

A Compilation of Excerpts from John Xiphilinus' *Epitome* of Cassius Dio

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THE *EPITOME* that John Xiphilinus made of Cassius Dio's *Roman History* was indisputably a particularly important enterprise,¹ now chiefly because it preserves a number of lost books from that *History*.² At the same time, however, the abridged presentation of Roman history from 69 B.C. to A.D. 229 in Xiphilinus' *Epitome* was a handy source for Byzantines interested in studying the events of that period without having to plough through the lengthy original.³

As is evident from its manuscript tradition, the *Epitome* was particularly popular towards the end of Byzantium and in the

¹ For the life and work of John Xiphilinus see A. Kazhdan "Xiphilinos, John the Younger," *ODB* III (1991) 2211; E. Trapp, "Johannes Xiphilinos der Jüngere," in *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon* 3 (1992) 618–619; W. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (New York 2013) 310–312; B. Berbessou-Broustet, "Xiphilin, abrégiateur de Cassius Dion," in V. Fromentin et al. (eds.), *Cassius Dion: nouvelles lectures* (Bordeaux 2016) 81–94; M. Kruse, "The Epitomator Ioannes Xiphilinos and the Eleventh-century Xiphilinoi," *JÖB* 69 (2019) 257–274. On Cassius Dio see J. Majbom Madsen, *Cassius Dio* (London 2020); J. Majbom Madsen and A. G. Scott, "Reviewing Cassius Dio," in *Brill's Companion to Cassius Dio* (Leiden 2023) 1–18, with a collection of studies on the writer and his work. The text of Xiphilinus' *Epitome* is cited here from U. P. Boissevain, *Cassii Dionis Historiarum Romanarum quae supersunt* III (Berlin 1901).

² The *Epitome* is the best-preserved form of Books 61–80 of Dio.

³ See A. Simpson, "The Reception of Cassius Dio's Imperial Narrative in Byzantium (Tenth-Twelfth Centuries)," in C. Davenport et al. (eds.), *Emperors and Political Culture in Cassius Dio's Roman history* (Cambridge 2014) 289–307.

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post-Byzantine period: of the 25 codices that preserve the work in whole or in part, 23 date to the 15th to 17th centuries.⁴

Also from the second half of the 15th century is the codex *Paris.gr.* 1310, a miscellany of prose works and poetry of classical and Byzantine authors.⁵ On fol. 45^r–60^v and 61^v–62^v of this codex,⁶ under the title *Ἐκ τῆς ἐπιτομῆς τῆς Δίωνος Ῥωμαϊκῆς Ἱστορίας τοῦ Ξιφιλίνου*, are a total of 298 excerpts from Xiphilinus' *Epitome*, unpublished. Diverse in content and varying in length, these excerpts were copied into the codex in sections by emperor, as in the *Epitome*, and bear matching titles: *ἐκ τοῦ β^{ov}*, *ἐκ τοῦ γ^{ov}*, *ἐκ τοῦ στ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Τιβερίου*, *ἐκ τοῦ θ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Νέρωνος καὶ Δομιτίου*, etc.⁷ Some of the excerpts also have headings describing or elucidating their content, such as: *Ἦνικά ὁ Αὔγουστος τῷ Ἀντωνίῳ ἤρξατο μάχεσθαι, Σημείωσαι στρατεύματα Ῥωμαϊκὰ τῷ τότε καιρῷ, Περὶ ἐκλείψεως*, etc.⁸ All these titles are in the hand of

⁴ According to the entry in the *Pinakes* database (<https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/oeuvre/6206/>), as there is no modern systematic study of the manuscript tradition. See also n.23 below.

⁵ H. Omont, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale et des autres bibliothèques de Paris et des Départements* I (Paris 1886) 295–296; *Pinakes*, numéro diktyon: 50919 (with the relevant bibliography). The codex was studied by means of digital colour photographs.

⁶ Fol. 61^r probably was originally left blank, and filled later with excerpts from Byzantine historians.

⁷ The section containing excerpts from the dominance of Pompey has no title and is not numbered like the preceding ones, while in two cases the numbering in the title is incorrect: the section for Tiberius is numbered *στ^{ov}* instead of *ε^{ov}*, and the section for Claudius *στ^{ov}* instead of *η^{ov}*. Also, the compilation contains nothing from the *Epitome*'s account of the reign of Vespasian.

⁸ The compiler also expresses his opinion in the title of the excerpt on the oratory of the Emperor Didius Julianus, which he considers *ἀλαζδὸνα καὶ ἐπιρμήνη* (fol. 56^v.27), and sometimes adds information, as for example that the Arabian city that Trajan attacked was Mecca, where the tomb of Mohammed is: *αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ πόλις ἡ λεγομένη Μέκκα· ἐν ἧ ὁ τάφος τοῦ μιαροῦ Μωάμεδ λέγεται εἶναι* (52^r), or noting, in relation to Dio's *ὥστε δεηθεὶς ποτε ἐν τῇ Νικαίᾳ τῆ πατριδί μου* (Xiph. S313.2), that: *σημείωσαι ὅτι νικαεὺς ὁ Δίων* (59^r.1).

the compiler and are not found in any of the known codices preserving the *Epitome* itself.

With few exceptions, the excerpts copied into the codex follow the order and arrangement of the *Epitome*.⁹ Also, the compiler has faithfully reproduced the original,¹⁰ barring occasional spelling or copying errors¹¹ and, in a few excerpts, some omissions of phrases or parts of the original.¹²

As for the content of the excerpts, it seems that the compiler's choice was based on his personal interests,¹³ as is the case with excerpts from other works that have been copied into *Paris.gr.* 1310, making it a classic example of a codex prepared for private use.¹⁴

An attempt to classify the subject matter of the excerpts

⁹ The excerpt Xiph. S239.12–13 precedes Xiph. S238.15–23 and S238.24–28; the excerpt S288.22–23 follows S288.25–33; S350.28–29 precedes S347.15–20, S348.12–13, and S349.10–17; S347.15–20 follows S348.18–20.

¹⁰ Some differences between the excerpts and the *Epitome* are worth noting: ὕψος (fol. 45^r.27) instead of ὕδωρ (Xiph. 17.22); μηχαναὶ (57^v.11) instead of ἕτεραί (S300.27), as are some additions: Ῥωμαίων (45^r.29) after τοὺς (22.6); Μάρκου (56^v.11) after παρ' αὐτοῦ (S285.21); κατ' ὄναρ (60^v.13) after ἐδόκει (S333.24). Also, part (37.2–4) of the excerpt from Xiph. 36.20–37.11 is significantly altered in the codex (45^v.26–28).

¹¹ See indicatively: σηνίασιν (fol. 45^r.13) for συνιᾶσιν (Xiph. 13.1); ὀνομασμένης (45^v.8) for ὀνομασμένης (27.20); ἀρχόμενων (45^v.10) for ἀρχόμενων (77.25); Ἀντωνίω (46^r.26) for Ἀντωνίω (73.16); ἔπεινε (51^r.4) for ἔπινε (S230.20); ὑψηλόφρων (55^r.5) for ὑψηλόφρων (S272.7); ὑπάρχων (58^v.24) for ἐπάρχου (S312.25), etc.

¹² These are usually details in the *Epitome* whose omission does not alter the sense of the excerpt. Omissions of longer or shorter excerpts occur in the excerpts: Xiph. 4.13–21, S157.7–158.17, S324.26–325.29, S330.22–24.

¹³ For the criteria on which Xiphilinus himself based his choice of events to include in his *Epitome* of Dio's *History* see M. Kruse, "Xiphilinos' Agency in the *Epitome* of Cassius Dio," *GRBS* 61 (2021) 193–223, at 194–195.

¹⁴ See in this regard I. Taxidis, "Public and Private Libraries in Byzantium," in S. Kotzabassi (ed.), *A Companion to the Intellectual Life of the Palaeologan Period* (Leiden 2023) 458–490, at 479.

selected from the *Epitome* for inclusion in the codex would have to start with the observation that for most emperors these include accounts of their physical and mental characteristics, their quirks of character, and the manner of their death.¹⁵ Apart from the emperors, the compiler seems to have been interested in various other figures, such as the Dacian king Decebalus, Marcellus Ulpus, the all-powerful Gaius Fulvius Plautianus, Fulvius Diogenianus, and the athlete Aurelius Helix, for all of whom he records sundry details from the *Epitome*.

Also present are a variety of curious, humorous, and anecdotal items: for example, the curious story of Pompey's cloven-hoofed horse (Xiph. 10.26–31), a description of the cetacean resembling a woman that washed up on the Celtic coast (94.14–17), accounts of the Indians' gift to Octavian of a boy without shoulders (92.25–31), and of how Didius Julianus sacrificed boys for purposes of magic (S292.21–23). To this category belong as well the excerpts describing exotic animals¹⁶—elephants, rhinoceros, giraffe.¹⁷

Also transcribed are excerpts concerning various omens and portents, such as the eagle snatching a loaf of bread from the hands of Octavian the future emperor (Xiph. 36.20–37.11), the curious sunlight that shone on Julius Caesar one day and was thought to portend his victory over his rivals (40.14–20), the foaling of a mule on the day Galba ascended the imperial throne,

¹⁵ Xiphilinus also gave weight to the biographical details supplied by Dio, converting his history into a series of biographies, while also following the character of the various figures: see C. Mallan, "The Style, Method, and Programme of Xiphilinus' *Epitome* of Cassius Dio's *Roman History*," *GRBS* 53 (2013) 610–644, at 617 and 631.

¹⁶ For the Byzantines' interest in exotic animals see N. Ševčenko, "Wild Animals in the Byzantine Park," in A. Littlewood et al. (eds.), *Byzantine Garden Culture* (Washington 2002) 69–86.

¹⁷ Xiph. 12.24–13.2, 80.11–14, 27.20–30. George Pachymeres' (*PLP* 21186) ekphrasis on the giraffe in his *History* is based on Dio's description; see I. Taxidis, D. Nikou, and I. Chrysostomidis, *The Ekphrasis in the Byzantine Literature of the Palaeologan Era* (Alessandria 2021) 258–259.

which was considered a sign of supreme power (S186.29–187.1), plus other incidents manifesting divine intervention, the most characteristic example being the miracle of the rain, prayed for by Christian soldiers fighting the Quadi during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, which saved the Roman army from dying of thirst (S299.27–301.22).¹⁸

The compiler also selected a considerable body of geographical information: there are, for example, excerpts about the Cilician city of Pompeiopolis, about the marshes at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, about the river Nile and the Atlas mountains,¹⁹ but the longest piece in this category is a description of Byzantium.²⁰ Many geographical descriptions also include ethnographic information, for example about the Britons and the Cenni.²¹

Some natural phenomena also attracted the compiler's interest; this is evident from the length of the relevant excerpts compared with the rest of the excerpts in the codex. Typical examples include the earthquake at Antioch in 115 B.C. (Xiph. S236.7–237.23), the fire that flared from the earth somewhere near the Aoös River (17.14–22), the asphalt that welled up at Babylon and the poisonous vapours that came with it (S238.15–23).

The content of the remaining excerpts is diverse. They include descriptions of important military operations, matters of imperial governance and the organisation of the army, and seemingly

¹⁸ The miracle of the rain is a characteristic example of Xiphilinus' Christianizing of an episode in Dio's non-Christian history; see Mallan, *GRBS* 53 (2013) 640–642, and C. T. Herhardt, "Dio Cassius Christianised," *Prudentia* 26 (1994) 26–28.

¹⁹ Xiph. 4.13–21, S237.24–32, S311.15–29.

²⁰ Xiph. S299.27–301.22. It has been observed that Xiphilinus had a preference for geographical information about the eastern regions of the Empire: P. A. Brunt, "On Historical Fragments and Epitomes," *CQ* 30 (1980) 477–494, at 489–490.

²¹ Xiph. S322.8–13, S333.9–12.

insignificant bits of information such as that the road ἄπὸ Σινοέσης ἐς Ποτιόλους was paved by Domitian (S223.18–19).

Finally, among the excerpts from the *Epitome* the compiler inserted two extraneous items: accompanying the description of the Atlas mountains is an eight-line poem by John Tzetzes with the title *Στίχοι Ἰαμβοὶ περὶ τοῦ Ἀτλαντος ὄρους*,²² while for the events of the reign of Caracalla he copied a long excerpt from Paeanius' *Metaphrasis* of Eutropius' *Breviarium*.²³

The natural response to this outline of the collection's general characteristics is to wonder what use this particular compilation of excerpts from the *Epitome* could have been to the compiler.²⁴ The question is partially answered by the initial observation that the codex appears to have been intended for private use, which means that from the material recorded by Xiphilinus the compiler selected the items that interested him. The answer would be quite different if, as has been argued, the compilation was made by Doukas, the historian of the Fall of Constantinople,²⁵ in which case the excerpts copied might have been intended for

²² See A. Zumbo, "Una misconosciuta ΥΠΟΘΕΣΙΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΑΤΛΑΝΤΟΣ di Giovanni Tzetzes (Schol. Oppian. Hal. 1,622)," *RBSN* 33 (1996) 275–278, and the entry in the *Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams*, Type 6991.

²³ It is worth noting that the oldest codex preserving the *Epitome*, *Iviron* 812, also contains Paeanius' *Metaphrasis* of Eutropius' *Breviarium*. On this codex see I. Pérez Martín, "The Role of Maximus Planudes and Nikephoros Gregoras in the Transmission of Cassius Dio's *Roman History* and of John Xiphilinos' *Epitome*," *MEG* 15 (2015) 175–193, at 179–181, and J. Groß, "On the Transmission of Paeanius," *GRBS* 60 (2020) 387–409, at 394–395.

²⁴ Since no exemplar has been found from which the compilation might have been copied, we assume that the compiler was able to consult the *Epitome* itself.

²⁵ For the identification of the copyist of the codex with the historian Doukas (*PLP* 5685), see S. Kotzabassi, "Der Kopist des Geschichtswerkes von Dukas," in F. Berger et al. (eds.), *Symbolae berolinenses für Dieter Harlfinger* (Amsterdam 1993) 307–323, and "Ist der Kopist von Dukas Dukas selbst?" *ByzZeit* 96 (2003) 679–683. The identification has been challenged by D. R. Reinsch, "Warum der Text im cod. Parisinus gr. 1310 nicht das Autographon des Autors Dukas sein kann," *MEG* 19 (2019) 185–192.

use in his *History*—which, incidentally, is preserved only in *Paris.gr.* 1310.²⁶

Instead of preparing a critical edition of the excerpts, a presentation of their content was preferred here in order to avoid flawed conclusions from any comparison with the old edition of John Xiphilinus' *Epitome*, which ignores a significant number of codices preserving the work. I think that any future critical edition of the *Epitome* should certainly take into account the compilation of excerpts of cod. *Paris.gr.* 1310, as a conveyor of the late 15th-century textual tradition of the work.

The compilation in Paris.gr. 1310 (fols. 45^r–60^v and 61^v–62^v)

Ἐκ τῆς ἐπιτομῆς τῆς Δίωνος Ῥωμαϊκῆς Ἱστορίας τοῦ Ξιφιλίνου [45^r]
[Pompey]²⁷

The conquest of Pompeiopolis (Xiph. 4.13–21).²⁸ Pompey's cloven-footed horse (10.26–31). The characteristics of elephants (12.24–13.2). Pompey's journey to Britain via the Rhine (13.26–27). The temple where the golden eagle, symbol of the legions, was kept (14.16–22).²⁹ Ἡ περὶ τὸν Ἴόνιον κόλπον: the fire that flared from the earth at Ἀπολλωνία, near the river Aoös (17.14–22).

[Julius Caesar] Ἐκ τοῦ β^{ov}

The end of Pompey,³⁰ and his association with Agamemnon

²⁶ Doukas relates very succinctly the events from the creation of the world to the second half of the fourteenth century, omitting entirely the events of the Roman era.

²⁷ These excerpts refer to events from the life of Pompey but do not bear a corresponding heading. See n.7 above.

²⁸ For the Pompeiopolis of the Byzantine age see H. Hellenkemper and F. Hild, *Kilikien und Isaurien* (Vienna 1990) 381–382.

²⁹ See K. Töpfer, *Signa militaria. Die römischen Feldzeichen in der Republik und im Prinzipat* (Mainz 2011) 18–20.

³⁰ With regard to Caesar's war against Pompey see K. Bialy, "John Xiphilinos on the Civil War between Pompey and Caesar in the *Epitome* of the *Roman History* of Cassius Dio," in D. Słapek et al. (eds.), *Przemoc w świecie starożytnym. Źródła - struktura - interpretacje* (Lublin 2017) 437–449.

(Xiph. 22.2–10).³¹ [fol. 45^v] How the soldiers shouted for Caesar to take power and remain sole ruler (26.31–27.6). Περὶ καμηλοπαρδάλεως: description of the giraffe (27.20–30). Caesar the first emperor to be publicly proclaimed (30.11–15). The naming of the emperor as Divus Julius, the temple dedicated to him, and the renaming of his birth month as Iulius (31.27–32.2).

[Octavian] Ἐκ τοῦ γ^{ov}

Nigidius Figulus and the story of the eagle that snatched a loaf of bread from the hand of the boy Octavian who would become emperor and returned it to him (Xiph. 36.20–37.11).³² [fol. 46^r] Octavian was practiced in oratory, not only in the Latin language but in Greek as well (38.10–11). Ἡνίκᾱ ὁ Αὔγουστος τῷ Ἀντωνίῳ ἤρξατο μάχεσθαι: the curious solar light portending his supremacy over his opponents (40.14–20). The origin of the name Octavian (42.28–43.3). Διὰ φόβον θανάτου: the slaves who dressed themselves in their masters' clothes and sacrificed themselves for them.³³ Ἀντωνίου καὶ Καίσαρος: the battle of Actium and the death of Antony (73.14–17).

[Octavian Augustus] Ἐκ τοῦ δ^{ov}

Octavian's subjugation of Egypt; the rain mixed with blood that fell on the region; a serpent of huge size that suddenly appeared there uttered an incredibly loud hiss (Xiph. 79.26–31). [fol. 46^v] Description of the rhinoceros (80.11–14).³⁴ The full power of the emperor over the laws (88.14–18). A child

³¹ In the manuscript two excerpts from Xiphilinus (22.2–6 and 22.6–10) have been copied as a single excerpt. On the linking of Pompey and Agamemnon see E. J. Champlin, "Agamemnon at Rome: Roman Dynasts and Greek Heroes," in D. Braund et al. (eds.), *Myth, History and Culture in Republican Rome: Studies in Honour of T. P. Wiseman* (Exeter 2003) 295–319.

³² On Publius Nigidius Figulus see A. Della Casa, *Nigidio Figulo* (Rome 1962).

³³ This single section in the *Epitome* is divided into two excerpts in the codex, each with its own rubricated initial (Xiph. 46.25–31 and 46.31–47.4).

³⁴ See C. Vendries, "Les Romains et l'image du rhinocéros. Les limites de la ressemblance," *ArchCl* 67 (2016) 279–340.

without shoulders gifted to Octavian by the Indians (92.25–31). The end of the Indian sophist Zarmarus (92.32–93.2). The cetacean resembling a woman on the Celtic coast (94.14–17). Τοῦ υἱοῦ ἀντρῆς τῆς Ἰουλίας: the privileges of mothers of large families (97.24–98.1). The incident of Tiberius and the astrologer Thrasyllus (102.14–25).³⁵ Σημείωσαι στρατεύματα ῥωμαϊκὰ τῷ τότε καιρῷ: the number of Roman troops in those days (113.4–114.1). [*fol. 47r*] The generosity of Augustus towards his friends and the blend of monarchy and democracy that he followed (123.4–124.1).

[Tiberius] Ἐκ τοῦ στ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Τιβερίου

The emperor honoured his predecessor by completing his building programme (Xiph. 129.4–5). [*fol. 47v*] The character of the emperor's son Drusus (131.16–22). The characteristics and the death of Tiberius (135.26–136.4). How under Tiberius executions depended on the day and hour of the person's birth and on his character (136.18–21). The emperor tells Galba that he will one day taste imperial power (136.22–26). Precise chronology of the life of Tiberius (155.20–25).

[Caligula] Ἐκ τοῦ ζ^{ov} Γαίου

Marcus Silanus reviled for his kinship with Tiberius (Xiph. 159.2–5). Tiberius' refusal to accuse Caligula (159.5–7). Caligula's insatiable blood-thirst (159.23–25). The emperor incarcerated his father (160.4–5). Σημείωσαι: the army assembled by Caligula (166.11–12). The emperor's various disguises (168.18–25).

[Claudius] Ἐκ τοῦ στ^{ov} περὶ Κλαυδίου

The physical and intellectual characteristics of Claudius (Xiph. 173.31–174.26). [*fol. 48r*] Κλαυδίου περὶ ἐκλείψεων: Claudius' fear on account of an eclipse that occurred on the day of his birth (179.2–7). Περὶ ἐκλείψεως ἡλίου: description of the course of a solar eclipse (179.7–25). Περὶ ἐκλείψεως σελή-

³⁵ For Thrasyllus of Mendes see H. Tarrant, *Thrasyllan Platonism* (Ithaca 1993).

νης: description of the course of a lunar eclipse (179.25–31). [fol. 48^v] How Nero became Claudius' son-in-law (S144.19–22). Σημείωσαι: how Claudius died by poisoning (S145.26–28). Information about the freedman Tiberius Claudius Narcissus (S146.9–11).

[Nero and Domitius] *Ἐκ τοῦ θ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Νέρωνος καὶ Δομιτίου*
Nero follows the policy of his predecessor Claudius (Xiph. S149.16–19). An elephant arrives on the stage of a theatre during festival celebrations (S156.8–10). The institution of the Juvenalia (S157.7–158.17). The emperor receives the harpist's crown of victory without having competed (S158.21–23). The annihilation of Pallas and his wickedness (S166.14–18).³⁶ The emperor's habit of wearing a mask (S176.28–178.29).³⁷ [fol. 49^v] Ἄρματος ἐπιβαίνοντι: the shout of the senators as the emperor passed mounted on a chariot (S181.21–25). The rivers of blood from the slayings in the palace, an earthquake that followed, and Nero's attempt to escape (S184.17–185.15). Nero's words: οἰκτρῶς θανεῖν μ' ἄνωγε σύγγαμος πατήρ (S185.20–22).

[Galba] *Ἐκ τοῦ ι^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Γάλβα*
Two omens regarding Galba's accession to the throne (Xiph. S186.29–187.1). It was foretold that the emperor would fall victim to a conspiracy (S188.23). Description of the duration of the reign of Galba (S189.14–16).

[Otho] *Ἐκ τοῦ ια^{ov} τοῦ περὶ τοῦ Ὄθωνος*
The emperor's dialogue with the soldiers who dissuaded him from killing himself, and his eventual suicide by knife (Xiph. S192.22–193.5).³⁸

[Vitellius] [fol. 49^v] *Ἐκ τοῦ ιβ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Βιτελίου*
The opulence of the emperor's life (Xiph. S194.14–16). The

³⁶ On Pallas see S. V. Oost, "The Career of M. Antonius Pallas," *AJP* 79 (1958) 113–139.

³⁷ See N. W. Slater, "Nero's Masks," *CW* 90 (1996) 33–40.

³⁸ See M. B. Charles and E. Anagnostou-Laoutides, "Unmanning an Emperor: Otho in the Literary Tradition," *CJ* 109 (2013) 199–222.

huge sums Vitellius spent on banquets (S194.17–25).

[Titus] Ἐκ τοῦ ἰδ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Τίτου

The emperor's dying words (Xiph. S216.10–23).

[Domitian] Ἐκ τοῦ ἰε^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Δομιτιανοῦ

Domitian's dislike of people, his distrust of his family, his vengeful attitude towards slanderers (Xiph. S217.21–31). [fol. 50^v] Decebalus, King of the Dacians (S219.12–15). Σημείωσαι περὶ Δακῶν: on the Dacians (S219.17–20). Civic executions by poisoned arrow (S222.9–13). Execution of a woman for disrobing in front of the portrait of the emperor (S222.16–17). The execution of Mettius Pompusianus for having a map of the world painted on the walls of his bedchamber and for reading the speeches of kings and other leaders that are recorded in Livy (S222.19–25).³⁹ The expulsion of the senator Caecilius Rufinus for performing a pantomime (S222.31–223.1). A street in Rome was paved by the emperor (S223.18–19). Domitian enquired into the day and hour of birth of important persons and had many of them killed (S224.32–225.2). Larginus Proculus' prediction of Domitian's death (S225.3–15).

[Nerva] Ἐκ τοῦ ἰστ^{ov} περὶ Νεροῦα [fol. 50^v]

Nerva's executions of slaves and freedmen who had accused their masters (Xiph. S226.25–227.5). The emperor's sickly constitution, his kindness, and his clemency (S227.6–8).⁴⁰

[Trajan] Ἐκ τοῦ ἰζ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Τραϊανοῦ

The emperor's provincial origins (Xiph. S228.14–21). His physical and mental characteristics and his habit of honouring rather than penalising the able (S230.4–30). His various building projects and replacement of damaged coins (S234.21–23).

³⁹ See P. Arnaud, "L'affaire Metius Pompusianus ou le crime de cartographie," *MÉFRM* 95 (1983) 677–699, and K. Geus, "Die 'Weltkarte' und das Verbrechen des Mettius Pompusianus: ein Vorschlag," in E. Suárez de la Torre et al. (eds.), *Ablanathanalba: Magia, cultura y sociedad en el Mundo Antiguo* (Madrid 2020) 175–186.

⁴⁰ The phrase εὐγενέστατος δὲ ἦν, καὶ ἐπιεικέστατος in the excerpt comes from an earlier point in the *Epitome* (Xiph. S224.29–30).

[*fol. 51^r*] The horse given to him which he trained to kneel and pay homage (S235.23–31). Trajan's habit of marching with his troops and of spreading false information to keep them alert (S235.32–236.4). Σημείωσαι: description of the great earthquake at Antioch and the lives lost (S236.7–237.23).⁴¹ [*fol. 51^v*] The changes in the geography of the region resulting from the earthquake (S237.24–32). On the river Euphrates, which ends in a marsh where it joins the river Tigris (S239.4–5). Σημείωσαι: the capture of the island Mesene in the Tigris (S239.12–13). Σημείωσαι περὶ ἀσφάλτου: the asphalt that welled up at Babylon and the abandonment of the region on account of the foul air (S238.15–23).⁴² Σημείωσαι: the similar phenomenon at Hierapolis in Asia (S238.24–28).⁴³ The attack on Trajan during his Arabian campaign (S240.16–28). [*fol. 52^r*] Σημείωσαι ἔχθραν ἀπάνθρωπον: the cannibalism of the Jews of Cyrene (S241.2–7).⁴⁴ The death of Trajan (S241.21–25). The emperor's bones placed in his Column (S243.3–4).

[Hadrian] *Ἐκ τῆς τοῦ ἡ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Ἀνδριανοῦ*

The emperor's lineage and erudition (Xiph. S243.16–21). The maintenance of strict discipline in the army (S244.32–245.4). The emperor's habit of going hunting (S245.31–32). His visits to friends when they were ill or were celebrating some occasion and his frequent distributions of gifts (S246.13–16). The death by hemlock of the philosopher Euphrates (S246.17–19).⁴⁵ Hadrian's on-the-spot inspection of his troops and their officers, his constant training and austere lifestyle (S246.25–

⁴¹ See G. Traina, "Trajan and the Earthquake of Antioch (115 AD)," *Revue des études tardo-antiques* Suppl. 5 *Hommages à Bertrand Lançon* (2017/8) 417–428.

⁴² See K. O'Reilly, *Asphalt: A History* (Lincoln 2021) 34–35.

⁴³ On Hierapolis in the Byzantine age see K. Belke and N. Mersich, *Phrygien und Pisidien* (Vienna 1990) 268–272.

⁴⁴ See the older article of N. Bentwich "The Graeco-Roman View of Jews and Judaism in the Second Century," *JQR* 23 (1933) 337–348, at 340.

⁴⁵ On the Stoic Euphrates see M. Frede, "Euphrates of Tyre," in R. Sorabji (ed.), *Aristotle and After* (London 1997) 1–11.

247.29). [fol. 52^v] The building of a city in Egypt named for Antinous (S248.3–11).⁴⁶ The construction of the city Aelia Capitolina at Jerusalem (S248.17–21).⁴⁷ Σημείωσαι φθορὰν Ἰουδαίας: the material destruction and lives lost during the Romans' Judean campaign (S249.14–18).⁴⁸ Hadrian's law exempting senators from direct and indirect taxation (S252.9–11). [fol. 53^r] The praetorian prefect Quintus Marcius Turbo and his presence in the palace day and night (S253.1–6). Turbo's saying that a praetorian prefect should die on his feet (S253.12–14).⁴⁹

[Antoninus Pius] Ἐκ ἰθ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Αὐρηλίου Ἀντωνίνου τοῦ εὐσεβοῦς

The cause of Hadrian's death (Xiph. S253.23–24). The character of the new emperor, Antoninus (S254.4–9). The Senate's initial refusal to deify Hadrian (S256.14–23). The emperor's tolerance towards the Christians (S257.3–6).⁵⁰ The peaceful death of Antoninus Pius (S257.6–15). [fol. 53^v] The magnificent temple he built at Cyzicus (S257.18–20).

[Marcus Aurelius] Ἐκ τοῦ κ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Μάρκου Ἀντωνίνου τοῦ φιλοσόφου

His war with the Quadi and the sudden rainfall after entreaties by the emperor and an Egyptian magician which saved the Roman soldiers from dehydration (Xiph. S260.15–261.1). Σημείωσαι δόξαν ζῶντος Θεοῦ: Xiphilinus' different interpretation of the sudden rainfall, which he credits to the prayers of

⁴⁶ C. Vout, "Antinous, Archaeology and History," *JRS* 95 (2005) 80–96.

⁴⁷ D. Golan, "Hadrian's Decision to Supplant 'Jerusalem' by 'Aelia Capitolina,'" *Historia* 35 (1986) 226–239.

⁴⁸ W. Eck, "The bar Kokhba Revolt: The Roman Point of View," *JRS* 89 (1999) 76–89.

⁴⁹ See the older article of L. Leschi, "La carrière de Q. Marcius Turbo, préfet du prétoire d'Hadrien," *CRAI* 89 (1945) 144–162.

⁵⁰ P. Keresztes, "The Emperor Antoninus Pius and the Christians," *JEH* 22 (1971) 1–18.

the Christian soldiers (S261.1–262.1).⁵¹ [*fol. 54^r*] Cassius of Carrhae in Syria (S262.12–14).⁵² Marcus' banning of duels to the death (S265.13–16). His gifts of money to various cities, and especially to Smyrna which had been damaged by an earthquake (S266.15–18).⁵³ The emperor's abstention from any form of vice (S267.17–19). His active interest in rhetoric and philosophy (S267.27–268.11). [*fol. 54^r*] The realisation that Marcus coped with all the hardships of his reign, while his son led the Empire into a dark period (S268.12–21).

[Commodus] *Ἐκ τοῦ καὶ τοῦ περὶ Κομόδου*

The character of the emperor (Xiph. S269.8–11). A story by the emperor before the senate: once while out riding he had saved the life of his father (S269.26–28). *Σημείωσαι*: the attempted assassination of Sextus Condianus and how he escaped (S270.27–271.10).⁵⁴ [*fol. 55^r*] The lifestyle and behaviour of Marcellus Ulpus (S272.5–17).⁵⁵ A disease caused many deaths in Rome (S275.31–276.7). *Σημείωσαι*: the names Commodus bestowed upon himself.⁵⁶ [*fol. 55^r*] The senators'

⁵¹ On this matter see n.18 above; I. Israelowich, "The Rain Miracle of Marcus Aurelius: (Re-)Construction of Consensus," *G&R* 55 (2008) 83–102, and analytically P. Kovács, *Marcus Aurelius' Rain Miracle and the Marcomannic Wars* (Leiden 2009).

⁵² A. M. Kemezis, "Avoiding the Eastern Question: Avidius Cassius and the Antonine Succession in Cassius Dio," in J. Majbom Madsen et al. (eds.), *Cassius Dio the Historian: Methods and Approaches* (Leiden 2021) 195–222.

⁵³ E. Winter, *Staatliche Baupolitik und Baufürsorge in den römischen Provinzen des kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien* (Bonn 1996) 94–108; C. T. Kuhn, "Cassius Dio's Asia Minor: Biography and Historiography," in A. Kemezis et al. (eds.), *The Intellectual Climate of Cassius Dio: Greek and Roman Pasts* (Leiden 2022) 456–480, at 466.

⁵⁴ On Sextus Quintilius Condianus see T. Esch, "Die Quintilii aus Alexandria Troas. Aufstieg und Fall einer Familie," in E. Schwertheim (ed.), *Neue Forschungen in Alexandria Troas* (Bonn 2018) 1–60, at 31–36.

⁵⁵ For Ulpus Marcellus see R. Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain* (Oxford 2005) 162–170.

⁵⁶ A single section in the *Epitome* is here divided into three separate excerpts, each with its own rubricated initial: S276.11–14, S276.15–22, S276.22–29.

acclamations of the emperor and Cassius Dio's justification of the recording of insignificant incidents in his history (S278.1–14). Commodus' pride at being left-handed (S278.22–23). One of the phrases he insisted be used in acclamations of him (S279.16–18). *Σημείωσαι*: the appearance of the emperor before the Senate holding a headless sparrow and his bloody sword (S279.27–280.6). The authorisation Dio received from the emperor Septimius Severus to continue writing his history and a dream in which a heavenly power ordered him to record history (S281.6–24). [*fol. 56^v*] The length of time it took Dio to gather his information and write his history (S281.24–27).⁵⁷

[Pertinax] *Ἐκ τοῦ κβ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ τοῦ Περτίνακος*

The character of the emperor and his short reign (Xiph. S282.15–24). Pertinax described as excellent in body and soul (S283.7–284.12). [*fol. 56^v*] The emperor's desire to be called democratic and the settlement of various problems in the Empire (S284.29–285.3). The Romans' confiscation of gold that had been given to the barbarians for the conclusion of a peace treaty (S285.21–25). Pertinax exposes people who had become rich during the reign of Commodus (S285.26–30).

[Didius Julianus] *Ἐκ τοῦ κγ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Ἰουλιανοῦ τοῦ Διδίου*

Τὸν Περτίνακα οἱ στρατιῶτες δηλονότι: how Didius Julianus acceded to the imperial throne (Xiph. S288.25–33). The emperor described as *χρηματιστής* (S288.22–23). Cassius Dio honoured by Pertinax with a generalship (S289.20–21). *Ἐκ τῆς δημηγορίας Ἰουλιανοῦ τῆς ἀλαζόνοσ καὶ ἐπηρμένης*: the oratory of the new emperor (S289.28–290.3). [*fol. 57^r*] Boys killed by the emperor for magic rites (S292.21–23).⁵⁸

[Septimius Severus] *Ἐκ τοῦ κδ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ τοῦ Σεύηρου*

About the usurper Gaius Pescennius Niger (Xiph. S297.1–

⁵⁷ See C. Letta, “La carriera politica di Cassio Dione e la genesi della sua Storia Romana,” *SCO* 65 (2019) 163–180.

⁵⁸ D. Ogden, *Greek and Roman Necromancy* (Princeton 2004) 154–155.

3).⁵⁹ His name Νίγρος which in Greek was translated as 'black' (S299.3–4). Σημείωσαι περὶ τοῦ Βυζαντίου: description of Byzantium (S299.27–300.22). The Byzantines' defensive devices (S300.27–28). [*fol.* 57^v] Ὡς εἶλε τὸ Βυζάντιον: Septimius Severus' conquest of Byzantium.⁶⁰ Various incidental items of information from the Roman siege of Byzantium (S301.20–23). Faced with starvation, the besieged Byzantines soaked and ate hides (S301.26–302.30). They also devoured one another (S302.30–32). Lamentations followed the loss of life (S302.15). The surrender of Byzantium to the Romans (S302.25–30). [*fol.* 58^r] The confiscation of the Byzantines' property followed by the incorporation of the city into the territory of the Perinthians (S302.32–303.3). The walls of Byzantium destroyed (S303.4–9). The execution of Julius Crispus (S309.22–27). Septimius Severus' curiosity to learn everything unexplored (S311.9–14). [*fol.* 58^v] Σημείωσαι περὶ τοῦ Νείλου / Σημείωσαι περὶ τοῦ Ἄτλαντος: information about the river Nile and the Atlas mountains (S311.15–29). Στίχοι ἰαμβοὶ περὶ τοῦ Ἄτλαντος ὄρους: inspired by the reference to the Atlas mountains, the compiler copied out an eight-line poem by John Tzetzes on the mythical Atlas.⁶¹ Παραδυναστεύων οὗτος ἦν τῷ Σευήρῳ: the portrait of Gaius Fulvius Plautianus (S312.21–313.3). [*fol.* 59^r] Σημείωσαι ὅτι νικαεὺς ὁ Δίων. The character and omnipotence of Plautianus (S313.6–18). Οὐκ ἄκοντος Σευήρου δηλονότι: the emperor's reaction that he will never do anything to harm Plautianus (S314.1–8). Σημείωσαι: a cetacean beached itself in the port of Augustus and a replica of it in the theatre of the hunt attracted fifty bears (S314.9–12). Plautianus' appearance and manner of

⁵⁹ S. Pasek, *Bellum civile inter principes. Der Bürgerkrieg zwischen Septimius Severus und Pescennius Niger* (Munich 2014).

⁶⁰ This is a single passage in the *Epitome* but in the codex is divided into two excerpts, each with its own rubricated initial (Xiph. S300.27–28 and S300.28–301.9).

⁶¹ Ed. U. Bussemaker, "Scholia et paraphrases in Nicandrum et Oppianum," in F. Dübner (ed.), *Scholia in Theocritum* (Paris 1878) 173–449, at 293.

life (S315.20–22). What the crowd in the hippodrome shouted for Plautianus (S315.17–20). Πλαυτιανοῦ θάνατος: the meeting of the Senate after the death of Plautianus (S317.5–10).⁶² The suicide of Caecilius Agricola (S317.26–30). Τοῦτο λέγει ὁ Δίων ὅτι ἔπαθεν ἀκούσας κατηγορούμενον ἀνωνύμως βουλευτὴν φαλακρὸν ὡς βασιλειῶντα· διότι ἦν καὶ αὐτὸς τῆς βουλῆς: the charge that some bald senator was spying on the emperor and Cassius Dio's fear (S319.12–16).⁶³ [fol. 59^v] The hardy Britons (S322.8–13). Σημεῖωσαι περὶ νήσου Βρετανίας: the size of the island of Britain (S322.15–17). Septimius Severus' observation, in some corner of Britain, of the movement of the sun by day and by night, summer and winter (S322.28–30). The physical characteristics, intellectual pursuits, and daily habits of Septimius Severus (S324.26–325.29).

[Caracalla] [fol. 60^r] Ἐκ τοῦ κε^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Ἀντωνίνου τοῦ Καρακάλλου
An excerpt from Paeanius' *Metaphrasis* of Eutropius' *Breviarium* describes how the emperor initially followed his father's policy but later descended into brutality and intimidation.⁶⁴ The murder of Septimius Severus' son Geta in the presence of his mother (Xiph. S327.23–31). The emperor's promises to the soldiers to appease them after the assassination (S328.6–8). Caracalla's hatred for the Aristotelians, because he held the philosopher partly responsible for the death of Alexander the Great (S329.32–330.6). The emperor's generosity towards the troops, in contrast to the rest of the citizens (S330.22–331.17), and especially towards their officers (S330.32). Caracalla's saying that he alone should have money to bestow on the soldiers (S331.15–17). [fol. 60^r] Although generally careless of

⁶² On Plautianus see F. Grosso, "Ricerche su Plauziano e gli avvenimenti del suo tempo," *RendLinc SER.* VIII 23 (1968) 7–58.

⁶³ On the incident see M. Gleason, "Identity Theft: Doubles and Masquerades in Cassius Dio's Contemporary History," *CLAnt* 30 (2011) 33–86, at 54–56.

⁶⁴ Ed. S. Lampros, "Παιανίου μετάφρασις εἰς τὴν τοῦ Εὐτροπίου Ῥωμαϊκὴν ἱστορίαν," *Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων* 9 (1912) 1–115, at 100, 20.1–7.

his intellectual cultivation, Caracalla was known for correctness of language and perspicacity, but also for impulsiveness (S332.1–6).⁶⁵ Harshness in the battle with the Cenni (S333.9–12). The emperor's mental illness (S333.23–28). The Cynic philosopher Antiochus (S335.12–16).⁶⁶ The garment devised and customarily worn by the emperor which earned him the nickname Caracalla (S338.7–10). The lion that ate and slept with him (S339.25–29). An incident in the hippodrome, when the crowd hailed a jackdaw, shouting the name of the man who murdered Caracalla, Martialis (S340.3–9). [*fol. 61^v*] The emperor's discussion with Cassius Dio on some verses of Euripides (S340.19–27).

[Macrinus] *Ἐκ τοῦ κστ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Μακρίνου*

Ὅς τὸ γένος ἦν μαῦρος ἀπὸ Σικελίας ὁ Μακρίνος: the emperor's origins (Xiph. S342.26–31). Description of his character (S342.26–31). The appearance of a comet (S344.14–17). The disturbed character of Fulvius Diogenianus (S345.12–13). Macrinus' attempt to resemble an ordinary citizen (S346.10). Cassius Dio's dictum that no one, even of those who seem the strongest, is sure of his power (S346.28–30).

[Elagabalus] *Ἐκ τοῦ κζ^{ov} τοῦ περὶ Ἀβίτου τοῦ καὶ Ψευδαντωνίνου καὶ Σαρδαναπάλου καὶ Ἀσυρίου καὶ Τιβερίνου*

The new customs that Elagabalus imposed on Rome (Xiph. S348.18–20).⁶⁷ The emperor's habit of dancing and making speeches while walking (S350.28–29).⁶⁸ The insults Elagabalus heaped on Macrinus in a letter (S347.15–20). The execution of any who advised him to live prudently (S348.12–13). [*fol.*

⁶⁵ See in general C. Davenport, "Cassius Dio and Caracalla," *CQ* 62 (2012) 796–815.

⁶⁶ I. Avotins, "Prosopographical and Chronological Notes on Some Greek Sophists of the Empire," *CLAnt* 4 (1971) 67–80, at 67–71.

⁶⁷ J. Osgood, "Cassius Dio's Secret History of Elagabalus," in C. Hjort Lange et al., *Cassius Dio: Greek Intellectual and Roman Politician* (Leiden 2016) 177–190.

⁶⁸ A. Kemezis, "The Fall of Elagabalus as Literary Narrative and Political Reality: A Reconsideration," *Historia* 65 (2016) 348–390.

62^v] The athlete Aurelius Helix (S349.10–17). The slave that the emperor called his husband (S351.7–18). How Elagabalus referred to himself as ‘Lady’ (S352.1–4).⁶⁹ Elagabalus’ adoption of his nephew Bassianus, renamed Alexander (S352.19–28).

[Severus Alexander]⁷⁰

Ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ Δίωνος τοῦτο: Cassius Dio’s career from Bithynia to his return to Rome (Xiph. S355.11–355.24).⁷¹ [fol. 62^v] The historian’s life in danger due to lack of discipline of the army (S356.24–357.7). Σημειώσαι: the historian describes his withdrawal from political and military life in two verses from the *Iliad* (S357.7–8).

Τέλος τῶν ἐκ τοῦ Δίωνος ἐκλεγέντων τῷ Ξιφιλίνῳ βιβλίων.

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⁶⁹ J. Rantala, “Ruling in Purple...and Wearing Make-up: Gendered Adventures of Emperor Elagabalus as seen by Cassius Dio and Herodian,” in A. Surtees et al. (eds), *Exploring Gender Diversity in the Ancient World* (Edinburgh 2020) 118–128; C. S. Chrysanthou, “Sex and Power in Cassius Dio’s *Roman History*: The Case of Elagabalus,” *Mnemosyne* 74 (2021) 598–625.

⁷⁰ These excerpts refer to events from the reign of Severus Alexander but are not separated from the preceding section by a corresponding heading.

⁷¹ D. Harrington, “Cassius Dio as a Military Historian,” *AClass* 20 (1977) 159–165.