

Alexander in the Tychaion: Ps.-Libanius on the Statues

Craig A. Gibson

THIS ARTICLE offers a reappraisal of the identity and arrangement of statues in the Alexandrian Tychaion, a Hellenistic or Roman-era building whose interior décor is known only from a description now attributed to Ps.-Nicolaus, the author of a late-antique or Byzantine collection of progymnasmata. Previous studies have not considered this ecphrasis in the broader context of Ps.-Nicolaus' progymnasmata as a whole or of other late-antique ecphrases. From verbal parallels in these sources and corroborating literary and material evidence, I argue that the statue usually identified as Ptolemy I Soter holding a cornucopia is instead Alexander the Great holding a thunderbolt and standing atop a decorated column capital. I also argue that this statue was at the focus of a semicircle of statues of six Olympian gods in individual niches, and that this group echoed a group standing directly across the room consisting of a statue of Charis standing at the focus of a semicircle of the other six Olympians. I close with a tentative reconstruction of the building's overall plan, and suggest that the temple depicted on coinage as containing a reclining cult statue of Tyche was not part of the Tychaion proper but may have stood in an adjacent temple of Tyche, as was the arrangement at Constantinople.

Little is known about the Alexandrian Tychaion.¹ Ps.-Callis-

¹ See A. ADRIANI, *Repertorio d'arte dell'Egitto greco-romano* (Palermo 1966) 258–259; J.-P. CALLU, “Julius Valère, le Pseudo-Libanius et le tombeau d'Alexandrie,” *Kléma* 19 (1994) 271–274, 284 n.124; P. M. FRASER (Oxford 1972) I 242, II 392–393 n.417; B. D. HEBERT, *Spätantike Beschreibung von Kunstwerken: Archäologischer Kommentar zu den Ekphrasis des Libanios und Nikolaos* (diss.Karl-Franzens-Univ. Graz 1983) 10–25; E. KOSMETATOU, “Constructing Legitimacy: The Ptolemaic *Familiengruppe* as a Means of Self-

thenes (1.31.4, *recensio vetusta* [Kroll]) places the building near a canal; Ps.-Nicolaus states that it was located in the middle of the city ([Lib.] *Ecphr.* 25.2) and was adjacent to or adjoining the Museum (25.8); and Theophylact Simocatta (8.13.10) says that it was a very famous location in the city in the early seventh century.² There is no epigraphical evidence for the building,

definition in Posidippus' *Hippika*," in B. Acosta-Hughes et al. (eds.), *Labored in Papyrus Leaves: Perspectives on an Epigram Collection Attributed to Posidippus* (Washington 2004) 243–246; A. STEWART, *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics* (Berkeley 1993) 40, 243–246, 383–384. These are cited below by author's name.

Cf. C. O. Müller, *Antiquitates Antiochenaë: Commentationes duae* (Göttingen 1839) 40 n.9; G. Lumbroso, "Cenni sull'antica Alessandria tratti dal Pseudo-Callistene," *AnnInst* 47 (1875) 11; Lumbroso, *L'Egitto dei Greci e dei Romani* (Rome 1895) 168; G. Botti, *Plan de la ville d'Alexandrie à l'époque ptolémaïque* (Alexandria 1898) 37–38; E. Breccia, *Alexandria ad Aegyptum: A Guide* (Bergamo 1922) 95; A. Calderini, *Dizionario dei nomi geografici* I.1 (Cairo 1935) 155; E. Will, "Dodékathéon et Panthéon," *BCH* 75 (1951) 233–246, at 239–240; A. Bernand, *Alexandrie le Grande* (Paris 1966) 137; W. A. Daszewski, "La personification et la Tyché d'Alexandrie: Réinterprétation de certains monuments," in L. Kahil et al. (eds.), *Iconographie classique et identités régionales* (*BCH* Suppl. XIV [1986]) 299–309, at 302; H. Lauter, *Die Architektur des Hellenismus* (Darmstadt 1986) 179; C. Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity: Topography and Social Conflict* (Baltimore 1997) 143, 167, 212, 287; G. Grimm, *Alexandria: Die erste Königsstadt der hellenistischen Welt* (Mainz 1998) 70; J. S. McKenzie, *The Architecture of Alexandria and Egypt, 300 B.C.–A.D. 700* (London, forthcoming 2007) chs. 8 and 10; McKenzie, "The Place in Late Antique Alexandria 'Where the alchemists and scholars sit ... was like Stairs'," in T. Derda et al. (eds.), *Alexandria: Auditoria of Kom el-Dikka and Late Antique Education* (*JJP* Suppl. 8 [forthcoming 2007]). Another study of the Tychaion is in preparation by McKenzie and A. T. Reyes: "The Tychaion and the Temenos of the Muses in Late Antique Alexandria."

² There are at least two further references to the Tychaion. Athanasius *Epist. Encycl.* 4.2 (H. C. Brennecke et al., *Athanasius Werke* II.8 [Berlin 2006] 173) (lampstands removed by rioters to the Tychaion); Zacharias Schol. *V. Severi* p.33 Kugener (*Patr. Or.* II) (bonfire of pagan statues staged in front of the Tychaion). Possible (not explicit) references: Amm. Marc. 22.11.7 (destruction of *Genii templum* threatened); Palladas *Anth. Gr.* 9.180–183 (Tyche transformed into a tavern-keeper); *Cod. Theod.* 14.27.1 (a law posted in the *Eutycheum*). On Amm. Marc. 22.11.7 see Alan Cameron, "Palladas and the Nikai," *JHS* 84 (1964) 54–62, at 57; Haas, *Alexandria* 287; Callu 274. On Palladas, see C. M. Bowra, "Palladas on Tyche," *CQ* 10 (1960) 122–126; McKenzie, *Architecture* ch. 10.

and no archaeological remains have been identified. In addition, the date of its construction and the date of the introduction of the decorative scheme described by Ps.-Nicolaus are uncertain. While E. Kosmetatou has recently suggested that the Tychaion was “commissioned by one of the first two Ptolemies,”³ and A. Ausfeld states that the Tychaion, along with the Museum, was part of the Ptolemaic royal palaces,⁴ P. M. Fraser argues that “the description ... of the elaborate plan and embellishment of the structure is hardly compatible with a Hellenistic building, though it may have succeeded an earlier building on the same site.”⁵ This article does not attempt to establish the building’s precise location, the date at which it was constructed or reconstructed, or the date at which the decorative scheme described by Ps.-Nicolaus was put in place. While I argue below that the Tychaion’s alleged connection to Ptolemy I Soter is based on a misunderstanding of Ps.-Nicolaus’ Greek text, the archaeological parallels nevertheless seem to leave open the possibility of a Hellenistic date for the building’s original construction.⁶

Most of what we know about the Tychaion, then, depends on the eyewitness description of Ps.-Nicolaus. This author was a late-antique or Byzantine imitator of both the progymnasmata of Libanius and the progymnasmata treatise of Libanius’ student Aphthonius.⁷ W. Stegemann has argued that Ps.-

³ Kosmetatou 243. For attribution to Ptolemy I Soter, see Adriani 258 and Callu 281–282; attribution to his son Ptolemy II Philadelphus, Müller, *Antiquitates* 40 n.9.

⁴ A. Ausfeld, “Zur Topographie von Alexandria und Pseudo-kallisthenes,” *RhM* 55 (1900) 367. On remains of Ptolemaic-era buildings from the palace area, J. McKenzie, “Glimpsing Alexandria from Archaeological Evidence,” *JRA* 16 (2003) 47–50. On the location of the Tychaion, cf. McKenzie, *Architecture* ch. 10, and “The Place.”

⁵ Fraser II 393 n.417; cf. Grimm, *Alexandria* 70. Similarly, Stewart (244) says that “the complex ... recalls the Roman imperial architecture of Asia Minor.” Kosmetatou (244) misses Stewart’s distinction between the date of the building and the date of the Tyche group at its center. Lauter, *Architektur* 179, dates the construction of the Tychaion to the Hellenistic period.

⁶ Hebert 24–25; cf. Lauter, *Architektur* 176–179.

⁷ On the date and authorship of the progymnasmata of Ps.-Nicolaus (I 263–420 Walz) see R. F. Hock and E. N. O’Neil, *The Chreia and Ancient*

Nicolaus is Aphthonius, though W. Hörandner's study of Byzantine prose rhythm seems to point instead to an imitator.⁸ In addition to this ecphrasis of the statues in the Tychaion, all the other ecphrases of statues in Libanius' collection were also composed by Ps.-Nicolaus.⁹

According to this ecphrasis,¹⁰ the Tychaion is located in a sacred precinct in the middle of the city (sect. 1). The room is laid out in semicircles, with statues placed in individual niches flanked by engaged columns (3–4). In the very middle of the room is a statue group consisting of Tyche, who, flanked by two Victories, is crowning Earth, who in turn is crowning

Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises (Atlanta 2002) 198–204 (between the sixth and thirteenth centuries); E. Amato, “Costantino Porfirogenito ha realmente contribuito alla redazione dei *Geoponica*?” *Göttinger Forum für Altertumswissenschaft* 9 (2006) 3 n.17 (sixth to tenth); W. Stegemann, “Nikolaos (21),” *RE* 17 (1936) 447–457, argues for Aphthonian authorship; H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* I (Munich 1978) 92; J. Felten, *Nicolai Progymnasmata* (Leipzig 1913) xxvii. [Lib.] *Ecphr.* 25 is attributed to Ps.-Nicolaus by R. Foerster and K. Münscher, “Libanios,” *RE* 12 (1925) 2521–2522, Stegemann 449, and Hebert 8–9. I intend to argue elsewhere that Ps.-Nicolaus was active in the late fourth or fifth centuries, and that he may have been a student of Aphthonius.

⁸ Stegemann, *RE* 17 (1936) 447–457, considers three possibilities for the identity of Ps.-Nicolaus: Nicolaus Rhetor, Aphthonius, and “irgendein Nachahmer des A(phthonios), der A(phthonios) Beispiele ergänzen wollte” (456). He concludes that Aphthonius is the author, on the basis of correspondences in language and theoretical approach. W. Hörandner, *Der Prosarhythmus in der rhetorischen Literatur der Byzantiner* (Vienna 1981) 59–60, 65–68 disputes this on metrical grounds.

⁹ Libanius has left no authentic ecphrases of buildings or statues. For the ecphrases of statues in Libanius' collection, see examples 12–20, 22–23, and 26–28. *Ecphr.* 21 is a description of a chimaera (modeled on a painting, according to B. Schouler, *La tradition hellénique chez Libanius* I [Paris 1984] 129); *Ecphr.* 24 is a description of a live peacock exhibited at Athens. Foerster and Münscher, *RE* 12 (1925) 2521, and A. F. Norman, *Libanius: Selected Orations* I (Cambridge [Mass.] 1969) xlix, declared all these examples spurious. Of the ecphrases of works of art, Foerster and Münscher 2521–2522 attribute all to Ps.-Nicolaus; Stegemann, *RE* 17 (1936) 449, attributes to him only *Ecphrases* 12–17; Hebert 8–9 is more tentative. I follow Foerster and Münscher's attribution of *Ecphrases* 8–28 to Ps.-Nicolaus.

¹⁰ Text and translation in the Appendix below.

Alexander (6).¹¹ Four other areas of the room are described. In one is a crown of laurel¹² flanked by statues of two unnamed philosophers, one seated and one standing, the second naked and holding a celestial sphere (7). In a second area, bronze stelae engraved with the city's laws stand in the middle of the floor, and representations of some of the Ptolemies stand either between the doors (as statues) or on the doors (as engravings or reliefs) that lead out toward the Museum (8).¹³ In a third area, six of the twelve gods that are standing in the room¹⁴ surround a central statue of Charis, who represents "the nature of the earth" (5). In a fourth area stands a statue of the Founder (5):

καὶ κορυφῇ μὲν ἔχει τὸν οἰκιστὴν ἐξ ἑτέρων ἄκρων καὶ μέσων,
ἀνέστηκε δὲ φέρων μὲν αὐτὸς τοῦ Σωτήρος ὑπόμνημα, φερό-
μενος δὲ δι' ὧν ἡ πόλις εἴωθε τρέφεσθαι.

We need to consider the meaning of individual words, phrases, and clauses in this sentence.

With only two exceptions, most scholars hold that "the Founder" portrayed was Ptolemy I Soter.¹⁵ But Ptolemy was

¹¹ Cameron, *JHS* 84 (1964) 57 n.32, says that the Alexander statue of this group "surmounted the Tychaion."

¹² The precise meaning of "a crown of laurel made from a statue" (ἡτοιμασμένον ἐξ ἀγάλματος δάφνινον στέφανον) is uncertain. Laurel (δάφνινον) is Foerster's conjecture for the ἐλάφειον of the MSS. and previous editions ("of deer"—perhaps supported by Paus. 1.33.3, a "crown with deer on it," στέφανος ἐλάφους ἔχων). Stewart (384) translates "a laurel crown created in sculptural form"; the phrase is interpreted the same way by Kosmetatou 243. In his discussion of the ephrasis, however, Stewart describes it as "a huge laurel crown held aloft by another statue" (244); similarly, Hebert ("einem Lorbeerkrantz, der vom Standbild bereitgehalten wird," 14). Callu (273 n.26) tentatively places a sculptured wreath around the upper circumference of the room; he goes on to offer two further conjectures involving live laurel trees.

¹³ Hebert 20 and Stewart 244 express uncertainty about this. Callu 273 n.29 and Grimm, *Alexandria* 70, understand the bronze kings to be statues. Kosmetatou suggests that they were statues arranged in "an elaborate Ptolemaic dynastic group monument" (245). Ps.-Nicolaus' tendency to describe so many things in this building as being "in the middle" is very unhelpful.

¹⁴ I do not know on what evidence Haas, *Alexandria* 143, claims that the Tychaion also contained statues of Egyptian gods.

¹⁵ The statue is identified as Alexander by Will, *BCH* 75 (1951) 239 n.3,

never called οἰκιστής of Alexandria.¹⁶ In an Alexandrian context, the word naturally refers to Alexander the Great.¹⁷ Elsewhere, Ps.-Nicolaus calls Alexander both οἰκιστής and κτίστης of Alexandria, in a description of a statue of Alexander riding Bucephalus (this statue was located by the sea and is not to be confused with the one referred to here).¹⁸ The Tychaion, then, contained two representations of Alexander: one identified as the Founder of Alexandria, and one standing with Tyche in the building's central sculpture group (sect. 6).

Ps.-Nicolaus says that a κορυφή “holds” (ἔχει) the Founder. Most scholars have understood κορυφή as an otherwise unattested usage for a high pedestal of some sort, with the emphasis on its height.¹⁹ However, in several other late-antique ec-

and Callu 273 n.23. Ptolemy Soter: Müller, *Antiquitates* 40 n.9 (“summum locum tenebat statua Soteris τοῦ οἰκιστοῦ (Ptolemaei Soteris, i.e. primi, puto)”; Adriani 258; Calderini, *Dizionario* I.1 155; Fraser I 242; Hebert 17, 20, 22–23; M. Whitby and M. Whitby, *The History of Theophylact Simocatta* (Oxford 1986) 231 n.80; Lauter, *Architektur* 179; Daszewski, in Kahil, *Iconographie* 302; Stewart 244; Grimm, *Alexandria* 70, as “founder” of the dynasty; Kosmetatou 243; McKenzie, *Architecture* ch. 10.

¹⁶ On Ptolemy I, see G. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, transl. T. Saavedra (London 2001) 14–29; E. G. Turner, *CAH*² VII.1 (1984) 119–133. Rhodes established a cult for Ptolemy as Soter in 304 B.C.E. (Turner 168; F. W. Walbank, *CAH* 92 with n.103, 93). After his death in 283, “his successor Ptolemy II in 280 proclaimed him a god with a special cult as the Saviour (*Soter*) and instituted elaborate games, the *Ptolemaieia*, to celebrate this. Ptolemy I's wife Berenice, who died in 279, was also included in the cult and the two together are referred to as the Saviour Gods (*theoi soteris*)” (Walbank 97).

¹⁷ See, for example, Plut. *Mor.* 814D (an anecdote repeated by Cass. Dio 51.16.4), Paus. 5.21.9, and Julian *Ep.* 60 (378c). On the foundation of Alexandria in 331 B.C.E., see P. Green, “Alexander's Alexandria,” in P. Green (ed.), *From Icaria to the Stars: Classical Mythification, Ancient and Modern* (Austin 2004) 172–196; Hölbl, *History* 9–14; Fraser I 3–7. On the cult of “Alexander the Founder,” Fraser I 212.

¹⁸ [Lib.] *Ecpbr.* 27.1. This statue has been frequently discussed: J. Dörig, “Lysippe et Alexandrie,” in N. Bonacasa et al. (eds.), *Alessandria e il mondo ellenistico-romano* (Rome 1995) 300; Hebert 178–197; Stewart 40, 172–173, 397–400, with further bibliography.

¹⁹ As discussed by Hebert 15, reflected in the translations of Hebert (“eine Spitze,” 13; cf. Lauter, *Architektur* 179, “Spitze (?)”), Stewart (“above the others” and “he stands high,” 384 [my emphasis]), and Callu 273 (“le

phrases the term is used of a column capital. In his ecphrasis of the Serapeum at Alexandria, Aphthonius describes column capitals made of bronze and covered with gold: καὶ κορυφαὶ κίοσι χαλκῷ μὲν δεδημουρημέναι, χρυσῷ δὲ συγκρουπτόμεναι (40.8–9).²⁰ He also describes an imposing column there whose capital featured an illustration of the “beginnings of the things that exist”: ἀρχαὶ δὲ τῶν ὄντων τῇ τῆς κίονος κορυφῇ περιεστήκασι (40.15–16). A ninth-century commentator on Aphthonius, John of Sardis, explains ἀρχαὶ δὲ τῶν ὄντων as images of the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water.²¹ This column, still a major landmark today in Alexandria, “probably supported a statue, possibly the porphyry one of which part was reportedly found at its base.”²² The term is also used of column capitals by Choricus (*Or.* 2.48) and Procopius of Gaza (*Ecphr. eikonos* 3). In addition, the historian Procopius describes a column capital that supported an enormous bronze equestrian statue of Justinian (*Aed.* 1.2).²³ On the basis of these verbal and artistic parallels, I conclude that the statue of Alexander as Founder stood on a large capital atop a column.

pinacle”), and also implicit in Müller’s description of the statue (“summum locum tenebat,” *Antiquitates* 40 n.9). Adriani 258 places the statue “sul fastigio.” Will, *BCH* 75 (1951) 239 n.3, apparently envisions the Founder statue on the rooftop: “un edifice ... coiffé de la statue d’Alexandre,” by which he clearly means the Founder statue as distinct from the Alexander statue in the Tyche group (i.e. “le groupe signalé”).

²⁰ H. Rabe, *Aphthonii Progymnasmata* (Leipzig 1926); the ecphrasis is translated with notes in G. A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta 2003) 118–120.

²¹ H. Rabe, *Ioannis Sardiani Commentarium in Aphthonii Progymnasmata* (Leipzig 1928) 229.8–11. This interpretation is followed by Kennedy, *Progymnasmata* 120 n.93. The word ἀρχαί commonly means the “elements.”

²² J. S. McKenzie, S. Gibson, A.T. Reyes, “Reconstructing the Serapeum in Alexandria from the Archaeological Evidence,” *JRS* 94 (2004) 99; See J.-Y. Empereur, *Alexandria Rediscovered* (New York 1998) 103 (close-up color photograph), 106–109. The column is known as Diocletian’s Column or Pompey’s Pillar.

²³ R. Foerster and E. Richtsteig, *Choricii Gazaei Opera* (Leipzig 1929) 40.8–9; P. Friedländer, *Spätantiker Gemäldezyklus in Gaza* (Vatican City 1939) 5.24–6.1; J. Haury and G. Wirth, *Procopii Caesariensis Opera omnia* IV (Leipzig 1964) 17.27–28.

Skipping over for the moment the phrase ἐξ ἐτέρων ἄκρων καὶ μέσων, which I argue below positions the Founder statue relative to other statues in a group, I turn to the remainder of Ps.-Nicolaus' description of the Founder statue itself: ἀνέστηκε δὲ φέρων μὲν αὐτὸς τοῦ Σωτήρος ὑπόμνημα, φερόμενος δὲ δι' ὧν ἡ πόλις εἴωθε τρέφεσθαι ("He stands, himself bearing a token of the Soter, but being borne up by the things through which the city is customarily nourished"). The structure of the sentence is clear: the statue is both acting and being acted upon. The presence and emphatic placement of the intensive pronoun αὐτός makes the contrast between the active and passive participles all the more pointed: φέρων μὲν αὐτός ... φερόμενος δέ.²⁴ The thing he is holding is not identical with the things (plural) by which he is being held. What, then, are these two?

First, the thing that he is holding, τοῦ Σωτήρος ὑπόμνημα. This cannot mean what B. D. Hebert says: "die Statue hat das Aussehen des Soter."²⁵ Even if the Founder were Ptolemy, it would be very strange to say that the Tychaion housed a statue of Ptolemy I Soter that bore a resemblance to Ptolemy I Soter. A. Stewart's "tokens of a savior," though incorrectly rendered as a plural, is more along the right lines, but the definite article in τοῦ Σωτήρος militates against his interpretation as "a [generic] savior." J.-P. Callu has offered the suggestion that the statue is holding Ptolemy's history of Alexander ("Mémorial de Sôter").²⁶ To develop his idea further, one might say that inclusion of a representation of a book by the man who perhaps commissioned the building or at least this statue would fit both with the scholarly ambience of the Tychaion (e.g. the statue of the astronomer holding the celestial sphere) and with the building's proximity to the Museum, and would thus serve as another legitimizing link between Alexander and the Ptol-

²⁴ The active-passive distinction is missed in the translations of Hebert 13 and Stewart 384, but is correctly rendered by Callu 273.

²⁵ Hebert (22) explains: "es handelt sich um ein Porträt Ptolemaios I. Soter, wie sich in Verbindung mit dem Aufstellungsort Alexandria von selbst ergibt."

²⁶ Callu 273 with n.23. The fragments of Ptolemy's Alexander-history: *FGrHist* 138.

emies.²⁷ As intriguing as this hypothesis is, however, I do not believe it is correct. Ps.-Nicolaus nowhere uses ὑπόμνημα to refer to a book; and ὑπόμνημα without the definite article should mean “a book” rather than “the book.” Neither of these objections is decisive, but the use of ὑπόμνημα elsewhere in Ps.-Nicolaus and in his literary model Aphthonius, together with the lofty and deliberately allusive tone that I argue Ps.-Nicolaus is trying to adopt here, militates against identifying the word ὑπόμνημα with something so literal and mundane as a book.

In Ps.-Nicolaus and Aphthonius ὑπόμνημα means a physical commemoration, token, or representation, usually of an abstract concept. For example, Aphthonius uses the word of wise men, who are a “token” of the wise gods (25.22 Rabe). More relevant to the present inquiry, he uses it to describe a large artistic “representation” of the universe located on or around the ceiling of the Serapeum: ὀροφῇ δὲ τῷ οἴκῳ προήλθεν εἰς κύκλον, παρὰ δὲ τῷ κύκλῳ μέγα τῶν ὄντων ὑπόμνημα πέπηγεν (39.11–12). Ps.-Nicolaus elsewhere uses the word nine times, three in descriptions of works of art: Heracles’ crown is a token commemorating his battle with Antaeus ([Lib.] *Ecphr.* 14.3); the hand of Prometheus is a token of his pain (19.11); and Alexander’s breastplate and cloak are tokens of the two critical states, war and peace (27.6).²⁸ In Aphthonius and Ps.-Nicolaus all instances but one govern a preceding genitive.²⁹ Both authors also use the words σύμβολον and γνώρισμα as synonyms for ὑπόμνημα.³⁰ Given these parallels in Ps.-

²⁷ Stewart 245 has described the Tyche group along similar lines: “Its decidedly pedantic character looks well suited to the scholarly environment that gave birth to Alexandrian literature.” Cf. Kosmetatou 244.

²⁸ The remaining references are to the Minotaur as a token of Pasiphae’s intercourse with the bull ([Lib.] *Narration* 22; for its attribution to Ps.-Nicolaus, see Foerster and Münscher, *RE* 12 [1925] 2518–2519; Stegemann, *RE* 17 [1936] 448), the leaf of the date palm as a “token of victory” ([Lib.] *Encomium* 9.8; attribution to Ps.-Nicolaus, Foerster and Münscher 2520; for the expression, cf. Ps.-Nicolaus in Walz I 331.1), spoils from a hunt as a “token of victory” ([Lib.] *Ecphr.* 10.5), Medea’s children as “a token of her past fortune” (Walz I 304.19–20), and the grapevine’s undeserved good reputation as “a token of its wickedness” (Walz I 343.7).

²⁹ The exception is Walz I 304.19–20.

³⁰ For Ps.-Nicolaus’ use of σύμβολον: [Lib.] *Ecphr.* 22.2, 27.6; Walz I

Nicolaus' own rhetorical exercises, the phrase τοῦ Σωτήρος ὑπόμνημα should mean "a (physical) token of the Soter," an object that would somehow call the Soter to the viewer's mind (ὑπομνήσκειν). The phrase τοῦ Σωτήρος is an objective genitive dependent upon ὑπόμνημα, not a subjective or possessive genitive (as in Callu's interpretation). If τοῦ Σωτήρος ὑπόμνημα were a "commemoration of [Ptolemy] Soter," it would have to be something that physically commemorates *him*, and not something that belongs to him and yet commemorates someone else (as Callu's interpretation would have it). It seems too convoluted even for Ps.-Nicolaus to say "a (physical) token that would remind one of the Soter" if what he actually meant was "a memorial written by the Soter."

Having established the semantic range of ὑπόμνημα in Ps.-Nicolaus, we turn to "the Soter" and then the object as a whole. The words τοῦ Σωτήρος have frequently been understood to identify the Founder (τὸν οἰκιστὴν) as Ptolemy I Soter. I have argued above that this is incorrect. It does not necessarily follow, however, that the words τοῦ Σωτήρος have nothing to do with Ptolemy. If we imagine, for instance, that Ptolemy commissioned the statue, it is conceivable that the artist was instructed to endow his Alexander statue with an attribute more commonly associated with Ptolemy than with Alexander, as a way of paying tribute to both men and linking the latter with the former: "and (Alexander) stands, himself bearing a token of (Ptolemy) Soter."³¹ But this seems a dead end: no token

268.3, 288.3, 294.5, 327.9, 341.5, 343.8, 350.17, 363.18, 377.19. Cf. Aphthonius in Rabe 13.13, 16.10, 30.10. For Ps.-Nicolaus' use of γνώρισμα: [Lib.] *Narr.* 24.1 (attribution to Ps.-Nicolaus: Foerster and Münscher, *RE* 12 [1925] 2518–2519; Stegemann, *RE* 17 [1936] 448), *Ecphr.* 15.3, 22.4, 24.5, 27.6; Walz I 298.29, 310.3, 317.28, 335.26, 346.28, 346.29, 375.9. Cf. Aphthonius in Rabe 11.13–14. Ps.-Nicolaus uses all three words in close proximity as synonyms in *Ecphr.* 27.6.

³¹ On Ptolemy's quest to establish legitimacy via connections to Alexander, see most recently Kosmetatou 241–246, who discusses Ptolemy's history of Alexander (241), his fictional kinship to Alexander (241–243), and the ceremonial use of statues of the two men together (243). For artistic representations of Ptolemy, see Stewart 243–244, 255–256, 279–280, 304; H. Kyrieleis, *Bildnisse der Ptolemaer* (Berlin 1975) 4–16. On his coinage, Stewart esp. 231–243; *BMC Ptolemies* xv–xxxii, plates I–III.

suggests itself that would fit the context. More importantly, how might Ps.-Nicolaus in the fourth century C.E. or later have recognized this token for what it truly represented, or, alternatively, on what basis might he have made an *incorrect* interpretation along these lines? Nor could he reasonably have expected his late-antique audience of teenaged schoolboys to understand such an allusion (whether right or wrong), which he must have expected if, as seems certain, he composed his progymnasmata to supplement the instruction given in Aphthonius' manual.³² Post-classical Greek education is notoriously silent about historical persons and events after Alexander.

A reader for this journal has suggested that the item may be Zeus' aegis, given its artistic association with both Alexander and Ptolemy.³³ This might be a reasonable interpretation of τοῦ Σωτήρος ὑπόμνημα in isolation, since the most natural referent for τοῦ Σωτήρος in an Alexandrian context would arguably be Ptolemy Soter. However, the structure and language of the sentence do not seem to support this: φέρων apparently cannot mean "wearing," and even if it could, this meaning would destroy the neatly balanced (if heavy-handed) contrast implied by φέρων μὲν αὐτὸς ... φερόμενος δὲ (i.e. "himself wearing an aegis ... but *being held by* [something else]"). Nor does it seem likely that Alexander is "holding" the aegis draped loosely over his arm, as depicted in the Neisos gem.³⁴ In that instance he also has a shield and an eagle beside him and a thunderbolt in his other hand; it seems very doubtful that anyone in antiquity would view this very Zeus-like posture as somehow reflecting Ptolemy. Furthermore, there are no surviving representations of Alexander holding the aegis in isolation,

³² Stegemann, *RE* 17 (1936) 456–457.

³³ On Alexander and the aegis, see K. Parlasca, "Alexander Aigiochos: Das Kultbild des Stadtgründers von Alexandria in Ägypten," in P. C. Bol et al. (eds.), *Fremdheit-Eigenheit: Ägypten, Griechenland und Rom* (Munich 2004) 341–362; Stewart 246–252, with figs. 66–67 and 82–83, and the catalogues with extensive bibliography on 421–422, 436.

³⁴ See Stewart figs. 66–67. The only other instance in Ps.-Nicolaus in which a statue holds something draped over its arm is the equestrian statue of Alexander the Founder (n.18 above), with a cloak wrapped around the left arm: ἡ δὲ λαϊὰ συνεσταλμένην ἔχει χλαμύδα ([Lib.] *Ecphr.* 27.5).

without other attributes of Zeus. It seems unlikely, then, that Ps.-Nicolaus is saying that Alexander is holding an aegis that betokens Ptolemy Soter.

If the Founder was not Ptolemy, and if the phrase τοῦ Σωτήρος ὑπόμνημα cannot convincingly be connected to him, then support must be sought elsewhere for the assumption that he played a role in the construction and decoration of the Tychaion.³⁵ Kosmetatou's recent argument that the building's interior décor portrays Ptolemy as "an enlightened ruler and patron of the arts and sciences who abided by the laws that he instituted and consulted the best and wisest advisors" (244) points to one possible way of doing this. However, without firm external evidence connecting Ptolemy to the Tychaion, we might consider the possibility that "Soter" here refers to someone else, someone with an artistic attribute at least as well known to a late-ancient rhetorician and his Classically educated audience as whatever artistic attribute they may have associated with Ptolemy. Although helpful parallels for the term in the ecphrases are lacking,³⁶ many deliverers and protectors, both divine and human, received the epithet "Soter" in antiquity.³⁷ In an Alexandrian setting, Ptolemy Soter would have been by far the best known of the many attested human recipients. Among male gods, the epithet was given to Asclepius, Apollo, the Dioscuri, Helios, Men, Pan, Poseidon, and Serapis (less often to Dionysus, Hermes, Telesphoros, and various wind and river gods), and among heroes to Heracles, Oedipus, Eurystheus, and Brasidas. However, the epithet was most frequently applied to Zeus.³⁸ The king of the gods had been represented in statuary since the fifth century B.C.E. as stand-

³⁵ The claim is made by Adriani 258 and Callu 281–282. Kosmetatou 243 attributes it to either Ptolemy Soter or his successor, Ptolemy Philadelphus; Müller, *Antiquitates* 40 n.9, attributed it to Philadelphus.

³⁶ Aphthonius never uses the word σωτήρ, and Ps.-Nicolaus uses it only once elsewhere, in an ethopoeia in which Laodamia asks, "Am I to call the gods saviors (σωτήρας)?" (Walz I 393.10–11).

³⁷ F. Dornseiff, "Σωτήρ (1)," *RE* 3 (1929) 1212–1214; A. D. Nock, *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1972) I 78, II 720–735.

³⁸ Dornseiff, *RE* 3 (1929) 1212, pointing out that in cult practice he was never called "Soter" alone, but always "Zeus Soter."

ing and holding a scepter, a thunderbolt, or both.³⁹ Although Zeus in his guise as Soter apparently had no peculiar attribute in art, we do know that the statue of Zeus Soter at Aegion held a thunderbolt,⁴⁰ and an illustration on a fifth-century B.C.E. Sicilian strigil depicts Zeus holding the eagle and thunderbolt with the caption ΣΟΤΕΡ.⁴¹ It would not seem to be a stretch to interpret the thunderbolt as the means by which Zeus as Soter liberates or delivers his worshippers.⁴² Closer to home, the cult of Zeus Soter is attested in Ptolemaic Egypt and was popular with soldiers,⁴³ and a statue of him may have stood atop the Pharos lighthouse.⁴⁴

Alexander was represented holding this attribute of Zeus during his own lifetime and beyond. Pliny the Elder says that Apelles was paid twenty talents in gold to paint a portrait of Alexander wielding Zeus' thunderbolt for the temple of Artemis at Ephesus.⁴⁵ Later artists followed suit: Alexander holds a thunderbolt in Hellenistic coinage, on the Neisos gem, in bronze statuary, and possibly even in a Pompeian wall-paint-

³⁹ *LIMC* VIII.1 (1997) 328–329 (fifth century B.C.E.), 338–340 (fourth century), 346–347 (Hellenistic), 352 (Roman). On Zeus in ancient art more generally, with particular emphasis on vase-painting, see K. W. Arafat, *Classical Zeus: A Study in Art and Literature* (Oxford 1990).

⁴⁰ Paus. 7.23.9. Cf. C. A. Robinson, Jr., “The Zeus Ithomatas of Ageladas,” *AJA* 49 (1945) 124 n.27, citing numismatic evidence (*BMC Peloponnese* pp.18–19, plate IV.12, 14, 17).

⁴¹ H. Marwitz, “Epigraphisch-numismatisches zu einer Strigilisinschrift,” *SchwMbl* 32 (1982) 53–58.

⁴² Cf. Stewart 195, who interprets Apelles' famous painting of Alexander holding a thunderbolt as follows: “So the Alexander Keraunophoros signaled, first, that the king's power on earth was like that of Zeus, universal, invincible, and omniscient; and second, that after ensuring the reconstruction of Artemis's desolated temple, he was now laying her 'liberated' territory of Asia at her feet. Since Asia was their joint kingdom, he had blasted their common foe, the impious barbarian, just as their father Zeus was accustomed to do.”

⁴³ E. Bernard, *Inscriptions grecques d'Alexandrie ptolémaïque* (Cairo 2001) p.91; Fraser I 194–195.

⁴⁴ Fraser I 18–19; Empereur, *Alexandria* 84–85.

⁴⁵ *HN* 35.92. For discussion of this painting and its influence on later artistic representations of Alexander, Stewart 191–209.

ing.⁴⁶ A 40-cubit gilded thunderbolt and an 18-cubit silver breastplate decorated with two 10-cubit thunderbolts were part of the procession of Alexander at a celebration of the Ptolemaicia in the 270s.⁴⁷ In addition, many authors report Alexander's desire to be viewed as a son of Zeus. In 331 Milesian oracles proclaimed that he was fathered by Zeus (Callisthenes *FGrHist* 124 F 14a). After inspecting the planned site of Alexandria later that year, Alexander visited the oracle of Zeus Ammon in the Siwah oasis and was hailed as the son of the god; he returned from the desert, laid out the site of the future city, and then made sacrifice to Zeus before leaving on the Persian campaign.⁴⁸ According to Arrian, Alexander believed that he was Zeus' son even before his visit to Siwah (*Anab.* 3.3.2), and this belief was ultimately responsible for his killing of Cleitus (4.8.1–9), his subsequent acceptance of absolution for the murder from the philosopher Anaxarchus (4.9.7), and his anger at the mutineers at Opis (7.8.3). Alexander claimed to be descended from Zeus on both sides of the family, and some said that his mother Olympias had been impregnated by Zeus disguised as a thunderbolt (Plut. *Alex.* 2.1–2).

Interpreting τοῦ Σωτήρος ὑπόμνημα as the thunderbolt of Zeus is plausible for several reasons. Abundant literary and visual evidence connects the thunderbolt with Zeus, the thunderbolt with Alexander, and Alexander with Zeus. It seems more likely that our late-ancient author would correctly recognize a thunderbolt as the ὑπόμνημα of Zeus Soter than any other item as the ὑπόμνημα of a particular Ptolemaic king. Alexander need not have been called Soter—and he was not—for this interpretation to be correct. But one might well wonder why, if the Founder is holding up a thunderbolt, Ps.-Nicolaus does not say so more directly. Whatever the object is, Ps.-

⁴⁶ A. B. Bosworth, *CAH*² VI (1994) 874; Stewart 198–209, with figs. 64–70. On artistic representations of Alexander's divinity, see also C. Reinsberg, "Alexanderbilder in Ägypten: Manifestation eines neuen Herrscherideals," in Bol et al., *Fremdheit-Eigenheit* 319–339.

⁴⁷ Callixeinos in Ath. 5.202C–E (*FGrHist* 627 F 2 [34]); cf. E. E. Rice, *The Grand Procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus* (London 1983); Stewart 252–260.

⁴⁸ Bosworth, *CAH*² VI 810–811, and on the divinity of Alexander more generally, 871–875.

Nicolaus has not identified it directly; so this would be not so much an objection to identification of the object with Zeus' thunderbolt as it would be to Ps.-Nicolaus' mode of description. The second part of this sentence is no less indirect or opaque: "but being borne up by the things through which the city is customarily nourished." I believe that the vagueness of Ps.-Nicolaus' description at this point must be intentional. His literary model here is Aphthonius,⁴⁹ who in his description of a column capital in the Serapeum, as mentioned above, says that it was decorated with "the beginnings of the things that exist" (ἀρχαὶ δὲ τῶν ὄντων, Rabe 40.15). This is arguably the same tone adopted by Ps.-Nicolaus in his description of the Founder statue; both authors may be seeking to convey a sense of religious awe by using symbolic language to partially conceal the very objects they purport to describe. In addition, this instance of ὑπόμνημα is unlike all others in Ps.-Nicolaus in that it omits the specific, concrete noun of which the "ὑπόμνημα + objective genitive" phrase is an appositive; the only parallel in Aphthonius is his description of a μέγα τῶν ὄντων ὑπόμνημα in the Serapeum (Rabe 39.12), an equally allusive description of an artistic representation of the universe. I suggest that once Ps.-Nicolaus committed himself to describing in lofty, deliberately allusive terms the things by which the statue was being held, he also had to describe the thing that the statue was holding in the same manner. In light of his apparent stylistic goal, the difficulty in getting from τοῦ Σωτήρος ὑπόμνημα to Zeus' thunderbolt—given that the referent of ὑπόμνημα would have been visible to the audience, and only τοῦ Σωτήρος might have given them pause—does not seem to be a serious obstacle to the interpretation proposed here.

We turn now to consider the second part of the sentence: φερόμενος δὲ δι' ὧν ἡ πόλις εἴωθε τρέφεσθαι. Despite the middle participle φερόμενος in sect. 7 (the standing nude philosopher "holding" a celestial sphere),⁵⁰ I have argued above that φερόμενος in 5 should be construed as passive, not middle. If this is correct, then the Founder cannot be "holding" a cor-

⁴⁹ Libanius has left no authentic ephrases of buildings or statues.

⁵⁰ This is also noted by Callu 273 n.27.

nucopia, as he has frequently been described as doing.⁵¹ A cornucopia is a plausible interpretation of δι' ὧν ἡ πόλις εἴωθε τρέφεσθαι; the double cornucopiae shown on Ptolemaic coins might have been a better guess, given the plural ὧν.⁵² But in order to have the statue holding a cornucopia, φερόμενος would have to be understood as middle. Stewart and Hebert interpret it in this way, downplaying the contrast implied by φέρων μὲν ... φερόμενος δέ and the intensive pronoun αὐτός. The μὲν ... δέ construction in any case precludes Stewart's reading of φερόμενος δὲ δι' ὧν ἡ πόλις εἴωθε τρέφεσθαι as a simple restatement of φέρων μὲν αὐτός τοῦ Σωτήρος ὑπόμνημα, i.e., "he stands high, and *bears* the tokens of a savior, *carrying* the means by which the city is nurtured" (my emphasis).

I have argued above that the sentence as a whole describes the Founder as holding something and being held by something else, and that the κορυφή that is "holding" (ἔχει) the statue is a column capital. We know both from archaeological remains⁵³ and from Aphthonius that prominent column capitals in late-antique Alexandrian temples were highly decorated. I have already mentioned Aphthonius' allusive description of the decorative scheme of a capital in the Serapeum: "the beginnings of the things that exist stand around the capital of the

⁵¹ Adriani 258 ("forse con cornucopia"); Hebert 17, 20, 22–23; Stewart 244; Kosmetatou 243. Note that Müller, *Antiquitates* 40 n.9, did not specify a cornucopia, but imagined the statue as holding various fruits in his hands: "qui omnia frugum genera, quibus civitas nutriebatur, manibus tenebat." At the site of the Serapeum, "a white marble hand from a colossal (c. 5 m. high) statue, apparently holding a cornucopia" of Roman date has been found (McKenzie et al., *JRS* 94 [2004] 100).

⁵² See *BMC Ptolemies* 54, 76, 77, 123; *BMC Alexandria* xciv, 9, 104.

⁵³ P. Pensabene, *Elementi architettonici di Alessandria e di altri siti Egiziani* (Rome 1993), with plates. On Corinthian capitals from Alexandria and Cairo, see R. Kautzsch, *Kapitellstudien: Beiträge zu einer Geschichte des spätantiken Kapitells im Osten vom vierten bis ins siebente Jahrhundert* (Berlin 1936) 24–40, with plates 5–10. Such capitals were often removed in late antiquity to adorn Christian buildings. See, for example, D. Kinney, "Spolia from the Baths of Caracalla in Sta. Maria in Trastevere," *ArtB* 68 (1986) 379–397. For their reuse in Alexandrian cisterns, see the photographs in Empereur, *Alexandria* 130, 131, 136, 138–139. More generally, J. Onians, *Bearers of Meaning: The Classical Orders in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance* (Princeton 1988).

column” (ἀρχαὶ δὲ τῶν ὄντων τῆ τῆς κίονος κορυφῆ περιεστήγασι, 40.15–16). I suggest therefore that Ps.-Nicolaus’ φερόμενος δὲ δι’ ὧν ἡ πόλις εἴωθε τρέφεσθαι refers to the decorative scheme of the column capital supporting the statue of Alexander. The problem of the plural ὧν is then easily resolved: there must be more than one thing “through which the city is customarily nourished.” These could be images of fruits and vegetation (e.g. stalks of grain), cornucopiae single or double,⁵⁴ the *septemfluus* Nile,⁵⁵ or some combination of these. The cornucopia is also an appropriate image because of its mythological connections both to Zeus, through the myth of the horn of Amaltheia, and to Fortuna/Tyche, through the myth of the broken horn of Achelous given by Heracles to the Nymphs and thence to Copia, who was a servant of Fortuna.⁵⁶

The statue of the Founder—Alexander the Great—stood bearing a thunderbolt in the guise of Zeus Soter, on top of a column whose capital was decorated with symbols of abundance. It remains to address the position of this statue relative to other statues in the room. After stating that the space is divided into semicircles abutted by columns and that the semicircles contain individual niches for statues of gods (sects. 3–4), Ps.-Nicolaus writes that “Gods are placed standing—not all but only twelve in number. And a column capital holds the Founder out apart from the two end ones and middle ones ... And the nature of the earth is represented by Charis; half the

⁵⁴ A sixth-century column capital (provenance unidentified) features the double cornucopiae above acanthus leaves; photograph in *The Oxford History of Byzantium* (Oxford 2002) 165.

⁵⁵ Callu 273 n.22, understands the phrase to refer to “le Nil avec ses multiples embouchures” but envisions this as part of a sculpture group with a reclining Charis holding up Alexander from below.

⁵⁶ For the relevant myths and their literary sources, see M. H. Iñiguez, “Copia,” *LIMC* III.1 (1986) 304, and Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.1.7 and 2.7.5 with J. G. Frazer’s notes (Loeb). On the association of Tyche with the cornucopia, K. J. Shelton, “Imperial Tyches,” *Gesta* 18 (1979) 29. In general on the cornucopia in ancient literature and art, see E. Pottier, “Cornucopia,” *Dar.-Sag.* I.2 (1877) 1514–1520. For the cornucopia in Ptolemaic iconography (which influenced many previous interpretations of this statue), see Ath. 497B–C; Hebert 22–23; *BMC Ptolemies* xlv, 47, 54–57, 65–66, 69, 74, 76–77, 123; Pottier 1517–1518.

stated number of gods surround her in the middle” (5). He immediately goes on to describe the group in the very center of the room (μέσον ἐκ μέσου) in which Tyche, flanked by Victories, crowns Earth, who in turn crowns Alexander (6).

We learn from this passage, first, that there are statues of only twelve gods in the room, presumably the twelve Olympians. Ps.-Nicolaus next describes the Founder statue: the column capital holds it ἐξ ἐτέρων ἄκρων καὶ μέσων. Next comes a statue of Charis, who represents the earth’s bounty and is surrounded by six of the aforementioned gods. After that, in the very middle of the room, is the Tyche group. In this description Ps.-Nicolaus omits to mention the location of the statues of the other six Olympian gods. We know that six of them surround Charis, and that all twelve (and only these twelve) are in the room. The proximity of his description of the Founder statue to his description of the Charis group suggests some relationship between the two. A clue to the interpretation of ἐξ ἐτέρων ἄκρων καὶ μέσων is provided by the description of the group in which statues of six of the twelve Olympians “surround” (κυκλοῖ) a statue of Charis “in their middle” (κατὰ μέσον). I follow Hebert in his suggestion that the six Olympians in their individual niches form a semicircle with the statue of Charis at its focus (i.e. the midpoint of its bisector).⁵⁷ Might the other six unmentioned Olympians, as Hebert suggested, form an identical semicircle with the statue of the Founder at its focus?⁵⁸ If so, it is likely that ἐξ ἐτέρων ἄκρων καὶ μέσων is intended

⁵⁷ For this arrangement of the Charis group, see Hebert 20. Callu (273 nn.22–23) places a reclining Charis along with the Nile in a sculpture group underneath the Founder statue because Charis represents the earth (as Ps.-Nicolaus says) and the Nile nourishes the earth. This alleged connection between Charis and the phrase δι’ ὧν ἡ πόλις εἴωθε τρέφεσθαι, however, is not drawn by Ps.-Nicolaus, who mentions only the nourishing of the city.

⁵⁸ In this I agree with Hebert 20. Stewart 244 likewise translates κυκλοῖ as “encircle” but apparently envisions seven niches in a straight line along two walls of the temple; he describes the room as “square in plan,” says that “the two adjoining sides each contained seven niches embellished with engaged columns,” and describes the central statues on each wall as being “flanked by” the Olympians. Kosmetatou 243 states that the building was circular but also follows Stewart’s description of its four sides, with two sides each containing seven niches.

somehow to describe this.⁵⁹ Ps.-Nicolaus, I suggest, is saying that “a column capital holds the Founder out apart from the two end ones and middle ones.” In other words, the Founder’s statue is placed apart from the statues of the Olympians that are located on the ends and in the middle of the semicircle they formed. The statue of the Founder is apart from all six Olympians, but in particular from the two located on the endpoints of the semicircle of gods (ἄκρων) and the two flanking the unoccupied midpoint of the semicircle (μέσων). This interpretation is in strict keeping with Ps.-Nicolaus’ use of these two words elsewhere in his ecphrases.⁶⁰ A semicircle of six statues would not have a central statue, which would account for Ps.-Nicolaus’ plural “middles” (μέσων). It is also possible that “middles” refers to all four statues located between the two endpoints (i.e., the “intermediate” statues). In either case, like any good rhetorician, Ps.-Nicolaus is trying to describe, artfully and accurately and with variety, the appearance of two symmetrical sculpture groups. It is a pity that his goals are so at odds with ours.

If this interpretation of the Founder group and the Charis group is correct, the building would at minimum need to ac-

⁵⁹ Hebert 13, takes the phrase to refer to statues of various heights (“aus anderen Spitzen und mittleren Höhen heraus”), in keeping with his theory that the κορυφή here uniquely means a high column or pedestal. Also viewing the κορυφή as a high column or pedestal, Stewart translates the phrase as “which are of medium height,” converting the words ἄκρων καὶ μέσων into a relative clause, omitting the καί, and taking μέσων as modifying ἄκρων in a difficult genitive of description. Callu (273) adds an understood “springing up” in order to make the phrase modify κορυφή rather than ἔχει: “Le pinacle jaillissant d’entre les acrotères et leurs entre-deux”; his theory that ἄκροα are acroteria recurs in his translation of the description of the wreath and the two philosophers (sect. 7).

⁶⁰ Ps.-Nicolaus applies ἄκρος to the tips of fingers (17.6), the ends of hair (18.2, 3), the tip of a foot (18.4), the end of an arm (22.6), the rim of a shield (22.6, 7, 10, 11), and the tips of a peacock’s tail-feathers (24.6). A second instance in 22.10 may mean “at the top,” where he is describing the position of Athena’s hand on the upper edge of the shield that stands beside her. The two key terms are found together in his description of the three-part composition of the chimaera: “For it started from where it did not stop, and it ended from where it did not begin, and the middle (τὸ μέσον) is removed from the ends (τῶν ἄκρων)” (21.2).

commodate two facing semicircles, each with six Olympians half-surrounding a central figure at its focus. An oval building, or a square or rectangular one with semicircular apses on two sides, would accommodate everything—the Charis group and Founder group occupying apses on opposite sides of the building; the Tyche group in the very middle of the room; the laurel crown flanked by two philosophers on one of the straight sides; and on the opposite straight side the stelae containing the laws “in the middle of the floor,” the statues of bronze kings between the doors, and the doors themselves leading out to the Museum. If the building was circular (as has frequently been suggested),⁶¹ there would need to be spaces opened between the two semicircles (which would then not be full semicircles) in order to allow room for the laurel crown flanked by the two philosophers and, opposite these, the bronze kings and the laws.⁶² In either case, semicircular arches above the individual niches would help further to explain Ps.-Nicolaus’ statement that “the decoration is divided into semicircles, and varied columns are placed in front of each” (3).⁶³

Where was the cult statue located? Coins under Antoninus Pius (*BMC Alexandria* 142 no. 1198) depict a statue of Tyche wearing a modius on her head, holding a rudder in her right hand, supporting her head with her left, and reclining on a couch decorated with garlands within a shrine featuring two Corinthian columns supporting a triangular pediment. This is

⁶¹ Hebert 24–25 discusses several Hellenistic and Roman-era architectural parallels. For the view that the building was circular: Adriani 258; Will, *BCH* 75 (1951) 239 n.3; Whitby and Whitby, *History* 231 n.80; Lauter, *Architektur* 179; Callu 273 n.23; Grimm, *Alexandria* 70; Kosmetatou 243; McKenzie, *Architecture* chs. 8 and 10.

⁶² Callu (273 n.28) says that visitors would have circulated between two exedrae. Will, *BCH* 75 (1951) 239 n.3, places the niches containing the twelve gods around the exterior of a round tholos, with Alexander the Founder apparently on the roof (“coiffé de la statue d’Alexandre”) and everything else in the interior. Lauter, *Architektur* 179, describes a round inner building with two semicircular exedrae. Callu places the twelve gods in two opposing exedrae around the perimeter of a round building, but then proposes a three-story decorative scheme for the rest that is quite difficult to envision (273 nn.23–24, 284 n.124).

⁶³ See the discussion of Hebert 24–25.

clearly not the standing Tyche statue described by Ps.-Nicolaus as occupying the very middle of the room (μέσον ἐκ μέσου) in a group with two Victories, Earth, and Alexander. Observing this discrepancy, R. S. Poole argues that the Tyche of the coins “probably ... was the form of the chief statue,” while the Tyche group described by Ps.-Nicolaus “clearly was the principal statue [of Tyche] in one part, not necessarily the chief one in the whole building”; the temple depicted on the coins, therefore, “represent[s] not the Tychaion but its sanctuary.”⁶⁴ This view has not generally found favor.⁶⁵ In a forthcoming study J. S. McKenzie suggests, by analogy with the Pantheon in Rome, that “it is possible the pediment depicted was on [the circular Tychaion’s] vestibule.”⁶⁶ But the reclining cult statue shown on the coin would not have been located within the hypothetical vestibule itself, and there seems to be no place for it in the circular room immediately behind the vestibule, whose center, we are told explicitly, is occupied by the standing Tyche group.⁶⁷ Ps.-Nicolaus may have declined to describe the cult statue simply because his model Aphthonius had done likewise,⁶⁸ but this is of no help in locating a large but unmentioned statue within the Tychaion. It is possible, however, that we are looking in the wrong place. At Constantinople the

⁶⁴ *BMC Alexandria* xc and lvi.

⁶⁵ Adriani 258–259 (followed by Hebert 18) doubts that Poole’s view can be reconciled with the details of the ecphrasis, but he too places the statues of the semicircles outside the temple. Will, *BCH* 75 (1951) 239 n.3, points out that the Tyche statue in the ecphrasis does not correspond to the one on the coins. In discussing Poole’s view, M.-O. Jentel, “Isis ou la Tyché d’Alexandrie,” in M. B. de Boer and T. A. Edridge (eds.), *Hommages à Maarten J. Vermaseren II* (Leiden 1978) 554 n.51, expresses uncertainty whether the Tychaion contained the temple shown on the coins.

⁶⁶ McKenzie, *Architecture* ch. 8.

⁶⁷ Cf. F. R. Trombley, *Hellenic Religion and Christianization I* (Leiden 1993) 213–214, for discussion of a similar problem in the Marneion in Gaza.

⁶⁸ There is no description of the world-famous statue of Serapis in Aphthonius’ ecphrasis of the Serapeum. Aphthonius closes his description by saying: “The beauty (of the acropolis) is greater than I can say, and if anything has been left out, this has been incidental to our wonder. It has been omitted because it was impossible to describe” (41.9–11 Rabe, transl. Kennedy). Ps.-Nicolaus does not allude to any similar omissions on his part.

temple containing the statue of the Tyche of Rome stood near but was not identical to the Tychaion, also known as the temple of Rhea.⁶⁹ Perhaps the Tychaion and the temple of Tyche were distinct buildings at Alexandria, as well.

To explicate: “A column capital holds the Founder (i.e. Alexander) out apart from the two end ones and middle ones (i.e. the two statues on the ends and in the middle of the semicircle formed by the six gods). And he stands, himself bearing a token of (Zeus) Soter (i.e. a thunderbolt), but being borne up by the things through which the city is customarily nourished (i.e. images of the earth’s bounty adorning the column capital).” With this reinterpretation the decorative plan of the Tychaion becomes somewhat more coherent. A semicircle of six Olympians, at its focus the divinity Charis, who represents the earth’s bounty, stands directly across the room from a semicircle of six Olympians, at its focus a statue of Alexander the Great in the guise of divine protector or liberator, placed atop a column capital decorated with symbols of the earth’s bounty.

APPENDIX: Ps.-Nicolaus’ Ecphrasis of the Tychaion⁷⁰

(1) Τύχαι δὲ ἄρα πάντα μὲν τὰ ἀνθρώπινα ὅπη βούλονται φέρουσιν, ἐγκαθίδρυνται δὲ δικαίως ταῖς πόλεσιν, ἐξ ὧν ἅπαντα δικαίως κατορθοῦσι τιμώμεναι. καὶ τὰς μὲν ἐν ἐκάστη τῶν πόλεων ἰδρυμένας οἱ παρ’ ἐκάστην θεώμενοι φράζουσιν, ἐγὼ δὲ ἦν τεθέαμαι καὶ δι-εξέρχομαι.

(2) τέμενος ἐν μέσῳ τῆς πόλεως ἴδρυται συγκείμενον μὲν ἐκ πλειόνων θεῶν, Τύχης δὲ ἅπαν ὀνόμασται. καὶ μοι δοκοῦσιν οἱ τὴν κλήσιν τῷ χώρῳ προσθέντες εἰς τὸ δέον ποιεῖν. οἷς γὰρ ἅπαντα Τύχῃ συγκρούπτεται, τούτοις ἢ θεῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Τύχης συνεκέκρυπτο κλήσις.

(3) κατασκευάσται δὲ ὁ χώρος ὠδέ πως. ἡσκηται μὲν ἅπας ἐξ ἐδάφους εἰς ὄροφῆν, διήρηται δὲ ἢ κατασκευῆ κατὰ κύκλους ἡμισέας, ἐφ’ ἐκάστῳ δὲ παντοδαπαὶ προβέβληνται κίονες. (4) οἱ δ’ αὖ κύκλοι εἰσὶ

⁶⁹ G. Dagron, *Naissance d’une capitale* (Paris 1974) 44, citing Hesychius *Patr. Const.* 15 (T. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum* I [Leipzig 1910] 6) and Zosimus 2.31.

⁷⁰ [Lib.] *Ecphr.* 25 (ed. R. Foerster, *Libanii opera* VIII 529–531) = Ps.-Nicolaus *Ecphr.* 8 (ed. Walz I 408.11–409.29). This ecphrasis has been translated into German by Hebert 11–15; into English by Stewart 383–384; and into French by Callu 272–273. The translation here is taken from my forthcoming translation of Libanius’ *Progymnasmata*, to be published by the Society of Biblical Literature and E. J. Brill.

πρὸς ἀγαλμάτων ὑποδοχὰς ἀνιστάμενοι καὶ μετρῆν ἕξεσι τοὺς κύκλους τοῖς ἀγάλμασιν, ἐκ δὲ τῶν ἀγαλμάτων παρεστήκασιν κίονες. (5) θεοὶ δὲ εἰσὶν ἀνεστηκότες οὐ πάντες, ἀλλ' ὅσοι δύο καὶ δέκα τὸν ἀριθμὸν. καὶ κορυφὴ μὲν ἔχει τὸν οἰκιστὴν ἐξ ἐτέρων ἄκρων καὶ μέσων, ἀνέστηκε δὲ φέρων μὲν αὐτὸς τοῦ Σωτῆρος ὑπόμνημα, φερόμενος δὲ δι' ὧν ἡ πόλις εἴωθε τρέφεσθαι. καὶ σημαίνει τῆς γῆς τὴν φύσιν ἢ Χάρις, κυκλοὶ δὲ κατὰ μέσον ἡμισυ ὅσον ἀριθμὸς θεῶν ὀνομάζεται. (6) καὶ μέσον ἐκ μέσου Τύχης ἔστηκεν ἄγαλμα στεφάνῳ δηλοῦν Ἀλεξάνδρου τὰς νίκας. καὶ στέφεται μὲν ὑπὸ Τύχης ἢ Γῆ, στέφει δὲ αὐτὴ τὸν νικήσαντα. Νίκαι δὲ τῆς Τύχης ἐκατέρωθεν ἀνεστήκασιν καλῶς τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τῆς Τύχης δηλοῦντος τὴν δύναμιν, ὡς πάντα νικᾶν οἶδεν ἡ Τύχη. (7) τελευτᾶ δὲ ἡ τοῦ χώρου κατασκευὴ πρὸς ἡτοιμασμένον ἐξ ἀγάλματος δάφνινον στέφανον. καὶ φιλοσοφεῖ εἰς ἐπὶ καθέδρας ἄκρου, γυμνὸς δὲ ἕτερος πρὸς τὸ λοιπὸν ἄκρον ἀνέστηκεν οὐρανοῦ μὲν ἐπὶ τῆς λαιᾶς φερόμενος πρόσχημα, τὴν δ' αὖ δεξιὰν εἰς ἅπαντα πρόχειρον, γυμνὸς δὲ προκαλύμματος ἴσταται. (8) καὶ στήλαι χαλκαὶ κατὰ μέσον ἐστήκασιν ἔδαφος ἐγκεκολλημέναι τὰ τῆς πόλεως νόμιμα. καὶ κατὰ μέσον αἱ πύλαι παρὰ τὸ Μουσῶν ἄγουσαι τέμενος. χαλκοὶ δὲ βασιλεῖς κατὰ μέσον ἐστήκασιν οὐχ ὅσους ἐκόμισε χρόνος, ἀλλ' ὅσοι τῶν κομισθέντων ἦσαν σεμνότατοι.

(9) ταῦτα θαῦμα μὲν ὑπῆρχεν ἰδεῖν, κέρδος δὲ μαθεῖν, ἀδίκημα δὲ σιωπῇ κατακρύπτεσθαι.

(1) Tyches, then, carry all human affairs wherever they wish, and they are justly erected in the cities, from which they, when honored, justly make everything prosper. And those who see them erected in each of the cities declare it in each case, and I too will describe one that I have seen.

(2) A sacred precinct is established in the middle of the city, composed of many more gods, but the whole precinct is named after Tyche. And those who gave the area its name seem to me to do so out of necessity. For as to those from whom everything is hidden by Tyche, for them the name of the gods⁷¹ had been hidden because of Tyche. (3) The area is decorated somewhat as follows. It is completely adorned from floor to ceiling. The decoration is divided into semicircles, and varied columns are placed in front of each. (4) The semicircles, in turn, are made to serve as receptacles for statues, and it is possible to measure the semicircles in terms of their statues; columns are set up alongside the statues. (5) Gods are placed standing—not all but only twelve in number. And a column capital holds the Founder out apart from the two end ones and middle ones, and he

⁷¹ I.e. the ability to call upon the gods for aid.

stands, himself bearing a token of the Soter, but being borne up by the things by which the city is customarily nourished. And the nature of the earth is represented by Charis; half the stated number of gods surround her in their middle. (6) And in the very middle stands a statue of Tyche, making clear by a crown the victories of Alexander; and Earth is being crowned by Tyche, and Earth herself is crowning the victor. Victories stand on either side of Tyche, with the craftsman admirably showing the power of Tyche, that Tyche knows how to be victorious over all. (7) The decoration of the area is completed with a crown of laurel made from a statue.⁷² And one man philosophizes on a chair at one end,⁷³ while another stands naked at the other end, holding an image of heaven⁷⁴ in his left hand, while <holding> his right hand ready for everything, and he stands bare of covering. (8) And bronze stelae stand in the middle of the floor, engraved with the laws of the city. And in the middle are the doors leading to the precinct of the Muses. Bronze kings stand in the middle,⁷⁵ not all that time has brought, but those it has brought who were most revered.

(9) These things were a wonder to see, a benefit to learn of, and a crime to hide away in silence.⁷⁶

May, 2007

Department of Classics
University of Iowa
Iowa City IA 52242
craig-gibson@uiowa.edu

⁷² The meaning of “made from a statue” is uncertain; see n.12 above.

⁷³ I.e. at one end of the crown.

⁷⁴ I.e. a celestial sphere.

⁷⁵ The meaning of “in the middle” is uncertain here; see n.13 above.

⁷⁶ I would like to thank Lara Aho, Jeff Beneker, Life Blumberg, Mary Depew, Peter Green, Malcolm Heath, Rosemary Moore, and the editor and anonymous readers for this journal for their many suggestions and criticisms. Judith McKenzie kindly shared with me some of her work on the Tychaion in advance of publication. I also wish to acknowledge the support services provided by the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies at the University of Iowa.