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RAIMONDO TOCCI (ed.), Anonymi Chronicon: Prolegomena, Erstedition, Übersetzung und Indices (Byzantinisches Archiv 33). Berlin: De Gruyter 2026. lxi + 167 pp. – ISBN 978-3-11-054062-8

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Many Byzantine texts have been transmitted anonymously. A fair number of these date from the mid-Byzantine period, and some are works of historiography. The volume discussed here presents the first edition of such an anonymous historical work: a world chronicle extending from Adam to John I Tzimiskes (who reigned from 969 to 976). It is thought to have been written in the late tenth or early eleventh century. In addition, the volume publishes an equally anonymous summary list of emperors from Basil II to John VIII (covering the years 976–1421), which is contained in one of the manuscripts of the larger work. This list was no doubt appended to the more substantial chronicle to bring the account up to the time of the copyist and the production of the manuscript.

The edition is contained in a single slender volume. After a preface (*Vorwort*, p. v), which includes acknowledgements and some notes on the project's prehistory, come the *Prolegomena*, with sections on *Autor und Werk* (p. xi), *Die Handschriften* (p. xv), *Das Verhältnis der Handschriften zueinander* (p. xxiii), *Die Quellen des Anonymus* (p. xxvii), *Zu Sprache und Stil* (p. xxxix), *Zur vorliegenden Edition* (p. xlvi), and an *Abkürzungsverzeichnis* (p. liv). After a *Tabula notarum in textu et apparatibus adhibitarum* (p. 2), the main text is edited with a German translation (p. 4). The aforementioned summary list of emperors is added as an appendix, also with a translation (p. 106). At the end of the volume are an *index nominum* (p. 115), an *index verborum ad res Byzantinas spectantium* (p. 133), an *index locorum* (p. 145), and illustrations (p. 163).

First, a few remarks on the introduction.

In *Autor und Werk* (p. xi), the editor argues that the chronicle ending with John I Tzimiskes and the list of emperors extending to John VIII are, in fact, two separate works. The main argument is that Nikephoros II Phokas and his reign, including his murder by Tzimiskes, are given particular prominence in the text and may mark the end, or culmination, of one work. For

example, Nikephoros is the only emperor in this chronicle to be called ἀοίδιμος, an epithet otherwise reserved for Constantine the Great. The editor also argues that the word συντέλεια in the work's title (Χρονικὸν κατ' ἐπιτομὴν ἀπὸ Ἀδὰμ τρέχον ἕως συντελείας) should be understood as referring to the end of the first Christian millennium; it is translated as '(bis zur) Endzeit'. Although I agree with the editor's main conclusion – that one work ends with Nikephoros II Phokas and John I Tzimiskes, as described above, and that the list of emperors is consequently the work of another author – I am not convinced by his interpretation of συντέλεια, especially if the text was written in the eleventh century. Is it reasonable to suppose that an author writing after the year 1000 would speak of the end of time in this way? A simple solution, of course, would be to suppose that the text was written shortly before the year 1000, which also seems more likely to me on linguistic grounds.

Another topic discussed under *Autor und Werk* is the character of the text. The editor argues that it focuses on matters of religion and faith, showing little interest in politics or other affairs of state. From this, he concludes that the author was most probably a cleric. Although this is certainly possible, it is hardly a necessary conclusion: the work's design does not reveal a greater concern with religious matters than is usual in texts of the period.

The following section (p. xv) describes the two manuscripts: Vaticanus Palat. gr. 369 (W) [Diktyon 66101, a. 1496] and Vindobonensis phil. gr. 333 (W) [Diktyon 71447, saec. XV]. A third manuscript was destroyed by fire in Turin in 1904. The beginning of the chronicle is transmitted only by the Vindobonensis, which ends with the chapter on the emperor Maurikios (chapter 207). The Vaticanus, by contrast, begins at chapter 18 (ἀνεφάνη καὶ ἕτερος γίγας Κρόνος λεγόμενος κτλ.) and continues to the end of the main chronicle, that is, until Nikephoros Phokas/John Tzimiskes. This manuscript also contains the list of emperors extending to John VIII. The Vatican manuscript has long been known, whereas the editor deserves credit for identifying the Vindobonensis. In sum, this is an excellent description, accompanied by a valuable discussion of several points, including the fact that no original survives and that neither manuscript's copyist appears to have sought to reshape an older work so as to create his own.

The next section discusses the relationship between the manuscripts (p. xxiii). The main conclusion is that neither manuscript depends on the other and that both derive from a common ancestor. Although this seems to be the only possible conclusion, many of the readings cited in support of it are of

limited significance. The most important argument is that the Vindobonensis cannot derive from the Vatican manuscript: the latter is precisely dated to 1496, whereas the former must date from earlier in the same century.

The following section offers a relatively extensive discussion of the sources used by the chronicler (p. xxvii). At the outset, the editor notes – as had been observed before – that a κύρις Γεώργιος is mentioned several times as an authority or source (explicitly in chapters 64, 67, 125, and 143). This is clearly George the Monk, the ninth-century chronographer. The editor's own work also identifies numerous readings or passages that correspond more or less closely to known versions of George the Monk's chronicle. It is therefore clear that the anonymous chronicler used George's text in some form. Other parallels and sources are also discussed, including versions of the chronicle of Symeon the Logothete. These are delicate matters, and both here and in the edition itself the editor proceeds cautiously. George the Monk is cited wherever possible, while other texts are adduced more selectively – sometimes less often than I would have liked. However, on the whole, the editor's decisions seem very reasonable (cf. the discussion of the principles governing the arrangement of the *apparatus fontium et parallelorum*, p. li). After all, the editor of this anonymous chronicle cannot be blamed for the lack of usable editions of so many mid-Byzantine historical texts.

This is followed by a description of the language of the chronicle (p. xxxix). Such a description has become almost obligatory in editions of Byzantine texts, although it is often of little practical use in establishing the text. In this case, the editor emphasises that the language resembles that of other chronicles of the period and presents few, if any, surprises. At the same time, the very justification for such an exercise lies in the otherness of Byzantine Greek and the desire to identify the ways in which it departs from standard ancient Greek. Despite these reservations about the genre, it must be said that the editor carries out the task very well and offers observations of interest to students of Byzantine literary Greek.

The introductory material is followed by an account of editorial principles (p. xlvi). The discussion begins with the accentuation of enclitics. The editor states that it has become standard practice for editors to take Byzantine rules of accentuation into account in critical editions. However, he notes, there are few differences between the transmitted texts and modern practice. The reason is clear: the manuscripts are very late, and even if the original author of the chronicle ending with Nikephoros Phokas/John Tzimiskes

used different rules of accentuation, the forms we see may be due to later copyists. Much the same applies to punctuation, discussed in the next section (p. l): the punctuation in our fifteenth-century manuscripts may well differ from that used by a tenth-century chronicler.

The constitution of the text itself is then discussed (p. xlix). Some parts of the text are transmitted in only one manuscript, while other parts occur in both the Vaticanus and the Vindobonensis. Where the manuscripts overlap, the Vindobonensis (W) is generally preferred as the authoritative text; the Vaticanus (V) is used where the Vindobonensis is faulty ('wenn W offensichtlich falsche Lesungen zeigt'). As the editor himself acknowledges, this policy carries some risks and may give undue preference to the Vindobonensis. In some cases, sources or parallels, such as George the Monk, are also used to establish the correct reading. I think all of this is handled very well, and the editor consistently shows sound judgement. It should be noted that itacisms have been corrected without comment.

This is followed (p. li) by a discussion of the arrangement of the four apparatus accompanying the text (*fontium et locorum parallelorum*, *criticus*, *historicus*, and *nominum propriorum*), along with some notes on the translation and the indexes (*nominum*, *verborum ad res Byzantinas spectantium*, and *locorum*). At the very end of the introduction (p. liv) is a list of abbreviations/bibliography.

The edition itself follows, about which, come this far, there is not much to say. The text is simple and appears to have been transmitted well, so that there is little need for intervention. The editor's corrections are indeed few and mostly convincing. Nevertheless, a few minor remarks may be in order.

I have identified only one misprint in the Greek text: at 20.2 (p. 8), ᾧτινι is printed as ὦτινι, that is, without a iota subscriptum.

At 146.4–5 (p. 50), the excision of τῆς βασιλείας seems unwarranted.

At 152.2 (p. 52), the emperor Trajan (98–117) is said to have reigned for nine years, represented in Greek by ἔτη θ′. Both manuscripts share this reading, which might therefore appear to be an archetypal error. However, the same reading also occurs in George the Monk, so retaining it in the text is the right decision. It may nevertheless be worth noting that the preceding word is ἔτη. The underlying reading may therefore have been ἔτη ιθ′, in which case the combination of sounds created by -η ι- (that is, if read out: -i i-) may be the reason why the simplification into -η θ′- has taken place.

At 197.1 (p. 76), ὁ is added in Θεοδόσιος <ὁ> μικρός, whereas the corresponding ὁ is not added at 200 (p. 78): Λέων μικρός.

At 199.2 (p. 78), Ἀρδαβούριν is corrected to Ἀρδαβούρι<ο>ν. -ις/-ιν seems to have been fairly common already in the mid-Byzantine period, so the correction may be unnecessary (cf. κύρις Γεώργιος above).

The German translation appears alongside the Greek text. It is excellent and fulfils its purpose well. The introduction (p. liii) states that the translation should preserve the style of the anonymous chronicler, and the editor generally succeeds admirably in doing so. Perhaps, however, it would have been possible to preserve the Greek *praesens historicum*, which, in my opinion, contributes greatly to the character of the narrative.

The indexes follow the text, and all are excellent. In the *index nominum* in particular, however, I found somewhat more minor errors and oversights than in earlier parts of the book. These include misprints (see, s.v. Ἀρειανισμός, the name Κωνσάντιος [sic!]), omissions (Σέρβος is described as *olitanus*), misleading information (everyone named Εὐδοκία is given the epithet Ἰγιρῖνα), and entries in the wrong order (see s.vv. Ἄχαζ and Ἀχαάβ). Odd dollar signs ($$$) also appear twice (see s.vv. Ἰωσήφ and Πέτρος). These and other minor issues suggest that a final round of proofreading was not carried out.

To conclude, this is an excellent piece of scholarship, as one would expect. As noted at the beginning of this review, the volume is slender, and much remains to be done with the text. The present reviewer found himself wishing for a historical commentary, both to clarify individual details (why are several historical figures apparently placed slightly out of their proper chronological order?) and to help us understand the chronicler's view of history more generally (why are so many of these figures from ancient Greek or Roman history, and what does this tell us about the author's knowledge of, or attitude towards, pre-Christian antiquity?). In sum, this very valuable *editio princeps* lays the foundations. It is now time to study the chronicle in depth.

Keywords

short chronicles; critical edition; *editio princeps*; George the Monk; history; Byzantine Greek