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The *Parthica* of Pseudo-Appian*

ABSTRACT: The *Parthica* found in the manuscripts of Appian's *Roman History* has received little attention since the work was shown to be a forgery by Schweighäuser in the late 18th Century. Since then it has been assumed that the work is of Byzantine provenance, and it has been omitted from subsequent scholarly editions of Appian. This article presents a reconsideration of the *Parthica*, its date, and the possible intentions of its pseudonymous author. It is argued that the work, whether or not an example of deliberate literary imposture, may in fact be of far greater antiquity than what is generally thought.

Keywords: Appian – Plutarch – Pseudepigrapha – Roman Historiography – Byzantine Historiography

Introduction

As Appian persevered with the task of writing his *Roman History*, so his historiographical vision evolved and expanded.[1] An Egyptian history was added at some point; the span of which encompassed events of the 60s B. C. and carried the narrative of the civil wars down to the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra.[2] Similarly, during the composition of either the *Civil Wars* or the *Syriaca*, Appian decided to add an account of Rome's wars against the Parthians. Three references attest to this projected work, all in the future tense.[3] The Parthian history, we are told, was to cover the campaign and defeat of Crassus and the deeds of the rogue general Quintus Labienus, but its scope

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1 References to the *Parthica* are taken from the third volume of the edition of Schweighäuser (1785). Specific passages in the *Parthica* will be referred to by page numbers and Schweighäuser's running line numbers. The opening section of the *Parthica* has been re-edited and may be found in Brodersen 1989, 23. Otherwise all citations of Appian and Plutarch are from their respective Teubner editions, and in the case of the former both numbering systems are used. For discussion of Appian's original historiographical programme, see Bucher 2000, 411–458.

2 Events of the 60s: App. *Mith*. 114.557. From the outset Appian certainly intended to cover the history of the civil wars down to the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra and the annexation of Egypt (cf. App. *Praef*. 14.60), but this was perhaps different from the four books of Egyptian history he ended up writing. Cf. Luce 1964, 259–262. Fragments of the *Egyptian History* are preserved in the grammatical treatise περὶ Συντάξεως (*On Syntax*), for which see Section II below.

3 App. *BC* 2.18.67; 5.65.276; App. *Syr*. 51.260.

(it has been argued) might have been more ambitious.[4] It seems likely, given Appian's interest in the late Republic, that he planned to take the story down to include at least Antony's ill-fated campaign of 36 B. C.

The *Parthica* which appears in the manuscripts of Appian is almost certainly not by Appian's hand.[5] Long banished from scholarly editions, recent discussions of the curious work (such as they are) have been brief and dismissive. Indeed, the last edition of the *Parthica* was that of Johannes Schweighäuser (1785).[6] Schweighäuser's analysis signified the scholarly death knell for the *Parthica*; for it was he who demonstrated its spurious nature.[7] Yet even before the appearance of Schweighäuser's edition, there were some who viewed the *Parthica* with justified suspicion. It seems to have been the sixteenth century humanist Wilhelm Holtzmann (Xylander) who first divined something of the *Parthica*'s dubious origins, having recognised that it was little more than two near-direct quotations from Plutarch's *Life of Crassus* and *Life of Antony*, with only sporadic traces of the author's interventions.[8]

Despite the growing interest in spurious works from antiquity, the *Parthica* represents a scholarly black hole.[9] Its origins have remained unexplored, although a Byzantine date for composition has been assumed.[10] Furthermore, questions remain over the purpose of this work. This article intends to open up the *Parthica* to debate and to question the fundamental assumptions made about the origins of the work. In particular, I shall argue that its assumed Byzantine provenance is particularly vulnerable, and that a date closer to Appian's own lifetime is to be preferred. But before we can turn to this discussion, given that so little has been written about the *Parthica*, it is desirable to comment briefly on its content and style, and what these tell us about the identity and authorial abilities of pseudo-Appian.

4 It has been suggested that Appian had intended the work to include Trajan's Parthian war: e. g. Brodersen 1993, 343; followed by Wheeler 2010, 15. This cannot be taken for granted. If he had, it is surprising that he did not intend to include such a narrative from the outset. Appian's own references to the proposed *Parthica* suggest a work that covered only the period of the late Republic, the function of which was to incorporate material that fell outside the scope of the *Syriaca* and the *Civil Wars*. The Trajanic campaigns might have featured in the final book of the history, the *Arabica*.

5 An outline of the manuscript tradition of the *Parthica* is provided Section II.

6 For brief comments on Schweighäuser's edition, see Dilts 1971, 49; Brodersen 1993, 350–351.

7 Schweighäuser 1785, 3.905–922, esp. 921–922, where Schweighäuser recommended the *Parthica* not appear in future editions of Appian.

8 Xylander quoted in Schweighäuser 1785, 3.906–907. The close similarity between the *Parthica* and Plutarch's lives of Crassus and Antony, led some to assume that Appian was little more than a plagiarist, or as Scaliger (1658, 177) put it *alienorum laborum fucus*.

9 Of the more substantial contributions, see McGill 2012; Peirano 2012.

10 E. g. Schweighäuser 1785, 3.922; Schwartz 1896, col. 217; Goldmann 1988, 2; Brodersen 1993, 343; etc. Mendelssohn 1879, 1.vi fn. 4, appears to be more cautious and does not venture a date of composition.

I. Content and Style

> Μετὰ δὲ τοὺς ἐκ Πομπηΐου Συρίας ἄρχειν ἠρημένους, Γαβίνιος Ρωμαίων στρατηγὸς ἐπέμφθη Συρίας ἄρχειν. ὃν ἐπὶ τοὺς Ἄραβας ὁρμῶντα Μιθριδάτης μέν, ὁ Παρθυαίων βασιλεύς, ἐξελαυνόμενος τῆς ἀρχῆς ὑπὸ Ὀρώδου[11] τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ, μετῆγεν ἐξ Ἀράβων ἐπὶ Παρθυαίους.
>
> Following the men chosen to govern Syria after Pompey, Gabinius, general of the Romans, was sent to govern Syria. [sc. Gabinius] having already begun his expedition against the Arabs, Mithridates the Parthian king (being deposed from his rule by his brother Orodes) diverted him from fighting the Arabs to the Parthians instead.

Thus pseudo-Appian, with almost Xenophontic abruptness, begins his work. From the outset the author appears to position his work as a continuation of the narrative of the *Syriaca*.[12] This opening section, with the exception of the initial clause, is extracted with minor alterations from Appian's *Syriaca*.[13] The choice was in some ways a natural one for the commencement of a Parthian narrative. The passage marks a natural caesura in the *Syriaca*. Indeed, had Appian not decided to embark on his digression on the Seleucids which forms the latter third of the *Syriaca*, he might well have begun his Parthian narrative at this juncture.[14]

Appended to the authentic Appianic material, pseudo-Appian provides his own brief summary of the events that led to Crassus' command in Syria, before commencing his copying of Plutarch, excerpting first from the *Life of Crassus* (15–33) then from the *Life of Antony* (27–53). The narrative proper begins with the consular elections for 55 B. C. then moves swiftly to Crassus' campaign up to his death. Pseudo-Appian then turns briefly to narrate the deeds of Labienus, before narrating the campaigns of Publius Ventidius and Antony.[15] In doing so, we may note that pseudo-Appian fulfils Appian's authorial statements concerning the scope of the *Parthica* as noted in the *Syriaca* and *Civil Wars*. Our author does not make any explicit attempt to identify himself as Appian (or indeed anyone else), but given that Appian nowhere identifies himself in the extant text of his history outside the *Preface* (15.62) we would be more surprised if pseudo-Appian had done so at the beginning of the *Parthica*. Instead, by

11 Variations on this name appear throught the MS tradition. Brodersen (1989, 23) prefers Ἡρώδου.

12 The opening statement (μετὰ δὲ τοὺς ἐκ Πομπηΐου Συρίας ἄρχειν ἠρημένους) refers to the list of individuals who took the command in Syria after Pompey provided by Appian (*Syr*. 51.255–6). It is possible that the δέ-clause is intended to pick up from the final μέν-clause that closes the *Syriaca* (*Syr*. 70.369). This perhaps explains why Photius considered the *Syriaca* and the *Parthica* together as one book, just as the *Libyca* contained distinct Punic and Numidian sections. It may also be the case that Photius' description simply denotes the order in which the *Parthica* appeared in his copy of Appian: that is directly after the *Syriaca*, as it does in several of the MSS.

13 [App.] *Parth*. 21.1–22.18 = *Syr*. 51.257–259.

14 App. *Syr*. 52.261–70.369. It is also the point immediately prior to where Appian foreshadows his intention to write a Parthian history (App. *Syr*. 51.260).

15 For an overview of the campaign of Ventidius and its place in ancient historiography, see Strugnell 2006, 239–252.

his appropriation of the text of the *Syriaca*, pseudo-Appian seamlessly assumes Appian's authorial voice.

Pseudo-Appian's method of composition seems straightforward, efficient, and uninspired. With few exceptions, pseudo-Appian follows his source texts closely. This suggests an author working closely from a text open in front of him, presumably reading then copying the source texts directly as he went along.[16] Deviations from his exemplar are surprisingly few.[17] Compositional sloppiness occasionally intrudes. The opening of the work, quoted above, is hardly a model of elegance,[18] and the transition from the Crassus-narrative to the Antony-narrative is especially poorly executed without acknowledgement of the temporal difference between the events described and with the intrusion of an unfortunate change to the source text.[19] Nevertheless, our author must have been an individual of some means and education. Not only had he read at least some of Appian's *oeuvre* to produce a work that corresponds to the scope of the *Parthica* as planned by Appian himself, but he also seemed to have access to a text of the *Syriaca* as well as copies of Plutarch's *Crassus* and *Antony*, which he had read, and from which he could excerpt.

Beyond the mechanics of how pseudo-Appian went about his task, we may appreciate something about his historical preferences and interests from his interaction with his source texts. If we consider what pseudo-Appian retains from his source material, we may note that the results are not un-Appianic. Like Appian himself, our author displays a fondness for military details: hence descriptions of the Roman battle array, numbers of casualties, and a description of decimation.[20] Admittedly an interest in military affairs is hardly a defining characteristic of Appian's style, but there are also some appropriate literary flourishes and a sense of the dramatic. The tag from Euripides' *Bacchae*, with which Plutarch closes the *Crassus*, is retained;[21] likewise the piquant reply of the aged ambassador Vagises to the overbearing Crassus.[22]

16 The method was perhaps identical to that employed by more skilled historians and authors (even including Plutarch) when compiling drafts (ὑπομνήματα) for what would become more highly polished productions: see further Pelling 1979, 94–95.

17 Note the occasional change of preposition or case. E. g. [App.] *Parth*. 22.15 changes Appian's ἐπὶ Λευκίου Βύβλου to ἐπὶ Λευκίῳ Βύβλῳ, and at [App.] *Parth*. 74.82 the author changes Plutarch's (*Ant*. 34.9) ἄχρι to μέχρι. Perhaps a concession to Appianic style, as Appian never uses the expression ἄχρι δεῦρο in the extant portions of the history, but does use μέχρι δεῦρο (App. *BC* 2.7.47, 5.12.118). ἄχρι is, however, found in the *Parthica* (71).

18 Note the ungainly use of the prolative infinitive ἄρχειν in the opening line.

19 [App.] *Parth*. 70.25–71.29: αἰωρουμένης δὲ Παρθικῆς στρατιᾶς περὶ τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν, ἧς Λαβιηνὸν οἱ βασιλέως στρατηγοὶ Παρθικὸν ἀναγορεύσαντες αὐτοκράτορα Συρίας ἐπιβατεύσειν ἔμελλον, οἳ οἴχεσθαι φερόμενον ὑπ᾽ αὐτῶν [sc. the Parthians] εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν. Cf. Plut. *Ant*. 28: αἰωρουμένης δὲ Παρθικῆς στρατιᾶς περὶ τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν, ἧς Λαβιηνὸν οἱ βασιλέως στρατηγοὶ Παρθικὸν ἀναγορεύσαντες αὐτοκράτορα Συρίας ἐπιβατεύσειν ἔμελλον, οἴχεσθαι φερόμενον ὑπ᾽ αὐτῆς [sc. Cleopatra] εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν. For discussion of this passage, see Perizonius 1685, 381–384; Schweighäuser 1785, 3.918–919.

20 Battle descriptions: [App.] *Parth*. 79–81, 90–91; Decimation: [App.] *Parth*. 85; Numbers of casualties: [App.] *Parth*. 99. Appian's love of these sorts of details is noted by Photius (*Bib. cod*. 57) and Campbell 1987, 24.

21 [App.] *Parth*. 69.4–70.10 = Plut. *Crass*. 33.

22 [App.] *Parth*. 29.35–38 = Plut. *Crass*. 18.

Omissions too shape the texture of the narrative and give us a further impression of pseudo-Appian's methods and aims. Individuals named by Plutarch are occasionally omitted. Often these are figures of peripheral interest or importance to the narrative of the Parthian wars and we may concur with pseudo-Appian's editorial judgement. For example, Octavia, who appears throughout the corresponding portions of Plutarch's narrative, is omitted until the very end of the *Parthica* (*Parth*. 101), where she appears suddenly and without introduction. Sometimes pseudo-Appian will provide a gloss to aid with the interpretation of the narrative, as when he introduces Fulvia as 'Antony's wife' ([App.] *Parth*. 71.33–4; cf. Plut. *Ant*. 30). At times, some of Plutarch's narrative colouring is stripped away; pseudo-Appian provides the beginning of the story of Antony's consultation with an Egyptian soothsayer, but omits half of the soothsayer's speech and the (quintessentially Plutarchan) story about Antony's failure to defeat Octavian at dice games.[23] Similarly, the detail of Antony leaving behind his insignia of command while spending the winter of 39–38 B. C. in Athens finds no place in the *Parthica*.[24] Furthermore, stretches of narrative presumably deemed superfluous to a Parthian history, such as the proposed conferences at Brundisium (in 38 B. C.) and Tarentum (in 37 B. C.), and Antony's 'gift' of Rome's eastern conquests to Cleopatra are removed.[25] These changes, minor though they may seem, provide a glimpse of our author's tastes and objectives. Not least, we may note how by these omissions pseudo-Appian's characterisation of Antony differs from that in Plutarch's *Antony*. Indeed, the general impression we get of Antony is of a generally exemplary commander.[26]

Where we do have changes to the source text, many are little more than seemingly meaningless changes of words. For example, pseudo-Appian changes the word ἱμάτιον to the (extremely uncommon) diminutive form ἱματίδιον for the dark cloak which Antony puts around himself while addressing his troops.[27] Such a change of word may not have been deliberate, and may simply have been the result of carelessness or indifference during the copying process. Nevertheless, the change is odd. The word is not found in Appian's extant works, but tantalizingly, aside from lexical and grammatical works, ἱματίδιον is virtually unused by prose authors after the Antonine-Severan period.[28] At other times, these changes are of greater significance and affect our reading of the text. Pseudo-Appian identifies the one-time Parthian ally of Labienus, who was

23 [App.] *Parth*. 72 = Plut. *Ant*. 33.

24 Plut. *Ant*. 33.7; cf. App. *BC* 5.76.323; with Pelling 1988, 208–209 on the similarities and subtle points of difference between the accounts of Appian and Plutarch, which are probably derived from the same source.

25 Plut. *Ant*. 34–6.

26 Cf. Pelling 1988, 232–233, for Plutarch's generally favourable portrayal of Antony as a general while on campaign. Of course this is not absolute. Pseudo-Appian (*Parth.* 73.67–8) notes Antony's jealousy of Ventidius' successes (cf. Plut. *Ant*. 34.4).

27 App. *Parth.* 89.44; cf. Plut. *Ant.* 44.3.

28 ἱματίδιον appears three times in Arrian (Epic. *Disc*. 3.22.74, 3.26.36, 4.6.4), and once in Cassius Dio (72(71).5.4 [Xiph.]). The only later attestation in a prose author (according to *TLG*) is in the seventh century Alexandrian Patriarch, John Eleemosynarius (*Vita Tychonis* 33).

defeated by Ventidius, as Phraates, whereas he is named Pharnapates by Plutarch.[29] The apparent change to the source text is difficult to understand. The simplest explanation would be that the manuscript of Plutarch, which our author was using, was illegible or corrupt, causing the author to insert a name which seemed plausible to him.[30] Alternatively, it is possible that pseudo-Appian simply misread his text, mentally substituting a familiar name in the place of an unfamiliar one – the sort of error that might creep in if the work was produced in haste.

Only in one extended passage does pseudo-Appian write without the obvious crutch of his source texts. The result is admittedly feeble, but is nevertheless important as it provides the only instance where we hear the author's voice unmediated by the source text.

In the space of a few sentences, the author describes the content of the *Parthica*, before transitioning into the *Crassus*-narrative. Pseudo-Appian writes (*Parth*. 22.19–31):

> καὶ ἔπραξαν μὲν οὐδὲν μέγα, ὅ τι καὶ ἄξιον λόγου, λῃστεύουσι μᾶλλον ἢ πολεμοῦσιν ἐοικότες. ἀλλὰ τάδε μὲν ὕστερον γενόμενα τῇ Κράσσου κακοπραγίᾳ τε καὶ συμφορᾷ προαγαγούσῃ αὐτοὺς ἐς θράσος ἀμήχανον, ὑπὸ Ἀντωνίου συνεστάλη. ὅπως δὲ Κράσσος ἔσχεν ὁρμῆς ἐς αὐτούς, ἄνωθεν εἰπεῖν ἄξιον.
>
> προσήει μὲν γὰρ ἡ τῶν ἀρχαιρεσιῶν ἔθιμος ἡμέρα κατὰ καιρόν· ἔσπευδον δὲ ἅμα ἐτὶ τὴν ὕπατον ἀρχήν, ἀλλήλοις συνθέμενοι, Γάϊός τε Καῖσαρ, καὶ Πομπήϊος Μάγνος, καὶ Κράσσος ὁ Μάρκος ἐπίκλην. οἵ τινες Κικέρωνά τε καὶ Κάτωνα καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀντιστασιώτας ἀπεωσάμενοι, ἐβιάσαντο ἐς τὴν ἀρχήν· καὶ ἐπέδοσαν Καίσαρι μὲν ἄλλην πενταετίαν, ἧς εἶχεν ἄρχειν Γαλατίας, αὐτοῖς δὲ Πομπήϊός τε καὶ Κράσσος ἐψηφίσαντο Συρίαν καὶ Ἰβηρίαν. κληρουμένων δέ, Συρίαν μὲν ἔλαβε Κράσσος, Πομπήϊος δ᾽ ἔλαβεν Ἰβηρίαν.
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> And whereas they [sc. the Parthians] achieved nothing significant, at least anything worthy of record (for these expeditions were more akin to raids rather than military campaigns). Yet later, the failure and disaster of Crassus filled them with ungovernable boldness until this was checked by Antony. As for how Crassus came to attack the Parthians, it is necessary to tell the tale from the beginning.
>
> For when the usual day for the choosing of magistrates came about at the appropriate time, Gaius Caesar, Pompeius Magnus and Marcus surnamed Crassus still yet aspired to the highest position of authority together, having reached an agreement among themselves. Such men as these, having driven away Cicero as well as Cato and others of the opposition faction, forced their way into office. To Caesar they gave another five years for which to govern Gaul, while Pompeius and Crassus voted to themselves Syria and Spain. Having cast lots, Crassus took Syria and Pompeius took Spain.

29 [App.] *Parth*. 72.53; Plut. *Ant*. 33.4. Dio (48.41.3) too identifies this Parthian commander as Pharnapates.

30 Whoever pseudo-Appian had in mind, it cannot be the same Phraates whom he has succeeding Orodes (*Parth*. 75.93–94).

The style is generally clumsy, as comparison with the source text reveals.[31] Furthermore, few if any meaningful concessions to Appian's style or diction are made.[32]

But it is substance not style that should concern us here. What this passage affords us is a glimpse of the historian's mind at work. As in the *Civil War*, the conference at Luca is alluded to, but without discussion (App. *BC* 2.17.63). In the corresponding passage of the *Crassus*, which pseudo-Appian had to hand, Plutarch notes only the opposition of the Younger Cato and Domitius Ahenobarbus to Caesar, Pompey and Crassus. Similarly, in Appian's account of the elections for the consulship of 55 in the second book of the *Civil Wars*, there is mention of Domitius Ahenobarbus (who was after all the rival candidate for the consulship), but not of Cato or Cicero (App. *BC* 2.17.64). Therefore, why pseudo-Appian included the name of Cicero as one of the opponents of the Caesar-Pompey-Crassus *entente* is difficult to explain. Certainly there is no known historical basis for such a claim, and so it is unlikely that pseudo-Appian drew this detail from a subsidiary source.[33] More likely our author was operating on a hunch, based on something imperfectly remembered. It may well have seemed possible to him that it was the sort of thing that Cicero might have done, given his earlier and later record of opposition, and pseudo-Appian therefore felt the need to correct and augument his source text. Such an intrusion does little for pseudo-Appian's stock as a historian. Yet what these instances of authorial intervention offer us is a glimpse of the mind of an author not entirely constrained by the text before him.

In summary, so far we may say that in terms of style and substance the *Parthica* betrays signs of authorial incompetence, or haste. Yet for all of its limitations, pseudo-Appian's selection of material manages to present a continuous narrative of the Parthian wars of the late Republic, which never loses sight of this central theme. As such it must be regarded as a self-standing piece of historical writing, and, to borrow McGill's phrase, an example of 'creative reuse'.[34] Moreover, the scope and theme of the work is not un-Appianic, and represents what must be regarded as a good approximation of what a genuine Parthian history by Appian might have looked like.

With something of the quality and scope of the work thus established, we need now to ask what these can tell us about the origins of the *Parthica* and the possible motivations of its author.

31 Note pseudo-Appian's labored phrasing (κληρουμένων δέ, Συρίαν μὲν ἔλαβε Κράσσος, Πομπήϊος δ' ἔλαβεν Ἰβηρίαν) in contrast to Plutarch's efficient formulation (κληρουμένων δὲ Συρίαν ἔλαχε Κράσσος, τὰ δ' Ἰβηρικὰ Πομπήϊος). Cf. App. *BC* 2.18.65: ὁ μὲν Πομπήϊος εἵλετο Ἰβηρίαν τε καὶ Λιβύην καὶ ἐς τάσδε τοὺς φίλους περιπέμπων αὐτὸς ὑπέμεινεν ἐν Ῥώμῃ, ὁ δὲ Κράσσος Συρίαν τε καὶ τὰ Συρίας πλησίον.

32 The expression Κράσσος ὁ Μάρκος ἐπίκλην looks suspicious. Analogy from elsewhere in the Appianic corpus suggests that he would have written Μάρκος ὁ Κράσσος ἐπίκλην. Cf. App. *BC* 2.111.464; *Syr*. 66.348. Alternatively, Nigel Wilson has suggested to me the attractive emendation Κράσσος ὁ Μάρκος <ὁ πλούσιος> ἐπίκλην.

33 For the standard discussion of Cicero's attitude towards the triumvirs following the settlement at Luca and during the prelude to the consulship of Pompey and Crassus, see Stockton 1972, 208–216.

34 McGill 2012, ix.

II. A Byzantine Forgery?

Over time the oeuvre of an illustrious name may become contaminated with the works of less able individuals.[35] In some cases we may assume that this process is accidental and does not necessarily involve any act of deliberate deception or imposture on the part of the intruding author.[36] But the *Parthica* does not fit this category. As we have seen, pseudo-Appian's usurpation of material from the *Syriaca* to form the starting point of his history makes it reasonably clear that our pseudonymous author intended the work to find a place within the Appianic corpus, and perhaps even be regarded as that of Appian.

Literary frauds and impostures may belong to any age, but it has been taken for granted that the *Parthica* is the product of the 'early Byzantine period'. Pseudonymous authorship was not unknown in Byzantium. Although less common than forgeries of contemporaries or near-contemporaries, the Byzantine age could produce literary 'fakes' of antique authors – the *Timarion* and *Philopatris* which are found in some of the later manuscripts containing Lucian's works are perhaps the most sophisticated examples.[37] Yet a work which imitated a literary stylist like Lucian is a far cry from the sort of history created by pseudo-Appian.

If we are to establish the origins of the *Parthica* we need to appreciate first its place in the textual tradition of Appian's work. The *Parthica* appears in both the *i* and *O* group manuscripts of Appian's history, the earliest examples of each date to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries respectively.[38] *Prima facie*, at least in terms of style of composition, it may be thought that the *Parthica* would not be out of place in these centuries. Indeed, the author's method of composition is not dissimilar (albeit not as skilful) as that employed by Pletho in his *Events after Mantinea*, which seems to have been conceived as a continuation of Xenophon's *Hellenica*.[39] But the *Parthica*'s origins predate the late and even middle Byzantine centuries. Although there are no excerpts from the *Parthica* found in the tenth century *Excerpta Constantiniana*,[40] the ninth

35 For ancient *pseudepigrapha* generally, see the classic handbook-like study of Speyer 1971 (who, strangely, does not mention the *Parthica*). Note also, the stimulating (postructuralist) discussion of Peirano 2012, 1–35.

36 Examples of works that fall into this category are legion, but the work on the *Athenian Constitution* transmitted along with the works of Xenophon, or the *Prometheus Bound* once ascribed to Aeschylus represent more distinguished illustrations of this group of texts.

37 For an overview of the reception of Lucian in Byzantium, see the useful study of Robinson 1979, 68–81.

38 The primary example of the *i* group MSS is *Codex Laurentianus* 70.5, which may be dated securely to the middle of the fourteenth century. For the manuscripts of Appian, see in brief, Brodersen 1993, 344–345; and the more detailed treatments of Dilts 1971, 49–71, and Dilts 1990, 37–42, both of which correct the account presented by Mendelssohn 1879, I.v–xxvi.

39 Thus Diller 1956, 34–35. It may be noted that Pletho's wide scholarly interests extended to the *Syriaca*, from which he made a series of excerpts. See further, Diller 1956, 35; and Brodersen 1991: 51–68 (with an edited text of the excerpts).

40 Appian's representation in the surviving volumes of the *Excerpta* is sporadic. For comments on which, note Brodersen 1993, 346–347. Interestingly, there are no fragments preserved of Appian's history after the *Macedonica* (the ninth book in Photius' scheme of a twenty-four book edition of Appian's work).

century patriarch Photius knew of the *Parthica*, which was presumably the same as the *Parthica* preserved in our later medieval manuscripts.[41] Most tantalizingly, a single quotation from the *Parthica* is preserved in one of the grammatical treatises found in the so-called *Lexica Segueriana*.[42] The single codex which preserves these grammatical texts dates from the tenth century, although most of the works that comprise the *Lexica Segueriana* are of significant antiquity.[43] In the case of *On Syntax* (περὶ Συντάξεως), which contains the excerpt from the *Parthica*, the most recent and thorough treatment of the treatise dates it to the late sixth or early seventh century A. D.[44]

The *Parthica* is not the only work of uncertain provenance transmitted among the genuine works of Appian. Appearing under the *titulus* ἐκ τῶν ἀππιανοῦ κελτικῶν, the so-called *Celtic Epitome* is a brief summary of Appian's now fragmentary history of Rome's wars against the Celts.[45] Although preserving perhaps as little as one hundredth of the source text, the anonymous epitomator of the *Celtic Epitome* produced a work that is replete with military detail, stratagems, and numbers of battle casualties. As we saw above with pseudo-Appian, the selection of material reveals the interests and preoccupations of the author. The origins of the *Celtic Epitome* are obscure. It is found in our earliest manuscript of the historian, the twelfth century *Codex Vaticanus gr*. 141, in addition to manuscripts of the *i* family. The epitomator's style of composition is not dissimilar from that employed by Photius in the *Bibliotheca* and by other anonymous Byzantine summarisers.[46] As such we may tentatively date the *Celtic Epitome* some time between the reigns of Constantine Porphyrogenitus and Alexius Comnenus.

The *Celtic Epitome* should make us question the presumed Byzantine origins of the *Parthica*. In terms of style, substance, and intention, the *Epitome* has nothing in common with the *Parthica*. The *Epitome* was created for the purposes of abridgement, not augmentation. Indeed, the *Epitome* is symptomatic of the process of contraction that the Appianic corpus underwent during the Byzantine period.[47] If pseudo-Appian

41 It seems to be most unlikely that Photius knew of a genuine *Parthica*, which was subsequently lost and replaced in the MS tradition by the *Parthica* of pseudo-Appian. Cf. Ziegler 1959, vi–vii.

42 *On Syntax* μ7 ed. Petrova = Bekker *Anec. Graec*. 1. p. 156.29–31: Μέτεισιν, ἐπέρχεται ἢ διαδέχεται. Ἀππιανὸς Παρθικῇ· εἴ τις ἄρα νέμεσις τὰς πρόσθεν εὐτυχίας μέτεισιν <…>, πρὸς αἰτιατικῆς. Cf. [App.] *Parth*. 90.51–52. For comments on the 35 fragments of Appian preserved in the *On Syntax*, and their value for the reconstruction of Appian's book order, note Brodersen 1990, 52–55.

43 For the date of the codex, see Petrova 2006, xiii.

44 Thus Petrova 2006, xxviii, dates the work to the years 600–625. Such a view consonant with that of Mazzucchi 1979, 123, who opts for a late-sixth century date based primarily on the fact that the latest authors cited in the *On Syntax* are Procopius and Petrus Patricius.

45 Rather than a series of excerpts as its title might suggest.

46 For comments on these sorts of bibliographical summaries found in medieval Byzantine manuscripts, which often were modelled on those of Photius, see Treadgold 2013, 134–135.

47 Of the twenty-four books of Appian's history known to Photius (*Bib. cod*. 57), only the *Iberica*, *Hannibalica*, *Libyca*, *Syriaca*, *Parthica* (which Photius counts with the *Syriaca*), *Civil Wars* I–V, *Illyrica*, and *Mithridatica* survived fully intact. For the problem of reconstructing the order of Appian's books based on the ostensibly conflicting Byzantine testimonia, see Brodersen 1990.

conceived of his labours as being a continuator or editor of Appian, then his aims were indeed peculiar.

On rare occasions, energetic Byzantine copyists are known to have filled lacunae in a source text with material from a subsidiary source. For example, the fifteenth century scribe of *codex Laurentianus* 70.10 used Xiphilinus' *Epitome* to provide supplementary material for his text of Cassius Dio where the manuscript he was working from was deficient.[48] Xiphilinus (although by no means a simple copyist) had used non-Dionian material himself, namely Eusebius and (ostensibly) Asinius Quadratus, to overcome the loss of whole books of Dio's history.[49] But the idea that a Byzantine copyist, editor, or continuator should complete a new work to fulfill an unfulfilled authorial promise in an existing ancient text is, to my knowledge at least, without parallel. Admittedly such a line of argument cannot be pressed far, and it may simply underline the *sui generis* quality of the *Parthica*. But it does prehaps reduce the probability that the work is the product of an ambitious Byzantine copyist.

We may challenge the assumed Byzantine date of the *Parthica* from another perspective. If the *Parthica* were the product of the 'early Byzantine centuries' it is notable how poorly it sits with the general conception of Republican history held by Byzantine authors, where the campaigns of Crassus and Antony barely feature. A survey of historical writing from the sixth through to the twelfth centuries makes this abundantly clear. Agathias in the Persian digression of Book 2 of his *History* makes no mention of these wars, and dismisses the whole Parthian period with little comment.[50] Malalas and Syncellus show scant attention to these events, and what is preserved of the fragmentary histories of John of Antioch and Petrus Patricius suggests little interest from those authors either.[51] Even when we turn to the later historians of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when an interest in the Roman Republic was resurgent, we again see negligible attention to the Parthian wars.[52] The *Historia Syntomos* (attributed to Psellus) has nothing, whereas Xiphilinus passes over the campaigns of Crassus and Antony with little comment, and the same may also be said of Zonaras' and Cedrenus' narratives of the period.[53]

To put it another way, the *Parthica* simply does not read like a product of the sixth to ninth centuries. The historiographical trends in those years were towards *Kaiser-*

48 Mazzucchi 1979, 137–138.

49 For Xiphilinus and his sources for the reigns of Antoninus Pius and the joint reign of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, see Juntunen 2013, 459–486; Mallan 2013, 633–642.

50 Agathias 2.25.9–10; cf. Cameron, 1969/70, 104–105. Understandably, it was the Persians, not Parthians that were of interest to Agathias.

51 Malalas (10.2) notes the death of Crassus, but has nothing about Antony's campaign. Syncellus (*Chron.* 361 M), notes the defeat of Crassus briefly, but in conjunction with his looting of the temple of Jerusalem (cf. Joseph. *AJ* 14.104–5). Antony's campaigns are treated summarily as well: Sync. *Chron.* 372 M, and are again seemingly derived from Josephus.

52 Cf. Kaldellis 2012, 75: 'The Byzantines were interested in Roman civil wars … the foreign wars of the Republic interested them less, which explains the selective survival of Appian and Dio.'

53 Zonaras (5.7 [= Dindorf 1.349]) presents a garbled version of Josephus *AJ* 14.104–5, and as with Syncellus with a focus on Crassus' despoliation of the Temple. Reference to Crassus' death appears later in the *Epitome* (Zonar. 10.7 [= Dindorf 2.356], based on Plutarch's *Caesar*.

geschichte, universal (Christian) chronicles, or classicising contemporary histories, not narratives of forgotten campaigns.[54] It is impossible to rule out definitively a Byzantine date for the *Parthica*; and should it be of this date then pseudo-Appian must surely rank as the last of the Republican historians in the ancient tradition. However, we need to confront and assess the possibility that the work may be in fact of greater antiquity.

III. Authorial Intentions

Whether we consider pseudo-Appian as a forger or conscientious literary continuator (and there is perhaps less distinction between these categories than what might first appear to a modern reader), arguments by analogy tell against a Byzantine date and suggest instead that pseudo-Appian was a close contemporary of Appian himself. The work of editors in antiquity is an area about which we know precious little, but anecdotal evidence tells us a little about their editorial activities. We know from the biography of Thucydides, attributed to Marcellinus, that there were suspicions that the eighth book of Thucydides was the work of a literary executor of sorts, some thinking Xenophon, others Thucydides' daughter.[55] Although such claims were (rightly) dismissed by the biographer, they are nevertheless instructive in so far as they indicate that such editorial activity was familiar enough for these stories to gain currency. For example, in the first century B. C., Hirtius considered himself a continuator of Caesar, at least for the final book of the *Bellum Gallicum*, and he may have also played a role in the formation of the *Corpus Caesarianum*.[56]

In the ancient world – a world we must remember where the copying and circulation of books was without regulation – spurious works could easily appear and gain currency.[57] The circulation of works bearing bogus attributions was a constant source of anxiety for at least some members of the literati. In the mid-first century B. C., Diodorus Siculus was wary of the circulation of incomplete copies of his history. Diodorus (40.8) states that some of his individual books were illegitimately copied and distributed before they had been corrected or perfected. Similarly Appian's coeval, Galen, expressed his surprise upon discovering a book he did not write circulating under his name.[58] We may note that in both the examples of Galen and Diodorus the fraud was perpetrated so as to exploit the fame of a contemporary writer.

54 For a summary of the evidence of historiographical activity of early Byzantine historians (4th–7th centuries), see Treadgold 2013, 361–379.

55 Marc. *Vit. Thuc.* 43. Of course, it is possible that a dutiful daughter or son of a famous author might collect and publish the works of her father. Cf. Richlin 2011, 166–167, who suggests that Fronto's daughter Cratia performed such a task with the letters of her father.

56 For the formation of the *Corpus Caesarianum*, see Gaertner and Hausburg 2013, 15–30, 164–165.

57 For book circulation and 'publication' in the ancient world generally see Starr 1987; McGill 2012, 12–13; cf. Johnson 2010, 85–88.

58 Galen *De Libris Propriis* Praef. 1–2 = 19.8 K.

Appian might have been a suitable target for a literary fraudster. Like Galen, Appian was one of the significant literary figures of his age. His possession of friends in high places certainly helped his standing and prominence. He numbered among the *amici* of the *consularis* Cornelius Fronto: a man whose patronage Appian hoped to exploit in order to secure a sinecure from Antoninus Pius.[59] Moreover, his readership was not confined to his immediate social circle, and we know that the circulation of his works extended beyond the municipal elites of Rome and Italy. Although no traces of Appian's work have yet emerged from his native Egypt, fragments of his work have been unearthed as far afield as Dura-Europus.[60] These two papyrus fragments from the *Iberica*, which date to perhaps the early third century, are testimony to Appian's enduring fame in the decades after his decease.[61]

IV. Alternatives

Only two things may be certain about the date of the *Parthica*, namely that it post-dated Appian's own *Syriaca*, and of course, Plutarch's *Crassus* and *Antony*.[62] This in and of itself sheds little light on the problem of dating pseudo-Appian. It cannot be denied that in Byzantium Plutarch was used as a model for biographically-oriented historiography, as well as a source of information for historians.[63] In the twelfth century, Zonaras used Plutarch's *Lives* sporadically throughout the *Epitome of Histories* to supply historical narrative.[64] But the popularity of Plutarch in Byzantium was not due to some freak resurgence of interest. Papyrus fragments from Egypt attest to the popularity of the *Lives* from the second century onwards.[65] Moreover, Appian himself seems to have been familiar with the biographical works of Plutarch, which he seems to have employed on occasion as a subsidiary source.[66]

59 Fronto *ad Ant. Pium* 10 [VdH p.168]. Fronto had petitioned Antoninus Pius on several occasions for Appian to be granted a procuratorship.

60 For these two fragments (*P. Dura*. 2a and 2b), see De Robertis 2015; Babcock and Johnson 1994, 85–88, who demonstrate that the two fragments belong to Appian's *Iberica*. *Pace* Welles 1939, 211–12; Brunner 1984; Brodersen 1993, 345.

61 De Robertis 2015, 200–201. That the Appian papyri predate the mid-third century is clear from the fact that they were found in the filling from an embankment built in A. D. 256: Roberts 1956, 16; Cavallo 2008, 99.

62 The problem of dating Appian's own composition is well known. It seems likely that the work was composed over a number of years, beginning *circa* 150 and continuing to the early 160s. For discussion of the evidence, see Bucher 2000, 415–429.

63 For the influence of Plutarch on Byzantine historiography, see the case-study of Jenkins 1948; and briefly Kaldellis 2012, 76–77; Neville 2012, 43–44.

64 Zonar. 4.8–14 [=Dindorf 1.284–304], which is derived from the *Life of Alexander*, and Zonar. 10.1–11 [= Dindorf 2.340–371], which is a composite of the *Caesar* and *Pompey*. For Zonaras' use of Plutarch in general, see the venerable, but still very useful study of Schmidt 1874, esp. xvi–xix, xxxix–xliii. Cf. Büttner-Wobst 1890, esp. 137–138, 142–156.

65 NB the recently published fragments of the *Life of Caesar*: Schmidt, Bagnoud, and Gindrat 2013. For a survey of the fragments of the *Lives* and *Moralia* preserved in the papyri, see Brusuelas and Parsons 2012, 89–91.

66 For Appian's use of Plutarch in the *Syriaca*, see now the treatment by Rich 2015, 85, 99, 105–106, and 110.

Yet the narrative of the *Parthica* itself may hold the clue for its origins, as pseudo-Appian presents an apparent *terminus ante quem* for the composition of his work. In his narrative describing the granting of a triumph to Ventidius, pseudo-Appian describes Ventidius as 'the only man up to the present time to have celebrated a triumph over the Parthians' (οὗτος ἀπὸ Πάρθων μέχρι δεῦρο τεθριάμβευκε μόνος).[67] Here our author seems to be nodding, or so it may be thought. After all Trajan had been awarded the right to hold as many triumphs as he had wished for his successes against the Parthians in A. D. 115.[68] As pseudo-Appian must have post-dated Trajan, could it be that he simply erred and failed to emend his text, through ignorance or incompetence?

Given the slip-shod nature of the *Parthica* such a thesis is possible. Yet for once we may extend to pseudo-Appian the benefit of the doubt. Trajan did not live long enough to celebrate his triumph, and in this context it should be noted that the verb θριαμβεύω denotes the act of celebrating a triumph, not just the honour of having a triumph decreed or the act of having triumphed over an enemy. In the case of the *optimus princeps* a triumph was conducted with a wax effigy of the deceased emperor upon Hadrian's return to Rome in A. D. 118.[69] Although modern authors have often spoken of this posthumous triumphal procession as a triumph, ancient authors did not, as this ceremony did not satisfy the basic requirements for a triumph.[70] Hence why it was Ventidius, and not Antony, who gained the reputation for having been the first to celebrate a Parthian triumph, although Antony was supposedly voted a triumph at the same time – at least according to Cassius Dio.[71]

Rome's sporadic conflicts with its eastern neighbour in the second century yielded few opportunities for triumphs. After Trajan, the pacific foreign policies of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius gave little scope for imperial adventure in the East. It was not until the joint triumph of Lucius Verus and Marcus Aurelius in A. D. 166 that an emperor celebrated a genuine triumph over the Parthians. Unlike the posthumous 'triumph' of Trajan, the triumph of A. D. 166 entered into the historical tradition.[72] It also offers pseudo-Appian a lifeline of sorts against accusations of inaccuracy and incompetence – providing the *Parthica* was compiled before the year 166.[73]

The date is not without attraction. If we admit the possibility of the *Parthica* being the product of the years prior to Verus' triumph, we may note how well it accords with the historiographical currents of the Antonine age. The pessimistic tone of the *Parthica* would not have been out of place in those years where the Roman military machine

67 [App.] *Parth.* 74.81–2; cf. Plut. *Ant.* 34.9: οὗτος ἀπὸ Πάρθων ἄχρι δεῦρο τεθριάμβευκε μόνος.

68 This has led some to determine the date for the composition of Plutarch's *Antony* as predating A. D. 115: e. g. Pelling 1988, 212; cf. Jones 1971, 33 fn. 38: '*Ant.* 34.9 (no triumph over the Parthians since Ventidius') seems clearly to antedate Trajan's posthumous triumph in 117 or 118'.

69 Birley 2000, 135; cf. SHA *Had.* 6.1–2.

70 As noted correctly by Claridge 2013, 7–8.

71 Note the comments of Cassius Dio (49.21.2–3) on this point, although the veracity of Dio's account on this point has been called into question: Rich 1996, 97–98.

72 Verus' Parthian triumph was remembered in the later chronographic traditions: e. g. Sync. *Chron.* 430.12 M.

73 We may note that even if the *Parthica* were completed after A. D. 166, pseudo-Appian's comment (perhaps inadvertently) is appropriate for a work written by Appian in the early 160s or earlier.

suffered setbacks, and in particular the violent deaths of the Cappadocian governor M. Sedatius Severianus and the governor of Syria, L. Attidius Cornelianus. Furthermore, if we wish to view pseudo-Appian as an individual alert to the political situation of his age, it could be argued that this tone might be seen to magnify the impending victory of Verus. Indeed, Verus himself in a letter to his one-time tutor, shows that he appreciated clearly the rhetorical value in highlighting the past failures of the Romans against the Parthians as a way of enhancing his own successes.[74]

Yet one gets the sense that the central thrust of the *Parthica* is not contemporary commentary, but an exercise in antiquarian erudition concerning the last generation of the Roman Republic. Here we may note how well the *Parthica* fits with mainstream of historical writing under the Antonines. As has been elegantly demonstrated by Adam Kemezis, the dominant trend of Antonine historiography was to look to the Republican period rather than to the imperial present for a suitable subject.[75] The sophist Zenobius, who completed a Greek translation of Sallust's literary corpus during the reign of Hadrian, is indicative of this trend.[76] Similarly, the annalist Granius Licinianus wrote a history that seems to have terminated in the late Republic, or early Principate.[77] As was the case with Zenobius, Licinianus, Florus, Appian himself, and doubtless other writers, the world of pseudo-Appian was the world prior to Actium.[78] With this in mind, the problem of the intrusion of Cicero in pseudo-Appian's discussion of the consular elections of 55 B. C. (discussed above) becomes more easily accountable.

We can make an attempt at reconstructing the way Rome's history with Parthia was construed by Antonine writers. Admittedly this picture is circumscribed by the scattered nature of the available evidence. Nevertheless, the picture that emerges is consonant with that presented by pseudo-Appian. The defeats of Crassus and Antony loom large in the historical imagination of Fronto and Florus, just as they dominate the pages of the *Parthica*.[79] Moreover, the special attention pseudo-Appian pays to the exploits of Ventidius is mirrored in the interest shown to him in Gellius, Fronto, and Florus.[80] We may note, in contrast, that no Byzantine author, with the possible exception of Dio's epitomator Xiphilinus, paid such attention to the deeds of Ventidius.[81]

According to Lucian's satirical *How to Write History* (πῶς δεῖ ἱστορίαν συγγράφειν), Verus' Parthian war was the catalyst for a slew of mediocre Parthian histories. The six 'historians' lampooned by Lucian may or may not be real men, but the situation he

74 Fronto *ad Verum Imp.* 1.2.1–3 [VdH² pp. 108–109].
75 Kemezis 2010, 285–325.
76 For Zenobius, see now Janiszewski et al. 2014, no. 1088 (Stebnicka).
77 For comments on Licinianus, see Hose 1994, 454–462; and Kemezis 2010, 312–313.
78 We may add to this list the author whose history is preserved in *POxy*. 30 = *FRHist* no. 110, and who seems to have covered Rome's Macedonian wars of the second century B. C. For his date, see *FRHist* 1.627–8 (Briscoe).
79 Fronto *Princ. Hist.* 6 [VdH² p. 206]; Florus 3.11.1–9.
80 Gell. *NA* 15.4; Fronto *ad Verum Imp.* 2.1.9 [VdH p.122] ; Florus 4.9.3–7.
81 Xiph. 68.1–20 = Cass. Dio 49.19.4–22.3 (much condensed).

describes is probably accurate.[82] Indeed, we know of several examples. Appian's occasional correspondent, Cornelius Fronto, professes his intention to contribute to this body of literature, even if the surviving fragment, the so-called *Principia Historiae*, was not intended for wide circulation.[83] The rhetor Polyaenus, temporarily eschewing the temptation to write a contemporary campaign history, cobbled together his miscellany of military-themed anecdotes at the beginning of Verus' Parthian war, although he too had ambitions to write a history of the conflict.[84] Such a pattern was not unusual. Earlier in the second century, Arrian's *Parthica* seems to have been conceived largely as a response to, and commemoration of, the wars of Trajan, just as his older contemporary, Statilius Crito had written a *Getica* to mark Trajan's victories in Dacia.[85] In the case of Arrian, the Trajanic campaigns were set at the end of a more detailed history of Romano-Parthian conflict in seventeen books.[86] At the beginning of the third century, Asinius Quadratus' *Parthica* was again probably inspired by contemporary conflicts, either the wars of Caracalla or Alexander Severus, but like Arrian's *Parthica*, encompassed earlier events too.[87]

It is not inconceivable that it was the wars of Lucius Verus that first inspired Appian himself to augment his history with a Parthian history.[88] However, it should be noted that the reign of Antoninus Pius was not free from tensions between the Romans and Parthians, and Appian might well have decided to write such a history before the accession of Marcus and Lucius in A. D. 161.[89] Indeed, how long Appian lived into the reign of Marcus and Lucius is not known, and it is possible that he expired before the conclusion of the Parthian war.[90] Even so, might it not have been in this very climate

82 Cf. Jones 1986, 61–67. Kemezis (2010, 289 fn. 11) presents a useful summary of the views concerning the historicity of the historians named by Lucian. The question of whether they were real individuals is a question that lies outside this present discussion.

83 For a brief summary of the *Principia Historiae*, see now Davenport and Manley 2014, 156–157.

84 Polyaen. *6 praef*. Note Campbell 1987, for the genre of military handbooks during the period of the Roman Empire.

85 Crito: *BNJ* 200 (Kriton of Pieria).

86 For Arrian's *Parthica*, see the standard treatment of Stadter 1980, 135–144. Cf. Bosworth 1983, 265–276, who is cautious as to the extent to which Arrian's *Parthica* was devoted to Trajan's wars. Note, however, Bowie 1970, 15, who suggests that Arrian's inspiration to write the *Parthica* was the wars of Verus.

87 For Quadratus' *Parthica*, note *FRHist* 1.615–6 (Levick and Cornell).

88 Thus the (over?) confident assertion of Nissen 1888, 250 fn. 1: 'In der Vorrede ist von einer parthischen Geschichte keine Rede; wenn solche dem ursprünglichen Plan zuwider Bürgerkr. II 18 V 65 in Aussicht genommen wird, so ist die Abweichung ohne Zweifel dem Einfluss der Tagesbegebenheiten d. h. dem Partherkriege des L. Verus in Rechnung zu stellen.' Cf. Bucher 2000, 427. Schwartz (1896, col. 216), takes the reference to 'emperors' (sc. βασιλέων) at App. *Praef*. 15.62 to mean that Appian was active in the court of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. Yet Appian's statement could be understood as him serving under successive emperors, or under Antonius Pius (as Augustus) and Marcus Aurelius (as Caesar). Cf. Hose 1994, 144–115, with fn. 18 on 115.

89 For these tensions, note Syme 1982, 204–205, citing *ILS* 1076 = *CIL* 9.2457 (an inscription to L. Neratius Proculus, who took part in the reinforcement of Syria against a future Parthian conflict during the reign of Antoninus) and SHA *Ant. Pius* 9.6.

90 Certainly the *Syriaca* (*Syr*. 57.296) was written before well before the destruction of Seleucia in A. D. 165/66. Cf. Brodersen 1993, 353–354. It follows that Appian's plan to write a Parthian history was also conceived before A. D. 165.

that the work of pseudo-Appian was conceived, written, and disseminated – a time when the fame of Appian and the topicality of Verus' war were at their height? If the *Parthica* was produced just after Appian's demise, then perhaps our pseudonymous author hoped to gain from producing for the reading public a 'lost book' of Appian's history. Such a fraud (if that is what it was) might also have brought financial reward to our author, if the *Parthica* were sold to, or produced by, an unscrupulous book-dealer, as was presumably the case with the fake copies of Galen, encountered above. Alternatively, if the work was the product of a literary executor then we must not rule out the work being simply an act of *pietas*.

It is true that an Antonine date is not the only possibility for the creation of the *Parthica,* and one must admit a range between the mid-160s through to the fourth century. The fourth century would seem to provide a terminal date for the creation of the *Parthica*. Ostensibly, the *Parthica* does not appear to have much in common with the world of luminaries such as Libanius and Eunapius, but the fertile intellectual and cultural climate of the fourth century might have been conducive even for a mediocre writer like pseudo-Appian to try his hand at history. Republican history was to a degree back in vogue, as attested by productions such as the *Origio gentis romanae* and the *De viris illustribus*, found in the *corpus Aurelianum*, not to mention the curious epitome of Julius Exuperantius, or the Livian *Periochae*. Moreover, the creation of Greek translations of Eutropius, the most famous being that of Paeanius, suggests that there was still active interest in the Roman Republic even amongst the Greek-speaking populations of the Empire.[91] The conflicts on the eastern frontier of the Empire under the successors of Constantine might even have provided some additional motivation for our author, just as it did for Festus and his *Breviarium*. But there are also problems with such a date. Most of our surviving works from the fourth century, which dealt with the distant past, are in the form of epitomes or short handbooks, not lengthy narratives of the kind provided by pseudo-Appian.

From a textual-history perspective, the fourth century was also a time of consolidation, as works were copied from rolls into codices. Hence, it might be thought that the *Parthica* was a production of an ambitious scribe at the library at Constantinople or one of the other centres of book production. Again such a hypothesis runs into difficulties. As has been maintained in the foregoing discussion, the *Parthica* is (to the best of our knowledge) a unique production and as such seems to be the work of an independent author, not an institution or proactive library committee. Furthermore, the role of these fourth century scribes, like the later scribes of medieval Byzantium, was to copy not to create.[92]

91 Of Eutropius' ten books, the first six and a half covered the period of the Republic. For Paeanius, see Cameron 2011, 638–639; Janiszewski et al. 2014, no. 766 (Janiszewski).

92 For the activities of copyists in the fourth century, note Lemerle 1971, 54–60; Cavallo, 1987. With the possible exception of the *pinakes* attached to the books of Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*, which contain temporal statements derived from Eusebius, and which may or may not have been inserted by one of these scribes, there is no evidence that the scribes at the library at Constantinople attempted to augment the corpus of any existing writer by the creation of a work similar in scale to the *Parthica*.

The *Parthica* may offer a clue to appreciating how Appian's works circulated in antiquity. Ownership of a full set of Appian's *Roman History* would have been a rare thing, and presumably individual books (genuine or spurious) circulated independently of one another. So much seems clear from the Dura-Europus fragments of the *Iberica*. Certainly, it would appear from Appian's unrevised preface that his work was disseminated in instalments as they were written. With such a mode of serial publication, it is easy to appreciate how a bogus work could appear and gain currency. It was presumably only when the works of the Appianic corpus were transferred from rolls to codices, perhaps in the mid-fourth century, that copyists assembled the various books of Appian's *Roman History* then in circulation, including the spurious *Parthica*, and in doing so began forming the corpus as it was known to Photius in the ninth century, and indeed to us today. By this reckoning, it would seem that the *Parthica* had been assimilated into the canon of Appian's works before the scribes of Constantius II or one of his successors began the process of copying and preserving the works of antiquity.

Conclusion

By a modern estimation, the author of the *Parthica* was a plagiarist and a hack – albeit one with literary pretentions. The *Parthica*, although being almost entirely derivative, nevertheless reveals something of its author's mind. In the way pseudo-Appian dealt with his source texts, he created a work which was distinct in focus and form. As a work of history, this *opuscule* is of little import or utility for the historian of the Roman Republic. Yet as a component in the broader textual history and reception of Appian (and indeed of Plutarch), the work is of interest and has value.[93] As such, the absence of any modern, scholarly edition is unfortunate and it is hoped that future editors of Appian will include this work in any new edition, if only as an appendix.

As has been maintained throughout, the *Parthica* warrants further attention. There is nothing to shake seriously the opinion of Schweighäuser that the work is not that of Appian, but the casual assumption that it is the work of the Byzantine period (however defined) must be brought into serious doubt. As has been maintained above, there is nothing in the text that precludes a date some time between the second and fourth centuries A. D. In terms of focus and tone, the work is consonant more with what we know of Antonine historiography than of Byzantine. If the work is indeed of the Antonine age, as has been posited above, then it perhaps represents an intriguing mixture of literary imposture, of the sort feared by Diodorus and experienced by Galen, and/or the work of a continuator or editor of Appian, who attempted to complete an unfulfilled authorial promise.

93 Here I am sympathetic with the views of Peirano 2012, 31, who notes that "[…] Roman literary fakes have much to teach us not only about the culturally specific dynamics of engagement with canonical authors in the literary tradition out of which they developed, but also about the tacit assumptions that we, as scholars, use in approaching this material."

Finally, the *Parthica* prompts us to think more about Appian and his work as well. Had Appian written a *Parthica*, we may wonder how, if at all, it would have differed from that of his imitator, at least in terms of scope, focus, and his even method of composition? We might even speculate as to what sources Appian might have employed. Would he have used the work of Q. Dellius as Plutarch is supposed to have done, or Dellius' coeval, Polyaenus of Sardis, or would he have employed the more recent narratives of Arrian?[94] Or again might he have turned to Plutarch himself – an author Appian appears to have known well? To put the question another way, we may ask how we would regard the genuineness of the *Parthica* had Plutarch's *Crassus* and *Antony* not survived?

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