Eunapius and Arethas

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In the Excerpta de Sententiis drawn up under Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the following scholion precedes the proem to the first book of the νέα ἔκδοσις of Eunapius of Sardis Η Ἱστορία ἡ μετὰ Δέξιππον:1

Οὐκ ἂν γνώριζον τῆς ἱστορίας χρόνων δεύτερον Ἑυνάππον τόνδε κατετάξαμεν Πρίσκου ἄνοητον γὰρ καὶ παρεξηγημένων ἀνθρώπων ἔργον τούτο Ἀπορία δὲ τῇ ἀπὸ φθόνου τῶν εὐποροῦντων διαγενόμενοι οὕτως, οἱ δὲ βουλοῦντ' ἀν ἔχειν ἀχθος ἐτῶσον ἀποφυρής τὰς βιβλίους καὶ παρ' ἑαυτοῖς διακατέχειν ἡ τοῖς χρήζοντιν ἔπ' ὠφελίᾳ μεταδίδοναι καὶ κυδώνειε διὰ τὴν παρομοίαν ἀνασοβείν τῆς ἐπὶ τῇ φάτνῃ κυνός, ἡ μητ' αὐτῇ τῶν τῇ φάτνῃ ἀποκειμένων ἐπαραλάμβανε, καὶ τῶν βουλομένων καὶ δυναμένων ἀκόσμως καθιλακτεῖ.

It is not through ignorance of the period covered by the History that we have placed Eunapius here second to Priscus, for this would certainly be stupid and tiresome on our part; rather, we did it this way owing to a lack of resources caused by the envy of those who possess the resources, those who wish to retain the books like a “fruitless burden of land,” and to keep them for themselves instead of sharing them so as to help those in need. To men who act thus one could almost apply the fable of the dog in the manger, who herself takes no enjoyment of what is stored there and who barks noisily at those willing and able to do so.

De Boor2 was the first to recognize that this anonymous scholion did not originate with the excerptor himself, but had stood in the text from which the excerpts were drawn. Since the authors included under the fifty-three thematic headings of the Excerpta historica were not arranged chronologically, there would have been no need for the eclogarius to apologize for placing Eunapius, whose history covered A.D. 270–404, after Priscus, who treated the years ca 434–472. Fur-

1 U. Boissevain, Excerpta de Sententiis (Berlin 1906: Boissevain/de Boor/Büttner-Wobst, Excerpta Historica IV) 71.3–11.
2 RhM 47 (1892) 321–23.
EUNAPIUS AND ARETHAS

thermore, the reluctance of the owner to part with his copy of Eunapius should have been no serious obstacle to the agents of Constantine VII. Instead, de Boor argued, the note was from a Weltgeschichte in Einzeldarstellungen, the publication of which would have drastically reduced the value of rare books like Eunapius' History, and would therefore have inspired a recalcitrance on the part of bibliophiles to make their holdings available. In addition, he suggested the identification of the expurgated version of Eunapius described by Photius as the νέα ἔκδοσις with the specially prepared text of the hypothesized Weltgeschichte.

This explanation of the genesis of the νέα ἔκδοσις has found little favor, and for good reason. Issue was even taken with the more plausible observation that the scholars working on the Excerpta would not have had to tolerate the sort of churlishness the note reports. Nevertheless, it is still generally acknowledged that the passage in question was, as de Boor maintained, copied from the manuscript of Eunapius' νέα ἔκδοσις used by the excerptor.

There is one other substantial scholion to the Eunapius entries in the Excerpta de Sententiis, the so-called Στηλευτικός κατὰ Εὐνάπιον, which has been convincingly attributed to Arethas of Patras, later archbishop of Caesarea. Even a tentative acceptance of Arethas' authorship of this note raises the possibility that he is also responsible for the anonymous preface, and several considerations suggest that this is in fact the case. First, the introductory scholion exhibits a concentration of vocabulary which is, if not unique to, at least characteristic of Arethas: καταστάτων, παρεξανθείν, διαγνώσθαι, ἐπαπολαύειν, διακατέχειν, καὶ καθυλακτέω.? Second, the phrase ἀχθος ἐτώισον ἄροφής, derived from II. 18.104, is quoted twice by Arethas. Third, the story of the dog in the manger fits well with that scholar's general fondness for proverbs, and more specifically, since it

3 Bibl. cod. 77 (I 158–60 Henry).
4 W. Chalmers, CQ N.S. 3 (1953) 165–70, summarizes earlier scholarship and critiques de Boor's thesis. Now see R. Blockley, The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire I (Liverpool 1981) 1–7, who divorces the νέα ἔκδοσις from any of the supplements that Eunapius may have published subsequent to the first installment of the History. The arguments of R. Goulet, JHS 100 (1980) 60–72, are flawed.
5 81.16–82.3 Boissevain. The invective is bracketed after fr.23 of Eunapius in Müller, FHG IV 23–24.
7 See the index verborum at II 222–68 Westerink.
8 At I 267 and II 113 Westerink.
THOMAS M. BANCHICH

seems here to have been inspired by Lucian, occurs in an author whom Arethas read and annotated. In addition, while ἱστορία seems to have interested Arethas primarily as a repository of rhetorical material, Eunapius, especially in an expurgated form, would have had the further attractions of an account of Julian the Apostate, whose Adversus Christianos Arethas attacked, and of sketches of some of the third and fourth centuries’ leading intellectuals, Arethas’ interest in whom is illustrated by his notes on Philostratus’ Vita Apollonii and Porphyry’s Vita Pythagorae. Finally, the rhetorical tone and the self-righteousness of the passage are common features of Arethas’ style.

Ex hypothesi, Arethas had difficulty obtaining a text of Eunapius’ νέα ἑκδοσις from which to make his own copy, the copy later used for the Excerpta historica. Perhaps not coincidentally, the only person known to have seen both editions of Eunapius was the Patriarch Photius, whose language implies that both versions were already scarce when he examined them: ἀμφότεροι δὲ ταῖς ἑκδόσεσιν ἐν παλαιοῖς ἐνετύχομεν βιβλίοις, ἵνα ἐκατέρων ἐν ἑτέρῳ τεύχεαι καὶ ἑτέρῳ συντεταγμένην. The “old books” may have been codices written in uncial lettering, but almost certainly were not rolls. The statement that there were several copies makes it likely that Photius is speaking of books in the Imperial library rather than in his own collection. Therefore, when Arethas, either while still in Constantinople or in Caesarea after 902 or 903, sought to acquire Eunapius, he could have found copies there. The reluctance of the administrators of the library to lend such a valuable text would then explain the problems Are-

9 Lucian Timon 14. Arethas’ comments on Lucian appear in Scholia ad Lucianum, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig 1906). There are scholia to the Timon, though not to this specific passage. For Arethas’ use of proverbs see II 205–09 Westerink; for the extent of his reading in Lucian see the index auctorum at II 190–91.
10 Cf. II 190 and 214 Westerink.
12 Bibl. cod. 77 (I 159.37–160.2 Henry). If, as seems likely, Arethas knew the Bibliotheca, it would have alerted him to the whereabouts of these particular texts. See Lemerle (supra n.6) 177–204 and 235–37 on Photius in general and on Arethas and the Bibliotheca.
13 T. Birt, Das antike Buchwesen (Berlin 1882) 26, discusses Photius’ terminology.
14 Photius seems to have seen at least three separate codices of Eunapius. For the Imperial library see Lemerle (supra n.6) 65–68, 105, 269, 282, and 295. Would the Patriarchal library have admitted copies of Eunapius, expurgated or not? Cf. C. Mango in Byzantine Books and Bookmen (supra n.11) 29–45, esp. 43.
EUNAPIUS AND ARETHAS

thas' request encountered, and make those librarians the dogs of the fable. The νέα ἐκδοσις, i.e. the expurgated version of Eunapius as described by Photius, was eventually supplied and, if the original was in uncial, would have been copied in minuscule. This in itself would have made Arethas' transcription far more accessible to the compilers of the Excerpta historica than an uncial text. Alternatively, between the time Arethas returned the volume lent him (if he ever did) and the call for a text of Eunapius for incorporation into the Excerpta, probably after 945, the library copies may simply have disappeared. Whatever the case, recourse was made to Arethas' transcription.

The belief that the Priscus section of the Excerpta de Sententiis came from the book described in the introductory note led Boissevain to conjecture that the now-missing pages of the Excerpta between Appian and the beginning of Eunapius contained passages of Priscus. But Priscus does not regularly immediately precede Eunapius in the collection. Instead, the evidence of the Excerpta suggests that Constantine VII's staff already had a text of Priscus, and either used only the Eunapius portion of the Priscus/Eunapius codex from Arethas' collection or worked from a copy of that section. They entered their own heading, ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΕΥΝΑΠΙΟΥ ΣΑΡΔΙΑΝΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΜΕΤΑ ΔΕΞΙΠΠΟΝ ΝΕΑΣ ΕΚΔΟΣΕΩΣ, based on the title of the book before them, followed by the text of the first page, which opened with Arethas' note.

This reconstruction is admittedly hypothetical. However, it avoids the necessity of attributing gross incompetence and lack of foresight to men ambitious enough to undertake the production of de Boor's Weltgeschichte, while offering a much more reasonable explanation of the note as the attempt of Arethas of Patras to pre-empt the sniping of the scholarly pedants whose ways he knew so well.

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15 Exc. de Sent. 71 Boissevain with 14 n.2.
16 Convenient lists of the contents of the various sections of the Excerpta historica are given by Lemerle (supra n.6) 285–87.
17 The form of this codex would be like that described by Photius as containing both editions of Eunapius.
18 Exc. de Sent. 71.1–2.
19 This paper owes much to Prof. Leendert Westerink, who was kind enough to comment on an earlier draft.