

# *Νέα Πώμη*

*Rivista di ricerche bizantinistiche*

IO

(2013)



Roma

Università degli Studi di Roma «Tor Vergata»

2014

ANNA KOMNENE AND THE POLITICS OF SCHEDOGRAPHIC  
TRAINING AND COLLOQUIAL DISCOURSE\*

Though much progress in the study of eleventh- and twelfth-century education in Byzantium has been made<sup>1</sup>, the humble type of grammatical exercise called σχέδος («sketch», «improvisation») has not received the detailed attention it deserves<sup>2</sup>. A more careful examination of the

---

\* The research for this paper was conducted at the Institut für Byzantinistik (München) with a grant by the Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung (Bonn). I am grateful to the former institution for its hospitality and to the latter for its support. My particular thanks go to Albrecht Berger, Francesco D’Aiuto, Franz Tinnefeld, Ioannis Stouraitis and Santo Lucà for assistance in bibliographical matters, and to Diether Reinsch for discussing with me the passages from the *Alexiad*. All translations are my own.

<sup>1</sup> See, indicatively, P. LEMERLE, *Cinq études sur le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle byzantin*, Paris 1977, pp. 192–248; V. KATSAROS, *Ιωάννης Κασταμονίτης. Συμβολή στη μελέτη του βίου, του έργου και της εποχής του*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1988 (Βυζαντινά Κείμενα και Μελέται, 22); P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180*, Cambridge 1993, pp. 325–330; V. KATSAROS, *Προδρομικοί «θεσμοί» για την οργάνωση της ανώτερης εκπαίδευσης της εποχής των Κομνηνών από την προκομνήνεια περίοδο*, in *Η αυτοκρατορία σε κρίση (?)*. *To Βυζάντιο τον 11ο αιώνα (1025–1081) / The Empire in Crisis (?)*. *Byzantium in the 11th Century (1025–1081)*, ed. V. VLYSSIDOU, Αθήνα 2003 (Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών. Ινστιτούτο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών, Διεθνή Συμπόσια, 11), pp. 443–471. For a summary of research with good bibliography see A. MARKOPOULOS, *De la structure de l’école byzantine. Le maître, les livres et le processus éducatif*, in *Lire et écrire à Byzance*, éd. par B. MONDRAIN, Paris 2006 (Centre de Recherche d’Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance: Monographies, 19), pp. 85–96; for a freshly published overview of education theory and practice see A. GIANNOULI, *Education and literary language in Byzantium*, in *The Language of Byzantine Learned Literature*, ed. by M. HINTERBERGER, Turnhout 2014 (Βυζάντιος. Studies in Byzantine History and Civilization, 9), pp. 52–71.

<sup>2</sup> Note should be made of the pioneering work of S.D. PAPANIMITRIOU, *Feodor Prodróm: Istoriko-literaturnoe issledovanie*, Odessa 1905, pp. 413–429. See also G. SCHIRÒ, *La schedografia a Bisanzio nei sec. XI–XII e la Scuola dei SS. XL Martiri*, in *Bollettino della Badia greca di Grottaferrata*, n.s. 3 (1949), pp. 11–29; A. GARZYA, *Intorno al Prologo di Niceforo Basilace*, in *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 18 (1969), pp. 57–71 [repr. in *id.*, *Storia e interpretazione di testi bizantini. Saggi e ricerche*, London 1974, nr. xii]; *id.*, *Literarische und rhetorische Polemiken der Komnenenzeit*, in *Byzantinoslavica* 34 (1973), pp. 1–14 [repr. in *id.*, *Storia e interpretazione cit.*, nr. vii]; R. BROWNING, *Il codice Marciano gr. XI.31 e la schedografia bizantina*, in *Miscellanea Marciana di Studi Bessarionei*, Padova 1976 (Medioevo e Umanesimo, 24), pp. 21–34 [repr. in *id.*, *Studies on Byzantine History, Literature and Education*, London 1977, nr. xvi].

manuscripts transmitting schedographic collections has hesitantly started in the past thirty years, while only a small percentage of the high number of surviving *schede* has been actually edited<sup>3</sup>. There are a number of reasons why schedography has not been favoured by Byzantinists despite the available manuscript material and despite the presence of a number of references by Byzantine teachers and intellectuals to this type of grammatical exercise. Older scholars have tended to throw all relevant references to schedography into one pot and produce out of it the image of a peculiar, rather pedantic, sort of school exercise that was scorned by the truly educated.

Instrumental in drawing the negative image of this widespread teaching method has been the opinion of Karl Krumbacher, expressed in the second edition of his *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur* (= GBL), where he offered the first attempt at an overview of schedography<sup>4</sup>. Already in the introduction to the GBL, Krumbacher had formulated an axiom about a diglossic situation in Byzantium, where there existed a *Kunstsprache* («learned language») and a *Vulgärsprache* («vernacular language»), two linguistic systems supposedly standing in opposition to each other, especially since the twelfth century<sup>5</sup>. In his overview of schedog-

<sup>3</sup> For more recent discussions of various issues, presentations of manuscripts and editions of various texts see, indicatively, C. GALLAVOTTI, *Nota sulla schedografia di Moscopulo e sui suoi precedenti fino a Teodoro Prodromo*, in *Bollettino dei classici* [dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, ser. III, 4 (1983)], pp. 3-35: 12-35; I. VASSIS, *Graeca sunt, non leguntur: Zu den schedographischen Spielereien des Theodoros Prodromos*, in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 86-87 (1993-1994), pp. 1-19; I. D. POLEMIS, *Προβλήματα της βυζαντινής σχεδογραφίας*, in *Ἑλληνικά* 45 (1995), pp. 277-302; ID., *Philologische und historische Probleme in der schedographischen Sammlung des Codex Marcianus gr. XI,34*, in *Byzantion* 67 (1997), pp. 252-263; I. VASSIS, *Τῶν νέων φιλολόγων παλαιόματα. Ἡ συλλογή σχεδῶν τοῦ κώδικα Vaticanus Palatinus gr. 92*, in *Ἑλληνικά* 52 (2002), pp. 37-68. For an overview of 11th- and 12th-century schedography with some pertinent remarks see S. EFTHYMIDIS, *L'enseignement secondaire à Constantinople pendant les XI<sup>e</sup> et XII<sup>e</sup> siècles. Modèle éducatif pour la Terre d'Otrante au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in *Νέα Ρώμη* 2 (2005), pp. 259-275: 266-275 (with substantial bibliography), but also E. G. GIANNACHI, *Per la storia dell'istruzione bizantina in Terra d'Otranto: la schedografia di Stefano di Nardò*, in *Medioevo Greco* 13 (2013), pp. 103-125; MARKOPOULOS, *De la structure* cit., pp. 93-95; GIANNOULI, *Education* cit., pp. 61-65.

<sup>4</sup> K. KRUMBACHER, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des oströmischen Reiches (527-1453)*, Zweite Auflage, bearbeitet unter Mitwirkung von A. EHRHARD - H. GELZER, München 1897 (Handbuch der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft, IX/1) [= GBL<sup>2</sup>], pp. 590-593 (§ 250); this section did not exist in the first edition, that is, ID., *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des oströmischen Reiches (527-1453)*, München 1891 (Handbuch der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft, IX/1) [= GBL<sup>1</sup>].

<sup>5</sup> GBL<sup>2</sup>, p. 17.

raphy Krumbacher primarily occupied himself with discussing a passage from Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*, wherein she talked about school education and schedography. It comes from the work's last book, which Anna wrote some time before her death in ca. 1153–1154; by then the *kaisarissa* was almost seventy years old.

However, before examining more carefully the relevant passage, it might be useful to describe briefly what the function of schedography was. Referred to in the sources as *σχεδογραφία* or *σχεδουργία*, it started some time in the early eleventh century and quickly developed into an important part of language training at its secondary level<sup>6</sup>. A *schedos* served a primary and a secondary aim. It drilled young pupils (ten to twelve years old) in the complexities of Greek spelling and grammar<sup>7</sup>, while it also helped them in certain cases to understand the different types of *progymnasmata*<sup>8</sup>. These two aims were achieved through the puzzling form in which the teacher presented the *schedos*, since the text, punctuated in an erratic manner, was filled with strange words and phrases giving no meaning. The pupils had to decode such a puzzle and to rewrite it correctly<sup>9</sup>. The puzzles were based on *ἀντίστοιχα* («sound correspondences»)<sup>10</sup>; these could be similarly sounding verbal or nominal forms<sup>11</sup>, or they could be wrongly written words and phrases<sup>12</sup>. *Schede* were usually written in prose (approximately twenty to twenty-five lines

<sup>6</sup> See briefly VASSIS, *Τῶν νέων φιλολόγων παλαιόματα* cit., pp. 41–42 on the three levels of language training at school, and the place of schedography therein.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the remarks of an anonymous teacher preserved in the *Marc. gr.* IX.14, f. 11r and edited by ΠΑΡΑΔΙΜΙΤΡΙΟΥ, *Feodor Prodrom* cit., p. 418: Τὸ σχεδογραφεῖν, ὃ νέε, διὰ τὸ ὀρθογραφεῖν ἔστιν ἀναγκαῖον· εἴ τις σπεύδει μὲν ἐπὶ τὸ γράφειν, οὐ σπουδάζει δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ ὀρθογραφεῖν, ἐπὶ κενῷ ἰδίει· τοῖνον καὶ σὺ εἰ αἰρή τὸ ὀρθογραφῆσαι, σπούδαζε καὶ ἀγωνίζου ὅση σοι ἴς. Σοφός τις ἔφη βραδέως μὲν φίλος γίνου, γινόμενος δὲ πειρωῖ διαμένειν.

<sup>8</sup> Many of the surviving *schede* display forms that reflect the various types of *progymnasmata*, such as fables, narratives, mottoes, character monologues and the like; see the respective groupings as described by VASSIS, *Τῶν νέων φιλολόγων παλαιόματα* cit., p. 42.

<sup>9</sup> The puzzle-like form was described with terms such as *γρίφος* («puzzle»), *αἴνγμα* or *νόημα* («riddle») and *λαβύρινθος* («labyrinth»); for some references see VASSIS, *Graeca sunt* cit., pp. 9–10.

<sup>10</sup> See E. FOLLIERI, *Ἀντίστοιχα*, in *Δίπτυχα* 4 (1986–1987), pp. 217–228.

<sup>11</sup> E.g. εἰ δέοις, θεόν, ὃ παῖ, καὶ περὶ λόγων εἰδήσεις ἰδίσεις, ἠδήσεις σαυτὸν καὶ τὸν ἐχθρόν δήσεις (*Pal. gr.* 92, f. 194v; GALLAVOTTI, *Nota* cit., p. 27 n. 23).

<sup>12</sup> E.g. ἐπήτην τελείαν σύνεσις ἦν ἔχει and οἱ ποὺ λάβρον πυρετὸν instead of ἐπεὶ τὴν τελείαν σύνεσιν ἔχει and ὑπὸ λάβρων πυρετῶν respectively (*Marc. gr.* XI.34, f. 277v; POLEMIS, *Probleme* cit., p. 258).

in length), but they were also composed in iambic twelve-syllable verse. The collection of the *Vat. Pal. gr.* 92 (Salento, late thirteenth century) gives us a very good picture of the immense variety of the schedographic material<sup>13</sup>.

In Book 15 of the *Alexiad*, Anna leads her narrative towards the dramatic description of her father's death and the events concerning the imperial succession. Before this grand scene<sup>14</sup>, the purpleborn princess presents some of her father's benefactions and specific donations to various churches and ecclesiastical institutions<sup>15</sup>. She then turns her attention to the emperor's support of a «school of the grammarians» (παιδευτήριον τῶν γραμματικῶν) offering training to orphaned children; it is the famous school of St. Paul of the Orphanage close to the Hagia Sophia<sup>16</sup>. The dense and complex passage is well-known because it has been used as a source for many different questions, such as ethnic (*qua* national) identity<sup>17</sup> or imperial patronage of schools<sup>18</sup>. It is therefore of some importance to understand exactly what Anna writes<sup>19</sup>:

<sup>13</sup> For a detailed description of this collection see VASSIS, *Τῶν νέων φιλολόγων παλαιόματα* cit., *passim*. On the importance of Salentine manuscript production for the survival of 12th-century Constantinopolitan schedographic collections and for Greek school education in the Terra d'Otranto during the 13th century see A. ACCONCIA LONGO - A. JACOB, *Une anthologie salentine du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle: le Vaticanus gr. 1276*, in *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, n.s. 17-19 (1980-1982), pp. 149-228, and A. JACOB, *Une bibliothèque médiévale de Terre d'Otrante (Parisinus gr. 549)*, in *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, n.s. 22-23 (1985-1986), pp. 285-315.

<sup>14</sup> *Alexiad* 15.II, ed. D.R. REINSCH - A. KAMBYLIS, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, Berlin 2001 (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae, 40), pp. 493-505.

<sup>15</sup> M. ANGOLD, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni (1081-1261)*, Cambridge 1995, pp. 265-285.

<sup>16</sup> See S. MERGIALI-FALANGAS, *L'école Saint Paul de l'Orphelinat à Constantinople: bref aperçu sur son statut et son histoire*, in *Revue des études byzantines* 49 (1991), pp. 237-246; T.S. MILLER, *The Orphanotropheion of Constantinople*, in E. ALBU HANAWALT - C. LINDBERG (eds.), *Through the Eye of a Needle: Judeo-Christian Roots of Social Welfare*, Kirksville, Mo. 1994, pp. 83-104; ID., *Two teaching texts from the twelfth-century Orphanotropheion*, in *Byzantine Authors: Literary Activities and Preoccupations. Texts and Translations Dedicated to the Memory of Nicolas Oikonomides*, ed. by J.W. NESBITT, Leiden-Boston 2003 (The Medieval Mediterranean, 49), pp. 9-20.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, A. KALDELLIS, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Cambridge 2007, pp. 290-291, with whose analysis I find myself in disagreement; see now I. STOURAITIS, *Roman identity in Byzantium: a critical approach*, in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 107 (2014), pp. 175-220.

<sup>18</sup> KATSAROS, *Προδρομικοί «θεσμοί»* cit., *passim*.

<sup>19</sup> *Alexiad* 15.7.9 (ed. REINSCH - KAMBYLIS cit., pp. 484.9-485.34); German translation and notes in D.R. REINSCH, *Anna Komnene: Alexias*, übersetzt, eingeleitet und mit Anmerkungen versehen, Köln 1996, pp. 538-539. The English translation by

Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τὰ τεμένη καὶ ἱερὰ φροντιστήρια εἰσιόντι σοι κατὰ λαῖδαν ἀπαντήσσει· κατὰ δὲ τὴν δεξιάν τοῦ μεγάλου τεμένου παιδευτήριον ἔστικε τῶν γραμματικῶν παισὶν ὀρφανοῖς ἐκ παντοδαποῦ γένους συνειλεγμένοι, ἐν ᾧ παιδευτὴς τις προκάθηται καὶ παῖδες περὶ αὐτὸν ἐστᾶσιν, οἱ μὲν περὶ ἐρωτήσεις ἐπτοημένοι γραμματικάς, οἱ δὲ *ξυγγραφεῖς τῶν λεγομένων σχεδῶν*. Καὶ ἔστιν ἰδεῖν καὶ Λατῖνον ἐνταῦθα παιδοτριβοῦμενον καὶ Σκύθην ἐλληνίζοντα καὶ Ῥωμαῖον τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων συγγράμματα μεταχειριζόμενον καὶ τὸν ἀγράμματον Ἑλληνα ὀρθῶς ἐλληνίζοντα. Τοιαῦτα καὶ περὶ τὴν λογικὴν παιδείου τὰ τοῦ Ἀλεξίου σπουδάσματα. *Τοῦ δὲ σχέδους ἢ τέχνης εὖρημα τῶν νεωτέρων ἐστὶ καὶ τῆς ἐφ' ἡμῶν γενεᾶς*. Παρίημι δὲ Στυλιανούς τινὰς καὶ τοὺς λεγομένους Λογγιβάρδους καὶ ὄσους ἐπισυναγωγὴν ἐτεχνάσαντο παντοδαπῶν ὀνομάτων καὶ τοὺς Ἀττικοὺς καὶ <τοὺς> γεγονότας τοῦ ἱεροῦ καταλόγου τῆς μεγάλης παρ' ἡμῖν ἐκκλησίας, ὧν παρίημι τὰ ὀνόματα. Ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐδ' ἐν δευτέρῳ λόγῳ τὰ περὶ τούτων τῶν μετεώρων ποιητῶν καὶ αὐτῶν συγγραφέων καὶ τῆς ἀπὸ τούτων ἐμπειρίας· πεττεία δὲ τὸ σπούδασμα καὶ ἄλλα τὰ ἔργα ἀθέμιτα. *Ταῦτα δὲ λέγω ἀχθομένη διὰ τὴν παντελῆ τῆς ἐγκυκλίου παιδευσεως ἀμέλειαν*. *Τοῦτο γὰρ μου τὴν ψυχὴν ἀναφλέγει, ὅτι πολὺ περὶ ταῦτα ἐνδιατέτρεφα, κἄν, ἐπειδὴν ἀπήλλαγμαί τῆς παιδαριώδους τούτων σχολῆς καὶ εἰς ῥητορικὴν παρήγγελα καὶ φιλοσοφίας ἠψάμην καὶ μεταξὺ τῶν ἐπιστημῶν πρὸς ποιητὰς τε καὶ ξυγγραφεῖς ἤϊξα καὶ τῆς γλώττης τοὺς ὄχθους ἐκείθεν ἐξωμαλίσάμην, εἶτα ῥητορικῆς ἐπαρηγοῦσης ἐμοὶ κατέγνων τῆς πολυπλόκου τῆς σχεδογραφίας πλοκῆς*. Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μέντοι προσιστορήσθω, εἰ καὶ μὴ ἐκ τοῦ παρέργου, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ τοῦ λόγου ἀκόλουθον.

But, once you have entered the city, these churches and holy cloisters are to be found on your left, while on the right side of the large church<sup>20</sup> there stands a school of the grammarians for orphaned children gathered together from every kind of race. An educator holds there the directorship, while boys are grouped all around him, some passionately attending to grammatical questions, *some being writers of the so-called improvised exercises*. And one can see there a Latin being fully trained, a Scythian learning Greek, a Rhomaian occupying himself with the writings of the Hellenes, and an uneducated Hellene learning correct Greek<sup>21</sup>. In this manner did Alexios strive to support literary edu-

E.A.R. SEWTER, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*, Harmondsworth 1969, pp. 495-496, is too free and inaccurate to be useful for the present analysis.

<sup>20</sup> The church of St. Paul within the building complex of the Orphanage.

<sup>21</sup> This is a sentence that has caused great difficulties to translators and students of the *Alexiad*. In my opinion, the interpretation given by Reinsch in his translation is the only cogent. I have attempted to translate the sentence in a way that something of Anna's particular hierarchic perspective is preserved. She uses her words very carefully to express the lack of proper training for the Latin boy (he is being παιδοτριβοῦμενον), the need for full linguistic training in Greek (ἐλληνίζοντα) of the Scythian (Petcheneg), the potential of the Rhomaian (*i.e.* Byzantine) boy to actually

cation<sup>22</sup>. *The art of the schedos, by the way, is a modern invention and of our own times.* I shall pass over people like Stylianos<sup>23</sup>, the so-called Longibardos<sup>24</sup>, and all those who artfully prepared collections of all kinds of words, as well as people like Attikos<sup>25</sup>, and those who became members of the clergy of our Great Church, whose names I shall also pass over<sup>26</sup>. Presently, however, the study of these elevated poets and those historians, as well as the experience gained from their works, is not even granted second place, since the current pursuits are boardgames and other such immoral activities. *I say this out of sorrow for the utter neglect of general education. For this inflames my soul, because I spent much time with this kind of studies,* even if, after I had freed myself from the child-like pursuit of such things, assigned myself to rhetoric, had come into contact with philosophy, had – during my study of the sciences – turned eagerly to poets and historians, and hence smoothed the mound-like unevenness of my style, *I rejected with the aid of rhetoric the overcomplicated complexity of schedography.* Let this be added to my actual historical account, not, however, as a digression, but rather in connection to the following narrative.

If we follow Anna's statements about schedography (here in *italics*), we will notice that these are explicitly made in three places and implicitly in a fourth: (a) the young pupils appear as «writers of the so-called improvised exercises», that is, they learn how to decode and to rewrite a *schedos*, deepening their knowledge of spelling and grammar by means of this difficult type of exercise; (b) «the art of the *schedos*» is a recent inven-

---

study the «pagan classics», while the uneducated native speaker of Greek from the province of Hellas needs to learn proper school Greek (ὀρθῶς ἐλληνίζοντα). For a different, class-defined, interpretation of Rhomaian and Hellene in this passage see STOURAITIS, *Roman identity* cit., pp. 197-199.

<sup>22</sup> This is how I understand λογική παιδείσις, the adjective referring to language and literature, rather than the intellect; see *Alexias* prol. 3.2 (ed. REINSCH – KAMBYLIS cit., p. 8.62) on Nikephoros Bryennios' attention to λογικούς τινας πόνους («literary endeavours»), that is, his unfinished historiographical work.

<sup>23</sup> On him see further below.

<sup>24</sup> On Longibardos and his Παρεκβόλαια περὶ συντάξεως καὶ ἀντιστοίχων πάνυ ὠφελίμων τοῦ σοφωτάτου ἀνδρῶν Λογιβάρδου see N. FESTA, *Note preliminari su Longibardos*, in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 16 (1907), pp. 431-453, and *id.*, *Longibardos*, in *Byzantion* 6 (1931), pp. 101-222, being the critical edition of the text's two redactions.

<sup>25</sup> Scholars have not been able to identify this person. It is possible, however, that he is Michael Attikos, one of the schedographers in the collection of the *Vat. Pal. gr.* 92, f. 188r (see GALLAVOTTI, *Nota* cit., p. 27, and VASSIS, *Τῶν νέων φιλολόγων παλαιόματα* cit., p. 56).

<sup>26</sup> A number of teachers can be found in the schedographic collections, who belonged to the clergy of St. Sophia, and later even become bishops; see the lists in BROWNING, *Il codice Marciano* cit., *passim* (with the older bibliography).

tion and of Anna's own times; (c) implicitly, Anna includes schedography in the general education (ἐγκύκλιος παιδείουσις) with whose subject matter she busied herself for a long time, even though she freed herself from the childlike pursuit of these matters, once she devoted herself to higher studies and rhetoric; (d) Anna states that on account of her study of poets and historians she polished her style, and, then, with the help of rhetoric «rejected the overcomplicated complexity of schedography». Between the second and the third statement Anna clearly moves from her school days to her authorial present (ἀλλὰ νῦν) in order to express her critique of contemporary education, where the pursuit of learning does not concern anymore the works of high poetry and historiography, but has rather become a «boardgame» (πεττεία) and other such «immoral activities» (ἔργα ἀθέμιτα)<sup>27</sup>.

It is important to understand that Anna does not criticize schedography in general<sup>28</sup>. The negative words she uses (ἀπήλλαγμα, παιδαριώδης, κατέγνωσ) define the second stage of school education, concentrated on the technical mastery of Greek, from which Anna moved to the higher levels of rhetoric, philosophy, science and literature. «Smoothing the mound-like unevenness of my style» is the code-like phrase for signalling within a specific socio-cultural context the perfect identity of expression and meaning<sup>29</sup>. Schedography, as a recent invention was very useful and

<sup>27</sup> Already in 1138, Michael Italikos in his grand encomiastic oration on John II Komnenos, had used the negative characterization «cunning draught-players» (εὐφρεῖς πεττευταί, alluding to Plato) and «iamb-devourers» (ιαμβειοφάγοι, alluding to Demosthenes) for writers who did not rise to the grandeur of the emperor's military deeds; see P. GAUTIER, *Michel Italikos. Lettres et discours*, Paris 1972 (Archives de l'Orient Chrétien, 14), p. 253.13–18. GARZYA, *Literarische und rhetorische Polemiken* cit., p. 8 was the first to point to this passage, however, he was wrong in the assumption that these highly ironic attributes refer to Theodore Prodromos and his schedographic activity; the two men were close friends as Italikos' letters to Prodromos attest. On Prodromos' schedographic production see VASSIS, *Graeca sunt* cit., *passim*.

<sup>28</sup> R. ANASTASI, *Ancora su Anna Comnena e la schedografia*, in *Studi di Filologia Bizantina*, III, Catania 1985 (Quaderni del Siculorum Gymnasium, 15), pp. 77–85, also proposed that Anna viewed schedography in a positive light. However, his overall reading of this passage differs substantially from the one offered here, because he believes that Anna comments on the situation in the time of Alexios.

<sup>29</sup> This context is, on the one hand, the *theatron* of her mother Eirene Doukaina, on which see M. MULLETT, *Aristocracy and patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople*, in *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII Centuries. Papers of the Sixteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies (Edinburgh, March 1982)*, ed. by M. ANGOLD, Oxford 1984 (BAR International Series, 221), pp. 173–201 [repr. in M. MULLETT, *Letters, Literacy and Literature in Byzantium*, Aldershot 2007, nr. viii]. On the other hand,



that is why Anna went through this training, but she did not consider it the final stage of a more essential *paideia*. Therefore, it is only after Anna has explained this course of rigorous training to her readers and her own attainment of the highest level, that she can from her own exalted position criticize the «utter neglect» of education in the first years of the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180), her flamboyant nephew, whom she despised<sup>30</sup>. In fact, the mention of schedography and its child-like pursuits (i.e. for children and not childish) served Anna's political attack on an age that, in her eyes, had become superficial, uneducated and degenerate<sup>31</sup>.

Krumbacher, in his effort to defend Byzantine language instruction from the scorn of classicists<sup>32</sup>, presented these «schoolbooks» (*Schulbücher*) as products of low-level education whose popularity grew, «the more folk education shrunk to a humble measure of elementary instruction along with the sinking of national welfare»<sup>33</sup>. However, as a result of this distorted view of schedography, he misread the whole passage quoted above, making the learned *kaisarissa* scorn this kind of training at «primary school» (*Volksschule*) as being below the dignity of a princely writer and intellectual. Moreover, Krumbacher misunderstood the statement about the «boardgame», thinking that Anna actually referred in this derogatory manner to the *schede*, rather than to education as some form of inappropriate entertainment. Krumbacher's reading of *Alexiad* 15.7.9 and the resulting image of an inimical attitude of high to low culture reflects his erroneous projection of a preconceived concept unto the evidence. His negative view of schedography was so strong that he remarked that «most of these elementary books deservedly rest in the dust of libraries»<sup>34</sup>, a remark that went against his own declaration in the

---

Anna supported a circle of philosophers, as we know from a long passage in the funeral oration George Tornikes wrote in her memory; see J. DARROUZES, *Georges et Démétrios Tornikès. Lettres et discours*, Paris 1970, pp. 220–323; 283–303.

<sup>30</sup> *Alexiad* 14.3.9 (ed. REINSCH – KAMBYLIS cit., p. 438.41–43); see P. MAGDALINO, *The pen of the aunt: echoes of the mid-twelfth century in the Alexiad*, in T. GOUMA-PETERSON (ed.), *Anna Komnene and her Times*, New York 2000, pp. 15–43: 20–22.

<sup>31</sup> Already GARZYA, *Intorno al Prologo* cit., pp. 62–63, had recognized that this passage in the *Alexiad* is acted out in two distinct chronological phases that serve different purposes.

<sup>32</sup> GBL<sup>2</sup>, p. 590.

<sup>33</sup> «Diese Lehrmethode [...] gewann [...] eine um so grössere Verbreitung, je mehr der Volksunterricht mit dem Sinken der nationalen Wohlfahrt auf ein bescheidenes Mass elementarer Unterweisung zusammenschrumpfte» (GBL<sup>2</sup>, p. 591).

<sup>34</sup> «Die meisten dieser Elementarbücher ruhen verdientermaßen im Staube der Bibliotheken» (GBL<sup>2</sup>, p. 592).

GBL's preface that nothing Byzantine should be left unstudied, even if it was ugly or unimportant<sup>35</sup>. We can see here how an ideological bias cancels a methodological principle.

In his study of the life and works of Theodore Prodromos, Synodis D. Papadimitriou (1859-1921), professor of Greek at the University of Odessa<sup>36</sup>, collected and analyzed a substantial number of passages on schedography and edited two of Prodromos' *schede* (see above n. 2). He used the passage from the *Alexiad* as a guide, quoted freely from other authors of the twelfth century and from some of the unpublished schedographic collections<sup>37</sup>, pointing to Krumbacher's misunderstanding of schedography as a training method and his misreading of the relevant passage. Georgina Buckler (1868-1953)<sup>38</sup>, in her pioneering study of Anna Komnene, discussed the passage in an intelligent manner, while she also pointed to Krumbacher's misreading and biased perspective towards «high education»<sup>39</sup>. Paul Lemerle in his article on education in the eleventh century devoted a lengthy section on schedography at the time of Psellos and the «government of philosophers»; therein he discussed the passage from the *Alexiad*, agreeing, however, with Krumbacher that Anna rejected schedography as a whole<sup>40</sup>. Papadimitriou's and Buckler's critique of Krumbacher were not taken into consideration by Herbert Hunger in the discussion of schedography in his handbook<sup>41</sup>. In fact, Hunger also misunderstood the whole concept of eleventh- and twelfth-century schedography since he, like Krumbacher, based his analysis on

---

<sup>35</sup> GBL<sup>1</sup>, pp. v-vii (reproduced in GBL<sup>2</sup>, pp. v-vii, but with some significant omissions).

<sup>36</sup> See K.K. ΠΑΡΟΥΛΙΔΗΣ, *Συνόδης Δ. Παπαδημητρίου, 1859-1921: Ένας ελάχιστος γνωστός λόγιος από τη Θεσσαλονίκη*, in *Μακεδονικά* 16 (1976), pp. 174-204.

<sup>37</sup> He had studied the collections in the *Marc. gr.* IX.14, *Mon. gr.* 201, *Par. gr.* 2556 and *Laur.* V.10.

<sup>38</sup> Ch. ROUECHÉ, *Georgina Buckler: the Making of a British Byzantinist*, in *The Making of Byzantine History. Studies Dedicated to Donald M. Nicol*, ed. by R. BEATON - Ch. ROUECHÉ, Aldershot 1993 (Centre for Hellenic Studies, King's College London. Publications, 1), pp. 174-196.

<sup>39</sup> G. BUCKLER, *Anna Komnena: A Study*, Oxford 1929, pp. 176-178 and 187-191. Despite Buckler's pertinent analysis, the passage was also misread by SCHIRÒ, *La schedografia* cit., p. 15, followed in his interpretation by ΕΦΘΥΜΙΑΔΗΣ, *L'enseignement* cit., p. 268 and n. 37.

<sup>40</sup> LEMERLE, *Cinq études* cit., pp. 235-241.

<sup>41</sup> H. HUNGER, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, I-II, München 1978 (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, XII/5,1-2): II, pp. 24-29.

Manuel Moschopoulos' manual of the early fourteenth century<sup>42</sup>. Thus, Hunger retained his predecessor's view of schedography, even quoting Krumbacher's negative statement<sup>43</sup>. Thus, we can say with certainty that an erroneous reading of *Alexiad* 15.7.9 has established itself as the *communis opinio* on Anna's view of schedography<sup>44</sup>. However, it has been shown that schedography was not seen by Anna as a worthless type of grammatical exercise but as appropriate to young pupils and to the technical type of linguistic training they had to go through. We should also not forget that Anna went through this training around the age of ten, whereas she directed her critique at the practices of her time when she was finishing the *Alexiad*, that is, at a distance of almost sixty years. The effect of such temporal disjunctions in historical (*qua* autobiographical) discourse is that the author's experiences and opinions at the time of writing are projected upon the past and more often than not shape the narrative in a crucial manner<sup>45</sup>.

The passage on education and schedography in the *Alexiad* is important for another reason. In my opinion, the narrative sequence of the passage reflects the chronological sequence of the rise and development of schedography from the early eleventh to the middle of the twelfth century. The surviving evidence in connection with Anna's brief presentation of schedographic activity concur in setting the beginning of this «recent invention» to the early years of the eleventh century. An important reference that supports this date can be found in two poems of Christopher Mitylenaios, in which he praises the school of St. Theodore at the Sphorakios Quarter<sup>46</sup>. The two poems were probably written

---

<sup>42</sup> Moschopoulos' schedographic collection, accompanied by a mostly lexicographical commentary, still awaits a critical edition; see J.J. KEANEY, *Moschopulea*, in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 64 (1971), pp. 303–321, and GALLAVOTTI, *Nota cit.*, pp. 3–12.

<sup>43</sup> HUNGER, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur cit.*, II, p. 24.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, the entry on schedography in the *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, III, ed. A.P. KAZHDAN (...), New York–Oxford 1991, p. 1849 (A.P. KAZHDAN).

<sup>45</sup> On the narrative problems created by this temporal disjunction in autobiographical discourse see Ph. LEJEUNE, *Le pacte autobiographique*, Paris 1996<sup>2</sup>, pp. 41–43.

<sup>46</sup> They are nrr. 9 and 10 in the collection transmitted in the *Cryptens*. Z.a.XXIX (13th cent.); the former poem is composed in iambs (Εἰς τὸ σχολεῖον τοῦ ἁγίου Θεοδώρου τῶν Σφωρακίου), the latter in hexameters (Εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ σχολεῖον. ἠρωϊκά). See now the new edition by M. DE GROOTE, *Christophori Mitylenaii versuum variorum collectio Cryptensis*, Turnhout 2012 (Corpus Christianorum. Series Graeca, 74), pp. 10 and 11 respectively. For a brief discussion of the two poems, along with poem 11, see K. DEMOEN, *Phrasis poikilē: imitatio and variatio in the poetry book of Christophoros*

during the very late years of the reign of Romanos III Argyros (1028–1034) or the very early years of the reign of Michael IV (1034–1041)<sup>47</sup>. Although the two poems include references to *schede*, they have not been read carefully as to their details. The relevant verses run as follows:

Poem 9.1–8

Σχολή μεγίστου μάρτυρος Θεοδώρου  
 πτωθῆ μὲν οὐκ ἄν, πρῶξιμον κεκτημένη  
 τὸν Στυλιανόν, ἀρραγῆ τινὰ στύλον·  
 ἦτταν δὲ δεινὴν οὐποτε σχέδους ἴδη,  
 ἕως μαίστωρ ἐστὶ γεννάδας Λέων·  
 οὗτος γὰρ ἦδη καὶ στομώσας τοὺς νέους  
 καὶ τοὺς ἀγῶνας ἐκδιδάξας τῶν λόγων,  
 ἔξιει θαρρῶν τοῖς μαθηταῖς ὡς ὄπλοις.

The school of the greatest martyr Theodore  
 shall not fall down, having as teacher  
 Stylianos – an unbreakable pillar;  
 but the school shall never witness dreadful defeat of its *schedos*  
 as long as the valorous Leo is its headmaster.  
 For he already, having both trained his youths  
 and thoroughly taught them the contests of discourses,  
 goes <into battle> having confidence in his pupils as weapons.

Poem 10.1–7+12–17

Δείματο οὐρανίη σοφίη δόμον, ὃν στύλοι ἐπτὰ  
 ἀσφαλέως ἀνέχουσιν, ἐφεσταότες κατὰ κόσμον·  
 δείματο καὶ σοφίη ἐγκύκλιος οἶκον ἑαυτῆ  
 ἄστεος ἀμφὶ τόπον, τὸν Σφωρακίου καλέουσι·  
 στήσατο δὲ στύλον ἔνδον κείνου ἔμμεναι εἴλαρ,  
 Στυλιανὸν μουσόφρονα, εἰδότα πολλὰ καὶ ἐσθλά.  
 ἠδυεπῆ δὲ Λέοντα πρόμον ποίησε ἀγητόν, [...]  
 ὃς ῥά ἐδὸν στόμα βιάσας Μουσῶν εἰς νόον ἄκρον  
 ῥοῦν ἐμέει σοφίης κούρων αἰεὶ περὶ ὄτα,  
 οἷ, λιπαινόμενοί τε καὶ εὐλόγιην ξυνάγοντες,

*Mitylenaios*, in *Imitatio-Aemulatio-Variatio. Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposions zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur (Wien, 22.-25. Oktober 2008)*, hrsg. von A. RHÖBY – E. SCHIFFER, Wien 2010 (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse. Denkschriften, 402; Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung, 21), pp. 103–118: 107–109. For an Italian translation with brief introductions see *Cristoforo di Mitilene: Canzoniere*, Catania 1983, pp. 56–60.

<sup>47</sup> *Mitylenaios*' poems in the Grottaferrata collection are placed in chronological order; poem 8 treats the death of Romanos III Argyros (11.4.1034) while poem 18 dates from 1035; see DE GROOTE, *Christophori Mitylenaii* cit., pp. xxii–xxiii.

τῶν πάντων κρατέουσι νέων σχεδέων ἐν ἀγῶσιν,  
οὐνεκα τοῖσι Λέων γε διδάσκαλος ἐστὶν ἄριστος,  
οὗ δὴ καὶ κλέος ἔσται ἀγήραον ἡματα πάντα.

Heavenly wisdom built a building which seven pillars  
safely uphold, setting it up in good order<sup>48</sup>;  
all-round wisdom also built a house for herself  
in that place of the city, which is called «of Sphorakios».  
She also erected a pillar inside that house to be a defense,  
the poetically minded Stylianos who knows many and good things.  
And she placed there sweet-speaking Leo as an admirable leader, [...]   
who then, having dipped his mouth in the innermost thought of poetry,  
always pours forth the stream of wisdom around the ears of boys;  
these, enriched and gathering eloquence,  
are victorious over all youths in the contests of *schede*,  
on account of which Leo is the best teacher,  
whose fame will indeed be ageless for all days to come.

Christopher wishes that *maistor* Leo, the school's current headmaster (9.5, 10.20), will continue leading his pupils to victories in the schedographic contests (10.14-16), so that the school might never witness defeat in a schedographic contest (9.4-5)<sup>49</sup>. But the school of St. Theodore, Christopher writes, will not ever suffer ruin because it possessed Stylianos as its *proximos* (9.2-3, 10.5-6)<sup>50</sup>, an unbrakeable pillar

<sup>48</sup> The two verses clearly echo the famous verse of Proverbs 9.1 on the seven pillars of Wisdom: Ἡ σοφία ᾠκοδόμησεν ἑαυτῇ οἶκον καὶ ὑπῆρσεν στύλους ἐπτά. At the same time, they can be read as a reference to Constantinople (the ἄστυ of v. 4) and its seven hills; on these see now A. BERGER, *Das apokalyptische Konstantinopel: Topographisches in apokalyptischen Schriften der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*, in *Endzeiten: Eschatologie in den monotheistischen Weltreligionen*, hrsg. von W. BRANDES – F. SCHMIEDER, Berlin 2008 (Millennium-Studien zu Kultur und Geschichte des ersten Jahrtausends n. Chr., 16), pp. 137-155, with a discussion of all relevant texts.

<sup>49</sup> In the second part of a poem *On subjunctive verbs*, probably by Niketas of Herakleia, also known as ὁ τοῦ Σεργῶν (ca. 1050-ca. 1120), a schedographic contest is described with the iconography of a horse race (vv. 85-123). The poem has been edited by Sp. LAMBROS, *Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου Περὶ ρημάτων ἀδθυποτάκτων στίχοι πολιτικοί*, in *Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων* 16 (1922), pp. 191-197; for the attribution to Niketas see C. WENDEL, *Tzetzēs Ioannes*, in *Paulys Realencyklopädie (...)*, VIIA/2, München-Stuttgart 1948, cols. 1959-2011: 2005-2006, with the relevant bibliography. In my opinion, the poem is a *schedos* presenting to the pupils the grammatical problem first and, then, offering examples of usage in the second part; see similar verse *schede* in the *Vat. Pal. gr.* 92, nrr. 3, 6, 30, 34, 39, 41, 59, 60, III, 168 (from the detailed list in VASSIS, *Τῶν νέων φιλολόγων παλαιόματα* cit., pp. 45-63).

<sup>50</sup> For the term πρῶξιμος, meaning «teacher», see *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität*, erstellt von E. TRAPP unter Mitarbeit von W. HÖRANDNER – J. DIETHART,

(στύλος) planted in the very middle of the school by «all-round wisdom», that is, general education (ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία). Stylianos is mentioned in the same prominent position and with the same wordplay in both poems. He must therefore have been either the school's founder or its most prominent teacher at a time before Leo. It is highly probable that this person is the Stylianos mentioned by Anna<sup>51</sup>. Stylianos therefore preceded Longibardos, who should be viewed as a contemporary of the *maistor* Leo and of Christopher Mitylenaios<sup>52</sup>. The identification of the two Stylianoi is supported by the schedographic context in which they appear in the two poems and in the *Alexiad*<sup>53</sup>.

Obviously, no negative attitude towards schedography can be detected in Christopher's poems. In the immediately following poem of the Grottaferrata collection (nr. 11)<sup>54</sup>, Christopher addresses the *maistor* of the school of the Virgin Mary at the Chalkoprateia<sup>55</sup>. The poet makes some scathing remarks on the avariciousness of the man who sells his *schede* to his pupils for gold instead of copper<sup>56</sup>. Inappropriately, the *mais-*

---

VII, Wien 2011 (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse. Denkschriften, 417; Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik, 6/7), s.v., with various references.

<sup>51</sup> Ed. REINSCH – KAMBYLIS cit., p. 485.19–20: παρήμι δὲ Στυλιανὸς τινὰς καὶ τοὺς λεγομένους Λογγιβάρδους.

<sup>52</sup> The proposal to identify the two Stylianoi was made by E. FOLLIERI, *Le poesie di Cristoforo di Mitilene come fonte storica*, in *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta* 8 (1964), pp. 133–148: 144–145 on poems 9–10; it was accepted by LEMERLE, *Cinq études* cit., pp. 228–229. Neither scholar compared the sequence of names in Christopher and Anna, thus believing that Stylianos, Leon and Longibardos belonged to the middle of the 11th century (so also EFTHYMIADIS, *L'enseignement* cit., p. 267). On the identification of the two Stylianoi see also S. LUCÀ, *Le diocesi di Gerace e Squillace: tra manoscritti e marginalia*, in *Calabria bizantina: Civiltà bizantina nei territori di Gerace e Stilo. Atti dell'XI Incontro di Studi bizantini (Locri-Stilo-Gerace, 6-9 maggio 1993)*, Soveria Mannelli 1998, pp. 245–343: 290–293. Lucà suggested that a certain Stylianos, fellow student of Michael Psellos (E. KURTZ – F. DREXL, *Michaelis Pselli scripta minora magnam partem adhuc inedita*, II: *Epistulae*, Milano 1941, pp. 12–13; ep. 11), could be the *proximos* Stylianos; however, the dates do not fit, since that Stylianos would be approximately 17–18 years old around 1035, when Christopher wrote his two poems.

<sup>53</sup> It seems not improbable that a number of *schede* bearing in their lemmata τοῦ κυροῦ Στυλιανοῦ should be attributed to the *proximos* Stylianos, given the rarity of the name in the middle Byzantine period; see VASSIS, *Graeca sunt* cit., p. 4 and n. 20, and GALLAVOTTI, *Nota* cit., p. 27 and 32.

<sup>54</sup> DE GROOTE, *Christophori Mitylenaii* cit., p. 12 (Εἰς τὸν μαΐστορα τῆς σχολῆς τῶν Χαλκοπρατείων).

<sup>55</sup> On this school see LEMERLE, *Cinq études* cit., pp. 227–228, and KATSAROS, *Ἰωάννης Κασταμονίτης* cit., pp. 172 n. 61, and 186 n. 136.

<sup>56</sup> *Carm.* 11.14–16: ἀπεμπολεῖ πλὴν οὐχὶ χαλκοῦ τὰ σχέδη | ὁμωνύμως πῶς τῇ σχολῇ τῆς Παρθένου, | χρυσὸν δὲ μᾶλλον, ὦν φιλόχρυσος φῦσει («for he sells his *schede* not for

*tor* has transformed the school at the «Coppermarket» into a «Schedo-market»<sup>57</sup>. This is not a critique of schedography but a satirical attack against a corrupt teacher who dishonours the Virgin under whose protection his school is placed. A closer examination of all other references to schedography in the eleventh century shows that they are unanimously positive<sup>58</sup>. It is therefore important to note that the evidence concerning schedography and its practice shows a coherently positive picture about this part of general education approximately until the middle of the twelfth century. In fact, the specific passage of the *Alexiad*, written around 1150, is the earliest evidence for a critique of schedography in the twelfth century<sup>59</sup>. As we saw, however, Anna Komnene's negative phrases are related to political and moral issues concerning her nephew Manuel and his rule rather than to schedography as such.

The *Alexiad* also served Krumbacher as a chief witness to what he perceived as the elitist oppression of the learned language towards the

---

copper in a manner somehow homonymous to the school of the Virgin, but rather for gold, being by nature a lover of gold»). It seems that this *maistor* was infamous for his greed, as an equally scathing letter of Michael Psellos attests; see K.N. SATHAS, *Μιχαήλ Ψελλοῦ ἱστορικοὶ λόγοι, ἐπιστολαὶ καὶ ἄλλα ἀνέκδοτα*, Paris 1876 (Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη, 5), pp. 428–430 (*ep.* 168).

<sup>57</sup> *Carm.* II.12–13: *σχεδοπρατεῖον οὐ πρεπόντως, ὃ δίκη, | Χαλκοπρατείων τὴν σχολὴν δεικνὺς τάλας*. Christopher has allowed himself a splendid antistoichic joke by placing the two five-syllable words in the beginning of the two consecutive verses; due to the identical pronunciation of omikron and omega, stressed by the pause after the fifth syllable of the iambic line, the listeners would be uncertain about the case (accusative singular or genitive plural) of the two neuter nouns until the very end of the second verse.

<sup>58</sup> Beyond the already mentioned poem by Niketas of Herakleia (see above p. 100 n. 49), see, for example, Psellos, *ep.* 16 and 24 (ed. KURTZ – DREXL cit., II, pp. 19–20 and 30–31), on the good use of *schede* in school; Psellos, *ep.* 115 (ed. SATHAS cit., p. 361), on the *ekdosis* of a *schedos* by the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos himself; Mauroπους, *carm.* 68 and 70 (P. DE LAGARDE, *Iohannis Euchaitorum metropolitae quae in codice Vaticano graeco 676 supersunt*, Göttingen 1882 [Abhandlungen der historisch-philologischen Classe der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, 28], p. 37), the latter poem again on a *schedos* written out in red ink by Monomachos; Mauroπους, *ep.* 74 (A. KARPOZILOS, *The Letters of Ioannes Mauroπους Metropolitan of Euchaita*, Thessalonike 1990 [Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae, 34], pp. 189–191), on advising a young grammarian to complete all of his general education and not only schedography or poetry.

<sup>59</sup> The other evidence comes from critical remarks expressed by Nikephoros Basilakes, Eustathios of Thessalonike and John Tzetzes; they are all dated after 1155; see now P.A. AGAPITOS, *Grammar, genre and patronage in the twelfth century: a scientific paradigm and its implications*, in *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 64 (2014) [forthcoming].

vernacular during the «Atticist Renaissance» of the twelfth century, since he considered the Komnenian era to be the turning point for the formal establishment of «literary diglossia» in Byzantium<sup>60</sup>. The main passage supposedly showing this elitist perspective comes from the early part of the work. Anna describes in Book 2 how the young general Alexios, her father, became involved in a revolt against emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates (1078–1081). During the secret preparations, Alexios escaped from a trap set by his opponents and left Constantinople before the break of dawn on a cold winter night of 1081. The inhabitants of the capital showed their approval of his actions by praising him in a song<sup>61</sup>:

Ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξιος καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ αἰτήσας ὄρκον καὶ λαβὼν δρομαῖος ἄπεισιν οἴκαδε καὶ πάντα ἀνακοινοῦται τοῖς αὐτοῦ. Νύξ ἦν ἡ τῆς Τυροφάγου Κυριακῆς, καθ' ἣν οὐμὸς πατὴρ ταῦτα ἐσκέπτετο. Τῇ δὲ μετ' αὐτὴν ὄρθρου βαθέος μετὰ τῶν ἄμφ' αὐτὸν ἐξεληλύθει τῆς πόλεως. Ἐνθὲν τοι καὶ τὸ πλῆθος ἀποδεξάμενον τῆς ὀρμῆς τὸν Ἀλέξιον καὶ τῆς ἀγχινοίας ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων ἁγομάτιον αὐτῶ ἀνεπλέξαντο ἐξ ἰδιώτιδος μὲν συγκείμενον γλώττης, αὐτὴν δὲ τὴν τοῦ πράγματος ἐπίνοιαν ἐμμελέστατά πως ἀνακρουόμενον καὶ παρεμφαῖνον τὴν τε προαίσθησιν τῆς κατ' ἐκείνου ἐπιβουλῆς καὶ τὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ μεμηχανημένα. Τὸ δὲ ἁγομάτιον αὐταῖς λέξεσιν εἶχεν οὕτως· «Τὸ Σάββατον τῆς Τυρινῆς, χαρῆς, Ἀλέξη, ἐνόησές το, καὶ τὴν Δευτέραν τὸ προῖ ἕπα καλῶς, γεράκιν μου». Εἶχε δὲ ὧδέ πως ἐννοίας τὸ διαφημιζόμενον ἐκεῖνο ἁγομάτιον, ὡς ἄρα· «Κατὰ μὲν τὸ Τυρώνυμον Σάββατον ὑπέρευγέ σοι τῆς ἀγχινοίας, Ἀλέξιε, τὴν δὲ μετὰ τὴν Κυριακὴν Δευτέραν ἡμέραν καθάπερ τις ὑψιπέτης ἰέραξ ἀφίπτασο τῶν ἐπιβουλευόντων βαρβάρων».

Alexios, after having also asked from him an oath and receiving it<sup>62</sup>, speedily returned home and reported everything to his people. It was the night of Cheese-Eating Sunday during which my father made these

<sup>60</sup> See the succinct statement in GBL<sup>2</sup>, pp. 16–18. He had already expressed his views on this matter in his travel book; see K. KRUMBACHER, *Griechische Reise: Blätter aus dem Tagebuche einer Reise in Griechenland und in der Türkei*, Berlin 1886, pp. XXIV–XXXVI, where he also equated the Modern Greek «Language Question» (τὸ γλωσσικὸν ζήτημα) with what he perceived as Byzantine diglossia; see P. MACKRIDGE, *Language and National Identity in Greece 1766–1976*, Oxford 2009, pp. 159–240 on the language controversy, and F. TINNEFELD, *Karl Krumbacher und der Streit um die neugriechische Schriftsprache*, in *Margarite Poljakovskoj kollegi, druž'ja, učenički*, Red. koll. H.-F. BEYER, Ekaterinburg 2002 (Antičnaja drevnost' i srednie veka, 33), pp. 294–315, on Krumbacher's involvement in this controversy.

<sup>61</sup> *Alexiad* 2.4.9 (ed. REINSCH – KAMBYLIS cit., pp. 65.92–12); German translation and notes in REINSCH, *Anna Komnene: Alexias* cit., pp. 80–81; SEWTER, *The Alexiad* cit., pp. 82–83 again offers a very free rendering of the passage.

<sup>62</sup> This is Constantine Umbertopoulos, a Norman warrior in the service of Alexios.



preparations<sup>63</sup>. In the early morning of the next day, he left the city with his companions. And so, the people, who had accepted Alexios because of his audacity and acumen, *composed out of the very situation a little song for him; it was made out of everyday language, but it intoned the very foresight of the stratagem in a most melodious manner, while it hinted at his sensing the attack against him in advance, and at what he devised against this plot. The little song runs in its own words as follows: «On the Saturday of the Cheese-Eating Week, hail, Alexis, you grasped it; and then, on Monday morning, fare well, my falcon»*. The intended meaning of that popular little song was something like this: «On Cheese-Named Saturday, congratulations on account of your acumen, Alexios; but on the day second to Sunday, like some high-soaring falcon, you flew away from the plotting foreigners»<sup>64</sup>.

Here Anna quotes in full the original text of a «little song» (ἄσματιον) composed in octosyllabic-couplets<sup>65</sup>. The song is not a folksong in the modern sense of the term, but belongs to the kind of laudatory or derogatory songs addressed by the citizens to a specific person within a specific historical context. Such songs were mostly composed by the professional chanters (κράκται) of the capital's circus factions (δῆμοι)<sup>66</sup>. Obviously, these songs, aiming at an immediate communicative impact, were composed in a rhythmically organized colloquial discourse, but none of them employed the fifteen-syllable verse normally associated with Modern Greek folksongs. Krumbacher pointed to the vast distance between Anna's studied Greek and the vernacular language of the song<sup>67</sup>. He refers to this and another song (*Alexiad* 12.6.5) as two examples of «folksongs» sung by the people against (!) Alexios, an obvious misunder-

<sup>63</sup> The night of the Cheese-Eating Sunday, i.e. from Saturday to Sunday, which is the last day before the beginning of Lent; it was 14 February 1081.

<sup>64</sup> Anna refers here to Borilos and Germanos, two officials of Botaneiates, who were acting as the emperor's «prime-ministers» (παραδυναστεύοντες), and who were of Pecheneg descent.

<sup>65</sup> See M.D. LAUXTERMANN, *The Spring of Rhythm: An Essay on the Political Verse and Other Byzantine Metres*, Wien 1999 (Byzantina Vindobonensia, 22), pp. 45-99; unfortunately, the author omits this song from his discussion of early accentual metrics (*ibid.*, p. 66 n. 147).

<sup>66</sup> See P. MAAS, *Metrische Akklamationen der Byzantiner*, in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 21 (1912), pp. 28-51 [reprinted in *id.*, *Kleine Schriften*, hrsg. von H. BUCHWALD, München 1973, pp. 393-418], who includes the song from the *Alexiad* on p. 36 (= reprint, p. 402) as nr. VII, 1. On the demes in the middle Byzantine period and their songs see Al. CAMERON, *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium*, Oxford 1976, pp. 230-270.

<sup>67</sup> GBL<sup>1</sup>, p. 81 n. 5, and GBL<sup>2</sup>, p. 277 and n. 2.

standing of the relevant passages. Krumbacher also postulated that Komnene's «failed translation» of the song showed the contempt which the learned *kaisarissa* felt for the vernacular language. Beyond this misreading, the actual text of the song presented problems to the previous editors of the *Alexiad* because they did not understand some of its colloquial phrases or its metrical structure<sup>68</sup>. Other scholars made an effort to normalize the song's «irregular» rhythm, for example, Nikolaos Politis (1852–1921), the founder of Greek folklore studies<sup>69</sup>, who included the song in his influential anthology of Modern Greek folksongs<sup>70</sup>. From there the ἑσμάτιον found its way to further anthologies and overviews of (Early) Modern Greek literature<sup>71</sup>.

Going back to the *Alexiad*, we will notice that Anna explicitly refers to the song as «made out of everyday language» and positively comments that the song «intoned the very foresight of the stratagem in a most melodious manner». By using the philosophical-rhetorical term παρ-εμφαῖνον, she also remarks that the song «hinted at» Alexios' sensing beforehand the trap set for him<sup>72</sup>. Therefore, she expounds to her readers the song's «intended meaning» – this is what the technical term ἔννοια indicates<sup>73</sup> – by including an exegesis of it. What she offers is not a failed translation into high Atticist diction, as Krumbacher and other scholars thought, but an expanded interpretation of the song in the stylistic level she uses throughout the *Alexiad*. It is the type of exegesis

<sup>68</sup> One can look at the relevant passages in the editions of A. REIFFERSCHIED (1884) and B. LEIB (1937), especially concerning v. 2 which appears as χαρὰ ὅτ' Ἀλέξιε ἐννόησές το – an incomprehensible distortion. In the new critical edition by REINSCH – KAMBYLIS (2001) the colloquial form of the young general's name has been restored from the manuscript into the main text. Moreover, the older editions printed ἐννόησές against the transmitted ἐνόησές, i.e. from νοῶ and not from the more recodite ἐννοῶ.

<sup>69</sup> See N.G. POLITIS, *Δημώδη βυζαντινά ἄσματα*, in *Λαογραφία* 3 (1911–1912), pp. 622–652: 642–645, where he commented on the song and its metrical form (v. 2 appears as χαρῆς, Ἀλέξιε, ἐννόησες το with no enclitic accent).

<sup>70</sup> N.G. POLITIS, *Ἐκλογή ἀπό τὰ τραγούδια τοῦ ἑλληνικοῦ λαοῦ*, Ἀθήναι 1914, p. 251, with a Modern Greek paraphrase.

<sup>71</sup> For example, in L. POLITIS, *Ποιητικὴ Ἀνθολογία*, I: *Πρὶν ἀπὸ τὴν Ἄλωση*, Ἀθήνα 1967, pp. 188 and 209–210 [Ἀθήνα 1975<sup>2</sup>, pp. 173–174 and 196–197] and in G. ΚΕΧΑΓΙΟΓΛΟΥ, *Ἀπὸ τὸν ὀστέρο Μεσαίωνα ὡς τὸν 18ο αἰῶνα. Εἰσαγωγή στα παλιότερα κείμενα τῆς νεοελληνικῆς λογοτεχνίας*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2009, pp. 26–27 (with erroneous presentation of the historical context); Kechagioglou, moreover, does not use the text of the new critical edition but reprints Politis' normalized text.

<sup>72</sup> The verb is used, for example, by Aristotle and Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

<sup>73</sup> See, for example, Hermog. *Prog.* 6 (RABE 12.13–14) and *Id.* 2.4 (RABE 330.2–3).

Anna had learned at school through her training in schedography, and that was applied to all kinds of texts needing paraphrastic interpretation, from proverbs<sup>74</sup> to Homer<sup>75</sup>. In fact, nowhere in the *Alexiad* do the terms ἰδιῶτις γλῶττα or ἰδιῶτις λέξις imply any negative characterization of everyday speech, nor is any opposition between learned and vernacular expressed<sup>76</sup>. Moreover, ἰδιῶτις γλῶττα applies here to the actual everyday language of a popular song and not to a specimen of «vernacular literature», such as the verse narrative of *Digenis Akritis* would supposedly be. Schedography and everyday language were not rejected by Anna in their totality. Her attitude was defined by her political evaluation of concrete situations: the support offered by the capital's citizens to a truly gifted young general, and Manuel's decadent times when education had become a mere entertainment.

The preceding analysis has demonstrated the constraints imposed on understanding Byzantine texts in their proper historical and literary environment by interpretive models based on specific ideologies, such as «national culture, language and education», and «ethnic identity», projected unto the remote past. Obviously, Krumbacher created such models in an effort to elevate Byzantine literature to an independent field of study and to establish Byzantine philology as an autonomous academic discipline<sup>77</sup>. However, his model cannot anymore interpret satisfactorily the available material, especially after the research of the past thirty years in matters of textual and literary criticism. The case of the *Alexiad* and the opinions of its author about schedography and colloquial discourse are just such a case where the model not only failed to do justice to the

---

<sup>74</sup> For example, a large collection attributed to Maximos Planoudes, offering paraphrastic versions of actual Byzantine proverbs; see E. KURTZ, *Die Sprichwörter-sammlung des Maximus Planudes*, Leipzig 1886.

<sup>75</sup> See the presentation of various *Iliad* paraphrases from Byzantine school practice by I. VASSIS, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der sogenannten Psellos-Paraphrase der Ilias*, Hamburg 1991 (Meletemata, 2), pp. 16-32.

<sup>76</sup> See *Alexiad* 7.5.2 and 10.2.4. An indicative example of the absence of any negative remark concerning colloquial discourse can be found at 12.6.5, where Anna remarks on a derisory song composed by «actors» during the public humiliation of a group of rebels in ca. 1098; see REINSCH, *Anna Komnene: Alexias* cit., pp. 418-419 (translation and notes).

<sup>77</sup> See briefly F. TINNEFELD, *Die Begründung der Byzantinistik als wissenschaftliche Disziplin*, in *Karl Krumbacher: Leben und Werk*, hrsg. von P. SCHREINER - E. VOGT, München 2011 (Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse. Sitzungsberichte, Jahrgang 2011, 4), pp. 27-37.

textual material, but also created a specific negative image about «learned secondary education» and «everyday language» in the twelfth century, which had serious consequences for the study of Komnenian literature and its history.

PANAGIOTIS A. AGAPITOS  
University of Cyprus  
(p.a.agapitos@ucy.ac.cy)

## INDICE

P. D'AGOSTINO, <i>Giovanni Malala e il re Andas (Chron. 18, 15). Proposta per un'identificazione</i> . . . . .	3
A. TADDEI, <i>La morte di Tiberio II, l'incoronazione di Maurizio (582) e il Kampos di Costantinopoli tra fonti, topografia e resti monumentali</i> . . . . .	23
P. CAVALLERO, <i>¿Una prueba de autoría? La immediatez como tópos en Leoncio de Neápolis</i> . . . . .	37
G. STRANO, <i>Simeone di Bulgaria negli epistolari di Leone Choiro-sphaktes, Nicola Mistico e Teodoro Dafnopata</i> . . . . .	67
P.A. AGAPITOS, <i>Anna Komnene and the politics of schedographic training and colloquial discourse</i> . . . . .	89
R.S. STEFEC, <i>Anmerkungen zu einigen zypriotisch-palästinensischen Handschriften des Athosklosters Vatopedi</i> . . . . .	109
A. JACOB, <i>L'építaphe métrique du prêtre Jean à Cerrate</i> . . . . .	139
D. GETOV, <i>Unedited Troparia in a Liturgical Pandect</i> . . . . .	155
M. CRONIER, <i>Comment Dioscoride est-il arrivé en Occident? À propos d'un manuscrit byzantin, de Constantinople à Fontainebleau</i> . . .	185
T. MARTÍNEZ MANZANO, <i>Un copista del lustro boloñés de Besarión: el Anonymus Ly</i> . . . . .	211
C. LUCIANI, <i>Un poema in greco demotico sul Giudizio finale: la Δευτέρα Παρουσία διὰ στίχων (XV sec.)</i> . . . . .	245

G. CARDINALI, <i>Un acquisto «poco giudizioso» del cardinale Antonio Carafa: il Gregorio Nazianzeno commentato da Elia di Creta Vat. gr. 1219</i> . . . . .	303
C. FARAGGIANA DI SARZANA, <i>Daniele Broia (30 mars 1944-20 novembre 2013) explorateur de la lumière, photographe de manuscrits</i> . .	319
Résumés degli articoli . . . . .	325
Pubblicazioni ricevute . . . . .	331
Norme per l'invio di contributi alla redazione e procedura di peer review . . . . .	345