Defining the relation between learned and vernacular literature still remains an important issue concerning the overall study of Byzantine literature. Since the middle of the nineteenth century these two linguistic and literary areas were more or less viewed as being separate entities catering to the needs and expressing the ideologies of different strata of Byzantine society, high (written and Byzantine) in the case of learned literature and low (oral and Neohellenic) in the case of vernacular literature. This division had a great impact on the study of late Byzantine and early Modern Greek literature, especially in the way in which the socio-cultural environment of these two literatures was perceived and how the master narratives for their respective histories were gradually created up to the middle of the twentieth century. Though much work has been done in editing and interpreting learned and vernacular texts, and even though voices have been raised against the division of these two domains, the overall impression from publications of the last twenty years is that most Byzantinists prefer to deal with learned texts, leaving the vernacular material to Neohellenists, while the latter on the whole avoid to study in depth material before the fifteenth century.

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4 For some examples see P. A. Agapitos, Genre, Structure and Poetics in the Byzantine Vernacu-
In a recent paper, I attempted to show how problematic this approach is, while I proposed that the joint study of learned and vernacular texts would be productive on an analytical microlevel, as well as on a synthetic macrolevel. As a case study, I chose the type of grammatical exercise known as *schedos* and the practice of schedography in the twelfth century, exactly the period in which it was believed that the separation of learned and vernacular language and literature was finalized. In a further paper, I looked more closely at the way in which *schede* were taught in school and read by various recipients, while in another three papers I examined in more detail the opinions of Anna Komnene, Eustathios of Thessalonike and Theodore Prodromos about schedography as a practice and the use of everyday language in literary texts. What, in my opinion, became apparent from these studies is that (i) everyday language was used in schools for teaching Greek, (ii) various authors and other players in Constantinople’s network of education had differing opinions about schedography, and (iii) the *schedos* became part of a new performative literary genre (the “prose-*schedos*-verse” triptych) from about the Thirties of the twelfth century and until at least the end of Manuel Komnenos’ reign. Not only was a new genre created out of schoolroom practice, but this practice also generated the composition of court poems in the vernacular, such as the surviving poems of the so-called Ptochoprodromic corpus.

The present paper is the last in this series and focuses on a fourth writer and teacher of the Komnenian era, the polymath and polygraph John Tzetzes (ca. 1110-after 1166). Despite the appearance of important editions of a number of his...
works offering a solid basis for scholarly research, there still remain poorly edited or even unedited texts of his in need of critical editions. Hellenists have for the most part been interested in Tzetzes as a “classical philologist”, viewing his works more as repositories of lost ancient Greek material rather than as textual products of the twelfth century with a concrete socio-cultural and literary life of their own. At the same time, Tzetzes has not received any deeper literary interpretive attention from Byzantinists. A few studies have dealt with specific themes of his œuvre,

to N. Agiotis, *Tzetzes on Psellos Revisited*, «Byzantinische Zeitschrift» 106, 2013, pp. 1-8. In order not to burden the notes of the present paper, I offer here a list of Tzetzes’ works most often used together with their editions and abbreviations:


11 For example, Grigoriadis, *Τζέτζης Τζέτζης*, cit., pp. 9-25 offered an analysis of Tzetzes’ humor.
his relation to Hellenism, his social network, his relation with his students, or his “beggarly” character as a “poet on commission”. Only very recently studies have focused on a more sustained, theoretically informed, literary analysis of some of Tzetzes’ works. One central difficulty in approaching Tzetzes as an author is the fact that most of his lengthier surviving works have been (or appear to have been) written for didactic purposes, thus giving the impression that they do not offer the necessary basis for literary interpretation. However, the question whether didactic texts are literature is a modern and not a medieval problem. Another major difficulty in studying Tzetzes is the extreme and quite particular presence of his own Self in his texts, to the point that the vast majority of his writings appears to be driven by an “autographic syndrome”.

The textual image of this phenomenon – Tzetzes’ egocentric, idiosyncratic and contentious character – has been mostly interpreted as a purely personal trait of his. However, it is not possible to establish a direct – biographic, psychological or intellectual – one-to-one relationship between texts and their authors. This, obviously, does not mean that a number of Byzantine writers – particularly so from the

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late tenth century onwards – did not have a sense of being “authors” and did not express such a sense quite clearly in their writings. Yet their authorial identities were also shaped by their social, cultural, religious and economic environment and the resulting manifold codes of interaction with their real or intended listeners and/or readers.

In the highly competitive environment of the capital, where the correct exegesis of standard school texts (such as Homer, Euripides, Aristophanes, Hermogenes and Aphthonios) was of paramount importance for promoting a specific teacher’s superiority over his colleagues, criticism of a potential competitor’s work was a crucial weapon in eliminating him from receiving a coveted position or a lucrative commission. Criticism by others is one of the reasons why Tzetzes kept a watchful eye over his own work, lest it should be appropriated by some other teacher. This happened, for example, when a certain Pelagonites, Tzetzes’ colleague at the Pantokrator Monastery, appropriated his commentary to the progÿnasmata of Aphthonios. Tzetzes accused Pelagonites of plagiarism and succeeded in convincing the abbot to relieve the adversary of his teaching duties. Within such a context, to accuse a competitor of philological ignorance or of using wrong Greek was instrumental in discrediting this person’s standing as a qualified teacher. Eustathios, for example, in his lectures discreetly criticized Tzetzes’ products of Homeric philology and corrected his errors, while Tzetzes in his commentaries

17 For theoretically well-equipped discussions of this matter in Byzantine Studies see S. Papaioannou, Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium, Cambridge 2013, along with A. Pizzone, The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature: A View from Within, in A. Pizzone (ed.), The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature: Modes, Functions and Identities, Boston-Berlin 2014, pp. 3-18, and M. Mullett, In Search of the Monastic Author: Story-Telling, Anonymity and Innovation in the 12th Century, ibid., pp. 171-198.

18 On this literary competitiveness, which reflected a very specific need for social and financial success, see the pioneering study of A. Garzya, Literarische und rhetorische Polemiken der Komnenenzeit (1973), in Storia e interpretazione di testi bizantini. Saggi e ricerche, London 1974, nr. VII. Two textual witnesses of such polemics in the twelfth century are a still unedited text by Nikolaos Kataphloron about blatant plagiarism by competitors (see M. Loukaki, Τιμήωροι και σκυλευτές νεκρών: Οι απόψεις του Νικόλαου Καταφλώρου για τη ρητορική και τους ρητόρες στην Κονσταντινούπολη του 12ου αιώνα, «Byzantina Symmeikta» 14, 2001, pp. 143-166) and an anonymous vituperation against writers who compose monodies (edited with translation and commentary by A. Sideras, Eine byzantinische Invektive gegen die Verfasser von Grabreden, Vienna 2002).

19 See Pizzone, Self-authorization, cit., part 2.

20 Epp. 78-79. For another case of blatant plagiarism, where a teacher stole Tzetzes’ commentary to Lycophron, tried to pass it as his own and was exposed by a pupil see ep. 42; see also a grotesque episode of supposed plagiarism described by Tzetzes in Sch. Ar. Ran. 897a (Rec. II), 951-955 Ko (on the latter passage see Gaul, Rising Elites, cit., pp. 266-268). Recension II represents an expanded and revised version of Tzetzes’ Aristophanic commentaries. It is most fully preserved in the famous Ambr. C 222 inf., once dated to the late 13th-early 14th century. However, C. M. Mazzucchi, Ambrosianus C 222 inf. (Graces 886): il codice e il suo autore, «Ævum» 77, 2003, pp. 263-275 and 78, 2004, pp. 411-437, has convincingly shown that the Ambrosianus was copied out in the late 12th century, commissioned and read by a pupil of Tzetzes.

also criticized, though not discreetly, other teachers on their metrical or grammatical inadequacies. The detection and publicizing of such “wrong” usages exemplifies the professional risks to which teachers could be exposed if they did not have a powerful social network to support them and good diplomatic skills to counter such an exposure, as Theodore Prodromos had successfully done. Tzetzes often represents himself as the target of such criticism, offering us valuable insights into the control mechanisms within a professional peer group such as the capital’s grammarians.24 The fight for securing a new patron or keeping an old one is what comes out most strongly in Tzetzes’ appeals as documented in his letters.

In comparing John Tzetzes and Eustathios of Thessalonike, we can say that the two men stand at a substantial distance within the social, cultural and educational spectrum of Komnenian Constantinople. In contrast to Eustathios, Tzetzes never occupied any high rank in the capital’s “school system”, nor any rank in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Despite Tzetzes’ vast textual production (he himself speaks of των ἔξηκοντα συγγεγραμμένων μοι βιβλίων, «the sixty books written by me»), only two brief prose texts of public oratory survive from his pen, this again in contrast to Eustathios’ grand orations and sermons. Moreover, Tzetzes’ philological works, such as his commentaries on the Aristophanic triad, Lycophron’s Alexandra or on the Iliad, differ greatly in style, structure and perspective from Eustathios’ Parekbolai on Homer or the exegesis on the iambic Pentecostal canon.

24 On the role of phthonos («envy») as an emotion and a driving force in this specific context of teacher rivalry see M. Hinterberger, Phthonos: Mißgunst, Neid und Eifersucht in der byzantinischen Literatur, Wiesbaden 2013, pp. 168-171.
25 Indicatively, see Epp. 56 (to the sebastokratorissa Eirene), 57 (to Megalonas, representative of Empress Eirene), 89 (to the sons of Theodore Kamateros) and 74 (to Joseph, abbot of Pantokrator Monastery).
26 See the similar phrased passages in Sch. Ar. Ran. 843a (Rec. II), 936, 13-19 Ko and Sch. Ar. Ran. 897a (Rec. II), 954, 15-955, 4 Ko. The «sixty books» also make an appearance in Hist. 369, Chil. XI 103.
27 A speech of gratitude addressed to the Patriarch John IX Agapetos (1111-1134) and a consolatory speech addressed to an anonymous. Both texts were written before 1134; see B. L. Konstantopoulos, Inedita Tzetziana: Δύο ανεξάρτητοι λόγοι του Ιωάννου Τζέτζη, «Hellenika» 33, 1981, pp. 178-184. That Tzetzes was absolutely capable of writing lively and artful prose can be seen from his letters, one of the most interesting epistolographic collections of Byzantine literature.
28 Only the commentary to Book 1 was ever completed; see now M. Paphathomopoulos (ed.), Ἐξήγησις Ιωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου εἰς τὴν Ὀμήρου Τιλίδα, Athens 2007.
29 On the latter see now P. Cesaretti, S. Ronchey (eds.), Eustathii Thessalonicensis In canonem iambicum Pentecostalem, Berlin 2014.
and Tzetzes represent two different types of teachers within the capital’s society, the former being an “upper-class” and high-profile maistor, the latter being a “middle-class” grammatikos with a restricted public profile. Tzetzes certainly gave no cause to be attacked for political reasons, as had been the case with high-level controversies over “correct” education at other times in Byzantium. Thus, some of Tzetzes’ eccentricities, which prove to be devices of high literary artistry, are related to his middle-class social standing and his failed efforts to achieve a higher educational status in Komnenian Constantinople.

Given these differences between Tzetzes, Prodromos and Eustathios, and given the amount of material Tzetzes has to offer, it will be quite instructive to examine in detail his opinions about schedography and everyday language, because this will enable us to see in what ways the social position of a teacher might influence his view on language instruction and literary writing. Furthermore, by looking into the way Tzetzes combines in one specific work the question of appropriate language use with a writer’s oikonomia, we shall be able to clarify some debated issues in the study of Komnenian literature. Such an examination will further our understanding of the variegated picture of Komnenian textual production in respect to the assumed division between learned and vernacular Greek language and literature.

The schedographic labyrinths of ignorant scum

The practice of schedography is firmly attested since the first decades of the eleventh century. The reading and writing of this new type of grammatical exercise (σχέδος, «sketch», «improvisation») quickly developed into an important element of the education system. A schedos was written for advanced pupils and...
served two main aims: it drilled them in the complexities of Greek spelling, grammar and syntax, while it also helped them to understand the progymnasmata. These two aims were achieved through the puzzling form in which the grammarian presented the schedos. The text, punctuated in an erratic manner, was filled with strange words and phrases giving no meaning. The pupils had to decode this «riddle» (γρίφος or νόημα) and to rewrite it correctly. The puzzles were based on similarities of sound, called ἀντίστοιχα («correspondences»). For example, we will find phrases playing with similarly sounding nominal and verbal forms or wrongly written phrases that need to be acoustically decoded. Most schede were in prose (usually up to twenty lines in length), but there survives a fair number of schede in iambic twelve-syllable verse. By the middle of the twelfth century a particular type of schedos had become fashionable, in which an antistoiχic prose section is concluded by a short non-antistoiχic poem, often addressed to a recipient. This particular “diptych” type was in all probability an invention of Theodore Prodromos, who elevated the schedos to a new genre, offering it to aristocratic patrons as entertainment. It is this specific, wholly literary activity that Anna Komnene and Eustathios criticized as a form of deviation from the true aim of proper education.

Similar to Eustathios, Tzetzes viewed schedography as a labyrinth created by its practitioners, mostly teachers like himself. For example, he wrote a letter to his friend and colleague John Ismeniotes in order to praise him about his literary skills which Tzetzes only recently had discovered. Tzetzes notes to his addressee that «I knew you to be a most exact model and scientific master of general education».

As Tzetzes notes in the Histories, the vast verse commentary to his own letter collection composed around 1155-1160 and commonly referred to as Chiliades, by

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35 From a schedos of Constantine Manasses transmitted in the Vat. Pal. gr. 92, f. 235v: (a) καὶ ἐκίσσασαν ἵω τε instead of καὶ οἰκίσας ἐνίστε, and (b) ἐνώκε ἐς τς ῥωτεῖς instead of ἐν ό καὶ ἔτερος τς; see I. D. Polemis, Fünf unedierte Texte des Konstantinos Manasses, «Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici» 33, 1996, pp. 279-292: 283.

36 For a detailed discussion of the above see my studies in n. 7 with full documentation and bibliography.


38 Very few and brief are the remarks on Tzetzes and schedography; see Gaul, Rising Elites, cit., pp. 273-279 on schedography in general with a reference to Tzetzes, and Nesseris, Παιδεία, cit., I, pp. 166-167 on Tzetzes and schedography.

39 Εp. 77, 114, 4-5: ύπογραμμόν γάρ σε καὶ ἐπιστημονάρχην τῆς ἐγκυκλίου παιδείας ἐγίνωσκον ἀκριβέστατον.

40 The Histories are quoted by the ordinal number of each historia and the thousand-verse numeration introduced by Theodor Kiessling in 1826. On the Histories as a larger-scale project of Tzetzes see the studies by Aglae Pizzone referred to above in n. 14.
«general education» in this passage he meant only «grammar». He then goes on to explain what exactly the subject was by which he knew the skills of Ismeniotes:

καὶ γὰρ εἰ καὶ κολοκύνταισι κατὰ τῶν κωμικῶν ἐλήμον, ὡμοὶ οὐκ εἰσιν οὕτως ἂν ἄβλεπτειν μὲ, ἀλλὰ παρεβῆσθον ταῦτα ὡρὰν καὶ ἀκούειν εἰ μεγαλοφυεῖς τῶν παρὰ σοῦ πλακεσίων σχεδουργικῶν λαβυρίνθων πλοκαὶ καὶ εἰ ἐξαγγέλλοι ἀμίλλαι· οὐ γὰρ ἦσαν οὕτω τῶν ἀνηκούστων καὶ ἁμαρτών μελισσαχέως τῶν λόγων ἕκρεουσαν ἵνα γας. οὕτω μὲν, οὕτω οἷς ἐγκυκλίου παιδείας ὑπογραμμών σε ἤδειν τὸν ἀκριβέστατον.

And even if pumpkins were damaging my eyes, according to the Comic, yet still I would not be as incapable of seeing, since the ingenious intertwinings and the non-athletic competitions of the schedourgic labyrinths you have intertwined would powerfully force me to see and listen. For your intertwinings were not utterly unknown and obscure, pouring forth the honeydripping charms of your words. Thus, then, thus I knew you to be the most exact model of general education.

Explaining in the Histories his own phrase σχεδουργικῶν λαβυρίνθων πλοκαὶ, Tzetzes expounds the story of Daedalus and the construction of the Labyrinth for King Minos. The story of the Labyrinth gives Tzetzes the opportunity to make the following comment about schedourgic «riddles» (νοήματα):

Σuch was the Labyrinth that was situated on Crete, a fortress with many twisted coils, snail-shaped as to its arrangement. But I, more allegorically by means of rhetorical force, called now the riddles of schedographers «labyrinths».

The extravagant epistolographic compliment payed to Ismeniotes about his inge-
nious composition of labyrinthine yet charming schede and its explanation in the Histories, are the only positive statements about schedography Tzetzes made in the totality of his surviving works. In its choice of specific words the phrasing in the passage quoted from Ep. 77 is fairly similar to a passage about the schedographic

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41 Hist. 377, Chil. XI 527-528: νῦν δὲ γε τὴν γραμματικὴν ἐγκύκλιον παιδείαν | εἶπον, κατὰ κατάχρησιν, οὐ λόγῳ δὲ κυρίῳ.
42 Ep. 77, 114,3-11.
43 Ar. Nub. 327 νῦν γέ τοι ἠδὴ καθορᾶς αὐτάς. εἰ μὴ λημάς κολοκύνταις (Socrates speaking to Strepsiades about seeing the Clouds descending from Mount Parnes and the latter not seeing them clearly). On the Aristophanic verse and its meaning see Hist. 378, Chil. XI 529-542 along with Sch. Ar. Nub. 323a, 460, 18-19 Ho: καὶ ὁ Σωκράτης· εἰ μὴ κολοκύνταις, φησί, λημάς καὶ μεγάλος ἄμβλουσσες ἰσομεγέθεις ἔχον τὰς λήμας, δικῶ ἠδὴ ταῦτας ὀρᾷ.
44 Hist. 379, Chil. XI 542-568.
45 Hist. 379, Chil. XI 565-568.
practice of Theodore Prodromos in the monody written by his pupil Niketas Eugenianos and a passage on the schedographic practice of Patriarch Michael in an encomiastic oration written by Eustathios. All three passages accentuate the performative aspects of the schedos, making it quite clear that Tzetzes knew very well what he was writing about.

All other remarks of Tzetzes about schedography and its practitioners are decisively negative. This massive criticism of «the art of the grammatical sketch» (ἡ τέχνη τοῦ σχέδους), as Anna Komnene called it, focuses on two major issues. The first concerns the ignorance of schedographers, be it in basic matters of spelling, grammar and metrics or in more complex subjects of general education, such as rhetoric and astronomy. A most telling example of this criticism comes from a note by Tzetzes (but copied out in the late thirteenth century), to be found on the left margin of cod. A of Herodotus, the famous Laur. 70, 3 (early 10th cent.), f. 5v. Commenting on Her. I 23 (‘Αρίωνα τῶν Μηθυμνηίων), Tzetzes remarks to the future reader of the codex:

\[\text{Know that ‘Αρίωνα is to be written with an omicron, both in Ionic and according to Attic diction; but let the teacher-intertwined speeches tell fooleries.}\]

The concern of Tzetzes about the correct spelling of third-declension proper names ending in -ων is also to be found in the Histories. On account of a reference to Arion in the verse epistle he addressed to the teacher Lachanas Zabareiotes, Tzetzes includes a whole exegetical note on Arion and his story with reference to Herodotus. In an added scholion to the heading of this history, Tzetzes points to the correct spelling of Arion by quoting an ancient verse inscription preserved in Aelian’s On the Nature of Animals. He then remarks addressing his future pupils:

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50 Luzzatto, Note inedite, cit., p. 643.
51 Chil. IV 479.
52 Hist. 17, Chil. I 396-417 (Περὶ Ἀρίωνος).
53 Sch. Chil. I 396; 533, 3-5 Leone.
John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners

ο ἐπίγραμμα καὶ σημείωσαι, ἵνα ἐξ αὐτοῦ γινώσκοι, ὅτι Ἄριονος τὸ ὀ μικρὸν δεῖ γράφειν, ὡς τὸ Πανδίονος, Ἡξίονος καὶ τὰ ὄμοια, καὶ οὕς ὡς οἱ βοῦβαλοι σχεδεκ-δόται μέγα.

Of this epigram take note, so that you might know from it, that in Ἄριονος the ὀ should be written as omicron, like Πανδίονος, Ἡξίονος and the same, and not omega like the buffalo sketch-publishers write.

In the marginal note of the Laurentianus quoted above the πρόξιμοι are the school teachers who «intertwine» schede, only that, in the opinion of Tzetzes, the teachings of such people tell nonsense. Tzetzes’ scholion to Hist. 17 makes it clear that he has the schedographers in mind. He calls them «publishers of sketches» (a word created by him) and characterizes them as «buffaloes». As we shall have the opportunity to see further below, this word is one of his favorite abuses for characterizing ignorant teachers, including himself in two cases.

The ignorance of schedographers in matters of spelling, especially of epic and archaic vocabulary, is expressed most clearly in another scholion. Tzetzes wrote a highly intricate letter to his former pupil Alexios, congratulating him on his appointment as kokkiarios, a tax official. The letter opens with a verse from Hesiod (Op. 486 ἢμος κόκκυς κοκκύζει δρυὸς ἐν πετάλοισι), in which Tzetzes introduces a wordplay with the verb κοκκύζειν and its homophone κοκκίζειν. Both verbs are brought into relation with Alexios’ new office, the name of which is firmly pointed out to the readers by its inclusion in the letter’s heading.

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54 E.g., like the proximos Stylianos in poems 9-10 of Christopher Mitylenaios: M. De Groote (ed.), Christophori Mitylenaii Versuum variorum collectio Cryptensis, Turnhout 2012, pp. 10-11. However, the verb σχεδεκδότεω is attested in his contemporary Gregory of Corinth (see LBG s.v.).
55 On the meaning of the word as «foolish person» see Kriaras, IV, p. 160, s.v. βοῦβαλος; see also Ph. Koukoules, Θεσσαλονίκης Εὐστάθιου τὰ λαογραφικά, I-II, Athens 1950: II, p. 184 with references to Tzetzes, but also to Ptochopr. II (version H), 68-73 (ed. H. Eideneier, Πτοχοπροδρομο. Κριτική έκδοση, Herakleion 2012, p. 168 in the critical apparatus).
56 On the meaning of the word as «foolish person» see Kriaras, IV, p. 160, s.v. βοῦβαλος; see also Ph. Koukoules, Θεσσαλονίκης Εὐστάθιου τὰ λαογραφικά, I-II, Athens 1950: II, p. 184 with references to Tzetzes, but also to Ptochopr. II (version H), 68-73 (ed. H. Eideneier, Πτοχοπροδρομο. Κριτική έκδοση, Herakleion 2012, p. 168 in the critical apparatus).
57 Tzetzes quotes in Ep. 1, 4, 7-13 a few lambs of his written when he was young. In a later scholion to the letters he applies this abusive characterization to himself concerning his wrong use of dichronic vowels in these verses (158, 14-159, 7): οὕτως ἔχεται μὲν τοῦτο καὶ κανόνας τὸ δὲ πλέον ὅτι τὸ ἀνεστημένος καταχρώμην, ὡς οἱ βοῦβαλοι («Thus does this phenomenon also have a rule; furthermore, that then I misused dichronic vowels just like buffaloes do»). In the Histories he also quotes a few of his own youthful lambs (Hist. 66, Chil. III 61-67) and makes a similar comment (541-542 Leone): στίχοι ἐμοὶ ἐξωταί ἐπὶ ταῦτα ἔγραψον ἐπὶ καταχρώμην τις διχρόνος ὡς οἱ βοῦβαλοι («My verses: when I wrote these lines, I still misused dichronic vowels just like buffaloes do»).
58 On this office, the meaning of the recondite wordplay and the aim of Ep. 31 see now the excellent analysis by P. Katsoni, Ο Ἰωάννης Τζέτζης και ο κοκκιάριος: Πληροφορίες για το φορολογικό σύστημα και τη λειτουργία του στην επιστολογραφία της ὑπέρης βουέλτης περιόδου, in T. G. Kollias, K. G. Pitsakis (eds.), Aureus: Τόμος αφιερωμένος στον καθηγητή Ευάγγελο Χρυσό, Athens 2014, pp. 311-328: 318-324. For a first, not quite successful attempt to solve the puzzle of kokkiarios see Grünbart, Byzantinisches Gelehrtenelend, cit., p. 417 n. 19.
59 Ep. 31, 46, 13-17.
To master Alexios, nephew of the protovestiarios, when appointed kokkiarios «When the cuckoo tweets his cuckoo-song in the leaves of the oak» (according to the Ascræan Hesiod kokkizein [«sprinkle with light rain»] and not kokkyzein [«produce the cuckoo-sound»], you also came forth, my most noble lord.

Hesiod used kokkuvzein, but Tzetzes suggests that he actually meant kokkivzein. Now, this verb – a colloquial word – means «sprinkle something with flour or dust», but Tzetzes (with an eye on the verses following the Hesiodic quotation, i.e. Op. 488 ἡμὸς Ζεὺς ὄων τρίτῳ ἤματι μηδ ἀπολήγοι) reinterprets the verb to mean «raining lightly». He thus suggests that just as the cuckoo starts singing at the end of winter, signalling the arrival of spring when light rain falls, so does Alexios go forth on his duties at the beginning of spring. It would have been obvious to the informed readers of the letter that the wordplay kokkuvzein/kokkivzein is a typical schedographic riddle involving the use of everyday language. We see here that Tzetzes knew very well how schedography functioned and, moreover, used colloquial discourse in setting up his deceitful riddle, just like Theodore Prodromos and other teachers did. In an iambic scholion to ἡμὸς in Ep. 31 about the accentuation of this archaic adverb, Tzetzes notes to his reader:

Should you write ἡμὸς [«when», place both an asper and a lenis, as in τέμος [«then», while ἡμὸς when shortened needs an asper, but when beginning a trochaic it carries the lenis. Thus, place an “asperolenis”, as Tzetzes says, granting to yourself a most exact technical diction, but let the all-wise sketch-workmen go their ways: They know nothing of what they think they know. In vain do they bear the appellation of the art, for they are ignorant of technical discourses.

60 See Katsoni, Ioánnης Τζέτζης, cit., p. 321 n. 42 for the relevant references.
61 On this interpretation of the relevant Hesiodic verses see Hist. 163, Chil. VIII 41-43.
62 Sch. ad Ep. 31, 166, 5-13.
63 That is, being called technikoi, another term for grammatikoi.
The criticism against schedographers concerns again their ignorance in matters of spelling, but here they are ironically called «all-wise sketch-workmen», a low-class version of schedekdotai. These people are wrongly called technikoi, whereas they are completely ignorant of the «discursive arts» (λογικαι τεχναι). It is interesting to note how Tzetzes disparages schedographers by degrading them intellectually and socially, while using quite aptly a schedographic riddle to enhance a letter to a former pupil. Similar in content to the previous scholia are some of Tzetzes’ remarks in his commentaries on Aristophanes. For example, in the commentary on the Frogs, he attacks vehemently schedographers for having misunderstood the elision ταυτ έστι, thinking that they hear ταυτη έστιν, exactly the kind of schedographic “error” also pointed out by Eustathios. Of the same type is the schedographic error criticized in relation to another verse of the Frogs:

αύλητης ήδε ἐνδον ἐστί: «ηδε ἐνδον ἐστίν» καὶ αύλητης. τοῖς σχεδεκδόταις καὶ λυμεσώι τεχνῶν λογικών μη δοίης «ἡδη» καὶ αὐτίκα, ὡς τά μακρά οὐκ εκθλιτεσθαι μετά μυρίων παραδειγμάτων πολλάκις ἐδειξα.

αύλητης ήδε ἐνδον ἐστί: «This here fluit-girl is inside». Do not grant immediately ἡδη («already») to the sketch-publishers and corruptors of the discursive arts, since I have many times shown with myriads of examples that long vowels are not elided.

The schedographers understand the elided demonstrative ήδε as the adverbial ήδη. Tzetzes again uses «sketch-publishers» but adds here the “moral” characterization «corruptors of the discursive arts» (λυμεσώις τεχνῶν λογικών). Thus, the practitioners of schedography are placed in an area demarcated by error as a form of sin. This moral imagery takes on stronger contours in a scholion to Aristophanes’ Wealth. Tzetzes, in dealing once again with the correct spelling of a word (δύο as a numeral and δύο as the dual of the ordinal adjective in Attic), makes the following note to his pupils:

μη τις δε των ἡμετέρων ἄκροατων, ως τα νεα σοφα του βίου καθάρματα, ως δυκυκνων γράφεσθαι μεγα τολήμοι ριεπιν. εάτε τα θατεριστων τοις θατερισταις, ἐπιστημονικοις δε κανόσιν οἱ ἡμετεροι χρώμενοι λέγετε: πάσα λέξις ἐν μιᾷ φωνῇ τὰ τρία γένη σημαίνουσα ἀκλίτος ἔστιν.

May none of my own pupils loudly dare say that it [sc. δύο] is to be written as a dual,

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64 Sch. Ar. Ran. 1160a (Rec. II), 1038-1039 Ko.
65 For example, the phrase ταχει μάυσει in Iliad 2, 373 is misunderstood by schedographers as τάχει μάυσει (Eust. Commil. 241, 33-36); see Agapitos, Literary Haute Cuisine, cit., p. 230.
66 Sch. Ar. Ran. 513-514 (Rec. I), 839-840 Ko. Recension I represents an earlier stage of Tzetzes’ commentary and is mostly preserved in Vat. Urb. 141 (14th cent.), but also in Par. Suppl. gr. 655 (14th cent.).
67 Possibly a reminiscence of λοβησαι τεχνης in Ran. 93 (referring to young upstart tragedians), a verse Tzetzes had commented on; see Sch. Ar. Ran. 93, 730, 1-2 Ko (λοβησαι τεχνης; διαφορετικαι και ἀνανυσται των τεχνων λέγεται δε της τραγωδιας και κωμικης). On Tzetzes’ use of Ran. 92-93 see also further below n. 244.
68 Sch. Ar. Plut. 508, 123, 22-124, 2 M-P.
like the young wise scum of our present times do. Leave the matters of differentialists (thateristai)\(^69\) to the differentialists, but you, my own pupils, by using scientific rules proclaim this: «Every word indicating in one form all three genders is undecidable».

Here the schedographers have become «the scum» of Tzetzes’ own times. The word καθάρμα belongs to the ritual sphere («refuse of a sacrifice»). In the ancient scholia to Aristophanes’ Wealth, Frogs and Knights the word is treated as synonymous to φαρμακός, the person sacrificed or executed as an atonement for others.\(^70\) Tzetzes obviously uses katharma in this particular sense of «outcast», thus a person of criminal background and low social status, in modern terms a «scum». Not only did Tzetzes comment extensively on two relevant Aristophanic passages,\(^71\) but he also included three exegetical notes of the word in the Histories.\(^72\) He was so fascinated by this Hellenic sacrificial tradition that he used it quite extravagantly in a satirical letter addressed to his own slave Demetrios Gobinos.\(^73\) For Tzetzes the characteristic traits of the katharma are his ugliness, meanness and low social standing.\(^74\) It is within this semantic frame that he applies katharma to the average schedographer, who is indirectly but decisively branded as a deformed, despicable and base creature.\(^75\) Thus, the schedourgos becomes the perfect inimical Other – a grotesque inversion of a good-looking, decent and noble grammatikos.\(^76\) Given this socio-textual attitude, Tzetzes allows himself to openly mock schedography and its

\(^{69}\) That is, «the ones who have a different opinion». The word is a creation of Tzetzes (see LBG s.v.).

\(^{70}\) Equation of κάθαρμα with φαρμακός in Sch. Ar. Pl. 454 and Sch. Ar. Eq. 1133; for appearances of these two words in Aristophanes see Plut. 454 (γρύζειν δὲ καὶ τολμάτων ὁ καθάρματα), Eq. 1405, Ran. 733. For a recent discussion of the pharmakos ritual in ancient Greek culture see T. M. Compton, Victim of the Muses: Poet as Scapegoat, Warrior and Hero in Graeco-Roman and Indo-European Myth and History, Cambridge, MA 2006, pp. 7-22 (with substantial bibliography).

\(^{71}\) Sch. Ar. Plut. 454b, 114, 4-17 M-P and Ran. 733a, 891.7-892.4 Ko; see Koster’s extensive note to 733a with full reference to the ancient scholia.

\(^{72}\) Hist. 23, Chil. V 728-763 (Τὶ τὸ καθάρμα); Hist. 239, Chil. VIII 902-912 (Τὶνα τὰ καθάρματα); Hist. 481, Chil. XIII 333-337 (Περὶ καθάρματος τοῦ καὶ φαρμακοῦ). See also Hist. 201, Chil. VIII 428-434 (on Aristophanes in the Frogs mocking the katharma, here explained as μορόσοφοι, «foolish-wise»).

\(^{73}\) Ep. 104, 151, 9-23. On this letter and its Aristophanic intertexts see Agapitos, “Middle-Class” Ideology, cit.

\(^{74}\) See Hist. 23, Chil. V 731 (τῶν πάντων ἀμορφότερον, «of all citizens the most deformed») and Sch. Ep. 104, 174, 9-11: καθάρμα] δυσειδεστῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔθουν ἐν ταῖς συμφοραῖς ὑπὲρ πάσης πόλεως, καὶ τοῦτο φαρμακός καὶ κάθαρμα ἐκαλέστο («Katharma] During disasters they sacrificed a most ugly and mean fellow for the good of all the city, and this person was called pharmakos and katharma»).

\(^{75}\) See, for example, the vicious description of the «wise scum» (σοφὰ καθάρματα) in Hist. 143, Chil. VII 496-510.

\(^{76}\) Tzetzes describes himself as being similar to Palamedes and Cato the Elder, namely, tall, strong of neck, symmetrically long-nosed and long-faced, quick-witted, modest, thin, blue-eyed, with golden skin and blondish curly hair, though like Cato the Younger, he had a hot and irrita-
practitioners. Thus, following a detailed analysis of a difficult passage in the opening lines of *Wealth*, he notes in his usual satiric iambics:77

παίζειν χρεον γόρ καὶ γελάν γενειάδας
σχεδεκδοτούντων καὶ στυγούντων τὰς βιβλιοὺς.

For it is right to ridicule and mock the beards of those who publish sketches and loathe all books.

Here we find a further element in the construction of the schedographic Other, since the «sketch-publishers» do not read books, in fact, they detest them. As Tzetzes puts it: «What a sort of scum, supposedly philosophizing, repulsive abortions, utterly inane, uncouth as to their art, having read ten or maybe twelve books».78 Therefore, it is the moral right of the excellent teacher to ridicule in public his ignorant colleagues. This right to ridicule extends even to women, as we can glean from another of Tzetzes’ satirical iambic poems:79

Verses by Tzetzes against a woman writing out sketches

Instead of a web you hold a volume in your hands,
and also a pen instead of a shuttle, woman.
You serve Hermes and you sacrifice to Calliope,
giving second place to Aphrodite.
What are you actually doing? By my books, I am astonished!
Unroll the spindle, weave the woof onto the warp,81
attend to the distaff, plait the thread.
Literature and education befite men.

ble temperament; see Hist. 70, Chil. III 173-191 and AllegIl. proleg. 724-739 (transl. Goldwyn-Kokkini, cit., pp. 54-57).

77 Sch. Ar. Plut. 9, 9-10 M-P.
78 Hist. 143, Chil. VII 498-500: καὶ οἶκα δὲ καθήματα, φιλοσοφοῦντα δῆθεν, ἐκτρώματα, ὁ- νούστατα, σφυρήλατα τὴν τέχνην, δὲκα μόνον ἢ διδεκα βιβλιά ἀναγνώτα.
80 The verb ἀφέλισσω is a creation of Tzetzes; see Hist. 258, Chil. IX 138 and 140.
81 Hes. Op. 538 στήμονι δέ ἐν παῦρῳ πολλῆν κρόκα μηρύσσεσθαι («and you should weave thick woof on thin warp»).
This is a rather particular specimen of Tzetzes’ anti-schedographic utterances. The poem criticizes a woman who, in her studies, concentrates on Hermes (qua rhetoric) and Calliope (qua epic poetry). However, according to Tzetzes, this was improper for a woman, since she had to attend to Aphrodite (qua marriage and motherhood) and to practice weaving, while literature and learning was an activity appropriate only for men, an axiom supported by a weighty verse of Aeschylus. It should be noted that only the heading of the poem refers to schedography, while in the actual text schede are not mentioned, however, this is not an unusual practice with Tzetzes. The terminology describing weaving comes exclusively from the Homeric and Hesiodic poems, making the image of female duties appear textually as very archaic. It has been suggested that the brief poem could be a schedos, written for teaching pupils the vocabulary of weaving. For one thing, we have no information that Tzetzes ever wrote schede intended for circulation, as his «sketch-publishing» colleagues did. Furthermore, there is no grammatical indication in the poem that the text needs to be decoded as if it were some kind of riddle. At the same time, the image of the woman studying and writing out a schedos reflects very much the reading practices of educated patronesses of the Komnenian aristocracy, such as Anna Komnene, Eirene Doukaina and the sebastokratorissa Eirene.

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82 Hermes as λόγιος Ἑρμῆς was seen as the patron of rhetoric, while Calliope, first among the Muses (Hes. Theog. 79), was equated with epic (or sometimes lyric) poetry. Irrespective of the ancient mythological and religious issues involved, Tzetzes viewed them so; see Hist. 89, Chil. VI 917-926 (about the Muses and Hermes as epboroi of poetry and rhetoric respectively), Hist. 36, Chil. II 386 (‘Ομήρου Καλλιότης) and Hist. 429, Chil. XII 589-591 (Hermes as being the interpreter [hermeneus] of languages and literature). Tzetzes in his letters often combines the two in addressing some learned recipients, for example, Ep. 71, 101, 5-6 (ὁ τῶν Ἐρμοῦ καὶ Μουσῶν ἀρχηγόν τὸ σεμνολόγημα) or Ep. 94, 136, 7-8 (κλάδε Μουσῶν καὶ Ἐρμοῦ).


84 See the satirical poem edited from Par. gr. 2925 (15th cent.) by S. Pétridès, Vers inédits de Jean Tzetzes, «Byzantinische Zeitschrift» 12. 1903, pp. 568-570: 569, where the information given in the heading is not found in the text. The poem, with some variants and a different heading (Στίχοι κατὰ διαβολέων τινών διασωρόντων αὐτῶν καὶ πέρα ἐγγενώντα), is also transmitted in the Vind. phil. gr. 321 (13th cent.), f. 43v, along with an unedited shorter poem on the same topic (Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐτεροί στίχοι πρὸς αὐτοὺς). I am currently preparing an edition of both poems.


86 See contrastively the long iambic poem placed at the end of the Histories (lambi, pp. 134-144), which is written as if it were a schedos accompanied by extensive scholia (lambi, pp. 147-151).

87 She worked hard with the complexities of schedography as she herself admits in the Alexiad; see Agapitos, Anna Komnene, cit., pp. 93-96.

88 She was the addressee of at least one of Prodromos’ literary schede; see Agapitos, New Genres, cit., p. 18 (with reference to the relevant editions).
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Komnene.\(^9\) In this sense, I would see the poem more as a public and misogynist expression against schedography, not unsimilar to some other satirical poems of Tzetzes.\(^9\)

The other major issue of Tzetzes against schedography is its use of everyday language. We shall look at some specific passages where he expresses his opinions about schedography in relation to ἱδιωτις γλώττα as Anna Komnene called it,\(^9\) keeping in mind the broader negative framework within which he was writing. For example, while commenting on \textit{mainis}, a word indicating in Aristophanes the smelt (a small surface fish),\(^9\) he remarks:\(^9\)

\begin{quote}
tίς τῆς μανίδος: ἡ μανίς εἶδος ἐστὶν ἱχθύος ὁμοίον ταῖς πλατείαις σμαρίσιν, οὐ μέντοι αὐτή ἡ σμαρίς, ὡς οἱ τοῖς σχέδεσι βαρβαροῦμενοι τοῦτο νομίζουσιν.
\end{quote}

τίς τῆς μανίδος: The smelt is a fish similar to the broad picarels, however not the picarel itself, as those barbarized by schedography believe this to be.

Tzetzes points out that schedography «barbarizes» pupils instead of educating them. This “barbarization” is reflected in the use of an Attic word (σμαρίς, Modern Greek \textit{maréda}) to cover in a colloquial manner all kinds of small surface fish. The notion of a wrong “vernacularization” of Greek due to schedographic practice is a phenomenon that Eustathios had also singled out as an example of the bad influence of schedography on pupils.\(^9\) This “vernacularization” through schedography is also a prominent element in Tzetzes’ critical remarks. For example, while criticizing a boorish addressee in one of his letters, Tzetzes made a recondite word-play on Thessalian cities and Thessalonike.\(^9\) In the \textit{Histories} he refers to this word-play, and then writes:\(^9\)

\begin{quote}
Καὶ γὰρ ἐβαρβαρώθησαν οἱ πλείους σχεδογραφίαις,
βιβλίους ἀναγινώσκοντες τῶν παλαιῶν οὐδόλως,
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
τῶν ἀμαθῶν κατήληκαν δὲ πλοκή λαβυρινθώδει
μόνη τὸν νοῦν προσέχοντες καὶ κεκαπηλευμένη.
\end{quote}

For most of them have been barbarized by schedourgy,

\(^9\) She also was the addressee of one of Prodromos’ literary \textit{schede}; see Agapitos, \textit{New Genres}, cit., pp. 9-12.

\(^{90}\) Tzetzes’ misogynist attitude has not been properly studied; for a very first attempt see T. Braccini, \textit{Mitografia e miturgia femminile a Bisanzio: il caso di Giovanni Tzetze}, «I Quaderni del Ramo d’Oro on-line» 3, 2010, pp. 88-105.

\(^{91}\) \textit{Alexiad} II 4, 9 (65, 98-99 Reinsch-Kambylis).

\(^{92}\) \textit{Ar. Ran.} 984-985: τίς τὴν κεφαλήν ἀπεδήδοκεν | τής μανίδος: («Who bit off the head of the smelt?»).

\(^{93}\) Sch. \textit{Ar. Ran.} 984-985, 985, 6-11 Ko.

\(^{94}\) See Agapitos, \textit{Literary Haute Cuisine}, cit., pp. 233-238.

\(^{95}\) \textit{Ep.} 60, 89, 8-9 and 90, 5-7.

\(^{96}\) \textit{Hist.} 280, \textit{Chil.} IX 703-708.
not reading any of the books of ancient writers,
in order to know most clearly about places, lands and affairs,
and to draw in treasures, namely, the discourses of various wise men;
instead, they turn their minds only to the labyrinthine
and vulgar complexity of ignorant tavern-keepers.

On the one hand, pupils pay attention only to this «labyrinthine complexity»,
which is a product sold in taverns. Moreover, pupils are not reading ancient
books in order to be properly educated, and we have already seen that Tzetzes viewed schedographers as people who hate books and have read just a few of them.
On the other hand, schedographers are presented as «ignorant tavern-keepers».
The image of tavern-keeper characterizing a teacher possibly suggests that the use
of everyday language is involved in this venal form of teaching. In Historia 399
Tzetzes explains at length the calculations of the astronomer Meton; at some point
he introduces the following digression:

97 The extravagant medium perfect participle 
kekaphleumevno" implies the selling of merchandise and its distribution in a tavern, while it might even imply some sort of forgery; see LBG s.v. ka phleuvomai.

98 Hist. 399, Chil. XII 223-246.

99 The mss. read eijdoi", but the editio princeps of 1564 corrected the incomprehensible word to hJduv", accepted by all editors. However, given that the riddles in the next lines are also transmitted in their "erroneous" form by all mss. (except for the 16th-century O which corrects everything), eijdoi should be retained in the text as the necessary signal that the readers are embarking on an encoded schedos.

100 I have changed the punctuation in this verse, turning its second half into direct speech.
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...καὶ τὸ τραγόπωλον τοῦ τόμου τὸ βιβλίον.
Οὔτω περὶ τοῦ Μετονος καὶ περὶ άλλων πόσων.

Καὶ έκ σοφῶν μὲν γίνονται συμχύσεις, πλὴν βραχείας,
έκ δὲ βαρβάρων βόρβοροι πληροῦντες δύσοσίας.

And the ignorant scum, these composers of foolish sketches, who have utterly barbarized the art of letters, not paying attention to books wherein lies manifold wealth, while feeding on foul-smelling dung as if it were nectar, (for pigs do not want to eat the bread of angels!) by writing fooleries and delighting in nonsense. For these here days he [sc. a grammarian] rests so sweet and pleasant to me;

"You have migrated to Imbro, no cock [?] is near by, the five men are living enemies to me, my friends, so is dinner, sleep and smoke", and other such fooleries. And these ignorant scum, these dung-eaters, when asked by the children studying with them, what are the yearly cycles of Meton and other such matters, hating all diphthongs and triphthongs and along with them the dichronic vowels and all rules of grammar, as well as hating the reading of any book, whenever their barbarous soul represents these matters for them, they say to the youths: "These are all mistaken". The youths write the little texts of these barbarians in their books, turning them among themselves into the dung-filled stables of Augeias, just like the young billy goat did to the book of the administrative cadaster.101 So much, then, about Meton and about how many others.

Certainly, confusions might also occur from wise men, yet they are brief, but from barbarians occur latrines filling everything with stench.

The digression is structured in three parts: (i) an opening section introducing the butt of Tzetzes’ verbal missiles (XII 223-228); (ii) a middle section which gives the impression of being a spontaneous insertion (XII 229-232), (iii) a concluding section presenting the main point of the abusive passage (XII 233-246). The opening and concluding sections connect to each other through the use of an almost identical verse (XII 223 ~ XII 233), while both sections end with an escalating abuse developed around fecal imagery. In the first section, the "ignorant scum" are represented as pigs eating excrements and refusing to dine on the Psalmist’s "bread of

101 The word τόμος can function as synonymous to πρακτικά, the administrative cadaster. Tzetzes in Chil. XI 243 is possibly alluding to a story he narrates in Ep. 47, asking from his friend John Ismeniotes to protect a young man (a relative of Tzetzes) from the possible misgivings of the provincial governor. The reason is that this young man, described in the letter as τὸ παιδάρι-ον ἀκριβῶς τὸ μωρόσοφον ἐκείνο καὶ δοκιμοσφόν, had been foolish enough to write an iambic poem at the end of the cadaster. For the image of a male goat used as an abuse see the poem edited by Pétridès, Vers inedits, cit., p. 569, v. 18 (τοῦτο δὲ καινὸν τοῖς τραγίσκοις τοῖς νέοις), where the phrase resembles the τραγόπωλον here; see also Tzetzes’ scholion to Hist. 20, Chil. I 559; 534, addressed to his scribe (ὁ τοῦ τράγου παίς).
Thus, schedographers have not only been pushed into the margins of society as *katharmata*, they have also been placed in the world of filthy beasts. In the concluding section, the «dung-eating ignorant scum» distort the truths of ancient wisdom because they hate reading books, thus pronouncing them as mistaken to their pupils. The misguided youths copy the «little stories» (λογύδριμα) of these barbarians in their books. They thus turn the books into excrement depositories of Augean (*qua* mythical) proportions, since only «latrines» full of stench can be produced by barbaric teachers. In Tzetzes’ view, then, the appropriate socio-cultural locus for schedographers is outside educated society and on the dung-heaps of a pigsty. The images, phrasing and subject of the first and third sections of this passage have already appeared in an earlier exegetical note of the *Histories*, where Tzetzes digresses for a moment from his main topic and attacks «the thrice-accursed among ignorant brutes» (τρισεξάγιστα τῶν ἀμαθῶν κυνωδάλων). These people teach as *technikoi* but are, in fact, envious pigs wishing to eat dung effortlessly (ἀπόνως κόπρον θέλουσι) rather than make «an effort, so to speak, to eat the bread of angels» (μετὰ πόνων, ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἀρτον φαγεῖν ἄγγέλων). In this passage the pig-like teachers have been placed in the mythical pigsty of Circe, while Tzetzes as the excellent teacher is equated with Odysseus holding the *moly* of Hermes. It becomes obvious from the above that Tzetzes had developed a set of thought patterns with which he attacked his peer group: ritual terminology from Hellenic cult, social and spatial antithesis of bad and good in a “dualist” worldview, fecal and animal imagery for the adversary, angelic and thaumatourgic imagery for himself. Both passages, being digressions from the main subject of the text, are built through these patterns that give meaning and structure to the writer’s improvised thoughts.

The inserted second section of the passage from *Historia* 399 offers to the readers of the *Histories* exactly the kind of malodorous fooleries that schedographers produce and on which young pupils prefer to dine. Sandwiched between a series of

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102 Ps. 77, 25: ἀρτον ἄγγέλων ἐφαγεν ἄνθρωπος, ἐπιστησιμὸν ἀπέστειλεν αὐτοὶς εἰς πλησμονήν.

103 This is probably a reference to *schede*. The rare word λογύδριν (possibly synonymous to λογίδιον, «little fable» in Ar. *Vesp.* 64) plays with the small size of the *schedos*, a characteristic which Prodomos turned into a poetological term defining his literary “sketches”; see Agapitos, *New Genres*, cit., p. 12.

104 The word βόρβορος has a number of meanings («mire», «filth», «sewer») which Tzetzes fully employs. To these he adds the meaning «latrine», as he himself explains in a scholion at the very end of the *Histories* (p. 569).


106 Another person who is criticized through a similarly fecal and animal imagery for his lack of education and professionalism is the scribe responsible for preparing a clean copy of Tzetzes’ complex edition of his *Histories*, as is witnessed by a substantial number of abusive scholia found in the margins of the manuscripts. See, for example, the scholion to the heading of *Hist.* 19, *Chil.* I 476; 534, the scholion at the end of *Hist.* 23, *Chil.* V 201; 549-550 or the scholion to *Hist.* 399, *Chil.* XII 226; 565. For the identification of this scribe with a certain Dionysios from the Peloponnese who inscribed himself in the *Histories* see E. Trapp, *Tzetzes und sein Schreiber Dionysios*, «Diptycha» 2, 1980-1981, pp. 18-22.
schedourgic riddles (ειδοίς should be understood as ἰδοὺς, ὡς ἔντει ἄνδρες as οἱ πέντε ἄνδρες, ὡς ἵππος as δεῖπνος and ἱππος as ἦππος), we find strange words coming from everyday language: ἰμπρο, τζουτζούτζου and κάπνος.107 Given the preceding analysis, it should not come as a surprise that Tzetzes shows himself fully competent in producing antistoichic puzzles, or in using everyday language.108 In fact, these verses are not unsimilar to Prodromos’ “mixed” schede. But here everyday language is part of Tzetzes’ parodistic strategy. Some eighty verses earlier in the same Historia, Tzetzes relaxedly shifted to colloquial discourse within his learned idiom, when talking about when Hesiod supposedly lived.109

Hesiod, who to some was earlier than Homer, to some he was his contemporary and to others he was later, but according to me Tzetzes – oh by my very own little pair of felt shoes – he was just itsy bitsy later by about four hundred years; so, does not Hesiod write an astronomic book whose beginning I do not know, while in the middle of the book are these verses to be found?

Tzetzes humorously swears by his felt shoes and uses a temporal predicative attribute with a demotic diminutive suffix contrasting ironically to the long period of four hundred years separating Homer and Hesiod.110 Through this device he asserts in a grotesque manner his superiority over his rivals. Therefore, within the broader combative strategy against his competitors, Tzetzes employed everyday language to degrade them even further.

It is unfortunate that a probably extended piece by Tzetzes of this type of humorous degradation has not survived. It concluded the vituperative letter Tzetzes addressed to his colleague and rival Lachanas,111 where, having reached the end of

107 Probably ἰμπρο reflects a regional version of ἵμβρο (is it possible that the mss. read ἱμπρο as an accusative?), while τζουτζούτζου could be nominative of a feminine noun (cfr. Modern Greek τζουτζούνα meaning «penis») or genitive of a masculine noun τζουτζούτζος (maybe from the Italian dialectal ciuccio, «donkey», «dumb person»). Κάπνος is καπνος with a shift of the accent.
108 These are techniques that Eustathios also referred to or even used but from a different perspective; see Agapitos, Literary Haute Cuisine, cit., pp. 230-233.
109 Hist. 399, Chil. XII 157-162.
110 The adjective ύστερούτζικος is formed in analogy to ὀλγούστικος that is well attested in 12th-century texts such as the Ptochoprodromika and the Spanes; see Kriaras, XII, p. 233 s.v. ὀλγούστικος.
111 Chil. IV 471-779; 142-151. On the function of this “epistle” within the Histories see Pizzone, The Historiae, cit., Part 3.
a long series of «astringent reproaches», he announces that «he will chase away the gloom with jokes».\footnote{112} In a scholion to this verse, Tzetzes informs his readers that these jokes were not copied from the author’s dossier into the manuscript prepared for publication because they were «thrown off, simple, of a colloquial and vulgar muse; whoever wants to read these as well, let him ask for them elsewhere».\footnote{113} The phrasing of the first part of this statement indicates, in my opinion, that these jokes were written in political verse and everyday language, while the second part insinuates that these verses circulated privately. If Aglae Pizzone’s suggestion is correct, that the verse epistle to Lachanas is a piece of didactic poetry (real or fictional is of little importance) to be read together with the author’s autographic commentary (see here n. 111), then a sustained verse composition of vernacular and coarse \textit{asteismata} had no place in the publication of the \textit{Histories}.\footnote{114} It is no coincidence that the often coarse Ptochoprodromic poems where addressed to the highest members of the reigning family. Whereas Prodromos had succeeded through his social network to remove colloquial discourse from the classroom and to elevate it to imperial heights,\footnote{115} Tzetzes was not willing or failed to do so. We recognize, therefore, in this and in some of the previous passages from his letters and the \textit{Histories} an ambivalent relation of Tzetzes to everyday language and its literary use, something we do not find in Anna or Eustathios, both of whom relegated colloquial discourse to the classroom or to some very specific uses within «the noble Attic diction».

Tzetzes’ device of inserted abusive digression and linguistic/stylistic variety reaches its climax towards the end of the \textit{Histories} and is related to a painful incident late in his life, when he lost some kind of appointment as «orator» (ρήτωρ) to an unnamed protégé of \textit{sebastos} Andronikos Kamateros, second cousin of Emperor Manuel and prefect (ἔπαρχος) of Constantinople at the time when the \textit{Histories} where being written.\footnote{116} This rival had publicly criticized Tzetzes’ presentation of a

\footnote{112} \textit{Chil.} IV 776-779: Ἀλλὰ ταύτη μὲν εἰπὼν σοι, δεόντως ὄνειδίζων, | καὶ παραινῶν τὰ πρέποντα, τὸν τύφον καταστέλλων, | ἐν λόγως ἵσας στυπτικοῖς, ἀλλὰ λυπητελοῦσα. | Νῦν δὲ τοῖς ἀστείσμασι τὸ σκυθρωπὸν ἐλάσσω. On \textit{asteisma} as a word attested in the 11th-12th cent. see \textit{LBG} s.v.

\footnote{113} \textit{Sch. Chil.} V 779, 548, 2-6: τὰ ἀστείσματα ἐν μόνῳ ἐγράφῃ τῶν πρωτογράφῳ χάρτῃ: ἐν τοῖς παρ’ ήμιν δὲ μεταγραφέσι τίδε οὐκ ἐτέθησαν ως ἐρρήμενα καὶ ευτελῆ (codd.: αὐτῆ Dübner Leone) καὶ ἰδιώτιδος μούσης καὶ ἀγοραίας: οἶς δ’ ἐν ἑθέλοι καὶ τῶν ἥτητον ἑτέρωθεν. The correction of Dübner (1836), accepted by Leone, is mistaken since Tzetzes’ point concerns the simple, cheap character of his product, not its imperfection. I take the participle ἐρρήμενα to mean «thrown off» in the sense of «improvised» (see further below on the heading of the \textit{Theogony} and the meaning of the adjective \textit{aujqwrovn}). Finally, for ἀγοραίος in the sense of «vulgar» see \textit{Ar. Pax} 750 (αὐξόμεσιν οὐκ ἀγοραίοις).

\footnote{114} Scurrilous poetic vituperation in the learned idiom could very well be published as Tzetzes’ \textit{Iambs} at the end of the \textit{Histories} or some of his freestanding satirical poems show.


\footnote{116} Andronikos Kamateros held the office of city prefect between ca. 1157 and some time before 1166, when he is attested as «grand captain of the palace guard» (μέγας δροσυγάρτος τῆς βιγλας), a high judiciary office in the 12th cent. (see A. Kazhdan, \textit{ODB}, I, p. 663). On Ka-
specific Hermogenean rule as insufficient and erroneous, thus convincing Kamateros to appoint him as rhetor and not Tzetzes.117 This is how the deeply insulted teacher presented the incident in Historia 369118 and the iambic poem concluding the Histories as a whole.119 This unnamed rhetor was not the only protégé of Kamateros with whom Tzetzes conducted a public exchange of critical vituperation. Two further persons were the imperial secretaries George Skylitzes and Gregory who, having criticized Tzetzes’ techniques of versification, where attacked by him in a virulently fecal iambic poem.120 The abusive attack of Tzetzes against Gregory reached such a point, that he then was forced to ask Andronikos Kamateros and his brother Theodore to speak on his behalf to Gregory and offer his apologies.121 The passion with which Tzetzes hurled his criticism shows how precarious

118 Hist. 369, Chil. XI 223-254, where he also makes reference to his lost verse treatise Logismoi, where he criticizes various passages of ancient authors, among which also sections of the Hermogenean corpus; on this work see Wendel, Tzetzes, cit., col. 2004.
119 The Histories end with three poems (iambic, hexametric, iambic); on the devices employed by Tzetzes for the conclusion of the Histories see Pizzone, Self-authorization, cit. The heading of the third poem is Στίχοι ιαμβικοί τοῦ αυτοῦ ὁμαθοῦ καὶ ἀρρητορεύτου [sc. Τζέτζου], ὅσπερ φασίν οἱ θεάζοντες, οἵα ρήτορας οἶνος Ἱρύδωτος λέγει βαρβαρῳδεᾳτέρους ἑθνεόν ἄπάντων (Leone, Iambi, cit., pp. 145-146); for the reference to the rhetor incident in the poem see Iambi III 331-336.
120 This is the already mentioned iambic poem edited by Pétridès, Vers inédits (see above n. 84). George Skylitzes rose to become a protokouropalates and governor of Serdica in Bulgaria; he was also a writer of various types of liturgical poetry (see A. Kazhdan, ODB, III, pp. 1913-1914). Crucial for his connection with Andronikos Kamateros are a laudatory poem on Kamateros’ Sacred Arsenal (see A. Bucossi, George Skylitzes’ Dedicatory Verses for the Sacred Arsenal by Andronikos Kamateros and the Codex Marcianus Graecus 524, «Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik» 59, 2009, pp. 37-50) and a series of six poems for icons and other sacred objects commissioned by Kamateros, preserved anonymously in Marc. gr. 524 (on the identification of Skylitzes as their author see A. Rhoby, Zur Identifizierung von bekannten Autoren im Codex Marcianus Graecus 524, «Medioevo Greco» 10, 2010, pp. 167-204: 179-189).
121 Ep. 89, 129-130. Wendel, Tzetzes, cit., col. 1964-1965 erroneously identified this Gregory with the unnamed rhetor in the Histories and the Iambs. The subject of the critique (theory of rhetoric in the one case, poetic technique in the other) and the framework in which this was conducted are entirely different. However, M. Bachmann and F. Dölger, Die Rede des μέγας ἄρουγάριος Γεωργίου Ἀντιοχος auf den Sebastokrator Konstantinos Angelos, «Byzantinische Zeitschrift» 40, 1940, pp. 353-405: 360 n. 2, suggested that the «imperial secretary Gregory» of Tzetzes could be identified with the well-known official and rhetor Gregory Antiochos, on whom see J. Darrouzés, Notice sur Grégoire Antiochos (1160-1196): I. Son œuvre. II. Son carrière. III. La fondation du monastère Saint Basile, «Revue des Études Byzantines» 20, 1962, pp. 61-92. This proposal has been viewed as unverifiable by M. Loukaki, Grégoire Antiochos: Éloge du Patriarche Basile Kamateros, Paris 1996, p. 12 n. 76. Yet the fact that Skylitzes is mentioned togeth-
his situation was and how little equipped he was with the necessary diplomatic skills, thus having to apologize for his impetuous reactions.

Already in Historia 278, Tzetzes vented his outrage against the unjust and insulting decision of his former patron by presenting himself in the following self-sneering manner:122

\[\text{Oh Tzetzes, untaught in rhetoric in the eyes of prefect Kamateros and more boorish than all of Constantinople’s citizens, you, more ignorant than thieving and temple-robbing clerics, who appear as rhetors ethereal to the prefect.}\]

Crucial in these lines are the words ἀρρητόρευτος, χωρικός, ἁμαθής, παπάς and the phrase ἑτῶρει ἀιθέριοι since these delineate the educational and social spectrum of Tzetzes’ critique: on the one side of the spectrum stands “boorish and ignorant” Tzetzes, on the other side stand the “thievish” clerics as ethereal rhetors.123 About fourteen-hundred verses later, while explaining the Hermogenean corpus in Historia 369, Tzetzes inserts the most complex digression concerning Andronikos Kamateros and the rhetor chosen by him:124

210 Τζέτζης δέ ὁ ἀρρητόρευτος ὁ ἁμαθής ἑπάρχω τῷ πανσέβαστῳ σεβαστῷ Καματηρῶν ἐκ γένους, ἑτῶρα ὡς κήρυξεν ἀνακτορίας ἐνὶ οἶκοις Δαιδάλου ἀιθέριοι συνημισμαίναν ἀρίσταις πετρομαχασκοπάπους ζον, τζαγγάριοι, ξύλοσούβλην,

215 βουβαλον, ὀρχίπαπαν, παγχώρικον, ἐμβασιμαύλον.125

er with Gregory by Tzetzes as being closely connected to Kamateros, while Antiochos addressed two letters to Kamateros concerning a salary he was expecting to be paid to him (Darrouzès, Notice, pp. 68-69), makes it more than probable that the two Gregories, both of whom had been imperial secretaries in their younger years, are one and the same person, favored and promoted by Kamateros.

122 Hist. 278, Chil. IX 656-659.
123 Similar is the critique of contemporary teachers and schools in the first of the three poems concluding the Histories; see Iambi I, 134-144.
124 Hist. 369, Chil. XI 210-224; see also the end of Hist. 369, Chil. XI 346-358.
125 All manuscripts transmit ἐμβασιμαύλον. The adjective ἐμβασιμαύλον printed by Leone is an emendation by Theodor Pressel (1851), but the word is his creation. Rather unconvincingly, ἐμβασιμαύλος is explained in the LBG as «with woolen shoes», probably because of ἐμβας («felt shoe») that is used in ancient Greek for poor people (Isocrates). Personally, I view ἐμβασιμαύλος as a construction parallel to ἐμβασίσχυτος («spot-visitor») in the Batrachomyomachia 137. The second component (μαύλος) is related to μαυλίζω («to pandeit», μαυλιστής («procure») and μαυλισταρέον («brothel»). These words are all attested in the learned and the vernacular idioms; see LBG and Kriaras, s.v. μαυλίζω etc.
John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners

We will note that the passage displays the same tripartite structure as the digression in Historia 399 (opening section with a first set of abuses, middle section with an abusive digression in a different linguistic idiom, concluding section with further abuses), while the opening and concluding sections are connected through an almost identical verse (XI 210 ~ XI 223). This indicates most clearly how Tzetzes operated with his abusive improvisations, mentally shaped and verbally expressed by recurring patterns of meaning and structure, a fully consciously developed device of

126 Lyc. Alex. 247 ροϊβησε.
127 πετρομαχισκόπασποτζός is rendered in LBG as «der Schuhe mit aufklaffender Stoßkappe hat», which is not what the word implies (πέτρα + «μαχαίρι» [?] + παπούτζιν).
128 Ar. Vesp. 676.
129 Ar. Aen. 333.
130 Ar. Lys. 150 and 735. On the various meaning of ἀμφόργινος and ἀμφόργις see Hist. 430, Chil. XII 592-600, along with Souda σ 1625 (ἀμφόργινος) and 1626 (ἀμφόργις): I 144, 9-14 Adler.
131 The adjective ἔρμεον is a hapax of Tzetzes, probably created to fit the hexameter instead of ἔρματον. The meaning of the word in this context of abuses is not quite clear, given that ἔρματον (or ἐρματόν in later Greek) has to do with an «unexpected piece of luck» or a «chance finding» (see LSJ s.v.). However, in the Souda ε 3032; II 412, 18-19 Adler we find: ἔρματον ἔστι τῶν κακοήθων ὑπάς ἐπιεικῆς. Therefore, I have tentatively rendered the word here as «wicked».
132 Hapax of Tzetzes; lemmatized in LSJ and imprecisely translated as «dark», «shadowy».
133 Hes. Theog. 159 and 173.
rhetorical technique. Moreover, Tzetzes again presents himself as lacking rhetorical education (XI 210 ἀρητορέωντος), picking up most of the key words from Historia 278. In attacking this ethereal rhetor, Tzetzes shifts at XI 212 from his average learned diction into Homeric overdrive, while also shifting from political verse to hexameter. After only two lines (XI 212-213) he embarks on a direct abuse of his adversary by shifting back to the political verse (XI 214-215). However, the abuses are in the everyday language Tzetzes used to mock the self-complacent schedographer in Historia 399. The two verses look as if they have been lifted straight from the Ptochoprodromic poems, and they make all the more regrettable the decision of Tzetzes not to have his vernacular ἀστείατα copied for publication.

Tzetzes introduces at the end of verse XI 215 the epic-looking adjective ἐμβασί-μαύλος which does not fit the political verse though it does fit the dactylic hexameter. He then shifts back into Homeric diction at XI 216 for the remainder of his attack. The seven verses are couched in the obscure style of the prophecies given by the oracle at Delphi. In the vernacular verses the rhetor, who has been proclaimed «through the best agreements of ethereal Daedalus» (XI 213), has, on the one hand, become an utterly boorish cobbler and skewer of planks, this being a distinctly Ptochoprodromic image, while, on the other, he is presented as a fool and a boorish, knave-like cleric. To the disgrace of the City (ἄστυ = Πόλις), this

134 Tzetzes does quote hexametrical passages from ancient texts in the Histories, for example, Hist. 50, Chil. VI 382-403 (quoting Il. II 127 and 225-227). In a few instances he introduces his own hexameters into the political verse; see, for example, the end of Hist. 23, Chil. V 186-201, where V 196-201 are in hexameters, being the weighty sphragis of Part II of the Histories.

135 One might compare, for example, the abuses in Ptochopr. I 251-257 (the teacher and his wife); III 207-213 (the cleric teacher); IV 549-557 (the young monk as teacher).

136 The word makes the accentuated fifteen-syllable verse longer by two syllables, while the accent is on the prepenultimate – a major rhythmical anomaly. However, the quantative pattern of the word forms the last two feet of the “heroic” verse (−−−−−), just like ἐμβασίχυτρος (Batracbytymon. 137).

137 For a similar case of a fictive Delphic prophecy composed in hexameters compare Prodromos’ Rhodanthe and Dosikles IX 184-233 Markovich; on this passage see P. A. Agapitos, Writing, Reading and Reciting (in) Byzantine Erotic Fiction, in B. Mondrain (ed.), Lire et écrire à Byzance, Paris 2006, pp. 125-176: 145-146. On the literary aspect of Delphic oracles in hexameters see Plutarch’s dialogue Περί τοῦ μη χρόνον ἐμετέρα νῦν τὴν Πυθίαν (Moralia 24; III 25-59 Patton-Pohlenz-Sieveking). For a list of “literary” oracles from Delphi, many of which would have been accessible to Byzantine readers through their inclusion in ancient Greek texts (e.g. Herodotus, Pausanias, Plutarch, Lucian, Heliodorus), see J. E. Fontenrose, The Delphic Oracle: Its Responses and Operations, with a Catalogue of Responses, Berkeley 1978, pp. 355-416 (legendary and fictional responses); for a critical edition of Byzantine collections of Hellenic oracles prophesying Christianity see H. Erbse, Theosophorum graecorum fragmenta, Leipzig 1995\(^2\) (without the Sibylline Oracles).

138 Note also the appearance of αἰθήριον at XI 219.


140 The sexual element in ὀρχύστατας («testicle-cleric»), a hapax of Tzetzes (see LBG s.v.), suggests a person who behaves like a knave or rogue. For the boorish thieving cleric as teacher see Ptochopr. III 240-273.
person has invaded the imperial court as a buffalo of epic proportions (XI 221),
who, in front of the city prefect, «pronounced such a buffalo» (XI 224), meaning
the nonsensical explanation of the Hermogenean passage in question. The animal
and sexual imagery employed once again degrades the adversary in social terms
and allocates him to the world of vulgar craftsmen and fraudulent priests. The
heaping of learned references together with the swift shifts of style and the choice
of strange-sounding words create a grotesque humor by whose pungent irony the
ethereal rhetor as buffalo is swept away. There is no indication in this passage that
the vernacular idiom is seen as another language, though it certainly is used in an
abusive way by Tzetzes. In fact, three different modes of poetic expression and two
verse forms are brought together to produce a devastating satirical effect. As with a
number of passages already discussed, Tzetzes puts on an Aristophanic mask by al-
lowing himself to use his profound knowledge of the Comic’s plays in order to
mock his buffalo-like rivals, be they ethereal rhetors with their vapid art or outcast
schedographers with their nonsensical little texts.141

The blemish examiners and everyday language

The incident concerning the appointment of a rhetor by the city prefect, as well as
the incident about the poetic quality of hexameters and iambics by persons closely
attached to the Kamateros brothers, give us a good idea of how rivalries between
teachers and rhetors were carried out in Komnenian Constantinople. Though the
former incident involved the exegesis of Hermogenes, Tzetzes also used colloquial
discourse to denigrate his successful adversary. Therefore, it will be instructive for
our purpose of examining the relation between learned and vernacular language in
the twelfth century to look at another well-documented case of polemical criticism
between Tzetzes and one of his rivals. This case concerns the use of everyday lan-
guage in the context of high poetical exegesis and constitutes a formidable exam-
ple of the peer-group control mechanisms referred to in the first part of the present
paper.

Among the difficult poetic works Tzetzes explained to his pupils, Lycophron’s
Alexandra held a place of pride. Early on in this dramatic monologue, the poet of-
fers a very dense and opaque metaphor: φηγών δὲ καὶ δρύκωρπα καὶ γλυκών
βότρυν | φάλλαι τε καὶ δελφίνες αἱ τ᾿ ἐπ᾿ ἄρσενον | φέρβοντο φῶκαι λέκτρα θουρ-
ώσαν βροτῶν («And on oat and acorn and the sweet grape browsed whales and
dolphins and the seals that are desirous of the beds of male mortals»).142 Tzetzes
explained in his commentary the rare word φάλλαι («whales»), used instead of the
conventional φάλαται, as follows:143

141 On the Aristophanic role-playing in Tzetzes see Agapitos, “Middle-class” Identity, cit., pp. 6-
10.
142 Lyc. 83-85. On the Alexandra more broadly see the new critical edition by A. Hurst, Ly-
Phalaina \ Il It is an insect flying around lamps, that is also called pyraustoumoros, psyche and psora. [...] And we spoke about the little land-animal phalaina, which we also call colloquially «oil-lamp-extinguisher».

Tzetzes states that phalaina also means «moth» as his periphrastic explanation shows. He then lists three other words by which moths are called: pyraustoumoros («dying by fire»),\textsuperscript{144} psyche («soul»)\textsuperscript{145} and psora («itch»). At the end of the lemma Tzetzes makes a concluding remark about phalaina, that the moth is generally called (φαλαίνα) «oil-lamp-extinguisher» in everyday language (ἰδιωτικῶς).\textsuperscript{146} For the use of the colloquial kandelosbestra in a commentary to Lycophron he was reproached by another teacher. In his commentary to the Frogs, Tzetzes mentions this reproach after he has explained the words plakou' and kollabou'.\textsuperscript{147} The lengthy digression is quite revealing about Tzetzes' use of everyday language for purposes of teaching:\textsuperscript{147}

144 The word πυραυστούμορος is attested only in Tzetzes (LBG s.v.). It is probable that he created it from an Aeschylean fragment (288 Radt δέδοικα μόρον κάρτα πυραύστου μόρον) quoted by Ael. NatAnim. XII 8 and explained in the Zenobian proverb epitome (V 79; CPG I 151, 9-14 Leutsch-Schneidewin). The Aeschylean word πυραύστο («moth singed by candle light») is also found in Eustathios' CommOd. 1547, 64-66 and 1848, 37-38 with reference to πυραύστου μόρον as a proverb.

145 For ψυχή meaning butterfly or moth see LSJ s.v. VI (Aristotle, Theophrast, Plutarch).

146 The word κανθηλοβεστρα/σβεστρα («moth») because of its appearance in the scholia to Nicander (Ther. 763a) and Oppian (Hal. I 404), authors for whose works Tzetzes had also written scholia (Wendel, Tzetzes, cit., col. 1982). In LSJ the word's literal meaning is understood as «extinguishing candles». However, in Byzantine usage κανθηλα primarily refers to the oil-lamp as used in homes or churches (see Lampe s.v.). From the attested compound words with κανθηλ- as their first component (see the list in LBG) it is obvious that a lamp is also inferred here and not a candle.

147 Sch. Ar. Ran. 507a (Rec. I), 835, 1-837, 5 Ko. The scholion is transmitted only in the Urb. gr. 141.
στραβος», ού καὶ ἀδαμποσύνη τοῦτο καὶ ἀπορία λέξεων εἰρήκη, ἀλλ' ἐφιέμενος σαφῶς γράφειν καὶ ὠφελείν καὶ τὴν τυχούσαν δύσινον ἑφερμίπνους τῶν λέξεων. εἰ δὲ κομπυραίας, μετεώροις καὶ ἐνεντέραις ἐβούλευτο κεχρήθαι ταῖς λέξεσι, πάντας οἱ τῆς ὑμῶν κουστοδίας ὅμοιοι συνέλθοντες συντίναι μίαν τῶν τζετζικῶν λέξεων οὐκ ἀν ἐσυνήθησαν· τούτο δὲ ποτὲ καὶ πεπόνθαι τὰ ἀκροκόρυφα ὑμῶν καὶ πρωτόλεια· ἐνι παγινώδει χωλῷ ἱάμβῳ ἐμῷ μηδείμαν λέξιν νοῆσαντες, πεπλασμένας δ’ εἶναι ταῦτας ὑποτοπάσαντες, ὡς μάρτυς τοῦ λόγου ὁ νῦν ὄρογγαρίου τούτους συνεθείςεις ἐρωτήσαι περὶ τῶν λέξεων, οἱ ἦσαν αἴδε—πίσηγη, τέμνει τὰς λατιθάργους ἀρβύλας.

πίσηγη, τέμνει τὰς λατιθάργους ἀρβύλας,

ἡρωίκὴν Μοῦσαν δὲ μὴ καταστάχυς.

ἄλλ’ ἐπὶ πρὸς τὸν ἀλτήριον καὶ παλαιμαίῳ κατάσχετον δαίμονι· τῆς κανδήλο-σβέστρας τὸ τί αἰτία; τὸ «κανδήλα» ἢ τὸ «σβέστραν»; ἀλλ’, οἶομαι, σὲ τε καὶ τὴν σὴν κουστοδίαν τοῦτο μόνον διέλαβον ἀνεγνωκέναι Τεῦκρον τὸν Χαλδαίον καὶ Βαβυλώνιον καὶ τὴν ἐκείνην συντεταγμένην Σφαίραν τὴν Βάρβαρον, ἐν ἢ περὶ τῶν παρανατελλόντων ἄστρων ζωδίων διδάσκει, τούτων δὴθεν λέγον ἀποτέλεσμα· ἐκεῖος γὰρ ἤσθην ὀτωσί· «ἐκ μιορᾶς ἡ μέχρις καὶ κ’ ὀλίς ὁ φέραν τὰ λίνα ποιει κανδήλαπτας καὶ λαμπαδάριος».

ἰδοὺ, τὰ νῦν σοι τῷ σκοτεινῷ τὰς φρένας κανδήλας εἰσήγεικα πρὸς τὸ φῶς τοῦ λόγου σβεστριών δὲ μηχανᾶς ὑποτρέχειν εὔφοις ἐν αὐτοῖς τοῖς λόγοις Φιλοστράτου ἔλαιον, οὐ σκολήκας ἐξ Ἱλδιδρέων λέγει.148
cάν καὶ τὴν πάνω καὶ βάρβαρος ἢν ἡ λέξις λυστελούντος ἐνεκα τεθειμένη, οὐκ ἔδει λαβραίας ἢμῶν καταφυλαιρέτες. «δαιμόνιοι, μαίνεσθε»149 ἐὰν ἡμᾶς ἡρέμους διάγειν τῷ θάλασ' ὑμεῖς συμμορίας καὶ κουστοδίας συνεπαγόμενοι ἀλλὰς ἄλλω υμῶν ἀντερίζετε καὶ ἐκάστος ἐκάστοτε καταληπτε. ἀλλά μοι πάλιν τὸν λόγον προσαρμοστέον, οἶδεν αὐτοῦσα.

Plakountas: All sorts of honeyed sweets. Kollabous: Ornaments made from bread, or rather from dough, pressed in the position of kollaboi (that is, the pegs of the lute),150 whom we today call siligniai («wheat breadloafs»)151 and sesamountes («sesame cakes»),152 even if some abominable person153 will disparage me also on account of this, namely that I explain everything for the profit and knowledge of my pupils, as I did in the case of Lycophron’s phallaina. For as I explained and said in my commentary: «Phallaina is a little animal flying around lamps and extinguishing them; it is also called psora, psyche and pyraustoumoros, and which is called «oil-lamp-extinguisher» by common people. Phallaina is also a fish, about which Lyco- 


148 Phil. VitApollTyan. ΙΙΙ 1, 2.
149 Od. XVIII 406 (δαιμόνιοι, μαίνεσθε).
150 Sch. At. Vesp. 572.
151 The noun σιλιγνίας is attested only since the 11th cent. (LBG s.v.), though σιλιγνής and σιλίγνυν (← Lat. siligineum, «wheat bread») are attested since the 2nd and 6th century respectively (LSJ s.v. and LBG s.v.).
152 The noun σισμαμβής is attested since at least the 4th cent. (LSJ s.v. and LBG s.v.).
153 Tzetzes employs again a ritual word, since μιαρὸς initially meant «polluted», «defiled by blood».

Plakountas: All sorts of honeyed sweets. Kollabous: Ornaments made from bread, or rather from dough, pressed in the position of kollaboi (that is, the pegs of the lute),150 whom we today call siligniai («wheat breadloafs»)151 and sesamountes («sesame cakes»),152 even if some abominable person153 will disparage me also on account of this, namely that I explain everything for the profit and knowledge of my pupils, as I did in the case of Lycophron’s phallaina. For as I explained and said in my commentary: «Phallaina is a little animal flying around lamps and extinguishing them; it is also called psora, psyche and pyraustoumoros, and which is called «oil-lamp-extinguisher» by common people. Phallaina is also a fish, about which Lyco- 


148 Phil. VitApollTyan. ΙΙΙ 1, 2.
149 Od. XVIII 406 (δαιμόνιοι, μαίνεσθε).
150 Sch. At. Vesp. 572.
151 The noun σιλιγνίας is attested only since the 11th cent. (LBG s.v.), though σιλιγνής and σιλίγνυν (← Lat. siligineum, «wheat bread») are attested since the 2nd and 6th century respectively (LSJ s.v. and LBG s.v.).
152 The noun σισμαμβής is attested since at least the 4th cent. (LSJ s.v. and LBG s.v.).
153 Tzetzes employs again a ritual word, since μιαρὸς initially meant «polluted», «defiled by blood».
nounced *phallaina* to be the same as *psora*, *psyche* and *pyraustoumoros*, and then added the word *kandelosbestra*, I did not say this because of ignorance and lack of words, but aiming to write clearly and to benefit others in interpreting an incidentally difficult word. But if he [sc. Tzetzes] wished to use bombastic, elevated and strange words, indeed, the members of your cohort having come all together would be unable to understand even one of the Tzetzian words. For exactly this did your topnotch<sup>154</sup> and pick-of-the-day boys suffer since they did not grasp a single word of just one playful choliambic verse of mine, suspecting these words to have been fabricated, as the present *drungarios*<sup>155</sup> is witness to my story since he acquainted himself with these people asking about the words that were the following:

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Shoemaker, cut to pieces the dog-biting hunting-boots, and do not utterly disgrace the heroic Muse.
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And again I address myself to the sacrilegious<sup>157</sup> man possessed by a murderous demon: What exactly do you censure in *kandelosbestra*? The component *kandela* or the component *sbestra*? Yet you and your cohort have missed, I think, reading Teucer the Chaldaean and Babylonian and the *Barbaric Sphere* composed by him,<sup>158</sup> in which he instructs us about the stars rising next to the Zodiac signs, purportedly declaring their influence on humans; for therein he speaks thus: «From degree 18 until all of degree 20 he who carries the filaments of Destiny creates candle-lighters and torch-bearers».«

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See now, for you, the one with a benighted mind, I have introduced lamps towards the light of education; but in these very stories of Philostratus you will find an oil, wherein he calls it «worms from India», that escapes from fire-extinguishing machines.«
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Even if the word was utterly common and barbaric but quoted because of being useful, you should not speak foolishly and behind my back against me. «Oh you pos-

<sup>154</sup> The noun ἄκροκόφυον is a *hapax* of Tzetzes (*LBG s.v.*).

<sup>155</sup> Could the *droungarios* here be the predecessor of Kamateros? On the office see above n. 116.

<sup>156</sup> The Tzetzian words of this verse prove to be rare words culled from the relevant lexica such as Hesychios or the *Souda*.

<sup>157</sup> For rendering ἀλτητήριος I use *Souda* α 1257; I, 114, 25-26 Adler (ἄλτητηρίος; ἀνόσιος, ὁ ἐνε-χώμενος μιᾶςματι καὶ ἐξημαρτηκώς εἰς θεοῦ).

<sup>158</sup> On this little known astronomer and his treatise see W. Hübner, *Grade und Gradbezirke der Tierkreiszeichen: Der anonyme Traktat De stellis fixis, in quibus gradibus oriuntur signorum*. I: *Quellenkritische Edition*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1995, pp. 92-93 (with the older bibliography). The various fragments of Teucer have been edited and commented by F. Boll, *Sphaera: Neue griechische Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Sternbilder*, Leipzig 1903, pp. 3-72. It is worth pointing out that John Kamateros (see A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, II, p. 1098) used Teucer in his astronomical poem *On the Zodiac*. This reveals a possible connection to Tzetzes via the patronage of the Kamateros clan, especially if John is to be identified with Andronikos’ older brother (see Bucossi [ed.], *Andronici Camateri*, cit., p. XXI).

<sup>159</sup> *Kandelaptes* and *lampadarios* are lemmatized in LSJ Suppl. *s.v.* The cryptic phrase «he who carries the filaments of Destiny» is the sign of Hydra, more specifically, the head of the water snake; see Hübner, *Grade*, cit., pp. 118-120.

<sup>160</sup> The fictitious story in Philostratus’ *Life of Apollonius* is about a strange creature living in the waters of the Indian river Hyphasis, that resembles a white worm; when melted down it produces an oil that can light up a fire able to overcome any fire-extinguishing device (σβεστήρια).
sessed ones, you are mad!» Leave me in peace to live in the cupola.\textsuperscript{161} Gathering
gangs and cohorts together, all of you contend against each other and fill each other
with nonsense.\textsuperscript{162} But let me reattach my discourse back to the point where I broke
off.

Having additionally used two colloquial words to explain the rare κόλλαβος, Tzet-
zes invokes the potential disparagement by some other teacher who would accuse
him of explaining everything in the texts he is presenting. He is thus reminded of
the episode about Lycophron’s phallainai. He first quotes his own scholion in a
somewhat modified form, probably from memory. It should be noted that what in
the commentary appeared as «which we also call colloquially “oil-lamp-extinguisher”» appears here as «which is called “oil-lamp-extinguisher” by common people»,
giving the impression that Tzetzes is not one of those who use this word. After
abusing his detractor in the manner we have already seen in the first part of the pa-
er, he remarks that he used this colloquial word in order to make his commentary
more profitable (i.e. comprehensible) to his pupils and not because he is ignorant
or overinterpretive. He then digresses even further by telling of how the cohort of
the teacher and his best pupils where not able to understand a funny choliamb he
had composed. Finally, he points out that both components of the contested word
are in fact well attested since ancient times, and he quotes the obscure astronomer
Teucer of Babylon and Philostratus’ Life of Apollonius of Tyana. He concludes his
digression by presenting himself as a peace-loving person sitting in his allotted
place, while his rival and his pupils are a gang of savages tearing each other to
pieces. As noted already (see above), Tzetzes’ representation of his rivals is shaped
by a specific set of negative images that he manipulates most competently. The
more one gets acquainted with this portrait gallery of miaroi, the more one gets the
impression that they are in one way or another reflections of Aristophanes’ archvil-
lain, the Paphlagonian slave in the Knights. Be that as it may, Tzetzes’ arguments
for using a colloquial word in interpreting Lycophron are (i) the usefulness for the
users of his commentary, and (ii) the fact that the colloquial word’s components
are already attested in older writings. These, in fact, are the arguments that Eu-
sthathios also used, only he expressed them somewhat differently (more coherently
one would be tempted to suggest) and not attacking other teachers in a pro-
nouncedly vehement manner.\textsuperscript{163} In fact, Tzetzes did not do something out of the

\textsuperscript{161} Tzetzes wishes to live peacefully under the cupola (ό θόλος). Koster plausibly suggests that
this could be a discreet reference to his cell or some other building of the Pantokrator
Monastery, where Tzetzes lived and taught. For a similar imagery see an abusive iambic note
written by Tzetzes in the margin of the oldest manuscript of Thucydides, the late 9th-century
Heid. Pal. gr. 252. The note has been edited by M. J. Luzzatto, Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide. Note
autografe sul Codice Heidelberg Palatino Greco 252, Bari 1999, pp. 49-50. On these verses see
Agapitos, “Middle-Class” Identity, cit., p. 5.

\textsuperscript{162} In the poem referred to in the previous note, Tzetzes also speaks about a «wise cohort»
(σοφή κοινοτόι), which disparages him because he does not follow their erring ways.

\textsuperscript{163} See Agapitos, Literary Haute Cuisine, cit., passim.
ordinary when he glossed Aristophanes’ rare “colloquial” word and Lycophron’s rare “epic” word with “classical” synonyms plus an “everyday” word, since this was not an uncommon practice when teaching Greek at school in the twelfth century and later.\(^\text{164}\)

This particular incident of collegial backstabbing must have caused Tzetzes substantial irritation, for he did write to this teacher a short, cryptically ironic letter:\(^\text{165}\)

\[
\text{Tini \ μομοσκόπω.}
\]

\[
Συ μὲν τὰς ἐμὰς φαλλαίνας ἐμέμψω· σοὺς δὲ σοφοὺς Τηλέφους νεόμικας.
\]

To a blemish examiner.

You reproached my whales, but you thought your wise men to be Telephuses.

The heading of this letter introduces us to the noun \(\text{μωμοσκόπος}\), a rare word from the context of sacrificial ritual meaning «a person examining sacrificial victims for blemishes», attested for the first time in Philo and somewhat later in Clemens, both Alexandrian authors.\(^\text{166}\) Tzetzes often used it to describe those persons who are ready to find blemishes in his works, in other words, malicious rivals.\(^\text{167}\) The word is used once in the sense of «ill-disposed critic» by Eustathios for Homer.\(^\text{168}\) Just like \(\text{katharma, momoskopos}\) marks through reference to ritual practice an extraordinary negative aspect of Tzetzes’ rivals.\(^\text{169}\)

Obviously, the letter is incomprehensible to anyone who does not know the inci-
dent. However, the letter reveals that Tzetzes must have retaliated in some way, because the second sentence suggests that the blemish examiner had also made an error out of ignorance. The two sentences are explained in two separate notes in the Histories. The first of the two notes follows the basic structure of the scholion to Ran. 507. Tzetzes remarks that there are numerous meanings attached to phallaina, one of which is «moth». He then goes on to explain:

ΔEn δὲ τοῖς εἰς Λυκόφρονα ἐμοὶ ἔξηγηθείσι καὶ περὶ τούτου ἐγραψα τότε τοῦ ζωολλίου.

In my commentary on Lycophron’s poem I also wrote then about this little animal.

Tzetzes again quotes his own scholion yet with the variation «that some people call this animal more commonly “oil-lamp-extinguisher”». The avoidance of the inclusive plural of the original scholion («we call colloquially») again serves to lessen the generality of the everyday usage implied in the Lycophron commentary. In the second note, he embarks on a full-scale counterattack; it begins as follows:

Now this buffalo-cleric blamingly examining these my writings, which I had written for the benefit of youths, himself wrote in a barbarous manner supposedly a satire to Patriarch Stypes, which things he expressed nonsensically even calling the patriarch’s brain a «Telephus».

Our outraged teacher points out a gross error in a «supposed satire» (ὡς δῆθεν

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170 Hist. 298 (Ἡ λέγουσα «τὰς ἔμας φώλανας», πολλὰ δὲ σημαίνει ἢ φώλανα) and 299 (Περὶ τοῦ «σοῦ δὲ ἑσοῦς Τῆλθοςς νεωνίκας»), Chil. IX 946-959 and 960-980.
171 Hist. 298, Chil. IX 953-959.
172 Σύρειν here is synonymous to διασύρειν. We find a similar use in AllegIl. IX 28.
173 Hist. 299; Chil. IX 960-964.
that his blemish-examining adversary addressed to Patriarch Leo Stypes (1134-1143). In this satire, most probably composed in iambics, the buffalo-cleric called the patriarch’s brain a «Telephus», obviously misunderstanding the Aristophanic verse θένων δ’ ὁργής, ἔκχεει τὸν Τῆλεφον, as quoted in Chil. IX 969, where the Comic disparagingly refers to Euripides’ play Telephus.\(^{174}\) Tzetzes sarcastically remarks that the patriarch had not composed a Telephus drama, while his adversary proved to be a «barbarian» in thinking that the brain is mainly called «Telephus» by Aristophanes (IX 968-978). The philological barbarism of Tzetzes’ adversary\(^{175}\) does not refer to the inappropriate use of everyday language, but to a scholarly error in understanding Aristophanes.\(^{176}\)

Tzetzes abuses his critic as a βούβαλόπαπας (IX 958, 960, 967), while in his commentary to the Frogs he calls the same person «son of a billy-goat» (τράγου υἱό̂ς).\(^{177}\) These abuses parallel the «buffalo» and «bullocks-cleric» we met in Hist. 369 (Chil. XI 215 βούβαλος, ὥρχιπαπας) and the «young billy-goat» in Hist. 399 (Chil. XII 243 τραγόπωλον). Thus, the rival has once again been placed in the world of malodorous beasts. As in the commentary to the Frogs, Tzetzes in the Histories is at pains to explain that he used κανδηλασθέστρα in a work «written for the benefit of youths» (IX 961). These virulent characterizations are part of a defense mechanism against criticism about the use of colloquial discourse in the commentary of an ancient text. Seen from a different point of view, the incident of the kandelosbestra reveals that Tzetzes’ commentaries were quite successful. This is proven, on the one hand, by the incidents where some teacher stole one of his books or dossiers,\(^{178}\) and, on the other hand, by the rich textual history of his commentaries, mostly written around the text\(^{179}\) but sometimes transmitted independently as running texts.\(^{180}\) Therefore, Tzetzes exposed his work much more to his peer group than other teachers did. Eustathios again offers us a good counter-example. The transmission of his Homeric Parekbolai is in Byzantine times far thinner than Tzetzes’ Iliad and Aristophanes commentaries,\(^{181}\) since the complexity and size of Eu-

\(^{174}\) In the critical editions Frogs 855 is printed as θενων υπ’ ὁργής ἔκχεε τὸν Τῆλεφον. Dionysus warns Euripides that the angry Aeschylus might hit the former’s temple with one of his immense words and thus spill out his Telephus. In Sch. Ar. Ran. 855a (Rec. I), 942, 9-10 Ko Tzetzes notes τὸν Τῆλεφον ἐγκέφαλον παρ’ ύπνοιαν, while in Sch. Ar. Ran. 854 (Rec. II), 942, 1-8 Ko he expands the older scholion and clarifies the difference between the literal and the figurative meaning in relation to the wordplay on the title of the Euripidean play.

\(^{175}\) Chil. IX 962 (βαρβάρως ἔγραψεν), 965 (βαβατὶ τῆς βαρβαρόστητος), 967 (βάρβαρα ἥμα γρά-φον), 978 (βάρβαρε).

\(^{176}\) This is a different application of the barbarian imagery than the one found in Eustathios; see Agapitos, Literary Haute Cuisine, cit., pp. 234-237.

\(^{177}\) Sch. Ar. Ran. 507a, 835, 9 Ko.

\(^{178}\) See above n. 20.

\(^{179}\) See, for example, Vat. Urb. gr. 141 or Par. suppl. gr. 655.

\(^{180}\) See, for example, Ambr. 222 inf.

\(^{181}\) One two-volume edition for the Iliad (Laur. 59, 2 and 3, a parchment codex) and two manuscripts for the Odyssey (Marc. gr. 460 and Par. gr. 2702, both bombycin codices), all of them from the late 12th century.
stathios’ work made it costly to copy and difficult to use, while Tzetzes’ scholia were reader-friendly and rather popular exegetical notes, as we can see from Eustathios who knew them.\footnote{See above p. 5 and n. 21.}

We saw above (pp. 24-26) that Tzetzes employed the technique of stylistic shifts for humorous purposes, but also within the context of poetry exegesis. He himself reveals that he employed this technique consciously. In one of his most grotesquely funny letters, he complained to Nikephoros Serblivas, imperial secretary and member of the Senate, that he had no money to repair a leaking drainpipe above the door of his appartment and that he was in dire need of financial support.\footnote{Ep. 18. On the Serblivas family see A. Kazhdan, \textit{ODB}, III, p. 1875.} In order to flatter Serblivas, Tzetzes made the utterly absurd claim that Nikephoros was a descendent of the Servilii, a noble family of republican Rome (τῶν πρὶν Κατσάρων Σερβιλίουν ἀπόγονε). In explaining the learned reference in the \textit{Histories}, Tzetzes wrote:\footnote{Hist. 132, Chil. VII 295-301.}

\begin{quote}
Σερβήλιος ἦν ὑπατος καὶ Καίσαρ τῶν Ῥωμαίων. Μεθώδω δὲ δεινότητος ῥητορικῶ τὸ τρόπον, ἐκ Σερβηλίων τῆς γονίας λέγω καὶ τὸν Σερβλίαν. Ὡς εἰπέρ ἄλλος ἰθελε, Σέρβον Ἡλίαν εἶπεν.\footnote{In all manuscripts but one of the \textit{Histories} the Roman name is written with an \textit{eta} (Σερβήλιος), though in some manuscripts the correct spelling Σερβιλίος has been written above the line. It is possible that the “wrong” spelling served Tzetzes’ purpose of an antistoichic play (Σερβίλιος → Σερβήλιος → Σερβ’ Ἡλίας).} Τούτω γὰρ ῥήτορος ἀνδρὸς καὶ ἀμφοτερογλῶσσου, καὶ πράγμασι καὶ κλῆσει καὶ τοὺς λοιποὺς ὀμοίως πρὸς ἑπαίνοι καὶ ψόγων δὲ κεχρῆσθαι συμφερόντως.

295 Σερβίλιος was a consul and caesar of the Romans.
By means of the technique of forcefulness, in a rhetorical way, 
I declared Serblias as being of the family of the Servilii, 
just as someone else might wish to call him a Serbian Elias.
For this is the talent of a man good in rhetoric and speaking in two ways, 
300 namely, to use situations and names and similar such things 
expeditiously for praise and for blame.
\end{quote}

The pseudo-etymological play on the family name Serblias can, therefore, move to two, quite opposite directions, on the one hand, as a transferral to an ancient Roman (\textit{qua} noble) context for purposes of praise (Σερβλίας becomes a Σερβήλιος), on the other, as a transferral to a contemporary Serbian (\textit{qua} barbarian) context for purposes of blame (Σερβλίας becomes a Σέρβος Ἡλίας). While the actual praise “rises” to learned diction since Σερβήλιος is a fully sanctioned Roman name culled from Hellenistic historiography and the lexica,\footnote{E.g. \textit{Souda} σ 243; III, 342, 10-11 Adler.} the potential blame “drops” to
colloquial diction since Σέρβος is not sanctioned by Atticist practice. Tzetzes adds that this technique is the very hallmark of a good rhetor who is ἀμφετερόγλωσσος. In my opinion, this adjective – a creation of Tzetzes – means that a rhetor can develop out of one word both a positive and a negative wordplay. This results in two very different meanings that can be used for praise or blame according to a given situation. The combined use of “Attic” Greek and colloquial “Rhomaian” Greek shows that we are not confronted with two languages standing in some inimical relation to each other, but with idioms that are used to express, sometimes simultaneously, different purposes of an author within the same text. When an author takes a defensive stance as to the use of everyday language, this is because someone else has criticized him for this use, as the kandelosbeta incident amply indicates. This ambivalent stance is related to the character and social standing of the individual teachers rather than to a general attitude of the teaching establishment.

Such an ambivalence is expressed at length in the epilogue Tzetzes wrote for his own compact version of the Theogony (along with a genealogy of the heroes of the Trojan War) composed in political verses.

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187 The usual Atticist equivalent for the Serbs was Τριβαλλοί, a race mentioned in Herodotus IV 49. See, for example, the comment of Niketas Choniates in his History about an expedition of John II Komnenos in 1123: Μικρῷ δὲ ὑστερὸν καὶ κατὰ τοῦ τῶν Τριβαλλῶν ἔθνους (εἴποι δ᾿ ἄν τις ἑτέρος Σέρβων), κακουργοῦντος καὶ τὰς σπονδάς συγχέοντος, στρατεύειν ἐκήρυξε (16, 15-18 van Dieten).

188 P. Roilos, Amphoteroglossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel, Washington, DC 2005, pp. 29-30, in analyzing Historia 132, suggests that the word means «double-tongued» and relates it to «ambiguity» (διπλόν), a word used by Theodore Prodromos to describe the power of rhetoric against opponents. But Tzetzes speaks of both praise and blame; he does not refer to the capacity of words to mean something else than what is being said and, thus, to appear as deceitful, which is what schedography does within an educational context. This meaning of διπλόν as «deceitful ambiguity» is what Gregory Pardos (2nd quarter of the 12th cent.) explains in his treatise On the Syntax of Discourse § 67, when he states that τὰ δὲ (sc. ῥήματα) διπλῆν ἔχοντα τὴν σύνταξιν ἢ καὶ ποικιλωτέραν, ταῦτα νόν μόνα παραλάβωμεν, ὡς χρήσιμα καὶ εἰς τὴν διπλόν τῆς σχεδικῆς πλεκτάνης («only those verbs that have a double or an even more varied syntactical function I have included as being also useful for the deceit of the schedographic meshes»); see D. Donnet, Le traité Περὶ συνάξεως λόγου de Grégoire de Corinth: Étude de la tradition manuscrite, édition, traduction et commentaire, Brussels 1967, p. 207, 409-411. On amphoteroglossia in Eustathios see also F. Kolovou, Die Briefe des Eustathios von Thessalonike, Munich 2006, pp. 43*-49* with many references.

189 The main part of the text was edited for the first time by Immanuel Bekker (see above n. 8), based on the Romanus Casanatensis gr. 306 (olim J-II-10), a. 1413 [C]. Eight years later, the text was also edited by P. Matranga, Anecdota graeca, I-II, Rome 1850: I, pp. 577-598, from a sofar unidentified Vatican manuscript that breaks off already at 618 in Bekker’s edition. The epilogue of the poem in C starts with v. 719, but breaks off at 777, because the scribe refused to continue copying the incomprehensible foreign languages he found in the text: καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοὶ στίχοι ἢσον διαλέκτων διαφόρον, ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ παρέλειψα ταύτα ὡς ἄνωφηλ («There were many other verses of various dialects, but I omitted these as being useless»). A similar case of refusal to copy the epilogue is found in the Vind. phil. gr. 321 (late 13th cent.) [W] which also transmitts
The poem’s heading runs as follows:190

Διαμαντου γραμματικου ποιήμα τοῦ Τζέτζου αὐθωρον πάντη καὶ ἁμελέτητον διὰ στίχων πολιτικῶν περιέχον πόσαν θεογονίαν ἐν βραχεί μετὰ προσθήκης καὶ καταλόγου191 τὸν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἰλιον ἀρίστων Ἐλλήνων τε καὶ Τρώων.

By John Tzetzes the schoolteacher a poem wholly instantaneous and unstudied in political verses comprising all the genealogy of the gods in a concise form with the addition of a catalogue of the excellent Hellenes and Trojans during the war at Ilion.

The phrase «a poem wholly instantaneous and unstudied» (ποίημα αὐθωρον πάντη καὶ ἁμελέτητον),192 also appears in the heading of the poem against the two imperial secretaries, namely, «verses instantaneous and wholly unstudied» (στίχοι αὐθωροὶ καὶ πάντη ἁμελέτητοι).193 In my opinion, the older meaning of the adjective αὐθωρός («immediate, at that very moment»), combined here with ἁμελέτητος («unstudied»), expresses the sense of «improvised», that is, delivered in a sketchy and unprepared manner.194

the Theogony on ff. 43r-48v. The scribe broke off at 723 and noted: τὸν ὄλον ἐπιλογὸν διὰ τὴν πολυλογίαν εἰμάσαμεν ἄγραφον («All of the epilogue we left uncopied because of its garrulity»). W is the oldest and best witness of the text, while it is also an important manuscript transmitting, among many other texts, the letters of Euthymios Malakes, various works of Theodore II Laskaris and the letters of Nikephoros Blemmydes; see H. Hunger, Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. 1: Codices historici, codices philosophici et philologici, Vienna 1961, pp. 409-418: 411 on the Tzetzes material. Maria Tomadaki (currently post-doctoral researcher at the Department of Literary Studies, Ghent University) is preparing a critical edition of Tzetzes’ Theogony. From a first study of the Theogony manuscripts in the Vatican, Dr. Tomadaki believes that the most probable candidate for having been the basis of Matrangas’ edition is Vat. gr. 896 (2nd half of 14th cent.), possibly with the use of Vat. gr. 895 (1st half of 14th cent.); it is the latter manuscript that preserves the dedication to the sebastokratissa (see below n. 196); on the two manuscripts see P. Schreiner, Codices Vaticani Graeci: Codices 867-932, Vatican City 1988, pp. 66-72 (895) and 72-76 (896).

190 Bekker, Die Theogonie, cit., p. 147. In a few cases readings from W have been included in the text as they clearly are superior to the text of C.

191 The word καταλόγου is omitted in C but transmitted in W.

192 See also in the text’s prologue at Theog. 22-23: ἐγὼ δὲ πάντα σοι σαφῶς ἐπιδρομαδὴν λέξοι, ἔμελεττός αὐθωρόν καὶ καταστενομένος («For I shall tell you everything clearly and summarily, in a manner unstudied, improvised and highly condensed»).

193 Pétridès, Vers inédits, cit., p. 569.

194 In connection with the embarrassing episode hinted at in the Pétridès poem, Tzetzes makes clear in two letters addressed to the Kamateroi brothers (Epp. 89-90), that he improvises good iambics; he uses the phrases ἱμβοὺς τινὰς ἀπεσχεδάσα and τὰ βραχείτα μοι στιχίδια ἀπέρ ἀπεσχεδάσα (129, 8-9 and 130, 18 respectively). It should be noted that αὐθωρόν as an adverb makes a massive appearance in lemmata to poems of Manuel Philes (ca. 1270-ca. 1335), that functioned as metrical prefaces to the recitation of prose works by older authors; see Th. Antonopoulou, On the Reception of Homilies and Hagiology in Byzantium: The Recited Metrical Prefaces, in A. Rhoby, E. Schiffer (eds.), Imitatio – Aemulatio – Variatio. Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposiums zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur (Wien, 22.-25. Oktober 2008), Wien 2010, pp. 57-79: 68-74.
The poem is dedicated to a royal lady, addressed in the prologue as «Well, then, imperial soul, soul loving scholarship, splendid soul, lover of beauty and, above all, lover of literature» and «Well, then, graceful soul, lover of history, lover of literature». This person is the sebastokratorissa Eirene, widow of the sebastokrator Andronikos († 1142), second-born son of Emperor John II Komnenos. Tzetzes first extolls Eirene’s mythical riches and royal will (Theog. 10-13) and, then, points to her wish for receiving a list of the gods and the descendence of the heroes, a wish which he will satisfy in a clear and concise manner (22). He concludes his self-praise by suggesting that only she can save him from unjust men and from inhuman poverty by breaking the bonds of his speechlessness through her warm golden medicine that will allow his tongue and brain to function again (35-43). One could compare this prologue with Constantine Manasses’ prologue for his Annalistic Compendium (Σύνοψις χρονικῆ), a work also commissioned by the sebastokratorissa. In the prologue’s first part, Manasses employs the same themes and vocabulary as Tzetzes (beautiful lady, friend of learning, rich and generous, wishing for a concise and clear book on ancient history), but without the autographic style of the latter. But, then, Manasses was a well-known public speaker, accomplished writer, schedographer and emissary of the emperor, exactly the kind of person whom Tzetzes could have branded as an «ethereal rhetor».

195 Theog. 1-2 Φέρει, ψυχή βασίλισσα, ψυχή φιλιστορούσα, ψυχή λαμπρά, φιλόκαλε καὶ φιλολογωτάτη and 18 ψυχή χαριέσσα, φιλιστόρ, φιλολόγον. 196 In the Vat. gr. 895, f. 115v (see above n. 189) we find the lemma Πρόλογος πρὸς τὴν σεβαστοκρατίσσαν (Matranga, Anecdota, cit., II, p. 577). The correct identification of the addressee goes back to G. Hart, De Tzetzarum nomine vitis scriptis, «Jahrbücher für Classische Philologie. Supplementband» 12, 1880-1881, pp. 1-75: 38, and is based on Ep. 56, wherein Tzetzes complains to the sebastokratorissa about the bad treatment of his «exegeses» (78, 2 τὰ γὰρ ἐμὸς ἔξηγήσεις); see Wendel, Tzetzes, cit., col. 1984. On Eirene Komnene see E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, Who was Eirene the Sevastokratorissa, «Byzantion» 64, 1994, pp. 40-68, who suggested that Eirene was actually of Norman descent; A. Rhoby, Verschiedene Bemerkungen zur Sebastokratorissa Eirene und zu Autoren in ihrem Umfeld, «Νέα Ρώμη» 6, 2009, pp. 305-336 and, most recently, E. Jeffreys, The Sebastokratorissa Eirene as Patron, in M. Grünbart, M. Mullett, L. Theis (eds.), Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond, Vienna 2013, pp. 177-194, with substantial bibliography. The hypothesis that Eirene was Norman has been unanimously accepted in the relevant bibliography, however, there is no actual evidence for this proposal, while the argumentation is solely e silentio. We simply do not know the origins of this woman; she could be Byzantine but of a somewhat lower social standing. 197 The text of the prologue (1-48) in C is in an unsatisfactory state. Given the importance of the prologue for understanding the contract between author and addressee I list here the readings from W so that readers can put them into the text in order to have a better understanding of these verses: 6 θεος ὡς ζ : τὴν ὄντως W | 9 τὸ C : τὶ W | 9a φιλεῖς τοὺς λόγους καὶ ποθεῖς, ἐπενεργοφόρα τοῦτο W : om. C | 13 βασιλικὸν πρὸς ἄλλους C : βασιλείαν εὐλόγων W | 15 ἐπιτερπεστάτων C : ἔπιτερπεστάτων W | 30 πάντα C : πάντων W | 37 δεσμώσιμα C : δεσμοῦμαι W | 38 καὶ παντελός C : καὶ παντελῶς ἄν ὄφονος ἐκ τοῦτον ἐγνύμην W | 43 τὴν ἐγκέφαλον ἡλίθιαν C : τὸν ἐγκέφαλον ἡλίθιαν W | 46 πρόσοχες (a silent correction of Bekker) : πρόσοχες W. 198 SynChron. 1-17; ed. O. Lampsidis (ed.), Constantini Manassii Breviarium chronicum, I-II, Athens 1996, I, pp. 5-6.
The poem’s long epilogue of 137 verses cannot be found as a continuous text in any printed edition and has therefore never been studied as a whole. Only one part of the prologue has become well known, at least among Byzantinists. It is the passage where Tzetzes shows his knowledge of foreign languages, quoting snippets of everyday conversation in Scythian (i.e. Cuman), Persian (i.e. Seljuk), Latin, Alan (i.e. Old Ossetian), Arabic, Russian and Hebrew.\(^{199}\) Because of the epilogue’s importance for the purposes of the present analysis, I will quote the lengthy passage in full, uniting it for the first time on the printed page.\(^{200}\) Tzetzes ends his narrative with the heroes who fought at Thebes. Then, he addresses his patroness:

\[
\text{Οὔτοι, φιλόν χρυσόπρεπον, οὔτοι, φιλόν ώραῖον,}
\]

720 \(\text{Έλληνων}\text{ εἴχαν οἱ θεοὶ καὶ πάιδες τῶν ἄρων.}\)

\(\text{Έχεις τοιγάρ τὸ άδειον, ἀπέσπα τὸ χρόσος,}
\)

\(\text{ἐν παγινώδεσι γραφώσι συγγράμα ὑπὸ σπουδάις}
\)

καὶ δὴ καλῶς ἐκμίθανεν πάντας τοὺς γεγραμμένους.

725 \(\text{Εἴ ὑπὲρ τις τείνει πρὸς ἡμᾶς ὁφρόνως μῶιμοι βέλος,}
\)

καταμωκόμενος ἡμῶν τοιοῦτα γεγραφῶν,

\(\text{ἐκεῖνος μὲν ὡς βουλοῖτο μῶιπος ἐπεντρύφατο,}
\)

\(\text{ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντως οὐδὲ γρυθεῖσαμεθα πρὸς τοῦτον.}
\)

\(\text{Σὺ δὲ καλῶς γυνώσκοσα τὸ τῆς οἰκονομίας,}
\)

καὶ πάς ἐξέφρων συνετός, εἰδὸς οἰκονομίαν

\(^{199}\) This passage (a total of thirty-five verses) was fully edited for the first time from the Vat. Barb. gr. 30 [B] (13th cent.) by Gy. Moravcsik, Barbarische Sprachreste in der Theogonie des Johannis Tzetzes [1928-1929], in Studia byzantina, Budapest 1967, pp. 283-292. Moravcik dated B to the 15th century, but on the 13th-century date see V. Capocci, Codices Barberiniani Graeci. Tomus I: Codices 1-163, Vatican City 1958, pp. 31-33. The missing final section of the epilogue was published by C. Wendel, Das unbekannte Schlusstück der Theogonie des Tzetzes, «Byzantinische Zeitschrift» 40, 1940, pp. 23-26 (comprising fifty-five verses), also edited from B. The passage with the foreign languages was then reedited from the Vind. phil. gr. 118 [V] (late 14th cent.) by H. Hunger, Zum Epilog der Theogonie des Johannes Tzetzes, «Byzantinische Zeitschrift» 46, 1953, pp. 302-307: 304-305. These thirty-five verses were translated into English by A. P. Kazhdan, A. Wharton Epstein, Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Century, Berkeley 1985, pp. 259-260 (text nr. 47) on the basis of Hunger’s edition. This passage has been discussed by P. A. Agapitos, Vom Aktualisierungsversuch zum kommunikativen Code: Johannes Tzetzes und der Epilog seiner Theogonie für die sebastokratorissa Eirene, in E. Kislinger, A. Külzer (eds.), Herbert Hunger und die Wiener Schule der Byzantinistik: Rückblick und Ausblick, Vienna (forthcoming).

\(^{200}\) Hunger, Zum Epilog, cit., p. 303, reconstructed the sequence of the epilogue on the basis of the printed editions as follows: vv. 1-47 (719-765 Bekker) + 1-35 (Moravcsik and Hunger) + 1-55 (Wendel). The epilogue will be quoted here as if it were a part of Bekker’s edition, thus continuing his verse numeration. For reference purposes the numeration of the individual editions will be printed on the right-hand margin of the text column. I have slightly unified the spelling and punctuation of the older editions. Lines printed in Italics are Tzetzes’ interlinear glosses found in all three manuscripts (C, B and V). The last part of the epilogue, as edited by Wendel from B, is also preserved in V which in certain cases transmits better readings. These have been incorporated from Hunger, Zum Epilog, cit., p. 307 who offers a collation.

\(^{201}\) W transmits ἐλλήνων, while C reads ἐλλήνες.
καὶ πρόσωπα καὶ τρόπους τε, δι’ οὖς ἔγραψα τάδε, ἐκείνου μεμψοισθε, δοκῶ, τήν μορφοσκόπουν γλώσσαν, ἡμᾶς δ’ οὖκ ἄν νομίσητε τῶν φαύλων συγγραφεόν, μὴ κομμητρῶς συγγραμμασίν ταῦτα συγγραφαμένους. Ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰσοθα σκοπεῖν καὶ πρόσωπα καὶ τρόπους καὶ τοὺς καιροὺς καὶ πράγματα, καὶ γράφειν τὰ πρεπόδω. Καὶ πρὸς σοφοὺς μὲν γεγραφῶς ἀνδρας καὶ πρὸς λογίους τὴν Ἀττικὴν ἀρµότομαι τότε κιννύραν γλώσσης, ἐπάδον πάνῳ λιγυράς ἐκείνος ἀρµονίας· εἰ δ’ ποτε δεχεσθε με καὶ πρὸς ἀγροίκους γράφειν,

ὅσπερ θησίν ὁ κωμικός, σκάφην τὴν σκάφην γράφω,202 πρὸς ἀλλας άγκιστρον, βουκεντρον βουηλάτας, πρὸς οἰνορκάς οίνον δὲ γυλκών καὶ τὸν οξίνην. Εἰ δ’ ἐκτροποι γράφαμεν οίνον ἐξεστηκότα μελιηδὴ καὶ φάλερνον ἢ σικερίτην πλέον,

κινήσει τότε καθ’ ήμων δίκην τῆς παρανοίας, ὃσπερ καὶ πάς τις ἔτερος τέχνην ἀσκῶν βαπαύσων.203 Διὰ τοῦτο πανταχοῦ πηρὸν οἰκονομίαν, ὡς πρὸς γυναίκα γεγραφῶσι εἴγραψα σφεστέρως· ἐνίοτε καὶ παντελῶς εἴγραψα βαπαύσωδη,

ἡ πρὸς γυναίκας γεγραφῶς κοινάς εξ ἀγραμμάτων, ἢ χαίριν ἁστείσατος καὶ γέλιους μεγάλου, βαϊτζας204 καὶ πατὴπα γράφων καὶ τὰς κουράς των. Πρὸς δὲ τάς κόρας γεγραφῶς καὶ τοὺς ἀπειροτέρους γράφῳ τὴν χαλκομίαν205 καὶ τὸ καμιουξολιτίζιν, τοῖς βρεφυλλίοις γεγραφὸς γράφῳ μαμία τατά τε.

Καὶ Πλάτων ὁ φίλωςοφος οὔτω φησὶν ποι γράφων «καὶ δὴ ἐλεγόν μοι καλὸν πατρός καλὸν υἱόν».206

202 Plutarch (Mor. 178b; II 1, 20, 14-18 Sieveking) reports it as a saying of King Philip of Macedon, while it is Lucian in his famous essay How should history be written (Op. 59, 41: III 312, 8-10 Macleod) who attributes it to «the Comic»: ὡς ὁ κωμικός φησιν, τὰ σύκα σύκα καὶ τὴν σκάφην δὲ σκάφην ὑμοῦχων (Aristoph. fr. 901b). Tzetzes refers to this bon mot also in Hist. 207, Chil. VIII 556-562, where it appears in a conflated version with Philip quoting Aristophanes.

203 Bekker printed βαναυσον but this is unmetrical; I prefer correcting it to βαναυσων.

204 Bekker prints βαϊτζας. On the word («maid servant») see Kriaras, s.v. βαϊτζα, where also the form βαϊτσα is included.

205 Attested in Aetios of Amida (LSJ), with the accent -μύταν, whilst Bekker prints -μυταν, that would not fit the political verse here (penultimate accent before the caesura).

206 Tzetzes is quoting here a bon mot, spoken by Socrates, in the Pseudo-Lucianic dialogue Halcyon or On Metamorphoses (Luc. Op. 72, 1; IV 90, 9-10 Macleod): Ἐκεῖσι τῶν Ἐσοφόρου τοῦ ἀστέρος, καλοῦ πατρὸς καλὸν υἱόν («Ceyx of Trachis, son of the Morning Star, handsome son of a handsome father»). Tzetzes’ ascription of the text to Plato stems from the fact the dialogue is included in some of the oldest Plato manuscripts and was considered genuine, despite the fact that Diogenes Laertius III 62 attested that Halcyon was falsely ascribed to Plato (see M. D. Macleod [ed.], Luciani Opera. Tomus IV: Libelli 69-86, Oxford 1987, p. xii with the relevant bibliography). It is interesting to note that Vat. gr. 1 (ca. 900; cod. O of Plato) and Harl. 5694 (a. 913/4; cod. E of Lucian) were both written by Baanes for Arethas of Cæsarea, and both of them include Halcyon, with E probably copying O. In connection with Tzet-
John Tzetzes and the blemish examiners

ΔΑρίστοφος, δε φησιν πάλιν ἐν ταῖς Νεφέλαις
tου μὲν μοι ἔλεγες μαμμάν, ἐγώ δέ ἀρτον ἐδίδουν·
ei δὲ κακάν μοι ἔλεξας, ἐξήγαγον ἂν ἔξω.²⁰⁷

Αἰσχύνη Δημοθένη τε Λυσίαν μᾶθοι τέ μοι
καὶ πάντας ἄλλους τοὺς σοφοὺς, οἱ χρόνται που τοιοῦτοις,
ἀνπερ τυγχάνω ἕξωτης, παντὶ προσφόρως γράφων,
σοφοῖς μὲν ἀπασί σοφά, σαφή δὲ τοῖς ἀσοφοῖς,
καὶ τοῖς βαναύσιοις βάναυσα καὶ πᾶσι κατ’ ἀξίαν.
Καὶ Σκύθην Σκυθαίς εὕροις με, Λατῖνον τοῖς Λατινοῖς
καὶ πᾶσιν ἄλλοις ἔθνησιν ὡς ἕνα γένους τούτων.

κόμιαν
καὶ Σκύθην ἀσπαζόμενος οὕτω προσαγορεύων
καλῇ ἡμέρᾳ σου, αὐθεντρία μου,²⁰⁸ καλῇ ἡμέρᾳ σου, αὐθέντα μου.

σαλαμαλέκκ ἁλίτη <→> σαλαμαλέκκ ἁλτούγεπ.

τοῦρκοις
Τοῖς Πέρσαις πάλιν περσικῷ οὕτω προσαγορεύων
καλῇ ἡμέρᾳ σου, ἀδελφέ, ποῦ ὑπάγεις, πόθεν εἰςαί, φίλε;
ἀόσαν χαίς κουροῦπαρζα χαντοζαρ χαραντάση.
Τῷ δὲ Λατινῷ προσφονῶ κατὰ Λατινὸν γλώσσαν:

καλῶς ἠλθες, αὐθέντα μου, καλῶς ἠλθες, ἀδελφέ,
βένε βενεστί, δόμινε, βένε βενεστί, φράτερ,
πόθεν εἰσαί καὶ ἀπὸ ποιον θέματος ἠλθες;
οὐνδε ἔς ἐτ δεκουάλε προβιντία βενεστί;

πῶς, ἀδελφέ, ἠλθες εἰς τοιαὐτήν τὴν πόλιν;

κόμοδο, φράτερ, βενεστί ἱνιστὰν τζιβιτάτεμ;

πεζός, καβαλλάριος, διὰ θαλάσσης θελείς ἀργησίας;

πεδόνε, καβαλλάριους, περιμάρε, βις μοράρε;

Τοῖς Ἀλανοῖς προσφέγγωμαι κατὰ τὴν τούτων γλώσσαν:

καλῇ ἡμέρᾳ σου, αὐθέντα μου, ἀρχόντισσα, πόθεν εἰσαί;

ταπαγχάς μεσφιλε ὁσιν κορθι καντά, καὶ τάλλα.

"Αν δ’ ἔχῃ Ἀλάνισσα παπάν φίλων, ἀκοῦσαι ταῦτα τὸν αἰσχύνεσαι, αὐθεντρία μου, νά γαμή το µουνίν σου παπάς;
tο φάρνετζ κίντζζ µέσφιλε καῖτζ φούν σαουγέ.

Τοῖς δ’ Ἀραβιν ὡς "Ἀραβιν ἀραβικός προσλέγων

ποῦ ὑπάγεις, πόθεν εἰσαί, αὐθεντρία μου; αὐθέντα μου,

καλῇ ἡμέρᾳ σου.

zes’ attested use of early minuscule codices for his readings of the classics (for example, his use of the Thucydidean Heidelb. Pal. gr. 252 and the Herodotean Laur. 70, 3), one can assume that he might have also read Plato and Lucian from the two Arethan codices or their immediate apographs. On the Thucydidean and Herodotean manuscripts see Luzzatto, Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide, cit., passim, and Note inedite di Giovanni Tzetze, cit. passim.

²⁰⁷ Ar. Nub. 1383-1384.
²⁰⁸ The feminine form of αὐθέντης appears three times in the text (769, 786, 789). Moravcsik and Hunger printed the word as αὐθεντριά, probably in correspondence to the more usual form αὐθεντρία (Kriaras, III, pp. 339-340). However, both B and V transmit αὐθεντρία μου in 769 and 786, while in 789 B transmits αὐθεντρία μου and V αὐθεντριπ without an accent. There can be no doubt that the paroxytonal form connected to the enclitic possessive pronoun reflects Tzetzes’ usage.
πάντας θεός ὡς ἔχοντον ἐθνός προσαγορεύον

υήμνευν, ἀδελφῷ, ἀδελφίτσα, καλῇ ἡμέρᾳ σου.

οὐκ ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς προσφυγὸν ἐβραίως προσέλεγεν,

μεμαγευμένη οἷκε στόμα φάραγγα καταπίνων μυῖας τυφλές,

μεμακαμένες βηθ ἐγγεζηθοῦν τιμαίε, Ἐβραίων λίθε, ὁ Κύριος ἦθεν ἀστραπή εἰς τὴν κεφαλήν σου.

ἐβερ ἐργάζα σαράν ἁθαν ἐβέσκε εἰς τὸ χωδάρι σου.

καλλίστης ἔργον ἐγγοικός οἰκονομίας τούτο.

Ὁστίς δὲ παρὰ πρόσωπον ἢ παρὰ τρόπον γράφει ἐκεῖνος οὐ θυσία οὕτοι, βαρβαρος δὲ τὸ πλέον

τὸν σχοινοπλόκον τις εἰπόν, τις ἰμοινοστρόφον, ἐκεῖ πάλιν τὸν τζικαλάν εἰπὼν τις γρυτοπόλην,

καυσάεδον καὶ πυρεργόν εἰπών τις τὸν χαλήκεα, ἑρέπην209 πάλιν φῆσας τις ἀνθρωπὸν κοπηλάτην,

λευκοπόλην τις εἰπόν τὸν ὁς πωλεῖ κυώνους,

σὺν τούτους τὸν καμελαύκιν καυσαργὴν τις φήσας,210
tὸ καμελαύκιν καῦσαι δὲ, γέλιαν πολλοῖς ὁφλῆσαι.

"Ὡσπερ καὶ τὸ φασῆλον"211 ἀν δόλιχον καλέσαι καὶ λάθυρον τὸ ὀσπρίων ἀκαναν ἄν λέγη, πρὸς γραῦν ὁποροπάδιν ἀν μορόσφος ἄν λέγη' 10

γραῦν

«ώραιοπάλλι, κάβαλλι, πῶς δίδως τὰ όραια,

κόμαρα

tὰς περσικάς, μιμαίκλα, ὕμη, καὶ τοὺς πιτζέγζους,212

ἀπίδια σύκα213 τα ἁγρυμήλα214

ἄχνας καὶ κράδας,215 κόμαρον καὶ τὰς ὠμομυλίδας;»216

"Ἀν λέγη τις πρὸς ἄσοφον τους, παῦτας ληροδίας, βαρβαρος ὄντως"217 καὶ θρασύς, παράφερδιν δὲ τὸ πλέον.

Καὶ πρὸς βαρβάρους ἀν πέρ τις βαρβαρίκος μὴ λέγη, καὶ τούτων τότε βαρβαρον γίνοικε μοι τυγχάνενιν,

ὁσπερ φησῖν 'Ανάχαρσις ὁ Σκύθης ἐπιστέλλων

φησὶ γάρ οὗτος ὁ ἄνηρ ἐν τῷ ἐπιστολίῳ

"οἱ Σκύθαι βαρβαρίζουσιν ἐν γένει τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ πάλιν βαρβαρίζουσιν Ἕλληνες ἐν βαρβάροις."218
"Ωστε καλῶς μοι γίνοσκε πάς ὁ φρονὼν ἐκ τούτου,
ei κατὰ τὸν Ἀνάχαρσιν τὸν πάνσαφον ἐκεῖνον
ἐςμὲν καὶ λογιζόμεθα βάρβαροι τοῖς βαρβάροις,
ἀν κατὰ γławταν τὴν αὐτῶν αὐτοῖς ὑ guideline προσλάλομεν,
pολλῷ μάλλῳ τυχάνομεν ἐκ βαρβαροδεστέρων,
ὅταν, ἐν οἷς δυνάμεθα πάσιν άξιῶς γράφειν,
ἀκαταλλήλως γράψαμεν σοφὰ πρὸς τοὺς ἀσόφους.
Καὶ πάσιν δὲ τὸ πάνσαφον βάρβαρον εἶναι νοεῖ
βαναύσοις πρὸς ἀσόφοις τε καὶ μέσοις καὶ πανσόφοις,
ὡς Διονύσιος φησὶ μετὰ τοῦ Φιλοστράτου.
"Ὡς μὲν γὰρ Διονύσιος φησὶ τοιοῦτοτρόπῳ·
«θαυμάζω, ἄνδρες, ἔγωγε, πῶς οἱ γονεῖς ἐκεῖνων
ἀκούοντες ἀνέχονται τοιαύτης φλυαρίας
καὶ ὡς δοκοῦσ' πρὸς αὐτοὺς βάρβαρα λέγειν τοῦτο».
Περὶ τῶν Ἀττικῶν φησὶ λεγόντων μωροσόφως
ταῦτα μὲν Διονύσιος, Φιλοστράτος δὲ λέγει·
«τὸ ἀπειρόκαλον ἐν τῷ ἀττικίζειν βάρβαρον», 220
ὡςτε καὶ πρὸς σοφοὺς φησὶ βάρβαρον εἶναι τοῦτο.
Τὴν δὲ σαφῆνειαν κοινῶς ἀπαντησαί ἐπαινοῦσι·
ἀν ζηλωτὴς ὁν κέχρημαι πάσι τῇ σαφῆνεία,
καίτοι παίξεν ὁν πηγὴ καὶ λέξεων παντοῖων,
ὅτε· 221 δὲ καὶ σαφέστατα καὶ βάναυσα ποι γράφω,
ἀπανταχοῦ θηρώμενος τὸ τῆς ὑποκομίας,
οὐ θάριν ἔγραψα καὶ νῦν ἐν λόγοις σαφέστεροῖς.
Εἰ δὲ τις πέμψῃ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐν τούτοις μῆμι θέλως,
οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπος εἰδὼς τρόπους ὑποκομίας.
ἄλλῃ ἡ πάντως μορφόσφος καὶ τὸν ἐπιφυλλίδων,
οἷον ὁ βίος πεπληρηθαί μεστῶν ἀλαζονείας,
ὁφρύν καὶ μόνον 222 βάδισμα φερόντων φιλοσόφων,
πολλάκις δὲ καὶ γένειον καὶ πλειον οὕτω ἄλλοι
ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐν γραφάς ἐσμέν κανόν τοῦ Πολυκλείτου,
πάσης τὰ πρεποῦστα γράψοντες κατ’ ἀξίαν.

These, golden-stemmed plant, these, o plant so beautiful,
were the Hellenic gods and the offsprings of heroes.
Thus you hold your loan, I paid my debt in full,
in playful writings have I composed matters important;
you, now, learn well all those recorded in writing.
And if someone should senselessly draw against me the arrow of blame,
stridently mocking me for having written such things,
let him, as he wishes, revel in such reproaches,
but I will not even reply a syllable to him.
But you, my lady, knowing well what concerns disposition,
and every sensible, judicious man, who knows about disposition

219 [ὡς ..σι] B We.
221 ὅτε B.
222 ὅφρυν μόνον καὶ V.
and about persons and ways of conduct, through which
shall reproach (so I think!) the blemish-examining tongue of this man,
while you readers will not think of me as being a bad writer,
since I have not written these things in boastful treatises.
For I am accustomed to examine persons and ways of conduct
and occasions and situations, in order to write what is appropriate.
Having written to wise men and learned scholars,
I then fit the Attic lyre to my tongue,
singing for them most sweet harmonies.
Yet should I need to write also to uneducated people,
as the Comic says, I write the trough a «trough»,
to fishermen I write «fish-hook», «ox-goad» to the cattle-driver,
to winesellers I write the wine as being «sweet» or «sour».
Should I write the soured wine ektropias («diverted»),
meliedes («honey-sweet»), phalernos («Falernian») or even sikerites
(«cidder»),
the wineseller will take me to court for madness,
just like everyone else practicing a handicraft would do.
Therefore, observing everywhere proper disposition,
having written to a woman I wrote more clearly.
Sometimes I even wrote in a completely low manner,223
either having written to uneducated commoner women,
or for the sake of a joke and a good laugh,
writing «handmaids», «slippers»224 and «cropping hair».
Having written to unmarried girls and to very ignorant persons,
I write «copper-colored-fly» and «fine chamois leather»,225
while to little babies I write «mommy» and «daddy».
Plato the philosopher writes somewhere
«they were telling me that I am a good-looking son
of a good-looking father».
Aristophanes again says in the Clouds:
«You were telling me “yummy-yummy”, and I gave you bred;
but if you told me “caca-caca”, I took you outside».
Educate yourselves then from Aeschines, Demosthenes, Lysias
and all other wise orators who use language in a similar way,
of whom I am an emulator, writing appropriately to everyone,
to all learned men learned things, clear things to the uneducated,
common things to commoners and to everyone according to their dignity.

223 The adjective βαναυσώδης means here «common», «low»; see LBG s.v. with references exclusively to high-style authors of the 12th century (e.g. Eustathios and the Choniates brothers).
224 The meaning of the word is not clear to me. In LBG s.v. πατήτης we find «Räucherharz» (εἰδὸς θυμόμαχος) from an alchemical work. The passage here is not quoted, nor is the word lemmatized in Kriaras. I wonder if the word has something to do with the verb πατώ, «to press», «to step», and therefore referring to some kind of shoe.
225 The noun καμουζουλίτζιν is probably a diminutive of καμουζζά, derived from Italian camozza, and meaning «chamois leather» (LBG s.v.).
You will find me to be a Scythian among Scythians, a Latin among Latins, and among all other nations being like one of their race.

Thus, addressing a Scythian, I speak to him in the following manner:
«Good day to you, my mistress, good day to you, my master».

To the Persians in Persian I speak thus:
«Good day to you, my brother, where are you going, from where are you, friend?»

To the Arabs as being Arabs I speak Arabically:
«Where are you going, from where are you, my mistress? Good day, my master».

And if an Alan woman has a priest as a friend, you will hear this,
«Are you not ashamed, my mistress, to have a priest fuck your cunt?»
namely,
«Bewitched house, mouth and throat swallowing flies, blind man»;
«Jewish stone, the Lord has come as a lightning upon your head».

And again to the Russians I speak according to their custom,
«Health to you, my brother, little sister; good day to you».

To the Jews I will suitably speak in Hebrew:
«Bewitched house, mouth and throat swallowing flies, blind man»;
«Jewish stone, the Lord has come as a lightning upon your head».

Yet he who writes in violation of the person or the way of conduct, he is not wise, rather he is a barbarian.

If someone calls the water-drawer a himoniostrophos
(«water-drawer»),

In Sch. Ar. Ran. 1322 σχοινοπλόκος is the «water-drawer», but Tzetzes’ σχοινοπλόκος could suggest that he understood the word as «rope-maker».

Ar. Ran. 1297.
or again if he calls the pot-maker a grytopoles («seller of small ware»),
if he calls the coppersmith a kausedon («pot-burner»),
or a pyrergos («fire-worker»),
or again if he names a rowing man an eretes («rower»),
if someone calls him who sells broad-beans a lekythboles
(«seller of pulse-gruel»),
and if along with these he calls the hatmaker a kausoergos
(«cap-worker»),
and the hat a kausis («cap») he will make many people laugh.

Just as if he names dolichos («long bean») the black-eyed pea
and if he calls akeanos the chickling-pea,
and if a foolish-wise man should say to an old woman fruitseller:

Old woman
_«Ripefruit-seller, aged mare?», at what price do you offer_
your ripe produce,

peaches, strawberry-tree-fruit (mimaikila) and pistaccios (?)
pears (ochnas), figs (kradas), berries (?) and wild little apples?_

If someone says such fooleries to an uneducated person,
he is certainly barbaric and insolent, if not completely mad.
And if someone does not speak to foreigners in their own foreign manner,
then know that he proves to be a barbarian,
just as Anacharsis the Scythian says when writing letters;
for this man writes in his little letter:

«Scythis speak as foreigners when found among Hellenes,
and again Hellenes speak as foreigners among the foreigners». So then, every sensible person, know well from these things

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228 Sch. Ar. Pl. 17.
229 Hapax of Tzetzes.
230 Hapax of Tzetzes.
231 Possibly λεκτισόπωλης; cfr. λέκτιος in Ar. Lys. 562.
232 Hapax of Tzetzes.
233 Macedonian hat (Theophrast).
234 Ar. Pax 1144 φασιόλος. The φασιόλεν (a diminutive of φάσιλος) is the kind of bean (φασίλος) defined as δόλιχος in Attic Greek.
235 Κάβαλλις seems to be a hapax of Tzetzes; in LBG it is rendered as «alte Frau (?)», which of course is what the lemma in 812a offers. But the word, which includes the root of καβάλλαρης, could be supposed to mean something like «old horse».
236 A colloquial expression in Ar. Ach. 745.
237 Πιτζέφώρος is a hapax of Tzetzes. In LBG s.v. πιτζέφωρος the word is rendered as «pistacio tree», i.e. πιστακέα.
238 Od. VII 120 ὠξυνή.
239 Ar. Pax 627 κραδή («fig-tree»).
240 The word is unattested; ἀμυμηλίς is ancient for μέσπιλον («medlar»).
241 One should note here that the “ethnic” names of the original phrase (Athenians – Scythians) have been transferred by Tzetzes to two different and very general categories; these, however, fit more easily a twelfth-century reading of the terms.
that, if according to Anacharsis (that most wise of men),
we actually are and are thought of as foreigners by foreigners,
lest we should not address them in their own language,
how much more must we be seen as most barbaric
when, in those things where we are capable of writing worthily to all,
we write unsuitably wise words to unwise persons.
Do understand that to everyone the most wise diction is barbaric,
to common people and to unwise, to «middle» persons\(^{242}\)
and to the most wise,
as Dionysius remarks along with Philostratus.
For Dionysius\(^{243}\) speaks in the following words:
«I do wonder, men, how the parents of such persons,
listening such phrases tolerate such garrulous nonsense,
thinking that their children speak to them in such a barbaric manner».
About those who speak Attically in a foolish-wise manner
these words says Dionysius, while Philostratus says:
«The lack of taste in using the Attic diction is barbaric»,
so that even speaking to wise men like that, he says, is barbaric.
But clarity is commonly praised by everyone;
being a zealous admirer of such wise men, I use in everything clarity,
although I am myself a source of books and manifold words;
but when I write more clearly and even commonly,
in all matters seeking after what is appropriate to the disposition
of my writing,
on account of which I now wrote in a more clear discourse.
And if someone should send in such matters against me
the arrow of blame,
he is not a man knowing the ways of disposition,
but he rather is a foolish-wise person and a poetaster,\(^{244}\)
obfuscating people whose life is filled with arrogance,
who bear only the brow and walk of philosophers,
often also the beard, but nothing else beyond that.

\(^{242}\) The phrase τοις μέσοις suggests here a social stratification of education, by being both a term for a social group and a term defining a middle (\textit{qua} average) level of education.
\(^{243}\) Wendel, \textit{Das unbekannte Schlußstück}, cit., p. 25, commentary to v. 34 (= 834) thinks that Dionysius of Halicarnassus is meant here, but the “quotation” could not be found in his surviving works. That Tzetzes was indeed referring to this Dionysius can be seen (a) from the marginal gloss ὁ Ἀλικαρνασσεύς in V to 834, and (b) from a letter of his where he again combines Philostratus and the «Halicarnassian» (Ep. 89, 130, 7-8): ὁ Ἀλικαρνασσεύς τε καὶ ὁ Φιλόστρατος καὶ ὁ λοιπός μυριάρθημος ῥητόρον ἐσμός.
\(^{244}\) Ar. Ran. 92-93 (ἐπιφυλλίδες ταύτ’ ἐστὶ καὶ στομύλματα, ἔχει λόγον μοισεία, ἱλαροὶ τέχνης) along with Sch. Ar. 92a, 729, 6-8 Ko. The Aristophanic verse is used by Tzetzes in Ep. 1, 1, 5-7 (Πυθανόμαι ὡς παρὰ σοι τινὲς ἐπιφυλλίδες τε καὶ στομύλματα γλώσσαν ἀρχαλινόν καθ’ ἕμων κεκινήσαν καὶ τὰ ἡμέτερα ὡς οἶδον τε ἢν αὐτών διασέφεραν), for which see Hist. 1, Chil. IV 783. On the meaning of the two words see also Souda e 2758; II, 393, 1-7 Adler (ἐπι-φυλλίδες· ἐπὶ τῶν δοκούντων εἰσὶ σφοδροὶ ή ποητών) and Souda σ 1154; IV, 438, 24-439, 6 Adler (στομύλως), also with reference to the Aristophanic verse. I have rendered the word as «poetaster» following the \textit{Suda}. 
However, in my writings I am the rule of Polycleitus, writing to everyone what is most appropriate according to their dignity.

Tzetzes, in his usual technique of reconnecting to previous passages, begins the epilogue by addressing the sebastokratorissa with the vegetal imagery he had used in the prologue (719 – 14-17). The epilogue itself is clearly divided into three parts. The driving power giving to this long passage the associative flow of its structure and its motoric rhythm is Tzetzes’ anxiety of being blamed or even mocked by the blemish examiners for not offering an allegorical exegesis of the Theogony in high Attic style (724-733, 848-855), but having used a style appropriate to people of a “middle-level” education (832 μέσοις). As we have seen, it is an anxiety that runs through a number of his works and that spurs him to attack these real or imagined adversaries with an abusive language. Of course, the broader issue behind this anxiety is the success or failure of the teacher to attract high-standing patrons and affluent students.

It is within this context that we have to read the notion of playfulness Tzetzes introduces when composing “light” educative texts in verse. For example, at the very beginning of the epilogue to the Theogony, he hands over his work to the sebastokratorissa, by suggesting that he has repaid his debt, having written in «playful writings» about the important matters concerning the gods and heroes of the Hellenes (721-722). He had already used this phrase earlier in the work, at the point where he had concluded the genealogy of Aeneas with a brief excursus on the beginnings of Rome. He interrupts the narrative and addresses his patroness (494-499):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Θέλοις σοι παρελκύσωμεν οὕτω τὸ γένος σύμπαν}; \\
\text{Αλλ’ ἀπρεπές σοι καὶ βαρύ φανησαι τέλειος}. \\
\text{Σὺ γὰρ τοὺς στρατηγοὺς ζητεῖς Ἑλλήνων τε καὶ Τρώων,} \\
\text{τὰ δ’ ἀλλα τὰ πείρεγμα πόνον καὶ κόπου πλέα} \\
\text{καὶ τοῖς ἀκρομωμένοις μὲν, τοῖς γράφουσι δὲ πλέον,} \\
\text{καὶ μᾶλλον παιγνιώδεσι τοῖς στίχοις γεγραφόσι.} \\
\text{Do you want me to explain to you thus all of their race?} \\
\text{But that would be inappropriate for you and utterly burdensome.}
\end{align*}
\]

245 Tzetzes uses the same phrase for his poetry in Ep. 89, 130, 1, which he explains in Hist. 426, Chil. XII 550-551 with reference to Hist. 191, Chil. VIII 311-316.

246 M. J. Jeffreys, The Nature and Origin of the Political Verse [1974], in E. M. Jeffreys, M. J. Jeffreys, Popular Literature in Late Byzantium, London 1983, nr. IV, pp. 142-195: 148-157, devoted substantial space to Tzetzes’ works composed in the politikos stichos. Jeffreys pointed to two features in Tzetzes’ works composed in political verse, that are of importance to the present study. These are the presence of the notion of paignion («play») and the frequent appearance of the term oikonomia («disposition»). Jeffreys’ understanding of these features form an essential part of his argument concerning the nature of the politikos stichos and the use of vernacular language in Komnenian poetic production and, therefore, their role in the history of Byzantine and Modern Greek literature. As will become apparent from the following analysis, I hold a rather different view about these matters.
For you ask to learn about the commanders of the Hellenes and the Trojans, and about all other superfluous things filled with toil and fatigue, for listeners and much more for writers, and above all for those writing their verses in a playful manner.

Tzetzes claims that a detailed account of Roman royal genealogy would appear as utterly improper and burdensome to Eirene, who has asked to learn specifically about the generals of the Trojan war. All other strange things are full of toil and weariness for listeners and writers alike, especially those who compose in “playful verses”. But why should the specific request be such a wearisome toil for Tzetzes and his playful verses? In the prologue to the *Odyssey Allegories*, he states about himself:

\[
\text{εἴτ' οὖν τοῖς πᾶσι ζηλωτῆς καθέστηκεν ὌμΗρου}
\]
\[
\text{καὶ τοῖς σαφέσι καὶ ληπτοῖς καὶ παιγνιωδεστέροις}
\]
\[
\text{καὶ τοῖς ἀποκαθάρμασι τοῦ λόγου τῆς οἰκίας.}
\]

Well, then, he [sc. Tzetzes] has become the emulator of Homer in everything, both in words clear and comprehensible and rather playful, as well as in the offscourings of the house of discourse.

In my opinion, these allusive lines suggest that Tzetzes in his allegorical exegesis has been able to emulate Homer in all aspects of the poet’s various styles, thus implying that he himself is the poet’s best interpreter. In fact, as Eric Cullhed has recently shown, Tzetzes actually set himself up as a kind of new Homer, the only true successor of the wandering and poor bard.

A number of teachers from the eleventh and twelfth century included the imagery of playfulness in their works, for example, Michael Psellos, Niketas of...

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247 The *Odyssey Allegories* form the second part of Tzetzes’ *Plot Summary of Homer* (Ὑπόθεσις τοῦ Ὅμηρου), on which see Wendel, *Tzetzes*, cit., col. 1969. The work was originally dedicated to Manuel Komnenos’ wife Eirene, that is, Bertha von Sulzbach (K. Barzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*, I-II, Thessaloniki 1984: I, pp. 456-457). However, the writing was broken off at Book 15 of the *Iliad Allegories*, when the empress refused through her middleman, a certain Megalonas, to raise Tzetzes’ wages (see also below n. 262). The work was finally completed after the empress’ death († 1160) with the financial support of Constantine Kotertzes, an old pupil of Tzetzes, as a special preface to Book 16 testifies (Boissonade [ed.], *Tzetzae Allegoriae Iliadis*, cit., p. 192; transl. in Goldwyn-Kokkini, cit., p. 289).


249 Jeffreys, *Nature*, cit., p. 155 renders v. 41 as “in the offscourings of kitchen talk” and suggests that Tzetzes intends to write in this manner.

250 We will find a similar self-representation in Tzetzes’ prefatory statement to the scholia he wrote to accompany his own hexametric summary of the complete Trojan epic material, his *Carmina Iliaca* (Μυκομεγάλη Τιάς) in three books; see Leone, *Carmina Iliaca*, cit., p. 101, 1-10.


252 In the epilogue to his *Rhetoric* for Michael Doukas (Poem. 7, 541-545 Westerink), the young
Herakleia, or an anonymous author of a verse manual on basic syntax. All three texts are composed in political verse. In my opinion, the words παίζω («to play»), παίγνιον («play») and παιγνιώδες («playful») point to the “playful ease” with which pupils will learn their material, be it by reading and memorizing grammar and vocabulary, or by listening to and learning mythological subjects. Playfulness is one aspect of a teacher’s marketing device to present rather dry and catalogue-like material as easy, digestable, even pleasant for young pupils or aristocratic ladies. The other aspect of this device is, of course, the use of the accentual πολιτικός στίχος that could easily accomodate all kinds of longer words, especially standardized technical terms or catch-phrases needed for a teaching aid.

But let us return to the Theogony of Tzetzes. The greater part of the epilogue is devoted to the author’s supposedly customary practice to examine persons, ways of conduct, occasions and situations in order to write what is appropriate (734-735). Thus, he adjusts his language according to the education level of the recipients of his writings. The Attic lyre is appropriate for wise and learned men, everyday language for uneducated craftsmen and merchants, a clearer diction for women (in this case the sebastokratorissa), but sometimes he will use an everyday idiom for illiterate women of a low station, or simply for the sake of jest and laughter (736-751). Tzetzes, then, offers some examples of this everyday language (752-755) that are of the same type as the sarcastic colloquial comments we saw him use in the Histories. He supports his practice of linguistic adjustement by referring to Plato, Aristophanes and the orators Aeschines, Demosthenes and Lysias (756-763). Moreover, he points out that he writes in a learned manner to the learned, in a clear manner to the uneducated and in a common one to common people, addressing all according to their social standing (764-765). In particular, Tzetzes’ refer-

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255 There is another topos connected to the notion of play, namely, that the teacher who teaches in a playful manner receives comfort from labouring hard to produce satisfactory manuals. Thus, the manual on syntax is preceded by a dedicatory epigram in twelve-syllable verse underscoring the use of “modest play” and “play as comfort”: Πρός παίδα σεμνὸν εὐγενὴ γράφειν θέλω | καὶ σεμνὸν αὐτῷ παιδίας δώσω τρόπον, | ὡς ἂν τὸ σεμνόν, κἀν δοκῇ παῖζε, ἔχῃ | κάμιοι δὲ διδάσκοντι παιγνίου τρόπο | ἄρνοι τοις μικρὸς τῆς μίας νυκτὸς πόνος, | πόνῳ παρηγόρησα τῶν ἐν τῷ βίω | ὧν γὰρ ἡμῖν οἱ λόγοιν ὀμιλίαι | κοινῷ παῖζαντον τῆς λύπης μέγα (On Syntax 1-8 Boissonade); see also Niketas’ opening statement quoted in n. 253.

256 In Theog. 765 κατ’ ἀξίαν suggests both «according to merit» in the Attic sense of the phrase...
ence to Aristophanes is important because the authority of the Comic vindicates the use of everyday language for serious and humorous purposes, as the vocabulary used in 801-817 manifestly shows.

We have seen so far that Tzetzes uses everyday language over the broad spectrum of his various writings, even if he does take towards it an ambivalent stance. It is negative when he mocks ignorant schedographers and their «little texts», defensive when he is being criticized by the malicious blemish examiners, and positive when he writes satirical verses for his personal enjoyment against his rivals. The epilogue of the *Theogony*, picking up the themes touched upon in its prologue, brings them together in a most forceful “teacherly” style, where Tzetzes expresses his opinion on how a specific authorial key concept functions. It is δικονομία. Within the first part of the epilogue (719-765), the word oikonomia appears three times (728, 729, 747) and in the same metrical position as the last word of the verse. Oikonomia also makes three more appearances in the rest of the epilogue (800, 846, 849), of which the two are again at the end of the verse. There can be no doubt that readers are intended to understand that oikonomia is an important concept related to the writer’s choice of an idiom «useful and appropriate» (799 πρόσφορα καὶ πρεπώδη). The notional framework in which the word is normally used by the Byzantines in theology and canon law is determined by three basic meanings, that of «wise foresight» (synonymous to πρόνοια), of «dispensation» (of God’s grace) and of «concession» (i.e. relaxation of canon law). 257 Within this framework, oikonomia is without exception exercised by a higher authority. In the epilogue of the *Theogony*, Tzetzes refers to oikonomia and its tropei («ways») as something that he as a writer heeds and applies (747, 800, 846), others, however, might or might not know, for example, the patroness and wise men know it (729-730), ignorant critics do not (849-850). Before embarking on the last part of the genealogies in the *Theogony*, Tzetzes interrupts his catalogue-like narrative and addresses the sebastokratorissa. We have already quoted the first part of this extended authorial address (see above p. 48) where Tzetzes mentions the inappropriateness of writing about useless matters full of toil and fatigue (494-499). He then remarks: 258

500 Ναρκαν γὰρ εἶσθε ψυχή πράγμα ποιούσα μέγα, ὅταν ἐν οἴσπερ πέφυκεν ἐπαίνων ἐπαξία, μᾶλλον δόκει τι μωμητὸν ποιεῖν τοὺς μυμοσκόποις, μὴ πρὸς αὐτὸ προσβέλεψα τὸ τῆς δικονομίας. Καὶ δὴ λοιπὸν τὰ περίσσα τῆς ἡρωγονίας
505 ἐάσας γράφειν ἀπρεπῶς συγγράμμασι πιθήκων,

(LSJ s.v. ἀξία 3a) but also «according to dignity» in the Byzantine sense; see A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, I, p. 639. In the prologue of the *Theogony*, Tzetzes had used ἀξία in the sense of «dignity», «rank» for the royal patroness (6 καὶ πρὸς ἀξίαν τέθεικε Θεὸς ὡς ἑπερτάτην and 8 τὴν καλλονήν τὴν ἐκκριτόν, τὸ γένος, τὴν ἀξίαν).

258 *Theog.* 500-509.
For the soul is used to grow numb in accomplishing a great deed, when in those things in which she shows itself worthy of praise, it rather seems to the blemish examiners to accomplish something blameful – people who have not looked into what is appropriate to disposition. Well, then, omitting to write inappropriately through the writings of monkeys what is superfluous to the genealogy of heroes, I shall delineate the more important matters in these my writings; what remains needs time and the verses of heroes, and even more so it needs a cheerful tongue. Well, then, I move on to the sequence of my story, while you be fully attentive.

The writing about useless matters full of toil and fatigue, therefore, refers to the state of stupor in which the soul sinks when, instead of receiving praise, it is attacked by the blemish examiners who have not discerned the ways of oikonomia. And so, Tzetzes tells his patroness that he will leave aside the redundant information of the genealogy of heroes since he does not wish to write improperly in the manner of «monkey writings», because these other matters require «heroic verses» and, even more so, a «cheerful tongue». The whole passage makes clear that the patroness commissioned Tzetzes to prepare for her the genealogy of the Hellenic gods and heroes, but it is he who knows how this is to be done and thus will produce the best possible product, exactly what the blemish examiners do not know nothing about.

In the Iliad Allegories, Tzetzes includes at two points similar remarks that make absolutely explicit the distinction as to the roles played by the writer and the patron in the contract of commission. In Book 18, that is after Tzetzes had resumed the writing of the work following the death of Empress Eirene, he notes that his work «was written by means of disposition and by the zeal of the sovereign lady» (oikonomía συγγραφέων, σπουδή τη τής ἀνόσσης).²⁵⁹ Oikonomia here clearly means the necessary «disposition» a writer has to undertake in matters of language, style, metre, content or structure so as to produce a work that will satisfy the «zeal» of a specific patron. In the prolegomena to the Plot Summary of Homer as a whole, Tzetzes makes a statement about the form of his work:²⁶⁰

²⁵⁹ AllegIl. 18, 660.
²⁶⁰ Allegll. proleg. 35-40. Boissonade placed a fullstop after φθόνῳ in 36, separating the main sentence from its secondary clause. But 37-40 must be understood as the imaginary reproach of the momoskopoi. Boissonade also corrected in 40 μεταβάλειν (all codices) to μεταβάλλειν against the meter. In their translation, Goldwyn-Kokkini, cit., p. 5 have translated the passage following Boissonade’s text.
But let the blemish-examining tongues be restrained from barking out something against me aroused by envy, for as the ancient mythographies write that Zeus changed the Titans into the shape of monkeys, so I now wish by the ways of disposition to change the heroes though the writings of monkeys.

We see here that the same set of key-words appears as in the second address to the patroness and the epilogue of the *Theogony*, namely, the *momoskopoi*, *oikonomia* and the *syngrammata pithekwn*. Having read about Tzetzes’ insistence on addressing people of different educational standing appropriately, we realize that the phrase «monkey writings» brands a book written in a diction inappropriate to the topic and the addressee (*Theog.* 505 ἀπερεπως). More specifically, in the *Theogony* «monkey writings» refers to over-detailed exegeses of the genealogical material, whereas in the *Iliad Allegories* it refers to what Tzetzes’ rivals wrongly perceive as his simpler style of writing. It is not Tzetzes’ personal expression of distaste to write in the clear diction of a middle style. Moreover, the images of the author’s numbed soul and cheerful tongue obliquely but decisively suggest that Tzetzes would expect a better payment for the treatment of such heroic matter in a heroic verse. In fact, in the prologue to the *Plot Summary*, he made three proposals to offer to the empress a more expensive product, twice a full translation261 and finally a detailed summary of each individual book.262

If Tzetzes, therefore, heeds *oikonomia* or writes by it, whose is the authority from which this «disposition» emanates? In my opinion, it is Tzetzes’ own. However, he could not state this directly because such a statement would constitute a case of unveiled novelty, a problematic choice within the broadly conservative frame of Byzantine society.263 The idea that an author could exercise *oikonomia* over his own work as the ultimate authority controlling the craft of writing had been expressed by Michael Psellos hundred years before Tzetzes. For example, in an essay comparing the novels of Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius, Psellos wrote about the former:264

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261 *AllegIi.* proleg. 46-49 and 489-504.
262 *AllegIi.* proleg. 1207-1214. These attempts precede his later complaints to the middleman of the empress, where he demanded to be paid according to his work as a metaphrast and not just as a scribe or author; see the long letter to Megalonas (*Ep.* 57) and his comments in *Hist.* 264, Chil. IX 278-297.
264 Text and translation by A. R. Dyck, *Michael Psellus: The Essays on Euripides and George of*
The book is organized (οικονόμηται) according to the arts of Isocrates and Demosthenes since the element interrupting the story is seen to be controlled from afar and the element following thereafter is immediately reconnected to the interruption. He who reads Charikleia for the first time thinks that most elements are superfluous, but as the story progresses, he comes to admire the author’s orderly disposition (τὴν οἰκονομίαν τοῦ συγγραφοτος θαυμάσσεται). The very beginning of the work resembles coiled snakes. Having concealed their head inside their coils, they display the rest of their body; so the book, having chosen the type of plot onset that falls in the middle, elevates its centre to its beginning.

Heliodorus’ own «orderly disposition» in matters of structural organization is to be admired, and the simile of the coiled snake makes this admiration more than obvious. Psellos, however, never used oikonomia to describe his own literary techniques, even if, in his very own way, he did use a number of other terms that derive from ancient literary criticism.265

The appearance of oikonomia in the Theogony and the Iliad Allegories is, then, a prominent feature of Tzetzes’ work in relation between him and his patrons, as Michael Jeffreys pointed out.266 As I have attempted to show above, the tropoi oikonomias are an encoded term signalling the authority of Tzetzes over his own work. It should therefore not be assumed that the “educational” texts produced by Tzetzes were written under the exact specifications of their respective patronesses. In fact, the presence of the politikos stichos and the idiotis glossa in an immensely varied spectrum of educational texts from the eleventh century suggests that it is the teachers who chose to present the material in a different manner. As in the case of most innovations in Byzantine culture, some of these teachers, like the over-sensitive Tzetzes, needed to defend their novel products. The only thing one can infer from the Theogony and the Plot Summary of Homer is that the patronesses asked for the mythological subject matter to be presented in a comprehensible manner.267 The treatment, however, was left to the teacher.

This relation between patron and writer reflects the standard practice in medieval book commissions. One illuminating example is the prologue Chrétien de Troyes, a slightly younger contemporary of Tzetzes, composed to his famous Le chevalier de la charrette or Lancelot (ca. 1170-1175).268 There Chrétien explicitly

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265 See Papaioannou, Michael Psellos, cit., pp. 88-127.
266 However, Jeffreys, Nature, cit. pp. 151-152, proposed that by oikonomia Tzetzes made an indirect reference to the compromise between the patron’s wishes and the writer’s own choices and that, in reality, the patron exercised strict control over all aspects of production. Jeffreys also suggested that the chosen literary form (i.e. political verse and lower-level style) were, in fact, distasteful to Tzetzes.
267 Compare the respective passages at Theog. 18-23 and AllegIl. proleg. 16-34.
268 Ch. Mela (ed.), Chrétien de Troyes, Le Chevalier de la Charrette ou Le Roman de Lancelot,
states that his patroness, Countess Mary of Champagne (1145-1198) and daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine, asked him to compose a romance: «Puis que ma dame de Chanpaigne | Vialt que romans a feire anpraigne, | Je l’anprendrai molt volontiers» (1-3). He refers to the title of his romance and then adds: «Matiere et san li done et livre | La contesse et il s’antremet | De panser, que gueres n’i met | Fors sa painne et s’antancion» (26-29). Chretien’s «thought» (panser), «effort» (painne) and «careful attention» (antancion) are the equivalent of Tzetzes’ «ways of disposition» (τρόποι οἰκονομίας), the «wish» (vialt) of Mary corresponds to the «zeal» (σπουδή) of Eirene, while both patronesses dictate the subject matter.

What Tzetzes, then, defends is adjustement and flexibility as the mark of a good writer and criticizes rigidity as the sign of a foolish-wise person or of a poetaster doning the high-brow comportment of philosophers (Theog. 850-851). It is in order to demonstrate how he heeds oikonomia that in the second part of the epilogue (766-800) he lets loose his display of knowledge of foreign languages, mingling into the text his rough humor, be it his abuse of Jews or the sexually explicit reproach to an Alan woman who has taken a priest as lover.

In the first part of the epilogue (719-765) oikonomia is exclusively related to the act of writing, in the second part (766-800) it is exclusively related to speaking, while in the third part (801-855) it is related both to writing and speaking, though at the very end of the text the act of writing takes over completely (854-855). Oikonomia in relation to the act of speaking (799-800) is the point where Tzetzes’ use of foreign languages enters the picture. In this sense, the very end of the epilogue to the Theogony is quite important in many respects. It suggests to the

270 «The subject matter and meaning are furnished and given him by the countess, and he devotes to it his thought so as not to add nothing but his effort and careful attention». On these highly debated lines of Chrétien see D. Kelly, The Art of Medieval French Romance, Madison, WI 1992, pp. 106-110.
271 For further examples from Old French and Middle Persian literature see P. A. Agapitos, In Rhomaian, Frankish and Persian Lands: Fiction and Fictionality in Byzantium and Beyond, in P. A. Agapitos, L. B. Mortensen (eds.), Medieval Narratives between History and Fiction: From the Center to the Periphery of Europe (c. 1100-1400), Copenhagen 2012, pp. 235-367: 254-276 and 294-312, where the patrons dictate the subject or point to an older book to be “translated”, but never interfere in matters of form and style.
272 On these abuses see Agapitos, Aktualisierungsversuch, cit.
274 See 768, 771, 774, 783, 785a, 788, 791, 793, 794, 799.
275 For «writing» see 801, 829, 830, 845, 847; for «speaking» see 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 810, 811, 812, 816, 818, 827. One should note that the two types of discourse are separated within the third part: writing first (801-802), then speaking (803-827) and, lastly, writing again (828-855).
sebastokratorissa Eirene – and vicariously to potential rivals, as well as to other readers – that the author, who «in playful writings composed matters important» (722), knows well the «ways of (writerly) disposition». Being in his writings the «rule of Polycleitus» personified,\(^{276}\) he writes to everyone what is most appropriate according to their educational standing (848-849 and 854-855). Tzetzes does not look down upon everyday language generally. In the ambivalent stance he has towards it, he accepts it for didactic purposes in lexical exegeses or for ridiculing in an Aristophanic spirit his rivals, but he certainly criticizes the inappropriate use of the idiotis glossa, be it when addressing the wrong people or, even worse, when employing it for the purposes of schedography.

John Tzetzes stands apart, or even sets himself consciously apart, from the group of successful teachers and accomplished public orators holding some ecclesiastical or state office. His many and varied comments reveal to us his manifold use of everyday language in school, as well as his knowledge of literary and educational developements between 1130 and 1160. Much more so, his comments disclose to us his socially defined personal tastes. In complaining about the successes of the ignorant scum-like schedographers or the ethereal buffalo-like rhetors, Tzetzes further shows us that his simultaneously aggressive and defensive stance is rather different and of a greater scale and style than the comments of “discreet” teachers such as Michael Italikos, Nikephoros Basilakes and Eustathios of Thessalonike, but it is neither idiosyncratic nor simply comical. Schedography certainly became during the twelfth century an embittered educational and literary battle ground, where teachers acted out their fights for professional recognition and financial security in front of the aristocratic patrons of the empire’s capital. In this context, Tzetzes’ finely developed set of abusive imagery is by itself quite a literary achievement and one of the most tangible results of teaching the classics in Komnenian schools. Tzetzes was very sensitive to the “modernist” change of fashion in education and its harmful role, as he saw it, to “traditional” literary culture. What we cannot infer from Tzetzes is the presumed disjunction of a learned and a vernacular idiom within the Komnenian literary system. The opinions of Anna, Eustathios, Prodromos and Tzetzes show a substantial variety and nuance in dealing with colloquial discourse and its uses, indicating that Komnenian literary culture was not compactly “elite” nor divided between “learned” and “vernacular” idioms.

The conclusions drawn from the detailed examination of Tzetzes’ opinions about schedography, everyday language and writerly disposition, combined with the analysis of the same issues in three other Komnenian authors, has led us to draw a substantially differentiated, far more complex and very dynamic picture of the literary scene in twelfth-century Constantinople, in which colloquial discourse and its literary uses came to play an important role. This role did not have “popular” origins but was the result of experimentation in the schools and of application in literary products prepared for aristocratic patrons. The separation of learned and ver-

\(^{276}\) A lost treatise titled Κανών («Rule») on the proportions of the human body by the famous bronze sculptor (5th cent. BC); see Tzetzes’ explanation in Hist. 191, Chil. VIII 311-316.
nacular language in Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies since the middle of the nineteenth century led to a distorted presentation of the socio-cultural environment of Komnenian literary production. The scientific paradigm that had created this distortion cannot any longer satisfy the study of Byzantine literature which now has to be based on a far broader spectrum of material data and new theoretical approaches. Thus, the old paradigm of Krumbacher and his epigones needs to be changed, and such a change needs to be reflected in a new literary history of Byzantium.

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