

**SCANDINAVIAN JOURNAL  
OF  
BYZANTINE  
AND  
MODERN GREEK STUDIES**

*Charis Messis & Ingela Nilsson*

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Constantine Manasses: Introduction,  
text and translation**

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## Editorial

In recent years, the *Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* has grown in length and it has become internationally recognised as a peer-reviewed journal in the field of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies. From the very beginning, in 2015, it is available online with free access to the scholarly and general public.

Volume 5 of SJBMGs includes four studies, of which three are of Byzantine interest. Let me begin with the study on the Byzantine writer Constantine Manasses by Charis Messis and Ingela Nilsson, offering a new edition of Manasses' *Description of a Crane Hunt*. The following article, originating as the 2018 Annual Lecture in Memory of Lennart Rydén, is by Averil Cameron, who poses some crucial questions on the necessity of bringing Byzantium into a wider historical perspective. The next article also originates as a Lennart Rydén Lecture (2019); Thomas Arentzen here explores how the authors of four texts imagined their protagonists' interaction with trees. Last but not least, the current volume includes an article by Adam J. Goldwyn dealing with issues such as gender, nationalism, and assimilation of Greek Jews on the American Stage.

In the last section of SJBMGs you will find two book reviews by G. Günay and T. Vervenioti, discussing studies on Byzantine Art and Modern Greek history, published in 2017 and 2019 respectively.

We remind you that SJBMGs is open for unpublished articles and book reviews related to Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies in the fields of philology, linguistics, history and literature.

Vassilios Sabatakakis  
Modern Greek Studies  
Lund University



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# The *Description of a Crane Hunt* by Constantine Manasses: Introduction, text and translation\*

*Charis Messis & Ingela Nilsson*

In any period and any society, the culture of hunting reveals the relationship of men with nature as well as their relationships with each other – relationships of equality and solidarity, but also of inequality, hierarchy or conflict. The practice of hunting thus becomes subject to technical, financial and ideological control; it becomes a language and a code likely to convey and express political, economic and social conceptions and values. Much has been written on hunting both in Antiquity and in the Western Middle Ages; numerous texts have been edited and translated into modern languages.<sup>1</sup> In the case of Byzantium, however, where hunting made up a field of multiple meanings which require a deeper investigation, studies have remained rather few and to some extent superficial.<sup>2</sup> The present contribution therefore takes the opportuni-

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\* This article is dedicated to the memory of Gunilla Åkerström-Hougen (1933-2010). We would like to express our thanks to Adam Goldwyn, Marina Loukaki and Stratis Papaioannou for reading and correcting the Greek text and translation, and to Pernilla Myrne for helping us with the translations from Arabic texts. Needless to say, any mistakes remain our own responsibility.

<sup>1</sup> For Greco-Roman antiquity, see Aymard 1951; Vidal-Naqué 1981, esp. 151-175; Anderson 1985; Schnapp 1997; Barringer 2001; Trinquier & Vendries 2009. For occidental and oriental Middle Ages, see Lindner 1940; Lombard 1969; Verdon 1978; Åkerström-Hougen 1981; Paravicini Bagliani & van den Abeele 2000; Bord & Mugg 2008. For historical and anthropological perspectives on hunting, see Sidéra 2006 and Hell 2012<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> In many cases, there is mostly repetition of the texts and conclusions presented by Faidon Koukoules; see Koukoules 1948-56, vol. 5, 387-423 (resumption of Koukoules 1932). On hunting on Byzantium, see also Bréhier 1970<sup>2</sup>, 159-161; Patlagean

ty to provide a thorough background for the new edition and translation of an ekphrasis written by Constantine Manasses in the twelfth century: the *Description of a crane hunt* (Τοῦ Μανασσῆ κυροῦ Κωνσταντίνου ἔκφρασις κυνηγεσίου γεράνων). This rhetorical piece offers a vivid image of an imperial hunt using birds of prey; at the same time, it poses a series of important cultural questions as regards hunting and its practices in Byzantium.

## 1. Constantine Manasses and the *Description of a crane hunt*

Constantine Manasses (c. 1115-after 1175) was one of many twelfth-century authors who worked for aristocratic and imperial circles in Komnenian Constantinople.<sup>3</sup> He is known primarily through his own texts, which represent a large variety of genres: the best known are a large chronicle in verse and a novel (preserved only in excerpts), but there are also a series of ekphraseis, several pieces of oratory and various texts that seem to belong in an educational setting.<sup>4</sup> His preserved production, consisting of some thirty texts, is marked by its occasional character, most often commissioned by or written for certain aristocratic or imperial patrons and performed at specific events. The *Description of the crane hunt* is no exception: a piece of rhetoric that uses the Graeco-Roman tradition in order to describe a contemporary event, thus combining literary imaginaries with lived experiences shared by the author and his audience.<sup>5</sup>

The *Description of a crane hunt* is preserved in a single manuscript of the thirteenth century, the Oxford Barocci 131. This codex, produced by a group of copyists with well-defined literary and philosophical interests, contains a series of texts by authors from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>6</sup> In addition to this ekphrasis (f. 180<sup>v</sup>-182<sup>v</sup>), the manuscript

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1992; Delobette 2005; Caseau 2007, 150-154; Sinakos 2011.

<sup>3</sup> For a recent account of Manasses' biography, see Paul & Rhoby 2019, 4-5. See also Nilsson 2021 (forthcoming).

<sup>4</sup> For a list of texts attributed to Manasses, see Chrissyogelos 2017: 13-20; Paul & Rhoby 2019: 5-7 (a discussion rather than an inventory); Nilsson 2021 (forthcoming).

<sup>5</sup> On this kind of referentiality as characteristic of occasional literature, see Nilsson 2021 (forthcoming).

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed description of the manuscript, see Wilson 1978. See also Papaioannou

also has other texts by Manasses: the *Encomium of Emperor Manuel Komnenos* (182<sup>v</sup>-184<sup>v</sup>) follows directly after the ekphrasis, and the manuscript also includes the *Monody on the death of his sparrow* (f. 174<sup>r</sup>-175<sup>r</sup>) and large chunks of the *Verse Chronicle* (*Synopsis Chronike*) (447<sup>r</sup>-474<sup>r</sup>).<sup>7</sup> As clear from the indication of folia, these texts do not constitute a codicological unit but are scattered throughout the manuscript. The ekphrasis was edited for the first time by E. Kurtz in 1906, together with the *Encomium of Emperor Manuel Komnenos*.<sup>8</sup> Our edition offers a limited number of corrections, a translation and comments on linguistic, literary and cultural aspects of the ekphrasis.

The structure of the text follows more or less the traditional composition of an ekphrasis: a narrative frame containing a series of descriptions of characters and events. Opening with two paragraphs on the beauty and benefits of hunting (§1-2), the narrator states his own presence at a crane hunt and his desire to describe it (§3). A description of the emperor follows, because it was an imperial hunt with the participation of Manuel I Komnenos (§4). The event took place in the autumn and the organization of the hunting party is described in detail, underlining the warlike atmosphere of the occasion (§5-6). The emperor carries a falcon, carefully depicted in much detail: it is old and noble, a female falcon with piercing eyes and greyish plumage (§7-8). There are also other birds of prey, whose names are unknown because they are not Greek (§9). The hunt starts and quickly turns into a bloodthirsty war scene. The emperor does not release the female falcon, but uses another old and experienced bird for the hunt (§10). The war goes on, a fierce battle between cranes and birds of prey, and one particular crane is brought down (§11-12). In order to train the young birds of prey, the same crane is finally torn apart and killed (§13). A close description of the crane follows (§14), after which the narrator concludes, underlining the beauty of crane hunting in particular – a pleasurable hunt for men to

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2019, lxxxvii-xc.

<sup>7</sup> The manuscript also contains a letter copied twice under the name of Manasses, but attributable to Michael Italikos (175<sup>v</sup> and 484<sup>rv</sup>).

<sup>8</sup> Kurtz 1906, 79-88. For a translation into modern Greek with introduction and notes, see Nimas 1984.

simply watch. The text closes with an ekphrastic turn of phrase, defining the function of the description “for me as a vivid reminder of the event and for others as a clear representation of what they have not seen” (§15).

In the following, we will focus on four aspects of the ekphrasis: first, hunting as a substitute for war in Byzantine literature; second, falconry in Byzantium; third, the crane as a game of distinction; and finally, the significance of the presence of Emperor Manuel in the hunt described by Manasses.

## 2. Hunting as a substitute for war

The close relationship between hunting and war is programatically indicated in the opening paragraphs of Manasses’ ekphrasis: hunting makes men healthy while also preparing them for war. The hunt is “a battle without deaths, an Ares unarmed who does not have his right hand covered by blood, nor a spear drenched in murder” (§2). This affiliation is always explicit or implicit in Greek texts that speak of hunting – an organic link that unites the two activities, based on the regulation of violence. Like war, hunting requires a mixture of skill and courage, guile and vigilance.<sup>9</sup> The association of war with hunting is not only a topos of imperial rhetoric, but also part of the advice found in tactical manuals. In such texts, hunting is presented as a preparation for war (the education of young boys in violence and cunning), as an exercise during war (to boost the morale of the soldiers or to refuel the army), or as an alternative activity to war in peacetime.

The first known reference to the affiliation between war and hunting dates back to Xenophon’s treatise on hunting, the *Cynegeticon*: “hunting is the means by which men become good in war and in all things out of which must come excellence in thought and word and deed.”<sup>10</sup> Xenophon clearly sees hunting as a preparation for war, primarily for young men. In ancient Greek society, where war was a regular summer

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<sup>9</sup> On the role of cunning during hunting based on the hunting treatises by Oppian, see Detienne & Vernard 1974, 35-40.

<sup>10</sup> Xenophon, *Cynegeticon* 1.18, tr. E. C. Marchant.

activity, hunting was aimed mainly at young men and had an educational character. This concern reappears in twelfth-century Constantinople, so we will return to it below. Byzantine military manuals consider hunting as an exercise of the military during wartime. The *Strategikon*, attributed to Emperor Maurice, devotes significant space to hunting during military expeditions. First, he prohibits hunting during a march against the enemy, stressing that “hunting is necessary for soldiers only during peacetime”.<sup>11</sup> Then he makes a comparison between war and hunting and points out their affiliation by emphasizing that victory is a question not of force, but of skill and cunning: “Activities of war resemble those of hunting. As we succeed in hunting animals through scouts, nets, traps, espionage, encirclements and such artifices rather than by force, we must do so also against enemies, be they many or few”.<sup>12</sup> Finally, the author offers an entire chapter “On hunting: how to hunt wild beasts without damage, accident and injury”, where he returns to the relationship between war and hunting.<sup>13</sup>

A fine example of hunting during war is provided by the *Passion* of the commander Eustathios Placidus, martyred in Rome under Trajan. According to the tenth-century metaphrastic version, “when his spear was not turned against the enemies, hunting was his study of war” (μελέτη πολέμου τὰ κυνηγέσια).<sup>14</sup> The hunting episode that follows is analogous with the progression of a battle:

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<sup>11</sup> Maurice, *Strategikon* 1.9.55-59 (Dennis & Gammilscheg). ‘Peace’ (ἐν δὲ καιρῷ εἰρήνης) should here be understood rather as inaction between two battles. Cf. Leo VI, *Taktikon* 9.20 (Dennis): ὄτ’ ἂν δὲ καιρὸς ἐστὶν εἰρήνης καὶ οὐδεμία ἀνάγκη ἐπιίχεται, τότε χρήσιμά εἰσι τὰ κυνήγια τοῖς στρατιώταις.

<sup>12</sup> Maurice, *Strategikon* 7 A Pr 45-49 (Dennis & Gammilscheg). Cf. also Leo VI, *Taktikon* 12.107 (Dennis): τὰ γὰρ τῶν πολέμων κυνηγίους εἰσὶν ὅμοια. See also Patlagean 1992, 260; Dennis 2009, 132.

<sup>13</sup> Maurice, *Strategikon*, 12 D 3-6 (Dennis & Gammilscheg).

<sup>14</sup> *Passion of Eustathios*, ch. 2 (van Hooff). On the text and the legend, see Delehaye 1919; on the fortune of this text in the West, see Boureau, 1982. The link between hunting and war seems to have been a metaphrastic initiative; in the ancient Acts of the martyr there is no such explicit link: Eustathios is a commander and ἦν δὲ καὶ περὶ τὴν θήραν σπουδαῖος καὶ κατὰ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ἠδέως κυνηγῶν (PG 105, 377D). For another version of this episode, see John of Damascus, *Third oration on the images*, PG 94, col. 1381.

When once he went out to hunt, the scout told him that a herd of deer was grazing nearby; the commander, as usual, gave order to the hunters and organised the hunting party (κυνηγέσιον). During these preparations, a very large deer, much swifter than the others, appeared in the wood, attracted the gaze of the commander and, like an illustrious enemy, provoked the commander to combat. The latter left the other hunters to take care of the herd according to the orders he had given and in the company of other soldiers he went after the deer. Once his companions were tired, he continued the chase alone with his tireless horse and with all his zeal until the deer, seeing that the commander was left alone, jumped, better than a real deer, onto a steep cliff over a precipice. There he stopped running and thus stopped the chase of the hunter. This showed that it was not the hunter who approached his game, but that he had become the game of the animal he was chasing.<sup>15</sup>

The deer is clearly an exceptional animal, one that exceeds the nature of a real deer (κατ' ἐλάφου φύσιν); the story will reveal that it is an incarnation of Christ who will lead the commander to the Christian faith and martyrdom.<sup>16</sup> But beyond its instructive character, this narrative 'beneficial for the soul' (ψυχοφελής) describes the habit of a Roman and, presumably, Byzantine army: the game localized by the scouts, the organisation of an almost military expedition for its capture, the various challenges and the individual battle. Hunting is merely another form of war.

The relationship between war and hunting also has a literary function in the portrait of the ideal emperor. In imperial panegyrics, hunting animals becomes a powerful metaphor for victories over the enemies of the empire. To cite but one eloquent example, we may turn to Theodore Daphnopates and his praise of Romanos II (959–963), an emperor who was slandered in later historical writings for the same reasons that he is applauded here. In a letter to Romanos about a hunt in which the emperor succeeded in killing a goat, a hare and a partridge, Daphnopates writes:

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<sup>15</sup> *Passion of Eustathios*, ch. 2 (van Hooff), our translation.

<sup>16</sup> On the significance of the deer as a christological animal, see Pastoureau 2004, 84–88.

As for me, I saw there signs and symbols of your victorious and powerful reign against the barbarians. These, first of all, like the wildest of goats, whose presumptuous pride is symbolized by their excessive horns, also like to frequent the desolate escarpments and set up their camp there; the ferocity and strangeness of their way of life and their cult give them before most people the reputation of being elusive. But then, when they are attacked by you, they are like fearful hares, they seek their salvation in flight and fall into a double misfortune: on the one hand, they reveal their own weakness and wantonness, on the other their capture manifests the difficulty of escaping your most sovereign power. However, even as they raise the horn of pride high, they yield like hares to fear and cowardice, they adopt the trick of the partridge and seek like it salvation in flight, trying to hide in the depths of the lairs and ruins – in the end, experience shows that they are easy to capture and to surrender to your imperial valor, and they suffer the price of war awaiting them.<sup>17</sup>

Hunting as preparation for combat characterizes positive historical figures and dictates their behaviour. There are, however, cases of several emperor-tyrants who, being fanatic hunters, were nevertheless pitiful warriors. The *Suda* includes a citation attributed to Polybios that considers this possibility: “Some are courageous in the hunt for animals in the hunting party; the same, however, are cowards when it comes to war and enemies.”<sup>18</sup> Hunting is valued when it is a supplement to war, but discredited as a substitute for war.

Recreational hunting was established in Byzantium at the end of the eleventh century, following the militarization and provincialization of its elites, but it was always justified by continuous reference to war, especially in the Komnenian period. Anna Komnene noted how her father Alexios I Komnenos and her uncle Isaac “indulged often in hunting, when there was no great pressure of work, but they found military affairs more exhilarating than hunting (πολεμικοῖς δὲ μᾶλλον ἢ κυνηγετικοῖς ἔχαιρον πράγμασιν).”<sup>19</sup> When Theophylact of Ochrid addressed Alex-

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<sup>17</sup> Daphnopates, *Letter* 14.37-50 (Darrouzès & Westerink), our translation.

<sup>18</sup> *Suda*, ed. Adler, a 3744, our translation.

<sup>19</sup> Anna Komnene, *Alexiad* 3.3.5 (Reinsch & Kambylis); tr. Sewter, rev. Frankopan



ios in an *encomium*, he highlighted the significance of hunting in the training of a new soldier:

When you relax after the military campaigns, you do not succumb to horse racing and the delirium of the crowds, you do not soften your hearing by the tones of effeminate music, but you wake up your drowsy ardour by the pursuit of game and hunting with hounds, making the children of the nobility taste, like young dogs, the exploits of their age.<sup>20</sup>

In this passage the educational character of hunting is clear: Alexios becomes a pedagogue, a living example of imitation for the aristocratic youth. In a similar vein, Isaac and John Komnenos were assigned “as a residence the Stoudios monastery and this for two purposes: so that they could both practice virtue by imitating the best men and easily leave the city to devote themselves to hunting and military exercises”.<sup>21</sup>

The same theme persisted in the writings of Theophylact’s successors. Besides Manasses justifying the hunting of Manuel I Komnenos in his ekphrasis, Michael the Rhetorician, in his *encomium* of the same emperor, wrote: “you practise fighting against enemies by fighting wild beasts and you rightly consider hunting to be identical to preparation for war ... Hunting is so close to war.”<sup>22</sup> Nikolaos Kataphloron, presenting a portrait of a noble soldier, went one step further:

He was also skillful in the art of hunting, of setting traps, of foreseeing the places through which the game could escape, of encouraging and reminding dogs with a loud whistle, of aiming at the deer with precision and of tracking the hare better than the rustic gods of mythology and Chiron; for these are divine things.<sup>23</sup>

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2009. See also *Alexiad* 14.7.9 (Reinsch & Kambylis) for similar statements about Alexios and hunting.

<sup>20</sup> Theophylact of Ochrid, *Encomium of Alexios I Komnenos* 233.24-235.2 (Gautier), our translation.

<sup>21</sup> Nikephoros Bryennios, *History* 1.1.23 (Gautier).

<sup>22</sup> Michael the Rhetorician, *Encomium of Manuel I Komnenos* 180.4-6 and 10-11 (Regel & Novosadski).

<sup>23</sup> Nikolaos Kataphloron, *Encomium of a Byzantine governor* 106 (Loukaki), our trans-

Hunting was thus elevated to a divine activity, suitable for all men and their sons. Theodore Prodromos, dedicating verses to the birth of the son of Sebastokrator Andronikos in the middle of the twelfth century, predicted for the baby a future devoted to hunting and war.<sup>24</sup>

To conclude, the affiliation between hunting and war formed the basis of aristocratic and masculine ideology of the Komnenian period. It imbued imperial rhetoric, but also fictional representations of heroic men. The father of Digenis Akritis was not only a great man but also a great hunter: “and every day he found recreation in battles against wild beasts, testing his daring and displaying his bravery, he became a wonder to all who observed him.”<sup>25</sup> The only way to obtain glory was through fighting with animals. So in the Komnenian period, men indulged in hunting and amused themselves, but they needed to appeal to the relationship between hunting and war in order to present hunting as a legitimate activity.

### 3. Falconry in Byzantium

For any scholar interested in falconry in the Greek tradition, the confusing terminology constitutes a first obstacle.<sup>26</sup> For the ancients and the Byzantines, the term *ἰέραξ* is generic and indicates several categories of birds of prey. The simplest definition they offer is that of “a hunting bird, known to all”.<sup>27</sup> *Κίρρις*, *κόκκυξ*, *κίρκος*, *πετρίτης* and *ὄξυπτερίον* are other terms used to describe ‘falcons’ which could belong to the two most important categories of birds of prey: the falconids and the accipitrines (like the goshawk and the sparrowhawk).<sup>28</sup> The *Paraphrase* of the

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lation.

<sup>24</sup> We will return to this poem in more detail below. For similar advice to a son in a didactic poem in the vernacular of the same period, see *Spaneas* 122-23 (Anagnostopoulos).

<sup>25</sup> *Digenis Akritis* G, 1.40-42 (Jeffreys), tr. Jeffreys.

<sup>26</sup> For a recent survey of falconry in Byzantium, see Külzer 2018. See also Maguire 2011 and *ODB*, s.v. Hawking.

<sup>27</sup> *Cyranides*, 3.18.2 (Kaimakes): *ἰέραξ* πτηνὸν θηρατικόν, πᾶσι δῆλον.

<sup>28</sup> According to the *Mega Etymologicon* 659.31 (Gaisford) there are eight categories of *ἰέρακες*, while Eustathios of Thessalonike, *Comment. Ad Hom Il* 3.727 (van der

*Ixeutica* of Dionysius (uncertain date) establishes another categorization according to the type of hunt: “There are several breeds of falcons and some of them are quick in the hunt, harmful especially for doves and pigeons ... others collaborate with hunting men, being held by a leash and scaring the hunted birds.”<sup>29</sup> Here we find the two primary uses of birds of prey in ancient hunting: those that fly and attack, and those that assist the hunters by scaring the small birds. These two forms of hunting are well illustrated in both texts and images. Manases offers an image of the birds of the first category: he calls the bird carried by Manuel a *ιέραξ*, but he is very elusive about the other birds that participate in the hunt. He even avoids naming them, saying twice (§6 and 9) that their names are foreign (without indicating a western or eastern origin). The description of the imperial *ιέραξ* with its grey and dappled plumage makes us think of a gyrfalcon, a falcon specialized in crane hunting according to later Western hunting treatises.<sup>30</sup>

Obviously, Byzantine authors were no zoologists and their knowledge of the varieties of birds of prey was limited. Manasses, in either case, does not seem to be more knowledgeable than us when it comes to hunting birds (even though birds of different kinds appear frequently in his works). In the following we will use primarily the term falcon to translate Greek words that indicate a falconid or an accipitrine.<sup>31</sup> If the Greek text juxtaposes *ιέρακες* and *φάλκονες*, we translate as “hawks and falcons”, simply to keep the stylistic variety.

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Valk), says there are ten. On the Byzantine terminology, see Külzer 2018: 703. On the different categories of birds of prey, see also Van den Abeele 1992, 51-86. In general, the birds sitting on the wrist of the falconer are goshawks, sparrowhawks, gyrfalcons or merlins.

<sup>29</sup> *Paraphrase* of the *Ixeutica* of Dionysius 1.6.1-2 and 6-7 (Garzya).

<sup>30</sup> See e.g. the treatise *De arte venandi cum avibus* (book IV) by Frederick II Hohenstaufen; translation and discussion in Paulus and Abeele 2001.

<sup>31</sup> In the western texts, as we shall see, there is a certain differentiation in the use of the terms *falcon* and *goshawk*, while in the Byzantine texts all terms used seem to be considered synonymous and are used, in their diversity, to vary the style rather than to achieve an exact terminology.

### *A brief history of falconry from antiquity to the eleventh century*

The first references to the use of falcons in hunting dates back to antiquity.<sup>32</sup> Falconry seems to have been an Iranian or Mongolian habit that reached Europe by two routes: the northern route of Germans, and the southern route through Syria. For the ancient Greek world, however, this practice seems to have been largely unknown. The rare references to falcons relate rather to cases where a bird of prey scares the small birds which are then killed by men. In late antiquity, a series of texts rewrite information contained in Aristotle's *History of animals* about the way in which inhabitants of Thrace hunt birds using falcons (μετὰ τῶν ἱεράκων) in the manner described above.<sup>33</sup> The falcons do not seem to be trained for an organized hunt, but they facilitate with their presence the hunting of small birds in a swamp. In another version of this kind of hunt, the falcons are part of hunting with bird lime (ixeutics): the birds, terrified by the appearance of the falcons, throw themselves on the twigs the hunters have covered in lime.<sup>34</sup> Such a scene may be represented in

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<sup>32</sup> We will not include the use of eagles for hunting. For this, see Epstein 1943, 503 (on Ctesias); see also Aristotle, *History of the animals* 9.32. On falconry in antiquity, see Lindner 1973, 111-156. Falconry in the western Middle Ages is very well studied; see esp. van den Abele 1990 and 1994; Oggins 2004; for the High Middle Ages, see also Verdon 1978.

<sup>33</sup> Aristotle, *History of the animals* 9.36, 620b. See also Pseudo-Aristotle, *Mirabilia* 118; Antigonos, *Mirabilia* 34; Aelian, *Natural history* 2.42, Pliny, *Natural history* 10.10, which all reproduce (with some variety) Aristotle. On the multiple reworkings of this story in late antiquity, see Epstein 1943, 501-504, and Åkerström-Hougen 1974, 91-92. One may add Eusthathios of Antioch, *Commentary on the Hexameron* (PG 18, 728), of an uncertain date, which introduces the information and states that ὁ δὲ ἱεράξ εὐνούστατος τυγχάνει περὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον. Under his name has been preserved a world history, the first part of which is a *physiologus*; this is where the information about the falcon is inserted. On this author and text, see Odorico 2014.

<sup>34</sup> The *Paraphrase* of the *Ixeutica* of Dionysius 3.5.1-9 (Garzya) describes a hunt that is similar but has several differences. It involves placing a hawk like a scarecrow on the stump of a tree, while the hunted birds remain terrified in the trees and become easy victims of the hunter. See also Vendries 2009, 123. Other ancient references include e.g. Manetho, Oppian and Paulinus of Pella.

one of the palace mosaics of Constantinople, depicting a monkey with a hunting bird perched on a basket that he carries on his back.<sup>35</sup>

In the fifth century, references to actual falconry become more common. Procopius of Gaza in his well-known *Ekphrasis Eikonos* speaks of a waiter who carries on his wrist a hunting bird that intervenes to save an abused woman.<sup>36</sup> In the same century, but in the western part of the Roman empire, Sidonius Apollinarius describes a society that makes extensive use of birds of prey in hunting; the falcon is here one of the attributes of the young aristocrat.<sup>37</sup> From the same period date the mosaics of Argos in Greece<sup>38</sup> and those of Madaba in Syria,<sup>39</sup> both of which represent a man holding a hunting bird on his gloved left hand. In the sixth century, the astrologer Rhetorios of Egypt devotes a chapter to hunting and falconry, speaking of a particular stellar constellation (συναστρία) that gives birth to falconers.<sup>40</sup> This indicates that there were persons who devoted themselves professionally to the training of falcons. In the seventh century, at least two mosaics of the Great Palace represent scenes that refer to falconry: a bird of prey that attacks another bird; two children on a camel, one of which has a bird that resembles a falcon on his left hand.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Tilling 1989, fig. 33; Külzer 2018, 702.

<sup>36</sup> Procopius of Gaza, *Ekphrasis of a painting*, ed. Amato, ch. 26 (p. 203, 10-13); cf. Drbal 2011, 115-117.

<sup>37</sup> Sidonius Apollinarius, *Letter* 3.3 (ed. Loyen, p. 86); *Letter* 4.9 (ed. Loyen, p. 131); *Poem* 7, v. 202-206 (ed. Loyen, p. 62). On the author and his hunting descriptions, see Aymard 1964.

<sup>38</sup> Åkerström-Hougen 1974, fig. 12-13. On the representations of the months in the west and the presence of a hunting bird in October, see Stern 1951. See also Külzer 2018, 701-702.

<sup>39</sup> Buschhausen 1986, table 9. Cf. also Drbal 2011, fig. 2 and Külzer 2018, 702, fig. 2. On Arabo-Byzantine coins of the seventh century which often represent a person holding on his left fist a goshawk, see Oddy 1991, 59-66. On Byzantine representations of falcons that capture animals, see also Dautermann Maguire & Maguire 2007, figs 44, 45, 84, 85, 87; Maguire 2011, figs 9.4 et 9.5; von Wartburg 2001. On western representations, much more diversified, see Oggins 2004, 126-138.

<sup>40</sup> Rhetorios, ch. 92 (Hellen & Pingree). Rhetorios supposedly continued an earlier astrological treatise, attributed to a certain Antiochos; see Cumont 1918, 38-54.

<sup>41</sup> Tilling 1989, figs C, 19 and 21.



*Gunilla Åkerström-Hougen in Argos, October 1973  
(private photo)*

For the next three centuries, there are no literary reference or artistic representations of falconry in Byzantium. This does not mean that it was not practiced, but rather that tastes had changed or that no evidence has been preserved. Iconophile witnesses say that the iconoclast emperors, especially Constantine V (741–775), preserved in the palace the “satanical” representations of hunting scenes of the sixth century,<sup>42</sup> but we possess no texts describing hunting from this period. The only indications we have of such activities come from the Arab world. To properly

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<sup>42</sup> *Life of Stephen the Younger* 26 (Auzépy).

measure the value of this information, it has to be noted that specialized treatises on falconry, containing theoretical considerations and practical advice, as they appeared from the eighth century onwards in the Arab and Western world, are completely absent in Byzantium.<sup>43</sup> For a very long time in Byzantium, zoology was in the shadow of authorities of the past, like Aristotle or Aelian, as regards the physiology and history of animals, and of the different versions of the *Physiologos*, as regards their moral meaning. A treatise on falconry would have constituted an unlikely novelty, even if the Arab treatise of Al-Gitrif, dating from the eighth century, indicates the existence of such a book:

Michael, son of Leo, high dignitary of the Byzantines (al-Rum), having heard of the passion that the Caliph al-Mahdi had for hunting and the pleasure he took in it, offered him as a gift a work due to the Greek ancestors on the trained birds of prey. Al-Mahdi had then called on Adham ibn Muhriz al-Bahili, because he had already heard him reporting information (on falconry) of the Arabs, and he asked him to edit for him a treatise, gathering the words of the Persian physicians, of Turks, of Byzantine philosophers as well as the Arabs who had experience in this field.<sup>44</sup>

This note is puzzling. First, there is a reference to a text handed over by a high dignitary, but not an emperor; this person might be an official of the border area, but he is impossible to identify. The treatise contains advice of “the Greek ancestors on the trained birds of prey”, who towards the end of the note seem to become “Byzantine philosophers”. This is confusing, because if such a treatise existed in Greek it could not have been written by “Greek ancestors” since they were unaware of falconry and imagining that Byzantine philosophers would write a technical treatise

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<sup>43</sup> On such texts, produced from at least the eighth century onwards in the West, see Van den Abeele 1994, 19-35. It is true that many of these Latin treatises contain “références fictives ou non, à des autorités grecs” (ibid. 35) from Antiquity (ibid., 23) or Late Antiquity (ibid. 25), but this could be a way of lending authority to information coming from a vaguely oriental direction. Most of these texts have an epistolary character, a literary choice that underlines often their fictionality.

<sup>44</sup> Al Gitrif, *Treatise on birds*, Prologue (Viré & Möller). Cf. also Kultzer 2018, 701.

on falcons seems unlikely. Two solutions are then possible: either the note refers to a treatise on zoology, like that of Aristotle or one of his Byzantine commentaries, a treatise that could have been consulted on the nature of birds but not on the training of falcons; or the Arab author invented a source, presenting a treatise to which he attributed the authority of both “Greek ancestors” and “Byzantine philosophers”, alongside Persian physicians, Turks and Arabs of the past. In any case, there is no trace of such a treatise in Byzantium before the fourteenth or fifteenth century. These late treatises could well be indicative of an earlier tradition, or more probably of translations of one or several treatises on falconry circulating in the West or in the Arab or Turkish East at the same time. On the Arab side, we can add another piece of information which concerns the ninth century and which seems fairly reliable. According to Al-Tabari, Nikephoros I (802-811) sent to the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, among other gifts, twelve falcons, four hunting dogs and three pack horses.<sup>45</sup> Byzantium thus exported, according to Arab authors, not only know-how, but also material for successful hunting.

The first Byzantine references to hunting with falcons, after this long interval, date to the middle of the tenth century, but with a significant difference. While texts from before the seventh century describe a hunting practice ‘of the people’ (the hunting of Thracian farmers, the lime hunt of simple people in Dionysius, the οἰκέτης in Procopius of Gaza), the context of hunting with birds of prey in the tenth century is clearly aristocratic and changes perspective: it no longer resembles the bird catching described by Aristotle, but noble hunting with birds of prey. Theodore Daphnopates, a learned man in imperial circles of the tenth century, is the first who refers to such an activity. A letter addressed to Romanos II (959–963) indicates that falcons were used for the imperial partridge hunt:

Despite its very fast flight and its speed much superior to that of falcons, the partridge could not escape the fatal hunting methods of the emperor. For, although usually it can find shelter in the thickets, in the

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<sup>45</sup> Canard 1964, 54. Translation of the passage in Bosworth, *The History of Al-Tabari*, vol. 30 (1989), 264.



valleys and in the thick bushes, this time, surrounded on all sides by the agility of the falcons, it became too easy a prey for their flight: it still showed the numerous wounds of their claws, in which she was covered, but even more numerous were the blows of beaks which had opened and torn its entrails.<sup>46</sup>

This text underlines the happy encounter between imperial hunting and the literarization of epistolography starting in the tenth century. From now on, letters – alongside ekphraseis, making a more marked literary reappearance a century later – will give us the most impressive images of hunting in Byzantium. In another letter, attributed to Daphnopates and presenting nature as an idyllic landscape, the author, when he presents the delights of life in the countryside, makes an allusion to falconry: “From then on an unforeseen death is prepared for the birds, seized by the falcons or caught by the nets.”<sup>47</sup>

Two other witnesses of the tenth century come from the surrounding world and throw a probably biased look on Byzantine society. The first comes from the Slavic world and should be treated with some caution. According to the Slavic *Life* of Constantine/Cyril, Apostle of the Slavs, the young hero lives in Thessaloniki and engages in activities that suit his age and social class, namely falconry. One day he goes out into the fields with his falcon, but the bird is carried away by a wind provoked by divine providence.<sup>48</sup> The loss of the bird is so disturbing that it leads the young man to give up the delight of an ordinary life, such as hunting, and seek instead the harsh road of monasticism. The falcon thus becomes a symbol of what is futile in the life of a young aristocrat. The text is dated by its editor to the ninth or tenth century, but the oldest manuscript is from the fourteenth century and the text certainly attributes to Thessaloniki attitudes that are more suitable for the fourteenth century and the widespread use of the falcon by young nobles.<sup>49</sup> It is,

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<sup>46</sup> Daphnopates, *Letters* 14.32-6 (Darrouzès), our translation.

<sup>47</sup> Daphnopates, *Letters* 37.63-4 (Darrouzès). On this letter and its attribution to Daphnopates, see Chernoglazov 2013, underlining the Prodroic character of the text through its use of themes and literary techniques present in the twelfth century.

<sup>48</sup> Dvornik 1933, 351.

<sup>49</sup> On the dating of the manuscript, see *ibid.* 339.

however, also possible that the text transposes to Thessaloniki a Slavic reality of the tenth century: the *De Administrando imperio* of Constantine Porphyrogenitus contains information that falcons were exchanged as diplomatic gifts among Slavic populations, as the Serbs proposed to Boris of Bulgaria a peace treaty where the tribute consisted in providing him with, among other things, two hunting falcons (φαλκώνια).<sup>50</sup>

The second witness of a Byzantine taste for falconry in the tenth century comes from the Arab world in the form of a treatise on falconry dated to 995. In the chapter on goshawks, the author notes that “we have only seen two in our country and they were presented as gifts by the emperor of the Byzantines [Basil II] to our master, the Emir of Believers”.<sup>51</sup> In the same treatise, there is an edifying story that involves Byzantium and birds of prey, more specifically goshawks. It is the story of a muslim who travels to Byzantium and comes across a Byzantine man who attracts goshawks, supposedly by imitating them, but then kills the first two birds that come to him. The third bird, “smaller and less beautiful than the first two”, is caught but not killed and the man celebrates by dancing and drinking himself into stupour. The visitor is very upset, takes the man prisoner and forces him to reveal why he killed the first two birds. The Byzantine man replies: “What made me decide to kill the two birds was that they were not purebred and that they were marked by famine; while this little goshawk is perfect and will fly to catch the crane.” He then promises to prove this, and a week later the Muslim man is offered a display of how the small goshawk catches a crane. This is “a good story”, concludes the narrator, “if it is true, but I have not witnessed the event, only heard it being told at a gathering.”<sup>52</sup> There is reason to doubt the authenticity of the story, which more likely reflects the stereotypical characteristics that an Arab would attribute to his western neighbour: cruelty to animals, trickery and efficiency.

To this, we could add the most indicative example of the popularity of falcons in tenth-century Byzantium, even if the information comes,

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<sup>50</sup> Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, ed. Moravcsik, ch. 32.55-56.

<sup>51</sup> Viré 1965, 262.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. 271-272.

again, from the oriental world in the form of a cultural hybrid. This indirect reference to the falcon is included in the Greek translation/adaptation of the Arabic *Oneirocriticon* of Achmed. In the chapter devoted to hawks and falcons, drawn from the wisdom of Persians and Egyptians, we learn that a king who dreams that he has liberated these birds for the hunt will send off his glorious commanders; an ordinary man who dreams the same will rise to success.<sup>53</sup> The text underlines what has already been noted in the case of tenth-century epistolography: the aristocratization of the falcon. In the dream world, the bird of prey signifies power, riches and glory, while the loss of it means the exact opposite. This dream book also contains a curious reference to the consumption of falcon meat: he who dreams of eating the meat or wings of a falcon “will be enriched by a very high and important person”.<sup>54</sup> With the falcon as an attribute of royalty, the partaking of its flesh is a way of sharing power. The same kind of renewed interest in falconry can be seen in art, with the multiplication of falcon scenes on clay objects.<sup>55</sup>

From the eleventh century onwards, the falcon as part of the spectacular and aristocratic/imperial hunt is solidly attested. The most detailed descriptions from this period are written by Michael Psellos. In the *Chronographia*, he offers a depiction of the activities of the great ancestor of the dynasty, Isaac I Komnenos (1057-1059):

Isaac was passionately devoted to hunting (ἐπτόητο περὶ τὰ κυνηγέσια). No one was ever more fascinated by the difficulties of this sport. It must be admitted, moreover, that he was skilled in the

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<sup>53</sup> Achmed, *Oneirocriticon* 232.16-20 (Drex1).

<sup>54</sup> Achmed, *Oneirocriticon* 233.2-5 (Drex1). The *Oneirocriticon* of Achmed transplants Arab imagery of the falcon in Byzantine soil, but the bird of prey is also present in other dream books of the Byzantine period; see e.g. Nikephoros, *Oneirocriticon* appendix II, 54 (Guidorizzi).

<sup>55</sup> As stated by Wartburg 2001, 125, on the representation of hunting scenes with bird of prey: “from the mid 6<sup>th</sup> to the later 10<sup>th</sup> century equivalent representations are very rare. The end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century marks a significant change: the number of relevant examples increases perceptibly; the geographical range of their origin widens; the objects bearing such pictorial motifs become more varied. These tendencies steadily grow stronger towards the 12<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> century.”

art, for he rode lightly and his shouts and halloos lent wings to the dogs, besides frightening the coursing hare. On several occasions he even caught the quarry in full flight with his hand. He was, too, a dead shot with a spear. But crane-hunting attracted him more, and when the birds were flying high in the air he still refused to give up the hunt. He would shoot them down from the sky, and truly his pleasure at this was not unmixed with wonder. The wonder was that a bird so exceptionally big, with feet and legs like lances, hiding itself behind the clouds, should, in the twinkling of an eye, be caught by an object so much smaller than itself (ὑπὸ βραχυτέρου ἠλίσκετο). The pleasure he derived from the bird's fall, for the crane, as it fell, danced the dance of death, turning over and over, now on its back now on its belly.<sup>56</sup>

Isaac engages in an athletic hunt that demonstrates his courage and skills; he prefers the hunting of cranes and small animals to that of wild beasts. This text heralds the framework of imperial hunting on the twelfth century: the heroic hunt (of wild beasts) turning into pleasure hunting, even though both types are practiced in the Komnenian period. Crane hunting becomes a specialisation, at least according to the texts that have come down to us – the most noble kind of hunt for an aristocratic society. Psellos here indicates that the hunt was effectuated by a smaller bird (ὑπὸ βραχυτέρου ἠλίσκετο), that is, through a bird of prey. We here have the two elements present in the ekphrasis by Manasses, the falcon and the crane; Manuel thus becomes a replica of the founder of the dynasty, Isaac.

Psellos also uses the imagery of hunting in three letters addressed to John Doukas. In the first, he expresses the distance between hunter and intellectual, before presenting a romantic image of his hero as ideal hunter:

I used to ridicule hunting and make fun of such activities; and I tried to dissuade you from them and used to advise you to instead spend time with books. But now I have changed my mind, I am not that demented.

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<sup>56</sup> Psellos, *Chonographia* 7.72 (Reinsch); tr. Sewter. On this passage, see Patlagean 1992, 259; Delobette 2005, 288. Cf. also a reference to the qualities of the same emperor as hunter in Psellos, *Letter* 142.56-64 (Papaioannou).

What do I prescribe for you? Ride your horses, hunt, jump through trenches, traverse rivers, gallop downhill and run up steep paths! Carry the falcon to your right, sitting unbound on your arm, and send him against geese, against partridges, against pigeons. If he captures the game in his flight, don't expect the Laconian dogs to trace the escaped animal. But if the latter has taken refuge somewhere, surround the grove, urge the dogs and don't give up until you catch it.<sup>57</sup>

With characteristic irony, Psellos describes in some detail the hunting with falcon that he tends to despise, but that he now tolerates because it is being practiced by his friend (and brings somewhat exotic food to his table). Doukas is accompanied not only by his falcon, but also by a pack of dogs. If the falcon drops the game, the dogs will find it.<sup>58</sup>

In a second letter to the same addressee, Psellos presents an account of a hunt that he has heard from someone else, involving the noble reaction of John Doukas faced with the loss of his brave hunting bird.

My dearest Andronikos [the son of John Doukas] graciously told me about the crane hunt and how the smallest animal, the most insidious of its species, hunts the big crane reaching beyond the clouds (ὕπερνεφοῦντα) with her wings; how he sneaks in under (ὕπεισιόν) the wings of the crane, besieges her and knocks her down like a wall and tears her up with his claws. Then, when Andronikos concluded his story by the fact that recently your wonderful animal was killed by a crane and that you felt no grief, but were instead glad and almost jumped with admiration for the animal's demise, saying that he died fighting and that he sacrificed his life in war, and you sung a kind of funeral speech to the animal, and then you did not consider it right to dispose of your arms, but buried the bird while wearing your breastplate and the rest of your gear – to hear this admirable story, extraordinary and brave, made me jump, o sacred soul.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Psellos, *Letter* 54.3-14 (Papaioannou), our translation.

<sup>58</sup> Similar advice is offered at Demetrios Pepagomenos (?), *Hieracosophium* 301.185-9 (Hercher): καὶ εἰ μὲν ἀπὸ πτεροῦ θηρεύσῃ, μείζον τὸ ἔργον εἰ δὲ ἐν καταφυγίῳ εἰσέλθοιεν οἱ διωκόμενοι πέρδικες, ἄνω δὲ πέταται ἢ καθίση ἐγγὺς ὁ ἰέραξ, δεῖ σε τὸν θηρατικὸν κύνα καλέσαι καὶ ταῖς εἰθισμέναις προσλαλιᾷς παροτρύνειν.

<sup>59</sup> Psellos, *Letter* 67.41-54 (Papaioannou), our translation.

Psellos shows in an allusive manner, through the use of prepositions (ὕπερνεφούντα - ὑπεισιδόν) a certain preference for the crane “reaching the clouds with her wings” to the sneaky animal that acts “stealthily”. At the same time, irony is even more pronounced than in the former letter: first, it is a failed hunt, because the hunter (the bird of prey) is defeated and killed by the hunted bird (the crane); second, the losing party is treated like a war hero and buried with military honours. We know nothing about the circumstances of this hunt, but we may note that several of the images presented in the letter are also present in the ekphrasis by Manasses, who probably was familiar with the letters of Psellos and may have entered into a fruitful literary dialogue with his predecessor.<sup>60</sup>

In a third letter to the same addressee, Psellos imagines himself as a hunter: “Even I, though a philosopher and completely devoted to books, if a man would take me out of my beloved academic pursuits, put a glove on my hand and give me a bird of prey, I would look at him approvingly and cover his chest with kisses.”<sup>61</sup> In fact, Psellos does not imagine himself as a hunter, but as an aristocrat. The falcon is not a means of catching birds, but a symbol and attribute of social standing, and the image of a man carrying a falcon on his hand is a model of nobility.

### *Falconry in the twelfth century*

References to falconry increase from the twelfth century onwards. Anna Komnene narrates a story of a man in charge of the imperial falcons,<sup>62</sup> and a series of other texts support the central position of falcons in the life of aristocrats. The description by Manasses is of particular importance here, together with an ekphrasis by Constantine Pantechnes.<sup>63</sup> In the following we will examine the information that the two texts offer

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<sup>60</sup> On the presence of Psellos’ letters among intellectuals of the twelfth century, see Papaioannou 2012 and 2020 (forthcoming).

<sup>61</sup> Psellos, *Letter* 76. 36-39 (Papaioannou).

<sup>62</sup> Anna Komnene, *Alexiad* 7.9.2 (Reinsch & Kambylis).

<sup>63</sup> Ed. Miller 1872. The ekphrasis by Pantechnes is preserved in the same manuscript that contains also Manasses’ *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches* and *Description of a little man* (Scorialensis Y II. 10 – Andrés 265); for editions of the texts by Manasses, see Horna 1905, 6-12; Messis & Nilsson 2015.

on methods and techniques of falconry. The two ekphraseis are different in many ways; a primary difference is Manasses' vagueness as regards technical details – instead he focuses on visual and emotional aspects of the hunt.

Manasses presents an imperial hunt that involves several types of birds of prey. It is organized as a military campaign of the single combat type in which the hero-fighter (Manuel), his multiple aids (a staff responsible for the organization of the hunt) and a crowd of spectators (among which the narrator of the ekphrasis) take part. The weapons used for this kind of hunt were dogs and birds of prey. The birds of prey fall into two categories: beginners and veterans, the latter being more valuable than the former (§6). There were also birds of prey specializing in different kinds of game (§6 and 9). Whoever held the hunting bird had to wear gloves to avoid being torn by the talons of the animals (§7) and the birds were held back by leashes or jesses (§9). The most noble birds came inexperienced from Iberia (today's Georgia); it was the emperor and his servants who were responsible for their training (§10). Throwing the falcon at the right moment required attention so that it could spot and surprise its target (§10). The moment the attacking bird was about to be defeated, substitute birds were released to rescue the fighter (§8). Finally, when the crane fell for the first time, they cut its talons and trimmed its beak before releasing it to fly and then sent young birds after it to learn to hunt without risk (§13).

This concrete information on falconry provided by Manasses is complemented by the detailed description of the majestic falcon of the emperor which appears in the text as an archetypal image of the perfect bird of prey (§8). But this falcon does not take part in the hunt; it is another experienced bird that launches the battle against the cranes: “This bird, sitting on the emperor's wrist, was very strong, had a fiery heart, was of venerable age, experienced in a thousand killings and trained in several Olympiads of this kind –an old Nestor, one would say, who instructed his own breed in the killing of cranes” (§10). When the crane has been released to fly again, after having her talons and beak cut, the young birds are launched against her “to upset, to tear with their beaks, to taste blood and flesh and lean about similar things”

(§13). Crane hunting thus functions like a school to train a new generation of bird hunters.

The ekphrasis of Pantechnes falls into two parts: the first is devoted to hunting with birds of prey and dogs, while the second is devoted to another peculiarity of the period, namely hunting with leopards or cheetahs.<sup>64</sup> Leaving the hunting leopard aside, we will concentrate on the references to hunting by means of “cruel falcons and mountain herons (τοὺς ἐπιβούλους ἰέρακας καὶ τοὺς πετραίους ἐρωδιούς).”<sup>65</sup> Pantechnes speaks of an imperial hunt without the presence of the emperor, but carried out by his staff under the orders of a high dignitary (ὁ μεγιστάν) in order to provide the imperial cuisine with game. This dignitary was “in charge of managing the imperial table” (καὶ γὰρ τῆς βασιλικῆς τραπέζης ἐπεμεμέλητο) and the hunting party was looking in particular for “partridges and wild beasts” (εἰς περδίκων καὶ κνωδάλων ἀνεύρεσιν).<sup>66</sup> Pantechnes refers first to the staff who were responsible for the birds of prey, calling them “pedagogues of noble birds” (εὐγενῶν ὀρνίθων παιδαγωγοί) and then offers a description of the birds:

Perched on their wrists were multicoloured and long-winged falcons (ἰέρακες), black and sharp-seeing hawks (φάλκωνες), herons (ἐρωδιοί) with crooked talons; most of their feathers were white while others leaned towards black and thus it looked like a speckled arrangement. You would have thought that many were covered with frost, especially those that time had turned white. Each of these birds had their feet attached; the falconer had made a kind of strap for the birds, the end of which was wound around the fingers of the falconers. This is how they were kept.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> The terminology is as confused as that of falcons and hawks. Buquet 2011 has argued for the difference between leopards and panthers, while Nicholas 1999 proposes that the Greek word *πάρδαλις* correspond to the cheetah. On the hunting with leopards, see Papagiannaki 2017.

<sup>65</sup> Pantechnes, *Ekphrasis* 47 (Miller).

<sup>66</sup> Pantechnes, *Ekphrasis* 47 (Miller).

<sup>67</sup> Pantechnes, *Ekphrasis* 48 (Miller), our translation.



Pantechnes only describes the birds that take part in the hunt, which is presented in a summary manner in the following. There is no better description of the hunting process, so we allow ourselves a long citation:

They throw... the impetuous hawks for which they let go the straps. As they are used to, as soon as they are released from their bond, they take off, soar lightly into space and float from the air above in order to locate the hunted beast ... the hawk makes a hissing sound, rushes on the animal, tears it with its talons and stops it from fleeing ... The falconers then throw against the partridges the birds they have in their hands, trained for this purpose. Some flee, others attack; it is like a sort of struggle and combat between the hunter and the hunted. Most partridges finally manage to escape, but some have the unfortunate fate of being caught. The carnivorous birds dig the tips of their talons into the flesh of the partridges, tear them apart and kill them. These wretches cry out painfully and fill the air with the sound of their flapping wings. As for the proud hawk, it is preched proudly on the partridge, as if it takes pride in the spectacle, turning often to one side and the other, seeming to threaten those who would try approach at this moment.<sup>68</sup>

Pantechnes clearly speaks of a staff specialised in the care of falcons, the *ἱερακάριοι* whom we know of since Late Antiquity, but who have been absent in texts for a long time. Finally, he adds another piece of information that is missing in Manasses, the reward for the bird of prey after a succesful flight:

They give a little, or almost nothing, of the entrails of the game to the dogs and falcons that have hunted to taste, not to cure their hunger, but just to turn their beaks red and flatter their palates with the taste of blood; then they send them back starving for a second hunt, furious and with gaping jaws. In fact, unless hunger torments birds of prey, they will not be ready to fly and will be ill-disposed for hunting.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Pantechnes, *Ekphrasis* 49-50 (Miller), our translation.

<sup>69</sup> Pantechnes, *Ekphrasis* 49 (Miller), our translation.

This is what the information provided by Manasses and Pantechnes on falconry amounts to. The two twelfth-century authors offer the most important texts on the use of hunting birds, on imperial hunting, its theatricality and the participation of spectators, but with some compelling differences. First, the presence of the emperor turns the hunt described by Manasses into a political act of high significance. The second difference, closely related to the first, is the nature of the game. In the hunt of Pantechnes, they explicitly hunt birds and hares for the imperial table, while in the hunt of Manasses, even if we know that cranes were prepared as food, the hunt is for pure pleasure; at least, there is not reference at all to any utilitarian use of the game.

In the twelfth century, falconry was a kind of aristocratic custom that concerned not only soldier and adults; from then on it became part also of the education of young princes. In a poem addressed to the Sebastokratorissa Eirene, Theodore Prodromos presents the education of a young aristocrat who would eventually learn to become the ideal soldier. Concerning the birth of Eirene's son Alexios, Prodromos assigns to the mother of the boy an energetic role in the education of her child. The boy should be trained as a soldier and accustomed to handling weapons from the earliest age:

Leaving aside the multiple cares of childbirth, prepare the armour of the young soldier; foals of the same age as the newborn should be trained, Arab and Thessalian foals, servants in combat; bridles should be prepared, caparisons made; a breed of hunting dogs that run to track should be raised with the child during as well as a breed of falcons (γένος κυνῶν θηρευτικῶν ἰχνευτικῶν δρομάδων / συνανηβάτω τῷ παιδὶ καὶ γένος ἱεράκων).<sup>70</sup>

All other equipment must be prepared in detail: the breastplate, the javelins, the bows, the swords. Elsewhere, he addresses the child himself, characterizing him as “a beautiful chick of a falcon flying high (ἱέρακος ταχυπετοῦς νεόττιον ὠραῖον) ... that intelligently exercises hunting from a most tender age” (καὶ τὸ πρὸς ἄγραν εὐφυεὲς ἐξ ἀπαλῶν

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<sup>70</sup> Theodore Prodromos, *Poem 44, 67-73* (Hörandner), our translation.

ὄνυχων),<sup>71</sup> presenting at the same time the ideal of the aristocratic life: “defeat the children of your age, and the older ones as well, go from being a baby to a boy, from a boy to an adolescent and then play with the ball nimbly, hunt with nobility (ἀρίστως κυνηγέται), ride, shoot with the bow, practice combat.”<sup>72</sup> The aristocratic ideal of the twelfth century incorporates the images of the soldier and the hunter, as we have already seen, but in this case it is a rather delicate hunter who engages in pleasure hunting with his falcons, a young aristocrat, aspiring to be a young soldier experimenting as he is reaching maturity.

Strength, efficiency, cleverness and intelligence govern the metaphorical uses of the falcon, when one wants to praise someone. Thus, according to Eustathios of Thessalonike, Andronikos Lapardas, “whom the Turkish sultan had decided to call ‘the Hawk’ because of his intelligence and swiftness of action”, was very familiar with military art.<sup>73</sup> Manasses, speaking of Romanos Diogenes and his manner of attacking the enemies, compares him with “a swift falcon, killer of birds”.<sup>74</sup> Anna Komnene, describing the eyes of her unfortunate fiancé as a child, Constantine Doukas, writes that “his eyes were not light-coloured, but hawk-like (ἰέρακος ἐοικότες), shone from beneath the brows, like a precious stone set in a golden ring”,<sup>75</sup> and she cites a popular song addressing Alexios as falcon (γεράκιν), saying (in Anna’s ‘translation’) that he flew off “like some falcon (ἰέραξ) soaring on high, away from the scheming barbarians”.<sup>76</sup> The eyes of a falcon signifies in a man a particular attribute; at the same time it can be adapted as a kind of theatrical appearance, as in the case of Kroustoulas, cited by Psellos, who performs the Passions of the Martyrs in the churches “adapting the look of a cherub or a lion, an ape and a falcon too (παρόμοιον καὶ ἰέρακι).<sup>77</sup> It is difficult to imagine what exactly this means, but it should be a penetrating look, firm and unyielding.

<sup>71</sup> Theodore Prodromos, *Poem* 44, 135 and 137 (Hörandner), our translation.

<sup>72</sup> Theodore Prodromos, *Poem* 44, 170-172 (Hörandner), our translation.

<sup>73</sup> Eustathios of Thessalonike, *The Capture of Thessalonike* 22.5-7; tr. Melville-Jones.

<sup>74</sup> Constantine Manasses, *Verses chronicle* 6460 (Lampsides): στρουθιοφόνης, εἶποι τις, ἰέραξ ὠκυπέτης.

<sup>75</sup> Anna Komnene, *Alexiad* 3.1.3 (Reinsch & Kambylis), tr. Sewter & Frankopan.

<sup>76</sup> Anna Komnene, *Alexiad* 2.4.9 (Reinsch & Kambylis), tr. Sewter & Frankopan.

<sup>77</sup> Michael Psellos, *Eulogy of Kroustoulas* 314-315 (Littlewood).

In Prodomos, the eulogy of a soldier and his father is accompanied by comparisons drawn from the animal world in which the falcons holds an honorary position; the person is described as “cub of a brave lion, chick of a golden peacock / the airborne son of a falcon flying high in the sky (ὕψιπετοῦς ἰέρακος αἰθεροδρόμον τέκνον)”,<sup>78</sup> or elsewhere as “beautiful chick of a falcon flying high in the sky”.<sup>79</sup> In Niketas Choniates, the bird that appears to Andronikos I and announces his destiny as he enters Hagia Sophia is “a falcon used for hunting (ἰέραξ τοῦ θηρεύειν ἐθάς), with white plumage and feet held by a cord”.<sup>80</sup>

If we are to believe Eustathios of Thessalonike, hunting with birds of prey reached even beyond aristocrats to the ranks of clergy and monks. According to the pamphlet that he composed against certain monks in Thessalonike, there were religious men who went to the countryside in the company of dogs to hunt and who also had “birds of prey (θηρατικοὶ ὄρνις) perched on their arms, so that they would fetch the game for them”.<sup>81</sup> In this case, falconry loses its justification of being a preparation for war; it becomes instead an eloquent symptom for moral decadence.<sup>82</sup>

The ancient Greek storyworld of the Komnenian novels includes no birds of prey, so the only reference to this kind of hunt in fictional literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries is to a *hierakarios* (ἰερακάριος) who travels in the service of a rich man and falls in love with his wife. This is the protagonist of an edifying story in *Stephanites and Ichnelates*, a series of oriental tales translated and adapted into Greek by Symeon Seth. The naughty and shameless falconer, facing the resistance of his beloved, comes up with a strategy: he hunts and captures magpies – with the obvious help of his falcon – and trains them so that they say, in Persian, that the woman committed adultery

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<sup>78</sup> Theodore Prodomos, *Poem* 19.144-145 (Hörandner) (to John Komnenos, having returned victorious from an expedition against the Persians).

<sup>79</sup> Prodomos, *Poem* 44.135. On this poem, see above.

<sup>80</sup> Niketas Choniates, *History* 251 (van Dieten).

<sup>81</sup> Eustathe, *De emendenda* 169.8-9 (Metzler). On clergy and falconry in the West, see Oggins 2004, 120-126.

<sup>82</sup> See also the comparison between monk and falcon in the tradition of the Church fathers: Ephraim the Syrian, *Ad imitationem proverbiorum* 238.4 (Frantzolis).

with her janitor. After the scandal breaks out, the woman protests and the falconer when questioned denies what has happened, it is the falcon that re-establishes the truth: it attacks the eyes of his trainer and pierces them (καὶ τοῦτο λέγοντος αὐτοῦ ἄφνω ἀναπηδήσας ὁ ἰέραξ τοὺς δύο ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ ἐξεκέντησεν).<sup>83</sup> The relationship between falcon and falconer must be based on honesty, it is a relationship of equality and mutual respect and not of hierarchy and injustice. The noble falcon cannot serve a mean man.

The falconer that embodies the atmosphere *fin de siècle* and offers a bitter critique of an entire era of political and social evolution, is not a fearless Byzantine soldier, but a shameless Western woman: Euphrosyne, wife of Alexios III Angelos, who, according to Niketas Choniates, “wore on her hand leather fitted around the fingers and shot through with gold, on which she held a bird trained to hunt game; going out for the chase, she clucked and shouted out commands and was followed by a considerable number of those who attend to and care after such things.”<sup>84</sup> Her presence signals the complete denigration of hunting turned into pure leisure with no military purpose: hunting has become an affair of foreign women about whom the parrots of the city, trained by the indignant people, cried in the streets: “the whore makes the law” (πολιτικὴ τὸ δίκαιον).<sup>85</sup> If the men of the Komnenian dynasty are exalted to have exercised hunting between and as a preparation for wars, Byzantium at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century knows its decline in the figure of the woman-hunter – a prostitute who plays with birds while the Empire is collapsing.

Henry Maguire has explained the link between emperor and bird of prey in art and literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries as a conscious effort of the learned elite to demonstrate the stranglehold

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<sup>83</sup> *Stephanites and Ichnelates* 2.71 (Sjöberg).

<sup>84</sup> Niketas Choniates, *History* 520 (van Dieten), tr. Magoulias.

<sup>85</sup> Niketas Choniates, *History* 520 (van Dieten) our translation; Magoulias translates “O strumpet, a fair price if you please!”, while Pontani 2014, 151 and 505, n. 85, has “alla puttana il giusto”. The woman with the falcon (most often a prize for her beauty) is one of the portrayals of heroines in the Western romances; see Le Rider 1998 on *Erec et Enide* by Chrétien de Troyes; on the use of birds of prey by Western women, see Oggins 2004, 118-19.

of the emperor on foreign peoples.<sup>86</sup> Maguire speaks of an “iconography of ‘soft power’” which is exercised through the representation of falconry.<sup>87</sup> He concludes that “from the Byzantine perspective the symbol of the trained and obedient falcon was a new and more subtle variant of the old idea of the victorious emperor destroying wild beasts by himself; it was an image more in tune with the new political reality in which the Byzantines found themselves in the later eleventh and twelfth centuries.”<sup>88</sup> From our perspective, that conclusion seems a little forced. Without excluding a specific political message, to which we shall return, the relationship between the emperor and the falcon is a symbol of both political and aesthetic order: in our view, the description by Manasses is a demonstration of a new aesthetics of imperial power rather than a political message that relates to a concrete situation.<sup>89</sup>

#### 4. A noble game: the crane

The third aspect of Manasses’ ekphrasis that deserves special attention is the game of the hunt: the crane, or rather the common crane (*grus cinerea*). The crane seems to have been a popular motif in Byzantine literature of the twelfth century: in addition to this ekphrasis, Manasses also refers to the Homeric confrontation between pygmies and cranes in the *Description of a little man* and to the leftovers of a crane that has been part of a meal in the *Description of the Earth*.<sup>90</sup> Theodore Prodromos discusses its consumption on more than one occasion,<sup>91</sup> while Niketas

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<sup>86</sup> Maguire 2011.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. 137; see also 140: “the birds of prey symbolise the ruler’s ability to get others to do his killing for him.”

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. 145.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. ibid. 141: “... here, the falconry is seen as a kind of analogue of the kind of diplomacy that sought to use foreigners to fight on behalf of the empire.”

<sup>90</sup> Manasses, *Description of a little man* 7-8 (Messis & Nilsson), cf. *Il.* 3.3-7; Manasses, *Description of the Earth* 189-205 (Lampsides), here esp. 146: πέρδικος σκέλος καὶ κνήμη γεράνου καὶ ῥάχης λαγώ.

<sup>91</sup> Prodromos, *Letter* 26.12-14 (Op de Coul); Prodromos (?), *Schede tou myos* 1.17 (Papathomopoulos). The latter is almost identical to the line in Manasses’ *Description of the Earth* cited above. The attribution of the *Schede tou myos* to Prodromos has

Choniates uses the imagery of crying cranes for describing the anguish of the Latins of Constantinople on the eve of the fall of the city in 1204, when their neighbourhood is attacked by the angry mob.<sup>92</sup> John Tzetzes describes, in his *Chiliades*, their spectacular migration, following the ancient account of Aelian:

The cranes, acting jointly, travel together and when winter approaches, they head for Egypt. Flying, they form a triangle because thus they traverse more easily the air. They also have guards: rear guards and vanguards. When they are about to leave for Egypt and reach the river Eubros in Thrace, they line up by troops and lines. The oldest crane of all first makes a tour and controls the army; then she falls down dead. After having buried her, the others help each other during attacks from eagles and other birds.<sup>93</sup>

There are numerous examples like these throughout the twelfth century. It is reasonable to imagine that the topic belonged to the school curriculum, which would have provoked the interest that has left literary traces.<sup>94</sup> The description by Manasses is, however, an ekphrastic masterpiece with its detailed description of the bird with its long and slender neck, tall and straight legs and a plumage in various dark shades of black and grey (§14). Competing with a small child in height, the large bird clearly impressed its spectators.

As already noted, descriptions of cranes can be traced back to Homer, lending them a special place in ancient and late antique literature.<sup>95</sup> One of the most interesting examples from the Byzantine period is that provided in the *Miracles* of Thekla, describing the creation of a menagerie for birds or a paradisiacal garden by the atrium of the saint's church – the birds were supplied by the pilgrims as votive gifts. Among these

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been questioned; see Nilsson 2021 (forthcoming) and Lauxtermann (forthcoming).

<sup>92</sup> Choniates, *History* (van Dieten) 392.

<sup>93</sup> John Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 4.52-64 (Leone), our translation. Cf. Aelian, *On the nature of animals* 2.1.

<sup>94</sup> See e.g. *Schedos* 103 (Τοῦ Περιβλεπτηνοῦ) in Vassis 2002, 53 (on geese and cranes).

<sup>95</sup> See e.g. Homer *Il.* 2.460; 3.3-7; 15.692. Cf. Tzetzes, *Allegories in the Iliad* 2.97 and 3.1-5 (Hunger).

birds was a crane that had taken out the eye of a sick child, thus curing him from his eye illness.<sup>96</sup> The crane, captured and offered by a pilgrim to the garden of Thekla, transforms into an instrument of the saint's grace, performing miracles on the child. The author does not mention how the bird was captured, but we may assume that it was not in a brutal hunt. According to the Byzantine paraphrase of the *Ixeutica* of Dionysius, cranes could be caught by three different methods: lime,<sup>97</sup> birds of prey or noose.<sup>98</sup> In the case of the crane of Thekla's garden, he would have been caught by the first or the third method.

But cranes were caught primarily with the use of falcons, which means that they were highly valued as game for the rich and noble. The crane being a royal game par excellence among the Arabs from at least the tenth century,<sup>99</sup> crane hunting by falcons is more frequent in Byzantine literature starting in the eleventh century. We have already seen above that for Psellos, in his praise of Isaak Komnenos and letters addressed to John Doukas, crane hunting with falcons becomes the most noble kind of hunt for aristocrats, anticipating the amusing and recreational hunt of the next century. In one of his letters to Doukas, Psellos even metamorphizes into a bird (earlier he mentions cranes), ready to be captured by his hero: "If you want to hunt me, I will fly above your head and cover myself in clouds for you. And you will catch me if I want to be caught, and not catch me if I don't want you to catch me; I too am a free and wild animal at ease, and I will not listen to the voice of the tax collector."<sup>100</sup> Among all hunted animals, he chooses to be the game of a noble hunt.

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<sup>96</sup> *Miracles of Thekla* 24.25-28 et 32-41 (Dagron). As noted by Dagron in his introduction (p. 70), this description could be inspired by a mosaic floor.

<sup>97</sup> *Paraphrase* 3.11 (Garzya). Cf. also Vendries 2009, 123.

<sup>98</sup> Dionysius, *Ixeutica* 3.11 (Garzya) and *Paraphrase* 3.11 (Garzya). For a French translation of the passage, see Prioux 2009, 179. See also *Greek Anthology* 6.109 (Antipater on the capture of cranes by strings).

<sup>99</sup> See Lévi-Provençal 2002<sup>2</sup>, 55, on a royal falconer at the court of Cordoba in the tenth century, responsible for crane hunting. See also the account of Al-Aziz bi-llah on the Byzantines in the tenth century, cited above.

<sup>100</sup> Psellos, *Letter* 53.36-38 (Papaioannou). See also Psellos, *Letter* 76.40-45 (Papaioannou); here he chooses to be a bird that sings (ὡς κίτταν, ὡς ψιττακόν, ὡς εὐκέλαδον τέττιγα, ὡς ἄλλο τι τῶν μουσικῶν), calling his hunter.



In another letter to the same recipient, Psellos reprimands Doukas for abandoning books for the delights of hunting. On this occasion, he lists the preferred game of his addressee : “You, you turn not to a logical and intellectual impulse, but to the effort to bring out of the forest any deer or a wild boar with sharp teeth and pierce it through the collar bone or to bring down any crane that flies above the clouds and laugh pleasantly when seeing how it dances its own death.”<sup>101</sup> In the universe of Psellos, hunting is presented as a noble activity, related to his own quest for knowledge; it also becomes a literary metaphor to describe Psellos’ relation with the aristocrats: he takes on the appearance of a noble game, a majestic bird or a songbird that offers itself voluntarily to the more powerful.<sup>102</sup> The crane is an integral part of this imagery that translates the social relationships between the hunter and the hunted. Psellos in a way anticipates the ekphrasis of Manasses and the literary interest in the crane in the Komnenian period. When the empire collapses in 1204, crane hunting continues in Nicaea and Epiros, but without the brilliance, symbolism and political effectiveness of the previous era.<sup>103</sup>

The crane was also a consumable bird in Byzantium and in the medieval West, eaten primarily by aristocrats and kings. There are several references to this, at least in the twelfth century. The texts by Manasses and Prodromos, presenting the leftovers of a sumptuous meal, both include a crane leg, and we can add a text by their contemporary Michael Italikos.<sup>104</sup> In a satirical poem, probably dated to the same century, a poor man fills his belly with vegetables and onions while watching a representation of various game in the utensils he is using: he dreams of eating hares, peacocks and cranes and he tells his imaginary servant to bring him rich man’s food: peacock, pheasant, crane and swan. The poor

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<sup>101</sup>Psellos, *Letter* 76.25-30 (Papaioannou).

<sup>102</sup>Cf. the frequent imagery employed by Constantine Manasses, presenting himself as a songbird in the service of his patrons; see Nilsson 2021 (forthcoming).

<sup>103</sup>For Nicaea, Theodore Doukas Laskaris speaks of crane hunting with a bird of prey in a letter to Joseph Mesopotamites; *Letter* 112.9-13 (Festa). In another letter to George Mouzalon, he regrets the fact that he was obliged to fight the Bulgarians instead of hunting; *Letter* 202.24-25 (Festa). For Epiros, see *Chronicle of Tocco* 3466-3467 (Schiro).

<sup>104</sup>Michael Italikos, *Letter* 1, 62.17-19 (Gautier).

man's imagination even costs him a trial because of an accusation from an envious neighbour!<sup>105</sup> In a vernacular text of the fourteenth century, staging a fight between different kinds of birds, the crane brags of being part of royal tables and of the fact that its legs, prepared with wine, is an exquisite treat for commanders.<sup>106</sup>

In light of this, it is quite a surprise that in the dream books, the crane symbolises poverty. According to the *Oneirocriticon* of Achmed, finding cranes means that one will make no profit, and cranes in general signify the poor.<sup>107</sup> Consequently, even if the flesh of a crane was a generally appreciated dish, to eat it in a dream signified poverty and even illness.<sup>108</sup> The combat between cranes and falcons – symbolizing, in the dream books, the commanders – thus becomes a sort of class war: the large bird must bow before the strength and bellicose value of the small-bodied bird. To conclude, war and pleasure, falcon and crane define, summarize and exemplify some of the core values of Komnenian society. Crane hunting with falcons becomes a literary effect revealing multiple social attitudes.

## 5. The presence of Emperor Manuel in Manasses' ekphrasis

After this survey of texts concerned with hunting, falconry and cranes, we shall return to where we began: the ekphrasis by Manasses and the hunting of cranes with Manuel I Komnenos at its center. The description is dominated by three portraits: Manuel (§4), his falcon (§7-8) and the crane (§14). There is also a series of secondary portraits: Manuel's other bird of prey, the other birds used for the hunt, the army of cranes acting as soldiers. The portraits may be seen as pearls embedded in the principal description of a hunting expedition and an aerial battle. The involvement of the author-narrator and the spectators in the events plays an auxiliary role in commenting emotionally on the different stages of the hunt. The author-narrator intervenes at least four times: the first time

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<sup>105</sup> Zagklas 2016, 901, no 2.1-2.

<sup>106</sup> *Poulologos* 83-5 (Eideneier).

<sup>107</sup> Ahmed, *Oneirocriticon* 234.10 and 12-17 (Drexl).

<sup>108</sup> Ahmed, *Oneirocriticon* 234.21-2 (Drexl).

is to underline his pleasure and his emotions (§3); the second is to say that he was part of the suite of the emperor in search of pleasure (§5); the third is to express his admiration of hunting (§10); and the fourth is to ‘sign’ the ekphrasis with an expression often encountered in such ekphrastic texts (§15: “I have described...”). The reactions of the spectators, shared by the author, express pleasure, astonishment and fright (§11, 13 and 15).

The portrait that Manasses devotes to Manuel is a complex image divided into several parts, of which three are the most important. The first and longest presents Manuel alone in his majesty and praises the protagonist as an ideal soldier and hunter in accordance with the political ideology and rhetorical habits of Komnenian authors. The purple-born emperor is not only a brave and virtuous man with mighty hands, he is also a lion and an eagle who terrifies his enemies (§4). This image emphasizes the military activity of the emperor, without forgetting to add a romantic touch to a man whom “the entire catalogue of graces embraced and breastfed and offered milk of myriad virtues”. The first image of Manuel thus presents him as a statue of bravery and grace. The second image presents him once again alone, circulating majestically among his hunting companions: “In the middle rode the emperor gently, without hurrying, without frequently spurring his horse and without inciting him to gallop” (§6). The third image presents him together with his bird of prey and again endows him with grace and nobility. The bird is not any bird, but “an old and noble falcon, capable of daring also large animals” (§7) – his beauty and grace matches and reflects that of the emperor, who has also trained him.

Manasses’ portrait of Manuel, holding his falcon on his left arm, supervising the preparations of the hunt and then giving the signal to start, is intended to be monumental – like a painting that manifests his heroic character. It is significant that the imperial falcon does not participate in the hunt – in order to launch the hunt, Manuel uses another bird, as old and noble as the first (§10). The first falcon participates only as a spectator by choice. It should also be noted that the imperial falcon is a female. It is a falcon for display only: the *alter ego* of the emperor, the prolongation of his left hand, his female counterpart and a symbol of

his power. With the description of the imperial falcon that follows the portrait of the emperor, Manasses wishes to paint a portrait of perfect and monumental beauty which is a pendant to the preceding portrait of Manuel. The text presents the falcon as an element of the décor of imperial ritual. A fictional narrative of the late eleventh or the early twelfth century, a free adaptation of an oriental text, *Stephanites and Ichnelates*, offers a suitable comment on this image: “the falcon, because it is wild (ὁ ἰέραξ ἄγριος ὄν), is summoned and taken by kings, because of the profit (λυσιτέλειαν) to be gained, and carried on the fist.”<sup>109</sup> The profit to be gained is clearly symbolic rather than economic.

Is this image of the emperor with a falcon related to a chivalrous hero, fashionable in this period in the Western romances, where the bird of prey is an attribute of the courtly lover?<sup>110</sup> Are we dealing with an image that infiltrates Constantinople because of the contacts with the Westerners or with a natural evolution of the image of the “noble man with a falcon” that we have encountered in Byzantine literature of the eleventh century? To us, it seems more likely that Manasses was inspired by the Byzantine tradition: the portraits of the eleventh century and the Manassean portrait of Manuel underline the military and not the amorous character of the protagonist. The lover’s image is only implied: Psellos wants to become the falcon, that is, the object of almost erotic attentions, of his hero, while in all portraits of Manuel, including this, the graces are always awaiting in the background. In the ekphrasis, the fact that Manuel’s falcon does not participate in the hunt means that the only female character present in the scene is given the role of spectator of the exploits of the hero – a scenario known from the romance. Accordingly, we cannot exclude the possibility that we could be dealing with an adaptation, or a kind of reappropriation of a Western imagery which is attractive to the Byzantines. Romance imagery of the Western-style falcon was admittedly rejected by Choniates in the case of Euphrosyne, but Choniates was describing a different storyworld: that of the Fall in 1204.

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<sup>109</sup> *Stephanites and Ichnelates* 1.10 (Sjöberg).

<sup>110</sup> Van den Abeele 1994, 41: “l’oiseau de vol est un attribut de l’amant courtois”; see also Van den Abeele 1990, 251.

The *Description of a crane hunt* was written and performed at a certain point in history, and it might be tempting to propose concrete events and dates that could help determine the immediate significance of the text. There are certainly similarities between the ekphrasis and another text by Manasses, the *Encomium of Emperor Manuel Komnenos*, which offers a praise of Manuel's victories against Hungarian tribes in the last years of the 1160s.<sup>111</sup> The cranes could be seen as symbols of the enemies of the North-West, the birds of prey could indicate the allies of Manuel and the falcon, majestic and motionless, could exemplify his own imperial power. However, we will refrain from such interpretations. We read this ekphrasis as an occasional piece of literature with which Manasses wishes to display his ability to create a vivid and clear (ἐναργές) story according to the rules of the ekphrastic art. He did this in order to praise his patrons or those he wished to have as patrons (in this case the emperor and his entourage), showing off his capacity for fine observations and creative imagination – two qualities that could assure him a certain standard of living.

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<sup>111</sup>Ed. Kurtz 1906. On Manuel's campaigns against Hungary (1162-1172), see Magdalino 1993: 78-83. For a comparison between the two texts, see Nilsson 2021 (forthcoming).

## Τοῦ Μανασσῆ κυροῦ Κωνσταντίνου ἔκφρασις κυνηγεσίου γεράνων

1. Ἰππηλάσια δὲ ἄρα καὶ κυνηγέσια καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τοιαῦτα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐπινενόηται, οὐ πρὸς γυμνάσια μόνον καὶ πρὸς ἐπίρρωσιν σωμαίων συμβάλλεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ ταῖς καρδίαις τέρψιν ἐνστάζει καὶ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσι γάργαλον<sup>1</sup>· καλὰ μὲν γὰρ καὶ ὅτι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀνόσους ποιοῦσι, πᾶν τὸ νοσηματικὸν ἀποκρίνοντα καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἔμβιον συναιρόμενα· καλὰ δὲ καὶ ὅτι πρὸς τὰ πολέμια προεθίζουσιν, (f.181) ἵππευειν καὶ ἐπελαύνειν διδάσκοντα καὶ τάξιν τηρεῖν καὶ μὴ τῆς φάλαγγος προπηδᾶν καὶ τὴν ἐπευθὺ προπαιδεύοντα διώξιν καὶ τὴν εἰς τὰ ἐπαρίστερα καὶ ἐνδέξια, πῆ μὲν ἐνδιδόναι τοῖς ἵπποις καὶ ἀνέτοις ῥυτῆρσι σφᾶς ἐπὶ δρόμον<sup>10</sup> προτρέπεσθαι, πῆ δὲ πέζειν καὶ ἄγχειν περιστομίους δεσμοῖς, οὓς σίδηρος ἐργάζεται πυριμάλακτος.

2. Καὶ εἶεν ἂν ταῦτα μετρίων, ὡς ἂν εἴποι<sup>2</sup> τις, ἄσκησις<sup>3</sup> πρὸς τὴν τῶν μειζόνων ὑπόμνησιν· ταῦτα μάχη οὐκ ἀνδρολέτειρα<sup>4</sup>, ταῦτα Ἄρης ἀσίδηρος καὶ μὴ λυθρόφυρτον ἔχων τὴν δεξιᾶν μηδὲ τὸ δόρυ φονοσταγῆς. Καλὰ μὲν οὖν ταῦτα καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα καὶ μόνοις ἐκείνοις ἀχαρίτωτα καὶ ἀθέλητα, ὅποσοι ἀνέραστοι τοῦ καλοῦ· χαρίεντα δὲ οὐχ ἦττον, ὅτι καὶ ψυχῆς ἄχθος δυσάγαλον ἐλαφρύνουσι καὶ τὸ δακέθυμον ἀποκρούονται καὶ τὸ λυποῦν ἀπελαύνουσι· καὶ τό γε παρὰ Πυθαγορείοις λεγόμενον, ὡς μέλος ὑπηγήσασα κίθαρις καὶ δόναξ ὑπολύριος ἐμπνευσθεῖς καὶ εἴ<sup>5</sup> τι ἄλλο τῶν ἐμπνευστῶν ὀργάνων καὶ ἐντατῶν, καὶ πρὸς θυμὸν καρδίαν ἐκμαίνει καὶ τινα<sup>5</sup> εἰς γῆν καχλάζοντα λέβητα δείκνυσι καὶ αὐτὴ ἡμεροῖ καὶ θηλύνει καὶ καταστέλλει τὸ ἀνοιδοῦν καὶ τὸ φλεγμαῖνον<sup>6</sup> μαλάσσει καθάπερ ἐπίπλαστον ἀκεσώδυνον, τοῦτο κὰν τοῖς κυνηγεσίοις κατίδοι τις ἄν· ὄπλοφορίας τὲ γὰρ καὶ ἀνδροκτασίας ὑπομιμνήσκει καὶ ἀσπίδων δούπου καὶ Ἄρεος φιλαιμάτου καὶ νέφος ἀθυμίας ἀπορραπίζει καὶ ἀκτῖνας ἠδονῆς ἐπαφίησι, καὶ οὐχ οὕτω δριμεῖαν ὀδύνην ἔχοι τις ἂν ἐπικάρδιον, ὡς μὴ ταύτην ἀκέσασθαι, λαγίναν ἰδὼν δειλοκάρδιον ἀνισταμένην, διωκομένην, κύνας δρομικοὺς ἀλυσκάζουσαν.

<sup>1</sup> γάργαλον B corr. ex γάργαρον

<sup>2</sup> εἶπη B, εἴποι K

<sup>3</sup> ἄσκησιν B, ἄσκησις K

<sup>4</sup> ἀνδρολέτηρα B, ἀνδρολέτειρα K

<sup>5</sup> τὰ B, τινα K

<sup>6</sup> φλεγμένον B, φλεγμαῖνον K

3. Ἐγωγέ τοι θήρα<sup>7</sup> γεράνων παρατυχῶν καὶ τῆς τούτων θέας ἐμφορηθεῖς <sup>30</sup>  
καὶ ἰδὼν ὄπως ὄρνιθες οὕτω βραχύσωμοι τὰ πτίλα ἐπιρροιζοῦσι καὶ  
μέχρις αἰθέρος ἐλαφριζόμενοι τοὺς τετανοσκελεῖς ἐκείνους εἰς γῆν  
καταφέρουσιν, ἠδονῆς τε ἀπλέτου τὴν ψυχὴν ἐγεμίσθην, καὶ τὴν  
μακαρίαν φύσιν κὰν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀποθειάζων, καὶ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος  
ἐθαύμασα, ὅτι τῶν ζῴων τὰ ταπεινόσωμα κραταιοτέρως ἐφώπλισε<sup>8</sup> καὶ  
τοῦ μεγέθους ἀφελομένη τῇ ἰσχύϊ προστέθεικεν.

Εἶδον μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἔλαφον ἐλαυνομένην φυζακινήν καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς φυγῆς  
ἀνακοπτομένην τὸ ἄσθμα καὶ καρχαλέαν τῷ δίψει καὶ τὴν γλῶτταν  
προβαλλομένην τῆς τοῦ ἀέρος ψυχρίας μεθέξουσιν καὶ ὑπὸ ἀνδρῶν  
ἅμα καὶ κυνῶν καρχάρων ἐπειγομένην καὶ ὑπερπηδῶσαν τὰς λόχμας καὶ <sup>40</sup>  
τῆς δενδρίτιδος ὑπεραλλομένην καὶ κατασκιρτῶσαν τῆς ἀρουρίτιδος,  
ἐνίστε δὲ καὶ λίμναις<sup>9</sup> πιστεύουσιν ἑαυτήν, ὡς διῆθεν τὴν ἄγραν ἀλύξῃ,  
καὶ κυβιστῶσαν κατὰ τῆς ἄλμης ὥσπερ τὰ θαλασσόβια, τοὺς γε μὴν  
κύνας καταταχοῦντας<sup>10</sup> καὶ ἄνδρας φαρετροφόρους ἐπικειμένους καὶ  
νευροσπαδέσιν ἀτράκτοις τὴν δειλαίαν ποιουμένους ἐκκόλυμβον. Εἶδον  
δὲ καὶ ἀκανθυλλίδας ἀλισκομένας καὶ σπίνους καὶ ἀστρογλήνους καὶ  
ὅσοις ὅλοις μικρὰ τὰ πτερύγια καὶ οἷς δαφνοστοίβαστοι ῥᾶβδοι τὸν  
δόλον ἀρτύνουσι, φυλλάδας ἀλλοτρίας προβεβλημένοι καὶ προἰσχύμενοι  
λύγους ἀηλιμμένους ἰξῶ. Ἐτερπé με ποτὲ καὶ μελάμπτερος ψᾶρ καὶ  
λάλος ἀκανθυλλίς καὶ ὁ στωμυλώτατος σπῖνος καὶ ἄλλ' ἄττα στρουθάρια, <sup>50</sup>  
δόναξιν ἰξῶ<sup>11</sup> κεκαλυμμένοις σχεθέντα καὶ θέλοντα μὲν φυγγάνειν καὶ  
περυγίζοντα, εἰργόμενα δὲ τοῖς ἐνύγροις ἐκείνοις δεσμοῖς καὶ πυκνὰ  
πυκνὰ τὰ στέρνα πατάσσοντα, οἷα τρέχοντα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς, ἀλισκόμενά  
τε καὶ μαχαιρίδι κεντούμενα καὶ κατὰ βόθρου ἀκοντιζόμενα, ἔνια δὲ  
ζωγρούμενα καὶ τηρούμενα, ὀπόσοις δηλαδὴ δαψιλεστέρου κάλλους ἢ  
κομμώτρια φύσις μετέδωκεν.

Ἀλλὰ μοι τὸ χρῆμα τῆς τῶν γεράνων ἄγρας τοσοῦτον ἐκείνων  
ἐπιτερπέστερον, ὅσον ἀκανθυλλίδων καὶ σπίνων αἱ μακραύχενες  
ὑπὲρέχουσι γέρανοι καὶ λύγων ἰξοφόρων ἰεράκες δραστικώτεροι καὶ

<sup>7</sup> θῆρα B, θήρα K

<sup>8</sup> ἐφώπλισεν B, ἐφώπλισε K

<sup>9</sup> λίμνας B, λίμναις K

<sup>10</sup> κατὰ χοῦντας B, καταταχοῦντας K

<sup>11</sup> ἰξῶν B, ἰξῶ K

ὅσον<sup>12</sup> γυμνασίων ἀνδρικοτέρων παιδαριώδη ἀθύρματα λείπεται· καὶ ὅ<sup>60</sup>  
γε θήραν ταύτης ὑπερτιθεὶς ταυτόν τι νομισθήσεται δρᾶν, ὡς εἴ τις τῶν  
ἀργυρέων προκρίνοι τὰ καττιτέρηνα καὶ τῶν χρυσεῶν τὰ χολοβάφινα.  
Δοτέον τοίνυν τὰ ὀραθέντα γραφῆ· τί γὰρ κωλύει κᾶν<sup>13</sup> τῇ γραφῇ τῷ  
πράγματι ἐντροφῆσαι με<sup>14</sup>, εἴ γε ἰθακησίων ἀνθρώπων κυνηγεσίου καὶ  
Ἵμηρος μέμνηται;

**4.** Ἐξήκει ποτὲ πρὸς θήραν ὁ καλλίνικος βασιλεὺς, ὃν πορφύρα μὲν  
ἐμαυεύσατο, ἀλουργίς δὲ τεχθέντα προσεῖπε, σοφία δὲ καὶ ἀνδρεία  
καὶ σύνεσις καὶ ὁ τῶν χαρίτων κατάλογος ἐνηγκαλίσαντο καὶ  
ἐμαστοτρόφησαν καὶ γάλα μυρίων προτερημάτων ἐπότισαν· οὗ χεῖρες,  
γίγαντος χεῖρες, οὗ καρδία, φρονήσεως θάλαμος, οὗ ψυχῇ παλάμαις <sup>70</sup>  
δορυφορεῖται θεοῦ· ᾧ νοῦς ὑψηλὸς καὶ αἰθέριος, μικροῦ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς  
ἀσωμάτους<sup>15</sup> νόας ἀνθαμιλλώμενος· οὗ κυνηγέσιον καὶ γυμνάσιον τὸ  
μὲν δοκεῖν εἰς τέρψιν ὀρᾶ καὶ διάχυσιν, τὸ δ' ἀληθές, εἰς νίκας καὶ  
τρόπαια καὶ μεγάλων διαθέσεις πραγμάτων καὶ τῆς Ἑρωμαίων ἡγεμονίας  
συντήρησιν τελευτᾶ· ὡς γὰρ λέοντος σκύμνος καὶ καθεύδων τοῖς  
τῆς ψυχῆς ἐγρήγορεν ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ βλέπει καὶ προφυλάττεται καὶ  
ἐφάπτεται· φυλάττεται μὲν πείραν ἐχθρῶν ἐπιόντων, ἐφάλλεται δὲ  
βλεφάροις ἀγριοθύμοις μηδὲ προῖδοῦσι τὴν ἔφοδον· καὶ ὡς ἀετὸς τῆς  
βαθυγνωμοσύνης τὰ πτίλα κινήσας καὶ τὸ πτέρωμα τῆς μεγαλοβουλίας  
περιρροϊζήσας ὄλας ἀγέλας πολεμίων φοβεῖ. Καί ποτε πρὸς ἄγρην <sup>80</sup>  
ζώων δόξας σταλῆναι, ὁ δὲ ἀλλὰ σατράπας, ἀλλὰ χωράρχας θηράσας  
ἐπαλινόστησεν.

**5.** Ἐξήκει τοίνυν θηράσων, εἰπόμεν δὲ καὶ αὐτός, τὸ τῆς θήρας τερπνὸν  
ἐποψόμενος· ἦν δὲ ὁ καιρὸς περὶ<sup>16</sup> φθίνουσας τὴν ὀπώραν, ἡνίκα  
αἱ κραύγασοι γέρανοι τὴν δυσχείμερόν τε καὶ χιονόβλητον Θράκην  
ἐκλείπουσαι ἐπὶ Λιβύην καὶ Αἴγυπτον καὶ τοὺς ἐκείνων ἡλίους καθάπερ  
εἰς<sup>17</sup> ἀποικίαν ἀπαίρουσι· τὰ δὲ κατὰ θήραν ὧδέ περ τετάχατο.

**6.** Παρ' ἐκάτερα μὲν πλῆθος παρήκει καὶ ἐφ' ἱκανὸν κεχυμένον καὶ ἐπὶ

<sup>12</sup> ὅσων B, ὅσον K

<sup>13</sup> κᾶν B, κᾶν K

<sup>14</sup> ἐντροφήσαιμεν B, ἐντροφῆσαι με K

<sup>15</sup> ἐν σώματι B, K

<sup>16</sup> ἐπὶ B, K

<sup>17</sup> ἐς K



μακρὸν τῆς πεδιάδος παρατεινόμενον· εἶχετο δὲ ἕτερος ἐτέρου καὶ ἄλλος ἄλλῳ<sup>18</sup> ἐπεστοιβάζετο καὶ οὕτω τὸ σμῆνος πεπύκνωτο, καθάπερ <sup>90</sup> πάλαι τοὺς Πέρσας τοὺς σαγηνεύοντας πόλεις ἢ ἱστορία φησὶν<sup>19</sup>. Ἐν μέσοις δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐπορεύετο βάδην πῶς<sup>20</sup> καὶ σχολαίως καὶ οὐ θαμὰ κεντρίζων τὸν ἵππον οὐδὲ κατατεινὼν εἰς δράμημα. Ἐστέλλοντο<sup>21</sup> οἱ μὲν (181ν) κατὰ τοὺς εὐζώνους τῶν ὀπιτῶν καὶ περιέκειντο τόξα καὶ γωρυτούς, τοῖς δὲ ξίφη μόνα τὸ περὶ τὴν ζώνην μέρος ἐπέσφιγγε. Καὶ οἱ μὲν σκυλάκια τὴν ὄσφρησιν ἀγαθὰ προσεπήγοντο, τὰ μὲν ἔποχα τοῖς ὀπισθίοις τῶν ἵππων, τὰ δὲ τῆς ἀπὸ τῆς πορείας<sup>22</sup> ταλαιπωρίας πειρώμενα· οἱ δὲ κύνας ἀελλόποδας ἐφείλκοντο<sup>23</sup> καὶ πτηνόποδας· ἕτεροι δὲ γαμψόνοχος καὶ ἀγκυλοχείλας ἰέρακας<sup>24</sup>, τοὺς μὲν ἐπετείους καὶ οὐ πρὸ πολλοῦ τοῦ κελύφους ἀπορραγέντας, τοὺς δὲ καὶ πολλάκις <sup>100</sup> ἀποδουθέντας τὸ πτέρωμα καὶ περιβαλομένους<sup>25</sup> καινότερον, τῆς τε τοῦ χρόνου παλαιότητος ἀπολαύσαντας κάντευθεν ἐν τοῖς περισπουδάστοις καὶ λόγου ἀξίοις<sup>26</sup> ἀριθμουμένους· καὶ οἱ μὲν γερανοφόντας καὶ νησσοφόνους ὄρνιθας ἐπεφέροντο (οὐκ οἶδα τὰ τῶν ζῴων ὀνόματα, ὅτι μὴ δὲ<sup>27</sup> ἑλλήνια)· ἕτεροι<sup>28</sup> τοῖς θηρευταῖς ἐπαρήξοντες εἶποντο, οἱ δὲ αὐτὸ τοῦτο θεαταὶ τῆς ἄγρας ἐσόμενοι. Ἦσαν δὲ πάντες ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ σιωπῇ καὶ ὡς Μενεσθέα προδιέγραψεν Ὅμηρος ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις τοὺς Ἕλληνας κατατάττοντα· εἰ δὲ τινα μικρὸν προσηδῆσαι τῆς φάλαγγος ἢ φρενῶν νεωτερισμὸς παρηρέθισεν<sup>29</sup> ἢ θράσος ἵππου καὶ γοργότης ἠνάγκασεν<sup>30</sup>, ἐνταῦθα δὲ ἀλλὰ τις τῶν βασιλείων<sup>31</sup> δραστηκῶν δορυφόρων <sup>110</sup>

<sup>18</sup> ἄλω Β, ἄλλω Κ

<sup>19</sup> φησί Β, φησὶν Κ

<sup>20</sup> πῶς Β, πως Κ

<sup>21</sup> ἐστέλλοντο Β, ἐστέλλοντο Κ

<sup>22</sup> πορίας Β, πορείας Κ

<sup>23</sup> ἐφείλκωτο Β, ἐφείλκοντο Κ

<sup>24</sup> ἱερας Β, ἰέρακας Κ

<sup>25</sup> περιβαλλομένους Β, περιβαλομένους Κ

<sup>26</sup> ἀξίους Β, ἀξίους Κ

<sup>27</sup> μηδὲ Κ

<sup>28</sup> ἕτεροι <δὲ> Κ

<sup>29</sup> παρηρέθισε Β, παρηρέθισεν Κ

<sup>30</sup> ἠνάγκασε Β, ἠνάγκασεν Κ

<sup>31</sup> βασιλέων Β, Κ

ἀπειλητῆρσι χρώμενος λόγοις τὴν ῥύμην ἀνέκοπτε καὶ ἀνέστελλεν<sup>32</sup>, ἐνιαχοῦ καὶ ῥάβδῳ προσχρώμενος, ἔνθα μηδὲν τοὺς λόγους ἀνύοντας ἔβλεπεν· οἱ δὲ οὐ σὺν πόνῳ<sup>33</sup> καὶ αὐθις εἰς τάξιν καθίσταντο τὸν τε τῆς τάξεως φροντιστὴν δεδιότες καὶ ἅμα μὴ καὶ τὴν τελετὴν τῆς ἄγρας ταράττοιεν ὑφορώμενοι. Ἀριπρεπεῖς δὲ τινες ἄνδρες ἦσαν περὶ τὸν βασιλέα καὶ μεγαλογενῶν αἱμάτων οὐκ ἁμαυρὰ δεικνύντες τὰ σύμβολα.

7. Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἰέρακα καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπικάρπιον ἔφερεν· εἶχε δὲ ὧδέ πως τὰ κατ' αὐτόν· ἐπιδερμίδα ζῶου λαβόντες οἱ περὶ ταῦτα δεινοί, χειρίδας τεκταίνονται, δακτύλους τε δερματίνους δημιουργοῦντες καὶ περιβλήμα ἐπικάρπιον, καὶ περιαμπίσχουσι τοὺς δακτύλους καὶ τοὺς καρπούς καὶ 120 ὀλίγα τοῦ πήχεος, ἅμα τὴν τε τοῦ κρύους πυράγραν καὶ τὰς ἐκ τῶν γαμψωνύχων ἀμυγᾶς ἐκτρεπόμενοι (δειναὶ γὰρ σάρκας δακεῖν αἱ τῶν ὀνύχων τούτων ἀκμαί). Ἄμφω τοίνυν τῷ χεῖρε τοῦ βασιλέως τοιαύτας χειρίδας περιεδέδυντο· καὶ ἡ ἀριστερὰ ἐπικαθίζοντα εἶχεν ἰέρακα, οὐ τῶν κοινῶν τούτων καὶ εὐπορίστων<sup>34</sup>, ἀλλὰ παλαιόχρονόν τινα καὶ γεννάδα καὶ οἶον καὶ κατὰ τῶν μεγαλοσώμων ζῶων ἀνδρίζεσθαι, τοῦ τε μεγέθους ἅμα καὶ τοῦ κάλλους ἀπόβλεπτον<sup>35</sup>, τούτου γε μὴν ἔνεκα ὄντα εὐδαιμονέστατον, ὅτι χειρὶ βασιλέως καὶ τηλικούτου βασιλέως ἔφερετο. Ἦν δὲ ὁ μεγάλθυμος ἐκεῖνος ἰέραξ ἰβηρικός, ὁποῖων πολλῶν Ἰβηρία μήτηρ καὶ θρέπτειρα<sup>36</sup>· οὐ τὴν ἄγχουρον λέγω Γαδείρων, τὴν 130 παρωκεανίτην, τὴν τῶν Ἄφρων ἀντίπορθμον, ἣν οἱ κατὰ Λυσιτανίαν νέμονται Ἰσπανοί, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἑώραν, τὴν πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα<sup>37</sup> ἥλιον, ἣν Φάσις ὁ πολλὸς περιρρεῖ καὶ Κόλχοι τὸ παλαιὸν ἐκαρπίζοντο. Τὴν γε μὴν περὶ τὴν θήραν πείραν οὐκ ἄφ' ἐστίας ἔχοντες ἤκουσιν, ἀλλ' ἄμαθεῖς ἰόντας καὶ ἀδιδάκτους ὁ βασιλεὺς πανδεξίους καταρτίζει παραλαβών· οὐ γὰρ ἀνθρώπους μόνον ἀναπαιδεύειν ἐπίσταται<sup>38</sup> καὶ φρενοῦν, ἀλλὰ καὶ γοργοπτέρους ὄρνις ἀεροπόρους ἐς ὄρνεοφονίας γυμνάζει καὶ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος ἐμπειρομάχους καθίστησιν.

<sup>32</sup> ἀνέστελλε B, ἀνέστελλεν K

<sup>33</sup> συμπόνῳ B, σὺν πόνῳ K

<sup>34</sup> εὐπορίτων B, εὐπορίστων K

<sup>35</sup> ἀπόβλεπτον B, ἀπόβλεπτον K

<sup>36</sup> θρέπτειρα B, θρέπτειρα K

<sup>37</sup> προσανίσχοντα B, πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα K

<sup>38</sup> ἐπίσταται B corr. ex ἐφίσταται

8. Ὁ ἱέραξ οὔτε παντελῶς κεχιόνωτο οὔτε ἀκριβῶς μεμελάνωτο· ἀγκύλον τὸ ράμφος, τομὸν τὸ ράμφος ὑπὲρ τὰς μαχαιρίδας· τοιαῦτα γὰρ τὰ ράμφη<sup>140</sup> τοῖς σαρκοφάγοις ἢ φύσις ἐφιλοτιμήσατο· ἡ κεφαλὴ οὔτε λελεύκαντο οὔτε μεμέλαντο, θαψίνη δέ τις ἦν τὴν χροιάν καὶ ὑπόκαπνος· γλαυκὸν τὸ ὄμμα, γοργὸν τὸ ὄμμα καὶ τὴν τῆς καρδίας γνωρίζον ἀρρενωπότητα· ὁ περὶ τὰς βλεφαρίδας κύκλος ὑπόκιρρος· αὐχὴν οὐ τετανὸς οὐδὲ ἐπιμήκης, ὅτι μὴδὲ τὰ σκέλη μακρά· τὰ πρηνῆ τοῦ πτερώματος ἐπὶ τὸ καπνηρότερον καὶ τὸ δὴ λεγόμενον ἀμφίβολον μέλαν ἐχρῶζετο, τὰ δὲ ὕπτια τὸ μὲν πλεόν λελεύκαντο (τοιαῦτα γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πτηνοῖς τὰ πρεσβυγενέστερα), ἐνιαχοῦ γε μὴν καὶ μελανίας σταλάγματα ἔφερον, οὐκ ἀνώμαλα οὐδὲ ἄτακτα οὐδ' ὅποι καὶ ἔτυχεν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ γραμμὰς ἐπιστοίχους μορφαζόμενα καὶ χρωζόμενα καὶ οἷον ζώστροις πολλοῖς<sup>150</sup> περισφίγγοντα τὰ τε περὶ γαστέρα καὶ ὅσον προστέρνιον, ἐκάτερον σκέλος ὑπόκιρρον, οὐ τετανόν, οὐ σαρκῶδες, ἀλλὰ παχυμερές, ἀλλ' ὀστῶδες καὶ οἷον ἂν τοιοῦδε σώματος ἄχθος ἀνέχοι· πέζα πλατεῖα καὶ τοιοῦτοις κατάλληλος σκέλεσι· δάκτυλοι περὶ μὲν τὰ πρόσθια τρεῖς, ὀξεῖς τινὰς καὶ ἐπάκμους ὄνυχας προβαλλόμενοι, περὶ<sup>39</sup> τὰ οὐραῖα καὶ τὰ ὀπίσθια ἕτερος, τοσαύτην ἀποπληρῶν τῷ σώματι χρεῖαν, ὀπόσῃν ἀντίχειρ ἐν ἀνθρωπίνῃ χειρὶ· καὶ ὑπὲρ μαχαιρίδας ἐστόμωτο καὶ ὑπὲρ βέλη ἠκόνητο<sup>40</sup>· καὶ τοσαύτη τις ἦν ἰσχύς ἅμα καὶ ὀξύτης τοῖς ὄνυξιν, ὡς μὴ μόνον νῆτταν ἰσχύειν σπαράττειν καὶ γέρανον καὶ ἄλλα ὅσα περιδέδυνται πτέρωμα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ταύρων καὶ κάπρων καὶ βουβαλίδων<sup>160</sup> ἐπίδερμίδας ἀμύσσειν καὶ διαπερονᾶν καὶ ὅσοις στερεμνιώτερον ὁ τοῦ σώματος πεπύκνωται φλοῦς ἢ δαψιλῇ τῇ λάχῃ τὸ δέρμα πεπύκασται. Τοιαύτη μὲν ἦν ἡ παλαιγενῆς καὶ τῷ πλείονι λευκοπτέρωτος ἱέραξ ἐκεῖνη, ἦν ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐπικάρπιον ἔφερε.

9. Συχνοὶ γε μὴν καὶ ἄλλοι ζωοφόντας ὄρνις ἐπήγοντο<sup>41</sup>, τοὺς μὲν περδίκων ἐρυθροράμφων καταταχεῖν, τοὺς δὲ καὶ πρὸς τὰς ὑγροβίους νήττας<sup>42</sup> ἀντιπαλαμᾶσθαι ἰσχύοντας, ἐνίους δὲ καὶ ταῖς λαγίναις ἄνωθεν ἀφ' ὕψους ἐποφθαλμίζοντας, κἂν ὑπὸ θαμνίσκουσ κοιτάζοινο<sup>43</sup>, κἂν

<sup>39</sup> περὶ <δὲ> K

<sup>40</sup> ἠκόνηστο B, ἠκόνητο K

<sup>41</sup> ἐπήγοντο B corr. ex ἐπέιγοντο

<sup>42</sup> νῆτται B, νήττας K

<sup>43</sup> κοιτάζοιτο B, κοιτάζοιτο K

τῶν πεδιάδων καταχορεύοιεν, καὶ γινομένους προσγειοτέρους, μαστί-  
ζοντάς<sup>44</sup> τε ταρσοῖς τῶν τλαιπύρων ἐκείνων τὰ προμετώπια καὶ τοῖς <sup>170</sup>  
ὄνυξι ῥηγνύοντας τὸ δέρμα καὶ διασπῶντας τὸ ῥάκος τοῦ σώματος· ἀλλ’  
οὐκ οἶδε γλῶσσα ἐλλήνιος<sup>45</sup> τὰ τῶν μαχίμων τούτων ζῶων ὀνόματα.  
Ἦσαν δὲ οἱ μὲν ἀκράτῳ τῇ μελανία κατάβαπτοι τὰ τε περι τὴν κεφαλὴν  
καὶ τὸ ἐπινώτιον πτέρωμα, οἱ δὲ ποικιλόπτεροί τινες καὶ κατάστικτοι,  
οἷς ἐνιαχοῦ μὲν τὸ πτερόν ὑπεπύρριξε, πῆ δὲ καὶ μελανίας ἔφερε  
χαλαζώματα· πάντες δὲ ὁμοῦς ἄλκιμοι καὶ μεγάθυμοι καὶ πνέοντες φόνου  
καὶ ὁ θυμὸς τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ὠρᾶτο ἐπικαθήμενος· καὶ τὰ ῥάμφη ὀξύτερα  
ἦσαν καὶ ἔπακμα· εἶπεν ἄν τις νεακονήτους μαχαιρίδας ὀρᾶν. Θαμὰ  
τὰ βλέφαρα τῆδε κάκεῖ περιέφερον καὶ ὄδιον πετασμοὺς καὶ ὄργων  
πολεμησεῖιν<sup>46</sup> καὶ ἐφαντάζοντο (182r) ὄρνιθας οἷς συμπλακῆσονται <sup>180</sup>  
καὶ περιέχασκον τὸν ἀέρα καὶ τοὺς δεσμοὺς ἐδυσχέρανιν καὶ τὸν ὄνυχα  
θηκτὸν<sup>47</sup> ὡς σίδηρον προεβάλλοντο, καθάπερ ὀπλίται γεννάδαι τινὲς  
βοῆς πολεμιστηρίας ἀκούοντες.

**10.** Ἦδη δὲ καὶ τὸ κυνηγετικὸν τύμπανον ἐδουπήθη καὶ πάταγον  
ἄσημόν τινα καὶ ἄγριον ἤχησεν, ὡς ἐς μόνον προκαλούμενον τὰς  
γεράνους καὶ τὰς σφῶν καρδίας προκατασεῖοντα· κέλαδον ἄν εἶπε τις  
ἐνυάλιον, ὃν ἄνδρες σιδηροθώρακες ἀλαλάζουσιν, ἠνίκα μὴ κλέπτειν  
τὴν νίκην<sup>48</sup> μηδὲ ἀκηρυκτεῖ τοῖς ἐχθροῖς<sup>49</sup> ἐπέρχεσθαι βούλοιντο. Ὡς δὲ  
καὶ γεράνων κλαγγαζουσῶν ἐγένετο αἴσθησις καὶ αἱ γέρανοι ἀναπτᾶσαι  
εἰς τάξιν καθίσταντο καὶ ἀλλήλας<sup>50</sup> ἐς συνασπισμὸν παρεκάλουν καὶ <sup>190</sup>  
ἐπύκνουν τὴν φάλαγγα, τότε δὴ τότε νόμους κυνηγετικούς καὶ εἶδον  
καὶ ἀπεθαύμασα καὶ ἐτέρφθην ὡς οἱ γευόμενοι τοῦ λωτοῦ καὶ γάνος μοι  
τὸ πρᾶγμα ἐνέσταζε τῇ ψυχῇ. Εἶχε δὲ ὧδέ μοι τὸ θέαμα· τέτραχα τοὺς  
ἄμφ’ αὐτὸν ὁ βασιλεὺς διανείμας, ὡς ἀπὸ τετραγώνου τὰς γεράνους  
κυκλώσοντάς τε καὶ ὑπαντιάσοντας, τὴν μὲν παλαιγενῆ ἐκείνην ἰέρακα  
ἠρεμεῖν τέως ἀφῆκε καὶ ἔξω μάχης ἐστάναι<sup>51</sup> καὶ εἶναι ἀπόλεμον, ἄλλον

<sup>44</sup> μαστίζον τὰς B, μαστίζοντας K

<sup>45</sup> ἐλλήνιος B, ἐλλήνιος K

<sup>46</sup> πολεμησήειν B, πολεμησεῖιν K

<sup>47</sup> θῆκτὸν B, θηκτὸν K

<sup>48</sup> νύκτα B, νίκην K

<sup>49</sup> ἐχθοῖς B, ἐχθροῖς K

<sup>50</sup> ἀλλήλοισ B, ἀλλήλας K

<sup>51</sup> ἐστάναι B, ἐστᾶναι K

δὲ ὄρνιν, γένους μὲν ὄντα ἐτέρου ἀξιόμαχον δὲ πρὸς γεράνους, αὐτὸς δὲ<sup>52</sup> λαβὼν καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ταῦτόν ποιεῖν ἐπιτρέψας καὶ ἐπικαιρότατον τόπον καταλαβὼν, ὡς οἱ τὰ ἐρυμνὰ προκαταλαμβάνοντες ἐν ταῖς μάχαις, τὴν τῶν γεράνων πτῆσιν ἐκαραδόκει. Ἦν δ' ὁ τῆ<sup>53</sup> βασιλείῳ 200  
χειρὶ προσφερόμενος ὄρνις καὶ τὴν ῥώμην πολὺς καὶ φλόγεος τὸν θυμὸν γεραρός τε τῷ χρόνῳ καὶ φόνους μυρίοις ἐνηθληκῶς καὶ πολλῶν τοιούτων ὀλυμπιάδων μεστός, πρεσβυτικός, ἂν εἶπε τις, Νέστωρ ἐς τὰ γερανοφόνια τοὺς ὁμοφύλους παιδοτριβῶν. Οἱ γε μὴν παρ' ἐκείνοις τοῖς ἄλλοις νεαροὶ μὲν ἦσαν καὶ πρωτοδίδακτοι καὶ ὀλίγοις αἵμασι πολεμίων ζώων χρανθέντες· ἐσφάδαζον δὲ ὅμως καὶ ἐπτερύγιζον καὶ ἐθύμαινον καὶ προῖπτασθαι ἤθελεν ἕκαστος καὶ ὡς πολεμησείων γοργότερον ἴσθη τὸ ὄμμα καὶ ἐσοβείτο καὶ τὸν συγγενῆ θυμὸν ἀνελάμβανεν<sup>54</sup>. ἐπείχοντο δὲ τέως καὶ ἄκοντες καὶ περιέμενον προπηδησαι τὸν πρωτόαθλον ὄρνιν ἐκεῖνον καθάπερ ἀριστεία πρωτόμαχον. 210

**11.** Ἦσθοντο τῆς μάχης οἱ<sup>55</sup> γέρανοι καὶ καταστάντες εἰς τάξιν καὶ φαλαγγηδὸν ἀρτύναντες ἑαυτοὺς ἔφευγον μὲν, καθάπερ εἶ<sup>56</sup> τινες ἄνδρες ἀντοφθαλμεῖν οὐ τολμῶεν τοῖς ἐναντίοις οὐδ' ἀντιμέτωποι ἵστασθαι· τεῖναντές γε μὴν τὸ πτερόν, ὠγύγιόν τι χρῆμα καὶ ἄντικρυς σάκος εὐρύ, καὶ τοὺς τραχήλους σφῶν ὀρθιάσαντες καθάπερ τινὰ μακροκόντια καὶ τοὺς ἐπιποδίους ὄνυχας ἐτοιμάσαντες οἷοι τε ἦσαν ἐνδεξόμενοι τε τοὺς ἐπιόντας καὶ ἀμνυόμενοι καὶ ῥάμφεσι καὶ ὄνυξι καὶ πτεροῖς. Ὡς δὲ καὶ ὁ παλαιόπειρος ὄρνις ἐκεῖνος ἀφείθη καὶ τὸ πτερόν ἐλαφρίσας εἰς βάθος ἀέρος κατετάχησε τῶν γεράνων καὶ ἤδη κατέλαβε φεύγοντας, τότε δὴ τέρψις τὲ ἅμα καὶ δέος κατεῖχε τοὺς θεατὰς καὶ τὸ φοβούμενον ἔχαιρε 220  
καὶ ὑπεστέλλετο τὸ τερπόμενον· τοιαύτη τις ἡδονή τε ἅμα καὶ ἀγωνία περὶ ἐκεῖνον τῷ ὄρνιθι. Ὁ μὲν γὰρ τῆς ὅλης ἀγέλης κατατολμήσας καὶ εἰς μέσους θυμῷ ἐμβαλὼν καὶ ἕνα ἀποτεμόμενος, Μέμνονα φασὶν ἢ Τιθόντην ὁ Τελαμώνιος, ἀπρίξ τε εἶχετο τοῦ γεράνου καὶ ἐμάστιζε τὰ πλευρὰ καὶ ἔδρυπτε τὸ προστέρνιον καὶ τοῖς<sup>57</sup> τοῦ τραχήλου τὸ ῥάμφος

<sup>52</sup> τὲ K

<sup>53</sup> ἦν δ' ἐν τῆ B, ἦν δ' ὁ τῆ K

<sup>54</sup> ἀνελάμβανε B, ἀνελάμβανεν K

<sup>55</sup> οἱ K

<sup>56</sup> καθάπερ B, καθάπερ εἶ K

<sup>57</sup> τὰ B, τοῖς K

ἐπῆγε καὶ τοῖς ὄνουσιν ἤμισσε καὶ παντοῖος ἦν κατάξων εἰς γῆν τὸν γιγαντοσκελετὴ καὶ δολιχόδειρον γέρανον. Ἀλλὰ τὸ πλῆθος οἱ γέρανοι μὴ ἐν παρέργῳ τὰ κατὰ τὸν κινδυνεύοντα θέμενοι περιείσαντο τε τὸν πολέμιον ὄρνιν καὶ ἀμφεκύκλουν καὶ οἷοι τε ἦσαν ἀνδρίσασθαι καὶ ἀλεξῆσαι<sup>58</sup> τῷ κάμοντι, καθάπερ ὀπλίται τινὲς ἀγαθοὶ ποιοῦντι <sup>230</sup> στρατιώτῃ ἐπικουροῦντες καὶ τοῦ συμφύλου προκινδυνεύοντες· οὕτως ἢ φύσις οὐ μόνον γένη ἀνθρώπων ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἀεροπόρα καὶ πτερωτὰ φιλάλληλα ἔθετο, μᾶλλον δὲ ἀνθρώποις διὰ τῶν ζώων προσονειδίζει τὸ ἀφιλάλληλον. Ἡμύνοντο οὖν τὸν ὄρνιν οἱ γέρανοι καὶ ἐσόβουν καὶ ἀπεκρούοντο (σχέτλιον γὰρ τοσοῦτων ἕνα κατακαυχήσασθαι ᾧοντο) καὶ ὁ πόλεμος εἰς πλεον ἀνήπτετο. Καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἦν τὰ δεινὰ καὶ αἱ καρδίαι τοῖς θεωμένοις ἐπάλλοντο, ὅτι μὴ ἐξ ἀντιπάλου τῆς μοίρας ἦν ὁ ἀγών· ἐν μέσοις γὰρ ἐκείνοις ὁ ὄρνις ἀπολειφθεὶς, μικροῦ καὶ ἀπαλλάξαι κακῶς ἐκινδύνευεν, εἰς φυγὴν τρέψας τὸ πτέρωμα καὶ οὐτόσον δράσας ὅσον παθῶν· ὑπὸ γὰρ μυρίων ἐνύσσετο καὶ ἐβάλλετο· καὶ ἦσαν τοῖς <sup>240</sup> γεράνοις οἱ τράχηλοι ὡς ἀνεμοτρεφεῖ καὶ μείλινα δόρατα, τὰ ράμφη προβεβλημένα ὥσπερ αἰχμᾶς καὶ κατευστοχοῦντα τοῦ ὄρνιθος.

**12.** Ἀλλὰ φθάνει καὶ τὸ δέος λυθὲν καὶ τὸ τῶν γεράνων σμῆνος τὸν ἀγγελίτην<sup>59</sup> ἐκείνον τὸν συστρατιώτην ἀποβαλόν. Ἀνήρ γὰρ τις ἔποχος ἵππῳ (κατάλευκος δὲ ἦν <ὁ><sup>60</sup> ἵππος ἐκείνος) ἐπὶ μικρὸν εἰς κύκλον περιδινήσας τὸν ἵππον καὶ τοῦτο σύνθημα δοὺς τοῖς ἐπαγομένοις τοὺς ὄρνιθας συμμαχούς, ὑπερμάχους ἀφειθῆναι τῷ κινδυνεύοντι<sup>61</sup> διεπράξατο. Ἄμα τὲ οὖν ἀφειθήσαν οἱ πρὶν ὀργῶντες εἰς πετασμοὺς καὶ ὁ πρόμαχος ἐκείνος ὄρνις ἐθάρσησε, στρατὸν ἐπικουρον κατιδῶν· καὶ ἦν ὁ πόλεμος ἐνεργὸς καὶ τὰ ζῶα μάχην ἀερίαν στησάμενα κλαγγῇ <sup>250</sup> καὶ ροιζήμασιν ἀλλήλοις συνέπεσον καὶ ἐνδηλα ἦσαν οὐκ ἐπὶ μετρίοις τὸν πόλεμον παύσοντα· θροῦς δὲ καὶ βόμβος τὸν ἀέρα ἐγέμιζε καὶ κατεκτύπουν τὰς ἀκοὰς τὰ τῶν πτερῶν παταγήματα<sup>62</sup> καὶ θούριος Ἄρης παρ' ἀμφοῖν τοῖν στρατοῖν ἐπεμαίνετο· οἱ μὲν βιάζεσθαι ἤθελον, οἱ δὲ τὴν βίαν ἐκκρούεσθαι· οἱ μὲν τὴν ἀγέλην ἠπειγόνο ζημιούν, οἱ

<sup>58</sup> ἀλεξίσαι B, ἀλεξῆσαι K

<sup>59</sup> ἀγγελίτην B K

<sup>60</sup> <ὁ> K

<sup>61</sup> κινδυνεύοντο B κινδυνεύοντι K

<sup>62</sup> παταγήματα B, παταγήματα K

δὲ ἀμύνεσθαι ἔσπευδον· οἱ μὲν παρασπᾶν καὶ ἀφέλκειν ἐθύμεινον, οἱ δὲ καὶ σφάζειν ὄργων τὸ σύμφυλον καὶ μὴ τὴν νίκην καταπροΐεσθαι· ἔνυσσόν τε πυκνὰ καὶ ἐνύσσοντο· καὶ οἱ μὲν συμμαχεῖν τῷ κάμνοντι ἤθελον, οἱ δὲ τοῖς συμμαχοῖς ἀντεστάτου καὶ ἐντεφέροντο· οὕτω μέγας ἦν ἀμφοῖν τοῖν στρατευμάτοι ἀγὼν καὶ οὕτω μέγας θυμὸς ἐκάτερα <sup>260</sup> ὥπλιζε. Τέλος οἱ γέραναι ἔκλιναν εἰς φυγὴν καὶ τοῖς πολεμίοις λιπόντες τὸν σύμμαχον ὄχοντο· οἱ γὰρ ζωοφόνται ὄρνις ἐμάχοντο κραταιότερον καὶ τὰς γεράνους ἐπέζον· οἱ μὲν οὖν ἐφοβήθησάν τε <sup>63</sup> καὶ ἐδραπέτευσαν ὅπῃ ἂν ἕκαστος ἔφερε τὸ πτερόν, ὁ δὲ πρωτόαθλος ὄρνις, ἐπεὶ τῆς μακραύχενος γεράνου ἐκείνης ἐλάβετο, οὐκέτι μεθίσσεται ἤθελεν, ἀλλ' ἐπικλινῆ τὴν τετανὴν ἐποίει δειρῆν, ἐπέσφιγγέ τε καὶ ἔκαμπτεν ὅποια τόξον κερατοξόος θυμομαχήσαντά τε καὶ ἤδη ἀπαγορεύσαντα εἰς γῆν ἐαυτῷ συγκατήνεγκεν, ὀλιγηπελέοντα καὶ ἀσθμαίνοντα· καὶ ἦν ἰδεῖν τερψίθυμόν τι καὶ θελξικάρδιον θέαμα, γέρανον τετανοσκελῆ καὶ μακρόδειρον ὑφ' οὕτω μικροῦ καταφερόμενον <sup>64</sup> ὄρνιθος καὶ ὡς ἀπ' <sup>270</sup> οὐρανοῦ τανταλούμενον καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ νεφῶν δισκευόμενον <sup>65</sup>· ὡς ἄρα οὐ μέγας σώματος ὄγκος δύναται σφάζειν, ἀλλὰ καρδία περιίθερμος καὶ ἀρρενωπότης <sup>66</sup> ψυχῆς {ὡς} ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις τὸ κράτος ἀυχοῦσιν, ὅποια <sup>67</sup> βαφαὶ στομοῦσαι τὰ ζῶα καὶ εἰς ἀνδρείαν ἀπαίρουσαι.

**13.** Ὡς δὲ ὁ γέρανος ἦν ἐν χερσὶ καὶ οἱ (182v) προῦμμάτων ὁ θάνατος καὶ ὁ κίνδυνος οὐκέτι ἐφαίνετο φύξιμος, ἐνταῦθα δὲ ἀλλ' οὐχ ἀπλοῦς ὁ ὄλεθρος ἦν οὐδὲ οἷος ἐπάγειν ἐτοίμην τὴν τελευτήν, μυρία δὲ ὅσα δεινὰ περιεστῆκει τὸν τάλανα· τὰς τε γὰρ τῶν ὀνύχων ἀκμὰς μαχαιρίσιν ἀποτεμόντες καὶ τὸ ράμφος ἀμβλύτερον <sup>68</sup> θέμενοι, ὡς μηκέτι τοὺς τῆς μάχης κατάρχοντας ἔχοι ἀπειργεῖν, οἷα τὴν σύμφυτον ὀπλοφορίαν <sup>280</sup> ἀποβαλὼν, τὸν μὲν ἀφήκαν ἐλευθέρῳ πετάζεσθαι τῷ πτερῷ, συχνοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ὄρνις προσεπαφῆκαν γερανοφονίων ἔτι ἀγεύστους, λυπήσοντάς τε καὶ νύξοντας ράμφεσι καὶ γευσομένους αἵματος καὶ σαρκῶν καὶ σκυλακευθησομένους ἐς ὅμοια. Καὶ οἱ ὄρνιθες πυκνὰ τῷ τάλαιπῶρῳ

<sup>63</sup> ἐφόβηθέν τε B, ἐφοβήθησάν τε K

<sup>64</sup> καφερόμενον sive καθεπόμενον B, καταφερόμενον K

<sup>65</sup> δυσκευόμενον B, δισκευόμενον K

<sup>66</sup> ἀρρενωπότης B, ἀρρενωπότης K

<sup>67</sup> ὅποια B, ὅποια K

<sup>68</sup> ἀμβλύτερον B, ἀμβλύτερον K

ἐπεπερύσσοντο καὶ ἐκέντουν καὶ ἔδακνον· καὶ τοῦτο τῶν μελλόντων εἶχον<sup>69</sup> ἐχέγγυον, ὅτι τοιοῦτον ἀποίσονται μίσθωμα κατὰ γεράνων μαχίμων ποτὲ ἀνδρισάμενοι· ὁ δὲ τάλας ἐκεῖνος ὁ γέρανός εἰς ἄθυρμα πᾶσι καὶ χλεῦν προέκειτο καθάπερ<sup>70</sup> τις στρατιώτης τὰς χεῖρας περιαικωνισθεὶς καὶ τὰ ὄπλα ἀποδυθεὶς καὶ βρεφυλλίοις προβεβλημένος εἰς παίγιον· καὶ ἤλγει μὲν καὶ εἰς ἄμυναν ἔσφυζεν, ἔφερε δὲ ὅμως<sup>290</sup> καὶ ἄκων τοὺς σπαραγμούς· παρήρητο γάρ τοι τὰ ἀμυντήρια· καὶ ἦν τὸ γινόμενον παίγιόν τε ἅμα σεμνὸν καὶ ἐθισμὸς τῶν ὀρνίθων εἰς μάχην γερανολέπειραν. Ὡς δὲ ἱκανῶς ἔχειν ἐδόκει τῶν ἀθυρμάτων καὶ ὁ ταλάντατος οὐ πλευρὸν μόνον ὡς ὁ Προμηθεὺς καὶ περύγιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὄλον τὸ σῶμα διατετόρητο, μόλις αὐτῷ καὶ θάνατον ἦνεγκαν τὸν παυσίπονον, πολλῶν τῶν σπαραγμῶν ἐκείνων καὶ περιδρύψεων κερδαλεώτερον<sup>71</sup> ὄντα καὶ εὐκταιότερον.

**14.** Μέγας ἦν καὶ ὑπὲρ τοὺς χῆνας ὁ γέρανός· ὁξὺ τὸ ράμφος, ὅτι καὶ σπερμοφάγον ἀλλ' οὐ σαρκοβόρον τὸ ζῶον· ὁ αὐχὴν τετανός, μηκεδανὸς ὁ αὐχὴν, ὅτι καὶ τὸ σκέλος μακρὸν καὶ ἐφ' ὑψηλοῦ τὸ σῶμα<sup>300</sup> ἐρείδεται· ὁ φάρυγξ<sup>72</sup> εὐρυχανῆς· τοῦ πτερώματος τὸ μὲν πλεόν κατὰ <τὸ><sup>73</sup> τῶν ὑακινθίνων ἀμφίβολον, μᾶλλον γε μὴν εἰς τὸ ὑπόκαπνον κέχρωστο, ὀλίγα δὲ τῶν πτερῶν καὶ ἀκράτῳ βέβαπτο μέλανι· εὐρεῖα πτέρυξ, οὐραῖον μακρὸν, μέλαν τὸ σκέλος, πηχυαῖον τὸ σκέλος· ὁ ποὺς ἰθυτενῆς<sup>74</sup> τις καὶ ὄρθιος καὶ ἐπὶ μακρὸν ἐξετέτατο<sup>75</sup> καὶ κατὰ τὸν αὐχένα ὠργύωτο· πέζα εὐρυτενῆς, ὄνυχες εὖ ἔχοντες τῆς ἀκμῆς· ἐρίσοι δ' ἂν γέρανός εἰς ὕψος ἡλικιώσεως ὀλιγοχρόνω παιδί· εἰ δὲ που τὸν τράχηλον εἰς γῆν καθεῖναι<sup>76</sup> δεῆσοι, ὄρμιάν τις δόξει βλέπειν λινόστροφον ἰχθύας ἐκ βάθους ἀνέλκουσαν ποντοβάμονα. Τὰ μὲν οὖν πολλὰ νικῶνται οἱ γέρανοι καὶ ἐπὶ κακῶ τῶν οἰκείων μανθάνουσι, τοῖς γενναίοις ἐκείνοις<sup>310</sup> ἀντιμαχόμενοι ὄρνισιν· ἐνίοτε <δὲ><sup>77</sup> καὶ τὰ τῶν γεράνων γίνονται

<sup>69</sup> εἶχεν B, K

<sup>70</sup> καθάπερ B, καθάπερ K

<sup>71</sup> κερδαλαιώτερον B, κερδαλεώτερον K

<sup>72</sup> φάρυξ B, φάρυγξ K

<sup>73</sup> <τὸ> K

<sup>74</sup> ἰθυτενίς B, ἰθυτενῆς K

<sup>75</sup> ἐξεπέτατο B, ἐξετέτατο K

<sup>76</sup> καθῆναι B, καθεῖναι K

<sup>77</sup> <δὲ> K



καθυπέρτερα καὶ ὁ γερανοφόντης ὄρνις οὐπω<sup>78</sup> προσπτάμενος ἔφθη, καὶ ὄνυξι προκαταταχήσαντος γεράνου πελάσας ἀθρόον τὴν ψυχὴν ἐξεφύσησεν<sup>79</sup>. εὐπάλαμοι γὰρ τινες καὶ μεγαλοδύναμοι καὶ αἱ γέρανοι.

**15.** Τοιοῦτον τὸ χρῆμα ταύτης τῆς θήρας<sup>80</sup>, ἐπιτερπὲς ὁμοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἔγκοπον· δορκάδων μὲν γὰρ καὶ λαγωῶν κυνηγέσιον πολὺν παρέχει τὸν κάματον καὶ οὐχ<sup>81</sup> ἐτοίμη σφῶν ἢ ἄγρα οὐδ' ἀταλαίπωρος, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἵππος διώκων ἀσθμαίνει καὶ κάμνει καὶ τῶν αὐτοῦ πνευμόνων ἄλγος ἀνθάπτεται καὶ ἀνὴρ ἐπελαύνει καὶ εἰς δρόμον ἑαυτὸν<sup>82</sup> κατατείνει καὶ ὄμους καὶ χεῖρας καὶ ἰξὺν βαρύνεται καὶ γλουτούς· ἐνίοτε δὲ καί, <sup>320</sup> τῆς ἀγραίας Δίκης νεμεσησάσης, ὃ τε ἵππος αὐτὸς καταφέρεται καὶ ὁ ἐποχούμενος ἐπὶ βρεχμὸν τε καὶ ὄμους ρίπτεται κύμβαχος καὶ εἰς μέγα τοῦτο κακὸν τὸ κυνηγέσιον ἀποτελευτᾷ. Γεράνων δὲ ἄγρα (μὴ καὶ περιττὸν εἶη λέγειν) ὡς εὐχείρωτός<sup>83</sup> τις καὶ εὐμαρῆς καὶ τὸ δὴ λεγόμενον ὑποκόλιος. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ ὄρνιθες οἱ θηρευτικοὶ καὶ ἐφίπτανται<sup>84</sup> καὶ συμπλέκονται καὶ αὐτῶν ἐξήπται<sup>85</sup> τὸ πᾶν, οἱ δὲ ἄνδρες ἐστήκασιν ἄερα περιγιάσκοντες καὶ νεφέλας καὶ μηδὲν ὅτι καὶ συμπονήσαι τοῖς ὄρνισιν εἰς τὸν ἐναέριον δυνάμενοι πόλεμον, μόνην δὲ τὴν ἀφ' ὕψους τῶν πολεμουμένων караδοκοῦντες κατάρραξιν. Γέγραπται δὴ μοι τὰ ὀραθέντα, ἐμοὶ μὲν εἰς ζώπυρον τοῦ πράγματος καὶ ἀνάμνησιν, ἄλλοις <sup>330</sup> δὲ ἴσως ἀνθρώποις εἰς ἐναργὲς προζωγράφημα οὐ μὴ θεάονται.

<sup>78</sup> οὐτω B, οὐπω K

<sup>79</sup> ἐξεφύσησε B, ἐξεφύσησεν K

<sup>80</sup> θύρας B, θήρας K

<sup>81</sup> οὐκ B, οὐχ K

<sup>82</sup> ἑαυτὸν B corr. ex ἑαυτῶ

<sup>83</sup> εὐχύρωτός B, εὐχείρωτός K

<sup>84</sup> ἐφίπταται B, ἐφίπτανται K

<sup>85</sup> ἐξήπτε B, ἐξήπται K

## Sources and parallel texts

**1) Ἰππηλάσια δὲ ἄρα καὶ κυνηγέσια:** Psellos, Chron. VII, 40 τὰ ἰππηλάσια ἀλλαξάμενοι, Manasses, Chron. v. 4271 τὰ φίλα κυνηγέσια καὶ τὰς ἰππηλασίας, Choniates, Hist. p. 333 καὶ ἦν ἰππηλάσια καὶ κυνηγέσια ζωγραφούμενα, Digenis Akrites G. IV.70 ἐντεῦθεν ἰππηλάσια καὶ κυνηγεῖν ποθήσας, Pantechnes (Miller), p. 48 τὸ κυνηγέσιον, p. 50 τὰ τῶν πτηνῶν κυνηγέσια; **ταῖς καρδίαις τέρψιν ἐνστάζει:** Manasses, De Aristandro (Mazal) fr. 64 Ὁ παῖς γὰρ Ἔρωσ εὐκραῶς, ὡς φασιν, ἐπιπνεύσας γάνος ἐνστάζει ταῖς ψυχαῖς, **ταῖς αἰσθήσεσι γάργαλον:** Lucianus, Gallus 6 τοιοῦτον γάργαλον παρείχετο μοι τὰ ὀρώμενα, Manasses, Chron. v. 4720 καὶ λιγυρὸν μουσικεῦμα γάργαλον ἀπορρέον. Plato, Phaedrus 253e5-7 ὅταν δ' οὖν ὁ ἡνίοχος ἰδῶν τὸ ἐρωτικὸν ὄμμα, πᾶσαν αἰσθήσει διαθερμήνας τὴν ψυχὴν, γαργαλισμοῦ τε καὶ πόθου κέντρων ὑποπλησθῆ; Choniates, Hist. p. 152 καὶ ὄν εἶχον γάργαλον ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ; **καλὰ μὲν ... καλὰ δέ:** Manasses, Ecphrasis terrae, l. 5-6; **νοσηματικὸν ἀποκρίνοντα:** Platon Rep. 407d.1 νόσημα ἀποκεκριμένον; **πρὸς τὰ πολέμια προεθίζουσιν:** Heliodorus, Aeth. 7.24.6 πρὸς τὴν βασιλικὴν διακονίαν πόρρωθεν προεθίζουσιν; **τῆς φάλαγγος προπηδᾶν:** Chrysostomus, PG 60, 19 οὐδὲ ἵππους προπηδᾶν τῆς βαλβίδος, Psellos, Chron. I.33.12 (=Anna Comnena, Alex. 7.3.7) οὐδενὶ προπηδᾶν ἐνετέλλετο, οὐδὲ τὸν συνασπισμὸν λύειν, Pantechnes, p. 50 ἐφ' ἧ μὴ δεῖ προπηδήσαντα; **τὴν ἐπευθὸν προπαιδεύοντα διώξιν:** Hippiatrica Cantabrigiensia (Hoppe - Oder) ch. 81.7: οὐ δύνανται ἐπευθὸν ποιήσασθαι τὸν περίπατον; **ἐπαρίστερα:** Psellos, Chron. VII.41.7-8 οὔτε ἐς αἰεὶ ἐπαρίστερα τὰ τέλη ταῖς δεξιάς ἀπαντῶσι ἀρχαῖς; **ἀνέτοις ῥυτῆρσι:** Cinnamus, Hist. p. 49.8 ὅλοις ῥυτῆρσιν ἐδίωκεν; **περιστομίους δεσμοῖς:** Orpianus, Hal. 3, 603 δεσμῶ δὲ περιστομίω; **πυρμιάλακτος:** Stilbes, Carmen de incendio 1.717 ὄξυ πυρμιάλακτον ἀφεῖσα βέλος, Manasses, De Aristandro (Mazal) fr. 102.4 ὡς πῶλος πυρμιάλακτον στόμιον ἀποπτύων.

**2) ἀνδρολέτειρα:** Aeschylus, Agam. 1465 Ἑλένην ... ὡς ἀνδρολέτειρα, Manasses, Epist. II.17: τὴν τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ἀνδρολέτειρα, Manasses, Schede (Polemia) 5.12: θεᾶν ἀνδρολέτειρα; **ἀσίδηρος:** Simocatta, Quaestiones physicae (Massa Positano) p. 12.7 πόλεμος τις ἀσίδηρος, Manasses, Ad Hagiotheodoritam, l. 82 βέλη ἀσίδηρα, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 6.5 et 116.2 βέλος ἐστὶν ἀσίδηρον, Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum (Kurtz) l. 51-2 βέλος ὀδύνης ... ἀσίδηρον; **λυθρόφυρτον:** Manasses, Chron. v. 2049 καὶ δόρατα γεγόνασι λυθρόφυρτα καὶ ξίφη et 3129, 3495, 5808; **φονοσταγῆς:** Manasses, Chron. v. 2050 ἀσπίδες αἰμοφόρुकτοι, φονοσταγῆς παλάμαι et 6465; **ἀχαρίτωτα** Manasses, Chron. v. 99 οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀχαρίτωτον οὐδ' ἀτελεὲς παρήχθη et 5450, 5712, Choniates, Hist. p. 115 οὐδ' ἀκαλλῆ τε καὶ ἀχαρίτωτον, Eustathius, Comm. ad Hom. Iliad. IV.417.22 ἀχάριστος, ἤγουν ἀχαρίτωτος; **ἀνέραστοι τοῦ καλοῦ:** Synesius Epist. 55.8 ἀνέραστοι τῶν καλῶν, Choniates, Hist. p. 649

οί τοῦ καλοῦ ἀνέραστοι οὗτοι βάρβαροι; **ἄχθος δυσάγκαλον:** Plutarchus, De facie in orbe lunae 923c1 ἄχθος οὐκ εὐάγκαλον, Manasses, Chron. v. 4492-3 ἄχθος, οὐ κοῦφον, οὐδ' εὐάγκαλον, οὐδ' ἐλαφρὸν βαστάσαι, Manasses, De Aristandro fr 72.3 δυοῖν δυσάγκαλον μεριζομένων ἄχθος; **δακέθυμον:** Gregorius Naz., Carmina de se ipso 1229.8 εἶ τινα καὶ δακέθυμον ἐρῶ λόγον, Manasses, Chron. v. 4803 καὶ λύπην μὲν δακέθυμον ἔσχε κατὰ καρδίας et 5369; **δόναξ ὑπολύριος:** Aristophanes, Ran. 232-3 ἔνεκα δόνακος, ὃν ὑπολύριον ἐνυδρον ἐν λίμναις τρέφω, Manasses, Ad Hagiotheodoritam lg 260 ὡς οἱ ὑπολύριοι δόνακες; **καχλάζοντα λέβητα:** Anna Comnena, Alexias 14.1.4 εἰς λέβητας ἐμβαλεῖν καχλάζοντας, Choniates, Hist. p. 481 διακεχαλακῶς καχλάζοντι λέβητι; **τὸ ἀνοιδοῦν καὶ τὸ φλεγμαιῖνον:** Oribasius, Coll.Med. 50.47.4 ἀνοιδούντων καὶ φλεγμαιόντων; **ἀκεσῶδνον:** Theophanis Continuatus p. 434.20 θλίψεων ἀκεσῶδνον φάρμακον, Manasses, Chron. v. 5289 φάρμακον ἀκεσῶδνον τοὺς λόγους ἐπιπάττων; **ἀνδροκτασίας:** Manasses, Chron. v. 480 σφαγὰς ἀνδροκτασίας τε φόνους, ἀκολασίας et 1336, 1414 etc.; **Ἄρεος φιλαίματος:** Anacreon Epigr. 7.226 ὁ φιλαίματος Ἄρης, Suda η 369 ὁ φιλαίματος Ἄρης, Manasses, Chron. v. 5220 καὶ πόλεμοι φιλαίματοι καὶ συνεχεῖς φροντίδες; **νέφος ἀθυμίας:** Chrysostomus, PG 47, 322 τῆς ἀθυμίας ἀποσείσασθαι νέφος, Psellus, Chron. IV.53.4-5 νέφος πάντας ἀθυμίας κατέσχε; **λαγίνας:** Manasses, Chron. v. 171 καὶ κύνες καρχαρόδοντες, πτηνόποδες λαγίνας et 6107, Choniates, Hist. p. 290 οἱ πτηνόποδες λαγίνας καὶ κύνες αἱ θηρευτικάι; **δειλοκαρδίον:** Manasses, Chron. v. 6467 ὡς εἶ τις λέων ἐντυχῶν δειλοκαρδίῳ ζῶῳ et 2004, 5960; **ἀλυσκάζουσαν:** Manasses, Chron. v. 6394 καὶ φεύγων οἶον τοὺς ἐχθροὺς καὶ μάχας ἀλυσκάζων.

**3) τὰ πτίλα ἐπιρροϊζοῦσι:** Manasses, Chron. v. 6394 στρουθοῖς ἀπαλοπτέρυξιν ἐπιρροϊζῶν τὰ πτίλα, Manasses, In Manuelem Comnenum (Kurtz) l. 40 ἐπιρροϊζήσας σου τοῖς πτεροῖς; **ἐλαφριζόμενοι:** Choniates, Hist. p. 123 καὶ πετροῦ αὐθις ἐλαφριζόμενος, Manasses, Ad Hagiotheodoritam, l. 76-7 καὶ ὑπὲρ πτερον ἐλαφρίζεται; **ἀποθειάζων:** Philostorgius, Hist. Eccl. 10.6.20 τοὺς δὲ λόγους αὐτοῦ πάντας ἀποθειάζων; **φυζακινή:** Homerus II.13.102 φυζακινόις ἐλάφοισιν εἰοίκεσαν, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 164.5 φυζακίνας πρὸς μάχας; **καρχαλέαν:** Homerus II.21.541 δίψη καρχαλέοι κεκοινήμενοι ἐκ πεδίοιο; **κυνῶν καρχάρων:** Homerus II.10.360 καρχαρόδοντε δύο κύνε, Manasses, Chron. v. 4403 οὐ τίγρις, οὐδὲ κάρχαρος οὐδὲ λυσσώδης κύων, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 30.15 τοῦτο καὶ κύων κάρχαρος et fr. 166.2; **δενδρίτιδος:** Manasses, Chron. v. 4350 καὶ κάμπαι τὰς δενδρίτιδας φυλλάδας ἀναλοῦσι; **ἀρουρίτιδος:** Manasses, In Manuelem Comnenum l. 135-6 καρπίζεται δὲ πολλὴν τὴν ἀρουρίτιν; **ὑπεραλλομένην:** Psellus, Chron. V.23.20-21 οὐδὲ τοῦ ἐδάφους ὑπεραλλόμενος, Choniates, Hist. p. 142 θηράτρων κούφως ὑπεραλλόμενος; **ἄγραν ἀλόξη:** Gregorius Naz., Carmina de se ipso 978.3 θηρὸς

ἀλύξει; **καταταχοῦντας**: Polybius, Hist. 15.9.10 ἐὰ δ' ἐκβιάζονται κατὰ τὴν τῶν θηρίων ἔφοδον, ἀποχωρεῖν, τοὺς μὲν καταταχοῦντας, Manasses, Chron. v. 5097 δεῖν ἔγνω προκαταλαβεῖν καὶ προκαταταχῆσαι et 5596 καὶ πρὸς τὴν μεγαλόπολιν καταταχῆσας φθάνει; **ἄνδρας φαρετροφόρους**: Aelianus, Varia Historia 12.43.1 Δαρεῖον ἀκούω τὸν Ὑστάσου φαρετροφόρον, Manasses, Chron. 3628: χρυσεοπήληκας, ἄβρους, πάντας φαρετροφόρους et 2207, 3192, 5416, Manasses, In Manuelem Comnenum I. 51 καὶ φαρετροφόρους; **νευροσπαδέσιν ἀτράκτοις**: Sophocles Phil. 290 νευροσπαδῆς ἄτρακτος, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 125.7 ἐπιτυχεῖς τε τίθησι νευροσπαδεῖς ἀτράκτους, Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum I. 103 τὸ κατὰ τοὺς νευροσπαδεῖς ἀτράκτους στοιχόν; **ἐκκόλυμβον**: Manasses, De Aristandro, fr. 69.4 καὶ τῶν κακῶν ἐκκόλυμβον οὐ δύναται γενέσθαι; **δόλον ἀρτύνουσι**: Eutecnius, Paraphrasis in Opp. Cyneg. (Tüselmann) 42.16-17 τοῦτο ... θεωρήσαντες τὸν δόλον ἀρτύνουσιν εὐθύς; **ἀλληλιμμένους ἰξῶ**: Geoponica 5.38.3 ἰξῶ ἐπαλείψομεν, Paraphrasis Dionysii (Garzya) 1.1.12 ἰξῶ τις ἐπαλείψας, Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 7.32 ἀλληλιμμένον θολῶ, Manasses, Ecphrasis de spinis (Horna), I. 87-88 ἰξῶ τοὺς λόγους ὑπῆλειφε, I. 184 ἰξὸν περιέχριον; **μελάμπτερος ψᾶρ**: Manasses, Chron., v. 258 οἱ ψᾶρες οἱ μελάμπτεροι τὸ πτίλον ἐπεσόβου, Manasses, Ecphrasis de spinis I. 193 μελάμπτερον τὸ περυγίον, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 47.1 ὀνειρῶν γὰρ τῶν σκοτεινῶν, τῶν μελανοπερυγῶν, Pantechnes, p. 48 φάλκωνες ... μελανόχροοι; **λάλος ἀκανθυλλίς**: Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 5.4 λάλος τις ἦν, Manasses, Ecphrasis de spinis, I. 61 λάλα στρουθία; **φυγγάνειν**: Sophocles, Electra 130-1 οὐ τί με φυγγάνει; **πυκνὰ πυκνά**: Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 6.27 καὶ πυκνὰ πυκνά; **τρέχοντα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς**: Manasses, Ecphrasis de spinis I. 108-9 οἷα τρέχουσα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς; **μαχαιρίδι**: Manasses, Chron. v. 157 τομὸν τὸ ράμφος ἔχοντες ὑπὲρ τὰς μαχαιρίδας, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 77.8 ὡς μαχαιρίδας; **κατὰ βόθρου**: Manasses, Ecphrasis de spinis I. 80-1 κατὰ βόθρου τινὸς ἠκοντίζετο, I. 165 ὃ τε βόθρος πεπλήρωτο; **κομμώτρια φύσις**: Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 8.14 τὴν κομμώτριαν φύσιν, Manasses, Ecphrasis terrae I. 98 (φύσις) ἐγὼ καὶ τῶν ἀνθέων κομμώτρια, Manasses, Ad Hagiotheodoritam I. 5 πολὺς δὲ τὴν κομμώτριαν φύσιν μιμήσασθαι; **παιδαριώδη ἀθύρματα**: Orpianus, Hal., 3, 619 ἅτε παῖδες ἀθύρμασι καγχαλόωντες, Gregorius Naz., Carmina moralia 844.6 παιδῶν ἀθύρματα, Chrysostomus, PG 57, 319 τὰ παιδικὰ ἀθύρματα, Anna Comnena, Alexias 15.3.1 ὡς παιδαρίων ἀθυρμάτων, Choniates, Hist. p. 509 τὰ μειρακιώδη ταῦτα ἀθύρματα, Manasses, In Manuelem Comnenum I. 90 νηπίους ἄθυρμα δέδωκας; **καττιτέρινα – χολοβάφινα**: Psellus, Orationes panegyricae (Dennis), no 4.350-351 καττιτερινὸς ἢ χολοβάφινος καὶ τὸ ὄλον ψευδόχρυσος, Manasses, Chron. v. 4693 καὶ χρῶμα χολοβάφινον βάμματι πορφυρέω, Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum I. 348-9 καὶ χολοβάφινα μὲν ὄντα, χρύσεια δὲ φιλοτιμούμενα φαίνεσθαι, Choniates, Hist. v. 189 τὴν χροίαν

χολοβάφινον, ‘οὐκ εὐσύμβολον τὸ χρῶμα τοῦτο’; **ἰθακησίων ... Ὅμηρος μέμνηται:** Homerus Od. 19, 429-31 βάν ρ’ ἴμεν ἐς θήρην, ἡμὲν κύνες ἡδὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ υἰέες Αὐτολόκου.

**4) ἄλουργίς:** Manasses, Chron. v. 4305 καὶ πάλιν ὁ μισόθεος φορεῖ τὴν ἄλουργίδα et 5516, 6410, Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum l. 98-9 ἄνθει κοσμουμένου τῆς ἄλουργίδος ἢ τὴν ἄλουργίδα καθωραΐζοντος; **γίγαντος χεῖρες:** Manasses, Ad Hagiotheodoritam l. 156-7 ἔργα γίγαντος ἥρωος τούτου τὰ ἔργα; **ἐφάλλεται:** Manasses, Ad Hagiotheodoritam lg. 23 οἱ καὶ ἀτάκτως τῶ ἀέρι ἐφάλλονται; **ἀγριοθύμοις:** Opprianus, Cyn. 2.103 ἄγραυλοι, σθεναροί, κερραλακές, ἀγριοθύμοι, Manasses, Chron. v. 3483 οὐκ ἀγριοθύμος ὀρμη βαρβάρου τοῦ χαγάνου et 3981, 4374; **σατράπας - χωράρχας:** Manasses, Chron. v. 927 ἔθνος τε πᾶν καὶ πάσης γῆς χωράρχαι καὶ σατράπαι et 603, 2499, 4153, 4298, 4951; **ἐπαλινόστησεν:** Manasses, Chron. v. 916 μόλις φυγῶν καὶ διαδράς αἰσχροῶς ἐπαλινόστει.

**5) περὶ φθίνουσαν τὴν ὀπώραν:** Eutecnius, Paraphrasis in Opp. 10.32.33 περὶ δέ γε φθίνουσαν ὀπώραν, Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 5-6 περὶ φθίνουσαν τὴν ὀπώραν; **κραύγασοι γέρανοι:** Choniates, Hist. p. 478 καὶ τοὺς πλείους δε κραυγᾶσους καὶ στασιώδεις, Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 4.10 κορώνη τῆ κραυγᾶσῳ, p. 5.30 ὄξυβόας σπίνος καὶ κραύγασος, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 40.1 ὀχλώδης γὰρ καὶ κραύγασος ἅπας ληστής καὶ ἀλός, Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum l. 361 οὐ κραύγασος ἦν; **δυσχειμέρον:** Apollonius, Argonautica 1.213 Θρήκης δυσχειμέρου, Theophanis Continuatio p. 61.9 καὶ τῆς Θράκης τῶν ἄλλων οὔσης δυσχειμέρου, Manasses, Chron. v. 6353 πέλαγος γὰρ δυσχειμέρον ὑπήνοιγε τὸ στόμα, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 165.4 οὐ πέλαγος δυσχειμέρον; **χιονόβλητον:** Aristophanes, Nub. 270 εἶτ’ ἐπ’ Ὀλύμπου κορυφαῖς ἱεραῖς χιονοβλήτοισι κάθησθε, Arrianus, Hist. Indica 6.7-8 ἄλλως τε οὐδὲ χιονόβλητα εἶη ἂν τὰ Αἰθιοπῶν ὄρεα ὑπὸ καύματος.

**6) ἐπεστοιβάζετο:** Nicetas Heracl., Comm. XVI orat. Gregorii Naz. 61 ἄλλα ἐπ’ ἄλλοις ἐπεστοιβάζετο εἰς ὕψος; **τοὺς Πέρσας τοὺς σαγηνεύοντας πόλεις ἢ ἱστορία φησίν:** Herodotus, Hist. 3.149.2 τὴν δὲ Σάμιον σαγηνεύσαντες οἱ Πέρσαι et passim; **τοὺς εὐζώνους τῶν ὀπλιτῶν:** Anna Comnena, Alexias 15.3.6 εὐζώνους στρατιώτας; **βάδην πως καὶ σχολαίως:** Pantechnes p. 49 σχολαίως καὶ βάδην; **σκυλάκια:** Pantechnes p. 48 et 50 τοῖς σκυλάξι ... σκυλάκων σάινουρα, τὰ τῶν σκυλάκων κυνηγέσια, Manasses, Chron. v. 4402 οὐχ οὕτως ἀγριαίνεται κατὰ τῶν σκυλακίων et 4027, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 36.7 κἄν σκυλακίου, κἄν ἀνδρός; **ἀελλόποδας:** Manasses, Chron. v. 3999 ἵπων ὠκέων ἐπιβάς πτηνῶν ἀελλόποδων; **πτηνόποδας:** Manasses, Chron. v. 171 καὶ κύνες καρχαρόδοντες, πτηνόποδες λαγῖναι, Choniates, Hist. p. 290 οἱ πτηνόποδες

λαγίναι καὶ κύνες αἱ θηρευτικά; **γαμψώνυχας καὶ ἀγκυλοχειλάς:** Alciphron, Epistulae 3.23.3 ἐξαίφνης δὲ ἐπιπτόντα μοι γαμψώνυχα καὶ μέγαν ἀετόν, γοργὸν τὸ βλέμμα καὶ ἀγκυλοχειλὴν τὸ στόμα; Pantechnes p. 48 ἐρωδιοὶ τε γαμψώνυχες, Manasses, Chron. v. 155 οἱ μὲν μεγαλοπτέρυγες, μεγαλαγκυλοχειλαί; **ἐπαρήξοντες:** Agathias, Hist. 139.7-8 καὶ ἐξ δύναμιν ἐπαρήξαντες, Choniates, Hist. p. 92 καὶ τὴν ἀπουσίαν ἀρπάζειν τοῦ ἐπαρήξαντος et 371, 639; **ὄτι μὴ δὲ ἑλλήνια:** Manasses, Ad Hagiotheodoritam l. 1 λόγος οὗτος ἑλλήνιος, Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum l. 127-8 παραρτυτέον ... καὶ τι ἑλλήνιον; **οἱ ... θεαταὶ τῆς ἄγρας:** Pantechnes p. 48 καὶ θεαταὶ τούτοις εἶποντο; Μενεσθέας: Homerus, Il 2.552 et passim, Manasses, Chron. v. 1230 ἦν Μενεσθεύς ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν; **γοργότης:** Xenophon, De re equestri 1.10.2-3 καὶ γοργότερον τὸν ἵππον ἀποδεικνύουσιν, Pantechnes p. 50 γοργὸν τὸ πτερόν; **δραστικῶν δορυφόρων:** Nicetas David Paphlagon, Laudatio Danielis (Halkin), p. 5.20 ὡσπερ δορυφόροι πιστότατοι καὶ δραστκώτατοι; **ἀπειλητήρσι:** Homerus, Il 7.96 ὦ μοι ἀπειλητήρες Ἀχαιῖδες οὐκετ' Ἀχαιοί, Eustathius, Comm. ad Hom. Il. I.780 ὁ ἀλαζῶν καὶ ὁ ἀπειλητὴρ βαρὺ βέμειν λέγονται; **ἀριπρεπεῖς:** Manasses, Chron. v. 1234 ἀριπρεπεῖς, διογενεῖς, ἀρεϊκοί, γεννάδαι; **μεγαλογενῶν:** Manasses, Chron. v. 6554 εἰς δὲ τις μεγαλογενῆς καὶ τῶν ἐκ πρώτης ρίζης.

7) **χειρίδας:** Homerus, Od. 24.230 χειρῖδας τ' ἐπὶ χερσὶ βάτων ἔνεκ'; **περιαμπίσχοσι:** Agathias, Hist. p. 46.17-18 οἱ δὲ καὶ σκυτῖνας διαζωννύμενοι τοῖς σκέλεσι περιαμπίσχονται; **πυράγραν:** Lucianus, Dial. Deor. 8.4 ἄρτι τὴν πυράγραν ἀποτεθειμένον, Manasses, Chron. v. 520 ὡς ἀποτρέψαιτο λιμοῦ τὴν φθαρτικὴν πυράγραν; **γαμψώνυχον:** Manasses, Chron. v. 156 γαμψώνυχες, ὡς βέλεμα τοὺς ὄνυχας αὐχοῦντες, Choniates, Hist., p. 308 γαμψώνυχες ὄρνιθες; **παλαιόχρονον:** Manasses, Chron. v. 5959 καὶ ταῦτα παλαιόχρονος πέμπελος ὢν τριγέρον; **τῶν ὀνύχων τούτων ἀκμαί:** Pantechnes p. 50 τὰς τῶν ὀνύχων ἀκμάς; ἀπόβλεπτον: Eustathius, Comm. ad Hom. Il. 1.393.11 ἀπόβλεπτον τοῖς θεωμένοις οὕτω ποιεῖν; **θρέπτειρα:** Orprianus, Hal. 5.336 γαῖα, φίλη θρέπτειρα, Manasses, Chron., v. 30 καὶ γῆν τὴν παντοθρέπτειραν; **ἄγχουρον:** Lycorhron, Alexandra 418 Ἀψυνθίων ἄγχουρος ἠδὲ Βιστόνων; **παρωκεανίτην:** Polybius, Hist. 34.5.6 τὴν παρωκεανίτην τῆς Εὐρώπης ἀπὸ Γαδείρων, Stephanus, Ethnica 259.4.20 Ἐβόρα, πόλις παρωκεανίτις μετὰ τὰ Γάδαιρα; **πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα ἥλιον:** Paraphrasis Dionysii (Garzya), p. 203.13 καὶ πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα τὸν ἥλιον; **πανδεξίους:** Manasses, Chron. v. 2073 πρὸ χρόνου τὸν πανδεξίον, κρατήσαντ' ἔτη δύο; **ἀεροπόρους:** Manasses, Chron. v. 2758 ἀεροπόρους πτέρυγας ἰδίας ἠπλωκότα, Manasses, Ad Hagiotheodoritam, l. 266-7 καθάπερ ἀεροπόροις ὀρνέοις ἐπιβουλαί; **ἐμπειρομάχους:** Cinnamus, Hist. 71.6 Προσοῦχ ἀνδρὶ ἐμπειρομάχῳ.

**8) κεχίονωτο:** Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 7.24 κεχίονωτό οί τὸ ράμφος, Manasses, Ecphrasis de spinis l. 195-6 ὅσον ὑποπύγιον, κεχίονωτο, Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum l. 202 ἤδη κεχιονωμένος τὸ τρίχωμα, Pantechnes, p. 48 τὰ πτίλα χιονώδη τὰ πλείω; **μεμελάνωτο:** Chrysostomus, PG 60, 728 ποῦ τὸ κάλλος τοῦ προσώπου; ἰδοῦ μεμελάνωται; **ἀγκύλον τὸ ράμφος:** Lucianus, Dial. Deor. 10.1 οὐκέτι ράμφος ἀγκύλον ἔχοντα; τομὸν τὸ ράμφος ὑπὲρ τὰς μαχαίριδας; Manasses, Chron., v. 157 τομὸν τὸ ράμφος ἔχοντες ὑπὲρ τὰς μαχαίριδας; **λελεύκαντο:** Cinnamus, Hist. 205.12 λελεύκονται δὲ ὑπὲρ χιόνα, Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 8 λελεύκαντό οί τὸ σκέλος; **θαψίνη:** Aristophanes, Vesp. 1413 γυναικὶ κλητεύεις εἰκοῦς θαψίνη, Plutarchus, Phoc. 28.5 θάψινον ἀντὶ φοινικοῦ χρῶμα, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 174.18 καὶ θάψινος τὴν χρόαν, Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum lg. 23 θαψίνην τινὰ καὶ νεκράδῃ χροίαν; **γοργὸν τὸ ὄμμα... ἄρρενωπότητα:** Manasses, Ad Hagiotheodoritam, l. 29-30 τὸ βλέμμα γοργόν, ἄρρενωπὸν καὶ αὐτό; **ὑπόκιρρος:** Manasses, Chron. v. 74 κυαναγωγίης, πορφύρεος, ὑπόκιρρος ἑτέρα, Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 7.25 τὸ μὲν ὑπόκιρρον ἦν καὶ τὸ κιρρὸν ὑπεχρύσιζε, Manasses, Ecphrasis terrae, l. 130 τὸ λέπος ὑπόκιρροι; **καπνηρότερον:** Choniates, Hist. p. 51 οὔτε μὲν ἄγαν καπνηρός, ὡς οἱ πολὺν τὸν ἥλιον ἐπὶ τοῦ προσώπου δεξάμενοι, Manasses, Ecphrasis terrae, l. 12 πρόσωπον καπνηρόν, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 106.2 καὶ καπνηρότης ὄψεων et fr. 174.9; **μελανίας σταλάγματα:** Sophocles, Antig. v. 1239 φοινίου σταλάγατος, Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum l. 109 σταλάγματα χρυσέα; **χρῶζόμενα:** Choniates, Hist. p. 362 φοινικοῦν χρῶζόμενα, Eustathius, Comm. ad Hom. Il. 1.483.2 χρῶζόμενα διόλου κατὰ πελαργούς; **ζώστροις** Homerus, Od. 6.38 ζώστρά τε καὶ πέπλους καὶ ῥήγεια σιγαλόεντα; **ἐπάκμους ὄνυχας:** Dioscorides, De materia medica 1.90.1 ἐπάκμους ἔχει τὰς ἀκάνθας, Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 8.10 τοὺς πλείονας τῶν ὀνύχων καὶ ἐπάκμους διέσφωζεν; **ὑπὲρ βέλη ἠκόνηστο:** Manasses, Ad Hagiotheodoritam, lig. 58-9 ὑπὲρ ξίφος ἠκονημένην; **ἀμύσσειν:** Eustathius, Comm. ad Hom. Il. 1.148.15: ἀμύσσειν δὲ κυρίως τὸ ξεῖν, ὡς καὶ αἶμα ρύϊσκεσθαι; **στερεμνιώτερον:** Manasses, Chron. v. 1918 καλλίπυργον πεποίηκα λιθίνην στερεμνίαν et 2944, 5364; **φλοῦς:** Eustathius, Comm. ad Hom. Il. 1.147.30-31 συναيرهθὲν γίνεται φλοῦς; **λάχνη:** Homerus, Il. 2.219 φοξὸς ἔην κεφαλὴν, ψεδνὴ δ' ἐπενήνοθε λάχνη et passim, Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 4.18 τὴν λάχνην αὐτοῦ διαδαίρων τοῖς ὄνυξι; **πεπύκασται:** Atheneaus, Deipn. 2, 2.52.10-11 (=Xenophanes, fr. 1.12) βωμός δ' ἄνθεσιν ἂν τὸ μέσον πάντη πεπύκασται; **παλαιγενής:** Manasses, Chron. v. 5183 ἀντικρὺς ἐστὶν ἀετὸς παλαιγενῆς τριγέρων et 924, 6569.

**9) ἀντιπалаμᾶσθαι:** Manasses, Ecphrasis hominis, l. 7-8 τοὺς ταῖς γεράνοις ἀντιπалаμωμένους Πυγμαίους, Anna Comnena, Alexias, 2.9.1 μηδ' ἀντιπалаμᾶσθαι δυνάμενος; **κοιτάζονται:** Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 7.16

ἔνθα ὁ στρουθὸς ἐκοιτάζετο, Manasses, Monodia in Theodoram (Kurtz) l. 116 ποῦ κοιτάζει; Manasses, Ecphrasis hominis, l. 3 ἐν καλαθίσκῳ κοιτάζεσθαι; **μαστιζόντας**: Manasses, In Manuelem Comnenum l. 59-60 τὸν ἀέρα μαστίζων κινήσεσι; **ταρσοῖς**: Lucianus, Herc. 8.4-5 πτερύγων ταρσοῖς παραπετέσθω, Eriphanus, Ancoratus 84.4 καὶ ταρσοῖς ἰδίους τὰ στήθη τὰ ἑαυτοῦ μαστίζας πολλά, Photius, Lexikon tau 569 ταρσοῖς: πτεροῖς ἄκροις; **ἐπινώτιον πτέρωμα**: Choniatas, Hist. p. 558 τὴν ἐπινώτιον τρίχα, Manasses, Monodia in Obitum p. 8.2 τὸ δὲ ἐπινώτιον πτέρωμα, De spinis l. 192 τὸ ἐπινώτιον ἅπαν ὑπόκιρρον; **ποικιλόπτεροι καὶ κατάστικτοι**: Euripides, Hipp. v. 1269-70 ὁ ποικιλόπτερος, Pantechnes, p. 48 ἰέρακες ποικιλόδειροι ... οὕτω κατάστικτα, Tzetzes, Hist. II.845 τὸν ξενοποικιλόπτερον τὸν κολοῖον ἐκείνον; **ὑπεπύρριξε**: Dioscorides, De re medica 2.146.1 ἐκ μέρους δὲ ὑποπυρρίζοντα, Atheneaus, Deipn. 2, 1.142.11-12 οἱ μὲν γὰρ μέλανες, οἱ δὲ ὑποπυρρίζοντες; **χαλαζώματα**: Manasses, Chron. v. 259 καὶ χαλαζώματά τινα λευκότητος ἐφόρου, Manasses, Monodia in Theodoram l. 100-1 κατὰ τῶν προσώπων φέρουσι χαλαζώματα συμφορῶν, Manasses, Consolatio ad Joannem Contostephanum l. 208 καὶ τραυμάτων ἕφαρες ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ χαλαζώματα; **νεακονήτους**: Sophocles, Elec. v. 1394 νεακονήτον αἶμα χειροῖν ἔχων et Scholia in Soph. Elec. 1394 νεακονήτον αἶμα, τὸ ξίφος τὸ ἠκονισμένον; **πετασμούς**: Manasses, Chron. v. 152 εἶχον ἐλεύθερον πτερόν εἰς πετασμούς συντόνους et 6432; **πολεμησεῖιν**: Photius, Lexicon pi 438 (=Souda pi 1881) πολεμησεῖιν· πολεμητικῶς ἔχειν; **περιέχασκον τὸν ἀέρα**: Tattius, Leucippe, 2.22.4 τὸν ἀέρα περιέχασκεν; **θηκτόν**: Souda theta 330 θηκτόν· ἠκονισμένον, Christus patiens v. 492 μὴ θηκτόν ὥση φάσγανον δι' ἥπατος.

**10) μόθον**: Homerus, Il 7.240 οἶδα δ' ἐπαίξαι μόθον ἵππων ὠκειῶν et passim, Hesychius, Lexicon kappa 1271 κατὰ μόθον· κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον; **ἐνυάλιον**: Homerus, Il. 210-211 Ἄρης δεινὸς ἐνυάλιος, Timarion (Romano) l. 187 ἄνδρες Ἄρεος ἐνυάλιοιο, Manasses, Chron. v. 5914 ἡ σάλπιγξ ἐνυάλιον καὶ μάχιμον ὑπήγει et 5897, 6531; **κέλαδον ἐνυάλιον**: Heliodorus, Aethiop. I.3.1.3 οὐδὲ τὸν ἐνυάλιον ἐνιοὶ κέλαδον ἀνασχόμενοι; **σιδηροθώρακες**: Scholia in Odysseam 286.4 χαλκοχιτώνων· σιδηροθωράκων; **γεράνων κλαγγαζουσῶν**: Pollux, Onomasticon 5.89.1 κλαγγάζειν δὲ γεράνους, Chrysostomus, PG 61, 763 καὶ πᾶν ὀρνίθων χορός, ἀνά τὸν αἰθέρα πετώμενος, ταῖς μελωδίαις κλαγγάζει, Paraphrasis Dionysii (Garzya) p. 227.6-7 τῶν μεγίστων κλαγγανόντων γεράνων; **ἐνυάλιον**: Manasses, In Manuelem Comnenum l. 180 πρὶν σαλπῖσαι τὸ ἐνυάλιον; **κλέπτειν τὴν νίκην**: Plutarchus, Alex. 31.12 οὐ κλέπτω τὴν νίκην, Malalas, Hist. 18.44 ἵνα μὴ νομισθῶμεν κλέπτειν τὴν νίκην καὶ δόλω περιγίνεσθαι τοῦ πολέμου, Bryennius, Hist. 4, 5 ἐβούλετο γὰρ αὐτοῦ μὴν πολεμίων ἐφοδεῦειν ἔφοδον καὶ τὴν νίκην κλέπτειν; **ἀναπτᾶσαι**: Apollodorus, Bibliotheca 2.42.6-7 αἰ δὲ Γοργόνες ἐκ τῆς κοίτης ἀναπτᾶσαι τὸν Περσέα ἐδίω-



κον; **γευόμενοι τοῦ λωτοῦ**: Homerus, Od. 9.84 sq; **γάνος ... τῆ ψυχῆ**: Manasses, De Aristandro, fr. 64 γάνος ἐνστάζει ταῖς ψυχαῖς; Tzetzes, Epistulae, no 19, p. 35.3 τῆ ψυχῆ θελκτήριον γάνος ἐνέσταξεν **ἐρυμνά**: Manasses, Chron. v. 3120 ἐντεῦθεν ὑπερίσχυσε τῶν ἐρυμνῶν φρουρίων et 3638; **φλόγεος**: Manasses, Chron. v. 1124 βλέπειν γὰρ ἔδοξε δαλὸν φλόγεον ἀνθρακίαν; **φαλαγγηδὸν ἀρτύναντες**: Homerus, Il. 12.43 οἱ δέ τε πυργηδὸν σφέας αὐτοὺς ἀρτύναντες et 13.152; **πρεσβυτικὸς, ἂν εἶπε τις, Νέστωρ**: cf. Theodori Lascari Epist. p. 112.5-6 τῆ τοῦ ἵππικοῦ Νέστορος παιδεία τὴν ἵππικὴν ἀσκήσοντες.

**11) ἀντοφθαλμεῖν οὐ τολμῶεν**: Acta Apostolorum 27.15.2 καὶ μὴ δυναμένου ἀντοφθαλμεῖν. cf. etiam Polybius, Hist. 3.14.9 πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἀντοφθαλμεῖν ἐτόλμα; **ὠγύγιόν τι γρῆμα**: Photius, Lexicon omega 658 ὠγύγια κακά ... ὠγύγιον· ἀρχαῖον, παλαιὸν ἢ ὑπερμέγεθες, Manasses, In Manuelem Comnenum I. 102 ὑπερωμίας τις ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὠγύγιος ἀτεχνῶς; **ὀρθιάσαντες**: Manasses, Ecephrasis de spinis I. 127 ἀλλ' ὀρθιάσας αὐτόν, Nic. Choniates, Orat. no 8, 82.26 πρὸς τὰ παρηγούμενα ὀρθιάσαντες; **μακροκόντια**: Eugenianus, De Drosilla (Conca) V, v. 398 Ἄραβες εἰργάσαντο μακροκοντίαι; **Μέμνονα ... ἢ Τιθόντην ὁ Τελαμώνιος**: cf. Malalas, Hist. V.27; **ἔδρυπτε τὸ προστέρνιον**: Orprianus, Cyneg. 3.214 δρυπτομένην ἀπαλὴν τε παρηΐδα; **δολιχόδειρον**: Aelius Herodianus, Partitiones 23.9-10 δολιχόδειρος γέρανος, ἢ μοκροτράχηλος, Choniates, Hist. p. 116 τὴν δολιχόδειρον καὶ καλλίσφυρον Λάκαιναν et 559, 652, Pantechnes p. 49 ταῖς ἀκωκαῖς καταδρύπτουσι; **ἐξ ἀντιπάλου τῆς μοίρας ... ὁ ἀγὼν**: Procopius, De bellis 2.3.52 οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ ἐξ ἀντιπάλου ἡμῖν τῆς δυνάμεως ὁ ἀγὼν ἔσται, Suda α 2699 ἀντίπαλον: τρία σημαίνει· τὸ ἐναντίον καὶ τὸ ἰσόπαλον καὶ τὸ ἰσόστροφον. οὐ γὰρ ἐξ ἀντιπάλου τῆς δυνάμεως ὁ ἀγὼν ἔσται, Psellus, Orat. Paneg. no 1, 64 οὐτ' ἀντιθέειν ἐξ ἀντιπάλου μοίρας ἠνέσχετο; **ἀνεμοτρεφῆ**: Homerus Il. 11.256 ἀλλ' ἐπόρουσε Κόωνι ἔχων ἀνεμοτρεφὲς ἔγχος, Manasses, Chron. v. 5363 φυτὸν γὰρ ἀνεμοτρεφὲς καὶ γυμνασθὲν ἀνέμοις; **μείλινα δόρατα**: Homerus, Il. 13.715 οὐδ' ἔχον ἀσπίδας εὐκύλους καὶ μείλινα δούρα et passim, Choniates, Hist. p. 305 : μετὰ δοράτων μελίνων.

**12) ροιζήμασιν**: Aristophanes, Av. 1182 ῥύμη τε καὶ πτεροῖσι καὶ ροιζήμασιν, Eutecnius, Paraphrasis in Opp. Cyneg. 36.10 τῶν πτερῶν τῷ ροιζήματι, Pantechnes p. 49 ἄνωθεν γὰρ ροιζηδὸν οἱ φάλκωνες καταπτερουσόμενοι... ὁ ροιζὸς τῆς πτήσεως; **παταγήματα**: Photius, Lexicon pi 402 : πατάγημα· ἀντίπαλος καὶ πανοῦργος; **θούριος**: Homerus Il.5.29 et passim θοῦρον Ἄρηα, Aeschylus, Pers. 718 θούριος Ξέρξης, Sophocles, Ajax 212 θούριος Αἴας, Héphaestion, Enchiridion de metris 18.10 θούριος μολῶν Ἄρης; **δειρῆν**: Rufus, De corpori 61.1 μετὰ δὲ τὴν κεφαλὴν, τράχηλος· τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ καὶ δειρῆ καὶ ἀσχήν, Orprianus, Cyneg. 1.406 δειρῆ μηκεδανῆ, Manasses, Chron., v. 1166 δειρῆ μακρά, κατάλευκος; **κερατοζῶος**: Nonnus, Dionysiaca 3.76: οὐς Κρονίη κερατοζῶος

εὔρατο τέχνη; **ὀλιγηπελέοντα:** Homerus, Od. 19.356 ὀλιγοπελέουσα περ ἔμπης; **τερψίθυρον ... θέαμα:** Michael Glycas, Annales p. 21.16 θέαμά τι τερψίθυρον; **θελξικάρδιον:** Manasses, Chron. v. 311 ἔφκει θελξικάρδιον γλυκυθυμίαν στάζειν; **τανταλούμενον:** Soph. Antig. 134 : ἀντιτύπα δ' ἐπὶ γὰ πέσε τανταλωθεῖς, Manasses, Hist. 3522 καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐκκυλισθεῖς τάλας ἐτανταλώθη; **περίθερμος:** Manasses, Chron. v. 5977 καὶ σφαδαρμοῖς σωματικοῖς περιθερμαιομένη.

**13) προῦμμάτων ὁ θάνατος:** Lycophron, Alexandra v. 82 προῦμμάτων δεδορότες et v. 251, Prodromus, Catomyomachia v. 18 προῦμμάτων ἴδοιμεν οἰκείων μόρον; **σκυλακευθησομένους:** Manasses, Vita Orpiani v. 18 καὶ σκυλακεύων τὸν υἱὸν ἐς τὰς ὁμοίας θήρας; **κερδαλεώτερον:** Manasses, Chron. v. 2552 πολλῶ κερδαλεώτερον τὸ πάρεργον εὐρίσκει, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 122.3 πολλῶ κερδαλεώτερος μεγαλοπόνου βίου; **Προμηθεύς:** cf. Aeschylus, Prom. 1021-1025; **περιδρύψεων:** Homerus, Il. 23.395 ἀγκώνάς τε περιδρύφθη, Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum l. 609-10 ἂν σὺ περιδρύπτῃς τὰς παρειάς.

**14) ὄξυ τὸ ράμφος:** Manasses, Ecphrasis de spinis l. 192 ράμφος ὄξυ καὶ λεπτόν; **σπερμοφάγον:** Sextus Ermiricus, Pyrr. 1.56.4 τὰ δὲ σπερμοφάγα τὰ δὲ σαρκοφάγα, Eustathius, De capta Thess., p. 104.21 οἷς χαίρουσιν οἱ τῶν ὀρνίθων σπερμοφάγοι; **εὐρυχανής:** Orpianus, Halieut. 3.344 γαστήρ τ' εὐρυχανής, Eutecnius, Paraphrasis in Orp. Cyneg. 15.32 τὸ στόμα εὐρυχανής τε καὶ κάρχαρος, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 74.3 εὐρυχανές οὐκ ἦνοιξαν οἱ πειρασμοὶ τὸ στόμα; **ὑακινθίνων:** Homerus, Od. 6.231 οὐλας ἦκε κόμας, ὑακινθίνω ἄνθει ὁμοίας, Apocalypsis Ioanni 9.17.3 θώρακας πυρίνους καὶ ὑακινθίνους καὶ θειώδεις; **ὄρμιάν:** Orpianus, Halieut. 5.354 μείονες ὄρμιαι, μείων γένος ἀγκίστροιο ; **ποντοβάμονας:** Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 147.1 τὸ ποντοβᾶμον ζῶον.

**15) ἐπιτερπές:** Manasses, Ad Nicephorum Comnenum, l. 11 ἐπιτερπές δὲ καὶ χάριεν et l. 334 τὴν ιδέαν ἐπιτερπῆς; **βρεχμόν - κύμβαχος:** Homerus, Il. 5.586 ἔκπεσε δίφρου κύμβαχος ἐν κόνιῃσιν ἐπὶ βρεχμόν καὶ ὦμος, Manasses, Chron. v. 4953 καὶ κύμβαχος κατέπεσεν ἐπὶ βρεχμόν καὶ νῶτα, et v. 5521, Manasses, De Aristandro fr. 78.3 καὶ καταβάλλει κύμβαχον ἐπὶ βρεγμόν, ἐπ' ὦμος, Manasses, Ecphrasis terrae, lig. 179-80 οἷα κύμβαχος ἔπεσε; **κατάρραξι:** Anonymus, Peri tōn tessarōn merōn tou teleiou logou 3.580.1 τῶν ἐπίπτων κατάρραξις; **ζώπυρον:** Manasses, Chron. v. 395 ὡς σπέρμα χρηματίσαιεν καὶ ζώπυρον τοῦ γένους.

## Constantine Manasses, *Description of a crane hunt*

1. Horse racing and hunting and other such things that men have invented do not contribute only to exercise and the strengthening of the body, they also instill pleasure in the hearts and a tickling to the senses.<sup>1</sup> For they are good because they keep men from illness, rejecting anything causing disease and contributing to what supports life, but they are also good because they accustom men for war, teaching them to ride, attack, and keep the ranks, and preparing them for the direct pursuit as well as that from the left or from right, training them when to yield to the horses and encourage them to run with relaxed reins and when to pressure them and hold them with bridles made by iron softened by fire.

2. All this would be, as one might say<sup>2</sup>, an exercise in moderate things, as a reminder of greater things; this is a battle without deaths, an Ares unarmed who does not have his right hand covered by blood, nor a spear drenched in murder.<sup>3</sup> These and other such activities are accordingly good and only for those who do not love beauty are they without grace or unwanted; they are in fact graceful, because they relieve the insufferable burden of the soul and drive away what eats the heart and expel what brings sorrow. And just like what the Pythagoreans say, namely that the kithara that sounds a melody and the reed that supports the lyre when blown<sup>4</sup> and any other string or wind instrument drive the heart to

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<sup>1</sup> The verb ἐνστάζει ('instills') belongs to medical vocabulary; Manasses wants to underline, throughout this paragraph, the therapeutic aspect of hunting.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ioannes Doxapatres, *Prolegomena in Aphthonii progymnasmata* (ed. Rabe) 143,15-17: Ὅρίζονται τοίνυν τὸ μὲν καθολικὸν προγύμνασμα οὕτως ἑπιπρογύμνασμα ἔστιν ἄσκησις μετρίων πρὸς μειζόνων ἐπίρρωσιν πραγμάτων.

<sup>3</sup> The rhetorical image of Ares unarmed (Ἄρης ἀσίδηρος) might echo the playful activities which the soldiers would engage in at the court of Manuel I in times of peace; see, for the same period, *Anacharsis ou Ananias* 1152 (Christidis): Ἄρης ἐκεῖ τελεῖται ἄδακρυς καὶ ἀσίδηρος; see also Ἄρης ἀνάμακτος in the description of a tournament, on which Schreiner 1976.

<sup>4</sup> The ὑπολύριοι δόνακες are drawn from Aristophanes, *Ranae* 232-3, employed by Manasses also in the *Encomium of Michael Hagiotheodorites* 253-60 (Horna). According to Pollux, *Onomasticon* 4.62 (Bethe), these reeds used to be placed on (under?) lyres instead of horns: καὶ δόνακα δὲ τίνα ὑπολύριον οἱ κωμικοὶ ὠνόμαζον, ὡς

anger and make it like a pot that boils over and then again calm down and soften and reduce the swelling and sooth the inflammation like a bandage allaying pain<sup>5</sup> – the same thing can also be observed in hunting. For it resembles the carrying of arms, the killing of men, the thudding of shields, and the blood-thirsty Ares, and it drives away any cloud of faintheartedness and produces rays of pleasure, but nobody could have such a piercing distress in his heart that it would not be healed upon seeing a doe hare with a coward heart appear, being hunted and fleeing from running dogs.

3. I myself, being present at a crane hunt, being filled with the sight of them and seeing how birds with such small bodies make a rustling sound with their wings and, while flying lightly into the air, bring down those long-legged birds to the ground, had my soul filled with immense pleasure and, while praising also for other reasons the blessed nature, I admired also this part, that she armed small-bodied animals with superior strength and added in vigor what she had removed in size.

Indeed, I have also seen a running doe being pursued and running out breath from the hunt and driven by thirst and sticking out her tongue to taste the fresh air, being hunted by both men and dogs with sharp teeth, jumping over the thickets and leaping across the woods and ascending towards the fields, sometimes even entrusting herself to lakes in order to escape the chase, and plunging into the sea like marine animals, while the dogs accelerated and the quiver-bearing men followed and with arrows ready to fly made the poor animal swim.<sup>6</sup> I have also seen captured

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πάλαι ἀντὶ κεράτων ὑποτιθέμενον ταῖς λύραις. Written in the second century, this explanation is likely to be imaginative rather than technically correct, and it seems likely that Manasses uses the expression as a metonym for pleasant, ancient-sounding music, but here curiously as a wind instrument. On musical instruments in Byzantium, see Maliaras 2007.

<sup>5</sup> We have not been able to identify the exact source of this theory. On the Pythagorean idea of music as the perfect union of contradictions or opposites, see Theon of Smyrna, *On mathematics useful for the understanding of Plato* 12.10-12 (Hiller).

<sup>6</sup> On this kind of hunt in ancient and late antique sources, see Xenophon, *Cynegeticon* 9.20 and Dio Chrysostom, *The Euboean discourse* 7.3-4. See also Linant de Bellefonds 2006.

goldfinches and siskins and chaffinches<sup>7</sup> and all those shortwinged birds for which twigs covered in sweet bay prepare a trap, projecting unnatural branches and holding out twigs smeared with glue.<sup>8</sup> Once<sup>9</sup> I also rejoiced at a starling with black wings and a singing goldfinch and the chattering siskin and other such birds, held by twigs covered in glue, wanting to escape and fluttering their wings, but prevented by those fluid bonds and with hearts beating in their chests, as if fighting for their lives, they were caught and pierced by a small knife and thrown in a basket, but some were kept alive, those to whom embellishing nature had given more abundant beauty.

But for me, the crane hunt is so much more pleasurable than all those other hunt as much the cranes with their long necks are superior to goldfinches and siskins, as much the falcons are more efficient than the twigs covered in glue, and as much children's plays are inferior to men's sports. And whoever would think another hunt to be superior will be viewed as doing the same thing as the one who prefers copper coins to silver coins and plated coins to golden ones.<sup>10</sup> What I have seen must thus be given to writing; for what prevents me from indulging in this

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<sup>7</sup> The text speaks of three kinds of birds: ἀκανθυλλίδα, σπίνου, ἀστρογλήνου; however, ἀκανθυλλίδα and ἀστρογλήνου seem to indicate the same bird: the chaffinch or *aigithalus pendulinus*; see Koukoules 1952, 399-400, esp. n. 7. For Manasses, the use of different names seems to have rather the function of stylistic variety; see also Nilsson 2021 (forthcoming). The chaffinch, the goldfinch and other small birds appear frequently in Manasses' works; see esp. the *Monody on the death of his goldfinch* (Horna 1902).

<sup>8</sup> A description of this kind of hunt appears in Manasses' *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches* (Horna 1905). See also Garzya 1995, 231.6-11 for a catalogue of birds caught with lime: καὶ ἰξῶ μὲν αἰροῦνται κορύδαλοι καὶ οἱ ταχεῖς ἀστραγαλῖνοι οἱ τε ἀμπελιῶνες οἱ κουφότατοι καὶ οἱ ἄσθηνεῖς βουδῦται οἱ τε βαρίται καὶ αἱ σῶδες καὶ σπῖνοι καὶ τρυγόνες καὶ ἀστέρες, οἷς ἐρυθρός τε κύκλος ἐστίν, ὥσπερ ἀστήρ, ἐπὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ. Καὶ οὗτοι μὲν ἅμα τοῖς ἄλλοις στρουθίοις τοῖς κατὰ τὸν βορρᾶν ἐπιδημοῦσι τοῦ ἀέρος ἰξῶ θηρῶνται, τοῖς καλάμοις ἐπικαθίσαντες.

<sup>9</sup> Possible reference to the *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches*, which may have been written before the *Description of a crane hunt*. The image that follows is a development of the preceding phrase.

<sup>10</sup> Crane hunting is the most prestigious kind of hunt, because it is not carried out by means of glue (like the socially less valued hunting of small birds) but with the help of falcons.

even by describing it, when Homer himself offered an account of the hunt of Ithacian men?<sup>11</sup>

4. Once, the triumphant emperor went hunting, he whom purple had brought to birth and whose purple robe proclaimed his breed,<sup>12</sup> whom wisdom and bravery and intelligence and the entire catalogue of graces embraced and breastfed and offered milk of myriads of virtues. His hands are the hands of a giant, his heart is a chamber of prudence, his soul is protected by the hands of God—his mind is elevated and lofty, close to rivalling the minds of angels.<sup>13</sup> His hunting and exercise appears to aim at pleasure and relaxation, but in truth they lead to victories and trophies and the arrangement of important affairs and the preservation of the rule of Romans. Like a lion's cub, even in his sleep he keeps watch with the eyes of his soul, sees, guards, and catches; he guards against the attempt of attacking enemies and leaps with ferocious eyes without their anticipating his charge.<sup>14</sup> Like an eagle, he moves his wings of profound judgment and, by rustling his feathered plumage of high counsel,<sup>15</sup> he terrifies entire herds of enemies. So, when once he seemed to go hunting wild animals, he returned having pursued foreign satraps, having captured foreign rulers.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Homer, *Od.* 19.429-31.

<sup>12</sup> ἀλουργίς: a purple robe, metonymy of royalty. Cf. *Souda*, π 1064: ἀλουργίς δὲ ἡ πορφύρα.

<sup>13</sup> The manuscripts have ἐν σώματι, accepted by Kurtz, but it seems to make no sense in the context. Manasses wishes to underline the unwordly, nearly divine nature of Manuel.

<sup>14</sup> Note the elliptic syntax and effects of alliteration: προφυλάττεται, ἐφάπτεται, φυλάττεται, ἐφάλλεται.

<sup>15</sup> Manasses here uses the verb περιρροζήσας, while previously he used ἐπιρροζοῦσι (3); he seems to be using the two verbs as synonyms.

<sup>16</sup> This is an allusion to an occasion at which Manuel was hunting during a military campaign that led to victory and the captivity of enemies; either the campaign of 1148 against the Cumans, when Manuel, during a hunt, found out about the enemy attack and organized a counterattack which led to the victory of the Byzantines (Kinnamos, *Hist.* 3.3 [Meineke]) or the campaign of 1159 in Antioch, when Manuel, during a hunt, was ambushed by the enemies (Kinnamos, *Hist.* 4.21 [Meineke]).

5. So he went out hunting, and I too followed to observe the pleasure of the hunt. It was towards the end of the autumn,<sup>17</sup> the time when the screaming cranes leave a wintry Thrace covered in snow and depart for Libya and Egypt and their sunny skies, as if to found a colony. The hunt was organized in the following manner.

6. On all sides, a crowd was advancing, overflowing and spreading out over most of the plain. One held on to the other and attached himself to the other and thus the crowd became dense, as history says about the Persians who in the past surrounded the cities.<sup>18</sup> In the middle rode the emperor gently,<sup>19</sup> without hurrying, without frequently spurring his horse and without inciting him to gallop. Some men were sent there as light-armed foot soldiers and carried bows and quivers; others had only daggers fastened to their belts. Some men brought small dogs with good sense of smell, some of which were carried on the backs of horses<sup>20</sup> while others were tried by the hardship of the walk; other men brought with them fast-running dogs with winged feet.<sup>21</sup> Others had falcons with crooked talons and hooked beaks; some were only a year old, having just separated from their shells, while others, who had been stripped of their plumage several times and regained it, profited from their seniority and, for this reason, were counted among the most sought after and worthy of praise. Still others carried with them birds, killers of cranes and ducks (I do not know the names of these animals, for they are not Greek).<sup>22</sup> More men followed to help the hunters, others only to be spec-

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<sup>17</sup> The time for crane hunting was November. Here, too, we have made a correction of the manuscript and the Kurtz edition by replacing *ἐπί* with *περί*. The construction *ἐπι φθίνουσας τὴν ὀπώραν* does not appear anywhere else and is probably a mistake of the copyist.

<sup>18</sup> Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.149.2.

<sup>19</sup> The phrase *βάδην πῶς* literally translates “as if on foot”.

<sup>20</sup> Animals for the hunt (some dogs, but also panthers) were transported on the backs of horses. For panthers, see Pantechnes, *Ekphrasis* 50 (Miller): *ἔφερον τὰς παρδάλεις οἱ τούτων παρδαλαγωγοὶ ἐφ’ οἷς ὠχούντο θαλαδίας ἵπποις*. The word *σκυλάκια* is used by Xenophon to indicate small dogs; *Cynegeticon* 7.1-7.

<sup>21</sup> On dogs and canine terminology in Byzantium, see Rhoby 2018.

<sup>22</sup> Manasses avoids details by refusing to use non-Greek names. Pantechnes is more precise when it comes to birds of prey (see the introduction above). On different names of birds used for hunting in Byzantium, see Koukoules 1952, 396.

tators of the hunt. All marched in order and in silence and as Homer described Menestheas who arranged the Greeks for battles.<sup>23</sup> If a rebel impulse spurred someone or the rashness and speed of a horse made him jump to the front of the lines of the phalanx, one of the vigilant imperial guards cut off his movement by using menacing words and sent him back; sometimes the guard used a stick, when he saw that the words had no effect. Without complaining and quickly they returned to order,<sup>24</sup> fearing the keeper of the order<sup>25</sup> and taking care not to disturb the ritual of the hunt.<sup>26</sup> Around the emperor were some distinguished men who displayed illustrious signs of their highborn blood.

7. The emperor himself also carried a falcon on his wrist; here follows its description. Leather specialists take the skin of an animal and make gloves, creating leather fingers and a cuff, and cover with that the fingers, the wrist and part of the arm to protect them from the intensity of the cold<sup>27</sup> and from the tears caused by birds with crooked talons (for the tips of these talons are able to bite the flesh). Both hands of the emperor were covered by such gloves, and on his left hand sat a falcon, which was not of the common type and easy to get, but an old and noble falcon, capable of daring also large animals, a falcon admired for its grandeur and beauty, but even more blessed than that because it was carried by the hand of an emperor – and by what an emperor! This magnanimous falcon was from Iberia, which gives birth to and nurture many such birds; I am not talking about Iberia which is next to Gadeira, the one which borders on the ocean, the one which is opposite Africa and which is dominated by the Spanish, installed in Lusitania,<sup>28</sup> but of the one in the

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<sup>23</sup> Homer, *Il.* 2.552.

<sup>24</sup> The manuscript has οὐ συμπόνῳ, corrected by Kurtz to οὐ σὺν πόνῳ. On the significance of careful order during a hunt, see also Maurice, *Strategicon* 12 D.29-35 (Dennis & Gammilscheg): εἰ γε διὰ ἀταξίαν τινὰ διαλοθῆι τὸ κυνήγιον, ἐπιτιμίῳ σωφρονισθήσεται ἐκεῖνος, δι' οὗ ἀποφεύγειν τοῦτο δυνατῆι.

<sup>25</sup> τῆς τάξεως φροντιστῆν: the word does not indicate any official function in the organization of the hunt.

<sup>26</sup> Manasses speaks of the ritual of the hunt in order to underline the repetition of such hunting expeditions.

<sup>27</sup> Metaphorical image of piercing and biting cold (τοῦ κρύου πύραγρον).

<sup>28</sup> Λυσσιτανίαν: Manasses prefers Λυσσιτανίαν, following Strabo (*Geographica* 3.3.3: Τοῦ δὲ



East, that which is towards the rising of the sun, that which is traversed by the great Phasis and that the ancient inhabitants of Colchis enjoyed.<sup>29</sup> The falcons arrive without having been trained in hunting in their homeland, but – ignorant and uneducated – it is the emperor who takes them on and teaches them their many skills. For he does not only know how to educate and enlighten men, but he also trains fast-flying birds to murder in the sky and makes them great warriors in this respect.

**8.** The falcon was not completely white as snow, nor exactly black. Its beak was hooked and sharper than razors; nature rewarded carnivorous birds with such beaks. Its head was neither white nor black, but of a rather sallow and ashy colour. It had sparkling eyes, lively eyes that revealed the virility of its heart; the circle around the eyebrow was yellowish. The neck was neither thick nor long, just like its legs were not long. The feathers on its back were rather ashy in the colour that is called not exactly black, while the inner part of the plumage was largely white (this is how the oldest among the birds usually are); in some places it also had black spots, neither uneven, nor disorderly and irregular, but having the form and colour of successive lines that encircled its belly and part of the chest. Each foot was yellowish, neither long nor fleshy, but formed of thick and bony parts, capable of supporting the weight of such a body. The ankle was flat, suitable for such feet. There were three toes in the front part, revealing pointed and sharp talons, and another toe in the back or rear part; this latter fulfilled a similar need for the body that the thumb does for the human hand, but it was sharper than a razor and more pointed than an arrow. The strength and sharpness of the talons was such that not only they could tear up a duck, a crane or another winged creature, but also cut and rip up the skin of bulls, wild boars and antelopes and all those whose hide is dense and whose skin is covered

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Τάγου τὰ πρὸς τὸν ἄρκτον ἢ Λουσιτανία ἐστὶ μέγιστον τῶν Ἰβηρικῶν ἐθνῶν καὶ πλείστοις χρόνοις ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων πολεμηθέν), to Λουσιτανία of Stephanus of Byzantium, *Ethnica* λ 89 (Billerbeck).

<sup>29</sup> See also *Digenis Akritis* G 4.905 (Jeffreys): χιονίδασι ἰέρακασι δώδεκα Ἀβασγίταις; Niketas Choniates, *History* 251 (van Dieten): ἰέραξ τοῦ θηρεύειν ἐθάς, λευκὸς τὴν πτίλωσιν. On these rare falcons in the Arabic tradition, see above, introduction, and Viré 1965, 262.

in abundant hair. Such was this old female falcon with plumage largely white that the emperor carried on his wrist.<sup>30</sup>

**9.** Several others also carried animal-killing birds; some of these could quickly overtake the read-beaked partridges, others could fight the ducks that love in water, others yet could see from up high the does, either they were hiding in the bushes or dancing in the plains, and flying towards the ground they whipped with their wings the front of those miserable hares, cut up their skin with their talons and tore up the rest of their bodies. The Greek language does not know the names of these warrior creatures.<sup>31</sup> Some were deep black in colour on the head and on the feathered back, others had mottled and spotted wings which in some places had reddish feathers and in other places had black specks. All these birds, however, were valiant, courageous, breathing murder and their spirit was visibly installed in their eyes; and their beaks were even more sharp and pointed – recently sharpened knives, one would say. They frequently turned their eyes in all directions, spread out their wings, were impatient to fight and imagined the birds<sup>32</sup> they would attack, they opened their beaks in the air and could not stand the jesses,<sup>33</sup> they exposed their talons sharp as iron, like brave soldiers who hear the sound calling them to war<sup>34</sup>.

**10.** The tambourine of the hunt had already sounded and given off a great noise, indistinct and savage, as if to provoke the cranes for fight and make their souls waver; one would call this a warlike din that iron-armoured men emit when they do not want to steal the victory<sup>35</sup> or

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. *Digenis Akritis* E 754 (Jeffreys): και ἐβάσταζαν γεράκια ἄσπρα ἐκ τοῦς μουτάτους.

<sup>31</sup> Manasses repeats himself; cf. 7: οὐκ οἶδα τὰ τῶν ζῴων ὀνόματα, ὅτι μὴ δὲ ἑλλήνια.

<sup>32</sup> ὄρν(ε)ις / ὄρνιθας: Manasses uses both ὄρνι- et ὄρνιθ-, so that the we encounter in the same text ὄρνις (poetic form instead of ὄρνεις) / ὄρνιθες for the nominative plural and ὄρνις / ὄρνιθας for the accusative plural. This variety of form does not seem to bother the author.

<sup>33</sup> On these leashes used to control the birds of prey, see Koukoules 1952, 397.

<sup>34</sup> βοῆς πολεμιστηρίας ἀκούοντες: cf. Manasses, *Chronicle* 5954 οὐδὲ τῆς σάλπιγγος βοῆς τῆς πολεμιστηρίας. Also: Aristophanes, *Acharnenses* 573 βοῆς ἤκουσα πολεμιστηρίας;

<sup>35</sup> The manuscript has μὴ κλέπτειν τὴν νύκτα, but the correction of Kurtz to μὴ κλέπτειν τὴν νίκην gives a better sense to the phrase. That said, it is possible that Manasses

even attack the enemy without declaring war. When the piercing cries of the cranes was heard and the cranes arrayed and organized themselves, one inciting the other to line up and make the phalanx dense, it was exactly then that I saw and wondered at the laws of the hunt and I rejoiced like those who taste the lotus and the event instilled pleasure in my soul<sup>36</sup>. The spectacle proceeded as follows. The emperor divided his company into four groups, so that they would surround and approach the cranes from four sides. He let that old falcon of his be at rest, stay out of the battle and far from war; instead he took another bird<sup>37</sup> (and he allowed the others to do the same), of another breed but capable of fighting cranes, and he moved to a most convenient place, as do those who in war take up strongholds in advance, and watched the cranes fly. This bird sitting on the emperor's wrist was very strong, had a fiery heart, was of venerable age, experienced in a thousand killings and trained in several Olympiads of this kind – an old Nestor,<sup>38</sup> one would say, who instructed his own breed in the killing of cranes. The birds of the other participants were young novices, coated with only little blood of animal

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alludes to nocturnal hunting (cf. Delobette 2005, 281, 288 and 290) or that he refers to Anna Komnene, who describes how her father, using a hunting trick, “stole the night” to deceive the Scythians; *Alexiad* 7.9.2: “As the space between the two armies happened to be rather small, he dared not allow the trumpet to sound the alert (ἐνυάλιον σάλπιγγα), for he wanted to take the enemy by surprise. The man in charge of the imperial falcons, one Constantine, was summoned and told to obtain a drum (τύμπανον) in the evening; all night long he was to walk round the camp beating his drum (τύπτειν δι’ ὅλης νυκτός), warning all to be ready because at sunrise the emperor planned to do battle with the Scythians and there would be no trumpet call.” The text by Manasses has several words in common with Anna’s (τύμπανον, ἐνυάλιον, νυκτός) along with a similar tone, which could indicate an intertextual play on the part of Manasses. The expression κλέπτειν τὴν νίκην, on the other hand, is linked to Alexander the Great in the form of a maxim; see e.g. *Florilegium sacro-profanum* (Sargologos): Ἀλεξάνδρου βασιλέως· Οὗτος παρακαλούμενος ὑπὸ τῶν φίλων νυκτός ἐπιθέσθαι τοῖς πολεμίοις, εἶπεν· οὐ βασιλικόν ἐστιν κλέπτειν τὴν νίκην.

<sup>36</sup> καὶ γάνος μοι τὸ πρῆγμα ἐνέσταζε τῇ ψυχῇ: Cf. above ἐνστάζει καὶ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσι γάργαλον.

<sup>37</sup> Manasses makes a clear distinction between the imperial falcon (ιέραξ) and the other bird of prey (ὄρνις). The first does not take part in the combat.

<sup>38</sup> πρεσβυτικὸς Νέστωρ: a proverbial expression that indicates the intelligence of experienced men.

enemies; but they were excited, flapped their wings, they were irritated and each of them wanted to fly off first and had the grimmest gaze for making war, was agitated and resumed its innate spirit; but they were held back, even unwillingly, and waited for the champion bird to make the first move, since he was the most distinguished fighter.

**11.** The cranes sensed war, and lining up and placing themselves in a phalanx, they backed away, like men who would neither dare to face the enemies in front of them nor rise up against them. They stretched out their wings, an almost gigantic<sup>39</sup> thing that looked like a large shield, and after having straightened their necks like long spears and prepared the talons attached to their feet, they were ready to receive the attackers and defend themselves with beaks, talons and wings. When the old and experienced bird of prey was launched and, flying lightly into the depths of the sky, overtook the cranes and caught them in their flight, a joy mingled with fear took possession of the spectators and the part that was afraid felt joy and the part that rejoiced withdrew by fear.<sup>40</sup> Such was the pleasure and at the same time the fear for the fate of that bird of prey! He turned against the whole flock and full of anger attacked them in the middle, and he isolated one of the cranes, like Ajax son of Telamon facing Memnon or Tithon;<sup>41</sup> he held her firmly, whipped her ribs, tore up her chest, brought his beak to her neck, clawed with his talons and did everything to throw to the ground the crane with giant legs and long neck. But the crowd of cranes, not remaining indifferent to the fate of the one in danger, rose up against the enemy bird, surrounded him and were ready to show courage and defend the crane in trouble, like good soldiers who come to help a companion in distress and run the risk for their comrades of the same race. Thus, nature has attributed mutual love

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<sup>39</sup> ὠγύγιόν τι χρῆμα: the word ὠγύγιον, an adjective derived from the name of the son of Cadmus, Ωγύγος or Ωγύγης, indicates something very old and very large.

<sup>40</sup> Manasses wishes to describe the contradictory feelings (fear and joy) experienced by the spectators. For a similar technique, see Manasses, *Description of the Earth* 151-163 (Lampsides) and Theodore Prodromos/ Constantine Manasses, *Sketches of the mouse* 15-23 (Papademitriou).

<sup>41</sup> Manasses alludes to a story of the Trojan cycle, preserved by Malalas, *History* 5.27 (Thurn), according to which Ajax confronted in combat Memnon, king of Indians, and Tithon, an ally of Priam who brought him Indian cavalry and Phoenicians as support.

not only to humans, but also to winged creatures that roam the air; rather, she rebukes humans by the example of animals for their lack of solidarity. The cranes defended themselves against the bird of prey, attacked him and pushed him back (they found it shameful that so many cranes should be overtaken by a single bird) and the war spread. And here came the misfortunes and the hearts of the spectators were beating for fear that the combat would not end justly; for the bird of prey, abandoned in the middle of the cranes, almost died badly, turning his wings to flight and suffering more pain than causing it – he was being bitten and attacked by a myriad of cranes. Their necks were like spears fed by the wind and made of ash wood, and their beaks were projected like spearheads that successfully pierced the bird of prey.

**12.** But it happened that the anxiety was resolved and the crowd of cranes lost the comrade in arms who belonged to the flock.<sup>42</sup> A man mounted on a horse (his horse was all white) made a little tour with the horse and thus gave signal to those who transported the hunting birds, ordering that they be released to go and help the bird of prey in danger. When these birds, which had long felt the urge to fly, were freed, the bird of prey that had started the battle took courage, seeing the auxiliary army. War broke out and the animals started an aerial battle, with crying and whirring they attached each other and everything indicated that the war would go on for a long time. A confused and thundering noise filled the air, the rattling of wings resounded in the ears and a rushing Ares<sup>43</sup> fell madly upon both armies. Some wanted to exercise violence, others sought to repel it; some hastened to harm the flock; others did everything to defend it; some tried to detach themselves and aim at them, others worked hard to save their comrade and not give up the victory. They continuously pierced each other and were pierced. Some wanted to rescue the bird of prey that was attacked, others lined up against the allies and counterattacked. That great was the battle between the two armies and the courage that armed them<sup>44</sup>. Finally, the

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<sup>42</sup> This refers to the crane that was first attacked.

<sup>43</sup> θεούριος Ἄρης: Homeric image of Ares (e.g. *Il.* 5.29), but in the case of Homer, the adjective form is θεῶριος.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Homer, *Iliad* 2,195 as well as 7,25 and 21,395. Cf. also Manasses, *Chronicle* 6453:

cranes fled and, abandoning their comrade to the enemies, took off. The bird-killers fought with even more ardour and pressed the cranes; these were afraid and each escaped where its wing took it. The bird of prey that had started the battle, when he captured the long-necked crane he no longer wanted to let go, but he bent the elongated neck, held it tight and twisted it in the way that someone who works with horn creates an arc; after a fierce battle, he brought down with him the crane which had already resigned to the exhausting and breathless fight. And one could see a pleasant spectacle that rejoiced the heart: a long-legged and long-necked crane to be brought down by a small bird, as if struck by lightning from the sky<sup>45</sup> and hurled from the clouds. For an enormous body volume cannot save anyone, but an ardent heart and a virile soul bring victory under such circumstances, because such bloody exercises sharpen the animals and bring them to bravery.<sup>46</sup>

**13.** As the crane was captured, death was before her eyes and the danger seemed inevitable; however, death was not simple or such that would bring an easy end – rather, a multitude of evils awaited the poor crane. First they cut off with razors the ends of its talons and made the beak less sharp so that it could not prevent future combatants, having lost the weapons provided by nature. She was then set free to fly and they released many other birds inexperienced in crane killing so that they would harass, tear with their beak, taste the blood and the flesh and be trained in such things. The birds of prey continually beat the miserable crane with their wings, pierced and bit her; and this they had as a security for their future: that they would gain such a salary if they ever fight courageously warrior cranes. The miserable crane had become the entertainment and laughing stock of all, like a soldier with his hands tied behind his back, deprived of his arms and given over to small children like

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μέγας ἐφόπλιζε θυμὸς ἄμφω τὰς στραταρχίας.

<sup>45</sup> *τανταλούμενον*: the verb *τανταλόομαι/οὔμαι* means to be struck by lightning like Tantalus.

<sup>46</sup> ἀλλὰ καρδία περίθερμος καὶ ἀρρενωπότης ψυχῆς {ὥς} ἐν τοῖς τοιοῦτοις τὸ κράτος ἀγχοῦσιν, ὅποια βαφαὶ στομοῦσαι τὰ ζῶα καὶ εἰς ἀνδρείαν ἀπαίρουσαι – a rather confused sentence. We propose to remove the ὥς of the manuscript (kept by Kurtz) but to keep the ὅποια (corrected by Kurtz to ὅποια).

a toy.<sup>47</sup> She suffered and fought fiercely to defend herself, but she was, even against her will, accepting the tearing, for she had lost all means of defense. What was going on was a majestic game that at the same time initiated the birds into the battling of cranes. When it seemed that the games had lasted long enough and the poor crane was pierced not just in the sides, like Prometheus, and in the wings, but all over her body, death that relieves pain was immediately imposed on her, a death much more advantageous and desired than the tearing and injuring.

**14.** The crane was larger than geese. Its beak was sharp, for the animal feeds on seeds and not flesh. The neck was long, slender was the neck, just as the leg was long and the body stretched up high. The throat was wide-mouthed.<sup>48</sup> Most of the plumage had the uncertain colour of hyacinths, or rather like ashes, but some of the feathers were of a deep black. It had a broad wing, a long tail, a black thigh, a thigh a cubit long; its leg was extended and straight and it was elongated and extended just like the neck; its foot was very wide, having really sharp talons. A crane could compete in height with a small child. If it were obliged to lower its neck towards the ground, one would have the impression of seeing a fishing line of twisted flax that draws from the depths of the sea fish that swim in the sea. Most of the times the cranes are defeated and learn from their own misfortunes, battling with these valiant hunting birds. Sometimes, however, the cranes prevail and the crane-murdering bird does not have the time to fly and, approaching the talons of a faster crane, loses its soul at a stroke, since cranes are often very skilled and very strong.

**15.** This is how it happened with the hunt, which was pleasant and at the same time not wearisome. The hunting of deer and hares is exhausting and the capturing of animals is not easy and without pain. Both the horse chasing them becomes short of breath, tires and feels pain in his

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<sup>47</sup> On military crimes and humiliating treatment of failing soldiers, see Koliai 1997; on various forms of public humiliation in Byzantium, see Messis (forthcoming).

<sup>48</sup> Manasses uses the word εὐρυχανής (as he does in his novel), while in other texts he uses figuratively the word εὐρυχανδής which has the same meaning: *Origins of Oppian* 23 (Colonna) ἦν ἀμφικλύζει πέλαγος εὐρυχανδῆς Ἄνδριου; *Description of the Cyclops* 60 (Sternbach): τὸ στόμα εὐρυχανδῆς.

lungs, and the man must follow the chase, is forced to run and suffers in the shoulders, hands, hips and buttocks; there are times, when Dike, the goddess of the hunt<sup>49</sup>, is annoyed and the horse falls and also his rider falls to the ground, head first, forehead and shoulders forward, and the hunt ends with this great misfortune. But crane hunting (perhaps it is even unnecessary to say), is so easy, so effortless and, as they say, safe and easy! For the hunting birds fly and fight and everything depends on them, while the men stand there gaping at the sky and the clouds without being able to help the birds in their aerial combats and just wait for the enemy to fall from the sky. I have described what I have seen, for me as a vivid reminder of the event and for others as a lifelike representation of what they have not seen.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> In the proverbial expression Ἄρτεμις Ἀγροαία, Manasses replaces Ἄρτεμις with Δίκη; this could be to neutralize or Christianize the citation, but more likely to create variation.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Manasses, *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches* 206-207 (Horna): τῷ ξεναγῶ χαριζόμενος καὶ ἑμαυτῷ περισώζων τὴν τῶν θεαμάτων ἀνάμνησιν.



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# Byzantium now – contested territory or excluded middle?

*Averil Cameron*

**A**mong Lennart Rydén’s publications, his study of the seventh-century *Life of Symeon the Fool* by Leontius of Neapolis opened many windows to me when I was first discovering the complications and complexities of Byzantine texts and encountered this important writer from Byzantine Cyprus. Nothing was to be taken at face value, and things were not likely to be as they seemed – this was a lesson that sat well for me with the scepticism I had learnt as a student of ancient history at Oxford. The present paper, originating as the 2018 Rydén lecture, given at the Swedish Collegium in Uppsala,<sup>1</sup> falls into two parts, “Contested territory” and “Excluded middle”; both can be taken as arguments against Byzantine exceptionalism.<sup>2</sup>

## **Contested territory**

In the past one could be unselfconscious about Byzantium. It was there for the taking, even if only a few took it up, and its outlines were pretty clear. It was different from the classical world, it had a long political history, it was associated with gold, glitter, court intrigue and decline, and it had a definite end in 1453.<sup>3</sup> For many people, and especially for

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<sup>1</sup> I am very grateful to Ingela Nilsson and her colleagues for the invitation and for her generosity in organizing and hosting a stay that included a lecture by my colleague Peter Frankopan at the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, a panel discussion after my lecture, with Björn Wittrock, Ingela Nilsson, Peter Frankopan and Olof Heilo, and the launch of two new publications.

<sup>2</sup> Which is defended in outspoken terms by Treadgold 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Sjösvärd 2014 on Yeats, especially “Sailing to Byzantium” (1926) and “Byzantium” (1930); Ekdawi 1996 and Jeffreys 2015 on Cavafy; Cameron 2014a.

anyone fascinated by Orthodoxy, it still has that appeal. Seen in this way, Byzantium was also somewhat reassuring – it seemed like a definable clear-cut entity, not classical and probably not medieval either. But now uncertainty seems to have taken over. It is striking how often one finds the words “lost”, “vanished” or “forgotten” in reference to Byzantium in books or in titles.<sup>4</sup> It can only be a matter of time before there is a volume on Byzantium in the publication series *Lost Civilizations* by Reaktion Books. This terminology is all the more surprising when in fact Byzantine studies are thriving as perhaps never before, with new approaches opening up in many different areas.

But Byzantium is also a dream, a subject of the imagination, or, as it was described recently by an Orthodox priest on Twitter, an icon, like Jerusalem: he even added: “the historical reality is in many ways secondary”.<sup>5</sup> How do we historians and scholars deal with that? A recent conference on the reception of Byzantium with several speakers from Sweden had the title: “Byzantium and the Modern Imagination”. Its subject was Byzantium and modernism, but Byzantium is also being re-imagined today. A special issue of the journal *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* in 2016 addressed the question of how scholarship on Byzantium had changed in the forty years since its founding, and Byzantinists now, like scholars in other fields, are asking themselves serious questions about methodology and theoretical approaches.

At least among scholars of the subject the familiar conception of Byzantine writing as hopelessly tedious and imitative has long gone, and indeed Uppsala is now at the forefront of new approaches in literary studies.<sup>6</sup> In relation to Byzantium, literary analyses (and art historical ones too) have been carried far beyond the positivist approaches that used to be standard, despite the obvious obstacle presented by the fact that Byzantine texts are written in a language few can understand, and which is often extremely and even perversely obscure. Even Byzantine

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<sup>4</sup> Davies 2011; Wells 2006; Nilsson & Stephenson (eds) 2014; Harris 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. Kristian Akselberg (@Miklegard11-12h), Norway.

<sup>6</sup> Take for instance the papers in the 2017 volume of the present journal, with five articles relating to the theme of narrative and verisimilitude in Byzantium, and the recently published Messis, Mullett & Nilsson (eds) 2018.

textual criticism is being rescued from the scorn of previous generations of classicists. More and more accessible translations of Byzantine texts are being published and new series are beginning. Companions and handbooks to Byzantine studies also proliferate; they make Byzantium far more accessible than it used to be, and at the very least they tell us that publishers think there is a potential readership. The numbers attending conferences continue to grow, alongside the international congresses for which potential host nations compete sharply with each other, in the style of the World Cup or the Eurovision Song Contest (dramatic scenes have taken place at recent international meetings where the decisions were made). Yet when I wrote in 2008 of an absence of Byzantium in wider historical and intellectual discourse, the argument clearly struck a chord, and the responses occupied the pages of the relevant journal for many months afterwards.<sup>7</sup>

Byzantine studies does not stand alone, any more than other academic disciplines, and is inevitably affected by what is happening in historical and literary studies on a wider scale. I want to set out here some current developments that impinge on Byzantine studies but at the same time present challenges to it.

Some calls have been made already for a redefinition of Byzantine studies, along lines that might make it more appealing at a time when humanities research in general is perceived to be under some threat.<sup>8</sup> The question is in which direction should the discipline go – Should it look towards global history? Does it belong in a long late antiquity? Does it face east or west? Was Byzantium a Mediterranean empire, or a kind of commonwealth? Such questioning of the definition of Byzantium and its place in the present intellectual landscape and the medieval world, and the desire of Byzantinists to rise to the challenges they present are signs of a discipline at a very vigorous stage of development. Debates and disagreements about the definition of Byzantium are signs of life. At the same time, while scholars in some parts of the field, and especially in the fields of Byzantine literature and visual art, are highly innovative, and clearly demonstrate the vitality of new approaches and

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<sup>7</sup> Cameron 2008; 2014a.

<sup>8</sup> Neil 2017.

exciting analyses, other areas, including history, have yet to catch up. Why is this so, and is it possible to aim for a more integrated approach?

Let us begin with literary studies, where scholars are currently leading the way with an explosion of new approaches and ground-breaking originality. Orality, performance, narrativity, fictionality, appropriation (in place of the familiar concept of imitation or *mimesis*) are all ways in which literary scholars are now approaching Byzantine texts. The reading of hagiography has undergone a sea change,<sup>9</sup> and with it the uses to which it can be put by historians, and the high literature of middle Byzantium has benefited most from a trend that began especially from the “novels” of the twelfth century and later. These new approaches to high literature are unlocking a body of material that has seemed forbiddingly alien and difficult – obscure for the sake of obscurity and entirely internal in its reference and its projected audience, and only accessible even in its own day to the few contemporaries who had received the right educational skills and belonged to the same small competitive world of Byzantine *litterati* as the author. In the case of Michael Psellos, the eleventh-century polymath, even the editor of his *Letters* and other specialists of great experience admit that deciphering the meaning of some of his works is sometimes beyond them, so obscure are their phraseology, language and sentence structure.<sup>10</sup> It is not surprising if many have found this literature off-putting. But positions, preferment and status within the elite of Constantinople depended on skill shown in this complex artistic production, which was judged by audiences better able than we are today to distinguish what counted then for real talent. It is essential to find better ways of understanding literature, audience and society.

We are now experiencing a real upsurge of innovative scholarship, especially on the output of the tenth to twelfth centuries. Its literary production in poetry and prose has been partially revealed by several key publications in recent years,<sup>11</sup> and opens up huge vistas and a wealth of material still largely unstudied. The high literature of this period, ending

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<sup>9</sup> See Efthymiades (ed.) 2011; 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Papaioannou (forthcoming); Lauxtermann & Jeffreys 2017.

<sup>11</sup> Including Bernard 2014; Bernard & Demoen (eds) 2012; Papaioannou (forthcoming).

in the disaster for Byzantium brought by the Fourth Crusade and the sack of Constantinople in 1204, offers extraordinarily rich possibilities for new kinds of interpretative scholarship. While the old certainty saw classical literature as self-evidently superior, and Byzantine literature as derivative, tedious and unoriginal, the fact that we no longer inhabit a world in which the classics hold unquestioned dominance, brings some new possibilities with it. Indeed, despite the enormous role played by classical literature in Byzantium, later Byzantine writing in fact developed out of the literature of the Second Sophistic and late antiquity (or, if one prefers it, the early Byzantine period), and this too is experiencing a rethink, emerging as a literature of elaboration, fragmentation and referentiality.<sup>12</sup> Greek writers from late antiquity, including poets like Nonnus and others previously dismissed as inferior and dreary are now seen to exemplify these trends (three recent conferences on Nonnus alone). These are all features that can also be seen in late antique visual art. Some scholars see this taste for obscurity and cleverness, combined with the appropriation of earlier styles and texts, as an aesthetic of decadence, perceptible in the Latin literature of late antiquity as well as the Greek. But decadence is of course exactly the frame within which Byzantium has been trapped, and I doubt that such terminology is helpful. But the liveliness of this discussion, and especially its willingness to bring aesthetics onto the agenda,<sup>13</sup> has some pointers for Byzantium too.

And is this literature late antique, or is it Byzantine? I believe it is a mistake to separate late antiquity from Byzantium. Without falling into the trap of arguing for simple continuity, we gain from taking a longer view. The concept of decadence<sup>14</sup> suggests an end and a decline; it smacks of the superior viewpoint of a traditional classicist (I write as one who was originally a classicist myself); the reality was a process that saw steadily increased value placed on referentiality and complexity, and on the specifics of a high linguistic register. This move towards

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<sup>12</sup> Formisano 2018; Elsner & Hernández Lobato (eds) 2017; cf. Roberts 1989.

<sup>13</sup> Long out of vogue as a subject of critical analysis, aesthetics is making a comeback: see Spingou (forthcoming); Barber & Papaioannou (eds) 2017; Schibille 2014; sensory experience: Ashbrook Harvey & Mullett (eds) 2017.

<sup>14</sup> Adopted by Jeffreys 2015 in relation to Cavafy's Byzantium.



the characteristics of a Byzantine literary production that continued developing for centuries is exactly what needs exploring. In the case of one specific literary form, the philosophical dialogue, as I have argued, the advantages of this longer perspective are clear; it makes little sense either to focus only on late antiquity or on such dialogues written in middle and late Byzantium.<sup>15</sup> A similarly long perspective would work for other types of writing too.<sup>16</sup> Late antique scholars and Byzantinists need to talk more to each other; in particular, late antique scholars need to talk to Byzantinists.

No single way of looking at Byzantium will do it justice. Byzantine art has obviously had an appeal for modern artists. In the first part of the twentieth century Byzantine art was an inspiration to the arts and crafts movement and provided fertile imaginative ground for artists and architects. Not surprisingly, the complex status of the image in Byzantium, and the way in which this was translated into visual art set it apart from the western naturalistic tradition and intrigued avant-garde artists. But it was not only artists: poets and writers like Yeats were also drawn to the otherness of Byzantium as they saw it.<sup>17</sup>

But this was when there was much less actual knowledge of Byzantine visual art than now. Modernist painters like Klimt and also Matisse drew inspiration from the Ravenna mosaics even while academic attitudes to Byzantine literature remained positivistic and disparaging.<sup>18</sup> At the time their appropriation of Byzantine art may have been subversive,<sup>19</sup> but the Byzantine “verbal art”, or “art of discourse” (the terms are used by Stratis Papaioannou, the editor of Psellos’s letters), allusive, complex, referential, imaginative and apt to switch inherited registers, also calls for a response different from the norms of classical philology established in the nineteenth century.

Nevertheless, despite the lively interest now being shown in Middle Byzantine literature and poetics, the absence of Byzantium from gen-

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<sup>15</sup> Cameron 2014b, 58; cf. Cameron & Gaul (eds) 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Papaioannou 2009 on the reception of late antiquity in Byzantium.

<sup>17</sup> Betancourt & Taroutina (eds) 2015.

<sup>18</sup> Taroutina 2015; Nelson 2015; Papaioannou 2015.

<sup>19</sup> So also with the English traveller Robert Byron in the 1920s: Cameron 2014a.

eral consciousness and from historical awareness still holds for some kinds of Byzantine literature as well. No wonder the concept of a new Byzantine literary history has proved so elusive. Krumbacher's handbook, published at the end of the nineteenth century, remained basic for decades, and with it the strict separation between secular and religious literature that saw theological writing consigned to a separate handbook altogether; the model was followed later by Herbert Hunger and Hans-Georg Beck.<sup>20</sup> Alexander Kazhdan had embarked before his death on a new history of Byzantine literature, but his functional and materialist conception of what is important will not now satisfy many readers.<sup>21</sup> Others, especially Panagiotis Agapitos, are trying to find a different way of doing it. Tellingly, Agapitos felt that he needed a striking amount of ground-clearing and preliminary publication, as he has explained in a series of open "letters to his readers". His latest manifesto announces that in view of "the size of the papers" (that is, his own preparatory essays) he has abandoned his original project of writing a synthetic literary history and will instead publish all these preliminary studies together in a single volume. They number thirteen so far and cover an immensely wide range of topics, including the history of the discipline and the fraught relation of so-called Byzantine "vernacular" texts with Modern Greek, a question intimately bound up in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with Greek national identity.<sup>22</sup> But they do not claim to be comprehensive. One can only sympathize, and there are indeed inherent problems in the endeavour: besides the vast range to be covered, the very concept of a history – and the same applies to the ubiquitous handbooks and companions now proliferating – necessarily imposes classifications and chronological considerations with the potential to mislead. Perhaps then a history of Byzantine literature is precisely what is not needed at the present moment.

The concept of an intellectual history of Byzantium also raises questions. The recent editors of such a volume clearly had difficulty in deciding on what constitutes intellectual history and what does not, and they

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. Rosenqvist 2007, 185-207.

<sup>21</sup> Kazhdan 1999, 2006.

<sup>22</sup> Agapitos 2017 (2018).

too felt the need to organize their material into some kind of chronological frame.<sup>23</sup> But all such chronological surveys are fraught with articulated and unarticulated assumptions. They imply linear development, and usually take views about periodization that may be unhelpful; like a handbook or a companion, a history of Byzantine literature by definition requires the editor or editors to make choices of classification. Of course we need broad categorizations in order to write about literature or history at all, but perhaps we do not need so much agonizing about them.

And yet these various attempts seem to demonstrate that we are at a stage in the study of Byzantium where new and real possibilities are opening up. One can begin to perceive a different Byzantium from that of old, a society and a culture that is not static but like all societies always in a process of reaction and adaptation. The idea of Byzantium as a monolith is absurd. No society can last unchanged for more than a millennium, while the world around it is changing. But grasping a different kind of Byzantium is still difficult. That there is no agreement on many individual topics, that some scholars are still writing in an older mode, and that public perceptions have yet to change, is only what one would expect.

Discovering this different Byzantium requires historians, art historians, theologians and literary scholars to come together. The prevailing model has separated theology from secular literature, and “popular” from high culture; it has also separated visual art too much from literature, literature from history and all of these from theology. But Byzantine society, and the careers and output of its writers and intellectuals, were too complex for that. These cannot be separate disciplines consigned to separate histories and handbooks as though they existed in isolation from each other; nor can they be dealt with simply in terms of having different chapters within such books. Instead they need to be integrated, and the difficulties of achieving this need to be faced and discussed.

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<sup>23</sup> Kaldellis & Siniosoglou (eds) 2017.

## Excluded middle

So there is plenty of “contested territory”, whether in terms of analyzing Byzantine literature, trying to define and settle the role of Orthodoxy, or questioning simplistic claims about the legacy of Byzantium. What then of the second part of my title, the ‘excluded middle’?

One of the hardest questions to grasp about Byzantium concerns the ideology and values that permeated this society. Perhaps Byzantium simply lasted for too many centuries to allow for such classification. The answer has too often seemed obvious, and the ready answer that has been given is simply, “Orthodoxy”. But again it is not so simple. As I see it, Byzantium’s history in this regard also was one of constant challenge, effort and restatement. In the language of the Byzantine commonwealth envisaged by Dimitri Obolensky in the early 1970s,<sup>24</sup> Orthodoxy is what Byzantium passed on to the emerging societies of the Slavic world, including the Rus”. But there is more than an element of mythical thinking here. This Orthodoxy took what one might call its strongest form in the final stages of the state, when its patriarchs felt able to assert the highest possible view of their role and the role of Orthodoxy; but that was only after many centuries of evolution and vicissitudes, and the reduction of the Byzantine state to a shadow of itself. Many people still believe that the emperor controlled the church, but Byzantium was not the theocratic society that some have claimed, and neither is it as straightforward as it seems simply and without qualification to call it an Orthodox society.<sup>25</sup> The “triumph” of Orthodoxy may have been formally asserted and celebrated with the ending of iconoclasm in the ninth century, but later emperors still found themselves struggling to define what this actually meant. To call Orthodoxy the ideology or “symbolic universe” of Byzantium<sup>26</sup> *tout court*, as many historians do, calls for

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<sup>24</sup> Obolensky 1971.

<sup>25</sup> Cameron 2017; Magdalino 2010 places the essential formation of Byzantine Orthodoxy in the period after the ending of iconoclasm; see also Magdalino 2016, (“political Orthodoxy”, from Beck 1978).

<sup>26</sup> Given more space in Haldon 2016 than in much of his earlier work.

a detailed look at what it was and how it functioned at any given time in that very long history. Distinguishing this ideology from Byzantine philosophical thinking, and relating it to anything that can be called intellectual history present further challenges. Even after the long history of Byzantine studies these are tasks still in their early stages.

On a broader scale, Byzantium has repeatedly been seen in terms of an Orthodox sphere, distinct from western European Christianity on the one hand and Islam on the other; one thinks of Spengler and Toynbee, but also of neo-liberal thinking after the events of 9-11.<sup>27</sup> Today's political situation demands much more. At the moment Byzantium is in danger of being passed over altogether in a new binary opposition between western Europe and the Islamic world. And if Byzantium itself is not a monolith, neither is the history of Orthodoxy. Bearing in mind the resurgence of Orthodoxy in Russia and elsewhere in eastern European countries, the aggressive behaviour of the Moscow patriarchate, the complications of the status of the Ukraine, and the new prominence of Orthodoxy in the political spectrum, a better understanding of what Orthodoxy in Byzantium was really like is badly needed.

In the current world climate religion is being weaponised, and the claim to a Byzantine heritage politicized even more than before. It features large in discourses of national identity; but what that heritage actually was is less questioned. This paper derives from a lecture given immediately after a conference in Oxford honouring the centenary of Dimitri Obolensky, in which there was much discussion of the ideas and implications of his book on *The Byzantine Commonwealth*. It posited a high view of the Byzantine legacy to the Slavic world that is highly relevant in today's political climate even though the book itself is nearly 50 years old now. It constituted a kind of companion to the well-known book of Nicolae Iorga, *Byzance après Byzance*, published in 1935, which focused on the Greek and Romanian aftermath of 1453. But while the idea of a Byzantine commonwealth has been widely taken up, the Greek political historian Paschalis Kitromilides, who adopted the title *An Orthodox Commonwealth* for his collected papers,<sup>28</sup> has pointed out that

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<sup>27</sup> Discussion in Heilo 2019, 47-54.

<sup>28</sup> Kitromilides 2007; cf. Speake 2018; critique of the concept: Raffensperger 2012.

this “legacy” was not a simple matter, in that it was not passed on intact and unchanged – in the course of its appropriation in the post-Byzantine period it went through a conscious process of redefinition and manipulation. Like the Byzantine influence on the emerging Slav states, the Byzantine element in this post-Byzantine legacy cannot be seen in essentialist terms as something clear-cut and easily identifiable. Returning to these questions also demands a return to the issue of what Byzantium was really like as a society. But Byzantium was not coterminous with Orthodoxy, and orthodoxy was as much a work in progress as Byzantine society itself.

Let us turn then to a broader historical sweep, and an effort to find a place for Byzantium within our understanding of a wider historical development. We need to make a distinction here between the appropriation of Byzantium in Orthodox countries and its place in historical consciousness elsewhere. It remains the case that despite all the new thinking to which I have referred, Byzantium is being squeezed out of European and North American historical agendas. When I wrote about this in 2008, I drew attention to the prevailing western European historical agenda which gives little or no place to Byzantium, and we can now add even more examples and reasons for this historical blindness.

Sad to say, despite many attempts to present Byzantium in more positive terms, and despite the real popular fascination with aspects of Byzantium, especially its visual art, the disdain for Byzantium that we owe to the legacy of Montesquieu and Gibbon from the eighteenth century onwards is still with us today. It is compounded by a casual Eurocentrism in standard histories of Europe, which simply omit Byzantium and trace a linear narrative from classical antiquity to modernity through the western middle ages, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment; the idea of Byzantine exceptionalism is indeed one of the problems. It took some arguing after the beginning of the project, for example, to insert Byzantium into the European Science Foundation project on the Transformation of the Roman World that ran in the 1990s with the explicit aim of integrating European scholarship on the transition from the ancient world to the middle ages. And when Evelyne Patlagean published her last book, *Un moyen âge grec*, in 2007, arguing for the connections be-

tween Byzantium and western Europe from the ninth century onwards, she met with a chilly response from some Byzantinists who felt that their subject was being deprived of its particularism.<sup>29</sup> Patlagean argued for an integrated history – of course with changes of emphasis over time – that embraced not only connections with the west, but also the states of central Europe and the Islamic world.

But in wider historiography the dominance of the western European narrative with Byzantium left to one side has if anything recently increased.<sup>30</sup> John Haldon has often been the sole representative of Byzantine history in collective works on empire or on the transition to the medieval world; even he alternates between the terms east Rome and Byzantium, conveying uncertainty over its status. It is an uncertainty that has not been resolved by Anthony Kaldellis’s insistence on the Romanness of Byzantium (“the nation-state of the Romans”), or his attempt to cast Byzantium as the heir of the Roman republic.<sup>31</sup> In relation to Europe Byzantium remains on the edge, not a full member of the group.

Meanwhile in my view the ever more burgeoning discipline of late antique studies poses a direct threat to Byzantium. Ever more journals, series and individual publications, and ever more discussions of periodization, assume that late antiquity is a discrete field. The recent emphasis on the fall of the Roman empire in the west also leaves Byzantium exposed during and after the sixth century. Perhaps in response, some Byzantine historians refer to Byzantium as “a rump state” and see its characteristic shape as emerging only in the seventh century;<sup>32</sup> this is a periodization that has also been adopted by some in relation to cultural and literary history.<sup>33</sup> Again Byzantium is forced onto the retreat. A trun-

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<sup>29</sup> On Patlagean, an unusual Byzantinist, see Delacroix-Besnier (ed.) 2016.

<sup>30</sup> Contrast Preiser-Kapeller 2017, though limited to the period 300-800.

<sup>31</sup> Kaldellis 2007; 2015; see Stouraitis 2014.

<sup>32</sup> Haldon 2013, 475; Sarris 2011. Heather 2018, 331 ends with the “demotion” of Constantinople to “regional power status”, also arguing that there was no overall planning behind Justinian’s wars, but that they set off a chain of further wars that led inexorably to “the fall of the eastern empire”.

<sup>33</sup> Agapitos 2012 (2015), n. 29. A new “shorter” late antiquity: Carrié 2017; Inglebert 2017.

cated Byzantium may make some sense in relation to the administrative and economic structures that are Haldon's particular concern, but in broader terms cutting Byzantium off from its late antique roots creates as many problems as it seems to solve. Tellingly, Panagiotis Agapitos felt that he had to address the question of when Byzantium began at considerable length in his preparation for a literary history of Byzantium.<sup>34</sup> Something new has happened with the "explosion" of the industry of late antiquity. Late antique scholarship shows no signs of diminishing. It is not only lively and pervasive: it is characterized by new methodologies and approaches that are being deployed by a veritable army of young and eager scholars, and while the overall number of Byzantinists has surely grown, that of late antique scholars is far greater.<sup>35</sup> Byzantinists may be busy with all kinds of new approaches, and with the sheer effort of dealing with a subject when so much primary scholarship is still lacking, but they also need to engage fully with the implications of the late antiquity boom.

Meanwhile a new front has opened up, as some late antique historians push their coverage later and later, claim Islam as a late antique religion and incorporate the early Islamic world into their horizon. This "turn to the east" involves an enthusiastic embrace of Syriac literature and of late antique Judaism, a new interest in Sasanian Persia, and above all, extends the reach of late antique studies to include the emergence of Islam and the early Islamic centuries. It is relatively new: Peter Brown's *World of Late Antiquity* in 1971 showed the way by making AD 750 its endpoint, but the real explosion in this direction belongs to the last decade or so. Books and articles by specialists on Sasanian Iran, early Islam and so on now routinely mention late antiquity in their titles. One can easily speculate on some of the reasons, and it goes long with the rise of the study of "Abrahamic religions" – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – as a theme and as a heuristic device for explaining the emergence of Islam.<sup>36</sup> Again, after the Arab conquests of the seventh century Byzantium itself is the poor relation, not only geographically, but also culturally. To

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<sup>34</sup> Agapitos 2012 (2015).

<sup>35</sup> Cameron 2016.

<sup>36</sup> E.g. Silverstein & Stroumsa (eds) 2015.



take an extreme example, one book not only extends late antiquity in the eastern Mediterranean lands into the tenth or even eleventh century, but also writes disparagingly of Byzantine culture after about 600 in comparison with the admired intellectual world of Baghdad.<sup>37</sup> Syria made the cultural running, not Byzantium, we are told; but the Syriac scholars and translators owed their own intellectual formation to Byzantium. The transmission of Greek learning and philosophy to Baghdad is such an exciting and important topic, it seems, that Byzantium is simply left behind, or worse, derided with the old tropes of unoriginality.

Such a scenario marginalizes Byzantium. It ignores developments in Byzantium after the seventh century and swallows whole the traditional view of a dismal cultural and intellectual collapse after the conquests; it also fails to take Byzantine religious culture seriously. Among the energetic young late antique scholars I have mentioned it is clearly very appealing to learn Syriac or indeed Arabic and to bring the huge intellectual territory of early Islam into a broad late antique context. But too few of the same people, who ought to be potential Byzantinists, think of moving forward into the central Byzantine period or connecting it with their late antique background.

Finally a more promising avenue is opening up in terms of inserting Byzantium into current thinking about global history.<sup>38</sup> This has distinct advantages. It addresses the issue of Eurocentrism and western narratives, and includes Byzantium as a main player. Global history works by looking at connections (connectivity – travel, migration, foreign groups, ideas, objects), by comparison (not necessarily by comparing states), and by asking questions about longterm or contemporary developments in different societies. In the case of Byzantium it could prove to be a way not only of bringing Byzantium into the mainstream but also of exploring the complex role assigned to it by Patlagean and others, with changing connections not only with both the west and the Islamic world, but also with what is now central Europe and the north, and with a shift-

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<sup>37</sup> Fowden 2013, 149.

<sup>38</sup> Byzantium is included in its scope by the Oxford Centre for Global History and features in “The Global Middle Ages”, a network led by Catherine Holmes, Naomi Standen and Scott Ashley, and see also Moore 2018; Holmes & Standen 2018.

ing relation over time to the Mediterranean. Rome had been a Mediterranean power: Byzantium's reach was far wider. Other historians bring Byzantium into the frame of Eurasia, with a sweep as far east as China;<sup>39</sup> Byzantine coins and imitation Byzantine coins of the sixth and seventh centuries are found on the silk roads and in China,<sup>40</sup> and Byzantium had an important role in the dissemination of ideas, as well as a potential for inclusion in the comparative study of empires and of knowledge networks. Global history is by definition close to comparative history, and emphasizes connections and connectivity; it undercuts by its very nature the problematic idea of Byzantine exceptionalism.

Bringing Byzantium into wider history in this way is exactly what is needed to rescue it from its marginality and to bring it into the consciousness of specialists in other disciplines and periods.

In an interview given in 1997 the Byzantine art historian Ernst Kitzinger described his book *Byzantine Art in the Making*, published exactly twenty years before, as “almost a prehistoric document”.<sup>41</sup> Of course far more material had come to light in those two decades, and by 1997 far more information existed on many of the items he discusses in the book; but the comment was based rather on methodological grounds. In only two decades, Kitzinger thought, the practice and methodology of art history had itself changed in fundamental ways. If that is true of one part of Byzantine studies, what of others, and what of other changes in interpretation over much longer periods?

Certainly it also depends on what kind of scholarship is in question: a classic edition of a text can hold the field unchallenged for decades. But Byzantine studies is not impervious to outside influences; the world changes, and as scholars we are inevitably affected by them. I strongly believe that the situation of the individual scholar at any given moment in time affects the questions asked and the way they are approached.<sup>42</sup> Both the issues of our day and the many appeals to past history in popular discourse require us as responsible historians to address their impli-

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<sup>39</sup> Di Cosmo & Maas (eds) 2017; Kim, Vervaeke & Adal (eds) 2017.

<sup>40</sup> Whittow 2018; Whittow (forthcoming).

<sup>41</sup> Cited from Diebold 2018.

<sup>42</sup> Cameron 2004.

cations very seriously. Appeals to the supposed lessons of Thucydides or the example of the Roman empire are everywhere. But we also urgently need to address the way that Byzantium itself is perceived in wider public discourse, and this is where the model of Byzantine exceptionalism fails. For the questions and methods followed in other branches of both historical and literary studies to be applied to Byzantium, and for historical and literary studies to be brought closer together, is exactly what is needed.

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# Arboreal Lives: Saints among the Trees in Byzantium and Beyond\*

*Thomas Arentzen*

Studying the past, we come with our own biases. This is natural, of course. When, for instance, questions of gender and sexuality burned in modern minds, we started paying attention to how ancients went about their gendered experiences and their sexualities. Saints' lives that had previously seemed dull or ordinary, all of a sudden came to life in new ways, because they showed ancient cross-dressing or close relationships between people of the same gender.<sup>1</sup> With Michel Foucault and the twentieth-century negotiations of madness, holy fools from Byzantium were increasingly capturing scholarly attention.<sup>2</sup>

Today we, as human societies, are struggling with our own being in the natural world. How can we relate to the environment around us in a healthy and ecologically sustainable manner? These questions have driven me, as a church historian, to explore how Christians in previous times situated themselves within their natural world. More precisely I am interested in how they lived with trees, interacted with trees, or were attracted to trees. Trees are ancient creatures, mostly outliving humans. We have a Norway spruce in Sweden, for instance, whose root system is estimated to be between 9 and 10 000 years old.<sup>3</sup> It is hardly surprising that trees might work as mythological symbols for life in Christian (and other) traditions. While trees certainly evoked a sense of awe in ancient and Byzantine people, the arboreal realm also induced a feel-

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<sup>1</sup> The examples are numerous, but among the most thorough treatments is Burrus 2007.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Ivanov 2006; Krueger 1996; Rydén 1963, 1995a, 1995b, 2002.

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. Öberg & Kullman 2011. The spruce is called Old Tjikko.

ing of recognition. Hence trees could represent humans in similes and metaphors. “You are young and in the blossom of youth like a beautiful tree!” exclaims Andrew the Fool’s disciple Epiphanius in Lennart Rydén’s translation.<sup>4</sup> Trees dominate what one might call the mythological landscape of Christian tradition, where history plays out in a dynamic tension between on one side the idyllic Garden of Paradise—with its Tree of Life and (transgression through the) Tree of Knowledge<sup>5</sup>—and on the other side the restoration through the Tree of the Cross.<sup>6</sup> In the following, however, I am not going to pursue mythological plants, but trees that narratives present as botanical rather than symbolical. Trees in these stories share their corporeal branches with Christian saints.

Medievalist Lynn White Jr famously stated that “to a Christian a tree can be no more than a physical fact.”<sup>7</sup> He means, I assume, that trees have no agency or spirit; they are merely useful as an inanimate resource for human exploitation. Although White was an historian, his generalizing statement fails to engage seriously earlier strands of the Christian tradition. Once we realize how early Christian authorities could talk about trees, White’s presupposition falls apart. The Latin Church Father Tertullian, for instance, was convinced that trees not only have souls, as Aristotle and Plato had argued, but even *rational* souls, *intelligent* souls.<sup>8</sup> The Greek Church Father Basil of Caesarea describes, in one of his homilies on Creation, an aroused sexual intercourse between palm trees.<sup>9</sup> Trees were indeed more than physical facts to these ecclesiastical authors.

The present article studies four literary texts and explores how the authors imagined their protagonists’ interaction with trees. How did the

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<sup>4</sup> Nikephoros, *Life of Andrew the Fool*; text and trans. Rydén 1995b, 160–61.

<sup>5</sup> Gen 2–3.

<sup>6</sup> E.g. Gal 3.13.

<sup>7</sup> White Jr 1996, 12. Incidentally, I am not the first person to criticize what Virginia Burrus calls White’s “five-page manifesto” (Burrus 2019, 2); see e.g. Arnold 2013, 4–6.

<sup>8</sup> Tertullian, *Treatise on the Soul* XIX.

<sup>9</sup> Basil, *Hexaemeron* V 7.37–48. Basil is part of a broader literary tradition here; for an elaboration on this and on the arboreal psychology of Tertullian, see Arentzen [forthcoming].

saintly characters—with various degrees of intimacy—share their lives with the arboreal other?

## Up in the Crown

I shall start up in the highest branches of the tallest trees, where the wind blows in the leaves and plays with the birds. Up there, overlooking the Flemish landscape down below, lived a woman called Christina in the thirteenth century. She was given the epithet *Mirabilis*, “the Astonishing”—and Christina was indeed an astonishing person. Like those Byzantine fools (σαλοί) to whom Rydén devoted much of his career, Christina shocked people. It would be no exaggeration to call her a fool for Christ—a fool, one might add, who even carried out Christ’s redemptive work. But what interests me here, is her peculiar affinity with trees, her longing to live a bird’s life.

The most famous version of Christina’s story these days was written by the Australian singer-songwriter Nick Cave early in the 1990’s.<sup>10</sup> But Nick Cave was not the first. Around the year 1232, the Dominican Thomas de Cantimpré (1201–1272) authored the life story of this remarkable woman from his own lands. When Thomas wrote it, Christina had recently passed away—for the second time. You see, her *vita* is not so much a life as an afterlife. Or perhaps something in between. Christina lends herself generously to scholars fond of speaking in the idiom of liminality;<sup>11</sup> her very direction points beyond categories, her determination consisting of escaping classification.

The dramatic story begins as Christina is lying in the coffin in church. An orphaned shepherd girl, she died too young. During the funeral service, however, odd things start to happen to this pious maiden: “suddenly the body stirred in the coffin and rose up and, like a bird, immediately ascended to the rafters of the church.”<sup>12</sup> Christina has awoken from the dead, and she soars straight up to the lofty places, to the rafters,

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<sup>10</sup> It is the fifth track on his 1992 album *Henry’s Dream*. Another version is Quade 2017.

<sup>11</sup> E.g. Radler 2011.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas de Cantimpré, *Life of Christina* 5 (18). Number in parenthesis refers to page in Margot King’s translation, which I have occasionally modified slightly.

where she, as it were, touches wood. Later she told her friends that she had been taken through purgatory on her way to paradise and seen people's suffering there. Christ had given her a choice: either stay with him in paradise, or go back and endure more earthly life, in order to save those people who suffer in purgatory. Christina decided to come back.<sup>13</sup>

The arisen Christina shared a meal with her sisters and behaved somewhat normal, but it soon became clear that she could not be around people. Since the time of Antony the Great, ascetics had fled human culture and escaped into deserts and wildernesses. Christina's hagiographer says that she "fled the presence of men with wonderous horror into deserted places [*in desertis*], or to trees [*in arboribus*], or to the tops of castles or churches or any lofty structure."<sup>14</sup> Thomas probably mentions deserts or deserted places here to emphasize a monastic connection—in reality, of course, Flemish areas do not feature many deserts, and Christina was hardly a nun in any conventional meaning of that word. Instead of fleeing to the horizontal outskirts, she sought the vertical ones; it was the high places that attracted her the most—primarily trees. From the moment she left her coffin and flew to the rafters, wooden material continued to entice Christina. To her, it seems, even small pieces of wood shared a unique vibrancy with living trees, similar to the power relics gain from the living person in whom they participate(d).<sup>15</sup>

People tried desperately to pull Christina down and chain her to the ground. Once when she was tied up in a locked room, she made a hole in the wall and "flew with her body (...) through the empty air like a bird."<sup>16</sup> Somehow she was always able to get away: "one night, with the help of God (...) she escaped and fled into remote deserted forests [*in remotis deserti silvis*] and there lived in trees [*in arboribus*] after the manner of birds."<sup>17</sup> The resurrected woman had become a tree-dweller.

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<sup>13</sup> Thomas, *Life of Christina* 6–7.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas, *Life of Christina* 9 (20).

<sup>15</sup> For a similar observation regarding ancient Syria and Palestine, see Jeffers 1996, 181–82.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas, *Life of Christina* 18 (25).

<sup>17</sup> Thomas, *Life of Christina* 9 (20).

Christina's corporeal self was extremely delicate—"Her body was so sensitive and light that she walked on dizzy heights and, like a sparrow, hung suspended from the topmost branches of the loftiest trees."<sup>18</sup> With the help of God, she was able to stay up in the branches for nine weeks without jumping down—not least because her own breasts miraculously started producing milk that she fed on.<sup>19</sup>

Yet we might ask: For what reason does Christina retract to trees? Why is she preferring their company to that of other people? The branches provide a refuge for her ornithic desire to escape human society, but what arboreal force pulled her magnetically into their midst? Unfortunately, Thomas fails to speculate about that, and much is left to the imagination of the reader. We can note, however, that Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), who died around the time Christina was born, famously socialized with trees; according to the earliest *Life*, he had no other masters or teachers than the oaks and the beeches.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps a Medieval reader would immediately have grasped the pull of the arboreal? There developed a tree affinity—if undoubtedly ambivalent—in monastic forests of the Middle Ages. As Ellen Arnold has shown in her study of a Benedictine monastery in Ardennes, for instance, the monks' relationship with the wooded land in which they lived could be intimate and difficult at the same time, leading them to render it both as harsh wilderness and idealized pastoral.<sup>21</sup>

Christina, too, clearly enjoys arboreal company, even as the trees represent an escape. Ecofeminist readings often underscore that the literary desire to control women resemble masculine mastering of nature, the hunting of the wild beasts;<sup>22</sup> hungry men chase down women as game, their wild female nature tamed or "killed" by the contained strength of the male. In Christina's case, however, we encounter a woman who escapes the violent grip of oppression. Thomas allows no reader's gaze to really get to her, nor any sanitizing clutch to catch her. No

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<sup>18</sup> Thomas, *Life of Christina* 15 (24).

<sup>19</sup> Thomas, *Life of Christina* 9 (20).

<sup>20</sup> *Vita Prima Sancti Bernardi* (the first *Life of Bernard of Clairvaux*) I 23.

<sup>21</sup> Arnold 2013, 27 et passim.

<sup>22</sup> For a pertinent example, see Goldwyn 2018, esp. 85–190.

one is able to domesticate Christina. At least for a while, the text allows its reader to remain with Christina in the tree crowns, and not to pull her down, but to admire her astonishing ways. It is by becoming like the birds, by inhabiting trees, living among the branches, that she escapes human tyranny, be it male or female. Treetops grant her a hiding place from the sinfulness of humanity. While humans reek of depravity, trees seem untouched by evil in Thomas' narrative, and hence they form a decent refuge for a saint.

Although the author gives no sufficient answer regarding her concrete relationship with the trees, he does stress the wooden aspect of her existence throughout his narrative. While she favored the branches and her birdlike life, her sisters (who were embarrassed by their lunatic sibling) tried to capture her, and "they bound her fast with a heavy wooden leash [*ligneo vinculis*] and fed her like a dog."<sup>23</sup> A couple of lines later in the same paragraph the narrator repeats the adjective "wooden" when mentioning the *vinculum*, as if to highlight the irony: the material which to Christina meant a blessed airiness, they utilized to bind her and humiliate her.

Eventually—perhaps to please her sisters—Christina settles for a more down-to-earth lifestyle. This may seem as a termination of her arboreal engagement and her spiritual freedom; yet Christina returns to earth *with* her newfound freedom, an arboreal freedom subtly indicated by the author. He tells us that, although down on the ground, Christina carries the trees with her. They are, we learn, literally stitched into the very fabric of her otherwise white garments: "She was dressed in a white tunic and a white scapular which frequently was sewn with threads made from the inner bark of the linden tree or willow twigs or little wooden spikes."<sup>24</sup> Like a lover stitching a hair of her beloved into her clothes, Christina preserved the little pieces of tree close to her heart. Even when she stayed down on the ground it was wooden fibers that kept her together, and her arboreal integrity remained intact.

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<sup>23</sup> Thomas, *Life of Christina* 19 (26).

<sup>24</sup> Thomas, *Life of Christina* 25 (30).

## Between the Branches

Christina's story is truly astonishing, but as strange as her arboreal life may appear, it does not lack predecessors. Byzantines, too, resided in trees—some among the boughs and some inside the trunks. In a Syrian tale entitled *The History of the Great Deeds of Bishop Paul of Qentos and Priest John of Edessa*, the two devoted companions Paul and John lead a wandering ascetic life together in early Byzantium.<sup>25</sup> The text is preserved in both Greek and Syriac. Since their literary journeys takes place in the early fifth century and the oldest manuscript is from the late sixth century, the narrative must have been composed some time in this interval. From their base outside Edessa, Paul and John travel to lands and peoples in the Eastern Mediterranean. This late ancient narrative tends to be episodic in character, rendering not an abstract landscape, but a “richly layered sequence of *topoi*”, to borrow Veronica della Dora's words.<sup>26</sup> A sequence of two distinct arboreal episodes creates an almost visual contrast between a Pagan tree and a Christian tree, which are both located in relation to a particular mountain:

Arriving at the foot of Mount Sinai, the friends encounter a group of Arabs, who capture them and intend to sacrifice them to their god. This god turns out to be a tall palm tree.<sup>27</sup> Paul and John see a challenge in the situation; they initiate a battle to judge whose god is the strongest, the palm god or their god. The fight reveals beyond doubt that the former is no match for the latter, and thus the two Christian friends avoid ending up as human sacrifice.<sup>28</sup> The Pagan palm loses; the previously so powerful tree now withers away.

Is this an instance where the Christian God creates (*ex nihilo*) Lynn White's tree qua “physical fact”? Does the Creator God—*abracadabra*—turn powerful trees into dead wood? Not really. As is well known, late antiquity was accustomed to religious competition.<sup>29</sup> The scene fea-

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<sup>25</sup> For a survey both of the text and tree-dwellers more generally, see Smith 2009.

<sup>26</sup> Della Dora 2016, 2.

<sup>27</sup> *The History of the Great Deeds of Bishop Paul of Qentos and Priest John of Edessa* 23–27.

<sup>28</sup> *Paul and John* 27–28.

<sup>29</sup> See e.g. DesRosiers & Vuong 2016.



tures a typical my-god-is-stronger-than-yours contest.<sup>30</sup> The anonymous author wishes to demonstrate the supremacy of the protagonists' Christianity vis-à-vis the Arabs' Pagan practices, and the Christian text suggests that one should avoid treating palms as gods. Trees lack the kind of power that would allow them to be counted among deities. This does not mean, however, that they are devoid of life-force. They are not dead wood. Trees may still be alive, communicating, spirited—even spiritual. The episode hardly permit us to conclude that the text dismisses tree agency.

What, then, is there to say about a Christian tree—or what does it itself say?<sup>31</sup> With the grand palm spirited away, the story goes on to explore a more Christian leaning tree—or the arboreal being of human/tree assemblage. Making their way from Mount Sinai toward Edessa the two human friends pass another mountain one evening and discern a figure up on the hill: “on top of [the mountain] stood a tall tree (ܐܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ).”<sup>32</sup> While they came across the Pagan tree at a mountain's foot, this Christian tree looms on the top of a mountain. In the ancient Near East, both tall trees and mountain tops deserved reverence, and the reader must assume that the tree stood out as a lonely giant (not unlike the palm that they had previously encountered) since it caught the travelers' attention. They gaze intently at the plant up there; the text reads: “And, lo, there was the shadow of a man standing in the tree. When they saw it/him, they shouted to it/him from below, ‘Bless, O my lord!’ But it/he did not answer them.”<sup>33</sup> Paul and John perceive a tree, and simultaneously they notice some vague shadow blending in between its branches—limbs thin, we may imagine, as the arboreal boughs. As my slight adjustment of the English translation shows, the grammar of these lines itself contributes to the sieving of the human limbs into those of the tree; the word for tree like the word for man is grammatically masculine in Syriac, and for a brief moment, the reader does not know what he or she reads. Do

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<sup>30</sup> A well-known example is 1 Kings 18.20–40.

<sup>31</sup> Regarding the sounds of ancient Near Eastern trees (esp. in Old Testament texts), see Zakariassen 2019, 101–34; regarding the silence of a post-animist world, see Manes 1996.

<sup>32</sup> *Paul and John* 31; trans. Hans Arneson et al.

<sup>33</sup> *Paul and John* 31; trans. slightly modified by me.

the two men address the tree or the man in the tree—or perhaps both at the same time? When addressed, this ‘both-at-the-same-time’ fails to reply. Why? Is the man dumb? Or does the tree avoid speaking? The text is silent too.

Eventually, however, the tree-dweller opens his mouth and starts talking to them. How long has the old man been standing in the tall tree, the two travelers wonder. He answers:

“As you live, my brothers, I have stood in this position, lo, for thirty-five years and no man has noticed me except the two men who come to me from time to time to bring me provisions of bread and water. For a journey once called me, too, to pass by this place just like you. And I saw a man standing on top of this tree, a man heavy with white hair whom they called Abraham. (...) I climbed up and stood in his place, and, lo, I await God’s deliverance.”<sup>34</sup>

His forerunner in the tree bore the name of the Biblical patriarch whose life was closely associated with groves, and whose relationship with God was connected to trees.<sup>35</sup> The current tree-dweller, on the other hand, is not only difficult to spot, barely distinguishable from the branches among which he lives, but he also remains anonymous. He came from somewhere unknown to become unseen. The tree lends him his only identity. He is only that, a second-generation tree-dweller—no name.

That the old man “await[s] God’s deliverance” may be read as an allusion to Simeon, the old man who stayed in the Temple awaiting God’s consolation and salvation in the Christ Child, according to the Gospel of Luke.<sup>36</sup> Thus interpreted, the tree turns into the tree-dweller’s temple—located, like that of Mount Zion, on a hill. The tree allows the old man to anticipate the presence of the Divine; it becomes for him a space of living interaction with God. The tree offers “serenity”,<sup>37</sup> says the author,

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<sup>34</sup> *Paul and John* 31.

<sup>35</sup> Gen 12.6; 13.18; 18.1. For a study, see Zakariassen 2019, esp. 75–9. The Mamre oak outside Hebron was an Abrahamitic pilgrimage site in Late Antiquity; see Sozomen, *Church History* II 4.

<sup>36</sup> Luk 2.25–35.

<sup>37</sup> *Paul and John* 31.

while the man himself fades into the mesh of arboreal tissue and biblical allusions.<sup>38</sup>

John and Paul stay with the tree-dweller, and after three days, he dies. They take care of his body and his few belongings; then they prepare him for burial and lay him in a wooden coffin next to his Abraham.<sup>39</sup> The two tree-people lie peacefully side by side, buried in wood, but the tree remain on the hill, in the reader's mind. While it is true that the narrative wants us to venerate trees much less than the Pagan tribe did, the text does convey a sense of arboreal comradery and affinity with the tree. Neither objects of exploitation nor objects of worship, trees may resemble us, as *strange strangers*, to use Timothy Morton's terminology.<sup>40</sup> This particular tree stays where it was. John and Paul do not replace the previous dweller. Yet this does not seem to bother the narrator. The tree lingers.

These ascetics are among the earliest attested '*dendrites*,' as tree-dwelling people came to be called. The Greek word δενδρίτης—which basically means a 'wooden' or 'arboreal' one—suggests a mingling of tree and human. Eustathios of Thessalonica seems to be the earliest writer who employs the term δενδρίτης to denote Christian ascetics. He talks about "the *dendrites*, the branches of the Tree of Life, who bloom in virtue, the beautiful fruits of the spirit."<sup>41</sup> The *dendrites* do not just reside *in* trees, but they *are* trees. Christina wanted to become a bird and dwell among twigs; the dendrites on the mountain, in contrast, wanted to blend in permanently. Like his predecessor Abraham, the anonymous dendrite endured in the tree-crown, swaying with it, we may imagine, as the wind blew on the hilltop, from the first time he set his foot in its branches. The holy man found his holy place among the leaves, and he remained in the grip of the tree for the duration of his days. Blending in with the branches, almost unnoticeable, like a shad-

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<sup>38</sup> Of course, one may detect a frail Christological allusion in this episode as well.

<sup>39</sup> *Paul and John* 32.

<sup>40</sup> Morton 2010, 277; "Strange strangers [i.e. other beings, non-human beings]," he says, "are uncanny in the precise Freudian sense that they are familiar and strange simultaneously. Indeed, their familiarity is strange, and their strangeness is familiar."

<sup>41</sup> Eustathios of Thessalonica, *Oratio (XXII) ad stylitam* 48 (pp. 189–90); my trans.

ow, staying in that same position on the mountain for a large part of his life, he himself virtually became tree. He found his death in wood. His passing away barely added up to a transition, for visually he had left this world already, when he became a dendrite. He had turned wooden. Both in his living tree and in his wooden coffin, he was hidden to the world.

The story of Paul and John reveals few details about human–arbo-real cohabitation, and it fosters few idyllic ideas about dendrite life. It tends toward an anthropocentric vision of the tree on the hill; the man in it seems to interest the travelers the most. The fact that the narrative leaves the tree, however, without any dendrite replacement suggests that the arboreal does not derive its worth from human presence entirely. When the travelers journey on and the unseen man in the tree is again not seen in the tree, things remain pretty much as they were before we heard the story. Yet as readers, we now know that trees hide holiness, and there is sanctity concealed in branches. We may see a flickering shadow, a lurch, or a very slight movement among the leaves. Never pass a tall tree casually, the tale suggests, for it may be a holy place! Trees no less than humans amount to deities, but they can be loci of sacred life, as they provide spaces for godly power. Humans, in turn, may live with trees and find serenity among their branches.

## Inside an Oak

Abraham's heir and Christina both preferred the crown of the trees. Others have found a habitation inside trunks.<sup>42</sup> Let us turn now to a ninth- or early tenth-century trunk-dweller. Like the more famous St David the Dendrite of Thessalonica,<sup>43</sup> Nicholas the Younger is said to have come from the east before settling in what is today central Greece.

The trees we have encountered so far are rendered quite anonymous by the hagiographers—as are their locations. Nicholas' tree is more distinct, and it inhabits a specific spot; the Nicholas stories convey a sense

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<sup>42</sup> An early example can be found in John Moschos, *Spiritual Meadow* 70.

<sup>43</sup> See *Life of St David the Dendrite* and Vasiliev 1946, and regarding visual representations, Della Dora 2016, 141.

of place.<sup>44</sup> Nicholas came to enjoy a close relationship with a large deciduous oak on a hill outside the city of Larissa, Thessaly. Oaks were, and continue to be, outstanding trees that might live for hundreds of years. The ancient Greeks regarded them as trees of Zeus, and Old Testament figures, including Abraham, maintained sacred connections to oaks.<sup>45</sup> Byzantines made particularly fine distinctions in their oak vocabulary.<sup>46</sup> Nicholas and his oak united to make a Byzantine matrix of healing.

Post-Byzantine legends say that each year on May 9<sup>th</sup> blood comes out of an oak tree at the place where Nicholas died.<sup>47</sup> But what do the Byzantine versions say? There are two early saint's lives that are clearly related: the anonymous *Martyrdom of Nicholas* composed in the tenth century and the slightly later *Encomium of Nicholas* written by a certain Presbyter Achaïkos.<sup>48</sup> Despite the fact that they resemble each other closely, they choose somewhat different strategies for interpreting the relationship between man and tree.

Nicholas was a Byzantine officer in Larissa. For a military man, however, he acted quite peculiarly. When the Avars attacked, Nicholas and his men abandoned the city and escaped to the hills of Ternavon, some ten miles northeast. In this idyllic place of “forests and woods,” the water is “splendid, delighting those who drink it as if it were wine.”<sup>49</sup> They hide and they pray—on a mountain where people are few and trees are more plentiful. This is Nicholas' first tree habitat. But the text does

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<sup>44</sup> For the ecology of place, see, e.g. Evernden 1996.

<sup>45</sup> Charalampidis 1995, 20; 27–28; see also the broader cultural sweep in Nagy 1990, ch 7.

<sup>46</sup> Olson 2016, 11–12.

<sup>47</sup> For contemporary Nicholas devotion, see *Ακολουθία Νικολάου τοῦ Νέου*.

<sup>48</sup> See introduction in Kaldellis & Polemis 2019, xi–xiv.

<sup>49</sup> *Martyrdom of Nicholas* 4. The chapter numbers for the *Martyrdom* and *Encomium* are given here according to Kaldellis & Polemis 2019, as there is no chapter division in Sophianos' critical edition, on which the former's edition and translation is based. All translations are taken from Kaldellis & Polemis, although I have modified them slightly. I should like to thank my fellow fellows at Dumbarton Oaks during the academic year 2018–19 for arboreal suggestions in or beyond the garden, and particularly Alice-Mary Talbot for her generous helpfulness, which included drawing my attention to Nicholas the Younger and his oak. I am deeply indebted, moreover, to stimulating arboreal conversations with Glenn Peers and participants in the Larceny symposium “Trees and More” in Syracuse 6 April 2019.

not specify how he lives in relation to this forest, nor does he stay there long, for the enemies soon hunt them down. The delight of the place silhouettes the horror of the Avars' behavior; the *Martyrdom* describes the torture in gruesome detail: "One was impaled on a pole, while some were hanged from a tree (...) but the martyrs, as if inhabiting others' bodies, endured it."<sup>50</sup> The text singles out trees, anonymous trees, which were utilized by these evil humans as torture instruments.

Nicholas never exploited trees. He managed to escape the terror; not hung on a tree, he fled deeper into the woody wilderness and the hilly country. "Soaring like a bird," the text says, he reached Mount Vounaina, a place located some 15 miles southwest of Larissa.<sup>51</sup> There he finds his second and final tree habitat. The *Martyrdom* relates: "The place he inhabited was like a grove—it had a cave and was shaded by a tall oak (δρῦς)—and formed a pleasing habitat."<sup>52</sup> In the mountainous wilderness, he settles down by a tree. Although the place is wild (like human bodies are indeed wild<sup>53</sup>), the man and the grove seem to fall into mutual peace with one another in the pleasing environment. The wilderness yields controlled beauty. Ernst Robert Curtius describes the *locus amoenus*—a *topos* of landscape description—as a site of natural delight shaded by one or more trees and watered by a spring.<sup>54</sup> Nicholas finds his locus in the shade of an oak which does more than cast its shade; together with the tree the saint lives happily—happily ever after, in fact.

From the *Martyrdom*, it is not clear whether he dwells in a cave next to the oak, making the huge tree his neighbor, or if he literally moves into the oak. According to the *Encomium*, on the other hand, Nicholas did not just live in the shade of the oaks' branches. He came to Vounaina, and "there found a huge oak and stood in its hollow (κουφώματι), offering his prayers to God."<sup>55</sup> Nicholas moves into the tree and resides in

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<sup>50</sup> *Martyrdom of Nicholas* 5.

<sup>51</sup> *Martyrdom of Nicholas* 6.

<sup>52</sup> *Martyrdom of Nicholas* 6.

<sup>53</sup> Snyder 1990, 17; this is not stated explicitly in the Nicholas stories, but Byzantine Christians would generally agree with Snyder on this point, for the harsh winds of the passions would rage through their flesh.

<sup>54</sup> Curtius 1954, 202–6.

<sup>55</sup> Achaïkos, *Encomium of Nicholas* 4.

it. The author says that “the cave of the oak held (...) the martyr.”<sup>56</sup> The tree embraces the man with its trunk as he finds his dwelling place in the “cave of the oak”, the hollow of the trunk. “To touch the coarse skin of a tree is (...) at the same time (...) to feel oneself touched *by* the tree,” says David Abram.<sup>57</sup> Although Achaïkos avoids elaborating on it at this point, there seems to be a loving reciprocity between the man and tree.

The officer had fled the murderous non-Christian military enemies. Nonetheless, in his life with the oak, “every day he prayed to become a martyr,”<sup>58</sup> and Achaïkos reiterates several times that Nicholas longs to obtain the wreath or crown (στέφανος) of martyrdom.<sup>59</sup> Martyrs are generally crowned, of course, so there is nothing out of the ordinary in that. But if we keep in mind that prize-crowns were often made of leaves, and Nicholas literally stands surrounded by foliage, we realize that his very position becomes a place of martyrdom; the oak itself participates in his martyrdom and becomes an inseparable aspect of it. In a certain sense, Nicholas is already crowned; the oak has already offered him his wreath—and his paradise.

Both legends were most likely written for urban audiences.<sup>60</sup> In the pastoral idyll of Mount Vounaina, the authors elicit the unconvoluted forces of violent evil in opposition to the godly and peaceful man who, like a returned Adam, has re-entered an Edenic arboreal realm. Other stories share the fantasy of an idyllic spot beyond the city limits, the delightful Arcadia. At least since Theocritus’ famous *Idylls* (third century BC) the rural delight had been a literary topos among urban authors. The presence of the violent urban realities in this *locus amoenus*, however, serves to undermine a purely idyllic reading. For, as one might expect, the Avars lurk in the vicinity. While the oak and Nicholas belong to the beautiful wilderness together, the Avar warriors pierce through its beauty.

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<sup>56</sup> Achaïkos, *Encomium of Nicholas* 5.

<sup>57</sup> Abram 1996, 68.

<sup>58</sup> Achaïkos, *Encomium of Nicholas* 4.

<sup>59</sup> Achaïkos, *Encomium of Nicholas* 4.

<sup>60</sup> These legends fit Terry Gifford’s broader definition of ‘pastoral’ as literature idealizing the countryside in contrast to urban life; see his second kind in Gifford 1999, 2.

Eventually they find Nicholas, and there on the mountain they brutally attempt to convert him to Islam. He refuses, and they kill him. The slaying sends his soul directly to Christ. But, says the *Martyrdom* story, the body remains on the ground among the trees:

His precious, martyred body that suffered so much became for us a treasury of miracles. It lay there, protected by God's grace: no force brought against it could weaken it. The tall oak he had previously occupied—growing even larger than before, as if at God's command—miraculously took the martyr's precious body within itself, and kept it intact, undamaged, and free from harm. That is how it happened.<sup>61</sup>

Christ takes care of the soul. The oak takes care of Nicholas' body—guarding it, protecting it, saving it. In the *Martyrdom*, Nicholas spends the last part of his earthly life next to the oak; still, when he dies, he ends up inside the trunk. Having passed away, the martyr is finally fully united with the tree, bodily embraced by it, in a relationship that transcends death.

Then both versions report how a certain governor Euphemianos of Thessalonica grew ill with leprosy and sought healing everywhere. According to the *Martyrdom*, the heavenly God appeared to the governor, after the latter had gone through many failed cures. God told Euphemianos to leave the city and go to Mount Vounaina: “[God:] ‘Inside a dense forest you will discover a tall oak, and outside it a clear spring, but inside the oak the long-suffering body of my martyr Nicholas.’”<sup>62</sup> Inside the oak, Nicholas' body emerges as an integral and inseparable part of the *locus amoenus* idyll.

Disease, implies the story, belongs to the urban world; whoever searches for healing must venture into the unpolluted wilderness. And so the governor goes to the mountain:

[He?] found the forest. He saw the clear spring, beheld the tall oak, and was filled with joy and happiness. Inside the oak lay the long-suffering

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<sup>61</sup> *Martyrdom of Nicholas* 8.

<sup>62</sup> *Martyrdom of Nicholas* 12.



body of the martyr, emitting a spiritual fragrance. It lay there completely intact, perfect, so that perhaps even the nature of the trees might be sanctified—whether they be pine, oak, or cypress. When the governor found what he was hoping for [i.e. supposedly the body in the oak], he was filled with joy, with more joy than one could say. He embraced it, kissing it, taking it in his arms, and drenching it with tears of joy.<sup>63</sup>

What precisely is Euphemia kissing and embracing? Is it the oak? Possibly. Or is it the body? Probably. The text does not specify this, but leaves it to the reader's imagination. In any case, the governor is there in the presence of the body's fragrance, a fragrance that evidently distributes healing<sup>64</sup>—as well as sanctification to all the trees. Nicholas has become a salvation to the arboreal realm. Even trees are in need of sanctification. It comes to them from this human-embraced-by-oak.

The *Encomium* tells the story a bit differently. Here the saint himself appears to the governor in a dream. Nicholas says enigmatically: "You will discover me there [on the mountain] next to something tall, lying under a big oak."<sup>65</sup> People from the city travel with their governor, and on the mountain they eventually find the tree: "They discovered that extremely tall oak. As soon as they came near it, their nostrils were filled with the fragrance that it emitted." And the author adds: "They also saw the body of the saint."<sup>66</sup> As we see, Achaïkos focuses more exclusively on the oak, and it is the tree itself that blesses its surroundings with the lovely scent. The people have come for the oak, while the saint appears as an appendix to the arboreal giant. But the author ensures us that "the mountain of Vounaina (...) hid the body of the martyr for many years and kept it intact and whole."<sup>67</sup> In this instance, then, the arboreal realm becomes salvation to Nicholas and the humans.

Nicholas' oaken place resembles in certain respects the paradise that St Andrew the Fool experienced in a dream: "[Andrew:] 'The beautiful trees there were filled with a wonderful fragrance that surpassed all the

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<sup>63</sup> *Martyrdom of Nicholas* 13.

<sup>64</sup> For healing incense and fragrance, see Harvey 2006, 147 et passim.

<sup>65</sup> Achaïkos, *Encomium of Nicholas* 7.

<sup>66</sup> Achaïkos, *Encomium of Nicholas* 7.

<sup>67</sup> Achaïkos, *Encomium of Nicholas* 7.

aromas of things terrestrial, making me forget the holy and wonderful things which I had passed and enjoyed earlier.”<sup>68</sup> Both Andrew and the people in Vounaina found healing, sanctifying qualities in wooden scent—as did the neighboring trees. The same seems to have been true for Christina, who fled to the trees to escape “the stench of men”, as her hagiographer puts it.<sup>69</sup>

The human versus natural environment dichotomy crumbles in these stories—if not entirely so at least partially—as Nicholas bleeds into oak and vice versa. The man-and-tree cohabitation emerges, perhaps unintentionally, as an icon of the radical interrelatedness of beings.<sup>70</sup> Nicholas’ holy life and his death take place *by* or *in* the tree. The anonymous author of the *Martyrdom* lets the oak pull Nicholas deeper and deeper into its inside. Achaïkos lets tree and man live a symbiotic life from the outset. Both stories reach a telos where man and oak attain their full potential as part of the other. There are indistinctive trees in the beginning used for hanging dead bodies on, but the Tall Oak is different. It amounts to a sacred tree that embraces a saint, shelters him, takes care of his dead body, and (in the *Encomium*) emanates a pleasant odor. The tree itself constitutes his very victory crown. Although the narratives disagree slightly regarding Nicholas’ precise placement in the oak or regarding the origin of the sanctifying fragrance—where does human body start and where does tree trunk end—the two beings are branched into one another in ways that hallow trees and humans around them.

Many Byzantine hagiographers presented monks’ caves as dark and gloomy, evoking the forces of death with which monks struggled.<sup>71</sup> Like so many ascetics before him, Nicholas lived in an uncultivated wilderness. Rather than a harsh desert dwelling, however, he found himself a lovely spot, a beautiful and attractive place. He did not aim for mortification—at least not in his choice of habitat. To be sure, the convergence of wild and beautiful in a *locus amoenus* is not alien to ascetic literature; already Athanasius placed St Antony under trees, on a mountain, by a

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<sup>68</sup> Nikephoros, *Life of Andrew the Fool*; text and trans. Rydén 1995b, 50–51.

<sup>69</sup> Thomas, *Life of Christina* 9 (20).

<sup>70</sup> For the ecological and ecocritical notion of inter-relatedness, see e.g. Evernden 1996.

<sup>71</sup> Talbot 2016.

spring.<sup>72</sup> Still, the Nicholas stories highlight the pastoral idyll more than for instance Athanasius did. Nicholas does not need to fight demons or wild beasts. Only human intruders can threaten his peace. Otherwise his wilderness is wonderful.

Terry Gifford draws attention to the *return* as a vital aspect of the pastoral in literature. When the characters or the readers have ventured into pastoral idylls, they must eventually return to the anti-idyll of the normal.<sup>73</sup> In the lives of St Nicholas, the protagonist and the oak never return; only the reader, along with the people from Thessalonica, will ever see the city again. And the authors are unwilling to let readers go easily. Unreturned, St Nicholas pulls the reader out into his locus, for Mount Vounaina is an actual place, and (we learn) a place of healing. What distinguishes Achaïkos' tale from for instance Theocritus' *Idylls*, where "bees fill their hives and the oak trees are taller,"<sup>74</sup> is not only that the latter is less wild and less haunted by Avars, but that Achaïkos designates a concrete place beyond the city toward which the reader is supposed to gravitate. His text does not expect the reader to make a full return to the city. The Nicholas stories render a Mount Vounaina that emerges as more real than Thessalonica. While Theocritus projects a countryside dream in the distance, and Athanasius tells of an inaccessible place somewhere yonder in the desert, Mount Vounaina is local, and most likely (although this of course remains a speculation) there was, even outside the text, an oak in place when the stories were composed; Vounaina was a reachable place in Thessaly welcoming readers as pilgrims. The hagiographies complicate the status of the city, for only by the oak can true healing transpire; only by the help of this posthuman plant may the city of Thessalonica, represented by its governor, find itself rehabilitated. The lives of Nicholas interpret the wild countryside as an indispensable center of gravity, the *other pole*, positioned around the trunk of an oak.

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<sup>72</sup> Athanasius, *Life of St Antony* 49–50. For this and other early loci, see Burrus 2019, 99–106. And, as has been argued recently, the Byzantines seem to have cherished their actual woodland much more than previous scholarship has assumed; see Olson 2016.

<sup>73</sup> Gifford 1999, 81–115.

<sup>74</sup> Theocritus, *Idyll* 8; trans. Hopkinson, 141.

## Shaking the Tree of Exploitation

In his *The Blue Sapphire of the Mind*, Douglas Christie surveys early Christian ascetic traditions, pursuing a diction for a new (or ancient) intimacy with the non-human. We need, he says, a language “that honors the earthy, embodied reality of our physical, material existence.”<sup>75</sup> The arboreal lives encountered in the present article offer no new language as such, but they imagine saintly existence as intimately and corporeally engaged in the more-than-human world around them. While the narratives may not provide us with recipes for ecologically sustainable lives in the Anthropocene, they display other ways to dwell with the living world. Embraced by trees, these holy people eschew exploitation.

As the lives of fools indirectly pose the question “what is sanity?”, the lives of tree-dwellers may be read as asking “how do you live with trees?” The three protagonists embody three different ways: Christina sought the leaves and the rustling treetops where she was free to live like a bird. The anonymous dendrite was solidly settled between boughs and branches in a mountain-top tree associated with prophets, patriarchs, and holy space. Opposing inclinations to worship trees, the author of *Paul and John* promoted companionship between tree and human. Nicholas, on the other hand, was drawn to the beauty of the forest and was planted within a stem, sharing in the wooden fragrance of redemption. The four authors may not tell us all we might have wished to know about how they envisioned the relationships between tree and human. It is clear, however, that to the tree-dwellers in their tales, trees represented more than arbitrary matter. Something vital crops up in trees; there is vibrancy in the branches. These saints sought living beings instead of the grave-like chamber of caves; they sought the shaded beauty together with the tree, the sacred serenity that an arboreal life provided, or the secluded aloofness that the crowns offered. They chose to live together with arboreal creatures and their scent.

The holy fragrance wafting through the grove, between the trees, the trunks and the leaves, is of course not the only smell that reaches us from Byzantine and Medieval Christianities. There is no reason to

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<sup>75</sup> Christie 2013, 226.

idealize the past. And yet, conversely, there is no doubt that to many Christians—historically—a tree has been much more than timber or “a physical fact”.<sup>76</sup> Christian tradition does not provide an excuse for exploiting other beings in the Anthropocene. Today, as modern scientists are (re)discovering and (re)learning that trees are not just wood, but living creatures that communicate through a so-called “wood wide web” of fungus-relations,<sup>77</sup> maybe it is time to re-learn history too. Maybe, to turn the proverb around, we have not been able to see the trees but for the forest. Maybe these four stories, along with other legends and lives,<sup>78</sup> can remind us that there are more intimate ways of interacting with trees than we are accustomed to in our own little corner of history.

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<sup>76</sup> For contemporary Christian tree cult in the Mediterranean area with a potentially long history, see e.g. Carr 2006 and Warren 1994.

<sup>77</sup> See e.g. Giovannetti et al. 2006.

<sup>78</sup> In addition to the *Life of David the Dendrite* and the tree-dweller in the *Spiritual Meadow* 70, which I have already mentioned, John of Ephesus tells of Maro who lives in a tree (*The Life of the Eastern Saints* 4); see Whitby 1987.

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# Greek Jews on the American Stage: Gender, Nationalism, and Assimilation in Rae Dalven's Unpublished Autobiographical Plays\*

Adam J. Goldwyn

Rae Dalven (1904-1992) is best known for her several volumes of translation, which introduced Anglophone readers to canonical Greek poets such as Constantine Cavafy (1961)<sup>1</sup> and Yannis Ritsos (1977)<sup>2</sup> and to the lesser-known poets who featured in her anthologies *Modern Greek Poetry* (1949)<sup>3</sup> and *Daughters of Sappho* (1994),<sup>4</sup> the latter a collection of Greek women writers. But Dalven was also a Jew, and her emigration from her hometown of Preveza (then in the Ottoman Empire; it was annexed by Greece in 1912) to New York in

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<sup>1</sup> Cavafy 1961.

<sup>2</sup> Ritsos 1977.

<sup>3</sup> Dalven 1949.

<sup>4</sup> Dalven 1994.

1909, when she was five years old, left an indelible mark on her. Much of her scholarly life, particularly after the Second World War, was devoted to preserving the memory of the decimated Jewish communities who stayed in Greece and documenting the immigrant experience of those who came to the United States – and New York in particular.<sup>5</sup> Her book *The Jews of Ioannina* (1989) was the culmination of a lifetime of research and scholarship on this subject.<sup>6</sup> Yitzchak Kerem’s “Rachel (Rae) Dalven: An Accomplished Female Romaniote Historian, Translator, and Playwright”<sup>7</sup> covers much of her biographical information, with particular regard to what she called her “unsought for calling” as a translator,<sup>8</sup> though he devotes only a single paragraph to her work as a playwright,<sup>9</sup> which is understandable, given that three of the plays survived only in fragmentary form in private collections and the fourth was widely considered lost until its rediscovery in the US Copyright Office in 2017. And yet, despite their marginal position in accounts of her life and work, Dalven thought of herself as a translator second and a historian third; she was, in her own eyes, first and foremost a playwright. In a letter of 1948 to Basil Vlavianos, an Athenian-born lawyer who had settled in New York, Dalven writes:

*As I wrote you at present I am teaching English in high school. This I hope will be temporary. I am determined to appear as a playwright,*

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<sup>5</sup> Formerly a relatively neglected subfield in studies of the Holocaust, which focused principally on the Ashkenazi communities of Eastern Europe, Greek Jewish life now constitutes a growing body of scholarship; see, for instance, Naar 2016, Bowman 2009, Mazower 2005, Pierron 1996, Plaut 1996, Fleming 2008, Naar 2016, and Antoniou and Moses 2018. Dalven’s own *Jews of Ioannina* (1994) also deals in part with her own Jewish community.

<sup>6</sup> Her translation of the poetry of Joseph Eliyia (1901-1930), the pre-eminent Jewish-Greek poet since antiquity and her nephew by marriage, published at the height of World War II, exemplifies the synthesis of her interest in Greek literature, translation, and Greek Jews (Eliyia 1944). For Dalven’s first-person account of discovering and translating Eliyia’s work, see Dalven Interview, and Dalven 1990. Two of Eliyia’s letters to Dalven survive, though unpublished.

<sup>7</sup> Kerem 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Dalven 1990.

<sup>9</sup> Kerem 2018, 150.

*which is my rightful heritage. I am revising my play "A Season in Hell" and some of my Greek-Jewish friends have offered to invest money in my play. Anyone who knows me and values my creative writing knows that I will perish if I do not arrive as a playwright, an original writer in my own right. Up to now I have been a servant to Greek literature, and I hope I have served Greek writers well. This was my aim. As a Jew I take great pride in the service I am offering Greek poets, for I am the first one in the world who has presented in English the beautiful poetry of 44 poets of the last 125 years of Modern Greece. But now I must appear as a playwright as well.*<sup>10</sup>

For Dalven, playwriting was the central and organizing passion of her life. Indeed, she had graduated from Yale Drama School in 1941,<sup>11</sup> but had had no success as a playwright during the 1940s. *A Season in Hell*, the play she references in the letter to Vlavianos, was about the lives of Arthur Rimbaud and Paul Verlaine; she wrote it, she tells another of her correspondents, William Rose Benét, in 1941, based on her studies at the Sorbonne in 1938. Staged in 1950 at the Cherry Lane Theatre in New York City, *A Season in Hell* was panned brutally and unequivocal-

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<sup>10</sup> Vlavianos Papers.

<sup>11</sup> Her time at Yale did have a long-term impact on her personal life, however, leading directly to her divorce from her husband; Diane Matza's notes from a 1984 interview with Dalven record that her ex-husband, Jack, sought to win her back:

*He persists in desiring remarriage, thinks he can persuade her if he supports her through a Yale M.A. in drama. When a play of hers is produced on campus he tells her: "If you're famous after this I don't want to know you." This finishes her relationship with him. She "wanted him to appreciate her culture." he wanted "her to dedicate herself to him." She says she feels he ruined her life. (Matza 2015).*

The episode reveals Dalven's lifelong dramatic concern with patriarchy and capitalism and the intersecting means by which men, through marriage and money, could simultaneously liberate and oppress the women close to them, thus both furthering and impeding their aspirations.

Relatively extensive letters with her professors at Yale survive, including their tepid recommendations to her for teaching and other positions. As a Jewish woman at Yale long before women were admitted as undergraduates and while strict Jewish quotas were still in place, Dalven was faced, as in so many of her other undertakings, with patriarchal and anti-Semitic attitudes which haunted her whole life.

ly; *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*'s headline "Dull, verbose 'Season in Hell'" sums up the reviewer Louis Sheaffer's view. The review itself is hardly any nicer; he calls the play "a heavy-handed effort with a frequently embarrassing attachment for literarified dialogue, a play floundering in waters that are much too deep for it. Under the circumstances, there's nothing the all-Equity cast can do to overcome the script's disastrous shortcomings."<sup>12</sup>

Dalven did not give up, however; she continued to write plays until the end of her life.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, records from the United States Copyright Office show that Dalven received copyrights for an additional four original plays: *A Matter of Survival* (1979), *Marriages Are Arranged in Heaven* (1980), *Esther* (1983) and *Our Kind People* (1990). Each of these four plays reflects a different aspect of the Jewish experience: *A Matter of Survival* is about the Greek-Jewish community in Athens during the Holocaust, *Our Kind of People* is about the Greek-Jewish immigrant experience in America, *Marriages Are Arranged in Heaven* is about a Greek-Jewish family struggling to find the money for dowries for their daughters, and *Esther* is about Dalven's and her mother's later life in New York City. Though they are distinct plays, they nevertheless constitute a kind of intergenerational dramatic cycle stretching across the twentieth century, and thus represent the most sustained depiction of Greek Jews in American drama. More importantly, by foregrounding women's experiences and voices and centering women's relationships, Dalven's work must also be seen as part of the broader feminist project of recuperating female voices ignored by traditional Holocaust and immigrant narratives.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Sheaffer 1950.

<sup>13</sup> Among those extant which will not be discussed in the present study are a 1952 radio drama entitled "Jim-Crow Schools Must go!" based on the life of Frederick Douglass, and "Hercules," which was also staged in 1952 at Fisk College, a historically black university where Dalven taught during those years. Letters of this period find her discussing writing scripts on George Washington Carver, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and musing that "some scripts ought to be written on current issues especially such issues as will better racial relations" (Vlavianos Papers). If she ever wrote these scripts, however, neither she nor any of her correspondents mention them, and extensive archival research and communication with her collaborators and family has yielded no leads.

<sup>14</sup> There has been an increasing interest in the primary source writing of Greek Jews,

## 1. “An Authentic Story Told to the Author in Athens”: Greek, Jewish, and Greek-Jewish Identity During the Holocaust in *A Matter of Survival*

While working on *A Season in Hell*, Dalven was also working on another, much more personal, play. A newspaper article in *The Banner* dated February 13, 1953 has the headline “Rae Delven’s [sic] play to have Sunday debut.”<sup>15</sup> This is the earliest published reference to a work which the playbill says is “based on an authentic story told to the author in Athens.”<sup>16</sup>

In letters to a variety of correspondents, she discusses the genesis and evolution of the play at length – as late as June 24, 1981, she wrote to Nicholas Capellaris, the Greek consul general in New York, that “I have taken Dr. Vlavianos’s suggestion to make a minor revision of my play which I will now call *Toula*. This was the original title of my play.”<sup>17</sup>

In a letter of May 23, 1948 to the poet and publisher William Rose Benét, Dalven locates the genesis of the play in May of 1947:

*I wonder if I might ask you at this time, if you think SR [the magazine The Saturday Review of Literature, which Benét founded and edited] would be interested in a short story about Jewish heroism during the German occupation. When I was in Greece last May Greek Jews told*

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particularly of prose by men, as, for instance, Sa’adi Besalel a-Levi 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Benét Family Papers. The magazine *Crisis*, a prominent African-American magazine founded by WEB DuBois, noted in its March 1953 issue that “other recent activities on the Fisk Campus include presentation of the original play ‘Toula’ by Rae Dalven, assistant professor of dramatics” (*The Crisis* 1953, 184). Records from the Lillian Voorhees Theater Programs Collection at Fisk University put the date at February 15 of that year [pg. 17]).

<sup>16</sup> Onassis Center Archives, New York University. In a letter of January 29, 1953 to her Yale professor Edward Cole, she claims that *Toula* was a real person: “*Toula* was a Christian girl who was killed by the Nazis. It is an authentic story and I have written it in tribute to her” (Benét Family Papers).

<sup>17</sup> Vlavianos Papers. In both the printed text of her play and the audio recording, the play is referred to as *A Matter of Survival*, though various letters and playbills at the Tsakopoulos Collection and the Onassis Center also refer to it by the alternate titles *A Testimonial to Life* and *Above All – Greek*; that the main character is named *Toula* in all the versions suggest that these are all revisions of the same play.

*me several stories of their sufferings. I have a number of these – some from people who returned from concentration camps – others who hid in Greek homes or in the mountains with the National Liberation Front – still others who made their way to Palestine. I have only notes on these – but I do not believe it would take me long to whip it up in story form. I was intensely excited about them when I heard them and I feel they will come out right.*<sup>18</sup>

Benét wrote back that “an article such as you mention about the Greek Jews during the German occupation would not quite be *Saturday Review* material.”<sup>19</sup> It may have been at this point that she decided to turn the material into a play; thus, though the first record of *Toula* being performed is in the *Crisis* issue of 1953, the play’s roots go back some years earlier. Reconstructing the timeline for the play, then, it seems that Dalven traveled to Greece in 1947, completed her work on *A Season in Hell* around 1950, then turned her attention to *Toula/A Matter of Survival*. She staged the play early in 1953, then put it aside for the next thirty years, only picking it up again in the 80s.

An audio recording of the play of uncertain date opens with a voice-over announcing that it is September 8, 1943, the day the Germans took over from the Italians in occupying Greece. This is also the day of the wedding of a Greek-Jewish couple whose family is at the center of the drama:

*As A Matter of Survival opens, Roberto Lorenzo, the young Italian commandant in Athens has been so helpful in hiding the Jews that Fanny Cohen, the lady of the house in this play as well as her husband Leon, have invited Roberto to the wedding of their first-born son Jonathan and his bride Sarah. Nina, their only daughter and Rabbi Barzilai, Chief Rabbi of Athens, were also pleased to see Roberto there. This is where Robert met Nina’s Greek Christian friend, Toula Miliate, and was immediately drawn to her. Toula, Nina, Jonathan and Sarah were all members of the resistance movement. Leon and Fanny approved of their children’s liberal ideas and their militant spirit.*

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<sup>18</sup> Benét Family Papers.

<sup>19</sup> Benét Family Papers.

*The parents were observant Jews but they looked upon their Christian neighbors as fellow citizens, rather than as Christians. The only member of the family who did not see eye to eye with Fanny and Leon on this point was Isaac, Leon's older brother. He was a businessman and often travelled to Germany. It was there that he met his wife Miriam, a young Jewish woman who was strongly pro-German. Isaac got along well with his brother Leon but was much more traditional. He believed what the Bible says in Exodus: "The Lord will fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." He felt that the Germans could not harm him, for he observed the law of God.<sup>20</sup>*

In addition to establishing the *dramatis personae* and the relationships among them,<sup>21</sup> the voiceover also establishes two key concepts in Dalven's view of the Holocaust in Greece. That the "observant Jews [...] looked upon their Christian neighbors as fellow citizens" and that the Christians, embodied by Toula and Roberto, reciprocated this humanistic spirit is the uplifting moral at the center of a play otherwise concerned with darker themes. Dalven balances the dual identities of Greek Jews – herself included – by arguing that the religious differences between the Christian and Jewish communities was less important than their shared Greek national identity.

The tension between a Greek identity which is inclusive of Jews and one which is exclusive of Jews is the play's central point of conflict, as set out between the two brothers, Leon and Isaac. Isaac believes that Orthodox Greeks do not consider the Jews to be Greek, and that the Jews thus have a better chance of survival if they trust the Germans instead of the Greeks. Leon and his wife Fanny, by contrast, trust that

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<sup>20</sup> Tsakopoulos Collection. The quoted biblical line is Ex. 14:14.

<sup>21</sup> It is tempting to try to identify the characters with people whom Dalven knew and perhaps from whom she heard the story. Dalven's family tree had in it in a previous generation a Fanny, a Leon, and an Isaac; though her ancestors' names may have inspired her, these are not the characters in the play. Dalven did, however, have two cousins who might be the source of the story: Sion who fought with the Greek resistance, and his sister Bimbo, who survived by going into hiding. For Dalven's family tree, see the website of Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum, the Romaniote synagogue of New York: <https://www.kkjism.org/previous-exhibits> (accessed October 16, 2019).



the Orthodox Greeks have a vision of Greekness that includes them and that they should thus trust the Greeks instead of the Germans.<sup>22</sup> These competing visions of Jewishness in Greece are reflected in the opening scene of the play, a family meeting on September 8, 1943, the day before the Germans have called for the Jews to register with the authorities. Leon suggests the family allow themselves to go into hiding among their Greek friends, while Isaac and his German-born Jewish wife suggest registering, noting that the Germans are more likely to show them mercy than the Greeks.

In trying to convince Isaac and Miriam to hide rather than register, the other characters repeatedly stress the bonds that join Greek Jews and Greek Christians. The most forceful voice of an inclusive Greek identity is Toula, the Orthodox Greek resistance fighter who is the central moral voice of the play. When Isaac and Miriam decide to register with the Nazis, she says: “Will you surrender to them because you and I are not of the same religion?” to which Fanny adds “For God’s sake, Isaac, recognize the relationships that exist between the Christians and us as soul citizens and not the difference in our religion.”<sup>23</sup>

The utopian theme of Greek identity trumping the religious divide is stronger in the second read-through of the play on the Tsakopoulos audio cassette, where Regina (an alternate name for Miriam in this version of the play), Toula, and Sara (Fanny) have a similar exchange:

*Regina: How many Christian families will risk their own safety to hide us?*

*Toula: Will you surrender to the Nazis because you and I are not of the same faith?*

*Sara: For God’s sake, recognize the relationship that exists between Christians and Jews, as citizens and not the difference in our religion.*<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Dalven frequently changed the names of her characters in different drafts, even as the lines they delivered remained virtually unchanged. The names I am using are from the complete audio-recording at the Tsakopoulos, which accords with the Benmayor fragments.

<sup>23</sup> *A Matter of Survival* audio cassette (Tsakopoulos).

<sup>24</sup> *A Matter of Survival* audio cassette (Tsakopoulos).

Miriam/Regina refuses to accept that the Greek Christians consider the Jews to be Greek, while Fanny/Sara argue the opposite. In the printed version of the play, this same sentiment remains: When Miriam tells the family that “[i]n Germany we always felt more German than Jewish. We thought we were German. In Germany, a Jew is a German. In Greece, a Jew is a Jew,” Toula responds: “[b]eing Jewish is your religion, not your nationality. Your nationality is Greek, just as mine is, even though I’m not Jewish.”<sup>25</sup>

Ultimately, the two couples thus make opposite choices: Leon and Fanny go into hiding, while Isaac and Miriam register with the Nazis, and Isaac is condemned in the play as much for his inability to see the Nazis’ true intentions as by his lack of faith in the good intentions of the Greek Christians.

The disastrous consequences of Isaac’s decision unfold later, when a Nazi soldier comes to their shop and asks Isaac to lead the German registration effort. Isaac attempts to decline, but is told that the other choice is execution. “What are we going to do?” Miriam asks, to which Isaac replies, “What can we do? We’re registered. Leon and the family have left their house and even if they’re still there, they’ll never want to get mixed up in this development. I never foresaw this.”<sup>26</sup> Though it is hard now to imagine a Jewish writer blaming the victims of the Holocaust for their own genocide, Dalven does construct this scene such that Isaac and Miriam bear the blame for their own deaths. She does this because the play is as much concerned with making an ideological argument for an inclusive Greek national identity as it is with history and memory: if antisemitic Nazi ideology is the proximate cause of their deaths, Isaac and Miriam’s ideological refusal to trust in the good intentions of the Greek Christians is the ultimate cause. Isaac’s “I never foresaw this” is meant to ring hollow, since no foresight was required: his brother and all the other characters warned him well in advance that this would happen, he just refused to believe them.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Dalven 1979, 7.

<sup>26</sup> *A Matter of Survival*.

<sup>27</sup> Dalven, of course, had the benefit of hindsight when writing these passages, and her treatment of Isaac and Miriam reflects his. The case for resistance as opposed to ac-

Act II takes place six months later, during which time Isaac and Miriam register several hundred Jews; it doesn't save them, however, as the voiceover says: "And so, Isaac and Miriam are taken to Haidari, the German concentration camp in Athens, and then deported to Poland with the other 800 Jews who had been locked up in the synagogue."<sup>28</sup>

The next act of the play occurs at the end of the war; as the liberation bells ring throughout Athens, Toula, the brave Greek resistance fighter who had been helping the family in hiding, is shot and dies. The play concludes with two voiceovers:

Female Narrator: *We hear church bells ringing and general jubilation on the street. We know that the war is over and that Greece has been liberated, but inside the house they are mourning the death of Toula.*

Male Narrator: *The war is over, but where there should be jubilation, they are mourning the death of Toula. As Leon recites from memory the El Malei Rachamim, the prayer for the dead, we realize that no one is an island unto himself. In order for any people to survive cruelty, terror and destruction, we must measure men not by his birth or his creed, but by his humanity.*<sup>29</sup>

For Dalven, Toula the character represents the best of Greece; that is, those Greeks who fought for liberty against the Nazis, those Greeks who put their lives at risk to help save Jews. This idea is then expanded to encompass universal ideals of peace and fraternity among all peoples, a universal humanity which transcends the divisions of Greek and Jew which formed Dalven's own core identity. Indeed, there is a version of the play in which Toula herself is Jewish, and she goes into hiding with her family and husband Fofu. For Dalven, however, who wanted to show the heroism of the Greek Christians in saving their fellow Greek Jews, changing the principal character to a Greek Christian furthers her idealized vision of a unifying Greek national identity.

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quiescence seems much more obvious to those who lived after the war than it did to the people who had to make these life or death decisions in the moment.

<sup>28</sup> *A Matter of Survival*.

<sup>29</sup> *A Matter of Survival* audio cassette (Tsakopoulos).

Making Toula the tragic heroine and moral voice of the play is consistent with the dramatic choices Dalven made throughout her plays about Jewish life, which organize social and family morality around the (often deleterious) effects patriarchal values and the men who enforce them have on women. What Dalven presents on stage, therefore, is the Holocaust from a female perspective; this is not a version of the Holocaust concerned with the violence perpetrated on Jews by Greeks – no deaths occur on-stage – but a version of the Holocaust concerned with the help Greeks gave to Jews, exemplified by the faultless female protagonist who, murdered by a Nazi soldier on the day of the liberation, sacrifices herself to save her fellow Greeks, albeit Jews, from the Nazis.

In later versions, however, Dalven seems to have significantly revised her thinking on the issue of Greek attitudes and actions towards Jews during the Holocaust. Though it can never be known why Dalven abandoned the play for thirty years, a letter to Vlavianos of Sept 9, 1983 may offer an explanation:

*Now I want to say a word about the play I wrote on the Holocaust in Athens. I abandoned that play only after one of the critics remarked that “the Jews did not suffer at all” – as I wrote it. In my desire to show my appreciation for any help given to the Jews by the Greek resistance, I highlighted that fact. But the resistance movement during the occupation was of great help to the Jews only in three cities: Athens, Volos and Larissa. It was quite a different story in Janina, and Salonika. In Janina as well as in Salonika, there were many Greek collaborators. I think my play should concern itself with Janina, which is what I know best. It’s all well and good for Mr. Capellaris to ask me “what happened to your play.” But I have a responsibility to my own Jewish people. Please do not forget that out of 80,000 Jews who lived in Greece in 1940, there are now fewer than 5,000. Anti-semitism has raised its ugly head again because of the situation in Israel.<sup>30</sup>*

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<sup>30</sup> Tsakopoulos Collection. I have found no evidence she ever revised the play along the lines suggested in the letter, nor are there any references to a play about the Holocaust set in Janina.

Dalven here gives insight into why she wrote the play: to show her appreciation to those Greeks who helped Jews during the Resistance. The letter suggests, however, that Dalven's attitude towards Greece had changed somewhat drastically: instead of focusing on the Greeks who helped Jews, she now sees most of the Greeks as having been collaborators. Dalven, who was writing her own book (*The Jews of Ioannina*) at the same time as revising the play may have become aware of the gathering scholarly consensus of the full scope of the destruction of Greek Jewry. Though there are as of today just over three hundred Greek Orthodox among the Righteous of the Nations, represented by characters like Toula, scholarship has increasingly pointed towards Greek disenfranchisement of Jews even before the Holocaust and of the Greek collaboration with the Nazis.<sup>31</sup> In light of her friendship with scholars like Steve Bowman and others prominent advocates of the new revisionism, Dalven's unambiguously pro-Greek attitude must have become increasingly untenable.

Nevertheless, this letter remains a rather stunning reversal for a person who had felt it her mission to be an ambassador for Greece and Greek letters to the rest of the world out of a sense of gratitude for the help it gave the Jews in their darkest hour. The date of the letter, however, and Dalven's more frequent trips to Israel and increasing Zionism during the 1970s may be significant. In June of 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon, a move which gained widespread international condemnation; the death of thousands of Palestinian refugees in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps by an Israeli-allied Lebanese militia further inflamed anti-Israeli passions. That Dalven's letter a year later suggests her change of heart on the position of Greeks protecting Jews during World War II might reflect her changed perception of Greek and European attitudes towards Israel after the invasion of Lebanon.

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<sup>31</sup> See, for instance, the works cited in n. 14 above, much of which by scholars whom Dalven knew personally (such as Steve Bowman).

## 2. “That Women Can’t Be Looked Upon, Officially at Least, as the Subject of Commercial Bargaining”: Politicizing the Personal in *Marriages Are Arranged in Heaven*

Dalven makes no mention of *Marriages Are Arranged in Heaven* in any of her other published or unpublished works. A date for the setting of the play can be inferred from its subject matter; the play ends with a voice-over summarizing the fates of the various characters:

*Now, happily, the Greek government has finally passed a law to abolish the dowry completely. The new legislation enacted states that parents may give gifts to their children at the time of their marriage, but they must provide for such gifts to be made to children of either sex. “What is very important,” said Anne Mangrioti, a member of the Union of Greek Women “is that women can’t be looked on, officially at least, as the subject of commercial bargaining.”<sup>32</sup>*

The Greek government passed this law on January 25, 1983, the same year the play was registered with the US Copyright Office, so a safe assumption can be made for this as the year of the play’s composition. The only potentially complicating factor is that the characters’ names are all both distinctly Jewish and distinctly non-Greek Orthodox (i.e. Baruch, Esther, Rachel, Avram), and by 1983 there were only approximately fifty Jews in Ioannina, where the play is set. The best solution, born out by the lifestyle and the customs depicted in it, is to accept that Dalven is writing about the world of oppressive dowries in which she grew up transposed against the contemporary political abolition of dowries.

For Dalven, the dowry was a personal as well as political issue. In accord with the general feminism of her oeuvre, this play too features a female protagonist who suffers under patriarchy and, through her suffering, reveals the essential inhumanity and injustice in the patriarchal world order. The title of the play itself reflects Dalven’s indictment of arranged marriages: marriage should be “arranged in heaven,” not by men.<sup>33</sup> In her interviews and other writings, Dalven frequently returns

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<sup>32</sup> Dalven 1980, 89.

<sup>33</sup> A similar idea is contained in the Yiddish word *beshert*, which describes soulmates or

to the pressures the dowry system imposed on families, driving fathers to penury, girls to difficult working conditions, young women into arranged marriages against their will, and children born to unhappy families.<sup>34</sup> In an interview with Sybil Maimin in 1991 for the New York Public Library Oral History Project for Sephardic Jews, which represents one of her most sustained (auto)biographical discourses, Dalven describes the difficulties the dowry system imposed on her grandfather and his eight daughters:

*So my grandfather, who had a store, who was a middle-class man, he had a beautiful business, had a gorgeous home, but he had to think of the dowry every year. [...] My grandfather always worried about... as soon as he got enough dowry for one, he had to begin saving for the next one. And of course the girls had no say in the matter.<sup>35</sup>*

Later in the interview, Dalven explains how the dowry system affected her mother's marriage: "He [her father] had expressed a desire for my mother. But the big thing was, would he want a dowry. When he said, No, I'm not interested in a dowry, I want to marry her without a dowry, so they arranged this marriage. My mother had nothing to do with it whatever."<sup>36</sup> Maimin then asks about the results of the marriage:

*Q. This was an arranged marriage.*

*A. Of course.*

*Q. Do you think it was a good marriage?*

*A. No. Not for me it wasn't, not for the children it wasn't.<sup>37</sup>*

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divinely foreordained couples.

<sup>34</sup> Elsewhere, Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos writes in her history of the Romaniote [the non-Sephardic Jewish population of Greece, of which Dalven was a part] immigrant community of New York that "the name *Stemma* is derived from the Greek world *stamata* and was given to what [parents with many children] hoped was the last of many daughters, expressing the desperate wish that God would 'stop' sending them daughters that they could not afford to marry off" Ikonomopoulos 2006-2007, 155).

<sup>35</sup> Dalven Interview, 18-19.

<sup>36</sup> Dalven Interview, 28.

<sup>37</sup> Dalven 1991 (Interview), 19.

In Dalven's own self-narrative, therefore, the dowry looms large in being the cause of her parents' unhappy marriage and, in her own telling, her own unhappy childhood.

The dowry, however, was not an issue for her parents alone; indeed, it was the biggest point of contention with her family in her own adolescence. In particular, the need for her to earn a dowry threatened her one true passion, education:

Q. *What was the reason your father didn't want you to get educated?*

A. *Money and marriage, for the girls.*

Q. *What do you mean by marriage?*

A. *To save money for the dowry to give to a man. Not only that, but who's going to make the wedding. They had no money to make a wedding for me.*

Q. *In other words, a girl would work and save for her own dowry?*

A. *That's right. For her own dowry, for her own wedding expenses, for her own trousseau.*<sup>38</sup>

Given the prominent place the dowry had as the exemplary Old World evil that scarred generations of women (including her mother) and followed her into the New World to scar her as well, it is not surprising that the news of the abolition of the dowry in 1983 was an important political development that also had deep personal resonance, even a half century later. Indeed, the affiliation between author and character is such that she gives the protagonist her own name, Rachel.<sup>39</sup>

*Marriages Are Arranged in Heaven* centers on three sisters: Rachel, Esther, and Amelia. Early in the play, Esther enters in tears, having just returned from the port city of Patras, where she had been denied in her attempt to emigrate; returning home she tells her family: "First they told us we would both have to have drops in our eyes for two weeks before we could be cured. When that was over we got ready to leave again. Then they told us America was closed."<sup>40</sup> This seemingly inconsequen-

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<sup>38</sup> Dalven 1991 (Interview), 29.

<sup>39</sup> Rachel's name also evokes her biblical namesake, who also endured sorrows as a result of patriarchal marriage law.

<sup>40</sup> Dalven 1980, 10.



tial detail has important significance for locating the origins of the story in Dalven's own biography; in her interview with Maimon, Dalven describes a sister who was initially denied passage to America:

- A. *My sister had trichoma of the eyes and they didn't let her come to America with us. So my mother went –*  
Q. *You mean the immigration authorities did not allow her to come?*  
A. *That's right, because she had trichoma and it was infectious. So they sent her back from Patras, which was the port of embarkation.*<sup>41</sup>

The play, therefore, is at least loosely autobiographical; likely it blends some of her and her mother's generations' experience of women's life and marriage politics in Greece.

Since she cannot emigrate, Esther must find a husband, which occurs a few pages later. Dalven plays the scene dramatically: by a stroke of luck, a rich suitor – described by the men as “a fine fellow” who “has piles of money” and “a very generous hearted man” – expresses interest in the otherwise unmarriageable girl; if she marries him “none of us will have to worry about money any more [sic].”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Dalven 1991 (Interview), 23. This Esther also shares a name with her mother and, in the play as in real life, marries a man named Israel who is much older than she. In the play, however, Israel is a butcher; Dalven's father was an itinerant peddler. This is another example of how the play operates at the intersection of autobiography and fiction resulting in some anachronisms. In the play, for instance, Rachel and Esther's brother is named Joseph, the name of Rae's brother in real life as well. But the overbearing and cruel Joseph in the play shares no resemblance to the brother to whom she was very close in real life. Also, both Rae and Joseph left Greece when they were still children, much younger than the characters in this play. The voiceover cited above at the end of the play indicates that Rachel, married as a teen or early twenty-something in the play, no longer had to worry about a dowry because of the legal abolition (which occurred in 1983), but this would be hard to reconcile temporally with the events in the beginning of the play, when her older sister is turned away from an attempt to immigrate to America by boat, an event much more suited to the early twentieth century.

<sup>42</sup> Dalven 1980, 14.

Dalven structures the scene such that the marriage is effusively praised by the men without revealing anything about the suitor himself: the audience's first picture of him sounds overwhelmingly positive. This, however, is only the male perspective, a perspective immediately questioned by the prospective bride-to-be. Esther wonders aloud if she is too young to marry, to which her father replies "(with bravado): Young! Your mother was ten when she was engaged to me and seventeen when she was married."<sup>43</sup> This admission, shocking to his daughters and certainly more so to the play's original late twentieth-century American audience, is followed by the reveal of the suitor himself: a local butcher named Israel. On hearing the news, Esther says "(as if stunned): Israel the butcher! (they pay her no attention)."<sup>44</sup> The stage directions sum up Dalven's attitude towards arranged marriage: the women have no choice and the men do not care what they want anyway.

Over the course of the scene, Esther becomes more despondent ("He's so old!" and "But I don't love him. I don't love him."),<sup>45</sup> even as her father and brother become more aggressive in pushing the marriage on her (her brother Moses says: "Shut up the lot of you! Listen to them. Babies telling us what to do. Chicks giving advice to the roosters" and later "(gets up menacingly)" to say "if I hear another word out of you, I'll strangle you. I'll break you in two").<sup>46</sup> For the women, marriage is servitude and misery, while for the men it is a path to economic security and freedom. Scene I ends with Esther in tears, futilely protesting her marriage: "I'll never go out with Israel. I'll never let him touch me. I'll pray every day for the engagement to be broken. Oh why, why didn't they let me go to America? (sobbing) Why? Why?"<sup>47</sup> The only other time she is mentioned is in the play's epilogue, when the narrator mentions that she and her son David move to Athens for work, suggesting that even despite her protestations, she ends up marrying Israel anyway.

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<sup>43</sup> Dalven 1980, 15.

<sup>44</sup> Dalven 1980, 15.

<sup>45</sup> Dalven 1980, 16, 17.

<sup>46</sup> Dalven 1980, 16, 17.

<sup>47</sup> Dalven 1980, 20.

Things go scarcely better for Amelia, Rachel's other sister. Scene II opens several years later, and now Amelia, aged 22, must get married. The two sisters discuss their disappointment with the engagement party, but Amelia shrugs it off:

Amelia: *Anyway, what was the use; an engagement without the man betrothed.*

Rachel: *It wasn't his fault. They wouldn't give your fiancé leave from the army.*

Amelia: *But I have never seen him.*

Rachel: *They sent you a photograph.*

Amelia: *Those who know him say he doesn't look at all like that.*<sup>48</sup>

Esther and Amelia, therefore, represent two different dilemmas women faced: where Esther finds her husband unsuitable because she knows everything about him already, Amelia has never even seen her betrothed, does not know what he looks like or anything about his background. Indeed, when they finally meet in the play, the husband-to-be, Nissim, fails to introduce himself, leading a terrified Amelia to flee into the house. Tears and terror were, Dalven seems to suggest, typical responses to marriage.

As in *A Matter of Survival*, Dalven depicts Jewish-Greek life through the eyes of female protagonists; the men in her plays represent the patriarchal forces which suck the joy and, as importantly, agency out of the women's lives. This is demonstrated in the final lines of dialogue in the play: Rachel has just been wed, but it is the women in her life – her mother Hannah and her sister-in-law Annette – to whom she turns for solace:

Hannah: *Thank God we managed it. (Hannah kisses Rachel). May I see you and rejoice.*

Rachel: *May I have you forever.*

Hannah: *At last you are saved.*

Annette: *(happily) Let's dance.*

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<sup>48</sup> Dalven 1980, 22.

Rachel: *Yes, and you sing Annette, the way you used to. (they clap hands and start to dance the kalamatiano. Annette sings gaily, more as she used to sing before she married Joseph).*<sup>49</sup>

The women, all in unhappy arranged marriages, nevertheless make a community among themselves without their husbands. This final scene presents three women made family by no choice of their own, who find happiness in the company of one another. The final stage direction in the parentheses emphasizes the negative effects of patriarchy on the women subject to it: Annette is only happy, and her singing only as gay as it was before her marriage, when she is surrounded by the other women in her family and not her husband or male relatives.

### **3. “I’m Not Gonna Leave School, Papa”: American Education and Female Liberation in *Our Kind of People***

The problems of arranged marriage, traditional customs, and their place in modern life were also the main subjects of Dalven’s most explicitly autobiographical play, *Our Kind of People*. The first extant reference to the play is a letter of May 27, 1944 to her former Yale professor Walter Prichard Eaton. In it, she writes that she has abandoned her proposed play about Walt Whitman and, in deciding what next to do, writes: “Shirly has been after me to return to my play Culture. Do you remember that? I wrote it as a one-acter and you and Mr. Nicoll both thought it contained three-act material. What do you think? I would appreciate a word on this. It’s a folk-drama about a Greek family in New York trying to learn the American way without being outcasts of their Greek heritage.”<sup>50</sup> As with *Toula/A Matter of Survival*, Dalven labored on this play in various forms for decades, and it was only in 1992, nearly fifty years later, that the play, the only one of hers to appear by name in her *New York Times* eulogy, was staged.<sup>51</sup> At least three different versions of

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<sup>49</sup> Dalven 1980, 88.

<sup>50</sup> Benét Family Papers. Mr. Nicoll is Allardyce Nicoll, a professor of Dalven’s at Yale with whom she exchanged letters for some years.

<sup>51</sup> *New York Times*, August 3, 1992. <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/08/03/nyregion/>



*Jayne Vitale as Sara Daniels and Peter Johl as Avram Daniels in Our Kind of People (date unknown). Courtesy of Jayne Vitale.*

the play exist in various states of completion. Only fragments survive of two. The fragments of the play preserved by Isaac Benmayor and the manuscript of the play provided by Jane Vitale, who acted in one

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rae-dalven-87-former-professor-and-a-historian-of-jews-in-greece.html. A surviving advertisement for the play in the Aaron Kramer Papers at the University of Michigan lists the “World Premier Performance” at the Sephardic House at Shearit Israel on Saturday, February 29<sup>th</sup> (with no year noted) followed by matinee and evening performances on Sunday, March 1. (Collection Code: AMSNB Call Number: Labadie Kramer; Volume/Box: Box 3 Folder Heading/Issue: Rachel Dalven Title: Aaron Kramer Papers). Dalven sent a playbill for these shows to Antonis Dekavalles, which is now held; a letter attached to the playbill is dated 1992.

staged version, share a fundamental plot but are clear revisions of the version held at the US Copyright Office; thus, at least three different versions are represented. That in one the principal heroine is most frequently called “Anna,” but that in another her name is “Rachel” speaks to the obvious autobiographical parallels. These parallels can be further deduced from external sources, such as the interview she gave to Maimin and to Diane Matza, a professor at Utica College, in 1984. The play is about the Daniels family, Greek Jewish immigrants who have moved to the Lower East Side. Avram (also called Abraham) and Sara are virtually identical to Dalven’s own parents: Avram is much older than Sara and the marriage is an unhappy one; Abraham is unable to adapt to American society, learns no English and wants to preserve the old ways. Sara is 20 years his junior, forced to work long hours because of their poverty, and, though somewhat unsure of her family’s place in America, more willing to let her children find their way. In one of Dalven’s most affective scenes, for instance, the daughter teaches her mother how to write her name in English. The two children are David, a stand-in for Dalven’s older brother Joe, and Anna, Dalven’s alterego.<sup>52</sup>

The play, which takes place in “a cold water rail road flat on 5 Elbridge Street,” is divided into four acts with two scenes in each, and each scene takes place on a day ranging from October 1918 to a Saturday in June 1926.<sup>53</sup> The plot centers on the parallel educations of the two

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<sup>52</sup> The playbill summarizes the play as follows: “OUR KIND OF PEOPLE” is an original play depicting the struggles of a Jewish immigrant family from Greece who settled in lower Manhattan in the early 20’s. The conflicts stem from the clanish [sic] father, a man of the old school who believes only in ‘a shoe from our own home town, even if it is patched’; and the mother who sides with her 2 children in their struggle for a higher education and more sensible acceptance of all Jewish people.” (Kramer archives). Dalven uses the phrase again when describing her parents’ suspicion of the Ashkenazi Jews they met in New York (Dalven 1991 [Interview], 41). Later, Dalven is asked about her time undergraduate years: “Q. What are your memories of Hunter College.? A. The unhappiest years of my life. Q. Why? A. Because I worked all the time.” (Dalven 1991 [Interview] 39). In 1982, Dalven told Diane Matza that “she stole her education” because of her parents’ disapproval (private correspondence, August 25, 2015).

<sup>53</sup> Dalven 1990, 2. These details nearly match Dalven’s own life: Dalven was born in 1904, and an early scene in the play (see below) takes place when Anna turns fourteen

children: David, as the eldest son, doesn't want to go to medical school, but is forced into it by his parents, who view it as his role. As eldest son, he must support the family and raise their status by becoming a doctor. By contrast, Anna, passionate for education, is discouraged merely because she is a girl. Just as Rae Dalven's parents belittled her goals, in one version of the play, Anna's parents also demand she go to work or get married:

Avram: (sternly): *You go for working papers?*

Anna: *No.*

Avram: *No? What you mean no? Don't we say when you are fourteen, you will leave school and take a full time job?*

Anna: *I'm not gonna leave school, papa.*

Avram: (angered): *She bring the blood to my head! How will you save money to marry? I can't afford to pay for you wedding.*

Anna: *Don't worry, papa, you won't ever have to pay for my wedding.*<sup>54</sup>

Sara: *Is it important for you to finish high school, Anna.*

Anna: *Very important. First of all I like school, and then I'll get a better job if I graduate from high school.*

Avram: *Nobody wanna marry you if you have so much education.*<sup>55</sup>

As in *Marriages Are Arranged in Heaven*, the parents' concern is again with dowries and marriage. Unlike Esther and Amelia (and, in real life, Dalven's own mother) in Greece, however, Anna has the beginnings of an American consciousness. Independent, persistent, and aware of the possibilities for individual self-fulfillment outside the traditional fam-

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(she would have been sixteen in 1918), while the play concludes with Anna graduating from college in 1926, while the real Dalven graduated from Hunter in 1925.

<sup>54</sup> In the draft, this line is crossed out and a handwritten note in the margin says: "Should this go back in?" That Dalven was fiercely independent and did not want to get married at all might offer one interpretation for this line, though it equally might suggest that she will pay for it herself through her own earnings.

<sup>55</sup> Dalven 1990, 12. Dalven references this scene in particular in describing the play to Maimin: "Now I was fourteen – that's the story of my play – I was fourteen and my father wanted me to get working papers once I reached fourteen and work, and get married at sixteen" (Dalven Interview, 26).

ily, she pushes back against patriarchal expectations: she refuses her father's demand. Her mother, much younger than her husband and therefore generationally closer to her children, also senses the possibility of escaping the constraints of Old World patriarchy. As an already married mother, however, she recognizes the limits placed on herself, and thus becomes a tentative but firm advocate for her daughter. She brokers a compromise that if Anna can still earn the \$6.00 she would have earned had she dropped out and gone to work in the factory, she can stay in school. Anna fulfills this obligation by working nights as a seamstress. This too parallels Dalven's own real-life experience as she describes it to Maimin: "I began to earn my own way really quite well at the age of fourteen, because I worked on all the machines – single machine, double-needle machine, narrow machine – and I was making a good salary. But I didn't enjoy my high school because I wanted to be with my classmates. I wanted to stay in school, after school."<sup>56</sup>

Her father's opposition to education and eagerness for her to get married comes to the fore again later in the play when Anna asks her parents to come to her high school graduation:

Anna: *You're coming to my graduation, papa, aren't you?*

Avram: *I come to your engagement, your wedding, your graduation, no!*

Anna: *Oh papa, why? All the fathers come.*

Sara: *Why don't you wanna go, Avram?*

Avram: *Is not important I go.*

Anna: *It is important to me.*

Avram: *I won't come.*

Anna (turns to her mother): *You'll come, mama, won't you?*

Sara: *Sure I will come. (pause) Maybe papa change his mind and come too.*

Avram: *I won't change my mind.*<sup>57</sup>

During the course of the play, Anna comes to see the full possibilities of American life, including full agency in matters of love, finances, educa-

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<sup>56</sup> Dalven 1991 (Interview), 26.

<sup>57</sup> Dalven 1990, 45.



tion, and marriage: she runs for student government, the Girls Scouts, and the drama club, quintessential American experiences her parents oppose because they will hinder her ability to earn money and find a husband.

In emphasizing Anna's commitment to her American identity, Dalven dramatizes the conflict between the expansive worldview of the children of immigrants and the narrowly constrained one of their parents. Indeed, the seemingly endless possibilities for Anna and her medical student brother are consistently contrasted with the shrinking world of her father, who resents American life in general and his lack of economic opportunity in particular ("life in America is slavery" he says, to which his wife replies, "Is true America is slavery").<sup>58</sup> This economic marginalization is coupled with his decreasing influence at home, a man's traditional sphere of greatest influence. This conflict comes to a head when the parents secretly attempt to betroth Anna to a rich man from their village in Greece. It is not Anna who objects, however, but her brother David. In one of the only passages in Dalven's plays in which a man makes a case for female independence, David opposes his parents when he accidentally overhears them discussing the marriage:

David: *She's seventeen! Listen, papa, you too, mama. You leave Anna alone! Don't go matchmaking for her.*

Sara: *He is a rich man. He comes from a good family. Maybe he will pay expenses for wedding.*

Avram: *Is good luck. It come unexpected. Don't come everyday.*

David: *She's too young to marry!*

Sara: *She don't marry tomorrow! First she will be engaged. We will make plans. She will go out...*

David: *With you and papa tagging behind. That's not the way it's done here! In America a girl finds her own husband, and she meets a man many times before she decides even to introduce him to her family; only after she makes sure that he's the right man for her, does she invite him to meet her parents; the same goes for the boy.*

Avram: *Anathema! The devil take your father!*<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Dalven 1990, 25.

<sup>59</sup> Dalven 1990, 41.

The contrast between David's speech and the depiction of women's agency in marriage reflects the cultural changes between marriage politics in Greece and in America. *Marriages Are Arranged in Heaven* features teenage and even pre-teen brides (the girls' parents were engaged when their mother was ten) who had no choice but to accept their husbands – often husbands whom they have either never seen or who are unsuitable in terms of age or temperament. The descendants of these women, however, transplanted to America, can wait to get married and can even refuse their suitors; the dowry and other economic considerations are no longer the exclusive concerns. David makes a point of mentioning that the women get to choose the husband and, as importantly, that the family only gets to meet the prospective husband when the daughter decides to make the introduction, a complete reversal of the power dynamic in Greece.

David's defense of Anna's independence in marriage extends beyond marriage as an economic decision and towards a more American notion of marriage as a romantic partnership based on shared values and interests. When Avram asserts that money is all that matters, David gives the most forceful speech in the play:

David: *That's the whole damn trouble. You don't know a damn thing about this man, except that he has money, and he comes from a family you knew twenty years ago. This man will treat Anna like a doll, not as a person; he'll want to think for her. He won't let her think for herself. Anna will sick with such a husband. A lot you know about your own daughter.*<sup>60</sup>

The force of David's conviction surprises the parents; in the next line, Sara says: "My God, how sharp you are. We're not gonna kill her," to which David responds: "It's worse than killing her."<sup>61</sup> The passage

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<sup>60</sup> Dalven 1990, 42.

<sup>61</sup> Dalven 1990, 42. In her interview with Maimin, Dalven indicates that this scene is taken directly from her real life: "They [her relatives] told him [her father] that so-and-so wants a wife and he wants a wife of our own people and I'd like you to arrange for him to meet your daughter. The first time that happened I was sixteen years old. So my brother... one of the scenes in the play is my brother raising hell because they

reads like an indictment of Dalven's own marriage; though she had some choice in whom to marry, she too yielded to economic necessity and parental pressure and married almost exactly the man described in the play: a wealthy furrier whom the family had known in Ioannina and who, as in the play, received no education in America but went straight into business.<sup>62</sup> David's speech, therefore, represents the most forceful moment in her corpus when a male member of the family intervenes on a woman's behalf. Even though the speaker is a man, this speech represents the ultimate rejection of the imposition of Old World patriarchy on Greek Jewish immigrant women in the US.<sup>63</sup>

Anna/Rae and David/Joe were able to complete their educations. Nonetheless, it is a point of both personal pride but communal shame that in doing so their success was exceptional among the immigrant children of their generation, most of whom were still bound by traditional way. Dalven tells Maimin that

*We were a rebellious family, my brother and I. On the one hand, we were the talk of the town among the Romaniotes as remarkable children. On the other hand, we were bad because we were doing things that the parents were against. Not a single Romaniote girl in my generation went to college.*

Q. *What about the boys?*

A. *The same. My brother was the first doctor and I was the first teacher among my people.*<sup>64</sup>

Dalven depicts a rather more optimistic world in *Our Kind of People*, offering Anna and, to a lesser extent, Joe as avatars of a new kind of Greek

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wanted to marry me off when I was seventeen. Oh, he had a fight with them! They dropped it. He threatened them.” (Dalven 1991 [Interview], 49).

<sup>62</sup> For the biographical parallel, see Dalven 1991 (Interview), 50-51, where Dalven describes her future husband and the circumstances of their engagement and marriage.

<sup>63</sup> Dalven seems unsure about whether a speech like this from her would have made any difference; it was only because her brother was the first-born son that he had this kind of influence, as Dalven notes: “It couldn't work since Joe was against it. That's how they (?) the firstborn son” (Dalven 1991 [Interview], 49).

<sup>64</sup> Dalven 1991 (Interview), 39-40.

Jew, freed from the traditions and cultural mores which had prevented their abilities to fulfill their personal and intellectual ambitions.

#### **4. “All people are her brothers and sisters”: Becoming American in *Esther***

The plot of *Esther* offers a political and personal counter-model to the previous plays, demonstrating the full possibilities of American life. At the political level, unlike *A Matter of Survival*, which takes place simultaneously but is set in Athens, the family that gathers in Manhattan as the play opens in late 1944 have no inkling of the genocide of their Greek kin in the Holocaust. More personally, the play begins with a group of siblings – closely modeled on Dalven’s family again – congratulating their youngest brother on his upcoming wedding which, significantly, is a love match and, just as importantly to Dalven, “Miriam’s [the bride’s] father can afford it. He’s not exactly a poor man.”<sup>65</sup> The dual problems of arranged marriage and dowries are thus solved in the play’s opening scene. *Esther*, then, picks up twenty years after *Our Kind of People*, with the same family in different guise, enjoying the fruits of life in America in a way that was neither possible for those Greek-Jews who did not emigrate nor to those immigrants of the previous generation. David, for instance, has become a doctor, fulfilling the aim of the different character with the same name from *Our Kind of People*. Rebecca, too, the stand-in for Dalven, has become a teacher, just as Anna had hoped in the previous play. Where the family in *Our Kind of People*, moreover, lived in a “cold water rail road flat on 5 Eldridge Street,” an evocation of a familiar kind of tenement for Jewish immigrants, *Esther* is set in “the living room of a middle-class home in the upper-story of a private two family house in Brooklyn,” thus signaling the family’s rising economic fortune,<sup>66</sup> and partway through the play, one of the sons, Jesse, announces that he is moving to New Jersey, saying, “It’s like country there –

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<sup>65</sup> Dalven 1983, 10. Dalven’s stand-in is named Rebecca Cohen, “a college teacher in her mid thirties,” about a decade younger than Dalven herself would have been, but sharing the same profession.

<sup>66</sup> Dalven 1983, 3.

lots of trees and grass, right in front of our house.”<sup>67</sup> The impoverished immigrant family marks its coming into wealth through its move from tenement to urban duplex, from duplex to suburban house.

The second strand of the plot of the play follows the children’s aging mother, the eponymous Esther (who has the same name as Dalven’s real mother), who stands as a foil between the generations, between the old ways and the new, between Greece and America. In one scene, Esther tells her gathered children about the reasons for her immigration: “Papa and me we come to America to make better life for you, so you can have good education. [...] In old country, in them days, not so easy for poor people give children good education. You know why doctor in my village say to me? ‘Go to America, Esther; there you and your husband will slave, but your children will become real people.’”<sup>68</sup> In this, Esther lays out the different opportunities available to her and her children, both in Greece and in the United States. Indeed, articulating her own ambiguous position, she continues: “But all the time you live in new world, papa and me we live in old world; most times is like we never leave our village.”<sup>69</sup> Esther identifies her personal sacrifices, identifying them as the price she paid for her children’s inclusion in America: “We help all we can so you can belong to this country, where we bring you. Is how we try to be part of your world, like you say. Papa and me, we have no chance to belong to this country for ourselves.”<sup>70</sup> This assertion epitomizes Dalven’s optimistic view of the possibilities of American life for her children: education, love marriages, wealth.

Thus, the wedding announcement that opens the play attains significance as a symbol of the family’s Americanness. Jesse (the only one of the children born in America), has rejected his mother’s attempts to find a match. In saying so, moreover, Esther uses nearly the same phrase as the title of the previous play: “I try to find girl for him from our people.”<sup>71</sup> Rebecca (Dalven’s autobiographical stand-in), however, ap-

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<sup>67</sup> Dalven 1983, 35.

<sup>68</sup> Dalven 1983, 21-22.

<sup>69</sup> Dalven 1983, 22.

<sup>70</sup> Dalven 1983, 22.

<sup>71</sup> Dalven 1983, 22.

proves of Jesse's choice, saying "It's always better to let children find their own mates, mama," to which Esther says: "In old country, we never believe like that. Father find man for his daughter, girl for his son."<sup>72</sup>

Their discussion then reveals that Rebecca has gotten a divorce (as did the real Rae Dalven): "I help you find somebody you like, so you marry again, Rebecca," Esther says.<sup>73</sup> Rebecca, however, rejects this, noting that her own personal fulfillment cannot be achieved within the confines of marriage as she understood it: "No one will ever have me, mama. [...] The men who are interested to marry me, expect me to give up my profession and give all my time to their profession. I can't do that mama."<sup>74</sup> When he mother asks here if she "want[s] something more from life" besides "teaching," she responds "I'm writing a book."<sup>75</sup> In this, *Esther* brings the story of Rae Dalven – through her various fictional alter-egos – to its autobiographical culmination: the female protagonist becomes self-sufficient economically and self-fulfilled through her vocation as artist and educator.

The same fulfillment is true of Esther. Where Rebecca achieved freedom through divorce, Esther's husband has died, allowing her a freedom she had never previously known. Indeed, one of the most notable elements of the play is the near complete absence of men. The first thing she does with that freedom, moreover, is to pursue two other forms of freedom: first, she becomes economically self-sufficient as a seamstress, and second, she attempts to naturalize as an American citizen; her pursuit of this goal and the reactions of the other characters to it is the central action of the play. Act I Scene 2, for instance, is largely given over to a discussion between Esther and her neighbor Lena Feldman, a Jewish woman of about the same age. Though both Jews, Lena and Esther come from different ethnic streams within the religion – Esther is a Romaniote Jew from Greece and Lena is an Ashkenazi Jew from Poland. The two women have much in common as aging immigrants from a lost world, but their worlds are relatively unknown to each other. As

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<sup>72</sup> Dalven 1983, 24.

<sup>73</sup> Dalven 1983, 24.

<sup>74</sup> Dalven 1983, 24.

<sup>75</sup> Dalven 1983, 24.

the scene progresses, Esther and Lena discuss their relative backgrounds in relation to the Holocaust:

Lena: *Many Jews in Greece now, Esther?*

Esther: *My daughter Rebecca say 80,000 Jews live in Greece before Hitler kill most of them. He kill almost all my relatives there; nephews, nieces; only one niece and her family living there now, and one nephew. Only 5000 Jews left in Greece today.*

Lena: *"I lost all my relatives in Poland. Not a single soul is left alive."<sup>76</sup>*

This discussion thus represents the decisive break between old world and new: despite their struggles to Americanize, there is no old world left for the elderly women to return to. In this light, the course of the conversation is significant, for in the very next line, Esther asks "You American citizen, Lena?" to which Lena replies "Oh, sure. I became a citizen myself after I went to night school and learned how to read and write English."<sup>77</sup>

This, then, spurs Esther, free of the economic obligations of the sweatshop and the domestic obligations of children and husband, to pursue her own life, and her vision of that is through becoming fully American. This journey is part of Dalven's broader argument over personal and national identity during the course of the plays. Indeed, while Jesse proves his Americanness by buying a house in the suburbs, and David by dramatically returning from four years in the European theater as a medic, the man with the largest speaking part is no man at all, but an eleven-year-old neighbor, Jonathan, who, in Act II, Scene 1, is quizzing Esther, who is preparing for her Naturalization exam, the ultimate expression of Americanization and assimilation; when Jonathan tells her about the Oath of Allegiance, she asks: "What mean allegiance?" to which he replies: "It means that you belong with your heart to this

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<sup>76</sup> Dalven 1983, 33-34.

<sup>77</sup> Dalven 1983, 34.

country,” and she, in turn, replies: “We belong to this country with our hearts more than thirty years.”<sup>78</sup>

The play also represents Dalven’s universal vision of American identity in the character of Patience, Esther’s African-American housekeeper. During the study session, Patience describes her life growing up in Georgia, the African-American experience under slavery. In particular, she tells Jonathan that African-Americans weren’t allowed to march in Lincoln’s funeral until the Assistant Secretary of War overturned the ban:

Jonathan: *I’m sure that isn’t in my history book.*

Patience: *I don’t expect that it is. I could tell your teacher a few more facts in American history which are not in your history book.*<sup>79</sup>

Dalven, perhaps influenced by her time at Fisk University, a historically black university, allows the voices of marginalized figures into the history of the nation – not just immigrants like the Greeks and Jews who populate the plays, but African-Americans as well. Indeed, when another of Esther’s daughters, Sara expresses her displeasure at her mother’s undertaking: “You are killing yourself for nothing,” she says and, later, “What good will it do at your age, mama?”<sup>80</sup> She then gets into a debate with Patience that reveals the universal humanism of Dalven’s vision of America:

Sara: *But what benefit will you get out of it, mama?*

Patience: *Excuse me, Mrs. Cohen, I would like to answer your daughter’s question.*

Sara (curtly): *I was speaking to my mother, not to you.*

Patience: *I know you were, but your mother happens to be my sister.*

Sara: *What is she talking about?*

Esther: *Patience feel all people are her brothers and sisters.*<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Dalven 1983, 61.

<sup>79</sup> Dalven 1983, 61.

<sup>80</sup> Dalven 1983, 68.

<sup>81</sup> Dalven 1983, 69.



In this way, Dalven allows for a capacious definition of Americanness beyond what is found in official textbooks, a vision that includes women, immigrants, and minorities and reaffirms the universalist message which had informed her early drafts of *A Matter of Survival*, in which Orthodox and Jewish Greeks fought alongside each other. Though her subsequent research into the extensive collaboration of Orthodox Greeks with the Nazis forced a revision of this thesis as regards the place of Jews in the citizen and national life of pre- and post-War Greece, Dalven finds it again in the story of immigrant and minority solidarity in the United States.

Indeed, this sense of the family's growing Americanness is not simply a matter of dialogue, but plays a fundamental role in the action of the plot. Rebecca and David (the analog characters to Anna and David from *Our Kind of People*) approve of her mother's attempt to naturalize, and Rebecca says: "You know what I'm going to do for mama, when she gets her citizenship? I'm going to drive her to Washington, to visit the White House."<sup>82</sup> The family's Americanness is, as immigrants and refugees, as much a matter of geography as ideology. When David announces that his mother has passed the test, he announces: "I now declare you an American lady," but it is Patience, the African-American housekeeper, who delivers the thesis of the play: "Your mother has always been an American lady."<sup>83</sup>

## 5. "You Don't Have to Forget Your Heritage to Become American": Memories of Greece and the American Dream

An undated fragment written in Dalven's handwriting sums up her early life as depicted in *Our Kind of People* in a few sentences:

*Papa left Greece so he could earn a living for his family, so that his daughters could find husbands without a dowry. When he got here he could not give up his ways of the old school. The children learn English – Irene – all don't want to know Greek – America—assim-*

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<sup>82</sup> Dalven 1983, 47.

<sup>83</sup> Dalven 1983, 84.

*ilation program – I don't want to hear Greek – I get to high school English – too much education for a girl is bad – after the marriage going to Greece + translating Eliyia.*<sup>84</sup>

Joseph Eliyia, the most famous Jewish poet of Greece, was nephew to her husband, and this relationship became central to Dalven's scholarly identity. Though he died in 1931 and Dalven did not travel to Greece until 1937, they corresponded frequently and, after his death, Dalven went to Greece to visit Eliyia's mother. Her translation of his poetry in 1944, during the height of the Holocaust, was her first major attempt to grapple with the questions of identity, nationality and memory that would sustain her for another fifty years.

Dalven never comments on her husband's interest in Eliyia's poetry; given his indifference to education or aesthetics, having a cousin as a poet and scholar was probably something more of a curiosity. For Dalven, however, Eliyia's work offered her a way to legitimize her interests and to tie together all the pieces of her otherwise fragmented identity. This is represented in one scene in *Our Kind of People*, in which Anna and her brother David are arguing about Anna's professor's assignment that she give a talk in class on Greek culture. The assignment leads to a rare argument between the otherwise close siblings about the place of their Greek, Jewish, and Greek-Jewish identities in America:

David: *Why the hell do you have to tell people you're from Greece in the first place?*

Anna: *It's where we were born, isn't it?*

David: *You amaze me. You were five years old when we came to America. Those five years are the only difference between you and an American born child. You started school like any other American.*

Anna: *We started out with a different heritage.*

David: *I thought we came here to become American...*

Anna: *You don't have to forget your heritage to become American.*<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Onassis Archives.

<sup>85</sup> Dalven 1990, 89.

The passage dramatizes contrasting ideas about assimilation. David, as the first-born son destined to go to medical school, is deeply invested in being fully American, with all the economic benefits and cultural liberation that the adoption of such an identity implied. Indeed, Dalven's brother Joe would cause something of a family scandal by marrying a Christian woman.<sup>86</sup> Dalven, however, by personal orientation and gendered expectations for women in the early twentieth century, wanted to be a teacher, a position that would also bequeath to her the responsibility for preserving her family's and her people's memory and traditions.

As all her plays' sentimental and melodramatic yet unsparring and often unflattering view of Greek-Jewish life suggests, Dalven was committed to preserving the past, even if she found it at odds with her own worldview. This is represented in the rest of Anna's reply to David: "The main reason I chose Greek is that it's the language that mama and papa speak."<sup>87</sup> In handwritten notes on this page, Dalven crossed out part of the last sentence and rewrote it: "Anyway, the main reason I chose Greek is because I want to write about our people." In the revision, she deleted the reference to her parents because she was conflicted about her allegiance to them. On the one hand, her parents brought the family to the US, creating the conditions that allowed their son to become a doctor and their daughter a teacher. On the other hand, her parents' inability or unwillingness to embrace their new culture brought Dalven a lifetime of pain. Through this revision, Dalven's ambivalence is made visible.

In *Our Kind of People*, Dalven gives voice to her own life's mission, putting in the mouth of Anna, her teenage self, the feelings which motivated her over the course of her several decades long involvement in writing about Greek Jewish life in both academic and creative venues:

*There's a void inside of me, because all the values of my home, appear worthless in America. No matter how much I learn about American and British literature and history at college, even though I love what I am learning, that void is always there. When I graduate and become*

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<sup>86</sup> Dalven 1991 (Interview), 43.

<sup>87</sup> Dalven 1990, 86. The fragment breaks off at the word "our," but I presume the missing next word would be "people."

*a teacher, I'm going back to Greece. I wanna find the house where David and I were born, where my parents were born, and I want to write about our life there (looks at the objects on the table).<sup>88</sup> I know this isn't much to talk about. If my parents had been rich in Greece, I would have had my mother's sterling silver to show, which was part of her trousseau, but sold almost all of it to raise money for my father to come to America.<sup>89</sup>*

The play concludes with Anna forcing her parents to accept that she will not marry the man they want, thus fully rejecting the Old World patriarchy under which all of the women Dalven wrote about suffered. Anna, a college graduate, will now get her own job and have her own independence; indeed, at just this climactic moment in the play, the phone rings with an offer from a school offering Anna a permanent position teaching creative writing. Anna accepts the offer but says she can't start until September; first she wants to study in Greece.

This, too, is similar to what happened to the real life Dalven, with one significant difference. Whereas Anna is free to go travelling, the real Dalven was unable to shake off the claims of patriarchy and family so easily. She grudgingly accepted a marriage proposal from an upper-class Greek-Jewish immigrant her family had known in Ioannina. The marriage was ultimately unhappy; her husband was hardly more accommodating of her intellectual and career goals than her father. Dalven says in her interview with Maimin that "I cooked, I baked, I did all sorts of things to make him comfortable. The first thing he did was ask me to give up my job."<sup>90</sup> She was forced to go to school only during the day, while her husband worked. This, and the infertility which plagued them (which she claims medical tests proved was his), led to an unhappy marriage and eventual divorce. It was only at this point, in 1936, that

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<sup>88</sup> The objects referenced are earlier identified as water jugs called *kukmula*, one of the few things the family brought to the US from Greece.

<sup>89</sup> Dalven 1990, 90. Dalven also edited this line by hand: "but she sold almost all of it to raise money to support us while my father was away." Though distinction seems small, it suggests the competing autobiographical narratives which Dalven was working out in the play.

<sup>90</sup> Dalven 1991 (Interview), 53.

Dalven, in a bid to save her marriage, went on a fourteen-month trip around the world, and to Greece for the first of her seventeen trips there. Though the two divorced upon their return, the trip fulfilled her (and Anna's) lifelong goal of seeing the house in which she was born and forging lifelong connections with those relatives who remained. After the Holocaust, she did keep in touch with the few survivors and their descendants and with several non-Jewish Greek writers. It was also during this trip that Joseph Eliyia's mother passed along the late poet's dying wish that she translate his poetry into English, thus launching her career in both Greek and Jewish literature.

*Our Kind of People*, then, can be seen as an attempt by Dalven, then in her late 80s, to recreate on stage the crucial moment in her life some sixty years earlier when she first rejected the demands of traditional Greek Jewish patriarchy and embraced her own financial and intellectual independence. The freedom she felt in claiming her agency and using it to pursue her passion for playwriting is exemplified in a letter she wrote to William Rose Benet on November 22, 1948:

*I must eventually become a part of the theater world. Imagine a human being tingling and radiant with life, with the strength of the soil, eyes forever brimming with the wonder of childhood, sensitive to the suffering of others, tuned to the voices of nature – I have seen myself like this when studying for the theatre.<sup>91</sup>*

Dalven never arrived in the world of the theater as she had hoped, but she nevertheless managed to leave behind a remarkable series of autobiographical plays which offer glimpses into the lost world of pre-War Greek Jewry both in Greece and in the US. The plays tell two interlocking sets of stories: *Marriages are Arranged in Heaven* and *A Matter of Survival* tell the story of Greek-Jewish women in Greece, while *Our Kind of People* and *Esther* follow Greek Jews in America. The plays represent Dalven's own vision of the world as proven by her own life: that even as Greek-Jewish culture in Greece suffocated its women and was eventually exterminated completely in the Holocaust, Greek-Jewish

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<sup>91</sup> Benét Family Papers.

women in American were asserting their right to live a new and freer life in a new country that accepted them wholly for who they were. It is to her credit that Dalven used the freedom that America offered her to chronicle the lives and experiences of her coreligionists who were not as fortunate as she.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

Charalampos Pennas, *The Byzantine Church of Panagia Krena in Chios: History, architecture, sculpture, painting (late 12<sup>th</sup> century)*. Leiden: Alexandros Press, 2017, 388 pp. (256 pp. Text plus 305 illustrations mostly in colour), ISBN 978-94-90387-08-2.

The church of Panagia Krena on Chios immediately catches the eye of the modern visitor, offering an unexpected spatial encounter with its impressive architecture, surrounded by olive, oak, and pine trees, among many others. Its remarkable architecture, subtle ceramic decoration on the exterior surfaces, and almost intact wall paintings left a lasting impression on Charalampos Pennas during his first visit to the monument in the 1980s (p. v), which eventually led him to write his award-winning book.<sup>1</sup> The book itself can be considered as a monograph that tries to place the monument and its late-Komnenian wall paintings into a proper historical context, through a study of the church itself and an inquiry of its founders' connections to the western Asia Minor and Constantinople.

The book presents a detailed analysis of Panagia Krena Church, one of the few surviving Middle Byzantine domed octagon churches, in this case strongly imitating the architecture of Nea Moni on the same island. The wall paintings, dated to 1197 based on epigraphic evidence, allows the author to make a complete art historical and iconographic analysis, which occupies a significant portion of the book. The iconographic program strongly emphasizes the funerary context of the church, the social status of its patrons, and their relation to the metropolitan of Hypaipa in Asia Minor. The book also includes approximately three hundred explanatory illustrations, such as the photographs of the exterior façades, the architectural sculpture and the wall paintings, the restitution drawings of the church, and the diagrams of the iconographic program.

In the preface of his book, Pennas explains the incentive behind his research as a wide range of dates suggested for the construction of the monument. In order to write a more precise history of the church, he

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<sup>1</sup> 2019 Maria Theocharis Prize, Christian Archaeological Society.

conducted surveys at the site and minutely studied the surviving evidence. He also employed prosopography, examining the founders and their connections to Asia Minor. In line with this incentive, the first chapter of the book focuses on the historical context of the monument. Pennas briefly explains the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>-century Chios, starting from the foundation of Nea Moni, the imperial commission par excellence on the island. Then, he compiles the existing literature on the church of Panagia Krena. The surroundings of the monument seem to have acquired the toponym *krena* from a nearby water source and to have become a popular recreational destination for the islanders in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Two Byzantine family names appear in the donor portraits in the narthex: Kodratos and Pepagomenos. The founder Eustathios Kodratos is depicted on the eastern wall as he is presenting a model of the church to the enthroned Mary. The patronymic name of her wife, Pagomene, appears in the family portrait in the south arcosolium, manifesting her relation to the metropolitan Stephanos Pepagomenos. The representation of Stephanos himself as a saint in the prothesis, among other hierarchs, in a suppliant position to the virgin in the central apse, implies his intermediary role for the donors of the church. The chapter ends with a list of the transcription and translation of the thirteen painted and carved inscriptions, found in the church.

The second chapter of the book concentrates on the architecture of the church, starting with a general definition of the domed octagonal design, the distinction between the ‘simple’ and the ‘complex’ types, and a mention to the known examples of the typology. Several theories about the emergence of the design are summarized by the author in a very refined way, with an emphasis on the Constantinopolitan influence in its origins. This section is followed by an explanation of the construction phases, a detailed architectural description, and discussion. The narthex of the church was constructed shortly after the naos and the sanctuary; the outer narthex, however, was added later, in 1539 according to the inscription on the belfry sill. The upper structure of the narthex and the central dome collapsed after the earthquake in 1881 and rebuilt in 1884.

In a subchapter entitled “The contribution of Panagia Krena to the architecture of the twelfth century” the architecture of the church is com-

pared to, and discussed with, two other Byzantine churches: the church of St. George Sykousis on Chios and the church of St. Spyridon in Selymbria. These monuments are considered to be the earliest examples of the plan-scheme, after the catholicon of Nea Moni. Pennas particularly focuses on the church in Selymbria in his comparison since the other one is largely altered in the successive periods. In fact, the Spyridon Church in Selymbria is completely demolished in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and its architecture is merely known via earlier architectural descriptions and some surviving visual documents. Pennas, however, does not mention the now-lost character of the monument. He considers the Hallensleben's hypothetical restitution drawings<sup>2</sup> as if they were representing the actual situation in every detail. For example, comparing the façade articulation of two monuments, Pennas suggests that in Spyridon church plasters on the exterior do not correspond to the interior arrangement of the church, and the northern and southern façades are treated differently, creating 'an asymmetry' in the plan (p. 33). By contrast, Hallensleben does not assert an asymmetry in his restitution plan but simply applies two different possible façade articulations on the same drawing.<sup>3</sup> Pennas also compares the narthexes of two churches, with an assumption that the narthex of Spyridon Church was roofed with a dome and two barrel vaults at the sides (p. 32). The detailed architectural description of Spyridon Church, made by the restoration architect Mavrides, is the only reliable source on the matter. As a matter of fact, Mavrides does not mention a dome, but only a barrel vault in the two-storeyed narthex.<sup>4</sup> Interestingly enough, in the Hallensleben's restitution, the narthex dome is only shown on the plan but excluded from the section drawings. My humble opinion is that the architectural features of the church in Selym-

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<sup>2</sup> Hallensleben, H. 1986. "Die Ehemalige Spyridonkirche in Silivri (Selymbria): Eine Achtstützenkirche im Gebiet Konstantinopel", in O. Feld & U. Peschlow (eds), *Studien zur Spätantiken und byzantinischen Kunst: Friedrich Wilhelm Deichmann gewidmet*. Bonn: R. Habelt, 35-46.

<sup>3</sup> As he noted under the restitution drawings (Abb. 1) "Im Grundriß wurden an Nord- und Südfassade zwei unterschiedliche Gliederungsmöglichkeiten zur Auswahl gestellt." see Hallensleben (1986, 40).

<sup>4</sup> Mavrides' report was published later in Stamoules, M. A. 1938. "Ο εν Σηλυβρία Βυζαντινός Ναός του Αγίου Σπυριδωνος" *Τα θρακικά* 9, 37-44.

bria need to be approached more cautiously before making any stylistic comparisons. Besides, Pennas does not include recent publications on Spyridon Church. It could have been useful to include especially the Ousterhout's articles<sup>5</sup> since he brought to light some previously unknown photographs and an 18<sup>th</sup>-century drawing of the church, which would have allowed Pennas to make more secure comparisons of the façade treatments of two churches.

The third chapter of the book is dedicated to the sculptural decoration. They are found almost exclusively incorporated in the masonry. It is worth mentioning that the many marble elements in the church are reused fragments, mostly dating to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, one of the main reasons behind the confusion about the church's chronology. The chancel screen of the church receives a more detailed examination. Based on the stylistic and structural unity of the fragments of the marble templon, Pennas suggests that they must have originally belonged to the same 11<sup>th</sup>-century monument, before their re-installation in Panagia Krena Church in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century (pp. 36-38).

In the next chapter, the wall paintings are described, stylistically analyzed, and discussed in detail. Pennas cataloged and explained each surviving wall painting in three main sections of the church: sanctuary, naos, and narthex. He underlines the appropriation of the iconographic program according to the donors' preferences and the historical context in which the church was constructed and decorated. The funerary character of the monument, for example, was emphasized in the iconographic program of the narthex. In the wall paintings, the explicit predominance of the bishops and saints associated with Asia Minor manifests the connections of the church's patrons. Finally, *Panagia*, to whom the church was dedicated, was represented in many places in the church: in

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<sup>5</sup> For example, Ousterhout, R. 2011. "The Byzantine Architecture of Thrace: the View from Constantinople", in Ch. Bakirtzis, N. Zekos & X. Moniaros (eds), *4<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Thracian Studies: Byzantine Thrace Evidence and Remains, Komotini, 18-22 April 2007, Proceedings*. Amsterdam: A. M. Hakkert, 489-502; Ousterhout, R. 2012. "Two Byzantine Churches of Silivri/ Selymbria", in eds. M. J. Johnson, R. Ousterhout & A. Papalexandrou, *Approaches to Byzantine Architecture and its Decoration: Studies in Honor of Slobodan Ćurčić*. Farnham-Surrey: Ashgate, 239-257.

the main apse in orant position, in the east wall of the narthex receiving the model of the church from Kodratos, in the tympanum of the south arcosolium blessing the founders, and above the main entrance to the nave.

The fifth chapter presents stylistic comments on the wall paintings, the composition of narrative scenes, and the stylistic rendering of the individual figures. The author interprets the proliferation of the figures in many compositions as a characteristic of the later Byzantine art, which is signaled also in the late-Komnenian wall paintings. He, then, describes the wall paintings of Panagia Krena to be belonging to the 12<sup>th</sup>-century 'monumental' style, having also some elements of the so-called 'dynamic' style. According to Pennas, the movement of the figures are kept in minimum, and they do not reflect linearity or any mannerist features. He finds close stylistic connections with the wall paintings of the chapel of the Virgin on Patmos (ca 1180?). In the last analysis, Pennas argues for a provincial workshop with strong connections to the western Asia Minor (p. 154).

In the concluding chapter, the arguments are summarized with an emphasis on the monument's transitional role from the late-Komnenian to the Laskarid art and architecture, signaled through its brickwork ornamentations and mural paintings. The conclusion is followed by two appendices in which the architectural sculpture and the iconographic program of the wall paintings are cataloged and briefly described.

Pennas' book is a valuable contribution to Byzantine art and architecture history. Via first-hand observation and careful study, it brings to light a significant Byzantine monument, which was previously somehow overlooked. He provides a complete picture of the church and its patrons, employing a variety of tools as much as the available material permits. The book is a good read for the scholars of Byzantine art and architecture, specifically focusing on the context of a monument, and the people who imagined and constructed it. Thus, the text goes beyond to be a simple monograph of a church, providing some insights into the late-12<sup>th</sup> century Aegean world.

Görkem Günay

Gonda Van Steen, *Adoption, Memory and Cold War Greece: Kid pro quo?*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2019, 350 pp., ISBN (Print) 978-0-472-13158-7.

## **Tribute to the Lost Children**

From mid-20th century onwards the children enter the historical scene as new historical subjects in addition to generals, politicians, and diplomats. During the Greek Civil War (1946-1949), which took place in the context of the Cold War, it is estimated that almost 400.000 children lost one or both of their parents. Social historians have conducted a thorough research about 50.000 to 60.000 children who were transported to the Soviet Bloc countries or the ‘paidoupoles’ [child towns] of Queen Frederica’s Royal Welfare Fund, because there are numerous archival sources on that issue, and historians are used to work on archives. In her book *Adoption, Memory and Cold War Greece: Kid pro quo?*, Gonda Van Steen discussed another related yet largely neglected topic: the 3.200 Greek children who were transported to the States, after the end of the civil conflict. She has examined all categories of children who were transported, including orphans, abandoned and “illegitimate” and, thus, unwanted children, that were selected for foreign adoption between 1950 and 1962.

Gonda Van Steen is a Belgian-American classical scholar and linguist, who specializes in ancient and modern Greek language and literature. Since 2018, she has been Koraes Professor of Modern Greek and Byzantine History, Language and Literature and Director of the Centre for Hellenic Studies at King’s College London. As she notes “After twenty-five years of applying myself to ancient Greek theater and reception studies”, she received a letter from Mike, an American, who proved to be the grandson of Elias Argyriadis, a Greek communist.

Elias Argyriadis and three others were found guilty of espionage by a military tribunal, sentenced to death and executed in Athens in 1952. The most famous among those executed was Nikos Beloyannis, the “Man with the Carnation”; Pablo Picasso made his portrait. A few months before the execution, Katerina Dalla, the wife of Elias Argyriadis, had committed suicide. In 1955, the authorities took custody of the

two girls of Elias and Katerina and arbitrarily arranged for their adoption by an American family without the possibility of contact with their siblings and their relatives in Greece. In 2013, Mike, the adult son of one of the two adopted women who grew up in America, persuaded his mother to tell him the little she could—or wished to—remember about her past. Mike wanted to know more; after an internet search he discovered Van Steen’s scholarly pursuits and special interests and he solicited her help in investigating his mother’s early years. From 1955 to 2013 it was more than half of a century. So, Part 1 of the book is entitled “The Past That Has Not Passed”.

Part 2, entitled “Nation of Orphans, Orphaned Nation” charts the institutional landscape and socioeconomic context that placed the Greek export of children for adoption on the fast track. Early instances of these postwar and Cold War adoptions may be called “political” adoptions. Children whose families were suspected of having supported the Communist Party of Greece were among the victims of virulent anticommunism. After approximately 1955, however, a new and larger wave of US-bound adoptions from Greece acquired different characteristics. The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) played an important if not unblemished role to find Greek children for America’s childless families; a network operated with little transparency and legal validity as an adoption body was established. Stephen S. Scopas, president of AHEPA, was later tried as the main mediator in the circuit of illegal adoptions but he was acquitted, because adoptions were made and completed in Greece.

Part 3 “Insights from Greek Adoption Cases” closes by returning to Mike’s story and that of the Argyriadis children in recent years. Thus, this study’s more psychologically oriented analysis of trauma, memory, and postmemory comes full circle. Van Steen ‘marries’ the personal with the political and the collective, the micro-stories with History and the (post)memories of the adopted today. For some -then- children, the experiences were traumatic and went on to create organizations and support networks that reinforce their sense of belonging.

The research of Van Steen’s took place both in Greece and the States. Her investigation focus is narrow and well defined. Her sources include



an impressive variety of published and unpublished archival material, legal records, and numerous interviews and recollections. The book includes also two precious Appendices. Appendix 1 presents a chronology of selected facts, juxtaposing family history with national, bilateral, and global history and adoption politics. Appendix 2 includes practical Information about Greek-born adoptees—pathways and paperwork.

Why should anyone care about overseas adoptions that happened more than half a century ago?

Because this book weaves the little-known but extensive Greek adoption movement into the broader narrative of political and social history of the Cold War, during which, in the Greek context, the heaviest burden of suffering fell on women and children. Reading the narratives and files (however scant) of the Greek adoption history means reading a history of despair, poverty, and violence. Many testimonies incorporated in this book must reassert the voices of the young, unnamed, uneducated, or powerless. These testimonies, each chosen for its psychological and analytical value, place private histories and national histories in a poignant dialectic relationship with each other, and together they spotlight the strange moral universe of the Cold War Greek adoption movement.

The deep Greek Civil War, like most civil wars, did not begin with the armed struggle, and it did not end with a decisive victory-versus-defeat scenario. The Civil War's depth reached far into the future, to affect how subsequent generations have interpreted it, ignored it, used it, exploited it, and so on.

On the American end, adoption policies and practices captured the ways in which the States wished to represent itself in the global theater of operations. Adoption became a metaphor for the national community.

Tasoula Vervenioti

## Contributors

Thomas Arentzen holds a PhD (2014) and since 2018 a *docentur* (habilitation) in Church History from Lund University. Exploring the intersection between liturgical poetry and early Christian bodies, he recently spent a year as Fellow at Dumbarton Oaks and completed the research project “Bodies in Motion” at the University of Oslo. He now works as a Researcher at Uppsala University conducting the project “Beyond the Garden: An Ecocritical Approach to Early Byzantine Christianity”. His publications include *The Virgin in Song: Mary and the Poetry of Romanos the Melodist* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017) and *The Reception of the Virgin in Byzantium: Marian Narratives in Texts and Images* (Cambridge University Press, 2019) coedited with Mary Cunningham. Arentzen is also article editor of *Patristica Nordica Annularia*.

Averil Cameron was the Warden of Keble College Oxford, and Professor of Late Antique and Byzantine History, until her retirement in 2010. Her Sather lectures on *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire* were published in 1991 and she is the author of many other books and articles on late antiquity and Byzantium, most recently *Byzantine Matters* (2014), *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity* (also 2014), *Arguing it Out* (2016) and *Byzantine Christianity* (2017).

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Charis Messis holds a PhD in Byzantine Studies from Écoles des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris and an habilitation from the Sorbonne University. He now teaches Byzantine literature at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. His research interests concern Byzantine history and literature, especially the history of gender, along with other social and anthropological aspects of the Byzantine world.

Ingela Nilsson is Professor of Greek and Byzantine Studies at Uppsala University and director of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (2019-21). She has a particular interest in narratological approaches to Byzantine literature. Her next monograph, *Writer and Occasion in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: Authorial Voice of Constantine Manasses*, is in press with CUP (2021).

Tasoula Vervenioti is an independent historian. She received Diploma from the University of Athens, Scholarship from the Institution of State Grants (IKY), PhD from Panteion University (1991); she was Visiting Research Fellow of the Program in Hellenic Studies at Princeton University (1998), teacher in Secondary Education and Tutor at Hellenic Open University (2005-2014). Her research project is on social history, focus on women/gender and children during the 1940s and 1950s. She has published four books in Greek: the Double Book: The Narration of Stamatia Barbatsi. Its Historical Reading took the Greek National Award on Chronicle – Testimony, 2004. She has participated in many conferences: she has edited and contributed in volumes published in Greek, English, French and German. Since 2011 she organizes training seminars for establishing grassroots oral history groups all over Greece.