristofane e l’inventiva lessicale di Tzetzes cf. Agapitos, *o.c.* 13-14; Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 668-670; Savio, *o.c.* 42 e *passim*; e il contributo di Aglae Pizzone in questo volume.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. *Jo. Tzetzae commentarii in Aristophanem, Indices*, Groningen-Amsterdam 1964, 86, *s.vv.* διεντέρευμα e \*διεντέρευσσις.

il corno rigonfio e copioso (πλημμυροῦσαν) del padre abbia fatto finalmente sgorgare (ἀνήκε) questi nuovi versi<sup>72</sup>.

**29-31.** Nella serie di epiteti che occupa questi due versi – e ambiguamente riferibile tanto al παιδός che al πατρός del verso precedente – si segnala in particolare μυριότραγος (30), che, assente nei moderni repertori lessicografici, ha tutto l'aspetto di un altro *hapax*<sup>73</sup>, a conferma ulteriore della rigogliosa inventiva del nostro *grammatikos*<sup>74</sup>. Come del resto spiccatamente tzetziaco è anche l'attributo μετροσύνθετος («composed in metre», *LSJ s.v.*; «in Versen geschrieben», *LBG s.v.*), che troviamo impiegato, oltre che qui (31), soltanto in altri suoi scritti (*Ep.* 13,24,9; *Ep.* 94,138,3; *Hist.* VII 144, 642).

**32.** Συλλογισμοὺς κερρατίνους, che in prima istanza avrebbe potuto far pensare al sofisma o paradosso delle corna<sup>75</sup>, sembra piuttosto alludere a più ravvicinate sottigliezze retoriche, quelle cioè dispiegate dallo stesso autore nei versi precedenti: si tratta appunto dei «ragionamenti» sul corno sviluppati poco prima, sia quelli di biasimo del corno che ha distrutto i versi, sia quelli di elogio del corno che ne ha creati di nuovi, conformemente all'abilità propria del retore provetto di saper essere ἀμφοτερόγλωσσος, come altrove rivendicato da Tzetzes, cioè in grado di «usare in modo vantaggioso fatti e nomi e altre cose parimenti per l'elogio e per il biasimo»<sup>76</sup>.

**33.** Insieme alle potenzialità del corno, con questi versi Tzetzes ha dunque rivelato anche il progenitore fin ad allora oscuro (ἐγκεκρυμμένον φυτοσπόρον) del

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Olobolo, *Encom. in imp. Mich. Palaeolog.* 30,16 Τρεῦ καὶ στόμα τούτοις πλημμύρειν λόγους ἀνήκε.

<sup>73</sup> Per una formazione lessicale analoga, cf. *Hist.* IX 275, 526 πρότραγος τῶν τράγων τε πάντων τῶν ἐν ὑστέροις, ove πρότραγος – che vale «erster Ziegenbock» (*LBG s.v.*) – è un altro *unicum* tzetziaco: questo termine, in passato corretto in πρότραγος (nell'ed. Kiessling delle *Chiliades*, che stampava πρότραγος τῶν τραγῶν, da cui dipende *ThGL s.v.*, che glossa «praefectus», ristabilito nell'ed. di Leone, 360), non va posto in relazione con προτραγαφδέω (*GI s.v.*: «declamare prima tragicamente»), ma correttamente connesso – proprio come nel nostro caso – con τράγος.

<sup>74</sup> Merita ricordare che Tzetzes si segnala per una scrittura «in cui l'involucro linguistico tradizionale a stento contiene pensieri nuovi; ma già il suo lessico si arricchisce di termini del tutto estranei al bagaglio ricavato dai classici» (L. Canfora, *Sulla tradizione dei testi*, in Id., *Antologia della letteratura greca*, I: *L'età arcaica*, Roma-Bari 1987, 69).

<sup>75</sup> Tale sofisma è attribuito nella sua prima formulazione a Ebulide di Mileto: Diog. Laert. II 108: «Uno dei poeti comici così dice di lui (fr. 294 Kock = 149 Kassel-Austin): "Ebulide l'Eristico, che poneva sofismi comuti (κερατίνας ἐρωτῶν) e confondeva gli oratori con argomenti falsi e pomposi, se ne andò col volgare e inutile cicaleccio di Demostene» (trad. M. Gigante). Come esempio di vacua sottigliezza il sofisma è ricordato da Sen. *Ep.* 49,8; cf. anche Gell. XVI 2,10.

<sup>76</sup> *Hist.* VII 132, 299-301 (τοῦτο γὰρ ῥήτορος ἀνδρὸς καὶ ἀμφοτερογλώσσου, / καὶ πράγμασι καὶ κλήσεσι καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς ὁμοίως / πρὸς ἔπαινον καὶ ψόγον δε κεχρηῆσθαι συμφερόντος), su cui cf. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes* cit. 35, e Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 660-661.



*pais*, che è appunto “figlio di capro” (2, 23), dunque figlio di un ‘padre con le corna’, con un termine, φυτοσπόρος, che si segnala certo per la sua ricercatezza<sup>77</sup>, ma anche per una evidente prossimità alla sfera semantica del mondo vegetale (*LSJ* s.v., lett. ‘planting’; e φυτοσπορία ‘planting of trees, esp. of vines’), e delle viti in particolare, che non può essere casuale. Da questi nuovi versi il *pais* viene dunque ad apprendere, grazie alle capacità retoriche di Tzetzes, sia delle potenzialità poetiche del corno sia della propria discendenza da un capro. Se poi ai ragionamenti cornuti sarà anche sotteso un *double entendre* e la figura dell’ignoto genitore del *pais* avrà una sua allusiva corrispondenza nel reale, allora non si dovrà neppure escludere che ἐγκεκρυμμένον φυτοσπόρον possa altresì insinuare l’idea della natura di bastardo del *pais* medesimo.

**34.** I nuovi versi di Tzetzes, questi appunto che leggiamo, “sono stati aggiunti nella parte recisa del libro”<sup>78</sup>: si tratta di un’aggiunta, dunque, quale è rimarcata dal verbo παραγράφω, che in forma di postilla su cartiglio dovremmo immaginare – stante quanto si legge nell’*inscriptio* – ‘incollata’ proprio nel punto in cui il *tomos* è stato lacerato.

**35-37.** Questi nuovi versi dovranno servire, nelle intenzioni dell’autore, non solo da ammonimento al lettore, ma anche, e al tempo stesso e sarcasticamente, da *compenso* (con espressione di sapore omerico e solenne: θρέπτ<ρ>α ... τοῖς πατρῶσιν)<sup>79</sup> che il *pais* offre ai genitori. Da qui, la chiusura ad effetto del carne, di tono sentenzioso, con l’esortazione generale a che ogni genitore provveda a render

<sup>77</sup> A φυτοσπόρος (che vale ‘padre’ fin da Soph. *Tr.* 359) Tzetzes ricorre anche altrove: *Iambi* 15; *Hist.* V 19, 665; VI 46, 314; VI 90, 929; VII 136, 361; VII 149, 863; *Theog.* 305. Merita osservare che nel *Vat. Pal. gr.* 92 (codice italogreco degli ultimi decenni del XIII secolo e importante testimone di testi schedografici; per una descrizione vd. I. Vassis, Τῶν νέων φιλολόγων παλαίσματα: Ἡ συλλογὴ σχεδῶν τοῦ κώδικα *Vaticanus Palatinus Gr.* 92, «Hellenica» LII (2002) 37-68) al f. 166r figura uno σχέδος in cui un anonimo maestro accoglie a scuola il παιδίον del quale mostra di conoscere bene τὸν σὸν φυτοσπόρον (cf. Vassis, *o.c.* 53 n° 101; trascrizione del testo in Nesseris, *o.c.* I, 41 n. 94).

<sup>78</sup> Tra i vari significati che τομή può assumere (Tzetzes altrove lo usa p.es. con il valore tecnico di ‘cesura’ e ‘divisione’: cf. *Trag. poe.* 19, su cui vd. Pace, *o.c.* 44 e 64-65 comm. *ad v.* 8), in questo caso sembra rispondere più pertinentemente al valore di ‘end left after cutting, stump’ (*LSJ* s.v.) e può essere reso con ‘parte recisa’ (che è, in forma più sintetica e ricercata, quanto si legge nell’*inscriptio*: κόψαντα μέρος τοῦ τόμου ... ἐκολλήθησαν εἰς τὸν τόμον). Non si può peraltro escludere che Tzetzes abbia qui presente anche il valore di ‘potatura’ che questo termine viene ad assumere nel lessico agricolo (cf. p.es. la potatura delle viti in Theophr. *CP* III 14,2 e il taglio dei grappoli nel romanzo bucolico di Longo II 1,2), valore che nel caso dei nostri versi tornerebbe ad alludere alla *paroimia* del capro.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. *Il.* 4,477-478 e 17,301-302 τοκεῦσι / θρέπτρα φίλοις, in riferimento a guerrieri uccisi anzitempo da Aiace. Per l’uso di θρέπτρα (correzione in luogo del θρέπτά di F) cf. Tzetzes, *Carmina Iliaca* 2,287 θρέπτρα δίδωσιν ἀμεύλιχος, ὡς περ ἐώκει (riferito a Erogenia figlia della Notte).

saggi (πᾶς σωφρόνιζε)<sup>80</sup> i figli; il tutto accentuato dall'accostamento di parole simili e quasi omofone (υἰοὺς/ύας), con un calembour a stento trasferibile in altra lingua, che circoscrivono il verso e fanno da suggello all'intero componimento.

4. Questi versi sembrano dunque concepiti per smascherare (anche se solo in parte) il giovane malfattore, denunciare il suo misfatto e infine rimpiazzare i versi recisi, verosimilmente non più reperibili altrove, con inediti στίχοι di denuncia apposti nel punto stesso del *tomos* in cui si è consumato lo scempio. Ma resta l'impressione complessiva che Tzetzes dica molto meno di quanto lasci realmente trapelare dai versi.

Merita perciò tanto più notare che forma e lessico degli ultimi due versi (36-37) richiamano alquanto da vicino l'appello che Tzetzes rivolge in una brevissima lettera, quasi un biglietto, al padre di uno studente ignorante (così l'*inscriptio*: ἀπαιδύτου πατρί): «Non mi piace che un padre soffra per l'ottusità del figlio: rendi saggio tuo figlio, se davvero sei suo padre» (*Ep.* 62: Οὐ βούλομαι δι' ἀβελτηρίαν υἱοῦ πατέρα λυπεῖν· σωφρόνιζε οὖν σὺ τὸν υἰόν, εἰ τῷ ὄντι πατήρ). Nulla sappiamo della natura e destinazione di questo biglietto e la possibilità di identificare quell'ἀπαίδευτος col *pais* dei nostri versi non avrebbe per ora altro riscontro al di fuori di queste analogie in termini. Movenza e lessico, così vicini, e destinatario finale dell'ammonimento, anch'egli πατήρ d'un figlio insubordinato, inducono quanto meno a mettere in conto una possibile affinità di dinamiche e forse pure una vicinanza temporale, pur nell'indeterminatezza della stessa *Ep.* 62 (1147-1148?)<sup>81</sup>.

In termini di confronto non molto diversi si pone un altro significativo contesto che rivela, con i nostri versi, alcuni punti di contatto. Il riferimento è al lungo passo delle *Historiai* in cui Tzetzes si scaglia con lessico tagliente e coprolalico contro gli schedografi (*Hist.* 399, *Chil.* XII 223-246). Egli lamenta, tra molto altro, che i giovani studenti non farebbero altro che trascrivere i testi dei *barbari* (schedo-

<sup>80</sup> Sull'idioma attico πᾶς con l'imperativo, «assai amato da Tzetzes» (Luzzatto, *Note inedite* cit. 645 n. 39), cf. Kühner-Gerth, I, 85, e Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 121 e n. 81.

<sup>81</sup> È tra quelle lettere che «non idcirco ut mitterentur scriptae sunt, sed tamquam ad exercitationem accommodatae orationis suae ostentandae gratia a Tzeta compositae esse videntur» (P.A.M. Leone, in *Ep.*, xviii-xix). E tuttavia, se la prima sezione delle lettere tzetziene (*Ep.* 1-69) rispetta anche un ordine cronologico, come si ritiene (Hart, *o.c.* 41-46; H. Giske, *De Ioannis Tzetzae scriptis ac vita*, Rostochii 1881, 5-9; Wendel, *o.c.* 1192), varrà la pena allora di notare che questa lettera è ricompresa tra l'*Ep.* 59 e l'*Ep.* 66 rispettivamente assegnabili al 1147 e al 1148. Cf. anche su questa lettera G. Morgan, *Homer in Byzantium: John Tzetzes*, in C.A. Rubino-C.W. Shelmerdine (edd.), *Approaches to Homer*, Austin 1983, 165-188: 169-170, e sulle *epistulae ad exercitationem accommodatae* più in generale il contributo di Giulia Gerbi in questo volume (sull'*Ep.* 62 cf. pp. 153-154).

grafi) nei loro libri trasformandoli così in stalle di Augia piene di sterco, proprio – aggiunge – «come fece il τραγόπωλον con il libro del catasto» (*Hist.* 399, *Chil.* XII 243: ὡσπερ καὶ τὸ τραγόπωλον τοῦ τόμου τὸ βιβλίον)<sup>82</sup>. In questo verso, ben congegnato e fortemente allusivo, l'*hapax* τραγόπωλον ('giovane capro' ovvero 'cucciolo/piccolo di capro')<sup>83</sup> e l'espressione tecnica τοῦ τόμου τὸ βιβλίον, che, sulla scia di Agapitos<sup>84</sup>, si può rendere con "libro del catasto", mostrano una *verve* e un lessico vicini a quelli dei nostri versi. Resta però estranea al confronto tra i due passi la possibilità di applicare l'accezione di 'libro del catasto' anche al τόμος dei nostri versi. Ciononostante, è da chiedersi se il nostro *pais* non sia da identificare proprio con quel τραγόπωλον. D'altronde, come ha suggerito ancora Agapitos<sup>85</sup>, il τραγόπωλον potrebbe a sua volta essere in relazione con la storia che Tzetzes riferisce in una lettera (*Ep.* 47, assegnata al 1146)<sup>86</sup>, con cui affida un *giovane*, non identificato e per di più suo *parente* (*ibid.* 68,7: παιδάριον ἡμέτερον ὃν συγγενές), alla protezione del *logariastes* Giovanni Smeniotes<sup>87</sup>, perché non venga punito dal governatore provinciale. Il παιδάριον, infatti, definito "sapiente folle" e "saccente"<sup>88</sup>, e già in precedenza resosi colpevole di un simile misfatto, aveva osato trascrivere alcuni giambi alla fine del volume del catasto<sup>89</sup>, che a tal motivo il funzionario si rifiutava di firmare. Difficile stabilire se il giovane delle *Historiai* e quello dell'*Ep.* 47, verosimilmente la stessa persona, possano essere identificati col nostro *pais* e se lo sfregio del *Versbuch* sia un (altro) misfatto a lui imputabile. Se così fosse, dovrem-

<sup>82</sup> Importanti riflessioni su questi versi (*Hist.* XII 399, 223-246) offre Agapitos, *o.c.* 8-21.

<sup>83</sup> Il termine va messo in relazione con πῶλος, che, oltre che 'giovane', vale anche 'cucciolo, figlio' (cf. *e.g.* *Hist.* IV 124, 111; XII 404, 329), per cui τραγόπωλον può valere anche 'cucciolo di capro, figlio di capro', alla stregua di τραγού υἱός.

<sup>84</sup> «The word τόμος can function as synonymous to πρακτικά, the administrative cadaster» (Agapitos, *o.c.* 19 n. 101).

<sup>85</sup> Agapitos, *o.c.* 19 n. 101.

<sup>86</sup> Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge* cit. 201-202.

<sup>87</sup> Su questa lettera cf. M. Grünbart, *Byzantium: a bibliophile society?*, «Basilissa» I (2004), 113-121: 120-121, e N. Zagklas, "How many verses shall I write and say?": *Poetry in the Komnenian period (1081-1204)*, in W. Hörandner-A. Rhoby-N. Zagklas (edd.), *A Companion to Byzantine Poetry*, Leiden-Boston 2019, 237-263: 255. Per il destinatario della lettera, Giovanni Smeniotes, cfr. Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge* cit. 201-203; P.M. Pinto, *La composizione letteraria antica agli occhi dei Bizantini: Giovanni Tzetze e Michele Coniata*, in R. Otranto-P.M. Pinto (edd.), *Storie di testi e tradizione classica per Luciano Canfora*, Roma 2018, 187-202: 188; e infine Pizzone, *Bureaucratic discourse* cit. Sulla sua funzione di *logariastes*, e non solo, cf. R. Guiland, *Logariaste*, «JÖByz» XVIII (1969) 101-113 (rist. in *Titres et fonctions de l'Empire byzantin*, London 1976, nr. XXI): 103 e 106; e il contributo di Aglae Pizzone in questo volume.

<sup>88</sup> Τὸ παιδάριον ἀκριβῶς τὸ μωρόσοφον ἐκεῖνο καὶ δοκησίσοφον (*Ep.* 47,68,9).

<sup>89</sup> Ὁ τοῦς ἰάμβους ποτὲ τῷ τέλει τῶν πρακτικῶν ἐνεχάραξε (*Ep.* 47,68,9-10).

mo pensare all'agire di un *pais*, pure legato a Tzetzes da vincolo di parentela, piuttosto irrequieto e recidivo. A ben vedere, giovani di tal fatta, istruiti al punto di avere guadagnato fin da presto una certa dimestichezza con la poesia<sup>90</sup>, non mancavano di certo nella Bisanzio del tempo: presuntuosi a tal segno da scrivere versi o decurtarne altri su libri e carte altrui. E in una cornice del genere ancor meglio si comprenderebbe la massima finale dei nostri στίχοι (37).

Più difficile, invece, ipotizzare in quale momento il nostro *grammatikos* abbia redatto questi versi. L'impiego di trimetri *atechnoi* indurrebbe ad escludere l'età matura, quando Tzetzes si avvalese di *iamboi technikoi* (come lui stesso li definisce, perché più rispettosi delle regole sia prosodiche che metriche proprie dei trimetri di età classica), pure rimproverandosi la precedente produzione di *atechnoi*. Questi στίχοι potrebbero dunque risalire alla sua produzione di giambi giovanili<sup>91</sup>, della quale s'incontrano sparse tracce nei suoi scritti<sup>92</sup>, mentre alcune analogie e assonanze, in termini e concetti, con lettere rivenienti alla seconda metà degli anni '40, potrebbero valere da indizio di appartenenza a quella fase cronologica della sua biografia.

Scritti sul modello dei numerosi 'avvisi' grammaticali e esegetici, che Tzetzes non lesina nei suoi commentari, o degli 'avvisi' di trascrizione e interpretazione ai copisti, che s'incontrano nelle note apposte nella sua minuziosa attività di annotatore di codici antichi, anche i nostri versi valgono da 'monito' al futuro lettore che potrebbe imbattersi nel suo *tomos*: questi sappia dei danni subiti dal *Versbuch*, apprenda dell'ignobile comportamento del giovane malfattore e della genesi e valore dei versi

<sup>90</sup> Su questa familiarità dei giovani con la poesia, legata alle consuetudini didattiche di usare composizioni in versi, cf. Zagklas, *How Many Verses* cit. 255.

<sup>91</sup> Sull'uso o meno degli *atechnoi*, legati a un largo impiego di dicrone, come indizio cronologico cf. E. Cullhed, *Diving for pearls and Tzetzes' death*, «ByzZ» 108 (2015), 53-62, per il quale l'impiego del dodecasillabo vale come elemento di datazione *ante* 1160; più cauta in merito si mostra Savio, *o.c.* 75 n. 112. A tal proposito si dovrà pure ricordare, per quanto non dirimente ai fini della datazione, che i nostri versi condividono con le *Allegoriae Odysseae* – la cui composizione dovette aver inizio intorno al 1160: cf. Wendel, *o.c.* 1968; H. Hunger, *Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien zur Odyssee, Buch 13-24, Kommentierte Textausgabe*, «ByzZ» XLVIII (1955) 4-48: 6; P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milano 1991, 138) – un tipico conio tzetziiano (cf. *supra* n. 70).

<sup>92</sup> Per la giovanile produzione di trimetri *technikoi* cf. *Ep.* 1,4,7-13, ove Tzetzes cita alcuni suoi giambi, e un più tardo scolio alle epistole ove fa riferimento al cattivo uso da lui fatto nel passato delle vocali *dichronoi* (*schol. Ep.* 1, p. 159,5-6 Leone: διχρόνοις κατεχρόμην, ὡς οἱ βούβαλοι); anche nelle *Historiai* cita alcuni giambi giovanili (*Hist.* III 66, 61-67) e si esprime con lo stesso tono (*schol. Hist.* III 66, 61: ὅτε ταῦτα ἔγραφον ἔτι κατεχρόμην τοῖς διχρόνοις ὡς οἱ βούβαλοι). Si vedano inoltre gli *exempla* che Tzetzes ricava ἐξ ἐμῶν ἰάμβων e si trovano annotati nei margini del *Voss. gr. Q 1*, ora editi da Pizzone, *Saturno contro* cit. 78-79 (per la citazione 78, v. 7), e ancora il contributo di Aglae Pizzone in questo volume.

che sta leggendo, oltre che naturalmente della perdita di quelli recisi che non potrà mai leggere.

Ed è pure da chiedersi se i versi caduti non trovassero posto proprio all'inizio del *tomos* e quindi se il tono e l'enfasi dispiegata da Tzetzes nei nuovi στίχοι non vada spiegata anche alla luce del fatto che una volta tagliato il foglio iniziale si rischiasse di non capire più chi fosse l'autore del *tomos*, la cui paternità poteva essere anche rivendicata da altri, quasi un'ossessione del nostro *grammatikos*, peraltro non affatto nuovo a furti e sottrazioni di questo genere<sup>93</sup>. Vedersi sottrarre o rovinare libri o anche solo una parte di un libro è del resto misfatto tanto più diffuso di quanto possano far pensare i versi di Tzetzes: le sottoscrizioni di molti manoscritti, nelle quali si incontrano espressioni di minaccia, forme di maledizione o semplici avvertimenti contro tali eventualità, sono infatti evidente «segno che la pratica doveva essere abbastanza frequente»<sup>94</sup>.

Anche per un'operazione di rammendo del genere non mancano testimonianze lungo tutto il millennio bizantino, secondo una prassi di risarcimento materiale con altro e nuovo testo effettuata da parte dell'autore medesimo dello scritto, che dunque si configura a tutti gli effetti come un «rattoppo 'd'autore'»<sup>95</sup>. Foglietti aggiunti, modeste toppe o semplici strisce di carta recanti interventi scrittori autografi degli autori medesimi degli scritti raccolti nel manoscritto sfregiato possono aiutare a comprendere meglio anche le dinamiche seguite da Tzetzes nel rimpiazzare i versi caduti (non più disponendo verosimilmente di altra copia di quei versi) con altri di nuova composizione e di denuncia.

Un'idea delle modalità di lavoro di Tzetzes – che può valere pure come testimonianza del modo in cui i suoi autografi potessero essere strutturati per stratigrafie e di come i manoscritti fossero talora corredati di aggiunte di testo fissate anche su ritagli di carta e toppe agglutinate – suggerisce il copista principale nonché possessore del codice *Ambrosianus C 222 inf.*, allievo, come sembra, dello stesso Tzetzes e attivo a Costantinopoli negli anni del primo regno di Isacco II Angelo (1185-1195) in un ambiente prossimo alla cancelleria imperiale. Questi «attingeva ad autografi di Giovanni Tzetzes o a una loro copia fedelissima»<sup>96</sup>, come indica una nota marginale

<sup>93</sup> Cf. *supra*, n. 43, il caso delle *Historiai*.

<sup>94</sup> D. Bianconi, *Cura et studio. Il restauro del libro a Bisanzio*, Alessandria 2018, 35, ove è ricordato, tra i vari esempi, il lungo colofone del celebre Tetravangelo di Rabbula, *Laur. Plut.* 1,56 (sec. VI) che annovera tra i ladri sacrileghi «chiunque [...] se ne appropri oppure ne tagli una pagina, scritta o non scritta».

<sup>95</sup> Secondo la definizione di Bianconi, *o.c.* 44.

<sup>96</sup> C.M. Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf. (Graecus 886): il codice e il suo autore. Parte seconda: l'autore*, «Aevum» LXXVIII (2004) 411-440: 419.

(alle ll. 6-13 del f. 93v, peraltro a corredo di uno scolio tzetziaco contro quanti utilizzavano le sue opere senza riconoscerne la paternità)<sup>97</sup>, in cui si avverte che τούτο προσφυῆς ἦν τῷ πρωτοτύπῳ τετραδίῳ, «questo era attaccato al quaternio originario»<sup>98</sup>. Il dottissimo allievo dovette dunque avere tra le mani un libro del maestro recante, secondo consuetudine non estranea alla prassi tzetziaca, un foglietto attaccato al fascicolo originario.

Poiché di questa consuetudine sia l'*Ambr. C 222 inf.* che il *Laur. Conv. Soppr. 627* serbano a loro modo eloquente testimonianza, non è improprio pensare che i risentiti versi tzetziaci trascritti ai ff. 20v-21r di *F* possano provenire senza tanti intermediari dal suo ambiente: da un esemplare autografo dell'opera (o proprio dall'esemplare ufficiale del suo *Versbuch*) o da una sua fedelissima copia. Che le radici del Laurenziano, almeno in parte, affondino nel XII secolo era stato già suggerito in merito al *corpus* dei romanzieri in esso trascritto<sup>99</sup>, il quale sembra riverberare, nel suo nucleo fondamentale, un analogo «*corpus* di narrativa antica organizzato nell'età dei Comneni»<sup>100</sup>, quando cioè a Bisanzio questo genere di testi andò incontro a un significativo *revival* (prova ne sarebbero anche i versi di Niceta Scutariota dedicati ad Alessio II Comneno e trascritti al f. 21v dello stesso codice, poco dopo quelli tzetziaci qui pubblicati)<sup>101</sup>.

Nell'immaginare infine circostanze e dinamiche che avranno dato origine a questi versi di Tzetzes è sensato pensare – se diamo credito a quanto si legge nell'*in-scriptio* – che fossero stati trascritti su un foglio *incollato* sull'esemplare d'autore nel punto sfigurato: una circostanza, è da credere, che avrà comprensibilmente dato vita ad una circolazione piuttosto ristretta degli stessi versi, il che si accorda bene

<sup>97</sup> *Schol. Ar. Ran.* 843a, pp. 934,15-936,19 Koster (che edita questo scolio con qualche errore di lettura cui ha posto rimedio Mazzucchi, *o.c.* 419 n. 46). Sul ricorrente timore di Tzetzes di appropriazioni indebite delle proprie opere cf. *Ep.* 42 e 56.

<sup>98</sup> Trascrizione diplomatica e traduzione di Mazzucchi, *o.c.* 419.

<sup>99</sup> Si tratta dei romanzi di Longo (ff. 22r-35v), Achille Tazio (ff. 36r-47r), Caritone (ff. 48r-70r) e Senofonte Efesio (ff. 70v-79r).

<sup>100</sup> G. Cavallo, *Conservazione e perdita dei testi greci: fattori materiali, sociali, culturali*, in A. Giardina (ed.), *Società romana e impero tardoantico*, IV: *Tradizione dei classici, trasformazioni della cultura*, Roma-Bari 1986, 83-172: 149 (rist. in *Dalla parte del libro. Storie di trasmissione dei classici*, Urbino 2002, 49-175: 145), e Id., *Il libro come oggetto d'uso nel mondo bizantino*, «JÖByz» XXXI (1981) 395-424: 415.

<sup>101</sup> Il componimento di Niceta Scutariota indirizzato ad Alessio II (Στίχοι τοῦ Σκουταριώτου πρὸς τὸν προσφυογέννητον), e databile tra il 1180 e il 1182, è edito da R. Browning, *Ο Μαρκιανὸς ἐλληνικὸς κώδικας XI.31 καὶ ἡ Βυζαντινὴ σχεδολογία*, «Parnassos» 15 (1973) 506-519: 515-516 = *Il codice Marciano gr. XI.31 e la schedografia bizantina*, in *Miscellanea Marciana di studi bessarionei*, Padova 1976, 21-34 [rist. in *Studies on Byzantine History, Literature and Education*, London 1977, nr. XVI]: 30-31. Cf. anche Bianchi, *Il codice cit.* 166.

anche con la *facies* del Laurenziano, noto per essere *codex unicus* di testi antichi e bizantini, un codice di *rariora*, insomma, scovati dal copista – o già presenti nel modello a sua disposizione, se mai ne ebbe uno – in sedi privilegiate, quali potevano essere biblioteche collegate con importanti centri culturali religiosi e politici della capitale, ristrette cerchie di eruditi, legati ad attività di insegnamento, ambienti dotti imperiali<sup>102</sup>. L'ipotesi costantinopolitana dell'origine del Laurenziano, a suo tempo prospettata su base testuale<sup>103</sup>, sembra ora trovare in questi versi un ulteriore e significativo indizio: il *tomos* tzetziaco conservato nel *sakellion*, prima sfregiato da un giovane insolente e molto vicino all'autore e poi risarcito dall'autore medesimo nel modo originale che si è visto, non avrà verosimilmente conosciuto grossa circolazione al di fuori di quell'ambiente, e ancor meno l'avrà avuta quel cartiglio avventizio recante quei risentiti *στίχοι* contro *il figlio di capro*.

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<sup>102</sup> Bianchi, *Il codice* cit. 165-167, 181.

<sup>103</sup> Bianchi, *Il codice* cit. 167 e *passim*.

INDEX VOCUM NOTABILIORUM

\* *Stellula notantur voces perrarae aut Tzetzianae, ° circello notantur verba coniectura restituta.*

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## **Tzetzes' scholia to the *Histories* as a source on the socio-cultural use of invective in Byzantium**

Whilst examples of invective poetry and prose *psogos* are well explored for the classical period, its Byzantine embodiment, as usual, stays far behind in terms of scholarly attention. Still, there are a number of publications devoted to the subject. Significantly, the existing studies mostly concentrate on the rhetorical aspect and take into consideration the sources which were intentionally created as literary works which allude to the corresponding ancient genre and aim at insulting the victim<sup>1</sup>. We would define this kind of invective, very approximately though, as the 'learned' one. The distinctive feature of it was an intention to neutralize the author's opponents, either by applying humor or not. Yet, there is one more important point to consider, namely the range of lexical units used as foul words.

Analyzing Aristotle's and Plato's theoretical approaches to invective, Severin Koster noticed that Plato had discerned two different forms of ἰαμβικὴ ἰδέα, i.e. with rage (σὺν θυμῷ) and without rage (ἄνευ θυμοῦ), which had different goals and were applied in different circumstances. The former aimed only at offending the enemy, whilst the latter intended to blame and criticize him for the public good<sup>2</sup>. Thus, this very type can be largely related to the case of literary use of insult. Nevertheless, in terms of vocabulary, it means that there were no separate wordlists to apply in the two corresponding sorts of invective. And what about the *status rerum* in Byzantium? Was there one set of words to be used for varied purposes, or were there two completely different layers of the foul language, so to say the 'learned' one and the 'vulgar' one? On the one hand, the tendency of modern research to step back from such kind of strict dichotomy has fully proved its fruitfulness<sup>3</sup>. On the other

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\* Preparation of this article has been started with the invitation of Enrico Emanuele Prodi to contribute and has been completed only due to his advice and invaluable support for editing.

<sup>1</sup> As for most recent publications, see corresponding chapter on derision and abuse in F. Bernard, *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry 1025-1081*, Oxford 2014, 266-276; E. van Opstall, *The Pleasure of mudslinging: an invective dialogue in verse from 10th century Byzantium*, «ByzZ» CVIII/2 (2015) 771-796. For a comprehensive bibliography on the subject see van Opstall, *o.c.* 789-790 n. 41.

<sup>2</sup> S. Koster, *Die Invective in der griechischen und römischen Literatur*, Meisenheim am Glan 1980, 7-11, citing Plat. *Leg.* XI 934b-936d.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. M. Hinterberger, *The language of Byzantine learned literature*, Turnhout 2014. The approach expressed by Hinterberger seems to have been fully implemented by Panagiotis Agapitos in

hand, the scholarly awareness in the sphere of the socio-cultural use of invective in Middle-Byzantine everyday life is rather limited<sup>4</sup>. It seems rather challenging to define the ‘vulgar’ foul vocabulary in its historical and linguistic background, and, surprisingly, one of the most brilliant intellectuals of Byzantine era left us an incredibly important source on this very kind of abuse, namely his scholia on the *Histories*<sup>5</sup>. The present paper is an attempt to assess to what extent the scholia can contribute to the research on the colloquial obscenities and swearwords of everyday life in the Middle Byzantine period.

To start, we have to take into consideration a whole variety of issues connected with the theoretical research on invective language which has its own functioning laws applicable to any culture in any time or space<sup>6</sup>. So, the first and the biggest problem to deal with is the fact that our subject belongs to oral communication, *i.e.* to spoken language. Consequently, we have to search for sources which could possibly reflect direct speech, for instance dialogues embedded into certain texts, such as hagiographies or juridical treatises<sup>7</sup>. The second difficulty is that we have to reconstruct the scenario, *i.e.* to assess what kind of people were talking to each other and the circumstances of their conversation. It is extremely important because when we deal with written invective, as was shown by Emilie van Opstall, we can hardly be sure of the genuine degree of the abusiveness. Analyzing the tenth-century invective dialogue between John Geometres and Stylianos, she noted that the poems might

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his article on John Tzetzes’ perception of schedography: *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners: a Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 1-57. The author proved that in his works Tzetzes artistically used versatile language registers in order to produce the most effective attacks on his intellectual competitors. Invective material collected in the article is of great importance for the present paper and certainly will be used further. Nevertheless, our main aspect is solely colloquial abusive practice, so we have to be cautious with the swearwords mentioned by Tzetzes in the text of the *Chiliads*, since this is a purely literary writing based on thoroughly elaborated οἰκονομία.

<sup>4</sup> So far, our search for secondary literature has resulted in two publications only, a chapter on insult in Phaedon Koukoules’ treatise on Byzantine culture and a monograph on invective use in Early Christian society: Ph. Koukoules, *Βυζαντινῶν βίος καὶ πολιτισμός*, Γ’, Ἀθήναι 1949, 284-312; J. F. Hultin, *The Ethics of Obscene Speech in Early Christianity and its Environment*, Leiden-Boston 2008. Koukoules collected a prominent list of swearwords, but it definitely needs a more systematical analysis of the contexts. Hultin’s book is an in-depth study surveying foul language in the ancient world and in the Judeo-Christian tradition without going into Byzantine period.

<sup>5</sup> P.L.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Historiae*, Galatina 2007<sup>2</sup>, 529-569.

<sup>6</sup> See *e.g.* T. Conley, *Toward a Rhetoric of Insult*, Chicago-London 2010.

<sup>7</sup> It is obvious that not all genres can provide us with dialogues transmitting true oral speech: for instance, historiographical sources can, in contrast, contain a hero’s speech which was stylized in the classical manner.

have been just an amusing literary game or an emulation of the ancient iambs composed solely by John<sup>8</sup>.

In contrast, returning to Tzetzes' scholia, it is crucial to point out that his abusive attacks on the scribe, who made some mistakes while preparing a manuscript with the *Histories*, demonstrate a specific real-life context: we thus have a chance to analyse a plausible oral speech situation. Despite the fact that some of the abusive comments are in verse, many invective terms are attested in slangy non-metric remarks, which seem not to be restricted by any genre or influenced by a rhetorical tradition<sup>9</sup>.

In the Appendix all the swearwords from the scholia are collected and organized into a table according to several parameters. The cognate words are placed horizontally, and vertical arrangement is based on the comparison with Aristophanic foul words, so, in a sense, it can be defined as temporal (descending from the classical period to later ones).

At first glance the set of invective images is quite predictable. A remarkable part of them is connected with the (so to speak) physical bottom. These are typical words which are often tabooed in different cultures. At the same time, returning to the problem of vocabulary, in order to define the stylistic and temporal register of the abusive words, I tried to assess how old these words were. To evaluate the general pattern, I decided to compare them with terms of abuse attested in Aristophanes' comedies. The reason for doing so was that Tzetzes was a connoisseur in the material<sup>10</sup>, and it was of interest to find out if he managed to borrow something from this abusive treasury.

So, at top of the table (rows 1-4) I placed the words which were actively used by both Tzetzes and Aristophanes. Despite this clear overlap, it is obvious that Tzetzes did not adopt them directly from Aristophanes. As we can see from column 3 (general number of occurrences in the twelfth century), the true reason is just that

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<sup>8</sup> van Opstall, *o.c.* 795, 788.

<sup>9</sup> The last piece of invective, which concludes the whole text of the scholia, is a more elaborate poem consisting of fifteen iambic verses and a *cento* of four Homeric verses: Leone, *o.c.* 601-602. Due to the fact that this poem possesses far more literary character, we decided not to include it in our analysis in the present article. It differs remarkably from Tzetzes' previous abusive interjections, thus it is best studied in a separate companion paper.

<sup>10</sup> One should note his extensive commentary on several comedies of Aristophanes, see *Johannis Tzetzae Commentarii in Aristophanem*, I: *Prolegomena et Commentarium in Plutum*, ed. L. Massa Positano, Groningen 1960; II: *Commentarium in Nubes*, ed. D. Holwerda, Groningen 1960; III: *Commentarium in Ranas et in Aves, argumentum Equitum*, ed. W.J.W. Koster, Groningen 1962; and the other Tzetzean materials collected in *Scholia in Aristophanem*, IA: *Prolegomena de comoedia*, ed. W.J.W. Koster, Groningen 1975, 22-38, 48-49, 84-114.

they were frequently used and common for the Greek language of the period<sup>11</sup>. Row 5 shows us one more overlap (ὐιὲ τῆς ἀνομίας), and again we can assume that the expression hardly came directly from classical antiquity. More likely, the phrase gained its popularity in Byzantium because it is a quotation from the *Psalms* (88:23), so the case may be seen as a hilarious coincidence.

The next word βάνουσος ‘related to craftsman’, ‘craftsman’ (row 6) is more problematic. It is not attested in Aristophanes’ works, although, according to the rhetoric of classical *psogos*, being a craftsman was a ground to be abused<sup>12</sup>. Obviously, the concept continued to exist, and, beside the general term βάνουσος, the names of at least two specific types of craftspeople were used as terms of abuse in Tzetzes’ *Historia* 369: τζαγγάριος ‘cobbler’, ξυλοσούβλης ‘skewer of planks’<sup>13</sup>. Still, the problem is to assess correctly the level of abusiveness and vulgarity: perhaps it was not a highly affective word, but just emotionally more neutral ‘boorish’, ‘rude’<sup>14</sup>. In the Modern Greek dictionaries there is an entry βάνουσος meaning ‘rude’, ‘yokelish’<sup>15</sup>, which means that the word eventually lost its first meaning ‘craftsman’ and continued to be applied in the metaphorical pejorative meaning only, so Tzetzes’ use might have been purely colloquial. Actually, we can hardly be sure what exactly Tzetzes meant: the old abusive concept ‘craftsman’ or the medieval meaning ‘boorish’. Taking into consideration the cases of ‘cobbler’ and ‘skewer of planks’, the former option seems more plausible, thus we should rather consider a more bookish register of the word βάνουσος in comparison with other insults.

As for βόρβορος and its derivatives (row 4), we can point out that in Old Comedy it could designate any type of mud or filth<sup>16</sup>, whilst for Tzetzes’ wrathful remarks we should rather consider the meaning of the root as ‘sewer’ (a flow of excrements and bilge waters) or ‘latrine’. The last interpretation can be proved by turning to an additional marginal gloss to the first line of the final poem of the scholia:

<sup>11</sup> The data were obtained through a *TLG* search, reference date 01.06.2018.

<sup>12</sup> See Koster, *o.c.* 2. Cf. *LSJ*<sup>9</sup> 305, *s.v.* βάνουσος, 1.I, 2.

<sup>13</sup> Agapitos, *o.c.* 25.

<sup>14</sup> See E. Kriaras, *Λεξικό της μεσαιωνικής ελληνικής δημόδους γραμματείας 1100-1669*, Α΄-Π΄, Θεσσαλονίκη 1968-1994 [henceforth: Kriaras], Δ΄ 21, *s.v.* βάνουσος.

<sup>15</sup> See *Λεξικό της κοινής νεοελληνικής*, Ίδρυμα Μανόλη Τριανταφυλλίδη, Θεσσαλονίκη 1998 [henceforth: Triandafillidis], 258, *s.v.* βάνουσος; G.D. Babiniotis, *Λεξικό της νέας ελληνικής γλώσσας*, Αθήνα 1998 [henceforth: Babiniotis], 351, *s.v.* βάνουσος.

<sup>16</sup> See *e.g.* J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse: Obscene Language in Attic Comedy*, New York-Oxford 1991<sup>2</sup>, 192. Nevertheless, a meaning similar to ‘sewers’ can be attested in Lucian’s *Lexiphanes* (17,9). There is a metaphor in which a torrent of unclear and dubious words poured upon the hero’s head is represented as a torrent of sewers. So the situation is quite like that of the scribe who was attacked for a flow of misspelled words.

ῥΩ (...) λουτρῶν βιβλογράφε (p. 569,10 Leone). The word λουτρῶν is explained as follows: λουτρῶν ἐστὶ τὸ ὑπηρέσιον, ὁ κανάλης, ἤγουν ὁ βόρβορος, ὁ κάραβος, τὸ περέσιν ('λουτρῶν is a necessary room, a sewer, *i.e.* a bog-house, a dung beetle, a necessary', *ibid.*)<sup>17</sup>. The definition is clear, so the word should be perceived as belonging to scatological vocabulary, which was very active (see row 9, κόπρος and its cognates). Understandably, the concept of scatological swearing does not require much attention as it is well researched for both antiquity<sup>18</sup> and modern cultures. This fact notwithstanding, one lexical observation should still be mentioned. In Old Comedy and the classical language in general the word κόπρος meaning 'excrement', 'dung' was emotionally neutral and deprived of a specific abusive strength, *i.e.* it did not mean 'shit'. In contrary, to express affective feelings and to abuse there was another word, σκῶρ<sup>19</sup>. Likely, by mediaeval times its expressiveness was fully adopted by κόπρος<sup>20</sup>, so Aristophanean σκατοφάγος (*Plut.* 706) appears in Tzetzes as κοπροφάγος (*Hist.* XII 399, 233; XII 436, 666; and schol. *Hist.* V post v. 201, p. 549,27 Leone)<sup>21</sup>. Moreover, there is not a single word with the root σκατ- in Tzetzes' work, although this word definitely existed in the form of σκάτον in Byzantine times<sup>22</sup>. One way or another, the word σκῶρ was not used by Tzetzes. In our opinion, the plausible reason is that this ancient word was too outdated or old-fashioned, thus unable to accomplish the mission of abusing someone in a vulgar way.

Moving downwards through our table, we pass on to the words which have a less strong connection to classical antiquity and, surely, they are not attested in Aristophanes. A remarkable part of them belongs to the Middle Byzantine period and represents for us, in a sense, 'modern' foul vocabulary.

<sup>17</sup> For a similar image relating to sewers see the passage of the *Logismoi* published by Aglae Pizzone in this volume, pp. 45, 59.

<sup>18</sup> As Edwards notes, in comedy «feces are intrinsically funny»: A.T. Edwards, *Aristophanes' Comic Poetics*: Τρύξ, *Scatology*, σκῶμια, «TAPhA» CXXI (1991) 157-179: 164. According to the comments at *Nub.* 295-297, turning to the theme of defecation was a typical way to make people laugh. See also Henderson, *o.c.* 187-199, and T.M. de Wit-Tak, *The function of obscenity in Aristophanes' Thesmophoriazousae and Ecclesiazousae*, «Mnemosyne» XXI (1968) 365.

<sup>19</sup> Henderson, *o.c.* 36.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. the nickname of the emperor Constantine V. On Greek copronyms see O. Masson, *Nouvelles notes d'anthroponymie grecque*, «ZPE» CXII (1996) 145-150, and F. Bechtel, *Die historischen Personennamen des Griechischen bis zur Kaiserzeit*, Halle 1917, 611. Van Opstall, *o.c.* 781, expresses the same opinion on the shift of abusiveness to the lexeme κόπρος and brings more examples.

<sup>21</sup> Leone, *o.c.* 574; see, however, p. xxx n. 110 of the introduction to this volume.

<sup>22</sup> See E. Trapp, *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität besonderes des 9.-12. Jahrhunderts*, Wien 1994-2017 [henceforth: *LBG*], VII, 1562, *s.v.* σκάτον.

First, we mention several terms of obloquy relating to animals. The three leading animals here are a pig<sup>23</sup>, a buffalo (line 7)<sup>24</sup>, and a goat, the latter as part of the expression ‘son of a goat’ (row 8)<sup>25</sup>. Noteworthy, in the table there is not a single *κάνθαρος* ‘dung-beetle’ or even *κύων* ‘dog’, which was one of the most traditional abuses in the ancient world. The word *κύων* is attested in other works by Tzetzes, but they all are related to a mythological context. At the same time, in his metrical scholia to Thucydides we encounter the word *σκύλλος*<sup>26</sup>, applied to the historian. Obviously, the word was used in its Modern Greek meaning, i.e. ‘dog’ (not ‘puppy’), and it had a vulgar and abusive character<sup>27</sup>. The conception of a dog as a dirty animal<sup>28</sup> definitely remained pervasive in medieval times. We can call to memory the famous epigram of the tenth-century poet John Geometres *On Psinas*<sup>29</sup>. Apparently, Psinas was a person’s name and the poet used it for an invective pun with the Slavic word *psina*, ‘dog’, which was an obscenity in old Slavonic and was known in Byzantium. So, we can assume that an old invective image gained its new life in a

<sup>23</sup> Three expressions connected with the word *χοῖρος* are mentioned in the final poem (see n. 9), so they will be discussed in a separate publication.

<sup>24</sup> One of Tzetzes’ favourite foul words, with a connotation of ‘stupid’, ‘ignorant’, see Agapitos, *o.c.* 11. Despite the fact that Tzetzes was the most active (and almost the only) author who used this word as a term of abuse (see *LBG* VI/1, 288, *s.vv.* *βουβάλιον*, *βούβαλος*), we still can be quite sure in general of the colloquial character of the insult. Alongside Tzetzes, Kriaras *s.v.* *βούβαλος* refers to Markos Defaranas (S. Karaiskakis, M. Δεφαράνας, *Λόγοι διδακτικοί του πατρὸς πρὸς τον υἱόν*, «Λαογραφία» XI (1934-37) 1-66), and Agapitos, *o.c.* 11 n. 56 cites the same meaning in *Ptochopr.* II 68-73. Besides, a similar pejorative meaning survived in Modern Greek (Triandafillidis, *s.v.* *βουβάλι*, 2.β).

<sup>25</sup> For this expression see below on ‘son of a cuckold’. For a scopic poem by Tzetzes that revolves entirely around the concept of ‘son of a goat’ see Nunzio Bianchi’s chapter in this volume.

<sup>26</sup> The word is used twice in the marginalia annotated by Tzetzes himself in ms. Heidelberg, *Pal. Gr.* 252: fol. 26r ὁ σκύλλος οὗτος Ἀττικώτατα γράφει (“This dog writes in the most Attic way”) and fol. 45r τὰς συγγραφαὺς κρίνειν δὲ τεχνικῶς τρόπῳ / σκύλλου τε τουδὶ καὶ παλαιῶν καὶ νέων / Τζέτζου μόνου χάρισμα δυσμαθεστάτου (“To judge in artful way the writings of this dog and [others] ancient and contemporary is the grace of the most ignorant Tzetzes only”): M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide. Note autografe sul codice Heidelberg, Palatino Greco 252*, Bari 1999, respectively pp. 61, 49.

<sup>27</sup> M.J. Luzzatto supposes that Tzetzes called Thucydides in this way because he was younger than Herodotus, see Luzzatto, *o.c.* 51-52 n. 30. I strongly suspect this understanding is too sophisticated and less plausible.

<sup>28</sup> Such attitude to dogs traces back to the ancient world. Judging on Aristophanes’ data, dogs were filthy, because they used to eat dung along with pigs and dung-beetles (*e.g.* *Pax* 24-25), thus the abusiveness of the term is rooted in scatology.

<sup>29</sup> For the text and commentary see M. Lauxtermann, *John Geometres – Poet and Soldier*, «Byzantion» LXVIII/2 (1998) 356-381: 379.

form of a more contemporary word, which corresponds to the observation we made above on the transition of the abusive potential from σκῶρ to κόπρος.

Finally, we turn to most actively used and, evidently, most 'modern' swearing options. The first one will be υἱὸς κούρβας 'son of a bitch' (line 10), but previously, it seems reasonable to discuss the word κοῦρβα itself.

The etymology of this invective has been much disputed. Scholars in the field of Slavic studies have always considered that it derives from Slavic \*kur (a cock). Initially it meant a hen, but later gained the meaning 'whore' (cf. French 'cocotte', 'poule'). On the other hand, Greek linguists consider this word to be a loan from Latin *curva* (*curvus*), i.e. 'crooked', 'wrong'<sup>30</sup>.

The problem is that there actually was a homonym loanword which came from Latin – κοῦρβα. It came into usage no later than the sixth century with a completely different meaning, i.e. 'saddle curve'<sup>31</sup>. Actually, we can be sure that the Byzantines understood both meanings and the difference between them, because there is a pun based on this word in the *Life of St David, Symeon and George* (BHG 494, ninth or tenth century). St Symeon made a joke when he refused to accept a horse which was given to him as a gift. He came to the horse, touched the saddle and said: Οὐαὶ τῷ μέσον δύο κούρβῶν μοναχῷ καθημένῳ ("Alas to the monk who is sitting between two curves / whores"<sup>32</sup>). Apart from this *Vita*, κοῦρβα as a professional title appears in two more cases. The first one occurs in some late manuscripts of the *Life of St John the Merciful* (ninth to twelfth century). The second example is in the astrological poem by John Kamateros (twelfth century) addressed to the emperor Manuel Komnenos. The author says that a girl who was born under a certain zodiac sign would definitely become a whore<sup>33</sup>. So, the word apparently came into active foul vocabulary some time around the tenth century, a time of dramatically intensive dealing with the Slavs, which indirectly proves the Slavonic origin of the abusive term. Following the usage of the word in later periods, we can see that the further we proceed in time, the more clearly the word loses its meaning as denotative of a profession and becomes just an affective abusive address towards a woman (cf. 'bitch' in English). There are at least three contexts in late Byzantine period in which

<sup>30</sup> The problem was scrutinized by I. Ševčenko, "Whore" in the *Life of John the Merciful*, «Palaeoslavica» VI (1998) 294-297.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* 296.

<sup>32</sup> J. van den Gheyn, *Acta Graeca Ss. Davidis, Symeonis et Georgii*, «AB» XVIII (1899) 209-259: 252.

<sup>33</sup> L. Weigl, *Johannes Kamateros. Εἰσαγωγή ἄστρονομίας. Ein Kompendium griechischer Astronomie und Astrologie, Meteorologie und Ethnographie in politischen Versen*, Leipzig 1908, 41 (v. 1251).

the word was addressed to a woman who was not a prostitute. Twice this epithet is given to a virgin warrior Maximou in the Escorial manuscript of the *Digenis epos*<sup>34</sup>, and once to a malicious wife from Leonardos Dellaportos' poem<sup>35</sup>.

Reverting to Tzetzes' scholia, we turn to the expression *υἱὸς κούρβας*, which is more relevant to the poet's abusive means. In the eleventh-century juridical treatise known as *Πεῖρα* there is a case on impairment of dignity: one state official verbally abused another one by calling him *υἱὸς κούρβας* and *κερατᾶς*<sup>36</sup>, and finally the wrangle led to a fight. Therefore, the invective efficacy of the terms can be stated without any doubts. To prove that it worked exclusively as an obscenity, we made a review on the usage of a similar expression – *υἱὸς τῆς πόρνῃς* 'son of a harlot'. The *TLG* shows that the collocation was quite frequent, but none of Middle Byzantine contexts revealed it as an affective abuse<sup>37</sup>. On the contrary, the examples demonstrate a neutral factual statement. If someone is called *υἱὸς τῆς πόρνῃς* it only means that the person was born to a prostitute or out of marriage<sup>38</sup>. This usage seems to go back to the Septuagint. According to the Book of Judges (11:1), one of the judges of Israel, Jephthah, was born to a prostitute. Therefore, such denotation dominates in the sources throughout the whole Byzantine period. So the expression *υἱὸς τῆς πόρνῃς* merely indicates the profession of the person's mother and/or highlights his social status. In contrast, *υἱὸς κούρβας* bears a purely vulgar and offensive character.

In our opinion, the expression definitely had a Slavonic origin. Such a statement can be sustained by general observations on the mechanisms of the borrowing of foul words. Typically, such words cross the borders between peoples and languages without much difficulty and, in many cases, faster than other lexical layers. Of the two main reasons, the first is the fact that the adopting language can intensively absorb foreign swearwords, because while being clear in their meaning, they do not sound very harshly, since non-native speakers do not feel emotional connota-

<sup>34</sup> E. Jeffreys, *Digenis Akritis. The Grottaferrata and Escorial versions*, Cambridge 1998, 350, 354 (vv. 1518, 1577).

<sup>35</sup> M. Manousakas, *Λεονάρδου Ντελλαπόρτα Ποιήματα (1403/1411)*, Αθήνα 1998, 205-368 (v. 2059).

<sup>36</sup> I. Zepos-P. Zepos, *Jus Graecoromanum*, IV: *Πεῖρα Εὐσταθίου τοῦ Ρωμαίου. Ἐπιτομή νόμων*, Αθήνα 1931, 233 (LXI, 6).

<sup>37</sup> Data obtained through a *TLG* search, reference date 01.08.2019. The search showed nine occurrences, only one of which refers to an abuse. The expression is included in a set of insults cited in one of John Chrysostomos' homilies, *De mansuetudine* (PG LXIII, 554).

<sup>38</sup> See e.g. an episode from the *Life of St Theodore of Sykeon*, where a demon addresses the saint and calls him a son of a prostitute (A.-J. Festugière, *Vie de Théodore de Sykéon*, Bruxelles 1970, ch. 18. On the one hand, it sounds offensive, but in fact, according to the text, Theodore's mother really made her living with the oldest profession (ch. 3).



tions as keenly as native speakers do. However, the second reason seems to be more plausible in our case. This type of loans coincides with the general perception of the Slavic language as barbaric and vulgar, thus the invective was supposed to work more effectively.

The next abusive term is *κερατᾶς* 'cuckold' and *υἱὸς κερατᾶ* 'son of a cuckold' (row 11). As in the case of *υἱὸς κούρβας*, the effectiveness of the word is proved by the context that we discussed already in the *Πεῖρα*. A brief excursus on the history of the concept of *κερατᾶς* is adduced in Phaedon Koukoules' treatise. In his opinion, the earliest source which contains the idea of a wife setting the horns onto her husband's head by cheating on him dates back to the second century AD and is attested in Artemidoros' treatise<sup>39</sup>. So, the idea itself is quite old, but we do not encounter the word much until the period between the tenth and the twelfth century, when it became extremely popular. We meet it in the works of Christophoros of Mytilene, Anna Comnena, Nicetas Choniates<sup>40</sup>, in the title of Constantinopolitan monument *Κερατεμβόλιον*<sup>41</sup>, and Michael Psellos even wrote an essay on the origin of the term *κερατᾶς*. He suggests that the expression was triggered by the fact that all the animals that wear horns (goats, deer, etc.) are very indifferent and apathetic in love, so they do not suffer from jealousy<sup>42</sup>. Remembering the previously mentioned term *υἱὸς τοῦ τράγου*, we can eventually come to the conclusion that the core idea of these abuses is the same<sup>43</sup>. If, according to the Byzantines themselves, a cuckold and a goat represent very close notions, then in both cases the matter is a situation when a child born in legal marriage is not biologically native to his official father. Moreover, perhaps, in some cases the abuse *υἱὸς κούρβας* might transmit the same concept. Since *κούρβα* is not strictly a prostitute, but merely a vicious woman,

<sup>39</sup> Koukoules, *o.c.* 303-307.

<sup>40</sup> All the references to the sources are given by Koukoules, *l.c.*

<sup>41</sup> According to *Patria*, in the Neorion harbour there was an arch with a magical statue wearing four horns on its head. If a man suspected his wife of adultery, he could pass over and touch the statue. In case his suspicions were justified, the statue would turn around for three times. Cf. T. Preger, *Pseudo-Codini Patria Constantinopoleos*, in *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, II, Leipzig 1907, 271.

<sup>42</sup> K. Sathas, *Μιχαὴλ Ψελλοῦ Πόθεν τὸ τοῦ κερατᾶ ὄνομα*, in *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη Ε'*, Παρίσι 1876, 526.

<sup>43</sup> In the case of the expressions *υἱὸς κερατᾶ*, *υἱὸς κούρβας*, apart from the abusiveness concentrated in the words *κερατᾶς* and *κούρβα* themselves, we should consider one more factor. The 'additional' insult effectiveness roots in a very archaic conception of vituperation of the opponent's ancestors, which surely was reflected in classical Greek *psogos* as well (see Koster, *o.c.* 16). As for our scholia, the same type of insults is represented by expressions such as *υἱὲ μαρῶτάτου* 'son of the filthiest' (row 2), *υἱὲ βεβήλου μαροῦ* 'son of a filthy and impure man' (row 12).

who, for example, practises adultery, the result is the same – her child has somebody else as a father, not her legal spouse. Viewing this abuse in the social and cultural aspect, we can make an important inference. Unlike terms of abuse such as ‘bastard’ which are common in other cultures, in Byzantium there must have been a different socially conventional invective. According to it, it was disreputable and humiliating to be born not to a cheating husband, but to a cheating wife<sup>44</sup>.

However, the last word to which we turn our attention, namely κόπελος (row 13), might add some ambiguity to the issue. The common Byzantine meaning, attested in the dictionaries of Kriaras and Trapp, is ‘youth’, ‘servant’<sup>45</sup>. Clearly, this translation hardly matches Tzetzes’ invective intonation, so we should rather consider other meanings. Another one given by Kriaras is κακοήθης, κακοποιός ‘nasty’, ‘evildoer’ with the field label ὕβριςτ. (insult)<sup>46</sup>, which seems to fit our context perfectly. At the same time, Trapp shows one more possible interpretation<sup>47</sup>. He refers to an occurrence of the word in the scholia to Sophocles’ *Electra*, where the commentator uses the word κόπελος to explain the notion of ‘bastard’, ‘natural child’<sup>48</sup>. I doubt we can be fully certain of what exactly Tzetzes meant, but at all events the word revealed its colloquial and affective character quite vividly.

Finally, apart from the analysis of separate words, we should pay attention to the combinational peculiarities of the insults. Looking at some expressions (especially rows 8, 10, 11), we can note that Tzetzes compiles several swear words together, so that they form a whole chain, a torrent of swearing. On the one hand, that is a true sign that our source reflects the real communicative situation. When people start losing temper and the emotional temperature intensifies, the density of the abuses increases dramatically. On the other hand, it is the structural characteristics of the language of obscenity. A great deal of foul words share a feature of being combined in various permutations to express the uncontrolled emotion. Noteworthy, not all the words reveal the same level of combinability. Among the words and expressions

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<sup>44</sup> At the same time, the concept of ‘bastard’ must have existed as well (see below on κόπελος), but, as for our scholia, the concept of υἱὸς κούρβας / υἱὸς κερρατᾶ undoubtedly prevailed. Moreover, the classical word for bastard, νόθος, was never used as an insult (see LSJ, Kriaras, Triandafillidis, s.v. νόθος) and a later insult with the same meaning was a loanword from Italian (see LBG, Triandafillidis s.vv. μπάσταρδος, παστάρδης). So, we can suggest that the abusive concept was borrowed along with the word due to the fact that it was not developed enough on Greek soil originally.

<sup>45</sup> Kriaras VIII 276, s.v. κόπελος, 1, 2; LBG VI/1 861, s.v. κόπελος.

<sup>46</sup> Kriaras, l.c.

<sup>47</sup> LBG, l.c.

<sup>48</sup> *Schol. Soph. El.* 325 φύσιν] κατὰ φύσιν, ἤτοι φύσει καὶ οὐ θέσει. τοῦ γνήσιου ἐναντίον, ὁ φυσικός, ὁ λεγόμενος κόπελος, in G. Dindorf, *Scholia in Sophoclis tragoedias septem*, II, Oxford 1852, 252.

attested in the scholia, *μιαρός*, *κούρβας υἱός*, *τράγου υἱός*, *κερατᾶ υἱός*, and the cognates of *κόπρος* demonstrate the most active combinability. In our opinion, it reveals a higher level of their abusiveness. Arguably, their direct meaning started to recede, and the usage of such expressions might eventually have attained expletive character (cf. 'shit', 'bitch' in English, *kurwa* in Polish). On the contrary, the words which better preserved their distinct meaning, e.g. *βούβαλος* as 'stupid', 'dumb' or *βόναυσος* as 'boorish' were likelier less affective and less rude.

To sum up, we can admit that the scholia to the *Histories* definitely contributed to our subject, since they gave us an opportunity to conduct quite a wide overview on the range of everyday invectives. Having placed them in context, we can rest assured that these words belonged to the register of vulgar and colloquial expressions. Even if in a majority of cases these terms of abuse have some roots in antiquity, we can postulate that none of them was borrowed from Aristophanes directly, and several do not have a straight connection to classical literary invective at all. Besides, a certain lexical shift should be noted, when new words replaced the ancient ones while conveying the same abusive concepts as their predecessors. Conversely, in other cases we witness relatively fresh concepts contemporary to the Byzantine world. As for the imagery, the scatological realm definitely prevails upon the sexual one<sup>49</sup>, and the second most active group is connected with the social status of the person in dependence from the circumstances of his or her birth. Assuredly, the aforementioned ideas should be assessed as preliminary and need to be further researched on the basis of other types of sources, e.g. juridical ones, if we talk about bastards and children born after female adultery. Anyway, apart from the numerous magnificent philological deeds conducted by John Tzetzes, we should be thankful to him for his swearing as well, since it was performed with much liveliness and variability, which left us significant data to work on the issue of understanding the functioning of language registers and Byzantine culture in general.

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<sup>49</sup> Despite the fact that we failed to find a single purely sexual abusive term within the scholia, it still seems too hasty to state that they were not used in Byzantium at all. Likelier, they had a more euphemistic expression, thus, they are more difficult to detect.

Appendix

| Nr.       | Arist.                     | XII c.   | Tzetzes' scholia on <i>Histories</i> , ed. Leone |                     |  |  |                                   | Total number of cognate abuses in the scholia |
|-----------|----------------------------|----------|--|---------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|
|           |                            |          | 3  | 4                   | 5                                      | 6  | 7                                 |   |
|           | <b>1</b>                   | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>                               | <b>6</b>   | <b>7</b>                          | <b>8</b>                                      |
| <b>1</b>  | 14                         | >200     | μωρός – 3  |                     |  |  |                                   | 3   |
| <b>2</b>  | 14                         | >200     | μιαρός – 13                                      | παμμίαρος – 2       | τῆς μιαρᾶς γονῆς τὸ μιαρώτατον ἔγγονον | ἀπόζον τῆς μιαρᾶς τούτου ψυχῆς                   | ἐμίανε τὴν βίβλον, υἱὲ μιαρωτάτου | 20  |
| <b>3</b>  | 2                          | ~50      | κάθαγμα – 1                                      |                     |  |  |                                   | 1   |
| <b>4</b>  | 6<br>(= 'mud',<br>'filth') | ~50      | βόρβορος (= 'shit') – 4                          | βορβόρου φύσις      | ὅλος αὐτοβόρβορος                      | βορβορεύς (hapax)                                | τὰς δυσόδμους βορβόρους           | 7   |
| <b>5</b>  | 1                          | 12       | υἱὲ τῆς ἀνομίας – 1                              |                     |  |  |                                   | 1   |
| <b>6</b>  | 0                          | > 200    | βάνασος – 1                                      |                     |  |  |                                   | 1   |
| <b>7</b>  | 0                          | >50      | βούβαλος – 4                                     | τὸ βουβάλιον        |  |  |                                   | 5   |
| <b>8</b>  | 0                          | 0        | Τοῦ τράγου ὁ υἱός – 4                            | Καλοῦ τράγου υἱός   | τέκνον τράγου                          | τράγου παῖς                                      |                                   | 7   |
| <b>9</b>  | 11<br>(= 'dung')           |          | κόπρος (= 'shit') – 1                            | κατεκόπρωσας – 2    | κοπροφάγος                             | κοπρίας οὐκ οἶδας γράφειν, ἀλλὰ κοπρίους; κοπρία | κοπρωτῆς (hapax) βιβλίων          | 8   |
| <b>10</b> | 0                          | 0        | κούρβας υἱὲ – 3                                  | κούρβας υἱὲ μιαρέ   | κούρβας υἱὲ τοῦ τράγου                 |  |                                   | 5   |
| <b>11</b> | 0                          | 0        | κερατᾶ μιαροῦ υἱὲ – 2                            | τοῦ Κερατᾶ τὸν υἱόν |  |  |                                   | 3   |
| <b>12</b> | 0                          | 0        | υἱὲ βεβήλου μιαροῦ – 1                           |                     |  |  |                                   | 1   |
| <b>13</b> | 0                          | 1        | κόπελος – 1                                      |                     |  |  |                                   | 1   |

## Buffaloes and bastards: Tzetzes on metre

John Tzetzes was a man of strong convictions and great anger with whoever dared to disagree with him. ‘Buffaloes’ he used to call them: βούβαλοι, morons<sup>1</sup>. Another favourite term of abuse was: ‘sons of he-goats’, i.e. ‘bastards’, because he-goats have horns, and horn-wearers (κερατάδες, *cornuti*, cuckolds) allow others to father *their* children<sup>2</sup>. The buffaloes and bastards were everywhere, in all walks of life, in every pursuit and field of expertise, but it was their views on metre that got Tzetzes really worked up.

A good example is a scholion in Tzetzes’ commentary on the *Plutus* of Aristophanes<sup>3</sup>. It is 117 lines long and deals with various grievances and annoyances, from the lack of proper funding to the serious metrical mistakes made by the θατεριστάί, silly scholars who disregarded the length of the so-called ‘dichrona’, the vowels α, ι and υ that are either short or long, but definitely not both<sup>4</sup>. Halfway through this rant,

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<sup>1</sup> See M. Jeffreys, *The nature and origins of the political verse*, «DOP» XXVIII (1974) 141-195: 149-150.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist.* XII 399, 243 (P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Historiae*, Galatina 2007<sup>2</sup>, 467): τράγου πάλς / υἱός / τέκνον in Tzetzes’ notes on the *Historiae*, I 20, 559 (p. 534,25 Leone); XI 385, 770 (564,12); 396, 891 (564,15); XII 399, 226 (565,15); 404, 332 (565, 20); 409, 426 (566,8); and XIII 480, 324 (568,10), two of which make it perfectly clear what this term of abuse stands for: 564,12 τοῦ τράγου ὁ υἱὸς referring to the same scribe as the one vilified in line 564,11 as τοῦ μισροῦ κερατᾶ ὁ υἱός, “the son of a filthy cuckold”, and 565,15 κούρβας υἱέ, τράγου υἱέ, “son of a whore, son of a he-goat” (cf. 565,20). See also *schol. Ar. Ran.* 507a, p. 835,9 Koster: τράγου υἱέ. For μένδητος τέκνον in *schol. Ar. Plut.* 137, see n. 5. For the similar meaning of τράγου παιδίον in the poetry of John Geometres, see M.D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Geometres to Pisides: Texts and Contexts*, I-II, Vienna 2003-19, II, 129-130. An entire poem of Tzetzes’ on a ‘son of a he-goat’ is edited by Nunzio Bianchi in this volume; on Tzetzes’ terms of obloquy more generally, see the chapter by Yulia Mantova (loose women and horned beasts at pp. 111-114).

<sup>3</sup> *Schol. Ar. Plut.* 137, pp. 41,8-46,20 Massa Positano; see also M. Schmidt, *Adnotamentum Tzetzae ad Arist. Plut. 137 ineditum*, «Philologus» XXV (1867) 687-691. For a commentary, see W. J.W. Koster, *À propos de quelques manuscrits d’Aristophane de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, «REG» LXVI (1953) 1-33: 23-24.

<sup>4</sup> For the term θατεριστής in Tzetzes’ commentary on Aristophanes, see H. Hunger, *Zur Interpretation polemischer Stellen im Aristophanes-Kommentar des Johannes Tzetzes*, in *Κωμφοδοτρῶ-γῆματα: Studia Aristophanea viri Aristophanei W.J.W. Koster in honorem*, Amsterdam 1967, 59-64, at 59. Hunger interprets it as a bad person: someone who is after «das θάτερον, das in euphemistischen Sinne für κακόν zu verstehen ist» (see *LSJ*, s.v. ἕτερος, III.2, «other than should be»). I think it means

Tzetzes directs his anger at one grammarian in particular who had claimed that Homer arbitrarily lengthens and shortens the dichronic vowels and who had adduced as evidence *Il. V 31*, a line that famously begins with ἄρες ἄρες, with alpha first long and then short (pp. 43,31-44,2 Massa Positano):

ἡμᾶς τε σύρει τήν θ' ὀμηρείαν φύσιν  
 ἄλλοπροσάλλως διχρόνοις χρῆσθαι λέγει,  
 τὸ «ἄρες, ἄρες» πανταχοῦ βοῶν μέγα  
 (Βρεντησίου μένδητος ὃ πατρὸς τέκνον!).

He mocks me in public and keeps saying that Homer uses the dichrona as it suits him, while bellowing ἄρες, ἄρες on every occasion (oh that bastard from Brindisi!)<sup>5</sup>.

We do not know who the bastard from Brindisi was. It must have been a Greek from Southern Italy, who had established himself as an intellectual in Constantinople in the mid twelfth century<sup>6</sup>. If he indeed taught that Homer used the dichronic vowels indifferently, he erred in good company: many other Byzantine scholars thought exactly the same<sup>7</sup>. Even a great scholar such as Eustathios of Thessaloniki comes dangerously close to admitting that Homer handles the dichronic vowels freely. This is what he has to say about ἄρες, ἄρες (pp. II, 14,15-17 and 15,7 van der Valk):

Καὶ ὅρα ὅπως ὁμοῦ παρέθετο τὸ αὐτὸ ὄνομα ἐν ἐκτάσει τε διχρόνου καὶ ἐν συστολῇ, ὡς ἂν ἐνδείξεται σαφέστατα τὴν διφύρησιν τῶν δισημῶν διχρόνων [...] τινὲς δὲ φασὶ γενέσθαι τοῦτο οὐ μόνον κατὰ ἀδιαφορίαν διχρόνου, ἀλλὰ [...].

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“a person who avers that, in the case of the dichronic vowels, anything goes: short or long—either of the two is correct”. A third possibility would be to connect it with Tzetzes’ rant in *schol. Ar. Ran.* 298a, p. 783,1-6 Koster against those who misinterpret τοῦτο γ’ ἔθ’ ἦττον θατέρου: people who make such ‘thateristic’ mistakes are capable of anything.

<sup>5</sup> For μένδης as the word for ‘goat’ in Egypt and the equivalent of Pan, see, e.g., J. Nimmo Smith, *Pseudo-Nonniani in IV orationes Gregorii Nazianzeni commentarii*, Turnhout 1992, 204,6-7: τὸν Πᾶνα Μένδητα καλοῦσιν οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι διὰ τὸ καὶ τὸν τράγον μένδητα καλεῖν.

<sup>6</sup> Both Michael Italikos and Theorianos may have been Italians; but the first is a bit early and the second a bit late to be identified with the bastard from Brindisi. See P. Magdalino, *Prosopography and Byzantine identity*, in A. Cameron (ed.), *Fifty Years of Prosopography: The Later Roman Empire, Byzantium and Beyond*, Oxford 2003, 41-56: 51, 53-54.

<sup>7</sup> See F. Kuhn, *Symbolae ad doctrinae περὶ διχρόνων historiam pertinentes*, Breslau 1892.

Please note how [Homer] offers the same name twice, with the dichronon both long and short, so as to demonstrate the different lengths of ambivalent dichrona. [...] Some maintain, however, that the treatment of the dichronon is not purely arbitrary, but [...].

The ‘some maintain’ was a minority view; most people, including Eustathios, thought that the dichronic vowels could be both long and short.

Another school of thought, slightly less liberal than the Eustathian one, included those who maintained that one ought to follow the example of the ancients and adopt their practices. A good example is the following dialogue between a pupil and his teacher, found in a thirteenth-century manuscript of Dionysius Thrax (*Vat. Gr.* 14, p. I/3, 206,14-19 Hilgard):

Ἄρ' οὖν ἔξεστί μοι τὰς διφθόγγους καὶ τὰ δίχρονα διὰ παντὸς ἐκτείνειν;  
λεπτόν ὅτι ἐν τοῖς μετρικοῖς τὰς διφθόγγους ἐκ παντὸς τρόπου, τὰ δὲ  
δίχρονα οὐκ εἰκῆ, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν καὶ χρῆσιν τῶν παλαιῶν·  
ἰδού γάρ τὸ Ἄρες, Ἄρες καὶ μακρὸν καὶ βραχὺ ἔχει τὸ α· ἔξεστιν οὖν  
ὁμοίως καὶ ἡμῖν χρῆσασθαι.

«So, am I allowed always to treat the diphthongs and the dichrona as long?»  
«Well, according to the metricians, [one should treat] the diphthongs always  
[as long], but as for the dichrona, [one should] not [treat them] at random, but  
follow the tradition and the example of the ancients. Take Ἄρες, Ἄρες where  
the alpha is both long and short; in such cases we are allowed to do the same».

Eustathios of Thessaloniki mentions yet a third category, consisting of radical grammarians who flatly denied the existence of dichronic vowels (p. I, 52,18-20 van der Valk):

οὕτω δὲ καὶ τὸ Κρονίων διφορεῖται παρὰ τῷ ποιητῇ καὶ ἄλλα οὐκ ὀλί-  
γα, εἰ καὶ οἱ νῦν στρυφνοὶ λογιστὰι τῶν στιχουργούντων μονόχρονα τὰ  
τοιαῦτα εἶναι θέλουσιν.

Thus we see that Κρονίων, and many other words as well, are measured both long and short in Homer, even if the metrical inquisitors of today claim that such words only have one length.

There can be little doubt that Tzetzes was one of these metrical inquisitors<sup>8</sup>. His most violent rants are invariably directed against the θατερισταί, also called ἀδιαφοροδίχρονοι or ἀδιαφοροδιχρομισταί, “those who use the dichrona indifferently”<sup>9</sup>. See, for example, a note on *Plutus* 277, where he discusses the prosodic length of πυθέσθαι (p. 99,6-19 Massa Positano):

τοῖς σοφωτάτοις μου ἀδιαφοροδιχρόνοις [...], οἵπερ τὰ κομψὰ ταῦτά φασιν, ὡς αἱ αὐτὰ δὶχρόνοι ὅτε μὲν μακροὶ ὅτε δὲ βραχεῖαι λογίζονται. ἀβάσκανον δὲ τοῦτο αὐτοῖς γένοιτο τοιαύτην τῷ βίῳ προσπορίζουσι λυσιτέλειαν τὸ ἄνευ μεθόδων κανόνων τε λογικῶν καὶ παρατηρημάτων ματαίων (οἷον ὁ Τζέτζης φησὶν, ἃ χρόνου δεῖται μακροῦ) ῥαδίως ἀκαριαίως οὕτω καὶ εὐμαρῶς πᾶσαν τέχνην τῶν λόγων μαθάνειν τε καὶ μετέρχεσθαι!

Our most learned it's-all-the-samists [...], who have this splendid theory that the same dichronic vowels can sometimes be measured long, sometimes short. How generous of them to provide such a beneficial service to the world: to study and learn the whole curriculum so easily, quickly and expediently, without need of methods, rational rules and idle observations (such as those by Tzetzes, which demand time and effort)!

As always, Tzetzes is exaggerating a bit: it is hardly believable that his fellow grammarians pretended that one could do without methods and rules and observations altogether. The point is that for Tzetzes, the self-declared lover of Homer (φιλόμηρος)<sup>10</sup>, the idea that Homer would treat the dichronic vowels at random was blasphemy. Obviously, he was well aware of the problem of irrational scansion in Homer<sup>11</sup>, but as Homer was the greatest poet ever, there had to be method to it and rules (κανόνες) which one could learn and master only through hard work. Crucial

<sup>8</sup> See Kuhn, *o.c.* 82-83; M. van der Valk, *Eustathii archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem pertinentes*, I, Leiden 1971, cxxxiv; Jeffreys, *o.c.* 150.

<sup>9</sup> See Hunger, *o.c.*

<sup>10</sup> See P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Carmina Iliaca*, Catania 1995, 101,3.

<sup>11</sup> For metrical problems in Homer, see G. Schulze, *Quaestiones epicae*, Gütersloh 1892, and W.F. Wyatt, *Metrical Lengthening in Homer*, Rome 1969. For discussions of metre in the ancient scholia to Homer, see G. Rauscher, *De scholiis Homericis ad rem metricam pertinentibus*, Strasbourg 1886, and F. Montanari, *I versi 'sbagliati' di Omero e la filologia antica*, in M. Fantuzzi-R. Pretagostini (edd.), *Struttura e storia dell' esametro greco*, I, Rome 1995, 265-287.



for Tzetzes' understanding of false quantities in Homer is the concept of the 'common syllable' (κοινή συλλαβή) – a concept very popular with metricians and grammarians in Roman and Byzantine times. The ancient commentators distinguish three types of 'common syllable': (1) syllables shortened through epic correction; (2) syllables shortened through Attic correction; and (3) irrational lengthenings of short final syllables. A classic example of the third type is *Il.* XIV 1 Νέστορα δ' οὐκ ἔλαθεν ἰαχὴ πίνοντά περ ἔμπης, where -εν in ἔλαθεν is long. The syllable is long because the word ἰαχὴ historically begins with a digamma, which here is slightly prolonged: [elathew wiak<sup>h</sup>ε:]; but later Greeks had no knowledge of the digamma, added a -v between ἔλαθε and ἰαχὴ to avoid hiatus, and assumed that in Homer a short syllable may occasionally be long at word end: such an inexplicable lengthening makes it a 'common syllable'<sup>12</sup>.

In his commentary on Hephaestion, the ninth-century grammarian George Choïroboskos (pp. 203,25-208,8 Consbruch) knows of ten phonetic environments that enable short syllables to be lengthened: (1) the following word begins with iota (as in the Homeric example just mentioned); (2) and (3) there is an acute or a perispomenon on, after, or before the short syllable; (4) there is a rough breathing or an aspirated plosive before or after the short syllable; (5) the short syllable is followed by a pause indicated by a punctuation mark; (6) the lengthening is triggered by adjacent ἀμετάβολα (nasals and liquids); and (7) to (10) the lengthening is triggered by either δ, π, σ or τ, letters that can be doubled word-internally. This metrical doctrine appears to have been quite popular with the Byzantines because traces of it can be found in the works of numerous scholars, including Eustathios of Thessaloniki and our own John Tzetzes<sup>13</sup>.

Later scholars, however, do not restrict these rules to final syllables, but also apply them word-internally. A good example is Tzetzes' self-critical scholion attached to the verse epilogue of *Epistle* 1 concerning the word ἀχαριτόγλωττος, which he had measured with both the first alpha and the iota long (pp. 158-159 Leone):

<sup>12</sup> See ps.-Dion. Thr. pp. 20-22 Uhlig; ps.-Herodian. p. III/2 657,27-36 Lentz; Heph. pp. 7,15-8,10 Consbruch. For later testimonies, see, for example, W. Studemund (ed.), *Anecdota varia Graeca musica metrica grammatica*, Berlin 1886, 183.

<sup>13</sup> For Eustathios of Thessaloniki, see H. Grossmann, *De doctrinae metricae reliquis ab Eustathio servatis*, Strasbourg 1887, 6-14. For Tzetzes, see, for instance, his commentary on Book I of the *Iliad*: M. Papathomopoulos, *Ἐξηγήσεις Ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου εἰς τὴν Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδα*, Athens 2007, at 100,4-7, 117,6-10, 132,19-133,1, 137,5-12, 162,14-15, 175,17-18, 178,18-21, 185,17, 198,20-199,1, 179,8, 179,16, etc. Whereas Choïroboskos restricts his discussion to short *final* syllables, Eustathios and Tzetzes apply the ten ways of lengthening both to final and word-internal short syllables.

καὶ ἐν τῶν δασέων ἐκτείνει ὡς παρ' Ἰππώνακτι τόδε· “ἦν αὐτὸν ὄφρις τῶντικνήμιον δάκοι”· καὶ παρ' Αἰσχύλῳ· “φαιοχίτωνες καὶ πεπλεκτανημένοι” [...]. οὕτως ἔχεται μὲν τοῦτο καὶ κανόνος, τὸ δὲ πλεον <οὐχ> ὅτι τότε καὶ διχρόνοις κατεχρῶμην ὡς οἱ βούβαλοι, ὅθεν ἀβοήθητον δίχρονόν ἐστι ἐν αὐτοῖς· τοῦ ἀχαριτόγλωττος τὸ ρι.

A single aspirated consonant is capable of lengthening, just as we see in this verse of Hipponax: ἦν αὐτὸν ὄφρις τῶντικνήμιον δάκοι [fr. 28.6 West], or in Aeschylus: φαιοχίτωνες καὶ πεπλεκτανημένοι [Cho. 1049]<sup>14</sup>. [...] This then conforms with the rule, but the rest does not, because back then I still misused the dichrona like the buffaloes do, which is why there is an indefensible dichronon: namely, the ρι of ἀχαριτόγλωττος<sup>15</sup>.

Here rule no. 4 (see above) justifies the lengthening of the short initial alpha because it is followed by an aspirated chi<sup>16</sup>.

While the doctrine of the common syllable has a distinguished pedigree and is certainly not his own invention, Tzetzes appears to innovate in three important respects. The first innovation is that final syllables cannot only be lengthened, but also shortened. Take, for example, the hilarious note attached to his own *Carmina Iliaca*, in which he defends shortening the long final alpha of τοῖα in line I 124 (pp. 128,7-129,11 Leone):

τοῦ δὲ τοῖα τὸ α μακρὸν καίπερ ὄν βραχὺ ἐδέχθη, ὡς λῆγον εἰς μέρος

Although the alpha of τοῖα is long, it is measured as short here because it ends

<sup>14</sup> The first syllable of ὄφρις is occasionally long in archaic poetry (e.g. *Il.* XII 208); the alternative spelling ὄπφρις (doubling of phi with deaspiration of the first phi), though supported by Eustathios, is rather dubious. P. Maas, *Greek metre*, Oxford 1960, 68, views φαιοχίτωνες as an exceptional case of anaclasis; M.L. West, *Tragica I*, «BICS» XXIV (1977) 89-103: 100, suggests to emend it to φαιῖοχίτωνες (though φαιῖός is not attested); see also the commentary *ad loc.* by A.F. Garvie, *Aeschylus. Choephoroi*, Oxford 1986, 345.

<sup>15</sup> For the suggestion to add οὐχ, see G. Hart, *De Tzetzarum nomine vitis scriptis*, «JCPH» Suppl. XII (1881) 1-75: 67.

<sup>16</sup> The reason why Tzetzes specifies that a *single* aspirated consonant already lengthens, is that he generally objects to unnecessary (in his eyes) double consonants, such as, for example, ἔδδειςσε instead of ἔδδειςσε in Homer (*Exeg. Il.* p. 132,8-17 Papathomopoulos): unnecessary because the χ of ἀχαριτόγλωττος (rule no. 4) and the acute of ἔδδειςσε (rule no. 2) suffice to create the right phonetic environment for the common syllable.

λόγου, καὶ γέγονε κοινὴ συλλαβὴ, ὡς καὶ παρ' Ὀμήρῳ ἐν τῷ Ψ· “δεῦρο  
 νῦν ἢ τρίποδος περιδώμεθον ἠὲ λέβητος”· καὶ παρ' Ἡσιόδῳ· “ἤματα  
 πεντήκοντα μετὰ τροπᾶς ἡελίοιο”· καὶ ἐν Ἀρχιμήδους ἐπιταφίῳ· “καὶ  
 χροιάς αὐτῶν ἄστινας πέριξ ἔχει”· καὶ παρ' ἑτέροις μυρίοις ἕτερα  
 μυρία. ἃ χρῆζων τις μαθεῖν ἐντεῦθε ῥαόνως ἐκμάθη εἰ προσεκτικῶς τοῖς  
 ἐμοῖς ἐγκύπτει συγγράμμασι καὶ μὴ φρυάττεται καὶ κορυζᾷ, καθάπερ  
 ἀμαθῆ τινα μορμολύκεια τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀμαθίαν ἡμῖν ἐπιφέροντες καὶ  
 δοκοῦντες ἡγνοηκέναι ἡμᾶς τὰ καὶ νεκροῖς σχεδὸν γνώριμα. οὐδεὶς γὰρ  
 οὐδέποτε ὡς ἡμεῖς μετρικὴν τέχνην καὶ ποιητικὴν ἠκριβώσατο. ἔτι δὲ  
 οὐδὲ τῶν κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἡλικίαν τελούντων ἡμῖν  
 τις πολυπληθεστέρας ἀνέγνωκε βίβλους, πλὴν μέντοι τῶν θειοτέρων.  
 καὶ εἰ φανητιᾶν ἦν ὀρεκτόν μοι καὶ ἐπιδείκνυσθαι, πυρίκαυστα ἂν ἐγε-  
 γόνει τὰ τῶν νῦν στιχουργήματα ἐν ταῖς ποιησάντων αὐτὰ κεφαλαῖς,  
 τὰ μὲν ὡς μετρικῆς τέχνης νενοθευμένα καὶ ἀλλοπρόσαλλα καὶ δεδευ-  
 μένα ὡς ἔτυχε, μὴ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς κανόνος τῶν μετρικῶν βοηθούμενα (οἷα  
 καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν ὀλίγοις ἀκολουθοῦντες θολοῦμεν τὴν τέχνην, καὶ τὰ μὲν ἂν

the word and functions as a common syllable, cf. Homer in book XXIII: δεῦρο  
 νῦν ἢ τρίποδος περιδώμεθον ἠὲ λέβητος [*Il.* XXIII 485], Hesiod: ἤματα  
 πεντήκοντα μετὰ τροπᾶς ἡελίοιο [*Op.* 663], the epitaph to Archimedes:  
 καὶ χροιάς αὐτῶν ἄστινας πέριξ ἔχει, and many other examples in the  
 works of many other authors<sup>17</sup>. Whoever is in need of instruction, may learn  
 these things here, provided they read my writings attentively and do not blather  
 and talk drivel, like some morons and dumbwits who project their own  
 ignorance onto me and think that I do not know what even the dead, so to  
 speak, know. In fact, no one has ever mastered the ins and outs of metre and  
 poetics as I have. No one else in this day and age, too, has read more books  
 than I have, although I make an exception for religious writings. Were I to  
 give myself airs and show off my knowledge, then the doggerel of today's  
 versemongers would go up in flames, right on top of their composers' heads:  
 some poems because their metre is false, erratic and random, and does not  
 comply with any known rule (just as I too make a mess of metre in some of  
 my works, following their example, and I would gladly see these burnt so as

<sup>17</sup> In modern editions, νῦν in *Il.* XXIII 485 is considered to be short and clitic: δεῦρό νῦν ἢ  
 τρίποδος. Hesiod has more examples of short fem. acc. pl. in -ας: see A.C. Cassio, *The language of  
 Hesiod and the Corpus Hesiodicum*, in F. Montanari-A. Rengakos-Chr. Tsagalis (edd.), *Brill's Companion  
 to Hesiod*, Leiden 2009, 179-201: 187-189, 191-192, 200-201. The epitaph to Archimedes appears  
 to be lost.

οὕτως ἐπυρακτώσαμεν ἵνα κατὰ μηδὲν συνέβαινε τὴν τέχνην θολοῦσθαι), τὰ δὲ ὡς παντελῶς τρόπων ποιητικῶν ἀποδέοντα.

to avoid offending the art of metre), and other poems because they fall short of true poetry altogether.

The second innovation is Tzetzes' insistence that having movable -v for reasons other than euphony is simply wrong. Take, for example, line 3 of the *Carmina Iliaca*: ἀρχῆθε δ' ἐπάειδε καὶ ἐς τέλος ἐξερέεινε, with the adverbial ending -θε long. In his notes to the *Carmina Iliaca*, Tzetzes explicitly tells us that ἀρχῆθε does not take a -v because it is followed by a consonant; adding movable -v is only allowed if the following word begins with a vowel (p. 103,16-104.3 Leone). As he likes to repeat himself, the same observation can be found over and over: do not add movable -v unless it is absolutely necessary for euphonic reasons<sup>18</sup>. The fact that Tzetzes explicitly, and on more than one occasion, warns against the redundant use of movable -v, indicates that many Byzantine intellectuals thought the opposite. So too do many modern editors, who, whenever -ε or -σι are measured long in Byzantine poems, hastily add a movable -v to save the day: the question is whether this is always the right approach<sup>19</sup>.

The third innovation is probably the most radical. In his commentary on Hephaestion, Choïroboskos explicitly warns against employing the third type of common syllable: epic correption and Attic correption are absolutely fine, but irregular lengthenings are not. They are fine in Homer and Hesiod, but not in other kinds of poetry (pp. 207,17-208,8 Consbruch)<sup>20</sup>:

Ἄξιον δ' ἡμᾶς ἀπορῆσαι, τί δὴ ποτε τούτῳ τῷ τρίτῳ τρόπῳ τῆς κοινῆς οὐ κεχρήμεθα ἡμεῖς [...], ἀλλὰ μόνοι οἱ ποιηταί· σπανίως γὰρ εὐρίσκειται εἰς ἄλλο μέτρον.

One might ask why we do not use this third type of common syllable [...], but only the [epic] poets do: in fact, it is seldom encountered in other metres.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, *Exeg. Il.* p. 162,14-15 Papathomopoulos: κε θάνατος, not κεν θάνατος (as in modern editions); p. 181.13-14 ἔπεσι καὶ, not ἔπεσιν καὶ (as in modern editions).

<sup>19</sup> See Lauxtermann, *o.c.* II, 281-282 and 283.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. p. 204,7-8 Consbruch.

Note the word ἡμεῖς, ‘we’, and the reference to other metres, presumably the Byzantine dodecasyllable, in which irrational lengthenings are indeed not allowed. That is, unless you are Tzetzes.

In many of his writings, Tzetzes prides himself on his metrical expertise and, particularly, his skill in composing ‘technical iambs’. Tzetzes’ technical iambs are prosodically correct verses that do not abuse the dichronic vowels; in his iambs, resolution is allowed and line end is not necessarily paroxytone. Tzetzes’ iambs are indeed prosodically faultless, except for final syllables and monosyllables where short alphas, iotas and ypsilons may be lengthened<sup>21</sup>. This is quite odd because while it is not difficult to learn by heart the prosodic length of a restricted number of inflections and small words, it takes an incredible intellectual effort to memorize the prosodic length of thousands and thousands of words. So if Tzetzes has hardly any problem with word-internal prosody, why does he stumble faced with the neuter article τὰ, which he measures as long? The answer is that he does not stumble, but simply applies the concept of the common syllable to the extreme<sup>22</sup>. If Homer and Hesiod can lengthen short final syllables, Tzetzes is entitled to do the same; in fact, by lengthening inflected endings and monosyllables, he demonstrates that he knows the rules of epic poetry as none other of his generation<sup>23</sup>. Measuring τὰ as long is not a mistake: in fact, it is unmistakable proof of Tzetzes’ superiority as a metrical expert.

In his technical iambs, Tzetzes restricts his use, or abuse, of the common syllable to the dichronic vowels α, ι and υ<sup>24</sup>. In his hexameters, however, he has many examples of long ε and ο<sup>25</sup>. I have looked at final syllables and monosyllables in the *Carmina Iliaca* and come across a truly staggering number of lengthened ε and ο

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<sup>21</sup> See Hart, *o.c.* 66-74; Kuhn, *o.c.* 83-88; G. Pace, *Giovanni Tzetzes. La poesia tragica*, Naples 2011<sup>2</sup>, 31-39.

<sup>22</sup> See Hart, *o.c.* 67: *non dubium videtur quin Tzetzes (...) in artificialibus iambis certas quasdam leges observaverit, quibus ad antiquos poetas proprius accedere sibi videretur.*

<sup>23</sup> It is worth noting that Tzetzes assumes that Homeric prosody also applies to metres other than the dactylic hexameter. In his didactic poem *Περὶ μέτρων*, he writes: τὰ πάντα μέτρα δέχονται τὰ πάθη τοῦ ἥρωος / τὰς συνιζήσεις, τὰς κοινὰς, τὰς διαλύσεις ἅμα, ‘all metres may have the irregularities of the hexameter: synizeses, common syllables, resolutions’, etc: ed. J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis bibliothecarum Oxoniensium*, I-IV, Oxford 1835-37, III, 331,20-27. This is why we also find ‘common syllables’ in Tzetzes’ iambic poetry.

<sup>24</sup> As Kuhn, *o.c.* 85 n. 2 rightly points out, the instances of long ε and ο are very rare indeed in Tzetzes’ technical iambs.

<sup>25</sup> For metrical observations on Tzetzes’ hexameters, see H. Schrader, *Die hexametrischen überschriften zu den achtundvierzig homerischen rhapsodien, mit einem excurs über die daktylischen verse des Theodoros Prodromos und des Johannes Tzetzes*, «JCPH» CXXXVII (1888) 577-609: 601-609.

and historically short  $\alpha$  and  $\iota$  (for which see the appendix below). Here are some appalling examples:

long  $\epsilon$ : τε, δέ, μέν, ἐν, ἐμέ, θώρηξε, βασιλῆες  
 long  $ο$ : ὅς, τόν, ἀπό, τοῖο, ἕκαστος, ἵππον, Ἀρτέμιδος, εἶδον, δέδμηντο  
 long  $\alpha$ : γάρ, δέκα, ὄσα, πάντα, γλῶσσα, ῥηγγῖνα, ἔρυμα, τίλλουσα,  
 κόμισαν  
 long  $\iota$ : τι, μιν, ἐπί, μέχρι, δόρατι, ἠγεμόσι, πᾶσι, ἄλλοισι.

To quote *Hamlet*, «though this be madness, yet there is method in it». The madness is restricted to the final syllables. Word-internally there are hardly any mistakes, and the few mistakes Tzetzes makes are all pardonable to a certain extent<sup>26</sup>. Take, for example, III 256 πόνων, with the omikron long, because of Hesiod *Op.* 113: νόσφιν ἄτερ τε πόνων καὶ οἰζύος, οὐδέ τι δειλὸν, where the manuscripts Tzetzes had access to offered a different reading: ἄτερ πόνων, without τε, so that the first syllable of πόνων necessarily becomes long. As expected, Tzetzes explains the irrational scansion of -πο- as an instance of the common syllable<sup>27</sup>. The reason why Tzetzes felt free to lengthen short final syllables and monosyllables, including ostensibly short vowels such as  $\epsilon$  or  $ο$ , is not metrical incompetence, but is based on his understanding of irregular lengthenings in Homer and Hesiod.

Some of his metrical observations may make little sense to us because we tend to forget that medieval manuscripts quite often offer different readings than we find in modern editions<sup>28</sup>. The problem with editions of classical authors is that they are usually based on a select number of manuscripts and ignore the medieval text tradition. I already discussed πόνων in Hesiod *Op.* 113 and the way Tzetzes treated this seemingly irrational scansion, even reproducing it in his own poetry. Another example is his discussion of Hesiod *Op.* 262, ἄλλη παροκλίνωσι δίκας σκολιῶς ἐνέπον-

<sup>26</sup> For III 256, see the main text. I 78 ἐς Τροίην is probably an interpolation: see Leone, *Carmina Iliaca*, app. ad loc. For II 68 Ἐχέμονα ( $\chi\epsilon$  long), see Tzetzes' own scholion, p. 171,13-15 Leone. III 144 Ἀργείοσιν is a typo for Ἀργείοισιν. III 384 Σκαμάνδροιο ( $\mu\alpha\nu$  short) finds its justification in Homer's ἀνδροτής and ἀνδρειφόντης (the scholion at III 384, p. 227,2 Leone is most probably not by Tzetzes, but by a later scholiast). There are also a number of verse-beginnings of the ἀκέφαλος type (see below): I 112 ἐρώτων βελέεσσι, II 460 στέναξαν δὲ πολύθορον, III 182 Ἐκάτη, Ἀγχεμάχη, and II 31 ὅτε χρονοκράτορα.

<sup>27</sup> See Tzetzes' scholia ad loc.: Th. Gaisford, *Scholia ad Hesiodum*, Leipzig 1823, 115,1-2.

<sup>28</sup> It is particularly annoying that Papatomopoulos 'emends' Homeric quotations to what is nowadays held to be the correct version, thus rendering Tzetzes' discussion of them totally nonsensical: see, e.g., Papatomopoulos, *o.c.* 100,4-7, at *Il.* I 4, where Tzetzes and most manuscripts do not offer δὲ ἐλώρια (as in modern editions), but δ' ἐλλώρια.

τες, where the manuscripts at Tzetzes' disposal apparently read παρακλίνωσι, not παρακλίνωσι (p. 185,4-17 Gaisford):

Τὸ πα μακρὸν ἐδέξατο, καὶ τὸ κλι βραχύ· ὃ τῆς ἀβελτηρίας τῶν τολμησάντων τοῦτον καλεῖν Ὀμήρω ἀνθάμιλλον, καὶ τῆς ἐσχάτης ἀτοπίας, καὶ νικητὴν! ἀλλὰ τοῦ μὲν παρακλίνωσι τὸ πα μακρὸν ἴσως δεχθήσεται δι' ὄνπερ κανόνα οἱ παλαιοὶ ποιηταὶ καὶ μέτρων εἰδήμονες, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐξεπίσταμαι. κλίνω δὲ τὸ κλι, εἰ καὶ σκυτεύς τις ἐτόλμησε βραχὺ δέξασθαι, καὶ τῆς πόλεως ἂν τοῦτον ἐξέωσα, ἐν ἧπερ διέτριβον, εἰ δυνατῶς εἶχον, ὡς μὴ τὸ τῆς τοιαύτης κακίας μύσος γένοιτο διαδόσιμον. πολλοῦ δ' ἂν ἐδέησε τοῦτόν με κρῖναι Ὀμήρω ἀνθάμιλλον, ὃς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐπιστήμασι καὶ τέχναις ταῖς λογικαῖς ἀπάντων ὑπερανέστηκεν, οὐ μόνον ἀνθρώπων, τολμῶ δὲ καὶ ἀγγέλων εἰπεῖν, εἰ τέως ἄρα καὶ ἄγγελοι εἰσὶν ἐπιστημονάρχαι καὶ τεχνάρχαι<sup>29</sup>.

Πα is long here, and κλι short. Oh the stupidity of those who dare claim that [Hesiod] is equal to Homer or even more foolishly, superior!<sup>30</sup> As for πα in παρακλίνωσι, it may be measured long, in the very same manner that the ancient poets and the specialists in metre, myself included, know very well. [Tzetzes is referring to the doctrine of the common syllable]. But κλι in κλίνω? If a shoemaker dared measure it short, given the chance I would have him thrown out of my home-town, so as to prevent that horrible blight from spreading. Not in a million years would I call him equal to Homer, the poet who surpassed all in all the arts and sciences, not only men, but also – dare I say it? – angels: that is, if angels too are masters of the arts and sciences.

Another thing we tend to forget is that the ancients and the Byzantines had no knowledge of historical linguistics and were therefore unable to understand the ins and outs of Homeric prosody from a diachronic perspective. Take Tzetzes' discussion of *Il.* I 70 ὃς ἤδη τά τ' ἔόντα τά τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἔόντα. Where we nowadays would say that ὃς is long because it is followed by a no longer extant digamma in ἤδη, Tzetzes assumed it was a common syllable (*Exeg. Il.* p. 175,19-20 Papat homopoulos). And if Homer used ὃς as a common syllable, then there was no

<sup>29</sup> I have made a few corrections on the basis of *Par. Gr.* 1310, f. 93r-93v, and *Par. Gr.* 2773, f. 42r.

<sup>30</sup> Tzetzes is referring to the legendary *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*: see P. Bassino, *The Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi: A Commentary*, Berlin 2018, 40-45.

reason why Tzetzes should not use it as such in his poetry: *Carmina Iliaca* III 40 ὄς ὑπ' Ἀχαιῶν Τροίη ἐμήδετο λυγρὸν ὄλεθρον.

A third thing we tend to forget is the formative role played by tradition in shaping ideas and expectations. Tzetzes' metrical observations may seem odd to us, but not to the Byzantines, who learnt at school about dichrona, common syllables, and all that. There are very few people nowadays who still read the metrical treatises of the ancients and the Byzantines, which is regrettable because so many metrical oddities in Byzantine poetry are not odd at all once you know what the poets-to-be learnt at school<sup>31</sup>. Many of these treatises deal in extenso with the so-called πάθη of the Homeric hexameter: metrical irregularities<sup>32</sup>. In his commentary on book I of the *Iliad* (pp. 239,16-241,10 Papathomopoulos) Tzetzes follows the grammatical tradition in distinguishing six πάθη, divided into two categories: (I) lines that are too long – (1) προκέφαλος (at line beginning), (2) προκοίλιος (in the middle), and (3) δολιχόουρος (at line end); and (II) lines that are too short – (4) ἀκέφαλος (at line beginning), (5) μεσόκλαστος (in the middle), and (6) μείουρος (at line end).

To give an example, the line Κύκλωψ, τῆ, πίε οἶνον, ἐπεὶ φάγες ἀνδρόμεα κρέα (*Od.* IX 347) is a δολιχόουρος because the sixth foot consists of a dactyl rather than a spondaic: it is too long. We would probably say that κρέα needs to be read with synzesis, but the ancients and the Byzantines thought otherwise. It is precisely this theoretical background that explains why Tzetzes deemed it acceptable to write verses with one extra syllable at the end. He created his own δολιχόουροι, 'long-tailed' verses. See, for example, *Carmina Iliaca* III 378: Αἰνεΐας δ' ἄρα βαιός, ἀτὰρ παχύς, εὔστηθος πέλε, where -θος πέλε fills the sixth foot<sup>33</sup>. One cannot fault Tzetzes for following the grammatical tradition and assuming that one of the types of the Homeric hexameter was the 'long-tailed' one. If he erred, he was at least in good company.

As we have seen, Tzetzes regularly claims to be a metrical expert, single-handedly fighting a rearguard action against the buffaloes and bastards, those idiots who made a mockery of prosody. But how good a metrician was he? The classicists have been rather harsh with Tzetzes, averring that he gets the prosody mostly right<sup>34</sup>,

<sup>31</sup> For a good overview, see F. Budelmann, *Sound and text: The rhythm and metre of archaic and classical Greek poetry in ancient and Byzantine scholarship*, in F. Budelmann-P. Michelakis (edd.), *Homer, Tragedy and Beyond: Essays in Honour of P.E. Easterling*, London 2001, 209-240.

<sup>32</sup> See, for instance, Studemund, *o.c.* 174, 180-183, and 184.

<sup>33</sup> See Schrader, *o.c.* 596-598.

<sup>34</sup> But not always. His discussion of Hes. *Op.* 462, p. 289,6-16 Gaisford, for example, is totally idiotic: see M.L. West, *Hesiod: Works & Days*, Oxford 1978, 70.



but fails miserably in all other respects<sup>35</sup>. However, getting the prosody right was no mean feat more than a thousand years after the loss of the phonetic distinction between long and short. Classical metre was beyond his ken, as it was for all Byzantines, but let us be fair to them: how were they supposed to grasp all the subtle rhythmical variations of classical metre if they could not hear this melodic variety in their own language? As the metrical treatises make abundantly clear, speakers of Greek effectively ceased to understand lyrical metres long before the Byzantine era<sup>36</sup>. Should we hold Tzetzes to account for not recognizing the dochmiac at *Ar. Plut.* 637, or the classicists for failing to understand what language change does to the perception of a language?

One of the things I love about Tzetzes is that he sometimes clearly disagrees with himself. In the commentary on Book I of the *Iliad*, we read that the second syllable of ὀλοῖσι at *Il.* I 342 (in modern editions: ὀλοιῖσι) is long because hiatus (between ο and η) may lengthen the syllable (pp. 314,13-315,8 Papatomopoulos). However, in his much later commentary on the *Plutus* of Aristophanes, he informs us that while hiatus may shorten long syllables, it cannot lengthen short syllables (*schol.* 947, p. 199,9-24 Massa Positano)<sup>37</sup>. And sometimes he just forgets what he has just said. In the excursus on the six πάθη of the Homeric hexameter embedded in his commentary on book I of the *Iliad*, Tzetzes has the following to say about the ἀκέφαλος type (p. 240,15-19 Papatomopoulos):

ἀκέφαλον γὰρ λέγεται τὸ ἐν ἀρχῇ στίχου λεῖπον συλλαβῆς, ἢ ἐκ κοινῆς συλλαβῆς, ἢ ἀπλῶς ὡς τό· “ὄς ἤδη τά τ’ ἐόντα τά τ’ ἐσσόμενα πρό τ’ ἐόντα”.

The ‘headless’ type is one that lacks a syllable at the beginning of the line, either because of [the presence of] a common syllable, or for no good reason, as, for example, ὄς ἤδη τά τ’ ἐόντα τά τ’ ἐσσόμενα πρό τ’ ἐόντα [*Il.* 1.70].

However, in his discussion of this verse, Tzetzes had previously explicitly denied that it is a ‘headless’ verse (p. 175,19-20 Papatomopoulos):

<sup>35</sup> See C.O. Zuretti, *Analecta Aristophanea*, Turin 1892, 144-145; Koster, *o.c.* 23; N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, London 1983, 194.

<sup>36</sup> See M.L. West, *Greek Metre*, Oxford 1982, 162-185; M.D. Lauxtermann, *The Spring of Rhythm: An Essay on the Political Verse and Other Byzantine Metres*, Vienna 1999, 69-74.

<sup>37</sup> Tzetzes is referring to lines such as Aeschylus fr. 155 Radt, Ἴστρος τοιαῦτας παρθένους ἐξεύχεται, where we have word-internal correption.

ὄς, κοινή συλλαβή, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀκέφαλος ὁ στίχος, ὡς τινες οἴονται.

ὄς is a common syllable, and the line is not headless, as some think.

These ‘some’ apparently include Tzetzes as well.

The buffaloes and bastards would have had a ball with this. They would have laughed at this minor lapse of memory and mocked Tzetzes for not always being consistent. But what else would one expect from that lot? Those it’s-all-the-samists with their «Ares, Ares». Bloody idiots...

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APPENDIX  
COMMON SYLLABLES IN THE *CARMINA ILIACA*

This appendix presents the irrational lengthenings of short monosyllables and final syllables in Tzetzes' *Carmina Iliaca*: ε, ο, short α, short ι, and short υ. Tzetzes considers such syllables to be 'common syllables' (see above for more information).

τε (I 185, 272, II 88, 139, 220, III 577, 645), δε (II 140, 302, 431, III 54, 585, 634, 712), μὲν (III 707), ἐν (III 74), ἀρχῆθε (I 3), οὐρανόθε (I 213), δῆθε (I 373), προπάροιθεν (II 446, III 439), ἔνθε (III 157), ἐτέρωθε (III 158), ὄπισθε (III 304), ἐκάτερωθε (III 321), ἐμὲ (III 620), κάμῃ (II 142, III 701), υἱὲ (II 115), θυγατέρες (I 23), δειδιότες (II 145), γούωντες (II 309, 454), ἀνστάντες (III 299), βασιλῆες (III 438), πλῆξε (I 113), ἔλαβε (II 20), ἀπέπαυσε (II 184), κατέρυξεν (II 284), θώρηξε (III 32), κόρυσσε (III 86), ἔπληθε (III 102), ἔχε (III 123), εἶχεν (III 157), θάνε (III 177), κύδηγε (III 288), ἐφρόνεεν (III 303), ἐπέβρισε (III 332), εἶλε (III 385), τίεσκε (III 544), ἄκουε (III 492), γεγάμεν (II 471)

ὁ (III 544, 690), τὸν (II 61, 194), ὃς (III 40, 282), ὄν (I 81), ἀπὸ (II 258, III 99), κατεναντίον (III 170), σωρηδὸν (III 338), Ὅμηρος (II 55), Ἰππόθοος (II 448), Ἔλενος (III 579), ἕκαστος (III 322), ὄϊος (II 141), φιλότιμος (III 367), χαριζόμενος (I 258), ἀνασχόμενος (III 332), Δαναὸν (II 42), Μενέλαον (II 82), υἱὸν (II 89), ἵππον (III 703, 713), βριαρὸν (III 63), ἐρίδουπον (III 457), οὐλόμενον (I 5), μυρόμενον (II 297), τοῖο (III 638), Πάριδος (I 59), Ἀρτέμιδος (I 201), Πέλοπος (III 577), ἐόντος (III 704), Αἰακιδάο (I 14), ἔθελον (II 168), εἶδον (II 303), ἀπέβαινον (III 226), φεῦγον (III 290), ἦλθον (III 352), δέδμηντο (I 171), ἔποντο (III 175), κέαντο (III 344)

γὰρ (III 157, 619), ἔνεκα (II 76), αἶψα (III 393), σάφα (III 617), δέκα (I 37), Ἀλήθεια (I 385), Εὔβοια (I 391), Ἀράβισσα (III 258), ἰέρεια (III 776), γλῶσσα (III 753), εὐρεῖα (III 639), νικήσασα (I 72), τίλλουσα (II 413), κλαίουσα (III 449), γαῖαν (III 457), σκέλεα (III 474), τέκνα (III 759), κύκλα (III 767), πάντα (III 652), ὄσα (I 147, 165), λαίνεα (II 490), ἀτυζόμενα (II 463), ἐκχύμενα (III 253), Ἀκάμαντα (I 156), ῥηγμῖνα (I 219), χρονοκράτορα (II 31), Ἥιονῆα (II 133), Αἶαντα (II 161), χιόνα (III 106), ἠγέμονα (III 336), ἰητῆρα (III 521), ἀρτεμέα (III 583), θάψαντα (I 389), ἀνέρας (I 90), Οὐρανίωνα (II 329), σῆμα (II 24), ἔρυμα (II 169), μέγα (I 139, II 357, III 524), κέρσαν (III 99), παῦσαν (III 293), κόμισαν (III 515)

τι (I 378), μιν (III 167, 560), ἐνὶ (III 36, 716), ἐπὶ (II 356, III 3), μέχρι (II 233), ποτὶ (III 405), ὅθι (II 456, III 686), Ἀρτέμιδι (I 196), Ἀχιλῆϊ (II 225), Τυφῶνι (III 301), Αἴαντι (III 403), Θέτιδι (III 459), δόρατι (I 279), περιπρεπέϊ (I 111), εὐγενεΐ (III 501), Τρωσὶ (I 172), ἡγεμόσι (I 188), ἐπέεσσι (III 750), ἀεθλοῦσι (II 271), πᾶσι (II 292, III 416), ἀλλήλοισι (III 318), ἄλλοισι (III 609), βάλλουσι (III 326)

σὺν (III 169)

***Epistulae ad exercitationem accommodatae:***  
**Notes on some fictional epistles by John Tzetzes**

1. *Epistulae ad exercitationem accommodatae* or *Musterbriefe*?

John Tzetzes<sup>1</sup> wrote 107 epistles which can be dated to the timeframe between the 30s and the 60s of the twelfth century. These letters were organized in a proper corpus and arranged for publication by the author himself, who provided them with a systematic commentary – ἡ βίβλος ἱστοριῶν, commonly referred to as *Chiliads*. The *Epistles* and the *Chiliads* are conceived to be complementary one to the other: this is a strong mark of originality that makes Tzetzes' epistles stand out from the rest of Byzantine letters collections.

The debate concerning the utilitarianism and fictionality of Byzantine epistolography which animated the twentieth century<sup>2</sup> has nowadays found a balance in the coexistence of both aspects in the different stages of reception and fruition of letters<sup>3</sup>. Although recognizing the high level of formality and literary elaboration of Byzantine epistles, which were meant for performance and publication, critics have recognized their value in the framework of élites communication and their importance for historical documentation.

Neither the production of letters on commission nor the composition of epistles intended to be used in schools were uncommon practices in the Byzantine

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\* I would like to thank Enrico Emanuele Prodi for his valuable advice: this work has been significantly improved by his contribution.

<sup>1</sup> For biographical information concerning John Tzetzes and his activity, see I. Nesseris, *Η παιδεία στην Κωνσταντινούπολη κατά τον 12ο αιώνα*, I, diss. Ioannina 2014, 158-197 (available at <http://hdl.handle.net/10442/hedi/40859>); F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire*, in F. Montanari-S. Matthaios-A. Rengakos (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, I, Leiden-Boston 2015, 297-455: 378-385.

<sup>2</sup> Byzantine epistolography suffered from a systematic devaluation from scholars due to its obscurity and its lack of concreteness: see the famous and emblematic judgement by Jenkins, «a Byzantine letter is an impersonal rhetorical flourish which either contains no message at all, or, if it does, the message is couched in so obscure and allusive a fashion as to be nearly unintelligible» (R. J. H. Jenkins, *The Hellenistic origins of Byzantine literature*, «DOP» XVII (1963) 37-52: 45). See also the quotations listed by M. Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid: Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop*, Aldershot 1997, 23-31.

<sup>3</sup> On the reception of letters see M. Mullett, *Theophylact* cit. 31-43.

learned milieu. Both the reading of letters in school<sup>4</sup> and the connection between preparatory exercises, in particular *ethopoia*<sup>5</sup>, and the epistolary genre are attested. It is likely that Tzetzes used some of his letters during his teaching activity; the endeavour of the production of the *Chiliads* itself (whose material is usually very well suited to teaching purposes) could point toward this direction. It being understood that *all* letters were eligible for use in teaching at a later stage of their reception, being by their very nature an expression of a public and ceremonial kind of communication<sup>6</sup>, some letters stand out from the corpus to various extents for their level of fictionality. Tzetzes' letter collection is advisedly recognized as a very useful instrument for tracing Tzetzes' network<sup>7</sup>. Nevertheless, critics have set aside some of these letters, considering them as not belonging to a proper communication network but rather being conceived from the beginning as models of epistolary communication.

In his edition, P.L. Leone singled out ten letters as being fictional literary exercises of sorts. He pointed out that *Neque desunt epistulae (7, 9, 11, 12, 15, 30, 52, 62-64) quae non idcirco ut mitterentur scriptae sunt, sed tamquam ad exercitationem accommodatae orationis suae ostentandae gratia a Tzetzta compositae esse videntur*<sup>8</sup>. Leone takes the expression *ad exercitationem accommodatae* from Giske<sup>9</sup>, who in turn borrows it from the title of the collection of fictitious epistolary models for school by Gasparino Barzizza (*Epistolae ad exercitationem accomodatae*, precisely), quoted by Förster<sup>10</sup>. Grünbart adds five more letters to this list (*Ep.* 16, 17,

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<sup>4</sup> A. Markopoulos, *Anonymi Professoris Epistulae*, Berlin-New York 2000.

<sup>5</sup> See Mullett, *Theophylact* cit. 42-43 and O. Vox, *Paideia ed esercizi retorici in Alcifrone*, in Id. (ed.), *Lettere, mimesi, retorica. Studi sull'epistolografia letteraria greca di età imperiale e tardo antica*, Lecce 2013, 203-250.

<sup>6</sup> Mullett, *Theophylact* cit. 17 speaks of «public intimacy».

<sup>7</sup> M. Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge zum Briefcorpus des Ioannes Tzetzes*, «JÖByz» XLVI (1996) 175-226. On Byzantine epistolography as a source for the knowledge of history, social network structure and everyday life, see P. Hatlie, *Redeeming Byzantine epistolography*, «BMGS» XX (1996) 213-248 and M. Mullett, *The detection of relationship in middle-Byzantine literary texts: the case of letters and letter-networks*, in W. Hörander-M. Grünbart (edd.), *L'Épistolographie et la poésie épigrammatique. Projets actuels et questions de méthodologie*. «Actes de la 16e table ronde», Paris 2003, 63-74.

<sup>8</sup> P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Epistulae*, Leipzig 1972, xviii-xix. The Greek text of all epistles comes from Leone's edition, with only some occasional changes in punctuation. Translations are my own.

<sup>9</sup> H. Giske, *De Ioannis Teztzae scriptis ac vita*, Rostock 1881, 4.

<sup>10</sup> R. Förster, *Francesco Zambecari und die Briefe des Libanios*, Stuttgart 1878, 279.

20, 35, 41) and refers to them as *Musterbriefe*, model letters<sup>11</sup>: his classification includes all the epistles which have an anonymous recipient (or whose sender is not supposed to be the author himself) and which must thus be understood as «Musterbriefe bzw. Auftragswerke»<sup>12</sup>, “model letters or letters on commission”.

The letters which have been singled out for fictionality are thus, altogether, 15 out of 107: *Ep.* 7, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 20, 30, 35, 41, 52, 62, 63, and 64, all belonging to the first section of the collection. Nevertheless, these letters cannot be classified as a unique compact group under the label of ‘fictional letters’: rather, a distinction has to be made between them.

## 2. Dealing with authority. Six progymnasmata-epistles in John Tzetzes’ corpus

If «every letter must be interpreted in terms of what is known of the recipient as well as the writer»<sup>13</sup>, a first discriminating factor is precisely if and how sender and recipient are made explicit in the epistle’s title. In six letters (*Ep.* 7, 9, 11, 15, 30, 52), the sender is mentioned using the indefinite pronoun, with the formula ὡς ἀπό τινος, “as if from somebody”. The first to notice the peculiarity of this expression was Giske, who pointed it out as a marker of fictitiousness: *ac primum quidem iam id, quod alii epistularum tituli habent illud ὡς ἀπό τινος, carent alii, demonstrat aliquid interesse inter has et illas*<sup>14</sup>. The sequence ὡς ἀπό + genitive is undoubtedly used to point out a difference between the *persona loquens* and the author regardless of genre: it can be found in the title of poems (e.g. Psellos *Carm.* 64 Westerink<sup>15</sup>), *progymnasmata* (e.g. an *ethopoiia* by Nicholas Mesarites<sup>16</sup>) and, of course, epistles (e.g. Michael Gabras, *Ep.* 414 Fatouros<sup>17</sup>). In epistolography, the indefinite pronoun is not unique to Tzetzes’ corpus (see e.g. the above-mentioned letter of Gabras), but it is more frequent in it compared to other authors’ collections. Being one of Tzetzes’ peculiar features, the presence of ὡς ἀπό τινος shows a deliberate precision in

<sup>11</sup> A similar appellation was introduced by Hunger in his classification of four different typologies of Byzantine epistles: he speaks of «Klischeebriefe», “epistolary models”, being the fourth sub-category (d) of the third typology, «Literarische Briefe», “literary epistles”. See H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, I: *Philosophie – Rhetorik – Epistolographie – Geschichtsschreibung – Geographie*, München 1978, 204-206.

<sup>12</sup> Grünbart, *o.c.* 180-181.

<sup>13</sup> Mullett, *Theophylact* cit. 18.

<sup>14</sup> Giske, *o.c.* 5.

<sup>15</sup> L.G. Westerink, *Michaelis Pselli Poemata*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1992.

<sup>16</sup> B. Flusin, *Nicolas Mésarités. Éthopée d’un astrologue qui ne put devenir patriarche*, in «Mélanges Gilbert Dagron», Paris 2002, 235-241.

<sup>17</sup> G. Fatouros, *Die Briefe des Michael Gabras*, Vienna 1973.

the designation of the sender as indefinite and cannot be considered as irrelevant. The formula *ὡς ἀπό τινος* should thus be considered distinctive not only comparing to the 92 ‘real’ letters of the corpus but also comparing to the nine epistles which have been included by critics in the number of the fictional letters without having this marker.

Out of these six letters, *Ep. 52* has a particular status, having both the sender and the receiver plainly marked as fictional:

### *Ep. 52*

#### **Ὡς ἀπό τινος πρὸς τινα**

Οὐκ ἐπιλήσμονες ἡμεῖς, ἐν κυρίῳ τριφίλητε ἀδελφὲ κύριε Θεόδωρε, οὐκ ἐπιλήσμονες ἡμεῖς ἀγάπης ἐσμὲν καὶ μᾶλλον τῆς σῆς καθαρᾶς καὶ ἀδόλου· ἔνθεν τοι μηδὲ συνώθει μηδὲ νύττε ἡμᾶς ταῖς γραφαῖς ὡσπερ τινὰς περὶ φιλίαν νοθροὺς καὶ ἀμνήμονας. Ἡμεῖς γὰρ καθ’ ἐκάστην ὡς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν αὐτῶν ὑπὲρ τῆς σῆς ἀγάπης ὑπερλαλοῦμεν πρὸς τὸν ἀγιώτατον ἡμῶν δεσπότην τε καὶ πατέρα, ὅσα δὴ καὶ δυνάμεθα. Ἀπολαβὼν δὲ καὶ τὰ σταλέντα μοι ἀγριμαῖα παρὰ τῆς σῆς ἀδελφότητος εὐχαρίστησα τῇ ὄντως περὶ ἡμᾶς ἀδελφικῇ διαθέσει σου καὶ διὰ τοῦ παρόντος μου γράμματος προσκυνῶ σε καὶ κατασπάζομαι τὸν ἐμὸν ἀδελφόν. Ἔρωσο.

#### **To somebody as from someone**

I am not neglectful, Theodore, most beloved brother in God, I am not neglectful of your affection and especially of your goodness and your honesty; so, do not urge and do not press me with letters as you would do with somebody who is sluggish and neglectful in friendship. Sure enough, I am talking every day to our most holy Lord and Father for your sake as well as for mine, as much as I can. Receiving the venison that was sent me from your brotherhood, I sincerely thank your fraternal disposition towards me, and with this letter I revere you and I embrace you as my brother. Farewell.

The fictionality of this letter, which is a basic epistolary model, is clearly stated by the title, where both the sender and the recipient are referred to with indefinite pronouns (*ὡς ἀπό τινος πρὸς τινα*). Judging from the epithets they are qualified with, the two correspondents are likely to be monks, but there is no further clue about them: even the name of the recipient, Theodore (‘a gift from God’), could be merely a standard name. The epistle, which is a model of a high-standard epistolary



conversation between equals<sup>18</sup>, does not provide any other information. The letter is a sort of repertoire of themes and tones which were typical of Byzantine epistolography: the absence of the sender (who is absent bodily, but not spiritually)<sup>19</sup>, the expression of friendship<sup>20</sup>, the exchange of gifts<sup>21</sup>. The communication focusses on conventional friendship-related themes<sup>22</sup>: brotherly affection and loyalty, the vivid memory of the friend, the mediation for the friend's sake, the gratitude for a gift, friendly devotion.

In five other letters (*Ep.* 7, 9, 11, 15, 30) the indefinite pronoun occurs only in the designation of the sender, while the recipient is qualified differently (generally by the post he holds). In three epistles, the sender's specific role or position is mentioned (a deacon, a stranger, a eunuch), while in two others he is described merely with the indefinite formula:

*Ep.* 7: Ὡς ἀπό τινος διακόνου πρὸς ἐπίσκοπον

*Ep.* 9: Ὡς ἀπό τινος ξένου πρὸς τὸν τοῦ Παντεπόπτου ἡγούμενον

*Ep.* 11: Τῷ Γαλήνῳ δουκὶ Θρακησίου ὡς ἀπό τινος εὐνούχου βαϊούλου πορφυρογεννήτου

*Ep.* 15: Τῷ ἱερωτάτῳ μητροπολίτῃ Πατρῶν ὡς ἀπό τινος

*Ep.* 30: Τῷ πατριάρχει κυρῷ Μιχαήλ ὡς ἀπό τινος

In any case, while the expression ὡς ἀπό + genitive, taken on its own, could have simply attributed the letter to a different *persona loquens*, for instance a real sender who commissioned to Tzetzes the drafting of the letter, the presence of the indefinite pronoun works rather as a precise mark of fictionality. In most cases, a precise communicative situation is built up, and the letters are imagined to be addressed to a well-defined authority in a quite specific occasion. These letters offer some examples of epistolary communication with clergymen belonging to various ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy (the bishop, *Ep.* 7; the abbot, *Ep.* 9; the metropolitan, *Ep.* 15; the patriarch, *Ep.* 30) and, in a single case, with a non-ecclesiastic

<sup>18</sup> The presence of the appellative ἀδελφός indicates that the characters involved are equals, while a communication directed to a δεσπότης from a δοῦλος implies «a superior / inferior relationship»; see Mullett, *The detection* cit. 70.

<sup>19</sup> See Mullett, *Theophylact* cit. 13-15.

<sup>20</sup> Friendship was one of the most important themes of Byzantine epistolography, if not the most important overall. See Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche* cit. 222-223.

<sup>21</sup> See Mullett, *Theophylact* cit. 32-34.

<sup>22</sup> See Grünbart, *o.c.* 183: «Dieser Brief ist ein Muster für die Pflege des freundschaftlichen Tones».

authority (the *doux*, *Ep.* 11). The systematic use of the terms δοῦλος and δεσπότης states that the communicative act has a vertical direction: these epistles do not concern peer-to-peer conversation (as *Ep.* 52 does) but address higher-ranking members of the hierarchy<sup>23</sup>. These epistles seem to be meant to offer a model of interaction with authority, in order to address in an appropriate way someone who outranks the sender.

### *Ep. 7*

#### **Ὡς ἀπό τινος διακόνου πρὸς ἐπίσκοπον**

Ἦγιασμένε μοι δέσποτα, ἡ τῶν γενητῶν πραγμάτων φορὰ ὡς ἐκ φύσεως ἀειρρόως κυβευομένη καὶ μεταπίπτουσα νῦν καιρὸν ἡμῖν ἐπεισήγαγε διαιτητὴν ἀκριβῆ καὶ ταλαντοῦχον φιλίας ἐπιγνώμονα. Δείξεις δὲ νῦν καὶ αὐτὸς εἰ μὴ τηνάλλως ἦσαν μῦθοι τὰ πρῶην λεγόμενα παρὰ σοῦ, ὡς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ὑπερλαλήσαις ὀλοσχερέστερον χηρευούσης τινὸς ἐκκλησίας τοῦ ναυκληροῦντος αὐτήν, καὶ ὡς δείξαις φιλίαν ὄντως ἀκραιφνεστάτην καὶ ἀπροσποίητον καὶ τῆς σῆς εὐγενείας ἐπάξιον. Καλεῖ γάρ σε μονονουχὶ αὐτὸς ὁ καιρὸς, ναὶ μὴν καὶ ἡ χηρευούσα Μίδεια, πληρῶσαι ἀκραιφνεστάτην σου τῆς φιλίας ὑπόσχεσιν ἀγωνισάμενον λίαν καλῶς ὑπὲρ ἀνδρὸς γνησίου καὶ φίλου τοῦτον τὸν δίαυλον. Εἰ δέ γε τοῦτον ἀεθλεύσας πληρῶσεις τὸν ἄεθλον, τὰ μὲν λοιπὰ τῆς φιλίας σιγῶ, τοῦτο δὲ οὐκ ὀκνήσαμεν τρανότερον ἐπιφθέγξασθαι, ὡς μία ποιμνὴ ἐσεῖται ἢ

#### **As from a deacon to a bishop**

My saintly lord, the movement of earthly things, since by nature it incessantly plays at dice and undergoes changes, has now given me the occasion to judge accurately and assess the balance of your friendship. and as a judge holding the balance of affection. You will now show if the words you recently said were not mere words, that you would speak on my behalf if a Church was in absolute need of a guide, and you would give proof of a friendship that is truly most pure and unfeigned and worthy of your nobility. It is all but the occasion itself – yes, and Midea which lacks a guide – that calls you to keep your most pure promise of friendship, accomplishing with extraordinary success this run of an honest and beloved man. If, after your struggling, you will have carried out the challenge, I will omit the rest about friendship; but I would not hesitate to declare this more clearly: that your flock and Midea will be a single herd.

<sup>23</sup> See n. 18.

τε σὴ καὶ ἡ Μίδαία. Ἐγὼ δὲ ἄσχιλος μυρίαίς γενόμενος δουλείαις καὶ περιστάσεσιν αὐτοπροσώπως ἰδεῖν σε οὐκ ἴσχυσα διὰ τὸ μὴ ἐξελθεῖν με πάντως αὐτόθι· εἰδὼς δὲ τὴν φιλίαν ὅσα καὶ δύναται, διὰ τῆς παρουσίας γραφῆς μου ἤξιωσα τὴν σὴν μεγαλοφιλίαν ἅμα καὶ μεγαλόνοϊαν τῶν φιλικῶν θεσμῶν μὴ λαθέσθαι. Ἐρρωσὸ μοι ἡ ἱερὰ κεφαλή καὶ αἰδέσιμος.

For my part, having become busy due to countless work and contingencies, I could not see you in person, since I absolutely could not leave at the moment; but knowing friendship and the things it can do, I pray through the present letter that the greatness of your affection and the greatness of your spirit does not forget the laws of friendship. Farewell, holy and venerable head.

In *Ep.* 7 a deacon addresses a bishop inviting him to fill the vacant see of the city of Midea<sup>24</sup>. All we know about the characters involved is their position in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which reveals a communication from a low-rank ecclesiastic to a high-rank one. The concrete occasion is quite clearly alluded as the appointment of a new bishop for the city of Midea, which is described as being desperately in need of a guide. The deacon apologizes to him for not having met him in person, adducing some general occupation that made him too busy to leave, and asks for friendship and goodwill. The reference to friendship implies a more concrete request: the sender aspires to hold the vacant post and asks the recipient to give him a preferential treatment while filling the post. The request follows a promise from the recipient himself, a promise that the sender hopes will be something more than mere words. There is no reference to time and space, and even the reference to the city of Midea could be the result of a conventional choice. The name ‘Midea’ in this letter is glossed in the *Chiliads* (*Hist.* VI 72, 670-697) in a passage in which Tzetzes draws up a list of names which are very similar in sound and spelling but different in meaning: Μηδείας, Μηδίας, Μιδείας, Μειδίας<sup>25</sup>. This *Chiliads* passage shows an unusual and unprecedented treatment of the myth of king Midas. The reference to

<sup>24</sup> The name Μίδαία could be a misspelling of Μηδεία, a city in western Thrace mentioned in the *Notitia episcopatum* (cfr. *Not. Episc.* 17,262 Darrouzès); see also H. Ahrweiler, *Géographie historique du monde méditerranéen*, Paris 1988, 246.

<sup>25</sup> The first three nouns disambiguated in the list replicate the sequence of *Suda* μ 878-880 Adler. The attention dedicated to spelling is likely to reflect Tzetzes’ contempt for a certain attitude toward schedography. For Tzetzes’ criticism against schedographers, see P.A. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners: a Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 7-27.

the city of Midea brings in the history of its founder, king Midas. In the *Chiliads*, Midas is associated to ploughing and his accession to the throne is presented as fortuitous and unwilling: while he is going and ploughing, he is physically seized by the Phrygians, who needed a king, and crowned as their sovereign<sup>26</sup>. The history of king Midas is used to recall the appointment of the sender as the bishop of Midea: as in the mythical past Midas was compelled to be king by the will of the Phrygians, now the city itself, which is lacking a guide (*Ep.* 7, pp. 15,23-16,2 Leone: καλεῖ γὰρ σε [...] ἢ χηρεύουσα Μίδεια), seems to urge the recipient to become its bishop.

### *Ep.* 9

#### **Ὡς ἀπό τινος ξένου πρὸς τὸν τοῦ Παντεπόπτου ἡγούμενον**

Τολμῶν ὁ δοῦλός σου, θεοειδέστατε δέσποτα, καὶ πάλιν δέομαι τῆς σῆς ἀντιλήψεως· διέσωζες πρὶν ἡμᾶς ὑπὸ τὴν σὴν κιβωτόν, τὴν ἀγίαν λέγω μονήν, ἐκ τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ τῶν βιωτικῶν περιστάσεων, ὥσπερ ὁ Νῶέ ποτε τὴν τῶν ἀπάντων ζώων ἀπόμοιραν, καὶ παντοίως ἡμᾶς χειραγωγῶν περιέθαλπες. Ὡς δὲ τῆς σῆς ἀπεφοιτήσαμεν κιβωτοῦ (οὐπῶ γὰρ ἐφ' ἡμᾶς τὸ τῆς βασιλικῆς ἀγανακτήσεως ὕδωρ ἐκόπασε), μυρίοις τοῖς δυσχερέσι παλαίομεν κρῦει τε ἀμέτρῳ πηγνύμενοι καὶ τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἀπάντων στερούμενοι. Ἔνθεν τοι καὶ πάλιν ὥσπερ ὑπό τινα σωτήριον

#### **As from a foreigner to the abbot of the monastery of Christ *Pantepoptes***

I dare to call myself your servant, my godly lord, and again I need your protection; you have saved me before in your Ark – I mean your sacred monastery – from the flood of the difficulties of life, as Noah once saved a portion of all the living animals, and in guiding me you took care of me in all kinds of ways. Since I left your Ark – since for me the flood of the emperor's anger has not stopped yet – I have been facing countless hurdles, paralyzed by an immeasurable frost and devoid of all the necessary. Therefore, I seek salvation again in your godly protection as in a saving Ark, and I beg to have your former

<sup>26</sup> *Hist.* VI 72, 686-688: Μίδας γὰρ οὗτος ἀμαξεὺς ὦν τῶν ἀποτρεπόντων / βόας λαβὼν καὶ ἄροτρον, ἐξῆλθεν ἄροτρεύων / οἱ Φρύγες δ' ἀναρπάξαντες ποιοῦσι βασιλέα ("Midas, who worked as a ploughman, took his oxen and his plough and went out ploughing, but the Phrygians took him and made him their king"). This situation is a mythographic *hapax* appearing only in Tzetzes, since in Arrian (*An.* II 3) all this story is referred to Midas' father Gordius, rather than to Midas himself. A parallel can be found only within Tzetzes' own work: in *schol. Ar. Plut.* 287 Massa Positano the same history is reported with almost the same words in an abridged version of this passage.

κιβωτὸν πρὸς τὴν σὴν θεαιδεστάτην καταφεύγω ἀντίληψιν, χειραγωγίας τε τῆς προτέρας τυχεῖν ἀξιῶ καθ' ὅσον ὁ θεὸς ὀδηγήσει σε. Καὶ τίς γὰρ οὕτως ὡς σὺ θεοῦ μιμητής, τῶν πενεστέρων κηδόμενος, τροφήν πεινῶντων, πόρος ἀπόρων καὶ συνελῶν εἰπεῖν θάλασσα παντοίων καλῶν;

Ἄλλ' ὦ Προμηθεῦ, ἐνδεῶν εὐεργέτα,  
 ἀνθ' ὧν τὰ πάντα τυγχάνεις τοῖς ἀπόροις,  
 ἀντιμετρήσαι σοι θεὸς παντοκράτωρ  
 κληῖρον κατασχεῖν τῆς Ἑδέμ κληρουχίας.

guidance in as much as God will lead you. Who could be said to be, to such an extent as you, an imitator of God, a man caring about the poor, a nourishment for the starving, a way for the ones who have no way out and a sea that gathers all sort of goods?

But, o Prometheus, benefactor of the poor,  
 In return for all the things you are for the desperate ones  
 May Almighty God reward you  
 by giving you a lot in the land of Eden.

*Ep. 9* is a request addressed to the abbot of the Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes from an unspecified foreigner who declares himself in severe trouble, because someone in the court is opposing him. The epistle, which has a laudatory tone, offers an example of how to beg a higher-ranking person in order to obtain hospitality and protection. Great attention is paid to the choice of words, imagery, and allusions. The text has a solid and well-organized figurative basis: the image of the monastery in which the foreigner hope to find asylum is entrenched in the metaphor of Noah's Ark, the image of the flood of life's harshness is based on the flood myth narrated in the book of *Genesis*. The anger of God that originated the flood is replicated in the βασιλική ἀγανάκτησις which threatens the sender and compels him to seek refuge in his Ark once more.

The letter ends with four dodecasyllabic verses where the abbot, being a generous benefactor, is depicted as a Prometheus bound to be rewarded by God with a place in Eden. One could argue that Prometheus, although being undoubtedly a benefactor, did not quite receive a prize in return for his philanthropy; nevertheless, the choice of Prometheus is not left to chance. The Titan is effectively a perfect character for symbolizing benefaction toward mankind, and the association between Prometheus and a prize obtained from God could satisfy a certain taste for oxy-

moron, creating a sharper imagery. The Titan's name itself could moreover be, in Tzetzes' mind, a citation of the Christ's epithet *Pantepoptes*, eponymous of the monastery. The choice of this monastery, founded by Anna Delassene circa 1087 and named after "Christ the All-Seeing", is easily attributable to the great importance it had acquired during the Komnenian age, to the strong link it had with the Komnenians themselves and to the role it had in the statement of their power<sup>27</sup>. Prometheus's name, meaning "foreseeing", "foreknowing" (in opposition to his brother Epimetheus, the "after-thinker") could thus be a fine reference to the epithet *Pantepoptes* of the title.

### Ep. 11

#### Τῷ Γαλήνῳ δουκὶ Θρακησίου ὡς ἀπὸ τινος εὐνούχου βαϊούλου πορφυρογεννήτου

Μεγαλεπιφανέστατέ μοι αὐθέντα καὶ ἀδελφὲ δοῦξ τοῦ θέματος Θρακησίου, φῆμαι πολλὰ πολλοῦ τὸ σὸν φιλοδίκαιον περιθρulloῦσι καὶ κηρυκεύουσιν· ἡμεῖς δὲ μόνοι, ὡς ἔοικε, παρὰ τῆς σῆς μεγαλεπιφανείας τὸ Φιλοποίμενος πάσχειν δοκοῦμεν. Φιλοποίμην γὰρ ἐκεῖνος ὁ Κραύσιδος στρατηγὸς ὑπῆρχεν Ἑλλάδος, ἀνὴρ δὲ τᾶλλα γενναῖος τελῶν ἐνέδει

#### To Galen, *doux* of the Thracesian Theme, as from a eunuch, advisor of a porphyrogenite.

My most eminent lord and brother, *doux* of the Thracesian Theme, many reports resound everywhere and announce your love for justice, but I alone, it seems, appear to suffer the fate of Philopoemen from your Eminence. Philopoemen, son of Crausis<sup>28</sup>, was general of Greece, although he was regarded as

<sup>27</sup> Scholars usually identify the *Pantepoptes* monastery with the mosque which is nowadays called *Eski İmaret Camii*, even if this identification is not unanimous. In regard of the monastery, see the introductory section of R. Flaminio, *La decorazione scultorea della chiesa di Cristo Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Camii) a Costantinopoli*, in Ch. Pennas-C. Vanderheyde (edd.), *La sculpture byzantine, VIIe-XIIIe siècles*. «Actes du colloque international organisé par la 2e Éphorie des antiquités byzantines et l'École française d'Athènes (6-8 septembre 2000)», Athènes 2008, 39-53. Concerning the debate on the identification: C. Mango, *Where at Constantinople was the monastery of Christos Pantepoptes?*, «Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας» XX/3 (1998) 87-88.

<sup>28</sup> The name of Philopoemen's father is attested in all the sources as Craugis (e.g. Plut. *Phil.* 1,1; Paus. IV 29,8, VIII 49,2, etc.) but in Tzetzes' works, whether it is due to a conscious innovation or to inaccuracy, it is always spelled Κραῦσις, a form for whom there are no other parallels.

μορφῆς. Ἐνθεν τοι καὶ πρὸς ἐστίασιν ἐς περιφανοῦς τινος κληθεὶς Μεγαρέως καὶ ἀπελθὼν τῆς ἀπρεποῦς ἐκείνου μορφῆς πρόπουσαν τιμωρίαν ἐφεύρατο. Ἐτυχε γὰρ οἴκοι τῷ τότε μὴ παρεῖναι τὸν Μεγαρέα, ἡ δὲ τοῦ Μεγαρέως ἐκείνου γυνὴ δυσειδῆ τὸν Φιλοποίμενα βλέψασα ξύλα σχίζειν κελεύει θεράποντα τοῦτον νομίσασα· ὁ δ' ὢν τὸν τρόπον ἐπεικῆς τὸ κελευσθὲν διειργάζετο. Ὡς δ' ὁ Μεγαρεὺς ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν τοῦτον ἀνέκραγε· “Τί τοῦτο δοῶς, ὦ Φιλοποίμην;” “Τί δ' ἄλλο”, φησὶν ἐκεῖνος, “ἢ κακᾶς μορφᾶς τίννυμι δίκαν;” Καὶ ἡμεῖς δέ, ὡς ἔοικε, παρὰ σοῦ εὐνοχικοῦ σώματος ἀσθενοῦς τινύομεν δίκας. Τί δέ μοι βούλεται ταῦτα κατάκουε. Ἀνεψιάς ἐμῆς ὀρφανῆς ἐν τῷ ὑπὸ σέ θεματι κτῆμα τυγχάνει προάστειον καὶ παντοίως ἐπηρεάζεται ἢ καὶ τελείως καταβιβρώσκεται. Ἄξιῳ γοῦν τὴν σὴν μεγαλεπιφάνειαν ἐαθῆναι τοῦτο ἀνεπηρέαστον, καὶ ἕξεις καὶ ἀπὸ θεοῦ χάριν καὶ ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἀγάπην καὶ ἀνακήρυξιν· εἰ δ' οὐ, ὁ ἐμὸς αὐθέντης εἰσάξει με καὶ ῥιφήσομαι παρὰ πόδας τοῦ κραταιοῦ ἡμῶν αὐτοκράτορος τοῦ πάντα δικαίως κρίνειν εἰδότης, καὶ τούτου μοι πάλιν ἐπαναλάμψοι τὸ δίκαιον. Ἡ ἀγάπη σου χαρισθεῖ μοι.

excellent as for the rest, he lacked in beauty. For this reason, when he was invited to a banquet by a famous man of Megara, getting there, he discovered the punishment that befitted his unbecoming appearance. Indeed, it happened that the Megarian was not at home at that time: that man's wife, seeing that Philopoemen was ugly, commanded him to chop the wood, mistaking him for a servant. Since he had a mild nature, he obeyed the order. When, after coming back and seeing all that, the Megarian cried out: “Why are you doing this, Philopoemen?” he said: “Why on earth, if not to serve the sentence for my ugliness?” And I too, it seems, serve the sentence for my weak eunuch's body at your hands. Listen what it means for me. In the Theme that you rule, there is a suburban possession belonging to a cousin of mine who has no relatives, and it is being damaged in all kinds of ways and it is completely decaying. I beg therefore your Eminence to keep it safe; you will get grace from God, and love and public praise from me. Otherwise, my lord will introduce me, and I will throw myself at the feet of our powerful emperor, who knows how to judge everything fairly, and thanks to him justice will shine again for me. May your love show favour to me.

In *Ep.* 11 the characters are described with a higher level of specificity, to such a point that we can identify the time and the place to whom the situation refers. The

sender is an unnamed eunuch, defined by his role as advisor of a porphyrogenite, and the receiver is Galen, *doux* of the Thracesian theme. Grünbart identifies the recipient with the Galen who is attested in 1133 as *katepano* in Smyrna (which is in the theme of the Thraceseans) and dates the epistle to 1139<sup>29</sup>. The emperor whom the sender declares himself ready to address if the *doux* refuses to help is anyway John II Komnenos (who reigned until 1143).

The communicative occasion is a request of protection (or a preventive move against any malversation) on behalf of a cousin, addressed to the *doux* by a eunuch holding a high place in the court. It is not clear which of the two ranks higher, since the addressee is called *αὐθέντα καὶ ἀδελφῆ*, but the relationship seems to be one between equals. The qualification of the sender as a eunuch is not a descriptive detail of secondary importance, since it imprints an important mark on the text. The sender's actual claim appears indeed to be relegated to a hasty and quite vague mention toward the end of the epistle<sup>30</sup>, whose more substantial part deals with the sender's personal condition, filtrated through the anecdote of Philopoemen, the Greek general who was strong and noble, but, it seems, outstandingly ugly<sup>31</sup>. Just as Philopoemen, mistaken for a servant, must expiate his ugliness, similarly the sender, in spite of his high social position, perceives his condition of *eunouchia* as something to atone for<sup>32</sup>. The narrative element is of paramount importance, since the anecdote is extensively narrated and occupies most of the epistle, whose tone is even animated by the use of direct speech<sup>33</sup>. The model of *ethopoia* appears to have a particularly strong influence on this epistle, which easily fits the characteristics of the exercise,

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<sup>29</sup> Grünbart, *o.c.* 181. The date would be consistent with the frame of the collection of the *Letters*, which is supposed to follow a chronological order: *Ep.* 10, dedicated to the death of his brother Isaac, is dated 1138 (by both Giske, *o.c.* 9, and Grünbart, *o.c.* 184), *Ep.* 12 is dated to around 1138, and *Ep.* 13 dates to 1139 (Grünbart, *o.c.* 185; *paulo post decimam* Giske, *o.c.* 9).

<sup>30</sup> Tzetzes thus obeys the general tendency in Byzantine epistolography to avoid giving too much space to a third person whose presence, although necessary, could distract attention from the true focus of the letter, that is the relationship between the sender and the writer. See Mullett, *Theophylact* cit. 18.

<sup>31</sup> Tzetzes' replication of the story is functional to the parallel he builds with the physical condition of the eunuch. Although all the ancient sources clearly say that Philopoemen had no real physical deformity, he proposes his ugliness as a matter of fact both in the epistle and in the history.

<sup>32</sup> It is well known that eunuchs had social relevance in the Byzantine court and that *eunouchia* was a way of rising in society. Nevertheless, the despicable condition of eunuchs is a conventional *topos* in Byzantine literature. See C. Messis, *Les eunuques à Byzance, entre réalité et imaginaire*, Paris 2014, 213-228.

<sup>33</sup> Tzetzes reproduces Plutarch's passages quite literally, inserting the direct speech exactly in the same place and using a very similar structure and equivalent words. Cf. Plut. *Phil.* 2,4; Tzetz. *Ep.* 11, p. 20,7-9 Leone; *Hist.* VI 84, 850-852.



so that one would not even be surprised to read it under the customary title of an *ethopoia*, “τίνας ἂν εἶποι λόγους...”.

### Ep. 15

#### Τῷ ἱερωτάτῳ μητροπολίτῃ Πατρῶν ὡς ἀπό τινος

Ἄτρωνῆ μὲν καὶ ἄκοιμνον περὶ τὸ γράφειν τὴν γλῶτταν ἐσχῆκαμεν, ὃ ἱερώτατε δέσποτα, οὗ ἔνεκα καὶ ὑπεστελλόμεθα ἐπιστέλλειν τῇ σῇ ἀγιότητι, καὶ τὴν Πυθαγορείαν ἀσκοῦντες ὠρώμεθα σιωπὴν, καθὰ καὶ αὐτὸς ἡμῖν κατωνείδισας, καίτοι καὶ συγγενικὴν πατροθειόθεν στοργὴν εἰδότες τηροῦντά σε πρὸς ἡμᾶς. Πλὴν εἰ καὶ ταῖς γραφαῖς Πυθαγόρειον ἡσκοῦμεν τὴν σιωπὴν, ἀλλ’ οὐχὶ καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις ἐπεσιγάζομεν, οὐδὲ πατρῷας φιλίας ἡμεν ἀμνήμονες, ἀλλὰ παντοίως τὰ πρὸς σὴν θεραπείαν ἐσπεύδομεν. Βραδεῖς δὲ οὐχ ἡμεῖς περὶ τὰς ἀποδείξεις τῶν σῶν τελεσμάτων ἐφάνημεν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ μὲν τὸν χρόνον τὸν περίσου κωλύμην δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς γενέσθαι γινώσκεις τὴν ἐκστρατείαν τοῦ κραταιοῦ ἡμῶν αὐτοκράτορος τὴν πρὸς Κιλικίαν καὶ Ἀντιόχειαν. Ἐστάλησαν μὲν γὰρ παρ’ ἡμῶν περὶ τὴν Ἀντιόχειαν τότε οἱ πρόσγραφοι, ὅπως αἱ ἀποδείξεις ταχινώτερον γένοιτο, καὶ μόλις ὄψε ταύτας ἀπεδεξάμεθα, τοῦ πανσεβάστου σεβαστοῦ κυρίου Ἀδριανοῦ ταύτας ἀποκομίσαντος. Ἡ βραδυτὴς δὲ τῶν ἀποδείξεων τῶν τελεσμάτων τῆς νῦν ἐγχρονίας οὐκ ἄλλοθεν ποθεν ἐγένετο ἢ ἐκ τοῦ μὴ τὸν γραμματηφόρον ὑποχείριον εἶναι τῆς σῆς ἀγιότητος, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τοῦ μὴ σῶα πεμφθῆναι

#### To the holy metropolitan of Patras as from someone

My tongue is obscure and unadorned in writing, my holy lord, therefore I hesitated to write to your holiness and I seemed to practice the Pythagorean silence which you blamed me for, and yet I know the innate affection of uncle that you keep towards me. Even though I observe the Pythagorean silence in writings, nonetheless I am not silent in doing, and I am not forgetful of paternal love; quite the opposite, I was striving to be at your service. It is not I that am late with the receipts of these payments, but you know that last year the military expedition of our mighty emperor in Cilicia and to Antioch was an obstacle. At the time I sent the officers to Antioch, so that the receipts might happen more quickly, and I received them only a long time later, when the *pansebastos sebastos* lord Adrian brought them back. The now considerable delay of the receipts of your payments is due to nothing but the fact that the letter-carrier was not under the control of your holiness and that the payments

καὶ τὰ τελέσματα. ὅμως καὶ οὕτω τοῦ πράγματος ἔχοντος ἡμεῖς συγγενικὴν ἀγάπην ἐπιδειξάμενοι τὸ λείπον ἐθεραπεύσαμεν καὶ ταύτας ἀποπληρώσαντες ἀπεστάλκευμεν τῇ σῇ ἱερότητι. Τὴν εὐλογίαν τοῦ πρωτοκλήτου ἀποστόλου ἀπέλαβον καὶ τῇ ἀγιωσύνῃ σου εὐχαρίστησα. Περιεῖχε δὲ τὸ ἱερόν σου γράμμα δηλοῦν με τῇ σῇ ἀγιότητι, καὶ εἴ τινος ἐν χρειᾷ γενοίμην τῶν ὄντων καὶ γινομένων αὐτόθι, ἐγὼ δὲ εὖ ἴσθι ὡς δέομαι μὲν οὐδενὸς τῶν αὐτόθι ἢ τῆς σῆς ἀγίας εὐχῆς. Εἰ δέ τινος καὶ δεοίμην ἐτέρου, οὐκ ἂν τῇ σῇ ἀγιωσύνῃ ἐδήλωσα· πολλοῖς γὰρ διαβεβόηται τὸ φιλότιμόν σου καὶ μεγαλόδωρον καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ τοῦτο λίαν καλλίστως ἐπίσταμαι· διὰ τοι τοῦτο καὶ εἴ τινος ἐδεόμην, οὐκ ἔδει πρὸς εὐγενῆ καὶ εὐγνώμονα καὶ τῷ ὄντι ἀρχιερέα καὶ μεγαλόδωρον καὶ μόνον τὸ δέον ἐπιστάμενον γράφειν με. Ἡ ἱερά σου καὶ θεία εὐχὴ χαρισθείη μοι.

were not complete when they were sent. However, even though this is the way things are, I took care of the rest and after topping it up I sent them to your holiness, giving proof of familial affection. I also received the blessing of the apostle who was called first and I expressed gratitude to your holiness. Your holy letter includes to the instruction to inform your holiness if I am in need of something among the things which are or have been here, but rest assured that I do not need any of the things that are there, except for your holy prayer. If I needed something else, I would not inform your holiness; indeed, your generosity and munificence resound in many places and I know them very well indeed myself. For this reason, if I needed something else, it would not be necessary for me to write to you, noble and right-minded and truly a high priest, and munificent and the one to be aware of what is needed. May your holy and godly prayer show favour to me.

This epistle too, like *Ep.* 11, contains some concrete details and references to facts and people and appears to be adapted to a real situation. The sender is completely undefined (both his name and his role stay obscure) and the epistle addresses a sender who is qualified only by his role of metropolitan of Patras. However, a specific historical event is referred to: the military expedition in Cilicia and to Antioch which John II Komnenos started in 1138. Since the sender says that the expedition was led during the previous year, the epistle can be dated with certainty to 1139. Another prominent figure is mentioned: Adrian Komnenos, son of the *sebastokrator* Isaac (the emperor's uncle), who took part in the expedition and was later rewarded with the position of archbishop of Bulgaria. The setting is bureaucratic: the

sender justifies himself for a delay in sending some documents attesting the payment of taxes. The anonymous writer says that he sent the documents to Antioch as required, but they were delayed due to some problems connected to the military expedition and that they are now waiting to be sent to Patras. He closes the letter by saying he topped up the payment himself and took care of the other things he was supposed to settle and reiterating his position of affection and trust towards the metropolitan. Being involved with tax payments and mediating between important clergymen, the sender is certainly supposed to be an official; Grünbart proposes to identify him with a *logariastes*, a fiscal authority dealing with the ecclesiastical hierarchy<sup>34</sup>.

### Ep. 30

#### Τῷ πατριάρχει κυρῷ Μιχαήλ ὡς ἀπό τινος

Τοσοῦτον ἐκ τῶν σῶν δοῦλος ἐγὼ πολλοστός, τοσοῦτον ἐλάχιστος, τοσοῦτον ἀνάξιος τῶν σῶν μεγαλοδωρεῶν, ὃ θεοπρόβλητε δέσποτα, ὃ πατριαρχῶν ἀκροθίνιον, ὃ τῶν ὑλαίων τούτων καὶ χαμερπῶν ὑπερ-κείμενε, ὃ παρὰ τῆς ἄνωθεν δεξιᾶς τοιούτοις δυσχερεστάτοις καιροῖς ἐπιβραβευθεὶς ἡμῖν φρουρὰ καὶ ὀχύρωμα, οὗ τὸ δάκρυον τὴν γῆν ἀνωμάλως ταλαντουμένην καταχεθὲν ὑπεστήριξεν ὡσπερ τι κολλητικώτατον ἔδρασμα, οὗπερ αἱ προσευχαὶ καὶ νηστεῖαι θεμελιούχον βάθρον γεγονάσιν ἄρρηκτον, ὃ τῷ ὑλαίῳ μὲν καὶ πηλίνῳ σώματι ἀνθρώπου, τῇ πολιτείᾳ ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπον, τοσοῦτον ἄτιμος ἐγὼ, τοσοῦτον ἀνάξιος τῶν σῶν μεγαλοδωρεῶν, θεοτίμητε. Ἐκτρέφεις μὲν γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς μυριάδας λαοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἐμὸν Ἰησοῦν, κἂν οὐκ ἐξ ὀλίγων κλασμάτων,

#### To the Patriarch Michael as from someone

So much I am the last of your servants, so much the humblest, so much unworthy of your generosity, O God-blessed lord, o topmost among the Patriarchs, superior to these material and earthly things! You who have been established by the divine hand as our protector and fortress in these difficult times, whose tear, poured on the earth that shakes irregularly, strengthened it as the most tightly-joined support, whose prayers and fasts are an invulnerable foundation and basis, o man with a corporeal body made of clay but superior to humans in behaviour, so much am I dishonourable and unworthy of your generosity, o God-honored lord. You nourish thousands of people, as my Jesus did, and

<sup>34</sup> Grünbart, *o.c.* 182.

ἀλλ' ἐξ ὀλοκλήρων τῶν ἄρτων, καὶ χρυσίον δὲ ἄλλοις ἀφειδестέρως ἀντλεῖς καὶ ἄλλοις ἄλλα τὰ χρειωδέστατα, ἡμεῖς δὲ τῶν ἀρτοκλασμάτων καὶ τοῦ χοροῦ τῶν σῶν δαιτυμόνων καθυστερίζομεν ἢ καὶ παντελῶς παρορώμεθα. Τὸ περὶ πάντας γοῦν προσηνές σου καὶ φιλόανθρωπον, ὃ θεοείκελε δέσποτα, κάμὲ τολμητίαν ποιεῖ, καὶ δέομαι τῆς μεγίστης ἀγιωσύνης σου εὐλογίαν ἡμερησίαν προσκυρωθῆναί μοι δίδοσθαι ἐφ' ὅρῳ παντὶ τῆς ζωῆς μου.

not with a few bites, but with entire loaves; to some you give money abundantly and you provide others with what they need most; but I was falling behind the bites of bread and the choir of your dinner companions, or indeed I was completely neglected. Your kindness and your goodwill towards everybody, O God-like lord, make me daring too, and I ask your great holiness that your daily blessing is confirmed for me and given me until the end of my life.

This letter is addressed to Michael II Kourkouas (also named Michael Oxeites), who was chosen as Patriarch of the capital by Manuel I Komnenos and was in office from 1143 (the year of the death of both the emperor John II Komnenos and the Patriarch Leo Styppes) to 1146. Nevertheless, despite the mention of a specific recipient, the epistle seems not to refer to any practical communicative occasion. The epistle has a complimentary tone and, since most of its text is constituted by quite fulsome praises of the Patriarch, it hardly goes beyond a mere display of flattery. The Patriarch is portrayed with a trend for hyperbole and manifest exaggeration (*e.g.* his tears would be able to fix the earth shaken by an earthquake; he would feed thousands of people); he is represented as an extraordinarily generous person whose *euergesia* is comparable to the miracle of Christ feeding the crowd with five loaves (see *Matthew* 14,17-21, *Mark* 6,38-44, *Luke* 12-17, *John* 6,9-13). The unspecified sender, instead, presents himself as the only one who was left behind by his generosity, being unworthy of the Patriarch's divine benevolence. What the sender asks, after a long praise that was supposed to be introductory but that occupies in fact most of the epistle, is simply to benefit from the Patriarch's munificence.

In these six letters, Tzetzes creates a fictitious communicative situation in which the sender and the recipient act following the schemes and the conventions of Byzantine epistolography. They can be defined, with good reason, *progymnasmata-epistles*<sup>35</sup>, since they share with preparatory exercises the role of rhetorical model,

<sup>35</sup> All these six letters are labelled as epistolary models by Maria Margarita Kevrekidou in her MA thesis: M.M. Kevrekidou, Το επιστολογραφικό corpus του Ιωάννη Τζέτζη: παραλήπτες, χορηγοί και προστάτες ενός λογίου του 12ου αιώνα, diss. Thessaloniki 2013 (available online at

the fictitious setting, and the adherence to the convention of their own genre.

3. *Ep. 12, 16, 17, 20, 35, 41, 62, 63, 64*: ‘real’ letters connected with Tzetzes’ activity

Beside the six epistles whose undetermined sender is qualified with the formula ὡς ἀπό τινος, nine more letters have been included in the number of the fictional ones. There is no consensus towards them among critics: if *Epp. 62, 63 and 64* were already included in the number by Giske, *Ep. 12* is considered fictitious only by Leone and Grünbart, while *Epp. 16, 17, 20, 35 and 41* are suspected as *Musterbriefe* or *Auftragswerke* by Grünbart alone. All these letters are joined by the absence of the indefinite expression ὡς ἀπό τινος, absence which cannot fail to be significant in a *corpus* whose elaboration was carefully planned by its author himself. In titles of these epistles there is no mention of the sender; consequently, there is no reason to suppose that the author wants to attribute the letters to a different *persona loquens*. Once established that the sender of these epistles is supposed to be Tzetzes himself, the difference between them and the rest of the *corpus* (that is, the difference from the remaining 92 letters which are considered ordinary) no longer holds. Given that, these letters are more likely to be an effective part of Tzetzes’ communicative network and to be related to concrete situations, although they remain, unsurprisingly, strongly influenced by their literary perspective. A major part of these nine epistles seems to be related to episodes of Tzetzes’ scholarly and teaching activity<sup>36</sup>.

*Ep. 12*: Πρὸς τινὰ γραμματικόν (To a grammarian<sup>37</sup>)

*Ep. 16*: Πρὸς ἐπίσκοπον ἀξιοῦντα μετ’ εὐγνωμοσύνης τὰ στελλόμενα παρ’ αὐτοῦ δέχεσθαι καὶ Ἰωάννη τὸν Λέοντα ἐπιγράψαντα πρὸς ὃν ἐστέλλετο τὰ στελλόμενα (To a bishop who asks with

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<http://ikee.lib.auth.gr/record/132536>). The epistles are defined as, respectively: επιστολή προγύμνασμα (*Ep. 7*, p. 34; *9*, p. 36; *11*, p. 37; *15*, p. 42); επιστολή πρότυπο (*Ep. 30*, p. 54); επιστολή υπόδειγμα (*Ep. 52*, p. 72).

<sup>36</sup> This article does not include text and translation of all these nine epistles, by reason of space and focus: I only provide the Greek text and the English translation of *Ep. 12* and of the triptych of *Ep. 62-64*, i.e. of the epistles which are classified by Leone as *ad exercitationem accommodatae*.

<sup>37</sup> Although neither *Ep. 12* nor *Ep. 17* seem to be fictional, it seems remarkable that the recipients of *Ep. 12* and *17* are indicated using the expression πρὸς τινά. The expression does not occur in the corpus except in some of the fictitious epistles, five out of the total 107 (*Ep. 7, 9, 12, 17, 52*). It may be relevant that πρὸς + accusative is the construction which is used to refer to the addressee of *ethopoiiai*. It is used by Aphthonius (*Prog. IX 4*) to indicate the character the speech is addressed to in the genre of *ethopoiia* which he calls “double”, and the recipient of the *ethopoiia* was already referred to with the expression τὸ πρὸς ὃ ὁ λόγος by Theon (*Prog. 70,24-25*, p. 115 Spengel).

frankness to receive the things that were sent from him and who dubs John, to whom he sent them, ‘Lion’)

*Ep.* 17: Πρός τινά γραμματικόν (To a grammarian)

*Ep.* 20: Ἦρωας ὑβρίζοντι λουτροκανθάρω<sup>38</sup> (To a scarab who insults heroes)

*Ep.* 35: Φίλφ ἀξιώσαντι γράψαι ἱκετηρίαν κομψὴν ἀττικίζουσιν (To a friend who asks to write a refined supplication in an Attic style)

*Ep.* 41: Τῷ πατριαρχικῷ ὑπομνήσκοντι (To the Patriarch’s ὑπομνήσκων)

*Ep.* 62: Ἀπαιδέτου πατρί (To the father of an ignorant child)

*Ep.* 63: Τινὶ διαβολεῖ (To a slanderer)

*Ep.* 64: Τινὶ μωμοσκόπῳ (To a blemish-examiner)

### *Ep.* 12

#### Πρός τινά γραμματικόν

Λογιώτατε γραμματικέ, ἀρκούντως παρὰ τῆς σῆς μεγαλεπιφανείας παροινηθέντες τε καὶ παιχθέντες ἠνέγκαμεν· ἐλογισάμεθα οὖν δέον μηκέτι τὴν σὴν ἐξωχληθέμεν μεγαλεπιφάνειαν, ἵνα μὴ καὶ περαιτέρω τὰ τῆς παροινίας ἡμῖν προχωρήσειε. Τὰ δ’ ἄλλα σιγῶ, τὸ δὲ τῶν γραφησομένων ἐδάφιον καλῶς καὶ πλατέως τοῖς βουλομένοις πάντα δηλώσειεν, ἀμέραι δ’ ἐπίλοιποι μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι<sup>39</sup>. Οὐ τῶν ῥαδίως γὰρ

#### To a grammarian

O most learned grammarian! I have tolerated enough to be outraged and mocked by your magnificence; I think therefore there is no more need for me to importune your magnificence, so that your outrage does not proceed further against me. I omit the rest, but the text of what will be written will explain everything correctly and abundantly to the ones who want to know: «the future days are the wisest witnesses». I am not among those who can easily be

<sup>38</sup> As far as we know, the word λουτροκάνθαρος is an absolute hapax, being attested only in the title of this epistle. The epithet is undoubtedly an insult; Grünbart, *o.c.* 185 defines it as: «eine Schabe, die sich gerne im Feuchten aufhält (vielleicht *blatta orientalis*)». The reference is to the Homeric Thersites who, being a coward, criticizes the Greek heroes and could be an allusion of a less talented scholar who dares to criticize a more brilliant colleague (namely Tzetztes himself). On Tzetzean insults see Julia Mantova’s chapter in this volume; on Tzetztes and Thersites, that by Valeria F. Lovato.

<sup>39</sup> Pind. *Ol.* I 33.

παιζομένων ἡμεῖς, καὶ ἀνέχεσθαι καὶ μακροθυμεῖν μεμαθήκαμεν.  
Ἔρρωσο παίζων ἡμᾶς, εἰ παικτέοι σοι λογιζόμεθα, ἀλλ' ἔδει καὶ Προμη-  
θέως φροντίδα ποιεῖσθαί σε, μήποτε καὶ πεῖραν λάβῃς Μεταμελείας  
τῆς Ἐπιμηθέως παιδός.

mocked, even if I have learned to tolerate and be patient. Go on mocking me, if you think I should be mocked, but you should also take care of Prometheus' thoughts, in order not to experience *Metameleia* [*i.e.* 'repentance'], daughter of Epimetheus.

*Ep.* 12 is piece of vivid and caustic irony directed against a colleague. Tzetzes reports that he has been mocked and discredited by the recipient, a grammarian, and to have run out of patience towards his behaviour. This epistle is radically different from the group of six *progymnasmata*-letters in terms of contents and form: it is neither an epistolary model nor to a letter produced on commission, but rather a small piece of a literary *querelle*. *Ep.* 12 does not show the typical features and the topoi of Byzantine epistolography, it focuses on the blame of a single adversary and seems to refer to a concrete episode. Based on the corresponding passage in the *Chiliads*<sup>40</sup> (VI 85, 854-895) the dispute may have arisen from a disagreement on etymology. The focus is on wine and on drinking games such as *kottabos*, and on the etymology of *παροιμία* and *προπηλακισμός* in particular. It seems that the controversy could have originated precisely from a different etymology: while a grammarian – whose name does not even deserve to be mentioned – states that the word was derived from 'mud', Tzetzes offers a different (and of course better) etymology connecting the word to wine and to the comic and symposiastic sphere.

The fact of portraying colleagues as villainous, injurious, and ignorant people, together with the strong (and somewhat threatening) self-defense, is a fairly characteristic trait of Tzetzes' production. The teaching milieu of the Komnenian age was a working environment in which competition was fierce and where each professional was busy not only affirming his ability as a scholar and a teacher but also criticizing others' work in order to discredit his rivals<sup>41</sup>. Tzetzes, who was not part of the circles

<sup>40</sup> A reference to *Chiliads* themselves could be seen in the mention of "the text of what will be written" which "will explain everything correctly and abundantly". After all, to clarify things and to provide information to those who wants to learn is exactly the aim of the *Chiliads* in relation to the *Epistles*: see also the introduction to this volume, pp. xxiii-xxv.

<sup>41</sup> All Byzantine literature is scattered with references to cases of harsh competition and mockery of rivals between scholars and schoolteachers. See for instance F. Bernard, *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry 1025-1081*, Oxford 2014, 254-259, 266-276. Rivalry between schools was

which were closer to the court and did not manage to obtain a prestigious teaching position, had a compelling need of self-promotion<sup>42</sup>.

*Ep.* 12 is not an isolated case in Tzetzes' letter collection, since there are many other letters addressed to more or less identifiable colleagues or learned men. A parallel could be found with the homonymous *Ep.* 17, where Tzetzes harshly urges a colleague to give him back some book that he had borrowed. A polemical invective (not necessarily directed against a colleague, even if it is most likely) animates also *Ep.* 20, when the recipient, described as an insect who dares to insult heroes, is mocked because of his vile aspect and behaviour and is compared to Thersites insulting the Achaeans<sup>43</sup>. *Ep.* 16 focusses on the contrast between Tzetzes and a bishop. The letter is highly sophisticated, and it is so strongly centred on the private relationship between the two that it is sometimes obscure to decode for the external reader. Nevertheless, some elements seem to emerge clearly: an exchange of gifts undoubtedly occurred, as well as a crack in the friendship between the sender and the recipient and a skirmish concerning the appellative 'lion' that the sender gave to Tzetzes, blaming him for being arrogant and voracious. As far as *Ep.* 35 is concerned, the addressee is referred to as a rhetor and the focus is on rhetorical production and imitation (one of the corresponding passages, *Hist.* VIII 169, 94-123, contains the definition and practical examples of the Hermogenic concepts of κόλλησις, the union of a quotation with one's own text, and παρωδία, the union of a quotation with one's own text with a partial redrafting and reinterpretation, see Herm. *Meth.* 30 Rabe).

The last three epistles of this group, included among the fictitious epistles by Giske, Leone and Grünbart, are connected to concrete teaching controversies. These

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also framed in specific contests between pupils centred on the practice of schedography. On schedography see I. Vassis, *Schedographie*, NP XI (2002) 152-153, and, at least, R. Browning, *Il codice Marciano Gr. XI.31 e la schedografia bizantina*, in *Miscellanea marciana di studi bessarionei*, Padova 1976, 21-34; I. Polemis, Προβλήματα τῆς βυζαντινῆς σχεδογραφίας, «Hellenika» XLV (1995) 277-302; and recently P.A. Agapitos, *Literary Haute Cuisine and Its Dangers. Eustathios of Thessalonike on schedography and everyday language*, «DOP» LXIX (2015) 225-242; Id., *Learning to read and write a schedos: The verse dictionary of Paris. Gr. 400*, in P. Odorico-S. Efthymiadis-I.D. Polemis (edd.), *Pour une poétique de Byzance. «Hommage à Vassilis Katsaros»*, Paris 2015, 11-24; Id., *Blemish examiners* cit.; F. Nousia, *Byzantine Textbooks of the Palaeologan Period*, Città del Vaticano 2016, 49-92.

<sup>42</sup> See M. Savio, *Polemica e invettiva nelle opere di Giovanni Tzetze: screditare i concorrenti e pubblicizzare l' "eccellenza tzetziiana"*, «RFIC» CXLVI (2018) 181-238; Ead., *Screditare per valorizzare. Giovanni Tzetze, le sue fonti, i committenti e la concorrenza*, Roma 2020; A. Pizzone, *Self-authorization and strategies of autography in John Tzetzes: The Logismoi rediscovered*, «GRBS» LX/4 (2020) 652-690, esp. 678-690.

<sup>43</sup> Maybe a metaphor of an untalented and arrogant scholar who disparages his more brilliant colleagues.



are the three shortest epistles of the corpus, being constituted by a single sentence: *Ep.* 63, the shortest ‘letter’ overall, is made of seven words which constitute a single trimeter<sup>44</sup>. The author himself refers to *Ep.* 64 as ἐπιστόλιον (*Hist.* IX 298, 959), while in the scholion to *Ep.* 62 (*schol.* 92,10, p. 169 Leone) these letters are called Λακωνικὰ ἐπιστολαί. Sure enough, they are but very short and caustic messages whose meaning is, at a first glance, quite obscure, and can be understood only by the person they have been written for. Their shortness and their obscurity are likely to be the main cause of their unanimous inclusion among the fictional ones. Nevertheless, these epistles, which share a berating and mordent tone, prove themselves to be connected with the environment of teaching and literary controversies.

***Ep.* 62**

**Ἀπαιδευτοῦ πατρὶ**

Οὐ βούλομαι δι’ ἀβελτηρίαν υἱοῦ πατέρα λυπεῖν· σωφρόνιζε οὖν σὺ τὸν υἱόν, εἰ τῷ ὄντι πατήρ.

**To the father of an ignorant child**

I don’t want to vex the father for the silliness of the son: so recall your son to his senses yourself, if you really are a father.

***Ep.* 63**

**Τινὶ διαβολεῖ**

Ὁ Μῶμος πάντα ὄρῳ ἐαυτὸν οὐχ ὄρῳ.

**To a slanderer**

Although he sees everything, Momos can’t see himself.

***Ep.* 64**

**Τινὶ μομοσκόπῳ**

Σὺ μὲν τὰς ἐμὰς φαλλαίνας ἐμέμψω· σοὺς δὲ σοφοὺς Τηλέφους νενόμικας.

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<sup>44</sup> The use of the trimeter is likely to imitate the model of the *gnomai monostichoi* attributed to Menander, and Euripides’s *gnomai*.

### To a blemish examiner

You blame my φάλλαινοι, but you call your wise men Telephoi.

If the first one, *Ep.* 62, is a reproach to a father for the boorishness of his son, *Ep.* 63 is addressed to a slanderer who, like Momos, sees everyone else's blemishes and makes fun of them but is unable to recognize his own. *Ep.* 64, though appearing completely obscure at a first glance, has been instead demonstrated to provide a cross section of a concrete linguistic and exegetical dispute.

Tzetzes himself offers us an explanation of this cryptic message in *Hist.* IX 297, 946-959<sup>45</sup>. He explains that the reference to the blamed φάλλαινοι must be traced back to his commentary to Lycophron's *Alexandra*, where he explained the different kinds of φάλλαινοι<sup>46</sup>, respectively the cetaceous (that is, the whale presented in Lycophron's verse alongside dolphins) and the insect (the moth), both of which named after their habit of jumping toward the light. Tzetzes offered several names in which φάλλαινοι can be called: φάλλαινα, ψύχη, ψώρα, πυραυστούμορος, and, in the everyday language, κανδηλοσβέστρα ('lamp-extinguisher'). In offering these lexical entries, he is not only listing synonyms, but he is also providing a fairly complete lexical overview, inclusive of different stylistic registers. He glosses the conventional word φάλλαινα, employed by Lycophron, not only with words belonging to the same register, but also with a synonym coming from the vernacular, like κανδηλοσβέστρα. The blemish-examiner whom the epistle addresses is a person who browses his colleagues' works in the desperate search of a blemish to reproach them for: the reference is to another (anonymous<sup>47</sup>) scholar who blamed Tzetzes for mixing different registers and mocked him for using vernacular Greek while glossing Lycophron<sup>48</sup>. Since criticizing colleagues was a proper weapon to harm their career,

<sup>45</sup> Panagiotis Agapitos exhaustively reconstructed the whole story: see *Blemish* cit.

<sup>46</sup> The animal is called φάλλαινα in the commentary to Lycophron and φάλλαινοι, systematically, in the epistle and in the *Chiliads*.

<sup>47</sup> Tzetzes defines him as "buffalo-priest", so the scholar is likely to be involved in the ecclesiastic hierarchy, but this is the only – very weak – clue toward his identification.

<sup>48</sup> The buffalo-scholar and his work cannot be identified, but it is possible to follow the debate on Tzetzes' side, since he usually builds a strong and explicit system of links between his own works, quoting himself and often reusing passages of his own other works. The issue of κανδηλοσβέστρα occurs in a great number of his works: besides the *Epistles* and the *Chiliads*, it appears also in his scholia on Lycophron, on Aristophanes (*schol. Ar. Ran* 507a Koster), and on Oppian (*schol. Opp.* p. 404 Dübner). There is a remarkable difference between two redactions of Tzetzes' *Commentary to Aristophanes*: while in *schol. Ar. Ran.* 855a Koster the gloss to the verse is very simple and mentions only the brain, the version of *schol. Ar. Ran.* 854 Koster presented by ms. *Ambrosianus* C 222 *inf.* (the second redaction) adds a precise reference to the *Telephus* as Euripides' play.

Tzetzes could not have found a better way to pay his μωμοσκόπος back than to denounce one of his blemishes in return. In *Hist.* IX 299, 960-980 he informs us that the so-called buffalo wrote a sort of comedy for Patriarch Leo Styppes and called the Patriarch's brain 'Telephus', inappropriately quoting a verse from Aristophanes' *Frogs* (855) in which Dionysus warns Euripides to dodge because Aeschylus, hitting him out of anger with an enormous word, could spill out the Telephus from his head. The buffalo, Tzetzes says, does not understand Aristophanes' reference to Euripides' play *Telephus* and misunderstands the verse, considering 'Telephus' as a learned way to refer to the brain.

None of these nine epistles can be considered a fictional epistolary model: all of them are clearly related to a more or less practical occasion and to the activity of their author.

#### 4. Drawing conclusions

The fifteen letters which have been singled out as fictional or written on behalf of someone else do not form a homogeneous group. Six of them (*Ep.* 7, 9, 11, 15, 30, 52) are effectively epistolary models, while the other nine (*Ep.* 12, 16, 17, 20, 35, 41, 62, 63, 64) are 'real' letters that Tzetzes sent during his life and career and that relate to concrete episodes, exchanges, and often disputes. In these last epistles the recipient is not identified, but he is alluded to in a way that, although remaining obscure for us, must have made him well recognizable in the learned circle in which Tzetzes's works circulated and in which the literary *querelle* was disputed<sup>49</sup>. The two groups show different features in both content and form.

A first visible clue is the title: an explicit mention of the presence of a different sender occurs in the fictional letters, where the *persona loquens* is clearly distanced from the author with the indefinite pronoun and the use of ὡς (ὡς ἀπό τινος). The coherent and systematic presence of this formula, occurring in the fictional epistles, ensures the distinctive role that the title plays in the internal classification in the eyes of Tzetzes himself. The indefiniteness of the title, for its part, ensures that the purported sender is not a concrete person who commissioned the letter and states the fictional nature of the text. These six epistles can be described as *progymnasmata*-epistles, because they are conceived and act as a preliminary exercise and a model for composition. In them, Tzetzes chooses a sender and a recipient among a variegated multitude of typical characters of the society of the time (the monk, the bishop, the

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<sup>49</sup> The non-outspoken mention of the recipient, who is often a competitor or an enemy, could be responding to a rhetorical mode of both attacking in an indirect manner and focussing on self-promotion.

patriarch, the eunuch, the *doux*, the foreigner) and builds up a concrete communicative occasion meant to be the scenario of the text. The quantity of details provided concerning the situation is uneven: in some epistles the communicative occasion is just vaguely sketched (*Ep.* 52) or even unmentioned (*Ep.* 30), while in others the situation is described in some detail and more characters are introduced (*Epp.* 11; 15). While the sender is totally indefinite (*Epp.* 15; 30; 52) or designated only by his social role (*Ep.* 7, 9, 11), the recipient is sometimes identified as an actual authority of the time (like the *doux* Galen in *Ep.* 11 and the patriarch Michael in *Ep.* 30); nevertheless, it has no consequence either on the text or on its fictionality. The characters generally act in a bureaucratic milieu: the imaginary sender, from time to time, faces several different situations in which he must deal and interact with authority and to create and maintain relationships inside the bureaucratic and ecclesiastical hierarchy.

In these letters almost all the topoi of Byzantine epistolography are explored: the expression of friendship and affection (*Ep.* 15, 52), absence and the excuse of the impossibility of a face-to face meeting (*Ep.* 7), the justification of a delay in communication (*Ep.* 15), the complaint for one's own personal condition (*Epp.* 9, 11, 30) and the (sometimes pleading) request of protection and help (*Ep.* 9, 11, 30) or of a post one aims to hold (*Ep.* 7), the eulogy of the recipient (*Ep.* 9, 11).

On the contrary, there is no reason to seclude the other nine letters (*Ep.* 12, 16, 17, 20, 35, 41, 62, 63, 64) from the remaining 92 epistles of the corpus, since they perfectly insert themselves into Tzetzes' communicative network and they have no fictional elements.

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## John Tzetzes on *ekphrasis* and the art of knowledge transfer

### *Introductory notes*

Ancient *ekphrasis* is the rhetorical art of vivid description as explained in the *progymnasmata* handbooks (pre-exercises) of the Roman Empire. As far as we know, the *progymnasmata* were first described in the first century CE by Aelius Theon. Later rhetoricians of the Second Sophistic, such as Aphthonius, ps.-Hermogenes, and Nikolaos of Myra, only made little changes. The literary influence of *progymnasmata* goes back to Classical and Hellenistic times, as demonstrated by literary analysis and archaeological evidence, i.e. ostraca and papyri with these school exercises<sup>1</sup>. Second Sophistic rhetoricians defined *ekphrasis* as “a guiding speech that brings the subject matter vividly before the eyes”<sup>2</sup>. *Ekphrasis* is therefore the verbal

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<sup>1</sup> J.A. Fernández Delgado, *Influencia literaria de los progymnasmata*, in J.A. Fernández Delgado-F. Pordomingo Pardo-A. Stramaglia (eds.), *Escuela y literatura en Grecia Antigua*, Cassino 2007, 273-306; J.A. Fernández Delgado-F. Pordomingo, *Topics and models of school exercises on papyri and ostraca from the Hellenistic period: P.Berol. inv. 12318*, in T. Gagos (ed.), *Proceedings of the 25th International Congress of Papyrology*, Ann Arbor 2010, 227-238; J.A. Fernández Delgado-F. Pordomingo Pardo, *La retórica escolar griega y su influencia literaria*, Edición a cargo de J. Ureña Bracero y L. Miguélez-Cavero, Salamanca 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Ael. Theon *Prog.* 118,7 Patillon-Bolognesi: ἔκφρασις ἔστι λόγος περιηγηματικός ἐναργῶς ὕπ’ ὄψιν ἄγων τὸν δηλούμενον. For some small differences in the ancient definition of *ekphrasis* see R. Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*, Farnham-Burlington VT 2009, 39-59. For an introduction to the literary praxis of *ekphrasis* and the existence of ephrastic canons in antiquity and Byzantium cf. J. Muñoz Morcillo, *Aproximación a los cánones de la ékphrasis, entre tradición literaria e influencia escolar*, «RCCM» LXI/2 (2019) 475-495. For further general literature on ancient *ekphrasis* cf. R. Webb, *Ekphrasis ancient and modern: The invention of a genre*, «Word & Image» XV/1 (1999) 7-18; S. Bartsch-J. Elsner, *Introduction: Eight ways of looking at an ekphrasis*, «CPh» CII (2007) i-vi; A.S. Becker, *Sculpture and language in early Greek ekphrasis: Lessing’s Laokoon, Burke’s Enquiry, and the Hesiodic descriptions of Pandora*, «Arethusa» XXVI/3 (1993) 277-293; Id., *The Shield of Achilles and the Poetics of Ekphrasis*, Lanham MD-London 1995; J. Elsner (ed.), *Art and Texts in Roman Culture*, Cambridge 1996, 54-74; Id., *Introduction: The genres of ekphrasis*, «Ramus» XXXI (2002) 1-18; D.P. Fowler, *Narrate and describe: the problem of ekphrasis*, «JRS» LXXXI (1991) 25-35; Id., *Even better than the real thing: A tale of two cities*, in Elsner (ed.), *Art and Texts*, cit. 54-74; R. Nicolai, *L’ἔκφρασις, una tipologia compositiva*

capacity to create mental images with psychological, persuasive strength. *Ekphrasis*'s topics range from characters (persons or animals), events, places, times, manners of doing something, and many other things. Aphthonius added plants as subject matter in the fourth century; Nikolaos of Myra included sculptures and pictures in the fifth. Rhetoricians considered *ekphrasis* as one of the most advanced rhetorical exercises, often used in combination with other *progymnasmata* such as narration (*diegema*) or praise (*enkomion*). Due to its overarching character, ephrastic texts are present in every literary genre changing their function over time. In Late Antiquity, some authors wrote *ekphraseis* as «memory images»<sup>3</sup>. Those texts were not meant for communicating with a broad audience, as in classical times. Therefore, we miss some descriptive vividness in them. But, in eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantium, a Hellenistic revival modernized the psychological use of *ekphrasis*. The fascination for ephrastic texts eventually reached Italian humanists. Guarino's translation of Lucian's *Slander* is for many authors the new starting point for a Western ephrastic tradition that fosters both the production of new ephrastic texts, e.g. encomiastic speeches on Church dedications, and the production of images inspired by ancient descriptions.

This article deals with the contribution of John Tzetzes (ca. 1110-1180) to the understanding of *ekphrasis* and its practice in twelfth-century Byzantium and delineates his possible influence on Renaissance Italy.

In response to a silk scarf he had received as a present, John Tzetzes wrote a thank-you letter as an *ekphrasis* (*Ep.* 71). Most of the mythological references in this encomiastic letter are explained in *Hist.* X 327, 307-324. After commenting on the Homeric *topos* about the surpassing excellence of Phaeacian women in the art of weaving, Tzetzes proceeds to describe the silk scarf in terms of a highly sensual and unique experience<sup>4</sup>:

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*dimenticata dalla critica antica e dalla moderna*, «AION(filol)» XXXI (2009) 29-45; For the special case of technical *ekphrasis* cf. C.A. Roby, *Technical Ekphrasis in Greek and Roman Science and Literature. The Written Machine between Alexandria and Rome*, Cambridge 2016, 298-299.

<sup>3</sup> R. Webb, *Picturing the past: Uses of ekphrasis in the Deipnosophistae and other works of the Second Sophistic*, in D. Braund-J. Wilkins (edd.), *Athenaeus and his World: Reading Culture in the Roman Empire*, Exeter 2000, 218-226.

<sup>4</sup> For the importance of silk production and trade in Byzantium cf. R. Sabatino Lopez, *Silk industry in the Byzantine Empire*, «Speculum» XX/1 (1945) 1-42; cf. also A.M. Muthesius, *Silk, power and diplomacy in Byzantium*, in *Textiles in Daily Life*. «Proceedings of the Third Biennial Symposium of the Textile Society of America, September 24–26, 1992», Earleville MD 1993, 99-110. I thank Anastasios Antonaras for bringing to my attention these two, articles which were helpful to my understanding of Tzetzes' description of the silk scarf.

ἀπέλαβον γάρ σου τὴν χάριν, ἐδεξάμην τὴν δωρεάν, εἶδον τὸ ὕφος κερκίδος ἔργον Θηβαικῆς, ἐτεθήπειν τὸ κάλλος, ἠγησάμην τὸν τεχνουργόν, ὀρῶν ἐκεκμήκειν τὰς τῶν ὀμμάτων βολάς, κόρον δὲ σχεῖν οὐδαμῶς εἶχον τῆς θεάς. ἀργυρόχρουν ἦν τὸ χρῶμα τοῦ ὕφους, ᾧ τῶν ἄλλων χρωμάτων αὐτὸς ἐπιγάννυμαι, ἠδὲ τὴν θεάν, μαλακὸν τὴν ἀφήν, χρυσόσημον ἦν, καθ' ὃ μέρος τὰς χεῖρας [Leone χειρίδας] εἰώθαμεν ἐξαρτᾶν, πυκνὸν ἦν, λεῖον ἦν, στερεὸν ἦν, ὑπερβηματίζον τὴν κλῆσιν καὶ παρατρέχον τοῦ οὐπερ ὕφους ἐκέκλητο καὶ τοῖς ἐκ μίτων ἐξαδικῶν συντεθειμένοις ἀντήριξε τῇ δὲ στιλπνότητι τῇ ἐκ πυκνότητός τε καὶ τῆς λειότητος λαμπρῶν ἐνόπτρων πλέον ἀπέλαμπε.

I got your thanks, I received the present, I saw the web, a work of a Theban weaver's shuttle, I was amazed by its beauty, I admired its industriousness, I couldn't stop to glance at it, I did not get tired at all of looking at it. Its colour was silvery, which is the colour I mostly exult with; it was pleasant to the eyes, soft to the touch; it was embroidered with gold, we accustom our hands to hang upon it in turns, and it was compact, smooth, stiff, perfectly pacing the closeness and being driven by the very web that summoned and also strived the combination of six-fold threads: thanks to the brightness resulting of its compactness and smoothness, it shone more than bright mirrors.

Tzetzes reflects on the first contact with the gift using verbs of perception and gradually intensifies the degree of anticipation: “I looked at it” (εἶδον), “I was amazed” (ἐτεθήπειν), “I couldn't stop gazing at it” (ὀρῶν ἐκεκμήκειν τὰς τῶν ὀμμάτων βολάς – actually: “weary from throwing glances at it”). At first glance, the scarf is generally a beautiful thing – at least as beautiful as the famous Phaeacian weaving works he describes in the introduction of the letter. Then, he remarks on its colour, calling it “silvery” (ἀργυρόχρουν). This is Tzetzes' favorite colour, as he goes on to remark: ᾧ τῶν ἄλλων χρωμάτων αὐτὸς ἐπιγάννυμαι (“I mostly exult with this color”). This remark may suggest that this is not going to be a description based on universal values but on personal preferences. At the same time, silver and gold (a few lines later the scarf is said to be χρυσόσημον, i.e., “embroidered with gold”) are traditionally preferred colours for representing opulence and prosperity. These colours, though, could also have a Neo-Platonic equivalence, conveying the ascent from the lowest material level to the experience of divine light through a kind of symbolic capacity or *anagoge*. The anagogical ascent was probably first popularized by pseudo-Dionysius the Aeropagite, who enunciated it as an intellectual effort for elevating the spirit from materiality to divinity. It then became an essential

tenet for symbolism in patristic exegesis and poetry<sup>5</sup>. Some descriptions of jewelry by the French abbot Suger (1081-1151) can thus be understood as demonstrating the anagogical and epiphanic character of works of art<sup>6</sup>. Hence, the brilliant colours silver and gold do not necessarily correspond with the observer's own personal preferences.

Moreover, it is not even necessary to ascribe to this passage an anagogical intention in Neo-Platonic terms. Indeed, in *Hist.* X 327 Tzetzes attributes the brightness of the Phaeacian weaving work to a type of 'Homeric' "close-woven fine linen" that is "watered by wet olive oil" (καιροσέων δ' ὀθονέων ἀπολείβεται ὑγρὸν ἔλαιον, *Od.* VII 107). Tzetzes nominalizes the archaic term καιροσέων in 'Καίροσις', which he defines as "the junction of a web of fine linen, the density, the setting of warp and weft threads whose high density is best composed of, and by means of woven robes it appears a shining and a radiance like the brightness and shining of the olive oil" (Καίροσις ἢ συνάρφεια τοῦ ὑφους τῆς ὀθόνης, / ἢ πύκνωσις, ἢ σύνθεσις στημόνων καὶ τῆς κρόκης, / ἐξ ἧς πολλῆς πυκνώσεως ἀρίστως ὑφασμένης, / ἐξ ὑφασμάτων στύλις τε φαίνεται τις καὶ αἴγλη, / οἷα ἔστιν ἡ λείωσις καὶ στύλις τοῦ ἐλαίου, vv. 327-331). Read in view of this interpretation of the Phaeacian weaving art, the *ékphrasis* from letter 71 would in no way concern Neo-Platonic anagogical experiences, but rather the more general meaning of superlative brightness as the result of outstanding craft and *decorum*<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Dion. Aerop. *De coelesti hierarchia* II 5,12: ἀνατείνεσθαι διὰ τῶν φαινομένων ἐπὶ τὰς ὑπεροχοσμίαις, "to lift up from sense-perception to divine realities"; cf. also G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford 1961, 100-101.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. e.g. Suger's description of Saint Eloy's Cross in the abbey church of St. Denis in *De administratione* 33,198: *Unde, cum ex dilectione decoris domus Dei aliquando multicolor, gemmarum speciositas ab exintrinsicis me curis devocaret, sanctarum etiam diversitatem virtutum, de materialibus ad immaterialia transferendo, honesta meditatio insistere persuaderet, videor videre me quasi sub aliqua extranea orbis terrarum plaga, quae nec tota sit in terrarum faece nec tota in coeli puritate, demorari, ab hac etiam inferiori ad illam superiorem anagogico more Deo donante posse transferri* «Thus, when—out of my delight in the beauty of the house of God—the loveliness of the many-colored gems has called me away from external cares, and worthy mediation has induced me to reflect, transferring that which is material to that which is immaterial, on the diversity of the sacred virtues: then it seems to me that I see myself dwelling, as it were, in some strange region of the universe which neither exists entirely in the slime of the earth nor entirely in the purity of Heaven; and that, by the grace of God, I can be transported from this inferior to that higher world in an anagogical manner» (E. Panofsky, *Abbot Suger: On the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and its Art Treasures*, ed. by G. Panofsky-Sorgel, Princeton NJ 1979<sup>2</sup>).

<sup>7</sup> Tzetzes also describes with a similar enthusiasm the clothes of Antisthenes the Sybarite in *Hist.* I 29, 815-823. In this case, too, there is obviously no need for a religious interpretation.



However, Tzetzes' urge to describe a superlative experience allows him to claim, in a more general sense, that the silk scarf is "pleasant to the eye" (ἡδὺ τὴν θέαν), "soft to the touch" (μαλακὸν τὴν ἀφήν), "embroidered with gold" (χρυσόσημον), i.e., of excellent quality. Among other things, the scarf is at once "compact" (πυκνόν), "smooth" (λεῖον), and "stiff" (στερορόν). All these qualities are easy to perceive as everyday sensory experiences, which Tzetzes also points out by referring to the experience of holding the silk scarf in each hand (καθ' ὃ μέρος τὰς χεῖρας εἰώθαμεν ἐξαροτᾶν). Therefore, this description seems to be sensuous but not because of the object's intrinsic value nor because of Tzetzes' personal predilection. It is a multisensory, sensuous description because his superlative gratitude inspires a smart communication strategy that takes the mythical suitability of excellent crafted materials as its point of departure. John Tzetzes appeals to the reader's multisensory experience in order to communicate his own hyperbolic enthusiasm for the present with corresponding verbal vibrancy, adhering to the essential progymnastic recommendation of vividness (ἐνάργεια) for sparking public's imagination by putting the described object in front of the eyes<sup>8</sup>. Furthermore, as a good grammarian, Tzetzes continues his encomiastic description by resorting to the corresponding substantives of the scarf's main haptic characteristics (πυκνόν and λεῖον), introducing a variation that leads to the idea of a brightness beyond a plain visual experience, i.e. the scarf is even more radiant because of its compactness and smoothness (τῆ δὲ στιλπνότητι τῆ ἐκ πυκνότητός τε καὶ τῆς λειότητος λαμπρῶν ἐνόπτρων πλέον ἀπέλαμπε, "thanks to the brightness resulting of its compactness and smoothness, it shone more than bright mirrors"). The result is a rhetorical exercise of gradual encomiastic *ekphrasis* with some similarities to an anagogical elevation of sensory perception that could frame it in the more general context of medieval ambiguity of the material world.<sup>9</sup>

Even if Tzetzes' description may resemble an anagogical exercise, its exhortations and hyperboles, as well as the clearness and concision of the verbal presentation, strongly suggest that he is following the main guidelines of Second Sophistic *progymnasmata* handbooks. Tzetzes' decision to do so is neither obvious nor typical of description-writing in twelfth-century Constantinople. In fact, since Late Antiqui-

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<sup>8</sup> Theon 118-120 Patillon-Bolognesi; Aphth. 36-38; ps.-Hermog. 22-23 Rabe; Nikolaos of Myra 67-71 Felten.

<sup>9</sup> In the Middle Ages, the physical world used to have a negative connotation (according to Christian neo-Platonic theories) but sometimes, materials, animals, plants, or even crafted objects could also have a symbolic, spiritual dimension. Cf. e.g. U. Eco, *Arte e bellezza nell'estetica medievale*, Milano 1987.

ty, ecphrastic practice had developed a different tenor in comparison with the ‘guidelines’ from the first handbooks of *progymnasmata*.

In the third century, for example, we find *ekphraseis* that are long and rich in detail, for instance in Triphiodorus’ *Sack of Troy*, even though the first rhetoricians mostly quoted and even recommended brief descriptions. The first of the four canonical rhetoricians who dealt with *progymnasmata*, Aelius Theon (first century CE), explicitly instructed his students to offer descriptions in a way that nonetheless avoided beating around the bush (τὸ μὴ τελέως ἀπομηκύνειν περὶ τὰ ἄχρηστα, 119 Patillon-Bolognesi). Nikolaos of Myra added in the fourth century that the descriptions should be made in detail, i.e., κατὰ μέρος (“part by part”, Nikolaos of Myra 68-69 Felten). The poets from the Egyptian Thebaid (such as Triphiodorus or Nonnus<sup>10</sup>) seem to have often ignored Theon’s advice of concision insofar as many of their descriptions are quite long and rich in intricate details that reduce or even annihilate the psychological strength recommended in the progymnastic definition of *ekphrasis*.

Some late compilers such as Athenaios of Naukratis are interested in the preservation of information via description<sup>11</sup>. Accordingly, they neglect the primary goal of *ekphrasis* to appeal to the imagination building on the public’s knowledge. Indeed, Late Antique authors no longer assume any general knowledge on the part of the public in order to establish this symbiotic essence of ἐνάργεια, but instead tend to formulate their descriptions in full. For example, as Webb has revealed, pseudo-Nikolaos designed his ecphrastic examples as «memory images», i.e. descriptions «with a specific cultural agenda to preserve the knowledge of the traditional narratives of classical literature»<sup>12</sup>.

In some cultural and artistic contexts, stand-alone *ekphraseis* serve allegorical or interpretative purposes, especially when it comes to describing pictures or sculptures that represent ideas or mythological episodes such as the *Eikones* by Philostratus or the epigrammatic description of sculptures (e.g. Posidippus’ epigram on the statue of *Kairos* made by Lysippos, AG XVI [Plan.] 275 = 142 Austin-Bastianini<sup>13</sup>).

<sup>10</sup> For an approach on *ekphrasis* in poetry from the Egyptian Thebaid, especially in Triphiodorus and Nonnus, see Miguélez Cavero, *o.c.* 283-309.

<sup>11</sup> Webb, *Picturing* cit.; cf. e.g. Athenaeus’ descriptions of Philopator’s river boat (Ath. V 204d-206d), Hieron of Syracuse’s large transport ship (V 206d-209e), or mollusks and pearl harvesting in India (III 93a-94b).

<sup>12</sup> R. Webb, *The Model Ekphraseis of Nikolaos the Sophist as Memory Images*, in M. Grünbart (ed.), *Theatron. Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter*, Berlin 2007, 463-475: 464.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. F. Pordomingo Pardo, *L’épigramme de Posidippe sur la statue de Kairos*, AP XVI (Plan.) 275: *Image, texte, réalité*, «Philologus» CLVI/1 (2012) 17-33.

Indeed, as late as the eleventh century, Michael Psellos (ca. 1017-1078) praised the pleasing and suggestive reading of Philostratus<sup>14</sup>. Many scholia on Philostratus by Planudes, Moschopoulos, and even Tzetzes also confirm that there was a positive reception of the *Eikones* in eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantium<sup>15</sup>.

We see in other examples that the progymnastic description from the Roman Empire was not the only standard in medieval Byzantium. In the twelfth century, the Byzantine medical instructor (διδάσκαλος ἰατρός) Michael Italikos declined to use encomiastic elements to describe a fish from the Nile River that he received as a present<sup>16</sup>. Instead, he concentrated on everyday practical aspects and objects, and wrote a cooking recipe (*idem*). Pragmatism triumphs here over the celebration of nature and art via psychological ἐνάργεια. Italikos' pragmatism indeed represents a distinct approach in comparison to Tzetzes' description of the silk scarf.

On the other hand, the sensuous approach is common to both authors. This similarity in their descriptions is probably due to a rediscovery of naturalism in the eleventh and twelfth century. As a result, abstract, stereotypical Christian descriptions of virtues and vices, which were typical between the seventh and the tenth century<sup>17</sup>, were left behind. According to Kazhdan et al., «Psellos perhaps best displayed these new attitudes toward [the] subject matter. His sensuousness and his appreciation of material life led him to write of the charms of a beautiful landscape»<sup>18</sup>. Psellos even ridiculed those who claimed to live exclusively a spiritual life. Instead, he celebrated the physical aspects of human existence<sup>19</sup>. Michael Angold has pointed out that «there is undeniably a hedonistic, an Epicurean strain to his views on human behavior»<sup>20</sup>. Psellos even wrote the following about himself: «I confess to being a human, a strange and fickle creature, a rational soul tainted by the body, a novel

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Psellos, Περὶ χαρακτήρων συγγραμμάτων τινῶν, in J.F. Boissonade, *Michael Psellus de operatione daemonum. Accedunt inedita opuscula Pselli*, Norimbergae 1838, 48-52.

<sup>15</sup> About the authorship of Tzetzes' scholia cf. R. Browning, *The so-called Tzetzes scholia on Philostratos and Andreas Darmarios*, «CQ» XLIX (1955) 195-200.

<sup>16</sup> P. Gautier, *Michel Italikos. Lettres et discours*, Paris 1972, 1-162: 161; cf. D. Chernoglazov, *Was bedeuten drei Fische? Betrachtung von Geschenken in byzantinischen Briefen (IV.-XII. Jh.)*, in M. Grünbart (ed.), *Geschenke erhalten die Freundschaft: Gabentausch und Netzwerkpflege im Europäischen Mittelalter*, Berlin 2011, 55-69: 64.

<sup>17</sup> A. Kazhdan-A.W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Berkeley-Los Angeles 1985, 210.

<sup>18</sup> *Scripta min.* II 219,2-12; see also his *ekphrasis* of Olympus, Sathas MB 4:76-26-28.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. e.g. *Chronographia* IV 37, cf. A. Kaldellis, *The Argument of Psellos' Chronographia*, Leiden 1999, 7-8.

<sup>20</sup> M. Angold, *The Byzantine Empire 1025-1204: A Political History*, London 1984, 80.

mixture of incongruous elements»<sup>21</sup>. Tzetzes was also very well versed in pagan literature, philosophy, and culture, which included a vast knowledge about the four classical schools of philosophy, i.e. Platonism, Aristotelianism, Stoicism, and Epicureanism. The continuity of some Epicureanism in the Byzantine Empire is probably the cultural aspect that explains the different approaches to *ekphrasis* in the western Christian Middle Ages and the early humanism of Byzantium in the tenth and eleventh centuries. However, not every Greek grammarian had the same pagan cultural background and spiritual liberty as Psellos and, later, Tzetzes.

Against the background of the classical revival in the eleventh and twelfth century Byzantium, we should formulate some questions concerning Tzetzes' various uses of *ekphrasis*:

- To what extent did Tzetzes follow the guidelines of the progymnastic *ékphrasis* from the Roman Empire?
- How did he integrate this rhetorical praxis in his writings?
- What differences can we identify between John Tzetzes and his contemporaries?
- Last but not least, did Tzetzes' ephrastic practice have any consequences for the notion of *ékphrasis* in the Western Renaissance?

In this chapter, we will discuss Tzetzes' understanding of *ekphrasis*, highlighting some representative texts and passages. Then, we will compare Tzetzes' ephrastic notion with the prevailing broader opinion on *ekphrasis* in Byzantium, indicating some differences between Tzetzes and other Byzantine writers such as Michael Italikos, Nicholas Mesarites, or Michael Psellos. Finally, we will speculate about the tradition of Tzetzes' ephrastic practice and its impact on Renaissance aesthetics.

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<sup>21</sup> Translation by Angold, *l.c.*; cf. Sathas MB 207 (Moore 426). In Criscuolo's new edition (*Ep.* 71,2, p. 22 Criscuolo), the Greek text says: 'Εγὼ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος εἶναι ὁμολογῶ, ζῆλον ἀλλοιωτὸν καὶ τρεπτόν, ψυχὴ λογικὴ χρωμένη σώματι, κρᾶμα καινὸν ἐξ ἀναμόστων τῶν συνελθόντων. Cf. U. Criscuolo, *Michele Psello, Epistola a Michele Cerulario*, Naples 1990. Criscuolo also indicates a similar statement in *Ep.* 160 (p. 34 n. 7). The letter itself is a *synkrisis*, a comparison between the patriarch Michael Keroularios and Psellos himself. Cf. also the letter's summary and bibliography in M. Jeffreys-M. D. Lauxtermann (edd.), *The Letters of Psellos. Cultural Networks and Historical Realities*, Oxford 2017, 153. The expression ψυχὴ λογικὴ χρωμένη σώματι indicates that the rational soul uses the body.

*Tzetzes' ecphrastic writings and writings on ekphrasis*

John Tzetzes wrote about and practiced the progymnastic *ekphrasis* in his letters and didactic poems. In *Hist.* XI 369, 125-129 he explicitly mentions some differences between the *progymnasmata* handbooks by Aphthonius and Hermogenes<sup>22</sup>, classifying *ekphrasis* as a *progymnasma* that appears in all handbooks. We find some examples of Tzetzes' *ekphrasis* in the *Chiliades* (e.g. *Hist.* XI 369), in the *Allegories of the Iliad* (e.g. XVIII 452-789), in the *Carmina Iliaca* (e.g. III 63-72), and in the *Letters* (e.g. *Ep.* 71). John Tzetzes appears to have understood *ekphrasis* in the sense of the rhetoricians of the Second Sophistic whom he quotes in the *Chiliades* (VI 79, 749; VIII 169, 102-131; XI 369). He probably also knew the exercises of Libanios (only quoted in 160). His interest for Philostratos<sup>23</sup>, the allegorical qualities of his compositions, and the recurring combination of *ekphrasis* and *enkomion*, among other things, suggest that John Tzetzes cleared the way for a particular understanding of its practice. The main argument of this chapter is that Tzetzes, along with Michael Psellos and other Byzantine scholars such as Nicholas Mesarites (ca. 1163-1216) contributed to establishing a specific understanding of *ekphrasis* that became significant for the development of this *progymnasma* into a leading aesthetic category among later humanists of the Renaissance. However, what did Tzetzes' ecphrastic practice look like?

*Painters and sculptors as a popular topic*

Let us now take a look at some ecphrastic examples. Tzetzes mentions the works of many ancient painters and sculptors. Sometimes he even passes down information that is relevant for the later development of aesthetics. One such contribution is the story about the contest between Phidias and his former disciple Alcamenes in *Hist.* VIII 193, 333-362. Rather than describing the appearance of the two artists' sculptures of Athena, Tzetzes focuses on relevant details about their production in a kind of short *ἔκφρασις τῶν ἔργων*. Especially noteworthy is the description of Phidias' molding a "wide open mouth" (*ἀνεφρός τὰ χεῖλη*) and "distended nostrils" (*τοὺς μύζωτῆρας τε αὐτοῦ ἔχον ἀνεσπασμένους*). Phidias, whose work followed the

<sup>22</sup> Aphthonius (along with other rhetoricians) is also quoted in *Hist.* XII 428, 578-579 in relation to questions of style (clarity, brevity, plausibility and Hellenism). For a discussion of Tzetzes' relationship with Hermogenes and the rhetorician's twelfth-century reception see the chapter by Aglae Pizzone in the present volume.

<sup>23</sup> Philostratus is quoted in *Hist.* II 52, 706; 60, 977; V 6, 394 (description of the bird Phoenix); IX 275, 568.

principles of optics and geometry, showed that distortion might be necessary to achieve a faithful rendering, in this case for the Athena sculptures that would be erected on high pillars (ἐπὶ κιόνων ὑψηλῶν). The aim of this description, which is also embedded in a *diegema*, is to present an attractive and memorable explanation of how perspective and foreshortening work. Needless to say, this anecdote was known and quoted by renowned Renaissance authors such as Giorgio Vasari<sup>24</sup>, even if they did not always mention the source<sup>25</sup>.

In *Hist.* XII 427, 552-560 Tzetzes discusses other sculptures by Phidias (also referred to in *Hist.* VIII 192, 317-332) along with Polykleitos' canon (also referred to in *Hist.* VIII 191, 311-316). He then describes a horse drawn by Micon or Polygnotus in order to illustrate how a minor detail can ruin a perfect picture. One of these painters painted a horse in the *Stoa Poikile*, but by overdrawing the eyelashes in the lower eyelid (ταῖς κάτω βλεφαρίσιν), the painter widely disgraced himself. The rest of the work was so carefully arranged, however, that not even Momus (the personification of mockery) could criticize anything<sup>26</sup>. In this brief commentary from Tzetzes, the description of the sculpture itself seems less significant than the anecdote involving the consequences of a relatively small artistic *faux pas* from the perspective of the classical imitation of nature. The deliberate brevity of the description has a clear purpose: to focus on the one relevant action of overdrawing the eyelashes in the wrong position. The short descriptions of Polykleitos' and Phidias' works in *Hist.* VIII 191 and 192 also seem aimed at a general introduction of the two sculptors,

<sup>24</sup> W. Gaunt, *Giorgio Vasari. The Lives of the Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, transl. by A.B. Hinds, I, London-Melbourne-Toronto 1980<sup>2</sup>, 225.

<sup>25</sup> Giorgio Vasari and other Renaissance authors could have access to the first printed Italian edition of the *Chiliades* published in 1546. Before that date, handwritten copies of Tzetzes' works were also common among some Greek scholars living in Italy. Gombrich was the first to make out the connection between Tzetzes' story on Phidias and Alcamenes' contest and Vasari's use of it for describing the different techniques of Donatello and Luca della Robbia (E.H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, London 1960, 161-162). Cf. also C. Montes Serrano, *Fidias y Alcámenes. Una indagación sobre la migración de las ideas*, in J.M. Parrado del Olmo-F. Gutiérrez Baños (edd.), *Estudios de historia del arte: homenaje al profesor de la Plaza Santiago*, Valladolid 2009, 137-142.

<sup>26</sup> The saying that not even Momus was able to criticize something was the sign of the perfection of a work of art, as we can also read in an anonymous epigram on a Priapus sculpture by Praxiteles. Cf. *AG XVI [Plan.] 262* (ἄδηλον): Ὁ τραγόπους, ὁ τὸν ἄσκον ἐπηρμένους, αἶ τε γελῶσαι / Νύμφαι, Πραξυτέλους, ἢ τε καλῆ Δανάη. / Λύγδινα πάντα, καὶ ἄκρα σοφαὶ χέρεις. Αὐτὸς ὁ Μῶμος / Φθέγγεται Ἄκρητος, Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἢ σοφίη. «Goat-footed Pan with the wine-skin on his shoulder, and the [laughing] Nymphs, and lovely Danae, are all by Praxiteles. They are all of marble, and the hands hath wrought them were supremely skilled. Momus himself will cry out "Father Zeus, this was perfect skill"». Translation by W.R. Paton, *The Greek Anthology*, V, Cambridge MA 1918, 314. Addition by the present author in square brackets.

similar to glossary entries. There is no description *κατὰ μέρος*, i.e. in detail, as recommended by the rhetoricians of the Second Sophistic. Instead, we find an enumeration of important works with an occasional description of the action, as in the case of a sculpture by Phidias showing “Heracles carrying out the dung of the cattle of Augeas” (*Hist.* VIII 192, 334: Καὶ ἐκφοροῦντα Ἡρακλῆν τὴν κόπρον τὴν Αὐγείου). In these examples, there is no question of writing an *ekphrasis* with the progymnastic psychological claim of vividness (*ἐνάργεια*) and enough detail to spark the audience’s imagination. Rather, the intention is didactic with a view to exemplifying concepts, such as painting accuracy or prolific production, and to linking them with the corresponding artists. Indeed, due to the overall concision and the didactic goals of description, the descriptive moments almost seem inadvertent.

Similar brevity, albeit with slightly more detail, can be seen in the description of Lysippos’ statue as the allegory of Time in *Hist.* X 322, 261-265 (cf. VIII 200, 421-427)<sup>27</sup>. Because Alexander of Macedon was “annoyed about having spent more time than expected”, Lysippos sculpted the personification of Time (τὸν χρόνον, *Hist.* X 322, 261-267)<sup>28</sup>. This description recalls Posidippus’ epigram about Lysippos’ sculpture *Kairos* (*AG* XVI [Plan.] 275 = 142 Austin-Bastianini<sup>29</sup>), which, beyond the original, dialogue-based description, is full of allegorical and practical meaning<sup>30</sup> that corresponds to Tzetzes’ explanation of Lysippos’ sculpture of Time (χρόνον). Indeed, the two descriptions could be mistaken with one another due to their similar, almost identical iconography. Both figures are presented as soundless (Tzetzes: κωφόν; Posidippus: ἐπ’ ἄκρᾳ, “on tip-toe”<sup>31</sup>), bald in the back of their head (Tzetzes: ὀπισθοφάλακρον; Posidippus: τὰξόπιθεν [...] φαλακρό),

<sup>27</sup> See also Corinne Jouanno’s chapter in this volume (pp. 224-227) on the further *ekphrasis* of the same statue given by Tzetzes in *Ep.* 70.

<sup>28</sup> Τότε τελῶν δ’ ὁ Λύσιππος ἀνδριαντοεργάτης / τὸν χρόνον ἠγαλμάτωσε σοφῆ τῆ διανοίᾳ, / κωφόν, ὀπισθοφάλακρον, πετρόπουν ἐπὶ σφαιράς, / πρὸς τὸ κάτοπιν μάχαιράν τι διδόντα πλάσας, / πάντας ἐντεῦθεν νοθετῶν, χρόνον μὴ παρατρέχειν, «Then Lysippos the sculptor came, / And sculpted Time with wise forethought, / Light, bald in the back of his head, wing-footed on spheres, / modeling him as giving someone a knife back, / thereby warning everyone not to let time pass». Translation by Jonathan Alexander, with some corrections by the present author in the second part of the passage (starting with “modeling”) following a suggestion by Francesca Pordomingo Pardo. The description occurs with minimal changes also in *Hist.* VIII 200, 421-427.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. also the even more precise description of Himerios, *Ecl.* 14,1 (*Or.* 13,1 Colonna).

<sup>30</sup> About the allegorical dimension of this epigram cf. Pordomingo Pardo, *L’epigramme* cit.; for an iconological reconstruction cf. P. Moreno, *Kairos*, *LIMC* VI/1 (1990) 920-926; concerning philosophical implications cf. G. Schwarz, *Der Lysippische Kairos*, «GB» IV (1975) 243-266.

<sup>31</sup> In this regard, Posidippus’ epigram is self-explanatory: Τίπτε δ’ ἐπ’ ἄκρᾳ βέβηκας; – Ἄεὶ τροχάω – probably with the meaning of “running fast” by not landing on the toes and not on the mid-foot. For this note, I owe my gratitude to Francisca Pordomingo Pardo.

wing-footed (Tzetzes: πετρόποιν ἐπὶ σφαίρας, “wing-footed on a sphere”; Posidippus: ταρσοὺς ποσσίν [...] διφυεῖς), and equipped with a “razor” or a “knife” (Tzetzes: μάχαιραν, knife; Posidippus: ξυρόν, razor). Tzetzes’ description is strikingly short: he describes the sculpture with similar attributes in two verses and explains the allegorical meaning in only a single verse, while Posidippus resorted to a lengthier explanation structured as a fictive dialogue that ends with a surprising climax. However, Tzetzes’ concision is not necessarily due to a lack of style. The didactic purpose of the *Chiliades* was to spread the cultural tradition in short, lucid and rhythmical poems to an educated public, especially for a better understanding of his own letter collections. Besides Tzetzes’ push for innovation, this is probably a major reason why he summarized or altered the classical expressions he used, in the present case to describe the attributes of Lysippos’ sculpture – including the sculpture’s name itself (*Chronos* instead of *Kairos*). The most remarkable example is his change of “razor” (ξυρόν – present not only in Posidippus but also in the oldest extant reliefs representing the *Kairos* figure<sup>32</sup>) to “knife” (μάχαιραν). Dietrich Boschung<sup>33</sup> has speculated that this terminological revision would eventually have consequences in the artistic representation of *Kairos* in the eleventh century, as evidenced in the *Kairos* relief of Santa Maria Assunta in Torcello, Venice. This theory is consistent with a notion of Tzetzes as a popularizer of classical antiquity. In essence, he modernized the ancient content by tidying up, explaining, and condensing knowledge with inevitable changes due to new interpretations, albeit sometimes even with false citations.

*An original ekphrasis by Tzetzes: Pentesilea’s shield*

Weapons are very prominent among the objects that traditionally belong to the ekphrastic exercise, at least since the Homeric description of Achilles’ shield (*Il.* XVIII 478-608). Aelius Theon defined this kind of description as ἔκφρασις τρόπων, that is, a description of the manner of preparing equipment, especially weapons or machines in general (118-120 Patillon-Bolognesi). However, when the thing described is not the creation process itself (the ‘manner’), but the action and figures represented

<sup>32</sup> The oldest work of art representing *Kairos* is a Roman relief from the second century CE, conserved in Berlin, Abguss-Sammlung Antiker Plastik, Inv. 06/8 I.G. 957 FW 1897. However, there is a Hellenistic statuette from the last quarter of the first century BC, commonly identified with *Hypnos* or a *Cupid* that would also match the description of *Kairos* (Museo del Prado, inv. E 165). For a large selection of iconographic representations of *Kairos*, cf. Moreno, *o.c.*

<sup>33</sup> D. Boschung, *Werke und Wirkmacht. Morphomatische Reflexionen zu archäologischen Fallstudien*, Munich 2017, 193.



in the finished work of art, we recognize Nikolaos' advice about the description of εἰκόνα. He suggests that pictures are to be regarded as descriptions of the represented objects, persons, and actions in each case (cf. 67-71 Felten). From this standpoint, the description of Penthesilea's shield that we find in Tzetzes (*Carm. Il.* III 63-71) would be an ἔκφρασις προσώπων καὶ πράγματων, i.e. a description of characters and actions.

Making use of poetic and epic forms Tzetzes describes in dactylic hexameters how Penthesilea held a powerful shield (σάκος βριαρόν) in her left hand in which some figures are depicted: Ares, Eros, and Penthesilea herself. The action being depicted is the fight between the two gods, Ares and Eros, over Penthesilea. Particularly noteworthy is the following explicit observation of vividness (*enargeia*) after the brief description of the main scene: καὶ γραπτοὶ περ ἑόντες ζωοῖς δ' αὖτε εἴκτην, "although they were represented as pictures they appeared to be alive" (v. 66). The explicit reference to a work of art's resemblance to the reality of its subject is a *topos* in Byzantine *ekphrasis*, which does not necessarily correlate with the actual realism of the picture, as we can read in Maguire's paper on *Truth and Convention in Byzantine Descriptions of Works of Art*<sup>34</sup>. In any event, in the following verse Tzetzes elaborates on the reason for the feud between the two gods, which also justifies the vividness of the scene: Ares and Eros both claim to be Penthesilea's father (κούρην φάτο ἔμμεναι εἶο, v. 67). This verse is introduced by the particles ἦτοι γὰρ μὲν, meaning "then truly" or "indeed", which is clearly aimed at offering both a causal explanation and the evidence for the vividness of the scene mentioned above. Indeed, the fact that they speak – φάτο – is a characteristic element of living beings and not of painted images<sup>35</sup>. Tzetzes also gradually develops the psychological dimension of the description in order to stimulate the emotions and the memory of the reader. The scene is vivid because it captures the essence of an *agon*, which

<sup>34</sup> H. Maguire, *Truth and Convention in Byzantine Descriptions of Works of Art*, «DOP» XXVIII (1974) 111-140.

<sup>35</sup> Tzetzes seems to play with the idea that the represented figures resembled living beings because of their ability to speak. Speaking images are indeed a *topos* of realism in the ecphrastic and artistic tradition, as we know for instance from Ovid's Pygmalion, who talks to his sculpture of Galatea expecting an answer: *oscula dat reddique putat, loquiturque tenetque* (*Met.* X 256). Besides, this is a proof of the greater capacity of the ecphrastic text compared to the image for representing certain 'actions' such as speaking or walking, which can be 'told' but cannot be represented visually as time-based experience. In the poetic *ekphraseis* of works of art, Greek expressions equivalent to "it seems that he is speaking" or "he is about to speak" appear as a mark of realism; there are some striking examples in the epigrams of the Hellenistic period: e.g., *AP* VI 352,4 (Erinna), XVI [Plan.] 120,3 (Asclepiades or Archelaus); Posidipp. 63,7 Austin-Bastianini 63,7; and in mime Herod. IV 33. I thank Francisca Pordomingo Pardo for this note and the Greek sources.

Tzetzes now describes κατὰ μέρος, i.e., in detail: “in the middle stood the girl, / prominent, shining like lightning, in beauty and armour. / and Eros seized the helmet and kissed her face, / Ares in turn covered and kissed her head” (vv. 68-71) Each god kisses her with a different verb: for Eros, Tzetzes uses the tender, iterative unaugmented imperfect form of φιλέω (φιλέεσκεν), while for Ares, he prefers the straightforward, epic imperfect form of κυνέω (ἐκύνεε). A reference to the Amazon holding the shield with her left hand closes the whole scene, just like at the beginning of the *ekphrasis*, which invites to think about it as both part of the description and continuation of the narration within the *ekphrasis* is inserted. This is the more intriguing since the shield is not a σάκος βριαρόν anymore (i.e., a big, concave shield) but an ἄσπίς. An ἄσπίς is an oval shield with a central motif, usually fashioned in the form of a head. We see numerous examples of this in representations of the Trojan battle between the Greeks and the Amazons (e.g. front panel of sarcophagus with a relief representing the Amazonomachy, marble, 230-250 CE. Rome, Vatican Museums, inv. no. 933). However, ἄσπίς (v. 72) and σάκος (v. 63) could refer to one and the same object, since Tzetzes uses σάκος and ἄσπίς interchangeably elsewhere (*Carm. II. III* 329-330)<sup>36</sup>.

Tzetzes’ description of the shield reinforces the allegorical interpretation of Penthesilea as an ambiguous being, ruled by warrior courage (personified by Ares) and love (personified by Eros). Penthesilea’s ambivalent nature was probably known to Tzetzes through Vergil’s *Aeneid* (I 491-493) or more likely through Quintus Smyrnaeus’ *Posthomerica*, who was probably inspired by Vergil. Quintus described the link between military ambition and the eroticism of Ares’ daughter in an ἔκφρασις προσώπων (I 55-61)<sup>37</sup>. In the *ekphrasis* of the temple doors in Carthage, Vergil emphasizes the male-female dichotomy to explain Penthesilea’s fatal blindness and in anticipation of Dido’s destiny<sup>38</sup>. Tzetzes’ originality lies in his allegorical explanation of Penthesilea’s nature, choosing for this purpose the slightly distorted *mise*

<sup>36</sup> Lexicographical sources regularly gloss σάκος with ἄσπίς: Hesychius, Photius, the *Etymologica*, etc., including the scholia to Homer and Eustathius. For this remark I owe my gratitude to Enrico Emanuele Prodi.

<sup>37</sup> ἐπεὶ ῥά οἱ ἀμφὶ πρόσωπον / ἄμφω σμερδαλέον τε καὶ ἀγλαὸν εἶδος ὀρώρει, / μειδίαν δ’ ἐρατεινόν, ὑπ’ ὀφύσι δ’ ἰμερόεντες / ὀφθαλμοὶ μάρμαϊρον ἀλίγκιον ἀκτίνεσσιν, / αἰδὼς δ’ ἀμφερούθηγε παρήια, τῶν δ’ ἐφύπερθε / θεσπεσίη ἐπέκειτο χάρις καταεμένη ἀλκίην. «Her face bore an expression at once fierce and radiant; she had an alluring smile, her lovely eyes sparkled like sunbeams beneath her brows, a modest blush colored her cheeks, and over all this was spread a divine grace that enveloped her warlike strength.» (translation by N. Hopkinson, *Quintus Smyrnaeus. Posthomerica*, Cambridge MA-London 2018, 17).

<sup>38</sup> S. Bär, *Quintus Smyrnaeus «Posthomerica» I. Die Wiedergeburt des Epos aus dem Geiste der Amazonomachie*, Göttingen 2009, 238-239.

*en abyme*. In this way, it resembles Vergil's description of Penthesilea's nature and destiny as the premonition of Dido's destiny. Tzetzes' ambiguous portrayal of Penthesilea has persisted over time, with medieval Christian aesthetics on ambiguity playing no role here.

*Summarizing or omitting the 'how': machine descriptions*

Tzetzes' descriptions include not only natural, artistic, and mythological topics, but also technical ones, i.e., machines and artifacts in general. Tzetzes understood himself as a communicator between the vast knowledge of antiquity and the elites and the more or less literate public of his time. This self-image as a mediator also pertained to his description of memorabilia such as Archimedes' machines<sup>39</sup>. In *Hist.* II 35, 106-159 Tzetzes dedicates an extended account to Archimedes' war machines. The short descriptions in political verse are embedded in a *diégema* (narrative) about the repeated Roman attacks on Syracuse by sea, which recalls to some extent Athenaeus' descriptions of Archimedean inventions within a larger context, especially the description of inventions, such as a windlass, a catapult, or the screw pump, all of them inserted in a larger text about the construction and launching of the ship *Syracusia* (Ath. V 206e-208f). Archimedes was an experienced geometrician who built many mechanical devices. Tzetzes mentions three of them, each one suited for a particular stage of the battle between the Roman general Marcellus and the Syracusans during the Second Punic War (ca. 214 BC). The first device is the three-pulley machine (τρίσπαστος μηχανή) that allowed him to launch a 50,000-*medimnoi* vessel (i.e., with an approximate volume of 694,736.8 gallons) with just one hand (vv. 107-108: καὶ τῆ τρισπάστῳ μηχανῇ χειρὶ λαίῳ καὶ μόνῃ / πεντεμυριομέδιμνον χαθείλκυσεν ὀγκάδα). Using several three-pulley machines – probably in combination with the famous *manus ferrea* or χεὶρ σιδηρᾶ described by other authors<sup>40</sup> – and several men to operate them, Archimedes was able to hoist enemy vessels along the Syracusan walls, and then let them crash back into the deep water.

The second mechanical device stems from Marcellus' counter-reaction, who moved the vessels some distance away. Archimedes developed new machines – probably cranes with a pulley system – that were able to raise large stones, i.e. λίθους ἄμαξιτίους (literally “large enough to load a wagon”) and then let them fall on top of the enemy vessels. The main mechanical principle seems to be the same in both cases. Once again Marcellus put his vessels out of range, but still near enough to

<sup>39</sup> On Archimedes and his machines see also the chapter by Philip Rance in this volume.

<sup>40</sup> Polyb. VIII 5-6; Plut. *Marc.* 14-17; Liv. XXIV 34,10.

attack the city with bow and arrow. The last and most remarkable machine is described in more detail: a six-angled mirror (v. 119: ἑξάγωνόν τι κάτοπτρον) consisting of small mirrors moved by metal sockets (cups) and hinge joints (μικρά τοιαύτα κάτοπτρα θεῖς τετραπλᾶ γωνίαις / κινούμενα λεπίσσι τε καί τισι γιγγλυμίσις). By placing the six-angled mirror under the sun at mid-day<sup>41</sup> Archimedes was able to bundle the reflected rays into a menacing beam of light (v. 126: ἕξαψις ἦρθη φοβερὰ πυρώδης ταῖς ὀλκάσι) that could reduce the vessels to ashes. The rest of the poem describes the betrayal of Archimedes to Marcellus and how he was murdered according to Dio and Diodorus. The poem closes with a remark about the legacy of his knowledge and his influence on “all machine writers” (v. 153: πᾶς μηχανογράφος), including Hero, Philo, and Pappus. It also cites more examples of Archimedes’ inventions: reflective machines, the lifting screw, a machine moved by the wind, and water clocks. In this poem, only the six-angle mirror device is described in some detail. However, all of these ‘written machines’<sup>42</sup> provide short presentations of technical details, stressing their functionality. They only partly follow the above-mentioned progymnastic guideline for the ἔκφρασις τρόπων<sup>43</sup>, where the description of the production process is almost entirely missing<sup>44</sup>. As Courtney Ann Roby states, the main challenge in describing mechanical devices is the lack of accuracy of the textual coding for describing the construction process<sup>45</sup>. This problem was well known to many technical writers such as Vitruvius, Hero, Galen, or Eratosthenes. Roby consequently points out that technical knowledge of mechanical artifacts cannot be obtained in its entirety except through personal experience, i.e. the author in question can only provide sufficient textual ‘indications’ for the reader. As Roby states, «Galen compares these limitations to the problem of verbally describing a person’s likeness; no one can recreate an individual’s form (ιδέα) accurately, but one can, for example, give verbal ‘indications’ (γνωρίσματα) sufficient to recognize runaway slaves from herald’s descriptions»<sup>46</sup>. Except for

<sup>41</sup> vv. 123-124: μέσον ἐκεῖνο τέθεικεν ἀκτινῶν τῶν ἡλίου, / μεσημβρινῆς καὶ θερινῆς καὶ χειμεριωτάτης.

<sup>42</sup> The term, “written machine” – i.e. γραφόμενον ὄργανον – is not used by Tzetzes, although he refers to the authors of such descriptions in a similar way – “machine writers”, i.e. μηχανογράφοι (see again Philip Rance’s chapter). For the origin of the former term in Heron’s work *Dioptra* and its comprehensive meaning as textual encoding of the machine itself including instructions for constructing and operating it cf. Roby, *o.c.* 3, 225 n. 121, 302.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Theon 118-120 Patillon-Bolognesi.

<sup>44</sup> A similar descriptive procedure can be found in *Hist.* I 31, 829-850 about the bridge that Mandrocles built over the Hellespont.

<sup>45</sup> Roby, *o.c.*

<sup>46</sup> Galen. *De dignoscendis pulsibus*, p. VIII, 774 Kühn; Roby, *o.c.* 298-299.

descriptions of the functionality, these γνώσιμα are also absent in the present case – probably because Tzetzes was writing for laypersons. What Tzetzes shares with other ‘amateur’ technical writers such as Athenaeus of Naucratis and even with experts such as Hero of Alexandria is an interest in emphasizing the machine’s functionality in order to attract attention and facilitate a moment of knowledge transfer. The brevity and variety of the descriptions interwoven with the narration of the Roman-Syracusan battles and Archimedes’ fate allowed Tzetzes to hold the attention of his pupils and readers who were otherwise less interested in technical details. Again, the apparent didactic purpose of the *Chiliades* was to minimize complexity while maximizing the impact of technical descriptions.

Tzetzes pays more attention to works of art, mythological beings (e.g. the phoenix in *Hist.* V 6, 387-398), allegorical meanings, gifts, the function of machines, and artifacts in general than to other progymnastic types of *ekphrasis* such as the description of persons<sup>47</sup>, events, or seasons. The allegorical or the narrative potential seem to have been decisive in shaping his descriptions.

#### *Geographical descriptions: clarity instead of vividness*

As for the style of Tzetzes’ writing, it does not seem to follow the complex and rich detail found in authors from Late Antiquity such as Nonnus or even Philostratus. His plain and clear literary style corresponds with his criticisms of other authors. For example, Tzetzes criticized Ptolemy’s obscure geographic descriptions, while praising clarity and plausibility as a good rhetorical practice<sup>48</sup>. As he said in *Hist.* XI 396, 888-889, “Ptolemy obscurely writes a geographical description [about the regions called Mysia and their cities], I did paraphrase it in these iambic verses”. Tzetzes’ aim is to make Ptolemy’s obscure descriptions (Πτολεμαῖος σκοτεινῶς περιηγήσει γράφει) accessible to his public. To this end, he writes a paraphrase in iambic verse (ἐγὼ μετέφρασα τοῖσδε τοῖς ἰαμβείοις). In this ἔκφρασις τύπου, Tzetzes does not spare geographical details, but nevertheless follows a plain descriptive scheme. Despite the eloquent iambic rhythm, the description’s vividness is missing.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Although he also has some ἐκφράσεις προσώπων, e.g. *Alleg. II.* prol. 359-379, 659-743. For this note, I owe my gratitude to Enrico Emanuele Prodi.

<sup>48</sup> On Ptolemy in Tzetzes see also Chiara D’Agostini’s chapter in this volume.

<sup>49</sup> Subjective descriptions of geographical areas have a long tradition in Greek literature (cf. e.g. Apollonius’ description of Syrtis in IV 1237-1249). But this kind of vivid description requires skipping details, focusing instead on the most important characteristics which are relevant either for engaging with the audience or for improving the narrative. In this case, Tzetzes is only focussing on clarity, conciseness and true knowledge in his geographical description. It seems that the lack of an

It seems much more critical to Tzetzes to give enough σαφήνεια about the geographical location of Mysia and its main cities than to report in a vivid way.<sup>50</sup> Tzetzes main focus here is knowledge transfer. He makes the description easier to comprehend through the rhythmic cadence and the introduction of pauses at the end of every section with short self-referential remarks about the benefits of a clear exposition. If we compare this geographical description with the examples of the *progymnasmata*, such as Aphthonius' mention of Thucydides' description of Chimerion, city of the Thesprotians<sup>51</sup>, we notice that Tzetzes' description, except for the iambic rhythm, lacks colour and action, i.e. vividness (*enargeia*). This is again probably due to the didactic aim of providing descriptions without digressions and in an understandable language – in short, all the necessary information relating to the geographical location of Mysia. Other Byzantine scholars such as Psellos or Mesarites described cities using much more encomiastic language. Their texts were therefore much more vivid, but also produced with different expectations<sup>52</sup>.

*Some remarks about the ecphrastic allegories on Achilles' shield*

As we have seen in the Penthesilea episode in the *Posthomerica*, Tzetzes could compose an original ecphrastic allegory. He also provided allegorical explanations of ancient *ekphraseis*, such as in *Allegories of the Iliad* XVIII 452-789, where he explains the meaning of Achilles' shield. Like many other authors, Tzetzes considered his didactic objective to be an exegesis that uncovers the allegorical truth behind the Homeric myths<sup>53</sup>. Tzetzes discussed the meaning of the Homeric shield at length in the *Allegories* but paid little attention to Homer's literary expressivity. In this way, he stands in contrast to most Byzantine commentators, such as Eustathios. In the introduction of his *Allegories of the Odyssey* (prol. 35-38) Tzetzes even pretends to have surpassed other authors with such as Palaephatus, Heraclitus, Cornutus, Demo,

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ecphrastic approach in Ptolemy is what Tzetzes try to overcome without missing any details, but the lack of vividness is a common 'problem' in *periégesis* or geographical survey. The idea of preserving as much details as possible is not always compatible with *enargeia* (psychological strength, vividness).

<sup>50</sup> Tzetzes could have reported this material in a subjective, vivid way, e.g., introducing a narrative, like in the description of Archimedes' machines. The *ekphrasis* of places (ἐκφρασις τόπου) is also a progymnasmatic one. Since Tzetzes knew the *Progymnasmata*, we can infer that the possibility of vivid description was there but he chose to focus on clarity and conciseness.

<sup>51</sup> Theon *Prog.* I 46, cf. Aphth. 22-23 Rabe.

<sup>52</sup> Maguire, *o.c.* 111-140.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milano 1991; E. Cullhed, *Movement and sound on the shield of Achilles in ancient exegesis*, «GRBS» LIV/2 (2014) 212.

and even Psellus, who was also known for his Christian allegories.<sup>54</sup> Instead, Tzetzes' primary focus was on the allegorical interpretation. He sought the truth behind the mythological scene, without however involving religion – neither pagan nor Christian<sup>55</sup>. As for Tzetzes' allegorical interpretation of the Homeric shield, we first notice that Tzetzes' explanation of the Trojan saga rests on three types of allegory, which he delineates in the *Exegesis*<sup>56</sup> and put into practice in the prolegomena of the *Allegories*: rhetorical, physical, and astronomical<sup>57</sup>. According to Tzetzes, Homer's description of the shield consequently speaks about “fulfillment, cosmos and time” in a general sense (XVIII 485: Ὅμηρος ὑπὲρ τέλος δὲ κόσμον καὶ χρόνον λέγει). However, the allegorical explanations do not have the same quality. As Cesaretti states<sup>58</sup>, books XVI-XXIV dedicated to Constantine Cotertzes are unlike books I-XV that were dedicated to Empress Eirene (Bertha of Sulzbach). Specifically, books XVI-XXIV are longer and introduce the allegorical explanation of προσωποποιία, i.e. personification. Tzetzes already used this interpretative method in the *Exegesis of the Iliad*, but not in the first fifteen books of his *Allegories of the Iliad*. Cesaretti also argues that the personification was probably «troppo difficile per l'augusta», i.e. too complicated for Empress Eirene<sup>59</sup>. One of the personifications that Tzetzes iden-

<sup>54</sup> On Psellos see the allegorical, immersive description of Jesus Christ's crucifixion: *Or. hag.* 3B 634-879. See also Frederick Lauritzen's chapter in this volume.

<sup>55</sup> *Alleg. Il.* XVIII 452-789 (ed. J.F. Boissonade, *Tzetzae Allegoriae Iliadis*, Paris 1851, 241-256). According to E. Cullhed, *o.c.* 212, Eustathios considered the whole production of the shield to be a fiction invented by Homer in order to show his skills in *ekphrasis* (*in Il.* IV, 216, 9-12 van der Valk); many Byzantine authors dealing with Achilles' return to battle even excluded the scene from their narratives, probably because of the apparent status of the making of the shield as a fiction staged in heaven (Cullhed, *o.c.* 217). Constantine Hermoniakos or even John Tzetzes omitted this scene in the *Iliad* (ed. E. Legrand, *La guerre de Troie*, Paris 1890, 331) and *Little-Big Iliad* (*Carm. Il.* II 234-236) respectively.

<sup>56</sup> *Exeg. Il.* p. 28,6-25 Papatomopoulos.

<sup>57</sup> On the allegorical methodology in Tzetzes cf. Cesaretti, *o.c.* 125-204; cf. also P.A.M. Leone, *I Carmina Iliaca di Giovanni Tzetzes*, «QC» VI (1984) 377-405; T. Braccini, *Erudita invenzione: riflessioni sulla Piccola grande Iliade di Giovanni Tzetze*, «IFilolClass» IX (2009/2010) 153-173; A. Goldwyn, *Theory and method in John Tzetzes' Allegories of the Iliad and Allegories of the Odyssey*. «Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies» III (2017) 141-171. On the prologue of the *Allegories of the Iliad* see also Alberto Ravani's chapter in this volume. As Cesaretti points out (*o.c.* 155-156), Tzetzes made some distinctions about the allegorical myth that can be read as a rhetorical (ῥητορικὴ), a physical (φυσικὴ), or an astronomical allegory (μαθηματικὴ) (*Exeg. Il.* p. 28,6-25 Papatomopoulos). However, the rhetorical allegory is not meant to be the use of figures of speech but the formulation of prodigious and wonderful beings and things that most likely never existed (p. 28,8-9 Papatomopoulos).

<sup>58</sup> Cesaretti, *o.c.* 188.

<sup>59</sup> Cesaretti, *o.c.* 190.

tifies concerns Thetis in book XVIII before the elaboration of the shield. It includes a meaningful allegorical interpretation of the Homeric *ekphrasis*. The goddess is identified with the sea: πρόσσωπον μὲν ὡς ἔφημεν τῇ Θέτιδι θαλάσση / Ὅμηρος περιθέμενος μητρὸς τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως (*Alleg. Il.* XVIII 106-107). Thetis' supplication in front of Zeus is correspondingly identified with a premonitory prayer to the sea (vv. 136-149)<sup>60</sup>.

Certainly, the allegories in the first fifteen books resemble those in the books that follow, i.e. rhetorical, physical, and astronomical. However, it is only in books XVI-XXIV, i.e. in the Cotertzes books, that Tzetzes gives details about explicit allegorical criteria prior to providing his explanations (XVIII 265-270)<sup>61</sup>. We can, therefore, surmise that the readers of the Cotertzes books were slightly different and probably more interested in learning Tzetzes' theories about allegorical exegesis.

Of the three kinds of allegorical interpretations, Tzetzes chose the astronomical approach and described the mythical beings in Hephaistos' crafted version of the night sky as constellations. The Homeric description focuses on mythical accounts that explain the position and movement of the constellations. Regarding the verses in which we learn that the Great Bear does not bathe in the water of Okeanos, Tzetzes explains that this constellation always stays above the horizon, revolving around the Polar Star (*Alleg. Il.* XVIII 487-489)<sup>62</sup>. Tzetzes' explanation suggests that many poetic descriptions are coded by Homer as myths in order to attract people's attention. The truth is revealed in the personification of real physical phenomena. In Tzetzes' *Allegories*, the description of the shield becomes a kind of meta-*ekphrasis* where the description itself plays a secondary role. Indeed, if we read the text from a progymnasmatic point of view the allegorical explanations would correspond with the λογισμός that Nikolaos of Myra recommended for descriptions of ἀγάλματα and εἰκόνας. The λογισμός, which usually explains the meaning of the work focusing on the intention of the artist, here becomes not an explanation of Hephaistos' but of Homer's intention behind the creation of Achilles' shield. In any case, Tzetzes'

<sup>60</sup> Cesaretti, *o.c.* 190.

<sup>61</sup> Ἀλλά σοι νῦν φραστέον / πρῶτα τοῦ νῦν χωρίου μὲν πᾶν τὸ τοῦ μύθου ὕφος, / εἶτ' ἀλληγορητέον μοι πραγματικῶς τὸν μύθον / εἰς Ἀχιλλέα τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θετταλοῦ Πηλέως, / εἶτα στοιχιακῶτατα τοῖς περὶ κόσμου λόγοις / εἰς Ἀχιλλέα τὸν υἱὸν Πηλέως, ἧτοι κόσμου, « But here I must tell you / first the entire plot of the story in this passage, / then, I should allegorize historically the story / about Achilles, the son of Thessalian Peleus, / then <allegorize it> as the elements in an account concerning the world, / about Achilles the son of Peleus, that is, of the world.» (translation by A. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Iliad*, Cambridge MA-London 2015, 351; cf. Cesaretti, *o.c.* 193-194).

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Cesaretti, *o.c.* 155-156. Another example of this astronomical allegory mentioned by Cesaretti (*o.c.* 156) is *Od.* V 271-275.



allegories succeed without resorting to any Christian explanations. The ecphrastic interpretations – i.e. in the sense of a λόγος περιηγηματικός that leads the audience to the allegorical truth – also mirror Tzetzes' identity as an independent scholar of high social standing<sup>63</sup>.

#### *Self-description as a modern category*

The most intriguing category Tzetzes cultivated is probably self-description. Short and varied, he strategically placed ἐκφράσεις προσώπων in a way that goes beyond common progymnasmatic recommendations. In many of his writings, Tzetzes presents himself (often in the third person) as an industrious writer and a skilled teacher (cf. e.g. *Hist.* XI 396 discussed above) in contrast to other historical figures such as Ptolemy (*ibid.*) or Isocrates (*Hist.* IX 296, 927-935), who was unable to teach two pupils at the same time<sup>64</sup>. Tzetzes also offers mocking caricatures of his enemies, e.g. Lachanas, who is the topic of the epistle opening the *Historiai*. Citing parallels with Croesus and Sesostris, Tzetzes ridicules Lachanas' arrogance, which Aglae Pizzone correctly refers to as a kind of «mock-epic crescendo»<sup>65</sup>. Indeed, there is a hyperbolic escalation of the description in the form of an anti-encomiastic description or, better, an ecphrastic *psogos*. Although the autobiographical tradition can be found in other Byzantine authors<sup>66</sup>, Tzetzes seems to be a special case because of his programmatic self-advertising in the *Chiliades*, which was recently analyzed by Pizzone<sup>67</sup>. Indeed, there were different strategies for self-description in medieval Byzantium. As Beatrice Daskas demonstrated, Nikolaos Mesarites subtly places a self-portrait in an excursus of his renowned *ekphrasis* on the Apostle Holy Church of Constantinople following ecphrastic conventions<sup>68</sup>. Pizzone emphasizes the intellectual rivalries surrounding the emergence of auto-exegetical self-commentaries

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<sup>63</sup> The role of ecphrastic interpretations for the literary identity in Renaissance literature and its roots in classical ecphrastic traditions (Philostratos, Lucian, *Tabula Cebetis*) has been analyzed by E.B. Bearden, *The Emblematics of the Self: Ekphrasis and Identity in Renaissance Imitations of Greek Romance*, Toronto 2012, with a focus on imitations of Greek romance. We think Tzetzes' ecphrastic interpretations in his *Allegories* fit in this picture of identity building as well.

<sup>64</sup> A. Pizzone, *The Historiai of John Tzetzes: A Byzantine 'book of memory'?*, «BMGS» XLI/2 (2017) 198.

<sup>65</sup> Pizzone, *o.c.*

<sup>66</sup> B. Daskas, *A literary self-portrait of Nikolaos Mesarites*, «BMGS» XL/1 (2016) 151-169; Pizzone, *o.c.*

<sup>67</sup> Pizzone, *o.c.*

<sup>68</sup> Daskas, *o.c.* 151-169.

already in the early eleventh century<sup>69</sup>. Tzetzes uses such self-descriptions for instance in *Hist.* VI 53, 475, where he claims he was forced to have a memory like a god because he lacked books (ἀβίβλη): “And it is hard for me, as if I were a god, to tell everything / since I am devoid of books: you know what I mean” (ἀργαλέον δέ μοί ἐστι, θεὸν ὧς πάντ’ ἀγορεύειν [= *Il.* XII 176], / ἀβίβλη πεφυκότι μοι οἶδατε οἷσπερ λέγω)<sup>70</sup>. Making the most out of an unfortunate situation, he humbly conveys an aura of literary superiority through a calculated *captatio benevolentiae*. In a similar manner, he describes his capacity of “declaiming every book by heart and mouth”, which we find in another passage of his commentary on the opening epistle to Lachanas<sup>71</sup>. As Yun Lee Too points out, the similar trope of a “breathing library” goes back to classical antiquity and was even used for criticizing renowned intellectuals<sup>72</sup>. Indeed, Eunapius described Longinos, the teacher of Porphyry, as a breathing library (βιβλιοθήκη τις [...] ἔμφυχος)<sup>73</sup> and a walking museum (περιπατοῦν μουσεῖον, both in Eunap. *VS* 456). This attests to the tradition of appropriating a cultural heritage by reading and memorizing which legitimates the author in a very competitive intellectual world. Tzetzes, too, needed to promote himself with a ubiquitous ephrastic curriculum strategically disseminated in his most ambitious and popular commentary, the *Chiliades*.<sup>74</sup> This practice of self-promoting became a common practice in early-modern and Renaissance literature. Just a few examples include Poggio Bracciolini’s polemics against other scholars, Alberti’s *Commentarium* to his first literary work, the Latin comedy *Philodoxeos fabula*, or Vasari’s false modesty as he introduces his own *Vita* as colophon of his opera magna directly after describing the ‘climax’ of art history represented by Michelangelo.

<sup>69</sup> Pizzone, *o.c.*

<sup>70</sup> Cf. also *Alleg. II.* XV 87-89.

<sup>71</sup> Οἶδας δὲ πάντως ἀκριβῶς πῶς πᾶσαν οἶδα βιβλίον / ἐκ στήθους τε καὶ στόματος οὕτως ἐτοίμως λέγειν. / Οὐδὲ γὰρ μνημονέστερον τοῦ Τζέτζου θεὸς ἄλλον / ἄνδρα τῶν πρὶν τε καὶ τῶν νῦν ἐξέφηνεν ἐν βίῳ. «You are very well aware that I know every book / by heart and that I am ready to declaim them by heart and mouth. / And God never let appear a man endowed with a stronger memory / than Tzetzes, neither among those of the past nor among those of the present» (*Hist.* I 11, 278-281; Pizzone, *o.c.* 195)

<sup>72</sup> Y. Lee Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, Oxford 2010, III.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. again *Alleg. II.* XV 87 ἐμοὶ βιβλιοθήκη γὰρ ἡ κεφαλή τυγχάνει.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. also a more specific self-description in *Alleg. II.* prol. 724-739. For this note, I owe my gratitude to Enrico Emanuele Prodi.

*Between progymnasmata, literary tradition, and innovation*

The subtle descriptive self-commentary is to some extent a modern innovation that may be attributed to Tzetzes, even if ancient authors such as Galen already wrote books to advertise their intellectual work (cf. e.g. *De praecognitione*). Tzetzes and other Byzantine scholars reintroduced the idea of the self-aware authorship, a modern idea that we also find in Italian Renaissance authors, especially in Giorgio Vasari, who even wrote an autobiography. Tzetzes' self-description is a mechanism of programmatic *captatio benevolentiae* that creates a reliable connection with the reader. This kind of ephrastic authorial marketing which makes a direct appeal to the audience became commonplace in the writings of some of the most influential humanists of the Renaissance, who also practiced the *ékphrasis* in their works.

To the best of our knowledge, Tzetzes was not merely following the recommendations of the progymnasmatic manuals. Depending on the object and its allegorical potential, his *ekphraseis* range from encomiastic descriptions to allegorical interpretations, short descriptions for conceptualizing ideas, knowledge transmission without any psychological profundity beyond the didactical precept of clarity, and even *mise en abyme* representations combining allegorical reading with narrative motives and, finally, self-descriptions and ephrastic caricatures of his enemies. In his didactic writings, Tzetzes seems to cultivate different ephrastic approaches. Therefore, he cannot be seen as a mere advocate or revitalizer of *ekphrasis* from the Roman Empire. It is also apparent that the didactic goal often determines the use of *ekphrasis*. For example, the claim to clarity in geographic descriptions implies eschewing a descriptive, encomiastic excursus about the cities in question. Further, the explanatory character of the presentation of Archimedes limits the level of detail that the descriptions can have. This correspondence between the main characteristics of descriptive texts and the intellectual context is by no means new, especially if we understand the literary production of Tzetzes in the context of the Hellenistic tradition which regards τὸ πρέπον (the suitability of contents and form) as a mandatory aesthetic value. In our view, the Hellenistic spirit of literary creation could explain why authors such as Tzetzes or Eustathios of Thessaloniki aimed, in Alexander Kazhdan's words, «to interpret ancient writings in relation to their times, modernizing the text to make it more easily understandable and extracting from it explanations of contemporary habits»<sup>75</sup>. In this sense, the use of *ekphrasis* can also be seen as experimental and open to new forms of literature.

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<sup>75</sup> Kazhdan-Epstein, *o.c.* 135.

*Some differences with his contemporaries*

This aspect of ecphrastic *varietas* leads to the next question regarding the similarities and differences between John Tzetzes and his contemporaries. As we have seen, Byzantine medical instructor Michael Italikos renounced using encomiastic elements to describe a fish from the Nile that he received as a present. Instead, he decided to write a cooking recipe<sup>76</sup>. The celebration of naturalism and art via psychological *enargeia* (vividness) was not necessarily a given in every Byzantine author from that period. Focusing on practical aspects is indeed a different approach in comparison to Tzetzes' description of gifts with an encomiastic part for showing gratitude and admiration. Such sentiments are convenient, i.e. *πρέπον*, in this very case. Although Italikos, Tzetzes, and other Byzantine writers were all immersed in the same cultural tradition, some preferred, depending on the topic, to concentrate on the role of language as a means for cultural conservation. They thus sought to pass down as much knowledge as possible, even at the cost of the psychological energy of *ekphrasis*. In Tzetzes, this communication process is still present, although predominantly with a didactic goal that often led to a reduction of complexity. However, Tzetzes can also convey a high degree of *enargeia*. Mesarites' style is much closer to Tzetzes' *ekphrasis*, the former being known for «his interest in vivid details and in his own role in the events»<sup>77</sup>. Indeed, according to Kazhdan and Epstein, by the eleven and twelfth centuries «Byzantine identification with the Hellenic past became firmly rooted»<sup>78</sup>. The main difference from Mesarites, however, is the selection of topics. While Mesarites mainly focuses on *ekphraseis* of churches and Christian art, Tzetzes chooses almost only classical subjects. Despite this discrepancy, Tzetzes' and Mesarites' use of *ékphrasis* is not morphologically very different. Both of them, not to mention other Byzantine authors such as Psellos, worked with ecphrastic *topoi* that frequently appear in the literary production of the Second Sophistic, e.g. the commonplace of pointing out the realism of a work of art.

However, if we have to summarize Tzetzes' contribution to ecphrastic literature, we can point to his conscious depiction of himself as a subtle ecphrastic topic and his independent allegorical readings of ecphrastic literature as probably the most important stimuli.

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<sup>76</sup> Cf. Chernoglazov, *o.c.*

<sup>77</sup> A. Kazhdan, *Mesarites, Nicholas*, in Id. (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, Oxford-New York 1991, 1346.

<sup>78</sup> Kazhdan-Epstein, *o.c.* 138.

*Tzetzes and the Italian Renaissance*

In bringing this article to a close, we would like to make one last remark about the possible influence of Tzetzes on the notion of *ekphrasis* in later Renaissance times. There is little research on Tzetzes' impact on Renaissance humanists. We know that there was a genuine reception in the fourteenth century among Greek scholars and translators. Konstantinos Hermoniakos worked for instance with Tzetzes' *Allegories of the Iliad*. Especially Greek-Latin translators such as Guarino Guarini and Lorenzo Bruni may have consulted Tzetzes' commentaries for their own work. According to Nigel Wilson<sup>79</sup>, Guarino must have followed Tzetzes' allegorical interpretations of the muses Thalia and Polymnia as co-inventors of agriculture. Indeed, Guarino wrote on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1447 a letter to Leonello d'Este<sup>80</sup>, Marquis of Ferrara, remarking on how to paint the Muses<sup>81</sup>. In Baxandall's translation, Guarino says: «Thalia discovered one part of agriculture, that which concerns planting the land, as indeed her name shows, coming as it does from θάλλειν, to bloom; so let her hold various seedlings in her hands and let her drapery be decorated with flowers and leaves»<sup>82</sup>.

Moreover, Guarino also states: «Polymnia discovered the cultivation of fields; let her be girt up and dispose hoes and vases of seed, bearing in her hand ears of corn and bunches of grapes»<sup>83</sup>. Although Guarino did not mention Tzetzes in his letter, this description of Thalia and Polymnia matches Tzetzes' explanations of the first verse of Hesiod's *Works and Days*.<sup>84</sup> This seems to be proof of Tzetzes' reception in

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<sup>79</sup> N.G. Wilson, *From Byzantium to Italy: Greek Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, London 2016<sup>2</sup>, 43-44.

<sup>80</sup> M. Baxandall, *Guarino, Pisanello and Manuel Chrysoloras*, «JWI» XXVIII (1965) 186-187 (Baxandall's translation), 183-204 (Latin original).

<sup>81</sup> Wilson, *l.c.* The paintings of the Muses created according to Guarino's instructions (now dispersed between Ferrara, Milan, Berlin, Budapest, and London) were exhibited together in Milan in 1991, cf. *Le Muse e il principe. Arte di corte nel Rinascimento padano*, Modena 1991. The paintings of Thalia and Polymnia are attributed to Michele Pannonio and Piero della Francesca respectively. Cf. also S.J. Campbell, *The traffic in Muses: Painting and poetry in Ferrara around 1450*, in L. Benedetti-J.L. Hairston-S.M. Ross (edd.), *Gendered Contexts. New Perspectives in Italian Cultural Studies*, Bern 2012, 49-68.

<sup>82</sup> *Thalia unam in agricultura partem repperit, quae de agro plantando est, ut et nomen indicat, a germinando veniens; idcirco abusculas varias manibus gestet; vestis esto floribus foliisque distincta. [...] Polymnia cultura invenit agrorum; haec succincta ligones et seminis vasa disponat, manu spicas uarumque racemos baiulans* (R. Sabbadini, *Guarino Veronese, Epistolario*, II, Venice 1916, 111-112; from Baxandall, *o.c.* 202)

<sup>83</sup> Baxandall, *o.c.*

<sup>84</sup> For an extensive article on Tzetzes' long scholion on the first two words of Hesiod's *Erga*, cf. M. Cardin-O. Tribulato, *Enumerating the Muses: Tzetzes in Hes. Op. 1 and the parody of catalogic*

Renaissance Italy and of his impact on the pictorial programme. We also find Tzetzes' scholia to Philostratus and Oppian in far-flung places in the sixteenth century, like Constantinople, Oxford, Salamanca, and Madrid. As Robert Browning states, «Works of Tzetzes, authentic or not, were commodities for which a ready market existed in the sixteenth century»<sup>85</sup>.

Moreover, the presence of an altered iconography of Kairos in emblem books (depicting the *Kairos*, just like Tzetzes describes, on a sphere<sup>86</sup>) seems to support the idea that not only the commentaries but also the *Chiliades* were consulted (directly or indirectly) by artists and humanists with a practical goal. This is strongly attested to by the abundance of copies of Tzetzes' writings. Of course, there was no systematic reception of Tzetzes' ecphrastic ideas, since none of his works was conceived as an autonomous *ekphrasis* nor dealt with the most typical ecphrastic topics of his time such as churches<sup>87</sup>, monuments, or hunting scenes<sup>88</sup>. Nevertheless, he was one of the

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*poetry in Epicharmus*, in M. Ercoles *et al.* (edd.), *Approaches to Greek Poetry*, Berlin-Boston 2018, 161-192. Thalia and Polymnia are mentioned on p. 171 as related to the sphere of agriculture. The authors consider the introduction of agriculture as a possible homage to Hesiod (*ibid.*).

<sup>85</sup> Browning, *o.c.* 200.

<sup>86</sup> J. Typot, *Symbola divina et humana pontificum, imperatorum, regum*, II, Prague 1601, 144; cf. the emblem's explanation with a fourth-century epigram by Ausonius very similar to Posidippus' one (*ibid.* p. 147). Anyway, there is no explanation for the striking detail of Kairos' spherical base that can only be found in Callistratus (*Statuarum descriptiones* IV 1-4) before Tzetzes. Cf. D. Boschung, *Kairos as a Figuration of Time. A Case Study*, Paderborn 2013. The sphere was identified as a Late Antique addition by S. Altekamp, *Zu den Statuenbeschreibungen des Kallistratos*, «Boreas» XI (1988) 138-148.

<sup>87</sup> For Byzantine *ekphrasis* of sacred spaces beyond visual perception cf. R. Webb, *Spatiality, embodiment, and agency in ekphraseis of church buildings*, in B. Pentcheva (ed.), *Aural Architecture in Byzantium: Music, Acoustics, and Ritual*, London-New York 2017, 163-175; L. James-R. Webb, *To understand ultimate things and enter secret places: Ekphrasis and art in Byzantium*, «Art History» XIV (1991) 1-17.

<sup>88</sup> For the *ekphrasis* in Byzantium in general, cf. H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, I, Munich 1978, 170-188; II, Munich 1978, 109-110. Abundant *ekphraseis* stand out as part of homilies, e.g. of battles in John Chrysostom or, in general, descriptions of martyrdoms in hagiographic literature. Autonomous *ekphraseis* were usually dedicated to works of art, but there were also *ekphraseis* of human actions such as hunting scenes, e.g. those of Constantine Manasses or Constantine Pantechnes. There are also geographical descriptions loaded with imagination (John Eugenikos), descriptions of saints and martyrdoms in pictorial key (Marc Eugenikos), of cities (Theodoros Pedisiamos), of gardens (*locus amoenus*, as part of a story, e.g., in Meliteniotes), among others (cf. Hunger, *o.c.* 183-188). The great thematic variety of the *ekphrasis* demonstrates that it was a wide-spread genre with application both artistic, propagandistic, religious, and socio-cultural. Our preference for Tzetzes is understood as a result of its great influence in later generations and for being an author whose ecphrastic production has not yet been studied.

most modern Byzantine humanists of the twelfth century and a source for many generations of humanists to follow. Since he is not an authority on Christian allegory or descriptions of churches, Renaissance authors turned to other Byzantine fore-runners, especially Psellos and Mesarites, for those matters. However, Tzetzes was able to avoid Christian explanations in his literary production even if he resorted to widespread ecphrastic *topoi* and traditional aesthetics, as we have seen in the opening remarks to *Ep.* 72 and other examples. Indeed, Maguire's observation that Mesarites and other authors used Byzantine ecphrastic *topoi* can be extended to some of Tzetzes' descriptions (cf. e.g. *Hist.* VIII 200, 413-420 about the realism of a statue of Alexander by Lysippos; cf. also the short story about Protesilaus' image in *Hist.* II 52, 771-779). The emphasis on the realism of paintings and sculptures was an ecphrastic *topos*, even if these works of art did not respect the laws of geometrical perspective<sup>89</sup>. The description of ambivalent emotions was also a *topos* among Byzantine Christian authors. Tzetzes' ambivalent description of Penthesilea is also proof that he belonged to the same *zeitgeist* as his colleagues and intellectual rivals. On the other hand, he seems to go back to classical sources instead of conceiving the ambiguity of painted emotions to be the result of a tacitly Neoplatonic world view<sup>90</sup>. This neither-Christian-nor-pagan literary identity that emerges from his ecphrastic writings is probably the aspect that makes his approach to description most unique.

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<sup>89</sup> Cf. Maguire, *o.c.*

<sup>90</sup> On the religious background of *ekphrasis* and contradictory emotions cf. again Maguire *o.c.*

**From contentious hero to bone of contention:  
The reception of Thersites by John Tzetzes and Eustathios of Thessaloniki**

*Introduction*

For Byzantine intellectuals, the study and reception of classical literature was not merely an act of passive transmission of a distant heritage. Rather, it was perceived as a constant dialogue with the sources, a productive interplay that exerted a deep impact on the literary production, self-presentation, and professional situation of the literati that engaged with it. Indeed, by interacting with the literary models of the past, Byzantine teachers and writers had a chance to display their erudition, to carve out a place for themselves in the competitive intellectual circles of Constantinople, and to define their authorial persona in relation to – or in contrast with – their past and contemporary ‘colleagues’.

This is all the more true when it comes to Homer. Always the cornerstone of Byzantine education, in the twelfth century the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* gave rise to a veritable ‘Homeric Renaissance’. Numerous Komnenian literati devoted most of their career to studying and commenting Homer, who became the model against which the intellectuals of the time defined their own literary production and authorial strategies. Just like Homer, the most memorable amongst the Homeric heroes were perceived as suitable paradigms around which to center discussions on rhetorical, literary, and ethical excellence. Considering his long-standing association with the Poet *par excellence*, it should come as no surprise that Odysseus had become an ideal catalyst for such debates. Notably, Odysseus plays a central role in the works of the two Komnenian literati that will be the focus of this paper, namely John Tzetzes and Eustathios of Thessaloniki. To be sure, both authors projected their differing conceptions of the Homeric model – along with their respective authorial selves – onto their reception(s) of Odysseus<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed analysis, see V.F. Lovato, Ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα. *La ricezione di Odisseo e di Omero presso Giovanni Tzetze e Eustazio di Tessalonica*, diss. Lausanne-Turin 2017. I am currently preparing a translated and updated version of this study for the series *Oxford Studies in Byzantium*.



But there is more. The centrality of the wily son of Laertes – as well as his potential overlap with Homer himself – inevitably affected the treatment of other epic characters that were somehow connected to him. As I argue, a close study of these figures will not only enrich our understanding of Tzetzes and Eustathios' Homeric exegesis, but will also shed further light on their self-fashioning strategies and involvement in Komnenian literary polemics. To prove my point, in the present study I will focus on a character that, despite playing a rather marginal role in the Homeric epics, was traditionally associated with – and contrasted to – Odysseus. I am referring to the notoriously ugly and insolent Thersites, who, in the second book of the *Iliad*, had dared insult Agamemnon only to be harshly reprimanded and publicly beaten by Odysseus himself.

In an excellent overview of the literary reception of this character, Corinne Jouanno has shown that, in Byzantine times, Thersites was consistently employed as a negative paradigm of verbal inappropriateness, shameless ignorance, and moral (as well as aesthetic) ugliness<sup>2</sup>. Amongst the authors quoted by Jouanno, we encounter also Tzetzes and Eustathios, who, in different passages of their works, both remark upon Thersites' proverbial arrogance and verbal intemperance. While in agreement with Jouanno's interpretation, I would like to suggest that the analysis of some additional texts by Tzetzes, combined with a closer comparison between Tzetzes and Eustathios' presentations of Thersites, might further enrich the picture.

Specifically, in the first section of the paper I will try to demonstrate that, in at least some of the passages that they both devote to Thersites, the two scholars seem to allude to – and indirectly criticize – one another. Their insistence on some rather specific aspects of the hero's reception points to the existence of a broader scholarly dispute, which likely involved competing literary circles and in which Tzetzes and Eustathios seem to have participated from opposite perspectives. The second part of the paper will focus especially on Tzetzes' treatment of Thersites. As I will attempt to demonstrate, the scholar's opinion of this character is more nuanced than it might appear at first glance. Specifically, Tzetzes' fluctuating reception of Thersites can be traced to his ambivalent attitude towards Homeric poetry as a whole. In the last section, I suggest that Tzetzes' peculiar interest in Thersites may also be linked to the hero's traditional connection with the so-called poetry of blame, a form of literary expression that the polemical scholar was particularly fond of<sup>3</sup>. In this

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<sup>2</sup> C. Jouanno, *Thersite, une figure de la démesure ?*, «Kentron» XXI (2005) 181-223.

<sup>3</sup> For the concept of poetry of blame see the now classic study by G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*, Baltimore 1979, 222-242 (on the contrast between poetry of blame and poetry of praise) and 242-252 (on the connection between blame poetry and iambos). For the relationship between blame and iambic poetry, see also N. Worman, *Abusive*

context, I will analyse Tzetzes' reception of the iambic poet Hipponax, another notorious paradigm of ugliness and outspokenness. In particular, I will try to show that, by associating the poet with the hero, Tzetzes sheds further light on the reasons inspiring his ambivalent treatment of Thersites.

### 1. A repugnant commoner or the scion of a noble family?

Let us start our exploration of the Komnenian Thersites with an apparently secondary issue, which, however, seems to have been of particular interest to both Tzetzes and Eustathios. I am referring to the hero's lineage, a topic that had already attracted the attention of previous generations of exegetes. As attested by Eustathios himself, ancient literati were divided between two irreconcilable reconstructions of the hero's ancestry. According to some, despite Homer's unflattering presentation, Thersites was far from being an anonymous member of the Achaean army. Being the son of Agrios, brother of Oineus, Thersites was not only a member of the Aetolian aristocracy, but was also a kinsman of Diomedes, one of the most valiant Greek commanders<sup>4</sup>. In his commentary on Book II of the *Iliad*, Eustathios briefly contemplates this possibility and summarizes Thersites' potential ancestry, while also alluding to his ignominious performance during the famous hunt of the Calydonian boar (*in Il. I 311,3-8*)<sup>5</sup>:

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*Mouths in Classical Athens*, Cambridge 2005, 40-48, with further bibliography. Modern scholars are still trying to determine to what extent ancient audiences considered blame and invective to be distinctive features of iambos. Despite the ongoing debate, experts seem to agree that this association became quite widespread from the Aristotelian *Poetics* onwards. For a detailed discussion, with an overview of previous scholarship, see A. Rotstein, *The Idea of Iambos*, Oxford 2010.

<sup>4</sup> The tradition concerning Thersites' noble lineage might stem from the Epic Cycle and, more specifically, from the *Aithiopsis*. According to Proclus' summary of the poem, the killing of the hero at the hands of Achilles caused a dissension amongst the Achaeans, possibly following Diomedes' angry reaction at the death of his kinsman. On the *Aithiopsis*, as well as the other sources referring to Thersites' illustrious ascendancy, see T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth. A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources*, Baltimore 1993, 333 and 621, along with Jouanno, *o.c.* 183 n. 9.

<sup>5</sup> This and all subsequent quotations from Eustathios' commentary on the *Iliad* are drawn from M. van der Valk, *Eustathii archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem pertinentes*, Leiden 1971-1987 (with volume, page, and line number).

Τινὲς δὲ καὶ γενεαλογοῦσιν αὐτὸν ἄνδρα Αἰτωλὸν ἱστοροῦντες, καὶ εὐγενῆ δὲ φασιν εἶναι καὶ προσγενῆ τοῦ Διομήδους, Ἀγρίου παῖδα ἱστοροῦντες αὐτόν, ὃς ἦν ἀδελφὸς Οἰνέως, πάππου τοῦ Διομήδους, λέγοντες καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Καλυδώνιον κάπρον στρατεῦσαι αὐτόν· ὀκνοῦντα δὲ τὴν μάχην καὶ ὑπεκκλίνοντα κατακρημνισθῆναι ὑπὸ Μελεάγρου καὶ οὕτω λωβηθῆναι τὸ σῶμα, καθάπερ ἐκφράζει ὁ ποιητής.

Some reconstruct his genealogy and declare that he hailed from Aetolia. They also say that he was of noble origin, being a kinsman of Diomedes. Indeed, according to these accounts, Thersites was the son of Agrios, brother of Oineus, who in turn was Diomedes' grandfather. These commentators also say that he participated in the hunt of the Calydonian boar. However, since he shrank from the fight and tried to escape, Meleager hurled him down a precipice, thus maiming his body in the way that the Poet describes<sup>6</sup>.

However, Eustathios does not seem to be convinced by this version of the story, which he dismisses in favour of the variant adopted by the so-called *palaioi*, an expression that he generally employs in reference to the ancient Homeric exegetes (I 311,8-10):

ὅπερ οὐκ ἀρέσκει τοῖς παλαιοῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἄν, φασίν, ἔπληξεν αὐτὸν ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς τῷ σκῆπτρῳ εὐγενῆ ὄντα, ὃς δὴ μόνους τοὺς δημότας ἔτυπεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ Διομήδης οὐκ ἄν περιεῖδεν αὐτὸν ἀτίμως πάσχοντα.

This version, however, does not please the ancient commentators. Had Thersites been of noble origin, they say, Odysseus would never have hit him with the scepter, a treatment that he reserved only to the common people. Moreover, Diomedes would never have allowed him to suffer such a dishonour.

While often alluding to the opinion of the *palaioi*, in the following sections of the *Parekbolai* Eustathios does not hesitate to participate in this age-old debate with some personal considerations<sup>7</sup>. For one, the archbishop is very keen on pointing out any additional details of the Homeric narrative that can be interpreted as a confir-

<sup>6</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from Greek are my own.

<sup>7</sup> Notably, according to Jouanno, *o.c.* 195, amongst the many Byzantine authors who dealt with Thersites, Eustathios might be the one who devoted the most attention to the ugly hero.

mation of Thersites' humble origins<sup>8</sup>. Moreover, in addition to discussing at length the issue of the hero's ancestry, Eustathios does not miss a chance to voice his disapproval of Thersites, constantly emphasizing his potentially disruptive effect on the community as a whole<sup>9</sup>. To strengthen his point, he even proposes to coin a new proverb, which goes as far as to equate the ugly hero to some historical figures, such as Lysander and Alcibiades, whose actions had caused the ruin of their own cities<sup>10</sup>. However, if the Spartan general and the Athenian commander might be better suited for a tragedy, Thersites is a comic figure, whose public humiliation triggers the laughter of the entire Greek army<sup>11</sup>. Indeed, the mention of the ugly hero was only a pretext for Homer to showcase his skill in employing different rhetorical registers, thus instructing the audience in different styles of poetic composition<sup>12</sup>. However – Eustathios observes – the Poet is also very careful to clarify that he did not consider Thersites to be a suitable protagonist for his poem. And indeed, at the very end of the episode, Homer goes as far as to announce that the ugly hero will never appear again in his verses<sup>13</sup>.

To sum up, from the passages here discussed, we can safely conclude that not only Eustathios considered Thersites as the prototype of the arrogant and incompe-

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<sup>8</sup> While drawing on other sources, such as the Homeric scholia and Porphyry's *Homeric Questions*, Eustathios is very keen on expanding upon them to further demonstrate that Thersites' bloodline was anything but illustrious. Apart from remarking on the 'unheroic' timbre of Thersites' voice (on which see Jouanno, *o.c.* 190), Eustathios observes that Agamemnon's reaction to the hero's insults is proof enough of the latter's insignificance (*in Il.* I 319,17-22). Even the relatively 'mild' nature of Thersites' invectives can be interpreted as further evidence of his humble status: had he been an equal of Achilles, he could have used much bolder language (*in Il.* I 319,26-29).

<sup>9</sup> The characterization of Thersites as the epitome of the seditious demagogue was quite widespread in the Greek literary tradition, as demonstrated by Jouanno, *o.c.* 194-196.

<sup>10</sup> Eust. *in Il.* I 325,25-29: 'Ἐνταῦθα δὲ σημείωσαι εἰς τὸ μήτινα ἐν Ἀχαιοῖς χεῖρονα τοῦ Θερσίτου εἶναι, ὅτι οὐ πᾶν ἀπροσφρῆς εἰπεῖν ὠρμημένον ἐκ τῶν παλαιῶν, ὡς οὐτ' ἂν δύο Λυσάνδρους ὑπήνεγκεν ἢ Σπάρτη, οὐτ' ἂν δύο Ἀλκιβιάδας αἱ Ἀθηναὶ κατὰ τοὺς παλαιούς, οὕτω δὲ οὐδὲ δύο ἂν τοιοῦτους Θερσίτας ἴσως τὸ Πανελλήνιον ("Here, concerning the fact that no Achaean was worse than Thersites, note that, taking one's cue from the ancients, it would not be completely incongruous to say that, just as Sparta could not have endured two Lysanders, nor Athens two Alcibiadeses – as the ancient saying goes – so, perhaps, the entire Greek community could not have endured two Thersiteses such as this one").

<sup>11</sup> On the comic tone of the Thersites episode, see e.g. Eust. *in Il.* I 311,20-25. Throughout the *Parekbolai*, Thersites himself is often qualified as γελοῖος : see e.g. Eust. *in Il.* I 319,7; 326,11; 329,16; and 547,6.

<sup>12</sup> According to Eustathios, the episode of Thersites is a perfect demonstration of Homer's ability to master all rhetorical and poetic modes: see e.g. Eust. *in Il.* I 394,9-15.

<sup>13</sup> Eust. *in Il.* I 333,29-334,3.

tent troublemaker, but that he also heartily approved of Homer's decision not to mention the hero anywhere else in his poems.

If we now turn to Tzetzes and his works, we will encounter a more nuanced discussion of both Thersites and his rightful place in the Homeric poems. Let us start with a short epistle where the scholar attacks an anonymous rival by comparing him to no one else but Thersites himself (*Ep.* 20, p. 37 Leone):

### Ἡρώας ὑβρίζοντι λουτροκανθάρα

Μικροῦ Θερσίτης ἄν ἐλελήθει τὸν Ὅμηρον παρεντεθῆναι τοῖς ἔπεσιν, εἰ μὴ τοὺς ἥρωας ὑβρίζεν. ἀλλ' ὑβρις ἡρώων τοῦτον ἐγνώρισε καὶ τῆ ποιήσει παρεζωγράφησε τέρας ἀδελφόν σοι τῆ μορφῆ καὶ ὁμότροπον, εἰ καὶ τῷ γένει “πολὺ προφερέστερον”. καὶ σὺ τὸ λοιπὸν ἄνδρας ἥρωας ὑβρίζε, ὡς τεθήση συγγράμμασιν.

### To the hero-slandering beetle<sup>14</sup>

Homer would have completely omitted Thersites from his poems, had the latter not insulted the heroes. But it was precisely his slandering of the heroes that made him famous and allowed him to be portrayed in Homer's poetry as a monstrous creature, a brother to you both in shape and in manners, even though he was “much superior”<sup>15</sup> in lineage. So, do keep slandering heroic men, if you aim to appear in their works.

When he equates his aggressive and repugnant adversary to the equally quarrelsome and hideous Thersites, Tzetzes implicitly identifies with the illustrious victims of the hero's verbal aggressions. Just as Thersites had become famous only because he had dared slander the Achaean commanders, so Tzetzes' enemy will be remembered solely because of the pointless insults he had addressed to the scholar,

<sup>14</sup> On the potential connection between the beetle, Hipponax and ‘blame poetry’, see below.

<sup>15</sup> *Od.* VIII 221. In the *Odyssey*, this line is uttered by no one else than Odysseus himself, who, boasting about his archery skills, proudly proclaims: «But of all the others I declare that I am best by far, of all mortals that are now upon the earth and eat bread» (τῶν δ' ἄλλων ἐμέ φημι πολὺ προφερέστερον εἶναι, / ὅσσοι νῦν βροτοὶ εἰσιν ἐπὶ χθονὶ σῆτον ἔδοντες; transl. A. T. Murray). The fact that Tzetzes uses this specific line to denote Thersites' nobility might be interpreted as an oblique jibe addressed to the son of Laertes, who, in this passage of the *Odyssey*, displays the very same arrogance that was generally ascribed to the ugly hero. What is more, Tzetzes might also be hinting at the illegitimacy of Odysseus' behaviour in *Iliad* II: being one of the βασιλεῖς, Thersites did not deserve to be beaten and humiliated in front of the whole Achaean host (this line of interpretation is explored further ahead in the paper).

who is clearly placing himself in a position of superiority. In this text, Thersites hardly plays a positive role: by insisting on the insignificance of his rival's words and by emphasizing his physical resemblance to the ugly hero, Tzetzes is clearly referring to a widespread *topos*, suggesting that his enemy's outward appearance perfectly matches his psychological and intellectual worth<sup>16</sup>.

In light of these considerations, we might be tempted to conclude that, in this epistle at least, Tzetzes' position perfectly overlaps with Eustathios' negative reception of Thersites. However, if we take a closer look at the text, we will notice two details that might suggest otherwise, especially if compared with other passages of Tzetzes' works. First of all, while Eustathios argues that Homer concocted the episode of Thersites to showcase his own rhetorical talent, Tzetzes suggests that the Poet would have rather not mentioned the ugly hero. Had he not insulted the Greek heroes, Thersites would never have featured in the Homeric account of the Trojan war. In other words, with this passing remark, Tzetzes seems to transfer all agency from the author to his character. Far from being a literary creation of the Poet, Thersites is a legitimate member of the Greek host and, through his notorious rhetorical exploit, he almost 'forces' Homer to mention him along with the other heroes of the *Iliad*. Secondly, and most importantly, in this short letter Tzetzes does not simply equate his anonymous rival to Thersites, but he goes as far as to suggest that the former is inferior to the Homeric character in at least one respect. Indeed, for all his inappropriate outspokenness and repulsive ugliness, Thersites could at least boast a noble origin, something which could certainly not be said of Tzetzes' addressee.

Interestingly, these themes feature again in a passage of the *Chiliads* where Tzetzes comments upon the very same letter that we have just examined<sup>17</sup>. In her aforementioned study on the figure of Thersites, Corinne Jouanno remarks that, in this text, Tzetzes is keen to highlight that the hero was remembered only because of the contumelies he had addressed to the Achaean chiefs<sup>18</sup>. To be sure, in the last four lines of the *historia*, the noun *hybris* and the cognate verb *hybrizō* feature no less than three times, further emphasizing that, just like Tzetzes' unnamed enemy, Ther-

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<sup>16</sup> On ancient physiognomy and its influence on rhetorical theories of character description, see K. De Temmerman, *Ancient rhetoric as a hermeneutical tool for the analysis of characterization in narrative literature*, «Rhetorica» XXVIII (2010) 23-51 and especially 38-40, with further bibliography.

<sup>17</sup> The *Chiliads*, or *Historiai*, were conceived as a commentary to Tzetzes' own epistolary collection. To each letter were devoted one or more *historiai*, aimed at explaining a specific aspect of the missive under scrutiny; see the introduction to this volume, pp. xxii-xxv. For a description of the structure and stages of composition of the *Chiliads*, see A. Pizzone, *The Historiai of John Tzetzes: a Byzantine 'Book of Memory'?*, «BMGS» XLI (2017) 182-207.

<sup>18</sup> Jouanno, *o.c.* 193.

sites owed his celebrity to nothing else but his aggressive insults. His actions and noble origins contributed nothing to his fame (*Hist.* VII 151, 886-889)<sup>19</sup>:

οὗτος ὕβριζων ἥρωας τοῖς ἔπεσιν ἐγράφη.  
 Οὐ διὰ γένος γὰρ αὐτὸν οὐδὲ διὰ τὰς πράξεις  
 ὁ Ὅμηρος ἀνέγραψε, δι' ὕβρεις δὲ ἠρώων.  
 Οὕτως αἱ ὕβρεις γνώριμον ἐποίησαν τὸν ἄνδρα.

His slandering of the heroes is the reason why this man (*sc.* Thersites)  
 [was included in the poems.  
 Homer did not commemorate him either for his lineage  
 or for his deeds, but only because of the insults he addressed to the heroes.  
 Thus, it was his insults that made him famous.

Certainly, Tzetzes' insistence on these details might be aimed first and foremost at further stressing the uselessness of his anonymous competitor. However, if we read carefully the first lines of this same *historia*, we may notice that this short text appears to be hiding an ulterior agenda, whose target could be different from the mysterious addressee of Tzetzes' sarcastic letter (vv. 879-885):

Θερσίτης ὁ παρ' Ἑλλησιν Ἀγρίου παῖς καὶ Δίας  
 γένους τυγχάνων εὐγενοῦς, πατρίδος Αἰτωλίας,  
 ἀνεψιὸς ἐξάδελφος ὑπάρχων Μελεάγρου,  
 καὶ τοῦ Τυδέως τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ τοῦ Διομήδους·  
 ἦν δὲ φορὸς καὶ παραβλόψ, χωλός, κυρτός, ψεδνόθριξ,  
 ἐν τῷ πεσεῖν ἀφ' ὑψηλοῦ καὶ κρημισθῆναι λόφου,  
 τῷ κυνηγίῳ διωχθεὶς χοίρῳ τῷ Καλυδῶνος.

The Greek Thersites was the son of Agrios and Dia:  
 he was the scion of a noble family and he hailed from Aitolia.  
 He was the cousin-german of both Meleager  
 and Tydeus, father of the famous Diomedes.  
 He was pointy-headed, cross-eyed, lame, hunchbacked and sparse-haired,  
 since he fell and was hurled down headlong from a high ridge  
 while he was being chased by the Calydonian boar during the hunt.

<sup>19</sup> All quotations from the *Chiliads* are taken from P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Historiae*, Galatina 2007<sup>2</sup>.

The first lines of the text are devoted to those very lineage and enterprises that, as noted by Tzetzes himself some lines later, played no role in the Homeric representation of Thersites. Interestingly, this section of the *historia* almost seems to paraphrase – and refute – point by point the first two extracts from the *Parekbolai* that we have analyzed in this study. Just like Eustathios, Tzetzes begins his short overview of Thersites' biography by analysing the hero's ancestry, then moves on to his participation in the hunt of the Calydonian boar<sup>20</sup>. Differently from Eustathios, however, Tzetzes does not bring Thersites' noble origins into question: on the contrary, he is careful to stress that the Aetolian hero was related not only to Diomedes, but also to the legendary Meleager. In the following lines, Tzetzes proceeds to describe Thersites' misshapen body: just like Eustathios, the scholar connects the hero's deformity with his participation in the hunt of the Calydonian boar. However, the version transmitted by the *Chiliads* is considerably less unflattering than the one preserved by the *Parekbolai*. Indeed, in Tzetzes' account, Thersites was not thrown off a cliff by the angered Meleager, as recounted by Eustathios. According to the *Chiliads*, the hero hurtled down a precipice while trying to escape the terrible beast. Admittedly, one could argue that fleeing from danger was not the epitome of heroic behaviour. However, taking a fall while participating in the hunt was certainly much more dignified than being thrown off a cliff as a punishment for one's cowardice<sup>21</sup>.

Be that as it may, in this short passage of the *Chiliads* Tzetzes seems to be aiming at multiple polemical targets. If the final lines of the *historia* reinforce the attack against his anonymous critic, the first section of the text might be read as a refutation of the positions adopted by a specific group of Homeric exegetes, among

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<sup>20</sup> Of course, these similarities can be ascribed to the fact that Tzetzes and Eustathios were likely relying on the same sources, while also following widespread rhetorical principles concerning the techniques and *topoi* of character description (see e.g. Theon *Prog.* 78,24-26 and De Temmerman, *o.c.* 24-28). Nevertheless, the structure and specificity of Tzetzes' presentation of Thersites cannot shake off the impression that the scholar is deliberately – and accurately – refuting a particular version of the story, which happens to coincide with the one adopted by Eustathios.

<sup>21</sup> The same explanation for Thersites' deformity features in a passage of Tzetzes' commentary on Lycophron's *Alexandra*, whose phrasing is even more explicit than that of the *Chiliads* (see *schol. Lyc.* 999, p. 312,11-17 Scheer, where the verb *κατημύζω* is used in the active form). Notably, death by precipitation was a fate reserved to the *pharmakos*, a scapegoat figure that not only was traditionally associated with Thersites, but was also rather prominent in Hipponax's poetic production. By proposing a different explanation for Thersites' deformity, Tzetzes, who was quite interested in the *pharmakos* ritual, may be trying to dispel (or, at least, nuance) the identification of the hero with the scapegoat. For the link between Thersites and the *pharmakos*, see e.g. Nagy, *o.c.* 279-281. For the *pharmakos* motif and its recurrence in Hipponax's iambs, see e.g. T. Compton, *Victim of the Muses: Poet as Scapegoat, Warrior, and Hero in Greco-Roman and Indo-European Myth and History*, Washington DC 2006.



whom we can count Eustathios himself. The latter's insistence on the issue of Thersites' lineage is already enough to suggest that the topic had become the subject of contemporary scholarly debates<sup>22</sup>. This impression is strengthened not only by the *historia* we have just analyzed, but also by some other passages of Tzetzes' 'Homeric works'. As I will try to demonstrate in what follows, while they corroborate the hypothesis that Tzetzes was refuting the opinions of his colleagues and rivals, these texts also show that the scholar's interest in Thersites cannot be separated from his problematic reception of both Homer and his heroic alter ego, namely the very same Odysseus who had publicly beaten and humiliated the noble Thersites.

## 2. *Thersites ostracized and the misshapen Odysseus*

Before further delving into Tzetzes' treatment of Thersites and examining its influence on the scholar's Homeric exegesis, it may be worth going back to the *Iliad* itself to quickly summarize the epilogue of the Thersites episode. After describing the hero's beating at the hands of Odysseus, Homer relates the reaction of the other Greek soldiers. In a so-called *tis*-speech, an unnamed member of the army goes as far as to define the punishment of Thersites as the best enterprise ever accomplished by Odysseus (τόδε μέγ' ἄριστον ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἔρξεξεν)<sup>23</sup>. When commenting on this short passage, Eustathios does not only express his approval for the words of this anonymous warrior, but he is also careful to highlight the army's appreciation of Odysseus, who, despite having prevented the Greeks from returning home, is still praised and admired by his comrades<sup>24</sup>.

The passages that Tzetzes devotes to Thersites in his Homeric works suggest that the scholar's opinion on Odysseus' actions – and on their treatment by Homer – was quite different from that of Eustathios. Unfortunately, Tzetzes' detailed *Exegesis of the Iliad* covers only the first book of the poem<sup>25</sup>. Nevertheless, however shortly,

<sup>22</sup> Thersites' humble origins were emphasized, among others, by Niketas Choniates, one of Eustathios' most famous and most affectionate pupils. As noted by Jouanno, *o.c.* 207-208, Choniates employs the figure of Thersites to mock the obscure ancestry of his polemical target – a rhetorical move that both mirrors and reverses the strategy informing Tzetzes' attack against his anonymous critic in *Ep.* 20.

<sup>23</sup> *Il.* II 272-277. On the concept of *tis*-speech, see I.J.F. de Jong, *The Voice of Anonymity: "tis"-speeches in the Iliad*, «Eranos» LXXXV (1987) 69-84.

<sup>24</sup> Eust. *in Il.* I 333,25-29. On Eustathios' appreciation for Odysseus' harsh treatment of Thersites, see also *in Il.* I 324,15, where the beating of the arrogant hero is approvingly qualified as πλεγγήν [...] γενναίαν τε καὶ βιάαν.

<sup>25</sup> According to F. Pontani, the scope of the *Exegesis* was so vast that Tzetzes probably never managed to go beyond the first book of the *Iliad* (see F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire*

Thersites appears also in two other strictly Homeric works by the scholar, namely the *Carmina Iliaca* and the *Allegories of the Iliad*.

As for the *Carmina Iliaca*, a hexametric poem that Tzetzes composed at the very beginning of his career, Thersites features prominently in the last section, which describes his death at the hands of Achilles. Unable as always to restrain his tongue, Thersites dared make fun of Achilles, who had been moved by the beauty of the fallen Penthesilea. Angered by Thersites' disrespectful words, the son of Peleus killed him with a punch (*Carm. Il.* III 194-208)<sup>26</sup>. Admittedly, in Tzetzes' rendition of the events, Thersites does not come across as a pleasant character – even though his condemnation of Achilles' lust does seem to echo the criticism that Tzetzes himself elsewhere addresses to the son of Peleus<sup>27</sup>. Be that as it may, what interests us here is Tzetzes' description of Diomedes' reaction to the killing of Thersites. Taking his cue from Quintus of Smyrna and John Malalas<sup>28</sup>, Tzetzes recounts that, being a relative of Thersites, Diomedes was so furious at Achilles that he instantly took his revenge by hurling the still breathing Penthesilea into the river Skamandros. Not content with this cursory mention of Thersites' lineage, Tzetzes goes back to it in a dedicated scholion, where he provides the reader with a detailed overview of the hero's ancestry<sup>29</sup>. Once again, the purposeful insistence on such a specific detail suggests that Tzetzes was deliberately taking aim at the interpretation of the events transmitted by the ancient scholiasts and further strengthened by Eustathios in his *Parekbolai*.

Before turning to the *Allegories of the Iliad*, it is worth examining one final element of the scholion that Tzetzes devotes to Thersites. As every reader of the *Carmina Iliaca* knows, after recounting the death of a significant character of the Trojan war, Tzetzes likes to insert in the related scholia a funerary epitaph dedicated

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(529-1453), in F. Montanari-S. Matthaios-A. Rengakos (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, I, Leiden 2015, 297-458 and especially 379). For a different opinion, see M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide. Note autografe sul Codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252*, Bari 1999, 102.

<sup>26</sup> This and all subsequent citations from the *Carmina Iliaca* are taken from P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Carmina Iliaca*, Catania 1995. See also Ugo Mondini's chapter in this volume.

<sup>27</sup> See e.g. J.-F. Boissonade, *Tzetzae Allegoriae Iliadis. Accedunt Pselli Allegoriae quarum una inedita*, Paris 1851, prol. 1148-1156.

<sup>28</sup> See Quint. Smyrn. I 776-781 (Diomedes is furious at Achilles, who has killed his kinsman) and Mal. *Chron.* V 96,81-83 Thurn (Diomedes throws the still alive Penthesilea in the river Skamandros). Interestingly, Malalas – who in turn was drawing on the Greek Dictys – makes no mention of Thersites' death: the connection between Diomedes' anger at Achilles and his decision to hurl the Amazon into the river might therefore be an innovation by Tzetzes.

<sup>29</sup> *Schol. Carm. Il.* III 207, p. 219,9-17 Leone.

to the hero involved. Recent studies<sup>30</sup> have demonstrated that the source for these short epitaphs was the pseudo-Aristotelian *Peploi*, which, however, did not preserve funerary epigrams for all the Greek and Trojan heroes that Tzetzes deemed worth remembering. Therefore, when it came to particularly meaningful characters, the scholar did not hesitate to fill the lacunae of his source by composing new epitaphs. This happens also in the case of Thersites, for whom Tzetzes penned the following distich (*schol. Carm. Il. III 207*, p. 219,15-17 Leone):

Γλωσσάων ὄδε τύμβος ἐπεσβόλον αἴσχος ἐρύκει  
Θερσίτην κατέχων εἶνεκ' ἐπεσβολίης.

This grave keeps in check the deformity of insolent words,  
holding Thersites because of his insolence.

While clearly reproducing Homeric diction and while insisting primarily on the hero's notorious outspokenness, the insertion of this epitaph into the scholion on Thersites is proof enough of Tzetzes' interest in this character. Indeed, only a few other figures enjoy this honour, owing to the central role they play in Tzetzes' exegetical project.

Our considerations are supported by an extract from the prolegomena to the *Allegories of the Iliad*, a vast composition in political verse that Tzetzes penned at the behest of the empress Eirene-Bertha<sup>31</sup>. While the 24 books of this lengthy poem mainly deal with the allegorical interpretation of the *Iliad*, the prolegomena offer a short overview of the poet's life, as well as a summary of the events that happened before Achilles' wrath. This introduction provides numerous insights into Tzetzes' complex relationship with Homeric poetry. Indeed, in many instances, the scholar does not hesitate to correct the Poet, especially when he considers his version of the

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<sup>30</sup> For a detailed presentation of the manuscript sources available to Tzetzes, see C.A. Martins de Jesus, *John Tzetzes and the pseudo-Aristotelian Peplos in middle-Byzantium. The testimony of the Matritenses gr. 4562 and 4621*, «CFC(G)» XXVI (2016) 263-283. On Tzetzes' use of the *Peploi* as a source for his *Carmina Iliaca*, see also T. Braccini, *Erudita invenzione: riflessioni sulla Piccola grande Iliade di Giovanni Tzetze*, «IFilolClass» IX (2009/2010) 153-173, esp. 156.

<sup>31</sup> On the scope and allegorical method of the *Allegories of the Iliad*, see P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milano 1991, 171-196. On Tzetzes' patronage relationship with Eirene-Bertha, see A. Rhoby, *Ioannes Tzetzes als Auftragsdichter*, «GLB» XV (2010) 155-170, esp. 160-166. The *Allegories of the Iliad* have recently been translated into English: see A. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes, Allegories of the Iliad*, Cambridge MA 2015, to be read with D.J. Mastronarde, «BMCR» 2015.09.45 (<https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2015/2015.09.45/>) and T. Braccini, «MEG» XVI (2016) 430-434. See also Alberto Ravani's chapter in this volume.

story to be incomplete or, worse, deliberately inaccurate. Tzetzes' polemical rebukes are most evident when it comes to his favorite characters, such as the wise Palamedes, whom the scholar considered as a sort of heroic alter ego. To be sure, Tzetzes does not hesitate to openly blame Homer's decision never to mention Palamedes in his poems. In the scholar's opinion, Homer's silence is all the more reprehensible in that it is caused by his desire to hide the crimes committed by Odysseus, who had orchestrated Palamedes' unfounded conviction for treason and subsequent execution<sup>32</sup>. Apart from Palamedes, however, other heroes were denied the place they deserved in the Homeric account of the Trojan war. As we will see, at least two of them are connected with Odysseus, whom Homer more or less explicitly presents as their antagonist.

Being relatively free to innovate, in the prolegomena to the *Allegories of the Iliad* Tzetzes sets out to rectify Homer's omissions. To this aim, he decides to compose an 'updated' version of the famous Catalogue of Ships, which takes up a considerable section of *Iliad* II by listing all the leaders of the Achaean host. Interestingly, in Tzetzes' new repertoire of the Greek commanders we encounter no one else than Thersites himself. More significantly still, the scholar dedicates no less than four lines to the ugly hero: that is, twice as many as those he devotes to any other warrior featuring in his personal Catalogue (with one significant exception that I will discuss below). Once again, in addition to recalling the hero's notorious ugliness, Tzetzes' presentation of Thersites focuses first and foremost on his noble lineage (*Alleg. Il.* prol. 649-652):

Θερσίτην τὸν τῆς Δίας δὲ υἱὸν καὶ τοῦ Ἀγρίου  
 πανευγενῆ μὲν ἔλκοντα τοῦ γένους ῥίζουχίαν,  
 εἰ καὶ χολὸς καὶ παραβλώψ, φοξός, κυρτός, ψεδνόθριξ,  
 τοῦ καταλόγου τῶν λοιπῶν ὡστράκισεν Ἑλλήνων.

Thersites, the son of Dia and Agrios,  
 was the scion of a most noble family,  
 even though he was lame and cross-eyed, he had a pointed head, a hunched  
 [back and sparse hair.

Homer ostracized him from his Catalogue of the other Greek commanders.

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<sup>32</sup> See again *Alleg. Il.* prol. 1148-1156 and cf. also *schol. Carm. Il.* I 155, p. 131,6-12 Leone. Tzetzes' 'rehabilitation' of Palamedes, along with his negative reception of Odysseus, is reminiscent of Philostratus' *Heroicus*. For a more detailed discussion of Tzetzes' sources see Lovato, ψεύδεια πολλά cit. 172-193. For a convincing analysis of Philostratus' 'Homeric revisionism', see L. Kim, *Homer between History and Fiction in Imperial Greek Literature*, Cambridge 2010, 175-215.

This time, however, Tzetzes adds a final remark that allows the reader to better appreciate the reasons behind his insistence on Thersites' ancestry. No matter how ugly, the hero deserved to be inserted in the Homeric Catalogue of Ships, since his noble origins clearly qualified him as one of the *basileis*. But why did Homer deliberately 'ostracize' Thersites from the ranks of the Greek commanders? The answer may lie in the extract that immediately follows the lines we have just read. Notably, it is in this very passage that we encounter the only other neglected hero who takes up four entire lines in Tzetzes' version of the Catalogue (*Alleg. Il.* prol. 653–658):

Ἄλλους πολλοὺς καὶ θαυμαστοὺς παρῆκεν ἡγεμόνας,  
τὸν Πολυνείκουσ Θερσανδρον ὃν Τήλεφος ἀνεῖλε,  
καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὸν Ἐπειὸν, υἱὸν τοῦ Πανοπέως,  
τὸν μέγαν ἀρχιτέκτονα γενναῖόν τε πυγμάχον,  
ὅσπερ, μηχανησάμενος τὸν Δούρειον τὸν ἵππον,  
τὴν Τροίαν ἐξέπόρθησεν, ὡς καθεξῆς διδάξω.

[Homer] disregarded many other admirable leaders,  
such as Thersander, the son of Polynices, who was killed by Telephos,  
and, along with him, Epeios, the son of Panopeus,  
who was a great builder and a skilled boxer.  
Having contrived the Wooden Horse,  
he captured Troy, as I will explain later on.

As I have shown elsewhere<sup>33</sup>, Tzetzes seems determined never to miss a chance to undermine Odysseus. In his eyes, the wily hero was nothing but the epitome of the overrated and envious upstart: just as his Byzantine counterparts, the son of Laertes had been able to establish himself in the eyes of the Greek leaders only after having unfairly eliminated all his competitors, starting from the much wiser Palamedes. What is worse, despite his ruthlessness and incompetence, Odysseus enjoyed a popularity that he did not deserve only because of Homer's unwarranted partiality for him. While Tzetzes may not be able to unmask the Odyssean impostors thriving in twelfth-century Constantinople, he can at least try to rectify the consequences of Homer's predilection for the undeserving Odysseus. His main strategy to cut the hero down to size consists in restoring to their rightful place the characters that had most suffered from his unjustified glorification. One such figure is Epeios, the protagonist of the extract we have just quoted and the legendary builder

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<sup>33</sup> Lovato, *Ψεύδεα πολλὰ* cit. 172-235.

of the Trojan Horse. As recounted by the *Odyssey*, the stratagem of the Horse was probably the most famous enterprise ever accomplished by the son of Laertes. By enhancing the role played by Epeios, Tzetzes subtly questions the actual merits of Odysseus, whose role in the conquest of Troy is thus critically downsized<sup>34</sup>.

A similar intent may be detected behind Tzetzes' interest for Thersites. Indeed, probably even more than Epeios, the ugly hero had traditionally been perceived – and presented – as an antagonist of Odysseus<sup>35</sup>. Of course, given Thersites' popularity, Tzetzes was not as free to innovate as he was with Epeios, for whom he went as far as to compose an original portrait (*eikonismos*)<sup>36</sup>. Just like his unbridled tongue, Thersites' ugliness had literally become proverbial and these components of the hero's traditional image could not be easily modified. However, by placing Thersites amongst the Greek commanders and by insisting on his noble origins, Tzetzes manages to alter the 'mainstream' perception of the hero, while also subtly attacking the Poet who was responsible for it. Indeed, through the insertion of Thersites in his Catalogue of Ships, Tzetzes aims to unmask Homer's inaccuracy, showing that the Poet's account of the Trojan War is far less reliable than it is generally assumed. And who could be more qualified than the learned Tzetzes to restore, finally, the 'true' version of the story?

In summary, the insistence on Thersites' noble origins is an important part of Tzetzes' self-advertising strategy. As noted, the hero's lineage had been debated by generations of Homeric commentators and had likely become the subject of scholarly discussions also in twelfth-century Constantinople. In the prolegomena to the *Allegories of the Iliad*, Tzetzes is not only taking a clear stance in the context of contemporary learned debates, but he is also boldly stating the superiority of his opinion, which warrants nothing less than a rewriting of the famous Catalogue of Ships. Moreover, by partially rehabilitating Thersites, Tzetzes delivers a fatal blow to Odysseus, who was the main cause of Homer's unforgivable alterations of the events. While the emphasis on the part played by Epeios in the building of the Horse aims to downsize Odysseus' contribution to the conquest of Troy, the reconstruction of

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<sup>34</sup> For a more detailed discussion of Tzetzes' reception of Epeios, see V.F. Lovato, *Tzetzes, Eustathius, and the 'city-sacker' Epeios: Trends and turning-points in the 12<sup>th</sup>-century reception of Homer*, in M. Kinloch-A. MacFarlane (edd.), *Trends and Turning-Points: Constructing the Late Antique and Byzantine World* («The Medieval Mediterranean» CXVII), Leiden 2019, 47-65.

<sup>35</sup> It is worth noting that, in the *Chiliads*, Tzetzes compares Thersites' fate to that of Ajax Telamoniuss, another hero whom the scholar was particularly fond of and whose death he ascribed to the envious Odysseus (see *Hist. IV ep. ad Lach. 737-738*, where both Ajax and Thersites are depicted as helpless victims of the capriciousness of human fortune).

<sup>36</sup> See *Carm. Il. III 670-761* and *Alleg. Il. prol. 740-743*.

Thersites' noble origins inevitably casts a dark shadow on Odysseus' behaviour in *Iliad* II. The public beating of Thersites – which both the Achaeans and Eustathios had humorously but approvingly defined as the best enterprise ever accomplished by the son of Laertes – acquires a completely different meaning if one is to accept Tzetzes' reconstruction of the hero's ancestry. Instead of rightly chastising an arrogant inferior, Odysseus unfairly beats up an equal, thus showing once again his tendency to silence his rivals through violence and abuse.

As a matter of fact, there are some instances in which Tzetzes seems to take his reassessment of the relationship between Odysseus and Thersites a step even further. When comparing the epithets that the scholar ascribes to the two heroes, one cannot escape the impression that Tzetzes seeks to project onto Odysseus the worst traits that were generally attributed to Thersites. For instance, in a passage of the *Carmina Iliaca*, Tzetzes clearly presents Odysseus as a *thrasydeilos*, someone who rejoiced in war and violence, but was a coward at heart (*Carm. Il.* III 629-633). As we know from our former analysis of Eustathios' *Parekbolai*, this unflattering title was usually given to Thersites, who was famous for mixing arrogance with cowardice<sup>37</sup>. In another passage of his commentary on the *Iliad*, Eustathios remarks that, with the Thersites episode, Homer had shown that he could temporarily set aside the solemn tones of the *Iliad* to compose scenes that were more suited to a comic context. The beating and ridiculous tears of the ugly hero were meant to amuse both the Achaean army, who exploded in laughter, and the audience of the poem itself. In his *Theogony*, Tzetzes seems to allude to this traditional interpretation when he defines the noble Thersites as τὸ παίγνιον Ἑλλήνων, “the joke of the Greeks” (*Theog.* 679)<sup>38</sup>. Interestingly, in another passage of his works, the scholar uses the very same term to refer to Odysseus, whom he qualifies as Homer's παίγνιον<sup>39</sup>. Admittedly, with this expression Tzetzes could simply be stigmatizing the Poet's predilection for Odysseus, who was Homer's ‘pet’. However, Tzetzes may also be deliberately playing with the ambiguity of the term, suggesting that the Poet's protégé was nothing but a laughable impostor, whose celebration at the hands of Homer could not but lead to ridiculous results.

This impression is strengthened by the last passage that I would like to discuss in this section. I am referring to a rather aggressive invective that Tzetzes addresses to Homer, who, in a scholion to the *Carmina Iliaca* (II 241b, pp. 195,12-17, 196,15-

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<sup>37</sup> On Eustathios' characterization of Thersites as a θρασύδειλος, see also the extracts quoted by Jouanno, *o.c.* 196.

<sup>38</sup> Cited from P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Theogonia*, Lecce 2019, 51.

<sup>39</sup> *Alleg. Il.* VII 32.

20 Leone)<sup>40</sup>, is bitterly criticized for having composed an unreliable account of the wrestling match between Ajax and Odysseus (*Il.* XXIII 700-739). According to Tzetzes, Homer was so blinded by his desire to praise Odysseus that he ended up writing such a rhetorically flawed account of the events that he could have easily been refuted even by inexperienced schoolboys. What interests us here is the epithet that Tzetzes refers to Odysseus in this vitriolic passage: in his opinion, the unreliable narrative of *Iliad* XXIII had been mostly inspired by the pity that Homer felt towards the “misshapen Ithakan” (δύσμορφον Ἰθακήσιον, p. 196,16-17 Leone). Tzetzes’ characterization of Odysseus as δύσμορφος is quite striking, especially since the son of Laertes was not known to be particularly ugly<sup>41</sup>. Certainly, in this passage the scholar might be employing once again the widespread motif that equated one’s psychological traits to their physical appearance. However, in light of the other texts here analyzed, I am inclined to think that Tzetzes was also trying to suggest that, if one were to crown the worst of the Achaeans, Thersites might not be the one to win the title<sup>42</sup>. The Achaean army featured another member who was at least as cowardly, ridiculous and repulsive as Thersites.

In fact, in Tzetzes’ eyes, Thersites might even surpass Odysseus in at least one respect. Contrary to the treacherous son of Laertes, who was a liar and a manipulative deceiver, Thersites did not hesitate to speak his mind openly, if inappropriately. Frankness and outspokenness were not foreign to Tzetzes himself, who had no qualms about addressing harsh invectives to both his rivals and their powerful sponsors<sup>43</sup>. Can we see in Thersites’ verbal incontinence another reason for Tzetzes’ inter-

<sup>40</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this scholion, considered in the context of Tzetzes’ reception of Odysseus, see V.F. Lovato, *Portrait de héros, portrait d’érudit: Jean Tzetzes et la tradition des eikonismoi*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 137-156, esp. 150.

<sup>41</sup> As remarked by M. Ropars, despite being sometimes disfigured by his misadventures or by crafty disguises, in the Homeric poems Odysseus is never depicted as ugly by nature (see M. Ropars, *Ulysse et son double*, «AOFL» XIII (2018) 3-30, and especially 6-7). To be sure, not even Tzetzes, who considerably modifies the traditional *eikonismos* of Odysseus to convey his negative opinion of the hero, goes as far as to describe him as an ugly man (see Lovato, *Portrait de héros* cit. 149).

<sup>42</sup> Eustathios insists time and again on the fact that Thersites is undoubtedly the χειρίστος and ἀΐσχιστος of the Achaeans (see e.g. Eust. *in Il.* I 325,23-25 and 327,14-16). On the meaning of the hero’s characterization as the ‘worst’ of the Greeks and its connection with the conceptual sphere of blame, see also Nagy, *o.c.* 262-263.

<sup>43</sup> See e.g. Tzetzes’ disagreement with his first employer, the Eparch of Berroia, which might have partly been caused by the scholar’s (excessive) frankness, as recently suggested by P. Agapitos, ‘Middle-class’ ideology of education and language, and the ‘bookish’ identity of John Tzetzes, in I. Stouraitis (ed.), *Ideologies and Identities in the Medieval Byzantine World*, Edinburgh (forthcoming). For a different interpretation of the event, see Braccini, *Erudita invenzione* cit. 154-155, 169. Consider also Tzetzes’ ‘iambic’ attacks against a certain Gregory, a fellow intellectual belonging to the influential



est in the hero? As I will try to show in the following and last section, despite never explicitly challenging the mainstream reception of Thersites as an ugly braggart, in some instances Tzetzes seems to present him – and his verbal aggressiveness – in a potentially positive light. This happens through a more or less explicit association between Thersites and another proverbial figure of blame, the iambic poet Hipponax.

### 3. *Thersites and Hipponax: an unlikely couple?*

Admittedly, the only text by Tzetzes where the poet and the hero are explicitly linked to one another does not seem to project a positive image of either of them.<sup>44</sup> I am referring to a scholion to the *Carmina Iliaca* focusing on a metrical issue that Tzetzes considers of the utmost importance<sup>45</sup>. The detailed explanation of the matter at hand ends in a vitriolic attack against those who, while unable to understand the canons of the rhetorical art, still fancy themselves to be more competent than Tzetzes. As is often the case with Tzetzes' invectives, these anonymous critics are stigmatized for their ignorance as well as their monstrous physical aspect, which is nothing but a visible manifestation of their inner worthlessness. Interestingly, amongst the paradigms of ugliness quoted by the scholar, we encounter both Hipponax and Thersites, who further enrich the customary repertoire of hideous creatures populating most Tzetzian polemical outbursts. At first glance, one might conclude that both the

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circle of the Kamateroi. On this episode, its protagonists, and its reverberations throughout Tzetzes' oeuvre, see the contribution by Aglae Pizzone in this volume, along with Ead., *Self-authorization and strategies of autobiography in John Tzetzes. The Logismoi rediscovered*, «GRBS» LX/4 (2020) 652-690 and P. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners: a Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 1-57.

<sup>44</sup> Tzetzes may be hinting at the potential affinity between Hipponax and Thersites also in the short *Ep.* 20 analysed above, where the missive's Thersites-like addressee is equated to a beetle. As has been convincingly demonstrated (D. Steiner, *Beetle tracks: Entomology, scatology and the discourse of abuse*, in I. Sluiter-R. Rosen (edd.), *KAKOS. Badness and Anti-Value in Classical Antiquity*, Leiden 2008, 83-118), this lowly insect, which features quite prominently in Hipponax's extant production, was explicitly associated with Hipponax himself – and with the iambic mode – since the comedies of Aristophanes. Tzetzes, who was quite familiar with both Hipponax and Aristophanes, may have mentioned the beetle to further emphasise the 'iambic nature' of his opponent's verbal attacks. Should this interpretation be correct, it may corroborate our suggestion that, even in the ostensibly disparaging context of *Ep.* 20, the reference to Thersites is more nuanced than it seems, especially if the ugly hero is implicitly linked to the 'blame poet' whom Tzetzes admired more than any other.

<sup>45</sup> Specifically, Tzetzes is focusing on the so-called κοινὰ συλλαβὰί, a topic that surfaces time and again throughout his oeuvre. On Tzetzes' conception of the doctrine of the 'common syllable' and on his outbursts against the metrical incompetence of his 'colleagues', see the contribution by Marc Lauxtermann in this volume.

poet and the hero are mainly quoted for their proverbial deformity: to be sure, just like Thersites, Hipponax was traditionally depicted as an ugly and rather repulsive individual<sup>46</sup>.

While this is certainly true, a quick analysis of the context of Tzetzes' final tirade might help to enrich the picture. The insertion of both Hipponax and Thersites in the long repertoire of famously ugly individuals comes immediately after a passage where the very same Hipponax is cited as an exemplary paradigm of iambic versification. The aggressive tone of the Hipponactean lines quoted by Tzetzes, along with the notorious ugliness of the poet, might have triggered the insertion of his name in the scholion's final invective, while also inspiring the association with Thersites, another character who perfectly combined verbal aggressiveness with repulsive deformity. Be that as it may, this text shows that Tzetzes' tendency to associate physical ugliness to utter incompetence cannot be considered as a rule. Despite being quoted as a proverbial example of deformity, Hipponax can still be a canon of literary perfection, as Tzetzes states time and again throughout his works. In light of these considerations, I would like to suggest that Tzetzes' complex reception of Hipponax might add a further element to our understanding of the scholar's interest in – and ambivalent treatment of – Thersites. While never explicitly refuting the traditional depiction of the hero as an inopportune braggart, Tzetzes does not seem to disapprove completely of his verbal abuses. Indeed, as noted above, Thersites' criticism of Achilles seems to echo the scholar's opinion of the lustful son of Peleus. The same could be said of Thersites' famous invective against Agamemnon, whom Tzetzes represents as a greedy and selfish ruler<sup>47</sup>. Therefore, by associating Thersites with the ugly but admirably caustic Hipponax, the scholar may be voicing his partial appreciation of the hero's attacks against the Greek commanders, which he may have perceived as a (primitive) form of iambic invective.

Of course, these are just speculations and further proof would be required to ascertain their validity. It would be especially interesting to read Tzetzes' remarks on Thersites' speech in *Iliad* II, which may have featured in his *Exegesis of the Iliad*. However, there is one further element that might provide some tentative evidence in support of my interpretation. While discussing Tzetzes' partial rehabilitation of Thersites in the *Carmina Iliaca*, I have briefly mentioned the epitaph that the scholar expressly penned for the hero. As I have observed above, in this short composition

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<sup>46</sup> See e.g. the texts quoted by E. Degani, *Studi su Ipponatte*, Bari 1984, 20-24.

<sup>47</sup> Tzetzes is particularly critical of Agamemnon's passion for women, which is almost as deplorable as his pernicious collaboration with Odysseus. See e.g. *schol. Carm. Il. I 300a*, p. 149,4-12 Leone: here, Tzetzes stigmatizes Agamemnon's lust for Cassandra, which would soon cause the death of the irreprehensible Locrian Ajax.

Tzetzēs clearly employs Homeric diction and his insistence on the hero's "insolent words" cannot but recall both the latter's exploits in *Iliad* II and his fatal argument with Achilles. Once again, the picture of Thersites emerging from these few lines may at first appear quite unflattering. However, this distich displays interesting similarities with another epitaph that Tzetzēs inserted in one of his earliest works, namely the so-called *Versus de poematum generibus*<sup>48</sup>. This short verse treatise provides the young reader with a comprehensive overview of the most important poetic forms that made up the history of Greek literature. When it comes to iambic poetry, Tzetzēs quickly mentions Archilochus and then focuses for quite some time on Hipponax, whom he clearly admired the most. To pay his tribute to the great iambographer, the scholar goes as far as to quote the epitaph that had supposedly been carved on his tomb, an honor that he reserves to no other poet.

Differently from what had happened with Thersites, Tzetzēs did not have to compose this epigram from scratch, but he could draw on a short poem that can now be read in the seventh book of the *Greek Anthology* (VII 536)<sup>49</sup>. Quite fittingly, Tzetzēs decides to adjust the original meter of this composition to the rhythm of his treatise, which was made up of iambic dodecasyllables. More interestingly still, the Hipponax epigram chosen and slightly modified by Tzetzēs bears some resemblance to the Thersites epigram that appears in the *Carmina Iliaca*. To appreciate these similarities, it will be useful to read the two texts one after another:

Γλωσσάων ὄδε τύμβος ἐπεσβόλον αἴσχος ἐρύκει  
Θερσίτην κατέχων εἶνεκ' ἐπεσβολίης.

This grave keeps in check the deformity of insolent words,  
holding Thersites because of his insolence.

(*schol. Carm. Il.* III 207, p. 219,15-17 Leone)

<sup>48</sup> W.J.W. Koster, *Scholia in Aristophanem, IA: Prolegomena de comoedia*, Groningen 1975, 84-109. On the early dating of this short metrical treatise, see especially p. 79.

<sup>49</sup> Οὐδὲ θανὸν ὁ πρέσβυς ἐῶ ἐπιτέτροφε τύμβω / βότρυν ἀπ' οἰνάνθης ἤμερον, ἀλλὰ βᾶτον / καὶ πνιγέσσαν ἀχερδὸν ἀποστύφουσαν ὀδιτῶν / χεῖλεα καὶ δίψει καρφαλέον φάρυγα. / ἀλλὰ τις Ἴππώνακτος ἐπὶ παρὰ σῆμα νέηται, / εὐχέσθω κνώσσειν εὐμένεοντα νέκυν («Not even now the old man is dead, do clusters of the cultivated vine grow on his tomb, but brambles and the astringent wild pear that contracts the traveller's lips and his throat parched with thirst. But he who passes by the tomb of Hipponax should pray his corpse to rest in sleep», transl. W.R. Paton).

οὐ βότρυν, ἀλλ' ἄχερδον ἐν τάφῳ φέρει,  
 στύφοντα, πικραίνοντα πικρία λόγων·  
 ἀλλὰ τις Ἴππώνακτος ἐλθὼν ἐς τάφον  
 τὸν ἄνδρα κνώσσειν εὐμενῶς εὐχου κάτω.

On his grave do not grow cultivated vines, but only the wild pear,  
 the taste of which draws up the lips, embittering the mouth with the  
 [bitterness of words.

He who reaches the tomb of Hipponax  
 should pray that the man keeps slumbering peacefully under the earth.  
 (*Diff. poet.* 161-164)

Particularly striking is the common motif of the necessity to ‘contain’ the aggressive tongue of the deceased, who, in both cases, seems about to break free of his tomb to verbally attack the unfortunate onlooker. If seen in light of other texts composed by Tzetzes, the repetition of the terms ἐπεσβόλος and ἐπεσβολία in the Thersites epitaph is also quite meaningful. As mentioned, by using these words, Tzetzes clearly meant to echo Homeric diction. However, ἐπεσβόλος (from ἔπος, ‘word’ and βάλλω, ‘throw, hurl’) calls to mind a rather unusual term featuring in Tzetzes’ verse treatise on Greek poetry. Before delving into the description of iambic poetry, the scholar feels the need to coin a word that may adequately describe the main traits of iambic poets themselves, who are thus qualified as γλωττοτοξόται (from γλῶττα, ‘tongue’ and τοξότης, ‘archer’)<sup>50</sup>. Just as Thersites used his words as throwing weapons, so the poems composed by Archilocus and Hipponax could prove as deadly as sharp arrows.

Certainly, the association between Thersites and the so-called poetry of blame is a widespread theme and the representation of iambographers as deadly arrow-throwing shamers is not to be considered as a Tzetzean innovation. Nevertheless, if put in conversation with the texts analyzed so far, the possibility that Tzetzes’ interest in Thersites was also motivated by the scholar’s appreciation for the hero’s ‘iambic’ outspokenness does not seem to be completely unfounded. For one, Tzetzes’ admiration for (and deep knowledge of) Hipponax is rather unique: as mentioned,

<sup>50</sup> Cf. also the exegesis of the Homeric ἐπεσβόλος presented by Eust. *in Il.* I 334,29-31: διὸ ἐφρασηνεύων ἐπεσβόλον αὐτὸν λέγει, τουτέστιν, ὡς ἐν τοῖς εἰς τὴν Ὀδύσειαν κάλλιον κεῖται, ἔπεσιν ὡς βέλεσι βάλλοντα, ὃ ταῦτόν ἐστι τῷ βλάσφημον (“This is why, clarifying [his thought], he (*scil.* Homer) calls him (*scil.* Thersites) ‘scurrilous’, that is, as is better explained in my commentary on the *Odyssey*, ‘someone who hits [his target] using words as if they were projectiles’, which is the same as ‘slandorous’). In turn, Eustathios’ remarks likely stem from schol. **bT** *Il.* II 275b Erbse.

the iambic poet features quite often in the works of the scholar, who is probably the most enthusiastic admirer of Hipponax amongst twelfth-century intellectuals<sup>51</sup>. Equally remarkable is Tzetzes' nuanced treatment of Thersites, especially if we consider the bad press that the hero normally enjoyed in Byzantine literature<sup>52</sup>. Certainly, this peculiar treatment of Thersites stems first and foremost from Tzetzes' desire to downsize Odysseus' – and Homer's – merits. This, in turn, was an essential component of Tzetzes' self-advertising strategy, which aimed to contrast his genuine – if often unacknowledged – talent to the feigned competence of the many Odyssean impostors populating Byzantine intellectual environments. This said, Tzetzes' interest for Thersites, along with the potential association of the hero with the aggressive Hipponax, cannot but remind us of other crucial aspects of Tzetzes' self-fashioning and literary activity. If we consider the scholar's notorious frankness, his proclivity towards the composition of vitriolic invectives and his own self-presentation as an irascible castigator of all kinds of injustice<sup>53</sup>, we are tempted to conclude that Tzetzes' nuanced presentation of Thersites was also motivated by the hero's proverbial outspokenness, in which the scholar might have seen a reflection of his own unquenchable thirst for *parrhēsia*.

*Conclusion. Eustathios and the disrupting appearance of the Thersitean intellectual*

That the figure and exploits of Thersites could be employed to illustrate the dynamics underlying the competitive literary environment of twelfth-century Byzantium seems to be confirmed by an interesting extract from Eustathios' *Parekbolai*. In a passage where he tries to figure out why Homer decided to include a laughable character such as Thersites in the otherwise solemn *Iliad*, Eustathios introduces the following remarks (*in Il.* I 310,24-31):

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<sup>51</sup> Tzetzes' deep admiration for Hipponax is aptly described by Degani, *o.c.* 81. Tzetzes has preserved a considerable number of fragments by the poet. As demonstrated by Masson, he must have had direct access to Hipponax's works (or, at least, to an edition of the first book of his poems). For a detailed discussion, see O. Masson, *Les fragments du poète Hipponax. Édition critique et commentée*, Paris 1962, 42-51 and Degani, *o.c.* 80-81.

<sup>52</sup> See the many examples quoted by Jouanno, *o.c.*

<sup>53</sup> See e.g. *Hist.* III 70, 193-205, where Tzetzes comments on his θυμὸς ἐπὶ δικάτοις πῦρ πνέων (vv. 193-194), a trait that he apparently shared with Cato the Younger. On this passage, see also S. Xenophonos, 'A living portrait of Cato': *self-fashioning and the classical past in John Tzetzes' Chiliads*, «EBiz» II (2014) 187-204, esp. 199-200.

Ὅτι διδάσκων ὁ ποιητὴς ὡς οὐδὲν καινὸν ἐν πολλῷ πλήθει πεπαιδευμένων ἀνδρῶν καὶ ἀτάκτους εἶναι τινὰς καὶ ἀτασθάλους καὶ ἀσωφρονίστους, ποιεῖ ἐνταῦθα ὡς ἐν λόγῳ ἐπεισοδίου τινὰ Θερσίτην ἀκαιρολόγον ἄνδρα καὶ ἐπεσβόλον καὶ οὐκ ἐν δέοντι παρησιαστικὸν τοῖς ἀρίστοις ἑαυτὸν ἐξισοῦν ἐθέλοντα, ὃς μόνος τῶν ἄλλων Ἑλλήνων καθεζομένων κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Ὀδυσσεῶς ὑποθήκην καὶ σιγῶντων τολμᾷ ἔτι λαλεῖν. ἔστι δὲ Θερσίτης ὁ τοιοῦτος ἀνήρ, ὃν καὶ ἡ κλῆσις θερμὸν εἶναι παραδηλοῖ καὶ ἰταμὸν καὶ θρασύν.

Observe that the Poet wants to teach that there is nothing surprising if, in a great multitude of civilized men (*pepaideumenōn andrōn*), we encounter also undisciplined, presumptuous and uncontrolled individuals. To this aim, in this passage he introduces – in the form of a digression – a certain Thersites, a scurrilous man who speaks at the wrong time with inappropriate frankness and wants to equate himself to the best. While all the other Greeks are sitting in silence following Odysseus' instructions, he is the only one who still dares to speak. This kind of man is represented by Thersites: after all, his warm, reckless, and insolent nature is revealed by his very name<sup>54</sup>.

The depiction of the Achaean army as an assembly of *pepaideumenoi* is quite striking. To be sure, Eustathios' interpretation of the second book of the *Iliad* as a sort of endless rhetorical *agōn* might have influenced his representation of the Greek host as a sort of literate gathering assessing the more or less laudable rhetorical exploits of the different heroes involved. However, in the passage just quoted, the hitherto tacit assimilation of the debating Achaeans with a group of discerning rhetors finally becomes explicit. Better yet, Eustathios seems to suggest that, with the episode of Thersites, Homer was specifically targeting his most learned readers, whom he wanted to warn against the always looming possibility of having to deal with an arrogant and aggressive individual such as the ugly hero. In other words, according to Eustathios, the Poet was well aware that even amongst the most civilized *pepaideumenoi* it was sometimes possible to encounter a black sheep<sup>55</sup>.

<sup>54</sup> Taking his cue from the Homeric scholia and from other sources (quoted by Jouanno, *o.c.* 192 n. 61), Eustathios (*in Il.* I 324,17-22) observes that Thersites' name might derive either from θέρω / θέρωω (with reference to the hero's warm and irascible temperament) or from θέρσος, the Aeolian equivalent of the Attic θάρσος (to be interpreted as an antiphrastic allusion to the hero's notorious *thrasyleilia*).

<sup>55</sup> In this respect, it is worth noting that Eustathios repeatedly insists on Thersites' lack of *paideia* and on the rhetorical flaws of his speech: see e.g. *in Il.* I 318,26-28 and 325,2-5 (Thersites is a

Time and again, the learned archbishop does not hesitate to apply Homer's lessons to his own times. After all, this was one of the main points of the *Parekbolai*: as Eustathios states repeatedly, reading, interpreting, and correctly reusing Homer was essential for anyone who aspired to get ahead in contemporary Constantinople<sup>56</sup>. But if we can safely conclude that, when comparing the Achaeans to a group of *pepaideumenoï*, Eustathios was likely thinking of the intellectual circles of twelfth-century Constantinople, can we also try to give a name to the Byzantine Thersites who constantly threatened to disrupt such civilized gatherings? Needless to say, we are again in the realm of speculation, since, without further proof, it is impossible to determine whether Eustathios was thinking of a specific individual or whether he was just referring to a generic situation. Just as Polyphemus was often quoted as the perfect epitome of the boorish would-be intellectual, Thersites might have simply represented the type of the boastful, aggressive and disrespectful speaker.

This said, by way of conclusion, I would like to suggest that, behind the polemical Thersites always ready to disrupt the assembly of the refined *pepaideumenoï*, we might tentatively recognize the only Byzantine intellectual that almost seemed to sympathize with the unruly hero, that is Tzetzes himself. The identification of one's rival with unsavoury Homeric characters was not an unusual polemical tool in Komnenian Byzantium. For instance, Tzetzes' criticism of Odysseus was likely aimed at those literati who not only expressed their admiration for the hero, but went as far as to present him as a sort of literary alter ego. As I have shown elsewhere, amongst these intellectuals we can count Eustathios, who not only liked to pose as a new Odysseus, but was also involved in a subterranean – but well attested – controversy with no one else but Tzetzes<sup>57</sup>. Indeed, while they never mention each other directly, we know that the two scholars were well aware of each other's work, which they subtly alluded to and criticized in their respective writings. For instance, Eustathios seems to have inserted a derogatory reference to Tzetzes in the very preface to his

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poor rhetor and his arguments end up refuting the very point he is trying to make); 318,30 (the hero is explicitly qualified as ἀπαίδευτος); 320,26-31 (on the syntactical mistakes marring Thersites' speech). On this last passage see also Jouanno, *o.c.* 195.

<sup>56</sup> For Eustathios' insistence on the usefulness of Homer's teachings, especially in the crucial field of rhetoric, see now B. van den Berg, *Homer and Rhetoric in Byzantium: Eustathios of Thessalonike on the Composition of the Iliad*, diss. Amsterdam 2016, *passim* and especially 39-53.

<sup>57</sup> See e.g. V.F. Lovato, *Odysseus the schedographer*, in B. van den Berg-D. Manolova-P. T. Marciniak (edd.), *Preserving, Commenting, Adapting: Commentaries on Ancient Texts in Twelfth-Century Byzantium*, Cambridge (forthcoming). For other, fascinating facets of the competition between Tzetzes and Eustathios, see Chiara D'Agostini's contribution in this volume, pp. 416-421, and Philip Rance's, pp. 472-474.

*Parekbolai* on the *Iliad* (I, 3,1-5)<sup>58</sup>, not long after the famous prologue where he presents himself as a Byzantine Odysseus ready to guide his readers through the Ocean of Homeric poetry. More interestingly still, in this oblique allusion Tzetzes is presented as a *κομπός*, whose bluster is implicitly contrasted to Eustathios' own decorum. Notably, this does not seem to be the only instance where Eustathios remarks upon Tzetzes' arrogance and verbal aggressiveness<sup>59</sup>. Now, given that Tzetzes likely used Eustathios' self-identification with Odysseus as a polemical weapon against his rival, it is not unreasonable to hypothesize that Eustathios might have adopted a similar strategy to attack his quarrelsome 'colleague'. And what better candidate than Thersites to represent an adversary whom the Odyssean Eustathios clearly perceived as an insolent blusterer? Among other things, such an identification might have been inspired by Tzetzes' attempts to partly rehabilitate Thersites: his sympathy towards the ugly hero can hardly have escaped Eustathios, who, as we have seen, was clearly involved in the scholarly debates revolving around Thersites' lineage and the appropriateness of the punishment administered by Odysseus.

However tempting, this reconstruction is nothing but a hypothesis. As mentioned, the wealth of texts and traditional motifs that had coalesced around Thersites throughout the centuries had transformed him into the perfect paradigm to both represent and stigmatize a certain type of individual, be it the aggressive speaker, the arrogant braggart or the hideous coward. Be that as it may, I hope that the case study of Thersites has shown that an informed examination of the Byzantine interpretation(s) of classical literature is bound to considerably enrich the scope of what we traditionally define as reception studies. Indeed, for Tzetzes, Eustathios and their 'colleagues', the exegesis of past literature was far from a sterile academic exercise. Even in what we might be tempted to classify as exquisitely scholarly works, Homer, Achilles and Odysseus – along with many other figures from the past – take up new and different meanings according to the context, the writer and his authorial agenda. Indeed, for the Byzantines, comparing oneself to Palamedes or Odysseus was an effective means to project a recognizable self-image, thus clarifying one's stance in

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<sup>58</sup> On this passage, see E. Cullhed, *Eustathios of Thessalonike, Parekbolai on Homer's Odyssey I-II*, diss. Uppsala 2014, 10\*, slightly modified in Id., *Eustathios of Thessalonike. Commentary on Homer's Odyssey. Volume I on rhapsodies A-B*, Uppsala 2016, 9\*-10\*.

<sup>59</sup> See again Cullhed, *Parekbolai* cit. 23\*-24\*. According to Cullhed, in the *Parekbolai on the Odyssey*, Eustathios stigmatizes Tzetzes' arrogance by making a subtle reference to the violent iambic composition that the latter had addressed to Gregory and George Skylitzes, two intellectuals belonging to the circle of the Kamateroi (on Gregory and Tzetzes' quarrel with the Kamateroi see above). These aggressive iambs were first published by S. Pétridès, *Vers inédits de Jean Tzetès*, «ByzZ» XII (1903) 568-570.



the competitive literary environment of the capital, while also confirming one's right to belong to the exclusive group of the *pepaideumenoí*. In other words, for Tzetzes, Eustahios and their fellow literati, past and present were in constant dialogue with each other: it was precisely such an interaction that contributed to shape one's (projected) identity, thus determining one's position both in contemporary society and in the eyes of future readers.

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## **L’Alexandre de Tzetzés : entre culture savante et culture populaire**

L’époque des Comnènes fut marquée par une exploitation intensive, à la fois politique et littéraire, de la figure d’Alexandre le Grand. Aussi est-il peu surprenant de trouver d’assez nombreuses références au conquérant macédonien dans l’œuvre de Tzetzés – non seulement dans ceux de ses écrits où la référence à Alexandre peut être considérée comme un *locus communis* (tel est le cas pour la littérature épistolaire), mais aussi dans ceux où ce type d’allusion historique était moins attendu (par exemple dans ses commentaires sur des textes anciens sans rapport avec Alexandre). On trouve ainsi des références au Conquérant dans plusieurs lettres de Tzetzés (n° 18, 70, 76) et surtout dans les *Chiliades*, où notre auteur s’emploie à élucider et gloser les allusions classiques figurant dans sa correspondance<sup>1</sup> : environ quinze des notices du recueil sont, entièrement ou en partie, consacrées à des épisodes de la geste d’Alexandre. Sans surprise, Alexandre est aussi mentionné à plusieurs reprises dans le commentaire de Tzetzés sur l’*Alexandra* de Lycophron, où un passage énigmatique de la prophétie de Cassandre, concernant le dénouement des guerres à venir entre l’Europe et l’Asie (v. 1435-1450), fait, semble-t-il, allusion au conquérant macédonien, sous le masque du « lion tout à la fois thesprote et chalastréen », descendant d’Éaque et de Dardanos (v. 1440-1441), et peut-être aussi sous celui du « loup de Galadra » (v. 1444)<sup>2</sup>. Des références moins attendues figurent dans l’*Exégèse de l’Iliade* et dans les scholies sur les *Travaux et les Jours*, où Tzetzés évoque, en marge des remarques d’Hésiode concernant les effets des saisons sur le corps humain (v. 414-422), diverses théories physiologiques et, signalant qu’il existe des personnes à l’odeur naturellement suave, cite en exemple de cet étonnant phénomène Alexandre... et lui-même ! Le Conquérant est mentionné aussi dans les scho-

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<sup>1</sup> Sur cette pratique de l’auto-commentaire, voir A. Pizzone, *The Historiai of John Tzetzes : a Byzantine “book of memory” ?*, « BMGS » XLI (2017) 182-207.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. Hurst, *Alexandre médiateur dans l’Alexandra de Lycophron*, in M. Bridges-J. Ch. Bürgel (éd.), *The Problematics of Power : Eastern and Western Representations of Alexander the Great*, Bern 1996, 61-68 ; G. Lambin, *L’Alexandra de Lycophron. Étude de texte et traduction*, Rennes 2005, notamment 30-36, 202-203 et 236-237. D’autres candidats ont toutefois été proposés – par exemple Pyrrhus ou Alexandre le Molosse – pour incarner le rôle du loup, ou même celui du lion : cf. P. Lévêque, *Lycophronica*, « REA » LVII (1955) 36-56 ; M. Mahé-Simon, *Les deux Alexandre dans l’Alexandra de Lycophron*, in C. Cusset-E. Prioux (éd.), *Lycophron. Éclats d’obscurité*, Saint-Étienne 2009, 441-450.

lies de Tzetzés sur le *Ploutos* d'Aristophane, dans le prologue de son traité *Sur les mètres*, dans son commentaire sur Hermogène et dans son *Épitomé rhétorique*, qui offre un abrégé de la doctrine d'Hermogène<sup>3</sup>.

Tout ce matériau relatif à Alexandre peut être sommairement réparti en trois catégories. Une première série de passages illustre la dimension extraordinaire des aventures du Conquérant macédonien<sup>4</sup> : Tzetzés évoque sa généalogie mythique, sa bonne odeur, ses pouvoirs surnaturels sur les animaux (en l'occurrence, Bucéphale), il mentionne quelques-uns de ses exploits les plus spectaculaires (prise de la roche Aornis, construction de portes de fer à l'entrée du « défilé des Hyrcaniens et des Caspiens ») et quelques-unes des merveilles admirées par lui au cours de ses pérégrinations orientales (remparts de la cité de Babylone, serpents gigantesques d'Aposisarès). S'inscrit aussi dans cette première catégorie le présage du lion tué par un âne, parce que, même s'il s'agit d'un signe funeste annonçant la mort prochaine d'Alexandre, le caractère exceptionnel de l'événement illustre l'aura surnaturelle entourant l'existence du héros macédonien.

Une seconde série de textes décrit Alexandre sous les traits d'un monarque exemplaire, doué de qualités indispensables au bon exercice de la royauté – magnanimité, justice ou sagacité<sup>5</sup>. La reconstruction des cités de Thèbes et de Stagire témoigne de sa générosité ; le châtiment qu'il inflige aux assassins de Darius prouve sa grandeur d'âme et son souci de la justice ; l'habileté avec laquelle il réconcilie les fils de la reine Candace atteste ses talents de diplomate... Dans cette deuxième série de passages, on remarque la présence de quelques épisodes habituellement constitutifs de la « légende noire », tel l'épisode du siège de Thèbes, plus souvent invoqué pour illustrer la cruauté d'Alexandre, mais pourvu ici d'un épilogue anhistorique (la reconstruction de la cité) qui en inverse la portée<sup>6</sup>. De même, alors que l'excès de

<sup>3</sup> Voir le détail des références dans le tableau joint en annexe.

<sup>4</sup> N° 4, 7, 10, 14, 18, 25, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34 et 38 dans le tableau ci-joint. On pourrait peut-être adjoindre à cette première série le n° 37 qui, à travers le motif du rêve mettant en garde contre les rêves, exploite l'élément paradoxal.

<sup>5</sup> N° 1, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 20 du tableau ci-joint. À cette série, on pourrait adjoindre le n° 11 (où Alexandre, en réclamant aux Athéniens l'extradition d'Harpale et de Démosthène, apparaît en roi de justice), les n° 23 et 24 (où Alexandre est mentionné en tant que conquérant de la Perse), les n° 29 et 35 (où il est cité comme repère chronologique – signe de l'importance historique reconnue à son règne), et enfin les n° 28 (sur Laïs et Alexandre) et 36 (sur les funérailles d'Héphaïstion). Pour Laïs et Alexandre, voir *infra*, n. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Les références très négatives à cet épisode sont nombreuses, dans la littérature grecque et byzantine : voir, par exemple, Liban. *Or.* 19 (Πρὸς Θεοδοσίον τὸν βασιλέα περὶ τῆς στάσεως), 13 ; Julien, *Les Césars*, 22, 321d ; Nicéphore Basilakès, *In Ioannem Comnenum imperatorem oratio*, § 15 (éd. R. Maisano, *Niceforo Basilace. Gli encomi per l'imperatore e per il patriarca*, Naples 1977, 87-

chagrin affiché par le Conquérant à la mort d'Héphaïstion et les extravagances dont il fit preuve en cette occasion lui ont souvent été reprochés par les moralistes<sup>7</sup>, Tzetzés, qui mentionne l'hommage rendu par Alexandre à son ami défunt parmi d'autres exemples de funérailles grandioses, en l'honneur de Patrocle, d'Achille ou de Mausole, se contente d'une brève référence aux murailles abattues par les Macédoniens en signe de deuil, sans y ajouter aucune expression de condamnation morale<sup>8</sup>. Le fait qu'il qualifie fréquemment Alexandre de « grand » (ὁ μέγας<sup>9</sup>) ou de « très grand » (ὁ μέγιστος<sup>10</sup>), et emploie à plusieurs reprises pour le désigner le démonstratif emphatique ἐκεῖνος<sup>11</sup> confirme la présence d'un parti-pris encomias-tique dans le portrait qu'il trace du Conquérant macédonien.

Une troisième série d'anecdotes, elles aussi globalement favorables à Alexandre, tourne autour des relations du roi avec les intellectuels ou les artistes de son temps<sup>12</sup> : Tzetzés décrit Alexandre rejetant avec mépris le commentaire dans lequel le grammairien Zoïle critiquait les poèmes homériques – signe de son attachement à l'œuvre du Poète ; il souligne la sensibilité artistique manifestée par le Conquérant

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132) ; *id.*, *Prog.* 53 (Éthiopée n° 24, éd. A. Pignani, *Niceforo Basilace. Progimnasmi e monodie*, Naples 1983, 217-221). Un écho de cette tradition négative transparait chez Tzetzés dans le *Commentaire sur Hermogène* (Tableau ci-joint, n° 39), avec l'allusion à la vente des prisonniers thébains.

<sup>7</sup> Voir Élien, *HV* VII 8, ainsi que la mise au point assez dubitative d'Arrien, *Anab.* VII 14 sur les folies prêtées à Alexandre à l'occasion de la mort d'Héphaïstion.

<sup>8</sup> Si la référence à la présence de la courtisane Laïs aux côtés d'Alexandre en Asie, dans la scholie au *Ploutos* d'Aristophane, 179, repose, comme le pense M. Chantry (*Scholies anciennes aux Grenouilles et au Ploutos d'Aristophane*, Paris 2009, 356), sur une confusion avec Thaïs, la courtisane athénienne qui passe pour avoir joué un rôle décisif dans l'incendie du palais de Persépolis (cf. Diodore XVII 72 ; Plutarque, *VA* 38 ; Athénée XIII 576d-e, d'après Clitarque, *FGrH* 137 F 11), l'absence chez Tzetzés de toute allusion à cet épisode de sinistre réputation peut aussi être considérée comme l'indice d'un parti-pris favorable à Alexandre. On remarquera toutefois que l'hypothèse d'une telle confusion n'est pas évoquée dans l'article *Laïs* de la *Realencyclopädie* (*RE* XII/1 (1924) 513-516), qui mentionne pourtant, parmi plusieurs courtisanes de même nom, celle qui se serait jointe à l'expédition d'Alexandre, possiblement identique à la Laïs dont Apelle admira la beauté (Athénée XIII 588c-d) et à celle dont Démosthène était amoureux (Aulu-Gelle I 8). Dans W. Heckel, *Who's Who in the Age of Alexander : Prosopography of Alexander's Empire*, Malden MA-Londres-Victoria 2009, on trouve une entrée consacrée à Thaïs, mais il n'est pas question de Laïs.

<sup>9</sup> *Hist.* III 89-91, 354 ; III 114, 947 ; IV *ep. ad Lach.* 489 ; VIII 198, 394 ; VIII 199, 402 ; X 322, 259 ; X 332, 404 ; XI 368 *tit.*

<sup>10</sup> *Hist.* XI 368, 90.

<sup>11</sup> *Ep.* 18, p. 34, 1 Leone ; *Ep.* 76, p. 112, 14 Leone ; *Hist.* IV *ep. ad Lach.* 758 ; VIII 200, 416.

<sup>12</sup> N° 2, 3, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22 et 26 du tableau joint. Sur l'importance de cette thématique dans les *Chiliades*, voir S. Kuttner-Homs, *Rhétorique des arts et art de la rhétorique. Les anecdotes de peintres et sculpteurs dans les Histoires de Jean Tzetzés*, in E. Hélin-V. Naas (éd.), *Le Mythe de l'art antique, entre anecdotes et lieux communs*, Paris 2018, 71-92.

devant les tableaux de Parrhasios, Zeuxis et Timanthe, son hostilité aux statues, par trop grandioses, du sculpteur Stasikratès, et sa préférence pour les portraits plus réalistes de Lysippe – preuve d’une saine appréciation des limites de l’humaine nature et d’un louable mépris de la flatterie. Enfin, plusieurs textes de notre auteur présentent Alexandre comme le destinataire de la statue de Kairos, œuvre célèbre de Lysippe.

Un examen des sources utilisées par Tzetzés dans ces trois séries de passages aboutit à des résultats assez inattendus – qu’il convient, bien sûr, d’interpréter avec prudence, car les sources invoquées par un auteur ne coïncident pas toujours avec celles qu’il a réellement exploitées, et l’écart peut être important entre affichage et pratique effective. Un certain nombre de citations de nature « bibliographique » figurent dans les ouvrages exégétiques de Tzetzés (au nombre desquels on peut ranger les *Chiliades*) : faire parade de son érudition était, assurément, plus attendu dans ce type de textes « techniques » que dans des œuvres à caractère épideictique, comme les lettres ou les discours, où la préférence va généralement aux cryptocitations, parce qu’elles sont mieux à même d’entretenir la connivence intellectuelle sur laquelle repose ce type de productions littéraires. Tzetzés se réfère ainsi aux théories scientifiques de Théophraste dans le passage de ses scholies aux *Travaux* d’Hésiode évoquant la bonne odeur d’Alexandre ; dans ses scholies à l’*Alexandra* de Lycophron, il cite « ceux qui ont écrit sur les *praxeis* d’Alexandre » à propos de la roche Aornis, « le Juif Josèphe » au sujet des portes Caspiennes, Théopompe et Pyrandros à propos de la généalogie d’Alexandre ; dans les *Chiliades*, il mentionne Onésicrite et Élien au sujet des serpents d’Aposisarès ; les *Éphémérides* d’Aischrion à propos de la sensibilité artistique d’Alexandre ; Clitarque, les compagnons d’Alexandre et Diodore au sujet des remparts de Babylone<sup>13</sup>. Il fait aussi trois références à « Callisthène » – dénomination par laquelle il désigne en fait l’auteur anonyme du *Roman d’Alexandre*<sup>14</sup>, en des passages traitant du sort de Thèbes, de l’assassinat de Darius et de la rencontre d’Alexandre avec la reine Candace<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> Le détail de ces références figure dans le tableau fourni en annexe.

<sup>14</sup> *Hist.* I 13, 331 (destruction de Thèbes) ; III 89-91, 330 (assassinat de Darius) ; III 102-111, 889 (rencontre avec la reine Candace). Dans *Hist.* III 89-91, le récit de l’assassinat de Darius est curieusement introduit par la phrase Ἡ παλαιῶν ἀνόνημος τοιάδε ἱστορία (« Voici une histoire anonyme racontée par les Anciens »), alors même qu’à la fin de la notice, c’est « l’historien Callisthène » qui en est cité pour garant. Dans *Hist.* III 69, 103 figure une quatrième référence de Tzetzés à Callisthène, dans une notice consacrée à Sésostris, mais elle ne renvoie pas au *Roman d’Alexandre*, et sans doute pas davantage à l’œuvre authentique de l’historien : J. Rzepka, auteur de l’article *Kallisthenes* du *Brill’s New Jacoby* (2016), estime qu’il s’agit d’une référence erronée, et il qualifie l’anecdote rapportée à propos de Sésostris (*FGrH* 124 F 59 bis) de « late invention », que Tzetzés aurait

On remarquera la prédilection avec laquelle Tzetzés met ainsi en avant des sources quelque peu excentriques<sup>16</sup>, pour ne pas dire tout à fait obscures, comme Aischrion<sup>17</sup> ou le fantomatique Pyrandros<sup>18</sup>. Même s'il avait accès au riche trésor de la bibliothèque impériale, comme le suggèrent les travaux de Maria Jagoda Luzzatto<sup>19</sup>, et s'il est par conséquent susceptible d'avoir consulté les textes d'auteurs aujourd'hui disparus<sup>20</sup>, il n'en paraît pas moins assez improbable qu'il ait lu directe-

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empruntée à l'historien byzantin Théophylacte Simokattès (*Historiae* VI 11,10-15), d'ailleurs cité lui aussi à la fin de la *Chiliade* III 69.

<sup>15</sup> On trouve sans doute aussi une autre référence, plus allusive, au récit du Ps.-Callisthène dans *Hist.* I 28, 809-814, où Tzetzés parle de l'ἱστορία de Bucéphale.

<sup>16</sup> G. Cordiano le décrit comme un lecteur à la recherche de textes extravagants ou désuets : *La Suda e i libri perduti delle Koinai historiai di Diodoro Siculo : conoscenza e sorte della Biblioteca storica nel X secolo*, in G. Vanotti (éd.), *Il lessico Suda e gli storici greci in frammenti*. « Atti dell'incontro internazionale, Vercelli, 6-7 novembre 2008 », Tivoli 2010, 371-391 (388).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Souda* α1 354 Adler : « Aischrion, de Mitylène, poète épique qui accompagna l'expédition d'Alexandre, fils de Philippe : c'était un familier d'Aristote et son bienaimé, à ce que dit Nicandre d'Alexandrie dans les *Disciples d'Aristote* ». Jeune contemporain d'Alexandre, il aurait composé des *Éphémérides* en hexamètres à son sujet. Outre deux passages de cet ouvrage (celui des *Chiliades*, et un autre figurant dans les scholies à Lycophron, 688 Scheer), H. Lloyd-Jones et P. Parsons citent également quelques extraits de poèmes iambiques (*SH* 1-4 [« Aeschrio Samius vel Mitylænaeus »], F 4-10 = *Anth. Pal.* VII 345 ; Athénée VII 296e et VIII 335b ; *Épitomé de la Rhétorique* [anonyme], éd. C. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, III, Leipzig 1834, 615-669 : 650-651). Mais il n'est pas sûr qu'Aischrion de Mitylène et Aischrion le iambographe (qu'Athénée appelle Aischrion de Samos) soient un seul et même personnage : Tzetzés est notre unique témoin attribuant au même auteur la paternité de vers épiques et d'iambes.

<sup>18</sup> Peut-être identique à l'auteur des *Peloponnesiaka* cité dans la *Collection d'histoires parallèles* du Ps.-Plutarque (37, 315a), à propos de l'assassinat d'Agamemnon : cf. K. Ziegler, *Pyrrhandros* (3), *RE* XXIV (1963) 82-83. Des quatre fragments cités par K. Müller, *FHG*, IV, 486, F. Jacoby n'a retenu dans sa rubrique sur Pyrandros (*FGrH* 504) que l'extrait du Ps.-Plutarque ; le texte de Tzetzés est mentionné uniquement dans la rubrique consacrée à Théopompe (*FGrH* 115 F 355 = *schol. Lyc.* 1439 Scheer).

<sup>19</sup> M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide. Note autografe sul Codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco* 252, Bari 1999, 44-46, 162 ; Ead., *Note inedite di Giovanni Tzetzes e restauro di antichi codici alla fine del XII secolo : Il problema del Laur. 70, 3 di Erodoto*, in G. Prato (éd.), *I manoscritti tra riflessione e dibattito*, Florence 2000, II, 633-654 : 636-637.

<sup>20</sup> Selon O. Masson, *Les fragments du poète Hipponax*, Paris 1962, 42-52, Tzetzés a dû découvrir et utiliser un exemplaire d'Hipponax, ou du moins de larges portions du livre I, le plus célèbre ; voir aussi E. Degani, *Studi su Ipponatte*, Bari 1984, 80-81 et 113-114. Il pourrait aussi avoir eu accès à un manuscrit, aujourd'hui perdu, contenant des drames satyriques d'Euripide – cf. V. Masciadri, *Autolykos und der Silen. Eine übersehene Szene des Euripides bei Tzetzes*, « *MH* » XLIV (1987), 1-7 –, ou encore à des œuvres d'Empédocle à présent disparues – cf. O. Primavesi, *Lecteurs antiques et byzantins d'Empédocle : de Zénon à Tzetzés*, in A. Laks-C. Louguet (éd.), *Qu'est-ce que la*

ment tous les ouvrages mentionnés ci-dessus : les écrits des historiens compagnons d'Alexandre ou l'œuvre de Clitarque n'étaient sans doute plus en circulation au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle<sup>21</sup> et, même pour des auteurs qui, comme Théopompe<sup>22</sup>, subsistaient peut-être encore à l'époque des Comnènes, les citations de Tzetzés paraissent souvent de seconde main. S'il connaissait de toute évidence Flavius Josèphe, qu'il cite fréquemment<sup>23</sup>, les éléments d'information qu'il attribue à Théopompe<sup>24</sup> et Pyrandros, à Onésicrite<sup>25</sup>, aux « compagnons d'Alexandre » ou à Clitarque<sup>26</sup>, ont été empruntés à des auteurs plus récents. La référence à Théopompe et Pyrandros figurait

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*philosophie présocratique ?*, Villeneuve d'Asq 2002, 183-204 : 200-201. Voir aussi, dans le présent volume, l'article de Philip Rance sur les textes techniques ou mathématiques connus de Tzetzés.

<sup>21</sup> Ni les historiens compagnons d'Alexandre ni Clitarque ne font l'objet de notices dans la *Bibliothèque* de Photios ; ils ne font pas non plus partie des auteurs qui furent dépouillés par les rédacteurs des *Excerpta Constantiniana* – ce qui laisse penser que leur texte n'était plus disponible à l'époque de la première « Renaissance » byzantine.

<sup>22</sup> Au IX<sup>e</sup> siècle, Photios pouvait encore lire cinquante-trois des cinquante-huit livres des *Philippiques* (*Bibl.*, cod. 176, 120a) : cf. M.A. Flower, *Theopompus of Chios*, Oxford 1984, 12 ; P. Pédech, *Trois historiens méconnus : Théopompe, Duris, Phylarque*, Paris 1989, 17-254 (65-66). Si Théopompe est souvent cité chez Étienne de Byzance et dans la *Souda* (cf. A. L. Chavez Reino, *Ecos de Teopompo en la Suda*, in Vanotti (éd.), *Il lessico Suda* cit. 207-266), il ne figure cependant pas parmi les auteurs exploités dans ce qui nous reste de l'encyclopédie de Constantin Porphyrogénète, où il n'est représenté qu'à travers des extraits de Polybe dans le *De virtutibus* (*Exc.* 26, éd. T. Büttner-Wobst et A. G. Roos, Berlin 1906, II, 108 et 112 = Polybe VIII 9,1 et 11, 6) et dans le *De sententiis* (*Exc.* 73, éd. U.P. Boissevain, Berlin 1906, 143 = Polybe XII 4a,2-3 ; *Exc.* 81, éd. Boissevain, 154 = Polybe XII 25f,6 ; *Exc.* 85, éd. Boissevain, 163 = Polybe XII 27,8).

<sup>23</sup> Flavius Josèphe est cité dans les lettres n° 5 (p. 8,15 Leone), n° 6 (p. 13,9 Leone) et dans *Hist.* V 12, *tit.*, 513 et 545 ; VI 43, 271 ; VI 52, *tit.* Commentant dans la *Chiliade* V 12 une formule de la *Guerre des Juifs* sur le « destin injuste », Tzetzés ne tarit pas d'éloge à propos de l'« historien hébreu », qu'il qualifie à deux reprises d'« admirable ».

<sup>24</sup> Dans les *Chiliades*, le nom de Théopompe n'apparaît qu'une seule fois, dans un passage sans rapport avec Alexandre (XII 406, 352), où Tzetzés attribue faussement à l'historien la paternité du traité de Théophraste Περὶ εὐσεβείας – ce qui ne plaide guère en faveur d'une connaissance directe de l'auteur en question.

<sup>25</sup> En dehors de *Hist.* III 114, 943 (sur les serpents d'Aposisarès), on ne trouve pas d'autre référence à Onésicrite dans les *Chiliades* ; il n'y en a pas non plus dans la correspondance de Tzetzés.

<sup>26</sup> Si le nom de Clitarque apparaît à plusieurs reprises dans les lettres de Tzetzés et dans ses *Chiliades* – *Ep.* 13 (p. 22,12 Leone) ; *Ep.* 77 (pp. 115-116 Leone) ; *schol. Ep.* 13 (p. 163 Leone) ; *Hist.* VII 100, *tit.* et 45 ; XI 386, *tit.* et 826 – ces divers textes font tous référence à un seul et même passage de l'historien, décrivant avec beaucoup d'emphase un insecte appelé *tenthredôn* (*FGrH* 137 F 14 = Démétrios, *Du style* 304) ; ils n'impliquent donc aucunement une connaissance directe de l'œuvre de Clitarque. Célèbre à l'époque hellénistique et romaine, celui-ci faisait partie des auteurs fréquemment utilisés par les scholiastes, d'après L. Pearson, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, New York 1960, 213.

dans les scholies anciennes à Lycophron<sup>27</sup>, dont Tzetzés s'inspire évidemment dans son propre commentaire à l'*Alexandra* – d'où la mention de ces deux auteurs à propos de la généalogie mythique d'Alexandre<sup>28</sup>. La référence à Onésicrite dans la *Chiliade* consacrée aux serpents d'Aposisarès (III 114) provient du traité sur la *Nature des animaux* d'Élien<sup>29</sup> – auteur que Tzetzés appréciait visiblement et cite à plusieurs reprises dans les *Chiliades*<sup>30</sup>. Quant à ses références conjointes à Clitarque et aux historiens compagnons d'Alexandre, dans la notice « Sur les remparts de Sémiramis » (*Hist.* IX 275), elles sont tout droit tirées de la *Bibliothèque historique* de Diodore de Sicile<sup>31</sup>. De fait, Tzetzés a évidemment été influencé par les écrits des trois « grands » historiens grecs d'Alexandre, Diodore, Plutarque et Arrien, dans les divers passages où il évoque la geste du Conquérant<sup>32</sup>, même s'il n'y cite jamais nommément aucun d'entre eux – à l'exception de Diodore, dans le développement, précédemment évoqué, sur les remparts de Babylone<sup>33</sup>. De ces trois auteurs, Plu-

<sup>27</sup> P. A. M. Leone, *Scholia vetera et paraphrases in Lycophronis Alexandram*, Galatina 2002, 256 (ad 1439). Le passage de Théopompe, d'après lequel Olympias prétendait descendre de Pyrrhus, fils d'Achille, et d'Hélénos, fils de Priam (*FGrH* 115 F 355), pourrait provenir, selon Flower, *Theopompus* cit. 102, de la préface des *Philippiques* (où figurait une généalogie des rois des Macédoine) ou, selon Pédech, *Trois historiens* cit. 74, du livre II, qui relatait le mariage d'Olympias avec Philippe.

<sup>28</sup> La dette de Tzetzés envers les recueils de scholies anciennes est attestée également par son commentaire au *Ploutos*, 179 : la référence à Laïs, que nous avons signalée plus haut, figure en effet aussi dans les scholies anciennes de la comédie d'Aristophane (M. Chantry, *Scholia in Aristophanem*, IVa : *Scholia vetera in Aristophanis Plutum*, Groningen 1994, 42).

<sup>29</sup> Trois autres des références de Tzetzés à Alexandre pourraient s'inspirer de l'*Histoire variée* d'Élien (*Ep.* 18 ; *Hist.* VII 140 ; VIII 198 : voir le tableau ci-joint).

<sup>30</sup> *Hist.* IV 117, 13 ; IV 128, 170 et 174 ; IV 129, 200 ; IX 256, 106 ; *schol.* V 6, 393 Leone. Tzetzés a surtout exploité son recueil sur *La Personnalité des animaux*, auquel il emprunte nombre d'anecdotes à contenu zoologique.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Diodore VII 3-5. Sur ce passage, voir Pearson, *The Lost Histories* cit. 228-230.

<sup>32</sup> Voir les divers rapprochements suggérés dans le tableau fourni en annexe, dans la colonne « Source(s) utilisée(s) ».

<sup>33</sup> Les trois auteurs font pourtant l'objet de citations explicites dans d'autres passages des *Chiliades*, mais sur des sujets sans rapport avec Alexandre : si Arrien n'est mentionné que trois fois (III 115, 990 ; XII 443, 790 ; *schol.* I 27, 802), Plutarque et Diodore sont régulièrement évoqués – le premier quatorze fois (I 1, 23 ; I 29, 823 ; II 32, 18 ; II 33, 35 ; III 70, 157 ; VI 93, 401 ; III 102-111, 880 ; IV 129, 200 ; IV 9, 931 ; IV 137, 388 ; VI 59, 513 ; VI 711, 661 ; *schol.* III 70, 158 et VII 155, 951), le second trente fois (I 16, 393 ; I 22, 596 ; I 25, 671 ; I 27, 703 ; I-II 32, 970 et 18 ; II 33, 36 ; II 35, 134 et 152 ; II 38, 562 ; II 39, 570 ; III 68, 85 ; III 69, 87, 102 ; III 70, 157 ; III 89-91, 389 ; III 95, 451 ; III 113, 942 ; IV 132, 280 ; V 15, 562 ; VI 53 *tit.* et 465 ; VI 74, 703 ; VIII 252, 978 ; IX 275, 518 et 563 ; XII 399, 181, 253, 258 et 261). Cordiano estime toutefois que Tzetzés a sans doute eu recours au texte de Diodore de façon médiate, à travers les *Excerpta* constantiniens, plutôt qu'en lecture directe (*La Suda e i libri perduti* cit. 388).



tarque est assurément celui qu'il a mis le plus à contribution : l'affection qu'il portait à l'œuvre du sage de Chéronée est bien connue<sup>34</sup>, et beaucoup de ses références à Alexandre s'inspirent tantôt de la *Vie* consacrée par Plutarque au conquérant macédonien, tantôt des deux traités de Plutarque *Sur la fortune d'Alexandre*<sup>35</sup> : alors même que Tzetzés connaissait visiblement certaines œuvres de Théophraste, qu'il cite assez souvent<sup>36</sup>, sa référence au philosophe à propos de la bonne odeur d'Alexandre est en fait un emprunt à Plutarque, qui invoque les théories de Théophraste et celles d'un autre disciple d'Aristote, Aristoxène de Tarente, pour expliquer l'*euodia* du Conquérant (VA VI 4-6)<sup>37</sup>. Par ailleurs, étant amateur d'érudition, Tzetzés devait sans doute aussi fréquenter de manière habituelle les ouvrages de compilation, à contenu paradoxographique ou mythographique, de divers *grammatikoi* anciens<sup>38</sup> :

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<sup>34</sup> Plutarque comptait parmi les auteurs préférés de Tzetzés : dans le prologue de son *Exégèse de l'Iliade*, il raconte que, forcé par la pauvreté à vendre ses livres, il conserva uniquement un volume de textes mathématiques et sa copie des *Vies parallèles* (p. 22,4-11 Papatomopoulos). Sur cet épisode voir encore l'article de Philip Rance (pp. 427-430). N.G. Wilson souligne l'influence exercée par les biographies de Plutarque sur sa conception du passé (*Scholars of Byzantium*, Londres 1996<sup>2</sup>, 191).

<sup>35</sup> *Ep.* 18 et *Hist.* VII 140 (reconstruction de Stagyre) : cf. Plutarque, VA 7,3 ; *Ep.* 76 (Lysippe et Stasikratès) : cf. Plutarque, FA II 2 ; *Hist.* VI 37 (Harpale et Démosthène) : cf. Plutarque, *Démosthène* 25-30 ; *Hist.* VIII 199-200 et XI 368 (Stasikratès et Lysippe) : cf. Plutarque, FA II 2 ; *Exeg. II.* p. 170,15-17 Papatomopoulos (présage annonçant la mort d'Alexandre) : cf. Plutarque, VA 73,6 ; *schol. Hes. Op.* 414-422 Gaisford (bonne odeur d'Alexandre) : cf. Plutarque, VA 4,4-6 ; *De metr.* 28-29 (éd. J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis Bibliothecarum Oxoniensium*, III, Oxford 1836, 302-333 : 302) (hommage funèbre à Héphaïstion) : cf. Plutarque, VA 72,3, ainsi que *Pélopidas* 34,1, où figure une référence, plus critique, au même épisode (« À la mort d'Héphaïstion, Alexandre le Grand ne se contenta pas de raser la crinière des chevaux et des mulets ; il fit même enlever les créneaux des murailles afin que les cités semblent elles aussi prendre le deuil, en troquant leur apparence habituelle contre un aspect sordide et négligé ») ; Plutarque parle au paragraphe suivant d'« ordres donnés par des despotes » et « exécutés sous la contrainte la plus absolue, inspirant de l'envie pour ceux qui étaient l'objet de tels honneurs et de la haine pour ceux qui les imposaient » ; il évoque ensuite un « étalage d'orgueil » et une « arrogance de barbares qui dépensent leurs trop grandes richesses à des cérémonies vaines, indignes de susciter l'admiration ».

<sup>36</sup> Autres références de Tzetzés à Théophraste, dans des passages sans rapport avec Alexandre : *Ep.* 6 (p. 13,7 Leone) ; *Hist.* VI 51, *tit.*, 412 et 416 ; IX 296, 928 et 934 ; XI 390, 850 ; *schol.* IX 296, 928.

<sup>37</sup> Théophraste est cité aussi, mais sans Aristoxène, dans les *Questions de banquet* I 6, 623e-f, qui traitent du même sujet.

<sup>38</sup> Sur la familiarité de Tzetzés avec ce type de littérature, voir J. Michels, *Tzetzes epitomator et epitomatus: Excerpts from Ps.-Apollodorus' Bibliotheca, John Tzetzes' Lycophron commentary and Chiliades in Vaticanus Gr. 950*, « Byzantion » XC (2020) 1-18 (sur Tzetzés et la *Bibliothèque* d'Apollodore) ; M. Alganza Roldan, *On the tradition and reception of Palaephatus in Byzantium*, « ByzSlav » LXXVII (2019) 5-25: 14-19; Ead., *Juan Tzetzes, exégeta de Paléfato*, in M. Alganza Roldán-

il appréciait, nous l'avons vu, l'œuvre d'Élien et, dans la *Chiliade* VIII 198, ses remarques sur Alexandre ému par un tableau représentant l'assassinat de Palamède semblent bien s'inspirer d'une anecdote racontée dans l'*Histoire nouvelle* de Ptolémée Chennos (Photios, *Bibl. cod.* 190, 146b<sup>39</sup>), que notre auteur cite d'ailleurs à plusieurs reprises<sup>40</sup>.

Il n'y a assurément rien d'inhabituel à ce qu'un homme de lettres byzantin, désireux d'afficher son érudition, fasse parade de sources rares, comme Aischrion, en lieu et place de sources plus banales et plus aisément accessibles. Ce qui, en revanche, peut paraître assez surprenant, c'est de voir Tzetzés mettre en avant l'utilisation d'un texte d'aussi bas registre que le *Roman d'Alexandre*, car les lettrés byzantins n'avaient pas coutume de citer pour autorités des œuvres relevant de la littérature « populaire » : même si la plupart d'entre eux connaissaient sans doute le *Roman*, qui semble avoir bénéficié d'une vaste circulation en Grèce médiévale, ils feignaient de l'ignorer par snobisme littéraire<sup>41</sup>. En faisant expressément référence à un tel texte, Tzetzés apparaît donc, sinon en rébellion, à tout le moins en décalage avec la culture officielle de son temps.

Dans un article récemment publié dans le *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Alexander the Great*<sup>42</sup>, j'ai tâché d'expliquer cette excentricité en la mettant en relation avec une particularité majeure des *Chiliades*, leur caractère formellement novateur : il s'agit en effet d'un ouvrage composé en vers politiques, autrement dit dans le *medium* de la poésie vernaculaire. Michel Jeffreys a bien montré comment le choix du mètre en question avait été pour Tzetzés un choix contraint, dicté par des

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P. Papadopoulou (éd.), *La mitología griega en la tradición literaria: de la Antigüedad a la Grecia contemporánea*, Granada 2017, 181-203 (sur Tzetzés et Palaiphatos).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. A. Chatzis, *Der Philosoph und Grammatiker P. Chennos I*, Paderborn 1914, 10-11.

<sup>40</sup> En dehors de *Hist.* VIII 198, on trouve des références explicites à Ptolémée Chennos dans une scholie à la lettre n° 6 (p. 162,14-16 Leone), dans *Hist.* VIII 195, 379-380 et dans *schol. Hist.* I 3, 147 et VII 144, 639 (sous l'appellation erronée de Ptolémée Dionysios). Dans les trois premiers de ces quatre textes, Tzetzés mentionne la lettre de Ptolémée à Tertulla – nous apprenant ainsi qu'il avait sous les yeux un exemplaire où figurait l'épître dédicatoire de l'*Histoire Nouvelle*, à laquelle Photios fait référence dans le cod. 190 (146b : « Il dédie son ouvrage à une certaine Tertulla, qu'il célèbre comme sa dame et dont il vante l'amour pour les lettres et l'érudition. »). On peut en conclure que Tzetzés a dû avoir directement accès à l'œuvre de Ptolémée Chennos (exploité aussi, à la même époque, par Eustathe de Thessalonique) : cf. C. Harder, *De Joannis Tzetzae historiarum fontibus quaestiones selectae*, Kiel 1886, 71-72 ; Chatzis, *Der Philosoph* cit. xvi, xlvi-xlvii, 1 ; K.-H. Tomberg, *Die Kaine Historia des Ptolemaios Chennos*, Bonn 1968, 42 ; E. Scheer, *Lycophronis Alexandra*, II, Berlin 1908, xiv-xv.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. C. Jouanno, *La réception du Roman d'Alexandre à Byzance*, « AncNarr » I (2000/2001) 301-321.

<sup>42</sup> C. Jouanno, *Byzantine views of Alexander*, in K.R. Moore (éd.), *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Alexander the Great*, Leiden 2018, 449-476.

considérations que l'on peut qualifier de pédagogiques<sup>43</sup> : il a employé le vers politique afin d'être plus aisément compris de lecteurs semi-éduqués (que l'on imagine déconcertés par le style très allusif de ses lettres). Aussi me paraissait-il tentant de mettre les fréquentes références de Tzetzes au *Roman d'Alexandre* et son utilisation, plus fréquente encore, du texte en question<sup>44</sup>, au compte de la même stratégie auctoriale que l'emploi du vers politique, et de les interpréter comme une concession de notre auteur aux connaissances historiques limitées d'un auditoire plus familier des affabulations du Ps.-Callisthène que des écrits « sérieux » des historiens d'Alexandre.

À cette hypothèse on peut toutefois objecter que les *Chiliades* ne sont pas seules à véhiculer des bribes de la version romancée des aventures d'Alexandre : on trouve aussi des échos du *Roman* dans d'autres œuvres de Tzetzes, par exemple dans la fameuse lettre où notre auteur se plaint au *mystikos* Nicéphore Serblias de ses problèmes de voisinage<sup>45</sup> et, après lui avoir demandé de remédier aux problèmes de plomberie de son appartement, s'emploie à minorer l'importance de sa requête (*Ep.* 18) : « Tu n'es pas forcé, comme le fameux Alexandre, de restaurer Thèbes, entièrement détruite, en son ancienne splendeur, à cause d'un athlète », lui écrit-il, faisant ainsi allusion à un épisode de la biographie fictionnelle d'Alexandre attesté

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<sup>43</sup> M. Jeffreys, *The nature and origins of political verse*, « DOP » XXVIII (1974) 148-157. Tzetzes était donc, à ce qu'il semble, un innovateur malgré lui. Cf. T.M. Conley, *Byzantine criticism and the uses of literature*, in A. Minnis-I. Johnson (éd.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, II : *The Middle Ages*, Cambridge 2005, 684-685 : « Tzetzes' critical allegiances were, by his own account, with the "ancients" rather than the "moderns" » ; Conley présente comme un « paradoxe » le recours de ce « learned scholar », imbu de classicisme, à une forme littéraire « not authorized by any classical, post-classical or patristic precedent ».

<sup>44</sup> Outre les quatre *Chiliades* citées plus haut (n. 14 et 15), on peut mentionner les *Chiliades* VII 139 et X 332 (sur la destruction de Thèbes et sa reconstruction) et la *Chiliade* VII 144 (où la référence aux « Himantopodes » paraît bien être un souvenir des êtres monstrueux, aux jambes en forme de lanières, évoqués dans le *Roman d'Alexandre*, même si le terme figure dans un passage que Tzetzes prétend tiré du commentaire du grammairien Apollodore au *Catalogue des Vaisseaux* = *FGrH* 244 F 257c). De fait, en dehors du *Roman*, le mot « Himantopode » n'est attesté que dans l'*Ixeutikon* de Denys le Périégète (2,10), où il désigne une espèce d'oiseaux « aux pattes grêles » (éd. A. Garzya, *Dionysii Ixeutikon*, Leipzig 1963) et dans les *Miracles des saints Cyr et Jean* de Sophrone de Jérusalem (ca. 550-638) où figure, parmi les malades miraculeusement guéris dans le sanctuaire des Anargyres de Ménouthis, un certain Ménas « l'Himantopode », affublé de ce sobriquet en raison d'une ankylose des jambes (Miracle 7 : éd. N. Fernandez Marcos, *Los 'Thaumata' de Sofronio : contribucion al estudio de la 'incubation' cristiana*, Madrid 1975 ; trad. et commentaire de J. Gasco, *Miracles des saints Cyr et Jean* : *BHG I 477-479*, Paris 2006).

<sup>45</sup> Cf. M. Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge zum Briefcorpus des Ioannes Tzetzes*, « JÖByz » XLVI (1996), 175-226 : 187-188.

uniquement dans la plus ancienne version du *Roman* (recension *alpha*). La référence à l'hétéroptalmie d'Alexandre, dans une autre lettre adressée à Jean Kostomos<sup>46</sup> (*Ep.* 76), témoigne aussi de l'influence du *Roman d'Alexandre* et de ses fabuleuses inventions, mais d'une manière peut-être plus indirecte, car le détail concernant les yeux vairons d'Alexandre, bien que probablement inventé par le Ps.-Callisthène, s'est ensuite frayé un chemin dans nombre de chroniques universelles (chez Malalas, Georges le Moine ou Michel Glykas), si bien qu'il est devenu « de notoriété publique » (θουλλεῖται πᾶσι), comme le remarque Tzetzés lui-même dans la *Chiliade* XI 368, écrite en commentaire à la lettre à Kostomos.

Un autre passage faisant écho au *Roman* figure dans l'*Exégèse de l'Iliade* (*ad* I 63-64, p. 170,15-17 Papatomopoulos), où Tzetzés, dans une discussion sur la *teratoskopia*, cite un présage rapporté par Plutarque dans sa *Vie d'Alexandre*, la mise à mort d'un lion par un âne, en laquelle il voit une préfiguration de l'assassinat d'Alexandre par son échanson Ioulos : une telle explication s'avère doublement influencée par le souvenir du *Roman d'Alexandre*, puisque Tzetzés suit la version du Ps.-Callisthène en présentant l'empoisonnement d'Alexandre comme un fait, et non comme une rumeur (à l'instar de Plutarque<sup>47</sup>), et puisque le nom qu'il donne à l'assassin, Ioulos, est précisément celui attesté dans le *Roman*, tandis que l'échanson d'Alexandre est désigné sous le nom de Iollas ou Iolaos dans les manuscrits de la *Vie d'Alexandre* de Plutarque<sup>48</sup>. Ce passage du commentaire de l'*Iliade* atteste donc la familiarité de Tzetzés avec la biographie fictionnelle du Conquérant. Un codex contenant la plus ancienne version du *Roman* devait être consultable à Constantinople au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle – le *Parisinus Gr.* 1711 (XI<sup>e</sup> s.), unique témoin grec subsistant de la recension *alpha*<sup>49</sup>, ou un autre manuscrit, aujourd'hui perdu : de fait, la même

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge* cit. 213. Selon J. Darrouzès, la forme Κοστομοῦ, qui figure dans le lemme de la lettre, pourrait résulter de la mélecture de l'abréviation du nom Κοστομύρη ; il est donc possible que le correspondant de Tzetzés ait été Jean Kostomyres, qui fut métropolite de Chalcédoine à la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle : voir le compte-rendu de l'édition des Lettres de Tzetzés par P.L.M. Leone, in « REByz » XXXVI (1978) 271-272 : 272.

<sup>47</sup> Plutarque, *VA* 77,2-5.

<sup>48</sup> Arrien utilise lui aussi la forme Ἰόλλας (*Anab.* VII 27,2) ; le nom n'est pas attesté chez Diodore.

<sup>49</sup> Une note, sur le folio A, indique que ce manuscrit fut acheté à Corinthe par un certain Jean Abrahamios, à une date inconnue (cf. P. Schreiner, *Die byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*, I : *Einleitung und Text*, Vienne 1975, 308) ; il entra ensuite dans la bibliothèque de Catherine de Médicis. Dans le bel article qu'il a consacré à ce codex composite, F. Ronconi ne fournit malheureusement aucune indication concernant la localisation du manuscrit : *Juxtaposition / assemblage de textes et histoire de la tradition : le cas du Par. gr. 1711*, in A. Bravo Garcia (éd.), *The Legacy of Bernard de Montfaucon : Three*

version ancienne du *Roman d'Alexandre* a été utilisée aussi par un autre auteur de l'époque comnène, le rhéteur Nicéphore Basilakès qui, partageant la singularité de Tzetzés, fait lui aussi très explicitement référence à « Callisthène », dans deux œuvres rhétoriques, une éthopée et un *basilikos logos*<sup>50</sup>, où l'on ne s'attendait guère à voir afficher la connaissance de cette œuvre « vulgaire ».

La référence de Tzetzés au présage du lion tué par un âne atteste aussi le goût de notre auteur pour le mélange des sources, puisqu'il entrelace en ce passage matériau canonique et données empruntées à la tradition légendaire, qu'il exploite sur un pied d'égalité, sans guère se préoccuper de fiabilité historique. Le même procédé de composition est repérable dans la *Chiliade* XI 368, l'un des nombreux textes que Tzetzés a consacrés aux portraits d'Alexandre et aux relations du roi avec des artistes<sup>51</sup>. L'intérêt de Tzetzés pour le sujet en question pourrait avoir été éveillé par la lecture des chapitres introductifs du second traité de Plutarque *Sur la fortune d'Alexandre*, qui s'ouvre sur une description d'Alexandre en patron des arts. Les remarques de Plutarque sur le rôle décisif de la générosité royale dans l'épanouissement des œuvres d'art et des hommes de génie étaient bien faites pour attirer l'attention de Tzetzés qui, sans être à proprement parler un courtisan, avait une longue expérience du patronage aristocratique<sup>52</sup> – d'où sa sensibilité à la question des relations entre hommes de pouvoir et intellectuels. La *Chiliade* XI 368 (« Qu'Alexandre le Grand avait les yeux vairons et le cou incliné d'un côté<sup>53</sup> ») s'ouvre sur une description de l'apparence physique d'Alexandre, où le motif de l'hétéroptalmie est emprunté au *Roman* (I 13,3), tandis que le détail de la tête penchée vient du traité de Plutarque *Sur la fortune d'Alexandre*, de même que celui des yeux

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*Hundred Years of Studies on Greek Handwriting*. « Proceedings of the Seventh International Colloquium of Greek Palaeography (Madrid-Salamanca, 15-20 September 2008) », Turnhout 2010, 503-520.

<sup>50</sup> Nicéphore Basilakès, *Prog.* 53 (Éthopée n° 24, éd. Pignani) : « Quels propos pourrait tenir le flûtiste Isménias, forcé par Alexandre à accompagner à la flûte la destruction de Thèbes ? » ; *In Ioannem Comnenum imperatorem oratio*, §2 (éd. Maisano).

<sup>51</sup> Huit des trente-sept pièces de notre corpus développent cette thématique. Quelques autres *Chiliades*, sans rapport avec Alexandre, sont aussi consacrées à des figures d'artistes : VII 154 (Phidias) ; XI 387 (Phidias et Alcamène) ; XI 394 (Dédale) ; XII 426 (Polyclète) ; XII 427 (Phidias et Nikôn). Sur l'intérêt de Tzetzés pour la peinture et la sculpture, voir le témoignage de *Hist.* XI 381 (« Sur la géométrie et l'optique »), où notre auteur insiste sur l'apport de l'optique et de la géométrie à l'art des peintres et des statuaires (v. 617-641). P. Magdalino souligne la fascination des écrivains du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle pour les artisans qui, détenteurs d'une *techné*, vendaient eux aussi leur expertise à un patron (*Byzantine snobbery*, in M. Angold (éd.), *The Byzantine Aristocracy*, Oxford 1984, 58-71 : 67-68).

<sup>52</sup> Voir notamment A. Rhoby, *Ioannes Tzetzes als Auftragsdichter*, « GLB » XV (2010) 155-170.

<sup>53</sup> Texte intégral et traduction fournis en annexe.

dirigés vers le ciel (*FA* II 2, 335b). Dans une scholie à ce passage, Tzetzés ajoute que « le cou d'Alexandre inclinait vers la gauche » (*schol. Hist.* XI 368, 93) – précision qu'il doit avoir trouvée dans la *Vie d'Alexandre* de Plutarque (4, 2). Plutarque est aussi la source des références de Tzetzés à Lysippe et à Stasikratès, qui voulut façonner le Mont Athos à la ressemblance d'Alexandre<sup>54</sup>. Mais, dans le traité de Plutarque, Lysippe est opposé au peintre Apelle<sup>55</sup>, et non à Stasikratès, mentionné seulement ensuite, dans un paragraphe séparé, et l'élément central de la comparaison concerne la question du réalisme artistique. Tzetzés a modifié le contenu et la portée de la confrontation, sans doute pour insister sur le délicat problème de la flatterie en art. Assez peu en phase avec cette nouvelle ligne interprétative, l'épigramme citée dans les derniers vers de la *Chiliade* XI 368 – « Cette statue de bronze, regardant en direction de Zeus, ressemble à quelqu'un qui va dire : "Je soumetts la terre à mon pouvoir, Zeus ; toi, garde l'Olympe !" » – vient également de Plutarque<sup>56</sup>. Probablement due au poète hellénistique Asclépiade, elle a, par ailleurs, été préservée dans l'*Anthologie* de Planude (*Anth. Plan.* 200,3-4<sup>57</sup>). Il n'est donc pas impossible que Tzetzés en ait connu le contenu aussi par l'intermédiaire d'une anthologie poétique<sup>58</sup>.

<sup>54</sup> *FA* II 2, 335c-e ; une allusion au même épisode figure aussi dans *VA* 72,5-8. L'anecdote était célèbre : on la trouve par exemple chez Strabon, XIV 1,23 ; Lucien, *Comment il faut écrire l'histoire* 12 ; *Défense des portraits* 9 ; Vitruve, *De l'architecture* II, Préface 1-4. Voir aussi Eustathe de Thessalonique, *in Il.* XIV 229, p. III, 624 van der Valk.

<sup>55</sup> Plutarque, *FA* II 2, 335b ; *VA* 4,1. Voir aussi Plutarque, *Isis et Osiris* 24, 198d : « Le sculpteur Lysippe eut raison de reprocher au peintre Apelle d'avoir portraituré Alexandre le foudre en main : il l'arma, lui, d'une lance, dont le temps ne pourrait jamais effacer la gloire, car elle était authentique et bien à lui. » Sur l'Alexandre Keraunophore d'Apelle, cf. P. Moreno, *L'immagine di Alessandro Magno nell'opera di Lisippo e di altri artisti contemporanei*, in J. Carlsen *et al.* (éd.), *Alexander the Great : Reality and Myth*, Rome 1993, 101-136 : 127, fig. 46.

<sup>56</sup> Cette épigramme, sans doute inspirée par l'Alexandre « Doryphore » (Porte-Lance) de Lysippe, figure dans les deux traités *Sur la fortune d'Alexandre* (I 9, 331a et II 2, 335b), mais elle est interprétée très différemment dans le premier et dans le second passage : tandis que, dans le traité II, Plutarque insiste sur la véracité de l'inscription, supposée souligner l'aspect léonin de la statue de Lysippe, dans le traité I il critique son caractère immodeste, et la cite comme exemple de flatterie artistique.

<sup>57</sup> Tzetzés cite le même passage dans la *Chiliade* VIII 200 (« Sur Lysippe »), 419-420 – dont le contenu est proche de *Hist.* XI 368.

<sup>58</sup> Sur le recours probable de Tzetzés à une forme d'anthologie poétique, cf. I.Ch. Nesseris, *Η παιδεία στην Κωνσταντινούπολη κατά τον 12ο αιώνα*, diss. Ioannina 2014, 183. Sur sa familiarité avec la poésie épigrammatique, voir Harder, *De Joannis Tzetzae historiarum fontibus* cit. 54 ; A. Cameron, *The Greek Anthology from Meleager to Planudes*, Oxford 1993, 340-341, ainsi que les articles de Jesús Muñoz Morcillo et de Julián Bertola figurant dans le présent volume. En dehors des *Hist.* VIII 200 et XI 368, on peut relever plus d'une quinzaine de passages où des épigrammes ou fragments d'épigrammes sont cités par Tzetzés, parfois à plusieurs reprises : cf. *Ep.* 14 (p. 27,21-22

(peut-être celle de Képhalas<sup>59</sup>) : l'usage intensif que Nicéas Eugénianos a fait d'une source de ce type dans son roman *Drosilla et Chariclès* atteste la popularité de la poésie épigrammatique à Constantinople à l'époque des Comnènes<sup>60</sup>.

La familiarité de Tzetzés avec ce genre de littérature est confirmée par sa lettre 70, adressée à Joseph Hagioglykérîtès<sup>61</sup>, higoumène du monastère du Pantokrator à Constantinople. Tout le texte en est consacré à l'histoire de la statue de Kairos réalisée par le sculpteur Lysippe. Cette statue allégorique était célèbre<sup>62</sup>, tout comme la

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Leone) = E. Cougny, *Epigrammatum Anthologia Palatina*, III : *Appendix*, Paris 1890, ch. 6 (Oracula), n° 93 (Apollon Pythien) ; *Ep.* 60 (p. 90,13-14 Leone : « oracle de la Sibylle ») = *Anth. Pal.* XIV 92,1 ; *Ep.* 61 (p. 91,18-19 Leone : « oracle ») = *Anth. Pal.* XIV 73,2-3 ; *Hist.* I 24, 635-636 = *Anth. Pal.* VII 77,1-2 ; *Hist.* I 24, 638-641 (« épigramme ») = *Anth. Pal.* VI 213,1-2 ; *Hist.* II, 36, 494-506 (citation attribuée à Coïntos de Smyrne) = *Anth. Plan.* 92,1-14 ; *Hist.* II-III, 61, 1000-1003 (citation attribuée à un ἐπιγραμματογράφος anonyme) = *Anth. Pal.* VII 57,1-4 ; *Hist.* III 95, 456-460 (épitaphe de Sardanapale) = *Anth. Plan.* 27,1-5 ; *Hist.* V 11, 504 et 506 = *Anth. Plan.* 207,3-4 ; *Hist.* VI 48, 343-344 = *Anth. Pal.* XIV 83, 1-2 ; *Hist.* VI 94, 960 (épigramme faussement attribuée à l'empereur Julien) = *Anth. Plan.* 115, 3 ; *Hist.* IX 273, 482-489 (« oracle ») et IX 291, 876-883 = *Anth. Pal.* XIV 73,1-8 (cf. *Ep.* 61) ; *Hist.* IX 291, 886-887 (formule de Callimaque) = *Anth. Pal.* V 6,5-6 ; *Hist.* XII 408, 375-376 (« épigramme ») = *Anth. Pal.* VII 433,1-2 ; *Exeg. Il.* pp.10,14-11,2 Papatomopoulos (« épigramme ») = *Anth. Pal.* XI 442, 1-6 ; *Exeg. Il.* p. 57,5 Papatomopoulos = *Anth. Pal.* IX 448,1 ; *Exeg. Il.* p. 57,13-14 Papatomopoulos (« épigramme ») = *Anth. Pal.* VII 3,1-2 ; *Vie d'Hésiode*, II. 179-182 (éd. Colonna, 39) = *Anth. Pal.* VII 54 ; *schol. Lyc.* 7, p. 11 Scheer = *Anth. Pal.* XIV 64 ; *schol. Hermog.* p. 43 Cramer = *Anth. Pal.* VII 433,1-2 (cité aussi en *Hist.* XII 408, 375-376). On signalera par ailleurs que des scholies aux épigrammes de l'*Anthologie* nous ont été transmises sous le nom de Tzetzés dans plusieurs manuscrits, notamment dans le *Parisinus suppl. Gr.* 316, copié par Andréas Darnarios en 1579 (éd. A.C. Lolos, *Antike Scholien zu Anthologia Graeca-Palatina*, « Hellenica » XXXIII (1981) 374-381), mais leur authenticité est hautement problématique, comme le souligne R. Browning, *The so-called Tzetzes' scholia on Philostratus and Andreas Darnarios*, « CQ » V (1955) 195-200 : 198-199, qui soupçonne une fausse attribution imputable à Darnarios lui-même.

<sup>59</sup> Sur la collection de Képhalas, probablement composée peu avant 900, voir Cameron, *The Greek Anthology* cit. 334-337 et 341-342. Parmi les compilations patronnées par Constantin Porphyrogénète, il devait y avoir aussi un recueil d'épigrammes, auquel renvoient les rédacteurs des *Excerpta de virtutibus* (éd. Büttner-Wobst et Roos, I, 207 : ζήτει ἐν τοῖς ἐπιγράμμασι).

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Cameron, *The Greek Anthology* cit. 128-129 et 341 ; E.M. Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, Liverpool 2012, 349.

<sup>61</sup> Texte intégral et traduction en annexe. Sur Joseph Hagioglykérîtès, cf. P. Gautier, *Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator*, « REB » XXXII (1974) 1-145 : 21-23. Sur les cinq lettres (51, 53, 54, 70 et 79) adressées par Tzetzés à ce personnage, voir Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge* cit. 205-207. L'*Ep.* 70 a été écrite entre 1148 et 1150.

<sup>62</sup> Voir notamment G. Schwarz, *Der Lysippische Kairos*, « GB » IV (1975) 243-266 ; P. Moreno, *Kairos*, in *LIMC* VI/1 (1990) 920-926 ; A. Zaccaria Ruggiu, *Le forme del tempo. Aion, Chronos, Kairos*, Padoue 2006, 74-118 et 141-155.

description qu'en traça Posidippe, contemporain et rival de Callimaque, dans l'une de ses épigrammes<sup>63</sup>, et elle devint sans doute ensuite un sujet d'*ekphrasis* dans les écoles de rhétorique, si bien qu'elle a été dépeinte par de nombreux auteurs, le fabuliste latin Phèdre, Callistrate, Himérios, ou Évagrius le Scholastique, pour mentionner seulement des auteurs antérieurs à Tzetzés<sup>64</sup>. L'œuvre de Lysippe (ou une copie de l'original) pouvait même être admirée à Constantinople au V<sup>e</sup> siècle ap. J.-C. : Georges Kédrénos nous apprend que la statue de Kairos faisait partie de la célèbre collection de Lausus, grand chambellan de Théodose II (408-450), avant que son palais ne soit détruit par un incendie en 475<sup>65</sup>. Le texte de Tzetzés sur la statue de Lysippe offre un mélange d'éléments traditionnels et d'innovations. Un certain nombre de points, dans sa description de l'apparence physique de Kairos, sont en accord avec l'épigramme de Posidippe<sup>66</sup> : les pieds ailés de Kairos, le couteau (chez Posidippe, un rasoir) que l'Occasion tient dans sa main, et surtout son étrange coiffure, avec une mèche de cheveux sur le front et l'arrière du crâne chauve<sup>67</sup>. Absent chez Posidippe, le détail de la sphère sur laquelle Kairos se tient debout en équilibre pourrait avoir été emprunté à Callistrate ; on le retrouve dans nombre de représentations figurées de Kairos sur des reliefs ou sur des gemmes. L'assimilation que Tzetzés opère entre Kairos et Chronos est également bien attestée dès l'Antiquité,

<sup>63</sup> Épigramme préservée dans l'*Anth. Plan.* 275 = *Ep.* 142 (éd. C. Austin et G. Bastianini, *Posidippi Pellaei quae supersunt omnia*, Milan 2002, ci-après AB). Sur ce texte de Posidippe, voir E. Fernandez Gadiano, *Posidipo de Pela*, Madrid 1987, 121-126 ; E. Prioux, *Regards alexandrins. Histoire et théorie des arts dans l'épigramme hellénistique*, Louvain 2007, 187-243 ; F. Pordomingo, *L'épigramme de Posidippe sur la statue de Kairos*, « *Philologus* » CLVI (2012) 17-33.

<sup>64</sup> Phèdre, *Fables* V 8 ; Callistrate, *Descriptions* 6 ; Himérios, *Or.* 13,1 (cité par Photios, *Bibl.*, cod. 243, 371b) ; Évagre le Scholastique, *Histoire ecclésiastique* III 26.

<sup>65</sup> Kédrénos, *Historiarum compendium*, 344, 6 (éd. L. Tartaglia, 2016, II, 557). Sur la collection de Lausus, voir S. Bassett, *The Urban Image of Late Antique Constantinople*, Cambridge 2014, 98-120 et 232-238 (237-238 sur la statue de Kairos).

<sup>66</sup> Tzetzés connaissait Posidippe, qu'il cite explicitement dans deux autres *Chiliades* – VII 144, 647-661 (vv. 653-660 = *Ep.* 15 AB) et VIII 213, 640 (qui constitue un renvoi au précédent texte) – et dans une scholie *ad Chil.* VII 144, 653. Cf. Harder, *De Joannis Tzetzae historiarum fontibus* cit. 57.

<sup>67</sup> Sans surprise, c'est cette particularité physique qui a le plus frappé l'attention de la postérité. Évagre le Scholastique s'y attarde complaisamment : « Elle a le vol rapide, en effet, l'occasion ; quand elle vient à vos pieds, elle se laisse peut-être prendre, mais, si elle a échappé à la prise, elle file en l'air et se rit de ses poursuivants, ne souffrant désormais plus qu'on l'atteigne. De là vient par exemple que les sculpteurs et les peintres lui font tomber les cheveux par devant, tandis que, derrière, ils lui rasent la tête jusqu'à la peau : par là, ils suggèrent ingénieusement que, si elle se trouve derrière vous, elle se laisse peut-être prendre par ce qui retombe de sa chevelure, mais que, une fois qu'elle a passé devant vous, elle fuit définitivement, n'offrant au poursuivant aucune prise. » (*HE* III 26 : *SC* 542). C'est l'unique élément décrit par Kédrénos, qui évoque une « statue représentant Chronos, œuvre de Lysippe, chauve à l'arrière <de la tête>, avec des cheveux sur le front ».



par exemple dans la fable de Phèdre<sup>68</sup> ; Kédrénos aussi, dans sa description de la collection de Lausos, parle de la statue de Kairos comme d'une statue du Temps : la confusion entre l'un et l'autre était rendue d'autant plus facile que Kairos et Chronos avaient tous deux reçu le qualificatif de πανδαμάτωρ<sup>69</sup>. D'autres éléments dans la description de Tzetzés semblent plus originaux : la nudité de Kairos, sa surdité, la présence, derrière lui, d'une autre figure essayant en vain de l'attraper<sup>70</sup>, et surtout le rôle attribué à Alexandre dans la genèse de cette statue. Dans la *Chiliade* X 323 et dans sa lettre à Basile d'Achrida<sup>71</sup>, métropolitaine de Thessalonique (*Ep.* 95), Tzetzés affirme que Démosthène aussi, dans ses écrits rhétoriques, dépeignait l'Occasion comme « sourde », mais il n'y a pas d'autre témoin pour confirmer cette allégation, dont la véracité demeure par conséquent sujette à caution<sup>72</sup>. Quant au lien d'Alexandre et de Kairos, dont on ne trouve mention nulle part ailleurs, c'est sans doute une

<sup>68</sup> Phèdre, *Fables* V 8 (« Le Temps ») : « Un coureur, en équilibre sur un rasoir ailé, chauve avec des cheveux au front et point de cheveux par derrière – (saisi au passage, on le retiendrait ; une fois échappé, Jupiter lui-même ne pourrait plus le ressaisir), – voilà l'emblème de l'occasion fugitive. C'est pour que l'exécution de nos projets ne soit pas entravée par les lenteurs de l'indolence que les anciens ont imaginé cette représentation du Temps. »

<sup>69</sup> Pour Kairos, cf. Posidippe, *Ep.* 142,2 AB ; pour Chronos, Simonide, F 261,4 (éd. O. Poltera, *Simonides Lyricus. Testimonia und Fragmente*, Basel 2008) ; Bacchylide, *Épinicies* 13,111-112. Mais, alors que Chronos est généralement représenté sous l'aspect d'un vieillard (cf. Zaccaria Ruggiu, *Le forme del tempo* cit. 112), Kairos a en principe un aspect juvénile : Callistrate le décrit comme un « adolescent », « dans tout l'éclat de sa beauté » (*Descr.* 6), Himérios comme « un jeune homme d'une délicate beauté, dans la fleur de l'âge » (*Or.* 13,1). Textes traduits par M. Trédé, *Kairos, l'à propos et l'occasion, le mot et la notion, d'Homère à la fin du 4<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J.-C.*, Paris 1992, 76-77.

<sup>70</sup> La présence de cette seconde figure a conduit certains commentateurs à comparer la description de Tzetzés avec un relief de marbre byzantin provenant de la cathédrale de Torcello : on y voit la figure d'un jeune homme, dont les pieds reposent sur des roues ailées, et qui tient un couteau d'une main et une balance de l'autre : sur sa gauche, un autre jeune homme, qui était probablement accompagné d'une allégorie de la Pronoia (ou de la Victoire), saisit sa mèche frontale, tandis qu'à sa droite, un vieil homme, flanqué de l'allégorie du Repentir (Metanoia), essaie en vain d'attraper son bras pour l'arrêter : cf. Zaccaria Ruggiu, *Le forme del tempo* cit. 145 et 153 (fig. 8 A-B). Selon O.M. Dalton, *Byzantine Art and Archaeology*, Oxford 1911, 159, ce relief fut probablement réalisé dans la région vénitienne, sous influence byzantine, au début du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, vers 1008, année de la restauration de la cathédrale de Torcello. A. Grabar suggère une datation plus tardive, vers la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, mais son interprétation de l'image est en partie fautive (*Sculptures byzantines du Moyen Âge. II. XI<sup>e</sup>-XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris 1976, 115).

<sup>71</sup> Lettre écrite vers 1155 : cf. Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge* cit. 189-190, 210 et 215 : Basile est attesté comme πατριαρχικός πρωτονοτάριος. Il est mentionné aussi dans l'*Ep.* 19, l. 9-15 : cf. A. Kambylis, *Textkritische Beobachtungen zu den Briefen des Johannes Tzetzes*, « JÖByz » XX (1971) 133-148 : 138.

<sup>72</sup> La remarque de Tzetzés a été reprise par R. Clavaud, dans son édition des fragments de Démosthène (Paris 1987) sous le n° 9.

invention de Tzetzés<sup>73</sup>. Il s'agit en effet d'un élément clef dans sa représentation de l'Occasion, puisqu'il lui permet d'aborder la question des relations des artistes avec les puissants, et de présenter Lysippe dans le rôle d'un conseiller du prince, utilisant son art comme un instrument d'*amphoteroglossia*<sup>74</sup> : car il recourt à la sculpture, et crée sa statue de Kairos, afin de donner une leçon à Alexandre, sans encourir le moindre risque. Le motif didactique est présent de manière très insistante dans la lettre de Tzetzés, à travers l'accumulation de termes comme ἐλέγχειν et ἐξελέγχειν (trois occurrences), νοθετεῖν (deux occurrences), διδάσκαλος et παραίνεσις (deux occurrences) : Tzetzés va jusqu'à décrire la statue de Lysippe comme une « recommandation en acte » (πρακτικὴν παραίνεσιν). On remarque aussi l'accent mis par notre auteur sur le double public de l'artiste, dont le message vise à la fois les puissants et les hommes du commun : il a pour mission d'être un éducateur universel. On note enfin comment le texte aboutit à l'identification de Tzetzés et de Lysippe : leurs deux noms sont associés dans la dernière phrase de la lettre, si bien que tout ce qui a été dit du sculpteur s'avère valoir aussi pour l'érudit byzantin, qui peut ainsi faire parade de sa propre utilité en tant qu'écrivain. Dans cette lettre comme dans beaucoup de ses écrits exégétiques, il s'exprime en *grammatikos* pré-occupé du bénéfice moral que les lecteurs pourront retirer de ses ouvrages<sup>75</sup>.

Une dernière particularité mérite d'être soulignée dans la lettre à Hagioglykérîtès, et se retrouve, amplifiée, dans la *Chiliade* X 323<sup>76</sup>, qui constitue un commentaire de la lettre 95 (adressée à Basile d'Achrida) : la présence d'une vigoureuse polémique contre des gens « prétentieux », qui « s'exprim[ent] à tort et à travers » et « déraisonnent, en affirmant sans discernement » que la statue de Lysippe est une image de la Vie. Dans la *Chiliade* X 323, Tzetzés fournit des éléments d'information

<sup>73</sup> Cf. R. Förster, *Alkamenes und die Giebelcompositionen des Zeustempels in Olympia. Die kunstgeschichtlichen Angaben des Ioannes Tzetzes und des Suidas*, « RhM » XXXVIII (1883) 421-449 : 435. Le même motif figure dans les deux autres textes où Tzetzés évoque la statue de Kairos : *Hist.* VIII 200 (commentaire à *Ep.* 42) et X 322 (commentaire à *Ep.* 70). Sur celles-ci voir également l'article de Jesús Muñoz Morcillo dans le présent volume (pp. 167-168).

<sup>74</sup> Tzetzés se vante de recourir à l'*amphoteroglossia* dans la *Chil.* VII 132, où il commente l'*Ep.* 18 et la présentation flatteuse qu'il y avait faite de la généalogie de Serblias, désigné comme un « descendant des Servilii, les Césars du temps jadis ». Sur cette lettre, voir Magdalino, *Byzantine snobbery* cit. 61 ; P.A. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners : A Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, « Medioevo Greco » XVII (2017) 1-57 : 35-36.

<sup>75</sup> F. Budelmann, *Classical commentary in Byzantium : John Tzetzes on ancient Greek literature*, in R.K. Gibson-C.S. Kraus (éd.), *The Classical Commentary. History, Practices, Theory*, Leiden 2002, 141-169 : 163.

<sup>76</sup> Cette *Chiliade* est intitulée : « Contre ceux qui prétendent à tort et à travers que la représentation figurée du Temps est une représentation de la Vie, et non du Temps ».

supplémentaires sur ces hommes qui, comptant parmi les philosophes, ont une haute opinion de leur sagesse, et sont fiers « de leur tiare, de leur manteau monastique, de leur archiprêtrise et de leur coterie » ; il explique qu'il a écrit cette lettre à Joseph sur la statue de Kairos tout exprès pour contredire les « sornettes » qu'ils avaient adressées au kathigoumène à ce sujet. J'ignore quelle pouvait être la cible d'une pareille attaque – peut-être des professeurs de l'École patriarcale<sup>77</sup> –, mais le fait est que Kairos et Bios semblent avoir été fréquemment confondus par les artistes et écrivains de l'époque<sup>78</sup>. Un exemple visuel de ce phénomène de superposition nous est fourni par un manuscrit du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, le codex *Urbani* 15 (aujourd'hui à la Bibliothèque Franzoniana de Gênes) : il contient des homélies compilées par Théodore Daphnopatès (X<sup>e</sup> s.) à partir d'*excerpta* de Jean Chrysostome. À l'intérieur de la lettrine O figurant au début de l'homélie « Sur la bonne et la mauvaise fortune » (f. 333v), on discerne une image minuscule de Bios, où l'influence de l'iconographie de Kairos est évidente : Bios est, en effet, représenté sous les traits d'un jeune homme, debout sur des roues ailées, avec un couteau dans la main droite ; son identité est confirmée par l'inscription O BIOS<sup>79</sup>. De même, Théodore Prodrome, qui a composé deux courts poèmes sur une image allégorique de la Vie, y décrit Bios comme un jeune homme aux pieds ailés, s'élançant en équilibre sur des roues, et portant une balance – autre attribut fréquent de l'Occasion<sup>80</sup> ; il est nu, comme le Kairos de Tzetzés et, s'adressant à un second personnage, qui a essayé de le saisir par les cheveux, s'offre

<sup>77</sup> Sur les relations parfois conflictuelles de Tzetzés avec les intellectuels de son temps, voir Nesseris, *Η παιδεία στην Κωνσταντινούπολη* cit. I, 379-384. Luzzatto signale la présence, dans les notes de Tzetzés sur Hérodote et Thucydide, d'accents fortement polémiques à l'encontre de l'École patriarcale et, de manière plus générale, à l'encontre des enseignants de l'école byzantine : *Note inedite* cit. 637 et *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 49-55 ; voir aussi F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529-1453)*, in F. Montanari-S. Matthaios-A. Rengakos (éd.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, Leiden 2015, I, 297-455 : 385. Sur le rôle hégémonique exercé au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle par l'École patriarcale, voir R. Browning, *The Patriarchal School at Constantinople*, « Byzantion » XXXII (1962) 167-201 et XXXIII (1963) 11-40 (repris in Id., *Studies on Byzantine History, Literature and Education*, Londres 1977, n° X) : l'École patriarcale était au centre de la culture byzantine et exerçait une influence décisive dans l'expression et dans la formation de l'opinion publique ; les intellectuels les plus prestigieux de l'époque y enseignèrent, par exemple Nicéphore Basilakès, Eustathe de Thessalonique, Michel Italikos ou Nicéphore Chrysobergès.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Moreno, *Kairos* cit. 923-924 et 926.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. I. Antonopoulos, Το τίμημα της τέρφης : Βίος και αναβιώσεις του Καιρού στη Βυζαντινή τέχνη, « Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας » XX (1999) 201-212. On retrouve la même image de Bios, debout sur des roues, dans des miniatures du codex *Vaticanus Gr.* 394 (XI<sup>e</sup> s.) illustrant l'*Échelle spirituelle* de Jean Climaque (cf. J.R. Martin, *The Illustrations of the Heavenly Ladder of John Climacus*, Princeton 1954, 49-53, ill. 70 et 72 ; voir aussi A.B. Cook, *Zeus. A Study in Ancient Religion*, II/2, Cambridge 1925, 867, fig. 803).

pour conseiller (παροινέτην) à ce poursuivant mal avisé<sup>81</sup>. On peut donc avoir ici encore le sentiment que, en insistant pour différencier les deux figures allégoriques de la Vie et de l'Occasion, Tzetzés est en décalage avec ce qui paraît être la tendance intellectuelle dominante de son temps<sup>82</sup>.

Pour conclure, en revenant à la question qui était au cœur de cette enquête – le traitement réservé par Tzetzés à la matière d'Alexandre –, il convient de souligner la variété des sources utilisées par notre auteur, et leur caractère éclectique : Tzetzés se montre ouvert à des influences très diverses. Sa manière de « mixer » tradition savante et tradition populaire est assurément la marque d'un assez faible sens historique : il semble avoir été sensible surtout à la dimension sensationnelle des aventures d'Alexandre et privilégie les aspects légendaires de la geste du Conquérant. Comme bien des chroniqueurs byzantins, il apprécie aussi les anecdotes pour leur potentiel édifiant, notamment lorsqu'elles lui permettent de se projeter personnellement dans l'histoire<sup>83</sup>, comme c'est le cas pour l'anecdote de la statue de Kairos, où il s'attribue subrepticement le rôle de l'artiste faisant la leçon au roi et enseignant la sagesse à l'humanité tout entière.

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<sup>80</sup> Cf. Himérios, *Or.* 13,1. La balance figure dans de nombreuses représentations figurées de Kairos : cf. Zaccaria Ruggiu, *Le forme del tempo* cit. 150, 154, 155. Sur l'importance de son symbolisme : Prioux, *Regards alexandrins* cit. 221.

<sup>81</sup> *PG* 133, col. 1419-1420 : Εἰς εἰκονισμένον τὸν βίον. Il est toutefois peu vraisemblable que Prodrome (né vers 1000) doive être compté au nombre des pédants dénoncés par Tzetzés, comme le prétend Cook, *Zeus* cit. II/2, 865 : son profil ne correspond guère à celui décrit par Tzetzés, et il devait être en fin de carrière à l'époque où ont été écrites les lettres 70 et 95, dans les années 1150. L'épigramme de Manuel Philès *Sur un jeune homme nu offrant une image de la Vie* semble s'inspirer de Prodrome, plutôt que de Tzetzés : elle a forme dialoguée, comme les poèmes de Prodrome (éd. E. Miller, *Carmina*, I, Paris 1855, 32 : n° 67).

<sup>82</sup> Luzzatto signale, dans les commentaires de Tzetzés au texte de Thucydide, diverses traces de cette marginalité – à commencer par ses critiques virulentes à l'encontre du style obscur de l'historien, vénéré comme une idole dans les milieux académiques ; il ferait preuve du même anticonformisme en suivant Denys d'Halicarnasse, et non Hermogène, qui était le texte de référence dans les écoles de rhétorique (*Tzetzes lettore* cit. 132-133). Sur ce dernier point, on peut toutefois se demander si l'influence de Psellos n'a pas été déterminante, car lui aussi s'était beaucoup intéressé à l'œuvre de Denys (cf. C. Jouanno, *Psellos on Rhetoric*, in F. Lauritzen (éd.), *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Theologia Orthodoxa* LXVI/1 (2021) 217-238 : 223-225 <https://doi.org/10.24193/subbto.2021.1.12>).

<sup>83</sup> Sur l'égotisme littéraire de Tzetzés, cf. P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*, Cambridge 1993, 402-403.

## ANNEXES

## 1. Tableau des références de Tzetzés à Alexandre

|   | Œuvres   | Datation/contexte                         | Nature de la référence   | Source invoquée   | Source(s) utilisée(s) par Tzetzés   |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Ep.</i> 18<br>(au <i>mystikos</i> Nicéphore Serblias)           | ca. 1140                                  | Reconstruction de Thèbes et de Stagire                           |   | <i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> I 47<br>Plutarque, <i>VA</i> 7,3<br>Élien, <i>HV</i> 12,54<br><i>et alii</i> |
| 2 | <i>Ep.</i> 70<br>(à Joseph, higoumène du monastère du Pantokrator) | 1148/1150                                 | Alexandre, Lysippe et la statue de Kairos                        |   | Posidippe ( <i>Anth. Plan.</i> 275)<br>Callistrate, <i>Descr.</i> 6 ?                                 |
| 3 | <i>Ep.</i> 76<br>(à Jean Kostomos)<br>(Kostomyres ?)               | ca. 1150                                  | Portraits d'Alexandre par Stasikratès et Lysippe                 |   | Plutarque, <i>FA</i> II 2<br><i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> I 13,3<br>(hétéroptalmie)                       |
| 4 | <i>Ep. ad Lachanam</i> 489-491                                     | = <i>Hist.</i> IV                         | Alexandre et Bucéphale   |   | Plutarque, <i>VA</i> , 6  |
| 5 | <i>Ep. ad Lachanam</i> 758-759                                     | = <i>Hist.</i> IV                         | Motif du « <i>ubi sunt</i> ? »                                   |   |   |
| 6 | <i>Hist.</i> I 13  | Commentaire à <i>Ep. ad Lach.</i> 477     | Destruction de Thèbes  | « Callisthène »   | <i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> I 46-46a   |
| 7 | <i>Hist.</i> I 28  | Commentaire à <i>Ep. ad Lach.</i> 489-491 | Alexandre et Bucéphale   | τοῦ Βουκεφάλα τὴν ἱστορίαν  | <i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> I 15 et 17<br>Arrien, <i>Anab.</i> V 19,5                                    |
| 8 | <i>Hist.</i> III 89-91   | Commentaire à <i>Ep. ad Lach.</i> 578     | Assassinat de Darius ; châtement de ses meurtriers par Alexandre | Παλαιῶν ἀνώνυμος ἱστορία<br>Callisthène ὁ συγγραφεὺς σὺν οὐκ ὀλίγοις ἄλλοις | <i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> II 20-21   |
| 9 | <i>Hist.</i> III 102-111   | Commentaire à <i>Ep. ad Lach.</i> 616-617 | Alexandre et Candace   | « Callisthène »   | <i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> III 22-23  |

|    | Œuvres                | Datation/contexte  | Nature de la référence                                  | Source invoquée   | Source(s) utilisée(s) par Tzetzés   |
|----|-----------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 10 | <i>Hist.</i> III 114  | Commentaire à <i>Ep. ad Lach.</i> 623                                    | Alexandre et les serpents d'Aposisarès                  | Onésicrite, d'après Élien   | Élien, <i>NA</i> 16,39 (= Onésicrite, <i>FGrH</i> 134 F 16a-c)<br>+ <i>NA</i> 15,21 |
| 11 | <i>Hist.</i> VI 37    | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 6 (au sébaste Isaac Comnène)                    | Alexandre, Harpale et Démosthène                        |   | Source principale : Plutarque, <i>Démosthène</i> 25-30                              |
| 12 | <i>Hist.</i> VII 139  | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 18 (voir <i>supra</i> )                         | Destruction et reconstruction de Thèbes                 | Citation de Démosthène  | <i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> I 46-47<br>Démosthène, <i>Or.</i> 18,41                    |
| 13 | <i>Hist.</i> VII 140  | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 18 (voir <i>supra</i> )                         | Reconstruction de Stagire                               |   | Plutarque, <i>VA</i> 7,3<br>Élien, <i>HV</i> 12,54<br><i>et alii</i>                |
| 14 | <i>Hist.</i> VII 144  | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 19 (à Léon, évêque de Klokotinitza)             | Allusion aux Imantopodes                                | Apollodore, <i>Commentaire du Catalogue des vaisseaux</i> , I. II | Apollodore, <i>FGrH</i> 244 F 157c<br><i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> III 17,20            |
| 15 | <i>Hist.</i> VIII 198 | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 42 (à un plagiaire anonyme)                     | Émotion d'Alexandre à la vue de trois célèbres tableaux | <i>Éphémérides</i> d'Aischrion (citation)                         | Élien, <i>HV</i> 2,2-3<br>Ptolémée Chennos (= Photios, <i>Bibl.</i> cod. 190, 146b) |
| 16 | <i>Hist.</i> VIII 199 | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 42 (voir <i>supra</i> )                         | Stasikratès repoussé par Alexandre                      |   | Plutarque, <i>FA</i> II 2   |
| 17 | <i>Hist.</i> VIII 200 | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 42 (voir <i>supra</i> )                         | Portraits d'Alexandre par Lysippe                       |   | Plutarque, <i>FA</i> II 2<br>Asclépiade ( <i>Anth. Plan.</i> 120) ?                 |
|    |                       |  | Lysippe et la statue de Kairos                          |   | Posidippe ( <i>Anth. Plan.</i> 275)   |
| 18 | <i>Hist.</i> IX 275   | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 59 (à l'épouse du grand <i>hetaireiarchos</i> ) | Sur les remparts de Sémiramis à Babylone                | Ctésias, Clitarque, Compagnons d'Alexandre, Diodore de Sicile     | Diodore VII 3-5 (citant Ctésias, Clitarque et les compagnons d'Alexandre)           |
| 19 | <i>Hist.</i> X 322    | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 70 (voir <i>supra</i> )                         | Sur la statue de Kairos par Lysippe                     |   | Posidippe ( <i>Anth. Plan.</i> 275)<br>Callistrate, <i>Descr.</i> 6 ?               |

|    | Œuvres   | Datation/contexte                                   | Nature de la référence   | Source invoquée   | Source(s) utilisée(s) par Tzetzés   |
|----|--|---|--|---|---|
| 20 | <i>Hist.</i> X 332   | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 71<br>(à Jean Sméniotes)   | Histoire de Thèbes :<br>fondation, destruction et<br>reconstruction            |   | <i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> I 46-47  |
| 21 | <i>Hist.</i> XI 367  | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 76<br>(voir <i>supra</i> ) | Sur Stasikratès  |   | Cf. <i>Hist.</i> VIII 199   |
| 22 | <i>Hist.</i> XI 368  | Commentaire à <i>Ep.</i> 76<br>(voir <i>supra</i> ) | Aspect physique<br>d'Alexandre, ses<br>portraits par Lysippe et<br>Stasikratès | Θουλλεῖται πᾶσι (à<br>propos de la<br>physionomie<br>d'Alexandre) | <i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> I 13,3<br>Plutarque, <i>FA</i> II 2<br>Asclépiade ( <i>Anth. Plan.</i> 120) ?              |
| 23 | <i>Exégèse de l'Iliade</i> ,<br>introduction : p. 16,5-8<br>Papathomopoulos          | a. 1138/1145  | Alexandre, conquérant<br>de la Perse   |   |   |
| 24 | <i>Exégèse de l'Iliade</i> ,<br><i>ad</i> I, 19 : p. 123,1-3<br>Papathomopoulos      |   | Alexandre, conquérant<br>de la Perse   |   |   |
| 25 | <i>Exégèse de l'Iliade</i> ,<br><i>ad</i> I, 63-64 : p. 170,15-17<br>Papathomopoulos |   | Présage annonçant la<br>mort d'Alexandre (lion<br>tué par un âne)              |   | Plutarque, <i>VA</i> 73,6 et 77,2-5<br><i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> III 17,31 (Ioulos)<br>et III 31-32 (empoisonnement) |
| 26 | <i>Exégèse de l'Iliade</i> ,<br><i>schol.</i> 3,13 : p. 417,9-15<br>Papathomopoulos  |   | Alexandre se débarrasse<br>de l'ouvrage de Zoïle<br>contre Homère              |   |   |
| 27 | Scholies aux <i>Travaux</i><br>d'Hésiode, <i>ad</i> 414-422                          | a. 1138/1140  | Bonne odeur<br>d'Alexandre et de<br>Tzetzés                                    | Théophraste   | Plutarque, <i>VA</i> 4,4-6 (d'après<br>Aristoxène de Tarente et<br>Théophraste)<br>+ <i>Quaest. conv.</i> 623c ?    |
| 28 | Scholies sur le <i>Ploutos</i><br>d'Aristophane, <i>ad</i> 179                       |   | Présence de la courtisane<br>Laïs auprès d'Alexandre<br>en Asie                |   | <i>Schol. vet. Plut.</i> 179 Chantry  |
| 29 | Scholies sur l' <i>Alexandra</i><br>de Lycophron,<br>introduction                    | avant 1140  | Alexandre cité comme<br>point de repère<br>chronologique                       |   |   |

|    | Œuvres   | Datation/contexte | Nature de la référence  | Source invoquée                               | Source(s) utilisée(s) par Tzetzés   |
|----|--|-------------------|---|---|---|
| 30 | Scholies sur l' <i>Alexandra</i> ,<br>ad 704   |                   | Prise de la roche Aornis  | οἱ τὰς Ἀλεξάνδρου<br>πράξεις<br>συγγραψάμενοι | <i>Schol. vet. Lyc.</i> 704 Leone (sans réf.<br>aux compagnons d'Alexandre)<br>Cf. Lucien, <i>Le Maître de rhétorique</i><br>7<br>Philostrate, <i>VApoll.</i> II 10<br><i>Roman d'Alexandre</i> III 4,8 |
| 31 | Scholies sur l' <i>Alexandra</i> ,<br>ad 803   |                   | Généalogie d'Alexandre  |   | <i>Schol. vet. Lyc.</i> 803 Leone<br>Cf. Diod. XVII 1,5<br>Plut. VA 2,1<br>Arrien, <i>Anab.</i> I 11,8 ; III 3,2 ; IV 11,6  |
| 32 | Scholies sur l' <i>Alexandra</i> ,<br>ad 887   |                   | Construction de portes<br>d'airain pour fermer le<br>défilé des Monts<br>Caspéens | « Josèphe le Juif »                           | Flavius Josèphe, <i>Guerre des Juifs</i> ,<br>VII 4   |
| 33 | Scholies sur l' <i>Alexandra</i> ,<br>ad 1439  |                   | Généalogie d'Alexandre  | Théopompe et Pyrandros                        | <i>Schol. vet. Lyc.</i> 1439 Leone<br>Cf. Théopompe, <i>FGrH</i> 115 F 355  |
| 34 | Scholies sur l' <i>Alexandra</i> ,<br>ad 1442  |                   | Généalogie d'Alexandre  |   | <i>Schol. vet. Lyc.</i> 1442a Leone   |
| 35 | Scholies sur l' <i>Alexandra</i> ,<br>ad 1446  |                   | Alexandre cité comme<br>point de repère<br>chronologique                          |   | <i>Schol. vet. Lyc.</i> 1446b Leone   |
| 36 | Traité <i>Sur les mètres</i> ,<br>éd. Cramer, <i>Anecdota</i> ,<br>III, 302, vv. 28-29 |                   | Hommage funèbre à<br>Héphaïstion  |   | Plut. VA 72,3<br>(cf. <i>Pélopidas</i> 34,1)  |
| 37 | <i>Epitomê rhêtorikê</i> ,<br>éd. Walz, III, 682                                       |                   | Alexandre invité en rêve<br>à ne pas croire aux rêves                             |   | Hermogène, <i>États de cause</i> I 102  |
| 38 | <i>Epitomê rhêtorikê</i> ,<br>éd. Walz, III, 683-684                                   |                   | Prise de la roche Aornis  |   | Concerne en fait la roche de Sogdiane<br>Cf. Arrien, <i>Anab.</i> IV 18-19  |
| 39 | <i>Commentaire sur<br/>Hermogène</i> , éd. Cramer,<br><i>Anecdota</i> , IV, 101-102    |                   | Alexandre met en vente<br>ses prisonniers thébains                                |   | Ps.-Hermogène, <i>L'Invention</i> III 11<br>Cf. Diod. XVII 4,4<br>Plut. VA 11,12  |



2. *Hist. XI 368* : ὅτι ἑτερόφθαλμος καὶ ἑτεροτράχηλος ἦν Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ μέγας  
(*Qu'Alexandre le Grand avait les yeux vairons et le cou incliné d'un côté*)

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ μέγιστος Ἀλέξανδρος Φιλίππου,<br>γλαυκὸν τὸν ἓνα ὀφθαλμὸν ἔχειν θρυλλεῖται πᾶσι,<br>μέλανα δὲ τὸν ἕτερον. Τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς τοιοῦτος.<br>Ἦν δὲ καὶ σιμοτράχηλος καὶ παρατραχηλῶν δέ,<br>ὥστε δοκεῖν πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἐνατενίζειν τοῦτον.<br>Τοιοῦτον καὶ ὁ Λύσιππος ἐκεῖνον ἐχαλκούργει. | 90<br><br><br><br><br>95 |
| Καὶ τούτου δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος ἐπέχαιρεν εἰκόσιν,<br>ἢ Στασικράτους πλάσμασι ψευδέσι, τυφουμένοις.<br>Ὅτι δ' ἦν ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος τοιοῦτος τὴν ἰδέαν,<br>δηλοῖ καὶ τὸ ἐπίγραμμα ὅπερ τυγχάνει τόδε·<br>“Αὐδάσοντι δ' ἔοικεν ὁ χάλκεος ἐς Δία λεύσσων,<br>γᾶν ὑπ' ἐμὲ τίθειμαι, Ζεῦ, σὺ δ' Ὀλυμπον ἔχε.”   | 100                      |

Le très grand roi Alexandre, fils de Philippe, avait, à ce que tout le monde raconte, un œil bleu et l'autre noir. Tel était-il en ce qui concerne les yeux. Par ailleurs, il avait le cou penché et dévié sur le côté, si bien qu'il paraissait avoir le regard tourné vers le ciel. C'est précisément ainsi que Lysippe l'avait représenté en bronze, et Alexandre appréciait ses portraits plus que les figures mensongères, prétentieuses de Stasikratès. Qu'Alexandre avait bien telle apparence, c'est ce que prouve l'épigramme suivante : « Cette statue de bronze, regardant en direction de Zeus, ressemble à quelqu'un qui va dire : “Je soumetts la terre à mon pouvoir, Zeus ; toi, garde l'Olympe !” »

## 3. Ep. 70 : À l'higoumène du monastère du Pantokrator, kyr Joseph

Ἀλεξάνδρῳ ποτὲ τῶν Μακεδόνων τῷ βασιλεῖ παραδραμόντι καιρὸν καὶ μεταμέλου πεῖραν λαβόντι παρῶν ἐκεῖνος ὁ πλάστης ὁ Λύσιππος, Σικυώνιος δ' ἦν ὁ ἀνὴρ, θειότατε δέσποτα, ὡς οὔτ' ἀκίνδυνον ἐώρα τὸ βασιλέα ἐλέγχειν, οὔτε μὴν πάντῃ ἀζήμιον τὸ μὴ τὴν ἐτέρων διαμαρτίαν ἐτέροις ποιεῖσθαι διδάσκαλον, τὴν ἀμφοτέρων κακίαν ἐκπεφευγῶς σοφῶς ἀμφοτέρω ἔδρασεν. ἐν εἰκόνι καὶ γὰρ τὸν χρόνον ἀγαλματώσας τὸν τε βασιλέα τῷ μὴ δοκεῖν ἐλέγχειν κοσμίως ἐξήλεγε καὶ τῷ κοινῷ τῶν ἀνθρώπων προακτικὴν τοῦ λοιποῦ τὴν εἰκόνα παροΐνεσιν καταλέλοιπεν. ἔχει δὲ οὕτως τὸ εἰκόνισμα. ἀνθρωπὸς τις ὁ χρόνος ἐκεῖνῳ δεδημιούργηται προκόμιον ἔχων βραχύ, τὰ δ' ἄλλα ὀπισθοφάλακρος καὶ κωφὸς ἰκανῶς, ὡς ἔστιν εἰκάσαι, καὶ γυμνὸς ἐστὶν ὡς διολισθαίνων καὶ ἀναφῆς· βέβηκε δὲ ἐπὶ σφαίρας εὐδρόμου τινὸς μεταρριπτάζων αὐτοῦ τοῖς ποσὶν ἐκείνῃν ὀξυκινήτως, ὡς ἡ τῶν ποδῶν ὑπαινίττεται πτέρωσις. ἐκεῖνου δὲ κατόπιν ἕτερος δεδημιούργηται ἀνθρωπὸς εὐτόνῳ κεχημένος βαδίσματι χειρὰ τε ἰδίαν ἐκτείνων, ἐκεῖνον ὡς συλληψόμενος καὶ τοῦτον μετακαλούμενος, ὡς τὸ ἀνεσπασμένον αὐτοῦ τῶν χειλέων δηλοῖ· ὁ δὲ παρέρχεται τε καὶ οἴχεται καὶ κωφεύων οὐκ ἐπαΐει, μάχαιραν δὲ ὀρέγει πρὸς τὸ κατόπιν ἐπανατείνων τὴν χεῖρα, κατακαρδίους πληγὰς αἰνιττόμενος, αἶπερ

Un jour qu'Alexandre, roi des Macédoniens, avait laissé échapper une occasion et en éprouvait du repentir, le fameux sculpteur Lysippe, présent à ses côtés – l'homme était de Sicyone, très saint maître –, comme il voyait qu'il n'était pas sans danger de faire des reproches au roi ni tout à fait exempt de blâme de ne pas instruire les uns des erreurs des autres, évita les inconvénients de l'une et l'autre position, en prenant habilement l'une et l'autre : de fait, ayant sculpté une image du temps, il administra en toute décence une leçon au roi, sans avoir l'air de lui faire des reproches et, au commun des hommes, il a laissé pour l'avenir cette image en guise de recommandation en acte. La statue se présente ainsi : il a façonné le temps comme un homme, ayant une courte touffe de cheveux sur le front, mais pour le reste chauve à l'arrière de la tête, et passablement sourd, comme on peut le conjecturer ; et il est nu, parce que fuyant et impalpable. Il se tient sur une sphère qui se meut aisément et, avec ses pieds, la fait tourner vivement de côté et d'autre, comme le suggèrent les ailes qu'il porte aux pieds. Derrière lui, est façonné un autre homme, à la démarche élastique, étendant sa main pour le saisir et le faire revenir à lui, comme l'indique la contraction de ses lèvres. Mais lui passe son chemin, s'éloigne et, sourd, ne lui prête pas attention ; il tend un couteau vers l'arrière, la main dirigée vers le haut, suggérant les coups en plein cœur

ἐγγίνονται τοῖς χρόνου καθυστερίζουσιν. οὕτω πως σοφῶς ὁ Λύσιππος ἐνου-  
θέτησε μὴ καθυστερίζειν καιροῦ, τοιαύτη τὸν χρόνον ἀναστηλώσας γραφῆ,  
κἂν ἀκαιρηγοροῦντες δοκητῖαι τινὲς ἀκρίτως εἶναι βίου ταύτην παραλη-  
ρῶσιν εἰκόνημα, μὴ συνιέντες ὡς πολλοὶ μὲν καὶ τῶν κατόπιν βίον κατέσχον,  
οὐδένες ὄντες τὸ πρότερον εἴτε μέτρια ἔχοντες, χρόνον δὲ παροιχόμενον καὶ  
τὰ προτέρω χρόνω πραχθέντα καὶ θεῶ μεταποιῆσαι ἀδύνατον. ὅθεν καὶ ὁ  
Αὐσίτης 'τίς ἄν με θείη κατὰ μῆνα τῶν πρὶν' ἔλεγεν 'ἡμερῶν', ἀλλ' οὐ κατὰ  
βίον ἢ πλοῦτον τὸν πρὶν· βίον γὰρ κρείττω ἀκαίριος ἐς ὕστερον εὔρε, χρόνον  
δὲ τὸν πρὶν οὐδαμῶς. τοιαύτη μὲν ἢ ἐκ τῆς εἰκόνης τῆς Λυσιππειᾶς παραινέ-  
σις ἢ περὶ τοῦ μὴ καθυστερίζειν χρόνου τοῦ δέοντος, ἥς τῶ ἐπιτιμῶ ἕτεροι  
ἔνοχοι ὄντες ὕστερον οἶδ' ὅτι ἐκτὸς ἡμᾶς καθεστηκότας αἰτίας τῆς οἴας δὴ  
τινος ὑπαιτίους ποιήσονται, θειότατε δέσποτα· ἀνάιτιος γὰρ πρὸς τὰς τοι-  
αύτας παραδρομὰς καὶ Τζέτζης καὶ Λύσιππος, ὁ μὲν ἅπαξ ἀναστηλώσας τὸ  
ἄγαλμα, ἐγὼ δὲ οὐκ ὀλιγάκις ταῦτα πολλοῖς νουθετῶν.

portés à ceux qui prennent du retard sur le temps. C'est ainsi, sans doute, que Ly-  
sippe, sagement, recommanda de ne pas prendre de retard sur l'occasion, en réalisant  
pareille représentation figurée du temps, même si, s'exprimant à tort et à travers,  
certains prétentieux déraisonnent, en affirmant sans discernement que c'est une  
image de la vie, sans comprendre que beaucoup ont réussi leur vie, après coup, alors  
qu'auparavant ils n'étaient rien ou n'avaient qu'une médiocre fortune, tandis qu'il  
est impossible même à Dieu de modifier le temps passé et ce qui a été fait antérieure-  
ment. C'est précisément pourquoi l'homme d'Ausitide disait : « Qui me replacera  
au mois des jours d'antan ? » (Job 29,2) et non à la vie ou à la richesse d'antan : car  
lui aussi <re>trouva une vie meilleure par la suite, mais nullement le temps passé  
(cf. *Hist.* X 323). Telle est la recommandation à tirer de l'image de Lysippe concer-  
nant le fait de ne pas prendre de retard sur le temps nécessaire. Exposés par la suite  
à sa sanction, d'autres, je le sais, nous incrimineront, alors que nous sommes exempts  
de toute espèce de responsabilité, très saint maître : car ni Tzetzès ni Lysippe ne sont  
coupables de telles erreurs de parcours, l'un ayant façonné une bonne fois pour toutes  
cette statue, tandis que moi, j'adresse fréquemment ces recommandations à beau-  
coup de gens.

**John of all trades:  
The Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς and Tzetzes' 'didactic' programme**

The Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς (*Little-Big Iliad*)<sup>1</sup>, the early work by John Tzetzes, consists of two complementary parts: a poem (1,676 hexameters) that summarises the entire Trojan War, and numerous scholia in which the verses are clarified. Leone published a new complete edition of the text<sup>2</sup> and several articles<sup>3</sup> which elucidate the textual tradition and Tzetzes' sources. Because of the increasing attention of scholars towards the role and the methods of education in the Middle Byzantine

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<sup>1</sup> On the title, see P.L.M. Leone, *I «Carmina Iliaca» di Giovanni Tzetzes*, «QC» VI/12 (1984) 377-405: 382-386; M. Cardin, *Teaching Homer through (annotated) poetry*, in R.C. Simms (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Prequels, Sequels, and Retellings of Classical Epics*, Leiden-Boston 2018, 90-114: 94 n. 12; U. Mondini, *Composing the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς. Macro- and microstructure of a Byzantine Homeric poem*, «ByzZ» CXIV/1 (2021) 325-354: 350-353.

<sup>2</sup> P.L.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Carmina Iliaca*, Catania 1995. A translation (with introduction and notes) limited to the poetic section is published in Id., *Giovanni Tzetzes. La leggenda troiana (Carmina Iliaca)*, Lecce-Brescia 2015. The poem is a *carmen continuum*, not divided into three parts (the so-called *Antehomerica*, *Homerica* et *Posthomerica*), as already Leone, *Carmina* cit. 385-386 demonstrated. Nevertheless, he published the text of the poem and the scholia divided into three parts and, for this reason, the quotations will follow this tripartition (abbreviated as *Carm. Il. I/II/III* for the poetic text; *schol. Carm. Il. I/II/III* for the scholia). The Greek text available on the *TLG* is the outdated edition by F.S. Lehrs, *Joannis Tzetzae Antehomerica, Homerica et Posthomerica*, in F.S. Lehrs-J.F. Dübner, *Hesiodi Carmina*, Paris 1840; the scholia are not online.

<sup>3</sup> P.L.M. Leone, *Note sulle fonti dei Τρωϊκά*, «Athena» LXXIX (1983/1984) 213-217; Id., *Noterelle tzetziene*, in *Lirica greca da Archiloco a Elitis*. «Studi in onore di Filippo Maria Pontani», Padova 1984, 249-258; Id., *Carmina* cit.; Id., *Sulla tradizione manoscritta dei Carmina Iliaca di Giovanni Tzetzes (IV)*, «Orpheus» n.s. V/2 (1984) 357-381; Id., *Noterelle tzetziene (II)*, «QC» VII/14 (1985) 285-292; Id., *Noterelle tzetziene (III)*, *ibid.* 293-309; Id., *Sulla tradizione manoscritta dei Carmina Iliaca di Giovanni Tzetzes (III)*, «Βυζαντινά» XIII/2 (1985) 773-786; Id., *Sulla tradizione manoscritta dei Carmina Iliaca di Giovanni Tzetzes [I]*, in «Studi albanologici, balcanici, bizantini e orientali in onore di Giuseppe Valentini, S.J.», Firenze 1986, 295-346; Id., *Sulla tradizione manoscritta dei Carmina Iliaca di Giovanni Tzetzes (II)*, «Athena» LXXX/1 (1989) 197-219; Id., *Un'epitome del Carmina Iliaca di Giovanni Tzetzes*, «Rivista di Bizantinistica (Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi VII)» I/1 (1991) 11-16; Id., *Noterelle tzetziene (IV)*, «Rivista di Bizantinistica (Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi VII)» I/2 (1991) 24-27; Id., *Noterelle tzetziene (V)*, «QC» VI (2007) 19-27.

period, the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* is slowly gaining the consideration that this unique text deserves<sup>4</sup>.

The historical framework of its composition is depicted by the author himself. Sometime in his mid-twenties<sup>5</sup>, Tzetzes was forced to go back to Constantinople from Thessaly apparently because of the wife of the *doux* Isaac, his former patron<sup>6</sup>. The aim of the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* is to prove that Tzetzes was a ‘John of all trades’ as well as a master of everything to enter the world of Comnenian *Auftragsdichter*<sup>7</sup>.

## 2. *An ambitious ouverture*

Ὁ παρὼν ποιητής, φιλοσύντομος ὦν καὶ τῆς ὠφελείας τῶν νέων φροντί-  
ζων, συνοπτικῶς τὴν πᾶσαν Ἰλιάδα ἐν τῇ παρούσῃ βίβλῳ ἐξέθετο.  
Φιλόμηρος δὲ εἶπερ τις ἄλλος τελῶν, ἐπειδὴ τινὰς εὗρισκε τὸν Ὅμηρον  
λέγοντας δαιμονιώδεις δοξάζειν θεοὺς, οὐ μὴν δὲ τὰς ψυχικὰς δυνάμεις

Loving brevity and taking care of the benefit of the young, this poet exposed synoptically the entire Iliad in the present book. As he is fond of Homer, he discovered some saying that Homer believes in demonic gods, omitting that he defines as gods psychic forces,

<sup>4</sup> T. Braccini, *Erudita invenzione: riflessioni sulla Piccola grande Iliade di Giovanni Tzetze*, «IFilolClass» IX (2009/2010) 151-173; Id., *Mitografia e miturgia femminile a Bisanzio: il caso di Giovanni Tzetze*, «QRO» III (2010) 88-105; Id., *Riscrivere l'epica: Giovanni Tzetze di fronte al ciclo troiano*, «CentoPagine» V (2011) 43-57; P.A. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the Blemish Examiners. A Byzantine Teacher on Schedography, Everyday Language and Writerly Disposition*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 1-57; V.F. Lovato, *Portrait de héros, portrait d'érudit: Jean Tzetzes et la tradition des eikonismoi*, *ibid.* 137-156; F. Conca, *L'esegesi di Tzetzes ai Carmina Iliaca, fra tradizione e innovazione*, «Koinonia» XLII (2018) 75-114; Cardin, *o.c.*; M. Savio, *Polemica e invettiva nelle opere di Giovanni Tzetze: screditare i concorrenti e pubblicizzare l'“eccellenza tzetziana”*, «RFIC» CXLVI/1 (2018) 181-238; Ead., *Screditare per valorizzare. Giovanni Tzetze, le sue fonti, i committenti e la concorrenza*, Roma 2020; Mondini, *Composing cit.*; Id., *La grandiosa ira di Achille in miniatura. Tensioni tra grande e piccolo nella Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς di Giovanni Tzetze*, in P. Piacentini et al., *(S)proporzioni. Taglia e scala tra testo e immagine* (forthcoming).

<sup>5</sup> On the chronology of Tzetzes' early career, see G. Hart, *De Tzetzarum nomine, vitis, scriptis*, Lipsiae 1889, 13; H. Giske, *De Ioannis Tzetzae scriptis ac vita*, Rostock 1881, 52-53; C. Wendel, *Tzetzes. Joannes*, in *RE VIIA/2* (1948) 1959-2010: 1961-1962.

<sup>6</sup> Braccini, *Erudita cit.* 154-155 compares this story with those of Joseph and Bellerophon.

<sup>7</sup> See P.A. Agapitos quoted in Conca, *o.c.* 76 n. 4; A. Rhoby, *Ioannes Tzetzes als Auftragsdichter*, «GLB» XV/2 (2010) 155-170. See also E. Cullhed, *The Blind Bard and 'I': Homeric Biography and Authorial Personas in the Twelfth Century*, «BMGS» XXXVIII/1 (2014) 49-67. The complex problem of the audience of *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* will be dealt with later in this paper (§4).

καὶ τοὺς ἀστέρας καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα καὶ τοὺς σοφοὺς ἐνίοτε καὶ τοὺς βασιλεῖς λέγειν θεοὺς, τοῦτο δεικνὺς καὶ ἀνατρέπων τὸν λῆρον αὐτῶν, χριστιανικώτατος ὢν, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἡμετέροις χρόνοις Καλλιόπας καὶ Μούσας καὶ θεοὺς φησι καὶ αὐτός, δεικνὺς πάντως ἐκ τούτων ὡς καὶ Ὅμηρος οὕτω ταῦτα πάντα ἐλάμβανεν.

(*schol. Carm. Il.* p. 101,1-10 Leone)

stars, natural elements, and even wise men and kings. Therefore, the author clarifies all these issues and demolishes their delirium. Whilst remaining a proper Christian, he himself mentions Calliope and Muses and gods at the present time, thus demonstrating that Homer also perceived all these aspects in this way.

This text is fundamental for the correct understanding of Tzetzes' literary operation, as the author offers to the reader the motivation as well as the basic tools to understand his work<sup>8</sup>.

Its longer part is dedicated to a poetic statement that stands for the second motivation of the composition. Because he is φιλόμηρος<sup>9</sup>, Tzetzes wants to defend Homer from the accusations of believing in δαίμονιόδεις θεοὺς when the Poet just wanted to depict some aspects of reality through the lens of allegory. To demonstrate Homer's innocence, Tzetzes uses the same allegorical means in his own poem as found in the epics to prove that reference to fictional demons in literature does not make the author less of a Christian. His more subtle overall point is that, in the

<sup>8</sup> Cf. [Psell.] *Poem.* 14 Westerink, a pseudepigraphic composition written by a certain Ioannikios, an author probably close to Prodromos (see C. Gallavotti, *Nota sulla schedografia di Moscopulo e suoi precedenti fino a Teodoro Prodromo*, «BollClass» III/4 (1983) 3-35: 22), which talks about the basic features of iambic metre. In ms. *Vindob. theol. gr.* 287 [*Diktyon* 71954], f. 25r, the poem is complemented by a scholion to v. 2 which offers the key to understanding the content of the poem and the characteristics of the iambs explained in it. The text of the scholion is edited by W. Studemund, *Anecdota varia Graeca et Latina*, I, Berlin 1886, 198-199. On the topic, see W. Hörandner, *The Byzantine didactic poem – A neglected literary genre?*, in F. Bernard-K. Demoen (edd.), *Poetry and Its Contexts in Eleventh-century Byzantium*, Farnham 2012, 55-67: 62, and Id., *Teaching with verse in Byzantium*, in W. Hörandner-A. Rhoby-N. Zagklas (edd.), *A Companion to Byzantine Poetry*, Leiden 2019, 459-486: 467-468. In contemporary Western literature, troubadours and Latin poets often attached prose 'motivations' (*razos*) to their compositions in which the reason and the purpose of their literary work are explained.

<sup>9</sup> By calling himself φιλόμηρος, Tzetzes claims a deep knowledge of Homeric poems and of their inner features. In Eusthatios, φιλόμηρος is used for Sophocles, an imitator of Homeric style (e.g. *in Il.* I 695,15-16 van der Valk), but also for Alexander the Great and Cassander, who were lovers of his poems and imitators of their ἔθος (e.g. *in Il.* I 727,6-7 van der Valk).

Byzantine mindset, allegory is an inherent feature of Homeric poetics and not exclusively an interpretative tool of the moderns<sup>10</sup>. In order to compose a poem in proper Homeric style, Tzetzes is compelled to use allegory because it is a crucial feature of the genre of Homeric poetry, one without which poems cannot be considered epics<sup>11</sup>. At the same time, his statement unveils Tzetzes' poetic choice perhaps also in order to pre-empt potential criticisms of hidden paganism (χριστιανικώτατος ὄν)<sup>12</sup>.

Although scholars mainly tried to understand the meaning of Tzetzes' declaration of intents on allegory, the opening sentence is equally noteworthy. Φιλολύττομος ὄν is connected to φιλόμηρος both by the δέ that follows the latter and by the identical first element of the two compounds. Although different in length, the two sentences have the same importance in the scholion: through the first one, Tzetzes explains the literary operation behind the whole Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς; through the second, his choice to write according to 'Homeric' allegory.

The claim to be φιλολύττομος is crucial to understand both the scholion and the poem. In rhetorical tradition, συντομία is one of the key elements of a well-executed διήγησις<sup>13</sup>. Tzetzes is aware of this tradition<sup>14</sup>, as can be seen from the quotation of Aphth. II 4 ἀρεταὶ γὰρ διηγήσεως τέσσαρες· σαφήνεια, συντομία, πιθανότης καὶ ὁ τῶν ὀνομάτων ἔλλητισμός ("the virtues of narration are clarity, conciseness, persuasiveness, and the correct use of Greek words") in *schol. Carm.*

<sup>10</sup> See *Exeg. Il.* pp. 44,16-45,9 Papatomopoulos. The only comprehensive study on Byzantine allegory is P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milano 1991; see also A. Goldwyn, *Theory and method in John Tzetzes' Allegories of the Iliad and Allegories of the Odyssey*, «Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies» III (2017) 141-171. However, there is still much work to do on allegory and its significance in the Byzantine mindset as well as on its use in teaching and in literary composition. On allegory in Tzetzes' early works, see Braccini, *Riscrivere* cit.; Id., *Erudita* cit. 160-163; Cardin, *o.c.* 101-104.

<sup>11</sup> Braccini, *Riscrivere* cit. 43-45; Id., *Erudita* cit. 164-167 and Cardin, *o.c.* 96 (quoting *schol. Hes. Op.* p. 13,7-14 Gaisford). Cardin, *ibid.* n. 18 registers the occurrences of Tzetzes' list of the four features of epic poetry, to which should be added *schol. Exeg. Il.* 45,1, pp. 452,8-453,15 Papatomopoulos.

<sup>12</sup> Leone, *Carmina* cit. 381.

<sup>13</sup> On διήγησις, see F. Berardi, *La retorica degli esercizi preparatori. Glossario ragionato dei Progymnasmata*, Hildesheim 2017, 80-96.

<sup>14</sup> See e.g. *schol. Hermog.* in *An. Ox.* p. IV, 5,25-34 Cramer, where he quotes Aphth. II 1 to explain Hermogenes. Some marginalia to Aphthonius preceded by a rubricated Τζέτζου are preserved in ms. *Vindob. phil. gr.* 130 [*Diktyon* 71244], ff. 8r-83r: see Wendel, *o.c.* 1989-1990 n. 24; H. Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*, I, Vienna 1961, 238. The notes attributed to Tzetzes are always in the margins, although Aphthonius' text is surrounded by long exegetical explanations by John Doxopates and John Sardonios (= ἑτέρου ἐξηγητοῦ, see H. Rabe, *Ioannis Sardianii commentarium in Aphthonii progymnasmata*, Leipzig 1928, iv-ix).

*Il.* I 20a Leone, at the beginning of the narrative part of his poem<sup>15</sup>. Συντομία means conciseness<sup>16</sup>, through which the topic is plainly and openly narrated in its entirety, omitting all negligible details<sup>17</sup>. For this reason, συντομία is mostly related with σαφήνεια<sup>18</sup> as the clarity of a speech usually depends on the ability to get straight to the point. In most of its occurrences, the term is considered a synonym of βραχυλογία<sup>19</sup>, although the former is normally referred to a whole text<sup>20</sup>, while the latter is confined to a section<sup>21</sup>. In both cases, redundancy and fragmentation must be strictly avoided<sup>22</sup>. In this sense, it is very important to notice that several scholia to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* underline and praise Homeric expedients to create συντομία in versification<sup>23</sup>; Homer himself is often depicted as a poet of few, accurate words<sup>24</sup>.

The adjective φιλοσύντομος has over thirty occurrences. Among them, four major literary authorities are called φιλοσύντομοι: Hippocrates as author of *apophthegmata* (ps.-Gal. *De victus ratione in morbis acutis ex Hippocratis sententia*, p. XIX, 185,10-12 Kühn); Aristotle according to Olympiodorus' commentary on *Categories* (31,6 Busse and, possibly as a consequence, Psell. *Or. min.* 37,48 Littlewood); Ptolemy according to Theon (*Comm. Ptol. Alm.* 284.14-16 Rome); Dionysios Thrax (*schol. Vat.* in *GG I/3*, 162,10 Hilgard); Hermogenes in an anonymous commentary (*RhG VII/2*, 720 Walz).

In these passages, the adjective φιλοσύντομος has a consistent meaning and it is used by the commentator to explain an obscurity. In the mind of the commentator, the author deliberately omits sections and words in order to be concise for the sake of brevity<sup>25</sup>. It should be stressed that, in these cases, the φιλοσυντομία repre-

<sup>15</sup> See also *schol. Hermog.* in *An. Ox.* pp. IV, 58-62 Cramer, on which see *infra*.

<sup>16</sup> For the cohesiveness implied by συντομία, see *Et.Gud. s.v. ἀπηλεγέως*, 165.17-18 De Stefani and Tz. *schol. Hermog.* in *An. Ox.* p. IV, 9.17-20 Cramer.

<sup>17</sup> Berardi, *o.c.* 273-276. See also C. Kallendorf, *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, II, 53-60, *s.v. Brevitas*.

<sup>18</sup> Berardi, *o.c.* 260-263.

<sup>19</sup> See *schol. Eur. Or.* 640 Schwartz.

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. *schol. Hermog.* in *An. Ox.* pp. IV, 51-52 Cramer.

<sup>21</sup> But, for example, Tzetzes considers asyndeton an expedient of συντομία, see *schol. Carm. Il.* I 84 Leone.

<sup>22</sup> See e.g. Arist. *Rhet.* 1414a 25-26 and ps.-Dem. *Eloc.* 103,1-3. Hermog. *Progymn.* 3,1-2 Rabe defines χρεία as an ἀπομνημόνευμα ... σύντομον ἔχον δήλωσιν, "a record ... that contains a concise explanation".

<sup>23</sup> See e.g. *schol. Il.* I 110a1-2 Erbse; Greg. Naz. *Epist.* 54,1; Eust. in *Il.* III 466,31-33 van der Valk.

<sup>24</sup> See Eust. in *Il.* I 3.22-24 van der Valk.

<sup>25</sup> E.g. Olymp. in *Cat.* 46,22-33; Sophr. *Excerpt. ex Io. Char.* in *GG IV/2*, 387,21-22 Hilgard; *schol. Vat.* Dion.Thr. in *GG I/3*, 162,10 Hilgard.



sents a positive quality of authors, according to the theory of συντομία as one of the four essentials of διήγησις. Nevertheless, sometimes συντομία can inadvertently create problems for readers if they do not have the tools to interpret allusions and omissions of the text. From the perspective of the less-educated reader, this type of authors could seem too concise; hence, the commentator elucidates unclear or apparently incongruous passages<sup>26</sup>. However, commented authors are generally not to blame for conciseness since their only purpose was to simplify and abridge the topic in question. In an anonymous commentary to the Hermogenic *On Invention*, the φιλοσυντομία of the author is strictly related to his didactic aim (*RhG* VII/2, 729,23-24 Walz): φιλοσύντομος οὖν ὑπάρχων ὁ τεχνικός [*sc.* Ἑρμογένης] διδασκαλικώτερον λόγον ἐκτιθέμενος κτλ. (“Hermogenes loves brevity and exposes a rather didactic discourse”).

Tzetzēs willingly exploits this rhetorical tradition to depict his *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* as a perfect example of metrical narration that is meant to be beneficial to the youth. In fact, the use of the verb ἐκτίθημι in the opening scholion is meant to recall the Hermogenic definition of narration: Hermog. *Prog.* 2.1-2 τὸ διήγημα βούλονται εἶναι ἔκθεσιν πράγματος γεγονότος ἢ ὡς γεγονότος (= Aphth. II 1 διήγημά ἐστιν ἔκθεσις πράγματος γεγονότος ἢ ὡς γεγονότος)<sup>27</sup>. This verb stands for ‘to select, to set out in order’ and may be used to mean the composition of texts in general (see LSJ<sup>9</sup> *s.v.* ἐκτίθημι)<sup>28</sup>.

In this self-representation between Homeric and rhetorical tradition<sup>29</sup>, Tzetzēs is displaying synoptically the entire *Iliad* (τὴν πᾶσαν Ἰλιάδα συνοπτικῶς)<sup>30</sup>. The adverb συνοπτικῶς is used by Tzetzēs two other times. In *Hist.* XI 369, whilst talk-

<sup>26</sup> T. Conley, *Byzantine teaching on figures and tropes: An introduction*, «Rhetorica» IV/4 (1986), 335-374, especially 335-348. Commentators often aim to level out the differences in authoritative rhetorical sources, see e.g. *schol. Vat.* Dion.Thr. in *GG* I/3, 162,10 Hilgard.

<sup>27</sup> “The tale (= διήγημα) is meant to be the exposition of a thing that occurred or as if it occurred”. The meaning of διήγημα is explained immediately afterwards, Hermog. *Progymn.* 2,4-8 Rabe. Following Hermogenic classification, the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* is clearly not a διήγημα, but a διήγησις. However, the distinction between διήγημα and διήγησις is volatile in commentaries (e.g. anon. in *RhG* VII/2, 729,24-25 Walz διήγησις ἐστιν ἔκθεσις πραγμάτων γεγονότων ἢ ὡς γεγονότων).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Prol. com.* I 160-163 in W.J.W. Koster, *Scholia in Aristophanem IA: Prolegomena de comoedia*, Groningen 1975, 31 (ch. XIa).

<sup>29</sup> In his (partly) lost work the *Logismoi*, Tzetzēs criticised passages from Hermogenes, as he reveals in *Hist.* XI 369. See the chapter by Aglae Pizzone in this volume, focussing specifically on the προκατάστασις.

<sup>30</sup> Conca, *o.c.* 75-76 briefly focuses on the problem of σύνοψις as a form of poetry, but on synopsis in Byzantine poetry see F. Bernard, *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry, 1025-1081*, Oxford 2014, 238-240.

ing about Hermogenes, Tzetzes repeats three times that, in the second book of *On Invention*, the rhetor recommends not to begin directly with the narration (διήγησις) after a preamble (προοίμιον), because it would appear as a lack of skill (vv. 205-207, 223-227, 262-264); on the contrary, he says that the narration should begin after a προκατάστασις and a προδιήγησις (vv. 208-209, 229-230, 266-267) that must report synoptically (συνοπτικῶς) what the narration is about to tell<sup>31</sup>. In *Ep.* 92 (p. 132, 23-26 Leone), Aetios is praised because he “compiled many medical remedies by ancient doctors συνοπτικῶς”, i.e. he assembled and redrafted ancient remedies by other authors and he succeeded to produce a useful collection because of his clear knowledge of the whole subject.

The same meaning is attested in other sources, too. Michael Psellos wrote several metrical συνόψεις<sup>32</sup> in which he gives an account of complex subjects in rather few verses<sup>33</sup>. For example, Psellos closes his pentadecasyllabic σύνοψις τῆς ῥητορικῆς (*Poem. 7, Synopsis of Rhetoric*, dedicated to Michael VII Doukas) with the following verses:

Ἔστω γοῦν σοι τεχνύδιον ἢ σύνοψις τῆς τέχνης,  
 εὐσύνοπτόν τι μάθημα, σύντομον, τετμημένον,  
 γλυκύτητος ἀνάμεστον, χάριτος πεπλησμένον,  
 ἠδυεπές, ἠδύφθογον, ἠδυμελές ἐκτόπως,  
 ὧς ἂν καὶ παίζων λογικῶς κερδαίνῃς τι τοῦ λόγου. 545

Here is your little literary work, the synopsis of rhetoric, a teaching easily taken in by the mind, concise, delimited, full of pleasantness, filled with grace, written with extraordinarily sweet verses, tongue and singing. As a result, you may benefit from this poem when you compose your own discourses.

*Poem. 7*, 541-542 Westerink closely resembles *Poem. 3*, 1-2 Westerink, dedicated to Constantine IX Monomachos:

<sup>31</sup> *Hist.* XI 369, 231-238 (talking about διήγησις). On *Hist.* 369, see Agapitos, *o.c.* 22-27, and Aglae Pizzone's contribution to this volume.

<sup>32</sup> Psell. *Poem.* 3, 6, 7, 8 Westerink, cf. Bernard, *o.c.* 70-71. On the problems linked to *Poem.* 9 Westerink, see Hörandner, *o.c.* 61.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. his praise to the dead John Xiphilinos, Psell. *Or.* 3 22.58-65.

δέχου καὶ τὸν θεμέλιον τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς δογμάτων,  
σύντομον καὶ συνοπτικὸν καὶ περιγεγραμμένον.

Receive the basic knowledge of our dogmas, which are concise, synoptical and circumscribed.

Michael Psellos closes the second σύνοψις dedicated to Michael VII Doukas (*Poem.* 8,1405-1410 Westerink, σύνοψις τῶν νόμων) with a very similar section:

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Ἄρχεῖ σοι ταῦτα, δέσποτα, τῶν νόμων εἰρημένα   | 1405 |
| ...  |      |
| Πάντων δ' ἠψάμην τῶν μερῶν, δέσποτα, τῶν νομίμων<br>καὶ σοι συνοπτικώτατον βιβλίον εἰργασάμην<br>ἔτοιμον εἰς κατάληψιν καὶ πρόχειρον εἰς γνῶσιν. | 1410 |

Lord, be satisfied with what has been said about the laws. [...] I have dealt with every part of legal customs, and I have created for you a book which is written in the most synoptical way possible, ready for the assimilation and accessible for the knowledge.

In the preface to the Σύνοψις ἱστοριῶν, John Skylitzes claims that he took inspiration from George the Synkellos and Theophanes. The two historians had written their chronicles after consulting the previous history books with due care (ἐπιστατικώτερον τὰς ἱστορικὰς ἐπιδραμόντες βίβλους) and they made a compendium in a plain and unaffected language (καὶ συνοψίσαντες λόγῳ μὲν ἀφελεῖ καὶ ἀπεριέργῳ) that directly expresses the essence and the meaning of what is narrated (μονονουχὶ δὲ τῆς οὐσίας αὐτῆς ἐφαπτομένῳ τῶν πεπραγμένων) (prol. 4-10 Thurn). On the contrary, other historical accounts are of no use for future generations (ἀνόνητοι τοῖς μετ' αὐτοῦς γεγόνασιν) because they merely report the duration of each reign but, meanwhile, they fail in accuracy or omit events. Furthermore, their narration is usually biased for various reasons (prol. 11-34). Skylitzes then states (prol. 40-44, 50-52 Thurn):

ἡμεῖς δὲ τῷ πόνῳ τῶν εἰρημένων ἀνδρῶν ἐκείνων ἀρεσθέντες καὶ λυσι-  
τελήσειν οὐ μικρὰ τὴν σύνοψιν τοῖς φιλιστοροῦσιν ἐλπίσαντες καὶ

I enjoyed reading the works of the aforementioned historians and I hoped that the synopsis will be of great benefit to the lovers of history, especially to those

μάλιστα τοῖς τὸ ῥᾶστον τοῦ ἐπιπονωτέρου προτιθεμένοις, συντομωτάτην διδοῦσαν κατάληψιν τῶν ἐν διαφόροις συμβεβηκότων καιροῖς καὶ τοῦ βάρους τῶν ὑπομνημάτων ἐλευθεροῦσαν [...] ὑφ' ἐν ἐπιδρομάδην συνθέμενοι τοῖς μεταγενεστέροις καταλελοίπαμεν τροφήν ἀπαλήν καὶ τοῦτο δὴ τὸ τοῦ λόγου ἀληγεσμένην.

who prefer what is easy to what is more challenging. Therefore, my synopsis offers them a concise knowledge of what happened at different times as well as it releases them from the weight of long accounts. [...] By gathering all these facts in summary form into a single book, I have left behind tender nourishment for posterity, 'finely ground' as the proverb says.

Skyllitzes says that his synopsis had been composed for the benefit of φιλιστοροῦντες<sup>34</sup>, whether they are beginners or experienced readers<sup>35</sup>, so that they can have at hand a comprehensive knowledge of historical events without consulting long, heavy, and complex ὑπομνήματα by other authors. In the omitted passage, the author underlines that he read with care the works of previous historians and he learned from their accounts, but he left out of his synopsis their dissimilarities and disagreements (διαφοραὶ καὶ διαφωνία) as well as all the elements that appeared to be only imaginary (ὅσα ἐγγυὲς ἐρχόμενα εὐρομεν τοῦ μυθώδους). Besides, Skyllitzes has gathered what was possible and what did not fall out from credibility (τὰ δὲ εἰκότα καὶ ὅποσα μὴ τοῦ πιθανοῦ ἀπέπιπτε) (prol. 46-48 Thurn). All these things were then assembled into a single book, in order to offer an abridged report (ὑφ' ἐν ... ἐπιδρομάδην συνθέμενοι) that is a "tender nourishment" (τροφή ἀπαλή) for the following generations.

Coming down to the age of Tzetzes, his contemporary Constantine Manasses wrote a Σύνοψις χρονική dedicated to the Sebastokratorissa Eirene<sup>36</sup>. The most evident feature of Manasses' Σύνοψις is the preference given to a "pleasant narrative"<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> By using this participle Skyllitzes probably alludes to the prologue of Theophanes Continuatus (4,17-5,6 Featherstone–Signes-Codoñer).

<sup>35</sup> On this topic, see *infra*.

<sup>36</sup> On the Sebastokratorissa, see M. Jeffreys-E. Jeffreys, *Who was Eirene the Sevastokratorissa?*, «Byzantion» LXIV (1994) 40-68, and A. Rhoby, *Verschiedene Bemerkungen zur Sebastokratorissa Eirene und zu Autoren in ihrem Umfeld*, «Nea Rhome» VI (2009) 305-336.

<sup>37</sup> See Nilsson, *From Homer* cit. 18-22; Ead., *To narrate events of the past. On Byzantine historians, and historians on Byzantium*, in J. Burke et al., *Byzantine Narrative. «Papers in Honour of Roger Scott»*, Melbourne 2006, 47-58, esp. 51-52; Ead., *The past as poetry: Two Byzantine world chronicles in verse*, in Hörandner-Rhoby-Zagklas, *Companion* cit. 517-538; I. Nilsson-E. Nyström, *To*

rather than an accurate report of historical events. This is announced by Manasses himself in the proem (vv. 1-25). The author reveals that the Sebastokratorissa is “always longing for knowledge, literature, and education” (v. 4: ἀεὶ διψῶσα γνώσεως καὶ λόγου καὶ παιδείας), she is always bent over books and enjoys reading λόγοι (v. 5). For this reason, she asked Manasses to write this literary work about history. After her conspicuous gifts and generosity, the author feels encouraged to undertake the difficult task of writing such a text. Manasses explicitly describes the characteristics of his work (vv. 7-13):

Ἐπεὶ γοῦν ἐπεπόθησας οἷα τροφίμη λόγου  
 εὐσύνοπτόν σοι καὶ σαφῆ γραφὴν ἐκπονηθῆναι,  
 τρανῶς ἀναδιδάσκουσάν τὰς ἀρχαιολογίας  
 καὶ τίνες ἦρξαν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς καὶ μέχρι ποῦ προῆλθον 10  
 καὶ τίνων ἐβασίλευσαν καὶ μέχρις ἐτῶν πόσων,  
 ἡμεῖς ἀναδεξόμεθα τὸ βάρος τοῦ καμάτου,  
 κἂν δυσχερές, κἂν ἐπαχθές τὸ πρᾶγμα, κἂν ἐργῶδες.

Since you have desired, as a foster child of learning, that a comprehensible and clear treatise should be written for you, giving plain teaching in ancient history, and who held power from the beginning, and how far they reached, over whom they ruled and for how many years, I shall accept the onus of this task, though it is a difficult and burdensome matter, and involves much work<sup>38</sup>.

If not a genre in its own right, σύνοψις was at least perceived as an identifiable method for composing literary works. Its two aims, readability and usefulness, are intertwined, and they are generally announced in a standardised introduction to the text. The σύνοψις is written by an expert who, through his deep knowledge and qualified skills, selects and arranges a certain subject in order to make the arguments short, clear, readable and fit to be appreciated by his targeted recipients. In doing so, the author must give a comprehensive overview of the whole subject, avoiding only unnecessary details<sup>39</sup>. For this reason, σύνοψις is strictly bound to συντομία; in fact,

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*compose, read, and use a Byzantine text: Aspects of the Chronicle of Constantine Manasses*, «BMGS» XXXIII/1 (2009) 42-60, esp. 44-52.

<sup>38</sup> Translation by M. Jeffreys, *The nature and origins of the political verse*, «DOP» XXVIII (1974) 143-195: 158.

<sup>39</sup> See Tzetzes’ own scholion to his *schol. Ar. Ran.* 1328, p. 1079,90-92 Koster.

they are almost synonyms, despite conveying two different methods of composing texts<sup>40</sup>.

Moving back to Tzetzes' scholion, the two elements συνοπτικῶς and φιλοσύντομος are both related to the real core of the sentence, i.e. the participial clause τῆς ὠφελείας τῶν νέων φροντίζων. This sentence conveys an important commonplace in Tzetzes' early works, one required by their didactic characterisation. The same theme is the *Leitmotiv* of his *Exegesis to Iliad*, composed some years later. The introductory book epigram states that Tzetzes' friends required the commentary which he then offers as a hermeneutic gift (ἐρμηΐον ... δῶρον) to the παῖδες Ὀμηριάδαι ("the youth who descend from Homer"), who would then learn the *Iliad* through this book<sup>41</sup>. The following preface begins with a clear statement (p. 3,6-9 Papathomopoulos):

Πολλοὶ μὲν τῶν ἀρχαίων τὴν Ὀμηρικὴν ἐπιχειρήκεσαν Ἰλιάδα ἐπεξεργάσασθαι, οὐδεὶς δὲ αὐτῶν, ὡς μὴ τῆς τῶν νέων ὠφελείας, οἶμαι, πεφροντικῶς, βίβλω μιᾶ τὴν πᾶσαν ἐξήγησιν συνετάξατο.

Several ancient men attempted to investigate thoroughly the Homeric *Iliad*, but none of them organised the whole exegesis within a single book. I think this fact suggests their lack of care for any benefit that the young may gain.

Also Eustathios of Thessalonike claims that his commentaries are designed to select only "profitable material" for the recipient (real or fictional), as something new for a new learner (νέος ἄρτι μαθάνων) or a review for who already completed their education (τυχὸν δὲ καὶ μαθόντι μὲν, δεομένῳ δὲ ἀναμνήσεως: *in Il.* I 3,5-8 van der Valk). Through his works, he wanted to «amplify a didactic function perceived in the epics themselves [...] The poet and teacher join forces to educate the students»<sup>42</sup>. The concept of producing something for young students is also contained in the beginning of a dodecasyllabic poem by Tzetzes, the so-called *Versus de poematum generibus*<sup>43</sup>.

The texts of Michael Psellos, John Skylitzes, and Constantine Manasses share the same purpose. In particular, John Skylitzes is the closest example to Tzetzes'

<sup>40</sup> In John Skylitzes, σύνοψις and ἐπιτομή are treated as synonyms. Cf. Psell. *Poem.* 6,542 Westerink.

<sup>41</sup> *Exeg. Il.* p. 3,1-5 Papathomopoulos, cf. also pp. 19,17-20,6 Papathomopoulos.

<sup>42</sup> E. Cullhed, *Eustathios of Thessalonike. Commentary on Homer's Odyssey, I: On Rhapsodies A-B*, Uppsala 2016, 12\*.

<sup>43</sup> Koster, *o.c.* 84-109.

representation of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς. Skylitzes continues to underline that he really enjoyed reading the histories of previous authors even though they were long, convoluted, disharmonious. He is aware that his own aesthetic taste for history is not shared by the majority of readers, but the knowledge of history is essential. For this reason, he has turned his personal pleasure into common utility, writing a σύνοψις both for experienced readers and beginners. In the same way, Tzetzes claims to have written a synopsis of the Πιadic saga for the two reasons expressed in the two participial clauses. Since he aesthetically loves συντομία, writing συνοπτικῶς is a clear consequence – it appears to be his own ‘personal’ reason, but only apparently. In fact, he cares about the benefit of students and believes that a clear one-book synopsis is better than several, perhaps disharmonious ones – the ‘public’ reason<sup>44</sup>. However, φιλοσυντομία (Tzetzes’ aesthetic aptitude) is inextricably correlated to σύνοψις (the way in which Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς has been written) and both to the explicative purposes. In this way, Tzetzes demonstrates that his innate talent and aesthetic taste together with his knowledge totally match the needs of young students<sup>45</sup>.

## 2. A sample of Tzetzes’ proceeding...

The Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς is a unique literary operation, completely different from Tzetzes’ *Exegesis to the Iliad* or the *παρεκβολαί* by Eustathios<sup>46</sup>. The prefatory scholion stands as a declaration of intents through which the accurate rhetorical coordinates for the interpretation of the poem are offered to the reader. Tzetzes not only writes a poem in Homeric metre and language whose narration follows the rules of perfect rhetoric; he also supplies his verses with a thorough commentary. If normally the author is separate from the interpreter, Tzetzes plays both the role of the φιλοσύντομος author as well as of the commentator of himself.

Tzetzes’ verses are poetry in the highest respect. Since Tzetzes thinks he has a perfect knowledge of Homeric poetry and of its sources, he is able to compose *ex*

<sup>44</sup> See *Alleg. II*. prol. 480-487; cf. Savio, *Screditare* cit. 25-27.

<sup>45</sup> The criticism of the sources within both Tzetzes’ Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς and Manasses’ Σύνοψις χρονική has been deeply studied by scholars (see Braccini, *Erudita* cit. 156-160; Conca, *o.c.* 75-84, 92-98; Cardin, *o.c.* 101-109; Nilsson, *From Homer* cit. 18-22). As Skylitzes himself claims for his own works (prol. 39-44), the evaluation and the selection of sources are peculiar features of a σύνοψις and should be seen in this perspective. The dialectical relationship between author and source is not an excess of self-confidence. By evaluating sources and rejecting their unacceptable details or sections, an author of σύνοψις proves his own skills.

<sup>46</sup> See Braccini, *Erudita* cit. 171 and Conca, *o.c.* 75-76.

*novo* a poem and a commentary in which he appears a real *alter Homerus*: both the best poet and the best teacher in the business, showing off his outstanding poetic and didactic skills.

The poem is composed through a high rhetorical and stylistic refinement that is then commented by the scholia through which Tzetzes reveals the features of the text and integrates any relevant material. In his scholia, Tzetzes generally does not repeat a same piece of information. Although this practice is not necessarily a rule, something that is explained by a given scholion does not usually reappears in a following one. For example, ἀργαλέου is glossed only at its first occurrence at v. 1; the Ionic genitive form -οιο is defined for Ἰλιακοῖο once for all; the Ionic termination in -εια is mentioned only in *schol.* I 2d Leone to justify Καλλιόπεια. Conversely, Αἰακίδαο is explained by two identical scholia (I 14b and II 343a Leone), while the theory of the κοινὴ συλλαβή is first mentioned in *schol.* I 3a Leone, then wholly elucidated in *schol.* I 124a Leone<sup>47</sup>. The scholia seem to follow the gradual development of reader's acquaintance with the text and with its inner rules as planned by Tzetzes. This aim is pursued both within its versification and through the commentary.

As for the rhetorical structure of the poem, Tzetzes gives a first explication at the beginning of the narration (*schol. Carm. II. I 20a Leone*):

ἦτοι μὲν Τροίη· ἐντεῦθεν ἄρχεται ἡ διήγησις ῥητορικωτάτη μετὰ μικρᾶς τῆς προδιηγήσεως. Τὸ γὰρ ἀπ' αὐτῆς τῆς διηγήσεως ἄρχεσθαι ἀρητόρευτὸν τε καὶ ἄτεχνον, τὸ δὲ πόρρωθεν ἄρχεσθαι καὶ μὴ συντόμως εἰσβάλλειν εἰς τὴν ὑπόθεσιν κακία ἐστὶ διηγήσεως· ἀσαφήνεια γὰρ ἐμποιεῖ. ἄρεταὶ διηγήσεως τέσσαρες· σαφήνεια, συντομία, πιθανότης καὶ ὁ τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐλληνισμός. ἔστι δὲ τὸ “ἦτοι μὲν” καὶ προσωποποιία· τὴν γὰρ ἰδίαν γνῶσιν ὡς Μοῦσάν τινα παρρησάγει λέγουσαν καὶ διηγουμένην.

ἦτοι μὲν Τροίη: here starts the narration in the most rhetorical way with a short introduction. To begin straight from the narration is unrhethorical and unskilled. On the other hand, if one starts from a remote point and does not go straight to the topic of the text, this is a deficiency of narration because it causes obscurity. Four are the virtues of the narration: clarity, conciseness, persuasive plausibility, correct use of Greek words. ἦτοι μὲν is a *prosopopeia* as it represents individual knowledge as a Muse that speaks and narrates.

<sup>47</sup> On the “common syllable” see Marc Lauxtermann's contribution to this volume.



Conca rightly suggests that the mentioning of the four Hermogenian / Aphthonian rules of διήγησις is only apparently cursory<sup>48</sup>. Through their list, Tzetzes is implying that his own narrative part – the poem after ἤτοι μὲν Τροίη – has been written as a διήγησις and, consequently, observes these rules.

For the sake of brevity and clarity, the study of the scholia and the following literary analysis of Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς will be confined in this paper to the first nineteen verses of the poem<sup>49</sup>. The underlined words of the Greek text are the ones to which a scholion is attached. After the Greek text and translation, I present an overview of the scholia in which they are grouped on the basis of their content; only the *scholia* that appear in all three mss. **A**, **H** and **B** are here listed<sup>50</sup>.

Ἀργαλέου πολέμοιο μέγαν πόνον Ἰλιακοῖο  
ἔννεπε, Καλλιόπεια, ὑφ' ἡμετέρησιν ἀοιδαῖς,  
ἀρχῆθε δ' ἐπάειδε καὶ ἐς τέλος ἐξερέεινε,  
ἐξ ὅτεο Πριάμος λαιγὸν Τρώεσσι φυτεύει  
Δύσπαριν οὐλόμενον, ἀρχὴν πολέμοιο κακοῖο, 5  
τὸν νόος οὐκ ἐρέεινεν Ὀμήρου κυδαλίμοιο.  
Ἔννεπε δ' Ἀργείης Ἑλένης ἐρόεσσαν ὀπωπὴν,  
πῶς τέ μιν ἦγεν Ἀλέξανδρος Σπάρτηθεν Τροίην.  
Ἔννεπε δὲ πλόον Ἑλλήνων καὶ νῆας ἀπάσας·  
εἰπέ δὲ Πηλεΐδαο κότον καὶ ὄλεθρον Ἀχαιῶν, 10  
Σαρπήδοντος Πατρόκλου τε καὶ Ἔκτορος οἴτον·  
εἰπέ δὲ Πενθεσίλειαν, κούρην ἀντιάνειραν.  
Ἔννεπε δ' Αἰθιόπων στρατὸν, υἷα τε Ἡριγενείης.  
Φράζεο δ' Αἰακίδαο πότμον δακρυόεντα·  
Εὐρύπυλόν τε ἄειδε καὶ υἷα Αἰακίδαο 15  
μαντείας θ' Ἑλένου, καὶ Ἀλεξάνδροιο φρονῆα.  
εἰπέ δὲ καὶ πτολίπορθον Ἐπειοῦ δούροεν ἵππον,  
εἰσόκεν ἠίστωσε πελώρια τείχεα Τροίης.  
Ταῦτά μοι εὐπατέρεια, Διὸς τέκος, ἔννεπε Μοῦσα.

<sup>48</sup> Conca, *o.c.* 77. His analysis of the scholia and his elucidation of Tzetzes' exegetical method undoubtedly show the most prolific way to approach the interpretation of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς.

<sup>49</sup> *Schol. Carm. Il.* 2a, 4a, 5b-10, 11b, 14c, 18c Leone are present only in ms. **H** (*Par. suppl. gr.* 95 [*Diktyon* 52865]). Since they are in the interlinear space above the glossed word, it is possible (but not certain) that they are an innovation of **H**, not written by Tzetzes. For this reason, they are not taken into account, like the other innovations of **A** and **B** (*Harleian. gr.* 5662 [*Diktyon* 39620]).

<sup>50</sup> **A** = *Vat. gr.* 915 [*Diktyon* 67546]. **F** = *Mutin. gr.* 244 = α.W.9.12, olim III.D.21 [*Diktyon* 43548]; **H** = *Par. suppl. gr.* 95 [*Diktyon* 52865].

Through my verses, sing, Kalliope, the great struggle of the painful war of Ilios from the beginning to the end, from when Priam generated the ruin of Trojans, the ill-fated and ruinous Paris, the origin of the awful war that the intellect of the illustrious Homer did not narrate. Sing the attractive appearance of the Argive Helen and how Alexander abducted her from Sparta to Troy. Sing the fleet of the Hellenes and all their ships. Tell about the wrath of the Peleides and the slaughter of Argives, about the death of Sarpedon, Patroclus and Hector. Tell about Penthesilea, the woman who fought men. Sing the Ethiopian army and the son of Erigeneia. Describe the fate of the Aeacides that leads to tears. Sing Eurypylus and the son of the Aeacides, and the prophecies of Helenus and the murderer of Alexander. Tell about the wooden horse of Epeius, the destructor of the City, until it destroyed the majestic walls of Troy. These events sing to me, Muse, daughter of a noble sire, child of Zeus.

- 1) Characters: *schol.* I 2c Καλλιόπεια; 5a Δύσπαριν; 14b Αἰακίδαο; 15a Εὐρουπυλόν; 16 μαντείας θ' Ἑλένου; 17 δούρεον ἵππον (Trojan horse).
- 2) Dialects: *schol.* I 1d Ἰλιακοῖο; 2b ἔννεπε; 2d Καλλιόπεια (Ionic); 2e ἡμετέρησιν (Ionic); 4b ἐξ ὄτεο (Ionic / Attic); 11a Σαρπηδόντος (Ionic / Attic); 14b Αἰακίδαο (Ionic / Attic / Aeolic); 16d φονῆα (Ionic); 17 δούρεον ἵππον (Ionic).
- 3) Etymologies and lexical features: *schol.* I 1a ἀργαλέου; 1b πολέμοιο; 1c μέγαν πόνον; 1d Ἰλιακοῖο; 2b ἔννεπε; 2d Καλλιόπεια; 4b ἐξ ὄτεο; 4e λαιγόν; 4f Τρώεσσι; 12a ἀντιάνειραν; 14b Αἰακίδαο; 18b ἠίστωσε; 18e πελώρια.
- 4) Metrical: *schol.* I 3a ἀρχῆθε.
- 5) Rhetoric: *schol.* I 18a εἰσοκεν ἠίστωσε (προθεωρία); 19a ταῦτά μοι (ἐπιλογικὸν κεφάλαιον καὶ ἐπανάληψις).

The first verses of a poem are a suitable place where authors usually want to show off their skills<sup>51</sup>. However, this cluster of scholia is not determined by mere ostentation. The first four verses introduce the most common features of Homeric language, and for each of them a scholion gives an explanation: the genitive in -οιο; the termination in -εια; the existence of κοινὰ συλλαβαί such as ἀρχῆθε δέ; the dative form -ησιν; ὄτεο instead of ὄτου / ὄτεω. *E silentio*, the reader notes the coexistence of the normal forms in -ου and -αῖς combined with the 'Ionic' ones

<sup>51</sup> Both in verses and in scholia: see for instance Savio, *Screditare* cit. 27-34 on the poem of the *Theogony*.

(ἀργαλέου πολέμοιο and ἡμετέρησιν ἀοιδαῖς) as well as another form of ‘epic’ dative (Τρώεσσι). Since the Homeric poems obviously had not been written to teach the Homeric language, the first occurrences of these basic features are scattered across the first books of the *Iliad* (I 4 κύνεσσιν, I 19 Πριάμοιο, I 26 κοίλησιν, III 248 χρύσεια). On the contrary, the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* immediately introduce them to acquaint the reader with Homeric style. Furthermore, in nineteen verses, the main characters of the whole Iliadic saga are listed, with the remarkable absence of Odysseus and the two Atreidai<sup>52</sup>. Tzetzes engages his readers within the summary and, in *schol. Carm. Il.* I 17 Leone, he reassures them: “you will know all these stories too well as long as you progress” (τὰς δὲ ἱστορίας πάσας ταύτας προϊόντες λίαν ἠκριβωμένως μαθήσεσθε).

The scholia clearly explain the content of the verses to readers from every point of view. In particular, etymologies and explanations about vocabulary, grammar, dialect, and metre show the perfect ἑλληνισμός of the text, which should be appreciated and imitated. Σαφήνεια and συντομία are also achieved through the clear arrangement of the contents of the poem. Most of the verses begin with an insistent anaphora of *verba dicendi* (vv. 2, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, followed by the epiphora at v. 19). These anaphoras highlight the presence of six subsections in which the topic of the poem is summarised.

This well-ordered arrangement is followed throughout the entire poem. Tzetzes planned several identifiable and recurrent sections. For example, the ecphrastic description of the characters (εἰκονισμοί)<sup>53</sup> are almost always situated after their death or their greatest deed. Although the subject of two thirds of the poem is war, the majority of the scholia, in which fighting scenes are explained quoting tactical literature, are gathered in the final part of the poem, mostly between *Carm. Il.* III 90 and 168<sup>54</sup>. Apart from the theory of κοινὰ συλλαβαί, five metrical scholia out of seven are between *Carm. Il.* II 58 and 110<sup>55</sup>. This proceeding is evident most of all in the pathetic events that take place between the death of Hector and his burial. Tzetzes fills the text with polished words relating to funerary practices which are often explained through scholia. Besides, he adds several rhetorical and explicative scholia to the text, which are far more frequent in this passage than anywhere else. This proceeding through delimited sections deeply affects the structure of the poem through the disposition of particles and conjunctions.

<sup>52</sup> On Tzetzes and Odysseus see Valeria F. Lovato’s chapter in this volume.

<sup>53</sup> These sections are analysed in Lovato, *Portrait de héros* cit.

<sup>54</sup> The other ones: *schol. Carm. Il.* III 47, III 221, III 434, III 439 Leone. Exceptions: *schol. Carm. Il.* I 403, II 45b, II 46a Leone.

<sup>55</sup> Exceptions: *schol. Carm. Il.* I 55b, III 312 Leone.

In the account, *πιθανότης* plays a crucial role in the analysis of Tzetzes' sources. Homer and the other authors were seen by Tzetzes as writers who compiled several sources in poetic form just as Tzetzes did in the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς*<sup>56</sup>. Tzetzes addresses their mistakes both within his verses and his scholia. For example, in *Carm. Il. III* 280-290 Tzetzes comments the dialogue between Nestor and Memnon in Quint. Smyrn. II 300-318 and adds his first invective against his former patron Isaac. Conca rightly underlines the suitability of the two corresponding scholia (*Carm. Il. III* 280 and 284). But, as Braccini suggests<sup>57</sup>, in these verses Tzetzes succeeds both in chastising the unlikelihood of Quintus' account and in attacking his former patron, Isaac. In describing his departure from Thessaly, Tzetzes does not only show the different methods of invective, but also determines the difference between an unlikely account<sup>58</sup> and a persuasive and realistic one.

### 3. ... and of his literary operation

The section quoted above is visibly set apart in *Ringkomposition* by two invocations to the Muse in the vocative, which appear the first at the beginning, the second at the end of the hexameter: v. 2 ἔννεπε, Καλλιόπεια, ὕφ' ἡμετέρησιν αἰοδαῖς; v. 19 ταῦτά μοι εὐπατέρεια, Διὸς τέκος, ἔννεπε Μοῦσα.

In this structure, the *μίμησις* of Homeric style subtly impacts the configuration of the text. Tzetzes postpones the beginning of the *Ringkomposition* from the first to the second verse in order to launch the poem with ἀργαλέου πολέμοιο μέγαν πόνον Ἰλιακοῖο. It is a choice evidently inspired by Homer, since both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* begin with a concise mention of their topic in the accusative. Beyond that, the comparison between the two openings of the *Iliad* (μῆνιν αἰεῖδε θεά Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος) and of the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* (ἀργαλέου πολέμοιο μέγαν πόνον Ἰλιακοῖο) reveals a meticulous adjustment of the Homeric model. The Iliadic incipit presents a single element (a disyllable in the accusative) followed by two pairs of correlated elements (two trisyllables; a pentasyllable + a tetrasyllable in the genitive); Tzetzes organises the elements in the opposite order (two tetrasyllables in the genitive; two disyllables in the accusative), closing the verse with a pentasyllable in the genitive. In *Iliad*, the first element is syntactically bound to the last two genitives; Tzetzes preserves the same structure making ἀργαλέου πολέμοιο agree with Ἰλιακοῖο. The order of the elements in the genitive is the opposite: in *Iliad*, patronymic

<sup>56</sup> Braccini, *Riscrivere* cit., effectively says that, in Tzetzes' perspective, Homer was a sort of metaphrast. See also Cardin, *o.c.* 101-104.

<sup>57</sup> Braccini, *Erudita* cit. 169.

<sup>58</sup> Conca, *o.c.* 79 «in sostanza Tzetzes rimprovera a Quinto tutto l'andamento della scena».

+ proper noun; in Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς, couple noun and adjective + toponym in an ‘Ionic’ genitive like the Homeric Ἀχιλλῆος<sup>59</sup>. Furthermore, the postposition of the *Ringkomposition*’s beginning corresponds with a false closure of its first section at v. 5 (πολέμοιο κακοῖο mirroring ὄργαλέου πολέμοιο) to which the relative clause of v. 6 is attached. Again, a pair of genitives closes this relative clause (Ὁμήρου κυδαλίμοιο<sup>60</sup>: noun + adjective, like πολέμοιο κακοῖο).

#### 4. *The problem of the audience*

«A school is a very simple institution. All it requires is a teacher, a room, and a book. And it can probably dispense with the last»<sup>61</sup>

In the case of Tzetzes, we have only what Browning believes to be not strictly necessary for school, namely his writings. However, Tzetzes’ prominent personality overflows almost from every line he wrote and tends to give a personal reconstruction of his historical contexts.

What is known from Tzetzes about the composition of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς has already been reported: Tzetzes was young, he had to move back from Thessaly to Constantinople because he lost Isaac’s patronage<sup>62</sup>. Starting from these pieces of information, Kaldellis states that the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς was «an introduction to the world of the *Iliad* in verses that could be read by a beginner»<sup>63</sup>. The Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς undoubtedly proliferated in circles linked to education, as the oldest testimonies of its textual tradition reveal<sup>64</sup>. However, its didactic afterlife does not directly imply the original context of its production, as «any Byzantine poetry is in a sense didactic»<sup>65</sup>.

<sup>59</sup> Tzetzes ascribe these endings to the Ionic dialect: for Ἰλιακοῖο see *schol. Carm. Il. I* 1d Leone; for Ἀχιλλῆος see *Exeg. Il.* pp. 91,15-92,6 Papathomopoulos.

<sup>60</sup> It echoes the Homeric verse-ending Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο (14× in the Homeric poems).

<sup>61</sup> R. Browning, *Literacy in the Byzantine world*, «BMGS» IV (1978) 39-54: 46.

<sup>62</sup> See e.g. *schol. Carm. Il. I* 124a Leone, in which he praises himself for his extensive reading. In the context of the σύνοψις, this self-praise is meant to underline his knowledge and expertise as well as his ability to keep his writings short and clear.

<sup>63</sup> A. Kaldellis, *Classical scholarship in twelfth-century Byzantium*, in C. Barber-D. Jenkins (edd.), *Medieval Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics*, Leiden-Boston 2009, 1-43: 26. Cardin, *o.c.* 108-109 agrees with him, and the same opinion is shared also by J. Haubold, *The scholiast as poet: Tzetzes and his Allegories of the Iliad*, «BICS» LXIV/1 (2021) 73-80: 76.

<sup>64</sup> See n. 50.

<sup>65</sup> Hörandner, *o.c.* 66. It is a judgement shared by Tzetzes himself, see *Exeg. Il.* p. 71,18-19 Papathomopoulos. As for many other Byzantine authors, Tzetzes’ students and friends have certainly played a key role in the transmission of the literary *corpus* of their teacher as proved by the references

The literary operation behind the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς is more challenging than a simple prose epitome that would have been rather more intelligible to the young students of the twelfth century<sup>66</sup>. Furthermore, by writing about the Trojan war in verse, any Byzantine author was certainly aware that such a literary work would have been compared to Homeric authority. For this reason, there is always a cogent reason behind this ambitious choice, and it usually is linked to the modality and the purpose of re-writing the Homeric subject. In this sense, Tzetzes wanted to prove his ability to handle the complexity of the Iliadic saga and to compose a new hexametric poem in Homeric language and through the rules of rhetorical διήγησις.

Kaldellis' statement is true only if «the world of the *Iliad*» is interpreted as 'every feature of Homeric poetry', from the etymology of individual words to the narration of ἡ πᾶσα Ἰλιάς and the use of hexameters. But all these features could have been appreciated by a beginner? The production *ex novo* of a hexametric poem and of a commentary is far more than what the school actually requires. If Tzetzes wanted his literary work only to be a book for students, the effort of producing the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς does not seem proportionated to the aim.

The final verses of the διήγησις (*Carm. Il.* III 750-762) give an important piece of evidence:

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to Tzetzes in ms. *Ambr.* C 222 *inf.* (Martini-Bassi 866; *Diktyon* 42485), see C.M. Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf.* (*Graecus* 886): *il codice e il suo autore. Parte prima: il codice*, «*Aevum*» LXXVII (2003) 263-275, and *Id.*, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf.* (*Graecus* 886): *il codice e il suo autore. Parte seconda: l'autore*, «*Aevum*» LXXVIII (2004) 411-440. Furthermore, Tzetzes' corpus seems to have attracted a renewed interest among Byzantine literati during the first part of the fourteenth century, as his works were both copied in manuscripts and actively used in creating new literary works. For example, the most ancient manuscripts of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς and of the *Exegesis to the Iliad* (Cambridge, Trinity College, R. 16. 33 [*gr.* 981; *Diktyon* 12049] and *Par. suppl. gr.* 655 [*Diktyon* 53390]) were produced in this period. Around 1330, the Despot of Epirus John II Orsini and his wife Anna Palaiologina commissioned to Constantine Hermoniakos a paraphrase in vernacular Greek of the *Iliad*. In producing this work, Constantine used Manasses' Σύνοψις χρονική and Tzetzes' *Allegories to the Iliad* as a primary source – and probably also the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς, but this point should be verified more accurately through an extensive study of Hermoniakos' *Iliad*. It is certainly noteworthy that Manasses' Σύνοψις, Tzetzes' *Allegories* and Hermoniakos' *Iliad* share a rather similar context of production, as the first two were commissioned for the Imperial family and the third for a Despot; both the *Allegories* and Hermoniakos' *Iliad* were dedicated to a ruler with Western origins. On Hermoniakos' *Iliad* and its context of production, see M. Jeffrey, *Constantine Hermoniakos and Byzantine education*, «*Dodone*» IV (1975) 81-109, and Nilsson, *From Homer* cit. 24-26.

<sup>66</sup> See A. Giannouli, *Education and literary language in Byzantium*, in M. Hinterberg (ed.), *The Language of Byzantine Learned Literature*, Turnout 2014, 52-71.

Στησίχορος δ' ἐρέησιν ἐοῖς ἐπέεσσιν νόστον, 750  
 ἤμην ὅσοι πελάγει φθάρην ἢδ' ὅσοι ἦλυθον ἄλλη,  
 ἢδ' ὅσοι εἰσαφίκοντο φίλην παρὰ πατρίδα γαῖαν.  
 Κεῖνος ταῦτ' ἐρέησιν ἀνήρ, γλῶσσα δ' ἄρ' ἐμεῖο  
 βουλῇ Ἴσαακίῳ δολόφρονος οἷ τε δάμαρτος 755  
 ἄρτου δευομένη κατὰίσχεται, οὐδ' ἐπαεῖδει  
 οὐδὲ θέλει πονέειν, περὶ ἄλγεσι θυμὸν ἔχουσα.  
 Καὶ τόδε τίς που εἴσεται ἀνήρ ὄρθια κρίνων,  
 ὡς ἄρ' ἄτερ καμάτοιο ὑμῖν κατὰ πάντ' ἐρέεινα.  
 Ἄλλ' ὑμεῖς, τέκνα μοιρηγενέων γενετῆρων, 760  
 ἄλλοθεν Ἀργείων νόστον δίζεσθ' ἐπαεῖδειν.  
 Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ἐρέω, περὶ τέρματι Μοῦσαν ἐλίσσω,  
 Τροίη ὀππότε πέρσαν ἀρήϊοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν.

It is tied, it does not keep on singing and it does not want to strain as the soul is weighted by sorrow. Anyone who can rightly judge will know that without difficulties I would speak to you about all these things. But you, sons of lucky parents, search elsewhere to have an account of the returns of the Acheaens. I will explain when the bellicose sons of Achaeans destroyed Troy, making the Muse turn around the goal. In his verses, Stesichoros describes their return and reports how many of them died in the sea, how many turned up in another place, and how many came to their beloved homeland. That man tells these things. On the contrary, my tongue is without bread by decision of Isaac and his deceiving wife.

The end of the narration after the fall of Troy depends on the selection that Tzetzes stated in his first section: he limited the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* to the facts directly linked to the war of Troy (ἀργαλέου πολέμοιο μέγαν πόνον Ἰλιακοῦ). Through these verses, he ends up the narration because he wants to adhere to self-delimitation by giving a cogent reason outside the economy of the narration. In doing so, Tzetzes refers to an audience, according to a long-established *τόπος* of didactic poems. The “sons of lucky parents” (τέκνα μοιρηγενέων γενετῆρων) are the offspring of Isaac and his wife. Tzetzes ironically addresses his former students: they have lost their teacher because of their parents’ mistake and, with him, the possible continuation of the account of the *νόστοι*.

Their characterization is decisive to understand the context of production. If Tzetzes had been under the patronage of another worthy aristocrat, the offspring would have been the sons of this new patron; the cohesion of the poem’s narrative

would have been spoilt; most importantly, these verses would have appeared ungrateful to the new patron, and the encouragement to his students to look elsewhere to know about the νόστοι thoughtless<sup>67</sup>. On the contrary, Tzetzes is describing his current status through the τόπος of poverty. It is not important if he was living in poverty or not, as he only hints at the absence of a patron to replace Isaac<sup>68</sup>. In this situation, the above-mentioned verses are even more effective: Isaac's poor sons had been deprived of the possibility to know the whole Iliadic saga with the same accuracy shown in the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς, while the sons of the new patron will know everything.

The composition of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς has to be linked to the context of Constantinopolitan learned élites of the twelfth century, as happened for a large part of the corpora of Theodore Prodromos and Constantine Manasses. «The production of twelfth-century literature is indissolubly bound up with patronage», even when authors had to change a patron and find another one<sup>69</sup>.

To sum up, the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς had two functions during Tzetzes' life. In his attempt to gain a new patron, Tzetzes was aware that the first step was to please the learned audience with a good piece of literature: as Braccini said, he needed a sort of 'business card'<sup>70</sup>. For this reason, the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς is in the first instance a work of high literature that was composed to be in direct comparison to the Homeric Ἰλιάς. The versification and the scholiastic commentary of the poem are meant to create an erudite literary reproduction of a Byzantine textbook of Homeric poetry. It is a sort of manifesto of his teaching method and of his skills in composing. The complex operation behind the composition of the Μικρομεγάλη

<sup>67</sup> See the aforementioned *schol. Carm. Il. I 124a* Leone.

<sup>68</sup> In the later *Exegesis to Iliad*, he openly says that he sold his books to earn some money because he was ruined by a woman, Isaac's wife (*schol. Exeg. Il. prol. 5,2*, p. 421,15-18 Papathomopoulos). The theme of poverty is a *Leitmotiv* among the *Auftragsdichter* of the Comnenian age, which aims to persuade a possible patron more than to describe an existing situation. This *topos* has been largely studied for Theodore Prodromos, Manganeios, and the *Ptochoprodromika*, see M.J. Kyriakis, *Poor poets and starving literati in twelfth-century Byzantium*, «Byzantion» LXIV (1974) 290-309; M. Alexiou, *The poverty of écriture and the craft of writing: Towards a reappraisal of the Prodromic poems*, «BMGS» X (1986) 1-40; R. Beaton, *The rhetoric of poverty: The lives and opinions of Theodore Prodromos*, «BMGS» XI (1987) 1-28. On the theme in Tzetzes, see Savio, *Screditare* cit. 33-34.

<sup>69</sup> N. Zagklas, *Theodore Prodromos: The Neglected Poems and Epigrams (Edition, Commentary and Translation)*, diss. Wien 2014, 78. See also Nilsson-Nyström, *o.c.* 44-52. On patronage in the Comnenian period, see M. Mullet, *Aristocracy and patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople*, in M. Angold (ed.), *The Byzantine Aristocracy, IX to XIII Centuries*, Oxford 1984, 173-201.

<sup>70</sup> Braccini, *Erudita* cit. 154.



Ἰλιάς – its imitation and improvement of Homeric model and its inner rhetorical and didactic features – would have been appreciated only by readers that were already familiar with literature, rhetoric, and Homeric poetry, not students. Through this work, Tzetzes wants to be considered as a talented writer within the closed group of Comnenian literati and both a potential *Auftragslehrer* and *Auftragsdichter*<sup>71</sup>. New patrons could benefit from Tzetzes' ability in teaching their offspring as well as in composing literature under their patronage<sup>72</sup>.

Only after obtaining a new patron, the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς could have been exploited by Tzetzes as a proper textbook for his pupils, but its following use in classroom left no evidence; in any case, it does not affect the reconstruction of the most plausible context of composition<sup>73</sup>. If this possibility is taken for granted, also when the poem eventually became a textbook, it is rather improbable that Tzetzes just wanted to give a simplified account of the Trojan saga for his pupils<sup>74</sup>. On the contrary, the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς is a perfect example of a historical διήγησις through which students could learn the dialects, words, prosody, and metre of the Homeric poems; it provides a correct allegorical method to understand the Homeric poems; it explains how to display a complex subject through the Hermogenic rules of narrations and how to handle sources and to exploit them in a persuasive way within a new literary text. Furthermore, as said in §2, the poem is organised in order

<sup>71</sup> Rhoby, *Ioannes Tzetzes* cit.

<sup>72</sup> See F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire*, in F. Montanari-S. Matthai-os-A. Rengakos (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Scholarship*, Leiden-Boston 2015, I, 297-455: 378-379, and Savio, *Polemica* cit. 5 n. 30. On Tzetzes' relationship with patrons, see Savio, *Screditare* cit. 25-39. A double audience is defined also in the prologue to the Σύνοψις ἱστοριῶν by Skylitzes (prol. 46-54), where the author states that he composed his work for two different kinds of audience, those who have already read the books of historians, and those who have not. Eust. *in Il.* I 3,5-8 van der Valk (quoted above) hints at the same double public.

<sup>73</sup> Tzetzes' use of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς as a textbook could be confirmed by the analysis of the scholia. However, the matter is very complex: on the one hand, most of these scholia were composed together with the text of the poem; on the other, the manuscripts do not date to the period in which Tzetzes was alive and they seem to be textbooks themselves. Since the manuscripts preserve only the final result of a process of composition, the distinction of the scholia in three phases (1. moment of composition; 2. Tzetzes' didactic use; 3. later didactic use) is very difficult, especially between phase 1 and 2.

<sup>74</sup> As said before, in the *Exegesis*, Tzetzes invites the reader to consult his previous hexametric poem in order to have a complete account of the events of the Trojan War. However, Tzetzes focuses more on the qualities of his earlier composition than on its actual content: it is in hexameters (ἔμμετρον ποίημα) and narrates the events *κατὰ λεπτομέρειαν* and *κατὰ ἀκριβείαν*. See Mondini, *Composing* cit.

to display short, identifiable sections through which a certain topic can be explained to students by a teacher.

As Zagklas shows for Theodore Prodromos<sup>75</sup>, a poem composed for a certain occasion could later gain a proper didactic function simply because Byzantine teachers had direct access to their own works. If this is true for an acclaimed teacher like Prodromos, it is certainly conceivable that the primary purpose of a young talented *νοογάρτωρ*<sup>76</sup> like Tzetzes was to prove to aristocratic families that his knowledge, skills in composing literature, and didactic method were the best on the market.

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<sup>75</sup> Zagklas, *o.c.* 78-82.

<sup>76</sup> *Ep.* 75, pp. 109,16-110,1 Leone, see Cardin, *o.c.* 91-92.



**«And wishes also a paraphrase of Homer’s verses»:  
Structure and composition of the *Prolegomena*  
to the *Allegories of the Iliad***

«What’s past is prologue»  
William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* II i 248

In John Tzetzes’ *Allegories of the Iliad*, the *Prolegomena* and the allegorical paraphrase of the epic are highly disproportionate in size. In the first half of the work, the books have an average size of 130 lines; in the second half, the length increases, peaking with 789 lines in Book XVIII. Nonetheless, even compared to the later books, the 1214 lines of the introduction remain something exceptional, which raises an important question on the structure of the entire work<sup>1</sup>. The present research tackles the reasons behind this disproportion by analysing the poem’s inner structure and the phases of its composition.

1. *The macro-structure*

The content of the *Prolegomena* may be divided as follows<sup>2</sup>:

- Dedication to Bertha of Sulzbach (vv. 1-40)
- Homer’s biography (vv. 41-132)
  - Origins (vv. 50-77)
  - Works (vv. 78-85)
  - Floruit (vv. 86-112)
  - Death (vv. 113-132)
- *Antehomerica* (vv. 133-1204)<sup>3</sup>
- Epilogue and request of instruction to dedicatee (vv. 1205-1214)

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<sup>1</sup> This number refers to J.F. Boissonade, *Tzetzae Allegoriae Iliadis*, Lutetiae 1851; all the other references are based on this edition, unless specified otherwise. Instead, the *Prolegomena* in Matranga’s edition consist of 1217 lines: P. Matranga, *Anecdota Graeca ex mss. Bibliothecis Vaticanae, Angelicae, Barberiniana, Vallicelliana, Mediceae, Vindobonensi deprompta*, Romae 1850. My DPhil research aims to provide a new critical edition of the *Allegories of the Iliad* based on the entire manuscript tradition. This article is an offshoot of the thesis’ introduction where I analyse text, context, and manuscript tradition of the work.

<sup>2</sup> Another division of the *Prolegomena* in P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milano 1991, 172.

After a homage to the first wife of Manuel I Komnenos, Bertha-Eirene of Sulzbach, who commissioned the work<sup>4</sup>, Tzetzes gives a brief account of Homer's life; the following lines – more than one thousand – focus on the *antehomerica*, that is, the events of the Trojan War before the start of the *Iliad*. Tzetzes' account starts from Paris' birth and ends with a double explanation of the reasons behind Achilles' wrath.

This structure has important parallels with the first half of Tzetzes' *Exegesis of the Iliad*. This is a prose commentary, probably written before the *Allegories*, which consists of two main parts: a general introduction to Homeric poetry, and a running commentary on the first book of the *Iliad*. It is possible – but not certain – that when he reached the end of Book I, Tzetzes discontinued the project and began to write the *Allegories*; in fact, only in this latter work did he finally succeed in producing an allegorical commentary of all the books of the epic poem. Since the *Exegesis of the Iliad* already offered an introduction to Homeric poetry (pp. 3-73 Papathomopoulos)<sup>5</sup>, Tzetzes could have just transposed this prose introduction to the political verse of the *Allegories*; such metaphrastic practices were quite common in eleventh- and twelfth-century didactic poetry<sup>6</sup>. However, to judge from the contents of the *Exegesis of the Iliad*, this is not what happened<sup>7</sup>:

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<sup>3</sup> This section contains the events before Achilles' wrath – i.e. before the start of the *Iliad* – but the account is also enriched with digressions, like a list of Achaean heroes (vv. 508-724), Tzetzes' self-portrait (vv. 725-745), a list of Trojan heroes (vv. 786-835), and lastly two different versions on the causes of Achilles' *menis*: Tzetzes' (vv. 961-1147) and Homer's (1148-1204).

<sup>4</sup> It is likely that Bertha-Eirene was either already married to Manuel or about to marry him when Tzetzes was commissioned the work, see A. Rhoby, *Ioannes Tzetzes als Auftragsdichter*, «GLB» XV (2010) 155-170.

<sup>5</sup> From now on, all the references to the *Exegesis of the Iliad* are based on M. Papathomopoulos, *Ἐξηγήσεις Ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου εἰς τὴν Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδα*, Ἀθήναι 2007, unless specified otherwise.

<sup>6</sup> In the eleventh and twelfth century, it was common practice to transpose a prose text into verse for didactic purposes. The most eminent example is probably Psellos' poem 2 Westerink, which is an introduction to the *Song of Songs* based on Gregory of Nissa's commentary. For a more detailed account of this example in the context of Byzantine didactic poetry see F. Bernard, *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry, 1025-1081*, Oxford 2014, 229-232. For more general overviews of didactic poetry in Byzantine literature see M. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and Contexts*, II, Vienna 2019, 199-224, and W. Hörandner, *Teaching with Verse in Byzantium*, in W. Hörandner-A. Rhoby-N. Zagklas (edd.), *A Companion to Byzantine Poetry*, Leiden-Boston 2019, 459-486.

<sup>7</sup> This division of the subject matter is a personal reworking based on the one made by Cesaretti, *o.c.* 148-151.

- Introduction (pp. 1-9)
- Homer's biography (pp. 9-27)<sup>8</sup>
- Homer's poetry and works (pp. 43-56)<sup>9</sup>
- *Antehomerica* (pp. 58-67)<sup>10</sup>
- The text of the *Iliad*: story, language, and metre (pp. 67-73)

A comparison of the two shows that there are structural parallels, but also many differences. For example, there is no section on Homer's poetry in the *Allegories* and the story of the text of the *Iliad* is not even discussed. The two introductions also differ considerably in the space which they give to sections with the same topic: the account of Homer's biography is much more detailed in the *Exegesis*, while in the *Prolegomena* it takes just a hundred lines which include a summary of Homer's works. On the other hand, more than a thousand lines of the *Prolegomena* are dedicated to the *antehomerica*, while the *Exegesis* takes care of it in fewer than ten pages.

At a closer look it may be noticed an important similarity between the first part of these introductions and the 'standard content' of introductions of ancient philosophical or literary commentaries. This 'genre' was held to derive from the preface of Porphyry's *Eisagoge*, but it is actually much older<sup>11</sup>; nonetheless, from this attribution, it takes the name of *schema isagogicum*. This isagogic scheme is composed of different headings (*κεφάλαια*); each of them addresses general matters concerning the author or the work under consideration. The first study on this 'genre' was carried out by Marian Plezia, who identified those headings and compared many different introductions, marking also an important distinction between introductions to philosophical works and to literary ones<sup>12</sup>. The latter kind usually starts from an

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<sup>8</sup> This biographical section corresponds just to the section of the *Prolegomena* which I have called 'origins'. It could be further divided into subsections: Homer's homeland (pp. 9-11), parents (pp. 11-20), teachers (pp. 20-25), trip to Egypt (pp. 25-27), and chronological remarks (pp. 27-39).

<sup>9</sup> It is interesting to notice that this section ends with an account of Homer's death (pp. 56, 18-57) based on *Vita V* Allen.

<sup>10</sup> This part is also divided into a popular version (pp. 58-60) and Tzetzes' 'correct' version (pp. 61-67), a division that occurs also in the *Prolegomena*, cf. n. 3.

<sup>11</sup> A similar scheme was already employed by Origen in his commentary to the *Songs of Songs*, which survives only in Latin translation, and also in Servius and Donatus' commentaries on Vergil. For this historical reconstruction and a general and updated overview on the 'genre' of *Prolegomena* see J. Mansfeld, *Prolegomena: Questions to be Settled before the Study of an Author or a Text*, Leiden-New York-Köln 1994.

<sup>12</sup> For more details on the contents of prefaces of exegetical commentaries see M. Plezia, *De commentariis isagogicis*, Kraków 1949, 22-25. The earliest traces of a *schema isagogicum* for literary texts come from the Latin commentaries of Servius and Donatus, and van Berchem suggests that this division first appeared in Hellenistic commentaries on Homer and Crates of Mallus brought it to Rome:

account of the life (βίος) of the author, and then moves on to the matter of the work (ῥήμη) which is exactly the same scheme followed by both the *Prolegomena* of the *Allegories* and the introduction of the *Exegesis of the Iliad*. However, from a more general point of view, typical headings of exegetical commentaries match more tightly with the topics covered in the *Exegesis*. The questions usually tackled included, for example, an explanation of the title (αἴτιον τῆς ἐπιγραφῆς), a topic covered at pp. 67,12-20 of the *Exegesis*; and the story of the text, like the division into books (ἡ εἰς κεφάλαια διαίρεσις) and the form of the poem (ποῖον εἶδος ποιήματος), discussed at pp. 68-70<sup>13</sup>. Additionally, it will not come as a surprise that Eustathios followed the *schema isagogicum* in the preface of his *Parekbolai* on the *Iliad*<sup>14</sup>. This similarity proves, first of all, how widespread this scheme was among Byzantine exegetical commentaries; but it also highlights that, of the two introductions by Tzetzes, it is the *Exegesis* which is closer to Eustathios' work.

My point here is to show that the introductory part of the *Exegesis* adheres quite strongly to the *schema isagogicum*, while the *Prolegomena* of the *Allegories of the Iliad* do not: the *Prolegomena* are something different. They offer neither a simple verse-paraphrasis of the *Exegesis*' introduction, nor do they follow the canonical rules for introductions to literary works.

## 2. Between allegory and history

In both the *Exegesis of the Iliad* and the *Little and Big Iliad*<sup>15</sup>, Tzetzes begins the story of the Trojan war with the ominous dream Hecuba had when she was pregnant

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cf. D. van Berchem, *Poètes et grammairiens: recherche sur la tradition scolaire d'explication des auteurs*, «MH» IX/2 (1952) 79-87: 84.

<sup>13</sup> Introduction to exegetical commentaries – especially those on philosophical works – usually contain a section on utility (χρήσιμον) which, in the case of the *Exegesis of the Iliad*, could be paralleled with the section on allegory: allegory is, in fact, a feature used to disguise important knowledge on nature and history (see *infra*).

<sup>14</sup> The topics covered by Eustathios are the life of the poet, the genre of his poetry, the way the commentary was written, and the principles of his exegesis; cf. M. van der Valk, *Eustathii Archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem pertinentes ad fidem codicis Laurentiani editi*, I, Lugduni Batavorum 1971, cxix-cxxi.

<sup>15</sup> With *Little and Big Iliad* I mean the poem commonly known as *Carmina Iliaca* or *Antehomerica*, *Homerica* and *Posthomerica* (we owe both titles to Jacobs' 1793 edition of the poem): ἡ μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς (*Little and Big Iliad*) is, according to Leone's reconstruction, part of the *inscriptio* contained in the archetype of the work. See P.L.M. Leone, *I «Carmina Iliaca» di Giovanni Tzetzes*, «QC» VI/12 (1984) 377-405: 383. Marc Lauxtermann suggested to me that the adjective μικρομεγάλη is a *dvandva* compound which merges the big Homeric Iliad with the different small Iliads, as Tzetzes observes also in *Exeg. Il.* p. 67,16 Ὀμήρου δὲ πρὸς ἀντιδιαστολὴν τῶν μικρῶν Ἰλιάδων (the passage

with Paris. Instead, at v. 125 of the *Prolegomena*, Tzetzes' account of the *antehomeric* begins with the background to the episode of Paris' judgment<sup>16</sup>. Rather than writing his own version, the author brings up what "rather coarse and vulgar writers" (οἱ μὲν ἀγροικικώτερον γράφοντες καὶ χυδαίως, v. 135) usually say, that is, the events which, from the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, brought to Paris' judgment. This episode had a very peculiar reception in the Byzantine accounts of the Trojan war, and Tzetzes himself casts many doubts on its truthfulness<sup>17</sup>. Among classical authors, Homer mentions the judgment only briefly<sup>18</sup>, while Euripides makes reference to it in nearly all his tragedies around the Trojan matter<sup>19</sup>. In earlier Byzantine literature, the *Chronicle* of Malalas – and maybe John of Antioch too – includes this mythical episode in the account, but 'justifies' it with an allegorical interpretation<sup>20</sup>; it is possible that Malalas drew it from Dictys of Crete – as he did with most of the Trojan material – but the original is lost and the surviving Latin translation does not include Paris' judgment<sup>21</sup>. Later on, other important chroniclers,

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is quoted more extensively and translated *infra*). So, the best way to translate this kind of compound is by a conjunction between the two adjectives. Marta Cardin already suggested a connection between the title of Tzetzes' work and the *Ilias Parva* (*Teaching Homer through (annotated) poetry*, in R. C. Simms (ed.), *Prequels, Sequels and Retellings of Classical Epic*, Leiden 2018, 90-114, 94 n. 13); but she still agrees with Tommaso Braccini's interpretation of the title according to which Tzetzes' *Iliad* is μικρομεγέλη because big in terms of plot, but small in terms of length (*Mitografia e miturgia femminile a Bisanzio: il caso di Giovanni Tzetze*, «QRO» III (2010) 88-105: 90).

<sup>16</sup> The *Carmina Iliaca* start from Hecuba's dream (I 38-44 Leone), as Tzetzes also says in the *protasis*; in the *Exegesis*, both versions of the events before the Trojan war (cf. n. 11) mention Hecuba's dream (p. 58,7-14; p. 61.1-9).

<sup>17</sup> For a thorough overview on this matter in the whole spectrum of Byzantine literature see E. Jeffreys, *The Judgment of Paris in later Byzantine literature*, «Byzantion» XLVIII (1978) 112-131. There, she also highlights how the episode of the judgment of Paris is the only one which involves a direct intervention of gods into the events – a very hard episode to explain for whoever wanted to interpret gods allegorically. In the *War of Troy*, a Greek paraphrase of the romance by Benoît de Sainte-Maure (*ibid.* 115), the author, in order to give to the events an historical appearance, says that the goddesses inspire Paris through a dream which makes him eager to sail to Greece.

<sup>18</sup> *Il.* XXIV 29-30 καὶ Πριάμος καὶ λαὸς Ἀλεξάνδρου ἔνεκ' ἄτης, / ὃς νείκεσσε θεὰς ὅτε οἱ μέσσαυλον ἴκοντο.

<sup>19</sup> See in particular T.W.C. Stinton, *Euripides and the Judgement of Paris*, London 1965. For a general overview of the judgment of Paris in classical literature see Jeffreys, *o.c.* 117-121.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. n. 24.

<sup>21</sup> For the role of Dictys as a source for this particular episode see Jeffreys, *o.c.* 121-123. Although the original has not been transmitted in its entirety, some extracts of the original Greek text can still be read thanks to four fragmentary papyri (*P.Tebt.* II 268; *P.Oxy.* XXXI 2539; *P.Oxy.* LXXIII 4943 and 4944). For a thorough explanation of the *status quaestionis* on Dictys see P. Gainsford, *Diktys of*



like Kedrenos or Manasses, did not include the episode at all. Tzetzes innovates: after two brief mentions in his previous works<sup>22</sup>, he lingers on it for two hundred lines of the *Prolegomena*. Here is what he does:

vv. 135-225 contain the mythical story of the wedding of Peleus and Thetis and then of Paris' judgment. At this point, the author raises some chronological concerns over the story (vv. 218-224): how can Paris and Achilles' sons have roughly the same age during the Trojan War, if Paris was already an adult when Achilles' parents got married<sup>23</sup>? Allegory is the answer.

vv. 226-249 contain a first allegorical explanation of the episode. During his time in Parion, where he had been sent by Priam to escape the prophecy of his destruction of Troy, Paris became a rhetorician (ζήτητωρ μὲν γενόμενος v. 241) and wrote an allegorical work in which he compared the three goddesses to human passions – Athena is wisdom (φρόνησις), Hera is bravery (ἀνδρεία), and Aphrodite, lust (ἐπιθυμία). Here Tzetzes says that he is drawing this allegory from John of Antioch/Malalas<sup>24</sup>.

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Crete, «CCJ» LVIII (2012) 58-87; for the role of Malalas and John of Antioch as primary witnesses for Dictys' text see in particular pp. 67-70.

<sup>22</sup> This interpretation of Paris' judgment is Tzetzes' original invention, but the *Allegories* are not the first of his works in which it appears: see *Carm. Il.* I 62-74 and *schol.* 63a, pp. 121-122 Leone; *Exeg. Il.* pp. 62-65.

<sup>23</sup> See above, but also prol. 217-224 Τοῦτο δ' ὅτι ψευδές ἐστὶ δῆλον ἐκ τῶν πραγμάτων. / Τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως γὰρ πατήρ ἦν ὁ Πηλεὺς, ὡς οἶδας, / ὁ δ' Ἀχιλεὺς γεραίτερος ὑπῆρχεν Ἀλεξάνδρου. / Καὶ γὰρ ὁ Νεοπτόλεμος υἱὸς τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως / πολεμιστῆς ἦν τέλειος τῷ Τρωϊκῷ πολέμῳ, / αὐτῷ σχεδὸν ἰσόχρονος ὑπάρχων Ἀλεξάνδρῳ. / Καὶ πῶς οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλογον Ἀλέξανδρον δικάζειν / γάμοις τινὸς τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ πάπποις ἰσοχρονούντος; «But that this is a lie is clear from events, for Peleus was the father of Achilles, as you know, and Achilles was older than Alexandros. For Neoptolemos, the son of Achilles, was a mature warrior during the Trojan War, and he was almost equal in age to Alexandros. And how is it not illogical for Alexandros to be the judge at the wedding of someone equal in age to his grandfather?» (transl. by A. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Iliad*, Cambridge MA-London 2015, 19).

<sup>24</sup> In the text, Tzetzes attributes this allegory explicitly to John of Antioch: v. 246 ὡς Ἰωάννης χρονικὸς Ἀντιοχεύς που γράφει, “as the Chronicler John of Antioch writes somewhere”; Tzetzes' vv. 241-245 reproduce almost *verbatim* a passage from fr. 40 Roberto (= fr. 24 Müller) ἐξέθε[το δὲ καὶ] λόγον εἰς ἐγκώμιον τῆς Ἀφροδίτης, λέγων μείζονα αὐτὴν εἶναι τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς καὶ τῆς Ἥρας. τὴν γὰρ Ἀφροδίτην <τὴν> ἐπιθυμίαν εἶπεν, ἐξ ἧς τίκεται πάντα τὰ κακὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. ἐντεῦθεν εἴρηται μῦθος, ὅτι Πάρις ἔκρινε μεταξὺ Παλλάδος, Ἥρας καὶ Ἀφροδίτης, καὶ <τῆ> Ἀφροδίτη δέδωκε τὸ μῆλον, ὅ ἐστι τὴν νίκην, “[Paris] set out an encomium of Aphrodite. He said that she is greater than Athena and Heras as Aphrodite is desire and from there come all the misfortunes of the people. From this it has been told the story that Paris judged among Athena, Hera and Aphrodite

vv. 250-333 contain Tzetzes' own natural allegorical explanation which is also presented as the content of a book written by Paris. The wedding of Peleus and Thetis is the creation of the universe (κοσμογένεια). After the creation, Eris – confusion and storm – starts a fight among the different types of air and, in the end, Aphrodite (εὐκροασία) prevails: she now holds the world/golden apple (κόσμος).

The structure of those lines shows that Tzetzes chooses to start from this episode because it gives him an opportunity to show his allegorical skills. Tzetzes gives the mythical version first, then a known allegorization, i.e. the one given by Malalas and perhaps John of Antioch (vv. 234-249), and finally his original physical explanation<sup>25</sup>. In so doing, he kills two birds with one stone. He does not reject this episode completely, as the other Byzantine chroniclers did: he writes it, adding his critical remarks. But he is also not content with Malalas' old explanation, so he takes the chance to add something original: a new allegorisation which does not substitute the 'traditional' one but adds to it in accordance with his allegorical scheme. In fact, both explanations fit in Tzetzes' threefold division of allegory as he outlined it in a large scholion the *Prolegomena* written to comment on this passage<sup>26</sup>:

πέντε μὲν οὕτως ἀνωνύμως κείμενον τὸ θεὸς σημαίνει· ἓν δὲ ἕκαστον ὄνομα τῶν θεῶν κείμενον ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλείστον, τρία σημαίνει· ἢ πραγματικῶς γὰρ, ἢ ψυχικῶς, ἢ στοιχειακῶς νοεῖται, οἷον Ἥρα, Ἀθηνᾶ, Ἀφροδίτη [...] πραγματικῶς μὲν βασιλεῖς, εἰ ἀπλῶς ἀνθρώπους τοὺς αὐτοὺς

The word "god" quoted without mentioning a name can have five different meanings. A single specific name of the gods has mostly three meanings: it can be intended historically, psychologically and materially. For example, Hera, Athena, Aphrodite [...] historically they are rulers, if they simply

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and gave the apple – which is the victory – to Aphrodite". However, a scholion to v. 246 reads τοῦ ἐπίκλην ὁ Μαλέλης "by surname Malalas" (Boissonade, *o.c.* 16; see also Matranga, *o.c.* II, 600): the above-quoted passage from the *Excerpta Salmasiana* is, in fact, almost identical with Mal. *Chron.* V 2,15-20. This definitely confirms Patzig's thesis, according to which, whenever Tzetzes quotes John of Antioch he is actually quoting Malalas, cf. E. Patzig, *Malalas und Tzetzes*, «ByZ» X/2 (1901) 385-393.

<sup>25</sup> With this interpretation, Tzetzes' originality does not break away from tradition, but is used as an instrument to defend himself and also for self-promotion. On originality in Byzantine writers see S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos. Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium*, Cambridge 2013, 19-20.

<sup>26</sup> The scholion is at v. 314 cf. Boissonade, *o.c.* 375-376; Matranga, *o.c.* II, 600-601.

τινὲς δηλοῦσι· ψυχικῶς δὲ, Ἥρα μὲν νοεῖται ψυχῇ, ἢ ἀνδρεία· Ἀθηνᾶ, φρόνησις· Ἀφροδίτη, ἐπιθυμία [...] στοιχειακῶς δὲ Ἥρα νοεῖται ὁ λεπτομερῆς ἀήρ, ἥγουν αἰθήρ· Ἀθηνᾶ, ὁ προσγειότερος καὶ παχύτερος ἀήρ, ὁ ἀπὸ σελήνης μέχρι γῆς διΐκνούμενος· Ἀφροδίτη, ἡ στοιχειακὴ εὐκρασία.

indicate some persons. Psychologically Hera means the soul, or courage; Athena wisdom and Aphrodite lust. [...] materially Hera is intended as the thin air, that is the ether; Athena the thicker air, the one closer to the ground that from the moon reaches the earth. Aphrodite is the harmonious mixture of all the elements.

The division of allegory into three kinds – psychological, historical and material – corresponds to the allegorical explanations given in lines 135-333<sup>27</sup>. The frame is that of a historical allegory where Paris is a scholar who writes two different allegorical versions of the judgment: John of Antioch's psychological allegory and Tzetzes' original cosmogonic interpretation which belongs to the material – or natural – kind. The two exegeses coexist, although the latter stands out for richness, complexity, and originality. Tzetzes himself makes sure to highlight this difference by adding that John of Antioch allegorised only that episode (v. 247 αὐτὸ μόνον ἀλληγοροῦν), while he intends to allegorise everything accurately (v. 250 ἅπαντα λεπτῶς ἀλληγορεῖν).

The question now is: why does Tzetzes show his ability at this particular point? The answer is at lines 500-504, where he asks the princess whether she is content with the work he has written so far, or if she would prefer something different from him<sup>28</sup>. It is clearly a rhetorical question, but it might reflect a real circumstance: as first noticed by Goldwyn, those lines were probably handed in to the princess' staff as a sample of a future project; the court had then to decide whether to support

<sup>27</sup> This threefold definition of allegory is also present in the *Allegories from the Verse Chronicle*, vv. 67-69: ἀλληγορεῖται πᾶν δὲ τριττῶ τῶ τρόπῳ, / στοιχειακῶς τε, ψυχικῶς καὶ τὸ τρίτον, / ὡς πραγμάτων πέφυκεν ὑλικῶν φύσις, "Everything can be allegorised in a threefold way: in terms of elements, psychologically, and as originally developed from real matters". Cf. H. Hunger, *Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien aus der Verschronik*, «JÖByz» IV (1955) 13-49: 20. It is different, however, from the one given in the *Exegesis of the Iliad* (pp. 43,12-44,15). On these two different definitions see Cesaretti, *o.c.* 155-156; on the *Allegories from the Verse Chronicle* see also Tommaso Braccini's contribution to the present volume, with the *editio princeps* of the end of the poem.

<sup>28</sup> Quoted and discussed *infra*, §4.

Tzetzes financially towards the completion of the work<sup>29</sup>. The poet, therefore, had to prove that he was the best writer ever. This explains why he places great emphasis on an episode which is not mentioned by either Manasses or Kedrenos; they probably shared the same chronological issues Tzetzes was also concerned about, but they did not consider allegory as an exegetical tool. Manasses' stance is particularly interesting. He writes his chronicle exactly in the same years in which Tzetzes wrote his *Allegories*; the two authors must have known each other, as they were the same age and both lived in Constantinople, while occasionally sharing the same patron. Manasses' *Synopsis Chronike* was dedicated to Irene the Sebastokratorissa, as was Tzetzes' *Theogony*<sup>30</sup>.

After those lines, Tzetzes goes on with his account of the *antehomerica*, but does not provide any other allegorical explanation until the episode of Achilles in Skyros (vv. 433-467). While Paris' judgment is a controversial episode, mentioned only by earlier chroniclers, references to the story of Achilles in Skyros are almost non-existent in Byzantine literature. This episode was probably unfamiliar to Byzantine scholarship since Homer and most classical authors never mention it<sup>31</sup>. Tzetzes' source here is probably Apollodoros, who describes the episode in his *Bibliotheca*, a text with which Tzetzes was well acquainted<sup>32</sup>. However, it was hard for a Byzan-

<sup>29</sup> See A. Goldwyn, *Theory and method in John Tzetzes' Allegories of the Iliad and Allegories of the Odyssey*, «Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies» III (2017) 141-171. He notices how «the first five-hundred lines, then, were the grammarian's chance to impress his imperial patron and win her approval for the remaining» (p. 149); however, he considers this sample a «programmatic allegory» which «offered Tzetzes the chance to put the theoretical model of allegorical analysis he had delineated in the *Exegesis* to work in a narrative form» (p. 145). In my view, this last remark is inaccurate for two main reasons: the threefold definition of allegory given in the *Exegesis* is not the one applied in the *Allegories* which follow the scholion quoted *supra*. Furthermore, as I will demonstrate in the next section his allegorical ability is not the only skill Tzetzes wanted to demonstrate in those lines (see *infra*).

<sup>30</sup> Irene the Sebastokratorissa – not to be confused with Bertha-Irene of Sulzbach! – was the widow of Sebastokrator Andronikos, second son of John II Komnenos (cf. M. Jeffreys-E. Jeffreys, *Who was Eirene the Sevastokratorissa?*, «Byzantion» LXIV/1 (1994) 40-68: 40); for her role as a patron see E. Jeffreys, *The Sebastokratorissa Irene as patron*, «Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte» LX (2012) 177-194. For more chronological details on the composition of the work see *infra*.

<sup>31</sup> For an overview of the classical sources see T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth. A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources*, London 1993, 581.

<sup>32</sup> See Apollod. III 13,8. It is also certain that Tzetzes not only knew Apollodoros' *Bibliotheca* (cf. e.g. N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, London-Cambridge (MA) 1996<sup>2</sup>, 207) but he could still read the entire work, including the lost part that can now be reconstructed only through epitomes. On this last point and on the older hypothesis that Tzetzes compiled Apollodoros' *Epitome Vaticana* see J. Michels, *Tzetzes epitomator et epitomatus? Excerpts from Ps.-Apollodoros' Bibliotheca, John Tzetzes' Lycophron commentary and Chiliades in Vaticanus Gr. 950*, «Byzantion» XC (2020) 1-18.

tine reader to accept at face value a myth in which the greatest warrior of all times, Achilles, dresses up like a woman in order to avoid going to Troy. Tzetzes knew it, so he provides an allegorical explanation to interpret it: when the myth says that Achilles in Skyros was concealing himself in woman's clothes, he was just hidden by the love and cares of his mother who knew his destiny of death; but when Odysseus, Nestor and Palamedes came to the island to recruit soldiers for the battle, Achilles heard about the expedition and decided to sail for Troy<sup>33</sup>. This explanation makes use of the historical allegory: Thetis is not a goddess, but just a worried mother. What Tzetzes does here is extremely similar to what he did with the judgment of Paris. By contrast, both Malalas and Manasses completely ignore the episode of Achilles on Skyros; probably, because they did not know it or, if they did, they could not find a way to justify it.

Thus, in these first five hundred lines, Tzetzes interprets two episodes allegorically. In the first one he provides the controversial mythical judgment with the explanation already given by historians, plus his original and richer version; for the second one, he revives a less-known myth, adding an original historical allegory. This was his best card to impress the court. My point here is that, in these first five hundred lines, while Tzetzes certainly does focus on showing off his allegorical skills, his real competitors seem to be chroniclers and historians rather than Homeric scholars. If this had to be an allegorical account of the Homeric *Iliad*, why does he prove his skills with episodes which Homer does not even mention? The answer is simple: the focus here is not on allegory. Tzetzes wants to demonstrate his skills as a scholar and particularly as a 'historian' who uncovers hidden and forgotten stories.

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<sup>33</sup> Prol. vv. 437-442, 454-457, 461, 465-467: Ἄπερ δὲ πεφλυάρηνται περὶ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως, / ὡς φοβηθεῖς τὸν πόλεμον ἐφόρει γυναικεῖα / καὶ σὺν παρθένοις ἰστουργῶν κρυπτόμενος ὑπῆρχε, / τοῦ Ὀδυσσέως ξίφη δὲ ῥίψαντος σὺν ἀτράκτοις, / κατάδηλος ἐγένετο τὸ ξίφος προτιμήσας, / τοιαύτην ἔχουσί τινα σοφὴν ἀλληγορίαν [...] ἀλλὰ κατεῖχε μητρικῶ καὶ διαπύρω πόθῳ, / ὃ γυναικεῖαν ἔνδυσιν ἠνόμασαν οἱ μῦθοι. / Ὡς Ὀδυσσεὺς καὶ Νέστωρ δὲ μετὰ τοῦ Παλαμήδους / ἀπανταχοῦ διήρχοντο πάντας στρατολογοῦντες, / οἱ μὲν γυναικωδέστεροι καὶ τῶν δειλῶν ἀνθρώπων [...] ἀτράκτους ἐπελέγοντο, ἤγουν τὴν οἰκουρίαν [...] Ὁ δ' Ἀχιλλεύς, ὡς ἤκουσε δι' ἐκστρατεῖαν λόγους, / ἠρωϊκὸν ἀναπηδᾷ καὶ τρέχει πρὸς τὴν μάχην, / ἀφροντιστήσας καὶ μητρὸς καὶ ταύτης μαντευμάτων, «This nonsense has been said about Achilles, that, being fearful of war, he dressed up as a woman and concealed himself among the girls at the loom, but when Odysseus tossed swords along with the spindles he revealed himself, by preferring the sword. But this tale has the following wise allegorical explanation [...] but held him back with her fervent maternal love, which the myths call women's clothing. When Odysseus, Nestor, Palamedes were going around to recruit everyone for the army, some more effeminate and cowardly men [...] chose the spindles, that is, housekeeping. [...] But Achilles, when he heard talk of an expedition, heroically leaped up and ran off to war, heedless of his mother and her prophecies» (transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, *o.c.* 35-37).

Once he has told the story – if needed – he untangles its allegorical nature to reveal the factual truth.

### 3. *Two Byzantine romances*

These *Prolegomena* are not a preface to an exegetical paraphrase. As it was shown in the first section, their macro-structure is fairly different from the first half of the *Exegesis of the Iliad* which could readily have been transposed into verse. The first five hundred lines were a sample that Tzetzes presented to the court, but his knowledge of history, myth and allegory is not the only weapon to impress – he also wanted to prove his skills as a writer of romance.

As Goldwyn has already noticed, the *Prolegomena* draw a lot from Malalas' version of the *antehomerica*, and they are not just limited to the episode of Paris as a rhetorician<sup>34</sup>: he adds that «the fidelity with which Tzetzes follows the plot of Malalas in his prolegomena is remarkable»<sup>35</sup>. However, in those lines there is a point in which he innovates greatly: the meeting of Paris and Helen. While Malalas' account is plain, Tzetzes lingers on the characterisation of the two lovers, adding a pinch of romanticism to the story. Here is Malalas' account (V 3,1-8 Thurn):

Ἐν τῷ δὲ διάγειν τὸν Μενέλαον ἐπὶ τὴν Κρήτην θυσιάζοντα Διὶ Ἀστερίῳ καὶ τῇ Εὐρώπῃ ἐν τῇ Γορτύνῃ πόλει συνέβη τὴν Ἑλένην κατελθεῖν ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ παλατίου αὐτῆς εἰς τὸ ἐωρισθῆναι μετὰ τῆς Αἴθρας τῆς συγγενίδος τοῦ Μενελάου ἐκ Πέλοπος καὶ τῆς Κλυμένης ἐκ γένους τῆς Εὐρώπης. ὁ δὲ Πάρις παρακύψας εἰς τὸν παράδεισον καὶ προσεσχηκῶς τῷ κάλλει τῆς Ἑλένης καὶ τὴν νεότητα, βληθεὶς ἔρωτι εἰς αὐτὴν καὶ διὰ τῆς Αἴθρας τῆς συγγενίδος Μενελάου τῆς Πελοπίδος καὶ τῆς Κλυμένης ἐκ γένους τῆς Εὐρώπης ὑπονοθεύσας τὴν Ἑλένην.

While Menelaos was staying in Crete and sacrificing to Zeus Asterios and Europe in the city of Gortyn, it happened that Helen, came down into her palace garden to take a walk with Aithra, Menelaos' relative through Pelops, and Klymene, of the family of Europe. Paris looked out into the garden and noticed Helen's beauty and youth. Falling in love with her, he seduced her

<sup>34</sup> Cf. A. Goldwyn, *John Malalas and the Origins of the Trojan war in Byzantium*, «Troianalexandrina» XV (2015) 23-49: 27.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* 30.

with the aid of Aithra, Menelaos' relative through Pelops and Klymene, of the family of Europe<sup>36</sup>.

The version of Malalas is essential – not to say dry – but, as Goldwyn notices, it presents two interesting novelistic features: the love at first sight and the role of Aithra as an intermediary between the lovers<sup>37</sup>. Tzetzes clearly draws the basic ideas from that, not only keeping these features, but further adding two *ekphraseis* of the lovers (prol. 357-381):

Ὁ δὲ Μενέλαος, λαβὼν τὰ δύσδωρα τὰ δῶρα,  
 αὐτὸς πρὸς Κρήτην ἔπλευσεν ἔνεκα τῆς θυσίας,  
 Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν Πάριον δὲ κατέλειψε τοῖς οἴκοις,  
 τριάκοντα καὶ δύο μὲν ὑπάρχοντα τῶν χρόνων, 360  
 ὠραῖον πάνυ καὶ λευκόν, εἰς ἡλικίαν οἶον,  
 χρυσότριχα, δασύτριχα, καὶ τῶν ἀβροβοστρύχων,  
 χαροποπρόσωπον πολὺ, καὶ ὑπομειδιῶντα,  
 συντομολόγον, εὐλαλον, τῷ τάχει δὲ τῶν λόγων, 365  
 πολλάκις ἀποπτύοντα λεπτότατον σιέλου,  
 κατὰ τὰς ὄρνεις ἃς φαμὲν κλῆσιν ἀκανθυλλίδας·  
 ὃς τὴν Ἑλένην κατιδὼν τὸ δειλινὸν ἐν κήπῳ

And Menelaos, taking the ill-omened gifts,  
 sailed to Crete for the sacrifice,  
 leaving Alexandros Paris in his house.  
 He was thirty-two years of age, 360  
 very handsome and fair-skinned, tall and lean,  
 with thick and delicate golden hair,  
 a very cheerful demeanour, and gentle smile,  
 concise yet eloquent, swift in speech,  
 often spitting out very refined spittle 365  
 like the birds we call goldfinches.  
 At sunset, he saw Helen in the garden

<sup>36</sup> Transl. by E. Jeffreys-M. Jeffreys-R. Scott, *The Chronicle of John Malalas*, Melbourne 1986, 46-47.

<sup>37</sup> See Goldwyn, *John Malalas* cit. 17. Goldwyn rightly points to Dictys as Malalas' source, but it is hard to say precisely what Dictys' text contained, since we have only the Latin translation; see Gainsford, *o.c.* So it is hard to tell whether those novelistic features are an original feature of Malalas' work or derived from Dictys.

μετὰ δουλίδων τῶν αὐτῆς καὶ γυναικῶν ἑτέρων,  
 εἰκοσιῆξ ὑπάρχουσιν χρόνων τὴν ἡλικίαν  
 κάλλος οὖσαν ἀμίμητον, ξένην τὴν ἡλικίαν, 370  
 ὑπὲρ χιόνα δὲ λευκὴν, καὶ τρυφερὰν τὸ σῶμα,  
 εὐπρόσωπον καὶ εὖρινα, καὶ τῶν καλλιοφρύων,  
 εὐόφθαλμον, ὑγρόφθαλμον, χαροποπροσωποῦσαν,  
 εὐχέιλον, ἀνθηρόχειλον, καὶ μελιτοφωνοῦσαν, 375  
 εὖμαστον, πυρρακίζουσαν, καὶ καλλιτραχηλοῦσαν,  
 πᾶσι τερπνοῖς, πᾶσι καλοῖς πασῶν ὑπερτεροῦσαν,  
 ὅσον ἢ πληροσέληνος φαιδρόκυκλος σελήνη  
 ὑπερτερεῖ τῶν ἀμυδρῶν νυκτερινῶν ἀστέρων.  
 Τοιαύτην οὖσαν κατιδὼν Ἀλέξανδρος Ἑλένην,  
 ἐπλήγη ταύτης ἔρωτι, καὶ ταύτην ἀφαρπάξας,  
 ἀντερασθείσης καὶ αὐτῆς, τῆς Αἴθρας συνεργούσης,

with her slave girls and other female attendants.  
 She was twenty-six years of age,  
 inimitably beautiful, of unusual stature, 370  
 her skin whiter than snow and tender of body,  
 with a pretty face and nose and beautiful eyebrows,  
 and pretty eyes, liquid eyes, with cheerful demeanour,  
 beautiful lips, flowery lips and honeyed voice,  
 with beautiful breasts, rosy cheeks and graceful neck, 375  
 surpassing all women in every delight and every beauty,  
 as much as the full moon, the shining orb of the moon,  
 surpasses the dim stars at night.  
 Such was Helen upon whom Alexandros gazed;  
 he was smitten with love for her and stole her away,  
 and she loved him in return with Aithra's cooperation<sup>38</sup>.

Paris and Helen are not described as historical figures, but as lovers who are destined to love each other and suffer – like all the main characters of a romance. Tzetzes starts by focusing on Paris – the main character of the account up to this point – describing his features and perfect beauty, then he focalises through him when he goes down to the garden and sees Helen: the ekphrasis of Helen's beauty starts only when Paris first sees her, as if the reader saw her through Paris' eyes.

<sup>38</sup> Transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, *o.c.* 29-31.



Another author, Manasses, uses a similar approach. While Malalas' chronicle is, according to Ingela Nilsson, «the starting point for the Byzantine tradition of *non-Homeric Troy matter*»<sup>39</sup>, it follows that Manasses makes him his main source for the Trojan section of his chronicle. In this section, however, Manasses does also something very similar to what Tzetzes does: he adds an *ekphrasis* to Malalas' story, but only about Helen's beauty (vv. 1155-1169):

|   |      |
|---|------|
| ἀποδημεῖ Μενέλαος, λείπεται Πάρις μόνος,          | 1155 |
| τὴν Μενελάου γαμετὴν κατὰ τὸν οἶκον βλέπει.       |      |
| ἦν ἡ γυνὴ περικαλλῆς, εὖοφρος, εὐχρυστάτη,        |      |
| εὐπάρειος, εὐπρόσωπος, βοῶπις, χιονόχρους,        |      |
| ἔλικοβλέφαρος, ἀβρά, χαρίτων γέμον ἄλσος,         |      |
| λευκοβραχίων, τρυφερά, κάλλος ἄντικρυς ἔμπνουν,   | 1160 |
| τὸ πρόσωπον κατάλευκον, ἡ παρειὰ ῥοδόχρους,       |      |
| τὸ πρόσωπον ἐπίχαρι, τὸ βλέφαρον ὠραῖον,          |      |
| κάλλος ἀνεπιτήδευτον, αὐτόβαπτον, αὐτόχρουν·      |      |
| ἔβαπτε τὴν λευκότητα ῥοδόχροια πυρσίνη,           |      |
| ὡς εἴ τις τὸν ἐλέφαντα βάψει λαμπρᾷ πορφύρᾳ,      | 1165 |
| δειρὴ μακρὰ, κατάλευκος, ὅθεν ἐμυθοργήθη          |      |
| κυκνογενὴ τὴν εὖοπτον Ἑλένην χρηματίζειν.         |      |
| ὄρᾳ ταύτην Ἀλέξανδρος, ἀλίσκεται τῷ κάλλει·       |      |
| καὶ τί πολλὰ καὶ περιττὰ μακρογορεῖν καὶ γράφειν; |      |

Then Menelaus went off on a journey, but Paris was left alone. He saw Menelaus' wife in her house. She was very beautiful, had fine eyebrows, good colouring, beautiful cheeks, a splendid countenance and large eyes. Helen was snow-white, with flirtatious eyes, delicate, a grove full of graces, white-armed, tender and with an inspirational beauty. Her face was quite white and her cheeks were rosy. She had a pleasing face and beautiful eyes. Her beauty was simple, enhanced by her natural colouring. A reddish hue tinted her white skin, as if someone had painted ivory a brilliant crimson. Her neck was long and entirely white. This gave rise to the myth that the delightful Helen had been born of a swan. Alexander saw her and was captivated by her beauty. Why go on talking and writing so much and at such length?<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> I. Nilsson, *From Homer to Hermoniakos: some considerations of Troy matter in Byzantine literature*, «Troianalexandrina» IV (2004) 9-34: 17.

<sup>40</sup> Transl. by L. Yuretich, *The Chronicle of Constantine Manasses*, Liverpool 2018, 62.

The similarities between the texts of Tzetzes and Manasses are striking. They draw from the same source, but they also enrich the text in the same way, giving it the nuance of a novel. Manasses' longer passage on the love story of Helen and Paris functions much better in terms of novelistic style, with Nilsson writing that «the episode functions like a miniature novel displaying Tyche, Eros, the heroine's beauty and the elopement in less than thirty verses. The authorial intervention in v. 1169 is the last signal, the author winking at his audience: the hero falls in love»<sup>41</sup>. Tzetzes does not go so far; he sticks to history, to a faithful account of the story, while still sketching a novelistic portrait of the star-cross'd lovers.

It is impossible to say who was inspired by whom, as it is extremely difficult to go into chronological detail. According to Yuretich, «Manasses is likely to have composed the *SC* [*scil. Synopsis Chronike*] in the years between 1145 and 1148»<sup>42</sup>. But it is also quite difficult to date Tzetzes' *Allegories of the Iliad*, although some boundaries can still be set: Bertha arrived in Constantinople in the summer of 1142 and married Manuel I in January 1146; we also know that Tzetzes wrote the fourth book of the *Allegories of the Iliad* after the wedding<sup>43</sup>. This means that the two works were written in more or less the same period and – as already discussed – the two authors must have been in contact with one another. However, what really matters is that, in these first five-hundred lines, Tzetzes gives not only an allegorical explanation, but adds a quick reference to the novelistic tradition as well. It cannot be ruled out that, in doing so, he wants to prove himself better than Manasses, but in what respect? Manasses, in fact, writes a chronicle not an allegorical work, and so why does Tzetzes have to compete with a chronicler? The answer is simple: because Tzetzes was writing an historical work too – not really a chronicle, but something closer to a chronicle than to an exegesis. In the previous paragraphs I have shown that the *Prolegomena* do not fit the standards of exegetical prefaces; on the contrary, Tzetzes tries to carefully report the historical events of the Trojan war, using allegory if the account turns out to be mythical or untrustworthy. In addition, on a key episode like the meeting of Paris and Helen he draws from the tradition of Byzantine chroniclers

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<sup>41</sup> Nilsson, *o.c.* 22.

<sup>42</sup> Yuretich, *o.c.* 3.

<sup>43</sup> For a more detailed discussion on the dating of the *Allegories* see Rhoby, *o.c.* 159-160. who sees the wedding between Bertha and Manuel as a *terminus post quem*. The evidence of Book IV comes from *schol. Alleg. Il. IV* 47 (p. II, 609 Matranga), see the discussion in H. Giske, *De Ioannis Tzetzae scriptis ac vita*, Rostochii 1851, 48-49. For an account of Bertha-Eirene see E. Tounta, *Westliche politische Kanzleipropaganda und byzantinische höfische Literatur im Dienst der Weltherrschaftsideologie: die Feierliche Ankunft Berthas von Sulzbach (1142) und ihr Ableben in Konstantinopel (1160)*, «Byzantina» XXVIII (2008) 137-160: 139.

and highlights the novelistic features of the love story in a ‘dialogue’ with one of his contemporaries. Looking more closely, it is clear that the work Tzetzes presents to the court does not belong to the exegetical tradition, but falls squarely into the genre of the chronicle. It looks like an historical account of the Trojan War.

#### 4. *The entire Iliad*

It is straightforward to assume that these first five-hundred lines were meant to be just a ‘preview’ of the rest of the work as we now read it: an allegorical metaphrasis of Homer’s *Iliad* written in political verse. However, this might not be the case. In fact, throughout the prologue, Tzetzes repeats multiple times that he is not sure about what to write; in addition, he gives ambiguous definitions of the work he is writing and appeals more than once to the princess to tell him what kind of oeuvre she wants.

In the *Prolegomena*, Tzetzes is quite vague the first time he mentions the work he is about to begin, but this description could still fit the *Allegories* as we know them today (prol. 28-31):

ἀλλὰ τὸν μέγαν τὸν βαθὺν ὠκεανὸν Ὅμηρου,  
τὸν πᾶσαν περισφίγγοντα κύκλῳ τὴν οἰκουμένην,  
βατὸν κελεύεις ἅπασι καὶ πορευτὸν ποιῆσαι, 30  
ὡς Μωϋσῆς τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν Ἰσραηλίταις πάλαι.

But the great and deep Ocean of Homer  
which tightly binds in a circle the whole world round;  
you order it to be made accessible and passable to all  
as Moses made the Red Sea to the Israelites long ago<sup>44</sup>.

Tzetzes’ duty will be to make Homer approachable to any reader; however, it is not clear how. The *Allegories* certainly do this, but there is no clear mention of an allegorical paraphrase. Ten lines later we arrive at the list of the contents which Tzetzes is going to cover, and references to the work he is writing go into deeper detail (prol. 41-49)<sup>45</sup>:

<sup>44</sup> Transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, *o.c.* 5.

<sup>45</sup> This section is defined as a prologue of the work by Tzetzes himself in *schol.* 41 (p. II, 599 Matranga) ἢ κατὰ ῥήτορας προέκθεσις τῶν κεφαλαίων καὶ προκατάστασις λεγομένη, καὶ ὑπόσχεσις· κατὰ δὲ ποιητὰς προθεωρία καὶ προϋφήγησις, ἥτοι προδιήγησις· καὶ οἱ ῥήτορες ἄλλως φασὶ τὴν προδιήγησιν, “ This is what in the case of the orators is called *proekthesis* (‘opening statement’) or *prokatastasis* (‘preamble’) or *hyposchesis* (‘promise’), but in the case of the poets, *pro-*

Καὶ δὴ λοιπὸν πετάσασα τὰς θείας ἀκοάς σου,  
 πρὸ πάντων πρῶτον μάθανε τοῦ ποιητοῦ τὸ γένος,  
 πατρίδα, καὶ γεννήτορας, μετὰ τῶν διδασκάλων,  
 καὶ χρόνους οἷς ἐτύγγανε, καὶ πόσας γράφει βίβλους,  
 καὶ ποῦ καὶ πῶς ἐξέλειψε τὸν βίον τελευτήσας. 45  
 Καὶ δὴ καὶ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν μάθε τῆς Ἰλιάδος  
 κατὰ λεπτὸν τὴν σύμπασαν, καὶ τὰς μορφὰς Ἑλλήνων.  
 Εἶτα δ', εἰ θέλεις, μετ' αὐτὰ καὶ πᾶσαν Ἰλιάδα,  
 ὥσπερ κελεύει θέλημα τὸ σόν, μεταποιήσω.

So now open wide your divine ears,  
 Learning first of all the lineage of the poet,  
 His native land, his parents, along with his teachers,  
 And when he lived and how many books he wrote,  
 And when and how he died at the end of his life. 45  
 And learn also the subject matter of the *Iliad*,  
 All of it, in detail, and the bodily appearance of the Greeks.  
 Then, if you wish, after this also the entire *Iliad*,  
 As your wish commands, I will rewrite and recast<sup>46</sup>.

Lines 42-45 describe the content of the first 130 lines<sup>47</sup>; next, Tzetzes promises to write the matter of the *Iliad* (τὴν ὑπόθεσιν τῆς Ἰλιάδος) specifying that the outline will be complete and precise (κατὰ λεπτὸν τὴν σύμπασαν); after this, he will describe the bodily appearance of the Greeks, which is the section at vv. 508-723 – something similar to what Malalas does in his chronicle<sup>48</sup>. In the final part,

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*theoria* ('preface') or *proyphēgēsis* ('outline'), *prodiēgēsis* ('preliminary account'), although the orators use the term *prodiēgēsis* in a different way". I thank Marc Lauxtermann for the help with this translation. On the *prokatastasis* see Aglae Pizzone's chapter in this volume, especially the passage from the *Logismoi* published on pp. 49-62.

<sup>46</sup> Transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, *o.c.* 5-7.

<sup>47</sup> On this point see the macro-structure of the *Prolegomena*.

<sup>48</sup> See Malal. V 13-28; for an analysis of this passage and in particular of the vocabulary used by Malalas see E. Jeffreys-M. Jeffreys, *The language of Malalas: Portraits*, in E. Jeffreys-B. Croke-R. Scott (edd.), *Studies in John Malalas*, Sydney 1990, 231-244. A similar list of heroes can also be found in Manasses vv. 1222-1241 Lampsidis. This is of course another hint that, up to this point, the *Prolegomena* belong more to the genre of chronicles than to that of exegesis. On this passage see also V.F. Lovato, *Portrait de héros, portrait d'érudit : Jean Tzetzes et la tradition des eikonismoi*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 137-156.

Tzetzes offers to transform (μεταποιήσω) the ‘entire *Iliad*’ (πᾶσαν Ἰλιάδα) as well, if you wish (εἰ θέλεις) and in the way you command (ὥσπερ κελεύει θέλημα τὸ σόν). This last two lines are rather ambiguous. It might be argued that Tzetzes is now talking about the work we now read – as the verb μεταποιήσω might suggest; but, instead, he might just be suggesting that, after the heroes’ description, he will bring to completion the account on the Trojan War he had started – as also another passage seems to imply<sup>49</sup>. What is clear from these lines is that the completion of the work was all but certain: Tzetzes does not know whether Bertha-Eirene wants it or not, and he is not even sure about the form this work should take. The real question, however, concerns the expressions he uses: what do τὴν ὑπόθεσιν τῆς Ἰλιάδος τὴν σύμπασαν or πᾶσαν Ἰλιάδα really mean? Are they somehow equivalent?

In Greek, there is hardly a word more polysemic than ὑπόθεσις, but here, quite clearly, it is used in the meaning of ‘subject of a poem or a treatise’<sup>50</sup>. Stephanus also says that ὑπόθεσις, when it refers to *materiam et argumentum operis alicuius*, may be equivalent to περιοχή, ‘summary’<sup>51</sup>. One could see this as a simple reference to the kind of summaries that, in medieval manuscripts, were meant to be an introduction to the poem they preceded<sup>52</sup>. However, The ὑπόθεσις which Tzetzes promises to deliver is not just the subject of the *Iliad*, but, as he specifies, the ‘entire subject’ of the *Iliad*, an expression which recurs in later passages, with the difference that the adjective indicating completeness is shifted from ὑπόθεσις to Ἰλιάς<sup>53</sup>. The

<sup>49</sup> This interpretation is supported by a comment Tzetzes makes while he is listing the heroes in *prol* 660-661: καὶ τὰς μορφάς μοι μάθανε τὰς τῶν ἀριστοτέρων, / καὶ τότε πᾶσαν τὴν ὑφῆν μέχρι τοῦ τέλους μάθης, «learn now from me the appearances of the best of them, and then you will learn the whole weave through the end» (transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, *o.c.* 51).

<sup>50</sup> Cf. LSJ<sup>9</sup> 1882.

<sup>51</sup> *ThGL* VII, 334 C.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. P. Mertens, *Songe d’Hécube. Pomme de discorde et autres «Antehomerica»*, «AC» XXIX (1960) 18-29: 18-19. G. Spatafora, *Antehomerica e Posthomerica nella letteratura bizantina*, «MEG» VI (2006) 205-214: 206 also observes that «fin dal VI secolo [...] la ripresa dei racconti omerici è sempre accompagnata da una precisa volontà da parte dell’autore di riordinare gli eventi secondo un asse narrativo perspicuo che parta dall’ἀρχή dei fatti narrati». This is also how Johannes Haubold interprets the *Prolegomena*: «The *Allegories* start off with extensive introductory material (fully one fifth of the text) on the life of Homer and the prehistory of the Trojan War, a typical feature of Byzantine manuscripts of Homer», see J. Haubold, *The scholiast as poet: Tzetzes and his Allegories of the Iliad*, «BICS» LXIV (2021) 73-80: 75.

<sup>53</sup> See *e.g.* *prol.* 86-88 Ἀλλὰ καὶ χρόνον μάθε μοι τὸν τοῦ Ὀμήρου πρῶτον, / καὶ τὴν ἐκείνου τελευτήν· εἶτα σαφῶς ἀκούσεις / τὸν νοῦν καὶ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν πάσης τῆς Ἰλιάδος, «But first learn from me about Homer’s early years and his death; then you will hear clearly the sense and the meaning of the whole of the *Iliad*» (transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, *o.c.* 9); 133-134 Ἐπεὶ λοιπὸν

result of this shift is essentially equivalent to *πᾶσα Ἰλιάς*, the words Tzetzes uses to describe the ‘third section’; this latter expression carries a very specific meaning in Tzetzes’ writings, as it can be seen from the introductory scholion to his *Little and Big Iliad* (p. 101 Leone):

Ὁ παρὼν ποιητής, φιλοσύντομος ὦν καὶ τῆς ὠφελείας τῶν νέων φροντίζων, συνοπτικῶς τὴν πᾶσαν Ἰλιάδα ἐν τῇ παραρῶσῃ βίβλῳ ἐξέθετο.

The present poet – since he loves brevity and has at heart the benefit of the young – exposed the entire *Iliad* in the present book, in a synoptic way.

The 1,600 lines of the *Little and Big Iliad* – roughly the length of two short books of the *Iliad* – start from Paris’ birth and end after the sack of the city<sup>54</sup>. So, the introductory scholion means that Tzetzes will tell “the entire *Iliad*” going through the events of the war from the beginning until the end. Tzetzes was well aware that, in doing so, he put himself in opposition with Homer’s *Iliad*, which only focuses on Achilles’ wrath<sup>55</sup>.

In the *Prolegomena*, Tzetzes uses this expression multiple times<sup>56</sup> and, after the digression on the Judgement of Paris, he starts his account on Troy precisely from where the *Little and Big Iliad* begins: Hecuba’s ominous dream<sup>57</sup>. Yet, in fact,

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μεμάθηκας καὶ θάνατον Ὀμήρου, / μάθηθαι τὴν ὑπόθεσιν τῆς ὅλης Ἰλιάδος «Well, since you have learned the details of Homer’s death, learn the subject matter of the entire *Iliad*» (*ibid.* 13).

<sup>54</sup> For more details on title and extent of the work see n. 15 ; for a discussion of the term *πᾶσα Ἰλιάς* in the *Little and Big Iliad* see U. Mondini, *Composing the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς*, «ByZ» CXIV/1 (2021) 350-353 as well as his contribution to the present volume.

<sup>55</sup> In Byzantium there is not a clear-cut distinction between the Trojan matter (meaning all the legends and events of the war) and the Homeric epic. As noted by Nilsson, «poetic licence allowed authors to express non-Homeric Troy matter in a Homeric style, or Homeric legends on vernacular verse, or to mix material from different sources» (*o.c.* 11-12). For further passages in Tzetzes see *e.g.* *Exeg. Il.* p. 67,12-20 or 71-73, where Tzetzes wonders why Homer started the *Iliad* from Achilles’ wrath – Διατί δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς μῆνιδος; The *Prolegomena* of the *Allegories of the Iliad* answers differently from the *Exegesis* on this particular question, see vv. 1148-1170. For others Byzantine authors who talk about “the *Iliad*” as the events of the Trojan War and not just about the poem see *e.g.* Eust. *in Il.* I 7,15-18 or 12,33-37 van der Valk. On 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020 I delivered a paper at the Oxford University Byzantine Society graduate conference on *The boundaries of the Iliad in 12<sup>th</sup>-century Byzantine literature* where I discussed and analysed the issue more thoroughly.

<sup>56</sup> See *supra* and also n. 53.

<sup>57</sup> ProL. 176-178 Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ Ἀλέξανδρον ἔγκυος ἦν Ἐκάβη, / γεννηῆσαι φλέγοντα δαλὸν ἐδόκησεν ὀνειρόις, / ὅς πάσας ἐπυρόλησε τὰς Τρώων περιχώρους, «When Hekabe was pregnant with Alexandros, she dreamed that she gave birth to a flaming torch, which burned all the Trojan

the *Prolegomena* do not contain an account of the whole Trojan matter, but rather a detailed allegorical account of the events which precede the beginning of the Homeric poem. Now, there are two remaining options for the meaning of ὑπόθεσις: Tzetzes either means the account of the *antehomerica* which he gives, or he had something in mind which he then failed to accomplish. A possible answer is given half-way through the *Prolegomena* (vv. 476-487, 493-495):

Μάθε τὰς τούτων κλήσεις δὲ πρῶτον καὶ ναυαρχίας  
καὶ τὰς μορφὰς εἰσέπειτα τὰς τῶν ἀριστοτέρων·  
εἶτα λοιπὸν μοι μετ' αὐτὰ μάθης τὰ τοῦ πολέμου  
κατὰ λεπτὸν τὰ σύμπαντα στενῶς πεπλατυσμένως,  
οὕτως ὡς ἂν ἀνέγνωκας Ὅμηρους, Στησιχόρους,  
Εὐριπίδας, Λυκόφρονας, Κολλούθους τε καὶ Λέσχας,  
καὶ Δίκτυν συγγραψάμενον καλῶς τὴν Ἰλιάδα,  
Τριφιδώρους, Κόϊντον, κἄν ἑκατὸν βιβλία,  
οὐκ ἂν λεπτομερέστερον οὕτως ἐξηκριβώσω,  
καὶ τότε τμήματι βραχεῖ πάντα συγκεκλεισμένα,  
ὅπως πᾶς ὁ βουλόμενος ἐν πόνῳ βραχυτάτῳ  
ἀνεγνωκέναι τοῖς πολλοῖς δοκῆ βιβλιοθήκας [...]  
τὰ πάντα περιέκλεισα τμήματι βραχυτάτῳ,

First learn their names and the ships under their command  
and then the appearance of the leaders;  
after that you may learn from me the rest about the war  
in detail, everything, in a compressed and an expansive way.  
Thus not even if you had read Homer and Stesichoros,  
Euripides, Lycophron, Kollouthos and Lesches,  
and Dictys's well-written *Iliad*,  
Triphiodorus and Quintus, even a hundred books, not  
even then would you have learned the story in greater detail,  
since I have incorporated everything in abbreviated form,  
so that anyone who wishes may seem to the masses  
to have read whole libraries with minimum effort [...]  
I included everything in a very short section,

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territory» (transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, *o.c.* 15). See also *Carm. Il.* I 39-61; the same episode is also the starting point of the Troy matter in the *Exegesis of the Iliad*, pp. 58,4-16 and 61,2-15.

ὅποσα οὐχ εὐρήσει τις οὐδ' ἑκατὸν βιβλίοις,  
καὶ ἀρκεσθῆ τὸ Κράτος σου τοῖς οἷσπερ διαγράφω.

containing more than one would find even in a hundred books,  
and let your Majesty be content with everything I write down<sup>58</sup>.

In this rhetorical hyperbole Tzetzes mentions many authors whose focus was on the *posthomeric* (i.e. the events after the death of Hector), such as Euripides, e.g. the *Trojan Women* or – especially – *Hecuba*<sup>59</sup>, and epic poems by Triphiodorus or Quintus Smyrnaeus<sup>60</sup>. From this passage, it seems clear that Tzetzes intended to write a complete account of the Trojan War that included the *posthomeric* – so complete, in fact, that it could have replaced an entire library. One might object that by this point Tzetzes had already written such a work, the previously-mentioned *Little and Big Iliad*. That work, however, was written in hexameters, making it quite hard to read: the vocabulary is Homeric, and the scholia must also be read in order to fully understand the work<sup>61</sup>. At this particular point, Tzetzes wanted to offer the princess a work with similar content, but in political verse, more readable even without the complex exegetical apparatus of the hexametric poem<sup>62</sup>: a work tailored for a foreign empress. The work he had in mind was probably close to his *Theogony*, a retelling of another popular topic in classical literature; this time, however, Tzetzes' work would

<sup>58</sup> Transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, *o.c.* 37-39.

<sup>59</sup> *Hecuba* was one of the tragedies of the school triad, together with *Orestes* and *Phoenissae*; see B. Baldwin, *Euripides in Byzantium*, in J.R.C. Cousland-J. R. Hume (edd.), *The Play of Texts and Fragments*, Leiden-Boston 2009, 433-443: 436

<sup>60</sup> The fact that Stesichorus and Lesches' Trojan works were already lost clearly highlights the rhetoric behind this passage which aims to present Tzetzes' work as the top of an entire tradition. However, as Martina Savio rightly observes, «In questo caso Tzetze non critica gli autori che l'hanno preceduto: semplicemente, conoscendo i bisogni del proprio pubblico, effettivo o potenziale, li presenta ad esso come superati in quanto ormai è 'inutile leggerli' da quando c'è l'opera di Tzetze»: *Polemica e invettiva nelle opere di Giovanni Tzetze: screditare i concorrenti e pubblicizzare 'l'eccellenza tzetziana'*, «RFIC» CXL/1 (2018) 181-238: 196.

<sup>61</sup> See Mondini in this volume, and Cardin *o.c.* 105-108: «The scholia appended by Tzetzes to his own poetic text are not intended only for the explanation of learned material. Of course, we find the voice of the teacher, who explains rhetorical grammar and metrical features [...] But we also find the voice of the author [...] We might say the same for *Carmina Iliaca*: the unity of poetic text and scholia, where erudition and inventiveness coexist».

<sup>62</sup> The scholia to the *Allegories of the Iliad* are not many and not even comparable to the ones of the *Little and Big Iliad*, where they are an essential part of the work; see the previous note.







not know what to write because the court's staff has not told him clearly. He reached the causes of Achilles' wrath – the turning-point from the *antehomerica* to the *homerica* – and is now left with two options: he could turn the text to a metaphrasis or just stick to his original plan. The princess – or, more probably, someone in her staff – finally tells Tzetzes what he has to write, so the plan changes and he starts the paraphrase of the first book of the *Iliad*. Paraphrasing the first book means that Tzetzes will have to tell the Homeric version of Achilles' wrath again: he is aware that he is going to repeat himself, so he bluntly writes it down (*Alleg. Il.* I 1-3):

Τῆς Ἄλφρα ἢ ὑπόθεσις Ὀμήρου ῥαψωδίας,  
 ἵνα πρὸς σὴν ὠφέλειαν πάλιν ἐπαναλάβω,  
 τάδε δηλοῖ κατὰ λεπτὸν ἅπερ ἐνθάδε φράσω.

The subject matter of the first book of Homer,  
 to repeat it again for your benefit,  
 states in detail these matters which I will describe here<sup>67</sup>.

Hence, Tzetzes writes Briseis' affair again (πάλιν). But now he has been told what to write and the work can actually start. A good start is half the battle; this was *not* a good start, and so there will still be a lot of fighting to complete the oeuvre. Tzetzes loses the Imperial patronage half-way through the work and a new sponsor, Konstantinos Kotertzes, takes over from the beginning of Book XVI<sup>68</sup>.

##### 5. A matter of titles?

So far, I have tried to break down the *Prolegomena* in order to understand the reasons behind its composition and structure. Tzetzes started with a different work in mind, an account of the whole war, but ended up following the imperial requests and wrote a metaphrasis of the *Iliad*. As a matter of fact, this first failed attempt has not been discarded, but kept as an introduction. A trace of this change in both matter and genre can be spotted in the title of the work the manuscript tradition presents: Ὑπόθεσις

<sup>67</sup> Transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, *o.c.* 93.

<sup>68</sup> There is a great difference in style between the books written for the princess and the ones written under Kotertzes' patronage. Given this distinction, I think that Tzetzes lost the imperial support after he had completed the allegories on Book XIV; Book XV shows already many similarities with the style of the second half of the oeuvre, so it was probably a transitional book before the small prologue – at the start of Book XVI, see *Alleg. Il.* XVI vv. 1\*-7\* – where Tzetzes officially announces the change of patron.

τῆς Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδος ἀλληγορηθεῖσα παρὰ Ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτ-  
τζου, “the story of the Homeric *Iliad* allegorised by John Tzetzes the grammarian”<sup>69</sup>.

The word ὑπόθεσις is still there, but its nuance has now changed: it is no longer the hypothesis of the ‘whole *Iliad*’, but only of Homer’s *Iliad*. This might seem an excessive emphasis on the role of a genitive, but it is actually a clear distinction made by Tzetzes himself (*Exeg. Il.* p. 67,12-20):

Ἰλιάς ἢ παροῦσα ποίησις ἐπιγέγραπται, ὡς τὰς τῶν Ἰλιέων, ἦτοι τῶν  
Τρώων, συμφορὰς περιέχουσα [...] Ὀμήρου δὲ πρὸς ἀντιδιαστολὴν τῶν  
μικρῶν Ἰλιάδων· καὶ γὰρ Λέσχης ὁ Πυρραῖος, Κιναίθων τέ τις Λακεδαι-  
μόνιος καὶ ὁ Ἐρυθραῖος Διόδωρος, Τριφιόδωρός τε καὶ Κόϊντος ὁ Σμυρ-  
ναῖος καὶ ἕτεροι Ἰλιάδας συγγεγραφήκεσαν.

The present poem is called *Iliad* because it contains the misfortunes of the  
Ilians, i.e. the Trojans [...] The Homeric *Iliad* has to be seen in opposition to  
the small *Iliads*: Lesches of Pyrrha, the Spartan Cinaethon, Diodorus the Eryth-  
rean, Tryphiodorus and Quintus Smyrnaeus and other too have written *Iliads*.

Hence, Ὑπόθεσις τῆς Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδος is the title the work should have  
according to the manuscript tradition. Ὑπόθεσις is the word Tzetzes uses to define  
his work; the word whose recurrences in the *Prolegomena* give an account of its  
compositional history<sup>70</sup>.

According to the manuscript tradition, the *Prolegomena* do not seem to have  
a specific title, even if some manuscripts have – after the title of the entire work  
quoted *supra* – an additional description, which Matranga prints as title for the entire  
introduction (p. I, 1): τὸ προοίμιον πρὸς τὸ κελεῦσαν πρόσωπον ἄψασθαι τὸν  
Τζέτζην ταύτης τῆς συγγραφῆς, “The prooimion [addressed] to the person who  
ordered Tzetzes to undertake this work”.

<sup>69</sup> Seven manuscripts bear this title, while five present a slightly different form Ὑπόθεσις τοῦ Ὀμήρου ἀλληγορηθεῖσα παρὰ Ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου. It must be added that in some others the first pages are missing, so it is not possible to read the title at all.

<sup>70</sup> The title which is commonly given to the work now comes from only three manuscripts, one of which, *Par. gr.* 2707, was used by Boissonade to prepare his *editio princeps* in 1851. The title reads Ἀλληγορία εἰς τὴν Ἰλιάδα Ὀμήρου πονηθεῖσαι Ἰωάννη γραμματικῷ τῷ Τζέτζη, whence the name *Allegoriae Iliadis* printed on the cover of the edition.

The word *prooimion* must be intended in strict Hermogenic terms; this means that it cannot entail the whole *Prolegomena* but it refers just to the relatively small section dedicated to the empress. In fact, in the first book of *On Invention*, Hermogenes says that every *prooimion* is divided into four parts: an introduction (*protasis*), a supporting statement or argumentation (*kataskeuē*), an explanation (*apodosis*), and final conclusion (*basis*)<sup>71</sup>. Tzetzes wrote a set of *scholia* to that work adding some comments on the panegyric *prooimion* (*schol. Hermog.* pp. 49,31-50,5 Cramer)<sup>72</sup>:

τὰ δὲ γε πανηγυρικὰ φέρει μέρη τέσσερα  
 πρότασιν, καὶ κατασκευὴν, ἀπόδοσιν καὶ βάσιν.  
 διώνυμον ἀπόδοσις ἔλαχε κλήσιν φέρειν.  
 καλεῖται γὰρ ἀπόδοσις ἅμα σὺν ἀξίωσει.  
 ὅταν οὖν λέγῃ τις θαρρῶν, ἀπόδοσις καλεῖται.  
 ἀξίωσις δὲ λέγεται, ὅταν τις ἰκετεύῃ.

Panegyric [scil. *prooimia*] have four parts:  
*protasis*, plus *kataskue*, *apodosis* and *basis*.  
 The *apodosis* happens to have a double name.  
 In fact, it is called both *apodosis* and *axiosis*.  
 When someone talks to encourage is called *apodosis*,  
*axiosis* when someone supplicates.

So, according to Tzetzes, the *apodosis* can take two different names: *apodosis*, when someone says something aimed to encourage; *axiosis*, when someone supplicates. This distinction is perfectly reflected in the scholia to the final section of the dedication to the princess:

<sup>71</sup> Here Tzetzes is commenting on Hermog. *Inv.* I 5: Σύγκειται δὲ πᾶν προοίμιον ἐκ προτάσεως, ἣτις ἐστὶν ἐκ τῶν μαθημάτων εὐρισκομένη τῶν προκειμένων, ἐξ ὧν δὴ τοι καὶ γίνεται, ἐκ κατασκευῆς, ἐξ ἀποδόσεως, ἣτις ἐστὶν ἀξίωσις, ἐκ βάσεως, ἣ συνάγει τὴν πρότασιν καὶ τὴν ἀπόδοσιν. «Every prooimion is composed of a protasis, which is invented from the precepts laid down above, from which you can certainly find one; a *kataskue*; an apodosis, which is an axiosis; and a *basis*, which joins together the protasis and the apodosis» (Transl. by G.A. Kennedy, *Invention and Method: Two Rhetorical Treatises from the Hermogenic Corpus*, Atlanta 2005, 25-27).

<sup>72</sup> The edition is J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. Manuscriptis bibliothecarum Oxoniensium*, IV, Oxonii 1837. A critical edition of John Tzetzes' exegesis on the Hermogenian corpus is in preparation by Aglae Pizzone; see also her chapter in this volume.

| scholia<br>(p. II, 599 Matranga)  | <i>Alleg. II. prol.</i><br>32-40 Boissonade   |
|---|---|
| <i>ad v. 32:</i> ἀπόδοσις, ἦν ψευδῶς τινὲς καὶ ἀξίωσιν καλοῦσιν.          | ἤδη χωρῶ πρὸς τὸν εἰρμόν, καὶ γλώττης βακτηρίᾳ πλήξας αὐτὸν τοῖς σύμπασι πορεύσιμον ποιήσω, καὶ βάθη τὰ ἀθέατα τούτου φανεῖται πᾶσιν.   |
| <i>ad v. 35:</i> ἀξίωσις  | Ἄλλ' ἀναχαιτιζέσθωσαν αἱ μωμοσκόποι γλῶσσαι, ἐξυλακτεῖν τι καθ' ἡμῶν οἰστρουόμεναι τῷ φθόνῳ.  |
| <i>ad v. 37:</i> βάσις  | Ὡς γὰρ αἱ πάλαι γράφουσι τὸν Δία μυθουργίαι μεταβαλεῖν εἰς μόρφωμα πιθήκων τοὺς Τιτᾶνας, οὕτω καὶ γὰρ νῦν βούλομαι τρόποις οἰκονομίας μεταβάλλειν τοὺς ἥρωας συγγράμμασι πιθήκων.           |
| <i>ad v. 32:</i> <i>apodosis</i> , which some falsely call <i>axiosis</i> | I am already advancing sequentially, and with the staff of my tongue<br>I strike it and will make it passable for everyone and its invisible depths will be revealed to all.                |
| <i>ad v. 35:</i> <i>axiosis</i>   | But let the critical tongues, stung by jealousy, be deflected from bursting out in rage against us.   |
| <i>ad v. 37:</i> <i>basis</i>   | For just as the ancient fables write Zeus gave the Titans an ape-like form, so too here I wish, following the doctrine of discretion, to change heroes into apes in my work <sup>73</sup> . |

The *proomion* ends with a *basis*. Hence, it ends at v. 40, after which Tzetzes starts illustrating his plan of telling Homer's biography and the story of the whole *Iliad*<sup>74</sup>. An important parallel is, again, Tzetzes' *Theogony*, where the first forty-eight lines in Leone's edition are occupied by a long praise of his patron Irene the Sebastokratorissa. Even in that work there is a *scholion* at the beginning of this praise (*schol.* 1 Leone): πρόλογος πρὸς τὴν σεβαστοκρατόρισσαν.

Despite the different word used – πρόλογος instead of προοίμιον – this parallel further proves that the word προοίμιον in the *Allegories* does not refer to the whole *Prolegomena*, but only the small section for Bertha-Eirene. Boissonade, in fact, does not call it *proomion*, but uses the word *Prolegomena* to indicate all the

<sup>73</sup> Transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, *o.c.* 5.

<sup>74</sup> See *supra*, §4.

lines before the start of the metaphrasis. This clever intuition gained a place in the scholarship on the *Allegories of the Iliad* and the name has also been used by the modern translators<sup>75</sup>. So, while we must acknowledge that the manuscript tradition does not give this section a name at all, it is good practice to stick with the modern editorial history of this text and use the non-original one given by Boissonade.

### 6. Conclusion

The structure of the *Prolegomena* was shaped by the troublesome relationship with the imperial patronage and all the different stages which led to the composition of the *Allegories of the Iliad* are still visible in the text of this 'introduction'. As Tzetzes states at vv. 46-47, his first idea was to write an historical account of the 'whole Trojan matter'. After completing the first five hundred lines, he presented them to the patron as a sample of his skill as allegorist, historian, and narrator, suggesting that he might *also* write an allegorical metaphrasis of the *Iliad*, if the princess so desired. Nonetheless, Tzetzes kept on writing after this *intermezzo*, including the list of the Greeks and Trojans based on Malalas, and finally reached the point where the Homeric *Iliad* starts. The imperial commands were, apparently, still too imprecise, but at this stage it was at least clear that it was an allegorical metaphrasis they wanted. So that is what he delivered.

Over time, this attempt to begin a different work was not deleted. Instead, it was kept as an introduction to the metaphrasis. We owe this state of things to the manuscript transmission no less than to the author himself. The former passage should not be taken for granted: textual transmission could change the way a text was initially arranged, especially when an allegorical metaphrasis of an epic poem comes after more than a thousand lines of introduction. In fact, there are two manuscripts (*Laur. conv. soppr.* 48, *Pal. gr.* 222) which left out the *Prolegomena* entirely<sup>76</sup>. In the manuscripts this first long section does not have a specific title, but it still plays an important role in providing the reader with essential information on Homer and the *antehomerica*. The importance of this introduction as a source of background knowledge for the Homeric poems is shown by its reception. There is one manuscript (*Bodl. Barocc.* 194) which contains only the *Prolegomena* and leaves out the rest. In addition, other manuscripts or works contain some of its lines: ff. 49-50 of *Vindob.*

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<sup>75</sup> For Boissonade see *o.c.* 4; for the title of the modern translation see also n. 23.

<sup>76</sup> In particular, the *Pal. gr.* 222 breaks up the work and present each metaphrasis at the end of the corresponding book of the *Iliad*.

*phil. gr.* 321 contain vv. 507-814 of the *Prolegomena* after Tzetzes' *Theogony*<sup>77</sup> and in the final folia of *Bodl. Auct.* T.4.3 a later hand copied some lines from Tzetzes' account of Paris' judgment<sup>78</sup>. In addition, some lines on Hecuba's dream were quoted by Maas' *Vergnügter Lexicograph* in *Cracov.* 2626<sup>79</sup>. Another case worth mentioning is the role of the *Prolegomena* as a source for the events of the Trojan war before the *Iliad* for example in the *Antehomerica Uffenbachiana*<sup>80</sup>.

An apparently bulky and rhetoric-heavy introduction contains hidden secrets: the vicissitudes of its author and patrons, changes of plans and ideas. There is nothing casual or rushed in the composition of the *Prolegomena*; it is the clash of two different projects in a single oeuvre which, in the end, finds balance and unitary purpose.

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<sup>77</sup> Cf. H. Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*, I: *Codices Historici, Codices Philosophici et Philologici*, Wien 1961, 409-418.

<sup>78</sup> This extract was spotted by Jeffreys, *The Judgment* cit. 129. In its original state the manuscript contained exclusively medical texts, but at ff. 207v-208r a much later hand added vv. 89 and 136-139 of the *Prolegomena* under the name *The Story of the Apple*.

<sup>79</sup> On the *Lexicograph* see P. Maas, *Der vergnügte Lexicograph*, «ByZ» XXXVIII (1938) 58-67. These lines were first spotted by Niels Gaul (Ἀνασσα Ἄνασσα σκόπει – *Fürstin Anna, bedenke! Beobachtungen zur Schedo- und Lexikographie in der späthbyzantinischen Provinz*, in L.M. Hoffmann (ed.), *Zwischen Polis, Provinz und Peripherie. Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, Wiesbaden 2005, 663-704), but it was Filippomaria Pontani who identified them as vv. 172-204 of the *Prolegomena* (*Achille l'occhio degli dèi: Antehomerica Uffenbachiana*, «RHT» IV (2009) 1-30: 10 and n. 37).

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Pontani, *o.c.* 9-14.





**Metapoiesis versus allegory:  
Psellos and Tzetzes on *Iliad* IV 1-4**

In 1974 Cyril Mango gave his inaugural lecture at Oxford, where he claimed that Byzantine authors do not refer to each other directly<sup>1</sup>. It is an effective statement which continues to make one think, especially since Tzetzes (1110-1180) refers by name to his predecessor Psellos (1018-1081) (*Allegories of the Iliad* IV 47-53)<sup>2</sup>:

Μὴ Χερουβὶμ, μὴ Σειραφὶμ ὧδε θεοὺς μοι νόει,  
ὥσπερ Ψελλὸς ἐδίδαξεν ὁ πάνσοφος ἐκεῖνος,  
παίζων οὐκ οἶδα πῶς εἶπεῖν, ἢ καὶ σπουδάζων ἄρα.  
Οὐδὲν γὰρ πρὸς τὸν Ὅμηρον ἄπερ φησὶν ἐκεῖνος· 50  
ἀσύντροχα πρὸς δόξαν γὰρ εἰσὶ τὴν Ὀμηρείαν,  
ὥσπερ ζωὴ καὶ θάνατος, καὶ τῶν ἀντιθετούντων.  
Ὁ Ὅμηρος ἐνταῦθα γὰρ ἀστρολογῶν νῦν γράφει.

Do not assume that the gods here are the Cherubim or Seraphim,  
As that wise all-wise Psellos taught,  
I do not know whether to say he was being playful or serious.  
For what he says has nothing to do with Homer, 50  
For they are incompatible with Homer's doctrines,  
Just as life and death, and other opposites.  
For here now Homer writes as an astrologer.

This passage appears to contradict the 'bold conjecture'<sup>3</sup> proposed by Mango, since Tzetzes in the twelfth century refers to Psellos in the eleventh by name. The interest is not in the fact that a Byzantine was able to indicate another, but in Tzetzes' disagreement with Psellos over allegorical interpretation of classical texts.

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<sup>1</sup> C. Mango, *Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror*. «An inaugural lecture delivered before the University of Oxford on 21 May 1974», Oxford 1975, especially p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> This and all other translations from the *Allegories of the Iliad* are taken from A.J. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Iliad*, Cambridge MA 2015.

<sup>3</sup> «Bold ideas, unjustified anticipations, and speculative thought, are our only means for interpreting nature: our only organon, our only instrument, for grasping her.» K. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, London 1992, 280.

Allegorical interpretation is manifold, since one may interpret the same passage in many, even contradictory, ways. Adam Goldwyn in 2017 has classified the allegorical readings of Tzetzes as being threefold: rhetorical, natural, and mathematical<sup>4</sup>. That brings us to the main point of Tzetzes' text: he thinks Psellos may be making a joke (IV 49). Dismissing something as being funny is an easy escape route, when one considers an opinion as dissenting from 'common sense'<sup>5</sup>. Indeed, the crux of the matter lies in the definition of common sense, as «the deposit of prejudices laid down in the mind before age eighteen»<sup>6</sup>. If Tzetzes was born in 1110, then his prejudices would be settled by *ca.* 1128. By that date it would at first appear that Psellos' allegorical method was out of fashion at least until 1158, the date before which Tzetzes' poem was composed<sup>7</sup>.

Fortunately, we can investigate the other side, since Psellos' essay has survived (*Philosophica Minora* 1.42 Duffy). Indeed it is one of a number of other allegorical readings undertaken by Psellos. Curiously most of these are transmitted only in *Par. Gr.* 1182:

- Or. Min.* 33: Circe
- Phil. Min.* 1.42: *Iliad* IV 1
- Phil. Min.* 1.43: Tantalos
- Phil. Min.* 1.44: Sphinx
- Phil. Min.* 1.45: Cave of Ithaka
- Phil. Min.* 1.54: Hephaestus
- Theol.* 1.35: *Psalm* 59
- Theol.* 1.38: *Isaiah* 7
- Theol.* 1.43: allegory of Gregory of Nazianzus on Easter
- Theol.* 1.72: *Susanna* 1
- Theol.* 1.110: Hebrew customs

Allegory was a familiar technique employed by Psellos. However, before going to his text, it is worth looking at the point of contention (*Iliad* IV 1-4):

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<sup>4</sup> A. Goldwyn, *Theory and method in John Tzetzes' Allegories of the Iliad and Odyssey*, «Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies» III (2017) 141-172, especially 144.

<sup>5</sup> Common sense in Aristotle *De an.* 3.1, 425a27. Contra Plato argues that opinion is between ignorance and knowledge *Resp.* 5.478d5-9 and *Tim.* 37b.

<sup>6</sup> L. Barnett, *The Universe and Dr. Einstein: Part II*, «Harper's Magazine» 196 (May 1948), 473, Column 1.

<sup>7</sup> The date of composition is generally between 1146, the date when Bertha married Manuel I (1143-1180), and 1159, when she died.

Οἱ δὲ θεοὶ παρὰ Ζηνὶ καθήμενοι ἠγορόωντο  
 χρυσέῳ ἐν δαπέδῳ, μετὰ δὲ σφισι πότνια Ἥβη  
 νέκταρ ἐοινοχόει· τοὶ δὲ χρυσεῖς δεπάεσσι  
 δειδέχατ' ἀλλήλους, Τρώων πόλιν εἰσορόωντες·

The gods sat and spoke beside Zeus,  
 in the golden hall. Among them mistress Hebe  
 poured the nectar. They greeted each other  
 with golden goblets, looking at the city of the Trojans.

The text is surprisingly rare in the *TLG*. A search for the phrase καθήμενοι ἠγορόωντο gives only nineteen occurrences, and the main surviving allegorical reading of the passage is actually from Psellos himself. The essay seems to be by Psellos for two reasons: 1) Tzetzes' attribution, 2) the admixture of pagan and Christian knowledge and erudition fused together.

Paolo Cesaretti<sup>8</sup>, followed also by Anthony Kaldellis<sup>9</sup>, has pointed out in his volume on Byzantine allegorical interpretation in the eleventh and twelfth century, that Psellos tends to be more philosophical and Tzetzes more literary<sup>10</sup>. I follow Cesaretti's interpretation, but I am rather surprised by Tzetzes' questioning of Psellos' method. This requires us to look at Psellos' essay and its structure in more detail:

1-15: Biblical justification of allegorical interpretation

16-25: choice of *Iliad* IV 1-4

26-31: Drunken banquet not an obstacle for interpretation

32-47: Zeus = life (*Iliad* IV 1)

48-65: if Zeus = life, then those around him are angels

66-72: Golden hall as heavenly (*Iliad* IV 2)

73-81: Banquet is heavenly (*Iliad* IV 2)

82-98: Hebe is being and becoming (*Iliad* IV 2)

99-110: Nectar concerns unity and distinction of three persons, providence, judgement (*Iliad* IV 3)

111-122: We are not perfect intellect (–)

<sup>8</sup> P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milano 1991, 125-204.

<sup>9</sup> «Allegory was not part of a consistent philosophical approach»: A. Kaldellis, *Classical scholarship in twelfth-century Byzantium*, in C. Barber-D. Jenkins (edd.), *Medieval Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics*, Leiden 2009, 1-44, especially 27.

<sup>10</sup> Cesaretti, *o.c.* 21.

123-137: Heavenly Troy (*Iliad* IV 4)

138-141: Make bitter stories sweet

Psellos claims that the gods present in the passage in the *Iliad* may be interpreted as Christian angels (especially at 48-65). The argument begins by claiming that the etymology of the word ‘Zeus’ is life, ζωή, based on Plato’s *Cratylus*<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, it is life which presides the gathering. Moreover, Psellos quotes the gospel of John 14:6 where Jesus defines himself as life<sup>12</sup>. Psellos claims that, if Zeus is life and if life is Jesus, then those around Zeus are the same as those around God. The Gods around Zeus are therefore the angelic host.

The argument is based on two premisses: 1) the identification of Zeus as life, 2) the identification of Jesus as life<sup>13</sup>. Therefore Psellos accepts as true both the statements from Plato’s *Cratylus* and the Gospel of John. Since both Jesus and Zeus have beings who are beside each of them, these beings must be the same since they both are beside Life. The arguments are valid; one may question the premisses. As is usual with Psellos, he focusses mostly on a philosophical argument. Once he has established this reading, he explains the remainder of the passage.

He is not interested in the golden hall, about which he simply indicates that gold implies a distance from the earthly world<sup>14</sup>. While this may seem rather abstract, one should not forget that the Gold Hall (*Chrysotriklinos*) is one of the main halls of the Imperial palace. The hall also had dining tables and is described in the tenth century by Liutprand of Cremona as the finest in the palace<sup>15</sup>. Psellos points out that the different cups and chalices in the room fit with the variety of reality as contrasted with the simplicity of the divine<sup>16</sup>. What is interesting in this hall is the connection between the variety of reality and the divine. Indeed, the focus is on Hebe who he interprets allegorically as “being and becoming”<sup>17</sup>. The focus of the essay is clearly

<sup>11</sup> Plat. *Crat.* 396a8-b3, Procl. *Theol. Plat.* V 79,7-11 Saffrey-Westerink.

<sup>12</sup> λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ ἰς Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀληθεῖα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ οὐδεὶς ἔρχετε πρὸς τὸν πατέρα ἢ δι’ ἐμοῦ (Alexandrinus); qaf imma Iesus: ik im sa wigs jah sunja jah libains. ainshun ni qimip at atin, niba þairh mik (Argenteus). It is worth remembering that Psellos probably had access to the text of the Gospel of John which was officially copied for the Emperor Constantine (305-337): F. Lauritzen, *Nonnos and Wulfila*, «Parekbolai» IX (2019) 19-30.

<sup>13</sup> The step which Psellos leaves out is the idea that Jesus and Zeus are the same since they are both equal to life.

<sup>14</sup> *Phil. Min.* 1,42,66-71 Duffy.

<sup>15</sup> Liutprand Cremonensis, *Antapodosis* 5,21 (PL CXXXVI 886B).

<sup>16</sup> *Phil. Min.* 1,42,78-81 Duffy.

<sup>17</sup> *Phil. Min.* 1.42.82-84 Duffy.

Hebe and derives from Proclus' commentary on the *Timaeus*, III 310,21-23 Diehl (though not pointed out in the *fontes* of *Philosophica Minora*):

οἰνοχοεῖ γούν αὐτοῖς ἡ Ἥβη, καὶ πίνοντες τὸ νέκταρ, φασὶν οἱ ποιη-  
ταί, καὶ τὸν ὅλον αἰσθητὸν κόσμον ὁρᾶσιν·

Hebe pours nectar for them and they drink, as the poets say, and they see the entire visible world.

Proclus is here identifying the gods with superior beings within his metaphysical system. In his commentary on Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, E.R. Dodds, Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, said: «that Homer's Olympians, the most vividly conceived anthropomorphic beings in all literature, should have ended their career on then dusty shelves of this museum of metaphysical abstractions is one of time's strangest ironies»<sup>18</sup>. This quotation allows one to seek the root of Psellos' interpretation. Indeed, Dionysius the Areopagite in his *Celestial Hierarchy* had claimed that angels were superior beings like intellects<sup>19</sup>. The reference to intellects is connected specifically with the Neoplatonism of Proclus. One may single out proposition 111 of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, which points out that the Gods are followed by the divine intellects and then by the individual intellects<sup>20</sup>. Thus in Psellos' essay the Gods beside Zeus are inferior to him and coincide with entities below the One but above humans. These entities in Dionysius the Areopagite were identified as the Angels described in the Bible. This direct appeal to Proclus is a familiar technique in Psellos. Indeed all the other main allegorical essays refer to Proclus. Therefore, Psellos simply identifies the Gods described as intellects (νόεσς) in Proclus with the angels also described as νόεσς in Dionysius the Areopagite. Moreover, the connection between the One and the intellects in Proclus is similar to that of the Christian God in relation to the angels.

This is not an empty rhetorical exercise. The question of nectar poured by Hebe is central to Plotinus, *Ennead* VI 7,35, where he distinguishes between the wise intellect and the loving intellect<sup>21</sup>, the latter being drunk with nectar<sup>22</sup>. This loving intellect explores what is beyond the intellect. Proclus defines πρόνοια as what is

<sup>18</sup> E.R. Dodds, *Proclus. Elements of Theology*, Oxford 1967<sup>2</sup>, 260.

<sup>19</sup> Dion. Areop. *De Celesti Hierarchia* II 7,9-8,5 Heil-Ritter.

<sup>20</sup> Procl. *Elem. Theol.* 111 Dodds.

<sup>21</sup> The question is discussed by J. Dillon, *The concept of two intellects: a footnote to the history of Platonism*, «Phronesis» XVIII/2 (1973) 176-185.

<sup>22</sup> Plot. *Enn.* VII 35,23-25 Henry-Schwyzler, a reference to Plat. *Symp.* 203b5.

beyond and before the intellect<sup>23</sup>, and it is an activity of the Gods, identified as Homer's divinities in *Iliad* IV 1-4. Psellos in the essay indicates that the contemplation of the heavenly Troy (as a νοητὸς κόσμος) is connected with the capacity to contemplate beyond the intellect (προνοητικῶς).<sup>24</sup> This Iliadic mysticism reflects Proclean Neoplatonism and Christian monasticism. The topic of what is above and beyond in the intellect (πρόνοια) was rather important when Psellos was young. Indeed, Niketas Stethatos (*ca.* 1000-*ca.* 1065)<sup>25</sup>, a student of Symeon the New Theologian (949-1022)<sup>26</sup>, had written an entire essay on the question of *pronoia* employing ideas from Dionysius the Areopagite.<sup>27</sup>

Psellos does not refer to this interpretation as an allegory but as a *metapoiesis*. A rendition from falsehood to truth. This seems to be a point of difference between Tzetzes and him. As Cesaretti pointed out, this is a philosophical undertaking, rather than a rhetorical device. Psellos' essay 42 on *Iliad* IV 1 is also interesting, since it contrasts allegory of individual elements (done by students) and *metapoiesis* from falsehood to truth (done by him) (*Phil. Min.* 1,42,138-141 Duffy):

Οὔτος ὁ μῦθος, αὐτή τοῦ ψεύδους πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν μεταποίησις, ἣν ὑμεῖς πρὸς τὰς καθ' ἕκαστον ἀλληγορίας προχειριζόμενοι, ῥᾶστον ἂν οὐ τῷ ποτίμῳ μόνον λόγῳ τοὺς ἀλμυροὺς ἀποκλύσαιτε, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἀλμυροὺς ποτίμους ποιήσαιτε

This is the myth, this is the transformation of falsehood into truth. You did it by allegorizing each element. It would be easier, if you not only washed off the bitter with the drinkable water, but if you made the bitter drinkable.

Psellos claims here that allegory is a way of avoiding interpretation, by transposing the letter but not the spirit of a text. The appearance of an acceptable truth is not a discussion of the philosophical nature of the text, or why one may agree or disagree with it on the basis of one's own beliefs.

Tzetzes refers explicitly to Psellos' interpretation of the text as an allegory. Moreover, he says that Psellos was mistaken and that the passage should be read astrologically (IV 53):

<sup>23</sup> Proposition 120 generally on *pronoia* and specifically Procl. *Elem. Theol.* 106.5-9 Dodds.

<sup>24</sup> *Phil. Min.* 1,42,124-125 Duffy.

<sup>25</sup> F. Lauritzen, *Areopagitica in Stethatos: a chronology of an interest*, «Vizantijskij Vremennik» LXXIII (2014) 199-215.

<sup>26</sup> H. Alfeyev, *Saint Symeon the New Theologian and the Orthodox Tradition*, Oxford 2000.

<sup>27</sup> Niketas Stethatos, *Oratio* 6,46,1-6 Darrouzès.

ὁ Ὅμηρος ἐνταῦθα γὰρ ἀστρολογῶν νῦν γράφει.

For here now Homer writes as an astrologer.

It is worth remembering that the husband of Bertha of Sulzbach (†1159), Manuel I (1143-1180), wrote a defence of astrology<sup>28</sup>. The Emperor was criticized for his excessive interest in the subject<sup>29</sup>. Thus Tzetzes seems on safe ground, by claiming that the gods of *Iliad* IV 1-4 are heavenly bodies rather than angels. He seems to be conforming to the interest endorsed by the emperor Manuel I. Indeed, imperial culture is important for such texts. The two interpretations of the text of *Iliad* IV 1-4, that of Psellos and that of Tzetzes, should be considered also in their historic context.

The empires looked very different. When Psellos was made consul of the philosophers in 1047<sup>30</sup>, the empire stretched from the Euphrates to the Danube, as the eastern half of the Roman Empire had done at the time of the emperor Hadrian (117-138). The empire at the time of Tzetzes' allegories was a place full of Latins and Selcuks and Jerusalem was under Crusader rule, something unimaginable at the time of Psellos. Moreover, Manuel I had married a westerner, Bertha of Sulzbach, who was from Bavaria. She may have had numerous qualities, but a drawback was clearly her lack of knowledge of Greek culture and literature. It is for this reason that Tzetzes' *Allegories* were written for her. One sometimes underestimates how knowledge of the *Iliad* was considered a basic element of humanistic culture in Byzantium. Psellos claims he was familiar with the entire poem by the age of eleven<sup>31</sup>. Psellos gives an insight into Homeric culture in Byzantium and moreover tells us how Maria Skleraina, the mistress of the emperor Constantine IX sometime between 1042-1045, was challenged with a line from the *Iliad* during a court procession. He notes she completed the quotation by heart pronouncing it correctly (*Chron.* VI 61 Reinsch):

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<sup>28</sup> F. Cumont-F. Boll, *Catalogus codicum astrologorum Graecorum*, Brussels 1904, 108-140. Apparently, the defence was written between 1147 and 1159. For the interest in astrology see also Nicet. *Chon. Hist.* 95,29-96,35 van Dielen. See also P. Magdalino, *L'Orthodoxie des astrologues: la science entre le dogme et la divination a Byzance (VIIe-XIVe siecle)*, Paris 2006.

<sup>29</sup> *Vat. Gr.* 1056, a fourteenth-century manuscript of a twelfth-century work, gives the horoscopes for the coronations of Alexios I Komnenos in 1081 and Manuel I Komnenos in 1143.

<sup>30</sup> J. Lefort, *Trois discours de Jean Mauropous en 1047*, «T&MByz» VI (1976) 265-303.

<sup>31</sup> Psell. *In matr.* 354-365 in U. Criscuolo, *Michele Psello. Autobiografia: encomio per la madre*, Naples 1989.



Ἀμέλει τοι συνειλεγμένων ποτὲ τῶν ὑπογραμματευομένων ἡμῶν, πομπὴν αἰ περὶ τὴν βασιλίδαν ἐποιοῦντο· προήεσαν δὲ αὐτὴ τε καὶ ἡ ἀδελφὴ Θεοδώρα, καὶ μετ' ἐκείνην ἡ σεβαστὴ (τούτῳ γὰρ αὐτὴν τῷ καινῷ ἄξιωματι αἰ βασιλίδες, δόξαν οὕτω τῷ αὐτοκράτορι, τετιμήκεσαν)· ὡς δ' οὖν προήεσαν, ἦγε δὲ αὐτὰς ἡ πομπὴ ἐπὶ θέατρον, καὶ τότε ταύτην οἱ πολλοὶ πρῶτως ἐθέασαντο συμπαριοῦσαν ταῖς βασιλίσι, τῶν τις περὶ τὴν κολακείαν πολὺς τοῦτο δὴ τὸ ποιητικὸν ἠρέμα πως ἀπεφθέγγετο, τὸ· «Οὐ νέμεσις», περαιτέρω μὴ συντείνας τὸ ἔπος· ἡ δὲ τότε μὲν οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν λόγον ἐπεσημήνατο, ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ πομπὴ ἐτελέσθη, διέκρινέτε τὸν εἰρηκότα, καὶ τὸν λόγον ἀνέκρινε, μηδὲν ὑποσολοικίσασα τὴν φωνήν, ἀλλ' ὀρθοεπήσασα τὸ ὄνομα ἀκριβῶς· ὡς δ' ὁ εἰρηκὼς τὴν ἱστορίαν τῷ ἀκριβοῦντι κατέλεξε, καὶ οἱ πολλοὶ ἅμα τῷ λόγῳ πρὸς τὴν ἐρμηνεῖαν κατένευσαν, φρονήματος αὐτίκα ἐκείνη πλησθεῖσα, ἀμείβεται τοῦ ἐγκωμίου τὸν ἐπαινέτην οὐκ ὀλίγοις τισὶν, οὐδὲ φαύλοις, ἀλλ' οἷς ἐκείνη κεχρηῆσθαι καὶ ἀμείβεσθαι εἴωθεν. Καὶ ἵνα γε αὐτῇ οἱ τε ἄλλοι καὶ αἰ βασιλίδες συμπνέωσι μάλιστα, τὸ ἐκάστῳ ἢ ἐκάστη οἰκεῖον ἐδίδου παρῆχειν ὁ αὐτοκράτωρ.

I will give an example of this. One day, when we, the imperial secretaries, were all together, the empress's retinue were taking part in a procession. Zoe herself and her sister Theodora walked in this procession, followed by the Augusta (a new title granted to her by the empresses, at the instigation of Constantine). As they were on their way – the route led them to the Theatre and this was the first time the ordinary people had seen Sclerena in company with Zoe and Theodora – one of the subtle flatterers softly quoted Homer's "It were no shame..." but did not complete the lines. At the time Sclerena gave no sign of having heard these words, but when the ceremony was over, she sought out the man who had uttered them and asked him what they meant. She repeated his remark without a single mistake, pronouncing the words exactly as he had whispered them. As soon as he told her the story in detail, and the crowd showed its approval of his interpretation of the anecdote, as well as of the quotation itself, she was filled with pride and her flatterer was rewarded for his compliment. The presents she gave him were not a few, nor were they paltry trifles, but such as she was used to receiving and giving in her own circle. As a matter of fact, the emperor had given her a private fund for presents

to individuals of either sex, in order to win the sympathies of the court, and especially of the two empresses<sup>32</sup>.

Thus, in the mid-eleventh century Psellos dealt with an audience who was meant to know the *Iliad*, and large sections of it by heart. Tzetzes was dealing with a foreign princess who seems to have never heard of the *Iliad* before she reached Constantinople. Psellos' essay appears to have been written for students who found it difficult to interpret the *Iliad* in a Christian manner. Such a method was not unusual and he tells us how his teacher used to be an expert of transposing the *Odyssey* into a Christian framework in ca. 1034 (*Oratio Funeris* 4,6,5-21 Polemis)<sup>33</sup>:

Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἴδει τοὺς Ἕλληνας μυστηριώδεις ὄντας καὶ τελετικοὺς τὰ πολλὰ καὶ ἀπόρητον ἔχοντας τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑπὸ φαυλοτέρῳ τῷ σχήματι, περιήρει τὸ περικάλυμμα καὶ τὸ ἐγκεκρυμμένον ἀπεγύμνου θεώρημα. Τοιγαροῦν αὐτῷ ἢ μὲν καθιεμένη παρ' Ὀμήρῳ χρυσῇ σειρᾷ στάσις τις ἐδόκει τῆς περιφορᾶς τοῦ παντός, Ἄρης δὲ δεσμούμενος ὁ θυμὸς ἐγινώσκετο ἀρρήτῳ δυνάμει τῶν λόγων, ὅστις τε διδασκαλικὸς καὶ διὰ τῶν ὠτῶν τῆς ψυχῆς ἐφικνούμενος καὶ ὅστις οἴκοθεν ἄλλεται, ἢ δὲ φίλη πατρίς, πρὸς ἣν οἱ περὶ τὸν Ὀδυσσεῖα ἀπὸ τῆς καταφρασματτοῦσης ἠπεύγοντο, ἢ ἄνω ὑπενοεῖτο Ἱερουσαλήμ, ἐν ἣ πρώτως γεγεννημένους ὁ πολυπαθὴς οὗτος χῶρος ἐδέξατο, ἐν ᾧ δὴ, εἰ μὴ πρὸς ἐκείνην ἐπειγοίμεθα, τῇ τῆς ἡδονῆς ἀπάτῃ δελεαζόμενοι, εἰς θηρίων ἰδέαν ἀπὸ τῶν

Since he knew that the Greeks were mysterious, that they were mostly secretive, and that they concealed the truth under a rather lowly form, he removed the cover and revealed the hidden meaning. Therefore, he thought that Homer's hanging golden chain was a pause in the movement of everything. He recognized that bound Ares was a spirit with the ineffable power of words, who, as a teacher, reached the soul through the ears and leapt from home. He understood that the beloved fatherland, towards which Odysseus' companions hurried away from the sorceress, was the heavenly Jerusalem, in which this place of suffering received those who were first born and where, if we had not rushed towards it, enticed by pleasure's deception, we would have been

<sup>32</sup> Translation by E.R.A. Sewter, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers: The Chronographia by Michael Psellos*, Harmondsworth 1966<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> Psellos indicates he undertook studies of advanced poetry at the time of the death of Romanos III (1028-1034): *Chron.* IV 4,1-3 Reinsch.

κρειττόνων μορφῶν μεθιστάμεθα. Τοιοῦτος Ὀμηρίδης ἐκεῖνος ἦν, οὐ κατὰ τοὺς πολλοὺς προσέχων τῷ γράμματι, οὐδὲ θελγόμενος τῷ μέτρῳ τὴν ἀκοήν, οὐδὲ τῷ φαινομένῳ διδούς, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀπόθετον κάλλος ζητῶν, λόγῳ καὶ θεωρίᾳ διασχῶν τὴν ὕλην καὶ εἶσω τῶν ἀδύτων γενόμενος.

transformed into beasts from superior shapes. He was such a Homeric scholar. He was not better than many in writing, nor did he charm one's hearing with verse, nor did he give in to appearance, but he sought the concealed beauty, taught the matter philosophically, and gained access to the secret recesses.

What Psellos describes in this passage is *metapoiesis*. Psellos seems to have taught his students what his teacher had taught him. Indeed in *Oratio Minor* 33 he refers to reading the myth of Circe of the *Odyssey* in this way<sup>34</sup>. Psellos is clear on the difference specifically in this text where he says: you students allegorize, I render true. Maistor Niketas does the same. He employs the term elsewhere but seems to indicate that the difference between the two terms is one of interpretation. While allegory seeks parallel readings, a *metapoiesis* interprets and renders true.

So, one may limit oneself to claim that Psellos has a philosophical interpretation for an audience which knew the *Iliad* well, while Tzetzes had a rhetorical reading suited for an audience which did not know the *Iliad* at all. This would conceal the ongoing debate among these thinkers. Among other details, Tzetzes is proud to descend from those very people which demoted Psellos at court, namely the Alans<sup>35</sup>. Psellos claims that the Homeric Gods of *Iliad* 4.1-4 designate entities which Christians define as angels, according to Dionysius the Areopagite. These intermediary entities have specific characteristics which were explored philosophically by Neoplatonists such as Proclus. On the other hand, Tzetzes dismisses such a reading by claiming that these entities are rather more similar to planets and stars. This view is clearly Aristotelian. The notion that planets are divine is present in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*<sup>36</sup>. This would have two main obstacles in eleventh century Constantinople: the Neoplatonist Iamblichus (245-325) asks how it is possible that the stars be considered Gods<sup>37</sup>, the other being that astrology was condemned by Church Fathers

<sup>34</sup> *Oratio Minor* 33,17-19 Littlewood in A.R. Littlewood, *Michaelis Pselli oratoria minora*, Leipzig 1985.

<sup>35</sup> See F. Lauritzen, *Nations and minorities in Psellos' Chronographia (976-1078)*, «Studia Ceranea» IX (2019) 319-331.

<sup>36</sup> Arist. *Metaph.* λ 1073a14-15

<sup>37</sup> Iambl. *De Myst.* I 17,2-4. For a discussion about the question see Dodds, *o.c.* 268 (commentary on propositions 128 and 129).

such as John of Damascus (676-749)<sup>38</sup>, since it denies free will. Tzetzes is aware of such objections. Such different readings reveal that an essay such as 42 was not written in jest. On the contrary it tackles directly the question of divine contemplation and divine activity, which was central both in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It also tackles those Neoplatonic passages which discuss and dismiss the notion of planets as divine and reveals an underlying problem both for Psellos and Tzetzes.

Mango was right that Psellos in these types of essays does not refer to his contemporaries, even though he is touching directly on a topic which was important and well known at the time. He does not give names but facts and interpretations. Alexander Kazhdan explains it thus: «the allusive commentary on current affairs that the literary fiction of the empire masked with antiquated vocabulary and antiquated subjects was thoroughly understood and appreciated by its readers»<sup>39</sup>. If one combines Mango and Kazhdan's views it seems that Tzetzes was rather unusually 'flogging a dead horse'<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> *Expositio Fidei* 21,122-125 Kotter.

<sup>39</sup> A.P. Kazhdan-A.W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Los Angeles 1990, 140.

<sup>40</sup> John Bright, referring to the Great Reform act of 1867.



**παρὰ τῶν τεσσάρων τούτων σοφῶν:  
Myth and criticism in Tzetzes**

This paper will discuss a short and significant attestation provided primarily by John Tzetzes on the alleged four members of the much-discussed Peisistratus' 'commission', which was gathered together in order to edit the Homeric epics. Nigel Wilson terms this piece of information «the most striking example» of «some unusual information which he [*sc.* Tzetzes] alone provides»<sup>1</sup>. Unusual here is the list of the members of the commission, with names – a corrupt Epiconcylos(?), Onomacritus from Athens, Zopyrus of Heraclea, and Orpheus of Croton. They “were arranged together more than two hundred years before Ptolemy Philadelphus and Zenodotus’ correction with Peisistratus’ effort by the following four intellectuals: Epiconcylos, Onomacritus of Athens, Zopyrus of Heracleia, and Orpheus of Croton” (πρὸ διακοσίων καὶ πλειόνων ἐνιαυτῶν Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Φιλαδέλφου καὶ τῆς διορθώσεως Ζηνοδότου συντεθείσας σπουδῆ Πεισιστράτου παρὰ τῶν τεσσάρων τούτων σοφῶν, Ἐπικογκύλου Ὀνομακρίτου τε Ἀθηναίου Ζωπύρου τε Ἡρακλεώτου καὶ Κροτωνιάτου Ὀρφέως, Tzetz. *Proem.* II 31-38, 33 Koster<sup>2</sup>).

How does Tzetzes use the myth of the Peisistratean recension and why is his evidence important? The names of four alleged scholars (*sophoi*) working under Peisistratus appear for the very first time here in Tzetzes. Where did he take these exact names from? The question whether the decision to provide the members of a mysterious commission of Peisistratus with names should be viewed as part of Tzetzes’ creativity, or to stems from a certain combination of sources that he had access to, including information from his library, should be posed. Although a synchronic contextualisation would demand the knowledge and skills of a Byzantinist, and not a classicist, some attempt can be made in order to analyse this passage on both diachronic and synchronic levels. And of course the question of reliability of the data provided by Tzetzes should be posed as well.

This is a significant piece of information not only for Byzantinists, but also for those who are interested in the history of scholarship, and especially of pre-

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<sup>1</sup> N. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*. London 1983, 194. See also M. Savio, *Polemica e invettiva nelle opere di Giovanni Tzetze: screditare i concorrenti e pubblicizzare l’“eccellenza tzeziana”*, «RFIC» CXLVI/1 (2018) 181-238: 187-190.

<sup>2</sup> The text is quoted according to *Scholia in Aristophanem*, IA: *Prolegomena de comoedia*, ed. W.J.W. Koster, Groningen 1975, pp. 22-38 (§XIa). All translations from Greek are my own.

Alexandrian scholarship. In the present paper the historical background of the passage will be considered and then this will be placed in Tzetzes' scholarly environment.

City-rulers and legislators have been frequently credited in the later tradition with 'transmitting' the Homeric text. Thus three figures - the legendary lawgiver of Sparta Lycurgus, the initiator of the Panathenaic Festival (unless it was his son Hipparchus) Peisistratus, and his son Hipparchus were said to have discovered, collected and popularized the Homeric poems. At the same time, two sixth-century BCE Athenians – Solon and (more frequently) Peisistratus – were credited with interpreting and interpolating Homer (see below). Thus Peisistratus and Hipparchus are at the epicentre of both legends and must have played some role in the history of the Homeric text. We will discuss the evidence for each separately although this is intermixed and not always clearly distinguishable.

From as early as the fourth century BCE a view is attested that Homer was recited at the Panathenaea under a regulation ascribed to Solon and/or Peisistratus or the Peisistratids. According to the fourth-century historian Dieuchidas (*BNJ* 485 F 6), Solon did more than Peisistratus to throw light on Homer (μᾶλλον οὖν Σόλων Ὅμηρον ἐφώτισεν ἢ Πεισίστρατος, *Diog. Laert.* I 57). Solon is praised for his abilities in explaining Homer and providing an order for public recitations of Homer. The account of regulation is identical in Dieuchidas and the contemporary pseudo-Platonic dialogue *Hipparchus*, only that the author of the latter ascribed the activities to Peisistratus' son Hipparchus: Hipparchus is said to have first brought the poems of Homer to this land, and required the rhapsodes at the Panathenaea to go through them in sequence by taking turns (Ἰππάρχῳ, ὃς [...] τὰ Ὅμηρου ἔπη πρῶτος ἐκόμισεν εἰς τὴν γῆν ταυτηνί, καὶ ἠνάγκασε τοὺς ῥαψωδοὺς Παναθηναίους ἐξ ὑπολήψεως ἐφεξῆς αὐτὰ διέναι ὡσπερ νῦν ἔτι οἶδε ποιοῦσι, *Hipp.* 228b)<sup>3</sup>.

The third-century historian Hereas of Megara (*FGrH* 486 F 1) wrote that Peisistratus for political reasons (χαριζόμενον Ἀθηναίους) had inserted the verse *Od.* XI 631 into the text of the *Odyssey* (ἐμβαλεῖν εἰς τὴν Ὅμηρου νέκυϊαν) and deleted one verse (fr. 298 M.-W.) from the Hesiodic corpus (τὸ ἔπος ἐκ τῶν Ἡσιόδου Πεισίστρατον ἐξελεῖν, *Plut. Th.* 20,2).

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<sup>3</sup> H.A. Shapiro, *Hipparchos and the Rhapsodes*, in C. Dougherty-L. Kurke (edd.), *Cultural Poetics in Archaic Greece: Cult, Performance, Politics*, Cambridge 1993, 92-107; B. Graziosi, *Inventing Homer: The Early Reception of Epic*, Cambridge 2002, 201-228; G. Nagy, *Homer the Classic*, Cambridge MA 2009, 354-449; L. Hübner, *Homer im kulturellen Gedächtnis. Eine intentionale Geschichte archaischer Homerrezeption bis zur Perserkriegszeit*. Stuttgart 2019, 109-117. See also D. Collins, *Master of the Game. Competition and Performance in Greek Poetry*. Washington DC 2004, 192-202.

Further sources are late. Cicero in his *De oratore* (55 BCE) refers to Peisistratus who “was outstanding in eloquence in such a way, that he excelled in education and literature” (*ita eloquentia floruit, ut litteris doctrinaque praestaret*) and who “is said to have been the first who arranged the books of Homer, scattered previously, in the form that we have them now” (*primus Homeri libros confusos antea sic disposuisse dicitur, ut nunc habemus*, Cic. *De Or.* III 137).

Solon’s and Peisistratus’ ‘philological’ activities such as their alleged interpolation of several passages into the Homeric text are frequently referred to. For political ‘Athenizing’ reasons some changes have been made in the Catalogue of Ships. Strabo, reporting on the island Salamis, claimed that some sources say it was Peisistratus, some Solon, who inserted in the Catalogue of Ships immediately after the verse Αἴας δ’ ἐκ Σαλαμῖνος ἄγεν δυοκαίδεκα νῆας the verse στήσε δ’ ἄγων, ἴν’ Ἀθηναίων ἴσταντο φάλαγγες (*Il.* II 558), and either Peisistratus or Solon – or both – use Homer as a witness that the island from the beginning belonged to the Athenians (μάρτυρι χρήσασθαι τῷ ποιητῇ τοῦ τὴν νῆσον ἐξ ἀρχῆς Ἀθηναίων ὑπάρξαι, Strab. IX 1,10). Importantly, Strabo’s vocabulary (such as οὐ παραδέχονται δὲ τοῦθ’ οἱ κριτικοὶ “the critics do not accept it”), and also his quotations, reveal that he had access to *hypomnemata* such as those of Didymus, Aristonicus, and others<sup>4</sup>.

Pausanias reports on Peisistratean associates’ scholarly activities, such as changing a word (μεταποιῆσαι τὸ ὄνομα) in *Iliad* II 573 (Paus. VII 26,13)<sup>5</sup>. Aelian says that Peisistratus collected and “published” Homeric epic (συναγαγὼν ἀπέφηνε τὴν Ἰλιάδα καὶ Ὀδύσειαν, *Ael. VH* 13,14). Julius Africanus in a fragmentary encyclopaedic work *Cesti* (Κεστοί) which has been ascribed to him, quotes *Odyssey* XI 51. The author explains that the Peisistratids “whilst they stitched together the other verses, they cut off these, judging that at that point they did not belong to the course/row of the poetry” (τὰ ἄλλα συνράπτο(ν)τες ἔπη ταῦτα ἀπέσχισαν, ἀλλότρια τοῦ στοίχου τῆς ποιήσεως ἐκεῖ ἐπικρίναντες, Jul. Afr. *Cest.* 18 in *P.Oxy.* 412 coll. i-ii)<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> See T.W. Allen, *Pisistratus and Homer*, «CQ» VII/1 (1913) 33-51: 38-39. The verse *Il.* II 558 is omitted in the manuscript *Ven. A*, and the whole catalogue is omitted in *T*.

<sup>5</sup> On the political interests behind this change, see T.W. Allen, *Argos in Homer*, «CQ» III/2 (1909) 81-98: 85, and Allen, *Pisistratus* cit. 35-36. Thus Allen believed that the statement about the casual alteration of Δονέεσσαν into Γονέεσσαν may have proceeded from the Sicyonians who destroyed the town.

<sup>6</sup> The Greek text quoted is based on J. Hammerstaedt, *Julius Africanus und seine Tätigkeiten im 18. Kestos (P.Oxy.412 col. II)*, in M. Wallraff-L. Mecella (edd.), *Die Kestoi des Julius Afrikanus und ihre Überlieferung*, Berlin-New York 2009, 53-69: 57.



Finally, according to the eleventh-century scholion T (in the ‘Townley Homer’, copied in 1059 CE) and Eustathius, the whole Book X of the *Iliad* (the so-called *Doloneia*) was not part of the transmitted poem but composed separately, and only under Peisistratus was this interpolated into the corpus of the *Iliad* (ὕπὸ δὲ Πεισιστράτου τετάχθαι εἰς τὴν ποιήσιν, *schol. T Il. X 1* Erbse)<sup>7</sup>. Before starting to analyse Tzetzes’ statement on Peisistratus’ associates it should be clear that Peisistratus and his enigmatic ‘commission’ were firmly credited with arranging and making interpolations to Homeric epic<sup>8</sup>.

Tzetzes’ passage reads as follows (*Proem. II 31-38*, 33 Koster):

τῶν ἑλληνίδων δὲ βίβλων, ὡς καὶ προλαβὼν ἔφην, τὰς τραγικάς μὲν διώρθωσε δι’ Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Αἰτωλοῦ, τὰς τῆς κωμωδίας δὲ διὰ τοῦ Λυκόφρονος, διὰ δὲ Ζηνοδότου τοῦ Ἐφεσίου τὰς τῶν λοιπῶν ποιητῶν, τὰς ὁμηρεῖους δὲ κατ’ ἐξαίρετον, πρὸ διακοσίων καὶ πλείονων ἐνιαυτῶν Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Φιλαδέλφου καὶ τῆς διορθώσεως Ζηνοδότου συντεθείσας σπουδῆ Πεισιστράτου παρὰ τῶν τεσσάρων τούτων σοφῶν, Ἐπικονκύλου Ὀνομακρίτου τε Ἀθηναίου Ζωπύρου τε Ἡρακλεώτου καὶ Κροτωνιάτου Ὀρφέως. οὕτω μὲν ἐν χρόνοις τοῦ Πεισιστράτου τοῖς τέσσαρσι τούτοις σοφοῖς αἱ ὁμηρικαὶ συγγραφαὶ τεμαχίως περιφερόμεναι συνετέθησαν καὶ βίβλοι ἐγένοντο· χρόνοις δ’, ὡς ἔφην, τοῦ Φιλαδέλφου παρὰ τοῦ Ζηνοδότου ὠρθώθησαν.

From the Greek books, as I said in my introduction, he (Ptolemy) had corrected the tragic texts through Alexander of Aetolia, the texts of comedy through Lycophron, and the books of all other poets through Zenodotus of Ephesus; the Homeric books which in a special category were arranged together more than two hundred years before Ptolemy Philadelphus and Zenodotus’ correction with Peisistratus’ effort by the following four intellectuals: Epiconcylus, Onomacritus of Athens, Zopyrus of Heracleia, and Orpheus of Croton. In such a way then at the time of Peisistratus Homeric *texts* circulated in pieces were

<sup>7</sup> See the detailed study on this question by C. Dué-M. Ebbott, *Iliad 10 and the Poetics of Ambush: A Multitext Edition with Essays and Commentary*. Washington D.C. 2010: <https://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/4278.casey-dué-and-mary-ebbot-iliad-10-and-the-poetics-of-ambush>.

<sup>8</sup> For Peisistratus’ or the Peisistratids’ ‘edition’ of the Homeric poems, see R. Pfeiffer, *History of classical scholarship: from the beginnings to the end of the Hellenistic age*. Oxford 1968, 6-8; M. L. West, *Geschichte des Textes*, in J. Latacz, *Homers Ilias. Gesamtkommentar. Prolegomena*, München-Leipzig 2000, 27.38: 29; and R. Fowler, *The Homeric Question*, in Id. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*, CUP 2004, 220-234; 224, n. 16.

collected together by these four intellectuals, and the books appeared. At the time, as I said, of (Ptolemy) Philadelphus they were corrected by Zenodotus.

As it is obvious from the comparison of Tzetzes' passage with the texts discussed above, it is noteworthy that Tzetzes comes to the number 'four' (παρὰ τῶν τεσσάρων τούτων σοφῶν), and gives specific names to the members of the commission: Epiconcylus, Onomacritus of Athens, Zopyrus of Heracleia, and Orpheus of Croton. It is also noteworthy that the discussion of the commission occurs not in a 'Homeric' but in an 'Aristophanic' treatise by Tzetzes. In the *Prolegomena* to Aristophanes' comedies Tzetzes begins with an account of the emendation of ancient texts in Hellenistic Alexandria. Zenodotus is then stated to be particularly interested in the text of Homer. At this point early Athenian activity which had taken place in the reign of Peisistratus when Homeric text was prepared, is reported. The alleged members of Peisistratus' commission are called by name in two other sources, related to the treatise *Prolegomena de comoedia Aristophanis* by Tzetzes: an anonymous (contemporary?) text, the so-called *Anonymus of Cramer*, first occurred in *Par. gr.* 2821 (XV c.)<sup>9</sup> and a derivative Latin version, known as the *Scholion Plautinum* (*Vat. Lat.* 11.469, XV c.)<sup>10</sup>. In all probability a source containing these names of Peisistra-

<sup>9</sup> R. Janko, *Aristotle on Comedy: Towards a Reconstruction of Poetics II*. London 1984, 9-10. In the *Anonymus of Cramer* we find similar content (II 43-48, 43-44 Koster): τὰς δέ γε σκηνικάς Ἀλέξανδρος τε, ὡς ἔφθην εἰπῶν, καὶ Λυκόφρων διορθώσαντο. τὰς δέ γε ποιητικὰς Ζηνόδοτος πρῶτον καὶ ὕστερον Ἀρίσταρχος διορθώσαντο. καίτοι τὰς ὁμηρικὰς ἑβδομήκοντα δύο γραμματικοὶ ἐπὶ Πεισιστράτου τοῦ Ἀθηναίου τυράννου διέθηκον οὕτως ἵσποράδην οὕσας τὸ πρὶν ἐπεκρίθησαν δὲ κατ' αὐτὸν ἐκεῖνον τὸν καιρὸν ὑπ' Ἀριστάρχου καὶ Ζηνοδότου, ἄλλων ὄντων τούτων τῶν ἐπὶ Πτολεμαίου διορθωσάντων. οἱ δὲ τέσσαρα σὶ τισὶ τὴν ἐπὶ Πεισιστράτου διορθώσιν ἀναφέρουσιν· Ὀρφεῖ Κροτωνιάτῃ, Ζωπύρῳ Ἡρακλεώτῃ, Ὀνομακρίτῳ Ἀθηναίῳ καὶ Ἐπικολύλῳ, "Alexander (of Aetolia), as I said before, and Lycophron corrected the dramatic texts. Zenodotus firstly and then Aristarchus corrected the poetic texts. However, Homeric books, which were scattered previously, were thus arranged by seventy-two grammarians at the time of Peisistratus the tyrant of Athens. They were considered at the same time by Aristarchus and Zenodotus and the others who were correcting at the time of Ptolemy. Other sources ascribe the correction under Peisistratus to a certain four persons: Orpheus of Croton, Zopyrus of Heraclea, Onomacritus of Athens and Epiconcylus.

<sup>10</sup> pp. 48-49, ll. 19-24 Koster: *Ceterum Pisistratus sparsam prius Homeri poesin ante Ptolemaeum Philadelphum annis ducentis et eo etiam amplius sollerti cura in ea quae nunc extant rededit volumina, usus ad hoc opus divinum industria quattuor celeberrimorum et eruditissimorum hominum, videlicet Concyli, Onomacriti Atheniensis, Zopyri Heracleotae et Orphei Crotoniatae; nam carptim prius Homerus et nonnisi difficillime legebatur*, "Besides Peisistratus through a skillfull careful rendering of the poetry of Homer, scattered earlier, made the books as they are now, two hundred years and even more before Ptolemy Philadelphus, employing for this divine work the diligence of four of the most illustrious and the most erudite men, such as Concylus, Onomacritus of Athens, Zopyrus of

tus' commission, common to Tzetzes and the anonymous Cramer-author, probably circulated in twelfth-century Byzantium.

Two questions at least may be posed here: Who were these particular "four intellectuals"? And why are they important for Tzetzes or his source?

A certain Epiconcylus remains enigmatic and the reading may be corrupt.<sup>11</sup> Allen discussed the anonymous Cramer-passage and the name Epiconcylus as given by the manuscripts: Ἐπικογκύλω **V** and the Cambridge ms Bd. 11.70 (XV c.); καὶ ἐπι κογκύλω **M**; καὶ \*καγ ἐπίκογκυλω, marg. \*αθηνοδωρῶ ἐπίκλιν κορδυλίωνι **P**.<sup>12</sup> Ἀθηνοδῶρῶ ἐπίκλιν κορδυλίωνι *in margine* in **P** is perhaps a correction of καγ ἐπὶ κογκύλω. Allen argued the scribe must have found the *marginale* in his original; the other manuscripts omitted it. «It is to be presumed the immediate original ran καὶ κατ' Ἀθηνοδῶρων ἐπίκλιν κορδυλίωνα Ἐπικογκύλω κτλ., and that when κατ' Ἀθηνοδῶρων ἐπίκλιν κορδυλίωνα got into the margin owing to the homoearchon of ἐπίκλιν and Ἐπικογκύλω without its preposition it was assimilated to the case of the other proper names»<sup>13</sup>. The Latin version in the *scholion Plautinum* reads *videlicet Concyli*. However, "Concylus" remains equally enigmatic.

The most important attestation provided by this manuscript is the marginal reference to the source perhaps of all four members – the early-mid first-century BCE Stoic philosopher Athenodorus Cordylion. Athenodorus had been in charge of the library at Pergamon (Diog. Laert. VII 34; Plut. *Cat.* 10,1-2). It was perhaps at Pergamon that Homeric epic was originally presented as the work of Peisistratus' enigmatic commission. The Pergamenes searched for an older authority to their rival Alexandrian Homeric scholars<sup>14</sup>. This remains of course hypothetical, but as a hypothesis it explains the origin and a fixed and steady transmission of the myth of Peisistratus' 'editorial board'.

The next name in Tzetzes' list, Onomacritus of Athens, on the other hand, is the most famous of this group. He was known as an industrious compiler of oracles (χρησμολόγος), an interpolator, and a forger of purportedly older oracles and poems<sup>15</sup>. The job of χρησμολόγος itself, attested as early as the mid-sixth century

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Heracleia, and Orpheus of Croton. For before Homer was read in pieces, not without tremendous effort." S.H. Newhall *Pisistratus and his edition of Homer*, «Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences» XLIII/19 (1908) 491-510: 500-501; Wilson *o.c.* 194-195. A copy of Tzetzes' text belonged to the Italian humanist Georgius Merula who produced the *editio princeps* of Plautus.

<sup>11</sup> On possible reconstructions, see Allen, *Pisistratus* cit. 37-38. See also M.L. West, *The Orphic Poems*, Oxford 1983, 251.

<sup>12</sup> T.W. Allen, *Homer, the Origins and the Transmission*, Oxford 1924, 232-233.

<sup>13</sup> Allen, *Homer* cit. 232 n. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Allen, *Homer* cit. 233.

BCE, was in fact powerful, as such a person bore considerable influence over political decision-making. Furthermore, this occupation was close to scholarly work. Unlike μάντις, from whom χρησμολόγος was repeatedly and explicitly distinguished, it required collecting books, working with written archives and presupposed selective quotations and the interpretation of texts<sup>16</sup>. Thus Herodotus reports that Onomacritus was hired by Peisistratus with the aim of compiling the oracles of Musaeus (διαθέτην χρησμῶν τῶν Μουσαίου) and then banished from Athens by Peisistratus' son Hipparchus, allegedly for inserting an oracle into the verses of Musaeus (ἐμποιέων ἐς τὰ Μουσαίου χρησμόν, Hdt. VII 6) but in fact for political reasons.<sup>17</sup> Though the Peisistratean people had exiled Onomacritus from Athens, they came with him (according to Herodotus) to Xerxes at Susa, and said reverential words concerning him (λεγόντων τῶν Πεισιστρατιδῶν περὶ αὐτοῦ σεμνοῦς λόγους) and Onomacritus recited from his oracles (κατέλεγε τῶν χρησμῶν).

It is thus no wonder that the scholia to the *Odyssey* depict Onomacritus as having made an interpolation of three verses, *Odyssey* XI 602-604 (*schol.* H *Od.* XI 604 Dindorf = fr. 8 D'Agostino: τοῦτον ὑπὸ Ὀνομακρίτου ἐμπεποιῆσθαί φασιν.

<sup>15</sup> J. Martínez *Onomacritus the forger, Hipparchus' scapegoat?*, in Id. (ed.), *Fakes and Forgers of Classical Literature: Ergo decipiatur!*, Madrid 2011, 217-226; M.S. Jensen, *Writing Homer: A Study Based on Results from Modern Fieldwork*, Copenhagen 2011, 302-312.

<sup>16</sup> Hdt. I 62,4; VII 6,3; VII 143,3; Ar. *Pax* 1045-1047, 1070-1071; Av. 959-991; Thuc. II 21,3; VIII 1,1. On χρησμολόγοι see more in L.E. Rossi, *Gli oracoli come documento d'improvvisazione*, in C. Brillante-M. Cantilena-C.O. Pavese (edd.), *I poemi epici rapsodici non omerici e la tradizione orale*, Padua 1981, 203-230; H.A. Shapiro, *Oracle-mongers in Peisistratid Athens*, «Kernos» III (1990) 335-345; J.E. Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle, Its Responses and Operations*, Berkeley 1978, 145-165; J. Dillery, *Chresmologues and manteis: Independent diviners and the problem of authority*, in S.I. Johnson-P.T. Struck (edd.), *Mantike: studies in ancient divination*, Leiden-Boston 2005, 167-231. On Onomacritus' practices and the deliberate mistreatment of his name by his rivals in competing genres, see R.P. Martin, *Onomakritos, rhapsode: composition-in performance and the competition of genres in 6th-century Athens*, in A. Guzmán-J. Martínez (edd.), *Animo decipiendi? Rethinking Fakes and Authorship in Classical, Late Antique and Early Christian Works*, Groningen 2018, 89-106.

<sup>17</sup> Hdt. VII 6; see H. Diels, *Die Anfänge der Philologie bei den Griechen*, «Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum, Geschichte und deutsche Literatur» XXV (1910) 1-25: 10-11; A.C. Cassio, *Early editions of the Greek epics and Homeric textual criticism in the sixth and fifth centuries BC*, in F. Montanari (ed.), *Omero tremila anni dopo*, Roma 2002, 105-136: 116; E. D'Agostino, *Onomacriti testimonia et fragmenta*, Pisa 2007, 33-40; M.A. Flower, *The Seer in Ancient Greece*, Berkeley 2008, 63-64. On the political context of Greek-Persian relations in Herodotus and Onomacritus' manipulations of oracles, see Shapiro, *Oracle-Mongers* cit.; J. Haubold, *Serse, Onomacrito e la ricezione di Omero*, in G. Zanetto et al. (edd.), *Momenti della ricezione omerica: Poesia arcaica e teatro*, Milano 2004, 19-35: 26-35; A. Hollmann, *The Master of Signs: Signs and the Interpretation of Signs in Herodotus' Histories*, Washington DC 2011, 216-217; Martínez, *o.c.*; and Martin, *o.c.* On the alleged forgery of Orphic poems, see West, *The Orphic Poems* cit. 40; D'Agostino, *o.c.* xviii-xxi.

ἠθέτηται δέ, “This is said to have been inserted by Onomacritus. In fact, it has been atheized”). These verses are dated later than the main text, as Heracles is not deified in either the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, but he is attested as a god in a number of late sixth-century BCE vases and inscriptions.<sup>18</sup> Thus the interpolator of these verses emphasized the importance of the new cult of Heracles at Athens, while at the same time revealing «the impossibility of doing away with a traditional and unalterable episode involving the dead Heracles»<sup>19</sup>. Finally, Aristotle in his *Politics* refers to a certain lawgiver Onomacritus (1274a22-31). It remains open whether this Onomacritus was identical with the Onomacritus of Athens, but in any case this presupposes a further link between the ruler Peisistratus and the lawgiver Onomacritus. So much for Onomacritus.

The next *sophos* in Tzetzes’ list is an obscure Zopyrus of Heraclea, who was perhaps an early Pythagorean, known from the catalogue in Iamblichus (though as a Tarentine)<sup>20</sup>. He was considered to have written the poems with cryptic titles the Κρατήρ, and perhaps the Πέπλος and the Δίκτυον which were also attributed to the sixth-century BCE Pythagorean philosopher Brontinus (the titles should perhaps be understood as metaphors for cosmogonic processes)<sup>21</sup>. However, I have found nothing suggesting any relationship with Peisistratus’ court or activities.

The last member of the ‘commission’ referred to in Tzetzes’ list is Orpheus of Croton. He is mentioned as an epic poet in the *Suda* too (ο 657 Adler: Κροτωνιάτης, ἔποποιός). The second/first-century BCE historian and grammarian Asclepiades of Myrlea – thus the *Suda* – credited Orpheus with being associated with Peisistratus, with some poems having been written in all probability at a later stage (ὄν Πεισιστράτῳ συνεῖναι τῶ τυράννῳ Ἀσκληπιάδης φησὶν ἐν τῷ ε’ βιβλίῳ τῶν Γραμματικῶν. Δεκαετηρίδα, Ἀργοναυτικά· καὶ ἄλλα τινά, “Asclepiades says in Book VI of *On the Grammarians* that he was an associate of Peisistratus the tyrant. The *Ten-years-duration*, the *Argonautica*, and some others”)<sup>22</sup>. The name Orpheus must, according to Martin West, have been invented as the author of an Orphic poem<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> See the parallels in Cassio, *o.c.* 116 n. 52.

<sup>19</sup> Cassio, *o.c.* 116 n. 52. On the interpolation of these verses in the context of competitive rhapsodic performance, see Martin, *o.c.* 100.

<sup>20</sup> Iambl. *VP* 267. West, *The Orphic Poems* cit. 10.

<sup>21</sup> West, *The Orphic Poems* cit. 10-12, 249-251.

<sup>22</sup> On Asclepiades’ Γραμματικοί / Περὶ Γραμματικῶν and his position in the debate on the Pisistratean recension see L. Pagani, *Asclepiade di Mirlea. I frammenti degli scritti omerici*, Roma 2007, 35-36.

<sup>23</sup> West *The Orphic Poems* cit. 249-250.

Another fact is noteworthy here. The coincidence that all Peisistratus' associates are somehow connected with Orphic-Pythagorean circles suggests that perhaps at the same time as the 'edition' of the Homeric poems an 'edition' of Orpheus might have been in the process of being prepared<sup>24</sup>. Nagy considers Tzetzes' narrative transmitted further in Cramer's *Anonymous* in the context of Orpheus in the time of Peisistratids<sup>25</sup>. Nagy's focus is on the word διέθηξαν ('arranged') with reference to the organizing of the Peisistratean recension by the four 'arrangers'. In Herodotus Onomacritus is called an "arranger of the oracles of Musaeus" (διαθέτην χρησμῶν τῶν Μουσαίου, Hdt. VII 6,3). Such arrangement indicates a mode of a textual transmission that in later times, however, was viewed as «antithetical and even detrimental to poetry»<sup>26</sup>. Alternatively, Allen, speculating on the enigmatic Epiconcylus, argued that, among the Pythagoreans, names in -υλος or -λος are frequent.<sup>27</sup> Diels and Kranz's *Vorsokratiker* contain the Pythagoreans Σύλλος, Ἐπίσυλος, Ἀγύλος, Ἄστυλος, Ὀκκελος, Ὀκκιλος (DK 58A), Βάθυλλος (DK 24B1). Points of contact between Orphic and Homeric poetry as well as the similarities in the organization of Homeric as well as Orphic poetry in the time of Peisistratids are thus probable<sup>28</sup>. There is no direct proof for this hypothesis in the sources, but as a statement it adds a pebble of sorts to the mosaic of early scholarly work.

Some further significant arguments recently have been added to this. The Athenian 'recension' was particularly important in the context of the circulation of the Ionic copies of the Homeric epics. The Ionic copies seem to have been written in the Euboean alphabet (if one can speak about alphabets used in the sixth century BCE)<sup>29</sup>. However, as Cassio argues, given the fact that Samos and Chios monopolized the epic texts early on, Ionic copies in the sixth century BCE meant East Ionic

<sup>24</sup> Clem. *Strom.* I 21,131,1-5. On an association with Orphic poetry, cf. also Paus. XI 22,7; on Orphic compositions connected to Onomacritus, cf. also Paus. VIII 31,3 and Plut. *Pyth. or.* 407b, and see Martin, *o.c.* 98-100. See further West, *The Orphic Poems* cit. 250.

<sup>25</sup> G. Nagy, *Homer the Preclassic*, Berkeley-Los Angeles 2010, 348-352.

<sup>26</sup> Nagy, *Homer the Preclassic* cit. 348.

<sup>27</sup> Allen, *Homer* cit. 234.

<sup>28</sup> Nagy, *Homer the Classic* cit. 250: «The poetry associated with Orpheus stems from a pre-Homeric tradition – that is if we define pre-Homeric in terms of earlier periods when Orphic poetry was not yet differentiated from what later became Homeric poetry».

<sup>29</sup> B.B. Powell, *Homer and the Origin of the Greek Alphabet*. Cambridge 1991; C.J. Ruijgh, *D'Homère aux origines protomycéniennes de la tradition épique: analyse dialectologique du langage Homérique, avec un excursus sur la création de l'alphabet grec*, in J. P. Crielaard (ed.), *Homeric Questions*. «Essays in Philology, Ancient History and Archaeology, including the Papers of a Conference organized by the Netherlands Institute at Athens, Athens, May 15, 1993», Amsterdam 1995, 1-96.

and not West Ionic, and Euboean copies perhaps never reached Athens<sup>30</sup>. Furthermore, since the late sixth century BCE Ionic letters have constantly been in use in the Attic alphabet. It is thus difficult to underestimate the significance of the story that Peisistratus and Peisistratids institutionalised the epic recitations. Though they were of course not responsible for the final fixing of the text, they played a crucial role in its Athenizing development<sup>31</sup>.

In order to deal with the last question I wanted to discuss in this paper – Tzetzes' reasons for providing the information on Peisistratus' recension of Homeric epic – we should turn from Classical antiquity to twelfth-century Byzantium, when Homeric poetry was especially loved and studied<sup>32</sup>. Tzetzes, «a great expert on Homer»<sup>33</sup>, prefaced his scholia with a discussion of the different kinds of poetry, commenting on the life of the famous ancient poets and the contexts and the background of their works<sup>34</sup>.

Furthermore, the pattern of the list of names used in the discussed passage on Peisistratus' commission is frequent in Tzetzes, who accorded a particular meaning to names<sup>35</sup>. I will provide here three examples from various works. In his *Theogony* Tzetzes writes (vv. 27-31):

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<sup>30</sup> Cassio, *o.c.* 111.

<sup>31</sup> On the end of rhapsodic creativity around this time, see A. Aloni, *L'intelligenza di Ipparco. Osservazioni sulla politica dei Pisistratidi*, «QS» XIX (1984) 109-148: 123; Cassio, *o.c.* 116. See also S. West, *The transmission of the text*, in A. Heubeck-S. West-J.B. Hainsworth, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, I, Oxford 1988, 33-48: 39.

<sup>32</sup> On Homer and scholarship in twelfth-century Byzantium, see A. Basilikopoulou-Ioannidou, Ἡ ἀναγέννησις τῶν γραμμάτων κατὰ τὸν ἸΒ΄ αἰῶνα εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον καὶ ὁ Ὅμηρος, Athens 1971; G. Morgan, *Homer in Byzantium: John Tzetzes*, in C.A. Rubio-C. W. Shelmerdine (edd.), *Approaches to Homer*, Austin 1983, 165-188; A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Cambridge 2007, 234-247, 301-307; F. Pontani, *Sguardi su Ulisse. La tradizione esegetica greca all' Odissea*, Roma 2011<sup>2</sup>, 157-199; A.J. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Iliad*, Cambridge MA 2015, xvi-xx; F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529–1453)*, in F. Montanari (ed.), *History of Ancient Greek Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Byzantine Age*, Leiden-Boston 2020, 373-529, 440-469. See also M. Cardin, *Teaching Homer through (Annotated) Poetry: John Tzetzes' Carmina Iliaca*, in R.C. Simms (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Prequels, Sequels, and Retellings of Classical Epic*, Leiden-Boston 2018, 90-114, with further bibliography.

<sup>33</sup> Pontani, *Scholarship* cit. 452.

<sup>34</sup> A. Kaldellis, *Classical scholarship in twelfth-century Byzantium*, in C. Barber-D. Jenkins (edd.), *Medieval Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics*, Leiden 2009, 1-43: 29-30; B. van den Berg, *John Tzetzes as didactic poet and learned grammarian*, «DOP» LXXIV (2020) 285-302.

<sup>35</sup> F. Budelmann, *Classical commentary in Byzantium: John Tzetzes on ancient Greek literature*, in R. Gibson-C. Kraus (edd.), *The Classical Commentary: History, Practices, Theory*, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2002, 141-169: 150-151.

λέγω παρρησίᾳ  
 ὡς οὐδ' ἂν ἦσαν ἑκατὸν Ὅμηροι καὶ Μουσαῖοι,  
 Ὀρφέες καὶ Ἡσίοδοι, Ἀντίμαχοι καὶ Λῖνοι,  
 καὶ πάντες ἄλλοι ποιηταὶ καὶ θεογονογράφοι,  
 κρεῖττον ἂν ἔγραφαν ἐμοῦ τὰ περὶ τούτων πάντα.

I say frankly that not even if there were a hundred Homers, Musaeuses, Orpheuses, Hesiods, Antimachuses, and Linuses, or indeed all the other poets and authors of Theogonies, would they have written better on this subject.

In the prologue to the *Allegories of the Iliad* he makes a point revealing a strong authorial presence and challenging the ancient authorities (prol. 480-484)<sup>36</sup>:

οὕτως ὡς ἂν ἀνέγνωκας Ὀμήρους, Στησιχόρους,  
 Εὐριπίδας, Λυκόφρονας, Κολλούθους τε καὶ Λέσχας,  
 καὶ Δίκτυν συγγραψάμενον καλῶς τὴν Ἰλιάδα,  
 Τριφιοδώρους, Κόϊντον, καὶ ἑκατὸν βιβλία...

Thus if you had read Homers, Stesichoruses, Euripideses, Lycophrons, Colluthuses and Lescheses, and Dictys, who wrote beautifully an *Iliad*, Triphiodoruses and Quintus, and a hundred books...

In letter 6 to Isaac Comnenus, Tzetzes lists the great 'grammarians' (γραμματικῶν) of the past, such as Hermes, Belesys, Palamedes, Sisyphos, Dictys, Teucrus, Archimedes, following by the Attic 'grammarians' Cephalus, Ctesiphon, Timarchus, Demosthenes and such like<sup>37</sup>.

These examples suggest that the pattern of the list of names was used as a rhetorical figure to emphasize the argument, the mixture of real and possibly mythic names being employed with deliberate intent. The significance of name for Tzetzes is also evident from the notorious authorial presence in his commentaries, which is noteworthy in the context of the frequently anonymous Byzantine reworkings of older commentaries<sup>38</sup>. The *Exegesis of the Iliad* begins with the following claim (p. 3,3-5 Papatomopoulos)<sup>39</sup>:

<sup>36</sup> On authorial strategies in the prologue of the *Allegories of the Iliad* see Alberto Ravani's chapter in this volume; cf. also that by Ugo Mondini on the *Carmina Iliaca*.

<sup>37</sup> I. Grigoriadis, *Ιωάννης Τζέτζης. Επιστολαί*, Athens 2001, 274; Kaldellis, *Classical scholarship* cit. 26-27.

<sup>38</sup> Budelmann, *o.c.* 150-151.



παισὶν Ὀμηριάδαις ἐρμήϊον ὄπασα δῶρον  
 γραμματικὸς περιάλλα μογήσας Ἰωάννης,  
 τὸν Τζέτζη καλέουσιν ἐπωνυμίην ἐρέοντες.

I gave the interpretation as a gift to the young Homerids, I, the very hard-working grammarian Ioannis, whom they call Tzetzēs, using a surname.

The decision to provide the members of a mysterious commission of Peisistratus with names should thus be viewed both as a component part of Tzetzēs' creativity, or/and as a certain combination of sources that he had access to. Tzetzēs used the myth of the Peisistratean recension elsewhere. Thus representing various locations around the Mediterranean which were claimed to have been Homer's 'homes' and revealing Homer's way from Smyrna to Athens, Tzetzēs quoted an epigram from the *Anthologia Graeca* (XI 442) where the Athenian Peisistratus is speaking about the Homeric poems (p. 10,16-17 Papathomopoulos):

τὸν μέγαν ἐν βουλαῖς Πεισίστρατον, ὃς τὸν Ὀμηρον  
 ἤθροισα, σποράδην τὸ πρὶν ἀειδόμενον.

Peisistratus, great in counsels, who gathered Homer that previously was sung scatteredly<sup>40</sup>.

Further down in the same text Tzetzēs refers to the topic again. He narrates on Homer's poverty and invokes the myth of Peisistratus' recension. This poverty is evident, says Tzetzēs, from the fact that the Homeric poems were previously recited in a scattered way (τὰ τούτου ποιήματα σποράδην πρώην ἐλέγετο), preserved on some rotten sheets of paper (ἐν σαπροῖς τισι χάρταις φερόμενα), and later gathered by Peisistratus the Athenian (ἃ καὶ συνήθροισεν ὕστερον ὁ Ἀθηναῖος Πεισίστρατος, p. 56,11-15 Papathomopoulos)<sup>41</sup>. Further down in the same treatise Tzetzēs represents a more detailed account of the myth. Because of Homer's poverty, the poems were initially written down on sheets of paper (ἐν χάρταις ἀπλῶς φέρεσθαι), but Peisistratus, the most philological (Πεισίστρατος δὲ ὁ φιλολογώτα-

<sup>39</sup> Here and below the text is quoted according to M. Papathomopoulos, *Εξήγησις Ἰωάννου Γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου εἰς τὴν Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδα*, Athens 2007.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *Vit. Hom.* 8 and 9 (XI and XII c.) where the same Peisistratus epigram is transmitted. See M.L. West, *Homeric Hymns, Homeric Apocrypha, Lives of Homer*, Cambridge MA 2003, 308.

<sup>41</sup> E. Cullhed, *The blind bard and 'T': Homeric biography and authorial personas in the twelfth century*, «BMGS» XXXVIII/1 (2014) 49-67: 64.

τος), made a proclamation at the time of Solon that those who had verses of Homer should bring them to him, and he would pay a golden coin for each verse (τὸν ἔχοντα ἔπη Ὅμηρου ἀποκομίζειν αὐτὰ πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ ἐκάστου ἔπους χρυσοῦν ἀντιφορτίζεσθαι νόμισμα). Peisistratus collected the texts and gave them to seventy-two grammarians for each to study, and then received a copy of each composition (οὕτω δὲ συναγείρας αὐτά, ἐβδομήκοντα καὶ δύο γραμματικοῖς ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ ἐπέδωκε κατ' ἰδίαν ἀνατεθεωρηκέναι καὶ συνθεῖναι αὐτά, p. 68,8-19 Papat homopoulos)<sup>42</sup>. Peisistratus is thus a metonymy for a 'patron', a 'Maecenas', and Tzetzes uses this metonymy addressing his new patron Constantine Cotertzes (ὁ δ' εὐγενὴς Πεισιστράτος Κοτέρτζης Κωνσταντῖνος, *Alleg. Il. XVI 4*).

Significantly, Budelmann points to an important characteristic of Byzantine authors, who felt the distance between Classical Antiquity and their contemporary era somewhat differently from today. Thus Byzantine writers were aware that Homer had died a long time ago, but they felt that the gap could sometimes be bridged, and felt that the ancient material was still alive. Budelmann argues that when Tzetzes used Oppian as the fishing ground to find food for his readers he was acting very much as a scholar of his time<sup>43</sup>. This constitutes another way of explaining Tzetzes' transmission of the narrative, including precise data on the members of Peisistratus' commission.

Furthermore, a period of great poverty in his life is known, during which Tzetzes was obliged to sell his books one by one<sup>44</sup>. This fact should help to explain

<sup>42</sup> Tzetzes' source for this narrative, which he modifies however, is *schol. Dion. Thrax* p. 29, 16-30, 24 Hilgard. See Cullhed, *o.c.* 64-67 and E. Matusova, *The Meaning of the Letter of Aristeas in Light of Biblical Interpretation and Grammatical Tradition, and with Reference to its Historical Context*, Göttingen 2015, 54-56. On Tzetzes' references to the myth of Peisistratus' recension cf. also *schol. Exeg. Il.* 3,9-10 p. 417 Papat homopoulos ἐβδομήκοντα καὶ δύο γραμματικοὶ σὺν Ἀριστάρχῳ ὑπὸ Πεισιστράτου ἀξιωθέντες, τὰ Ὅμηρου ποιήματα σποράδην φερόμενα συντεθείκεσαν καὶ τὰς αὐτῶν λέξεις καὶ ἱστορίας ἐπεξηγήσαντο, and *schol. Exeg. Il.* 68,3 pp. 458-459 Papat homopoulos: Ἀριστοτέλης ὕστερος ἦν πολὺ Πεισιστράτου καὶ τῶν συντεθεικότων Ὅμηρου τὴν βίβλον, ἄλφα δὲ ἐπέγραψεν Ὅμηρου καὶ βῆτα. The reference to the *Septuagint* whilst using the number 72 (ἐβδομήκοντα καὶ δύο γραμματικοῖς) might be significant: the *Letter of Aristeas* (early II c. BCE) recounts the translation of the Hebrew Law into Greek by seventy-two interpreters (οἱ πάντες ἐβδομήκοντα δύο, *Ep. Arist.* 50). On the popularity of the number 72 in Hellenistic times, see Matusova, *o.c.* 60-62. On the blending of Homeric and Biblical scholarship, see also I. Varillas Sánchez, *La edición del libro sagrado: el 'paradigma alejandrino' de Homero al Shahnameh*, «Interfaces: A Journal of Medieval European Literatures» IV (2017) 85-102: 85-94.

<sup>43</sup> Budelmann, *o.c.* 164.

<sup>44</sup> *Ep.* 75; *Exeg. Il.* p. 22,1-11 Papat homopoulos; *Hist.* VIII 176, 173; X 332, 452-453; XII 397, 4. See Cullhed, *o.c.* 66; Cardin, *o.c.* 93; and Philip Rance's chapter in this volume (p. 427-430).

errors made in his recollections and quotations of classical texts<sup>45</sup>. On the other hand, we know that Tzetzes often provided correct chronological information and was not devoid of critical judgement<sup>46</sup>. He was definitely not a person who took for true everything he read.<sup>47</sup>

To sum up. Tzetzes' specific use of the myth of the Peistratean recension in the preface to Aristophanes' comedy is not his own creative invention. Tzetzes repeatedly alluded to this narrative, however, moulding out of Peisistratus a symbol of scholarly patronage. Tzetzes' hypothetical sources or the sources of his source for this particular passage on the four *sophoi* can be traced back to a number of historians: the fifth-century BCE Herodotus, the fourth-century BCE Dieuchidas' *Megarian History*, the early third-century BCE Hereas of Megara, the early first-century BCE Strabo, the grammarian Asclepiades of Myrlea (second-first century BCE), the Stoic philosopher Athenodorus Cordylion, the geographer Pausanias, and the Homeric scholia. However, none of these sources provides the information exactly in the way it is provided by Tzetzes. Peisistratus' associates are mentioned as a group, some of them such as Onomacritus and Orpheus are mentioned in a number of sources specifically as Peisistratus' associates, Epiconcylus may have appeared in this context in Athenodorus Cordylion. Zopyrus of Heracleia remains enigmatic.

Belonging himself to a long tradition of Homeric criticism and positioning himself as a revisor of the Homeric corpus at a time of flourishing Homeric scholarship, Tzetzes found parallels in an episode of early Homeric transmission, revealing significant authorities for his own activities. The four members of Peisistratus' commission are listed by name in detail, not at random, but as a necessary part of the continuation and tradition Tzetzes was deliberately choosing for himself.

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<sup>45</sup> Wilson *o.c.* 190-191.

<sup>46</sup> Refuting the suggestion that Galen (died in 199 CE) was a contemporary of Christ, placing Galen in the reign of Caracalla (ascended the throne in 196 CE): *Ep.* 81 and Wilson, *o.c.* 193.

<sup>47</sup> He criticized Proclus in his interpretation of Hesiod's *Erga*: Wilson, *o.c.* 194-195. This piece of information could be «derived from the scholiasts on Dionysius Thrax, one of whom, Heliodorus, Tzetzes singles out for abuse, claiming that as a young man he had been misled by the scholiast into thinking that Zenodotus and Aristarchus were contemporaries of Peisistratus» (*ibid.*).

## Φλωραεῖ Εὐριπίδης: Tzetze commenta Euripide?

Gli *scholia* ad Euripide riposano in gran parte ancora sull'edizione di E. Schwartz<sup>1</sup>, che deliberatamente optò per selezionare solo il materiale antico, ad eccezione dei rari casi in cui anche uno scolio più recente riportasse informazioni che lo studioso tedesco considerava in qualche modo importanti. Ne consegue che – allo stadio attuale delle ricerche – soprattutto per quanto riguarda i tre drammi della triade (*Ecuba*, *Oreste* e *Fenicie*), è difficile avere un'idea complessiva, precisa e del tutto affidabile del contenuto degli *scholia* risalenti all'epoca bizantina. Tra gli studiosi che si sono occupati della faccenda, Günther si focalizza soprattutto sugli interventi dei dotti di età paleologa ai drammi triadici, mentre la recente pubblicazione di D.J. Mastronarde dedica un intero capitolo all'ipotesi di un eventuale contributo di Giovanni Tzetze<sup>2</sup> agli *scholia* euripidei<sup>3</sup>. L'intera questione della paternità tzetziana di alcune note rimane tuttavia ben lungi dall'essere chiarita. In questa trattazione, per forza di cose parziale, ci si baserà in massima parte sugli *scholia* non triadici, dal momento che è più facile identificare in essi quale sia il materiale antico e quale invece quello bizantino o più tardo.

Testimone capitale per l'intera questione è un codice conservato nella Biblioteca Vaticana: il *Vat. gr.* 909 (V) che contiene nove drammi euripidei con *scholia* (nell'ordine: *Ecuba*, *Oreste*, *Fenicie*, *Medea*, *Ippolito*, *Alceste*, *Andromaca*, *Troiane* e *Reso*). Si tratta di un manoscritto celeberrimo e molto importante sia per il testo

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. E. Schwartz, *Scholia in Euripidem*, I-II, Berolini 1887-1891. Di più recente pubblicazione sono gli *scholia* al *Reso* in G. Merro, *Gli scolî al Reso euripideo*, Messina 2008 e all'*Ippolito* in J. Cavarzeran, *Scholia in Euripidis Hippolytum*, Berlin-Boston 2016. Gli *scholia* tricliniani alla triade sono editi in L. De Faveri, *Die metrischen Trikliniusscholien zur byzantinischen Trias des Euripides*, Stuttgart 2002; quelli a *Elettra*, *Eraclidi* e *Ippolito* rispettivamente in G. Basta Donzelli, *Un filologo ispirato al lavoro: Demetrio Triclinio*, in AA.VV., *Syndesmos*, «Studi in onore di R. Anastasi», II, Catania 1994, 7-27; M.G. Fileni, *Demetrio Triclinio revisore del codice Laur. Plut. 32,2 (L): i cantica degli Eraclidi di Euripide*, «QUCC» n.s. LXXIX (2005) 65-97; e J. Cavarzeran, *Gli scolî metrici tricliniani all'Ippolito nel Laur. pl. 32,2*, «Eikasmos» XXVII (2016) 313-339.

<sup>2</sup> Sulla biografia di Tzetze si vedano N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, Londra 1996<sup>2</sup>, 190-196 e F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529-1453)*, in F. Montanari-S. Matthaios-A. Rengakos (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, I, Leiden-Boston 2015, 297-455: 378-385.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. D.J. Mastronarde, *Preliminary Studies on the Scholia to Euripides*, Berkeley 2017, 77-89.

tragico che per il materiale scoliastico<sup>4</sup>. Dal punto di vista materiale, è composto da una carta di pessima qualità, non molto ben conservata; l'inchiostro in vari punti tende a sparire. La stesura del codice è stata collocata da Wilson<sup>5</sup> tra il 1250 e il 1280: a quest'epoca risalgono le mani dei due copisti<sup>6</sup> (A e B) di testo e *scholia* che vanno entrambe normalmente sotto la sigla V<sup>7</sup>. Tale dettaglio non è di poca importanza, in quanto significherebbe che questo testimone appartiene ad un periodo che precede l'interessamento ad Euripide da parte degli studiosi di epoca paleologa, e che gli *scholia* traditi dal solo V (segnati con una † da Schwartz) rifletterebero dunque l'analisi retorica e grammaticale del XII secolo o di epoca precedente<sup>8</sup>, nonché la testimonianza di un commento anche ai drammi non triadici in età bizantina. Ai primi decenni del XIV è con ogni probabilità da collocare invece V<sup>3</sup> (o V<sub>2</sub> nell'edizione degli *scholia* all'Ippolito, *v* in Murray e Barrett, *b* in Wecklein)<sup>9</sup>; è questa la mano successiva (e di difficile lettura) di un dotto che, purtroppo quasi del tutto ignorata nell'edizione di Schwartz, interviene nel codice con diversi scopi: corregge il testo, inserisce *variae lectiones* (non tutte registrate negli apparati delle moderne edizioni critiche), aggiunge diversi *scholia* – altri li integra – circa vari argomenti come grammatica, retorica, lessicografia, mitografia, etica, usi arcaici e citazioni di autori antichi; a queste note vanno aggiunte anche moltissime parafrasi e brevi spiegazioni di versi poco chiari<sup>10</sup>. Come si vedrà subito di seguito, questa mano si rivela essere essenziale per la questione degli *scholia* 'tzetziiani' ad Euripide.

<sup>4</sup> Il manoscritto V è descritto accuratamente in P. Schreiner, *Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae codices manuscripti recensiti: Codices Vaticani Graeci 867-932*, [Città del Vaticano] 1988, 106-109; H.-Chr. Günther, *The Manuscripts and the Transmission of the Paleologan Scholia on the Euripidean Triad*, Stuttgart 1995, 225 e nell'esautivo capitolo dedicatogli in Mastronarde, *o.c.* 199-223.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. N.G. Wilson, rec. di G. Zuntz, *An Inquiry into the Transmission of the Plays of Euripides*, Cambridge 1965, «Gnomon» XXXVIII (1966) 334-342: 342. Con lui concorda anche Mastronarde, *o.c.* 199-206. A. Turyn, *The Byzantine Manuscript Tradition of the Tragedies of Euripides*, Urbana 1957, 90-91 e Schreiner, *o.c.* 108-109 propongono invece una data compresa tra il 1280 ed il 1300.

<sup>6</sup> Le sezioni di testo ad opera di ognuno dei due sono doviziosamente identificate in Mastronarde, *o.c.* 217-223.

<sup>7</sup> Dalle continue lacune lasciate da questi copisti risulta assai evidente che il loro antigrafo era danneggiato o molto antico e di difficile lettura. Gli *scholia* all'Ippolito, che ho potuto collazionare integralmente, sono chiaramente frutto di una collazione di almeno due diverse fonti: se questo lavoro di collazione sia stato svolto dai copisti di V o fosse già compiuto nel loro antigrafo, è questione difficile da dirimere. Cf. Cavarzeran, *Scholia* cit. 38-39.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Mastronarde, *o.c.* 200-206.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Mastronarde, *o.c.* 215. Il *terminus ante quem* è la copia del Neap. II.F.9 (Y), che riporta le note di V<sup>3</sup> ed è stato vergato nel periodo 1320-1230.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Cavarzeran, *Scholia* cit. 38.

Per prima cosa, dunque, appare opportuno indagare gli *scholia* alle tragedie euripidee in cui viene esplicitamente fatto il nome dell'erudito bizantino.

Si tratta di pochissimi passi: *schol. Eur. Hec.* 1220 e *Med.* 1201 Schwartz, e *Hipp.* 656b Cavarzeran.

*schol. Eur. Hec.* 1220 p. 87,25 Schwartz (πενομένοις): Τζέτζης νῦν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐνδεέσι· πένης γὰρ ὁ χειρῶναξ. V (A)

In questo caso il breve scolio<sup>11</sup> pare essere stato pensato esattamente per la spiegazione lessicale di questo verso, come dimostra il νῦν, per giunta non estraneo all'uso di Tzetze (cf. e.g. *schol. Ar. Ran.* 798a Koster Τζέτζης μὲν οὕτω τουτοῖ σοι νῦν γράφει). Il termine ἐνδεές viene messo in relazione con πενία o con termini affini anche nel commentario al *Pluto* di Aristofane: *schol. Ar. Plut.* 548 Massa Positano (rec. 1) riporta ἡ μὲν πενία μεμετρημένη ἐστὶν ἐνδεια e *schol. Ar. Plut.* 582 Massa Positano (rec. 2) chiosa πένεται per mezzo di παραχρηστικῶς ἐνδεής ἐστι καὶ πτωχός<sup>12</sup>. In effetti sulla differenza tra i due termini si concentra *schol. Ar. Plut.* 548 Massa Positano (rec. 2) διαφέρει γὰρ [...] ἐνδεής [...] πένης [...] ἐνδεής ὁ τινος στερισκόμενος [...] πένης δὲ ὁ χειροεργάτης καὶ τέχνης τινὸς ἔμπειρος· λέγεται ἀπὸ τοῦ τὰ ζωαρκῆ ἔχειν ἐκ τοῦ πονεῖν καὶ πένεσθαι καὶ ἐργάζεσθαι (“infatti c'è differenza tra ἐνδεής e πένης [...] ἐνδεής è chi è privato di qualcosa, πένης invece il lavoratore manuale ed esperto in un mestiere; deriva dal fatto che si guadagna da vivere per mezzo della fatica, dello sfiancarsi e del lavorare”). Proprio a questo scolio tzetziano rimanda la seconda parte del testo che si sta esaminando, in cui viene detto che πένης è il χειρῶναξ. Questa parola non è mai attestata altrove in Tzetze, per quanto mi è possibile appurare, ma il concetto è lo stesso che viene espresso nel già citato scolio al *Pluto*: in entrambi i casi πένης viene definito colui che ha capacità artigianali. In questo frangente non sembrano sussistere elementi nel testo per negare la paternità di Tzetze. Lo stesso si può concludere per quel che riguarda lo scolio alla *Medea*<sup>13</sup>:

*schol. Eur. Med.* 1201 p. 205,22 Schwartz (γνάθοις ἀδήλοις): τοῦ Τζέτζου· ἐν τοῖς σιαγόσι καὶ τοῖς στόμασι· τίνων; τῶν φαρμάκων. τὸ σχόλιον δὲ φλυαρεῖ· ὤσανεὶ γὰρ τὰ φάρμακα ὀδόντας εἶχον. V<sup>1</sup> (B)

<sup>11</sup> A riguardo si veda anche Mastronarde, *o.c.* 80.

<sup>12</sup> Va ricordato che spiegazioni simili si trovano anche al di fuori dell'opera tzetziana. Cf. e.g. Poll. III 110 Bethe; Hsch. ε 2747 Cunningham; ps-Zonar. col. 1528, 8 Tittmann.

<sup>13</sup> Su questa nota si è soffermato già Mastronarde, *o.c.* 81.

(*con mandibole invisibili*): Di Tzetze. Con la mandibola e la bocca di chi? Del veleno. Lo scolio dice sciocchezze, come se infatti i veleni avessero i denti.

Tzetze qui polemizza con l'interpretazione antica di questo verso (p. 205,17-19 Schwartz): accusa infatti, non a torto, lo scolio di dire sciocchezze (φλυαρεῖ). Nella produzione scoliastica di epoca bizantina, l'uso di questo verbo e di questa espressione per criticare uno scolio o l'autore stesso è confinato al solo Giovanni Tzetze. Si vedano ad esempio *schol. Hist.* III 89-91, 363 Leone o *schol. Ar. Nub.* 6a Holwerda, *Plut.* 1082 Massa Positano (rec. 2), *Ran.* 1225 Koster.

L'ultimo scolio che menziona Tzetze non è vergato da uno dei copisti di V, ma dalla mano successiva V<sup>3</sup>:

*schol. Eur. Hipp.* 656b Cavarzeran<sup>14</sup> (εὐσεβές): Ἀριστοτέλης φησὶν δίκαιον καὶ ὄσιον διαφέρειν· δίκαιον ἔλεγον τὸ εἰς ἀνθρώπους, ὄσιον δὲ τὸ εἰς θεοῦς. Τζέτζης δὲ φησιν διαφέρειν ὄσιον, δίκαιον, εὐσεβές, δίκαιον εἰς ζῶντας ἀνθρώπους, εὐσεβές εἰς θεοῦς, ὄσιον εἰς νεκρούς· ὅθεν καὶ ἡ ταφή. V<sup>3</sup>

**1-4** cf. *schol. Ar. Plut.* 682 Massa Positano (rec. 2) ἰστέον δὲ ὡς διαφέρει εὐσεβές καὶ δίκαιον καὶ ὄσιον κατὰ κυριολογίαν· τὸ εὐσεβές γὰρ πρὸς θεὸν λέγεται, τὸ δὲ δίκαιον πρὸς ζῶντας ἀνθρώπους, πρὸς τοὺς τεθνηκότας δὲ ὄσιον· ὅθεν καὶ ὀσίας φραμὲν τὰς ταφὰς καὶ τοὺς ἐνταφιασμούς. νῦν δὲ ὀσίαν παραχρηστικῶς ἀλλ' οὐ καταχρηστικῶς [...]. αὕτη διαφορὰ ἐστὶν εὐσεβοῦς, δικαίου καὶ ὀσίου, κἄνπερ ὁ Πλάτων, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ὁ πολὺς Ἀριστοτέλης διαφορὰν ὀσίου μόνου φασὶ καὶ δικαίου, τὸ ὄσιον ἐπὶ θεῶν λέγοντες, τὸ δὲ δίκαιον ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων; cf. etiam Men. Rh. 316, 18 || **4** ὅθεν-ταφή: cf. etiam Eust. *in Il.* IV 990,2 van der Valk; *schol. rec. Soph. Aj.* 1405e Christodoulos

**1** εὐσεβές post φησὶν add. V<sup>3</sup>, postea deletit || καὶ s.l. V<sup>3</sup>

(εὐσεβές): Aristotele sostiene che δίκαιον e ὄσιον abbiano un significato differente: δίκαιον lo riferivano agli uomini, ὄσιον invece agli dei. Tzetze però dice che hanno diverso significato ὄσιον, δίκαιον ed εὐσεβές: δίκαιον (si usa) per i vivi, εὐσεβές per gli dei, ὄσιον per i morti, donde anche (la parola ὀσία) per tomba.

<sup>14</sup> Approfitto di questa sede per correggere e migliorare alcuni *scholia* di V<sup>3</sup> in cui compaiono errori di lettura nell'edizione, cosa ora possibile grazie alle nuove riproduzioni del manoscritto disponibili nel sito della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

In questo caso, come si nota in apparato, lo scolio è sostanzialmente una riduzione di quello di Tzetze al *Pluto*, in cui si spiega il termine ὀσίαν del v. 682 della commedia. Si può osservare tuttavia che in questo caso, a differenza dei due precedenti, lo scolio non sembra esattamente modellato sul verso euripideo, ma pare invece essere un riadattamento, nemmeno troppo accurato, dello scolio tzetziario, tant'è che inizia spiegando la differenza tra δίκαιον e ὄσιον quando il v. 656 contiene εὐσεβές. L'attribuzione a Tzetze di questa breve notarella, a mio parere, richiede molta più cautela. Il fatto che l'erudito venga qui nominato non credo sia per forza garanzia di paternità; potrebbe invece essere dovuto al fatto che l'anonimo dotto che si cela in V<sup>3</sup> stia citando l'opinione di Tzetze, dalla quale trae quanto gli serve per commentare il testo euripideo. Non è certo impossibile che si tratti di uno scolio tzetziario, ma non sembrano esserci elementi solidi per l'attribuzione.

La stessa situazione di ambiguità si ritrova analizzando alcuni altri *scholia* di V<sup>3</sup>, i quali, sebbene riconducano a dottrina tzetziaria, da essa si discostano in qualche modo. Sono riportati qui di seguito<sup>15</sup>.

*schol. Eur. Hipp.* 384b Cavarzeran (λέσχαι): λέσχαι κυρίως<sup>16</sup> λέγονται τὰ τῶν βαναύσων ἐργαστήρια, παρὰ τὸ “τοὺς λαοὺς ἴσχειν”. πρῶν γὰρ ἀνεφγμένα ἦσαν καὶ οἱ βουλόμενοι πάντες τὸν χειμῶνα εἰσήρχοντο ἐκεῖσε θέλοντες θερμανθῆναι, καὶ καθήμενοι αἰσχροὺς λόγους πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀνέπεμπον. ὅθεν καὶ ἐκλήθη λέσχη ἢ ὕβρις. V<sup>3</sup>

1-3 *schol. Hes. Op.* 491b Gaisford τὸ γὰρ παλαιὸν τὰ χαλκεῖα, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐργαστήρια τὰ πῦρ ἔχοντα ἄθυρα ἦν· ἃ καὶ λέσχας ἐκάλουον, ὅτι οἱ πένητες εἰσερχόμενοι, καὶ μᾶλλον ἐν χειμῶνι ἐν τῷ θερμαίνεσθαι λέσχας καὶ φλυαρίας λόγων συνέπλεον. ἐν τῷ ἀροσίμῳ οὖν καιρῷ, παράδρομε, φησὶ, τὴν ἐν τοῖς χαλκεῖοις καθέδραν, ἢ τὸ καθῆσθαι ἐν τῷ σῶ οἴκῳ, καὶ θερμαίνεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς χαλκεῖοις τῶν πενεστέρων καθέδραν || 3-4 λέσχη – ὕβρις: cf. *Suda* λ 310 Adler; ps.-Zonar. col. 1296,1 Tittmann

(λέσχαι): λέσχαι sono dette propriamente le officine degli artigiani, perché τοὺς λαοὺς ἴσχειν (la gente vi si ferma). Un tempo infatti erano aperte e tutti quelli che lo desideravano potevano entrarvi d'inverno per scaldarsi, e stando seduti si scambiavano l'un l'altro parole volgari. Perciò la ὕβρις (tracotanza) è anche chiamata λέσχη.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Mastronarde, *o.c.* 83-85.

<sup>16</sup> Devo la lettura di κυρίως a Mastronarde, *o.c.* 83 n. 60.



*schol. Eur. Hipp.* 820d Cavarzeran<sup>17</sup> (ἀλαστόρων): ἀλάστορες λέγονται οἱ Τελχῖνες, καὶ γὰρ λέγεται ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις ἔρ<ρ>αινον τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ θαλάσσιον διὰ τὸ μὴ φύεσθαι τὸν σῖτον. ὀνόματα δὲ αὐτῶν Ἐκαταῖος, Μεγαλήσιος, Μιμών. ἀπὸ τότε δὲ ἐκλήθησαν καὶ πάντες οἱ κακοὶ καὶ βλάπτοντες τοὺς ἄλλους. ἀλάστορες παρὰ τὸ τηρεῖν τὰς ἄλας. V<sup>3</sup>

1-4 cf. Zenob. V 41 Τελχίνων [...] (καὶ γὰρ τῷ τῆς Στυγὸς ὕδατι τὴν γῆν καταρραίνοντες ἄγονον ἐποίουν) δύο ἐγένοντο ἡγεμόνες, Σίμων καὶ Νίκων ; *Suda* τ 293 Adler; Tz. *Hist.* VII 113, 119-128 Τελχῖνες ἦσαν δὴ τινες τῶν φθονερῶν δαυμόνων, / Ἄκταῖος, Μεγαλήσιος Ὀρμενός τε καὶ Λύκος, / καὶ δὴ Νικῶν τε καὶ Μιμών καὶ ἕτεροι σὺν τούτοις. / οὗτοι Στυγὸς τῷ ὕδατι ῥαίνοντες γῆν ἠγάρπουν, / τροφὰς ἀνθρώποις σπεύδοντες μὴ γίνεσθαι μηδόλως. / οὗτοι δὲ καὶ Ἀλάστορες εἰσὶ καὶ Παλαμναῖοι. / ἐν τῷ τηρεῖν τὰς ἄλας μὲν (ἄλλη δ' ἐστὶν ἡ βλάβη) / Ἀλάστορες ἐσχῆκασιν προσφρευεστάτην κλῆσιν. / τῷ δὲ παλάμαις καὶ χερσὶ ῥαίνειν Στυγὸς τὸ ὕδωρ / πρὸς ἀκαρπῖαν καὶ φθορὰν κέκληνται Παλαμναῖοι ; *ibid.* XII 447, 829-831 Τελχῖνες ἦσαν δὲ τινες τῶν φθονερῶν δαυμόνων / Ἄκταῖος, Μεγαλήσιος, Ὀρμενος τε καὶ Λύκος / Μιμών ὁμοῦ τε καὶ Νικῶν; Tz. *Theog.* 84 Ἄκταῖος, Μεγαλήσιος, Ὀρμενός τε καὶ Λύκος, 87 οἵπερ Στυγὸς τῷ ὕδατι ῥαίνοντες γῆν ἠγάρπουν || 4 cf. *Et.Gen.* α 400 Lasserre-Livadaras ἢ ὁ τὰ ἀλαστὰ τηρῶν, τουτέστι τὰ χαλεπά ; *Et.Gud.* p. 81,7 De Stefani; Tz. *Hist.* XII 447, 826-827 Ἀλάστορες οἱ ἄλας τε τηροῦντες καὶ τὰς βλάβας ; / ὁ Τζέτζης, οἱ ἐν ἄλαις δε τείροντες καὶ ταῖς βλάβαις

(ἀλαστόρων): i Telchini vengono chiamati ἀλάστορες, e difatti si dice che ad Atene spargessero acqua di mare perché il grano non crescesse. I loro nomi sono Ecateo (*sic*), Megalesio e Mimone. Da quel momento vennero denominati così anche tutti coloro che sono malvagi e che danneggiano gli altri. La parola ἀλάστορες deriva da τηρεῖν τὰς ἄλας (tenere il sale).

*schol. Eur. Hipp.* 878 Cavarzeran (ἀπὸ [...] οἴχομαι): ἀπό [...] οἴχομαι· οἱ γὰρ Ἀττικοὶ τὰ ῥήματα μετὰ τῶν προθέσεων λέγουσι. V<sup>3</sup>

cf. *schol. Ar. Nub.* 224a Holwerda κάτειπέ: κυρίως κατειπεῖν ἐστὶ τὸ “κατὰ τινος εἰπεῖν”. νῦν δὲ ἀττικῶς “κάτειπε” ἀντὶ τοῦ “εἰπέ”. μετὰ γὰρ προθέσεων Ἀττικοὶ λέγουσι ; *ibid.* 476a καὶ ἀπλῶς Ἀττικοὶ μετὰ προθέσεων τὰ πλείω φασί

(ἀπὸ [...] οἴχομαι): ἀπό [...] οἴχομαι. Gli Attici infatti dicono i verbi con le preposizioni.

<sup>17</sup> Ho corretto rispetto al testo edito (cf. Mastronarde, *o.c.* 84 n. 61) Ἐκάτη in Ἐκαταῖος e τοῦδε in τότε.

*schol.* Eur. *Hipp.* 887c Cavarzeran (ὧ πάτερ Ποσειδόν): πάντας μὲν τοὺς θυμικοὺς πλὴν τοὺς λελογισμένον ἔχοντας θυμὸν λέγουσι εἶναι υἱοὺς Ποσειδῶνος, τοὺς δὲ ἀλόγιστον ἔχοντας υἱοὺς Ἄρεως. V<sup>3</sup>

1-2 τοὺς<sup>1</sup> – Ποσειδῶνος; cf. *schol. Lyc.* 157, pp. 74,30-75,1 Scheer τοὺς γὰρ θυμικοὺς καὶ ἀνδρείους καλοῦσι παῖδας καὶ ἐραστάς Ποσειδῶνος ; *Hist.* II 51, 745-748 Θησεὺς υἱὸς ἦν Ἀττικοῦ Αἰγέως καὶ τῆς Αἴθρας / ὡς δὲ ἀνδρεῖον, ἔφασαν παῖδα τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος / τοὺς θυμικοὺς γὰρ σύμπαντας καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἀνδρείους / υἱὸς καὶ φίλους, ἐραστάς φασι τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος || 2-3 τοὺς – Ἄρεως; cf. ps.-Plut. *de Hom.* 1057 τὴν δὲ Ἀθηνᾶν τῷ Ἄρει, τὸ λογικὸν τῷ ἀλογίστῳ ; Tz. *Alleg. II.* XVI 186 εἴτουν ὁ Ἄρης, καὶ θυμὸς, κτείνει Πατρόκλῳ τοῦτον ; *schol. Alleg. II.* prol. 314, p. 601,7-8 Matranga Ἄρης δὲ ὁ διάπυρος θυμὸς καὶ ἀλόγιστος καὶ φρονικός ; cf. etiam Eust. *in Il.* II 33,17 van der Valk ὁ δὲ Ἄρης νοηθεῖται ἂν θυμὸς ἀλόγιστος, *ibid.* II 149,13-14 Ἄρης, ἦγουν θυμὸς ἄκαιρος καὶ ἀλόγιστος

(*o padre Poseidone*): tutti gli irascibili ma che hanno un animo razionale si dice che siano figli di Poseidone, coloro che invece ce hanno irrazionale (si dice che siano) figli di Ares.

*schol. ined.* Eur. *Med.* 686 [f. 138r] (σοφὸς γὰρ ἀνήρ): χρησιμολύτην λέγουσι τὸν Πιτθέα. V<sup>3</sup>

cf. *schol. Lyc.* 494b, p. 187,30-32 Scheer ἀπορῶν δὲ διὰ τὸν χρησιμὸν παραγίνεται εἰς Τροί-ζῆνα πρὸς Πιτθέα τὸν χρησιμολύτην

(*infatti l'uomo è saggio*): Pitteo lo chiamano χρησιμολύτην (solutore di oracoli).

Nel primo caso – nello *schol.* Eur. *Hipp.* 384b Cavarzeran – viene presentata una spiegazione che ritrova un chiaro parallelo in uno scolio ad Esiodo composto da Tzetze; in quest'ultimo tuttavia mancano sia l'etimologia della parola λέσσαι, abbastanza curiosa e assente altrove, sia la nota lessicale finale, che potrebbero essere state aggiunte da V<sup>3</sup> a partire dal preesistente scolio di Tzetze alle *Opere e Giorni*. Anche nel secondo esempio – lo *schol.* Eur. *Hipp.* 820d Cavarzeran – V<sup>3</sup> si riallaccia a due opere in versi dell'erudito, le *Chiliades* e la *Theogonia* (vd. apparato), e da esse (anche se non sono le uniche fonti che ne parlano) riprende verosimilmente la storia dei malvagi Telchini, che con l'acqua dello Stige rendevano la terra sterile. V<sup>3</sup> però compie innanzitutto un'imprecisione sui nomi, omettendo Ormenos e Lykos e corrompendo il nome di Aktaios in un evocativo ma pur sempre errato Hekataios; in secondo luogo travisa l'etimologia di ἀλάστορες, facendola derivare da ἄλας

τηρεῖν anziché ἄλλας τηρεῖν, come fa Tzetze, che si premura anche di spiegare come ἄλλη significhi βλάβη. In questo caso, se lo scolio è opera di Tzetze, deve essere stato corrotto in qualche momento della tradizione manoscritta, perché non concorda con quanto questi afferma nelle *Chiliades*. È allora più probabile che V<sup>3</sup>, come già evidenziato, abbia attinto da Tzetze parte del contenuto, mentre parte l'avrebbe desunto da altre fonti o composto di suo pugno.

Di natura composita è forse anche lo *schol.* Eur. *Hipp.* 887 Cavarzeran: la prima osservazione, secondo cui i θυμικοί sono detti figli di Poseidone, si presenta molto simile nelle *Chiliades*, mentre la seconda, riguardante i figli di Ares, non è di matrice esclusivamente tzetziiana, ma si ritrova anche nel coevo Eustazio di Tessalonica. Molto più legato all'esegesi, in questo caso grammaticale, di Tzetze è lo *schol.* Eur. *Hipp.* 878 Cavarzeran, in cui viene fatto notare l'uso delle preposizioni nei verbi da parte degli scrittori attici: la medesima considerazione ricorre due volte nel commentario alle *Nuvole* di Aristofane. Interessantissima, infine, è la presenza dell'epiteto χρησιμολύτης riferito a Pitteo nello *schol.* Eur. *Med.* 686; questo termine in greco è un *hapax* che compare proprio in uno scolio di Tzetze a Licofrone riferito proprio a Pitteo. Anche in questo caso può sembrare facile attribuire l'osservazione a Tzetze, ma il λέγουσι fa pensare che qui V<sup>3</sup> stia riportando quanto detto da quella che egli riteneva una qualche autorità, forse l'erudito stesso.

Somiglianze con le opere di Tzetze si possono rilevare anche nella notarella di stampo evemeristico che V<sup>3</sup> inserisce a fianco del v. 337 dell'*Ippolito*. Nonostante questa spiegazione non sia avanzata dal solo Tzetze, che, anzi, la desume da fonti antiche, questi ne parla tuttavia in più punti della propria opera, sia nelle *Chiliades* che negli *scholia* a Licofrone.

*schol.* Eur. *Hipp.* 337c Cavarzeran (μητρει): ἡ Πασιφάη ἠράσθη Ταύρου στρατηγού. V<sup>3</sup>

cf. Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 17a (Plut. *Thes.* 19, 5); Palaeph. 2; ps.-Heraclit. *Incred* 7; Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 17b (G. Sync. 191,19); Tz. *Hist.* I 19, 528-529 τούτῳ τῷ Ταύρῳ στρατηγῷ, οὐχὶ βοῖ δὲ ταύρῳ / ἡ Πασιφάη Μίνωος γυνὴ λαθροκοιτοῦσα ; *ibid.* XII 409, 399-400 ὡς Πασιφάη συνεργῶν τῇ Μίνωος συζύγῳ / εἰς τὸν τοῦ Ταύρου ἔρωτα τοῦ στρατηγού καὶ μίξιν ; *schol.* Lyc. 1301, p. 367,10-16 Scheer οὗτος ὁ Ἀστέριός ἐστιν ὁ καὶ Μινώταυρος, εἶχε δὲ, ὡς φασί, ταύρου πρόσωπον, ἣν δὲ Πασιφάης υἱὸς γεννηθεὶς αὐτῇ ὑπὸ Μίνωος καὶ ταύρου, ὃν ὁ Δαίδαλος ἐποίησεν, ἢ τὸ ἀληθὲς ὑπὸ Ταύρου τοῦ στρατηγού ᾧ καὶ ὅμοιος ὢν ἐμθεύθη ταύρου πρόσωπον ἔχειν ; de Tauro cf. etiam Plut. *Thes.* 19,3 (Demon *FGrHist* 327 F 5)

(*madre*): Pasifae si innamorò del generale Tauro.

Non è però l'unico scolio di V<sup>3</sup> che contiene spiegazioni evemeristiche del mito, le quali sembrano suscitare grande interesse per il copista. Come si vedrà nei casi seguenti, esse hanno poco o nulla da spartire con il racconto tzetziano del mito.

*schol. Eur. Hipp.* 454 Cavarzeran (Σεμέλης): Πολυμήδων, βασιλεύς τις, ἐρασθεὶς τινος γυναικός, Σεμέλης καλουμένης, βροντῶν καὶ ἀστραπῶν ἔτυχεν αὐτὴν ἀποθανεῖν, διὸ καὶ τὰ οἰκήματα αὐτῆς ἐκαύθησαν. νοθευσαμένων <τινῶν> ὅτι ὁ Ζεὺς ἦλθε μιγῆναι αὐτῇ μετὰ βροντῶν καὶ ἀστραπῶν, ἐκαύθη καὶ τὸν παῖδα ἀπέδωκεν ἀνατρέφεσθαι εὐτυχῶς καὶ εὐσεβῶς. V<sup>3</sup>

cf. Malal. II 15, p. 30,59 Thurn τὴν δὲ Σεμέλην, τὴν ἄλλην αὐτοῦ θυγατέρα, εὐπρεπεστάτην οὖσαν πάνυ, ἐφίλησέν τις ὀνόματι Πολυμήδων, υἱὸς Αἰθερίωνος συγκλητικῶ, ἐκ τοῦ γένους καταγομένου τοῦ Πίκου Διός· ἦν προτρεψάμενος ἔφθειρεν, ἀπ' ἧς ἔσχεν υἱόν. καὶ ἐν τῷ ἔχειν αὐτὴν ἐν γαστρὶ τὸν παῖδα χειμῶνος ὄντος ἐγένοντο ἀστραπαὶ μεγάλαι καὶ βρονταί· καὶ ἐθροήθη ἡ κόρη Σεμέλη, καὶ τὸ μὲν βρέφος παρευθὺς ἐγέννησεν μηνῶν ἑπτὰ, αὐτὴ δὲ μὴ ὑπενέγκασα τοὺς πόρους ἐτελεύτησεν· καὶ ἔπεμψεν ὁ Κάδμος τὸ βρέφος εἰς τὴν Νυσίαν χώραν, κάκεῖ ἐτρέφη· διὰ τοῦτο δὲ συνεγράψαντο, ὅτι ὁ Ζεὺς τὸ λοιπὸν χρόνον τῆς μητρικῆς αὐτοῦ γαστροῦ ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ κόλπῳ ἐφύλαξεν, διότι μέρος ζωῆς ἔσχεν παρὰ τὸν χρόνον τῆς γεννήσεως αὐτοῦ ἐκτρωθεὶς

(*di Semele*): Polimedonte, un re, si era innamorato di una donna di nome Semele. Accadde che ella morisse a causa di tuoni e fulmini, perciò anche la sua abitazione bruciò. Avendo alcuni alterato l'accaduto dicendo che Zeus era giunto per unirsi con lei con tuoni e fulmini, (ella) bruciò e affidò il figlio affinché fosse allevato felicemente e rispettosamente.

Si tratta qui della razionalizzazione del mito di Semele, che, secondo il compilatore V<sup>3</sup>, altri non era che una donna amata da un re e morta a causa di un incendio; il mito sarebbe sorto dopo la corruzione dei fatti da parte di alcuni ignoti. Tale racconto è completamente assente nell'opera di Tzetze<sup>18</sup>, e l'unico tentativo di interpretare il mito sembra essere quello di Giovanni Malala. Comparabile a questo è un altro scolio, sempre all'*Ippolito*:

*schol. Eur. Hipp.* 740b Cavarzeran (κόρη Φαέθοντος): μῦθος φέρεται τοιοῦτος<sup>19</sup> ὅτι ποτὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς Ἥλιου πιστευθεὶς ὁ Φαέθων τοῦ

<sup>18</sup> Tzetze parla di Semele in *schol. Ar. Nub.* 311a e 311b Holwerda in termini mitologici, senza mai avanzare letture evemeristiche.

<sup>19</sup> Correggo quanto è edito in *Scholia* cit. in quanto ora chiaramente leggibile nelle riproduzioni.

ἐλάσσει τὸ ἄρμα ἀτακτότερον αὐτὸ φέρων ἔκαυσε τὴν τρίτην ζώνην τὴν κεκαυμένην. ὀργισθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ζεὺς ἐκεράυνωσεν αὐτὸν καὶ κατηνέχθη ἐπὶ τὸν Ἡριδανόν. αἱ οὖν ἀδελφαὶ αὐτοῦ κλαίουσαι αὐτὸν μετεβλήθησαν εἰς αἰγείρους· καὶ τὸ φερόμενον παρ' αὐτῶν δάκρυον, πήγνυται καὶ ποιεῖ ἤλεκτρον. ἀνασκευή· οὗτος ὁ Φαέθων υἱὸς ἦν βασιλέως τὴν ἀρχὴν λαβὼν παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως, ἤγουν τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ. πολλὰ καὶ δεινὰ ἀπεργαζόμενος καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους κακοποιῶν ἐπιβουλεύθεις ἀπὸ τινῶν ἀπόλλυται, ἐμπρησάντων καὶ τὰ βασίλεια. φήμη δὲ ἐπέροισεν ὡς ὁ Ζεὺς αὐτὸν ἐκεράυνωσεν. αἱ δὲ ἀδελφαὶ αὐτοῦ διὰ τὸ πάθος τὸ περὶ Φαέθοντα γενόμενον περιπαθεῖς γενόμεναι εἰς ποταμὸν ἑαυτὰς ἔβαλ(λ)ον. διόπερ οἱ ζητοῦντες παραγενόμενοι ἐπὶ ποταμὸν {καὶ} τὰς μὲν οὐκ εὕρισκον, ἀντὶ δὲ ἐκείνων εὐρόντες τρία στελέχη αἰγείρου ὑπέλαβον τὰς παρθένους δενδροῦσθαι. ὀνόματα δὲ αὐταῖς Φοίβη, Λαμπετώ, Αἴγλη. καὶ πάλιν ὁ Ἄτλας μυθεύεται φέρειν τὸν πόλον ἐπωμάδιον, ὃ ἀδύνατον. ἀνὴρ γάρ τις μαθηματικός, ἀστρολόγος Ἄτλας ἦν καλούμενος ᾧ ἐμυθέσαντο φέρειν τὸν οὐρανόν. πρῶτος γὰρ κατώπτευσεν ἄστρα δι' ὧν ἔδειξε σημεῖα χειμῶνων καὶ τέρμονας καιρῶν. V<sup>3</sup>

**1-5** fere ad verbum *schol.* Dion. Per. 291 Müller; cf. etiam Plat. *Tim.* 22c; Aristot. *Met.* 345a; *schol. Od.* XVII 208 Dindorf; Diod. Sic. V 23, 2; Palaeph. 52; Tz. *Hist.* IV 137, 360-378 || **6** ἀνασκευή; cf. ps.-Heraclit. *Incred. tit.* ἀνασκευὴ ἢ θεραπεία μύθων τῶν παρὰ φύσιν παραδεδομένων; cf. etiam Hermog. *Prog.* 5a || **6-9** οὗτος-ἐκεράυνωσεν: scholiastae fontem agnoscere nequivi; de historico interpretamento Phaëthontis fabulae cf. Tz. *Hist.* IV 137, 379-382 || **10-15** αἱ – Αἴγλη; cf. ps.-Heraclit. *Incred.* 36 ταύτας φασὶν ἐξ ἀνθρώπων αἰγείρους γενέσθαι. οὐ τοῦτο δέ, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ πάθος τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ εἰς τὸν Ἡριδανὸν αὐτὰς ἔβαλον. διὸ οἱ ζητοῦντες, ἐπὶ τὸν ποταμὸν παραγενόμενοι καὶ τὰς μὲν οὐκ εὐρόντες, τρία δὲ στελέχη αἰγείρων, ὑπέλαβον αὐτὰς ἀποδενδρωθῆναι. {ὄνομα δὲ αὐταῖς Φοίβη, Λαμπετώ, Αἴγλη} || **14** μαθηματικός; cf. Tz. *schol. Lyc.* 879, p. 284,22-23 Scheer Ἄτλας γὰρ μαθηματικός ἦν Λίβυς ἀνὴρ; *schol. Hes. Op.* 382d Gaisford γέγονε δὲ καὶ τις Λίβυς ἀνὴρ μαθηματικώτατος, Ἄτλας τὴν κλησιν; *schol. Aesch. PV* 425c-d Herington || ἀστρολόγος; cf. *schol. Arat.* 16 Martin; Diod. Sic. III 60, 2 (Dionys. Scyt. *FGrHist* 32 F 7); Eus. *PE* II 2,46 et IX 17,9; Malal. III 3, p. 49,33 Thurn; G. Sync. 175,4; *Suda* π 2506 Adler; G. Cedr. I 144; Tz. *schol. Hes. Op.* 382d Gaisford (*Exc. Pleiad. Tz.* 2, p. 550, 15 Martin); *schol. Lyc.* 482, p. 175, 8-10 Scheer; Eust. *in Od.* 1390,14 Stallbaum; *schol. rec. Aesch. PV* 450 Dindorf

(*fanciulle, di Fetonte*): viene riferito un mito di questo genere: un tempo Fetonte, dopo che il padre gli aveva affidato la guida del carro, lo condusse con negligenza e bruciò la terza fascia della terra, quella ora arsa. Zeus, adiratosi, lo fulminò e lo fece precipitare nell'Eridano. Le sorelle, mentre lo piangevano, vennero tramutate in pioppi neri. La lacrima che scorre su di esse si solidifica e forma l'ambra. Confutazione: questo Fetonte era il figlio di un re che prese

il potere da tale re, ovvero suo padre. Poiché compie molte azioni terribili e fa del male agli uomini, fatto oggetto di una congiura da parte di alcuni, che danno anche fuoco alla reggia, viene ucciso. Le sue sorelle, disperate a causa del dolore per Fetonte, si gettarono nel fiume. E dunque quelli che si recarono al fiume non le trovavano; rinvenendo però al loro posto tre tronchi di pioppo nero supposero che le giovani fossero diventate alberi. I loro nomi erano Febe, Lampeto ed Egle. E ancora, il mito racconta che Atlante portasse sulle spalle la volta celeste, il che è impossibile. Infatti vi era un matematico, un astronomo chiamato Atlante di cui si raccontava che “portasse il cielo”, perché per primo osservava gli astri per mezzo dei quali mostrò i segni del cattivo tempo e i confini delle stagioni.

Nell’apparato è possibile rilevare come lo scolio sia in gran parte derivato da varie fonti: per il racconto del mito dagli *scholia* a Dionigi Periegeta, per la parte finale, a proposito delle sorelle di Fetonte, dallo pseudo-Eraclito. È interessante innanzitutto la struttura dello scolio, nel quale dapprima viene enunciato il racconto come tramandato e successivamente, con la dicitura ἀνασκευή, desunta dal titolo dell’opera dello pseudo-Eraclito (ἀνασκευὴ ἢ θεραπεία μύθων τῶν παρὰ φύσιν παραδεδομένων) viene introdotta la spiegazione evemeristica: Fetonte sarebbe lo scapestrato figlio di un re che arriva a farsi detestare dai propri sudditi per le sue male azioni, tanto da venire ucciso e bruciato nella propria reggia. Anche in questo caso **V**<sup>3</sup> si sofferma sul fatto che si sia diffusa una versione diversa da quanto davvero accaduto, ma soprattutto l’interpretazione risulta essere completamente differente da quella che si trova in *Hist.* IV 137, 381-390, legata invece anche ad un’osservazione di Plutarco (fr. 189 Sandbach) per cui il mito sarebbe derivato dalla caduta di una sfera di fuoco nelle terre dei Celti:

Φαέθων βασιλέως τις Ἡλίου παῖς διφρεύων  
 εἰς τὸν ῥηθέντα ποταμὸν συρεῖς ἐναπεπνίγη.  
 αἱ σύναίμοι δ’ ἐπένησαν περιπαθῶς ἐκεῖνον.  
 ἐπεὶ δ’ ἐκεῖσε πάρεισιν ἠλεκτροφόρα δένδρα,  
 τὰς ἀδελφάς μὲν ἔπλασαν αἰγείρους γεγονέναι,  
 τὸ δάκρυον δὲ ἠλεκτρον ἐκείνων ἀπορρέον. 385

Fetonte, un qualche figlio di un re, guidando il carro verso il suddetto fiume (i.e. l’Eridano) fu trascinato e annegò. Le parenti si addolorano profondamente per lui. Poiché lì si trovano alberi produttori di ambra, ci si inventò che le sorelle erano divenute pioppi neri, e che su di esse la lacrima scorre come ambra.

ταῦτα ῥητορικώτερον οὕτως ἠλληγορήθη.  
 ὁ Πλούταρχος δὲ λέλυκεν οὕτω φυσικωτέρως,  
 σφαῖραν πυρὸς τῆς Κελτικῆς γράφων ἐγκατασκῆψαι,  
 Ἡριδανοῦ σβεσθῆναι δε ρεῖθροις ἐμπεπτωκυῖαν. 390

Queste cose, dette più in modo da retore, sono state rese così come allegoria. Plutarco d'altra parte ha risolto così, in modo più legato allo studio della natura, scrivendo che una sfera di fuoco sarebbe precipitata nella terra dei Celti e che si sarebbe spenta una volta caduta nelle correnti dell'Eridano.

Neppure i nomi delle tre figlie di Helios corrispondono a quelli che enumera Tzetze in *Hist.* IV 137, 368-369 Αἴγλη καὶ Λαμπετή δε, Φαέθουσα πρὸς ταύταις / καὶ Ἡμιθέα μετ' αὐτῶν ὁμοῦ καὶ Διωξίππη, ma si rifanno allo pseudo-Eraclito. Le ultime righe dello scolio riguardano invece Atlante, menzionato poco dopo nello *Ippolito* al v. 747. Anche questo personaggio viene letto in modo evemeristico: si ipotizza infatti che si tratti in realtà di un astrologo di cui veniva detto che portava l'asse del cielo come metafora per la sua grande conoscenza degli astri e dei loro movimenti. Questa spiegazione è abbastanza diffusa anche in altri autori, con l'eccezione della definizione di μαθηματικός per Atlante: questa la si può rinvenire, ancora una volta, in *schol. Lyc.* 879 e *schol. Hes. Op.* 382d, oltre che in *schol. Aesch. PV* 425c-d.

Quello che si può concludere da questi tre *scholia* è che V<sup>3</sup> presenta una tendenza evemeristica assai spiccata e affronta la mitologia antica in modo singolare. Le spiegazioni che avanza non sembrano essere strettamente correlate con l'esegesi tzetziana, anzi sembrano essere frutto di interventi autoschediastici e ingegnosi da parte del copista V<sup>3</sup> (che probabilmente corrisponde all'autore). In quest'ottica, lo scolio che parla del generale Tauros è probabilmente debitore nei confronti di Tzetze, ma non vi è necessità di pensare che esso sia opera di quest'ultimo. Eppure, come si è visto, non mancano delle importanti ed evidenti similarità. A questo proposito, allo stile di Tzetze riconduce lo scolio di V<sup>3</sup> al v. 1013 dell'*Ippolito*<sup>20</sup>:

*schol. Eur. Hipp.* 1013b Cavarzeran (τοῖσι σώφροσιν): φλυαρεῖ Εὐριπίδης.  
 πάντες γὰρ ἐπιθυμοῦσι τῆς βασιλείας, δι' ἣν καὶ πόλεμοι καὶ μάχαι. V<sup>3</sup>

(*ai saggi*): Euripide dice schiocchezze. Tutti infatti desiderano il regno, a causa del quale (avvengono) guerre e battaglie<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Mastronarde, *o.c.* 85-87.

Come si è potuto notare in precedenza per lo *schol.* Eur. *Med.* 1201 Schwartz, viene anche in questo frangente utilizzato il verbo φλυαρέω, qui non riferito però ad uno scolio ma ad Euripide in persona, o meglio a quanto egli scrive ai vv. 1013-1015 dell'*Ippolito*:

ἀλλ' ὡς τυραννεῖν ἠδύ; τοῖσι σάφροσιν  
ἥμιστά γ', †εἰ μὴ τὰς φρένας διέφθορεν  
θνητῶν ὅσοισιν ἀνδάνει μοναρχία<sup>22</sup>.

Regnare piace? Oh no, non certo ai saggi,  
a men che non si neghi che il potere  
guasta la mente a quelli che seduce<sup>23</sup>.

Lo scoliasta (chiunque egli sia) mostra così il suo disaccordo con quanto il poeta sostiene. Questo genere di critica ad Euripide è presente solamente in questo scolio di V<sup>3</sup> ed appartiene indubbiamente al modo di esprimersi di Tzetze, come si può facilmente notare negli *scholia* ad Aristofane, dove il Nostro non si esime dal dire più volte che il commediografo φλυαρεῖ<sup>24</sup>. Pare davvero difficile attribuire a un dotto dell'epoca in cui era attivo V<sup>3</sup> un'osservazione e un lessico di questo tipo, estranei ai commentari di età paleologa; d'altronde generalmente costui si limita a parafrasi, note erudite di mitografia e grammatica o a citazioni da altri autori<sup>25</sup>.

È arduo, in definitiva, riuscire a trarre delle conclusioni. Per quanto concerne gli *scholia* di V, le due testimonianze addotte non sembrano portare elementi atti ad impedire una loro attribuzione a Tzetze. Più problematico è però capire quale fosse l'ampiezza di questo intervento sulle tragedie euripidee: parrebbe in effetti strano

<sup>21</sup> Riecheggia qui forse l'omerico αἰεὶ γὰρ τοι ἔρις τε φίλη πόλεμοί τε μάχαι τε di *Il.* I 177.

<sup>22</sup> Il testo segue l'edizione di W.S. Barrett, *Euripides. Hippolytos*, Oxford 1964.

<sup>23</sup> Traduzione di F.M. Pontani.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. e.g. *schol. Ar. Ran.* 358a Koster κατὰ δὲ αὐτοῦ νῦν ὁ κωμικός, ὡς ὁ Βελλεροφόντης, φέρει τὸ γράμμα· φλυαρῶν γὰρ νῦν αὐτὸς σχεδὸν ἐν ὅλῳ τούτῳ τῷ δράματι φλυάρους ἀποκαλῶν τοὺς ἐτέρους κωμικούς; *Ran.* 1144a Koster ὁ κωμικός ἢ κοιμώμενος ἢ μεθύων συνετάξατο· [...] ὡς καὶ νῦν, φλυαρεῖ, καὶ μέχρι τέλους τοῦτο ποιεῖ; *Ran.* 1225 Koster τῆδε ὁ κωμικός φλυαρεῖ μέχρι τέλους.

<sup>25</sup> L'unico scolio di ambito morale vergato da V<sup>3</sup> è *schol.* Eur. *Hipp.* 380c Cavarzeran, che va in una direzione completamente differente sia per contenuti che per stile: ὄρα· ἢ φύσις τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ μὲν <\*\*\*> ὡς πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθὸν ῥέπει, κωλύεται δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς κακῆς προαιρέσεως· ὥστε τὸ μὲν ἀμαρτάνειν οὐ φυσικόν, τὸ δὲ οὐχ ἀμαρτάνειν φυσικόν.



che egli si fosse limitato a due brevi note. Se si accetta la paternità tzetiana, si può ipotizzare che i due copisti di **V** annoverassero tra le loro fonti almeno una in cui erano confluiti sporadici frustuli di un più ampio commento di Tzetze che già alla metà del tredicesimo secolo era perduto nella propria interezza. In alternativa è possibile pensare che le note di Tzetze ad Euripide fossero assai contenute nel numero e nell'estensione. Entrambe queste supposizioni però possono soltanto limitarsi a rimanere mere congetture, almeno fino a quando non si sarà compiuta un'indagine più approfondita sulle fonti di **V** in tutte le tragedie che il codice contiene e più in generale sulla tradizione degli *scholia* ad Euripide; si potrebbe così appurare se gli *scholia* di **V**, quando non condivisi dagli altri *veteres*, possano recare altri frammenti attribuibili a Tzetze<sup>26</sup>. Lo stesso studioso bizantino parla del proprio lavoro su Euripide in *schol. Ar. Ran.* 1328 Koster:<sup>27</sup>

ὁ δ' Εὐριπίδης τὸ ἀνοικειοπρόσωπον ἔχει ἐπίληπτον καὶ τὸ ἐναντιοῦσθαι αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἐν πολλοῖς καὶ ἄλλα ἅττα βραχέα, ἅπερ εἰ θέλοι τις ἀκριβῶς γνῶναι, ἀναλεξάσθω βίβλον ἐμήν, ἐν ἣ παντοίων σοφῶν πραγματείας ὑπέβαλον λογισμοῖς, Εὐριπίδου μὲν δρᾶματα πεντήκοντα δύο, καὶ ἐτέρων παντοίας τέχνης σοφῶν βίβλους ἑκατὸν ἑνεακαίδεκα· ὧν πασῶν λογισμοὺς βίβλος μία ἐμοῦ περιέχει στίχοις ἰάμβοις τοῖς πλείοσιν, οὐκ ὀλίγοις δὲ καὶ μέτρον ἐτέρων. καὶ ἕτεροι δὲ βίβλοι σποράδην ἐμοὺς ἔχουσιν ἐτέρων σοφῶν λογισμούς, οὐ μάτην καὶ ἀναιτίως οὐδὲ κατ' ἔχθραν ἐπεμβαίνοντός μου τινων ἀλλά τινας μὲν ἐλέγχοντος τοῦ περὶ τὴν τέχνην ἔνεκα πλημμελοῦς καὶ τοῦ διαμαρτάνειν πραγμάτων ἢ χρόνων, ἢ αὐτοὺς λέγειν ἑαυτοῖς ἐναντία.

Euripide denota biasimevole incoerenza, contraddizioni interne in molti passi e altri difetti minori. Se qualcuno volesse conoscerli con precisione, legga un mio libro, in cui ho sottoposto a revisione i lavori di sapienti d'ogni genere: per Euripide cinquantadue drammi e centodiciannove libri di altri sapienti di ogni tipo. Di tutti questi un unico mio libro contiene le revisioni, perlopiù in metro giambico ma non pochi anche in altri metri. E altri libri riportano in modo sporadico le mie revisioni ad altri sapienti; non li attacco a caso, né senza ragione, né per inimicizia nei confronti di alcuno, ma alcuni li rimprovero per l'uso errato dell'arte e perché sbagliano eventi o cronologia, oppure perché contraddicono se stessi.

<sup>26</sup> A questo proposito cf. Mastronarde, *o.c.* 72-73.

<sup>27</sup> A riguardo cf. Mastronarde, *o.c.* 86-89.

Le critiche che Tzetze muove qui alla poesia di Euripide non sono molto diverse da quelle degli *scholia* antichi<sup>28</sup>. Per il nostro scopo è tuttavia più utile cercare di ricostruire in che modo lo studioso sia intervenuto sul testo del tragediografo<sup>29</sup>. In questo passo l'erudito bizantino scrive di aver letto e sottoposto a critiche in un suo volume, il βίβλος τῶν λογισμῶν<sup>30</sup>, 52 drammi di Euripide, oltre che 119 libri di altri dotti<sup>31</sup>. Per quanto riguarda l'affermazione sulle sue conoscenze del tragico ateniese, l'informazione che un così elevato numero di tragedie euripidee fosse ancora disponibile nel dodicesimo secolo appare quantomeno problematica, per cui si sarebbe portati a pensare piuttosto ad una vanteria o ad ipotizzare che nel computo Tzetze annoverasse anche le epitomi o degli *argumenta*<sup>32</sup>. A proposito degli *scholia* di V di cui si è trattato, si può essere tentati di pensare, in via chiaramente del tutto ipotetica, che siano stati tratti da quest'opera di Tzetze; è doveroso però notare che nessuno tra quelli analizzati in questa sede e riferibili in qualche modo al dotto bizantino (sia di V che di V<sup>3</sup>) mostra la minima traccia di essere in versi<sup>33</sup>. Sembra invece adattarsi meglio al materiale presente in V quanto Tzetze afferma poco dopo nel medesimo passo, ovvero che "altri libri riportano in modo sporadico le mie revisioni ad altri sapienti". Se questo era il normale modo di procedere che adottava Tzetze, non è

<sup>28</sup> Sul non rispetto dell'οἰκονομία e delle coerenza narrativa nella tragedia di Euripide si vedano ad esempio R. Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia*, Cambridge 2009, 27-33, e Cavarzeran, *Scholia* cit. 13-15.

<sup>29</sup> Sulla questione si veda Mastronarde, *o.c.* 86-87.

<sup>30</sup> Sui Λογισμοί si veda il recente lavoro di A. Pizzone, *Self-authorization and strategies of autobiography in John Tzetzes: the Logismoi rediscovered*, «GRBS» LX (2020) 652-690, e il contributo della medesima studiosa nel presente volume.

<sup>31</sup> C. Wendel, *Tzetzes I*, in *RE* VII/A (1948) 2004 propone che il numero 52 sia riferito al numero di note lasciate da Tzetze e non al numero di drammi.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Koster *app. ad loc.*: *at ipsa dramata aperte indicantur, quae Tz. non cuncta ipsa legisse puto, sed maxima parte ex argumentis eorum vel similibus fontibus cognovisse*; vd. anche W.J.W. Koster, rec. di M. van der Valk, *Eustathii Archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem pertinentes*, I, Leiden 1971, «Mnemosyne» ser. 4, XXVI/4 (1973) 404-411: 408, e D.F. Sutton, *Evidence for lost dramatic hypotheses*, «GRBS» XXIX (1988) 87-92. Dello stesso avviso è Mastronarde, *o.c.* 87. Tuttavia M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide*, Bari 1999, 100-102 e 160-162 mostra come Tzetze si sia spesso rivelato molto affidabile nelle informazioni che riferisce riguardo alle sue fonti. Per lo stato dell'arte a riguardo si veda E. Magnelli, *Un nuovo indizio (e alcune precisazioni) sui drammi 'alfabetici' di Euripide a Bisanzio tra XI e XII secolo*, «Prometheus» XXIX (2003) 193-212: 194 n. 10. Sulla conoscenza diretta dell'*Autolico* e del *Sileo* si vedano V. Masciadri, *Autolykus und der Sylen. Eine übersehene Szene des Euripides bei Tzetzes*, «MH» XLIV (1987) 1-7, e W. Luppe, *Zur Lebensdauer der Euripides-Hypothesen*, «Philologus» CXL (1996) 214-224: 219-220.

<sup>33</sup> L'unico scolio ad Euripide in V che contiene un verso di epoca bizantina è *schol.* Eur. *Hipp.* 1090b Cavarzeran ὄρκους πεδηθεὶς τῆς τροφοῦ παρ' ἀξίαν, ma non sembra possibile collegarlo allo ipotetico intervento di Tzetze.

impossibile allora che abbia apposto poche note sparse in uno o più codici euripidei e che poi esse siano entrate, in parte o del tutto, direttamente in V o in uno degli antigrafati usati dai due copisti del manoscritto. Quanto il contenuto di questi *scholia* fosse simile a quello delle critiche mosse da Tzetze nel proprio libro, non è possibile saperlo, anche se *schol. Eur. Med.* 1201 Schwartz e *schol. Eur. Hipp.* 1013b Cavarzeran parrebbero adattarsi bene al soggetto dell'opera. Del tutto diverso è il caso di V<sup>3</sup>. Questo compilatore non usa le medesime fonti dei due copisti di V e scrive in un periodo successivo e in un contesto culturale differente, al tempo di Tommaso Magistro e di Demetrio Triclinio. Molti degli *scholia* che appone sono parafrasi, ma altri dimostrano che dietro questo anonimo V<sup>3</sup> si nasconde la mano di un copista dotto del XIV secolo, con molteplici ed eruditi interessi<sup>34</sup>. Tra gli altri, alcuni di questi interventi appaiono proprio far riferimento all'esegesi di epoca paleologa, come ad esempio lo *schol. Eur. Hipp.* 5c Cavarzeran, ma almeno anche un'altra breve nota, inedita, qui riportata:

*schol. Eur. Alc.* 150 [f. 201r] τὸ νῦν ἀντὶ τοῦ δή, ὡς τὸ “σίγα νυν ἐστὼς” (Ai. 87) παρὰ Σοφοκλεῖ. V<sup>3</sup>

cf. Thom. *Ecl. Att.* 249,10-12 χρῶνται δὲ οἱ τραγικοί τε καὶ κωμικοί καὶ ἐτέρω νῦν, λαμβανομένων μὲν ἀντὶ τοῦ δή, ἔχοντι δὲ ἔμφασίν τινα χρόνου, ὡς παρὰ Σοφοκλεῖ ἐν Αἴαντι “σίγα νυν ἐστὼς”.

Particolarmente indicativo per il modo di procedere di V<sup>3</sup> è uno scolio al f. 128r della *Medea*, anch'esso inedito:

<sup>34</sup> Le note all'*Ippolito* del solo V<sup>3</sup> possono essere così suddivise, pur grossolanamente, per argomento, escludendo parafrasi e glosse: antichità (653d), citazioni da altri autori (122b; 231c; 403a), grammatica (5c; 148d; 304a2; 586b2; 878b; 1256a2; 1352c), greco volgare (148c), lessicografia (77a3; 384b; 385b; 418b; 811b; 820d; 836c; 862a; 913b; 1172d; 1189d; 1253c), mitologia (11b; 146a2; 314a4; 337c; 372b; 454; 464c; 560a; 683a2; 740b; 953d), morale (380c; 1055a), retorica (82a; 137a2; 179; 446a; 447b; 482b3; 525b; 731; 1036c), *variae lectiones* (41a; 118c; 593c; 615c; 630d; 690b; 841b; 882c; 919b; 965b; 984b; 986c; 992f; 1002d; 1011e; 1053; 1064c; 1084b; 1114c; 1138b; 1145b; 1274b; 1293d; 1362a; 1403; 1446), varie (455d; 887c; 1013b; 1466b). Per una selezione di passi nell'*Ippolito* si veda Cavarzeran, *Scholia* cit. 40.

schol. Eur. *Med.* 352 [f. 128r] σημειῖον ὅτι ὡσπερ ὁ Ὅμηρος θέλων εἰπεῖν ὡς γέγονε ἡμέρα περιφράζει οὕτως· “Ἡὼς μὲν θεὰ προσεβήσατο μακρὸν Ὀλυμπον [...] φῶς ἐρέουσα”, ἥτοι ἀπαγγέλουσα, “καὶ ἄλλοις ἀθανάτοισι” (*Il.* II 48-49). προσέθετο δὲ τὸ “θεά”, ἵνα μυθικῶς νοηθῇ· τῆς γὰρ σωματοειδοῦς Ἡοῦς ἐστὶ τὸ ἀγγέλλειν φῶς τῷ τε Διὶ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀθανάτοισιν οἶονεὶ δαδουχοῦσαν. ὅπερ δηλοῖ ἀλληγορικῶς τὸ ἡμέρας οὔσης τὸν τε ἀέρα Ζῆνα, ἥγουν Δία, πεφωτίσθαι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ δὲ στοιχεῖα κατὰ τὸ ἐγχωροῦν. <Ὅμηρος> μὲν ἔφη <φῶς> ἀπαγγέλλειν θεοῖς τὴν μυθικὴν Ἡῶ ἀφυπνίζουσαν οἷον ἐκείνους, ὁ δὲ παρὼν ποιητὴς ἀλληγορικῶς “θεοῦ λαμπάδα” (*Med.* 352) τὴν ἡμέραν φησί. V<sup>3</sup>

ferre ad litteram Eust. in *Il.* I 262,32-263,8 van der Valk

Da notare che Omero, volendo dire che arriva il giorno, faccia una perifrasi di questo genere: “E la dea Aurora salì sull’alto Olimpo [...] annunciando la luce agli altri immortali”. Vi aggiungeva il “dea” perché fosse inteso mitologicamente. È proprio difatti dell’Aurora personificata l’annunciare la luce a Zeus e agli altri immortali, come se portasse una torcia. Questo indica allegoricamente l’illuminare Zeus-aere e per quanto possibile gli altri elementi. Omero diceva che l’Aurora del mito annunciava agli dei la luce, come se li svegliasse, il presente poeta chiama invece allegoricamente il giorno “lampada del dio”.

L’osservazione è tratta in modo estremamente letterale dal vastissimo commentario di Eustazio all’*Iliade*. Il motivo sta nel fatto che l’arcivescovo di Tessalonica cita in questo passo un verso dalla *Medea* di Euripide: quel che fa il compilatore dello scolio è modificare Εὐριπίδης δὲ in ὁ δὲ παρὼν ποιητὴς per armonizzarlo al contesto. Anche in questo caso V<sup>3</sup> rivela così di riadattare materiale tratto da altre fonti, solo che, al posto di Tzetze, qui viene utilizzato Eustazio.

In conclusione, da quanto è stato possibile appurare, sembra più probabile, nonché più cauto, ritenere che il compilatore degli *scholia* V<sup>3</sup> non avesse accesso a delle note tzetziene ad Euripide, ma che conoscesse bene l’opera dell’erudito e che da essa traesse le informazioni che gli erano utili nella sua esegesi alle tragedie euripidee: a volte fedelmente, a volte con varianti che appaiono autoschediastiche o persino con interpretazioni non corrette o corrotte in certi punti, in certi casi affiancandole ad altre fonti. Come s’è appena visto, il medesimo procedimento viene utilizzato da V<sup>3</sup> anche per Eustazio (autore coevo a Tzetze, il che farebbe pensare ad una propensione di questo copista per l’esegesi del XII secolo). Non sussistono d’altra parte motivi per negare l’esistenza di un commento di Tzetze ad Euripide, ma

credo sia più facile rinvenire quel che ne rimane, qualunque ne sia l'origine, negli *scholia* di **V** invece che negli interventi di **V**<sup>3</sup>, che appaiono frutto di un erudito che tra le sue varie letture annoverava Tzetze, autore di cui riporta la dottrina spesso in modo erroneo, quando non vi aggiunge del proprio. A questa ricostruzione si sottrae però lo scolio 1013b all'*Ippolito*, che mal si adatta allo stile di **V**<sup>3</sup> e che usa un linguaggio molto particolare ed estraneo a quello tipico di questo copista. O si risolve la questione pensando che in questo frangente imitasse Tzetze, oppure bisogna concludere che anche la mano **V**<sup>3</sup> includa al suo interno qualche frustolo di note tzetziane ad Euripide (lo scolio d'altronde è indubbiamente riferito al verso). La faccenda rimane per ora irrisolta, ma rimane la speranza che un più approfondito studio degli *scholia* ad Euripide possa gettarvi nuova luce.

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**Tzetzes' verse scholia on Thucydides and Herodotus:  
A survey with new evidence from *Laur. Plut.* 70,3**

John Tzetzes must be one of the best-known Byzantine authors for non-Byzantinists. His numerous commentaries on and allusions to ancient authors render him a recurrent reference for classicists. Similarly, his boastful erudition and aggressive sense of competition frequently crystallize into a strong authorial figure that may appeal to the modern reader. However, the vastness of his work and his context and motivations for writing remain still a fruitful field of research for Byzantinists<sup>1</sup>. This paper will address one particular aspect of Tzetzes' literary and didactic endeavours, namely verse scholia. In doing so, it will also try to shed light on the general stances Tzetzes adopts towards the Hellenic cultural heritage, especially on the interplay between the texts commented upon and Tzetzes' persona and milieu<sup>2</sup>.

A major part of Tzetzes' literary output indeed consists of commentaries or texts somehow subordinated to others. Consider, for example, the wide corpus of scholia devoted to Aristophanes, Hesiod and Lycophron or the traces of larger commentaries on Pindar, Oppian and the tragedians<sup>3</sup>. There are also the *Exegesis* of the

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<sup>1</sup> The best comprehensive modern monograph on this author is C. Wendel, *Tzetzes, Joannes*, in *RE* VIIA (1948) 1959-2011, although many valuable contributions have been published since then. The present volume will surely contribute to an up-to-date overview of Tzetzes' life and oeuvre.

<sup>2</sup> For Tzetzes' works on the classics, cf. A.P. Kazhdan-A.W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1985, 133-138; F. Budelmann, *Classical commentary in Byzantium: John Tzetzes on ancient Greek literature*, in R.K. Gibson-C.S. Kraus (edd.), *The Classical Commentary. Histories, Practices, Theory*, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2002, 141-169; A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Cambridge 2007, 301-307; Id., *Classical scholarship in twelfth-century Byzantium*, in C. Barber-D. Jenkins (edd.), *Medieval Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics*, Leiden-Boston 2009, 1-43; F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529-1453)*, in F. Montanari-S. Matthaios-A. Rengakos (eds), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, I, Leiden-Boston 2015, 297-455: 378-385.

<sup>3</sup> On Aristophanes: *Jo. Tzetzae commentarii in Aristophanem*, I: *Prolegomena et commentarium in Plutum*, ed. L. Massa Positano, Groningen 1960; II: *Commentarium in Nubes*, ed. D. Holwerda, Groningen-Amsterdam 1960; III: *commentarium in Ranas et in Aves, argumentum Equitum*, ed. W.J.W.

(first book of the) *Iliad*, the *Allegories* both of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and works strongly dependent on the classical tradition, such as the *Carmina Iliaca* or the *Theogonia*<sup>4</sup>. Tzetzes not only comments on ancient authors, but also on himself. We have Tzetzean annotations that clarify his *Carmina Iliaca*, his *Theogonia*, his *Exegesis of the Iliad*, his *Allegories of the Iliad* and *of the Odyssey*, his *Letters*, and his *Histories*<sup>5</sup>. And what else is the *Histories*, the most representative of his works, if not an extensive versified commentary on the *Letters*<sup>6</sup>?

The present work will only focus on a part of these commentaries, namely on scholia written in verse that comment on sections of texts in the margins of the manuscripts containing them. These verse scholia are of a different nature from other rather self-standing commentaries in verse, such as the *Histories*, whereas they share features with the genre of book epigrams. Book epigrams are poems in and on books, since the book is both the subject of the poem and the object where it is ‘inscribed’<sup>7</sup>.

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Koster, Groningen-Amsterdam 1962. On Hesiod: Th. Gaisford, *Poetae Minores Graeci*, II, Leipzig 1823, 1-459. On Lycophron: E. Scheer, *Lycophronis Alexandra*, II, Berlin 1908; see also Thomas Coward’s chapter in this volume. On Pindar: A.B. Drachmann, *Scholia vetera in Pindari carmina*, III, Leipzig 1927, 205; cf. M.J. Luzzatto, *Leggere i classici nella biblioteca imperiale: note tzetziene su antichi codici*, «QS» XLVIII (1998) 69-86: 84-86. On Oppian: U.C. Bussemaker, *Scholia et paraphrases in Nicandrum et Oppianum*, Paris 1849, 260-375. On the tragedians: S. Allegrini, *Note di Giovanni Tzetzes ad Eschilo*, «AFLPer» IX (1971/1972) 219-233; F. Bevilacqua, *Il commento di Giovanni Tzetzes a Sofocle*, «AFLPer» XI (1973/1974) 557-570; D.J. Mastronarde, *Preliminary Studies on the Scholia to Euripides*, Berkeley 2017, 77-89; and Jacopo Cavarzeran’s chapter in this volume.

<sup>4</sup> *Exegesis*: M. Papatomopoulos, Ἐξήγησις Ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου εἰς τὴν Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδα, Athens 2007; *Allegories of the Iliad*: J.F. Boissonade, *Tetztae allegoriae Iliadis*, Paris 1851, cf. A.J. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Iliad*, Cambridge MA-London 2015; *Allegories of the Odyssey*: H. Hunger, *Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien zur Odyssee, Buch 13-24*, «ByzZ» XLVIII (1955) 4-48 and Id., *Johannes Tzetzes, Allegorien zur Odyssee, Buch 1-12*, «ByzZ» XLIX (1956) 249-310, cf. A.J. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Odyssey*, Cambridge MA-London 2019; *Carmina Iliaca*: P.L.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tetztae Carmina Iliaca*, Catania 1995, cf. Id., *Giovanni Tzetzes. La leggenda troiana (Carmina Iliaca)*, Lecce-Rovato 2015; *Theogonia*: Id., *Ioannis Tetztae Theogonia*, Lecce-Rovato 2019.

<sup>5</sup> *Carmina Iliaca*: Leone, *Carmina* cit. 102-243; *Theogonia*: Leone, *Theogonia* cit. 65-70; *Exegesis*: Papatomopoulos, *o.c.* 417-460; *Allegories*: J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis bibliothecarum Oxoniensium*, III, Oxford 1836, 376-384 and P. Matranga, *Anecdota Graeca*, II, Rome 1850, 599-618; *Letters and Histories*: *Ioannis Tetztae Epistulae*, ed. P.L.M. Leone, Leipzig 1972, 158-174 and *Ioannis Tetztae Historiae*, ed. P.L.M. Leone, Galatina 2007, 529-569. Even the poems that follow the *Histories* are furnished with scholia, cf. P.L.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tetztae Iambi*, «RSBN» VI-VII (1969/1970) 127-156: 147-151.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. A. Pizzone, *The Historiae of John Tzetzes: a Byzantine ‘book of memory’?*, «BMGS» XLI (2017) 182-207.

<sup>7</sup> On book epigrams, cf. M.D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres: Texts and Contexts*, I, Wien 2003, 26-34, 132, 197-212 and F. Bernard-K. Demoen, *Byzantine Book*

It can be said, therefore, that verse scholia are book epigrams commenting on specific passages and found next to them in the manuscripts<sup>8</sup>.

I will consider Tzetzes' verse scholia qua book epigrams, i.e. paying particular attention to their contexts of occurrence in manuscripts and to the relationship they establish with the main text and its readers. Book epigrams are derivative and accessory texts that, in fact, paradoxically, try to organize and control the interpretation of the main text. Their liminal condition, on the other hand, may also attest to how a given text was read by and how it interacted with the Byzantine society. Yet verse scholia constitute a special case of book epigrams. First, the regular position of book epigrams is either at the beginning or the end of the book, oeuvre, or chapter they refer to, whereas verse scholia occupy the external margin of the folios. Second, unlike book epigrams, which normally consider the production and circulation, the content, author or readership of the text at issue as a whole, verse scholia refer only to particular passages of texts and are attached alongside them in the manuscripts.

Tzetzes himself is the author of typical book epigrams<sup>9</sup>, but he is also a main exponent of the genre of verse scholia. He is surely one of the few writers of verse scholia whose authorship can be easily detected. Verse scholia are, as a rule, anony-

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*Epigrams*, in W. Hörandner-A. Rhoby-N. Zagklas (edd.), *A Companion to Byzantine Poetry*, Leiden-Boston 2019, 404-429, with further bibliography. Cf. also the ever-growing corpus collected at the *Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams (DBBE)*, [www.dbbe.ugent.be](http://www.dbbe.ugent.be), based at Ghent University. On Tzetzes and the epigrammatic genre more broadly, see the chapter by Corinne Jouanno in this volume (pp. 222-223 n. 58).

<sup>8</sup> I am currently working on the edition, translation and commentary of unedited cycles of verse scholia on Herodotus and Niketas Choniates that will be presented in forthcoming publications.

<sup>9</sup> Such as the ones preceding his *Exegesis of the Iliad* (Papathomopoulos, *o.c.* 3; cf. Budelmann, *o.c.* 151), surrounding his *schol. Ar. Pl.* in different manuscripts (Massa Positano, *o.c.* lxxxiv, xcii, 233, 18-24, cf. A. Pizzone, *Self-authorization and strategies of autography in John Tzetzes: The Logismoi rediscovered*, «GRBS» LX (2020) 652-690: 679), or attached to his *schol. Lyc.* (Scheer, *o.c.* 1, 3-6, 398, 4-13, cf. C. De Stefani-E. Magnelli, *Lycophron in Byzantine poetry (and prose)*, in C. Cusset-É. Prioux (edd.), *Lycophron: éclats d'obscurité*, Saint-Étienne 2009, 593-620: 615-616 and C. De Stefani, *The end of the "Nonnian School"*, in K. Spanoudakis (ed.), *Nonnus of Panopolis in Context*, Berlin-Boston 2014, 375-402: 391-392), *schol. Opp.* (A. Colonna, *Il commento di Giovanni Tzetzes agli 'Halieutica' di Oppiano*, in *Lanx satura Nicolao Terzaghi oblata*, Genoa 1963, 101-104; Id., *De Oppiani Vita antiquissima*, «BPEC» XII (1964) 33-40; De Stefani, *o.c.* 392) and *schol. Hes. Op.* (A. Colonna, *I Prolegomeni ad Esiodo e la Vita esiodea di Giovanni Tzetzes*, «BPEC» II, 1953, 27-39). For Tzetzean book epigrams on the tragedians, cf. M. Tomadaki-E. van Opstall, *The tragedians from a Byzantine perspective: Book Epigrams on Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides*, «MEG» XIX (2019) 193-220. For further inquiries, I refer the reader to *DBBE* and the catalogues of I. Vassis, *Initia carminum Byzantinorum*, Berlin-New York 2005 and *Initia carminum Byzantinorum, Supplementum I*, «Parekbolai» I (2011) 187-285.



mous<sup>10</sup>, but the literary production of Tzetzes is characterized by acerbic gestures of self-assertion and promotion and a spirit ready for polemics that, together with formal and stylistic elements, help us to recognize the works of his hand. This degree of self-awareness as an author and Tzetzes' construction of himself as an authority go together with his didactic intention, which reflects the teacher-student relation but also the competition among teachers<sup>11</sup>. In general verse scholia react in a more spontaneous and emotional way to the main text, adopting attitudes of awe, disbelief or reprobation at the author or the text, or setting comparisons with current affairs. Within this scenario, the display of erudition and the didactic purposes are typical Tzetzian hallmarks. These kinds of marginalia, however, deserve to be studied not only as a mere medium for accessing the meaning of the main text, nor as a repository of older commentaries, nor as a window to Byzantine society, but also as literature in their own right. The literariness of verse scholia seems to be more evident given their versified nature<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. e.g. the efforts to identify the authors of verse scholia in *Vat. Gr. 130* in C.M. Mazzucchi, *Leggere i classici durante la catastrofe (Costantinopoli, maggio-agosto 1203): Le note marginali al Diodoro Siculo Vaticano gr. 130*, «Aevum» LXVIII (1994) 164-218 and LXIX (1995) 200-258.

<sup>11</sup> On Byzantine didactic poetry, cf. e.g. M.D. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine didactic poetry and the question of poeticality*, in P. Odorico-P.A. Agapitos-M. Hinterberger (edd.), «Doux remède...» *Poésie et poétique à Byzance*, Paris 2009, 37-46; W. Hörandner, *The Byzantine didactic poem – A neglected literary genre? A survey with special reference to the eleventh century*, in F. Bernard-K. Demoen (edd.), *Poetry and its Contexts in Eleventh-century Byzantium*, Farnham-Burlington 2012, 55-67; Id., *Teaching with verse in Byzantium*, in Hörandner-Rhoby-Zagklas, o.c. 459-486. On Tzetzes, cf. now B. van den Berg, *John Tzetzes as didactic poet and learned grammarian*, «DOP» LXXIV (2020) 285-302, and Ugo Mondini's chapter in this volume.

<sup>12</sup> For a call to study Byzantine scholia in their own context, cf. O.L. Smith, *Medieval and Renaissance commentaries in Greek on classical Greek texts*, «C&M» XLVII (1996) 391-405. For the risk of considering Byzantine literature only as a source for historical information, cf. C. Mango, *Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror*. «An inaugural lecture delivered before the University of Oxford on 21 May 1974», Oxford 1975. For what verse means in Byzantine literature, cf. e.g. E.M. Jeffreys, *Why produce verse in twelfth-century Constantinople?*, in Odorico-Agapitos-Hinterberger, o.c. 219-228; Lauxtermann, *Byzantine didactic poetry* cit.; P. Magdalino, *Cultural change? The context of Byzantine poetry from Geometres to Prodromos*, in Bernard-Demoen, o.c. 19-36: 30-33; F. Bernard, *Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry, 1025–1081*, Oxford 2014, 31-57.

*Tzetzes 'accountant' of historians: some general trends from the verse scholia on Thucydides*

This paper will investigate Tzetzes' verse scholia on the two main classical historians, Thucydides and Herodotus<sup>13</sup>. At first sight, Tzetzes' verse scholia on these authors show common trends as regards form and content. They address textual issues of the ancient manuscripts where they are found and comment upon the grammar, style and classical references of the main text. The larger and probably better-known cycle of epigrams is devoted to Thucydides and found in the margins of Heidelberg, *Pal. gr.* 252 (tenth century). Luzzatto identifies fifty verse scholia in the margins of this authoritative manuscript of Thucydides (E for the editors)<sup>14</sup>. Let us begin with the last line of f. 133v, where a symbol is placed over κλήσειν in Thuc. IV 8,7 and repeated in the lower margin to open a verse scholion (nr. 25):

<sup>13</sup> For Tzetzes' verse scholia on Thucydides, cf. K. Hude, *Scholia in Thucydidem ad optimos codices collata*, Leipzig 1927; R. Scott, *The classical tradition in Byzantine historiography*, in M. Mullet-R. Scott (edd.), *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, Birmingham 1981, 60-74; B. Baldwin, *Tzetzes on Thucydides*, «ByzZ» LXXV (1982) 313-316; E.V. Maltese, *La storiografia*, in G. Cambiano-L. Canfora-D. Lanza (edd.), *Lo spazio letterario della Grecia antica, II: La ricezione e l'attualizzazione del testo*, Rome 1995, 355-388: 370-371; M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tuciddide: note autografe sul Codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252*, Bari 1999; D.R. Reinsch, *Byzantine Adaptations of Thucydides*, in A. Rengakos-A. Tsakmakis (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Thucydides*, Leiden-Boston 2006, 755-778: 757-758; A. Kaldellis, *Byzantine Readings of Ancient Historians*, Abingdon-New York 2015, 65-79; Pontani, *o.c.* 384-385. For Tzetzes' verse scholia on Herodotus, cf. M.J. Luzzatto, *Note inedite di Giovanni Tzetzes e restauro di antichi codici alla fine del XIII secolo: il problema del Laur. 70,3 di Erodoto*, in G. Prato (ed.), *I manoscritti greci tra riflessione e dibattito*, Florence 2000, 633-654; R. Cantore, *I marginalia dei primi trentaquattro fogli del Laur. Plut. 70. 3 (A) di Erodoto*, «BollClass» XXXIII (2012) 3-32; Ead., *Per la storia del testo di Erodoto. Studi sulla famiglia romana*, Bologna 2013, 82-93.

<sup>14</sup> Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. I follow her numeration of the epigrams and print her text with minor changes after inspection of the manuscript (available online at <https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/cpgraec252/0001>). The interpretation of these epigrams follows closely Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. and Kaldellis, *Byzantine Readings* cit. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine. Luzzatto also claims that the epigrams are autograph, i.e. jotted down in this manuscript by Tzetzes himself. Significantly, the same hand is found again in the margins and interlinear spaces of a manuscript with Tzetzes' commentary on Hermogenes and traces of his Λογισμοί (*Voss. Gr. Q. 1*). Aglae Pizzone first published about these findings at the blog of the Centre for Medieval Literature: *John Tzetzes in the margins of the Voss. Gr. Q1: discovering autograph notes of a Byzantine scholar* (<https://cml.sdu.dk/blog/john-tzetzes-in-the-margins-of-the-voss-gr-q1-discovering-autograph-notes-of-a-byzantine-scholar>). Cf. now Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 654-656. Note that the same hand also wrote verse scholia in *Voss. Gr. Q. 1*, similar to those of E (cf. e.g. Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 680). Cf. *infra* and Pizzone's contribution to the present volume.

Κληῖθρον κατεκλήσθησαν Ἀττικῶ τρόπῳ  
 Τζέτζου φρονῶν πᾶς τοῖς λόγοις πεπεισμένος  
 δίφθογγον οὐ γράψειας, ἀλλ' ἦτα μόνον.  
 τοὺς βουβάλους δ' ἔασον δυσμαθεστάτους  
 ἀπανταχοῦ δίφθογγα ταυταῖ γράφειν, 5  
 οἱ τὸ σκότος φῶς ὡς τὸ φῶς φασὶ σκότος,  
 Κίρκης τραφέντες χοιρεῶσι τῆς νέας.

Κληῖθρον, κατεκλήσθησαν in the Attic manner  
 every one of you sensible men, persuaded by the words of Tzetzes,  
 do not write with a diphthongue [ει], but only with eta,  
 and leave the most ignorant buffaloes  
 to write these with diphthongues everywhere, 5  
 those who call the darkness light just as they call the light darkness,  
 bred in the pigsties of the new Circe<sup>15</sup>.

This is one of the numerous verse scholia suggesting corrections or explaining orthography. But in this epigram we can also observe four characteristic dimensions of Tzetzes' dialogue with the ancient texts, their tradition, and their reception. First, the author gives instructions to a student-reader-scribe (25,1-3), supported by a display of grammatical expertise and knowledge of ancient Greek dialects. Second, Tzetzes represents himself as a reliable source of authority, which is enhanced by the use of his own name in 25,2 as in the third person. Third, the attack to contemporary scholars, disparaged with offensive and witty names, is a hallmark of Tzetzes' polemical discourse (25,4-7)<sup>16</sup>. Fourth, an allusion to Thucydides' obscurity in 25,6,

<sup>15</sup> Transl. after Kaldellis, *Byzantine Readings* cit. 73; cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 18-20.

<sup>16</sup> For example, βούβαλος (25,4) or similar terms are repeatedly used by Tzetzes to demean his adversaries (cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 19 n. 20; P.A. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners: a Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, «MEG» XVII, 2017, 1-57: 11ss.; and Yulia Mantova's chapter in this volume): e.g. *Hist.* V 28, 828; IX 298, 958; IX 299, 960 and 967; X 316, 178; XI 369, 215, 221, and 224; *schol. Hist.* I 17, 396; III 66, 61; III 98, 617; IV 4, 837 (pp. 533,5, 542,1, 544,7, 548,19 Leone); *schol. Ep.* 1 (p. 159,6 Leone); *schol. Ar. Plut.* 543 (p. 131,25 Massa Positano) and *Nub.* 965a (p. 596,14 Holwerda), which is the same as *schol. Opp. Hal.* I 266 (*recte* I 200; p. 276,54 Bussemaker). Circe, on the other hand, is mentioned in another polemical context in *Hist.* X 306, 64-76 (cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 20; Agapitos, *o.c.* 18-21). Now, one may wonder whether the "new Circe" (25,7) constitutes only an ornamental use of the myth (cf. 34,2), or a particular patroness and her circle are meant here too; Tzetzes himself worked for female commissioners (cf. e.g. A. Rhoby, *Ioannes Tzetzes als Auftragsdichter*, «GLB» XV (2010) 155-170). On Tzetzes' misogyny, cf. Agapitos, *o.c.* 15-17, to which the hostility towards the mythographer Demo

that is, a stylistic censure of the main text. The beginning of the poem (25,1-3) presents, therefore, a positive and constructive movement, while the final section (25,4-7), a rather negative and polemical one. The stances that Tzetzes adopts towards the main text and its author and towards the scribe, the reader and his competitors can be observed further throughout the cycle.

In the right and lower margin of f. 26r, for example, two verse scholia (nrr. 3-4) comment on the orthography of two different words at Thuc. I 63,2-3, ἰππῆς and τροπαῖον<sup>17</sup>. The intervention seems to be motivated by corrections in the manuscript by a later hand of ἰππῆς into ἰππεῖς. Through insistent imperatives (γράψον 3,2; γράφε 3,4, 3,6, 4,1, 4,4), Tzetzes teaches the reader how to write properly, again according to the Attic dialect (Ἀττικῶ τροπῶ 3,2; Ἀττικώτατα 3,3; Ἀττικῶς 4,2). Tzetzes contrasts his learned opinions with the ones of his opponents (cf. τίς 3,1)<sup>18</sup>. The construction of himself as an authority converges with the impertinence towards the author of the main text, dubbed as cub or puppy (σκύλλος 3,3).

These strategies can adopt an even harsher and less tolerant way. In f. 185r, containing Thuc. V 18,1-5, two verse scholia occur in the right margin (nrr. 33-34). Tzetzes first criticizes a passage of the text (paraphrased in 33,1-2) for its confusing syntax, calling it a solecism. This time, he does not want to justify Thucydides' obscure style by invoking a feature of his dialect (33,3-4)<sup>19</sup>:

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can be added (e.g. *Alleg. Od.* prol. 32-34; cf. P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milan 1991, 138-139 and H. Hunger, *Allegorische Mythendeutung in der Antike und bei Johannes Tzetzes*, «JÖByz» III (1954) 43-44; M. Savio, *Screditare per valorizzare. Giovanni Tzetze, le sue fonti, i committenti e la concorrenza*, Rome 2020, 141-161). In fact, in *Hist.* X 306, 64-76 the ἀτεχνία of Circe and her filthy followers is contrasted with the τέχνη of a female writer, empress Eudokia. Now Pizzone brings forward new evidence of the same elements in a similar polemical context from the rediscovered fragment of the Λογισμοί. Her explanation of these images through the socio-historical background of twelfth-century Constantinople is very compelling and it is not at odds with a possible allusion to a patroness. Cf. Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 667-672.

<sup>17</sup> The two words are marked in the main text with the same symbol that opens nr. 3. There is no clear separation between poems nrr. 3 and 4 and thus they could be considered as one single poem. Cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 61-63.

<sup>18</sup> In the manuscript, the accent in τίς indicates that 3,1 is a question: Ἰππῆς τίς ἐξώρθωσε δίφθογγον γράφων; ("Who corrected ἰππῆς by writing a diphthong?").

<sup>19</sup> He does so elsewhere. Cf. verse scholion nr. 29 (f. 183v): γλώσσης νόησον Ἀττικῆς εἶναι τόδε, [...] μηδ' αὐτὸ σόλοικον μηδαμῶς νόει τόδε. ("Understand that this is characteristic of the Attic dialect [...] so under no circumstances think this is a solecism"). Cf. also the formulaic verse σολοικοειδές, οὐ σόλοικον τυγχάνει ("It has the aspect of a solecism, but it is no solecism") that occurs in nrr. 15 (f. 93v), 28 (f. 183v) and 47 (f. 290r). Cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 28-29, 105-106, 114-115, 126-127.

Τζέτζης σολοικίζουσιν ἐντάττει λόγοις·  
οὐκ οἶδεν Ἀττίκισμα τουτοῖ λέγειν.

Tzetzes classifies this among the solecisms of speech,  
he just cannot call this an Atticism<sup>20</sup>.

The last four verses of this poem (33,5-8) address outspokenly the author in the second person and strike again against his abstruseness, as deceptive and contrary to the τέχνη. We can fully understand now the attack against Tzetzes' adversaries in poem 25,6: not only do the buffaloes ignore the τέχνη of the Attic dialect, but they also praise Thucydides' misleading σκότος (33,8). Moreover, in the beginning of the second verse scholion in f. 185r (34,1-2), Tzetzes compares the stylistic difficulties of the author, addressed again by Tzetzes in the second person (τὸ σὸν σκοτεινόν, 34,1), with those provoked by the scribe. The labour of the scribe is a constant target of Tzetzes' complaints and satirical remarks, as the formulaic label κόπρος βιβλογράφου reveals (see poems nrr. 30-31, ff. 183v-184v)<sup>21</sup>.

Tzetzes' criticisms, however, are not limited to grammatical, stylistic or textual remarks. He even calls into question the content of what Thucydides recounts. At the beginning of Book VI, Thucydides refers to the etymology of Italy, allegedly derived from the name of a Sicilian king<sup>22</sup>. In our manuscript the passage is marked with a cross that also introduces a verse scholion in the right margin of f. 214r (nr. 35), after the heading σημείωσαι ἱστορίαν. In this epigram, Thucydides is again addressed in an irreverent way and his etymology rejected: οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως οὐδαμῶς, Θουκυδίδη ("It is not like this, Thucydides, not at all", 35,1). An alternative aetiology is told, involving Heracles and the Latin word *uitulus* (35,2-9)<sup>23</sup>. The poem is closed by a warning addressed to ancient historians with significant programmatic overtones (35,10-11):

Τζέτζην παλαιὸς πᾶς πτοοῦ χρονογράφος·  
λαθεῖν γὰρ αὐτὸν οὐδὲ δαίμων ἰσχύει.

<sup>20</sup> Transl. after Kaldellis, *Byzantine Readings* cit. 75; cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 35-39.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 26, 30.

<sup>22</sup> Thuc. VI 2,4: καὶ ἡ χώρα ἀπὸ Ἰταλοῦ, βασιλέως τινὸς Σικελῶν, τοῦνομα τοῦτο ἔχοντος, οὕτως Ἰταλία ἐπωνομάσθη.

<sup>23</sup> For the sources of Tzetzes and *loci similes* in his oeuvre, cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 77-78. To these it could be added *schol. Lyc.* 1232 (p. 353,3-8 Scheer).

Every one of you ancient historians fear Tzetzes,  
not even a supernatural spirit can escape his notice<sup>24</sup>!

The mission to correct the style and grammar and control the truth and consistency of the classics is asserted openly, such as in *schol. Ar. Ran.* 1328 (pp. 1077,49-1079,89 Koster)<sup>25</sup>:

ὧν πασῶν (*sc.* βίβλων) λογισμοὺς βίβλος μία ἐμοῦ περιέχει στίχοις ἰάμβοις τοῖς πλείοσιν, οὐκ ὀλίγοις δὲ καὶ μέτρων ἑτέρων· καὶ ἕτεροι δὲ βίβλοι σποράδην ἐμοὺς ἔχουσιν ἑτέρων σοφῶν λογισμούς, οὐ μάτην καὶ ἀναιτίως οὐδὲ κατ' ἔχθραν ἐπεμβαίνοντός μου τινων, ἀλλὰ τινας μὲν ἐλέγχοντος τοῦ περὶ τὴν τέχνην ἔνεκα πλημμελοῦς καὶ τοῦ διαμαρτάνειν πραγμάτων ἢ χρόνων, ἢ αὐτοὺς λέγειν ἑαυτοῖς ἐναντία [...] ταύτην ἐμοῦ τὴν βίβλον ἀναλεξάμενος, ὅστις ἂν γε (καὶ *add. cod.*) βούλοιο, Αἰσχύλου τε εὐροὶ καὶ Εὐριπίδου καὶ ἄλλων πολλῶν αἰτιάματα, πλημμελεία τῇ περὶ τὴν τέχνην καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑποπεπτωκότας τοῖς λογισμοῖς, οὐ μέντοι διὰ ψευδοῦς (ψευδῶς *cod. ut vid.*) γελοιόζουσαν κωμωδίαν οὐδὲ δυσμένειαν.

Of all these books, one book of mine contains the accounts, most of them in iambic verses, but quite a few also in other metres. And other books have here and there my accounts of other wise men, not because I attack moved by enmity towards some, nor in vain or without reason, but rather censuring some for an error regarding the τέχνη or for missing the facts or the chronology, or because they say things contradicting themselves [...] After reading this book of mine, whoever would want to, would find the faults of Aeschylus, Euripides and many others, included in my accounts for their error regarding the τέχνη or the truth, yet not for the sake of jesting comedy or ill will with falsehood.

The *Accounts* (Λογισμοί) here mentioned is the title of a work by Tzetzes, widely considered to be lost until in 2020 Aglae Pizzone brought to light a manu-

<sup>24</sup> Transl. after Kaldellis, *Byzantine Readings* cit. 76; cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 75-76. However, note that **E** seems to read παλαιοῖς.

<sup>25</sup> After consultation of the manuscript (*Ambr. C 222 inf.*, <http://213.21.172.25/0b02da8280051c1e>, f. 103r), I was able to make two minor improvements to Koster's edition (I keep his punctuation). On this manuscript (last quarter of the XII c., copied by a scholar closely connected with Tzetzes), cf. C.M. Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf. (Graecus 886): Il codice e il suo autore*, «Aevum» LXXVII (2003) 263-275 and LXXVIII (2004) 411-440.

script where parts of it are preserved. Tzetzes' description leads us to an identification of them with our verse scholia. First, these accounts are in verse, mainly comment upon ancient authors and can also be found occasionally (σποράδηγ) in other manuscripts. Second, the motivations in Tzetzes' enterprise of watching (ἐλέγχειν) the form (τέχνη) and content (ἱστορία) of the text commented upon match precisely those of his verse scholia<sup>26</sup>.

In the long poem nr. 8 (f. 45r) on Thucydides, which is probably the best-known of the series together with nr. 50 (f. 326v), Tzetzes defines his role in a similar way. He claims that he is the only one entitled to judge according to the τέχνη the writings of this puppy – again the disrespectful nickname – and all ancient and new literature (8,7-9):

τάς συγγραφάς κρίνειν δὲ τεχνικῶ ττρόπῳ  
 σκύλλου τε τουδὶ καὶ παλαιῶν καὶ νέων  
 Τζέτζου μόνου χάρισμα δυσμαθεστάτου

<sup>26</sup> On the Λογισμοί, cf. primarily Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit., who corrected a long-lasting misunderstanding in Wendel, *o.c.* 1990, 2004 (cf. e.g. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 74 n. 18), by which the *Accounts* were equated to Tzetzes' commentary on Hermogenes in political verse (C. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, III, Stuttgart-Tübingen-London-Paris 1834, 670-686; J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis bibliothecarum Oxoniensium*, IV, Oxford 1837, 1-148). As Pizzone points out, the catalogue of the library already records some of its verses in ff. 212v-239v: cf. K.A. De Meyier, *Codices Vossiani Graeci et Miscellanei*, IV, Leiden 1955, 93. Pizzone masterfully reconstructs the possible stages of composition of the oeuvre and the associations between imperial administration, authenticity and authorship that emanate already from its title; cf. also A. Pizzone, *Bureaucratic discourse, signature and authorship in John Tzetzes: a comparative perspective*, «ACME» LXXIII (2020) 43-67. The connection of the Λογισμοί with Tzetzes' verse scholia has been first proposed by Luzzatto (*Leggere i classici* cit. 71-72 and *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 156-161), who also refers to *Hist.* VI 50, 399-403, where Tzetzes specifies the objects of his critiques, among which historians and chroniclers (ἱστορικοὶ καὶ χρονικοὶ). When consulting these books, that did not belong to him (ὦν ἀβιβλις), he annotated the necessary accounts in their margins: ἐκείναις (sc. βίβλοις) παρενέγραφε τοὺς λογι-σμοὺς οὓς ἔδει. The same work is alluded to in *Hist.* XI 369, 349-354, where Tzetzes repeats the goal of censuring the content and the form (ἄλλους ψευδῶς, ἀτέχνως δε, οὓς ἤλεγξεν ὁ Τζέτζης) in his *Book of Accounts* (ὦν βίβλος ὅλη γέγραπται τῶν Λογισμῶν τῷ Τζέτζη). *Book of Accounts* is in fact the title proposed by Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 160 n. 12, considering also *schol. Ar. Ran.* 100a (pp. 732-733,6 Koster). There, Tzetzes defends Euripides from unfair criticism, different from the real problems addressed in the *Accounts* (οὐχ ὡς ἡμεῖς τοῖς τῶν σοφῶν λογιμοῖς δικαίως ἐκεῖνον ἐλέγξαμεν, οἷσπερ ἐχρῆν), again for the sake of truth and without ill will (οὐ καθ' ὑμᾶς φθόνῳ φερόμενος, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν).

To judge according to the criteria of the τέχνη the works  
of this puppy and of the ancients and moderns  
is the gift of Tzetzes alone, the most ignorant one<sup>27</sup>.

These lines recall the final verse of Tzetzes' *Iambi*, the series of poems following his *Histories*: Τζέτζης λογιστῆς τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ νέων (v. 360, p. 146 Leone). The word λογιστῆς ("accountant") in this *sphragis* connects again the verse scholia with the Λογισμοί<sup>28</sup>. Notably, the same formula is used as the title for the excerpts of the Λογισμοί in the *Voss. gr. Q. 1, f. 212v*: Τζέτζου λογισμῶν τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ νέων<sup>29</sup>. Another recurrent motif in this context is the apparently self-deprecatory use of δυσμαθῆς. Notice that the same epithet is given to the buffaloes in the aforementioned verse scholion 25,4<sup>30</sup>. The same goes for ἀμαθῆς, employed to refer both to his enemies and to himself<sup>31</sup>. These terms are frequently associated with a dispute with the prefect Andronikos Kamateros regarding court patronage and the teaching of rhetoric<sup>32</sup>. With this characterization, Tzetzes seems to ironically impersonate his adversaries. Many of these elements in fact meet in *Hist.* XI 369, 246-249:

ἀλλ' ἤδη σε συνέχεεν ὁ ἀμαθῆς ἐπάροχῳ,  
ὁ λογιστῆς τῶν παλαιῶν, οὗ δι' ἰάμβων βίβλος  
τῶν Λογισμῶν γραμματικῶν, ῥητόρων, φιλοσόφων,  
τῶν μετρικῶν, ἱστορικῶν, μηχανικῶν, τῶν ἄλλων.

But the ignorant in the eyes of the prefect already confused you,  
the accountant of the ancients, the author of the iambic book  
of Accounts of the grammarians, rhetoricians, philosophers,  
the metricists, historians, mechanics, and others.

<sup>27</sup> Transl. after Kaldellis, *Byzantine Readings* cit. 72 and Pontani, *o.c.* 384; cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 46-58.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 206; Ead., *Self-authorization* cit. 672 n. 61, 682-685; Ead., *Bureaucratic discourse* cit. 51-53. Whether this ὑπογραφή (v. 359, p. 146 Leone) corresponds to the *Iambi*, the *Histories* or another work by Tzetzes remains unclear (Leone, *Iambi* cit. 130).

<sup>29</sup> Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 656-657. Cf. [www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/19745](http://www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/19745).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. also the occurrences of δυσμαθῆς in the polemical *Iambi* (vv. 261, 230 p. 141 Leone; 260, p. 143 Leone).

<sup>31</sup> E.g. *Hist.* IX 273, 408; IX 278, 656-659; IX 280, 688-690, 702-707; X 306, 64-76; X 319, 240-242; XI 369, 210-224, 286, 349-354; XII 398, 85-91; XII 399, 223-246. Cf. also the title of the last of the *Iambi* (Leone, *Iambi* cit. 145).

<sup>32</sup> For Andronikos Kamateros' episode, cf. e.g. Leone, *Iambi* cit. 128-130; Agapitos, *o.c.* 22-27; Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 185-186; Ead., *Self-authorization* cit. 669, 671 n. 56, 682 n. 91.



A similarly explicit prescriptive instance occurs in the left and lower margin of **E**, f. 184v (verse scholion nr. 32 *ad* Thuc. V 17,2). Tzetzes explains a syntactical and rhetorical figure that deepens the obscurity of Thucydides (32,1). After attacking again the rhetoricians who defend Thucydides' style (32,2-3), Tzetzes sets the guidelines for writing history properly (32,4-5)<sup>33</sup>:

τίς ἱστορούντων ἀκριβῆς κανὼν μάθε·  
σαφῆς μετ' ὄγκου καὶ ταχύς, πειθοῦς γέμων.

Learn which is the precise rule for historians:  
clear with grandeur and swift, full of persuasion<sup>34</sup>.

In this regard, Herodotus (τὸν μελιχρὸν Ἡρόδοτον ἐν τοῖς λόγοις, 32,8) is to be preferred over Thucydides, Tzetzes implies at the end of this poem<sup>35</sup>.

*Tzetzes' verse scholia on Herodotus: fragments of a larger scholarly project*

Of course, Tzetzes knew Herodotus well. His verse scholia on Herodotus are probably less known, but they echo in several ways the ones on Thucydides, at least those edited by Luzzatto<sup>36</sup>. Tzetzes' verse scholia on Herodotus are preserved only in Florence, *Laur. Plut.* 70,3 (tenth century, **A** for the editors)<sup>37</sup>. Different later hands annotate the margins and interlinear spaces of this manuscript, in which some epigrams

<sup>33</sup> These guidelines are reconsidered and amplified in the final lines of the famous last poem of the cycle (f. 326v). Tzetzes closes his verse scholia on Thucydides explaining how historians should write according to the τέχνη (poem nr. 50,14-16; cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 132-138). Needless to say, these lines brim with rhetorical technical terms. Cf. Tzetzes' commentary on Hermogenes, Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca* IV cit. 125,7-9 = Walz, *o.c.* 686,2-4.

<sup>34</sup> Transl. after Kaldellis, *Byzantine Readings* cit. 75; cf. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 31-35.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. *schol. Carm. Il.* I 22c (p. 111,10 Leone).

<sup>36</sup> Luzzatto, *Note inedite* cit.

<sup>37</sup> Available online at <http://mss.bmlonline.it/s.aspx?Id=AWOItLNNI1A4r7GxML8h&c=Herodotus>. The date of the manuscript is in fact still a matter of debate, especially the issue of its stratigraphy. On palaeographic and codicological grounds, there is a consensus that the manuscript has two main parts (ff. 1-238 and ff. 239-376). Now, it remains an open question whether both parts are dated to the same period or the first is later and archaizing, and whether the first 26 folios represent yet a third stratum. Luzzatto (*Note inedite* cit.) supports the latter, whereas Cantore (*I marginalia* cit. and *Per la storia* cit. 70, 82-93) proposes that the first half (ff. 1-238) has been annotated after a collation with a manuscript from the Roman family of Herodotus' textual tradition. Cf. also e.g. M.L. Agati, 'Digrafismo' a Bisanzio. *Note e riflessioni sul X secolo*, «Scriptorium» LV (2001) 34-56: 53-56; G. De Gregorio, *L'Erodoto di Palla Strozzi* (cod. Vat. Urb. gr. 88), «BollClass» XXIII (2002) 31-130: 37-38 n. 19.

can be found<sup>38</sup>. Six certainly Tzetzian poems copied by a Palaeologan hand were edited for the first time by Luzzatto<sup>39</sup>. The first five verse scholia, in ff. 5v (Hdt. I 23) and 10r (Hdt. I 39-41), deal with orthographic and dialectal issues, most of them discussed in similar terms by Tzetzes elsewhere<sup>40</sup>. The didactic imperatives directed to a young reader and accompanied by the first-person pronoun in the dative case pervade these epigrams. The polemic against his adversaries and competitors is not absent either. The mentions of the τέχνη, on the other hand, do not surprise as the main concern of these verse scholia is grammar. The other main Tzetzian target, regarding the truth and consistency of the text commented upon, is the protagonist of the last and longest poem edited by Luzzatto. In the lower margin of f. 26r, written in five columns and three lines, a verse scholion comments on Hdt. I 94,2-3<sup>41</sup>. Here,

<sup>38</sup> Marginalia from various origins meet in A, such as the Planudean hand in the upper margin of f. 1r and the lower one of 376v, Nikephoros Gregoras in the external margin of f. 218v, or the interlinear conjecture in f. 315r (cf. B. Hemmerdinger, *Les manuscrits d'Hérodote et la critique verbale*, Genoa 1981, 88; C.M. Mazzucchi, *Diodoro Siculo fra Bisanzio e Otranto (cod. Par. gr. 1665)*, «Aevum» LXXIII, 1999, 385-421: 385; Luzzatto, *Note inedite* cit. 651-652, 654). Another hand commenting on Hdt. I 161 in f. 41v (ἔστι καὶ ἑτέρω Μαγνησία κατὰ δύσιν ὡς ἐρεῖ οὗτος ἐν τοῖς ὄπισθεν) can be added to this list, among others (cf. e.g. the external margin of 69r, 86v, 101r, the effaced upper margin of 92v). But even if the first section of this manuscript is throughout supplemented with accents and breathings by a later hand (Agati, *o.c.* 53), only the first folios are more heavily loaded with marginal scholia and interlinear glosses. Luzzatto (*Note inedite* cit.) and Cantore (*I marginalia* cit. and *Per la storia* cit. 70) maintain that one single hand from the Palaeologan period copied all these notes in the first 34 folios (or 26 according to Luzzatto), but in fact there seem to be many similar and contemporary Palaeologan hands filling these margins. Cf. *infra*.

<sup>39</sup> Some prose notes, possibly fragments of other epigrams, can be ascribed to Tzetzes too. Cf. Luzzatto, *Note inedite* cit. 649-650; Cantore, *I marginalia* cit. 20-22; Ead., *Per la storia* cit. 83-89. Traces of a larger scholarly project on Herodotus by Tzetzes can also be observed in a scholion to Hdt. III 75 found in other manuscripts (Cantore, *Per la storia* cit. 79, *lege ἑαυτὸν*).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Luzzatto, *Note inedite* cit. 642-645. For example, the issue discussed in the poem in f. 5v can be found again in *schol. Hist. I 17*, 396 (p. 533,3-9 Leone). Moreover, the wording and subject of the first two verse scholia in f. 10r have parallels in Tzetzes' verse scholia to Ar. *Plut.* 82 (p. 28,1-10 Massa Positano), Ar. *Ran.* 1137 (p. 1033,15-20 Koster), and *Ep.* 4 (p. 161,1-12 Leone). Cf. also Luzzatto, *Leggere i classici* cit. 74-76; Ead., *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 95-102; R. Cantore, *Citazioni erodotee nei commentari omerici di Eustazio*, «BollClass» XXIII (2002) 9-30: 29-30; Ead., *I marginalia* cit. 12-14; Ead., *Per la storia* cit. 90s.; Agapitos, *o.c.* 10-11.

<sup>41</sup> Luzzatto, *Note inedite* cit. 646-648. Cf. also Ead., *Leggere i classici* cit. 70-72; Ead., *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 158-159; Cantore, *Citazioni erodotee* cit. 28-29; Ead., *I marginalia* cit. 16-20. The passage commented on is actually in the previous folio (25v). As in other verse scholia in this manuscript, Luzzatto normalizes and emends the text of this epigram. She proposes στέργεται in v. 2, where the text seems to read στερνυκὴν (cf. Luzzatto, *Note inedite* cit. 647 n. 49; Cantore, *I marginalia* cit. 20 n. 17; the same abbreviation for -νικ- occurs in v. 2 of the poem in f. 5v), but I would be inclined to read a word related to στερέω. She also corrects τὰς ἐλίκτρας in v. 3 into ταῖς ἐλίκτρας and τήνδε τὴν

Herodotus claims that the Lydians invented a series of games later adopted by the Greeks<sup>42</sup>. Tzetzes, who refers to himself in the accustomed third person in v. 1 and as ὀβίβλης in v. 2<sup>43</sup>, reacts against Herodotus' report with an epigram. He offers a handful of Homeric quotations to confute the Lydian origin of these games (vv. 5-10) and some objections to imprecisions and contradictions in the passage (vv. 11-13)<sup>44</sup>. Therefore, the objective of this verse scholion is not the τέχνη, but the other elements summarized in *schol. Ar. Ran.* 1328 Koster: veracity of facts and chronology and internal coherence<sup>45</sup>. Tzetzes states his mission once again in v. 4: πάντας ἐλέγχει πανταχοῦ ψευδηγόρους ("He censures every liar everywhere")<sup>46</sup>.

So far, the typology of Tzetzean verse scholia on Thucydides and Herodotus reveals itself consistent. The motives for Tzetzes' interventions are the ones of the *Accounts*, enumerated in the aforementioned *schol. Ar. Ran.* 1328. They consider either the grammar and rhetorical devices of the main text at the level of the τέχνη, or its content at the level of the ἱστορία. In this last regard, they especially supervise the external agreement of what is told in the main text with what is told in other reliable sources and the internal agreement of what is told in the main text with what is told elsewhere by the same author. The scholiastic programme of Tzetzes involves a didactic, learned and self-assertive moment and a polemical one, which confronts equally his enemies, the author and the scribe. Both extremes, the generous lesson and the ruthless criticism, are complementary, since they imply a superior status of

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χοῖσιν in v. 6 in τάσδε τὰς χρήσεις, but these seem less necessary (cf. Cantore, *I marginalia* cit. 19-20). In v. 14 Luzzatto prints ὁ νῦν ἐπισκοπήσας instead of the manuscript's ὁ νῦν ἐπεσκόπησα.

<sup>42</sup> This passage is referred to in *schol. Exeg. Il.* 13,2, pp. 429,16-430,6 Papathomopoulos.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. *e.g. Hist.* VI 50, 401; VI 53, 470; VIII 176, 173; Pizzone, *The Historiāi* cit. 190-192.

<sup>44</sup> Cantore (*I marginalia* cit. 12-14, 16-20) argues that in these epigrams in A Tzetzes actually comments on a text closer to the Roman family of Herodotus' textual tradition. Particularly, this last verse scholion would react to a summary filling a lacuna. Accordingly, the second person would address the copyist of such text.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. another example of Tzetzes' observation of consistency in *schol. Lyc.* 497 (p. 181,21-29 Scheer). This scholion has been identified as verse by Thomas Coward in this volume, pp. 378-380.

<sup>46</sup> Herodotus himself is called a liar in strikingly similar terms in *schol. Hes. Op.* 652 (*recte* 654; p. 368,21-22 Gaisford): ὁ Ἡρόδοτος, ὁ ἐν πολλοῖς ἐμοὶ ἐλεγχεῖς ὡς ψευδηγοῶν. In this particular scholion on Hesiod, Tzetzes seems to refute Hdt. II 53,2, but he explicitly admits to having censured Herodotus on many other occasions. Hdt. V 58 could be at stake in *Hist.* XII 398, 85-118, where many Tzetzean motifs occur, such as the self-demeaning irony and the ἔλεγχος of liars and their wrong chronology. But, most remarkably, Tzetzes closes the discussion by admitting that these liars (among whom presumably Herodotus) misled him, "had I not examined them in inescapable accounts and in the Tzetzean way" (ἄνπερ οὐκ ἐξητάκειν / ἐν ἀλαθήτοις λογιμοῖς καὶ Τζετζικῶ τῶ τρόπῳ). These passages constitute thus yet further possible testimonies of an extensive Tzetzean commentary on Herodotus.

the speaker and the ignorance of the addressee<sup>47</sup>. Both extremes also meet as they pursue public recognition in a struggle against competitors for court patronage.

*A new verse scholion in political verse on Hdt. I 32,1 in Laur. Plut. 70,3*

There are other verse scholia in **A** not treated by Luzzatto that seem to escape this classification. First, an epigram published by Cantore can be read in the lower margin of f. 2v, written in a single line. The poem is preceded by a sign repeated in Hdt. I 8,3 (ἄμα δὲ κιθῶνι ἐκδυομένῳ συνεκδύεται καὶ τὴν αἰδῶ γυνή), over the word κιθῶνι. Moreover, a monogram for ὦραῖον, a common way of calling attention to *notabilia*, is found in the left margin next to the words of Gyges. The same word reappears at the beginning of the poem<sup>48</sup>:

ὦραῖον ὡς δὲ καὶ πανάληθες πέλει  
Γύγου τὸ ῥητὸν οἶδας ὠδὶ τὸν τρόπον.

How beautiful and also entirely true  
the words of Gyges are, you know this way.

Cantore suggests that Tzetzes may have composed these verses, although their tone is remarkably different from the ones edited by Luzzatto. Herodotus' version of the episode of Gyges is reproduced by Tzetzes elsewhere, but he makes no special mention of the proverb highlighted by the verse scholion<sup>49</sup>. The amazement and approval expressed in this verse scholion correspond better to the emotional reactions that usually underlie non-Tzetzian verse scholia. It does not seem to fall under Tzetzes' scholarly programme of controlling the accuracy of ancient texts, nor does it show any degree of self-promotion.

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<sup>47</sup> This superiority can also be read in moral terms. The verb ἐλέγχειν, recurrent in these contexts, synthesizes the commentator's control over grammar, facts and morals. In the longest verse scholion to Thucydides, Tzetzes even affirms (8,17): πηγαὶ γὰρ εἰσι τῷ βίῳ καλῶ τέχνηαι ("For the τέχνηαι are sources for a good life", cf. *Hist.* X 306, 71). On moral undertones in Tzetzes' polemics and self-representation, cf. Agapitos, *o.c.* 13-16; Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 203-206; van den Berg, *o.c.* 299-301. On the other hand, Tzetzes is well aware of the aggressiveness of his attitude, as he repeatedly denies arbitrariness or animosity in his critiques to ancient authors (cf. *supra*, *schol. Ar. Ran.* 100a and 1328 Koster).

<sup>48</sup> Cantore, *I marginalia* cit. 22; Ead., *Per la storia* cit. 84.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *Hist.* I 3, 148-156; VI 54, 476-479; VII 120, 191-198.

An inspection of the manuscript allowed me to find another verse scholion in **A** not edited by Luzzatto or Cantore, in the right margin of f. 8r (**fig. 1**)<sup>50</sup>. The verse scholion comments on the beginning of the famous answer of Solon to Croesus in Hdt. I 32,1 and reuses some of its vocabulary<sup>51</sup>:

Συμμαρτυρεῖς, Ἡρόδοτε, τὸ θεῖον τῶν Ἑλλήνων  
καὶ ταραχῶδες, φθονερόν, ἀνάμεστον κακίας·  
εἶπας καὶ γὰρ ὡς ἔχουσι τὰ πρᾶγματα πανσόφως.

You testify, Herodotus, to the deity of the Greeks  
as troubling, envious and full of evil.  
In fact you also say wisely how things are.

The question is whether this new verse scholion was composed by Tzetzes or not. Besides some partial formal parallels<sup>52</sup>, its subject matter does not correspond to

<sup>50</sup> The hand that copied this epigram, even if contemporary, seems to be quite different from the one responsible for the other verse scholia. Two distinct types of scripts can be observed in this same f. 8r. Consider the marginal note ὄρα ὅλον ὠραῖον (also occurring next to the same passage in *Angel. gr.* 83, f. 6v) marking the continuation of Solon's response (Hdt. I 32,2). The script of this note is similar to the one of the other Tzetzian verse scholia, whereas it differs at first sight from the one of the new verse scholion on Hdt. I 32,1. In the interlinear glosses to *σπερχθεῖς* (Hdt. I 32,1) the same phenomenon occurs. The first two synonyms above *σπερχθεῖς* (*ρίφεις λυπηθεῖς*) are written in a script closer to the one of the epigrams edited by Luzzatto, whereas the last two (*ταραχθεῖς θυμωθεῖς*) are in the thicker script of the new verse scholion in this same folio (cf. Cantore, *I marginalia* cit. 6; Ead., *Per la storia* cit. 85). Similarly, in f. 8v some variants of the text are written in the interlinear space. Above the famous line οὕτω ὧν Κροῖσε πᾶν ἐστι ἄνθρωπος συμφορῆ (Hdt. I 32,4), the thinner script wrote ἦ ᾧ over ᾧ and the thicker one wrote ᾧ over πᾶν (cf. H.B. Rosén, *Herodoti Historiae*, I, Leipzig 1987, 21; Cantore, *I marginalia* cit. 10; Ead., *Per la storia* cit. 85). However, the distinctive traits of the hand writing the new verse scholion (e.g. straighter terminal strokes of ρ and ligature εἰ; the ligatures for ρο, αχ, ερ, σο; more compressed and less wavy abbreviation for καί) could be ascribed to a lack of space or simply to a darker ink (cf. Cantore, *I marginalia* cit. 5; cf. e.g. another case in Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus* cit. 275). Whether it is one hand that annotates on separate occasions or they are different hands from the same milieu and period, these notes come from various origins and are closely intertwined with the complex history of the text (cf. Cantore, *I marginalia* cit. 22).

<sup>51</sup> Hdt. I 32,1: ᾧ Κροῖσε, ἐπιστάμενόν με τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐὼν φθονερόν τε καὶ ταραχῶδες ἐπειρωτῶς ἀνθρωπῆϊων προηγήματων πέρι.

<sup>52</sup> For example, *συμμαρτυρέω* (v. 1) is used by Tzetzes elsewhere (e.g. *Hist.* VI 85, 860; *schol. Ar. Plut.* 612, p. 144,10 Massa Positano), but always to introduce a quotation that supports Tzetzes' point (as here Herodotus agrees with Tzetzes by quoting Solon?). Another significant, yet not conclusive, coincidence occurs in *schol. Hes. Op.* 174 (*recte* 176; p. 144 Gaisford). He defines Hesiod's silver age as *κακίας παντοίας ἀνάμεστον* (cf. v. 2).



his regular types of interventions. Tzetzes alludes to the meeting of Solon and Croesus in his *Histories*, but he never considers the well-known topos of the divine jealousy<sup>53</sup>. The archaic and classical concept of the divine φθόνος is treated by Tzetzes, for example, in *schol. Ar. Plut.* 87 (pp. 29,15-30,8 Massa Positano), but differently from the new verse scholion. He does not criticize it, but he explains it allegorically:

τὸ δὲ “ἀνθρώποις φθονῶν” ἐπὶ τοῦ καθ’ ἱστορίαν Διὸς ἔνεκα τοῦ γελοιασμοῦ τῆς κωμωδίας, ὅτι φθονερός ἐστὶν ὁ Ζεὺς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις· ἀλληγορικῶς δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς εἰμαρμένης καὶ τύχης, ὅτι φθονερά ἐστὶν ἡ τύχη τοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ οὐκ ἔῤῥα τοὺς ἀξίους πλουτεῖν, ἀλλ’ ἐτύφλωσεν ὥσπερ τὸν Πλοῦτον· πλουτίζει γὰρ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον πονηροῦς, ἀλιτηρίου καὶ συκοφάντας, τοὺς ἀξίους δὲ πλουτισμοῦ παρατρέχει.

Whereas “envying mankind” is said for the sake of the humour of comedy with reference to the story of Zeus, because Zeus is jealous of mankind. But allegorically this is said with reference to the destiny and fortune, because fortune is jealous of mankind and does not let the worthy people become rich, but was blinded like Wealth. For fortune enriches especially the wicked ones, the sinners, the slanderers, and omits the worthy of enrichment.

Normally pagan gods and myths are allegorized by Tzetzes, that is, interpreted as rhetorically embellished ways of talking about cosmic or natural phenomena and elements, psychological processes, or, in a rather euhemeristic approach, historical facts and persons<sup>54</sup>. Allegory, indeed, constitutes the third column of Tzetzes’ didactic and scholarly agenda, as stated in *schol. Hes. Op.* 382 (p. 248,16-21 Gaisford)<sup>55</sup>:

<sup>53</sup> Cf. *Hist.* I 1, 22-54; III 71-73, 236-238; IV *ep. ad Lach.* 572; V 5, 376-381; VIII 177, 184-189. Of course, this omission could be understood in itself as implied censorship. The criticism of this key element of Herodotean religion seems to be inaugurated in Plut. *On the Malice of Herodotus* 857f-858a. On its reception, cf. e.g. A. Ellis (ed.), *God in History: Reading and Rewriting Herodotean Theology from Plutarch to the Renaissance*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2015; Id., *The jealous god of ancient Greece: Interpreting the classical Greek notion of φθόνος θεῶν between Renaissance humanism and Altertums-wissenschaft*, «Erudition and the Republic of Letters» II (2017) 1-55.

<sup>54</sup> On Tzetzes’ allegorical method and practice, cf. e.g. Hunger, *Allegorische Mythendeutung* cit.; Id., *Allegorien* 13-24 cit. 4-7; Cesaretti, *o.c.* 125-204; P. Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel*, Washington, D.C 2005, 124-127; Goldwyn-Kokkini, *Allegories of the Iliad* cit. xii-xvi (= *Eid.*, *Allegories of the Odyssey* cit. xv-xviii); Leone, *La leggenda troiana* cit. IX; A. Goldwyn, *Theory and method in John Tzetzes’ Allegories of the Iliad and Allegories of the Odyssey*, «Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies» III (2017) 141-171; M. Cardin, *Teaching Homer through (annotated) poetry: John Tzetzes’ Carmina Iliaca*, in R. Simms

ἢ ψευδῆ τινὰ ἱστορίαν ἐλέγχομεν ἢ διορθοίημεν, ἢ τι μυθῶδες ἀλληγοροίημεν, ἢ ἀτέχνως γεγραμμένον τεχνικῶς διαγράφοιμεν, οὐ μεταρσίοις λόγων συνθήκαις, οὐ κόμπῳ ῥημάτων, ἀλλὰ σαφεῖ καὶ περιπεζίῳ τῇ λέξει, ὡς ὁ διδασκαλικὸς τρόπος παρακελεύεται.

Either I censure or correct a false story, or I allegorize some myth, or I cross out with τέχνη something written without τέχνη, not with a highbrow style, nor with boastful words, but with clear and accessible diction, as the didactic way of writing prescribes.

Tzetzes' commentaries orbit around this triad: τέχνη, ἱστορία and ἀλληγορία. The latter is chosen by Tzetzes to deal with the divine φθόνος in *Ar. Plut.* 87<sup>56</sup>, whereas in the new verse scholion to *Hdt.* I 32,1 the allegorical interpretation is replaced by a plain repudiation of a pagan religious notion.

On the other hand, it is true that the typically Tzetzean polemical tone subsists in the new verse scholion, even if paganism is not a typical object of Tzetzes' attacks. There is also the direct dialogue with the author, addressed in v. 1<sup>57</sup>. Another problem is how we should understand the πανσόφως in v. 3. As we have seen, certain negative terms as δυσμαθής or ἀμαθής can be used both literally and ironically by Tzetzes. The same seems to apply to positive adjectives used sarcastically as derogatory<sup>58</sup>. Therefore, it is ambiguous whether the last verse of the new verse scholion indeed recognizes the report of Solon's adage as a complaint by Herodotus against the nature of pagan deities, or whether it rather ironically rejects beliefs with which Herodotus probably agreed.

Tzetzes' verse scholia in general do not dwell on religious questions and, if they approach the issue of paganism in ancient Greek literature, they are not condemnatory. There is one book epigram, however, that shows striking similarities with the

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(ed.), *Brill's Companion to Prequels, Sequels, and Retellings of Classical Epic*, Leiden-Boston 2018, 90-114: 95-98.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. van den Berg, *o.c.* 292-293.

<sup>56</sup> In a very Tzetzean way, since Zeus is often interpreted as fate. Cf. *e.g. Exeg. II.* p. 179 Papatthomopoulos: Ζεὺς γὰρ, ὡς εἶπον, καὶ εἰμαρμένη καὶ τύχη καλεῖται.

<sup>57</sup> Herodotus is also addressed by Tzetzes in the vocative in another polemical context (*Hist.* II 50, 736-743).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. *e.g.* πάνσοφος in Tzetzes' polemical *Iambi* (vv. 12, 108, 347, pp. 134, 137, 146 Leone); in *schol. Ar. Ran.* 1160a (p. 1039,2-3 Koster) or *schol. Ep.* 31 (p. 166,10 Leone) against schedographers (cf. Agapitos, *o.c.* 12-13); in *Hist.* IV 4, 847, 849; XI 369, 355; in *Alleg. II.* IV 48, polemicizing with Psellos (cf. Frederick Lauritzen's chapter in this volume); cf. also the σοφοὶ βούβαλοι in *schol. Ar. Plut.* 543 (p. 131,25 Massa Positano).



new verse scholion in A. In a number of manuscripts at the end of Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* a series of book epigrams can be found. One of them is ascribed to Tzetzes in some manuscripts<sup>59</sup>:

Ἄνθ' ὧν τὸ πῦρ δέδωκας ἀνθρώπων γένει  
 τρύχη βία φάραγγι προσπεπηγμένος·  
 τὸ πῦρ, Προμηθεῦ, ὃ βροτοῖς ἐχαρίσω  
 ὕλη πρὸς ἀκάματον εὐρέθη φλόγα,  
 ὀργῆς κατὰ σοῦ πρὸς θεῶν πυρσομένης. 5  
 Αἰσχύλε, τί φῆς; τοὺς θεοὺς σου προσφέρεις  
 πάσχοντας αἰσχροῶς ἐκ θεῶν ὁμοτρόπων;  
 καὶ πῶς ἄρα λέληθας σαυτὸν εἰς τέλος  
 θεοὺς σεβάζων τοὺς παθητοὺς τὴν φύσιν,  
 καὶ μὴ δυνατοὺς ἐκφυγεῖν τιμωρίας; 10

As a result of giving the fire to the human race,  
 you are consumed fixed by force to a ravine.  
 The fire, Prometheus, which you bestowed on mortals,  
 was the fuel for the untiring flame  
 of the wrath ignited by the gods against you. 5  
 Aeschylus, what do you say? Do you present your gods  
 as suffering shamefully from gods of a similar nature?  
 And how then do you not notice yourself finally  
 that you worship gods by nature capable of suffering,  
 and not capable of escaping punishments? 10

The first half of this poem (vv. 1-5) refers to the punishment inflicted on Prometheus by other gods and seems to sympathize with him<sup>60</sup>. In the second half (vv.

<sup>59</sup> I follow the edition by C.J. Herington, *The Older Scholia on the Prometheus Bound*, Leiden 1972, 240-242. There are disagreements about the structure of this epigram. Some editors consider it as part of a longer poem (cf. E. Cougny, *Epigrammatum Anthologia Palatina cum Planudeis et Appendice nova epigrammatum veterum ex libris et marmoribus ductorum*, III, Paris 1927, 414, IV 83; Allegrini, *o.c.* 228), some as two separate poems (cf. Vassis, *o.c.* 23, 58; Tomadaki-van Opstall, *o.c.* 197-198; <https://www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/3434> and <https://www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/3436>). Tzetzes' authorship tends to be supported by modern scholarship: cf. Herington, *o.c.* 43-44; Allegrini, *o.c.* 227-230; Tomadaki-van Opstall, *o.c.* 196-200.

<sup>60</sup> A remarkable parallel of these verses can be found in the epigram closing *Ep.* 9 (p. 18,14-17 Leone; cf. the chapter by Giulia Gerbi in this volume, pp. 141-142), explained and allegorized in

6-10), the author of the play is addressed in the vocative exactly as in the new verse scholion in A. Moreover, not only does this epigram attack ancient Greek religion as such, but it also rebukes Aeschylus for portraying and believing in gods subject to evil feelings. The criticism of the passions of pagan deities can be ascribed to someone who loves to rationalize them, like Tzetzes. However, this ascription remains uncertain, since Tzetzes normally chooses to explain allegorically instead of just mocking or reproaching<sup>61</sup>.

*Conclusion: Tzetzean authorship and the question of the metre*

To conclude, a final consideration on the authorship of these poems not edited by Luzzatto. Were these two verse scholia to Hdt. I 8,3 and I 32,1 composed by Tzetzes? There is no self-promotion in them, or attacks against adversaries, or grammatical and historical erudition. The verse scholion in f. 2v of A seems to be a simple profession of approval and admiration, a standard verse scholion, improvised and emotional. Tzetzes' verse scholia can also be described as improvised and emotional, but they often offer a scholarly dimension and a didactic purpose, not to mention his self-referential remarks. And even if the truthfulness praised in v. 1 and the use of the second person in v. 2 can allude to a didactic setting, the verse scholion does not seem to be openly provoked by the usual reasons for Tzetzes to intervene in the text of a classical author. These, we have observed, are threefold: the correctness of the form (τέχνη), the accuracy of the content (ἵστορία) and the explanation of a possible hidden message (ἀλληγορία). The latter could have been expected in the new verse scholion in f. 8r, but this epigram rather chooses to directly condemn the pagan element in Hdt. I 32,1. On the other hand, the new verse scholion reproduces, together with some interesting Tzetzean parallels, the dynamics of the ἔλεγχος, i.e. the quality control and censure of the text under consideration. This key concept of Tzetzes' method of commentary underlies the possibly caustic address to Herodotus in the new verse scholion to Hdt. I 32,1.

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*Hist.* VI 82, 830-840 (cf. *schol. Hes. Op.* 47ss., pp. 73,20ss., 80,26ss. Gaisford; see also the contribution to this volume by Tommaso Braccini).

<sup>61</sup> It is true that allegory seems to occur more frequently in prose scholia or in larger works by Tzetzes. Allegorical interpretation is seldom employed in his verse scholia. Cf., however, Tzetzes' verse scholion allegorizing the myth of Atlas that serves as *schol. Aesch. PV* 428 (Herington, *o.c.* 137, cf. 44 n. 1; Allegrini, *o.c.* 225-226) and as *schol. Opp. Hal.* I 619 (*recte* I 622; p. 293,48-55 Bussemaker; cf. A. Zumbo, *Una misconosciuta υπόθεσις περὶ Ἄτλαντος di Giovanni Tzetzes (Schol. Oppian. Hal. I,622)*, «RSBN» XXXIII, 1996, 275-278).

Therefore, even if these two verse scholia fit less evidently within Tzetzes' methodological framework, Tzetzes' authorship cannot be rejected outright. This especially applies to the new verse scholion in f. 8r of A. Yet another prominent feature makes Tzetzes a better candidate for the authorship of this epigram. The poem was composed in political verse, a metre frequently employed by Tzetzes elsewhere but unusual in other verse scholia, among which the dodecasyllable prevails<sup>62</sup>. However, the growing popularity of this accentual fifteen-syllable metre allowed it to feature more and more in many genres. Tzetzes' use of the political verse is above all linked with teaching and commissions by members of the court. This metre is associated with playfulness, and the accessibility of its rather prosaic rhythm renders it a perfect medium to convey (and possibly to memorize) a lesson. In this regard, the use of political verse in the new verse scholion to Hdt. I 32,1 is exceptional but not entirely alien to the Tzetzean contexts of occurrence of this metre. It must be remembered that the accounts, the name of a Tzetzean work closely related to his verse scholia, are said to be composed "most of them in iambic verses, but not few in other metres" (*schol. Ar. Ran.* 1328, p. 1077,52-53 Koster)<sup>63</sup>. In a marginal scholion to this passage, Tzetzes clarifies: "Note: I read 57 books and I wrote succinctly all the meaning in popular verses" (σημείωσαι ἀνέγνων δὲ νζ' βίβλους καὶ τὸν νοῦν πάντα συνοπτικῶς ἔγραψον πανδήμοις στίχοις, p. 1079,90-92 Koster)<sup>64</sup>, namely political verses. Two inferences can be made from this scenario. First, political verse can be regarded by Tzetzes as a metre<sup>65</sup>. Second, some of Tzetzes' accounts, whether

<sup>62</sup> On the history, features, and functions of political verse, cf. e.g. M.J. Jeffreys, *The nature and origins of political verse*, «DOP» XXVIII (1974) 141-195; W. Hörandner, *Beobachtungen zur Literaturästhetik der Byzantiner. Einige byzantinische Zeugnisse zu Metrik und Rhythmik*, «ByzSlav» LVI (1995) 279-290: 280-285; M.D. Lauxtermann, *The Spring of Rhythm. An Essay on the Political Verse and Other Byzantine Metres*, Vienna 1999; Bernard, *o.c.* 229-251.

<sup>63</sup> However, in *Hist.* XI 369, 247 only dodecasyllables are mentioned. Cf. *supra*.

<sup>64</sup> Koster states that this scholion corresponds approximately to v. 50, but in fact in *Ambr.* C 222 inf., f. 103r, the marginal note seems to be divided and the first part is written next to v. 44. A strong punctuation (:-) occurs after βίβλους (as for the abbreviation of βίβλους, cf. Koster's apparatus and Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus* cit. 273) and at the end after στίχοις (the manuscript actually reads ἔγραψ, maybe ἔγραψα?). In a footnote, however, Koster denies any connection of these political verses with the *Accounts*. He proposes to identify them with the *Histories*. On synopsis and poetry, cf. Bernard, *o.c.* 238-240; van den Berg, *o.c.* 291 n. 58; and Ugo Mondini's chapter in this volume, pp. 242-248.

<sup>65</sup> This moderates the opinion of M.J. Jeffreys, *o.c.* 156: «For Tzetzes, the political verse was not a meter». In the opening verses of his *Iambi* (1-5, p. 134 Leone), Tzetzes also refers to his *Histories* as μούσης μέτρα φέρουσα τῆς ἀγυρτίδος ("carrying the metres of the vulgar muse") and to some metrical violations regarding rhythm, feet and quantity. He also enumerates the πάνδημος Μοῦσα together with iambic (dodecasyllabic), hexametric and prose works in a catalogue of his oeuvre in *schol. Ar. Ran.* 897a (pp. 954,16-955,4 Koster).

they were collected in a book of *Accounts* from annotations in the margins or copied from the *Accounts* in the manuscripts, were written in political verse<sup>66</sup>. At this point, it would not surprise us to find the new verse scholion in **A** among the lines of a postulated section of this work of Tzetzes, most likely as part of a longer commentary on Herodotus.

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<sup>66</sup> This is now confirmed by Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 663-668, who even publishes the first verses of the passage in political verses from the *Accounts* in *Voss. gr. Q. 1*, conveniently entitled: Στίχοι δημώδεις. Λογισμὸς, τῆς Ἐρμογένους τέχνης (f. 222v; cf. De Meyier, *o.c.* 93). Pizzone, *Self-authorization* cit. 678ss. convincingly argues that the accounts could have been written in unbound writing material (σχέδη, σχέδια, σχεδάρια).



## Towards a new edition of Tzetzes' *Commentary on Lycophron*

John Tzetzes (ca. 1110/12-1170/1180), the teacher and scholar, calls himself the author of very many texts<sup>1</sup>. He is known for his impressive commentaries on Hesiod's *Works and Days*<sup>2</sup>, some of Aristophanes' plays<sup>3</sup>, and Lycophron's *Alexandra*.<sup>4</sup> While the *Commentary to Lycophron* is attributed to his brother Isaac in the manuscripts, it is more likely that it was written under John's direct attention<sup>5</sup>. All three works,

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\* I thank the audiences in St Andrews and at Ca' Foscari for their comments on the oral versions of this chapter. I thank the library staff at the Center of Hellenic Studies in Washington DC, the Institute of Classical Studies in London, the Vatican, the Ambrosiana, and El Escorial for their assistance in consulting editions and manuscripts.

<sup>1</sup> *Hist.* V 17, 586. In 1150, he explained to one Ioannes that he made a living exclusively by his pen and would starve if he stopped writing; the letter (*Ep.* 75) makes comparisons between his situation and those of several ancient writers, particularly Plato during his Sicilian period. He also claimed that God had never made a man with a better memory than his, and he knew all books by heart; yet, though he was of an excellent family, he chose to live a very simple life, thinking human life was vanity (*Hist.* I 11, 276-90). Cf. also *Hist.* I 31, 848-50. Tzetzes also thought of himself as an independent teacher and scholar, despite the job offers that he received (*Ep.* 19), and he also said: ἐμοὶ βιβλιοθήκη γὰρ ἢ κεφαλὴ τυγχάνει ("My head happens to be my library", *Alleg. II.* XV 87).

<sup>2</sup> Th. Gaisford, *Poetae minores Graeci*, III, Oxford 1820; see also A. Colonna, *I "Prolegomeni" ad Esiodo e la "Vita esiodea" di Giovanni Tzetzes* «BPEC» II (1953) 27-39 and III (1954) 45-55.

<sup>3</sup> Full commentaries on the triad *Wealth, Clouds, Frogs*, a set of notes on *Birds*, and a preface to *Knights* are edited in D. Holwerda-W.J.W. Koster-L. Massa Positano, *Jo. Tzetzae Commentarii in Aristophanem*, I-III, Groningen 1960-1964.

<sup>4</sup> See E. Scheer, *Lycophronis Alexandra*, I-II, Berlin 1881-1908, and C.G. Müller, Ἰσακίου καὶ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου σχόλια εἰς Λυκόφρονα, Leipzig 1811. He is also the author of several corpora of notes now lost or unpublished, e.g. to Sophocles (see F. Bevilacqua, *Il commento di Giovanni Tzetzes a Sofocle*, «AFLPer(class)» XI (1973/1974) 559-570), to Oppian (F. Napolitano, *Esegesi bizantina degli "Halieutica" di Oppiano*, «RAAN» XLVIII (1973) 237-254), and to Porphyry's *Eisagoge* (see Chr. Harder, *Johannes Tzetzes' Kommentar zu Porphyrius περὶ πέντε φωνῶν*, «ByzZ» IV (1895) 314-318). Aglae Pizzone is working on Tzetzes' commentary on Hermogenes and the *Logismoi*: see her contribution to this volume and the bibliography cited there. The *Exegesis of the Iliad* was composed before 1143: see M. Papatomopoulos, Ἐξηγήσεις Ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου εἰς τὴν Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδα, Athens 2007, 19 with F. Montana, *The oldest textual witness of John Tzetzes' Exegesis of the Iliad*, in M. Ercoles et al., *Approaches to Greek Poetry*, Berlin-Boston 2018, 107-131.

<sup>5</sup> See C. Wendel, *Tzetzes. Johannes* in *RE* VIIA/2 (1948) 1959-2010; P.A.M. Leone, *La tradizione manoscritta degli Scholia in Lycophronem (4)*, «SOC» VIII/2 (2004) 5-22: 5-7; and S. Hornblower, *Lycophron. Alexandra*, Oxford 2015, 105-106 on the very likely Johnian authorship of the commentary. I suspect John used his deceased brother's name and memory to help market the commentary.

preserved intact down to the present day, address pivotal texts in the late antique and Byzantine curriculum, and they all interact with their respective corpora of *scholia vetera*, as well as providing their own comments, where Tzetzes contests, differs, or diverges from them<sup>6</sup>. These commentaries are a treasure trove of mythographical material, quotations of lost works, and pointed comments<sup>7</sup>.

This chapter marks the first steps towards a new edition of Tzetzes' *Commentary on Lycophron*. Having briefly summarized the manuscripts and their relationships, the main topic of this chapter is to offer some samples of Tzetzes' commentary that are not dependent on the *scholia vetera* by considering matters such as Tzetzes' self-referential third person statements, spontaneous versifying, rationalising statements or allegories, and polemics against the poet<sup>8</sup>. This chapter demonstrates Tzetzes' genuine additions to the ancient exegesis on Lycophron, considers the sources available to him, and the overlaps between his commentary and other exegetical scholia and his own works, in order to demonstrate his working methods<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> The importance of Tzetzes in the history of Classical scholarship, after recent reassessments (see M. Grünbart, *Byzantinisches Gelehrtenelend – oder: Wie meistert man seinen Alltag?*, in L.M. Hoffmann (ed.), *Zwischen Polis, Provinz und Peripherie. Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, Wiesbaden 2005, 413-26: 143; F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529-1453)*, in F. Montanari-S. Matthaios-A. Rengakos (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, I, Leiden-Boston 2015, 297-455: 378-85), still needs a comprehensive, in-depth reappraisal, see P. Cesaretti, *Tzetzes, John*, in A. Grafton-G.W. Most-S. Settis (edd.), *The Classical Tradition*, Cambridge MA-London 2010, 957). On the reception of Lycophron in Byzantine poetry, see C. De Stefani-E. Magnelli, *Lycophron in Byzantine poetry (and prose)*, in C. Cusset-É. Prioux (edd.), *Lycophon: éclats d'obscurité. «Actes du colloque international de Lyon et Saint-Etienne, 18-20 janvier 2007»*, Saint-Etienne 2009, 593-620.

<sup>7</sup> They also show elements of oral delivery, see e.g. *schol. Hes. Op.* 198 Gaisford and *schol. Ar. Ran.* 897a Koster.

<sup>8</sup> Tzetzes defines three kinds of allegory: rhetorical, natural, and mathematical (i.e. in astrological and astronomical terms). See H. Hunger, *Allegorische Mythendeutung in der Antike und bei Johannes Tzetzes*, «JÖByz» III (1954) 35-54; P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI-XII secolo)*, Milano 1991, 127-204; A. Goldwyn, *Theory and Method in John Tzetzes' Allegories of the Iliad and Allegories of the Odyssey*, «SJBMGs» III (2017) 141-171 on Tzetzes' allegorical method. The use of the third person by Tzetzes could be seen as not only a sign of his ego and manner, but also his imitation of the *scholia vetera* of the Classical authors, who likewise refer to Hellenistic and Imperial era scholars in the third person in reporting their opinions and preferences (e.g. "Aristarchus/Didymus says..."), so Tzetzes is also imitating the scholarly style of the scholia.

<sup>9</sup> Maria Jagoda Luzzatto has shed light on Tzetzes' working methods: *Leggere i classici nella biblioteca imperiale: note tzetziene su antichi codici*, «QS» XLVIII (1998) 69-86; *Tzetzes lettore di Tuciddide. Note autografe sul codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252*, Bari 1999; *Note inedite di Giovanni Tzetzes e restauro di antichi codici alla fine del XIII secolo: il problema del Laur. 70, 3 di Erodoto*,

Tzetzes' approach to classical authors in general goes well beyond self-celebration and a weary re-statement of ancient material. He often would not confine himself to elucidating the phrase in question, and instead would use the lemma as a starting-point for little treatises on various topics. He had access to good libraries in Constantinople<sup>10</sup>. He also would often wish to consult the earliest copies of a text<sup>11</sup>. The *Commentary on Lycophron* often supplies dozens of quotations of, or allusions to, extant or lost poetical works (among the latter, a number of fragments of the Epic Cycle and of lost Euripidean tragedies, drawn probably from anthologies or later authors), and it displays a thorough familiarity with a vast range of handbooks and lexica, but above all with the exegetical corpora to other authors, starting from Homer. Tzetzes' acquaintance with unusual texts is demonstrated by the fact that he was the last known reader of a work containing the archaic lyric poet Hipponax (e.g. *schol. Lyc.* 219 Scheer, which cites Hipp. fr. 3 West)<sup>12</sup>; he was familiar, well before Planudes' rediscovery post-1295, with Ptolemy's *Geography*<sup>13</sup>, Ptolemy Chennus' cumbersome *New History*, the early books of Cassius Dio's historiographical work<sup>14</sup>, and some of Callimachus' works and fragments (*Hymn* 4,102; fr. 235 [= *Hec.* 9 Hollis], 618, 641-653 Pfeiffer)<sup>15</sup>. Given the poor editorial state of Tzetzes' commentaries, they may yet conceal more fragmentary works. Tzetzes had direct or indirect access to the text and scholia to Apollonius of Rhodes, Euripides, Homer, Pindar, Lycophron, Dionysius Thrax, Dionysius Perigetes, and Nicander's *Alexipharmaka*

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in G. Prato (ed.), *I manoscritti greci tra riflessione e dibattito*. «Atti del V Colloquio Internazionale di Paleografia Greca (Cremona, 4–10 October 1998)», Florence 2000, 633-654.

<sup>10</sup> *Schol. Ar. Plut.* 733 Massa Positano.

<sup>11</sup> e.g. *schol. Ar. Plut.* 137 Massa Positano: Ἐβουλόμην μὲν ἐξανορθοῦν εἰς πλάτος, γράφειν τε πάντα προσφυῶς Τζέτζου τρόποις· ἐπεὶ δ' ὁς ἡμᾶς ἦν συνωθήσας γράφειν, πρῶτον παλαιὰν οὐκ ἐφεῦρέ μοι βιβλὸν ἢ καὶ δύο ἢ τρεῖς ἔκ γε τῶν νεογράφων, ὡς ἄλλον ἐξ ἄλλης ἀνορθοῖν στίχον. Tzetzes would also become annoyed with bad copyists, see e.g. *schol. Ar. Plut.* 137 Massa Positano: βέβηλοι δυσμαθεῖς βιβλογράφοι.

<sup>12</sup> H. Degani, *Hipponactis testimonia et fragmenta*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1991<sup>2</sup>, 23; O. Masson, *Les fragments du poète Hipponax*, Paris 1962, 42-52 on Tzetzes' use of Hipponax. On Tzetzes' reliability as a witness of ancient fragments see M. Cannatà Fera, *Giovanni Tzetzes e i "giambi" di Archiloco* (fr. 215 W. = 20 T.), in D. Castaldo-F.G. Giannachi-A. Manieri (edd.), *Poesia, musica e agoni nella Grecia antica*. «Atti del IV convegno internazionale di MOISA (Lecce, 28-30 ottobre 2010)», «Rudiae» XXII-XXIII (2010/2011) II, 694–710, esp. 705-706 with earlier bibliography.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Hist.* XI 396, 888-889. See F. Pontani, *The world on a fingernail: An unknown Byzantine map, Planudes, and Ptolemy*, «Traditio» LXV (2010) 177-200, and Chiara D'Agostini's chapter in this volume.

<sup>14</sup> e.g. *schol. Lyc.* 1232 Scheer. Part of Book XV was paraphrased by Tzetzes (*Hist.* II 35, 109-128); on that passage see Philip Rance's chapter in this volume, pp. 452-456.

<sup>15</sup> N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, London 1996<sup>2</sup>, 196.



and *Theriaka*<sup>16</sup>. He tweaks and incorporates bits of the *scholia vetera* into his own commentary. It is also likely that Tzetzes had a sourcebook of quotations<sup>17</sup>. He also had access to Demosthenes, Pausanias, Plutarch, and Stephanus of Byzantium. Most importantly, he is indebted to Pseudo-Apollodorus' *Bibliotheca* and Palaphaetus' *On Incredible Tales*, where he versified elements in his *Historiai* and made extense use in the Lycophron commentary. Tzetzes also made use of his own commentaries and other poetic works, where he elaborates or summarises in one work points made in another.

In terms of the legacy of the Lycophron commentary, the oldest preserved ms. of the *Odyssey* with scholia (Heidelberg *Pal. gr.* 45, of 1201) displays on its margins mainly glossographical and mythographical material, partly drawn from the exegetical works of John Tzetzes, including to Lycophron's *Alexandra*<sup>18</sup>. The scholia to Oppian's *Haliutica* are substantial (much larger than the poem itself) and fall into three groups: A, B, and C. The A scholia appear to derive primarily from the work of Tzetzes. Finally, Eustathius copies verbatim Tzetzes' notes on Lycophron in his own works<sup>19</sup>. The *Epitome Vaticana* of ps.-Apollodorus' *Bibliotheca*, discovered by Richard Wagner in 1885 in a fourteenth-century ms. (*Vat. gr.* 950), was considered to be the work of John Tzetzes who, in the twelfth century, used the *Bibliotheca* (and Palaphaetus) for the compilation of the *Commentary to the Alexandra* and for his *Historiai*<sup>20</sup>. Johanna Michels, however, has shown that Wagner's hypothesis was

<sup>16</sup> See e.g. M. Geymonat, *Scholia in Nicandri Alexipharmaca, cum glossis*, Milan 1974, 12-13 on the Nicander scholia and Tzetzes, e.g. *schol. Nic. Al.* 77c, 248c, 450e Geymonat, cf. also *Lyc.* 631, 652, 621. Cf. also *schol. Pind. Isth.* 1,44a, 4,33a Drachmann, *schol. Ap. Rh.* III 1242-1243 Wendel, and *schol. Lyc.* 646 Scheer.

<sup>17</sup> See M. Cardin-F. Pontani, *Hesiod's fragments in Byzantium*, in Ch. Tsagalis (ed.), *Poetry in Fragments: Studies on the Hesiodic Corpus and its Afterlife*, Berlin-Boston 2017, 245-88, for examples from the Hesiodic corpus.

<sup>18</sup> See F. Pontani, *Sguardi su Ulisse: la tradizione esegetica greca all'Odissea*, Rome 2005, 218-225 and D. Arnesano-E. Sciarra, *Libri e testi di scuola in Terra d'Otranto*, in L. Del Corso-O. Pecere (edd.), *Libri di scuola e pratiche didattiche dall'antichità al Rinascimento*, II, Cassino 2010, 425-473: 433-440 on this ms.

<sup>19</sup> Wilson, *o.c.* 201, e.g. *schol. Lyc.* 731 Scheer and *schol. Ar. Plut.* 415 Massa Positano. See D.J.W. Koster-D. Holwerda, *De Eustathio, Tzetzta, Moschopulo, Planude Aristophanis commentatoribus*, «Mnemosyne» VII (1954) 136-156 on the relationship between the two.

<sup>20</sup> A. Diller, *The Text History of the Bibliotheca of Pseudo-Apollodorus*, «TAPhA» LXVI (1935) 296-313: 304. E.g. *schol. Lyc.* 50 Scheer draws on [Apollod.] II 7,7 [160] and *schol. Lyc.* 838 Scheer is known to depend upon the *Bibliotheca*.

wrong and that the epitomes are unlikely to be by Tzetzes himself, but by an epitomator of Tzetzes' works<sup>21</sup>. Any overlaps between the *Epitome* and Tzetzes ought to be considered as a legacy of the *Commentary*, rather than as a source. Therefore, it is important to mark out and explain Tzetzes' genuine additions to the bulk of ancient exegesis. It is also worth noting that when the Byzantine's contributions are overtly declared as such, they present his characteristic features, such as rationalising allegories and a polemical attitude against the author.

### *Summary of the manuscripts and printed editions*

There are currently 72 or 73 mss. that contain Tzetzes' commentary on Lycophron's *Alexandra*, and 17 or 18 that contain fragments or excerpts<sup>22</sup>. Those listed below (**tab. 1**) and marked with an \* are the important witnesses or *codices principes*<sup>23</sup>.

The stemma below (**fig. 1**) is drawn from Leone's observations on the relationships between the mss. and his reconstruction of the families and their relationship to the *scholia vetera* to Lycophron. It demonstrates the *status quo* and may change upon further investigation: for example, Leone's A (*Ambr. C222 inf.*) has been redated by Carlo Maria Mazzucchi to an earlier time (*ca.* 1185-95) than when Leone studied it<sup>24</sup>. Leone had gone into detail about mss. that transmit Tzetzes' commentary and *prolegomenon*. I use Leone's *sigla* in my apparatus bar Müller's **Vitt. 1** (= *Pal. gr.* 40), since Leone did not give the ms. a siglum on the grounds that the quality and quantity of the transmitted scholia in the ms. is strongly curtailed<sup>25</sup>. I include it to demonstrate Müller's sources and emendations.

<sup>21</sup> J. Michels, *Tzetzes epitomator et epitomatus? Excerpts from Ps.-Apollodorus' Bibliotheca, John Tzetzes' Lycophron commentary and Chiliades in Vaticanus gr. 950*, «Byzantion» XC (2020) 115-132.

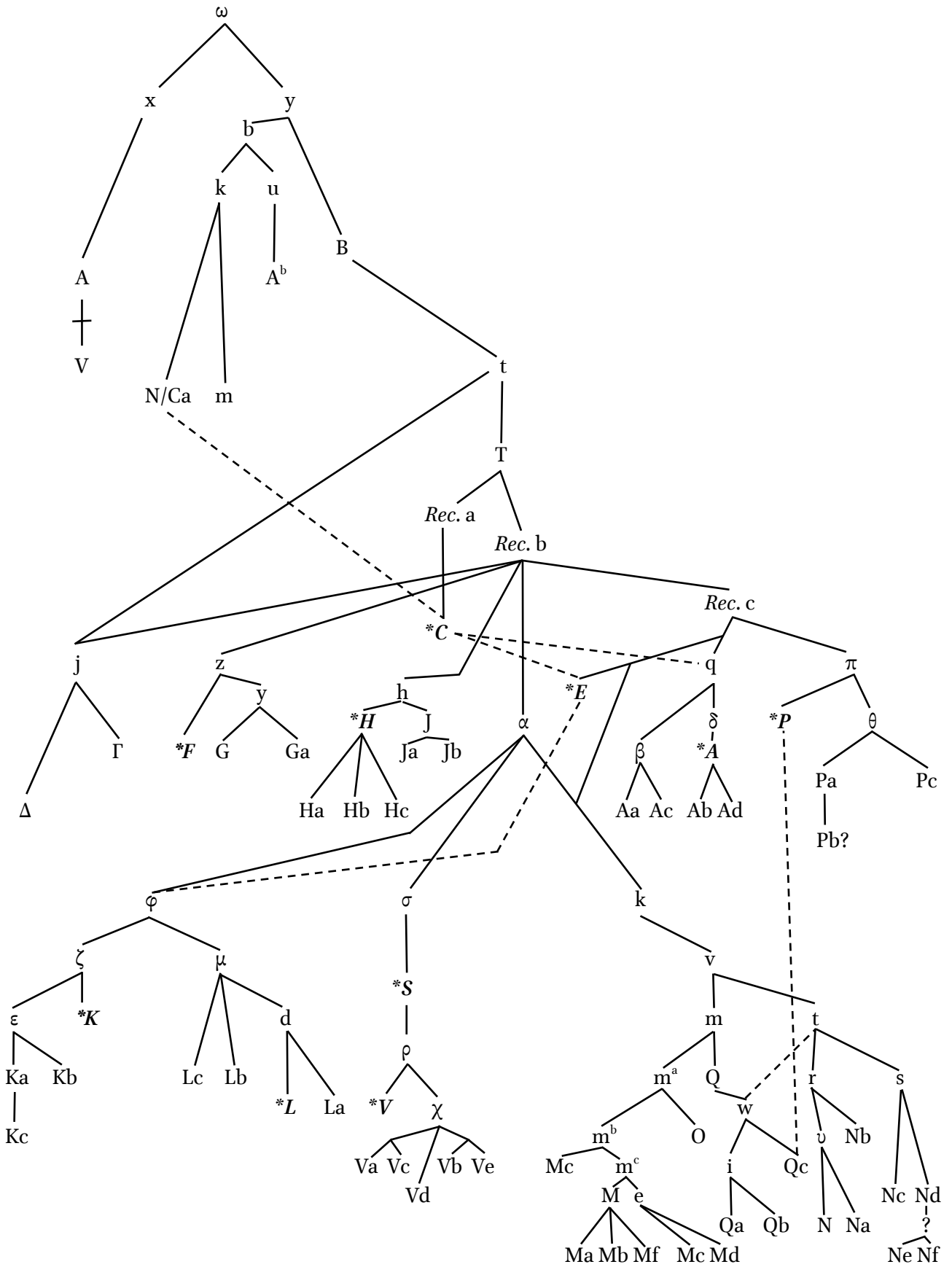
<sup>22</sup> For a full list see Appendix below. For a series of studies of the mss. that contain Tzetzes' commentary, see P.A.M. Leone, *La tradizione manoscritta degli scholia in Lycophronem (1)*, «QC» III (1991) 33-76; (2), «QC» IV-V (1992-1993) 45-58; (3), «QC» n.s. I (2002) 95-122; (4) «SOC» VIII/2 (2004) 5-22; (5), «QC» ns. II (2003) 101-121; (6), *ibid.* 123-150; (7), «QC» n.s. VI (2007) 5-18. For a summary of the main mss. see O. Masson, *Notes sur quelques manuscrits de Jean Tzetzes*, «Emerita» XIX (1951) 104-116: 107-111. Leone focused on the *Prologomenon*. Hornblower, *o.c.* 100-112 is a summary and is derived from P.M.J. Fraser's unpublished notes with a few additions by Hornblower. Fraser's piece seems to be an English translation of the relevant section of Wendel, *o.c.*

<sup>23</sup> For the scope and purposes of this chapter I have examined only the *codices principes*: **AVF** by autopsy and **SPQHL** through high-definition digital images.

<sup>24</sup> See C.M. Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf. (Graecus 886): il codice e il suo autore*, «Aevum» LXXVII (2003) 263-275 and LXXVIII (2004) 411-437, and the Appendix below.

<sup>25</sup> *Pal. gr.* 40 is however mentioned by Leone, *La tradizione (1)* cit. 44 and (4) cit. 10.

*Scholia vetera*



**Tab. 1:** *Conspectus siglorum*

| Mss.                                   | saec.         | Scheer                   | Masson   | Leone    | Hurst     | Hornblower |
|--|---------------|--------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|
| <i>Codices Tzetzae</i>                 |               | $s^4 + s^5$              |          |          | t         |            |
| <i>Commentaria Tzetzae</i>             | c. 1140-1190  |                          |          |          | T         | T          |
| * <i>Ambr. C222</i> inf., ff. 109r-76r | c. 1185-1195  | <i>c/γ1</i>              | <b>A</b> | <b>A</b> |           |            |
| * <i>Scor. R-I-18</i> ff. 3r-101v      | 2nd June 1255 |                          | <b>S</b> | <b>S</b> | <b>M3</b> |            |
| * <i>Par. gr. 2723</i> ff. 3-73v       | June 1282     | <b>C/Ia</b>              | <b>P</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>C</b>  | <b>α'</b>  |
| * <i>Par. gr. 2403</i> ff. 58r-99v     | xiii          | <b>b</b>                 | <b>Q</b> | <b>P</b> | <b>D</b>  | <b>β'</b>  |
| * <i>Pal. gr. 18</i> ff. 9r-96v        | xiii          | <b>E/c/γ<sup>2</sup></b> | <b>H</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>E</b>  | <b>γ'</b>  |
| * <i>Vat. gr. 1306</i>                 | xiii          | <b>b/IIb</b>             | <b>V</b> | <b>V</b> |           |            |
| * <i>Laur. Plut. 32,17</i>             | xiii/xvi      |                          | <b>L</b> | <b>K</b> |           |            |
| * <i>Vat. gr. 117</i> , ff. 30-113     | xiv           |                          | <b>W</b> | <b>F</b> |           |            |

Tzetzes had access to some mss. that contained some *scholia vetera*, but not all of them (t). A helpful ms. in the collation of Tzetzes' commentary is *Marc. gr.* 476 (Leone's **A** of the *scholia vetera*), from the eleventh century, which contains *scholia vetera* not incorporated into the commentaries of Tzetzes<sup>26</sup>. This can help us to separate examples where Tzetzes follows the *scholia vetera* which he had access to and where he adds his own comments. Tzetzes made three revisions / editions of his commentary (rec. *a, b, c*). Of the *codices principes*, **C** represents the first edition, **KLSV** the second edition, and **AP** the third edition. **E** is mainly a third edition ms., but has been influenced indirectly by **C**, and has indirectly influenced **KL**. Leone's *q*, which is the most recent redaction of Tzetzes' commentary, however, needs to be reassessed due to the revised earlier dating of **A** (*ca.* 1185-1195). A future stemma also needs to consider the influence or contamination of the mss. of the *Etymologica* and of ps.-Apollodorus' *Bibliotheca*.

The first printed edition of the commentary was by Arnoldus Arlenius Peraxylus (*ca.* 1510-1582), which was printed in Basel in 1546<sup>27</sup>. He makes a number of conjectures and had access to a selection of mss. (e.g. **CPFL**) through his travels as a publishing agent and diplomat. This Dutch humanist, collector, philosopher, and poet was trained in Bologna. He was the Librarian of the Spanish Ambassador in Venice from 1542 and was an agent for booksellers in Basel. He catalogued the manuscripts in the collection of the Spanish Ambassador, and he also travelled to Ferrara, Florence, Frankfurt, and Paris. According to the prefatory epistle, he completed his edition in Bologna. There is no apparatus or notes on the text. It also contained the *Historiai* with a Latin translation. John Potter's 1697 edition (reprinted in 1702)<sup>28</sup> contains a Greek text and facing Latin verse translation of Willem Canter (1542-1575) with the corresponding scholia attributed to Isaac printed underneath. The edition was based on manuscripts held in Oxford and on the editions of Joseph Scaliger (1540-1609), Canter, and Johannes Meursius (van Meurs, 1579-1639). It also contained the Latin commentaries of Canter, Meursius, and Potter himself, as well as the Latin verse translation of Scaliger and Canter's verse summary of the poem (*Epitome*) in Anacreontic metre(!). The next printed edition, in 1803, was by

<sup>26</sup> It also contains the text and scholia of Aratus' *Phainomena*. See D. Kidd, *Aratus. Phaenomena*, Cambridge 1997, 43.

<sup>27</sup> Λυκόφρονος Ἀλέξανδρα τὸ σκοτεινὸν ποίημα, καὶ πολυμαθέστατον εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο Ἰσακίου τοῦ Τζέτζου ἐξήγημα. *Lycophronis Chalcidensis Alexandra, sive Cassandra: poema quidem obscurum etiam doctis appellatum*, etc. Basel 1546.

<sup>28</sup> Λυκόφρονος τοῦ Χαλκιδέως Ἀλέξανδρα, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο Ἰσακίου τοῦ Τζέτζου ἐξήγημα. *Lycophronis Chalcidensis Alexandra, cum Graecis Isaacii Tzetis commentarii*, etc., cura & opera Iohannis Potteri, Oxford 1697.

Leopoldo Sebastiani, who leans towards authorship by John rather than Isaac Tzetzes<sup>29</sup>. It contains a Greek text with scholia beneath it and an apparatus, emendations, and a facing Latin translation of the *Alexandra*. There is also a Latin translation of Tzetzes' commentary with some notes at the back. His main mss. were those kept in the Vatican (*Vat. gr.* 117, 915, 916, 972, 1306, 1307, 1421, 1476). He also consulted Potter's edition of Lycophron. As will be seen in the apparatus of the examples below, several of Sebastiani's corrections are found in mss. which he did not have access to. Shortly afterwards, the edition of Christian Gottfried Müller followed, in 1811<sup>30</sup>. It remains the most detailed edition, though his collations were confined to mss. from Germany (Wittenberg, now in Heidelberg, and his hometown of Zeitz), and readings from Sebastiani's edition<sup>31</sup>.

The last printed edition by Eduard Scheer was in 1908, the second volume of his two-volume edition of Lycophron and scholia<sup>32</sup>. It is not user-friendly at all and is full of labyrinthine inconsistencies. Scheer combines all the scholia, and most of those presented are Tzetzian, but where Tzetzes and *scholia vetera* diverge, Scheer prints the text in two columns, with Tzetzes' commentary on the right-hand side. Scheer's *scholia vetera* do not always match up with the more recent collations of the *scholia vetera* by Leone<sup>33</sup>. While he consulted more manuscripts than Sebastiani and Müller, Scheer still missed out on three *codices principes* (**S**, **K**, and **F**). Scheer's method was to prioritise **C** (*Par. gr.* 2723) as the primary witness, with **V** (*Vat. gr.* 1306) and **A** and **E** (*Ambr. C222 inf.* + *Pal. gr.* 18) as secondary witnesses. Scheer also gave too much value to **La** (*Vindob. phil. gr.* 282). This edition received only two reviews, which pointed out important flaws in Scheer's construction of the text. Schultz stated that Scheer's compilation with **C** as a "foundation text" and omissions supplied by **V** and **AE**, which Scheer indicated by \*...\*, was not correct<sup>34</sup>. In fact, **C** was an abbreviated version of the other two, given the several omissions present in

<sup>29</sup> Λυκόφρονος τοῦ Χαλκιδέως Κάσσανδρα τὸ σκοτεινὸν ποίημα, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο Ἰσαακίου, μᾶλλον δὲ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου ἐξήγημα. *Lycophronis Chalcidensis Cassandra obscurum poema, ope XVI. Codicum MSS. sanioribus subinde lectionibus restitutum*, etc., studio et impensis Leopoldi Sebastiani, Rome 1803.

<sup>30</sup> Müller, *o.c.*

<sup>31</sup> Müller (followed by L. Bachmann, *Lycophronis Alexandra*, Leipzig 1830) used the following abbreviations: **Vitt. 1** (= *Pal. gr.* 40), **Vitt. 2** (= *Pal. gr.* 18 = **E**), **Vitt. 3** (= *Pal. gr.* 272 = **M**), and **Ciz.** (= *Ciz. gr.* 69 = **Ha**).

<sup>32</sup> Scheer, *o.c.*

<sup>33</sup> P.A.M. Leone, *Scholia vetera et paraphrases in Lycophronis Alexandram*, Galatina 2002.

<sup>34</sup> H. Schultz, rec. Scheer, *o.c.*, «GGA» CLXXII (1910) 19-35, summarised without reference in Hornblower, *o.c.* 106-108.

the ms.<sup>35</sup> **C** ought to be viewed as an exemplar of the first edition of the *Commentary*, and therefore, correct readings in **V** and/or **E** which are corrupt in **C** should be incorporated into the edited text as part of the revised versions of the *Commentary*. Furthermore, **A** has been redated as likely having been copied by one of Tzetzes' own students<sup>36</sup>. Holzinger, noting Zacher's observations on Tzetzes' commentary on Aristophanes' *Wealth*, refined this position, believing that any early work by Isaac had been supplanted by John's later efforts, citing the status of the mss. of John Tzetzes' commentaries on Aristophanes' *Wealth*, which seem to have also undergone revisions<sup>37</sup>. Although Tzetzes made three editions of the *Commentary*, **C** remains useful for showing the development of Tzetzes' commentary technique and his own editorial processes. Finally, there is no real apparatus in Scheer's edition, and there are no consistent *sigla* between the two volumes. Parallels are not pointed out regularly, and it is not always clear what is *scholia vetera*, *recentiora*, or *Tzetziانا*. It is a surprisingly disappointing edition given how long Scheer spent working on it (well over thirty years) and missed out on opportunities to point out Tzetzes' sources and parallels within his own works, given the number of editions of other corpora of scholia and Tzetzes' works which were available at the time. Therefore, a new critical edition is needed.

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<sup>35</sup> Schultz, *o.c.* 24 notes that «Die Pariser Hs. verliet ihre Sonderstellung als Redaktion des Isaac Tzetzes, und es steht wohl jetzt nichts mehr im Wege, sie als eine verkürzte Redaktion des in der Klasse *bc* reicher überlieferten Kommentars des Johannes Tzetzes anzusehen». Scheer's S5 and S6, intermediary and conjectured mss., do not exist: see Schultz, *o.c.* 27 and Wendel, *o.c.* 1978.

<sup>36</sup> Mazzucchi, *o.c.*

<sup>37</sup> C. Holzinger, rec. Scheer, *o.c.*, «BPhW» XXXII (1912) 513-524, citing K. Zacher, *Die Handschriften und Classen der Aristophanesscholien*, Leipzig 1888, 602. See now L. Massa Positano, *Jo. Tzetzae commentarii in Aristophanem*, I: *Prolegomena et commentarium in Plutum*, Groningen 1960, LXXX-CVI. John Tzetzes' commentary on Aristophanes' *Wealth* would seem to have undergone revisions and expansion in its second edition. The earlier edition is preserved in **U** (*Vat. Gr. Urb.* 141), which does not diverge much from the *scholia vetera*, whereas **Amb** (our **A**) and **Lut** (*Par. suppl. Gr.* 655) show a more developed and opinionated commentary. One can compare the mss. of Demetrius Triclinius' commentary and edition of Aeschylus, which likewise shows evidence of an earlier edition and subsequent revision by the author. See A. Turyn, *The Manuscript Tradition of the Tragedies of Aeschylus*, New York 1943, 100-116, and Id., *The Byzantine Manuscript Tradition of the Tragedies of Euripides*, Urbana IL 1957, 253 n. 238 on *Vat. Gr.* 1824 and O.L. Smith, *Studies in the Scholia on Aeschylus: The recensions of Demetrius Triclinius*, Leiden 1975, 55-113 for further analysis.

*Some samples of Tzetzes' Commentary to Lycophron*

In the proposed edition of Tzetzes' *Commentary*, there will be a critical text and apparatus with a facing translation, followed by explanatory notes. Per custom, the apparatus will be divided between *testimonia* and variant readings. The *apparatus testimoniorum* will be subdivided into three sections: firstly, overlaps with the Tzetzean corpus where comments, interpretations, and passages are repeated or developed elsewhere by Tzetzes; secondly, the sources for Tzetzes' commentary, such as the *scholia vetera*, *Etymologica*, or other classical and Byzantine authors; thirdly, instances where Tzetzes' comments have been used as a source e.g. by Eustathius or the scholia to Oppian. The explanatory notes will describe aspects of Tzetzes' style and methods, or how he uses or manipulates his sources, or what his interpretations tell us about Tzetzes' intellectual milieu, concerns, and lines of reasoning.

1. Critical text
2. *Apparatus testimoniorum*
  - a. Overlaps within Tzetzes' corpus
  - b. Tzetzes' sources, e.g. *scholia vetera*, *Etymologica*, other scholia
  - c. Someone using Tzetzes as source, e.g. Eustathius.
3. *Apparatus criticus*
4. Translation
5. Notes

For these examples below, I quote the passage of Lycophron being commented in order to situate the commentary within its literary context. Words highlighted in bold are the ones being commented on. The translation of the *Alexandra* is adapted from Hornblower and Mooney, while the translations of the scholia are my own.

1. *Schol. Lyc. III, pp. II, 57-59 Scheer*

νήσω δ' ἐνὶ δράκοντος ἐγγέας πόθον 110  
**Ἄκτῆς, διμόρφου γηγενοῦς σκηπτουχίας,**  
 τὴν δευτέραν ἕωλον οὐκ ὄψει Κύπριν  
 ψυχρὸν παραγάλισμα καὶ ὄνειρατων  
 κεναιῖς ἀφάστων ὠλέναισι δέμνια. (Lyc. 110-114)

When, on Dragon's isle, you have fulfilled your desire, 110  
**in Akte, the realm of the two-formed earth-born king,**



you will not see a second day of marriage,  
but will have a cold embrace, the stuff of dreams,  
grasping the bed with your empty arms.

**111a** Ἀκτῆς] τῆς Ἀττικῆς, Ἀθηνῶν. Ἀκτὴ δὲ λέγονται αἱ Ἀθῆναι ὅτι Ἀκτεὺς ἐκεῖνων ἐβασίλευσεν ἢ ὅτι ἀκτὴ ἐστὶ, τουτέστι προβεβλημένη καὶ κειμένη τὸ πλεῖον μέρος εἰς θάλασσαν. Ἀττικῆς δὲ νῆσος ἡ Σαλαμίς.

**111a** Strab. IX 1,3; *Et.Gen.* α 378-379, *Et.Sym.* α 448-452 Lassere-Livadaras | ἀκτὴ ἐστὶ ... εἰς θάλασσαν : Apollod. *FGrHist* 244 F 185 *ap.* Steph.Byz. α 176 Billerbeck οὕτω γὰρ ἐκλήθη διὰ τὸ πόλυ μέρος αὐτῆς καθικνεῖσθαι εἰς θάλασσαν | Ἀκτὴ = Attica : Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 93; Euphor. fr. 37,1 Lightfoot; Call. *Ia.* 4,68 = fr. 194,68 Pfeiffer; Lyc. *Alex.* 504, 1339; Paus. I 2,6; Hellad. *Chrest.* *ap.* Phot. *Bibl.* 534a.25-26 (p. VIII, 182 Henry); *Et.Magn.* s.v. Ἀκτὴ, Ἀττικὸς pp. 54, 167 Gaisford; *Et.Gud.* s.v. Ἀττικὸς p. 230 De Stefani; *Et.Gen.* α 378, 1380, *Et.Sym.* α 1543 Lassere-Livadaras; Eust. *in Il.* I 436 van der Valk; Eust. *in Od.* p. 1568 Stallbaum; Eust. *in Dion. Per.* p. 177 Bernhardt | ἀκτὴ = litus/ora : Eur. *Hel.* 1673; Apoll. Rhod. II 354; Strab. IX 1,3; Steph. Byz. α 176 Billerbeck; *Et. Gen.* α 379 Lassere-Livadaras

**111a** Ἀθηνῶν : τῶν Ἀθηνῶν **FL** | Ἀκτὴ Scheer : Ἀκταὶ **FEML** | λέγονται : λέγεται Peraxylus | ἐκεῖνων Scheer : αὐτῶν **SPHaVitt 1** : αὐτῆς **EML** | ἐστὶ <ἡ Ἀττικὴ> Sebastiani, quod non opus erat | τουτέστι : τοῦτ' ἐστὶ Müller | εἰς θάλασσαν : εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν **M** | Ἀττικῆς : τῆς Ἀττικῆς **SMLP** | Ἀττικῆς δὲ νῆσος ἡ Σαλαμίς om. **C**, fort. del.?

**111a** “«of Akte» of Attica, of Athens. Athens is called Akte because Akteus had ruled them or because it is an *akte* ('promontory'), that is to say, it juts out and lies for the most part into the sea. Salamis an the island of Attica.

**111b.1** διμόρφου γηγενοῦς σκηπτουχίας· ἡ Ἀττικὴ γὰρ ἦν βασιλεία τοῦ Κέκροπος· ἐλθὼν γὰρ ἀπὸ Σάεως πόλεως Αἰγύπτου τὰς Ἀθήνας συνώκησε. Σάις δὲ κατ' Αἰγυπτίους ἡ Ἀθηνᾶ λέγεται, ὡς φησι Χάραξ (cf. *BNJ* 103 F39).

**111b.1** *Hist.* V 19, 658-662; *schol. Ar. Plut.* 773 Massa Positano

**111b.1** Hecat. *BNJ* 264 F 25; Anaximen. *BNJ* 72 F 50; Plat. *Tim.* 21e; *schol.* Plat. *Tim.* 21e Greene; Diod. Sic. I 28,4; Charax *BNJ* 103 F 39; *schol. vet. Ar. Plut.* 773b Chantry | Σάις = Ἀθηνᾶ : cf. *etiam* Hdt. II 28; II 59; II 169; Plat. *Tim.* 21e; Strab. XVII 1,18; Paus. IX 12,2; Orig. *Contra Celsum* V 29

**111b.1** ἦν βασιλεία : βασιλεία ἦν **SEFLP** | τοῦ om. **P** | ἐλθὼν γὰρ ἀπὸ Σάεως : γὰρ om. **M** : ἐλθὼν οὖν ἀπὸ Σάεως **C** : Σάεως om. **S** | συνώκησε] συνώκησε **CP** | Σάις δὲ : Σάις γὰρ **Vitt. 1 Ha**

**111b.1** “the realm of the two-formed earth-born king”: for Attica was ruled by Cecrops. For having come from the Egyptian city Sais he founded Athens. Sais according to the Egyptians means Athena, as Charax [of Pergamum] says.

**111b.2** δίμορφον δὲ καὶ διφυῆ λέγουσι τὸν Κέκροπα διὰ τὸ ἐκ τῶν τοῦ δράκοντος ὀδόντων ἐξελεθεῖν τῶν παρὰ τοῦ Κάδμου σπαρέντων ἐν Θήβαις· οὗτος ἦν βασιλεὺς Ἀθηναίων. ἢ διὰ τὸ δύο ἀνδρῶν φυὴν καὶ μέγεθος ἔχειν ἢ διὰ τὸ δύο φωνὰς ἐπίστασθαι Αἰγυπτίαν καὶ Ἑλληνίδα ἢ, ὡς ληροῦσιν, ὅτι τὰ ἄνω ἀνθρώπου, τὰ δὲ κάτω δράκοντος εἶχεν. καὶ ἀλληγορῶν ὁ Δημοσθένης (60,30) φησὶν ὅτι τὴν ἀλκὴν ὁμοίωτο τῷ δράκοντι, ἀνθρώπῳ δέ γε τὴν φρόνησιν· ἐγὼ δὲ οὕτως ἀλληγορῶ, ὅτι ἀγαθὸς βασιλεὺς γεγονὼς πᾶσαν θηριωδίαν ἐθνῶν οὕτως ὑπέταξεν ὡς μίαν σύμπνοιαν πάντας ἔχειν, καὶ ἀγαθὸν ἡγεμόνα καὶ αὐτοκράτορα. διὰ ταῦτα γοῦν αὐτὸν λέγουσι διφυῆ. ἢ ὡς εὔρον ἐν Ἰωάννῃ Ἀντιοχεῖ (V 5 Thurn) ὅτι πρότερον αἱ καθ' Ἑλλάδα γυναικῆς θηριωδῶς ὥσπερ τὰ ἄλογα καὶ οὐ κατὰ συζυγίαν ἐμίγνυντο. οἱ γοῦν παῖδες τότε μονοφυεῖς ἦσαν· μητέρα γὰρ μόνην, πατέρα δ' οὐκ ἐπεγίνωσκον. βασιλεύσας δ' ὁ Κέκροψ τῆς Ἀττικῆς κατέπαυσε τὸ θηριῶδες τῆς μίξεως καὶ ἀνδράσι νομίμοις ἐποίησε τὰς γυναικῆς συνάπτεσθαι. ἐπεὶ γοῦν ἐκ τούτου οἱ παῖδες πατέρα καὶ μητέρα ἐγνώρισαν τοὺς αἰτίους αὐτοῖς τῆς γεννήσεως δύο τυγχάνοντας φύσεων, διφυῆς καὶ ὁ Κέκροψ ἐκλήθη ὡς τοῦτο ποιήσας αὐτός.

**111b.2** δράκοντος...ἐν Θήβαις : *schol. Lyc.* 495 Scheer | Ἰωάννῃ Ἀντιοχεῖ ... : de Cecrope et matrimonio cf. etiam *Hist.* I 174-177; V 19, 664-667

**111b.2** Charax *BNJ* 103 F 38 ap. Eust. *in Il.* IV 228,16-19 van der Valk | δύο φωνὰς ἐπίστασθαι Αἰγυπτίαν καὶ Ἑλληνίδα : *Diod. Sic.* I 28,4; Charax *BNJ* 103 F 39 | τὰ ἄνω ἀνθρώπου, τὰ δὲ κάτω δράκοντος εἶχεν : *schol. vet. Ar. Vesp.* 438b Koster; *schol. vet. Ar. Plut.* 773c Chantry; [Apollod.] 14,1 (177); *Hesych.* δ 2306 Cunningham; *Hygin. Fab.* 48; *Ant. Lib.* 6; *Diod. Sic.* I 28; *Ar. Vesp.* 438; *Suda* κ 1272 Adler, cf. etiam *δισώματος* ap. *Diod. Sic.* IV 12,5; *Hymn. Orph.* 70,5 | δράκοντος ... ἐν Θήβαις : *schol. vet. Lyc.* 111b Leone; *schol. Pind. Isth.* 7,13 Drachmann, cf. etiam *schol. Ol.* 2,16c, *Pyth.* 5,101b Drachmann | ὁ Δημοσθένης φησὶν ... τὴν φρόνησιν : [Dem.] 60,30 | Ἰωάννῃ Ἀντιοχεῖ ... : Io. Malalas *Chron.* IV 5 Thurn; de Cecrope et de matrimonio cf. etiam *schol. vet. Ar. Plut.* 773e Chantry; *Ath.* XIII 555d (cf. O. Andrei, A. *Claudius Charax di Pergamo. Interessi antiquari e antichità cittadine nell'età degli Antonini*, Bologna 1984, 71 et n. 4); Eust. *in Il.* IV 940,28-30 van der Valk; Eust. *in Dion. Per.* 391 Bernhardt; fort. *Philoch. BNJ* 328 F 96

**111b.2** δὲ καὶ διφυῆ λέγουσι : δὲ λέγουσι καὶ διφυῆ **SFEM** : δὲ λέγουσι καὶ διμόρφου γηγενοῦς δὲ **L** | διφυῆ : διμόρφου γηγενοῦς **EM** | Κέκροπα διὰ : Κέκροπα ἢ διὰ **SEF** | τῶν παρὰ τοῦ Κάδμου σπαρέντων ἐν Θήβαις : om. **SFP** | διὰ τὸ ... βασιλεὺς Ἀθηναίων : om. **FEML** | φυὴν : φωνὴν **C** | οὗτος ἦν : οὗτος δὲ ἦν **S** | ὅτι : om. **P** | δύο φωνὰς : δύο **L** | καὶ ἀλληγορῶν : ὡς

ἀλληγορῶν **F** : ὁ ἀλληγορῶν **SC** : ὁ περὶ ἀλληγορῶν **L** | καὶ Scheer : ὅπερ **EM** : ὅ **Vitt. 1 Ha** | τὴν ἀλκίην : κατὰ τὴν ἀλκίην **M** : τὴν om. **L** | ὁμοίωτο **SE** : ὁμοιώθη Sebastiani : ὁμοιος **F** et codd. | τῷ δράκοντι **P** : τῷ om. Scheer | γοῦν αὐτὸν λέγουσι : γοῦν λέγουσι αὐτὸν **EL** | δράκοντι : τῷ δράκοντι **F** | θηριωδίαν : θηριώδη γνώμην **Vitt. 1 Ha** | πάντας om. **F** : πάντα **H** | ἔχειν : ἔχειν αὐτῷ **SL** : ἔχειν εἰς αὐτὸν **C** : ἔχειν, αὐτὸν Peraxylus | αὐτὸν λέγουσι διφυῆ. ἢ ὡς εὖρον om. **F** | Ἑλλάδα : Ἑλλάδος **M** | τότε μονοφυεῖς : μονοφυεῖς τότε **P** | βασιλεύσας : βασιλεύς **EM** | ὁ om. **EML** | νομίμοις **M**, cf. *Hist.* V 19, 664 : νομίμως cett. | ἐκ τούτου : ἐκ του, τις *s.l.* **L** | αὐτοῖς **Vitt. 1 Ha** : αὐτῶν **SEML** | αὐτός Peraxylus : αὐτοῖς **M** : εἰς αὐτῶν **L**

**111b.2** They call Cecrops δῖμορφον (‘two-formed’), i.e. two-natured, because he came out of the dragon’s teeth when Cadmus sowed them in Thebes. He was the king of the Athenians. (He is called ‘two formed’) either because he had the stature and size of two men, or because he knew two languages, Egyptian and Greek, or as they stupidly say, because he had the upper part of a man and the lower part of a dragon. And Demosthenes (60,30), allegorising, says that he seemed to have the strength of a dragon, and the wisdom/understanding of a human, but I interpret it allegorically in this way: being a good king, he subdued the wildness of his people so that they all had one agreement, and a good leader and ruler. On account of these things, they say he was διφυῆ (‘double form’). Or, as I found in John of Antioch (Malalas), because previously the women of Greece used to mate wildly like cattle, not in marriage. As a result, then the children were of one form, for they knew only their mother, not their father. When he ruled Attica, Cecrops stopped the savagery of this sexual intercourse and he made the women join themselves to lawful husbands. Since, accordingly, the children recognised that their father and mother, who were responsible for their birth, happened to have two (different) natures, Cecrops too was called two-natured because he had done this himself.”

**111c** γηγενοῦς ὅτι ὁ Ἑριχθόνιος ἐκ τῆς γῆς, ὡς φασιν, ἀνεδόθη. Ἀθηναῖς γὰρ ἐλθούσης πρὸς Ἥφαιστον ἔνεκεν ὄπλων κατασκευῆς ἐρασθεῖς Ἥφαιστος ἐδίωκε, καταλαβὼν δὲ, ὡς ἀντέπιπτεν αὐτῷ ἡ Ἀθηναῖα, περὶ τοὺς μηροῦς αὐτῆς ἀπεσπέρμηνεν, ἡ δὲ μυσσαχθεῖσα ἐρίῳ εἰς γῆν τὸν γόνον ἀπέρριψεν, ἀνεδόθη δὲ ὁ Ἑριχθόνιος ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐρίου κληθεῖς καὶ τῆς χθονός ὅθεν πάντας Ἀθηναίους γηγενεῖς φάσκουσιν ἀπὸ τούτου. ἄλλοι δὲ φασιν ὅτι λυπρόγεως ἡ Ἀττικὴ καὶ οὐδέποτε ὑφ’ ἐτέρων ἐθνῶν ἐξηλάθησαν οἱ ἐν αὐτῇ διὰ τὸ ἄζηλον τῆς αὐτῶν χώρας, ὅθεν αὐτοὺς αὐτόχθονας καὶ γηγενεῖς ἔφασαν. καὶ τὸ περὶ Ἀθηναῖς καὶ Ἥφαιστου οὕτως ἐστίν· Ἀθηναῖα τινα βασιλίδα τῆ καὶ Βαλενίκη λεγομένη, θυγατρὶ δὲ Βροντέου ὑπαρχούσῃ, Ἥφαιστος γάμῳ μιγείς γεννᾷ Ἑριχθόνιον, ὃς ἐβασίλευσε τῆς Ἀττικῆς· πολλὰ γὰρ ἦσαν καὶ Ἀθῆναι καὶ Ἀφροδίται καὶ

οὐ μία οὐδὲ μυθικὴ ὡς τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ὀνομάτων. γηγενεῖς λέγει τοὺς Ἀθηναίους, ἐπεὶ ἐκ τῶν Ἐρεχθιδῶν ἔχουσι τὸ γένος· τὸν γὰρ Κάδμον φασὶ σπεῖραι ἐν τῇ γῆ δράκοντος ὀδόντας καὶ ἀναφυῆναι τοὺς Ἐρεχθείδας.

**111c** Athena et Hephaestus et Erichthonius : *Hist.* I 4, 175-176; V 19, 671-672 | ὁ Ἐριχθόνιος ἀπὸ <τοῦ> ἐρίου κληθεὶς καὶ τῆς χθονός : *schol. Lyc.* 158a Scheer | τὸν γὰρ Κάδμον ... Ἐρεχθείδας : *Schol. Lyc.* 495 Scheer

**111c** *schol. vet. Lyc.* 111b Leone; *schol. D II.* II 547 van Thiel; 'Amelesagoras' *FGrHist* 330 F 1 | Ἀθηνᾶς γὰρ ... ὄπλων: [Apollod.] III 14,6 (188); Paus. I 14,6; Serv. in *Georg.* III 113, *Ecl.* 4,62 Thilo-Hagen; Nonn. XIII 171-179 | Athena et Hephaestus et Erichthonius : Call. *Hec. fr.* 70 Hollis; *schol. Eur. Med.* 824-825 Schwartz; Paus. I 2,6; [Apollod.] III 14,6 (188); *schol. II.* II 547 Erbse; Hygin. *Fab.* 166; Serv. in *Georg.* III 113 Thilo-Hagen | λυπρόγεως ἡ Ἀττικὴ : Thuc. I 2,5 (cf. S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, I, Oxford 1991, *ad loc.*) | ἐπεὶ ἐκ τῶν Ἐρεχθιδῶν ἔχουσι τὸ γένος : *schol. Eur. Hipp.* 151d1,1-2 Cavarzeran; *schol. Eur. Med.* 825 Schwartz | τὸν γὰρ Κάδμον ... Ἐρεχθείδας; *schol. vet. Lyc.* 111b Leone

**111c** ὁ om. **LCP** | Ἀθηνᾶς γὰρ ἐλθούσης : Ἀθηνᾶν γὰρ ἐλθοῦσαν **EML** | ἡ om. **EL** | αὐτῆς om. **EM** : αὐτοὺς **Vitt. 1 Ha** | ἡ Ἀθηνᾶ om. **P** | γῆν **P** | ὁ om. **L** | κληθεὶς καὶ τῆς χθονός : καὶ τῆς χθονός κληθεὶς **F** | τοῦ **E** : on. cett. | γηγενεῖς **F** : γηγενοῦς **EH** | φάσκουσιν : λεγουσι **F** | λυπρόγεως : λυπρόγεα **EML** | ἡ Ἀττικὴ om. **P** | ἐθνῶν ... χώρας : ἐθνῶν οἱ ἐν αὐτῇ ἐξηλάθησαν διὰ τὸ ἄζηλον τῆς αὐτῆς χώρας **P** | ἐθνῶν om. **M** | αὐτόχθονας : αὐτόκτονας **L** | ἔφρασαν : ἔφησαν **E** : ἔφησε **M** : εἰς ἔφησαν **L** | καὶ τὸ : τὸ δὲ **M** | Ἀθηνᾶς καὶ om. **F** | Βαλενίκη **C** : Βελονίκη **FEMP Vitt. 1 Ha** : βελενίκη **SAL** : βιλονίκη **V** | λεγομένη : καλουμένη **M** | Βροντεύου : Βρόντου **EM** : Βρονταιη **L** | ὑπαρχούση om. **C** | τῆς Ἀττικῆς : τῆς om. **SAL** | ἦσαν καὶ om. **ML** : ἦσαν om. **P** | οὐ : οὐδὲ **P** | μυθικὴ **SEML** : τοῦτο δὲ μυθικὸν **CP** : οὐδὲ μυθικῶς Sebastiani : om. **F** | ὡς τὰ πολλὰ ... τοὺς Ἐρεχθείδας om. **M** : ὡς καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ὀνομάτων γηγενεῖς **E** : ὡς καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ὀνομάτων **SFL** : ὀνομάτων <γγενοῦς σκηπτουχίας> γηγενεῖς Sebastiani | γηγενεῖς λέγει ... τοὺς Ἐρεχθείδας om. **SVFLCP** | ἐπεὶ : ἐπειδὴ Sebastiani | δράκοντος : δρακοντίους Sebastiani | ἀναφυῆναι : ἀναφῦναι Sebastiani

**111c** “earth-born” because Erichthonios, they say, rose from the ground. For when Athena came to Hephaestus to have armour prepared, Hephaestus lusted after her, pursued her, seized her and, since Athena resisted him, he ejaculated around her thighs, and she cast the offspring to the ground with a flock of wool, and Erichthonios sprang up; he was named after after ἔριον (‘wool’) and χθών (‘earth’) hence from this they say that all Athenians are earthborn. Others say that Attica has poor soil and its inhabitants were never driven out by other peoples on account of the sorry state of their land, whence they said that they were autochthonous and earthborn. And the story about Athena and Hephaestus goes like this: Hephaestus joined in marriage a princess Athena, also called Balenike, who was the daughter of Bronteos (‘Thunderer’), and he fathered Erichthonios, who ruled Attica. For there

were many Athenas and Aphrodites, not one neither mythical, as the majority of names. He calls the Athenians ‘earth-born’ since their race descends from the Erechtheids. For they say that Cadmus sowed dragon’s teeth into the ground and out sprang the Erechtheids.

Tzetzes here takes the opportunity to delve into Athenian proto-history. He comments on the meaning of Ἀκτῆς, διμόρφου (γηγενοῦς σκηπτουχίας), and γηγενοῦς. 111a offers two interpretations of the meaning of ἀκτή, either an earlier name for Attica derived from the name of an early king (Akteus), or just a descriptive term for the coastline of Attica. Tzetzes’ source text, without acknowledgement, is Stephanus of Byzantium: he seems to be summarising him – as Stephanus cites his sources whereas Tzetzes does not – and the *Etymologicum Genuinum* for these two meanings. Strabo may have been another source, since he too discusses both meanings. Presumably the *scholia vetera*, which supply the first meaning, were Tzetzes’ starting point for his research. Ἀττικῆς δὲ νῆσος ἡ Σαλαμίς comes from the *Etymologicum Magnum*, and may have been added after Tzetzes did his first edition of the *Commentary*, as the passage is not found in C, but it could also be a piece of *Etymologica* that has slipped into the text.

111b shows how Tzetzes uses his sources and corrects them, and how he deploys his learning in both his scholarly works and his poetry. These two passages (111b.1 and 111b.2) are about the origin of Cecrops and the meaning of ‘double-form’/‘double shape’ in regard to the appearance and activities of this early Athenian king. According to Charax of Pergamum (*BNJ* 103 F 39), a historian of the Roman Imperial era, to whom Tzetzes refers (ὡς φησι Χάραξ), Cecrops came from Sais in Egypt, and Sais was also a name for Athena<sup>38</sup>. Tzetzes likely came across this reference to Charax’s works in the scholia to Aelius Aristides (pp. 17,24 and 18,7 Dindorf). Other interpretations of δίμορφος/διφυῆς are that Cecrops was the height of two men, or bilingual in Egyptian and Greek, or he was half-man and half snake. On the last interpretation (τὰ ἄνω ἀνθρώπου, τὰ δὲ κάτω δράκοντος εἶχεν), Tzetzes disagrees (ὡς ληροῦσιν); in fact he is actually disagreeing with an interpretation found in the *scholia vetera* to Aristophanes. It is understood that either the reader may know these passages from their own knowledge, or Tzetzes is just being dismissive<sup>39</sup>. Ironically the half-man and half-snake meaning is in fact correct, as

<sup>38</sup> On Charax of Pergamum see O. Andrei, *A. Claudius Charax di Pergamo. Interessi antiquari e antichità cittadine nell’età degli Antonini*, Bologna 1984; G. Squillace, *Charax of Pergamon (103)*, in I. Worthington (ed.), *Brill’s New Jacoby*, 2016: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1873-5363\\_bnj\\_a103](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1873-5363_bnj_a103) (accessed 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. φασὶ γὰρ τινες ἀσκεπτότεροι καὶ ἀπαίδευτοι ὅτι... in §4 below.

Cecrops was often depicted in this way in ancient Greek art<sup>40</sup>. The reference to Cadmus in 111b.2 and 111c, where Tzetzes mentions another instance of earthborn humans involving dragons, comes from the *scholia vetera* to Lycophron and is derived from the *scholia* to Pindar, and the point is repeated later by Tzetzes in his *Commentary to Lycophron* (495 Scheer).

Tzetzes cites or refers to some of his sources that are not included in the earlier known scholarly discussions on Cecrops: John of Antioch and Demosthenes. He refers to and paraphrases Demosthenes' *Funeral Oration*, indicating that he had access to a copy of the speech or had another text that quoted the work<sup>41</sup>. The interpretation of Demosthenes was that Cecrops was a man with the strength of a dragon. Tzetzes uses John of Antioch's *Chronicle* as a reference point on Cecrops' institution of marriage rites in Attica. ὡς εὔρογν indicates that Tzetzes had consulted a copy of the *Chronicle* and had actively sought the work. Tzetzes may again have come across this in Charax (*BNJ* 103 F 38), although that fragment is found in Eustathius and refers to Erichthonius as the legislator, but the same story regarding Cecrops is found in Athenaeus and the *scholia vetera* to Aristophanes. In his *Commentary to Aristophanes*, Tzetzes also refers to Cecrops as having come from Sais in Egypt and having instituted laws in Athens, and states (without going into detail) that any other interpretations of Cecrops are without foundation<sup>42</sup>. Tzetzes in his *Historiai* goes into further detail on points made in the *Commentary* about the background of Cecrops. In fact, the overlaps between the two passages are striking and suggests that Tzetzes used the same sources for both, and that one work influenced the other or were written down at the same time, though which of the two did so cannot be determined due to dating issues with both works (V 19, 639-683):

<sup>40</sup> See e.g. 'Kekrops' 1, 2, 9, 11, 16 *LIMC*<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> [Dem.] *Or.* 60,30: ἤδεσαν Κεκροπίδαι τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχηγὸν τὰ μὲν ὡς ἔστιν δράκων, τὰ δ' ὡς ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος λεγόμενον, οὐκ ἄλλοθεν ποθεν ἢ τῷ τὴν σύνεσιν <μὲν> αὐτοῦ προσομοιοῦν ἄνθρωπον, τὴν ἀλκὴν δὲ δράκοντι («The Cecropidae were well aware that their founder was reputed to have been part dragon, part human, for no other reason than this, that in understanding he was like a man, in strength like a dragon»: N.W. DeWitt-N.J. DeWitt, *Demosthenes*, VII, Cambridge MA-London 1949, 31).

<sup>42</sup> *Schol. Ar. Plut.* 773 Massa Positano: χώραν τε Κέκροπος : τὰς Ἀθήνας. ὃς Κέκροψ ἐκ Σάεως τῆς Αἰγύπτου ἐλθὼν—Σάϊς δὲ ἢ Ἀθηνᾶ αἰγυπτίως καλεῖται—κτίζει τὰς Ἀθήνας εἰς ὄνομα Σάεως καὶ νόμους ἐξεῦρε σεμνοῦς καὶ μυρία χρηστὰ τοῖς Ἀττικοῖς προσεπόρισεν. ὅτι δὲ δράκων καὶ ἄνθρωπος ὁ Κέκροψ καὶ πάντα τὰλλα τίς χρεῖα γράφειν ἐνθάδε κενῶς; “‘And the land of Cecrops’: Athens. Coming from Sais in Egypt – ‘Sais’ is Egyptian for ‘Athena’ – Cecrops founded Athens in the name of Sais, and he devised venerable laws and made countless benefactions to the dwellers of Attica. That Cecrops was dragon and man and all the rest of it, what need is there to write it idly here?”

Πρῶτος ἀπάντων Ἀττικῆς ὁ Κέκροψ βασιλεύει,  
 ὁ πρῶτος ὁ καλούμενος καὶ διφυῆς τοιῶσδε, 640  
 ἢ ὅτι μέγεθος ἀνδρῶν δύο πρὸς μῆκος εἶχεν,  
 ἢ ὡς Ἑλλάδος ἔμπειρος καὶ Αἰγυπτίας γλώσσης,  
 ἢ ὡς τὰ κάτω δράκων μὲν, ἄνθρωπος δὲ τὰ ἄνω.  
 ὁ Δημοσθένης τάχα μὲν ἀλληγορεῖν ἐθέλει,  
 συνηγορεῖν δε πεφυκῶς, ἀλληγορεῖν δ' οὐδόλως· 645  
 “Ἦιδεσαν Κεκροπίδαι μὲν, φησὶν, ὡς ὅτι Κέκροψ  
 ἀλκὴν ἐφκει δράκοντι, τὴν σύνεσιν ἀνθρώπῳ.”  
 ὁ Τζέτζης βασιλεύειν δε πρῶτος τὸν ἄνδρα λέγει,  
 ὡς καὶ βαρβάρους τοὺς αὐτῷ ταῖς μάχαις ἠττημένους,  
 τῷ φιλανθρώπῳ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς τοσοῦτον συνδεδέσθαι, 650  
 ὡς ἐν σῶμα λογίζεσθαι μὴδ' ἀποσπᾶσθαι θέλειν.  
 καὶ ἄλλως τοῦτον διφυῆ τὸν Κέκροπα καλοῦσιν·  
 αἱ τῶν Ἑλλήνων πρότερον γυναῖκες καθ' Ἑλλάδα  
 οὐχ ὥσπερ νῦν ἐξεύγνυντο νομίμως τοῖς ἀνδράσι,  
 δίκην κτηνῶν δ' ἐμίγνυντο πᾶσι τοῖς βουλομένοις. 655  
 ἦσαν λοιπὸν μονοφυεῖς οὕτως οἱ παῖδες τότε,  
 μόνας ἐπιγινώσκοντες μητέρας, μὴ πατέρας.  
 Ὡς δὲ ἀπο τῆς Σάεως πόλεως Αἰγυπτίας—  
 Σάις δ' ἐστὶν ἡ Ἀθηνᾶ τῇ Αἰγυπτίων γλώσσῃ—

“**Cecrops** was the first of all the rulers of Attica. He was called the first and **double-born** in such way, either because he had the size of **two men** in height, or because he knew **both the Egyptian and the Greek tongue**, or because he had the **lower body of a dragon but the upper parts of man**. Demosthenes perhaps wanted to craft an allegory, but he was cut for court oratory, not at all for allegory: “The Cecropids knew”, he says, “that Cecrops had **the strength of a dragon and the intelligence of a man**. But Tzetzes says that the man ruled gently, so that even the barbarians whom he defeated in battle became so attached to his benevolence that they wished to be regarded as one body with him and never to be separated. They call **Cecrops double-born** for another reason too. In ancient times in Greece the women of Greece would not marry men lawfully like now, but like beasts they would copulate with everyone who wanted. **So children at the time were single-born, in that they only knew their mothers, not their fathers**. And because Cecrops came from the city of Sais in Egypt—in the Egyptian language ‘Sais’ is Athena—

μετὰ τὸν κατὰ ὄγυγον κατακλυσμὸν ἐκεῖνον 660  
ὁ Κέκροψ παραγέγονεν Ἀθήναις τῆς Ἑλλάδος,  
ταύτας Ἀθήνας κεκληκῶς ἐκ Σάεως Αἰγύπτου,  
πολλοῖς ἐλυσιτέλησε καὶ ἄλλοις τῇ Ἑλλάδι,  
**νομοθετεῖ καὶ γυναῖξι τοὺς γάμους τοὺς νομίμους,**  
**ἐξ ὧν παῖδες ἐγνώκεισαν τοὺς δύο φυτοσπόρους,** 665  
**τὸ πρὶν μόνην γινώσκοντες,** ὡς ἔφην, **τὴν μητέρα.**  
**ὄθεν ὁ Κέκροψ διφυής,** νόμοις ὡς δεῖξας ταῦτα·  
οὗτος ἀπάντων Ἀττικῆς πρῶτος ἐμβασιλεύει,  
καὶ Κεκροπίδας ἐξ αὐτοῦ φαμέν τοὺς Ἀθηναίους.

to Athens in Greece after that great cataclysm, he called it 'Athens' after Sais of Egypt; and among the many ways in which he benefitted the Greeks, **he also legislated lawful matrimony for women, from which children came to know both their parents, whereas previously they only knew their mother**, as I said. **So Cecrops is double-born** because he showed these customs. He was the first of all rulers of Attica and from him we call the Athenians 'Cecropids'.

In both passages, Tzetzes made use of Demosthenes; the order of points of interpretation are very similar, though the point about connections between Athens and Egypt comes later in the *Historiai*, and both offer Tzetzes' own interpretation, though with some differences. In the *Commentary*, Tzetzes reinterprets Demosthenes' allegorical interpretation that Cecrops was a good ruler and engaged in ordering all the living beings under one authority; whereas in the *Historiai*, Tzetzes maintains the point about Cecrops as a good ruler but adds a new point about him as a benevolent ruler of all the barbarians.

In 111c, Tzetzes provides further mythographical information beyond Cecrops about the birth of Erichthonios, derived mainly from the *scholia vetera* to Lycophron and the D-scholia to Homer, and probably the scholia to Euripides. Athena fought off an attempted rape by the god Hephaistos, shortly after his divorce from Aphrodite. She wiped his semen from her leg and threw it upon the earth (Gaia) which conceived and bore a son Erichthonios. Athena felt a certain responsibility for this child and raised it as her own in the temple of the Acropolis. Elements of the story are also found in pseudo-Apollodorus and Pausanias.

In this discussion on Athenian proto-history, Tzetzes conflates together several sources. Some are marked out, and those that are not can be detected on further investigation. They indicate the range of sources that he had available to him, his



research methods, but most interestingly how Tzetzes' researches are deployed in both his poetic and prose works, and the development and variations in his learning and arguments.

2. *Schol. Lyc. 497, p. II, 181 Scheer*

τρίτος δὲ τοῦ μάργαντος ἐκ κοίλης πέτρας  
 κέλωρ γίγαντος ὄπλα, τοῦ ποτ' εἰς λέχος 495  
 λαθραῖον αὐτόκλητος Ἰδαία πόρις  
**ἡ ζῶσ' ἐς Ἄιδην** ἴζεται καταιβάτις,  
 θρήνοισιν ἐκτακεῖσα, Μουνίτου τοκάς·  
 ὄν δὴ ποτ' ἀγρώσσοντα Κρηστῶνης ἔχισ  
 κτενεῖ, πατάξας πτέρναν ἀγρίῳ βέλει, 500  
 ὅταν τεκόντος αἰχμάλωτος ἐς χέρας  
 ἢ πατρομήτωρ τὸν δνόφω τεθραμμένον  
 βάλῃ νεογνὸν σκύμνον. (Lyc. 494-502)

The third is the son of the man who took the giant's weapons  
 from the hollow rock. To his furtive bed 495  
 the Idaian heifer shall come, self-summoned,  
**she** who will descend, **still living, to Hades**,  
 emaciated with grief, the mouther of Moutinos;  
 whom once, when he is out hunting, a Krestonian viper  
 will kill, striking his hell with its fierce sting, 500  
 after his grandfather's mother, the prisoner, has placed  
 in his father's hands the child reared in darkness,  
 the young cub.

497a ἡ ζῶσ' εἰς Ἄιδην· φεῦ, πῶς, Λύκοφρον, ἀνακόλουθα γράφεις  
 ἐναντία σύμπασι καὶ σαυτῷ πλέον;  
 ἄνω γὰρ εἰπὼν σαῖς γραφαῖς μετροκρότοις  
 “ὄν τὴν μὲν αὐτόπρεμνον ἢ τοκάς κόνις  
 χανοῦσα κευθμῷ χεῖσεται διασφάγος,  
 λεύσσουσαν ἄτην ἀγχίπου στεναγμάτων” (316-318)  
 ἤγουν χαράδρα συμπεσεῖται καὶ θανη,  
 ὅταν τὸ καλλίπυργον Ἰλίου πέδον  
 Ἕλλην στρατὸς πέρσειεν εὐσθενεῖ κράτει,

ταῦτα προειπὼν νῦν ἐναντίως λέγεις·  
 τὴν γὰρ θανοῦσαν πρὶν πεσοῦσαν χαράδρᾳ  
 αὐθις ἀνιστᾶς καὶ νεκροῖς αὐτὴν πάλιν  
 θνήσκουσιν, ὡς φῆς, συμφοραῖς τοῦ Μουνίτου  
 Θρήσσης ἐχίδνης προσβολῆ τεθνηκότος.

**497a** *Carm. Il.* III 736 τὴν δ' ἄρα Λαοδίκην ἐνὶ χάσματι δέξατο γαῖα, cf. F. Jacobs, *Ioannis Tzetzae Antehomerica, Homerica et Posthomeric*, Lipsiae 1793, 171; cf. etiam *schol. vet. Lyc. Alex.* 65a Leone et *Carm. Il.* III 597 | Versus Tzetzae in commentariis e.g. *schol. Hes. Op.* 41, p. 65 Gaisford; *schol. Thuc.* in cod. *Pal. gr.* 252 f. 45r ap. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 49-51 et tab. 3

**497a** *schol. vet. Lyc.* 314a, 319a, 495, 497 Leone | Fabula Laodices : Hegesippus *FGrHist* 391 F 4a; Euphor. fr. 97-99 Lightfoot; *Lyc.* 314, 503; Parthen. fr. 16 Lightfoot; [Apollod.] *Epit.* V 25; Tryph. 660-663; Quint. Smyrn. XIII 544-551 | Munitus : Euphor. fr. 97-99 Lightfoot, fort. 186 Lightfoot; Eust. *in Il.* I 403,4 van der Valk ἐν οἷς καὶ ὁ Μόνιτος, ὃν Ἴωνικῶς μετὰ τοῦ υ προφέρει ὁ Λυκόφρων (v. 497) | καλλιπυργον Ἰλίου πέδον : Eur. *Suppl.* 618 (Thebas), cf. etiam Eur. *Bacch.* 1202 | Θρήσσης ἐχίδνης : *Lyc.* 499 Κρηστῶνης ἔχης et *schol. vet. Lyc.* 499b Leone Θρακικὸς ὄφις ; Euphor. fr. 98.3 Lightfoot ap. *schol. Lyc.* 495 Scheer

**497a** ἦ codd. : ἦ S : ἦ Potter | φεῦ om. C : ὦ Peraxylus | μετροκρότοις **EMFCPS**<sup>pc</sup>, V in marg : μεγακρότοις **S**<sup>pc</sup>, L | αὐτόπρεμον : αὐτόπρεπον F | χανοῦσα κευθμῶ : κευθμῶ χανοῦσα P | ἀγγίπουν : ἀγγίπουν M : ἀγγίπου Peraxylus : προειπὼν C : πρὶν εἰπὼν **FLP** | λέγεις : γράφεις F | προσβολῆ **CP** : προσβολαῖς **SEML**

**497a** “she still living ... to Hades”: Alas, why, Lycophron, do you write inconsistently, contrary to everyone and especially yourself? For earlier you had wrought in metre (vv. 316-318): «One of you will be swallowed up completely in deep cleft / of the gaping earth which bore her, / when she sees, with groans of anguish, her approaching doom»; that is to say, she (*sc.* Laodice) fell into a ravine and to her death, whenever the Greek army with firm strength sacked the plain crowned with the towers of Ilium, having foretold these things now you speak contrariwise. For the one who had previously died after falling into a ravine you now raise back from the dead and (you send her) back dead among the dead, as you say, for the fate of Mounitos who died by the bite of the Thracian viper.

Tzetzes reproaches Lycophron for inconsistency in his account of the story of Laodice, a sister of Cassandra, who was swallowed up by the earth at the fall of Troy and so avoided slavery<sup>43</sup>. Earlier on (vv. 316-318), Lycophron had alluded to this

<sup>43</sup> *Schol. vet. Lyc.* 497 Leone: ἦ ζῶσ' ἐν Ἄιδῃ· Λαόδικη, πορθουμένης τῆς Τροίας, ἠΰξατο καὶ κατεπόθη εἰς γῆν διὰ τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι αὐτὴν δούλην.

story; here she is mentioned again as the mother of Mounitos by Akamas, who is one of the five Cyprian founders in this section of the *Alexandra*. Tzetzes reproaches Lycophron in verse, using the poet's own words to chastise him. He quotes the earlier passage on Laodice and complains about Lycophron raising Laodice from the dead and so reproaches Lycophron for inconsistency<sup>44</sup>. While amusing, Tzetzes is not being entirely fair to Lycophron here, who seems to be offering a motivation for her death. Θρήνοισιν ἔκτακεῖσα (v. 498) need not imply that Laodice died from grief for Mounitos, as there were many things for her to lament (e.g. the capture of Troy, besides her personal danger) in the previous passage<sup>45</sup>.

Regarding Tzetzes' style here, there are some interesting phrases that show Tzetzes' knowledge of classical poetry and continuities within his own *Commentary*. καλλίπυργον [...] πέδον is used by Euripides to describe Thebes (*Suppl.* 618), here Tzetzes applies it to Troy. Tzetzes' Θρήσεως ἐχίδνης qualifying Mounitos is a conflation of Lycophron's own Κρηστώνης ἔχιδς (v. 499) with the accompanying *schol. lia vetera*'s Θρακικὸς ὄφις and Euphorion's reference to the death of Mounitos by a snake (πελώριος [...] ὕδρος, fr. 98,3 Lightfoot), which is transmitted in Tzetzes' *Commentary to Lycophron* on line 495<sup>46</sup>. μετροκρότος ("wrought in metre") is a Tzetzian coinage. Tzetzes elsewhere reproaches scholarly predecessors and the authors in verse<sup>47</sup>.

### 3. *Schol. Lyc. 719, p. II, 234 Scheer*

οὗ σῆμα δῶμήσαντες ἔγχωροι κόρης  
λοιβαῖσι καὶ θύσθλοισι Παρθενόπτην βοῶν  
ἔτεια κυνδανοῦσιν οἰωνὸν θεάν. (Lyc. 719-721)

<sup>44</sup> Tzetzes himself is given to mythographical inconsistency, e.g. *Carm. II.* I 154-161. where he conflates the two embassies and has Menelaus, Odysseus, Palamedes, Acamas, and Diomedes all go to Troy to demand Helen back and all protected by the goodwill of Antenor.

<sup>45</sup> J.L. Lightfoot, *Hellenistic Collection: Philotas, Alexander of Aetolia, Hermesianax, Euphorion, Parthenius*, Cambridge MA-London 2009, 329 n. 126.

<sup>46</sup> Euphorion, presumably, had a story where Laodice was swallowed up by the earth. Pausanias (X 26,8) complains that Euphorion's version is improbable.

<sup>47</sup> E.g. *schol. Hes. Op.* 41, p. 65 Gaisford and the autograph annotation in *Pal. Gr.* 252 f. 45r published by Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* cit. 49-51 and Tav. 3. See N. Zagklas, «How many verses shall I write and say?»: *Poetry in the Komnenian period (1081–1204)*, in W. Hörandner-A. Rhoby-N. Zagklas (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Byzantine Poetry*, Leiden-Boston 2019, 237-263: 254-255 for other examples.

There the locals **will construct** a tomb for the maiden,  
and will honour her with yearly libations and sacrifices of oxen,  
Parthenope, the bird-goddess.

**719a** δωμήσαντες· τὸ δὲ μικρὸν ὁ Τζέτζης γράφει τιθεὶς ἄνωθεν αὐτοῦ μακρὸν καὶ φησὶν ὅτι ἐκτείνεται ὑπὸ τοῦ μὲ καὶ ἔστι κοινὴ συλλαβῆ· τὰ γὰρ ἀμετάβολα ἐκτείνουσιν, ὅποτε ὁ μετρικὸς βούλοιτο. εἰ δὲ μέγα φησὶ τοῦτο τις γράφειν, γινωσκέτω, ὅτι Ἄττικῇ ἐκτάσει τοῦτο γέγονε καὶ μὴ κτηνωδῶς καὶ ἀναιτίως γραφέτω.

**719a** τὸ ... μικρὸν : *schol. Ar. Plut.* 215, 508 Massa Positano, *schol. Ar. Nub.* 549a Holwerda, *schol. Ar. Ran.* 822a, 935 Koster | τὸ δὲ μικρὸν ... κοινὴ συλλαβῆ : *schol. Lyc.* 804b Scheer | ἐκτείνεται ... ἄττικῇ ἐκτάσει : *schol. Ar. Plut.* 156, 508, 905 Massa Positano | κτηνωδῶς : *Hist.* V 16, 571 ἱστορικοὶ κτηνώδεις

**719a** *Schol. vet. Lyc.* 719b Leone δωμήσαντες· διὰ τὸ μέτρον γράφεται μέγα | τὰ γὰρ ἀμετάβολα ἐκτείνουσιν : *schol. Od.* II 94d, IV 472c Pontani; *schol. Opp. Hal.* I 650, p. 295 Bussemaker; *Eust. in Il.* I 339,28 et 524,15 van der Valk

**719a** δωμήσαντες **SVBD** : δομήσαντες **CTAE**, cf. *Et. Magn.* s.v. δῶμα, p. 293,12-20 Gaisford | ὁ Τζέτζης ... φησὶν ὅτι om. **Vitt. 1 Ha** | ἄνωθεν : ἄνω Peraxylus | ἐκτείνουσιν Scheer : ἐκτείνουσι **Vitt. 1 Ha** : ἐκτείνει **S** : om. **EM** | ὅποτε **S Vitt. 1 Ha** : ὅποταν **V** | βούλοιτο **SFC** : βουλετα **Vitt. 1 Ha** | μέγα φησὶ τοῦτο τις : μέγα τις τοῦτο **L** : μέγα φησὶ τις τοῦτο Peraxylus | γράφειν : γράφει **F?** : γράφασθαι **EM** | εἰ δὲ μέγα ... τις γράφειν : εἰ δὲ μέγα φησὶ τις τοῦτο γράφειν **S** | γινωσκέτω : γινωσκέτω λέγειν **SFL** : γινωσκέτω λέγειν δομ **P** | καὶ μὴ ... γραφέτω om. **Vitt. 1 Ha** | γραφέτω : γράφεται

**719a** “will construct”: Tzetzes writes the δο- short placing a long over it and he says that it is lengthened by the mu and it is a common syllable. For the liquid and nasal consonants lengthen (the preceding vowel) whenever the metrician wishes. And if anyone says to write this long, let him be aware that this happens by Attic lengthening and let him not write brutishly and for no reason.

This passage is a pseudo-future reference to the establishment of a cult of Parthenope in Campania (vv. 719-721). Tzetzes states that he writes the participle form of δωμάω with an omicron, δο-. Tzetzes ‘corrects’ the Lycophron text on metrical, grammatical, and aesthetic grounds to write δο- with an omicron while scanning the syllable as long. Here, he also diverges from the *scholia vetera* which say that δομ- is metrically impossible and should be scanned as long (*schol. vet. Lyc.* 719b Leone).

δομάω with the omega is attested elsewhere in Lycophron, and here it is metrically fine<sup>48</sup>. The *codices principes* of Tzetzes' commentary and the *Alexandra* preserve both readings, usually with a small omicron written above the omega in the main text. Scheer prints an omega above the δο- as he is following C. Tzetzes corrects Lycophron based on the "common syllable" (κοινή συλλαβή), a concept used by Roman and Byzantine-era metricians and grammarians<sup>49</sup>. There are three types of κοινή συλλαβή; in this case Tzetzes has supposed that δο- is a syllable lengthened through "Attic lengthening" (Ἀττικῆ ἑκτάσει). The phraseology that Tzetzes uses (τὰ γὰρ ἀμετάβολα ἐκτείνουσιν) comes from the scholia to the *Odyssey*<sup>50</sup>. Another authority for Tzetzes on this was the *Etymologicum Magnum*, which remarks on the spelling and prosody of δῶμα and its derivatives<sup>51</sup>. Elsewhere, Tzetzes offers corrections on similar lines of reasonings based on the κοινή συλλαβή, prosody, or dialect, e.g. *schol. Lyc.* 804b Scheer and *schol. Ar. Plut.* 508 Massa Positano. In the case of the latter, he was correct to do so. Here, Tzetzes was not correct to emend the text, but his reasoning can be understood within a Classical and Byzantine tradition of learning. The adverb κτηνωδῶς ('brutishly') is a *hapax legomenon* coined by Tzetzes; in another passage uses the adjective κτηνώδης (*Hist.* V 16, 571).

4) *Schol. Lyc.* 805, pp. II, 253-255 Scheer

**Πέργη** δέ μιν θανόντα, Τυρσηνῶν ὄρος 805  
 ἐν Γορτυναίᾳ δέξεται πεφλεγμένον,  
 ὅταν στενάζων κῆρας ἐκπνεύσῃ βίον  
 παιδός τε καὶ δάμαρτος, ἦν κτείνας πόσις

<sup>48</sup> Cf. *Lyc.* 48, 593, 1272 for further examples of δομάω with N. Guilleux, *La fabrique des hapax et des proton legomena dans l'Alexandra, entre connivence et cryptage*, in C. Cusset-É. Prioux (edd.), *Lycophron : éclats d'obscurité*. «Actes du colloque international de Lyon et Saint-Étienne, 18-20 janvier 2007», Saint-Étienne 2009, 221-236: 226 on the uses and spelling of this verb in Lycophron. δομάω, with an omega, is also used in *Ap. Rhod.* II 531 for the building of a tomb or altar. See K. Ziegler, *Lycophron* (8), *RE* XIII/2 (1927) 2316-2381: 2348-2350 on the versification of Lycophron. Of interest, Παρθενόπην (v. 720) is an anapaest, the one and only in the *Alexandra*.

<sup>49</sup> See Marc Lauxtermann in this volume on Tzetzes, metre, and the κοινή συλλαβή.

<sup>50</sup> *Schol. Od.* II 94d Pontani ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν: ὅτι καὶ δι' ἐνὸς "μ" καλῶς ἔχει ὁ στίχος: τὸ γὰρ ἀμετάβολον ἐκτείνει, IV 472c Pontani ἀλλὰ μάλ' ὄφελος: ἐκτείνει τὸ ἀμετάβολον τὸ "φε".

<sup>51</sup> *Et. Magn.* s.v. δῶμα Gaisford (293.12-20, esp. 16-20): Δῶμα: τὸ οἴκημα, ἐκ τοῦ δομῶ δομήσω, δόμημα: καὶ κατὰ συγκοπὴν, δῶμα. Τὸ δὲ δομῶ παρὰ τὸ δέμω. Τὰ γὰρ εἰς ᾧ λήγοντα βαρύτερα ῥήματα τῷ εἰς ᾧ δέμω, δομῶ: νέμα, νομῶ. ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ δέμω δόμα, καὶ δῶμα κατ' ἑκτασιν. ἢ ἐκ τοῦ δομῶ δομήσω, δεδόμηκα, δεδόμημαι, δῶμα τὸ οἴκημα. Γράφεται διὰ τοῦ ᾧ μεγάλου: καὶ κατὰ ἀποκοπὴν γίνεται δῶ: δόμα δὲ τὸ διδόμενον, διὰ τοῦ ο μικροῦ.

αὐτὸς πρὸς Ἴαθην δευτέραν ὁδὸν περῶ,  
σφαγαῖς ἀδελφῆς ἠλοκισμένος δέρον,  
Γλαύκωνος Ἀψύρτοιο τ' αὐτανειφίας. 810  
(Lyc. 805-811)

**Perge**, the Tyrrhenian mountain in Gortynaian territory, 805  
will receive him [Odysseus] when dead and cremated,  
as he breathes out his life, lamenting the fate  
of his son [Telemachus], and of his wife [Circe], whom her husband kills  
and then follows her on the path to Hades,  
his throat slit by a sister's slaughter, 810  
the cousin [Cassiphone] of Glaukos and of Apsyrtos.

**805a.** ἡ Πέργη ὄρος Τυρσηνίας ἔνθα φησὶ τὸν Ὀδυσσεῖα κεῖσθαι καέντα ἐν Γορτυναίᾳ. πῶς <δὲ> ὁ αὐτὸς ἐν Εὐρυτάνῃ τῆς Ἡπειροῦ καὶ Τυρσηνία κεῖσθαι συνέβη; καὶ ὁ μὲν Τζέτζης κακοπλάστως αὐτὸν φησὶ τὸν Λυκόφρονα γράφειν καὶ ἐναντίως οὐ μόνον τοῖς ἄλλοις, ὡς ἔδειξε πολλάκις, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸν ἑαυτῷ, ὡσπερ καὶ ἐνταυθοῖ φησὶ γράφαι καὶ ἐν τῷ κατωτέρῳ στίχῳ τῷ λέγοντι ὅταν στενάζων τὰς κῆρας τοῦ παιδὸς Τηλεμάχου καὶ τῆς δάμαρτος Κίρκης ἀποθάνῃ· καὶ φησὶ γελῶν πολλὰ εἶναι τὰ ἐναντία ἐνταῦθα· ἐν μὲν ὅτι θανὼν πρώην ὑπὸ Τηλεγόνου νῦν πάλιν ὡς ζῶν ἀποθνήσκει διὰ τὸν θάνατον Κίρκης καὶ Τηλεμάχου. καὶ ἐν μὲν εἶναι τοῦτό φησιν ἐναντίον καὶ ἀνακόλουθον, δεύτερον δὲ ἀνακόλουθον φησὶ τοῦτο, ὃ Λύκοφρον· ζῶντος Ὀδυσσεῖος ἢ τεθνηκότος ἐπιγαμία γέγονε Τηλεμάχου τοῦ Ὀδυσσεῖος καὶ Κασσιφόνης τῆς Κίρκης παιδός· εἰ μὲν ζῶντος, πάντως οὐ προανεῖλεν αὐτὸν ὁ Τηλέγονος ὡς ἄγνωστον – ἐγίνωσκε γὰρ ἂν τοῦτον ἰδὼν ἐν τοῖς τοῦ παιδὸς γάμοις – εἰ δὲ τεθνηκότος, πῶς ὁ ἤδη θανὼν πάλιν ὡσπερ ἀπὸ μηχανῆς κωμικῆς ζωθεὶς ὑπὸ σοῦ παρεισάγεται τὴν Κίρκην θανοῦσαν θρηγῶν καὶ Τηλέμαχον καὶ τῷ πάθει αὐτῶν τελευτῶν; ἐμοὶ μὲν, ὃ Λύκοφρον, ἀνακόλουθα ταῦτα καὶ γελοιωδέστατα φαίνεται, οὐ μόνον δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα σὰ ῥήματα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ τῶν πειρωμένων ἐν τοῖς τοιοῦτοις συμμαχεῖν σοι· φασὶ γὰρ τινες ἀσκεπτότεροι καὶ ἀπαίδευτοι ὅτι θανόντα τὸν Ὀδυσσεῖα ὑπὸ Τηλεγόνου Κίρκη φαρμάκοις ἀνέστησεν ἢ προαναιρεθεῖσα Τηλεμάχῳ καὶ μηδ' αὐτὴν ἐγεῖραι δυναμένη. καὶ λοιπὸν ἡ παροιμία ἐπὶ ταύτῃ πεπλήρωται

“ἄλλων ἰατρὸς αὐτὸς ἔλκεσι<ν> βρούων” (Eur. fr. 1086 Kannicht)

ἢ ὡς ὁ νεκρὸς ἐκεῖνος ὁ σωτὴρ Σιμωνίδου (Sim. fr. 96,3-4 Sider = 85 FGE) καὶ αὕτη τῷ Ὀδυσσεῖ τεθνηκυῖα χάριτας παρέχει. ταῦτά φησιν ὁ Τζέτζης περὶ τούτων τῶν κακοπλάστων καὶ ἀνακολούθων καὶ ἐναντίων τοῦ τε κεῖσθαι τὸν

Ὀδυσσεά ἐν Ἠπειρώ καὶ Τυρσηνία καὶ ἔτι πλέον περὶ τοῦ ὑπὸ Τηλεγόνου θανάτου αὐτοῦ καὶ πῶς πάλιν φαίνεται ζῶν καὶ θνήσκων διὰ τὸν θάνατον Κίρκης καὶ Τηλεμάχου. ἄλλοι δε φασὶ περὶ μὲν τοῦ πρώτου λόγου ὅτι ἴσως μετετέθη ἀπ' Εὐρυτάνων καὶ Ἠπειροῦ εἰς Τυρσηνίαν. καὶ τοῦτο μὲν τῷ Τζέτζη ὡς ἐχόμενον πιθανότητος οὐ πανταχοῦ ἀπόβλητον φαίνεται, διὰ δὲ τὸ ἐν πολλοῖς τὸν Λυκόφρονα τοιοῦτον εὐρίσκειν, τοιαῦτα πάντα μισεῖ. ἄλλοι δὲ φασὶν ὅτι ἀναιρεθεῖς ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς ὑπὸ Τηλεγόνου πάλιν ὑπὸ τῆς Κίρκης φαρμάκῳ ἀνέστη καὶ ἐγήματο Κασσιφόνην Τηλεμάχῳ, Πηνελόπη δ' ἐν Μακάρων νήσοις ἐγήματο Τηλεγόνῳ.

**805a** *schol. vet.* Lyc. 805b Leone; [Apollod.] *Epit.* VII 34-37 | ἡ Πέργη ... κεῖσθαι συνέβη : *schol. vet.* Lyc. 806 Leone (= Theopomp. *FGrHist* 115 F 354); *paraphr.* Lyc. 805-806 Leone; Arist. fr. 507 Rose | Εὐρυτάνη τῆς Ἠπειροῦ : *schol. vet.* Lyc. 799b Leone (= Arist. fr. 508 Rose), *paraphr.* Lyc. 799 Leone; Steph. Byz. ε 169 Billerbeck; *schol. Carm. Il.* I 383c, p. 156 Leone) cognoscit constitutionem Ithacensium Aristotelis (fr. 504-509 Rose). παρουσία ... ἔλκεσι<ν> βρῶων (Eur. fr. 1086 Kannicht) : cf. *Suda* ε 3691 Adler; Plut. *Mor.* 88c, 71e, 481a, 1110e; Galen. *De sanitate tuenda* V 1,9 (CMG V/4.2, p. 136,2); Greg. Naz. *Or.* 2,13; *Floril. Monac.* 142, p. 277 Meineke; Eust. *in Il.* III 337,6 van der Valk; fons Eustathii est Plutarchus, fortasse et Tzetzae | ἡ ὡς ... σωτήρ Σιμωνίδου : *Anth. Pal.* VII 77; *schol. Aristid. Or.* 2,160,14, p. III, 533 Dindorf, cf. etiam *Hist.* I 24, 633-638 | ἄλλοι δὲ φασὶν ... ἀνέστη : *schol. vet.* Lyc. 805b Leone | καὶ ἐγήματο Κασσιφόνην Τηλεμάχῳ : *schol. vet.* Lyc. 808a Leone, nomen Cassiphones inser. Tzetzes | Πηνελόπη ... Τηλεγόνῳ : *Teleg. argum.* 4, fr. 6 West; Hygin. *Fab.* 127; [Apollod.] *Epit.* VII 37; Eust. *in Od.* p. II, 117,19-20 Stallbaum = *Teleg.* fr. 6 West

**805a** ἡ Πέργη ... ἐν Γορτυναία om. **C** | ἡ **SFLP**, om. Peraxylus | Γορτυναία : Γορτυνία **VFP**, Peraxylus et Sebastiani in textu scholiorum, sed Γορτυναία in textu | πῶς δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς **SF** : πῶς \*δὲ\* ὁ αὐτὸς Scheer : πῶς οὖν ὁ αὐτὸς **V** : ὁ om. **L** : δὲ om. **C** | Εὐρυτάνη Scheer : εὐρυτᾶσι **N/Ca S4 Vitt. 1 Ha** : Εὐρυτᾶσι **SVLPC** : τᾶσι **F** | Τυρσηνία : ἐν Τυρσηνία **SVLP** : Τυρσηνίας Peraxylus : om. **F** | κεῖσθαι συνέβη **Ha Vitt. 1** pro κεῖται **VLC** : ἐν Γορτυνία κεῖται **FP** : συνέβη om. **SC** | κακοπλάστως αὐτόν φησι τὸν Λυκόφρονα γράφειν : αὐτόν φησι τὸν Λυκόφρονα κακοπλάστως γράφειν **P** | ὡς ἔδειξε πολλάκις **SVFL** | ἀλλὰ καὶ : καὶ om. **L** | αὐτὸν ἑαυτῷ : ἑαυτοῦ **C** : αὐτόν om. Peraxylus | ὡσπερ καὶ ἐνταυθοῖ **SPC** : καὶ ὡσπερ ἐνταυθοῖ **L** : ὡσπερ ἐνταυθὶ **VEM** : ὡσπερ καὶ ἐνταῦθα **F** | φησι γράψαι καὶ om. **C** : φησι γράψαι Sebastiani : φησι ἐνγραφαι **F** | τὰς om. **C** | καὶ φησι γελῶν **SEMFP** : γελῶν om. **C** | νῦν πάλιν : νῦν om. **C** | δεύτερον δὲ ἀνακόλουθον : δεύτερον δὲ καὶ ἀνακόλουθον **CEM** | καὶ ἐν μὲν ... ἀνακόλουθον **EMF** : καὶ ἐν μὲν τοῦτο φησὶν εἶναι **S** : ἐν μὲν τοῦτο φησὶν εἶναι **L** : εἶναι om. **P** | καὶ ἐν μὲν ... ὃ Λύκοφρον : δεύτερον καὶ ἀνακόλουθον τοῦτο, φησὶν, ὃ Λύκοφρον Peraxylus | φηὶς τοῦτο : τοῦτο φηὶς **L** : τοῦτο φησί(ν) **SVF** : φησί τοῦτο **C** | ἐπιγαμία γέγονε : ἐπιγαμίαν γεγονέναι Sebastiani | Τηλεμάχου : Τηλεμάχῳ **C** | τοῦ Ὀδυσσεῶς om. **P** | πάντως om. **F** : πάντων **M** : παντοῦ **L** | γὰρ om. **P** | τοῦτον ἰδὼν ἐν : τοῦτον ἰδὼν αὐτόν ἐν Sebastiani | ὁ om. **LP** : ἡ **C** | θανὸν πάλιν : θανὸν πάλαι **M** | παρεισάγεται : παράγεται **M** | καὶ τῷ πάθει ... σὰ ῥήματα : ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀνακόλουθα ταῦτα φαίνεται οὐ μόνον δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα **C** | ἐμοὶ μὲν ... φαίνεται : ἐμοὶ ταῦτα, ὃ Λύκοφρον, ἀνακόλουθα καὶ γελοιωδέστατα φαίνεται **SVEL** : ἐμοὶ μὲν ταῦτα, ὃ Λύκοφρον, ἀνακόλουθα

καὶ γελοιωδέστατα φαίνεται **FP** (ὃ om. **P**) : ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀνακόλουθα ταῦτα φαίνεται **C** | καὶ τὰ τῶν : καὶ τῶν **LP** | ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις om. **C** | ἀσκεπτότεροι καὶ ἀπαίδευτοι om. **C** | ὅτι om. **F** | αὐτήν **H** : ἑαυτήν Sebastiani | ἐπὶ ταύτῃ Sebastiani : ἐπ' αὐτῇ **H** : ἐπ' αὐτήν **L** | καὶ αὐτῇ Scheer : καὶ νῦν αὐτῇ codd. | καὶ : om. **EM** | θανάτου αὐτοῦ καὶ πῶς πάλιν φαίνεται : θανάτου αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ πῶς φαίνεται πάλιν **FP** | θανάτου : θανάτον **FP** : θανάτος Sebastiani | ὅτι θανόντα τὸν Ὀδυσσεά : ὅτι καὶ τὸν θανόντα καὶ τὸν Ὀδυσσεά **S** | Τηλεμάχῳ : Τηλεμάχου **S** | αὐτήν : αὐτὸν Peraxylus | σωτήρ ... καὶ αὐτῇ τῷ : πατήρ ... καὶ αὐτῇ τῷ **SL** | ἄλλων ... βρύων : vid. app. in *TrGF* V/2 1012 | περὶ τούτων τῶν ... θάνατον Κίρκης καὶ Τηλεμάχου om. **C** | περὶ τούτων τῶν om. **P** : περὶ τῶν **L** | ἀπ' Εὐρυτάνων : ἀπ' Βρυτάνων | κακοπλάστων καὶ ἀνακολούθων : καὶ om. **S** | περὶ τοῦ ὑπὸ Τηλεγόνου θανάτου : ὑπὸ om. **SL** | φασὶ περὶ μὲν τοῦ : φασὶ ἐκ μὲν τοῦ **S** : φασὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ **L** | πιθανότητος : πιθανότητον Peraxylus | πανταχοῦ : παντελῶς **SVF** : παντοτε **L** : πάντα Peraxylus | ἀπόβλητον : ἀπόβλητα Peraxylus | διὰ δὲ τὸ ... πάντα μισεῖ om. **C** | τοιαῦτα πάντα μισεῖ : τοιαῦτα πολλὰ μισεῖν : πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα μισεῖν **SVFLP** | δὲ om. **SF** | ὁ om. **SVLFC** | ὑπὸ Τηλεγόνου : ὑπὸ τοῦ Τηλεγόνου **S** | ὑπὸ τῆς Κίρκης : τῆς om. **L** : ὑπὸ τοῖς τῆς Κίρκης **P** | ὅτι ἴσως ... ἐγήματο Τηλεγόνῳ : ὅτι μετετέθη ἀπὸ εὐρυτάνων εἰς πέργην, ἢ ὅτι μῦθος φέρεται, ὅτι μετὰ τὸ ἀνελεῖν αὐτὸν τὸν Τηλέγονον ἢ Κίρκη φαρμάκοις ἀνέστησεν, ὁ δὲ Τηλέγονος Πηνελόπην ἐν μακάρων νήσοις ἐγήματο **EM** | τοιοῦτον : τοῦτον **F** | φαρμάκῳ : φαρμάκοις **SFP** | καὶ ἐγήματο Κασσιφόνην Τηλεμάχῳ om. **F** : ἐγήματο Κασσιφόνην post Τηλεγόνῳ **P** : Κασσιφόνην om. **C** | καὶ ἐγήματο ... Τηλεγόνῳ om. **EM** | Πηνελόπη **AF** : Πηνελόπην cett.

**805a** Perge is a mountain in Etruria, where he says that Odysseus lies buried and cremated in Gortynaian territory. How did the same person come to lie buried in Eurytana in Epirus and in Etruria? And Tzetzes says that Lycophron writes in an ill-conceived way, contradicting not only the other (authors) – as he has shown many times – but even himself, just as he says he has written here and in the following line, which says “when he dies lamenting the fate of his son Telemachus and his wife Circe”. And laughing he says that the contradictions here are many. One is that Odysseus died at the hands of Telegonus, and now again living he dies on account of the death of Circe and Telemachus. And he says this one thing is a contradiction and an inconsistency, and the second inconsistency that you say is this, O Lycophron: when Odysseus was alive or dead, a marriage occurred between Telemachus, son of Odysseus, and Cassiphone his daughter by Circe. If (It happened) when he was alive, Telegonus certainly wouldn't have killed him without recognizing him, for he would have recognised him having seen him at his son's wedding; if instead (it happened) when he was dead, how could you bring him back in, dead as he was, coming back to life as from a comedy trick to mourn Circe's death and Telemachus' and then die from grief of them? These things, o Lycophron, seem to me to be irregular and most ridiculous, not only the things you have said here, but also those said by those seeking to fight your corner. For some rather thoughtless and ignorant people say that when Odysseus was killed by Telegonus, Circe resurrected him with



drugs – she who had already been killed by Telemachus and who hadn't been able even to resurrect herself. Well then, she fulfils the proverb:

«He treats others while a mass of wounds himself»

Or like that dead man who saved Simonides, she too does favours to Odysseus when she is already dead. This is what Tzetzes says about these plot holes and inconsistencies and contradictions – Odysseus being buried in Epirus and in Etruria, and again concerning his death at Telegonus' hands, and how again he appears alive and dies because of the death of Circe and Telemachus. And this seems to Tzetzes not entirely to deserve rejection, in that it has some plausibility; but since in many places he found Lycophron to be like that, he hates all such things. And others say that Odysseus, having been killed by Telegonus, was resurrected by Circe by means of a drug, and he married Cassiphone to Telemachus, and Penelope was married to Telegonus on the islands of the Blessed.

This passage of the *Alexandra* concerns the fate of Odysseus in Italy and the deaths of Circe and Telemachus. Tzetzes reminds us a couple of times in this passage that he has reproached Lycophron for inconsistencies several times. In the previous passage (§3), Tzetzes reproached Lycophron's inconsistencies on mythology in verse, here it is in prose. In particular he quibbles about the fate and burial of Odysseus in Etruria rather than in Epirus. This extended passage of commentary sees Tzetzes deploy an almost Socratic line of argument (“if this is the case...” etc.), use quotations and references to other literary works, and in some cases overlap, again, with his own poetic and scholarly output. Tzetzes despairs of Lycophron for putting two contradictory versions together, for glossing over any inconsistencies, and says that he writes *κακοπλάστως*, which is another Tzetzean adverb. He even thinks that Lycophron is joking around with the reader (*ἀπὸ μηχανῆς κωμικῆς ... γελοιωδέστατα φαίνεται*).

Lycophron has Telegonus take Odysseus' body to Etruria, who will die there lamenting the fate of Telemachus and of Circe. The first son of Odysseus follows Circe to Hades having been killed by Cassiphone, his stepsister by Circe. The main sources of contention for Tzetzes are the *scholia vetera* and *paraphrasis antiqua* to this passage and Proclus' summary of the Trojan Cycle or a similar summary available to Tzetzes. The inconsistency is that Odysseus, in the *Telegony*, died at the hands of Telegonus, who was his son by Circe and who did not know who Odysseus was, on Ithaca in Greece. Subsequently, Telemachus marries Circe, and Telegonus marries Penelope (*argum.* 4 West). The *scholia vetera* state that Circe resurrected

Odysseus and he died a second time in Etruria<sup>52</sup>. Cassiphone was a daughter of Odysseus by Circe and the sister of Telegonus. After Odysseus had been resurrected by Circe, following his death by Telegonus on Ithaca, Telegonus gave Cassiphone in marriage to Telemachus, who, however, she killed, because he had put to death her mother Circe for the death of Odysseus. Tzetzes refers to the authors of these versions as ἀσκεπτότεροι καὶ ἀπαίδευτοι. He poses a series of questions to demonstrate the inconsistencies in Lycophron's version, but in the end, Tzetzes just thinks that the tomb and Odysseus' body was moved from Epirus to Etruria, so that he died once but the remains were relocated.

In describing the abilities and activities of Circe, Tzetzes quotes, without naming the author, a tragic fragment attributed to Euripides (fr. 1086 Kannicht: ἄλλων ἰατρὸς αὐτὸς ἔλκεσι<ν> βρύων), indicating that although Circe was a healer Tzetzes mockingly points out that she was unable to resurrect herself. The Euripidean authorship is stated by the *Suda*, but the verse is quoted a few times by Plutarch, whose works Tzetzes had access to (see below), and by Galen and Gregory of Nazianus without a specific reference to Euripides but either to "the tragedian" (which can be understood as Euripides) or as παρομιία. The reference to a Simonidean epigram (ὁ σωτήρ Σιμωνίδου, cf. Sim. fr. 96,3-4 Sider = 85 *FGE*) is something that he quotes in full in the *Historiai* (I 24, 633-638)<sup>53</sup>. The epigram attributed to Simonides is a dedication by a poet to an anonymous man who saved the poet's life, but the name of the man is not important, rather the honour of the anonymous man having an epigram composed by the poet. Presumably Tzetzes came across the epigram in the *Anthology* or in the scholia to Aelius Aristides. While he probably had access to mss. of both works, Tzetzes, in the aforementioned passage from the *Historiai*, refers to Aelius Aristides, thereby suggesting that his main source for the Simonidean epigram was Aristides' *Orations* with the scholia. In this part of the *Commentary to Lycophron*, Tzetzes' reference to this epigram is about disparaging Circe's role as Odysseus' saviour.

<sup>52</sup> M.L. West, *The Epic Cycle: A Commentary on the Lost Troy Epics*, Oxford 2013, 138-139 thinks that this Etruscan episode was not in the *Telegony*, as Penelope would not have been able to marry Telegonus. There were traditions going back to at least Theopompus about Odysseus in Etruria, see E. Occhipinti, *Tyrhanoi, visti con gli occhi dei Greci: Cortona, un caso "sospetto" di ktisis greca*, in P. Giannellaro (ed.), *Visti dall'altra sponda. Interferenze culturali nel Mediterraneo antico*, Rome 2010, 163-185.

<sup>53</sup> οὗτος ὁ τοῦ Κεῖοιο Σιμωνίδου ἐστὶ σωτήρ, / ὅς καὶ τεθνηὼς ζῶντι παρέσχε χάριν. («This man is the saviour of Simonides of Ceos, who, although dead, paid his debt of gratitude to the living»). See D. Sider, *Simonides. Epigrams and Elegies*, Oxford 2020, 363-367 on this epigram.

Tzetzes takes, it seems, a more pedagogical approach to his handling of Lycophron's account of the fate of Odysseus. The series of logical questions and hypotheses indicate perhaps a way of conveying to his students and readers how to approach inconsistencies in an author and indeed reproach that very author directly (ἐμοὶ μὲν, ὦ Λύκοφρον, ἀνακόλουθα ταῦτα καὶ γελοιωδέστατα φαίνεται...). In doing so, Tzetzes schools both his students and the author he is commentating upon.

5) *Schol. Lyc. 1301, p. II, 367 Scheer*

αὖθις γὰρ ὕβριν τὴν βαρεῖαν ἀρπαγῆς  
 Κουρηῆτες ἀντίποινον Ἰδαῖοι κάπροι  
 ζητοῦντες αἰχμάλωτον ἤμπρυσαν πόριν  
 ἐν ταυρομόρφῳ τράμπιδος τυπώματι  
 Σαραπτίαν Δικταῖον εἰς ἀνάκτορον  
 δάμαρτα Κρήτης Ἀστέρω στρατηλάτῃ. 1300  
 (Lyc. 1296-1301)

For next, the Kouretes, the boars of Ida,  
 seeking reprisals for the grievous act of rape  
 dragged off a Saraptian girl  
 as prisoner, in a ship with a bull-shaped ensign,  
 to the Diktaian palace, 1300  
 to be a bride for **Asteros** the Cretan commander.

**1301a** οὗτος ὁ Ἀστέριος ἐστὶν ὁ καὶ Μινώταυρος, εἶχε δὲ, ὡς φασι, τάυρου πρόσωπον, ἣν δὲ Πασιφάης υἱὸς γεννηθεὶς αὐτῇ ὑπὸ Μίνως καὶ τάυρου, ὃν ὁ Δαίδαλος ἐποίησεν, ἢ τὸ ἀληθὲς ὑπὸ Τάυρου τοῦ στρατηγοῦ ᾧ καὶ ὅμοιος ὢν ἐμυθεύθη τάυρου πρόσωπον ἔχειν. οὗτος δὲ ὁ Λυκόφρων τὸν Ἀστέριον λέγει Δία πατέρα εἶναι τοῦ Σαρπηδόνο, Μίνως καὶ Ῥαδαμάνθους.

**1301a** Pasiphae et taurus : Tzetz. *Hist.* I 19, 487-490 | Pasiphae et Taurus imperator/legatus : *schol. Lyc.* 1214 Scheer; *Hist.* I 19, 524-534; XII 409, 399-400 | Europa mater Sarpedonis, Minōis et Rhadamanthi : *schol. Lyc.* 1283 Scheer

οὗτος ... Μινώταυρος : Paus. II 31,1 (Taurus nomen Minotauri) cf. etiam [Apollod.] III 1,4 (11) | ὃν ὁ Δαίδαλος ἐποίησεν : [Apollod.] III 15,9 (215); Serv. in *Aen.* VI 14 Thilo | ἢ τὸ ἀληθὲς ὑπὸ Τάυρου τοῦ στρατηγοῦ : Palaeoph. 2 Festa (6-7); *schol. Eur. Hipp.* 337c Cavarzeran; Jo. Antioch. *Ap.* 1,18 Mariev ~ fr. 6,15, p. IV, 544 *FHG*, cf. Tzet. *schol. Lyc.* 1214 Scheer; Lact. in Stat. *Ach.* 192, p. III, 495,14-20 Jahnke (Pasiphae et Taurus imperator/legatus) | Ἀστέριον ... Ῥαδαμάνθους : Diod. Sic. IV 60,2-3; [Apollod.] III 1,1 (3), 1,3 (8); Hes. fr. 140 Merkelbach-West et Bacch. fr. 10 Maehler ap.

*schol.* D *Il.* XII 397 van Thiel; Hes. fr. 141,12-14 Merkelbach-West; Mosch. 2,165-166; Diod. Sic. IV 60,2; V 78,1; 84,1; Hygin. *Fab.* 155,2, 178,1; Ov. *Fast.* V 617-618; Hor. *Carm.* III 27,73-76; Eust. *in Il.* III 654,13-17 van der Valk | ἦν δὲ Πασιφάης υἷος γεννηθεὶς αὐτῇ ὑπὸ Μίνωος καὶ ταύρου (Pasiphae et taurus) : [Apollod.] III 1,4 (9-10), 15,9 (215); *schol.* Eur. *Hipp.* 887a Cavarzeran; Hygin. *Fab.* 40,1-2; Zenob. IV 6; Ov. *Met.* IX 735-737; Diod. Sic. IV 77,1-3; Phil. *Imag.* 1,16; Palaeph. 2 Festa (6-7); Lact. *in Stat. Ach.* 192, p. III, 494-495 Jahnke | Ταύρου τοῦ στρατηγοῦ : Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 17a ap. Plut. *Thes.* 19,5, F 17b ap. Eus. *Chron.* 785; Palaeph. 2 Festa (6-7); Ps.-Heraclit. *Incred.* 7; Plut. *Thes.* 25,2, cf. etiam Demon *FGrHist* 327 F 5 ap. Plut. *Thes.* 19,3 (*Taurus imperator Minōis*) | Taurus, filius Minōis : Nonn. *D.* XIII 223, XL 285 | Asterius, rex et vir Europae : Hes. fr. 140 Merkelbach-West et Bacch. fr. 10 Maehler ap. *schol.* D Hom. *Il.* XII 397 van Thiel; Nonn. *D.* I 354, II 695; *schol. vet.* Lyc. 1301 Leone; [Apollod.] III 1,3 (8); *Et. Magn.* s.v. Μίνωος, p. 588,25 Gaisford | Asterius, vitricus Sarpedonis, Minōis et Rhadamanthi : [Apollod.] III 1,1 (3-7)

**1301a** οὗτος ὁ Ἀστέριος : ὁ Ἀστέριος οὗτος **SFL** | ἦν δὲ : ἦν δὲ καὶ? **C** | Πασιφάης υἷος : υἷος Πασιφάης **L** : υἷος Πασιφάης υἷ(ος) **S** | αὐτῇ ὑπὸ Μίνωος : αὐτῇ ἐκ Μίνωος **F** | καὶ ταύρου : κενταύρου **Vitt. 1 Ha** | ὑπὸ Ταύρου : ἀπὸ τοῦ Ταύρου **C** | ὁ om. **Ha Vitt. 1** | ὦν om. **L** | ἐμυθεύθη : ἐμυθεύθη **Vitt. 1 Ha** | λέγει Δία πατέρα εἶναι **C** : Δία πατέρα εἶναι λέγει Müller : Δία πατέρα λέγει εἶναι **FLP** : Δία καὶ πατέρα εἶναι **S** : Δία λέγει πατέρα εἶναι Peraxylus

This is Asterios and he is the Minotaur. He had, so they say, the face of a bull, and he was born the son of Pasiphae and by the bull of Minos, (a process) which Daedalus made (possible), or the truth was he was the son by Tauros the general who was said to have the face of a bull. Lycophron means Asterios to be Zeus the (step-)father of Sarpedon, Minos and Rhadamanthys.

This mythographical passage is very short in comparison to previous passages (§1, §3). It is from a section of the *Alexandra* (1296-1311) on the abduction of Europa, and other hostile acts by Cretans. Lycophron himself rationalises the myth, but teases with nods to the better-known version (πόρτιν means here ‘girl’, but also ‘young heifer’). Lycophron follows the Herodotean version (I 2,1), where Europa was abducted by men (Cretans), not by a god, but he also uses elements of the metamorphosis story. Tzetzes, rationalising the story further, says that the Minotaur was the human son of a general Tauros who commanded Minos’ army (1298), rather than the famed mythical beast. Tzetzes first refers to the traditional myth, then asserts that the real father of the Minotaur was a human who just had a bull-shaped face, and that Lycophron meant Asterios to be understood as the step-father to Sarpedon, Minos, and Rhadamanthys.

The story of Pasiphae and the bull is an old and common one. The pivot to the “true story” (τὸ ἀληθές) of the myth of Tauros the general as the lover of Pasiphae is found in Plutarch’s *Life of Theseus*, which goes back to Philochorus; interestingly, Tzetzes owned a copy of Plutarch’s *Lives*, which for a time he refused to sell unlike

his other books<sup>54</sup>. Another source for this story would have been Palaephatus. Both versions of the story also feature in the *Historiai* (I 19, 487-490 and 524-534; XII 409, 399-400) and demonstrates another overlap between Tzetzes' poetry and scholarly works. In the *Historiai*, Tzetzes gives a more detailed account than in this section of the *Commentary*.

### *Conclusions*

The five passages above demonstrate the variety of materials that Tzetzes had access to and the various points of interpretation he could comment upon. They also show how limited Scheer's edition was and what could have been placed into the *apparatus* to better elucidate Tzetzes' learning and sources. The need and rewards of a new edition of the *Commentary to Lycophron* are hopefully clear. Among the difficult poetic works Tzetzes explained to his pupils, Lycophron's *Alexandra* held a place of pride. Tzetzes virtually eclipses the original by treating it as a pretext for every kind of learned excursus, be it in the realm of prosody or etymology, of grammar or mythography, of ethical or allegorical interpretation. Whether or not this commentary was conceived and used in and for everyday school practice, it shows a plurality of approaches and offers a suitable floor for Tzetzes' polemic against Psellos' didactic methods, digressions and Christianising allegories<sup>55</sup>: Tzetzes displays a very philological mind indeed.

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<sup>54</sup> *Exeg. Il.* p. 22,3-8 Papathomopoulos. On this passage see also Philip Rance's chapter in this volume (pp. 427-430). Tzetzes mentions Tauros earlier in the *Commentary* (*schol. Lyc.* 1214). The story of Pasiphae and Tauros is also found in the Latin tradition: Serv. *in Aen.* VI 14 Thilo and Lact. Plac. *in Stat. Ach.* 192 Jahnke. A reference is also made to it by the second hand of a ms. (Cavarzeran's V<sub>2</sub>, dated after AD 1250-1280) of *schol. Eur. Hipp.* 337c Cavarzeran (μητρει : η Πασιφαη ηρασθη Ταυρου στρατηγου). V<sub>2</sub> had material derived from John Tzetzes, see J. Cavarzeran, *Scholia in Euripidis Hippolytum*, Berlin-Boston 2016, 40. Further remarks on Tzetzes' presence in the Euripides scholia can be found in Jacopo Cavarzeran's chapter in this volume. As for the books Tzetzes needs to consult in order to find information (*Hist.* XII 397, 2-6), Tzetzes is able to repeat by heart their contents as if he could hold them once again in his hands (*Hist.* I 11, 278-279); he is liable to error, but his mind, working as a library (*Alleg. Il.* XV 87-88), allows him to display a huge amount of data (*Hist.* VIII 176, 173-80). See Wendel, *o.c.* 2008 for more examples.

<sup>55</sup> On Tzetzes and Psellos' allegories see Frederick Lauritzen's chapter in this volume.

## Appendix

The Appendix below lists all the manuscripts and the sigla used by several scholars and has notes on the key features of the *codices principes*. The arrangement by family groupings is reconstructed from Leone's articles on the manuscript tradition of the *Commentary*, though I have added several MSS to this list that are not included by Leone and those which only contain excerpts of the *Commentary*.

*Conspectus siglorum*

| Mss.                                    | saec.                     | Scheer       | Masson   | Leone     | Hurst                | Hornblower |
|---|---------------------------|--------------|----------|-----------|----------------------|------------|
| <i>Codices Tzetzae</i>                  |                           | $s^4 + s^5$  |          | <b>t</b>  |                      |            |
| <i>Commentaria Tzetzae</i>              | c. 1140-1190              |              |          | <b>T</b>  | <b>T</b>             |            |
| <b>q</b>                                |                           |              |          |           |                      |            |
| * <i>Ambr.</i> C222 inf., ff. 109r-176r | c. 1185-1195              | $c/\gamma^1$ | <b>A</b> | <b>A</b>  |                      |            |
| <i>Par. gr.</i> 2839                    | xv-xvi                    |              |          | <b>Aa</b> |                      |            |
| <i>Ambros.</i> A 200 inf.               | 1491                      |              |          | <b>Ab</b> |                      |            |
| <i>Bodl. Misc. gr.</i> 192              | post 1496                 |              |          | <b>Ac</b> |                      |            |
| <i>Matrit. gr.</i> 4808                 | xvi                       |              |          | <b>Ad</b> |                      |            |
| <hr/>                                   |                           |              |          |           |                      |            |
| <b><math>\sigma</math><sup>56</sup></b> |                           |              |          |           |                      |            |
| * <i>Scor.</i> R-I-18, ff. 3-102r       | 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 1255 |              | <b>S</b> | <b>S</b>  | <b>M<sup>3</sup></b> |            |
| * <i>Vat. gr.</i> 1306                  | xiii                      | <b>b/IIb</b> | <b>V</b> | <b>V</b>  |                      |            |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 972                     | xv                        |              |          | <b>Va</b> |                      |            |

<sup>56</sup> Leone, *La tradizione* (6) cit. 123-130.

|  |                      |                |           |              |          |          |
|--|----------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Neap. gr.</i> II F.15                               | xv                   |                |           | <b>Vb</b>    |          |          |
| <i>Par. gr.</i> 2725                                   | xvi                  |                |           | <b>Vc</b>    |          |          |
| <i>Vat. Ottob. gr.</i> 313                             | xvii                 |                |           | <b>Vd</b>    |          |          |
| <i>Ambr. gr.</i> A 57 sup.                             | xv                   |                |           | <b>Ve</b>    |          |          |
| <hr/>  |                      |                |           |              |          |          |
| $\pi^{57}$   |                      |                |           |              |          |          |
| * <i>Par. gr.</i> 2403, ff. 58r-99v                    | xiii                 | <i>b</i>       | <b>Q</b>  | <b>P</b>     | <b>D</b> | $\beta'$ |
| <i>Mutin. gr.</i> 51, ff. 116r-87v                     | xv                   |                |           | <b>Pa</b>    |          |          |
| <i>Marc. gr.</i> 475, ff. 211r-42v                     | xv                   |                |           | <b>Pb</b>    |          |          |
| <i>Ambr.</i> C 32 sup.                                 |                      |                | <b>Pc</b> |              |          |          |
| <hr/>  |                      |                |           |              |          |          |
| $\varphi^{58}$   |                      |                |           |              |          |          |
| $\zeta = K, Ka, Kb, Kc$                                |                      |                |           |              |          |          |
| * <i>Laur. Plut.</i> 32,17                             | xiii/xvi             | <i>deest</i>   | <b>L</b>  | <b>K</b>     |          |          |
| <i>Riccard. gr.</i> 69, ff. 4r-111v                    | xiv                  |                |           | <b>Ka</b>    |          |          |
| <i>Monac. gr.</i> 241, ff. 1r-198v                     | xv                   |                |           | <b>Kb</b>    |          |          |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 916                                    | xvi ( <i>init.</i> ) | southern Italy | <b>Kc</b> |              |          |          |
| $\mu = L, La, Lb, Lc$                                  |                      |                |           |              |          |          |
| <i>Neap. gr.</i> II F.16                               | xv                   |                |           | <b>L</b>     |          |          |
| <i>Vindob. phil. gr.</i> 282                           | xvi                  |                |           | <b>La</b>    |          |          |
| <i>Neap. gr.</i> II F.15 (om. prol.)                   | xv                   |                |           | <b>Lb/Vb</b> |          |          |
| <i>Palat. gr.</i> 356, ff. 163v-165r<br>(prol. tantum) | xiv                  |                |           | <b>Lc</b>    |          |          |

<sup>57</sup> Leone, *La tradizione* (4) cit. 11-14.

<sup>58</sup> Leone, *La tradizione* (4) cit. 15-20.

|   |        |          |                        |
|---|--------|----------|------------------------|
| <b>z</b> <sup>59</sup>                        |        |          |                        |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 1421                          | xiv    |          | <b>F</b> <sup>60</sup> |
| <i>Par. gr.</i> 2836                          | xv     | <b>R</b> | <b>G</b>               |
| <i>Casan. gr.</i> 1281                        | xv     |          | <b>Ga</b>              |
| <hr/>   |        |          |                        |
| <b>j</b> <sup>61</sup>                        |        |          |                        |
| <i>Bodl. gr. Seld. supra</i> 18, ff. 67r-126v | xv     |          | <b>Γ</b>               |
| <i>Par. gr.</i> 2838, ff. 6r-126v             | xvi    |          | <b>Δ</b>               |
| <hr/>   |        |          |                        |
| <b>h</b> <sup>62</sup>                        |        |          |                        |
| <i>Pal. gr.</i> 264 diorthota Tzetzae?        | xiv-xv | <b>d</b> | <b>H</b>               |
| <i>Ciz. gr.</i> 69                            | 1498   |          | <b>Ha</b>              |
| <i>Vat. Pal. gr.</i> 158, ff. 1r-136r         | xv-xvi |          | <b>Hb</b>              |
| <i>Par. gr.</i> 2890                          | xvi    |          | <b>Hc</b>              |
| <i>Vratisl. Rehdig. gr.</i> 32                | xv     |          | <b>J</b>               |
| <i>Laur. Plut.</i> 32,20                      | xv     |          | <b>Ja</b>              |
| <i>Laur. Plut.</i> 32,29                      | xv     |          | <b>Jb</b>              |
| <hr/>   |        |          |                        |
| <b>k = familia Cretensis</b> <sup>63</sup>    |        |          |                        |
| <i>Palat. gr.</i> 272                         | xv-xvi |          | <b>M</b>               |

<sup>59</sup> Leone, *La tradizione* (6) cit. 137-142.

<sup>60</sup> This is the siglum given to it by Leone, *l.c.* A different ms. (*Vat. gr.* 117) is labelled as **F** by Leone in *Scholia vetera* cit.

<sup>61</sup> Leone, *La tradizione* (4) cit. 21-22.

<sup>62</sup> Leone, *La tradizione* (6) cit. 137.

<sup>63</sup> Leone, *La tradizione* (5) cit. 101-121.



|                             |                  |           |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------|
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 1586        | xv               | <b>Ma</b> |
| <i>Ottob. gr.</i> 369       | xvi              | <b>Mb</b> |
| <i>Vat. Pal. gr.</i> 139    | xv-xvi           | <b>Mc</b> |
| <i>Scor. gr.</i> 143        | xvi <i>init.</i> | <b>Md</b> |
| <i>Vindob. phil. gr.</i> 43 | 1541             | <b>Me</b> |
| <i>Par. gr.</i> 2837        | xvi              | <b>Mf</b> |
| <i>Matrit. gr.</i> 4551     | xv               | <b>Mg</b> |

|                      |    |          |
|----------------------|----|----------|
| <i>Ottob. gr.</i> 65 | xv | <b>O</b> |
|----------------------|----|----------|

|   |        |           |
|---|--------|-----------|
| <i>Bodl. Barocc.</i> 153                      | xv     | <b>N</b>  |
| <i>Par. gr.</i> 2724                          | xvi    | <b>Na</b> |
| <i>Ambr.</i> I 24 inf., ff. 2v-145v           | xv     | <b>Nb</b> |
| <i>Vat. Barb. gr.</i> 249, ff. 1r-3r, 7r-130v | xv-xvi | <b>Nc</b> |
| <i>Vat. Pii II gr.</i> 17                     | 1479?  | <b>Nd</b> |
| <i>Scor.</i> R-I-6, ff. 1r-112v               | xv     | <b>Ne</b> |
| <i>Casan. gr.</i> 424                         | xvi    | <b>Nf</b> |

|                                       |        |           |
|---------------------------------------|--------|-----------|
| <i>Laur. Conv. soppr.</i> 170         | xv-xvi | <b>Q</b>  |
| <i>Neap. gr.</i> II F.14 ff. 18r-142v | xv     | <b>Qa</b> |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 1471                  | xv     | <b>Qb</b> |
| <i>Ambr.</i> B 160 sup.               | xvi    | <b>Qc</b> |

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***Codd. sine familia***

|                                  |           |                          |          |          |          |           |
|----------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| * <i>Par. gr.</i> 2723 ff. 3-73v | June 1282 | <b>C/Ia</b>              | <b>P</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>α'</b> |
| * <i>Pal. gr.</i> 18 ff. 9r-96v  | xiii      | <b>E/c/γ<sup>2</sup></b> | <b>H</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>γ'</b> |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 1910             | xiii-xiv  |                          |          |          |          |           |

|                                    |     |          |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----|----------|-----------------------|
| * <i>Vat. gr.</i> 117 ff. 30-113   | xiv | <b>W</b> | <b>F<sup>64</sup></b> |
| <i>Laur. Plut.</i> 32,36           | xv? |          |                       |
| <i>Taurin. gr.</i> 299 ff. 1r-172v | xv  |          |                       |
| <i>Ambr.</i> P 11                  | xvi |          |                       |
| <i>Marc. gr.</i> IX 22 ff. 1v-97v  | xvi |          |                       |

***Codd. qui desunt in Leone***

|  |                |  |  |
|--|----------------|--|--|
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 915, ff. 213-214                             | 1290-ante 1311 |  |  |
| <i>Pal. gr.</i> 40 ff. 65v-86v                               | xiv            |  |  |
| <i>Poznan, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka</i><br>R 32, ff. 64-176v | xv             |  |  |
| <i>Bodl. Barocc.</i> 153                                     | xv             |  |  |
| <i>Lond. BL Burney</i> ms. 89                                | xv (1/2)       |  |  |
| <i>Lond. BL Royal</i> ms. 16 D IV                            | xvi            |  |  |
| <i>Scor. gr.</i> R-I-9, ff. 188r-345r                        | xvi            |  |  |
| <i>Scor. gr.</i> X-IV-18, ff. 1r-61r                         | xvi            |  |  |
| <i>Par. gr.</i> 456, ff. 1r-75v                              | xvi vel xvii   |  |  |

***Codd. cum excerptis scholiorum Tetzianorum***

|  |                  |             |  |
|--|------------------|-------------|--|
| <i>Pal. gr.</i> 45, ff. 231v-3r  | 1201-2           |             |  |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 915, ff. 213-214   | 1290-ante 1311   |             |  |
| <i>Neap. gr.</i> II D 4, ff. 1-6   | xiii             | <b>N/Ca</b> |  |
| <i>Laur. Plut.</i> 32,52 ff. 120v-121v   | xiii-xiv         |             |  |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 927, f. 29r  | xiv <i>init.</i> |             |  |
| <i>f. avusulm ex alio codice. ANONYMUS, scholia in Alexandram vv. 1362-1371; f. 29v uacuum</i> |                  |             |  |

<sup>64</sup> This is the siglum given to it by Leone, *Scholia vetera* cit. A different ms. (*Vat. gr.* 1421) is labelled as **F** by Leone in *La tradizione* (6) cit.

|                                       |                        |    |                            |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 1825 f. 161           | xiv                    |    |                            |
| <i>Laur. Plut.</i> 31,8, ff. 208r-44v | xiv                    |    |                            |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 1421, ff. 200r-39v    | xiv                    |    |                            |
| <i>Pal. gr.</i> 356, ff. 163v-165r    | xiv                    |    | <b>Lc</b>                  |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 950, ff. 50r-68r      | xiv                    |    |                            |
| <i>Ambr.</i> C32 sup.                 | xv                     |    |                            |
| <i>Vat. Barb. gr.</i> 112             | xv ( <i>ante</i> 1494) |    | Poliziano <i>legit</i>     |
| <i>Par. gr.</i> 3069                  | ca. May 1491           |    | Poliziano <i>legit</i>     |
| <i>Vat. Pal. gr.</i> 139              | xv-xvi <i>init.</i>    |    | <b>Mc</b>                  |
| <i>Matrit. gr.</i> 4808               | xvi                    | Ad |                            |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 1826 ff. 344-379      | xv-xvii                |    | <i>cum versione Latina</i> |
| <i>Ambr.</i> N 177 ff. 1-24           | xvi                    |    |                            |
| <i>Ambr.</i> P 11                     | xvi                    |    |                            |

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***Scholia vetera***

|  |      |           |   |             |
|--|------|-----------|---|-------------|
| <i>Coislin. gr.</i> 345  | x    |           |   | <b>B</b>    |
| <i>Marc. gr.</i> 476   | x-xi | $s + s^2$ |   | <b>A</b>    |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 117, ff. 30-113  | xiv  |           | W | <b>F</b>    |
| <i>Neap.</i> II D 4, ff. 1r-6v (prol. et schol.)<br>gemellus <i>Neap.</i> II D 4 | xv   | $s^3$     |   | <b>N/Ca</b> |
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 1307   |      | V         |   | <b>V</b>    |

***Scholia minora et glossemata***

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <i>Vat. gr.</i> 1841, ff. 117v-22v          | xiii-xiv |
| <i>Vindob. phil. gr.</i> 124, ff. 13r-16v   | xvi      |
| <i>Vindob. phil. gr.</i> 257, ff. 132r-143v | xv       |
| <i>Vat. Pal. gr.</i> 142, ff. 82r-112v      | xv-xvi   |

*Editions of Tzetzes' Commentary on Lycophron (in chronological sequence)*

Arnoldus Arlenius Peraxylus, Λυκόφρονος Ἀλέξανδρα τὸ σκοτεινὸν ποίημα, καὶ πολυμαθέστατον εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο Ἰσακίου τοῦ Τζέτζου ἐξήγημα = *Lycophronis Chalcidensis Alexandra, siue Cassandra: poema quidem obscurum etiam doctis appellatum, sed ita eruditissimis Isacii Tzetis grammatici commentarijs (quae & doctissimo cuic[ue] uehementur desiderata sunt hactenus, & simul nunc primum in lucem eduntur) illustratum atq[ue] explicatum, ut tam historiarum & fabularum, quam aliarum quoque reconditarum scitic[ue] dignarum rerum studiosi, horum editione magno se thesauro ditatos, agnoscere merito possint*, Basel 1546.

John Potter, Λυκόφρονος τοῦ Χαλκιδέως Ἀλέξανδρα, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο Ἰσακίου τοῦ Τζέτζου ἐξήγημα. *Lycophronis Chalcidensis Alexandra, cum Graecis Isaacii Tzetis commentarii*, etc., cura & opera Iohannis Potteri, Oxford 1697.

Leopoldo Sebastiani, Λυκόφρονος τοῦ Χαλκιδέως Κάσσανδρα τὸ σκοτεινὸν ποίημα, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο Ἰσακίου, μᾶλλον δὲ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου ἐξήγημα = *Lycophronis Chaloidensis Cassandra obscurum poema, ope XVI. codicum mss. sanioribus subinde lectionibus restitutum, fideliori interpretatione exornatum, et accurata paraphrasi explicatum: cum Isaaci vel potius Johannis Tzetzae commentario ex postrema Oxoniensi editione ad fidem XIII. exemplarium bis mille ferme in locis emendato, notabiliter aucto, Latine reddito, et illustrato. accedunt fragmenta undique collecta, variantes lectiones, emendationes, et indices necessarii. Studio et impensis Leopoldi Sebastiani*, Rome 1803.

Christian Gottfried Müller, Ἰσακίου καὶ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου σχόλια εἰς Λυκόφρονα *nunc primum emendavit, notis illustr., comm. additit et indicibus instruxit C.G. Müller*, I-III, Leipzig 1811.

Eduard Scheer, *Lycophronis Alexandra*, I-II, Berlin 1881-1908.

*Codices principes*

**A** = *Ambr.* C222 inf. (Martini-Bassi 886) consists of 362 folios, written on paper (350mm x 256mm). The *Alexandra* with Tzetzean commentary ff. 109r-176r. It is an illustrious codex carrying a first-rate recension of Pindar's *Olympians* (1-12) and Theocritus' *Idylls*, as well as a remarkable collection of dramatic (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Lycophron) and narrative poetry (Hesiod, Oppian, Dionysius the

Periegete, Aratus), and a number of other poetical and grammatical texts. Mazzucchi has convincingly shown that **A** was copied out in 1185-1195 by a pupil and junior assistant of John Tzetzes and John Camaterus<sup>65</sup>. The copy may have been made in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, not far from the Monastery of the Pantokrator, where Tzetzes had had a residence<sup>66</sup>. A copy of this ms. was owned by the Italian humanist Merula<sup>67</sup>.

**E** = *Pal. gr.* 18, now in Heidelberg, was probably owned at the end of the thirteenth century by a Nikolaos Goudeles (see f. 264r), possibly a *paroikos* at Radolibos<sup>68</sup>. **E** is generally assumed to be from the fourteenth century; but a date towards the end of the thirteenth has been hypothesized<sup>69</sup>. The text is laid out sometimes in one column, sometimes in two. It is written on silky paper, in quartos, consisting of 264 folios (247 x 173mm). There are corrections by a second hand. **E** contains Aeschylus' *Persians*, Hesiod's *Works and Days* (with Tzetzes' commentary), the Hesiodic *Shield* without *scholia*, nine verses on Xerxes by a later hand, Euripides' *Hecuba* with *scholia*, the gospel of Luke, and the beginning of the *Cyclica theoria* of Cleomedes. Bachmann and Müller knew this ms. as *Vitt(enbergensis)* II as **E** was briefly at Wittenberg in 1881/2, but now it resides in Heidelberg<sup>70</sup>. Folios 9r-96v contain the *Alexandra* and Tzetzes' commentary, and there is a portrait of Lycophron in the process of writing the *Alexandra* at the bottom of f. 8v and another of Tzetzes and Lycophron on f. 96v (see the frontispiece of this volume). It also contains an eclectic mix of Classical and Byzantine texts. Three plays of Aeschylus (*PV*, *Sept.*, and *Pers.*)

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<sup>65</sup> On **A**, see Mazzucchi, *o.c.*

<sup>66</sup> Mazzucchi, *o.c.* (II) 435. See *Ep.* 22 and 79, pp. 39,10-12 and 117,15-16 Leone.

<sup>67</sup> Some of Tzetzes' *Prolegomena to Comedy* ended up in the Latin *Scholium Plautinum* in a Renaissance copy of Plautus: see W.J.W. Koster, *Scholium Plautinum plene editum*, «Mnemosyne» XIV (1961) 23-37; Wilson, *o.c.* 195; and Anna Novokhatko's chapter in this volume.

<sup>68</sup> See H. Stevenson Sr., *Codices manuscripti Palatini Graeci Bibliothecae Vaticanae descripti*, Rome 1885, 9-10; Turyn, *The Manuscript Tradition* cit. 56 on **H**. See also Nikolaos 171 in *PBW* 2016: <http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Nikolaos/171/>.

<sup>69</sup> On the dating, see O.L. Smith, *Scholia Graeca in Aeschylum quae exstant omnia*, II/2: *Scholia in Septem adversus Thebas*, Leipzig 1982, vii.

<sup>70</sup> Stevenson, *o.c.* xxxiv; Bachmann, *o.c.* xxvi. Scheer in vol. I of his edition and Mascialino in his Teubner incorrectly name **E** as *Palatinus Graecus* 218, instead of 18.

and the Hesiodic triad<sup>71</sup>. The readings in **E** are similar to those found in the families of  $\varphi$  and *k*.

**L** = *Laur. Plut.* 32,17 is a thirteenth-century ms. of 191 folios containing only the *Alexandra* and Tzetzes' commentary. It was written on parchment by two hands (one XIII c., the other XV c.?). It contains the text with interlinear glosses and Tzetzes' commentary with his prolegomena and a four-line epigram about the poem.

**C** = *Par. gr.* 2723 is written on parchment of varying quality and contains many errors. It contains 245 folios. The ms. consists of four codices by four different copyists bound together. For the copyist of the section of Lycophron with Tzetzes' commentary (ff. 3-73v), the copyist writes one line out of two and uses two very different scripts, one for the poetic text, of big letters and archaic style, the other of small letters and less applied for the commentary of Tzetzes. From one folio to another, the hand of the two scripts varies considerably. The part of **C** containing the *Alexandra* and commentary originated from a scriptorium in the library of the Sérail at Constantinople.<sup>72</sup> According to a subscription on folio 76v, **C** was completed in June 1282, thereby suggesting that this particular copy of the *Alexandra* and Tzetzes' commentary was made in Constantinople. The ms. was further annotated in the fourteenth century, and then was bought by Antoine Galland and sent to Paris before 1688. The scribe of **C**, as shown by the colour of the ink, took various readings from the ms. which he was copying from, and afterwards wrote between the lines and in the margin and even inserted in the text (**C**<sup>2</sup>) other readings from another ms., from which he inserted interlinear scholia and glosses, which were mostly not derived from the commentary of Tzetzes. There is a second hand, and corrections by a third hand. **C** or a copy of **C** may have been a source for **S** (*Scor.* R-I-18). **G** (*Par. gr.* 2836) is also related to **C**.

**S** = *Cod. Scor.* R-I-18 was completed on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1255 by Joannes the priest (f. 106) and was likely copied out in Otranto, southern Italy<sup>73</sup>. **S** is a palimpsest consisting of

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<sup>71</sup> See E. Cingano, *The Hesiodic Corpus*, in F. Montanari-A. Rengakos-Chr. Tsagalis (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Hesiod*, Leiden-Boston 2009, 91-130 on the transmission of Hesiod, and Turyn, *The Manuscript Tradition* cit. on the triad of Aeschylus.

<sup>72</sup> H. Omont, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, III: *Ancien fonds grec: belles lettres*, Paris 1888, 31.

<sup>73</sup> See R. Devreese, *Les manuscrits grecs de l'Italie méridionale. Histoire, classement, paléographie*, Vatican City 1955, 50 on the probability that the ms. was made in Otranto. It is possible that this ms. is referred to in a library catalogue from a library in the Salento (*Par. Gr.* 549, pre-1320), see

102 parchment folios (252 x 170mm). The text of the *Alexandra* with John Tzetzes' commentary (ff. 3-101v) was copied over a text of John of Damascus and John Chrysostom from the eleventh century<sup>74</sup>. It was acquired by Philip II of Spain on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1567 and has been in El Escorial since then. **V** is descended from **S**. The text is laid out in two or three columns.

**V** = *Vat. gr.* 1306 is a thirteenth-century ms. of 191 folios containing only the *Alexandra* and Tzetzes' commentary. It is a descendent of **S**. **V** was copied in the south of Italy in the Salento region, possibly at S. Nicola di Casole<sup>75</sup>. It is written on paper or parchment and there are three hands. Ff. 12<sup>1</sup>-13<sup>2</sup>, 21<sup>1-2</sup>, 34<sup>2</sup>-37<sup>2</sup>, 51<sup>1</sup>-54<sup>2</sup>, 73<sup>1</sup>-74<sup>2</sup>, 76<sup>1</sup>-80<sup>2</sup> have traces of faint ink indicating a single column palimpsest.

**P** = *Par. gr.* 2403 was written on oriental paper and consists of 308 folios (250mm x 150mm)<sup>76</sup>. The *Fettaugenmode* script dates **P** from the second half of the thirteenth century to the early fourteenth. It was originally called "Hurault-Regius 2794" after Jean Hurault de Boistaillé, the French Royal Ambassador to Venice in 1561<sup>77</sup>. It had previously resided in the Monastery of San Antonio di Castello in Venice. It was destined to scholarly uses<sup>78</sup>. The text is arranged in columns, one to three in number. Black ink for text and commentary, red for interlinear glosses, initials. Ff. 58r-99v contain Lycophron's *Alexandra* and Tzetzes' commentary. The commentary takes up the majority of the page, with a few words or at most two lines of the *Alexandra* per page. From f. 80 (~Lyc. 547) the central margin is damaged by the wear of the

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A. Jacob, *Une bibliothèque médiévale de Terre d'Otrante*, «RSBN» XXII-XXIII (1985-1986) 284-315: 297.

<sup>74</sup> P.A. Revilla, *Catalogo de los codices griegos de la Biblioteca de El Escorial*, I, Madrid 1936, 65-67.

<sup>75</sup> M. Buonocore, *Bibliografia dei fondi manoscritti della Biblioteca Vaticana (1968-1980)*, II, Vatican City 1986, 890; M. Ceresa, *Bibliografia dei fondi manoscritti della Biblioteca Vaticana (1981-1985)*, Vatican City 1991, 376; Leone, *La tradizione (1)* cit. 41-42 with n. 4, 76; D. Arnesano, *Il "Copista del Dioscoride"*. *Un anonimo salentino del secolo XIII*, «BollClass» XXIV (2003) 29-55: 36-41 with pl. 3; E. Sciarra, *La tradizione degli scholia iliadici in Terra d'Otranto*, Roma 2005, 37, 133, 259 n. 58.

<sup>76</sup> See J. Irigoin, *Histoire du texte de Pindare*, Paris 1952, 264-265; D. Jackson, *The Greek manuscripts of Jean Hurault de Boistaillé*, «SIFC» II/2 (2004) 209-252; Pontani, *Sguardi su Ulisse* cit. 277-282 on **Q**.

<sup>77</sup> Omont, *o.c.* II, 253-254.

<sup>78</sup> A. Dain, *À propos de l'étude des poètes anciens à Byzance*, in D. Harlfinger (ed.), *Griechische Kodikologie und Textüberlieferung*, Darmstadt 1980, 225-233: 226.

thumb from holding the book open. Fol. 17 also contains some verses by John Tzetzes on various genres of poetry. There are interlinear scholia mostly from the commentary of Tzetzes, some *variae lectiones* added by the scribe, and a small number added by a later hand (**P**<sup>2</sup>). **P** is a learned ms. which contains Aratus, Homer's *Odyssey*, Proclus, Nicander, and Pindar, all with accompanying scholia. **P**, despite its errors, preserves interesting readings, and it may have been used for teaching purposes<sup>79</sup>. Like **A**, it contains the *Odyssey* with scholia (ff. 177-308)<sup>80</sup>, and Leone's **G** (= *Par. gr.* 2836), a parchment codex of 106 folios from the fifteenth century, is related to **P**<sup>81</sup>.

**F** = *Vat. gr.* 117 is a codex of 113 folios from the fourteenth century. It contains a copy of Dionysius Periegetes and the *Alexandra* with Tzetzes' commentary (ff. 30-113). Leone could not firmly assign it to one of the families as it has a mix of readings found across the second and third editions of the *Commentary*.

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<sup>79</sup> Dain, *o.c.* 226.

<sup>80</sup> See Pontani, *Sguardi su Ulisse* cit. 277-282, 374-377.

<sup>81</sup> See D. Muratore, *La biblioteca del cardinale Niccolò Ridolfi*, Alessandria 2009.





## Borders to cross the bounds: John Tzetzes and Ptolemy's *Geography* in twelfth-century Byzantium

John Tzetzes was always intimately concerned with the past, showing a passionate attitude towards the legacy of ancient literature. This strong engagement, indeed, finds its main instantiations in Tzetzes' constant reference to ancient authors: his self-comparison and ultimately rivalry with Homer, for instance, blurs chronological boundaries emphasizing instead the timelessness of literature<sup>1</sup>; in his *Chiliades*, the insistent literary and mythological digressions serve also as autobiographical tools<sup>2</sup>; finally, in his signature and self-depiction as λογιστής τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ νέων (*Iambi* v. 360, p. 130 Leone)<sup>3</sup> which he probably added as a conclusion to the final

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<sup>1</sup> For the relation, the reprise and eventually the competition between Tzetzes and his well-known source and model, see E. Cullhed, *The blind bard and 'I': Homeric biography and authorial personas in the twelfth century*, «BMGS» XXXVIII (2014) 49-67; V. Lovato, *Ulysse, Tzetzès et l'éducation à Byzance*, in S.M.M. Nicholas-T. Kampianaki-L.M. Bondioli (edd.), *From Constantinople to the Frontier. The City and the Cities*, Leiden-Boston 2016, 326-342.

<sup>2</sup> The reference to the past is here taken into a broad sense: the Greek as well as the Roman past are equally used. For the use of Roman past in particular, see S. Xenophontos, 'A living portrait of Cato': *self-fashioning and the classical past in John Tzetzes' Chiliades*, «EBiz» II (2014) 187-204, and V.F. Lovato, *Hellenising Cato? A short survey of the concepts of Greekness, Romanity and barbarity in John Tzetzes' work and thought*, in K. Stewart-J. M. Wakeley (edd.), *Cross Cultural Exchange in the Byzantine World, c. 300-1500 A.D.*, Oxford-New York 2016, 143-157. Specifically for the autobiographical subject in the *Chiliades*, see A. Pizzone, *The autobiographical subject in Tzetzes' Chiliades: An analysis of its components*, in C. Messis-M. Mullett-I. Nilsson (edd.), *Storytelling in Byzantium. Narratological Approaches to Byzantine Texts and Images*, Uppsala 2018, 287-304.

<sup>3</sup> "Auditor of the ancient and of the modern": P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzæ iambi*, «RSBN» XVI-XVII (1969/1970) 127-156: 130. This is the last verse of the third iambic poem attached to the *Historiai* in the second *recensio*, called B by Leone. If *recensio* B embodies Tzetzes' conclusive textual arrangement, this line might be regarded as a sort of *sphragis* for the whole work. In confirmation of this, also the lost work titled *Logismoi* stands out. From what can be deduced from some references in *schol. Ar. Ran.* (100a, p. 733,5 Koster; 1328, p. 1976,43 Koster) and in *Hist.* XI 369, 247-249 and 353-354, this work had the declared intent to judge and to assess criticism against authors, ancient and modern, and their style. Again, not only Tzetzes put the past and the present on the same level, but he also positioned himself on a higher level. According to his education and his culture, indeed, he is able and eventually allowed to judge both present and past. On the *Logismoi* see some considerations in M.J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzès lettore di Tucicide. Note autografe sul Codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252*, Bari 1999, 160-162, and recently, see the contribution of Aglae Pizzone in this volume together with

version of his *Chiliades*, past and present are deliberately set on the same level. Such a constant engagement involves a variety of textual genres. As he elucidates, when accounting for his critical remarks, οἱ ποιηταὶ καὶ συγγραφεῖς, ῥήτορες, λογογράφοι, / ἱστορικοὶ καὶ χρονικοὶ καὶ τεχνικοὶ παντοῖοι<sup>4</sup>, they are all object of scrutiny, in a way thus all contributing to creating a link between the past and Tzetzes' present. Among the large number of authors known and mentioned by Tzetzes, the second-century mathematician, astronomer and geographer Claudius Ptolemy holds a noteworthy position. In particular, Tzetzes was acquainted also with Ptolemy's geographical treatise, the *Geography*, an eight-book-long treatise containing a list of toponyms and meant to enable the drawing of maps. Although the Byzantine reception of Ptolemy's *Geography* has been repeatedly addressed in the last decades, very scant attention has been devoted to its treatment by Tzetzes. Modern scholars have hitherto focused mainly on the work's problematic textual tradition. Ptolemy wrote his treatise around the middle of the second century AD; the first preserved manuscripts, however, date to the late thirteenth century, with a gap of one millennium from the original composition<sup>5</sup>. Traditionally, this 'rediscovery' of the *Geography* is associated with the activity of Maximos Planudes and, given the presence of maps in some manuscripts, scholarly discussion has been revolving almost exclu-

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the recent details on the rediscovery of some *folia* of the *Logismoi* and on their chronology in Ead., *Self-authorization and strategies of autography in John Tzetzes. The Logismoi rediscovered*, «GRBS» LX (2020) 652-690. One of the conditions making Tzetzes able to be "auditor of the ancient and of the modern" is his memory, always depicted as prodigious. On Tzetzes' memory as an apt tool see A. Pizzone, *The Historiai of John Tzetzes: A Byzantine "book of memory"?*, «BMGS» XLI/2 (2017) 182-207: 190-200.

<sup>4</sup> *Hist.* VI 50, 399-400: "the poets and prose-writers, rhetors and logographers, historians, chroniclers and all sorts of technical writers". The edition of reference is P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Historiae*, Galatina 2007<sup>2</sup>. If not otherwise pointed out, the text always follows this edition. On this passage, see specifically Luzzatto, *o.c.* 156-157.

<sup>5</sup> See the latest edition of the text by A. Stückelberger-G. Grasshoff (edd.), *Handbuch Der Geographie. Griechisch-deutsch Einleitung, Text und Übersetzung, Index*, Basel 2006. On the textual transmission see F. Mittenhuber, *The tradition of texts and maps in Ptolemy's Geography*, in A. Jones (ed.), *Ptolemy in Perspective. Use and Criticism of his Work from Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century*, Dordrecht-Heidelberg-London-New York 2010, 95-119; O. Defaux, *The Iberian Peninsula in Ptolemy's Geography. Origins of the Coordinates and Textual History*, Berlin 2017. For the *recensio* of the existent Greek manuscripts of Ptolemy's *Geography* see R. Burri, *Die "Geographie" des Ptolemaios im Spiegel der griechischen Handschriften*, Berlin-Boston 2013, esp. 63-519 with the description and the catalogue of the extant manuscripts.

sively on the issue of the origin and 'originality' of late thirteenth-century maps<sup>6</sup>. Specifically, modern experts have been trying to ascertain whether the maps were just copies of ancient originals or whether they should be considered as a later and new Byzantine addition<sup>7</sup>. This still-blurred picture, however, hardly takes into account earlier Byzantine engagements with Ptolemy's *Geography*. And yet Tzetzes' direct references to this work show that Ptolemy's treatise was actively read and commented upon at least as early as the twelfth century.

The present paper attempts to partially fill this gap in the study of the Byzantine reception of the *Geography* by examining Tzetzes' engagement with Ptolemy's text. Not only does Tzetzes' work shed a new light on Planudes' alleged 'rediscovery' of the *Geography*, but he also offers an invaluable case study to explore the role played by geography in the cultural context of Komnenian Constantinople and in the education of its intellectual and political elites. Indeed, Tzetzes is not the only intellectual of his time concerned with geographical knowledge in Constantinople. Roughly around the same period, his contemporary Eustathios of Thessalonike was equally interested in geography and authored a commentary on the *Periegesis* of Dionysius of Alexandria. To illustrate the centrality of geography in twelfth-century intellectual discourse, I will first proceed to a close analysis of some lines from Tzetzes' *Chiliades* featuring direct quotations from Ptolemy's *Geography*. Second, building on my reading of this text, I will draw a comparison between two different and competing geographical models so as to better understand the social, cultural and political meaning of geography in the context of twelfth-century Constantinople. Specifically, I will endeavor to disentangle the reasons behind Tzetzes' interest in Ptolemy, offering a new understanding of the *Geography* within this specific context of reception. Even though Ptolemy's work is mentioned several times in Tzetzes' *oeuvre*<sup>8</sup>, his direct knowledge of the *Geography* emerges starkly in a particularly

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<sup>6</sup> The earliest preserved manuscripts completed with a set of maps – as it was meant to be in the original project by Ptolemy – date to the end of the thirteenth century and they are related to each other in terms of textual tradition. *Urb. gr.* 82 presents 27 maps as well as *Seragl. G. I.* 57. *Fabr. gr.* 23, 2°, instead, is fragmentary and features only three maps. They have been associated with the agency of Maximos Planudes since A. Diller, *The oldest manuscripts of Ptolemaic maps*, «TAPhA» LXXI (1940) 62-67. On the topic, a reassessment of some questions taken for granted has been offered recently by I. Pérez Martín-G. Cruz Andreotti, *Geography*, in S. Lazaris (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantine Science*, Leiden-Boston 2020, 231-260: 255-259.

<sup>7</sup> The bibliography is vast. For a detailed summary of the debate with relevant literature see Mittenhuber, *The Tradition* cit. 95-119.

<sup>8</sup> This is not the only mention of Ptolemy's works in the *Chiliades*, but it is the longest. For the other citations of Ptolemy see *Hist.* II 36, 167-168, where his *Tetrabiblos* is mentioned; in *Hist.* II

pregnant passage of the *Chiliades*<sup>9</sup>. This massive work – more than 12,500 political verses – is a commentary on his personal collection of letters, offering multiple digressions on a variety of themes and thus allowing us to get a sense of Tzetzes' engagement with previous authors and ancient sources. In the eleventh book Ptolemy is introduced as the primary and main source helping Tzetzes to describe geographically the regions of Mysia. This detail, firstly noticed by Carl Wendel<sup>10</sup>, was then picked up by scholars interested in classical reception as well as in Byzantine literature. In his generally critical presentation of Tzetzes, Nigel Wilson cast some doubts on his first-hand knowledge of Ptolemy's *Geography*<sup>11</sup>; Patrick Gautier Dalché, on the contrary, while dealing with the matter in his study of the Western reception of the *Geography*, took Tzetzes' words as unquestionable evidence of direct knowledge and, thus, of the presence of Ptolemy's geographical treatise in Byzantium, something rather exceptional in that it dates to almost two centuries before its supposed rediscovery by Maximos Planudes<sup>12</sup>; from a different perspective, Filippomaria Pontani saw in Tzetzes' knowledge of Ptolemy evidence of his familiarity with a wide range of texts, including rare ones<sup>13</sup>.

Despite the interest paid by modern scholars and the doubts concerning the source of Tzetzes' knowledge, however, there have been very few attempts to understand this specific context of reception and the reasons why Tzetzes decided to use the *Geography* for his work. This lack of analysis is partly due to the treatment that has been often devoted to Tzetzes' entire work, and in particular to his *Chiliades*. The latter has been mainly considered as an unfruitful repository of their author's erudition, not worthy of closer scrutiny. Only recently the trend has changed, and new approaches aim at looking at Tzetzes' work both in its general logic and in its

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55-58, 886-890, in the discussion about Thales and his discovery of lunar eclipses, Ptolemy is presented as one of many to whom the Metonic cycle (period of 19 years, common multiple of the solar year and the lunar month) is attached after Meton himself; in *Hist.* VIII 212, 581-589 and in *Hist.* VIII 225, 783-785, Ptolemy's work as geographer is central as he is the only one claiming that the Ocean does not encircle the entire οἰκουμένη as all the other geographers believed.

<sup>9</sup> The title *Historiai* is the one used by Tzetzes, while the more common title *Chiliades* comes from the division made by the first editor N. Gerbel in Basel in 1546, who arbitrarily allocated 1000 verses to each book. For a description of the structure of the *Historiai* see Pizzone, *The Historiai* cit. 182-207: 184-190.

<sup>10</sup> C. Wendel, *Tzetzes, Johannes*, *RE* VII/A (1948) 2003-2004.

<sup>11</sup> N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, London 1996<sup>2</sup>, 196.

<sup>12</sup> P. Gautier Dalché, *La Géographie de Ptolémée en occident, 4.-16. siècle*, Turnhout 2009, 79-81.

<sup>13</sup> F. Pontani, *Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529-1453)*, in F. Montanari-S. Matthaios-A. Rengakos (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, I, Leiden 2015, 297-455: 382.

peculiar features against the political, social, and cultural context of twelfth-century Constantinople<sup>14</sup>. Building on these recent developments, I will now consider some especially relevant lines of *historia* 396 featuring in the eleventh book of the *Chiliades*, where Ptolemy is explicitly brought to the fore and repeatedly mentioned.

1. *Historia* 396: “the regions of Μυσία happen to be two”

In *historia* 396, a section of Ptolemy's *Geography* is quoted in detail. In tune with the general structure of the *Chiliades*<sup>15</sup>, the title of the *historia* τέταρτον οὐ Ῥώσ, ἀλλὰ τῷ γένει Μυσός ἐστι («Fourth, he is not Russian, but Mysian by race»)<sup>16</sup> is taken from one of the letters from Tzetzes' collection, specifically from letter 80<sup>17</sup>. Here, Tzetzes addresses his friend the metropolitan Leo Charsianites of Dristra<sup>18</sup>, complaining about two gifts he had received, a small writing set and a slave. The latter, in particular, is the main reason behind Tzetzes' complaints. The slave, now called Theodore after having changed his name from Seblados<sup>19</sup>, is so unwelcome to

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<sup>14</sup> Suffice it to mention here the work carried out by Aglae Pizzone aimed at recognizing Tzetzes' authorial persona mainly in his *Chiliades* seen in its essence of a commentary: see Pizzone, *The autobiographical subject* cit. 287-304; Ead., *The Historiai* cit. 182-207. On a different perspective, Eric Cullhed and Valeria F. Lovato aim at understanding the literary world in which Tzetzes lived and acted, moving into the social and cultural framework of Komnenian Constantinople: see respectively E. Cullhed, *The Blind Bard* cit. 49-67, and Lovato, *Ulysse* cit. 326-342. Recently, see also M. Savio, *Screditare per valorizzare. Giovanni Tzetze, le sue fonti, i committenti e la concorrenza*, Roma 2020. Eventually, also the conference at the origin of the present volume has been a milestone in collecting the newer approaches on the figure of Tzetzes; on his persona (as instructor, commentator, disruptor) see particularly the chapters by Valeria F. Lovato and Ugo Mondini.

<sup>15</sup> This is the method used throughout *Chiliades* to introduce the comments on the letters: generally, a sentence is retrieved, and it then gives the cue for further digressions or explanations.

<sup>16</sup> For the complete English translation of the letter, see J. Shepard, *Tzetzes' letters to Leo at Dristra*, «ByzF» VI (1979) 191-239 (reprinted in Id., *Emergent Elites and Byzantium in the Balkans and East-Central Europe*, Farnham 2010): 196-198.

<sup>17</sup> For the edition of the letters see P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae epistulae*, Leipzig 1972. The letters to Leo of Dristra constitute a small corpus inside the collection of letters. Apparently, Leo and Tzetzes were close friends. Tzetzes addressed to him five letters, a substantial number considering that only Tzetzes' pupil Alexios, the nephew of the *prostobestiarios*, received a larger number of letters, namely nine. On Alexios see M. Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge zum Briefcorpus des Ioannes Tzetzes*, «JÖByz» XLVI (1996) 175-226: 191-193. For considerations on Tzetzes' friendship with the metropolitan of Dristra and a deep analysis of the corpus, see Shepard, *o.c.* 191-239: 228-232.

<sup>18</sup> Today Silistra, in Northern Bulgaria on the river Danube.

<sup>19</sup> See Shepard, *o.c.* 191-239: 215-228 for further details.

Tzetzes that he carefully lists seven reasons why he is unsuitable for work<sup>20</sup>. The fourth reason introduces the notion of his 'ethnicity': «He is not Russian, but Mysian». Given the context, the expression appears as quite derogatory in itself and is left without further explanations. One might expect to find some clarification in the *Chiliades*. However, when Tzetzes comments on the letter, the slave is completely left aside, and the focus turns to the regions of Μυσία, to which most of *historia* 396 is devoted. Such an ambiguous statement, thus, turns out to be the pretext for a discussion on geography<sup>21</sup>. Tzetzes introduces the subject by addressing a fictive pupil and explains what his student is supposed to know about these regions, using Ptolemy's *Geography* as source. Tzetzes starts *ex abrupto*, by introducing the geographical theme, Μυσία (*Hist.* XI 396, 884-889):

Μυσίας χώρας γίνωσκε τάυτας τυγχάνειν δύο·  
μίαν τὴν περὶ Κάϊκον καὶ Ὀλυμπον Μυσίαν, 885

Know that the regions of Μυσία happen to be the following two:  
one Mysia (is) located near (the river) Caicus and (mount) Olympus, 885

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<sup>20</sup> In Tzetzes' words, the slave is a complete failure: he needs too much help and attention, it is difficult to communicate with him, he is lazy, weak and insolent. To put it in Tzetzes' words: «For, firstly, on account of his tender years, although I need him to serve me, I am his slave rather than he mine. Secondly, being scarcely able to feed one slave, now I take on this second one and foster him, and as I do not have abundant means for a living, I sell the things which I need most for their sake. Third, being ignorant of my language – for I do not know how to go barbarian – he makes a fuss and laughs at me. Fourth, he is not Russian but Mysian by race. Fifth, he is left-handed. In addition, sixth, he does not wish to learn, but does want to feed. Seventh, he is utterly unrobust and at death's door, and he is teaching the other slave to be the same». (Shepard, *o.c.* 191-239: 197).

<sup>21</sup> The focus of the letter is on the slave whereas the focus of the *historia* is on geography, starting from the slave's geographical origin. The partial inconsistency of the themes tackled in the letter and in the *historia* might point to the idea that Tzetzes' collection of letters was fictional and meant exclusively for a school context, as it has been suggested (see A. Kaldellis, *Classical scholarship in twelfth-century Byzantium*, in Ch. Barber-D. Jenkins (edd.), *Medieval Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics*, Leiden-Boston 2009, 1-43: 28-29). On Tzetzes' fictitious letters see also the contribution by Giulia Gerbi in this volume. The debate on Tzetzes' *Letters* and their reality or fictionality is broad, and likely there is no single convincing answer applicable to the entire collection. However, in short, the *Chiliades* were meant to comment on the letters, also in an original way that was not always equivalent to the original letters' approach, be that real or fictional. The *Chiliades* were a rewriting as much as a commentary, and as such they could be innovative. To put it in Pontani's words, «Tzetzes' attitude towards the heritage of ancient exegesis is rarely a passive one» (Pontani, *o.c.* 380). As the text here analysed suggests, he had the same attitude towards his own work.

ἄλλην Μυσίαν γίνωσκε τυγχάνειν τὴν Οὐγγρίαν,  
τὴν καὶ περὶ τὸν Δάνουβιν, ὥσπερ ἐγὼ νομίζω,  
καὶ Πτολεμαῖος σκοτεινῶς περιηγήσει γράφει,  
ὄνπερ ἐγὼ μετέφρασα τοῖσδε τοῖς ἰαμβείοις.

the other Moesia, you shall learn, is Hungary,  
and it is located near the (river) Danube, as I think,  
and as Ptolemy obscurely writes in a geographical description,  
exactly what I paraphrased in the following iambic verses.

The topic proves immediately rather complex. Two different regions are called Μυσία. To clarify the ambiguity, Tzetzes provides some identifying characteristics for both of them: the first one, Mysia, “located near the river Caicus and Mount Olympus”, is in Asia Minor, while the second one, Moesia, corresponding to Hungary, is a Roman province “located near the river Danube” in Europe<sup>22</sup>. Tzetzes’ source is named upfront: Ptolemy reports all the details in his geographical description. Subsequently, from line 889 to 969, boundaries, cities, rivers and populations of the two areas are presented. Since the regions are two, they are dealt with separately, one after the other. Overturning their initial order, Tzetzes starts from dealing with the European Moesia which in turn is divided into two regions, Moesia Superior and Inferior. For each of them, Tzetzes reports geographical details taken from

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<sup>22</sup> The names of the regions are spelled the same way in Tzetzes’ text, but the English translation will – for easier reference – distinguish two different spellings, namely Mysia and Moesia. This demarcation has been used for instance in the last edition of Ptolemy’s *Geography* to distinguish between the two homonymous regions (see ed. Stückelberger-Grasshoff, *o.c.*). In any case, the ambiguity between European Moesia and the Asiatic Mysia has a long-standing tradition due to the fact that the Greek toponym Μυσία does not allow a linguistic differentiation between the regions. Mysia, namely the region in the northwest of Asia Minor, was so named after the Thracian tribe of the Mysi migrated there by the twelfth century BC. Simply, this region is where the Thracians inhabited in Asia Minor, internally distinguished only by their names and not for any administrative or ethnic characteristic. The difficulty in the differentiation in Asia Minor is pointed out by Strabo, who at the same time equates the Mysians to all the other Thracians living on the European territory, as they eventually do not differ so much between each other (Strab. XII 4,4). For further information, see the entries for ‘Moesi, Moesia’ and ‘Mysia’ in *Brill’s New Pauly* and, generally, *ODB* II 1389. Nevertheless, this term carries with it a variety of referents. From the eleventh century onwards, it was not univocal, rather it pointed alternatively to the region where Pechenegs, Hungarians, or other Slavic populations lived. See G. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, II, Berlin 1958, esp. Mysoi, 208.



Ptolemy, following his source most scrupulously<sup>23</sup>. While expressing his criticism towards the obscurity of his source, Tzetzes always uses his source as a blueprint and moves to the other regions of Mysia. The lines from 953 to 970 represent the description of the Asiatic areas. The Asiatic Mysia too is divided into two parts, namely Small (vv. 953-958) and Great Mysia (vv. 959-969). Even though this section is shorter than the previous one, the descriptive pattern is roughly the same: cities, rivers and populations are thoroughly listed.

Tzetzes discloses to his reader – his imaginary student that resurfaces time and again in the *Chiliades* – also the methodology he followed to handle Ptolemy's text. Throughout the *historia*, Tzetzes refers allusively but consistently to a preexistent work, a *metaphrasis* of the *Geography*, written in Byzantine dodecasyllables. Tzetzes seems to have extrapolated a few lines from this longer *metaphrasis*<sup>24</sup> so as to

<sup>23</sup> The problem is to define exactly where Tzetzes took all this set of information. For Ptolemy's *Geography* is divided into eight books, with books II and III containing Europe, book IV Africa, and books V to VII Asia. The two regions called Mysia thus are not consecutive in the original work and the parts paraphrased by Tzetzes correspond to a few sections of books III and V. In handling his source, Tzetzes creates an alternative order and a narrative that does not just summarize the source text but reorganizes it into a different product, with a *trait d'union* offered by two distant regions sharing the same name. The essence of the rationale sustaining Tzetzes' *metaphrasis* of the *Geography* is captured by the words used by Eric Cullhed in introducing Eustathios' *Parekbolai*: the commentaries «are used as a series of hooks to facilitate the interplay between memory and archive in organizing the diversified mass of knowledge required to qualify as *logios* in the textual life of middle Byzantium». And again, this knowledge «is only as valuable as it is productive. It must inspire and support literary creativity, and thus Eustathios privileges new connections, associations and learned sidetracks over explication of meaning» (Cullhed, *Eustathios* cit. 4). I believe the same attitude might apply to Tzetzes' approach to the *Geography*.

<sup>24</sup> Tzetzes refers to such a *metaphrasis* throughout the 113 lines of *historia* 396. The first piece of information given and then repeated at the end of the *historia* is that it was composed in iambic verses: ὄνπερ ἐγὼ μετέφρασα τοῖσδε τοῖς ἰαμβείοις (v. 889: “exactly what I paraphrased in the following iambic verses”); Κἀγὼ σὺν αὐτῷ τοὺς ἰάμβους συστρέφω, / κάμπτων, ἐλίσσω, συστροφαῖς ἐναντίας (vv. 975-976: “So, I twist my iambs following him / turning and rolling them with conflicting convolutions”); Ἐκ τῶν ἰάμβων τῶν ἐμῶν ἠκηρόεις (v. 990: “You had heard from my iambic verses”). Then, it is frequently mentioned as a parallel to the content of the *historia*: ταῦτα μεταφράσας μὲν εἰρήρειν πάλιν (v. 913: “I had already mentioned these facts in my *metaphrasis*”); κἀν τῇ μεταφράσει δὲ τῆς Θράκης ἔφην (v. 933: “as I said also in the *metaphrasis* of Thrace”); Μετά τινας δὲ μὴ καθεξῆς τῶν στίχων, / εἰσὶν ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ μεταφράσει τάδε (vv. 939-940: “After some lines which are not immediately subsequent, / these details are also in that paraphrase”); Κἀν τοῖς ὄρισμοῖς γῆς Μακεδόνων ἔφην (v. 943: “And I said it also when I defined the land of the Macedonians”). At the end, it is underlined how Ptolemy's obscurity reflects into the *metaphrasis* whose text is reported in the *historia*: Ὁ Κλαύδιος γράφει γε συμπεφυρόμενα, / κάγὼ σὺν αὐτῷ

'copy-paste' them into the *historia*<sup>25</sup>. The use of deictic adjectives in the *historia* under scrutiny supports this hypothesis. The *metaphrasis*, which must have been a massive work, is unfortunately not preserved, except for these few lines. Apparently, Tzetzes carried out such a demanding task despite some reservations he had towards his source. Throughout the *historia*, Tzetzes appears quite critical of Ptolemy's style: the geographer is accused of writing σκοτεινῶς (v. 888), of presenting elements συμπεφυρμένα (v. 951) and πεφυρμένως (v. 992). In other words, Ptolemy is blamed for being obscure, confused and eventually inconsistent. Because of Tzetzes' disparaging comments, we are tempted to conclude that the scholar did not have a very high opinion of Ptolemy and his work<sup>26</sup>. However, despite these stylistic flaws, surprisingly, Tzetzes follows meticulously the text offered by his source, which ends up affecting and shaping the scholar's own style, as Tzetzes himself is forced to admit (vv. 952 and 975). Be that as it may, the geographical data reported in Tzetzes' *historia* are taken directly from Ptolemy's *Geography*.

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τῆδε τῆ μεταφράσει (vv. 951-952: "Claudius write it confusedly, / as I do following him in this *metaphrasis*"). Since, unfortunately, such a *metaphrasis* is not preserved, little evidence can be drawn from these few lines. On the issues concerning the genre of *metaphrasis*, see J. Signes Codoñer, *Towards a vocabulary for rewriting in Byzantium*, in Id.-I. Pérez Martín (edd.), *Textual Transmission in Byzantium. Between Textual Criticism and Quellenforschung*, Turnhout 2014, 61-92; in the same volume, see also the remarks in M. Hinterberger, *Between simplification and elaboration: Byzantine metaphrasis compared*, 33-60; more recently see also S. Constantinou, *Metaphrasis: Mapping premodern rewriting*, in Ead.-C. Högel (edd.), *Metaphrasis: A Byzantine Concept of Rewriting and Its Hagiographical Products*, Leiden-Boston 2020, 3-60.

<sup>25</sup> The conclusion is supported also by the scholion to v. 890 (p. 564 Leone): Ἰαμβοὶ ἐμοὶ ἐκ τῆς εἰς τὴν Πτολεμαίου χωρογραφίαν μεταφράσεως, "my iambs drawn from the *metaphrasis* of Ptolemy's *Chorography*". On that, see also Gautier Dalché, *o.c.* 80.

<sup>26</sup> Ptolemy is not the only author blamed for his *obscuritas* by Tzetzes. A case in point for such accusations is presented by Maria Jagoda Luzzatto in her analysis of Tzetzes' notes on the ms. Heidelberg, *Pal. gr.* 252, where the author on charges is nothing but Thucydides (see Luzzatto, *o.c.* 35-39). As she points out, a note in f. 185r claims that Thucydides' γράφῃς σκότος dramatically invalidates readers' understanding (Luzzatto, *o.c.* 36). In the same folio, Tzetzes annotated below again his disapproval towards Thucydides and also towards a βιβλιογράφος, as they are both affected by σκοτεινόν. Tzetzes' vituperation of the historian's *obscuritas* reached its peak in the last scholion of the ms. edited and commented by Luzzatto, where Tzetzes accused Thucydides of hiding the true history under his linguistic and stylistic deviousness, compromising a clear understanding for not learned people (Luzzatto, *o.c.* 132-138). For Tzetzes' attitude of acting as 'auditor' of different authors, see above, n. 3. For his notes on mss. of Thucydides and Herodotus, and his attitudes towards historians and scribes alike, see the chapter by Julián Bértola in this volume.

## 2. vv. 975–997: a change in tone

After a painstakingly precise outline of the two regions of Mysia with details on borders, rivers, cities and populations, Tzetzes picks up again on the main theme (vv. 970–974), offering some of the geographical details he had expanded upon earlier. From v. 975 onwards, however, Tzetzes suddenly changes tone and stops following directly his source. He says:

Κἀγὼ σὺν αὐτῷ τοὺς ἰάμβους συστρέφω, 975  
 κάμπτων, ἐλίσσων, συστροφαῖς ἐναντίαις.  
 Ἦμᾶς καλεῖν Μυσοὺς δὲ τοὺς Οὐγγροὺς νόει.  
 Τοιαῦτα γράφας καὶ τοσαῦτα βιβλία,  
 – κἄν οὐ μετεγράφησαν οἷς νόει τρόποις,  
 πρωτοσχεδῆ κεῖνται δὲ καὶ πεφυρμένα – 980  
 συγκλητικοῖς ἔδοξα καὶ ποίοις τότε,  
 τοῖς ἐν λόγοις τελοῦσι, μήτοι βαρβάρων,  
 χείρων δὲ χείρων, οἷσπερ ἔκριναν λόγοις.

So, I twist my iambs following him 975  
 turning and rolling them with conflicting convolutions.  
 You should also understand that we call Moesians the Hungarians.  
 As I wrote such and so many books,  
 – please, consider them as such even if they were not copied  
 but they lay all drafty and mixed up – 980  
 I seemed to senators and those who in that time  
 distinguished themselves in speeches, worse not even than barbarians,  
 but even worse than sows, because of the speeches they judged<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> The references to speeches, public, and judges seem to allude to an actual performative context where a sort of speech contests took place followed by a judgement. On the so-called *theatron*, see M. Grünbart (ed.), *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter/Rhetorical Culture in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, Berlin-New York 2007. More specifically on the eleventh and twelfth centuries, see M. Mullett, *Aristocracy and patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople*, in M. Angold (ed.), *The Byzantine aristocracy IX to XIII centuries*, Oxford 1984, 173-201 and F. Bernard, *Writing and reading Byzantine secular poetry, 1025–1081*, Oxford 2014, esp. 253-290. Striking parallels can be found in the text from the *Logismoi* edited by Aglae Pizzone in this volume (pp. 68-73) and in the iambic poems attached to the *recensio* B of Tzetzes' *Historiai* (see Leone, *Iambi* cit. 134-146). As the major target of Tzetzes' criticism in these iambic poems is the educational system affecting the education of the young, those parallels bring this *historia* closer to the same context. For instance, for the very mention of the judges, see *Iambi* 305-315, 331-333 (pp. 144-145 Leone).

Ἄνθ' ὧν, πόλις ἄνασσα τῶν πολισμάτων,  
 οἰκτρῶς σὲ διςσὶ καὶ τριπλᾶ κατασθένω. 985  
 Δέδοικα γάρ, δέδοικα μήπως βαρβάροις  
 δοθῆς ἄλωτῆ καὶ γενήσῃ βαρβάρα,  
 ὄνος νεμηθῆ σοι δὲ καὶ χοῖρος τότε,  
 τοὺς οὓς ἐτίμας, οὐ κάτοιδα τῷ τρόπῳ.  
 Ἐκ τῶν ἰάμβων τῶν ἐμῶν ἠκηκόεις, 990  
 τῆς Κλαυδίου τε συγγραφῆς Μυσῶν γένη,  
 πόλεις τε τούτων κἄν λαλῆ πεφυρμένως.  
 Ἔα τὸ λοιπὸν τὸν νέον γεωγράφον.  
 Γνωρίσματα γὰρ οὐδαμῶς Μυσῶν λέγει,  
 δήμους, πόλεις, ὄρη τε, ῥευμάτων χύσεις, 995  
 καὶ πανταχῆ δὲ τοῦτο ποιεῖ συγγράφων.  
 Λέγων γὰρ ἓν τι μυρία παρατρέχει.

Therefore, O city queen of cities,  
 I tearfully lament you twice and three times. 985  
 I fear, I fear that perhaps you may fall  
 to the hands of the barbarians and you would become barbarian yourself.  
 I fear that a donkey and then a sow were allotted to you in that time,  
 those whom you honoured, I don't know why.  
 You had heard from my iambic verses 990  
 and from the work of Claudius about the tribes of the Moesians,  
 their cities, even though he spoke confusedly.  
 And the new geographer, please drop him henceforth!  
 He doesn't explain anywhere the hallmarks of the Moesians,  
 people, cities, mountains, flows of streams, 995  
 and so does he every time he writes something down.  
 For when he says one thing, he omits thousand others.

In this passage, the focus shifts to the work composed by Tzetzes to adapt Ptolemy's material resulting into a *metaphrasis* penned by adapting, "turning and rolling" his iambic verses (vv. 975-976); second, with a sort of ring composition, Tzetzes points out and stresses the main and immediate goal his pupil should pursue through this *historia*: he is expected to understand that Moesians and Hungarians are the same population. Then, the focus diverts from pure geography to broader considerations on the cultural, political, and social life of Constantinople. The latter

conceptual nexus becomes a pretext to complain and to criticize the alleged progressive barbarization of the capital.

At the outset, Tzetzes' outburst is inspired by the scarce appreciation met by his many and great books. Tzetzes laments his frustrated expectations and a wrongfully low consideration of him by people professionally trained in the art of speaking, who accuse him of being worse than a barbarian and a sow. Instead of honoring him, the city and its intellectual and political elites allotted important tasks and awarded honors to someone else, to "a donkey and then a sow". As if this were not enough, a lamentation is then addressed to the city of Constantinople, bewailed "twice and three times"<sup>28</sup>. The peak is reached with the formula οὐ κάτοιδα τῷ τρόπῳ<sup>29</sup> at verse 989, an expression that encapsulates all of Tzetzes' bitterness, resentment and sense of powerlessness. As those primarily responsible for this deplorable situation, Tzetzes reproaches the συγκλητικοί, the senators<sup>30</sup>, as they were able to gain the attention and the favour of the city along with political control over it, even though, in Tzetzes' opinion, they did not deserve it.

At the end of the passage, the harsh criticism against Constantinople and its social structure shows a shift in focus and centers again on the topic of geography. Tzetzes' invective is aimed at another geographical author, the "new geographer", as Dionysius Periegetes was dubbed in the scholia<sup>31</sup>, whom Tzetzes described as utterly unreliable. As Tzetzes himself explains in a scholion and Gautier Dalché has pointed out<sup>32</sup>, calling Dionysius 'new' is nothing but a pun based on contrast, since Dionysius, in fact, is an earlier author and therefore it is Ptolemy who should be called the "new geographer" instead. Dionysius is discredited for his lack of details,

<sup>28</sup> This line goes back to the lamentation in the first part of Lycophron's *Alexandra* where the following lines are to be found: Στένω, στένω σε δισσὰ καὶ τριπλᾶ, δορὸς / αὔθις πρὸς ἀλκὴν καὶ διαρπαγὰς δόμων / καὶ πῦρ ἐνανυάζουσιν αἰστωτήριον (69-71). The city here lamented is Troy and an image of destruction is depicted with violence and fire everywhere. Tzetzes himself commented this work and complemented the text with scholia; see Thomas Coward's chapter in this volume. Note the variation of the verb στένω which Tzetzes intensifies into κατασθένω and puts into an emphatic position at the end of the line.

<sup>29</sup> The expression has often been adopted by rhetors and other theological writers, also with a reference to a sort of feeling, soul disposition that cannot be fully understood, eventually something perceived a sort of disease. Such an expression is typically used by Tzetzes specifically in situations where he reaches the peak of his anger and outrage. A similar expression, for instance, can be found in the third Iamb attached to the *recensio altera* of the *Chiliades*: see *Iambi* 314, p. 145 Leone: οὐκ οἶδα πῶς φάναι δὲ καὶ ποίῳ τρόπῳ.

<sup>30</sup> For the label of "senators" and its meaning in this context, see below.

<sup>31</sup> Τὸν νέον τὸν Διονύσιον· εἰρωνικῶς δὲ νέον εἶπον· πρῆσβύτερος γὰρ οὗτος ἦν Πτολεμαίου (p. 565 Leone).

<sup>32</sup> Gautier Dalché, *o.c.* 81.

as proven by the case of Μυσία. And this is just one example out of many: according to Tzetzes, every time Dionysius says one thing, "he omits thousand others".

This *historia*, therefore, can be safely divided into three main sections: the geographical core with the paraphrased quotation from Ptolemy on the two regions called Μυσία; an invective against Constantinople and its elites, a class of self-proclaimed intellectuals unable to recognize true eloquence; and finally, a section connected again with geography, emphasizing Ptolemy's superiority over Dionysius Periegetes, perhaps the most studied geographer in Byzantium. The last section of the *historia*, apparently disconnected from Tzetzes' earlier geographical concerns, provides in fact further insights into Tzetzes' broader preoccupations and into his social position in the Byzantine capital, shedding new light on the entire *historia*.

### 3. Ptolemy, a choice on the fringes

Besides Tzetzes' knowledge of Ptolemy's *Geography* and his consequent *metaphrasis*, this *historia* provides information on Tzetzes' reasons and methodology in engaging with ancient authorities. A sound knowledge of carefully selected ancient sources constitutes Tzetzes' ideal teaching method. This *historia* speaks to his choice in respect of geographical sources. Ptolemy and Dionysius Periegetes are the authors taken in consideration and, from the very beginning, Tzetzes gives his preference to the former. The bad press enjoyed by Dionysius Periegetes, however, is puzzling.

If we look at the *Chiliades*, Dionysius is mentioned three times and in none of them he is the target of Tzetzes' criticism<sup>33</sup>. Furthermore, in the manuscript *Ambr. C 222 inf.*, dated to the end of the twelfth century and written in a context close to Tzetzes' *milieu*, as shown by Mazzucchi<sup>34</sup>, Dionysius is mentioned in more than one

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<sup>33</sup> His name appears in *Hist.* IV 139, 402 as a source to tell the story about the tombs of Cadmus and Harmonia which used to rattle together and produce sounds for the Illyrians when some evil arises; in *Hist.* VIII 218, 718, he is mentioned as a source in contrast to Ptolemy in the number of the cities present in the British Isles; again, in *Hist.* XII 450, 876-878, his *Periegesis* is explicitly mentioned, again as a source dealing with the women of the Sauromates.

<sup>34</sup> For a thorough study of the manuscript, see C.M. Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf. (Graecus 886): Il codice e il suo autore. Parte prima: il codice*, «Aevum» LXXVII (2003) 263-275; Id., *Ambrosianus C 222 inf. (Graecus 886): il codice e il suo autore. Parte seconda: l'autore*, «Aevum» LXXVIII (2004) 411-440. The codex is linked so closely to Tzetzes' *milieu* that there is even the strong possibility that Tzetzes' hand is present in the codex. On Dionysius Periegetes and his approach in an educational context, see in particular Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf. Parte seconda* cit. 421. For an analogous phenomenon but in relation to the poet Simonides, see the paper by V. Lovato, *From Plato to Cato and back again. Friendship and patronage in Tzetzes' Letters and Chiliads*, «C&M» LXX (2022) 59-98.

occasion as a good example of poetry together with authors like Aratus and Pindar<sup>35</sup>. Thus, it is somewhat surprising that, in the passage discussed here, Tzetzes advises his readers to disregard his works: Ἔα τὸ λοιπὸν τὸν νέον γεωγράφον, “And the new geographer, please drop him henceforth!”. Given Dionysius’ generally positive reception, such an emphatic rejection is worth being investigated more closely.

In about the same period as Tzetzes worked on this part of the *Chiliades*, another contemporary eminent scholar was concerned with geography in Constantinople. After 1165, Eustathios of Thessalonike wrote a detailed commentary on the *Periegesis* of Dionysius<sup>36</sup>. Such work, besides offering a close commentary to the hexameters composed by the Periegetes, is preceded by a telling prefatory letter by the author. This introduction contains Eustathios’ methodology, his authorial intentions, and explicitly mentions his addressee, John Doukas Kamateros, a young member of the broader imperial family<sup>37</sup>. Eustathios’ prefatory piece helps us understand something more about the geographical culture of the Komnenian period. While explaining his way of approaching the text of Dionysius, Eustathios talks about Dionysius’ handling of geographical details in a way that is somewhat reminiscent of the passages by Tzetzes that we have just read. But let us read Eustathios’ very words (*in Dion. Per. epist. ll. 136-167, pp. 205-206 Müller*):

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<sup>35</sup> See Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf. Parte seconda* cit. 423-424 reporting what can be read at f. 339r: ἄλλος ποιητῆς οὐκ ἔστι κρείττων μὴ ὁ Πίνδαρος· ὁ Ἄρατος; καὶ ὁ πολὺς Περιηγητής.

<sup>36</sup> For some considerations on the date of the composition on the commentary on Dionysius Periegetes, see Cullhed, *Eustathios* cit. 7-9. Generally on Eustathios see S. Ronchey-P. Cesaretti, *Eustathii Thessalonicensis exegesis in canonem iambicum pentecostalem*, Berlin-München-Boston 2014, 7-30; more specifically on his teaching activity, especially in relation with his commentaries, see Pontani, *o.c.* 385-393.

<sup>37</sup> The identity of Eustathios’ addressee, however, is problematic due to the rather common combination of names. For a detailed account of the Kamateros family and the different John Doukas attested, see J. Darrouzès, *Georges et Démétrios Tornikès: Lettres et Discours*, Paris 1970, 43-47, 49 (genealogy of the family). Four men named John are mentioned there. For the John Kamateros, patriarch of Constantinople, whose annotation is recognized in the ms. *Ambr. M 66 sup.*, see recently C.M. Mazzucchi, *L'ex libris di Giovanni Camatero e versi inediti di Tzetzes nel codice Ambrosiano M 66 sup.*, «Aevum» XCIII/2 (2019) 441-447. For the traditional interpretation of Eustathios’ pupil, see D.I. Polemis, *The Doukai: A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography*, London 1968, 127-130. This proposal, however, has been discussed and not accepted by more recent analyses. For the discussion, see A.P. Kazhdan, *John Doukas: An attempt of de-identification*, «Le parole e le idee» XI (1969) 242-247; P. Karlin-Hayter, 99: *Jean Doukas*, «Byzantion» XLII (1972) 259-265; A.F. Stone, *The Grand Hetaireiarch John Doukas: The career of a twelfth-century soldier and diplomat*, «Byzantion» LXIX (1999) 145-164: 145-147; C. Messis, *Littérature, voyage et politique au XIIIe siècle: l'Ekphrasis des lieux saints de Jean "Phokas"*, «ByzSlav» LXIX (2011) 146-166: 148.

καὶ οὐκ ἀναπληροῖ μὲν ὡς ἀτελεῖ εἰπόντα τὸν Διονύσιον, οἷς δὲ ἐκεῖνος ἐχρήσατο, πλατυκώτερον ἐπεξέρχεται, ὡς πρέπει λόγῳ πεζῷ, καὶ ὡς οἶον εἰπεῖν ἐκμυζῶν τῆς ἐκείνου ἱστορίας ἅπαν εἶ τι νόστιμον προσ-επιλιπαίνει ἄλλως αὐτήν, καὶ τὸ λεχθὲν ἰσχνῶς ἐξάγει περιττότερον, καὶ τὸ τοῦ ἀκροατοῦ λίχνον ἐκθεραπεύει, καὶ τὸ πολὺ δὲ τοῦ πόνου παραιρεῖται, ὡς ἂν ἄπερ ἐτέρωθεν ποθεν ἔμελλεν ἀναλέγεσθαι ὁ ἀκρο-ώμενος ἀπονητὶ ἐντεῦθεν ἔχοι κτᾶσθαι κατὰ τινὰ ὑπομνηματισμὸν, ὅσα γε ἴκει πρὸς τὸ μέτρον, ἥδη δὲ πού καὶ εἰς τὸ ἀναγκαῖον τοῦ πράγματος. Διονυσίῳ μὲν γὰρ ἐμέλησεν ὀλικῆς τινος περιηγήσεως γῆς καὶ ἔθνων ἐπελεύσεως· πόθεν δὲ ἢ τοῖς τόποις αἱ κλήσεις ἢ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, ἢ τίνα τὰ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς συμπτώματα, οὐ πάνυ τι ἐκασταχοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἐν λόγῳ θέσθαι ἠθέλησεν· ἡμῖν δὲ εἰς ὅσον ἐπιβάλλει συγγενῶς τοῖς τοῦ Διονυσίου τὸ τοιοῦτον φυλαχθήσεται. Καὶ τοῦτο πραγματευόμενοι οὐ διορθούμεθα τὸν περιηγητήν, οὔτε τι τῶν δῆθεν οὐ δεόντως ἐλλειφθέντων ἀναπληροῦμεν, ὡς καὶ ἀνόπιν ἔφαμεν, ἀλλὰ τὴν τῆς μετρικῆς ἐπελεύσεως ἀνάγκην παραμυθούμεθα διὰ τὸ λίχνον τῆς ἀκροάσεως. Ἡ γὰρ τις

And it (my work) does not supplement Dionysius as if he were incomplete in what he says, rather it goes through his subject more broadly as it befits a prose work, and so to say, squeezing out any nutritious ingredient from his narrative<sup>38</sup>, it further fattens it and it expands the unadorned diction with greater abundance of detail; it (my work) caters to the appetite of the listener, and takes away the great part of the pain, so that perhaps the listener might get from here without effort as a way of commentary all the details which he would otherwise have had to recover get there only allusively, in so much as it is fitting as such and perhaps even to the extent that the subject-matter requires. For Dionysius cared about a kind of universal *periegesis* of the earth and about a survey of nations; but, hence, he did not want to affix anywhere in his work the names to places and populations nor their attributes. We, for our part, will take care of this sort of things in so much they befittingly contribute to Dionysius' words. And in doing this, we do not amend the *Periegetes* will not restore the *periegesis*, neither do we fill up those details that he unduly left out, but – as we have also said earlier – we assuage the constraint of the metrical exposition due to the appetite of the listener. For who being self-

<sup>38</sup> On the imagery on cooking and banqueting in Eustathios, see P. Agapitos, *Literary haute cuisine and its dangers. Eustathios of Thessalonike on schedography and everyday language*, «DOP» LXIX (2015) 225-241.



ἂν φιλομαθεῖν εἰδώς, εἶτα δὴ ἀκούσας τοῦ Διονυσίου γῆς Βοιωτῶν καὶ Λοκρῶν καὶ Θεσσαλῶν καὶ Μακεδόνων ἐν δυσὶν ἔπεσι μνησαμένου πρὸς μόνον ὄνομα, καὶ μηδέν τι πλεόν ἐξιστορήσαντος περὶ αὐτῶν, οὐκ ἂν εἰς δέον λιχνεύσεται πλατύτερον μαθεῖν τι περὶ αὐτῶν; ποθήσει δ' ἂν ὁ φιλοπευθής, οἶμαι, καὶ τι περὶ Μυσῶν ἀκοῦσαι, ὡς δ' αὐτως καὶ περὶ Βεβρύκων. Οὐκ ἀναπαύσει δ' αὐτὸν οὐδὲ τὸ τῆς Λιβύης, οὐδὲ μὴν τὸ τῆς Ἀσίας, οὔτ' οὔν Εὐρώπης ὄνομα ψιλόν, εἰ μὴ τι καὶ περὶ τούτων αἰτιολογούμενον γνῶσεται. Τὸ δ' ὅμοιον καὶ ἐπὶ ἄλλων ζητήσεται χωρῶν, καὶ μέντοι καὶ περὶ πόλεων.

consciously eager of learning, after having heard Dionysius recording the land of the Beothians, Lokrians, Thessalians, and Macedonians in two verses only by name, and telling then nothing more about them, would not reasonably desire eagerly and greedily to learn something broader about them? One curious, I suppose, would desire also to hear something about the Mysians just as much as about the Bebryces. And neither the mere name of Africa nor of Asia, nor indeed of Europe will give the curious listener rest, unless he will get some explanation about them too. And he will seek the same also about other regions, to say nothing about cities.

Even though perhaps more subtly, Eustathios blames Dionysius for the same reasons as Tzetzes did: some pieces of information provided by the geographer are neither exhaustive nor complete. Some populations like the Mysians, are even recorded “only by name”. However, if Tzetzes recommends his pupil to “leave aside the geographer” and choose another source, namely Ptolemy, despite his obscure style, Eustathios adopts a different strategy. Instead of rejecting Dionysius, he enriches his text, as he says, by “discarding the constraint of the metrical subject” and effacing the difficulties for his pupil.<sup>39</sup> This does not only imply minutely detailed comments, it also entails the inclusion of changes and additions to the original source so as to make the work more palatable for his pupils<sup>40</sup>. In this respect, Eustathios' approach is very different from Tzetzes'.

Given such a different method, Tzetzes' criticism against Dionysius has in fact a twofold target: its explicit aim is the scanty information provided by the *Peri-*

<sup>39</sup> For Eustathios' different kinds of audience, see useful remarks in A. Pizzone, *Audiences and emotions in Eustathios of Thessalonike's Commentaries on Homer*, «DOP» LXX (2016) 225-244 (with a translation of roughly the same passage at pp. 229-230).

<sup>40</sup> For an overview of attention for Classics in the Byzantine twelfth century, especially in respect to the genre of commentaries, see Kaldellis, *o.c.*

*egesis*, while its implicit aim is the method chosen by Eustathios in commenting on Dionysius<sup>41</sup>. In fact, methodology is key here. To further underline his stance, Tzetzes repeats time and again throughout the *historia* that he follows almost blindly Ptolemy's text even though the latter, at times, can appear obscure. And yet, neither additions nor simplifications are included into Ptolemy's text. Moreover, Eustathios appears to know Ptolemy too. In fact, he used the *Geography* as a source in the introduction of his commentary to the *Periegesis*, when explaining the differences between chorography and geography<sup>42</sup>. The issue is not simply the choice of a suitable geographical source, rather it necessarily concerns the right approach to it. Eustathios' acquaintance with Ptolemy's *Geography* makes methodology even more central. Tzetzes' criticism does not stem exclusively from the flaws of Dionysius' geographical work. What proves crucial is the method developed in dealing with Dionysius as a geographical source.

What is more, Eustathios is not a neutral figure in relation to Tzetzes. Both active teachers and competing intellectuals in the Komnenian Constantinople, they represent two poles of the same cultural economy<sup>43</sup>. Eustathios, part of the patriarchal school with the prestigious title of μαίστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων, represented a more centralized 'institutional' learning at the top of education in Constantinople<sup>44</sup>. Tze-

<sup>41</sup> For another facet of the competition between Tzetzes and Eustathios see Valeria F. Lovato's contribution to this volume, as well as a passage in Philip Rance's (pp. 472-474).

<sup>42</sup> See J. Akujärvi, *Pausanias' Periegesis, Dionysius Periegetes, Eustathius' Commentary, and the construction of the periegetic genre*, in D. Searby-E. Balicka Witakowska-J. Heldt (edd.), *Δῶρον ῥοδοποικίλον*. «Studies in honour of Jan Olof Rosenqvist», Uppsala 2012, 41-52: 45-47. Furthermore, Eustathios mentions Ptolemy also in comparison with other geographers, showing thus a vast geographical knowledge. For instance, discussing the shape of the Caspian Sea and its alleged connection with the Ocean (*in Dion. Per.* 718, p. 344 Müller), Eustathios compares Dionysius' and Ptolemy's opinion, proving his knowledge of both. See also P. Cassella, *Sul commentario di Eustazio a Dionigi Periegeta*, in P. Volpe Cacciatore (ed.), *L'erudizione scolastico-grammaticale a Bisanzio*, Napoli 2003, 27-36.

<sup>43</sup> As Agapitos has aptly summarized, the «two men (i.e. Tzetzes and Eustathios) stand at a substantial distance within the social, cultural and educational spectrum of Komnenian Constantinople». See P. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners: A Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 1-57: 6.

<sup>44</sup> For the patriarchal school, see as a milestone the studies by R. Browning: *The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the twelfth century*, «Byzantion» XXXII (1962) 167-202 and XXXIII (1963) 11-40. Nevertheless, the role of the μαίστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων gives a hint of the overlap between the different schools on the one hand, and the political and educational context, on the other hand. The master of rhetoric was appointed by the Emperor. Even though such a title, being a wholly secular official, entailed membership of the Senate, the man appointed to this position was also part of the patriarchal school, where he acted as a court representative. See A. Kazhdan-A.W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1985, 126-130.

tzes, on the other hand, belonged to the fringes of the elites, embodying what has recently been defined by Panagiotis Agapitos as the Byzantine «middle class»<sup>45</sup>. The distance between the two scholars is even wider if we consider that Tzetzes struggled his entire life to gain more recognition, without ever succeeding<sup>46</sup>. Additionally, his relationship with Eustathios bordered on intellectual theft and plagiarism, as the latter used more than once Tzetzes' works without crediting him<sup>47</sup>.

Given this framework and the two scholars' long-standing rivalry, Tzetzes' stance toward Dionysius and Eustathios has an even broader purport so that it uncovers a deeper polemic against Constantinopolitan elites, designated through the term *συγκλητικοί*. Although Eustathios, being *μαίιστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων*, was in fact automatically part of the Senate, and therefore implicitly part of the group of "senators and those distinguished in speeches" who harshly attacked Tzetzes, the invective seems to cover a broader spectrum. The overlap between the group of the "senators" and the figure of Eustathios points thus to an issue that is key to a full understanding of the passage, namely what does Tzetzes precisely mean while referring to "senators". At face value, the term designates the members of the Byzantine Senate, re-institutionalized in Constantinople by the eleventh century and still in place during the Komnenian period, but it is, in fact, more nuanced than it might appear at first

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<sup>45</sup> For a discussion of the attribution, see P. A. Agapitos, 'Middle-class' ideology of education and language, and the 'bookish' identity of John Tzetzes, in J. Stouraitis (ed.), *Ideologies and Identities in the Medieval Byzantine World*, Boston-Berlin (forthcoming).

<sup>46</sup> A case in point of Tzetzes' striving and frustration is represented by the violent quarrel with the eparch Andronikos Kamateros around 1160, where Tzetzes disparages the eparch's poor judgement on his rhetorical skills. The details of this event are still blurred as it is not clear which position or special occasion Tzetzes aimed at (for a fine-tuning of the question, see the contribution by Aglae Pizzone in this volume). Nevertheless, Tzetzes' disappointment and anger not to have been properly judged transpires throughout his late works – mainly, the final books of the *Historiai* and the commentaries to Aristophanes and to Hermogenes – leading into the iambic poems attached to *recensio* B of *Chiliades*, a letter (*Ep.* 89, pp. 129-130 Leone), and a long comment in the *Chiliades* (*Hist.* XI 369, 210-224 and 353-358). Such a situation is likely also in the background of the present *historia*, as the specific temporal indication expressed by *τότε*, emphasized by its final position in vv. 981 and 988, suggests by pointing to a specific period in time or to a specific situation. Beyond the style, the context fits such a situation too: Tzetzes failed a concrete occasion at his disposal to change his social position, from the margins to the predominant and influential centre. The only way to gain centrality stands thus in criticizing the 'new' schedography and in proposing an alternative in order to reassess the social order from which he had been excluded.

<sup>47</sup> This plagiarism has been investigated by E. Cullhed, *Diving for pearls and Tzetzes' death*, «ByzZ» CVIII (2015) 53-62: 55-60; Id., *The blind bard* cit. 61-63. In both papers, the author reports some «incriminating» examples and refers to T. Conley, *Byzantine criticism and the uses of literature*, in A. Minnis-I. Johnson (edd.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, II: *The Middle Ages*, Cambridge 2005, 667-692.

glance. The dignity of senator was seldom an exclusive office in twelfth-century Constantinople. The aggregation of offices in the same person was a common occurrence, so much so that it led to an increasing overlap between the institutions themselves, as the case of the appointment to *μαίιστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων* clearly shows<sup>48</sup>. It is therefore not surprising that Tzetzes equates the senators with those who master and judge speeches, hinting at a performative setting familiar to Byzantine education<sup>49</sup>. And yet, resentment against senators persistently surfaces also in other passages where Tzetzes vehemently opposes the educational system<sup>50</sup>. Educational and political context go hand in hand, given the overlaps between cultural, social and political life in the capital. Even though the actual institutionalization, organization, and specific syllabi of the different educational organizations in Constantinople are hard, if not impossible, to pinpoint, clearly Tzetzes attacks the school 'system' in which the intellectual as well as the political elites were involved<sup>51</sup>. Elsewhere, too, Tzetzes heavily criticizes and downgrades the schools for their educational program based on a wrong methodology. Here the target of his criticism is the same.

What is more, as it has been stressed, the leading Constantinopolitan schools shared a common method of teaching, based on the exercise of schedography. Tzetzes is particularly aggressive and polemical against this widespread rhetorical exercise adopted as a new learning practice in the middle Byzantine period<sup>52</sup>. In the

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<sup>48</sup> See M. Loukaki, *Les Grâces à Athènes. Éloge d'un gouverneur byzantine par Nikolaos Kataphlōron*, Berlin-Boston 2019, 7-8, offering the telling example of Nikolaos Kataphlōron.

<sup>49</sup> On the performative and often competitive background of Byzantine education in the eleventh and twelfth century, see Bernard, *o.c.* esp. 253-266.

<sup>50</sup> Effective parallels are to be found, for instance, in Tzetzes' *Iambi* (see Leone, *Iambi* cit. 134-144), especially in the first poem where the peak of the criticism towards the educational system in the capital is to be found. There, in fact, Tzetzes pounces on the educational method used to train the young students through a detailed description of the possible paths that a boy could undertake.

<sup>51</sup> On the Constantinopolitan school system, see the overview offered by Kazhdan-Epstein, *o.c.* 120-133, and Pontani, *o.c.* 385. However, the clear boundaries and the setting of higher education in Constantinople are still nebulous. What is indisputable is, on the one hand, the influence played by the Church, and on the other hand, the importance of the *theatron*, the stage where the intellectuals were summoned to prove themselves. Bibliography on the topic is vast. See at least U. Criscuolo, *Chiesa ed insegnamento a Bisanzio nel XII secolo: il problema della cosiddetta «Accademia Patriarcale»*, «Siculorum Gymnasium» XXVIII/2 (1975) 373-390; M. Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081-1261*, Cambridge 1995, esp. 89-98.

<sup>52</sup> In the last few years, the topic of schedography has been widely addressed, also specifically in Tzetzes' works. See Agapitos, *Blemish examiners* cit. 1-57; Id., *Grammar, genre and patronage in the twelfth century: a scientific paradigm and its implications*, «JÖByz» LXIV (2014) 1-22. On riddles, see also Mazzucchi, *Ambrosianus C 222 inf. Parte seconda* cit. 426-430. On the literary interpretation

*historia* under scrutiny, the expression χείρων δὲ χοίρων at verse 983 stands out as a sharp pointer to this polemic. If read with the Byzantine pronunciation, in fact, the phrase sounds as the repetition of the same sound, being formed by two homophonic but not homographic words. This is precisely the kind of riddles which populated schedographic exercises and puzzles; entailing a similarity of sounds but not of meaning, they were riddles for pupils to decode<sup>53</sup>. More to the point, Tzetzes considers schedography to be not only negative *per se*. In his opinion, schedography provided only a superficial knowledge of the ancient sources and did not truly educate pupils, preventing a correct learning of the linguistic canon centered on classical models and distorting the Attic Greek model. Tzetzes' attitude towards schedography is reminiscent of his criticism of Dionysius Periegetes and, consequently, of the Byzantine intellectuals who, like Eustathios, preferred this “new” geographer over the more reliable Ptolemy. Here, Tzetzes appropriates the language of the people and the teachers who are criticizing him, like Eustathios, with the clear intent to mock them at the same time<sup>54</sup>.

The blame, thus, falls upon the schools concerned with higher education, among which we can certainly count the patriarchal school – of which Eustathios was a prominent representative – and their common method of teaching. Throughout Tzetzes' works, epithets like ‘buffaloes’ or ‘pigs’ are frequently found with reference to teachers adopting the practice of schedography<sup>55</sup>. From a mere matter of rhetoric dealing with schedography, thus, the polemic gets to touch upon culture and possibly even upon moral values: once exposed to such a practice, pupils indeed become

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of schedography and the image of the “pigs of Circe”, frequently adopted by Tzetzes in describing his adversaries, see V. Lovato, *Odysseus the schedographer*, in P. Marciniak-B. van den Berg-D. Manolova (edd.), *Preserving, Commenting, Adapting: Commentaries on Ancient Texts in Twelfth-Century Byzantium*, Cambridge forthcoming.

<sup>53</sup> For an exhaustive definition of the schedographic practice, see Agapitos, *Blemish examiners* cit. 7-8. As he underlines, furthermore, «the text [of a *schedos*], punctuated in an erratic manner, was filled with strange words and phrases giving no meaning. The pupils had to decode this “riddle” (γρίφος or νόημα) and to rewrite it correctly. The puzzles were based on similarities of sound, called ἀντίστοιχα (“correspondences”) [...] that need to be acoustically decoded».

<sup>54</sup> Agapitos, *Blemish examiners* cit. 21 talks about a «parodistic strategy».

<sup>55</sup> Many are the passages where Tzetzes mocks these teachers throughout the *Chiliades*. For some examples commented in different contexts, see Agapitos, *Grammar*, *genre* cit. 12-13; Id., *Blemish examiners* cit. 18-20; V.F. Lovato, *Hellenising* cit. 155-157. See also Leone, *Iambi* cit. 134-144. As Aglae Pizzone shows in her contribution to this volume, such an invective against alternatively “barbarians”, “buffaloes”, or the βαρβάρων κουστωδία from which he categorically distances himself was also at the core of the *Logismoi*. On Tzetzes' vituperative posture (with a specific focus on the scholia to the *Chiliades*) see Yulia Mantova's chapter in this volume.

'barbarized'<sup>56</sup>. In the *historia* discussed above, the damages of this wrong educational system are such that Tzetzes fears that the entire city might "fall / to the [...] barbarians" and that the city itself might "become barbarian" once controlled by barbarized persons, namely a "donkey and a sow". Once the city is completely barbarized, it will inevitably prize and honor the barbarians. This is the irreparable consequence of the decline of education. Tzetzes' shock at depicting this setting is so strong that it leads him to perform a lamentation on the "queen of the cities".

Against this background, the adjective 'new' referred to Dionysius is neither just ironic nor a simple chronological tag. Indeed, it ends up becoming a cultural signpost that labels Dionysius as an author favored by the group of the 'new' intellectuals, dedicated to schedography and thus progressively infecting society. Far from being a virtue, it is for his very 'newness' that he should be dropped<sup>57</sup>. Ptolemy, therefore, remains the only possible alternative geographical model, which is bound to guarantee the right education, to improve the educational system, and eventually to forge better community members.

This constant and deliberate overlap between geography and education finds its final instantiation in the term 'barbarian'<sup>58</sup>. If read against this context, this adjective is first and foremost related to the concept of culture and of a proper education. As has been shown by Valeria F. Lovato<sup>59</sup>, indeed, this notion is often used by Tzetzes in relation to the educational background, the *paideia* of a man and it partially loses its reference to the idea of ethnicity. However, the situation presented here offers a more nuanced case. The lines where the idea of 'barbarization' is presented certainly refer to the cultural and teaching background described above: the term 'barbarian' implies a lack of cultural knowledge and of an apt education based on reading ancient authors in a comprehensive and solid way. Nevertheless, the entire context of the *historia* here discussed, with its explicit reference to geo-

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<sup>56</sup> See Agapitos, *Blemish examiners* cit. 17-20.

<sup>57</sup> Apparently, a 'new' kind of schedography emerged in the middle of the twelfth century, as proves the famous account of Anna Komnene (*Alexiad* XV 7,9). For an analysis of the passage, see Agapitos, *Grammar, genre* cit. 5-6, and A. Garzya, *Intorno al Prologo di Niceforo Basilace*, «JÖByz» XVIII (1969) 57-71. The rhetoric of 'new' and therefore inferior to old standards surfaces also in the *Logismoi* (see Aglae Pizzone in this volume).

<sup>58</sup> The term is also put in a strong position into the lines of this *historia*: it occupies always the last part of the line and it is found always in a different case. Such attention cannot be accidental. It might probably point ironically to the hallmarks used by the kind of education defined as 'barbarian' by Tzetzes. With such a method and by the use of these rhetorical features, Tzetzes is mocking again those teachers considering a great thing this formal approach to the text, neglecting categorically the content, mostly in respect to the ancient source which is eventually what constitutes the education.

<sup>59</sup> See Lovato, *Hellenising* cit. 143-157.

graphy, allows us to go a step further. With the concern for countries, boundaries and populations, the idea of ethnicity carried along from the word's Classical meaning somehow surfaces. The cultural and the geographical connotations proceed thus concurrently, and they end up overlapping somehow. Here, Tzetzes plays with the concept of 'barbarian', maintaining in the background both meanings. The connection between geography and education, indeed, is offered by Tzetzes himself in the *Chiliades* (*Hist.* IX 280, 703-708):

Καὶ γὰρ ἐβαρβαρώθησαν οἱ πλείους σχεδουργίαις,  
βίβλους ἀναγινώσκοντες τῶν παλαιῶν οὐδόλως,  
ὡς τόπους, χώρας, πράγματα γινώσκειν σαφεστάτως, 705  
καὶ θησαυροὺς ἀρύεσθαι, λόγους σοφῶν παντοίων,  
τῶν ἀμαθῶν καπήλων δε πλοκῆ λαβυρινθώδει  
μόνη τὸν νοῦν προσέχοντες καὶ κεκαπηλευμένη.

For most of them have been barbarized by schedourgy,  
not reading any of the books of ancient writers,  
in order to know most clearly about places, lands and affairs, 705  
and to draw in treasures, namely, the discourses of various wise men;  
instead, they turn their minds only to the labyrinthine  
and vulgar complexity of ignorant tavern-keepers<sup>60</sup>.

An adequate education is not only essential to have a widespread comprehension but aims at providing a detailed knowledge "about places, lands and affairs". A geographical competence too contributes to scaffold one's path towards Knowledge<sup>61</sup>. Geography appears as a fully-fledged part of this education, and as in any other field, it should be pursued through the appropriate sources and the appropriate method, which are completely incompatible with those used to train barbarians. By proposing a different geographical model, therefore, Tzetzes stimulates a construc-

<sup>60</sup> See Agapitos, *Blemish examiners* cit. 17-18

<sup>61</sup> Beside the pure geographical competence, it is worth noting that travel as such was a traditional theme in the exegesis, often associated with the pursuing of knowledge. Such a long-standing tradition finds perfect embodiment also in twelfth-century Constantinople, with the works of Eustathios and Tzetzes which, needless to say, extensively commented upon the most famous literary travel of Odysseus in the Homeric poems. For the analysis of such a theme used as a rhetorical tool by Eustathios and Tzetzes, see V.F. Lovato, *The wanderer, the philosopher and the exegete. Receptions of the Odyssey in twelfth-century Byzantium*, in C. Ferella-C. Breytenbach (edd.), *Paths of Knowledge. Interconnection(s) between Knowledge and Journey in the Graeco-Roman World*, Berlin 2018, 217-240.

tive discussion since the selection of a specific geographical model and of a given approach entails direct consequences for society. By criticizing the education that impacted on the social structure of Komnenian society, as discussed above, Tzetzes also voices his claim to a better position in this very society, aiming at being finally granted the honor and the reputation he deserves. His social status is marginal: he is accused of being a barbarian and a sow by people gravitating around the court and the school system. The opposition is thus between a centre, represented by what, for simplicity's sake, might be labelled as an 'institutionalized' education, and the margins where Tzetzes finds himself. The scholar constantly fights to gain more importance while acting on the fringes of the society as an independent intellectual figure. This opposition results into a distance and such a distance is vast. By recommending a different geographical ideal, I believe, Tzetzes places the quarrel on another level, claiming for himself more recognition and centrality so as to escape the margins.

In conclusion, therefore, once geography's many facets are revealed, it becomes central especially when it comes to a conceptually adequate model to convey Tzetzes' social and cultural concerns. First, as a technical subject, it should convey geographical details and thus, it is necessary to select a source where information is actually provided; even obscurely, Ptolemy offers details whereas Dionysius "does not explain anywhere" what he should. Secondly, geography represents a conceptually adequate model for Tzetzes to find a new position in society. As an integral part of the educational canon, the selection of the sources and the choice of an accurate approach are highly relevant: they could deeply affect one's educational path, that is to say that they have an impact on the first essential step to gain a position in the social milieu of the capital and climb the political ladder. A high position on the educational ladder corresponds to a high position on the social ladder and consequently, in the political hierarchy too<sup>62</sup>. Geography, therefore, is not neutral<sup>63</sup>.

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<sup>62</sup> For another pupil of this generation, see the figure of Gregory Antiochos in M. Loukaki, *Grégoire Antiochos, Éloge du patriarche Basile Kamatéros*, Paris 1996, 3-28; see specifically pp. 5-12 for useful remarks on the higher education in Constantinople during the twelfth century, presented as essential to enter an administrative career. Further, on the importance of education in Komnenian society, see T. Creazzo, *Retorica, filosofia e gestione del potere a Bisanzio fra XI e XII secolo: alcune considerazioni*, in T. Creazzo-C. Crimi-R. Gentile-G. Strano (edd.), «Studi Bizantini in onore di Maria Dora Spadaro» Acireale-Roma 2016, 131-144; M. Grünbart, *Paideia connects: the interaction between teachers and pupils in twelfth-century Byzantium*, in S. Steckel-N. Gaul-M. Grünbart (edd.), *Networks of Learning: Perspectives on Scholars in Byzantine East and Latin West, c. 1000-1200*, Münster 2016, 17-32. Education, indeed, was an essential step in starting a career in administration and also represented a social mark and was sign of social representation. Education and administrative career go hand in hand, being the former the necessary condition for the latter.



Rather, it relates to issues of education, culture, politics and ultimately of centrality and marginality. Margins, in particular, have a multivalent dimension in this broader geographical perspective, from the spatial 'barbaric' borders of the Empire embodied by the regions of Μουσία to the fringes of twelfth-century Byzantine elites. This tension between centre and margins active on the spatial dimension and reflected in cultural, social and ultimately political aspects constantly maintains also a temporal dimension. Tzetzes indeed uses a geographical work of Ptolemy, dated almost to a thousand years earlier, to address contemporary issues. Once again, Tzetzes uses an ancient work pertaining directly to the past to talk about his present, although he never labels it as 'new'.

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<sup>63</sup> As firmly stated by the geographer John B. Harley (J.B. Harley, *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*, Baltimore 2001, 150-168), maps are never neutral as they are closely linked to power. Here, maps are not directly concerned but the same definition applies to geography as a subject-matter: geography is not neutral for Tzetzes as it contributes to reassessing his and others' social, political, and educational position.

**Tzetzēs and the *mechanographoi*:  
The reception of Late Antique scientific texts in Byzantium**

One of the better-known episodes of the life of John Tzetzēs – or at least of his literary and social persona – occurs in his *Exegesis of the Iliad*, written ca. 1140, where he bemoans years of professional failure and adversity with typically learned obscurantism (*Exeg. Il.* p. 22,1-11 Papat homopoulos)<sup>1</sup>:

οὐδὲ γὰρ κατὰ τοὺς τῆς Πηνελόπης μνηστῆρας τρίτον ἔτος ἐστὶ μοι, τάχα δ' εἴσι τέταρτον· ἀλλ' ἑβδομὸν μοι ἔτος ἐστὶ, τάχα δ' εἴσιν ὄγδοον, ἐξ οὗ ἀπράκτως ἐγγωνιάζων, τὰς ἀπάσας ἐμοῦ βίβλους ἄλλοτε ἄλλην ἀποδιδούς ὀλίγου τιμήματος, κατὰ τὸν Πυθαγόραν σῆς βιβλιοφάγος γενόμενος καταβέβρωκα, πλὴν μόνου πυκτίου ἑνός, ὅπερ εἰσὶ Πλουτάρχου Παράλληλα, καὶ μαθηματικῶν διαφόρων τεμαχίων τινῶν· ἅ πάντα τοῖς μὴ τῆς τούτων δυνάμεως ἐπιγνώμοσιν οὐδὲ χαλκοῦ Βυζαντίου νομίσματός εἰσιν ἄξια·

For it is not, as in the case of Penelope's suitors, a third year for me, soon to be a fourth, but for me it is a seventh year, soon to be an eighth, from when, unprofitably withdrawing into a corner, giving away all my books one after the other for a small price, I became, in the Pythagorean manner, a book-eating moth and have consumed them, excepting only one volume, which is Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, and some various mathematical morsels, all of which, to those who do not recognise their value, are not worth a brass coin of Byzantium.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Papat homopoulos, Ἐξηγήσεις Ἰωάννου Γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου εἰς τὴν Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδα, Athens 2007. For discussion of this passage, with further bibliography, see C. Wendel, *Tzetzēs (I)*, *RE* VII/A (1948) 1959-2011: 1961; N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, London 1996<sup>2</sup>, 190-191; T. Braccini, *Erudita invenzione: riflessioni sulla Piccola grande Iliade di Giovanni Tzetze*, «IFilol Class» IX (2009/2010) 153-173: 159-160 with n. 21; M. Savio, *Screditare per valorizzare. Giovanni Tzetze, le sue fonti, i committenti e la concorrenza*, Rome 2020, 12-13, 62-68.

Now apparently in his late twenties, Tzetzes alludes to a murky scandal seven years earlier, when he was abruptly dismissed from a salaried post with the Eparch of Beroia and obliged to make his way on foot back to Constantinople<sup>2</sup>. Since then, struggling on low or irregular income from writing and teaching, he has been forced to sell off his library, cheaply, book by book, just to survive. Essentially, Tzetzes has sold books in order to eat. Metaphorically, reborn as a “book-eating moth”, by way of a strained analogy to Pythagorean metempsychosis, Tzetzes has “consumed” (καταβέβρωκα) his books (p. 22,6-7 Papatomopoulos)<sup>3</sup>. Only two items remain in

<sup>2</sup> The foundational study of the chronology of Tzetzes’ life is Wendel, *o.c.* 1960-1965, who established the conventional termini *ca.* 1112 – post-1180/1185. Recently M. Grünbart, *Byzantinisches Gelehrtenelend – oder: Wie meistert man seinen Alltag*, in L.M. Hoffmann-A. Monchizadeh (edd.), *Zwischen Polis, Provinz und Peripherie. Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, Wiesbaden 2005, 413-426: 424-425, drew attention to the tenuity of the evidence for the last 20-25 years of the traditional dating, whereby the secure *terminus post quem* becomes the death of the Empress Bertha-Eirene in 1159/1160 (Grünbart, *o.c.* 425 n. 72 cites *Alleg. II. XVI* prol.; see correctly *Alleg. Od.* prol. 16). It is generally assumed that some of Tzetzes’ later letters belong to the early/mid-1160s, though none can be firmly dated to this decade: M. Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge zum Briefcorpus des Ioannes Tzetzes*, «JÖByz» XLVI (1996) 175-226: 176-177, 219-223. See discussion of additional considerations in E. Cullhed, *Diving for pearls and Tzetzes’ death*, «ByzZ» CVIII/1 (2015) 53-62; A. Pizzone, *Saturno contro sul mare d’Ismaro. Una nuova fonte per l’(auto)biografia di Tzetze*, in A. Capra-S. Martinelli Tempesta-C. Nobili (edd.), *Philoxenia: Viaggi e viaggiatori nella Grecia di ieri e di oggi*, Milan 2020, 75-94, esp. 85-88. Date of Tzetzes’ *Exegesis of the Iliad*: Wendel, *o.c.* 1961-1962, 1966, correcting older studies, sets the termini as 1138 to mid-1145, wherein he plausibly argues for *ca.* 1140, or in any case around Tzetzes’ twenty-eighth year. Citing older scholarship, Papatomopoulos, *o.c.* 19\* assigns the composition to shortly before mid-1143.

<sup>3</sup> Previous editors, following a variant manuscript tradition, read σῆς βιβλιογράφος, “scribe of your [book]”, rather than σῆς βιβλιοφάγος, “book-eating moth”. Accordingly, βιβλιοφάγος, seemingly a Tzetzean neologism, is not found in, e.g., LSP<sup>9</sup>, *LBG* or yet *TLG*. In consequence also, some older studies construed this passage somewhat differently. Tzetzes clarifies his meaning in a scholion (ed. Papatomopoulos, *o.c.* 443,14-15): κατὰ τὸν Πυθαγόραν παίζων εἰρήκειν ὡς τοῦ Πυθαγόρου μετεμψυχώσεως δοξάζοντος, “I have said jestingly ‘in the Pythagorean manner’, as Pythagoras held opinions about the transmigration of souls”. See H. Felber, *Quellen der Ilias-Exegese des Ioannes Tzetzes*, Zurich 1925, 24: «Er macht seiner gedrückten Stimmung Luft, nicht ohne Galgenhumor, wenn er sagt, er sei nun zufolge der Pythagoräischen Metempsychose aus einem Bücherschreiber zu einem Büchervernichter geworden». Recently, Savio, *o.c.* 62-65, reading κατὰ τὸν Πυθαγόραν as simple self-comparison to a celebrated ancient intellectual, sees the primary function of Tzetzes’ metaphorical καταβέβρωκα as a self-promotional claim to having committed books to memory before selling them. Elsewhere Tzetzes presents himself as one who lives – or literally eats – by means of his intellect and literary production, a characterisation encapsulated in recherché vocabulary and inventive neologizing: ἐγγλωττογάστωρ (cf. *Ar. Av.* 1695-1696), “eating by one’s eloquence”, and νοογάστωρ, “eating by one’s wit”, in *Ep.* 75 (pp. 109,17-110,3 Leone); *Hist.* X 353, 759-769. See V.F. Lovato, *Living by his wit: Tzetzes’ Aristophanic variations on the conundrums of a ‘professional writer’*, «BMGS» XLV/1 (2021) 42-58.

his possession. One is a single-volume copy of Plutarch's *Lives* – clearly more important than food. The other is an assemblage of mathematical texts. Tzetzes opines that readers ignorant of this discipline could not appreciate the significance of such works. In this vignette, Tzetzes combines two rhetorical motifs that pervade his writings: the undeserved poverty of true scholars, exemplified by his own often precarious circumstances<sup>4</sup>, and the ignorance, incompetence or banality of contemporary literati and educators, in comparison to his own erudition, talent and originality. In his later works, from the mid-/late 1150s, in which genuine autobiographical testimony and competitive authorial self-representation become less easily distinguished, Tzetzes frequently asserts that he is writing “bookless” (ἀβίβλης) – apparently his own neologism – or “without books” (ἄνευ βιβλίων), as a way of excusing potential inaccuracies or lapses, while simultaneously vaunting his phenomenal memory and unparalleled extempore compositional skills<sup>5</sup>. But Tzetzes' complaints of hardship in the late 1130s/early 1140s seem to record actual material constraints on composition: in a scholion to a subsequent passage of his *Exegesis of the Iliad*, regarding the meaning of comets, he wistfully observes that seven years earlier, in his twenty-first year (*ca.* 1133), he had still enjoyed access to all the relevant books on this subject, before that fateful affair at Beroia deprived him of all such learning<sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, the details of Tzetzes' residual library have a seemingly authentic specificity. The enduring popularity of Plutarch's *Lives* in tenth- to twelfth-

<sup>4</sup> Grünbart, *Byzantinisches Gelehrtenelend* cit. 413-426. For potential ‘Homeric’ associations of poverty see E. Cullhed, *The blind bard and ‘I’: Homeric biography and authorial personas in the twelfth century*, «BMGS» XXXVIII/1 (2014) 49-67, esp. 58-61, 64-67. For the verb ἐγγωνιάζω, as used here, see *LBG* 433, s.v., «sich in einen Winkel zurückziehen ...»; cf. *Hist.* I 11, 286: ὅθε τὸν φιλόγώνιον ἠρετισόμην βίον, “whence I chose a life lurking in corners”.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. *Hist.* VI 50, 399-403 (401: ὦν ἀβίβλης), VI 53, 469-470 (470: ἀβίβλη πεφυκότι μοι); VIII 176, 169-183 (173: ἀβίβλης; 179: βιβλίων ἄνευθε γράφεσθαι); 12.1-6 (4: ἄνευ βιβλίων γράφω); *Alleg. II.* XV 87-89; cf. also *Hist.* IX 284, 744-754; X 329, 355-361. On this literary-rhetorical motif in Tzetzes' writings see now Savio, *o.c.* 58-65. For practices of memorisation and imagery of memory in Tzetzes' *Histories* see A. Pizzone, *The Historiæ of John Tzetzes: A Byzantine “book of memory”?*, «BMGS» XLI/2 (2017) 182-207, esp. 190-200, 205-207.

<sup>6</sup> *Schol. Exeg. II.* pp. 421,3-422,3 Papatomopoulos. See Wendel, *o.c.* 1961-1962. For Tzetzes' knowledge of comets and celestial divination see also *schol. Alleg. II.* IV 66-67 in ms. *Par. gr.* 2644, ed. J.F. Boissonade, *Tzetae Allegoriae Iliadis*, Paris 1851, 103, n. ad 67, and J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codicibus manuscriptis bibliothecarum oxoniensium*, III, Oxford 1836, 380,23-31. See the remarks of Cramer, *o.c.* iv; M. Mavroudi, *Occult science and society in Byzantium: Considerations for future research*, in P. Magdalino-M. Mavroudi (edd.), *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, Geneva 2006, 39-95: 79.

century Byzantium hardly requires demonstration<sup>7</sup>, and it should occasion no surprise that Tzetzes retained this “one volume only” (μόνου πυκτίου ἑνός) – or at least wished his readers to believe so. In contrast, a strict reading of this passage suggests that Tzetzes’ mathematical collection was something less than a complete codex – “some various mathematical morsels” (μαθηματικῶν διαφόρων τεμαχίων τινῶν). Modern readers have inferred a collection of extracts and/or a physically damaged manuscript containing fragmentary texts – and perhaps therefore unattractive to the secondhand book market – though they miss the point that Tzetzes chose this unusual usage of τεμάχια presumably because he wished to continue his metaphor of “eating” books<sup>8</sup>. Seemingly overlooked by most or all previous studies, Tzetzes’ own scholion to this passage clarifies certain aspects and relates a further deterioration in his situation (p. 443,16-20 Papathomopoulos)<sup>9</sup>:

Κατεβρώθη μοι καὶ ὁ Πλούταρχος, καὶ νῦν παντελῶς ἄβιβλοι καθεστήκαμεν, πλὴν δὲ τῶν μαθηματικῶν τεμαχίων, ἃ διὰ τὸ κατερρινωμένον τε καὶ σαθρὸν φραγεῖν οὐ δυνάμεθα· οὐδεὶς γὰρ μὴ γινώσκων αὐτά, εἰς οὐδὲν ἐξωνήσαιοτο.

The Plutarch also has been consumed by me, and now we are rendered entirely bookless, excepting the mathematical morsels, which, on account of being both shrivelled and defective, we are not able “to eat”; for no one who does not know them would pay out anything for them.

In this later and more piteous scenario, the mathematicians become Tzetzes’ only remaining reading material.

Tzetzes’ historical, allegorical, and exegetical writings do not display an exceptional passion for or expertise in mathematics or other sciences – though, in this respect, he does not significantly differ from other authors in twelfth-century Constantinople. Nevertheless, he names numerous ‘scientific’ or ‘technical’ authors, broadly construed, and cites their works to elucidate, enliven or verify historical

<sup>7</sup> See now M. Grünbart, *Plutarch in twelfth-century learned culture*, in K. Oikonomopoulou-S. Xenophonos (edd.), *Brill’s Companion to the Reception of Plutarch*, Leiden-Boston 2019, 265-278.

<sup>8</sup> Wendel, *o.c.* 1961: «einige Bruchstücke mathematischer Schriften»; Wilson, *o.c.* 190-191: «some fragmentary mathematical texts [...] Whether the mathematical works were retained because the copy was too poor to have any value in the secondhand book trade must remain uncertain»; Braccini, *o.c.* 160 n. 21: «i “frammenti di diversi matematici”»; Savio, *o.c.* 64 and 65 n. 82: «alcuni «frammenti» di natura scientifico-matematica».

<sup>9</sup> I am grateful to Enrico Emanuele Prodi for drawing this scholion to my attention.

events, literary meanings and natural phenomena. Investigation of Tzetzes' citations and vocabulary in this sphere reveals that, consistent with typically popularised and anecdotal traditions about ancient science, his interests lay not in pure mathematical theorems but in their practical applications and reported demonstrations, unsurprisingly, given that his historical ambitions and literary tastes encompass celebrated achievements in mechanical technology and military engineering. More generally, he extols the sciences of classical antiquity and compiles lists of writers and works on geometry, mechanics, hydraulics, optics, pneumatics, and poliorcetics, partly to authenticate the comparative breadth and depth of his learning<sup>10</sup>. The following selective study of interaction between Tzetzes' oeuvre and ancient scientific literature has two primary objectives. First, to evaluate Tzetzes' references to mathematical, technological, and paradoxographical authors, including works that are otherwise unattested or no longer extant; to attempt to distinguish his first-hand knowledge of texts from mere literary posturing; and to examine how Tzetzes' citations relate to the known textual traditions, manuscript transmission, and scholarly reception of classical science in Byzantium. Second, to analyse examples of Tzetzes' use of scientific texts, and in particular his efforts to combine historical narrative and technical exposition. In this regard, instances where his sources are known and extant supply a methodological template for studying other cases where his technical source is uncertain or lost. In addition, discernible parallels with the writings of Tzetzes' near-contemporaries, John Zonaras and Eustathios of Thessaloniki, potentially point to intertextuality and/or common source-material, while elucidating the intellectual background to Tzetzes' knowledge and choice of subjects.

#### *Tzetzes and the mechanographoi*

In five passages of his various works Tzetzes mentions or cites multiple μηχανογράφοι. The term μηχανογράφος appears to be unique to Tzetzes' verse and was possibly his own coinage. This collective designation generally refers to authors on applied mathematics, mechanics and/or technology, sometimes but not exclusively in military contexts<sup>11</sup>. It is synonymous with μηχανικοί and presumably also with

<sup>10</sup> On the place of 'science(s)' in Tzetzes' self-promotional rhetoric see Braccini, *o.c.* 157-160; Savio, *o.c.* 64-68.

<sup>11</sup> Tzetzes employs μηχανογράφος in three instances: *Alleg. II.* V 14; *Hist.* II 35, 155; XII 457, 969. Modern lexica wrongly infer necessarily military-technological writers: LSJ<sup>9</sup> *s.v.* μηχανογράφος, «writer on military engineering»; LBG *s.v.* μηχανογράφος, «kriegstechnischer Schriftsteller». The only documented cognate is μηχανογραφία, apparently a "technological treatise", found only

τεχνικοί, whom Tzetzes includes in a list of literary genres in which he claims to be well read<sup>12</sup>. Under the label μηχανογράφοι, Tzetzes includes also famous engineers of the distant past to whom no writings, extant or lost, are otherwise ascribed; he thus seems, at least, not to distinguish pure theorists from practitioners. Furthermore, he adduces documented authors in connection with topics that do not occur in their extant writings and/or as authorities in fields on which they are not otherwise known to have written. Modern readers have therefore long suspected that Tzetzes compiled lists of names and book titles known to him, as displays of his erudition and reading, but with little, if any, actual acquaintance with their texts, while in some cases ascribing writings to famous figures who never wrote at all. In addition, repetition of certain names and their recurring position within a verse raise further suspicions that some names were selected – and were certainly so positioned – primarily owing to their metrical suitability in iambic decapentasyllabic composition<sup>13</sup>. Prosody may similarly account for Tzetzes’ use – or even coinage – of μηχανογράφος<sup>14</sup>. By far the most frequently mentioned scientific figure in Tzetzes’ oeuvre is Archimedes, who seemingly exercised a peculiar fascination, though his relative prominence may merely reflect Archimedes’ longer-term status as the most famous mathematician and ‘inventor’ of antiquity and a semi-divine miracle-worker in classical literature and its Byzantine reception<sup>15</sup>. In particular, Tzetzes exhibits recurrent interest in the legendary story of how Archimedes used a mirror or mirrors to reflect and concen-

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in the Greek translation (ca. 1015) of Apomasar/Albumasar (Abū Ma‘šār), *De revolutionibus nativitatium*, ed. D. Pingree, Leipzig 1968, 93.8; see *LBG s.v.* μηχανογραφία, «kriegstechnische Schrift».

<sup>12</sup> For μηχανικοί: *schol. Carm. II.* II 45b (p. 166,4-5 Leone): καὶ οἱ ἄριστοι τῶν μηχανικῶν, ὅποσοι περὶ πυροποιίας καὶ θέσεως πολέμων συγγεγραφήκασιν (listing the same authors described as μηχανογράφοι at *Alleg. II.* V 14-18). For τεχνικοί: *Hist.* VI 50, 399-400: Οἱ ποιηταὶ καὶ συγγραφεῖς, ῥήτορες, λογογράφοι, / ἱστορικοὶ καὶ χρονικοὶ καὶ τεχνικοὶ παντοῖοι. Cf. XI 369, 247-249: ὁ λογιστὴς τῶν παλαιῶν, οὗ δι’ ἰάμβων βίβλος, / τῶν λογισμῶν, γραμματικῶν, ῥητόρων, φιλοσόφων, / τῶν μετρικῶν, ἱστορικῶν, μηχανικῶν, τῶν ἄλλων.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. the frequency with which verses terminate Ἀρχιμήδης, Ἀρχιμήδους or Ἀρχιμήδην, even in close proximity: *Alleg. II.* V 10, 15; *Hist.* II 35, 153, 159; XII 457, 965, 972.

<sup>14</sup> *Hist.* II 35, 155: Ἦρων καὶ Φίλων, Πάππος τε καὶ πᾶς μηχανογράφος ; XII 457, 969: ἐξ ὧν Ἦρων, Ἀνθέμιος καὶ πᾶς μηχανογράφος ; *Alleg. II.* V 14: Οὕτω δὲ δρῶν κελεύουσι πάντες μηχανογράφοι. In contrast to the last-cited verse, in a prose version of the same material in *schol. Carm. II.* II 45b (p. 166,4 Leone) Tzetzes substitutes μηχανικοί.

<sup>15</sup> The classic study of Archimedes’ life and writings remains E.J. Dijksterhuis, *Archimedes*, Groningen 1938 (in Dutch); enlarged Engl. transl. by C. Dikshoorn, Copenhagen 1956; revised ed. Princeton 1987, with appended survey of scholarship by W.R. Knorr (at 419-451); citations hereafter are from the 1987 edition. See subsequent bibliography in I. Schneider, *Archimedes: Ingenieur, Naturwissenschaftler, Mathematiker*, Munich 2015<sup>2</sup>. For Archimedes’ Roman reception see M. Jaeger, *Archimedes and the Roman Imagination*, Ann Arbor 2008.

trate the sun's rays and thereby burn vessels of the Roman fleet during the siege of his native Syracuse by Marcus Claudius Marcellus in 213-212 BC<sup>16</sup>. Near-contemporary sources and derivative accounts, unsurprisingly, make no mention of solar reflection or any such naval catastrophe<sup>17</sup>. The tale of Archimedes' burning-mirror(s) first emerges as incidental allusions in unconnected texts around the mid- to late second-century AD, possibly indicative of its genesis in Greek revivalist culture of the Second Sophistic<sup>18</sup>. This fictive episode was thereafter repeated and embroidered during Late Antiquity<sup>19</sup>, and seems also to have attracted renewed interest in eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantine scholarship that may assist in locating Tzetzes within contemporary intellectual currents (see below).

A brief diachronic survey of the five passages relating to *mechanographoi*, insofar as their dating and sequence can be established, reveals common characteristics. First, Tzetzes touches on an Archimedean theme, albeit obliquely, in his earliest Homeric work, conventionally titled the *Carmina Iliaca* or Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς.

<sup>16</sup> *Carm. Il.* II 44-48 (with *schol.* II 46a); *Alleg. Il.* V 10-12; *Hist.* II 35, 121-131, 156; IV *Ep. ad Lach.* 505-506; XII 457, 967; *S. Lucia* 11 (p. 94, 10-13 Papadopoulos-Kerameus); see also references to Archimedes' reputed writings on burning-mirrors at *Hist.* II 35, 156 and XII 457, 968, and to burning-mirrors generally at XI 381, 589. The bibliography on Archimedes' "burning-mirror(s)" is immense and venerable, but often incomplete, speculative and lacking dialogue between philological, historical, and scientific scholarship. See collections of sources in L.J. Heiberg, *Quaestiones Archimedaeae*, Copenhagen 1879, 39-41; P. Ver Eecke, *Les Oeuvres complètes d'Archimède suivies des Commentaires d'Eutocius d'Ascalon*, I, Liège 1960, xix-xxii; Dijksterhuis, *o.c.* 28-29; with discussions of the evidence in e.g. I. Schneider, *Die Entstehung der Legende um die kriegstechnische Anwendung von Brennsiegeln bei Archimedes*, «Technikgeschichte» XXXVI/1 (1969) 1-11; D.L. Simms, *Archimedes and the Burning Mirrors at Syracuse*, «Technology and Culture» XVIII/1 (1977) 1-24 (to be read with some caution); W. Knorr, *The Geometry of Burning-Mirrors in Antiquity*, «Isis» LXXIV/1 (1983) 53-73, esp. 53-55; R. Rashed, *Les catoptriciens grecs*, I: *Les miroirs ardents*, Paris 2000, 317-320; P. Jal, *Archimède et les miroirs ardents: quelques remarques*, «REL» LXXXV (2007) 39-45; F. Acerbi, *I geometri greci e gli specchi ustori*, «Matematica, cultura e società» (2007-2008 [2011]) 187-230, esp. 190-200 (who misconstrues the historical sources and textual interrelationships of Byzantine authors).

<sup>17</sup> See Polyb. VIII 3-7, 12, 37, with F.W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, II, Oxford 1967, 69-78; with derivative Livy XXIV 33-35 and Plut. *Marc.* 14-19, and (via Livy) Sil. XIV 292-340. Cf. also Polyæn. *Strat.* VIII 11,1. As Plutarch had access to other, now-lost sources, his silence has additional significance, especially given his familiarity with concave burning-mirrors used as temple gadgetry: Plut. *Num.* 9,6-7.

<sup>18</sup> Galen, *De temperamentis* III 2 (I, 657-658 Kühn) (ed. G. Helmreich, Leipzig 1904; add. S. Besslich, Stuttgart 1969<sup>2</sup>, 93,5-20); ps.-Lucian, *Hippias* 2 (ed. N. Nilén, Leipzig 1906, I/1, 19,5-9). In the same period, see generally also Apul. *Apol.* 16,2-6. See subsequently Dio XV, fr. 57,35 (ed. U.P. Boissevain, Berlin 1895-1901, I, 232-233), on which see below, pp. 452-457.

<sup>19</sup> Anthemios of Tralles will be discussed in detail below. See also Olymp. in *Gorg.* 38,2 (ed. L.G. Westerink, Leipzig 1970, 194,13-16).



Following the premature debacle of his administrative career, Tzetzes composed this condensed narration of the Trojan War in hexameters as a literary-educational “showpiece” to further his efforts at securing employment or patronage in Constantinople (ca. 1133-1140)<sup>20</sup>. An episode in *Iliad* V (1-8), in which Athena invests Diomedes with a flame-like aura, prompts Tzetzes to draw a contrastive analogy with historically distant events at Syracuse (*Carm. Il.* II 44-48):

Ὦς τῶν μαρναμένων Διομήδης ἔνθορε μέσσον,  
 τεύχεσι λαμπόμενος πυρὶ τεχνήεντι ἀφλέκτω,  
 οὐχ οἶον φλογέεσκε Συρακοσίῳ κατόπτρου,  
 τῷ ᾧ Ἄρχιμήδης φλόγα εἴλκυσεν ἠελίοιο,  
 πρῆψε δὲ Μάρκου Μαρκέλλου νέας Αἰνεάδαο,

45

As Diomedes leapt into the midst of those doing battle,  
 from his arms shining with an artificial fire without flame,  
 not such as blazed from a Syracusan mirror,  
 by which that Archimedes drew flame from the sun  
 and burned the ships of Aenean Marcus Marcellus.

These verses, overlooked in all previous studies of the Archimedean tradition, attest Tzetzes’ interest in this topic from his earliest writings<sup>21</sup>. More intriguing than this brief allusion, however, is the likewise neglected scholion that Tzetzes wrote on his own verse, which incorporates a catalogue of distinguished μηχανικοί (*schol.* II 45b Leone)<sup>22</sup>:

<sup>20</sup> P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Carmina Iliaca*, Catania 1995. For authorial objectives and literary-educational contexts see selectively: Braccini, *o.c.*; M. Cardin, *Teaching Homer through (annotated) poetry: John Tzetzes’ Carmina Iliaca*, in R. Simms (ed.), *Brill’s Companion to Prequels, Sequels, and Retellings of Classical Epic*, Leiden-Boston 2018, 90-114; F. Conca, *L’esegesi di Tzetzes ai Carmina Iliaca, fra tradizione e innovazione*, «Koinonia» XLII (2018) 75-99; B. van den Berg, *John Tzetzes as didactic poet and learned grammarian*, «DOP» LXXIV (2020) 285-302; U. Mondini, *Composing the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς. Macro- and microstructure of a Byzantine Homeric poem*, «ByzZ» CXIV/1 (2021) 325-354; and Ugo Mondini’s contribution to this volume. The termini for the date of composition, ca. 1133-1140, can perhaps be narrowed to ca. 1138-1140; see P.L.M. Leone, *I “Carmina Iliaca” di Giovanni Tzetze*, «QC» VI/12 (1984) 377-405: 377-378; Cardin, *o.c.* 93-94 with nn. 11-12.

<sup>21</sup> To my knowledge, only Braccini, *o.c.* 158-160 has cited and discussed these verses.

<sup>22</sup> Leone, *Carmina Iliaca* cit. 165,17-166,10. A very corrupted text of this scholion was previously published in G.B. Schirach, *Ioannis Tzetzae Carmina Iliaca*, Halle 1770, 45-46, and reprinted with some emendations in B. ten Brink, *Hipponactea*, «Philologus» VI (1851) 35-80, 215-227: 225-226, but both publications appear to have passed unnoticed by scholars of Archimedes.

πυρὶ τεχνήεντι κάτοπτρον μηχανητὸν εἶχεν ἐπὶ τῆς ἀσπίδος ὁ Διομήδης δόκησιν πυρὸς ἀποστίλβον, ὥσπερ καὶ Ἀχιλεὺς, πρὸς ἐκπτώησιν τῶν πολεμίων καθ' ἡλιακῆς ἀκτῖνος φερόμενον καὶ τῇ ἀντανακλάσει προσεπιτεῖνον τοῖς ἀπειροτέροις τὴν δόκησιν. οὕτω παρακελεύονται δρᾶν καὶ οἱ ἄριστοι τῶν μηχανικῶν, ὅποσοι περὶ πυροποιίας καὶ θέσεως πολέμων συγγεγραφήκασι, Ἀρχιμήδης καὶ Ἴηρων καὶ Πάππος καὶ Διονύσιος καὶ Σώστρατος καὶ Κτησίβιος καὶ Φίλων καὶ Φιλεταῖριος καὶ Ἀνθέμιος καὶ Ἰσόης καὶ ὅσον ἔγκριτον φῦλον μηχανικόν, κάτοπτρα ἐπὶ τε λόφων τεχνᾶσθαι καὶ ἐπὶ ἀσπίδων, εἰ δυνατόν, καὶ ἐπὶ θωράκων καὶ μαχαιρῶν, ὅπως παντοίως τοῖς ἐναντίοις κατάπληξιν γένοιτο.

With an artificial fire: Diomedes had a mirror devised on his shield, shining forth an apparition of fire, which, just like Achilles, brought about alarm among the enemy through a solar ray and by reflection intensified the apparition for the more inexperienced. That it be done in this way is also recommended by the best of those mechanicians who have written about fire-making and arrangement of wars: Archimedes and Heron and Pappos and Dionysios and Sostratos and Ktesibios and Philon and Philetairios and Anthemios and Isoes, and all those accepted into the class of mechanicians, to contrive mirrors both on crests and on shields, if possible, also on breastplates and swords, in such a manner that the opponents might be completely struck with amazement.

Tzetzes' following scholion, to the phrase Συρακοσίοιο κατόπτρου, "from a Syracusan mirror" (II 46), will be discussed below. While the *Carmina Iliaca* is securely located in the 1130s, the date of Tzetzes' scholia – whether contemporary with the verses or a later accretion(s) – has not been demonstrated, even where inherent instabilities in the textual transmission of the scholia can be resolved. Correspondingly, overall assessments of this work remain partly impressionistic – whether originally a sample teaching text replete with paratextual apparatus or a virtuoso display of hexametric composition subsequently modified to a didactic purpose<sup>23</sup>. In any case, although the relative chronology is uncertain, a second and almost identical catalogue occurs in a slightly later work in the same context. In his *Allegories of the*

<sup>23</sup> For the textual tradition see Leone, *Carmina Iliaca* cit. v-xxxii, citing numerous preliminary studies. Recent scholarship on the *Carmina Iliaca* has tended to assume or imply the contemporary integrity of Tzetzes' verses and scholia: e.g. Cardin, *o.c.* 93 n. 11, 101-105; Mondini, *o.c.* esp. 330-331.

*Iliad*, in a section written probably in the early to mid-1140s<sup>24</sup>, Tzetzes once more seeks to rationalize the allegedly supernatural brilliance of Diomedes' arms and armour with a technological – or techno-allegorical – explanation: Diomedes has contrived to make his helmet and shield in some way like a mirror, which can, “without flames” (ἀφλεγές), reflect the sun's rays so as to dazzle and alarm the enemy. It is unclear whether Tzetzes here imagines Diomedes' helmet and shield to be highly polished or fitted with reflectors. By way on contrast, he again differentiates Archimedes' use of an actual “burning mirror” (καυστικὸν κάτοπτρον) to ignite the Roman fleet at Syracuse and likewise lists those *mechanographoi* whose writings, he alleges, recommend reflective military equipment in the manner of Diomedes (*Alleg. Il. V 1-24*)<sup>25</sup>:

Τότε τῷ Διομήδει δε τόλμαν καὶ καρτερίαν  
 ἢ Ἀθηνᾶ παρέσχηκε δοξάσασα τὸν ἄνδρα·  
 ἐκ περικεφαλαίας δὲ τούτου καὶ τῆς ἀσπίδος  
 πῦρ ἀφλεγές ἀνέκαιεν ὅμοιον τῷ κυνάστρου.  
 Μάθε τὸ ἀλληγόρημα τοῦτο, μικρὸν ὑπάρχον. 5  
 Ὁ Διομήδης θέλων δε τότε γνωσθῆναι πᾶσι,  
 κάτοπτρον κατασκεύασεν ἀσπίδι καὶ τῷ λόφῳ  
 πυρὸς ἐκπέμπον δόκησιν ἀκτῖσι ταῖς ἡλίου,  
 οἷον ἐνῆν καὶ Ἀχιλεῖ φόβητρον πολεμίῳ·  
 οὐ καυστικὸν δὲ κάτοπτρον οἷον τὸ Ἀρχιμήδους, 10

Then to Diomedes daring and endurance  
 Athena has given, glorifying the man;  
 from his helmet and his shield  
 a flameless fire lit up similar to the Dog Star.  
 Learn now this allegory, though it is a minor one. 5  
 Diomedes, wishing then to be recognised by everyone,  
 contrived a mirror with his shield and crest,  
 which by the sun's rays sent forth an apparition of fire,  
 and instilled in the enemy as much terror as Achilles;  
 not a burning mirror like that of Archimedes, 10

<sup>24</sup> A. Rhoby, *Ioannes Tzetzes als Auftragsdichter*, «GLB» XV/2 (2010) 155-170: 159-165.

<sup>25</sup> Boissonade, *o.c.*105-106; minor variants in P. Matranga, *Anecdota Graeca*, I, Rome 1850, 66-67.

ὄπερ ὁ γέρον ἔφλεξεν ὀλκάδας τοῦ Μαρκέλλου  
 ἐκ τῆς ἀντανακλάσεως ἡλίου τῶν ἀκτίνων·  
 ἀλλ' ἀφλεγῆς εἰς πτόησιν ταγμάτων ἐναντίων.  
 Οὕτω δὲ δοῶν κελεύουσι πάντες μηχανογράφοι  
 (Φίλων καὶ Φιλεταίριος, Ἰσόης, Ἀρχιμήδης, 15  
 Ἴηρων καὶ Διονύσιος, Σώστρατός τε καὶ Πάππος,  
 ὁ Παλλαδάς, Ἀθηναῖος σὺν τῷ Ἀπολλοδώρῳ,  
 Κτησίβιος, Ἀνθέμιος μετὰ τοῦ Πατροκλέους,  
 ἐξ ὧν περ ἀνεγνώκειμεν πολλὰς μηχανουργίας),  
 τοιαῦτα μὲν τὰ κάτοπτρα λόφοις καὶ ταῖς ἀσπίσιν, 20  
 εἰ δυνατὸν, καὶ θώραξι καὶ σπάθαις ἅμα τούτων,  
 ὅπως παντοίως ἔκπληξῃς εἴη τοῖς ἐναντίοις.  
 Τοιοῦτον ἔχων κάτοπτρον τοῖς ὀπλοῖς Διομήδης,  
 εἰς μέσον παρεισέδραμε τὸ στόμα τοῦ πολέμου ...

with which the sage man burned Marcellus' ships  
 with the reflection of the sun's rays,  
 but flameless, to alarm opposing regiments.  
 All the mechanical writers urge that it be done in this way  
 (Philon and Philetairios, Isoes, Archimedes, 15  
 Heron and Dionysios, Sostratos too and Pappos,  
 Palladas, Athenaios, along with Apollodoros,  
 Ktesibios, Anthemios, together with Patrokles,  
 from whom we have read about many mechanical constructions),  
 [to make] such mirrors for crests and shields, 20  
 and, if possible, for breastplates and swords as well,  
 so that the opponents would be completely awestruck.  
 Diomedes, having such a mirror in his weaponry,  
 ran right into the jaws of battle ...

The names listed here include all those found in Tzetzes' scholion to his *Carmina Iliaca*, arranged in a different order dictated by metrical considerations, together with a few additions: Palladas, Athenaios, Apollodoros, and Patrokles. Some of these *mechanographoi*, like Archimedes, are mathematical or technological authors whose writings are at least partly extant, ranging in date from the Hellenistic era to Late Antiquity – Philon of Byzantium (*fl. ca.* 200 BC), Heron of Alexandria (*fl.* 40s-60s AD), Apollodoros of Damascus (*fl.* 100-120), Pappos (*fl.* 320s-340s) and Anthe-

mios of Tralles (*ca.* 474-*ca.* 534). Furthermore, Ἀθηναῖος, sometimes construed as a qualifying “Athenian” ethnic of the preceding Palladas, is more plausibly identified as Athenaios Mechanicus (*fl.* 20s BC)<sup>26</sup>. The writings of Ktesibios (*fl.* *ca.* 250 BC), widely cited by subsequent authors, have not survived and were evidently lost long before Tzetzes’ era. Philetairios is otherwise documented only in *Histories* II 34, where Tzetzes cites his now-lost work on harbour construction, seemingly irrelevant here, unless perhaps it also discussed lighthouses<sup>27</sup>. Other names apparently belong to celebrated figures of ancient engineering to whom no writings are ascribed. Sostratos can only be Sostratos of Knidos (*fl.* 300), the reputed architect-engineer (and/or sponsor) of the Alexandrian Pharos, included here simply by association with a canonical wonder of long-distance reflection<sup>28</sup>. With some stretch of the imagination, but little confidence, Dionysios has been identified with a homonymous military engineer of Alexandria, mentioned only by Philon of Byzantium as the inventor of a repeating catapult<sup>29</sup>. Others in this list – Isoes, Palladas and Patrokles – are entirely unknown<sup>30</sup>; it is tempting to deem them fabrications by Tzetzes or his source(s). More to the point, Tzetzes appears to refer specifically to writings on catoptrics, the branch of geometrical optics concerned with the reflective properties and applications of plane and concave/convex (parabolic and spherical) mirrors, including burning-mirrors. Of the listed authors, no more than three – certainly Anthemios, probably Heron and possibly Archimedes – wrote in this field. At least to judge by

<sup>26</sup> Boissonade, *o.c.* 105 prints (v. 17): ὁ Παλλαδᾶς Ἀθηναῖος σὺν τῷ Ἀπολλοδώρῳ, whence A.J. Goldwyn-D. Kokkini, *John Tzetzes. Allegories of the Iliad*, Cambridge MA-London 2015, 153 translate «Palladas the Athenian and Apollodorus». Given that this would be the only ethnic in the list, alternative punctuation in Matranga, *o.c.* I, 66: ὁ Παλλαδᾶς, Ἀθηναῖος... allows the possibility that Ἀθηναῖος is a separate name, referring to the mid-/late first-century BC technical writer Athenaios Mechanicus. See thus A. Jones, *Pappus of Alexandria, Book 7 of the Collection, Part I: Introduction, Text, and Translation*, New York 1986, 37. This view is supported by lexical parallels between Tzetzes’ *Histories* and the treatises of Athenaios and Apollodoros, which are conjointly transmitted within a poliorcetic corpus in tenth- and eleventh-century codices. See below, n. 50.

<sup>27</sup> See below, p. 475-477.

<sup>28</sup> See now A. Meeus, *The career of Sostratos of Knidos: Politics, diplomacy and the Alexandrian building programme in the early Hellenistic period*, in T. Howe-E.E. Garvin-G. Wrightson (edd.), *Greece, Macedon and Persia. Studies in Social, Political and Military History in Honour of Waldemar Heckel*, Oxford 2015, 143-171.

<sup>29</sup> Philon, *Bel.* 73.21-77.8 (Schöne), Engl. transl. E.W. Marsden, *Greek and Roman Artillery: Technical Treatises*, Oxford 1971, 146-153, with commentary at 177-178 (n. 106). See also Id., *Greek and Roman Artillery: Historical Development*, Oxford 1969, 75, 88-89, 94. For this suggestion, with argumentation, see Jones, *o.c.* 37.

<sup>30</sup> Schirach, *o.c.* 45, emended Ἴσότης to Ἴσόκρουτης; repeated in ten Brink, *o.c.* 225. Leone, *Carmina Iliaca* cit. 166,7 app. crit. ascribes this emendation to ten Brink.

the surviving texts and/or testimonia, none of them mentioned the eccentric combat application that Tzetzes infers from *Iliad* V<sup>31</sup>. In short, this extendable list of authorities is largely fanciful and disingenuous; even the authentic authors cited are not known to have written anything germane to the topic.

Third, in Tzetzes' scholia to Aristophanes' *Clouds*, imprecisely dated to between the mid-1140s and mid-1150s<sup>32</sup>, Aristophanes' phrase ὃ καλλίπυργον σοφίαν, "O fair-towered wisdom!" (*Clouds* 1024) occasions a panegyric to mechanics (*schol. Ar. Nub.* 1024a Holwerda)<sup>33</sup>:

<sup>31</sup> Anthemios: see below, pp. 460-465. Heron: testimonia and potential fragments of Heron's *Catoptrica*, along with [ps.-Ptolemy] *De speculis*, considered by some to be a Latin rendering of Heron's lost Greek text, are edited with German transl. in L. Nix-W. Schmidt, *Heronis Alexandrini Opera quae supersunt omnia*, II/1: *Mechanica et Catoptrica*, Leipzig 1900, 301-373, 394-399. Archimedes: 'fragments' (some are strictly testimonia) of a *Catoptrica* ascribed to Archimedes are collected in J.L. Heiberg, corr. E.S. Stamatis, *Archimedis Opera omnia cum commentariis Eutocii*, II, Stuttgart 1972, 549-551, fr. 17-21 (C. Mugler, *Archimède. Oeuvres*, IV: *Commentaires d'Eutochius et Fragments*, Paris 1972, 207 admits only Heiberg fr. 17), with textual emendations in A. Rome, *Notes sur les passages des Catoptriques d'Archimède conservés par Théon d'Alexandrie*, «Annales de la Société Scientifique de Bruxelles» LII (1932) 30-41; Id., *Commentaires de Pappus et de Théon d'Alexandrie sur l'Almageste*, II, Rome 1936, 347,5-348,2, n. 1; and discussion in Knorr, *o.c.* esp. 53-55, 70-73; W. Knorr, *Archimedes and the pseudo-Euclidean Catoptrics: Early stages in the ancient geometric theory of mirrors*, «AIHS» XXXV (1985) 28-105; Schneider, *Archimedes* cit. 72-74; Acerbi, *I geometri* cit. 190-192. On catoptrical writings in general see selectively A. Lejeune, *Recherches sur la catoptrique grecque d'après les sources antiques et médiévales*, Brussels 1957; G.J. Toomer, *Diocles, On Burning Mirrors: the Arabic Translation of the Lost Greek Original*, Berlin-Heidelberg-New York 1976, esp. 3-21; W. Knorr, *The Geometry* cit.; J.P. Hogendijk, *Diocles and the geometry of curved surfaces*, «Centaurus» XXVIII (1985) 169-184; A. Jones, *On some borrowed and misunderstood problems in Greek catoptrics*, «Centaurus» XXX (1987) 1-17; J. Sesiano, *Les miroirs ardents de Dioclès*, «MH» XLV (1988) 193-202; G. Simon, *Aux origines de la théorie des miroirs: sur l'authenticité de la Catoptrique d'Euclide*, «RHS» XLVII/2 (1994) 259-272; Rashed, *o.c.* xi-xxv; F. Acerbi, *The geometry of burning mirrors in Greek antiquity: Analysis, heuristics, projections, lemmatic fragmentation*, «AHES» LXV/5 (2001) 471-497; Acerbi, *I geometri* cit.; B. Machado Mota, *The astronomical interpretation of Catoptrica*, «Science in Context» XXV/4 (2012) 469-502.

<sup>32</sup> Tzetzes' commentary on selected comedies of Aristophanes (*Wealth*, *Clouds* and *Frogs*) must postdate the mid-1140s, since, when writing its prologue, he took the opportunity to admit and correct an error concerning Homeric scholarship that his younger self had unwittingly perpetrated in his *Exegesis of the Iliad* (pp. 68,12-69,4 Papatthomopoulos). No secure *terminus ante quem* has been established, but striking echoes of Aristophanes' *Frogs* in Tzetzes' *Ep.* 1, dated ca. 1155, may point to his concurrent engagement with this project. See H. Giske, *De Ioannis Tzetzae scriptis ac vita*, Rostock 1881, 61-63; Wendel, *o.c.* 1966-1967, 1974-1977; L. Massa Positano, *Jo. Tzetzae commentarii in Aristophanem*, I: *Prolegomena et commentarium in Plutum*, Groningen 1960, xxxix-xlii.

<sup>33</sup> D. Holwerda, *Jo. Tzetzae commentarii in Aristophanem*, II: *Commentarium in Nubes*, Groningen-Amsterdam 1960, 621,12-622,4.

ᾧ καλλίπτυργον σοφίαν: [...] (621.20) καὶ βάθη καὶ μήκη πελαγῶν ἐκμετροῦσα τοῖς μηχανήμασι, καὶ κινουσα βάρη ἀλλόκοτα, ὡς καὶ τὴν γῆν πᾶσάν τινας μετόχους αὐτῆς ὑπισχνεῖσθαι κινεῖν, εἰ δοθῇ τις αὐτοῖς ἕτερος τόπος ἔξω τῆς γῆς, ἐν ᾧ τὴν βαρουυλκὸν μηχανὴν ἐπιστήσεται; τὸ περαιοῦσθαι ποταμούς πρὸς ἀνάρρουν, τομῇ ῥυθμιζόμενα πλοῖα τεκταίνεσθαι, τὸ δὲ μυριάδας στρατῶν ὑπερτρεχούσας ἀριθμούς τῶν δακτύλων διὰ τε γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης ἐστρατευμένους ἑνὸς ἀνθρωπαρίου γηρανδραρίου ἠτᾶσθαι τοῖς μηχανήμασιν, οἷος ἦν ὁ ἡμέτερος καὶ πάντων, ὧν εἶπω, πρεσβύτερος, ὁ βυζάντιος Φίλων, Ἀρχιμήδης καὶ Σώστρατος, Ἡρῶν καὶ Πάππος καὶ μυριάδες λοιπαί.

“O fair-towered wisdom!” [...] measuring out both depths and lengths of seas with machines, and moving prodigious weights, as even some practitioners of this [wisdom] promised to move the entire earth, if some other place outside the earth might be given to them, where one will know how to use the weight-lifting machine; the traversing of rivers against the current, by fitting together boats in sequence at a cutting; the defeat of myriad-strong hosts beyond reckoning, campaigning both on land and sea, by the machines of one small withered old man, such that he was for us the most senior of all those of whom I speak, Philon of Byzantion, Archimedes and Sostratos, Heron and Pappos and myriad others.

Some of the mechanical applications outlined here clearly refer to Archimedes<sup>34</sup>. Tzetzes alludes to Archimedes’ reported claim that, given a place to stand, he could move the earth, which later tradition variously associated with a weight-lifting or ship-launching mechanism<sup>35</sup>. Face-saving Roman accounts of the siege of Syra-

<sup>34</sup> Holwerda, *o.c.* 621, app. ad 21-23.

<sup>35</sup> Tzetzes quotes differently worded versions of Archimedes’ dictum at *Hist.* II 35, 110-111, 132-133; III 66, 63-65. For the ancient sources and historical and technological contexts: Dijksterhuis, *o.c.* 14-18, supplemented by P. Ver Eecke, *Note sur une interprétation erronée d’une sentence d’Archimède*, «AC» XXIV (1955) 132-133; R.P. Duncan-Jones, *Giant cargo-ships in antiquity*, «CQ» n.s. XXVII/2 (1977) 331-332; F. Meijner-A.W. Sleeswyk, *On the construction of the “Syracusia” (Athenaeus V. 207 A-B)*, «CQ» n.s. XLVI/2 (1996) 575-578; J.M. Turfa-A.G. Steinmayer, *The Syracusia as a giant cargo vessel*, «IJNA» XXVIII/2 (1999) 105-125; Jaeger, *o.c.* 103-109; M. Bonino, *Notes on the Syrakosia and on Archimedes’ approach to the stability of floating bodies*, in S.A. Paipetis-M. Ceccerali (edd.), *The Genius of Archimedes – 23 Centuries of Influence on Mathematics, Science and Engineering*. «Proceeding of an International Conference held at Syracuse, Italy, June 8-10, 2010», Heidelberg-New York-London, 251-264; G. Di Pasquale, *The “Syrakousia” ship and the mechanical knowledge between Syracuse and Alexandria*, *ibid.* 289-301.

cuse, by land and sea, arguably the most famous historical episode of Archimedes' biography, commonly credit initial Roman reverses to the singular genius of one "old man" rather than Syracusan martial superiority<sup>36</sup>. In contrast, the reference to a pontoon bridge is broadly reminiscent of some poliorcetic treatises, though neither language nor content points to a particular source<sup>37</sup>. Although Tzetzes does not use the term *mechanographoi* in this case, he concludes with a much-reduced selection of now-familiar exemplars: four extant writers – Philon, Archimedes, Heron and Pappos – and a famous engineer, Sostratos, to whom no writings are ascribed. Surprisingly, given Tzetzes' singling out of Archimedes as the most significant mechanician, his name occurs second in the list. Tzetzes perhaps accorded first place to "the Byzantine Philon" on account of his (anachronistic) Constantinopolitan affiliation. A pairing of Archimedes and Sostratos, as engineering wonder-workers, is preceded in classical literature<sup>38</sup>.

Fourth, in compiling his *Histories* (or *Chiliades*) from the mid-to-late 1150s<sup>39</sup>, as an expansive self-promoting metrical commentary to his self-edited letter collection, Tzetzes unremarkably touched upon the lives and works of celebrated *mechanographoi*. He devotes *Histories* II 35 to "Archimedes and some of his machines" (Περὶ Ἀρχιμήδους καὶ τινῶν αὐτοῦ μηχανῶν), where he revisits, among other

<sup>36</sup> See generally Dijksterhuis, *o.c.* 26-29; Jaeger, *o.c.* 75-122; and further below, pp. 452-465. A single genius or old man: Polyb. VIII 3,3 (μία ψυχή), 7,7-9 (μία ψυχή, πρεσβύτην ἕνα Συρακοσίω); Livy XXIV 34,1 (*unus homo*); Plut. *Marc.* 17,1-2 (ψυχὴ μία); Sil. XIV 338 (*calliditas Graia atque astus pollentior armis*). Cf. ὁ γέρον also at Tzetzes, *Hist.* II 35, 118, 131, 147; III 66, 63; IV *Ep. ad Lach.* 505.

<sup>37</sup> E.g. Apoll. *Poliorc.* 189,1-193,5 (Wescher), Greek text with Engl. transl. in D. Whitehead, *Apollodorus Mechanicus, Siege-matters* (Πολιορκητικά), Stuttgart 2010, 64-67, with commentary at 132-136; Syrianus [formerly Anon.], *De re strategica* 19, in G.T. Dennis, *Three Byzantine Military Treatises*, Washington DC 1985, 63-69. For this topic in military literature see generally S. Cosentino, *Per una nuova edizione dei Naumachica ambrosiani. II De fluminibus traiciendis (Strat. XII.B.21)*, «Bizantinistica» III (2001) 63-107.

<sup>38</sup> E.g. ps.-Lucian, *Hippias* 2 (ed. N. Nilén, Leipzig 1906, I/1, 19,5-9).

<sup>39</sup> The received text of Tzetzes' *Histories* is a product of multi-stage textual evolution and revision, resulting in two differently formatted, author-supervised recensions. See H. Spelthahn, *Studien zu den Chiliaden des Johannes Tzetzes*, Munich 1904, 18-35; Wendel, *o.c.* 1993-1997; P.A.M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Historiae*, Galatina 2007<sup>2</sup>, esp. xxxix-lxiv. The period of (at least initial) composition can be dated by certain references to *sebastos* Andronikos Kamateros as ἑπαρχος (Eparch of the City), an office he entered between 1155 and 1157 and held till at least 1161 but not after 1166; see Tzetzes, *Ep.* 101 and 103, and *Hist.* IX 278, 656; XI 369, 210-211, 223, with Wendel, *o.c.* 1964-1965, 1999-2000; Grünbart, *Prosopographische Beiträge* cit. 217, 220; P.A. Agapitos, *John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners: a Byzantine teacher on schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition*, «MEG» XVII (2017) 1-57: 22-26.



Archimedean traditions, the legendary tale of Archimedes' use of solar reflection to burn the Roman fleet during the siege of Syracuse. Tzetzes' presentation of Archimedes' burning-mirror(s) will be discussed in detail below; it suffices here to observe his concluding source-notice (*Hist.* II 35, 152-159):

Ὁ Δίων καὶ Διόδωρος γράφει τὴν ἱστορίαν  
καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς δε μέμνηνται πολλοὶ τοῦ Ἀρχιμήδους,  
Ἄνθέμιος μὲν πρῶτιστον ὁ παραδοξογράφος,  
Ἡρόων καὶ Φίλων, Πάππος τε καὶ πᾶς μηχανογράφος, 155  
ἐξ ὧν περὶ ἀνεγνώκειμεν κατοπτρικὰς ἐξάψεις  
καὶ πᾶσαν ἄλλην μάθησιν τῶν μηχανικωτάτων,  
βαρουλκόν, πνευματικὴν, τὰς ὑδροσκοπικὰς τε,  
καὶ τούτου δὲ τοῦ γέροντος τῶν βίβλων Ἀρχιμήδους.

Dio and Diodorus write the story,  
and along with them many refer to Archimedes:  
Anthemios the paradoxographer, foremost,  
Heron and Philon, Pappos too and every writer on mechanics, 155  
from whom we have read about ignitions using mirrors  
and every other lesson of those most skilled in mechanics,  
on lifting-screws, pneumatics, well-sinking too,  
as well as from the books of this sage Archimedes.

Tzetzes adduces two narrative historians who, he claims, report this story – Cassius Dio and Diodoros. He lists also previously cited technological writers who mention Archimedes, in this or another context, principally Anthemios of Tralles, here styled a “paradoxographer” though in fact an architect and writer on applied geometry, along with three authors on mathematics, mechanics and/or engineering – Philon, Heron and Pappos, as well as other unnamed *mechanographoi* allegedly influenced by Archimedes' writings on diverse other topics.

Fifth, Tzetzes similarly devotes *Histories* XII 457 to “What Archimedes achieved in words and deeds when alive and still achieves by his writings” (Περὶ τῶν οἷς λόγοις καὶ ἔργοις ζῶν ἐλυσιτέλησεν Ἀρχιμήδης καὶ τοῖς συγγράμμασιν ἔτι λυσιτελεῖ). Starting with a cross-reference to his earlier Archimedes-related section (II 35), Tzetzes seeks to corroborate his remarks with a preliminary and typically disputational source-notice (*Hist.* XII 457, 964-974):

Τὴν Ἀρχιμήδους εὗρης δε τριακοστὴν καὶ πέμπτην.  
 Τινὲς βιβλίον λέγουσιν ἐν γράφαι Ἀρχιμήδην, 965  
 ἐγὼ δὲ τούτου ἀναγνοὺς διάφορα βιβλία,  
 <--> τὰ κεντροβαρικά, κατόπτρων τὰς ἐξάψεις,  
 καὶ τὰ ἐπιστασίδια καὶ ἕτερα βιβλία,  
 ἐξ ὧν Ἡρόων, Ἀνθέμιος καὶ πᾶς μηχανογράφος  
 τὰ ὑδρικά τε ἔγραψαν καὶ τὰ πνευματικά δε, 970  
 βαρουουλκά τε σύμπαντα καὶ θαλασσοδομέτρας.  
 Πολλὰ τοιαῦτα ἀναγνοὺς βιβλία Ἀρχιμήδους,  
 ἀκούων οἵπερ λέγουσιν ἐν μόνον γεγραφέναι,  
 πᾶσχω καὶ λέγω τὰ αὐτά, ...

The [story] of Archimedes you may find at [passage] thirty-five.  
 Some say Archimedes wrote one book, 965  
 but I myself have read various books by this man,  
 <--> the Centre of Gravity, the ignitions by mirrors,  
 and the Epistasidia and other books,  
 from which Heron, Anthemios and every writer on mechanics  
 also wrote on hydraulics and pneumatics, 970  
 on lifting-screws of all kinds and nautical odometry.  
 Having read many such books of Archimedes,  
 hearing those who say that he has written only one,  
 I am affected and have this to say, ...

Thereafter (vv. 975-990) Tzetzes develops his discussion of the number of Archimedes' works into an obscure comparison with a story concerning the husband of St Thekla the protomartyr. Tzetzes again names Heron and Anthemios (but not Philon or Pappos), apparently as foremost examples of, rather than distinct from, all *mechanographoi* who have been influenced by Archimedes' diverse multi-volume oeuvre. Both these passages of Tzetzes' *Histories* (II 35 and XII 457) are a casual mélange of scientific learning, and there seems little point in attempting to identify particular named authors as sources for each of the topics listed, especially as Tzetzes twice resorts to the cover-all anonymous authority of "every writer on mechanics" (πᾶς μηχανογράφος). If some of the listed authors wrote on hydraulics, pneumatics, lifting-screws and/or catoptrics, none is known to have written on well-sinking (II 35, 158) or nautical odometry (XII 457, 971). Here also Tzetzes emphatically refutes an opinion, of some unspecified commentators, that Archimedes wrote only one

work, on the grounds that Tzetzes himself has read (ἐγὼ ... ἀναγνοῦς) “various” and “many such books” (διάφορα ... πολλὰ τοιαῦτα βιβλία), or seemingly knows of at least three, though one struggles in some cases to distinguish titles from descriptions<sup>40</sup>. Leaving aside Tzetzes’ doubtful claim to direct acquaintance with Archimedean texts, we will see below that the disputed number of Archimedes’ works, along with other aspects of Tzetzes’ language and content, has potential significance for identifying his source.

Finally, in a sixth passage, in a somewhat different but related vein, Tzetzes devotes an entire section of his *Histories* (XI 381) to, in effect, an encomium “On geometry and optics”. Here, in contrast, he cites no authorities, but these verses are crucial for understanding his connection to textual traditions of scientific literature. In the first half, he lists the many and diverse applications of geometry, ranging across civil and military engineering – particularly bridges, harbours and siegecraft, and touching on the fields of mechanics, hydraulics, metrology and catoptrics. The second half (from v. 617) concerns optics, and mostly comprises a summary of optical principles applicable to painting and sculpture. In particular, Tzetzes discusses the effects of visual distortion on the perception of images that have been placed at various heights, and the consequent need for artists to adjust the form of figures in order to ensure that they appear in proportion when viewed from ground level (*Hist.* XI 381, 586-641):

### Περὶ γεωμετρίας καὶ ὀπτικῆς

Γεωμετρία χρήσιμος πολλαῖς μηχανουργίαις,  
πρὸς τε ἐλκύσεις τῶν βαρῶν, ἀναγωγάς, ἀφέσεις  
πετροπομπούς καὶ μηχανὰς ἄλλας πορθητηρίου,  
καὶ πρὸς ἐκπυρακτώσεις δε τὰς ἀπὸ τῶν κατόπτρων

### On geometry and optics

Geometry is useful for many mechanical constructions,  
for drawing weights, launching [ships], discharging  
stone projectiles and other destructive machines,  
and for setting ablaze by means of mirrors

<sup>40</sup> Tzetzes specifies three Archimedean works: 1. τὰ κεντροβαρική (967), apparently a lost treatise concerning the centre of gravity; cf. Simp., in *Cael.* II 14 [297a 8] (ed. J.L. Heiberg, Berlin 1894, 543,30-33); 2. κατόπτρων τὰς ἐξάψεις (967, cf. *Hist.* II 35, 156: κατοπτρικὰς ἐξάψεις), though clearly not a title, evidently refers to catoptric writings transmitted under Archimedes’ name; see above, n. 31; 3. τὰ ἐπιστασίδια (968), otherwise unknown and of undetermined content.

καὶ σωστικὰς δε πόλεων ἄλλας μηχανουργίας. 590  
 Λυσιτελῆς γεφύραις τε καὶ λιμενοποιΐαις,  
 καὶ μηχαναῖς, αἱ θαυμασμὸν ποιοῦσιν ἐν τῷ βίῳ,  
 ὡς τὰ χαλκᾶ καὶ ξύλινα καὶ σιδηρᾶ καὶ τᾶλλα  
 πίνειν, κινεῖσθαι, φθέγγεσθαι καὶ ἕτερα τοιαῦτα,  
 καὶ τὸ μετρεῖν δὲ μηχαναῖς σταδίου τῆς θαλάσσης, 595  
 καὶ γῆν τοῖς ὀδομέτραις δε καὶ ἕτερα μυρία  
 γεωμετρίας πέφυκεν ἔργα, πανσόφου τέχνης.  
 Πέντε δυνάμεις δε αὐτῆς αἷς γίνονται τὰ πάντα.  
 Ὅσφην καὶ τὰ πολύσπαστα, μοχλὸς καὶ ὁ κοχλίας  
 καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς ὁ ἄξων δε μετὰ περιτροχίου. 600  
 Βαρυολκοὺς χελώνας με τί δέον διαγράφειν;  
 Χελώνας ὀρυκτριδᾶς τε καὶ τὰς ὀπλοχελώνας  
 καὶ τὰς ἀμπέλους ἐλαφράς, χελώνας καλουμένας,  
 καὶ πᾶσαν ἄλλην μηχανὴν ἐκ τῶν πορθητηρίων,  
 τὰς ἀναγνούσας βάρη τε, ῥώστακας μονοκώλους, 605  
 δικώλους καὶ τρικώλους τε καὶ γε τοὺς τετρακώλους,  
 ἀφετικὰς τε μηχανὰς οἷον τὰς πετροβόλους,

and other mechanical constructions for protecting cities.  
 It is profitable for bridges too and harbour works,  
 and for machines that inspire awe in life,  
 as the bronze and wood and iron and still other parts  
 drink, move, creak and other such things,  
 and for the measuring of nautical stadia with machines, 595  
 and the earth with odometers and myriad other  
 works born of geometry, a most ingenious art.  
 It has five powers, by which all these things are accomplished.  
 The wedge and the compound pulleys, lever and the screw,  
 and with them the axle with a revolving wheel. 600  
 What need for me to delineate weight-lifting pent-houses?  
 Mining-tortoises too and the armed-tortoises  
 and the light mantlets, called tortoises,  
 and every other machine of destructive purposes,  
 those for determining weights too, one-legged stands, 605  
 two-legged and three-legged too, and even the four-legged,  
 and ballistic machines, such as the stone-throwers,

καὶ καταπέλτας τῶν βελῶν πάντας καὶ γαστραφέτας,  
καὶ τοὺς πορθοῦντας δε κριοὺς τῶν πόλεων τὰ τεῖχη,  
κλίμακας καὶ καρχήσια καὶ πύργους ὑποτρόχους, 610  
καὶ πᾶσαν ἄλλην μηχανὴν τί δέον παρεγγράφειν;  
Πῶς τε θαλάσση γεφυροῦν καὶ ποταμοῖς πῶς δέον,  
καὶ πῶς δὲ τὰ κιβώτια καὶ ποδαπὰ τῇ θέσει,  
χρεῶν κατασκευάζεσθαι τὰ τῆς λιμενουργίας,  
καὶ τὰς ἀνακαθάρσεις δε καὶ κλεῖθρα τῶν λιμένων. 615  
ἽΩν πάντων τούτων καὶ λοιπῶν μήτηρ γεωμετρία.  
Καὶ ὀπτική δὲ συντελεῖ σὺν τῇ γεωμετρίᾳ  
πολλαῖς μὲν ἄλλαις μηχαναῖς καὶ τέχνῃ τῇ ζωγράφω  
καὶ ἀγαλμάτων τέχναις δε καὶ ἀνδριαντουργίαις.  
Δεῖ γὰρ καὶ ὕψη συνορᾶν καὶ μήκη καὶ τὰ βάρη, 620  
ἵνα καὶ ὄργανα ποιῇ ἀρμόδια τῷ ὕψει,  
τῷ μήκει καὶ τῷ βάρει τε ἀνάλογα ὁμοίως,  
καὶ τὰς μορφὰς δὲ τῶν γραπτῶν καὶ τῶν πλαστῶν ὡσαύτως.  
Ἄλλων ὀργάνων δεῖται γὰρ τὸ σύμμετρον τὸ ὕψος,  
ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸ μήκος δε καὶ σύμμετρον τι βάρος, 625

and all catapults for darts and belly-bows,  
and the rams that destroy the walls of cities,  
ladders and universal-joints and wheeled towers, 610  
and what need is there to write of every other machine besides?  
And how one ought to build bridges over a sea and how over rivers,  
and how the caissons should be and of what sort in the arrangement,  
which must be prepared for the construction of harbours,  
and the dredging and booms of the harbours. 615  
Geometry is the mother of all of these things and the rest.  
And optics, together with geometry, contributes  
to many other machines and to the art of painters  
and arts of statuary and sculptural works.  
For one needs also to comprehend heights and lengths and weights, 620  
so that one might also make works in keeping with their height,  
and with their length and weight, too, similarly proportionate,  
and the forms of the paintings and the statues likewise.  
For the proportionate height needs different sorts of works,  
likewise also the length and some kind of proportionate weight, 625

ἄλλων δὲ τὰ μακρότερα, ἑτέρων τὰ βραχέα  
 ὁμοίως ζωγραφίαις δε καὶ ἀνδριαντουργίαις.  
 Ὅσα μὲν ἐγγιστα τῆς γῆς μέλλουσι στάσιν ἔχειν,  
 συμμετρους ἔχειν τὰς μορφὰς ἅπαντα ταῦτα πρέπει·  
 ὅσα δ' εἰς ἄρσιν σύμμετρον ἀνεγεροῦσθαι δεοί,  
 630  
 χρεὼν ποιεῖν καὶ τὰς μορφὰς ἐκείνων ἀδροτέρας.  
 Ὅσα δ' εἰς ὕψος ὑψηλὸν μεταρσιοῦσθαι μέλλει,  
 χρεὼν ἐκείνων τὰς μορφὰς τῶν ἀσύμμετρων πλάττειν,  
 ὡς ἂν εἰς ὕψος λάβωσι σπάντα τὴν συμμετρίαν·  
 τὸ ὕψος κλέπτειν εἶωθε καὶ γὰρ τὴν θεωρίαν.  
 635  
 Κἂν σύμμετρον ποιήσεις τοῖς κάτω τὴν εἰκόνα,  
 ἄνω σταθεῖσαν ἴδοις ἂν, οὕσαν συμμεμυκυῖαν.  
 Ἄνπερ δὲ πλάσης τὴν μορφὴν ἀσύμμετρον τοῖς κάτω,  
 τὸ ὕψος πάλιν σύμμετρον δεικνύει τὴν εἰκόνα.  
 640  
 Οὕτως ὑπάρχει χρήσιμος πολλοῖς γεωμετρία,  
 καὶ σὺν αὐτῇ καὶ ὀπτικῇ καὶ μᾶλλον ζωγραφίαις.

the longer for some, the shorter for others,  
 similarly with paintings and sculptural works.  
 Whatever is destined to be placed very close to the ground,  
 it is fitting that all these things have proportionate forms;  
 while whatever needs to be raised to a proportionate elevation,  
 630  
 one must also make the forms of these things fuller.  
 But whatever is destined to be raised up to a lofty height,  
 one must shape the forms of these disproportionately,  
 so that at a height they might assume the established proportion;  
 for the height is wont also to capture the visual perception.  
 635  
 And if you had made the image proportionate to those below,  
 you would see that, once placed above, it becomes compressed.  
 But if you have shaped the form disproportionately to those below,  
 the height again shows the image in proportion.  
 640  
 Thus geometry is useful for many things,  
 and, together with optics, especially for paintings.

*Tzetzes and Pappos of Alexandria*

Tzetzes' *Histories* XI 381 is quoted here in full because it both exemplifies his presentation of scientific knowledge and betrays something about his sources and meth-

odology. In both language and content, his survey of applied geometry exhibits close correspondences with the scientific writings of Pappos of Alexandria, to an extent and of a nature that cannot be explained by mere chance. Pappos' *Collection* (*Synagoge*), probably compiled during the first half of the fourth century, is a large and composite mathematical compendium, based substantially on the works of earlier mathematicians. Tzetzes' text bears marked similarities to two passages of *Collection* VIII, which comprises a definitional history of mechanics and a largely derivative miscellany of mechanical propositions that is primarily indebted to Heron<sup>41</sup>:

... καὶ ἕτερα μυρία  
 γεωμετρίας πέφυκεν ἔργα, πανσόφου τέχνης.  
**Πέντε δυνάμεις δε αὐτῆς αἷς γίνονται τὰ πάντα.**  
**Ὅ σφὴν καὶ τὰ πολύσπαστα, μοχλὸς καὶ ὁ κοχλίας**  
**καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς ὁ ἄξων δε μετὰ περιτροχίου.** 600  
 (Hist. XI 381, 596-600)

Τῆς αὐτῆς δέ ἐστὶν θεωρίας τὸ δοθὲν βάρος τῆ δοθείσῃ δυνάμει κινῆσαι· τοῦτο γὰρ Ἀρχιμήδους μὲν εὕρημα [λέγεται] μηχανικόν, ἐφ' ᾧ λέγεται εἰρηκέναι· δός μοί (φησι) τοῦ στῶ καὶ κινῶ τὴν γῆν. Ἦρων δὲ ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεὺς **πάνυ σαφῶς** αὐτοῦ τὴν κατασκευὴν ἐξέθετο ἐν **τῷ καλουμένῳ βαρουλκῷ**, λῆμμα λαβὼν ὅπερ ἐν τοῖς μηχανικοῖς ἀπέδειξεν, ἔνθα καὶ **περὶ τῶν ε' δυνάμεων** διαλαμβάνει, τουτέστιν **τοῦ τε σφηνός καὶ μοχλοῦ καὶ κοχλίου καὶ πολυσπάστου καὶ ἄξονος ἐν τῷ περιτροχίῳ**, δι' ὧν τὸ δοθὲν βάρος τῆ δοθείσῃ δυνάμει κινεῖται [καθ' ἐκάστην δύναμιν]. ἐν δὲ **τῷ βαρουλκῷ** διὰ τυμπάνων ὀδοντωτῶν παραθέσεως ἐκίνει τὸ δοθὲν βάρος τῆ δοθείσῃ δυνάμει, τῆς διαμέτρου τοῦ τυμπάνου πρὸς τὴν διάμετρον τοῦ ἄξονος λόγον ἐχούσης ὃν ε' πρὸς α', τοῦ κινουμένου βάρους ὑποκειμένου ταλάντων χιλίων, τῆς δὲ κινούσης δυνάμεως ὑποκειμένης ταλάντων ε'.

(Papp. VIII propos. 10 xi §19 [1060,1-15])

<sup>41</sup> Papp. VIII, ed. F. Hultsch, *Pappi Alexandrini Collectionis quae supersunt*, Berlin 1876-8, III/1. On Pappos and his oeuvre see P. Ver Eecke, *Pappus d'Alexandrie, La Collection mathématique*, Paris-Bruges 1933, ix-cxx, with a detailed summary of the *Collection* at xiii-cxiv; A. Jones, *Pappus* cit. 1-26, digesting older scholarship. For *Collection* VIII specifically see Ver Eecke, *o.c.* ci-cxiv; S. Cuomo, *Pappus of Alexandria and the Mathematics of Late Antiquity*, Cambridge 2000, 91-126.

**Βαρουλκούς** χελώνας με τί δέον διαγράφειν;  
 Χελώνας ὀρυκτριδάς τε καὶ τὰς ὄπλοχελώνας  
 καὶ τὰς ἀμπέλους ἐλαφράς, χελώνας καλουμένας,  
 καὶ πᾶσαν ἄλλην **μηχανὴν** ἐκ τῶν πορθητηρίων,  
 τὰς **ἀναγνούσας** βάρη τε, ῥώστακας **μονοκώλους**, 605  
**δικώλους καὶ τρικώλους τε καὶ γε τοὺς τετρακώλους**,

(*Hist.* XI 381, 601-606)

Τοσαῦτα μὲν οὖν περὶ τοῦ βαρουλκοῦ, τῶν δὲ προειρημένων εἴ δυνάμεων ἐκ τῶν Ἡρωνος τὴν ἔκθεσιν ἐπιτομώτερον ποιησόμεθα πρὸς ὑπόμνησιν τῶν φιλομαθούντων, προσθέντες ἔτι καὶ τὰ περὶ τῆς **μονοκώλου καὶ δικώλου καὶ τρικώλου καὶ τετρακώλου μηχανῆς ἀναγκαίως** λεγόμενα, μή ποτε καὶ τῶν βιβλίων ἐν οἷς ταῦτα γέγραπται ἀπορία γένηται τῷ ζητοῦντι· καὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς κατὰ πολλὰ μέρη διεφθαρμένοις ἐνετύχομεν ἀνάρχοις τε καὶ ἀτελέσι βιβλίοις. πέντε τοίνυν οὐσῶν δυνάμεων δι' ὧν τὸ δοθὲν βάρος τῇ δοθείσῃ βίβῃ κινεῖται, ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστιν τὰ τε σχήματα αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς χρείας ἔτι δὲ καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα ἐκθέσθαι. ἀποδέδοται δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἡρωνος καὶ Φίλωνος καὶ διότι αἱ προειρημέναι δυνάμεις εἰς μίαν ἄγονται φύσιν, καίτοι παρὰ πολὺ διαλλάσσουσαι τοῖς σχήμασιν. ὀνόματα μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν τάδε· **ἄξων ἐν περιτροχίῳ, μοχλός, πολύσπαστον, σφήν, καὶ** πρὸς τούτοις ὁ καλούμενος ἄπειρος **κοχλίας**.

(Papp. VIII propos. 24 xxxi §52 [1114,22-23/1116,1-15])

The specificity of the parallelism is striking<sup>42</sup>. Tzetzes refers (v. 598) to five “powers” (δυνάμεις), that is, five basic apparatus for lifting and moving weights. Among extant Greek mathematical texts, both the concept and its terminology only otherwise occur in Pappos’ *Collection* VIII<sup>43</sup>. Pappos clarifies that he had in turn derived this system from Heron’s *Mechanics*, which now survives only as a ninth-century Arabic translation<sup>44</sup>. Tzetzes names the five devices (verses 599-600): wedge (σφήν), compound pulley (πολύσπαστον), lever (μοχλός), screw (κοχλίας), and axle with a revolving wheel (ἄξων μετὰ περιτροχίου); the same five devices, using identical vocabulary, are listed in *Collection* VIII, in propositions 10 and 24. Tzetzes

<sup>42</sup> See also preliminary remarks of Jones, *Pappus* cit. 41.

<sup>43</sup> Papp. VIII propos. 10 xi §19 (1060,4-10); propos. 24 xxxi §52 (1114,22-23/1116,1-15).

<sup>44</sup> Heron, *Mechanics* II 1-6 explains the manufacture and function of each device, before treating their applications; see Nix-Schmidt, *o.c.* 94-112 (Arabic text with German transl.). Cf. also fr. I 1 (256,6-30) and II 1 (272,1-18) (= Papp. VIII propos. 10 xi §19 and 24 xxxi §52).



reproduces the sequence in Pappos' first passage, with a single transposition, presumably for metrical reasons; the sequence in Pappos' second passage, seemingly replicating Heron's original text, differs entirely<sup>45</sup>. Correspondingly, Tzetzes refers (vv. 605-606) to constructions that are one-, two-, three- and four-legged (μονοκώλους, / δικώλους και τρικώλους τε και γε τους τετρακώλους); again this terminological combination is otherwise found only in *Collection VIII*, proposition 24<sup>46</sup>. In some instances, it is possible to trace the influence of even Pappos' non-technical vocabulary in Tzetzes' wording: for example, Tzetzes' use of adjective πάνσοφος (v. 597), in reference to the "most ingenious art" of geometry, was apparently inspired by πάνυ σαφῶς that immediately precedes in Pappos' text, in reference to Heron. In addition, Tzetzes' knowledge of Pappos' *Collection VIII* would explain his previously noted assertion that "some say Archimedes wrote one book" (XII 457, 965), a point Tzetzes vigorously contests. This otherwise unparalleled and patently false statement is explicable by reference to the preface of *Collection VIII*, where Pappos reports an opinion, attributed to Karpos of Antioch, that Archimedes had written only one work specifically in the field of mechanics – but, by implication, wrote other books on other topics. Tzetzes' peculiar statement would therefore reflect his misunderstanding of Pappos' text<sup>47</sup>. The preface of *Collection VIII*, in summarising diverse practical applications of "mechanical theory" (ἡ μηχανικὴ θεωρία), may in fact be the main inspiration for Tzetzes' panegyric on applied geometry (XI 381), even if further linguistic parallels are slight and similar passages occur elsewhere in Late Antique mathematical literature<sup>48</sup>. More generally, it is instructive

<sup>45</sup> *Hist.* XI 381, 599-600: wedge, pulley, lever, screw, axle; Pappos, *Collect.* VIII propos. 9 §19 (1060,8-9): wedge, lever, screw, pulley, axle; cf. propos. 24 xxxi §52 (1116,13-15): axle, lever, pulley, wedge, screw; likewise Heron, *Mech.* II 1 (94,10-12) and following chapters.

<sup>46</sup> Pappos again drew this concept, and presumably its vocabulary, from Heron's lost *Mechanics*: see Arabic version, *Mech.* III 2-5 (202-212). Tzetzes substitutes the noun ῥῶσταξ for μηχανή in Pappos' text; on this rare term see below, n. 50.

<sup>47</sup> Papp. VIII praef. §3 (1026,9-12): Κάροπος δὲ πού φησιν ὁ Ἀντιοχεὺς Ἀρχιμήδη τὸν Συρακόσιον ἐν μόνον βιβλίον συντεταχέναι μηχανικὸν τὸ κατὰ τὴν σφαιροποιίαν, τῶν δὲ ἄλλων οὐδὲν ἤξιωκέναι συντάξαι, "Karpos the Antiochene says somewhere that Archimedes the Syracusan had written only one book on mechanics, the one about making spheres, but that he did not deem it worth writing on any other [mechanical] matters." See also remarks of Jones, *Pappus* cit. 39.

<sup>48</sup> Papp. VIII praef. §1-3 (1022,3-1028,3), with remarks of Cuomo, *o.c.* 104-109. Linguistic parallels: e.g. Tzetzes' assertion that "geometry is the mother of all of these things and the rest" (XI 381, 616: Ὡν πάντων τούτων καὶ λοιπῶν μήτηρ γεωμετρία) corresponds to the statement in Papp. VIII praef. §3 (1026,24): "as [geometry] is in fact the mother of arts ..." (μήτηρ οὖν ὥσπερ οὔσα τεχνῶν ...; bracketed as interpolation by Hultsch 1029, n. 1). For another Late Antique definitional survey of geometry see e.g. Procl. *in Eucl.* prol. I 41,3-42,8; prol. II 63,9-18 (ed. G. Friedlein, Leipzig 1873). Scholarship has long maintained that this section of Proklos' commentary comprises or incorpo-

that Pappos frequently cites his sources and predecessors, which for the two passages presented here were Archimedes, Heron and Philon. Even if Tzetzes' own lists of *mechanographoi* entail wilful intellectual posturing, the tendency to compile authorities is therefore inherent in his source-material. This in turn might harden the suspicion that Tzetzes' own citations of the writings of Archimedes, Heron, and Philon are second-hand references.

Accordingly, in both wording and substance, there are clear affinities between passages of Tzetzes' *Histories* XI and XII, and Pappos' *Collection* VIII. There are three possible explanations. First, and most economical, is that Tzetzes drew directly on Pappos' text. Second, as Pappos himself cites now-lost mechanical writings of Heron, it remains possible that Tzetzes also had direct access to Heron's original work, and thus the similarities are attributable to independent use of common source-material; the consensus of mathematical historians that Heron's Greek text did not survive into the twelfth century makes this a less likely prospect. Third, Tzetzes may have known another Heron-derived text; if so, it closely resembled Pappos' *Collection* VIII and disappeared without leaving any other trace. The balance of probability strongly favours the first option. Perhaps more important than identifying the specific source, however, is recognition of an immediate textual relationship, which cannot be accounted for in terms of recollected content or diction, however much Tzetzes boasts his "bookless" compositional skills. Tzetzes' use of this material is highly selective – even superficial – and gives no reason to infer a more profound comprehension of the subject. His apparent neglect of all other books of Pappos' *Collection*, which are mostly concerned with pure geometry, seemingly affirms Tzetzes' primary interest in applied mechanics, unless he knew VIII as an independently transmitted text<sup>49</sup>. Also striking is Tzetzes' creative adaptation and linguistic virtuosity. For example, restricting enquiry to the short passage quoted, in vv. 602-605 Tzetzes employs arcane and often exceptionally rare terminology not otherwise encountered outside ancient and/or Byzantine poliorcetic treatises (e.g. *χελώνη ὀρυκτρὶς*, 602; *ἄμπελος ἐλαφρά*, 603; *ῥῶσταξ*, 605)<sup>50</sup>, as well as vocabulary that

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rates a fragment of Geminus's *Philokalia*, see recently J. Evans and J.L. Berggren, *Geminus's Introduction to the Phenomena: a Translation and Study of a Hellenistic Survey of Astronomy*, Princeton-Oxford 2006, 248 (F 1).

<sup>49</sup> Evidence for the compositional integrity of Pappos' *Collection* and possible prior autonomy of VIII: Jones, *Pappus* cit. 15-21, 24-26, 41, n. 85, though deeming independent transmission of VIII in the twelfth century unlikely.

<sup>50</sup> The phrase *χελώνας ὀρυκτρίδας* (*Hist.* XI 381, 602), "mining tortoises", applied to movable shelters used by sappers, otherwise occurs only in two ancient poliorcetic treatises, and one derivative Byzantine text: first, Ath. *De mach.* 19,3-20,3 (Wescher), Greek text with Engl. transl. in D. Whitehead-P.H. Blyth, *Athenaeus Mechanicus, On Machines* (Περὶ μηχανημάτων), Stuttgart 2004,

is otherwise unattested (ὄπλοχελώνη, 602)<sup>51</sup>. Even if we assume that Tzetzes attempts here a lexical pastiche of jargon typically encountered in technological writing, his knowledge and choice of vocabulary points to at least passing acquaintance with specimens of this (sub-)genre of military literature.

### *Tzetzes and Anthemios of Tralles*

There is another passage of the *Histories* in which Tzetzes' familiarity with an extant scientific text is demonstrable. In this instance, his use of such material may serve to exemplify his methodology, and in particular his efforts to combine historical narrative and technical exposition. Returning to Tzetzes' account of Archimedes' construction of a burning-mirror(s) during the Roman siege of Syracuse in *Histories* II 35: as previously noted, in this section Tzetzes adduces Cassius Dio and Diodoros as his historical sources for Archimedes' technological feats (v. 152), while he cites this pair of authors also regarding other episodes during the siege (134-138). Evidently Tzetzes had consulted both historians, whether recently or in the past, as he believed (in fact erroneously) that their accounts conflicted, though this misconception stems from his own careless reading<sup>52</sup>. Furthermore, throughout his *Histories*,

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52-53, with commentary at 118-120 (note that the citation of Anna Komnena, *Alexiad* XIII 2,3 (p. 389,62 Reinsch-Kambylis) should read ὄρυκτίδας not ὄρυκτρίδας; see *LBG s.v.* ὄρυκτίς); second, Apoll. *Poliorc.* 138,19 (Wescher): χελωνῶν διορυκτρίδων, described at 143,6-147,6, Greek text with Engl. transl. in Whitehead, *Apollodoros* cit. 38-41, with commentary at 84-88. Apollodoros is in turn the source of Anon. [formerly ps.-Heron], *Polioretica parangelmata* 2,1-2, 13,2-5, 47,16-17, ed. D.F. Sullivan, *Siegecraft: Two tenth-century instructional manuals by 'Heron of Byzantium'*, Washington DC 2000, 28, 44-46, 96, with commentary at 159, 183.

Tzetzes' wording τὰς ἀμπέλους ἐλαφράς, χελώνας καλουμένας (*Hist.* XI 381, 603), "the light mantlets [grapevines], called tortoises" similarly recalls Apoll. *Poliorc.* 141,7-8 (Wescher): χελώνας ἐλαφραῖς, αἱ καλοῦνται ἄμπελοι, "with light tortoises, which are called grapevines" cf. also 143,4-5, which are the only other instances of this terminology; see Greek text and Engl. transl. in Whitehead, *Apollodoros* cit. 38-39, with commentary at 82-83.

The noun ῥῶσταξ (*Hist.* XI 381, 605), a "stand", only otherwise occurs in a short anonymous (tenth-century?) tract on the construction of a siege tower, which in its manuscript tradition is appended to Apollodoros' *Polioretica*. The sole edition is *Constructio Helepolis quae dicitur Corvus* (Κατασκευὴ ἐλεπόλεως κόρακος λεγομένης), ed. M. Thévenot, *Veterum mathematicorum opera*, Paris 1693, 43-48; ῥῶσταξ occurs throughout the text. See also *LBG s.v.*

In addition, one could also note that the term γαστραφέτης (*Hist.* XI 381, 605) is otherwise found only in two artillery treatises: Heron, *Bel.* 7 (81,2 Wescher); Biton, *Bel.* (61,12-67,4 Wescher).

<sup>51</sup> The term ὄπλοχελώνη (XI 381, 602), "arm(our)ed tortoise", appears to be a hapax: LSJ<sup>9</sup> *s.v.*; *TLG Online* (2021).

<sup>52</sup> *Hist.* II 35, 152: Ὁ Δίων καὶ Διόδωρος γράφει τὴν ἱστορίαν, within a general source-notice (vv. 152-159) for the life, discoveries, and writings of Archimedes (see above). At vv. 134-138

Tzetzes frequently cites Dio and Diodoros as historical authorities, in combination or individually<sup>53</sup>. Although the relevant sections of both Dio's and Diodoros' histories have not survived in their original form, we are fortunate that John Zonaras, in compiling his *Epitome of Histories*, probably in the 1120s to early 1130s<sup>54</sup>, drew extensively on the now-lost first 21 books of Dio's *History* concerning the Roman Republican era (but not, it would seem, on Diodoros' *Bibliotheca*), and thus Zonaras derived his account of Archimedes' role in the defence of Syracuse from the same passage of Dio as Tzetzes had read<sup>55</sup>:

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Tzetzes remarks that the two authors differ in their accounts of how Syracuse fell, whether as Diodoros (κατὰ Διόδορον), by treachery, or as Dio (εἴτε κατὰ τὸν Δίωνα), by a nocturnal Roman attack when the Syracusans were celebrating a festival. Tzetzes confuses two stages of the same narrative: the seizure of the outer city during the festival of Artemis (Polyb. VIII 37; Livy XXV 24; Plut. *Marc.* 18) and the subsequent capture of the citadel of Achradina by treachery (Livy XXV 25-31; Plut. *Marc.* 18,4).

<sup>53</sup> Dio and Diodoros also cited together at *Hist.* I 27, 703; III 68, 85; 69, 102; 70, 157; IV 132, 280; IX 275, 563-6; Dio alone: II 34, 87; III 69, 87; 111, 880; V 21, 109; VI 60, 522; Diodoros alone: I 16, 393; 22, 596; 25, 671; 27, 703; 32, 970; II 32, 18; 33, 36; 38, 562; 39, 570; III 91, 389; 95, 451; 113, 942; V 15, 562; VI, 53, 465; 74, 703; VIII 252, 978; IX 275, 518; XII 399, 181, 253, 258, 261. See also C. Harder, *De Joannis Tzetzae historiarum fontibus quaestiones selectae*, Kiel 1886, 58-59, 61-62; J.M. Moscovich, *Dio Cassius, Tzetzes, and the "Healthful Islands"*, «AHB» VIII/2 (1994) 50-53.

<sup>54</sup> See chronological evidence and arguments in T.M. Banchich-E.N. Lane, *The History of Zonaras, from Alexander Severus to the Death of Theodosius the Great*, London-New York 2009, 2-7.

<sup>55</sup> Zonaras, *Epit. hist.* IX 4 (ed. L. Dindorf, II, Leipzig 1869, 262,25-263,8); cf. also XIV 3,28-30 (ed. T. Büttner-Wobst, Bonn 1897, III 137,14-138,11). Zonaras' dependence on Dio is mostly charted in older *Quellenforschungen*: W.A. Schmidt, *Über die Quellen des Zonaras*, in L. Dindorf, *Ioannis Zonarae Epitome Historiarum*, VI, Leipzig 1875, i-lx, esp. xxiv-xxxix; H. Haupt, *Neue Beiträge zu den Fragmenten des Dio Cassius*, «Hermes» XIV (1879) 431-446; T. Büttner-Wobst, *Die Abhängigkeit des Geschichtsschreibers Zonaras von den erhaltenen Quellen*, in A. Fleckeisen (ed.), *Commentationes Fleckeisenianae*, Leipzig 1890, 121-170 esp. 140-169; U.P. Boissevain, *Cassii Dionis Cocceiani Historiarum Romanarum quae supersunt*, I, Berlin 1895, ii-vi, civ-cv; K. Ziegler, *Zonaras*, in *RE X/A* (1972) 718-732: 725-729; I. Grigoriadis, *Linguistic and Literary Studies in the Epitome Historion of John Zonaras*, Thessalonica 1998, 118-120, 196-197; V. Fromentin, *Zonaras abrégiateur de Cassius Dion : à la recherche de la préface perdue de l'Histoire romaine*, «Erga-Logoi» I (2013) 23-39.

καὶ τοῦ Μαρκέλλου στρατηγοῦ ποτέ δε τῶν Ῥωμαίων  
 τῇ Συρακούσῃ **κατὰ γῆν προσβάλλοντος καὶ πόντον,**  
 τινὰς μὲν πρῶτον **μηχαναῖς ἀνείλκυσεν** ὀλκάδας,  
 καὶ πρὸς τὸ Συρακούσιον τεῖχος **μετεωρίσας** 115  
 αὐτάνδρους πάλιν τῷ βυθῷ κατέπεμπεν **ἄθρόως.**  
 Μαρκέλλου δ' ἀποστήσαντος μικρὸν τι τὰς ὀλκάδας,  
 ὁ γέρον πάλιν ἅπαντας ποιεῖ Συρακουσίους  
**μετεωρίζειν** δύνασθαι λίθους ἀμαξιαίους,  
 καὶ τὸν καθένα πέμποντα βυθίζειν τὰς ὀλκάδας. 120  
 ὡς Μάρκελλος δ' ἀπέστησε βολὴν ἐκείνας τόξου,  
 ἐξάγωνόν **τι κάτοπτρον** ἐτέκμηεν ὁ γέρον,  
 ἀπὸ δὲ διαστήματος συμμέτρου τοῦ κατόπτρου  
 μικρὰ τοιαῦτα κάτοπτρα θεῖς τετραπλᾶ γωνίαις  
 κινούμενα λεπίσι τε καὶ τισι γιγγλυμίσις, 125  
 μέσον ἐκεῖνο τέθεικεν **ἀκτίνων τῶν ἡλίου**  
 μεσημβρινῆς καὶ θερινῆς καὶ χειμεριωτάτης.  
 ἀνακλωμένων δε λοιπὸν εἰς τοῦτο τῶν ἀκτίνων  
 ἕξαψις ἦρθη φοβερὰ πυρῶδης ταῖς ὀλκάσι,

And when Marcellus the Roman general was  
 attacking Syracuse both by land and sea,  
 [Archimedes] at first hauled up some ships with machines,  
 and raising them to the height of the Syracusan wall, 115  
 suddenly sent them down into the depths, men and all.  
 When Marcellus had withdrawn his ships a short distance,  
 again the sage man made it possible for all the Syracusans  
 to raise up stones the size of a wagon  
 and by hurling them one by one to sink the ships. 120  
 Once Marcellus had withdrawn them a bowshot away,  
 the sage man constructed a kind of hexagonal mirror,  
 while at an interval commensurate to the size of the mirror  
 he set small mirrors such as these, fourfold, at angles,  
 which could be moved both by plates and certain small hinges, 125  
 and he set this up amid the rays of the sun  
 at midday, whether in summer or mid-winter.  
 Afterwards, when the rays were reflected in this mirror,  
 a terrifying fire was ignited on the ships

καὶ ταύτας ἀπετέφρωσεν ἐκ μήκους τοξοβόλου. 130  
οὕτω νικᾷ τὸν Μάρκελλον ταῖς μηχαναῖς ὁ γέρων.

and at the distance of a bowshot he reduced them into ashes. 130  
Thus did the sage man with his machines prevail over Marcellus.

(*Hist.* II 35, 112-131)

καὶ δι' ἐλαχίστου ἂν αὐτὰς ἐχειρώσατο, **καὶ κατὰ γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλασσαν ἅμα προσβαλὼν** τῷ τείχει, εἰ μὴ ὁ Ἀρχιμήδης **μηχαναῖς** ἐπὶ πλεῖστον αὐτοὺς ἐποίησεν ἀντισχεῖν. καὶ λίθους γὰρ καὶ ὀπίκτας μηχανήμασιν ἀπαρτῶν καθίει τε ἐξαπιναίως αὐτοὺς καὶ ἀνέσπα δι' ὀλίγου. ταῖς τε ναυσὶ καὶ ταῖς πυργοφόροις ἐτέρας ἐπιρρίπτων **ἀνεῖλκε** τε αὐτὰς καὶ **μετεωρίζων ἀθρόως** ἤφιει, ὥστε ἐμπιπτούσας εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ ῥύμη βαπτίζεσθαι. καὶ τέλος σύμπαν τὸ ναυτικὸν τῶν Ῥωμαίων παραδόξως κατέπρησε. **κάτοπτρον γάρ τι** πρὸς **τὸν ἥλιον** ἀνατείνας τὴν τε **ἀκτῖνα** αὐτοῦ ἐς αὐτὸ εἰσεδέξατο καὶ τὸν ἀέρα ἀπ' αὐτῆς τῆς πυκνότητι καὶ τῆς λειότητι τοῦ κατόπτρου πυρώσας φλόγα τε μεγάλην ἐξέκαυσε καὶ πᾶσαν αὐτὴν ἐς τὰς ναῦς ὑπὸ τὴν τοῦ πυρὸς ὁδὸν ὀρμούσας ἐνέβαλε καὶ πάσας κατέκαυσε.

And [Marcellus] would have seized [Syracuse] in the shortest time, attacking the walls simultaneously both by land and sea, had not Archimedes made it possible for them to resist for a long time with his machines. For suspending both stones and soldiers on machines, he suddenly let them down and quickly drew them up again, and launching other [machines] on to the ships and tower-bearing vessels, he hauled them up and, raising them aloft, suddenly released them so that they plummeted into the water with a crash and were submerged. Finally in an incredible manner he burned up the entire Roman fleet. For by tilting a kind of mirror toward the sun he concentrated the [sun's] ray upon it, and owing to the thickness and smoothness of the mirror he ignited the air from this ray and kindled a great flame, the whole of which he directed upon the ships that lay at anchor in the path of the fire and he burned them all.

(Zonaras, *Epit. hist.* IX 4)

The degree of parallelism, in language and content, between these two twelfth-century Dio-derived texts is such that, prior to the report of a mirror (v. 122), it is difficult to discern any details that Tzetzes might have taken from Diodoros rather

than Dio, as Tzetzes is himself the sole potential witness to this part of Diodoros' *Bibliotheca*. The crucial difference lies in the description of the burning-mirror. Both Zonaras and Tzetzes record, in near-identical wording, "a kind of mirror" (Zonaras: κάτοπτρον γάρ τι; Tzetzes: τι κάτοπτρον), providing independent testimony to the presence of this phrase in their common source, Dio<sup>56</sup>. Moreover, in a much later passage, Zonaras unambiguously confirms that Dio was the source for his previous account of the siege of Syracuse, including Archimedes' use of a burning-mirror; Zonaras did not draw this detail from another source nor is it his own elaboration<sup>57</sup>. Long-running scholarly controversy has variously located the protracted composition of Dio's *History* between the 190s and 230s<sup>58</sup>. Beyond speculation, it is not known whence Dio obtained this information about a mirror, but, as previously observed, the story is not otherwise attested before the early/mid-second century AD<sup>59</sup>. Dio states that Archimedes' employed one burning-mirror, while previous and subsequent sources, if they specify, refer to several mirrors; this may suggest that Dio drew on a variant tradition independent of the sources known to other authors<sup>60</sup>. In

<sup>56</sup> See remarks of Haupt, *o.c.* 438-439.

<sup>57</sup> Zonaras, *Epit. hist.* XIV 3,30 (ed. T. Büttner-Wobst, Bonn 1897, III 138,5-11): κάτοπτρα γὰρ ἄδεται χαλκεῦσαι πυρφόρα ὁ Πρόκλος [...] ὁ πάλαι τὸν Ἀρχιμήδην ἐπινοῆσαι ὁ Δίων ἱστόρησε, τῶν Ῥωμαίων τότε πολιορκούντων Συράκουσαν, "For the story goes that Proklos wrought burning-mirrors [...] this, Dio narrates, Archimedes long ago thought up, when the Romans were besieging Syracuse." See further discussion below. Seemingly unaware of the extensive historiographical scholarship (see above nn. 53 and 55), specialists in the history of science have repeatedly failed to appreciate the significance of Dio or the nature of the textual relationship. Simms, *o.c.* 7-10, 21, 24 wrongly doubts whether the lost section of Dio's *History* even mentioned a mirror. W.R. Knorr, *Catoptrics*, in *OCD*<sup>3</sup>, 303 asserts «legends of Archimedes' use of great burning mirrors ... are the product of Byzantine imaginations.» Again, Acerbi, *I geometri* cit. 198-200 discounts Dio and mistakenly makes the Archimedean tradition transmitted by Tzetzes and Zonaras (and Eustathios) wholly dependent on the technical writings of Anthemios of Tralles.

<sup>58</sup> See most recently A.M. Kemezis, *Greek Narratives of the Roman Empire under the Severans. Cassius Dio, Philostratus and Herodian*, Cambridge 2014, 282-293, for evidence, arguments and bibliography.

<sup>59</sup> See above, p. 433. Dio claims (*Hist.* I 2) to "have read almost everything anyone has written about them [Romans]" (ἀνέγνω μὲν πάντα ὡς εἶπεῖν τὰ περὶ αὐτῶν τισι γεγραμμένα), but rarely mentions his sources. Potential sources for the Second Punic War have been identified in lost historical works of Coelius Antipater and Valerius Antias, but nothing is known of the content of either text; see A. Klotz, *Über die Stellung des Cassius Dio unter den Quellen zur Geschichte des zweiten punischen Krieges*, «RhM» LXXXV (1936) 68-116.

<sup>60</sup> Among preceding references, while ps.-Lucian, *Hippias* 2 recorded only that Archimedes τὰς τῶν πολεμίων τριήρεις καταφλέξαντα τῇ τέχνῃ, "ignited the enemy's warships by art(ifice)", Galen, *De temperamentis* III 2 (I, 657-658 Kühn) stated that he did this διὰ τῶν πυρρείων, "by means of burning-mirrors". In the early sixth century, Anthemios, *Περὶ παραδόξων μηχανημάτων* §5 (p. 85,

contrast, it is not possible to demonstrate conclusively that Diodoros did or did not refer to a burning-mirror(s). In the extant text of an earlier book, Diodoros promises to discuss Archimedes' inventions when he reaches an appropriate juncture; however, to judge by Tzetzes' treatment of the siege and fall of Syracuse, Diodoros appears to have provided no significant variant or supplementary information. Furthermore, if Diodoros, apparently writing over a three-decade period from the 30s to 50s BC, did mention a burning-mirror(s), he would thus predate the earliest witnesses to this story by some two centuries, during which others who wrote at length about Archimedes' role in the siege, notably Livy and the well-read Plutarch, are entirely silent on this matter<sup>61</sup>.

While Zonaras says nothing further regarding the mirror's design, Tzetzes provides technical specifications for a complex multi-unit solar reflector. This comprises a central hexagonal mirror, to each side of which, at commensurate intervals, adjustable smaller mirrors are attached, "fourfold", by links and hinges (vv. 122-125). Tzetzes' technical source now becomes our primary interest. Before proceeding with this enquiry, however, it is necessary to point out evidence of this source elsewhere in Tzetzes' oeuvre. Unnoticed by all previous studies of Archimedes' burning-mirror(s), two other works by Tzetzes contain very similar accounts. First, elements of this description recur in Tzetzes' only known endeavour in hagiography, a brief *Memorial* to St Lucia of Syracuse, probably written in 1154 or possibly 1158, in connection with one of two Sicilian embassies to Constantinople, and thus roughly contemporary with the composition of his *Histories*. In this inventive literary fantasy, Tzetzes' makes the saint a proud descendant of Archimedes. When St Lucia acclaims her forebear's achievements, her remarks on his defence of Syracuse are essentially a prose digest of *Histories* II 35, 112-130, employing the same or similar

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7-9 Heiberg), to be discussed below, wrote that καὶ γὰρ οἱ μεμνημένοι περὶ τῶν ὑπὸ Ἀρχιμήδους τοῦ θειοτάτου κατασκευασθέντων <ἐκκαῦσαι> οὐ δι' ἑνὸς ἐμνημόνευσαν πυρίου ἀλλὰ διὰ πλειόνων, "for the authorities on what was contrived by the most god-like Archimedes recall that he effected ignition not by means of a single burning-mirror but by several."

<sup>61</sup> Diod. V 37,4: θαυμάσαι δ' ἂν τις εἰκότως τοῦ τεχνίτου τὴν ἐπίνοιαν οὐ μόνον ἐν τούτοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις πολλοῖς καὶ μείζοσι, διαβεβημένοι κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην, περὶ ὧν τὰ κατὰ μέρος ὅταν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἀρχιμήδους ἡλικίαν ἔλθωμεν ἀκριβῶς διέξιμεν, "One may marvel at the inventiveness of the technician, not only in this device [the "Archimedean" screw], but also in many other and greater ones, which have been celebrated across the whole inhabited world, and which we shall accurately describe in detail when we come to the period of Archimedes." See, for example, the early assessment of Heiberg, *o.c.* 39: *sed putaverim eum [Tzetzem] ex illo [Diodoro] nihil nisi narrationem de morte Archimedis hausisse*. See recently the same conclusions by Jal, *o.c.* 39-45.



vocabulary, including details about the burning-mirrors, now pluralised<sup>62</sup>. Second, and more remarkably, most of the details of the mirror reported in *Histories* II 35 are also found in a long scholion that Tzetzes wrote on his *Carmina Iliaca*, the erudite “showpiece” he had composed two decades earlier in the 1130s. As noted above, in this his earliest Homeric work, Tzetzes first offered a rationalising interpretation of the flame-like glare emitted by Diomedes’ armour (*Il.* V 1-8), with a contrastive reference to Archimedes’ burning of the Roman fleet<sup>63</sup>. Tzetzes’ scholion elaborates the line (*schol. Carm. Il.* II 46a Leone): οὐχ οἷον φλογέεσκε Συρακοσίοιο κατόπτρου, “not such as burned from a Syracusan mirror”<sup>64</sup>:

Συρακοσίοιο κατόπτρου· ὁ Ἀρχιμήδης οὗτος ἐπὶ Ἱέρωνος ἦν καὶ Πυθαγόρου, γέρον γεωμέτρης μηχανικὸς Συρακούσιος τὴν ἡλικίαν ἐγγυὲς ὀγδοήκοντα ἔτων, ὃς μυρία μὲν πεποίηκεν ἕτερα, ἀλλὰ καὶ Μάρκελλον τὸν στρατηγὸν τῶν Ῥωμαίων τῇ Συρακούσῃ πολέμῳ βαρεῖ κατὰ γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης ἐπιτεθέντα μεγάλοις συνέθραυσε μηχανήμασι. πρῶτα μὲν γὰρ μηχανὰς ἐκ τοῦ τείχους καθιείς, αὐτάνδρους ἀνέσπα τὰς τριήρεις ἐκείνου καὶ μετεωρίζων εἰς ὕψος καὶ κατασπῶν εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν

From a Syracusan mirror: this Archimedes lived at the time of Hieron and Pythagoras, a sage geometer [and] mechanician of Syracuse, close to eighty years of age, who had made countless other things, but also used great machines to crush Marcellus, the Roman general, as he beset Syracuse with heavy fighting on land and sea. For first, letting down machines from the wall, he drew up the triremes of [Marcellus], men and all, and raising them aloft to a height and dragging them down into the sea,

<sup>62</sup> S. Lucia 11, ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Varia Graeca Sacra. Сборник греческих неизданных богословских текстов IV–XV веков*, St Petersburg 1909, 80-97, with Archimedes’ defensive machines at 94,4-13, and specifically 94,10-13: εἰ δὲ καὶ τόξου βολὴν ἀποσταίησαν ἐκ τῶν τειχῶν πρὸς τὸ πέλαγος, ἐν ἐξαγώνοις κατόπτροις τετραπλούμενοις [*sic*] λαμπάδας ἡλίου δεχόμενος καὶ ταύτας φλέγων ἀντανακλάσειν, “and if they [the Roman ships] withdrew out to sea a bowshot from the walls, he received the light of the sun in hexagonal fourfold[?] mirrors and by means of reflections set these [ships] ablaze.” See also 83,9-17. On the authorship and date of this work see P.L.M. Leone, *Sull’Hypomnema in S. Luciam di Giovanni Tzetzes*, «Rivista di Bizantinistica» I/2 (1991) 17-21. Leone favours composition in 1154; an alternative dating to 1158 is not entirely excluded.

<sup>63</sup> *Carm. Il.* II 44-48. The comparison between Diomedes and Archimedes recurs at *Alleg. Il.* V 1-24. See previous discussion at pp. 434-439.

<sup>64</sup> Leone, *Carmina Iliaca* cit. 166,13-167,13. See also remarks of Braccini, *o.c.* 158-160. Previous scholarship seemingly overlooked the defective text of this scholion previously published in Shirach, *o.c.* 46-48.

ὑποβρυχίους ἐποίει. τοῦ Μαρκέλλου δὲ τὰς λοιπὰς ὀγκάδας πορρώτερον τοῦ τείχους πελαγιώτερον καθελκύσαντος, μηχανήμασι πάλιν ὁ αὐτὸς Ἀρχιμήδης τὸν καθένα τῶν Συρακουσίων ἐποίει λίθους σφενδοῦν ἁμαξήρεις καὶ πάλιν τὰς ὀγκάδας βυθίζειν. ἀπογνοὺς δὲ ὁ Μάρκελλος τὸν τείχους ἐπίπλουν τόξου βολὴν πόρρωθεν εἴλκυσε ταύτας· ὁ δὲ κάτοπτρον ἐξάγωνον ποιήσας ποδιαῖον τὸ μέγεθος καὶ ἀνατείνας αὐτό, ὡς ἀπέχειν ἐξ ἴσου διαστήματος μεσημβρινῆς, θερινῆς καὶ χειμερινῆς ἡλίου ἀκτῖνος καὶ θεῖς παρ' ἐκάστην ἐκείνου γωνίαν ἕτερα τέτταρα μικρότερα κάτοπτρα, τῇ ἀνακλάσει τῆς ἀκτῖνος τὰς ὀγκάδας ἐνέπηρσε τοσοῦτον ἀφροστηκυίας...

he left them below the surface. When Marcellus had pulled back the rest of his ships further out to sea away from the wall, again with machines the same Archimedes made it possible for each one of the Syracusans to sling stones the size of a wagon and again to sink the ships. Giving up on sailing against the wall, Marcellus pulled them back as far as a bowshot, but [Archimedes], having made a hexagonal mirror, one foot in dimension, and tilted it so that it was at an equal distance from the midday rays of the sun, in summer or midwinter, and having set at each angle of that [hexagonal mirror] four other smaller mirrors, by the reflection of the rays he set the ships on fire when they were so far away...

The scholion continues at some length up to the capture of the city and Archimedes' death, incorporating references to his prior discoveries. As previously discussed, the chronology of Tzetzes' scholia to his *Carmina Iliaca* remains uncertain. In this case, however, the evidence permits some tentative inferences. Insofar as *Histories* II 35 and Zonaras IX 4 are independent witnesses to Dio's text, instances of verbal correspondence between the scholion and Zonaras alone suggest that, whenever Tzetzes wrote this scholion, he did not merely rework material found in *Histories* II 35 but referred separately to Dio's account. That is to say, the scholion and *Histories* II 35 appear to be distinct projects and possibly belong to different periods.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, arguably in favour of an early dating of the scholion is the incidence of errors or conflicting details (the reference to Pythagoras, the size of the

<sup>65</sup> Note, for example, that the phrase ἀνατείνας αὐτό in Tzetzes' scholion finds a direct parallel in the Dio-derived passage of Zonaras IX 4 (πρὸς τὸν ἥλιον ἀνατείνας), but not *Hist.* II 35. That the scholion draws independently on Dio's text is best illustrated by the wording καθίει, αὐτάνδρους ἀνέσπα, where καθίει ... ἀνέσπα is found in Zonaras IX 4 but not in *Hist.* II 35, while αὐτάνδρους is found in *Hist.* II 35 but not in Zonaras IX 4.

mirror, Archimedes' age), all of which are omitted or seemingly corrected in *Histories* II 35, and can thus be explained as the mistakes of a younger Tzetzes<sup>66</sup>. If this inference is correct, Tzetzes' interest in this theme and access to the relevant historical and technical sources may go back to his earliest writings.

In any case, to supplement Dio's narrative, Tzetzes drew additional information about Archimedes' mirror(s) from a second source, which scholarship has long recognised as a work entitled *On Paradoxical Mechanisms* (Περὶ παροξυμένων μηχανημάτων), written by Anthemios of Tralles, the early sixth-century architect, physicist and geometer. A substantial but truncated section of this treatise survives<sup>67</sup>. In addition, a near-contemporary anecdote, recorded in the 570s, implies Anthemios' practical experimentation in this field, by alleging his construction of a concave, disk-shaped solar reflector on his property, so that he might terrify a neighbour with sudden beams of light<sup>68</sup>. Tzetzes may well acknowledge a special indebtedness to Anthemios in the source-notice that concludes *Histories* II 35, where he lists

<sup>66</sup> The chronological reference ἐπὶ Ἰέρωνος ἦν καὶ Πυθαγόρου, as it stands, is inexplicable. Certainly Archimedes lived during the reign of Hieron II of Syracuse (r. 269-215 BC), but no Pythagoras figures in the city's history in this period. If the famous philosopher is meant, he lived in the sixth century BC and has no documented connection with Syracuse. Here also the stated foot-wide dimension (ποδιαῖον τὸ μέγεθος) of the hexagonal mirror finds no parallel in *Hist.* II 35 nor, as will be shown below, in Tzetzes' technical source. The almost 80-year lifespan (τὴν ἡλικίαν ἐγγυὺς ὀγδοήκοντα ἐτῶν) of Archimedes in the scholion conflicts with the implication at *Hist.* II 35, 108 that he died aged 75 (χρόνους τε ἑβδομήκοντα καὶ πέντε παρελαύνων), though the source of either statement is unknown and Tzetzes may merely elaborate ancient indications of Archimedes' old age (see above n. 36).

<sup>67</sup> The sole manuscript witness to the Greek text is *Vat. gr.* 218 (1r-2v). The most frequently cited edition is by J.L. Heiberg, *Mathematici Graeci Minores*, Copenhagen 1927, 77-87. For the sake of continuity, Heiberg's pagination/lineation is retained below. At least two Arabic versions of Anthemios' work are also variously preserved: Rashed, *o.c.* 217-244 (textual tradition), 286-321 (Arabic texts, French transl. and annotations). A revised edition of the Greek text is edited by M. Rashed in R. Rashed, *o.c.* 343-359, with ten emendations, based on the Arabic tradition and/or re-examination of the *Vaticanus* under ultraviolet light; only one emendation substantively affects the passages discussed below. English translation and commentary: G.L. Huxley, *Anthemios of Tralles: A Study in Later Greek Geometry*, Cambridge MA 1959, 6-19. On grounds of content, style and method, some scholars have identified the so-called *Fragmentum mathematicum Bobiense*, which treats *inter alia* the focal properties of parabolic and spherical mirrors, as part of Anthemios' work. Greek text: Heiberg, *o.c.* 87-92; repr. in Huxley, *o.c.* 53-58 with Engl. transl. and commentary at 20-26. Date and authorship: Huxley, *o.c.* 27-33; Knorr, *The Geometry* cit. esp. 63-70, with older bibliography. Rashed, *o.c.* 220 n. 8, 264-271 contests this view.

<sup>68</sup> Agath. *Hist.* V 8,3-4, ed. R. Keydell, Berlin 1967, 173,18-23, on which see below, n. 104. See generally Huxley, *o.c.* 1-5, with bibliography; *PLRE* IIIA, 88-89, *s.v.* Anthemius 2.

“Anthemios the paradoxographer” as “foremost” among those authors who mention Archimedes<sup>69</sup>.

In order to understand Tzetzes’ methodology, it is necessary to examine briefly the content, nature and aims of Anthemios’ work. The transmitted text comprises three optical problems. The second enquires: “How shall we cause combustion by means of the sun’s rays in a given position that is not less than a bowshot away?” As historical background, Anthemios outlines principles established by preceding geometers and introduces the tradition that Archimedes had used mirrors to burn the Roman fleet. Anthemios observes that this proposition would seem to be impossible “according to those who have set out the construction of so-called burning-mirrors” (κατὰ μὲν τοὺς ἐκθεμένους τὰς τῶν λεγομένων πυρῶν κατασκευάς), inasmuch as, using the types of mirrors they discuss – namely concave parabolic mirrors – combustion occurs only if the target is aligned with the direction of the sun’s rays, while, again “according to the explanations of the ancients” (κατὰ τὰς ἐκθέσεις τῶν παλαιῶν), burning over so great a distance would require a mirror of unfeasibly colossal dimensions in order to attain the required focal length<sup>70</sup>. Nevertheless, since “Archimedes cannot be deprived of the fame (δόξα), unanimously reported by all authors, that he burnt the enemy ships using the sun’s rays, it is reasonable to suppose that the problem can be solved”<sup>71</sup>. On the premise that “combustion with burning-mirrors occurs in no other way than by conducting many rays to one and the same point” (ἢ τῶν πυρῶν ἕξαιψις καθ’ ἕτερον οὐ γίνεται τρόπον ἢ τῷ πλείονας ἀκτῖνας εἰς τὸν ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν τόπον συνάγεσθαι), Anthemios opines that this could most easily be achieved “through many men” (διὰ πλείονων ἀνδρῶν) collectively aiming individual hand-held plane mirrors at a single point<sup>72</sup>. Anthemios concludes that this method, which is consistent with the testimony of all earlier authors that Archimedes’ burnt the Roman fleet using several mirrors, is thus the

<sup>69</sup> *Hist.* II 35 and 103-104: καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς δὲ μέμνηται πολλοὶ τοῦ Ἀρχιμήδους, / Ἀνθέμιος μὲν πρόωτιστος ὁ παραδοξογράφος, “and along with them [Dio and Diodorus] many refer to Archimedes: Anthemios the paradoxographer, foremost...” Tzetzes cites Anthemios also at *Hist.* XII 457, 969 and *Alleg. II.* V 18.

<sup>70</sup> Anthemios §2 (81,22-82,8)

<sup>71</sup> Anthemios §2 (82,9-12): ἐπειδὴ δὲ τὴν Ἀρχιμήδους δόξαν οὐχ οἷόν τε ἐστὶ καθελεῖν, ἅπαντι ὁμολόγως ἱστορηθέντος, ὡς τὰς ναῦς τῶν πολεμίων διὰ τῶν ἡλιακῶν ἔκαυσεν ἀκτῖνων, ἀναγκαῖον εὐλόγως καὶ κατὰ τοῦτο δυνατὸν εἶναι τὸ πρόβλημα... Anthemios evidently draws on earlier sources, both historical and geometrical, but the evidence for what these might have been remains ambiguous, see remarks of Knorr, *The Geometry* cit. esp. 62-63.

<sup>72</sup> Anthemios §3 (83,8-23)

most likely explanation<sup>73</sup>. Anthemios then proposes another solution “so that we do not go to the trouble of imposing this [task] on many men” (ἵνα δὲ μὴ δυσχεραίνωμεν πλείοσιν τοῦτο ἐπιτάττοντες)<sup>74</sup>. As verbal correspondences (marked in bold) indicate, it was this following section that inspired Tzetzes’ account of Archimedes’ burning-mirror at Syracuse (Anthemios §2 *tit.*, §3-4):

β’. Πῶς ἂν εἰς τὸν δοθέντα τόπον ἀφροστώτα οὐκ ἔλαττον ἢ τόξου βολὴν κατασκευάσομεν **ἔξαψιν** γίνεσθαι διὰ **τῶν ἡλιακῶν ἀκτίνων**....

γ’. [...] ἔστω ἐπίπεδον **ἔξαγωνικὸν ἔσοπτρον** τὸ ΑΒΓΔΕΖ καὶ τοῦτω παρακείμενα ἕτερα ὅμοια **ἔσοπτρα ἔξαγωνικά** καὶ συνημμένα τῷ προτέρῳ κατὰ τὰς εἰρημένους ΑΒ, ΒΓ, ΓΔ, ΔΕ, ΕΖ, ΖΑ εὐθείας ἀπὸ ἡττονος ὀλίγῳ διαμέτρου, δυνάμενα δὲ κινεῖσθαι περὶ τὰς εἰρημένους εὐθείας ἢ **λεπίδων** συναπτῶν προσκολλιζομένων αὐτοῖς ἢ **τῶν λεγομένων γιγλυμίων**. εἰ τοίνυν ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἐπιπέδῳ τοῦ μέσου κατόπτρου ποιήσομεν εἶναι καὶ τὰ πέριξ ἔσοπτρα, ἢ ἀνάκλασις δηλονότι ὁμοίως τῇ πάσῃ συνθέσει γενήσεται. εἰ δὲ μένοντος τοῦ μέσου ὡσανεὶ ἀκινήτου διά τινος ἐπινοίας εὐχερῶς προστιθεμένης ἅπαντα τὰ πέριξ ἐπὶ τὸ μέσον ἐπινεύσομεν, δῆλον, ὡς καὶ αἱ ἀπ’ αὐτῶν ἀνακλώμεναι ἀκτῖνες ἐπὶ τὸν μέσον τόπον τοῦ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐσόπτρου παραγίνονται. τὸ αὐτὸ δὴ

2. How shall we cause combustion by means of the sun’s rays in a given position that is not less than a bowshot away? ...
3. [...] Let there be a plane hexagonal mirror ΑΒΓΔΕΖ and adjacent to it other similar hexagonal mirrors and connected to the first along those straight lines ΑΒ, ΒΓ, ΓΔ, ΔΕ, ΕΖ, ΖΑ, each with a slightly smaller diameter and capable of being moved about those straight lines, being linked together either by plates glued to them or by the so-called small hinges. If, then, we place the surrounding mirrors in the same plane as the central mirror, the reflection [from each mirror] is obviously in the same direction in every case. But if the central [mirror] is left, as it were, unmoved and, by suitably applying a degree of ingenuity, we incline all the surrounding [mirrors], it is clear that the rays reflected from the [surrounding mirrors] will arrive at the central point of the original mirror. So then, by proceeding in this way

<sup>73</sup> Anthemios §5 (85,7-9): καὶ γὰρ οἱ μεμνημένοι περὶ τῶν ὑπὸ Ἀρχιμήδους τοῦ θεοτάτου κατασκευασθέντων <ἐκκαῦσαι> οὐ δι’ ἐνὸς ἐμνημόνευσαν πυρίου ἀλλὰ διὰ πλείονων, “for the authorities on what was contrived by the most god-like Archimedes recall that he effected ignition not by means of a single burning-mirror but by several.”

<sup>74</sup> Anthemios §3 (83,24)

ποιούντες καὶ ἕτερα πέριξ περιτιθέντες τῶν εἰρημένων ἔσοπτρα καὶ δυνάμενα νεύειν ἐπὶ τὸ μέσον {καὶ} τὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀκτῖνας εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ συναγάγωμεν, ὥστε συναγομένας ἀπάσας κατὰ τὸν εἰρημένον τρόπον τὴν ἕξαψιν ἐν τῷ δοθέντι τόπῳ ποιῆσαι.

- δ'. κάλλιον δὲ ἢ αὐτὴ **ἕξαψις** γενήσεται, εἰ **τέτρασιν** ἢ καὶ πέντε ἐσόπτροις δοθείη τὰ **τοιαῦτα** πυρία ἀνὰ ἑπτὰ ὄντα τὸν ἀριθμὸν καὶ ἀφεστῶσι **σύμμετρον** ἀλλήλων **διάστημα** κατ' ἀναλογίαν τοῦ τῆς ἐξάψεως διαστήματος, ὥστε τὰς ἀκτῖνας τὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν τεμνοῦσας ἀλλήλας πλέον δύνασθαι ποιεῖν τὴν εἰρημένην ἐκπύρωσιν. ἐν ἐνὶ γὰρ τόπῳ τῶν ἐσόπτρων ὄντων κατ' ὀξυτάτας **γωνίας** αἱ ἀνακλάσεις ἀλλήλας τέμνουσιν, ὥστε σχεδὸν πάντα τὸν περὶ τὸν ἄξονα τόπον θερμαινόμενον δια<πυροῦσθ>αι...<sup>75</sup>

and placing other mirrors around those previously described, which can incline towards the central [mirror], we conduct the rays from them to the same [point], so that all the [rays] conducted in the manner described cause combustion at the given point.

4. The same combustion will occur more effectively if [individual plane] burning-mirrors such as these, to the number of seven apiece, were to be assigned to four or even five [composite] mirrors, and these were standing at a commensurate distance from one another in proportion to their distance from the [point of] combustion, in such a manner that the rays from them intersect one other and are more able to cause the said ignition. For when the mirrors are in one place, the reflected rays intersect one another at very acute angles, so that almost the whole area surrounding the axis is heated and bursts into flames...<sup>76</sup>

Tzetzes extracted and greatly condensed key elements of Anthemios' technical exposition, discernible in individual terms and phrases, and inserted them into the framework of Dio's historical account. In doing so, he appears to have misunderstood the context and operation of Anthemios' reflective device. First, and crucially, two stages of scientific discourse must be distinguished, despite the rather vague transition from a conjectural reconstruction of Archimedes' likely method to a new proposal for an alternative solution. Anthemios reasons that, if Archimedes did in

<sup>75</sup> Heiberg, *o.c.* 83,27-84,17 with selected emendations in Rashed, *o.c.* 356. See further below n. 81 on textual and interpretative difficulties at §4 (84,18-20).

<sup>76</sup> The English translation by Huxley, *o.c.* 13-14 differs in many respects.

fact burn the Roman fleet by solar reflection, he most probably did so by deploying many individual hand-held plane mirrors to concentrate the sun's rays on a single point of combustion. The complex multi-unit reflector, in contrast, is expressly Anthemios' own invention – “we devised the following” (κατασκευάσωμεν ούτως), in essence his improvement upon Archimedes, which employs the same optical principles, but has the stated objective of economising on manpower. Accordingly, Tzetzes transformed Anthemios' ingenious quasi-geometrical speculation into Archimedes' historical invention. The most likely point of confusion is Anthemios' concluding statement: “and I think that there is no other means of causing burning at this distance” (καὶ οἶμαι μὴ εἶναι τρόπον <ἕτε>ρον τῆς ἀπὸ τούτου τοῦ διαστήματος ἐκκαύσεως)<sup>77</sup>. Here Anthemios means simply that combustion over the given distance can be achieved only by using multiple (plane) mirrors, in accordance with the universal report that Archimedes “effected ignition not by means of a single burning-mirror but by several” (<ἐκκαῦσαι> οὐ δι' ἑνὸς ... πυρίου ἀλλὰ διὰ πλειόνων)<sup>78</sup>. Tzetzes, however, could easily have misunderstood the “means” (τρόπον) in question to be Anthemios' own multi-unit contraption, as outlined in the immediately preceding text. Second, older scholarship puzzled over what Tzetzes meant or understood by μικρὰ τοιαῦτα κάτοπτρα θεῖς τετραπλᾶ γωνίαις (*Hist.* II 35, 124), “setting small mirrors such as these, fourfold, at angles”<sup>79</sup>. Assuming he does not mean “fourfold in angles”, namely square mirrors, which would glaringly contradict Anthemios' text<sup>80</sup>, Tzetzes appears to envisage a sequence of four smaller mirrors affixed to each side of the central hexagonal mirror. This interpretation is now supported by Tzetzes' scholion to the *Carmina Iliaca* (II 46): “and having set at each angle of that [hexagonal mirror] four other smaller mirrors” (καὶ θεῖς παρ' ἐκάστην ἐκείνου γωνίαν ἕτερα τέτταρα μικρότερα κάτοπτρα). Although Anthemios' specification for “placing other mirrors around those previously described” (ἕτερα πέριξ περιτιθέντες τῶν εἰρημένων ἔσοπτρα) clearly envisages more than one row of smaller mirrors arranged concentrically around the central mirror, he nowhere specifies how many smaller mirrors should be sequentially attached to each side of the hexagon. In fact, in the received text, Anthemios mentions the number four only in the context of an obscurely worded proposal that optimal combustion

<sup>77</sup> Anthemios §5 (85,10-11)

<sup>78</sup> Anthemios §5 (85,7-9)

<sup>79</sup> Interpretative difficulties posed by Tzetzes' τετραπλᾶ are discussed by L. Dupuy, *Fragment d'un Ouvrage grec d'Anthemios, Sur les Paradoxes de Mécanique*, Paris 1777, 29-35; Huxley, *o.c.* 36-37.

<sup>80</sup> Anthemios §3 (83,28) expressly specifies ἕτερα ὅμοια ἔσοπτρα ἐξαγωνικά, “other similar hexagonal mirrors.”

may be obtained by constructing four or even five reflector-units, each comprising seven mirrors (i.e. a central hexagon with six side-mirrors). Modern editors and translators have found this easily misconstrued and probably corrupt passage no less challenging<sup>81</sup>. Third, in both his poetic account of events at Syracuse (*Hist.* II 35, 121, 130) and his scholion to the *Carmina Iliaca* (II 46a Leone), Tzetzes specifies that Marcellus withdrew his ships over a bowshot's distance from the city's seawalls, a detail not found in Zonaras. Tzetzes introduced this measurement to the siege narrative purely because Anthemios set himself the task of projecting the sun's rays over that distance<sup>82</sup>. It follows that this information was not to be found in Dio's narrative. Finally, again in both his *Histories* (II 35, 127) and the scholion, Tzetzes' unintelligible reference to the sun's midday beams in both summer and mid-winter – that is to say, at the solstices – is irrelevant to the historical circumstances of Syracuse in 213 BC; in fact Tzetzes has interpolated this unrelated detail from the preceding problem in Anthemios' thesis<sup>83</sup>. In short, while Tzetzes displays a degree of familiarity with Anthemios' work that is indicative of current or recent access to the text, his handling of this technical material suggests a high degree of misconception and/or carelessness.

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<sup>81</sup> Anthemios §4 (84,18-20), where Heiberg edits: εἰ τέτρασιν ἢ καὶ πέντε ἐσόπτροις δοθεῖν τὰ τοιαῦτα πυρία ἀνὰ ἑπτὰ ὄντα τὸν ἀριθμὸν (app. crit. l. 19: «ἐσόπτροις] incertum»), with the apparent meaning “if [individual plane] burning-mirrors such as these, to the number of seven apiece, were to be assigned to four or even five [composite] mirrors.” Some modern attempts to translate Heiberg's text are self-evidently incorrect, e.g. French transl. in P. Ver Eecke, *Les opuscules mathématiques de Didyme, Diophane, et Anthémius, suivis du fragment mathématique de Bobbio*, Paris 1940, 54, and English transl. in Huxley, *o.c.* 14, both seemingly under the influence of the French rendering by Dupuy, *o.c.* 15. More recently, where Heiberg and prior editorial consensus discerned the uncertain reading ἐσόπτροις or κατόπτροις, Rashed, *o.c.* 233-234 (with n. 25), by means of an ultraviolet lamp, read προσώποις; see thus the revised Greek text at 356,15 (app. crit.) and mathematical analysis at 253-255. This reading would entail assigning composite reflectors “to four or even five people.” As an additional complication, Rashed, *o.c.* 233-234 (n. 25), 308 observes that Uṭāridi's Arabic version here reads *nawāḥin*, “places”, implying that the translator-paraphrast read τόποις, thus “to four or even five places.” A further possible source of confusion, which has defied satisfactory explanation in modern scholarship, is Anthemios' preceding remark at the beginning of §3 (83,25-26): εὐρίσκομεν γὰρ, ὡς οὐκ ἔλαττον καὶ ἀνακλάσεων χρῆζει τὸ ὀφειλὸν ἐξαφθῆναι, “we find that no less than twenty-four reflections are needed to cause the required combustion”, from which, whatever the intended meaning, a reader might potentially infer “fourfold” side-mirrors on each side of the hexagon. See Knorr, *The Geometry* cit. 54 with n. 4.

<sup>82</sup> Anthemios §2 (81,19-21).

<sup>83</sup> Anthemios §1 (79,1-8). The nature of this error was already noted by Dupuy, *o.c.* 31-33; see also Huxley, *o.c.* 37.



*Some literary contexts: Archimedes in eleventh- and twelfth-century literature*

Tzetzes was one of several Byzantine authors in the eleventh and twelfth centuries who referred to or discussed Archimedes' burning-mirrors. A brief survey, which does not aim to be comprehensive, opens lines of enquiry concerning textual interrelationships and common sources, while locating Tzetzes' 'mathematical' interests in contemporary intellectual and belletristic currents.

After a long silence since the sixth century, renewed interest first re-emerges, perhaps predictably, in the writings of Michael Psellos, who mentions this story in four works<sup>84</sup>. In his short tract *On the Echo-chamber in Nikomedeia*, Psellos seeks to present a natural-scientific explanation for an acoustic phenomenon inside a particular domed structure, in response to those who consider this sound effect to be miraculous or due to concealed artifice. Following an exploratory visit, as Psellos is not able to substantiate his theory with the reproducible experimental results that some required, he defensively adduces, as ancient precedent, another scientific theorem that is not vitiated merely by variable results in its practical application: "since also Archimedes the Sicilian knew that from certain mirrors, which have received the appropriate preparation and have been placed facing towards the sun's rays, fire will be kindle at a commensurate distance, and indeed he prepared many such [devices] by which he defended the walls of his native city, thereby kindling whole funeral pyres among the enemy, but he did not find the target with all of the devices. For it was necessary that the iron was not fashioned to be too concave nor disproportionately curved nor to have a smooth surface" (ἐπεὶ καὶ Ἀρχιμήδης ὁ Σικελὸς ἦδει μὲν ὡς ἐξ ἐνόπτρων τινῶν κατασκευὴν τὴν προσήκουσαν δεξαμένων καὶ πρὸς ἡλιακὰς ἀντιτεθέντων ἀκτῖνας πῦρ ἐκ συμέτρου διαστήματος ἐξαφθήσεται, καὶ πολλὰ τοιαῦτά γε κατεσκεύακε δι' ὧν τὰ τεῖχη τῆς πατρίδος διεφυλάξατο, τοῖς πολεμίοις πυρκαϊὰς ὅλας ἐκεῖθεν ἀνάψας, οὐκ ἐπὶ πάντων δὲ τῶν ὀργάνων τοῦ σκοποῦ ἐπετύγχανεν. ἔχρῃν γὰρ μήτ' ἄγαν κοῖλον εἶναι τὸν ἐπιτεχνώμενον σίδηρον μήτ' ἀσυμέτρως κυρτοῦσθαι μήτε λείαν ἔχειν τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν)<sup>85</sup>. Similarly, in two orations Psellos alludes to Archimedes and

<sup>84</sup> For Psellos' knowledge of ancient Greek scientific texts see generally A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism and Byzantium. The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Cambridge 2007, 202-209.

<sup>85</sup> J.M. Duffy, *Michaelis Pselli Philosophica minora, I: Opuscula logica, physica, allegorica, alia*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1992, 109,92-100 (XXXI). See recently A. Papalexandrou, *Perceptions of sound and sonic environments across the Byzantine acoustic horizon*, in S. Ashbrook Harvey-M. Mullet (edd.), *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls. Sense Perceptions in Byzantium*, Washington DC 2017, 67-85: 79-80, with an Engl. transl. of the whole text at 84-85.

burning-mirrors. In one occasional speech, *When He Resigned from the Rank of Protasekretis*, dated to ca. 1055, Psellos describes some of the scientific demonstrations that he has personally conducted for his pupils, inspired by the writings of Heron and Archimedes. Having outlined several hydraulic and pneumatic mechanisms, he claims “a mirror too was fashioned by me, from which truly fire, spurting forth spontaneously and applied at a distance, incredibly burns to ashes” (κάτοπτρον τέ μοι ἐξείργαστο ἀφ’ οὗ δὴ πῦρ αὐτομάτως ἐξαλλόμενον τὸ ἐκ διαστήματος παρατιθέμενον παραδόξως τεφροῖ)<sup>86</sup>. In his *Encomium* on John Mauro-pous, delivered in or shortly after 1075, Psellos clarifies that the process of “consuming with divine fire” (θείῳ πυρὶ καταφλέγων) differs from earthly conflagrations and is “not like when Archimedes of Sicily with certain machines made lightning burst forth” (οὐχ ὡς ὁ ἐκ Σικελῶν Ἀρχιμήδης μηχαναῖς τισιν ἀστραπαῖς ἐκεῖθεν ἐκπυρροηνίζων)<sup>87</sup>.

The most peculiar reference to Archimedes’ burning-mirrors, however, occurs in the *Concise History*, ascribed in its unique manuscript to Psellos and in recent scholarship generally accepted as authentically his<sup>88</sup>. In this series of idiosyncratic biographical sketches of emperors, the miscellany of unrelated details recorded under Anastasios I (491-518) includes a notice about the celebrated philosopher Proklos, the foremost exponent of the Neoplatonist school in Athens (*Hist. synt.* 69):

Ἐπὶ τούτου Πρόκλος ὁ μέγας ἦνθει φιλόσοφος, ὃν ἐγὼ μετὰ γε Πλάτωνα τίθημι, ἀνὴρ Συριανοῦ μὲν μαθητῆς τοῦ σοφοῦ, ὑπερβαλὼν δὲ μακροῦ τὸν διδάσκαλον καὶ τὴν ἑλληνικὴν σοφίαν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ τέλει συμπερανάμενος. Οὗτος ἀναγνοὺς πάντα τὰ Ἀρχιμήδεια, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς προσεφευρῶν, ὧν ἐκεῖνος ἠγνόησε, κάτοπτρα χαλκεύσας πυρφόρα τῶν

Under his rule flourished the great Proklos, a philosopher whom I place after Plato. This man was a pupil of the wise Syrianos, but surpassed his teacher by far and perfected Greek wisdom to his own standard. He read all Archimedes’ works, but he himself made besides many discoveries that Archimedes did not perceive. Having wrought fire-bearing mirrors, he  
τειχῶν ἀπηώρησε καὶ πῦρ ἐκεῖθεν κατὰ τῶν πολιορκούντων τὴν πόλιν

<sup>86</sup> A.R. Littlewood, *Michaelis Pselli Oratoria minora*, Leipzig 1985, 35,173-175 (VIII).

<sup>87</sup> *Encomium on John the Most-reverend Metropolitan of Euchaita and Protosynkellos*, ed. G.T. Dennis, *Michaelis Pselli Orationes panegyricae*, Stuttgart 1994, 163,558-561 (XVII).

<sup>88</sup> Text and Engl. transl.: W.J. Aerts, *Michaelis Pselli Historia Syntomos*, Berlin-New York 1990 (here 52,36-43). Summary of recent scholarship: W. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, Basingstoke-New York 2013, 282-289.

βαρβάρων ἐξεκεράυνωσε.

suspended them from the walls and thence shot out thunderbolts against the barbarians besieging the city.

Even without the wondrous ray-guns, this information is obviously erroneous, not least because Proklos (410/12-485) died six years before Anastasios' accession<sup>89</sup>. Insofar as this episode has any 'historical' basis, it must be set during the protracted military revolt of the *magister militum* Vitalian against Anastasios in 513-15<sup>90</sup>. A detailed, near-contemporary account by John Malalas, successively epitomised and modified in subsequent chronographic works, reports that Vitalian's assault on Constantinople in 515, with predominantly non-Roman troops, was repulsed thanks to an incendiary device invented by "the philosopher Proklos of Athens, a man of renown." Yet Malalas, in contrast, narrates that this Proklos advised Anastasios on the preparation and use of an inflammable chemical compound, based on "pure [unrefined] sulphur" and somehow involving the sun's rays, whereby the imperial forces burned Vitalian's ships and men<sup>91</sup>. Modern assessments of Malalas' account

<sup>89</sup> See *PLRE* II 915-919, s.v. Proclus 4. See remarks by Aerts, *o.c.* 140-141; J. Duffy, *Proclus the philosopher and a weapon of mass destruction*, in M. Grünbart (ed.), *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter*, Berlin 2007, 1-11, esp. 5-7; Treadgold, *o.c.* 283.

<sup>90</sup> Vitalian's revolt: F.K. Haarer, *Anastasios I: Politics and Empire in the Late Roman World*, Cambridge 2006, 164-179; M. Meier, Σταυρωθεὶς δι' ἡμᾶς. *Der Aufstand gegen Anastasios im Jahr 512*, «Millennium» IV (2007) 157-237, with cited bibliography.

<sup>91</sup> Malalas, *Chronographia* XVI 16, ed. H. Thurn, Berlin-New York 2000, 330,28-332,94, here selectively quoted: ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς Ἀναστάσιος πρόην μὲν ἦν μεταστειλάμενος διὰ Μαρίνου τὸν φιλόσοφον Πρόκλον τὸν Ἀθηναῖον, ἄνδρα περιβόητον (330,32-34) ... καὶ ἐκέλευσεν ὁ αὐτὸς φιλόσοφος ἐνεχθῆναι τὸ λεγόμενον θεῖον ἄπυρον πολὺ, εἰπὼν τριβῆναι αὐτὸ ὡς εἰς μίγμα λεπτόν, καὶ δέδωκε τῷ αὐτῷ Μαρίνῳ, εἰρηκῶς αὐτῷ ὅτι ὅπου ῥίψεις ἕξ αὐτοῦ εἴτε εἰς οἶκον εἴτε ἐν πλοίῳ μετὰ τὸ ἀνατεῖλαι τὸν ἥλιον, εὐθέως ἄπτεται ὁ οἶκος ἢ τὸ πλοῖον καὶ ὑπὸ πυρὸς ἀναλίσκεται. (331,42-47) [...] ἔλεγον δὲ τινες ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει ὅτι ἀπὸ τῆς θερμῆς τοῦ ἡλίου, ὡς λεπτότατον ὄντα, τὸ θεῖον ἄπυρον ῥιπτόμενον εἰς τὸν ἀέρα ἄπτεται καὶ φυσικόν ἐστὶ τοῦτο (332,91-93); "The Emperor Anastasius had recently, through Marinos [the praetorian prefect], sent for the philosopher Proklos of Athens, a man of renown [...] and this philosopher ordered a large quantity of what is known as pure sulphur to be brought in, saying that this was to be ground into a fine compound, and he gave this to the same Marinos, saying to him, 'Wherever you throw this either into a house or on to a ship after the sun has risen, the house or the ship will immediately catch alight and be destroyed by fire' [...] Some people in Constantinople said that it was from the heat of the sun that the pure sulphur caught fire when thrown into the air, since it is so fine, and that this is its natural property." Derivative texts: e.g., John of Nikiu, *Chronicle* 89,78-80, Engl. transl. R.H. Charles, London 1916, 130-131; Georgius Monachus, *Chronicon* IX 15, ed. C. de Boor-P. Wirth, II, Stuttgart

range from acceptance of a mostly reliable report, probably derived from a well-placed oral informant soon after Vitalian's defeat, to dismissal of a largely or wholly fictitious tale, concocted by Malalas himself. Correspondingly, depending on which of these interpretations is preferred, Malalas' protagonist becomes either another, later philosopher named Proklos from Athens, reportedly well known, but documented only by Malalas and dependent sources, or merely a fictive doublet of the famous Neoplatonist, also "of Athens", anachronistically transposed to events three decades after his death. Between these extremes lies room for partial conflation of two real and homonymous individuals<sup>92</sup>. In any case, these historical controversies aside, it seems most likely that Psellos (or his source) erroneously interpreted, hastily misread, inaccurately remembered or creatively adapted a version of these events, derived from Malalas or more plausibly an intermediary abridgement, which included the key elements of a philosopher called Proklos and an incendiary invention. The known sources of the *Concise History* offer modest scope for this possibility<sup>93</sup>. Even allowing that the *Concise History* overall abounds in similarly gross errors and shortcomings, which for some readers are sufficient to cast doubt on Psellos' authorship<sup>94</sup>, one struggles to explain or excuse this particular flight of fancy. Psellos' first-person assertion that, in his view, Proklos stands second only to Plato is affirmed both by

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1978<sup>2</sup>, 619,16-620,2; Symeon Logothetes, *Chronicon* 102,2, ed. S. Wahlgren, Berlin-New York 2006, 134,2-7.

<sup>92</sup> *PLRE* II 915-919 distinguishes two homonymous philosophers of Athens: Proklos 4 (915-919) and Proklos 8 (919). For a positive assessment of Malalas' account, see e.g. E. Jeffreys-B. Croke-R. Scott (edd.), *Studies in John Malalas*, Sydney 1990, 6, 11, 16, 209, inferring that Marinus, the praetorian prefect mentioned in Malalas' text, is likely to have been his chief informant; see also *PLRE* II 726-728, s.v. Marinus 7. In contrast, Duffy, *Proclus* cit. 1-11, argues that the episode is Malalas' own invention and that its protagonist Proklos is unhistorical.

<sup>93</sup> The limited *Quellenforschungen* of the *Concise History* have identified resemblances with (a version of) the *Chronicle* of Symeon the Logothete: Aerts, *o.c.* xv, xxiii-xxiv, 139-140 (cited as 'Ecl[oge]. Hist[oriarum].'); J.N. Ljubarskij, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού: Συνεισφορά στην ιστορία του βυζαντινού ουμανισμού*, transl. A. Tzelezi, Athens 2004<sup>2</sup>, 259-261; Treadgold, *o.c.* 285-286. Symeon very concisely reports Vitalian's revolt: 'Εφ' οὗ Βιταλιανὸς ὁ Θράξ ἀντάρας καὶ παραλαβὸν Θράκας καὶ Σκύθας ἤλθεν ἕως τοῦ Ἀνάπλου πραιδεύων. ἀλλὰ ναυμαχίσαντος αὐτῷ Μαρίνου τοῦ ὑπάρχου μετὰ τοῦ μηδικοῦ πυρὸς καὶ θείου ἀπύρου, οὗ κατεσκευάσασε Πρόκλος ὁ φιλόσοφος, κατέφλεξε τὰς ναῦς τῶν βαρβάρων. ὁ Βιταλιανὸς ἔφυγε μετ' ὀλίγων διασωθεῖς (102,2 [Wahlgren, 134,2-7]), "Under whom, Vitalian the Thracian, having risen up and taken hold of Thrace and Scythia, came plundering as far as Anaplous. But Marinus the prefect fought a naval battle with him using the Medic fire and pure sulphur, which Proklos the philosopher prepared, and burned the ships of the barbarians. Vitalian saved himself by fleeing with a few men." Only through extreme carelessness, defective memory or willful elaboration could μετὰ τοῦ μηδικοῦ πυρὸς καὶ θείου ἀπύρου have been construed as Psellos' κάτοπτρα πυρφόρα.

<sup>94</sup> See bibliography in Treadgold, *o.c.* 283-288.

similar statements elsewhere in Psellos' oeuvre and his demonstrable indebtedness to selected Proklean works in his own philosophical writings<sup>95</sup>. Although Proklos often cites or refers to Archimedes, nothing in his extant works could have conceivably suggested a knowledge of or interest in theoretical and/or applied catoptrics<sup>96</sup>.

During the twelfth century, this Archimedean tradition appears to have become more widely known and elaborate, at least to judge by the writings of Tzetzes and his near-contemporaries, Zonaras and Eustathios of Thessaloniki. When Zonaras compiled his *Epitome of Histories*, perhaps barely a decade before Tzetzes' earliest writings, not only did he reproduce the reference to "a kind of mirror" that he encountered in Dio's account of the siege of Syracuse in 213-12 BC, as previously discussed, but also, much later in his work, he interpreted variant historical-literary traditions concerning Vitalian's revolt in 515 in light of this ancient Syracusan episode (*Epit. Hist. XIV 3,28-30*)<sup>97</sup>:

...ἀντικατέστη τούτῳ διὰ Μαρι(α)νοῦ τοῦ ὑπάρχου ὁ Ἀναστάσιος, καὶ καὶ ναυμαχίας γενομένης ἐκ τινος μηχανῆς παρὰ Προκλου τοῦ πάνυ γεγενημένως (τότε γὰρ ἦνθει ἐπὶ φιλοσοφία καὶ ἐν τοῖς μηχανήμασι, τὰ τε τοῦ περιβοήτου ἐν τούτοις Ἀρχιμήδους ἅπαντα διελθὼν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκείνοις προσεξευρών) τὸ ναυτικὸν τῶν ἐναντίων κατεπολεμήθη. κάτοπτρα γὰρ ἄδεται χαλκεῦσαι πυρφόρα ὁ Πρόκλος, καὶ ταῦτα ἐκ τοῦ

...Anastasios opposed him [Vitalian] through Mari{a}nos the Prefect, and a naval battle took place and the opposing fleet was defeated as a result of a certain device constructed by the famous Proklos (for at that time he flourished in philosophy and in mechanics, having perused all the disciplines in which Archimedes was renowned, and having himself made additional discoveries in these fields). For the story goes that Proklos wrought burning-mirrors and τείχους τῶν πολεμίων νεῶν ἀπαιωρῆσαι κατέναντι, τούτοις δὲ τῶν τοῦ

<sup>95</sup> See now D.J. O'Meara, *Michael Psellos*, in S. Gersh (ed.), *Interpreting Proclus: From Antiquity to the Renaissance*, Cambridge 2014, 165-181, with bibliography.

<sup>96</sup> The only allusion to Archimedes' military engineering in Proklos' oeuvre known to me occurs in his prefatorial survey of geometry in Procl. *in Eucl.* prol. I 41,5-8 (ed. G. Friedlein, Leipzig 1873): ...ἢ τε ὀργανοποιϊκῆ τῶν κατὰ πόλεμον ἐπιτηδείων ὀργάνων, οἷα δὲ καὶ Ἀρχιμήδης λέγεται κατασκευάσαι τῶν πολεμούντων τὴν Συράκουσαν ἀμυντικὰ ὄργανα, "...and the engine-making [art] of engines suitable for war, as indeed Archimedes is said to have constructed defensive engines against those waging war on Syracuse". Duffy, *Proclus* cit. 6-7 proposes that Psellos, familiar with but sceptical of Malalas' account, introduced a feat of mechanical engineering more worthy of the great Neoplatonist philosopher.

<sup>97</sup> T. Büttner-Wobst, *Ioannis Zonarae Annales*, III, Bonn 1897, 137,18-138,11.

ἡλίου ἀκτίνων προσβαλουσῶν πῦρ ἐκεῖθεν ἐκκεραυνοῦσθαι καταφλέγον τὸν νηίτην τῶν ἐναντίων στρατόν καὶ νῆας αὐτάς, ὃ πάλαι τὸν Ἀρχιμήδην ἐπινοῆσαι ὁ Δίων ἱστόρησε, τῶν Ῥωμαίων τότε πολιορκούντων Συράκουσαν.

when he suspended them from the wall opposite the enemy ships and the rays of the sun fell upon them, fire burst forth from them and consumed the opposing naval force and the ships themselves; this, Dio narrates, Archimedes long ago thought up, when the Romans were besieging Syracuse.

Both the content and wording of Zonaras' brief account of Vitalian's defeat outside Constantinople indicate that he amalgamated two sources, an ultimately Malalas-derived narrative and the notice about Proklos in Psellos' *Concise History*:

ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς Ἀναστάσιος πρόφην μὲν ἦν μεταστειλόμενος διὰ Μαρίνου τὸν φιλόσοφον Πρόκλον τὸν Ἀθηναῖον, ἄνδρα περιβόητον

(Malalas, *Chronographia* XVI 16, p. 330,32-34 Thurn)

ἀντικατέστη τούτῳ διὰ Μαρι|α|νοῦ τοῦ ὑπάρχου ὁ Ἀναστάσιος, καὶ καὶ ναυμαχίας γενομένης ἕκ τινος μηχανῆς παρὰ Πρόκλου τοῦ πάνυ γεγενημένης (τότε γὰρ ἦνθει ἐπὶ φιλοσοφία καὶ ἐν τοῖς μηχανήμασι, τά τε τοῦ περιβοήτου ἐν τούτοις Ἀρχιμήδους ἅπαντα διελθὼν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκεῖνοις προσεξευρών) τὸ ναυτικὸν τῶν ἐναντίων κατεπολεμήθη. κάτοπτρα γὰρ ἄδεται χαλκεῦσαι πυρφόρα ὁ Πρόκλος, καὶ ταῦτα ἐκ τοῦ τείχους τῶν πολεμίων νεῶν ἀπαιωρῆσαι κατέναντι, τούτοις δὲ τῶν τοῦ ἡλίου ἀκτίνων προσβαλουσῶν πῦρ ἐκεῖθεν ἐκκεραυνοῦσθαι καταφλέγον τὸν νηίτην τῶν ἐναντίων στρατόν καὶ νῆας αὐτάς, ...

(Zonaras, *Epit. hist.* XIV 3,28-30)

Ἐπὶ τούτου Πρόκλος ὁ μέγας ἦνθει φιλόσοφος, ὃν ἐγὼ μετὰ γε Πλάτωνα τίθημι, [...] Οὗτος ἀναγνοὺς πάντα τὰ Ἀρχιμήδεια, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς προσεφευρών, ὧν ἐκεῖνος ἠγνόησε, κάτοπτρα χαλκεύσας πυρφόρα τῶν τειχῶν ἀπῆώρησε καὶ πῦρ ἐκεῖθεν κατὰ τῶν πολιορκούντων τὴν πόλιν βαρβάρων ἐξεκεραύνωσε

(Psellos, *Hist. synt.* 69)

An alternative possibility that both Psellos and Zonaras independently drew on a lost common source, which had already incorporated the two traditions, is less easily compatible with the broader evidence for Zonaras' use of Psellos' *Concise History*<sup>98</sup>. Zonaras wrote while in retirement in the island monastery of St Glykeria and, in his prologue, remarks on his isolation and lack of necessary books<sup>99</sup>. He was, therefore, not always able to check his sources or avoid glaring inaccuracies<sup>100</sup>, while his expression ἄδεταί, "so the story goes", may imply circumspection in this case. Nevertheless, whatever information was available to him regarding Vitalian's revolt, Dio's report of Archimedes' burning-mirror at Syracuse appears to have corroborated the feasibility of their military application more than seven centuries later.

Finally, Archimedes' burning-mirrors recur in the Homeric *Commentaries* of Eustathios (ca. 1115-ca. 1195/7, Archbishop of Thessaloniki from 1178), Tzetzes' longer-lived and more successful contemporary. In his voluminous *Commentaries on the Iliad*, in addition to two incidental references to Archimedes<sup>101</sup>, Eustathios refers more expansively to this story in his comments on *Iliad* V (1-8), the same verses concerning Diomedes' divinely-bestowed gleaming aura as were discussed above in relation to Tzetzes' *Carmina Iliaca* and *Allegories of the Iliad*. Eustathios notes that unspecified predecessors have drawn a connection between the Homeric hero's dazzling equipment and Archimedes' burning-mirrors, though Eustathios also introduces other elements of this tradition<sup>102</sup>:

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<sup>98</sup> Aerts, *o.c.* 52-53 (app. crit.), 139-140 notes the resemblances, but at xiii-xv, xxiv entertains the possibility that the (in his view, spuriously attributed) *Concise History* postdates and is dependent on Zonaras. See Treadgold, *o.c.* esp. 283 n. 62, 396 with n. 38, asserting the opposite. See also the more cautious remarks of Duffy, *Proclus* cit. 6 n. 16; A. Karpozilos, Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονολόγοι, III: (11ος – 12ος αι.), Athens 2009, 166-167.

<sup>99</sup> Zonaras, *Epit. hist.* praef. 2 (ed. L. Dindorf, I, Leipzig 1868, 5,12-17), 4 (I, 9,12).

<sup>100</sup> For example, at *Epit. hist.* XIV 3,23-25 (pp. III, 136,19-137,10 Büttner-Wobst), immediately preceding his account of Vitalian's revolt, Zonaras inserts an anecdote concerning Theoderic the Ostrogoth, whom he describes as "the ruler of Africa" (ὁ τῆς Ἀφρικῆς ἡγεμών).

<sup>101</sup> Eust. *in Il.* I 191,7-8 van der Valk: ὅθεν καὶ ὁ πολυμήχανος Ἀρχιμήδης μᾶ προσβολῆ πολλὰ βέλη ἀφιεῖς ἐκατόγχειρ πρὸς τῶν βαλλομένων ἐκλήθη, "whence also the ever-inventive Archimedes is hailed for having sent forth, with one touch, a hundred-handed, many missiles towards their targets"; *in Il.* III 394,1-2 van der Valk: λέγεται δὲ ἕλιξ καὶ τι μηχανῆς εἶδος, ὃ πρῶτος εὐρὼν Ἀρχιμήδης εὐδοκίμησε ..., "it is said that a *helix* is also some other kind of device, which Archimedes was reputed to have been the first to discover ..."

<sup>102</sup> Eust. *in Il.* II 5,1-7 van der Valk.

Ἔδοξε δέ τισι καὶ κατοπτρικὴν τινα ἐπίνοιαν μεμηχανῆσθαι τῷ Διομήδει ἔν τε τῇ αὐτοῦ, ὡς εἰκός, περικεφαλαία καὶ τῇ ἄσπιδι, καὶ οὕτω λίαν καταυγεῖν τὰς ὄψεις τῶν εἰς αὐτὸν βλέπόντων, ὅτε ἀντικρὺ πρὸς λάμποντα ἥλιον ἔστραπτο, καθ' ἣν δὴ ταύτην μέθοδον Ἀρχιμήδης μὲν ὁ σοφώτατος πολεμικὰς ἐνεπύρισε νῆας ὡς οἷά τις κεραινοβόλος· Ἀνθέμιος δέ τις ὕστερον γείτονα πονηρὸν καταστράπτων καὶ οὕτως ἐκφοβῶν μακρὰν ἑαυτοῦ ἀπόγκισε.

Some have thought that a kind of reflective invention had also been devised for Diomedes, seemingly on both his helmet and shield, such that it completely dazzled the vision of those looking at him, when it flashed in direct sunlight, by that very method whereby Archimedes, the wisest of men, set warships on fire, like some hurler of thunderbolts; a certain Anthemios later brought down lightning upon a disagreeable neighbour and so alarmed him that he drove him far away from his own home.

In all probability, the anonymous “some” who favoured such a rationalising technological explanation for this Homeric episode included – or were none other than – Tzetzes, with whose writings Eustathios was demonstrably familiar, though in this case independent use of a common source cannot be excluded<sup>103</sup>. In addition, Eustathios adduces here a sixth-century anecdotal tale about Anthemios, as reported around a generation later by Agathias in a digression to his *Histories*, in which the architect-geometer applies his hydraulic and catoptrical expertise to terrorising a disputatious neighbour, including the construction of a concave solar reflector designed to simulate lightning<sup>104</sup>. Subsequently, in two passages of his *Commenta-*

<sup>103</sup> Eustathios’ knowledge of Tzetzes’ works: W.J.W. Koster-D. Holwerda, *De Eustathio, Tzetza, Moschopulo, Planude Aristophanis commentatoribus*, I, *Mnemosyne* VII/2 (1954) 136-156; Wilson, *o.c.* 199-201; T. Conley, *Byzantine criticism and the uses of literature*, in A. Minnis-I. Johnson (edd.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, II: *The Middle Ages*, Cambridge 2005, 669-692: 684; Cullhed, *Diving* cit. 58-60; and the chapters by Chiara D’Agostini and Valeria F. Lovato in the present volume.

<sup>104</sup> Agath. *Hist.* V 7-8, ed. R. Keydell, Berlin 1967, 172-173, esp. 8,4 (173,19-23): δίσκον μὲν γὰρ τινα ἐσόπτρου δίκην ἐσκευασμένον, καὶ ἠρέμα ὑποκοιλαινόμενον ταῖς τοῦ ἡλίου ἀντερείδων ἀκτίσιν ἐνεπίπλα τῆς αἴγλης, καὶ εἶτα μετάγων ἐφ’ ἕτερα πολλὴν ἀθρόον αὐτῷ κατηκόντιζε λαμπηδόνα, ὡς πάντων ἐφ’ οὓς ἂν φέροίτο ἀμβλύνεσθαι τὰς ὄψεις καὶ σκαρδαμύττειν, “For, setting towards the sun’s rays a kind of disc, prepared in the manner of a mirror and gently curved, and filling it with sunlight, he then reflected it [the light] in the other direction and suddenly shot a great beam into [the neighbour’s room], so as to dull the sight of everyone it might fall upon and dazzle them.” The translation by J.D. Frendo, *Agathias, The Histories*, Berlin-New York



ries on the *Odyssey*, Eustathios briefly notes that unnamed historical works (ἐξ ἱστοριῶν) report Archimedes' achievements in the field of catoptrics and, again, that Anthemios imitated this marvel, according to Agathias<sup>105</sup>. These observations have no parallels in Tzetzes' *Allegories of the Odyssey*.

#### *Tzetzes' lost sources*

Tzetzes' handling of the tale of Archimedes' burning-mirrors has wider implications for both investigating his sources and understanding how he used them. In this instance, he sought to insert information from Anthemios' treatise on geometrical optics into the narrative framework of Dio's Roman history. These two sources are, respectively, extant, as a substantial excerpt, and lost, but indirectly recoverable (via Zonaras). Tzetzes' effort to combine historical narrative and technical exposition here potentially offers a methodological guide for studying other cases where his technical source is uncertain or lost. For reasons of space, one example must suffice.

Immediately preceding his excursus "On Archimedes and some of his machines" (II 35), Tzetzes devotes *Histories* II 34 in part to another celebrated feat of ancient engineering: "On Trajan and bridging the Danube" (Περὶ Τραϊανοῦ καὶ γεφυρώσεως τοῦ Ἰστρου). This survey of Trajan's exploits includes an account of the famous stone bridge over the Danube constructed for that emperor by the architect-engineer Apollodoros of Damascus, sometime between Trajan's two Dacian Wars (AD 101-102, 105-106), from Pontes (modern Kostol) to Dobreta (modern Turnu Severin) (*Hist.* II 34, 68-75, 87-97)<sup>106</sup>:

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1975, 143 interprets εἴτα μετάγων to mean «then turned the disc round», once it was full of light, in order to shoot in the opposite direction. I prefer to understand μετάγων more simply (and scientifically) as "reflecting" the aforementioned αἴγλη. See further E. Darmstaedter, *Anthemios und sein "künstliches Erdbeben" in Byzanz*, «Philologus» LXXXVIII (1933) 477-482; Huxley, *o.c.* 2; A. Kaldellis, *The makings of Hagia Sophia and the last pagans of Rome*, «JLA» VI/2 (2013) 347-366: 357-358.

<sup>105</sup> Eust. in *Od.* V 128, ed. J.G. Stallbaum, *Eustathii archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis commentarii ad Homeri Odysseam*, Leipzig 1825-6, I, 206,25-26: τεχνωμένους ὁμοίως Ἀρχιμήδει, τὰς δι' ἐνόπτρων ὡς οἶον ἀστραπαίας κάυσεις οὗ μμητῆς καὶ Ἀνθέμιος ὁ παρὰ τῷ Ἀγαθίᾳ, "those who have devised the lightning-like combustions, as it were, using mirrors, similar to Archimedes, of whom Anthemios was also an imitator, according to Agathias"; in *Od.* XI 235, p. I, 411,15-16 Stallbaum: καὶ αἱ τοῦ Ἀρχιμήδους δὲ καυστικαὶ διὰ κατόπτρων ἀστραπαὶ δηλοῦνται ἐξ ἱστοριῶν, "and Archimedes' burning lightning-bolts using mirrors are made known by histories"; there follows another allusion to Anthemios' simulated earthquake and lightning, as reported by Agathias.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. also *Hist.* IV *Ep. ad Lach.* 503-504.

Διὸ ποιεῖ τὴν γέφυραν πρὸς τὰς ἐπιβασίας,  
 Ἥ θέσις τῆς γεφύρας δε τοιούτως ἴδρυταί πως.  
 Εἴκοσι λίθοι στερεαὶ τετράγωνοι μεγάλοι, 70  
 πλάτος ἐξήκοντα ποδῶν, τὸ δ' ὕψος πλὴν θεμέθλων,  
 ποδῶν ὡς ἑκατὸν εἰσι πενήκοντα λαχοῦσαι.  
 Ἐκάστη δ' ἑβδομήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν τοὺς πόδας  
 ἀλλήλων ἀφεστήκασιν, ἀψῖσι δὲ συνδοῦνται.  
 Οὕτω μὲν ἐγεφύρωσε Τραϊανὸς τὸν Ἰστρὸν. 75  
 ...  
 Τὴν ἱστορίαν γέγραφεν ὁ Κάσσιος ὁ Δίων,  
 ἄλλοι πολλοὶ τε χρονικοὶ τῶν ἐπισήμων ἄνδρες.  
 Τῆς δὲ γεφύρας μέμνηται ταύτης τῆς παριστρίας 90  
 αὐτὸς ὁ Φιλεταίριος ἐν Λιμενοποιίαις  
 καὶ ταῖς Θεμελιώσεσι ταῖς παραθαλασσίαις,  
 Θεόφιλος ἀνθύπατος, πατρίκιος, κουαίστωρ  
 ἔπαρχος τὲ τῆς πόλεως ταύτης τῆς βασιλίδος,  
 λέγων τὸν Ἀπολλόδωρον τὸν Ἰστρὸν γεφυρῶσαι,  
 κιβώτιον τεκτῆναντα πρὸς προθεμελιώσεις, 95

Wherefore he [Trajan] makes the bridge as a means of access.  
 The arrangement of the bridge was built in such a manner:  
 there are twenty large solid squared piers of stone,  
 with a width of sixty feet, in height, excluding foundations,  
 reaching some one hundred and fifty feet.  
 Each one stood one hundred and seventy feet  
 from one another, but they are bound together by arches.  
 In this way Trajan bridged the Danube.

...  
 Cassius Dio has written this story,  
 and many other men who chronicle notable matters.  
 This transdanubian bridge is mentioned by  
 Philetairios himself in *Construction of Harbours*,  
 and even in the *Foundations by the Sea*  
 Theophilos, proconsul, patrician, quaestor,  
 and prefect of this imperial city,  
 says that Apollodoros bridged the Danube  
 by having fabricated a caisson upon lower foundations,

μῆκος ποδῶν μὲν ἑκατὸν καὶ εἴκοσι σὺν τούτοις,  
εἰς πλάτος δ' ὀγδοήκοντα. Ταῦτα φασὶν οἱ ἄνδρες.

in length, together with these, one hundred and twenty feet,  
in width eighty. This is what these men say.

Again, Tzetzes cites Dio, whose text, in this instance, is preserved by way of Xiphilinos' epitome, which indeed records the bridge's structural dimensions just as Tzetzes relates – 20 stone piers, which are 150 feet high, 60 feet wide, 170 feet apart, and connected by arches. Tzetzes reproduced these details from Dio's work almost verbatim. Following these constructional specifications, at least to judge by the surviving epitome, Dio appended some general remarks on the difficulties of bridging the Danube, given its depth, width, strong current and exceptionally muddy bottom<sup>107</sup>. The only other ancient source to name Apollodoros as the architect of the bridge is Prokopios, writing *ca.* 550, who seemingly alludes to a now-lost treatise on or description of its structure written by Apollodoros himself<sup>108</sup>. For additional details, however, Tzetzes implies that he has consulted two other authors, whose writings are now entirely lost. The first is a Philetairios, to whom he ascribes a work on the *Construction of Harbours* (Λιμενοποιΐα), apparently a title – or description – of a technical treatise (90-91)<sup>109</sup>. Tzetzes previously included this author's name in a list of *mechanographoi* in his *Allegories of the Iliad*, ostensibly in the context of solar reflection<sup>110</sup>. Philetairios is not otherwise documented. The second-named author,

<sup>107</sup> Dio LXVIII 13,1-6, esp. 1-2 (Boissevain III, 199,10-16, 643,29-35) (verbal parallels with Tzetzes' text marked in bold): **Τραϊανὸς δὲ γέφυραν** λιθίνην ἐπὶ τοῦ Ἰστρου κατασκευάσατο, περὶ ἧς οὐκ ἔχω πῶς ἂν ἀξίως αὐτὸν θαυμάσω: [...] ὡς γὰρ κρηπιδές εἰσι λίθου **τετραπέδου εἴκοσι**, τὸ μὲν ὕψος **πεντήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν ποδῶν πλὴν τῶν θεμελίων**, τὸ δὲ **πλάτος ἐξήκοντα**, καὶ αὐταὶ **ἑβδομήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν ἀπ' ἀλλήλων πόδας ἀπέχουσαι ἀψῖσι συνφοδόμηνται**, "Trajan constructed a stone bridge over the Danube, for which I cannot sufficiently admire him [...] For there are twenty piers of squared stone, in height one hundred and fifty feet excluding the foundations, in width sixty, and these, standing one hundred and seventy feet from one another, are connected by arches."

<sup>108</sup> Proc. *Aed.* IV 6,11-17, esp. 13: ὅπως μὲν οὖν τὴν γέφυραν ἐπήξατο ταύτην, ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐκ ἂν ἐν σπουδῇ γένοιτο, Ἀπολλόδορος δὲ ὁ Δαμασκηνός, ὁ καὶ παντὸς γεροντῶς ἀρχιτέκτων τοῦ ἔργου, φραζέτω, "How indeed he [Trajan] built this bridge I should not trouble to relate, but let Apollodoros of Damascus, who was also the architect of the entire work, explain". See generally Whitehead, *Apollodoros* cit. 17-24, with bibliography.

<sup>109</sup> To the present author's knowledge, the only other attested work of this type is one of the lost books of Philon's *Mēchanichē Syntaxis*, which he himself (*Bel.* 49,1-3 Wescher) terms Λιμενοποιΐα; see D. Whitehead, *Philo Mechanicus: On Sieges*, Stuttgart 2016, 20-21.

<sup>110</sup> *Alleg. Il.* V 15, cf. *schol. Carm. Il.* II 45b (p. 166,6 Leone). See above, pp. 437-438.

Theophilos, evidently a high-ranking dignitary, is known only from this passage. Reportedly proconsul, patrician, quaestor and urban prefect of Constantinople (92-93), his dignities and offices, if authentic, point to an Early or Middle Byzantine date. While prosopographical lexica record homonymous figures consistent with some or even all of these details, vast gaps in the fasti hinder secure identification<sup>111</sup>. Although Tzetzes' wording is ambiguous, he appears to ascribe to Theophilos – rather than to Philetairios – a monograph on the foundations of coastal constructions. In any case, it is to Theophilos that Tzetzes attributes technical specifications for the bridge's foundations, which are not reported in the received text of Dio's work.

Even if suspicions may linger over this at once illustrious and obscure Theophilos, Tzetzes' vocabulary seemingly verifies his consultation of a technical source on this subject. Tzetzes employs the term κιβώτιον here with the rare technical sense of a "caisson", a large chest or box filled with concrete and/or stones, used to construct under-water foundations for bridges and harbour works<sup>112</sup>. Prokopios had used cognate κιβωτός in his account of two giant moles that were constructed to shelter a new harbour at Constantinople during the reign of Justinian<sup>113</sup>. Furthermore, corresponding content and terminology occur in Tzetzes' subsequent encomium on geometry at *Histories* XI 381. Having listed "bridges and harbour works" (γεφύργαις τε καὶ λιμενοποιΐαις) among its most useful practical applications (v. 591), Tzetzes later elaborates on what geometry can achieve in this sphere (vv. 612-615):

<sup>111</sup> See e.g. *PmbZ*, 28154, s.v. Theophilos Erotikos.

<sup>112</sup> D. Tudor, *Les ponts romains du Bas-Danube*, Bucharest 1974, 69, 102-105; R.L. Hohlfelder, *Procopius, De Aedificiis, 1.11.18-20: Caesarea Maritima and the building of harbours in Late Antiquity*, in I. Malkin-R.L. Hohlfelder (edd.), *Mediterranean Cities. Historical Perspectives*, London 1988, 54-62; Id., *Building harbours in the early Byzantine era: The persistence of Roman technology*, «ByzF» XXIV (1997) 367-380; A. Cosentino, *Storia della marineria bizantina*, Bologna 2004, 231-232; K. Karapli, Κιβώτια, ξυλόκαστρα, καστέλλωμα, «Byzantina» XXIX (2009) 111-120, esp. 112-116; C.J. Brandon-R.L. Hohlfelder-M.D. Jackson-J.P. Oleson, *Building for Eternity. The History and Technology of Roman Concrete Engineering at Sea*, Oxford 2014, 35 (§2.16). Alternatively, R. Kroes, *Woodwork in the foundations of stone-built Roman bridges*, «BABesch» LXV (1990) 97-105 suggests that Tzetzes refers to a cofferdam, an enclosed section of a river from which the water is pumped out to create a dry working environment; his understanding of Tzetzes' text (at 103-104) is obviously faulty and this proposal is not consistent with the wider evidence. On the design of the bridge see also K. Martin, "Bridge over troubled water". *Detailstudien zur Frage: Donaubrücke oder Pons Sublicius?*, in H. Schwarzer–H.-H. Nieswandt (edd.), "Man kann es sich nicht prächtig genug vorstellen!". «Festschrift» für Dieter Salzmann zum 65. Geburtstag, Marsberg-Padberg 2016, 145-157

<sup>113</sup> *Proc. Aed.* I 11,18-20, esp. 19: τὰς κιβωτοὺς καλουμένας ἀναρίθμους τε καὶ παμμεγέθεις πεπονημένους, "having made a countless number of the so-called 'chests' of a very large size." See Hohlfelder, *Procopius* cit.

Πῶς τε θαλάσση γεφυροῦν καὶ ποταμοῖς πῶς δέον,  
καὶ πῶς δὲ τὰ κιβώτια καὶ ποδαπὰ τῆ ἔσει,  
χρεῶν κατασκευάζεσθαι τὰ τῆς λιμενουργίας,  
καὶ τὰς ἀνακαθάρσεις δε καὶ κλεῖθρα τῶν λιμένων.

And how one ought to build bridges over a sea and how over rivers,  
and how the caissons should be and of what sort in the arrangement,  
which must be prepared for the construction of harbours,  
and the dredging and booms of the harbours.

Here Tzetzes uses *termini technici* specific to this field – κιβώτιον (caisson), κλεῖθρον (boom), ἀνακάθαρσις (dredging) – and which are not usually encountered outside technical-scientific literature. Again, even if Tzetzes' intention in employing such vocabulary is merely a poetic mélange of scientific jargon, it is necessary to assume at least limited exposure to specimens of this genre. However, as with his account of Archimedes' burning-mirror, combining Dio and Anthemios, Tzetzes' attempt to combine Dio with Philetairios and/or Theophilos may have imported some degree of misconception: for example, on a strict reading Tzetzes states that Apollodoros built one such caisson during the construction of his bridge, whereas the measurements he supplies, as well as architectural logic, dictate that each of the bridge's 20 stone piers rested on its own individual caisson. Further speculations on the nature of this technical source-material must await another occasion, but, for the present, the evidence points to Tzetzes' access to or familiarity with one or more textual sources that have otherwise vanished without trace.

### Conclusions

This study of Tzetzes' engagement with 'scientific' literature, broadly construed, has sought to evaluate both his general observations on categories of technical knowledge – geometry, mechanics, hydraulics, optics / catoptrics, pneumatics, poliorcetics – and specific references to named *mechanographoi*. This term, unique to Tzetzes' verse and possibly his own coinage, embraces mostly ancient mathematical and technological authors, but also extends to famous architects and engineers of antiquity to whom no writings are ascribed. Consistent with a strand of popular anecdotalism that characterises the transmission and reception of Greco-Roman science, Tzetzes is primarily concerned with the practical utility and celebrated demonstrations of applied mathematics, none more so than the story of Archimedes' burning-mirrors. Thematic parallels with the writings of Tzetzes' near-contemporaries, specifically

John Zonaras and Eustathios of Thessaloniki, open potential lines of enquiry into intertextuality, common sources and/or authorial competition, and assist in locating Tzetzes' knowledge and choice of subjects within contemporary intellectual and belletristic currents. In particular, recurring allusions to Archimedes' burning-mirrors in eleventh- and twelfth-century literature suggest that Tzetzes' 'mathematical' interests were not entirely idiosyncratic or pedantic, but shared and reflected a broader literary climate in Constantinople.

A survey of Tzetzes' citations of scientific writers, typically geometers and theoretical mechanics, including works that are now lost or otherwise unattested, generally corroborates modern readers' long-held suspicions that Tzetzes compiled bibliographical lists of authors and titles known to him, primarily to demonstrate scholarship and erudition, but with little, if any, first-hand acquaintance with those texts, while in some cases fancifully ascribing fictive writings to illustrious figures who never wrote at all. Such intellectual posturing may variously reflect Tzetzes' individual scholarly temperament and techniques of self-promotion within the highly competitive market of Komnenian patronage, though a tendency to compile authorities is already apparent in Late Antique scientific writing, including Tzetzes' identifiable sources, which may have encouraged his cumulative citation of second-hand references. Nevertheless, though Tzetzes' source-notices for the most part suggest superficial or indirect familiarity with the works listed, certain exceptions transcend the overall scepticism. In two cases, Pappos' *Collection* and Anthemios' *On Paradoxical Mechanisms*, the extent and nature of correspondence between Tzetzes' poetry and a Late Antique mechanical text, in both substance and wording, cannot plausibly be explained in terms of recollected content or diction and point rather to a more immediate textual relationship. Even if Tzetzes' handling of this technical material gives no reason to infer profound comprehension of the subject matter, his current or recent access to – if not necessarily ownership of – these two texts seems inescapable, however much Tzetzes might wish to accentuate his "bookless" circumstances, whether as evidence of authentic hardship in the 1130s or as testimony to prodigious mnemonic powers in later decades.

Tzetzes' dependence on Pappos' and Anthemios' works affords analysable samples of his use of scientific texts, whereby, despite selectivity, abridgement, transposition and sometimes inaccuracy, his verses transmit recognisable elements of the original. The nature of this textual adaptation in turn opens the prospect that Tzetzes' historical, allegorical and exegetical writings have preserved content and vocabulary drawn from other ancient technical sources. In particular, Tzetzes' treatment of the episode of Archimedes' burning-mirrors during the siege of Syracuse has wider implications for both investigating his sources and understanding how he

exploited them. His efforts to integrate Dio's historical narrative and Anthemios' technical exposition, where both sources are known and at least partly extant, potentially provides a methodological template for studying Tzetzes' working practices in other cases where his technical source is unknown and/or lost. I have highlighted an example concerning Apollodoros' bridge over the Danube, where Tzetzes cites two lost technological monographs on specialised aspects of civil engineering, from which he appears to have drawn structural specifications that were not found in his narrative source, again Dio. Tzetzes' use of the arcane *termini technici* of bridge building and harbour works, here and elsewhere, seemingly substantiates his consultation of a technical treatise(s). Even if Tzetzes merely intended to fashion a terminological pastiche of technological literature, these lexical eccentricities necessarily entail at least passing acquaintance with such texts. Correspondingly, Tzetzes' use of rare jargon otherwise unique to certain Hellenistic-Roman and Byzantine poliorcetic treatises signals contact with specimens of this genre, notably Athenaios Mechanicus, Apollodoros and associated opuscula, an inference that is strengthened by the conjoined transmission of these particular works<sup>114</sup>.

Finally, returning to the pitiful remnants of Tzetzes' library in the late 1130s, some brief remarks on the manuscript tradition and reception of Pappos' *Collection* and Anthemios' *On Paradoxical Mechanisms* may be instructive or at least intriguing. Not only are these the only two mathematical treatises that Tzetzes demonstrably read, but also Tzetzes is in turn the only Byzantine author to show any degree of familiarity with either text<sup>115</sup>. It is therefore curious that both works are jointly and uniquely transmitted today via a single codex, early tenth-century *Vaticanus gr.* 218, in which an already truncated scrap of Anthemios' text (current 1r-2v) has been affixed to an acephalous and similarly acaudate copy of Pappos' far larger compendium (3r-202v)<sup>116</sup>. Although aspects of the genesis and prior configuration of this codex remain unresolved, owing to successive losses, disarrangements and rebindings, one interpretation of the palaeographical and scribal evidence affirms that its two components were integrally connected and bound together, originally in reverse sequence, around the time of their production or very shortly thereafter, perhaps for

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<sup>114</sup> See above n. 50. I plan to pursue this line of enquiry in a separate study.

<sup>115</sup> Pappos: Jones, *Pappus* cit. 36-42. Anthemios: Rashed, *o.c.* 344 (with incomplete list of references at n. 2).

<sup>116</sup> See I. Mercati-P. Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Codices Vaticani Graeci*, I: *Codices I-329*, Rome 1923, 283; A.P. Treweek, *Pappus of Alexandria. The manuscript tradition of the Collectio Mathematica*, «Scriptorium» XI/2 (1957) 195-233, esp. 197-198, 206-209; Jones, *Pappus* cit. 26-35. Additional recent bibliography: <https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/cote/66849/>.

or by a mathematically-minded patron-reader<sup>117</sup>. While it is not necessary to assume Tzetzes' acquaintance with the *Vaticanus*, given the coincidence of this codicological pairing of Anthemios and Pappos, and the role they played as his writings and he in their reception, it is hard to resist conjecture<sup>118</sup>. Although Tzetzes evidently had access to libraries in Constantinople that were well stocked with ancient manuscripts, if one were inclined to speculate, it is tempting to imagine that the defective and unappreciated collection of "some various mathematical morsels" that remained in his possession even at the nadir of adversity may have resembled such a compilation.

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<sup>117</sup> See Jones, *Pappus* cit. 31-35, who identifies the scribe of Anthemios' text (1r-2v) as scribe A<sup>2</sup>, who made marginal emendations to the text of Pappos (3r-202v) previously copied by the primary scribe A<sup>1</sup>. Accordingly, A<sup>2</sup> both edited the text of Pappos, apparently using the same exemplar as A<sup>1</sup>, and appended a copy of Anthemios' work. Subsequent damage and disturbances caused the loss of both the beginning and end of Pappos' text and the relocation of a surviving bifolium of Anthemios' text to the front of the codex. More recently, Rashed, *o.c.* 343-344, seemingly unaware of Jones' study, asserts that *Vat. gr.* 218 is, on the contrary, a much later composite of two heterogeneous parts.

<sup>118</sup> Jones, *Pappus* cit. 37 remarks that «there is a fair chance that he [Tzetzes] read them [Pappos and Anthemios] in the *Vaticanus* itself», but it is not necessary to infer that this was the only codex in twelfth-century Constantinople to contain this particular mathematical corpus.