Byzantine collections and anthologies of poetry

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ABSTRACT:
While offering an overview of Byzantine compilations of poetry, this paper argues for their role as autonomous literary works situated in different sociocultural contexts and emphasizes their significance for the transmission of the texts. It distinguishes anthologies from collections having as a criterion the number of authors represented in a compilation. Collections are divided into two categories on the basis of the compiler’s identity -- the poet himself or an admirer of his work. It further proposes to differentiate “Classicizing” and “Byzantine” Anthologies, on the basis of their content. The Greek Anthology and the related to it anthologies are understood as “Classicizing”; while anthologies of occasional poetry are classified as “Byzantine”. It argues that authorship was important for compilers only if they wished to emphasize the importance of a text. Finally, it is suggested that these compilations represent a group of aesthetic values which can be considered “canonical”.

KEYWORDS:

DISCIPLINE CATEGORIES
8. Archives and Sources
13. Byzantine world
38. Learning
40. Literature – General
42. Literature – Verse
45. Manuscripts and Palaeography

GEOGRAPHICAL CATEGORIES
6. Eastern Mediterranean
10. Italy (with Malta and Ticino)

CHRONOLOGICAL CATEGORIES
5. 9th century
6. 10th century
7. 11th century
8. 12th century
9. 13th century
10. 14th century

OTHER KEYWORDS
1. Anthologies
2. Collections
3. Literary Canon
4. Authorship
Byzantine collections and anthologies of poetry

Nel suo profundo vidi che s’interna,
legato con amore in un volume,
ciò che per l’universo si squaderna...

In its profundity I saw when entering
bound by love in a single volume
these which are scattered leaves throughout the universe...

Dante, La Divina Commedia: Paradiso, 33. 85 – 87

Definitions

When Sir Henry Wellcome, founder of the Wellcome Trust and perhaps the greatest collector of the past century, started amassing his collection, he intended to demonstrate “by means of objects…every notable step in the evolution and progress from the first germ of life up to the fully developed man of today.” The unique artworks and objects, once in 1,300 cases in his storage area, are now housed in famous (mostly Londonese) museums, available to the modern visitor for experiencing fragments of the past. Byzantine collectors of poetry are not different from Sir Wellcome in what they have to offer and their aims. Their collections and anthologies are the major source for Byzantine poetry for the modern reader; and, indeed, they demonstrate past or contemporary literary achievements by means of texts. As it is not always clear what led Sir Wellcome (or his agents) to acquire an object, similarly it is uncertain why a Byzantine collector included a poem in his compilation. The lack of a clear statement over his criteria poses a problem in defining the right descriptive terms for these complications. So what is a poetic collection and an anthology?

Modern definitions of the terms “poetic collection” and “anthology” lack accuracy. Both terms are applied to forms of compilations because they include poems, which are decontextualized and thus disconnected from previous interpretive frames, such as an object or a ceremony. A poetic collection is considered to include poems with

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“a sequential or other holistic form”; while an anthology is understood to be a “bouquet” of poems, masterpieces which do not necessarily narrate one story. The very fact that poems are considered “interesting” or “beautiful” and thus worthy to be included in a compilation, imposes the holistic aspect of collections to anthologies as well. Poems are assembled to tell the story of, e.g., a literary “genre” or of good writing or even to give instructions to the good Christian. To put it differently, an anthology is a collection even if the criteria for its compilation are not explicit. Let us take for example the case of the ultimate anthology, the Palatine Anthology, which is a middle Byzantine compilation and combines earlier poetic anthologies and collections. Despite the constant additions, the compilation has an internal sequence. This sequence has started to be decoded only very recently. At the same time, a compilation of poems penned by one author could also be considered an anthology. Although it has a “holistic form” as the work of one author, such a compilation is neither always arranged in an obviously rational manner nor possesses a “sequential” form. Often it includes only a “bouquet” of poems by one and the same author. Collectors refer to their collections as such. In a famous passage, the eleventh-century poet John Mauropous sets his collection’s goal to give “a small (little?) taste” of his literary production (see below). And a thirteenth-century copyist indicates that what follows in another manuscript are “various verses” from the pen of Mitylenaios “selected and placed” in that manuscript.

As confusion can arise from describing medieval practices with modern terms, I would rather follow Marc Lauxtermann, who keeps things simple, dividing roughly the available manuscript material into “collections of poems by a single author and anthologies containing poems by various authors”. The term “sylloge” is often used in modern scholarship to denote small anthologies. Despite the functional character of such a definition, the dividing line remains blurred, as the lack of Byzantine interest in the question of authorship resulted in poems of various authors “sneaking in” to an authored

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5 Vat. gr. 1357 (XIV s.), fol. 82: “Χριστοφόρου...τοῦ μιτυληναίου στίχοι διάφοροι ἐκλεγέντες καὶ τεθέντες ἐνθάδε”. See de Groote, Mitylenaios, p. XLVII.
6 Lauxtermann, Poetry, p. 61.
collection. Justly, Paolo Odorico refers to the Byzantine collecting impulse as “la cultura della Sylloge” or “la culture du recueil,” which perhaps can be rendered in English as the “culture of the compilation.” For Odorico, “Sylloge” or “Recueil” describes the way medieval speakers of Greek worked to compile excerpts or full texts in manuscripts.

Nonetheless, the difficulty in terminology also reflects a reality: each compilation of poetry must be treated as a unique cultural product. However, a list of seeming similarities of anthologies or collections of a certain era can be compiled. Collections and anthologies of poetry obviously depend on the production of poetry itself. As little poetry was produced during the “dark ages” in Byzantium, collections started appearing after the end of iconoclasm. Then, as the interest for the production of occasional poetry declined after the 1330s, anthologies with the “typically” Byzantine occasional poetry become a rarity after 1350s, without, however, ceasing to exist altogether.

**Collections of Byzantine Poetry**

Two groups of poetic collections can be distinguished: those that were gathered by the author himself and those that were compiled by students or admirers of an author. However, if a compiler’s note (often a book epigram) is not included, any secure classification is impossible. Titles of poems are rarely helpful since in most cases the poems come from the draftbooks of authors.

One of the first poetic collections to appear after iconoclasm was that of the poetic oeuvre of the preceding era’s greatest holy man, Theodore the Stoudite. Seventy years after his death, Theodore’s cult led Dionysios, a monk of the Stoudite monastery, to register verse inscriptions attributed to Theodore from the walls of the monastery and other Stoudite monasteries. Dionysios added to his compilation other poems that he found in manuscripts and thus he created the collection of Theodore Stoudite’s poetry. In a poem appended at the end of the collection and in painstaking hexameters, Dionysios

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7 Instead of “the florilegic habit” as tentatively suggested by Paul Magdalino (“Orthodoxy and History”, p. 143).
8 Odorico, “La cultura della Συλλογή”; idem “La culture du recueil”.
10 On the poetic collection of Theodore the Stoudite see Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, pp. 70–72 (and Speck???) and Dement’s paper in the present volume.
expresses his admiration, but also implicitly claims credit for the collection by the poem’s
very presence\textsuperscript{11}.

Almost a century later, Niketas Stethatos published the collected poetic work of
another holy man, Symeon the New Theologian. Niketas speaks of his agency in more
vivid terms than Dionysios, referring to it twice: first, in a Vita that he composed for
Symeon, and second, at the introduction that he placed before the poetic collection.
Thirteen years after the death of the great mystic Symeon – that is, in 1035 – Niketas
collected the latter’s work. Symeon’s poetic work occupied a special place in Niketas
enterprise, as according to the available manuscript evidence and the introduction
preceding the poetic collection, and despite Niketas’ claims in the Vita, the hymns
circulated independently of Symeon’s prose works\textsuperscript{12}. Moreover, Niketas felt
responsible for the collection of Symeon’s works that he assembled by divine command.
According to the Vita, after Symeon’s decease, Niketas had a vision, which was interpreted by “a
very wise elder”, that Symeon invited Niketas to “write down” (”γράφῃ”) “the
compositions [of Symeon] that were provided to him [Symeon] by the Spirit from
above”; so that Niketas would make them “known to the faithful” and “they [the
compositions] may benefit those who read them”\textsuperscript{13}. The use of the undoubtedly
ambivalent verb “γράφω” (to write) is particularly curious and especially since this is the
first time that Niketas speaks about his “mission”. In later passages, Niketas refers to his
undertaking with the words “μεταγραφή” and “μεταγράψαι”, or “μετάπηξις” and
“μεταπηγνύναι”, indicating that he simply copied the words of Symeon\textsuperscript{14}. These later
terms would have been most appropriate to describe Niketas’ undertaking, given that
Symeon himself wrote down his mystical experiences and that Niketas alleges he worked
from the saint’s manuscripts\textsuperscript{15}. However, when the verb “γράφω” reappears a few
paragraphs after the passage in question, it has the meaning “to compose”, referring to
Niketas’ encomia to Symeon\textsuperscript{16}. Hence, by using the verb “γράφω” in a crucial passage for

\textsuperscript{11} Theodore the Stoudite, Iambs, no. 124. See also Lauxtermann, Poetry, pp. 72–73.
\textsuperscript{12} See J. Koder, Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Hymnes, vol. 1, SC 156, Paris 1968, pp. 23–25; and A.
LXXVII – LXXXI, LXXXIX – XCVI.
\textsuperscript{13} Chapter 139, cf. Greenfield, Niketas, p. 343.
\textsuperscript{14} Chapter 150, cf. Greenfield, Niketas, p. 379–81.
\textsuperscript{15} Chapters 131 and 140, transl. Greenfield, Symeon, pp. 317 and 345.
the development of the narrative, Niketas claims co-responsability for the final form of Symeon’s collected works. Such a feeling of co-responsibility is also mirrored in the way he intervenes in Symeon’s poems. The very title of the compilation is his invention: “τῶν θείων ἔρωτων ὤμοιον” (Hymns of the Divine Loves) – although none of the fifty-eight poems can be interpreted as a hymn. He also added a general introduction at the beginning of each “hymn”17, and modern research has shown that indeed Niketas intervened in the very text18. Therefore, Niketas was neither a simple compiler nor a new gatekeeper for the treasure of Symeon’s work19. Instead he is a collector who labels the poetry – as if guiding the reader around the texts – and who is interested in presenting literary artifacts in a manner accessible to the beholder.

Niketas himself states that his aim for “making his [Symeon’s] legacy known everywhere and […] publishing his divine writings for everyone” is to make sure “that they are readily available to help and benefit their [the people’s] souls”20. By publishing Symeon’s hymns, Niketas diffuses the word of a holy man, who was given revelations by the Holy Spirit21. Most importantly, and since the circulation of Symeon’s works is uncertain, Niketas preserves Symeon’s works. Niketas did this for the first time in Symeon’s lifetime. According to the Vita, Niketas was entrusted to copy Symeon’s works, but he returned to Symeon both copy and original22. More than a decade after Symeon’s death, Niketas not only claims that he had no access to manuscripts with Symeon’s works until “accidentally” (or by divine providence) they came into his

17 The labeling of the poems by Niketas as “hymns” is misleading. As J. Koder has discussed the genre of these poetic texts is a hybrid, including features of lyric and didactic poetry, verse homily and having strong autobiographical elements. Koder, “Ο Συμεών...και οι ύμνοι του”, pp. 25–26. You may add E. Aftentoulidou-Leitgeb, Οι ύμνοι του Συμεών του Νέου Θεολόγου. Σχέσεις των επιγραφών με τους Ύμνους, Byzantina 22 (2001) 123-147
19 Greenfield, Symeon, p. ix – x, argues that Niketas presents himself as Symeon’s “deliberately chosen literary trustee”. Symeon indeed entrusted him to make known his legacy, however, according to Chapter 140 of the vita, a process of collection was intervened. Niketas says that Symeon’s compositions “had been taken and guarded like some royal treasure for thirteen years by another difficult man”… “and one book of his compositions that had been sold off”. All these works came together to Niketas’ hands, who published the collected work of Symeon (not only the Hymns, which concerns us here). See also Chapters 133–135.
22 With the exception of some letters addressed to Niketas. See Chapter 131, Greenfield, Symeon, p. 319.
possession; but also he speaks of a book that was sold off and he managed to find. These manuscripts were more than sixteen years old by the time Niketas wrote, and it is not beyond imagination that Symeon’s works were in eminent danger of disappearing, if indeed only a single copy existed.

The case of Niketas’ self-awareness as a collector finds a parallel in that of Dionysios. Dionysios is present in the collection thanks to his book epigram and the very fact that he recorded the epigrams. Niketas is present with the interventions to the text, the introduction and the briefing at the beginning of each poem. Moreover, they both record and ensure the survival of divinely inspired words. In this sense their collections are not “antiquarian” actions or collections of curiosities, but practical guidance for a good Christian life. The circulation of their collections would also benefit themselves. Niketas was trying to establish Symeon’s cult, at the time that he (Niketas) was involved in political turbulences. Dionysios with his collection ensured that the memory of the spiritual founder of his monastery remained alive. The potential circulation of his collection would also mean that some of the verses could become verse inscriptions in monasteries outside the Stoudite circle, and thus could ensure the further spreading of Theodore’s teachings.

From the middle of the eleventh century on, an increasing number of authors were interested in collecting their works. Unfortunately, only a few of these collections have come down to our modern era. Sometimes we are lucky enough to hear about them. Isaac Komnenos, son of an emperor, wished to bequeath the collection of his writings (“heroic, iambic and political verse, as well as various letters and ekphraseis”) to the monastery he founded, the Theotokos Kosmosoteira in Thrace, near Pherrai. He demands that the book not “lie in an obscure place, but be displayed often as [something to] read (and in memory of me) to those especially industrious men (and they [are the ones who] want to come upon books and pictures)” 23. And he is not slow to add that he does not wish the books that he bequeathed (including his collected works) “to be alienated by the monastery” but “to survive” there “forever”. Unfortunately, Isaac’s book did not survive

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23 Transl. N. Patterson Ševčenko, ‘Kosmosoteira: Typikon of the sebastokrator Isaac Komnenos for the monastery of the Mother of God Kosmosoteira near Bera’, in BMFD, no. 29, p. 844, par. 106. Please, cite BMFD in full. The entire quote has to go to the Bibliography Section (this applies to all references in the footnotes!)
the vicissitudes of the Pherrai monastery. However, the book of the collected works of John Mauropous, the highly erudite metropolitan of Euchaita and a prolific teacher of the eleventh century, is now at the Vatican library (ms. Vat. gr. 676).

The Vatican manuscript has long been thought a close copy of the original collection by Mauropous. Recently, Daniele Bianconi proved on palaeographical grounds that the Vaticanus is the original and that Mauropous himself oversaw the production of the book. According to the book epigram at the beginning of his volume, he carefully included his rhetorical works (in prose and verse) in order to give a “small (little?) taste” (“γεύμα μικρόν”) from “a rich scent of flowers” (“δαψιλοῦς ἀνθοσμίου”) to the friends of literature (“τοῖς λόγων φίλοις”)25. Mauropous, like Isaac, collected his works to be read by a small circle closely affiliated to the author. Mauropous had students and he was part of the most vibrant circle of literati of his age. Isaac, a nobleman, did not have real students, but the monks of the monastery that he founded could become such “students”.

In the book epigram, Mauropous indicates that the poetic section of Vat. gr. 676 was formed after a deliberate process of selection and subsequent arrangement so that the reader would receive “a moderate pleasure”. According to Floris Bernard, Mauropous was interested in constructing a self-representative image in the way he arranged the poetry. Mauropous – still according to Bernard – appears in different sections of the collection as “a humble epigrammatist”, as a “man self-assertive about his authorship” and with “high-ranking friends” and so forth.26

The case of Mauropous’ book is unique. We have never come as close to a medieval author’s practice in preserving his own poetry as this one. In most cases, it is unclear who arranged the poetry as it survives. Revealing is the case of another eleventh-century master, that of Christopher Mitylenaios. Mitylenaios’ poetic collection has been (poorly) preserved in a manuscript in Grottaferrata (Z a XXIX), which was copied far away from where Mitylenaios lived and flourished, in the thirteenth-century Terra d’Otranto.27 It has been suggested that the collection is arranged chronologically,

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25 Poem 1, vv. 26–29.
27 For the relevant bibliography see M. de Groote, Mitylenaios, pp. xxvii-xxix, and Arnesiano, La minuscola, no. 88 (p. 97).
although some poems are grouped around the same subject\textsuperscript{28}. Given that Mitylenaios’ poems are arranged chronologically, it is a plausible hypothesis that the poems come from a register with his works\textsuperscript{29}. However, whether this “register” was formed by Mitylenaios himself or a copyist who selected some poems from a larger pool remains uncertain.

The problems encountered when trying to identify the collector can be further demonstrated by looking into the poetic collection of the late twelfth-century canonist Theodore Balsamon. Balsamon’s collection is transmitted as part of an extensive poetic anthology, the *Anthologia Marciana* (see below)\textsuperscript{30}. It is not possible to discern a pattern of arrangement to the poetry within the collection. Only a group of epigrams at the beginning of the collection stands out as a cluster (nos. 1 – 8)\textsuperscript{31}. Otherwise, poems on the same subject appear separately in the collection\textsuperscript{32}. Most importantly, three more epigrams attributed to Balsamon (excluded from the collection) are copied by the same scribe and compiler of the anthology later on in the same anthology\textsuperscript{33}, indicating that he had access to a larger corpus of epigrams. Is the modern reader approaching Balsamon through the author’s selection of poems or that of a later compiler?

Nicholas Kallikles’ collection, also part of the *Anthologia Marciana*, can provide some interesting clues. In the original arrangement of the manuscript’s quires, Kallikles’ collection was the opening poetic section of the anthology. His collection as it appears in the Marcianus comprises twenty-five poems\textsuperscript{34} with two easily distinguishable part: the first twenty-one poems at least are verse inscriptions (or at least they are intended as such), while the rest have a performative function\textsuperscript{35}. Furthermore, smaller clusters also

\textsuperscript{28} Bernard, *Reading and Writing Poetry*, pp. 148–53. Crimi, *Canzoniere*, pp. 16–20, suggests that the collection’s focus is diverting from the court towards an intimate group of friends, as also the metre becomes simpler.


\textsuperscript{31} Horna, “Die Epigramme”, p. 204.

\textsuperscript{32} E.g. Horna, “Die Epigramme”, nos. 21–23 cf. no. 25 or no. 9 cf. nos. 35 – 37.

\textsuperscript{33} Fols. 8–9.

\textsuperscript{34} The arrangement of the poems is the following (using Romano’s numbering): 1, 2, 32, 3, 4, 8, 11, 13 – 18, 20 – 31. Romano has placed no. 32 among the “dubia”, because in other manuscripts it is attributed to poets other than Kallikles. Romano himself seems to be uncertain about his decision (Romano, *Callicles*, p. 29).

\textsuperscript{35} Romano’s no. 28, which is included in the Marcianus, could be either a verse inscription or a sepulchral epigram.
exist within the collection: poems 18 to 22 (according to Romano’s numbering) are tomb epigrams and poems 24 to 25 are dedicated to monumental pictorial works in the palace. In other words, Kallikles’ collection is arranged according to the medieval concept of “genre” – which is closer to the modern notions of “subject-matter” and function than to literary “genre”. However, Kallikles’ collection in the Anthologia Marciana does not include all the poems penned by the author or even all the inscriptive epigrams. Thus, it can be assumed that what is included in the Anthologia Marciana is only a fraction of a larger poetic collection purposely arranged and coming from the author’s papers. From this fraction the scribe was able to make further selections. The scribe-redactor was the one deciding what to include. Three of Kallikles’ poems re-appear in a different part of the anthology indicating a selection process on the part of the scribe. Therefore, it is highly probable – although hard to prove – that Balsamon’s collection stems from a similar selection process since it is also preserved as part of the Anthologia Marciana.

Poetic Anthologies

Poetic anthologies can be roughly divided between those that include antique epigrams (Classicizing Anthologies) and those that consist solely of Byzantine material (Byzantine Anthologies).

The compilation that has primarily been associated with the word “anthology” is the so-called Greek Anthology. The term Greek Anthology refers to anthologies formed from / around the ninth-century Anthology of Constantine Kephalas, and specifically to the poems in the tenth-century recension in the Palatine manuscript and the thirteenth-century Anthology of Maximos Planudes. Kephalas – about whom we know almost nothing – published in the 880s, at the earliest, an anthology of Ancient and late antique poetry. His sources were mainly Alexandrian, Roman and late antique anthologies. To this antique material, Kephalas himself added a small number of ninth-century

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36 Nos. 9 and 10 in Romano’s edition are not included in the collection as appears in Marciamus and thus they could have been arranged within the suggested cluster of tomb-epigrams.
38 The lack of significant differences in the readings of poems that are included both in the collection and were circulated independently does not support the existence of two separate manuscript traditions. See, e.g., the apparatus criticus in Romano’s poem no. 18.
epigrams\textsuperscript{39}, but also a book with Christian epigrams at the very beginning of his collection to justify his use of pagan poetry\textsuperscript{40}.

The manuscript of Kephalas has not survived, but the tenth-century \textit{Palatine Anthology} must be considered a faithful copy, but with the addition of three books\textsuperscript{41}. The copying of the book was a collective work, but its final tenth-century form is the work of one scribe who was the final redactor of the manuscript\textsuperscript{42}. A twelfth-century hand copied additional epigrams in the book\textsuperscript{43}.

The \textit{Kephalas anthology} was an immediate success. Many copies, most of which do not survive, were redacted\textsuperscript{44}. Interestingly, none of them appears to be a faithful copy of the \textit{Kephalas Anthology}, since in all cases a selection process was involved. The \textit{Palatine Anthology} incorporated poems that were originally not to be found in the \textit{Kephalas Anthology}. Another recension, the \textit{Sylloge Euphemiana}, which was compiled during the reign of Leo VI (886 – 912), included only re-arranged selections from the \textit{Kephalas Anthology}\textsuperscript{45}. The same holds true for the \textit{Sylloge Parisina} that comes from an early abridgement of Kephalas\textsuperscript{46}.

The great thirteenth-century scholar, Maximos Planudes, organized a new enterprise to collect as much as possible from Kephalas’ original anthology in between 1280 and 1283. He used two manuscripts that come from a different branch of Kephalas’ manuscript tradition than the \textit{Palatine Anthology}. He compared and compiled a new anthology, today named the \textit{Anthologia Planudea}. In the \textit{Anthologia Planudea} one can find no less than four hundred fifty additional epigrams to the 3,700 epigrams of the \textit{Palatine Anthology}. Planudes, however, did not follow faithfully Kephalas thematic

\textsuperscript{39} For Kephalas’ additions of ninth century poetry see: Lauxtermann, “Cephalas”, pp. 200–02.
\textsuperscript{40} Lauxtermann, \textit{Poetry}, pp. 89–98.
\textsuperscript{42} The first group of scribes worked between 920 and 930 (B\textsuperscript{1}, B\textsuperscript{2}, B\textsuperscript{3}) and the second just a few years later, between 940 and 950 (A\textsuperscript{1}, A\textsuperscript{2}, J). The identification of J, the redactor of the manuscript, with Constantine the Rhodian has been disputed by Orsini, “Lo scriba J”, but without good cause: see Lauxtermann, “Cephalas”, p. 196, n. 5.
\textsuperscript{43} Scribe Σ\textsuperscript{x} literature on this issue? Or is this your finding?.
\textsuperscript{44} Lauxtermann, \textit{Poetry}, 114.
categories; instead, he cut sequences into shorter blocks, mixed poems, and even re-arranged some epigrams.

Kephalas Anthology withstood the pace of time by being complete, organized and adaptive. Thus, its production is not the result of mere classicism; instead the effort of a genius, such as Kephalas, who managed to collect and justify more than 4,000 epigrams made unnecessary to compile ex novo a similar anthology in the subsequent years. Luckily, he lived in years with a great interest in the classics and late antiquity as examples of rhetorical production. Fortunately, Kephalas’ time was only the prelude of an even greater interest in collecting and anthologizing and thus the anthology of Kephalas could receive the recognition that it deserved and its contents keep being copied. Thus, Byzantine “classism” was only a part of the equation that lead to the compilation of this (still) influential anthology.

The turbulent story of the Greek Anthology leads to one of the main points of this contribution: no two anthologies are the same. To my knowledge, there are no faithful copies of one anthology, since a factor of re-organizing is always involved. As soon as a scribe is engaged in copying, he becomes a new anthologist. The fluctuant nature of short texts allowed him to select those that he found interesting for his own reasons. With no need to abbreviate, the anthologist was able to quote the poems without affecting their individual character as snapshots from a larger composition. The titles were there to remind the reader of the individual character of each poem. Byzantine anthologies also fit into this “mix and [perhaps] match” pattern.

The elegant tenth-century manuscript Barberinus Gr. 310 contains one of the earliest surviving Byzantine anthologies – the so-called Anthologia Barberina. It was compiled contemporaneously to the copying of the manuscript and it is organized so as to flatter emperor Constantine VII. Although it has lost most of its pages, its index has

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48 On the arrangement of the poetry see above p. xxx, and Maltomini, “Poesia epigrammatica”, pp. 120–23.


50 Lauxtermann, Poetry, p. 126.
been preserved, offering a comprehensive picture of the poems’ arrangement. The poems of the first part of the manuscript (mainly anacreontics) date from between the sixth and the ninth centuries and some of them can also be found in the Palatine manuscript\textsuperscript{51}. Alphabets and various hymns that date from between the years 867 and 912 prevail in the second part. The \textit{Anthologia Barberina} is the only Byzantine anthology that can be read as a songbook, as a collection of lyrics: both alphabets and anacreontics, written in accentual metre, were intended for musical performance\textsuperscript{52}.

The anthology in the early twelfth-century manuscript Paris. Suppl. Gr. 690 may differ from the \textit{Anthologia Barberina} as to its contents, but not its intended audience\textsuperscript{53}. The once luxurious manuscript – clearly written for a commissioner of high status – with titles in gold is today in deplorable condition and spare folia and significant \textit{lacunae} make it impossible to discern the original arrangement of the poetry\textsuperscript{54}. However, the surviving material from the anthology points to Par. Suppl. Gr. 690 as the herald (or perhaps the only survivor) of a new pattern for anthologizing poetry. If Kephalas was interested only in a small number of contemporary or nearly contemporary poet works, if the \textit{Anthologia Barberina} is a songbook for the court, the anonymous anthologist of the Parisian manuscript is far from it. The manuscript itself includes some classical poetry, but the anthologist is concerned mainly with texts of Byzantine authors. Poets such as Pisides, Geometres, Mitylenaios, Mauropous, Psellos, but also Kosmas the Melode, have a place there. All these poems are laudatory poems, epigrams on works of art, and liturgical hymns, and can be viewed as “good poetry” from a time relatively close to the anthologist’s past.

Medieval Greek anthology culture reached its peak within the context of the early Palaeologan “revival”. Manuscripts with Byzantine letters, homilies, and histories date primarily from this time of high hopes and scholarly confidence after the politically turbulent years following the dramatic events around the year 1204. The high level of scholarship in the early years of the Palaiologan dynasty encouraged the creation of compilations of literature surviving in the Constantinopolitan libraries after 1261, and

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{Lauxtermann2} Lauxtermann, \textit{Poetry}, pp. 127–28, where also comparison to the \textit{Book of Ceremonies}.
\bibitem{Lauxtermann3} Lauxtermann, \textit{Poetry}, pp. 329–33; Rochefort, “Une anthologie”; Bernard, \textit{Reading and Writing}, pp. 72–73. The dating of the manuscript is heavily disputed; see Lauxtermann, \textit{Poetry}, p. 329.
\bibitem{Rochefort} Rochefort, “Une anthologie”, p. 4.
\end{thebibliography}
thus it is understandable that the late thirteenth- and early-fourteenth centuries are rich in poetic anthologies as well. Unfortunately, only a small number of them has been sufficiently studied and the role of Nicaea to the anthologizing impulse remains unexplored.

The most famous of all is the late thirteenth-century *Anthologia Marciana*. It was compiled in the last decades of the century in Constantinople and today can be found in the *Biblioteca Marciana* under the number Gr. 524 (collocation no. 318). The *Anthologia Marciana* is a ***hyper-anthology*** that includes long poems, such as Constantine Stilbes’ nearly one thousand verses on the great fire of 1197; authored collections, such as those of Nicholas Kallikles and Theodore Balsamon; and three anonymous compilations of poetry (“Syllogae”). The “Syllogae” are relatively small anthologies with occasional poetry (epitaphs, epigrams on works of art, deme-hymns, etc). The first Sylloge, Sylloge A, consists of thirty-nine poems that date from mainly the eleventh century. Sylloge B, with a hundred seventy-three poems, is the largest of the three compilations. The datable poems come mainly from after the year 1140, with poetry from after 1050 interspersed. Sylloge C contains forty-five poems from between 1050 and 1200, some of which have been copied from previous parts of the same manuscript. The seemingly sloppy layout suggests that the scribe copied the anthology for his own use and he did not aspire to circulate the texts. In most probability the scribe is the redactor of the poetic anthology as it is transmitted in the manuscript Marcianus gr. 524. However, it is unclear whether he collected the poetry by himself or whether he “anthologized” from one or more pre-existing anthologies55.

Another thirteenth-century anthology copied by the Scribe for his personal use is manuscript Hauniensis GkS 1889.4, in Copenhagen and apparently only a fragment from a larger anthology that has not survived56. The datable poems come from the late eleventh

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55 On the *Anthologia Marciana* and the relevant bibliography see Spingou, “Anonymous Poets”, pp. 139–140.
56 For the poems see L.G. Westerink, *Michaelis Pselli Poemata*, Leipzig 1992, pp. VIII–IX. For the description of the manuscript see B. Schartau, *Codices Graeci Haunienses*, Copenhagen 1994, pp. 157–59. A new re-appraisal of the manuscript was published by Christensen, “Inedita”. I follow here the dating implied as the most probable by Christensen.
century. Again, there is not a sense of order in this anthology, while it is uncertain if it is indeed the copy of a previous anthology.\(^{57}\)

Looking for general patterns in the compilation of the anthologies, scribes in these centuries were copying poetry for themselves and not necessarily for a wealthy commissioner. Such poetry could be used as model-text. Indeed a verse for the Sylloge A of the *Anthologia Marciana* can only be found in a thirteenth-century grammatical treatise as an example of concise but meaningful verse.\(^{58}\) Furthermore, the language of court poetry during the reigns of Michael VIII and Andronikos II resembles much the style of the poetry found in anthologies.\(^{59}\)

Similar was the use of the anthologies in the periphery. A number of manuscripts with poems comes from South Italy and especially the Terra d’Otranto where a Greek-speaking population had a pronounced presence with a number of functioning monasteries. In two prominent thirteenth and fourteenth-century manuscripts local poetic production is mixed with Byzantine poetry stemming from the center,\(^{60}\) suggesting that Italian poets used the poets as examples of good writing.\(^{61}\) An early fourteenth-century manuscript from Cyprus appears to be a parallel case. The Vatican manuscript Palatinus gr. 367 contains a collection of mainly letters and charters from early Frankish Cyprus. The collected texts were meant to be used as models by local family notaries. Among the various prose works, it also includes enclaves with poetry. Poems from the Byzantine center are mixed with poems that notaries have written or received as gifts.\(^{62}\)

The poetic anthologies did not disappear with the political turning point marked by the year 1453. The *Greek Anthology* was already a great success in the West.

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\(^{57}\) As suggested by Christensen, “Inedita”, p. 320.


\(^{59}\) See the contribution of Martin Hinterberger in the present volume <PLEASE CHECK that he does mention this point>. No he doesn’t mention anything about this issue. Delete this footnote!


Although Byzantine Anthologies had fallen into oblivion, those initiated into Byzantine literature were compiling their own anthologies. It is sufficient to look at the notebooks of Andreas Darmarios (a sixteenth-century book dealer) and Leo Allatius (librarian of the Vatican Library) or at the anonymous nineteenth-century anthology of Byzantine-Italian poets in Palermo to be persuaded of the importance of the anthologizing impulse for the transmission of the Byzantine poetry in early modern times.

**Authorship in Collections and Anthologies**

If collections, as defined here, are built around the axis of authorship, anthologies show little concern with the delicate matter of who wrote what. Most often, particularly occasional poetry appears anonymously. One might mention the gargantuan *syllogae* in the *Anthologia Marciana*. Despite the fact that some poems in the *syllogae* come from the poetic collections of Christopher Mitylenaios and Nicholas Kallikles, they are quoted anonymously. In the anthology of ms. Hauniensis 1899, most poems appear unattributed or with false ascriptions. Furthermore, other poems often appear to be attributed to more than one poet. A poem by the tenth-century poet John Geometres appears in manuscripts either unattributed or with no less than five different ascriptions. Such multiple attributions have puzzled modern editors who are most concerned with authorship. Robert Romano, for example, in his edition of Nicholas Kallikles’ poems, was led to consider a poem of ‘uncertain authorship’ (perhaps you mention here which poem this is), since a manuscript ascribed the poem to Theodore Prodromos, despite the fact that the

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63 Lauxtermann, “Janus Laskaris”.
66 Westerink, *Michaelis Pselli Poemata*, p. VIII.
poem was included in Kallikles’ collection as well. Other philologists decided to not publish their editorial work on anthologies because they were unable to identify authors.

It is not by pure co-incidence that Byzantine compilers were not interested in accurately attributing texts. Despite the concern of some authors to safeguard their identity by compiling collections or giving hints in the main text, the concept of “copyright” per se is a modern invention. Epigrams, verses, rare or newly coined words, were used and re-used without giving any credit to their original creator. Manuel Straboromanos, a little known poet, wrote a series of epigrams on behalf of Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118) in which he incorporated an epigram by Michael Psellos without giving him credit. Furthermore, epigrams on works of art, in particular, were inscribed and recycled and the name of the author did not figure under inscriptions. A famous example is an epigram by the tenth-century poet John Geometres that accompanies a twelfth-century depiction of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste in Asinou. Similar we see in the case of Straboromanos adopting Psellos’ epigram and the epigraphist in Asinou using the work of an earlier poet, poems also have been included anonymously in collections or, to be more precise, anthologies were built around the work of a single poet. The little explored manuscript tradition of Manuel Philes poems testifies to such a habit.

When reading Philes, we rely mostly on the very problematic nineteenth-century edition by Bénigne Emmanuel Clément Miller. Miller arranged the poems according to what he considered “primary manuscripts”. Even in the first pages of the printed book one could find a number of poems that are not penned by Philes, but they have been included among his poems. In most cases, these are epigrams on works of art, which, thanks to their formulaic language and to their utilitarian character as potential verse inscriptions, could circulate freely. The anthologist (or perhaps even Philes himself)

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68 The same poem (no. 32) appears also in Kallikles’s collection. Romano, Callicles, p. 29
69 On the unpublished edition of the anonymous Syllogae of the Anthologia Marciana by Konstantin Horna, see F. Spingou, “The vicissitudes of an anthology” (in preparation) Is already published?.
70 See for example the use of the word “φίλος” and its derivatives in the poetry of Philes.
thought it appropriate to include a further example on the same “subject” (a depiction), even if it was by a different author.

The practice of including poems by different authors in a collection is not unique to Byzantine poetic anthologies. Collections of letters also include mis-attributed texts\(^74\). The reason behind these misattributions is the very function of a collection of rhetorical texts, as both letters and poems are. Theoretical rhetorical treatises and fictional model-texts dedicated to specific “genres” are rare in Byzantium. Anthologies and collections were filling this gap by offering examples of good writing. In a famous passage from the thirteenth-century treatise of Pseudo-Gregory of Corinth on rhetoric, the author appears to incite the reader to have as models George of Pisidia, Nicholas Kallikles, Prodromos “and whoever is similar to them”\(^75\). Significantly, names mainly of these “canonical” authors appear in collections, while the names of many more poets (those whose existence we infer from other sources) are lost for good.

The question of authorship becomes relevant especially for texts aimed at the “spiritual benefit of the reader,” in which authorship ensures “orthodoxy”. Spiritual florilegia or anthologies, for instance, the thirteenth-century anthology by Mark the Monk, often include clusters with poetry. Short epigrams with obvious profit for the soul are not necessarily attributed, but excerpts from longer poems are attributed to church fathers such as John Chrysostom\(^76\).

**Collections, Anthologies and the Literary Canon**

Anthologies and collections of Byzantine poetry incorporate principles related to the literary canon, for they presuppose a selection process on the basis of “value”. This selection appears to depend on the individual, given the diversity of the anthologies, and so compilations seem to represent a “private canon”, which was assembled on commission or speculation. The various canons, however, are built around the axis of common aesthetic values. The relatively narrow selection of poems they represent, although not always first-rate, nevertheless demonstrate one or more of the following

characteristics: erudite and often purposely obscure language; newly coined compounds; rich list of modifiers; vivid metaphors and images; personal involvement; (acceptable) metrics; and/or rhythm. A possible demonstration of “Orthodox” values can be potentially added to this list. The sensibility towards these aesthetic values indicates that the collector, anthologist, and scribe were seen as the custodians of cultural capital. The names of famous, “canonical”, authors were there to signify that indeed a poem possesses these characteristics and thus deserves attention\textsuperscript{77}.

The great number of anthologies of occasional poetry dating from the second half of the thirteenth and the early fourteenth centuries and their decline in numbers after the 1330s are telling. In the early Palaeologan court but also in roughly contemporary South Italy and Cyprus, it was essential for the individual to write appropriate poetry that incorporated as many of the abovementioned aesthetic values originating from a glorious past as possible, or to understand the connotation of similar texts. With this skill, the reader could participate in mainstream culture. As soon as this social interest towards this kind of rhetoric ceased to exist because of sociopolitical changes, such a literature ceased to be important and, accordingly, was no longer intensively collected\textsuperscript{78}. Only later compilations were based on personal, isolated interests, such as the cases of Darmarios and Allatius in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century demonstrate.

\textit{Concluding Remarks}

The short nature of this essay precluded an overview of the collections with liturgical or vernacular poetry, not to mention \textit{poetic miscellani} (codices only with poetry) and early modern anthologies of Byzantine poetry. From the material that has been surveyed here, three conclusion can be drawn. First, that the poems collected in an anthology or collection do not differ significantly from objects collected by, e.g., Sir Wellcome, and then exhibited in a collection. The selected texts create a new whole (a storyline), although they preserve their individuality. Second, our modern picture of Byzantine poetry passes through the lens of collectors and anthologists, who worked as the curators

\textsuperscript{77} Papaioannou, “Voice, Signature, Mask”, pp. 35–39.
\textsuperscript{78} On the decline of interest see D. Angelov, \textit{Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium, 1204 – 1330}, Cambridge 2007, pp. 7–8.
of an exhibition of poetry, since occasional poetry survives almost exclusively in collections and anthologies. Third, a collection or an anthology cannot be seen as an isolated cultural event, out of its sociocultural context. It is a cultural product of the concerns and the needs of a society at a specific time. John Mauropous and Isaac Komnenos collected their works at a time that education was connected to social status and the place of the individual was paramount. Kephalas and Dionysios worked at a time when aspects of the past were important for forming a new future. The multilayered Greek Anthology shows magnificently how such needs changed over time. Thus, each anthology or collection reflects only intentional in part but nevertheless significant choices between what should be remembered (and thus be preserved) or forgotten (and thus disappear). Such a function does not differ much from how one would describe “culture” itself.

Appendix I: Selected Collections of Byzantine Poetry (9th – 14th cent.)

Anonymous Italian (Barocci 5081).

10th cent. Anonymous Patrician (Vat. Pal. Gr. 367, s. XIV inc.).

11th cent. Symeon the New Theologian (Marc. Gr. 494, s. XIII s.; Paris. Suppl. gr. 103, s. XIV; Patmiacus 427, s. XIV)
Anonymous of Sola (Vat. gr. 753, f. 4v)82.
John Mauropous (Vat. gr. 676, s. XI)
Christophoros Mitylenaios (Grott. Bibl. Bad. Greca Z a XXXIX, s. XIII)

12th cent. Nicholas Kallikles (Marc. Gr. 524, XIII s. ex.)
Theodore Prodromos (Vat. gr. 305, XIII s. ex.)
‘Manganeios Prodromos’ (Marc. Gr. XI 22, XIV s.)
Theodore Balsamon (Marc. Gr. 524 (XIII s. ex.)

13th cent. John Apokaukos (St Petersburg RNB Gr. 250 Granstrem 454)
Maximos Planudes (Paris. suppl. gr. 1090, XV s. & Paris. gr. 1211)

79 Lauxtermann, Poetry, pp. 111–12.
80 See Speck, Theodoros, p. 59.
Maximos/Manuel Holobolos

14th cent. Leo Bardales (Paris. gr. 1630)
Manuel Philes (although its textual transmission remains problematic, see Stickler, Manuel Philes, 209–242)

Anthologies

Anthologies of Byzantine Poetry (preliminary list)
Barber. Gr. 310 (X s.) = Anthologia Barberina
Vat. Gr. 753 (XI s.)
Paris. Suppl. gr. 690 (XII s.)
Laur. Plut. 5.10 (a. 1282), ff. 25–214
Haun. Gr. 1899 (XIII s.)
Marc. Gr. 524 (XIII s.) = Anthologia Marciana
Vat. Gr. 1357 (XIV s.)
Vat. Pal. Gr. 367 (a. 1317 – 1318)
Laur. Plut. 32.19 (XIV s.)
Bodl. Roe 18 (1349)
Scor. Gr. R.III.17 (XIV s.)
Vat. Gr. 1267 (XIV s.)
Vat. Ottob. 324 (XIV/XV s.)

Andreas Darmarios: Monanch. Gr. 162 (1579), Bodl. Auct. D. 3. 19 (Misc. 4, XVI s.)

Leo Allatius: Barber. Gr. 74 and 279 (XVII s.).

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