

Life and Artistry in the 'Publication' of Demetrios Kydones' Letter Collection

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ALTHOUGH BYZANTINE LETTERS have long presented serious problems of analysis and interpretation, researchers today have a considerable—and growing—array of methodological tools with which to meet those challenges.¹ One fundamental but still elusive issue in the study of any collection of letters is, however, the author's intentions, *i.e.*, what letter-writers wished to convey by and through their missives, and how to locate a distinct point of view within so-called 'private' literary letters, by far the most common type of extant Byzantine epistolography, combining both literary and 'real' elements. Disclosing unequivocally the original intentions of any medieval Greek writer, Byzantine epistolographers not excepted, may be too much to hope for.² Yet a closer analysis of certain texts, with special attention to the criteria for and processes of medieval letter-writing, can throw light on some intimately related issues, including the general outlines of an author's personality,³ his or her capacity and outlets for original expression,⁴ and the various means by which some authors sought to color the tone and

¹ For a review of recent scholarship see my "Redeeming Byzantine Epistolography," *ByzMGSt* 20 (1996) 213–48.

² Cf. A. Eastmond, "An Intentional Error? Imperial Art and 'Mis'interpretation under Andronikos I Komnenos," *ArB* 76 (1994) 502–10; M. Mullett, "The Imperial Vocabulary of Alexios I, Komnenos," in M. Mullett and D. Smythe, ed., *Alexios I Komnenos, I. Papers* (=Belfast ByzTr 4.1 [Belfast 1996]) esp. 390–94; more generally see A. Kazhdan and G. Constable, *People and Power in Byzantium* (Washington 1982) esp. 100–16.

³ J. N. Ljubarskij, *Michail Psell. Lichnost' i tvorcestvo* (Moscow 1978).

⁴ M. Mullett, "Originality in the Byzantine Letter: The Case of Exile," in A. R. Littlewood, ed., *Originality in Byzantine Literature, Art and Music* (Oxford 1995) 39–58.

mood of their letters.⁵ With answers to these questions within reach, there is hope that scholars will be able to narrow the possibilities of intention in these writers by better understanding the manipulation of their craft and their processes of decision-making.

I

Among the many challenges to analysis, certainly the most basic is simple meaning. Not infrequently the language and sensibilities of Byzantine authors confound the modern reader. Some passages are all but impossible to decipher, in part owing to the consciously artificial language and high style employed by so many authors, and partly in view of the Byzantine love of riddles and word plays. In other words, numerous Byzantine authors purposely cultivated obscurity (ἀσαφεία) to some degree, a practice that occasionally baffled even their own correspondents and regularly tries the patience of modern readers looking for coded messages between the lines.⁶

Perhaps more critical, however, is the problem of how to weigh the influence of epistolographic theory and tradition on Byzantine authors. If letter writers were well educated—as those of existing collections normally were—they had a font of information about the art of letter writing from which to draw. Style, approach, presentation, and subject-matter would have been introduced in school, and then again encountered in works on epistolographic theory and collections of model letters.⁷ Although the influence of any or all of these was no

⁵ Cf. M. Mullett, "The Madness of Genre," *DOP* 46 (1992) 233–45, esp. 240–43; K. Snipes, "A Letter of Michael Psellos to Constantine the Nephew of Michael Cerularios," *GRBS* 22 (1981) 104–07; R. Anastasi, "Psello e le Kinolexia," *StFilByz* 4 (1988) 55–79, esp. 76–79, and "Michel Psello al Metropolita di Euchaita (Ep. 34, pp.53–56 K.D.)," *StFilByz* 4 (1988) 105–120, esp. 108–15.

⁶ On obscurity, see N. Thomadakes, *Byzantine Epistolographia*³ (Athens 1969) 88f; A. Littlewood, "An Icon of the Soul: The Byzantine Letter," *Visible Language* 10 (1976) 209–12; on the underlying rhetorical concepts, G. L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessaloniki 1973) 63–100; more generally see S. Averincev, *Poetika rannevizantijskoj literatura* (Moscow 1977) 129–49.

⁷ For a summary and basic bibliography see H. Koskenniemi, *Studien zur Idee und Phraeseologie des griechischen Briefes bis 400 n.Chr.* (Helsinki 1956) 18–63; K. Thraede, *Grundzüge griechisch-römischer Briefstipik* (=Zetemata 48

doubt profound, providing at the very least a general framework of the craft, the results were still somewhat unpredictable. Not surprisingly, letter-writers still took initiatives based on their own developed literary tastes and individual reading of theory as well as various demands of the moment. Some theorists recommended brevity (συντομία). But was it not necessary that a letter between true friends be long (asked one Byzantine correspondent of another), lest the recipient of a short one feel neglected?⁸ This was a fair question both in human terms and in view of other theorists' emphatic descriptions of the letter as a vehicle for friendship, a means of showing kindness and affection (φιλοφρόνησις)—functions that too much brevity might compromise. Similarly, a letter-writer's use of stilted language and occasional obscurity (ἀσαφεία) grew, ostensibly, from a desire to impress and delight one's peers, even though this too ignored some theorists' calls for clarity (σαφηνεία).⁹ These and other examples¹⁰ point to a certain degree of originality in the Byzantine letter, worked out within and between the general lines of epistolographic theories and models. What they do not yet provide is a clear and consistent basis for understanding how to "be able to read between the lines what Byzantine letter-writers so ardently sought to con-

[Munich 1970])18–27; Littlewood (*supra* n.6) 204–09; H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (Munich 1978) I 199–207; A. M. Jeffreys and A. Kazhdan, "Epistolography," *OxDict Byz* I 718ff.

⁸ Ignatios of Nicaea, *Ep.* 15, in M. I. Gedeon, ed., "Adelou (Theophanous Nikaias) Epistolai," *Nea bibliothekē ekklesiastike* (n.p. 1903) 14.

⁹ On Gregory of Nazianzus' three basic precepts for a good letter, συντομία, σαφηνεία, and χάρις, cf. G. Dennis, "The Byzantines as Revealed in Their Letters," in J. Duffy and J. Peradotto, edd., *Gonimos. Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies Presented to Leendert G. Westerink at 75* (Buffalo 1988) 155–59; the text of Gregory's comments: P. Gallay, ed. and tr., *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze, Lettres* (Paris 1964–67) I 66–69; English translation: G. Dennis, "Gregory of Nazianzus and Byzantine Letter Writing," in T. Haldon and J. Williman, edd., *Diakonia: Studies in Honor of Robert Meyer* (Washington 1986) 3–13; on [Demetrius]'s *On Style* (W. Rhys Roberts, ed. [Cambridge 1902]), with its strong emphasis on φιλοφρόνησις, cf. I. Sykoutris, "Epistolographie," *RE Suppl.* 5 (1931) cols. 189–220; Koskeniemi (*supra* n.7) 35ff, 93ff, 201ff, 128–54; G. Karlsson, *Idéologie et cérémonial dans l'épistolographie byzantine. Textes du X^e siècle analysés et commentés*² (= *Studia Graeca Upsaliensia* 3 [Uppsala 1962]) 15–106; Thraede (*supra* n.7) 129–32.

¹⁰ See A. R. Littlewood, "A Statistical Survey of the Incidence of Repeated Quotations in Selected Byzantine Letter Writers," in Duffy and Peradotto (*supra* n.9) 138–54.

vey and what was almost always grasped by their readers."¹¹ In other words, where does the model letter or learned topos end and originality begin? (Mullett [*supra* n.4] 39f).

A broader discussion of the letter writers' literary dispositions, exercise of choice, and ultimately originality and intention would naturally require consideration of a host of additional factors, including the literary ambitions of writers, their concern for their audience, the immediate situation at the time of writing, the oral dimension of a given letter, and perhaps even the powers of memory.¹² Yet it may also be instructive to consider—in addition to the immediate *Briefssituation* and the rituals of letter-exchanges—the published manuscript. This issue has received very little attention from either modern scholars interested in the criteria for and processes of letter writing or those focussing on other factors (Littlewood [*supra* n.6] 203f). Yet it merits consideration as a category for the analysis of Byzantine letters, for all these writers were aware, to some degree, of the publishability of their work. They both wrote and presumed that their letters would be made public in some form. At times this common understanding merely reflected contemporary awareness of the state of the letter transport system, in which an author's letters might easily reach another's hands and become 'published' involuntarily, while in other cases it derived from the expectation that the recipient would pass the letter on to friends, soliciting their comments and criticisms, and generally use the piece as the basis for a spontaneous 'theater'.¹³

Most letter writers went even further. Looking to a wider public, they took formal steps toward publication. Authors normally made copies of their letters and established letter-books with a view to eventual publication. Some merely held their letters in safe keeping, knowing their value and perhaps touching up individual pieces from time to time, but generally

¹¹ I. Sykoutris, "Probleme der byzantinischen Epistolographie," in A. C. Orlandos, ed., *Actes du III^e Congrès Études Byzantines* (Athens 1932) 295–310, esp. 307: "Der Philologe kann dann auch zwischen den Zeilen lesen, was die Byzantiner sehr eifrig getrieben haben und beim Leser fast immer voraussetzen."

¹² All these problems remain open to further investigation; for discussion and bibliography see Hatlie (*supra* n.1).

¹³ See H. Hunger, *Reich der Neuen Mitte. Der christliche Geist der byzantinischen Kultur* (Graz 1965) 340–44, and (*supra* n.7) 208–12.

counting on a later editor to appear. Others took matters into their own hands, arranging for publication of their collections during their own lifetimes. No doubt the energy, scope, and, ultimately, success of these initiatives varied from one case to another, depending upon individual personalities and circumstances. At all events, however, Byzantine letter writers typically welcomed and quite often facilitated outright the publication of their letter collections with the aim of reaching a wider public, perhaps even posterity.¹⁴ Thus the collections that survive are in all likelihood at least once removed from the dossier of original letters, after individual authors or their associates at some point and to some degree retouched and reshaped the original work.

Modern readers would do well to weigh the implications of these editorial initiatives. Understanding to what extent the form, size, or content has been altered—not only of individual letters, but also of entire letter collections—may prove important for some kinds of historical and literary analysis. Regrettably, however, the actual mechanics of such ventures are only partly understood. Although authors are known to have made or supervised copies, collections, and even published editions of their work, the editorial trail between the original dossier and ‘published’ work has been erased in the vast number of cases. Some version or versions of a later copy generally survives instead, and indeed in most instances these copies stand one or more manuscript traditions removed from the first ‘published’ copy or copies envisioned by the author. Consequently an understanding of what decisions Byzantine letter-writers made about their published work relative to its prototype—and why—is normally difficult to ascertain.¹⁵

II

To illustrate the problem, it will be useful to look briefly at the letter collection of the ninth-century abbot and saint, Theodore

¹⁴ Sykoutris (*supra* n.9) 196–200; Hunger (*supra* n.7) 204–07; Littlewood (*supra* n.6) 203f. This concern for publication seems consistent with what George Kennedy has called the “letteraturizzazione” of ancient rhetoric: *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill 1980) 5, 110ff.

¹⁵ For the late Byzantine era see the informative discussion V. A. Smetanin, *Vizantijskoe Obschestvo XIII–XIV vekov po dannym epistolografii* (Sverdlovsk 1987) 64ff.

of Stoudios. During his lifetime Theodore occasionally produced multiple copies of a letter, mainly for circulation among friends and supporters, and he most probably kept a single copy of most letters in a dossier of some sort. No evidence suggests, however, that he took formal steps toward the publication of his work. Writing about forty years after the abbot's death, his hagiographer Michael reports that the letters were by then compiled in a collection comprising five books, but he gives no information about the total number of letters or the principle of organization by book.¹⁶ One of the abbot's associates, probably his close friend and successor Naukratios, was responsible for putting that collection together about the middle of the ninth century. But the contents of his work and what editorial standards guided him are not precisely known. One of the earliest manuscripts of the collection—indeed, perhaps the very one made by Naukratios—included over 1,100 letters, although, now lost, it cannot be said whether it should be roughly identified with the original dossier of Theodore's letters.¹⁷ Presently about 550 letters remain. But what became of the other 550 'published' letters—not to mention Theodore's dossier—and why indeed the present 550 letters survive, remains a mystery. Questions of chance destruction and loss aside, one may have grounds to implicate the earliest editors and perhaps even Theodore himself. Was the letter collection groomed at some point, with a view toward projecting a particular image of the abbot?¹⁸ Or toward serving another ulterior purpose, such as establishing an identity for the Stoudios monastery? Or perhaps toward facilitating storage and use of the collection? Presuming that any of these or a related motive came into play, such a reworking would perhaps have entailed not only preserving some letters and omitting others, but also touching up portions of individual pieces. Yet in any event, the original dossier was superseded, and consequently modern readers of the collection should beware of making overly sweeping claims about Theodore or his times based on his letters. Equal caution is in order for any number of other Byzantine letter collections whose line of descent, notably from the author to the first editors, can be

¹⁶ Michael of Stoudios, *Life of Theodore* (BHG³ 1754), in PG XC 264D.

¹⁷ Discussions in B. Melioranskij, "Perechen' vizantijskikh gramot' i pisem'. Neskol'ko slov' o rukopisjakh i isdanijakh' pisem' pr. Feodora Studita," *ZapSj Petersburg SER.* 8 4.5 (1899) 12–43; A. P. Dobroklonskij, *Prep. Feodor', Isповедnik i Igumen' Studiskij* (Odessa 1913–14) II 52–99.

¹⁸ Melioranskij (*supra* n.17) 1–46; Dobroklonskij (*supra* n.17) II 97–100.

reconstructed only in part.¹⁹ In some cases almost nothing in this regard is known.²⁰

III

Measured against this state of affairs, the letter collection of the fourteenth-century scholar and diplomat Demetrios Kydones constitutes an extraordinary exception to the norm, for it is possible to follow a fairly consistent trail from the published versions to the author's original dossier. Kydones was intimately involved throughout the earliest publication efforts. Less is known directly about his preparation of the first 131 of his 450 letters, except that he personally made or supervised copying the letters accumulated by *ca* 1373 during a brief retirement in the monastery of St George in Constantinople.²¹ More remarkable is the other collection of 319 letters, most of which Kydones published in 1391–92 as a sequel to his earlier work. The autographed dossier is preserved in the fourteenth-century Vat. gr. 101 (=A) with interlinear and marginal corrections and notes in Kydones' own hand. Moreover, the exact copy of A, commissioned and supervised by Kydones and copied by his associate Manuel Kalekas, also survives as Urbin. gr. 133 (=U). A unique case in Byzantine epistolography, therefore, permits us to isolate and examine what choices a letter-writer took when

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. the collection of Basil of Caesarea, investigated by G. Gain, *L'Église de Cappadoce au IV^e siècle d'après la correspondance de Basil de Césarée (330–379)* (=OrChrAn 225 [Rome 1985]) 32–36; R. Pouchet, *Basile le Grand et son univers d'amis d'après sa correspondance. Une stratégie de communion* (=Studia Ephemerides "Augustianum" 36 [Rome 1992]) 47–72, esp. 70ff; P. J. Fedwick, *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis: A Study of the Manuscript Tradition of the Works of Basil of Caesarea I: The Letters* (Turnhout 1993) xxviii–xxxI, 665–68.

²⁰ Cf. e.g. the collection of Nikolas Mystikos, studied by J. Darrouzès, *Épistoliers byzantins du X^e siècle* (Paris 1960) 35–38; R. J. H. Jenkins and L. G. Westerink, edd. and trr., *Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople, Letters* (=CFHB 6 [Washington 1973]) xxxi–xxxvii.

²¹ Cf. R. J. LOENERTZ, *Les recueils de lettres de Démétrius Cydonès* (=StudTest 131 [The Vatican 1947: hereafter 'Loenertz, Recueils']) 49–82, and, ed., *Démétrius Cydonès: correspondance I–II* (=StudTest 186, 208 [The Vatican 1956, 1960: 'Corr.']) at I iii–xvi; F. KIANKA, *Demetrius Cydones (c.1324–c.1397): Intellectual and Diplomatic Relations between Byzantium and the West in the Fourteenth Century* (diss.Fordham University 1981: 'Kianka') 5f.

preparing a dossier for publication and ultimately how a 'published' work compared to its prototype.²²

A proper study of the language and style of Kydones' letters still awaits scholars. Apart from some brief comments, relatively little is known about his general literary disposition, range of concerns, and decisions as a letter-writer, notably the extent of the influence of epistolographic theory, as opposed to other factors.²³ These problems will merit attention in what follows, at least to the extent that Kydones' preparation of his dossier for publication sheds light upon them. Scholars have not looked seriously at the nature of his changes to the letter-collection during this process of 'publication' for insights into these problems. Loenertz' fleeting remarks (*Recueils* 11, 13, 80) suggest merely that Kydones sought to make his dossier more presentable to the public, to improve his style, and excise potentially embarrassing parts. Kianka (6) has rightly followed Loenertz's guidance, adding only that Kydones' stylistic changes to A altered the content of the dossier very little. Both observations are useful and correct to a degree, though neither scholar fully explores the materials at hand. Looking at these changes more closely, it will be useful to ask both why such amendments to style and language were necessary and whether and how they alter the meaning and impact of certain letters. Ultimately, too, it will be instructive to ponder what they can say about Kydones as a letter-writer.

At issue are seven letters (all in *Corr.* II) that can, to some degree, be deemed 'unpublishable' at the time when Kydones commissioned the publication of his dossier and penned various editorial instructions in the margins of some letters, indicating that a letter should be either eliminated (ἐαθήτω/ἔασον) or relocated to another place (ἀργή) in the definitive copy U. Four of the seven letters (197, 258, 401*, 427) were eliminated completely, although only two (197, 427) bore a marginal note in A to this effect. Three other letters (235*, 328*, 368*) were considerably reworked and given new recensions in U, two (235*, 368*) despite having been earmarked for deletion and the other

²² Loenertz, *Recueils* 1-12, 81f, *Corr.* II v-xi; Kianka 5f. The copying of Urbin. gr. 80 (=U¹), a selection of Kydones letters, may have also involved Kalekas and perhaps even the author: see *Recueils* 21ff.

²³ Kianka 10-13; F. Tinnefeld, "Kriterien und Varianten des Stils im Briefcorpus des Demetrios Kydones," *JÖBG* 32 (1982) 257-64; see also G. DENNIS' periodic commentaries on letters from Kydones to Manuel II Palaiologos: *The Letters of Manuel Palaeologos* (=CFHB 8/DOT 4 [Washington 1977]: hereafter 'Dennis, Letters').

(328*) in accordance with Kydones' instructions. The slight discrepancies between marginal notes in **A**, giving one instruction, and the resulting alterations made in **U** itself may point to unfinished work, a change of heart, or perhaps advice from Kalekas. At any rate the final changes would have been made entirely under his own supervision.²⁴

IV

Four of the seven letters defy absolute explanation for Kydones' editorial intervention: 197, to his recently deceased young friend Rhadenos, and 427, to Theodore Palaiologos, the despot of the Morea, both of which were completely omitted from **U**;²⁵ 258 (*Corr.* pp.162f), to Manuel II Palaiologos, replaced by another letter to Manuel, no. 276 (pp.194f);²⁶ and 328*, to an anonymous friend, the contents of which were considerably reworked into a new recension.²⁷ As none of the four concerns matters of any particular historical importance or throws direct light on the personal character of either Kydones or his correspondent—issues seen in other re-edited letters (see below)—it is reasonable to suppose that Kydones had other criteria in mind. These criteria might be characterized, in the first instance,

²⁴ Besides these seven letters, another six that do not merit discussion were either recopied or deleted in **U**. Three (210, 433, 428) were incomplete and therefore canceled; two (262–63) were recopied with minor changes; and one, a treatise copied twice in **A**, was recopied only once in **U**. See Loenertz, *Recueils* 10ff, *Corr.* II xf. In *Corr.* II Loenertz inexplicably reports nos. 190 and 240 as omitted pieces instead of nos. 197 and 427, reported in *Recueils*. In *Corr.* II he also concluded that 401* was not omitted but reworked. In principle he is correct, although only an extremely small passage from 401*, the closing, is preserved in the new recension, 401.

²⁵ *Corr.* 71f; on Rhadenos see E. TRAPP, ed., *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit* 10 (Vienna 1990: hereafter 'PLP') 91 no. 23986; on the letter see Loenertz *Recueils* 12, *Corr.* II xi; on the relationship between the two men, F. Tinnefeld, "Freundschaft und Paideia: die Korrespondenz des Demetrios Kydones mit Rhadenos (1375–1387/8)," *Byzantion* 55 (1985) 210–44, esp. 211–28; G. Dennis, "Rhadenos of Thessalonica, Correspondent of Demetrios Cydones," *Byzantina* 12 (1985) esp. 263–72.

²⁶ On no. 258 see Loenertz, *Recueils* 10ff and tables, esp. 11; for the relationship—literary and otherwise—between them, G. DENNIS, *The Reign of Manuel II Palaeologus in Thessaloniki, 1382–87* (= *OrChrAn* 159 [Rome 1960: hereafter 'Dennis, Reign']) 18–22 and *passim*, and *Letters* xxxvii–xl; for Manuel's life in Thessaloniki, cf. *Reign* 57ff; J. BARKER, *Manuel II Palaeologus 1391–1425: A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship* (New Brunswick 1969: 'Barker') 43–62.

²⁷ *Corr.* 259f; *Recueils* 10ff and tables, esp. 11.

as aesthetic. Although no explicit standard or consistent editorial system is detectable, all the changes seem to reflect a concern for elegance and grace, something akin perhaps to the epistolographic theorists' concern for *χάρις*.²⁸

All four letters share a common accessory function. Letter 328* accompanies a gift of Kydones' translation of Ricoldo da Monte Croce's *Refutation of the Koran* (*Corr.* 260.19–24). Already an elegant piece, 328* is refined even further in its new recension. Kydones builds on two similes found in 328*, the first comparing his own situation as a philosopher with that of a Byzantine merchant who, lacking sufficient domestic goods to supply his customers, must buy them abroad; the second identifying the work of translators like himself with water-channels, which bring water from an excellent spring (without being themselves the source). The language of the new piece is considerably reworked, and Kydones attaches greater attention to benefitting his fellow citizens and friends with the gift of this book. The result is a longer and intellectually more challenging letter, expressly more conscious of its intended audience.²⁹

The other three letters with a distinctly different accessory function are notably unrefined in their style and overtly direct in tone. Letter 197 to Rhadenos is an afterthought, sent when Kydones discovered that the messenger of an earlier letter (*Corr.* 71.4f) had not yet departed. It is brief and to the point, mainly complaining about a dispute among some mutual acquaintances that now involves Rhadenos and himself (71f.13–20, *passim*). Letter 427 is similarly short and prosaic. Dispatching it together with some earlier letters, addressed to Theodore Palaiologos but never actually sent, Kydones confines himself mainly to a discussion of the unreliability of his messengers (*Corr.* 381f.4–21). Finally, letter 258 was probably sent together with another to Manuel II Palaiologos, both in response to one of Manuel's extant letters.³⁰ The reason for the later omission of 258, according to Loenertz (*Recueils* 11), is

²⁸ Cf. Littlewood (*supra* n.6) 203; M. Mullett, "The Classical Tradition in the Byzantine Letter," in M. Mullett and R. Scott, ed., *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition* (Birmingham 1981) 78f; Dennis (*supra* n.9) 157f.

²⁹ Cf. *Corr.* no. 328*, p.259.3–14 and no. 328, p.259.7–15 (merchants); no. 328*, p.260.17f and no.328, p.260.24f (water-channels and springs); no. 328, p.258.3–6 and p.259.15–20 (for the new emphases).

³⁰ Both letters respond directly to Manuel's report (Dennis, *Letters* no. 3, pp.6f.6–17) that he is trying to obtain a book of Plato located on Mt Athos: *Corr.* no. 258, 162f.4–9; no. 276, p.194.14f. Cf. Dennis' partial translation and comments, *Letters* 10f nn.2f; R.-J. Loenertz, "Manuel Paléologue et Démétrius Cydonès," *EchOr* 36 (1937) 274, 277f; Barker 49 n.135.

that it was “un projet de lettre abandonné par l’auteur et remplacé”—a reasonable hypothesis in view of the letter’s rather abrupt conclusion. It is equally possible, however, that 276 was retained more specifically for its elegance and craft, for although both letters take the same ideas as their point of departure, 276 develops them more fully and in vivid detail, primarily through an infusion of classical and mythological allusions.³¹

Thus three of the four letters (197, 258, 427) were clearly expendable as either rough drafts or *post scripta*. Two (197, 427) subsequently disappear from the new collection U, in all likelihood because of their relatively direct language and banal content; the more rhetorical third letter (258) is replaced by a still more refined piece (276) with a similar point to make. It is noteworthy that a number of historical details vanish along with the three letters—small revelations, to be sure, such as the circumstances and names of people involved in Kydones’ and Rhadenos’ dispute (*Corr.* no. 197, p.71.8f), and the general ambiance surrounding Theodore Palaiologos in the Peloponnese in the late 1380s or early 1390s (no. 427, p.382.21–26). These represent clear cases of deconcretization (*Entsachlichung*), a phenomenon specific to private literary letters and other highly rhetorical texts, in which historical details can quite randomly be lost (or intentionally not included) because authors and editors consider them only incidental to their larger aim of creating a polished, moving work.³² The fourth reworked letter (328*) constitutes an already deconcretized piece. Kydones included no historical details whatsoever—not even the slightest allusion to the identification of the addressee. From the beginning his emphasis instead was to compose a smart literary accompaniment to his gift. And when 328* fell slightly short of his ‘publication’ standards, he reworked it into a new and more elegant recension, no. 328.

³¹ Cf. *Corr.* no. 258, p.163.11 (Siren), 14 (Philoxenos); no. 276, p.194.8 (Plato’s Academy), 12 (Daídalos), p.195.21 (Dionysius of Sicily and Ariston), 29 (Charybdis), 30 (Athens).

³² For discussions of this phenomenon see Sykoutris (*supra* n.9) 218f Karlsson (*supra* n.9) 14f; Littlewood (*supra* n.6) 219f; V. A. Smetanin, “Idejnoe Nasledie Vizantii ‘Dekoncretizatsija’ (na primere epistolografii),” *Antichnaja Drevnost’ i Srednie Veka* 21 (1984) esp. 98ff, and (*supra* n.15) 65f; A. Garzya, “L’epistolografia letteraria tardoantica,” in M. Mazza and C. Guiffrida, edd., *La trasformazione della cultura nella tarda antichità* (Rome 1985) 369; M. Mullett, “Writing in Early Mediaeval Byzantium,” in R. McKitterick, ed, *The Uses of Literacy in Early Mediaeval Europe* (Cambridge 1990) 184.

V

Letter 401 (*Corr.* 357f) provides another example of deconcretization, though probably for reasons other than those suggested above. Kydones used it as a replacement for 401* (*Corr.* 357f), years later completely reworking this letter to such an extent that its affinity to 401 is hardly recognizable.³³ Letter 401*, dated 1389 and composed for Manuel II Palaiologos, responded to a letter from the emperor, now constrained to live on Lemnos.³⁴ Kydones' response provides rather concrete information, such as the name of the island and an allusion to the emperor's frequent and obviously enjoyable hunting ventures. Letter 401, by contrast, avoids both these topics. Loenertz maintained ("Exil" 124, 138) that the name of Lemnos was deliberately suppressed. As the island is only rarely mentioned in Kydones' other letters from the period, in his view there must have been good reasons to avoid it. Perhaps this editorial decision was in deference to Manuel, who for years afterward appears to have shunned all recollection of his days in Lemnos.³⁵

It is telling that style and language do not seem to have been a deciding factor in his decision to rework 401*, as both it and 401 constitute equally highly polished pieces. In his own letter Manuel had evidently mentioned his hunting adventures, and he also confessed his regret at not having written more letters to his friend, quipping that Kydones' "talents"—measured by the letters he sent—far outweighed his own epistolographic "obols." Letter 401 (p.357.7-17) continues this second theme, playing cleverly with notions of the emperor's robbery and debt over and against Kydones' growing poverty. In letter 401* Kydones briefly acknowledges the debt problem, but elects rather to stress the first theme to the same effect, describing how Manuel prefers hunting partridges to chasing down hares (*i.e.*, writing) like himself (p.357f.12-24). Curiously 401* then

³³ On the editorial changes see *Corr.* II x, 357 (bottom); Loenertz, *Recueils* 11f and tables, esp. 12; similarities: *cf.* no. 401*, p.358.24-27 and no. 401, p.357.17-20; similar references to "talents" and "obols": pp.358.13, 357.8f.

³⁴ R.-J. LOENERTZ, "L'exil de Manuel II Paléologue à Lemnos," *OrChrP* 38 (1972; hereafter 'Exil') esp. 116-20, 123-40; Dennis, *Reign* 158, and *Letters* 32 n.1; Barker 64-68.

³⁵ R.-J. LOENERTZ, "Manuel Paléologue et Démétrius Cydonès," *EchOr.* 37 (1938) 119f; Barker 65-68, esp. 66.

takes a slightly more serious (and again concretized) turn when it characterizes Manuel's hunting feats as a kind of training for future battles and touches on the political concerns preoccupying the emperor. Yet this brief digression takes nothing away from the artistry of the letter. By no means, as Loenertz claimed ("Exil" 124), is letter 401* a rough draft ("brouillon") in the conventional sense. To describe it as a highly polished piece incorporating a number of concrete details is more accurate. The polish remained in the new recension; only details about Manuel's exact place of residence, activities, and state of mind were stripped away. Thus Kydones' touching up of 401* tended to move away from mere literary deconcretization to what can only be called deconcretization for the sake of historical revision.

Letter 368, a slightly reworked recension of letter 368*, offers an example of revisionism by other means.³⁶ Sent in the autumn of 1387, again to Manuel, the original letter 368* had arrived at an awkward moment in this future emperor's career. Having abandoned his controversial rule over Thessaloniki to the besieging Turks some months before, Manuel fled first to Lesbos and then Tenedos, finally travelling to Bursa in the summer of 1387 to humble himself before the Ottoman Sultan Murad. Soon afterwards Murad effected a rapprochement between the emperor and his father John V, his two vassals in fact, which sent Manuel back to Constantinople for the first time in five years. Despite their long-standing feud, the elder statesman John received his son, though not without taking precautions. Kydones, for one, was evidently discouraged if not prohibited from seeing his long-absent friend, so he resorted to writing to Manuel letters 368* and others (*cf. Corr. nos.* 363-81). Kydones' last letter in this series was written in the late autumn of 1387 on the eve of Manuel's exile to Lemnos. The relations between father and son had remained cool throughout, perhaps even growing worse. At any rate Lemnos was the political price Manuel had to pay for the earlier falling out with his father. How high that price was remained unclear until sometime after the spring of 1390, the date when Manuel returned to Constantinople, for it was only then that a lasting reconciliation with John V took place, not incidentally ensuring the son's succession to the imperial throne.³⁷

³⁶ *Corr. no.* 368*, pp.314f; *no.* 368, p.314; for the editorial changes, *Corr. x*; Loenertz, *Recueils* 10ff and tables, esp. 11.

³⁷ Barker 61-79; Dennis, *Reign* 158f.

Letter 368* sheds considerable light on the ambiguous circumstances Manuel confronted after his arrival in Constantinople in the autumn of 1387.³⁸ Kydones relates, on the one hand, that John is happy to have his son and heir back at his side, but he reports on the other that he is unable to see his friend and that spies are standing by to report any irregularities. The only thing to do, Kydones claims, is to pray to God for deliverance from *these hateful people*.

Letter 368 follows 368* in reporting these details. It differs, however, in their precise treatment. Although the earlier 368* used the words "son and heir to rule" (τὸν υἱὸν καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς διάδοχον) to describe Manuel's political status, 368 prefers "son and man who will inherit his scepter" (τὸν υἱὸν καὶ τὸν τὸ σκῆπτρον διαδεξόμενον). In describing the spies, 368* and 368 compare as follows:

Letter 368*

ὁρῶ γὰρ τοὺς ὀπτήρας
τούτους
. ἀρπάσαι τι τῶν
γινομένων ἢ λεγομένων
ἐπιθυμοῦντας καὶ μεγάλην ἐκεῖνο τὸ
μικρὸν φλόγα ποιήσοντας.³⁹

Letter 368

ὁρῶ γὰρ τοὺς ὀπτήρας
τούτους ὡςπερ τὰ θηρία κυκλοῦντας
ἡμᾶς, οἷς ἔργον ἀρπάσαι τι τῶν
λεγομένων ἢ γινομένων καὶ τὸ
μικρὸν ἐκεῖνο φλόγα καὶ τῆς ἐν
Βαβυλῶνι τοῖς παισὶν ἀναφθείσης
ὕψηλότεραν ἐργάσασθαι.⁴⁰

Finally, 368* and 368 invoke God's assistance in slightly different terms:

Letter 368*

πάντως ὃ τὸ πρότερον δοὺς οὐδὲ
τούτου τοῖς δεομένοις φθονήσει,
ἀλλὰ μισήσας τοὺς τῶν σκανδάλων
τεχνίτας σοὶ μὲν γαλήνην

Letter 368

πάντως ὃ τὸ πρότερον δοὺς οὐδὲ
τούτου τοῖς δεομένοις φθονήσει,
ἀλλὰ μισήσας τοὺς τῶν σκανδάλων
τεχνίτας σοὶ μὲν γαλήνην

³⁸ Barker (64, esp. n.176) maintains that 368* dates to an earlier phase of Manuel's return.

³⁹Corr. 315.11ff: "For I know that these spies seize upon what ever is done or said, making the small flame into a great fire."

⁴⁰Corr. 314.12-15: "For I know that these spies, *who encircle us like beasts, have as their task to seize upon whatever is done or said, making the small flame higher than that which engulfed the children in Babylon.*"

πανταχόθεν κατασκευάσει, ἡμῖν δὲ
τῶν ὑπὲρ σοῦ πόνων ἄθλον δώσει
τὴν σὴν συνουσίαν.⁴¹

πανταχόθεν κατασκευάσει, ἡμῖν δὲ
τῶν ὑπὲρ σοῦ πολέμων ἄθλον δώσει
τὴν μετὰ ἀδρείας σὴν συνουσίαν.⁴²

From these comparisons it becomes clear that Kydones' revised text further concretized his message. Letter 368 arguably strengthened the sense of Manuel's claim to the throne by replacing τὸν τῆς ἀρχῆς διάδοχον with τὸν τὸ σκῆπτρον διαδεξόμενον, and it most certainly added fear and loathing to the negative impressions of 368*. The entire tone of the letter was also intensified by the changes, notably Kydones' mention of beasts and the Babylonian furnace in respect to the activities of those watching after Manuel.⁴³ Particularly this last reference, a paraphrase of Daniel 3:11ff, spoke volumes about John V's arrogance and misjudgment, the supposed treachery of his advisors, and the noble innocence of Manuel.⁴⁴ In effect, it was a piercing commentary on the old emperor and his advisors' character. And that Kydones turned to this revised depiction of character is no accident, for letters were strongly meant to describe character, one's own as well as that of the correspondent's. Character portraiture (ἠθοποιία) was in fact one of the

⁴¹Corr. 315.16ff: "In all events the One who granted before will not refuse this thing to those in need. Hating the artisans of scandal, He will instead effect peace on all sides for you, while to us He will give, as a prize for my struggles for you, your true presence."

⁴²Corr. 314.18-21: "In all events the One who granted before will not refuse the thing to those in need. Hating the artisans of scandal, He will instead effect peace on all sides for you, while for us He will give, as a prize for my wars for you, your true presence *without fear*."

⁴³Letter 368 also has other quite slight changes that heighten its intensity, including the replacement of νῦν (p.315.9) with καθημέραν (p.314.9) in Kydones' reference to the misfortunes that overshadow the auspicious return of Manuel, and the replacement of ἐργάζεται (p.315.10) with ἐγείρει (p.314.11) in his characterization of the effects of this bad turn of events.

⁴⁴Obviously carefully chosen, the reference reflects a series of events in the Babylonian court of Nebuchadnezzar. Certain of N.'s Chaldean subjects implicate three otherwise innocent and competent Jewish governors for deciding to worship an idol he had erected. After refusing N. to his face, they are thrown into an excruciatingly hot furnace but nonetheless miraculously survive. Subsequently the Jewish governors are rewarded for their travails and show of faith.

most constant and valued currencies of this and a number of other literary genres.⁴⁵

The date of these amendments to 368* is not entirely clear, although they were surely later and possibly belong to 1391 when Kydones commissioned U. Even if Kydones had revised it sometime earlier, it is telling that he chose the amended version over 368* for publication in 1391.⁴⁶ That date is significant because several of the conditions described in 368* had by then changed dramatically. Manuel's political rôle was no longer in doubt, for example, and presumably John V's henchmen had been removed (Barker 69-99). Although the Turkish threat remained, the years of internal struggle for the imperial throne had come to a temporary close.⁴⁷ Seen in this light, Kydones' amendments to letter 368 seem to use current circumstances as a point of reference for looking back to the past. More assertive about the emperor's right to rule and more harsh to his enemies than 368*, letter 368 was not only Kydones' claim to victory after years of witnessing Manuel's long and difficult struggle for the throne, but also a warning about repeating the mistakes of the past, especially internecine warfare. This was Kydones the revisionist at work, subtly reshaping and recoloring character portraits and events as they had stood some four years earlier.

VI

Character issues were also the focus of attention in letter 235*, one of the longest in Kydones' collection, dating to the years 1382-83 and addressed to Isidore Glavas, then metropolitan of

⁴⁵ On ἠθοποιία and the eventual association of letters with this progymnasma in the school curriculum, cf. Kennedy (*supra* n.14) 164f, and *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton 1983) 64, 70-73; G. Kustas, "The Function and Evolution of Byzantine Rhetoric," *Viator* 1 (1970) 58ff, and (*supra* n.6) 33, 45f. On whether Byzantine letter-writers sought to depict their own or their correspondent's character, cf. Littlewood (*supra* n.6) 216; Ljubarskij (*supra* n.3) 36-39; V. A. Smetanin, "Epistologija pozdnej Vizantii. Proleusis (konkretno-istoricheskaia chast')," *Antichnaja Drevnost' i Srednie Veka* 15 (1978) 64ff.

⁴⁶ If not in 1391, another likely date for the new recension would be the winter of 1387-88 after Manuel had left for exile on Lemnos.

⁴⁷ On the imperial claims of Manuel's nephew, John VII Palaiologos, see Barker 112f.

Thessaloniki.⁴⁸ From the start this letter proceeds in a fairly irreverent tone. Kydones unveils some damaging remarks that the archbishop has allegedly made against him and discusses aloud and at length how he might best respond to them. Candor, sarcasm, and the unexpected are all tightly woven together in the piece. Yet ultimately Kydones was dissatisfied with it enough to make revisions. An initial revision, now lost, appeared in A. Another was made for U, which became the definitive recension of letter 235*.⁴⁹

Glavas is a relatively well-known historical figure. Born in 1342, probably at Thessaloniki, he became a monk in 1375 and metropolitan in 1380, a post he still held in 1382 when Manuel II arrived in Thessaloniki and set up rule. He reportedly did not agree with some of Manuel's strategies for dealing with the Turkish threats, criticizing the emperor's requisition of church wealth, but neither was he explicitly opposed to him or insensitive to the dangers at hand. Indeed his sermon in October 1383 supported the emperor's defense of the city. But within months of this sermon, and for reasons unknown, Glavas abandoned his see. He returned sometime before 1393 to a city long since in Turkish hands. His death came in 1396, shortly before Kydones' own.⁵⁰

Letter 235* is much less concerned with either Glavas' fate or that of his city than with a highly personal matter. The metropolitan, after ostensibly praising Kydones in the past, now criticizes, even ridicules him in public. Kydones' theological positions are clearly at the heart of the matter, although the exact issues under dispute are not revealed. Kydones has heard this news from his friends in the city, who apparently advised him to shun the metropolitan. The emperor Manuel, newly arrived at Thessaloniki and locked into a less than agreeable relationship with Glavas, may indeed have been among these

⁴⁸ Isidore: *PLP* II no. 4223; on the prominent family Glavas, cf. *PLP* II pp.212ff; D. I. Polemis, *The Doukai: A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography* (=ULondonHistSt 22 [London 1968]) 120ff.

⁴⁹ *Corr.* no. 235*, pp.134-37; no. 235, pp. 130-34; for the intermediate but now lost recension between 235* and 235, see *Corr.* x, nn. 130, 134; Loenertz, *Recueils* 10ff and tables, esp. 12, 37 n.1, 46 n.4.

⁵⁰ R.-J. Loenertz, "Isidore Glabas, Métropolitte de Thessalonique 1380-1396," *REByz* 6 (1948) 181-90; Dennis, *Reign* 16ff, 89-95, and "The Second Turkish Capture of Thessaloniki, 1391, 1394, or 1430?" *BZ* 57 (1964) 56ff; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium 1261-1453*² (Cambridge 1993) 287ff, 321.

informers. In any event, Glavas' friendship with Kydones evidently further complicated receipt of this news. Considering their respective ages and common origins in Thessaloniki, it is not impossible that they were school friends, just as Glavas was with Theodore Potamios, another probable native of Thessaloniki.⁵¹ The relationship between Kydones and Glavas had evidently continued to develop through the years. Letter 235* suggests that Kydones mentored Glavas at some point and that the letter in turn apparently supported Kydones in both his earlier theological struggles and his career.⁵² These rumors from Thessaloniki put their hitherto secure friendship to the test.⁵³

Kydones' revision of letter 235* some years later left much of the text intact. As a rule, the revised letter either preserved 235* exactly or touched up particular passages. In most cases these editorial changes simply added text without measurably affecting the content of the piece. A fairly typical example is Kydones' contention that he is guided strictly by reason, not self-interest, in the theological positions to which he subscribes:

Letter 235*

ὄρας δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ὡς οὐδὲ
πλάττειν τι γούν ἔξεστιν ὃ με νῦν
παρὰ τοὺς λογισμοὺς βιάσαιτ' ἂν
λέγειν.
.....
.....
.....
..... οὔτε γὰρ χρημάτων
ἔστιν ἀποδόσθαι νῦν τὴν ἀλήθειαν.

Letter 235

ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐδ' ἔστιν ὅ τις ἂν ἴσως
φιλονεικῶν λέγειν ἀναισχυντήσειεν,
ὡς ἄρα ἔστιν οὐ στοχαζόμενος καὶ
ἔμαντῶ τοῦτο πράττων παρὰ τοὺς
ἔνδον λογισμοὺς λέγειν αἰροῦμαι τί
γὰρ ἂν εἴη ἐκείνο: λέγειν γὰρ αὐτὸ
δίκαιον, εἴ τις μὴ τοῦ ληρεῖν ἀπλῶς
ὥσπερ γέρωσ ἐπιθυμεῖ, χρήμασι
τυχὸν ἐρεῖ με πρὸς τὴν ψευδολογίαν

⁵¹ On Potamios see Dennis, *Reign* xlviii-1, 226f (Potamios' letter of friendship to Glavas), and "The Letters of Theodore Potamios," in his *Byzantium and the Franks 1350-1420* (London 1982) XII 1-4, 13f, 29f (edition and tr. of the letter to Glavas); Potamios' friendly letters to Kydones: *Reign* 227 (edition only), and "Potamios," 5, 17f (editions), 20, 32f (tr.).

⁵² Cf. *Corr.* no. 235*, p.135.35-40, p.136.66-69. Possibly the earlier conflicts concerned Kydones' stand against Palamism: cf. Kianka 37ff, 70-74; John Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas*², tr. G. Lawrence (London 1974) 81-85 *passim*.

⁵³ One manuscript attributes an earlier letter, alluding to friendship, to Glavas (*Corr.* no. 113, p.151). On friendship in Byzantium, notably the view that average friendships tended to be "instrumental," i.e., based on a mutual exchange of benefits, see M. E. Mullett, "Byzantium: A Friendly Society?" *PaP* 118 (1988) 3-25.

.....

 ἄλλα γὰρ τοῖς διὰ τὴν πενίαν
 ταλαιπώροις ῥωμαίοις νῦν
 πρὸς τὰς ἀλλήλους ἀμφισβητοῦντες,
 ἵνα τις τοῖς ἑτέροις τῶν
 ἀντιλεγόντων προσθέμενος ἐλπίσει τι
 παρ' αὐτῶν κέρδος οἴσασθαι διὰ τὴν
 πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους ἀντιλογία. ὄρας
 δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ὡς ῥωμαίοις πλείων
 τῶν ἐπ' ἀγορᾶς λαχάνων ἢ τῶν
 ὑψηλῶν θεωρημάτων φροντίς, καὶ
 μὴν εἰ καὶ αὐτὸς οὕτως ἦν ἄθλιος,
 ὡς ἀξιῶν ὑπὲρ ὀβολοῦ πάντα
 λέγειν, τί ἂν παρὰ τῶν πενήτων
 λήψασθαι προσεδόκησα καὶ οἷς τῶν
 σωματῶν οὐδὲν πλέον λείπεται διὰ
 τὴν τῶν τούρκων πλεονεξίαν.⁵⁵
 τόν τε τοῦρκον καὶ τὴν τῶν
 ἀναγκαίων ἀπο[βολήν] ἔχει
 διήγημα.⁵⁴

κινεῖσθαι, καὶ ποία περὶ τὴν
ἀλήθειαν νῦν σπουδή, καὶ τίνες νῦν
οἱ ταύτης ἀλλήλοις ἀμφισβητοῦντες,
ἵνα τις τοῖς ἑτέροις τῶν
ἀντιλεγόντων προσθέμενος ἐλπίσει τι
παρ' αὐτῶν κέρδος οἴσασθαι διὰ τὴν
πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους ἀντιλογία. ὄρας
δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ὡς ῥωμαίοις πλείων
τῶν ἐπ' ἀγορᾶς λαχάνων ἢ τῶν
ὑψηλῶν θεωρημάτων φροντίς, καὶ
μὴν εἰ καὶ αὐτὸς οὕτως ἦν ἄθλιος,
ὡς ἀξιῶν ὑπὲρ ὀβολοῦ πάντα
λέγειν, τί ἂν παρὰ τῶν πενήτων
λήψασθαι προσεδόκησα καὶ οἷς τῶν
σωματῶν οὐδὲν πλέον λείπεται διὰ
τὴν τῶν τούρκων πλεονεξίαν.⁵⁵

Certainly these additions strengthen the original content, but it is perhaps difficult to detect anything more than an amplification of the same ideas. These were essentially cosmetic changes. A small number of other additions to 235*, however, tell a new story. In effect, Kydones expands and sharpens his basic account of the personalities depicted in the letter, namely Glavas' and his own. The earlier 235* creates an image of two fairly

⁵⁴*Corr.* 136.55–60: "You know also yourself that it is in any case impossible to do something that would force me now to speak beyond reasoning (alt.: contrary to my opinions). Indeed one cannot now sell the truth for money. Instead there are other things that are more serviceable now to the Romans, who are hard-pressed because of their poverty, and every assembly tells of the same two things, the Turk and the [lack] of necessities."

⁵⁵*Corr.* 132.64–75: "But there is absolutely nothing which someone who is equally contentious would be unashamed to say, just as there is then nothing which I, in the thing I aim at and that which I do for myself, choose to say against internal reasoning (alt.: contrary to my opinions). For what would that be then? For would it be right to say the same thing if someone should desire simply not to say nonsense, like some old man? Or what if he should announce that I am drawn to false words by money? Where is the attention to truth now, and who are those these days who contest it [the truth] with one another in order that someone among them who joins one side might hope to gain something by being in opposition to the other side? Yet you yourself know that the attention of the Romans rests more on vegetables in the market than on lofty speculations. And truly, even if I myself were so wretched that I would deem it worthy to say everything for an obolon, what would I expect to take from the poor, to whom, because of the greediness of the Turks, nothing remains except their bodies?"

congenial characters confronting a difference of opinion, but the revised 235 pictures a clash of personalities with little room for bridging their differences.

To pursue one of the ideas cited above, in letter 235 Kydones stresses the difference between his own strictly rational and Glavas' markedly demagogic approach:

Letter 235*

ἀλλ' ἔστιν ... καί τις ἴσως ἀλήθεια
λανθάνουσα τοὺς πολλοὺς, ἢ με
ταύτην, ὑπὸ πολλῶν ἀδικουμένην
ἐγκαταλιπεῖν οὐκ ἔῃ

.....
..... ὅτι μηδ' ὄσιον
ἀληθείας ὑβριζομένης, παρόντα
καὶ δυνάμενον ἀμύνειν,
ὑφίεσθαι.⁵⁶

Letter 235

ἔστιν μὲν ἴσως... τις ἀλήθεια
λανθάνουσα τοὺς πολλοὺς, ἢ με
ταύτην, ὑπὸ πολλῶν ἀδικουμένην
ἐγκαταλιπεῖν οὐκ ἔῃ. ἢ καὶ
πειθόμενος οὐ ραδίως τοῖς
σοφίσμασιν εἶπω, ὅτι μηδ' ὄσιον
ἀληθείας ὑβριζομένης παρόντα
καὶ δυνάμενον ἀμύνειν,
ὑφίεσθαι.⁵⁷

This contrast between Kydones' philosophy and Glavas' sophism is even more clearly brought out in one of the closing passages of the letters:

Letter 235*

τοῦναντίον γὰρ μᾶλλον χαρίζεσθαι
προαιρούμενον.....
τάναντία παρ' ὑμῖν δημηγοροῦντα
λέγειν ἐχρῆν,

..... ὧν
οὐκ ἐπαίνους μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ
μισθοὺς ἂν πολλοὺς παρ' ὑμῶν
ἠνεγκάμην, τά τε ἄλλα τιμώντων

Letter 235

τοῦναντίον γὰρ μᾶλλον χαρίζεσθαι
προαιρούμενον οἷς νῦν λέγω
τάναντία παρ' ὑμῖν δημηγοροῦντα
λέγειν ἐχρῆν, καὶ τοῖς ἀρέσκουσι τὸν
τε δῆμον καὶ ὑμᾶς κολακεύειν, ὧν
οὐκ ἐπαίνους μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ
μισθοὺς ἂν πολλοὺς παρ' ὑμῶν
ἠνεγκάμην, τά τε ἄλλα τιμώντων

⁵⁶*Corr.* 136.75-79: "But there is ... perhaps a certain truth that escapes many people but which, despite being ridiculed by many, nonetheless prevents me from abandoning this [faith], since it is not right to yield when one is here and capable of defending a truth that is being slandered."

⁵⁷*Corr.* 133.93-97: "There is perhaps ... a certain truth that escapes many people but which, despite being ridiculed by many people, nonetheless prevents me from abandoning this [faith]. *Being persuaded by it, I will not yield easily to sophisms*, because it is not right to yield when one is here and capable of defending a truth that is being slandered."

κάν ταῖς ἀρχαιρεσίας πρό πολλῶν
ἔμοι τιθεμένων.⁵⁸

κάν ταῖς ἀρχαιρεσίας πρό πολλῶν
ἔμοι τιθεμένων.⁵⁹

Kydones' central message is that Glavas' vanity and personal ambition have spoiled his powers of reasoning, a character judgment to which he returns toward the end of letter 235 (*cf.* *Corr.* 137.99ff, 133f.129–33).

As a corollary to this essentially new picture of Glavas comes a touched-up depiction of Kydones. In the revised letter Kydones makes a point of showing that, while strictly rational in his thinking, he resists taking this habit to excess. In other words, he is not argumentative for its own sake and is not alone in thinking the way he does:

Letter 235*

'Ἄλλ' ἴσως αὐτός, ἀλήθειαν τῆς
ἐνστάσεως αἰτιώμενος, υπερήφανόν
τι δόξω λέγειν καί φορτικόν,

ἄγνοιαν δὲ μόνον ἐροῦσιν οἱ γε

Letter 235

*εἰ μὲν οὖν ἀληθείας φροντίς καὶ τοῦ
ταύτης στερήσεσθαι δέος ἐμοὶ τῆς
δοκούσης ταύτης θρασύτητος αἴτιον.
ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἀπειλάς καὶ λαιδορίας
καὶ τᾶλλ' ὣν καθημέραν πειρῶμαι
δίκαιος ἂν εἶναι φαῖν τῆς ὑπὲρ τῆς
ἀληθείας παρησίας
ἀντιλαμβάνειν· ἄλλοι δ' ἂν ἴσως
εἶποιεν καὶ στέφανον ὑπὲρ ταύτης
ὀφείλεσθαί μοι ὅν ὁ θεὸς καὶ
δέδωκε καὶ δώσειν ὑπισχνεῖτο τοῖς
ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀληθείας οὐ τὰ ὅπλα
μόνον, ὡς περ ὑπὲρ πατρίδος, ἀλλὰ
καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτὴν τιθεμένοις, εἰ
δ' εἰς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας μόνον
ἄγνοιαν τὴν ἐμὴν τις ἀντιλογία
ἀνοίσει—τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ μᾶλλον ἐρεῖν
οἶμαι τὸν γε*

⁵⁸*Corr.* 136.66–69: "Much to the contrary, it is necessary to say that I chose before to favor opposing positions when I was speaking publicly in your presence, for which I won not only praises but also many rewards when you valued different things and would have appointed me before many others among the chief magistrates."

⁵⁹*Corr.* 132.79–83: "Much to the contrary, it is necessary to say that I chose before to favor *what I now call* opposing positions when I was speaking publicly in your presence, *as well as in front of those who like to flatter both the people and you*, for which I won not only praises but also many rewards when you valued different things and would have appointed me before many others among the chief magistrates."

ἐπιεικέστεροι καὶ τῶν ἐμῶν τρόπων
 πεπειραμένοι. καὶ εἰ τοῦτ' ἀληθὲς
 δίκαιον ὑμῖν ἂν ᾔην
 τοὺς σοφοὺς ὑμᾶς καὶ τὰ
 τῶν ψυχῶν νοσήματα
 πεπιστευμένους δύνασθαι
 θεραπεύειν καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν εἴτε
 ἄγνοιαν εἴτε ἀμαθίαν
 ἰᾶσθαι.⁶⁰

ἐπιεικέστερον καὶ τῶν ἐμῶν τρόπων
 πεπειραμένον, ὡς οὐ δύσερίς τις
 εἶην καὶ τῷ συνειδότηι μαχόμενος—τί
 λοιπὸν ἢ τοὺς σοφοὺς ὑμᾶς καὶ τὰ
 τῶν ψυχῶν νοσήματα
 πεπιστευμένους δύνασθαι
 θεραπεύειν, καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν εἴτε
 ἄγνοιαν εἴτε ἀμαθίαν πειρᾶσθαι
φιλανθρώπως ἰᾶσθαι.⁶¹

As if to underscore his cooperative character further, in the closing of letter 235 Kydones inserts a passage saying that he has always respected and obeyed church authorities in the past, and he is willing to do so again provided people like Glavas comport themselves reasonably and responsibly (cf. 137.97f, 133.124–29). This is an image of Kydones as the epitome of reason and modesty in 235, in marked contrast to the swaggering Glavas of the same letter.

One final amendment to letter 235* also betrayed Kydones' willingness to reshape the past. Between the composition of 235* and 235 he most surely had the opportunity to gain more personal experience of Glavas, as the metropolitan seems to have passed the period from 1384 to 1389 in Constantinople. Kydones' writings never comment on Glavas or this incident again. But at the very least he must have observed with interest the serious difficulties and public disgrace the metropolitan en-

⁶⁰Corr. 136.79–84: "Yet perhaps I myself, in my demand for a constant truth, will appear to be saying something arrogant and vulgar, and those who are more reasonable and familiar with my character will call it mere ignorance. And if this were true, then it would be right for Your Cleverness (alt.: you clever fellows?), convinced of your ability to cure the sickness of souls, also to cure me either of my ignorance or my stupidity."

⁶¹Corr. 133.97–109: "So if therefore a concern for truth and a fear of being deprived of this is responsible for my apparent audacity, I myself would say that I have the right not to receive threats, abuse, and the other things which I suffer every day in return for my frank expression of the truth, and some others might perhaps even say that I should earn a crown for this, which [crown] God has given and promised to give to those who not only take up arms for the sake of the truth, as though for their country, but also put forth the soul itself. Yet if someone will attribute my response to mere ignorance of the truth—for I suppose that someone who is more reasonable and familiar with my character might very well call it this [ignorance], so that I would be a very contentious fellow who quarrels with someone who is knowledgeable—then what is left except for Your Cleverness (alt.: you clever fellows?), convinced of your ability to cure the sicknesses of souls, also to endeavor out of compassion to cure me either of my ignorance or my stupidity?"

countered in the capital during these years (Dennis, *Reign* 91–94). Unless letter 235 constitutes a purely literary exercise, it probably reflects Kydones' considered views about Glavas and to some extent himself, nearly ten years after the fact. In part, it did what theorists of letters intended a letter to do, describe character (see *supra* n.45), although under the circumstances that entailed telescoping people and events in a way not unlike biography. A similar tendency is manifest in a notable omission in Kydones' text of 1391: the exclusion of Glavas from his circle of friends. The earlier letter dwells on the issue of the two men's friendship, but letter 235 omits it almost entirely:

Letter 235*

ταῦτ' ἔλεγον ἐκεῖνοι. καὶ προσετίθεσαν ὡς οὐδὲ τὰ πρότερον ἐπαίνους ἀπλῶς νομιστέον, ἀλλ' εἶναι τέχνην τοῦ ῥᾶον τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα μέμψεις παραδεχθῆναι. μὴ γὰρ ἂν δόξαι μίσει πρὸς τὸ κακῶς εἰπεῖν κινηθῆναι τὸν οὕτω με πρότερον εὐφημοῦντα, προβαλέσθαι δὲ τὰ βελτίω ὑπὲρ τοῦ καὶ τὰ δεύτερα δόξαι μετ' ἀληθείας εἰρησθαι. ὥστ' ἠξίουν λοιπὸν σε μηδὲ φίλον νομίζεσθαι, τὴν τοῦ φιλεῖν δόξαν οἷς ἐπέθηκας ἀναιροῦντες. [Ἐγὼ δὲ ἐκεῖνον ἐμεμψάμην ταῖς ψήφοις,] εἰ μὴ διὰ τὰς νῦν μέμψεις ἢ τοὺς πρότερον ἐπαίνους νομίζοιεν σε φίλον ἐμοὶ μᾶλλον εἶναι. τὸ γὰρ πανταχόθεν ὠφελεῖν πειρᾶσθαι τοὺς φιλουμένους, τοῦτ' ἔλεγον εἶναι φίλων τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν μὴ ψευδομένων. ἐμοὶ δὲ παρὰ μὲν τῶν ἐγκωμίων κέρδος οὐδὲν προσγενήσεσθαι· τὸ γὰρ ἐπαινεῖσθαι δόξαι μόνον ἀγαθόν, οὐκ εἶναι ποιεῖν, ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ βλάπτειν, κενοῦ φρονήματος τὸν ἐπαινεθέντα μόνον ἐμπλήσαν, ὃ πολλῶν ἀεὶ κακῶν αἰτίων καὶ ἰδιώταις καὶ πόλεσι· τὰς δὲ κατηγορίας τὸ πλεῖστον τοὺς προσέχοντας ὠφελεῖν, πειθούσας διορθοῦσθαι τὰ κατηγορημένα· καὶ

Letter 235

ταῦτ' ἔλεγον ἐκεῖνοι, καὶ προσετίθεσαν ὡς οὐδὲ τὰ πρότερον ἐπαίνους ἀπλῶς νομιστέον, ἀλλ' εἶναι τέχνην τοῦ ῥᾶον τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα μέμψεις παραδεχθῆναι. ὥσπερ γὰρ ὁ τὰ πάντα ψέγων ἀπλῶς ὑποπτεύεσθαι δίκαιος, ὡς δὴ μίσει πρὸς τὴν κατηγορίαν κινούμενος, οὕτως ὁ διαίρων, καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐγκωμιάζων τοῖς δ' ἐπιτιμῶν ἀξίων, μετ' ἀληθείας τοῖς τε ἐπαίνοις καὶ τοῖς ἐλέγχοις χρῆσθαι δοκεῖ. ταῦτα μὲν τὰ παρ' ἐκείνων.

ἐμὲ δὲ καὶ ὁ τρόπος καὶ οἱ λόγοι καὶ τᾶλλα τῶν πλεονεκτημάτων οἷς τὴν ἱερωσύνην κοσμεῖς, καὶ πρὸ πάντων τὸ μηδὲν ἐμαυτῷ μέχρι νῦν πρὸς τὴν σὴν ἀρετὴν ἀηδὲς συνοιδεῖναι, ἔπειθον μὴ σφόδρα πιστεύειν τοῖς ὡς ἀπορρίψεις τι κατ' ἐμοῦ ῥῆμα σκαιὸν διατεινόμενοις, ὅθεν καὶ πλάσμα καὶ ἀνδρῶν φίλους πειρωμένων ταραττεῖν τοὺς ἐκείνων λόγους ἀπφαινόμην. ὡς δὲ ἐνέκειντο καὶ μάρτυσιν ἦσαν ἔτοιμοι τὰ προσηγγελέμενα πιστοῦσθαι, τότε ἦδη ἐκεῖνοις μὲν οὕτω προθυμονόμενοις ἀπιστεῖν ἀναίσχυντον ὤμην, αὐτὸς δὲ οὐδὲν ἦντιν τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς περὶ σὲ γνώμην ἠξίουν τηρεῖν, εἰκέναι λέγων τὰς

εἶναι ταῖς τῶν πατέρων νοουθεσίαις
ἢ τῶν παιδευτῶν εὐκυβίας.

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..... οὓς
ὀρώμεν μέμψει μάλλον ἢ ἐπαίνοισ
τοὺς υἱεῖς ἢ τοὺς μαθητὰς ὠφελεῖν
πειρωμένους.⁶²

μέμψεις ταῖς τῶν πατέρων ἢ τῶν
παιδευτῶν νοουθεσίαις, ὡς ἀπλῶς μὲν
οὕτως ἀκουόμενας ὕβρεις ἂν τις καὶ
λοιδορίας καλέσειεν, ἴσως δ' ἂν τοὺς
εἰπόντας καὶ ἐχθροὺς οἰθήει καὶ
δίκην τῆς δοκούσης τραχύτητος
ἀπαιτήσειεν. ὁ δὲ τὴν τῶν λεγόντων
ἐπιστάμενος γνώμην καὶ
ἐπαινέσεται καὶ ἦντιν' αὐτοῖς
ἀμοιβὴν τῶν σκωμμάτων ἐκείνων
ἀποδοῖη ζητήσῃ ταῦτα δύνασθαι
καὶ τὰς πρὸς ἐμὲ τοῦ θαναταστοῦ
Θεσσαλονίκης ἐπιτιμήσεις
ἀπεφανόμην. εἶναι γὰρ ταύτας
πατρός τε καὶ διδασκάλου, οὓς
ὀρώμεν μέμψει μάλλον ἢ ἐπαίνοισ
τοὺς υἱεῖς ἢ τοὺς μαθητὰς ὠφελεῖν
πειρωμένους.⁶³

⁶²Corr. 135f.16–32: “These were the things they said. And they added that one should not look naively at your former praises, but that it was an artifice in order to exhibit more easily the blame after these praises. For [they said that] it was strange that he who praised me thus before was then moved by hate to say bad things. Rather [they said] he should have proffered better statements so as to seem to speak the truth also on the second time. So in the end they wanted further not even to consider you as a friend, dismissing the definition of friendship upon which you operate. [I myself took issue with these decisions] when they would not understand that you are a friend to me even more in view of your present criticisms than in view of your past praises. For they said that, when there is support on all sides for friends who are undergoing a trial, this is the proof of true friendship. But [I said that] I derive no benefit from your praise; for the process of praising seems only good, but is not doing so, and sometimes even harms, since it satiates the one praised with vain arrogance, which is always the cause of many bad things in both private and public life. And as for the accusations, [I said that] they benefit those who pay attention to them in the highest degree by persuading one to amend the things with which one is accused, similar to the admonitions of fathers and teachers, who, as we know, attempt to benefit their sons and pupils more through criticism than praise.”

⁶³Corr. 131.19–40: “These were the things they said. And they added that one should not look naively at your former praises, but that there was an artifice in your attempt, after these [praises], to keep the blame from surfacing. For [they said that] just as he who simply criticizes everything is rightly suspected to be moved by hate in his criticism, so too when someone divides himself between praising some things and preferring to censure others, in truth he seems bent on producing both praises and reproofs. These are the things they said. But as for me—with the character and the eloquence and all the other excellencies with which you adorn the priesthood, and since above all I was not conscious of anything unpleasant about Your Virtue until now—

The divergence of the two letters on the subject of friendship is particularly evident in the very close of this peroration:

Letter 235*

οἷς καὶ τὰς εἰς ἐμὲ σὰς ἐπιτιμήσεις
ἔλεγον εἰσκήναι, δι' ὧν καὶ φιλῶν
κάπι τὸ συνοῖσον ἡμᾶς ἄγων φαίνη.
τούτοις μὲν οὖν ἔπειθον ἐκείνους
μὴ λίαν ἄχθεσθαι τοῖς καθ' ἡμῶν
εἰρησθαι δοκοῦσιν, ἀλλ' οἶεσθαι
κάκείων οὐ τὸ τυχὸν ὄφελος
εἶναι.⁶⁴

Letter 235

αὐτός τε οὖν οὕτως ἠξίου φρονεῖν.
.....
.....
..... κάκείνους πείθειν ἐπεχείρου
μὴ λίαν ἄχθεσθαι τοῖς καθ' ἡμῶν
εἰρησθαι δοκοῦσιν, ἀλλ' οἶεσθαι
κάκείων οὐ τὸ τυχὸν ὄφελος
εἶναι.⁶⁵

Ultimately the difference between the two passages teaches an important lesson. Kydonēs' invocation of friendship in letter 235* was a commonplace both for the epistolographic genre

I was persuaded not to believe seriously those who contended that you launched some mischievous words against me. At which point I declared that their words were an invention of some men who were trying to disturb friends. But when they chided me and were prepared to confirm the things reported with witnesses, then I forthwith began to suppose that I was behaving badly by not believing them, though they were showing such zeal in this matter, and I myself preferred to protect—as second to none—the opinion I held of you from the beginning, saying that the criticisms were similar to those of fathers and teachers, which, if heard out of context, one might call insults and railings, and perhaps one might think that those who said [these words] were enemies, and might demand punishment in the harshest terms. But one who understands the opinion of those speaking will both praise [it] and seek to repay them in some way for their mockery. The same things are possible, I declared, also for the criticisms levelled against me by the wondrous man of Thessaloniki. For these were [the criticisms] of a father and a teacher, who, as we know, attempt to benefit his sons and pupils more through criticism than praise."

⁶⁴Corr. 135.32–35: "I also said that your criticisms of me were like these, [criticisms] through which you appeared to be our friend and to bring us to some advantage. Therefore I began to persuade them not to be exceedingly annoyed by those who felt obliged to speak against us, but rather to suppose that there was a possible advantage in it also for them."

⁶⁵Corr. 131.40ff: "Therefore I myself found it useful to think in this way, and I undertook to persuade them not to be exceedingly annoyed with those who felt obliged to speak against us, but rather to suppose that there was a possible advantage in it also for them."

and, as we have seen, for his own letters to friends.⁶⁶ So its deliberate removal can only point to one meaning: he and Glavas had ceased to be friends in the ensuing years, and Kydones sought in letter 235 to suppress the idea that they ever were. The image of Glavas the slightly meddlesome old friend thus receded before that of Glavas as a wily and unpleasant opponent.

VII

By the time Demetrios Kydones died in 1397, his reputation as an imperial servant and intellectual was well established. Some years before, in 1391-92, he took steps to perpetuate his name by committing his letters to publication. This was the second time that he had gathered together his letters and resolved to give them a definitive recension. The first group, published about 1373, spanned his early life and career, whereas these letters covered his mature years from about 1373 to 1391-92. His attention to these projects was by no means strange for a person of his education and public stature. A great many prominent Byzantine figures before his day contemplated similar things, be they church leaders, educators, or politicians. Preparing one's letters with a view to reaching a wider audience, even posterity, enjoyed a long and continuing tradition.

Kydones' letter collection differs from those of other Byzantine authors in that it was preserved in both the dossier and published form, Vat. gr. 101 (A) and Urbin. gr. 133 (U) respectively. Comparing them today, it must be said that they do not appear radically different from one another. On this point modern scholars have generally agreed that Kydones mainly envisioned making his collection more artful and elegant, more flattering to his literary reputation without fixing great concern one way or the other on its contents. In support of this hypothesis it should be observed that Kydones included practically every letter from the dossier in his publication. One reason may have been that his dossier already represented a

⁶⁶ On the theme of friendship in epistolographic theory and Byzantine letters, cf. Karlsson (*supra* n.9) 15-78; Koskenniemi (*supra* n.7) 35ff, 115-27; Thraede (*supra* n.7) 125-46; Hunger (*supra* n.7) 222-25; on Kydones in particular, cf. F. Tinnefeld, "Georgios Philosophos. Ein Korrespondent und Freund des Demetrios Kydones," *OrChrP* 38 (1972) 141-71, and *supra* n.25. See also *supra* letter 197.

selectively cleansed version of his total number of collected letters, or perhaps he had merely been in the habit of avoiding certain kinds of controversial material in the texts.⁶⁷ For whatever reasons, however, he found it unnecessary to suppress large sections at the moment of publication.

Yet Kydones did make substantive changes within the dossier in anticipation of publication. The exact intentions behind these changes were not explicitly stated, although a critical reading of relevant letters in the dossier against those in the published version suggests some explanations. Kydones was concerned with style (letters 197, 258/276, 427, 328*/328), although not merely or always style for its own sake. His adding or reworking a text could very well go beyond cosmetic and aesthetic change. In certain instances, in fact, he amended a letter in his dossier apparently after reconsidering the historical circumstances under which it was written, changes that gave the piece a new mood and connotation as well as throwing the characters involved into a new light (letter 368*/368). Another pattern is his explicit concern for content. In some letters this appears in an immediate way, such as his willingness to suppress isolated details apparently for the purpose of protecting either himself or his addressee (letter 401*/401). More subtle tendencies are found in other letters, however, such as his inclination to touch up the character portraits of particular people and events connected to his own life. Amendments of this sort could indeed be of consequence. Not only did Kydones modify the characterization of himself and his world in some instances, but also that of his correspondents (letter 235*/235).

Considering the amendments of Kydones' dossier, his general attitudes and patterns of thinking seem relatively consistent with the recommendations of the epistolographic theorists. He was surely well-informed in this respect, selecting and emphasizing certain schools of thought over others. Notable were his concern for elegance in the letter and his sensitivity to the characterization of individuals, himself and others. No doubt he was already somewhat concerned with these matters when he first wrote his letters and registered them in his dossier. But years later, when preparing a new publication, he necessarily

⁶⁷ Kianka (50f, 65ff, 72ff, 142-46) has observed several striking omissions in the correspondence, major issues in Kydones' life, and the history of his times that are passed over in silence.

confronted the fruits of his earlier work again, in light of some new personal and historical circumstances as well as perhaps a more developed sense of literary and epistolographic tastes. Kydones' more substantive revisions still tended to stay within the general boundaries allotted by epistolographic theory and tradition. Considerations of style governed the revision of some letters. And even when he could not resist rewarding a friend or censuring an enemy in hindsight, he did so mainly through the subtle modification of character portraits, letter forms, and citations. At a glance, such behavior may seem timid, suggesting the triumph of a rarefied education and Kydones' strong sense of social conformity over plain talk. Yet it was also something that his intended audience would surely have understood and appreciated.⁶⁸

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