

Malalas and the Chronographic Tradition*

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Abstract The preface of John Malalas situates the chronicle within the traditions of historiography on which Malalas himself draws and to which he is indebted in terms of content and conception. In particular, his work is the result of the confluence of local history and the writing of chronicles. Theophilus and Clement, mentioned in the preface, are predecessors of Malalas in this respect and models for him. Their chronicles are locally focused, Theophilus on Alexandria and Clement on Antioch; moreover, they adhere to the same date of the crucifixion (in AM 6000) as Malalas. Updating and copying within the chronographic tradition can be an explanation for the often garbled nature of the source references in the chronicle.

A hermeneutics of suspicion governs most research on John Malalas. Manifest errors and the fantastic nature of many a story recorded hardly inspire confidence in the eyes of modern scholarship. Suspicion has been extended to his use of sources, many of which are only known through his chronicle: Malalas is thought to have invented at least some of the authors he mentions. In addition, many references are assumed to be garbled because they are secondary: in the standard account of Malalas' sources, Elizabeth Jeffreys sides with Bourier's reduction of the number of direct sources for the first 14 books to just three (Domninus, Nestorianus and Timothy).¹

This article starts out from a different methodological choice and takes Malalas' references to lost authors seriously. Even if this approach cannot solve all problems, it can produce results, as my first section will show. There I argue that the list of authors mentioned in the preface can be read as reflecting the types of works Malalas relied on and is therefore a statement about the nature of his own work. Moreover, there is no reason to presume that any of the authors named in the preface is a fake. In fact, if we accept their existence and their profile as it emerges from Malalas, we end up with a fairly coherent picture of a set of lost authors who can be understood against the background of 4th and 5th century historical writing and who, in turn, help to understand Malalas' peculiar work. If the derivative nature of many a reference in Malalas is beyond doubt (a practice that is very common in ancient – not just late ancient! –

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1 Bourier (1899), (1900); Jeffreys (1990); Thurn/Meier (2009), p. 23.

historiography), analysis should not stop at that point. As my second section shows, Malalas can be used to gauge the transformation of the Eusebian chronicle under the influence of contemporary interests.

1. Theophilus, Clement and the others

A preface is a serious matter in ancient historiography: it is the place where the author sets out his aims, method and form. One way to do this was to cite predecessors, as does John Malalas:

Δίκαιον ἡγησάμην μετὰ τὸ ἀκρωτηριάσαι τινὰ ἐκ τῶν Ἑβραϊκῶν κεφαλαίων ὑπὸ Μωϋσέως <καὶ τῶν> χρονογράφων Ἀφρικανοῦ καὶ Εὐσεβίου τοῦ Παμφίλου καὶ Πausανίου καὶ Διδύμου καὶ Θεοφίλου καὶ Κλήμεντος καὶ Διοδώρου καὶ Δομνίνου καὶ Εὐσταθίου καὶ ἄλλων πολλῶν φιλοπόνων χρονογράφων καὶ ποιητῶν καὶ σοφῶν ἐκθέσαι σοι μετὰ πάσης ἀληθείας τὰ συμβάντα ἐν μέρει ἐν τοῖς χρόνοις τῶν βασιλέων ἕως τῶν συμβεβηκότων ἐν τοῖς ἑμοῖς χρόνοις ἐλθόντων εἰς τὰς ἡμᾶς ἀκοάς, λέγω δὴ ἀπὸ Ἀδάμ ἕως τῆς βασιλείας Ζήνωνος καὶ τῶν ἐξῆς βασιλευσάντων.²

I thought it right, after abbreviating some material from the Hebrew books written by Moses and from the chronographers Africanus and Eusebius, son of Pamphilus, and Pausanias and Didymus and Theophilus and Clement and Diodorus and Domninus and Eustathius and many other industrious chroniclers and poets and wise men, to relate to you as truthfully as possible a summary account of events that took place in the time of the emperors, up till the events of my own life-time which came to my hearing, I mean indeed from Adam to the reign of Zeno and those who ruled afterwards.³

This is a fairly terse statement to start an expansive chronicle with. Except for the list of names, there is no hint as to how Malalas positions himself vis-à-vis earlier and contemporary historical writing. It is, then, to this list that we must turn for answers. At first sight, it appears as a disorganised series of names, and thus confirms the suspicion held about Malalas. Let us take a closer look. A first observation to make is that the list seems to suggest chronological order. Africanus and Eusebius are the first, traditional names of chronicle writing, and they are the usual, earliest points of reference in this period. The last name, Eustathius of Epiphania, is (whoever one identifies behind the other names) the last one in chronological order, having composed his chronicle early in the 6th century. In Antioch, at least, Eustathius seems to have been

² Malalas, *Chronographia praefatio* (p. 3, 4–11 Thurn).

³ Jeffreys/Jeffreys/Scott (1986), p. 1, adapted.

sufficiently well-known.⁴ Hence, the list is bracketed by references to respectable and well-known authors of chronicles.

What are we to do with the names in between? Pausanias seems to be Pausanias of Antioch, writing at some point between the 2nd century BC and the 6th century AD⁵ and the author of a work variously called *Περὶ Ἀντιοχείας* or *Περὶ Ἀντιοχείας κτίσεως*. Debate about the issue whether Malalas used this author directly or not are not germane here.⁶ More important is that Pausanias composed a local history, which surfaces in the 6th century, not just in Malalas but also in Stephen of Byzantium, and, much later, in Tzetzes. We shall notice such resurgence more often for authors mentioned in Malalas. Thus, after the chroniclers, Malalas refers to a local historian of Antioch.

The same holds for the second to last name, Domninus. The extant citations in Malalas suggest Domninus wrote a local history of Antioch with particular attention to chronology. The identification of Domninus as the author of a work with a clear Antiochene focus is surely correct: the ten mentions in Malalas all regard local history and topography.⁷ The *terminus post quem* is 302, Diocletian's visit to Antioch. The fragments include precise chronological references (cf. Malalas, *Chronographia* VIII 24), demonstrating a close interest in precise chronology. Pawel Janiszewski argues that Domninus is to be dated to the early 4th century AD, as he was, most likely, a pagan, given the explicit praise for Diocletian in XII 44, with a reference to Zeus. Domninus' paganism is Janiszewski's main argument for favouring an early date, besides the fact that the extant fragments show no knowledge of Libanius' *Antiochicus* (held in 356 or 360 AD).⁸ Albeit uncertain, a date under Constantius II would help to understand some of the particular interests that surface in Domninus' extant fragments. The interest expressed in Trajan's Persian campaign (Malalas, *Chronographia* XI 4) and the Persian threat throughout Antioch's history (Malalas, *Chronographia* X 9–10; cf. also the invasion of Sapor the Great under Valerian in XII 26) would square well with a date under Constantius II, when Rome and Persia fought a series of battles. The list of temples built by Tiberius in Antioch (Malalas, *Chronographia* X 10) could then be a response to increased Christian building under Constantius in that city.

The identification of Pausanias and Domninus as local historians is important, for it implies that after Malalas' bracketing of the list of authorities with chronicle writers, the second tier of the list are historians of Antioch. This is, I would surmise, a statement of intent: Malalas displays his Antiochene focus.

Still four names to go. Let us first look at the two middle ones, Theophilus and Clement. Discussion of these two authors has been marred by the persistent ten-

4 Allen (1988); Treadgold (2007) (whose view on Eustathius, however, is unlikely to be correct); see also Dariusz Brodka's contribution in this volume.

5 *FGrHist* 854 = *BNJ* 854 (the tendency is to date him after the 2nd century AD).

6 Bourier (1899), pp. 9–14; Jeffreys (1990), p. 189.

7 Malalas, *Chronographia praefatio*; IV 19; V 37; VIII 24; X 10; X 51; XI 4; XII 9; XII 26; XII 44. See also Laura Mecella's contribution in this volume.

8 Janiszewski (2006), pp. 282–291.

dency to think these must be Theophilus of Antioch (2nd century AD) and Clement of Alexandria (2nd–early 3rd century AD). This is due to the general suspicion towards Malalas, and, for Clement, to the fact that he is indeed mentioned by Eusebius as a predecessor.⁹ As the citations from Malalas show no overlap with the works of these two figures, it has been suggested that they are fictions.¹⁰ In fact, as we shall see, we are dealing with chronicles that circulated in their own right and had a distinct profile. Let us look at a famous passage, in which both are named.

Γίνεται οὖν ὁ πᾶς χρόνος ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς Αὐγούστου <τοῦ> καὶ Ὀκταβιανοῦ ἡμπεράτορος ἕως τῆς συμπληρώσεως τῆς δευτέρας ὑπατείας τοῦ βασιλέως Ἰουστινιανοῦ ἰνδικτιῶνος ζ' ἔτη φνθ', ὡς εἶναι τὰ πάντα ἔτη ἀπὸ τοῦ πρωτοπλάστου Ἀδὰμ ἕως τῆς αὐτῆς ἰνδικτιῶνος ἔτη ςυϛζ', κατὰ δὲ τοὺς Ἀντιοχεῖς τοὺς καὶ Θεοπολίτας ἐπὶ τῷ Ὀρέντῃ, Σύρους ὄντας, ἔτη φοζ', ἀρχόμενα ἀπὸ Καίσαρος Ἰουλίου, κατὰ δὲ τοὺς Ἀλεξανδρεῖς Αἰγυπτίους, τοὺς οἰκοῦντας ἐπὶ τῷ Νείλῳ, ἔτη σμε' ἀπὸ Διοκλητιανοῦ, κατὰ δὲ τοὺς λεγομένους Σύρους Μακεδόνας τῆς Ἀπαμείας ἔτη τμ' ἀπὸ Σελεύκου τοῦ Νικάτωρος, καθὼς ἡῦρον τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν ἐνιαυτῶν ἐν τοῖς συντάγμασι Κλήμεντος καὶ Θεοφίλου καὶ Τιμοθέου τῶν σοφωτάτων χρονογράφων ὁμοφωνησάντων. ἐν δὲ τοῖς χρόνοις Εὐσεβίου τοῦ Παμφίλου ἡῦρον τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν ἐτῶν ἀπὸ Ἀδὰμ ἕως τῆς ὑπατείας Ἰουστινιανοῦ βασιλέως τῆς ἑβδόμης ἰνδικτιῶνος ἔτη ςυλβ'. ἀκριβέστερον δὲ μᾶλλον οἱ περὶ Θεοφίλου καὶ Τιμόθεου καὶ Κλήμεντα ψηφίσαντες τοὺς χρόνους ἐξέθεντο.¹¹

The whole period from the accession of Augustus Octavian Emperor to the completion of the second consulship of the emperor Justinian in the 7th indiction is 559 years, so that the total of years from first-created Adam to this indiction is 6497, according to the Antiochenes who are also the Theopolites who live by the Orontes, being Syrians, this was the 577th year starting from Julius Caesar, according to the Alexandrians, who are Egyptians and live by the Nile, this was the 245th from Diocletian, according to the so-called Syrian Macedonians of Apamea, this was the 440th year from Seleukos Nikator, which is the number of years I found in the works of Clement, Theophilus and Timotheos, the chroniclers who agree among themselves. In the chronology of Eusebius, son of Pamphilus, I found the number of years from Adam to the consulship of the emperor Justinian in the 7th indiction to be 6432, but Theophilus and Timotheos and Clement have calculated and recorded the years with greater accuracy.¹²

The text as I print it is the one presented by Thurn, who includes in *Italic* retroversions from the Slavonic translation. Once integrated in the text, they allow a different reading of the text from the one suggested by the briefer version in the *Baroccianus*. With

⁹ Eusebius, *Hieronimi Chronicon praefatio* 7, 15 Helm (*ex nostris Clemens et Africanus et Tatianus*). Cf. Eusebius, *Chronicon* 48, 9 Karst.

¹⁰ Meier (2003), p. 456.

¹¹ Malalas, *Chronographia* XVIII 8.

¹² Jeffreys/Jeffreys/Scott (1986), p. 247, adapted.

the additions from the Slavonic, the text seems to say that Clement, Theophilus and Timothy agree on the year 6497 for the second consulship of Justinian (AD 528/529). This does not necessarily mean that they wrote until that date but that their chronicles generate such a date. In the edition of Thurn, however, the text suggests that each of the three authors is responsible for the use of one of the three eras in the intercalated sentence. This finds support in the fact that Malalas does not frequently use the Seleucid era, nor the Diocletian one, although for obvious reasons the Antiochean era is fairly common in his work.¹³ The first two are thus not normally part of his chronological apparatus and he is therefore unlikely to have added these eras himself. This suggests, in turn, that each of the eras is used by one of the authorities he cites. This would mean that Clement is an Antiochean chronicler, Theophilus an Egyptian one and Timothy a Syrian or, more specifically, Apamean one.

The citations for Timothy are too unspecific to verify or falsify this hypothesis, but it works well for the first two authors. The quotations of Clement indicate a particular interest in Syria. It starts with Clement showing a particular interest in Syros, the founding father of Syria (Malalas, *Chronographia* II 9): he is said to have developed an “arithmetical” philosophy regarding the transmigration of souls. Clement also mentions the succession in Judaea (Malalas, *Chronographia* X 2) and the death of Herod (Malalas, *Chronographia* X 13). He is also cited for the conflict between Peter and Paul in Antioch (Malalas, *Chronographia* X 15). The reference to Marcion in *Chronographia* XI 19, by contrast, is less precise. These fragments bear out a clear interest in Syro-Palistine history: in particular the interest in Syros and Paul and Peter is telling.

Evidence for Theophilus is more copious and often there is an Egyptian connection, as in the case of the story of Io (Malalas, *Chronographia* II 7), the death of Cleopatra (Malalas, *Chronographia* IX 10), and Annianus as first successor of Mark on the see of Alexandria (Malalas, *Chronographia* X 32). Strikingly, Theophilus introduced an unknown pharaoh, Naracho, a son of Noah, thus connecting the Egyptians in an original way to the table of nations inherited from Hippolytus of Rome. Malalas also states (*Chronographia* III 6) that Theophilus wrote about the Egyptian dynasties. Theophilus clearly included more material too and did not write a simple Egyptian chronicle (cf. *Chronographia* V 68, VI 10), but Malalas seems to have been particularly interested in his Egyptian material, which Theophilus probably was unique among his sources in offering.

For Clement and Theophilus, then, we see emerge the profile of locally focused chroniclers, Clement on Antioch and Theophilus on Alexandria, willing to integrate local interest, Greek philosophy and chronography. Thus, at the heart of Malalas’ list of authorities we find types of work that seem to be rather close to what he himself produced. This is, I would suggest, not accidental: Malalas consciously inserts himself into a particular tradition of locally focused chronicles.

This leaves only two names from the preface to be elucidated. Diodorus probably is Diodorus of Sicily, who, in terms of citations, plays a minor role in Malalas. Yet

13 Jeffrey (1990), pp. 153–154.

Diodorus did experience a revival in the 6th century history as an authority in the field of historiography. This is, probably, the result of the reception of the chronicle of Eusebius, although it is hard to find traces of Diodorus in the 4th and 5th century. In the 6th century, by contrast, we have Procopius, Agathias, Theophylact Simocatta and, somewhat later (or earlier, depending on your taste), John of Antioch all drawing on Diodorus.¹⁴ The 6th century marks, then, the renaissance of Diodorus. Didymus is Didymus Chalcenterus, a 1st century BC Alexandrian scholar, whose *Xene Historia*, a work on mythography, surfaces in Syncellus and Michael the Syrian; the references in Malalas must come from the same work.¹⁵ There is a link between Orosius and one of the Didymus quotations by Syncellus, and Orosius has long been suspected of having used an Eastern, Alexandrian chronicle.¹⁶ This would situate the introduction of Didymus into the chronicle tradition before ca. 415, when Orosius could have accessed this Eastern chronicle. The mention of Didymus in Malalas' preface may signal a particular interest in mythography, which is indeed present in the *Chronographia*. Diodorus' first five books were also dedicated to myth and the reference to Diodorus may well reinforce the impression gained by that to Didymus.¹⁷ Moreover, both Diodorus of Sicily and Didymus Chalcenterus are classical authors, writing about the distant past, and one may presume that John Malalas mentions them to indicate that he has harkened back to ancient sources of authority.

2. Taking Malalas seriously

What can we conclude from this analysis of the preface? First, the list of names should be understood as a statement about Malalas' project: he inserts himself into the chronographic tradition (Africanus, Eusebius, Eustathius) with a strong local, Antiochene focus (Pausanias, Domninus) and with a particular interest in myth (Didymus). Some of the names were good, respected historians and chroniclers, such as Diodorus, Africanus, Eusebius, and Eustathius, allowing Malalas to claim authority through his use of good sources. The highlighting of Theophilus and Clemens is relevant to the extent that they reflect the approach Malalas himself seems to have to chronography, with an interest in Greek philosophy, myth, mystery lore, and historical facts, as well as a distinct regional focus. Moreover, as stated by Malalas (*Chronographia* X 2), they provided him with his *Annus mundi* dates. In other words, the preface (at least through the list of names) is not a hodgepodge of randomly chosen names but does what a preface is

¹⁴ Procopius, *De aedificiis praefatio*; Agathias, *Historiae praefatio*, II 18, 5, II 25, 5; Theophylactus Simocatta, *Historiae* VII 17; for John of Antioch see Roberto (2005), pp. CXXXIV–CXXXV. Cf. also Kaldellis (2012), p. 77.

¹⁵ Georgius Syncellus, *Ecloga chronographica* 305 (p. 189, 23 Mosshammer) and 306 (p. 190, 1–2 Mosshammer); Michael Syrus, *Chronicon* IV 1 (Translation p. 49 Chabot; Text p. 23 Chabot); Malalas, *Chronographia praefatio*, IV 10, IV 17 and VI 22. The fragments of Didymus are edited in Schmidt (1854).

¹⁶ Orosius, *Historiae adversum paganos* I 12, 3–4 and Georgius Syncellus, *Ecloga chronographica* 305 (p. 189, 23 Mosshammer). Cf. Zangemeister (1882), p. XXIII.

¹⁷ Cf. Sulimani (2011).

supposed to do in the historiographical discourse of Antiquity: it situates the work the reader has in his hands against the background of earlier historiography and, in doing so, gives clues about the nature of the work. A suspicious reader of this chapter might object that my interpretation is, by and large, circular: in parts it has to rely exclusively on evidence offered by Malalas himself. Yet, this would not invalidate my argument: if one wants to consider the authors unattested elsewhere as a smoke-screen blown up by Malalas, it would still be the case that he creates for himself the pedigree I have just sketched. His self-representation remains upright, even if one thinks it is based on fiction.

Nevertheless, such scepticism is, at least for the cases we have looked at so far, unwarranted: Theophilus has a clear, particular profile, as does Clement, and they cannot be identified with any other author of that name. The same holds for Domnius and for Pausanias. Obviously, this does not mean that we should accept at face value everything Malalas writes, but scepticism should not be the starting point. To give one more example: the Bottios cited by Malalas must be identical to the Bruttius cited by Jerome and the Brettios quoted by Georgius Syncellus.¹⁸ He is not a fictitious name, but an author who was quoted in Eusebius' chronicle or in a later update used by all authors just cited.

More generally, the hermeneutics of suspicion has failed to recognise that the chronographic tradition in Greek after Eusebius is by and large lost, as is local historiography. By situating Malalas simply against the background of preserved traditions, we fail to understand not only his use of sources but also where he positions himself within the history of Greek chronography. Indeed, Malalas himself, as well as some of his authorities (Theophilus and Clement), testify to an integration of chronography and local historiography. This is not just evident in the local focus they share. From the little we know of the latter genre, we can infer that it tended to include discussions of local myth, which linked a city to Greek traditions.¹⁹ Chroniclers such as Clement and Theophilus clearly have a local focus, but also included local mythical traditions that customarily were part and parcel of local histories. It seems, then, that the integration of local history into chronography contributed to an increased interest in myth within chronography – precisely what we witness in Malalas. His idiosyncratic understanding of the mythical past may, then, have less to do with the state of his mind than with the development of late ancient chronography.

¹⁸ Malalas, *Chronographia* II II, VIII 1, X 48 (cf. *Chronicon Paschale* p. 69, 14 Dindorf and p. 468, 7 Dindorf [written as Βροῦττιος]); Georgius Syncellus, *Ecloga chronographica* 650 (p. 419, 27 Mosshammer); Eusebius, *Hieronymi Chronicon* 192e Helm. Cf. Jeffreys (1990), p. 174: "Bottios (or Bouttios) is an otherwise unknown and completely unidentifiable chronicler". See now the annotated edition in *FRHist* 98.

¹⁹ Dagron (1984), pp. 9–19; Gabba (1981), pp. 60–62. Lorenzo Focanti is currently preparing a PhD thesis in Ghent and Groningen on late ancient *patria* under the direction of J.W. Drijvers and myself.

3. Transmission and innovation

The picture I have just drawn is relevant for *Quellenforschung* in another way. We do not have to suppose that Malalas (or another author) necessarily had direct access to all of these texts individually. John Malalas knew of authors such as Didymus and Bruttius through the chronicle tradition, in all likelihood through updated and changed versions of Eusebius or works written in response to his chronicle. Given the absence of full chronographic texts in Greek before Malalas, we can only presuppose that such texts existed, but the presence of authors like Bruttius and Didymus in the Latin, Greek and Syriac chronographic traditions makes this very likely. Indeed, we must think of chronography in the 4th and 5th century as a very lively field, and as Malalas as one of the earliest witnesses to that.²⁰

I would like to add another, albeit somewhat hypothetical, example related to Malalas: Palaiphatus. In late ancient historiography, the name seems to refer to at least two persons: a 4th-century BC peripatetic, the probable author of the *Unbelievable tales* and a Trojan history (*FGrHist* 44 = *BNJ* 44); and another Palaiphatus who also seems to have written proper historical works and which references in Malalas (*Chronographia* VIII 27) and Moses Khorenat'si (*Historia* II 69 Mahé) oblige to situate in the 3rd century AD (*FGrHist* 660 = *BNJ* 660). The confusion in the Palaiphatus-tradition is hard to disentangle²¹ and for the purpose of my argument of little importance. All references to Palaiphatus in Malalas are to mythological subjects, except one:

Μετὰ ταῦτα δὲ ἐγένετο ὕπατος Μάγνος ὁ καὶ Παῦλος ὁ Μακεδών· ὅστις ἐφόνευσεν ἐν πολέμῳ τὸν βασιλέα τῆς Μακεδονίας ὀνόματι Πέρσην καὶ παραλαβὼν τὴν Μακεδονίαν χώραν ἐποίησεν αὐτὴν ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίους· περὶ οὗ Σαλλοῦστιος μέμνηται εἰς τὴν Κατελλιναρίαν ἐκθεσιν, μνημονεύων τῆς δημηγορίας τοῦ Καίσαρος· καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα βασιλεύει τῆς ἰδίας χώρας Περσεὺς ὁ Ἡπειρώτης ὁ νεομάχος καὶ τοπάρχης Θεσσαλίας, ὄντινα Περσέα ὠνόμασε τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐκθέσει Εὐτρόπιος ὁ συγγραφεὺς Ῥωμαίων ἐν τῇ μεταφράσει αὐτοῦ· τοῦτου δὲ καὶ Παλαίφατος μέμνηται· τὸν δὲ αὐτὸν Περσέα πολέμῳ ἀνείλε Λούκιος Παῦλος, ὕπατος Ῥωμαίων.²²

After this, Magnus, also called Paulus, the Macedonian became consul. He killed in battle the king of Macedonia, named Perses. He captured the land of Macedonia and made it subject to the Romans. Sallust mentions this in his Catilinarian history, in recording Caesar's speech. After this, Perseus of Epirus, the sea-warrior and toparch of Thessaly, reigned in his own land. Eutropius the Roman writer named this Perseus in his account, in the translation. Palaiphatos mentions him too. Lucius Paulus, the Roman consul, killed Perseus in battle.²³

²⁰ This will be detailed in a planned edition of fragmentary Greek chronicles from Late Antiquity.

²¹ It is, however, illogical that the authors of *BNJ* 44 and *BNJ* 660 do not ascribe *BNJ* 44 F9 and *BNJ* 660 F1 to the same author.

²² Malalas, *Chronographia* VIII 27.

²³ Jeffreys/Jeffreys/Scott (1986), p. 110, adapted.

The account is garbled, beyond repair, splitting Perseus up into two personalities. At the same time, there is a wealth of source references, which are not completely wrong. The wrong version of the name *Perses* may indeed have been triggered by Sallustius, *Bellum Catilinae* 51, 5: *Bello Macedonico, quod cum rege Perse gessimus*. Eutropius does discuss Perseus (*Breviarium* IV 6–7) and there did exist translations into Greek. The reference to Palaiphatus seems out of place, although we do know that Palaiphatus was credited with describing political events and not just myths:

Բազում են ժամանակիս այսորիկ պատմողք ի Պարսից եւ յԱսորաց, այլ եւ ի Յունաց: Քանզի ի սկզբանէ թագաւորութեանն Պարթեւաց փնչել ցղադարումս՝ ընդ Հռոմայեցւոց կալան գործ, երբեմս հնազանդութեամբ եւ երբեմս պատերազմաւ, զոր պատմէ Պաղէփատոս եւ Փորփիւր եւ Փիլեմոն, եւ այլք բազումք: Բայց մեք ասասցուք ի մատենէն զոր եբեր Խոռոհբուտ, զԲարսումայի.²⁴

Many are the historians of this time among the Persians and the Syrians and also among the Greeks. For from the beginning of the kingdom of the Parthians until its extinction they were involved with the Romans, sometimes in subjection and sometimes in war, which Palaiphatos and Porphyrios and Philemon and many others relate. But we shall give our account from the book of Barsuma, which Xoiohbut brought.²⁵

There are some mysteries in this passage by Moses Khorenat'si too, such as the identity of Philemon and Chorobut. For my purposes it suffices to note a series of related facts: 1) we find Palaiphatus and Porphyry associated; 2) Moses is normally assumed to have used Eusebius' chronicle in the Armenian translation;²⁶ and 3) the reference to Porphyry also derives from Eusebius. Moses presumably used here the first part of Eusebius' chronicle, that is the chronography, but we cannot check this as it is only preserved in Armenian translation until the early history of Rome. Eusebius' chronography provides indeed a tentative context for the garbled passage in Malalas. Drawing on Porphyry, Eusebius discusses and lists the Macedonian kings,²⁷ then lists the Thessalians, by noticing that Macedonians ruled Thessalians and Epirus too. Eusebius thus offers some of the elements we find in Malalas' garbled account. Tentatively, then, we have two authors, Moses Khorenat'si and John Malalas, who associate Palaiphatus with material derived from Eusebius' chronography.

It seems, then, that Palaiphatus was cited by Malalas through the chronicle of Eusebius, as probably were Cephalion, Diodorus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Thallus and Phlegon too. The evidence from Palaiphatus suggests access to the first part, the chronography, and not just to the second part, the canons. There is no evidence that Malalas had access to an original version of Eusebius' chronicle: he cites Eusebius,

²⁴ *BNJ* 44 F9 = Moses Khorenat'si, *Historia* II 69 Mahé.

²⁵ English translation by Nünlist (2008).

²⁶ Traina (1995), p. 309.

²⁷ Eusebius, *Chronicon* 112, 6–114, 17 Karst.

but this is clearly not the original text, but one adapted to later views, including an incarnation date of AM 5500.²⁸ This leaves us with two possibilities. Either the 'Eusebius' Malalas used was his updated and adapted version of Eusebius' chronicle, to which material (drawn from, among others, Palaiphatus) had been added, or the material from Eusebius was combined with that of Palaiphatus in another intermediary chronicle. Both are plausible scenarios: most important is that the evidence suggests we must suppose access to the chronography and not just the canons of Eusebius, and that we are dealing with an intermediate source.

The picture that emerges from these few soundings is that of a chronographic literature that is in full movement. Texts are being copied, cut and pasted, and updated with new material drawn from new sources. Many of the local chronicles will have included similar material, drawn from earlier chronicles, but tailored to their own needs. Malalas' chronicle is a repository of these traditions and one should not be surprised that it is hard to pin every reference down with certainty, or, indeed, that some of them are garbled indeed.

4. Conclusions

For the study of chronography, the present article allows to draw the following conclusions. John Malalas bears witness to the integration of local history and chronography, a process that started earlier, as the chroniclers Clement and Theophilus demonstrate. This integration led to an increased interest in mythographic material within chronography, as such topics had been prominent in local historiography. This, in turn, spurs interest in authorities that could provide one with mythographic material, such as Didymus Chalcenterus, or, to give a last example, Charax of Pergamon, a 2nd century author who makes a remarkable come-back in the 6th century as an authority for myth.²⁹ In addition, chronography was a genre subject to constant updating and changes, which could take different forms: the writing of one's own chronicle with new authorities or the updating of an existing one (as Malalas' 'Eusebius' illustrates). In these new chronicles, additional authorities could be included for material that was deemed relevant at the time of writing, as the examples of Didymus, Bruttius and Palaiphatus illustrate. In Malalas, the reception of this tradition has resulted in many garbled references, but this should not lead to a general rejection of all his source references: they should all be scrutinised on an individual basis and the absence of parallels for an author can never

²⁸ Jeffreys (1990), p. 180.

²⁹ Charax of Pergamon (*FGrHist* 103 = *BNJ* 103), the 2nd century AD author of 40 books of Greek and Italic histories, in the sources variously described as *Hellenika* (F 1–14), *Historiai* (T 1), and *Chronika* (F 15–26; F 28–30). The work is first attested in John the Lydian, Malalas, Stephen of Byzantium and Evagrius Scholasticus and is fairly well-represented in the scholia-tradition and the Byzantine erudite literature (such as Eustathius of Thessalonike). Most fragments relate to mythology; it is clear that Charax was perceived as being a useful reference book for the beauties and the beasts of Greek myth and one may surmise that he was rediscovered for that use in the 6th century.

be the sole basis for rejection of his existence. Indeed, I would suggest that, contrary to the traditional assumption that Malalas only used a very limited number of sources directly, the confusions and problems in his chronicle are the result of an unsuccessful integration of material drawn from many texts. Obviously, as I have indicated, many references are only second-hand, but that is no reason to embrace a radical reduction of the number of sources – which, in any case, only shifts the problem away from Malalas to another, earlier author. Indeed, what may have made Malalas attractive for future generations was the bewildering breadth of knowledge, drawn from many quarters.

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