

“Scythica Vindobonensia” by Dexippus(?): New Fragments on Decius’ Gothic Wars

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THE YEAR A.D. 238 is a turning point with respect to both history and historiography: on the one hand, the year, more specifically the Gothic attack on Olbia, marks the start of a period of Germanic invasions of Roman territory. In the following over thirty years the defense against the threat from the north and northeast became one of the most pressing tasks for the emperors, and with Decius for the first time a Roman emperor was killed in battle by foreign enemies. On the other hand, while history did not cease to be written, the end of Herodian’s history in 238 is followed by a long gap, from which no detailed and approximately contemporary account of events exists. Discounting the scarce fragments, we have to rely on dubious sources, in particular the *Historia Augusta*, or works of later authors, both Latin and Greek, such as Jordanes, Zosimus, Georgius Syncellus, and Zonaras. Both groups are of limited value for the reconstruction of events: the *Historia Augusta* has a questionable agenda, and the late sources suffer from a distortion probably caused by their separation from contemporary reports by several layers of historical writing and diverging goals.¹ Janiszewski’s overview of the historians of the second half of the third century shows the lost wealth of historiographic production even in a period that has

¹ Cf. B. Bleckmann, *Die Reichskrise des III. Jahrhunderts in der spätantiken und byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung. Untersuchungen zu den nachdionischen Quellen der Chronik des Johannes Zonaras* (Munich 1992) 3–7.

—in a rather generalizing manner—been deemed a time of crisis and cultural breakdown.²

Against this background, a recent discovery in the Austrian National Library in Vienna must be hailed as exceptional: in a manuscript of Christian texts eight palimpsest pages (*Vind. hist.gr.* 73, fols. 192–195) have been found to contain a detailed narrative of at least two invasions of the ‘barbarians’ into the Roman provinces in the Balkans in the middle of the third century A.D. One of these incursions is that of the Goths—called Scythians in the new text—under Cniva in 250/1.³ It is impossible to say with certainty who is the author of these fragments. However, the subject matter as well as some details of style and wording point evidently to Dexippus of Athens and his *Scythica*,⁴ already the best preserved of the historians of the time.⁵

The aim of this publication is both to inform interested schol-

² P. Janiszewski, *The Missing Link. Greek Pagan Historiography in the Second Half of the Third Century and in the Fourth Century AD* (Warsaw 2006). For a differentiated picture of the perception of crisis and threat in the empire see Ch. Witschel, *Krise – Rezession – Stagnation? Der Westen des römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Frankfurt am Main 1999). Indeed, many parts enjoyed relative quiet, but the emperors’ capacities were tied down at the frontiers.

³ We have tentatively identified the invasion described on 192^v–193^r with that of the Heruli in 267/8 in our preliminary edition and analysis of these pages: G. Martin and J. Grusková, “*Dexippus Vindobonensis*(?). Ein neues Handschriftenfragment zum sog. Herulereinfall der Jahre 267/268,” *WS* 127 (2014) 101–120. At a workshop on the fragments in Vienna in June 2014 alternative suggestions have been offered, which will be worth every consideration.

⁴ For a more detailed analysis of the authorship (based on the four pages deciphered so far) see Martin and Grusková, *WS* 127 (2014) 114–116.

⁵ On the fragments cf. G. Martin, *Dexipp von Athen. Edition, Übersetzung und begleitende Studien* (Munich 2006), and now L. Mecella, *Dexippo di Atene. Testimonianze e frammenti* (Tivoli 2013). Dexippus’ fragments in this paper are numbered according to Jacoby (*FGrHist* 100) and Martin, *Dexipp.* On Dexippus’ account of the events of 250/1 see most recently C. Davenport and Ch. Mallan, “Dexippus’ *Letter of Decius*: Context and Interpretation,” *MusHelv* 70 (2013) 57–73.

ars of the new fragments and to present the current state of decipherment of the section about 250/1 as well as our first considerations concerning its content. In providing images we want to give others an opportunity to gain access to the manuscript itself and the transmitted text.⁶ In this way we hope to foster a discussion, the results of which will be included in a full edition of the palimpsest and a comprehensive analysis of the manuscript and the text.

The palimpsest

The manuscript *Vind.hist.gr.* 73 (dimensions: 240 × 160 mm) is one of the witnesses of the *Constitutiones Apostolorum*, a fourth-century collection of ecclesiastical law, written on fols. 2–184 in a calligraphic minuscule of the tenth century.⁷ In the thirteenth century eleven palimpsest leaves (fols. 185–195) with various Christian texts⁸ were added to this volume. On fols. 194^v–195^r, Theodosius IV, Patriarch of Antioch (1278–1283), inserted a curse against book thieves (*figs.* 1 and 2). The manuscript was purchased in Constantinople by Augerius de Busbeck, the well-known ambassador of the Hapsburg monarchs to the Ottoman court (1554–1562) and an assiduous buyer of manuscripts; subsequently, it was donated to the imperial library in Vienna, now the Austrian National Library.⁹

⁶ For this purpose palimpsest images will also be made accessible on the homepage of the project (see n.12).

⁷ Fol. 1^v contains a fragment of *Epistula Clementis ad Jacobum* written by the same scribe.

⁸ Fols. 185^r–191^v *Synodicon Orthodoxiae*, 192^r–193^r Theodorus Studita *Descriptio constitutionis monasterii Studii*, 193^v–194^v prayers (see *fig.* 1).

⁹ For more details see H. Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek I* (Vienna 1961) 82–83; J. Grusková, *Untersuchungen zu den griechischen Palimpsesten der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek* (Vienna 2010) 42–53 (with further bibliography) and 179–181, *Figs.* 7–9; S. Kotzabassi, *Βυζαντινά χειρόγραφα από τα μοναστήρια της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 2004) 111–112. There is a thirteenth-century owner’s inscription of the Theotokos monastery τοῦ Βόλακος (Smyrna) on fol. 1^r and a monogram on fols. 1^r and 194^v (*fig.* 1); see Kotzabassi 112.

The historical fragments on fols. 192^r–195^v were discovered and preliminarily examined by Jana Grusková in 2007/8.¹⁰ The technical means available at the time enabled her to read only about 15% of the original text. This amount of text, however, was sufficient to suggest that the Vienna palimpsest contains unknown historical fragments. Concluding from a larger passage deciphered on fol. 195^r, it seemed that the palimpsest might preserve fragments of Dexippus' *Scythica*.

This lower text runs parallel with the upper one and is hardly discernable to the naked eye. It is written in one column of 30 lines in a Greek calligraphic minuscule (related to the 'Perlschrift') that has been dated to the eleventh century. The four surviving leaves form two bifolia: fols. 192+193 and 194+195.¹¹

Work on the new fragments is now part of a project, which started in June 2012 and is funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF).¹² In order to render visible as much as possible of the original text, the technical and scientific team of the Early Manuscripts Electronic Library (EMEL)¹³ has been invited to cooperate. In February 2013 the EMEL carried out high-

¹⁰ Grusková, *Untersuchungen* 50–53 (with a work-in-progress transcription of fol. 195^r) and 181 (Fig. 9: fol. 195^r). The lower text on fols. 185–191 is written in two columns (11th cent.); it contains hagiographical fragments that were identified in the catalogue of 1961.

¹¹ In the MS. these double leaves are not folded together and each of them starts with the hair page.

¹² This Project FWF P24523-G19 "Important textual witnesses in Vienna Greek Palimpsests," focusing on several unique texts preserved in Vienna palimpsests, is being carried out at the Institute for Medieval Research (Division of Byzantine Research) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (project leader: Otto Kresten); see J. Grusková, "Further Steps in Revealing, Editing and Analysing Important Ancient Greek and Byzantine Texts Hidden in Palimpsests," *GLO* 33–34 (2012) 69–82; see also <http://www.oeaw.ac.at/byzanz/P24523.htm>.

¹³ EMEL (California; Director: Michael Phelps; see <http://emel-library.org/>) is working with the scientific team that developed new methods of spectral imaging to recover the erased text of the Archimedes palimpsest.

resolution spectral imaging on all eight pages, using a special camera (provided by Kenneth Boydston with the assistance of Damianos Kasotakis) and narrow band illumination system (provided by William Christens-Barry). Subsequently, the image-processing using sophisticated techniques was performed by the scientists William Christens-Barry, Keith Knox, Roger Easton, and David Kelbe. While the hair sides of the parchment leaves still pose great difficulties for decipherment, the text on the flesh sides (fols. 192^v, 193^r, 194^v, 195^r) has been rendered relatively legible.¹⁴

The calligraphic Greek minuscule of the original text seems to have been written by a professional scribe. The writing is slightly inclined to the right and hangs from the blind-ruled lines. Majuscule forms are relatively frequent. Shape and size of individual characters may differ (e.g. epsilon and kappa). Accents and breathing marks (as well as apostrophes) are written systematically. The breathing marks are mostly rounded, only rarely square. The scribe uses common abbreviations (e.g. for -ης, -ος, -εν, -ων, -ν)¹⁵ and occasionally suprapositions (e.g. 194^v line 1, 195^r line 2); in 194^v line 19 he contracts the *nomen sacrum* ἀνθρώπων. The *iota mutum* is not written; tremata occur sporadically (e.g. 194^v line 9). The scribe begins the first complete line of a new section with an initial letter (e.g. 194^v line 16, omega; 195^r line 9, epsilon). Dots in the three common positions (τελεία · , μέση · , ὑποστιγμή ·), commas, and (rarely) semicolons are used for punctuation.¹⁶

Some corrections,¹⁷ if written by the scribe himself, as seems likely, provide evidence that he was working carefully, checking

¹⁴ See below, *figs.* 3 and 4 (fols. 194^v, 195^r), and *figs.* 2 and 3 (fols. 192^v, 193^r) in Martin and Grusková, *WS* 127 (2014) 118–119.

¹⁵ For further abbreviations see Martin and Grusková, *WS* 127 (2014) 105–107.

¹⁶ The system of punctuation marks used in Byzantine manuscripts is not identical with the system used in modern editions. In addition, scribes were often inconsistent in the way they used punctuation marks.

¹⁷ Cf. e.g. the notes below on fol. 194^v lines 9 and 23.

the text he had copied. In 195^r line 28 a character seems to have been deleted, perhaps by the scribe himself. The corrections in 194^v line 30 (in and above the line) seem to have been inserted by a later hand. Occasionally a horizontal stroke with a dot above and below (similar to the *obelos periestigmenos*) was placed in the left margin (194^v lines 5, 11, 18; 195^r lines 12, 16);¹⁸ a convincing explanation of this sign has not yet been found. There is a note (subtitle) in the outer margin of 194^v indicating the beginning of a direct speech;¹⁹ the fact that a part of this note has been cut off shows that the original folios were wider, measuring probably around 240 × 175 mm.²⁰

Transcription

The following transcription represents the current state of decipherment of the text on fols. 194^v and 195^r (*figs.* 3 and 4).²¹ Orthography and punctuation have not been normalized.²² Accents and breathing marks are written in the transcription only if they are identifiable on the images. The separation of words, not applied throughout by the scribe, has been extended to the entire text. A hyphen is set if a word is divided at the end of the line. Parentheses are used for the expansion of abbreviations. A sublinear dot indicates that the letter is uncertain (the same applies to punctuation marks and abbreviations). The

¹⁸ See also Martin and Grusková, *WS* 127 (2014) 105–107.

¹⁹ A similar note was obviously inserted also on fol. 193^r, but has been cut off almost completely.

²⁰ A comprehensive palaeographical analysis will be provided in the full edition of the palimpsest.

²¹ A work-in-progress transcription (“Arbeitstranskription”) of fol. 195^r was printed, as mentioned in n.10, in Grusková, *Untersuchungen* (2010) 52–53. Mecella, *Dexippo* (2013) 535, reprinted it, but tacitly modified the text, inserting daggers (to athetize a passage) and a *crux philologorum*, and changing the punctuation. The transcription of fol. 195^r presented in this paper—being based on the new images—updates and replaces Grusková’s transcription of 2010.

²² There often remains a degree of uncertainty concerning the exact position of punctuation marks.

dotted characters range from hardly interpretable traces to obvious reconstructions where only a little is missing, but enough to make the shape ambiguous,²³ and where the context further clarifies the matter. Square brackets [] are used when we assume that a punctuation mark is covered by the upper script, on the grounds that there is a wider than average gap between two words and also a syntactical or sense break. Double square brackets [] indicate a deletion. Where no reconstruction was possible (194^v line 30, 195^r line 28), each missing letter is substituted by *. Curly brackets { } in 194^v line 30 enclose later corrections/insertions.

The first sentence of fol. 194^v begins already on 194^r line 29:

Fol. 194^r (lower text)

29: δεκιος δε της τε |
30 Βοηθειας τη διαμαρτια: και τη της φιλιπ-|

Fol. 194^v (lower text, see *fig. 3*)

1 πουπόλεωσ αλώσει, λυπηρῶσ εἶχε: και επει |
2 τὸ στρατιωτικὸν ἠθροίσθη· εἰς μυριάδας ὀκτώ |
3 που μάλιτα, γνώμησ ἦν ἀνάμαχεσθαι τον |
4 πόλεμον εἰ δύναιτο[·] ὡσ καλὸν αὐτῶ εἰ και τ(ης) |
5 ÷ ἐπικουρίας διημαρτήκει· ἀλλὰ θρακῶν |
6 τοὺς τε αἰχμαλώτους ἐξελέσθαι· και της επεί-|
7 κεινα διαβάσεωσ αὐτοὺς ἀποκωλύσαι· και |
8 το μὲν παραυτικα εἶναι τάφρον βάλ[λ]όμενος |
9 προς ἀμῖσῶ, χωρίω βεροίνης, εἶσω τοῦ χάρακ(οσ) |
10 ἦν· ἅμα τῶ στρατῶ· ἐπιφυλάττων τοὺς πολε-|
11 ÷ μίους· ὁπότε διαβαίνοιεν· ἐπει δὲ ἐξηγγελ-|
12 θη ἐσ αὐτὸν· της ἅμα ὀτρογούθθω δυνάμεωσ |
13 ἢ προχώρησις· ἔγνω δεῖν τοῦ καιροῦ ἐνδιδόντ(οσ) |
14 θαρσύναι τοὺς στρατιώτασ, και ποιησάμ(εν)(οσ) |

²³ Because the visible traces could belong to more than one character of similar shape, e.g. kappa/beta/mu.

15 δε]κίου αὐτῶν κύλλογον· ἐπεὶ ἠθροίσθησαν, ἔλεξε τοιάδε· |
 16 γ]ορί ^{δημη} Ωφελε μὲν ὧ ἄνδρες· ἢ τε στρατιωτικὴ σύνταξις· |
 α : -
 17 καὶ πᾶν το ὑπήκοον· εὖ πράξαι· καὶ ἐκτὸς εἶ- |
 18 ÷ ναι λύμης πολεμίων· ἐπεὶ δὲ αἱ συντυχίαι τῶ(ν) |
 19 ἀν(θρώπ)ων· κατὰ τὸν του θνητοῦ λόγον· παντοίας |
 20 πημονὰς ἐπιφέρουσιν· ἀνδρῶν ἂν εἴη σωφρόνων(ν)· |
 21 δεχομένους τὰ συμβαίνοντα· μὴ χεῖρους εἶναι |
 22 ταῖς γνώμασι· μὴ δὲ τῇ συμβάσει ἐν τῷ πεδί- |
 23 ω κατοπραγία· καὶ τῇ θρακῶν ἀλώσει ἀρα- |
 24 χθέντας· εἴ τις ἄρα ὑμῶν τούτοις ἠθύμηκε, |
 25 κακοὺς γενέσθαι· ἔχει γὰρ ἀντιλογίαν ἐκατέ- |
 26 ρα ἢ συμφορά· ἢ τε γὰρ προτέρα· ἐκ προδοσί- |
 27 ας τῶν σκοπῶν μάλλον· ἢ κακία τῇ ἡμετέρα |
 28 συνηγέχθη· καὶ τὴν θρακῶν πόλιν· ἀπει- |
 29 πόντες ταῖς προσβολαῖς, ἐνέδραις μάλλον· |
 30 ἢ ἀρετῇ ἠρήκασι· ἀσθενὲς δὲ [**] {οὐκ} ἀνδρεῖον· {τε} |
 ἐπιτε- |

Fol. 195^r (lower text, see *fig.* 4)

1 ὠπιεθοφυλάκων· ἀρετῆς μεταποιούμενοι· καὶ δό- |
 2 ξαν ἔχοντες ὡς ἀλκιμώτατοι· προσποησάμ(εν)οι |
 3 ἀναχωρεῖν· κατέμενον αὐτόθι[.] οὐκ ἀποκνήσαντες |
 4 τὴν διατριβήν· κατασκηνήσαντές τε ὡς ἀφανέ- |
 5 στατα· καὶ οὐ πόρρω ἀπαυλιζόμενοι τῶν πολε- |
 6 μίων· ὡς ἐξ ὀλίγου τὴν ἐπιβουλήν παρασκευα- |
 7 σθῆναι· ἀπεῖχοντο δὲ νύκτωρ πῦρ ἀνακαίειν· |
 8 δέει τοῦ μὴ κάτοπτοι εἶναι· ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐνόμιζαν· |
 9 Ἐς πίετιν βεββαίαν ἀφίχθαι τῆς ἀναχωρήσεως σφ(ῶν) |
 10 τοὺς θράκας· καὶ τι καὶ στασιασμοῦ ἐς τοὺς δυνα- |
 11 τοὺς ἐμπεδόν· οἷα ἐν ὁμίλῳ φιλεῖ συμβαίνειν· ἀ- |
 12 ÷ λογίαν ἔχειν τῆς φρουρᾶς ἐπεποιήκει· οἱ δε |
 13 τινες καὶ πρὸς εὐπαθείαις ἦσαν· ὡς δὴ ἐπὶ λύ- |
 14 σσει τοῦ πολέμου· καὶ νίκη περιφανεστάτη, ἐπι- |
 15 τίθεσθαι τῇ πόλει ἐγίγνωσκον· καὶ γὰρ τι καὶ ἐ- |

16 ÷ πήγετο αὐτοὺς ἐπιτήδειον κατὰ προδοσίαν· καί |
 17 τις ἐκδράς τοῦ ἄστεος ὡς ἐλέχθη· ἦτοι κατὰ ἔχθος |
 18 τὸ πρὸς τινα τῶν ἐν τέλει· ἢ καὶ μισθῶν μεγά- |
 19 λων ἐλπίδι· ἐξάγγελος γίγνεται τῶν κατὰ τὴν |
 20 πόλιν τῷ κνίβα οὗτος· καὶ ἀνέπεισε τοὺς κκύθας |
 21 ἐπιμᾶλλον ἀντιλαβέσθαι τῆς ἐπιχειρήσεως· ἐ- |
 22 παγγειλάμενος· τοῦ τειχίσματος· καθ’ ὅτι εὐεπι- |
 23 βατώτατον εἶη, σύνθημα ἄραι· κατὰ λόγον τῶν |
 24 συγκειμένων τοῖς ἐκπεμφθεῖσιν· ἐξεπέμφθη- |
 25 σαν δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ κνίβα νύκτωρ· ἄνδρες πέντε ἐ- |
 26 θελονταὶ· κατὰ γε τὸ σφῶν αὐτῶν πρόθυμον· καὶ |
 27 ἐλπίδι χρημάτων· ἐπὶ προσκοπῇ τῶν ἀγγελλο- |
 28 μένων· καὶ πείρα· τῆς λογο[*]ποιηθείσης προ- |
 29 δοσίας· ἄθλα δὲ ἦν παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως· τῷ μὲν |
 30 πρώτῳ ἀνελθόντι· πεντακόσιοι δαρεικοὶ· δευ- |

Translation

Folio 194^r (lower text) lines 29–30 to 194^v line 30:

Decius was concerned about the wrongdoing of the auxiliary troops and the capture of Philippopolis. And when the army was gathered, about 80,000 men, he wanted to renew the war if he could—as he thought that the situation was favorable to him, even though he had lost the auxiliary force—but also to liberate the Thracian captives and to prevent them from crossing to the other side. And for the moment, having built a trench at Hamisos [?], a place of Beroïna [?], he stayed inside the encampment together with his army, watching for when the enemy were to cross. When the advance of Ostrogotha’s force was reported to him, he thought that he should encourage his soldiers, as a good opportunity arose. And he made an assembly, and when they had gathered, he spoke as follows:

“Men, I wish the military force and all the provincial territory were in a good condition and not humiliated by the enemy. But since the incidents of human life bring manifold sufferings (for such is the fate of mortals), it is the duty of prudent men to accept what happens and not to lose their spirit, nor become weak, distressed by the mishap in that plain or by the capture of the Thracians—in case any of you has been disheartened by these things. For each of

these two misfortunes offers arguments against your discouragement: the former was brought about by the treachery of the scouts rather than by any deficiency of ours, and the Thracian town they [sc. the Scythians] took by ambushes rather than through prowess, having failed in their attacks. And weak ...{and not}²⁴ brave ... ||[...”

In the left (outer) margin: [De]cius' address (*demegoria*)

Folio 195^r (lower text) lines 1–30:

...]|| (they) formed the rear-guard, claiming to be particularly valiant and having a reputation of being the fiercest. They pretended to withdraw but stayed in the area. Not shrinking from abiding there, they built a camp as secretly as they could and lodged not far from the enemies, so that the attack could be prepared within a short time. They did, however, refrain from lighting fires at night, fearing that they might be seen.

When they believed that the Thracians had become firmly convinced of their withdrawal—so much so that a rebellion against those in power had arisen (as tends to happen where there is a mass of people) and caused carelessness with the guard duty, and some had given themselves to merriment, as if the war had ended and they had achieved a splendid victory—at that point they decided to attack the town. For an advantage gained by betrayal had also encouraged them: a man had stolen away from the town and provided Cniva with information about the city (as was said, either out of hatred against one of those in power or in the hope of a big reward). And he convinced the Scythians to hold on even more firmly to their plan of attacking by promising them to give those who would be dispatched the signal in accordance with what had been agreed in the place where the fortifications could be climbed most easily. Five men, who had volunteered out of zeal and in hope of money, were sent out by Cniva by night as scouts to check what had been reported and to test the arranged betrayal. Prizes were set by the king: 500 darics for the first to climb the walls, for the sec| | [ond ...

²⁴ See the note below on fol. 194^v line 30.

Notes on the text

Folio 194^r lines 29–30 της τε | βοηθείας τη διαμαρτία:²⁵ The text at the beginning of 30 is badly preserved, but it seems that the traces that have survived make βοηθείας more than a shot in the dark. Moreover, a reference to a collective is most likely after the feminine article (which rules out a male individual), and a military unit is suggested by the context. διαμαρτία leaves it open whether the indicated action is considered culpable behavior or an involuntary mistake. The phrase denotes a setback for Decius and may best be taken as a reference to a defeat. The fact that it is juxtaposed to the capture of Philippopolis as a source of the emperor’s chagrin seems to attribute to it high significance (cf. 22–23). One may see a parallel to διημαρτήκει mentioned in fol. 194^v lines 4–5 (see below): the ἐπικουρία there may be the same as the βοήθεια here. If an element of guilt is implied, it may also be possible to link this passage to the “betrayal” in 26–27 (also juxtaposed with the fall of Philippopolis), most likely describing the circumstances of the defeat at Beroea (see 22–23 τῆ συμβάσει ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ κακοπραγία, cf. Jord. *Get.* 102).²⁶

Folio 194^v lines 4–5 τ(ῆς) | ἐπικουρίας διημαρτήκει: The most likely interpretation seems to be that Decius wanted to renew the war, even though he “had lost” or “missed” the auxiliary forces, i.e. did not have at his disposal troops he had expected or hoped to have. Whether he failed to gather them, or whether they fell or defected, is unclear.

5–6 ἀλλὰ θρακῶν | τοὺς τε αἰχμαλώτους ἐξέλθει· καὶ τῆς ἐπέκεινα διαβάσεως ἀποκωλύσαι: In the context the verb ἐξαιρέομαι could refer to the liberation of the Thracian captives (LSJ s.v. IV *set free, deliver*, e.g. Eur. *Heracl.* 977). We

²⁵ With beta written as initial letter in order to mark the first full line of a new section that begins in 29 (i.e. with Δέκτιος δέ).

²⁶ The text of Jordanes is cited after the edition by F. Giunta and A. Grillone (Rome 1991).

know that the Goths were trying to take a large number of captives to their own territory, together with their other booty from Philippopolis (cf. Georg. Sync. 459.12 = Dexippus F 22J = 17M μετὰ πλείστων αἰχμαλώτων).²⁷ Other meanings of ἐξαίρεομαι would be hard to interpret. Decius lies in wait for the Goths to “cross”; διαβαίνω/διάβασις usually signals a location at a river (here most likely the Danube).

7 ἀποκωλύσαι *sic*, with an acute.

7–8 καὶ ἰ τὸ μὲν παραυτικά εἶναι: τὸ παραυτικά is not paralleled in this combination with εἶναι, but the phrase may be formed on the analogy of τὸ νῦν εἶναι. There seems to be a little bit more space than expected after τάφρον, but this need not indicate a syntactic break. For (τάφρον) βάλλεσθαι (*lay the foundations of, begin to form*) cf. e.g. Philostr. *VA* 1.24; *Suda* α249.

8 βαλ[λ]όμενος: The second lambda seems to have been erased.

9 πρὸς ἀμῖ^ικῶ, χωρίω βεροῖ^{τ(ης)}νης: The words are relatively clear, even if some of the characters are partly covered by the upper script. A trace of the breathing can be seen above the alpha, but it is impossible to decide whether it is rough or smooth. However, this reading was judged corrupt, for someone (probably the scribe himself) inserted iota or rho *supra lineam* between alpha and mu of ἀμῖκῶ, and τ(±2) *supra lineam* between χωρίω and βεροῖνης, probably τ(ης), since the strokes after tau could, with some uncertainty, be deciphered as an abbreviation of -ῆς. Neither a name/toponym nor an adjective ἀμισός/ἀμισός or (corr.) αἰμισός/αἰμισός or ἄρμισός/ ἄρμισός is attested in this region;²⁸ the name βέροινα/βεροῖνη is

²⁷ Cf. Zosimus 1.23.1. This line of action is not unusual: for example, Aurelian does the same with the Juthungi in 270 (Dexippus F 6.1J = 28.1M). Cf. *AE* 1993, 1231 (Raetia, ca. 260): *excussis multis milibus Italarum captivorum*.

²⁸ For αἰμισός some associations could arise with mount Haemus (Αἶμος) in Thracia; for ἄρμισός one could suggest the emendation to ἄβρισός (supposing that mu is a misreading of an original beta—as is common in Greek minuscule of this period—and that the supralinear rho was placed

not attested either.²⁹ The text may contain (an) unknown geographical name(s) or corrupted known name(s). A garbled transcription of Latin names into Greek cannot be excluded either.³⁰

12 ὄμμα ὀστρογούθθω: The name, including the omega, is clearly legible. It occurs otherwise only in Latin sources: see in particular Jord. *Get.* 98–100, where the form *Ostrogotha* is used. That may suggest that Dexippus, Jordanes’ source, wrote Ὀστρογούθθας, gen. -α, dat. -α, on analogy with Κνίβας (cf. fol. 195^r lines 20 and 25); for this termination cf. *Princeton Exped. Syria* IIIA 223 (Hauran, A.D. 208) μνημεῖον Γούθθα. If -α is the correct, i.e. original, reading, the dative variant -ω (i.e. -ω) in the manuscript must have been created in the course of transmission, caused by a normalization to the more regular masculine termination -ος (cf. *Ostrogothae/Ostrogothi* and Γότθοι/*Gothi* for the people) or by a minuscule misreading of ω/α. For the form -γούθθ- cf. also *I. estrem. or.* 261.7 (*Res Gestae Saporis*, ca. A.D. 260) Γούθθων τε καὶ Γερμανῶν ἔθνῶν.

Fol. 194^v puts to rest the idea that *Ostrogotha* is a later invention meant to explain the division of the Goths into Ostrogoths

wrongly between alpha and mu/beta), which could be associated with Abrittus, for which manuscripts provide a range of different spellings; e.g. Jord. *Get.* 103 *veniensque ad Abritum Moesiae*; Georg. Sync. 459.11 (= Dexippus F 22J = 17M) ἀναίρεται ἐν Ἀβρύτῳ, τῷ λεγομένῳ φόρῳ Θεμβρωνίῳ; cf. Prosper Tiro 850 (ed. Mommsen) *Decius cum filio in Abito occiditur*, where we also find *Abyto*, *Absto* in the MSS. But as the building of the trench seems to be the first action after Decius gathered his new troops, one would rather place the trench closer to the Danube, between Novae and Abrittus. See below.

²⁹ For βεροΐνης (gen. sg.) an association may immediately suggest itself with Beroea in Thracia (Βέροια or Βερόη, *Beroea*, *Beroa*, or *Berone* of the *Tabula Peutingeriana* VIII 2), the town where Cniva ambushed Decius several months before the moment when our passage is set; for this event see below on the historical context.

³⁰ One could try to see a connection between χωρίῳ τῆς βεροΐνης and φόρῳ Θεμβρωνίῳ transmitted by Georgius Syncellus (see n.28), “Forum Terebronii.”

and Visigoths. As Wolfram points out,³¹ the previously known attestations of this person are irreconcilable: according to Jordanes he was Cniva's predecessor as king, led the invasion of 248 (*Get.* 90–101), and fought back the Gepids (99). His death is reported in the following way: *redeunt victores Gothi, Gepidarum discessione contenti suaque in patria feliciter in pace versantur, usque dum eorum praeuius existeret Ostrogotha. post cuius decessum Cniva, exercitum dividens in duas partes ...* (100–101). Since the invasion and the defeat of the Gepids have been dated to around 290, Ostrogotha was suggested to belong to this later time.³² The mention of an Ostrogotha in the palimpsest as being alive and leading a “Scythian” force in 251, probably the first part of the Gothic forces going to “cross” (the Danube), should be counted as entirely new and trustworthy prosopographic evidence for the Gothic rulers, changing the picture yet again. The conflicting evidence on the dates of Ostrogotha's life could be explained if the name was frequent among the Gothic élite.

14 θαρσύναι *sic* (ut vid.), with an acute.

15 ff. marg. [δε]κίου | [δ]ημη[γ]ορία: A marginal note marks the beginning of Decius' ‘public’ military speech/address to his soldiers. During the production of the new manuscript or a later binding, the left margin of the original leaf was cut off, and with it part of this note.

16–17 ἢ τε στρατιωτικὴ σύνταξις. | καὶ πᾶν το ὑπήκοον: These two elements probably anticipate, and are picked up by, the two defeats mentioned later: that of Beroea, which befell the army, and the capture of Philippopolis and the subsequent raids, which predominantly affected the provincials. The periphrasis with σύνταξις instead of the simple στρατιῶται or στρατός is a mannerism in line with the imitation of Thu-

³¹ H. Wolfram, *Die Goten. Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des sechsten Jahrhunderts*³ (Munich 1990) 392 n.12.

³² H. Wolfram, “Kniva,” in H. Beck et al. (eds.), *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*² 17 (Berlin/New York 2001) 34–37, here 35; cf. *Paneg. Lat.* XI(III) 17.1.

cydidean style, which is a trademark of Dexippus.³³

23–24 ἄραχθέντας: After apparently writing just ἀραχθέντας, the scribe—probably immediately—corrected his mistake, inserting tau above the first alpha.

25–26 ἔχει γὰρ ἀντιλογίαν ἐκατέρω ἢ συμφορά: The sentence is a good example of the imitation of Thucydides’ style: the dense nominal phrase is on the brink of incomprehensibility. The sense is that aspects of each event can serve as arguments against (ἀντιλογία, i.e. a refutation of) despair. That means they explain why the soldiers must not be discouraged.

30: The corrections seem to have been inserted by a later hand.

Folio 195^r lines 2–3 προσημασμένοι ἠναχωρεῖν: Cf. Dexippus F 27.11J = 24.11M on the siege of Philippopolis: ὡς δὲ πάντῃ ἄποροι τῇ γνώμῃ ἐγίνοντο οἱ βάρβαροι, ἐδόκει ἀναχωρεῖν. καὶ τοῦτο τῇ πολιορκίᾳ τέλος τοῖς Σκύθαις ἐγένετο.

10: θράκας *sic* (ut vid.), with an acute.

11–12 ἀλογίαν ἔχειν τῆς φουρᾶς: In this meaning (‘carelessness/disregard’) ἀλογία is not Thucydidean but common enough in historiography (e.g. Hdt. 4.150, Polyb. 1.11.1).

17 ὡς ἐλέχθη: This could be an indication that the author drew on accounts of eye-witnesses.

20 κούθας: The use of the name ‘Scythians’ for the Goths is an anachronism that is common at the time: cf. Dexippus F 22J = 17M (= Georg. Sync. 459.5–16) and the title *Scythica*.³⁴ Γότθοι (and similar spellings) is hardly ever used in literary texts before the fourth century.

21 ἐπιμᾶλλον: For the spelling cf. Dexippus F 34J = 4M (= *Suda* ε2455 s.v. ἐπιμᾶλλον). In the manuscript there may be a small gap after ἐπι, but that is not unusual within words in the palimpsest, and there seems to be no accent on the iota.

28 λογο[*]ποιηθείς: A character seems to have been de-

³³ Cf. F. J. Stein, *Dexippus et Herodianus rerum scriptores quatenus Thucydidem secuti sint* (diss. Bonn 1957) 28–29; Martin and Grusková, *WS* 127 (2014) 115–116.

³⁴ Cf. Martin and Grusková, *WS* 127 (2014) 106, 110.

leted, perhaps by the scribe himself. The word is obviously complete and correct without the cancelled letter.

29: ἄθλα *sic*, with an acute.

29 παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως: The fact that no name is given here suggests that the “king” is Cniva, mentioned in 20 and 25.

30 δαρεικοὶ: A typical classicizing usage of the name of a Persian coin for (presumably) the Roman *aureus*, along the lines of calling the Goths Σκύθαι. Cf. Philostr. *VA* 6.39.3 (possibly an old treasure), Lucian e.g. *Nav.* 18, *Dial.metr.* 7.1.

Historical context

The general course of events can be reconstructed from historical accounts—mainly Jordanes’ *Getica* and Georgius Syncellus’ *Ecloga Chronographica*—and numismatic evidence.³⁵

Probably in the spring of 250, the Goths led by Cniva together with other tribes (Carpi, Bastarnae, etc.) crossed the Lower Danube to invade the Roman provinces of Dacia, Moesia, and Thracia. After breaking through the *limes*, the tribe of the Carpi split from the Goths and moved into Dacia. One part of the Goths invaded the Dobrudja in Moesia Inferior; the unsuccessful siege of Marcianopolis may be part of that campaign.³⁶ Subsequently, they crossed the range of the Haemus, moved up the Hebrus (now Maritsa) valley and started

³⁵ Jord. *Get.* 101–103, Georg. Sync. 459.5–16 (= Dexippus F 22J = 17M); cf. Zosimus 1.23–24 and Zonaras 3.136. For the numismatic evidence see in particular B. Gerov, “Die gotische Invasion in Mösien und Thrakien unter Decius im Lichte der Hortfunde,” in *Acta Antiqua Philippopolitana. Studia historica et philologica* (Sofia 1963) 127–146, and D. Boteva, “On the Chronology of the Gothic Invasions under Philippus and Decius (AD 248–251),” *Archaeologia Bulgarica* 5 (2001) 37–44. Modern reconstructions of events and a discussion of the sources can be found in Wolfram, *Goten* 55–56; Bleckmann, *Reichskrise* 161–167; Wolfram, in *Reallexikon* 34–37; D. S. Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay, AD 180–395* (New York 2004) 241–246; U. Huttner, “Von Maximinus Thrax bis Aemilianus,” in K.-P. Johne (ed.), *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser. Krise und Transformation des Römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Berlin 2008) 161–221, here 208–211.

³⁶ See n.44.

besieging the Thracian town Philippopolis (now Plovdiv).³⁷

The other part under Cniva crossed the Danube at Oescus (now Gigen); these troops (70,000 men) invaded central Moesia Inferior and moved down the Danube to Novae (now Svištov), at the mouth of the river Iatrus (now Jantra). Beaten off by the provincial governor (and future emperor) Trebonianus Gallus, they pressed south to besiege Nicopolis ad Istrum (now Nikyup). In the meantime Decius arrived at the Danube from Illyria, drove out the Carpi and moved against the Goths. Cniva then moved further south to Philippopolis to join the rest of the Gothic army. Decius followed him, but at a rest at Beroea (now Stara Zagora) in the Upper Thracian Plain, north-east of Philippopolis, Cniva attacked him and inflicted heavy losses on the Roman army. Decius fled with the small remainder back to the Danube, to Gallus' large force at the border in Novae. Here he reorganized his army: he gathered troops stationed in the area and prepared for the resumption of the war.

Meanwhile, probably in the summer of 250, after some unsuccessful attacks and a long siege, Cniva took Philippopolis.³⁸ He is reported by Jordanes (*Get.* 103) to have allied himself with Lucius(?) Priscus, the commander of the town, who had been declared emperor by the Thracian troops in the city so that he could negotiate with the Goths. But once inside the town, the Goths went on a rampage. The fall of Philippopolis allowed them to carry out raids in Thracia and probably also neighboring Illyricum.

In the spring of 251 the Goths moved northeast to return home, laden with booty and many captives. Decius marched to intercept them. It was at Abrittus (now Abrittus-Hisarlak near Razgrad), probably in the middle/late summer of 251, that the

³⁷ See n.38.

³⁸ But cf. Boteva, *Archaeologia Bulgarica* 5 (2001) 42, who argues that Philippopolis must have been besieged, captured, and plundered by the Goths in 251.

Romans finally met the Gothic main force.³⁹ Decius joined battle on unfavorable ground, was ambushed, driven into the marshes and killed. The Goths finally returned home under the rule of Gallus, without meeting further resistance.

We will now try to consider how the events described on fols. 194^v and 195^r relate to the historical context sketched above and what new evidence the Vienna palimpsest presents. The text of these pages is not continuous, so the two passages must be examined separately.

The fact that Philippopolis has fallen and the emperor Decius is still alive firmly places the text of fols. 194^r lines 29–30 and 194^v in 250/1 and before the battle of Abrittus. Decius mentions another defeat as having occurred “on that plain,” obviously some time earlier than the fall of Philippopolis (τῆ συμβάσῃ ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ κακοπραγία,⁴⁰ 194^v 22–23, cf. 26). This probably is to be identified with the battle at Beroea (Jord. *Get.* 102):⁴¹ firstly, the juxtaposition of the “mishap” with the capture of Philippopolis suggests that it was a major setback for the emperor, and after Beroea Decius had to withdraw to the Danube and leave Thracia to the Goths. Secondly, the only detail we know about Beroea is that it was an ambush. In 194^v 26–27 we find similar information in Decius’ remark that the Romans suffered defeat as a result of treachery by the scouts (ἐκ προδοσίας τῶν σκοπῶν).

Further indications help to determine more precisely when our text is set. The way in which Decius’ reaction to the fall of Philippopolis is described suggests that this is not the moment in which he first hears of it: the imperfect εἶχε signals an

³⁹ Wolfram, *Goten* 56. Cf. Bleckmann, *Reichskrise* 166: “Den Goten begegnete Decius in der Tat erst dann wieder, als er ihnen beim moesischen Abrittus den Rückweg über die Donau versperren wollte.”

⁴⁰ From this point on the quoted text of the palimpsest will be normalized.

⁴¹ Cf. Georg. Sync. 459.8–9 (= Dexippus F 22J = 17M) with Bleckmann, *Reichskrise* 165 n.32.

emotion upon reflection rather than the first consternation. Moreover, at the start of the fragment he has already gathered an army of 80,000 men (ἐπεὶ τὸ στρατιωτικὸν ἠθροίσθη) and decides to fight again (γνώμης ἦν ἀναμάχεσθαι). The parallel in Jordanes (*Get.* 102 *collectoque ... exercitu, futuri belli se reparat in acie*) is so close that it becomes likely that Jordanes depends in some way on our new text. It seems that the emperor wants (lines 5–7) to prevent the Goths from leaving the territory of the Empire with their rich booty, especially that of Philippopolis, which included many Thracian captives. Having dug a trench at a place that has not so far been identified—most likely somewhere near the Danube, on the way from Novae to Abrittus—Decius and his army lie in wait for the Goths to “cross,” staying inside a χάραξ (probably a camp or fort). Having heard that Ostrogotha’s force is approaching (12–13), Decius gathered his soldiers to encourage them with a speech. All this points to the beginning of Decius’ campaign.

For fol. 195^r the identification of the historical context is more tentative: the names Thracians, Scythians, and, chiefly, the explicit mention of a “Scythian” leader Cniva in 20, 25, who is obviously the βασιλεύς referred to in 29,⁴² connect the fragment with the same Gothic incursion as fol. 194.⁴³ The town that is the object of the stratagem and attack of the “Scythians” (20) is not named in the part deciphered so far, but from line 10 we know that it must have been a Thracian town. For the Gothic invasion in question, attacks on four cities are attested: Novae, Nicopolis, Philippopolis, and possibly Marcianopolis.⁴⁴ Of these cities only Philippopolis was situated in

⁴² See above on fol. 195^r line 29.

⁴³ However, assuming with Wolfram, in *Reallexikon* 36, that Cniva “fällt etwa 20 Jahre später um 271 gegen Kaiser Aurelian,” one cannot rule out the possibility of a later invasion of Thracia by Goths led by Cniva.

⁴⁴ The date of the siege of Marcianopolis in Dexippus (F 25J = 22M) remains uncertain. In Jordanes a siege is mentioned in the narrative of 248 (*Get.* 92). However, it has been argued that the events narrated for 248 actually took place in 250/1: cf. Wolfram, *Goten* 392 n.12; A. Soby Christensen, *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths* (Copenhagen 2002) 198–

the province of Thracia, so its inhabitants were the only ones who would be referred to as Θραῖκες.⁴⁵

The Thracian town in 195^r must previously have been under attack by the “Scythians,” since the invaders (pretend to) withdraw (2–3). The political structure of the town, its morale, and military discipline collapse as the outside pressure suddenly disappears (10–12 τι στασιασμοῦ ἐς τοὺς δυνατοὺς ἐμπροσθέν ... ἀλογίαν ἔχειν τῆς φρουρᾶς). Treachery ensues by a man who had stolen away from the town (15–24; 16 προδοσίαν), and a storming of the town and an infiltration by night are being prepared (24–30), with prizes set for the first men to climb the walls, i.e. to enter the town (τῷ πρώτῳ ἀνελθόντι). The traces that have been read on 195^v so far seem to confirm that a lengthy account of the attack follows. Noteworthy in this context could be the fact that Decius (194^v 28–29) says only that the Goths took Philippopolis by ambushes (ἐνέδραι) and that they had failed in their open attacks (ἀπειπόντες ταῖς προσβολαῖς). This could refer to the action described on 195^r.

Does the account on 195^r correspond to the most detailed parallel report on the fall of Philippopolis, that of Jordanes? The later historian mentions that the town was under attack for some time, and Cniva had entered the town before the alliance with Priscus, the local commander (*Get.* 103 *Cniva vero diu obses-*

201. The argument is that the entire incursion of 248 is a doublet of the expedition of 250/1, for Ostrogotha, the Gothic leader in that siege (here *Jord. Get.* 90), was a figure of the end of the third century. In the light of the evidence, it can no longer be said that any mention of (an) Ostrogotha must refer to the end of the century. Moreover, the numismatic evidence suggests that there was an invasion in 248: see A. Schwarcz, “Die gotischen Seezüge des 3. Jahrhunderts,” in R. Pillinger et al. (eds.), *Die Schwarzmeerküste in der Spätantike und im frühen Mittelalter* (Vienna 1992) 47–57, here 48 n.5; Boteva, *Archaeologia Bulgarica* 5 (2001) 39.

⁴⁵ Cf. Dexippus’ fragment on the siege of Marcianopolis in *Excerpta de strategematibus* 4 (F 25J = 22M), βιαζόμενοι δὴ οὖν οἱ Σκύθαι καὶ μὴ ἀντιδρῶν ἔχοντες τοὺς Μυσοὺς..., and his fragment on Nicopolis in *Georg. Sync.* 459.6–7 (F 22J = 17M), οὗτοι τοὺς Μυσοὺς φεύγοντας εἰς Νικόπολιν περιέσχον. Oescus was also in Moesia Inferior.

sam invadit Philippopolim, praedaque potitus, Priscum ducem qui inerat sibi foederavit quasi cum Decio pugnaturum).⁴⁶ So there is no contradiction between Jordanes and the new fragment: Cniva may have entered with the help of the anonymous traitor; the alliance with Priscus may have been mentioned in the part following fol. 195^r.

For these reasons, the identification of the town as Philippopolis is possible and plausible, though by no means certain. In this case the text on 195^r could describe the beginning of the second stage of Cniva's onslaught on this Thracian town. One could then conclude that the text on 195^r may start soon after the point where Dexippus' F 27J = 24M breaks off. Hopefully the decipherment of 195^v and the ensuing investigations will offer further clues.

The original manuscript

The larger fragments of Dexippus known so far have all come down to us in collections of excerpts,⁴⁷ mostly in the work of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus. This would *prima facie* make it likely that the Vienna palimpsest also contains fragments from a collection of excerpts. However, the passages deciphered so far—fols. 192^v, 193^r, 194^v, and 195^r—are quite long (192^v+193^r even contain one continuous passage), without the start or end of an extract being recognizable, nor are there signs of an excerptor's interference (e.g. abridgements); moreover, the content of the fragments is very diverse: it includes speeches, narrative of campaign preparations, and a stratagem: it is, therefore, unlikely that all this text would have been incorporated into a collection under the same heading (such as the *περὶ γνωμῶν, περὶ στρατηγημάτων, or δημηγορίαι*⁴⁸). It is more

⁴⁶ For Priscus see also Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 29.2–3, Sync. 459.9–10; cf. *PIR*² P 971.

⁴⁷ For the *Scythica* such large excerpts have been transmitted in the *Excerpta de strategematibus*: FF 25, 27, 29J = 22, 24, 27M; *Excerpta de sententiis*: FF 26, 28aJ = 23, 25M; *Excerpta de legationibus*: FF 6, 7J = 38, 30M.

⁴⁸ Cf. e.g. the manuscript *Ambr.* B 119 sup. which contains on fols. 141^r–

likely that the pages originate from a full copy of a historical work, most probably Dexippus' *Scythica*.⁴⁹

If we assume that the original quire was the usual quaternion,⁵⁰ further inferences about the lost text are possible, based on the following facts: (1) fols. 194/195 originally formed a bifolium; (2) 194^v and 195^r are the flesh sides of the parchment; and (3) the text of 194^v does not continue on 195^r.

Hence, if the Thracian town on 195^r is Philippopolis, attacked by Cniva in 250—or, for that matter, any Thracian town attacked by Cniva before the events on fol. 194^v—a necessary consequence would be that 195^r originally preceded 194^v. In this case fols. 195^{rv} (F/H) and 194^{rv} (H/F) must have been (a) the first and the eighth folio or (b) the third and the sixth folio of the supposed quaternion. The space between 195^r and 194^v would thus have covered either (a) 14 or (b) 6 pages, i.e. about 3150 or 1350 words. As the seizure and/or surrender of Philippopolis was one of the main events of the invasion, fols. 195 and 194 most probably formed the covering leaves of the quaternion, i.e. (a).⁵¹

156^r such a collection of “Contiones militares,” military speeches extracted from classical historians (Xenophon, Herodian etc.).

⁴⁹ See Martin and Grusková, *WS* 127 (2014) 116. The four pages transcribed so far contain the beginnings of two speeches. The prominence of this text type in the fragments may be an indicator of its frequency in the work.

⁵⁰ The parchment quires in Greek manuscripts consist usually of four bifolia forming a quaternion, which starts with a flesh page, i.e. flesh side of the parchment-sheet, and the folios continue in such a way that pages of the same kind face each other: so the second and the third page are hair pages (H), the fourth and the fifth page are flesh pages (F), and so on. The last page, being of the same parchment-sheet side as the first page of the quire, is again a flesh page and faces the first (flesh) page of the following quire (‘lex Gregory’). The structure of such a quaternion is as follows: of the first, third, fifth, and seventh folio the *recto* is a flesh page, the *verso* a hair page; on the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth folio it is *vice versa*, i.e. H/F. Cf. C. R. Gregory, “The Quires in Greek Manuscripts,” *AJP* 7 (1886) 27–32, here 30–31.

⁵¹ Otherwise the narrative of the actual sack of the town would have had

However, if the Thracian town of 195^r is not Philippopolis and the attack by the Goths under Cniva on the unknown town occurred after the events described on 194^v,⁵² fols. 194^{rv} (H/F) and 195^{rv} (F/H) must have been the second and the seventh folio of the quaternion. In such a case the missing text between 194^v and 195^r would have covered eight pages, i.e. about 1800 words.⁵³

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to be much less detailed after the lengthy run-up. This looks unlikely, not just in terms of narratology. There is much material to be covered: apart from the execution of the attack that evidently was conducted, the entire story of how Priscus allied himself with the Goths and how they ransacked the town must fit into the gap. The struggle about the town may have been rather extended: Ammianus (31.5.17) tells us that *post clades acceptas inlatasque multas et saevas excisa est Philippopolis, centum hominum milibus—nisi fingunt annales—intra moenia iugulatis*.

⁵² Cf. n.43.

⁵³ Work on this paper would not have been possible without the support of the Austrian Science Fund (see n.12) and the Swiss National Science Foundation, which awarded a generous research grant to Gunther Martin. We would like to express our profound gratitude to both institutions, and also to Otto Kresten, Arnd Kerkhecker, Fritz Mitthof, Herbert Bannert, Giuseppe De Gregorio, Ernst Gamillscheg, Walter Stockert, and Peter Soustal.

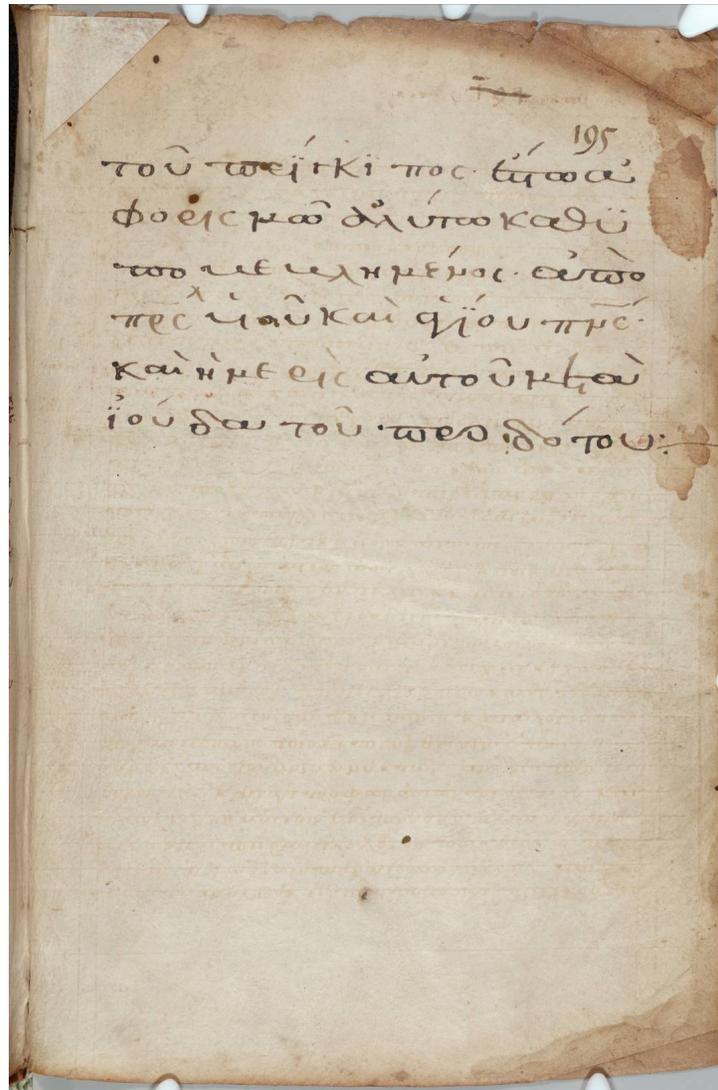


Figure 2: Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek,
Hist.gr. 73, fol. 195^r, upper text
 Spectral imaging by the Early Manuscripts Electronic Library.
 Visual appearance image.
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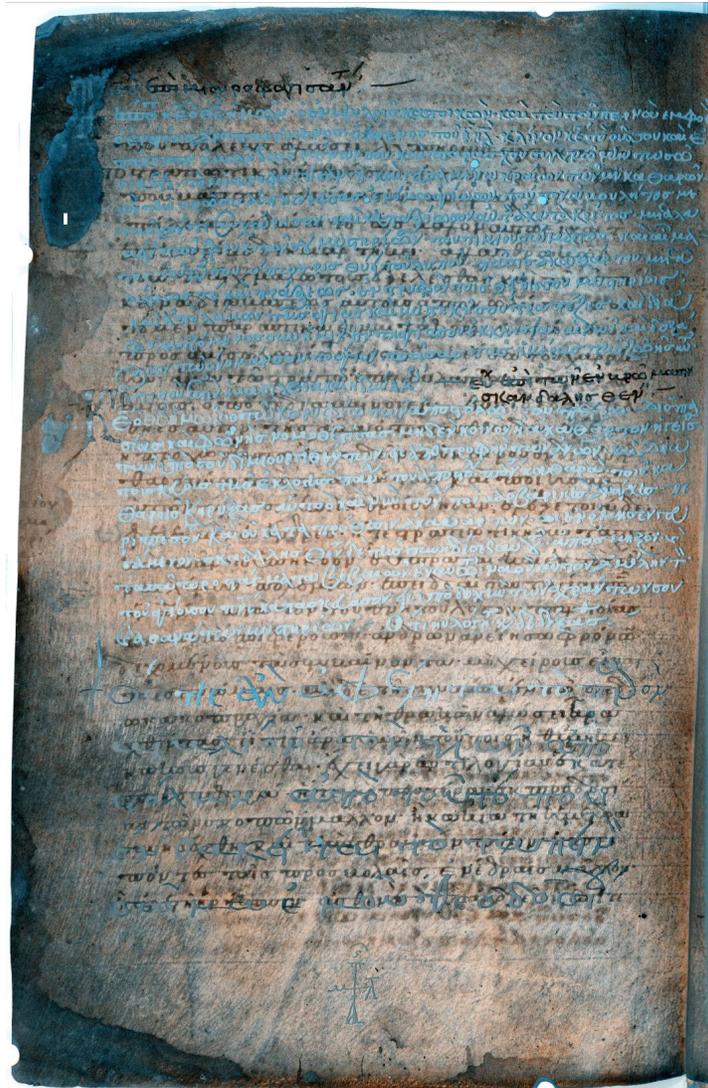


Figure 3: Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek,
Hist.gr. 73, fol. 194v, lower text
 Spectral imaging by the Early Manuscripts Electronic Library.
 Processed image by David Kelbe.
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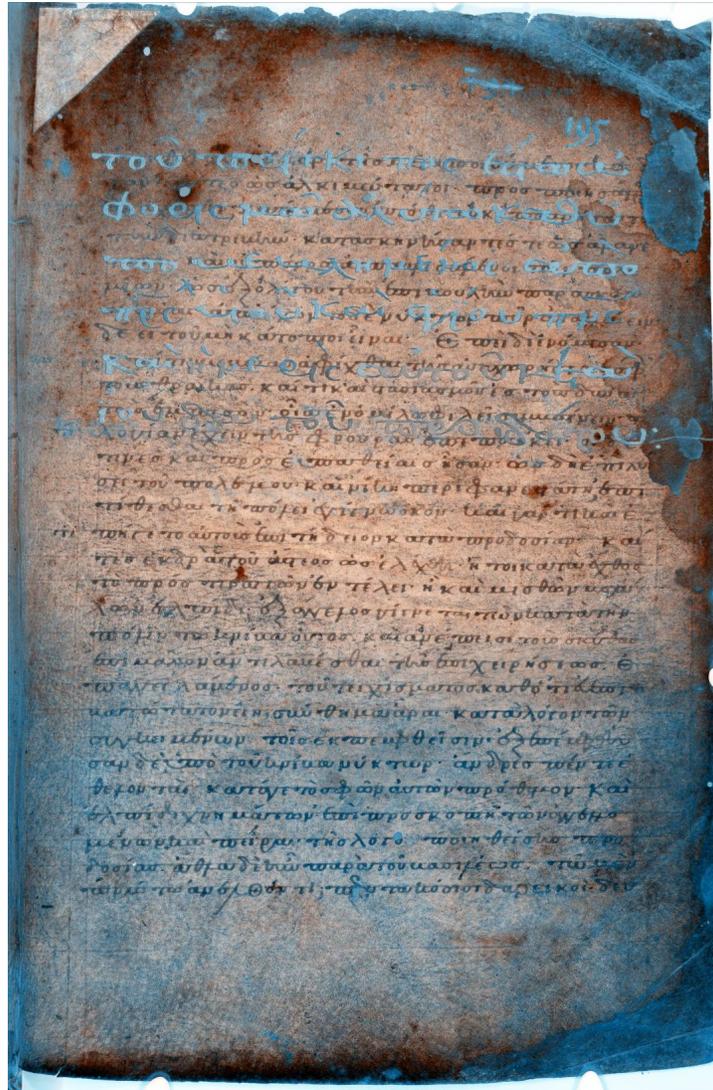


Figure 4: Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek,
Hist.gr. 73, fol. 195^r, lower text
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