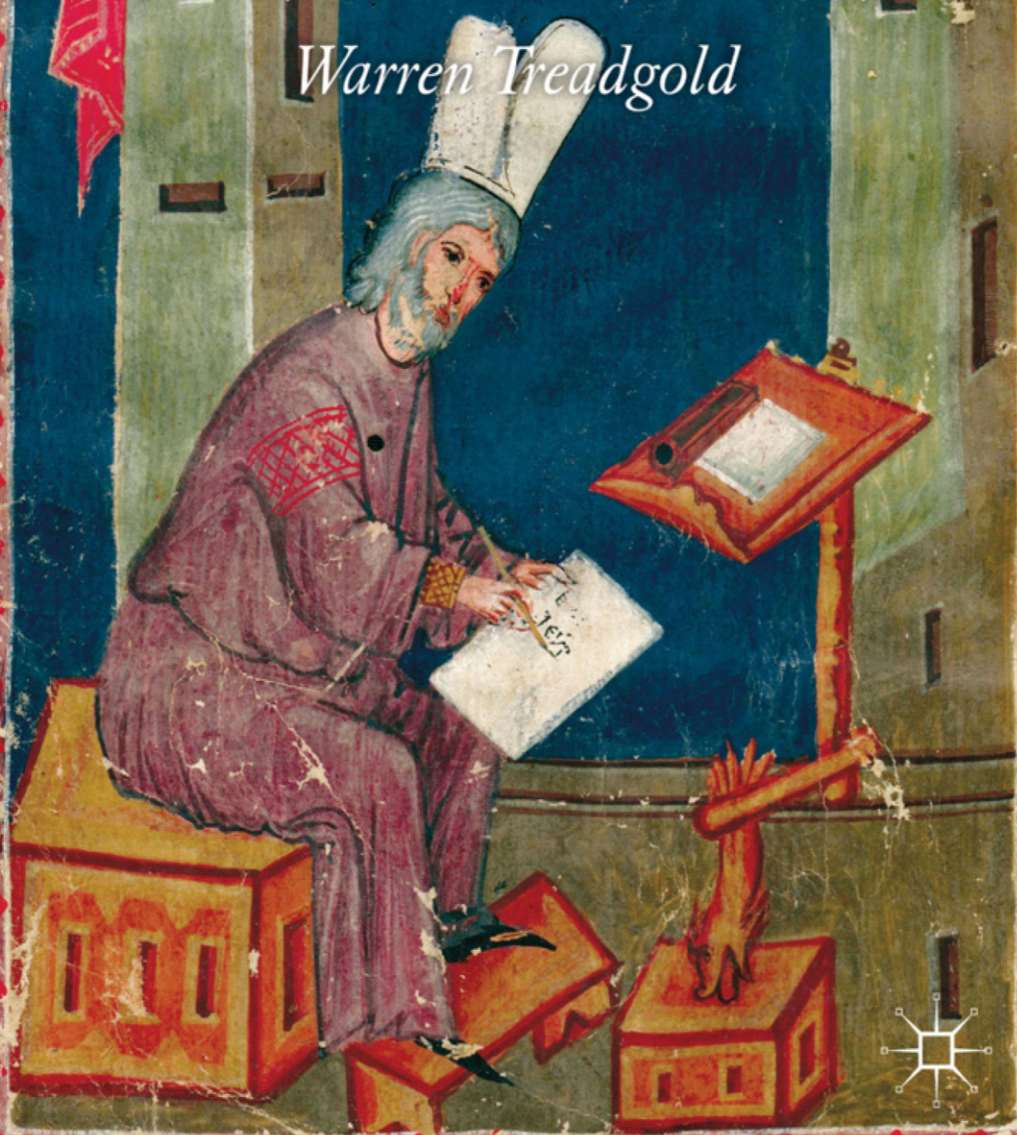


ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ τοῦ βλαστάνειν

# THE MIDDLE BYZANTINE HISTORIANS

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# 7

## Historians of the Age of Expansion

In retrospect, the years roughly from 950 to 1050 were a Byzantine century, when Byzantium became the greatest power in the Western world and a promising subject for its historians to celebrate. Yet contemporaries often fail to see which advances or setbacks are temporary and which represent lasting change. If today we may be too ready to believe that whatever has just happened will transform the future, the Byzantines, conservative by tradition and used to a far slower pace of change than ours, were more likely to overlook the significance of new events than to exaggerate it. Of course they saw and welcomed their victories over the Arabs and the increasing quiescence of the Bulgarians after 925; but the Arabs and Bulgarians had suffered defeats before yet recovered to attack the empire, and soon they did recover under the Fatimids and the Cometopuli. Certainly the Byzantines realized that their state had become quite strong and prosperous; but it had been quite strong and prosperous for some time, and was nonetheless weaker and poorer than it had been in late antiquity, as all educated Byzantines knew. Only in the later part of the tenth century did many Byzantines begin to see that the empire's fortunes had taken a decisive turn for the better.

Byzantine historiography had also been slowly regaining its sixth-century status as a major branch of literature. From the middle of the seventh century to the middle of the tenth, few if any historians attempted to write in the grand classical manner. The longest histories were the complementary chronicles of George Syncellus and Theophanes Confessor, neither of whom took much care with his style or composition. The few historians with greater literary ambitions either wrote histories of modest scope, like Trajan the Patrician and the patriarch Nicephorus, or, like Sergius Confessor and Nicetas the Paphlagonian, used a style that well-educated Byzantines found grating. Then the compilation of Constantine VII's *Historical Excerpts* made the old classical and classicizing historians more accessible to readers and writers, and consequently more fashionable. Theodore Daphnopates (or whoever wrote the *Life of Basil* and the first four books of *Theophanes Continuatus*) wrote at length in classicizing Greek. The chronicles of Symeon the Logothete and Pseudo-Symeon were also long, and composed in a style that was passable by classical standards. Although none of these historians wrote classicizing contemporary histories on the model of Procopius or Agathias,

recent events had supplied no military victories as brilliant as those historians had recorded. After Nicephorus Phocas and John Tzimisces won such victories, they soon found a classicizing historian, and probably two of them.

### Nicephorus the Deacon and the History to 971

John Scylitzes summarized most of the first part of his history from the histories now preserved in a manuscript of around the year 1000, which Scylitzes presumably found in a similar manuscript.<sup>1</sup> Our manuscript contains Books I–IV of *Theophanes Continuatus*, the *Life of Basil*, and the second edition of Symeon the Logothete's chronicle from 886 to 963; together, these texts provide a continuous account of Byzantine history from 813 to 963. By and large Scylitzes did little more than paraphrase the three texts and supplement them with material from Genesis' *On Imperial Reigns* until he reached the deposition of Romanus I, in 944.<sup>2</sup> After 944, even though the second edition of Symeon's chronicle continued up to 963, Scylitzes began to use a different source, now lost, which took a less favorable view of Constantine VII and Nicephorus II than Symeon had done. Scylitzes seems to have shared this source with Pseudo-Symeon for a single incident datable to 931, then to have shared the same source with Leo the Deacon's surviving *History* for events from 969 to 971. This common source of Scylitzes, Pseudo-Symeon, and Leo the Deacon apparently concluded with 971, because after that year neither Scylitzes nor Leo knew much about the rest of the reign of John Tzimisces up to his death in 976, which included extensive campaigning in Syria.<sup>3</sup>

Because Leo the Deacon was a member of the court and wrote when the years from 944 to 971 were within living memory, he could have combined literary sources with oral sources and his own reminiscences. He also had a reason not to copy sources that criticized earlier members of the reigning Macedonian dynasty. By contrast, Scylitzes, writing more than a century after 971 when the Macedonian dynasty was extinct, could have had no oral sources for this period and no particular reason to praise or condemn the people who had lived then. Since Scylitzes did little more than paraphrase written sources up to 944, he seems likely to have continued the same method of composition, as he implied by calling his work *Synopsis of Histories*. He ought therefore to be a fairly reliable guide to the contents of his lost source or sources from 944 to 971, and from his text we should be able to make reasonable conjectures about the number and character of his sources.

<sup>1</sup> Our MS is *Vaticanus graecus* 167 (described by Ševčenko, *Chronographiae ... liber*, pp. 14\*–17\*)—which, however, has many more lacunae than the similar text used by Scylitzes; see above, p. 171 n. 63.

<sup>2</sup> On Scylitzes' method, see especially Holmes, *Basil II*, pp. 91–119 and 125–52 (comparing Scylitzes' account of the years from 920 to 944 with his source, the second edition of Symeon's chronicle, which Holmes calls *Theophanes Continuatus*), and Kiapidou, *Σύνοψη*, pp. 65–88.

<sup>3</sup> This source, called Scylitzes' "unknown source" by Kiapidou, *Σύνοψη*, pp. 89–110, has been variously described and labeled Source A by Kazhdan, "Из истории 2," pp. 112–15, Tinnefeld, *Kategorien*, pp. 108–18, and Flusin, "Re-writing History," pp. xx–xxi.

Although Scylitzes mentions Leo the Deacon's *History*, most of his account is obviously independent of Leo, and the scanty parallels between Scylitzes and Leo seem to show a common source rather than Scylitzes' use of Leo.<sup>4</sup>

Scylitzes begins his narrative of Constantine VII's reign after 944 with a short description of that emperor's earlier life.<sup>5</sup> Since Scylitzes has already described Constantine's earlier life at length from Symeon's chronicle, this redundant description presumably came from Scylitzes' new source, which briefly summarized previous events before it began its main narrative with 944. According to this later summary, Romanus I had violated his own "most fearsome oaths" by making himself and his son Christopher emperors ahead of Constantine VII. After Christopher's death, Constantine tricked Romanus' son Stephen into deposing his father, despite the warnings of Stephen's wiser brother Constantine. Then Stephen plotted against both his brother Constantine and his brother-in-law Constantine VII, who, incited by his wife, Helen Lecapena, against her own brothers, seized and exiled both of them and took power for himself. Stephen at least bore his captivity patiently, but Constantine Lecapenus rashly murdered one of his jailers and was killed. Thus Scylitzes explicitly or implicitly criticizes Romanus I for perjury, Stephen for stupidity, Helen for disloyalty to her brothers, and Constantine Lecapenus for recklessness.<sup>6</sup>

According to Scylitzes, Constantine VII was drunken, lazy, and vindictive, though an admirable patron of learning and the Church. Badly advised by his wife, Helen, and his chamberlain Basil Lecapenus, Constantine carelessly appointed bad men to the empire's main civil and military offices, apparently including Bardas Phocas and his sons, Nicephorus and Leo.<sup>7</sup> Later Scylitzes denounces Bardas Phocas for passivity and corruption, though he admits that Nicephorus and Leo Phocas were better than Bardas and defeated the Arabs. In reporting the death of the patriarch Theophylact Lecapenus in 956, Scylitzes berates him at length for his irreligious behavior. Almost the only figure to be praised in this part of Scylitzes' chronicle is the new patriarch, Polyeuctus, who is said to have criticized Constantine VII, Helen Lecapena, and Basil Lecapenus.<sup>8</sup> Finally Scylitzes accuses Constantine's son Romanus II of poisoning his father, whose death was foreshadowed by stones hurled from Heaven.<sup>9</sup>

Next Scylitzes describes Romanus II as thoroughly dissipated, dependent on his grand chamberlain, Joseph Bringas, and particularly fond of a worthless eunuch who was upbraided by the virtuous Patriarch Polyeuctus. Romanus dispatched

<sup>4</sup> See p. 239 and n. 58 below.

<sup>5</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 233–34.

<sup>6</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 234–37.

<sup>7</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 237–38. On p. 238 Scylitzes and not his source seems to have made the mistake that Constantine VII had castrated Basil Lecapenus (who was actually castrated by his own father, Romanus I), because Scylitzes has just said, apparently copying his source, that Constantine relied heavily on Basil's bad advice, as he would have been unlikely to do if he had castrated Basil.

<sup>8</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 240–44.

<sup>9</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 246–47.

Nicephorus Phocas to take Crete, but after it was conquered, recalled him because of a prophecy that the conqueror of Crete would become emperor.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile cattle throughout the empire suffered from a disease that had allegedly begun when a marble bull's head was dug up and destroyed during the reign of Romanus I.<sup>11</sup> After sending Nicephorus Phocas against Beroea (modern Aleppo), Romanus II died, either exhausted by his debauchery or poisoned.<sup>12</sup> Despite his native abilities, Romanus II had been misled into self-indulgence by his corrupt advisers.

Romanus' widow, Theophano, was therefore left to rule for her underage sons, Basil II and Constantine VIII. Although Joseph Bringas suspected Nicephorus Phocas of aspiring to the throne, Nicephorus tricked him by swearing deceptive oaths. Meanwhile Theophano had the exiled Stephen Lecapenus murdered.<sup>13</sup> Scylitzes reports two versions of how Nicephorus gained the throne. Either Bringas tried to make an alliance against Nicephorus with John Tzimiskes, who informed Nicephorus and insisted that he proclaim himself emperor, or else (in the version Scylitzes prefers) Nicephorus had already plotted with Theophano to seize power. In any event, Nicephorus proclaimed himself emperor and marched on Constantinople, where he defied Bringas and was crowned co-emperor with the support of Basil Lecapenus.<sup>14</sup>

Nicephorus exiled Bringas, sent Theophano away briefly, but then, "putting aside his mask and his playacting," married her. Before this Nicephorus had claimed to be abstaining from meat, but this may have been a mere pretense, and he now abandoned it. The patriarch Polyeuctus objected to the marriage because Nicephorus had stood godfather for one of Theophano's sons, making the couple spiritual relatives; but a priest falsely swore that this report was untrue. Scylitzes now introduces an expedition against the Arabs of Sicily with a digression on the Arabs of the West. Things had gone well "while the land had prudent and just governors" under Romanus I, who made a truce with the Arabs; but "when the administration was entrusted to unjust and greedy men" under Constantine VII, the truce broke down. Constantine rejected negotiations and sent oppressive commanders to Italy, whom the Arabs overwhelmed. Later, after the Arab fleet had been destroyed in a storm, the Arabs made peace. Nicephorus II now broke the peace with an expedition under another worthless commander, which the Arabs annihilated.<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile John Tzimiskes, as domestic of the East, won a victory in Cilicia that "greatly exalted John's reputation and became the cause of the final downfall of the Saracens." Scylitzes gives a somewhat grudging description of Nicephorus'

<sup>10</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 248–50.

<sup>11</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 251–52.

<sup>12</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 252–53.

<sup>13</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 254–55.

<sup>14</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 256–59. Both versions of how Nicephorus became emperor apparently came from the lost source.

<sup>15</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 260–67.



own victories, observing that the emperor “did not dare” to attack Tarsus and Mopsuestia when winter was approaching, that the besieged Arabs of Tarsus inflicted heavy losses on Leo Phocas’ men in a sally, and that Nicephorus failed to conquer Antioch.<sup>16</sup> Scylitzes reports that despite many victories and conquests Nicephorus “was detested by everyone, and all longed to see his overthrow.” The emperor supposedly avoided taking Antioch, and ordered his generals not to take it, because of a prophecy that he would die when it fell. After Michael Burtzes took the city anyway, Nicephorus angrily dismissed him.<sup>17</sup>

The people hated Nicephorus because he was ungrateful, had let his men plunder Constantinople at his accession, made oppressive requisitions for his army, cut payments to officials and religious institutions, and outlawed donations to the Church. Worse still, Nicephorus demanded power over selecting bishops and tried to have soldiers who died in battle honored as martyrs, though the bishops bravely prevented such an outrage. He also minted a lightweight gold coin, the tetarteron, which he used for payments while collecting the full-weight nomisma in taxes. Even worse, Nicephorus built a wall around the Great Palace, destroying many fine structures in order to ward off a prophecy that he would die there. On Easter, some of Nicephorus’ Armenian soldiers fought and killed many sailors of the Imperial Fleet. Soon afterward, the emperor staged military games in the Hippodrome that panicked the spectators, causing many deaths, which he regarded with indifference. He was happy to sell wheat at high prices during a severe famine. This list of reasons for Nicephorus’ unpopularity, though partly corroborated by Leo the Deacon, is blatantly hostile and includes some serious distortions.<sup>18</sup>

The first time Scylitzes shows obvious and significant parallels with Leo the Deacon is in their account of Nicephorus’ assassination, in 969, by plotters led by John Tzimisces. This account, without quite exculpating Tzimisces, is much more sympathetic to him than may seem justified.<sup>19</sup> Scylitzes observes that

<sup>16</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 267–69 and 271.

<sup>17</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 271–73.

<sup>18</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 273–78. Nicephorus did not in fact outlaw donations to religious institutions, but only donations of land and foundations of major new institutions (Treadgold, *History*, pp. 499–500). Scylitzes’ account also seems to distort both Nicephorus’ proposal concerning soldiers killed in battle (see Treadgold, “Byzantium,” pp. 219–20) and his introduction of the tetarteron (see Treadgold, *Byzantium*, pp. 139–41). Leo the Deacon, *History* IV.6, describes the deaths at the military games as an accident (but admits that they made Nicephorus unpopular), blames the profiteering in wheat on Nicephorus’ brother Leo (but admits that people blamed both brothers), acknowledges that Nicephorus’ taxes were burdensome, and explains that Nicephorus built his wall around the palace because the prophecy mentioned his being killed there, not just dying there. Leo the Deacon, *History* IV.7, describes a fight on Ascension Day in which Armenian soldiers injured some of the people of Constantinople, apparently not fatally, but this may be a different incident from the one mentioned by Scylitzes.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Scylitzes, pp. 279–81, with Leo the Deacon, *History* V.6–8. The parallels, not noted in the apparatus to Thurn’s edition of Scylitzes, are listed in Ljubarskij, “Nikephoros,” pp. 250–52, except for one parallel between Scylitzes, pp. 280–81 (at the end of the account),

Tzimisces allied himself with Basil Lecapenus, who had been Nicephorus' ally but now exiled Nicephorus' other supporters and recalled those whom Nicephorus had exiled, especially the bishops who had refused to accept his outrageous law against the Church. Forbidden by Patriarch Polyeuctus to enter St. Sophia because of Nicephorus' murder, Tzimisces gently explained that not he but two others had actually done the deed on the orders of Theophano. Tzimisces agreed to the patriarch's demands that he exile Theophano and the two assassins and tear up Nicephorus' law on donations, thus restoring the Church to "its former liberty." After also promising to give his private fortune to the poor, Tzimisces was crowned by Polyeuctus on Christmas Day 969.<sup>20</sup>

According to Scylitzes, Tzimisces found the empire in a deplorable state. Nicephorus' conquests in the East were not yet secure, and their peoples were contemplating rebellion; the Rus', whom Nicephorus had unwisely encouraged to invade Bulgaria, now threatened the empire itself; and a famine had been raging for five years. The new emperor carefully considered what should be done. He appointed as patriarch of Antioch an admirable monk who had predicted Tzimisces' accession, and chose as patriarch of Constantinople another admirable monk, Basil Scamandrenus, to succeed Polyeuctus, who died soon after crowning Tzimisces. When the Arabs besieged Antioch with a hundred thousand men, the emperor sent an army that defeated them, even though the Arabs outnumbered it ten to one. Thus he secured all the new Byzantine possessions in the East.<sup>21</sup>

The Rus', having decided to remain in Bulgaria, rebuffed an embassy from Tzimisces and allied themselves with the Bulgarians, Pechenegs, and Hungarians, raising an army of 308,000 men. The emperor dispatched twelve thousand men under his brother-in-law Bardas Sclerus, who killed most of the Pechenegs and defeated the Rus'. Sclerus was then recalled to suppress a revolt led by Nicephorus' nephew Bardas Phocas, who surrendered. Tzimisces mercifully exiled Bardas Phocas, his father, Leo, and Bardas' brother, Nicephorus, without blinding them as they deserved for their part in the revolt. Tzimisces married Constantine VII's daughter, Theodora, to the enthusiastic approval of the people of Constantinople.<sup>22</sup> After making excellent preparations, Tzimisces marched against the Rus', defeated them repeatedly (though they now had 330,000 men), and besieged them in Dorostolum (modern Dristra). Meanwhile Leo and Nicephorus Phocas plotted again and were blinded, and an ancient inscription was discovered that read "Many years to John and Theodora, the friends of Christ," though the writer admits that this may have been a hoax.<sup>23</sup> Finally Tzimisces decisively defeated

and Leo the Deacon, *History* V.6 (at the beginning). For arguments that this account is sympathetic to Tzimisces, see Morris, "Succession," pp. 210–11.

<sup>20</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 284–86. For the suggestion that the incorrect ages given for Basil II and Constantine VIII on p. 284 are the fault of Scylitzes rather than his source, see below, p. 234 n. 35.

<sup>21</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 286–87.

<sup>22</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 287–94.

<sup>23</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 294–303. Cf. Scylitzes, pp. 281.49 (οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν, expressing doubts that Nicephorus II was warned about his impending assassination in 969) and 303.73

the Rus' with the help of a man on a white horse, who must have been the ancient martyr St. Theodore Stratelates. After the Rus' made peace and withdrew, Tzimisce celebrated a glorious triumph in Constantinople.<sup>24</sup>

At this point the obvious parallels between Scylitzes and Leo the Deacon cease. Scylitzes' next few sentences may still come from the same source, because they are favorable to Tzimisce, describing how he restored the palatine church of Christ the Savior in Chalce (also mentioned by Leo the Deacon), reduced taxes, and struck bronze coins with the image of the Savior, probably in 970. Yet the sentence after that presumably comes from a different source, because it mentions the trial and deposition in December 973 of the patriarch Basil, whom Scylitzes has praised earlier but now fails to defend.<sup>25</sup> In any case, Scylitzes devotes about ten times as much space to the first two years of Tzimisce's reign as to the last four, although those last four years were filled with momentous events. Leo the Deacon gives Tzimisce's first two years about four times as much space as the last four, or about seven times if we ignore a long digression on events after 976. Scylitzes devotes almost five times as much space per year to the whole period from 944 to 971 as to the four years from 972 to 976. Moreover, the short accounts that Leo and Scylitzes do supply of the eventful years from 972 to 976 show no parallels with each other. Therefore the detailed source that Leo and Scylitzes used until 971 seems to have ended with that year.

This conclusion is supported by the sentiments Scylitzes seems to have taken over from his source or sources for events from 944 to 971. Scylitzes expresses a poor opinion of Constantine VII, Romanus II, Nicephorus II, Basil Lecapenus, the empress Helen Lecapena, the empress Theophano, and Joseph Bringas—in fact, more or less every member of the Lecapenus and Phocas families and the Macedonian dynasty. The only prominent figures whom Scylitzes consistently praises are John Tzimisce, Tzimisce's brother-in-law Bardas Sclerus, Patriarch Polyeuctus (who crowned Tzimisce), and some officers and officials appointed by Tzimisce. Although Scylitzes' criticism of Basil Lecapenus may seem odd coming from an admirer of Tzimisce, Basil was after all Tzimisce's subordinate, had backed other emperors whom Scylitzes criticizes, and was on sufficiently parlous terms with Tzimisce to be credibly accused of poisoning him in 976.

(φράζειν οὐκ ἔχω, expressing doubts about the discovery of the inscription in 971), both first-person references that are not typical of the rest of Scylitzes' history and seem likely to be copied from his source; cf. p. 337 and n. 124 below.

<sup>24</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 304–10. McGrath, "Battles," compares Scylitzes' and Leo the Deacon's accounts of the battles around Dristra, acknowledging without further discussion that they had a common source.

<sup>25</sup> Scylitzes, p. 311, with the possible break after p. 311.80. Grierson, *Catalogue* III.2, pp. 634–35, dates the first of these "anonymous folles" to "the opening months of 970," since Tzimisce issued no folles in his own name. Scylitzes himself probably added the remark that the emperors after Tzimisce issued folles of the same sort, because these were issued until 1092, around the time Scylitzes wrote. Tzimisce's other two measures cannot be precisely dated. For the praise of the patriarch Basil, see Scylitzes, p. 287. Leo the Deacon, *History* VIII.1, gives a longer description of the restoration of the Church of the Savior.



The views expressed in Scylitzes' history would have been unwelcome to those in power either before or after Tzimisces' reign, but not in 971. Yet if the author had written more than a few months after 971, he would surely have described and praised Tzimisces' spectacular campaigns in Syria, which began in the spring of that year.

The possibility that Scylitzes used two sources that were sympathetic to John Tzimisces, one for Nicephorus II's assassination and the other for John's campaign against the Rus', appears to be remote.<sup>26</sup> In that case we would need to assume that both Leo the Deacon and Scylitzes, who worked not just independently but almost a hundred years apart, used the same two sources for the two years from December 969 to autumn 971, one after the other. Two years also seems too short a time to permit one history to be written of the years up to 969 and a second to continue the first up to 971. The two years from 969 to 971 are in any case too short a period to be the subject of a separate history, and the texts of Leo and Scylitzes show none of the distinctive characteristics of a poem, oration, or any other literary genre but historiography. Moreover, anyone who wrote a history favorable to Tzimisces in 971 could scarcely have avoided saying something about the recent and notorious circumstances of his accession. Even that Scylitzes used one source for the years from 944 to 963 and another for the years from 963 to 971 is improbable, because from the beginning Scylitzes implicitly criticizes the Phocas family, as no historian writing under Nicephorus II would have been likely to do.

Probably the source used by Scylitzes for the period from 944 to 971 and by Leo the Deacon for the period from 969 to 971 was also used by both Scylitzes and Pseudo-Symeon for the accession of the patriarch Theophylact Lecapenus. Here Scylitzes and Pseudo-Symeon obviously shared a source; Pseudo-Symeon cannot be Scylitzes' source, because he gives less information than Scylitzes does.<sup>27</sup> Since Pseudo-Symeon probably finished his work around 978, he should have been able to use a source completed in 971, even if he preferred to follow Symeon for the years from 944 to 963, probably because Scylitzes' source criticized the Macedonian dynasty.<sup>28</sup> The parallel passages in Scylitzes and Pseudo-Symeon tell how Patriarch Tryphon, when he tried to break his promise to abdicate in favor of the emperor's son Theophylact, was provoked by a charge that he was illiterate into signing a blank page later turned into a letter of abdication. This

<sup>26</sup> For a contrary opinion, see Kaldellis, "Original Source": "[That the account of Nicephorus' murder is sympathetic to Tzimisces] suggests that there may have been other texts [than the account of the campaign of 971] generally favorable to [Tzimisces], but we should not fuse them into one pro-Tzimisces source. Absolving a usurper of direct participation in the murder of his uncle and predecessor would have been done in a different kind of text than the heroic narrative of his subsequent wars against the Rus'." In my view, however, an historical text sympathetic to Tzimisces not only could have done both things but would have needed to do both of them. I am grateful to Professor Kaldellis for sending me the text of his article before its publication; see also below, p. 233 and nn. 31 and 32.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Scylitzes, pp. 226.26–227.62, with Pseudo-Symeon, pp. 742.17–743.10.

<sup>28</sup> See above, pp. 221–22.

story, though doubtless legendary, would fit well into the damning account of Theophylact's life given by Scylitzes on the occasion of the patriarch's death, in 956.<sup>29</sup> In Scylitzes' source this was probably the story's original place, from which both Scylitzes and Pseudo-Symeon moved it to its chronological position, in 931.

Another reason for assuming that this anecdote originally belonged to Scylitzes' source from 944 to 971 is that both the story and the source were evidently written by someone well educated and well read. The anecdote seems to include an allusion to a lost play by Aristophanes, and in Scylitzes' account of Constantine VII's accession we find allusions to Aristophanes' *Knights*, Homer, and an ancient proverb.<sup>30</sup> Although after this point Scylitzes may have omitted some of the literary references in his source, later he alludes to Josephus, Basil of Caesarea, Plutarch's *Lives*, Polybius, and probably Dionysius of Halicarnassus.<sup>31</sup> At least a few of the classical allusions in Leo the Deacon's account of the campaign of 971 that are not paralleled in Scylitzes must go back to their common source, though Leo was admittedly capable of adding such allusions himself.<sup>32</sup> The author of this common source liked classicizing names, because he called Aleppo "Beroea," Mopsuestia "Mopsou Hestia," Dristra "Dorostolum," and the Arabs of North Africa "Carthaginians."<sup>33</sup> Evidently he sympathized with scholars and the Church, because he praised Constantine VII (whom he otherwise criticized) for patronage of the Church and of scholarship, and condemned Nicephorus II especially for oppressing bishops and church institutions.

The author of this lost history was well informed about events and gossip at court, including the plot that led to Nicephorus' assassination. The writer had considerable information about warfare and diplomacy up to the campaign against the Rus' in 971, which he narrated in so much detail that he may well have been an eyewitness. Yet the absurdly inflated numbers he gave for the armies of the Arabs and Rus' defeated by the Byzantines show that he was not a military man. His chronology was generally accurate, though he seems to have included several slightly incorrect dates at the beginning of his account.<sup>34</sup> Since he probably gave

<sup>29</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 242–44.

<sup>30</sup> See Thurn's apparatus to Scylitzes, pp. 227.39 (the lost play of Aristophanes), 233.10 (*Iliad*), 234.41 (the proverb), and 236.76 (*Knights*).

<sup>31</sup> See Thurn's apparatus to Scylitzes, pp. 267.56 (Josephus) and 275.68 (Basil), and for Plutarch, Polybius, and Dionysius, see Kaldellis, "Original Source." Since Thurn overlooked the allusions identified by Kaldellis in Scylitzes' account of the campaign of 971, and Kaldellis does not discuss possible allusions in the earlier part of Scylitzes, it may well include other allusions that remain unidentified. In any case, since Scylitzes failed to transmit some allusions and quotations from Genesis, *Theophanes Continuatus*, and the *Life of Basil*, he may have omitted allusions from this source.

<sup>32</sup> See Kaldellis, "Original Source."

<sup>33</sup> See Scylitzes, pp. 253.26 and 254.51 (Beroea), 265.20 and 21 (Carthaginians), 268.2 and 269.7 (Mopsou Hestia), and 298.11 and 299.34 (Dorostolum).

<sup>34</sup> Scylitzes, p. 235.64–66, dates Romanus I's deposition to December 16 (an error for 20) of the sixth indiction (an error for 3rd), AM 6453 (944/45, correct), in the twenty-sixth year of his reign (an error for 24th). Scylitzes, p. 237.1–2, dates Romanus' death to July (an error

the correct date for the birth of Constantine VIII, in 960, the author seems not to be responsible for Scylitzes' repeated and contradictory miscalculations of the ages of Constantine and Basil II.<sup>35</sup> A writer with good information and decided opinions about events as early as 944 should have been born not long after 925; but he may not have been born much earlier, because as we have seen he recorded unreliable hearsay about the patriarch Tryphon's deposition, in 931. Since the writer began his history with 944, he may have continued either the first edition of Symeon's chronicle or the lost history of Manuel the Protospatharius, both of which ended with 948.

As for the writer's name, it should be among the historians Scylitzes lists as sources in his preface: "Theodore Daphnopates, Nicetas the Paphlagonian, the Byzantines Joseph Genesis and Manuel, the deacon Nicephorus the Phrygian, Leo the Asian, Theodore the Bishop of Side and his nephew and namesake [Theodore] the leader of the church in Sebastea, and besides him Demetrius the Bishop of Cyzicus and the monk John the Lydian."<sup>36</sup> This list looks very much as if Scylitzes arranged it in what he thought was chronological order. Although Nicetas the Paphlagonian evidently wrote before Theodore Daphnopates, Scylitzes is unlikely to have known Nicetas' exact dates, because Scylitzes wrote long after

for June 15) of the sixth indiction (948, correct). Scylitzes, p. 253.32–33, gives the length of Romanus II's reign as thirteen years (an error for 3), four months (correct), and five days (perhaps correct), but this is an obvious copying error (possibly made by Scylitzes).

<sup>35</sup> Scylitzes, p. 248.3–4, says that Constantine was born in the year after the third indiction, thus between September 1, 960, and August 31, 961. Symeon (*Theophanes Continuatus* VI, p. 469, Markopoulos, "Témoignage," p. 96) and Pseudo-Symeon, p. 757, say that Basil was less than a year old when his father became emperor, while Pseudo-Symeon, p. 755.20–23, says that Basil was born in the fourteenth year of Constantine VII; if both are right, Basil was born between November 9 (or 19), 958, and January 27, 959. Yaḥyā of Antioch, III, pp. 480 (text) and 481 (trans.) and 488 (text) and 489 (trans.), apparently reckoning the ages inclusively, says that Basil died at the age of sixty-eight, putting his birth in the year beginning Dec. 11, 957, and that Constantine died at the age of sixty-nine, putting his birth in the year beginning Nov. 12, 959. All these data are compatible and plausible, indicating that Basil was born between November 9 (or 19) and December 11, 958, and Constantine between September 1 and November 12, 960. Incompatibly with this, Scylitzes, p. 284.95–1, states that at Tzimisces' accession Basil was six and Constantine was four, putting their births in 962/63 and 964/65 (which is impossible if Constantine was Romanus II's son), whereas Scylitzes, p. 314.52–54, says that at Tzimisces' death (which he misdates to December 975) Basil was twenty and Constantine seventeen, putting their births in 954/55 and 957/58. Scylitzes, pp. 369.15 and 374.41–42, says that Basil was seventy when he died on December 15, 1025, and that Constantine was also seventy when he died on November 11, 1028; this would again put their births in 954/55 and 957/58. I am not persuaded by the arguments of Featherstone, "Olga's Visit," pp. 249–51, that Basil may have been born in 953, 955, or 957.

<sup>36</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 3–4: ὁ ... Δαφνοπάτης Θεόδωρος, Νικήτας ὁ Παφλαγών, Ἰωσήφ Γενέσιος καὶ Μανουὴλ οἱ Βυζάντιοι, Νικηφόρος διάκονος ὁ Φρύξ, ὁ Ἀσιανὸς Λέων, Θεόδωρος ὁ τῆς Σίδης γενόμενος προέδρος καὶ ὁ τοῦτου ἀνεψιὸς καὶ ὁμώνυμος ὁ τῆς ἐν Σεβαστείᾳ καθηγησάμενος ἐκκλησίας, καὶ ἐπὶ τούτῳ Δημήτριος ὁ τῆς Κυζίκου καὶ ὁ μοναχὸς Ἰωάννης ὁ Λυδός. ... Here I have omitted the commas in Thurn's edition after Γενέσιος, προέδρος, and Κυζίκου in order to clarify the sense as I understand it.

Nicetas' death and seems never to have seen Nicetas' history.<sup>37</sup> Probably Scylitzes had to deduce these historians' relative dates from ambiguous references in the same lost source that told him that Joseph was Genesisius' Christian name and that Theodore Daphnopates wrote *Theophanes Continuatus* and the *Life of Basil*. The most likely candidate to be the source of Scylitzes' information is the author of the lost history from 944 to 971, who may well have mentioned in a preface his fairly recent predecessors Nicetas, Daphnopates, and Genesisius.<sup>38</sup>

Except for the error about Nicetas, Scylitzes puts these historians in a very plausible chronological sequence. Daphnopates does appear to have written the *Life of Basil* before Genesisius wrote his history. Genesisius wrote before Manuel, and Manuel wrote before "Leo the Asian," who must be Leo the Deacon, born in the ancient province of Asia. Theodore of Sebastea is known to have written a history of Basil II, and if he wrote soon after Basil's death in 1025, as seems likely, Theodore's uncle Theodore of Side would probably have written no earlier than Leo the Deacon, who wrote around 995.<sup>39</sup> Probably Theodore of Sebastea wrote before Demetrius, who is attested as bishop of Cyzicus as early as 1028 and as late as 1039.<sup>40</sup> Since we have no independent information about Nicephorus the Deacon of Phrygia or John the Monk of Lydia, we have no reason to think that Scylitzes listed them out of the chronological order that he seems to have followed for the others. Thus in his list the author of his lost source for the years from 944 to 971 should come after Manuel the Protospatharius, who wrote around 962, and before Leo the Deacon, who wrote around 995. This position in Scylitzes' list belongs to "the deacon Nicephorus the Phrygian," who is therefore the most likely candidate to be Scylitzes' lost source for the period from 944 to 971.

Obviously any biographical sketch of Nicephorus the Deacon is subject to even more than the usual uncertainties. According to Scylitzes, Nicephorus was a native of Phrygia, on the Anatolian plateau. If he was indeed our lost historian, he appears to have been born around 925. He probably left Phrygia for Constantinople in order to receive his excellent secondary education. There he read some rare books (possibly in the imperial library) and was perhaps ordained deacon at the canonical age of twenty-five, around 950. He was so familiar with court affairs that he may well have been an imperial deacon like Leo the Deacon, who apparently used Nicephorus' work and tried to supersede it. Leo's and Scylitzes' account of the campaign of summer 971 is so detailed that Nicephorus quite possibly accompanied the army as John Tzimiskes' court chaplain, just as Leo the Deacon later attended Basil II on his campaign of 986.

After this campaign, Nicephorus the Deacon (if it was he) quickly finished writing a history of the years from 944 to 971 that depicted John Tzimiskes as by far

<sup>37</sup> See below, p. 333.

<sup>38</sup> If so, however, the author (probably Nicephorus the Deacon) must have continued Manuel's history rather than Symeon's, because his preface mentioned Manuel but not Symeon, whom Scylitzes never mentions. See below, pp. 333–34.

<sup>39</sup> See below, pp. 250–51 and n. 101.

<sup>40</sup> See below, pp. 258–59.

the greatest ruler of his time and denigrated Tzimisce's predecessors. This history was a work of real erudition and notable interest. No doubt the historian hoped to be rewarded with a promotion, perhaps to a bishopric, and perhaps he succeeded. Even if he lived past Tzimisce's death, in 976, his history was so aggressively uncomplimentary to the Macedonian dynasty that he had little to gain from continuing it, and he would have had trouble making the drastic alterations necessary to praise Constantine VII, Romanus II, and Basil II. The historian is likely to have died or retired before his history was used by Leo the Deacon around 995. Although it survived to be paraphrased by Scylitzes in the late eleventh century, it was eventually lost, eclipsed by the histories of Scylitzes and Leo, so that today even its author's name can be only a matter of plausible conjecture.

### Leo the Deacon

Leo the Deacon was born around 950 in the small town of Caloë (the ancient Coloë), in western Anatolia.<sup>41</sup> Punning on the adjective *kalós* (beautiful), Leo calls Caloë "a very beautiful village" at the foot of Mount Tmolus, near the source of the Cayster, a river that was itself "a very pleasant sight" as it flowed through its valley to the "famous and celebrated" city of Ephesus.<sup>42</sup> Small though Caloë was, it had its own bishop, a suffragan of the metropolitan of Ephesus. Leo's father, Basil, was probably a prosperous landowner, because he had enough money to send his son to Constantinople for a fine secondary education. Leo mentions being at school in the capital in 966 and 968.<sup>43</sup> At times he revisited his native region, where he mentions seeing a pair of Siamese twins around 974.<sup>44</sup> Yet he seems to have planned early in his career to join the clergy of the imperial palace, because he was as familiar with the Bible and the Fathers as with Homer and the dramatists. At some stage he must also have read a number of authors who were not part of the standard school curriculum, including the historians Herodotus, Diodorus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Arrian, Dio Cassius, Herodian, Procopius, Agathias, and Theophylact, some of whom Leo may have known from Constantine VII's *Historical Excerpts*.<sup>45</sup> Leo is unlikely to have found such a range of rare books anywhere but the imperial library.

Leo may have been ordained deacon when he reached the canonical age of twenty-five, around 975. He seems already to have been a member of the imperial court in August of that year, when a comet appeared that Symeon the Logothete and Bishop Stephen of Nicomedia interpreted for the emperor John Tzimisce.

<sup>41</sup> On Leo, see Talbot and Sullivan, *History*, pp. 1–52, Kazhdan, *History* II, pp. 278–87, Karales, *Λέων*, pp. 7–92, Panagiotakes, "Λέων," Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί* II, pp. 475–91, and Hunger, *Hochsprachliche profane Literatur* I, pp. 367–71.

<sup>42</sup> Leo the Deacon, *History* I.1.

<sup>43</sup> Leo the Deacon, *History* I.1 (his father's name) and IV.7 and 11 (his education).

<sup>44</sup> Leo the Deacon, *History* X.3 (in "Asia," the former Roman province where Caloë was located).

<sup>45</sup> See the index of "quotations, paraphrases, and allusions" in Leo's history in Talbot and Sullivan, *History*, pp. 262–64.

## Theodore of Side and Theodore of Sebastea

Strangely, no contemporary Byzantine history of the long and brilliant reign of Basil II has reached us, unless we count as Byzantine a history in Arabic by the Egyptian immigrant Yaḥyā of Antioch.<sup>93</sup> Our best narrative in Greek of Basil's reign appears in the *Synopsis of Histories* of John Scylitzes, who wrote some sixty years after Basil's death. We also have a brief account of Basil's reign in the *Chronography* of Michael Psellus, who was a child of seven when the great emperor died, in 1025. While Psellus at least knew some older men who had known Basil, Scylitzes had to rely almost exclusively on written sources that are now lost. Even so, Scylitzes' treatment of Basil's reign receives about half as much space in proportion to its length as the rest of the period Scylitzes covers. Thus the Byzantines—or at any rate Byzantine historians—seem not to have been much interested in the half-century of Basil II's rule, though it was a time of military triumphs that many modern scholars consider the high point of middle Byzantine history.

We have seen that the list of historians in John Scylitzes' preface seems to be in chronological order, and that in this list Leo the Deacon is followed by "Theodore the Bishop of Side and his nephew and namesake [Theodore] the leader of the church in Sebastea."<sup>94</sup> Apart from this, we have three apparent references to the history of Theodore of Sebastea. One is an interpolation in some manuscripts of Scylitzes' history: "The bishop of Sebastea, on whom it is preferable to rely, says that Basil [II] became emperor [in his own right not in December but] on the eleventh of the month of January." January 11, 976, is in fact a possible date for the beginning of Basil's reign.<sup>95</sup> Two more references to Theodore's history appear in an anonymous twelfth-century treatise *On Transfers of Bishops*: "During the reign of Basil [II] the Porphyrogenitus the archbishopric of Corinth was given to the metropolitan of Patras, as Theodore the [bishop] of Sebastea writes, and Leo of Synnada does also. Agapius the Archbishop of Seleucia Pieria was transferred to the patriarchate of Antioch in the reign of the Lord Basil the Porphyrogenitus during the revolt of [Bardas] Sclerus, as Theodore the Bishop of Sebastea says, the author of the book of history of the Lord Basil the Porphyrogenitus." Although the first transfer cannot be dated precisely, the second occurred on June 20, 978.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Yaḥyā, whose important history extends from 938 to 1034, is still a neglected author, and the excellent dissertation of Forsyth, "Byzantine Arab Chronicle," remains sadly unrevised and unpublished.

<sup>94</sup> See above, pp. 234–35, and Scylitzes, pp. 3–4. On Theodore of Sebastea, see Panagiotakes, "Fragments," Flusin, "Re-writing History," p. xxi and n. 39, and Holmes, *Basil II*, pp. 96–99, who finds the evidence for Scylitzes' use of Theodore of Sebastea's history "flimsy."

<sup>95</sup> Scylitzes, p. 313; for the date in December, see Scylitzes, p. 314. While Leo the Deacon, *History* X.11, says that John I died on January 10, Theodore could reasonably have counted the next day as the first one of Basil's reign. On the interpolations in Scylitzes' text, see p. 252 and n. 109 below.

<sup>96</sup> See Darrouzès, "Traité," pp. 181 (text, sections 45 and 46) and 204–5 (commentary). I leave out of account the second part of section 46 of *On Transfers*, which Darrouzès has shown to be the result of the anonymous compiler's confusing section 46 with section 56. Since we cannot be sure that Leo of Synnada did not live past 1025 (see Kazhdan, *History*

These references appear to show that Theodore of Sebastea wrote a history of the reign of Basil II, which was perhaps entitled *History of the Lord Basil the Porphyrogenitus*. It seems to have begun with 976 and concluded with 1025. We can be fairly sure that Theodore's history began with 976, the date of our first reference to it, because the anonymous treatise calls Theodore's work only a history of Basil II and not of John I or Nicephorus II, and because Scylitzes seems to have had no detailed source for the events between 972 and 976. Similarly, that the treatise says Theodore wrote a history of Basil but fails to mention his brother, Constantine VIII, seems to indicate that Theodore concluded his work no later than 1025. Although we cannot be absolutely sure that Theodore stopped no earlier than 1025, that year was the logical place to conclude a "book of history of the Lord Basil the Porphyrogenitus," and we have no reason to think that Theodore's work was unfinished.

We first hear that Theodore was bishop of Sebastea when he signed the acts of a church council in 997. On the assumption that by that date he had reached the canonical age of thirty for consecration as a bishop, he could have been as young as fifty-eight in 1025. He was evidently dead by 1030, when a certain Basil was bishop of Sebastea.<sup>97</sup> Since Constantine VIII was nominally co-emperor throughout Basil II's reign, his absence from the title of Theodore's history may well mean that Theodore wrote before Constantine's death, in 1028. If Theodore had written later, he would probably have included Constantine's short reign to round off the story of the two brothers. Conversely, if Theodore wrote between 1025 and 1028, he presumably omitted Constantine's name from his history's title in order to avoid giving the wrong impression that he had included some of Constantine's reign as senior emperor.

The suggestion has, however, been made that Theodore of Sebastea's history began as early as the birth of Basil I, in 811, and extended to the campaign of Basil II in Iberia, in 1021–22. The existence of a history covering this period has been deduced from twenty-one historical passages in a collection of the posthumous

II, p. 292), this reference to him gives us no decisive information for dating the first transfer more precisely than within Basil II's reign. On Theodore of Sebastea and the treatise *On Transfers*, see also Grégoire and Orgels, "Chronologie," pp. 160–66. Shepard, "Some Remarks," pp. 81–85, suggests plausibly that *On Transfers* also took its section 48 (on the transfer of Theophylact of Sebastea to Russia) from Theodore of Sebastea, but unlike Shepard (p. 82) I see no reason to think that Theodore's history was "dedicated to Basil II," especially since it seems to have been completed after Basil's death. Even on the dubious assumption that MS L provides the best text of section 46 of *On Transfers*, there *πρὸς* could as easily mean "concerning" as "dedicated to."

<sup>97</sup> See Honigsmann, "Studies," pp. 156–57 (mentioning Theodore of Sebastea, his predecessor Leo, and Basil, bishop of Sebastea in 1030); for the synod, see Grumel et al., *Regestes* I.2, pp. 319–20, no. 805. I cannot see why Panagiotakes, "Fragments," pp. 339–40 (who confuses this synod with Grumel's no. 804), believes that the Theodore who was bishop of Sebastea in 997 "can scarcely be the same person" as the historian of Basil II because "the historian wrote about events dating twenty-five years later or more than 997." Why should we assume that Theodore of Sebastea could not have become a bishop in his early thirties and lived into his sixties?



miracles of St. Eugenius, patron saint of Trebizond and a martyr under Diocletian, written by the fourteenth-century metropolitan of Trebizond John Lazaropulus. The first seven passages in Lazaropulus' collection, from 811 until Nicephorus II's accession, in 963, show verbal parallels with the twelfth-century history of John Zonaras. The rest of the passages, beginning with Basil II's accession, in 976, and ending with 1022, show verbal parallels with both Zonaras and John Scylitzes.<sup>98</sup> While Lazaropulus, Zonaras, and Scylitzes clearly shared a common source or sources for the period from 811 to 1022, should we conclude that their only common source was the history of Theodore of Sebastea?

Scylitzes' combined reference to the two historians, "Theodore the Bishop of Side and his nephew and namesake [Theodore] the leader of the church in Sebastea," appears to imply that Theodore of Sebastea's history was a continuation of a history by his uncle Theodore of Side.<sup>99</sup> If so, Scylitzes could have known that the two Theodores were relatives from reading in the history of Theodore of Sebastea that he was the nephew of Theodore of Side and was continuing his uncle's history, facts that Theodore of Sebastea would have been likely to mention in his preface. Yet why should we assume that Theodore of Side, writing toward the end of the tenth century, concluded his history before 811? He could of course have died before completing his work, but if his history had ended before 811, why did Scylitzes list him among the ten historians who wrote on the period after the ending date of Theophanes' *Chronography*, which was 813?

The most economical and plausible hypothesis would seem to be that Theodore of Side wrote a history of the period from about 811 to 976, which was later continued from 976 to 1025 by his nephew Theodore of Sebastea. Probably the two histories were usually copied one after the other in the same manuscripts. Scylitzes, who had other sources that recorded in more detail almost all of the period covered by the history of Theodore of Side, evidently made little use of it—except for the last four years of the reign of John Tzimiskes. For that interval, Scylitzes presumably did use Theodore of Side's history, since his account is independent of Leo the Deacon's and we know of no other history that covered those years. Later Zonaras and Lazaropulus used both the history of Theodore of Side and Theodore of Sebastea's continuation of it. Theodore of Side concluded his history with John I's death, in 976, because that was the end of the last complete reign at the time he wrote. By 1025, when the next reign ended with the death of Basil II, Theodore of Side was probably dead as well, and Theodore of Sebastea undertook to bring his late uncle's history up to date.

Because Theodore of Sebastea's continuation made up a single book, seemingly of no very great length, we may conjecture that Theodore of Side's original history had several books, like those of Genesius, the author of *Theophanes Continuatus*, and Manuel the Protospatharius. Theodore of Side's work probably went back little if at all farther than 811, since neither Zonaras nor Lazaropulus used it for

<sup>98</sup> See Panagiotakes, "Fragments," giving texts of the parallels on pp. 341–57.

<sup>99</sup> Panagiotakes, "Fragments," p. 339.

the earlier parts of their works and Scylitzes lists it among histories of the period after that covered by Theophanes. Most likely Theodore of Side began roughly where Theophanes had left off, as Genesius, the author of *Theophanes Continuatus*, Manuel, and Nicephorus the Deacon had done, and incorporated and continued some or all of the works of those historians in his own history of several books. Like those other histories, the history of Theodore of Side is likely to have been written in formal Greek and to have had a limited circulation.

Where the two Theodores' family originally came from is unclear. Side, in Pamphylia, was not close enough to Sebastea, in Cappadocia, to suggest that the uncle and nephew received sees near to their home town. Probably Side and Sebastea were simply the metropolitan sees that happened to be vacant when the two Theodores were appointed to them. Nonetheless, when we see that a man and his nephew both became metropolitan bishops within a few years of each other, we may reasonably guess that the nephew obtained his appointment with the help of the influence of his uncle. Such episcopal appointments were generally bestowed in Constantinople on men who were known there and lived there. Moreover, the books that Theodore of Side would have needed to compile his history are unlikely to have been easily available anywhere but the capital. For that matter, men who wrote learned histories and aspired to bishoprics are likely to have gone to secondary school in the capital. Yet we have no reliable way of knowing whether the two Theodores were natives of Constantinople or came there from the provinces to seek their fortunes, like Leo the Deacon and many others.

Any chronology of the two Theodores must obviously be conjectural and approximate. Theodore of Sebastea cannot have been born later than 967 if he became a bishop by 997. Evidently he wrote around 1027, during the reign of Constantine VIII, and died before 1030, when we know that his bishopric had passed to another man. We may therefore guess that Theodore of Sebastea was born around 965. His uncle Theodore of Side was presumably older, born perhaps around 945. Theodore of Side died some years after 976, the concluding date of his history, and probably after helping his nephew to become bishop of Sebastea, not much before 997. Theodore of Side was doubtless the Bishop Theodore whose monogram appears in a church in the episcopal palace at Side, which has been tentatively dated to the tenth century.<sup>100</sup> Since Theodore of Side seems to have done the research for his history in Constantinople, not from the few books available at Side, he probably became bishop after finishing his work, and quite possibly as a reward from the emperor for compiling it.

The list in Scylitzes' preface puts Theodore of Side immediately after Leo the Deacon.<sup>101</sup> Scylitzes' implication is either that Theodore of Side wrote after Leo the Deacon finished his history, about 995, or that the two historians composed

<sup>100</sup> Hellenkemper and Hild, *Lykien* I, p. 393 n. 206.

<sup>101</sup> That the list in Scylitzes' preface puts Leo before Theodore is admittedly not conclusive, because Scylitzes may simply have listed the two relatives one after the other in the absence of other evidence. Yet Scylitzes may also have found some indication in the history

their works at more or less the same time. In the latter case, Theodore could have finished his history around 995, may have been made metropolitan of Side as a reward, and could then have used his influence as a metropolitan to have his young nephew made metropolitan of Sebastea by 997. This is perhaps the most probable reconstruction. Around 1027 the nephew apparently wrote a continuation of his uncle's history as an act of homage to his relative, by that time probably deceased, rather than as an attempt to win himself a further promotion when he was over sixty. Theodore of Sebastea died a little later, around 1029.

John Zonaras and John Lazaropulus seem to supply us with seven short fragments of Theodore of Side's history. The fragments Lazaropulus preserves from Theodore's history include three bits of information not found elsewhere. First, Lazaropulus says that Basil I was born in the Thracian town of Chariopolis. This may well be correct, since Chariopolis was a small town not far from Adrianople, and the *Life of Basil*, while recording that Basil's family came from the region of Adrianople, also implies that they lived in the countryside.<sup>102</sup> Second, Lazaropulus says that Inger, the father of Basil I's wife Eudocia Ingerina, was of senatorial rank. This seems likely enough, since Inger certainly came from a distinguished family.<sup>103</sup> Third, according to Lazaropulus, Michael III's sister Pulcheria joined Basil and Eudocia in plotting to murder Michael. While this may seem surprising, Pulcheria may well have resented Michael's relegating her mother to a convent, since Symeon the Logothete records that Pulcheria was Theodora's favorite daughter.<sup>104</sup> Lazaropulus also says that Leo VI ruled for eighteen years. Although this is wrong by any calculation, it would almost be right for Leo's predecessor, Basil I, who ruled alone for eighteen years and eleven months.<sup>105</sup> Perhaps Lazaropulus made the mistake by excerpting Theodore carelessly.

Theodore of Side must have taken the otherwise unattested material in his history from a source now lost to us, probably either Manuel the Protospatharius or Nicephorus the Deacon. After Nicephorus' history presumably ended with 971, Theodore seems to have had little to say about the years from 972 to 976, if we are to judge from Scylitzes' and Zonaras' brief accounts of that period. Yet the parallels between those two accounts, and the absence of parallels between them and Leo the Deacon, suggest that their source was Theodore of Side.<sup>106</sup> While Theodore was surely of an age to be aware of events in 972 and seems to have written his work less than twenty years after 976, he was essentially a compiler of the histories of others and may have been reluctant to write history on his own. Besides, the main events of the years from 972 to 976 were the glorious conquests of John

of Theodore of Sebastea or Theodore of Side that Theodore of Side had written after Leo the Deacon.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Panagiotakes, "Fragments," pp. 329 and 341, with *Life of Basil* 2–5; on Chariopolis, see Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, pp. 308–9.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Panagiotakes, "Fragments," pp. 329 and 341, with *PmbZ* I, no. 2683.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Panagiotakes, "Fragments," pp. 329 and 341, with Symeon I, 131.21.

<sup>105</sup> Panagiotakes, "Fragments," pp. 329 and 342. Leo himself ruled for twenty-five years and eight and a half months.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Scylitzes, pp. 311–12, and Zonaras XVII.4.8–14, with Leo the Deacon, *History* X.

Tzimisce, and describing them in detail was unlikely to win the favor of Basil II, whose favor Theodore wanted to secure. By contrast, Theodore of Sebastea seems to have written an original history of the years from 976 to 1025, all of which fell within his lifetime, even if he had still been rather young in 976.

We know too little about the other lost sources of Scylitzes to be certain that Theodore of Sebastea was Scylitzes' only source for the reign of Basil II. In fact, if the addition to Scylitzes' text that mentions Theodore of Sebastea is not by Scylitzes himself, we cannot be absolutely sure that Scylitzes used Theodore's history at all. On the other hand, the information about Basil II's reign is so similar and so abbreviated in the histories of both Scylitzes and Zonaras, and in all other Byzantine histories but that of Yaḥyā of Antioch, that it appears to derive from just one narrative source, and Theodore of Sebastea is the only contemporary Greek historian known to have covered that period and to have been cited by others. Scylitzes had the habit of making fairly complete and faithful summaries of the main sources he consulted, and he appears especially likely to have done so in covering the momentous reign of Basil II.<sup>107</sup> Admittedly, Scylitzes and Zonaras leave out the three transfers of bishops mentioned by Theodore of Sebastea; but such minor details of church politics, even if a contemporary bishop thought they warranted a brief mention, would hardly have seemed worth copying by secular historians writing a century later. Yet some manuscripts of Scylitzes' account of Basil II include three references to earlier ecclesiastical history that seem appropriate to a bishop with historical interests like Theodore of Sebastea.<sup>108</sup> The balance of probability is therefore that most of the contents of Theodore's history, though of course not all of its contents or all of its wording, survives in the summaries of Scylitzes and Zonaras.

Theodore's history was probably the source of most of the so-called interpolations in the text of Scylitzes. Scylitzes' whole history has about sixty passages that appear in some manuscripts but not in others. Thirty-three of these additions occur in the section on Basil II's reign as senior emperor, from 976 to 1025.<sup>109</sup> This frequency is particularly noteworthy because Basil's reign accounts for just over a tenth of the text of Scylitzes' whole history and about a fifth of the time span that the history covers. Moreover, the additional passages relating to the reign of Basil II, unlike many of the others, add details to Scylitzes' narrative, as if they came from the same source as the main text, not from a different source with its own approach to the subject. As we have seen, an interpolation at the very beginning of Basil's reign cites "the bishop of Sebastea." Thus the interpolator, even if

<sup>107</sup> See above, p. 226 and n. 2.

<sup>108</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 330 (references to the First Council of Nicaea and the Council of Serdica) and 365 (a reference to Justiniana Prima), only in MSS A, C, E, and U (the last only in E and U).

<sup>109</sup> On the interpolations, see the preface to Thurn's edition of Scylitzes, pp. xxix–xxxiv. Note that here I distinguish the interpolation at Scylitzes, pp. 312.26–313.45 (which relates to John Tzimisce's reign and obviously derives from Leo the Deacon, *History* VI.2–3 and X.11), from that on p. 313.45–47 (which is explicitly attributed to the bishop of Sebastea).

he was not Scylitzes himself, seems as a rule to have taken his additions from the source that Scylitzes had originally used, which appears to have been the history of Theodore of Sebastea.<sup>110</sup> These interpolations, though frequent, are relatively short and trivial, probably because Scylitzes had included most of the information from Theodore's history in the first place. Another possibility is that Scylitzes originally included all these passages but a later copyist found some of them too trivial to copy and deleted them.

Scylitzes' oddly unbalanced summary of the years from 976 to 1025, the section for which Theodore of Sebastea seems to have been his source, falls into three distinct parts. Roughly the first half is dedicated to a narrative of Basil II's civil wars with Bardas Sclerus and Bardas Phocas, from 976 to 989. While generally detailed and accurate, most of this section is plainly told from the point of view of the rebel Sclerus, including information that only Sclerus' closest associates would have been likely to know.<sup>111</sup> Second, a very brief section gives a hurried and confused summary of the ten years from 989 to 999. Third, another section that again comprises almost half of the entire account supplies another detailed and accurate narrative of events from 999 to 1025, concentrating on the Bulgarian war up to Basil's triumph in Constantinople in 1018/19 and the Iberian campaign and second civil war, in 1021–22. In this section events are dated year by year, apparently with accuracy, and much attention is given to the exploits of Basil's aristocratic generals. Many dates in all three of these parts are given by indictions and years of the world, which Scylitzes seldom uses in his long account of the years from 811 to 976.

In each of these three sections, events in Constantinople are recorded only sporadically. We learn that in 976 the news of the revolt of Bardas Sclerus distressed all the sensible and honest men in the capital but pleased those who were corrupt.<sup>112</sup> The great earthquake of 986 in Constantinople is recorded at the right date with a few details of the emperor's subsequent restoration of St. Sophia,

<sup>110</sup> Thurn, in the preface to his edition of Scylitzes, pp. xxvi and xxxiv, suggests that many but not all of these interpolations were made by Michael, bishop of Diabolis, who according to a colophon copied MS U (which begins only with 976) in the year 1118. This conjecture is possible but not certain, especially because it depends on the further conjecture that a later copyist introduced some but not all of Michael's interpolations into MS E through *contaminatio*. Admittedly the interpolations need not all be by one hand, and even those that are by one hand need not have been taken from a single source. Prokič, "Zusätze," especially pp. 23–26 and 40, argues that most of the interpolations derive from Theodore of Sebastea. Ferluga, "John Scylitzes," especially pp. 169–70, argues that Michael of Diabolis drew on "his knowledge of events which had taken place in that area [Diabolis = Devol, near Ochrid] some hundred years earlier, since he could have heard about them through oral traditions still preserved in his time"; but this idea seems implausible, because most of the interpolations add very minor details of the sort that no one would have passed on orally for a hundred years. I am, however, reluctant to attribute to an educated author like Scylitzes or Theodore the interpolation in the margin of MS E at Scylitzes, p. 346.58–59, deriving the name of the Vardar River from Bardas Sclerus.

<sup>111</sup> See Scylitzes, pp. 316.28–317.37, 318.71–76, and 334.40–335.56.

<sup>112</sup> Scylitzes, p. 317.

including its cost of ten centenaria (a thousand pounds of gold).<sup>113</sup> The detail that Basil paraded the defeated rebels on donkeys at his triumph in 989 may come from an eyewitness.<sup>114</sup> The succession of patriarchs of Constantinople is recorded vaguely and inaccurately. We are told that Patriarch Anthony III (974–79) resigned “during the revolt of Sclerus” and that the next patriarch, Nicholas II (979–91), was chosen after a vacancy of “four years and a half,” although this vacancy actually occurred after Nicholas’ death (991–96). Then we learn of a total eclipse of the sun after Nicholas’ accession (April 979), apparently the eclipse of May 28, 979.<sup>115</sup> Later we find that Nicholas died after a patriarchate of “twelve years and eight months,” which appears to be right; but we also hear that his successor, Sisinnius II (996–98), took office in A.M. 6503 (994/95), which is a year too late, and had a patriarchate of “three years,” which is a year too many, before he was succeeded by Sergius II (1001–19), after a vacancy that is not mentioned.<sup>116</sup> Finally the deaths of Sergius and his successor, Eustathius (1019–25), are dated correctly.<sup>117</sup>

Theodore of Sebastea could himself have been the source of this information on Constantinople. Scylitzes uses the same chronological indicator for the resignation of Patriarch Anthony that *On Transfers of Bishops* attributes to Theodore: “during the revolt of Sclerus.”<sup>118</sup> If Theodore was born around 965 and lived or came to live in the capital, he may well have remembered local opinions of Sclerus’ revolt in 976, the eclipse of 979, the earthquake of 986, and Basil’s triumph in 989. Writing in Sebastea soon after 1025, Theodore may well have tried to reconstruct from memory the dates of the earlier patriarchs of Constantinople, misplacing the vacancy in the patriarchate but remembering its length and the eclipse that followed the accession of Nicholas II. The misdating of the accession of Sisinnius II to 994/95, rather than to April 12, 996, may be significant if Theodore became bishop of Sebastea in late 996 or early 997; he may later have recalled leaving for Sebastea soon after Sisinnius’ accession but misremembered how much time had passed before he left. Although Theodore returned to Constantinople for the council of 997 and presumably on some other occasions, the rest of Scylitzes’ account of Basil’s reign mentions few events in the capital, except when the emperor and his army returned there.

A recent study has tried to explain the partiality for Bardas Sclerus in Scylitzes’ account of the civil wars of 976–89 by arguing that Scylitzes drew on a lost encomium of Sclerus.<sup>119</sup> The argument would be much the same if Theodore of Sebastea had used such an encomium and Scylitzes then used Theodore’s history. Yet Scylitzes’ summary is not always favorable to Sclerus. Scylitzes records that

<sup>113</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 331–32.

<sup>114</sup> Scylitzes, p. 338.

<sup>115</sup> Scylitzes, p. 328. For the dates of these patriarchates and the eclipse, see Grumel, *Chronologie*, pp. 436 (patriarchs) and 464 (eclipse).

<sup>116</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 340–41. For the dates of these patriarchs, see Grumel, *Chronologie*, p. 436.

<sup>117</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 365 and 368. For the dates of these patriarchs, see Grumel, *Chronologie*, p. 436.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Scylitzes, p. 328, with Darrouzès, “Traité,” pp. 181 (section 46).

<sup>119</sup> Holmes, *Basil II*, pp. 240–98.

the rebel relied heavily on the support of Arabs and troublemakers, was tricked by Manuel Erotikus, was defeated by Bardas Phocas in single combat, was tricked a second time by Phocas, and finally, as a blind and pathetic figure, had to be led by the hand to submit to the emperor.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, defeated rebels were seldom if ever the subjects of Byzantine panegyrics, which were generally reserved for emperors and victorious generals. A more plausible explanation is that after 1025 Theodore of Sebastea gathered oral reports on the revolt from one or more former partisans of Sclerus, who told him what they recalled from their point of view, showing some sympathy for their old leader.

The same recent study has proposed that Scylitzes' accounts not only of the civil wars but of Basil II's Bulgarian campaigns gave prominence to Anatolian aristocrats, including relatively unimportant ones, because Scylitzes wanted to encourage the aristocrats of his own time to cooperate with the emperor, probably Alexius I (1081–1118).<sup>121</sup> While no doubt Scylitzes did want to see cooperation between the emperor he served and the contemporary aristocracy—and Scylitzes could scarcely have encouraged rebellions—by the time he wrote he obviously had to depend on written sources for events before 1025. His political interests cannot explain why he found so much information on aristocrats in his source or sources for the period from 999 to 1025 but not for the period from 989 to 999.

If Scylitzes' main or exclusive source was Theodore of Sebastea, the most likely explanation is that Theodore, writing at Sebastea soon after 1025, gathered his material from retired veterans in Cappadocia. One of his sources was probably a former subordinate of Nicephorus Xiphias, whose exploits in Bulgaria from 999 to 1018 and in the civil war of 1021–22 Scylitzes relates favorably in some detail.<sup>122</sup> Other sources may have served under David Arianites or Constantine Diogenes, who like Xiphias are mentioned prominently and favorably in Scylitzes' account of the Bulgarian wars.<sup>123</sup> Like the Sclerus, Xiphias, Arianites, and Diogenes families, practically all the aristocratic families that provided generals for Basil's Bulgarian wars came from the general region of Cappadocia, and most of them would naturally have returned home with their retainers after the wars were over.<sup>124</sup> Scylitzes' treatment of Basil II, though favorable, seldom seems

<sup>120</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 316.22–28, 323.10–31, 326.90–10, 335.71–336.81, and 339.59–63.

<sup>121</sup> Holmes, *Basil II*, pp. 171–239.

<sup>122</sup> For references to Xiphias, see Scylitzes, pp. 343.83–344.88 (favorable), 345.38–40, 348.18–349.31 (favorable), 352.22–32 (favorable), 354.83–87 (favorable), 364.67–68 (favorable), and 366.32–367.70 (the civil war and its aftermath). Theodore's source seems, however, not to have been Xiphias himself, who was exiled to the island of Antigone between 1022 and 1028 and then became a monk in the Monastery of Studius (Scylitzes, pp. 367.50–54 and 376.74–76).

<sup>123</sup> For Arianites, see Scylitzes, pp. 345.34–38, 350.59–62, 354.81–84 (favorable), 355.19–21 (favorable), and 358.81–89; for Diogenes, see Scylitzes, pp. 352.22–32 (favorable, mentioned with Xiphias), 355.19–21 (favorable, mentioned with Arianites), 356.38–49 (fairly favorable), and 365.16–366.30 (very favorable).

<sup>124</sup> See Cheynet, *Pouvoir*, pp. 213–29, especially 215 (Sclerus), 218 (Diogenes), and 229 (Xiphias and Arianites), with 246 (a map of the homelands of the Anatolian aristocratic families).

based on the views of the emperor or his closest advisers and courtiers.<sup>125</sup> Unlike Yahyā of Antioch, Symeon the Logothete, and Pseudo-Symeon, Scylitzes has only an approximate idea of Basil's age, apparently based on contemporary impressions of how old the emperor looked.<sup>126</sup>

Scylitzes' account of the Bulgarian wars implies an approval of Byzantine ruthlessness that presumably reflects the attitude of the imperial officer corps. Basil's famous blinding of some fifteen thousand Bulgarian prisoners of war, which was decisive in breaking Bulgarian power, is related as a simple matter of fact. The story of the blinding of the Bulgarian boyar Ibatzes through the treachery of the Byzantine officer Theodore Daphnomeles is described as "something pleasant and wonderful," and Daphnomeles is commended for his courage (which he certainly displayed, having entered his enemy's stronghold with only two retainers). Scylitzes recounts without a hint of disapproval Constantine Diogenes' murder of the Bulgarian boyar Sermon by breaking an oath, and two Byzantine officers' massacre of a company of Rus' by breaking an agreement.<sup>127</sup> Apparently the metropolitan of Sebastea had no interest in moralizing about how the Byzantines waged war.

If Theodore of Sebastea was Scylitzes' source from 976 to 1025, he seems to have been respectably but not remarkably well educated. This part of Scylitzes' history includes five literary allusions, to Demosthenes, Sophocles, Homer, and the Psalms.<sup>128</sup> While the author uses a few classicisms like "Byzantium" for Constantinople, and the less banal "Triballia" for western Serbia and "Upper

<sup>125</sup> In the description of Basil's successful attack on the forces of Bardas Phocas, at Scylitzes, p. 336.91, we should presumably read ἀνωϊστὶ ("unexpectedly") with MS B, not ἀνοήτως ("madly") as in Thurn's text, which would be an unparalleled and seemingly undeserved criticism of the emperor.

<sup>126</sup> See p. 234 n. 35 above, noting that Scylitzes, p. 369.15, says that Basil died at age seventy, though his real age was probably sixty-seven.

<sup>127</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 349 (the blinding of prisoners), 360–63 (the blinding of Ibatzes, ἡδὺ τι καὶ θαυμαστόν), 365–66 (the murder of Sermon), and 367–68 (the massacre of Russians). Scylitzes' figure of "around" (ἄμφω) fifteen thousand blinded Bulgarian prisoners is independently corroborated by Cecaumenus, *Strategicon* II.49, who gives the more precise number of fourteen thousand. Unlike most numbers for enemy armies in sources, which seem to be based on vague impressions from the battlefield, this one should be nearly correct, because the Byzantines themselves captured and blinded the prisoners; the details in Scylitzes' account show that it depended on well-informed contemporaries, and certainly not on oral transmission over the seventy years or so that separated the event from Scylitzes' compilation. Nonetheless, recently fashionable skepticism about sources has led to such assertions as Stephenson, *Legend*, p. 4: "It is likely ... that Skylitzes was reporting a story which had remained in circulation since the episode, and which had been modified and exaggerated in the retelling." Stephenson's comparison of the fifteen thousand blinded Bulgarians with ancient figures of 2.3 million or 4 million Persians at Thermopylae simply shows the difference between a large but credible number and absurd exaggerations. Holmes, *Basil II*, pp. 154–55, is somewhat more cautious.

<sup>128</sup> According to Thurn's apparatus, the allusions are at Scylitzes, pp. 316.11–13 (Demosthenes), 321.71 (Sophocles), 322.87 (Psalms), 332.61 (*Iliad*), and 368.95 (*Odyssey*, in an interpolation).



Media" for Vaspurakan, he transmits a large number of Bulgarian place and personal names unaltered, and even quotes a phrase in Bulgarian.<sup>129</sup> Scylitzes never uses the archaic dual number in this part of his history, although the part after 1025 has a half-dozen examples of the dual, the first of which occurs almost at once after Basil II's death.<sup>130</sup> While Scylitzes was capable of simplifying or adorning his sources to some extent, these features seem less likely to be his than to derive from the text he summarized.

We may sum up what can reasonably be conjectured about Theodore of Sebastea as follows. He was born around 965, perhaps in Constantinople, where he seems to have received a good secondary education. He and his uncle, for whom he was quite possibly named, pursued careers in the Church, apparently in Constantinople. By 997 he became archbishop of Sebastea, probably through the influence of his uncle, who by then was archbishop of Side. After Basil II died, in 1025, Theodore of Sebastea decided to add a book on Basil's reign to the history of his late uncle, which had concluded with Basil's accession, in 976. The younger Theodore seems to have gathered information from a few high-ranking veterans of Basil's civil and Bulgarian wars, who probably lived around Sebastea. He also drew on his own memories of life in Constantinople and in Sebastea, where he would have received some news about Basil's wars with the Arabs and Iberians, which receive cursory treatment in Scylitzes. Apparently Theodore completed his history around 1027 and died around 1029.

This tentative reconstruction would explain a good deal about Scylitzes' coverage of the reign of Basil II. Scylitzes' account is brief, because it was based on a short work meant to supplement a much longer history of the years from 811 to 976 by Theodore of Side. Theodore of Sebastea gave disproportionate treatment to the civil wars of 976–89 and 1021–22 and to the Bulgarian wars from 999 to 1019 because his main sources were Cappadocian veterans who had served in those wars. Although their information was generally reliable and detailed, and Theodore collected it intelligently and diligently, the rest of his work was rather haphazard. He could of course have written a very long book on Basil II, or divided his treatment into several books, but he seems not to have gathered enough material to do so. Probably he wrote at Sebastea, not in the capital, which would have been the best place to find written and oral sources for Basil's reign. While he may have revisited Constantinople, or received letters or even books or documents from friends or acquaintances there, we have no particular reason to think that he did.

Theodore of Sebastea appears to have composed his book when he was in his sixties, primarily to honor his uncle's memory, not out of personal ambition or any special passion for history. His short book had its defects, but it filled a gap, as his uncle's mainly derivative history had not. No other Byzantine historian (unless we count Yahyā of Antioch, who wrote in Arabic) undertook to record

<sup>129</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 340.87 (Byzantium), 353.65 (Triballia), 354.94 (Upper Media), and 356.46 (the phrase in Bulgarian).

<sup>130</sup> See Scylitzes, pp. 371.39–40 (τοῖν βασιλέσιν), 439.95 (χεροῖν), 486.81 (χεροῖν), 491.33 (τοῖν δυοῖν), 497.10 (τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ), and 499.55 (δυοῖν ἀτόποιν).

Basil II's reign until it had become too late to do better than Theodore had done. After Scylitzes summarized most of the contents of Theodore's history in a more convenient form, the original ceased to be much read and was eventually lost. Theodore of Side's history seems also to have sunk into oblivion, eclipsed by the overlapping histories of Symeon the Logothete, Leo the Deacon, and Scylitzes.

### **Demetrius of Cyzicus and John the Monk of Lydia**

John Scylitzes devotes more than twice as much space to the thirty-two years after Basil II's death as to the fifty years of Basil's reign as senior emperor. Scylitzes' sources for the years from 1025 to 1057 seem to be the two historians he cites last in his preface: "Demetrius the Bishop of Cyzicus and the monk John the Lydian." While Scylitzes mentions Demetrius as a participant in historical events in 1028 and 1037, he cites neither Demetrius nor John the Monk as a source for any specific information. Yet a sign of a possible division does appear about halfway through Scylitzes' coverage of this period: from 1028 to 1043, but not earlier or later, every year of the world is carefully noted.<sup>131</sup> The part of Scylitzes' account before 1025 dates events by years of the world only occasionally, and the part from 1043 to 1057 mentions just two more years of the world.<sup>132</sup> Thus Scylitzes' history from 1028 to 1043 appears to depend, if not necessarily directly, on an annalistic source that dated events by years of the world. If, as seems likely, Scylitzes slightly summarized his source's dates during the short reign of Constantine VIII (1025–28), this annalistic source could have begun as early as 1025.<sup>133</sup> Was that source the history of Demetrius of Cyzicus?

Apart from the preface, Scylitzes' history mentions Demetrius of Cyzicus twice. First, it records that in 1028 Romanus III Argyrus (1028–34) appointed Demetrius, who had been Romanus' friend before his accession, as one of three syncelli of the patriarch Alexius of Studius (1025–43).<sup>134</sup> Second, Scylitzes relates that when John the Orphanotrophus, brother of the emperor Michael IV (1034–41), decided he wanted to become patriarch of Constantinople, in 1037, Demetrius of Cyzicus led

<sup>131</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 373.15 (A.M. 6537), 381.17–18 (A.M. 6538), 384.10–11 (A.M. 6539), 384.29 and 386.75–76 (A.M. 6540; at 386.78, τούτω τῷ ἔτει should be A.M. 6541, apparently summarized incorrectly by Scylitzes from his source, as appears from τούτω τῷ ... ἔτει at 389.54), 389.54 (A.M. 6541; for ςφμζ' [ςφμβ' in four MSS] read ςφμα'), 390.90 (A.M. 6542), 398.75 (A.M. 6543), 399.7 (A.M. 6544), 399.20 (A.M. 6545), 402.81 and 403.31 (A.M. 6546), 404.50 (A.M. 6547), 405.76 and 408.63–64 (A.M. 6548), 412.88 (A.M. 6549), 415.51 and 421.5 (A.M. 6550), 424.59 (A.M. 6551), and 433.38 (A.M. 6552; for ςρνβ' read ςρνβ' with MS M).

<sup>132</sup> Scylitzes, pp. 469.65 (A.M. 6558) and 480.27 (A.M. 6564).

<sup>133</sup> Note that Scylitzes, p. 368.85–86, cites the year of the world when Basil II died (A.M. 6534), and Scylitzes, p. 373.92, dates to "that same year" a raid by the Pechenegs under Constantine VIII. Scylitzes, p. 373.2–14, looks like a very brief summary of the events of A.M. 6535 and 6536. In the latter passage Scylitzes also mentions a drought, one of the phenomena that the annalistic source (Demetrius of Cyzicus?) was particularly careful to record; see below, p. 261 and n. 144.

<sup>134</sup> Scylitzes, p. 375.