

Byzantina Symmeikta

Vol 21, No 1 (2011)

BYZANTINA SYMMEIKTA 21



Inedita from the MS. Hauniensis 1899

Jonas CHRISTENSEN

doi: [10.12681/byzsym.1006](https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.1006)

To cite this article:

CHRISTENSEN, J. (2012). Inedita from the MS. Hauniensis 1899. *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 21(1), 339–349. <https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.1006>

JONAS CHRISTENSEN

INEDITA FROM THE MS. HAUNIENSIS 1899

The epigrams here presented are all found in the fragmentary manuscript *Hauniensis 1899*¹. Following a poetic exchange by John Geometres and a certain Stylianos², they form part of a content wise random selection of poetry followed by prose texts, of which the last one ends abruptly.

Fragment?

It is on the whole quite probable that the *Hauniensis 1899* is only a fragment as the last word on the last page, 8v, is ἔρωτος without any of the punctuation marking full stop used fairly consistent throughout the manuscript. Furthermore, the use of red initials, decoration, and the traces of golden ink seem odd in a manuscript supposedly this short. In the beginning of 1r is written in a later hand and then crossed out: *De Zodiaco Circolo incertus autor* with written correction above rasure: *Johannis Geometrae quaedam*. The crossed out title is puzzling as there are no texts in the manuscript with astrological content. The erroneous title might originate during the process of splitting the, possibly, original *florilegium*

1. GkS 1899,4^r. B. SCHARTAU, *Codices Graeci Haunienses*, Copenhagen, 1994, 157-9. The *Hauniensis 1899* is situated at the Royal Library in Copenhagen. Nothing is known of the transmission of the manuscript until it appears at Gottorp castle in northern Germany. When Gottorp castle was brought under Danish rule in 1684 the library as well became the possession of the crown. In 1735 most of the Gottorp library was brought to Copenhagen and entered into the collection of the Royal Library, where it has been kept to the present (Ibid. 15-16).

2. Edition in CH. GRAUX, *Notices Sommaires des Manuscrits Grecs de la Grande Bibliothèque Royale de Copenhague*, Paris 1879, 44-48.

Επιμέλεια έκδοσης: IBE/EIE

or *sylloge*: the scribe could have mistaken two quires, then upon discovery of his mistake added the correction³. It is then interesting that the author of the entire quire is drawn from the first text, without concern for the heterogeneous content.

*Palaeographical Considerations*⁴

The manuscript consists of a quire of four bi-folios without watermarks, written on paper of what might be Eastern origin, suggesting a dating based on codicological features before 1350, as the influx of paper from the East was discontinued at that time due to new techniques of mass production in Italy, and Western paper, with watermarks, came to dominate the book production of Byzantium⁵. There is no ruling, which is common in later Byzantine manuscripts. The writing is in a scholarly and clear but heavily abbreviated minuscule with a bewildering variety of letters and a prolific use of ligatures: nu-in-omicron, epsilon-iota, epsilon-xi, epsilon-rho (the “ace of spades”), among others. Many of the letters are enlarged, especially omega, beta, omicron, upsilon, psi and epsilon, epsilon sometimes with elongated trunk. As for punctuation, it is thorough, with aspirations, abbreviations and other signs sometimes connected. The enlarged letters show influence of *Fettaugen-stil*⁶, while the heart-shaped betas are reminiscent of the so-called Beta-Gamma style, but the overall impression is too unruly to classify

3. It is, however, remarkable that all the librarians who deal with the manuscript continue to cite the treatise on the zodiac registering first John Geometres’ poems, then a couple of other poems and then a treatise on the zodiac, see Erik Petersens’ survey in Schartau, *Codices*, 482-83.

4. See also SCHARTAU, *Codices*, 157-9.

5. I here follow the information supplied by the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, entry: “Paper”, 1579, though N. OIKONOMIDES, Writing Materials, Documents, and Books, in A. LAIOU (ed.), *The Economic History of Byzantium*, Washington D.C., 2002, vol. 2, 589-92, 590 states that: “Paper of this type [Oriental] continued to be used in the Byzantine world until the fifteenth century, in parallel with western-type paper, with a watermark, imports of which into the East from Italy began in the thirteenth century, flooding the Byzantine market in the fourteenth century thanks to its mass production.”

6. H. HUNGER, Antikes und Mittelalterliches Buch- und Schriftwesen, in *Die Textüberlieferung der antiken Literatur und der Bibel*, München, 1961 (repr. 1975), 27-147, 101-2, and Id., Die sogenannte Fettaugen-Mode in griechische Handschriften des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts, *BF* 4 (1972), 105-13.

the script securely. The whole quire seems to have been written by the same hand, though the *ductus* changes a bit for the more casual and open in the prose passages. Certain features, especially the occurrence of *Fettaugen-stil*, would suggest a hand belonging to the late 13th or early 14th century⁷, but as Greek minuscule writing is notoriously difficult to date after the 11th century, a more precise dating will not be attempted here. If a date of writing in or after the 13th century is accepted, it implies the near impossibility of identifying the place where the writing took place, as the years of exile of the imperial chancery in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade entailed the dispersion of “hands” throughout the remaining Byzantine territories.

1r through 3v are written in two columns and arranged to be read continuously across the page, whereas the prose filling the rest of the manuscript is in one column only. Initials are coloured red, and two initials and a rosette (2v) preserve traces of golden ink. The red ink is also used for corrections as well as some punctuation, rosettes, and a linear decoration above the text.

Poetic content

As the poetic content fills the largest part of the remaining manuscript and as the prose parts are completely anonymous, the poems provide the only clues to a dating of the original collection. Most of the poems have, however, been transmitted to the manuscript as anonymous or with wrong authorship⁸. The earliest of the identified authors is John Geometres who was active in the second half of the 10th century, next comes Christopher of Mytilene who was born around the turn of the 10th century and died sometime after 1050 or 1068⁹, John Mauropous who lived from 1000 until

7. HUNGER, *Die sogenannte*, 111, places the prime of the *Fettaugen-Mode* in the reign of Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282-1328), while Schartau, *Codices*, 20, 157-59 dates the manuscript to 12/13th century, and characterizes it as “Gebrauchsschrift in der Fettaugenmode”.

8. L. G. WESTERINK, *Michaelis Pselli Poemata*, Leipzig, 1992, p. VIII: “(...) collecta habet haec epigrammata variorum, nominibus saepe temere impositis”. He provides a complete survey of the poetic content of *Hauniensis 1899* in his edition of Psellos’ poems, pp. VIII-IX. All epigrams are here numbered accordingly.

9. Editions in E. KURTZ, *Die Gedichte des Christophoros Mitylenaios*, Leipzig 1903: nos 11, 14, 15, 16, 36, pp. 7, 9, 9-10, 19-20.

1081¹⁰ and Michael Psellos who lived from about 1018 to around 1081¹¹. What can be deduced from the collection is as follows:

- a. Psellos and Mauropous are the youngest of the identified authors, thus marking as *terminus post quem* c. 1081 in terms of compiling.
- b. If the dating of the manuscript is approximately right it leaves 200 years or less for the transmission of the collection, if indeed it was at that time a collection till it is written in the *Hauniensis* 1899.
- c. On the grounds that no author later than the 11th century is included a cautious assumption might be that the collection is compiled somewhere around the turn of the 11th century, that is, in the early Komnenian period.

The poems vary in subject matter — from pious, as nos 2-6 of this edition, to scopic, as the iambic exchange between Geometres and Stylianos. Most of the literary references belong to the Christian sphere, while fragments of classical learning are utilized here and there, as in the aforementioned iambic exchange, where explicit reference is made to *Iliad* II.211-277 and the figure of Thersites. There seems to be no defining motive behind this collection, and together with the inconsistent and sometimes downright faulty attributions of authorship, it leaves the impression of a collection made with the intention of preserving without either intent or possibility to impose order on the collection. Considering the highbrow content, it might have been for the personal use of a learned person who collected the poems *ad hoc* without bothering to make explicit note of the authorship. A later scribe would then have copied the collection, or parts of it, into the free space of a *florilegium*, of which the *Hauniensis* 1899 seems to be the first part. This, in terms of transmission, final scribe would then have had the trouble figuring out the authorships.

10. Edition in P. LAGARDE, *Johannis Euchaitorum Metropolitae quae in codice Vaticano gr. 676 supersunt*, Göttingen 1882: poema 30, pp. 14-16.

11. Editions of these poems together with some of the anonymous in Westerink: poems 20, 31, 33, 83, 84 (anon.), 85 (not 84 as in Westerink) (anon.), 86 (anon.; in Westerink erroneously identified as no 90); pp. 258, 297, 298, 459-460. Westerink also wrongly attributes no 82 to this manuscript.

Notes on the metre

The verses are written in the regular Byzantine dodecasyllable that prescribes avoidance of enjambement, avoidance of external hiatus (and to some degree also internal hiatus), caesura as a strong pause in the middle of the verse (*Binnenschluss*) after 5th or 7th syllable, and paroxytone verse endings¹².

1. *On Friendship*

No. 13. according to Westerink¹³ (fol. 2r)

Name not given in title, but considering that poems nos 11, 12, and 14 are in the MS. ascribed to Christopher of Mytilene (no 11) and Τοῦ αὐτοῦ (nos 12, 14), it seems possible to perceive this as a poem by the same author, though not edited by Kurtz in his edition of the poems of Christopher. Considering the nature of the collection it would seem wise to abstain from any final conclusion.

- 1 Ὡς ἐστι τερπνὸν καὶ καλὸν καὶ συμφέρον
- 2 φίλους ἔχειν ἅπαντας ἀνθρώπους βίῳ
- 3 ἰδοὺ προθεὶς βούλευμα γενναῖος φίλος,
- 4 ἑαυτὸν ἐξέσωσεν εἶτα τοὺς φίλους
- 5 τίς ἂν δυνηθῆ ὄϊον εὐρέσθαι φίλον;

That it is good and beautiful and advantageous
that all men have friends in life:

Behold, when the true friend produces a plan
he saves both himself and accordingly his friends:

Who would be able to find such a friend?

The subject of friendship, φιλία, is here treated as a question of benefit and not necessarily mutual benefit. The sole criterion for true friendship is the way in which it can procure means which the person in question can not by himself provide. The very limited aspect of friendship here described has more in common with the view of Michael Psellos in contrast with the more seclusionist views of Kekaumenos, Cerularius and Symeon the

12. M. D. LAUXTERMANN, The Velocity of Pure Iambs, *JÖB* 48, 1998, 9-33, and P. MAAS, Der byzantinische Zwölfsilber, *BZ* 12, 1903, 278-323.

13. All poems are numbered according to Westerink's survey in his edition of Psellos' poems.

Theologian: even though it seems entirely utilitarian, it is after all a praise of friendship¹⁴.

2. *To an Icon of the Mother of God holding the Child*

No. 16. (fol. 2v)

Anonymous

Πρὸς εἰκόνα τῆς θεοτόκου βρεφοκρατούσης:

- 1 Ἐκ μητρικῶν μου τῶν σπλάγγνων, ὦ Παρθένε,
- 2 ἐπὶ σε πανάσπιλε τὴν ῥύψιν ἔχω,
- 3 καὶ μέχρι γήρατος καὶ πνοῆς τελευταίας
- 4 σύ μοι πνοὴ ζωὴ τε καὶ νοῦς καὶ καρδιά.

To an icon of the Mother of God holding the child:

Of my mother's flesh and blood, oh Virgin,
from you, All-pure, I receive my cleansing,
and till old age and the last breath,
you are breath of life, mind, and heart for me.

The contrast between the mortal flesh and the immortal soul is carried out in an elegant and compact way, skilfully contrasting the earthly mother of the author with the Virgin, the earthly life and last breath with the heavenly and eternal. An example of an epigram on a work of art, maybe inscribed next to an icon¹⁵. It is notoriously difficult to ascertain whether such epigrams were composed *for* an actual icon, or rather *on* a certain type of icon — that is, if it was inscribed next to an actual icon, or was intended as a detached poem on an iconographic type¹⁶. The dedication is very specific in its mention of the type of icon, but without any clue of the material circumstances it is very hard to come any closer to a conclusion.¹⁷

14. A. KAZHDAN – G. CONSTABLE, *People and Power in Byzantium*, Washington D.C., 1982, 28-29.

15. M. D. LAUXTERMANN, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres*, Vienna 2003, 149-153.

16. *Ibid.* 152.

17. *Ibid.* 151-152. Lauxtermann suggests that the use of place-specific words might indicate the presence of an actual icon. The verses of this edition would seem to be lacking any such indications.

3. *To the Forerunner*

No. 17. (fol. 2v-3r)

Anonymous

Εἰς τὸν Προδρόμον

- 1 Σὺ καὶ προφήτης εὐρέθης πρὸ τοῦ τόκου,
- 2 καὶ τῶν προφητῶν ἀξίως ὑπερφέρων,
- 3 ὅθεν σε τιμῶν τῇ γραφῇ τῆς εἰκόνοσ,
- 4 πλουτεῖ βοηθὸν ἐν βίῳ Καλοκύρησ.

To the Forerunner

You were known to be the prophet before your birth,
and by far the most worthy of the prophets,
therefore honouring you with the painting of an icon
Kalokyres gains a helper in life.

Evidently a dedication on behalf of Kalokyres, either the author, the commissioner of a work for which the poem was intended as an epigram, or both¹⁸. It is, however, less plausible that Kalokyres was also the actual painter of the icon, as such skills were only rarely combined in one person¹⁹. The verses are very explicit in their reciprocal approach to the commissioning of an icon, and the expectation of the benefits to be derived from the icon is very straightforward: *do ut des*²⁰.

As to my knowledge, five persons bearing the family name Kalokyres or Kalokyros are found in the sources²¹. All belonged to elite society and

18. Cf. again LAUXTERMANN, *Byzantine Poetry*, 149-153, for the problems connected with the proper classification.

19. *Ibid.* 159.

20. For a similar expression of the divine economy of patronage, cf. LAUXTERMANN, *Byzantine Poetry*, 164-5.

21. Scylitzes, *Historia*, ed. H. THURN, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, Berlin 1973, uses both forms in his work: Kalokyres (295.27) and Kalokyros (277.29), which does not, however, need to indicate any ambiguity as cross references with other works prove the identity, e.g. the third Kalokyres of this survey in Scylitzes, *Historia*, 336.82: Καλοκυροῦ πατρικίῳ τῷ Δελφινῶ, who is identical to *Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis Historiae Libri Decem*, ed. C. B. HASE, Bonn 1828, book X, 9: (...) Καλοκύρην πατρικίον, ᾧ ἐπίκλησις Δελφινῶσ προεστήσατο.

each one could thus have been the commissioner and maybe even author of the poem:

- a. The *prokoitos*²² or *koitonites*²³ Kalokyros who helped Samonas thwart the plot of Basil against Leo VI c. 900.
- b. The envoy to the Rhos in the years 966-69 and later rebel, the *patrikios* Kalokyres, last heard of in 971, who enjoyed brotherly bonds of friendship with the Kievan prince Svjatoslav²⁴.
- c. The Kalokyres Delphinias, *patrikios*, *anthypatos* and *katepano* of Italy,²⁵ who ended his life fighting Basil II and Constantine VIII on the side of Bardas Phokas 988/9²⁶.
- d. Kalokyros Sextos or Sestos, *anthypatos* and commentator of the *Basilika*, 11th century, allegedly part of John VIII Xiphilinus' (c. 1010-1075) circle of law scholiasts²⁷.
- e. Kalokyros Dordiletos, Bishop of Tropea (1088) and *protosynkellos*²⁸.

As the commissioner of the icon ought to have been alive at the time of the composition of the epigram, the possible dating spans the 10th, most of the 11th century and quite possibly a good part of the 9th, considering the high post and thus probably long career of the *prokoitos*. While it would

22. Scylitzes, 179.86.

23. *Theophanes Continuatus*, ed. I. BEKKER, Bonn 1838, 363.

24. Leo the Deacon, IV.6 (envoy); V.1-3 (relations with Sviatoslav, rebellion); VIII.5 (his escape to the Rhos and last mention). Scylitzes, 277.27-35 (envoy), 288.2-5 (rebellion) and 295.26-32 (last mention).

25. V. VON FALKENHAUSEN, *Untersuchungen über die byzantinische Herrschaft in Süditalien vom 9. bis ins 11. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden 1967, 84, and R. GUILLAND, *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines*, Berlin-Amsterdam 1967, vol. 2, 72.

26. Scylitzes, 336.82-92 and Leo the Deacon, X.9 (command and execution). It seems safe to assume here two separate persons, as the scenes of action are clearly divided into the Rhos/Bulgarian frontier and the rebellion of Phokas in Anatolia. Furthermore, Leo the Deacon distinguishes between the two, when he introduces the latter as Delphinias (X.9) after having treated the first earlier in the work (IV, V and VIII). Of the relationship between these two nothing much can be said, other than it would seem strange if two high-ranking persons of the same time and name should not in some way be related.

27. C. W. E. HEIMBACH, *Griechisch-römisches Recht im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit*, Leipzig 1868-9, 388 (J. S. ERSCH - J. G. GRUBER, *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*, vol. LXXXVI, 191-471, vol. LXXXVII, 1-106).

28. FALKENHAUSEN *Untersuchungen*, 151.

seem a long stray for this collection to include a poem at least 50 years earlier than the otherwise earliest, John Geometres, it would be unwise to preclude the possibility considering the fragmentary state of the manuscript and the number of poems of uncertain authorship.

4-6 *On the Occasion of the Discovery of the Head of the Forerunner*

Nos. 18-20. (fol. 3r)

Anonymous

Εἰς τὴν εὐρεσιν τῆς τιμίας κεφαλῆς τοῦ Προδρομοῦ

I.

- 1 Τὴν εὐρεσιν σῆς παμφαιστάτης κάρας
- 2 στάμνω φανεῖσαν ἐκ μυχῶν κατωτάτων,
- 3 τὸ παμφαῖνον σύστημα τῆς ἐκκλησίας,
- 4 πανηγυρίζον νῦν ἑορτάζει πόθω.

On the discovery of the honoured head of John the Baptist

The discovery of your radiant head,
coming to light in a jar from the deepest pits,
the radiant whole of the church,
praises and feasts with reverence.

II.²⁹

ἄλλως:

- 1 Τὴν εὐρεσίην σου τῆς τρι<σ>ολβίας κάρας,
- 2 ἦν στάμνος ἡμῖν βρωσιν καὶ θεῖαν φέρει
- 3 τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πλήρωμα <τῆς> ἐκκλησίας,
- 4 νῦν ὡς ἑορτὴν ἐκτελεῖ πανδαισίας.

1 τρισολβίας *supplevimus* 2 *Exodus* 16.33, *Ep.Hebr.* 9.4: (...) ἐν ἧ στάμνος χρυσῆ ἔχουσα τὸ μάννα καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος Ἀαρὼν ἡ βλαστήσασα καὶ αἱ πλάκες τῆς διαθήκης, (...) 3 τῆς *supplevimus*

Another

The discovery of your thrice hallowed head,
which the jar carry to us as godly food,

29. There is a slight damage to the manuscript in this epigram.

the godly presence in the Church,
now completes the perfect feast.

III.

ἄλλως

- 1 Στάμνος κάραν φέρουσα τὴν τοῦ Προδρομοῦ
- 2 τὰς θαυματουργὰς ἐκροὰς συνεκχέει,
- 3 ἧς ἐξαγωγὴν ὡς ἑορτὴν κυρίως
- 4 πανηγυρίζει πᾶσα νῦν ἐκκλησία.

Another

A jar carried the head of the Forerunner,
spilling the wonder working flow,
the discovery is occasion for a major feast,
that the whole of the church now celebrates.

These three short epigrams conform to the style and language of the celebratory texts of the *Menaion*: The idea of the head as a everlasting source of *charis*³⁰. What is somewhat unusual is the emphatic use of the theme of manna from *Exodus*: just as the Jews received the divine manna when they wandered in the desert, so the Christians, those of the new Covenant, miraculously recovered the head of the Forerunner, John the Baptist. The insistent use of the word *στάμνος* and its immediate correspondence to *Exodus* 16.33 corroborates this line of thought, as the golden, manna-filled jar was placed inside the Ark of the Covenant. John the Baptist is the manna of the New Covenant, only here the order is reversed: the Jews received the divine help and then placed a token of it in the Ark, while this token is recovered and thought to bring help by the Christians. The new Covenant is thus the rediscovery of the old, represented by the jar from the Ark of the (old) Covenant. This corresponds well with the general notion of the Forerunner as a bridge between the Old and New Covenant and self-image of the Byzantines as the new Jews, the Chosen People, a view propagated at least from the time of Heraclius on³¹.

30. Cf. the entry for 25 May: *Μηναια τοῦ ὄλου ἐνιαυτοῦ*, vol. 5: *Μαΐου καὶ Ἰουνίου*, Rome 1899, 162-170.

31. Cf. P. MAGDALINO – R. NELSON, Introduction, in P. MAGDALINO – R. NELSON (eds), *The*

INEDITA FROM THE MS. HAUNIENSIS 1899

Preserved in the manuscript Hauniesnsis 1899, five anonymous epigrams and one epigram probably to be ascribed to John Mauropous are edited and commented on for the first time. The introduction comprises a palaeographical analysis of the manuscript, dated before 1350 on the basis of the quality of the paper used for its establishment, remarks on its content, considerations on the function of the codex to which the *Hauniensis* formed originally a part, and notes on the epigrams' meter.

Old Testament in Byzantium, Washington D.C., 2010, 1-38, esp. 15-29.

