

COLLÈGE DE FRANCE – CNRS
CENTRE DE RECHERCHE D’HISTOIRE
ET CIVILISATION DE BYZANCE

TRAVAUX ET MÉMOIRES
19

STUDIES
IN THEOPHANES

edited by
Marek JANKOWIAK
&
Federico MONTINARO

*Ouvrage publié avec le concours de la fondation Ebersolt
du Collège de France*

Association des Amis du Centre d’Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance
52, rue du Cardinal-Lemoine – 75005 Paris
2015

INTRODUCTION

by Marek JANKOWIAK & Federico MONTINARO

This book presents the proceedings of the conference “The *Chronicle* of Theophanes: sources, composition, transmission,” organized by the editors in Paris in September 2012. The *Chronicle* attributed to Theophanes the Confessor († 817 or 818) is an annalistic compilation continuing the world chronicle of George Synkellos and spanning more than five hundred years of Byzantine history, from Diocletian’s accession to the eve of the second Iconoclasm (AD 284–813). It stands as the major Greek source on Byzantium’s “Dark Centuries,” for which its author relied on now lost sources covering, notably, the Arab conquest, the Monothelete controversy, the emergence of Bulgaria, and the first Iconoclasm. It seemed to us in 2012 that the fifteen years of research since C. Mango and R. Scott’s ground-breaking English translation¹ had witnessed steady advances in the understanding of the manuscript tradition as well as in the identification and assessment of the *Chronicle*’s individual sources. In this regard, one source of the *Chronicle*, clearly related to the Western Syriac tradition, had received a particularly large share of attention. It also seemed to us, however, that on this and other matters opinions differed, while numerous questions, concerning for example the author’s method and biases, the early manuscripts, or the Latin adaptation by Anastasius, Librarian of the Roman Church († c. 879), waited to be reformulated in the light of recent research.

The first section of the volume is devoted to the question of the authorship of the *Chronicle*, raised by C. Mango almost forty years ago.² Detecting what he believed to be the traces of George Synkellos’ composition, Mango suggested that the sentence, found in Theophanes’ preface, “[George Synkellos] both bequeathed to me, who was his close friend, the book he had written and provided *aphormas* with a view to completing what was missing,” where *aphormas* can indeed indicate “materials” (but also a “starting point” or “pretext”), describes more or less a draft which Theophanes did little more than revise and polish. The opening contribution of this section, by W. Treadgold, develops this view and presents the knowns and unknowns of George’s life, career, and legacy. In the following paper, in contrast, C. Zuckerman takes issue with this interpretation. Zuckerman attributes a far greater agency to the author of the *Chronicle* and argues

1. MANGO – SCOTT.
2. MANGO, Who wrote the Chronicle.

that he should be dissociated from the Confessor and abbot of Agros. In spite of this we shall, for the sake of convenience, keep speaking of “Theophanes” as the author of the *Chronicle*. Irrespective of his identity, the question of his relationship with George Synkellos remains relevant. Thus, M. Jankowiak attempts to identify Synkellos’ hand in the rubrics of the *Chronicle*, perhaps its most distinctive feature, without however denying Theophanes’ role in making it look very different from Synkellos’ *Chronography*. The analysis of the chronological framework of the *Chronicle* leads him to offer a new explanation of Theophanes’ problematic chronology of the seventh and eighth centuries and throws some light on his sources for this period. A. Kompa offers a stylistic argument for isolating fragments of George’s notes within the text of the *Chronicle*, setting himself half-way between the supporters of the attribution *en bloc* to George and those who prefer to see in Theophanes a more independent writer. We have resolved to put in this section also J. W. Torgerson’s paper, which would perhaps have more naturally belonged in the section on transmission. Torgerson’s starting point is the observation, already made by his predecessors, of the joint circulation of George’s and Theophanes’ works in several Greek manuscripts as well as in Anastasius’ *Chronographia tripertita*. The author surmises that this arrangement goes back to “the *Chronicle*’s original context” in which George’s and Theophanes’ works were read “as a single universal chronicle.” One is tempted to see Theophanes writing his *Chronicle* on the pages that were left blank in George’s codex.

The second section is devoted to issues of transmission, both direct (manuscript tradition) and indirect (readership, translations). F. Ronconi has undertaken the major task of assessing anew the early manuscripts of the *Chronicle*, following B. Fonkič’s recent redating to the early ninth century of *Paris. gr. 1710*,³ which had been regarded as a *Fabricat* and dated to the tenth century by de Boor. The priority of the Parisian manuscript has been further argued in several publications by P. Yannopoulos,⁴ but many questions remain open. Ronconi prefers a later date in the third quarter of the ninth century and offers many insights on the palaeographic and codicological aspects of this and two other early manuscripts. His analysis is likely to spark fresh debate. B. Neil looks concisely into the successive steps in the transmission of Theophanes’ influential account of the Arab conquests, from Greek into Latin. J. Signes Codoñer explores the possible role of kinship in the transmission of the *Chronicle* after it had been attributed to Theophanes the Confessor, a distant relative of Empress Zoe Karbonopsina and her son, Constantine VII Porphyrogenitos. Starting from the possibility that *Paris. gr. 1710* represents an early shape of Theophanes’ work, he suggests that the *Chronicle* was re-edited under Zoe’s patronage, perhaps with the addition of the chronological rubrics detailing the succession of emperors, Persian kings (later caliphs), and patriarchs in the early tenth century. F. Montinaro has attempted to fulfil a *desideratum* in research on Theophanes’ *Chronicle*, studying systematically its indirect transmission, particularly in the works of middle Byzantine historians. Finally, A.-M. Totomanova presents the so far

3. Б. Л. Фонкич, О датировке и происхождении Парижского списка «Хронографии» Феофана (*cod. Paris. gr. 1710*), in *Византийские очерки*, Москва 1996, pp. 183–6 (repr. in B. L. FONKITCH, *Manuscripts grecs dans les collections européennes : études paléographiques et codicologiques, 1988-1998*, Moscou 1999, pp. 47–9).

4. E.g. P. YANNOPOULOS, Une note sur la date du *Parisinus gr. 1710*, in *Μοσχολία : К 60-летию Б. Фонкича : проблемы византийской и новогреческой филологии*, Москва 2001, pp. 27–30.

overlooked Old Church Slavonic translation of the beginning of Theophanes' *Chronicle*. While not modifying the published Greek text in the relevant portion, the Slavonic text is nonetheless, if one accepts its dating to the age of Photios as argued by Totomanova, an important early witness to the general shape of the *Chronicle*.

The third section concerns Theophanes' sources for early Byzantine history. It is opened by R. Scott's presentation of Theophanes' handling of the sources in the first half of the *Chronicle*, developing his views published in several articles since 1996.⁵ I. Tamarkina studies Theophanes' handling of one particular theme, the cult of relics. The contribution of G. Greatrex deals with Theophanes' lost source on the Persian wars of Anastasius I, identifying it with the work of a classicizing author also accessed by Eustathios of Epiphaneia, whose work Theophanes in his turn knew. B. Pouderon offers the definitive proof that Theophanes used one of his major sources for the fourth and fifth centuries, a lost companion to ecclesiastical history by Theodore Lector, only through a later epitome, although he speculates that Theophanes may have known also the full works of Theodore and of John Diakrinomenos. In the penultimate contribution here A. Kotłowska and Ł. Różycki present a case study of Theophanes' treatment of Theophylact Simocatta in the steps of Ja. N. Ljubarskij. Finally, we have fitted into this section, in spite of its broader perspective, the contribution by S. Cosentino, who proposes to study Theophanes' perception of the economic sphere. This becomes a pretext for a further-reaching and therefore very welcome discussion of some vexed issues in seventh- and eighth-century economic and social history, which is supplemented by an appendix systematically collecting a large quantity of positive data.

A separate section hosts papers by some of the major actors in the current debate on Theophanes' Eastern source. A source for the seventh and eighth centuries common to Theophanes and the late Syriac chronicle of Michael, patriarch of Antioch († 1199), was already recognized by E. W. Brooks.⁶ The same source appears to have been used also by an anonymous Syriac chronicler, writing down to 1234, who shared Michael's sources, and by the tenth-century Arab-Christian historian Agapios of Menbidj. In 1990, L. I. Conrad identified this source with the lost historical work of the court astrologer of Caliph al-Mahdi, Theophilus of Edessa († 785), which today enjoys distinct life in the authoritative reconstruction of R. Hoyland.⁷ Adding another element to the puzzle, R. Hoyland brings out an unpublished portion of Agapios' work from the pages of the Florence manuscript that were glued together when the early twentieth-century editors, A. A. Vasiliev and L. Cheikho, viewed it. The new text, covering the first years of the caliphate of Mu'āwiya (661/2–666/7), is to an unexpectedly large extent based on early

5. Especially in R. SCOTT, *Writing the reign of Justinian : Malalas versus Theophanes*, in *The sixth century : end or beginning?*, ed. by P. Allen and E. Jeffreys (Byzantina Australiensia 10), Brisbane 1996, pp. 20–34, and ID., "The events of every year, arranged without confusion" : Justinian and others in the *Chronicle* of Theophanes Confessor, in *L'écriture de la mémoire : la littérature de l'historiographie : actes du III^e colloque international philologique EPMHNEIA, Nicosie, 6-7-8 mai 2004, organisé par l'EHESS et l'université de Chypre*, sous la dir. de P. Odorico, P. A. Agapitos, M. Hinterberger (Dossiers byzantins 6), Paris 2006, pp. 49–65.

6. W. E. BROOKS, *The sources of Theophanes and the Syriac chroniclers*, *BZ* 15/2, 1906, pp. 578–87.

7. L. I. CONRAD, *Theophanes and the Arabic historical tradition*, *Byz. Forsch.* 15, 1990, pp. 1–44; HOYLAND, *Theophilus*.

Islamic sources. The following two papers voice scepticism against the “Theophilos theory.” M. Debié offers an introduction to the complicated philological and cultural-historical issues raised by the hypothesis of a single Syriac source underlying the four dependants, while M. Conterno brings forth several (mainly linguistic) arguments against Hoyland’s reconstruction and similarly argues for multiple Eastern sources covering the Dark Centuries. The opposite perspective is defended by M. Jankowiak in his paper in the first part of the book. At the end of this section, A. Hilkens presents some of the results of his doctoral dissertation on the source of the *Chronicle of 1234*. He offers a clear presentation of an aspect of the relationship between Theophanes and Syriac historiography that has been overshadowed by the interest in Theophilos and the Dark Centuries, namely the existence of parallels relating to the fourth to sixth centuries. Hilkens questions the ascription of some of these parallels to a lost Arian history which ultimately relied on Philostorgios’ *Church history* (J. Bidez) or to Theodore Lector (A. D’yakonov), and instead supports H. C. Hansen’s view that the Syriac chroniclers read Theophanes. In the light of this theory, so far overlooked in the debate on the Oriental source, the reconstruction of Theophilos’ chronicle may have been flawed by the attribution to Theophilos of bits of Theophanes’ narrative. (On these implications, see the paper by F. Montinaro.) In sum, the debate on the Eastern source is certain to continue.

The last section of the book deals with the later part of the *Chronicle* and with its sources. In her study of Theophanes’ Byzantine source for the late seventh and early eighth centuries, S. Forrest thinks of one single source beginning *c.* 668 and ending *c.* 716. She suspends judgment on whether or not we should attribute this source, which she prefers to call the *Chronicle of Justinian II*, to the shadowy Patrician Trajan. L. Mordechai sets up a statistical method for spotting Theophanes’ presence in the text through selected textual markers. While there are risks inherent in a quantitative approach, Mordechai has succeeded in showing that Theophanes quite uniformly edited the text of the last century of the *Chronicle*, an observation which does not contradict Kompa’s aforementioned findings concerning, for the most part, the first part of the *Chronicle*. D. Afinogenov proposes to attribute Theophanes’ source for the years 718–75 to nobody less than Patriarch Tarasios († 806), writing before his election. Finally, J. Howard-Johnston detects the traces of government communiqués behind much of the seemingly official information in the last thirty years covered by the *Chronicle*.

In spite of its tight three-day schedule, the Paris conference could not be exhaustive. It is in the nature of things that many questions should remain unanswered or even unasked. The most noticeable gap in this book is perhaps the absence of studies on Alexander the Monk, one of Theophanes’ sources for the reign of Constantine the Great, which is now available in J. Nesbitt’s English translation, or on George of Pisidia, on whom Theophanes drew amply for the reign of Heraclius and whose work Mary Whitby has recently done much to elucidate.⁸ We do not claim to have offered the answer to each of

8. J. W. NESBITT, Alexander the Monk’s text of Helena’s discovery of the Cross (BHG 410), in *Byzantine authors : literary activities and preoccupations : texts and translations dedicated to the memory of Nicolas Oikonomides*, ed. by J. W. Nesbitt (The medieval Mediterranean 49), Leiden – Boston 2003, pp. 23–39. On George of Pisidia, see e.g. M. WHITBY, A new image for a new age : George of Pisidia on the emperor Heraclius, in *The Roman and Byzantine army in the East*, ed. by E. Dąbrowa, Kraków

the questions that were asked, let alone to have always asked the right questions. But we felt surprised by the number of new findings that emerged both during the colloquium and at the editing stage. Opinions on these and other matters still diverge, but our aim was not to offer a definitive volume on Theophanes' *Chronicle*. Our project was rather to enable the readers to take the temperature of the debates and to familiarize themselves with positions on issues of central importance to the study of the *Chronicle*. We offer this volume to the reader with the simple hope that it will stimulate further research.

The idea of a conference and a volume on Theophanes' *Chronicle* has long been in gestation. In 2008, we both attended C. Zuckerman's seminar on the *Chronicle* at the École pratique des hautes études, which instilled in us an enthusiasm for this crucial source. Later on, during the Byzantine Congress in Sofia in August 2011, we found ourselves engaged over a glass of beer in a discussion about the authorship of the *Chronicle* with A. Kompa. This one pub idea survived the evening and eventually led to the gathering in Paris in September 2012.

We wish to express our gratitude to the contributors, who have endured and reacted to our exacting comments on their work in progress for almost three years, to the sponsors of the 2012 conference, namely the Collège de France, the University of Paris 4, the UMR 8167, and the Association des amis du Centre d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, and to those who made that conference possible by entrusting us with important resources: J.-C. Cheynet, C. Zuckerman, V. Déroche, and O. Delouis. A. Ter-Markosyan took care of the conference design. L. Simon, who has now retired, did much of the administrative work. V. Prigent bravely took over a Saturday morning panel during a communication breakdown between the organizers. A. Binggeli and B. Caseau accepted to chair two more panels. We should also like to thank the staff of the two Byzantine libraries of rue Cardinal-Lemoine and at the Sorbonne. Those who have had the privilege to cooperate with E. Capet know that her work on texts goes well beyond the usual tasks performed by a copy editor. C. Sweeting was most helpful in the final revision of texts.

M. J. was at the time of the conference supported by the International Newton Fellowship of the British Academy, to which he expresses his gratitude.

F. M. wishes to thank the Fritz-Thyssen-Foundation in Cologne, and the university there, for supporting his research during much of the time that was needed for the preparation of this book; C. Sode and S. Wahlgren for support beyond academia; his present employer, the Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, M. Meier and the colleagues at Alte Geschichte and the SFB 923; his family.

As this volume goes to print, the news has already reached Byzantinists worldwide of Gilbert Dagron's death. We need not underline the gravity of the loss. We dedicate this volume to him.

1994, pp. 197–225; EAD., Defender of the Cross : George of Pisidia on the emperor Heraclius and his deputies, in *The propaganda of power : the role of panegyric in late antiquity*, ed. by M. Whitby, Leiden 1998, pp. 247–73; EAD., George of Pisidia's presentation of the emperor Heraclius and his campaigns : variety and development, in *The reign of Heraclius (610–641) : crisis and confrontation*, ed. by G. J. Reinink and B. H. Stolte, Leuven 2002, pp. 157–73.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Hommage à Gilbert Dagron	V
Abbreviations	IX
Marek JANKOWIAK & Federico MONTINARO, Introduction.....	1

The authorship of the *Chronicle* 7

Warren TREADGOLD, The life and wider significance of George Syncellus	9
Constantin ZUCKERMAN, Theophanes the Confessor and Theophanes the Chronicler, or, A story of square brackets.....	31
Marek JANKOWIAK, Framing universal history: Syncellus' canon and Theophanes' rubrics	53
Andrzej KOMPA, In search of Syncellus' and Theophanes' own words: the authorship of the <i>Chronographia</i> revisited.....	73
Jesse W. TORGERSON, From the many, one? The shared manuscripts of the <i>Chronicle</i> of Theophanes and the <i>Chronography</i> of Synkellos	93

Transmission, transcription, translation 119

Filippo RONCONI, La première circulation de la « Chronique de Théophane » : notes paléographiques et codicologiques.....	121
Bronwen NEIL, Theophanes Confessor on the Arab conquest: the Latin version by Anastasius Bibliothecarius	149
Juan SIGNES CODOÑER, Theophanes at the time of Leo VI	159
Federico MONTINARO, The <i>Chronicle</i> of Theophanes in the indirect tradition.....	177
Anna-Marija TOTOMANOVA, The <i>Chronicle</i> of Theophanes the Confessor in the Slavic tradition	207

Theophanes and early Byzantine history 237

Roger SCOTT, The first half of Theophanes' <i>Chronicle</i>	239
Irina TAMARKINA, Veneration of relics in the <i>Chronicle</i> of Theophanes	261
Geoffrey GREATREX, Théophane et ses sources sur la guerre d'Anastase I ^{er} contre les Perses .	269
Bernard POUDERON, Théophane, témoin de l' <i>Épitomè d'histoires ecclésiastiques</i> , de Théodore le Lecteur ou de Jean Diacrinoménos?.....	279
Anna KOTŁOWSKA and Łukasz RÓŻYCKI, The battle of Solachon of 586 in light of the works of Theophylact Simocatta and Theophanes.....	315
Salvatore COSENTINO, La perception du domaine économique dans la <i>Chronographie</i> de Théophane.....	327

Theophilus of Edessa 353

Robert G. HOYLAND, Agapius, Theophilus and Muslim sources.....	355
Muriel DEBIÉ, Theophanes' "Oriental source": what can we learn from Syriac historiography?	365
Maria CONTERNO, Theophilus, "the more likely candidate"? Towards a reappraisal of the question of Theophanes' "Oriental source(s)"	383
Andy HILKENS, Before the Eastern source: Theophanes and the late Syriac Orthodox chronicles, 4 th -6 th centuries	401

Theophanes and recent history 415

Stephanie FORREST, Theophanes' Byzantine source for the late seventh and early eighth centuries, c. AD 668–716	417
Lee MORDECHAI, The last century of Theophanes' <i>Chronicle</i> : a statistical approach	445
Dmitry AFINOGENOV, Style, structure, and authorship of the hypothetical source of Theophanes for the reigns of Leo III and Constantine V.....	467
James HOWARD-JOHNSTON, Theophanes on the recent past: the crisis of 782 and its antecedents	473

Index 491

Sources.....	491
Manuscripts	506
Names and places.....	507