

Self-authorization and Strategies of Autography in John Tzetzes: The *Logismoi* Rediscovered

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WHEN IN 1948 CARL WENDEL wrote the *Realencyclopädie* entry on John Tzetzes' life and work (still the most comprehensive survey to date), he introduced a section devoted to the author's "lost works."¹ The list included only three items: a paraphrasis of Ptolemy's *Geography*, alluded to in the *Historiai* (11.396.884–997), an iambic poem on a representation of the sky in the palace of Chosroes, mentioned in the same work (3.66.58–67), and the *Logismoi*, which are the focus of the present paper.

Tzetzes mentions the *Logismoi* on several occasions throughout his works.² The first reference is in the *Commentary on Hermogenes*, in the section devoted to the *Περὶ μεθόδου δεινότητος*.³ They are again explicitly recalled in the *Historiai* as well as

¹ C. Wendel, "Tzetzes," *RE* 7A (1948) 2003–2004. Tzetzes also probably wrote—or started to write—a chronicle in verse, on which see H. Hunger, "Allegorien aus der Verschronik. Kommentierte Textausgabe," *JÖB* 4 (1955) 13–49.

² Besides Wendel's overview, on the *Logismoi* see also G. A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton 1983) 317, mostly relying on Wendel; M. J. Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore di Tucidide. Note autografe sul Codice Heidelberg palatino greco 252* (Bari 1999) 161–162; P. A. Agapitos, "John Tzetzes and the Blemish Examiners: A Byzantine Teacher on Schedography, Everyday Language and Writerly Disposition," *MEG* 17 (2017) 1–57, at 23 n.117 (based on Wendel).

³ The relevant lines of the commentary were edited in 1837 by Cramer (*Anecd.Ox.* 131.30–132.2). His text contains several mistakes, which impinge on the overall meaning. The following text is transcribed from *Voss.gr.* Q1, f.

in the iambs accompanying the second redaction of the work.⁴ Finally, the *Scholia on Aristophanes*, as we shall see, provide a sort of summary of the *Logismoi* and their rationale.⁵ According to Tzetzes' own description, the work consisted of a series of "reviews" or "audits," written mostly in iambs, although occasionally other verse forms are found. The *Logismoi* selected and discussed mistakes, omissions, and inconsistencies in an array of ancient and Byzantine texts with which Tzetzes had engaged over his lifetime.

Despite the detailed description provided by Tzetzes in the

199^r (the *Vossianus*, on which see below, is acephalous and I follow the current pagination) and collated with *Neap.gr.* II E 5, f. 328^r (*Neap.gr.* II E 5 contains Hermogenes and excerpts of Tzetzes' commentary, probably to be dated to the thirteenth century: R. Duarte, "The Transmission of the Text of the P scholia to Hermogenes' Περὶ στάσεων," *RHT* 5 [2010] 25–42, at 32): Καλῶς ὁ ῥήτωρ νῦν λέγει· Γεωμέτρα, / ὁ σὸς δὲ πολλὰ χαιρέτω Σταγειρόθεν, / Τζέτζη (Τζέτζου Ne), λογισμοῖς ἐξελεγχθεῖς, οὐ (οἷς Ne) δέον / εἰς ὄργανοῦσαν λοξοσύστροφον βίβλον ("The rhetor is right here, Geometres, and farewell to your man from Stagira, who was refuted by Tzetzes' *Logismoi*: he [Tzetzes] is the one you need against an infuriating, slanting and twisted book"). In the *Vossianus*, Tzetzes adds in his own hand the marginal gloss πρὸς τὸν Γεωμέτρην. Interestingly the *Neapolitanus* too, like Cramer's text, normalizes the vernacular genitive Τζέτζη present in the *Vossianus* into Τζέτζου. As Tzetzes himself revised the text of the *Vossianus* and does not correct it, I take it that he deemed it legitimate.

⁴ 11.369.246–249: Ἄλλ' ἤδη σε συνέχεεν ὁ ἀμαθῆς ἐπάρχω, / ὁ λογιστῆς τῶν παλαιῶν, οὐ δι' ἰάμβων βίβλος, / τῶν λογισμῶν, γραμματικῶν, ῥητόρων, φιλοσόφων, / τῶν μετρικῶν, ιστορικῶν, μηχανικῶν, τῶν ἄλλων ("But now [Tzetzes], ignorant as per the Eparch, has confounded you, [Tzetzes] who is the auditor of the ancients, by whom there is a book in iambs, of audits pertaining to grammarians, rhetors, philosophers, theorists on meters, historians, experts in mechanics, and everyone else"). The same self-description (λογιστῆς) is found also in the iambs accompanying the second recension of the *Historiai*, published in P. A. M. Leone, "Ioanni Tzetzae Iambi," *RSBN* 6–7 (1969–1970) 134–151, at 146, line 360 (see section 3 below for a more detailed analysis).

⁵ D. Holwerda, in W. J. W. Koster, *Scholia in Aristophanem* IV.3 Jo. *Tzetzae Commentarii in Aristophanem, Commentarium in Ranas et in Aves argumentum Equitum* (Groningen 1960) 100a (733.4–6), 1328 (1076.40–1079.89).

Scholia on Aristophanes, Wendel misinterprets the nature of the work. Building on Giske's dissertation of 1881,⁶ he implies an overlap between the *Logismoï* and the commentary on Hermogenes, which in his opinion did not really exist as a work in its own right.

In this paper I first reconsider Wendel's misconstruction, on the basis of fresh and hitherto disregarded manuscript evidence. Focusing on the Leiden MS. *Vossianus gr. Q1*, I demonstrate that the *Logismoï* are in fact only partly lost and I provide a general presentation of the work. In the second section I focus on the title chosen by Tzetzes (*Logismoï*), in order to shed light on the entanglements between bureaucratic and literary writing implied by such a term. This will pave the way to the third section, in which I show to what extent the materiality of writing shapes Tzetzes' attitude toward authorial agency.

1. *Voss.gr. Q1 and the Logismoï*

Voss.gr. Q1, now divided into two volumes, is a silk⁷ codex of about 260 × 165 mm, including 30 quires, mostly bifolia. The quires, numbered in red ink by the main copyist, start with ε, thus showing that the codex is acephalous. The library catalogue dates it to the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries.⁸ However, the main copyist's handwriting bears clear analogies to informal scholarly hands that have been recently re-dated to the mid-to-late twelfth century. Such scholarly hands are closely related to contemporary documentary hands, and to chancery

⁶ H. Giske, *De Joannis Tzetzae scriptis ac vita* (Rostock 1881) 63–65.

⁷ I follow here the description in the Leiden University Library catalogue: K. A. de Meyier, *Codices Vossiani graeci et miscellanei* (Leiden 1955) 92. "Silk" is used instead of bombicyn (*Bombyx mori* being the Linnaean name of the silk worm). The latter term, already employed by the Byzantines, was in fact not etymologically connected with *bombyx*, but rather with the city of Manbij in Syria, northwest of Rakka: J. Bloom, *Paper before Print. The History and Impact of Paper in the Islamic World* (New Haven 2001) 56–57.

⁸ See de Meyier, *Codices Vossiani graeci* 92–93. I will provide a more detailed description of the manuscript in a publication co-authored with Elisabetta Barili and Stefano Martinelli Tempesta in *Classica et Mediaevalia*.

hands in particular. The professional copyist penning part of the *Ambrosianus* C 222 inf. (including also Tzetzes' scholia on Aristophanes)⁹ provides a very fitting example, much like the hand copying Pindar with scholia in *Vat.gr.* 1312.¹⁰ The traditional dating of both manuscripts has been recently challenged and a new consensus has been reached: they are now dated respectively the 1180s and the mid twelfth century.¹¹

The *Vossianus* is an important witness not only because it can be dated around the time of Tzetzes' life. In addition to the text penned by the professional main copyist, it preserves a large number of interlinear and marginal notes, in darker ink (varying from dark blond to dark brown), showing a very characteristic, utterly informal, handwriting. A comparison with the marginal notes from the Thucydides *Pal.gr.* 252, ascribed to Tzetzes by Maria Jagoda Luzzatto, leaves little room for doubt: the two scripts stem from the same hand.¹² The authorship of the notes, moreover, is confirmed by their content. At f. 45^v Tzetzes names himself explicitly as the one who drafted the glosses, while at 41^v and 115^v he states that he is old and he finds himself in his seventieth year. As Tzetzes was probably born ca. 1110–1112,¹³ one can draw the conclusion that his

⁹ See C. M. Mazzucchi, "Ambrosianus C 222 Inf. (Graecus 886): il codice e il suo autore," *Aevum* 77 (2003) 263–275, and 78 (2004) 411–440.

¹⁰ See P. Canart and L. Perria, "Les écritures livresques des XI et XII siècles," in D. Harlfinger et al. (eds.), *Paleografia e codicologia greca. Atti del II Colloquio internazionale Berlino-Wolfenbüttel* (Alessandria 1991) 67–116, at 83, and P. Irigoien, *Pindare, Olympiques: reproduction du Vaticanus Graecus 1312 (fol. I–95)* (Vatican City 1974). I would like to thank Professor Maria Jagoda Luzzatto for pointing out the parallel to me.

¹¹ Another hand very similar to that of the *Vossianus* is the one copying *Laur.Phil.* 74.15, recently dated to the first half of the twelfth century: D. Bianconi, "Età commena e cultura scritta. Materiali e considerazioni alle origini di una ricerca," in A. Bravo García et al. (eds.), *The Legacy of Bernard de Montfaucon* (Turnhout 2010) I 75–96, II 68–677 at 92–93 and pl. 7.

¹² Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore passim*.

¹³ See Wendel, *RE* 7A (1948) 1961. The note sheds new light on the debate over the date of Tzetzes' death; see E. Cullhed, "Diving for Pearls

revision of the *Vossianus* took place in the 1180s, which matches Mazzucchi's dating of *Ambr.gr.* C 222 inf. This chronology squares well also with the note on the *Historiai*, from which we learn that Tzetzes was correcting a copy of his self-commentary for Konstantinos Kotertzes. There he also adds that he was now an old man.¹⁴ It is easily possible that toward the end of his life Tzetzes reviewed his work either autonomously or upon request of patrons who wanted to have written copies of it.

As mentioned above, a misunderstanding was prompted by a wrong assessment of the evidence provided by the *Vossianus*. Following Giske, Wendel took the note Τζέτζου λογισμῶν τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ νέων¹⁵ at f. 212^v as a “von der Hand eines Besitzers stammenden Schlussnotiz.”¹⁶ This is, however, not a “Schlussnotiz,” but a proper superscription in red ink introducing a new textual unit, penned by the same hand that copied the main text. The genitive form underlines the fact that this is only a section of a larger work. This is further confirmed by a note in the left margin (see *fig.* 1):

ὅλον γὰρ βιβλίον ἐγράφη τῷ Τζέτζη,
λογισμοὺς παλαιῶν περιέχον καὶ νέων τινῶν.

A whole book was written by Tzetzes,
including audits of the ancients and of some of the moderns.

Another note from the main copyist in the upper margin clarifies the title from a lexical point of view, specifying ἦγουν λογαριασμοί. Such a gloss is crucial to fully understand the implications of the design of the work as well as how it was per-

and Tzetzes' Death,” *BZ* 108 (2015) 53–62, who advocated an earlier date.

¹⁴ See the scholion on the *Historiai* published at P. L. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae Historiae* (Lecce 2007) 549. On Kotertzes and Tzetzes in the late 1040s see E. Cullhed, “The Blind Bard and ‘I’: Homeric Biography and Authorial Personas in the Twelfth Century,” *BMGS* 38 (2014) 49–67. On the *Historiai* and its structure see A. Pizzone, “The *Historiai* of John Tzetzes: a Byzantine ‘Book of Memory?’” *BMGS* 41 (2017) 182–207.

¹⁵ See de Meyier, *Codices Vossiani graeci* 92–93.

¹⁶ Wendel, *RE* 7A (1948) 1990.

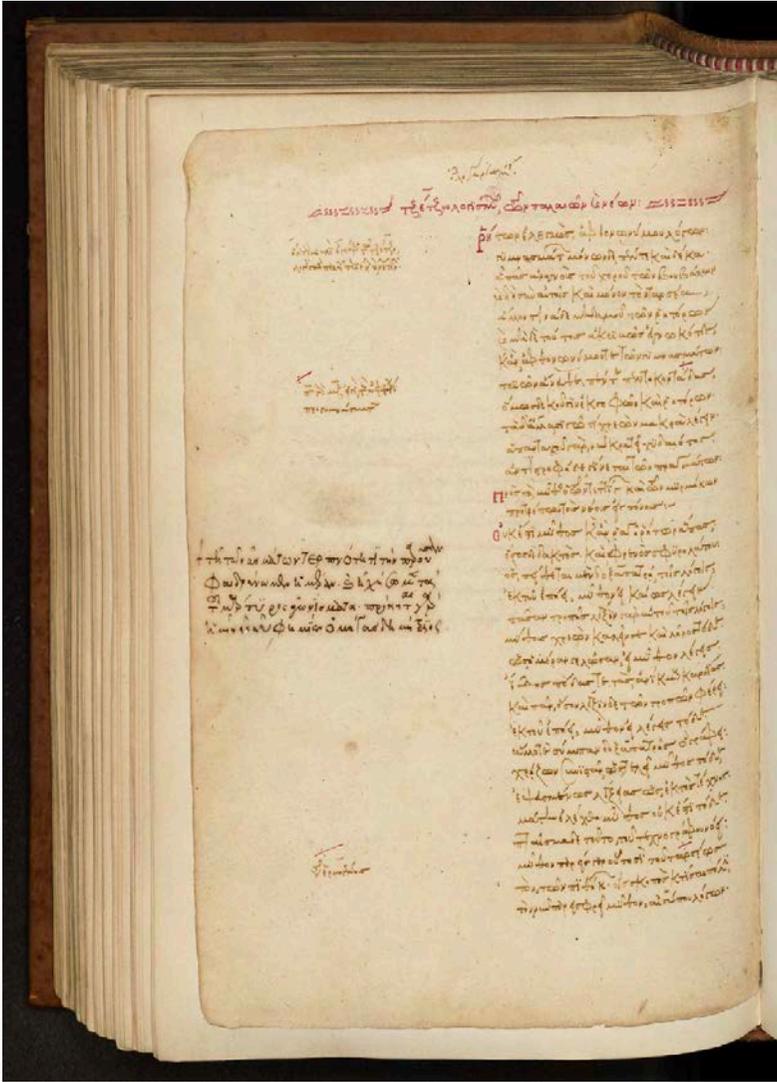


Figure 1: *Vossianus Gr. Q1*, f. 212^v

ceived by contemporary audiences. I will come back on this point in detail in the second section.

The new unit introduced by the superscription stretches over

the final folia of the manuscript, 212^v–239^v, and comes *after* Aphthonius' *Progymnasmata* and Hermogenes' treatises, complete with Tzetzes' commentary.¹⁷ Between the text of the *Progymnasmata* and that of the *Corpus Hermogenianum*, moreover, we find two more textual units, at ff. 31^r–36^r: a διόγνωσις of the στάσεις in the form of a diagram (f. 31^r) and an essay on the differences and similarities between στάσεις, which most likely is also to be ascribed to Tzetzes.¹⁸ The last section of *Voss.gr.*, therefore, *does* transmit a portion of the *Logismoi*, as stated by the superscription; this is in the genitive as the work was not copied in its entirety. The manuscript bequeaths only the portion devoted to Aphthonius and Hermogenes, whose *Progymnasmata* are also taken into account.¹⁹ Giske's misunderstanding is all the more surprising, as the Dutch scholar and expert in ancient rhetoric John Bake (1787–1864) had perused the manuscript, transcribing most of the Tzetzian material.²⁰

As Tzetzes himself worked on editing the manuscript, it would be particularly important to ascertain its precise date. Unfortunately, however, at this stage we cannot know with certainty when it was copied—the autograph notes could have been added also at a later stage. Very much depends on the dating of the commentary on Hermogenes itself. A loose *terminus post quem* is offered by the iambic shipwreck poem introduced by Tzetzes as an example of elaborate ekphrastic diction in the commentary on the treatise *On invention*, at f.

¹⁷ The so-called *Corpus Hermogenianum* is customarily transmitted together with Aphthonios' *Progymnasmata*. See M. Patillon, *Anonyme, Préambule à la rhétorique. Aphthonios, Progymnasmata en annexe Pseudo-Hemogène, Progymnasmata* (Paris 2008) IX–X.

¹⁸ The title at f. 36^v introducing the next section, i.e. the Περὶ στάσεων with Tzetzes' commentary, reads Τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου, εἰς τὸν Περὶ στάσεων Ἑρμογένους βιβλίον, which implies that the preceding textual unit also stemmed from the same author.

¹⁹ Although they are not copied in the *Vossianus*.

²⁰ His transcription is still available at the Leiden University Library: BPL 1507 II.

109^{r-v}.²¹ The events related in the poem can be dated precisely to 8 November 1131 (on the old calendar).²² The fact that the commentary describes those lines as juvenile verses leads us to believe that Tzetzes was rather in his mature years when the commentaries were put together. They had to be circulating before 1156, as Gregory of Corinth mentions them, presenting them as a written text in his own exegesis, and we know that Gregory had died before then, as in that year Theodore was metropolitan of Corinth.²³

We also know, because the paratexts of the *Vossianus* inform us so, that the commentary on Hermogenes was ‘published’ in book form upon the request (and sponsorship) of one Nikephoros (211^v):²⁴

Σὺ δ’ ἱερὴ κεφαλὴ Νικηφόρε, λάζεο ταῦτα·
 Τζέτζη Πιερίδων ὑποφήτορι τά ποτε Μοῖσα
 ἀντομένη πόρσυνεν ἀφ’ ὑψιλόφου Ἑλικῶνος.
 Ἰαχε γὰρ μέγα οἶ, ὃς δ’ ἔκλυεν αὐτίκα Μούσης·
 “Μοισάων ὑποφήτορ, ἀγήνορα κάλλιπε μῦθον,
 ἀκρολόφους σκοπιάς τε καὶ ἄκριας ἠνεμοέσσας.
 Ἐν χθαμαλοῖς προπόδεσσι παρ’ ἐσχατὴν ὑπὸ βῆσαν,
 ἔρχεο καὶ, πεδανῆς ἀπὸ ἄνθε’ ἀμέργεο ποιῆς.”
 Ὡς ἢ μὲν προσέειπεν· ὁ δ’ αὐτίκα τάμνετο ποιῶς
 καὶ στεφάνους ποίησε· τεῖν δ’ ἀνεθήκατο δῶρα.

²¹ See A. Pizzone, “Saturno contro sul mare d’Ismaro. Una nuova fonte autobiografica per la vita di Giovanni Tzetze,” in A. Capra et al. (eds.), *Philoxenia. Viaggi e viaggiatori nella Grecia di ieri e di oggi* (Milan 2020) 75–94.

²² The shipwreck happened on the day of St. Demetrius, and the planets’ alignment described by Tzetzes could have occurred on that day only in 1131, according to the Ptolemaic tables.

²³ A. Kominis, *Gregorio Pardos, metropolita di Corinto e la sua opera* (Rome 1960) 29–30, 35. Tzetzes is mentioned, mostly disparagingly, in Pardos’ commentary on Hermog. *Meth.* 7.2: 1098.24, 1099.3, 1186.12, and 1157.25 Walz.

²⁴ The text is printed also in the Leiden University Library catalogue (Meyier, *Codices Vossiani graeci* 93). Several misreadings, however, make the text less than transparent. The most problematic mistake was the interpretation of the name Νικηφόρε which, despite the scribe’s indication that it is a personal name, is taken as an adjective with Τζέτζη as vocative.

Nicephorus, blessed head, take this:
 to Tzetzes, interpreter of the Pierides, the Muse once
 provided it, coming to him from the heights of the Helicon.
 She shouted, yes, mightily to him and at once he heard the Muse.
 “You, interpreter of the Muses, leave behind heroic discourse
 and the high-crested peaks and the windy heights.
 Come down here, to the low spurs, in the narrow valley
 and pluck your blooms from the grassy plain.”
 So she spoke; he at once cut the stems
 and made garlands and to you he dedicated the gifts.

During the 1140’s Tzetzes was in correspondence with Nikephoros Serblias who, as *mystikos*,²⁵ was in close contact with the emperor.²⁶ Tzetzes famously sends him a heartfelt letter, complaining about the state of his lodgings: the hay stacked on the ground floor made the house a fire hazard, poor insulation led to leaks whenever it rained, and a priest living with a bunch of children and pigs on the upper floor made a very unpleasant neighbor. It would be tempting to identify Nikephoros with the commissioner of the commentary on Hermogenes. Unfortunately, Tzetzes’ addressee is an elusive figure. *Ep.* 18 has been dated to the 1140’s on the basis of its location within the

²⁵ On the role of the *mystikos* see R. Guiland, “Études sur l’histoire administrative de l’empire byzantin: Le mystique, ὁ μυστικός,” *REB* 26 (1968) 279–296; P. Magdalino, “The Not-so-secret Functions of the *Mystikos*,” *REB* 42 (1984) 229–240, at 232 for Nikephoros Serblias; A. Gkoutzioukostas, *Το αξίωμα του μυστικού. Θεσμικά και προσωπογραφικά προβλήματα* (Thessaloniki 2011). As Magdalino puts it, “the *mystikos* in the mid twelfth century held a high degree of responsibility for the palace and the public treasury, especially during the emperor’s absence from Constantinople. In this capacity, he controlled both regular and extraordinary payments to clerics and government officials. His position also made him an important ecclesiastical patron” (235). Tzetzes sends to Nikephoros letter 18 (30–34 Leone); on the chronology of the letter see M. Grünbart, “Prosopographische Beiträge zum Briefcorpus des Ioannes Tzetzes,” *JÖB* 46 (1996) 175–226, at 187–188, who dates it ca. 1140.

²⁶ On the Serblias family see A.-K. Wassiliou-Seibt, “Der Familienname Serblias und seine Träger in Byzanz. Eine sigillographisch-prosopographische Studie,” *StudByzSyll* 11 (2012) 35–55.

collection—after *Ep.* 15 referring to John II's 1137/8 campaign in Syria and before *Ep.* 30 addressed to the Patriarch Michael Oxeites (1143–1146)²⁷—as well as of the fact that later in the decade Tzetzes would find an accommodation at the Pantokrator monastery.²⁸

More details about Tzetzes' interlocutor are harder to pinpoint with exactitude. One Nikephoros *mystikos* is responsible for the *typikon*, dated to 1162, of the Monastery of Heliou Bomon, or Elegmoi, which had been freed from the control of the Great Church thanks to a joint action of the patriarch and the emperor.²⁹ That Nikephoros, however, is probably not a Serblias, but rather the Nikephoros Phorbenos mentioned by the acts of the synod of the Blachernae on 12 May 1157.³⁰

More doubtful is the identification of the Nikephoros *mystikos* named as a donor in *Marc.gr.* 524.³¹ One epigram, 277 Lampros, mentions him as the subject, together with the emperor and the Virgin, of painted portraits in the monastery of the Holy Trinity on the Bosphoros, which, as epigram 278 informs us, had been founded by one Symeon in 1130/1.³² This Nikephoros, together with the emperor, had contributed to renovating the gardens of the monastery and the epigram expresses the monks' gratitude. Based on Manuel's changed policies toward monasteries after 1158, as well as on the fact that the epigram seems to present the founder Symeon as still alive, Oikonomides argues that the epigram has to be dated to

²⁷ Magdalino, *REB* 42 (1984) 232 n.17.

²⁸ Grünbart, *JÖB* 46 (1996) 187 n.62.

²⁹ R. H. Jordan and R. Morris, *The Hypotyposis of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis* (New York 2016) 30, 141–142.

³⁰ V. Grumel, *Les Regestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople I* (Paris 1971) 1041; N. Oikonomides, "Le monastère de la Sainte Trinité à Boradion sur le Bosphore," in C. Sode et al. (eds.), *Novum Millennium: Studies on Byzantine History and Culture dedicated to Paul Speck* (New York 2016) 267–270, at 269; Gkoutzioukostas, *To αξίωμα του μυστικού* 158 n.354.

³¹ S. Lampros, "Ο Μαρκιανός κώδιξ 524," *Νέος Ελλ.* 8 (1911) 8–192, at 164.

³² Oikonomides, in *Novum Millennium* 268.

the 1140s and that the *mystikos* mentioned in epigram 277 is therefore to be identified with Nikephoros Serblias. This has also been the consensus in scholarship since the studies of Magdalino and Nelson.³³ If the emperor portrayed is in fact Manuel and Nikephoros is Serblias, however, this would imply either that Tzetzes' addressee had been *mystikos* under both John Komnenos and Manuel, or else that the letter was written after 1143. As stressed by Gkoutzioukostas, however, the first hypothesis³⁴ seems at odds with William of Tyre's account of the beginning of Manuel's reign, in which George of Cappadocia, who was then occupying the post of *mystikos*, plays a central role (15.23 [706.43–49 Huygens]). It remains therefore uncertain when and under which emperor Nikephoros Serblias served as *mystikos*.

Despite the problematic chronology and prosopography, the *mystikos*, as such, was surely in close relations with the emperor and therefore much involved in imperial patronage. This fact alone makes Nikephoros Serblias a likely candidate as the Nikephoros who sponsored the commentary on Hermogenes. The way in which Tzetzes addresses the *mystikos* in *Ep.* 18 might provide another piece of evidence.

Besides informing us about realia and invaluable details concerning housing in Byzantium, the letter to Serblias has attracted scholarly attention because this is where Tzetzes sets the stage for his well-known definition of rhetorical prowess as ἀμφοτερόγλωσσος. The term comes up in the *Historiai*-commentary on the letter (7.132.295–301, revealing the double-edged nature of the over-flattering words addressed to Nikephoros in *Ep.* 18).³⁵ Tzetzes' attitude here is clearly playful and assumes

³³ P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, "The Emperor in Byzantine Art of the Twelfth Century," *ByzF* 8 (1982) 123–183; P. Magdalino, *The Reign of Manuel I Komnenos 1143–1180* (Cambridge 2002) 472; cf. F. Spingou, *Words and Artworks in the Twelfth Century and Beyond* (diss. Oxford 2012) 112.

³⁴ Gkoutzioukostas, *To αξίωμα του μυστικού* 148–149.

³⁵ On this passage and for further bibliography see Agapitos, *MEG* 17 (2017) 34–36.

the addressee's interest in and close acquaintance with rhetorical practice.³⁶

To sum up, the final word on the identity of Tzetzes' sponsor cannot be said at this stage. A closer examination of the commentary on Hermogenes and its paratexts will hopefully provide more information and more solid evidence to sustain this hypothesis. In fact, as we shall see, the *Vossianus* provides invaluable details on the process underlying the 'publication' of Tzetzes' material and the different stages that this process implies. It clarifies issues pertaining to relations with patrons and the degree of authorial agency and freedom that Tzetzes enjoyed—or did not.

Although not very long, the portion of the *Logismoi* preserved by the *Vossianus* has a complex structure. The folia up to 221^v contain the *logismos* on Aphthonius. From f. 221^v to 222^v we find the *logismos* on Hermogenes' *Progymnasmata* (a text not included in the manuscript as we have it). The two sections are organized in the same way: after a general introduction, not devoid of polemic overtones (see below), Tzetzes copies short passages from the two works under consideration and scrutinizes them, thus alternating the prose of the quotations with the dodecasyllables of his reflections on the texts. From f. 222^v onward, however, there is a formal and structural change in the way he organizes his material. First, there is a change in meter, a switch to fifteen-syllable verses. Moreover, instead of quoting verbatim from the four treatises of the Hermogenian corpus, Tzetzes 'translates' the relevant passages into a paraphrasis in fifteen-syllable verses. The points of criticism he addresses are organized into ζητήσεις, numbered in the margins with red ink rubrics.

This diversity of meter accords with the description of the work provided by Tzetzes himself in the scholia on Aristophanes' *Frogs* 1328, preserved by the *Ambrosianus* C 222 inf. (1074–

³⁶ See also A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium* (Cambridge 2008) 304.

1079 Koster):³⁷

ὁ δ' Εὐριπίδης τὸ ἀνοικειοπρόσωπον ἔχει ἐπίληπτον καὶ τὸ ἐναντιοῦσθαι αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἐν πολλοῖς καὶ ἄλλα ἅττα βραχέα, ἅπερ εἰ θέλοι τις ἀκριβῶς γνῶναι, ἀναλεξάσθω βίβλον ἐμήν, ἐν ἧ παντοίων σοφῶν πραγματείας ὑπέβαλον λογισμοῖς, Εὐριπίδου μὲν δράματα πεντήκοντα δύο, καὶ ἐτέρων παντοίας τέχνης σοφῶν βίβλους ἑκατὸν ἔννεακαίδεκα· ὧν πασῶν λογισμοῦς βίβλος μία ἐμοῦ περιέχει στίχοις ἰάμβοις τοῖς πλείοσιν, οὐκ ὀλίγοις δὲ καὶ μέτρων ἐτέρων· καὶ ἕτεραι δὲ βίβλοι σποράδην ἐμοῦς ἔχουσιν ἐτέρων σοφῶν λογισμοῦς, οὐ μᾶτην καὶ ἀναιτίως οὐδὲ κατ' ἔχθραν ἐπεμβαίνοντός μου τινων, ἀλλὰ τινας μὲν ἐλέγχοντες τοῦ περὶ τὴν τέχνην ἔνεκα πλημμελοῦς καὶ τοῦ διαμαρτάνειν πραγμάτων ἢ χρόνων, ἢ αὐτοῦς λέγειν ἑαυτοῖς ἐναντία, οὐκ ὀλίγους δέ, ὥσπερ τὸν Σταγειρόθεν καὶ Γαληνὸν καὶ τὸν Πλούταρχον καὶ οὐ βραχεῖς ἐτέρους τοιοῦτους, ὅτι τε κατὰ πυρπνόων ἀνδρῶν εὐεργετῶν καὶ σφῶν διδασκάλων ἐξοιστηγότες, κριοῖ τινες κατεφάνησαν ἀντιτεκνότες τροφεῖα,³⁸ καὶ ὅτι, ὅσα τοξεύματα δι' ἄκραν δυσμένειαν, ὡς ἐλέγχει τὰ πράγματα, κατὰ τῶν θείων ἑκείνων ἀνδρῶν κατετόξευσαν, κατὰ τῶν ἑαυτῶν “κεφαλῶν ῥήϊστα φέρονται”.³⁹ ... ταύτην ἐμοῦ τὴν βίβλον ἀναλεξάμενος, ὅστις ἂν γε βούλοιο, Αἰσχύλου τε εὐροι καὶ Εὐριπίδου καὶ ἄλλων πολλῶν αἰτιάματα, πλημμελεία τῇ περὶ τὴν τέχνην καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑποπεπτωκότας τοῖς λογισμοῖς, οὐ μέντοι διὰ ψεύδους γελοιάζουσιν κωμωδίαν οὐδὲ δυσμένειαν.

Euripides shows censurable inconsistencies and several internal contradictions in many passages and some other minor issues; if anyone is interested in knowing exactly about them, they should

³⁷ On experimenting with meter in the twelfth century as well as on the alternation between prose and verse see now N. Zagklas, “Metrical *Polyeideia* and Generic Innovation in the Twelfth Century: The Multimetric Cycles of Occasional Poetry,” in A. Rhoby et al. (eds.), *Middle and Late Byzantine Poetry: Texts and Contexts* (Turhout 2018) 43–47, and “Experimenting with Prose and Verse in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: A Preliminary Study,” *DOP* 71 (2017) 229–248. On the content of the quoted passage see also Luzzatto, *Tzetztes lettere* 159–162.

³⁸ Cf. Zenob. 4.63: said of ungrateful people, who like rams hit those who feed them (cf. Massa Positano 1076–1077).

³⁹ Cf. *Suppl.Hell.* 1183 (p.561).

read a book of mine where I audit the work of several wise men, fifty-two plays by Euripides, and one hundred nineteen books of wise men from all fields. One book of mine contains the audits of all of them, mostly in iambic meter, but a few also in other meters; and there are other books too containing in a scattered way my audits of other wise men, and I did not attack any of them for nothing, or without cause, or out of sheer hostility against someone, but I refute some because they disgrace art and mistake facts or times, or they contradict themselves, and not a few, like the man from Stagira and Galen and Plutarch and many other such, because they rage against fire-breathing men who were their own benefactors and teachers, appearing as those rams recompensing their nurture, and because the darts they threw in high dudgeon, as shown by the facts, against those divine men were hurled back, “readily borne against their own heads” ... Reading this book of mine, whoever may want to would find charges against Aeschylus and Euripides and many others, falling under my audits for their disgracing art and truth, but not out of mockery ridiculing through lies nor out of malevolence.

This overview of the *Logismoi* confirms that, besides being collected in a single volume, the material was used to complement other manuscripts containing ancient authors, just as happens in the *Vossianus*. The way Tzetzes describe these ‘extra’ *Logismoi*, moreover, seems to suggest (ἐμοὺς ἔχουσιν ἑτέρων σοφῶν λογισμούς) that some ‘audits’ were not included in the bound book.

The *Logismoi* are presented as a collection of reading notes drafted by Tzetzes over the years. It is not far-fetched to assume that each ζήτησις or criticism existed in the form of unbound σχέδια,⁴⁰ or drafts, which then could be copied σποράδη when needed. This procedure seems to be confirmed by an error at the beginning of the third section of the *Logismoi* in *Voss.gr.* Q1. The red rubric signaling the first ζήτησις contains a mistake in numbering. When the copyist realized his mistake, he added—still in red—a note (223^r, *fig.* 2):

⁴⁰ On this term see 675 below.

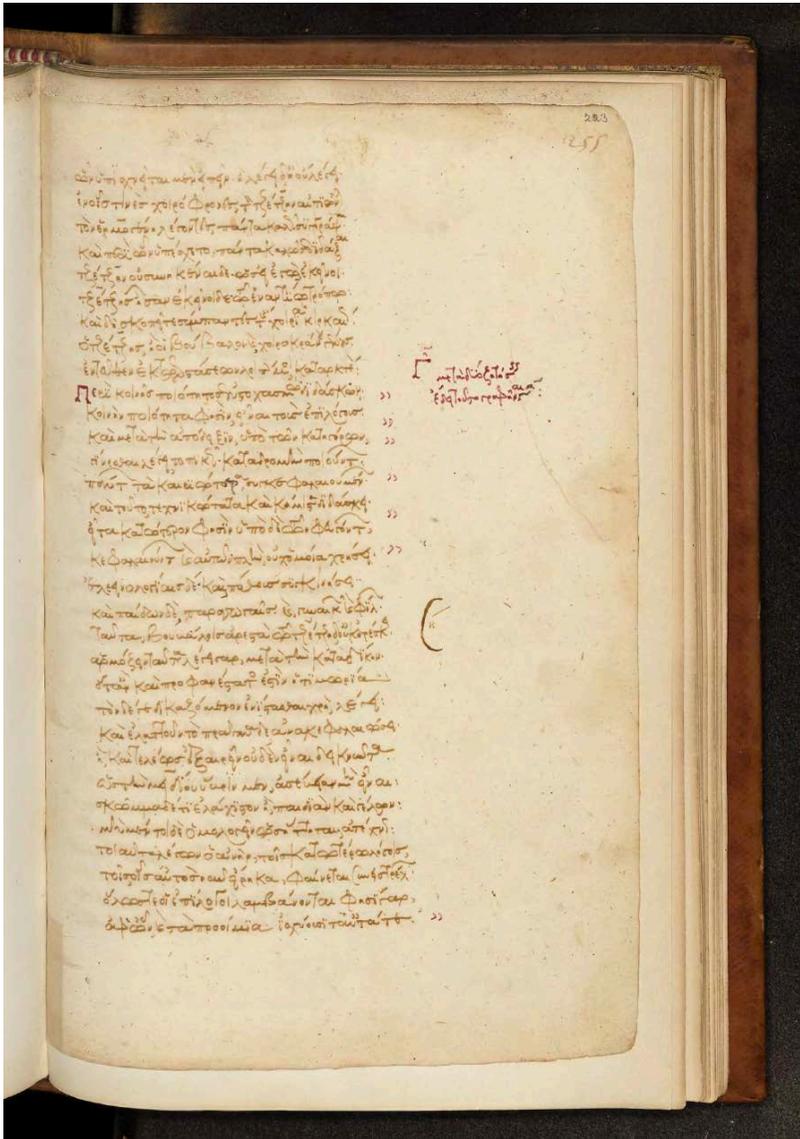


Figure 2: Vossianus Gr. Q1 f. 223r

Γ μετά δύο ζητήσεις ἔδει τοῦτο γραφῆναι. Γ
 Γ: This should have been written after two inquiries. Γ

To reinforce the point, Tzetzes adds in his own hand another Γ in black ink at the end of the rubric. Now, at the end of the second ζήτησις (f. 225^r) the next ζήτησις is numbered Δ. The copyist therefore had at first skipped the third ζήτησις. This kind of mistake would be hardly conceivable if the copyist had before his eyes a continuous, bound text, but it is easy to see how this could happen if he worked with unbound files. When he later added the rubrics, upon realizing the error, he signaled it in the margin.

The other striking feature of the last section is the change of meter and the paraphrasis of Hermogenes' text into verse. The paraphrasis of Ptolemy shows that this was not an isolated case. The paraphrasis could suggest that the portion of *Logismoi* devoted to the four treatises of the corpus was linked to Tzetzes' teaching practice. The change of meter might also point to different times of composition. We know that Tzetzes was keener on using iambs in his youth.⁴¹ A close metrical analysis of the iambic lines will be needed to further clarify this, as Tzetzes in his first period used dichronic vowels wrongly, for which he later criticized himself.⁴² The composition of this section seems also to be closely related to the drafting of the commentary proper, as we know that some of the iambic *Logismoi* existed before the commentaries were authored, as is proved by the reference in the commentary on the *Περὶ μεθόδου δεινότητος* mentioned above (n.3). When the *Vossianus* came to be, the *Logismoi* in book form already existed, but they could also have been assembled at some point after the composition of the commentary and before the *Vossianus* was copied.

At the beginning of the *logismos* in political verses, Tzetzes stresses explicitly that he has decided to write down his criticism because of the hostile reception with which his exegesis of the corpus had been met (f. 222^v–223^r):⁴³

⁴¹ See Cullhed, *BZ* 108 (2015) 53–62.

⁴² Cullhed, *BZ* 108 (2015) 56–57.

⁴³ As we see in the general statement in the commentary on the *Frogs*, this was one of the reasons why *some* (not all) of the *Logismoi* were composed.

Στίχοι δημόδεις. Λογισμὸς, τῆς Ἑρμογένους τέχνης,
τῶν στάσεων εὐρέσεων τῶν ἰδεῶν μεθόδων.

- ※ Ζητήσεις τὲ καὶ λογισμοὶ ταῦτα, τοῦ Ἑρμογένους
ὧν ὑπισχνεῖται μὲν εἰπεῖν ἢ λέγει δ' ἢ οὐ λέγει 223^r
ἐν οἷς τινὲς χοιρόφρονες τὸν Τζέτζην αἰτιῶνται
τὸν Ἑρμογένη λέγοντες πάντα καλῶς συγγράψαι
καὶ περὶ ὧν ὑπέσχετο πάντα καλῶς διδάξαι,
Τζέτζην οὐ συνηκέναι δὲ ὡς εἰ ἐγὼ ἐκεῖνοι,
Τζέτζης ἦσαν ἐκεῖνοι δὲ τῷ ἐναντίῳ τρόπῳ.
Καὶ δὴ σκοπεῖτε σύμπαντες τίς χοιριᾶ κερκαίως,
ὁ Τζέτζης ἢ οἱ βούβαλοι καὶ χοιροκράνου γένους;
Ἐντεῦθεν ἐκ τῶν στάσεων λοιπὸν μοι καταρκτέον.

Popular verses. Audit of Hermogenes' art,
Legal issues, Invention, Style, Method.

These are queries and audits of what Hermogenes promises to say, but then either says or does not say, for which some pig-minded folks accuse Tzetzes, saying that Hermogenes wrote everything well and taught well everything he promised, and that Tzetzes did not grasp it, as if I were they and they, by contrast, were Tzetzes; but they were the opposite. Now please, look everyone, who is like a pig of Circe, is it Tzetzes or the buffaloes of the pigheaded race? Let me then start now from the *Issues*.

The text states unequivocally that this section of the *Logismoi* (ταῦτα) was produced in response to the allegations of fellow rhetoricians who blamed him for his poor understanding and control of Hermogenes' text. In particular, he was accused of being unable to place all the arguments anticipated by Hermogenes in his treatises, with resulting inconsistencies. Tzetzes turns the table on them, arguing that in fact they are the ones who cannot grasp the text in full. As elsewhere, he plays with his own identity.⁴⁴

The introduction to the *Logismoi* in political verses, therefore, makes clear that this section was prompted by specific circum-

⁴⁴ See the striking anecdote, still in need of clarification, about Archimedes' work in *Historiai* 12.457.

stances, further supporting the hypothesis of a many-stage composition. The images and tone of this introduction, moreover, resonate with the polemic attack against Andronikos Kamateros, attested in the *Historiai*⁴⁵ and motivated by a disagreement over the interpretation of the technical term *προκατάστασις*.⁴⁶ The target of these lines from the *Logismoi* is the same as in *Historiai* 11.369 and in the iambs attached to the second recension of the *Historiai*.⁴⁷ There Tzetzes describes the conditions in which the close-knit group of rhetors gathered around Kamateros were trained from a very young age (lines 80–89). Among other details, Tzetzes mentions that they were left by their parents at dubious boarding houses—described as run by prostitutes-performers (59–60). Once we discount Tzetzes’ fondness for jesting and polemic exaggeration, we should probably hypothesize that the iambs allude to lodgings where pupils coming from outside Constantinople would live while being educated. The equating of inn-keepers, performers, and prostitutes was common and old,⁴⁸ and against this background Tzetzes’ attack, though very violent, may hint at the actual demi-monde populating the capital. Such a reference would add a new dimension to the image of the “pigs of Circe” used to label his opponents, found also in the section of the *Logismoi* preserved by the *Vossianus*.⁴⁹ Tzetzes builds his polemic both

⁴⁵ *Historiai* 11.369.210–224, with P. A. Agapitos, “Grammar, Genre and Patronage in the Twelfth Century. A Scientific Paradigm and its Implications,” *JÖB* 64 (2014) 1–22, at 12–14.

⁴⁶ See the overview of the affair offered by Agapitos, *MEG* 17 (2017) 22–25. On *prokatasstasis* see R. G. Scalia, “La teoria della *προκατάστασις* nel Περὶ εὐρέσεως dello Pseudo-Ermogene e nei suoi commentatori,” in P. B. Cipolla (ed.), *Metodo e passione* (Amsterdam 2018) 111–130. I will enlarge on these more technical aspects in a future publication.

⁴⁷ See Leone, *RSBN* 6–7 (1969–1970) 127–156.

⁴⁸ See T. Labuk, “Aristophanes in the Service of Niketas Choniates – Gluttony, Drunkenness and Politics in the Χρονική διήγησις,” *JÖB* 66 (2016) 127–151, at 138 n.82.

⁴⁹ See Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* 11, 20, 25, and V. F. Lovato, “Odysseus the Schedographer,” in B. van den Berg et al. (eds.), *Preserving, Commenting,*

with multiple literary intertexts and with references, though probably exaggerated, to realia, i.e. the material circumstances of the Constantinopolitan educational scene.

The first and most immediate literary reference is of course to the *Odyssey*. However, the scholia on Aristophanes' *Plutus* show that there is one more layer to consider. At *Plutus* 302–308, in a dialogue with the chorus replete with Odyssean overtones and based on the parodic reworking by Philoxenos of Cythera, one of Tzetzes' favorite authors and characters,⁵⁰ the protagonist Carion uses Circe to epitomize Lais, the most famous prostitute of ancient Greece:⁵¹

ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν Κίρκην γε τὴν τὰ φάρμακ' ἀνακυκῶσαν,
ἢ τοὺς ἐταίρους τοῦ Φιλωνίδου ποτ' ἐν Κορίνθῳ
ἔπεισεν ὡς ὄντας κάπρους
μεμαγμένον σκῶρ ἐσθίειν, αὐτὴ δ' ἔμαπτεν αὐτοῖς,
μιμήσομαι πάντας τρόπους·
ὕμεις δὲ γρυλίζοντες ὑπὸ φιληδίας
ἔπεσθε μητρὶ χοῖροι.

Then I'll do Circe, the mixer of potions, who one day in Corinth convinced Philonides' companions to behave like swine and eat shit cakes—she kneaded them herself; I'll act out the whole story, while you grunt gaily and follow your mother, piggies! (transl. Henderson)

Aristophanes' text encapsulates all the recurring motives used by Tzetzes against his opponents: the bestial men-pigs, but also the whole range of scatological images, as well as the double-edged reference to the ambiguous figure of Odysseus, as aptly pointed out by Valeria Lovato.⁵² Tzetzes' exegesis in the com-

Adapting: Commentaries on Ancient Texts in Twelfth-Century Byzantium (Cambridge forthcoming).

⁵⁰ See especially *Historiai* 10.358.

⁵¹ See K. Kapparis, *Prostitution in the Ancient Greek World* (Berlin 2017) 130–138, 210–212, and 412 for Circe.

⁵² V. F. Lovato, “Ulysse, Tzetzés et l'éducation à Byzance,” in N. S. M. Matheou et al. (eds.), *From Constantinople to the Frontier. The City and the Cities* (Leiden 2016) 236–244, and in *Preserving, Commenting, Adapting*.

mentary on Aristophanes further clarifies the intertextual web of references:⁵³

ἦ τοὺς ἐταίρους· δέον εἰπεῖν “Ὀδυσσέως” πρὸς τὴν ἱστορίαν “Φιλωνίδου” εἶπεν· κωμῶδει δὲ αὐτὸν ὡς πλούσιον καὶ παρασίτους ἔχοντα καὶ διὰ τὸν Λαΐδος ἔρωτα ἐν Κορίνθῳ διαύγοντα. διασύρεται δὲ καὶ ὡς συώδης σὺν τοῖς ἐταίροις αὐτοῦ, οὓς καὶ κάπρους εἶπε, τὴν δὲ Λαΐδα Κίρκην, ἐπεὶ τοὺς ἐραστὰς ἐφαρμάκευεν. ἀμαθῆς δὲ ἦν ὁ Φιλωνίδης καὶ μέγας σφόδρα. Νικοχάρης οὖν ἐν τῷ περὶ αὐτοῦ· “τί δῆτ’; ἀπαιδευτότερος εἰ Φιλωνίδου τοῦ Μελιτέως;”

“who the companions”: he should have said “of Odysseus” according to the story, but he said “of Philonides”; he ridicules him as rich and having parasites and spending time in Corinth because of his love for Lais. He is also mocked as swinish together with his companions, whom (Aristophanes) also refers to as swine, and Lais is called Circe for she drugged her lovers. Philonides was indeed ignorant and very prominent. This is why Nikochores says in the piece about him: “What now? You are more ignorant than Philonides of Meliteia.”⁵⁴

Tzetzēs, I argue, builds on the social construction of tavern-keepers as prostitutes as well as on the conceptual nexus associating Circe with prototypical figures of sorcerous and liminal inn-keepers, which is found also in folktales.⁵⁵ In his exegesis Tzetzēs sees a close correlation between Philonides’ social environment and his ignorance, conveyed by the catchword ἀμαθῆς, which was used against him by his opponents.⁵⁶ Tzetzēs, like other twelfth-century authors,⁵⁷ uses Aristophanes’ comic

⁵³ On line 303 (86.24–87.9 Massa Positano).

⁵⁴ Comic poet contemporary with Aristophanes: *PCG* VII 39–49, fr.4.

⁵⁵ See F. Bettini and C. Franco, *Il mito di Circe* (Torino 2010).

⁵⁶ It was allegedly the nickname used by Andronikos Kamateros to refer to Tzetzēs: see e.g. *Historiai* 9.273.408, 9.278.658, 11.369.246–249.

⁵⁷ See again Labuk, *JÖB* 66 (2016) 127–151, and more broadly his dissertation illuminating the importance of Aristophanes’ imagery in the quarrels between literati: *Gluttons, Drunkards and Lechers: The Discourses of Food in 12th-Century Byzantine Literature: Ancient Themes and Byzantine Innovations* (Katowice 2019).

language as a distinctive sociolect⁵⁸ to trace boundaries of aesthetic and social decorum as well as to define groups and allegiances within the intellectual elite of Constantinople. In so doing, he weaves together references to realia from the teachers' and pupils' everyday life—for instance the ivory decorations of the beds in the lodgings described in the iambs (60)—and literary, paradigmatic references. These two sides of the same coin illuminate each other and need to be considered together to gain a full understanding of the meaning behind the recurrent insulting tags, such as “pigs,” “circeans,” “buffalos,” which populate Tzetzes' work and mark also the section of the *Logismoi* preserved by the *Vossianus*.⁵⁹

2. *Tzetzes as a Grand Logariast? Literature, status, and writing practices*

As we have seen, both the scholia to Aristophanes and the *Vossianus* refer to Tzetzes' book of ‘audits’ as *Λογισμοί* or *Βίβλος τῶν λογισμῶν*. Such a title, I argue, entails a pun based on the double meaning of *λογισμός*: “calculation” or “audit” on the one hand, “discursive reasoning” on the other.⁶⁰ The English word “audit,” although it does not convey the polysemy of the term, is perhaps the most incisive translation.

As mentioned above (654), a marginal gloss in the *Vossianus* shows that the word *λογισμοί* was felt as a learned version of the demotic *λογαριασμοί*. The same applies to *λογιστής*, also used by Tzetzes,⁶¹ which was employed as a more elegant and

⁵⁸ See also Agapitos, *MEG* 17 (2017) 13–14.

⁵⁹ I will explore these aspects in a future publication.

⁶⁰ For a description of Tzetzes' exegetical work as a result of his own *λογισμός* see the first line of the poem opening his notes to Oppian's *Halieutica*: A. Colonna, “Il commento di Giovanni Tzetzes agli *Halieutica* di Oppiano,” in *Lanx satura: Nicolao Terzaghi oblata* (Genoa 1963) 101–104. Cf. F. Budelmann, “Classical Commentary in Byzantium: John Tzetzes on Ancient Greek Literature,” in R. K. Gibson et al. (eds.), *The Classical Commentary: Histories, Practices, Theory* (Leiden 2002) 141–169, at 160, and *Historiai* 7.143.484–493, 10.340.536–548 (on the difference between *νόος* and *λογισμός*).

⁶¹ In the iambs in the second recension of the *Historiai* he labels himself as *λογιστής τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ νέων*: Leone, *RSBN* 6–7 (1969–1970) 146 (cf. 654

archaizing substitute for λογαριαστής. In summarizing the career of Nicholas Hagiotheodorites, for instance, Eustathios mentions his post as grand accountant by using the periphrasis ἐκ βασιλέως προήδρευε τῶν λογιστῶν εὐαγῶς,⁶² on which the glossator of the *Scorialensis* Y II 10 comments ἀντὶ λογαριαστής ἦν τῶν εὐαγῶν σεκρέτων.⁶³ This is the sort of equivalence that was common currency in contemporary school exercises, in which the vernacularization was used in antistoichic schedographic games.⁶⁴ In this section I argue that in the *Logismoi* Tzetzes takes up the role of auditor, reviewing, as it were, present and past literary texts, creating for himself a persona modelled on one of the most prominent officers of the Comnenian era, the Grand Logariast.

The title μέγας λογαριαστής, created by Alexios I, is first attested in 1094.⁶⁵ It was used for two positions: the μέγας λογαριαστής τῶν σεκρέτων, auditing all fiscal services, and the μέγας λογαριαστής τῶν εὐαγῶν σεκρέτων, who controlled the emperor's charitable departments (the latter was the title held by Nicholas Hagiotheodorites). The μέγας λογαριαστής τῶν σεκρέτων had full control over the economy of the empire. In the years 1143–1171, for instance, the position was held by

above and 680 below).

⁶² *Or.* 1.11.81 Wirth, with the introductory note in P. Wirth, *Eustathii Thessalonicensis Opera Minora* (Berlin 2000) 16*.

⁶³ J. Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les ΟΦΦΙΚΙΑ de l'église Byzantine* (Paris 1970) 82. On the function of the λογαριαστής τῶν εὐαγῶν σεκρέτων ("grand accountant of the charitable *sekreta*"), first mentioned in 1099, see N. Oikonomides, "The Role of the Byzantine State in Economy," in A. E. Laiou (ed.), *The Economic History of Byzantium* (Washington 2002) 993–994; M. H. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy c. 300–1450* (Cambridge 2008) 432–433.

⁶⁴ P. A. Agapitos, "Learning to Read and Write a *Schedos*: The Verse Dictionary of Paris. Gr. 400," in P. Odorico et al. (ed.), *Vers une poétique à Byzance: mélanges offerts à Vassilis Katsaros* (Paris 2015) 11–24, esp. 12–14.

⁶⁵ On the title see R. Guiland, "Etudes sur l'histoire administrative de l'Empire byzantin. Le logariaste, le megas logariaste," *JÖB* 17 (1969) 101–113.

John of Poutze (Ἰωάννης ὁ ἐκ Πούτζης), renowned for his very harsh fiscal policies, especially in the first years of his tenure.⁶⁶ A prominent figure in the mid-twelfth century, described in a colorful way by Niketas Choniates, with Aristophanic overtones,⁶⁷ John embodied many of the traits that Tzetzes interpreted as incurable flaws of a declining society.

The rise to prominence of figures like John of Poutze was perceived by Tzetzes as a symptom of society's failure, mainly due to the monopoly exerted by a powerful and exclusive clique on the educational system. By choosing the title of "Logariast of the ancients and the moderns," Tzetzes redresses the balance as he appoints himself to one of those offices he could never attain but were the prerogative of the debased products of a—in his eyes—perverted education.

At the beginning of his career Tzetzes probably had contemplated the option of work in the administration. We know from the *Exegesis on the Iliad* that in his youth he had indeed been secretary to the *doux* of Beroia but that experience had not ended well.⁶⁸ Although there is no hard evidence that Tzetzes later worked again as a secretary,⁶⁹ from his letter collection it transpires that the hypothesis of holding an *offikion* was indeed something which he could contemplate—and with great joy, at

⁶⁶ The details are known through Niketas Choniates' account (*Hist.* pp. 54–58 van Dieten). On John see E. Patlagean, *Un Moyen Âge grec* (Paris 2007) 263, on his likely humble origins; A. Simpson, *Niketas Choniates. A Historiographical Study* (Cambridge 2013) 205–206, 271; R.-J. Lilie, "Reality and Invention: Reflections on Byzantine Historiography," *DOP* 68 (2014) 157–210, at 168–169.

⁶⁷ See Labuk, *JÖB* 66 (2016) 127–151.

⁶⁸ M. Papathomopoulos, *Εξήγησις Ἰωάννου Γραμματικῆς τοῦ Τζέτζου εἰς τὴν Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδα* (Athens 2007) 15.12–19. Cf. T. Braccini, "Erudita invenzione: riflessioni sulla *Piccola grande Iliade* di Giovanni Tzetze," *Incontri triestini di filologia classica* 9 (2009/10) 153–173, at 160. Polymnia Katsoni has shown that Tzetzes had a competent knowledge of the tax system: "Ὁ Ἰωάννης Τζέτζης καὶ ὁ κοκκιάρης," in T. Kolias et al., *Aureus: Τόμος αφιερωμένος στον καθηγητὴ Εὐάγγελου Χρυσό* (Athens 2014) 311–328.

⁶⁹ *Contra* see Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* 141.

that.⁷⁰

The book-title *Logismoi* with its implicit pun needs to be read against the background of Tzetzes' overall circumstances and strategies of self-presentation. By styling himself as an 'auditor' he projects the office into the literary/aesthetic dimension, so as to find a way out of his own perceived social subordination. He conflates two different personae, the bureaucrat and the literatus. His all-encompassing knowledge grants him the privilege⁷¹ to accurately examine the literary 'value' of the authors he engages with. In the domain of literary and aesthetic criticism he can give himself the right to censure colleagues and predecessors, moving from his middle-rank social position to that of supreme auditor. Nothing can escape the notice of his *Logismoi*.⁷²

Such self-styling, moreover, involves the act of writing, in both its material and symbolic aspects.⁷³ Again, Tzetzes turns his own marginal position into a matter of pride. Lacking a proper secretary, in the scholia on Aristophanes he dubs his

⁷⁰ The eparch John Taronites in a letter probably written between 1150 and 1154 (*Ep.* 83, 125.1 Leone) promises him one: see Grünbart, *JÖB* 46 (1996) 214–215.

⁷¹ In an iambic poem written in the margin of the Thucydides MS. which he annotated himself, the ability and the prerogative to criticize ancient and modern authors is labeled as χάρισμα: Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* 49–51, line 3.

⁷² Cf. *Historiai* 12.398.118: ἐν ἀλαθῆτοις λογιμοῖς καὶ Τζετζικῶ τῷ τρόπῳ.

⁷³ We know from Tzetzes' letters that he was fond of beautiful ink pots and pens. In the 1140s the metropolitan of Dristra (see J. Shepard, "Tzetzes' Letters to Leo at Dristra," *ByzF* 6 [1979] 191–239) sent him a carved writing set, more beautiful than the famous works of Daidalos. Tzetzes in his letter, full of pleasantries and jokes, points out that, although exquisite, the set is more apt for drinking than for writing, as it barely contains one *kalamos*—a joking allusion to its use as a drinking straw: *Ep.* 80, 119–120 Leone (probably ca. 1150, Grünbart, *JÖB* 46 [1996] 196). Writing sets used by secretaries were a luxury item. Choniates tells us that when John of Poutze died, his storehouses were found replete with money and a collection of polychrome cases for the pens of the secretaries working under him: *Hist.* p.58.10–11.

own pen ὑπογραφεύς (secretary).⁷⁴ Tzetzes' joke reveals yet another important detail, that writing is for him a solitary occupation: when composing his first drafts he is alone with his pen and his thoughts.⁷⁵ Significantly enough, in the commentary on Aristophanes, Tzetzes designates himself as “writer and copyist at the same time,” emphasizing once more that he does not dictate or copy his work, but writes it down directly, all by himself.⁷⁶ The limitations owing to lack of means become thus an identity trait. His writing is depicted as a very individual and self-directed endeavor.

The glosses to the letters give us further details about this process. In the scholion to the first letter, in particular, literary creation is characterized as rushed and at times chaotic:⁷⁷

αὕτη ἡ μεταγραφὴ κατὰ τὸ πρωτότυπον ἐγράφη· ὅπερ τυχαίως καὶ αὐτοσχεδίως γράφων ἐγὼ οὕτως τὴν τάξιν ἀτάκτως καὶ πεφυρμένως ἐποίησάμην. Τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς μεταγράφουσιν εἶπον καὶ συνέθεντο καθεξῆς ἀδιασπάρστως τὰς πάσας ἐπιστολάς καὶ ἐξῆς πάλιν συνηνωμένως τὸν τῆδε κείμενον τῶν βραχειῶν ἱστοριῶν βραχυτάτον πίνακα καὶ τὸν τῶν λοιπῶν ἱστοριῶν μέγιστον πίνακα· χοιριδίου δὲ νίῳ ἐμπιστεύσας τὴν παροῦσαν μεταγραφὴν καὶ δούς καὶ μισθὸν τούτῳ καλλιγράφου λόγου ἀξίου καὶ εἰπὼν οὕτω μεταγράψαι καὶ αὐτόν, ὡς χοῖρον ὄντως οὐχ εὖρον καταπειθῆ, ἀλλὰ πολλαχῶς κοπρώσαντα τὸ βιβλίον.

⁷⁴ Schol. *Plut.* 733, 170.4 Massa Positano; Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* 143 n.5.

⁷⁵ Elsewhere Tzetzes clearly distinguishes between different writing activities: the copyist (μεταγραφεύς), the author (γράφων), and the “metaphrast” (“translator,” or else, as in this case, author of a paraphrasis). The author is granted a high degree of freedom and can write “whatever he wants” and ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ (*Ep.* 57, 83.13–17 Leone). Such a statement may be compared to the famous distinction between *scriptor* and *auctor* proposed by Bonaventura of Bagnoregio: *S. Bonaventurae Commentaria in quatuor libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi* (Quaracchi 1882) 1.14–15, with M. Long, *Autografia ed epistolografia tra XII e XIII secolo* (Milan 2014) 17–28, 39–43.

⁷⁶ Schol. *Plut.* 733, 170.12–13 Massa Positano: συγγραφεύς ὁμοῦ καὶ γραφεύς.

⁷⁷ P. 159.8–23 Leone. αὐτοσχεδίως can be compared here to ἀθωρός, as analyzed by Agapitos, *MEG* 17 (2017) 37.

πρόσσχες τὸ λοιπὸν πᾶς θέλων μεταγράφειν,
κᾶν τῶδε γράψης οὐ κακῶς γράψεις πάλιν.⁷⁸

This copy was produced according to my original,⁷⁹ which I drafted casually and extemporaneously, so I made the order disordered and confused. However, I said (this) to the other copyists and they put all the letters in an unbroken series, immediately followed by this very short table of contents⁸⁰ for the short stories and by the very large table of contents for the other stories. After entrusting the present copy to a son of a piglet and, on top of that, paying him as if he were a renowned calligrapher and telling him that he too was to make the copy in that way, I found out he had not obeyed, truly proving himself a pig—on the contrary he had repeatedly defiled the book with his dung:

Beware from now on, all you who want to make copies,
And as long as you write based on this, you won't miswrite again.

In this respect, I would note that Tzetzes tellingly uses the term *αὐτοσχεδίως*, traditionally linked to oral improvisation, to describe written composition. Once again there is probably a hint of schedographic practices, as suggested by Panagiotis

⁷⁸ The note reads so at *Vat.gr.* 1369 f. 64r. Leone, however, prints κᾶν τῶδε γράψης οὐ κακῶς γράφεις πάλιν, which makes the syntax not so intelligible.

⁷⁹ In Leone's edition of the epistles there are two more notes pointing to Tzetzes' first drafts, i.e. *σχεδιαί* (originally collected, we may assume, in what Hunger refers to as a "Hausbuch": H. Hunger, *Schreiben und Lesen in Byzanz* [Munich 1989] 156; cf. V. Atsalos, *La terminologie du livre manuscrit à l'époque byzantine* [Thessaloniki 2001] 168–169): at pp.99.1–6 (before *Ep.* 70) and 112.1–3 (after the title of *Ep.* 76 and before the letter's text). The first note refers to someone who had taken away both the first draft and its revised version, completely destroying the former and seriously altering and corrupting the latter. For the parallel use of *schedulae* in the West see G. Brunetti, "L'autografia nei testi delle origini," in *Di mano propria. Gli autografi dei letterati italiani* (Rome 2010) 67–71.

⁸⁰ *πίναξ* could be synonymous with *δέλτος*; however Tzetzes' use here is more common and akin to the modern "table of contents," as a numbered list of all the *Historiai* precedes the text in some manuscripts. It is likely that the copyist worked with *σχεδιαί*, not bound or only provisionally bound together (see Atsalos, *La terminologie* 135–136).

Agapitos.⁸¹ And yet, however similar, the terminology of improvisation here points also to another dimension of writing in its very materiality. Tzetzes must cope with the flow of his own thoughts, by entrusting them to paper as quickly as possible.⁸² He becomes a tachygrapher of himself, reversing again established practices of dictation. As a matter of fact, one of the secretary's tasks was to write down documents dictated by his employer. Eustathios, for instance, describes the troubles he went through in trying to keep pace with the verbal flow uttered by Michael *tou Anchialou*, involved in a dispute over a vineyard.⁸³ Tzetzes, on the contrary, is writer and copyist at the same time, since, in a way, he dictates to himself and to his secretarial pen.

3. *Autography and self-authorization*

If my hypothesis is correct, the choice to style himself as “Logariast of the ancients and the moderns” is to be contextualized in a consistent strategy whereby the vocabulary and the realia of bureaucratic writing practices are used to emphasize authorship. From this perspective, autography, i.e. writing as an autonomous, willful, personal, and very material act, takes center stage.⁸⁴

First of all, Tzetzes' writing is distinctive in its material aspects. He defines his own handwriting as *φουλογραφία*, and his autograph notes to Thucydides and to the commentary on Hermogenes show that his handwriting was indeed very recognizable.⁸⁵ Tzetzes thus turns such a flaw into his personal

⁸¹ Agapitos, *MEG* 17 (2017) 7–8.

⁸² This is an old topos, cf. already Quintilian *Inst.* 10.3.31.

⁸³ *Or.* 6 (83.74–84.18 Wirth).

⁸⁴ On autography in Byzantium see in general Hunger, *Schreiben und Lesen* 109–112, with further bibliography. For the Middle Ages in general see P. Chiesa et al. (eds.), *Gli autografi medievali. Problemi paleografici e filologici* (Spoleto 1994). For the Greco-Roman period see T. Dorandi, “Den Autoren über die Schulter geschaut. Arbeitsweise und Autographie bei den antiken Schriftstellern,” *ZPE* 87 (1991) 11–33.

⁸⁵ See Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* 143–144, 152.

trademark, as it were.

At the beginning of the scholia to Aristophanes' *Plutus* he signals his authorship via a book-epigram:⁸⁶

Βίβλος ἐγώ, σχεδίη πρωτόγραφος· αὐτὰρ ὁ Τζέτζης,
 φαυλογράφος περ ἑόν, πρωτογράφος ἔσκεν ἐμεῖο·
 συμβολὰ δ' εἰσοράας, πᾶς ἀρίγνωτα τάδε.

I am a book, the very first draft; Tzetzes,
 even though a bad writer, was the first who drafted me:
 you are looking here at the tokens well known to everyone.⁸⁷

These lines assert the 'paternity' of the book, echoing established notarial practices.⁸⁸ Autography is a guarantee of textual authenticity—and Tzetzes closely links autography and creativity. Furthermore, these lines aim to protect him from potential competitors, in that they stress that the text obviously 'belongs' to him: an attempt to appropriate it would be easily unmasked.

This is another key aspect. As we have seen, Tzetzes used professional copyists for the texts designed for 'publication'.

⁸⁶ L. Massa Positano, Prolegomena II, in *Scholia in Aristophanem* IV.1, *Jo. Tzetzae Commentarii in Aristophanem* (Groningen 1960) XCII: written *in calce* after *Plutus*' argument in *Ambr.gr.* C 222 inf. The codex is the most reliable exemplar for the tradition of Tzetzes' scholia on the *Plutus* and belongs to the second edition of the Aristophanic scholia, arranged by Tzetzes himself after the first edition of the *Historiai* (see Koster, *Commentarii recensiones et aetas*, in *Scholia* XXV–XLII). Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* 144, changes ἔσκεν into ἔσχεν: this correction is perhaps unnecessary, as Tzetzes uses here an ionic-imperfect, in tune with ἑόν and ἐμεῖο. See also Hunger, *Schreiben und lesen* 110. On book-epigrams as a genre see F. Bernard and K. Demoen, "Byzantine Book Epigrams," in W. Hörandner et al. (eds.), *A Companion to Byzantine Poetry* (Leiden 2019) 404–429.

⁸⁷ Nominative πᾶς does not make much sense here. It would be acceptable if the verb were imperative. I suggest to correct to πᾶσ', dative governed by ἀρίγνωτα. The verse in any case does not scan properly, not even as a pentameter as the editor labels it. It is interesting that in the manuscript there is a blank space between εἰσοράας and πᾶς, as if the author had left room to complete the verse later.

⁸⁸ On calligraphy as a litmus test for documental authenticity see H. G. Saradi, *Notai e documenti dall'età di Giustiniano al XIX secolo* (Milan 1999) 241 and 246–247.

However, he did experience problems with the undue circulation of his *σχεδία*, and this is where the hallmark of his handwriting becomes important to guarantee his authorship. Once again, Tzetzes subverts traditional patterns: not calligraphy but ‘phaulography’ becomes a hallmark of authenticity.

Phaulography as autography is present also in the *Vossianus* where it becomes not only the trademark of Tzetzes’ textual production but also a pointer to his actual life circumstances, as the particularly bad writing is due to old age (115^v, see *fig. 3*):

† Ὁ παμβέβηλος οὐτοσὶ βιβλογράφος
 ἀντιγραφεὺς ἦν τῶν ἐμῶν συγγραμμάτων
 γράφων τὰ πλείω τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἐναντίως·
 καὶ τὸν γέροντα καὶ τόσον φαυλογράφον
 νῦν ἐβδομηκάζοντα τῷ ζωῆς ἔτει
 ὠθῶν ἀνορθοῦν σφᾶς γραφὰς λεπτογράφου
 θολὸν παραιρῶν ὀπτικῆς θεωρίας. †

This wholly sacrilegious scribe
 was the copyist of my treatises:
 he writes most of the time contrary to my text;
 and this old man, with his very bad handwriting,
 now in the seventieth year of his life,
 he forces to correct his own neatly traced letters,
 removing the dirt from his very sight.

The identity of Tzetzes as an author is thus reinforced also by the visual characteristics of his handwriting, used for glosses on already circulating manuscripts, be they *antiquiores* or copies of his own works like the *Vossianus*.⁸⁹

The book-epigram written for his comment to the *Plutus* is not the only instance of overlap between autography, literary practices, and the language of bureaucracy. Yet another—more telling—example can be found in some manuscripts belonging to the second recension of the *Historiai*. Here again *λογισμοί* come into play.

⁸⁹ This becomes all the more true if we accept, as argued by Luzzatto, that his ‘phaulography’ bore some similarities to contemporary chancery hands: *Tzetzes lettere* 152.

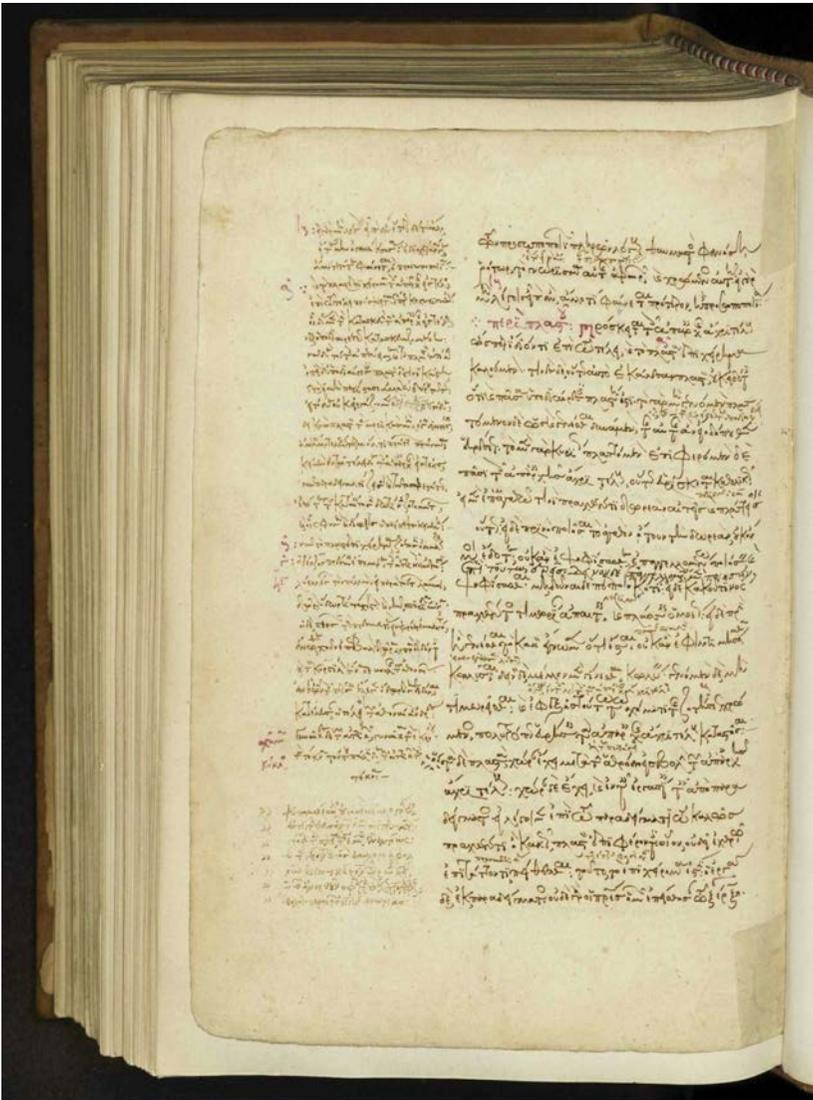


Figure 3: Vossianus Gr. Q1, f. 115v

In four MSS. belonging to recension b,⁹⁰ the corpus of letters and ‘stories’ is followed by a series of free-standing poems: a first and shorter poem (22 lines) delving into the characteristics of iambic composition and introducing the theme of children’s education; a longer one (270 lines) on education, with a colorful description of the gang of buffalos monopolizing the Constantinopolitan scene; a 17-line book epigram in hexameters; 46 final iambs written against Andronikos Kamateros.⁹¹

The last poem closes with a poetic seal, a *sphragis*, borrowed from Sophocles, and is followed by five lines bearing Tzetzes’ signature. Whether the signature pertains only to the iambic poems or to the whole of the *Historiai*’s second recension has been matter of discussion.⁹² Be that as it may, the *sphragis* and Tzetzes’ subscription make more sense if read together, as I will try to demonstrate:⁹³

Ἄλλ’ ὦ Σοφόκλεις, ὦ Σοφίλλου παιδίον,	350
γνώμαις ἐπισφράγιζε σαῖς τὸ βιβλίον·	
κᾶν ποτ’, ἄνδρες, ἄνδρα θαυμάσαιμ’ ἔτι,	
ὃς μηδὲν ὦν γοναῖσιν εἶθ’ ἀμαρτάνει,	
ὅθ’ οἱ δοκοῦντες εὐγενεῖς πεφυκέναι	
τοιαῦθ’ ἀμαρτάνουσιν ἐν λόγοις ἔπη.	355
Ὡς ἀντεβλήθη ταῦτα τοῖς πρωτογράφοις	
ταῦτα δ’ ἐφευρέθησαν ἰσχυρῶς λόγων,	
Τζέτζου κατεστρώθησαν ἐν τῷ σεκρέτῳ,	
ὑπογραφήν δ’ ἔσχηκεν ἦν τινα βλέπεις.	
Τζέτζης λογιστῆς τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ νέων.	360

⁹⁰ *Par.gr.* 2750 (13th c.); *Cantab.gr.* Ec. 6.35 338 (late 15th–16th c.); *Monac.gr.* 338 (15th c.); *Laur.gr.plut.* 69.14 (15th c.); Leone, *RSBN* 6–7 (1969–1970) 127.

⁹¹ If Tzetzes in fact placed the three poems immediately following the *ιστορίαί*, we might regard them as reinforcing his authorial intentions and emphasizing the attacks on Andronikos Kamateros incorporated into the *Historiai*. On the final verses, from another perspective, see also the remarks of Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* 20. On Kamateros see A. Bucossi, *Andronici Camateri Sacrum Armamentarium* (Turnhout 2014) XIX–XXVI.

⁹² See Leone, *RSBN* 6–7 (1969–1970) 130.

⁹³ Leone, *RSBN* 6–7 (1969–1970) 146. Lines 352–355 are from Soph. *Aj.* 1093–1096.

So, Sophocles, son of Sophillos,
 please, do seal the book with your thoughts:
 “Never again, my fellows, will I be amazed
 if some nobody by birth does wrong,
 when those who are deemed noble
 do so wrong in their discourses.”

As they were collated with the original,
 and invented by the power of words,
 these texts were deposited in the archive of Tzetzes,
 and obtained the signature you see here:
 Tzetzes, auditor of the ancients and moderns.

The final lines are modeled after the stock phrases used to authenticate official documents.⁹⁴ In this respect, Tzetzes’ text provides an earlier parallel to the signature practices of thirteenth-century Italian notary-poets, such as Giacomo da Lentini and Brunetto Latini. Both used to insert their name into the verses they produced, imitating the notarial *signum*.⁹⁵

However, Tzetzes’ strategy is more subtle and multilayered. He has in mind notarial practices of copying, based on the production of ‘prototypical’ *σχεδάρια*, first drafts, on the basis of which the final documents were produced and then put on file.⁹⁶ The formulaic *κατεστρώθην*, in particular, was used to validate and file minutes and notarial annotations, or else, as here, copies of original documents.⁹⁷ Tzetzes seems to allude to chancery practices connected with the production of *παρεκβληθέντα*, i.e. authenticated copies to be put on file, or else *ῥσα*, subsequent official copies made upon request: *ἀντιβάλλω* points precisely to the truthful collation executed by notaries.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Already signaled by G. Hart, “De Tzetzarum nomine, vitis, scriptis,” *JKIPh* Suppl. 12 (1881 61; see on the topic and this passage Pizzone, *BMGs* 41 (2017) 206.

⁹⁵ See S. Bianchini, “Giacomo da Lentini e Brunetto Latini: una questione di firme,” *Studi Mediolatini e Volgari* 41 (1995) 27–50.

⁹⁶ For *σχεδάρια* in Tzetzes see also *Ep.* 72, 111.3–5 Leone. On notarial practices see Saradi, *Notai* 85–87.

⁹⁷ See for instance the sources collected by Darrouzès, *Recherches* 508–510.

⁹⁸ Cf. e.g. F. Miklosich and J. Muller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi*

Significantly enough, in the patriarchal chancery the *παρεκβληθέντα* carried only the personal signature of the *chartophylax*, as a sign of their hierarchic importance in the series of successive copies. In secular administration, the copying and production of official documents always fell under the responsibility of the notary in charge. Scribes were not allowed to draft originals or copies without the request or explicit consent of the notary.⁹⁹

Furthermore, in Byzantium minutes were deemed less authoritative than the final documents (regarded as the originals) and were used only when the ‘original’ was not available.¹⁰⁰ The documents archived in given departments (*σεκρέτα*) were thus granted the validity of archetypes and thereby deemed authentic by definition: such was the case of the fiscal archive, for instance.¹⁰¹ This procedure aimed at protecting documents from falsification or destruction after they were sent out to their recipients. This is a very important point: the term *κατεστρώθη* always signaled the ‘publication’ of the registered document.

Finally, the signature closing Tzetzes’ iambs sustains the writer’s autonomy through the hierarchic relationship between *σφραγίς* and *ὑπογραφή*. Byzantine law stated that private acts, such as testaments and documents drafted by *tabularii* or *tabelliones* (notaries),¹⁰² had to be signed by the issuer (according to the model set by the imperial chrysobuls). No *σφραγίς* or *γνώρισμα* had the power of validating the document by itself, it

(Vienna 1860–1890) IV no. 317, with Darrouzès, *Recherches* 518.

⁹⁹ See Saradi, *Notai* 5.

¹⁰⁰ Saradi, *Notai* 87, 96–98.

¹⁰¹ See Darrouzès, *Recherches* 463 n.5 and 521.

¹⁰² *Suda* T 3 Adler Ταβελλίων; cf. S. Vryonis, “Byzantine Δημοκρατία and the Guilds in the Eleventh Century,” *DOP* 17 (1963) 297–298; Saradi, *Notai* 39–51. *Tabelliones* are to be distinguished from the notaries (νοτάριοι) working in imperial and patriarchal administration: they prepared the acts stipulated between private citizens, guaranteeing their legitimacy and compliance (Darrouzès, *Recherches* 381–383; G. Cavallo, “Tracce e divaricazioni di un percorso dal tardoantico al medioevo greco e latino,” in *Leggere e scrivere nell’alto medioevo* I [Spoleto 2012] 25–27).

needed to be accompanied by a signature.¹⁰³

The vocabulary of notarial practices is thus mobilized to ensure control over textual production. A prose subscription in the *Vossianus* shows in more detail the reasons behind the need to exert such control and reassert agency within the dynamics of the Constantinopolitan book ‘market’ (f. 212^r, see *fig. 4*):

Ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ ῥητορικῆ πικτίδι τῇ παρ’ ἡμῶν ἐξηγηθείσῃ δημῳδῶσι στίχοις εἴ τις ἐφεύροι διαφωνοῦντα τινὰ πρὸς τὴν πρωτόγραφον καὶ σχεδίαν τοῦδε τοῦ συγγράμματος βίβλον τὴν παρ’ ἐμοῦ γεγραμμένην καὶ τὰς ἐξ αὐτῆς ἀντιγράφους, θαυμάσοι μηδόλως. Ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ πολλοῖς συνωθηθεὶς χρήμασι, ταύτην συνεταξάμην καὶ δέδωκα, μὴδ’ ἰδεῖν αὐτὴν σχεδὸν ἔαθεις, ὡς μὴ καὶ ἑτέροις τισὶ δοῖην αὐτὴν εἰς ἀντίγραφα. Ἐκεῖθε δ’ ὑφαιρεθείσα οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως εἰπεῖν μετεγράφη. Ὑστερον αὐθις ἐς τὰς ἐμὰς χεῖρας περιελθοῦσα βραχὺ, ἐθεάθη τε καὶ τινα ἀνωρθώθη ἐναλλαγῆ ἢ προσθήκη βραχεῖα, ἢ ἀφαιρέσει. Ἔδεια γὰρ πλατύτερον ἀνορθοῦν μὴ παντελῶς κιβδηλευθῆ τὰ ἀντίγραφα. Ἔστω οὖν τουτὶ ἐπιτίμιον τοῖς τὰς σχεδίους γραφὰς ὑφαιρουμένοις καὶ μεταγράφουσιν.

ὁμοῦ οἱ πάντες στίχοι αἴπε καὶ ὀλίγω πλείονες.

If anyone should find in this rhetorical book interpreted by me in popular verse anything different as compared with the original and the draft of this treatise, the book written by me and those copied from it, he should not wonder at all. For, impelled by much money, I did compose and circulate this one (too), but was barely allowed to see it, lest I give it also to any others to be copied. Snatched away from there, it was copied I know not how. Later, once again back in my hands briefly, it was perused and corrected in some passages, by changing or adding or taking out little things. For I feared to correct more widely lest the copies be altogether falsified. This be then the penalty for those who snatch away and copy written sketches.

All together the lines are 16085 and a bit more.

¹⁰³ *Ecloga Basilicorum* 2.2.37 praef.; σφραγίς indicated the cross, often used in the documents as signature. Tzetzes himself sometimes uses it to signal his interventions on Thucydides’ text (Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* 17–18) and in the *Vossianus*, as seen where he mentions his ‘phaulography’ (*fig. 3* above).

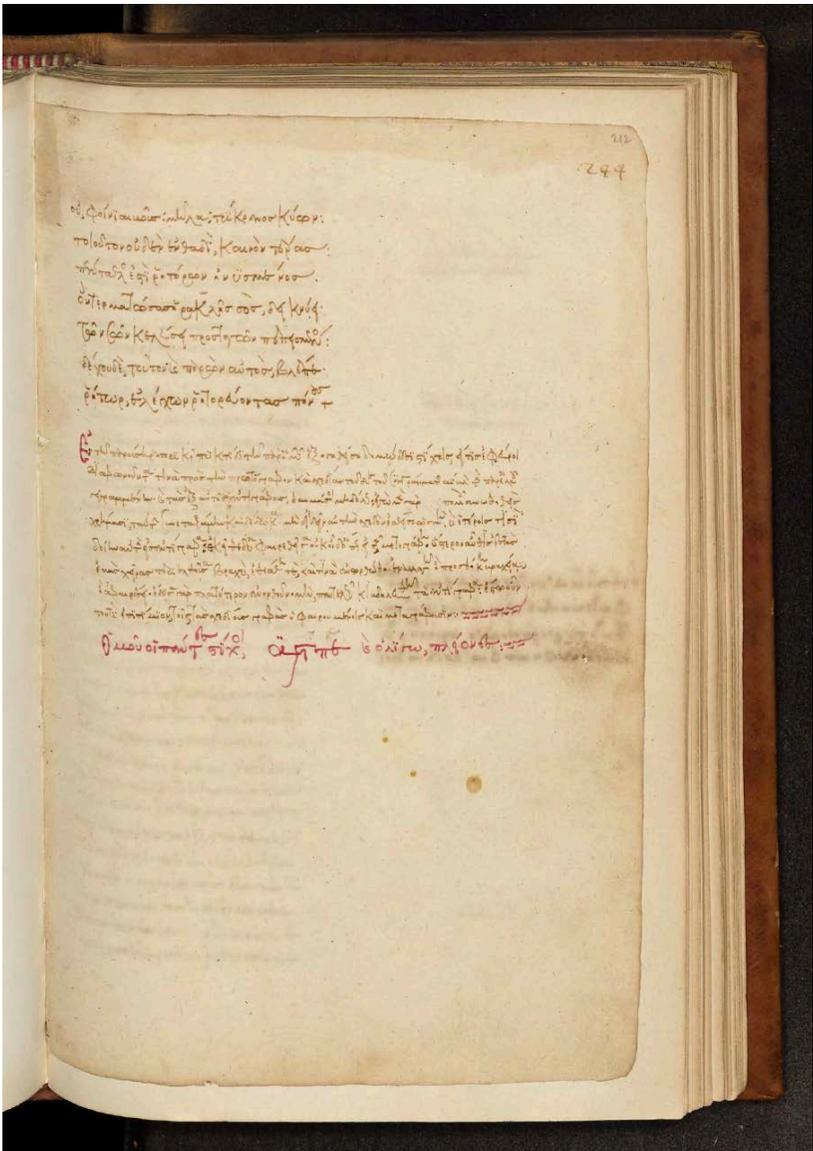


Figure 4: Vossianus gr. Q1 f. 212^r

These lines, together with Tzetzes' autograph interventions on the *Vossianus*, testify to the author's anxiety about losing control over his books once they were given out for copying. Misunderstandings could be very detrimental, not only for aesthetic reasons: possible mistakes, solecisms, and the like would likely be ascribed to the author's agency rather than to the copyist's sloppiness. The emphasis on creativity, therefore, does not testify only to a proprietary notion of authorship. Rather, it speaks more broadly to issues of social standing, reputation, and cultural economy. As to authorship, a further intriguing detail seems to emerge from these lines. Tzetzes declares that he does not want to correct the copy too much: if he went all the way to restoring the original text, the copies made later would not be recognizable, as too different from the manuscript from which they were produced. The term he uses, ἀντίγραφα, in the plural, designates the exact copies produced from a given text, while κίβδηλεύω evokes forgery and falsification, as of coinage. This implies, in other words, that Tzetzes is ultimately forced to 'own' some of the mistakes present in the master copy so as to ensure that the authorship of the copies produced afterwards is recognized as his.

Against this backdrop it is easy to understand why the need to stress authorial autonomy is so pressing.¹⁰⁴ Emphasis on autography, moreover, implies yet another consequence. Writing is described by Tzetzes, more often than not, as a distinctively individual and self-directed activity. This model informs also exemplary authorial figures: for instance, literary creation emerges as a solitary endeavor in the portrait of Homer traced by Tzetzes in the scholia to the *Plutus*.¹⁰⁵ Homer, the ideal

¹⁰⁴ On Tzetzes and patronage see A. Rhoby, "Ioannes Tzetzes als Auftragsdichter," *Graeco-Latina Bruniensia* 15 (2010) 155–170; V. F. Lovato, "From Cato to Plato and Back Again: Friendship and Patronage in Tzetzes' Letters," *ClMed* (forthcoming).

¹⁰⁵ Schol. *Plut.* 733, 168.20–169.15 Massa Positano. On the passage in general see Luzzatto, *Tzetzes lettore* 45–46. We know from external evidence that Tzetzes identified himself with Homer (Kaldellis, *Hellenism* 306–307; cf.

author, versed in every kind of *logos*, is self-contained and self-sufficient.¹⁰⁶ In order to emphasize these characteristics, Tzetzes resorts to two striking expressions:

τῷ δὲ βριθεῖ καὶ στερρῷ τοῦ νοῶς αὐτοδαιμονίου τινὸς τελοῦν-
τος καὶ αὐτονοῦ

of one accomplishing with the vigor and sturdiness of his self-
inspired and self-intelligent mind

While αὐτοδαιμόνιος is a neologism coined by Tzetzes, the rare αὐτόνοος is usually applied to God or to the divine/transcendent pure intellect.¹⁰⁷ The two adjectives may be compared to Tzetzes' frequent statements¹⁰⁸ about the autonomous character of his own work, which he again describes as αὐτοσχέδια (*Hist.* 8.176.178). He often characterizes his writing as spontaneous, fast, and impetuous (8.176.173–176):

Ὁ Τζέτζης κἂν ἀβίβλης γὰρ κἂν γράφῃ καὶ σχεδίως
ἄπερ ὁρᾶτε σύμπαντα καὶ τάχει ταχυτέρῳ
ἢπερ¹⁰⁹ ὁρῶν μετέγραφεν ἕκ τινων ταῦτα βίβλων,
ἀλλ' ὅμως ἀτρεκέστατα πᾶσαν γραφὴν συντάττει.

Tzetzes, even if both bookless and writing sketchily
all that you see, and with speedier speed
than if he had seen and copied these things from certain books,
yet composes every piece of writing most exactly.

Cullhed, *BMGS* 38 [2014] 49–67). The polemic emphasis characterizing the passage as well as the reference to falsifications of Homer's work reinforce such an interpretation (schol. *Plut.* 733, 169.19–21 Massa Positano: οὐ πύλαι Ἄιδου οὐ κατισχύουσι, πλὴν μέντοι τῶν ἅ τισιν ἐνοθεύθη, “And the gates of Hades will not prevail on him, obviously apart from the works falsified by certain people”).

¹⁰⁶ Cf. the remarks on Tzetzes' autonomy of Cullhed, *BMGS* 38 (2014) 59–60.

¹⁰⁷ Eus. *Dem.Evang.* 4.2.1, *Eccl.Theol.* 2.14.6; *Plot.* 3.2.16, 5.9.13.

¹⁰⁸ See e.g. the whole Prologue of the exegesis on the *Iliad*: Papathomopoulos, *Εξήγησις* 3–73, with Budelmann, in *The Classical Commentary* 151.

¹⁰⁹ I change here Leone's printed text, εἴπερ. I prefer the *lectio* of MS. aX, which makes more sense in a context in which Tzetzes emphasizes his dislike for copying.

The celebration of autographical practices goes hand in hand with Tzetzes' frequent attacks on copyists, depicted as greedy beasts, unable to understand the texts they should take care of. This contrast between self-sufficient autography and paid copies provides a supplementary explanation for Tzetzes' claims of being ἀδωρότατος: it is part of the same strategy of self-presentation. At his best, Tzetzes does not copy, his writing is ἀντοσχέδιος, under his personal control: an original textual production—when the author writes “whatever he wants” and ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ¹¹⁰—in his view is also unpaid by definition.¹¹¹ As a consequence Tzetzes tends to present the market value of his texts as a by-product.

4. Conclusions

Tzetzes' rationale is now clearer. As an author and as a teacher, he had the urgent need to protect himself not only against possible forgeries—and we know by now that this was a real issue—but also against low-quality transmission of his material.¹¹² A special concern was the ‘in-between’ stage of manuscript production, when provisional texts, not yet ‘published’ as books proper, could be lent, borrowed, and made to circulate in the form of copybooks. Both Psellos and Nikephoros Basilakes vividly describe such modes of dissemination.¹¹³ By using governmental formulae, Tzetzes shapes himself as a self-legitimated ‘literary auditor’, allowed to pick holes in the work of both contemporary and past authors. At the same time such a self-appointment allows him to create a literary fiction serving to overcome his perceived social marginality. The title *Logismoi*, as we have seen, evokes the functions of the Grand

¹¹⁰ On these issues see also Lovato, *ClMed* (forthcoming).

¹¹¹ Even in the field of bureaucratic, notarial writing, scribes can never write what they want, but always need to follow the notary's orders.

¹¹² See Cullhed, *BMGS* 38 (2014) 49–67.

¹¹³ Psellos *De legum nominibus* (PG CXXII 1029A); Nikephoros Basilakes *Prologue* 5.16–34 (N. Garzya, *Nicephori Basilacae Orationes et Epistulae* [Leipzig 1984]). See also Atsalos, *Terminologie* 168.

Logariast, entrusted with censoring authority over all other writers ‘under’ him. Thus the language of bureaucratic authority becomes central to the creation of the literatus’ authorial agency and key to a process of self-canonization. The texts preserved in the *Vossianus* show to modern readers how Tzetzes turned the entangled relationship between literary and non-literary writing into a productive tool to sustain his ambitions.¹¹⁴

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