

A Conundrum of Cats: Pard and their Relatives in Byzantium

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THE GREEK TERM *πάρδος* or *πάρδαλις* (the “pard”) is routinely rendered as “leopard” in Classical dictionaries, while Byzantine dictionaries, considering it to have the same meaning in that period, do not define the words distinctly at all.¹ Recent examples with reference to Byzantine texts include Jeffreys’ edition of *Digenes Akrites* and the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*.² However, it is apparent that in Byzantium, the animal referred to by those terms was primarily understood to be the cheetah, rather than the leopard. It is also apparent that towards the end of Byzantium, some confusion had re-arisen as to the precise nature of the “pard.” In what follows, we consider characteristic references in Byzantine and post-Byzantine literature to the pard, and variants of the pard—the *λεόπαρδος*/*λεοντόπαρδος* “lion-pard”/“leopard” and the *κατόπαρδος* “cat-pard.”

The Classical Pard

The confusion in our interpretation of ancient names for great cats³ is understandable, given that such confusion has persisted

¹ Classical dictionaries: e.g. LSJ; A. Bailly, *Dictionnaire Grec-Français*, 16th ed. (1894) (“panthère ou léopard”). Byzantine dictionaries: e.g. Lampe (1961); E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods* (New York 1900).

² E. M. Jeffreys, *Digenes Akrites* (Oxford 1997) 319; A. Kazhdan, “Panteches, Constantine,” *ODBz* III (1991) 1572.

³ In the following I use “great cats” to include the cheetah, though properly it belongs to a distinct genus (*Acionyx*, rather than *Panthera*). The following are cited by authors’ names: A. Denis, *Cats of the World* (London 1964); R. L. Eaton,

into modern times. For example, the word "panther" survives in popular parlance to this day, and was until the twentieth century thought to be a distinct species of great cat.⁴ However, modern zoology has determined that the panther and the leopard are in fact the same species (*Panthera pardus*), with no good salient distinction between the two, and with the black panther merely a melanistic leopard.⁵ Other than consistently naming black exemplars of the species "black panthers," there was a consistent muddle between panthers and leopards by early modern naturalists:

Instead, the visiting explorers and sportsmen rapidly accepted and confirmed that there did appear to be two leopard-like beasts, and these visitors soon adopted the local distinguishing criteria—normally size of the individual animal, and sometimes very different habits. It was rarely that these visitors adopted the local names, since their culture already provided them with two alternatives, Leopard and Panther ... Unfortunately the Western sportsman or early naturalist was not at all consistent. In some parts of the huge Leopard range he applied the term Panther to the larger specimens, in other parts he reserved this name for the smaller (Turnbull-Kemp 14).

So the leopard and the panther are the same animal; and when the Latin *pardus* is glossed in the *OLD* as "a large spotted animal of the genus *Felidae*, a leopard or panther," the same animal is meant, and may be safely glossed as "leopard." This is also reflected in the leopard's scientific name; though its

The Cheetah: The Biology, Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species (New York 1974); V. H. Heptner and A. A. Sludskii, *Mammals of the Soviet Union III Carnivores (Feloidea)* (Washington 1992 [1972]); E. Miller, "Description d'une chasse à l'once par un écrivain byzantin du XII^e siècle de notre ère," *Annuaire de l'Association pour l'encouragement des études grecques* 6 (1872) 28–52; P. Turnbull-Kemp, *The Leopard* (London 1967); N. Wrogemann, *Cheetah under the Sun* (Johannesburg 1975).

⁴ As I have been reminded by an anonymous reviewer, the confusion persists; in the United States, for example, *panther* is used to refer to quite disparate felines, such as the mountain lion (*Felis concolor*) and even the bobcat (*Felis rufus*).

⁵ Turnbull-Kemp 29–30; Denis 38.

genus has varied over the generations, it has always been identified with the pard (Turnbull-Kemp 16–17): Linnaeus' original *Felis pardus*, *Panthera pardus* (1816), *Pardus panthera* (1868).

So one can assume by default that when an ancient author is speaking of a "pard," he is referring to a leopard. This is the case, for example, in Rackham's Loeb translation of the *locus classicus* referring to feline hybrids, in Pliny:

Sexual passion is strong in this species, with its consequence of quarrelsomeness in the males; this is most observed in Africa, where the shortage of water makes the animals flock to the few rivers. There are consequently many varieties of hybrids in that country, either violence or lust mating the males with the females of each species indiscriminately. This is indeed the origin of the common saying of Greece that Africa is always producing some novelty. A lion detects intercourse with a leopard [*pardi*] in the case of an adulterous mate by scent, and concentrates his entire strength on her chastisement; consequently this guilty stain is washed away in a stream, or else she keeps her distance when accompanying him (Plin. HN 8.43–44).

The same holds for Greek. Like Latin, Greek uses two terms to refer to the pard, *πάνθηρ* and *πάρδαλις/πάρδος*; the first term need not detain us here, and the identity of panther and pard—at most different races of leopard—is assumed by modern zoologists.⁶ The *πάρδαλις* is first mentioned in the *Iliad*, as a ferocious beast (17.20), and its pelt is described as "dappled" (10.30). References to both properties persist in ancient Greek literature—e.g. Aesop *Fable* 12 on the pard's pelt, or Plato *Laches* 196E on the proverbial repute of the pard as a brave beast. It is especially frequent for the pard to be mentioned together with the bear, the lion, or the boar, as an exemplar of a wild beast.⁷ So ostensibly the Greek pard was a leopard, and that is how *πάρδαλις* is glossed in the 1940 LSJ.

⁶This identity was already posited by Bartholomeus Anglicus in the thirteenth century: "The perde varieth not fro the pantera, but the pantera hath moo white speckes" (cited in T. H. White, *The Book of Beasts* [London 1954] 13).

⁷*Od.* 4.457, Semonides 14, Pl. *Lach.* 196E, Xen. *Cyr.* 1.4.7, 1.6.28, Callisthenes *GGrHist* 124 τ 18a.

The form *πάρδος* is not attested before I A.D., and is recorded in LSJ as “a later form of *πάρδαλις*.”⁸ The first definite instance of *πάρδος* is in Aelian *N.A.* 1.31 (II–III A.D.; once, against 31 instances of *πάρδαλις* in his corpus). The works containing the “contemporary” instances of *πάρδος* associated with Apollonius of Tyana (I A.D.; *Apotel.* 1377, *De horis* 7.177.24)⁹ and Alexander of Aphrodisias (II–III A.D.; *Probl.* 3.17.11) are known to be spurious, and their actual date of authorship is unknown; so they need not be considered.

There is a second candidate to identify the *pard* with, however: the cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*). We know from contemporary vases that Classical Athenians kept cheetahs as pets,¹⁰ and the cheetah is in its gross physiognomy similar to a leopard, though of a lankier build.¹¹ Though I do not pursue the issue in any greater detail here, there is reason to suspect that the ancient Greeks called any spotted great cat either panther or *pard* (*πάνθηρ*, *πάρδαλις*), without any further refinement. This conflation is reflected in modern lexicography; the English word *cheetah* is not even to be found as a gloss in LSJ.¹² The earlier *Intermediate Liddell-Scott* (1899), however, still hedges its bets

⁸H. Frisk, *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg 1970) *s.v.* *πάρδαλις*, characterises the Latin *pardus* as a reverse formation from *πάρδαλις*, and suspects that *πάρδος* itself might be a loan back from Latin.

⁹Bibliographical information on post-Classical works is given at the end of the paper.

¹⁰A. Ashmead, “Greek Cats,” *Expedition* 20.3 (1977–78) 38–47. D. Engels, *Classical Cats: The Rise and Fall of the Sacred Cat* (London 1999) 174–175, points out that many such felines assumed to be cheetahs are probably domestic cats, although he agrees that tame cheetahs would have been widespread in Athens.

¹¹Engels (*supra* n.10) 58 sees in Sophocles’ *Trackers* (fr.314.303 Radt) a reference to cheetahs. Anne Mahoney, in her on-line translation for the Perseus Project (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/>), translates “Was it like a cat, or rather a leopard?” (*ὡς αἰέλουρος εἰκάσαι πέφυκεν ἢ τὼς πόρδαλις*): the Chorus is trying to guess the animal Cyllene is describing, which turns out to be a tortoise. So this reference is not necessarily to a domestic great cat: leopards were quite well known in Classical Greece.

¹²Using the Perseus Project’s reverse dictionary: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/engreek?lang=greek>.

with the gloss “the pard, whether leopard, panther, or ounce”—where *ounce* is an obsolete term for “cheetah.”¹³

There is some evidence to suggest that the ancient Greeks understood the cheetah, as well as the leopard, to be a pard. In Byzantium, this evidence becomes overwhelming, and is considered in some detail below.

The Classical Leo-Pard

If the *πάρδος* is a leopard, then what was the animal named by the ancients as a leo-pard? The ancients certainly thought it was a distinct (though lesser) beast; they may have unnecessarily differentiated leopards into pards and panthers, but it is confusing to find the *λεοντόπαρδος* in its sundry guises (*leopardalis/leopardus/λεόπαρδος/λεοντόπαρδος*) defined as a leopard as well (as is done in the *OLD* and *LSJ*). Turnbull-Kemp (150) suspects the original “lion-pard” was a cheetah or a lion cub:

It is still hard to understand how this gross confusion between variants of the Leopard could have crept into bestiaries, although fairly modern zoologists were equally muddle-pated. As noted earlier, it is possible that Cheetahs (slimmer, more lightly-built, and with solid—not eye-like spots) might have been considered inferior to large specimens of the real Leopard. Again clumsy and rather oaf-like lion cubs, with their dim spots and frequent stupidity, might have been thought to have been inferior adult animals—and, in primitive captivity, they may have stood little chance of survival to a maturity which would have disproved the assumption that they were already adult. In defence of the early authors and naturalists it does seem

¹³In contemporary usage, *ounce* is used to refer to the snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*). However, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*s.v.* *ounce* II) lists as its primary definition “A name originally given to the common lynx, afterwards extended to other species, and still sometimes applied in America to the Canada lynx and other species. From 16th c. applied to various other small or moderate-sized feline beasts, vaguely identified.” (Turnbull-Kemp [68] concurs that “in historical times it [*ounce*] has been applied to many of the cat-like animals, and its use is hardly to be recommended.”) In particular, the *OED* adds, as an obsolete definition of *ounce*, “Applied to the Cheetah or Hunting Leopard, this being at first confounded with the ounce of Buffon” (that is, the snow leopard, identified as a distinct species by Buffon in 1761).

probable that, side-by-side, a full-grown male forest Leopard, a small female Leopard, a well and solid-spotted Leopard cub, a Cheetah, and a strongly spotted Lion cub would give rise to all kinds of confusion and might lead to descriptions of five distinct animals. Such descriptions could be passed about by word of mouth, or be drawn up from the crumbling wells of fragmentary documents written in ill-understood language.

Denis also identifies both the ancient leo-pard and the panther with the cheetah; Sterndale only the former.¹⁴ Sterndale further identifies the "leopard" of Habbakuk (1:8: "their horses also are swifter than the leopards," LXX *παρδάλεις*) with the cheetah—"for the pard [*Felis pardus* = leopard] is not a swift animal, whereas the speed of the other [*Felis jubata* = cheetah] is well known." Sterndale believes the notion of the leo-pard as a hybrid originated because the cheetah has a short mane.¹⁵ Since the cheetah is known not to breed readily in captivity, the ancients may have devised the notion that the cheetah originates only in miscegenation, and considered it akin to the mule: "The ancients considered the cheetah as a bastard originating in the crossing of a male panther with a lioness, because it is the only feline which does not reproduce in captivity."¹⁶

The word itself appears quite late in Greek: *λεόπαρδος* appears first in Ignatius of Antioch (I-II A.D.), and *λεοντόπαρδος* in a version of the *Alexander Romance* no earlier than V A.D., and quite possibly as late as Comnenan Byzantium (XI-XII).¹⁷ The distinction between cheetah and leopard, if that it be, is not Classical but Roman: it is a distinction foreign to the Greek Classical era.

¹⁴Denis 63; R. A. Sterndale, *Natural History of the Mammalia of India and Ceylon* (New Delhi 1982 [1884]) 175.

¹⁵Sterndale (*supra* n.14) 176, 200; Eaton 22; Heptner/Sludskii 705.

¹⁶*Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια Ἑλλάδος* (Athens 1959) s.v. κυνάλουρος.

¹⁷*λεόπαρδος*: Ignatius 4.5.1. (The instance ostensibly in the III B.C. scholar Aristophanes of Byzantium is actually a citation of the VI A.D. scholar Timothy of Gaza, included in Constantine Porphyrogenitus' X A.D. redaction of Aristophanes' zoölogical writings.) *λεοντόπαρδος*: *Alexander Romance* β (Paris + Messina) 3.29. See discussion on both passages below.

So we already have an ancient confusion: a *πάρδος* (and a panther) was primarily a leopard, but probably also a cheetah; a *λεόπαρδος* was probably a cheetah, but possibly also a lion cub.

The Middle Byzantine Pard

The words for pard continued in use in Byzantium—both in the Classical guise of *πάρδαλις*, and the Latin-influenced, colloquial form *πάρδος*. But where the pard in antiquity is difficult to identify, matters are more straightforward for its Byzantine counterpart—though modern scholarship has not always displayed awareness of it.

The *πάρδαλις* was extensively used in Byzantium for hunting.¹⁸ For instance, in the twelfth century Constantine Pantechnes wrote a description of a hunt using pards. In the century before that, Theodore Balsamon says, in his commentary on the canon law forbidding the consumption of “strangled meats” (*πνικτὰ κρέατα*; cf. Acts 15:29),

How meats hunted and suffocated by hunting birds, hounds, or pards can be eaten by some, I know not. This law should be noted by the Latins, who eat strangled meats indifferently.¹⁹

Though *πάρδαλις* is accepted as meaning “leopard” in antiquity, Pantechnes and Balsamon are unlikely to be speaking of a leopard, which is quite difficult to tame, as specialists repeatedly attest. Turnbull reports that

here the beast shows a radical difference to the true Leopard, which has seldom been used for serious and regular hunting excursions in company with man.²⁰

¹⁸Ph. Koukoules, “Κυνηγετικά ἐκ τῆς ἐποχῆς τῶν Κομνηνῶν καὶ τῶν Παλαιολόγων,” *EpefByz* 9 (1932) 3–33 (see 6, 12, 27), and Βυζαντινῶν Βίος καὶ Πολιτισμός (Athens 1947–55) V 413–414.

¹⁹G. A. Rallis and M. Potlis, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων* (Athens 1852–59) II 81.

²⁰Turnbull-Kemp 71; see also Denis 42 (leopards), 63 (cheetahs); Sterndale (*supra* n.14) 178. So too the twelfth-century Syrian hunter Usāma ibn Munqidh, *An Arab-Syrian Gentleman and Warrior in the Period of the Crusades*, transl. P.

As a detailed examination of Pantechnes' text makes clear (see Appendix), the "hunting leopard," namely the cheetah, is meant instead. Cheetahs were widely used in hunting in Asia—and, in the late Middle Ages, Western Europe as well;²¹ the first attestation of cheetah coursing in Western Europe is in the court of Frederick II (1197–1250), where they were referred to as *leopardi*.²² As Pantechnes makes clear, cheetah coursing was already well established in Byzantium by that time.

Indeed, the association of pards and cheetahs was so entrenched in Byzantium, that the use of the name "pard" to refer to the cheetah was transmitted from Byzantium to Russia. While the Russian for leopard was *bars* until recently, the cheetah goes under the name of either *gepard* or *pardus*.²³ "The first name is bookish, artificial, and borrowed from contemporary western languages [French *guépard*, German *Gepard*], while the second is old Russian and encountered in chronicles."²⁴ Note that the word that entered Russian is the vernacular *πάρδος*, not the learned *πάρδαλις*. This means that

K. Hitti (New York 1929) 141: "It is well-nigh impossible to get a leopard to become familiar with human beings or to act tamely in their presence"—his anecdote about a "tractable" leopard presents an exception that proves the rule.

²¹ Denis 63; G. H. Pournelle, "The Cheetah—Associate of Aristocracy," *Zoonooz* 37.5 (1964) 3–7.

²² Miller 35–37. *Leopardi* was also the term Marco Polo used to refer to Kublai Khan's cheetahs (Pournelle [*supra* n.21] 3). Miller distinguishes between the *guépard* and the *once* (Farsi *yūz*) in his account; there is no reason to doubt that both refer to the cheetah. While *guépard* is Modern French for "cheetah," the word *once* currently refers to the snow leopard (the word is derived from the Latin for "lynx," as *lunceā* > *lonce* > *l'once*). However, there is a long history of the ounce and the cheetah being conflated, as already noted. As for the Farsi *yūz*, that is glossed by F. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary* (London 1988 [1892]) *s.v.*, as "A small panther or ounce, especially that used in hunting deer, a cheeta" (*sic*).

²³ Heptner/Sludskii 203.

²⁴ Heptner/Sludskii 702; details of the appearance of the *pardus* in the chronicles, from 964 on, are given at 729–730. As they point out, the Russians could have learned of cheetah hunting from the Khazars, Arabs, and Kumans, as well as the Byzantines.

the word was not borrowed as an erudite construction, but reflected an everyday reality.²⁵

None of the references to hunting pards adduced by Koukoules in his studies on Byzantine realia dates from before the tenth century. The one potential exception is a VI A.D. plate depicting an animal on a leash:²⁶ the animal looks as much like a mastiff as a cheetah, and is not depicted actually hunting—it is likelier to be a participant in circus games, and Koukoules is careful only to refer to it as a pard led by a *παρδαλαγωγός* “pard-tamer.”²⁷ The earliest evidence for the Byzantine use of the pard in hunting comes from a X A.D. manuscript illustration,²⁸ and from Old Russian (which was already using *pardus* in 964). Heptner and Sludskii (728) admittedly claim that “hunting with cheetahs began to be practiced in southern Europe from the fifth century A.D. (Byzantium) and possibly earlier,” but do not provide any justification for their claim. It is not at all obvious that cheetah-hunting continued uninterrupted through the Byzantine Dark Ages, and I have seen nothing to indicate it.

Cheetah coursing was clearly not an indigenous tradition in Byzantium. Miller, in fact, denies that cheetah-coursing was known to the ancients at all (33). (Aelian *N.A.* 6.2—not 13.10, as Miller has it—reports only an attempt to tame a *πάρδαλις* with dubious success.) While Miller says he “does not know” whether emperor Manuel Comnenus (1143–1180), a notorious hunter, introduced cheetah coursing to Byzantium, he strongly hints that it was so (45). Just as the Comnenans had imported jousting from the West, the Comnenan or (more likely) the preceding Macedonian dynasty may have imported cheetahs and coursing from the East. Cheetah coursing was well estab-

²⁵The identity of *πάρδαλις* and *πάρδος* is confirmed in Pantechnes, who refers to the pard-trainer as both *παρδαλαγωγός* and *παρδοκόμος*.

²⁶H. Peirce and R. Tyler, *L'art byzantin* (Paris 1932–34) I pl. 177.

²⁷Koukoules, *Βυζαντινῶν Βίος* V 388.

²⁸Seraglio Octateuch: F. Uspenskij, ed., *Konstantinopol'skij Seral'skij Kodeks Vos'miknizhija* (Russkago arxeologicheskago instituta v Konstantinopolje, Izvestij 12 [Munich 1907]) Pl. XIII no. 40; cf. Koukoules, “Κυνηγετικά” 27.

lished in the Middle East, and a twelfth-century Syrian hunting autobiography (Usāma ibn Munqidh's *Book of Exhortations*) details the use of the cheetah in hunting.²⁹

At any rate, "cheetah" seems to have been the primary denotation of πάρδος through the Comnenan era (XI–XII). This appears to be confirmed in Byzantius' 1874 dictionary of Modern Greek, though the entry is rambling and encyclopaedic enough to give a cook's tour of all the sundry Greek names for cats:

Ῥῆσος, ζ. Λύγξ -υγκός και υγγός (ό), λυκοπάνθηρ. loup-cervier, lynx, rich; guépard (κυρ. τό Τουρκ. Καρακουλάκι), πάνθηρ, πάρδος και πάρδαλις (τὰ τρία ταῦτα ὀνόματα δίδονται ἀπροσδιορίστως εἰς τρία ὁμοφυῆ μέν, πλὴν ὅμως ἕτερογενῆ ζῷα). panthère, θ. (αὐτὴ εἶνε κυρ. ἢ πάρδαλις τῶν ἀρχαίων), once (αὐτός εἶνε ὁ πάρδος τῶν παλαιῶν), léopard (τό δέρμα τοῦτων εἶνε τό ὠραιότερον.) (ό) Πάνθηρ (τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους φαίνεται ὅτι εἶνε ὁ) adive.

ρήσος zool. λύγξ, λυγκός or λυγγός (masc.), wolf-panther. loup-cervier, lynx, rich [?]; guépard [cheetah] (lit. the Turkish Karakulak [caracal]), πάνθηρ, πάρδος and πάρδαλις (these three names are given indiscriminately to three animals of the same nature, but of different breeds). panthère (fem.) [panther] (this is lit. the ancients' πάρδαλις), once [cheetah] (this is the πάρδος of the old-timers), léopard [leopard] (whose skin is the fairest). The πάνθηρ (of Aristotle seems to be the) adive [?].³⁰

Despite some confusions (the caracal has nothing to do with the cheetah, and the *adive* appears to be a misprint), the distinction between "ancients" and "old-timers" (παλαιῶν) seems to indicate awareness of the Byzantine association of pards with cheetahs.

The Late Byzantine Pard

It is not clear that the Comnenan familiarity with cheetahs still held for Palaeologan noblemen (XIII–XV A.D.): none of the allusions to hunting pards found by Koukoules dates from after

²⁹Supra n.20: 236–238.

³⁰S. D. Byzantius, Λεξικὸν τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς ἑλληνικῆς διαλέκτου μεθερμηνευμένης εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἑλληνικὸν καὶ τὸ γαλλικόν³ (Athens 1874).

the Fourth Crusade. Pardes figure in several vernacular Greek texts associated with the Palaeologan era; but none of them offers incontrovertible evidence for cheetah coursing as a living art during that time. Thus, *Digenes Akrites'* dowry of cheetahs is found in all versions of the eponymous poem except for the late Oxford rhymed version: *twelve choice pardes* (πάρδους), *proven* (*Digenes* P 361); *twelve choice pardes* (πάρδους), *most proven* (*Digenes* Z 2221); *twelve choice leopards* (πάρδους) *from Syria* (*Digenes* E 1073),³¹ *twelve well-proven hunting leopards* (*Digenes* G 4.904 παρδαλοκυνηγοί, "pard-hunters"; so glossed also in Trapp's edition [*Digenes* Z] p.390 as *Jagd leopard*). The reference must therefore date from the poem's archetype—i.e. from Comnenan times: it does not provide evidence of anything Palaeologan. The pard reappears in *Digenes* E 1653—and *set up figures of animals, made of solid gold and silver, lions, leopards and eagles, partridges and neraïdes*; but there it turns up in a perfunctory listing of statuary, and is exotic enough to keep the company of water fairies (νεράδας).

The other major late evidence for hunting pardes in Byzantium are the late, vernacular prose versions of the *Alexander Romance*. (The *Alexander Romance* in its earliest versions dates from late antiquity; it was popular in Byzantium, and appeared in vernacular prose redactions in the sixteenth and seventeenth century.) These versions speak explicitly of pardes in conjunction with hunting. The late prose references are as follows:

1. F 56, E 56, V 71, Φ 126 describe the booty Alexander was given by the Babylonians in Darius' court: "100 lions with silver and gold chains, 1,000 pardes of the hunt (τοῦ κυνηγιῶ), and 500 Arabian steeds" (F). This passage is absent from the prototype of the late prose versions, *Alexander Romance* ε (VI A.D.).
2. F 71, V 79 again speaks of Darius' booty: "1,000 hunting falcons, 500 lions of the hunt trained, and 1,400 trained pardes of the hunt." (F; E 71 speaks of "500 lions of the hunt and another 1,000 trained.") Again, this is extraneous to ε.

³¹The translation of versions E and G is from Jeffreys, *Digenes*.

3. F 86, E 86, Φ 191 refer to Alexander hunting down the One-Legged Monsters: "And thus his army surrounded the mountain, 200,000 men, and they released the hounds and the pards, and caught some and brought them to Alexander" (F). In ε 35.2, Alexander encounters the One-Legged Monsters, but does not give chase to them.

4. F 103, E 103, V 82, Φ 214 describe the booty Alexander took from Porus: "And they brought him 10,000 lions, which Porus the King hunted, and 20,000 pards and a thousand gold-plated whole (E: ready) chariots" (F). V at this point has "10,000 lions of the hunt and 20,000 pards"; F has "10,000 lions, which Porus used to hunt, and 20,000 hunting pards." The description is again absent from ε.

To these one may add an earlier, Koine instance:

5. β (Paris + Messina) 3.29 has king Candaules of India say "I went out to hunt, wishing some entertainment with my wife, heading to the countryside, having with me 500 lads with leo-pards, hounds, and hawks." This example is from a rather earlier tradition of the romance—dated to IV A.D., and it terms the animals leo-pards (λεοντοπάρδων) rather than pards. In recension α 3.19 and β (synoptic) 3.19, the established versions of the text at that point, Candaules is heading to perform a ritual for the Amazons, and there is no mention of hunting.

Although references to pards abound throughout the history of the *Alexander Romance* (mainly in the guise of *πάρδαλις*), the vernacular redaction in which these references involve hunting, and the vernacular name *πάρδος*, is not any older than the thirteenth century—*i.e.* it is post-Comnenan.³² The hunting-pard references are consistently interpolations into the older redactions, ε and β. Thus, the addition of hunting pards to these redactions is likewise post-Comnenan; it was unknown to the early Byzantine redactors of ε and the late Roman redactors of β, and reflects a worldview informed by the thirteenth century. The manuscripts giving the reading in instance (5) date from the fifteenth century; the version they transmit is quite old, and the

³²A. Lolos and V. L. Konstantinopoulos, edd., *Pseudo-Kallisthenes: Zwei mittelgriechische Prosa-Fassungen des Alexanderromans* (Königstein 1983) I 27.

telltale mention of falconry suggests Comnenan intervention, but post-Comnenan authorship still cannot be ruled out.

But though the mention of pards (πάρδος) is of recent origin in the *Romance*, the text is not consistently clear that the pards are hunters rather than hunted. (1) and (5) are obviously about cheetahs giving chase; but the other passages show that "of the hunt" is ambiguous between "hunting" and "hunted"; it is doubtful that lions were trained to hunt, and (4) shows that "of the hunt" could mean "hunted," in manuscript V. So the scribes may have become confused in their interpolations between cheetahs as hunters and leopards as prey.

Furthermore, the pards are placed in a fabulous domain—the courts of Darius and Porus. The Moguls of India were well known for their use of cheetahs, and the use of cheetahs in the late *Alexander Romance* is clearly intended as exotic colour; it does not mean the redactor had actually ever seen one. Even if he had, the origin of the allusion would be close at hand: cheetahs were used by the Ottomans for hunting.³³ And Mitsakis, in his edition of an abridged version of the *Romance*, believes there are enough Turco-Persian words in the late prose *Romance* to suspect its redactor was from Asia Minor—*i.e.* residing in a Turkish rather than Byzantine domain.³⁴ A writer in Asia Minor presumably had a better chance of seeing hunting cheetahs in the fourteenth or fifteenth century than a writer in Constantinople. So although the references to hunting pards were clearly inserted into the text after the Comnenan era, the *Alexander Romance* is no more reliable as evidence of Palaeologan cheetah coursing: the reference might easily be Ottoman, deliberately exotic, or merely a reminiscence of Comnenan times.

The apparent fading of cheetahs from the Palaeologan scene

³³A. Pallis, *In the Days of the Janissaries* (London 1951) 202.

³⁴K. Mitsakis, "Διήγησις περὶ τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ τῶν Μεγάλων Πολέμων: Ἀνέκδοτη περὶ διασκευὴ τοῦ Βυζαντινοῦ Μυθιστορήματος τοῦ Μεγ. Ἀλεξάνδρου ἀπὸ τὸν κώδικα 236 τῆς Μονῆς Κουτλουμουσίου," *Byz. und Neugr. Jahrb.* 20 (1970) 228–301 at 261.

reflected in these texts is curious. The Palaeologans may have been too poor to hunt with cheetahs—although then again, if Andronicus III (1328–1341) is said to have had 1,500 hounds and 1,000 falcons,³⁵ they may not have been. The Palaeologans would also not have had access to the regions where the cheetah or the leopard were indigenous (southern Anatolia for the leopard, Persia for the cheetah)³⁶—though if the imperial coffers were full enough, they might just have imported the beasts for that purpose, as was taking place in Western Europe around that time. Still, it is not as certain for the fourteenth century that a Byzantine would have had a cheetah in mind as a pard as it would be in the twelfth.

So hunting pards (cheetahs) are not certain to have still been employed by Byzantines in the Palaeologan era. Likewise, hunting *for* pards (whether cheetahs or leopards), though attested in Comnenan times,³⁷ is not attested for certain in Late Byzantium. The *Vita of the Esteemed Donkey* (38) has the Donkey threaten his adversaries with his master's Lombard (Italian) hounds and falcons pursuing bears, boars, lions, and pards (παρδάλοι). But lions were already scarce in Byzantine territory by Comnenan times,³⁸ and the *Vita* seems to have been written

³⁵Koukoules, *Βυζαντινῶν Βίος* V 394, citing Pseudo-Sphrantzes p.182.

³⁶Leopard: Turnbull-Kemp 4. The cheetah certainly was not to be found in Thrace, the only region the emperor had access to by that time for recreational purposes. Turkish tourist officials claim there are populations of "Anatolian cheetahs" in the Dilek Peninsula National Park near Aydin (<http://www.about-turkey.com/aydin.htm>), and Sterndale (*supra* n.14) 200 claims the cheetah is found "throughout Asia Minor." However, no other past or present authority does so (Eaton 18), and both Wrogemann 115 and Heptner/Sludskii 712 exclude Asia Minor from their map of the past and present range of the animal. Today the Asian cheetah is reported to survive only in scattered locations in Iran and Afghanistan; but its extirpation from the Middle East is relatively recent (Eaton 19). This means that in all likelihood the Comnenans had to import cheetahs, and would not have found them locally in Asia Minor. One wonders, all the same, where the Classical Athenians got their pet cheetahs from (Ashmead [*supra* n.10]), if they had to be sought even back then as far away as Persia.

³⁷Koukoules, "Κυνηγετικά" 32–33; e.g. Theodore Prodromus, *Historische Gedichte*, ed. W. Hörander (Vienna 1974) 4.82–83.

³⁸The European lion was extinct by 100 A.D.; the lion was to be seen in Azerbaijan and Southern Georgia (Transcaucasia) only up to the tenth century, and

in Western-held Greece, so that the reference is probably merely literary rather than factual. (Italian hounds and falcons are an odd mix with lions and leopards.) Significantly, the later *Fair Tale of the Donkey, the Wolf, and the Fox*, in most regards an expansion of the *Vita*, omits verse 38. Presumably by 1539, when the *Fair Tale* was published, the hunting of pards had become too much of a distant memory even to mention.

There is one context in which we can be reasonably sure Palaeologans remained aware of pards, however. Pseudo-Codinus' *De Officiis*, a treatise on court ceremony, seems to have been compiled for the most part during the reign of John VI Cantacuzene (1347–1354). It speaks of the *παρδοβάγιοι*, the pard-carers, who are entitled to enter and leave the palace on horseback (p.287). The work's editor believes "this is an allusion to the presentation of animals during the celebrations accompanying the imperial wedding."³⁹ So pards (either leopards or cheetahs) were still to be seen on show.⁴⁰ And in

the last lion in Palestine was killed in the thirteenth century. However, lions survived in Iran until 1942 (or 1930), and though they were long extinct in western Asia Minor, they were still to be sighted in easternmost Asia Minor up to the mid-nineteenth century (E. R. Ricciuti, *The Wild Cats* [New York 1979] 34; Heptner/Sludskii 87, 90; Munqidh (*supra* n.20) reports frequent run-ins with them in Syria). Given the presence of lions on the border with Mesopotamia and Syria, the Byzantines may still have undertaken lion-hunts in the early eleventh century, before the loss of eastern Asia Minor at Mantzikert. By the time of the *Vita of the Esteemed Donkey*, of course, lion-hunts were merely a fabulous reminiscence.

³⁹ An alternative manuscript reading, accepted in Du Cange, *Glossarium ad scriptores mediae et infimae Graecitatis* (1688) s.v. and the previous edition of the work—I. Bekker, *Codini Curopalatae De officialibus Palatii c'politani et de officiis magnae ecclesiae liber* (Bonn 1839)—is *παρδόβαλλοι*. Du Cange interprets this as *Curatores Pardorum* "pard-carers," in the light of *παρδοβάγιοι*. Bekker interprets it as *venatores pardorum* "pard-hunters"; but the annotations in his own edition prefer the *παρδοβάγιοι* reading. Whether as pard-carers or pard-hunters, Ps.-Codinus' testimony shows that pards were still known to Palaeologan Byzantines—but would probably not have been seen by most of them very often.

⁴⁰ Koukoules, Βυζαντινῶν Βίος III 253, claims that leopards and other wild beasts were on show in Constantinople throughout Byzantium; but he bases this on the fact that Baron Waclav Wratislaw of Mitrowitz saw them in Constantinople in the 1590s—in affluent Ottoman Constantinople: "We saw also, in Constantinople, wild beasts of various nature and form; lynxes and wild cats, leopards, bears, and lions, so tame and domesticated, that they are

this instance, the vernacular stem *πάρδ-* rather than the Classical *πάρδαλ-* has been used; the term thus reflects an extant fact of life, rather than a literary fiction or conventional appellation.

The evidence suggests that, in the final century of Byzantium, hunting pards were known in Byzantium by reputation rather than observation; but pards themselves (leopards or cheetahs) could still be sighted on occasion in Constantinople.

The Brave Pard

The instances of the pard seen until now clearly involve hunting and the cheetah; the presence of the vernacular *πάρδος* alongside the learned *πάρδαλις* show that the pard as cheetah was commonly known in Middle Byzantium. There is also evidence, as we have just seen, that the cheetah was not as well known in Late Byzantium, becoming an object of hearsay or occasional ceremonial sightings, rather than an accustomed hunting companion. This would lead to a distorted popular perception of the pard. Several mentions of the pard in late vernacular Greek literature do indeed point to such distortion.

For instance, the pard was proverbially brave in Late Byzantium. References to the brave pard are frequent in late mediaeval vernacular literature: "for I'm the mighty pard, brave past measure" (*Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds* 870, ca 1364); "the man invested with the rank of Captain, who has a soul like a pard" (Trivolis, *Tagiapièra* 9, 1520); "Whoever has a heart like a pard should not pay attention to a woman's doings, for magnanimity calls for virile acts" (Falieros, *Words of Counsel*

led up and down the city by chains and ropes" (Vaclav Wratislaw, *Adventures of Baron Wenceslas Wratislaw of Mitrowitz*, ed. A. H. Wratislaw [London 1862] 70). If Cantacuzene did put on animal shows in Constantinople, he may well have been the last Byzantine emperor able to afford to. Whereas the Byzantines had pard-keepers, the Ottomans had distinct guilds of both leopard-keepers and lion-keepers: Evliya Çelebi, *Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa in the Seventeenth Century* by Evliya Efendi, ed. J. von Hammer (New York 1968 [1834]) I.2 205. So the Ottomans had the means to import lions, which the late Byzantines do not seem to have done.

262, 1420s); “he circled like an eagle, mangled like a pard (*Achilleid* N 1398, XV A.D.); “he roared like a lion, growled (ἐμούκρῖσεν) like a pard” (*Achilleid* O 525, XV A.D.); “he roared like a lion, leapt like a pard” (*Achilleid* O 560, XV A.D.); “he moaned like a pard (!) (ὡς πάρδαλις ἐγόγγυζεν), and roared like a lion” (*Chronicle of the Tocco* 3385, 1420s).

Such bravery is a characteristic of the leopard, but not the rather more docile cheetah.⁴¹ The cheetah in the wild is not particularly effective in warding off other predators, and is liable to be driven off even by vultures.⁴² As for its behaviour in captivity, Constantine Pantechnes paints a convincing portrait of the cheetah cowering before the admonitions of its tamer (see Appendix). The proverbial identification of the pard as brave, if the cheetah is still meant, certainly shows that the Late Byzantines had no experience of the behaviour of cheetahs in the wild or in the hunt. Even the reference to the cheetah’s growling is suspect. Pantechnes was aware that the cheetah produced “something like a roar” (see Appendix): rather than roar like the great cats proper, the cheetah normally chirps or purrs (Wrogemann 7). For the author of the *Achilleid* to mention the pard’s vocalization in the same breath as the lion’s can only mean he could not have had a real cheetah in mind.

What is far likelier as an explanation is that the pard was once more being associated with the leopard. Since hunting cheetahs would seem to have no longer been commonplace in Byzantium, once again the pard became an exotic wild cat. In that case, it would have been as likely to refer to the leopard as the cheetah.⁴³ Neither was by this stage native to Byzantine

⁴¹Pournelle (*supra* n.21) 5: “rather mild-natured and fairly easily tamed when captured young.”

⁴²Eaton 124–125; Wrogemann 46–49, 104–106.

⁴³The conflation of the two seems to have already been in place in antiquity, as discussed above, and indeed may never have been effaced. Contemporary Arabs, by contrast, routinely made the distinction; Munqidh (*supra* n.20) 141, for instance, can tell that a “Frank” is trying to sell him a leopard [*namir*], passing it off as a cheetah [*fahd*].

territory, but the leopard at least is still indigenous to southern Anatolia (Turnbull-Kemp 4), and the Ottomans were using leopard skins—the Ottoman emir Orhan sent John VI Cantacuzene (1347–1354) presents including horses, hounds, and leopard skins (παρδάλεων δοράς: Cantacuzene I 447). The Byzantines by this stage would presumably have been getting similar reports on wild cats from Westerners, and the learned among them would have obtained corroboration on what the pard was from the ancient descriptions of pards available to them—the instance in Revelation 13:2 (καὶ τὸ θηρίον ὃ εἶδον ἦν ὅμοιον παρδάλει, “And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard”) presumably capturing their imagination the most.

The Short-tailed Pard

The evidence for what the Palaeologans made of the pard from the fourteenth-century vernacular Greek poem *Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds* is even more ambiguous. The pard in that poem is described at some length; but what is given does not match expectation:

and close to him he had two chief advisors—
the cheetah and the leopard, those defamers (21–22).⁴⁴

[...]

Cheetah and leopard then arrived on stage,
telling each other “I’m the better one!,”
baring their teeth, and waiting each in ambush.
But then impetuously the cheetah spoke,
and uttered to the leopard what here follows: (860–864)

[...]

“Now me—my gallantry goes with the name;
for I’m the mighty cheetah, brave past measure,
able to overpower any beast.

In just two bounds, or three at times, I reach
and pin down any animal I chase.

⁴⁴I am citing the forthcoming translation by myself and George Baloglou of the poem. In this translation, *cheetah* corresponds to *πάρδος*, and *leopard* to *λεοντόπαρδος*.

I clench it with my claws, to stop it fleeing,
 and then I eat it to my heart's content.
 Whatever's left, I leave there and depart,
 and any other passing beast consumes it.
 Also my skin is valued by the sultans,
 the knights and noblemen and great emirs,
 who cover both their seats and couches with it,
 and place it on their mattresses and pillows;
 for anywhere it lies, no flea will land."

The leopard answered back to him as follows:

"No point in bragging, motley, short-tailed beast,
 about your strength, about your bounds and claws [...]" (869–885)

We have already seen that the pard's claim to "overpower any beast" does not match the cheetah's behaviour in the wild. In fact, the author of the *Entertaining Tale* himself shows up the cheetah, having him kicked and gored by the buffalo within an inch of his life (1028–1030). But that is not the only puzzling feature of this description. Although most animals in the poem are described extensively in terms of their uses to humanity, the *Entertaining Tale* does not even mention that the pard is used in hunting—though the description of how it seizes prey echoes Pantechnes' ("with swift-turning bounds not more than two or three in number"). Instead, the pard is singled out for the use of its pelt on couches. This could refer to cheetahs, but is likelier to refer to leopards—the use of whose pelt was so widespread among the Ottomans that, as reported by Evliya Çelebi (1630s), it was decreed that leopard-keepers and lion-keepers should parade in the company of fur merchants instead of shepherds in the Ottoman procession of guilds.⁴⁵

As if things were not already complicated enough, the *Entertaining Tale's* leopard refers to the pard in verse 884 as "short-tailed." This does not match what we know of leopards—whose tails are around 90 cm long. A "pard" (= leopard) could reproach a "leo-pard" (= cheetah) for having a short tail; but it

⁴⁵Çelebi (*supra* n.40) I.2 205.

would be pedantic indeed to do so, as the cheetah's tail is only 10–15 cm shorter. And given the prevalent confusion between leopards and cheetahs, it is doubtful the author would have distinguished between the two species, let alone their tail lengths—if indeed he even had the opportunity to compare them at close range.

“Short-tailed” however does match the lynx uniquely amongst the cats of the old world: the southern lynx (*Felis lynx pardina*) survives in Greece and Anatolia. The vernacular Modern Greek name of the lynx is Slavonic in origin (ρήσος),⁴⁶ and is thus not obvious as a referent of πάρδος. But the lynx may have served as a model to the late Byzantines for what the pard might actually have looked like—being the closest the Balkans have to a great cat.⁴⁷

And evidence from the Pontic dialect of Greek does in fact show that the meaning of πάρδος was shifting. In the form of Pontic formerly spoken in Turkey, πάρδος refers to the (male) domestic cat; this is the only meaning attested in Papadopoulos' dictionary of Pontic.⁴⁸ It is just possible that πάρδος

⁴⁶From Old Church Slavonic *rŭsĭ* “pardalis” cf. Russian *rys'*, Southern Slavonic (Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, Macedonian Slavonic) *ris*. On the vernacular use of ρήσος, cf. e.g. the proverb “Όπου φωνάζει ρήσος, ό λύκος δέν πατεί, “where the lynx howls, the wolf won't set foot” (Έγκυκλοπαίδεια ‘Ηλίου s.v. λύγξ). The conjecture implicit in the word's Modern Greek orthography and made by N. A. Andriotis, Έτυμολογικό Λεξικό τής Κοινής Νεοελληνικής³ (Thessalonica 1983) s.v. ρήσος, that the word has anything to do with Latin/Greek *Rhesus*, is fanciful. J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Bern 1959) I 690, derives it from Proto-Indo-European **leik-*, making it cognate with Greek λύγξ—though he admits the substitution of *l* by *r* is problematic.

⁴⁷This confusion does not extend to the illustrator of the Constantinopolitan manuscript of the *Entertaining Tale*, which displays the pard as a reasonably realistic cheetah with a collar. However, the manuscript in question (*Constantinopolitanus Seraglio* 35) was written in 1461, in Venetian Euboea (D. R. Reinsch, “Kodikologisch-Prosopographisches zum Codex Seragliensis graecus 35,” in I. Vassis, G. S. Henrich, and D. R. Reinsch, edd., *Lesarten: Festschrift für Athanasios Kambylis zum 70. Geburtstag* [Berlin 1988] 248–258). As cheetahs and cheetah-coursing were known to Westerners from the time of Frederick II, the illustrator's knowledge of cheetahs need not have been the same as the author's one century previously, and in a different realm.

⁴⁸A. A. Papadopoulos, ‘Ιστορικόν Λεξικόν τής Ποντικῆς Διαλέκτου (Athens 1961) s.v. We have been assured by speakers of Pontic from Georgia and Russia (Ρωσσοπόντιοι), where Pontians emigrated in the eighteenth and nineteenth

in Pontic, before ending up as “tomcat,” went through an intermediate phase denoting a wild feline indigenous to Northern Anatolia; possibly a lynx or wild cat, and more than likely not a leopard or cheetah.⁴⁹ The transition would have been made much easier by the fact that cheetahs were no longer to be seen in Greek-speaking areas; the term would then have become applied to the felines Greeks did see in the wild.

There is some more evidence favouring such an interpretation. The breed of the lynx native to Southern Europe, Asia Minor, and the Caucasus (*Felis lynx pardina*) is indeed “motley,” as the *Entertaining Tale’s* leopard claims (884), having “a very bright ‘reddish’ coloration combined with profuse spottiness”—although, it must be said, the spots are nowhere near as pronounced as on the leopard or cheetah.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the propensity of the pard to leave behind leftovers (876–877) is not characteristic of the leopard, who goes so far as to drag its carcass up a tree to prevent its being scavenged, and will repeatedly return to its kill.⁵¹ Nor is it characteristic of the cheetah, who is known as a rushed eater, and leaves very little

centuries, that *πάρδος* in their dialect does not refer to “cat.” George Baloglou and I had initially conjectured that this might preserve an older state of affairs, in which the Pontic “pard” referred to a feline intermediate between the cheetah and the domestic cat—say, the lynx. However, as Dr Julia Krivoruchko (Univ. of Haifa) found enquiring amongst Abkhazian Pontians on our behalf, the word *πάρδος* means “tomcat” for older speakers of the dialect, just as it does in Southern Pontic. Krivoruchko believes younger speakers have been influenced by the Russian use of *gepard* and *pardus* to mean “leopard” or “lynx,” so that Northern Pontic does not provide independent evidence for the downward shift of *πάρδος*. (Our thanks to Dr Krivoruchko for clarifying this for us.)

⁴⁹Heptner/Sludskii 532. The move downwards of *πάρδος* might be anticipated in the *Vita of the Esteemed Donkey* 179, 189, in which the old lady calls her cat with the diminutive Παρδίτζη. Note that this is a diminutive of the late (and vernacular) form *πάρδος*, whereas the leopards the *Vita* mentions as game in verse 38 are *παρδάλοι*, a misstressed form of the Classical *πάρδαλις*. The *Vita* may thus present two stages of the meaning of “pard” in Greek.

⁵⁰Heptner/Sludskii 537. This also rules out the caracal or desert lynx (*Felis caracal*) as a referent for the *Entertaining Tale’s* pard. The caracal has been used in hunting like the cheetah, but is not spotted at all.

⁵¹Denis 38–39; Turnbull-Kemp 42, 102, 117–119. A leopard will let the viscera of its kill, dragged up a tree, drop to waiting hyenas (Turnbull-Kemp 117). Otherwise, leopards display “a keen proprietary interest in their kills—even if they have made a substantial meal from one of these” (119).

meat behind unless disturbed.⁵² It sounds rather more like a lynx, which only eats part of its victims. While the Iberian lynx (to be identified with the Balkan and Anatolian breed) covers the remainder with sand and litter, to prevent other carnivores getting at it, it does not safeguard its kill as efficiently as the leopard: "foxes often profit by its leavings" (Denis 96). Likewise, according to Heptner and Sludskii,

On killing its prey, the lynx rarely eats it at the site, usually carrying it or dragging it away, sometimes for 400 to 1,000 m. The predator usually bites the throat of a large prey first and licks and sucks its blood; then the cat slits open the abdomen and eats the liver and heart, and later the flesh of the neck and shoulders; the rest of the carcass is not touched ... Having killed a prey but not consumed it immediately, the lynx sometimes conceals the remains of a small animal under a fallen tree; carcasses of large animals are covered with dry grass, twigs, or snow, and returns to eat the remaining part of the meal—if wolves or wolverines have not destroyed it. Sometimes it lives beside even a white hare for a few days or until only the paws and intestines remain, and may stay for as long as a week next to a roe deer kill; a lair is established close by, sometimes within 10 m of the kill. More often, however, when full, the lynx simply abandons the quarry and does not return even if the remains of the victim are concealed ... Wolverine, wolf, and fox often eat prey caught by lynx if it is not consumed at once. In Latvia not only predators (wolf), but also wild boar represent "spongers" off lynx. On coming across a lynx track a wild boar often will follow it and eat the remains of the cat's kill (613–615, 626).

So the lynx does attempt to act as proprietary about its prey as the great cats. But since the lynx is less capable of chasing off other carnivores, and more capable of remaining hidden, the author could have formed the impression that it leaves its half-eaten prey behind for others, more readily than he might for the great cats. In some instances, in fact, that is indeed what

⁵²Wrogemann 64–65. In Nairobi Park a symbiosis has latterly emerged between jackals and cheetahs, with cheetahs leaving behind leftovers for the jackals. However, Eaton (85) doubts this is characteristic of cheetahs overall.

happens. However, this does not prove the lynx rather than the cheetah is being described in the passage. The cheetah is likewise less capable of warding off other predators, as noted; it is also disinclined to return to its kill.⁵³ The behaviour the *Entertaining Tale* reports, of a pard contentedly leaving its leftovers for scavengers, matches the lynx best; but while one could not claim it under any circumstances for the leopard, one might mistakenly attribute it to a cheetah.

The multiple jumps of the pard onto its prey (*Entertaining Tale* 872) are also more in character with a lesser cat than either the leopard, who waits in a tree or creeps up to its prey before executing a single pounce, or the cheetah, who uniquely amongst felines knocks down its prey in pursuit (Eaton 131). Yet the term "bounds" used to refer to the stride of the cheetah already occurs in Pantechnes, as well as Chardin in the seventeenth century (see Appendix.)

A point against identifying the lynx with the pard is that, unlike what is claimed of the *Entertaining Tale's* pard, the lynx is by no means *able to overpower any beast* (871). The northern European lynx feeds largely on ungulates (mostly smaller species of deer, in some locations on larger species), supplemented by hares, foxes, and squirrels. It is capable of killing prey three to four times its size, and it has even been known to attack fully-grown boars.⁵⁴ This is a respectable feat, but the *Entertaining Tale's* boast seems better attuned to the leopard. Likewise, the manner the *Entertaining Tale* specifies of the pard capturing its prey (873) is more characteristic of the larger cheetah than the lynx: the cheetah holds the animal down with its forelegs and chest.⁵⁵

The main evidence identifying the pard with the lynx in this passage is its short tail. If the identification with the lynx was

⁵³Ricciuti (*supra* n.38) 110; Wrogemann 65; Heptner/Sludskii 723.

⁵⁴<http://lynx.uio.no/jon/lynx/lynxeu02.htm>; Heptner/Sludskii 596–606; Ricciuti (*supra* n.38) 90; J. Schneider, *Lynx* (Minneapolis 1995) 16.

⁵⁵Eaton 131–132; Wrogemann 41–42.

not intended by the author of the *Entertaining Tale*, then the explicit reference to a short tail presents a problem. If the author used written sources to obtain information on the pard, he may have derived the notion of a short-tailed pard from Timothy of Gaza (who in turn obtained it from Oppian, *Cynegetica* 3.63):

That there are two kinds of pards, the big ones having a short ... tail (*Timothy of Gaza* [Paraphrase] §11).

As for the pard, it has two kinds; one is small, while the other has been born large. And the small has a very long tail, while the large has a short tail (cited in Aristophanes of Byzantium II 260).

The paraphrase of Timothy of Gaza, and the excerpts of Timothy included in the epitome by Aristophanes of Byzantium, mention both panthers (Paraphrase: §14; Epitome: II 279) and leo-pards (Paraphrase: §12; Epitome: II 274), as animals distinct from the pard. So the distinction between the two kinds of pard may be specious, even though it is reminiscent of the attempts to distinguish leopards from panthers in modern times.⁵⁶ The author of the *Entertaining Tale* must have consulted some written source to get information on the very existence of leo-pards, as he would hardly find corroboration of the fanciful ancient notions of hybrids in the real world; he may have caught sight of something like this reference, and extended the distinction Timothy makes to one between leo-pards and pards.

The Timothean instances are not promising, however, as a source for the belief about the length of pard tails. Timothy has abundant mentions of panthers and leo-pards, though without comparing their tail lengths; in fact the panther is said to have the tail of a wolf (Epitome II 281), and the pard to have a sting on its tail (Paraphrase §11). The fabulous properties of the pard and panther mentioned by Timothy, however, are conspicuous by their absence in the *Entertaining Tale*, and at any

⁵⁶In fact, F. S. Bodenheimer and A. Rabinowitz, *Timotheus of Gaza on Animals* (Leiden 1949) 13, adduce the three appearances of the (modern) leopard as evidence of Timothy of Gaza being an armchair zoologist.

rate provide little excuse for the author to divine that the pard's tail is significantly shorter than a leo-pard's. It is not impossible that "short-tailed" does not refer to a physical attribute at all, but is a literate allusion—or misunderstanding. But it is just as possible, for that matter, that "short-tailed" indicates an incipient confusion between familiar lynxes and exotic cheetahs or leopards, leading the author to attribute the lynx's tail to a beast he otherwise termed a cheetah.

In all, the *Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds*, the only vernacular mediaeval Greek text to give a detailed description of the pard, instead presents a chimera. The poem appears to be conflating the heroic pard of Classical and travellers' lore (the leopard), the pard used on Turkish couches (leopard, less likely cheetah or lynx),⁵⁷ possibly reminiscences of the pard in Comnenan hunting (the cheetah), and the physiognomy of the vernacular pard (*potentially* the lynx—certainly not the leopard, now inaccessible to Byzantium).⁵⁸ That the author intended the lynx from the beginning is unlikely: he always uses vernacular names for his beasts in the poem (though not to the exclusion of Classical names), and the vernacular name $\rho\acute{\eta}\sigma\omicron\varsigma$ should in that case have made an appearance in his text. Yet it is not surprising that the author's description should match a lynx better than a

⁵⁷"After him rode several trumpeters, blowing their trumpets without intermission, who were followed by about 300 Turkish hussars, ornamentally dressed in pelisses of spotted lynxskin, who sometimes shouted, sometimes sprang from their horses, and exhibited tokens of great exultation" (Wratislaw [*supra* n.40] 17—account from the 1590s). But when Cantacuzene made reference to the pardskins the emir Orhan sent him as a present, he was using Atticist Greek, and presumably was capable of distinguishing between the Attic $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\gamma\acute{\alpha}$ and $\acute{\alpha}\rho\delta\alpha\lambda\iota\varsigma$.

⁵⁸The conflation of the exotic leopard with the familiar lynx would not be unique to the *Entertaining Tale*. Guillaume le Clerc's thirteenth-century bestiary claims the panther is "in proper French called a lynx" (F. McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries*² [Chapel Hill 1962] 149); and the Old Church Slavonic *rŭsŭ*, which gave rise to the Modern Slavonic names for "lynx," is glossed into Latin in A. G. Preobrazhenskii's Russian-language *Etymological Dictionary of the Russian Language* (1910–1949) *s.v.* *rys* (presumably relaying a much earlier gloss) as *pardalis*. Ironically, Bodenheimer and Rabinowitz (*supra* n.56: 44) believe the larger lynx "with a saffronlike ($\kappa\rho\kappa\omicron\delta\epsilon\iota\delta\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$) skin" referred to by Timothy of Gaza (§46) is in fact a cheetah, presumably because the lynx is not indigenous to Palestine.

cheetah or leopard; the lynx is the only large feline native to the part of the world in which the *Entertaining Tale* was written, and the author would have had much more opportunity to observe it in the wild than the occasionally imported pard on show. All the same, there is only one piece of evidence incontrovertibly pointing to a lynx—the pard’s allegedly short tail—and there is reason to cast even that into doubt.

The latest edition of the *Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds* glosses πάρδος as the “male of the *panthera*.”⁵⁹ While the identification of the pard’s gender is consistent with its meaning of “tomcat” in Modern Pontic, the definition given is certainly misleading, as the modern panther is not distinct from the leopard; and the ancient panther—which the Byzantines would have known through the *Physiologus* (the fantastical compendium of animal lore which underlay the Western bestiaries) as a charming hybrid of all animals (πᾶν θῆρ), foe only to the dragon—is altogether too fabulous to belong here. Yet the confusion the author seems to have harboured about what precisely this pard was lends his creation a chimeric air, and is further evidence that the Palaeologans were nowhere near as sure of what a pard was as their Comnenan forebears. (It is possible, indeed, that the reality of the lynx “contaminated” notions of the pard in other texts: the lynx’s fearsome caterwauling, for example, would provide a better explanation of the *Chronicle of the Tocco’s* “he moaned like a pard, and roared like a lion” than the cheetah’s chirping.) In our forthcoming translation and commentary of the *Entertaining Tale*, accordingly, George Baloglou and I render πάρδος as “cheetah,” though more as a matter of convenience than as a concrete identification.

The Leo-Pard

Like the “pard,” the “leopard” was also mentioned in Byzan-

⁵⁹ Παιδιόφραστος Διήγησις τῶν Ζώων τῶν Τετραπόδων: *Critical Edition*, ed. V. Tsiouni (Munich 1975 [1972]) 48.

tine literature, continuing on from Roman times. The only Byzantine author who displays some concrete notion of what the λεόπαρδος looked like is Timothy of Gaza, *ca* 500 A.D.:

Chapter XII, On the leopard.

1. That it is born from the intercourse of a lion and a pard.
2. That the lioness when she cubs (having conceived) from a pard, hides the (new)-born (cub) and herself lest the lion may find her and rend her in pieces.
3. That she washes herself in many rivers to wash off the smell; for if the lion perceives (anything) he kills her and never again mates even with another (lioness) (Timothy of Gaza §12: Bodenheimer/Rabinowitz, *Timotheus* 26).

Of course, the leopard also has different parents; for it is born of the lion and the pard coming together for sex. And it preserves its mother's colour, spots, and vigour, and its father's size, courage, and fearlessness (Aristophanes of Byzantium II 274) (after Timothy of Gaza).

The first mention of the leopard in Greek writing also displays a grim familiarity with the feline; it was penned by the Christian martyr Ignatius, early in the second century A.D., on his way to be killed by wild animals:

All the way from Syria to Rome I am fighting wild beasts, on land and sea, by day and night, chained as I am to ten leopards, that is, a detachment of soldiers, who prove themselves the more malevolent for kindnesses shown them (Ignatius, *Epistle to the Romans* 5.1).

Though Timothy of Gaza's description has made it into Porphyrogenitus' zoological compendium (the *Epitome of Aristophanes*), the leopard occurs everywhere else in Byzantine literature as a purely fabulous beast.⁶⁰ Even Timothy of Gaza worked from fabulous hearsay, and was hardly a scientific zoologist.⁶¹ This is in contrast to Roman practice, where the

⁶⁰In the case of *Alexander Romance* β discussed above, the reference to the cheetah as a leopard rather than a pard may reflect the earlier provenance of the redaction.

⁶¹Bodenheimer/Rabinowitz, *Timotheus* 13.

leopard was an animal actually sighted by someone (e.g. Pliny, Ignatius).

Though the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* corpus of Byzantine Greek is by no means comprehensive (as of this writing it has a fair amount of historical and theological material, but little oratory, for instance), the distribution of λεο(ντο)παρδ- in that corpus is indicative of the obscurity the leopard had fallen into in Byzantium. Excluding citations by other authors, the leopard is mentioned by ten authors in the corpus, as of November 2000. The instances in Ignatius and Timothy of Gaza have already been seen; the instance in the *Alexander Romance* was considered alongside the mentions in that work of pards. Of the remaining seven works, the leopard plays the most prominent role in the redactions of the *Acts of Philip*, where a leopard spares a goat kid for the greater glory of the apostle. Both the leopard and the goat speak to the apostle with a human voice, promising to be rid of their animal natures, and nothing more beastly is said about the leopard than the goat's exhortation:

O leopard, make away with your savage heart and beastly mind, and bring yourself into meekness; for the apostles of the Divine Magnitude are to go through this desert, to fulfil to perfection the promise of the glory of the Only-Begotten Son of God (*Acts of Philip* 95).

The only concrete feature about the leopard we learn from the text is that he is a quadruped (123).

The other instances of the leopard in the corpus are even sketchier. The instances in Theognostus (IX A.D.) are merely grammatical illustrations of the behaviour of *omega* in compounding (498, 577), and can be passed over. Galen (II A.D.) mentions the consumption of lion, pard, and leo-pard meat as being beneficial to the spleen, in a prescription more magical than medical (*De atra bile* p.134); the allusion is at any rate Roman rather than Byzantine. An astrological work in an XI A.D. manuscript states that Mars governs dogs, lynxes, leopards, wild and

carnivorous beasts (though not lions, which are the province of Jupiter), pigs, apes, and wasps (*Astrologica* p.122): the leopard merely forms part of a laundry list of beasts. Likewise, Michael Psellus (XI A.D.) rattles off the name of the leopard in a listing of non-kosher carnivores: "hyena and crocodile, leopard and lion, wolf and bear, carnivorous beasts—none of these lodged within Eden, but Man alone, the work of the hands of God" (*Poemata* 55.81). Theodore Studites (VIII–IX A.D.) unflatteringly compares "appearances of the soul" of dissent to animals—"one having something of a human, another of a dog, another a leopard perhaps, another a fish or some other reptile—with your holiness finding them quite unmanageable" (*Letters* 8). Like Psellus, Studites uses the leopard as a bogeyman, though without displaying any deeper familiarity with it: the conflation of fish and reptiles raises suspicion enough about his command of zoology. St Athanasius (IV A.D.), finally, has demons in the form of wild beasts attacking St Anthony:

And when the demons were just about to break down the four walls of the hut, they tried to get in through them, transforming themselves into the images of beasts and reptiles; and the place was at once filled with the images of lions, bears, leopards, bulls, and serpents, asps, and scorpions, and wolves. And each of these moved in its own manner. The lion roared, wanting to come in; the bull tried to headbutt; the serpent crawled and could not enter; and the wolf rushed forwards. And all the phantasms' noises together were fearsome, and their rage grievous (*V. Ant.* p.857).

As can be seen, Athanasius does not even manage to come up with a description of the leopard demon's gait. In all, the leopard appears in learned Byzantine literature as an occasional terror, though with little detail and less plausibility. In contrast to the West, where the leopard was emblematic of miscegenation and sin, and frequently brought up as an exemplum by both theologians and fabulists, the leopard does not seem to have engaged Byzantine imaginations. He is not

mentioned by Byzantine theologians or historians as an example of anything other than savagery. In fact when a Byzantine wished to point to an instance of miscegenation, he was just as likely to refer to the tiger(!):

So he was begotten from a Syrian lioness and an Armenian pard as a miscegenated, mixed and peculiar species of tiger, of illegitimate and base parentage, more hateful than an Armenian or Syrian. He was Leo by name, and he had acquired the lion's rapacity and steadfastness—though by no means taking on the lion's nobility (George Monachus, Continuator 769–770; X A.D.).⁶²

Furthermore, the leopard is absent from all the Greek versions of the *Physiologus*. In fact, the leopard is even absent from the corpus of Byzantine lexicæ.

The situation of the leopard is much the same in the vernacular Greek works of late Byzantium. The beast is mentioned in the London *Achilleid* (verse 1228), Pseudo-Georgillas' *Fall of Constantinople* (445), and the Athenian *Digenes Akrites* (4402). In each case, the leopard's name is dropped in as a perfunctory addition to a catalogue of wild beasts. The Athenian manuscript's interpolation naming the leopard is absent from the other manuscripts of the poem—even from the Trebizond manuscript of *Digenes*, which for the most part parallels the Athenian fairly closely; so its mention is the responsibility of the Athenian's scribe alone. The leopard is mentioned in the manuscript as Digenes' prey along with lions and bears, but without more specifics. The London *Achilleid* likewise rattles off Achilles' prey as bears, dragons, lions, and leopards, where the Naples version (verse 1645) mentions only dragons and lions: the leopards have been added in by the scribe of the London version, again merely as an afterthought. And the *Fall of Constantinople* merges all three beasts together in a portrait of the Turkish threat: "for I

⁶²Referring to Emperor Leo V (813–820). See N. A. Koutrakou, "Βυζαντινή Πολιτική Ίδεολογία και Προπαγάνδα: Μετασχηματισμοί, Θέσεις και Άντιθέσεις. Το Παράδειγμα του Λέοντος Ε' Άρμενίου (813–820)," *Ίστορι* 3 (1991) 85–91, discussion at 89.

see he has leapt, and sat on the West as well; like a pard, a leopard, a hungry lion, eating your flesh and drinking your blood like a sweet dish and despite your will." These instances seem to show that the Byzantines knew the leopard to be a ferocious wild cat, which scribes could exploit to spice up a list of beasts; but otherwise they had about as much real knowledge of it as they did about dragons—if indeed not less.

The absence of the leopard from Byzantine imaginations is most evident in the *Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds*. In that poem, the leopard accompanies the pard as a retainer to King Lion. But the leopard is sketchily described: as the first modern commentator on the poem remarks, the author is at pains to say anything about the leopard at all.⁶³ The leopard is the one animal in the poem which is given no description—either by the narrator, by the leopard himself, or by his interlocutor the pard, who by contrast has more than a little to say about himself. Compare the pard's description in the *Entertaining Tale* with what is said about the leopard (865–868, 883, 886–888):

"You are no pure-bred; no, you are a cross-breed,
 having both something of the lion in you,
 and something else of me. And you're a beast
 that's born in sin and brought up out of wedlock,
 just like the very name of 'leo-pard' shows." ...
 The leopard answered back to him as follows:
 "... for any deeds and merits you exhibit,
 most certainly I share them with you, cheetah,
 as do the cat-pard and our King the Lion."

All the poet has to say about the leopard is that it is the product of miscegenation (as Pliny and Timothy of Gaza taught, but as would also have been obvious from the etymology of the name), and that it is a great cat. In deriding the pard (cheetah) as motley, the *Entertaining Tale's* leopard has even forgotten that it, too, is meant to be spotted. This is confirmed

⁶³A. C. Gidel, *Études sur la littérature grecque moderne: Imitations en grec de nos romans de chevalerie depuis le XII^e siècle* (Paris 1866) 329.

abundantly in the only comprehensively illustrated manuscript of the *Entertaining Tale, Constantinopolitanus Seraglio* 35 (1461). The leopard there is depicted merely as a scraggly version of the lion, with not a spot in sight—in marked contrast to his colleague the pard, clearly drawn as a cheetah, and to western bestiaries, where the leopard is likewise universally spotted. By the end of the time allotted to Byzantium, the leopard had come to change its spots after all.

The Cat-Pard

A few late vernacular Greek works make reference to a feline unknown to the Ancients: the cat-pard. The word appears with various stems for “cat.” The usual mediaeval word for cat, *κάτης* (< Lat. *cattus*), is used in the *Entertaining Tale* (888: *κατόπαρδος*): the leopard there imprudently compares himself to the *κατόπαρδος* and the lion, but no further description of the animal is given. In a set of XV A.D. vernacular oracles, the word appears as *κασίπαρδος* (*Oracles* I.270a MS. B), based on *κασίον* “small cat.” In the printed edition of the XVII A.D. Cretan poem *Erotokritos* (2.337), it is based on the diminutive of *κασίον*, *κασιούλι*, giving *κατσουλόπαρδος*. In the Heptanesian manuscript of the same work, linguistically closer to standard Modern Greek, the word appears as *γατόπαρδος*—using the standard Modern word for “cat” (*γάτος*), taken from Italian (*gatto*) rather than Latin (*cattus*). And *γατόπαρδος* is the form in use in Modern Greek.

The word is also present in Modern Italian (*gattopardo*), and Spanish (*gatopardo*). Given the spread through the Mediterranean, and the similarity of the Greek to the Italian word, it is likeliest that the form is Italian in origin; but the use of different stems in Greek means one cannot rule out an independent native coining.

At first sight, dictionaries present a heterogenous picture of what the modern instances of the cat-pard are. In Modern

Italian, *gattopardo* is glossed as the American "ocelot" (*Felis pardalis*) or the African "serval" (*Felis serval*), which lives in sub-Saharan Africa.⁶⁴ In Spanish, the word *gatopardo* exists as well, though it is rare; the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy characterises it as a loan from Italian *gattopardo*, and refers the reader to *onza*.⁶⁵ The *onza*, however, is normally glossed in Spanish dictionaries not as a serval, but as a snow leopard ("ounce": *Panthera uncia*) or in the Americas a jaguar (*Panthera onca*)—both of them great cats.

Superficially, this gives a confusing picture; the meaning of the term has diversified prodigiously, and this shows an early confusion in how to apply the term. If Modern Spanish and Italian use the same word to refer to a range of beasts, the Mediaeval Latin *cattopardus* may well not have had a fixed denotation, but referred to any number of cats lesser than the lion and leopard. In a world where the known cats were lion, panther, pard, and cat, the precedent of *leo-pard* would have led mediaeval observers to characterise any other felines they encountered as hybrids of the established types. These proposed hybrids need not have had a fixed relationship to the distinct species of felines we identify nowadays. Since the Latin *κάτις* is the only word for "cat" in the Greek of the *Entertaining Tale*, *κατόπαρδος* need not have even been taken from Italy; it could well have been coined independently by a Greek, although its vernacular colouring (and the reticence of Byzantine scholars to improve on the ancients) would have prevented it from being recorded in Byzantine scientific prose. The definition of "cat-pard" would likely have shifted several times before it settled in modern times; for instance, it is doubtful that the mediaeval *cattopardus* was in fact the sub-Saharan serval.

Yet it is possible to discern a single cat behind the various manifestations of the cat-pard. The same monolingual Spanish

⁶⁴Ricciuti (*supra* n.38) 218.

⁶⁵Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua española* (Madrid 1984).

dictionary which defines a *gatopardo* as an *onza* states that the *onza* was used in hunting in Persia—which makes it a cheetah rather than a snow leopard. The snow leopard⁶⁶ is hardly to be found in Iran, and certainly has never been domesticated; and Eaton in fact gives *onza* as the Spanish word for cheetah (17). As we have already seen, *ounce* was formerly used to refer to the cheetah rather than the more recently discovered snow leopard, which would explain the confusion on the part of Spanish lexicographers outside the Royal Academy.

Likewise, it is unlikely that *gatopardo* in Mediaeval Italian could have denoted a cat found south of the Sahara—a region Italians had no access to until well after the Renaissance. The cat-pard of Lampedusa's novel (and Visconti's film) *Il Gattopardo* is the animal on the protagonist's family crest; one would hardly expect to find the serval on a centuries-old crest, and the title is rendered in English as *The Leopard* and in French as *Le Guépard* "The Cheetah." It is far likelier that in the Middle Ages, as preserved in heraldry, *gatopardo* referred to either the leopard or the cheetah; since *pardo* or *lipardo* in Italian would have been understood already as a leopard, the cheetah (certainly well known to late Mediaeval and Renaissance Italians as a hunting animal) is a promising candidate meaning for *gatopardo* in Italian.

And, to come to the evidence from Greek, "cheetah" is in fact the sense of the Modern Greek γατόπαρδος, used alongside the Puristic κυναίλουρος (Neo-Latin *cynaelurus*). Internal evidence from the use of "cat-pard" words in Mediaeval and Early Modern Greek do not give strong indications, but certainly do not contradict this gloss. The only thing the *Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds* has to say about the cat-pard is that it is comparable in might to the lion and the leopard. This would suggest a larger rather than a smaller cat. The tiger was distinctive

⁶⁶The snow leopard is indigenous to Central Asia (extending "in the west, it is said, to Persia": Ward cited in Turnbull-Kemp 69); Denis 64 disputes accounts of the snow leopard by British hunters in Asia Minor.

enough to name separately, and the Byzantines were certainly well aware of the tiger: between V A.D. and XV A.D. there are at least 35 references to the tiger in the 2000 *Thesaurus Language Graecae* corpus. The snow leopard was still unknown to Europeans (being identified as a distinct species only in 1761); this leaves the cheetah as the only likely referent.⁶⁷

The vernacular *Oracles* include the κασίπαρδος in a listing of beasts real and legendary. The animals are depicted feasting on the carcass of the Empire (*They break the poles, / destroy the moat; / uproot the vines / and pluck the grapes. / And full of wine / choke a great colt*: 1.276–281). The majority of manuscripts at that point name ferocious beasts, real and fabulous.⁶⁸ But **B**, the manuscript actually mentioning the κασίπαρδος (helpfully supplying the names of the peoples the animals symbolise) errs on the side of domesticated animals (269–272):

The dragon ^{Hungarian} saw and rushed
to head down there as well;
lion ^{the relevant party} and basilisk, ^{the basilisk is the future lord}
and cat ^{Wallachian} and cat-pard ^{Moldavian} too;
also the massive bear, ^{Russian, Russian}
the cunning fox as well, ^{the Turk}
and then the old man wolf ^{Tatar}

While in real life a cheetah is docile, it would still make a more effective addition to a list of monsters than would a lynx. But **B**'s catalogue introduces a cat (κατίν, diminutive of κάτης) beside the cat-pard; the two nations represented, Wallachians (Βλάχος) and Moldavians (Πογδάνος), were regarded as kindred. (Rumania was called Moldo-Wallachia (Μολδοβλαχία) under Ottoman rule.) So while a cheetah makes a better mon-

⁶⁷If the leopard has in mind a wild cat or lynx, on the other hand, then he truly is grievously insulting the lion in the comparison, and the author of the *Entertaining Tale* is displaying more subtle wit than might at first have been apparent. This is not impossible, but not the likeliest account.

⁶⁸A 269–272: lion, pard, basilisk, bear, dragon, fox, wolf. C 269–272: lion, dragon, basilisk, pard, bear, fox, wolf. D 269–272b: dragon, bear, fox, wolf, lion, pard, τζηπάρδιν (< *ghepardo?*), giraffe.

ster, a lynx makes a better kinsman of the cat. As can be seen, the confusion about hybrids persists.

Erotokritos is less ambiguous: the cat-pard is mentioned in the description of a fearsome horse—"it had a tail like a cat-pard, legs like a buffalo, and eyes like a wild cat" (ἀγριόκατος). It would be comical if a lynx's bobtail were intended here; and given the other fabulous wild beasts invoked in the description, a lynx or caracal would come as an anti-climax. A wild cat, in any case, may be ruled out as a candidate cat-pard, being mentioned on its own terms in the next verse.

The first scholarly editor of the *Erotokritos* identified the κατόπαρδος⁶⁹ with the "panther" (so glossed in German, *Panther*, and by the Classical πάρδαλις)—though it is not clear why a Cretan, writing under explicit Italian influence, would call a panther a cat-pard when Greek and Italian both had perfectly acceptable words already in place for leopards. In fact, the more recent editor glosses the more plausibly original κατσουλόπαρδος as "feline, It. *gatto-pardo*, Fr. *guépard*."⁷⁰ This means that the Cretan cat-pard was a cheetah—and, incidentally, that despite its modern denotation, the Italian *gattopardo* could also be glossed as "cheetah" (French *guépard*; the normal Modern Italian term for "cheetah" is *ghepardo*.) It is by consequence the cheetah with which Kriaras' dictionary of the mediaeval vernacular⁷¹ identifies the *Entertaining Tale's* κατόπαρδος, considering it the same word as γατόπαρδος in the Heptanesian *Erotokritos*, and glossing both as the modern γατόπαρδος.

The κατόπαρδος, thus, could be any wild feline other than a "pard" and native to North Africa, the Middle East, or Southern Europe—for instance, a European wild cat (*Felis*

⁶⁹Vincenzo Cornaro, *Ἐρωτόκριτος*, ed. S. Xanthoudidis (Heraclion 1915) 575. Xanthoudidis ignored the Cretan κατσουλόπαρδος, and emended the Standard Modern form γατόπαρδος to κατόπαρδος, in imitation of the *Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds*. His emendation is rejected by Alexiou.

⁷⁰Vincenzo Cornaro, *Ἐρωτόκριτος*, ed. S. Alexiou (Athens 1980) 477.

⁷¹E. Kriaras, ed., *Λεξικό της Μεσαιωνικής Ελληνικής Δημόδους Γραμματείας* (Thessalonica 1969-).

silvestris), a sand cat (*Felis margarita*), a jungle cat (*Felis chaus*), a caracal (*Felis caracal*), or a lynx (*Felis lynx*). In fact, the word may have at some stage encompassed all of these. There are only two serious proposals on the table, however: Kriaras' and Alexiou's identification with the Modern Greek γατόπαρδος "cheetah," and Shandrovskaja's tentative *dikaja koška* "wild cat," in her translation of the *Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds*.⁷² If the word was a loan into Greek from Italian, it almost certainly meant a "cheetah." If the word was coined locally, it would have denoted something considered a hybrid between the pard (cheetah) and the cat; a lynx, for example, or indeed a wild cat. But usage in Mediaeval and Early Modern Greek literature, and the high likelihood of a loan from Italian, points to "cheetah." The fact that someone like the author of the *Entertaining Tale* could use κατόπαρδος and πάρδος to refer to distinct entities, when it appears both are properly cheetahs, likeliest points to confusion on the part of late Byzantines—who, after all, are unlikely to have ever set eyes on any great cat.

Appendix: Pantechnes' Cheetah Hunt

Constantine Pantechnes' *ekphrasis* (rhetorical description) of a cheetah hunt he attended was written while he was Metropolitan of Philippoupolis (modern Plovdiv), some time between 1147 and 1166 (Miller 31). I give a translation here (Pantechnes pp.49–51) with commentary from the natural history of cheetahs, in order to substantiate the contention that the Byzantine πάρδαλις (and πάρδος) corresponded to a cheetah rather than a leopard.

AN *EKPHRASIS* BY THE METROPOLITAN OF PHILIPPOUPOLIS
AND MOST ESTIMABLE LORD CONSTANTINE PANTÈCHNES
ON A HUNT FOR QUAIL AND HARES

⁷²V. S. Shandrovskaja, "Vizantijskaja basnja 'Rasskaz o Chetveronogikh (xiv v.),'" *Vizantijskij Vremennik* 9 (1956) 211–249. Tsiouni's edition of the *Entertaining Tale* (p.143) has the gloss "a kind of small leopard," which is not much to go by.

... So much, and suchlike, for hunts by hounds and birds. But cheetahs (παρδάλεις) also followed the hunters, with variegated spots (ποικιλόστικτοι); one differing from another in both size and savagery; cheetahs, reckless animals and grim beasts, horrible to behold, even more horrible to approach. They were tamed by two pard-trainers (παρδαλαγωγοί), who cared for them after the fashion of lions (λεοντοκομοῦντες);⁷³ these seemed submissive, and they stroked them. The cheetahs turned to them benevolently, and as I saw this I exclaimed: "O how capable Man is of bridling both frenzied cheetahs and lions, and of treading on asps and basilisks and dragons! How much, then, have these to do with his privilege to rule, a privilege granted him who was made 'in His own image'!⁷⁴ But, O thou mother Eve, and thou deceitful serpent, and Death: how have you brought it about that we should be terrified of those beings over whom we had been entrusted with dominion?"

The pard-trainers (παρδαλαγωγοί) brought them on the gelded horses which they rode, binding their necks with leashes, so that the beasts should not get out of line when it was inopportune, and jump onto what they should not.⁷⁵ If a hare springs forth from

⁷³So rendered by Miller 42: *les avaient apprivoisées comme des lions*. Pantechnes refers below to "lion-tamers," and the term "lion" in the compounds may simply be a generic reference to "great cat."

⁷⁴Namely Adam: Genesis 1:27–28.

⁷⁵The description Heptner and Sludskii give of coursing in India and China is similar (732): "The cheetah was secured to the cart with a leash, the other end of which was fastened to its body in the waist region or more rarely to a collar around its neck. Its eyes were closed with a bandage. The hunters, on sighting a herd of antelopes, began to move around them in circles until the radius was reduced to 100 to 300 m. Upon approaching to this distance, the cheetah was then unleashed and the bandage removed from its eyes, and it was shown the game. If it was possible to close in on an animal the predator immediately fell upon the antelope. Usually, however, the cat first concealed itself and then quietly crept up, and only when a very short distance was left, or when the antelopes started running away, did the cheetah jump up and throw itself into the chase. In catching an antelope the cheetah knocked it to the ground, held it by the throat, and began to strangle it. At this time the hunter ran up to it, slit the antelope's throat, collected the blood in a special bucket, and gave it to the predator. After drinking the blood, the cheetah was again blindfolded and tied to the cart." Miller (34–35) cites a seventeenth-century description of a hunt in Persia by Chardin (*Description de la Perse* III 398): "For great hunts, they employ wild beasts trained to hunt—lions, leopards, tigers, panthers, cheetahs (*onces*). The Persians call these trained beasts *yourze* [*yüz*, "cheetah"]; they do no harm at all to humans. A rider brings in one on the horse's rump, its eyes blindfolded, with a roll of flesh attached to a chain. He stays on the track of the beasts being pursued, which he gets as close to as possible. When the rider catches sight of one, he un-blindfolds the eyes of the animal, and turns its head towards the pursued beast. If it catches sight of it, it cries out and dashes forth, and throws itself on top of the beast with great leaps (*grands sauts*), and knocks it down. If it misses after a few leaps, it usually gives up and stops. One goes and picks it up, and to

somewhere, and the pard-trainer (παρδοκόμω)⁷⁶ thinks he should send the cheetah after it, the other hunters are immediately barred from loosing the hounds or the birds; for verily, the cheetahs would attack not just the wild beasts, but them as well.⁷⁷ And the cheetah pursues (κατατρέχει) the hare alone, and reaching it with swift-turning⁷⁸ bounds not more than two or three in number,⁷⁹ he entangles (ξυμποδίζει) it;⁸⁰ and striking it with its front feet,⁸¹ lifts it up with swift-acting palms;⁸² and faster than speech the hare ends up under the teeth of the beast, within an indivisible moment. Right then the beast sticks his jaw in;⁸³ and suspended from the backbone where the

console it, strokes it, and tells it it was not at fault, but rather it had not been shown the beast properly. It is said that it understands this excuse and is satisfied with it." Although Chardin speaks of tamed leopards, tigers, and lions, the Farsi word he gives means just "cheetah," and there is no reason to suppose there was extensive taming and training of the other felines.

⁷⁶Here Pantechnes uses the vernacular stem παρδ-, instead of his usual παρδαλ-.

⁷⁷The cheetah instinctively attacks anything running: "It seems that cheetah find it difficult not to pursue an animal that runs away from it as this probably acts as a stimulus that releases the predatory sequence" (Wrogemann 35).

⁷⁸The cheetah is able to change direction quickly while running, using its tail as a rudder (Eaton 141; Wrogemann 31).

⁷⁹Pantechnes and the *Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds* (872) both speak of cheetah leaps (ἄλμασιν, πηδήματα); Miller 43 translates Pantechnes accordingly with *bonds*, and Chardin's seventeenth-century description cited above likewise speaks of *grands sauts*. However, the cheetah does not jump onto its prey: "'Pouncing' in most cats is homologous to the behavior in the cheetah that involves chasing and catching the intended prey animal. Most cats attack over very short distances and often the prey is not aware of the cat until it is very close or already upon the prey. Cheetah seldom make kills in this manner, but instead must bring down the prey while both are running very fast. In order to make a kill the cheetah must first overcome the prey and bring it down" (Eaton 131). Pantechnes clearly speaks of his pard as pursuing its prey, which identifies it unambiguously as a cheetah rather than any other feline. The leaps spoken of should not be identified as pounces, therefore; they should instead be considered a description of the strides in the cheetah's gallop. Pournelle (*supra* n.21: 4) likewise speaks of "bounds": "A series of rapid bounds and, if the cheetah is successful, the antelope is brought down and held by the throat until the attendant arrives for the dispatch."

⁸⁰Miller 43 renders the verb as *arrête*, "stops."

⁸¹The forepaw is the means the cheetah always uses to down its prey (Eaton 131-132, 135-142; Wrogemann 41). Its dew claw is instrumental in this, gashing the side of the animal, and hooking larger prey to hold it down (Wrogemann 43-44). Eaton (41) similarly concludes that the dew claw is used to hook and drag the prey down, rather than knock it down as had been thought.

⁸²I have sighted no reports of a cheetah actually lifting its prey to its jaws. The cheetah instead holds the animal down with its forelegs and chest (Eaton 131-132; Wrogemann 41-42).

⁸³A detailed description of the suffocating bite is given by Eaton 141: "Once the prey is fallen the cheetah approaches the head from the dorsal side of the lying prey. The

neck emerges to support the head, the rest of the animal gasps its last breath (ἀσπαίρων τὸ λóισθιον).⁸⁴ The cheetah, successful in its intent, paces on foot haughty and strutting; nor does this diminish his savagery in the slightest.

But once more, it is a marvel to behold the beast, and a wonder to comprehend it. For it does not demand to chew up the animal, and suck of its entrails (ἐγκάτων),⁸⁵ and devour its flesh—mingled perchance with the surrounding dirt—until the lion-trainer (λεονταγωγός) speedily dismounts from his horse, places a kind of platter underneath, and prepares the cheetah's food for it as if in a

head and upper neck are rotated towards the cheetah by digging one dew claw into the head or upper neck and pulling, while holding the prey down with the other foreleg placed over the lying prey's shoulders and lower neck, which prevents the entire body from rolling as the head and neck are rotated ... During these movements the cheetah lowers its head so that the mouth faces posteriorly. The upper ventral neck of the prey is gripped in the mouth. Once the neck grip is achieved, the cheetah uses this grip to rotate the neck (and head) towards itself, thus twisting the neck. When the ventral neck is rotated laterally the cheetah holds the bite and suffocates the prey."

⁸⁴The cheetah typically kills its prey by strangulation through a bite at the throat, rather than the neck—its jaw not strong enough to penetrate the flesh, unlike the great cats proper (Eaton 129–133, 143; Wrogemann 41–42). However, most observations of cheetah kills involve large animals, such as species of antelope. Its behaviour for small game, such as hares, is different: "With the young of large prey and very small game species or their young, such as warthogs, the cheetah simply lands on or hits the animal's body with one or both of its hind legs as it runs up to and overcomes the animal from behind and above or from the side. When the animal falls over, usually rolling, the cheetah keeps the prey down by standing on it and/or then very quickly grabs the animal by the upper back or neck and carries or drags it to nearby cover where it is then killed and eaten. When the prey is dragged off, the cheetah grips it in the throat region ... Death sometimes came from crushed skulls since the bones are soft in very young prey and the brain is easily damaged. A bite directed to the dorsal side of a young warthog's neck was observed, but death resulted from a crushed skull, not from spinal damage or blood loss" (Eaton 132). "I think a little caution is warranted when generalising on the cause of death of prey animals. With the larger ungulates, such as impala or Thomson's gazelle, the bite must be oriented to the throat region. But I do not think that this would necessarily apply to the smaller mammals cheetah prey on, such as the hare, which is small and has a relatively soft skin. The cheetah has to be extremely quick and agile when catching a hare, and if it happens to take it other than by the throat the canines may pierce vital internal organs which could cause death. In some cases, too, the neck vertebrae may be dislocated, even though the bite is from below and not from above, as in the case of a 'neck' bite by other larger predators. Furthermore, cheetah have sharp and laterally flattened canine teeth which in fact make for easy penetration between the vertebrae" (Wrogemann 42). The process Pantechnes describes, in any case, is clearly suffocation, and not a crushed skull. As Munqidh attests (*supra* n.20: 237), a cheetah could even grip one hare with its jaw (by the neck, presumably), while giving chase to a second.

⁸⁵Though cheetahs eat viscera (including the heart, kidneys, and liver), they avoid the intestines and stomach, to the extent of dragging them aside from the carcass—though an individual has been reported as eating intestines in "spaghetti like fashion" (Wrogemann 64).

bread-basket, as regally as can be amongst beasts; thereby he readies an improvised banquet, fit for a wild beast indeed. So hear then, friend, the kind of service, and what sort of banquet the pard-trainer (παρδοκόμος) provides to the dining beast. The beast lies, embracing the hare to itself with its front legs, chewing at it (ἐμμασώμενον),⁸⁶ and mixing in something like a roar⁸⁷ with his meal (καί τι βρυχηθμοῦ παραμυγνύον τῷ συσσιτίῳ), and looking down, bloody to behold (αἱματωπόν).⁸⁸ Then—the cheetah being used to this and

⁸⁶The verb is left out in Miller's translation (43).

⁸⁷The cheetah does not roar, its hyoid bones permitting only purrs and chirps (Wrogemann 7). The author would have expected a roar from a great cat—the cheetah being the only great cat which does not—and his disappointment may be reflected in the statement "something like a roar." The closest to a description of cheetah vocalisation after the hunt is mothers' calls to their young: "One female with cubs gave a low pitched 'ughh' that had the effect of keeping the cubs in one place while she was gone. They remained still until she gave a high-pitched 'chirp' which brought the cubs to kill site" (Eaton 133). Heptner and Sludskii (727) add that "an excited cheetah sniffs, grinds its teeth, and growls."

⁸⁸The verb "chewing at it" might imply the cheetah still has the hare in a strangulation hold, which may last a long time: "Five minutes is common but for some cheetahs 15–25 minutes was not rare, even with small impala fawns" (Eaton 132). Even chickens were dispatched "with bites to the upper neck and head which they held for up to several minutes, typical of the suffocating bite used on mammalian prey" (139). Pantechnes would then be accurate in saying that it is the trainer who actually kills the hare by slitting its throat. Since the cheetah strangles its prey, "Blood was seldom seen externally on the bodies of prey during or shortly following killing" (132). The adjective used to describe the cheetah, αἱματωπόν "blood-eyed," means in Classical Greek "bloody to behold, blood-stained" according to LSJ (Eur. *Or.* 256, *Phoen.* 870), but could also mean "with bloody eyes"; Miller (43) chooses the latter reading (*et a les yeux injectés de sang*). Indeed, the instance in *Orestes* is translated by E. P. Coleridge in W. J. Oates and E. O'Neill Jr., ed., *Euripides. The Complete Greek Drama* (New York 1938), as "those maidens with their bloodshot eyes"—though for the *Phoenician Women* he uses LSJ's sense: "That bloody destruction of his [Oedipus'] eyes." If the cheetah is actually bloody rather than bloodshot, and this is not just a literary convenience on the part of Pantechnes, then the prey has already been dispatched. Pantechnes also speaks of a "meal," though it is not clear that the meal has in fact commenced. But the cheetah in the wild takes its prey away into the shade to eat it, rather than consume it on the spot (Eaton 76–77; Wrogemann 44)—both to recover from the exertion of the chase, and to prevent its prey being purloined by other predators. So the cheetah would be inclined to eat the hare on the spot. And descriptions of coursing routinely state that the trainer is the one who actually kills the prey (*e.g.* Pournelle [*supra* n.21] 4: "the antelope is brought down and held by the throat until the attendant arrives for the dispatch"). The hare is thus probably not dead at this point, as the cheetah is still strangling it, and Pantechnes likely means "bloodshot" rather than "blood-stained." The significance of all this is why the trainer is so circumspect about letting the cheetah have its fill of the hare's flesh. There was a Byzantine taboo against the consumption of flesh killed by animals; the taboo was violated often enough, which is why Theodore Balsamon was entitled to marvel at the persistence of the error (see above). If the actual killing was done by a human, then the choicer parts of the hare could still be eaten without fear of mortal sin—especially in the presence of a clergyman like Pantechnes. On the other hand, Pantechnes himself explains giving the falcons in the hunt blood to drink as an

accustomed from the foregoing taming—that pard-trainer (παρδαλαγωγός) and crier (ποππυστής) sneaks onto his hind legs without a sound, and the beast ends up between his legs; he stretches its forehead skin, holds on to the top jaw of the beast, and pinches its nostrils with his fingers. The beast, not being allowed to breathe through its nose, gapes open its jaws;⁸⁹ and the beast-trainer (θηριοκόμος) eagerly snatches the hare from its throat. He slaughters it and fills the platter lying beneath with blood; and the beast gobbles up what is being emptied out there.⁹⁰ Then he serves it no small portion of the entrails, and also casts to it those of the limbs which that bold and daring man deems should be fed it.⁹¹

The beast afterwards desires more food, and does not stop anyone from adding further, but lays hold of the platter (it is made of a single piece of wood, and artlessly), and clenches it as though it will never let it go unless it has licked up whatever liquid remains therein, and wiped up all the bloody moisture with its tongue. But the tamer (τιθασσευτής) outsmarts the cheetah's gluttony,⁹² and wanders around it tempting it with steaming meat⁹³ (κρεατίω ἀτμίζοντι);

action meant to incite them (ἐπιμαίνεσθαι) (Miller 49). Whatever the case, the trainer would have to act quickly, before the cheetah absconded with its prize.

⁸⁹After the chase, the cheetah is exhausted; breathing rates have been recorded as ranging from 16 per minute for a male lying in the shade to a maximum of 156 for a male following a chase and prolonged kill (Eaton 71). The nostril pinch delivered to the cheetah at that very moment could have little other effect.

⁹⁰The cheetah usually drinks blood in the wild: "Blood that collects in the body cavity [of prey] is lapped up which is a 'useful behaviour in a predator that inhabits semi-desert country in which water is often scarce', writes Schaller" (Wrogemann 64). The same reward of a cup of blood was given Akbar the Great's cheetahs in sixteenth-century Hindustan: "A successful kill brought about much applause and jubilation and the cheetah was always rewarded with a cup of warm blood from the victim" (11). The platterful of blood is also mentioned by Heptner and Sludskii (732); see above.

⁹¹Part of the training of a cheetah was to get it to eat food in this manner: "In the first days after capture, the animal is 'seasoned', being given no food and little sleep. Then the hungry and weakened animal is taught to take food from the hands of the 'pardusnik' [pard-trainer] tending it, who gives the food in a bucket" (Heptner/Sludskii 732).

⁹²The cheetah, not knowing where its next meal is coming from (hunts are usually unfruitful), is gluttonous even after an abundance of meat—let alone a platterful of blood from a single hare: "On several occasions an abundance of cut-up horsemeat was fed until the cheetahs stopped feeding. After reaching what was considered satiation, a whole carcass of a horse or other ungulate was introduced. Immediately the cheetahs fed ravenously, and did not stop until all was consumed, except for the skin, larger bones, skull, stomach, and intestines" (Eaton 135-136).

⁹³It is tempting to think the trainer has cooked meat for the purpose, but it is likelier that this is raw meat. As cheetahs do not eat carrion (Wrogemann 65), the meat would have had to be reasonably fresh.

and the beast gapes with hope, and is completely left hanging, staring at what the lion-trainer is up to. So the beast neglects the platter—which slips from its palm as it slackens and loosens, too, its hands, for the sake of what is wandering around. So the pard-trainer (παρδαλαγωγός) kicks and strikes the platter aside with his foot, and flings it far away. And then the beast, deceived, grows savage seeking to attack its deceiver—who offers it the lion hide or skin he is girded with. And the beast scratches with its palms and teeth, its weapons of aggression, underneath the skin-wounds (ἀμυχάς), and does savage battle with it to no effect.⁹⁴

Then it is recaptured in some ingenious manner, and is dragged along with a leash bound to its collar; afterwards—trained for this too, I believe—it springs up on the pard-trainer's (παρδαλαγοῦ) command, and follows him and rides on the same horse, on the hindquarters.⁹⁵ It is frightened in a way by his calls and his shouts; so it whines its way (προσκνυζᾶται) into his arms, gets close up and licks him, just in case a droplet or bubble of blood, foamed up from the slaughter of the prey, has splashed onto the hide.

But we were aware that the magnate for whose sake we had become spectators of all this was still lovingly obsessed with hunting; we decided it was not fitting that we should further accompany him, and neglect thereby our own duties. So we realised that we should

⁹⁴"For example, how are we to accept that a panther, however small—a cheetah (*guépard*) or an ounce (*once*), could hold on to a horse without tearing at its back or flanks with its nails? The lion hide explains everything. It is known that this animal's hide, when dried, is as hard as iron" (Miller 44).

⁹⁵"The 15th century saw the cheetah indeed treated as a royal subject. Marie of Burgundy, who had her own small zoo, wanted a cheetah. And so, in fitting style, a cheetah crossed Mt Cenia in mid-winter on the rump of a horse, muffled up in a cape" (Wrogemann 11). Transportation in this manner was normal: "In India, Iran, Mongolia, the Middle Asian republics, Kazakhstan, Africa, and Europe, cheetahs were also transported on horseback by placing them in a special, rectilinear, flat seat situated behind the saddle" (Heptner/Sludskii 732). The orientalist de Longpérier, asked by Miller, confirmed that horseback depictions of cheetahs were commonplace in Middle Eastern art. He also believed this to have been a Turkic innovation: "Since we have seen that the Byzantines used animals not originally from their territory, it is quite plausible to believe that the practice arrived there from more easterly countries, and especially Mesopotamia. I will add that since 1844—being on the lookout prompted by the goblet of Malek-el-Aschraf [depicting cheetahs on horseback] and the Latin of Emperor Frederick [speaking of cheetahs *qui sciunt equitare* "who know how to ride horses"]—I have determined that the wild beasts borne on horseback are not to be seen in the ancient monuments of either Assyria or Persia. Nothing of the sort is to be seen on the stone carvings of the Sassanids. It seems that from the twelfth or thirteenth century on the Turkomans or Arabs of Mesopotamia and Asia Minor developed the habit of using birds of prey and feline quadrupeds for their hunts" (Miller 39).

remember to go home. Thus what we saw and marvelled at in the hunt, friend, we have also cast here towards your own ears.

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