Theofili Kampianaki: John Zonaras' *Epitome of Histories*. A Compendium of Jewish Roman History and Its Reception. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2022 (Oxford Studies in Byzantium). XIII, 200 p. £ 65.00/$ 85.00/€ 81.22. ISBN: 978-0-19-286510-6.

Theofili Kampianaki's 2017 Oxford thesis "John Zonaras' *Epitome of Histories* (12th Cent.): A Compendium of Jewish-Roman History and Its Readers" is the precursor of the book here reviewed. The latter differs from the former in several respects, among which are the addition (pp. 165–172) of an interesting treatment of medieval translations of the *Epitome*, the excision of summary sections, and the revision of some notes, especially to accommodate citations of works published after the thesis, some as recently as 2021. Both dissertation and book are informed by Kampianaki's approach from the perspective of a Byzantinist whose concerns include the form, content, composition, transmission, and reception of Zonaras' immense and labor- and materials-intensive exposition of events, personages, and themes stretching from creation through the death of Alexios Komnenos in 1118. The result is novel, learned, and stimulating. Readers should be forewarned, however, that, because Kampianiki cites the *Epitome* by the volume, page, and line numbers of the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* edition of Moritz Pinder and Theodor Büttner-Wobst,[1] they will need to have access to their work in order to appreciate Kampianaki's accomplishment in full.

Her Introduction (pp. 1–6) briefly reviews the major modern editions of the *Epitome* from Hieronymus Wolf's[2] through Pinder and Büttner-Wobst's and notices a few of the most accessible translations of portions of the *Epitome* together with Iordanis Grigoriadis' modern Greek version of the whole.[3] Before a chapter-by-chapter preview of what will follow, she justly observes (p. 3) that, with the exception of Grigoriadis' 1998 "Linguistic and Literary Studies in the *Epitomê historiôn* of John Zonaras,"[4] the attention of modern scholarship to the *Epitome* derived almost without exception from interest in the sources from which Zonaras drew, most notably otherwise-lost portions

1 Ioannis Zonarae Annales. 3 vols. Bonn 1841/1844/1897.

2 Ioannis Zonarae [...] compendium historiarum. 3 vols. Basil 1557.

3 Επιτομή Ιστοριών. 3 vols. Athens 1995–1999.

4 Thessalonike 1998 (Βυζαντινά κείμενα και μελέται 26).

of Cassius Dio's *Roman History*. To redress that perceived wrong is one of Kampianaki's primary objectives, if not the *raison d'être* of her book.

Kampianaki devotes her initial chapter ("John Zonaras. Biography and Oeuvre," pp. 7–26) to the exposition of Zonaras' life, of a public career which culminated, prior to his tonsure, in the offices of πρωτασηκρῆτις and μέγας δρουγγάριος, and to the review of a literary output comprised of commentaries on canon law, various hagiographical and homiletic compositions, some ecclesiastical poetry, a lexicon that most today deny was his work, and the *Epitome of Histories*. A muster of Zonarii, some whom held ecclesiastical and governmental positions of significance, furnishes a context for John's career and contributes to Kampianaki's convincing construction of his education and the social, intellectual, and spiritual circles which helped define him and which, in turn, Kampianaki equates with Zonaras' targeted readership and with those whose enthusiastic reception of the *Epitome* contributed to its immediate popularity. An exposition of her reconstruction of the chronology of the composition and publication or publications of the *Epitome* follows, this based primarily on her analyses of Zonaras' Proem to the *Epitome* and of passages from his commentaries on canon law, on the use of the *Epitome* by later authors, and on some modern scholarship concerned with these same matters. The resultant chronology (p. 15) sets Zonaras' birth between about 1080 and 1098, his retirement from public life and high government office to the monastery of the Theotokos Pantanassa on the island of St. Glykeria in the 1120s or 1130s, and, partly on the basis of the pronoun ἐκεῖνος employed by Zonaras with reference to John II Komnenos (died 1143), the completion of the *Epitome* between 1143 and 1150. The execution of his various commentaries, exegetical works, and poetry Kampianaki situates on St. Glykeria. Zonaras' death she places in or after 1161 (p. 10). For some reservations about certain components of this reconstruction, see below on Chapter 6.

Kampianaki's ensuing chapter ("The Composition of the *Epitome*," pp. 27–37) is replete with stimulating and, to varying degrees, compelling reflections on the composition of the *Epitome*. She demonstrates (pp. 27–29) that the completed *Epitome* looks to have been disseminated in two volumes, the first devoted to Jewish antiquities and to pre-imperial Roman history, the second to imperial Roman history and its Rome's emperors. That established, she shifts her attention (pp. 29–37) to the "internal thematic structure" of the *Epitome*. Because of what strikes her as the "self-contained" nature of the

Jewish section of the *Epitome*, "a theme worthy of being treated in its own right" (p. 34) and reflected as such by the content of the first volume of the *Epitome*, Kampianaki suggests that an exposition of Jewish history was Zonaras' original objective, expanded by him as an increasing number of sources for Roman history, above all portions of Dio's *Roman History*, came into his possession. She adduces as traces of Zonaras' subsequent expansion of the scope of the *Epitome* Zonaras' peculiar direction of his readers toward Herodotus' account of the rise of Cyrus the Great when, in fact, the *Epitome* itself later offers just such a Herodotus-based account and in Zonaras' advice to those keen on learning about early Rome and her rise to empire to consult Polybius and Dio rather than to look for such information in relevant portions of the *Epitome* (pp. 34–35). To Kampianaki, these directives are indications that Zonaras' original focus was on Jewish history alone and that "the *Epitome* should not be viewed as a vast project that was conceived in its final form from the very beginning, but rather as a work in progress which gradually developed into its present form" (pp. 35–36). Furthermore, if accepted, this thesis helps to explain why the *Epitome* "plays down" but does not eradicate "a remarkable feature traditionally ascribed to Byzantine chronicles: that their authors sought to establish the Empire as the fourth kingdom prophesized in the apocalyptic visions of the prophet Daniel and to present its citizens as the rightful heirs to the Jews as God's Chosen People" (p. 34).

Kampianaki turns next to how Zonaras worked on the *Epitome* and how he treated his sources ("Zonaras' Working Method and Treatment of His Sources," pp. 38–66). She first considers Zonaras' Proem and stresses his emphases therein on his didactic purpose, on his belief in the utility and stylistic accessibility of the *Epitome*, and on what he saw as its three significant limitations: its periodic imprecision due to a paucity or unavailability of sources; his sources' sometimes contradictory testimony, which Zonaras says he will note only when he deems it crucial to his narrative to do so; and his decision to employ stylistic and linguistic shifts to mirror the characteristics of his sources. She then treats in turn the Jewish and Roman books of the *Epitome*.

With respect to the former, Kampianaki's thoughtful exposition (pp. 42–47) of how Zonaras handled Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*, an epitome of which he adapted for the *Epitome of Histories*, and the *Jewish War*, together with the Old Testament, Theodoret of Cyrrhus' *Commentary on Daniel,* and several other sources, are especially welcome. Her demonstration of how Zonaras used

quotations from these texts and the periodic inclusion of alternative versions of a particular subject to confirm his veracity, to bolster his own authority, and to demonstrate the care he took in the construction of a firm foundation for his narrative is illuminating and convincing. When it comes to Zonaras' exposition of Roman history – divided by Kampianaki into pre-Constantinian (*Epitome* Books 7–12) and Constantinian and post-Constantinian through Alexios Komnenos (*Epitome* Books 13–18) – she continues to impress.

Kampianaki begins her treatment of the pre-Constantinian Roman books (pp. 47–55) with a review of Zonaras' sources. With respect to these, she observes that, apart from Dio's use of consular years, Zonaras' sources generally determine his chronological and structural exposition of pre-Constantinian history. Events and individuals pertinent to ecclesiastical history appear in distinct sections, generally following the treatment of emperors with whom they are associated. Events, rather than individuals, dominate. Shifts in sources, only rarely announced, accompany shifts in focus and emphasis. Matters change, however, in the Constantinian and post-Constantinian portions the *Epitome* (pp. 55–66). Biographical and moralizing interests displace but do not totally replace the relation of events. Kampianaki (p. 65) sees in this shift evidence that Zonaras thought the reign of Constantine inaugurated a distinct period of Roman history, one which she regularly designates "Byzantine." This periodization, she thinks, prompted Zonaras to search for features that distinguish the periods in question and, in some cases, to reflect on the causes and consequences of those features. For Zonaras and, in Kampianaki's view, for his anticipated readership, all these concerns were connected to the characters of individual emperors and to the complex relationships between those characters and the character of the political institutions of the Roman state. Kampianaki's Chapter 4 (pp. 67–83), "The Political and Ideological Context of the *Epitome*," delves deeper into these matters and concentrates especially on the theme of *Kaiserkritik*.

Scholarly recognition of Zonaras' animus against the Komnenian regime is a commonplace, and Kampianaki's assertion that the *Epitome's* exposition of "Roman and Byzantine history has strong political leanings" (p. 67) comes as no surprise. What distinguishes Kampianaki's take from most earlier considerations of this topic is the convincing case she makes for Zonaras' dissatisfaction with "the mechanisms of imperial administration, rather than his alleged disapproval of the institution of monarchy itself" (p. 69) as the impetus behind Zonaras' discontents. For her, then, the *Kaiserkritik* of the

Epitome is not institutional but constitutional in character. Zonaras' register of such institutional abuses includes Alexios' misuse of public funds, favoritism in appointments, degradation of a senatorial status traditionally and rightly esteemed since the foundation of the Republic, creation of new taxes, devising of novel debts to the state, and the abandonment of customs established by tradition (pp. 70–71). All these, individually or in various combinations, provide for Zonaras "an evaluative principle by which to judge earlier emperors" (p. 73). Furthermore, the onerous effects of such transgressions on the traditional standards of propriety "once fundamental for the Byzantine political system" would regularly result in a loss of liberty and a recognition of a ruler's autocratic character (p. 74). Not surprisingly, it was this ideal "upper class" with which Zonaras identified that most intensely suffered the consequences of such flawed rulers – and for Zonaras all humans, even emperors, were flawed. This being the case, it fell to that same targeted readership to learn from Zonaras and his *Epitome* to rebuke rather than to insult emperors (pp. 82–83).

Kampianaki's exposition of the ideological context of the *Epitome* is a suitable segue to Chapter 5 (pp. 84–108), "Zonaras' Keen Interest in Roman Antiquity," a subject that reflects Zonaras' belief in "the Roman origins of Byzantium," a theme which "is a notable feature of his chronicle" (p. 84) but hardly unique to it. Indeed, Kampianaki notes (pp. 84–94), the subject figures prominently in twelfth-century historiography and contributes to the appearance of Latinisms in Greek texts and to the explication of Latin terms for earlier Roman institutions and practices. She very reasonably maintains, too, that increased contact with Westerners, whether in the form of allies, merchants, mercenaries, or pilgrims, stimulated a corresponding interest in the history of Roman *imperium* in that same geographic area. For Zonaras, two consequences were the convictions of a close "connection of the West to the world of Old Rome, the Byzantines' own heritage" and that the "Latins" of his own day (Franks of German extraction), "were in no way related to the Roman Empire" (p. 97). In sum, for Kampianaki "Zonaras' prodigious interest in the Roman origins of Byzantium was the result of intellectual, cultural, and historical processes taking place in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Unlike the majority of Byzantine chroniclers, Zonaras discussed Republican Rome in detail in order to fulfill his own authorial agenda, which was to stress the institutional continuity between contemporary Byzantium and Rome" (p. 108).

But at whom did this authorial agenda aim? Kampianaki's answer to this question, offered in Chapter 6 ("Intellectual Networks and Intended Readers," pp. 109–124), depends in part on the degree of Zonaras' isolation after his withdrawal from Constantinople to the monastery of Theotokos Pantanassa on St. Glykeria. Whether or not Zonaras had before then sometimes or ever been outside the confines of Constantinople, what parts of the city he had frequented, by what means, in whose company, and on what occasions lies in the realm of conjecture. Be that as it may, whatever he meant by describing his place of retirement as παρὰ τῇ ἐσχατιᾷ ταύτῃ (*Epitome* Proem 2 [Pinder/Büttner-Wobst I, p. 8.13]), Kampianaki sees Zonaras' description of his circumstances as an exercise in the rhetoric of exile, a pose which serves to excuse his paucity of sources, to justify his celebration of the sources he did acquire, and to advertise the degree of labor required to find them (p. 111). In actuality, Kampianaki thinks it reasonable that while on St. Glykeria Zonaras maintained connections he may have made through his assumed former attendance at θέατρα and, less hypothetically, in consequence of the continued respect in which he was held as a result of his former standing as a judge and his prominence in the imperial bureaucracy. Kampianaki gives pause, though, in her declaration that the two latter factors are "attested primarily by Zonaras' exegesis of the canons, a work produced [according to her chronology] during his stay at the Pantanassa and completed in or after 1161" (p. 112). She also takes Zonaras' autopsy of what she understands to have been the wedding of Manuel Komnenos to Maria of Antioch in 1161 as proof that Zonaras visited Constantinople after he had removed himself to St. Glykeria and that this, in turn and with some circularity of argumentation, confirms the exaggeration due to the rhetoric of exile which she attributes to the relevant sections of Zonaras' Proem. But would he have gone out of his way to witness a ceremony that so offended him unless he was obligated to do so by his rank, though perhaps the coincidence of the marriage with Christmas would have drawn him to Constantinople?

Kampianaki views her association of the testimony of Zonaras' commentary on Canon 7 of the Council of Neokaisareia with the nuptials of Manuel and Maria as clear evidence that Zonaras visited Constantinople in 1161, long after he had absented himself to St. Glykeria, in her view in the 1120s or 1130s. Furthermore, she sees that identification as clear evidence that Zonaras produced at least some of his canonical commentaries while on St. Glykeria. An obstacle to the 1161 date would be the acceptance of the case this

reviewer initially made in the 2009 edition of his "The *History* of Zonaras" for the identification of the union in 1078 of Nikephoros Botaniates and Bebdene[5] and, in consequence of the cogent criticism of Kampianaki in her 2017 Oxford thesis,[6] re-stated by the reviewer in the 2019 corrected reprint of his book, but with Botaniates, already an emperor, and Maria Alania, Botaniates' third wife, as the principals and the date remaining 1078.[7] This correction would appear to address all the objections levelled originally by Kampianki against the reviewer's 2009 interpretation of Zonaras' comment on Canon 7 and to render them irrelevant to the reviewer's revised 2019 interpretation. Its acceptance would also remove the sole reason to hold that Zonaras visited Constantinople subsequent to his retirement to St. Glykeria. If this is not the case, there seems to be no one better than Kampianaki to explain why. Fortunately, while the dating of Zonaras' remarks on Canon 7 matters for the chronology of Zonaras' life and for the date of the completion of the *Epitome*, it does not matter for our appreciation of the *Epitome* itself, of its place within a broader historiographical context, or of its reception, for all of which Kampianki offers guidance worthy of our attention.

Whatever one thinks of the likelihood that Zonaras visited Constantinople after his withdrawal, there is no doubt – as Kampianaki persuasively argues (pp. 112–118) – that while on St. Glykeria Zonaras availed himself of a network of fellow monks, friends, and admirers who sought out and delivered texts to him, particularly copies of classical authors. She notes, as one factor in the presence of such texts, the patronage of John IX Agapetos, Patriarch from 1111–1134, and almost certainly the anonymous subject of *Epitome* XVIII.25 [Pinder/Büttner-Wobst III, p. 751.2–8]. In addition, she adduces persuasive reasons to think that Zonaras found some books pertinent to his projects in the monastery library, perhaps in part thanks to the efforts of Joseph, abbot before Zonaras' arrival and subsequently (sometime before October 1136) abbot of the Pantokrator monastery in Constantinople.

5 The *History* of Zonaras. From Alexander Severus to the Death of Theodosius the Great. London/New York 2009 (Routledge Classical Translations), pp. 5–7.

6 John Zonaras' *Epitome of Histories* (12th Cent.): A Compendium of Jewish-Roman History and Its Readers. PhD Diss. University of Oxford 2017, pp. 17–19.

7 The *History* of Zonaras. From Alexander Severus to the Death of Theodosius the Great. London/New York 2019 (Routledge Classical Translations), pp. 5–7. In 2018, the author sent Kampianaki corrected proofs of these pages, though perhaps they were never received.

The penultimate section of this chapter, "The Intended Audience of the *Epitome,*" opens with a succinct overview of the issue of how the *Epitome* figures within "the traditional division of historical accounts into histories and chronicles" (p. 118). In this matter, Kampianaki follows the lead of Roger Scott and accepts that "the classification of Byzantine historical narratives into histories and chronicles is one of convenience" (p. 119). Despite her admission that Zonaras never distinguished chronicles from histories, her recognition that Zonaras promises that his readers "will gain knowledge of many and most indispensable histories (πολλῶν τε καὶ τούτων ἀναγκαιοτάτων ἱστοριῶν)," and her observation that Zonaras himself describes his work as a short history (σύντομος ἱστορία), she opts "to characterize the *Epitome* as a chronicle" (p. 119). Kampianaki finds a "middlebrow" linguistic register she discerns in the *Epitome* reflective "as a general rule" of chronicles (p. 120) and suggests this register points to Zonaras' imagined contemporary and future readership, situated predominantly in Constantinople and whose level of education would have familiarized them with grammar, rhetoric, and, to a degree, with the vocabulary "of well-known Christian and pagan authors." These readers, "scholars, teachers, and officers high up in the hierarchy of the state and Church" (p. 121), she submits, would have been members of private reading groups and regular attendees of the θέατρα, both viewed by Kampianaki as instrumental in the production of a rapid awareness of the *Epitome of Histories* (p. 124). She even allows for the possibility that during visits to Constantinople from St. Glykeria Zonaras himself delivered readings from the *Epitome* (p. 124). This same readership, too, could have been instrumental in bringing to St. Glykeria texts he did not possess or which were not available in the library of Pantanassa.

"Readers' Responses and the Reception of the *Epitome*," Chapter 7 (pp. 125–172), is a detailed and welcome contribution to scholarship on the *Epitome* and has broader implications for the transmission and reception of texts in general. In it, Kampianaki treats in succession Constantine Manasses' *Chronike Synopsis* (her title), which she dates to between 1143 and 1152; Michael Glykas' chronicle (to which she give no title) and letter 90 of his *Theological Chapters* (both probably completed sometime after 1165); Balsamon's commentaries on canon law (shortly after 1180); the early fourteenth-century verse chronicle of Ephraim of Ainos; the mostly unedited chronicle of Ephraim's contemporary Constantine Akropolites; the so-called late thirteenth-century *De Schismate Vitando* of the monk Methodios; an ecclesiastical

chronicle preserved in the late-thirteenth or early fourteenth-century manuscript *Oxon. Baroc. gr.* 25; and an early fourteenth-century poem on the sack of Jerusalem in 70 by Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos.

Kampianaki then turns to an investigation of what forty-three Greek manuscripts of the *Epitome of Histories* tells us about its reception. Her careful inspection of these manuscripts – some containing all of the *Epitome*, others only portions – sometimes yields unsurprising conclusions but more often insightful, original observations. Of course, both are of great value for the purpose of formulating a notion of the reception of the *Epitome*. She pays welcome attention to scholia, to three verse marginalia, and to one especially interesting and lengthy prose "commentary" – Kampianaki's term, justified by her on p. 154 – which opens *Par. gr.* 1715. With regard to the commentary, one might wonder just how carefully its author, whom, at pp. 154–155, she tentatively identifies as the aforementioned Constantine Akropolites, had read the *Epitome* and to what degree his motivation was to encourage not just the reading of but also the production of copies of the *Epitome*. Perhaps a tabulation of the contents of the specific passages which feature scholia in the same hand as the commentary could offer clues. Nobody is better qualified to do this than is Kampianaki herself. Before turning to "medieval translations" of the *Epitome* up to the fifteenth century, she directs her attention to a thirteenth-century verse epigram by a certain Constantine, for whose identity see pp. 164–165, which appears as the colophon to what originally was the first of a two-volume copy of the *Epitome* but which, in *Vat. gr.* 136, is bound as a single volume (pp. 160–165). This poem, she observes, contains clues about the readership that Constantine thought would find the *Epitome* especially rewarding. Kampianaki characterizes readings by Constantine at θέατρα as "plausible" (p. 164).

An insightful investigation of a Church Slavonic translation, extant in eight manuscripts beginning in the fourteenth century and a source for a Serbian redaction and for parts of the so-called *Bulgarian Short Chronicle*, sets Byzantine universal chronicles in a South Slavic context. A Slavic readership could receive ethical instruction (pp. 167–168) and find information about geography, biblical history – at the time there was no complete Slavonic translation of the Old Testament –, secular history, imperial history, the Christian empire, and Rome's interactions with Slavic peoples, whether actual or, as in the case of the Dacians, therein styled Serbs, manufactured.

The sole known version of the *Epitome* prior to the fifteenth century in a Western European language is the *Libro de los emperadores*, itself an adaptation into Aragonese of a rendering into contemporary spoken Greek and extant in a single manuscript. The former Grand Master of the Knights Hospitallers of Rhodes, Juan Fernández de Heredia, commissioned the project. Its concentration on the reigns of the "Greek emperors" and on matters of primarily antiquarian interest at the expense of a broader account of Roman history mirror in many ways the intense and eventful life of Fernández de Heredia himself (pp. 168–171). Kampianaki notes (p. 171) that the book ends with a summary version of Zonaras' observation that "there can be no perfect emperors and that no ruler is without fault."

What Kampianaki sees as five factors critical to the popularity of the *Epitome of Histories* among Byzantine readers conclude the chapter (pp. 171–172) and lead to a series of "Overall Conclusions" (pp. 173–174). The first group of factors consists of a utility derived from its coverage in two volumes of so wide a swathe of time and topics; the reliability of its contents and of the sources it employed; its ethical tone and the moral instruction it provided; its linguistic register, neither too low nor too high; and its appeal to readers of varied social backgrounds, to "secular men of letters, churchmen, and monks" (p. 172). The second group of factors includes the relevance to several centuries of readers of the varied themes of the *Epitome* coupled with the powerful impression that Zonaras' skillful interjection of his own social and political ideas would have made on those same readers. The *Epitome*, Kampianaki concludes, was a hybrid composition, unique through its author's conscious combination of some of the conventions of the genre of chronicle with some of the conventions of the genre of historiography. It was this distinctive character that "made the work stand out and helped to endear the text to readers in Byzantium and beyond" (p. 174). Within the broader context of the study of Byzantine literature, paramount for the proper appreciation of the significance of the *Epitome* is the recognition of that it is a work with its own individual qualities and features "rather than simply a compilation of earlier sources," a confirmation "that some Byzantine chronicles deserve to be investigated in their own right as both literary compositions and historical accounts" (p. 174).

Most of what follows are, rather than criticisms, matters that the reviewer thinks worthy of consideration by Kampianaki's readers and by Kampianaki

herself, some of them perhaps in the planned "Companion to Byzantine Epitomes" which she is co-editing with Christopher Mallan.

First, the distinction between "Roman" and "Byzantine," one which Kampianaki herself recognizes is anachronistic, seems to this reviewer to have resulted in the imposition of misleading heuristic categories on Zonaras' mind and on his conceptualization and execution of his work.

Then there is the matter of "chronicle" or "epitome," with regard to which Kampianaki opts for the former, though she regularly and somewhat confusingly vacillates between the two. But why not accept Zonaras' own characterization of his work as a σύντομος ἱστορία or employ the title ἐπιτομὴ ἱστοριῶν given it in *Par. gr.* 1715? Indeed, Zonaras refers to his treatment of Xenophon's *Cyropaideia* as an ἐπιτομὴ ἱστορίας (*Epitome* III.26 [Pinder/Büttner-Wobst I, p. 303.6]). Might he not have envisioned his project as a new type of history, an epitomization of earlier histories, biographies, and chronicles proper? At any rate, to this reviewer, adoption of the abbreviation *EH* would have provided a less problematic and prejudicial solution. The eventual publication of Brill's "Companion to Byzantine Chronicles," edited by Raimondo Tocci, originally scheduled to appear in 2016 but the victim of a series of unavoidable delays, and Kampianaki and Mallan's planned "Companion to Byzantine Epitomes" will or should have more to say about this matter.

Likewise, Kampianaki is well-positioned to address the question of whether or not the *Epitome* betrays any notion on Zonaras' part of what we would call historical causation. The various forms of constitutions that Zonaras describes in his relation of the history of Rome do not seem to be active historical agents nor does each, as is the case of Polybius, seem to contain in itself inherent qualities that would stimulate shifts within a constitution or drive a succession of constitutions. Do specific polities produce particular types of rulers or is it the other way around? Do events and individuals always or only sometimes reflect divine agency? Do Zonaras' comments on constitutions warrant terms such as "development" (p. 101) and "evolution" (pp. 103–104) or, via a translation of μετέπεσε, the attribution to Zonaras of a concept of passive constitutional transformation (p. 103)? If thoughts on historical causation, complex or simplistic, with respect to constitutions or more broadly discernable are absent from the *Epitome of Histories*, this too would seem worthy of comment.

The literary expectations and social disposition of Zonaras' envisioned readership figures prominently in several of Kampianaki's most interesting arguments. Though her characterization of this readership is convincing, ultimately it seems to mean that Zonaras most often wrote in his own voice, one which was, for all important purposes, more or less identical to the "voices" of those for whom he wrote. But if such is the case, might this not involve Kampianaki's audience-directed take on much of the *Epitome*, as telling as it is, in a certain degree of over-determinism and circular reasoning? So, when Zonaras adapted his sources and chose what sorts of things he would include in or exclude from the *Epitome*, did he act on the basis of his own sensibilities, on his understanding of the sensibilities and expectations of his readers, or a combination of both? To the reviewer, the Proem to the *Epitome* is the best guide toward an answer.

Kampianaki's handling of the portions of the Proem in which Zonaras comments on his circumstances following his withdrawal from Constantinople may be vulnerable to another type of criticism. As noted above, Kampianaki maintains that Zonaras employs literary motifs associated with exile and, on the basis of this, she asserts that Zonaras does not just overstate his isolation but fundamentally misrepresents it (pp. 109–116). This move, in turn, allows her to posit trips to Constantinople, whether to search for sources or to attend and even deliver readings at θέατρα. However, the use of motifs of exile does not necessarily equate to fundamental misrepresentation, especially when Zonaras' readers might recognize it as such. Moreover, Kampianaki's view that Zonaras' comments on Canon 7 of the Council of Neokaisareia prove that Zonaras, while resident on St. Glykeria, visited Constantinople has been shown above to be problematic at best.

The book features a good index of subjects and names, though John IX Agapetus is missing, and it is generally free from all but very minor production errors. The single exception occurs on pp. 140–141, where comparison with pp. 203–204 of Kampianaki's thesis shows that what originally were headings for Tables 7.1 and 7.2 appear on p. 140. If this was intentional, it is confusing. Very regrettably, there is no *index locorum*. There are problems, mostly minor, in the printing of Greek (μετεποιήσατο, for example, near the end of the quotation on p. 102, αὐτὸς for αὐτός on p. 115, and ʽξω Χῶραι for Ἔξω Χῶραι at p. 112, n. 20), none the fault of the author. The spelling of the late Michael DiMaio's appears throughout the notes and bibliography as Dimaio.

The bibliography is excellent and includes entries for works published as recently as 2021. Nevertheless, there are some noteworthy absences: Banchich's 2019 corrected reprint of his "The *History* of Zonaras"[8] and his "The Lost *History* of Peter the Patrician;"[9] Michael DiMaio's "Zonaras' Account of the Neo-Flavian Emperors;"[10] Andrea Martolini's "L'*Anonymus post Dionem*. Pietro Patrizio e la *Leoquelle*: Uno studio sulle fonti post-Dionee dell' *Epitome* di Giovanni Zonara;"[11] David Pingree's "The Horoscope of Constantinople;"[12] Richard Tada's "John Zonaras' Account of the Reign of Alexius I Comnenus (1081–1118): Translation and Commentary;"[13] Luigi Tartaglia's edition of Kedrenos;[14] and Staffan Wahlgren's "The Chronicle of the Logothete."[15]

8 See note 7 above.

9 The Lost *History* of Peter the Patrician. An Account of Rome's Imperial past from the Age of Justinian. London/New York 2015 (Routledge Classical Translations).

10 Zonaras' Account of the Neo-Flavian Emperors. A Commentary. Diss. University of Missouri 1977.

11 Diss. University of Rome "La Sapienza" 2008–2009.

12 In: Y Maeyama/W. G. Saltzer (eds.): Prismata. Naturwissenschaftsgeschichtliche Studien. Festschrift für Willy Hartner. Wiesbaden 1977, pp. 305–315.

13 MA Thesis University of Washington 1999.

14 Georgii Cedreni Historiarum Compendium 2 vols. Rome 2016 (Bollettino dei classici. Sopplemento 30).

15 Liverpool 2019 (Translated Texts for Byzantinistis 7).

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Empfohlene Zitierweise

Thomas M. Banchich: Rezension zu: Theofili Kampianaki: John Zonaras' *Epitome of Histories.* A Compendium of Jewish Roman History and Its Reception. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2022 (Oxford Studies in Byzantium). In: Plekos 25, 2023, S. 497–509 (URL: https://www.plekos.uni-muenchen.de/2023/r-kampianaki.pdf).

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