

# Eunapius and Arethas

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**I**N THE *Excerpta de Sententiis* drawn up under Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the following scholion precedes the proem to the first book of the νέα ἔκδοσις of Eunapius of Sardis' Ἱστορία ἢ μετὰ Δέξιππον:<sup>1</sup>

Οὐκ ἀγνοία τῶν τῆς ἱστορίας χρόνων δεύτερον Εὐνάπιον τόνδε κατετάξαμεν Πρίσκου· ἀνόητον γὰρ καὶ παρεξηγημένων ἀνθρώπων ἔργον τοῦτο· ἀπορία δὲ τῇ ἀπὸ φθόνου τῶν εὐπορούντων διαγενόμενοι οὕτως, οἱ βούλουσι ἂν ἔχειν ἄχθος ἐτώσιον ἀπούρης τὰς βίβλους καὶ παρ' ἑαυτοῖς διακατέχειν ἢ τοῖς χρήζουσιν ἐπ' ὠφελίᾳ μεταδιδόναι· καὶ κινδυνεύει οὕτω γε προϊῶσι τὴν παροιμίαν ἀνασοβεῖν τῆς ἐπὶ τῇ φάτῃ κυνός, ἢ μήτ' αὐτῇ τῶν τῇ φάτῃ ἀποκειμένων ἐπαπολαύει, καὶ τῶν βουλομένων καὶ δυναμένων ἀκόσμως καθυλακτεῖ.

It is not through ignorance of the period covered by the *History* that we have placed Eunapius here second to Priscus, for this would certainly be stupid and tiresome on our part; rather, we did it this way owing to a lack of resources caused by the envy of those who possess the resources, those who wish to retain the books like a “fruitless burden of land,” and to keep them for themselves instead of sharing them so as to help those in need. To men who act thus one could almost apply the fable of the dog in the manger, who herself takes no enjoyment of what is stored there and who barks noisily at those willing and able to do so.

De Boor<sup>2</sup> was the first to recognize that this anonymous scholion did not originate with the excerptor himself, but had stood in the text from which the excerpts were drawn. Since the authors included under the fifty-three thematic headings of the *Excerpta historica* were not arranged chronologically, there would have been no need for the *eclogarius* to apologize for placing Eunapius, whose history covered A.D. 270–404, after Priscus, who treated the years *ca* 434–472. Fur-

<sup>1</sup> U. Boissevain, *Excerpta de Sententiis* (Berlin 1906: Boissevain/de Boor/Büttner-Wobst, *Excerpta Historica* IV) 71.3–11.

<sup>2</sup> *RhM* 47 (1892) 321–23.

thermore, the reluctance of the owner to part with his copy of Eunapius should have been no serious obstacle to the agents of Constantine VII. Instead, de Boor argued, the note was from a *Weltgeschichte in Einzeldarstellungen*, the publication of which would have drastically reduced the value of rare books like Eunapius' *History*, and would therefore have inspired a recalcitrance on the part of bibliophiles to make their holdings available. In addition, he suggested the identification of the expurgated version of Eunapius described by Photius as the *νέα ἔκδοσις*<sup>3</sup> with the specially prepared text of the hypothesized *Weltgeschichte*.

This explanation of the genesis of the *νέα ἔκδοσις* has found little favor, and for good reason. Issue was even taken with the more plausible observation that the scholars working on the *Excerpta* would not have had to tolerate the sort of churlishness the note reports. Nevertheless, it is still generally acknowledged that the passage in question was, as de Boor maintained, copied from the manuscript of Eunapius' *νέα ἔκδοσις* used by the excerptor.<sup>4</sup>

There is one other substantial scholion to the Eunapius entries in the *Excerpta de Sententiis*, the so-called *Στηλιτευτικὸς κατὰ Εὐναπίου*,<sup>5</sup> which has been convincingly attributed to Arethas of Patras, later archbishop of Caesarea.<sup>6</sup> Even a tentative acceptance of Arethas' authorship of this note raises the possibility that he is also responsible for the anonymous preface, and several considerations suggest that this is in fact the case. First, the introductory scholion exhibits a concentration of vocabulary which is, if not unique to, at least characteristic of Arethas: *κατατάττειν*, *παρεξαιλέιν*, *διαγίνεσθαι*, *ἐπαπολαύειν*, *διακατέχειν*, and *καθυλακτεῖν*.<sup>7</sup> Second, the phrase *ἄχθος ἐτώσιον ἀρούρης*, derived from *Il.* 18.104, is quoted twice by Arethas.<sup>8</sup> Third, the story of the dog in the manger fits well with that scholar's general fondness for proverbs, and more specifically, since it

<sup>3</sup> *Bibl. cod.* 77 (I 158–60 Henry).

<sup>4</sup> W. Chalmers, *CQ* n.s. 3 (1953) 165–70, summarizes earlier scholarship and critiques de Boor's thesis. Now see R. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire I* (Liverpool 1981) 1–7, who divorces the *νέα ἔκδοσις* from any of the supplements that Eunapius may have published subsequent to the first installment of the *History*. The arguments of R. Goulet, *JHS* 100 (1980) 60–72, are flawed.

<sup>5</sup> 81.16–82.3 Boissevain. The invective is bracketed after fr.23 of Eunapius in Müller, *FHG* IV 23–24.

<sup>6</sup> J. Compnass, *StBiz* 7 (1935) 119–20, followed by L. Westerink, *Arethae Scripta Minora* II (Leipzig 1972) xiii. P. Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantin* (Paris 1971) 225, realized the implications of Compnass' identification.

<sup>7</sup> See the *index verborum* at II 222–68 Westerink.

<sup>8</sup> At I 267 and II 113 Westerink.

seems here to have been inspired by Lucian, occurs in an author whom Arethas read and annotated.<sup>9</sup> In addition, while *ἱστορία* seems to have interested Arethas primarily as a repository of rhetorical material, Eunapius, especially in an expurgated form, would have had the further attractions of an account of Julian the Apostate, whose *Adversus Christianos* Arethas attacked,<sup>10</sup> and of sketches of some of the third and fourth centuries' leading intellectuals, Arethas' interest in whom is illustrated by his notes on Philostratus' *Vita Apollonii* and Porphyry's *Vita Pythagorae*.<sup>11</sup> Finally, the rhetorical tone and the self-righteousness of the passage are common features of Arethas' style.

*Ex hypothesi*, Arethas had difficulty obtaining a text of Eunapius' *νέα ἔκδοσις* from which to make his own copy, the copy later used for the *Excerpta historica*. Perhaps not coincidentally, the only person known to have seen both editions of Eunapius was the Patriarch Photius, whose language implies that both versions were already scarce when he examined them: ἀμφοῖν δὲ ταῖς ἐκδόσεσιν ἐν παλαιοῖς ἐνετύχομεν βιβλίοις, ἰδίως ἑκατέραν ἐν ἑτέρῳ τεύχει καὶ ἑτέρῳ συντεταγμένην.<sup>12</sup> The "old books" may have been codices written in uncial lettering, but almost certainly were not rolls.<sup>13</sup> The statement that there were several copies makes it likely that Photius is speaking of books in the Imperial library rather than in his own collection.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, when Arethas, either while still in Constantinople or in Caesarea after 902 or 903, sought to acquire Eunapius, he could have found copies there. The reluctance of the administrators of the library to lend such a valuable text would then explain the problems Are-

<sup>9</sup> Lucian *Timon* 14. Arethas' comments on Lucian appear in *Scholia ad Lucianum*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig 1906). There are scholia to the *Timon*, though not to this specific passage. For Arethas' use of proverbs see II 205–09 Westerink; for the extent of his reading in Lucian see the *index auctorum* at II 190–91.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. II 190 and 214 Westerink.

<sup>11</sup> The scholia may be found in *Flavii Philostrati quae supersunt*, ed. C. Kayser (Zurich 1844) 177–98 and *Corrigenda et Addenda* 79–80, and *Porphyrii Opuscula Selecta*<sup>2</sup>, ed. A. Nauck (Leipzig 1886), 29, 31–33, 38, 42, 49. Lemerle (*supra* n.6) 25–41 provides a thorough treatment of Arethas' life and work. L. Reynolds and N. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford 1974) 57, go too far in asserting that Arethas shows "no taste for historical writing." But cf. Wilson in *Byzantine Books and Bookmen* (Washington 1975) 7 on Arethas and *Kunstprosa*.

<sup>12</sup> *Bibl. cod.* 77 (I 159.37–160.2 Henry). If, as seems likely, Arethas knew the *Bibliotheca*, it would have alerted him to the whereabouts of these particular texts. See Lemerle (*supra* n.6) 177–204 and 235–37 on Photius in general and on Arethas and the *Bibliotheca*.

<sup>13</sup> T. Birt, *Das antike Buchwesen* (Berlin 1882) 26, discusses Photius' terminology.

<sup>14</sup> Photius seems to have seen at least three separate codices of Eunapius. For the Imperial library see Lemerle (*supra* n.6) 65–68, 105, 269, 282, and 295. Would the Patriarchal library have admitted copies of Eunapius, expurgated or not? Cf. C. Mango in *Byzantine Books and Bookmen* (*supra* n.11) 29–45, esp. 43.

thas' request encountered, and make those librarians the dogs of the fable. The *νέα ἔκδοσις*, *i.e.* the expurgated version of Eunapius as described by Photius, was eventually supplied and, if the original was in uncials, would have been copied in minuscule. This in itself would have made Arethas' transcription far more accessible to the compilers of the *Excerpta historica* than an uncial text. Alternatively, between the time Arethas returned the volume lent him (if he ever did) and the call for a text of Eunapius for incorporation into the *Excerpta*, probably after 945, the library copies may simply have disappeared. Whatever the case, recourse was made to Arethas' transcription.

The belief that the Priscus section of the *Excerpta de Sententiis* came from the book described in the introductory note led Boissevain to conjecture that the now-missing pages of the *Excerpta* between Apian and the beginning of Eunapius contained passages of Priscus.<sup>15</sup> But Priscus does not regularly immediately precede Eunapius in the collection.<sup>16</sup> Instead, the evidence of the *Excerpta* suggests that Constantine VII's staff already had a text of Priscus, and either used only the Eunapius portion of the Priscus/Eunapius codex<sup>17</sup> from Arethas' collection or worked from a copy of that section. They entered their own heading, ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΕΥΝΑΠΙΟΥ ΣΑΡΔΙΑΝΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΜΕΤΑ ΔΕΞΙΠΠΙΟΝ ΝΕΑΣ ΕΚΔΟΣΕΩΣ,<sup>18</sup> based on the title of the book before them, followed by the text of the first page, which opened with Arethas' note.

This reconstruction is admittedly hypothetical. However, it avoids the necessity of attributing gross incompetence and lack of foresight to men ambitious enough to undertake the production of de Boor's *Weltgeschichte*, while offering a much more reasonable explanation of the note as the attempt of Arethas of Patras to pre-empt the sniping of the scholarly pedants whose ways he knew so well.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Exc. de Sent.* 71 Boissevain with 14 n.2.

<sup>16</sup> Convenient lists of the contents of the various sections of the *Excerpta historica* are given by Lemerle (*supra* n.6) 285–87.

<sup>17</sup> The form of this codex would be like that described by Photius as containing both editions of Eunapius.

<sup>18</sup> *Exc. de Sent.* 71.1–2.

<sup>19</sup> This paper owes much to Prof. Leendert Westerink, who was kind enough to comment on an earlier draft.