

PANAGIOTIS A. AGAPITOS

## Grammar, genre and patronage in the twelfth century: A scientific paradigm and its implications\*

*To Carolina Cupane  
in admiring friendship*

**Abstract:** The paper examines the relation between learned and vernacular language and literature in the twelfth century on the background of Karl Krumbacher's hypothesis about an oppositional – linguistic and social – aspect of this relation, which formed a “scientific paradigm” that has remained more or less valid in Byzantine Studies and is reflected in the available handbooks and overviews of Byzantine and Modern Greek literature. The case study for this examination is schedography. On the one hand, the paper shows that the opinions of literati and teachers, such as Anna Komnene, Nikephoros Basilakes, Eustathios of Thessalonike and John Tzetzes are not generalizingly negative towards schedography and its practice. On the other hand, it is shown that Theodore Prodromos systematically promoted the use of everyday language in schedography as part of a modernist project, and that this experiment led to the generic creation of the Ptochoprodromic poems as performative court literature of “teacherly” entertainment.

In his *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur*, Karl Krumbacher (1856–1909) explicitly stated that “Byzantine literature is the most important expression of the intellectual life of the Greek nation and of the Roman state from the end of Antiquity up to threshold of the Modern Age. It is on this fact primarily that its evaluation must be based”.<sup>1</sup> Late romantic ideology about the national character of literature also shaped his view of linguistic variety within Byzantine literature.<sup>2</sup> For Krumbacher, it was textual production in the “natural” *Vulgärsprache* (such as early hymnography, hagiography up to the ninth century, chronicles, epic, verse romance and proverbs) that represented “true” Byzantine literature out of which Modern Greek literature arose.<sup>3</sup> All other varieties of Medieval Greek he considered as having been written in an “artificial” *Kunstsprache* which was far removed from everyday

---

\* The present paper is an expanded and revised version of a talk given at the Department of the Classics (Harvard University) and the Abteilung für Byzanzforschung (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften); my thanks extend to the audiences in Cambridge, Mass. and Vienna for their fruitful comments and suggestions. The research for the paper was for the most part conducted at the Institut für Byzantinistik (Universität München) through a fellowship of the Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung (Bonn). I am grateful to both institutions for their support.

<sup>1</sup> K. KRUMBACHER, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des Oströmischen Reiches, 527–1453* (*Handbuch der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft IX 1*). München 1891, 13 (= GBL<sup>1</sup>). For the convenience of readers references to GBL<sup>1</sup> will be accompanied by the respective references to the far more accessible second edition (= GBL<sup>2</sup>): IDEM, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des Oströmischen Reiches, 527–1453*. Zweite Auflage, bearbeitet unter Mitwirkung von A. EHRHARD und H. GELZER (*Handbuch der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft IX.1*). München 1897, 20. Unfortunately, no scholarly biography of Krumbacher exists; for a useful collection of papers on various aspects of his life, work and academic achievement see now Karl Krumbacher: *Leben und Werk*, ed. P. Schreiner and E. Vogt (*Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse. Sitzungsberichte. Jahrgang 2011, 4*). München 2011.

<sup>2</sup> See already his remarks in K. KRUMBACHER, *Griechische Reise: Blätter aus dem Tagebuche einer Reise in Griechenland und in die Türkei*. Berlin 1886, viii–ix and xxii–xxix. For the major German model of this romantic ideology see M. ANSEL, G. G. Gervinus' *Geschichte der poetischen National-Litteratur der Deutschen: Nationbildung auf literaturgeschichtlicher Grundlage* (*Münchener Studien zur literarischen Kultur in Deutschland 10*). Frankfurt a. M. 1990.

<sup>3</sup> See the highly telling declaration about his particular preferences from the preface to his collection of essays in K. KRUMBACHER, *Populäre Aufsätze*. Leipzig 1909, ix–x.

life. He therefore perceived these two linguistic and literary areas as being distinct and standing in opposition to each other, with the *Kunstsprache* belonging to an oppressive elite and the *Vulgärsprache* being, in his words, the necessary “democratic reaction” to this oppression.<sup>4</sup>

Krumbacher’s focus on the *Vulgärsprache* resulted in a modernist rejection of aestheticist approaches to Byzantine literature in favor of scientific objectivity and primary research.<sup>5</sup> It was through these two concepts that his pioneering work marked the foundation of Byzantine Studies (and Byzantine Philology, in particular) as an independent academic discipline.<sup>6</sup> However, it was also on the basis of these two concepts that later scholars expressed their views about Byzantine and/or Modern Greek language and literature,<sup>7</sup> argued for or against some of Krumbacher’s proposals,<sup>8</sup> or formulated their own hypotheses about the character and the beginnings of Modern Greek literature.<sup>9</sup>

Krumbacher’s two concepts – the opposition of learned to vernacular, and the rejection of aestheticist analysis – form the core of a scientific paradigm.<sup>10</sup> Its normative implications are readily apparent in Byzantinist and Neohellenist scholarship up to the late twentieth century. Thus, education in Byzantium has been viewed as a system repressing the “natural” development of language and enforcing an “artificial” Greek as the discourse of the elite. Because of this repressive system the genres of Byzantine literature have been primarily studied *sub specie antiquitatis*.<sup>11</sup> An unbridgeable gap

<sup>4</sup> GBL<sup>1</sup> 10 = GBL<sup>2</sup> 17.

<sup>5</sup> See his programmatic statements in the preface to GBL<sup>1</sup> v–vii; in GBL<sup>2</sup> v–vii two important passages have been removed. Needless to say, Krumbacher was not objecting to aesthetic appreciation of Byzantine literature *in toto* (see, for example, his astute remarks in K. KRUMBACHER, *Die griechische Literatur des Mittelalters*, in: *Die Kultur der Gegenwart: Ihre Entwicklung und ihre Ziele. Teil I, Abteilung 8: Die griechische und lateinische Literatur und Sprache*, ed. P. Hinneberg. Berlin<sup>3</sup> 1912, 237–285); he was reacting to the kind of impressionistic and a-historical readings of classical literature as they were fashionable in his youth.

<sup>6</sup> See the splendid Vorwort to the first volume of the *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* (1892), reprinted in KRUMBACHER, *Populäre Aufsätze* 231–250.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, K. DIETERICH, *Geschichte der byzantinischen und neugriechischen Litteratur (Die Litteraturen des Ostens in Einzeldarstellungen 4/1)*. Leipzig 1902 and F. DÖLGER, *Der Klassizismus der Byzantiner, seine Ursachen und seine Folgen*, in: IDEM, ΠΑΡΑΣΠΟΡΑ. 30 Aufsätze zur Geschichte, Kultur und Sprache des byzantinischen Reiches. Ettal 1961, 38–45 (originally published in 1938).

<sup>8</sup> N. G. POLITIS, *Περὶ τοῦ ἐθνικοῦ ἔπους τῶν νεωτέρων Ἑλλήνων*, in: IDEM, *Λαογραφικὰ Σύμμεκτα Α΄ (Demosieumata laographikou Archeiou 1)*. Athens 1920, 237–260 (originally published in 1905) and G. N. HATZIDAKIS, *Ἀπάντησις*, in: *Τὸ πρόβλημα τῆς νεωτέρας γραφομένης Ἑλληνικῆς ὑπὸ Karl Krumbacher καὶ ἀπάντησις εἰς αὐτὸν ὑπὸ Γεωργίου Ν. Χατζιδάκι*. Athens 1905, 301–860.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, the first publications in the debate between L. POLITIS, *Λογοτεχνία νεοελληνικῆ καὶ λογοτεχνία εὐρωπαϊκῆ. Angloellenike Epitheorese 4* (1949) 89–93 (reprinted in IDEM, *Θέματα τῆς λογοτεχνίας μας [Πρώτη σειρά]*, Δεύτερη ἔκδοσις [*Melete 11*]. Thessaloniki 1976, 151–175) and E. KRIARAS, *Ἡ μεσαιωνικὴ ἑλληνικὴ γραμματεία – Τὰ ὅρια, μερικὰ χαρακτηριστικά*. Ἐναρκτήριος λόγος στὸ μάθημα τῆς μεσαιωνικῆς ἑλληνικῆς φιλολογίας. *Angloellenike Epitheorese 5* (1951) 92–96.

<sup>10</sup> This concept was introduced into the history of science by T. S. KUHN, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago<sup>3</sup> 1996 (reprint of the original 1962 edition with a post-script of 1969), and has played an immense role in the natural and the social sciences; see, indicatively, A. BIRD, *Thomas Kuhn*, in: *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. E. N. Zalta. (Fall 2013 Edition), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/thomas-kuhn/>>, with substantial bibliography.

<sup>11</sup> For the most rigid expression of this view see F. DÖLGER, *Die byzantinische Literatur in der Reinsprache: Ein Abriß. Teil I.1: Die byzantinische Dichtung in der Reinsprache*, in: *Handbuch der griechischen und lateinischen Philologie. C: Byzantinische Literatur*, ed. B. Snell – H. Erbse. Berlin 1948 (booklet with separate pagination) and IDEM, *Byzantine Literature*, in: *The Cambridge Medieval History. Volume IV: The Byzantine Empire. Part II: Government, Church and Civilisation*, ed. J. M. Hussey. Cambridge 1967, 206–263. The core of this view is still reflected in recent overviews such as A. KAMBYLIS, *Abriß der byzantinischen Literatur*, in: *Einleitung in die griechische Philologie*, ed. H.-G. Nesselrath. Stuttgart 1997, 316–342 and W. J. AERTS, *Panorama der byzantinischen Literatur*, in: *Spätantike, mit einem Panorama der byzantinischen Literatur*, ed. L. J. Engels – H. Hofmann (*Neues Handbuch der Literaturwissenschaft 4*). Wiesbaden 1997, 635–716. For a more open treatment, but still within this frame, see now J. O. ROSENQVIST, *Die byzantinische Literatur vom 6. Jahrhundert bis zum Fall Konstantinopels 1453*, übersetzt von J. O. Rosenqvist – D. R. Reinsch. Berlin 2007 (originally published in Swedish, Stockholm 2003).

between “learned” and “vernacular” was established, modelled on the supposed dichotomy between Latin and the Western *linguae vulgares* as perceived by nineteenth-century Medievalists.<sup>12</sup> Krumbacher consciously elevated the twelfth century to the turning point for this literary, cultural and social dichotomy,<sup>13</sup> while he also placed the beginnings of a “Middle Greek Literature” (*mittelgriechische Litteratur*) in this very century on account of the appearance of longer works in the vernacular.<sup>14</sup>

In the past thirty years, many Byzantinists conducting literary and textual research find that the accepted paradigm does not explain what they see in the evidence at hand. The study of genre and of poetics, for example, is more and more growing out of the paradigm,<sup>15</sup> while the editorial approach to Byzantine texts has also begun to change, albeit with substantial resistance.<sup>16</sup> However, this innovative scholarly activity concerns almost exclusively the area of learned literature, in other words, what had been viewed as the regressive and imitative part of Byzantine textual production. The area of vernacular literature has received far less attention despite its much smaller quantity and its supposed “popular” originality. Issues of genre and poetics have been minimally discussed,<sup>17</sup> while tangible proposals for new editorial methods are far and few between.<sup>18</sup> In Medieval Studies of the past forty years, we find immense changes that have taken place in matters concerning literary interpretation

<sup>12</sup> On the particulars of this dichotomy and its restricted hermeneutic validity in the case of Medieval German literature see, indicatively, W. HAUG, *Literaturtheorie im deutschen Mittelalter von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts*. Darmstadt <sup>2</sup>1992, 25–74 and D. KARTSCHOKE, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im frühen Mittelalter*. München <sup>3</sup>2000, 11–32 (with further bibliography).

<sup>13</sup> GBL<sup>1</sup> 9 = GBL<sup>2</sup> 16–17.

<sup>14</sup> GBL<sup>1</sup> 385–387 = GBL<sup>2</sup> 787–789.

<sup>15</sup> M. MULLETT, *The Madness of Genre*. *DOP* 46 (1992) 233–244; M. HINTERBERGER, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz* (*WBS* 22), Wien 1999; M. D. LAUXTERMANN, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres: Texts and Contexts*. Volume One (*WBS* 24/1). Wien 2003; S. CONSTANTINOULI, *Generic Hybrids: The “Life” of Synkletike and the “Life” of Theodora of Arta*. *JÖB* 56 (2006) 113–133; A. GIANNOULI, *Paränese zwischen Enkomion und Psogos: Zur Gattungseinordnung byzantinischer Fürstenspiegel*, in: *Imitatio – Aemulatio – Variatio*. Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposions zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur. Wien, 22.–25. Oktober 2008, ed. A. Rhoby – E. Schiffer (*Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung* 21). Wien 2010, 119–128.

<sup>16</sup> See, indicatively, D. R. REINSCH, *Stixis und Hören*, in: *Actes du VIe Colloque International de Paléographie Grecque (Drama, 21–27 septembre 2003)*, ed. B. Atsalos – N. Tsironi. Athens 2008, 1259–269 (with substantial bibliography); D. R. REINSCH, *What Should an Editor Do with a Text like the Chronographia of Michael Psellos*, in: *Ars Edendi. Lecture Series. Volume II*, ed. A. Bucossi – E. Kihlman (*Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Studia Latina Stockholmiensia* 58). Stockholm 2012, 131–154 with the objections of B. BYDÉN, *Imprimatur? Unconventional Punctuation and Diacritics in Manuscripts of Medieval Greek Philosophical Works*, in: *Ibidem* 155–172; *From Manuscript to Book: Proceedings of the International Workshop on Textual Criticism and Editorial Practice for Byzantine Texts* (Vienna, 10–11 December 2009), ed. A. Giannouli – E. Schiffer (*Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung* 29). Wien 2011, with the critical reviews by A. RIEHLE in *BZ* 105 (2012) 209–216 and C. M. MAZZUCCHI in *Aevum* 87 (2013) 613–614.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, M. HINTERBERGER, *Η αυτοβιογραφία ως διήγηση-πλάισιο*. *Cretan Studies* 6 (1998) 179–198; U. MOENNIG, *The Late-Byzantine Romance: Problems of defining a Genre*. *Kampos: Cambridge Papers in Modern Greek* 7 (1999) 1–20; P. A. AGAPITOS, *Genre, Structure and Poetics in the Byzantine Vernacular Romances of Love*. *Symbolae Osloenses* 79 (2004) 7–54 and 82–101 (with comments by C. CUPANE, E. JEFFREYS, M. HINTERBERGER, M. LAUXTERMANN, U. MOENNIG, I. NILSSON, P. ODORICO and S. PAPAIOANNOU, *ibidem* 54–82).

<sup>18</sup> See, indicatively, *Θεωρία και πράξη των εκδόσεων της υστεροβυζαντινής, αναγεννησιακής και μεταβυζαντινής δημόδους γραμματείας*. Πρακτικά του Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Neograeca Medii Aevi IVa, ed. H. Eideneier – U. Moennig – N. Toufexis. Herakleion (Crete) 2001; U. MOENNIG, *Die Erzählung von Alexander und Semiramis. Kritische Ausgabe mit einer Einleitung, Übersetzung und einem Wörterverzeichnis (CFHB. Supplementa Byzantina 7)*. Berlin–New York 2004; P. A. AGAPITOS, *Αφήγησις Λιβίστρου και Ροδάμνης*. Κριτική έκδοση τής διασκευής «ἄλφα» (*Byzantine kai neoellenike bibliotheke* 9). Athens 2006 and T. LENDARI, *Αφήγησις Λιβίστρου και Ροδάμνης (Livistros and Rodamne): The Vatican Version. Critical Edition with Introduction, Commentary, and Index-Glossary (Byzantine kai neoellenike bibliotheke 10)*. Athens 2007; T. A. KAPLANIS, *Ioakeim Kyprios’ Struggle: A Narrative Poem on the “Cretan War” of 1645–1669—Editio Princeps (Cyprus Research Center: Texts and Studies in the History of Cyprus 67)*. Nicosia 2012.

and textual criticism, both for medieval Latin and for the various vernaculars.<sup>19</sup> However, this is not the case in Byzantine Studies. In my opinion, the reason lies not so much in the relatively small number of scholars working in this field, but in the continuing acceptance by the majority of Byzantinists and Neohellenists of an actual opposition between a learned and a vernacular language as fixed and clearly antithetical poles, resulting in a conceptual unwillingness to step over the supposed boundaries of the two domains. As a result, the twelfth century appears like the head of Janus – one face looking towards the learned, the other looking towards the vernacular, but their gazes never meeting.<sup>20</sup>

The aim of the present paper is to offer a first challenge to this concept of opposition, which goes back to Krumbacher’s belief of the existence of a Byzantine and/or a Modern Greek “national” literature in medieval times. By removing the boundaries between the “learned” and the “vernacular” we can embark on a broader, historically and culturally more appropriate interpretive avenue.<sup>21</sup> This would lead us to richer and more nuanced readings of the texts, to more varied and finely tuned linguistic studies, to more text-specific and less normative editorial methods, and, finally, to more satisfactory comparative approaches to Western and Eastern medieval literatures.

From Komnenian literature I have chosen as my case study the type of grammatical exercise called by the Byzantines *σχέδος* (“sketch, improvisation”).<sup>22</sup> The oldest surviving attestation of its practice – referred to in the sources as *schedographia* or *schedourgia* – dates from around 1035

<sup>19</sup> On literary matters the bibliography is vast; one might indicatively refer to the following collective volumes: The New Philology, ed. S. N. Nichols. *Speculum* 65 (1990) 1–108 (with contributions by S. NICHOLS, S. WENZEL, S. FLEISHMAN, R. H. BLOCH, G. M. SPIEGEL and L. PATTERSON); The New Medievalism, ed. M. S. Brownlee – K. Brownlee – S. G. Nichols. Baltimore 1991; Medievalism and the Modernist Temper, ed. R. H. Bloch – S. G. Nichols. Baltimore 1996; Cultural Studies of the Modern Middle Ages, ed. E. A. Joy – M. J. Seaman – K. Bell – M. K. Ramsey. New York 2008; Defining Medievalism(s), ed. K. Fugelso (*Studies in Medievalism* 17). Cambridge 2009. On textual matters see, very selectively, *Fondamenti di critica testuale*, ed. A. Stussi. Bologna 2006 (collective volume with a substantial introduction and bibliography on pp. 7–45, and 235–240, a series of important papers or book-chapters on textual criticism of vernacular texts between 1872 and 1985, as well as three original contributions); B. CERQUIGLINI, *Éloge de la variante: histoire critique de la philologie*. Paris 1989; F. BRAMBILLA AGENO, *L’edizione critica dei testi volgari (Medioevo e Umanesimo* 22). Padova 1984; *Ars Edendi. Lecture Series: Volume I*, ed. E. Kihlman – D. Searby (*Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Studia Latina Stockholmiensia* 56). Stockholm 2011 (with contributions by N. WILSON, J. M. ZIOLKOWSKI, T. JANZ, P. STOLZ and P. BOURGAIN); see also the bibliographical references in AGAPITOS, *Αφήγησις Λιβίστρου* 94–97.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, the distorted and inaccurate picture of “the linguistic basis of Komnenian Hellenism” in A. KALDELLIS, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*. Cambridge 2007, 233–241.

<sup>21</sup> For serious doubts concerning these boundaries see C. CUPANE, *Wie volkstümlich ist die byzantinische Volksliteratur?* *BZ* 96 (2003) 577–599.

<sup>22</sup> A full study of Byzantine schedography along with an edition of the substantial surviving material is a major *desideratum* for understanding the system of education and language instruction in the 11th and 12th century. For more recent discussions of various issues, presentations of manuscripts and editions of a few texts see, indicatively, A. GARZYA, *Literarische und rhetorische Polemiken der Komnenenzeit*. *BSI* 34 (1973) 1–14 (reprint in IDEM, *Storia e interpretazione di testi bizantini: Saggi e ricerche*. London 1974, no. VII); R. BROWNING, *Il codice Marciano gr. XI.31 e la schedografia bizantina*, in: *Miscellanea Marciana di Studi Bessarionici (Medioevo e Umanesimo* 24). Padova 1976, 21–34 (reprint in IDEM, *Studies on Byzantine History, Literature and Education*. London 1977, no. XVI); C. GALLAVOTTI, *Nota sulla schedografia di Moscopulo e suoi precedenti fino a Teodoro Prodromo*. *Bollettino dei Classici*, serie III 4 (1983) 3–35, esp. 12–35; I. VASSIS, *Graeca sunt, non leguntur: Zu den schedographischen Spielereien des Theodoros Prodromos*. *BZ* 86–87 (1993–1994) 1–19; IDEM, *Τῶν νέων φιλολόγων παλαιίσματα: Ἡ συλλογὴ σχεδῶν τοῦ κώδικα Vaticanus Palatinus gr. 92*. *Hell* 52 (2002) 37–68; I. D. POLEMIS, *Προβλήματα τῆς βυζαντινῆς σχεδογραφίας*. *Hell* 45 (1995) 277–302; IDEM, *Philologische und historische Probleme in der schedographischen Sammlung des Codex Marcianus gr. XI, 34*. *Byz* 67 (1997) 252–263. For an overview of 11<sup>th</sup>- and 12<sup>th</sup>-century schedography see S. EFTHYMIADIS, *L’enseignement secondaire à Constantinople pendant les XI<sup>e</sup> et XII<sup>e</sup> siècles: Modèle éducatif pour la Terre d’Otrante au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*. *Nea Rhome* 2 (2005) 259–275, specifically 266–275 (with substantial bibliography); for a recent summary of research see A. MARKOPOULOS, *De la structure de l’école byzantine: Le maître, les livres et le processus éducatif*, in: *Lire et écrire à Byzance*, ed. B. Mondrain (*Centre de Recherche d’Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance. Monographies* 19). Paris 2006, 85–96, esp. 93–95.

and implies the use of the *schedos* since the early eleventh century.<sup>23</sup> Schedography quickly developed into an important part of language training at its secondary level.<sup>24</sup> A *schedos* served a primary and a secondary aim. It drilled young pupils (ten to twelve years old) in the complexities of Greek grammar and syntax, while it also helped them in certain cases to understand the different types of *progymnasmata*. These two aims were achieved through the puzzling form in which the γραμματικός (“grammarians”) presented the *schedos*, since the text was filled with strange words and phrases giving no meaning, and punctuated in an erratic manner. The pupils had to decode such a puzzle and to rewrite it correctly.<sup>25</sup> The puzzles were based on ἀντίστοιχα (“sound correspondences”); these could be similarly sounding verbal or nominal forms,<sup>26</sup> or they could be wrongly written words or phrases.<sup>27</sup> *Schede* were usually written in prose (approximately twenty to twenty-five lines in length), but they were also composed in iambic twelve-syllable verse. A high number of *schede* from the late eleventh to the late twelfth century survive in collections transmitted in approximately twenty manuscripts of the thirteenth and early fourteenth century;<sup>28</sup> most of these *schede* are still unpublished and thus understudied.

The reason for this neglect is that schedography was viewed as of no interest for the study of Byzantine literature and only of marginal interest for Byzantine education because previous scholars strongly focused on high-style school curricula and the study of the classics, for example, the teaching activities of towering personalities such as Michael Psellos or Eustathios of Thessalonike. This negative image of schedography was primarily based on a passage from Anna Komnene’s *Alexiad*. It comes from the last book, which Anna wrote some time before her death in ca. 1153/54; by then the kaisarissa was almost seventy years old. Having presented some of her father’s donations to various ecclesiastical institutions, Anna turns her attention to the emperor’s support of the school of Saint Paul of the Orphanage close to the Hagia Sophia.<sup>29</sup> The dense and complex passage is well-known because it has been used as a source for many different questions, such as ethnic/national identity<sup>30</sup> or imperial patronage of schools.<sup>31</sup> Anna writes:<sup>32</sup>

Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τὰ τεμένη καὶ ἱερὰ φροντιστήρια εἰσιόντι σοι κατὰ λαιὰν ἀπαντήσεις· κατὰ δὲ τὴν δεξιὰν τοῦ μεγάλου τεμένου παιδευτήριον ἔστηκε τῶν γραμματικῶν παισὶν ὄρφανοῖς

<sup>23</sup> Poems nos. 9–10 of Christopher Mitylenaios, composed in praise of the school of Saint Theodore at the Sphorakios Quarter; see now M. DE GROOTE, *Christophori Mitylenaii versuum variorum collectio Cryptensis (CCSG 74)*. Turnhout 2012, 10–11.

<sup>24</sup> See VASSIS, *Παλαισμάτα* 41–42 on the three levels of language training at school.

<sup>25</sup> The puzzle-like form was described with terms such as γρίφος (“puzzle”), αἴνιγμα or νόημα (“riddle”) and λαβύρινθος (“labyrinth”). For references see VASSIS, *Graeca sunt* 9–10; for references from Eustathios’ *Parekbolai* see below n. 57.

<sup>26</sup> E.g. εἰ δεῖσεις, θεόν, ὃ παῖ, καὶ περὶ λόγων εἰδήσεις ἰδίσεις, ἠδήσεις σαυτὸν καὶ τὸν ἐχθρὸν δήσεις (Pal. gr. 92, f. 194v; GALLAVOTTI, *Nota* 27, n. 23).

<sup>27</sup> E.g. ἐπήτην τελείαν σύνεσις ἦν ἔχει and οἱ πῶ λάβρων πυρετὸν instead of ἐπεὶ τὴν τελείαν σύνεσιν ἔχει and ὑπὸ λάβρων πυρετῶν respectively (Marc. gr. XI.31, f. 277v; POLEMIS, *Probleme* 258).

<sup>28</sup> One might indicatively refer to such codices as Laur. V.10, Vat. Pii PP II gr. 54 (probably from Cyprus, ca. AD 1320), Marc. gr. XI.31, Vat. Pal. gr. 92 (from Salento), Vat. gr. 18, Vat. Barb. gr. 102 and Par. gr. 2572 (all three manuscripts from Otranto).

<sup>29</sup> See S. MERGIALI-FALANGAS, *L’école Saint Paul de l’Orphelinat à Constantinople: bref aperçu sur son statut et son histoire*. *REB* 49 (1991) 237–246; T. S. MILLER, *The Orphanotropheion of Constantinople*, in: *Through the Eye of the Needle: Judeo-Christian Roots of Social Welfare*, ed. E. A. Hanawalt – C. Lindberg. Missouri 1994, 83–104; IDEM, *Two Teaching Texts from the Twelfth-Century Orphanotropheion*, in: *Byzantine Authors: Literary Activities and Preoccupations. Texts and Translations Dedicated to the Memory of Nicolas Oikonomides*, ed. J. W. Nesbitt (*The Medieval Mediterranean* 49). Leiden 2003, 9–20.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, KALDELLIS, *Hellenism* 290–291.

<sup>31</sup> See V. KATSAROS, *Προδρομικοί «θεσμοί» για την οργάνωση της ανώτερης εκπαίδευσης της εποχής των Κομνηνών από την προκομνηνεία περίοδο*, in: *E autokratoria se krise (?)*. *To Byzantio ton 11o aiona, 1025–1081*, ed. V. Vlyssidou. Athens 2003, 443–471 (with substantial bibliography also for the twelfth century).

<sup>32</sup> *Alexiad* XV 7, 9 (484.9–485.34 REINSCH – KAMBYLIS); German translation and notes in D. R. REINSCH, *Anna Komnene: Alexias. Übersetzt, eingeleitet und mit Anmerkungen versehen*. Köln 1996, 538–539.

ἐκ παντοδαποῦ γένους συνειλεγμένοις, ἐν ᾧ παιδευτὴς τις προκάθηται καὶ παῖδες περὶ αὐτὸν ἐστᾶσιν, οἱ μὲν περὶ ἐρωτήσεις ἐπτοημένοι γραμματικᾶς, οἱ δὲ ξυγγραφεῖς τῶν λεγομένων σχεδῶν. Καὶ ἔστιν ἰδεῖν καὶ Λατῖνον ἐνταῦθα παιδοτριβούμενον καὶ Σκύθην ἑλληνίζοντα καὶ Ρωμαῖον τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων συγγράμματα μεταχειριζόμενον καὶ τὸν ἀγράμματον Ἕλληνα ὀρθῶς ἑλληνίζοντα. Τοιαῦτα καὶ περὶ τὴν λογικὴν παιδευσιν τὰ τοῦ Ἀλεξίου σπουδάσματα. Τοῦ δὲ σχεδούς ἢ τέχνη εὕρημα τῶν νεωτέρων ἐστὶ καὶ τῆς ἐφ' ἡμῶν γενεᾶς. Παρίημι δὲ Στυλιανούς τινὰς καὶ τοὺς λεγομένους Λογγιβάρδους καὶ ὅσους ἐπισυναγωγὴν ἐτεχνάσαντο παντοδαπῶν ὀνομάτων καὶ τοὺς Ἀττικοὺς καὶ <τούς> γεγονότας τοῦ ἱεροῦ καταλόγου τῆς μεγάλης παρ' ἡμῖν ἐκκλησίας, ὧν παρίημι τὰ ὀνόματα. **Ἀλλὰ νῦν** οὐδ' ἐν δευτέρῳ λόγῳ τὰ περὶ τούτων τῶν μετέωρων ποιητῶν καὶ αὐτῶν συγγραφέων καὶ τῆς ἀπὸ τούτων ἐμπειρίας· πεττεία δὲ τὸ σπουδάσμα καὶ ἄλλὰ τα ἔργα ἀθέμιτα. Ταῦτα δὲ λέγω ἀχθομένη διὰ τὴν παντελεῖ τῆς ἐγκυκλίου παιδεύσεως ἀμέλειαν. Τοῦτο γάρ μου τὴν ψυχὴν ἀναφλέγει, ὅτι πολὺ περὶ ταῦτα ἐνδιατέτριφα, κἄν, ἐπειδὴν ἀπήλλαγμαί τῆς παιδαριώδους τούτων σχολῆς καὶ εἰς ῥητορικὴν παρήγγειλα καὶ φιλοσοφίας ἠψάμην καὶ μεταξὺ τῶν ἐπιστημῶν πρὸς ποιητὰς τε καὶ ξυγγραφεῖς ἤϊξα καὶ τῆς γλώττης τοὺς ὄχθους ἐκεῖθεν ἐξωμαλίσάμην, εἶτα ῥητορικῆς ἐπαρηγούσης ἐμοὶ κατέγων τῆς πολυπλόκου τῆς σχεδογραφίας πλοκῆς. Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μέντοι προσιστορήσθω, εἰ καὶ μὴ ἐκ τοῦ παρέργου, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ τοῦ λόγου ἀκόλουθον.

If we follow Anna's statements about schedography (here underlined), we will notice that these are explicitly made at three places and implicitly in a fourth: (i) the young pupils appear as “writers of the so-called *schede*”, that is, they learn how to decode and to rewrite such an exercise; (ii) “the art of the *schedos*” is a recent invention and of Anna's own times; (iii) implicitly, Anna includes schedography in the ἐγκύκλιος παιδευσίς (“general education”) with whose subject matter she busied herself for a long time, even though she freed herself from the childlike pursuit of these matters, once she devoted herself to rhetoric; (iv) Anna remarks that on account of her study of poets and historians she polished her style, and then, with the help of rhetoric “rejected the overcomplicated complexity of schedography”. Between the second and the third statement Anna clearly moves from her school days to her authorial present (ἀλλὰ νῦν) – a distance of approximately sixty years – in order to express her critique of contemporary education, where the pursuit of learning is a “boardgame” and other such “immoral activities”.

Anna does not criticize schedography in general. The negative words she uses (ἀπήλλαγμαί, παιδαριώδης, κατέγων,) define the second stage of education, concentrated on the technical mastery of Greek, from which Anna moved to the heights of the classics. Schedography, as a recent invention was very useful and that is why Anna went through this training, but she did not consider it the final stage of a more essential *paideia*. Therefore, it is only after Anna has explained this course of training to her readers and her own attainment of the highest level, that she can from her own exalted position criticize the “utter neglect” (τὴν παντελεῖ ἀμέλειαν) of general education in the first years of the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180), her flamboyant nephew whom she despised.<sup>33</sup> In fact, the mention of schedography and its childlike pursuits (i.e. for children and not childish) excused Anna's political attack on an age that, in her eyes, had become utterly superficial, uneducated and degenerate.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Alexiad XIV 3, 9 (438.41–43 REINSCH – KAMBYLIS); see P. MAGDALINO, The Pen of the Aunt: Echoes of the Mid-Twelfth Century in the Alexiad, in: Anna Komnene and her Times, ed. T. Gouma-Peterson. New York 2000, 15–43, esp. 20–22.

<sup>34</sup> Already A. GARZYA, Intorno al Prologo di Niceforo Basilace. *JÖB* 18 (1969) 57–71, esp. 62–63 (reprint in IDEM, Storia e interpretazione, no. XII) had recognized that this passage in the Alexiad is acted out in two distinct chronological phases that serve different purposes.

Krumbacher was the first scholar who attempted to offer an overview of schedography.<sup>35</sup> In his effort to defend Byzantine language instruction from the scorn of the classicists, he presented these “schoolbooks” (*Schulbücher*) as products of low-level education whose popularity grew, “the more folk education shrunk to a humble measure of elementary teaching along with the sinking of national welfare”.<sup>36</sup> The main part of the GBL’s section on schedography is occupied by a discussion of the passage from the Alexiad. As a result of his view of schedography, Krumbacher misread the whole passage, making the learned kaisarissa scorn this kind of training at primary school (*Volksschule*) as being below the dignity of a princely writer and intellectual. Moreover, Krumbacher misunderstood the statement about the boardgames, thinking that Anna actually referred in this derogatory manner to the *schede*. This reading of Alexiad XV 7, 9 and the resulting image of an inimical attitude of high to low culture reflects Krumbacher’s erroneous projection of a preconceived concept unto the evidence.<sup>37</sup>

The Alexiad also served Krumbacher as a witness to the elitist opposition of learned to vernacular, as expressed by Anna’s presumed scorn for schedography and her high-brow classicist attitude.<sup>38</sup> The main passage supposedly showing this elitist perspective comes from the early part of the work. Anna describes how her father, the young general Alexios, became involved in a revolt against Emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates in April of 1081. During the secret preparations, Alexios escaped from a trap set by the ruler’s minions and leaves Constantinople before the break of dawn on a cold February night. The inhabitants of the capital showed their approval of his actions by praising him in a song:<sup>39</sup>

Ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξιος καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ αἰτήσας ὄρκον καὶ λαβὼν δρομαῖος ἄπεισιν οἴκαδε καὶ πάντα ἀνακοινοῦται τοῖς αὐτοῦ. Νύξ ἦν ἡ τῆς Τυροφάγου Κυριακῆς, καθ’ ἣν οὐμὸς πατὴρ ταῦτα ἐσκέπτετο. Τῇ δὲ μετ’ αὐτὴν ὄρθρου βαθέος μετὰ τῶν ἀμφ’ αὐτὸν ἐξεληλύθει τῆς πόλεως. Ἐνθέν τοι καὶ τὸ πλῆθος ἀποδεξάμενον τῆς ὁρμῆς τὸν Ἀλέξιον καὶ τῆς ἀγχινοίας ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων ἄσμάτιον αὐτῷ ἀνεπλέξαντο ἐξ ἰδιώτιδος μὲν συγκείμενον γλώττης, αὐτὴν δὲ τὴν τοῦ πράγματος ἐπινοίαν ἐμμελέστατά πως ἀνακρουόμενον καὶ παρεμφαῖνον τὴν τε προαίσθησιν τῆς κατ’ ἐκείνου ἐπιβουλής καὶ τὰ παρ’ αὐτοῦ μεμηχανημένα. Τὸ δὲ ἄσμάτιον αὐταῖς λέξεσιν εἶχεν οὕτως· «Τὸ Σάββατον τῆς Τυρινῆς, χαρῆς, Ἀλέξι, ἐνόησές το, καὶ τὴν Δευτέραν τὸ πρωὶ ὑπα καλῶς, γεράκιν μου». Εἶχε δὲ ὧδέ πως ἐννοίας τὸ διαφημιζόμενον ἐκεῖνο ἄσμάτιον, ὡς ἄρα· «Κατὰ μὲν τὸ Τυρώνυμον Σάββατον ὑπέρευγέ σοι τῆς ἀγχινοίας, Ἀλέξιε, τὴν δὲ μετὰ τὴν Κυριακὴν Δευτέραν ἡμέραν καθάπερ τις ὑψιπέτης ἰεραῖς ἀφίπτασο τῶν ἐπιβουλεύοντων βαρβάρων».

Here Anna quotes in full the original text of a “little song” (ἄσμάτιον) composed in octosyllabic-couplets.<sup>40</sup> She explicitly refers to the song as “made out of everyday language”, and positively comments that the song “intoned the very foresight of the stratagem in a most melodious manner”.

<sup>35</sup> GBL<sup>2</sup> 590–593 (§250); this section did not exist in GBL<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> GBL<sup>2</sup> 591.

<sup>37</sup> For early criticism of this view see S. D. PAPANIMITRIU, Feodor Prodrom: Istoriko-literaturnoe izsledovanie. Odessa 1905, 413–429 and G. BUCKLER, Anna Comnena: A Study. Oxford 1929, 176–178 and 187–191.

<sup>38</sup> GBL<sup>1</sup> 81 n. 5 and GBL<sup>2</sup> 277 and n. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Alexiad II 4, 9 (65.92–12 REINSCH – KAMBYLIS); see also REINSCH, Alexias 80–81.

<sup>40</sup> On this type of accentuated verse see M. D. LAUXTERMANN, The Spring of Rhythm: An Essay on the Political Verse and Other Byzantine Metres (*BV* 22). Wien 1999, 45–99. The song is not a folksong in the modern sense of the term, but belongs to the kind of laudatory or derogatory songs addressed by the citizens to a specific person within a specific historical context. Such songs were mostly composed by the professional chanters of the capital’s circus factions. Obviously, these songs, aiming at an immediate communicative impact, were written in a rhythmically organized colloquial language, but none of them was composed in the fifteen-syllable verse normally associated with Modern Greek folksongs.

By using the philosophical-rhetorical term *παρεμφαῖνον*,<sup>41</sup> she also remarks that the song “hinted at” Alexios’ sensing beforehand the trap set for him. Therefore, she expounds to her readers the song’s “intended meaning” (this is what the technical term *ἔννοια* indicates<sup>42</sup>) by including an exegesis of it. What she offers is not a failed translation into high Atticist diction, as Krumbacher and other scholars thought, but an expanded interpretation of the song in the stylistic level she uses throughout the *Alexiad*. It is the kind of exegesis she had learned at school, and which was applied to all kinds of texts needing paraphrastic interpretation, from proverbs<sup>43</sup> to Homer.<sup>44</sup> In fact, nowhere in the *Alexiad* do the terms *ιδιωτικὸς γλῶττα* or *ιδιωτικὸς λέξις* imply any negative characterization of everyday speech, nor is any opposition between learned and vernacular expressed.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, *idiotis glotta* applies here to the actual everyday language of a popular song and not to a specimen of “vernacular literature”, such as the verse narrative of *Digenis Akritis* would be. Schedography and everyday language were not rejected by Anna in their totality. Her attitude was defined by her political evaluation of concrete situations: the support offered by the capital’s citizens to a truly gifted young general, and Manuel’s decadent times when education had become a mere schedographic entertainment.

Anna does not mention one aspect of schedography, and that is its public character. However, a number of references from the early eleventh up to the late twelfth century show that the schools of the capital organized schedographic contests in which the pupils solved or even composed *schede*.<sup>46</sup> Thus, from the earliest times of its appearance, schedography was connected to public performance which was an essential element in a school’s strategy for ensuring high patronage for its teachers and pupils.

This many-layered function of the *schede* was aptly described by Nikephoros Basilakes (ca. 1115–ca. 1185), initially a successful teacher of rhetoric and later Patriarchal Professor of the Pauline Epistles (*διδάσκαλος τοῦ ἀποστόλου*).<sup>47</sup> Some time after 1160, Basilakes wrote an extended preface to a collection of his *opera minora*.<sup>48</sup> In the preface he discussed, among other things, his contribution to what he calls the “recent sophistic”:<sup>49</sup>

Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν μετὰ τὴν γραμματικὴν ἐμπειρίαν, ἣν ἐγὼ πάγκαλόν τι προτεμένισμα τίθεμαι σοφίας τῆς ἄλλης, μετήειν δὴ τὴν νέαν ταύτην καὶ ὡς ἐν παισὶ σοφιστικὴν, τὴν ὡς ἐν ὀνόμασι<sup>50</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Used, for example, by Aristotle and Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

<sup>42</sup> For example, Hermog. Prog. 6 (12.13–14 RABE) and Id. 2.4 (330.2–3 RABE).

<sup>43</sup> For example, a collection attributed to Planoudes, offering paraphrastic versions of actual Byzantine proverbs; see E. KURTZ, *Die Sprichwörtersammlung des Maximus Planudes*. Leipzig 1886.

<sup>44</sup> See the presentation of various *Iliad* paraphrases from Byzantine school practice in I. VASSIS, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der sogenannten Psellos-Paraphrase der Ilias (Meletemata 2)*. Hamburg 1991, 16–32.

<sup>45</sup> See, *Alexiad* VII 5, 2 and X 2, 4 (217, 285 REINSCH – KAMBYLIS). An indicative example of the absence of any negative remark concerning colloquial discourse can be found at XII 6, 5 (374 REINSCH – KAMBYLIS), where Anna comments on a derisory song composed by “actors” during the public humiliation of a group of rebels in ca. 1098; see REINSCH, *Alexias* 418–419 (translation and notes).

<sup>46</sup> See above n. 23 on the poems of Christopher Mitylenaios; see also an anonymous poem from the School of the Forty Martyrs (G. SCHIRÒ, *La schedografia a Bisanzio nei sec. XI–XII e la Scuola dei SS. XL Martiri. BollGrott* 3 [1940] 11–29, esp. 27–28) and a poem probably by Niketas of Herakleia (S. P. LAMBROS, *Ἰωάννου τοῦ Τζέτζου Περὶ ρημάτων ἀθυποτάκτων στίχοι πολιτικοί. NE* 16 [1922] 191–197).

<sup>47</sup> On his career see P. MAGDALINO, *The Bagoas of Nikephoros Basilakes: A Normal Reaction?* In: *Of Strangers and Foreigners (Late Antiquity – Middle Ages)*, ed. L. Mayali – M. M. Mart. Berkeley 1993, 47–63, esp. 49–51 (with the older bibliography).

<sup>48</sup> On the prologue see GARZYA, *Intorno al Prologo passim* and IDEM, *Literarische Polemiken* 5; for an “autobiographical” reading of this preface see HINTERBERGER, *Autobiographische Traditionen* 349–353. For a first edition of the text with Italian translation see A. GARZYA, *Il Prologo di Niceforo Basilace. Bollettino del comitato per la preparazione dell’Edizione Nazionale dei Classici Greci e Latini*, N.S. 19 (1971) 55–71 (reprint in IDEM, *Storia e interpretazione*, no. XI); new edition by A. GARZYA, *Nicephori Basilacae Orationes et epistulae*. Leipzig 1984, 1–9, to be read together with the extensive review by D. R. REINSCH in *BZ* 80 (1987) 84–89.

<sup>49</sup> Praef. §3–4 (3.14–37 GARZYA).

<sup>50</sup> Thus REINSCH 89; GARZYA prints τὴν ἐν ὀνόμασι.



κλεπτικήν. Ἐθελγε γάρ μου τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ τούτου τὸ δόλιον καὶ θαμὰ θεατρίζων ὄλας νέων ἀγέλας εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐπεσπώμην. Οὐ τὸν ἀρχαῖον μέντοι τρόπον τοῦς λαβυρίνθους τούτους διετεχνώμην· ἀγλευκὲς γάρ μοι ἐδόκει καὶ ἀρχαιολογίας καὶ τέχνης ἀξέστου τὸ μὴ ζῆν ἡδονῇ λέγειν ἢ καὶ ὄλωσ ὑποβαρβαρίζειν. Ὅθεν οὐκ ἀνίην τοῦς γρίφους καὶ τὰς πλεκτάνας, καὶ τὰ ἐκτὸς μὲν εἰς ἀγλαῖαν ὑπογράφων, ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ τὰ ἐντὸς ἱκανῶς βοστρυγίζων καὶ διαπλέκων εἰς ὥραν· καὶ τις ἔδοξα τοῦτο τὸ μέρος, καὶ ἦν ἔταιρία περὶ ἐμὲ οὐ φαύλη ζήλω τοῦ ἐπιτηδεύματος καὶ ἰμέρω τῆς εὐπαιδευσίας ταύτης, ὡς ὀλίγου μεταρρηῆναι πάντας ὀπόσοι τῶν νέων εὖστομοὶ τε καὶ ἀκροφνεῖς ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχαιοτρόπου καὶ παλαιᾶς σχεδικῆς ἐπὶ τὴν ἡδυεπῆ ταύτην καὶ ἡμετέραν, ἦν καὶ τὸ φαινόμενον καταμελιτοῖ καὶ τὸ κρυπτόμενον ἀγλαΐζει.

Καὶ ἦν ἤδη λεγόμενον τὸ βασιλακίζειν ἐν σχεδοπλόκοις ὡς πάλαι τὸ γοργιάζειν ἐν σοφισταῖς. Καὶ ὁ φθόνος πολὺς ὑπεκάετο τούτοις δὴ τοῖς τὸ ἀρχαιοτρόπον καὶ σαπρὸν μεταδιώκουσιν ὑπ' ἀμαθίας καὶ τοῦ μὴ φύσεως εὖ ἔχειν, τοῖς τῶν χαρίτων ἐχθροῖς, τοῖς ὑποξύλοις καὶ γελοίοις τὴν πλοκὴν, οὐχ ἥκιστα δὲ καὶ ὑποσολοίκοις, καὶ ταῦτα γραμματικὴν ἐπαγγελομένοις ἐκπαιδεύειν, ἦς τὸ εὖ λέγειν καὶ ὀρθοεπεῖν ἐπιτήδευμα ὧν καὶ τὸ ἀκριβὲς ἀμαθὲς καὶ τὸ εὖσταθὲς ἀγεννὲς καὶ τὸ ὑψηλὸν χθαμαλόν, οἷ καὶ βασιλακισμὸν ὡς φιλιππισμὸν ἢ μηδισμὸν τοῖς τῶν ἡμετέρων ζηλωταῖς ἐνεκάλουν.

The words used to define this “recent sophistic” (λαβύρινθος, γρίφος, πλεκτάνη, διαπλέκω) make it clear that the author is referring to schedography. Basilakes asserts that it was he who lured talented youths away from old-fashioned schedography to a new one, which was his very own creation. Basilakes lucidly describes the main reason for his success as schedographer among youths. He had changed the antiquarian manner of the older schedography by avoiding its labyrinthine roughness and unpleasant style because he considered it “harsh” (ἀγλευκός)<sup>51</sup> not to speak in a charming and pleasing style. He accomplished this transformation by removing the puzzles and complex traps, and by changing the relation between form and meaning. The change of this particular relation is presented by Basilakes as a process of beautification: the exterior of the *schedos* is turned into shining lustre, while its interior is combed and timely braided. By this imagery of *haute coiffure* Basilakes suggests that his exercises stand in absolute contradistinction to the antiquarian *schede* which were of an “uncouth art” (τέχνης ἀξέστου) and “oldfashionedness” (ἀρχαιολογίας), in other words, lacking brilliance and stylistic polish.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, the proud rhetor used the verb ὑποβαρβαρίζειν (“speaking rather like a barbarian”), possibly suggesting the use of everyday language in the composition of exercises. Therefore, he declares, the newly coined word βασιλακίζειν has now become current among writers of *schede*, like in the old days γοργιάζειν was current among sophists. It is envy that led the old-fashioned teachers – ridiculous people of a rather bad taste (ὑποσολοίκοι) – to accuse his enthusiastic followers by calling their act of emulation βασιλακισμός, parallel to the accusation of political opponents in ancient Athens of being followers of Philip or even the Persian king. These envious accusations reflect the fear of Basilakes’ colleagues that they would lose their clientele and their patrons,<sup>53</sup> while Basilakes’ choice of “theatrical” terminology in this passage clearly points to the public and performative aspect of his *schede*. Furthermore, the metaphorical transfer of Basilakes’ sophistic activity to the political situation in classical Athens, makes it clear that his accusers viewed

<sup>51</sup> The adjective is used of Thucydides’ style by Hermogenes in *Id.* 2.14 (410.15–16 RABE).

<sup>52</sup> Obviously, Basilakes’ act of “hairdressing” (κομμωτική) inverts the Platonic critique against rhetoric as a form of kommotike expressed through Socrates in the *Gorgias* 463b and referred to in Hermogenes’ *De ideis* 1.12 (297.25–298.2 RABE).

<sup>53</sup> The bitter complaint of Michael Italikos in a letter probably addressed to Stephen Meles about John Komnenos’ preference of Basilakes and the latter’s success is quite indicative (*Opusc.* 19; 163.3–7 GAUTIER); see GARZYA, *Literarische Polemiken* 8, n. 32. On the role of envy in such contexts see now M. HINTERBERGER, *Phthonos: Mißgunst, Neid und Eifersucht in der byzantinischen Literatur (Serta Graeca 29)*. Wiesbaden 2013, 169.

this successful attraction of aristocratic patronage as a case of betrayal for purposes of financial and political profit.

As was the case with Anna Komnene, Basilakes did not reject schedography in general, but only the “oldfashioned” products of his competitors. It is, therefore, interesting to note that shortly after the middle of the twelfth century the kaisarissa and the didaskalos tou apostolou pointed to a type of schedography that was either an immoral “boardgame” or a composition in a rather “barbaric” style. There are other teachers in Constantinople at that time, who also had a few things to say about schedography and everyday language. One of them was Eustathios ὁ τοῦ Καταφλῶρον (ca. 1115–ca. 1195), Senior Professor of Rhetoric (μαῖστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων) for almost fifteen years, before he was appointed sometime between 1175 and 1178 archbishop of Thessalonike by Emperor Manuel.<sup>54</sup>

Eustathios included a substantial number of comments on schedography in his works, showing a good knowledge of its practice; he even composed *schede* himself, as we now know, but they remain unedited.<sup>55</sup> In his *Parekbolai* on the Homeric poems, written mostly in the Sixties and the Seventies of the twelfth century,<sup>56</sup> he often points to verses that seem to hide an acoustic riddle – obviously, the result of the medieval pronunciation of ancient Greek. Eustathios explains these riddles as antistoi-chic puzzles composed according to the “schedographic custom” (σχεδικὸς νόμος).<sup>57</sup> In Book 9 of the *Parekbolai* to the *Odyssey*, Eustathios embarks on a long excursus on schedography. Pointing to a series of words difficult to distinguish acoustically in the Homeric poems, he notes the following:<sup>58</sup>

Παλαιὸς μὲν τις ἐπίγραμμα τωθαστικὸν εἷς τινα ἰατρὸν Ἄκρωνα ἔγραψεν οὕτως· «Ἄκρων ἰατρὸν ἄκρον Ἀκραγαντίνων»,<sup>59</sup> ἐπίτηδες οὕτω γράψας ἐκεῖνος καὶ οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ παρατυχόντος. Οἱ δὲ νεώτεροι ταῦτα καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα ζηλώσαντες, πολλὰ δ' ἐν τοῖς παλαιοῖς εὔρηται ὅμοια ὡς πολλαχοῦ δεδήλωται, γρίφους ἐμελέτησαν πλέκειν οὓς ὀνόμασαν σχέδη, τὴν ἀρχὴν μὲν λεπτοῦς τινὰς καὶ οἴους ῥῆον ἐκδιαδράσκεσθαι, τέλος δὲ ἀδροὺς καὶ δυσδιαφύκτους. Καὶ οἱ μὲν παλαιοὶ τὸ ῥηθὲν τοῦ Ἐπιχάρμου νόημα,<sup>60</sup> ἔτι δὲ καὶ τὸ τοῦ ἐπιγράμματος καὶ ὅσα δὲ ἀρχαῖα τοιαῦτα,

<sup>54</sup> The data of Eustathios' life and career have been a matter of substantial debate. For the most recent bibliography see S. SCHÖNAUER, *Eustathios von Thessalonike: Reden auf die große Quadregesima. Prolegomena, Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar, Indices (Meletemata 10)*. Frankfurt a.M. 2006, 3\*–6\*; K. METZLER, *Eustathii Thessalonicensis De emendanda vita monachica (CFHB 45)*. Berlin–New York 2006, 3\*–5\* and EADEM, *Eustathios von Thessalonike und das Mönchtum: Untersuchungen und Kommentar zur Schrift “De emendanda vita monachica” (CFHB. Supplementa Byzantina 9)*. Berlin–New York 2006, 3–14; F. KOLOVOU, *Die Briefe des Eustathios von Thessalonike. Einleitung, Regesten, Text, Indizes (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 239)*. München 2006, 3\*–5\*.

<sup>55</sup> GALLAVOTTI, *Nota 33* mentions an unpublished schedos in the Vat. gr. 2299 (early 14th cent.) bearing the lemma τοῦ ἀγνωστότου Θεσσαλονίκης κυροῦ Εὐσταθίου.

<sup>56</sup> For the date and composition of the *Parekbolai* see now E. CULLHED, *Eustathios of Thessalonike: Parekbolai on Homer's Odyssey 1–2*. Proekdosis. Uppsala 2014, 4\*–9\*.

<sup>57</sup> See, for example, the following passages: Τὸ δὲ «τάχ' ἡμῦσαι» παλαιὸν μὲν ἄνδρα οὐκ ἂν παρήγαγεν ὡς ἐθάδα τῶν τοιούτων· τοῦ δὲ νῦν γένους τινὲς πλανηθεῖεν ἂν δοκοῦντες ἀκούειν «τάχει», εἶτα κατ' ἰδίαν «μῦσαι», νόμῳ δηλαδὴ σχεδικῷ (CommII. 241.33–36 to v. 2.343ff.); παρακείμενον δὲ τὸ «νωθῆς» μετὰ τὸ «παῖδας», «ἐβιήσατο» γάρ, φησί, «παῖδας νωθῆς», φιλοῖτο ἂν ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκδιόντων ἄρτι τοὺς σχεδικοὺς γρίφους ὡς ἀπατήλιον τοῖς παισὶ (CommII. 862.47–49 to v. 11.558–559); Τοῦ δὲ ἰχνευταὶ περιφρασὶς ὃν τὸ «ἴχνι» ἐρευνῶντες» κάλλιον ἐκεῖνου πέφρασαι. Ὅρα δ' ἐνταῦθα τὸ «ἴχνι» ἐρευνῶντες» ὑποδύσκολον ὃν τῆ φράσει καὶ λαβυρινθῶδες κατὰ τὰ νῦν σχεδικά· ἦν μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἴχνη γράψαι διὰ τοῦ η, εἴλετο δὲ ἡ ποίησις τὸ ἴχνα (CommOd. 1871.63–1872.1 to v. 19.436).

<sup>58</sup> CommOd. 1634.11–18 to v. 9.366. The quoted passage is only the middle section of this excursus on deceitful soundplays (*ibidem* 1634.4–31); it has been quoted in full and briefly discussed by ΠΑΠΑΔΙΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ, Feodor Prodrum 420–421.

<sup>59</sup> The epigram was attributed since ancient times to Empedocles; it runs as follows: Ἄκρον ἰατρὸν Ἄκρων Ἀκραγαντίνων πατρός Ἄκρου | κρύπτει κρημνὸς ἄκρος πατρίδος ἄκροτάτης (DIELS – KRANZ 31 B 157, from Diog. Laert. 8.65). Eustathios knew the epigram from the Suda, α 1026 (I 94.18–26 ADLER), since it is only there that the couplet is characterized as τωθαστικὸν ἐπίγραμμα.

<sup>60</sup> This is a deceitful phrase attributed to Epicharmus and quoted by Eustathios in the first part of this digression (CommOd. 1634.5–8).

θαυμασιῶς ἐκάλουν ὡς ἐνομοθέτησεν ὁ Ἐπίχαρμος, «λόγον ἐν λόγῳ» αὐτὰ εἰπὼν, διὰ τὸ «ὡς ἐν αἰνίγματι ἄλλον μὲν εἶναι τὸν λαλούμενον λόγον, ἕτερον δὲ τὸν νοοῦμενον». Οἱ δὲ τὰ σχεδικὰ λαλοῦντες ἀκολούθως καὶ αὐτοὶ νοήματα καλοῦσιν ἅπερ γριφεύονται, διὰ τὸ καὶ τὸν γραμματέα παῖδα μὴ τοῦ λεγομένου ἀλλὰ τοῦ νοουμένου γίνεσθαι.

Eustathios quotes the beginning of an ancient derogatory epigram. He compares the epigram’s antistoichic play of sound and word with the “moderns” (οἱ νεώτεροι) who attempt to emulate this ancient practice and compose in a similar manner “puzzles which they named *schede*”. Furthermore, Eustathios remarks that these puzzles were “initially somehow delicate and of a style that could be easily fled from, but finally powerful and hard to escape”. The antithesis τὴν ἀρχὴν μὲν ... τέλος δὲ suggests a chronological differentiation between the beginnings of schedography and its present phase, that is, around 1160, a differentiation not unsimilar to the one presented by Anna in the passage discussed above. Eustathios saw in the complexity of the *schedos* an emulation of a past practice,<sup>61</sup> but he did not in general characterize schedography negatively, when he stated that “the people declaiming the *schede* have subsequently called riddles (νοήματα) what they puzzlingly compose, because the boy learning grammar has to grasp not what is spoken but what is subsumed”.

The deceptive division of words as a result of an antistoichic sound play runs through Eustathios’ and Basilakes’ comments and is also implied by Anna. It suggests that something more than grammar was involved. This “something more” Eustathios described more fully in a letter addressed to the young Nikephoros Komnenos (†1173), grandson of Anna Komnene and Nikephoros Bryennios.<sup>62</sup> Having expounded the etymology and history of the *calendae*, and having explained the difference between the “marked” days of a Roman month (καλάνδαι, νόνηαι, εἰδοί), Eustathios comments:<sup>63</sup>

**Νῦν δ’ ἀλλὰ** τὰ τῆς κοινῆς ἐκείνης συνθήκης παρεσπονδήθη· καὶ ἡ τῶν σχεδικῶν νοημάτων τύραννος ἀνάγκη τὴν παλαιὰν χρῆσιν βιασαμένη παρανομεῖ, εἰδοῦς τε καὶ νόνηας καὶ τὰς ἀπλῶς ἡμέρας ἄγουσα εἰς ταῦτόν. Καὶ ἔπαθον ταῦτόν οἱ γραμματικοὶ ἄρτι, ὃ καὶ οἱ πεσόντες ὑπὸ πολιορκίαν πολυετῆ. Ἐκεῖνοι τε γὰρ ἐν στενῶ κομιδῇ καθειργμένοι, ἔστιν οὗ πιεσθέντες ἐνδεία, οὐδὲ τῶν ἀψαύστων ἀνειμένη γλώσση σωμάτων ἀπέσχοντο, λιμοῦ κάνταῦθα δαιταλουργοῦντος αὐτοῖς· καὶ αὐτοὶ τῷ λαβυρίνθῳ τῶν σχεδικῶν ἐλιγμῶν ἐναπειλημμένοι, καὶ λέξεων εὐπόρως οὐκ ἔχοντες, ἀλλ’ ὡς εἰπεῖν λιμώττοντες, αἷς περιεργότερον χρήσονται, καὶ τῶν τοιούτων κατεξάνεστησαν καὶ χορεύσαντες οἷον ἀδιαφόρως αὐτὰς συνεῖλον εἰς ἓν.<sup>64</sup>

Here Eustathios openly criticizes antistoichic schedography that has “recently” (ἄρτι) forced the grammarians to misuse the different meanings of the old Roman words. He then employs a vivid

<sup>61</sup> See also his remark on Od. 22.461 at CommOd. 1809.12, where he clearly suggests that the schedographic “method” was lifted from such antistoichic passages in Homer: ἐξ ὧν (sc. sound plays) ἡ τῶν σχεδοποιῶν εἰληφθαι δοκεῖ μέθοδος.

<sup>62</sup> See K. BARZOS, Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν (*Byzantina keimena kai meletai* 20, A–B). Thessaloniki 1984, II, 87–95 (no. 115).

<sup>63</sup> Ep. 7 (34.189–200 ΚΟΛΟΒΟΥ).

<sup>64</sup> Because of the extreme difficulty of this passage, I offer a tentative translation: “But now indeed the agreements of that common treaty have been broken; by violating ancient practice, the tyrannical necessity of schedographic riddles has acted unlawfully, leading the Ides and the Nonae and the normal days into the same meaning. Thus, the grammarians have recently suffered the same thing to people who have fallen under a year-long siege. For the latter, entirely imprisoned in dire straits, were sometimes pressed by want of sustenance and did not desist from eating even untouchable bodies with their unrestrained tongues, since hunger in this case too prepared a banquet for them. Similarly, the former [i.e. the grammarians] were oppressed by the labyrinth of schedographic manoeuvres and did not have a wealth of words at hand but were starving, so to speak, which words to use in a more curious manner; thus, they rose up against such words and, as if dancing <in a frenzy>, they indiscriminately united them all into one”.

simile to give a reason for the unlawful practice. He compares the grammarians to the inhabitants of a city that has been besieged for many years. Forced by hunger, who prepared for them a banquet, the people did not desist from eating even polluted animals and humans with their unrestrained tongues. The allusive passage is based on Flavius Josephus' famous description of cannibalism during the siege of Jerusalem by Titus in AD 70 (*Bellum Iudaicum* VI 193–213), a passage well-known in Byzantine historiography.<sup>65</sup> Similarly to the besieged, Eustathios scathingly comments, the grammarians of his time rose under the constraint of novelty against the old Latin words and “indiscriminately united them all into one”. The complex sentence with its negative image of Bacchic sparagmos – suggested by the word “dancing” (χορεύσαντες) – reflects, I would suggest, Eustathios' critique of a peculiar case of culinary (*qua* literary) transgression.<sup>66</sup> It is the misguided attempt of the grammarians to create out of conventional linguistic exercises some kind of novel literary text.

At a far lower step of the social ladder, we find John Tzetzes (ca. 1110–ca.1185).<sup>67</sup> His commentaries were written for second-level education at school, while his verse “allegories” of Homer and Hesiod were composed for aristocratic patrons. Tzetzes often complains that schedography “barbarifies” pupils instead of educating them because young people cease reading the old books and concentrate instead on this modern invention. Thus, in one section of his *Historiae* (the immense verse “commentary” to his own letter collection, composed around 1155–1160) he presents schedographers as “ignorant tavern-keepers” and their students as paying attention only to this “labyrinthine and falsified complexity”.<sup>68</sup>

Similar to Eustathios, Tzetzes views schedography as a labyrinth created by the capital's “ethereal rhetors” (ρήτορες αἰθέριοι)<sup>69</sup> so as to display their vapid art. Unlike Eustathios, however, he attacks in a most virulent manner these “ignorant knaves who compose foolish schedē” without paying attention to the old books. This attack comes from a later section of the *Historiae*, where Tzetzes explains at length the calculations of the astronomer Meton.<sup>70</sup> Tzetzes gradually makes the teachers look like dung-eating pigs. He then picks out one “sweet and pleasant” teacher who sits relaxedly these days and uses in his class “fooleries” (ληρωδίας):<sup>71</sup>

Ἡμέραις κάθηται ταῖς νῦν γλυκὺς τε καὶ ἡδύς μοι.  
 Πρὸς Ἴμπρω ἀπεδήμησας, τζουτζούτζου δ' οὐ παρείη,  
 ὑπ' ἔντε' ἄνδρες μοι ἐχθροὶ ζῶντες εἰσίν, ὧ φίλοι,  
 ὁ δ' ἵπνος καὶ ὁ κάπνος τε· καὶ ἄλλας ληρωδίας.

<sup>65</sup> For example, Eusebios of Caesarea quoted it verbatim in his *Ecclesiastical History* III 6, 17–28 (I 206.3–210.12 SCHWARTZ), George the Monk in the 9th century included an abbreviated version in his *Chronicle* II 385.10–386.16 (DE BOOR), as did other chroniclers. Moreover, the horrid story forms the hypotext of a poem contemporary to Eustathios, written by the high judge Andronikos on a case of cannibalism in South-Western Asia Minor; see R. MACRIDES, *Poetic Justice in the Patriarchate – Murder and Cannibalism in the Provinces*, in: *Cupido legum*, ed. L. Burgmann – M. Th. Fögen – A. Schminck. Frankfurt a.M. 1985, 137–168, specifically 150–151 on the sources of the poem. One might also compare the similar description of the siege of Larissa in 986 by the Bulgarian Tsar Samuel as narrated by the general Kekaumenos in his memoirs, §7\* (250–252 LITAVRIN).

<sup>66</sup> On Eustathios' poetics of *haute cuisine* see KOLOVOU, *Die Briefe* 57\*–73\*.

<sup>67</sup> See C. WENDEL, *Tzetzes Johannes*. *RE* 7A (1948) 1959–2010. For brief overviews see H. HUNGER, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (*HdA* XII 5, 1–2). München 1978, II 59–63 and I. GRIGORIADIS, *Ἰωάννης Τζέτζης: Ἐπιστολαί. Εἰσαγωγή, μετάφραση, σχόλια* (*Keimena byzantines logotechnias* 3). Athens 2001, 27–32 (with the previous bibliography).

<sup>68</sup> *Hist.* 280, *Chil.* IX 703–708: Καὶ γὰρ ἐβαρβαρώθησαν οἱ πλείους σχεδουργίαις, | βίβλους ἀναγινώσκοντες τῶν παλαιῶν οὐδόλωσ, | ὡς τόπους, χώρας, πράγματα γινώσκειν σαφεστάτως, | καὶ θησαυροὺς ἀρύεσθαι, λόγους σοφῶν παντοίων, | τῶν ἀμαθῶν κατήλων δε πλοκῆ λαβυρινθώδει | μόνη τὸν νοῦν προσέχοντες καὶ κεκατηλεωμένη.

<sup>69</sup> *Hist.* 278, *Chil.* IX 659.

<sup>70</sup> *Hist.* 399, *Chil.* XII 223–246.

<sup>71</sup> *Hist.* 399, *Chil.* XII 229–232.

These are words coming directly from “everyday language”, but they are craftily used in antistoichic puns. For example, ὑπ’ ἔντε’ ἄνδρες should be understood as οἱ πέντε ἄνδρες, δ’ ἵπνος as δεῖπνος and ἵπνος as ὑπνος, while κάπνος is a false accentuation of καπνός. Tzetzes, in fact, used the *ιδιωτικὴ γλῶσσα* quite often in his abusive attacks. In another passage from the *Historiae*, he mocks a rhetor who has been given a commission by the city prefect Andronikos Kamateros:<sup>72</sup>

Τζέτζης δ’ ὁ ἀρρητόρευτος ὁ ἀμαθὴς ἐπάρχῳ  
 τῷ πανσεβάστῳ σεβαστῷ Καματηρῶν ἐκ γένους,  
**ρήτορα** ὃς κήρυξεν ἀνακτορίοις ἐνὶ οἴκοις  
**Λαιδάλου αἰθέροιο** συνημοσύναισιν ἀρίσταις  
 πετρομαχασκοπάπουτζον, τζαγγάριον, ξυλοσούβλην,  
**βούβαλον**, ὀρχίπαπαν, παγχώρικον, ἐμβασίμαλλον,  
 ὕρχαν ἠδέ γε λάρκος ἀμόργινον, ἔρμεον εἶδος,  
 νυκτερίου εἶδωλον δαίμονος ἔσπερόμορφον.  
 Οὐρανὸς οὐ στενάχει δὲ καὶ αὐτὴ γαῖα πελώρη;  
 ὄστλιγγες δὲ πυρὸς οὐκ ἔφλεγον **αἰθερίοιο**;  
 οὐ πόντος ροίβδησε καὶ ἔκλυσεν οἶδμασι γαῖαν,  
**βούβαλον** εἰσορόων βασιληΐδος ἔνδοθεν αὐλῆς,  
 ἄστεος αἰσχροσύνην πωλευμένον ἡμετέροιο.  
**Οὗτος ὁ ἀρρητόρευτος ὁ Τζέτζης**, τοῦ ὑπάρχου  
 τοῦ ρήτορα κηρύξαντος τὸν **βούβαλον** τὸν οἶον ....

The passage is quite astonishing for a number of reasons. First of all, Tzetzes presents himself as lacking rhetorical education and learning (IX 210 ἀρρητόρευτος), an attribute with which he later returns to his critique of the “eparch’s rhetor” and his own competitor (IX 223). In attacking this ethereal rhetor, Tzetzes shifts from his average learned diction into Homeric overdrive, while also shifting from political verse to epic-style hexameter (IX 212). After only two lines he embarks on a direct abuse of his adversary by shifting back to the political verse (IX 214–215), but the abuses are now written in everyday language. At the end of line XI 215, Tzetzes introduces an “epic” adjective (ἐμβασίμαλλος)<sup>73</sup> which does not fit the political verse, but fits the dactylic hexameter.<sup>74</sup> Thus, he shifts back into Homeric diction for the remainder of his attack, couched in the obscure style of the prophecies given by the oracle at Delphi.<sup>75</sup> Thus, the rhetor, who thinks that he possesses the “intelligence of the ethereal Daedalus” but is only a slow-minded “buffalo”, is ridiculed through the use of three different linguistic idioms and two metres, passing from the one to the other without any signal of change. The comic effect is quite devastating.

<sup>72</sup> Hist. 369, Chil. XI 210–224.

<sup>73</sup> The word is attested only here; in the *LBG* it is explained as “with woolen shoes”, probably because of ἐμβάς (“felt shoe”) that is used in ancient Greek for poor people (Isocrates).

<sup>74</sup> 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 quantitative pattern of the word forms the last two dactyls of the “heroic” verse (– υ υ – x); cf. ἐμβασίχυτρος (*Batrachomyom.* 137).

<sup>75</sup> For a similar case of a twelfth-century fictive Delphic prophecy composed in hexameters compare Theodore Prodromos’ novel *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* 9, 184–233 (153–154 MARKOVICH). On the literary aspect of Delphic oracles in hexameters see Plutarch’s dialogue *Περὶ τοῦ μὴ χρᾶν ἔμμετρα νῦν τὴν Πυθίαν* (*Mor.* 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, etc.), see J. E. FONTENROSE, *The Delphic Oracle: Its Responses and Operations, with a catalogue of responses*. Berkeley 1978, 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<sup>2</sup>1995 (without the Sibylline Oracles).

The critique against schedography expressed by the four authors just examined ultimately focuses on a novel form which the *schedos* had taken in the Forties and Fifties of the twelfth century. It is with this particular critique in mind that we shall briefly turn our attention to the grammatikos Theodore Prodromos (ca. 1100–ca. 1175), one of the most versatile and prolific writers of the Komnenian era.<sup>76</sup> Prodromos wrote a number of prose works in many genres (e.g. orations of various types, satirical dialogues, letters, hagiography, commentaries, grammatical treatises), but also numerous poems in various styles and metres.<sup>77</sup> In many of these poems he clearly described the relation between his teaching activity, his literary efforts and the patronage he had received or expected to secure. It is this attitude that led Krumbacher to call him a “beggar poet” (*Betteldichter*),<sup>78</sup> a characterization that proved problematic as recent scholarship has shown.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, Prodromos appears to us as having a “split literary personality” since Byzantinists and Neohellenists have fiercely debated the existence of one, two, or even three Prodromoi and the ascription of an immense, “learned” and “vernacular”, output to these real or imagined persons.<sup>80</sup> Obviously, these debates have more to do with the accepted opposition of learned to vernacular and the supposedly imitative character of Byzantine literary genres, than with the textual evidence and their socio-cultural context.

About twenty antistoichic prose *schede* survive that can be ascribed with certainty or high probability to Theodore Prodromos; half of them remain unpublished.<sup>81</sup> Most of Theodore’s *schede* display a two-part structure: a first part is written in prose and ends with some admonitory statement, while a second part is composed in iambic or hexametric verses, often addressed to a person.<sup>82</sup> In some cases, the person addressed in the poem is the actual commissioner or an intended recipient of the text.<sup>83</sup> Two among Prodromos’ *schede* display those characteristics that Tzetzes pointed to, namely, the use of humor and of everyday language couched in a puzzle-like form. The first of these *schede* fictively addresses the son of a foolish and bad woman:<sup>84</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Despite much work on his biography, no consensus has been reached about the approximate dates of his life or all the stages of his “career”. The older studies have been thoroughly discussed by W. HÖRANDNER, *Theodoros Prodromos. Historische Gedichte (WBS 11)*. Wien 1974, 8–12, who also presented the first balanced attempt at a biography of Prodromos (*ibidem* 21–32); see also A. P. KAZHDAN – S. FRANKLIN, *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*. Cambridge 1984, 87–115 and now E. JEFFREYS, *Four Byzantine Novels: Theodore Prodromos, Rhodanthe and Dosikles; Eumathios Makrembolites, Hysmine and Hysminias; Constantine Manasses, Aristandros and Kallithea; Niketas Eugenianos, Drosilla and Charikles*. Translated with introductions and notes (*Translated Texts for Byzantinists 1*). Liverpool 2012, 3–6.

<sup>77</sup> For a complete list of his works, as well as a number of dubia and spuria see HÖRANDNER, *Theodoros Prodromos* 37–67.

<sup>78</sup> GBL<sup>1</sup> 354 = GBL<sup>2</sup> 750.

<sup>79</sup> For two different reassessments of this image see M. ALEXIOU, *The Poverty of Écriture and the Craft of Writing: Towards a Reappraisal of the Prodromic Poems*. *BMGS* 10 (1986) 1–40 and R. BEATON, *The Rhetoric of Poverty: The Lives and Opinions of Theodore Prodromos*. *BMGS* 11 (1987) 1–28 (reprint in *idem*, *From Byzantium to Modern Greece: Medieval Texts and their Reception*. Aldershot–Burlington 2008, no. IX).

<sup>80</sup> For the beginnings of this debate see Krumbacher, GBL<sup>1</sup> 367 no. 3, then more amply in GBL<sup>2</sup> 804–806; G. N. HATZIDAKIS, *Περὶ τῶν Προδρόμων Θεοδώρου καὶ Ἰλαρίωνος*. *VV* 4 (1897) 100–127; S. D. PAPADIMITRIOU, *Οἱ Πρόδρομοι*. *VV* 5 (1898) 91–130; A. ΠΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ-ΚΕΡΑΜΕΥΣ, *Ἐἷς καὶ μόνος Θεόδωρος Πρόδρομος*. *Lětopis Istoriko-Filologičeskago Obščestva pri Imperatorskom Novorossijskom Universitetě VII: Vizantijskij Otdel* IV. Odessa 1898, 385–402, to be read together with the review by E. KURTZ in *BZ* 10 (1901) 244–246.

<sup>81</sup> See the list in VASSIS, *Graeca sunt* 3–5.

<sup>82</sup> See, for example, a *schedos* on Saint Nicholas, where the accompanying poem addresses the saint and is written in iambic and dactylic metre; edited by PAPADIMITRIOU, *Feodor Prodrom 429–432* from the Mon. gr. 201 (early 14th cent.).

<sup>83</sup> Two further *schede* of Prodromos are addressed to Saint Nicholas (VASSIS, *Graeca sunt*, nos. 2 and 12), but in the accompanying poems, the author addresses Emperor Manuel through his personal secretary Theodore Stypiotēs, Prodromos’ former pupil. This bipartite form is used by other writers of *schede*, such as those transmitted in the collection of the Marc. gr. XI.31, among which figures George, maistor of the School of the Forty Martyrs (ca. 1140–1150). They have been partially edited by I. D. POLEMIS, *Γεώργιος μαΐστωρ ἀγιωτεσσαρακοντῆς*. *Hell* 46 (1996) 301–306; George’s addressee is John of Poutze, chief accountant of Manuel.

<sup>84</sup> Edited by PAPADIMITRIOU, *Feodor Prodrom 433–435* from the Mon. gr. 201; the *schedos* is also transmitted in the Laur. V.10 (14th cent.) and the Vat. Pal. gr. 92 (late 13th cent.); see VASSIS, *Graeca sunt* 4, no. 8).

Λέξον μοι δεῦρο, ὦ μωρῆς υἱέ, τῆς κακῆς παιδίν, καὶ σὺ τὸν χρυσὸν ἔχεις διὰ πόθον οἷα γέμων λιμώξεως; Καὶ σὺ μὲν, ἀνόητε, μόσχος καὶ μῦρα, †κενέτε, ἀφ' ὑὸς παράκειται, † ὁ πένης δὲ βρωμεῖ ὁ ἐλεεινὸς καὶ παντὶ βρωτῶ τυγχάνει ἀπαραμύθητος. Καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐν εὐτελεῖ παρίσταται σχήματι δούλων, σὺ δὲ μόνος ἐσθίεις περδίκιν ἀληθινὸν λιπαρόν. Κἂν σοι πλησίον γένηται, ὁ λαμπρὸς υἱός, τὸ ὄξυν ἰμάτιν φορεῖ, ὁ ἀδελφὸς δὲ οὐδὲ ξερὴν γούναν ἔχει. [...] Δὸς δὲ ψωμῖν τῶ πεινῶντι οὐκ ἀλλοίαν φύσιν λαχόν. Μὴ φείσῃ τῶ διψῶντι ψυχροῦ, ἀλλὰ δὸς ποτήριν νερόν, δὸς δὲ καββάδιν τῇ συχνῇ ἀρρωστία καὶ φιλοτίμησαι χήραν τὸν δρόμον ταχύνουσαν· μὴ δώσης δὲ χονδρὸν ὑποκάμισον, οἷσιν γὰρ εὐκλεῶς εἰς τὸ πολλαπλάσιον τῶ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν.

Κεφάλαιον τοῦ λόγου. Μίσησον τὸν ἐχθρόν, ἐννοῶν ὅτι κακὰ ὑπάγεις καὶ φεῦγε τὰ κατὰ σου μηχανήματα· δίωκε δὲ τινα μαυλιστήν, ἐὰν ποθῇ πλήθη δικαίων.

The text has a moralizing tone, accentuated by phrases echoing a biblical style. The vocabulary and syntax move freely between a higher and a lower diction without any marker of change or comment about this change, just as we saw happening in Tzetzes. In certain instances, the phrases are for all purposes completely “vernacular” (Κἂν σοι πλησίον ... γούναν ἔχει). The critique of a money-loving young man who does not practice the virtue of charity takes on the sarcastic edge of ironic linguistic humor using words or even gnomic-like phrases of colloquial discourse.

Prodromos concludes his innovative *schedos* with the following iambic poem to an anonymous commissioner (bold underlining indicates poetological terminology):

Ἔχεις μεγαλόδοξον ὄλβιον κἄρα  
σπούδασμα μικρὸν σωφρονικῶ παιγνίῳ.  
 Ἄν μὲν κατ' ὄψιν ἐντρανίσσεις τῶ σχέδει,  
σύρφακας εἶναι προσδοκήσεις τοὺς λόγους,  
 ἂν δ' εἰς τὸ βάθος τῶν νοημάτων ἴδης,  
τὴν προδρομικὴν γνωριεῖς μουσουργίαν:  
 ὡς ἐν τύπῳ γὰρ τῶν ἀρίστων ὀστρέων,  
ἔξω μὲν ὀστρακῶδες ἐστὶ τὸ σχέδος,  
ἔσσω δὲ μαργαρῶδες – οἰγέσθω φθόνος:  
 τέως δὲ τοῦπίταγμα πεπλήρωκά σοι.

The poem opens by expressing the notion that the text – purportedly a grammatical exercise – has been written for the sake of a “play”.<sup>85</sup> Prodromos gives to this notion a particular twist since he characterizes this play as “prudent” (σωφρονικῶ). The “small effort” (σπούδασμα μικρὸν) made for the sake of this prudent play is the surprising form of the text at hand. The recipient will have to go beyond the countenance of the *schedos*, which appears ugly, and will have to look into the depth of the νοήματα (“thoughts” and “riddles”), wherein he will recognize the “Prodromic muse-inspired (*qua* poetic) creation” (τὴν προδρομικὴν μουσουργίαν). Infact, the *schedos* is modelled in similarity to the best oysters: on the outside it is hard and rough like the oyster’s shell (ὀστρακῶδες), but inside it is beautiful and precious like the pearl it hides (μαργαρῶδες). Prodromos suggests that the composition of such a *schedos* is quite an extraordinary achievement by emphatically inserting the apotropaic

<sup>85</sup> For a discussion of a number of passages about the notion of “play” in 11<sup>th</sup>- and 12<sup>th</sup> century didactic literature see M. JEFFREYS, *The Nature and Origin of the Political Verse*. *DOP* 28 (1974) 142–195, specifically 174–180 (reprinted in E. M. JEFFREYS – M. J. JEFFREYS, *Popular Literature in Late Byzantium*. London 1983, no. IV).

formula “let envy be gone” (οἰχέσθω φθόνος).<sup>86</sup> Thus, the successful decoding of the “labyrinthine” text leads to the beauty of its deeper thoughts – a combination of instructional utility and aesthetic pleasure. It is, however, a type of *schedos* that stands in absolute contrast to what Nikephoros Basilakes had described as his own innovative contribution to the “recent sophistic”.

The second of Prodromos’ mixed *schede* fictively addresses a mischievous and gluttonous man.<sup>87</sup> The concluding poem is addressed to a “wise imperial lady” (τῆ σοφῆ βασιλίδι), almost certainly the sebastokratorissa Eirene Komnene († ca. 1153).<sup>88</sup> The *schedos* is fairly long and quite complex in its enumeration of vices, including a high number of very difficult passages due to the antistoichic puzzles:<sup>89</sup>

Κινεῖ με πρὸς παραινέσεις, ἄνθρωπε, ἢ συντεθραμμένη σοι μοχθηρία καὶ ἡ σὴ λειξουρία. Σὺ δὲ βάλε ταύτας πρὸς τὴν σὴν ἀκοήν, ἐὰν οὐκ ἔχῃς κοφίνιν ἢ σακκίν. Βλέπε μὴ φορέσης μέγαν ἱμάτιν, πρόσκαιρον εὐροίαν τύχης τιμῶν καὶ ὀλέθριον ὕψωμα. Ἔχεις γὰρ περὶ τῶν παρόντων σκέψιν καὶ σύ, ὡς δίκην χλόης καὶ θρύμπου ζηραίνονται. Ἄρ’ οὖν τίνα, φρόνιμον ὄντα, τὸ λυόμενον εἰς ἀέρα τέρπει περδίκιν σαχόν; Ἀγαπήσεις δὲ χηνάριν πτωχὸν ἐπὶ συντριβῆ καὶ ἀπωλεία ψυχῆς; [...]

Μὴ φιλοχρήματος ἔσο, ὃ λογαρᾶτε, ἐπεὶ αἱ ἀμαρτίαι τῆς ψυχῆς σου τῷ τοιούτῳ γένει παρέπονται. Σφάλισε καὶ τὸ παραθύριν, ὅπερ ἐκ τῆς τρυφῆς ὑπανοίγεται, ὡς οὐδὲν εὐρήσει τῆς ἐκεῖ τιμωρίας παυστήριον φιλοπαίγμων ἢ ἀμαδοκόπος ἀνήρ. Ταῦτα τοι μὴ ἀμέλει τοῦ τρόπου τῆς γλωσσαλγίας, ἵνα μὴ πνίξη ἡμᾶς ἡ Γιλλού. Μὴ φθονερῶν συμμορίαις, ὃ μαγιωμένε, συναριθμοῦ. Τοῖς ὑπὸ θυμοῦ θολουμένοις τὸν νοῦν μὴ συναρπασθῆναι, φουσκολόγε, παρακαλῶ. Ἔσο πρᾶος ὡς πρόβατον ἢ τράγος, ἐντεῦθεν τὸν μολυσμὸν τῆς κακίας σου περιποιούμενος τῆ ψυχῆ. Ταχὺ σημαίνει τὰ Μάγγανα καὶ παραυτικά προσεύχου, ἵνα μὴ ἀγρευθῆ ὁ νοῦς ὑπὸ τοῦ σατανᾶ. Καλὸν δὲ μοναστήριον ἐστὶ τὰ Στουδίου. Ἔτι γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ τηρεῖται τὸ βαρὺ τῆς τραχύτητος.

Κεφάλαιον τοῦ λόγου. Οὐ τῆ πρὸς τὰ φθαρτὰ κατανεύσει στοιχεῖν ὀφείλουσιν ἴσθι δὲ τῆ ποτ’ αἴην ἴ οἱ καταλήθειαν ἄνθρωποι, καὶ σὺ γοῦν οὐ μήποτε παγιδευθῆς οἷα πουλὶν ἀηδόνιν ἢ διακόνιν. Τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ κοσμικὸν δοξάριόν σε λήγεται, ὡς, ἐὰν τῆ προσκαίρω φαντασία ἴ προσφέρῃ σαλεύη τ’ ἄλλῃ, ὕστερον, ὃ πελελέ, βοήσεις ὠδὴν οἰκτράν, τῆ μεταμελεία στενοχωρούμενος.

In the prose section we find again the moralizing tone and presence of gnomic statements. We also find some of the same “everyday” words as in the previous *schedos*.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, we find the presence of the carnivorous demon Gilloú, while there is a reference to a teacher of the School of the Holy Forty Martyrs. We will also note the appearance of two important monasteries – Mangana and the austere Studios. Again, the text is serious and playful.

The opening verses of the dedicatory poem run as follows:<sup>91</sup>

Ἄθυρμα σεμνότητι συγκεκραμένον  
ἔπαιξα τοῦτο τῆ σοφῆ βασιλίδι,

<sup>86</sup> On this specific formula see now M. HINTERBERGER, Phthonos: A Pagan Relic in Byzantine Imperial Acclamations? In: Court Ceremonies and Ritual Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean: Comparative Perspectives, ed. A. Beihammer – S. Constantinou – M. Parani (*The Medieval Mediterranean* 98). Leiden 2013, 51–65.

<sup>87</sup> Published by POLEMIS, Προβλήματα 287–290 (introduction), 297–298 (diplomatic transcription) and 298–302 (edition and commentary); it is no. 18 in the list of VASSIS, Graeca sunt 5.

<sup>88</sup> See POLEMIS, Προβλήματα 289; in general see now E. JEFFREYS, The sebastokratorissa Eirene as patron, in: Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond, ed. M. Grünbart – M. Mullett – L. Theis (*Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 60/61). Wien 2013, 177–194, but also A. RHOBY, Verschiedene Bemerkungen zur Sebastokratorissa Eirene und zu Autoren in ihrem Umfeld. *Nea Rhome* 6 (2009) 305–336, specifically 305–321.

<sup>89</sup> POLEMIS 298.1–7 + 301.42–52.

<sup>90</sup> For example, ἱμάτιν, ποτήριον, ἐβρώμη.

<sup>91</sup> POLEMIS 301.58–302.70



μικρὸν παρηγόρημα μακροῦ καμάτου,  
 οὗ πείραν αὐτῇ προὔξενησαν πλησμίως  
 πρὸ βραχέως μὲν καὶ πρὸ τούτου τοῦ χρόνου  
 αἱ παρασάγγαι τῶν ὁδῶν καὶ τὰ πλέθρα,  
 ἐσύστερον δὲ καὶ δριμυτάτη νόσος  
 γλουτῶ κατασκήψασα τῷ πρὸς ἰσχίῳ.  
Οὕκουν τὸν ἐκτὸς συρφετὸν βλέποντί τῳ  
τὴν ἔνδον εὐπρέπειαν ἀτιμαστέον.  
 Καὶ χρυσίον γὰρ οὐ περιφρονητέον,  
 ἂν ἄρα τοῦτο φυλακῆς ψιλῆς χάριν  
 βαλάντιον σκύτιον ἔνδοθεν στέγη.

“A toy blended with modesty I did play for the wise imperial lady”, Prodromos writes to his patroness. The text is offered as a comfort for the lady’s exhaustion after a long journey and an acute sickness. Then, the author remarks that the recipient should not despise the work’s inner beauty because she is looking at its exterior ugliness (συρφετόν, “refuse”). And he points out that, similarly, gold coins are not despised if, for reasons of practical safety, they are hidden in a leather pouch – a discreet way of asking the lady for a reward. Both *schede* are addressed to patrons of a high social standing, both include a fair amount of humor mixed with expressions culled from everyday language, both texts employ a loose episodic narrative structure that supports their performative character, both adopt a moralizing tone as part of their humorous strategy, in both of the accompanying poems the author points to his literary achievement and asks for his just reward.

It seems, therefore, not implausible to suggest that the negative comments made from different perspectives and for different reasons by Anna, Eustathios, Basilakes and Tzetzes are the personal reactions to the public and financial success that Prodromos’ oyster-like *schede* had attained by the middle of the twelfth century. In this sense, Ioannis Vassis was quite right in suggesting that Prodromos attempted to turn the *schedos* into a new literary genre by changing its function.<sup>92</sup> Prodromos’ public success is described in detail by his pupil Niketas Eugeneianos in the monody he wrote for his much admired teacher.<sup>93</sup> Niketas leaves to others the presentation and evaluation of Prodromos’ remaining literary compositions, because he intends to concentrate on the deceased rhetor’s *schedography*.<sup>94</sup>

τὴν δὲ γε σχεδουργίαν ἐγὼ κρινῶ κατ’ Ἀριστείδην καὶ Σόλωνα καὶ δὴ διαγινώσκω ταύτην πεσεῖν  
 ἀπὸ βηλοῦ θεσπεσίοιο (Iliad 1.591), οὐράνιον τι χρῆμα ταύτην ἀποφαινόμενος καὶ μηδενὶ  
 τῶν κατὰ γῆν ῥαδίως παραβαλλόμενον· [...] ταύτης τοὺς χαρακτῆρας καὶ τοὺς σχηματισμοὺς καὶ  
τὴν ἠθικὴν καλλονὴν καὶ τὸν ῥυθμὸν καὶ τὴν εὐμήχανον εὐαρμοστίαν καὶ ὄργια τὰ ὑπερφυῖ καὶ  
τὴν τεραστίαν πλοκὴν καὶ νοῦν τὸν ταῦτα πάντα προσκολλῶντά τε καὶ ξυμπλάττοντα οὐκ ἀφ’  
ἐτέρων ἔσχεσ μαθῶν· [...] ἀλλὰ φρένες αἱ σαὶ σχεδουργικὸν ἐποίησαν ὄργανον καὶ οἱ λογισμοὶ  
 σου νοηματοουργὸν ψαλτήριον ἤρμοσαν, θελξίνοον—ὡς εἶποιμι—μέλπηθρον, οὐκ ἀραχνιῶν, οὐ  
 φθίνον, οὐκ ἀμαυρούμενον, ἀλλ’ ἄθλαστον ὁδοῦσι χρόνου τηρούμενον καὶ βυθῶ τῆς λήθης μὴ  
 συγχωνύμενον, προσέτι καὶ τὴν μίμησιν ἐμφαῖνον ἀμήχανον καὶ τὸ κάλλος ἔχον ἀπεριήγητον.  
 [...] τί μοι τὰ πολλά; λόγῃ γνωρίζει τοὺς Σπαρτιάτας, τὸν Ἡρακλέα ἢ λεοντῆ, τὸν Ἀχιλλέα τὰ  
 ὅπλα, σχέδη τὸν φέριστον Πρόδρομον.

<sup>92</sup> VASSIS, Graeca sunt 13–14; see also POLEMIS, Προβλήματα 278.

<sup>93</sup> The text (with its end missing) is preserved in the Scor. Y-II–10, ff. 296v–300r; it was edited by L. PETIT, Monodie de Nicéas Eugénianos sur Théodore Prodrome. *VV* 9 (1902) 446–463, esp. 452–463.

<sup>94</sup> PETIT 461.15–18 + 20–23, 461.25–462.4, 462.9–10.

In contrast to Basilakes' rather generalizing praise of his own achievement as inventor of the modern, externally and internally beautiful schedic art, Eugeneianos goes into great detail as to the form and content of Prodrornos' "heavenly" *shedourgia* (see the underlined sentence). He points to its style and syntax, its moral beauty, its rhythm, its cunning construction, its marvellous secret rites (ὄργια τὰ ὑπερφυσῆ),<sup>95</sup> its astonishing complexity and its thought (νοῦς) which connects and reshapes everything. Moreover, Eugeneianos declares that Prodrornos did not learn this kind of *shedos* from anyone; it was his own mind that created this *shedos*-like organ, his own thoughts that crafted a thought/riddle-producing psaltery.<sup>96</sup> The various terms Niketas chooses – some of which we have already seen being used to describe schedography – and the imagery of rhythm, music and instruments make it, in my opinion, clear that Prodrornos' schedographic project was perceived as highly performative. Within this project, the ἰδιῶτις γλωσσοῦσα came to play an important role, and was not something alien to the author or to the recipients of his *schede*. On the contrary, as we saw, everyday language belonged to the "cunning construction" (εὐμήχανος εὐαρμυστία) of this modern invention.

But how could such a "novel" text be composed and, more importantly, how could it be decoded by the pupils or the commissioners? Fortunately, there survives a dictionary from the second half of the twelfth century, that offers us at least one glimpse on how such *schede* were written and read. It is transmitted in the Par. gr. 400, datable to ca. 1343/44. Though it was published hundred-and-eighty years ago,<sup>97</sup> the dictionary has barely attracted the attention of scholars.<sup>98</sup> Its original heading states that the lexical material was collected to accompany the reading of the πρῶτον σχέδος, in other words, the elementary exercises of the schedographic collections.<sup>99</sup> The anonymous teacher uses the politikos stichos, a verse easy to memorize as he points out in the prologue.<sup>100</sup>

The author has organized the material alphabetically. In many lemmata he has used colloquial words. This use of colloquial words can be grouped in four categories: colloquial explanations of learned words,<sup>101</sup> two explanations for one word,<sup>102</sup> learned explanations of colloquial words,<sup>103</sup> words that refer to Byzantine *realia*.<sup>104</sup> Obviously, the first group includes the highest number of colloquial

<sup>95</sup> I understand this ritual terminology ("extraordinary secret rites/mysteries"; cf. Arist. Frogs 356 ὄργια Μουσῶν and Knights 141 ὑπερφυσῆς τέχνη) as signalling the instructional aspect of Prodrornos' *schede* by means of which pupils were initiated into the mysteries of their teacher's art. See the similar terms used by Michael Choniates in his monody on his teacher Eustathios, edited by S. P. LAMBROS, Μιχαὴλ Ἀκομινάτου τοῦ Χωνιάτου τὰ σωζόμενα: Τόμος Α'. Athens 1879, 288.21–30.

<sup>96</sup> While ὄργανον and ψαλτήριον refer to the Biblical instruments (e.g. Psalm 150.3–4: αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν ἐν ἤχῳ σάλπιγγος, αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν ἐν ψαλτηρίῳ καὶ κιθάρᾳ· αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν ἐν τυμπάνῳ καὶ χορῷ, αἰνεῖτε αὐτὸν ἐν χορδαῖς καὶ ὄργάνῳ), they were also in full use in twelfth-century Byzantium; see N. MALIARAS, Βυζαντινὰ μουσικὰ ὄργανα (*Ellenikes mousikologikes ekdoseis* 6). Athens 2007, 77–111.

<sup>97</sup> J. FR. BOISSONADE, *Anecdota graeca e codicibus regiiis*, Vol. IV. Paris 1832 (reprint Hildesheim 1962), 366–412.

<sup>98</sup> GBL<sup>2</sup> 591; HUNGER, *Hochsprachliche profane Literatur* II 24; JEFFREYS, *The Nature and Origin* 174. Quite recently, the dictionary received the extended attention of N. GAUL, Ἄνασσα Ἄννα, σκόπει – Fürstin Anna, bedenke! Beobachtungen zur Schedo- und Lexikographie in der spätbyzantinischen Provinz, in: *Zwischen Polis, Provinz und Peripherie: Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, ed. L. M. Hoffmann – A. Monchizadeh (*Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik* 7). Wiesbaden 2005, 663–703, esp. 666–693 (with substantial bibliography). For a different approach to the dictionary see P. A. AGAPITOS, *Learning to Read and Write a Schedos: The Verse Dictionary of Par. Gr. 400*, in: *Byzantine Literature and Culture*, ed. P. Odorico – S. Efthymiadis – I. D. Polemis (*Dossiers Byzantins* 16). Paris (forthcoming).

<sup>99</sup> Par. gr. 400, f. 87r: Ἀρχὴ σὺν Θεῷ τοῦ λεξικοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀντιστοιχῶν τοῦ πρώτου σχέδους, εἰς μέτρον στίχων πολιτικῶν εἰς νόησιν γραμμάτων καὶ τέχνης ἀντιστοιχῶν καὶ νόησιν λέξεων. On the *proton schedos* see GALLAVOTTI, *Nota* (as above n. 22) 5.

<sup>100</sup> LexProtSched. 19–23: Οὐ μὴν δὲ γράφομεν ἀπλῶς τὰς λέξεις δίχα στίχων, | ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐναρμόνιον σαφῶς ὀρθογραφῆσω, | εἰς δεκαπέντε συλλαβὰς τὸν στίχον περιπλέξω, | ὅπως ἀποστηθίζομεν ὡς εὐμαρῶς τῆ φύσει, | ὃ φίλε λογοῖδιστε, ἱμερόεντε λόγου.

<sup>101</sup> For example, 318 ἵππος ἐστὶ τὸ ἄλογον· ἵππεις οἱ καβαλλάροι, 351 κιθὼν ἐστὶν ἱμάτιν, 619 πεσσοὶ καὶ τὸ ταβλίον τε.

<sup>102</sup> For example, 757 στέαρ τὸ λίπος πέφυκεν, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἄξουγγιν or 901 ὠδῶδειν ῶζειεν φημί, ἤγουν πολλὰ ἐβρώμην. Single underlining indicates colloquial words, double underlining indicates "simple Attic".

<sup>103</sup> For example, 463 λίχιος ὁ οἰκεῖος, 665 πηδάλιν τὸ αὐχένιον, 793 τοπάκιον λίθος ἐντιμος.

<sup>104</sup> For example, 402 κωδίκελλος διόρθωσις ἐστὶ τῆς διαθήκης, 790 τόμος ἐστὶ κονδάκιον.

glosses, though the second group is also very interesting in offering “gradations” of linguistic idiom. However, the last two groups are a rarity, in the sense that Byzantine “everyday” phrases and terms are explained, a practice which is quite revealing for the approach to basic language instruction in a school of the twelfth century. Furthermore, we find in the dictionary various types of colloquial linguistic usage, which the author employed freely and with no indication that they constituted “barbaric” Greek.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, a number of the dictionary’s colloquial words are found in Prodrōmos’ two mixed *schede* but also in the Ptochoprodromic poems.<sup>106</sup>

It is, then, to these poems that we will briefly turn our attention, because they have been viewed, along with the *Digenis Akritis*, as the main literary manifestations of vernacular (*qua* popular) literature in the twelfth century.<sup>107</sup> Krumbacher viewed the *Ptochoprodromika* as prime examples of “popular” literature in the twelfth century, though he believed in Prodrōmos’ authorship.<sup>108</sup> This image of their popular and beggarly character is still prevalent in Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, be it in discussions of authorship and genre,<sup>109</sup> be it in literary interpretation<sup>110</sup> or evaluation of their social context.<sup>111</sup> Poem I is addressed to Emperor John Komnenos, poems III and IV to Emperor Manuel, while poem II addresses an anonymous *sebastokrator*, most probably Isaac Komnenos, John’s younger brother.<sup>112</sup> These royal addressees were also patrons of Theodore Prodrōmos.

If we step out of the current scientific paradigm, we will realize that the prologues and epilogues of the Ptochoprodromic poems, especially in the form they survive in two of the oldest manuscripts (Par. gr. 396 and Par. suppl. gr. 1034, both of the fourteenth century), display an impressive similarity to the structure, style and rhetorical strategies of Prodrōmos’ prologues and epilogues in his surviving

<sup>105</sup> For example, 291 and 835 τοῦ δένδρου, 404 καὶ φέρω πρὸς ἐμένα, 516 μείζων ὁ μεγαλύτερος, 784 Τρύφων ὄνομα ἐνί.

<sup>106</sup> For example, γούνα, βρωμῶ (ἐβρώμην), ἰμάτιν, λείζουρος, μοναστήριν, ποτῆριν, πουλίον, πρησμένος, σακούλιν, ταβλίον.

<sup>107</sup> Two critical editions have appeared: D. C. HESSELING – H. PERNOT, Poèmes prodromiques en grec vulgaire (*Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam. Afdeling Letterkunde*, N.R. 11/1). Amsterdam 1910 and H. EIDENEIER, Ptochoprodromos. Einführung, kritische Ausgabe, deutsche Übersetzung, Glossar (*Neograeca Medii Aevi* 5). Köln 1991; the latter has now been published in Greek translation and with a revised introduction and slightly revised text as IDEM, Πτωχοπρόδρομος: Κριτική έκδοση. Herakleion (Crete) 2012. It is from Eideneier’s 2012 edition that the texts will be quoted here.

<sup>108</sup> GBL<sup>1</sup> 354 = GBL<sup>2</sup> 750 (see also above n. 80). For the most recent statement against Prodrōmic authorship see EIDENEIER, Πτωχοπρόδρομος 93–99; arguments in favor of his authorship were formulated by W. HÖRANDNER, Autor oder Genus? Diskussionsbeiträge zur “Prodromischen Frage” aus gegebenem Anlass. *BSI* 54 (1993) 314–324 and D. R. REINSCH, Zu den Prooimia von (Ptocho)Prodromos III und IV. *JÖB* 51 (2001) 215–223. For a proposal to examine more closely the Ptochoprodromika with “Manganeios Prodrōmos” see RHOBY, Verschiedene Bemerkungen (as above n. 88) 329–336.

<sup>109</sup> See EIDENEIER, Ptochoprodromos 31–37 and IDEM, Πτωχοπρόδρομος 93–99, who argues for a complete disjunction with Prodrōmos’ “learned” poems, insists on authorial anonymity as a precondition for Greek “vernacular” literature, and believes in the existence of “beggar poetry” as a special genre.

<sup>110</sup> See M. KULHÁNKOVÁ, Die byzantinische Betteldichtung. Verbindung des Klassischen mit dem Volkstümlichen, in: *Imitatio – Aemulatio – Variatio* (as above n. 15) 175–180.

<sup>111</sup> A brief reference is made by P. MAGDALINO, The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180. Cambridge 1993, 341–342 in relation to education and the social status of teachers. However, no reference to the Ptochoprodromika is to be found in Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204, ed. H. Maguire. Washington, D.C. 1997; see also M. MULLETT, Did Byzantium have a court literature? In: *The Byzantine Court: Source of Power and Culture. Papers from the Second International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium* (Istanbul, 21–23 June 2010), ed. A. Ödekan – N. Nečipoglou – E. Akyürek. Istanbul 2013, 173–182, who focuses on the reign of Alexios I Komnenos and, thus, omits the Ptochoprodromika from her analysis.

<sup>112</sup> In GBL<sup>1</sup> 399 (= GBL<sup>2</sup> 805) Krumbacher proposed Andronikos Komnenos (VARZOS I 357–361; no. 76), John’s second son and husband of the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene. On the one hand, there is no attested direct relation of Prodrōmos to this Andronikos (see *CarmHist.* XLIV [405–412 HÖRANDNER] on the birth of Andronikos’ son Alexios), whereas Prodrōmos entertained stronger contacts with the *sebastokratorissa*, but after her husband’s death (see above n. 88). On the other hand, Prodrōmos wrote three poems and a short prose oration for the *sebastokrator* Isaac. The four texts were edited and commented upon by E. KURTZ, Unedierte Texte aus der Zeit des Johannes Komnenos. *BZ* 16 (1907) 69–119, while the three poems have been reedited and discussed by HÖRANDNER, Theodoros Prodrōmos 390–404 (*CarmHist.* XL–XLII). Isaac was not only a valiant military man, but also a learned writer with philosophical interests.

“historical” poems.<sup>113</sup> One might compare, for example, the opening verses of Prodromos’ CarmHist. IV of 1133 and Ptochoprodromika I (ca. 1141/42); both poems address Emperor John:<sup>114</sup>

Ἀπὸ Προδρόμου Πρόδρομος, οἰκέτης ἀπ’ οἰκέτου,  
 ἀπὸ λογίου λόγιος **ταῦτα καρποφορῶ σοι**  
 ὁ Πρόδρομος τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ τῷ χριστῷ Κυρίου,  
 ὁ δοῦλος τῷ δεσπότητι καὶ τῷ κυριαρχοῦντι,  
 ὁ λόγιος τῷ μάλιστα τιμήσαντι τὸν λόγον·  
τὸ δὲ **καρποφορούμενον** καὶ προσαγόμενόν μοι  
στίχων δεκάδες, βασιλεῦ, πολιτικῶν καὶ τούτων,  
 ὧδῆς δὲ φέρει μίμησιν ἐκάστη τῶν δεκάδων  
 τοῖς πέρασι τοῖς ἑαυτῆς συναπαρτιζομένη.  
Ἄκουε γοῦν μου τῶν ὧδῶν, ἄκουε τῶν ἀσμάτων.

Τί σοι προσοίσω, δέσποτα, δέσποτα στεφηφόρε,  
 ἀνταμοιβὴν ὅποιαν δεῖ ἡ χάριν προσενέγκω  
 ἐξισωμένην πρὸς τὰς σὰς λαμπρὰς εὐεργεσίας,  
 τὰς γινομένας εἰς ἐμὲ τοῦ κράτους σου παντοίας;  
Πρὸ τίνος ἤδη πρὸ καιροῦ καὶ πρὸ βραχείου χρόνου  
οὐκ εἶχον οὖν ὁ δύστηνος τὸ τί προσαγαγεῖν σοι  
κατάλληλον τῷ κράτει σου καὶ τῇ χρηστότητί σου  
 καὶ τῇ περηφανείᾳ σου καὶ χαριτότητί σου,  
εἰ μὴ τινὰς πολιτικούς ἀμέτρος **πάλιν** στίχους  
συνεσταλμένους, παίζοντας, ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἀναισχυντῶντας.  
παίζουσι γὰρ καὶ γέροντες, ἀλλὰ σωφρονεστέρως.  
 Μὴ οὖν ἀποχωρίσης τους μηδ’ ἀποπέμψης μᾶλλον,  
**ὡς κοδιμέντα δέξου τους,** ποσῶς ἂν οὐ μυρίζουν,  
καὶ φιλευσπλάγχχνως ἄκουσον ἄπερ ὁ τάλας λέγω.

We recognize the similarity in the rhetorical technique of approaching the emperor, where the poet establishes a relation of continuous patronage with the addressee: in the first poem he has inherited from his father the status of a learned servant to the emperor who has most energetically supported learning, in the second poem he presents his verses as a recompense for the emperor’s previous generosity. In both prologues the political verses are presented as part of a public performance (ἄκουε and ἄκουσον). The use of the adverb *πάλιν* in the second poem clearly indicates that this offer continues an already established practice of fifteen-syllable-verse poems directed to John. Moreover, the prologue of Ptochopr. I manifestly employs the notion of “prudent play” in the same manner as we found it in the dedicatory epigrams of Prodromos’ two mixed *schede*. Finally, the poet – similar to the poetological metaphor of the *schedos* as an oyster – presents his verses as fruit (καρποφορῶ, καρποφορούμενον) or spices (κοδιμέντα),<sup>115</sup> even if the latter do not actually smell, that is, they are

<sup>113</sup> HÖRANDNER, Theodoros Prodromos 65 had already pointed out that this “peritextual” material (obviously composed in a different linguistic register) should be viewed as an integral part of the poems and not as material added at a later stage of their reception, a hypothesis that had been proposed by HESSELING – PERNOT 14–24 and largely accepted until the Eighties of the previous century.

<sup>114</sup> CarmHist. IV, 1–10 (201 HÖRANDNER) and Ptochopr. I 1–14 (153 EIDENEIER).

<sup>115</sup> See *LBG* s.v. κοδιμέντον.

textual rather than vegetal “produce”. Just as Prodromos uses complex and learned techniques in his prologues, so does (Ptocho-)Prodromos use the same techniques, although they are appropriately transferred to the system of a different stylistic (*qua* humorous) register.

One might also compare the epilogues to Prodromos’ CarmHist. XVI of 1139 and Ptochoprodromika II (ca. 1145–1150). The first poem is addressed to Emperor John as he is about to leave the capital for yet another expedition against the Seljuqs, the second to the sebastokrator (Isaac):<sup>116</sup>

ἔχεις κάμῃ τὸν Πρόδρομον θερμότατον οἰκέτην  
 ἐκ τῆς ἐρήμου τῆς σκληρᾶς, τῆς ἀχμηρᾶς πενίας,  
 τῆς ἐπαράτου καὶ λυπρᾶς νῦν ἐπανήκοντά σοι,  
 ἐξ ἧς με ῥύσαι, δυσωπῶ· μισῶ γὰρ τὰς ἀκρίδας,  
 μισῶ τὸ μέλι τὸ πικρὸν, τὴν δερματίνην ζώνην  
 καὶ τὴν ἀδρᾶν περιβολὴν τὴν ἐκ τριχῶν καμήλου.  
 Φωνὴ βοῶντος πέφυκα, τί μοι καὶ ταῖς ἐρήμοις;  
 Τῇ πόλει θέλω προσλαλεῖν, τοῖς ὄχλοις ἐντυγχάνειν  
 καὶ τὰς τοῦ κράτους σου λαμπρὰς ἐκπαινίζειν νίκας,  
 αἶ σοι καὶ πληθυνθείησαν ὑπὲρ θαλάσσης ψάμμον  
 καὶ τοὺς ἀστέρας οὐρανοῦ καὶ τὰ τῶν δένδρων φύλλα.

Μὴ σὲ πλανᾷ, πανσέβαστε, τὸ Πτωχοπροδρομάτον  
 καὶ προσδοκᾷς νὰ τρέφωμαι βοτάνας ὀρειτρόφους·  
 ἀκρίδας οὐ σιτεύομαι οὐδ’ ἀγαπῶ βοτάνας,  
 ἀλλὰ μονόκυθρον παχὺν καὶ παστομαγειρείαν,  
 νὰ ἔχη θρύμματα πολλά, νὰ εἶναι φουσκωμένα,  
 καὶ λιπαρὸν προβατικὸν ἀπὸ τὸ μεσονέφριν.  
 Ἀνήλικον μὴ μὲ κρατῆς, μὴ προσδοκᾷς δὲ πάλιν  
 ὅτι, ἂν μὲ δώσης τίποτε, νὰ τὸ κακοδιοικήσω·  
 ὅμως ἐκ τῆς ἐξόδου μου καὶ σὺ νὰ καταλάβῃς  
 τὸ πῶς οἰκοκυρεύω μου τὴν ἅπασαν οἰκίαν.  
 Λοιπὸν ἢ σὺ προμήθεια συντόμως μοι φθασάτω,  
 πρὶν φάγω καὶ τὰ ἀκίνητα καὶ πέσω καὶ ἀποθάνω,  
 καὶ λάβῃς καὶ τὰ κρίματα καὶ πλημμελήματά μου,  
 καὶ τῶν ἐπαίνων στερηθῆς, ὧν εἶχες καθεκάστην.

In both poems we find the same imagery of poverty playfully based on the surname Πρόδρομος. The poet emphatically declares that, despite his name and his literary nickname, he is not a new ascetic prophet, similar to Saint John the Forerunner (Πρόδρομος), famous for living on “locusts and wild honey” in the desert (Matthew 3.1–4).

The Ptochoprodromika abound in learned references, for example, to the plays of the Aristophanic triad (Wealth, Clouds, Frogs),<sup>117</sup> while their vocabulary is partly identical to Prodromos’ mixed *schede*.<sup>118</sup> In terms of content the four poems are close to Prodromos’ two *schede*. We find topics re-

<sup>116</sup> CarmHist. XVI 218–228 (284 HÖRANDNER) and Ptochopr. II 101–114 (170 EIDENEIER).

<sup>117</sup> See ALEXIOU, The Poverty (as above n. 77) 16–19 and EADEM, Ploys of performance: Games and Play in the Ptochoprodromic Poems. *DOP* 53 (1999) 91–109.

<sup>118</sup> See, for example, ἀλαλάιν, βρωμῶ (βρομῶ), ἡγούμενος, θρύμπος (θρουμπόξυλον/ἀγιόθρουμβον), δίμιτον, ἰμάτιν, καββάδιν, κρασίον, κυπρίνος, κύρις, λιπαρὸν, μαγιωμένος, μοναστήριν, νερόν, ξηρός (ξερός), ὀσπίτιν, ποτῆριν, πρόβατον, τυρίν,

lated to grotesque everyday situations, to teaching (Ptochopr. I and III) and to monasteries (Ptochopr. IV). The main character as “narratorial” *persona* is represented as a sort of rascal or miser (Ptochopr. I, II and III). The poems and the *schede* employ the same humor and moralizing tone as part of their specific “entertainment” character.

What, then, has this brief analysis shown in relation to Krumbacher’s prevailing paradigm? As to genre, we have seen that around the middle of the twelfth century a number of authors recognized schedography as a modern invention that had turned into a literary novelty, acquiring recognizable generic characteristics. However, the points of view of these persons were not the same. Anna Komnene rejected “modernism” in favor of the “classics” as part of her conservative and aristocratic stance in criticizing the decadence of Manuel’s reign. Eustathios similarly rejected schedographic novelty because of his antiquarian attitude as a scholar and professor of rhetoric with direct imperial protection. Nikephoros Basilakes objected to the “ugly” *schedos* because he wished to promote his own beautified version of a trendy schedography. Finally, Tzetzes rejected “modernism” from his perspective of a conservative, lower-class schoolteacher with not so high connections, who insisted on sticking to the “ancient books”. However, the successful Theodore Prodromos accepted “modernism” as a middle-class private teacher of aristocratic pupils. Through his high connections he became a supporter of the imperial family’s new political image by means of a new genre. He transformed the “utilitarian” *schedos* into a short narrative text that purported to be a grammar exercise but was, in fact, a piece of playful entertainment for generously paying patrons.

As to everyday language, we saw that Anna used it for documentary purposes providing the quoted oral song with a typical school exegesis, while Eustathios showed a certain scholarly interest in everyday language and its ironic use in specific, usually grotesque, contexts. Tzetzes actually did employ colloquial discourse in abusing his competitors while vying for patronage and financial security. Prodromos, however, consciously used everyday language and elevated it to a full literary idiom as part of his “modernist” project.

The Ptochoprodromic poems, which I consider to have been originally written by Prodromos, are the final stage of a literary experiment among middle-level teachers to raise schedography to an art. The experiment begun with non-antistoichic prose or verse compositions, it moved to antistoichic *schede* with a narrative character, then to Prodromos’ mixed *schede* addressed to patrons and not to students. Finally, the experiment culminated in the Ptochoprodromika as performative poetry at the Komnenian court during the reigns of John II and Manuel I.

In my opinion, there exists no unbridgeable polarity between an “elitist” *Kunstsprache* and a “popular” *Vulgärsprache* in the twelfth century – linguistic and social categories alien to Byzantine society as a whole. All this Komnenian textual production, that covers a wide and continuous spectrum of linguistic variety, belongs to or is strongly connected with the broader aristocratic milieu at and around the imperial court. It was produced by authors who were fully versed in the “classics”. These authors responded to or even shaped the preferences of their patrons so as to produce for them texts in a novel style and a novel form that were based on the ideological and cultural codes of Byzantine education. If we are to understand this process and its implications, we will have to abandon the old paradigm and find a new one that will help us to rethink and possibly to rewrite the literary history of the twelfth century.

---

ὑποκάμισον, φασούλιον, φόλλιον, χέριον, χονδρός. There is also an obvious similarity between Tzetzes’ abusive language in the *Historiae* (see Chil. IX 214–215, quoted above) to Ptochopr. III 218–228 (the teacher cleric) and IV 549–557 (the young monk as teacher).