# John Zonaras' *Epitome of Histories* (12th Cent.): A Compendium of Jewish-Roman History and Its Readers

Theofili Kampianaki

Wolfson College

DPhil in Medieval and Modern Languages, University of Oxford
Trinity Term 2017

# John Zonaras' *Epitome of Histories* (12th Cent.): A Compendium of Jewish-Roman History and Its Readers

Theofili Kampianaki, Wolfson College
DPhil in Medieval and Modern Languages
University of Oxford, Trinity Term 2017

**Short Abstract**

This thesis is concerned with the twelfth-century chronicle of John Zonaras, the so-called *Epitome of Histories* (henceforth: *Epitome*). Its aim is to identify the unique qualities of the *Epitome* which make the work stand out, and thus determine its place within the tradition of Byzantine historical writing.

The first chapter discusses the biographical and chronological information available to us about Zonaras, and contains a survey of the other works composed by the author in addition to the *Epitome*.

Chapters 2 to 5 focus on the chronicle itself. The second chapter explains the arrangement of Zonaras' text in volumes and in thematic units. It demonstrates that the author gradually developed his project into a universal historical account over a period of time. Chapter 3 looks at the author's method of work, exploring how he used and adapted his source material. The fourth chapter deals with the work's political and ideological framework. It shows that Zonaras' disapproval of Alexios I Komnenos was to a great extent a personal attack, but also an outright rejection of similar policies that were implemented by various emperors in the past. Zonaras' pronounced interest in Roman antiquities is discussed in the fifth chapter. His attention to the Roman origins of Byzantium is examined against the broader intellectual, literary and historical milieu of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Chapters 6 and 7 include discussions that go beyond the text. The sixth chapter proves that the chronicler was part of a network of intellectuals outside the monastery

to which he had retired. Additionally, it shows that Zonaras addresses the *Epitome* to relatively learned readers. The last chapter, dedicated to the reception of the chronicle, investigates the various ways in which approximate contemporaries of Zonaras and later readers perceived and exploited the *Epitome*.

At the end of the thesis, some broader conclusions are drawn about the profile of Zonaras and about the overall character of his historical account.

# John Zonaras' *Epitome of Histories* (12th Cent.): A Compendium of Jewish-Roman History and Its Readers

Theofili Kampianaki, Wolfson College
DPhil in Medieval and Modern Languages
University of Oxford, Trinity Term 2017

**Long Abstract**

The twelfth-century chronicle of John Zonaras, the so-called *Epitome of Histories* (henceforth: *Epitome*), begins with the biblical Creation and ends in 1118, the year when Alexios I Komnenos passed away and was succeeded by his son John II. The work was undoubtedly one of the best-sellers of the Greek-speaking world during the Middle Ages, with an enormous number of manuscripts preserving the text or parts of it. It has famously provided an essential basis for the reconstruction of classical and late antique sources no longer extant, with the *Roman History* of Cassius Dio being the most prominent example. The *Epitome* has traditionally attracted scholarly attention on account of the sources that underpin it. If considered solely in this context, however, it is perceived, and perhaps disparaged, as merely a compilation of earlier accounts. Examining Zonaras' lengthy work in its own right, this thesis aims to show the chronicler as a compiler who pursued his own authorial agenda, and present his text as a product which emerged from a particular cultural and social milieu. It seeks to identify the unique qualities of the *Epitome* which make the work stand out, and thus determine its place within the tradition of Byzantine historical writing.

The thesis opens with a chapter dedicated to the author and his oeuvre. The first part of the chapter summarises the prosopographical and chronological data about Zonaras which is supported by solid evidence. The chronicler belonged to a family whose members enjoyed prominent positions in the machinery of the state and

was a high-level judicial official. At some point, he assumed the monk's habit and retired to the monastery of the Theotokos Pantanassa, a foundation located on the small island of St Glykeria, one of the Princes' Islands. During this period, he composed the *Epitome*. An internal textual indication strongly suggests that the chronicle was completed in or after 1143, the year of John II Komnenos' death. The *terminus ante quem* for the completion of the work is approximately the year 1150, as the *Epitome* was used as a source by Constantine Manasses for his own chronicle, which can be dated to between 1143 and 1152. The chapter suggests that Zonaras' withdrawal to his monastery was associated with events which took place during the reign of John Komnenos, and also that he retired to St Glykeria some time in the 1120s or 1130s. It also shows that the year 1161 is a secure *terminus post quem* for the author's death.

In addition to the *Epitome,* Zonaras produced the lengthy *Exegesis of the holy and sacred canons*, which offers an interpretation of the canons of the apostles, the synods and the Church Fathers, and two shorter treatises which address questions of canon law. He also composed six hagiographical texts, three of which are *metaphrases*, a canon dedicated to the Theotokos and two commentaries on ecclesiastical poetry. This survey of his oeuvre shows Zonaras to have been an author who exhibited broader interests and tastes, and had a dual focus on both secular and ecclesiastical literature. It is not possible to tell who the author of the *Lexikon* that passes under the name of Zonaras is; an initial draft of the work might have been produced by a compiler familiar with Zonaras' canonical commentary or even by Zonaras himself. Using this compilation as the basis for their project, later copyists might have added glosses and expanded it.

Chapters 2 to 5 of the thesis focus on the *Epitome* itself. Zonaras arranged the material of his chronicle in two different ways, as explained in chapter 2. The first method is the division of the *Epitome* into two volumes when the narrative reached 146 BC. The reason for using this date as a point to break the narrative into two is the large chronological gap between the end of the first volume and the start of the second, which begins with the account of Pompey's rise to power. As a result of this division, the first volume of the *Epitome* is devoted to Jewish and pre-imperial Roman history, whereas the second one focuses on the presentation of the Roman Empire. The other way in which the chronicler arranged his material is thematic. There are two distinct thematic sections: the first focuses on Jewish antiquities and the second on the Roman past. A secondary distinction which emerges within the Roman section is that between pre- and post-Constantinian Roman history, which indicates that Zonaras approaches in a different way the 'Old' Roman Empire and the 'New' Empire, which had Constantinople as its capital. The Jewish section is a largely self-contained unit. The chronicler originally aimed to produce a work dedicated to Jewish antiquities, but, finding more sources as he was writing, he at some point decided to broaden the subject matter of his text and include the history of the Roman nation.

The third chapter investigates Zonaras' method of work and the manner in which he treats and adapts his source material. The foundation of the chronicler's methodology is the adherence to a single source which provides him with the basic structure of his account. One of the key features of the Jewish section of the *Epitome* is the strong emphasis Zonaras places on the connection of his text to Flavius Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* and *Jewish War*. By repeatedly citing Josephus as his source, the chronicler seeks to impress on his readers the reliability and validity of his own account. What characterises Zonaras' method in his presentation of pre-

Constantinian Roman history is his attempt to adapt the data he collects from his Roman sources, Cassius Dio's *Roman History* and Plutarch's *Lives*, to make them meaningful and interesting to the Byzantine audience. His account of post-Constantinian Empire concentrates mainly on the Constantinopolitan environment. In the narrative of Byzantium, the dominant principle of Zonaras' methodology is the close attention to the portrayals of famous historical figures, mostly emperors. This is a result not only of the character of the sources used, but also of the chronicler's own authorial tastes.

The section of the *Epitome* dedicated to Roman and Byzantine history has a strong political leaning, with elements of *Kaiserkritik*, namely the critique of an emperor, being prominent in Zonaras' narrative. This subject is extensively discussed in chapter 4. The chronicler's severe criticism of Alexios I Komnenos constitutes very much a personal attack aimed specifically against the style of government established by the founder of the Komnenian dynasty and followed by later Komnenian emperors too. The author condemns Alexios for allocating high offices to members of his family and their acquaintances, bankrupting the public treasury, reducing the wealth of the aristocratic nobility, disregarding the traditional customs of the Roman state, and inventing new and unjust taxes. Evidently influenced by the conduct of government during his time, he vehemently reproaches various emperors who enforced similar policies in the course of Byzantine history. He conceives his *Kaiserkritik* as a form of rebuke to rulers, something that he believes is open to him as a private individual. Also, by amending relevant passages of his sources, Zonaras gives prominence to the qualities exhibited by aristocrats as well as men of culture, and thus argues in favour of an enhanced role for these groups at the imperial court. In

Zonaras' view, the 'elite' class comprises not only the nobility, but also intellectuals who, like himself, were high-ranking members of the civil service.

Chapter 5 focuses on Zonaras' prodigious interest in the Roman origins of Byzantium, a notable feature of the *Epitome*. His great attention to the Roman past can be seen as part of a broader upsurge of interest in Roman antiquities during that period. Zonaras knew some of the earlier authors who used material drawn from Roman history, namely John Xiphilinos and Michael Psellos. It is likely therefore that such writers prompted the chronicler to turn his attention to the Roman heritage of Byzantium. Moreover, the practical reality of the situation in the Constantinople of his time, when a large number of Latin-speaking peoples passed through or resided in the capital, may have fuelled a renewed interest in Roman antiquities and stimulated Zonaras to emphasise the Roman antecedents of the Empire. Unlike the majority of Byzantine chroniclers, Zonaras was keen on talking in detail about Republican Rome in order to fulfil his own authorial agenda. He sets out to demonstrate the evolution of the Roman government over time and aims to stress the institutional continuity between contemporary Byzantium and Rome. He is also very careful in the language he uses to make these changes in the constitution of the Roman state clear to his readers.

Chapters 6 and 7 of the thesis include discussions that go beyond the text. The sixth chapter sheds light on the circumstances in which Zonaras found himself on the island of St Glykeria, where he composed the *Epitome*. Despite the fact that Zonaras makes heavy use of motifs and language typical of exile literature in his chronicle, evidence collected from the *Epitome* and other works of his oeuvre prove that the writer was by no means a secluded retiree at the Pantanassa monastery. He was clearly part of a network of intellectuals who provided him with reading material and

to whom he distributed his own pieces as well. His circle consisted of those with whom he had become acquainted when he was still a layman: educated individuals who attended the *theatra*, and persons of the same profession as him, namely lawyers and bureaucrats. Following his departure from Constantinople, he seems to have kept in touch with them by correspondence. A small number of monks who had some knowledge of the writings of the Church Fathers may be added to this circle. This group also constituted the audience for which Zonaras was originally writing. He consciously opted to use middlebrow, mildly archaising Greek, aiming at address his chronicle not only to a small number of very erudite scholars, but also to a more numerous group of relatively learned readers.

The last chapter of the thesis explores the various ways in which approximate contemporaries of Zonaras and later readers perceived and exploited the *Epitome*. Methodologically, the investigation of the *Epitome*'s reception is based on two types of material: primary sources and evidence derived from the manuscript tradition of the chronicle. Constantine Manasses, Michael Glykas, Ephraem of Ainos and Constantine Akropolites all inserted a good deal of material from Zonaras' chronicle into their works, which indicates how reliable they regarded the *Epitome* as a historical source. With the exception of Manasses, however, these chroniclers were notably reluctant to imitate or exploit Zonaras' account creatively. They would produce an abbreviated version of the *Epitome*, mainly by paraphrasing their source or even citing verbatim passages taken from Zonaras. Unlike these writers, the authors of two short ecclesiastical chronicles employed Zonaras' text solely to derive material about the history of the Church.

From the great bulk of manuscripts in which the *Epitome* or parts of it survive, I have investigated those which are dateable to the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth

centuries. The greatest number of manuscripts, more than a half of those that have been studied, transmits Zonaras' entire text. Being equally interested in Jewish, Roman and Byzantine history, most patrons would ask for the reproduction of the whole work. The majority of patrons who did not wish to acquire the entire chronicle were interested in Zonaras as a source of information for Byzantine history. The fact that most manuscripts contain the *Epitome* exclusively or shorter sections of it implies that commissioners read Zonaras' text for its own sake, instead of including and using it in a manuscript of wider scope. An examination of a selective number of marginal comments in manuscripts of the *Epitome* indicates that many different parts of the text caught the attention of the audience and provoked various responses. A piece of writing that can help us identify the elements which made the *Epitome* a popular work is a prose text of an encomiastic character which is included in *Par. gr.* 1715, the oldest manuscript that preserves the chronicle. The author of this text does not emphasise the historical value of the chronicle so much as the educational one, stressing that it provides advice on ethical conduct as well as practical matters. A second important piece of writing is a poem transmitted in the thirteenth-century *Vat. gr.* 136. The poet understands the chronicle to be a useful compendium of carefully selected pieces from older accounts. He also expresses his disappointment at not having the second volume of the chronicle at his disposal, which indicates that already from the thirteenth century, the two volumes of the *Epitome* circulated separately. The study of the reception of the chronicle demonstrates the text became widely popular in the Byzantine world because it corresponded to the tastes, the needs and the aims of many different readers.

At the end of the thesis, some broader conclusions are drawn about the profile of Zonaras and about the overall character of his historical account. The author was a

man of his time – his concerns echo discussions among his contemporaries. He was versatile as an author, composing texts in various literary genres. His critical and analytical skills can be seen in the way in which he collects, selects and adapts materials from different sources to create a composite narrative. The *Epitome* can be characterised as a 'hybrid composition', because it seamlessly merges the traditions of chronicle writing and historiography, and because it combines two distinct historical accounts: the first is dedicated to Jewish history or, from the Byzantines' perspective, early Christian history, and the second focuses on the Roman past. The evaluation of the *Epitome* as a work with its own individual qualities and features, rather than simply a compilation of earlier sources, indicates that Byzantine chronicles deserve to be investigated in their own right as both literary compositions and historical accounts.

## Acknowledgements

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the support and assistance of a number of people, to whom I am grateful.

I am indebted, first and foremost, to Professor Marc Lauxtermann, my supervisor and academic mentor over the past five years, for his valuable comments and suggestions, and for his sharing of expertise with me, but also for his kind advice and patience.

Special thanks are also due to Dr Ida Toth and Dr Catherine Holmes, my assessors in the Transfer of Status and the Confirmation of Status, for their very valuable feedback on parts of early drafts of this thesis. I am also grateful to Dr Georgi Parpulov and Dr Dimitrios Skrekas for devoting much of their time to helping me read and transcribe comments and epigrams inscribed in manuscripts of Zonaras' chronicle.

I am thankful to my good friends, Dr Kirsty Stewart and Mr Nicholas Matheou, who time and time again checked my English in early drafts of my work. I am likewise thankful to Mr James Disley for his meticulous proofreading of the final draft of my thesis.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation and the A. G. Leventis Foundation, as without their generous support I would not have been able to pursue my doctoral studies in Oxford and complete this project.

I also owe many thanks to: Wolfson College for offering me three travel grants to present preliminary findings of my research at international conferences; the Wolfson Ancient World Research Cluster, for providing me with a grant to digitise a

number of manuscripts for the requirements of my research; and the Zernov-Carras Scholarship Fund, for offering me two research grants.

## Note on transliteration, citations and quotations

As there is no standard form for the transliteration of Greek names, placenames and terms in general, I have used the versions of these words that appear in the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*.

Abbreviations of journals and databases are listed in full at the beginning of the thesis. Publications cited in abbreviated form are cited in full in the bibliography at the end. Primary sources are always cited by page number and line/verse if necessary.

Quotations in Greek which exceed three lines/verses are indented and in single spacing. Shorter quotations in Greek run on in the text.

# Table of contents

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| *AASS* | *Acta Sanctorum*, 71 vols (Paris, 1863-1940) |
| *B* | *Byzantion* |
| BHG | *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca*$^{3}$, ed. by F. Halkin, 3 vols in 1 pt (Brussels, 1957) |
| *BMGS* | *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* |
| *BZ* | *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* |
| *DBBE* | *Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams* |
| *DOP* | *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* |
| *GRBS* | *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* |
| *JÖB* | *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* |
| Lampe | *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ed. by G. W. H. Lampe (Oxford, 1961-1968) |
| *LSJ* | *A Greek-English Lexicon*, ed. by H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, and H. S. Jones, 9$^{th}$ edn with supplement (Oxford, 1968) |
| *ODB* | *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. by A. Kazhdan et al., 3 vols (Oxford, 1991) |
| *PBW* | *Prosopography of the Byzantine World* |
| *PG* | *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. by J.-P. Migne, 161 vols in 166 parts (Paris, 1857-1866) |
| *REB* | *Revue des études byzantines* |
| *TM* | *Travaux et mémoires* |

## INTRODUCTION

The twelfth-century chronicle of John Zonaras begins with the biblical Creation and ends in 1118, the year when Alexios I Komnenos passed away and was succeeded by his son John II. The work was undoubtedly one of the best-sellers of the Greek-speaking world during the Middle Ages, with an enormous number of manuscripts preserving the text or parts of it. It is also one of the longest historical accounts written in Greek that has come down to us. The author brings together a great variety of sources, both of a theological and a secular nature, that deal with Jewish, Ancient Greek, Roman and Byzantine history. The chronicle has famously provided an essential basis for the reconstruction of classical and late antique sources no longer extant, with the *Roman History* of Cassius Dio being the most prominent example.

The text has seen four editions over the centuries.

It was first published in 1557 by Hieronymus Wolf.[1] It was accompanied by a Latin translation and came out in three volumes. The first volume began with the Creation of the world, the second with the legendary story of Aeneas and the third with the reign of Constantine the Great.

The next edition of the chronicle was that of Charles Ducange in 1686.[2] The French scholar published the work in two volumes and, for reasons of practicality and convenience, split Zonaras' material into eighteen books. The division of the text in this way was also followed by subsequent editors of the chronicle.

Neither Wolf, nor Ducange had at their disposal the oldest and arguably the best manuscript which transmits the work, namely the *Par. gr.* 1715, which is dated to

[1] John Zonaras, *Compendium historiarum*, ed. by H. Wolf, 3 vols (Basil, 1557). Wolf's *praefatio* is reprinted in *Epitome*, I, xxiv-xlii.
[2] John Zonaras, *Annales*, ed. by C. Ducange, 2 vols (Paris, 1686). Ducange's introduction is reprinted in *Epitome,* I, vii-xxviii.

1289. This codex was employed for the first time by Ludwig Dindorf in his edition of the chronicle for the Teubner series between 1868 and 1875.[3]

The last edition of the text is that by Moritz Pinder and Theodor Büttner-Wobst. It comprises three volumes and is the edition we still use nowadays. Pinder published the first two volumes between 1841 and 1844. The *Par. gr.* 1715 is the principal codex on which this edition of the chronicle is based. Pinder also made use of three later codices: the fourteenth-century *Vind. hist. gr*. 16; the thirteenth-century *Monac. gr*. 324; and the sixteenth-century *Monac. gr.* 93.[4] With the exception of the last, which preserves the chronicle from the reign of Constantine the Great onwards, the other manuscripts contain the entire work. The third volume of the text was published in 1897 by Büttner-Wobst, who, in addition to the aforementioned manuscripts, also took into consideration the fifteenth-century *Monac. gr.* 325.[5]

An important clarification is required concerning the title of the chronicle. Ducange, Wolf and Pinder published the text under the title *Χρονικόν*.[6] It was only Dindorf who made *Ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν* the title to the work – this is the heading found in the *Par. gr.* 1715 and *Vind. hist. gr.* 16. Interestingly enough, it is this title – *Epitome of Histories* – which has prevailed in secondary literature. Hence, I use the title *Epitome* to refer to Zonaras' chronicle.

Three translations of the text into modern languages have been published, all of which are partial. The part of the chronicle from the reign of John Tzimiskes onwards was translated into German by Erich Trapp.[7] An annotated translation into Modern Greek was produced by Iordanis Grigoriadis.[8] This extends from the reign of

[3] *Epitome historiarum*, ed. by Dindorf.
[4] *Epitome*, I, v-vi.
[5] *Epitome*, III, xviii-xxi.
[6] *Epitome*, I, 3 (critical apparatus).
[7] Trapp, *Militärs*.
[8] John Zonaras, *Επιτομή Ιστοριών*, trans. into Greek by I. Grigoriadis, 3 vols (Athens, 1995-1999).

Constantine the Great to the end of the work. The latest translation is that of Thomas Banchich and Eugene Lane and is into English. These two scholars have translated Zonaras' prologue, as well as the part of the text from the reign of Severus Alexander to that of Theodosios I.[9] Their translation is accompanied by a commentary.

The text has traditionally attracted scholarly attention on account of the sources that underpin it. If considered solely in this context, the *Epitome* is perceived, and perhaps disparaged, as merely a compilation of earlier accounts. So far, the only book-length study of the *Epitome* is that of Iordanis Grigoriadis, which was published in 1998.[10] Grigoriadis focused particularly on the linguistic and literary qualities of the chronicle, emphasising the author's skills in using the language, in playing with words and in making telling and purposeful changes to the vocabulary of his sources. He also demonstrated that the style of the chronicler is refined, sophisticated and elegant, but at the same time smooth and easy to follow. In my opinion, particularly his observations that Zonaras writes in the language of the learned tradition, using forms of contemporary spoken Greek only on rare occasions, were astute and accurate.[11] Showing neatly that the linguistic register of the *Epitome* is relatively high, the scholar challenged the view of Zonaras as simply a copyist of earlier material and thus paved the way for further investigations into literary aspects of the *Epitome*. It should also be noted that Grigoriadis was one of the first scholars to discuss the subject of humour in Byzantine literature, making thoughtful remarks on Zonaras' use of irony.[12] Some points that need to be reconsidered, though, relate to the sense of humour and wit that Grigoriadis identifies particularly in cases when the chronicler makes critical comments and uses exaggerations. The sense of humour is different

[9] Banchich and Lane, *The History of Zonaras.*
[10] Grigoriadis, *Studies.*
[11] See particularly Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 79-81.
[12] Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 133-47.

across different cultures; it is, therefore, really difficult to know whether very critical remarks and exaggerated statements were indeed perceived as funny by the Byzantines.

My own thesis concentrates on different aspects of the *Epitome*: its composition (chapter two), sources (chapter three), and political, ideological and literary background (chapters four and five). I also widen my inquiry to include discussions that go beyond the text, such as the intellectual networks surrounding Zonaras (chapter six), the anticipated audience and the reception of the chronicle (chapters six and seven). This twin focus – on the work itself and the circumstances of its production – may lead to an appreciation of the unique character of Zonaras' intellectual achievement. Examining his ambitious enterprise in its own right, I wish to show Zonaras as a compiler who pursued his own authorial agenda, and present his chronicle as a product which emerged from a particular cultural and social milieu. Although the topic of the thesis and the basis of all my investigations is the *Epitome*, material derived from the writer's other works is sometimes used as supplementary evidence to prove or reinforce a point.

Chapter one contains a preliminary discussion of the author's life and oeuvre. The first half of the chapter provides an outline of the information available to us about Zonaras and, perhaps more importantly, clarifies what is known about him with certainty and what is only speculation. It also explores the serious dating issues concerning the period in which he lived and wrote. The second half of the chapter is dedicated to Zonaras' literary production, looking at the other works he composed in addition to the *Epitome*. This survey sheds light on Zonaras' wide range of scholarly activities and interests.

I begin the examination of the *Epitome* in chapter two, which is concerned with the text's composition. The chapter explains the two ways in which Zonaras arranged his material: in volumes and in thematic units. Focusing mainly on the thematic structure of the work, it demonstrates that the chronicle was not conceived in its present form right from the start. I seek to show that Zonaras gradually developed his project into a universal historical account over a period of time.

The third chapter looks at the author's method of work, exploring particularly how he used the multifarious material at his disposal. I provide an overview of the principal sources underpinning the text and subsequently try to pinpoint the writer's methods as an epitomiser. Among the questions raised are how Zonaras treated the different sources he collected, how he adapted his old material to suit the interests of his contemporary audience, and what factors guided the selection of information inserted into or omitted from his narrative. In the light of these considerations, I identify key features of Zonaras' narrative.

The fourth chapter deals with the work's political and ideological framework. My focus rests primarily on the author's *Kaiserkritik*, his harsh criticism of imperial policies, and generally on his political and ideological sympathies. The impetus for these discussions comes from one of the best-known passages of the *Epitome*, namely Zonaras' critical judgement of the reign of Alexios I Komnenos. I outline the basic reasons why the chronicler condemns the founder of the Komnenian dynasty and the Komnenian style of government as a whole. I also try to find similar points raised about earlier emperors. This investigation aims to prove that Zonaras' disapproval of Alexios was to a great extent a personal attack, but also an outright rejection of similar policies that were implemented by various emperors in the past. I also indicate the basic tenets, which, according to the writer, form the basis of a lawful and a

tyrannical state and are employed by him as standards for the assessment of an emperor. The second part of this chapter looks more broadly into views of an ideological and social nature that emerge from the text and can be seen in the alterations the chronicler makes to his primary source material.

Zonaras' pronounced interest in Roman antiquities is the subject of chapter five. I propose that his attention to the Roman origins of the Empire can be placed within the broader intellectual, literary and historical milieu of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. I emphasise and try to account for Zonaras' avid interest in Republican Rome, indicating that his purpose was to demonstrate to his readers the development of the Roman forms of government over the course of time. I subsequently focus on his attempt to use and coin terms that can accurately explain the gradual transition of the Roman polity from a republic to a monarchy.

Chapter six looks into the circumstances surrounding the production of the *Epitome*. It seeks to challenge the image of the isolated retiree that Zonaras cultivates for himself and seeks to prove that the author was part of a network of intellectuals outside his monastery. I argue that it was through this network that he managed to acquire the impressive variety of sources he exploited in his chronicle, and also to make the *Epitome* available to his audience. These considerations then provide the ground for an analysis of the anticipated audience of the work, namely the readers to whom the chronicler originally addressed his text. I attempt to determine more about them, particularly in terms of their level of literacy and social status.

The last chapter of the thesis is centred on the immediate and long-term reception of the chronicle. It aims to provide an insight into how approximate contemporaries of Zonaras, as well as readers in later times, encountered, perceived and exploited the *Epitome*. Methodologically, it relies on two types of material:

primary sources and evidence derived from the manuscript tradition of the chronicle. I will consider the manner in which Byzantine authors who were active after Zonaras made use of his material for their own writings. I also offer examples of interesting marginal comments that are found in manuscripts of the *Epitome* and look at how scribes who copied the text tried to organise such a lengthy narrative, namely how they divided the chronicle into shorter sections, and what titles they gave to each of these. The overall character of the codices in which parts of the text are contained is also a focus. Special attention is given to two longer pieces of writing, which are significant testimonies to the reception of the chronicle. It should be said in advance that, for practical reasons, my study of the reception of the *Epitome* has a geographical and a chronological restriction; it pertains to its reception in the Greek-speaking world from the mid-twelfth to the fifteenth century, which means that I will not consider the fourteenth-century translations of the work into Old Church Slavonic and Aragonese.[13]

Overall, the aim of this thesis is to identify the unique qualities of the *Epitome* which make the work stand out, and thus determine its place within the tradition of Byzantine historical writing.

[13] For the translation of the *Epitome* into Slavonic, see *Die Byzantinische Geschichte bei Joannes Zonaras in slavischer Übersetzung*, ed. by A. Jacobs (Freiburg, 1970), which includes an edited section of the Slavonic text. The Slavonic translation of the chronicle must have been completed before 1344: B. Todorov, 'Monks and History: Byzantine Chronicle in Church Slavonic', in *Translating the Middle Ages*, ed. by K. L. Fresco and C. Wright (Farnham, 2012), 147-59. The part of the *Epitome* from approximately 780 to 1118 was translated into Aragonese in 1393 by Juan Fernández de Heredia, Grand Master of Rhodes: A. Luttrell, 'Juan Fernández de Heredia's History of Greece', *BMGS*, 34 (2010), 30-37; A. Luttrell, 'Greek Histories Translated and Compiled for Juan Fernández de Heredia, Grand Master of Rhodes, 1377-1396', *Speculum*, 35 (1960), 401-07. See also T. Shawcross, *The Chronicle of Morea: Historiography in Crusader Greece* (Oxford, 2009), 38-39.

# CHAPTER 1. JOHN ZONARAS: BIOGRAPHY AND OEUVRE

## 1.1. Prosopographical and chronological details

Very little is known about John Zonaras. Most of the information we have about his life and career derive from his two most famous works, the *Epitome* and his commentary on canon law. To investigate Zonaras' biography, it is necessary to pinpoint when these two works were produced, which in itself is an extremely problematic task, as we shall soon see. Also, the prosopographical and chronological data about the author which is supported by solid evidence should be distinguished from that which represents merely plausible hypotheses.

The family name of Zonaras can be traced back to the mid-tenth century.[14] It was only from the mid-eleventh century onwards, though, that members of the family made their presence known in public affairs and entered the civilian bureaucracy.[15] From a seal dateable to the last third of the eleventh century, we learn of a certain Nicholas Zonaras, who was a judge in Thrace and Macedonia.[16] It is likely that he is the same Nicholas who, at the end of the century, held the offices of the *krites tou Hippodromou* and the *megas chartoularios*, as well as the title of the *protovestarches*.[17] A notice in a thirteenth-century *synaxarion* attests to the presence of a monk named Naukratios Zonaras in the monastery on the island of St Glykeria

[14] Reaching *c*. 945, *Theophanes Continuatus* tells us of a cunning Zonaras, a colleague of a devious prefect at the court of the Lekapenoi: *Theophanes continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius monachus*, ed. by I. Bekker (Bonn, 1838), 442.1-6.
[15] Treadgold, *Historians*, 390-91; Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 4.
[16] See *PBW* (consulted 24/04/2017), 'Nikolaos 20308', http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/boulloterion/6684. For his seal, see Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel*, 235-36.
[17] See *PBW* (consulted 24/04/2017), 'Nikolaos 205', http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/120465. The *krites tou Hippodromou* was a professional judge whose tribunal must have been at the Hippodrome: A. Kazhdan, 'Judge', *ODB*, II, 1078. *Chartoularioi* were 'functionaries with fiscal and archival duties in both central and provincial administration'. From the late tenth century onwards, the epithet *megas* accompanied the title of the *chartoularioi of the genikon*: A. Kazhdan, 'Chartoularios', *ODB*, I, 416. From the end of the eleventh century, the title *protovestarches* was granted to judges and notaries: Kazhdan, 'Vestes'.

(the modern Incir Adasi), one of the Princes' Islands, during the first half of the twelfth century.[18] Naukratios was among the benefactors of the restoration of the monastery's main church. Before taking monastic vows, he is said to have been a *droungarios tes viglas*, a chief in one of the civil courts and a 'key judge' in the capital.[19] Although Cyril Mango does not rule out that the Naukratios mentioned in this source might be identified with John Zonaras, the author of the *Epitome*, he considers it more likely that Naukratios was the monastic name of this same Nicholas, who at a later stage of his career became *droungarios tes viglas* and was tonsured at some time thereafter.[20] In *c.* 1090, a Basil Zonaras was granted the title of *vestes*.[21] Slightly later than John, the writer of the *Epitome*, is a Christopher Zonaras. In the mid- to late twelfth century, he became a *protasekretis* and is known to have composed a paraenetic text and a series of letters.[22] *Protasekretis* was also the office of another Nicholas Zonaras, who was active during the reign of Manuel I Komnenos.[23] He was appointed *nobelissimos* and *droungarios tes viglas* as well.[24] As is clearly indicated by this evidence, the author of the *Epitome* belonged to a family whose members enjoyed prominent positions in the machinery of the state and who had distinguished themselves particularly in the judicial system.

---

[18] Mango, 'Twelfth-century Notices', 221-22.
[19] Haldon, *The Palgrave Atlas*, 132; Macrides, 'Nomos and Kanon', 72.
[20] Mango, 'Twelfth-century Notices', 226-27.
[21] See *PBW* (consulted 24/04/2017), 'Basileios 20107', http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/152325. For a seal on which his name and office is inscribed, see Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel*, 234-35. Towards the end of the eleventh century, the title of *vestes* was given to lower-ranking officials. It seems to have disappeared in the early twelfth century: Kazhdan, 'Vestes'.
[22] Christopher Zonaras, *Χριστοφόρου Ζωναρᾶ. Ι. Λόγος Παραινετικὸς εἰς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ κυρὸν Δημήτριον. ΙΙ. Ἐπιστολὲς*, ed. by E. Tsolakis (Thessaloniki, 1981). See also *PBW* (consulted 24/04/2017), 'Christophoros 20135', http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/152587. The *protasekretis* occupied a privileged position at court, as head of the imperial chancery: Haldon, *The Palgrave Atlas*, 132; A. Kazhdan, 'Protasekretis', *ODB*, III, 1742.
[23] *PBW* (consulted 24/04/2017), 'Nikolaos 198', http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/120458. It seems probable that this Nikolaos was the grandson of Naukratios.
[24] From the mid-eleventh century onwards, the dignity of *nobelissimos* was meant for members of the imperial family, but from the end of the century it was also awarded to high-ranking military commanders: A. Kazhdan, 'Nobelissimos', *ODB*, III, 1489-90.

The titles that precede Zonaras' works in manuscripts reveal that, just like his relatives, he was a high-level judicial official: a *protasekretis* and a *megas droungarios*. These titles also accompany the name of Zonaras in an epistle penned by the thirteenth-century jurist Demetrios Chomatenos, who cites Zonaras' exegesis of the canons as his source.[25] Zonaras can, therefore, be placed among those historians dating from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries who were all prominent administrators of justice, namely Michael Attaleiates, John Skylitzes, Niketas Choniates and George Akropolites.[26] From his distinguished career, one can infer that he had received a strong education in rhetoric and the learned language of the state administration, and that he excelled in legal science.[27] In his works he makes direct use of a series of classical authors, such as Cassius Dio, Plutarch, Herodotus and Xenophon, attesting to his classical education. One may reasonably assume that his family had the financial means to support him in pursuit of his studies. Nothing is known about his private life. Introducing the *Epitome*, he confesses that God had deprived him of those dearest to him.[28] This piece of information may allude to some painful family losses.

In the very first lines of his chronicle Zonaras informs us that he is writing having assumed the monk's habit.[29] He describes the place where he currently resides as 'the end of the world' ('ἐσχατιά'),[30] adding later in his text that it is an island away

[25] Demetrios Chomatenos, *Ἡ ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς τὸν χρηματίσαντα μητροπολίτην Κερκύρας, τὸν Πεδιαδίτην…*, in *Πονήματα διάφορα*, ed. by G. Prinzing (Berlin, 2002), 52.176-77.
[26] See, for example, the observations in Neville, *Heroes*, 29; *The Oxford History of Historical Writing. Volume 2: 400-1400*, ed. by S. Foot and C. Robinson (Oxford, 2012), 233; Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 360. For a study of eleventh and twelfth-century historians against the background of their legal knowledge, see also A. Laiou, 'Imperial Marriages and Their Critics in the Eleventh Century: The Case of Skylitzes', *DOP*, 46 (1992), 165-76, particularly at 166-67.
[27] For Zonaras' legal training, see the observations in Pieler, 'Johannes Zonaras als Kanonist', 601-02.
[28] *Epitome*, I, 3.6.
[29] *Epitome*, I, 3.1-5.
[30] *Epitome*, I, 8.13.

from Constantinople.[31] Zonaras' image as an author who lives far away from the capital is extensively treated in chapter six.[32] The monastery to which the chronicler retired was that of the Theotokos Pantanassa, a foundation located on the small islet of St Glykeria. The name of Zonaras' monastery is given in several manuscripts that transmit the chronicle or his canonical commentary, such as the *Ambros. gr.* 411, the *Vat. gr.* 828 and the *Ath. Vat.* gr. 228.[33]

The Zonaras family seems to have had a close connection with the Pantanassa monastery, the same monastic foundation to which Naukratios Zonaras had withdrawn. During the Komnenian period, when it was common for private individuals to build and endow monasteries, religious houses were often treated as family establishments.[34] Because Naukratios was among the benefactors who contributed to the refoundation of the Pantanassa, his authority would be recognised among the members of its community. Understandably, therefore, the Zonaras family would occupy a special place in the monastery, which must have been one of the principal reasons why the chronicler decided to retire there. This is practically all we know for certain about the writer of the *Epitome*.

A further clue about Zonaras' life might come from the fact that he penned two exegetical works of religious poetry: one dealing with the Resurrectional Canons in the *Octoechos* and another with Gregory of Nazianzos' *Gnomic Tetrastichs*. More information about these texts will be given in the second part of this chapter.[35] As a genre, hermeneutical works of this kind were meant to be didactic textbooks for use in schools.[36] They would be produced by teachers or former teachers of grammar for the

[31] *Epitome*, II, 297.22.
[32] See pp. 159-163.
[33] Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 10-11; Leone, 'La tradizione manoscritta', 234.
[34] Angold, *Church and Society*, 265-308.
[35] See pp. 30-34.
[36] Ronchey, 'An Introduction to Eustathios'; Dimitrakopoulos, 'The Exegeses'.

requirements of courses and lectures. Both of Zonaras' exegeses can probably be dated to the time when he was at the Pantanassa monastery and were written at the request of a third party. The fact that Zonaras was asked to compose commentaries which would serve educational purposes may imply, in my opinion, that he himself had some prior teaching experience.[37] He may have worked as a teacher for some time in Constantinople, most likely before beginning his career in the judicial system.

The *terminus post quem* for the completion of the *Epitome* is 1143. Referring to the emperor John II Komnenos, Zonaras makes use of the pronoun 'ἐκεῖνος', which is commonly used in connection with the deceased.[38] It is also used by the author when he mentions Alexios Komnenos too.[39] This observation strongly suggests that the chronicle was completed in or after 1143, the year of John Komnenos' death.

The *terminus ante quem* for the completion of the work can be established in relation to another chronicle, the *Chronike Synopsis* of Constantine Manasses. As I will demonstrate in chapter 7, the *Epitome* was one of the major sources employed by Manasses for the composition of his historical account.[40] This, however, makes the matter even more complicated, as the dating of Manasses' work also poses a problem. The chronicle of Manasses can be loosely dated to between 1143 and 1152.[41] Taken together, this evidence suggests that Zonaras must have completed his chronicle in or after 1143, even in the late 1140s, but before *c*. 1150.

It would be useful to clarify at this point that the concept of 'completing', 'finishing' or 'publishing' a work was not as straightforward in Byzantium as it is

[37] Fotios Dimitrakopoulos, though, seems to be of a different opinion, as he does not find 'evidence of an instructive intention' in Zonaras' exegetical works: Dimitrakopoulos, 'The Exegeses', 156.
[38] *Epitome*, III, 762.10-11. See Angold, 'Afterword', 400.
[39] *Epitome*, III, 765.1,5.
[40] For a comparison between the chronicles of Zonaras and Manasses, and an analysis of the way in which Manasses exploited the *Epitome*, see pp. 184-88 in the thesis.
[41] For the dating of the text, see Manasses, *Breviarium Chronicum*, I, xviii-xx, as well as the remarks of E. Jeffreys in *Four Byzantine Novels* (Liverpool, 2012), 273-74.

nowadays. Byzantine writings were much less stable than modern texts, in the sense that authors often subsequently revised or expanded parts of their works. A process of editing or even updating a text by incorporating material related to recent events has been observed in various genres of Byzantine literature. I can offer a few examples. Dedicatory epigrams were frequently redrafted over and over again by their composers, so that the final product would be pleasing to both the poets and their patrons.[42] The best example which can be given from the field of history is the historical account of Niketas Choniates, who flourished a few decades after Zonaras. As is evident from its manuscript transmission, Choniates' *History* went through several stages of composition and revision by the author himself before reaching final form.[43] Similarly, imperial orations of the Palaiologan period would occasionally be reworked and circulate in more than one version.[44]

Therefore, one cannot exclude the possibility that, having completed a first draft of the *Epitome*, Zonaras later re-edited his chronicle or added some material to the initial version. The author could well have finished a draft of the *Epitome* prior to John Komnenos' death, for instance, but amended his text accordingly in or after 1143. Manasses did have at his disposal a complete draft of the chronicle when he composed his own work, but whether Zonaras continued to make changes to the *Epitome* after that date is unclear. When viewed in this context, the date when the final version of the work was completed remains elusive. Unfortunately, the manuscript tradition of the chronicle does not enable us to reach any conclusions about whether it was created at different stages, since its manuscripts go back to a common ancestor. We do not know whether drafts of chronicle existed prior to, or

[42] Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry*, 41-44.
[43] Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 69-127; A. Simpson, 'Before and After 1204: The Versions of Niketas Choniates' "Historia", *DOP*, 60 (2006), 189-221.
[44] Toth, 'Rhetorical Theatron', 446-47.

even after, this archetype. It would make sense, though, that various drafts of the work had been produced and were circulating long before the 'publication' of the entire chronicle, especially given the enormous length of the text and the great amount of time Zonaras would have needed to finish it. The author is likely to have distributed initial drafts of shorter sections of his work. Certain parts of the *Epitome* would have lent themselves to this. Notably, the section of the chronicle that deals with Jewish antiquities (Books 1 to 6) could well have been sent out in advance of the whole work, since, as will be demonstrated in chapter 2, it is largely a self-contained unit.[45] A second suggestion would be that the author circulated and sent out separately the first volume of the *Epitome* (Books 1 to 9).

In the commentary on the canons we find a chronological indication that has often been taken to be the *terminus post quem* for the author's death. It comes from Zonaras' exegesis on canon seven of the Council of Neokaisareia, which forbids churchmen from attending the weddings of people who are re-marrying.[46] Zonaras approves of this prohibition, but bitterly observes that it is applied only on paper. Clearly showing his dissatisfaction with contemporary ecclesiastical men, he says that: 'I witnessed a patriarch and several metropolitans attending the wedding festivities of an emperor who was getting married for a second time' ('ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ πατριάρχης ὤφθη, καὶ μητροπολῖται διάφοροι, συνεστιώμενοι δευτερογαμήσαντι βασιλεῖ'). It is usually believed that Zonaras is alluding here to the second wedding of Manuel Komnenos, who married Maria of Antioch on Christmas Day of 1161.[47] However, a few years ago Banchich questioned whether this short segment was original to the writer and, in the event that it did come from his pen, suggested that it might refer to Nikephoros III Botaneiates instead, the other emperor (aside from

[45] See pp. 46-48.
[46] Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, III, 80-81.
[47] See, for instance, Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 206-07; Macrides, 'Perception of the Past', 591 (footnote 13).

Manuel) who got married more than once and falls into the time period when Zonaras lived.[48]

To my mind, it is hardly likely that Zonaras' remark is an interpolation. First, this idea is not supported at all by the evidence provided by the work's manuscript transmission, at least so far as one can tell from Rhalles and Potles' late nineteenth-century edition. Secondly, the author's critique of the churchmen of his time is in line with the overall attitude exhibited by Zonaras in both his chronicle and his exegesis of the canons, namely open condemnation of practices and phenomena he disapproves of. What is more, a very close parallel to this blunt remark can be found in Zonaras' commentary on canon ninety-six of the Council in Trullo, according to which people with bizarre hairstyles should be excommunicated from the body of the Church.[49] The author expresses his contempt of contemporary churchmen who tolerate the faithful with eccentric appearances. Similarly, in his interpretation of the canon seven of Neokaisareia, Zonaras makes a harsh judgement of clergymen of his time when he concludes his exegesis. In both cases, he does not hesitate to find fault with the behaviour of high-ranking members of the Church. Within this framework, Zonaras' harsh remarks about clergymen who attended the second wedding of an emperor does not appear foreign to either his attitude or style of writing.

The possibility that the emperor under consideration is Botaneiates is equally unlikely. Banchich bases his suggestion on a single sentence of *Skylitzes Continuatus*, which, in my opinion, he did not interpret correctly.[50] This is what we read about the

[48] Banchich and Lane, *The History of Zonaras*, 3. Treadgold rejects the possibility that this sentence might be an addition by a later hand as an 'arbitrary and unlikely assumption', but follows Banchich in his hypothesis that the emperor in question must be Botaneiates: Treadgold, *Historians*, 389.
[49] Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, II, 247 and III, 533-35.
[50] *Skylitzes Continuatus* is one of the only two sources where we read about Botaneiates' second wife and the only one in which her name is mentioned. The second source is the memoirs of Nikephoros Bryennios, in which Botaneiates' wife is said to have still been alive when he proceeded to marry Maria: Bryennios, *History*, 253.14-255.7 (Book 3.25); Neville, *Heroes*, 53-54.

second wife of Botaneiates, an otherwise unknown Bebdene, in *Skylitzes Continuatus*: 'When his wife Bebdene (she had been proclaimed empress at the same time as Botaneiates ascended the throne) died, the emperor took another wife' ('Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτοῦ τελευτησάσης τῆς Βεβδηνῆς, ἅμα τῇ ἀναρρήσει ἀναγορευθείσης καὶ αὐτῆς, ἑτέραν ἠγάγετο').[51] This brief extract says that Botaneiates' wife was made empress along with her husband. It does not mean that their wedding actually took place along with Botaneiates' coronation in the year 1078. As the text indicates, Botaneiates probably married Bebdene prior to his accession to the imperial office and crowned her empress when he rose to the throne. In this case, Zonaras' remark cannot apply to him, because the writer refers explicitly to the wedding of an emperor. Consequently, when commenting on canon seven of the Council of Neokaisareia, Zonaras cannot be making an allusion to Botaneiates, but to Manuel. This indicates that the year 1161 is indeed the *terminus post quem* for the composition of the exegesis on the canons. It is also the *terminus post quem* for the author's death. In light of these observations, the *Epitome* apparently antedates Zonaras' canonical work.

Something that should also be underlined is that it is not known why the author took monastic vows. It is generally believed that the chronicler was at the prime of his career as a judge during the reign of Alexios Komnenos and that he was somehow involved in the coup instigated by Anna Komnene and her mother, Irene Doukaina, against John. It is thought that, as a consequence of his interference, he fell from favour and was more or less forced to retire to a monastery when John ascended the throne. As has been rightly noted by both Ruth Macrides and Eleni Kaltsogianni,

[51] *Skylitzes Continuatus*, 181.22-23.

this theory was based on a hypothesis first raised by Konrad Ziegler in 1972.[52] Ziegler's suggestion came to be accepted as fact by some later scholars, although there are no compelling arguments to support the view that Zonaras was forced to withdraw from public life on account of his involvement in Anna's conspiracy.

It is more likely that his retirement to the Pantanassa monastery was associated with events that took place during the reign of John Komnenos. This emerges from what Zonaras says to account for ending his narrative with John's rise to the throne: 'for I considered it neither advantageous nor opportune to record the events missing' ('δοῦναι γὰρ γραφῇ καὶ τὰ λείποντα οὔ μοι λυσιτελὲς οὐδ' εὔκαιρον κέκριται').[53] It is clear from this segment that, for some reason, Zonaras regarded it as unwise to discuss the reign of John, who at the time when the *Epitome* was completed was already dead. The chronicler was willing to give an account of Alexios' reign (and severely criticise the emperor's style of rulership), but reluctant to talk about the state of affairs under John. He must have been displeased with some aspects of John's execution of government. If he continued his work beyond the death of Alexios, Zonaras would have to either conceal these events or include in his narrative details embarrassing or unflattering to the second Komnenian emperor. Understandably, a negative portrait of John would not be pleasing to the reigning emperor at that time, Manuel Komnenos, John's son and successor. Perhaps for fear of repercussions, Zonaras did not find it 'opportune' and safe enough to address the administration of the state under John. It would, therefore, seem likely that something happened during

[52] Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 9; Macrides, 'Nomos and Kanon', 72-73 (footnote, 57); Ziegler, 'Zonaras', 720-21.

[53] *Epitome*, III, 768.2-4. It is worth paying attention to the syntax of this clause. The personal pronoun 'μοι' can either denote the agent of the verb 'κέκριται' or govern the adjective 'λυσιτελὲς'. In the first case, the text could read as follows: 'For it was considered by me neither advantageous, nor opportune to…' In the second case, the text could read: 'It was considered neither advantageous to me, nor opportune to…' The author seems to have carefully placed the pronoun prior to the 'λυσιτελὲς' so that his sentence could be read and interpreted in both ways.

the reign of John that meant that the author was no longer welcome at the imperial court and, consequently, led to his withdrawal to St Glykeria some time in the 1120s or 1130s. The reasons why Zonaras could have fallen out of favour are unclear; with the limited evidence available to us about the author, we simply cannot arrive at a conclusion.

It is interesting to note that, apart from the *Epitome*, two other historical accounts which were written in the course of Manuel's reign discuss the age of Alexios but do not go into that of John. One, of course, is Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*, the greatest part of which was composed when Manuel was head of state.[54] The other is Michael Glykas' chronicle, which was produced after *c*. 1164-1165. As I will show in chapter seven, Glykas, basing his narrative on the *Epitome*, ends his work with the death of Alexios.[55] Clearly, though, he could have continued his account beyond that point, as people who lived during the reign of John would still have been around in his own day.[56] Constantine Manasses, whose chronicle was also composed when Manuel was on the throne, openly admits that he did not wish to talk about any of the Komnenian emperors. These observations may suggest that, during the reign of Manuel, recounting the history of the first two Komnenian emperors, particularly that of John, was a difficult, if not perilous, task.

There exists no solid evidence about the dates of Zonaras' birth and death, and for the period when he was in the prime of his career as a judge. It does not seem probable that he would have risen to the offices of *megas droungarios* and *protasekretis*, both high-ranking positions in the civilian bureaucracy, before his fortieth year. It is implausible, although not impossible. Asssuming that Zonaras

[54] Magdalino, 'The Pen of the Aunt', 15-16.
[55] For Glykas' treatment of the *Epitome*, see pp. 187-89.
[56] John Kinnamos, who wrote a laudatory history of John and Manuel Komnenos between 1180 and 1182, indicates that his presentation of John's reign was based on oral accounts: Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 4-6.

abandoned his career as a juridical official some time during the first two decades of John's reign, one can deduce that he must have been born between 1080 at the earliest and 1098 at the latest. If this is indeed true, the author would have been between sixty-three and eighty-one years old in 1161, the *terminus post quem* for the exegesis on the canons.

### Summary timeline

To bring together what has been discussed so far, I would like to present a timeline of Zonaras' life. The timespan of the chronologies noted below is understandably very wide.

Date of Zonaras' birth: *c*. 1080-1098

Retirement to monastery: 1120s or 1130s

Completion of the *Epitome*: in or after 1143, but before *c*. 1150

Completion of Zonaras' commentary on canon law: in or after 1161

Date of Zonaras' death: in or after 1161

## 1.2. The oeuvre

A brief overview of Zonaras' overall literary production is essential for two reasons. The first is because it can offer a more complete picture of the author's authorial interests and areas of expertise. Zonaras was not only a chronicler, but also a scholar who penned works in various genres. The *Epitome*, therefore, should be approached as an integral part of his broader oeuvre, rather than a work detached from the rest of his written production. Secondly, it is necessary to offer some substantial background information on Zonaras' compositions, as material from these works will be

occasionally employed in the following chapters to complement the analysis of the chronicle.

### 1.2.1. Commentaries on canon law

To a great extent, Zonaras' literary production reflects his legal background as a juridical functionary. His engagement with law is best exemplified by his lengthy *Exegesis of the holy and sacred canons* (*Ἐξήγησις τῶν ἱερῶν καὶ θείων κανόνων*), which offers an interpretation of the canons of the apostles, the synods and the Church Fathers.[57] As has been shown earlier, the *terminus post quem* for the completion of the text is the year 1161. Zonaras' commentary is the second hermeneutical work on the canons produced in the course of the twelfth century, following Alexios Aristenos' and preceding Theodore Balsamon's.

In the proem to his text, Zonaras informs us that he did not embark on this project on his own initiative.[58] According to the writer, he succumbed to the pleadings of a third party from fear that he might be judged disobedient. Statements such as these were commonplace in Byzantine literature. This is not to say, though, that they did not echo the truth. Perhaps the term 'ἀνηκοΐα', used for 'disobedience' in the text, is an oblique reference to monastic obedience (the so-called 'ὑπακοή').[59] On this assumption, Zonaras might have been asked to write his canonical interpretation by a

[57] Zonaras' commentary on canon law can be found in Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, II-IV. For further information on the work, see Troiannos, 'Canon Law', 177-78; Pieler, 'Johannes Zonaras als Kanonist'; Macrides, 'Perception of the Past'; Macrides, 'Nomos and Kanon'.
[58] Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, II, 1.
[59] That the word 'ἀνηκοΐα' may have these connotations is also highlighted by Kaltsogianni in 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 24. As will be demonstrated in chapter three, Zonaras claims to have composed five of his works at the bidding of other people: see p. 57. It is only in the introduction to his canonical commentary, however, that he presents obedience as the reason why he took up writing.

monk whom he ought to obey.[60] This man might well have been the abbot of the Pantanassa monastery to which the author had withdrawn.

Zonaras is much more comprehensive in his exegeses than his predecessor Aristenos. Taking as indicative examples the scholia particularly on the apostolic canons, Peter Pieler observes that Zonaras tends to paraphrase in his own words the original text of a canon, and that he frequently introduces comments explaining the rationale behind a canon and gives citations from the Bible.[61] Also, throughout his work, the writer makes heavy use of the writings of the Fathers. It is particularly striking that he derives limited information from sources of secular law, quoting only from the *Basilika*.[62] His vague references to the *Basilika* corpus, however, may indicate that he cited the work from memory.[63] As has been emphasised by Macrides, common features that emerge in both the *Epitome* and the interpretation of canon law are the author's interest in antiquities and his disapproval of changes in traditional customs.[64] It is characteristic, for example, that in both texts we find explanations of Latin terms, along with the equivalent Greek ones.

Zonaras also addresses a question of canon law in his short treatise which bears the title *On the prohibition of the marriage of two cousins related in the sixth degree to the same woman (Περὶ τοῦ μὴ δεῖν δύο δισεξαδέλφους τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγαγέσθαι πρὸς γάμον*).[65] The legal matter on which this text focuses is whether a woman is allowed to marry a man related in the sixth degree by marriage to her first husband. Zonaras carefully lists the series of arguments raised by both parties, namely by those

[60] Identifying the emperor who proceeded to a second marriage as Botaneiates, Banchich dates Zonaras' commentary to a much earlier period and proposes that the author was probably commissioned by Alexios Komnenos to produce an exegesis of the canons: Banchich and Lane, *The History of Zonaras*, 4.
[61] Pieler, 'Johannes Zonaras als Kanonist', 605-06.
[62] Troiannos, 'Canon Law', 178.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Macrides, 'Perception of the Past', 592-95.
[65] Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, IV, 592–97. For details on the text, see Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 26-27; Pitsakis, *Τὸ κώλυμμα γάμου*, 227-31 and 291-94.

who believe that there is no hindrance to such a union, and by those who claim that a marriage such as this is forbidden not only by civil, but also by moral laws. The writer solidly supports and justifies the second view. The treatise is very difficult to date. It is mentioned in passing that current laws prohibit marriage between a man and a woman related up to the sixth degree by blood.[66] The *terminus ante quem* of the text, therefore, is 1166, when the Patriarch Luke Chrysoberges and Manuel Komnenos issued a stricter law, which did not allow marriage between those related in the seventh degree by blood.[67]

The nature of the text is peculiar. The historian of Byzantine law Konstantinos Pitsakis is inclined to connect the text to a specific case in court.[68] In the title of the work, Zonaras appears to write 'on behalf of the chief priests' ('ἐκ προσώπου τῶν ἀρχιερέων').[69] It is not clear whether this piece of information was original to the title of the text or was added by a later scribe. Notably, though, that Zonaras speaks on behalf of a group of high-ranking churchmen does not emerge from the text proper, which may suggest that it is a trustworthy piece of information. Based on this, Pitsakis considers it likely that here the writer was asked to justify the collective vote of priests in a mixed kind of court.

Another short text which was a result of Zonaras' canonical interests is the so-called *Speech against those who believe that a natural emission of sperm is a pollution (Λόγος πρὸς τοὺς τὴν φυσικὴν τῆς γονῆς ἐκροὴν μίασμα ἡγουμένους).*[70] This essay is of a theological nature and concerns a subject repeatedly discussed in patristic literature, namely whether monks who have a wet dream in the course of the night should be considered unclean. Zonaras vehemently argues against the views of some

[66] Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, IV, 592-93.
[67] Angold, *Church and Society*, 412-13; Pitsakis, *Τὸ κώλυμμα γάμου*, 227.
[68] Pitsakis, *Τὸ κώλυμμα γάμου*, 291.
[69] The term 'ἀρχιερεύς' probably means 'bishop' in this case: see Lampe, 239.
[70] Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, IV, 598-611.

highly conservative monastic circles that, when they emit semen, monks become polluted and must not be allowed to receive the Holy Communion or venerate icons. He sees nocturnal emission as a physical process, which, if not a result of conscious sexual thoughts, should not be regarded as impure. In these cases, therefore, monks should not be punished. The author's argument is based on a series of passages from the Bible and the works of the Church Fathers.[71]

### 1.2.2. Hagiographical works

Zonaras is the writer of six hagiographical texts: (a) the *Life of Silvester*, bishop of Rome (BHG 1633-34), (b) the *Life of Eupraxia* (BHG 631m),[72] (c) a commentary ('ὑπόμνημα') on Cyril, bishop of Alexandria (BHG 2099), (d) a commentary on Sophronios, bishop of Jerusalem (BHG 1641), (e) a commentary on the Presentation of Christ to the Temple (BHG 1962c), and (f) a speech about the Veneration of the Cross (BHG 419).[73] It is worth noting that the *Life of Silvester*, the *Life of Eupraxia* and the commentary on Cyril are *metaphrases*, namely reworkings of earlier texts.

The first four of these works have been the subject of a doctoral thesis completed a few years ago by Kaltsogianni, the only comprehensive study of Zonaras' hagiographical production. For this reason, it is worth summarising below some of Kaltsogianni's principal conclusions. In all four works, Zonaras follows patterns and motifs frequently found in saints' biographies, such as the encomium of a saint's parentage, homeland and upbringing, and the presentation of his miracles.

[71] For a detailed investigation of the text, see Fögen, 'Nocturnal Pollution'.
[72] John Zonaras, *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τῆς ὁσίας μητρὸς ἡμῶν Εὐπραξίας*, ed. by Kaltsogianni in 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 639-56.
[73] The Greek term 'ὑπόμνημα' is a technical term which denotes a commentary of a religious text: see Lampe, 1451. Giving a brief overview of Zonaras' activity as hagiographer, Symeon Paschalidis translates the term into English as 'commentary': S. Paschalidis, 'The Hagiography of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography. Volume 1: Period and Places*, ed. by S. Efthymiadis (Farnham, 2011), 143-71, at 158-59.

Special features of Zonaras' metaphrastic scheme are the insertion of numerous extracts from the Bible and the works of the Church fathers, and the prominence given to the saints' characters. Kaltsogianni suggests that the *Life of Silvester* and the commentary on Sophronios predate the *Epitome,* and that Zonaras took passages from these texts and inserted them into his chronicle.[74] Either work could have been written prior to or after the retirement of the author to his monastery. The commentary on Cyril, by contrast, appears to have been written after Zonaras' historical account.[75]

Among the hagiographical works by Zonaras, the *Life of Silvester* had the widest dissemination. The text is not transmitted under the name of Zonaras in all manuscripts that preserve it. Kaltsogianni argues in favour of its attribution to the author on the basis of similarities in content, language and style to other works of Zonaras. The writer reworks the preface of the earlier *Life* available to him so as to emphasise the crucial role played by Silvester in the dominance of orthodoxy.[76] A story which makes its appearance in both the *Life of Silvester* and the *Epitome* is the healing and baptism of Constantine the Great by the saint. The most significant divergence from his prototype for the *Life of Eupraxia* is the addition of a proem. In the preface of his work, he focuses on the concept of women's bravery according to the Christian ideology and aims to exalt the saint for resisting the temptations of the flesh.[77] He makes minor amendments to the text proper of his prototype in order to highlight motifs such as virginity, philanthropy and poverty as virtues of monastic life.

A striking feature of the commentary on Cyril is the author's analysis of the education of the saint in all major subjects, Aristotelian and Platonic philosophy

[74] Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 478.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 394-95.
[77] Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 386.

included. The account of Cyril's contribution to the discussions of the Third Ecumenical Council is repeated almost word for word in the *Epitome*.[78] Just as in the introduction to his canonical interpretation, in the proem of the commentary to Sophronios, too, Zonaras tells us that he was asked to compose this work by other people (whom he does not name). The narrative is structured around two thematic axes: Sophronios' acts prior to and after his rise to the patriarchal throne of Jerusalem.[79] Considerable attention is given to his attempts to solve the theological disputes of his time, a topic which is also treated in Zonaras' chronicle.[80]

Having presented in brief some of Kaltsogianni's findings, I would like to concentrate particularly on the commentary on Sophronios of Jerusalem and attempt to place its production within the historical context of twelfth-century Constantinople. After the conquest of the Holy City by the Crusaders and the creation of the Latin Patriarchate in 1099, the Greek patriarchs of Jerusalem appointed by the Byzantine emperor resided in the imperial capital.[81] We know that a patriarch of Jerusalem who was formerly bishop of Tyre and Sidon came to Constantinople in 1107 and dwelt at the monastery of St Diomedes.[82] A decade later, Sabas of Jerusalem, former bishop of Caesarea, also found himself in the capital.[83] Both patriarchs must have been accompanied by an entourage which would have included other high-level churchmen from areas of Syria and Palestine. In 1157, John Merkouropoulos, initially a monk at Mar Saba, was ordained abbot of St Diomedes and, shortly afterwards, patriarch of

[78] Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 451.
[79] Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 419.
[80] Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 429-30.
[81] J. Richard, 'The Eastern Churches', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History. Volume IV, c. 1024-c. 1198. Part. 1*, ed. by D. Luscombe and J. Riley-Smith (Cambridge, 2004), 564-98, at 573.
[82] This information comes from an anonymous treatise which deals with the transfer of bishops. The text dates approximately to the second half of the twelfth century and has been transmitted in various recensions: 'Le traité', 183 (chapter 55). Jean Darrouzès seems to identify the anonymous patriarch of the treatise with the patriarch John VIII, who, as is known from a seal, was patriarch of Jerusalem towards the end of the eleventh century: V. Laurent, *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin V.2. L'église* (Paris, 1965), no 1565.
[83] 'Le traité', 183 (chapter 56).

Jerusalem.[84] He is attested to have taken part in the council of 1157 against Soterichos Panteugenos, which was held in the Blachernai Palace. It was probably during his time at Constantinople that Merkouropoulos composed the paired *Life* of John of Damascus and Kosmas of Maiouma.[85]

Zonaras' choice to write about a distinguished figure who occupied the patriarchal see of Jerusalem in the past should be considered against this background. The presence of the patriarchs of Jerusalem and probably other members of the city's clergy in Constantinople might have fostered a special interest in holy men connected with Jerusalem. Zonaras' commentary on Sophronios and Merkouropoulos' double *Life* are examples of this interest. Also, it would seem that the monastery of St Diomedes was a point of congregation for the 'exiled' clergymen of Jerusalem. This may lead to the hypothesis that those who prompted Zonaras to dedicate a work to Sophronios were a group of Syro-Palestinian monks associated with St Diomedes. This, however, cannot be proved. If Kaltsogianni is correct and the commentary on Sophronios was produced prior to the *Epitome*, Merkouropoulos could not have been the person who asked Zonaras to compose the text.

### 1.2.3. Ecclesiastical poetry

A religious poem from the pen of Zonaras that has come down to us is a canon dedicated to the Theotokos.[86] It comprises nine odes, each consisting of three or four *troparia*. The canon is of a strong dogmatic character, condemning all the major heresies in the history of the Church. Each *troparion* (or less frequently two

[84] Spingou, 'John IX'.
[85] Spingou, 'John IX', 197. For the work of Merkouropoulos, see A. Kazhdan and S. Gero, 'Kosmas of Jerusalem: A More Critical Approach to His Biography', *BZ*, 82 (1989), 122-32.
[86] John Zonaras, *Κανὼν εἰς τὴν ὑπεραγίαν Θεοτόκον*, ed. by J. B. Cotelerius, *Monumenta ecclesiae graecae*, III (Paris, 1686), 465-72; repr. in *PG*, 135, 413-21. See also Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 29.

consecutive *troparia*) concerns a leading figure whose teachings deviated from the orthodox dogma and lapsed into heretical beliefs. Zonaras structures all *troparia* in much the same way; he uses a couple of short sentences to refer to the false teachings of a heresy and a couple of sentences to explain the corresponding orthodox doctrine.

Special attention should be drawn to the last ode of the canon. The first *troparion* of this ode deals with Leo III, the emperor who launched iconoclasm, and the second *troparion* and the third *troparion* with the Bogomils. What is interesting is the final *troparion* of the ode, which concerns the 'Italians'. Latins become targets of Zonaras' attack because of the doctrine of Filioque and are explicitly characterised by the author as 'heretics'.[87] This characterisation is one of the most direct and harshest remarks against Westerners that can be found throughout Zonaras' oeuvre. A detail worth noting is that this canon was one of the texts that were added to an edition of the *Horologion* by the printing house of the 'Da Sabbio' family in 1524 in Venice. Due to the fact that Zonaras' canon termed Italians as 'heretics', the editors were accused by the Venetian ecclesiastical authorities of printing a text of an anti-Latin character.[88]

### 1.2.4. Exegeses of ecclesiastical poetry

Zonaras composed two commentaries on ecclesiastical poetry. This activity corresponded to a remarkable upsurge of interest in exegeses of religious poetry noted

[87] The main issues that caused controversy between East and the West during the twelfth century were the azymes, papal primacy and the Filioque: T. Kolbaba, 'Byzantine Perceptions of Latin Religious "Errors": Themes and Changes from 850 to 1350', in *The Crusades*, ed. by Laiou and Mottahedeh, 117-43.

[88] E. Folieri, 'Il libro greco per i greci nelle imprese editoriali romane e veneziane della prima metà del cinquecento', in *Venezia centro di mediazione tra Oriente e Occidente (secoli XV-XVI). Aspetti e problemi*, ed. by H.-G. Beck, M. Manoussakas and A. Pertusi, II (Florence, 1976), 485-508, at 491-98.

during the twelfth century.[89] Works of this kind were produced, in addition to Zonaras, by Gregory Pardos, Neilos Doxopatres, Theodore Prodromos and Eustathios of Thessaloniki.[90] Unfortunately, the first of Zonaras' commentaries remains unedited, whereas the second one has been only partly edited. This makes it hard to know the specifics of the works' content and arrive at a conclusion on the precise date of their composition.

The first commentary is an exegesis of the Resurrectional Canons in the *Octoechos*. Zonaras' interpretation of the poem survives in more than fifty manuscripts.[91] The author reveals that he was urged by a certain metropolitan of Thessaloniki to continue his own exegesis of the *Octoechos*, as he himself was unable to bring his project to a conclusion.[92] To refer to the said metropolitan, Zonaras uses the pronoun 'ἐκεῖνος', from which one can infer that, by the time Zonaras started the composition of the exegesis, the metropolitan had already died. The fact that Zonaras offers such specific information about this person indicates that his claim that he was prompted to compose his work by somebody else is probably true. According to the fourteenth-century *Oxon. Baroc. gr.* 157 and the *Vind. theol. gr.* 238, a codex dated to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the name of the metropolitan who started the

---

[89] See Gregory Pardos, *Ἐξηγήσεις εἰς τοὺς ἱεροὺς λειτουργικοὺς κανόνας τοῦ Δαμασκηνοῦ καὶ Κοσμᾶ τοῦ Μελῳδοῦ*, ed. by A. Kominis (Munich, 1960), 252.

[90] See the introduction in Eustathios of Thessaloniki, *Exegesis*, 53*-69*. For Neilos Doxopatres, see also pp. 32-33 below.

[91] For an analysis of the text, see Kominis, *Γρηγόριος Πάρδος*, 108-11.

[92] The two segments of the text, from which we learn about the request of the metropolitan of Thessaloniki, have been edited by Athanasios Kominis from the codex *Regin. gr.* 33: Kominis, *Γρηγόριος Πάρδος*, 106. The first segment, found in f. 66$^{v}$ of the manuscript, reads: 'The man who began this work and produced an exegesis (of the text) up to the *heirmos* of the sixth ode of this *echos*, that blessed metropolitan of the renowned metropolis of Thessaloniki, narrated the story of the three children in the seventh ode of the first *echos*… ('Ὁ τοῦ ἔργου τοῦτου ἀρξάμενος καὶ μέχρι τοῦ εἱρμοῦ τῆς ἕκτης ᾠδῆς τοῦ ἤχου τούτου τὴν ἐξήγησιν θέμενος, ὁ μακάριος ἐκεῖνος ἀρχιερεὺς τῆς ἐν Θεσσαλονίκῃ περιφανοῦς μητροπόλεως, ἐν τῇ τοῦ πρώτου ἤχου ἑβδόμῃ ᾠδῃ τὴν κατὰ <τοὺς> τρεῖς παῖδας ἱστορίαν ἐξέθετο...') The second extract, in f. 248$^{v}$, is as follows: '…for the completion of this work it is not fair to thank me, but that blessed metropolitan who began it and inspired to us the same zeal' ('…ὑπὲρ δὲ τῆς τοῦ ἔργου τοῦδε τελεσιουργίας οὐχ ἡμῖν δικαίως κείσεται χάρις, ἀλλὰ τῷ μακαρίῳ ἐκείνῳ ἀρχιερεῖ τῷ προκαταρξαμένῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡμᾶς εἰς τὸν ὅμοιον παραθήξαντι ζῆλον'). Note the pronoun 'ἐκεῖνος' that makes an appearance in both extracts.

exegesis was Niketas.[93] This led Kominis to identify him most likely with the well-known theologian Niketas 'of Maroneia', who flourished in the first half of the twelfth century and was bishop of Thessaloniki from 1132/3 to 1145, the year of his death.[94] From this, it can be deduced that Zonaras began writing the exegesis of the *Octoechos* after 1145, when he had already been at the Pantanassa monastery for several years.

The work survives in two versions, a longer and a shorter one.[95] Also, three variant proems have come down to us, one of which is an abridgement of other two, which are more extensive.[96] The proem which is transmitted in the majority of the work's codices is the only part of the text which has been edited.[97] It is of special value to scholars interested in Byzantine hymnography, as Zonaras lists and elaborates on all the technical features related to the internal structure of a canon, namely the *heirmos,* the ode and the *troparion*. These are characterised by Zonaras as technical words of hymnography. He provides long and detailed definitions of these terms, trying to account for their etymology as well. He offers a comprehensive definition of the canon as a type of poem and explains its division into odes.

The second exegesis of ecclesiastical poetry produced by Zonaras is that dedicated to the fifty-nine *Gnomic Tetrastichs* of Gregory of Nazianzos. Short parts of the text were edited in the mid-sixteenth century by Zacharias Skordylios.[98] A learned priest from Crete, Skordylios moved to Venice, where he involved himself with

---

[93] Kominis, *Γρηγόριος Πάρδος*, 106-07.
[94] Kominis, *Γρηγόριος Πάρδος*, 108. For information on Niketas, see A. Kazhdan, 'Niketas "of Maroneia"', *ODB*, III, 1482.
[95] Kominis, *Γρηγόριος Πάρδος*, 110.
[96] Kominis, *Γρηγόριος Πάρδος*, 108.
[97] The proem was edited for the first time by Angelo Mai: Zonaras, *Ἐξήγησις τῶν ἀναστάσιμων κανόνων*. It was later edited by Wilhelm Christ as well: W. Christ, *Über die Bedeutung von Hirmos, Troparion and Kanon in der griechischen Poesie des Mittelalters, erläutert an der Hand einer Schrift des Zonaras*, *Sitzungsberichte der königlichen Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, II (Munich, 1870), 1-11.
[98] For the edition of the text, see *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὰ τετράστιχα.*

writing, the copying of manuscripts and the publication of religious works.[99] He edited Zonaras' comments alongside those of Neilos Doxopatres on the same work by Gregory. For his edition, though, Skordylios used a manuscript which incorrectly attributes Doxopatres' commentary to Niketas David Paphlagon.[100] Hence, his edition bears the title *Νικήτα φιλοσόφου τοῦ καὶ Δαβίδ, ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὰ τετράστιχα τοῦ μεγάλου πατρὸς Γρηγορίου τοῦ Ναζιανζηνοῦ*. Looking into the manuscripts that transmit comments ascribed to Zonaras, Friedhelm Lefherz concluded that, from the extracts edited by Skordylios under the name of Zonaras, only the proem, the interpretation of the distich at the beginning of Gregory's poem and the exegeses of the first, the ninth, the tenth and the twentieth distichs were written by Zonaras.[101]

From Zonaras' proem we derive some information about the circumstances surrounding the production of the work. The author apparently produced the commentary late in life, as can be deduced from his reference to old age.[102] He composed the text at the instigation of somebody else, whom he addresses directly, calling him 'most blessed brother' ('μακαριώτατε ἀδερφὲ').[103] This form of address suggests that this person must have been the recipient of the commentary and was probably a monk. Zonaras further reveals that his commentary was meant as a response to a similar exegesis he had received from his dear friend.[104] These statements strongly suggest that, just as with Zonaras' interpretation of the *Octoechos*,

[99] Information about Zacharias Skordylios can be found in A. Rigo, 'Da Zaccaria Skordylis al *Vaticinium Severi et Leonis* del 1596', in *Oracula Leonis: tre manoscritti greco-veneziani degli oracoli attribuiti all'imperatore bizantino Leone il Saggio* (Padua, 1988), 73-99.
[100] All three authors, Niketas David, Neilos Doxopatres and Zonaras produced prose commentaries on Gregory's *Gnomic Tetrastichs*: C. Simelidis, 'Lustrous Verse or Expansive Prose? The Anonymous Chapters in the Parisinus Gr. 2750A and Vaticanus Gr. 1898', in *Pour une poétique de Byzance. Hommage à Vassilis Katsaros*, ed. by S. Efthymiadis et al. (Paris, 2015), 273-94, at 277-78.
[101] F. Lefherz, *Studien zu Gregor von Nazianz. Mythologie. Überlieferung, Scholiasten* (Bonn, 1958), 180-93, particularly 192-93.
[102] *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὰ τετράστιχα*, f. 3, line 7.
[103] *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὰ τετράστιχα*, f. 3, lines 1-2.
[104] *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὰ τετράστιχα*, f. 3, line 23-f. 3$^{v}$, line 6.

his exegesis on Gregory's *Gnomic Tetrastichs* was indeed composed at the bidding of an acquaintance.

### 1.2.5. The *Lexikon* of (Pseudo-)Zonaras

The *Lexikon* that passes under the name of Zonaras was hugely popular in the Byzantine world, with over 120 extant manuscripts transmitting the work or parts of it.[105] The earliest of these, the *Vat. gr.* 10, dates to 1253.[106] The longest version of the *Lexikon* was edited in 1808 by Johann Tittmann, after whom the work is sometimes called the *Lexikon Tittmannianum*,[107] and contains more than 19,000 glosses. There also exists a second, abridged version of the *Lexikon*.[108] As stated in the title of the longer version, the *Lexikon* takes material from the Old and the New Testaments, as well as from secular works. It draws heavily on earlier lexicographical sources, mainly on the *Lexikon Ambrosianum*, the *Souda* and the *Etymologika*, but also on those by Oros and Stephanos of Byzantium. It is supplemented with material from numerous other authors, such as John of Damascus, Michael Psellos and George Choiroboskos.[109]

The authorship of the work is widely contested. The *Lexikon* is transmitted under the name of Zonaras in only a few manuscripts: the fourteenth-century *Vind. phil. gr.* 154 and *Vind. phil. gr.* 322, the fifteenth-century *Marc. gr.* 492 and the sixteenth-century *Vind. phil. gr.* 32.[110] It is more often ascribed to a certain monk

[105] For details on the work, see F. Pontani, 'Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529-1453)', in *Ancient Greek Scholarship*, ed. by Montanari et al., 297-455, at 400; E. Dickey, 'The Sources of Our Knowledge of Ancient Scholarship', in *Ancient Greek Scholarship*, ed. by Montanari et al., 459-514, at 474; Hunger, *Literatur*, II, 42-43.
[106] Hunger, *Literatur*, II, 42.
[107] See Pseudo-Zonaras, *Lexicon.*
[108] Hunger, *Literatur*, II, 42.
[109] Hunger, *Literatur*, II, 43.
[110] Alpers, 'Zonarae Lexicon', 737; Pseudo-Zonaras, *Lexicon*, lxviii-lxx.

called Antony or is preserved anonymously.[111] Therefore, most modern scholars incline to the view that the *Lexilon* was not original to Zonaras.[112] Klaus Alpers, who was the first to have thoroughly studied the text, set 1204 as the *terminus post quem* for its compilation.[113] He bases his theory on the gloss 'ἤλεκτρον', namely amber, the substance 'from which the holy table of Hagia Sophia was made' ('οἵας ἦν κατασκευῆς ἡ τῆς ἁγίας Σοφίας τράπεζα').[114] What is considered important here is the use of the imperfect 'ἦν', which may indicate that the altar table of the church had been destroyed by the Crusaders by the time this gloss was written.[115] In the *Souda*, the source from which this excerpt is derived, the verb is in the present tense.[116]

The idea that the *Lexikon* could potentially have come from the pen of Zonaras has been supported by Grigoriadis.[117] Another possibility, in his view, is that the work was compiled by a later scholar, perhaps a member of the Pantanassa monastery, who had access to Zonaras' writings, and particularly his interpretation of canon law.[118] Grigoriadis' strongest argument in favour of either view is that several extracts from Zonaras' canonical commentary show an affinity with entries in the *Lexikon*.[119] He further points out that, as is evident from both the *Epitome* and the exegesis of the

---

[111] Alpers, 'Zonarae Lexicon', 737.

[112] This is expressed in the following studies, for instance: A. Momigliano, 'Johannes Zonaras', in *Who's Who in the Classical World*, ed. by S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (Oxford, 2000), ebook; A. Spanos, 'Was Innovation Unwanted in Byzantium?', in *Wanted, Byzantium: The Desire for a Lost Empire*, ed. by I. Nilsson and P. Stephenson (Uppsala, 2014), 43-56, at 47; R. Browning, 'Lexika', *ODB*, II, 1221; Alpers, 'Zonarae Lexicon', 737-38.

[113] Alpers, 'Zonarae Lexicon', 736-37. His opinion is also shared by Hunger: Hunger, *Literatur*, II, 42.

[114] Pseudo-Zonaras, *Lexicon*, I, 986-87.

[115] The destruction of the altar table of the Great Church is attested to by Niketas Choniates, according to whom the table, 'fashioned from every kind of precious material and fused by fire into one whole', was smashed to pieces: Choniates, *Historia*, 573.20-23. The translation is that of Harry Magoulias in *City of Byzantium*, 315. A discussion of the metals of which the table of Hagia Sophia was made is found in P. Bissera, *The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual and the Senses in Byzantium* (University Park, 2010), 108.

[116] *Suidae Lexicon*, ed. by A. Adler (Leipzig, 1928-1935), II, 560 (lemma 200); Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 37.

[117] Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 183-208.

[118] Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 189-90.

[119] Kaltsogianni, however, argues that in some cases the affinity between Zonaras' exegetical work and the *Lexikon* may be due to the fact that both Zonaras and the compiler of the *Lexikon* had access to the same sources, usually either the *Souda* or the writings of Josephus: Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 38.

canons, Zonaras had a keen interest in lexicography. Grigoriadis also draws attention to the fact that the *Lexikon* shares material with John Tzetzes' scholia to Aristophanes. As is the case with Zonaras, the precise period when Tzetzes was active as a scholar is unclear. Tzetzes must have lived at least up to the early 1160s, with indications showing that he may have been alive as late as 1185.[120] It appears, therefore, that he and Zonaras were near contemporaries and either of the two could have known each the other's oeuvre.[121]

There can be no safe answer to the question of the authorship of the *Lexikon*. In my view, Grigoriadis offers conclusive evidence that Zonaras' exegesis of canon law shares numerous common quotations and entries with the *Lexikon*. What should be borne in mind is that the *Lexikon* is a compilation which alters over time. Hence, it has a shorter version. An initial draft of the work might have been produced by a compiler familiar with Zonaras' canonical commentary or even by Zonaras himself. Using this compilation as the basis for their project, later copyists added glosses and expanded it. The one who inserted the term 'ἤλεκτρον' (apparently from the *Souda*) into the *Lexikon* was editing the text after 1204. Examining the work within this framework, the dating of its compilation ranges from *c*. the mid-twelfth to the mid-thirteenth century, the period to which its earliest surviving manuscript is dated.

[120] One indication is a poem that has been attributed to Tzetzes about the death of Manuel I Komnenos in 1180; another is a poem of Tzetzes which is thought to refer to the death of Andronikos I Komnenos in 1185: C. Wendel, 'Tzetzes, Johannes', *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, VII A 2 (1948), 1960-65; M. Grünbart, 'Byzantinisches Gelehrtenelend – oder: Wie meistert man seinen Alltag', in *Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, ed. by L. M. Hoffmann and A. Monchizadeh (Wiesbaden, 2005), 413-26, at 424-25. See also E. Cullhed, 'Diving for Pearls and Tzetzes' Death', *BZ*, 108 (2015), 53-62.

[121] I do not agree with Grigoriadis, who, postulating that Tzetzes produced his works during the second half of the twelfth century, believes that this poses a problem for the identification of Zonaras as the compiler of the *Lexikon*: Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 203-04.

## Final remarks

Although mostly known as a chronicler and a canonist, Zonaras was a prolific writer. A survey of his oeuvre shows him to have been a polymath and a man of vibrant scholarly activity. He was an author who exhibited broader interests and tastes, and had a dual focus on both secular and ecclesiastical literature. He had historical, canonical, hagiographical and exegetical concerns, and was equally keen on composing original works or commentaries on earlier writings. It is also significant that he tried his hand at both prose and verse.

# CHAPTER 2. THE COMPOSITION OF THE *EPITOME*

Zonaras arranged his material in two different ways. As will be shown below, the first method is the division of the chronicle into volumes and the second the structuring of the text into broad thematic units.

## 2.1. The division of the *Epitome* into volumes

The *Epitome* covers a little less than 2,000 pages of printed text in Pinder and Büttner-Wobst's three-volume critical edition. The modern division of the work into eighteen books was made by Ducange. The evidence of the manuscript tradition proves that Zonaras had originally divided his chronicle into two enormous volumes. The first one included Jewish, Greek and early Roman material and extended to the victory of the Roman Republic over Corinth and its allied city-states in 146 BC. The second volume was devoted to the history of the Roman Empire, starting from the rise to power of the famous Roman general Pompey in *c.* AD 60. Early on in the scholarly investigations of the *Epitome*, Ducange rightly pointed out that, in a great number of manuscripts, the second volume includes various titles which explicitly indicate that the second book of Zonaras' lengthy narrative is beginning.[122] The most characteristic of these can be found in the *Par. gr*. 1715:

> This is the second book of John Zonaras. *Epitome of histories* compiled and composed by the monk John Zonaras. The former book contains Jewish antiquities and the history of Rome and the history of consulships, and this one the history of the emperors.
>
> βίβλος δευτέρα ἰωάννου τοῦ ζωναρᾶ. ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν συλλεγεῖσα καὶ συγγραφεῖσα παρὰ ἰωάννου μοναχοῦ τοῦ ζωναρᾶ. ἡ μὲν προτέρα βίβλος περιέχει τὰ ἑβραϊκὰ καὶ τὰ τῆς ῥώμης καὶ τὰ τῶν ὑπατειῶν, αὕτη δὲ τὰς περὶ τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων ἱστορίας.[123]

[122] *Epitome*, I, xiv-xv. See also Leone, 'La tradizione manoscritta'; Büttner-Wobst, 'Textgeschichte'.
[123] *Epitome*, II, 298 (the critical apparatus).

Although this title was considered by Pinder to be an interpolation by the hand of the copyist and was, therefore, put into the critical apparatus, such titles can very well reflect the original two-part division of the chronicle.

As can be seen, there is a large chronological gap – of about 86 years – between the end of the first volume of the *Epitome* and the beginning of the second. The author himself says that he omitted the period of the Late Roman Republic 'against his will' ('ἄκων').[124] He was forced to do so because he did not manage to find sources dealing with this period. He was apparently missing the relevant books of Cassius Dio's *Roman History*, one of his major sources for the presentation of Roman history. This part of Dio's work does not survive either. We do not know whether these books of Dio had already been lost in the twelfth century or whether they were simply not available to Zonaras. This gap in the sequence of the narrative is a plausible explanation as to why the author divided his work into two volumes in 146 BC.[125]

Leaving this practical reason aside, starting the second volume of the *Epitome* with Pompey may seem an odd point. Interestingly, another universal chronicle, that by George Synkellos, also starts the second volume with Pompey. A meticulous examination of the tenth-century *Par. gr.* 1764, the oldest manuscript which preserves Synkellos' text, has convincingly shown that the chronicle was originally divided by the writer into two volumes.[126] The first one ran from the Creation of the world to the conquest of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 BC. The second one commenced immediately afterwards, with Pompey's triumphal return to Rome in the same year,

[124] The part of the text in which Zonaras accounts for the gap in his narrative is found in the *Epitome*, II, 297.9-298.7.
[125] This opinion is expressed by Treadgold as well: Treadgold, *Historians*, 393.
[126] J. Torgerson, 'From the Many, One? The Shared Manuscripts of the *Chronicle* of Theophanes and the Chronography of Synkellos', *TM: Studies in Theophanes*, ed. by M. Jankowiak and F. Montinaro, 19 (2015), 93-117.

and ended with the rise of Diocletian to the throne in 284 AD.[127] In contrast to Zonaras' *Epitome*, there is no chronological gap between the events recounted at the end of the first volume and those at the beginning of the second. Synkellos' division of the work in this way emphasised the fulfilment of a mythical prediction given by Jacob, namely that, when the Incarnation of Christ was approaching, Judaea would no longer be ruled by a Jew. For Synkellos, this prophecy came true with the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans.[128] The example of Synkellos' chronicle indicates that beginning a volume dedicated to Roman history with Pompey, however unusual, was not unprecedented in the tradition of chronicle writing.

The pattern which emerges from Zonaras' two-volume division of his chronicle is that the first book focused on Jewish antiquities and pre-imperial Roman history, and the second one on imperial history, even if it started with the final years of the Roman Republic. As I will explain in chapter five, the political system under Pompey and Julius Caesar, and afterwards under Mark Antony and Augustus is characterised by the chronicler as a 'monarchy in disguise'.[129] This period is perceived by Zonaras as a precursor to the 'genuine monarchy' established later by Augustus. The two volumes of the *Epitome*, in other words, correspond to pre-imperial and imperial history. The title given to the second volume of the chronicle by the scribe of the *Par. gr.* 1715 supports this view. The scribe writes that the second book contains the history of the Roman emperors, which demonstrates that he clearly understood the second volume as dealing specifically with imperial history.

[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] See pp. 153-56.

## 2.2. The internal thematic structure of the *Epitome*

The division of the chronicle into two volumes is different to its internal thematic structure. In terms of thematic units, Zonaras arranges his chronicle into two broad sections. The first concerns Jewish antiquities, covering Books 1 to 6 in the editions of the work. The second covers Books 7 to 18 and relates the history of the Roman nation.

Zonaras gives his audience a good idea of the main themes and the general compositional structure of his narrative in the proem of the *Epitome*. The chronicle's contents take up the entire second half of the preface. Zonaras' interest in giving a clear outline of the contents of his work is further accentuated by comparing the *Epitome*'s proem to the proems of other historical texts. Let us take as examples works on which Zonaras relied for the composition of his account. From the proem of Theophanes' *Chronographia*, for instance, we learn about the period covered in the text – from the accession of Diocletian to the throne in 284 to the end of the reign of Michael I Rangabe in 813 – and the range of material included in the chronicle, which deals with 'military or ecclesiastical or civic or popular or of any other kind' of affairs ('[πρᾶξις] εἴτε πολεμική, εἴτε ἐκκλησιαστική, εἴτε πολιτική, εἴτε δημώδης, εἴτε τις ἑτέρα').[130] In the preface to his *Synopsis of Histories*, John Skylitzes is notoriously vague as to the contents of his text. He tells us only that his description will start from the point at which Theophanes ended his *Chronographia*, and that it will provide a brief summary of the history of the Byzantine state.[131] Introducing his *Historia Syntomos*, Michael Psellos states in barest outline that his chronicle will focus on those 'who reigned in Elder Rome and later in Younger Rome' ('τῶν παρὰ τῇ

[130]Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 4.17-18. The translation of the segment is contained in *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, 2.
[131] Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 4.40-44 (proem).

πρεσβυτέρᾳ Ῥώμῃ βασιλευσάντων καὶ αὖθις τῇ νεωτέρᾳ'), beginning with Romulus, the first king of Rome.[132] Not one of these writers gives the kind of long, detailed overview of his work's contents that we find in Zonaras' proem.

The opening clauses to the contents of Zonaras' text shed light on the reason why he tried so hard to give his audience a good picture of what was to follow in his narrative. He writes: 'But before my history, I should say in summary what the things are that are going to be narrated, so that the readers of the work may know that they will gain knowledge of many and most indispensable histories' ('Ἀλλά μοι πρὸ τῆς ἱστορίας κεφαλαιωδέστερον εἰρήσθω τίνα τὰ ἱστορηθησόμενα, ἵν' εἰδεῖεν οἱ τῷ συγγράμματι ἐντευξόμενοι ὡς πολλῶν τε καὶ τούτων ἀναγκαιοτάτων ἱστοριῶν ἐν εἰδήσει γενήσονται').[133] Looking over the contents, readers can understand that Zonaras' extensive account does not have a narrow thematic focus, but is a work that encompasses a wide variety of subjects. The author, furthermore, wished to show that his narrative comprised two distinct thematic sections, the Jewish and the Roman. Hence, he presents the contents of each section separately.

Summarising the Jewish contents of the *Epitome* in his proem, Zonaras offers a detailed account of the key events in the history of the people of Israel that will feature in his text.[134] He begins with the story of the ten tribes of Israel and the Assyrian king Shalmaneser V, and then mentions a number of significant historical figures on whom he will focus, such as the Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezzar II, the Persian ruler Cyrus II, the Macedonian Alexander the Great, the king of the Seleucid Empire Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the Roman statesman Pompey and the Jewish king Herod. Most figures mentioned appear, because they played an important role in the history of Jerusalem. The author recalls, for example, the siege and destruction of

[132] Psellos, *Historia Syntomos*, 2.1-3.
[133] *Epitome*, I, 9.8-11.
[134] *Epitome*, I, 9.11-12.9.

Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and later the decree granted to Jews by Cyrus to return to the city and restore the Holy Temple.

It is interesting to note, moreover, that Zonaras in his prologue names the major sources he will use for his account of Jewish history. Among those he acknowledges are certain Old Testament books: the Octateuch, the Books of Kings, the Books of Chronicles and the Books of Esdras. Additional sources from which he will derive material are the works of Flavius Josephus, the Roman-Jewish historian of the first century AD, whom Zonaras discusses twice in the proem. One can observe that the writer prefers to mention sources that are directly related to Jewish antiquities. No reference is made to secondary sources that supplement and extend information supplied by the main ones about other subjects. The works of Herodotus, Plutarch and Xenophon, for instance, from which Zonaras draws rich material for Greek and Persian history, are not cited in his preface.

Zonaras' outline of Jewish antiquities concludes with the conquest of Jerusalem by the Romans. The reference to the Roman Republic offers the author a convenient way to introduce the subjects recounted in the section of his work dedicated to the Roman past.[135] This part of the preface provides a detailed overview of the history of Rome, with Zonaras naming significant events and famous individuals, such as Julius Caesar, Mark Antony and Augustus, with whom he will deal later in the narrative. The stress appears to be very much on the evolution of the Roman political constitutions from a kingship, into a tyranny, an aristocracy, a republic and finally a monarchy.

An important point to note about the manner in which Zonaras presents the contents of the chronicle's Roman section is that he makes an implicit distinction in

[135] *Epitome*, I, 12.10-15.9.

his account of the Roman nation before and after the reign of Constantine the Great. This distinction is not as sharp and straightforward as is the one between the Jewish and the Roman contents of the *Epitome*. Still, there is a striking change in Zonaras' presentation of pre- and post-Constantinian history. Up until the period of Constantine, Zonaras gives a very concise overview of the Roman material included in his work. Constantine is the last historical figure who is described in some detail in the contents, with the author highlighting the appearance of the Cross in the heavens to Constantine and the foundation of 'New Rome'. The manner in which he summarises the post-Constantinian material of his chronicle is substantially different. This extract is worth quoting in full:

> …and who ruled after him [Constantine I] in Constantinople, what each of them was like in his character, but also in his religious beliefs, and how long he maintained the power, and in what way he left this life. And who was at the head of the Church of Constantinople, and for how long each one was, and who of these adhered to the right doctrine, who supported different doctrines, and in what way each of these followed them. And under which emperors and which patriarchs and against whom the councils were called for.
>
> …καὶ τίνες μετ' ἐκεῖνον ἐν αὐτῇ ἐβασίλευσαν, καὶ οἷος ἕκαστος ἦν τοὺς τρόπους, ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ τὸ σέβας, καὶ ὅσον ἐκράτησε τῆς ἀρχῆς, καὶ ὅπως μετήλλαξε τὴν ζωήν· τίνες τε τῆς ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει προέστησαν ἐκκλησίας, καὶ ἐφ'ὅσον ἕκαστος, καὶ τίνες αὐτῶν τοῦ ὀρθοῦ ἀντείχοντο δόγματος, τίνες δὲ γεγόνασιν ἑτερόδοξοι, καὶ ὅπως τῶν τῇδε μετελήλυθεν ἕκαστος· καὶ ἐπὶ τίνων αὐτοκρατόρων καὶ πατριαρχῶν καὶ κατὰ τίνων αἱ σύνοδοι συγκεκρότηνται.[136]

Here, one can see first that the amount of text dedicated to the contents of post-Constantinian history is slim, representing no more than a few lines of printed text. Zonaras is not nearly as precise in his outline of this part of his work as he was in the overview of the earlier Roman material; he mentions neither crucial events nor key historical figures that marked the period after the reign of Constantine. More than this, Zonaras makes it clear that there will be a shift in the narrative focus. He will move from a narrative of events and renowned individuals in his presentation of pre-

[136] *Epitome*, I, 15.2-9.

Constantinian Roman history to a narrative of biographies in his presentation of the Empire after Constantine. The writer says that he will concentrate on the lives and characters of emperors, and will also relate the history of the patriarchs of Constantinople, discussing mainly those who remained faithful to the orthodox doctrines and those who deviated from them.[137] As will be shown in the next chapter, this turn to a more personality-centred account has to do with the biographical style of writing that characterises the sources exploited by Zonaras, but also with the author's own literary preferences and choices.[138] Furthermore, the prologue makes it apparent that Zonaras will deal primarily with the new imperial capital, rather than the events throughout the Empire. This underlying distinction between the pre- and post-Constantinian Roman state is highly significant, because it reflects the chronicler's understanding of Roman history. He essentially acknowledges that there is a distinction between the Old Roman Empire, with Rome as its capital, and the New Roman Empire, the 'Byzantine Empire', with Constantinople as its capital.

There are good reasons to think that the extensive proem of the chronicle was one of the last parts written by author. This is suggested by the very detailed presentation of the work's contents in the preface and, more importantly, by the fact that the proem, divided into two parts, echoes the clear-cut division of the Jewish and the Roman material in the main text. It is clear, moreover, that Zonaras' composition of the preamble takes into consideration some of the basic features of the main part of his narrative: (a) the emphasis on his principal sources for Jewish history; (b) the focus of the narrative on the development of Rome's political constitutions; and (c) the personality-focused style of writing in the account of Byzantium.

[137] Banchich and Lane, *The History of Zonaras*, 39.
[138] See pp. 87-92.

The sharp division of the *Epitome* into two thematic sections, the Jewish and the Roman, can be seen, apart from in the proem, at the point when Zonaras completes his account of Jewish history.[139] A short paragraph serves as the conclusion of the Jewish section of the *Epitome*. There, Zonaras explains that, with the fall of Jerusalem in Roman hands, the story of the tribulations of the Jews comes to an end. He continues by saying that, under Hadrian, the Jews revolted against the Romans, but were once again defeated and destroyed. He adds that he will relate these events in the corresponding parts of his narrative, obviously in the Roman section that follows.

The next paragraph introduces the theme of Roman antiquities.[140] In this paragraph, the author lists the main subjects he will address in the Roman section of the *Epitome*, namely the origins of the Roman nation, the successful campaigns of the Romans to spread their rule all over the world and the different forms of government that were developed throughout the history of the Empire. Zonaras underlines that his aim in the Roman section will be to teach his readers about the evolution of the Roman political system, a theme which plays a central role in the *Epitome*, as will be explained in chapter five.[141] Of great interest is the phrase which opens this paragraph: 'Since I recalled the history of the Romans…' ('Ῥωμαίων δὲ μνησθείσης τῆς ἱστορίας…').[142] This statement is very similar to the one Zonaras uses in his preface to begin his discussion of the Roman contents of the work: 'Since I recalled the history of the Romans and the history of Rome…' ('Ῥωμαίων δὲ καὶ τῆς Ῥώμης μνησθείσης τῆς ἱστορίας…').[143] It is highly plausible, therefore, that the paragraph which introduced the *Epitome*'s Roman section was composed at the final stage of Zonaras' writing, more or less at the same time as the preface.

---

[139] *Epitome*, I, 561.17-23.
[140] *Epitome*, I, 562.1-14.
[141] See pp. 147-50.
[142] *Epitome*, I, 562.1.
[143] *Epitome*, I, 12.10.

The clear-cut distinction between the Jewish and the Roman section of the *Epitome* is further highlighted if considered in comparison with the way in which Jewish-Roman history is presented in other Byzantine chronicles.[144] Indeed, authors of universal chronicles often attempt to mingle the Jewish with the Roman material in their works in order to form a more cohesive narrative and stress a sense of continuity between the two traditions. Discussing the internal organisation of the sixth-century chronicle of John Malalas, Mary Whitby argues that the work is structured into three parts: the first concerns Jewish and Old Testament history (Books 1 to 6), the second Roman antiquities (Books 7 to 12), and the final one Byzantium (Books 13 to 18), 'a scheme that anticipates the chronicle of John Zonaras in the twelfth century'.[145] Malalas, though, incorporates the story of Aeneas, including his adventures and the foundation of Alba Longa, into Book 6, the final book of the Jewish section.[146] Within his account of Aeneas and his descendants, he intertwines short pieces of information about parallel developments in the Jewish and the Greek world.[147] More than that, nowhere in Malalas' narrative do we find authorial statements which explicitly indicate that the Jewish section has come to a close and a new one featuring Roman antiquities is about to open. The mid ninth-century chronicle of George the Monk, which begins with the Creation and extends to 867, is also a good example of how a chronicler would arrange his Jewish, Greek and Roman material into a continuous account. Having discussed the Persian Empire and the Hellenistic kingdoms, George immediately moves on the history of the Roman Empire without using a concluding

[144] Fishman-Duker, 'The Second Temple Period in Byzantine Chronicles', *B*, 47 (1977), 126-56, where special reference to Zonaras is made. In a more recent publication, the same author comments on the image of Jews, as it emerges from Byzantine chronicles: R. Fishman-Duker, 'Images of Jews in Byzantine Chronicles: A General Survey', in *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures*, ed. by R. Bonfil et al. (Leiden, 2012), 777-98.
[145] M. Whitby, 'The Biblical Past in John Malalas and the Paschal Chronicle', in *From Rome to Constantinople: Studies in Honour of Averil Cameron*, ed. by H. Amirav and B. ter Haar Romeny (Leuven, 2007), 279-302, at 286.
[146] Malalas, *Chronographia*, 126-130.
[147] Malalas, *Chronographia*, 130-131.

paragraph or any linking construction.[148] The same pattern was copied three centuries later by Michael Glykas, a near-contemporary of Zonaras, whose chronicle also ends with the death of Alexios Komnenos in 1118.[149]

That Zonaras distinguishes in such a straightforward manner the Jewish from the Roman material in his work sets him apart from other authors of universal chronicles. This structural pattern plays down a remarkable ideological feature which is traditionally ascribed to Byzantine chronicles: that their authors sought to establish the Empire as the fourth kingdom prophesised in the apocalyptic visions of the prophet Daniel and to present its citizens as the rightful heirs to the Jews as God's Chosen People.[150] This concept certainly emerges in the *Epitome*, but is not prominently stressed.[151] Zonaras' account of the Jewish past represents it as a largely self-contained unit. Within a composition of wide scope, the Jewish section clearly has its own theme and also its own conclusion, a paragraph which signifies to the audience that the long presentation of the history of the people of Israel has finally reached its end. For Zonaras, the story of Israel is a theme worthy of being treated in its own right.

Some further remarks can be made about the Jewish section of the chronicle which may shed light on the way the work gradually received its final form. To help the audience follow up with the central story line and enhance the coherence of his account of the Jewish past, the chronicler tries to create several cross-references within his text. He frequently includes short phrases that refer to earlier parts of his narrative of Jewish history.[152] The parenthetical sentence 'as has (already) been said' ('ὡς ἱστόρηται', ὡς ἤδη ἱστόρηται', 'ὡς εἴρηται', ὡς εἴρηταί μοι' etc.) is the most

[148] George the Monk, *Chronicon*, I, 293.
[149] Glykas, *Annales*, 379.
[150] Markopoulos, *Η θέση του χρονογράφου.*
[151] See also Matheou, 'City and Sovereignty', 48-49.
[152] See, for instance, *Epitome*, I, 96.7, 208.8, 261.16-17, 234.7, 329.15-16, 419.15, 473.11.

frequent formula used by the author. In contrast, it is extremely rare for Zonaras to offer references which point forward in the narrative. We find only 'internal' cross-references, namely references which indicate what will follow later in the Jewish section.[153] In other words, nowhere in his narrative of Jewish antiquities does the author link his account of the Jewish past with the next part of his work which is dedicated to the history of the Roman Empire.

As in the Jewish section, the Roman one contains numerous cross-references that are used to refer readers to earlier passages of Zonaras' text. The most important of these can be found in the narrative of the Roman general Pompey. There, one can read that Pompey 'conquered Judaea and captured Aristobulus, its king, as has already been narrated in the Jewish account' ('τὴν δὲ Ἰουδαίαν ὑπέταξε καὶ τὸν βασιλέα αὐτῆς Ἀριστόβουλον συνέλαβεν, ὡς ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαϊκοῖς ἤδη ἱστόρηται').[154] In contrast to the Jewish section of the work, here the author demonstrably tries to create a link between the two distinct parts of his narrative, the Jewish and the Roman.

One further consideration is pertinent here. In the third book of the *Epitome*, Zonaras makes a passing reference to Cassius Dio's *Roman History*. Analysing one of the prophetic visions found in the Book of Daniel, he tells us that the prophet predicted that the fourth great empire, namely the Roman Empire, would conquer all the lands and nations which had not been conquered by Alexander the Great. Zonaras turns directly to his readers and says that 'whoever is interested in knowing about these historical events should read the books of Dio, the Roman, and the writings of Polybius' ('ἅπερ ὁ βουλόμενος γνῶναι τὰς βίβλους τοῦ Ῥωμαίου Δίωνος ἀναγνώτω καὶ τὰ τοῦ Πολυβίου συγγράμματα').[155] Zonaras urges his audience to read about the expansion of the Roman Empire, mentioning the sources from which one could derive

[153] *Epitome*, I, 211.21; 241.6-7; 243.3-4.
[154] *Epitome*, II, 311.3-5.
[155] *Epitome*, I, 227.15-16.

useful information about the topic. Dio's history is one of the principal sources on which Zonaras based his own account of the Roman nation up to the early third century AD. The question which arises, of course, is why the chronicler would prompt his readers to search for Dio's history in order to learn about the rise of the Roman Empire, if he himself intended to recount the history of the Romans and take abundant material for his composition from Dio's work.

A parallel observation can be made about Zonaras' reference to another external source. Drawing on Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, the chronicler makes a digression on the life of the Persian ruler Cyrus the Great. Bringing his digression to an end, he states that Herodotus offers a different version of Cyrus' upbringing, life and death. He explains that he is unable to include this material in his chronicle because it would prolong his narrative. Zonaras says that: 'Anyone who wishes to know what Herodotus wrote about Cyrus should use his work and will find this information in the first book, which he named after Clio, the first of the Muses' ('ὅτῳ δ' εἰδέναι βούλημα καὶ ἅπερ Ἡρόδοτος περὶ αὐτοῦ συνεγράψατο, τὴν ἐκείνου μεταχειρισάμενος βίβλον εὑρήσει ταῦτα κατὰ τὸν πρῶτον λόγον, ᾧ τὴν πρώτην τῶν Μουσῶν ἐπέγραψε τὴν Κλειώ').[156] Here, the writer encourages his readers to read Herodotus' *Histories* because he had no intention of weaving Persian material from them into his own work.

I would suggest that the same explanation applies to the case of Dio. It is plausible that, at the time when Zonaras recounted the prophetic visions of Daniel, he had no intention of drawing on Dio's work. He had probably not acquired a copy of Dio by that point and had not decided yet to widen the scope of his chronicle to narrate the history of Roman Empire. He viewed the expansion of the Roman rule as a

[156] *Epitome*, I, 303.8-11.

theme that was then beyond the scope of his text and, therefore, encouraged those interested in the topic to look for an external source.

These two observations, namely that Zonaras does not try to connect his account of the Jewish past with the Roman section of his work and the early reference to Dio's *History*, indicate that the author did not aim from the start to compose a universal chronicle that would feature both Jewish and Roman antiquities. It would seem that he initially meant to focus on the Jewish past alone. He initiated his project as a book dedicated to Jewish history, in which topics concerning ancient Rome would be treated only in passing. The original conception of his work, however, changed in the course of writing. At some point, the chronicler conceived the idea of recounting the history of the Romans as well. The key factor that allowed him to expand the subject of his enquiry was the source material he gradually managed to collect. When he took up writing, he already had at his disposal the Bible and Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* (henceforth: *JA*) and the *Jewish War* (hernceforth: *JW*), the texts that would form the compositional structure of his book about Jewish history. As time went by and his work progressed, Zonaras continued to search for and collect new sources. It must have been when he managed to get his hands on Dio's history that he considered the possibility of writing about Roman antiquities. Like the Bible and Josephus' writings, Dio's lengthy work also had the potential to provide the backbone for an extensive part of Zonaras' narrative.

This inference is central to our perception and understanding of Zonaras' composition as a whole. To put it simply, the *Epitome* should not be viewed as a vast project that was conceived as such from the very beginning, but rather as a work in progress which was gradually developed into its present form. We should not forget that such a lengthy work must have been created over a considerable period of time.

In the final lines of the text, Zonaras writes: 'Here, let my writing reach an end and the course of the history, which I very much prolonged, come to an end' ('Ἐνταῦθά μοι τὸ πέρας ἤτω τῆς συγγραφῆς καὶ ὁ δρόμος στήτω τῆς ἱστορίας, ὅς μοι πρὸς μακρὸν ἐκμεμήκισται'),[157] signifying both the great amount of text he produced and the great amount of time he had spent on writing.

The question which subsequently arises, of course, is why the chronicler initially meant to compose a work focusing on the Jewish past. To answer this question, one should consider how the Byzantines themselves viewed the period prior to and shortly after the Incarnation of Christ. For them, this period was the history of the people of Israel, God's Chosen People. It was part of the early history of Christianity and, consequently, part of their own history. They viewed the story of the people of Israel as part of the Orthodox legacy. The Old Testament after all, which covered the events of this period, was fully accepted in the Christian world. The Old Testament figures were just as 'Christian' in the Byzantine tradition as those of the New Testament. Therefore, aiming to write about the people of Israel, Zonaras wished to offer his readers an account of early Christian history.

Zonaras' choice of the works of Josephus as his principal sources for this period should not come as a surprise either. Despite being a Jew, Josephus exerted great influence in the Christian world both in the East and the West.[158] The most significant reason for this is that the content of his works supplemented the books of both the Old and the New Testaments. In his *Church History* and *Praeparatio evangelica*, the highly-learned Eusebios of Caesarea made abundant use of Josephus. He recognised that his works were valuable witnesses to the history of early

[157] *Epitome*, III, 768.1-2.
[158] J. Carleton Paget, 'Some Observations on Josephus and Christianity', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 52 (2001), 539-624; Schreckenberg, 'Josephus in Early Christian Literature'.

Christianity, and provided an exegesis of the Old and the New Testament.[159] The employment of Josephus by Eusebios was of crucial importance to the later reception of the historian in Byzantium.[160] For instance, writing his *Bibliotheca* in the ninth century, Photios, the erudite patriarch of Constantinople, offers a detailed summary of the *JA*. He also praises Josephus' literary merits as a historian in his codex concerned with the *JW*.[161] A great number of fragments from Josephus' works are present in the *Excerpta* of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos as well.[162] Josephus was frequently read and used by Byzantine chroniclers, as not only Zonaras, but also George the Monk, George Kedrenos and Michael Glykas were based, either directly or indirectly, on his compositions. Just as for other Byzantine intellectuals, for Zonaras, too, Josephus was a very reliable – and therefore an obvious – source of information for early Christian history.

## Final remarks

To summarise, I have argued in this chapter that Zonaras structured his text in two different ways. He divided his chronicle into two lengthy volumes when his narrative reached 146 BC. The reason for using this date as a point to break his narrative into

---

[159] A. Johnson, *Eusebius* (London, 2014), 85-11; A. Johnson, *Ethnicity and Argument in Eusebius' Praeparatio evangelica* (Oxford, 2006), 128-30; Schreckenberg, 'Josephus in Early Christian Literature', 63-71; Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius-Josephus-Tradition*, 79-88. It has been proposed that Eusebius was the author of the so-called *Testimonium Flavianum*, the part of the *JA* (Book 18, chapters 63-64) dedicated to the historical Jesus: K. Olson, 'A Eusebian Reading of the *Testimonium Flavianum*', in *Eusebius of Caesarea: Tradition and Innovations*, ed. by A. Johnson and J. Schott (Washington, 2013), 97-114; L. Feldman, 'On the Authenticity of the *Testimonium Flavianum* Attributed to Josephus', in *New Perspectives on Jewish Christian Relations*, ed. by E. Carlebach and J. Schechter (Leiden, 2012), 14-30.

[160] Studies that deal with or touch upon the use of Josephus' writings by Byzantine scholars are the following: T. Leoni, 'The Text of the Josephan Corpus. Principal Greek Manuscripts, Ancient Latin Translations, and the Indirect Tradition', in *A Companion to Josephus*, ed. by Chapman and Rodgers, 307-21, particularly at 312; Bowman, 'Josephus in Byzantium'; Schreckenberg, 'Josephus in Early Christian Literature'; Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius-Josephus-Tradition*.

[161] Photios, *Bibliothèque*, ed. by R. Henry, 8 vols (Paris, 1959-1977), I, 155-58 (codex 76) and 32-33 (codex 47) respectively. For Photios' treatment of Josephus, see J. Schamp, 'Flavius Josèphe et Photios', *JÖB*, 32 (1982), 185-96.

[162] Bowman, 'Josephus in Byzantium', 369-70.

two is practical, namely the large chronological gap between the end of the first volume and the start of the second, which begins with the account of Pompey's rise to power. Zonaras explains that he did not have sources that covered the period of the Late Roman Republic at his disposal. As a result of this division, the first volume of the *Epitome* is devoted to Jewish and pre-imperial Roman history, whereas the second one focuses on the presentation of the Roman Empire.

The other way in which the chronicler arranged his material is thematic. There are two distinct thematic sections: the first focuses on Jewish antiquities and the second on the Roman past. A secondary distinction which emerges within the Roman section is that between pre- and post-Constantinian Roman history, which indicates that Zonaras approaches in a different way the 'New' Roman Empire and the 'Old' Roman Empire. As the author reveals in his proem, his account of Byzantium will be centred on the Constantinopolitan environment, placing the emphasis on Byzantine emperors and the patriarchs of the city.

The Jewish section is a largely self-contained unit. In the course of this chapter, I have aimed to show that Zonaras' initial aim was to produce a work dedicated to Jewish antiquities. For the Byzantines, the story of the people of Israel was understood as the history of early Christianity and, thus, as part of their own historical legacy. Finding more sources as he was writing, Zonaras at some point decided to broaden the subject matter of his text and include the history of the Roman nation.

# CHAPTER 3. ZONARAS' METHOD OF WORK AND TREATMENT OF HIS SOURCES

To examine the manner in which the chronicler treats and adapts his source material, I have looked at, separately, the two distinct thematic sections of the *Epitome* that were identified in the previous chapter, namely the Jewish and the Roman. The first part of the chapter concentrates on the proem of the *Epitome* and the following ones on the sections dedicated to Jewish and Roman history.

## 3.1. The proem of the *Epitome*

The proem of Zonaras' chronicle, traditionally the part in which an author describes the scope and purposes of his enquiry, is enlightening in many respects. First, it provides insights into Zonaras' ideas of a flawed historical narrative; second, it reveals the overall purpose of the work; and third, it gives a precise outline of the chronicle's contents and names some of the major sources used by the writer.

In his extensive analysis of Zonaras' proem, Grigoriadis compares literary aspects of the preface to elements we find in the proems of other histories of the middle Byzantine period.[163] Grigoriadis highlights particularly how Zonaras employed and adapted common literary motifs for his own work. More recently, Nicholas Matheou, exploring several aspects of Zonaras' proem, has suggested that the writer might have loosely modelled his preface on the introduction of the ninth-century chronicle of George the Monk.[164]

[163] Grigoriadis, 'Prooimion'.
[164] Matheou, 'City and Sovereignty', 44-46.

Zonaras follows closely the recommendations of Byzantine rhetorical textbooks, the so-called *progymnasmata*, about the purposes of a proem.[165] In the fifth-century *progymnasmata* of Nicholas of Myra, for example, we read that the function and aim of a proem is 'to cultivate the attention, the knowledge and the goodwill' ('τὸ προσοχὴν καὶ εὐμάθειαν καὶ εὔνοιαν ἐργάσασθαι') of the audience.[166] In accordance with the instructions of Byzantine rhetoricians, Zonaras seeks first to gain the attention and goodwill of his readers, and shortly after, to inform them about the principal subjects of the *Epitome*.

Indeed, the chronicler is well aware how important it is to attract his readers' attention right from the very beginning of his account. For this reason, he starts immediately with a *captatio benevolentiae*. In the first sentence of the preface, he employs an effective rhetorical device: he accepts an accusation that his intended audience might level against him. He admits that his readers would 'rightly' ('εὐστόχως') criticise him for bestowing more importance upon a 'secondary task' ('πάρεργον') – that of recording the past – than his monastic duties, with the adverb 'εὐστόχως' being emphatically placed at the beginning of the sentence to create a strong impression.[167] To show his modesty, Zonaras explains that he sees his project as a means of atoning to God for his past faults. Trying to further secure the goodwill of his audience, he also tells us that he is not interested in the fine things monastic life has to offer, but would rather devote himself to an arduous task, the composition of a historical work.[168]

---

[165] For the *progymnasmata*, see G. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition Introductory to the Study of Rhetoric* (Atlanta, 2003); R. Webb, 'The Progymnasmata As Practice', in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, ed. by Y. Too (Leiden, 2001), 289-316.
[166] Nicholas of Myra, *Progymnasmata*, ed. by J. Felten (Leipzig, 1913), 4.10-11. For information on Nicholas, see A. Kazhdan, 'Nicholas of Myra', *ODB*, II, 1470.
[167] *Epitome*, I, 3.1-2.
[168] *Epitome*, I, 4.1-6.

The author reveals that he did not take up writing of his own accord. Having noticed that Zonaras was 'at leisure' ('σχολάζοντα'), a group of friends, who remain anonymous, urged him to devote his spare time to something 'of general benefit' ('ἔργον κοινωφελές').[169] Claims by writers that they were encouraged by other people to carry out a project is a longstanding literary trope.[170] Statements of a similar kind are made by Zonaras in the proems of the *Exegesis of the holy and sacred canons*, the commentary on Sophronios of Jerusalem and the exegesis of the *Gnomic Tetrastichs* of Gregory of Nazianzos, as well as in the exegesis of the Resurrectional Canons in the *Octoechos*.[171] The language of Zonaras is very formulaic, particularly in the *Epitome* and the commentary on Sophronios, where synonymous phrases make their appearance.[172] The fact, however, that it was common for authors to employ such motifs does not necessarily mean that their remarks were not based on real circumstances. Zonaras' claim that he was asked to produce his chronicle at the instigation of some friends may reflect to some extent that, although no longer part of the inner circle of the Empire's intellectual life, he was still in contact with a group of literati outside his monastery and engaged with them in scholarly discussions.

---

[169] *Epitome*, I, 4.7-11, 7.1-3. Another reason why Zonaras made the decision to compose his chronicle is the spiritual benefit he would derive from his accomplishment. About this, however, he says little. He simply explains that, engrossed in writing, he would be spared from temptations and not yield to sinful actions: *Epitome*, I, 7.18-8.5.

[170] See Grigoriadis, 'Prooimion', 340-42. This motif was used by many Byzantine chroniclers and historians. It was exploited, for example, by Theophanes Confessor, who says that the impetus to write his chronicle came from the abbot of his monastery, George Synkellos: Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 4.1-8. Michael Psellos also claims that he was prompted to compose his *Chronography* by a group of high-ranking court officials and churchmen. The *Chronography* lacks a proem. Psellos' statement appears in his narrative of the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos: Psellos, *Chronography*, 116.1-4 (Book 6, chapter 22).

[171] See *Epitome*, I, 4.7-9. Cf. Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, II, 1; John Zonaras, *Εἰς τὸν ὅσιον πατέρα ἡμῶν Σωφρόνιον πατριάρχην Ἱεροσολύμων*, ed. by A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας* (St Petersburg, 1897; repr. Brussels, 1963), V, 137-50, at 138.17-19. As Kominis has edited only fragments from Zonaras' exegesis of the Resurrectional Canons in the *Octoechos*, we do not know whether the author's statement that he writes at the request of a metropolitan of Thessaloniki is found in the proem of the text: see pp. 31-32 of the thesis.

[172] In the preface of both the *Epitome* and the commentary on Sophronios, Zonaras stresses that he did not come up with the idea of composing these texts himself and that he was requested to do so by a third party. The verb 'ὁρμῶ' makes its appearance in both cases.

Furthermore, presenting his decision to start writing as granting the wishes of somebody else was a convenient means for Zonaras to introduce his works without appearing presumptuous to his audience. In the *Epitome*, it also provided him the narrative context to voice his own opinion as to how a history should be written.[173] The author attributes to his friends a series of critical remarks about earlier historians in terms of the content and style of their accounts. He thus uses his friends as a literary persona through which to reveal his aesthetic approach to historical works. Zonaras' acquaintances are said to disapprove, first of all, of particularly long narratives, in which authors deal exhaustively with military operations and provide information about war strategies, battles and the geography of battlefields, among other things. They have a negative attitude, moreover, towards those who compose lengthy, rhetorically ornate speeches in order to display their own erudition, as well as those who include numerous dialogues in their narratives to defend and communicate their religious doctrines. This type of material unnecessarily prolongs historical narratives and may tire the audience as a result. Zonaras' friends are equally critical of extremely succinct historical accounts because they do not talk 'about the important events' ('περὶ τὰ καίρια') and 'the most important actions' ('τὰς καιριωτέρας τῶν πράξεων') of certain historical figures.[174] This concision would make it difficult for readers to evaluate the characters of these figures. Other works are rejected due to their poor linguistic qualities, with Zonaras dismissing their style as solecistic and their language as 'ordinary and sometimes even barbaric' ('ἰδιωτικαῖς λέξεσιν […] ἢ καὶ βαρβάροις ἐνίοτε').[175] The implication that underlies these critical remarks is that

[173] For this passage, see *Epitome*, I, 4.11-6.21. The fact that Zonaras expresses his views through the speech of his friends is something that provoked Wilhelm Schmidt's mockery in the 1830s, but was praised as 'innovative' by Grigoriadis more than 150 years later: Schmidt, 'Quellen', iv; Grigoriadis, 'Prooimion', 341.
[174] *Epitome*, I, 6.11-12.
[175] *Epitome*, I, 6.20.

the *Epitome* does not exhibit any of the flaws identified in previous historical accounts.

The chronicler is instructed by his acquaintances to produce a 'short history' ('σύντομον ἱστορίαν'), omitting a great many details which would be neither easy to remember nor beneficial to his readers.[176] Zonaras' imaginary acquaintances conclude their critique by prompting the chronicler 'to succinctly teach the readers of his text the most important deeds and other circumstances' ('συνοπτικῶς διδάσκουσαν τοὺς ἐπιόντας τὸ σύγγραμμα τὰ καιριώτερα τῶν πεπραγμένων ἢ καὶ ἄλλως συμβεβηκότων'). These guidelines can give us an insight into Zonaras' overall purpose in composing his chronicle: to write a compact historical account whose content would be useful to his audience. His project was clearly intended to be a work of general benefit, as he notes earlier in the preface. An important concept that emerges here is that of public utility of a historical work, which was a commonplace among ancient and medieval historiographers. The use of the verb 'διδάσκω' in the segment quoted above attests to the fact that the *Epitome* was meant to have an edifying character. Zonaras' objective, in other words, was to produce a work of educational value which would be brief and focus only on the most significant facts. The didactic dimension of the *Epitome* is emphasised elsewhere too, particularly in connection with the author's intention to communicate to his readers the transformation of the Roman political system over time. This subject will be treated extensively in the fifth chapter.[177]

It is remarkable that the emphasis on the didactic purpose of the chronicle goes hand-in-hand with the concept of brevity. Similar observations about the close connection between the educational character and the synoptic quality of a text have

[176] *Epitome*, I, 7.2-8.
[177] See pp. 147-50.

been made in relation to poetry.[178] Writing in verse was considered a form of expression befitting teaching purposes, because 'verse is capable of summarizing ideas in short syntactical units'.[179] To achieve his own didactic goals, however, Zonaras chose to write in prose and, more than that, composed a narrative of enormous length. His idea of brevity is linked to his method of work. He tries to achieve brevity by heavily compressing his sources, as we shall see in the course of this chapter. If viewed in this context, the idea of public utility acquires an additional dimension; instead of studying the primary sources themselves, Zonaras' audience can thumb through the *Epitome* and learn about the basics of Jewish and Roman history much more quickly. The chronicle was designed as a compendium of history, which would be easy for readers to use.

Zonaras' historical compendium has three significant limitations, though, as the author himself acknowledges in his preface. First, he explains that his narrative is not very precise in certain parts due to the obstacles he encountered in the process of collecting and studying his source material.[180] Composing his work at the monastery on the island of St Glykeria, he found it hard to find all books he needed for his work. Second, he says that the texts he had at his disposal occasionally give different accounts of the same event. He regrets that he could not record all the versions of a story, but this would have made his narrative too long. He says he will note the discrepancies between different accounts only when these are crucial to his narrative and could not be left out.[181] Finally, the chronicler accounts for the lack of consistency in terms of the linguistic style of his text. He explains that he frequently

[178] Bernard, *Poetry*, 238-40.
[179] Bernard, *Poetry*, 239.
[180] *Epitome*, I, 8.9-14.
[181] *Epitome*, I, 8.14-23.

tries to imitate the language of his sources, either by including phrases taken from them or by changing his own style to fit theirs.[182]

In some manuscripts, the preface concludes with a series of theological remarks about the Creation of the world and the human race. This passage does not appear in two of the three manuscripts on which Pinder depended for his edition of Books 1 to 9 of the chronicle, namely the *Par. gr.* 1715 and the *Vind. hist. gr.* 16, but can be found in the *Monac. gr.* 324. For this reason, Pinder regarded the passage as a later interpolation and put it into brackets.[183] This must be correct, because the paragraph contains a paraphrase of some doctrinal observations that are present in Zonaras' narrative of the Creation shortly after.[184] One can reasonably conclude that this paragraph was added by a later copyist who paraphrased an extract from the main text.

## 3.2. The Jewish section: Books 1 to 6

Zonaras' account of Jewish history comprises approximately a third of the entire *Epitome*. It extends from the Creation of the world to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70, a period more or less covered by most Byzantine chronicles.

The most comprehensive investigation into the source material of the first six books of the *Epitome* is offered by two nineteenth-century studies, which remain very useful. In his work in 1839, Schmidt provided a thorough analysis of all the known sources employed by Zonaras to the end of Book 12.[185] The sources identified by Schmidt for Books 1 to 6 in particular are: the Old Testament, Flavius Josephus' *JA* and *JW*, Eusebios of Caesarea's *Church History*, Theodoret of Cyrrhus' *Commentary*

[182] *Epitome*, I, 8.23-9.7.
[183] *Epitome*, I, 15.16-16.11.
[184] *Epitome*, I, 21.4-11.
[185] Schmidt, 'Quellen'.

*on Daniel*, Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, Herodotus' *Histories* and Plutarch's *Life of Artaxerxes* and *Life of Alexander*. Most of Schmidt's findings were confirmed in an equally detailed study by Büttner-Wobst in 1890.[186] Büttner-Wobst, though, shared the opinion of Benedikt Niese, the editor of Josephus' writings, who had argued that Zonaras did not make direct use of the *JA*, but had access to an epitome of the work instead.[187] In contrast, a modern scholar, Steven Bowman, seems to believe that the chronicler employed and reworked Josephus' work itself.[188]

Whether or not Zonaras employed the *JA* via an epitome, it is clear that the greatest amount of material in the Jewish section of the chronicle derives from the *JA*. Consisting of twenty books, Josephus' *magnum opus* is a very long work. It begins with the biblical Creation and ends in AD 66, just before the outset of the Roman-Jewish War.[189] Large portions of the Josephan text are usually summarised, paraphrased, or, less frequently, copied almost verbatim into Zonaras' account. Bowman highlights that the chronicler omitted much of the literary, philosophical and documentary material included in his source.[190] There can be no doubt that the *Epitome* owes much to the narrative structure of Josephus' work. Not only does the chronicler use individual episodes included in the *JA*, but he also follows very closely the sequence of events found there to build the main spine of his own narrative. A

[186] Büttner-Wobst, 'Abhängigkeit'.
[187] Büttner-Wobst, 'Abhängigkeit', 126-27. Niese published a Byzantine epitome of the *JA* and has supported the theory that this is the work used by Zonaras. Taking Zonaras as the *terminus ante quem* for the compilation of this epitome, Niese has suggested that the work may date to the tenth or the eleventh centuries: *Flavii Josephi Antiquitatum Iudaicarum epitome*, ed. by B. Niese (Berlin, 1896), v-vi. In his study of the reception of Josephus' writings in antiquity and the Middle Ages, Heinz Schreckenberg also agreed with Niese: Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius-Josephus-Tradition*, 141-44.
[188] Bowman, 'Josephus in Byzantium', 371-72.
[189] Secondary literature on Josephus is abundant. Some recent publications are the following: *A Companion to Josephus*, ed. Chapman and Rodgers; *Flavius Josephus: Interpretation and History*, ed. by J. Pastor, P. Stern and M. Mor (Leiden, 2011); *Josephus and the Flavian Rome*, ed. by J. Edmondson and S. Mason (Oxford, 2005); *Josephus, the Bible*, ed. by Feldman and Hata.
[190] Bowman, 'Josephus in Byzantium'.

brief overview of the narrative structure of the Jewish section of the *Epitome* demonstrates this.

Zonaras opens his main text with a few lines dedicated to the Christian doctrine concerning the nature of God.[191] He then moves on to describe the period from the Creation to the death of Saul. The sequence of events follows that of the *JA* (Books 1 to 6) and the first nine Old Testament books (from Genesis to Samuel 1). Afterwards, special emphasis is given to David's reign. The narrative from that point on is organised chronologically according to reigns in a fashion similar to that of the *JA* (from Book 7 to Book 10, chapter 144) and the biblical Samuel 2, Kings 1, 2 and Chronicles 1, 2.

For the events following the conquest of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, Josephus incorporates a large amount of material from the biblical book of Daniel into his composition. Remaining close to the narrative sequence of the *JA*, Zonaras moves on to relate the apocalyptic visions of the prophet Daniel, deriving material mainly from Josephus and Theodoret's *Commentary on Daniel*. After this, for the first time in his narrative, Zonaras stops using Josephus and relates the stories of Judith and Tobit, heavily abridging the biblical books of Judith and Tobit. Resuming the use of the *JA*, he turns the focus of his narrative to Persian history. Zonaras' presentation of the life of Cyrus the Great is essentially a summary of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia.* Drawing on Josephan material yet again, Zonaras deals next with Cyrus' successors Cambyses II, Darius I, Xerxes I and Artaxerxes I. Abridging Plutarch's *Life of Alexander*, he then relates the military successes of Alexander the Great. Moving on to the Hellenistic period, he uses the *JA* as his major source. He maintains the narrative focus of

[191] *Epitome*, I, 17.1-12.

Josephus' text and is primarily concerned with the Ptolemaic kingdom and the Seleucid Empire.

The selection and order of episodes towards the end of the chronicle's Jewish section follow that of the *JA* and later the *JW*, to which Zonaras had direct access.[192] Much emphasis is given by the author to the rule of Herod the Great and the rule of his successors. Next, Zonaras proceeds to an account of the events that led to the Jewish revolt against the Romans and subsequently the Roman conquest of Jerusalem. From that point onwards, the writer heavily abridges Books 3 to 7 of the *JW*.

To highlight the close connection of his chronicle to Josephus, Zonaras makes repeated references to his compositions. A search in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* shows that Josephus is the most frequently cited author in the *Epitome*, with Zonaras referring to the writer by name on fifty-three occasions. On this evidence, it seems that the chronicler's aim was not simply to acknowledge the principal source from which the Jewish material of his work derives, but, more importantly, to establish in the eyes of his readers the strong dependence of his chronicle on Josephus' works. This betrays not only Zonaras' own appreciation of Josephus as a historian, but also that of his contemporary audience.

It is no coincidence that in cases when the author wishes to enhance or confirm the veracity of what he says, he employs lengthy word for word quotations from Josephus. This can be seen, for instance, in Zonaras' conclusion of the biblical story of Noah. The writer remarks that Noah died at the age of 950.[193] To address the doubts his readers might have about Noah's longevity, he quotes verbatim an extensive passage from his source, which explains why Noah enjoyed such a long life.

---

[192] For a general introduction on the *JW*, see S. Mason, 'Josephus' *Judean War*', in *A Companion to Josephus*, ed. by Chapman and Rodgers, 13-35; *The Jewish War*, trans. into English by G. A. Williamson, rev. ed. with a new introduction by M. Smallwood (Harmondsworth, 1989), 9-24.
[193] *Epitome*, I, 28.18-19. Cf. Josephus, *JA*, I, 24 (Book 1, chapter 105).

Similarly, in his account of the execution of John the Baptist by Herod Antipas, Zonaras inserts into his text an extract of approximately twelve lines taken from the *JA* in support of his claim that some Jewish people attributed Herod's military defeat by Aretas IV Philopatris to his hideous crime.[194] Evidently, for Zonaras, the use of Josephus as a source add importance, authority and appeal to his account.

Some of the Old Testament material present in the chronicle was transmitted to the text via the works of Josephus, who himself drew extensively from the biblical text.[195] At the same time, Zonaras augmented his main source with much information taken directly from the Old Testament. He explicitly acknowledges as his sources Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and the Kings.[196] It is apparent, moreover, that he derived some material from the books of Numbers, Chronicles, Judith and Tobit. Zonaras followed the Septuagint corpus alone. Like several of his fellow chroniclers, he is aware of the content of the book of Jubilees, one of the Jewish-Christian texts that are nowadays characterised as *pseudepigrapha*, but questions its validity.[197] His negative opinion of the text is clearly laid out at the beginning of his narrative of the Creation, when he emphatically states that: 'I [Zonaras] do not regard anything written there as certain, neither do I weave (such material) into my account' ('οὐδέν τι τῶν ἐν ἐκείνῃ γεγραμμένων λογίζομαι βέβαιον,

---

[194] *Epitome*, I, 485.21-486.12. Cf. Josephus, *JA*, IV, 161-62 (Book 18, chapters 117-19).

[195] Josephus heavily exploited the Hebrew biblical text and had also access to Greek translations of the Bible: P. Spilsbury, 'Josephus and the Bible', in *A Companion to Josephus*, ed. by Chapman and Rodgers, 123-34, at 128; T. Rajak, *Translation and Survival: The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora* (Oxford, 2009), 252; E. Ulrich, 'Josephus' Biblical Texts for the Books of Samuel', in *Josephus, the Bible*, ed. by Feldman and Hata, 81-96.

[196] For example, see *Epitome*, I, 21.2, 42.16, 55.14-15, 59.18, 69.19-20, 70.6-7, 75.12 and 75.20-21, 150.23 and 194.8-9.

[197] The Jubilees was originally written in Hebrew and was later translated into Greek, Latin, Ethiopic, and perhaps Syriac. Only brief excerpts of the Greek translation survive; they can be found mainly in the compositions of the fourth-century Epiphanius of Salamis and those of the Byzantine chroniclers George the Synkellos, George Kedrenos, and Michael Glykas. The citations found in these works have been used by James VanderKam for his edition of the Ethiopic Jubilees: see *The Book of Jubilees*, I, ix, xi-xii; II, xi-xiv.

οὐδὲ τῷ λόγῳ συντίθεμαι').[198] Since the Jubilees does not count among the writings that were approved by the Church, Zonaras considered the work an unreliable source of information, and one which should not be used in his narrative. However, echoes of the Jubilees can be found in the *Epitome*. Zonaras ignores the fact that Josephus, his principal authority, interpolated items of information from the Jubilees into the *JA*.[199] As a simple indication of this, remaining faithful to Josephus, Zonaras gives the name of the daughter of Pharaoh who saved the infant Moses as Tarmuth ('Θέρμουθις'), a name that does not appear in any other source prior to Josephus, apart from the Jubilees.[200]

An interesting point arises as to Zonaras' treatment of the Old Testament in connection with Josephus. The chronicler occasionally compares short pieces of information collected from the books of the Old Testament and the *JA*, although the two sources do not present substantial differences. He closely examines the texts and indicates slight differences between the descriptions of a certain place or a certain event. To take some examples, he draws a detailed comparison between the description of the Holy Temple of Solomon in the *JA* and the description in the Kings. He records the points on which the two accounts agree or disagree, and provides accurate references to the sections of his sources where this material is included.[201] In other cases, he points out that an item of information contained in the biblical text is omitted by Josephus or that a certain passage of the Old Testament offers a more

[198] *Epitome*, I, 18.8-10. For the ambivalent attitude of Byzantine chroniclers towards the Jubilees, see E. Jeffreys, 'Old Testament "History" and the Byzantine Chronicle', in *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, ed. by P. Magdalino and R. Nelson (Washington, 2010), 153-74, at 156-57, 163; *The Chronography of George Synkellos*, liv-lv, lxi-lxii.

[199] See *The Chronography of George Synkellos*, liv-lv (footnote 119), lxi. For some examples that reflect Josephus' use of the Jubilees, see J. Kugel, *A Walk Through Jubilees: Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of Its Creation* (Leiden, 2012), 42, 98, 191-93; T. Franxman, *Genesis and the Jewish Antiquities of Flavius Josephus* (Rome, 1979), 79, 98, 101-02, 108, 115, 283.

[200] *Epitome*, I, 53.8. Cf. Josephus, *JA*, I, 129 (Book 2, chapter 224) and *The Book of Jubilees*, II, 47.5.

[201] *Epitome*, I, 146.16-147.5.

reliable account than the corresponding section of the *JA*.[202] It is remarkable, moreover, that he pays considerable attention to the different terms or the different names given by his sources. He underlines, for instance, that 'the tree of knowledge' ('ξύλον τῆς γνώσεως') mentioned in Genesis is called the tree 'of judgment' ('τῆς φρονήσεως') by Josephus.[203]

The emphasis Zonaras places on trivial differences between the *JA* and the Old Testament is not in line with the author's statement in the proem, namely that points on which his sources contradict one another will feature in his text if they are crucial to the coherence of the narrative. The writer deviates from his intended practice to emphasise that he is drawing very carefully on source texts and that he is striving to compose an accurate account of the history of the people of Israel. As Roger Scott has argued, chroniclers 'often use repetition and apparent plagiarism as a way of demonstrating their authenticity and accuracy'.[204]

On certain occasions, the chronicler deliberately deviates from the narrative of his sources to introduce several pieces of extraneous information in the form of digressions. Zonaras introduces the biblical stories of Judith and Tobit as a brief excursus from the narrative of Josephus.[205] Since the books of Judith and Tobit are not among those of the Jewish Torah, they were left out by Josephus. Zonaras might have found this omission odd. He considers these stories edifying and includes them in his text. A longer part of the narrative which is also presented as a self-contained, parenthetical unit is the one dedicated to Alexander the Great. This can be seen in the

---

[202] *Epitome*, I, 42.15-6, 55.15.
[203] *Epitome*, I, 21.19-20. For other examples, see *Epitome*, I, 59.18-21, cf. Exodus 15.23; *Epitome*, 69.18-19, cf. Numbers 17.23. A close comparison such as this can also be seen in Zonaras' treatment of Xenophon and Herodotus. According to Zonaras, the former states that Cambyses' brother was named Tanaoxares, while the latter was called Smerdis: *Epitome*, I, 305.9-10.
[204] R. Scott, 'Text and Context in Byzantine Historiography', in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. by James, 251-63, at 252.
[205] *Epitome*, I, 247.1-260.15.

opening sentences of the passage, where the author explains to his readers that he will pause his presentation of the Jewish past to relate the life and achievements of the illustrious Macedonian king.[206] Zonaras' intention behind this digression is to enrich his narrative with information from Plutarch's *Alexander*. These examples serve to highlight that, when the writer had access to sources that furnished a new store of material, he would systematically mix this material with information from the works that formed the backbone of his text. Even if the information he had at his disposal was not directly connected to the main narrative line, he was determined to include it in his composition.

One can occasionally discern his efforts to draw together the different subjects of his account. An indication of this is provided by the transitional paragraph that follows the story of Tobit; this enables Zonaras to smoothly integrate into his text a great amount of material from the *Cyropaedia*.[207] The author briefly recapitulates what he has recounted earlier in his narrative – the conquest of Jerusalem by the Assyrians and Jeremiah's apocalyptic prophecy about the destruction of the Assyrian kingdom – and then introduces the topic which he will deal with shortly after, the history of the Persian Empire. To strengthen further the connection with his earlier account, he argues that his narrative of the Persians will prove the reliability of Jeremiah's prophecy. It should be noted that this pattern of connection is not a result of Josephus' influence on Zonaras, since in the corresponding section of the *JA*, the Jewish historian moves directly from the story of Daniel to the presentation of the Persian past.

---

[206] *Epitome*, I, 329.9-12: 'Now that the account of history made mention of Alexander, it is good to narrate in brief his deeds and dispositions, and from which place and from whom he was born, and then once again to bring back the account to its continuation' ('Επεὶ δὲ μνείαν τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου ὁ τῆς ἱστορίας λόγος πεποίηται, καλὸν καὶ τούτου τὰς πράξεις τε καὶ τὰ ἤθη καὶ ὅθεν κἀκ τίνων ἔφυ κατ' ἐπιδρομὴν διηγήσασθαι, καὶ οὕτως αὖθις ἐπαναγαγεῖν τὸν λόγον πρὸς τὴν συνέχειαν').
[207] *Epitome*, I, 260.16-261.3.

## 3.3. The Roman section: Books 7 to 18

### 3.3.1. Pre-Constantinian Roman history: Books 7 to 12

In Pinder and Böttner-Wobst's three-volume edition of the chronicle, the section which concerns pre-Constantinian Roman history covers the entire second volume, more than 620 pages of printed text. For his narrative up to the reign of Nerva, Zonaras is based on one principal source: the *Roman History* of Cassius Dio, a voluminous work which consisted of eighty books and extended from the foundation of Rome to AD 229.[208] Dio's work has not come down to us intact. Books 22 to 35 have been almost entirely lost, while Books 55 to 60 and 79 to 80 have been preserved only in fragments. Zonaras, though, had the greatest part of the text at his disposal, with the exception of the books that dealt with the late Republican period. Due to the chronicler's strong dependence on Dio, the *Epitome* – along with the *Excerpta* of Constantine Porphyrogennetos and John Xiphilinos' *Epitome* of Dio – has been used by scholars to reconstruct the lost books of Dio's work.

The chronicler supplements Dio's history with a good deal of information from Plutarch's *Lives* of renowned mythological and historical figures of Rome: Romulus, Numa, Publicola, Camillus, Aemilius Paulus, Pompey, Caesar, Brutus and Antony. It seems plausible that Zonaras occasionally consulted Xiphilinos as well, who epitomised Books 36 to 80 of Dio's work.[209] The section from the reign of Trajan to the reign of Alexander Severus seems to be based primarily on Xiphilinos'

[208] A very helpful introduction to Dio and his work can be found in Swan, *The Augustan Succession*, 1-38. For a comprehensive study of the special features of Dio's narrative, see A. Kemezis, *Greek Narratives of the Roman Empire Under the Severans: Cassius Dio, Philostratus and Herodian* (Cambridge, 2014), 90-149

[209] Büttner-Wobst, 'Abhängigkeit', 155-59; Schmidt, 'Quellen', xlii.

narrative, although Zonaras must have been reading Dio's text at the same time.[210] From that point on, it is very hard to identify the principal sources which underpin the chronicle. It has been argued that the author heavily depends on Dio's Anonymous Continuator and John of Antioch, and that he also employs the works of Theodor Lector, Appian and Philostratus, among other writers.[211] Evidently, the chief work on which he relies for Church affairs is Eusebios of Caesarea's *Church History*.

The legend of Aeneas, the refugee from Troy who became the founder of the Roman nation, serves as the starting point for Zonaras' account of Roman history. Showing no interest at all in Aeneas' Greek/Trojan background, the author tells us only of the hero's adventures in Italy and the foundation of the city of Alba Longa.[212] He soon moves on to present the story of Romulus and Remus, to whom he pays considerably more attention. He then recounts the history of the first kings of Rome and the events that led to the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of the Roman Republic. As the narrative goes on, the author focuses on the Roman military campaigns, with great emphasis being given to the First and the Second Punic Wars,

---

[210] Banchich and Lane, *The History of Zonaras*, 76-77; U. Boissevain, 'Zonaras' Quelle für die Römische Kaisergeschichte von Nerva bis Severus Alexander', *Hermes*, 26 (1891), 440-52; Büttner-Wobst, 'Abhängigkeit', 163-68.

[211] The sources used by Zonaras after Dio have been the cause of much debate among early and recent commentators on the *Epitome*. The fragments of Dio's Anonymous Continuator have been edited by K. Müller in the *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, IV, 191-99. For Zonaras' relation to Dio's Continuator, see Patzig, 'Zonaras I'; Büttner-Wobst, 'Abhängigkeit', 168; Schmidt, 'Quellen', l-lii. Carl de Boor has identified Dio's Anonymous Continuator with Peter the Patrician, although modern scholars have expressed serious doubts about this identification: see C. de Boor, 'Römische Kaisergeschichte in byzantinischer Fassung, I. Der Anonymous post Dionem', *BZ*, 1 (1892), 21-31; Cameron, *The Last Pagans*, 659; M. R. Cataudella, 'Historiography in the East', in *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity*, ed. by G. Marasco (Leiden, 2003), 391-447, at 437-40; D. Potter, *Prophecy and History in the Crisis of the Roman Empire: A Historical Commentary on the Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle* (Oxford, 1990), 395-97. Two editions containing fragments attributed to John of Antioch have come out in the last few years: John of Antioch, *Fragmenta quae supersunt omnia*, ed. by S. Mariev (Berlin, 2008), which excludes the majority of the so-called Salmasian fragments, and John of Antioch, *Fragmenta ex Historia chronica*, ed. by U. Roberto (Berlin, 2005). For a discussion of the methodology followed by the two editors, see P. Van Nuffelen, 'John of Antioch, Inflated and Deflated. Or: How (not) to Collect Fragments of Early Byzantine Historians', *B*, 82 (2013), 437-50. For Zonaras' use of John of Antioch, see M. Dimaio, 'The Antiochene Connection: Zonaras, Ammianus Marcellinus, and John of Antioch on the Reigns of the Emperors Constantius II and Julian', *B*, 50 (1980), 158-85; E. Patzig, 'Die römischen Quellen des salmasischen Johannes Antiochenus', *BZ*, 13 (1904), 13-50. See also Treadgold, *Historians*, 394-95.

[212] Jeffreys, 'Attitudes', 234.

as well as the later wars against Macedonia and Carthage. Forced by his lack of access to the relevant books of Dio to skip the period from 146 BC (the destruction of Carthage and the battle of Corinth) to the Late Roman Republic, he continues by giving an account of the First and Second Triumvirate and a comparatively long and detailed description of the reign of Augustus. From that point on, Zonaras records the key events that marked the reign of each Roman emperor.

As can be observed in this overview of the text's Roman section, the structural organisation of the narrative is chronological. The author closely follows Dio and builds up his narration according to the chronological scheme of his principal source.[213] When his exemplar refers to certain individuals or events, Zonaras embeds in his narrative information on these taken from the other sources he had at his disposal. Like Dio, Zonaras organises his description of the early kings of Rome and the world of imperial Rome in units of reigns. As a rule, material about ecclesiastical history – almost always drawn from Eusebios – is presented in separate sections, which are in most cases placed towards the end of the unit dedicated to an emperor. As he concludes his presentation of the age of Augustus, for example, Zonaras talks about the birth of Christ, which occurred during his reign.[214] Later on, he ends his narrative of the emperor Tiberios by recording the baptism of Christ.[215] Similarly, two paragraphs containing material from Eusebios are found at the very end of the section on Trajan's rule.[216]

---

[213] For Zonaras' treatment of Cassius Dio, see B. Bleckmann, *Die römische Nobilität im Ersten Punischen Krieg: Untersuchungen zur aristokratischen Konkurrenz in der Republik* (Berlin, 2002), 35. There have been quite a few studies in recent years looking at different features of Dio's text, as these can be deduced from Zonaras' text: V. Fromentin, 'Zonaras abréviateur de Cassius Dion: à la recherche de la préface perdue de l'Histoire romaine', *Erga-Logoi*, 1 (2013), 23-39; G. Urso, 'The Origin of the Consulship in Cassius Dio's Roman History', in *Consuls and Res Publica*: *Holding High Office in the Roman Republic*, ed. by H. Beck et al. (Cambridge, 2011), 41-60; B. Simons, *Cassius Dio und die Römische Republik* (Berlin, 2009), 25-32; Swan, *The Augustan Succession.*

[214] *Epitome*, II, 431.12-432.21.

[215] *Epitome*, II, 445.15-446.16.

[216] *Epitome*, II, 513.5-514.22.

The chronicler shows little interest in following the division into consular years adopted in Dio's text. The Roman historian combines the chronological order of his material according to reigns with one according to consulships. He is rather diligent in assigning the events he describes to the years of particular consuls.[217] Zonaras follows this practice less systematically. We frequently see that he does not report under whose consulship a series of events took place, although the names of the consuls make their appearance in the corresponding sections of his source. Dio says, for instance, that the emperor Tiberios died during the consulships of Gnaeus Proculus and Pontius Nigrinus.[218] Passing over his source's reference to the consuls, Zonaras states that the emperor fell ill and died on 20 March.[219] Having specified the date of Tiberios' death, it appears the chronicler thought that information about the consuls was not essential and would add nothing to his narrative. It is manifest that, for a twelfth-century author, the sequence of consular years was not as relevant as it was for a historian who lived in a period when the consular office was still a notable feature of government rather than a palace honorific. What is more, Zonaras' contemporary readers would not have been able to understand when an event actually took place if it were registered simply within the chronological framework of consular years.

Unlike Xiphilinos, who remains faithful to the wording of his source, Zonaras does not usually transcribe Dio's account word for word. He is inclined to heavily summarise or omit altogether numerous sections of Dio's text. A meta-historical statement that clearly denotes this process of abridgement is his remark that certain events are not worthy of being recorded and, as a result, have no place in his historical

---

[217] Millar, *Study*, 39-40.
[218] Dio, *History*, II, 613-14 (Book 58.26-27)
[219] *Epitome*, II, 444.12 and 445.3. It should be noted that, most likely out of haste, the chronicler does not copy the date he found in his source correctly. According to Dio, Tiberios passed away on 26 March.

work: ‘In the years following these, some events took place, but it is not at all necessary to regard them as worthy of being written down’ (‘Ἐν δὲ τοῖς μετὰ ταῦτα χρόνοις συνηνέχθησαν μέν τινα, οὐ μέντοι καὶ ἀναγκαῖα πάνυ ὥστε καὶ συγγραφῆς νομίζεσθαι ἄξια’).[220]

A comparison between the *Epitome* and Dio’s text shows that Zonaras’ is a much more event-focused account than the Roman historian’s. As the chronicler indicates in the preface of the *Epitome*, his aim was to produce a succinct piece of writing and lay the emphasis primarily on the most significant historical events. Indeed, he focuses on the truly ‘historical’ data found in Dio and does not let this kind of information become clouded by other material that would prolong and complicate his narrative. This is the appropriate context, for instance, in which one should view Zonaras’ systematic practice of excluding the bulk of philosophical material contained in Dio’s work from his text. The Roman historian fills his narrative with generic remarks about human life.[221] Most statements of this kind are omitted altogether by Zonaras. The majority of Dio’s fragments that have been preserved in the sacro-profane gnomology of Pseudo-Maximos Confessor cannot be found in the chronicle. Similarly, the author prefers to leave out passages that echo Dio’s political contemplations.

The lengthy speeches attributed by the Roman historian to significant historical figures have no place in the *Epitome*. The speeches of Antony and Augustus prior to the Battle of Actium, for instance, are conspicuously absent from the

[220] *Epitome*, II, 268.13-4. See also a similar statement in *Epitome*, II, 161.3-4: ‘After that, there came several consuls, but they did not achieve anything worthy of being related’ (‘Ἔκτοτε δὲ διάφοροι μὲν ὑπάτευσαν, οὐδὲν δὲ ἱστορίας ἔπραξαν ἄξιον’).

[221] For example, see Dio, *History*, I, 11-12 (fragments 5.12-13), 33 (fragments 12.2-3), 52 (fragment 18.2), 96 (fragment 36.4), 313-14 (fragments 70.2-3).

chronicle.[222] Two speeches of Cicero that extend to several pages in U. Boissevain's edition of Dio are each summarised by Zonaras in no more than six lines of printed text.[223] The speeches of Fabricius directed at Pyrrhus, of Antony against the amnesty for Caesar's assassins, and the one of Livia Drusilla addressed to Augustus are present but are yet again heavily abridged by the chronicler.[224] The omission and abbreviation of Dio's speeches sits neatly with the critical remarks attributed to Zonaras' friends in the proem about historians who 'compose their works to show off, displaying their capacity to write, and for this reason intersperse their writings with speeches' ('τοῖς δὲ καὶ πρὸς ἐπίδειξιν συντέθεινται τὰ συγγράμματα, ἐπιδεικνυμένοις ὅπως εἶχον περὶ τὸ γράφειν δυνάμεως').[225] This clearly shows that, through the persona of his friends, Zonaras expresses his own distaste for lengthy speeches.[226] A further reason that explains why the author chose to leave out or condense long speeches in his source has to do with the fact that he is writing a chronicle; long pieces of direct speech were not common in the literary tradition of chronicle writing, in contrast to the tradition of classicising histories.

Just as he does with Dio's work, Zonaras omits or heavily abbreviates various passages of Plutarch, his second major source for Roman antiquities, trying nevertheless to retain essential data.[227] He swiftly passes over or leaves out of his text

---

[222] Dio, *History*, II, 336-46 (Book 50.16-30); Cf. *Epitome*, II, 395.5-399.2, in which the author discusses the battle.
[223] Dio, *History*, II, 118-25 (Book 44.23-33) and *Epitome*, II, 336.20-337.7; Dio, *History*, II, 154-72 (Book 45.18-47) and *Epitome*, II, 343.1-7.
[224] See respectively Dio, *History*, I, 129-31 (fragments 40.34-38) and *Epitome*, II, 117.1-11; Dio, *History*, II, 127-37 (Book 44.36-49) and *Epitome*, II, 337.22- 338.17; Dio, *History*, II, 501-07 (Book 55.16-21) and *Epitome*, II, 424.14-22.
[225] *Epitome*, I, 4.19-20.
[226] A similar observation can be made about Xiphilinos, who also left out of his own *Epitome* many of Dio's long speeches: Mallan, 'Style', 618-21.
[227] I have examined at length Zonaras' use of the Plutarchean *Lives* in my article 'Plutarch's *Lives* in the Byzantine Chronographic Tradition: The Chronicle of John Zonaras', *BMGS*, 41 (2017), 15-29. For the reception of Plutarch in Byzantium, see Humble, 'Plutarch in Byzantium'; M. Pade, 'The Reception of Plutarch from Antiquity to the Italian Rennaissance', in *A Companion to Plutarch*, ed. by M. Beck (Chichester, 2014), 531-43, particularly at 535-36; Garzya, 'Plutarco a Bisanzio'. I am grateful to

minor episodes that do not greatly affect the course of the narrative. It is evident that he does not have much taste for the poetical quotations that are scattered throughout the *Lives*. Indeed, he omits all quotations but one attributed to Sophocles.[228] Significantly, a large bulk of the information that was entirely alien to the Byzantine tradition and had no significant relation to things still extant was considered to be of little interest. For this reason, material about Roman feasts, customs, institutions and laws is casually left out of the narrative.[229] The writer does not speak, for instance, of *Talassio*, the traditional Roman acclamation to a bride, and the origin of the custom that we read in *Pompey*.[230] Neither does he give an account of the temples that adorned the city, such as the one devoted to Jupiter Capitolinus which is described in *Publicola*.[231] It is interesting, by contrast, that he includes in his text pieces of information about the early Roman calendar found in the *Numa*, selecting those that explain the contemporary, twelfth-month calendar system.[232] These observations indicate Zonaras' understanding and treatment of the *Lives* primarily as a historical source.

Plutarch's work has a significant ethical dimension as well.[233] He was very much concerned with character. Essentially a collection of portraits, the *Lives* illustrate the virtues and vices of well-known Greek and Roman individuals, aiming to present them as models for imitation or avoidance. To some extent Zonaras attempted

---

Professor Noreen Humble for allowing me to read her study of Plutarch in Byzantium prior to its publication.

[228] The following quotations, for example, are left out of the chronicle: Plutarch, *Romulus*, 57.17-26, 63.30-64.12, 73.25-74.4; Plutarch, *Numa*, 61.6, 67.20-22; Plutarch, *Publicola*, 141.16-142.2; Plutarch, *Pompey*, 275.6-8. The quotation of Sophocles is found in *Epitome*, II, 326.8-9.

[229] For example, see Plutarch, *Romulus*, 21-22; Plutarch, *Numa*, 64.23-66-10, 69.22-77.6; Plutarch, *Publicola*, 136.5-138.9; Plutarch, *Camillus*, ed. by K. Ziegler in, *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, vol. 1.1 (Leipzig, 1957), 216.21-218.23, 234.14-236.14.

[230] Plutarch, *Pompey*, 279.15-280.9.

[231] Plutarch, *Publicola*, 141.5-142.2.

[232] Plutarch, *Numa*, 85.17-86.18.

[233] The most important monograph about the moralising character and educational value of the Plutarchean *Lives* remains that of T. Duff, *Plutarch's Lives: Exploring Virtue and Vice* (Oxford, 2002), particularly at 13-98. See more recently Stadter, *Roman Readers*.

to tailor Plutarch's moral biographical accounts to his own interests. The reception of *Numa* is the finest example of the chronicler's creative adaptation of a Plutarchean biography. Numa, the second king of Rome, who is characterised by Plutarch as a wise, just, pious and peace-loving ruler, is seen by Zonaras as a paradigm of virtue that contemporary readers could potentially look up to. The chronicler does not simply reproduce Plutarch's portrayal of Numa, but actively reconstructs it to offer us a more 'Christianised' version of the life of Rome's early lawgiver. Indeed, it has been suggested that Plutarch might have had the influence he did in middle Byzantium because his moral stance coincided with that of the Christian doctrines.[234]

It is apparent that certain omissions and alterations to Plutarch's text serve to play down Numa's pagan background. According to Plutarch, for instance, the young Numa would live in 'sacred groves and holy meadows' ('ἐν ἄλσεσι θεῶν καὶ λειμῶσιν ἱεροῖς'), a statement that is changed slightly by Zonaras into 'meadows and groves' ('ἐν λειμῶσι καὶ ἄλσεσι').[235] The writer makes no mention of Numa's celestial marriage to the nymph Egeria, from whom the king was believed to have received his wisdom.[236] Neither does he give an account of the religious institutions introduced by Numa. Following Plutarch, he adds that the king managed to soften the citizens of Rome and change their warlike attitude into one of peace, but understandably omits the means through which he achieved this, such as sacrifices, processions and religious dances.[237] What must have made quite an impression on Zonaras, furthermore, were Numa's ordinances against human-made idols of gods and blood

[234] This is emphatically stated, for instance, in an epigram of the eleventh-century scholar John Mauropous dedicated to Plato and Plutarch. There, Mauropous pleads with God to spare the two because, despite not being Christians, in words and manners conformed to His ordinances: John Mauropous, *Ἐπίγραμμα εἰς τὸν Πλάτωνα καὶ τὸν Πλούταρχον*, in *Johannis Euchaitorum metropolitae quae in Codice Vaticano Graeco 676 supersunt*, ed. by P. de Lagarde (Göttingen, 1882; repr. Amsterdam, 1979), 24 (epigram 43). See also Humble, 'Plutarch in Byzantium'; Garzya, 'Plutarco a Bisanzio', 24-25.

[235] Plutarch, *Numa*, 59.22-23; *Epitome*, II, 19.22.

[236] Plutarch, *Numa*, 59.24-60.6.

[237] *Epitome*, II, 20.21-2. Cf. Plutarch, *Numa*, 66.11-67.6.

sacrifices. Not only did the ruler prohibit the veneration of idols, but he also taught his subjects that the divine can only be approached spiritually. As we read in his *Life*, though, Numa's religious attitude had its origins in the doctrines of the Greek philosopher Pythagoras. Indeed, there are many passages in Plutarch's text that underline the significant impact of the Pythagorean ideas on Numa.[238] Naturally, the chronicler leaves out of his narrative all the pro-Pythagorean material found in his source text. Zonaras' portrait gives an image of a ruler who was strongly opposed to pagan practices and urged his people to appeal to gods in some form of 'prayer'. By adapting Plutarch's portrayal of Numa, in other words, Zonaras paints a picture of a Roman king who, albeit pagan, essentially possessed the qualities of a good Christian.

A further issue to address concerns the author's literary tactics when he recounts the period from Pompey's rise to power in *c*. 85 BC to the Battle of Actium in 31 BC.[239] In this part of the text, Zonaras employs several sources which partly overlap in content: *Pompey*, *Caesar*, *Brutus*, *Antony* and Dio's work. He subjects the material collected from his sources to a thoughtful process of selection and disposition. He develops a simple literary technique; he changes his sources in order to change the focus of his narrative.

It would be helpful to take as an example Zonaras' account of the First Triumvirate. Summarising chapters 5 to 50 of Plutarch's *Pompey*, the chronicler gives an account of Pompey's political and military career. His use of Plutarch's *Life* dedicated to Pompey comes to a stop when Zonaras reaches Pompey's interactions with Caesar. The chronicler tells us that he will narrate the rest of Pompey's story along with the story of Caesar, because it coincides with it.[240] Up to the account of the Battle of Pharsalus, Zonaras is based on a single source, Plutarch's *Caesar*. For the

[238] For the theme of Pythagorean philosophy in the *Numa*, see Stadter, *Roman Readers*, 246-57.
[239] *Epitome*, I, 298.8-399.2.
[240] *Epitome*, II, 314.6-8

decisive battle between the two political men, he combines information from both *Lives*. He consults chapters 43 to 46 of *Caesar* for the section about the omens that appeared to Caesar prior to the battle and about the battle itself. He then draws on chapters 73 and 74 of *Pompey* and focuses on the aftermath of the clash, describing Pompey's flight to Egypt with his wife, Cornelia, and his assassination.

What Zonaras tries to do is clear. He makes use of the *Life* dedicated to Pompey at first, but when the text reaches the age of Caesar he sets it aside, since its focus understandably rests mainly on Pompey's status and activities during this period. Wishing to put Caesar centre stage, he naturally selects material from the *Life of Caesar*, which gives a much fuller account of his achievements. The events that led to Caesar's triumph at Pharsalus are narrated through the eyes of the victor. To tell us what followed the crucial clash between the two, however, the chronicler returns to *Pompey*, which concentrates on what happened to Caesar's rival. Using this material allows him to emphasise the unfortunate end of the Roman statesman and the events immediately following this.

Apparently satisfied with this technique, the chronicler does something similar in his account of the Second Triumvirate as well. For instance, both Dio's text and Plutarch's *Antony* provide Zonaras with information about the Battle of Actium. He consults the former when presenting the clash itself and the latter when focusing on its disastrous outcome for Antony. Faithful to Dio's narrative, he tells his readers how Augustus regained his courage when Antony's fleet was thrown into disarray by a storm, essentially guiding them to look at the battle from Octavian's perspective.[241] Antony's description in the aftermath of his humiliating defeat, including the scene in which he sat silently at the prow of his ship for three days, is taken from Plutarch and

[241] *Epitome*, II, 398.4-6. Cf. Dio, *History*, II, 346-47 (Book 50.31).

aims to focus the audience's attention solely on the tragic figure of Octavian's opponent.[242]

This literary tactic – changing the sources in order to shift the focus of the narrative, and likewise the emphasis – is telling, for it presupposes some sort of advance preparation. The author has selected the appropriate passages allowing him to highlight certain scenes and episodes. This indicates that he had already studied the content of his sources. He must have also considered in some detail the range of material he would include in his own text, as well as the places in which he would put the pieces taken from each source. Zonaras' words that he tried to avoid overlapping information contained in *Pompey* and *Caesar* indicates first that he had made a fairly good survey of his material, and second that he had taken some time to think of the manner in which he should combine the two accounts. During this process he might have even made use of notes in order to draw out a plan to collate the information.

The chronicler does not very often inform us about his principal authorities for Roman antiquities. Despite the fact that most of his material is taken from a single source, Zonaras does not acknowledge Dio more than ten times. This is in contrast with what we observed in the Jewish section of the work, in which the writer repeatedly referred to the *JA*, the text that provided the basic narrative structure. Plutarch is mentioned three times only. There are quite a few occasions when the chronicler cites Eusebios by name. In just as many instances, however, he does not identify the source that furnishes him with information on ecclesiastical history. One should also point that the writer often tries to make the transition from one source to another without using linking constructions. Material introduced from *Publicola*, *Camillus*, *Brutus* and *Antony*, for instance, is effectively woven together within Dio's

[242] *Epitome*, II, 398.11-399.2. Cf. Plutarch, *Antony*, ed. by K. Ziegler, in, *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, vol. 3.1 (Leipzig, 1915), 147.18-22.

narrative. The same can be observed of the manner in which Zonaras incorporates data from John of Antioch. All these indicate that the author made an effort to organically combine different material into a single composition. He attempted in a sense to make the text his own, without betraying the fact that he had pieced together information from disparate accounts.

### 3.3.2. Constantinian and post-Constantinian Roman history: Books 13 to 18

The section of the *Epitome* dedicated to Byzantine history is slightly longer than the one that deals with the Roman past, filling about 760 printed pages. Zonaras' narrative is composed of units of reigns. It is evident that the author places great emphasis on prominent emperors of the Byzantine period, such as Constantine the Great, Justinian and Herakleios. He also gives a detailed account of the iconoclast and the Macedonian emperors. When the narrative reaches the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Zonaras elaborates on the events under Romanos Diogenes and Alexios I Komnenos, the last emperor he discusses in his work.

Although scholars have long attempted to identify the origin of Zonaras' Constantinian and post-Constantinian material, the problem is complicated by the fact that many of the texts available to Zonaras are no longer extant.[243] As a supplement to his major source, the chronicle of John of Antioch, Zonaras is suggested to have taken

[243] The existing bibliography on this matter is extensive: Treadgold, *Historians*, 395-96; Cameron, *The Last Pagans*, 659-90; Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί*, 472-78; R. M. Frakes, 'Ammianus Marcellinus and Zonaras on a Late Roman Assassination Plot', *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 46 (1997), 121-28; B. Bleckmann, 'Der Chronik des Johannes Zonaras und eine pagane Quelle zur Geschichte Konstantins', *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 40 (1991), 343-65; M. Dimaio, 'Smoke in the Wind: Zonaras' Use of Philostorgius, Zosimus, John of Antioch, and John of Rhodes in His Narrative on the Neo-Flavian Emperors', *B*, 58 (1988), 230-55; Dimaio, 'The Antiochene Connection'; M. Dimaio, 'History and Myth in Zonaras' *Epitome Historiarum*: The Chronographer as Editor', *Byzantine Studies/Etudes Byzantines*, 10 (1983), 19-28; M. Dimaio, 'Infaustis Ductoribus Praeviis: The Antiochene Connection, Part II', *B*, 51 (1981), 502-10; Patzig, 'Zonaras II'; Patzig, 'Zonaras I'.

material from the works of Philostorgios, Socrates and the emperor Julian, among others. He himself names the late fifth-century historian Malchos of Philadelphia and Prokopios, the famous historian of Justinian, as his sources.[244] Nevertheless, whether he drew on those directly or instead relied on an intermediary source remains unclear.[245] It has been shown, furthermore, that the *Epitome* shares some material with the *Life of Silvester*, a hagiographical text which in all likelihood was composed by Zonaras himself, as was discussed in the first chapter.[246] For the age of Justinian, he must have had additional works at his disposal. These provided him with information, concerning the Nika Revolt for instance, that is not known to us from other sources.[247] He is also believed to have had access to the chronicle of John Malalas and Michael Psellos' *Historia Syntomos*.[248] The second one would have furnished him with quotes attributed to emperors, as well as with short items of information that cannot be found in any other known text, except for the *Historia Syntomos*.[249]

The *Chronographia* of Theophanes Confessor is Zonaras' principal authority for the period between the reigns of Herakleios and Michael I Rangabe, although we

---

[244] For Malchos, see *Epitome*, III, 131.7. For Prokopios, see *Epitome*, III, 170.1-8, 171.15-17.
[245] Ziegler, 'Zonaras', 729.
[246] See pp. 26-27.
[247] See the observations of J. Bury in his article 'The Nika Riot', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 17 (1987), 92-119, at 104-05, 116-17.
[248] Treadgold, *Historians*, 396; R. Scott, 'From Propaganda to History to Literature: The Byzantine Stories of Theodosius' Apple and Marcian's Eagles', in *History As Literature*, ed. by Macrides, 115-33, at 130. Banchich expresses his doubts as to whether Zonaras had direct access to Malalas: Banchich and Lane, *The History of Zonaras*, 79-80, 93-94.
[249] See T. Kampianaki, 'Sayings Attributed to Emperors of Old and New Rome in Michael Psellos' *Historia Syntomos*', in *From Constantinople to the Frontier*, ed. by Matheou, Kampianaki and Bondioli, 311-25; 'Dželebdžić, 'Izreke careva'. A notable mistake made by Zonaras, who in all probability follows Psellos, is that Constantine Porphyrogennetos composed some verses for his late wife Helen: *Epitome*, III, 483.4-5. Constantine, of course, died in 959 and predeceased his wife by two years. This error appears only in Psellos, *Historia Syntomos*, 102.10-2. Although the authorship of *Historia Syntomos* was questioned in the past, it is fairly certain now that it is an original Psellian work: Dželebdžić, 'Ιστορία σύντομος', 5-19; J. Duffy and E. Papaioannou, 'Michael Psellos and the Authorship of *Historia Syntomos*: Final Considerations', in *Βυζάντιο: κράτος και κοινωνία*, ed. by A. Avramea, A. Laiou and E. Chrysos (Athens, 2003), 219-29; Ljubarskij, 'Some Notes'; K. Snipes, 'A Newly Discovered History of the Roman Emperors by Michael Psellos', *JÖB*, 32 (1982), 53-65.

can find traces of other works too, such as the chronicle of Symeon Logothete and texts that follow the same tradition.[250] These sources are exploited in his account of the emperors of the Amorian and the Macedonian dynasty as well. However, the great portion of the text there is based primarily on the chronicle of John Skylitzes.[251] When Skylitzes' description comes to an end with the deposition of Michael VI Stratiotikos in 1057, Zonaras moves on with his narrative by making heavy use of the text known in modern scholarship as *Skylitzes Continuatus*, penned most likely by Skylitzes himself, and the *Chronography* of Psellos.[252] The chronicler cites both Psellos and Skylitzes by name.[253]

The section of the *Epitome* that concerns the age of Alexios I Komnenos is the only one original to the writer. As a high-ranking officer in the judicial system during the Komnenian regime, Zonaras essentially bases his account on his own recollections, impressions and knowledge of the imperial environment. A subject that has been the cause of considerable debate among scholars is the relationship between Zonaras' narrative of Alexios and Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*. It is not entirely clear whether either of the two writers were aware and made use of the other's work. In the secondary literature, the *Alexiad* is sometimes listed as one of the chronicler's

[250] Treadgold, *Historians*, 396; Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί*, 474, 477-79.
[251] Generally on Zonaras' relation to Skylitzes, see Trapp, *Militärs*, 13-19, in which the parallel extracts between Zonaras and Skylitzes are identified, and also F. Hirsch, *Byzantinische Studien* (Leipzig, 1876), 379-96. Catherine Holmes has underlined that Zonaras downplays the importance given to aristocratic families by Skylitzes: Holmes, *Basil II*, 199.
[252] The existing scholarship that supports the common identity of Skylitzes and *Skylitzes Continuatus* is summarised in Holmes, *Basil II*, 81-85. Trapp has indicated the parallel passages between Zonaras and *Skylitzes Continuatus*, as well as between Zonaras and Psellos: Trapp, *Militärs*, 13-19. In this connection, it should be said that Trapp argues that Zonaras also had access to the *History* of Michael Attaleiates, drawing upon his work once: Trapp, *Militärs*, 13. In my view, *Skylitzes Continuatus* depends so heavily on Attaleiates, that it is extremely difficult to tell whether Zonaras consulted Attaleiates directly. For further information about how the chronicler handles Psellos' *Chronography*, see D. Reinsch, 'Wer waren die Leser und Hörer der *Chronographia* des Michael Psellos, *ZRVI*, 50-51 (2013), 389-98, at 395, in which Zonaras' reception of Psellos is briefly discussed. See also O. Lampsidis, 'Ο Μιχαήλ Ψελλός ως πηγή της «Επιτομής» του Ιωάννου Ζωναρά', *Επετηρίς Εταιρείας Βυζαντινών Σπουδών*, 19 (1949), 170-88.
[253] *Epitome*, III, 672.13 and 673.4 respectively.

sources.[254] Anna certainly began writing the biography of her father at least in or after 1138, the year of the death of her husband, the caesar Nikephoros Bryennios.[255] She herself reveals that she collected much information for her work during the reign of Manuel I Komnenos and points out that she was still writing in 1148.[256] As I suggested in the first chapter, Zonaras must have completed the *Epitome* between 1143 and *c*. 1150.[257] If this is true, it means that the two historical accounts are almost contemporaneous and that either or both authors could well have acquired an early draft of the other's work. As has been convincingly argued, nevertheless, there exist significant chronological discrepancies between the two texts, as well as some divergences in the recording of events.[258] Therefore, I tend to agree with the suggestion that Zonaras did not exploit the *Alexiad*, although he could or might have read it.[259]

In his treatment of Theophanes, Zonaras shows himself to be in step with a major literary development noted from the mid-ninth century onwards, the rejection of the rigid chronological system adopted by earlier writers of historical accounts.[260] Theophanes would generally organise his material according to *anni mundi* and indictions, also mentioning the regnal year of a Roman emperor as well as the bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria and Antioch.[261] Departing from the strict chronological scheme of his source, Zonaras gives dates only sporadically and weaves

---

[254] For example, both Hunger and Ziegler count the *Alexiad* among Zonaras' sources: Hunger, *Literatur*, I, 416-17; Ziegler, 'Zonaras', 729. In his doctoral thesis, Peter Frankopan has also argued that Zonaras' account of the reign of Alexios Komnenos is based on Anna's work: Frankopan, 'Foreign Policy', 40-48.

[255] In the proem of the *Alexiad*, Anna tells us that her writing continues that of Bryennios, who died before finishing his own history: Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, 7.47-8.93. About the dating of the *Alexiad* in general, see Magdalino, 'The Pen of the Aunt', 15-16.

[256] Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, 451.42-452.64.

[257] For the dating of the *Epitome*, see pp. 15-17.

[258] Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί*, 521-26; Angold, 'Afterword'.

[259] Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί*, 521-26; Macrides, 'Who Wrote the *Alexiad*?', 73.

[260] Holmes, *Basil II*, 180-81; *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, lii-liii.

[261] *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, lxiii-lxxiv.

them into his narrative. He compresses and paraphrases Theophanes' account by collating distant pieces of information found in different parts of the account. The most substantial part of the material he uses relates to important political and military developments, as well as significant events of Church history. Unlike his source, he does not show much interest in delineating the broader contemporary context within which Byzantine affairs can be set, supplying very little on events in far-away places, such as in the Persian and the Arab world. He tells us nothing, for instance, about the affairs of the Arabs in the later reign of Herakleios, a subject on which Theophanes lays great emphasis.[262] In this way, he places the events that took place around Constantinople at the centre of his narrative. Similarly, he often ignores physical phenomena and natural disasters, even if these underline a point made by his source. For example, he does not report the volcanic eruption in the island of Thera, presented by Theophanes as divine retribution for Leo III's iconoclastic policy.[263]

The history of Skylitzes forms the main spine of Zonaras' narrative until the deposition of Michael Stratiotikos in 1057. In general, Zonaras remains very close to the sequence of events in his source; every important episode in Skylitzes appears in the appropriate order in the *Epitome* too, albeit more briefly described. Nevertheless, one can note several divergences in the positioning of the material between the two texts. A striking example is how the two authors insert in their narratives the stories that circulated about Basil I's past prior to his accession to the throne. Following his presentation of Michael III's assassination and the Macedonian's rise to the imperial office, Skylitzes tells us about the numerous incidents that foreshadowed Basil's regal destiny from his infancy.[264] Perhaps considering it more efficient, Zonaras incorporates this material at an earlier point, just before his description of Basil's

[262] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 333-41. Cf. *Epitome*, III, 218.9-10.
[263] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 404-05.
[264] Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 115-27 (Book 7, chapters 1-10).

affinity with Michael and gradual rise to power.[265] To provide an additional example, the author places the episode about Basil's visit to Patras and his acquaintance with the famous widow Danielis much later than his source.[266] Reaching the point when Skylitzes relates Danielis' arrival at Constantinople to meet the newly crowned emperor Basil, Zonaras has to include information he had previously omitted, but is now necessary to the understanding of his account.

It is worth exploring more closely Zonaras' account of the regime of Romanos I Lekapenos. By making several additions to Skylitzes' text, the chronicler repeatedly attempts to impress on his audience that the tragic fate of the emperor and his sons should be interpreted as divine retribution for the offence they committed, namely casting aside Constantine Porphyrogennetos, the rightful heir to the Byzantine throne. At first, Zonaras tells us that Romanos put his first-born son, Christopher, ahead of Constantine in the line of succession and appends his own opinion about that: 'so, it was as if the genuine emperor and the one to whom rulership belonged by inheritance was illegitimate. But retribution did not neglect these things' ('ἦν οὖν ὁ αὐθιγενὴς βασιλεὺς καὶ ᾧ κατὰ κλῆρον ἡ βασιλεία διέφερεν ὥσπερ παρέγγραπτος. ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τούτοις ἡ δίκη οὐκ ἐπενύσταξεν').[267] A while later, when he is about to narrate what happened to the Lekapenos family once Constantine rose to power, the writer reiterates his belief, more strongly this time, that divine retribution will fall on those who are unjust. In Zonaras' own words: 'now the narrative comes to add the following as well and show that, albeit rather slowly perhaps, providence pursues those who do wrong, prolonging for them the time of repentance, but if they do not keep away from evil, providence pursues them slowly and exacts the punishment' ('ἥκει δὲ νῦν ὁ λόγος προσθήσων καὶ τὰ ἑξῆς καὶ δείξων ὡς κἂν βραδύτερον ἴσως

[265] *Epitome*, III, 407.13-412.18.
[266] *Epitome*, III, 433.3-434.16. Cf. Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 21-22 (Book 7, chapter 6)
[267] *Epitome*, III, 475.1-3.

μέτεισι τοὺς ἀδικοῦντας ἡ πρόνοια, μετανοίας αὐτοῖς ἐπιμετροῦσα καιρόν, ἀλλά γε τοῦ κακοῦ μὴ ἀπεχομένους μέτεισι σχολαίῳ ποδὶ καὶ δίκας εἰσπράττεται').[268] To finally conclude his report of Romanos and his sons, Zonaras claims that 'in this manner retribution came after each one of them' ('καὶ οὕτω τούτων ἕκαστον ἡ δίκη μετῆλθεν').[269] Comments of a similar kind do not appear in the corresponding sections of the *Synopsis*. As is clear, the author tries to adapt the material he receives from Skylitzes to further his own moralising agenda and give the story of Romanos an edifying character for the benefit of his readers.

An additional consideration about the portion of Zonaras' text that is based on the *Synopsis* and *Skylitzes Continuatus* is that the narrative is interspersed with short comments about the attitudes of famous historical figures. The writer draws on the portrayals of individuals which are embedded in his source texts. Just like Skylitzes, Zonaras presents his readers with a portrait of Constantine Porphyrogennetos, emphasising both the virtues and the flaws of the emperor.[270] For the description of Constantine Monomachos, he collects material from both the *Synopsis* and *Skylitzes Continuatus*,[271] while his assessment of Isaac Komnenos, a few lines at the end of the part dedicated to his reign, is taken directly from *Skylitzes Continuatus*.[272] The same goes for the ambivalent picture he paints for Constantine Doukas shortly after.[273]

Despite the *Epitome*'s strong dependence on these two works, Zonaras occasionally gives precedence to Psellos' *Chronography*. To provide a notable example, a long passage which runs parallel to Psellos' text has to do with the last

[268] *Epitome*, III, 480.6-10.
[269] *Epitome*, III, 482.5.
[270] *Epitome*, III, 482.17-483.11. Cf. Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 237-38 (Book 12, chapter 3). Here, it may be noted that Zonaras reverses the order in which Skylitzes describes the qualities of Constantine. He speaks about the positive ones first and the negative ones second.
[271] *Epitome*, III, 646-47 and 676-77. Cf. Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 476-77 (Book 22, chapter 29); *Skylitzes Continuatus*, 112-13.
[272] *Epitome*, III, 674.1-6. Cf. *Skylitzes Continuatus*, 110-11.
[273] *Epitome*, III, 676.15-677.16. Cf. *Skylitzes Continuatus*, 112.

years of the reign of Michael IV Paphlagonian and the events that followed Michael V Kalaphates' accession to the throne, the expulsion of the empress Zoe to Prinkipos and the subsequent popular uprising included.[274] Having access to two sources that overlap each another, Zonaras weaves together his material into a composite narrative, in a way resembling his use of information taken from Dio and Plutarch. Once again, this process of selection and combination must have required some preparation and prior thought on the part of the writer.

Apparently very pleased with the comprehensive and detailed portraits of Psellos, he derives from the *Chronography* a large supply of biographical information.[275] Following his source text, he gives us a portrayal of Basil II the Macedonian, illustrating how his attitude changed over time.[276] To discuss Basil's character towards the later years of his reign, he combines information from two distinct extracts of Psellos, which shows Zonaras' own attempt to provide his readers with a coherent description of the emperor. The *Chronography* also furnishes the chronicler with the depictions of the emperor Constantine VIII and Michael V Kalaphates.[277]

An immediate implication of the author's extensive use of Skylitzes' *Synopsis*, *Skylitzes Continuatus* and Psellos' *Chronography* is that there is an obvious change in the character of the narrative: personalities start to emerge more vividly than they do in earlier parts of Zonaras' work. Of course, this is dictated to a great extent by the nature of these sources. As previous scholarship has shown, historiographical texts

---

[274] *Epitome*, III, 601-12.
[275] For an analysis of the manner in which Psellos draws the portraits of the emperors in the *Chronography*, see E. Pietsch, *Die Chronographia des Michael Psellos: Kaisergeschichte, Autobiographie und Apologie* (Wiesbaden, 2005), 2-6, 66-128.
[276] *Epitome*, III, 554-5, 561-2. Cf. Psellos, *Chronography*, 13.1-14.8 (Book 1, chapter 22), 19.1-20.14 (Book 1, chapters 31-32).
[277] *Epitome*, III, 569.7-570.13, 606.9-17 respectively. Cf. Psellos, *Chronography*, 27.21-29.14 (Book 2, chapters 6-9), 83.14-84.29 (Book 5, chapter 9) respectively.

produced in Constantinople from the mid-tenth century onwards display features of historical biographies.[278] Among eleventh-century writers, Skylitzes and particularly Psellos exemplify this trend towards an anthropocentric conception of history-writing.

It should be stressed, though, that the shift to a more personality-focused narrative in Zonaras' presentation of Byzantium did not emerge solely as a result of the typology of his source material. The chronicler himself appears to have been very fond of the biographical style of writing that had prevailed in the genre of historiography to that point and wished to follow the literary conventions laid down by his predecessors. Therefore, he strives to give his readers a full picture of the character of a Byzantine individual, despite the abridgement of his source texts. Several remarks indicate that he does not wish to achieve brevity at the expense of building up comprehensive pictures of Byzantine emperors. Conveying a negative image of Michael II the Stammerer, for instance, he explains that 'a few of the many incidents which point to his wickedness and even his folly were written' ('ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἐκ πολλῶν ὀλίγα τῆς ἐκείνου κακίας ἢ καὶ ἀνοίας γνωρίσματα ξυγγεγράφαται').[279] Later, he summarises the turpitudes of Michael III 'the Drunkard' and concludes his account of the emperor with the following conspicuous sentence: 'But to narrate everything done by this coterie, in which the emperor himself happened to participate, would be a lot of chit-chat and something disgusting no less' ('ἀλλ' ἅπαντα καταλέγειν τὰ τοῦ τοιούτου χοροῦ, οἷς συνθιασώτης καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐτύγχανεν ὤν, πολλῆς ἂν εἴη λέσχης καὶ ἀηδίας οὐχ ἥκιστα').[280] It is apparent that providing his readers with sufficient information to assess the character

[278] Markopoulos, 'Narrative Historiography', in which earlier bibliography on the subject is included, and also Markopoulos, 'Genesios'.
[279] *Epitome*, III, 339.11-2.
[280] *Epitome*, III, 407.9-12.

of an emperor was a criterion that Zonaras used to decide how much he should condense his narrative.

Evidence of Zonaras' interest in the biographies of Byzantine individuals is also provided by the additions he occasionally makes to his sources in order to elaborate on the story of a well-known historical figure. I can offer the hymnographer Kassia as a case in point.[281] In the part of his text dedicated to the emperor Theophilos, Skylitzes makes no mention of the poetess at all. Zonaras departs from the narrative of his source to relate the famous episode of the verbal exchange between Theophilos and Kassia that led the ruler to choose Theodora over her as his bride.[282] He calls attention to Kassia's lineage, appearance and learning, carefully sketching an encomiastic portrait of the woman. She is said to have been beautiful, adept with words and of a distinguished extraction. I quote in full what he adds after that:

> …and withdrawing herself, she was living with herself and God, without disregarding her intellectual education. For this reason, one does not find her writings lacking educational virtues. This is how she handled her own affairs and, when she failed to secure the hand of a mortal king, she was betrothed to the king of all things and was allotted the heavenly, rather than the earthly, kingdom.
>
> …καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ μονάσασα ἑαυτῇ ἔζη καὶ τῷ θεῷ, τῆς λογικῆς παιδείας μὴ ἀλογήσασα. ὅθεν καὶ συγγράμματα ἐκείνης εὑρίσκονται εὐπαιδευσίας χαρίτων οὐκ ἄμοιρα. καὶ ἡ μὲν οὕτω διέθετο τὰ καθ' ἑαυτὴν καὶ ἀτευκτήσασα βασιλέως φθαρτοῦ τῷ παμβασιλεῖ ἑαυτὴν ἐμνηστεύσατο καὶ ἀντὶ γεηρᾶς βασιλείας τὴν ἐπουράνιον ἐκληρώσατο.

The writer paints an ideal picture of Kassia, accentuating her intellectual capacities. When she took the monastic vows, she did not devote herself solely to her spiritual labour as a nun, but took pains to pursue her education as well. She was an active

---

[281] *Epitome*, III, 354.3-355.8. For Kassia and her oeuvre, see the classic study on Kassia by I. Rochow, *Studien zu der Person, den Werken und dem Nachleben der Dichterin Kassia* (Berlin, 1967), in which Zonaras' presentation of the poet can be found at 7-8. See also N. Tsironis, 'The Body and the Senses in the Work of Cassia the Hymnographer: Literary Trends in the Iconoclastic Period', *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 16 (2005), 139-57.

[282] For an interpretation of how the famous legend of Kassia's participation in the bride-show for the hand of Theophilos emerged, see M. Lauxtermann, 'Three Biographical Notes', *BZ*, 91(1998), 391-405.

scholar, composing a series of works in which Zonaras discerns an upright character. This description sounds strangely familiar to a reader of Zonaras; in fact, behind Kassia's portrayal one can identify the image of the chronicler himself. He, too, was learned, who, having withdrawn to a monastery, did not abandon his scholarly preoccupations, producing numerous works. Evidently, Zonaras tailors Kassia's portrayal to suit his own image. It is perhaps no coincidence that, though referring to Kassia's hymns, he does not specify the type of works she wrote and prefers to use the generic term 'συγγράμματα', making it easier for his readers to recognise the figure that is implicitly being praised here. His audience would probably be able to grasp this self-referential allusion. Zonaras was not the only author to have drawn analogies between his own personality and that of one of his heroes. The treatment of Kassia's portrayal mirrors similar practices attested in hagiographical texts, with Psellos' adaptation of the image of St Auxentios to that of his own in the *Life of St Auxentios* the most prominent example.[283]

Above all, it is the distinctively personality-centred manner in which he presents the reign of Alexios Komnenos that is most revealing of Zonaras' engagement with the biographies and characters of renowned Byzantine figures. The fact that he does not depend on an external source here allows him great freedom in handling his material. It is indicative of the chronicler's authorial preferences that in a part of the *Epitome* where he is not affected by the nature, style and agenda of a source he opts to pay special attention to the attributes and defects of the emperor under consideration. For the founder of the Komnenian dynasty, the author composes one of the most extensive and detailed portraits in his narrative. He draws an

[283] E. Fisher, 'Michael Psellos and a Hagiographical Landscape: The Life of St. Auxentios and the Encomion of Symeon the Metaphrast', in *Reading Michael Psellos*, ed. by C. Barber and D. Jenkins (Leiden, 2006), 57-71; A. Kazhdan, 'An Attempt at Hagio-Autography: The Pseudo-Life of "Saint" Psellus', *B*, 53 (1983), 546-56. Solely thirteenth-century examples are provided by J. Munitiz, 'Hagiographical Autobiography in the 13th Century', *Byzantinoslavica*, 53 (1992), 243-49.

ambivalent picture of Alexios, telling us of his virtues as a private citizen, but also highlighting his shortcomings as a ruler. As a private man, he is praised for being of a moderate temper, and for being lenient and approachable, among other things.[284] At the same time, he is severely criticised as an emperor, because he spent excessive amounts of money; he did not preserve the old customs of the Roman polity; he did not treat the state fisc as public, but rather as his own property; he did not offer members of the senatorial class honours appropriate to their rank; and finally he distributed privileges and a great amount of wealth to his relatives and servants.[285] Indeed, the presentation of Alexios as an emperor is a 'blatant psogos'.[286] The next chapter of the thesis discusses at length the comprehensive portrayal of the Komnenian ruler.[287]

There is an interesting issue to address in this connection. Zonaras was not equally interested in the portrayals of Roman and Byzantine individuals. Dio's *Roman History* and Plutarch's *Lives* were rich sources of biographical material. Zonaras, however, either condenses or omits altogether portraits of Roman individuals found in his sources. Compared to Dio's text, for instance, the *Epitome* gives a briefer presentation of the Roman statesmen Scipio Africanus and Agrippa.[288] The depiction of the emperor Tiberios is also very much abridged.[289] The author opts to leave out of his narrative Dio's portrayal of Hannibal and the paragraph in which the Roman historian gives his assessment of Antony and Cleopatra.[290] Likewise, drawing on Plutarch, the chronicler gives more succinct descriptions of the personalities of

[284] *Epitome*, III, 765.5-766.3.
[285] *Epitome*, III, 732.15-733.4; 766.9-767.10. For Zonaras' critique of Alexios, see Magdalino, 'Kaiserkritik', 329-33; Kazhdan, 'Social Views', 59-62.
[286] Holmes, *Basil II*, 180.
[287] See pp. 100-05.
[288] See respectively *Epitome*, II, 284.20-285.6. Cf. Dio, *History*, I, 309-310 (fragments 70.4-9); *Epitome* II, 417.20-418.6. Cf. Dio, *History*, II, 469-70 (Book 54.29).
[289] *Epitome*, II, 433.1-12. Cf Dio, *History*, II, 559-60 (Book 57.1).
[290] See respectively Dio, *History*, I, 191-94 (fragments 54.1-9) and Dio, *History*, II, 365-66 (Book 51.15).

famous Roman figures than those he finds in his source. In other words, he is disinclined to select Roman material to suit current tastes for a personality-focused style of writing. A plausible explanation for this might have to do with the expectations of his contemporary readers. Zonaras must have been aware that he was addressing an audience which was familiar with, and perhaps anticipated, the presence of biographical material about Byzantine individuals in historical texts. His readers were accustomed to finding vivid images of Byzantine emperors in historical works, such as those of Theophanes Continuatus, Psellos, Skylitzes, Michael Attaleiates, Nikephoros Bryennios and Anna Komnene. There, they would read of emperors' virtues, flaws and whims. Stories and anecdotes, too, circulated about them.[291] Encomiastic poems were also a likely medium through which a contemporary audience could learn of an emperor's appearance, among other things.[292] In a sense, memories of Byzantine emperors were still very much alive in Zonaras' time. Unlike Byzantine rulers, though, figures of Republican Rome and the Principate belonged to the distant past, the days of antiquity, and were probably not of equal interest to the twelfth-century audience.

At this point, it is relevant to add that the chronicler maintains a largely secular focus in his presentation of Byzantine history. Building his narrative around emperors and reigns, he pays much more attention to secular rather than religious

[291] For this, see the illuminating article by L. Garland, 'Basil II as Humorist', *B*, 69 (1999), 321-43, esp. 332-33. Discussing Psellos' presentation of Basil II in his *Chronography*, Garland argues that corpora of imperial sayings circulated in the palace during this period and that one containing the witticisms of Basil was available to the writer. She further highlights a part of the *Chronography*, in which Psellos relates that the emperor Isaac Komnenos would entertain his entourage 'with stories of the old times, recalling all the witty sayings of Romanus's son, the emperor Basil the Great': see Psellos, *Chronography*, 245.6 (Book 7, chapter76).

[292] Floris Bernard, for example, has investigated an encomiastic poem of the eleventh-century poet Christopher of Mytilene addressed to Constantine Monomachos: Bernard, *Poetry*, 103. An extensive poem of the twelfth-century poet Manganeios Prodromos, which describes in encomiastic terms the body of Manuel Komnenos, has been analysed by Michael Jeffreys: M. Jeffreys, ''Rhetorical' Texts', in *Rhetoric in Byzantium: Papers from the Thirty-fifth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. by E. Jeffreys (Aldershot, 2003), 87-100, at 95-96. See also Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 471-72, for an epigram composed by Andronikos Kamateros, which is an ekphrasis of a portrait of Manuel Komnenos.

matters. This is not to say, of course, that he does not address issues relating to the Church. He does, but the portion of the text devoted to ecclesiastical affairs is considerably smaller than that dedicated to imperial history. Zonaras does not really deliver on the 'promise' he gives to his readers in the proem of the *Epitome* to concentrate on the lives of both the emperors and patriarchs of Constantinople, as well as on the councils of the Church.[293] Despite the author's statement in his preface, it was never his intention to compose a historical account that would place as much emphasis on Church matters as it would on secular ones. This is manifested by the type of source material he selected for his account of Byzantium, namely historical narratives that dealt almost exclusively with imperial history (*Historia Syntomos*, Skylitzes' *Synopsis*, *Skylitzes Continuatus*, Psellos' *Chronography*). The secular bias is also clear in the last part of the chronicle, which deals with the reign of Alexios Komnenos, where Zonaras does not depend on an external source. The author is interested primarily in the emperor's personality, as well as his internal and external policy, discussing in only a few lines the patriarchs of the time.[294] Why, then, does he give the impression in his proem that he will focus equal attention on secular and ecclesiastical affairs? As a good 'publicist' of his own work, Zonaras wished to attract readers who had a keen interest in the history of the Church. Chapter six will show that he aimed to address his chronicle, among others, to cultivated ecclesiastical men.[295] This audience might have had a particular preference for the religious material contained in the *Epitome*. Indeed, the last chapter will provide examples of later readers who were monks and members of the clergy and made use of the chronicle to gather information particularly for the history of the Church.[296]

[293] See pp. 43-45 of the thesis.
[294] *Epitome*, III, 734.1-16, 750.16-751.9
[295] See pp. 177-78.
[296] See pp. 198-201.

## Final remarks

The proem of the *Epitome* reveals Zonaras' aesthetic tastes and methodological principles. More than that, it helps us to understand the purposes of his work. The writer seeks to produce a compact historical account which will relate only notable historical events and will be beneficial to his audience. An important idea that is emphasised is that of public utility, which can be understood in two ways. It points to the didactic dimension of Zonaras' text, as well as its practical value, namely that the chronicle succinctly informs readers of the essentials of Jewish and Roman history.

The foundation of the chronicler's methodology is the adherence to a single source which provides him with the basic structure of his account. This is evident in his use of the *JA* (or an epitome of the work), the *JW*, Plutarch's *Lives*, Dio's Roman *History*, Xiphilinos' *Epitome*, Skylitzes' *Synopsis* and *Skylitzes Continuatus*. Zonaras employs the rest of his readings to supplement his principal sources. As an epitomiser, he was concerned with creating a concise account, but at the same time preserving essential data found in his sources. The manner in which the writer modified his sources, the degree to which he condensed each one of them, and the type of material he would select or omit vary a great deal.

One of the key features of the Jewish section of the *Epitome* is the strong emphasis Zonaras places on the connection of his text to Josephus. By repeatedly citing Josephus as his source, the chronicler seeks to impress on his readers the reliability and validity of his own account. This appears to be the aim, moreover, behind the writer's practice of examining Josephus' narrative in comparison with the Old Testament books and of underlining minor differences between the two texts.

What characterises Zonaras' method in his presentation of pre-Constantinian Roman history is his attempt to adapt the data he collects from his Roman sources,

Dio and Plutarch, to make them meaningful and interesting to the Byzantine audience. The chronicler only loosely follows Dio's organisational scheme of consular years, as to use it systematically would be neither comprehensible nor helpful to his readers. He reworks Dio's narrative by excluding or abbreviating material such as generic remarks about human life and Roman politics, as well as long speeches of well-known Roman individuals. Similarly, he omits much information we find in Plutarch's *Lives* about ancient Rome and Roman culture, material which would not attract much attention on the part of his readers. It is significant, though, that he takes advantage of the didactic dimension of the *Lives* by tailoring the presentation of Numa, the legendary king of Rome, and implicitly describing him as an early 'Christian' ruler.

Zonaras' account of post-Constantinian Empire concentrates mainly on the Constantinopolitan environment. Indicative of this is how Zonaras handles the chronicle of Theophanes. He leaves out of his account Theophanes' information about distant lands and foreign peoples, focusing on the imperial capital. In the narrative of Byzantium, the dominant principle of Zonaras' methodology is the close attention to the portrayals of famous historical figures, mostly emperors. This is a result not only of the character of the sources used, namely Skylitzes' *Synopsis*, *Skylitzes Contnuatus* and Psellos' *Chronography*, who all show an interest in characterisations, but also of the chronicler's own authorial tastes. Zonaras was particularly fond of depictions. This can be seen first by the fact that he tries to provide a sufficient amount of information to give an idea of an emperor's character, second by the way he sometimes deviates from the narrative of his sources to talk about of a well-known individual, and third by the meticulous portrait he draws of Alexios Komnenos in the last part of his narrative, which is original to the author.

In the course of producing his work, the chronicler seems to have evolved as a writer. At the early stages of the writing process, he would put all his major sources side by side, read them through, draw close comparisons and point out minor differences. Gradually, though, his treatment of his sources becomes more substantial. There are indications that he would prepare in advance for the selection, arrangement and presentation of his material so as to emphasise a particular episode or historical figure or to avoid overlapping information. He allowed himself more freedom in exchanging his sources with one another, without naming the accounts that provided him with certain pieces of information.

# CHAPTER 4. THE POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF THE *EPITOME*

## 4.1. The political context: *Kaiserkritik*

The section of the *Epitome* dedicated to Roman and Byzantine history has a strong political leaning, with elements of *Kaiserkritik*, namely the critique of an emperor, being prominent in Zonaras' narrative.

The rights and public responsibilities of the sovereign in Byzantium are themes that are addressed and investigated in texts of different genres, from legal collections and 'mirrors for princes' (an admonitory type of text which offers rulers advice on leadership) to histories and works of court oratory. Closely allied to these topics is the notion of *Kaiserkritik*, which could be expressed in the form of subtle disapproving remarks or more blatant accusations against a ruler or a ruling dynasty.[297]

For authors of historical accounts, it was quite common to criticise policies pursued by past emperors as well as to evaluate whether the reigning emperor was efficient or inefficient in managing government affairs. Franz Tinnefeld's seminal study of *Kaiserkritik* has shed light on the various ways in which historians and chroniclers from the sixth to the twelfth centuries conceived the notion of abuse of imperial power.[298] To provide some indicative examples: John Skylitzes disapproves of the well-known 'ἀλληλέγγυον' of Basil II, characterising it as an unreasonable

[297] Elements of *Kaiserkritik* can be identified in other media, too, apart from written texts. For example, it has been argued that the person who commissioned a mid-eleventh-century psalter, the *Vat. gr.* 752, criticises imperial behaviour through the careful selection and arrangement of miniatures in the manuscript: I. Kalavrezou, N. Trahoulia and S. Sabar, 'Critique of the Emperor in the Vatican Psalter gr. 752', *DOP*, 47 (1993), 195-219.

[298] F. Tinnefeld, *Kategorien der Kaiserkritik in der Historiographie von Prokop bis Niketas Choniates* (Munich, 1971). For the concept of *Kaiserkritik*, see also Magdalino, 'Kaiserkritik'.

burden on the wealthy class.[299] He also accuses Michael IV the Paphlagonian of wasting state wealth on 'what were supposed to be his good works' ('τὰς δοκούσας εὐποιΐας ἀποπληρῶν'), by which the emperor hoped to earn divine forgiveness for the sins he had committed to rise to the throne.[300] The empresses Zoe and Theodora are criticised by Michael Psellos for spending the wealth that had been accumulated by Basil II on frivolities,[301] and Constantine IX Monomachos for, among other things, spending public money on his mistresses.[302] Michael Attaleiates comments that contemporary emperors break the law and act in a hideous way using as the pretext that they are acting in the public good.[303] Elements of *Kaiserkritk* can also be found in historians who lived and wrote after Zonaras. George Pachymeres, for instance, who flourished from the second half of the thirteenth to the early fourteenth centuries, expresses negative views of the first two rulers of the Palaiologan dynasty, highlighting that Michael VIII Palaiologos misused the public fisc and imposed excessive taxes on the people of Asia Minor.[304]

Members specifically of the Komnenian family became targets of attack by authors of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Like Zonaras, the patriarch of Antioch John Oxeites was a severe critic of Alexios Komnenos.[305] In an oration delivered in 1091 in the presence of the emperor himself, the patriarch expressed a

[299] Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 347.76-80 (Book 17, chapter 32).
[300] Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 997.64-998.74 (Book 20, chapter 7). The translation is taken from *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis*, 375.
[301] Psellos, *Chronography*, 131.1-132.4 (Book 6, chapters 62-63).
[302] Psellos, *Chronography*, 176.1-176.9 (Book 6, chapter 153).
[303] Attaleiates, *Historia*, 195/96.9-11.
[304] George Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, ed. by A. Failler and V. Laurent (Paris, 1984), I, 139.16-19, 291.23-25 and I, 33.3-11, 293.2-12 respectively. Aspects of Pachymeres' critique of the imperial rule are discussed at length by Dimiter Angelov in his book *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium, 1204-1330* (Cambridge, 2007), 269-80.
[305] V. Stankovic and A. Berger, 'The Komnenoi and Constantinople Before the Building of the Pantokrator Complex', in *The Pantokrator Monastery*, ed. by Kotzabassi, 3-32, at 23-24; Frankopan, 'Advice'.

series of concerns about the decline of the empire under Alexios.[306] He accused the emperor of unacceptable taxation and of seizing the properties of the Church. He was strongly dissatisfied with the fact that the emperor favoured his relatives, a clan which, according to him, greatly damaged the imperial office and all people. He highlighted that Alexios' relatives lived an opulent lifestyle and put their own interests ahead of the common good. As a result of these policies, the royal treasury had run out of funds. As will be demonstrated below, John Oxeites' complaints accorded with Zonaras' own objections to the execution of government by Alexios. In his account of the sack of Thessaloniki by the Normans in 1185, Eustathios, the learned metropolitan of the city, depicts the emperor Andronikos I Komnenos in a negative light, condemning him for brutally executing all those he believed had set their eyes on the throne.[307] Similarly, David Komnenos, the governor of Thessaloniki during the capture of the city, is characterised by Eustathios as a traitor for neglecting the common good and caring only for his own well-being.[308] In an epistle to Theodore I Laskaris, the first emperor of Nicaea, the erudite scholar Michael Choniates hints at the Komnenoi when he indicates that former Byzantine rulers, who took over the reins of the state by means of a huge army, an extensive network of relatives and hidden resources, did not achieve anything significant.[309]

The most concrete criticism against the mismanagement of the Empire by the Komnenian emperors was applied, apart from Zonaras, by Niketas Choniates, whose historical narrative covers the period from 1118, the year of Alexios Komnenos' death, to *c.* 1206, during the aftermath of the conquest of Constantinople by the

[306] John Oxeites, *Τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας κῦρ Ἰωάννου λόγος εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Ἀλέξιον τὸν Κομνηνόν*, ed. by P. Gautier, in *Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis Ier Comnène*, *REB*, 28 (1970), 19-49, esp. from 29 onwards. See also Angold, *Church and Society*, 66-67.
[307] Eustathios of Thessaloniki, *Capture*, 14.31-18.15, 54.16-28.
[308] Eustathios of Thessaloniki, *Capture*, 74.19-29
[309] Michael Choniates, *Τῷ βασιλεῖ τῷ Λάσκαρι τῆς Ἀνατολῆς*, in *Epistulae*, ed. by F. Kolovou (Berlin, 2001), 284-86, at 284.11-18.

Crusaders. Niketas makes a harsh assessment of the policies followed by Manuel I Komnenos in particular. In an illuminating article dedicated to the *Kaiserkritik* of twelfth-century writers, Paul Magdalino has underlined that Manuel's systematic practice of surpassing the limits of his constitutional role lies at the centre of Niketas' critique.[310] Niketas castigates the emperor for regarding his subjects as servants instead of free men, eliminating prominent citizens and exploiting state properties as if they were his own.[311] The fierce opposition expressed by Niketas to Manuel's methods offers an insight into the author's reflections on the constitution of emperorship. This aspect of his critique, however, does not involve questioning the monarchy itself, but addressing the functions and limitations of imperial authority.[312] As will be seen, Zonaras' *Kaiserkritik* has a constitutional character in much the same sense as Choniates'; Zonaras' critique reflects his thoughts on the mechanisms of imperial administration, rather than his alleged disapproval of the monarchical institution in itself.[313]

The following quotation, certainly one of the most famous extracts in the entire *Epitome*, encapsulates the essence of Zonaras' critique of Alexios Komnenos: 'he treated state affairs neither as common, nor as public and regarded himself not as their administrator, but as their master…' ('τοῖς πράγμασιν οὐχ ὡς κοινοῖς οὐδ' ὡς δημοσίοις ἐκέχρητο καὶ ἑαυτὸν οὐκ οἰκονόμον ἤγητο τούτων, ἀλλὰ δεσπότην…').[314] We are confronted here with the image of an authoritative ruler who, according to the author, governed the Byzantine state as if he were managing his own private property.

[310] Magdalino, 'Kaiserkritik', 327. In general on Choniates' *Kaiserkritik*, see also Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 158-79. According to Alicia Simpson, Choniates used Psellos as ideological and literary model for his critique of earlier emperors: Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 253-56.
[311] Choniates, *Historia*, 60.8-11, 143.1-23, 209.24-30.
[312] See also the observation in Frankopan, 'Advice', 71-72.
[313] I do not agree with the view that has been expressed by Anthony Kaldellis that, in his assessment of Alexios Komnenos as a ruler, Zonaras 'articulated a republican critique of the new regime' and expected his readers 'to sympathize with the republican values he outlines': Kaldellis, *Byzantine Republic*, 47.
[314] *Epitome*, III, 766.14-16.

Scholarly discussions that touch upon Zonaras' political and social ideas are inextricably linked with the presentation of the Komnenian regime under Alexios.[315] Laying emphasis on Zonaras' disapproving attitude towards Alexios' kingship is reasonable to some extent, since the narrative dedicated to the Komnenian era relates to the author's own experiences as a judicial official and can be read as an account counterbalancing Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*, the major historical source focusing on the reign of Alexios.[316]

At the core of Zonaras' disapproval of the emperor lies Alexios' policy of granting great privileges to his relatives and their followers.[317] The author dedicates much of his critique to this issue. Alexios appointed members of his family and those who served them to the highest offices. He also offered them so much wealth that they lived as if they were emperors themselves. An indicative example is that of Nikephoros Melissenos, brother-in-law of the emperor, who was raised to the office of caesar and was given the city of Thessaloniki as his 'residence'. Alexios, though, was not equally generous to other members of the aristocracy. The chronicler highlights that this system of elevating relatives to prominent state offices shows Alexios to be an unjust leader, one who did not discriminate according to merit.[318] Highly educated men of noble extraction and aristocrats without ties to the imperial family were among those excluded by the favouritism of the Komnenian emperors towards their extended family.[319]

---

[315] I cite a selection of studies that deal with the political and social background of the chronicle: Kaldellis, *Byzantine Republic*, 47-48; E. Fryde, *The Early Palaeologan Renaissance (1261-c. 1360)* (Leiden, 2000), 53-54; Kazhdan, 'Social Views', 59-63; Magdalino, 'Kaiserkritik'.

[316] Two studies that compare Zonaras' account with that of Anna are: Macrides, 'Who Wrote the Alexiad?', 72-75; Angold, 'Afterword'.

[317] *Epitome*, III, 732.10-14 and 767.2-9. This subject is examined in Frankopan, 'Kinship'. The Komnenian system of government, based on the domination of members of the ruling family, is aptly explained in Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 180-201.

[318] *Epitome*, III, 767.1-2.

[319] Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 189-90.

A direct and very serious consequence of Alexios' practice of providing members of his family with extensive wealth was that 'the imperial treasury, or rather the common vault, was impoverished' ('τὸ βασιλικὸν ταμεῖον ἢ τὸ κοινὸν πρυτανεῖον ἐστένωτο').[320] The writer purposely underlines that the emperor spent public funds to achieve his own private goals. Alexios is thus viewed as a ruler who made bad use of money that belonged to the state.

The chronicler raises a further point about the disgraceful treatment of the civilian nobility by the Komnenian emperor. He protests that Alexios cut the annual instalments which had always been given to those of high rank, and also that he deprived senators of their properties.[321] By eliminating the income that went along with certain ranks, Alexios broke a centuries-old tradition. The emperor is once again shown as aiming to get hold of funds that were not actually his. In addition to this, he failed to bestow the appropriate honours on the senate. Instead, he humiliated its members.[322] The author makes it apparent here that Alexios' system of government aimed at weakening specifically the aristocratic class of his time.

One of Zonaras' main charges against the emperor is that he did not preserve the traditional customs of the Roman polity.[323] On the contrary, he aimed to alter the ancient traditions of the state. Alexios' policy of allocating offices and honours to those closest to him, instead of granting those privileges according to merit, is apparently understood by Zonaras to be a corruption of the Roman political tradition, which should be preserved intact in the course of time. The same must be true of Zonaras' accusation that the members of the senatorial class saw their social status diminished during Alexios' regime.

---

[320] *Epitome*, III, 732.15-733.1.
[321] *Epitome*, III, 733.1-3.
[322] *Epitome*, III, 766.17-19.
[323] *Epitome*, III, 766.7-14.

A final source of grievance for Zonaras is that the emperor invented abominable ways of collecting money. Alexios is accused of inventing and making his subjects pay non-existent debts, and of stripping of their belongings people who did not owe anything to the state.[324] He also sent tax collectors to fields and villages in order to find properties liable for taxation, and invented new taxes.[325] He adds, moreover, that the emperor removed the gold from the churches.[326]

There can be no doubt that the author is opposed to Alexios' individual model of governance. Zonaras makes a direct attack on the political and fiscal reforms of the founder of the Komnenian dynasty, being particularly dissatisfied with the fact that Alexios' relatives came to dominate important offices. Placing relatives and supporters in key positions in the political and military administration was a policy implemented to a great extent by the Komnenian emperors. It was certainly a distinctive feature of their style of rulership.[327] By extension, therefore, Zonaras' critical account of Alexios could be read as an outward rejection of the Komnenian system of government as a whole. It is also very much in line with the critique levelled against the family of the Komnenoi by John Oxeites, Niketas Choniates and his brother, Michael.

I would also suggest that the author's severe criticism of Alexios can be understood as a response to the rhetoric exalting the emperor which was prominent during the regime of his descendants. Both John II Komnenos and Manuel Komnenos sought to keep Alexios' memory alive, publicly extolling his greatness and heroism.[328] They deliberately tried to identify themselves with the founder of their

[324] *Epitome*, III, 737.11-14.
[325] *Epitome*, III, 737.15-738.2.
[326] *Epitome*, III, 738.3.
[327] Frankopan, 'Kinship', 2-3.
[328] Magdalino, 'The Pen of the Aunt', 17-20.

dynasty as a means of reinforcing the legitimacy of their claim to the throne.[329] At the same time, they would advertise themselves as being the only ones of his heirs capable of exceeding Alexios' remarkable accomplishments. Examples of such propaganda are, for instance, the *Mousai*, an admonitory poem which is attributed to Alexios containing advice to his first-born son,[330] as well as the encomiastic verses of the court poet Manganeios Prodromos, who praised Manuel for emulating and even surpassing the deeds of his father and grandfather. The *Alexiad* is the result of Anna's own effort to perpetuate her father's memory and is a reaction to the comparisons made between Alexios and his descendants.[331] The chronicler's portrayal of Alexios should be seen against this background of imperial panegyric. Raising his objections against the emperor's style of rulership, Zonaras attempts to set the record straight and restore the truth about some aspects of Alexios' management of the state. This does not mean that his presentation of the Komenian regime was meant to be an answer specifically to Anna Komnene, whose work might have been known to Zonaras.[332] The chronicler himself reveals that his intention behind focusing on aspects of the emperor's personality was to 'make his character manifest to those that will live from now on and indicate his disposition to later generations' ('τὸν τρόπον ἐκείνου δῆλον θείημεν τοῖς μετέπειτα καὶ τὸ ἦθος τοῖς ὀψιγόνοις χαρακτηρίσαιμεν').[333] This is a key statement. Zonaras addresses his portrayal of the emperor to future generations,

[329] Another member of the Komnenian family, the *sebastokrator* Isaac Komnenos, the third son of Alexios Komnenos, also had imperial aspirations and tried to appropriate his father's memory to pursue his political ambitions: K. Linardou, 'Imperial Impersonations: Disguised Portraits of a Komnenian Prince and His Father', in *John II Komnenos*, ed. by Bucossi and Rodriguez Suarez; Magdalino, 'The Pen of the Aunt', 20.

[330] *Mousai*, ed. by P. Maas, 'Die Musen des Kaisers Alexios I', *BZ*, 22 (1913), 348-69. See also M. Mullett, 'Whose Muses? Two Admonitory Poems Attributed to Alexios I Komnenos', in *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine: le texte en tant que message immediate*, ed. by P. Odorico (Paris, 2012), 195-220; D. Reinsch, 'Bemerkungen zu einigen byzantinischen ‚Fürstenspiegeln' des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts', in *Synesios von Kyrene: Politik – Literatur – Philosophie*, ed. by H. Seng and L. M. Hoffmann (Turnhout, 2012), 404-19, at 412-16.

[331] Magdalino, 'The Pen of the Aunt', 21-23.

[332] See the third chapter of the thesis, pp. 82-83. I share the opinion of Michael Angold that 'it is just an assumption that it [the *Epitome*] was intended as a riposte to the *Alexiad*': Angold, 'Afterword', 400.

[333] *Epitome*, III, 765.5-6.

namely audiences who will have no personal recollections of public life under Alexios and who will learn of his reign through the flattering accounts of his encomiasts.

Interestingly, evidence in the *Epitome* demonstrates that Zonaras was well aware that propaganda created by Alexios' successors circulated about the founder of the Komnenian dynasty. The chronicler mentions that, while Alexios was on his deathbed, his son John attempted to take control of the Great Palace.[334] According to Zonaras, John spread the word that he had taken this initiative after receiving his father's permission. John claimed to have been offered a ring by Alexios as a token of his blessing. Zonaras does not openly dismiss this story. His careful remarks, however, that the incident was reported by John himself and that it escaped the notice of Alexios' wife, Irene Doukaina, indicates that he seriously questioned its truth.

Let us return to the concept of *Kaiserkritik*. Reading the *Epitome*, one can observe that many faults identified by Zonaras in the Komnenian system of government are not unique to their era. In the *Epitome*, we do not read of any other leaders appointing a large number of their relatives and followers to crucial positions. We learn, however, of emperors who allocated honours and ranks based on questionable criteria. Michael III the Amorian, for instance, is said to have had absolutely no idea how to distribute offices.[335] Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos placed in leading posts of the state and the army people who were unsuitable for these positions.[336] Some of them were selected by Helen Lekapene, his wife, and Basil the *parakoimomenos*, who both turned offices into 'commodities for sale' ('ὠνίους χρημάτων'). Another emperor who managed the allocation of honours very poorly was Michael VI Stratiotikos; to hinder several people from supporting Isaac

[334] *Epitome*, III, 762.10-16.
[335] *Epitome*, III, 393.9-15.
[336] *Epitome*, III, 483.12-15.

Komnenos, who was plotting to oust him from power, Michael bribed senators with money and other people with offices.[337]

According to Zonaras, Alexios' practice of lavishing his circle with immense wealth led to a deficit in the imperial treasury. It is interesting that the same remark appears in the author's overall evaluation of the emperors who reigned after Basil II and up to Isaac Komnenos. His assessment at this point draws on the corresponding section of Psellos' *Chronography*.[338] Zonaras says that these emperors would spend the public revenues indulging their own pleasures, building churches and giving rewards to whomever they wished to.[339] As a result, 'the imperial treasuries were empty and the public vaults in want of money' ('οἱ βασιλικοὶ θησαυροὶ ἐκκεκένωντο καὶ τὰ δημόσια πρυτανεῖα χρημάτων ἐσπάνιζον').[340] Concerning Constantine IX Monomachos in particular, the chronicler states that he squandered the resources of the imperial treasury.[341] In addition, a recurring point throughout Zonaras' account of imperial history is that emperors often spent excessive sums of money. This is what the author says, for example, about Commodus,[342] Caracalla,[343] Philippikos and Leo IV,[344] but also about two very prominent emperors, Constantine the Great and Justinian I.[345]

In addition, the Komnenian emperor was not the only one who curtailed the income that was traditionally connected with several high offices. Nikephoros Phokas, for instance, also partly reduced the imperial grants that were given to senators.[346] Such measurements are comparable to some extent to policies that were meant to

[337] *Epitome*, III, 663.12-664.2.
[338] Psellos, *Chronography*, 234.1-236.1 (Book 7, chapters 58-59)
[339] *Epitome*, III, 667.1-7.
[340] *Epitome*, III, 667.6-7.
[341] *Epitome*, III, 617.1-2.
[342] *Epitome*, II, 537.2.
[343] *Epitome*, II, 562.17.
[344] *Epitome*, III, 243.9-13 and 283.4-7 respectively.
[345] *Epitome*, III, 25.1-2 and 151.17-152.4 respectively.
[346] *Epitome*, III, 504.18-19.

achieve the same goal – limiting the wealth and power of those high up in the social hierarchy. Indicative of such policies is the 'ἀλληλέγγυον' of Basil II. Deriving this piece of information from Skylitzes' *Synopsis*, the chronicler writes that, according to Basil's decree, men of high rank had to cover the tax contributions of peasants who had been financially ruined.[347] A similar measure is said to have been taken by Nikephoros I.[348] Zonaras, furthermore, sometimes makes the point of telling us that emperors either shunned or ignored the members of the senate and their counsellors. Commodus, for instance, would reject the advice he was given by the noble men of the senate,[349] and Caracalla would reproach senators because they supposedly lived idle lives.[350] Leo III and Basil II, too, did not take into account the opinions offered to them by their advisers.[351]

Complaints that a ruler did not maintain the traditional customs of the Roman political order do not appear very often in Zonaras' text. It should be stressed, though, that such remarks are made not only about Alexios, but also about Basil II. Following Michael Psellos at this point, the chronicler states that the Macedonian emperor did not wish to manage the affairs of the army and the state according to established tradition, but according to his own judgement.[352]

Finally, in Zonaras' presentation of imperial history, there exist numerous examples of emperors who came up with new, outrageous ways of collecting taxes. I can offer a few examples. When Justinian was in need of financial resources, he gathered money by using immoral means.[353] He would devise new methods of taxation and would be very pleased with those who thought of new pretexts to put up

[347] *Epitome*, III, 561.1-3. Cf. Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 347.76-80 (Book 17, chapter 32).
[348] *Epitome*, III, 306.9-10.
[349] *Epitome*, II, 532.18.
[350] *Epitome*, III, 563.1-3.
[351] *Epitome*, III, 260.4-261.5, and 561.11-12 respectively.
[352] *Epitome*, III, 561.8-11. Cf. Psellos, *Chronography*, 18.8-10 (Book 1, chapter 29).
[353] *Epitome*, III, 152.4-6.

taxes. The chronicler, furthermore, provides a long list of all the unjust taxes levied by Nikephoros I.[354] Later on, based on Skylitzes' *Synopsis*, he says that Nikephoros Phokas introduced new taxes and raised existing ones using the cost of the constant wars as a false pretext.[355] It is inferred from these examples that imperial fiscal policies were generally among the subjects that attracted Zonaras' attention.

Taken in conjunction, these remarks suggest that the chronicler's disappointment with the abuse of imperial power by the Komnenians during his time ultimately turned into a general disdain for similar policies, irrespective of the emperors who enforced them. Zonaras makes his sentiments about such policies known throughout his account of Byzantine history.

That Zonaras fundamentally condemned overtaxation, for example, is corroborated by his alterations to an extract derived from Theodoret of Cyrrhus' *Commentary on Daniel*. The chronicler employs Theodoret's work to analyse the seventh chapter of the book of Daniel, a prophecy which likens the appearance of four beasts to the succession of four great kingdoms in the world. The fourth beast, traditionally interpreted as being the Roman Empire, is depicted as having teeth made of iron. Here is what one reads in Theodoret's exegesis of this:

> And there [Daniel] says: "The teeth of the beast are made of iron". It is clear that he is hinting at the same kingship at this point. He says: "the beast was eating and making [people] thinner". And indeed Romans put heavier taxes on their subjects. He says: "and the beast was treading on the rest with its feet".
>
> Καὶ ἐνταῦθα δέ φησιν· «Οἱ ὀδόντες τοῦ θηρίου σιδηροῖ·» ὡς εἶναι δῆλον, ὅτι τὴν αὐτὴν κἀνταῦθα βασιλείαν αἰνίττεται. «Ἔσθιε, φησὶ, καὶ ἐλέπτυνε.» Καὶ τῷ ὄντι μείζους ἐπετέθησαν ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων τοῖς ὑπηκόοις οἱ φόροι. «Καὶ τὰ ἐπίλοιπα, φησὶ, τοῖς ποσὶν αὐτοῦ συνεπάτει».[356]

The writer disapproves of the fiscal administration of the Roman Empire, apparently protesting against the heavy taxation levied upon citizens at the time he was

[354] *Epitome*, III, 306.3-308.2.
[355] *Epitome*, III, 504.12-14. Cf. Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 274.46-51 (Book 5, chapter 18).
[356] Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Interpretatio in Danielem*, *PG*, 81, 1420.17-23.

writing.[357] By adapting Theodoret's analysis, Zonaras tries to sharpen his critique of Roman emperors who put burdensome taxes on their subjects:

> The fact that it [the beast] was eating and making [people] thinner is understood to be the collection of taxes, because heavier taxes were levied upon subjects. These taxes feed and make emperors fat, while they make thin and impoverish the people from whom they are exacted. The beast treads on with his feet and destroys those men who do not bear to pay taxes, striving for their freedom.
>
> τὸ μὲν οὖν ἐσθίειν καὶ λεπτύνειν εἰς τὴν τῶν δασμῶν ἐξείληπται εἰσφοράν, ὡς βαρυτέρων τοῖς ὑπηκόοις φόρων ἐπιτεθέντων, οἳ τοὺς βασιλεύοντας τρέφουσι καὶ πιαίνουσι, τοὺς δ' εἰσπραττομένους αὐτοὺς ἐκλεπτύνουσι πενητεύοντας. οἳ δὲ δασμοφορεῖν οὐκ ἠνείχοντο, τῆς ἐλευθερίας ἀντιποιούμενοι, τούτους τοῖς ποσὶ συνεπάτει τὸ θηρίον καὶ ἐξωλόθρευε.[358]

With a hint of sarcasm, the chronicler draws the mocking picture of emperors growing fat on the collection of taxes. This serves to underscore that emperors imposed excessive taxes for their own personal gain, whereas they forced their subjects into circumstances of extreme poverty. The consequences for those who objected to such treatment on the part of the state were disastrous. Zonaras links economic prosperity with liberty. He implies that weighty taxation leads private men to lose their freedom and, by extension, shows an emperor to be an autocratic ruler with no concern for the well-being of his people.

Similarly, a telling amendment by the chronicler to a passage of Theophanes indicates that he generally rejected policies whose aim was to diminish the properties of the rich. This passage is the speech which Justin II publicly addressed to Tiberios II when he named him as his successor.[359] The speech, which was first recorded by Theophylaktos Simokattes and was then copied by later authors,[360] Theophanes included, contains advice to Tiberios about how an emperor should rule. In the

---

[357] Indeed, Theodoret was particularly concerned with the issue of taxation. Seven letters of the bishop addressed to public authorities ask for tax relief for the citizens of Cyrrhus: see F. Millar, *A Greek Roman Empire*: *Power and Belief Under Theodosius II* (Berkeley, 2006), 29, 146-48.
[358] *Epitome*, I, 227.22-228.4.
[359] This part of the *Epitome* is commented on Kazhdan, 'Social Views', 26.
[360] For Justin's speech, see S. Efthymiadis, 'A Historian and His Tragic Hero: A Literary Reading of Theophylact Simokatta's Ecumenical History', in *History As Literature*, ed. by Macrides, 169-86, at 177-78.

*Epitome*, one can read that an emperor should 'allow men of wealth to enjoy their properties without being subject to envy' ('τοῖς εὐποροῦσιν ἀπολαύειν τῶν οἰκείων ἀνεπιφθόνως παραχωρεῖν').[361] The original segment in Theophanes' chronicle is 'those who have properties should enjoy them' ('οἱ ἔχοντες οὐσίας ἀπολαυέτωσαν αὐτῶν').[362] Zonaras adds the adverb 'ἀνεπιφθόνως' to the text of his source to emphasise that emperors should not deprive private people of their money out of jealousy,[363] for instance by means of confiscation or heavy taxation. More importantly, he narrows the category of people who should be allowed to enjoy their possessions. Theophanes speaks generically of people who have properties, without taking their social standing into consideration. Slightly changing the text of his source, Zonaras conveys the message that a ruler ought to protect the property of members of the upper class specifically.

According to the author, there was a certain set of principles that were once fundamental for the Byzantine political system, but have long ceased to be so. A valuable insight into these is provided by his commentary on the story of the astronomer Valens, who at the encaenia of Constantinople made a prediction about the longevity of the city.[364] This short extract of the *Epitome* is, along with the assessment of Alexios, among those usually exploited by scholars interested in

[361] *Epitome*, III, 178.14-15.
[362] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 249.2-3.
[363] The emotion of envy ('φθόνος') in Byzantium has been discussed at length by Martin Hinterberger in several studies. According to Hinterberger, the emergence of envy was connected to social mobility in Byzantium, as it fostered rivalry and competition. Envy also has connotations connecting it to the devil: M. Hinterberger, *Phthonos. Missgunst, Neid und Eifersucht in der byzantinischen Literatur* (Wiesbaden, 2013); M. Hinterberger, 'Envy and Nemesis in the Vita Basili and Leo the Deacon: Literary Mimesis or Something More?', in *History As Literature*, ed. by Macrides, 187-203; M. Hinterberger, 'Phthonos als treibende Kraft in Prodromos, Manasses und Bryennios', *Medioevo Graeco*, 11 (2011), 1-24; M. Hinterberger, 'Emotions in Byzantium', in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. by James, 123-34, at 130-32.
[364] *Epitome*, III, 14.11-15.16.

Zonaras' political ideology.[365] Valens foretold that the newly-built city would last for 696 years. Since the Byzantine capital had long outlived this by the time Zonaras was writing, the chronicler assumes that the prophecy was either false or intended to be taken figuratively. He believes that the astronomer might have meant those years when the customs of the polity were kept intact, the senate was treated with respect, private men prospered and the administration of public affairs was lawful. Here, we can get a glimpse into Zonaras' vision of the ideal Byzantine state, with the author enumerating its four main principles. It is not at all clear how long it had been since these ideal circumstances had changed. One is given to understand that the principles on which the model state was based had apparently ceased to exist a long time ago.

In elaboration, he gives us the description of a tyranny as well, a polity which does not possess any of these principles. Tyrants administer public affairs as if they were their own and use them to satisfy their own pleasures, and also offer state funds to whomever they wish. The writer further states that tyrants treat their subjects, not as shepherds who tend their flock, but 'as thiefs slaughtering the sheep and devouring their flesh, or even sucking the marrow from their bones' ('δίκην ληστῶν αὐτὰ καταθυόντων τὰ πρόβατα καὶ τῶν σαρκῶν ἐμφορουμένων ἢ καὶ αὐτοὺς ἐκμυζώντων τοὺς μυελούς').[366] With this striking metaphor, he insinuates that a tyrannical ruler, among other things, imposes extremely heavy taxes.

The descriptions of an ideal and a tyrannical state accord well with the series of charges laid by Zonaras against several emperors. The author uses the principles that, in his view, characterise an ideal and a tyrannical rulership as standards against which to measure Byzantine emperors. Alexios Komnenos is presented in the *Epitome* in precisely the terms fitting a tyrant: he managed state affairs as if he were handling

[365] Kaldellis, *Byzantine Republic*, 47; Macrides and Magdalino, 'Fourth Kingdom', 128-29; Magdalino, 'Kaiserkritik', 330-31. The last two studies contain a translation of the extract.
[366] *Epitome*, III, 15.14-16.

his own business, granted public property to family members, and squeezed his subjects by extracting money from them in various ways. All these aspects add up to the image of an autocratic despot. Without explicitly labelling Alexios a tyrant, Zonaras evidently does consider him one, but leaves it up to his audience to infer for themselves whether this was indeed the truth.

It is interesting that another mention of tyranny in combination with the senate is located in Zonaras' interpretation of canon law. The writer makes an extensive analysis of the twenty-eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon, which concerns the organisation of the Church.[367] According to the canon, the see of New Rome was accorded equal prerogatives to that of Old Rome. The reason for this is because, just like Rome, Constantinople was also an imperial city and the seat of the senate. Commenting on this justification, Zonaras adds bitterly: 'Even though nowadays the first [kingship] has turned into tyranny, and the second [the senate] has been closed and abandoned' ('Εἰ καὶ νῦν ἡ μὲν εἰς τυραννίδα μετήμειπται, ἡ δὲ συγκέκλεισται καὶ ἐκλέλοιπε').[368] Here, he admits much more openly than in his piece about Valen's prediction that the Byzantium of his age has fallen short of the ideal state he envisioned. The contemporary political system is a tyranny, rather than a lawful kingship, and senators who, in his opinion, should be worthy of respect, have been marginalised.

The two extracts above echo the writer's belief that the Byzantine polity has declined with the passage of time. Judging from Zonaras' severe attack on the Komnenian system of government, it is clear that, for him, this decay certainly characterised the age in which he lived. It can be traced back much earlier too, with a number of earlier emperors implementing similar policies to those of Alexios. Like

[367] Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, II, 282-84.
[368] Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, II, 283.

the Komnenian emperor, several rulers of the past would spend enormous amounts of money, for instance, or levy heavy taxes. What is striking in both the depiction of the ideal state in the passage about Valens and the short remark on the twenty-eighth canon of Chalcedon is the author's emphasis on the role of the senate. This attests to the high regard in which he held the senatorial class.

Although Zonaras in principle condemns certain political practices and feels that the Empire has long fallen short of the ideal state described in the passage about Valens, he by no means rejects the institution of emperorship itself. He does not challenge the political and ideological construct of Byzantium. His narrative is very much concentrated on assessing the competence and character of rulers. Like Niketas Choniates, through his critique of the emperors, Zonaras shares his ideas about how a monarch should exercise government, discussing the balance between the powers and duties that arise from the imperial office.

As a private individual, he feels he has the right to reprehend a ruler for his ill behaviour or ill administration of state affairs. This idea is eloquently expressed in his exegesis of the eighty-fourth apostolic canon, according to which if one unjustly insults a ruler, one should be punished. Commenting on the canon, the author notes that: 'Nobody is allowed to insult emperors and lords. The canon, nevertheless, does not forbid [one] to rebuke them in the event that they do something improper, even if the words of rebuke are perhaps so fierce that they might be regarded as insults by the rulers being rebuked' ('Ὑβρίζειν μὲν οὖν κεκώλυται πᾶς τις καὶ βασιλέας, καὶ ἄρχοντας· ἐλέγχειν δὲ παρὰ τὸ προσῆκον ποιοῦντάς τι, οὐ κωλύεται, κἂν οἱ τῶν ἐλέγχων λόγοι, δριμύτεροι ὄντες ἴσως, εἰς ὕβριν τοῖς ἐλεγχομένοις λογίζωνται').[369] At this point, Zonaras makes a crucial distinction between insulting and rebuking an

[369] Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, II, 108.

emperor. He accepts that being offensive towards a ruler is forbidden, but highlights that rebuking him, even in a very harsh tone, is permissible. In view of this comment, one can surmise that the writer must have understood his *Kaiserkritik* as a form of 'ἔλεγχος', an assessment of what an emperor has done or failed to do and, consequently, a rebuke to emperors who instigate unlawful policies.[370]

## 4.2. The ideological context

Building on the observations made so far in this chapter, I wish to look into some additional passages which are revealing of the author's political and ideological sympathies. The first is the part of the chronicle in which Zonaras talks about the social strata created by Romulus once he became king. In the following segment, Zonaras explains how the choice of the patricians was made: 'From those most notable for their family, intelligence and way of life, he [Romulus] chose a hundred senators, naming them patricians' ('τῶν μέντοι περιφανεστέρων γένει τε καὶ συνέσει καὶ βίου αἱρέσει ἑκατὸν ἀπέδειξε βουλευτάς, πατρικίους ὀνομάσας αὐτούς').[371] This statement should be considered against Zonaras' original source, the Plutarchean *Romulus*: 'He [Romulus] proclaimed senators a hundred noble men, and called them patricians' ('ἑκατὸν δὲ τοὺς ἀρίστους ἀπέδειξε βουλευτάς, καὶ αὐτοὺς μὲν πατρικίους […] προσηγόρευσεν').[372] The chronicler modifies and expands the term 'noble' that he finds in Plutarch's narrative. This is an enlightening alteration, because it reflects

[370] The term 'ἔλεγχος', common in Late Antique and Byzantine sources, can be used in various contexts. Apart from the evaluation and criticism of someone as a ruler, 'ἔλεγχος' often means the assessment of a person's religious beliefs against the Bible and the writings of the Church Fathers. Hence, we sometimes find the title *Ἔλεγχος καὶ ἀνατροπή* (*Assessment and refutation*) in theological treatises: see, for example, the titles in: Nikephoros I, patriarch of Constantinople, *Refutatio et Eversio Definitionis Synodalis Anni 815*, ed. by J. Featherstone (Turnhout, 1997); Peter of Sicily, *Historia utilis et refutatio Manichaeorum vel Paulicianorum*, in 'Les sources grecques pour l'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure I. Pierre de Sicile. Histoire des Pauliciens', ed. by D. Papachryssanthou, *TM*, 4 (1970), 7-67.

[371] *Epitome*, II, 10.17-19.

[372] Plutarch, *Romulus*, 49.21-23.

Zonaras' own understanding of nobility. His paradigm of nobility includes prominent lineage, remarkable intellectual qualities and exemplary conduct. The writer had a broader concept of the aristocratic class, one not associated strictly with a man's descent, but also with his intellect.

Immediately afterwards, he explains why the class of patricians was given this name. One of the reasons, according to Zonaras, was that 'for themselves, each one could prove that their own fathers came from eminent families' ('ὅτι αὐτοὶ πατέρας ἑαυτῶν ἀποδεικνύειν ἠδύναντο ἕκαστος ἐκ γένους ὄντες γνωρίμου').[373] In the *Romulus*, Plutarch writes that it was 'because they could tell who their own fathers were' ('αὐτοὺς ἔχοντας ἑαυτῶν ἀποδεῖξαι πατέρας').[374] The chronicler adds the detail about the illustrious origin of the patricians. He paraphrases Plutarch's text to point out that patricians were given their title because their *patres*, their fathers, were of distinguished extraction. In this way, he wants to emphasise that, following the establishment of the senatorial class, its members have been aristocrats. They were by no means a random group of people. Zonaras here provides an additional reason why senators are worthy of respect – their noble historical origins.

It was mentioned above that, according to the *Epitome*, the emperor Leo III disregarded the advice given by his counsellors. Drawing on Kedrenos' chronicle, Zonaras recounts how Leo took up the fight against the icons. Launching his iconoclastic policy, the emperor asked for the opinion of his twelve advisers, who resided in an imperial house in the basilica near the Chalkoprateia. We should

---

[373] *Epitome*, II, 11.1-2. The syntax of this short segment is extremely problematic. It seems to me that the accusative 'πατέρας' is the subject of the infinitive 'ἀποδεικνύειν', just as the word 'πατέρας' is the subject of 'ἀποδεῖξαι' in the Plutarchean text. In this case, we would expect 'ὄντας' to be in the accusative, rather than to have 'ὄντες' in the nominative. In the edition of the *Epitome* by Dindorf, we also find 'ὄντες': *Epitome historiarum*, ed. by Dindorf, II, 91.24-26. I believe the use of the participle in the nominative, instead of the accusative, is a mistake by either a scribe or Zonaras himself.

[374] Plutarch, *Romulus*, 49.26-27. The translation is taken from *Plutarch: Romulus*, in *Lives, Volume I Theseus and Romulus. Lycurgus and Numa. Solon and Publicola*, trans. into English by B. Perrin (Cambridge; MA, 1914), 125.

compare the corresponding extracts from Zonaras' chronicle and Kedrenos'. Here follows what we read in the *Epitome*:

> And having summoned the men, he communicated to them his wicked decision about the holy icons. Not only did they not agree with him, but they attempted to entirely change his decision, somehow stroking the beast which bears the name "lion" and chanting magical words for his deliverance, somehow going against him more intensely and rebuking him for his impiety. As if a cobra blocked his ears, he was neither listening to the voice of those who chanted incantations, nor was being healed by the wise men. […] But he [Leo] ordered that much wood, which was easy to light a fire, should be collected, put around the residence and kindled during the night. He thus burnt the residence down along with the books, and also those wise and respectable men.
>
> καὶ τοὺς ἄνδρας μεταστειλάμενος τὴν περὶ τῶν σεβαστῶν εἰκόνων γνώμην αὐτοῦ τὴν πονηρὰν αὐτοῖς ἐκοινώσατο. οἱ δὲ οὐχ ὅσον οὐχ ὡμοδόξουν αὐτῷ, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸν μεταστῆσαι τῆς γνώμης ταύτης ἐπεχείρουν ὁλοσχερῶς, πῇ μὲν καταψῶντες τὸν θῆρα τὸν λεοντώνυμον καὶ κατεπᾴδοντες αὐτοῦ τὰ σωτήρια, πῇ δὲ γενναιότερον ἀντιβαίνοντες καὶ διελέγχοντες τὴν ἀσέβειαν. ὁ δὲ ὡσεὶ ἀσπὶς ἔβυε τὰ ὦτα καὶ φωνῆς ἐπᾳδόντων οὐκ ἤκουεν οὐδ' ἐφαρμακεύετο παρὰ τῶν σοφῶν.[375] […] αὐτὸς δὲ κελεύσας εὔπρηστον ὕλην συναχθῆναι πολλὴν καὶ πέριξ τοῦ οἴκου τεθεῖσαν ἀναφθῆναι νυκτός, οὕτω τόν τε οἶκον σὺν ταῖς βίβλοις καὶ τοὺς σοφοὺς ἐκείνους ἄνδρας καὶ σεβασμίους κατέκαυσε.[376]

Kedrenos, now, writes in his work:

> Frequently summoning these men, Konon attempted to talk them into his heresy. Since they were not willing to engage in this, but were resisting, he dishonourably ordered that they should be shut up in there. In the course of the night, the abominable man, lighting a fire around (the residence), burnt [them] along with the dwellings themselves and many splendid books and holy vessels.
>
> τούτους ὁ Κόνων συχνῶς προσκαλούμενος ἐπείραζε πεῖσαι τῇ αὐτοῦ αἱρέσει. καταθέσθαι δὲ μὴ καταδεχομένους ἀλλ' ἀντιπίπτοντας ἀτίμως κατακλεισθῆναι διεκελεύσατο ἐκεῖσε, διὰ δὲ τῆς νυκτὸς πῦρ κυκλόθεν ὑφάψας αὐταῖς ἑστίαις καὶ βίβλοις πολλαῖς καὶ καλαῖς καὶ σκεύεσιν ἱεροῖς ὁ μιαρὸς κατέκαυσεν.[377]

Zonaras expounds the text of his source to highlight two points. The first concerns the intellectual capacities of Leo's advisers. The writer adds two epithets about them in his narrative: wise ('παρὰ τῶν σοφῶν', 'τοὺς σοφοὺς'), a characterisation which appears twice; and respected ('σεβασμίους'). These men were apparently worthy of respect because of their sagacity and level of education. There is no mention of their

[375] See Psalms 58.5-6.
[376] *Epitome*, III, 260.10-, 261.2-5
[377] George Kedrenos, *Compendium historiarum*, ed. by I. Bekker (Bonn, 1838), 796.2-6.

descent. Secondly, Zonaras inserts a few lines that are not found in Kedrenos' text, aiming to stress that the twelve counsellors made a great effort to dissuade the emperor from banishing the icons. Not only did they attempt to change his mind, but they were also brave enough to reprove him for his lack of piety. These two points illustrate how an educated man close to the emperor might be able to prevent him from pursuing the wrong course of action. Zonaras, as we may see, lays the emphasis on the idea of nobility of intellect.

A short extract that should be given attention in addition to this one is found in Zonaras' portrayal of the emperor Constantine X Doukas: 'Despite the fact that he [Constantine] had not any received education, he loved education and also respected learned men, and used to say that he wished to become known much more for his education rather than for his kingship' ('λόγοις δὲ οὐχ ὡμιληκὼς ἠγάπα τούτους καὶ τοὺς λογίους ἐσέβετο, καὶ ἔλεγε βούλεσθαι μᾶλλον ἐκ λόγων ἢ τῆς βασιλείας γνωρίζεσθαι').[378] This part of the chronicle depends on Psellos' *Chronography*. The relevant segment of Psellos is as follows: 'He [Constantine] very much devoted himself to education. He said: "Would that I became known from my education, rather than my kingship"' ('Τοῖς δὲ λόγοις ἐξόχως προσκείμενος, «ὤφελον» ἔλεγεν «ἐκ τούτου, ἢ τῆς βασιλείας γνωρίζεσθαι»').[379] Zonaras' brief sentence about the respect shown by Constantine to educated men is absent from Psellos' account. It is evident that it was added deliberately by the author to provide an example of an emperor who appreciated and honoured the intellectuals in his entourage.

Extracts such as these testify to the chronicler's ideological orientation. There can be hardly any doubt that he favoured noblemen of birth and men of letters, two social groups that were affected badly by the Komnenian style of government. Prior to

[378] *Epitome*, III, 682.8-9. In this section, Zonaras plays on the words 'λόγος' and 'λόγιος'.
[379] Psellos, *Chronography*, 262.7-8 (Book 7, chapter 121).

Alexios Komnenos' accession to the throne, learned men were offered more chances to attain either high positions in the state bureaucracy or prestigious offices in the imperial court.[380] Zonaras alters or expands on his source texts in order to bestow importance on the aristocratic and intellectual elite that should surround a ruler. He attempts to promote the idea of a group of noblemen and learned men around the emperor, counterbalancing the dominance of those related to the Komnenoi. He implicitly presents his own alternative here, namely that men of noble birth as well as men of education are able to offer great services to the emperor. They therefore should be given the chance to do so, instead of being sidelined.

It is evident that Zonaras' idea of 'upper class' includes families of the traditional aristocracy, but also members who occupied important positions thanks to their level of education. The chronicler himself, who had a distinguished career as a judge, belonged to the second group. As was seen in the first chapter, moreover, he came from a family whose members were apparently well-educated and worked in the higher echelons of the civil administration.[381] He clearly believes that members of his own social group belonged to the elite class on the basis of their ability.

Another matter that features prominently in Zonaras' presentation of imperial history is the distinction between public and private affairs. A clear separation between the public and the private sphere can be seen in Byzantine texts of various genres.[382] This distinction plays a key role in Zonaras' assessment of an emperor; there exist emperors fit and unfit for kingship. The chronicler tries to elucidate to his readers that a noble man is not necessarily a good ruler. For example, Theodosios III, though a good man who lived an ascetic life, was 'inexperienced in state

[380] Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 189.
[381] See pp. 11-12.
[382] Kaldellis, *Byzantine Republic*, 43-53; Magdalino, 'Kaiserkritik', esp. 338-42.

administration' (ἀπράγμων δ' ἀνὴρ καὶ πρὸς πραγμάτων διοίκησιν').[383] Likewise, Michael I Rangabe is described as being a noble man, a supporter of the orthodox dogma, but as a ruler 'incompetent in the management of political affairs' ('περὶ δὲ τῶν πραγμάτων οἰκονομίαν νωθὴς').[384] Another characteristic example of an emperor who, despite being gifted with several praiseworthy qualities, does not have the makings of a good leader is Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos. The chronicler acknowledges Constantine's aptitude for scholarship, but underlines that 'he was much less competent in the administration of rulership' ('περὶ δὲ τὴν τῆς βασιλείας διοίκησιν διέκειτο μαλθακώτερον').[385] These examples illustrate that Zonaras tried to evaluate separately how good or how bad an emperor was both as a leader and as a private man.

The author by no means loses sight of the fact that there can be no perfect rulers. Indicative of this is that not even Constantine the Great, traditionally the model-emperor, is described solely in positive terms.[386] He is said to have spent money lavishly and levied high taxes. According to Zonaras, Constantine's extravagant expenditure should not be regarded as munificence. Constantius Chlorus is also viewed in a mostly favourable light, being depicted as just and kind to his subjects.[387] He led a temperate life and granted offices to those that were best suited for them. Still, his portrayal is blackened by what Zonaras says about his religious beliefs, namely that he deviated from orthodoxy and leant towards Arianism. There is the other side of the coin too. Readers of the *Epitome* may learn of the appealing qualities of emperors who are best-known for something negative. The most characteristic example of this is the presentation of Julian, who, although condemned

[383] *Epitome*, II, 247.12-14.
[384] *Epitome*, II, 316.5-6.
[385] *Epitome*, II, 483.5-11.
[386] *Epitome*, III, 25.1-2.
[387] *Epitome*, III, 56.7-58.11.

for his Hellenism, is acknowledged to be well-educated and temperate in his lifestyle.[388]

Zonaras even tells us that the founder of the Komnenian dynasty exhibited some remarkable personality traits.[389] We learn, among other things, that he was neither contemptuous nor arrogant, and that he was not excessively avaricious. He was merciful, moderate in temper, easy to approach and would not rush to inflict punishment on his subjects. He took notice and honoured men of virtue and was not too solemn when talking to his entourage, so that they did not approach him with fear. The author clearly did not consider Alexios an altogether bad or unworthy emperor.[390] He recognises that the Komnenian ruler did possess qualities that a competent ruler ought to have. Nevertheless, according to Zonaras, a leader should display other virtues in addition to these; he ought to be fair, care for his subjects and preserve the customs of the polity.[391]

All these lead the writer to arrive at a significant conclusion at the end of his presentation of imperial history: that, to make an overall assessment of an emperor's character, one should take into account how he would conduct himself and act on most occasions during his reign. The relevant passage is as follows:

> If someone seeks absolute perfection in emperors, I do not think that any of those who held the sceptre of the Romans from the beginning will be assessed as successful in everything, but the conduct of each emperor is characterised by the sum of his dispositions and deeds. For no one would ever seem either blameless, or without faults. For this is of a more divine fate, but could never be part of human nature.
>
> εἰ δὲ τὴν ἄγαν ἀκρίβειαν ζητοίη τις ἐν τοῖς αὐτοκράτορσιν, οὐκ οἶμαί τινα τῶν ἀνέκαθεν τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐπιβεβηκότων ἡγεμονίας ἐν πᾶσιν εὐδοκιμηκότα κριθήσεσθαι, ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ πλεονάζοντος ἐν τοῖς ἤθεσι σφῶν καὶ ταῖς πράξεσιν ἑκάστῳ ἡ πολιτεία κεχαρακτήρισται. ἀνέγκλητος γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἄν ποτε δόξαι

[388] *Epitome*, III, 69.1-4.
[389] *Epitome*, III, 765.5-766.3.
[390] This is also eloquently stated as the chronicler concludes his critique of Alexios: 'but one could not characterise the Komnenian as a bad emperor either' ('ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μέντοι φαῦλον εἴποι τις τὸν Κομνηνὸν αὐτοκράτορα'): *Epitome*, III, 767.11-12.
[391] *Epitome*, III, 766.4-11.

> οὐδ’ ἀμιγὴς τῆς χείρονος ἕξεως· θειοτέρας γὰρ τοῦτο μοίρας, ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἀνθρωπίνης εἴη ἄν ποτε φύσεως.[392]

Bringing his narrative of the Empire to an end, the author presents his readers with the lesson he derived for himself: that no emperor in the course of the Empire's history was excellent in every respect. This is natural, according to him, because, like all human beings, rulers have flaws. Surprisingly, despite the vehemence of his criticism, particularly against Alexios Komnenos, Zonaras ultimately takes a lenient approach to the way in which emperors should be judged. His conclusion can also be taken as a hint to those authors of historical accounts who paint a hagiographical picture of their benefactors, concealing or undermining their objectionable actions. The chronicler's unstated message to his audience is that they should treat such histories with caution.

## Final remarks

As has been shown in this chapter, the severe criticism of Alexios Komnenos in the *Epitome* constitutes very much a personal attack aimed specifically against the style of government established by Alexios Komnenos and followed by later Komnenian emperors too. The author condemns Alexios for allocating high offices to members of his family and their acquaintances, bankrupting the public treasury, reducing the wealth of the aristocratic nobility, disregarding the traditional customs of the Roman state, and inventing new and unjust taxes. Evidently influenced by the conduct of government during his time, he vehemently reproaches similar policies that have been enforced by various emperors in the course of Byzantine history. He condemns in principle those practices that are not in line with the concept of the model state he envisions. In his view, the foundation of an ideal state is the preservation of the traditional customs of the polity, showing respect to the senate, the prosperity of

[392] *Epitome*, III, 767.12-19

private individuals, and the lawful administration of state affairs. Using these principles as a compass, Zonaras evaluates an emperor's efficiency in the administration of public affairs. It is implied that Alexios Komnenos' political and fiscal reforms accord with the features of a tyrannical state and are therefore rejected by the author.

Zonaras' critical remarks have an institutional basis. Without questioning the authority of the imperial office, the writer touches upon issues that relate to the nature of the imperial authority and the constitutional rights of a monarch. He conceives his *Kaiserkritik* as a form of rebuke to rulers, something that he believes is open to him as a private individual.

By amending relevant passages of his sources, Zonaras gives prominence to the qualities exhibited by aristocrats as well as men of culture, and thus argues in favour of an enhanced role for these groups at the imperial court. From this, it can be seen that, in Zonaras' view, the 'elite' class comprises not only the nobility, but also intellectuals who, like himself, were high-ranking members of the civil service.

# CHAPTER 5. ZONARAS' KEEN INTEREST IN ROMAN ANTIQUITIES

Zonaras' great interest in the Roman origins of Byzantium is a notable feature of his chronicle. To account for the writer's emphasis on the world of Old Rome, one can examine his interests first against the intellectual and literary background of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and secondly against the historical background of the period.

## 5.1. Zonaras' interest in the Roman past within the eleventh- and twelfth-century intellectual and literary context

In his article dedicated to *Kaiserkritik*, Magdalino was the first to note the considerable interest in Roman antiquities at the imperial court of Michael VII Doukas.[393] Echoes of this attention to the Roman world can be found in several works dedicated to the emperor by educated and ambitious men of the time. John Xiphilinos wrote his epitome of Cassius Dio's *Roman History* for Michael Doukas.[394] The *Ponema Nomikon*, a legal textbook commencing with the Roman Republic, was produced by Michael Attaleiates for the same dedicatee.[395] Michael Psellos, Michael Doukas' tutor and close confidant (if we are to believe the *Chronography*), dedicated to his disciple numerous didactic poems about a variety of subjects.[396] Among these, one is the so-called *Synopsis Legum*, which is in essence a manual explaining Latin

[393] Magdalino, 'Kaiserkritik', 343-44.
[394] Xiphilinos himself mentions in his text that the *Epitome* was composed during the reign of Michael Doukas: Xiphilinos, *Epitome of Dio*, 526.8-10 (chapter 87). For Xiphilinos' treatment of Cassius Dio, see Millar, *Study*, 2-3, 195-203.
[395] The proem of the text is preceded by a book epigram in which Attaleiates reports that the work was commissioned by the emperor Michael Doukas and was produced at the third year of his reign, in 1073: see Attaleiates, *Ponema Nomikon*, 411.4-8. See also Krallis, *Politics*, xxi–iv; Wolska-Conus, 'L'école', 97-101.
[396] Bernard, *Poetry*, 37-38, 127-28, 216-17, 243 and 247.

juridical terms.[397] Psellos' *Historia Syntomos*, a chronicle starting from the mythical foundation of Rome by Romulus, was most likely intended for the same emperor as well.[398]

References to ancient Roman history are found in numerous eleventh- and twelfth-century texts, with writers deriving material from the early days of Rome, from Republican Rome, and from the Principate. Magdalino has postulated that the revival of interest in the Roman origins of the Empire relates to two eleventh-century developments: the boost of legal studies under Constantine IX Monomachos and the shift towards the Roman past noted in the West, in 'parallel and in reaction to' which Roman antiquarianism was developed in Byzantium.[399] Macrides has linked the twelfth-century *renovatio* promoted by the Komnenian dynasty to the Byzantine quest for Roman antecedents, particularly those of Justinian I's time.[400] The attention to the Roman origins of Byzantium came into focus again a few years ago with a study by Athanasios Markopoulos. Giving an overview of the Byzantines' engagement with Roman antiquities during the middle Byzantine period, Markopoulos proposed a new approach to the phenomenon. In his opinion, the ripening interest in Roman history during the eleventh and twelfth centuries was a culmination of intellectual processes whose origins can already be traced to the patriarch Photios' attention to the Roman past in the mid-ninth century.[401] The phenomenon of Roman antiquarianism has also been noted by Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis, who have both identified a strong interest in the Roman Republic in particular during the period.[402]

[397] For an extensive analysis of the text, see Wolska-Conus, 'L'école', 79-97.
[398] See particularly Ljubarskij, 'Some Notes'.
[399] Magdalino, 'Kaiserkritik', 343. See also Angold, *History*, 65.
[400] Macrides and Magdalino, 'Fourth Kingdom', 121-22.
[401] Markopoulos, 'Antiquarianism'.
[402] Kaldellis, 'Equivalence', 21; Kaldellis, *Hellenism,* 62; Krallis, '"Democratic" Action'.

Various eleventh-century sources indicate the contemporary need for good command of Latin in the field of jurisprudence. The emperor Constantine Monomachos founded a law school as part of the extensive complex of the monastery of Saint George at Mangana. According to a Novel probably promulgated in 1047 by the accomplished poet John Mauropous,[403] John VIII Xiphilinos, patriarch of Constantinople, received the title of *nomophylax* and was appointed head of the school. In the Novel, Mauropous makes heavy use of the Justinianic corpus of laws, where he found many legal terms that originated from Latin.[404] The law school of Constantine Monomachos was apparently short-lived and did not have a lasting effect.[405] Still, the details that point to the importance of Latin within the school are worthy of note. The *nomophylax* of the school was required to know both Greek and Latin. One might presume that Roman law and Latin would also be subjects of the school's curriculum.[406]

The importance of Latin to the legal profession is also stressed by the author named John Nomophylax in his scholia to the *Basilika*. The author, whom Wada Wolska-Conus has identified as Xiphilinos,[407] criticised the compilers of the *Basilika* for having made mistakes in the translation of the Latin works due to their poor knowledge of the language. A second text attributed to Xiphilinos by Wolska-Conus

[403] For the latest edition of the Novel, see *Novella constitutio saec. XI medii*, ed. by A. Salač (Prague 1954). The Novel has come down to us in a *codex unicus*, the *Vat. gr.* 676 (ff. 280$^{v}$-292$^{v}$), which dates to the late eleventh century and contains John Mauropous' works: see D. Bianconi, '«Piccolo assaggio di abbondante fragranza». Giovanni Mauropode e il Vat. gr. 676', *JÖB*, 61 (2011), 89-103.
[404] S. Troianos, 'Η Νεαρά Κωνσταντίνου του Μονομάχου: ἐπὶ τῇ ἀναδείξει καὶ προβολῇ τοῦ διδασκάλου τῶν νόμων', *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 22 (2012), 243-63, at 262.
[405] M. Jeffreys, 'Michael Psellos and the Monastery' in *The Letters of Psellos: Cultural Networks and Historical Realities*, ed. by M. Jeffreys and M. Lauxtermann (Oxford, 2017), 42-58 (at 43) and 443-44 ('Summaries', excursus 17.3 and excursus 17.4); M. T. Fögen, 'Modell und Mythos. Die Rechtsfakultäten von Konstantinopel, Neapel und Bologna im Mittelalter', *Rechtshistorisches Journal*, 15 (1996), 181-204, at 185.
[406] Kazhdan and Wharton-Epstein, *Change*, 122.
[407] See Wolska-Conus, 'L'école', 13-31.

is the *Meditatio de nudis pactis*.[408] Written by a judge in the Constantinopolitan court for his peers, the work betrays a clear interest in Roman law and Latin legal terminology. Although the extent to which eleventh-century jurists, Xiphilinos included, knew and understood Latin is open to debate,[409] repeated references to the use of Latin by the administrators of justice reflect a renewal of interest in the language, at least among high-ranking state officials.

Such topics captured Psellos' attention as well. His work *Synopsis Legum* was probably produced not later than 1075.[410] Although the work is introduced by the author as 'a comprehensible compendium of laws' ('εὐθήρατόν τι σύνταγμα τῶν νόμων'),[411] it is in fact a manual focusing on legal terminology. To explain basic concepts of jurisprudence to his addressee, Psellos uses numerous Latin terms, for which he generally provides the Greek equivalent shortly after.[412] Wishing his student to gain a sense of historical scope, he makes various references to ancient Roman law. Psellos' practice of using legal terms in Latin is identified in his shorter juridical treatises as well.[413]

Psellos' keen interest in Roman antiquities may be seen in his historical works as well. In the *Chronography*, the author shows an appreciation of well-known figures of imperial Rome, such as the philosopher Marcus Aurelius, the second Antonine

[408] *La Meditatio de nudis pactis*, ed. by H. Monnier and G. Plato (Paris, 1915; repr. 1974). See also B. Stolte, 'The Byzantine Law of Obligations', in *Obligations in Roman Law: Past, Present and Future*, ed. by T. McGinn (Ann Arbor, 2012), 320-33, at 327-31; Wolska-Conus, 'L'école', 37-53.
[409] Markopoulos, 'Antiquarianism', 291-92; N. Van der Wal, 'Problèmes linguistiques recontrés par les jurists byzantins', in *Non Nova, Sed Nove: mélanges de civilization médiévale*, ed. by M. Gosman and J. Van Os (Groningen, 1984), 279-83.
[410] Wolska-Conus, 'L'école', 79. As numerous of Psellos' didactic and introductory works, the text is written in political verse and comprises 1406 verses: M. Jeffreys, 'The Nature and Origins of Political Verse', *DOP*, 28 (1974), 141-95, at 164-66.
[411] Psellos, *Synopsis Legum*, 124.7.
[412] For example, see Psellos, *Synopsis Legum* 127.95-128.108, 128.112-14.
[413] See G. Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte im Spiegel des Schriften des Michael Psellos* (Munich, 1973), 284-302, which contains five edited treatises.

emperor.[414] Mocking the emperor Romanos III Argyros, for instance, Psellos draws a parallel between the emperor and Marcus Aurelius, saying that Romanos Argyros aspired to emulate the first Roman emperor, Augustus, and the emperors of the Antonine dynasty, particularly Marcus Aurelius. Therefore, Romanos Argyros would involve himself 'in the study of letters and the science of war' ('τῆς τε περὶ τοὺς λόγους σπουδῆς καὶ τῆς περὶ τὰ ὅπλα φροντίδος').[415] Psellos says elsewhere that the image of Marcus Aurelius, 'the most philosophic among kings' ('τὸν ἐν βασιλεῦσι φιλοσοφώτατον'), appealed to Constantine Monomachos as well.[416] Monomachos would listen carefully to Psellos' lectures and take notes, wishing to imitate a similar practice by Marcus Aurelius.[417] Furthermore, in cases when Psellos wished to make a remark about an emperor's military skills and either mock or praise him, would draw on the history of imperial Rome and was likely to use, among others, the exempla of Trajan and Hadrian. Narrating Romanos Argyros' military campaign to Syria in the *Chronography*, he notes ironically that Romanos was determined to go to war in an attempt to accomplish remarkable deeds similar to those of the memorable rulers Trajan, Hadrian and, further back in time, Augustus, Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great.[418] The same Roman exempla are found in Psellos' favourable portrayal of the caesar John Doukas, who admired Trajan and Hadrian.[419] The caesar, according to Psellos, even studied their accomplishments, as they were transmitted by extant

[414] Cresci, 'Exempla', 131-32.
[415] Psellos, *Chronography*, 31.7-8 (Βοοκ 3, chapter 2); *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers: the Chronographia of Michael Psellus*, trans. into English by E. Sewter (Harmondsworth, 1979), 39.
[416] Michael Psellos, *Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐπιτάφιος εἰς τὸν μακαριώτατον πατριάρχην κῦρ Ἰωάννην τὸν Ξιφιλῖνον*, in *Orationes funebres*, ed. by I. Polemis (Berlin, Boston, 2014), 115-69, at 129.3-4 (chapter 11).
[417] Monomachos' environment seems to have promoted the image of the philosopher-king for the emperor and his identification particularly to Marcus Aurelius was conducive to their aims: M. Angold, 'Imperial Renewal and Orthodox Reaction: Byzantium in the 11th Century', in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium 4th-13th Centuries*, ed. by P. Magdalino (Aldershot, 1994), 231-46, esp. 235.
[418] Psellos, *Chronography*, 35.17-35.21 (Book 3, chapter 8).
[419] Psellos, *Chronography*, 294.8 (Book 7, chapter 180).

*strategika*, manuals of strategies and military tactics, and the works of Aelian and Apollodorus.[420]

*Historia Syntomos* exemplifies Psellos' quest for Roman antecedents. The chronicle extends from the time of Romulus to the reign of the emperor Basil II. Interestingly enough, it is the only work of the middle Byzantine period in which the narrative begins with the mythical founder of Rome.[421] Unlike Psellos, Byzantine chroniclers would usually start their accounts with the Creation of the world. Psellos' aim, though, was not to compose a world history, but to focus on the Roman Empire presenting 'a short history of those who reigned in Elder Rome and later in Younger Rome' ('Ἱστορία σύντομος τῶν παρὰ τῇ πρεσβυτέρᾳ Ῥώμῃ βασιλευσάντων καὶ αὖθις τῇ νεωτέρᾳ').[422] The fact that about half the text is devoted to the subject of Rome is likely to indicate that the author wished to lay equal emphasis on Rome and Constantinople.[423]

At the same time, the author follows the long tradition of chronicle writing and gives a succinct account of the Roman Republic.[424] He deals with the Republican era in only seven chapters (chapters 8 to 14), each dedicated to a set of consuls, from Iunius Brutus and Tarquinius Collatinus in 509 BC to Valerius Poplicola IV and Lucretius Tricipitinus II in 504 BC. He then skips Republican Rome and continues his history recounting the deeds of Julius Caesar. From that point on, each chapter narrates the reign of an emperor. It has been argued that the Republican system of government, whose authorities were in charge for a short period of time, would not

[420] Psellos, *Chronography*, 294.10-13 (Book 7, chapter 180).
[421] Only the sixth-century antiquarian author John Lydos chose a similar starting point for his work *On the Magistracies*, which, however, is a work of a different character; it is a treatise focusing on the history of late Roman bureaucracy: John Lydos, *On Powers or the Magistracies of the Roman State*, ed. by A. Bandy (Philadelphia, 1983).
[422] Psellos, *Historia Syntomos*, 1-2 (title).
[423] Dželebdžić, 'Ιστορία σύντομος', 21.
[424] Jeffreys, 'Attitudes', 206-07.

make much sense to the Byzantine audience.[425] Psellos himself explains the reason why he decided to omit the achievements of the consuls; he wished to urge the recipient of his work (his student Michael Doukas) to choose specific models of kingship over others.[426] Such models could not be found within the context of Republican Rome, in which consuls were publicly elected and held their office for a single year. The Republican period lacked 'governing continuity' ('συνέχειαν ἀρχικήν'),[427] to use Psellos' own words, and consequently did not provide examples of rulers who remained in power for a long time, as the emperor Michael Doukas was supposed to do. To offer such examples to his disciple, Psellos had to look back to the world of the Roman *imperium*.

Nevertheless, Psellos' view of the Roman Republic as a political system is not negative. It is illustrated in his brief account of the consulship of Valerius Poplicola and Lucretius Tricipitinus, when the author emphatically states that: 'They [the consuls] brought peace during that year and increased the numbers of the armies for the Romans; it was proved that, for the Romans, aristocratic consulship was better than kingship' ('Εἰρηνικόν τε τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν ἐκεῖνον συντετελέκασι καὶ τὰ πλήθη τῶν στρατευμάτων Ῥωμαίοις συνηυξήκασι καὶ <ἡ> ἀριστοκρατικὴ ὑπατεία κρειττων τῆς βασιλείας Ῥωμαίοις ἀποδέδεικτο').[428] The results of the consulship of Valerius Poplicola and Lucretius Tricipitinus were beneficial to the state. The historian's favourable attitude towards aristocratic consulship has been suggested as the most important reason why Psellos did not opt to omit the history of Republican Rome altogether.[429] Nevertheless, an extensive analysis of the Roman Republic would not

[425] Scott, 'Classical Tradition', 68; Jeffreys, 'Attitudes', 207.
[426] Psellos, *Historia Syntomos*, 10.61-63.
[427] Psellos, *Historia Syntomos*, 10.61.
[428] Psellos, *Historia Syntomos*, 8.20-23.
[429] D. Dželebdžić, 'Η δημοκρατική Ρώμη στην πολιτική σκέψη του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού', *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta*, 42 (2005), 23-33.

serve Psellos' didactic purposes in *Historia Syntomos*, which was to seek imperial models for imitation.

In his epitome of Cassius Dio's *Roman History*, Xiphilinos focuses on leading politicians and emperors of ancient Rome. The author derives material from Books 36 to 80 of Dio's history, thus covering the period from 69 BC to 229. In a short excerpt from Xiphilinos' work, we find his reason for epitomising Dio's work: 'because our own life and polity depends a great deal upon those times' ('διὰ τὸ πάμπολυ ἀπηρτῆσθαι τῶν καιρῶν ἐκείνων τὸν καθ᾽ ἡμᾶς βίον καὶ τὸ πολίτευμα').[430] Xiphilinos thus underlines how important he believes it is for the Byzantines to know about Republican and imperial Rome. For him, this period is ultimately linked to the contemporary political situation; he clearly sees some sort of continuity between the political institutions of ancient Rome and those of eleventh-century Byzantium. Still, Dio's constitutional debates about republicanism attracted limited attention from his epitomiser. According to an analysis by Christopher Mallan, Xiphilinos was keen to abridge heavily lengthy speeches included in Dio's account of the Republic, but seems to have maintained long pieces in his narrative of the imperial period. Xiphilinos primarily draws his attention to elements of the emperors' characters and biographies, thus maintaining the tenth- and eleventh-century biographical style of history-writing.[431] The fact that he was writing at the imperial court must also have had a significant impact on Xiphilinos' choice of omitting or abridging sections of a republican nature.

Xiphilinos was not the only author who took a great interest in Dio's work during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Kekaumenos, a close contemporary of

[430] Xiphilinos, *Epitome of Dio*, 526.4-6 (chapter 87). See also Kaldellis, *Hellenism*, 63; Krallis, '"Democratic" Action', 49-50.
[431] Mallan, 'Style', 616-21. For the developments in the genre of historiography, see Markopoulos, 'Narrative Historiography'.

Xiphilinos and a high-ranking military official, made use of the *Roman History* in his *Strategikon*, produced in the mid-1070s.[432] In his *Histories*, the twelfth-century scholar John Tzetzes repeatedly names Cassius Dio as one of his sources,[433] while excerpts from his work can be found in Tzetzes' commentary on Lycophron's *Alexandra*.[434] Eustathios, archbishop of Thessaloniki, also included parts of Dio in his works.[435]

The ancient Roman world was a source of inspiration for Michael Attaleiates as well, a high-ranking legal and military official. Let us first consider his legal treatise. The *Ponema Nomikon* is a completely different text from Psellos' *Synopsis Legum* in terms of character and purpose, although it is a similar kind of legal compendium. It has a more practical character and therefore would have been particularly useful to jurists.[436] According to Attaleiates himself, his aim was to record the current laws of the state in a brief and easily understood treatise.[437] He begins his work by succinctly explaining the Republican system of government and points out that at first the majority of laws were not written down and were based on customs.[438] He then refers to the process which led to the promulgation of the *Law of the Twelve Tables*; a board of ten men was elected, with the legal expert Claudius Appius as the

---

[432] Kekaumenos, *Strategikon* ed. by M. D. Spadaro, in *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo* (Alessandria, 1998), 44-242. For Kekaumenos' use of Dio, see C. Roueché, 'The Literary Background of Kekaumenos', in *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. by C. Holmes and E. Waring (Leiden, 2002), 111-38, at 124-26.

[433] See, for instance, John Tzetzes, *Historiae*, ed. by P. Leone (Naples, 1968), 32.3, 46.87, 88.102, 171.109.

[434] Lycophron, *Alexandra*, ed. by L. Mascialino (Leipzig, 1964). In his edition of Cassius Dio, Boissevain includes the corresponding sections of Tzetzes' works.

[435] Angold, *Church and Society*, 179-96. For both Tzetzes' and Eustathios' treatment of Cassius Dio, see the introduction in vol. 1 of Dio's *Roman History*, trans. into English by E. Cary (London, 1914-1927), xxiii.

[436] Numerous scholars have underlined the 'superiority' of *Ponema Nomikon* over *Synopsis Legum*: see, for example, S. Troianos, *Οι Πηγές του Βυζαντινού Δικαίου* (Athens, 1999), 208; Kazhdan and Wharton-Epstein, *Change*, 146. It seems likely that Michael Doukas ordered a second juridical textbook, because he was not very satisfied with *Synopsis Legum* presented to him by Psellos: Wolska-Conus, 'L'école', 97-98.

[437] Attaleiates, *Ponema Nomikon*, 415 (proem).

[438] For Attaleiates' account of the history of Roman law, see Attaleiates, *Ponema Nomikon*, 415-16.

head. Having collected the Roman laws, and also taken into consideration the legislation established in various Greek cities, they selected the laws for inclusion in the code. Attaleiates hastily passes over in two sentences imperial regulations promulgated by emperors after the end of the Republic to reach the Justinianic codification of laws and soon after the *Basilika*, the compilation of the Justinianic corpus of laws produced by Leo VI.[439] What is important here is that Attaleiates saw fit to introduce his text by giving an account, albeit short, of the history of Roman jurisprudence. He thus presents the contemporary legislative system as the final stage in a continuum of legal developments beginning with the recording of laws during the Republic.

Attaleiates' *History* covers the reigns of the Byzantine emperors from Michael IV the Paphlagonian to Nikephoros Botaneiates, to whom the work is dedicated.[440] Two sections of the work are particularly revealing of the historian's perception of Roman antiquity. First, in his account of Michael Doukas' reign, Attaleiates contrasts the leaders of the contemporary Romans with those of the ancient Romans.[441] He notes, among other things, that, although ancient Romans had not known Christianity, due to their inherent magnanimity they educated themselves to observe and practice virtues such as piety and purity. They identified a defeat or a negative omen as a sign of divine displeasure and sought to investigate whether something necessary had been neglected or a shameful act had been done. Once they had appeased their gods, they

[439]The presentation of the material relies on the structure of the *Basilika*, although Attaleiates occasionally arranges the information in a different order than the one found in his source: Wolska-Conus, 'L'école', 99.

[440] For recent approaches to Attaleiates' work, see A. Kaldellis, 'Equivalence'; Krallis, *Politics*; Krallis, '"Democratic" Action'; D. Krallis, 'Attaleiates as a Reader of Psellos', in *Reading Michael Psellos*, ed. by C. Barber and D. Jenkins (Leiden, 2006), 167-91; A. Markopoulos, 'The Portrayal of the Male Figure in Michael Attaleiates', in *Η αυτοκρατορία σε κρίση (;)*: *το Βυζάντιο τον 11ο αιώνα (1025–1081)*, ed. by B. Blysidou (Athens, 2003), 215-30.

[441] The comparison between Attaleiates' contemporaries and their Roman ancestors can be found in Attaleiates, *Historia*, 142-44. For an extensive treatment of this subject, see Krallis, *Politics*, 192-99.

campaigned against their enemies and achieved marvellous victories.[442] Contemporary Roman emperors and generals do not act in the same manner as their ancestors. They are more interested in their own personal gain than in the well-being of their countrymen and the glory of the Empire. For Attaleiates, the attitudes of ancient Roman leaders are the standard against which he measures his contemporaries; he uses Roman politicians of the past as exempla to strongly criticise modern Byzantine leaders.

The other section in which Attaleiates' Roman antiquarianism emerges is the extensive digression into Botaneiates' alleged ancestry. According to the historian, that emperor descends from the family of the Phokades, who are presented as being descendants of both Constantine the Great and two well-known and highly esteemed families of ancient Rome, the Fabii and the Scipiones.[443] Attaleiates makes special mention of three renowned figures of Republican Rome: the consul Aemilius Paulus; Scipio Africanus, a general in the Second Punic War; and his brother, the consul Scipio Asiaticus. He gives a brief account of the military accomplishments achieved by each of these figures. It is not possible to tell whether Attaleiates himself invented the noble ancestry of the Phokades or whether he used material which was in circulation around that time.[444] As he does earlier in his narrative, he links the chief protagonist of his work to ancient Romans so as to elevate Botaneiates in his readers' estimation. By emphasising the unbroken continuity between these notable icons of the Roman Republic and the Phokades from whom Botaneiates supposedly descends,

---

[442] Attaleiates, *Historia*, 355.
[443] Attaleiates' description of Nikephoros Phokas' Roman ancestry is contained in Attaleiates, *Historia*, 159-61.
[444] Markopoulos, 'Antiquarianism', 289-90. According to Psellos, numerous writings about Nikephoros Phokas were circulating during that time: Psellos, *Historia Syntomos*, 98.82-85. Cf. J. Ljubarskij, 'Nikephoros Phokas in Byzantine Historical Writings', *Byzantinoslavica*, 54 (1993), 245-53.

he projects, in a sense, the qualities of powerful and memorable figures of ancient Rome onto the emperor whom he wishes to exalt.[445]

Composed during the first half of the twelfth century, the historical work of the caesar Nikephoros Bryennios also recalls the ancient Roman past.[446] Discussing the events from 1070 to 1079, Bryennios features some of the most prominent historical figures of the period, with Alexios I Komnenos and Nikephoros Bryennios the Elder being the central heroes of the narrative. In her study dedicated to Bryennios' work, Leonora Neville characterises both Attaleiates and Bryennios as 'Romanising historians'.[447] Bryennios occasionally uses exempla taken from Roman history to make comparisons with key figures in his narrative. Isaakios Komnenos, for instance, was put in charge of the military expedition against the Turks in Cappadocia by the emperor Michael Doukas. Isaakios' younger brother, Alexios, marched along with him. Bryennios provides a double example for this. He says that Alexios exceeds Scipio Africanus the Younger in military virtue. He then adds that Scipio followed his father, the consul Aemilius Paulus, in his campaign against the Macedonian king Perseus, thus drawing a second parallel between Alexios and Scipio, both of whom joined an expedition under the command of a senior member of their family.[448] Although it is unusual for Bryennios to explicitly compare figures of his narrative with ancient Roman paradigms, his heroes are portrayed as having classical Roman virtues.[449] Neville views Bryennios' quest for heroes in Roman antiquity as the

[445] Attaleiates claims that Constantine the Great removed the most illustrious patricians and their families from Rome to the newly-built city of Constantinople and compares the Fabii and the Phokades with the roots and the branches of the same tree: Attaleiates, *Historia*, 159-60.
[446] See Neville, *Heroes*; D. Reinsch, 'Ο Νικηφόρος Βρυέννιος – ένας Μακεδόνας συγγραφέας', in, *Β' Διεθνές Συμπόσιο: Βυζαντινή Μακεδονία, Δίκαιο, Θεολογία, Φιλολογία* (Thessaloniki, 2003), 169-77.
[447] Neville, *Heroes*, 35.
[448] Bryennios, *History*, 147.7-15 (Book 2.3).
[449] Neville, *Heroes*, 89-111. See also K. Paidas, 'Issues of Social Gender in Nikephoros Bryennios' *Ὕλη Ἱστοριῶν*', *BZ*, 101 (2008), 737-49.

author's attempt to understand the processes of social and political transformation in Alexios Komnenos' time.[450]

In the twelfth century, when Byzantine rhetoric flourished,[451] both Greek and Roman exempla frequently made their appearance in imperial orations as well.[452] A prime example in which we find numerous exempla drawn from the Roman history is Nikephoros Basilakes' extensive oration to the emperor John II Komnenos. Aiming to hail the recipient of his speech, Basilakes repeatedly compares John with great figures of the Roman past, drawing material from the early days of Rome, from Republican and imperial Rome. He recalls Tarquin the Elder, the fifth king of Rome, and his successor Servius Tullius, both of whom launched an extensive building programme in Rome, remarking that John fortified New Rome with arms, instead of walls.[453] Many exempla relate to Republican Rome. The emperor fights against foreign enemies with greater bravery than Scipio,[454] is more adventurous than Marcellus and a better general than Sertorius.[455] Unlike Aemilius Paulus who defeated the Macedonian king Perseus, John does not parade his triumphs.[456] To praise his addressee as a skilful archer, Basilakes uses an imperial model; he says that John is more competent in using a bow than the emperor Gratian.[457]

This overview of the eleventh- and twelfth-century literature in which an interest in the ancient Roman world is identified demonstrates that authors drew from Roman history and treated their material in various ways. The purposes of a work

---

[450] Neville, *Heroes*, 197.
[451] P. Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel* (Washington, 2005), 26-32.
[452] Cresci, 'Exempla', 119-30.
[453] Basilakes, *To John Komnenos*, 70.30-34.
[454] Basilakes, *To John Komnenos*, 56.2-3.
[455] Basilakes, *To John Komnenos*, 60.5 and 70.30.
[456] Basilakes, *To John Komnenos*, 62.23.
[457] Basilakes, *To John Komnenos*, 70.12. The Roman emperor Gratian was said to be a skilled huntsman: see, for instance, Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rerum gestarum libri qui supersunt*, ed. by W. Seyfarth (Stuttgart, 1999), II, 185.14-22.

impacted on the selection and presentation of the material. In the historical works of Attaleiates and Bryennios, the presentation of the Roman past serves as the moral compass of the narratives. The extent to which their heroes exhibit qualities which characterised ancient Romans determines how favourably they are portrayed. Psellos' *Historia Syntomos* was primarily a vehicle for offering the young emperor Michael Doukas imperial models for imitation. The author's account of the Roman Republic, which was not conducive to the aims of the text, was thus brief. Authors would use well-known figures of Roman antiquity as exempla for juxtaposition with the heroes of their works. To provide the most characteristic examples, an emperor was likely to be compared with Marcus Aurelius for his aptitude for knowledge and with Trajan and Hadrian for his military achievements. Of course, such exempla are rhetorical devices which allowed a well-learned writer to display his rhetorical training, but at the same time they are understood as shared knowledge between authors and their audiences. These icons of Old Rome were part of the collective memory of the Byzantines, who associated them with particular features.

These remarks raise the question of how widespread Roman antiquarianism was among learned men of the period. The material at our disposal does not allow us to propose a definite answer. Many of those works were produced at the imperial court. The individual interests and tastes of an emperor must have played an important role, as the numerous works concerned with Roman antiquities at the court of Michael Doukas indicate. The personal preferences of an individual writer should also be taken into consideration. It was Attaleiates' own choice, for instance, to either invent or incorporate the story of Botaneiates' relation to highly esteemed Roman families into his narrative. In parallel to this nostalgia for Roman antiquities, a pronounced interest in ancient Greek literature can also be observed during the twelfth century.

For instance, Anna Komnene was inspired by Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* and John Kinnamos by Thucydides and Xenophon,[458] while authors such as Tzetzes and Basilakes included both Greek and Roman material in their works.[459] One can assume that some authors were more interested than others in either Greek or Roman history and keener to take material from either of these traditions.

Zonaras seems to have been receptive to the literary trends of his time. The considerable attention he pays to Old Rome certainly fits within the broader framework of Roman antiquarianism noted in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. He can be seen as one of the 'Romanising' authors, to whom Roman antiquities appealed much more than the ancient Greek past. His quest for the ancient Roman past is also shown in his commentary on canonical works,[460] which further reinforces the idea that Zonaras was fascinated by the Roman tradition. He drew extensively from Cassius Dio's history, a work whose use by authors appears to have been in vogue during that time. Written in Greek, Dio's text was a useful source of information about the Roman past. It is worth noting that, although Dio was read by intellectuals for much of the Byzantine period, he was not a source used by early chroniclers such as John Malalas and the author of the *Chronicon pascale*.[461]

It is also clear that Zonaras had knowledge of earlier authors who took an interest in the Roman origins of Byzantium. He partly depended on Xiphilinos' epitome of Dio and, recounting the events of the eleventh century, took much information from Psellos' *Chronography*. The second Psellian work occasionally used by the chronicler was *Historia Syntomos,* from which Zonaras derived, among other

[458] Scott, 'Classical Tradition', 71-72; John Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 7.
[459] For Tzetzes' treatment of Greek authors, see N. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (London, 1996), 190-96. For Basilakes, see Cresci, 'Exempla'.
[460] Macrides, 'Perception of the Past'.
[461] Scott, 'Classical Tradition', 72-73.

information, a number of sayings attributed to emperors of the early Byzantine era.[462] Perhaps affected and inspired by these works, he might have been encouraged to research into the Roman history of the Empire.[463]

## 5.2. Zonaras' interest in the Roman past within the historical context of the later eleventh and twelfth centuries

In addition to the literary context of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the social and cultural milieu in which Zonaras lived and composed his work probably had a strong impact on the selection of his material. The author's decision to draw on the Roman tradition and emphasise the Roman antecedents of the Empire may be better understood when one considers the growing stream of Westerners coming to Constantinople, noted particularly from the mid eleventh century onwards. This development was a result of both the commercial treaties concluded between Byzantium and the Italian maritime cities and the First Crusade.

Following a chrysobull issued by Alexios Komnenos in the late eleventh century,[464] Venetian merchants were highly motivated to do business in Byzantium. Although the original document has not come down to us, a detailed record of the concessions to Venetians can be found in two Latin translations of Alexios' chrysobull incorporated into later chrysobulls issued by Manuel I Komnenos in 1148 and Isaac II Angelos in 1187.[465] The Republic of Venice was offered generous trading

[462] For Zonaras' use of Psellos, see pp. 81-82, 86-87 of the thesis.
[463] Macrides and Magdalino, 'Fourth Kingdom', 131.
[464] Scholars have yet to reach a definite conclusion as to the date when the chrysobull was issued. It is traditionally dated to 1082: T. Madden, 'The Chrysobull of Alexius I Comnenus to the Venetians: the Date and the Debate', *Journal of Medieval History*, 28 (2002), 23-41, where previous scholarship is summarised. Peter Frankopan, however, has argued for a date in 1092: Frankopan, 'Chrysobull'.
[465] *I trattati con Bisanzio, 992–1198*, ed. by M. Pozza and G. Ravegnani (Venice, 1993), 68-87.

privileges by Alexios, two of which were of great importance.[466] First, a separate commercial quarter on the west bank of the Golden Horn was granted to Venetian traders. Three landing stages, a number of buildings and the church of St Akindynos with its adjacent bakery were situated in this area and now passed into Venetian hands. Secondly, Venetian merchants were exempted altogether from taxes on products either imported to, or exported from, the capital. Similar privileges were awarded to Venetian traders in other ports of the Empire as well. The commercial advantages given to Venice were confirmed by chrysobulls of Alexios' heirs, John Komnenos (in 1126) and Manuel Komnenos (in 1147).[467] These concessions aimed at, and succeeded in, making Byzantine cities, and particularly the capital, markets attractive to Venetians. Indeed, the regular trade contacts with Venice and the growing number of Venetian merchants in Constantinople led Manuel to issue a second chrysobull in 1148 and to provide them with new buildings and a fourth landing stage in their quarter at the imperial capital.[468] Venice was not the only one of the Italian maritime republics to which a series of privileges was granted by the Komnenian emperors. The year 1111, for example, saw Alexios according privileges to Pisa.[469] Pisans merchants were offered a quarter and a landing stage in Constantinople. The Pisan privileges were ratified by John in 1135.

In addition to the streams of Italian merchants flooding Constantinople, Western mercenaries, too, joined the Byzantine army from the mid-eleventh century onwards. Hervé Frankopoulos, Robert Crépin and Roussel de Bailleul are prominent

[466] For an extensive treatment of the privileges granted to Venice by Alexios, see Penna, *Imperial Acts*, 26-34; Nicol, *Venice*, 60-61; Lilie, *Handel*, 8-16, 50-68.
[467] Penna, *Imperial Acts*, 35-40; Nicol, *Venice*, 77-85; Lilie, *Handel*, 17-23.
[468] Penna, *Imperial Acts*, 40-44; Nicol, *Venice*, 86; Lilie, *Handel*, 23-24.
[469] For the privileges granted to Pisa by Alexios, see Penna, *Imperial Acts*, 101-14; Nicol, Venice, 75-76; Lilie, *Handel*, 68-76.

examples of Franks who were appointed commanders of the Byzantine army.[470] In the autumn of 1087, Alexios Komnenos reached an agreement with Robert, count of Flanders, by which 500 knights were to be sent to the Byzantine emperor to assist him in his campaign against the Turks in Anatolia.[471] Under pressure from the Turkish expansion in Asia Minor, Alexios is likely to have requested that additional military forces be sent to him in the early 1090s.[472] Frankish contingents, however, made their presence very much felt in the imperial capital after the First Crusade in 1097, a turning point in relations between Byzantium and the Latin kingdoms.[473] The years after 1097 saw a large number of Western soldiers coming to Constantinople. A further implication of the First Crusade was the arrival of numerous pilgrims from the West, who travelled to the newly-founded crusader states via the Byzantine capital. We also know of a small number of Frankish interpreters who were active at the court of the first two Komnenian emperors.[474]

Taken together, these considerations suggest that Westerners were an important part of the Constantinopolitan society in the period when Zonaras lived and wrote his works. The flow of Frankish soldiers, merchants and pilgrims to the city would have meant that Latin would be increasingly heard around the capital. In his

---

[470] A. Kazhdan, 'Latins and Franks in Byzantium: Perception and Reality from the Eleventh to the Twelfth Century,' in *The Crusades*, ed. by Laiou and Mottahedeh , 83-100; R. Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader States*, trans. into English by J. Morris and J. Ridings (Oxford, 1993) [original in German, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten* (Munich, 1981)].

[471] See Angold, *History*, 157-58.

[472] Ibid. Also, for the letter of Alexios Komnenos to Robert of Flanders, which is translated into Latin, see *Epistula Alexii I Komneni ad Robertum comitem Flandrum*, ed. by H. Hagenmeyer, in *Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacri spectantes: die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100* (Innsbruck, 1901), 130-36. According to Peter Frankopan, the letter, in the form in which it has come down to us today, is an extended version of the original document and was probably produced by a Westerner: Frankopan, *First Crusade*, 60-62.

[473] Modern scholars have been inclined to believe that the Franks of the First Crusade were essentially invited by Alexios himself to help him stop the Turkish threat and recover Asia Minor. See, for example, Frankopan, *First Crusade*, 71-100, which includes a thorough examination of the circumstances that led the emperor to ask for help from the West; J. Shepard, 'Cross-Purposes: Alexius Comnenus and the First Crusade', in *The First Crusade: Origins and Impact*, ed. by J. Phillips (Manchester, 1997), 107-29.

[474] A. Rodriguez Suarez, 'From Greek into Latin: Western Scholars and Translators in Constantinople During the Reign of John II', in *John II Komnenos*, ed. by Bucossi and Rodriguez Suarez.

poem *Theogonia*, composed during the 1140s, John Tzetzes comments on the number of languages heard in the Constantinople of his time, Latin included.[475] Interestingly enough, he seems to put slightly more emphasis on Latin than languages such as Persian and Arabic.[476] For contemporary Byzantines, in other words, Latin was no longer simply the language of their ancestors. It was very much part of their present and was spoken by foreigners from the West.[477] Before his withdrawal from public life, Zonaras would have witnessed the vibrant presence of Western people in Constantinople. Even after his tonsuring as a monk, he must have been aware that Frankish communities were becoming firmly established in the city.[478] As will be shown in the next chapter, he was in touch with a circle of acquaintances outside his monastery. Due to the close proximity of the island of St Glykeria to the capital, it is likely that he occasionally visited Constantinople himself or welcomed visitors from there to his monastery.[479]

In the *Epitome*, Zonaras makes his view about the connection of the West to the world of Old Rome, the Byzantines' own heritage, very clear. Latins were by no means related to the Roman Empire. He intrudes into his own narrative twice to

---

[475] John Tzetzes, *Theogonia (ex codice Casanatensi)*, ed. by I. Bekker (Berlin, 1841), 3-25. In the *Casanatensis gr*. 306 which was used by Bekker, the poem is cut short. Part of the poem's epilogue was edited by G. Moravcsik, 'Barbarische Sprachreste in der Theogonie des Johannes Tzetzes', in *Studia Byzantina* (Amsterdam, 1967), 283-92. The last fifty-five verses of the poem were published by C. Wendel, 'Das unbekannte Schluszstück der Theogonie des Tzetzes', *BZ*, 40 (1940), 23-26. See also H. Hunger, 'Zum Epilog der Theogonie des Johannes Tzetzes', *BZ*, 46 (1953), 302-07.

[476] Tzetzes dedicates nine verses to the Latin language, while other languages are described in around three verses each.

[477] For some aspects of this, see Ciggaar, *Travellers*, 98-99.

[478] The construction of more than one church using the Latin rite by the middle of the century is an indication that there was a well-established and organised Western presence in the capital at that time: R. Lilie, 'Die lateinische Kirche in der Romania vor dem Vierten Kreuzzug', *BZ*, 82 (1989), 202-20. In the absence of reliable sources, it is not easy for us to estimate the actual number of Franks residing permanently in Constantinople during this time. It is generally agreed, for instance, that the Venetian population transmitted by contemporary Venetian sources for the year 1171 – larger than ten thousand – seems implausible: Nicol, *Venice*, 88; P. Schreiner, 'Untersuchungen zu den Niederlassungen westlicher Kaufleute im Byzantinischen Reich des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts', *Byzantinische Forschungen*, 7 (1979), 175-91, at 182. Nevertheless, such figures may reflect the increasing influx of Latins to Constantinople over the course of the twelfth century.

[479] For these subjects, see pp. 167-68.

remark that Franks are of German extraction, drawing at this point on Prokopios.[480] Like all Byzantines, Zonaras does not consider the Frankish leader to be a Roman emperor and calls him 'the king of Frankia' or 'the king of the Franks' instead.[481]

I would propose that the chronicler's emphasis on the Roman roots of the Empire could have been a result of the increased cultural and social interactions with Westerners, whose language was a reminder of the Byzantines' own Roman ancestry. The author is likely to have been stimulated by the atmosphere in the capital to investigate and write extensively about the Roman past. Notably, previous scholarship has shown that the negative attitude of the twelfth-century Byzantine elite towards Westerners was among the reasons that led learned men of the time to take an interest in aspects of classical Greek culture.[482] Contemporaries of Zonaras responded to the contacts with Latins by showing a preference for classical Greece. It could be maintained that Zonaras was among those who opted to take the opposite 'cultural route' and, prompted by the influx of Frankish people, turned his attention to the Roman origins of Byzantium.

Zonaras was not the only twelfth-century author who received an impetus from the Frankish presence in Constantinople to stress the Roman antecedents of the Empire. A similar attitude can be seen in the court poems produced by Zonaras' near-contemporaries Theodore Prodromos and Manganeios Prodromos.[483] For example,

---

[480] *Epitome*, II, 261.10-3, 299.10-11.

[481] For example, see *Epitome*, II, 286.7, 299.5, 300.15, 442.1. The noun used by Zonaras for 'king' is 'ῥήξ').

[482] Angold, *Church and Society*, 512. According to Kaldellis, the twelfth-century attachment to Greek past is a reaction to a broader cultural diversity which characterised contemporary Byzantine society: Kaldellis, *Hellenism*, 293.

[483] For Theodore Prodromos, see R. Beaton, 'The Rhetoric of Poverty: The Lives and Opinions of Theodore Prodromos', *BMGS*, 11 (1987), 1-28; A. Kazhdan, 'Theodore Prodromus: A Reappraisal', in Kazhdan and Franklin, *Studies*, 87-114. For Manganeios Prodromos, as the writer of the extensive corpus of poems found in the codex *Marc. gr. XI* 22 is commonly known, see E. and M. Jeffreys, 'Literary Reactions'; W. Hörandner, 'Marginalien zum 'Manganeios' Prodromos', *JÖB*, 24 (1975), 95-106. The titles of Manganeios' poems can be found in Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 494-500. An

both poets are inclined to repeatedly refer to Constantinople as 'New Rome' and juxtapose the city with 'Elder Rome',[484] which was thought to pale in comparison with the Byzantine capital.[485] The primacy of Constantinople over Rome is particularly highlighted in *epithalamia* written about the marriage of a Westerner to a member of the imperial family.[486] This is the case with the poem composed by Theodore Prodromos in 1142 for the arrival in the imperial capital of Bertha of Sulzbach, sister-in-law of Conrad III and Manuel Komnenos' new bride.[487] The same goes for Manganeios' poem for the wedding of Theodora, third daughter of the *sebastokratorissa* Irene, to Conrad's brother Heinrich in 1148.[488] Both Theodore and Manganeios underline that the German royal court will acquire greater prestige through its connections to the Byzantine imperial house. Because of this alliance, even 'Western Rome', according to Manganeios, 'will show itself brighter' ('Ῥώμη δυτικὴ δειχθῇ φωτεινοτέρα').[489] Such messages were intended to be heard and understood by Westerners attending these ceremonies,[490] which were perfect occasions for the Byzantines to advertise their Roman heritage and concomitantly

---

edition of the full corpus of Manganeios' poems is currently in progress by Professors Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys.

[484] See, for instance, Theodore Prodromos, *Εἰς τὴν ἐπὶ τῇ ἁλώσει τῆς Κασταμόνος*…, in *Historische Gedichte*, 201.11, 203.77; Theodore Prodromos, *Ἔκφρασις διὰ στίχων ἡρωικῶν τῆς ἐπὶ τῇ ἁλώσει τῆς Κασταμόνος προελεύσεως*…, in *Historische Gedichte*, 221.18; Theodore Prodromos, *Τῷ μεγαλονίκῳ πορφυρογεννήτῳ καὶ βασιλεῖ κυρῷ Ἰωάννῃ τῷ Κομνηνῷ*, in *Historische Gedichte*, 261.7. For Manganeios, see Manganeios Prodromos, *Ἕτερος λόγος εὐχαριστήριος εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν αὐτοκράτορα*…, in *De Manganis*, 51.43; Manganeios Prodromos, *Τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν αὐτοκράτορα ἐπὶ τῇ δωρεᾷ τοῦ ἐν τοῖς Μαγγάνοις ἀδελφάτου*, in *De Manganis*,79.140.

[485] This is nicely condensed, for example, in the following verses of Theodore Prodromos:
Second Rome queen, New Rome, most honoured, / Rome superior in power to Elder Rome, / even if you follow and come second in time…
(Ῥώμη δευτέρα βασιλίς, Ῥώμη κυδίστη νέα, / Ῥώμη προτέρα κατ' ἰσχὺν τῆς πρεσβυτέρας Ῥώμης / κἂν ὑστερίζῃς χρονικῶς αὐτὴν καὶ δευτερεύῃς…)
See Theodore Prodromos, *Τῷ βασιλεῖ μετὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ ἐξέλευσιν ἐν τῷ Λωπαδίῳ διάγοντι*, in *Historische Gedichte*, 306.97-99.

[486] For these points, see Jeffreys, 'Comnenian Background'.

[487] See Theodore Prodromos, *Εἰσιτήριοι ἐπὶ τῇ νυμφευθείσῃ ἐξ Ἀλαμανῶν τῷ πορφυρογεννήτῳ κῦρ Μανουὴλ καὶ σεβαστοκράτορι*, in *Historische Gedichte*, 320-21.

[488] The *epithalamion* written by Manganeios has been edited by Carl Neumann in *Griechische Geschichtsscreiber*, 65-68. Neumann mistakenly attributes the poem to Theodore Prodromos. See also E. and M. Jeffreys, 'Literary Reactions', 114-15.

[489] See *Griechische Geschichtsscreiber*, 67.61.

[490] Ciggaar, *Travellers*, 23; Jeffreys, 'Comnenian Background', 472.

stress the superiority of New Rome over Old Rome. Like the poems of Theodore Prodromos and Manganeios, the *Epitome*, too, seems to have been a product of this climate, which stimulated intellectuals to promote the Byzantine *Romanitas*.

## 5.3. Zonaras' approach to the Roman past

Zonaras' references to Rome as 'Elder Rome', a characterisation which implies the existence of a 'New Rome', and the references to Constantinople itself as 'New Rome' can be taken to reflect his attempt to stress the Byzantine continuity with the ancient Roman Empire.[491] His attempt to promote the image of Constantinople as 'New Rome' becomes even clearer when we consider the way he changes relevant extracts from his sources. The alterations he makes to the chronicle of Theophanes, for instance, are telling. As indicative examples, we can compare the following excerpts from the two texts. For reasons of convenience, the extracts are listed one after another.

**(1)** Theophanes:

For when Eusebios died, the people restored Paul to the throne of Constantinople, whereas the Arians appointed Makedonios, so that a civil war broke out then.

τοῦ γὰρ Εὐσεβίου θανόντος, ὁ λαὸς τὸν Παῦλον τῷ θρόνῳ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἀπεκατέστησεν, οἱ δὲ Ἀρειανοὶ τὸν Μακεδόνιον ἀντεχειροτόνησαν, ὡς ἐντεῦθεν ἐμφύλιον γενέσθαι πόλεμον.[492]

Zonaras:

When Eusebios died, Makedonios, who fought against the Holy Spirit, was put on the throne of New Rome by the Arians.

τοῦ δ' Εὐσεβίου θανόντος ὁ πνευματομάχος παρὰ τῶν Ἀρειανῶν εἰς τὸν τῆς νέας Ῥώμης θρόνον ἀνάγεται Μακεδόνιος…[493]

**(2)** Theophanes:

When Eudoxios died in that year, the Arians proposed Demophilos as a bishop…

[491] See, for example, *Epitome*, III, 19.5, 56.17, 119.9, 124.5, 221.4, 298.15.
[492] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 42.22-25.
[493] *Epitome*, III, 58.1-3.

Τούτῳ δὲ τῷ χρόνῳ Εὐδοξίου τελευτήσαντος Δημόφιλον Ἀρειανοὶ προεβάλοντο ἐπίσκοπον…[494]

Zonaras:

In that time, when Eudoxios, the patriarch of New Rome who had held unorthodox beliefs, died, Demophilos, who happened to be of the same beliefs as his predecessor, was elevated in his place.

Ἐπὶ τούτου τελευτήσαντος Εὐδοξίου τοῦ κακοδόξου τῆς νέας Ῥώμης ἀρχιερέως ἀντεισήχθη Δημόφιλος ὁμόδοξος τυγχάνων τῷ πρὸ αὐτοῦ·[495]

**(3)** Theophanes:

When things were in this way, Gratian the Augustus knew and, marching to Panonia for help, he proclaimed Theodosios Augustus, instead of Valens, and named him emperor and sent him to war against the Goths.

τούτων δὲ οὕτω διατεθέντων, γνοὺς Γρατιανὸς ὁ Αὔγουστος, ἐν τῇ Πανονίᾳ κατερχόμενος ὡς πρὸς βοήθειαν ἀντὶ Οὐάλεντος ἐνέδυσε Θεοδόσιον Αὔγουστον καὶ ἀνηγόρευσε βασιλέα καὶ ἀπέστειλεν εἰς τὸν κατὰ τῶν Γότθων πόλεμον.[496]

Zonaras:

And Gratian, being aware that he would not be able to manage such power by himself, he proclaimed Theodosios emperor of New Rome…

καὶ συνιδὼν ὡς οὐχ οἷός τ’ ἂν εἴη αὐτὸς μόνος τὴν τοσαύτην ἰθύνειν ἀρχήν, βασιλέα τῆς νέας Ῥώμης ἀναγορεύει τὸν Θεοδόσιον…[497]

As is apparent from these cases, Zonaras would sometimes replace the name of Constantinople, found in Theophanes’ text, with the phrase ‘New Rome’ (example 1). He would also insert the characterisation ‘New Rome’ into his account, even if the name of the capital did not appear in the corresponding segment of Theophanes (examples 2 and 3).[498] A particularly interesting point is that these amendments are made in connection with the Byzantine imperial throne or the patriarchal throne of Constantinople. The phrase ‘New Rome’ was part of the official, full title of the patriarch of Constantinople: ‘Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Oecumenical Patriarch’ (‘ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Νέας Ῥώμης καὶ

[494] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 58.18-19.
[495] *Epitome*, III, 74.8-10.
[496] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 65.28-66.2.
[497] *Epitome*, III, 84.9-11.
[498] See also Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 75.19-26 and *Epitome*, III, 95.1-3 for another comparative example.

οἰκουμενικὸς πατριάρχης').[499] In the first example, Theophanes uses an abbreviated form of the title saying simply 'the throne of Constantinople'. Zonaras, too, does not write the full title to refer to the throne of Constantinople in either of the first two examples; it is characteristic, though, that in both cases he prefers using the second, rather than the first, part of the official title: 'the throne of New Rome'. By making these amendments to the narrative of Theophanes, namely by replacing 'Constantinople' with 'New Rome' and by inserting 'New Rome' into his text, Zonaras is clearly trying to highlight the historical ties of the imperial office and the patriarchal See of Constantinople with the capital of the ancient Roman Empire, perhaps in the face of the Western rulers who claimed for themselves the title of the Roman Emperor and the papal claims to primacy over the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Noteworthy is the keen interest Zonaras maintains particularly in the Roman Republic and its institutions. This is manifest in the preface of the *Epitome*, where he declares that he will report 'what consulship was a long time ago, what dictatorship was, what the work of the censors was and what the term of office for each of these posts was' ('τίς μὲν ἡ ὑπατεία τὸ παλαιὸν ἦν, τίς δὲ ἡ δικτατωρία, τί δ' ἦν τὸ ἔργον τῶν τιμητῶν, καὶ πόσος ὥριστο χρόνος ἑκάστῃ τῶν ἀρχῶν τουτωνί').[500] Indeed, when his narrative reaches the period of the establishment of the Roman Republic, the author provides a thorough analysis of the republican institutions, describing the role

[499] The full title of the patriarch of Constantinople is often inscribed in the seals of particular patriarchs: see, for example, J. Nesbitt, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art, Volume 6: Emperors, Patriarchs of Constantinople, Addenda* (Washington, 2009), no 116.1 (the seal of Sergios II) and no 118.2 (the seal of John VIII Xiphilinos). Also, the full form of the title appears in the Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, a collection of documents dated from 1315 to 1402 which were preserved at the chancery of the Patriarchate of Constantinople: see, for instance, the titles of the patriarchs in *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel, Edition und Übersetzung der Urkunden aus den Jahren 1315-1331, vol. 1*, ed. by H. Hunger and O. Kresten (Vienna, 1981), document no 80 (the patriarch Isaiah), document no 109 and document no 148 (the patriarch John XII Glykys).

[500] *Epitome*, I, 13.1-3.

of dictators, consuls and censors.[501] In all probability, the material about the institutions of the Roman Republic derives from Cassius Dio, although the corresponding sections of Dio's work have not come down to us.

An important question to ask is why the chronicler dedicated a large part of his work to the Roman Republic. As has already been noted, although Republican Rome was an integral part of Roman history, most Byzantine chroniclers would discuss this period only very briefly. A notable exception seems to have been John of Antioch. So far as we can tell from the material collected by Constantine Porphyrogennetos in his *Excerpta de insidiis* and *Excerpta de virtutibus*, John's chronicle discussed Republican Rome extensively. Also, Psellos did not skip the entire Republican period in his *Historia Syntomos*. Zonaras, nevertheless, clearly marks a break from the Byzantine chronographic tradition, because he gives a more thorough and more detailed account of the Roman Republic than any other chronicler we know.[502]

Reaching the destruction of Carthage in 146 BC and the battle of Corinth in the same year, Zonaras regrets that he cannot continue with his account of the Late Roman Republic because he cannot find sources concerned with this period. As was noted in chapter 2, he did not have at his disposal the relevant books of Dio's history.[503] The chronicler says: 'Let no one accuse me that I omitted these things on account of contempt or laziness or indolence and that I left my composition somewhat incomplete. For it was not due to indolence that I overlooked the things that are missing. Nor did I willingly leave my work half-complete…' ('μή μέ τις αἰτιᾶτο ὡς ἢ καταφρονήσει ἢ ῥᾳθυμίᾳ ἢ ὄκνῳ ταῦτα παρελθόντα καὶ ἀτελὲς οἷον εἰακότα τὸ σύγγραμμα. οὐ γὰρ ῥᾳστώνῃ μοι τὰ λείποντα παρεώραται, οὐδ' ἡμιτελὲς ἑκὼν τὸ

[501] *Epitome*, II, 50-51, 69-72.
[502] Zonaras' extensive treatment of Republican Rome, his 'unique contribution to Byzantine chronicle-writing', has been underlined particularly by Macrides: Macrides and Magdalino, 'Fourth Kingdom', 126-31.
[503] See p. 39.

πόνημα καταλέλοιπα…').[504] The statements 'ἀτελὲς σύγγραμμα' and 'ἡμιτελὲς πόνημα' indicate the manner in which the author viewed his work without a full account of the Roman Republic; for Zonaras, the *Epitome* was clearly lacking an essential part of Roman history. Why is this?

Aside from the broader aim of the work, namely to give a compact account of important historical events,[505] the *Epitome* also had a much more specific purpose, one for which an analysis of Republican Rome was required: Zonaras aimed to demonstrate the development of the Roman political constitutions over time. A stimulus to the author, as a *megas droungarios* and a *protasekretis*, in investigating the forms of the Roman government might have come partly from his interest in jurisprudence.[506] Zonaras himself explicitly states this goal of his work in his preface, where he analyses in detail how Roman constitutions evolved.

> Since I recalled the history of the Romans and the history of Rome, I thought it was necessary to write about those and record where the Roman nation comes from, where it originates from and by whom the region of Italy was inhabited a long time ago. And whence Romulus, he who became the founder of Rome, was brought to light, and how Romus, his brother, was killed and later how Romulus, too, was gone. And how at first this city was ruled by a king and what kind of customs and laws Romans used. And how Tarquinius Superbus changed kingship to tyranny and was ousted from power, and how many and what kind of wars Rome suffered because of his deposition. And how the Roman state was transformed into an aristocracy and then into a republic, with consuls, dictators and tribunes being in charge of public affairs. […] and how later the Roman state became a monarchy. And that Gaius Julius Caesar was the first monarch, although not overtly…
>
> Ῥωμαίων δὲ καὶ τῆς Ῥώμης μνησθείσης τῆς ἱστορίας, ἀναγκαῖόν μοι ἐνομίσθη καὶ περὶ τούτων συγγράψασθαι, καὶ παραδοῦναι πόθεν τὸ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἔθνος κἀκ τίνος ἔσχηκε τὴν ἀρχήν, καὶ παρὰ τίνων ἡ τῆς Ἰταλίας χώρα πρώην κατῴκιστο· ὅθεν τε προήχθη Ῥωμύλος εἰς φῶς ὁ τῆς Ῥώμης γενόμενος οἰκιστής, καὶ ὅπως ἀνῃρέθη Ῥῶμος ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ, εἶτα κἀκεῖνος ἐγένετο ἀφανής·καὶ ὅπως πρῶτον ἡ πόλις αὕτη ἐβασιλεύθη, καὶ ἔθεσιν οἵοις καὶ νομίμοις ἐχρήσατο· καὶ ὡς εἰς τυραννίδα τὴν βασιλείαν ὁ Σούπερβος Ταρκύνιος μεταγαγὼν καθῃρέθη, καὶ ὅσους πολέμους καὶ οἵους ἡ Ῥώμη διὰ τὴν ἐκείνου καθαίρεσιν ἤνεγκε· καὶ ὡς εἰς ἀριστοκρατίαν, εἶτα καὶ δημοκρατίαν μετηνέχθη Ῥωμαίοις τὰ

[504] *Epitome*, II, 297.14-17.
[505] For a discussion of the broader purpose of the text, see pp. 59-60 of the thesis.
[506] See also Macrides and Magdalino, 'Fourth Kingdom', 131.

> πράγματα, ὑπάτων καὶ δικτατόρων, εἶτα καὶ δημάρχων τὴν τῶν κοινῶν ποιουμένων διοίκησιν· […] καὶ ὅπως ὕστερον ἐκ τούτων εἰς μοναρχίαν ἡ ἀρχὴ τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις μετέπεσε· καὶ ὡς πρῶτος ταύτης, εἰ καὶ μὴ καθαρῶς, ὁ Γάϊος Ἰούλιος Καῖσαρ μετεποιήσατο…[507]

According to Zonaras, it was necessary to write about the evolution of the Roman political system in his work. Therefore, he devotes a considerable part of his preface – around two pages of printed text – to the timeline of constitutional changes since the foundation of Rome. He also mentions the political figures that mark the changes from one form of government to the other (Romulus, Tarquinius Superbus and Julius Caesar). The emphasis he places on the constitutional history of the Roman Empire at the very beginning of his text indicates that it plays a central thematic role in his project.

The writer reiterates the aim of his work elsewhere. For example, when he concludes his account of Jewish history and is about to introduce Roman antiquities into his work, he says:

> Since I mentioned the history of Romans and recorded their invincible state, I thought it was absolutely necessary to tell and teach or remind those who read this work who the Romans are, […] and also how the Roman state, initially a kingship, was transformed into an aristocracy, namely a series of dictatorships and consulships, and hereafter turned into a republic and later became a monarchy again.
>
> Ῥωμαίων δὲ μνησθείσης τῆς ἱστορίας καὶ τούτοις κράτος ἀναθεμένης ἀήττητον, ἀναγκαῖον πάντως εἰπεῖν καὶ διδάξαι ἢ ἀναμνῆσαι τοὺς ἐντευξομένους τούτῳ δὴ τῷ συγγράμματι, τίνες τε οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι […] καὶ ὅπως (τὸ κράτος) βασιλευθὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς εἰς ἀριστοκρατίαν ἤτοι δικτατωρίας καὶ ὑπατείας μετέπεσε, καὶ εἰς δημοκρατίαν αὖθις μετήνεκτο, εἶτα εἰς μοναρχίαν ἐπανελήλυθεν.[508]

Opening the Roman section of the *Epitome*, the chronicler wishes to remind his audience about a prominent theme introduced in his proem, the development of the Roman polity. The statement ‘διδάξαι ἢ ἀναμνῆσαι τοὺς ἐντευξομένους’ illustrates that the author considers the transformation of Roman government to be a theme of a

[507] *Epitome*, I, 12.10-13.1, 6-8.
[508] *Epitome*, I, 562.1-4, 8-11.

didactic character; he believes that knowledge of Rome's constitutional history is beneficial to his audience. Later on, the scarcity of sources forces Zonaras to pass over the late Republican period, thus creating a gap in his presentation of Roman political history. For this reason, he sees fit to stress once more that he is interested in showing to his readers how the political system of Rome was transformed from a kingship into a republic and then into a monarchy.[509] An account of Rome's constitutional changes is also found in Zonaras' extensive treatment of the apocalyptic material of the biblical Book of Daniel.[510] Commenting on the seventh chapter of Daniel, the chronicler uses the term 'πολυειδὴς' ('of many kinds') to refer to the Roman state, explaining in this way that the Empire has seen various forms of government since its foundation.[511] Zonaras briefly summarises the evolution of the political system in Rome at the beginning of his account of the First Triumvirate as well.[512]

These observations allow for a better appreciation now of why Zonaras, unlike the majority of earlier chroniclers, wished to provide a detailed account of Republican Rome. The Republic was an essential part of the core project of his work: to make the gradual evolution of the Roman political constitutions known to his audience. Although the Republican system of government did not conform to the Byzantine political state of affairs, a monarchy centred on the key figure of the emperor, Zonaras regarded the Roman Republic as an important part of the development of the political system of his own time. For him, a republic, as a form of government, did not seem as incomprehensible as it might have seemed to other Byzantine chroniclers.[513]

---

[509] *Epitome*, II, 297.9-14.
[510] *Epitome*, I, 212.14-14.2, 227.3-9.
[511] *Epitome*, I, 227.3.
[512] *Epitome*, II, 298.8-13.
[513] Scott, 'Classical Tradition', 68; Jeffreys, 'Attitudes', 207.

It should be remembered that, when Zonaras was writing, a form of democratic government had been established for some time in the Italian maritime cities. One may assume that increased contacts with Westerners would have brought an awareness of this among the twelfth-century literati. References, albeit sparse, to the democratic character of a polity can be found in some twelfth-century authors.[514] Eustathios of Thessaloniki, for instance, claimed that Venice was the only state of his time that preserved a democratic form of government.[515]

Zonaras' political reflections in his analysis of Daniel strongly suggest that he had a precise overall picture of the practical reality of Roman politics. His exegesis of the second chapter of Daniel (Daniel 2) demonstrates how well-aware he was of the defects of certain forms of government.[516] Daniel 2 narrates Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a colossal figure, whose head was made of gold, shoulders and arms of silver, waist of brass, and legs of iron and clay. The sequence of materials represented the historical succession of four empires. In the Christian exegetical tradition, the four empires were commonly identified as the Babylonian, the Persian, the Greek under Alexander the Great, and the Roman. The fourth empire, the Roman Empire, was identified as the strongest of all, even though the foundation supporting to – represented by the legs made of iron mixed with clay – was weak. This interpretation of Daniel's prophecies had already been reflected in Josephus' *JA* in the first century

[514] Magdalino, 'Kaiserkritik', 333-35.
[515] Eustathios of Thessaloniki, *Exegesis*, 226.1-27.20.
[516] *Epitome*, I, 209-14. Apart from the *Epitome*, references to Daniel are also present in Malalas, the *Chronicon paschale*, George the Synkellos and George the Monk, from whom Kedrenos draws information about Daniel for his own work. However, with the exception of the *Chronicon paschale*, where we find a detailed paraphrase only of the second chapter of Daniel, none of these chronicles offers such an extensive account of Daniel's prophecies as the *Epitome*: G. Podskalsky, *Byzantinische Reichseschatologie: die Periodisierung der Weltgeschichte in der vier Grossreichen (Daniel 2 und 7) und dem tausendjährigen Friedensreichen* (Munich, 1972), 57-61. For aspects of the treatment of Daniel in Byzantium, see W. J. Van Bekkum, 'Four Kingdoms Will Rule: Echoes of Apocalypticism and Political Reality in Late Antiquity and Medieval Judaism', in *Endzeiten: Eschatologie in der monotheistischen Weltreligionen*, ed. by W. Brandes and F. Schmieder (New York, 2008), 101-18.

AD and is clearly seen in later commentaries on Daniel, such as those produced by Hippolytus of Rome, Origen and Theodoret of Cyrrhus.[517]

For his narrative of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's interpretation of it, Zonaras mainly follows Josephus,[518] from whom he takes the term 'statue'('ἀνδριὰς'), instead of 'image' ('εἰκὼν'), which we find in the biblical text, to denote the gigantic figure appearing in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. To identify the empires, he is likely to have taken material from Theodoret. The most important part of Zonaras' exegesis of Daniel 2 is the final section, which must have been original to the author. By making an extensive political digression, Zonaras presents the 'flaws' of certain political systems of Rome.[519] What stands out is particularly his presentation of Republican Rome and the negative opinion he expresses about the Roman people, 'the crowd' ('τὸ πλῆθος'). In the context of the Roman Republic, the iron represents the senate 'because of the firmness of judgement' ('διὰ τὸ τῆς γνώμης στερέμνιον'), whereas the clay represents the crowd, to which the writer attributes a series of negative traits: vulgarity, lowliness, changeability and weakness of mind. The author notes that the mob is easily misled and changes its mind, as can be seen throughout the history of the Empire. Discord, too, was among the major 'defects' of the republican system of government. The senate and the crowd would occasionally fall into dispute and revolts would occur as a result. From these observations, it can be inferred that Zonaras was ill-disposed towards the republican form of government. This was mainly because of the great power held by the masses, who were vulgar, and could be easily manipulated and led astray.

---

[517] For the Christian interpretations of Daniel, see the detailed analysis of J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Minneapolis, 1993), 112-17.
[518] *Epitome*, I, 209-12. Cf. Josephus, *JA*, II, 374-76 (Book 10, chapters 203-10). The characterisation of the figure as 'ἀνδριὰς' can be found in 375.9-10 in the text of Josephus.
[519] *Epitome*, I, 212-14.

According to the chronicler, moreover, when monarchy was established, Rome experienced periods of internal discord due to civil wars, such as those between Julius Caesar and Pompey, and between Augustus and Mark Antony. Referring to the reign of later emperors, the author says the Roman Empire was stronger in certain places, but weaker in others. He regrets that the Byzantium of his time had lost many of the territories which once belonged to the Empire. Zonaras' political interpretation of Daniel 2 is unique among Byzantine chroniclers, and indeed among the Byzantine authors we know.

That the chronicler had a good overall understanding of Roman politics is also indicated by his attempt to describe the mechanisms of constitutional change, particularly the manner in which the Roman state was transformed from a republic into a monarchy. In the Late Republican Period, according to Zonaras, 'the Roman polity was suffering, and Roman leaders verged on tyranny' ('ἐνόσει Ῥωμαίοις τὰ πράγματα, καὶ ἐπὶ τυραννίδα οἱ σφῶν ἀπέκλινον ἄρχοντες').[520] Elsewhere in his narrative he explains that Romans did not allow dictators to hold their office for more than six months, because they could easily be lured by power and seek to rule as monarchs. Zonaras believes that this is what happened with Caesar.[521]A crucial point in Roman political history was when Antony and Augustus rose to power; it was then that Romans were deprived of republic, although a monarchical form of government had not been officially established.[522] The 'genuine' Roman monarchy, according to Zonaras, was inaugurated when Augustus defeated his rival and gained absolute control of the Empire.

What makes the chronicler's account of this process particularly interesting is the language he uses. It is of great importance to him to make his readers understand

[520] *Epitome*, II, 298.16-299.1.
[521] *Epitome*, II, 51.10-14.
[522] *Epitome*, II, 391.19-23.

the subtle difference between ‘a monarchy in disguise’ and ‘a genuine monarchy’. His attention to correct vocabulary was stressed by Grigoriadis in his study of the *Epitome*’s linguistic aspects.[523] It is also evidenced by Zonaras’ attempts to find the appropriate terminology to render the forms of government at the times of Caesar and Augustus. As can be seen in the extract of the proem quoted above (in pp. 148-49), the author uses ‘μὴ καθαρῶς’, an adverbial phrase he invented himself, to indicate that Caesar was essentially ruling as a monarch, although the Republic had not yet been abolished. It was an idiosyncratic form of government, ‘a monarchy in disguise’. Later in his prologue, Zonaras provides the opposite term, which denotes ‘a genuine monarchy’, to denote the form of government under Augustus. In particular, he says that ‘in this manner Octavius returned to Rome with splendid triumphs, gained sole rule and transformed rulership of the Romans into a genuine monarchy’ (‘οὕτω μετ’ ἐπινικίων λαμπρῶν εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἐπανελθὼν ὁ Ὀκτάβιος τῆς αὐταρχίας ἀντεποιήσατο καὶ εἰς ἀκριβῆ μοναρχίαν τὴν τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονίαν μετήνεγκε’).[524] Unlike earlier, the terminology used in this excerpt is not original to the author. The phrase ‘ἀκριβὴς μοναρχία’ is taken directly from Dio’s history, where it is similarly employed for the state in the age of Augustus. When Zonaras’ account reaches the time of Augustus, he quotes almost verbatim the section of Dio’s passage in which this phrase appears.[525]

However, he occasionally tries to create his own political vocabulary. Let us look at how the two authors define the constitution in the time of Antony and Augustus.

Dio:

The Roman people were deprived of the republican form of government, but

[523] Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 79-80.
[524] *Epitome*, I, 14.1-4.
[525] *Epitome*, II, 408.13-17. Cf. Dio, *History*, II, 379 (Book 52.1).

were not led to a genuine monarchy. Antony and Caesar ruled the political affairs as equals […] After that, when Sextus had passed away, the Armenian king had been caught, those who had carried on a war against Augustus were at rest and the Persian enemy was not causing any trouble, they openly turned against each other and people really became slaves.

Ὁ δὲ δῆμος ὁ τῶν Ῥωμαίων τῆς μὲν δημοκρατίας ἀφῄρητο, οὐ μέντοι καὶ ἐς μοναρχίαν ἀκριβῆ ἀπεκέκριτο, ἀλλ᾽ ὅ τε Ἀντώνιος καὶ ὁ Καῖσαρ ἐξ ἴσου ἔτι τὰ πράγματα εἶχον, […] Μετὰ δὲ δὴ τοῦτο, ὡς ὅ τε Σέξτος ἀπωλώλει καὶ ὁ Ἀρμένιος ἐαλώκει τά τε προσπολεμήσαντα τῷ Καίσαρι ἡσύχαζε καὶ ὁ Πάρθος οὐδὲν παρεκίνει, καὶ ἐκεῖνοι φανερῶς ἐπ᾽ ἀλλήλους ἐτράποντο καὶ ὁ δῆμος ἀκριβῶς ἐδουλώθη.[526]

Zonaras:

The Romans were deprived of the republican form of government, but did not lapse to a manifest monarchy until Sextus passed away and the nations that had revolted were enslaved and the Persian enemy was not causing any trouble. For then Antony and Caesar openly turned against each other, and people really became slaves.

Οἱ μέντοι Ῥωμαῖοι τὴν μὲν δημοκρατίαν ἀφῄρηντο, οὐ μὴν καὶ εἰς φανερὰν μοναρχίαν κατώλισθον, ἕως ὅ τε Σέξτος ἀπώλετο καὶ τὰ ἐπαναστάντα ἔθνη δεδούλωτο καὶ ὁ Πάρθος οὐδὲν παρεκίνει. Τότε γὰρ φανερῶς ἐπ᾽ ἀλλήλους ὁ Ἀντώνιος καὶ ὁ Καῖσαρ ἐτράποντο, καὶ ὁ δῆμος ἀκριβῶς ἐδουλώθη.[527]

Dio tells us that, although the republican form of government was lost to the Roman people, the rule of Anthony and Augustus was not ‘a genuine monarchy’ (‘μοναρχία ἀκριβὴς’). In his paraphrase of Dio’s text, Zonaras coins his own term, ‘a manifest monarchy’ (‘φανερὰ μοναρχία’). Although Zonaras’ term does not precisely render Dio’s meaning, the chronicler seems to have understood the overall context of his source very well and might have used the adverb ‘φανερῶς’ found shortly after in Dio’s account to create his own terminology.

The chronicler’s emphasis on the concept of a ‘genuine monarchy’, the type of government under Augustus, served a practical purpose: to account for the discrepancy in the duration of Augustus’ reign between Eusebios of Caesarea’s *Church History*, the main source of Zonaras for the history of the Church, and other

[526] Dio, *History*, II, 324.9-11, 14-17 (Book 50.1).
[527] *Epitome*, II, 391.19-23.

historical works.[528] This consequently led to a discrepancy in the dating of a significant event which occurred in this period, namely the birth of Christ. As Zonaras points out, Eusebios, his main source for ecclesiastical affairs, writes that Augustus reigned for fifty-seven years in total, counting from the year that he took the reins of the Roman Empire along with Antony. He thus dates Christ's birth to the forty-second year of Augustus' monarchy. Other authors, however, believe that the reign of Augustus began with the Battle of Actium in 31 BC, when he defeated Antony, and lasted for forty-four years. Zonaras inclines to the second view and accepts that only the years after Actium should count as the period when Augustus 'truly reigned' ('ἀληθῶς ἐμονάρχησε').[529] The chronicler, therefore, concludes that the birth of Christ occurred 'in the twenty-ninth year of Caesar Augustus' genuine monarchy' ('ἐν γοῦν τῷ εἰκοστῷ ἐνάτῳ τῆς ἀκριβοῦς μοναρχίας τοῦ Καίσαρος Αὐγούστου').[530] Here, Zonaras not only tries to explain what appears to be a contradiction between *Church History* and other works, but also shows how crucial it is for authors to employ accurate terminology to avoid causing confusion among their readers. Furthermore, this discrepancy in the duration of Augustus' rule reflects an overall confusion among later writers about the gradual transition of the Roman state from a republic to a monarchy.

## Final remarks

These observations may lead to a series of conclusions about Zonaras' presentation of the Roman past in his chronicle. His prodigious interest in the Roman origins of Byzantium was a result of intellectual, cultural and historical processes taking place in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It can be seen as part of a broader upsurge of

[528] *Epitome*, II, 431.12-432.21.
[529] *Epitome*, II, 431.19.
[530] *Epitome*, II, 432.18-19.

interest in Roman antiquities during that period. This is exemplified by certain developments in the field of jurisprudence and the manner in which numerous contemporary authors used material drawn from Roman history in their literary compositions. Zonaras knew some of these, namely Xiphilinos' epitome of Dio, Psellos' *Chronography* and *Historia Syntomos*. It is likely therefore that such works prompted the chronicler to turn his attention to the Roman heritage of Byzantium. In addition, late eleventh- and twelfth-century Constantinople witnessed an influx of Latin-speaking peoples from the West. Frankish merchants, mercenaries and pilgrims would pass through or reside permanently in the Byzantine capital. The practical reality of the situation in the Constantinople of his time may have fuelled a renewed interest in Roman antiquities and stimulated Zonaras to emphasise the Roman antecedents of the Empire.

Unlike the majority of Byzantine chroniclers, Zonaras was keen on talking in detail about Republican Rome in order to fulfill his own authorial agenda. He sets out to demonstrate the evolution of the Roman government over time and aims to stress the institutional continuity between contemporary Byzantium and Rome. To recount the development of the Roman constitutions, the author would have to devote a part of his narrative to the Roman Republic as well. Although an awareness of continuity with the Roman polity is commonly reflected in Byzantine literature, with Xiphilinos' statement noted earlier being a precise rendering of it,[531] in Zonaras' case, Byzantine continuity with the Roman tradition is a theme wholly integrated into his project.

The chronicler presents the transition from the Roman Republic to the Principate as a gradual process, which involved: first a form of government that was a 'monarchy in disguise' during the time when Julius Caesar, and later when Augustus

[531] See p. 130.

and Antony were in charge, and then a type of government under Augustus which was a ‘genuine monarchy’. Zonaras is very careful in the language he uses to make these changes in the constitution of the Roman state clear to his readers and thus explain an important divergence in the dating of Christ’s birth between Eusebios and other historians.

# CHAPTER 6. INTELLECTUAL NETWORKS AND INTENDED READERS

## 6.1. The intellectual networks surrounding Zonaras

The proem of the *Epitome* conveys the image of a self-exiled author composing his work in isolation and seclusion. Opening his preface, Zonaras emphatically states that he has 'chosen to live all alone and condemn himself to an eternal exile' ('καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἑλόμενον ζῆν ἀειφυγίαν τε ἑαυτοῦ καταψηφισάμενον').[532] Although he presents his decision to withdraw from public life as a voluntary one, he laments that, confined to 'this edge of the world' ('παρὰ τῇ ἐσχατιᾷ ταύτῃ'), he does not have access to all the source material required for his writing.[533] The point that the author demonstrably wishes to impress on his audience is that the place in which he currently lives is extremely remote. This is repeated with greater vehemence when Zonaras excuses himself for being unable to find books covering the Late Roman Republic. There, he uses the marked adjective 'ὑπερόριος' (meaning 'living beyond the borders', 'being in exile') to highlight the spatial distance that separates him from Constantinople.[534] It is made clear that the 'ὅρια', the borders, are in this case those of the imperial capital in the very next phrase: '…because I [Zonaras] live in an islet away from the town' ('…πόρρω τοῦ ἄστεος ἐν νησῖδι ἐνδιαιτώμενος'). To display his erudition here, the chronicler uses the classicising word 'ἄστυ'. Also, the choice of 'ἄστυ', a term which means a town and its buildings, instead of 'πόλις', which denotes a social and political entity,[535] implies that the writer is far away from anything civilised and underlines his 'ἀπορία,' the limited resources available to him on his island. What emerges, in other words, from Zonaras' narrative is a sense of

[532] *Epitome*, I, 3.4-5.
[533] *Epitome*, I, 8.13.
[534] *Epitome*, II, 297.21-2.
[535] See, for example, one of the meanings offered by *LSJ* for the lemma 'ἄστυ': 'III. *town* in the material sense, opp. πόλις (*the civic body*)'.

regret for his absence from Constantinople. Within this context, his engagement with writing is understood as a remedy, or a consolation, to the state of indolence in which he found himself at the monastery ('σχολάζοντα', 'ῥᾳστώνῃ συζῶν').[536]

In fact, however, the place where the *Epitome* was written was by no means 'the edge of the world'. As was mentioned in the first chapter, Zonaras is known to have produced his chronicle at the monastery of the Theotokos Pantanassa on the island of St Glykeria.[537] This tiny island, located in the bay of Tuzla on the eastern shore of the Sea of Marmara, is only a few miles southeast of Constantinople.[538] The important questions to ask here are: does the image of Zonaras as an isolated retiree correspond to the reality? How did he manage to acquire the impressive variety of sources he exploited in the *Epitome*?

It is interesting that the earliest mention of the island of St Glykeria, found in the *Life of Niketas*, the abbot of the Medikion monastery, is in relation to exile.[539] Between 816 and 821, the saint was banished to the island by the emperor Leo V the Armenian and was reportedly put in prison by the chief of the monasteries there, a malicious man named Anthimos. The text does not give any additional information about the monastic community of the period.[540] The monastery dedicated to St Glykeria is known to have been founded by Ignatios, the patriarch of Constantinople, some time prior to his accession to the patriarchal throne in 847, but appears to have

---

[536] *Epitome*, I, 4.9, and 7.11-2 respectively. Let us note that the verb 'σχολάζω' used by the writer as regards his current state designates a change of circumstances. It means that someone was active in the past, but he no longer is. One of the meanings offered from the lemma 'σχολάζω' by *LSJ* is '*have* rest or *respite* from a thing, *cease* from doing'. Zonaras hints that he is idle right now, but was not so in the past, obviously when he was still in Constantinople.

[537] See pp. 13-14.

[538] For the topography of the area, see Mango, 'Twelfth-century Notices', 224.

[539] Theosteriktos, *Life of Niketas of Medikion*, *AASS*, April I, 254B-265F, at 31 (chapter 43). The text was written by a certain Theosteriktos, a monk at the Medikion monastery: A. Alexakis, 'A Florilegium in the Life of Nicetas of Medicion and a Letter of Theodore of Studios', *DOP*, 48 (1994), 179-97, at 193-94.

[540] For the history of monasticism on the island of St Glykeria, see R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1975), 56-57.

been abandoned soon afterwards.[541] It was rebuilt in the early twelfth century with the support of wealthy patrons and was rededicated to the Theotokos Pantanassa.[542] The rebuilding campaign of the monastery culminated in May 1142 with the reconsecration of its church.[543] Significantly, the Pantanassa monastery was among those whose properties were guaranteed by the chrysobull granted by the emperor Manuel I Komnenos in 1158.[544] This suggests that the second and third quarter of the twelfth century, roughly the period when Zonaras found himself at the Pantanassa, was a time of relative economic prosperity for its community.[545] It is apparent that the monastery was well known enough to attract patronage and that it had established ties with the imperial court. This last point is reinforced when one considers that a certain Joseph, the first known abbot of the monastery of Christ Pantokrator in Constantinople, the foundation built and endowed by the emperor John II Komnenos and his Hungarian-born wife Irene, was previously abbot of the Pantanassa.

The inference to draw from these considerations is that the island of St Glykeria and its monastery were by no means on the 'edge of the world'. This apparent distortion of reality has been explained by Magdalino in terms of 'the rhetoric of exile' employed by the chronicler.[546] Indeed, exile was one of the dominant themes in the literary production, both prose and poetry, of the twelfth

---

[541] *Vita Ignatii*, *PG*, 105, 487-574, at 496D.
[542] See Mango, 'Twelfth-century Notices', 221-222 (the scribal note found in the *Christ Church Wake graecus* 51).
[543] The precise date of the reconsecration is given in the *Christ Church Wake gr.* 51. There, we also find the names of the two patrons who undertook the rebuilding of the church: Gregory Taronites and Basil, both of whom were monks at the Pantanassa monastery: Mango, 'Twelfth-century Notices'. Basil is said to have collected rich donations for the rebuilding of the monastery.
[544] Manuel's chrysobull secures the properties of the monasteries located in Constantinople and its nearby regions, as well as those of the islands at the Sea of Marmara: *Jus Graecoromanum*, ed. by I. and P. Zepos (Athens, 1931; repr. Athens, 1962), I, 381-85. See also Angold, *Church and Society*, 87.
[545] Mango, too, deduces that the first half of the twelfth century was 'a period of considerable distinction' for the monastery of the Pantanassa: Mango, 'Twelfth-century Notices', 228. See also J. Nesbitt, N. Oikonomides and E. McGeer, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art* (Washington, 1996), III, 111-12 for a twelfth-century seal originating from the Pantanassa.
[546] Magdalino, 'Constantinople and the "Ἔξω Χῶραι"', 183-85; Magdalino, 'Outside World', 149.

century. In her analysis of a large corpus of epistles penned by exiled writers, Margaret Mullett has identified several motifs which characterised the discourse of exile; these include, for instance, poverty, contrast between an intellectual's current and previous circumstances in Constantinople, exile as a life sentence, lack of learning, and barbarism.[547] Thematic elements such as these can also be found in Zonaras' account. The motif of poverty, for example, underlies the author's complaints about the shortage of books in his monastery, something which contrasts with the range of works that would have been available to him in the capital. Additionally, he exploits vocabulary typical of exile-literature, namely 'ὑπερόριος' and 'ἐσχατιά'. The use by Zonaras of *topoi* and language reminiscent of the theme of exile shows that the chronicler shared the attitude frequently observed among literati of the late eleventh and the twelfth century, a period in which Constantinople becomes increasingly important: that confinement to any place outside of the city essentially constituted an expulsion from the intellectual and cultural life of the Empire. Zonaras, too, appears to feel the loss of Constantinople keenly. Whether he was indeed cut off from the intellectual circles of the capital remains to be seen.

In my view, the employment of thematic motifs and language strongly suggestive of the exile discourse was a deliberate choice made by Zonaras. I would argue that he uses these rhetorical devices not merely to account for the sources he did *not* manage to find, but rather to stress the impressive amount and variety of the material he *did* succeed in collecting. By relating the purported difficulties he had to overcome in order to bring his project to fruition, Zonaras seeks to highlight, or even overstate, in the eyes of his readers the extent of his achievement. The theme of exile provides him with the narrative framework to advertise his work not only as a product

[547] M. Mullett, 'Originality and Byzantine Letter-writing: The Case of Exile', in *Originality in Byzantine Literature, Art and Music*, ed. by A. Littlewood (Oxford, 1996), 39-58.

of his literary and scholarly activity, but also as a result of hard labour. One may suggest, in addition, that the treatment of *topoi* of exile writing, particularly Zonaras' description of how he copes in a tiny island where there is a shortage of sources, was a means by which the author appealed to members of his circle outside the Pantanassa monastery to continue to support him by sending him books to read and exploit for the works he was writing.[548]

Zonaras must have developed ties with members of the cultural Constantinopolitan elite prior to his withdrawal from public affairs, perhaps by attending the *theatra*, the social gatherings at which literary compositions were read aloud.[549] The audience of a *theatron* would include aristocrats, court officials, high-ranking civil servants, ecclesiastical men, and teachers of grammar and rhetoric. As a learned man who worked in the higher echelons of civil administration, Zonaras, too, probably attended such gatherings, which would offer a good opportunity to be introduced to and befriend fellow intellectuals. Moreover, because of his profession as a judge and a high-ranking bureaucrat, he would have been part of a wider nexus of social relationships. His acquaintances would certainly include juridical functionaries and bureaucrats.

Significant in this context is that Zonaras was apparently held in high esteem among administrators of justice of his time even after his retirement to St Glykeria. This is attested primarily by Zonaras' exegesis of the canons, a work he produced

[548] A secondary aspect that that may also underlie the *topos* of exile in Zonaras' narrative is that of exile in a monastic sense. In monastic contexts, we often read that monks are 'ξένοι', strangers, to the earthly kingdom. They feel 'exiled' from the true fatherland, paradise. However, Zonaras' claim that he lives in a place far away from the capital and that, because of this, lacks some sources required for his work indicate that the chronicler primarily connects the theme of exile to the image of the exiled intellectual.

[549] For a thorough analysis of the *theatra* under the Komnenian emperors, see Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 339-56; M. Mullett, 'Aristocracy and Patronage in the Literary Circles of Comnenian Constantinople', in *The Byzantine Aristocracy*, ed. by M. Angold (Edinburgh, 1984), 173-201.

during his stay at the Pantanassa and completed in or after 1161.[550] The commentary on canon law must have been intended as an interpretative manual that would be used not only by the monastic community of the Pantanassa, but also by the ecclesiastical courts and the Patriarchate.[551] On the assumption that it was written after Zonaras' tonsure, the treatise *On the prohibition of the marriage of two cousins related in the sixth degree to the same woman* may also point to the fact that the author kept in touch with ecclesiastical circles while being at his monastery.[552] Taken in conjunction, these ideas strongly suggest that, although no longer practising the law and despite being absent from the capital, Zonaras was still being consulted about legal matters. By extension, this indicates that the author must have retained his connections with some of his former colleagues.

It must have been thanks to the contacts he maintained with his acquaintances outside the Pantanassa monastery that the chronicler managed to acquire the large amount of source material he used in the *Epitome*. For a society in which manuscripts were extremely valuable objects, the exchange of books between intellectuals was central to the literary and intellectual life.[553] To access a book they did not have at their disposal, educated Byzantines would probably borrow it from someone who belonged to the same circle of literati or literary salon. Subsequently, they would memorise or copy parts of it. Zonaras would probably write letters from his monastery to acquaintances requesting that they send or lend him manuscripts.

Strong proof of his correspondence with learned men outside St Glykeria can be found in the preface to his commentary on the fifty-nine *Gnomic Tetrastichs* of

---

[550] For the dating on the text, see pp. 17-19 of the thesis.
[551] Pieler, too, indicates that Zonaras wrote 'as a monk for his church': Pieler, 'Johannes Zonaras als Kanonist', 603. For the uses of the exegetical works on the canons, see Magdalino, 'Constantinople and the "Ἔξω Χῶραι"', 181.
[552] For more information on this text, see pp. 24-25 of the thesis.
[553] For an overview of the history of books in Byzantium, see J. Waring, 'Byzantine Book Culture', in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. by James, 275-88.

Gregory of Nazianzos. In the analysis of the text in the first chapter, I pointed out that the author composed this work during his old age to send to a friend, probably a monk, via whom he had previously received a similar kind of exegesis to Gregory's work.[554] As we read:

> If it is not possible for me to attain in every matter the intellect of the great father and theologian, so that in this way my work will be beyond criticism, complete, and worthy of the greatness of that father, my interpretation may well be better than the one included in the book you sent me, because of its extreme brevity. Why should I say anything more? So, I think that my writing will not be considered by you to be worthless in comparison.
>
> εἰ δὲ καὶ μὴ τῆς ἐφ' ἑκάστῳ διανοίας τοῦ μεγαλόνου καὶ θεηλόγου πατρὸς ἐφικέσθαι μοι γένηται, ἵν' οὕτως εἴη μοι τὸ ἔργον ἀνεπίληπτον καὶ ἄρτιον, καὶ τῆς ἐκείνου μεγαλονοίας ἐπάξιον, ἀλλά γε τελεωτέρα εἴη ἂν ἡ ἐξήγησις τῆς ἐγκειμένης τῇ βίβλῳ, τῇ παρὰ σοῦ κομισθείσῃ μοι, διὰ τὸ ἐκείνης στενὸν κομιδῇ. εἰ γάρ τι πλέον ἐρῶ, καὶ οὕτω δὲ οὐκ ἀχρεῖον οἶμαί σοι τὸ πόνημα λογισθήσεται κατὰ σύγκρισιν.[555]

Noteworthy is that here a two-way exchange of books is recorded, which implies that Zonaras was part of a group of literati from whom he received source material, and to whom he was able to send his own works. We do not learn whether it was Zonaras who asked his friend to despatch a manuscript containing an interpretation of Gregory's work, or whether the sender of the book did this on his own initiative. Making a literary critique of the book he received, the author disapproves of its extremely succinct style and invites his addressee to compare his own text with it.

The nature of the work may give us a hint of the professional status of Zonaras' addressee. As was explained in chapter one, exegetical works of religious poems were designed by teachers specifically for didactic purposes.[556] It can be suggested, therefore, that the scholar for whom the writer composed his commentary was a teacher. This person asked his friend Zonaras, who might also have worked as a teacher in his youth, to assess the exegesis of Gregory's *Tetrastichs* that he used in his

[554] See pp. 32-33.
[555] *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὰ τετράστιχα*, f. 3, line 23-f. 3$^{v}$, line 6.
[556] See pp. 14-15.

lessons. Not satisfied with the work he read, Zonaras wrote and sent his own commentary to his friend in order to assist him with his classes. He would not have been the only author who produced an exegesis for the use of another teacher. Zonaras' near-contemporary Eustathios of Thessaloniki also did this, penning a commentary on the Pentecostal canon attributed to John of Damascus. Silvia Ronchey has demonstrated that Eustathios composed this text after abandoning his post at the Patriarchal School and being appointed bishop of Thessaloniki for several years.[557] Although no longer teaching, Eustathios was requested to produce this commentary by a colleague, perhaps a clergyman and teacher at the Patriarchal School, who wished to use it for his own lectures.

The suggestion that Zonaras was in touch with highly educated men outside his monastery may be corroborated by his exegesis of the Resurrectional Canons in the *Octoechos*, a work he composed when he was a monk.[558] Zonaras himself informs us that he produced the commentary at the instigation of a bishop of Thessaloniki, most likely Niketas 'of Maroneia'. The fact that the chronicler was engaged in such scholarly discussion proves that he had established links with ecclesiastical men high up in the hierarchy of the Church. Such individuals, who had much better access to reading material, might have helped Zonaras to acquire sources essential for his enquiry and also to publicise his work to audiences outside the Pantanassa monastery.

I believe a point which needs to be emphasised here is that the group of literati to which Zonaras belonged apparently included not only laymen but also members of the clergy and monks. It is clear that a small number of monks had some or a good knowledge of Greek and were able to read the writings of the Church Fathers and

[557] Ronchey, 'An Introduction to Eustathios'.
[558] For more information on this text, see pp. 31-32 of the thesis.

other ecclesiastical authors. This could have been the case, for example, with abbots of monasteries and monks who were in charge of monastic libraries.

It is safe to deduce that Zonaras must have acquired sources essential for the composition of his chronicle through his correspondence with a group of people outside his monastery. Enlightening in this respect is the extract from the *Epitome* in which the chronicler explains why he will not relate the events of the late Republican period.

> …and this [the fact that he will skip the Roman Republic due to the lack of books] although I repeatedly searched for them, but I did not find them and I do not know whether they may not be preserved, with time having destroyed them, or whether they to whom I made this request did not search very diligently, myself being in exile and living away from the town on an island.
>
> …καὶ ταῦτα πολλάκις ζητήσαντί μοι ταύτας, μὴ εὑρηκότι δ' ὅμως, οὐκ οἶδα εἴθ' ὅτι μὴ σώζοιντο, τοῦ χρόνου διεφθαρκότος αὐτάς, εἴθ' ὅτι μὴ φροντιστικώτερον τὴν τούτων ἴσως ζήτησιν ἐποιήσαντο οἷς αὐτὴν ἀνεθέμην, αὐτὸς ὑπερόριος ὢν καὶ πόρρω τοῦ ἄστεος ἐν νησῖδι ἐνδιαιτώμενος.[559]

This short passage makes it obvious that, when composing his historical account, Zonaras did not have all the books he needed readily available to him and had to ask third parties to search for them. He uses the pronoun 'αὐτὸς' to underline that *he* lives away from the capital, while *they*, the people to whom he appeals, are present in Constantinople and, therefore, have much better access to books. The adverb 'πολλάκις' indicates that his correspondence with them was regular, especially if his request for a book was not granted, as is the case here. The writer appears to be mildly dissatisfied with those to whom he made his plea, expressing his doubt about whether they had diligently looked for the material he had requested.

Despite Zonaras' claims that he lived secluded in St Glykeria, we should also allow for the possibility that he was actually able to leave his monastery from time to time and collect manuscripts himself. In his commentary on the canons, Zonaras

[559] *Epitome*, II, 297.18-21.

alludes to his presence in the capital for Manuel Komnenos' wedding to Maria of Antioch in 1161. He explicitly states that he had witnessed the patriarch and several bishops bless an emperor who proceeded to a second marriage.[560] An imperial wedding was certainly a special occasion, but there is no reason to believe that Zonaras would not have the chance to make the short journey to Constantinople once in a while. Likewise, other members of the Pantanassa would have been able to visit the city and perhaps look for books for Zonaras' use. The same probably holds true for people who wished to take the opposite route – either secular men or monks who resided in the capital and wanted to visit St Glykeria. When acquaintances of Zonaras found themselves at the Pantanassa, they might have offered him material to use for his works.

Joseph, the abbot of the Pantanassa and subsequently of the Pantokrator monastery, may have played a key role in the creation of an intellectual network connecting the Pantanassa to the capital. He must have assumed his post in the Pantokrator sometime prior to October 1136, when the *typikon* of the monastery was drawn up.[561] If Zonaras had retired to the Pantanassa before that date, he would have been acquainted with Joseph, as they would have been members of the same monastic community. His career as abbot of the Pantokrator shows Joseph to have been a man engaged with cultural and artistic activities who had connections with prominent members of the Constantinopolitan literary circles. We know of his correspondence with the well-known scholar John Tzetzes, whom he would lavish with gifts.[562] Also,

[560] The verb that is employed by the writer here is 'ὤφθη': Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, III, 80.
[561] The *typikon* of the Pantokrator has been edited by Paul Gautier: *Le typikon du Christ Sauver Pantocrator*; information about Joseph can be found at 21-23. See also Mango, 'Twelfth-century Notices', 227. Magdalino has postulated that the *typikon* of the Pantanassa might have been used as a prototype for that of the Pantokrator: P. Magdalino, 'The Foundation of the Pantokrator in Its Urban Setting', in *The Pantokrator Monastery*, ed. by Kotzabassi, 33-56, at 40.
[562] John Tzetzes, *Epistulae*, ed. by P. Leone (Leipzig, 1972), 72-73 (letter 51), 74-75 (letters 53 and 54), 99-100 (letter 70), 117-18 (letter 79).

he famously commissioned and sent as a gift to the Pantanassa monastery the impressive *Sinaiticus gr.* 339, an illuminated manuscript containing the liturgical *Homilies* of Gregory of Nazianzos, most likely to mark the reconsecration of its church.[563] His donation to the Pantanassa is a clear indication that he maintained strong links with the spiritual home to which he formerly belonged; it can be explained in terms of the Pantokrator's overall policy of trying to bring a broader group of monastic foundations under its influence.[564] Within this framework, it seems highly plausible that Joseph continued to be in contact with some of his well-read acquaintances at the Pantanassa, such as Zonaras, and to send books to them from the capital. They, in turn, would be able to provide him with their own writings.

So far this analysis has shown that Zonaras was sent books from his circle of acquaintances outside the island of St Glykeria. In addition, he might have (a) searched for manuscripts himself when he travelled to the capital, (b) requested monks who left the Pantanassa for a while to find manuscripts for him, and (c) received source material from visitors to the monastery.

Another issue to address is the amount and type of material that could have been available to him in the library of his monastery. Earlier in this chapter, Zonaras' complaints about the limited resources available to him at the Pantanassa were interpreted as a *topos* of exile literature. Still, the dissatisfaction expressed by the author could reflect reality too. For the composition of a work like the *Epitome* which contains various and disparate material, the holdings of the Pantanassa library would

[563] Mango, 'Twelfth-century Notices', 227. A scribal entry found in f. 3$^{r}$ of the manuscript reveals that its patron was 'the abbot of the imperial monastery of Pantokrator, the monk Joseph Hagioglykerites': Peers, *Sacred Shock*, 155 (note 6); H. Evans and W. Wixon, *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261* (New York, 1997), 109-10.

[564] The Pantanassa monastery is not listed among those which were officially under the jurisdiction of the abbot of the Pantokrator: *Le typikon du Christ Sauver Pantocrator*, 69.685-73.727. As noted by Peers though, the Pantokrator had numerous holdings on the Asiatic shore across Constantinople, and the monastery on the island of St Glykeria could fit within this scheme: *Le typikon du Christ Sauver Pantocrator*, 115.1446-125.1576; Peers, *Sacred Shock*, 63-64.

certainly have been inadequate. According to Nigel Wilson, typical monastic libraries would not possess a large number of manuscripts, usually under a hundred.[565] Of these, the overwhelming majority would be biblical, liturgical and patristic manuscripts. Michael Angold adds that monastic collections would occasionally include a rather wide array of religious works, such as theological treatises, commentaries and saints' lives.[566] As we learn from the *typika* of monastic complexes built by elite individuals, their founders would sometimes provide their establishments with considerable land and property, collections of manuscripts included. Gregory Pakourianos, for example, a prominent general of the late eleventh and early twelfth century, offered thirty books to his foundation, the Theotokos Petritzonitissa in modern Bulgaria. All of them were of a religious character. The monastery of the Theotokos Kosmosoteira, established in *c*. 1152, also owned a number of books bequeathed by its founder, the *sebastokrator* Isaac Komnenos. Among these was an illuminated manuscript containing works of a secular nature that Isaac had compiled himself. The *Diataxis* of Michael Attaleiates lists about seventy-nine books donated to the monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon that he had built in Constantinople.[567] Apart from the Bible, liturgical and hagiographical books, this list includes a copy of Josephus' *JW*, a *seismobrontologion*, the Hellenistic novel *Leukippe and Klitophon* of Achilles Tatius and a 'chronicle composed by the founder'. Although these are examples of well-funded monasteries, they indicate, nonetheless, that, aside from the 'standard' religious works, certain monastic collections would hold other types of texts as well. It seems probable to me that, as an abbot of the Pantanassa monastery, Joseph would have fostered the acquisition or

[565] Wilson, 'The Libraries', 63, 71.
[566] Angold, *Church and Society*, 352-53.
[567] Krallis, *Politics*, 45-52.

copying of manuscripts.[568] The expensive, luxurious manuscript of Gregory's *Homilies* he donated to the Pantanassa later on must have been intended as a treasured object to add to an already existing collection of books.

It is evident that, from the sources he used in his *Epitome*, Zonaras would have certainly found the Bible in his monastery. Apart from this, though, it is hard to tell how many, if any, of the works that underpin the chronicle were among the holdings of the library. Its collection would perhaps include a copy of Theodoret's *Commentary on Daniel*, although this is merely conjecture. There is no doubt that the secular texts used by Zonaras in his chronicle, such as those of Plutarch, Xenophon, Herodotus and the Byzantine historians, were not available to him in the Pantanassa library. The writer certainly accessed them in another way.

A final possibility to consider is that he himself may have possessed a number of books which he brought along with him when he retired to St Glykeria.[569] Indeed, it is very likely that a knowledgeable man who occupied an important office in the bureaucratic administration would have owned a series of manuscripts. Yet, how many of them Zonaras took with him to his monastery must remain once again a matter of conjecture.

## 6.2. The intended audience of the *Epitome*

To explore the intended readership of the *Epitome*, it is essential to begin with an issue which has not been addressed so far: the traditional division of historical

[568] It appears to have been a usual practice for abbots of newly-established monasteries to seek books in order to set up a library. For instance, the twelfth-century saint Bartholome of Simeri, who established the monastery of St Maria del Patir in Rossano, is said to have appealed to the emperor Alexios Komnenos for liturgical books for the monastery: 'Il *bios* di San Bartolomeo da Simeri (BHG 235)', ed. by C. Zaccagni, in *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, 33 (1996), 205-28, at 221-22. See also S. Burkhardt and T. Foerster, *Norman Tradition and Transcultural Heritage: Exchange of Cultures in the 'Norman' Peripheries of Medieval Europe* (Farnham, 2013), 110; Wilson, 'The Libraries', 56.
[569] This suggestion is put forward by Treadgold as well: Treadgold, *Historians*, 393.

accounts into histories and chronicles. Broadly speaking, works which relate events roughly contemporary with their writers, use Attic Greek, contain sophisticated and learned allusions to ancient Greek authors, and emulate the patterns of classical Greek historiographies are considered histories. For instance, the historical narratives of Agathias, Theophylaktos Simokattes, Anna Komnene and George Pachymeres clearly fall into this category. Accounts which cover the period from the Creation of the world to the author's own day, have an annalistic format, are written in a non-classicising language and rely heavily on earlier material are termed chronicles. Typical examples are the *Chronicon Paschale* and the works of John Malalas, George Synkellos and Theophanes.

However, this sharp dichotomy between histories and chronicles, which implies a distinction between high and low literature, is no longer accepted.[570] The Byzantines themselves did not strictly distinguish chronicles from histories,[571] nor did they consider chronicles works of a lesser value or as compositions of uneducated authors. Hence, one frequently finds chronicles and histories included in a single manuscript.[572] Prime examples are the codices which transmit the *Epitome* along with the histories of Niketas Choniates, George Akropolites or Nikephoros Gregoras. The last chapter will offer more information about such manuscripts.[573] The boundaries between the two genres became even looser when chroniclers abandoned the year-by-year account and, from the tenth century onwards, stopped using a relatively low linguistic register.[574] Beck highlighted that most chroniclers and historians came from

[570] The monumental article arguing against the strict distinction of chronicles from histories is that of Hans-Georg Beck, 'Zur byzantinischen "Mönschchronik"'. See also B. Croke, 'Uncovering Byzantium's Historiographical Audience', in *History As Literature*, ed. by Macrides, 25-54; Scott, 'Byzantine Chronicles'; Holmes, *Basil II*, 172-76; Markopoulos, *Η θέση του χρονογράφου*.
[571] Scott, 'Byzantine Chronicles'.
[572] Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 105.
[573] See pp. 206-07.
[574] For this observation, see M. Hinterberger, 'Δημώδης και λόγια λογοτεχνία: διαχωριστικές γραμμές και συνδετικοί κρίκοι', in *Pour une « nouvelle » histoire de la littérature byzantine*, ed. by P. Odorico

similar social and professional backgrounds; they were high-ranking bureaucrats or Church officials, and were members of the imperial court.[575] The audience of the chroniclers was not an illiterate mass, according to Beck. Rather, it was much the same audience for whom historians were writing. It has been shown, in addition, that authors of chronicles often sought to fulfil their own agenda just like historians.[576]

I share the view of Roger Scott that the classification of Byzantine historical narratives into histories and chronicles is one of convenience.[577] As long as we remember that this dichotomy is by no means a strict or clear one, distinguishing chronicles from histories can be useful for scholars. By terming an account as a 'chronicle', one can immediately understand that it extends from the biblical Creation to the author's own time (or that it continues a work which commences with the Creation) and that it is not written in pure Attic Greek. Adopting this perspective, I myself prefer to characterise the *Epitome* as a chronicle.

It should be stressed that, like many Byzantine writers, Zonaras does not distinguish chronicles from histories. In fact, he applies the term 'history' generically to all kinds of narratives of the past. Introducing the contents of his text, he states that readers 'will gain knowledge of many and most indispensable histories' ('πολλῶν τε καὶ τούτων ἀναγκαιοτάτων ἱστοριῶν ἐν εἰδήσει γενήσονται') from the *Epitome*, including the Octateuch, the Books of Kings, the Books of Chronicles and the works of Flavius Josephus.[578] He conceives of his own work as a 'short history' ('σύντομον ἱστορίαν').[579] In practice, though, he consciously rejects both the typical themes and

---

and P. Agapitos (Paris, 2002), 153-63. The different linguistic registers of Byzantine texts have been studied in a well-known article by Ihor Sevchenko, who has distinguished three linguistic levels: high, middle and low: I. Sevchenko, 'Levels of Style in Byzantine Prose', *JÖB*, 31 (1981), 289-312.

[575] Beck, 'Zur byzantinischen "Mönschchronik"'.

[576] Scott, 'Byzantine Chronicles'.

[577] Ibid.

[578] *Epitome*, I, 9.10-14.

[579] *Epitome*, I, 7.5-6.

the linguistic conventions of classical historiography. He disapproves of exhaustive accounts of strategies and military operations as well as the inclusion of dialogues or long speeches by demagogues, generals and emperors,[580] all traditional thematic elements of archaising histories.[581] He considers complex, highbrow Greek to be unsuitable for the recording of history, expressing a negative opinion of authors who use extremely sophisticated constructions and compose their works to display their mastery in writing.[582] Comments along these lines are made by other chroniclers as well. George the Monk, for instance, criticises earlier authors of historical accounts for employing such rhetorically ornate language that their narratives are incomprehensible to the many.[583] He says that, by contrast, his own style is characterised by 'utmost clarity' ('σαφηνείας ἐναργεστάτης').[584] Likewise, John Skylitzes sings the praises of George Synkellos and Theophanes for employing a 'simple, unaffected language' ('λόγῳ μὲν ἀφελεῖ καὶ ἀπεριέργῳ').[585] It is apparent that Zonaras sees himself as belonging to and following the tradition of earlier chroniclers, who chose to write in simpler, less inflated language.

A few more words need to be said about the linguistic register of chronicles. Authors of chronicles do not make heavy use of erudite, puristic vocabulary. Neither are they fond of highly rhetorical, sophisticated grammatical and syntactical forms of classical Greek. As a rule, they write in middlebrow Greek, combining features of the antiquated language of the learned tradition with idioms from the Bible or the spoken Greek of the time. Certainly, though, there is a wide range of stylistic levels within the confines of middlebrow Greek. To make a comparison, Zonaras writes towards the

[580] *Epitome*, I, 4.12-19, 5.1-3, 5.18-6.6.
[581] For a discussion of this point, see p. 58 of the thesis.
[582] *Epitome*, I, 4.19-5.2.
[583] George the Monk, *Chronicon*, I, 1.1-10.
[584] George the Monk, *Chronicon*, I, 2.7-9.
[585] Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 3.6-11 (proem). For the translation, see *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis*, 1.

top end of the register, whereas his near-contemporary Michael Glykas uses classicising language in moderation, mixing to a greater extent learned elements with ones approximating the speech of the people. What is significant is that the choice of chroniclers to compose accounts in a middle style was deliberate and served a particular purpose, namely so that they could be better understood by their audiences.[586] By avoiding the difficult vocabulary and constructions of Attic Greek, chroniclers aimed to make their narratives accessible not only to a small group of highly learned individuals, but also to a greater number of relatively educated readers.

The language of Zonaras is influenced by the language of the works that underpin his chronicle. The author himself states that he tends to draw on the phraseology of his source material and that, even when he alters the text of his sources, he tries to remain faithful to their style.[587] The syntax in the *Epitome* can be quite complex, with long periods containing a series of participles.[588] The vocabulary is elegant, but not extremely refined or recondite.[589] Words typical of Attic vocabulary sometimes make their appearance, such as 'ὁμευνέτιδας' ('wives'),[590] 'πρυτανεῖον' ('vault'),[591] 'ξύμπασα' ('entire'),[592] and 'ἄνακτι' ('to the emperor').[593] We occasionally find nouns or pronouns in dual number, such as 'ἀμφοῖν τοῖς ὁμαίμοσιν' ('to both brothers') and 'ἀδελφὼ' ('two brothers').[594] Also, Zonaras relatively often uses verbal forms of the pluperfect, a tense which had long become

[586] Erich Trapp has identified three reasons why a writer may use language of a lower register: poor classical education, to improve comprehension of the text by its audience, and stylistic choice: E. Trapp, 'Learned and Vernacular Literature in Byzantium', *DOP*, 47 (1993), 115-29.
[587] *Epitome*, I, 8.23-9.7.
[588] Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 84.
[589] For Zonaras' language and vocabulary in general, see Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 53-85.
[590] *Epitome*, III, 730.22.
[591] *Epitome*, III, 733.1.
[592] *Epitome*, III, 735.6.
[593] *Epitome*, III, 738.24.
[594] *Epitome*, III, 731.19-732.1.

obsolete, instead of forms of the aorist.[595] This was a means through which he attempted to elevate his writing style and thus display his classical learning. Overall, Zonaras writes in a 'mildly' archaising language, with elements of high style present, but not prevalent in his text. The choice of register is evidently 'strategic' and relates to the chronicler's wish to become understood by a relatively wider audience.

Interestingly, there exists evidence that readers of Zonaras responded positively to his preference for a middle style. In a treatise preserved in the thirteenth-century *Par. gr.* 1715, the earliest manuscript of the *Epitome*, the owner of the codex writes the following: 'Since (ideally) clear style is the characteristic of historians and of those who do not make an untimely demonstration of their strength in eloquence, he [Zonaras] cared for clarity in as much as this was demanded of him by his narrative' ('ἐπειδὴ τὸ σαφὲς τοῖς ἱστορικοῖς ἀνεῖται καὶ μὴ ἐπίδειξιν ἄκαιρον τῆς ἐν λόγοις δυνάμεως ποιουμένοις, τοσοῦτον πεφρόντικεν ὅσον ὁ λόγος ἀπήτει τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ διηγήσεως').[596] This reader believes that the stylistic level of the chronicle is perfectly suited to a historical account, since Zonaras seeks to attain clarity, rather than exhibit his rhetorical prowess.

The observations on the linguistic register of the *Epitome* may offer a first clue as to the profile of Zonaras' intended audience. The chronicle was evidently addressed to cultivated readers, who would be able to understand Zonaras' elevated prose. These would be individuals who had followed a secondary education and had

---

[595] Martin Hinterberger has investigated how often and in what ways Zonaras, among other authors, makes use of grammatical forms of the pluperfect: Hinterberger, 'Die Sprache', particularly at 115-16. The preference for pluperfect forms instead of aorist forms is a typical feature of highbrow Greek. Their interchangeable use attests to a significant development in the meaning and use of these tenses in Medieval Greek, namely that the functions of the pluperfect were taken over by the aorist. A similar development is noted in the meaning and use of the perfect tense as well: M. Hinterberger, 'The Synthetic Perfect in Byzantine Literature', in *The Language of Byzantine Learned Literature*, ed. by M. Hinterberger (Turnhout, 2014), 176-204; Hinterberger,, 'Die Sprache', 113-15; R. Browning, *Medieval and Modern Greek*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1983), 30, 64.

[596] *Commentary in the Par. gr. 1715*, 568.38-41. For the translation of the segment, see Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 114.

good knowledge of grammar and rhetoric.[597] They would be familiar with polished pieces of writing, and were acquainted to some extent with the vocabulary of ancient Greek literature. This was largely the audience of the *theatra*, namely scholars, teachers and officers high up in the hierarchy of the state and the Church.

The references we find in the narrative to the chronicler's sources provide further testimony to the level of literacy of the anticipated readers of the *Epitome*. Zonaras envisaged an audience able to appreciate his use of prestigious Christian and pagan authors. Citing by name several writers on whom he based his account, such as Flavius Josephus, Cassius Dio, Plutarch, Herodotus and Xenophon, Zonaras manifestly expected his readers to be acquainted with their compositions. He encourages those keen on exploring a certain subject more closely to search for particular classical works. Readers who wish to delve into Roman history are advised to read the writings of Dio and Polybius, and those who want information about Cyrus the Great the Herodotean *Histories*.[598] Of note in the second case is that Zonaras indicates to his audience the exact part of Herodotus' work in which the story of Cyrus is recounted, namely *Clio*, the first book of the *Histories*. Equally exact are the references to his sources in other instances. One reads, for example, that Josephus mentions the name of the Babylonian king Belshazzar in the tenth book of the *Antiquities*, and that he records the birth of Christ in the eighteenth.[599] Here, the author offers direct references to his external sources in case his addressees wished to read the relevant passages for themselves. In other words, he assumes that his addressees would be interested in and able to access such material. Evidence of this

[597] An overview of the Byzantine educational system and earlier bibliography on the topic can be found in A. Markopoulos, 'Teachers and Textbooks in Byzantium: Ninth to Eleventh Centuries, in *Networks of Learning: Perspectives on Scholars in Byzantine East and Latin West*, ed. by S. Steckel, N. Gaul and M. Grünbart (Münster, 2014), 3-15; A. Markopoulos, 'Education', in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. by R. Cormack, J. Haldon and E. Jeffreys (Oxford, 2008), 785-95.
[598] *Epitome*, I, 227.15-16 and 303.8-11 respectively.
[599] *Epitome*, I, 296.1-4 and 479.1-3 respectively

kind attests once again to the social standing of Zonaras' intended readers. They were individuals who had the means to order the reproduction of manuscripts, were able to borrow books from a third party, and attended the *theatra* where many of the texts cited were read aloud.

Internal indications, furthermore, suggest that Zonaras had a predominantly Constantinopolitan audience in mind. As was demonstrated in the second chapter, the outline of the *Epitome*'s contents in the proem makes it clear that Constantinople will be the main subject of the text's Byzantine section.[600] The writer underlines that the focus of his attention will be on the secular and ecclesiastical authorities of the capital, namely emperors and patriarchs. This emphasis on the environment of the imperial capital would appeal to readers who, like Zonaras himself, approached things from a metropolitan point of view and exhibited considerably less interest in the affairs of the provinces of the Empire.[601]

Also, an interesting question to pose is whether the original audience of the chronicle comprised churchmen and monks. As we saw earlier in the analysis of Zonaras' exegesis on Gregory's *Gnomic Tetrastichs* and his exegesis on the Resurrectional Canons in the *Octoechos*, the author was acquainted and corresponded with monks and members of the Church who had a good level of literacy and studied the works of the Fathers.[602] Certainly, most monks would not be able to read a text written in a mildly antiquated, literary language. Without a doubt, though, another work of Zonaras, the *Speech against those people who believe that a natural emission of sperm is a pollution*, was intended to be read by a group of literate monks. Providing information about this short text in chapter one, I noted that Zonaras

[600] See pp. 43-45.
[601] For the emphasis placed by twelfth-century literati on Constantinople and their disparaging attitude towards the inhabitants of the provinces, see Magdalino, 'Outside World'; K. Galatariotou, 'Travel and Perception in Byzantium', *DOP*, 47 (1993), 221-41.
[602] See pp. 164-66.

condemns the belief of some conservative monastic circles that monks who have wet dreams during the night become polluted.[603] What is significant is that, to reinforce his thesis, he recalls the wisdom of several well-known Church Fathers, quoting from the works of Paul, Dionysius of Alexandria, Timothy of Alexandria, Athanasius of Alexandria, and Basil the Great. Interestingly, one finds echoes of pagan authors too. Zonaras makes a brief mention of the *Laws* of Plato and paraphrases an erotic story from the Plutarchean *Demetrius*. This 'highly rhetorical' essay is evidently directed at a small group of educated monks who knew (or at least knew of) the writings of the authors cited.[604] This audience would surely have been able to read the *Epitome* too. Particularly appealing to clergymen and monks might have been the material on the history of the Church, as well as the early parts of the chronicle, where the chronicler combines information from the Old Testament and Josephus' *JA*.

Much like many chroniclers and historians, Zonaras produced his writing with the intention that it be read, not only by his contemporaries, but by later audiences too. This emerges from the manner in which he alludes to the reception of the text. His purpose in sketching a meticulous portrait of Alexios Komnenos is to inform later generations of the emperor's character.[605] Two synonyms make their appearance here to underline that Zonaras has the future recipients of his work in mind: 'οἱ μετέπειτα' and 'οἱ ὀψίγονοι'. This forward-looking scope of the chronicle also underlies, for example, Zonaras' intention to literally 'hand over (to writing)' ('παραδοῦναι') the history of the Roman nation, and, consequently, to leave it to posterity.[606]

The language employed by Zonaras to refer to the addressees of his composition also needs a word of comment. So far in this discussion, I have used the

[603] See pp. 25-26.
[604] According to Fögen, Zonaras composed 'fourteen highly rhetorical pages': Fögen, 'Nocturnal Pollution', 267.
[605] *Epitome*, III, 765.5-6.
[606] *Epitome*, I, 12.3.

generic terms ‘audience’ and ‘readers’ to designate the group to which the chronicler directed his work. The vocabulary employed by the author himself, though, is significant, because it may give us insight into how Zonaras envisaged his work being received.[607] When talking about the addressees of his account, Zonaras makes use of the following expressions: ‘οἱ ἐντευχόμενοι τῇ ἱστορίᾳ’, ‘οἱ ἐντευχόμενοι τῷ συγγράμματι’, ‘οἱ ἐπιόντες τὸ σύγγραμμα’, and ‘οἱ ἀναγιγνώσκοντες τὸ σύγγραμμα’.[608] These are technical terms which denote the readers of a book.[609] The chronicler anticipated the reception of the *Epitome* by an audience of private readers. He would also expect that his work would be read aloud before an audience of listeners in the *theatra*. As will be shown in the last chapter, the chronicle very soon became known to the literary circles of the capital and was used by authors who were near-contemporaries of Zonaras, namely Constantine Manasses and Michael Glykas.[610] The public reading of the text must have played a key role in its quick transmission. Zonaras’ acquaintances to whom he sent drafts of his chronicle would recite parts of the text to their own circle of friends. Likewise, the writer himself, when he occasionally left St Glykeria, could have attended the *theatra* and presented drafts of his work. Understandably, such a long composition as the *Epitome* would have to be read aloud in sections. It is worth adding that the owner of the *Par. gr.* 1715 makes the following remark in his treatise about Zonaras: ‘Indeed he cared for elegance and sweetness of diction in order not to overwhelm his listeners with a speech which would otherwise have been extremely harsh, dissonant and somewhat

[607] For some observations on the performance of Byzantine texts, see P. Marciniak, ‘The Byzantine Performative Turn’, in *Within the Circle of Ancient Ideas and Virtues*, ed. by K. Twardowska et al. (Krakow, 2014), 423-30; E. Bourbouhakis, ‘Rhetoric and Performance in Byzantium’, in *The Byzantine World*, ed. by P. Stephenson (London, 2010), 175-87; Toth, ‘Rhetorical Theatron’, 441-44; A. Stone, ‘Aurality in the Panegyrics of Eustathios of Thessaloniki’, in *Theatron*, ed. by Grünbart, 419-28; Pr. Marciniak, ‘Byzantine Theatron – A Place of Performance?’, in *Theatron*, ed. by Grünbart, 277-85.
[608] *Epitome*, I, 8.11-2, 9.9-10, 7.6-7and II, 298.6 respectively.
[609] See, for example, the third meaning of the lemma ‘ἐντυγχάνω’ in the *LSJ*: ‘of books, meet with; hence, read’.
[610] See pp. 183-92 of the thesis.

inflexible' ('[ἐδέησε] κάλλους δὲ καὶ γλυκύτητος ὅσον ἔμελλε μὴ διακορεῖς τοὺς ἀκούοντας διαθεῖναι τῷ πάνυ τραχεῖ καὶ δυσήχῳ τῆς ἑρμηνείας καὶ οἷον σκληρῷ').[611] Praising Zonaras' pleasant language, the writer of the treatise essentially confirms that the text was orally delivered before a listening audience during the thirteenth century. The final chapter includes a thorough investigation of the treatise contained in the *Par. gr.* 1715.[612]

## Final remarks

To sum up, this chapter attempted to examine the cultural and social system to which Zonaras belonged and, following these observations, to uncover an aspect of the *Epitome* which had not been considered by previous scholarship, namely its anticipated readership. Despite the fact that Zonaras makes heavy use of motifs and language typical of exile literature, evidence collected from the *Epitome* and other works of his oeuvre may prove that the writer was by no means a secluded retiree at the Pantanassa monastery. He was clearly part of a network of intellectuals who provided him with reading material and to whom he distributed his own pieces as well. One may surmise that his circle of friends consisted of those with whom he had become acquainted when he was still a layman: educated individuals who attended the *theatra*, and persons of the same profession as him, namely lawyers and bureaucrats. Following his departure from Constantinople, he seems to have kept in touch with them by correspondence. A small number of monks and churchmen who had some knowledge of the writings of the Church Fathers may be added to this circle.

This group also constituted the audience for which Zonaras was originally writing. He consciously opted to use middlebrow, mildly archaising Greek, aiming at

[611] *Commentary in the Par. gr. 1715*, 568-69. For the translation of the segment, see Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 114.
[612] See pp. 221-29.

address his chronicle not only to a small number of very erudite scholars, but also to a more numerous group of relatively learned readers. Such readers would be able to acknowledge and appreciate the chronicler's references to well-known Christian and pagan authors. Also, Zonaras had a Constantinopolitan audience in mind which, just like him, connected the history of Byzantium with that of its capital city and was therefore primarily interested in reading about events and individuals that marked the history of Constantinople.

# CHAPTER 7. READERS' RESPONSES AND THE RECEPTION OF THE *EPITOME*

The previous chapter concluded with the argument that the *Epitome* was intended to be read by a relatively cultivated audience. The present chapter focuses on the recipients of the *Epitome* themselves, and explores how they viewed, responded to and made use of Zonaras' chronicle. It is divided into four sections. The first examines the different ways in which writers who were approximate contemporaries to Zonaras, and also later writers, employed his text. Next comes an analysis of the unparalleled number of manuscripts in which the *Epitome* or shorter sections of it survive. The third part of this chapter deals with scribal practices and marginalia that can be found in a select group of codices, and the final section dwells on two significant texts, one written in prose and one in verse, which both comment on the contents and style of the *Epitome*. Taking into account all the evidence, I conclude by outlining the reasons why the chronicle of Zonaras was widely read among Byzantine readers.

## 7.1. Immediate and later reception of the chronicle by Byzantine authors

We may begin this discussion by exploring the immediate reception of the *Epitome* by members of the Constantinopolitan literary circles. By 'immediate', I mean the reception of the work by its audience until roughly the 1170s, namely about thirty years after its 'publication'. There are two testimonies which can give us an idea of how approximate contemporaries of Zonaras approached and exploited the *Epitome*. These are the chronicles of Constantine Manasses and Michael Glykas.

It is hard to pinpoint exactly when Manasses lived and composed his *Chronike Synopsis* (henceforth: *CS*), a chronicle of 6,620 fifteen-syllable verses which begins with the biblical Creation and continues up to the reign of Nikephoros Botaneiates.[613] The only evidence we have for the date when the *CS* was written comes from the work itself. First, an epigram preceding the text reveals that the author dedicated his chronicle to a prominent literary patroness of the twelfth century, the *sebastokratorissa* Irene, sister-in-law of the emperor Manuel I Komnenos.[614] Irene's date of death, approximately 1152/3, is the *terminus ante quem* of the work. Secondly, a few laudatory lines addressed to 'the greatest emperor' Manuel demonstrate conclusively that the text was completed after his rise to the imperial throne in 1143.[615] The *CS*, therefore, can be dated to between 1143 and 1152.

The chronicle of Zonaras was one of the major sources employed by Manasses, even though he never mentions the name of his predecessor. This is not surprising considering that, as a rule, Manasses avoids acknowledging his sources. The fact that the author makes use of a work which had only recently come out may suggest that Zonaras' *Epitome* must have made an impression on him, or, as Treadgold supposes, on his patroness.[616] Treadgold assumes that Irene might have read Zonaras' account and commissioned Manasses to write a more succinct universal chronicle. It is striking, but not altogether unexpected, that a text which was replete with remarks that were highly critical of the first Komnenian emperor would circulate through the networks surrounding the *sebastokratorissa*, whose relationship with

[613] For information on the text, see Odysseas Lampsidis' extensive preface in his edition of Manasses' chronicle: Manasses, *Breviarium Chronicum*, I, xi-clix. Generally for Manasses, see Treadgold, *Historians*, 399-403; Macrides and Magdalino, 'Fourth Kingdom', 123-26; O. Lampsidis, 'Zur Biographie von Konstantinos Manasses und zu seiner *Chronike Synopsis*', *B*, 58 (1988), 97-111.
[614] For information about the *sebastokratorissa* Irene, see E. Jeffreys, 'The Sevastokratorissa Eirene as Patron', in *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. by L. Theis et al. (Cologne, 2014), 177-94; James of Kokkinobaphos (Jacob the Monk), *Epistulae*, ed. by E. and M. Jeffreys (Turnhout, 2009), xiv-xv, xxiv-xxxii; E. and M. Jeffreys, 'Who was Eirene the Sevastokratorissa?', *B*, 64 (1994), 40-68.
[615] Manasses, *Breviarium Chronicum*, I, 139.2506-12.
[616] Treadgold, *Historians*, 399.

Manuel was extremely tense in the last decade of her life. Following the death of her husband, the *sebastokrator* Andronikos Komnenos in 1142, Irene fell out of favour with the emperor, which led to her imprisonment and banishment from the capital. Despite the antipathy his benefactor had towards Manuel, Manasses was cautious lest he himself fell into disgrace among court circles and therefore spoke in positive terms about Manuel.[617] Omitting Zonaras' harsh remarks about the Komnenian system of government, he professes that the reason why he terminated his history with the deposition of Botaneiates is that the achievements of the Komnenoi were too glorious to be put into words.[618]

The *Epitome* was a very useful compendium for Manasses. Unlike Zonaras, who gradually developed the project of a world chronicle on the basis of the source material he managed to acquire, Manasses had a large store of material readily available to him, and one which covered the entire period he was going to relate in his writing. He consults Zonaras for his presentation of the biblical, the Roman and the Byzantine past, and traces of the *Epitome* are found from the start of the *CS*. More often than not, though, Zonaras' chronicle is not the principal source used by Manasses, who tends to use the *Epitome* in parallel with the text or texts on which he primarily bases his narrative.[619]

---

[617] We know, for instance, of an encomiastic *ekphrasis* composed by Manasses for Manuel: I. Nilsson, 'Constantine Manasses, Odysseus, and the Cyclops. On Byzantine Appreciation of Pagan Art in the Twelfth Century', *Byzantinoslavica*, 69 (2011), 123-136, at 125. As Magdalino observes, ambitious writers of the time struggled to strike a balance between their obedience to their primary patron and their loyalty to the emperor, particularly in cases when the relationship of the patron himself with the emperor was turbulent. Manasses and the court poet Manganeios Prodromos are two characteristic examples of authors whose loyalties lie both with the *sebastokratorissa* Irene and Manuel Komnenos: Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 351-52.

[618] Manasses, *Breviarium Chronicum*, I, 358.6609-20.

[619] In the *index locorum* of his edition of the *CS*, Lampsidis tabulates the numerous passages of the *Epitome* which Manasses consulted: Manasses, *Breviarium Chronicum*, II, 164-72. The sources of the text are discussed by Lampsidis in the introduction of his edition: Manasses, *Breviarium Chronicum*, I, lii-liv. Selected studies focusing on Manasses' sources are: A. Rhoby, 'Quellenforschung am Beispiel der Chronik des Konstantinos Manasses', in *Textual Transmission in Byzantium: Between Textual Criticism and Quellenforschung*, ed. by J. Signes Codoñer and I. Pérez Martín (Turnhout, 2014), 391-415; Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί*, 551-53; E. Kiapidou, 'Ο λογοτέχνης Κωνσταντίνος Μανασσής

A first observation to make about Manasses' method of work is that, when drawing on the vocabulary of his fellow chronicler, he tries to fit Zonaras' phrasing into the rhythmic structure of his verses. I offer Manasses' brief account of the legendary rape of Lucretia by Sextus Tarquinius as a case in point. To recount the history of the early Roman Empire, Manasses mainly follows the *Roman Antiquities* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, but, reaching the story of Lucretia, he gives precedence to the *Epitome*. This is what Dionysius writes in his text: 'Sextus attempted to corrupt this woman, because she was the most beautiful and prudent of all Roman women' ('ταύτην τὴν γυναῖκα καλλίστην οὖσαν τῶν ἐν Ῥώμῃ γυναικῶν καὶ σωφρονεστάτην ἐπεχείρησεν ὁ Σέξτος διαφθεῖραι').[620] The corresponding extract in the *Epitome* is as follows:

> Lucretia was daughter of Lucretius Spurius, a senator, and wife of Tarquinius Collatinus, a prominent man. She was renowned for her beauty and prudence. Sextus, the son of Tarquinius sought to dishonour this woman…
>
> ἡ δὲ Λουκριτία θυγάτηρ μὲν ἦν Λουκριτίου Σπουρίου, ἀνδρὸς τῶν τῆς συγκλήτου ἑνός, γαμετὴ δὲ Κολλατίνου Ταρκυνίου τῶν ἐπιφανῶν, ἐπί τε κάλλει καὶ σωφροσύνῃ τυγχάνουσα περιβόητος. ταύτην Σέξτος ὁ τοῦ Ταρκυνίου υἱὸς αἰσχῦναι σπούδασμα ἔθετο…[621]

In the chronicle of Manasses, we read that: 'Since the child of Tarquinius committed a crime / and dishonoured the most prudent Lucretia, / wife of Collatinus, a most noble man…' ('ἐπεὶ δὲ παρηνόμησεν ὁ παῖς τοῦ Ταρκυνίου / καὶ Λουκρητίαν ᾔσχυνε τὴν σωφρονικωτάτην, / τὴν Κολλατίνου γαμετὴν ἀνδρὸς εὐγενεστάτου…').[622] The segment of the *Epitome* 'ταύτην Σέξτος ὁ τοῦ Ταρκυνίου υἱὸς αἰσχῦναι σπούδασμα ἔθετο' provides Manasses the inspiration for verses 1,685-86 of his chronicle. He replaces the two-syllable word 'υἱὸς' with the one-syllable word 'παῖς' to form the

---

συγγράφει Σύνοψη Χρονική. Οι πηγές του για την εξιστόρηση της πρωτοβυζαντινής περιόδου', in *Realia*, ed. by Kotzabassi and Mavromatis, 57-66.

[620] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Antiquitates Romanae quae supersunt*, ed. by C. Jacoby (Leipzig, 1885; repr. Stuttgart, 1967), II, 108.8-10 (Book 4, chapter 64).

[621] *Epitome*, II, 41.5-9.

[622] Manasses, *Breviarium Chronicum*, I, 91.1685-87.

second hemistich of the fifteen-syllable verse, which should consist of seven syllables. He prefers to employ a form of the verb 'αἰσχύνω', present in Zonaras' narrative, instead of a form of 'διαφθείρω', which is used by Dionysius. In verse 1,687 he takes the phrase 'γαμετὴ δὲ Κολλατίνου' almost verbatim from Zonaras' text, as he can easily adapt it to form the first eight-syllable hemistich of the political verse.

A second point to notice is that Zonaras' overall writing style was clearly too rigid for Manasses' taste. The author of the *CS* certainly wished to relate the history of Christianity and the Roman nation, but was equally, or even more, concerned with composing a flowery narrative and recounting good stories as a means to please and entertain his audience.[623] As a rule, therefore, he selected short pieces of information from the *Epitome* and tried to enrich the text of his source with impressive literary motifs, such as fanciful metaphors and compound adjectives that he often coined himself. Let us consider, for instance, how Manasses rewrites and expands the following sentence in which Zonaras talks about the library near the Chalkoprateia church in Constantinople. Zonaras writes: 'There was an imperial building in the so-called basilica very close to the Chalkoprateia, where many books of both secular and nobler, divine wisdom were found' ('οἶκος ἦν ἐν τῇ καλουμένῃ Βασιλικῇ ἔγγιστα τῶν Χαλκοπρατίων βασίλειος, ἐν ᾧ καὶ βίβλοι τῆς τε θύραθεν σοφίας καὶ τῆς

[623] The most prominent example of such a story is that of the Trojan War, to which he dedicates more than 360 verses: Manasses, *Breviarium Chronicum*, I, 63.1108-81.1470. Ingela Nilsson has thoroughly studied the literary qualities of Manasses' chronicle in a series of papers. For an examination of the literary qualities of Manasses' chronicle, see I. Nilsson and E. Nyström, 'To Compose, Read, and Use a Byzantine Text: Aspects of the Chronicle of Constantine Manasses', *BMGS*, 33 (2009), 42-60; I. Nilsson, 'Discovering Literariness in the Past: Literature vs. History in the *Synopsis Chronike* of Konstantinos Manasses', in *L'écriture de la mémoire*, ed. by Odorico et al., 15-31; D. Reinsch, 'Historia ancilla litterarum? Zum literarischen Geschmack in der Komnenenzeit: Das Beispiel der Σύνοψις Χρονική des Konstantinos Manasses', in *L'écriture de la mémoire*, ed. by Odorico et al., 81-94; I. Nilsson, 'Narrating Images in Byzantine Literature: The Ekphrasis of Konstantinos Manasses'. *JÖB*, 55 (2005), 121-46.

εὐγενεστέρας καὶ θειοτέρας πολλαὶ ἐναπέκειντο').[624] In Manasses' chronicle, we read that:

> Close to the courtyard of Saint Sophia,
> an illustrious building was erected by the old emperors,
> one could say a pretty garden of book-bearing trees,
> a grove beautifully planted with all kinds of wisdom.
>
> Τοῦ τεμενίσματος ἐγγὺς τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ Σοφίας
> οἶκος λαμπρὸς δεδόμητο τοῖς πάλαι βασιλεῦσι,
> κῆπος, ἂν εἴποι τις, ἁβρὸς βιβλιοφόρων δένδρων,
> ἄλσος ἀγλαοφύτευτον παντοδαπῆς σοφίας·[625]

As can be seen in these extracts, Manasses composes his verses by using Zonaras' language as his primary material ('οἶκος…βασίλειος' > 'οἶκος…τοῖς πάλαι βασιλεῦσι', 'ἔγγιστα > ἐγγὺς', 'σοφίας'), but modifies the austere narrative of his source to suit his own style. He therefore comes up with two well-turned similes, likening the library to a garden of 'book-bearing trees' and 'a grove, beautifully planted with all kinds of wisdom'. He also makes use of two striking adjectives, 'βιβλιοφόρων' and 'ἀγλαοφύτευτον'. The adjective 'ἀγλαοφύτευτον' was invented by Manasses himself and is a *hapax legomenon* in Greek literature, as a search in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* database shows. Although he makes use of Zonaras' text, in other words, Manasses seeks to produce a chronicle with higher literary pretensions than his predecessor's.

Like the *CS*, the chronicle of Glykas is very difficult to date.[626] The author was active during the reign of Manuel Komnenos. A former imperial secretary, he fell out of favour with the emperor, was blinded and imprisoned in 1159.[627] It is generally agreed that the chronicle was penned some time after Glykas' release from

[624] *Epitome*, III, 259.18-9-260.1-2.
[625] Manasses, *Breviarium Chronicum*, I, 228.4191-94.
[626] For general information on Glykas, see Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί*, 585-624; W. Adler, 'Did the Biblical Patriarchs Practice Astrology? Michael Glykas and Manuel Komnenos I on Seth and Abraham', in *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, ed. by P. Magdalino and M. Mavroudi (Geneva, 2006), 245-63 (for Glykas' intense interest in astrology); Macrides and Magdalino, 'Fourth Kingdom', 131-36.
[627] O. Kresten, 'Zum Sturz des Theodoros Styppeiotes', *JÖB*, 27 (1978), 49-103, at 66-77.

incarceration in *c*. 1164-1165.[628] The text extends to the death of Alexios Komnenos in 1118 and is divided by the writer into four sections: (a) the Creation, (b) Jewish history, (c) Roman history, and (d) Byzantine history. Two of the most notable features of the work are the attention Glykas pays to the biblical and Jewish past, as well as the avid interest he exhibits in the natural world.[629]

The writer relies on the *Epitome* mainly to supplement the works of George the Monk, John Skylitzes and *Skylitzes Continuatus*.[630] He makes no use at all of Zonaras' extensive account of the early Roman Empire and Republican Rome, since, following George the Monk, he starts the Roman section of his work with Julius Caesar.[631] He takes more material from the *Epitome* to record the history of Byzantium, particularly the events between the reign of Theophilos and the reign of Basil I,[632] as well as those during the age of Alexios Komnenos. The part of the chronicle dedicated to Alexios is the only one that depends solely on the *Epitome*.[633] On the whole, Glykas remains very close to the content and the wording of Zonaras. Although he greatly abridges the narrative of his source, he includes in his text pieces of information which present Alexios in a negative light. We read, for instance, that he would reduce the wealth of those belonging to the senatorial class, that he would come up with unjust ways to collect taxes, and that he had given the rulership of the Empire over to his mother. Like Zonaras, Glykas, too, appears displeased with the

---

[628] According to Treadgold, the chronicle was presumably composed around 1170: Treadgold, *Historians*, 406.
[629] Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 381.
[630] The sources that were employed by Glykas for the early parts of his chronicle have been examined by Soultana Mauromati-Katsougiannopoulou in her book *Η χρονογραφία του Μιχαήλ Γλύκα και οι πηγές της: περίοδος 100 π.Χ.-118 μ.Χ.* (Thessaloniki, 1984).
[631] Glykas, *Annales*, 379. Cf. George the Monk, *Chronicon*, I, 293.8.
[632] Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί*, 598.
[633] Glykas' narrative of Alexios is found in *Annales*, 618-25. Karpozilos discusses this part of the text in *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί*, 616-24.

Komnenian style of government and, therefore, does not hesitate to repeat some of Zonaras' critical remarks about the first emperor of the Komnenoi.[634]

It is worth mentioning that Glykas cites Zonaras by name four times in the course of his narrative. He tells us, for example, of the two different etymologies given by George the Monk and Zonaras for the word 'palace' ('παλάτιον').[635] The former explains that the term derives from 'Πάλας', the name of a Persian eparch in Italy who built a magnificent house there.[636] The latter associates the word with the Palatine hill, where, according to tradition, the shepherd Faustulus found Romulus and where later Julius Caesar established his residence.[637] Glykas repeats Zonaras' text almost verbatim, which indicates that he must have had access to a manuscript of the *Epitome*. Also, the writer remarks that the accounts of Skylitzes and Zonaras do not agree with each other on the identity of Leo VI's real father, with Zonaras arguing that Leo was actually the son of Michael III.[638] Although the *Epitome* had been 'published' only a little time before, Glykas apparently expected the recipients of his work to be familiar with Zonaras and his chronicle, just as he expected them to know the work of Josephus and the older chronicles of George the Monk and John Skylitzes, which he repeatedly names as his sources, too.[639]

This observation leads us to include in this discussion the references we find to Zonaras' commentary on the holy canons in another work by Glykas, namely his

---

[634] This, however, does not mean that he did not maintain his ties with members of the extended imperial family and the Constantinopolitan court. Indicative of this is a letter included in Glykas' *Theological Chapters*, an epistolary collection with which I deal immediately afterwards, and is addressed to Theodora, a niece and mistress of Manuel Komnenos. Glykas writes a letter to console Theodora, who had killed a woman out of envy. He brings up as examples past emperors who had been implicated in murders: Glykas, *Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας*, II, 118-27.
[635] Glykas, *Annales*, 266.4-12.
[636] George the Monk, *Chronicon*, I, 21.2-6.
[637] *Epitome*, II, 411.12-17.
[638] Glykas, *Annales*, 551.16-552.4. Cf. *Epitome*, III, 414.16-415.5. Glykas further cites Zonaras in *Annales*, 530.16-531.2 and 546.7-10.
[639] See, for example, Glykas, *Annales*, 8.15-6, 198.1, 227.22, 238.4-5 (for Josephus); 221.7, 229.19-230.2, 243.1-4, 294.14-15 (for George the Monk); 531.20-21, 545.6-7, 547.12-13, 593.9-10 (for Skylitzes).

*Theological Chapters*, a collection of ninety-five essays that interpret biblical passages or analyse canonical problems.[640] The majority of these are written in the form of letters and are intended as replies to questions posed to the author by various individuals. Drawing his attention to the identity of Glykas' correspondents, Magdalino has observed that a great many of them were monks and that only very few were laymen who held a high position in society.[641] Scholars tend to believe that these essays were produced after 1165, although it is difficult to determine whether their composition predates that of the chronicle.[642] Glykas quotes Zonaras' hermeneutical work on the canons in letter no 90, which is addressed to a monk called Ioannikios the Grammarian.[643] The epistle focuses on an extract from Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians which concerns a man who had an affair with his step mother.[644] Paul urges the Corinthians to 'hand this kind of man over to the devil to destroy his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus' ('παραδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ').[645] Glykas disagrees with those who interpret Paul's words to 'hand this man over to the devil' as meaning excommunication from the body of the Church.[646] Zonaras was the theologian who, as we read in the very first

[640] For information about the text, see E. Kiapidou, 'Chapters, Epistolary Essays and Epistles. The Case of Michael Glykas' Collection of Ninety-five Texts in the Twelfth-century', *Parekbolai*, 3 (2013), 45-64; Kiapidou, 'Epistolography'; Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 370-77.
[641] Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 372-76.
[642] See Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 382 (note 233), who argues that the *Theological Chapters* might have been compiled prior to the chronicle. It has also been suggested that the questions Glykas was asked to answer might have later inspired him to write a world history: Macrides and Magdalino, 'Fourth Kingdom', 131. Karpozilos, on the other hand, is sceptical about this and leans towards the possibility that the chronicle may have provided some material for the *Theological Chapters*: Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί*, 601-03. Eirini Kiapidou underlines that, sometime after the original composition of the essays, Glykas must have edited and compiled them into a single corpus: Kiapidou, 'Epistolography', 181.
[643] Glykas, *Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας*, II, 405-09. There appears to have been a frequent correspondence between Glykas and the monk Ioannikios, as five essays contained in the *Theological Chapters* are addressed to Ioannikios: Kiapidou, 'Epistolography', 180 (note 49).
[644] 1 Corinthians 5.1-5.
[645] 1 Corinthians 5.5.
[646] Glykas, *Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας*, II, 405.3-7.

lines of the letter, interpreted Paul's extract in this way. Glykas continues by listing a series of arguments which indicate that Zonaras' opinion was incorrect. According to Glykas, Zonaras did not carefully consider the evidence found in the writings of other theologians, particularly Basil the Great, and was not particularly precise in the language he used.[647] The entire letter is essentially a rebuttal of Zonaras. Although Glykas disagrees with Zonaras' view, the fact that he himself produced an entire letter with the intention of refuting Zonaras' thesis indicates that he thought highly of him as a theologian. His characterisation of Zonaras as a 'very learned' man ('λογιώτατος') towards the end of this epistle further attests to his admiration for Zonaras' theological knowledge. The impression is that Ioannikios, and generally the monastic audience to which this corpus of essays was directed, were expected to be aware of Zonaras and his canonical work. In contrast, Glykas obviously feels the need to introduce the pagan historical figures which he mentions, namely Pindar and Heraclitus.[648] It is reasonable to infer, therefore, that by the time Glykas compiled his *Theological Chapters* Zonaras had already earned considerable fame as a commentator on the canons among men with theological and exegetical interests.

These considerations accord well with the high esteem in which Theodore Balsamon held Zonaras as a canonist. Along with Alexios Aristenos and Zonaras, Balsamon was the third great commentator on canon law to be active during the twelfth century.[649] His hermeneutical work on the canons must have been completed

[647] Glykas, *Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας*, II, 409.7-9.

[648] Glykas, *Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας*, I, 240.6-7 (for Pindar); II, 416.8-9 (for Heraclitus). This has also been underlined by Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*, 374.

[649] For information on Balsamon, see Troianos, 'Canon Law', 180-83; H. Hunger, 'Kanonistenrhetorik in Bereich des Patriarchats am Beispiel des Theodoros Balsamon', in *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century*, ed. by Oikonomides, 37-59; J. Meyendorff, 'Balsamon, the Empire and the Barbarians', in *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century*, ed. by Oikonomides, 533-42; Magdalino, 'Constantinople and the "Ἔξω Χῶραι"'.

shortly after the death of Manuel Komnenos in 1180.[650] Unlike Zonaras, whose interpretation of the canons rests extensively on a theological basis, Balsamon proceeds to an exegesis primarily from a legal point of view.[651] In spite of this, he consults the work of his predecessor, occasionally repeating and expounding Zonaras' comments.[652] Twice in his account Balsamon calls his predecessor 'extraordinary' ('ὑπερφυής', 'ὑπερφυέστατος'), showing his appreciation of Zonaras' legal erudition.[653] This reinforces the impression that, no more than two decades after the 'publication' of his canonical work, Zonaras already stood out in the field of canonical legal literature.

The conclusion on the basis of these observations is that Zonaras became known in a relatively short period of time on account of his broader scholarly activity. Both his chronicle and his exegesis of the canons attracted the attention fairly quickly of his close contemporaries. The *Epitome* was already being read aloud in the literary salons of the capital in the late 1140s or early 1150s, and must have been a success among learned men of Manasses' circle. When Glykas created his own compositions, a little more than two decades later, he evidently expected that his readers would be familiar with the two most extensive works in Zonaras' oeuvre.

The *Epitome* continued to be held in high regard by authors of universal chronicles in the following centuries, too. A chronicle which is known to have taken much material from the *Epitome* is that of Ephraem from Ainos. Roughly dated to the first or second decade of the fourteenth century, the work consists of 9,588

[650] Troianos, 'Canon Law', 180-83.
[651] B. Stolte, 'The Past in Legal Argument in the Byzantine Canonists of the Twelfth Century', in *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century*, ed. by Oikonomides, 199-210, at 209.
[652] Troianos, 'Canon Law', 178. For Balsamon's knowledge and use of Zonaras, see Macrides, 'Nomos and Kanon'.
[653] Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, II, 49; IV, 76.

dodecasyllable verses and is arranged by reign.[654] The first two sheets of the manuscript in which the text survives, the *Vat. gr.* 1003, have been lost. As a result, we do not know either the original title of the chronicle or its precise starting point.[655] In its present form, the text commences with Caligula and concludes with the reconquest of Constantinople by Michael VII Palaiologos in 1261.[656] As a rule, the presentation of the Byzantine emperors (from Constantine the Great onwards) is more elaborate than that of the Roman emperors, to whom the author usually dedicates a terse paragraph each. Notable also is the intense focus of the narrative on each emperor's contribution to Christianity and the development of orthodox dogma.

Ephraem owes much to Zonaras, with the *Epitome* being his principal authority until the regime of Alexios Komnenos.[657] Unlike Manasses, whose writing style is particularly rhetorical, he is not interested in rendering the narrative of his source in a different, and more flowery, mode. The author remains faithful not only to the content, but also to the phrasing of Zonaras' text. Depending on how easy it is to put the sentences of his source into verse, he even follows the syntactical structure of Zonaras' narrative. This is revealed, for instance, by a comparative reading of the two brief segments that follow. In the *Epitome*, we read: 'Since there were three emperors, namely Constantine himself, Licinius and Maxentius…' ('Τριῶν δ' ὄντων τῶν βασιλέων, αὐτοῦ Κωνσταντίνου καὶ Λικιννίου καὶ Μαξεντίου…').[658] Ephraem writes:

---

[654] For the dating of the text, see the introduction in Lampsidis' edition of the text: Ephraem, *Historia Chronica*, xvii. For further information on the chronicle, see *Ἐφραὶμ τοῦ Αἰνίου Χρονογραφία. Κείμενο, μετάφραση, σχόλια*, trans. into Greek by O. Lampsidis, 2 vols (Athens, 1984); H. Hunger, *Literatur*, I, 478-80; O. Lampsidis, *Beiträge zum byzantinischen Chronisten Ephraem und seiner Chronik* (Athens, 1972).

[655] The work is also preserved in the seventeenth-century *Vat. barb. gr.* 146; this, however, is a copy of the *Vat. gr*. 1003.

[656] According to Lampsidis, Ephraem must have begun his account with the reign of the emperor Tiberios: Ephraem, *Historia Chronica*, x. Hunger, however, is of the opinion that the text might have started with the age of Julius Caesar or Augustus: Hunger, *Literatur*, I, 478.

[657] In the introduction of his edition, Lampsidis discusses the sources on which Ephraem was based for the composition of his chronicle: Ephraem, *Historia Chronica*, xl-xlii.

[658] *Epitome*, III, 2.9-10.

'Since there were three emperors then, / he [Constantine], Maxentius and Licinius…' ('Τριῶν δ' ὑπόντων αὐτοκρατόρων τότε, / τούτου Μαξεντίου τε καὶ Λικινίου…').[659] Here, Ephraem stays very close to both the wording and the syntax of the *Epitome*. For metrical reasons, though, he uses the two-syllable participle 'ὑπόντων', instead of 'ὄντων' found in Zonaras' text, replaces the noun 'βασιλέων' with 'αὐτοκρατόρων', and inserts the adverb 'τότε' to form his dodecasyllable verse.

In other instances, the writer sometimes paraphrases the *Epitome* by changing the order of the words, or seeks to find terms which are close synonyms of Zonaras' and fit the metre of his text. According to the *Epitome*, for example, 'Zeno came from the most shameful nation, that of the Isaurians, himself being most ugly in both his appearance and his soul…' ('Ἦν δὲ ὁ Ζήνων ἐξ ἔθνους αἰσχίστου τοῦ τῶν Ἰσαύρων, αἴσχιστος καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ τὴν μορφὴν καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν γεγονώς…').[660] In the corresponding passage of his chronicle, Ephraem replaces the word 'ψυχὴν', present in the *Epitome*, with 'καρδίαν', a metrically convenient synonym: 'Zeno came from the Isaurians, as I said, / a most ugly man in both body and heart' ('Ζήνων δ' ὑπῆρχεν ἐξ Ἰσαύρων, ὡς ἔφην, / αἴσχιστος ἀνὴρ καὶ δέμας καὶ καρδίαν').[661] Ephraem treats the other major sources of his chronicle, namely the historical works of Niketas Choniates and George Akropolites, in much the same way as he does the *Epitome*.

Ephraem displays an avid interest in the portrayals of emperors he finds in his sources. He usually inserts a short description of each emperor at the beginning of the section dedicated to his reign. For his presentation of Alexios Komnenos, he draws on the last part of Zonaras' account of the emperor.[662] One can observe that Ephraem eliminates all elements of Zonaras' outspoken critique of Alexios. He does not pick

[659] Ephraem, *Historia Chronica*, 15.308-09.
[660] *Epitome*, III, 128.5-6.
[661] Ephraem, *Historia Chronica*, 39.966-67.
[662] Ephraem's account of Alexios Komnenos is found in *Historia Chronica*, 129.3482-137.3708.

up the details that are unfavourable to the Komnenian emperor and thus conveys a much more positive image of him. Alexios is depicted as a moderate, accessible ruler, who would not indulge in luxuries and would pay honour to virtuous men.[663]

The *Epitome* also furnished much material for a contemporary of Ephraem, Constantine Akropolites (d. *c*. 1324), whose chronicle survives in the fourteenth-century codex *Vind. hist. gr*. 99.[664] Constantine, the son of the historian George Akropolites, was a prolific writer who gained much fame particularly for his *metaphrases* of saints' lives.[665] His chronicle is contained in ff. 15$^{r}$-35$^{r}$ of the manuscript and is entitled *Epitome of the rulership of the Roman state, and where the Romans came from and why they were called Romans* (*ἐπιτομὴ ἀρχῆς τῆς ῥωμαίων ἐπικρατείας, κἀκ τίνος κατάγονται καὶ πῶς ῥωμαῖοι ἐκλήθησαν*). Alfred Heinrich was the first to identify Constantine as the author of this text in the late 1800s, based on the inscription found above the title of the text: 'Of Akropolites the Master and Grand Logothete' ('τοῦ ἀκροπολίτου κυροῦ καὶ μεγάλου λογοθέτου').[666] Indeed, during the reign of Andronikos II Palaiologos, Constantine rose first to the office of the Logothete *tou genikou*, and then, in 1294, to that of the Grand Logothete. He remained Grand Logothete at least to 1321. According to August Heisenberg, the work cannot have been penned by George Akropolites, who too occupied that office. As Heinrich underlined, George explicitly stated in his *History* that he had no interest in composing a world chronicle, since a number of authors had already carried out

[663] Ephraem, *Historia Chronica*, 130.3500-3502. Cf. *Epitome*, III, 765.11-17.
[664] Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften*, 107.
[665] For some biographical information about Constantine Akropolites, see K. Konstantinidis, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries* (Nicosia, 1982), 38-42, 100-01. Donald Nicol provides a list of all works, both edited and unedited, composed by Constantine Akropolites: Nicol, 'Constantine Akropolites'.
[666] See Akropolites, *Chronicle*, 10-11. It should also be mentioned that Heinrich believes that the part of the manuscript containing Constantine's chronicle was copied in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century.

such a project.[667] The work starts with the arrival of Aeneas in Italy and terminates with the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261.[668]

Only five passages of the chronicle have been edited.[669] So far as one can tell from these extracts, Constantine's narrative is extremely condensed and, as characterised by Nicol, 'pedantic and unliterary'.[670] Hunger has stressed that the writer based a large portion of his account on the historical works of Zonaras and Manasses.[671] A comparative reading of the published extracts from Constantine's chronicle and the corresponding sections of Zonaras makes it apparent that the *Epitome* is the chief, if not the sole, source exploited by Constantine for his presentation of Vespasian-Titus-Domitian, Constantine IV Pogonatos, John Tzimiskes-Basil II-Constantine VII-Romanos III Argyros, and Romanos IV Diogenes-Michael VII Doukas. On this evidence, it is clear that the author relied on Zonaras for an extensive part of his narrative, at least from the period of the Principate to the late eleventh century. One may reasonably presume that he continued his use of the *Epitome* until the reign of Alexios Komnenos.

Constantine's method of work is unimpressive. He follows Zonaras' text verbatim or only slightly paraphrases it. He collects and brings together pieces of information that are placed in different sections of his source without adding anything of his own. The author's close adherence to Zonaras' narrative is clearly illustrated, for example, in the chapter which focuses on Tzimiskes. First, let us take a look at a part of what Zonaras tells us of Tzimiskes.

> When Tzimiskes rose to the imperial office, he made Romanos' sons partners in leadership, although they were still children […] When these events happened,

---

[667] George Akropolites, *Opera*, ed. by A. Heisenberg (Leipzig, 1903), II, xxiv.

[668] After this date, a later hand has added the names and the years of the reign of the Byzantine emperors up to 1323.

[669] Akropolites, *Chronicle*, 11-15.

[670] Nicol, 'Constantine Akropolites', 256.

[671] Hunger, *Literatur*, I, 477.

> Tzimiskes was allowed entrance to the church and received the crown in the feast of the birth of our Saviour and God, and he banished Theophano to Prokonnesos.
>
> ὁ δὲ Τζιμισκὴς τῆς βασιλείας γενόμενος ἐγκρατὴς καὶ τοὺς τοῦ Ῥωμανοῦ παῖδας κοινωνοὺς πεποίητο τῆς ἀρχῆς παῖδας ἔτι τυγχάνοντας […] Τούτων δὲ γενομένων, κατὰ τὴν γενέθλιον τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν καὶ θεοῦ ἑορτὴν ἅμα τε τὴν εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἐπιτρέπεται εἴσοδον καὶ ἅμα τῷ διαδήματι στέφεται, τὴν δὲ Θεοφανὼ εἰς Προικόνησον περιώρισεν.[672]

Now, Constantine introduces his chapter on the emperor by virtually copying certain segments of his source and leaving out details inessential to his account: 'When Tzimiskes rose to the imperial office, he made Romanos' sons partners in leadership and banished Theophano to Prokonnesos' ('ὁ δὲ Τζιμισκῆς τῆς βασιλείας γενόμενος ἐγκρατὴς καὶ τοὺς [τοῦ Ῥωμανοῦ] παῖδας κοινωνοὺς πεποίηται τῆς ἀρχῆς, τὴν δὲ Θεοφανὼ εἰς Προικό[ννησον πε]ριώρισε').[673] Assuming Constantine uses the rest of his reading in such a way, his chronicle is not of any historical or literary value.

Overall, with the exception of Manasses, these chroniclers were notably reluctant to imitate or exploit Zonaras' account creatively. They would produce an abbreviated version of the *Epitome,* mainly by paraphrasing their source or even citing verbatim passages taken from Zonaras. However, the fact itself that Manasses, Glykas, Ephraem and Constantine Akropolites all inserted a good deal of material from Zonaras' chronicle into their works indicates how reliable they regarded the *Epitome* as a historical source. It also highlights that the language of the text was accessible and flexible, which helped later writers to pattern their own accounts on Zonaras'.

A text that clearly stands apart from all these in terms of the type of material it draws on the *Epitome* is the treatise conventionally entitled by its editor, Jean-Paul Migne, *De Schismate Vitando*.[674] The work was written in the late thirteenth century

---

[672] *Epitome*, III, 519.11-2-520.1, 521.8-12.
[673] Akropolites, *Chronicle*, 13, να΄.1-2.
[674] Methodios, *De Schismate Vitando*. See also Beck, *Kirche*, 687.

by a monk named Methodios and records the history of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, extending to the early thirteenth century. In his treatise, Methodios turns against Arsenite churchmen who cause conflicts among Christians and divide the body of the Church. Introducing his text, he mentions that it is 'a compilation of various short books' ('συλλογὴ ἐκ διαφόρων συνοπτικῶν βιβλίων'). He cites Zonaras by name when he relates the appointment of Proklos as patriarch of Constantinople in 434.[675]

Of a similar character is a short ecclesiastical chronicle contained in the *Oxon. Baroc. gr.* 25, a manuscript dated to the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.[676] Covering ff. 233$^{r}$-242$^{v}$ of the codex, this virtually unknown chronicle records the succession of patriarchs of Constantinople from the late fourth to the late twelfth centuries. The narrative is extremely succinct, giving only the names of patriarchs and a few pieces of information about each. The anonymous writer of the work reveals at the end of his text that he 'would move around here and there on account of Church scandals' ('διὰ τὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας σκάνδαλα ἔνθεν κακεῖθεν περιφερόμενος'),[677] from which one can infer that he was apparently a member of the Church. He directs his chronicle at a person who must also have been a churchman or a monk, as he addresses to him as 'Your Reverence' ('τῇ εὐλαβείᾳ σου').[678] Turning to his recipient, he concludes his narrative: '…and these which I am sending you I read them some time in the past, and therefore I forgot a great deal of them. But you, in order to derive wisdom from these, look for the relevant passages and what follows after (them). For

[675] Methodios, *De Schismate Vitando*, 781; at this point, one reads: '…as Zonaras recounts in his chronicle' ('ὡς ὁ Ζωναρᾶς ἱστορεῖ ἐν τῷ χρονικῷ αὐτοῦ').
[676] The manuscript can be found online at: http://viewer.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/icv/thumbs.php?book=ms._barocci_25&page=1 (accessed on the 20th November 2015). For a description of the codex, see Coxe, *Catalogi codicum*, I, 32-36, and particularly at pp. 33-34 for the chronicle. See also Leone, 'La tradizione manoscritta', 250; Büttner-Wobst, 'Textgeschichte', 242.
[677] See *Oxon. Baroc. gr.* 25, f. 242$^{v}$, lines 24-25; Coxe, *Catalogi codicum*, I, 34.
[678] See *Oxon. Baroc. gr.* 25, f. 242$^{v}$, line 23; Coxe, *Catalogi codicum*, I, 34.

it is said "give a wise man the occasion (to do something) and he will be wiser"' ('…καὶ αὐτὰ γὰρ ἅπερ σοι πέπομφα πάλαι ἥμην ἀναγνοὺς, τὰ πλείω δὲ ἀπεβάλετό μου ἡ διάνοια. σὺ δ' ἐκ τούτων ἵνα ἄγῃς σοφώτατα, ἐπιλόγισαι τὰ συγγενῆ καὶ ἀκόλουθα. "δίδου", γάρ φησι, "σοφῷ ἀφορμὴν καὶ σοφώτερος ἔσται"').[679] The author writes from memory; he consulted the works on which he based his presentation of patriarchal history long ago and cannot recall many details given there. For this reason, he advises his addressee to search for the sources he used and consider material he has not included. The *Epitome* was one of these sources.

The writer relies heavily on Methodios' *De Schismate Vitando*, through which he employed the *Epitome* as well. His reference to Zonaras concerning the accession of Proklos to the patriarchal throne is probably drawn from Methodios. Slightly paraphrasing Methodios' acknowledgement of his source, the author says that 'these events are recounted in the chronicle of the most wise Zonaras' ('ταῦτά δε μὲν ἱστόρηται ἐν τῇ χρονικῇ βίβλῳ τοῦ σοφωτάτου Ζωναρᾶ').[680] But the anonymous chronicler makes two more references to the *Epitome* which cannot be found in Methodios' treatise. Thus, one can deduce that the author must have made direct use of the chronicle too. He repeats the appreciative characterisation of Zonaras as a very wise man when he discusses the quarrel between Ignatios and Photios; there, we are told that this information is present 'in the chronicle of the monk John, most wise

[679] See *Oxon. Baroc. gr.* 25, f. 242$^{v}$, lines 25-28. The transcription of this passage is mine. Coxe read the words 'σὺ δ'' as 'οἶδ'', in which case, however, the text does not make sense. The quotation of the last line is taken from Proverbs 9.9. It is worth drawing attention to the use of the term 'ἀφορμή' in this segment. In the context of the Bible, the word means an 'occasion for an act, a source of inspiration': T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Louvain, 2009), 109. I adopt this interpretation of the word, since here we have to do with a standard, proverbial phrase. It is likely, however, that the anonymous author makes use of this quotation because in Byzantine works of a historical character the term 'ἀφορμή' frequently has a technical meaning, that of 'historical material'. See, for example, *Theophanes, Chronographia*, I, 4.2. The writer may be indirectly inviting his recipient to use these texts as sources for the composition of his own historical work.

[680] See *Oxon. Baroc. gr. 25*, f. 234$^{r}$, lines 1-2.

Zonaras' ('ἐν τῇ χρονικῇ βίβλῳ Ἰωάννου μοναχοῦ τοῦ σοφωτάτου Ζωναρᾶ').[681] It is clear that the writer greatly admired the *Epitome,* not only as a source of information about ecclesiastical affairs, but also as the intellectual product of a prudent man. For him, Zonaras' chronicle was a work of an edifying nature which would add wisdom to his own.

Taken in conjunction, these two texts penned by a monk and a churchman confirm the suggestion put forward in the previous chapter that members of monastic and ecclesiastical circles with a good level of education were able to read and exploit the *Epitome*.[682] Also, as I pointed out in the third chapter, in his preface Zonaras presents the *Epitome* as a work that can be of use to readers looking for information about religious affairs, although the text proper pays greater attention to the history of the Byzantine state rather than the history of the Church.[683] This is indeed the case. Unlike the writers discussed earlier, who took an interest in the *Epitome* as a compendium of Jewish and Roman imperial history, Methodios and the anonymous chronicler in the *Oxon. Baroc. gr.* 25 employed Zonaras' text solely to derive material about ecclesiastical matters.

## 7.2. The evidence of the manuscript transmission

A practical way to widen the enquiry into the reception of the chronicle in later times is to examine the manuscript transmission of the *Epitome*. From the great bulk of manuscripts in which the work or parts of it survive, I have closely looked at those which are dateable to the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In particular, forty-three manuscripts have been studied in terms of (a) the number of manuscripts

[681] See *Oxon. Baroc. gr. 25*, f. 239$^{v}$, line 18. The second reference to the *Epitome* which does not appear in Methodios is included in f. 240$^{r}$, line 12.
[682] See pp. 178-79.
[683] See pp. 92-93 of the thesis.

that contain the entire *Epitome* or only a certain section of it, and (b) the number of manuscripts that transmit Zonaras' chronicle alone or along with other texts. Examining the first issue, one can gain a clear sense of what parts of the chronicle fascinated readers in general. As to the second one, it is crucial to consider not so much the manuscripts that preserve the *Epitome* exclusively as those that contain other works as well. The textual context of these codices can offer significant indications about the way in which audiences viewed the chronicle.

The forty-three manuscripts that have been taken into account in this investigation are listed in Table 1. This catalogue is arranged according to the part of the chronicle each manuscript transmits. In their present state, manuscripts numbered from nos 16 to 20 are mutilated, with leaves missing from either the beginning or the end of the codices. As has been shown by Pietro Leone and Boissevain, however, they must originally have preserved the whole work.[684] The same goes for nos 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 33 and 41; they currently have varying degrees of damage, but must at one time have transmitted longer parts of the *Epitome*, those indicated in the corresponding sections of Table 2.[685] I have added an asterisk to nos 30, 31, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42 and 43, because they either start or stop at the 'middle' of a book. This, however, is a deliberate choice of their scribes, not a result of the mutilated state of the codices.[686]

---

[684] Leone, 'La tradizione manoscritta', 235-237; Boissevain, 'Zur handschriftlichen Überlieferung', 250-51 (for no. 19).

[685] Leone, 'La tradizione manoscritta', 239-241, 244, 248; Boissevain, 'Zur handschriftlichen Überlieferung', 256 (for nos 24, 26, 27), 257 (for no. 41) and 271 (footnote 1, for no. 23).

[686] No. 30 commences with Zonaras' narrative of Pompey (Book 10, chapter 3): Coxe, *Catalogi codicum*, I, 453. No. 31 starts from Cleopatra (Book 10, chapter 30) and ends with the first years of Alexios Komnenos' reign (Book 18, chapter 25): see V. Puntoni, *Indice dei codice greci della bibliotheca Estense di Modena* (Florence, 1896), 461-63. Codex 35 extends to the appearance of Arius (Book 13, chapter 4) and codex 36 up to the death of Michael II the Stammerer (Book 15, chapter 25): Leone, 'La tradizione manoscritta', 243-45; Büttner-Wobst, 'Textgeschichte', 240 (for no. 35). No. 37 starts with the ascension of Diocletian to the Roman throne (Book 12, chapter 31): A. Turyn, *Codices graeci Vaticani: saeculis XIII et XIV scripti annorumque notis instructi* (Vatican, 1964), 131. Codex 38 contains an abridged version of Zonaras' narrative from the succession of Constantius I by his son

Table 1 below shows the manuscripts that have been studied for this investigation:

**Table 1: The manuscripts**

1. *Par. gr.* 1715 (dated to 1289)
2. *Par. gr.* 1714 (13th cent.)
3. *Monac. gr.* 324 (13th cent.)
4. *Vat. gr.* 135 (13th cent.)
5. *Vat. gr.* 136 (13th cent.)
6. *Vat. pal. gr.* 271 (13th-14th cent.)
7. *Laur. plut. gr.* 70.4 (13th-14th cent.)
8. *Scor. gr.* 165 (14th cent.)
9. *Mut. gr.* 177 (14th cent.)
10. *Marc. gr.* 400 (14th cent.)
11. *Vind. hist. gr.* 16 (14th cent.)
12. *Lond. BL, Add.* 28828 (14th cent.)
13. *Marc. gr.* 399 (15th cent.)
14. *Ambr. gr.* 411 = G 73 sup. (15th cent.)
15. *Par. gr.* 1716 (15th cent.)
16. *Scor. gr.* 296 (13th cent.)
17. *Vat. gr.* 1623 (13th cent.)
18. *Const. vet. ser. gr.* 50 (13-14th cent.)
19. *Ambr. gr.* 912 = C 279 (14th cent.)
20. *Balt. gr.* 16 (15th cent.)
21. *Par. gr.* 1717 (13th-14th cent.)
22. *Marc. gr.* 401 (13th cent.)
23. *Athen. gr.* 1069 (15th cent.)
24. *Vat. gr.* 982 (13th cent.)
25. *Par. gr.* 1768 (14th cent.)
26. *Ambr. gr.* 691 = Q 92 (14th cent.)
27. *Monac. gr.* 325 (14th cent.)
28. *Patm.* 298 (14th cent.)
29. *Vat. gr.* 981 (14th cent.)
30. *Oxon. Crom. gr.* 24 (14th cent.)∗
31. *Mut. gr.* 122 (14th-15th cent.)∗
32. *Par. coisl. gr.* 137 (14th-15th cent.)
33. *Alex. bibl. patr.* 135 (15th cent.)
34. *Vind. hist. gr.* 43 (14th-15th cent.)
35. *Vat. gr.* 1199 (15th cent.)∗
36. *Taur. gr.* 220 (13th-14th cent.)∗
37. *Vat. gr.* 980 (14th cent.)∗
38. *Vat. urb. gr.* 95 (13th- 15th cent)∗
39. *Marc. gr.* 523 (15th cent.)∗
40. *Marc. gr. VII* 13 (14th cent.)
41. *Vind. hist. gr.* 68 (14th cent.)
42. *Par. coisl. gr.* 135 (13th-14th cent.)∗
43. *Bon. bibl. univ. gr.* 2412. (13th-14th cent.)∗

Now, Table 2 shows how many of these codices contained or must have contained the entire chronicle, and how many other parts of the text:

---

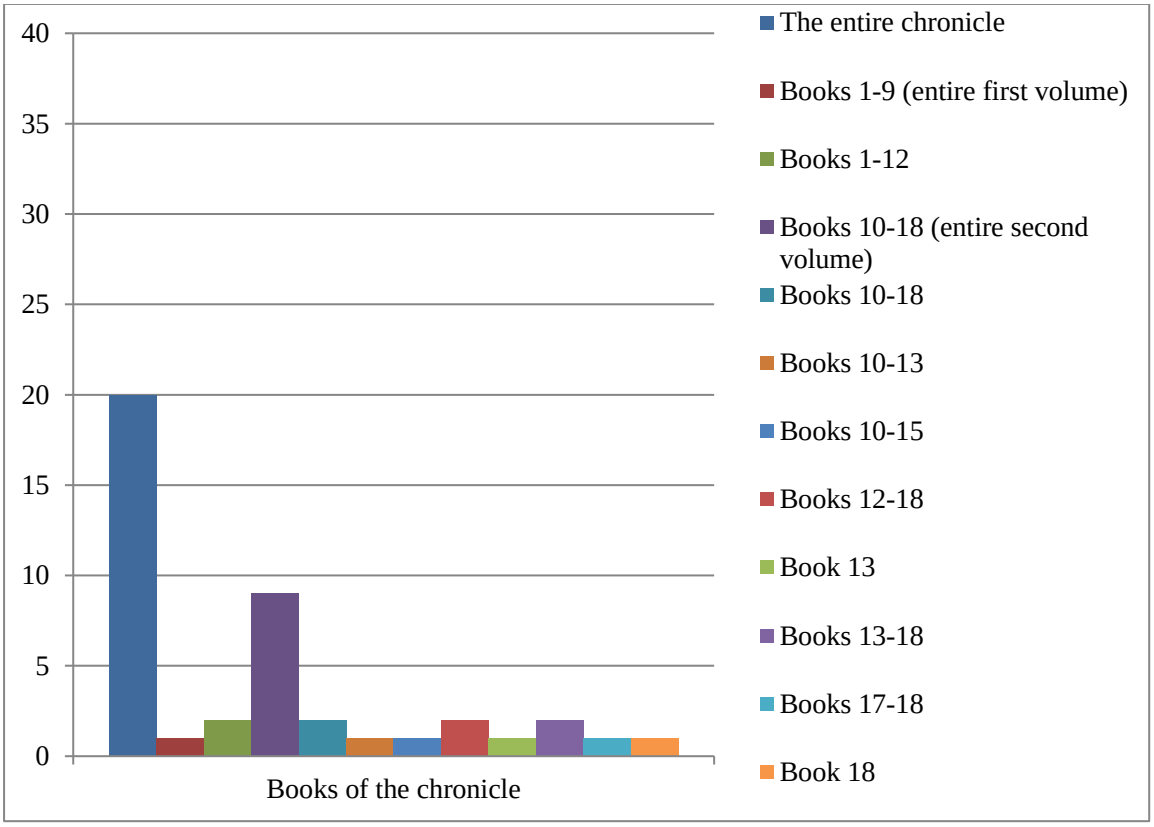
Constantine (Book 12, chapter 30) to the end of the chronicle: C. Stornajolo, *Codices urbinates graeci Bibliothecae Vaticanae* (Rome, 1895), 139-47. Codex 39 preserves the part which starts with Constantine's reign as sole emperor and ends shortly after the accession of Arkadios and Honorius to the thrones of the Eastern and Western Roman Empire respectively (Book 13, chapter 12): Mioni, *Thesaurus Antiquus*, 396-98. No. 42 transmits the text from the rise of Isaac Komnenos to the imperial office (Book 18, chapter 4) almost to the end: Devreesse, *Les fonds coislin*, 126-27. Codex 43 preserves a long part of the chronicle, that from the reign of Theodora as sole empress (Book 17, chapter 28) to the end of the work: V. Puntoni, *Indicis codicum graecorum Bononiensium ab Al. Oliverio compositi supplementum*, *Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica*, 4 (1896), 370-73.

**Table 2: The contents of the manuscripts**

| Books of the *Epitome* | Number of manuscripts |
|---|---|
| 1. The entire chronicle | 20 (nos 1-20) |
| 2. Books 1-9 (entire first volume) | 1 (no. 22) |
| 3. Books 1-12 | 2 (nos 21, 23) |
| 4. Books 10-18 (entire second volume) | 9 (nos 24-29, 32-34) |
| 5. Books 10-18 | 2 (nos 30, 31) |
| 6. Books 10-13 | 1 (no. 35) |
| 7. Books 10-15 | 1 (no. 36) |
| 8. Books 12-18 | 2 (nos 37, 38) |
| 9. Book 13 | 1 (no. 39) |
| 10. Books 13-18 | 2 (nos 40, 41) |
| 11. Books 17-18 | 1 (no. 43) |
| 12. Book 18 | 1 (no. 42) |

A comparison of the number of manuscripts that preserve the whole chronicle with those that transmit shorter sections of it is given in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: The contents of the manuscripts**




What strikes us here is that the greatest number of manuscripts, more than a half of those that have been studied, transmits Zonaras' entire text. This is an impressive

figure, especially if one considers the gigantic length of the *Epitome* and, consequently, the cost of producing these manuscripts. It is remarkable that most patrons were keen on learning about the wide range of subjects covered by the chronicler. Being equally interested in Jewish, Roman and Byzantine history, they would ask for the reproduction of the entire work. These figures, furthermore, offer evidence concerning the circulation of the chronicle. They indicate that, at least from the thirteenth century onwards, the two volumes of the *Epitome* circulated independently of each other. Clearly, though, the second volume was in considerably greater demand than the first one, which seems to have been much less popular.

Examining only the twenty-three codices that transmit shorter sections of the *Epitome*, one can identify certain literary trends among the patrons. Seventeen manuscripts (nos 21, 23-38) include the part of the chronicle dedicated to the early imperial history of Rome, namely from the age of Julius Caesar to the accession of Constantine the Great to the throne as sole emperor (Books 10-12). There are twenty codices (nos 24-43) which preserve parts of the work from the reign of Constantine as sole emperor onwards (from Book 13 to the end of the text). Taken together, these two pieces of evidence reflect a clear preference among these patrons towards the imperial history of the Empire. Quite a few of them would request the reproduction of the first parts of the second volume, seeking to learn about the origin and the establishment of the Roman *imperium*. However, there was apparently a greater enthusiasm for the Empire's more recent past, the period from the age of Constantine onwards. In other words, most patrons who did not wish to acquire the entire chronicle were interested in Zonaras as a source of information for Byzantine history. The patrons of only three manuscripts (nos 21-23) displayed an interest in the early

history of Christianity, the first kings of Rome and Republican Rome and ordered the copying of the first volume individually.

Let us now turn our attention to the number of codices in which the *Epitome* is transmitted alone or along with other texts. The overwhelming majority of manuscripts listed above – thirty out of the forty-three – contain Zonaras' chronicle exclusively or shorter sections of it. These are nos 1-11, 13, 15-16, 18, 20-28, 30 and 33-37. A reason why most codices transmit the *Epitome* alone may be that the manuscripts which preserved the whole work, as extensive as it is, and even those that preserved only one of the two volumes, were already bulky enough. In any case, the fact that most patrons commissioned codices containing the *Epitome* alone implies that they appreciated and read Zonaras' text for its own sake, instead of including and using it in a manuscript of wider scope.

This is certainly true for some of the codices in which the chronicle survives along with other compositions. There are ten manuscripts that are essentially 'historical' (nos 12, 14, 17, 19, 29, 31, 32, 40-42), in that they transmit mainly historical accounts. The histories of Niketas Choniates and George Akropolites are the works which usually appear along with the *Epitome*. In nos 17, 29, 32 and 40, Choniates' text is presented right after Zonaras' chronicle and is followed by Akropolites' and Nikephoros Gregoras' histories in nos 29 and 32, respectively.[687] All four codices commence with the Genesis, the starting point of the *Epitome*. Manuscripts 17 and 40 reach up to 1206, when Choniates finishes his account,

[687] For no. 17, see C. Giannelli, *Codices vaticani graeci: codices 1485-1683* (Vatican, 1950), 291-93; Choniates, *Historia*, xxvii-xxviii. For no. 29, see R. Devreesse, *Le fonds grec de la bibliothèque vaticane des origines à Paul V* (Vatican, 1956), 420, 452; Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, I, 15*-17*. The first five folios which include excerpts of the work *On the Peoples of India and the Brachmans*, written by the historian Palladius of Helenopolis, are not original to the manuscript: Choniates, *Historia*, xxxvii-xxxviii. For no. 32, see Devreesse, *Les fonds coislin*, 128-29; Choniates, *Historia*, xliv-xlv. For no. 40, see E. Mioni, *Bibliothecae Divi Marci Venetiarum codices graeci manuscripti. Volumen II: codices qui in sextam, septimam atque octavam classem includuntur continens* (Rome, 1960), 28-29; Choniates, *Historia*, xxxviii-xxxix.

manuscript 29 up to 1261, the point where Akropolites' work comes to an end, and manuscript 32 up to 1351, when the eleventh book of Gregoras' *Roman History* stops. It is evident that here the *Epitome* is being exploited as part of a bigger project. Selecting and putting these texts into a chronological sequence, the owners of the manuscripts wished to create a world history for themselves.[688]

The production of a historical handbook must also have been the purpose of manuscripts 12, 14 and 41, where only the histories of Zonaras and Akropolites are included.[689] Of course, with the absence of Choniates' work, there is a clear break in the timeline between 1118 and 1204. That manuscript 29 transmits the *Alexiad*, in addition to Zonaras, Choniates and Akropolites, points to the strong preference of its owner for historical writings.[690] The same is probably true for the commissioner of codex 19, who requested, along with the *Epitome*, for pieces from Skylitzes' *Synopsis* and *Skylitzes Continuatus*.[691] Manuscript 42 preserves, aside from Kedrenos, the part of Zonaras' chronicle that covers the eleventh century, which may indicate that its owner had a special interest in this period.[692]

An important conclusion that emerges from the observation of these historical manuscripts is that Zonaras was apparently perceived by their owners as an author of a high-quality history, one worth reading along with the works of Akropolites and the classicising histories of Choniates and Anna Komnene.

---

[688] These codices may be considered the earliest precursors of the printed editions of the *Corpus Historiae Byzantinae*, a collective corpus which comprised the historical works of Zonaras, Choniates, Gregoras and Laonikos Chalkokondyles, all popular in Early Modern Europe: G. Della Rocca de Candal, 'Bibliographia Historica Byzantina: A Historical and Bibliographical Description of the Early Editions of the *Corpus Historiae Byzantinae* (1556-1645)' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 2016).

[689] For no. 12, see M. Richard, *Inventaire des manuscrits grecs des Fonds Sloane additional, Egerton, Cottonian et Stowe du British Museum* (Paris, 1952), 52. For no. 14, see Leone, 'La tradizione manoscritta', 234-35; Martini and Bassi, *Catalogus codicum*, I, 493-94. For no 41, see Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften*, 77.

[690] For bibliography on the manuscript, see footnote 687 above.

[691] Martini and Bassi, *Catalogus codicum*, I, 1022-23; Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, xxiii-xxiv.

[692] For bibliography on the manuscript, see footnote 686 above.

Codex 31 is the well-known Modena manuscript, which is famous for its wonderful illustrations of Byzantine emperors.[693] In its current form, the manuscript was produced in two stages. A fourteenth-century scribe copied the second volume of the chronicle in the codex, without, however, being able to finish it. In the second half of the fifteenth century, another scribe added some extra folios at the front and the back of the manuscript in order to complete Zonaras' text and insert the series of catalogues he had at his disposal. Judging from the multifarious contents of these catalogues, from emperors to patriarchs and offices, this scribe sought to produce in a sense a complete guide to the history of the imperial capital. In the *Epitome*, he found the ideal text that could form the basis for this wide-ranging enterprise.

Special mention should be made of manuscript 43, which is a miscellany, namely a codex that includes a great number of extracts from different kinds of works. It preserves twelve brief texts and excerpts. It was produced by seven different scribes, the last of whom copied the part of the *Epitome* which begins with Constantine's reign as sole emperor and ends shortly after the period of Arkadios and Honorius. Apart from Zonaras' chronicle, excerpts from four historical texts also make their appearance in the codex: Appian's *Roman History*, Diodorus Siculus' *Historical Library*, the Greek translation of Eutropius' *Breviarium* produced in the late fourth century by Paeanius, and the history of the city of Herakleia Pontike written by the ancient historian Memnon. The extract of Memnon's work is derived from Photios' *Bibliotheca*, since the original text had been lost by the fifteenth century. The manuscript would have attracted the attention of readers interested in history. What sets this manuscript apart from the other historical codices is that in this case an extract of the *Epitome* is found along with works focusing on Roman, instead

[693] I. Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), 172-83; T. Büttner-Wobst, 'Studien zur Textgeschichte des Zonaras. Nachtrag', *BZ*, 1 (1892), 594-97.

of Byzantine, history. This codex is known to have been commissioned by the cardinal Bessarion towards the end of his life (d. 1472) and perfectly exemplifies Bessarion's broad philosophical and historical interests.[694]

Worthy of note in this regard is that all Marciani codices under consideration here (nos 10, 13, 22 and 40) were acquired by the cardinal Bessarion, who made a systematic effort to collect and copy classical Greek and Byzantine historical writings. Bessarion was the first to put together in a single manuscript the works of Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon (*Hellenica*), aiming to compile 'a sequential "history of Greece"'.[695] A similar purpose would undoubtedly underlie his intention to acquire a codex containing both Zonaras' and Choniates' works (no. 40), namely to have at his disposal a continuous history of the Byzantine Empire from the Creation to the early thirteenth century.

At least three manuscripts provide us with some prosopographical information about their commissioners or early owners. The first is no. 3. At the bottom margin of f. 2$^{r}$, where the chronicle begins, the person in possession of the codex writes in his own hand 'The *Zonaras* of Basil, the Great Koumnos'('ὁ Ζωναρᾶς τοῦ Βασιλείου τοῦ μεγάλου Κούμνου').[696] The surname Koumnos is probably a corrupted version of Choumnos, a well-known family name attested already from the mid-eleventh century.[697]. Basil must have descended from this family and might, too, have occupied

[694] I. Hadot, *Simplicius, sa vie, son oeuvre, sa survie* (Berlin, 1987).
[695] A. Kaldellis, *Byzantine Readings of Ancient Historians* (London, 2015), 7.
[696] Leone, 'La tradizione manoscritta', 228; Hardt, *Catalogus codicum*, III, 306-07.
[697] A. Kazhdan, 'Choumnos', *ODB*, I, 433. We are aware of several bureaucratic officials with this surname, such as a certain Manuel Choumnos, a *kouropalates* who lived in the early twelfth century, a *nomophylax* and *sebastos* Theodore Choumnos, who in the late twelfth century served under Andronikos I, and of course the statesman and prolific scholar Nikephoros Choumnos, who rose to high offices during the reign of Andronikos II. For the seal bearing the name of Manuel *kouropalates*, see V. Šandrovskaja, 'Popravki i dopolnenija k 'Katalogu molivdovulov' B. A. Pančenko', *Vizantijskij Vremennik*, 38 (1977), 102-19, at 117 (no. 59). For Theodore Choumnos, see P. Lemerle, A. Guillou and N. Svoronos, *Actes de Lavra. Première partie: Des origines à 1204*, *Archives de l'Athos* (Paris 1970), V, 344.16. On Nikephoros Choumnos, see A. Riehle, 'Epistolography As Autobiography: Remarks on the Letter-collections of Nikephoros Choumnos', *Parekbolai*, 2 (2012), 1-22.

a significant post in the imperial bureaucracy, as the epithet 'the Great' suggests.[698] A second manuscript whose original owner is revealed in a scribal note is no 13, a codex which is securely dated to 1420 and eventually found its way into Bessarion's collection.[699] This one was commissioned by Demetrios Laskaris Leontares, a prominent statesman and general of the early fifteenth century, who, according to Doukas' history, enjoyed high honours under John VII Palaiologos.[700]

Unlike these manuscripts, whose owners were laymen, codex 37 was in the possession of an ecclesiastical man, a priest whose surname was Bolenos.[701] It is not clear whether he also commissioned the codex. Bolenos is a good example of a relatively educated churchman who was able to read a text like the *Epitome* written in archaising, middlebrow Greek.

## 7.3. Scribal practices and marginalia

The investigation of this large body of manuscript material has helped to advance our understanding of the parts of the *Epitome* that were read most, by whom and in what contexts. But my focus so far has been solely on evidence collected from the manuscript tradition of the chronicle, not the ways in which the text itself is actually written in the codices. First, what I would like to investigate here is whether the fact that Zonaras' narrative was not divided into shorter books posed a problem for scribes who copied the work, and, if this is the case, how they tried to handle it. Next, I want

[698] The most obvious assumption is that he held the office of the Grand Logothete, but this cannot be proved. Notably, the name Basil appears in the family of Choumnoi, as we learn from a seal dated to *c*. the 1050s: C. Stavrakos, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel mit Familiennamen aus der Sammlung des Numismatischen Museums Athen* (Wiesbaden 2000), no. 279.

[699] This date when the manuscript was completed is noted by the scribe, a priest called George Vastralites, in the last folio of the codex: Mioni, *Thesaurus Antiquus*, 151-52.

[700] Michael Doukas, *Historia Byzantina*, ed. by I. Bekker (Bonn, 1834), 133-34, where the author provides some biographical information about Demetrios Leontares. See also E. Trapp, 'Λεοντάρης Δημήτριος, Λάσκαρις', *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*, VI (1983), 162.

[701] For information on the manuscript, see above footnote 686 above.

to consider various marginal scholia which were penned by either the scribe of a manuscript or later readers commenting on the text.

For practical reasons, this investigation inevitably relies only on a select sample of the codices listed in Table 1; these are nos 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 21, 25, 27 and 30.[702] The criteria by which these manuscripts were chosen were the date of their production and their accessibility. All twelve codices are dateable to the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. Of these, nos 1, 2, 3, 5 and 27 are codices on which the edition of the *Epitome* by Pinder and Büttner-Wobst was based.[703] Most of these manuscripts have been made available online by the libraries in which they are kept, with the exceptions of codices nos 5 and 30. I was able to study the former on microfilm, and consult the latter in person in the Bodleian Library.

A first thing to observe is that the copyists of these manuscripts share a common method for presenting Jewish and Roman history, the two broad thematic sections of the chronicle. They all understand this basic thematic articulation of the text, and find it necessary to make the thematic division of the work very clear to their readers. For the Roman section, the manuscripts nos 1, 2, 11, 12, and 21 preserve exactly the same heading: 'About the Romans and Rome itself' ('Περὶ 'Ρωμαίων καὶ τῆς Ῥώμης αὐτῆς'), a likely echo of Zonaras' original title.[704] Traces of another transmission, in which the name of Romulus appears in the heading of the section, can

[702] H. Omont, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris, 1888), 128-29 (for nos 1, 2, 21), 138 (for no. 25); Mercati and Franchi, *Codices Vaticani*, 161-62 (for no. 5); H. Stevenson, *Codices manuscripti palatini graeci Bibliothecae Vaticanae* (Rome, 1885), 148-49 (for no. 6); A. M. Bandini, *Catalogus codicum graecorum Bibliothecae Laurentianae*, II (Florence, 1768), col. 658 (for no. 7); Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften*, 20-21 (for no. 11); Hardt, *Catalogus codicum*, I, 307-08 (for no. 27). For nos 3, 12 and 30, see respectively footnotes 696, 689 and 686 above.

[703] The last manuscript which has been used by Büttner-Wobst for the edition of Books 13 to 18 of the *Epitome*, the *Monac. gr.* 93, is dated much later, to the sixteenth century, and has therefore been excluded.

[704] No. 1: 160$^{v}$, no. 2: 107$^{v}$, no. 11: 141$^{v}$, no. 12: 97$^{v}$, no. 21: 201$^{r}$.

be found in codices 5 and 7.[705] All scribes write these titles in large letters or within decorative patterns, so that they can stand out.

There are also other parts of text which several copyists try to separate from the rest of the narrative by using titles. Notable examples are the accounts of the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans and the birth of Christ.[706] Such items were obviously considered by scribes to be of great significance and had to be highlighted accordingly. It is worth mentioning that the title given to the conquest of Jerusalem in codices nos 1 and 12, namely 'Epitome of the Capture of Jerusalem' ('Ἐπιτομὴ τῆς ἁλώσεως τῆς Ἱερουσαλήμ'), betrays the scribes' perception of the narrative as an abbreviated form of a more extensive presentation of the fall of the Holy City, that of Josephus.

Notwithstanding these common features in the internal organisation of the work, copyists treated the chronicle with a great deal of liberty. Zonaras' account of Jewish history in particular is very 'raw' material in terms of its division into shorter pieces. No tidy pattern emerges as to how scribes break the narrative. It would seem probable, therefore, that the Jewish section of the chronicle was originally a continuous narrative, or that it was split into several very extensive chapters. Scribes must have encountered long pieces of text and felt that these would be extremely inconvenient to readers. For this reason, they took it upon themselves to break them into shorter segments. They also added titles to shorter parts of Zonaras' Jewish account, so as to make it easier for those who read the manuscripts to find certain subjects.

---

[705] No. 5: 73$^{r}$: 'About Rome, and Romulus and the Romans' ('Περὶ 'Ρώμης καὶ 'Ρωμύλου, καὶ τῶν 'Ρωμαίων'); no. 7: 65$^{r}$: 'About Romus and Romulus and the Romans' ('Περὶ Ῥώμου καὶ Ῥωμύλου καὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων').

[706] For the part of the text recording the fall of Jerusalem, see no. 1: 150$^{r}$, no. 5: 69$^{r}$, and no. 12: 87$^{r}$. For the chapter narrating the birth of Christ, see no. 1: 272$^{r}$, no. 3: 297$^{v}$, no. 27: 44$^{r}$ and no. 30:50$^{r}$.

Titles in the presentation of the first Roman kings, and the Roman and Byzantine emperors follow a much more regular pattern in all twelve manuscripts. The copyists have a very good understanding of the author's own organisation of the text into units of reigns and use titles which correspond to this. Particularly for Zonaras' narrative of imperial history – from the age of Augustus onwards –, titles have a pretty much standard form: 'The reign of…', with scribes using the terms 'μοναρχία', 'αὐταρχία', 'βασιλεία' and 'αὐτοκρατορία' interchangeably. We also find titles such as 'The accession of…' ('ἀναγόρευσις/ἀνάρρησις τοῦ…') in nos 3 and 12. It is noteworthy that in codices 1, 2, 7, 11 and 30 these titles are always written either on top of Zonaras' narrative of an emperor (nos 1, 2, 11 and 30), or prior to it in a continuous text (no. 7). The scribes are essentially employing them as headings to introduce the section dedicated to a new emperor, and to emphasise to readers the division of the chronicle into reigns.

Things become more intriguing when one looks at idiosyncratic features that characterise certain scribes. Those who copied codices 25 and 30, for instance, occasionally include in the title of a new emperor the duration of his reign, apparently considering it a significant item of information that should be given special prominence.[707] Manuscripts 5 and 6, in addition, bear a great number of marginal titles penned by their scribes that indicate pieces of the text which concern patriarchal history.[708] The titles are typically as follows: 'About patriarchs' ('Περὶ πατριαρχῶν') or 'About the patriarch' ('Περὶ πατριάρχου'). These scribes found that Zonaras' material about ecclesiastical affairs, interwoven in imperial history, was rather hard for a reader to find, and saw fit to make it stand out. They were probably aware that the work appealed to readers who had a great interest in Church history, as, for

[707] See, for example, no. 25: 254$^{r}$, 259$^{r}$ and 271$^{v}$; no. 30: pp. 18, 63, 71 and 89.
[708] See, for example, no. 5: 154$^{r}$, 161$^{v}$, 194$^{r}$, 198$^{r}$, 203$^{r}$, 211$^{r}$ and 242$^{v}$; no. 6: 197$^{v}$, 198$^{v}$, 200$^{v}$, 201$^{v}$, 207$^{v}$ and 238$^{r}$.

example, the author of the ecclesiastical chronicle in the *Oxon. Baroc. gr*. 25 or the priest Bolenos, who owned a copy of the *Epitome*, must have done.

No doubt, the most peculiar example of adding titles to the reigns of individual emperors comes from codex 30; here, the scribe, judging from his tidy and neat handwriting, was probably a professional. The headings opening the reign of a new ruler are very clearly visible; they are written with red ink and large letters. For twenty-one emperors, from Augustus to Macrinus, the copyist lists next to the name of the emperor a series of strange epithets, usually five to nine in number, which designate features of his appearance and, less frequently, traits of his personality. It is worth providing a couple of examples. The first is the heading given to the section dedicated to the reign of Tiberios: 'The monarchy of Tiberios, who was old, of medium height and slim, with curly hair, beautiful eyes, dark complexion, short hair and a somewhat flat nose. He ruled for twenty-two years and five months' ('μοναρχία Τιβερίου, ὃς μὲν γέρων, διμοιραῖος, λεπτός, οὖλος, εὐόφθαλμος, μελάγχρους, κοντόθριξ, ὑπόσιμος. οὗτος ἐκράτησεν ἔτη κβ΄, μῆνας ε΄'').[709] The title for the reign of Commodus is as follows: 'The reign of Commodus, son of Marcus, and what he looked like. He was of medium height and good size; he had fair skin, greyish eyes, broad face, a good chest and beautiful hair; he was blond with a short beard' ('βασιλεία Κομόδου υἱοῦ Μάρκου καὶ οἷος ἦν: διμοιραῖος, εὔογκος, λευκός, ὑπόγλαυκος, πλάτοψις, εὔστηθος, γλυκόθριξ, ξανθός, ἀρχιγένειος').[710]

The epithets of the headings are not present in Zonaras' narrative. The scribe derives them from an external source: the *Chronographia* of John Malalas, where they are used to characterise the same emperors.[711] Unlike the scribe of the

[709] *Oxon. Crom.* 24, p. 63.
[710] *Oxon. Crom.* 24, p. 113.
[711] In Malalas' text, similar epithets appear in connection not only with Roman emperors, but also with Greek and Trojan heroes, as well as with the Apostles: E. and Michael Jeffreys, 'Portraits', in *Studies*

manuscript, though, Malalas continues to embed into his text such epithets for the emperors after Macrinus. A possible explanation why the scribe stopped making use of them at that point would be that he did not have the entire chronicle of Malalas readily available to him. Another explanation could be that the commissioner of the manuscript, who supervised the copying of the chronicle, was not particularly satisfied with this practice. The scribe usually repeats all the epithets encountered in his source in the same order, but may sometimes omit or replace one with a simpler synonym of the same root. Here are some examples.

| | Malalas | *Oxon. Crom. 24* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| [Augustus] | 'κονδοειδὴς' | 'κοντὸς' | short |
| [Augustus] | 'εὔρινος' | 'εὖριν' | with a good nose |
| [Galba] | 'γρυπόρυγχος' | 'γρυπόρριν' | with a hooked nose |
| [Pertinax] | 'ὁλοπόλιος' | 'πολιὸς τὴν κάραν (και) τὸ γένειον' | totally grey haired |

It has been demonstrated that the *Chronographia* of Malalas was not a particularly well-known work among Byzantine readers.[712] The copyist found this material about Roman emperors in Malalas' chronicle and must have assumed it was unknown to his audience. Therefore, he decided to insert these pieces of information into his titles of Zonaras' account of Roman emperors. He probably considered them useful and interesting, and thought they would complement the text of Zonaras nicely.

In addition to the titles used by the scribes of these manuscripts, several items of marginalia also provide clues about readers' reactions and responses to Zonaras' narrative. Although he very rarely writes marginal scholia, the scribe of codex 11 feels that two extracts in the recording of Byzantine history need a word of comment. The first is the story of the iconoclast monk who was rumoured to have deceived the

---

*in John Malalas*, ed. by E. Jeffreys, B. Croke and R. Scott (Sydney, 1990), 231-43. Pp. 232-40 include a complete catalogue of all epithets along with their meanings, which has helped me to translate the two extracts of the Cromwell manuscript quoted above, and also the four epithets listed below.

[712] W. Treadgold, 'The Byzantine World Histories of John Malalas and Eustathius of Epiphania', *The International History Review*, 29 (2007), 709-45.

emperor Leo V the Armenian into resuming the campaign against the icons. Prior to his accession to the throne, Leo was said to have received a prophecy by a monk at Philomelion, who predicted his imperial destiny. After he took up the reins of the state, he sent gifts to the monk, who unbeknown to him had died some time before. A monk in his place warned the emperor to abolish the 'idols' lest he should fall from power very soon.[713] Struck by Zonaras' account of how the iconoclastic controversy was rekindled, the scribe notes in the margin of the manuscript: 'look at how powerful the Devil is' ('ὅρα πόσον ὁ Σατανὰς ἰσχύει').[714] He concludes from the text that this incident was a devilish deed, a belief he apparently wanted to make known to other readers who would read the codex after him. The second segment of the text that catches the scribe's attention is the edifying moral that the author himself draws from the unfortunate end of the emperor Romanos Lekapenos and his sons, namely that providence always punishes those who commit a crime. In the margin just below this segment, the scribe writes in red ink his own interpretation of Zonaras' moral: 'This word is fearful' ('φοβερὸν τὸ ῥῆμα').[715] Only rarely do we have such remarks that give us a glimpse of the emotional impact the text has on a reader. For the copyist, this is a formidable statement by Zonaras, which fills him with awe. In chapter 3, I argued that the chronicler deliberately interpolated Skylitzes, his source for the reign of the Lekapenoi, in order to highlight to his audience that the fate of the usurpers was a result of divine retribution.[716] This marginal comment demonstrates that he was successful in conveying, at least to some of his recipients, the ethical message of the story of the Lekapenoi.

[713] *Epitome*, III, 322.13-323.7.
[714] *Vind. hist. gr* 16, f. 382$^{v}$.
[715] *Vind. hist. gr*. 16, f. 415$^{r}$.
[716] See pp. 85-86.

There are a number of scholia in the margins of manuscript no. 1, which have been penned by different hands.[717] The majority of them were inscribed by a later reader, the one who composed the fairly lengthy commentary of the *Epitome* that appears in ff. 1$^{r}$-2$^{v}$ of the codex. Neither these scholia, nor the commentary, in other words, were written by the monk Mokios Taranes, the copyist of the manuscript. An extensive analysis of the commentary follows in the next part of this chapter.[718] Most marginal notes by this hand are cursorily written and hence difficult to read. Some of the passages that are of interest to this individual relate to the biblical contents of the chronicle. I offer a couple of examples. Reaching the story of the prophet from Judah who visited king Jeroboam I,[719] the reader records the *sticheron* of an ode chanted during Great Lent which concerns this particular prophet.[720] Another passage that he finds worthy of note is the one recounting how Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph. From Genesis and Zonaras too, we learn that, despite Joseph's displeasure, Jacob put his right hand on Ephraim, the younger boy, instead of Manasseh, the older one, because many nations would eventually descend from Ephraim.[721] Reading Zonaras' narrative, the unknown individual notes the following words in the margin of the manuscript: 'look at how blessing was given to the nations' ('ὅρα ὅπως τοῖς ἐξ ἐθνῶν ἐδόθη εὐλογία').[722] It should be mentioned here that this reader repeatedly begins his

[717] Astruc and Géhin, *Les manuscrits grecs*, 56-57, at 56.
[718] See pp. 221-29.
[719] *Epitome*, I, 153-54.
[720] The *sticheron*, in f. 45$^{v}$ of the *Par. gr.* 1715, is from the eighth ode chanted on Monday of the second week of the Great Lent. The reader writes: 'This *sticheron* is in the *Triodion*: Who ate long ago the man of God? The wild lion, because he (the man) accepted the food of disobedience due to the deceit of the Prophet. Be careful, my soul, do not be deceived by the snake of gluttony' ('τόδε τὸ στιχηρὸν ἐν τῷ τριοδίῳ: τίς βιβρώσκει θεοῦ τὸν ἄνθρωπον πάλαι; θὴρ ὁ λέων, ἐκ πλάνης τοῦ προφήτου παρακοῆς τὰ βρώματα δεξάμενον. Βλέπε οὖν, ψυχή μου, μή σε ἀπατήσῃ γαστριμαργίας ὄφις').
I have corrected the spelling mistakes and the punctuation of the scribe.
[721] *Epitome*, I, 51.
[722] See *Par. gr.* 1715, f. 14$^{r}$.

scholia by using the verb ‘ὅρα’ (meaning ‘look’, ‘note’), as if directly addressing subsequent readers of the manuscript.[723]

The short extract of the chronicle where Zonaras tells us that the emperor Leo VI the Wise was a fervent practitioner of divination and astronomy catches the eye of a later reader of codex 12, who, judging from his handwriting, can be dated to the fifteenth century.[724] Written in a careless fashion, his scholion at the margins of ff. 334$^{v}$-335$^{r}$ is hard to make out. As far as I can tell, it reads as follows:

> … of divination, philosophy, astronomy … astrology. Such were the seers of those times. You should look at the Roman emperors, also concerning their philosophers. Nobody practised divination without astronomy and philosophy and astrology.
>
> *** μαντείας καὶ σοφίας καὶ ἀστρονομίας *** ἀποτελεσματικ<ῆς>. Τοιοῦτοι ἦτον οἱ μάντεις τῶν καιρῶν ἐκείνων. Πρόσχες καὶ τοὺς Ῥωμαίους τοὺς βασιλεῖς καὶ περὶ φιλοσόφους· οὐδεὶς ἐμέτεχε μαντείας χωρὶς ἀστρονομίας καὶ φιλοσοφίας καὶ ἀποτελεσματικῆς.[725]

Receiving impetus from Leo’s aptitude for the ‘arts’ of foretelling the future, the commentator makes a general remark that in the past, at the time of the Roman emperors, nobody would practice divination without having knowledge of astronomy, philosophy and astrology. He implicitly criticises all those who, in his own time, could supposedly predict the future, but had no idea of astronomy and philosophy.

Codex 5 is worth detailed investigation as regards its marginalia. There exist three poems in the manuscript, all written in the popular dodecasyllabic verse and all penned by the scribe who copied the chronicle.[726] Located in the margins of f. 33$^{v}$ and f. 61$^{v}$, the first two are both six verses in length.[727] Prior to the poem in f. 33$^{v}$, we find the name of its composer: Constantine. I will elaborate on the identity of this person

---

[723] Such scholia are found, for instance, in ff. 57$^{v}$, 59$^{r}$ and 82$^{r}$ of the manuscript.
[724] *Epitome*, III, 445.14-446.1. The reader notes a mark beside this passage in the manuscript. He repeats the same mark in the top margin of the codex, where he inscribes his comment of the passage.
[725] I correct the spelling mistakes that appear in the text.
[726] For information on the manuscript, see footnote 703 above.
[727] Neither of these short poems has been edited in full. In their catalogue, Mercati and Franchi note only the first and the last verse of each poem: Mercati and Franchi, *Codices Vaticani*, 161-62.

shortly afterwards, discussing the longest poem found in the manuscript. The impetus for the poem in f. 33$^{v}$ comes from Zonaras' description of scaphism ('σκάφευσις'), a gruesome method of execution common among ancient Persians.[728] Taking material from the Plutarchean *Life of Artaxerxes*, the chronicler explains that victims subjected to the torture of scaphism would be fastened to a skiff and repeatedly stung by insects. Victims eventually died of sceptic shock.[729] Constantine's epigram is as follows:

> Of Constantine
> What a tub and trough of flesh, not dough,
> or also a furnace which dissolves flesh,
> or a tomb or some sepulchre made of wood!
> Oh bitterness, which gushes from honey
> and milk. It is not food, it is what feeds
> the worms that eat the one who is buried, oh my!
>
> Κωνσταντίνου
> βαβαὶ σκάφη καὶ μάκτρα σαρκὸς, οὐ ζύμης,
> ἢ καὶ κλίβανος ἐκδαπανώσας σάρκας,[730]
> ἢ τάφος ἢ σορός τις ἐκ ξυλουργίας·
> ὦ τοῦ μέλιτος ἐκβρύουσα πικρία
> καὶ τοῦ γάλακτος·[731] οὐ τροφὴ τὸ δὴ τρέφον
> σκώληκας οἴμοι τοῦ ταφέντος τοὺς φάγους.

The narrative about scaphism clearly made a vivid impression on Constantine. In an almost lamenting tone, the poet expresses how appalled he is by the cruel torture captives were subjected to.

The person who composes the verses in f. 61$^{v}$, a poem also of an elegiac character, is spurred by similar feelings. He is repulsed when reading that Herod the Great ordered the strangling of his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, who were

---

[728] *Epitome*, I, 223.12-224.15.

[729] For information on scaphism, see J. Lockwood, *Six-legged Soldiers: Using Insects As Weapons of War* (Oxford, 2009), 36.

[730] The last word of the verse is not very clear. It could be either 'σάρκας' or 'σάρκαν', with the first option being more plausible.

[731] The 'ἐκβρύω', instead of the common βρύω, is extremely rare. It is encountered only in an epigram of the grammarian and poet Constantine Stilbes, who was active in the last decades of the twelfth century and the first decades of the thirteenth: A. Kazhdan, 'Stilbes, Constantine', *ODB*, III, 1956-57. The epigram concerns a great fire that broke out in Constantinople: Constantine Stilbes, *Τοῦ Κωνσταντίνου μαΐστωρος καὶ διδασκάλου τοῦ Στιλβῆ στίχοι ἰαμβικοὶ ἐπὶ τῷ συμβάντι ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει θεηλάτῳ μεγάλῳ ἐμπρησμῷ μηνὶ Ἰουλίῳ κε΄ ἔτους ˏ ϛψε΄*, in, *Constantinus Stilbes Poemata*, ed. by J. Diethart and W. Hörandner (Munich, 2005), 8-51, at 12.94, 15.159, 38.773.

executed in about 7 BC.[732] Inspired by Zonaras' account of this episode, he writes the following verses:

> Oh, the former murderer of infants became murderer of (his) children
> [and], to express his wickedness in short, a murderer of men.
> A mind of leather or a heart of stone!
> Oh, a man who kills all people bears the name 'Herod'![733]
> You hate children, but animals love (their) children,
> oh, nature fiercer even than lions!
>
> τεκνοκτόνος, φεῦ, ὁ πρὸ τοῦ βρεφοκτόνος,
> τὸ πᾶν συνάξειν πικρὸν, ἀνθρωποκτόνος.
> νοῦς δερμάτινος ἢ λίθινος καρδία·
> φερωνύμως φεῦ ἡρώδης παντοκτόνος·
> σὺ μισοτεκνεῖς, φιλοτεκνεῖ θηρία,
> ὦ καὶ λεόντων ἀγριωτέρα φύσις.

The composer of the poem employs four compound nouns whose second part is a derivative of 'κτείνω' ('kill') to stress the atrociousness of Herod's crime. A detail about the use of the word 'μισοτεκνεῖς' should be mentioned. In the corresponding section of the *JW*, where Josephus recounts the execution of Alexander and Aristobulus by their father, Herod is called 'μισοτεκνότατος'.[734] The case is strong therefore that the composer must also have had access to the source on which the chronicler himself relied for his presentation of the Jewish past. We cannot know with certainty whether this poem, too, was created by Constantine, although it seems more likely that both marginal poems (or, as we shall see, all three poems found in the codex) were indeed composed by the same person. In any case, these two poems clearly show how a group of readers could be emotionally engaged by Zonaras' narrative and give vent to their feelings by composing their own pieces of writing.[735]

---

[732] *Epitome*, I, 451-52.

[733] This phrase is difficult to translate. 'Herod' is a name of Greek origin: see W. R. F. Browning, 'Herod', in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2009), ebook. Although its etymology is not clear, the word does not seem to have connotations of crime. To my mind, the poet may mean that the name 'Herod' has become synonymous with 'murderer'; when someone commits a hideous crime, he is characterised as a 'Herod'.

[734] Josephus, *JW*, 134.14 (Book 1, chapter 589).

[735] Another example of a manuscript in which we find short verses at the margins commenting on the historical works of the codex is the eleventh-century *Par. gr.* 1711: P. Odorico, 'Poésies à la marge,

Overall, this selective number of marginal comments in manuscripts of the *Epitome* indicates that many different parts of the text caught the attention of the audience and provoked various responses.

## 7.4. Two further testimonies to the reception of the chronicle

Aside from the marginal notes found in these manuscripts, there are two longer pieces of writing that can help us identify the elements which made the *Epitome* a popular work. The first of these is a prose text of an encomiastic character which is included in codex no 1 (*Par. gr.* 1715), the oldest manuscript that preserves the chronicle. The second is a poem comprising twenty-nine verses. It is transmitted in codex no 5 (*Vat. gr.* 136), along with the two short poems discussed above.

### 7.4.1. The prose text of codex no. 1 (*Par. gr.* 1715)

For the prose text, I use the term 'commentary', since its anonymous author provides us with extensive remarks about many things that attracted his attention in Zonaras' narrative. It was noted earlier that the commentary was produced by the same person who inscribed most scholia in the margins of the codex.[736] The text can, therefore, be securely dated to after 1289, when the copyist of the manuscript, Mokios Taranes, completed his task.[737] In the manuscript, the commentary precedes the *Epitome*, which starts on f. 3$^{r}$. Due to the fact that he did not have enough writing space, the author of the commentary added a folio at the beginning of the codex.[738] One would reasonably expect, therefore, that this person was the owner of the manuscript.

---

réflexions personnelles? Quelques observations sur les poésies du *Parisinus graecus* 1711', in *Poetry and its Contexts in Eleventh-century Byzantium*, ed. by F. Bernard and K. Demoen (Farnham, 2012), 207-24.

[736] See p. 218.

[737] Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 5-6 (note 19); Astruc and Géhin, *Les manuscrits grecs*, 57.

[738] Astruc and Géhin, *Les manuscrits grecs*, 57.

We are not given any specific clues about his identity. The commentary evidently came from the pen of a man who had received a good education and was able to use sophisticated grammar and vocabulary. The linguistic register of the text is similar to that of Zonaras – archaising middlebrow Greek. The author of the commentary makes frequent use of forms of the perfect (e.g. 'ἐντέταχε', 'ἀνεληλακώς', 'πεφρόντικεν', 'διαπέφευγε' etc.) and verbs in the optative (e.g. 'παραιτήσαιτο', 'θαυμάσειε', 'φαίνοιτ' ἄν', 'γνοίη' etc.). He is also familiar with difficult grammatical forms, such as passive aorists ('φιλοπονηθείσῃ', 'ἐξεδιαιτήθη', 'συνενεχθῆναι' etc.) and irregular aorists ('διέλωμαι', 'παρεθέμην', 'εἶλε', 'ἀναβῆναι', 'προείλετο' etc.). However, he does not write long periods. Neither does he employ rare Attic Greek vocabulary.

Assuming that this person was the owner of the manuscript, we can deduce that he must have been a wealthy man of letters who could afford to order the reproduction of a long text by a competent professional scribe. Grigoriadis considers it likely that the writer was a historian himself, since he seems well-acquainted with the stylistic qualities that a remarkable historical account should possess and by which it should be judged.[739] The scholar has put forward Niketas Choniates and Constantine Akropolites as possible candidates. The former, who lived and died much earlier than the date of the manuscript's production, must definitely be excluded.[740] There are strong indications that it was the latter, however. As was shown above, Constantine possessed a copy of Zonaras, as he made abundant use of the *Epitome* for his own chronicle. More than this, the manuscript he had at his disposal contained the entire chronicle, as is the case with codex 1. Constantine, moreover, would slightly paraphrase or repeat word for word the text of his source, from which one can infer

[739] Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 113-14.
[740] Kaltsogianni, Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 5-6.

that he admired the linguistic and literary virtues of Zonaras' account. Likewise, the remarks of the anonymous commentator reflect a high admiration for the chronicler's language. A man of Constantine's social status would surely have the financial means to order his own copy of Zonaras' work.[741] He was a well-known book collector, whose library included a remarkable variety of works, such as writings of Heraclitus, Aelius Aristides and poems of George Pisides.[742] A survey of his collection reveals that he was fond of different kinds of books which were 'stockpiles' of earlier texts; he possessed a copy of Andronikos Kamateros' *Sacred Arsenal* and is known to have requested from a friend to lend him an epitome of Aristotle's works in order to make his own copy.[743] Zonaras' *Epitome* could well fit into this pattern of interest. In all, there is a fair chance, in my view, that the commentary preceding the chronicle in codex 1 was penned by Constantine Akropolites.[744]

The commentary offers little prosopographical data about Zonaras. At the beginning of his text, the commentator expresses his intention to only briefly recount Zonaras' biography, which could be due to the fact that the contemporary literary audience probably knew much about him already. According to the commentator, Zonaras was of noble extraction and belonged to the aristocratic class. On account of his virtue and excellent rhetorical skills, the author was given great honours by the emperor and enjoyed the rare privilege of being able to talk to him with freedom. Whether these statements hold any truth is difficult to tell, since we have scarcely any information about Zonaras' career in the service of the Komnenoi. The fact that he

[741] From the will of Constantine Akropolites, we learn that he had inherited a substantial amount of money from his father, George Akropolites, which allowed him to live comfortably and devote himself to learning. The will, along with two other texts of Constantine Akropolites, has been edited by Maximilian Treu: C. Akropolites, *Διαθήκη τοῦ μεγάλου λογοθέτου Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ Ἀκροπολίτου*, ed. by M. Treu, in 'Νέος κῶδιξ τῶν ἔργων τοῦ μεγάλου λογοθέτου Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ Ἀκροπολίτου', *Δελτίον της Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρείας της Ελλάδος*, 4 (1892), 45-49, at 48.
[742] Konstantinidis, *Higher Education*, 144-45.
[743] Ibid.
[744] Astruc and Géhin, too, argue that the treatise was composed by a scholar at the first quarter of the fourteenth century: Astruc and Géhin, *Les manuscrits grecs*, 57.

was entrusted with high offices in bureaucracy certainly indicates an appreciation of his talents by the central government. That said, rhetoric seems to have got the better of reality in this case. The commentator tries to emphasise Zonaras' close relationship with the emperor as a means of exalting him. If we accept that the author of this text is indeed Constantine Akropolites, he may well be projecting his own profile onto the encomium of the chronicler here. Much like the image he draws of Zonaras, Akropolites came from an aristocratic family, received an exceptional education and occupied an enviable position in the court of Andronikos Palaiologos, who honoured him with very high offices in state administration. In telling us that Zonaras was allowed to speak freely to the emperor, Constantine may reveal how his own relationship with Andronikos was, or how he would have wished it to be. Noteworthy, apart from this, is the allusion made by the commentator to the actual reasons why Zonaras took monastic vows. The commentator tells us that Zonaras came to this decision realising how unstable human affairs can be and that, when he withdrew from public life, he did not turn against those who had caused him trouble. The commentator is clearly of the impression that, prior to his retirement, Zonaras had experienced a drastic change in his circumstances, and also some animosity against him.

The chronicler's idiosyncratic literary and linguistic style is one of the key issues discussed in the text.[745] Expressing his admiration for Zonaras, the commentator enumerates a long list of stylistic virtues which characterise the chronicle and, according to him, are befitting a historical account. The most significant of these are clarity, a balance between a flat and a closely-knit style, solemnity, conciseness, pleasantness, sweetness, flexibility and pureness of

[745] This section of the treatise was translated into English and subsequently analysed by Grigoriadis: Grigoriadis, *Studies*, 114-16.

expression. In contrast to Constantine Manasses, who found Zonaras' narrative too austere and tried in his own way to make it more ornate and attractive, the commentator regards the chronicler's vocabulary as flowery and rich. Although he acknowledges that the *Epitome* is not a rhetorical masterpiece, he highlights that Zonaras' linguistic register represents a deliberate authorial choice. In composing his work, Zonaras does not wish to flaunt his skills in language. Instead, he aims to produce an account which will aid men to better their lives, adopting a writing style conducive to this goal. Thus, the commentator turns against those authors, primarily historians, who seem to care more for rhetorical elaboration than for providing useful and valuable advice.

In addition to these, he devotes a long paragraph to the presentation of the work's contents, where he makes it clear how he conceives the thematic organisation of the text. According to the commentator, Zonaras structures his account into histories of peoples and empires: the history of Jews, and the histories of the Persian Empire, the Macedonian Empire under Alexander the Great, and the Roman Empire. The author of the treatise departs significantly from the way in which Zonaras presents the thematic arrangement of his composition. In the *Epitome*'s proem, the chronicler explains the division of the work into two broad sections, Jewish and Roman, and introduces the subjects of the Persian and the Macedonian rule in relation to the history of Jerusalem. The commentator, though, perceives the extensive digressions on Cyrus and Alexander as independent sections. His understanding of the text as a sequence of Jewish, Persian, Macedonian and Roman history calls to mind the apocalyptic visions of Daniel, which predicted the historical sequence of four empires: the Babylonian, the Persian, the Greek under Alexander the Great, and the

Roman. The author of the treatise might have thought that Zonaras structured his text according to this pattern.

What he adds after this clearly echoes the preamble of the chronicle: that Zonaras recounts not only the acts of the emperors, but also those of the patriarchs. He approvingly comments that the chronicler was right to point out instances when a churchman trespassed against the laws.

Prior to these remarks on the structure of the *Epitome*, the writer of the commentary lists a series of topics he identifies in the text. These topics include stories of lands, rivers and cities, as well as the deeds and dispositions of men. According to the commentator, the narrative also features wars and naval battles, explaining how armies would be positioned on the battlefield and relating the events that occurred prior to a certain combat. Here we encounter yet another contrast to what Zonaras writes in his preface. Echoing the chronicler's own views, the acquaintances who instigated him to compose the *Epitome* disapprove of long historical narratives discussing battles, strategies and tactics. This obviously indicates that Zonaras' work does not emulate previous histories and avoids elaborating on such themes. The fact that the author of the treatise makes special mention of them, however, indicates that they certainly appealed to him. More than that, he understands military history to be at the core of Zonaras' narrative, a significant topic on which one can derive information from the chronicle.

Perhaps the most remarkable conclusions drawn from the commentary concern the reasons why the chronicle is worth reading. Two related yet distinct reasons are given by the commentator. The first relates to the inherent ethical and moral merit of the chronicle, a feature that is keenly emphasised from the first sentence of the text: '…from the stories themselves that are included in the present

book, it is obvious that the book constitutes a school of virtue' ('διδασκαλεῖον καθέστηκεν ἀρετῆς ἡ παροῦσα βίβλος, αὐτόθεν καὶ ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἐστι πρόδηλον τῶν αὐτῶν ἐμφερομένων διηγημάτων').[746] The *Epitome*, according to the commentator, may teach readers about various aspects of human affairs and guide them towards the best courses of action. One can also learn about how unexpectedly a man's life can change. The commentator underlines that the work speaks of both virtues and vices, offering 'representations both of what is good and what is the opposite' ('ἀμφοτέρων γὰρ εἰκόνας, τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἐναντίου').[747] He, thus, suggests that the text deserves to be studied because it offers models for imitation as well as avoidance. It should be stressed that the chronicle is understood by the commentator to have an educational value as a whole, as a composition which includes material from Christian but also from pagan writers.

The second reason why the *Epitome* is useful is that it is distinctively practical in character.[748] The work is said to focus very much on practical matters. It demonstrates how one should combine theoretical and practical knowledge and, thus, accomplish one's duties. The commentator classifies four categories of readers who could benefit from these instructions: private citizens, generals, emperors and archpriests. This shows that, for him, the chronicle was intended for a wide readership, in the sense that it could recommend itself to the needs of people in different social positions. The view that individuals who occupy a certain office should act in a way appropriate to their station mirrors Zonaras', who, in his critique of Alexios Komnenos, claims that a leader is required to exhibit different qualities to those of a common citizen. The commentator does not specify what kind of things a private man and a general can learn from the chronicle. The text, according to him,

[746] *Commentary in the Par. gr. 1715*, 567.2-4.
[747] *Commentary in the Par. gr. 1715*, 568.1.
[748] *Commentary in the Par. gr. 1715*, 570.34-571.17.

advises archpriests to adhere firmly to orthodox beliefs and keep the body of the faithful safe. What is most striking, though, is that the author of the treatise explains in great detail how the work provides guidance to an emperor and describes how a ruler should or should not behave. He clearly believes that the chronicle is addressed to emperors: 'it [the book] urges emperors not to succumb to pleasures…' ('παραινεῖ δὲ μὴ πρὸς ἡδονὰς ἐκκλίνειν τοὺς βασιλέας…').[749] He says the text teaches that a ruler should always conform to the laws, care for the state, and be lenient towards his subjects, as well as to think hard and labour to take the best action. Also, emperors should disdain money, avoid burdening people with excessive taxation and entrust the government of public affairs to worthy people. This part of the treatise contains obvious echoes of Zonaras' *Kaiserkritk* of Alexios, particularly in terms of a leader's fiscal policy, his duty to put the common good above his own and to assign offices based on merit. One may suggest that the commentator essentially perceives the *Epitome* as a 'mirror for princes', a text which discusses the makings of the ideal ruler.

The question that naturally follows these considerations has to do with the purpose of the commentary: why was it penned, and to whom might it have been addressed? Taking into account its place – on the first pages of the manuscript – and its overall content (basic information about the work's author, style, subjects and value), one can conclude that it was apparently written to serve as an introduction to the *Epitome*. The reasons which prompted probably the owner of the codex to compose this introductory piece are open to discussion, since the treatise itself does not provide any details of the occasion. In my opinion, it is likely that the owner would do so if he intended to offer or lend it to a friend, a colleague or a student. In

[749] *Commentary on the Epitome*, 570.43–44.

this case, he would see fit to make a preliminary presentation of the work for the sake of his addressee and also give his own interpretation of it. This hypothesis is also supported by the scholia written by the commentator in the margins of the codex. As was observed earlier, many of his comments start with the verb 'ὅρα',[750] which may be an indication that he is directing these remarks to a person who would read the manuscript after him.

On the whole, this commentary offers a rare view of the reception of the *Epitome* by a reader who lived approximately one and a half centuries after the work's publication. Like the recipients Zonaras had in mind when he wrote his text, this reader was a learned man. He is particularly impressed by the linguistic register of the narrative, which, according to him, is perfectly compatible with Zonaras' purpose, namely to compose a work of a didactic character. Indeed, the commentator does not emphasise the historical value of the chronicle so much as the educational one, stressing that it provides advice on ethical conduct as well as practical matters. For him, these are the principal reasons why the *Epitome* should be read. Notably, moreover, he approaches certain aspects of the text in ways substantially different to the chronicler's agenda, as this is outlined in the *Epitome*'s preface. He largely perceives the work as a string of individual histories of distinct civilisations, rather than a compendium of Jewish and Roman history, and takes an interest in the events of military history which are recounted in the work, subjects that Zonaras does not find appealing in a historical account.

[750] See pp. 217-18.

## 7.4.2. The poem of codex no. 5 (*Vat. gr.* 136)

The longest of the three poems contained in manuscript no. 5 deserves particular notice for its contents and the indications it offers about the circulation of the chronicle.[751] Written in dodecasyllabic metre by the copyist of the codex, the poem does not bear a title. Like the one written in f. 33$^{v}$, it is preceded by the name of its author: Constantine. In the seventeenth century, it came to the attention of Leo Allatius, who copied it in ff. 9$^{r-v}$ of the codex *Vat. barb. gr.* 74 and added 'To John Zonaras' ('εἰς Ιωάννην τὸν Ζωναρᾶν') as a title.[752]

The poem is a book epigram, a type of poem which is usually found at the beginning or in the colophon of a manuscript and relates to the text or texts that are included in it. Oddly enough, the epigram is located between the first and the second volume of the chronicle, in f. 101$^{v}$ of the codex. It is comparable to some extent to an anonymous book epigram contained in the *Par. gr.* 1640, an early fourteenth-century manuscript that preserves Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and *Anabasis*.[753] This codex draws on a prototype produced in the late ninth or early tenth century, during the reign of Leo VI to whom it was donated. The epigram was composed by the scribe of the original manuscript and was transmitted along with Xenophon's works contained there.[754] In the Paris manuscript, the epigram is placed between the *Cyropaedia* and

[751] The poem has been edited by Pietro Leone in 'Miscellanea Critica (I)'. The quotations of the poem which appear below are taken from Leone's edition, unless otherwise indicated. The poem has also been edited in the *DBBE* (consulted 02/03/2017), www.dbbe.ugent.be/occ/1023. The *DBBE* offers different readings of some verses of the poem, which, however, do not affect its meaning.

[752] As Leone has pointed out, Allatius made very few amendments to the poem: Leone, 'Miscellanea Critica (I)', 65.

[753] Pérez Martín, 'The Reception of Xenophon', 823-28; Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry*, 208-12; Markopoulos, 'Ἀποσημειώσεις'.

[754] There has been a debate among scholars who studied and commented on the epigram of the *Par. gr.* 1640 as to the content of the original manuscript. Both Markopoulos and Lauxtermann believe that it must have included the *Cyropaedia* as well as the *Anabasis*, whereas Pérez-Martín argues that the manuscript presented to Leo VI contained the *Anabasis* alone, which was preceded by the epigram: Markopoulos, 'Ἀποσημειώσεις', 196-97; Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry*, 210. Pérez-Martín, 'Xenophon', 824.

the *Anabasis*, at f. 123$^{v}$. What is remarkable, though, is that the poem attached to the manuscript of the *Epitome* is placed between the two volumes of the same text. As we shall see below, it is purposely located at this point because it pertains to the contents of the first volume only.

Writing in the first person, Constantine addresses Zonaras, who is the imaginary recipient of his composition. The poem has a clearly encomiastic character. Its laudatory tone becomes apparent in the first two verses, where the poet addresses Zonaras and hails him as a writer who stands out among his fellow chroniclers: 'You are to be greatly thanked for your great labours, / John, the wonder of chronographers' ('Χάρις μακρά σοι τῶν μακρῶν πόνων χάριν / Ἰωάννη, τὸ θαῦμα τῶν χρονογράφων'). The epigram begins in a striking manner, namely with the use of an adnomination, a rhetorical scheme in which words of the same grammatical root are repeated. Here, two forms of the noun 'χάρις' and the adjective 'μακρός,-ά,-όν' make their appearance within one verse. The choice of the word 'χάρις' in connection with the name 'Ἰωάννης' is deliberate, since, according to the Byzantines, the name was associated with grace.[755] The poet continues by explaining why he benefited from reading the *Epitome*: the work provided him with knowledge, literally 'cognitive food' ('γνωστικὴν τροφὴν').[756] From this statement, it emerges that, in Constantine's opinion, the importance of the *Epitome* derives from its value as a source of information.

---

[755] Indicative of this is the epithet 'χαριτώνυμος', meaning 'the one who is named after grace', which is often used by authors to refer to a person called John. For example, the emperor John II Komnenos is characterised by Theodore Prodromos as the 'the offspring of the holy porphyra who is named after grace' ('ὁ χαριτώνυμος βλαστὸς τῆς ἱερᾶς πορφύρας'): see Theodore Prodromos, *Τῷ μεγαλονίκῳ αὐτοκράτορι κυρῷ Ἰωάννῃ τῷ Κομνηνῷ*, in *Historische Gedichte*, 331.22. In his chronicle, Ephraem of Ainos writes that Irene, the daughter of Theodore I Laskaris, was given as a bride 'to a man of the Vatatzes family who is named after grace' ('ἀνδρὶ χαριτωνύμῳ Βατάτζῃ'), namely the future emperor John III Vatatzes: Ephraem, *Historia Chronica*, 279.7868-69.

[756] Having examined the manuscript on microfilm myself, I believe that this verse clearly reads: 'ἀνήροτόν μοι γνωστικὴν τροφὴν δίδως' ('[you] gave me raw cognitive food'). Leone misreads 'ἀνήρατόν' instead of 'ἀνήροτόν', whereas the *DBBE* offers the reading 'ἀνήροταί'.

It is very common to find dedicatory epigrams addressed to the person to whom the manuscript would be gifted, but quite rare to encounter book epigrams addressed to the author whose works are included in the codex. For example, the anonymous composer of the epigram in the *Par. gr.* 1640 directs a line at Xenophon, saying: 'Speak up, Xenophon, in support of what I am saying!' ('λέγε Ξενοφῶν τῷ λόγῳ συνηγόρει!').[757] Still, this is only one verse, not an entire poem. Constantine, however, appeared to favour this practice of composing epigrams which would praise the works he was copying. Ioannis Vassis has identified him as the same Constantine who wrote an epigram of four verses commenting on the third polemic of Theodore of Stoudios against iconoclasts.[758] There, too, Constantine writes in the first person and addresses his words to 'father' Theodore, who is extolled for being 'a spiritual spring of most wise lessons, / which spouts streams of orthodox dogmas' ('Πηγὴ νοητῶν πάνσοφων διδαγμάτων / βλύζουσα κρουνοὺς ὀρθοδόξων δογμάτων'). This metaphor of a text as something – either a spring or a vessel – which contains precious knowledge makes its appearance in both of Constantine's epigrams, as will be shown shortly.

In the epigram dedicated to the *Epitome*, the chronicler is also praised on account of his method. Zonaras, we read, 'would collect honey from flowers in the manner of a bee' ('τὸν μελίσσης ἀνθολεκτήσας τρόπον'). In turn, Constantine, as a reader of the work, is compared to a beekeeper who reaps the honey harvest, the results of Zonaras' labours. In ancient and Medieval Greek literature, images of flowers and bees frequently appear in relation to poetic texts and anthologies of poetry and prose. Indicative of the wide use of these motifs in such literary contexts is that several Byzantine anthologies have come down to us today with the title *Melissa*;

[757] The translation of this verse can be found in Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry*, 209.
[758] I. Vassis, *Initia carminum Byzantinorum* (Berlin, 2005), 616. The epigram has been published in *PG*, 99, 435-36.

examples are the famous *Melissa* of Antony and the collection formerly known as *Melissa Augustana*.[759] The fact that the poet employs this imagery in connection with a prose text essentially implies that he regards Zonaras' chronicle as a compilation of earlier authors. More than this, it serves to show that, much like a compilator chooses certain poems over others to incorporate in an anthology, Zonaras included in his account only a select amount of the material he found in his source texts. Constantine highlights, moreover, that Zonaras displayed the data he had collected in such a concise manner that readers, including him, are able to learn about a series of subjects 'very quickly' ('ἐπι τρόχου'). According to the poet, in other words, Zonaras put together his compilation for a specific purpose: to offer information in a succinct format. The *Epitome* is understood to be a useful compendium of carefully selected pieces from older accounts.

What follows next in the epigram is an outline of the topics presented in the first volume of the chronicle and a list of some significant sources used by Zonaras in this part of his work. Constantine tells us that, by reading the *Epitome*, he learned about the Octateuch and the Books of Kings, Chronicles, Esther, Judith, Tobit and Esdras. He would certainly be familiar with the content of the Old Testament books, but the point he makes here is that, through the *Epitome*, he was able to go through them very quickly. Apart from the Old Testament, the only other source he acknowledges is Josephus' *JA*. It should be remembered that these are the sole works Zonaras himself names as his sources in the proem of his chronicle. The poet says, in addition, that he learned of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, the Persian rulers

[759] Both collections depend on the *Loci Communes*, the sacro-profane collection of Pseudo-Maximos. The *Melissa* of Antony, dated perhaps to the eleventh century, has been edited in *PG*, 136, 765-1244. The *Melissa Augustana* or, as the collection is better-known nowadays, the *Florilegium Baroccianum* or *Florilegium Monacense*, has been edited by É. Sargologos, *Florilège sacro-profane du Pseudo-Maxime* (Hermoupolis, 2001). In general for the use of *Melissa* as a title to anthologies, see E. Jeffreys and A. Kazhdan, 'Melissa', *ODB*, II, 1335.

Cyrus, Xerxes and Cambyses, the Macedonian expansion in the time of Alexander and the division of the Macedonian Empire. These themes also appear in the preface of the *Epitome*, where Zonaras makes special mention of all these rulers (save Cambyses). Finally, concerning the history of the Roman state, we read that Constantine came to know about 'the four types of Latin leadership' ('τὴν Λατίνων τετράτην αὐταρχίαν') and 'the various Roman generalships'('Ῥωμαϊκὴν ποικίλην στρατηγίαν'). The term 'αὐταρχία', a word repeatedly employed by the chronicler in the course of his narrative of Rome, is encountered in the proem as well, when Augustus is said to have triumphed at the Battle of Actium, returned to Rome and 'gained the leadership' ('τῆς αὐταρχίας ἀντεποιήσατο'**)** of the state. In the epigram, in combination with 'τετράτην', which literally means fourth, the term must designate the four types of Roman government identified in the preface and elsewhere too, namely kingship, tyranny, aristocracy and republic. In other words, Constantine learned from Zonaras about the development of the Roman political system. From these observations, it can be inferred that Constantine composed his epigram mainly based on the preamble of the chronicle. No doubt he found it more efficient to rely on the proem, where Zonaras summarises the major themes of his work and records some of his most important sources, rather than trying to recall or search back in his bulky manuscript for such information.

The final eight verses of the epigram are extremely interesting, for they reinforce the conclusion that, already from the thirteenth century, the two volumes of the *Epitome* circulated separately. The poet expresses his keen disappointment at not having the second volume of the chronicle at his disposal. Having been captivated by Zonaras' narrative, he wants to read the entire text. He desires to learn about 'the emperors of the new Romans' ('βασιλέας... Αὐσόνων νέων'), Constantine the Great

and the emperors who reigned after him. Constantine is vaguely aware of the contents of the chronicle's second volume. He would certainly have read Zonaras' outline of the Roman and Byzantine material of his work in the *Epitome*'s preface. Also, he could have heard parts of the second volume being recited at the *theatra*. The epigram ends with Constantine wondering how he will manage to acquire the part of the text that is not available to him: 'how, how will I receive the missing part of the sweet-flowing narrative?' ('ποῦ ποῦ τὸ λεῖπον τῆς μελιρροίας λάβω;')

These remarks on the content of the epigram may help us to focus more closely on the circumstances surrounding its production. From an examination of the handwriting in ff. $2^{r}$-$101^{r}$ (the first volume of the chronicle), $101^{v}$ (the epigram) and $102^{r}$-$216^{r}$ (the second volume of the chronicle), I have deduced that the entire manuscript was copied by the same hand. Also, in ff. $110^{r}$ and $125^{v}$ one can clearly make out the quire numbers: β΄ and γ΄, respectively. This evidence attests that the part of the codex which transmits the second volume was produced separately by the same scribe who copied the manuscript of the first volume. Some time later, the two manuscripts were bound together. The epigram, in other words, is located at the colophon of the initial codex, which preserved only the first volume of the *Epitome*. Its position in that manuscript is related to its purpose. The concluding verses, containing the phrases 'thirst', 'ask', and 'how, how will I receive…?', show that the poem was essentially a request. The person who composed or commissioned the composition of the epigram had read the first volume, but did not have access to the second one. Through this epigram, he expressed his desire to read the rest of the work. Understandably, the poem would be read by those who accessed the manuscript. These would be learned friends of the manuscript's owner, to whom he had lent his copy of the *Epitome*. It is also plausible that he would recite the epigram along with

sections of the chronicle in the *theatra* he attended, and would thus appeal to other members of his literary circle to provide him with the rest of Zonaras' work. Almost contemporary to the manuscript that included the first volume of the *Epitome*, the epigram should by extension be dated to the thirteenth century.

Concerning the identity of Constantine, the person whose name is inscribed before the epigram under consideration here as well as before the one in f. 33$^{v}$, there exist three possibilities. First, Constantine might have been the owner of the manuscript and composed the epigrams himself. In this case, the scribe who copied the chronicle was asked by Constantine to copy his poems into the manuscript. A second possibility would be that Constantine was the copyist of the manuscript. He was commissioned by the owner of the codex to compose a poem that aimed to serve as a request for the second volume of the *Epitome*. Finally, it is plausible that Constantine was both the owner and the copyist of the manuscript.

Leone has remarked that the language of the text is a mixture of words derived from the *koine* and the ancient Greek literary tradition. The poet shows his creativity by inventing the new compound terms 'ἀνθολεκτήσας', 'ἀρχαιόλεκτα' and 'μελιρροίας', which are all *hapax legomena* in Greek literature. The vocabulary in the concluding verses of the chronicle is taken from the context of drinking and thirst. The poet stresses that he is 'thirsting to drink the entire, later part of the narrative' ('διψῶ τὸν ἑξῆς ἐκπιεῖν ὅλον ῥόα') and compares the book in its current incomplete form to 'a narrow vessel' ('ἄγγος ἐστενωμένον') which 'did not entirely contain inside the immense flow (of words)' ('ἔστεξεν οὐ πάνυ ἔνδον ἄπλετον χύμα'). The abrupt stop of the text leaves him 'thirsty' for the rest of Zonaras' narrative. The image of Zonaras' work as a vessel makes us recall the metaphor used in the other epigram attributed to Constantine, that of Theodore of Stoudios' text as a spring from

which precious knowledge gushed forth. Constantine would apparently draw on common literary *topoi*. The use of such language in the epigram dedicated to Zonaras aims, of course, to underline the intense desire on the part of the poet to obtain the second volume of the *Epitome*. In terms of metrical structure, the literary quality of the verses is not particularly high. Constantine makes demonstrable mistakes in the length of the vowels, not only of the 'δίχρονα' alpha, iota and upsilon, but also of the long and short vowels.[760] Despite the metrical flaws of his epigram, though, Constantine must have been a relatively well-read individual who had studied the language of ancient Greek authors, and was also aware of the *topoi* of poetic tradition.

## Final remarks

To sum up, it is necessary to bring together all the evidence collected from later literary sources that drew on the *Epitome* and from numerous manuscripts which preserve the text, and pinpoint the reasons why the chronicle was such a huge success among Byzantine readers.

To begin with, it was a very useful compendium, since it dealt with a wide array of subjects. Indicative of this is that most patrons who commissioned a copy of the chronicle were interested in accessing the whole text and therefore asked for the reproduction of both volumes, instead of one of the two or even shorter parts of the work. The variety of topics which, according to the commentator in the *Par. gr.* 1715 (no. 1), are covered by the chronicler exemplifies this perception of the work as a broad textbook. Readers, moreover, could derive substantial information about these subjects quite quickly, as Constantine, the composer of the epigram contained in the *Vat. gr.* 136 (no. 5), remarks.

[760] Leone, 'Miscellanea Critica (I)', 64.

Closely related to this point is that the *Epitome* was considered to be a very significant and reliable historical source for authors to exploit in their own works. Writers who aspired to compose a universal chronicle themselves would depend heavily on Zonaras' account of Jewish, Roman and Byzantine history. To those who sought to recount the history of the Church, furthermore, the chronicle offered a rich vein of material concerning ecclesiastical affairs. It would also accommodate the interests of readers who wanted to learn more about a particular historical period. As has been shown in the study of the codices that do not transmit the entire text, for instance, the *Epitome* attracted much attention as a source of imperial history. It was certainly of crucial importance to readers who commissioned for themselves manuscripts on world history.

A further remarkable reason that accounts for the high esteem in which the chronicle was held is its ethical tone. Very enlightening in this respect is the characterisation of Zonaras as 'most wise' that we encounter in the ecclesiastical chronicle of the Barocci manuscript, as well as the understanding of Zonaras' account of the Lekapenoi as a moral lesson, in the case of the scribe of the *Vind. hist. gr.* 16. The author of the commentary in codex no. 1 also expresses the view that the chronicle offers valuable pieces of advice concerning human life and constitutes a practical guide as to how people of a different status should behave.

Finally, the linguistic register of the *Epitome* certainly contributed to its popularity. It is once again the anonymous commentator who concisely explains the effectiveness of Zonaras' language; the chronicler writes in a clear, not overly rhetorical style that befits a historical account. If we accept that Constantine Akropolites is indeed the author of the commentary, this must be the reason why, in his own chronicle, he copies Zonaras almost word for word. In any case, the fact that

later chroniclers (Manasses, Glykas, Ephraem of Ainos, Constantine Akropolites) would draw on the language of the text attests to their appreciation of the *Epitome* as a literary product.

This overview illustrates then that Zonaras' chronicle became widely popular in the Byzantine world for various reasons. Essentially, it was because the work corresponded to the tastes, the needs and the aims of many different readers. It appealed to audiences of different social backgrounds, namely secular men of letters, churchmen and monks, able to understand a text written in middle brow Greek.

Notwithstanding the success of the *Epitome*, there existed certain 'defects' facing readers. The most significant problem presented by the text was certainly its length. The chronicle must have been originally divided into long sub-sections, which made the text extremely inconvenient to read. An additional consequence of this was that audiences interested in Church history, for example, would find it extremely hard to search for such information within a lengthy narrative. Scribes who copied the chronicle tried to deal with these by splitting Zonaras' account into shorter sections and adding a number of titles.

## OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Through the analysis of the *Epitome* in my thesis, I hope to have shed light on some important aspects of this chronicle, which, though a popular and well-known text among the Byzantines, has been little studied by modern scholars. This examination can help to draw some broader conclusions about the profile of Zonaras and also about the overall character of his historical account.

Zonaras lived and wrote at a time when the Empire was at a turning point. The Komnenian style of rulership had brought about significant changes in government and military administration. At the same time, the establishment of trade treaties between Byzantium and the Italian city states, as well as the Crusades, led to a stream of Westerners arriving in the imperial capital. This historical background impacted, directly or indirectly, on various aspects of the *Epitome*: the author's political ideas, the choice of source material and the emphasis on particular subjects. Zonaras shows himself to be a man of his time – his concerns echo discussions among his contemporaries. He was brave enough to openly express his political views and condemn what he considered the mismanagement of public affairs by the ruling dynasty. He was versatile as an author, composing texts in various literary genres. His critical and analytical skills can be seen in the way in which he collects, selects and adapts materials from different sources to create a composite narrative.

A good way of characterising the *Epitome* is as a 'hybrid composition', a work which combines elements of two different yet interconnected literary traditions: of chronicle writing and historiography. The text presents the external features of a chronicle: it starts with the Creation of the world and extends as far as Zonaras' own days, it makes heavy use of earlier material, and it is written in middlebrow Greek. The author consciously follows conventions typical of chronicles; he does not include

lengthy speeches in his narrative, and avoids writing in an erudite and difficult style as a means of displaying his rhetorical training. His goal behind this was to broaden the readership of his work beyond a narrow audience of highly educated intellectuals to a larger group of relatively cultivated readers.

Nevertheless, the *Epitome* has qualities that set it apart from other chronicles, such as those by John Malalas, Theophanes, Michael Glykas and Ephraem of Ainos for example, bringing Zonaras' text close to classicising historiographies. While remaining within the boundaries of middlebrow Greek, Zonaras composes an account in an elevated, sophisticated literary style. In his narrative, we find linguistic features of Attic Greek prose which would certainly appeal to the intellectual elite. Much like authors of historiographies who recounted recent or contemporary events, Zonaras elaborates on the political context of his own time, commenting on and criticising the reformations of Alexios Komnenos. He also breaks the mould of chronographic tradition by devoting a lengthy part of his narrative to the Roman Republic, a period which almost every other chronicler dealt with in brief. He shows an avid interest in the institutions of the republican form of government and sets it as his goal to make clear to his audience the way that Roman political constitutions evolved over time.

An additional reason why the work can be called a 'hybrid' is because it combines two distinct historical accounts: the first is dedicated to Jewish history or, from the Byzantines' perspective, early Christian history, and the second focuses on the Roman past. Unlike other authors of universal chronicles, who mingle Jewish and Roman materials, Zonaras divides the history of the people of Israel and the antiquities of the Romans into two clearly defined sections. This highlights that, according to Zonaras, the early history of Christianity merits separate investigation and presentation.

Oddly enough, these final remarks lead us back to the title of the thesis: ‘A Compendium of Jewish-Roman History’. An idea that is emphasised by the author at the beginning of his text is that of brevity; by abridging his source material, Zonaras sought to compose a narrative which would offer in summary the essentials of early Christian and Roman history. Including only significant information in his narrative, he aimed to produce a useful account for his audience. In this sense, it was a short yet complete ‘guide’ to Jewish-Roman history. The accessible linguistic register of the chronicle served this functional purpose.

In other words, the *Epitome* is neither a typical chronicle nor a proper high-style historiography, but a creation which seamlessly merges the two traditions. This unique character of Zonaras’ text certainly made the work stand out and helped to endear the text to Byzantine readers. This evaluation of the *Epitome* as a work with its own individual qualities and features, rather than simply a compilation of earlier sources, indicates that Byzantine chronicles deserve to be investigated in their own right as both literary compositions and historical accounts.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## 1. Manuscripts*

Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, codex pluteus graecus 70.4 (= *Laur. plut. gr.* 70.4)

London, British Library, additional codex 28828 (= *Lond. BL, Add.* 28828)

Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, codex graecus 324 (= *Monac. gr.* 324)

Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, codex graecus 325 (= *Monac. gr.* 325)

Oxford, Bodleian Library, codex Baroccianus graecus 025 (= *Oxon. Baroc. gr.* 25)

Oxford, Bodleian Library, Cromwell codex 24 (= *Oxon. Crom. gr.* 24)

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, codex graecus 1714 (= *Par. gr.* 1714)

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, codex graecus 1715 (= *Par. gr.* 1715)

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, codex graecus 1717 (= *Par. gr.* 1717)

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, codex graecus 1768 (= *Par. gr.* 1768)

Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, codex vaticanus graecus 0136 (= *Vat. gr.* 136)

Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, codex palatinus graecus 271 (= *Vat. pal. gr.* 271)

Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, codex historicus graecus 016 (= *Vind. hist. gr.* 16)

## 2. Primary sources

Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rerum gestarum libri qui supersunt*, ed. by W. Seyfarth (Stuttgart, 1999)

Akropolites, Constantine, *Chronicle* (excerpts), ed. by A. Heinrich, in *Die Chronik des Johannes Sikeliota der Wiener Hofbibliothek. Jahresbericht des K. K. ersten Staats-Gymnasiums in Graz* (Graz, 1892), 10-15 (= Akropolites, *Chronicle*)

—— *Διαθήκη τοῦ μεγάλου λογοθέτου Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ Ἀκροπολίτου*, ed. by M. Treu, in ‘Νέος κῶδιξ τῶν ἔργων τοῦ μεγάλου λογοθέτου Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ

* The manuscripts included in the bibliography are only those I had access to and examined myself. The manuscripts about which information were derived from library catalogues are not included.

Ἀκροπολίτου', *Δελτίον της Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρείας της Ελλάδος*, 4 (1892), 45-49

Akropolites, George, *Opera*, ed. by A. Heisenberg (Leipzig, 1903)

*Anonymous Commentary on the Epitome in the Par. gr. 1715*, ed. by M. Pinder, in *Epitome*, I, 567-71 (= *Commentary in the Par. gr. 1715*)

Antony, *Melissa*, *PG*, 136, 765-1244

Attaleiates, Michael, *Historia*, ed. by I. Pérez Martín (Madrid, 2002) (= Attaleiates, *Historia*)

—— *Ponema Nomikon*, in *Jus Graecoromanum* ed. by I. Zepos and P. Zepos, VII (Athens, 1931), 411-97 (= Attaleiates, *Ponema Nomikon*)

Basilakes, Nikephoros, *In Joannem Comnenum Imperatorem*, in *Nicephori Basilacae orationes et epistulae*, ed. by A. Garzya (Leipzig, 1984) (= Basilakes, *To John Komnenos*)

'Il *bios* di San Bartolomeo da Simeri (BHG 235)', ed. by C. Zaccagni, in *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, 33 (1996), 205-28

*The Book of Jubilees*: *A Critical Text*, ed. and trans. into English by J. VanderKam, 2 vols (Leuven, 1989) (= *The Book of Jubilees*)

Bryennios, Nikephoros, *Histoire*, ed. by P. Gautier (Brussels, 1975) (=Bryennios, *History*)

*Die Byzantinische Geschichte bei Joannes Zonaras in slavischer Übersetzung*, ed. by A. Jacobs (Freiburg, 1970)

Cassius Dio, *Cassii Dionis Cocceiani historiarum romanarum quae supersunt*, ed. by U. Boiseevain, 3 vols (Berlin, 1895-1901); *Roman History*, trans. into English by E. Cary (London, 1914-1927) (= Dio, *History*)

Chomatenos, Demetrios, *Ἡ ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς τὸν χρηματίσαντα μητροπολίτην Κερκύρας, τὸν Πεδιαδίτην…*, in *Πονήματα διάφορα*, ed. by G. Prinzing (Berlin, 2002), 47-53

Choniates, Michael, *Τῷ βασιλεῖ τῷ Λάσκαρι τῆς Ἀνατολῆς*, in *Epistulae*, ed. by F. Kolovou (Berlin, 2001), 284-86

Choniates, Niketas, *Historia*, ed. by J.-L. Van Dieten (Berlin, 1975) (= Choniates, *Historia*); *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates*, trans. into English by H. Magoulias (Detroit, 1984) (= *City of Byzantium*)

*The Chronography of George Synkellos: A Byzantine Chronicle of Universal History from the Creation*, trans. into English by W. Adler and P. Tuffin (Oxford, 2002) (= *The Chronography of George Synkellos*)

Constantine, *Epigram on the Third Polemic of Theodore of Stoudios Against Iconoclasts*, *PG*, 99, 435-36

Dio's Anonymous Continuator, ed. by K. Müller in *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, IV, 191-99

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Antiquitates Romanae quae supersunt*, ed. by C. Jacoby, 5 vols (Leipzig, 1885; repr. Stuttgart, 1967)

Doukas, Michael, *Historia Byzantina*, ed. by I. Bekker (Bonn, 1834)

Ephraem of Ainos, *Historia Chronica*, ed. by O. Lampsidis (Athens, 1990) (= Ephraem, *Historia Chronica*); *Ἐφραὶμ τοῦ Αἰνίου Χρονογραφία. Κείμενο, μετάφραση, σχόλια*, trans. into Greek by O. Lampsidis, 2 vols (Athens, 1984)

*Epistula Alexii I Komneni ad Robertum comitem Flandrum*, ed. by H. Hagenmeyer, in *Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacri spectantes: die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100* (Innsbruck, 1901), 130-36

Eustathios of Thessaloniki, *La espugnazione di Tessalonica*, ed. by S. Kyriakidis (Palermo, 1961) (= Eustathios of Thessaloniki, *Capture*)

—— *Exegesis in canonem iambicum pentacostolem*, ed. by S. Ronchey and P. Cesaretti (Berlin, 2014) (= Eustathios of Thessaloniki, *Exegesis*)

*Flavii Josephi Antiquitatum Iudaicarum epitome*, ed. by B. Niese (Berlin, 1896)

Flavius Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae*, ed. by B. Niese, in *Flavii Iosephi Opera*, I-IV (Berlin, 1885-1892) (= Josephus, *JA*)

—— *De bello Judaico libri vii*, ed. by B. Niese, in *Flavii Iosephi Opera*, VI (Berlin, 1895) (= Josephus, *JW*); *The Jewish War*, trans. into English by G. A. Williamson, rev. ed. with a new introduction by M. Smallwood (Harmondsworth, 1989)

*Florilège sacro-profane du Pseudo-Maxime*, ed. by É. Sargologos (Hermoupolis, 2001)

George the Monk, *Chronicon*, ed. by C. de Boor and P. Wirth, 2 vols (Stuttgart, 1978) (= George the Monk, *Chronicon*)

Glykas, Michael, *Annales*, ed. by I. Bekker (Bonn, 1836) (= Glykas, *Annales*)

—— *Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας τῆς θείας Γραφῆς Κεφάλαια*, ed. by S. Eustratiadis, I (Athens, 1096), II (Alexandria, 1912) (= Glykas, *Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας*)

James of Kokkinobaphos (Jacob the Monk), *Epistulae*, ed. by E. and M. Jeffreys (Turnhout, 2009)

John of Antioch, *Fragmenta ex Historia chronica*, ed. by U. Roberto (Berlin, 2005)

—— *Fragmenta quae supersunt omnia*, ed. by S. Mariev (Berlin, 2008

Kedrenos, George, *Compendium historiarum*, ed. by I. Bekker (Bonn, 1838)

Kekaumenos, *Strategikon* ed. by M. D. Spadaro, in *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo* (Alessandria, 1998), 44-242

Kinnamos, John, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, trans. into English by C. Brand (New York, 1976) (= Kinnamos, *Deeds*)

Komnene, Anna, *Alexias*, ed. by D. Reinsch and A. Kambylis (Berlin, 2001) (= Anna Komnene, *Alexias*)

Lycophron, *Alexandra*, ed. by L. Mascialino (Leipzig, 1964)

Lydos, John, *On Powers or the Magistracies of the Roman State*, ed. by A. Bandy (Philadelphia, 1983)

Malalas, John, *Chronographia*, ed. by H. Thurn (Berlin, 2000) (= Malalas, *Chronographia*)

Manasses, Constantine, *Breviarium Chronicum*, ed. by O. Lampsidis, 2 vols (Athens, 1996) (=Manasses, *Breviarium Chronicum*)

Mauropous, John, *Ἐπίγραμμα εἰς τὸν Πλάτωνα καὶ τὸν Πλούταρχον*, in *Johannis Euchaitorum metropolitae quae in Codice Vaticano Graeco 676 supersunt*, ed. by P. de Lagarde (Göttingen, 1882; repr. Amsterdam, 1979), 24

*La Meditatio de nudis pactis*, ed. by H. Monnier and G. Plato (Paris, 1915; repr. 1974)

Methodios, *De Schismate Vitando*, *PG*, 140, 781-806 (= Methodios, *De Schismate Vitando*)

*Mousai*, ed. by P. Maas, 'Die Musen des Kaisers Alexios I', *BZ*, 22 (1913), 348-69

Nicholas of Myra, *Progymnasmata*, ed. by J. Felten (Leipzig, 1913)

Nikephoros I, patriarch of Constantinople, *Refutatio et Eversio Definitionis Synodalis Anni 815*, ed. by J. Featherstone (Turnhout, 1997)

*Νικήτα φιλοσόφου τοῦ καὶ Δαβίδ, ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὰ τετράστιχα τοῦ μεγάλου πατρὸς Γρηγορίου τοῦ Ναζιανζηνοῦ*, ed. by Z. Skordylios (Venice, 1563) (= *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὰ τετράστιχα*)

*Novella constitutio saec. XI medii*, ed. by A. Salač (Prague, 1954)

Oxeites, John, *Τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου πατριάρχου Ἀντιοχείας κῦρ Ἰωάννου λόγος εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Ἀλέξιον τὸν Κομνηνόν*, ed. by P. Gautier, in *Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis Ier Comnène*, *REB*, 28 (1970), 19-49

Pachymeres, George, *Relations historiques*, ed. by A. Failler and V. Laurent, 2 vols (Paris, 1984)

Pardos, Gregory, *Ἐξηγήσεις εἰς τοὺς ἱεροὺς λειτουργικοὺς κανόνας τοῦ Δαμασκηνοῦ καὶ Κοσμᾶ τοῦ Μελῳδοῦ*, ed. by. A. Kominis (Munich, 1960)

Peter of Sicily, *Historia utilis et refutatio Manichaeorum vel Paulicianorum*, in 'Les sources grecques pour l'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure I. Pierre de Sicile. Histoire des Pauliciens', ed. by D. Papachryssanthou, *TM*, 4 (1970), 7-67

Photios, *Bibliothèque*, ed. by R. Henry, 8 vols (Paris, 1959-1977)

Plutarch, *Antony*, ed. by K. Ziegler, in *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, vol. 3.1 (Leipzig, 1915)

—— *Camillus*, ed. by K. Ziegler, in *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, vol. 1.1 (Leipzig, 1957)

—— *Numa*, ed. by K. Ziegler, in *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, vol. 3.2 (Leipzig, 1926) (= Plutarch, *Numa*)

—— *Pompey*, ed. by K. Ziegler, in *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, vol.3.2 (Leipzig, 1926) (= Plutarch, *Pompey*)

—— *Publicola*, ed. by K. Ziegler, in *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, vol. 1.1 (Leipzig, 1957) (= Plutarch, *Publicola*)

—— *Romulus*, in *Plutarchi vitae parallelae*, ed. by K. Ziegler, vol. 1.1 (Leipzig, 1957) (= Plutarch, *Romulus*); *Plutarch: Romulus*, in *Lives, Volume I Theseus and Romulus. Lycurgus and Numa. Solon and Publicola*, trans. into English by B. Perrin (Cambridge; MA, 1914)

Prodromos, Manganeios, *Epithalamion*, ed. by C. Neumann, in *Griechische Geschichtsscreiber und Geschichtsquellen im zwölften Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1888) (= *Griechische Geschichtsscreiber*), 65-68.

—— *Theodori Prodromi De Manganis*, ed. by S. Bernardinello (Padua, 1972) (= *De Manganis*)

Prodromos, Theodore, *Historische Gedichte*, ed. by W. Hörandner (Vienna, 1974) (= *Historische Gedichte*)

Psellos, Michael, *Chronographia, Band I: Einleitung und Text*, ed. by D. Reinsch (Berlin, 2914) (= Psellos, *Chronography*); *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers: the Chronographia of Michael Psellus*, trans. into English by E. Sewter (Harmondsworth, 1979)

—— *Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐπιτάφιος εἰς τὸν μακαριώτατον πατριάρχην κῦρ Ἰωάννην τὸν Ξιφιλῖνον*, in *Orationes funebres*, ed. by I. Polemis (Berlin, Boston, 2014), 115-69

—— *Historia Syntomos*, ed. by W. Aerts (Berlin, 1990) (= Psellos, *Historia Syntomos*)

—— *Synopsis Legum*, ed. by L. Westerink, in, *Michaelis Pselli Poemata* (Leipzig, 1992), 123-77 (= Psellos, *Synopsis Legum*)

Pseudo-Zonaras, *Lexicon ex tribus codicibus manuscriptis*, ed. by J. Tittmann, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1808; repr. Amsterdam, 1967) (= Pseudo-Zonaras, *Lexicon*)

*Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel, Edition und Übersetzung der Urkunden aus den Jahren 1315-1331, vol. 1*, ed. by H. Hunger and O. Kresten (Vienna, 1981)

*Skylitzes Continuatus*, ed. by E. Tsolakis (Thessaloniki, 1968) (= *Skylitzes Continuatus*)

Skylitzes, John, *Synopsis historiarum*, ed. by H. Thurn (Berlin, 1973) (= Skylitzes, *Synopsis*); *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, trans. into English by J. Wortley (Cambridge, 2010) (= *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis*)

Stilbes, Constantine, *Τοῦ Κωνσταντίνου μαΐστωρος καὶ διδασκάλου τοῦ Στιλβῆ στίχοι ἰαμβικοὶ ἐπὶ τῷ συμβάντι ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει θεηλάτῳ μεγάλῳ ἐμπρησμῷ μηνὶ Ἰουλίῳ κε΄ ἔτους ˏ ϛψε΄*, in, *Constantinus Stilbes Poemata*, ed. by J. Diethart and W. Hörandner (Munich, 2005), 8-51.

*Suidae Lexicon*, ed. by A. Adler (Leipzig, 1928-1935)

*Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων*, ed. by G. A. Rhalles and M. Potles, 6 vols (Athens, 1852-1859) (= Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*)

Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Interpretatio in Danielem*, *PG*, 81, 1255-1546

Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. by C. de Boor, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1883; repr. Hildesheim, 1963) (= Theophanes, *Chronographia*); *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History*, trans. into English by C. Mango and R. Scott (Oxford, 1997) (= *The Chronicle of Theophanes*)

Theophanes Continuatus, *Theophanes continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius monachus*, ed. by I. Bekker (Bonn, 1838)

Theosteriktos, *Life of Niketas of Medikion*, *AASS*, April I, 254B-265F

'Le traité des transferts', ed. by J. Darrouzès, *REB*, 42 (1984), 147-215 (= 'Le traité')

*I trattati con Bisanzio, 992–1198*, ed. by M. Pozza and G. Ravegnani (Venice, 1993)

*Le typikon du Christ Sauver Pantocrator*, ed. by P. Gautier, *REB*, 32 (1974), 1-145 (= *Le typikon du Christ Sauver Pantocrator*)

Tzetzes, John, *Epistulae*, ed. by P. Leone (Leipzig, 1972)

—— *Historiae*, ed. by P. Leone (Naples, 1968)

—— *Theogonia (ex codice Casanatensi)*, ed. by I. Bekker (Berlin, 1841)

*Vita Ignatii*, *PG*, 105, 487-574

Xiphilinos, John, *Epitome of Cassius Dio's Roman History*, ed. by U. Boissevain in *Cassii Dionis Historiarum Romanarum quae supersunt*, III (Berlin 1901) (= Xiphilinos, *Epitome of Dio*)

Zonaras, Christopher, *Χριστοφόρου Ζωναρᾶ. I. Λόγος Παραινετικὸς εἰς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ κυρὸν Δημήτριον. II. Ἐπιστολὲς*, ed. by E. Tsolakis (Thessaloniki, 1981)

Zonaras, John, *Annales*, ed. by C. Ducange (Paris, 1686)

—— *Annales*, ed. by M. Pinder and T. Büttner-Wobst, 3 vols (Bonn, 1841-1897) (=*Epitome*); *Επιτομή Ιστοριών*, trans. into Greek by I. Grigoriadis, 3 vols (Athens, 1995-1999); *The History of Zonaras: from Alexander Severus to the Death of Theodosius the Great*, trans. into English by T. Banchich and E. Lane, introduction by T. Banchich (London, 2009) (= Banchich and Lane, *The History of Zonaras*); *Militärs und Höflinge im Ringen um das Kaisertum*, trans. into German by E. Trapp (Graz, 1986) (= Trapp, *Militärs*)

—— *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τῆς ὁσίας μητρὸς ἡμῶν Εὐπραξίας*, ed. by E. Kaltsogianni, in 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα', 639-56

—— *Compendium historiarum*, ed. by H. Wolf, 3 vols (Basil, 1557)

—— *Εἰς τὸν ὅσιον πατέρα ἡμῶν Σωφρόνιον πατριάρχην Ἱεροσολύμων*, ed. by A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας* (St Petersburg, 1897; repr. Brussels, 1963), V, 137-50

—— *Epitome historiarum*, ed. by L. Dindorf, 6 vols (Leipzig, 1868-1875) (= *Epitome historiarum*, ed. by Dindorf)

—— *Ἐξήγησις τῶν ἀναστάσιμων κανόνων τῶν τοῦ Δαμασκηνοῦ. Περὶ κανόνος καὶ εἱρμοῦ καὶ τροπαρίου καὶ ᾠδῆς*, ed. by A. Mai, *Spicilegium Romanum*, V (1841), 384-89; repr. in *PG*, 135, 421-28 (= Zonaras, *Ἐξήγησις τῶν ἀναστάσιμων κανόνων*)

—— *Ἐξήγησις τῶν ἀναστάσιμων κανόνων τῶν τοῦ Δαμασκηνοῦ. Περὶ κανόνος καὶ εἱρμοῦ καὶ τροπαρίου καὶ ᾠδῆς*, ed. by W. Christ in *Über die Bedeutung von Hirmos, Troparion and Kanon in der griechischen Poesie des Mittelalters, erläutert an der Hand einer Schrift des Zonaras*, *Sitzungsberichte der königlichen Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, II (Munich, 1870), 1-11

—— *Κανὼν εἰς τὴν ὑπεραγίαν Θεοτόκον*, ed. by J. B. Cotelerius, *Monumenta ecclesiae graecae*, III (Paris, 1686), 465-72; repr. in *PG*, 135, 413-2

## 3. Secondary sources

Adler, A., 'Did the Biblical Patriarchs Practice Astrology? Michael Glykas and Manuel Komnenos I on Seth and Abraham', in *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, ed. by P. Magdalino and M. Mavroudi (Geneva, 2006), 245-63

Alexakis, A., 'A Florilegium in the Life of Nicetas of Medicion and a Letter of Theodore of Studios', *DOP*, 48 (1994), 179-97

Alpers, K., 'Zonarae Lexicon', *Realencyklopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft*, X A (1972), 732-63 (= Alpers, 'Zonarae Lexicon')

Angelov, D., *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium, 1204-1330* (Cambridge, 2007), 269-80

Angold, M., 'Alexios I Komnenos: An Afterword', in *Alexios Komnenos: Papers of the Second Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium*, ed. by M. Mullett and D. Smythe, I: Papers (Belfast, 1996), 398-417 (=Angold, 'Afterword')

—— *The Byzantine Empire, 1025 – 1204: A Political History*, 2nd edn (New York, 1997) (= Angold, *History)*

—— *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081-1261* (Cambridge, 1995) (= Angold, *Church and Society*)

—— 'Imperial Renewal and Orthodox Reaction: Byzantium in the 11th Century', in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium 4th-13th Centuries*, ed. by P. Magdalino (Aldershot, 1994), 231-46

Astruc, C., and P. Géhin, *Les manuscrits grecs datés des XIIIe et XIVe siècles conservés dans les bibliothèques publiques de France*, I (Paris, 1989) (= Astruc and Géhin, *Les manuscrits grecs*)

Bandini, A. M., *Catalogus codicum graecorum Bibliothecae Laurentianae*, II (Florence, 1768)

Beaton, R., 'The Rhetoric of Poverty: The Lives and Opinions of Theodore Prodromos', *BMGS*, 11 (1987), 1-28

Beck, H.-G., *Kirche und theologische Literatur im Byzantinischen Reich* (Munich, 1959) (= Beck, *Kirche*)

—— 'Zur byzantinischen "Mönschchronik"', in *Speculum historiale: Geschichte im Spiegel von Geschichtschreibung und Geschichtsdeutung. Festschrift K. Adler*, ed. by A. Bauer, L. Boehm and M. Müller (Freiburg, 1965), 188-97 (= Beck, 'Zur byzantinischen "Mönschchronik"')

Bernard, F. *Writing and Reading Secular Byzantine Poetry, 1025-1081* (Oxford, 2014) (= Bernard, *Poetry*)

Bianconi, D., '«Piccolo assaggio di abbondante fragranza». Giovanni Mauropode e il Vat. gr. 676', *JÖB*, 61 (2011), 89-103

Bissera, P., *The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual and the Senses in Byzantium* (University Park, 2010)

Bleckmann, B., 'Der Chronik des Johannes Zonaras und eine pagane Quelle zur Geschichte Konstantins', *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 40 (1991), 343-65

—— *Die römische Nobilität im Ersten Punischen Krieg: Untersuchungen zur aristokratischen Konkurrenz in der Republik* (Berlin, 2002)

Boissevain, U., 'Über die dem Ioannes Antiochenus zugeschriebenen Excerpta Salmasiana', *Hermes*, 22 (1887), 161-78

—— 'Zonaras' Quelle für die Römische Kaisergeschichte von Nerva bis Severus Alexander', *Hermes*, 26 (1891), 440-52

—— 'Zur handschriftlichen Überlieferung des Zonaras', *BZ*, 4 (1895), 250-71 (= Boissevain, 'Zur handschriftlichen Überlieferung')

Bourbouhakis, E., 'Rhetoric and Performance in Byzantium', in *The Byzantine World*, ed. by P. Stephenson (London, 2010), 175-87

Bowman, S., 'Josephus in Byzantium', in *Josephus, Judaism and Christianity*, ed. by L. Feldman and G. Hata (Detroit, 1987), 362-85 (= Bowman, 'Josephus in Byzantium')

Browning, R., 'Lexika', *ODB*, II, 1221

—— *Medieval and Modern Greek*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1983)

Browning, W. R. F., *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2009), ebook

Bucossi A., and A. Rodriguez Suarez, eds, *John II Komnenos, Emperor of Byzantium: In the Shadow of Father and Son* (London, 2016), ePub ebook (= *John II Komnenos*, ed. by Bucossi and Rodriguez Suarez)

Burkhardt, S., and T. Foerster, *Norman Tradition and Transcultural Heritage: Exchange of Cultures in the 'Norman' Peripheries of Medieval Europe* (Farnham, 2013)

Bury, J., 'The Nika Riot', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 17 (1987), 92-119

Büttner-Wobst, T., ‘Die Abhängigkeit des Geschichtschreibers Zonaras von der erhaltenen Quellen’, in *Commentationes Fleckeisenianae* (Leipzig, 1890), 121-70 (= Büttner-Wobst, ‘Abhängigkeit’)

—— ‘Studien zur Textgeschichte des Zonaras’, *BZ*, 1 (1892), 202-44 (= Büttner-Wobst, ‘Textgeschichte’)

—— ‘Studien zur Textgeschichte des Zonaras. Nachtrag’, *BZ*, 1 (1892), 594-97

Cameron, A., *The Last Pagans of Rome* (New York, Oxford, 2011) (= Cameron, *The Last Pagans*)

Carleton Paget, J., ‘Some Observations on Josephus and Christianity’, *Journal of Theological Studies*, 52 (2001), 539-624

Cataudella, M. R., ‘Historiography in the East’, in *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity*, ed. by G. Marasco (Leiden, 2003), 391-447

Chapman, H., and Z. Rodgers, eds, *A Companion to Josephus* (Chichester, 2015) (= *A Companion to Josephus*, ed. by Chapman and Rodgers)

Ciggaar, K., *Western Travellers to Constantinople: The West and Byzantium 962 – 1024* (Leiden, 1996) (= Ciggaar, *Western Travellers*)

Collins, J., *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Minneapolis, 1993)

Coxe, H., *Catalogi codicum manuscriptorum bibliothecae Bodleiane* (Oxford, 1853) (= Coxe, *Catalogi codicum*)

Cresci, L., ‘Exempla storici greci negli encomi e nella storiografia bizantini del XII secolo’, *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, 22 (2004), 115-45 (= Cresci, ‘Exempla’)

Croke, B., ‘Uncovering Byzantium’s Historiographical Audience’, in *History As Literature*, ed. by Macrides, 25-54

Cullhed, E., ‘Diving for Pearls and Tzetzes’ Death’, *BZ*, 108 (2015), 53-62

de Boor, C., ‘Römische Kaisergeschichte in byzantinischer Fassung, I. Der Anonymous post Dionem’, *BZ*, 1 (1892), 21-31

Della Rocca de Candal, G., ‘Bibliographia Historica Byzantina: A Historical and Bibliographical Description of the Early Editions of the *Corpus Historiae Byzantinae* (1556-1645)’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 2016)

Devreesse, R., *Catalogue des manuscrits grecs. II. Les fonds coislin* (Paris, 1945) (= Devreesse, *Les fonds coislin*)

—— *Le fonds grec de la bibliothèque vaticane des origines à Paul V* (Vatican, 1956)

Dickey, E., ‘The Sources of Our Knowledge of Ancient Scholarship’, in *Ancient Greek Scholarship*, ed. by Montanari et al., 459-514

Dimaio, M., ‘The Antiochene Connection: Zonaras, Ammianus Marcellinus, and John of Antioch on the Reigns of the Emperors Constantius II and Julian’, *B,* 50 (1980), 158-85 (= Dimaio, ‘The Antiochene Connection’)

—— ‘History and Myth in Zonaras’ *Epitome Historiarum*: The Chronographer as Editor’, *Byzantine Studies/Etudes Byzantines,* 10 (1983), 19-28

—— ‘Infaustis Ductoribus Praeviis: The Antiochene Connection, Part II’, *B,* 51 (1981), 502-10

—— ‘Smoke in the Wind: Zonaras’ Use of Philostorgius, Zosimus, John of Antioch, and John of Rhodes in His Narrative on the Neo-Flavian Emperors’, *B,* 58 (1988), 230-55

Dimitrakopoulos, F., ‘The Exegeses of the Canons in the Twelfth-century as School Texts’, *Diptycha*, 1 (1979), 143-57 (= Dimitrakopoulos, ‘The Exegeses’)

Duff, T., *Plutarch’s Lives: Exploring Virtue and Vice* (Oxford, 2002)

Duffy J., and E. Papaioannou, ‘Michael Psellos and the Authorship of *Historia Syntomos*: Final Considerations’, in *Βυζάντιο: κράτος και κοινωνία,* ed. by A. Avramea, A. Laiou and E. Chrysos (Athens, 2003), 219-29

Dželebdžić, D., ‘Η δημοκρατική Ρώμη στην πολιτική σκέψη του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού’, *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta*, 42 (2005), 23-33.

—— ‘Ιστορία σύντομος του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού’ (University of Athens, unpublished MA dissertation, 2003) (= Dželebdžić, ‘Ιστορία σύντομος’)

—— ‘Izreke careva u Kratkoj istoriji Mihaila Psela’, *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta*, 44 (2007), 155-73 (= Dželebdžić, ‘Izreke careva’)

Edmondson, J., and S. Mason, eds, *Josephus and the Flavian Rome* (Oxford, 2005)

Efthymiadis, S., ‘A Historian and His Tragic Hero: A Literary Reading of Theophylact Simokatta’s Ecumenical History’, in *History As Literature,* ed. by Macrides, 169-86

Evans, H., and W. Wixon, *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843-1261* (New York, 1997)

Feldman, L., ‘On the Authenticity of the *Testimonium Flavianum* Attributed to Josephus’, in *New Perspectives on Jewish Christian Relations*, ed. by E. Carlebach and J. Schechter (Leiden, 2012), 14-30

Feldman, L., and G. Hata, eds, *Josephus, the Bible and History* (Leiden, 1989) (= *Josephus, the Bible*, ed. by Feldman and Hata)

Fisher, E., 'Michael Psellos and a Hagiographical Landscape: The Life of St. Auxentios and the Encomion of Symeon the Metaphrast', in *Reading Michael Psellos*, ed. by C. Barber and D. Jenkins (Leiden, 2006), 57-71

Fishman-Duker, R., 'Images of Jews in Byzantine Chronicles: A General Survey', in *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures*, ed. by R. Bonfil et al. (Leiden, 2012), 777-98

—— 'The Second Temple Period in Byzantine Chronicles', *B*, 47 (1977), 126-56

Fögen, M. T., 'Modell und Mythos. Die Rechtsfakultäten von Konstantinopel, Neapel und Bologna im Mittelalter', *Rechtshistorisches Journal*, 15 (1996), 181-204

—— 'Unto the Pure All Things Are Pure: The Byzantine Canonist Zonaras on Nocturnal Pollution', in *Obscenity: Social Control and Artistic Creation in European Middle Ages*, ed. by J. Ziolkowski (Leiden, 1998), 260-78 (= Fögen, 'Nocturnal Pollution')

Folieri, E., 'Il libro greco per i greci nelle imprese editoriali romane e veneziane della prima metà del cinquecento', in *Venezia centro di mediazione tra Oriente e Occidente (secoli XV-XVI). Aspetti e problemi*, ed. by H.-G. Beck, M. Manoussakas and A. Pertusi, II (Florence, 1976), 485-508

Foot, S., and C. Robinson, eds, *The Oxford History of Historical Writing. Volume 2: 400-1400* (Oxford, 2012)

Frakes, R. M., 'Ammianus Marcellinus and Zonaras on a Late Roman Assassination Plot', *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 46 (1997), 121-28

Frankopan, P., 'Byzantine Trade Privileges to Venice in the Eleventh Century: The Chrysobull of 1092', *Journal of Medieval History*, 30 (2004), 135-60 (= Frankopan, 'Chrysobull')

—— *The First Crusade: The Call from the East* (Cambridge; MA, 2012) (= Frankopan, *First Crusade*)

—— 'The Foreign Policy of the Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1081-c. 1100)' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1998) (= Frankopan, 'Foreign Policy')

—— 'Kinship and the Distribution of Power in Komnenian Byzantium', *English Historical Review*, 122 (2007), 1-34 (= Frankopan, 'Kinship')

—— ‘Where Advice Meets Criticism in Eleventh Century Byzantium: Theophylact of Ohrid, John the Oxite and Their (Re)Presentations to the Emperor’, *Al-Masāq*, 20 (2008), 71-88 (= Frankopan, ‘Advice’)

Franxman, T., *Genesis and the Jewish Antiquities of Flavius Josephus* (Rome, 1979)

Fromentin, V., ‘Zonaras abréviateur de Cassius Dion: à la recherche de la préface perdue de l’Histoire romaine’, *Erga-Logoi*, 1 (2013), 23-39

Fryde, E., *The Early Palaeologan Renaissance (1261-c. 1360)* (Leiden, 2000)

Galatariotou, K., ‘Travel and Perception in Byzantium’, *DOP*, 47 (1993), 221-41

Garland, L., ‘Basil II as Humorist’, *B*, 69 (1999), 321-43

Garzya, A., ‘Plutarco a Bisanzio’, in *L'eredità culturale di Plutarco dall'antichità al Rinascimento*, ed. by I. Gallo (Napoli, 1998), 15-27 (= Garzya, ‘Plutarco a Bisanzio’)

Giannelli, C., *Codices vaticani graeci: codices 1485-1683* (Vatican, 1950)

Gouma-Peterson, T., ed., *Anna Komnene and Her Times* (New York, 2000) (= *Anna Komnene*, ed. by Gouma-Peterson)

Grigoriadis, I., *Linguistic and Literary Studies in the Epitome historion of John Zonaras* (Thessaloniki, 1998) (= Grigoriadis, *Studies*)

—— ‘A Study of the Prooimion of Zonaras’ Chronicle in Relation to Other 12th-Century Historical Prooimia’, *BZ*, 91 (1998), 327-44 (= Grigoriadis, ‘Prooimion’)

Grünbart, M., ‘Byzantinisches Gelehrtenelend – oder: Wie meistert man seinen Alltag’, in *Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, ed. by L. M. Hoffmann and A. Monchizadeh (Wiesbaden, 2005), 413-26

—— ed., *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter* (Berlin, 2007) (= *Theatron*, ed. by Grünbart)

Hadot, I., *Simplicius, sa vie, son oeuvre, sa survie* (Berlin, 1987)

Haldon, J., *The Palgrave Atlas of Byzantine History*, 2nd edn (Basingstoke, 2010) (= Haldon, *The Palgrave Atlas*)

Hardt, I., *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum graecorum Bibliothecae Regiae Bavariae* (Munich, 1806) (= Hardt, *Catalogus codicum*)

Hinterberger, M., ‘Δημώδης και λόγια λογοτεχνία: διαχωριστικές γραμμές και συνδετικοί κρίκοι’, in *Pour une « nouvelle » histoire de la littérature byzantine*, ed. by P. Odorico and P. Agapitos (Paris, 2002), 153-63

—— ‘Emotions in Byzantium’, in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. by James, 123-34

—— ‘Envy and Nemesis in the Vita Basili and Leo the Deacon: Literary Mimesis or Something More?’, in *History As Literature*, ed. by Macrides, 187-203

—— ‘Phthonos als treibende Kraft in Prodromos, Manasses und Bryennios’, *Medioevo Graeco*, 11 (2011), 1-24

—— *Phthonos. Missgunst, Neid und Eifersucht in der byzantinischen Literatur* (Wiesbaden, 2013)

—— ‘Die Sprache den byzantinischen Literatur: Der Gebrauch der synthetischen Plusquamperfektformen’, in *Byzantinische Sprachkunst. Studien zur byzantinischen Literatur, gewidmet Wolfram Horandner zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by M. Hinterberger and E. Schiffer (Munich, 2007), 107-42 (= Hinterberger, ‘Sprache’)

—— ‘The Synthetic Perfect in Byzantine Literature’, in *The Language of Byzantine Learned Literature*, ed. by M. Hinterberger (Turnhout, 2014), 176-204

Hirsch, F., *Byzantinische Studien* (Leipzig, 1876), 379-96

Holmes, C., *Basil II and the Governance of Empire (976-1025)* (Oxford, 2005) (= Holmes, *Basil II*)

Hörandner, W., ‘Marginalien zum ‘Manganeios’ Prodromos’, *JÖB*, 24 (1975), 95-106

Humble, N., ‘Plutarch in Byzantium’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Plutarch*, ed. by F. Titchener and A. Zadorojnyi (Cambridge, forthcoming) (= Humble, ‘Plutarch in Byzantium’)

Hunger, H., *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, 2 vols (Munich, 1978) (= Hunger, *Literatur*)

—— ‘Kanonistenrhetorik in Bereich des Patriarchats am Beispiel des Theodoros Balsamon’, in *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century*, ed. by Oikonomides, 37-59

—— *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Codices historici. Codices philosophici et philologici* (Vienna, 1961) (= Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften*)

—— ‘Zum Epilog der Theogonie des Johannes Tzetzes’, *BZ*, 46 (1953), 302-07

James, L., ed., *A Companion to Byzantium* (Malden; MA, 2010) (= *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. by James)

Janin, R., *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1975)

Jeffreys, E., ‘The Attitudes of Byzantine Chroniclers Towards Ancient History’, *B*, 49 (1979), 199-238 (= Jeffreys, ‘Attitudes’)

—— ‘The Comnenian Background to the Romans d’Antiquité’, *B*, 50 (1980), 455-86 (= Jeffreys, ‘Comnenian Background’)

—— *Four Byzantine Novels* (Liverpool, 2012)

—— 'Old Testament "History" and the Byzantine Chronicle', in *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, ed. by P. Magdalino and R. Nelson (Washington, 2010), 153-74

—— 'The Sevastokratorissa Eirene as Patron', in *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. by L. Theis et al. (Cologne, 2014), 177-94

Jeffreys, E., and M. Jeffreys, 'Portraits', in *Studies in John Malalas*, ed. by E. Jeffreys, B. Croke and R. Scott (Sydney, 1990), 231-43

—— 'Who was Eirene the Sevastokratorissa?', *B*, 64 (1994), 40-68

—— 'The "Wild Beast from the West": Immediate Literary Reactions in Byzantium to the Second Crusade', in *The Crusades*, ed. by Laiou and Mottahedeh, 101-16 (= E. and M. Jeffreys, 'Literary Reactions')

Jeffreys, E., and A. Kazhdan, 'Melissa', *ODB*, II, 1335

Jeffreys, M., 'Michael Psellos and the Monastery' in *The Letters of Psellos: Cultural Networks and Historical Realities*, ed. by M. Jeffreys and M. Lauxtermann (Oxford, 2017), 42-58

—— 'The Nature and Origins of Political Verse', *DOP*, 28 (1974), 141-95

—— ''Rhetorical' Texts', in *Rhetoric in Byzantium: Papers from the Thirty-fifth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. by E. Jeffreys (Aldershot, 2003), 87-100

Johnson, A., *Ethnicity and Argument in Eusebius' Praeparatio evangelica* (Oxford, 2006)

—— *Eusebius* (London, 2014), 85-11

Kalavrezou, I., N. Trahoulia and S. Sabar, 'Critique of the Emperor in the Vatican Psalter gr. 752', *DOP*, 47 (1993), 195-219

Kaldellis, A., 'A Byzantine Argument for the Equivalence of All Religions: Michael Attaleiates on Ancient and Modern Romans', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 14 (2007), 1-22 (= Kaldellis, 'Equivalence')

—— *Byzantine Readings of Ancient Historians* (London, 2015)

—— *The Byzantine Republic: People and Power in New Rome* (Cambridge; MA, 2015) (= Kaldellis, *Byzantine Republic*)

—— *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, 2007) (= Kaldellis, *Hellenism*)

Kaltsogianni, E., 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα του Ιωάννη Ζωναρά' (doctoral thesis, University of Thessaloniki, 2008) (= Kaltsogianni, 'Τα αγιολογικά έργα')

Kampianaki, T., 'Plutarch's *Lives* in the Byzantine Chronographic Tradition: The Chronicle of John Zonaras', *BMGS*, 41 (2017), 15-29

—— 'Sayings Attributed to Emperors of Old and New Rome in Michael Psellos' *Historia Syntomos*', in *From Constantinople to the Frontier*, ed. by Matheou, Kampianaki and Bondioli, 311-25.

Karpozilos, A., *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί και Χρονογράφοι. Τόμος Γ΄ (11ος-12ος αι.)* (Athens, 2009) (= Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί*)

Kazhdan, A., 'An Attempt at Hagio-Autography: The Pseudo-Life of "Saint" Psellus', *B*, 53 (1983), 546-56

—— 'Chartoularios', *ODB*, I, 416

—— 'Choumnos', *ODB*, I, 433

—— 'Judge', *ODB*, II, 1078

—— 'Latins and Franks in Byzantium: Perception and Reality from the Eleventh to the Twelfth Century,' in *The Crusades*, ed. by Laiou and Mottahedeh, 83-100

—— 'Nicholas of Myra', *ODB*, II, 1470

—— 'Niketas "of Maroneia"', *ODB*, III, 1482

—— 'Nobelissimos', *ODB*, III, 1489-90

—— 'Protasekretis', *ODB*, III, 1742

—— 'The Social Views of Michael Attaleiates', in Kazhdan and Franklin, *Studies*, 23-87 (= Kazhdan, 'Social Views')

—— 'Stilbes, Constantine', *ODB*, III, 1956-57

—— 'Theodore Prodromus: A Reappraisal', in Kazhdan and Franklin, *Studies*, 87-114

—— 'Vestes', *ODB*, III, 2162 (= Kazhdan, 'Vestes')

Kazhdan, A., and S. Franklin, *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1984) (= Kazhdan and Franklin, *Studies*)

Kazhdan, A., and S. Gero, 'Kosmas of Jerusalem: A More Critical Approach to His Biography', *BZ*, 82 (1989), 122-32

Kazhdan, A., and A. Wharton-Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley, 1985) (= Kazhdan and Wharton-Epstein, *Change*)

Kemezis, A., *Greek Narratives of the Roman Empire Under the Severans: Cassius Dio, Philostratus and Herodian* (Cambridge, 2014)

Kennedy, G., *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition Introductory to the Study of Rhetoric* (Atlanta, 2003)

Kiapidou, E., ‘Chapters, Epistolary Essays and Epistles. The Case of Michael Glykas’ Collection of Ninety-five Texts in the Twelfth-century’, *Parekbolai*, 3 (2013), 45-64

—— ‘Ο λογοτέχνης Κωνσταντίνος Μανασσής συγγράφει Σύνοψη Χρονική. Οι πηγές του για την εξιστόρηση της πρωτοβυζαντινής περιόδου’, in *Realia*, ed. by Kotzabassi and Mavromatis, 57-66

—— ‘On the Epistolography of Michael Glykas’, *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 21 (2011), 169-93 (= Kiapidou, ‘Epistolography’)

Kolbaba, T., ‘Byzantine Perceptions of Latin Religious “Errors”: Themes and Changes from 850 to 1350’, in *The Crusades*, ed. by Laiou and Mottahedeh, 117-43

Kominis, A., *Γρηγόριος Πάρδος μητροπολίτης Κορίνθου καὶ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ* (Rome, 1960) (= Kominis, *Γρηγόριος Πάρδος*)

Konstantinidis, K., *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries* (Nicosia, 1982)

Kotzabassi, S., ed., *The Pantokrator Monastery in Constantinople* (Boston, 2013) (= *The Pantokrator Monastery*, ed. by Kotzabassi)

Kotzabassi, S., and G. Mavromatis, eds, *Realia Byzantina* (Berlin, 2009) (= *Realia*, ed. by Kotzabassi and Mavromatis)

Krallis, D., ‘Attaleiates as a Reader of Psellos’, in *Reading Michael Psellos*, ed. by C. Barber and D. Jenkins (Leiden, 2006), 167-91

—— ‘“Democratic” Action in Eleventh-Century Byzantium: Michael Attaleiates’ “Republicanism” in Context’, *Viator*, 40 (2009), 35-53 (= Krallis, ‘“Democratic” Action’)

—— *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium* (Tempe, 2012) (= Krallis, *Politics*)

Kresten, O., ‘Zum Sturz des Theodoros Styppeiotes’, *JÖB*, 27 (1978), 49-103

Kugel, J., *A Walk Through Jubilees: Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of Its Creation* (Leiden, 2012)

Laiou, A., ‘Imperial Marriages and Their Critics in the Eleventh Century: The Case of Skylitzes’, *DOP*, 46 (1992), 165-76

Laiou, A., and R. Mottahedeh, eds, *The Crusades From the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World* (Washington, 2001) (= *The Crusades*, ed. by Laiou and Mottahedeh)

Lampsidis, O., *Beiträge zum byzantinischen Chronisten Ephraem und seiner Chronik* (Athens, 1972)

—— 'Ο Μιχαήλ Ψελλός ως πηγή της «Επιτομής» του Ιωάννου Ζωναρά', *Επετηρίς Εταιρείας Βυζαντινών Σπουδών*, 19 (1949), 170-88

—— 'Zur Biographie von Konstantinos Manasses und zu seiner *Chronike Synopsis*', *B*, 58 (1988), 97-111

Laurent, V., *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin V.2. L'église* (Paris, 1965)

Lauxtermann, M., *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres* (Vienna, 2003) (= Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry*)

—— 'Three Biographical Notes', *BZ*, 91(1998), 391-405

Lefherz, F., *Studien zu Gregor von Nazianz. Mythologie. Überlieferung, Scholiasten* (Bonn, 1958)

Lemerle, P., A. Guillou and N. Svoronos, *Actes de Lavra. Première partie: Des origines à 1204, Archives de l'Athos*, V (Paris 1970)

Leone, P., 'Miscellanea Critica (I)', *Quaderni Catanesi di Cultura Classica e Medievale*, 4-5 (1992/1993), 63-65 (= Leone, 'Miscellanea Critica (I)')

—— 'La tradizione manoscritta dell' *Epitome historiarum* di Giovanni Zonaras', in *Syndesmos. Studi in onore di Rosario Anastasi*, II (Catania, 1991), 221-62 (= Leone, 'La tradizione manoscritta')

Leoni, T., 'The Text of the Josephan Corpus. Principal Greek Manuscripts, Ancient Latin Translations, and the Indirect Tradition', in *A Companion to Josephus*, ed. by Chapman and Rodgers, 307-21

Lilie, R., *Byzantium and the Crusader States*, trans. into English by J. Morris and J. Ridings (Oxford, 1993) [original in German, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten* (Munich, 1981)]

—— *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epochen der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1081 – 1204)* (Amsterdam, 1984) (= Lilie, *Handel*)

—— 'Die lateinische Kirche in der Romania vor dem Vierten Kreuzzug', *BZ*, 82 (1989), 202-20

Linardou, K., 'Imperial Impersonations: Disguised Portraits of a Komnenian Prince and His Father', in *John II Komnenos*, ed. by Bucossi and Rodriguez Suarez

Ljubarskij, J., 'Nikephoros Phokas in Byzantine Historical Writings', *Byzantinoslavica*, 54 (1993), 245-53

—— ‘Some Notes on the Newly Discovered Historical Work by Psellos’, in *To Ellinikon: Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis, Jr*, ed. by J. Allen and J. Langdon (New Rochelle, 1993), 213-28 (= Ljubarskij, ‘Some Notes’)

Lockwood, J., *Six-legged Soldiers: Using Insects As Weapons of War* (Oxford, 2009)

Luttrell, A., ‘Greek Histories Translated and Compiled for Juan Fernández de Heredia, Grand Master of Rhodes, 1377-1396’, *Speculum*, 35 (1960), 401-07

—— ‘Juan Fernández de Heredia’s History of Greece’, *BMGS*, 34 (2010), 30-37

Macrides, R., ‘Nomos and Kanon on Paper and in Court’, in *Church and People in Byzantium*, ed. by R. Morris (London, 1991), 61-85 (= Macrides, ‘Nomos and Kanon’)

—— ‘The Pen and the Sword: Who Wrote the *Alexiad*?’, in *Anna Komnene*, ed. by Gouma-Peterson, 63-78 (= Macrides, ‘Who Wrote the Alexiad?’)

—— ‘Perception of the Past in the Twelfth-century Canonists’, in *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century*, ed. by Oikonomides, 589-99 (= Macrides, ‘Perception of the Past’)

——, ed., *History As Literature in Byzantium: Papers from the Fortieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (Farnham, 2010) (= *History As Literature*, ed. by Macrides)

Macrides, R., and P. Magdalino, ‘The Fourth Kingdom and the Rhetoric of Hellenism’, in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. by P. Magdalino (London, 1992), 117-56 (= Macrides and Magdalino, ‘Fourth Kingdom’)

Madden, T., ‘The Chrysobull of Alexius I Comnenus to the Venetians: The Date and the Debate’, *Journal of Medieval History*, 28 (2002), 23-41

Magdalino, P., ‘Aspects of Twelfth-Century Byzantine *Kaiserkritik’*, *Speculum*, 58 (1983), 326-46 (= Magdalino, ‘Kaiserkritik’)

—— ‘Constantinople and the “Ἔξω Χῶραι” in the Time of Balsamon’, in *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century*, ed. by Oikonomides, 179-98 (= Magdalino, ‘Constantinople and the “Ἔξω Χῶραι”’)

—— ‘Constantinople and the Outside World’, in *Strangers to Themselves: The Byzantine Outsider*, ed. by D. Smythe (Aldershot, 2000) (= Magdalino, ‘Outside World’)

—— *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180* (Cambridge, 1993) (= Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel*)

—— ‘The Foundation of the Pantokrator in Its Urban Setting’, in *The Pantokrator Monastery*, ed. by Kotzabassi, 33-56

—— ‘The Pen of the Aunt: Echoes of the Mid-Twelfth Century in the Alexiad’, in *Anna Komnene*, ed. by Gouma-Peterson, 15-43 (=Magdalino, ‘The Pen of the Aunt’)

Mallan, C. ‘The Style, Method, and Programme of Xiphilinus’ *Epitome* of Cassius Dio’s *Roman History*’, *GRBS*, 53 (2013), 610-44 (= Mallan, ‘Style’)

Mango, C., ‘Twelfth-century Notices from Cod. Christ Church gr. 53’, *JÖB*, 42 (1992), 221-28 (= Mango, ‘Twelfth-century Notices’)

Marciniak, P., ‘Byzantine Theatron – A Place of Performance?’, in *Theatron*, ed. by Grünbart, 277-85

—— ‘The Byzantine Performative Turn’, in *Within the Circle of Ancient Ideas and Virtues*, ed. by K. Twardowska et al. (Krakow, 2014), 423-30

Markopoulos, A., ‘Ἀποσημειώσεις στόν Λέοντα ΣΤ΄ τον Σοφό’, in, *Θυμίαμα στη μνήμη της Λασκαρίνας Μπούρα*, I (Athens 1994), 193-201 (= Markopoulos, ‘Ἀποσημειώσεις’)

—— ‘Education’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. by R. Cormack, J. Haldon and E. Jeffreys (Oxford, 2008), 785-95

—— ‘From Narrative Historiography to Historical Biography. New Trends in Byzantine Historical Writing in the 10th-11th Centuries’, *BZ*, 102 (2009), 697-715 (= Markopoulos, ‘Narrative Historiography’)

—— ‘Genesios: A Study’, in *Realia*, ed. by Kotzabassi and Mavromatis, 137-50 (= Markopoulos, ‘Genesios’)

—— ‘The Portrayal of the Male Figure in Michael Attaleiates’, in *Η αυτοκρατορία σε κρίση (;)*: *το Βυζάντιο τον 11ο αιώνα (1025–1081)*, ed. by B. Blysidou (Athens, 2003), 215-30.

—— ‘Roman Antiquarianism: Aspects of the Roman Past in the Middle Byzantine Period (9th-11th Centuries)’, in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies, London, 21-26 August*, ed. by E. Jeffreys and F. Haarer, I (Aldershot, 2006), 277-97 (= Markopoulos, ‘Antiquarianism’)

—— ‘Teachers and Textbooks in Byzantium: Ninth to Eleventh Centuries, in *Networks of Learning: Perspectives on Scholars in Byzantine East and Latin West*, ed. by S. Steckel, N. Gaul and M. Grünbart (Münster, 2014)

—— *Η θέση του χρονογράφου στη Βυζαντινή κοινωνία* (Athens, 1993) (= Markopoulos, *Η θέση του χρονογράφου*)

Martini, E., and D. Bassi, *Catalogus codicum graecorum Bibliothecae Ambrosianae*, 2 vols (Milan, 1906) (= Martini and Bassi, *Catalogus codicum*)

Mason, S., 'Josephus' *Judean War*', in *A Companion to Josephus*, ed. by Chapman and Rodgers, 13-35

Matheou, N., 'City and Sovereignty in East Roman Thought, c.1000-1200: Ioannes Zonaras' Historical Vision of the Roman State' in *From Constantinople to the Frontier*, ed. by Matheou, Kampianaki and Bondioli, 41-63 (= Matheou, 'City and Sovereignty')

Matheou, N., T. Kampianaki and L. Bondioli, eds, *From Constantinople to the Frontier: The City and the Cities* (Leiden, 2016) (= *From Constantinople to the Frontier*, ed. by Matheou, Kampianaki and Bondioli)

Mauromati-Katsougiannopoulou, S., *Η χρονογραφία του Μιχαήλ Γλύκα και οι πηγές της: περίοδος 100 π.Χ.-118 μ.Χ.* (Thessaloniki, 1984)

Mercati, G., and P. Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Codices Vaticani Graeci. Tom. 1, Codices 1-329* (Vatican, 1923) (= Mercati and Franchi, *Codices Vaticani*)

Meyendorff, J., 'Balsamon, the Empire and the Barbarians', in *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century*, ed. by Oikonomides, 533-42

Momigliano, A., 'Johannes Zonaras', in *Who's Who in the Classical World*, ed. by S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (Oxford, 2000), ebook

Montanari, F., et al., eds, *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, I (Leiden, 2014) (=*Ancient Greek Scholarship*, ed. by Montanari et al.)

Moravcsik, G., 'Barbarische Sprachreste in der Theogonie des Johannes Tzetzes', in *Studia Byzantina* (Amsterdam, 1967), 283-92

Millar, F., *A Greek Roman Empire*: *Power and Belief Under Theodosius II* (Berkeley, 2006)

—— *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford, 1964) (= Millar, *Study*)

Mioni, E., *Bibliothecae Divi Marci Venetiarum codices graeci manuscripti. Volumen II: Thesaurus Antiquus. Codices 300-625* (Rome, 1985) (= Mioni, *Thesaurus Antiquus*)

—— *Bibliothecae Divi Marci Venetiarum codices graeci manuscripti. Volumen II: codices qui in sextam, septimam atque octavam classem includuntur continens* (Rome, 1960)

Mullett, M., ‘Aristocracy and Patronage in the Literary Circles of Comnenian Constantinople’, in *The Byzantine Aristocracy*, ed. by M. Angold (Edinburgh, 1984), 173-201

—— ‘Originality and Byzantine Letter-writing: The Case of Exile’, in *Originality in Byzantine Literature, Art and Music*, ed. by A. Littlewood (Oxford, 1996), 39-58

—— ‘Whose Muses? Two Admonitory Poems Attributed to Alexios I Komnenos’, in *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine: le texte en tant que message immediate*, ed. by P. Odorico (Paris, 2012), 195-220

Munitiz, J., ‘Hagiographical Autobiography in the 13th Century’, *Byzantinoslavica*, 53 (1992), 243-49

Muraoka, T., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Louvain, 2009)

Nesbitt, J., *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art, Volume 6: Emperors, Patriarchs of Constantinople, Addenda* (Washington, 2009)

Nesbitt, J., N. Oikonomides and E. McGeer, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art* (Washington, 1996)

Neville, L., *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The Material for History of Nikephoros Bryennios* (Cambridge, 2012) (= Neville, *Heroes*)

Nicol, D., *Byzantium and Venice: A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations* (Cambridge, 1988) (= Nicol, *Venice*)

—— ‘Constantine Akropolites: A Prosopographical Note’, *DOP*, 19 (1965), 249-58 (= Nicol, ‘Constantine Akropolites’)

Nilsson, I., ‘Constantine Manasses, Odysseus, and the Cyclops. On Byzantine Appreciation of Pagan Art in the Twelfth Century’, *Byzantinoslavica*, 69 (2011), 123-136

—— ‘Discovering Literariness in the Past: Literature vs. History in the *Synopsis Chronike* of Konstantinos Manasses’, in *L’écriture de la mémoire*, ed. by Odorico et al., 15-31

—— ‘Narrating Images in Byzantine Literature: The Ekphrasis of Konstantinos Manasses’. *JÖB*, 55 (2005), 121-46

Nilsson, I., and E. Nyström, ‘To Compose, Read, and Use a Byzantine Text: Aspects of the Chronicle of Constantine Manasses’, *BMGS*, 33 (2009), 42-60

Odorico, P., ‘Poésies à la marge, réflexions personnelles? Quelques observations sur les poésies du *Parisinus graecus* 1711’, in *Poetry and its Contexts in Eleventh-century Byzantium*, ed. by F. Bernard and K. Demoen (Farnham, 2012), 207-24

Odorico, P., et al., eds, *L’écriture de la mémoire: la littérarité de l’historiographie* (Paris, 2006) (= *L’écriture de la mémoire*, ed. by Odorico et al.)

Oikonomides, N., ed., *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century: Canon Law, State, and Society* (Athens, 1991) (= *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century*, ed. by Oikonomides)

Olson, K., ‘A Eusebian Reading of the *Testimonium Flavianum*’, in *Eusebius of Caesarea: Tradition and Innovations*, ed. by A. Johnson and J. Schott (Washington, 2013), 97-114

Omont, H., *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris, 1888)

Pade, M., ‘The Reception of Plutarch from Antiquity to the Italian Rennaissance’, in *A Companion to Plutarch*, ed. by M. Beck (Chichester, 2014), 531-43

Paidas, K., ‘Issues of Social Gender in Nikephoros Bryennios’ *Ὕλη Ἱστοριῶν*’, *BZ*, 101 (2008), 737-49

Paschalidis, S., ‘The Hagiography of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries’, in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography. Volume 1: Period and Places*, ed. by S. Efthymiadis (Farnham, 2011), 143-71

Pastor, J., P. Stern and M. Mor, eds, *Flavius Josephus: Interpretation and History* (Leiden, 2011)

Patzig, E., ‘Die römischen Quellen des salmasischen Johannes Antiochenus’, *BZ*, 13 (1904), 13-50

—— ‘Über einige Quellen des Zonaras I’, *BZ*, 5 (1896), 24-53 (= Patzig, ‘Zonaras I’)

—— ‘Über einige Quellen des Zonaras II’, *BZ*, 6 (1897), 322-56 (= Patzig, ‘Zonaras II’)

Peers, G., *Sacred Shock: Framing Visual Experience in Byzantium* (University Park, 2004) (= Peers, *Sacred Shock*)

Penna, D., *The Byzantine Imperial Acts to Venice, Pisa and Genoa, 10th – 12th Centuries: A Comparative Legal Study* (Hague, 2012) (= Penna, *Imperial Acts*)

Pérez Martín, I., ‘The Reception of Xenophon in Byzantium: The Macedonian Period’, *GRBS*, 53 (2013), 812-55 (= Pérez Martín, ‘The Reception of Xenophon’)

Pieler, P., ‘Johannes Zonaras als Kanonist’, in *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century*, ed. by Oikonomides, 601-20 (= Pieler, ‘Johannes Zonaras als Kanonist’)

Pietsch, E., *Die Chronographia des Michael Psellos: Kaisergeschichte, Autobiographie und Apologie* (Wiesbaden, 2005)

Pitsakis, K., *Τὸ κώλυμμα γάμου λόγω συγγενείας ἑβδόμου βαθμοῦ ἐξ αἵματος στὸ Βυζαντινὸ Δίκαιο* (Athens, 1985) (= Pitsakis, *Τὸ κώλυμμα γάμου*)

Podskalsky, G., *Byzantinische Reichseschatologie: die Periodisierung der Weltgeschichte in der vier Grossreichen (Daniel 2 und 7) und dem tausendjährigen Friedensreichen* (Munich, 1972), 57-61

Pontani, F., 'Scholarship in the Byzantine Empire (529-1453)', in *Ancient Greek Scholarship*, ed. by Montanari et al., 297-455

Potter, D., *Prophecy and History in the Crisis of the Roman Empire: A Historical Commentary on the Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle* (Oxford, 1990)

Puntoni, V., *Indice dei codice greci della bibliotheca Estense di Modena* (Florence, 1896)

—— *Indicis codicum graecorum Bononiensium ab Al. Oliverio compositi supplementum*, *Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica*, 4 (1896)

Rajak, T., *Translation and Survival: The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora* (Oxford, 2009)

Reinsch, D., 'Bemerkungen zu einigen byzantinischen ‚Fürstenspiegeln' des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts', in *Synesios von Kyrene: Politik – Literatur – Philosophie*, ed. by H. Seng and L. M. Hoffmann (Turnhout, 2012), 404-19

—— 'Historia ancilla litterarum? Zum literarischen Geschmack in der Komnenenzeit: Das Beispiel der Σύνοψις Χρονική des Konstantinos Manasses', in *L'écriture de la mémoire*, ed. by Odorico et al., 81-94

—— 'Ο Νικηφόρος Βρυέννιος – ένας Μακεδόνας συγγραφέας', in, *Β΄ Διεθνές Συμπόσιο: Βυζαντινή Μακεδονία, Δίκαιο, Θεολογία, Φιλολογία* (Thessaloniki, 2003), 169-77

—— 'Wer waren die Leser und Hörer der *Chronographia* des Michael Psellos, *ZRVI*, 50-51 (2013), 389-98

Rhoby, A., 'Quellenforschung am Beispiel der Chronik des Konstantinos Manasses', in *Textual Transmission in Byzantium: Between Textual Criticism and Quellenforschung*, ed. by J. Signes Codoñer and I. Pérez Martín (Turnhout, 2014), 391-415

Richard, J., ‘The Eastern Churches’, in *The New Cambridge Medieval History. Volume IV, c. 1024-c. 1198. Part. 1*, ed. by D. Luscombe and J. Riley-Smith (Cambridge, 2004), 564-98

Richard, M., *Inventaire des manuscrits grecs des Fonds Sloane additional, Egerton, Cottonian et Stowe du British Museum* (Paris, 1952)

Riehle, A., ‘Epistolography As Autobiography: Remarks on the Letter-collections of Nikephoros Choumnos’, *Parekbolai*, 2 (2012), 1-22

Rigo, A., ‘Da Zaccaria Skordylis al *Vaticinium Severi et Leonis* del 1596’, in *Oracula Leonis: tre manoscritti greco-veneziani degli oracoli attribuiti all'imperatore bizantino Leone il Saggio* (Padua, 1988), 73-99

Rochow, I., *Studien zu der Person, den Werken und dem Nachleben der Dichterin Kassia* (Berlin, 1967)

Rodriguez Suarez, A., ‘From Greek into Latin: Western Scholars and Translators in Constantinople During the Reign of John II’, in *John II Komnenos*, ed. by Bucossi and Rodriguez Suarez

Roilos, P., *Amphoteroglossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel* (Washington, 2005)

Ronchey, S., ‘An Introduction to Eustathios’ “Exegesis in Canonem Iambicum”’, *DOP*, 45 (1991), 149-58 (= Ronchey, ‘An Introduction to Eustathios’)

Roueché, C., ‘The Literary Background of Kekaumenos’, in *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. by C. Holmes and E. Waring (Leiden, 2002), 111-38

Šandrovskaja, V., ‘Popravki i dopolnenija k ‘Katalogu molivdovulov’ B.A. Pančenko’, *Vizantijskij Vremennik*, 38 (1977), 102-19

Schamp, J., ‘Flavius Josèphe et Photios’, *JÖB*, 32 (1982), 185-96

Schmidt, W., ‘Über die Quellen des Zonaras’, *Zeitschrift für die Altertumswissenschaft*, 30-36 (1839), 238-85; repr. in *Epitome historiarum*, ed. by Dindorf, VI, iii-lx (= Schmidt, ‘Quellen’)

Schreckenberg, H., *Die Flavius-Josephus-Tradition in Antike und Mittelalter* (Leiden, 1972) (= Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius-Josephus-Tradition*)

—— ‘Josephus in Early Christian Literature and Medieval Christian Art’, in H. Schreckenberg and K. Schubert, *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early and Medieval Christianity* (Assen, 1992) (= Schreckenberg, ‘Josephus in Early Christian Literature’)

Schreiner, P., ‘Untersuchungen zu den Niederlassungen westlicher Kaufleute im Byzantinischen Reich des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts’, *Byzantinische Forschungen*, 7 (1979), 175-91

Scott, R., ‘Byzantine Chronicles’, in *The Medieval Chronicle VI*, ed. by E. Kooper (Amsterdam, 2009), 31-57 (= Scott, ‘Byzantine Chronicles’)

—— ‘The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Historiography’, in *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, ed. by M. Mullett and R. Scott (Birmingham, 1981), 61-74 (= Scott, ‘Classical Tradition’)

—— ‘From Propaganda to History to Literature: The Byzantine Stories of Theodosius’ Apple and Marcian’s Eagles’, in *History As Literature*, ed. by Macrides, 115-33

—— ‘Text and Context in Byzantine Historiography’, in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. by James, 251-63

Seibt, W., *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel in Österreich*, I (Vienna, 1978) (= Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel*)

Sevchenko, I., ‘Levels of Style in Byzantine Prose’, *JÖB*, 31 (1981), 289-312

Shawcross, T., *The Chronicle of Morea: Historiography in Crusader Greece* (Oxford, 2009)

Shepard, J., ‘Cross-Purposes: Alexius Comnenus and the First Crusade’, in *The First Crusade: Origins and Impact*, ed. by J. Phillips (Manchester, 1997), 107-29

Simelidis, C., ‘Lustrous Verse or Expansive Prose? The Anonymous Chapters in the Parisinus Gr. 2750A and Vaticanus Gr. 1898’, in *Pour une poétique de Byzance. Hommage à Vassilis Katsaros*, ed. by S. Efthymiadis et al. (Paris, 2015), 273-94

Simons, B., *Cassius Dio und die Römische Republik* (Berlin, 2009)

Simpson, A., ‘Before and After 1204: The Versions of Niketas Choniates’ “Historia”, *DOP*, 60 (2006), 189-221

—— *Niketas Choniates: A Historiographical Study* (Oxford, 2013) (= Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*)

Snipes, K., ‘A Newly Discovered History of the Roman Emperors by Michael Psellos’, *JÖB*, 32 (1982), 53-65

Spanos, A., ‘Was Innovation Unwanted in Byzantium?’, in *Wanted, Byzantium: The Desire for a Lost Empire*, ed. by I. Nilsson and P. Stephenson (Uppsala, 2014), 43-56

Spatharakis, I., *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976)

Spilsbury, P., ‘Josephus and the Bible’, in *A Companion to Josephus*, ed. by Chapman and Rodgers, 123-34

Spingou, F., ‘John IX Patriarch of Jerusalem in Exile: A Holy Man from Mar Saba to St Diomedes/New Zion’, *BZ*, 109 (2016), 179-206 (= Spingou, ‘John IX’)

Stadter, P., *Plutarch and His Roman Readers* (Oxford, 2014) (= Stadter, *Roman Readers*)

Stankovic, V., and A. Berger, ‘The Komnenoi and Constantinople Before the Building of the Pantokrator Complex’, in *The Pantokrator Monastery*, ed. by Kotzabassi, 3-32

Stavrakos, C., *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel mit Familiennamen aus der Sammlung des Numismatischen Museums Athen* (Wiesbaden 2000)

Stevenson, H., *Codices manuscripti palatini graeci Bibliothecae Vaticanae* (Rome, 1885)

Stolte, B., ‘The Byzantine Law of Obligations’, in *Obligations in Roman Law: Past, Present and Future*, ed. by T. McGinn (Ann Arbor, 2012), 320-33

—— ‘The Past in Legal Argument in the Byzantine Canonists of the Twelfth Century’, in *Byzantium in the Twelfth-Century*, ed. by Oikonomides, 199-210

Stone, A., ‘Aurality in the Panegyrics of Eustathios of Thessaloniki’, in *Theatron*, ed. by Grünbart, 419-28

Stornajolo, C., *Codices urbinates graeci Bibliothecae Vaticanae* (Rome, 1895)

Swan, P., *The Augustan Succession: A Historical Commentary on Cassius Dio’s Roman History, Books 55-56* (Oxford, 2004) (= Swan, P., *The Augustan Succession*)

Tinnefeld, I., *Kategorien der Kaiserkritik in der Historiographie von Prokop bis Niketas Choniates* (Munich, 1971)

Toth, I., ‘Rhetorical Theatron in Late Byzantium: The Example of Palaiologan Imperial Orations’, in *Theatron*, ed. Grünbart, 429-48 (= Toth, ‘Rhetorical Theatron’)

Todorov, B., ‘Monks and History: Byzantine Chronicle in Church Slavonic’, in *Translating the Middle Ages*, ed. by K. L. Fresco and C. Wright (Farnham, 2012), 147-59

Torgerson, J., ‘From the Many, One? The Shared Manuscripts of the *Chronicle* of Theophanes and the Chronography of Synkellos’, *TM: Studies in Theophanes*, ed. by M. Jankowiak and F. Montinaro, 19 (2015), 93-117

Trapp, E., ‘Learned and Vernacular Literature in Byzantium’, *DOP*, 47 (1993), 115-297

—— ‘Λεοντάρης Δημήτριος, Λάσκαρις’, *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*, VI (1983), 162

Treadgold, W., ‘The Byzantine World Histories of John Malalas and Eustathius of Epiphania’, *The International History Review*, 29 (2007), 709-45

—— *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (Basingstoke, 2013) (= Treadgold, *Historians*)

Troianos, S., ‘Byzantine Canon Law from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Centuries’, in *The History of Byzantine and Eastern Canon Law to 1500*, ed. by W. Hartmann and K. Pennington (Washington, 2012), 170-214 (= Troiannos, ‘Canon Law’)

—— ‘Η Νεαρά Κωνσταντίνου του Μονομάχου: ἐπὶ τῇ ἀναδείξει καὶ προβολῇ τοῦ διδασκάλου τῶν νόμων’, *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 22 (2012), 243-63

—— *Οι Πηγές του Βυζαντινού Δικαίου* (Athens, 1999)

Tsironis, N., ‘The Body and the Senses in the Work of Cassia the Hymnographer: Literary Trends in the Iconoclastic Period’, *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 16 (2005), 139-57

Turyn, A., *Codices graeci Vaticani: saeculis XIII et XIV scripti annorumque notis instructi* (Vatican, 1964)

Ulrich, E., ‘Josephus’ Biblical Texts for the Books of Samuel’, in *Josephus, the Bible*, ed. by Feldman and Hata, 81-96

Urso, G., ‘The Origin of the Consulship in Cassius Dio’s Roman History’, in *Consuls and Res Publica*: *Holding High Office in the Roman Republic*, ed. by H. Beck et al. (Cambridge, 2011), 41-60

Van Bekkum, W. J., ‘Four Kingdoms Will Rule: Echoes of Apocalypticism and Political Reality in Late Antiquity and Medieval Judaism’, in *Endzeiten: Eschatologie in der monotheistischen Weltreligionen*, ed. by W. Brandes and F. Schmieder (New York, 2008), 101-18

Van der Wal, N., ‘Problèmes linguistiques recontrés par les jurists byzantins’, in *Non Nova, Sed Nove: mélanges de civilization médiévale*, ed. by M. Gosman and J. Van Os (Groningen, 1984), 279-83

Van Nuffelen, P., ‘John of Antioch, Inflated and Deflated. Or: How (not) to Collect Fragments of Early Byzantine Historians’, *B*, 82 (2013), 437-50

Vassis, I., *Initia carminum Byzantinorum* (Berlin, 2005)

Waring, J., 'Byzantine Book Culture', in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. by James, 275-88

Webb, R., 'The Progymnasmata As Practice', in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, ed. by Y. Too (Leiden, 2001)

Weiss, G., *Oströmische Beamte im Spiegel des Schriften des Michael Psellos* (Munich, 1973)

Wendel, C.,'Tzetzes, Johannes', *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, VII A 2 (1948), 1960-65

—— 'Das unbekannte Schluszstück der Theogonie des Tzetzes', *BZ*, 40 (1940), 23-26

Wilson, N., 'The Libraries of the Byzantine World', *GRBS*, 8 (1967), 53-80 (= Wilson, 'The Libraries')

—— *Scholars of Byzantium* (London, 1996)

Wolska-Conus, W., 'L'école de droit et l'enseignement du droit à Byzance au XIe siècle,' *TM*, 7 (1979), 1-107 (= Wolska-Conus, 'L'école')

Whitby, M., 'The Biblical Past in John Malalas and the Paschal Chronicle', in *From Rome to Constantinople: Studies in Honour of Averil Cameron*, ed. by H. Amirav and B. ter Haar Romeny (Leuven, 2007), 279-302

Ziegler, K., 'Zonaras', *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, 2nd series, 19 (1972), 718-32 (= Ziegler, 'Zonaras')

## Online databases

*DBBE* (consulted 02/03/2017), www.dbbe.ugent.be/occ/1023

*PBW* (consulted 24/04/2017), 'Basileios 20107', http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/152325

*PBW* (consulted 24/04/2017), 'Christophoros 20135', http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/152587

*PBW* (consulted 24/04/2017), 'Nikolaos 198', http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/120458

*PBW* (consulted 24/04/2017), 'Nikolaos 205', http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/person/120465

*PBW* (consulted 24/04/2017), 'Nikolaos 20308', http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/boulloterion/6684