

New Perspectives on Late Antiquity in the Eastern Roman Empire

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Edited by

Ana de Francisco Heredero,
David Hernández de la Fuente
and Susana Torres Prieto

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P U B L I S H I N G

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EDITORS' NOTE

All transliterations of Greek proper names have been made according to *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan) 1991-2005. In the case of Greek names not appearing in the Dictionary, the same rules have been followed for the transliteration of Greek, except in those names more widely accepted in other Latinised forms. In case of proper names from other languages, the criteria of each individual author have been followed.

PREFACE

ROSA SANZ SERRANO

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The IV International Conference “New Perspectives on Late Antiquity. From the Frontiers to the New Rome: profiles of the Eastern Empire”, held jointly at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM) and the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), between Madrid at Segovia (Spain), on October 24-26, 2012, focused on various historical and cultural aspects of the Eastern Roman Empire and, specifically, on the dynamics between the Eastern capital, Constantinople, and the boundaries of the Empire. This symposium was a continuation of others previously organised on different subjects by the academic society *Barbaricvm*, established within the framework of the Department of Ancient History of UCM, and the International Centre for Late Antique Studies ‘Theodosius the Great’ (UNED Segovia). *Barbaricvm* is a research group devoted to promoting and developing historical research, specifically on the dialectics between concepts such as “Barbarism” and “Civilization”, particularly in Late Antiquity, by organising activities such as the series of conferences entitled “New Perspectives on Late Antiquity”, or the International Conference “Tempus Barbaricvm. El Imperio y las Hispanias al final de la Antigüedad”, held in Madrid in 2011. The ‘Theodosius the Great’ Centre for Late Antique Studies at UNED Segovia, with participation of the Department of Ancient History of UNED, has hosted several academic seminars and research activities from 2009, such as the conferences “New Perspectives on Late Antiquity”.

Studies on the Roman East are many and diverse in their approaches, which is the reason why an attempt has been made in the present volume to present some of the most relevant and current interests among specialists. For contemporaries, the Eastern Empire represented the last stronghold, the reference point of the ancient splendour of the Roman world in the West when the former provinces were transformed into the new Germanic kingdoms. Constantinople, and the provinces ruled by its court, served as a factor of cohesion and assurance in a hostile environment where foreigners and barbarism constantly threatened its

borders, endangering its unity and the permanence of structures created by Rome, although these were already very weak in the last centuries of its history. The “New Rome” neither escaped the internal problems that *Roma Aeterna* had had to overcome for centuries (and which were replicated in the new *pars Imperii*), nor learned to successfully manage its relationships with cultures and peoples at its boundaries and beyond them, neither in its Western part, nor within the borders of either their African provinces, such as the Cyrenaica, or in the Euphrates or the Black Sea. Attempts made by Eastern emperors to effectively control the borders meant – as it had been the case of Western emperors before them – being overwhelmed by adverse developments of the system itself, a heavy burden to the stability of the Empire, and, eventually, these very attempts prompted a number of important changes in the structures of the government, in the economy and in Roman society. These attempts turned it into a fragile and sensitive State in terms of its relations with the outside world, and forced it to face the question of its survival. Once again, the *limes* and their peripheries were decisive elements of change, and became also strong destabilising factors, while acting at the same time as political underpinnings of their rulers.

The Eastern Empire did not elude its destiny by defending itself against the process of Barbarisation that was threatening Western provinces with the arrival of peoples from the Rhine and the Danube, whom the Empire believed to have got rid of. Empires include peripheral territories difficult to control, where population flows determine important changes by imposing and surpassing the control of governments. The East could not survive the fall of the West, partly because it repeated the same errors of Western emperors, and also because it trusted that the situation at its boundaries, and that of their own citizens, had little or nothing in common with the other part of the Empire. Attempts of influencing Western Germanic states across the Mediterranean, which at certain times became true dreams of reconquest and recovery of lost Roman territories, are, on the one hand, actually part of the massive recovery effort of a non-existent Empire and, on the other, the development of forms of state following an inefficient tradition which was out of order at its time. Both the new aristocracy of Germanic origin, well established in the West, as well as new populations from steppes and deserts that threatened the Eastern provinces were important determinants of the policy developed by the Eastern Empire but, at the same time, they meant the decline of its hegemony mirage in the former Western Roman territory. Neither the skirmishes in Western territories, nor the development of major diplomacy in its relations with the neighbouring states of West and East, nor attempts

to control the Mediterranean, nor the Byzantine currency strength in international markets, nor the influence of intellectuals and Christian missionaries could finally overthrow Western Germanic kingdoms: they could neither stop the push of others threatening its cities and borders, nor the ambitions of their provincial aristocracies and imperial judges.

The present monograph, despite stemming from the 2010 conference, has become an independent collective academic endeavour. The fourth conference on Late Antiquity gathered specialists from Spanish and other European universities with the aim of exchanging views and discussing various historical and cultural aspects of the Late Eastern Roman Empire, as well as its relations with its enduring provinces, the ancient Roman provinces of the West and the barbarian kingdoms installed in them. Some papers presented new documentation on topics that, especially in the field of archaeology, are subject to various interpretations, thus opening new paths for study in certain areas. Others made critical revisions of documentation already known, either offering alternatives to concepts, models and paradigms conventionally accepted, or raising new interpretations of known sources. This volume is structured as collection of what has been called ‘a portrait’ and four thematic sections consisting of various contributions (see “Table of Contents”).

Within the general framework of the Eastern Empire in Late Antiquity, contributions to this collective volume address some of the problems that Eastern emperors had to face both outside and inside their borders. David Álvarez Jiménez presents an analysis of the text by John Malalas about pirate activities and other bandit acts as a result of the revolt of the circus factions in Constantinople in 565, showing different forms of internal violence in which populations were involved due to riots revealing social unrest. As another form of violence, Ana de Francisco Heredero focuses on the role of local aristocracies in defending Eastern provinces, specifically focusing on Synesios of Cyrene and the creation and use of private armies as a mechanism to counter Berber incursions from the periphery into the cities and villages of the Cyrenaica. It is precisely the political role of the bishop, and not his religious role previously studied by other specialists, that is highlighted.

Economic and legal aspects of the time are also discussed in the present volume. José María Blanch Nogués presents a detailed study on the characteristics and development of the *collatio lustralis* tax introduced by Emperor Constantine for *negotiatores* and general traders, that became in later decades one of the most questionable and unpopular taxes. The author also proposes that maintenance costs could have caused the Empire to be beset by continual bankruptcy, due to enormous court expenses and a

militaristic boundary policy, and therefore to be in bad need of a strong fiscal control over the province populations and the profits generated by trade. The study by Juan J. Ferrer-Maestro focuses on fiscal problems upon the analysis of some specific examples of tax abuses and pressure exerted by the state on farming and trading populations all over the Empire, and particularly on price speculation and currency devaluation that plunged the provinces on a very sharp inflation process, which became eventually unbearable for lower classes. Also in relation to the economic aspects of the Eastern Empire, the contribution of Ángel del Río Alda analyses a little-known information of Timotheos of Gaza – a contemporary of the Eastern Emperor Anastasios – gathered in his *Libri de Animalibus*, concerning the arrival at Constantinople of an elephant and two giraffes from India. The author connects this fact with the existence of an “incense route” that he reconstructs in an original and suggestive way, and that must have been into operation at a time well before the narrated anecdote, which, as late as in the 5th century, it must have been still a busy route and one of the main *foci* of trade with India. Aside from these economic overviews, the study by Elena Quintana Orive refers to a specific law from the Theodosian Code concerning the social and legal status of theatre actors in the second half of the 4th century. She thoroughly analyses the characteristics of this law, its formal aspects and provisions regarding actors, who, at the time under study, began to be appreciably affected by anti-pagan policies of Christian emperors, inspired by the attacks which members of this profession were subject to by Christian intellectuals and priests.

The present volume also includes a series of studies on religious aspects specific to the time. The first one, by Carmen Blázquez Pérez, is devoted to the beginnings of Christianity in Petra and in the southern region of Jordan, based upon archaeological evidence. Thus, she presents a detailed study of the first churches built in the Nabataean territory in Byzantine times, similar to those in Madaba, Mount Nebo and Umm ar-Rasas, but located in the north-south axis from Aqaba to Hawara, Petra or Phaino, following the famous *Via Nova Traiana*, where the author acknowledges the phenomenon is less well known than in close regions, such as the Holy Land. Clelia Martínez Maza has carried out an extensive tour of religious conflicts that took place in Egypt in the 4th and 5th centuries, presenting the main legal sources on the persecution of pagans, more specifically the religious policy of emperors and city magistrates, as well as the involvement of monks in the destruction of the main pagan temples in major cities. The author uses an important collection of sources which, as a whole, allows us to analyse this phenomenon with new

perspectives, focusing more specifically on the question of the death of Hypatia and on the various versions we have about this shocking fact. Conversely, Ángel Narro approaches the Christian environments of 5th century Seleukeia through the narration of the priest, reputedly the author of the *Life and Miracles of Saint Thekla*, focusing on the construction of churches and altars dedicated to the saint both inside and outside the city, as well as the saint's miracles and other hagiographical aspects composing her figure. All these elements would also allow us to reflect upon the social and religious environment of the city at that time. Related to the adoption of Christian monotheism by Emperor Constantine, Juan Signes has conducted an interesting study on the term "Commonwealth", a denomination coined by Slavic historians that is partly used in current historiography, in order to refer to this new religious policy of the Eastern Empire. For some scholars, particularly for Garth Fowden, there exists the aspiration of creating a culturally homogenous political world of universal nature over the social and ideological pluralism that composed the Byzantine Empire. This aspiration reached its zenith in the 5th century, as it was defined at the Council of Chalcedon, and lasted until the arrival of Islam in the early 7th century. But the disappearance of the Empire did not end with the concept, and so we are able to identify a second stage in the Slavic ideological organisation. As for the rise of Islam and its militarised extension, we find a line of study that enhances the investigation of the interaction of the Eastern Empire with its borders. As Johannes Niehoff-Panagiotidis defends, it is clear that the history of the Muslim conquests is an integral part of the war between Byzantium and Persia.

Focusing on the new capital of the Eastern Empire, José Luis Cañizar Palacios takes a tour of the changes experienced by the city of Constantinople and presents, contrary to traditional historiography, the interesting theory that many 4th century sources, especially Ammianus Marcellinus, rejected the idea of considering the new capital as the new Rome – even for some of them, particularly historians of pagan origin, the ancient capital of the Empire remained the undisputed centre of power at this time – to the point that Constantinople was qualified in these circles by the term "*vetus Byzantium*", a way to remember its historical past as a Greek colony and its recent conversion as the capital. Meanwhile, in a similar line of research, Susana Torres Prieto presents an analysis of the fall of Constantinople and the existence of a relationship with the emergence of the myth of Moscow as the "Third Rome".

In a parallel line of research, Fotini Hadjittofi approaches the study of Greek rhetoric and the Third Sophistic, which evidences the important cultural and intellectual changes of the time, specially the increasing

stratification of society. She analyses the changes in 4th century discourses, taking as an example Himerios' *Oratio* 41 addressed to emperor Julian during his stay in Constantinople in 361. Continuing with contemporary literary aspects, David Hernández de la Fuente examines the transformation of the aesthetic principles of early Byzantine arts and the interaction between poetry and philosophy in the literature of the Eastern Empire through the work of some poets of the so-called Nonnian School: among others Nonnos himself, John of Gaza, and George of Pisidia, who praises Emperor Herakleios campaigns and is also the author of important works in verse, showing a remarkable philosophical background and a rich classical tradition. On a different field, Isabel Moreno has made a very thorough analysis of the idea of the East in Ammianus Marcellinus's *Res Gestae*, specifying the content of reality and fiction that exists in the author's discourse, and suggesting the possibility of a strong ideological baggage, which is attributable to ideas prevailing in the Western empire, dominated by traditional literature in both the imaginary, ideology and vocabulary.

The opening section named "A portrait" contains a detailed key-note study by Enrico Livrea on one of the last main pagan figures of the Eastern Empire in Late Antiquity: Pamprepios of Panopolis, a poet and politician at the court of Emperor Zeno. This character was an active witness of the social and economic crisis affecting the Eastern Empire, and was actively involved in the struggle for power in the imperial court to the point of being involved in the usurpation of Leontios, loading with special literary significance the narration of the taking of the Papirios fortress by the Imperial army, occupied by the usurper in 484. His adventures and his verses are an emblematic token of this time of change and this historical and philological portrait may be used as a symbol of the Eastern Roman Empire in Late Antiquity.

Last, as an epilogue to this monograph, José María Blázquez Martínez, from the Real Academia de la Historia (Madrid), presents a general overview of the some of the latest theories about the fall of the Western Empire and its consequences for the stability of the Eastern provinces, as well as the endurance of the structures of the Roman world in it.

All the above-mentioned studies provide this volume with a multidisciplinary approach thanks to the diversity of topics included, but without losing its cohesion and the initial purpose of publication: presenting new perspectives to study the most controversial and determinant factors in the history of the Eastern empire in Late Antiquity through specific and innovative works, but without abdicating from the outlook that any publication of this type should offer its readers.

I.

A PORTRAIT

THE LAST PAGAN AT THE COURT OF ZENO: POETRY AND POLITICS OF PAMPREPIOS OF PANOPOLIS

ENRICO LIVREA
UNIVERSITÀ DI FIRENZE

Let us witness the final act of a sombre Byzantine tragedy. The date: the end of November, 484 A.D. The place: the castle of Papirios, customarily identified with the ruins of Çandir-Kalesi, on the slopes of the Taurus range, 40 km. to the north of Tarsus, in S.E. Anatolia (the area is sometimes called Armenian Cilicia)¹. A gruesome spectacle is being played out before the eyes of the soldiers of the emperor Zeno who are laying siege to the fortress occupied by the usurper Leontios, by Illos, *magister militum per Orientem*, and by Verina, the dowager empress: the corpse of a swarthy-skinned man², whose head had been hoisted up on the ramparts as a macabre trophy, was hurled down from the castle battlements on to the sharp rocks which surround the fortress on every side³. The reports of this ghastly end will re-echo throughout the contemporary world, and

¹ I accept the identification of Gottwald 1936, 86-100, to whom we are indebted for the recognition and description of the site. Dam. E 174 Z. = 114 A. A. is to be identified with it: ἡ πέτρα αὕτη τὰ μὲν ἄνωθεν ἐκπεπετασμένη πολὺ εἰς εὖρος, τὰ δὲ κάτωθεν ἀποστενουμένης τοσοῦτον ὅσον ὑπερέιδειν τὴν ἐπικρεμαμένην εὐρύτητα μετέωρον, πολλαχῇ ὑπερέχουσιν τῆς ὑποκειμένης καὶ ἀνεχούσης κρηπίδος ὀρείας· εἰκάσεις ἂν αὐχένι μεγάλῳ φέροντι κεφαλὴν ὑπερμεγέθη τινὰ καὶ ἀξιοθέατον. I am not convinced by Hild and Hellenkemper V, 1, 373-5, Abb. 331, who distinguish between a Papirawn and a Papirion; they identify the latter as the scene of the events we describe.

² For his 'typhonic' character, see *infra*, n. 39.

³ Cf. Dam. fr. 115 C A.: ἀκοντίζει τὴν κεφαλὴν εἰς τὸ τῶν πολέμιων στρατόπεδον, ἄνωθεν ἀπο τῆς πέτρας ἀποδισκεύσας. For this gruesome practice, frequently attested in Late Antique military triumphs, see Agosti 2012 on Nonn. D. 34. 226-48, 543-4. Pamprepios' corpse was experiencing the very same destiny of Pentheus' head, D. 46. 232: Lycurgus' palace bristles with cut heads, 20. 152-7, adding 36. 150.

will continue to resound in posterity with an intensity which proclaims the incident as the distinguishing leitmotif of a whole age and culture, embodied in the form of the individual whose colourful earthly career came to such an appalling end. This man, Pamprepios of Panopolis, played a leading role in the tortuous vicissitudes which plagued the reign of Zeno, and in the variety of his activities – cultural, political, military – he reflects, perhaps better than any other individual, the deep crisis and the contradictions of his turbulent age.

The sources which enable us to reconstruct the personality and the career of Pamprepios are unusually rich, and their abundance reflects the powerful fascination exerted by this charismatic individual. The *Suda* preserves for us a lengthy extract from the *Byzantine History* of Malchos, a contemporary of Pamprepios; in addition to this there is a most unusual document, a horoscope cast by the Egyptian Rhetorios in the sixth century, cryptically entitled *Γένεσις γραμματικοῦ*; it was clearly a *post eventum* composition which, as Delatte and Stroobant⁴ have established, retraces, with precise chronological accuracy, every stage of Pamprepios' life. The surviving fragments of the *Life of Isidore* by the Neoplatonist Damaskios of Damascus, the last head of the Athenian school, are of primary importance, and have been reconstituted in the excellent, albeit different, editions of Zintzen and Athanassiadi: the lost biography of the sage can, for the numerous sections in which Pamprepios is mentioned, be reconstructed from the extracts of it in Photios (= E), and by the use made of it in the *Suda*. These are supplemented by sources which, though less important in both qualitative and quantitative terms, are by no means negligible, such as the article 'Pamprepios' in Hesychios of Miletus, (reproduced in the *Suda*), Malalas, John of Antioch (recently edited by Roberto and Mariev: in the 7th century this historian could draw heavily on the *Isaurica* of Kandidos the Isaurian, a contemporary of Pamprepios), Theophanes of Mytilene, the *Church History* of the monophysite Zacharias Rhetor, and Joshua Stylite⁵.

What emerges from combining these various and often contradictory pieces of evidence is, broadly speaking, a figure who, apart from his

⁴ Delatte-Stroobant 1923, 58-76; for a partial English translation see Neugebauer-Van Hoesen 1959, Nr. L 440, 140-1, 187-8 : it must be remembered that Rhetorius' text is, especially towards the end, a summary of a more extensive *Vorlage*: cf. also Pingree 1976, 144-47.

⁵ The fullest selection is to be found in Livrea's edition (1979), 1-9: 'Testimonia selecta de Pamprepii vita et scriptis'; unfortunately none of the historians who have dealt with Pamprepios has been aware of this.

fundamental political role, can be described as emblematic of the literary phenomenon of late antiquity that Alan Cameron⁶ has aptly styled ‘the wandering poets’: the last flowering of ‘pagan’ poetry, originating almost entirely in Egypt⁷, from where it spread, with its features unchanged, to every part of the Empire. The representatives of this movement are on the whole vigorous upholders of the pagan outlook, of ‘Hellenism’, in an empire where non-adherence to Christianity is by now a crime which is, at best, tolerated. Despite their courageous profession of an unfashionable faith, they are in general very close to the holders of power, for whom they represent – thanks to their skilful and uninhibited use of such literary tools as encomium and *λόγος* (one need think only of Claudian) – a subtle and versatile means of moulding and influencing public opinion among the classes who mattered most in social and economic terms. These poets are equipped with a rich and sensitive knowledge of classical literature: indeed, the sources refer to them as *γραμματικοί*, implying a rigorous education in the grammatico-rhetorical tradition, which is fully borne out by their surviving works, e.g. Triphiodoros’ *Capture of Troy*, the sprawling *Dionysiaka* of Nonnos, Musaeus’ epyllion *Hero and Leander*, and *The Seizure of Helen* of Kollouthos. Frequently they are *docti sermonis utriusque linguae*, and are almost always travelling in various parts of the empire to offer their undoubted talents to the service of the highest bidder.

All, or practically all, of the characteristics just listed are to be found in Pamprepios: born on 29 September 440 in the Thebaid of Egypt in Panopolis, the same city that gave birth to Nonnos, Pamprepios was doubtless able to benefit from the renaissance of classical studies in Egypt and channel his youthful poetic talent into the new modes and forms that his master Nonnos was formulating⁸. Pamprepios would have certainly,

⁶ Cameron 1965, 470-509: his identification of Theagenes as Pamprepios’ *patronus* seems to me the very reverse of ‘hinfällig’, as Feld 2002, 275 puts it. Cameron modified his interpretation, maintaining (Cameron 2007, 21-46) that most poets from Egypt were Christian.

⁷ See Miguélez Caveró 2008, 33-79 for an updated list of papyri (Pamprepios on p. 72-4, 83-5). The best summary is to be found in Agosti 2012, 361-404 (with full bibliography).

⁸ If my reconstruction of Nonnos’ chronology (repeated in my ed. of the *Paraphrasis of St John’s Gospel, book 2* (Bologna, 2000, 56) is sound, we can neither confirm nor deny the possibility that Pamprepios may have met his master (who was about 40 years his senior) at Panopolis or at Alexandria, in his youth, before his journey to Athens. What is certain is that nearly all the lines attributed to

beyond doubt, studied in Alexandria as well, where he may have known Hermias, with whom he later sought to compete during his stay in Athens, Dam. fr. 289 Z. = 112 B A. Ἀλεξανδρέως Ἐρμείου τοῦ ῥήτορος, ὃν τὸ κλέος ὑπερβαλεῖν ἐσπουδάκει τῆς πολυμαθείας. The sources speak of Pamprepios' being active as a schoolmaster – γραμματιστής or γραμματικός – just like Callimachus⁹; and since they emphasise his humble economic circumstances¹⁰, one readily assumes that he made a living by employing his poetic abilities in the composition of eulogies of the great and the good¹¹. His scholarly profession brought him, ἐκ πολλοῦ κατὰ τὴν Ἑλλήνων οἰκήσαντα (Joh. Ant. fr. 211.2 M. = 303.27 R. = 234 p. 458. 5-6 M.)) first to Athens in 473: one of the attractions was the teaching of the great Proklos. If it is true that Proklos' school “se composait pour moitié de futurs philosophes, l'autre moitié groupait les auditeurs de passage”¹², we might confidently assign Pamprepios to the latter group, along with Severianos of Damascus, Rufinus, Marcellinus, the patrician Anthemios, the future Western emperor (467-72), Flavius Illustis Pusaеus (consul 467, *praefectus praetorio Orientis* in 465 and 473), Flavius Mesius Phoebus Severus (consul in 470), Athenodoros and Zeno of Pergamon, Hilarius of Antioch. Hostile sources, such as Damaskios, accuse Pamprepios of being incapable of benefiting, even at a superficial level, from instruction in the teaching of Neoplatonism, except in its outward manifestations such as soothsaying and theurgy, but they are forced to concede that he made a name for himself as a poet and scholar, publishing a work on *Etymologies*; this, it may be conjectured, belonged to the lineage which goes back to its archetype in Plato's *Cratylus*, through

Pamprepios are practically a cento of Nonnos' poetry (though not of the *Paraphrasis*). For some deviations from the iron laws of Nonnian metrics, see Calderón Dorda 1995, 349-61.

⁹ Test. 1 Pfeiffer: πρὶν δὲ συσταθῆναι τῷ βασιλεῖ γράμματα ἐδίδασκεν ἐν Ἐλευσίνι κωμυδρίῳ τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας. I shall discuss below the extent to which this affinity with Callimachus was sensed and emphasized by Pamprepios himself.

¹⁰ It is difficult to take seriously the claim of Rhet. 222.8ff.: τὴν πρώτην ἡλικίαν χαλεπὴν ἐκτήσατο, ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ φυγὰς ἐν πολλοῖς τόποις ἐγένετο... καὶ ταῦτα μὲν περὶ τῆς πρώτης ἡλικίας μέχρι ἐτῶν κ' ἢ λ'. A thorough training in philosophy, rhetoric, and poetry presupposes rather a well-to-do family.

¹¹ On the genre of Late-Antique poetic biography, the opposite of contemporary (and highly successful) Christian hagiography, see the fundamental work of Agosti 2009, 20-36.

¹² See Saffrey 1990, 161 and above all Di Branco 2006, 157-79.

Pamphrepios' contemporaries Orion (Proklos' teacher)¹³ and Horus of Alexandria, who taught in Constantinople. This work earned him nomination to a public chair in the Academy as well as the hand in marriage of a rich Athenian woman¹⁴. In reporting this fact Dam. fr. 178 Z. = 77 D A. cannot resist the opportunity to twist his knife in his *bête noire* Pamphrepios with his explanation of the latter's success: ἐπεὶ ὁ οὐκ εἰδὼς ἐν οὐκ εἰδόσι... πιθανώτερος ὑπάρχει (= Plat. *Gorg.* 459d), but he is forced to acknowledge (fr. 289 = E 168 Z. = 112 B A.) περὶ δ' οὖν τὴν ἄλλην προπαιδείαν οὕτω διεπονεῖτο καὶ ἐς τοσοῦτον διεγυμνάζετο ὁ Παμφρέπιος, ὥστε ἐν ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ λογιώτατος εἶναι ἔδοξε καὶ πολυμαθέστατος τῶν αὐτόθι παιδείας μετεληχότων. The political and cultural life of Athens, so well outlined by Di Branco, was dominated by the patrician Theagenes, to whom we shall return. We cannot be certain about what led Theagenes to withdraw the protection he had accorded to Pamphrepios at a given moment (it may have been slanderous attacks from influential Christian groups; or Theagenes' conversion to Christianity¹⁵; or disagreements within the school with Marinus, Proklos' biographer). However that may be, in May 476 Pamphrepios had to leave Athens because of his patron's hostility. Later events such as the exiling of Proklos and the destruction of the Asclepieion in Athens lead one, when considering Pamphrepios' paganism, to make due allowance for the disapproval of Theagenes, now a Christian convert. On this hypothesis the much-debated evidence of Malchos (fr. 23 B.) διαβολῆς δὲ αὐτῷ πρὸς Θεαγένην τινὰ τῶν ἐκεῖ δυναμένων συστάσης, ὑβρισθεὶς ὑπ' ἐκείνου καὶ μείζονος ἢ ἐχρῆν διδάσκαλον ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πειραθεὶς σκευωρίας should be interpreted as "there was slander against him from Theagenes, one of the powerful figures there, and Pamphrepios was ill-treated by him and accused of a plot more

¹³ See F. Romano, 'Su Proclo lettore ed interprete del Cratilo', in Pépin-Saffrey 1987, 113-36.

¹⁴ A poisoned sting must, I suspect, be detected in the words οἱ προβεβλημένοι τὴν γαμικὴν προβολήν in Dam. E 160 Z. = 103 B A. (the context is however exceedingly corrupt).

¹⁵ He cannot properly be defined as a Christian without qualification, as do Kaster 1988, 332 and Feld 2002, 275 n.17; *PLRE* 2, 1064 s.v. is more balanced. In this connection I would stress the stormy relations between Theagenes and Marinus, cf. Dam. fr. 42, 144, 262, 275-6 Z. = 105 A-B A., which could cast light on those with Pamphrepios. See Hällström 1994, 152 and n. 2.

extensive than one would attribute to a professor”¹⁶. Immediately afterwards we find the banishment to Constantinople, where he sought a protector in the circles of the Isaurians (who dominated Zeno’s court) after the fall from power of the usurper Basiliskos, Verina’s brother, in the summer of 476¹⁷ (Zeno himself was an Isaurian *parvenu* whose original name was Tarasicodissa Rusumbladeotou). Pamprepios was introduced to the powerful general Illos, a diophysite Christian with some Neoplatonic sympathies, the unofficial power-broker at Zeno’s court, a senator, *magister officiorum* in 477 and consul in 478, by a certain Marsos, a cultivated officer of Isaurian stock¹⁸. According to Malchos, Illos’ protection was secured by the success of the reading of a poem by Pamprepios (Malch. fr. 23 B. δημοσίᾳ ποίημα ἀναγνόντα¹⁹), whereas

¹⁶ The text seemed incomprehensible to Bernhardt in his edition of the *Suda* (Halle, 1843, 2.2.31): “cum autem in calumniationibus apud Theagenem illius loci magistratum delatus, et gravius quam magistrum deceret exagitatus fuisset, Byzantium venit.” For my part, I find Blockley’s rendering (1983, 453) also incomprehensible: “When an accusation was made against him before Theagenes, one of the authorities there, he was manhandled by him and because he had gained more recondite knowledge than was necessary for a teacher, he went to Byzantium.” Feld 2002, 262 in his turn was misled into further error by this translation: “weil dieser seiner Meinung nach mehr Wissen erlangt habe als für einen Lehrer notwendig gewesen sei.” It is not certain that Theagenes was archon in 476, as Di Branco 2006, 161 and n.303 would have it.

¹⁷ For the letters immediately written by Zeno to Akakios, patriarch of Constantinople, and Simplicius, pope of Rome, see the documents collected by Lippold 1972, 163. It is typical of Simplicius that in his reply he exhorts Zeno to follow the example of Marcian and Leo by standing beside the *defensor fidei* in opposition to all heresy.

¹⁸ On this Marsos, who was *magister officiorum* in 477, honorary consul in 478, cf. Dam. fr. 303 Z. = 115 A A., Joh. Ant. fr. 214.6 M. = 306. 48 R. = 237 p. 438. 9 M., Mal.5.14, Evagr. HE 3.27 Joh. Nikiou 88.76, Theoph. 5972, and see Feld 2005, 226-7. It cannot be fortuitous that Marsos too perished in the siege of the fortress of Papirios, displaying to the very end his loyalty to Illos’ cause and his attachment to his party.

¹⁹ I anticipate my later discussion by suggesting that this unknown poem may have been of the kind we shall see below on fr. 3 of Pamprepios, which was certainly recited publicly before an audience whose generosity was being solicited (cf. lines 1 and 193). I find it much less likely, because of its presumed length, that the work recited was the *Isaurica* (a problem to which I shall return below).

Damaskios (fr. 178 Z. = 77 D A.) speaks of a discourse *On the Soul*²⁰ which must have won the admiration of his aristocratic audience.

This is not the right moment to locate Pamprepios' composition of the *Isaurica*: this would not have been a historical work in prose, as one might believe from Hesychios ap. *Suda* P 136=4.13,25-7 Adler Παμπρέπιος, Πανοπολίτης, ἐπῶν ποιητής, ἀκμάσας κατὰ Ζήνωνα τὸν βασιλέα. ἔγραψεν Ἐτυμολογιῶν ἀπόδοσιν, Ἰσαυρικὰ καταλογάδην (the corrupt text must be patched up by accepting Bernhardt's transposition of the adverb), but an epic poem of a historical kind (I shall discuss its surviving fragments below).

Such cultural interests would be in no way surprising among the Isaurian elements at court, who must have been eager to foster cultural activities as a means to dispel their unsavoury reputation of being barbarian marauders. Leonadas, the philosopher who welcomed Proklos to Alexandria and adopted him into his family²¹, was an Isaurian; so was Superianos, a sophist who had been trained by Lachares, the pupil of Syrianos (Dam. fr. 140 Z. = 61 A.). There is also evidence of Isaurians showing an interest in poetry: see, e.g., the inscription on the base of a statue of Zeno in the nymphaeum of Sagalassos in Pisidia (Merkelbach-Stauber 4, 18/08/01, 118)²²:

Ἡλίου ἀντολῆς ἡγήτορα καρτερόθυμον
 Ζήωνα στήσεν ἔμπνοον ἥδε πόλις.
 τεύχεσιν ἀστράπτει Ζήων θρασυκάαρδιος ἀνὴρ,
 χάλκεος ἐν πολέμῳ, χρύσεος ἐν γραφίσιν.

²⁰ Can it be a mere coincidence that a commentary on Aristotle's *De anima* is listed among the lost works of Marinos, Pamprepios' fellow-student at Proklos' school in Athens? One solitary fragment of it survives, in John Philoponos, *In de an.* 3.5 = CAG 15.535.5-8, 535.31-536.1, on which see Masullo 1985, 18-19. It is possible that Pamprepios' work contained passages of polemic against Marinos.

²¹ See Marin. *VP* 8 Λεωνᾶς γοῦν ὁ σοφιστής, Ἰσαυρος, οἶμαι, τὸ γένος καὶ εὐδοκιμῶν ἐν τῷ πλήθει τῶν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ ὁμοτέχνων, οὐ μόνον αὐτῷ λόγων τῶν ἑαυτοῦ ἐκοινωνήσεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ συνοίκον ἔχειν ἡξίου καὶ συνδιατᾶσθαι γυναικὶ καὶ τέκνοις παρεσκεύασεν, οἷα παῖδα αὐτῷ γνήσιον καὶ τοῦτον γενόμενον. The same Leonadas will have introduced Proklos τοῖς τὰς ἡνίας ἔχουσι τῆς Αἰγύπτου, the same ruling class, educated and with Platonic leanings, that Pamprepios sought to ingratiate himself with some decades later.

²² I reproduce Lanckoronski's text, with some certain orthographic corrections. It is not certain that the addressee of the epigram is Emperor Zeno: his general Zeno is another possibility.

Even more striking is the high quality of the dedicatory inscription (Merkelbach-Stauber 4, 19/05/02, 187), dated several decades before, of the restored marble floor of a public building (a palaestra, perhaps) in Seleukeia, commissioned by Paulina, the wife of this same Isaurian general Zeno (*magister militum per Orientem* 447-451, consul 448, *patricius* 451) whose prestige was so high among his countrymen²³ that the emperor chose to assume his name:

τειρόμενον δάπεδόν με χρόνων ὑπο πότνα γυναικῶν
 πατρικία Ζήνωνος ἀρηϊφίλου παράκοιτις
 Παυλίνα πραπίδεςσι κεκασμένη ἡδὲ καὶ ἔργοις
 προφρονέως κόσμησε καὶ οὐκ ἀμέλησεν ἐμεῖο·
 καὶ γὰρ ἐμὴν μεγάλην ὑπὸ γήραος ὄλεσα μορφήν·
 νῦν δὲ χάριν πινυτῆς καὶ ἀμωμήτοιο γυναικός
 κόσμοις μαρμαρέοισιν ἐπαστρέπτω πολὺ μᾶλλον,
 ἥβης καὶ προτέρης ἐπέβην χαλεπὸν μετὰ γήρας.

Nor should we forget that also at Seleukeia Zeno had a church built in honour of the martyr St. Thekla, who had appeared to him in a vision and encouraged him to expel the usurper Basiliskos from the capital²⁴. Consequently it is entirely natural that the Egyptian scholar, pagan though he was, impressed Illos favourably, who would have spent his time at the siege of Papirios reading! (Joh. Ant.fr. 214.6 M. = 306. 50-1 R. = 237 p. 438. 11 M.)²⁵. However it may be, Pampreprios was honoured with the

²³ This Zeno must be the addressee of a letter from Theodoret of Cyrrhus (*ep.* 65). On the epigram cited here, see Şahin 1991, 155-56; Feissel 1999, 9-17, esp. 9-11, and, more generally on the “Gelehrsamkeit bei den Isauriern”, Feld 2005, 223-9. There are German translations in Şahin 1991, 156 and Feld 2005, 156, besides Merkelbach-Stauber *cit.*

²⁴ Euagr. *HE* 3.8, see Lippold 1972, 161. Monophysite though he was, it is impossible to deny Zeno’s personal piety (Lippold 1972, 201), or his belief that the *Henoticon* could really iron out the often bitter disagreements between the Chalcedonians and the Monophysites. Another saintly object of his veneration was Daniel Stylites: near his column at Telanissus in Syria Zeno had a baptistery and a hostel for pilgrims built, see Lippold 1972, 202. It is not accidental that the *Vita Danielis Stylitae* (ca. 500 A.D.: ed. Lietzmann-Hilgenfeld, Leipzig 1908) is the only source that praises Zeno’s *pietas* and his courage. Also the site of the burial place of St. Menas, who was venerated at Alexandria, was developed and raised to the status of a *polis*, see Lippold 1972, *loc.cit.*

²⁵ ὁ δὲ Ἰλλοῦς, τὴν τοῦ φρουρίου φυλακὴν ἐπιτρέψας Ἰνδακῶ Κοττούνη, τὸ λοιπὸν ἐσχόλαξεν ἐν ἀναγνώσει βιβλίων. See Elton 2000, 399; Feld 2005, 275.

grant of a chair of grammar at the imperial university, with the right of selecting his own pupils.

The bonds between Illos and Pamprepios became so close that when, in 478, Illos decided to leave Constantinople after two attempts on his life²⁶ (it was well known that they had been organised by the all-powerful Verina, the widow of Leo I, who embodied the dynastic legitimacy of Zeno's succession, in that she was the mother of his wife, the empress Ariadne), Pamprepios was banished from the capital on charges of practising pagan rites which involved black magic and of having forged oracles damaging to the emperor (Malch. fr. 23.14-8 B. 452: καὶ ἀπελθόντος δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν Ἰσαυρίαν, οἱ βασκαίνοντες αὐτῷ συνθέντες διαβολὴν τὴν τε ἐκ θρησκείας καὶ ὅτι μαγγανεῦσι καὶ μαντεύοιτο τῷ Ἰλλου κατὰ τοῦ βασιλέως, πείθουσι τὸν Ζήγωνα καὶ τὴν Βηρίναν τότε μέγιστα δυναμένην τῆς πόλεως ἐκπέμψαι²⁷). After a brief stay in Pergamon, seat of the flourishing mystical-theurgic school founded by Edesios, the follower of Iamblichos²⁸, we find Pamprepios once again in Illos' entourage, in Isauria, cf. Dam. fr. 291 Z.= 112 B A. μεταπεμψάμενοι ἐκ περιουσίας καὶ Παμπρέπιον. The earthquake of 25 September 478 marked an unexpected revival in Illos' fortunes: shrewdly taking advantage of the superstitious confusion at court (Zeno had fled to Chalcedon, and stepped up the pressure of the Goths under Theodoric Strabo and Theodoric the Amal) he returned to Constantinople, to Zeno's discomfiture, engineered the sending of Verina as a hostage, and advanced his protégé Pamprepios, who had now become his closest

²⁶ The first, in the summer of 477, was carried out by a slave, Paulus (Joh. Ant. fr. 210 M. = 303.3 R. = 234 p. 426. 5-6 M.), the second, perpetrated in 478, by Verina's *domesticus* Epinikos (cf. Kand. fr. 1 B.), had the effect of causing Illos to leave for Isauria on the pretext of his brother's illness.

²⁷ In fact, Pamprepios could have been sentenced to death on the basis of the edict which threatened with the death penalty "sorcerers, magicians, and the others whom the people call malefactors because of their crimes" (*Cod. Theodos.* 1.9.16.4); this resulted, in the winter of 371/2, under Valens, in the beheading of the philosopher Maximus of Ephesus, a theurgist who had instructed Julian the Apostate, and author of the astrological poem *Περὶ καταρχῶν* cf. *Lith.* 71-4, with Livrea's observations, *Gnomon* 64 (1992) 205.

²⁸ Edesios' son, who died at the age of twenty, might actually have inspired Pamprepios to concern himself with oracles; cf. Eun. *VS* 23.5 Civiletti ἡ δὲ πρὸς τὸ θεῖον οἰκειότης οὕτως ἦν ἀπραγμάτευτος καὶ εὐκολος, ὥστε ἐξήκει τὸν στέφανον ἐπιθεῖναι τῇ κεφαλῇ, καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἥλιον ἀναβλέποντα χρησμούς ἐκφέρειν καὶ τούτους ἀψευδεῖς, καὶ πρὸς τὸ κάλλιστον εἶδος ἐνθέου πνεύματος γεγραμμένους.

adviser. At this juncture Pamprepios' fortunes underwent an unexpected surge: as *quaestor sacri palatii, consul* (perhaps *honorarius*), *patrician* he exercised a decisive role in advising Illos on how to repress the usurpation in 479 by Marcian²⁹, who had in his favour the support of the common people of Constantinople and also the hopes of a dynastic legitimation, in that he was married to the second daughter of Leo and was the son of Anthemios, emperor of the West (467-72) and of the daughter of Marcian, emperor of the East in 450-57. Illos was forced to winter with Pamprepios at Nicaea, as we are told by Blockley's anonymous historian (perhaps the Isaurian Kandidos?), and *Suda* fr. 7 = Malchus fr. 23.14-8, p. 452, 482: καὶ τότε τοίνυν αὐτὸν λαβὼν ἐς Νίκαιαν ἦκε χειμάσων, εἴτε τὴν ἐκ τοῦ δήμου δυσχέρειαν ἐκκλίνων εἴτε ἐπὶ ταῖς σφαγαῖς τὸν ἔχοντα τὴν πόλιν ἐκτρέπεσθαι δαίμονα πρὸς ὀλίγον ἐθέλων. The unscrupulous misuse of oracular utterances, in the manipulation of which Pamprepios was very successful, was decisive in bringing about an unexpectedly favourable outcome for Zeno's cause. But when a third assassination attempt³⁰ finally persuaded Illos – who lost one of his ears in it – of the extreme precariousness of the Isaurian cause in the capital, he withdrew with Pamprepios, who had been driven out of Constantinople, and, after having been appointed *magister militum per Orientem*, fled to Antioch, which thus became the capital of the anti-Zenonian forces³¹. Here he was backed by the bishop Kalandion. There seems to be no good reason for rejecting the explicit statements of the sources, that Pamprepios, who like Marsus and Leontios followed his protector, lost no time in taking up the role of Illos' personal adviser, as the *éminence grise* of his political programme, a decisive position from which to direct the course of events in accordance with a master plan which now had a universal dimension, of bringing about the overthrow of Zeno as a first step to restoring Julianic paganism³². Hence, Pamprepios undertook a series of missions to coordinate

²⁹ See *PLRE* 2, 827.

³⁰ This was carried out in 481 by Urbicius, the *praepositus sacri cubiculi*, at the behest of the Empress Ariadne, who was demanding the release of her mother Verina, whom Illos was holding prisoner. On the background to this attempt, see Lippold 1972, 179.

³¹ See Euagr. *HE* 3. 16, Joh. Ant. fr. 211.1 M. = 303. 10 R. = 234 p. 426. 12 M.

³² In fact, we learn from Zacharias Scholastikos that at Gaza it was feared that a victory over Zeno would bring in its wake the re-opening of the pagan temples (*Vit. Is. Mon.* CSCO 103, Scr.Syri III, 5. 25.7) and that in Caria numerous oracles were forecasting the collapse of Christianity (*Vit. Sev.* 2.40 Kugener). How much Pamprepios influenced them we cannot say.

the strands of opposition. His first stop was Egypt, where his enduring personal links with the savants of Alexandria and the singular religious situation in the country seemed to guarantee success, despite the malicious comment of Damaskios, fr. 58 B A.: ὅτι Πανικόν τι ζῶον διακομιζόμενον θεάσασθαι φησι ὁ Ἱέραξ ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεὺς, ὁ συναγκμάσας Ἀμμωνίῳ ἐξ Αἰθιοπίας εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον, ἐοικὸς ἀκριβῶς τοῖς γραφομένοις καὶ τυπομένοις ἀκηκοέναι τε αὐτοῦ τῆς φωνῆς διὰ τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας φερομένου οἶονεὶ τριζούσης. Pamprepios' arrival in Alexandria occurred during the very days that Isidore was attending his friend Sarapion on his death bed³³. The city was convulsed by religious strife. In the controversy between the monophysite patriarch Peter Mongos³⁴, who had the support of Zeno and perhaps of the ambiguous "edict of unity", the *Henoticon* of 28 July 482, and John Talaia, a Chalcedonian protégé of Illos³⁵, Pamprepios attempted to bring about an unnatural rapprochement (though this is contested by some scholars, who see here a pure power-struggle without any religious pretexts³⁶) between the Chalcedonian Dyophysite groups and pagan culture, which still flourished in Alexandria; but it is not possible to claim that this mission of 482-3³⁷ was crowned by any degree of success. Pamprepios' fortunes were very short-lived, cf.

³³ See Di Branco 2006, 163 and n. 322-4.

³⁴ See the devastatingly negative verdict of Dam. fr. 236 Z. = 113 A. : ὁ δὲ τῶν κρατούντων τῆς πολιτείας ἡγεμῶν τὴν δόξαν ἐπισκοπεῖν εἰληχῶς, ὄνομα Πέτρος, ἀνὴρ ἰταμὸς ὢν καὶ περιπόνηρος, adding E 178 = 118 A A. πονηρὸν δὲ ἀνθρώπον καὶ τὸν βίον ἐπίρρητον, and see Asmus 1909, 469-70; Stein 1949, 2,35; Haeling 1980, 94 and n.91. The extremist front represented by Mongos, the rhetor Aphthonios, and the fanatically monophysite monks of Enaton committed the crime of destroying a revered statue of Isis at Menouthis-Aboukir; this had been particularly dear to Horapollon and his school, in particular to Asklepiodotos. A convoy of no fewer than twenty camels, loaded with devotional objects venerated by pagans was dispatched to Alexandria; the treasures all ended up on an immense bonfire, see Athanassiadi 1999, 28-9.

³⁵ Talaia had in fact pledged himself not to aspire to the episcopate, but at the beginning of 482 he broke his oath by sending an ambassador to Illos (whom he had already met, acting as an envoy of Timotheos Ailouros, the patriarch of Alexandria, in 478 at Constantinople). Illos promised him money for bribery: cf. Zach.Schol.HE 5.6-7, Euagr. HE 3.12. On the vicissitudes of the Alexandrian Theognostos, who accepted the bribes, see Asmus 1913, 322ff.

³⁶ E.g. Chuvin 1991, 100-2; Salamon 1996, 192-5; Feld 2005, 178; *contra* see Jarry 1968, 153. 2 A A.

³⁷ His arrival in Egypt is to be placed in the spring of 482 according to Rhet. 222. 13, Dam. E 172, fr. 287 Z. = 112 A A.

Rhet. 224.15: ἦν δὲ καὶ ἡ ἐβδομαία πρὸς Ἀφροδίτην φερομένη, and his relations with the intelligentsia are marked by the diffident ridicule revealed by the anecdote on the ‘Cynic’ Salloustios in Dam. fr. 148 Z. = 66 A A. τῷ δὲ Παμπρεπίῳ μέγιστον ἤδη δυναμένῳ ἐντυχῶν, ἐπειδὴ ἐκεῖνος ὠραϊζόμενος, τί θεοὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους; ἔφη, τίς δέ, ἔφη, οὐκ οἶδεν ὡς οὐτ’ ἐγὼ πῶποτε θεὸς ἐγενόμην οὔτε σὺ ἄνθρωπος; Quite the contrary: Pamprepios’ mission proved to be counter-productive, since he was not only forced to accept Mongos’ installation on the patriarchal throne, soon endorsed by ranging himself with the astute but inconclusive *Henoticon*, but he also brought down upon the learned pagans the violent persecutions of the stupid and fanatical monophysites, as we see in the case of Heraiskos and his nephew Horapollon³⁸. This violent débacle explains the hostility towards Pamprepios that is found even in the Neoplatonist sources, which stigmatise him as a “demonic disaster” (πανικὸν δυστύχημα) and, worse still, as τυφώνιος, καὶ Τυφῶνος ἔτι πολυπλοκώτερον θηρίον (Dam. fr. 287 Z. = 112 A A.), recalling the πνεύματα Τυφώνεια that were unleashed against Proklos³⁹. But if even to the ultra-hostile Damaskios the whole Egyptian episode seems obscure (Dam. E 111 = 78 D A. οὐκ εἰμὶ πρόθυμος πρᾶγμα λέγειν καὶ ἄδηλον εἰς ἀλήθειαν καὶ πρόχειρον εἰς φιλαπεχθημοσύνην), this could imply a split in the Neoplatonic groups in Egypt between factions favourable and unfavourable to

³⁸ They were ill-treated and tortured, see the sources collected by Feld 2002, 277 and n.55, esp. Dam. fr. 314-5 Z. = 117 B-C A A.: καὶ τὸν Ὠραπόλλωνα καὶ τὸν Ἡραῖσκον αἰροῦσι καὶ νεύροις ἀνακρεμάσαντες ἀπὸ τῆς χειρὸς ἐκότερον ἀπῆλθον τὸν Ἀρποκράν καὶ Ἰσίδωρον, καὶ κατατεινομένῳ ταῖς στρέβλαις ὑπὲρ τοῦ κατεπιεῖν τοὺς συνεγνωκότας· οἱ δὲ ἐμπρίσαντες τοὺς ὀδόντας τοῦ εἶξαι τῷ τυράννῳ γεγόνασιν κρείττους. There were repercussions at Athens too: Proklos was forced into exile, and the time-honoured Asklepieion was destroyed: see Di Branco 2006, 191.

³⁹ See Plat. *Phaedr.* 230a Τυφῶνος πολυπλοκώτερον καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπιτεθυμμένον with the commentary of Herm. 31.66 Couvreur τὸ δὲ Τυφῶνος ὅτι ὁ θεὸς οὗτος ἐπάσχει τοῦ πλημμελοῦς καὶ ἀτάκτου. On ‘Typhon’ as ‘mal absolu et multiforme’ (the definition of Lamoureux-Aujoulat 2008, 29ff., 60ff., on the insoluble problem of the identification of Typhon, the co-protagonist of *Aegyptii sive de providentia*) Baudy 1992, 47-82 has assembled a very rich doxography; to it we may add *C.Herm.* 4.77; Athanassiadi 1999, 19 and 77 n.7 (“an allegory of Christian misrule”); Shorrock 2001, 121-5 and n.200; Hagl 1997, 127 and *passim*; to the useful note of Schlange-Schöningen 1995, 277-8 n.68, add Vian, 1963, 17-37. The Chorician cave in Cilicia was considered as Typhon’s residence, see the passages assembled by Merkelbach-Stauber 4, 19/08/01, p. 195-8.

Pamphrepios before the agitator returned, vanquished, to Antioch. While Pamphrepios was attempting to form anti-Zenonian alliances with Odoacer, with the Persians, with the Armenians⁴⁰, Illos abandoned all prevarication in 484 and decided to come out in open opposition to Zeno. Since he could not afford, as a barbarian of Isaurian origin, the hostility with which both the people and aristocratic circles had branded his compatriot Zeno, he recruited the support of the canny Verina and contrived that she should nominate as emperor the senator Leontios, a pious aristocrat who was *persona grata* to Christians and nobles⁴¹. In Antioch in 484, which from this point became the pretender's capital, Pamphrepios was nominated as *magister officiorum*⁴², but scarcely after two months the situation came to a head with the victory of Zeno's army which compelled Verina, Illos, Marsus and Pamphrepios to withdraw into the impregnable fortress of Papirios⁴³, hotly pursued by Zeno's forces under the command of John of Scythia, the new *magister militum per Orientem*, cf. Theoph. 5977 = p.131.6-9 De Boor μετὰ Ἰωάννην τοῦ Σκύθου κατὰ τὸν Ἰλλοὺν ἔπεμψεν (sc. Theodericum Amalun) ὃς καὶ μετὰ τὸ ἀποκλεισθῆναι Ἰλλοὺν καὶ Λεόντιον εἰς τὸ Παπύρου καστέλλιν καταλιπὼν Ἰωάννην πολιορκοῦντα αὐτὸς πρὸς Ζήνωνα ἦλθεν. In the castle, destined to fall only after four years of determined resistance, the tragedy was played out: Verina died, overcome by the hardships of the siege; and Pamphrepios was put to death by the very men who had shared his desperate gamble. Malalas and Rhetorios openly accused him of treason; Damaskios and Joshua the Stylite made the specific charge that Pamphrepios' loyalty to Illos had come under suspicion after Trokundos, Illos' brother, had failed to return⁴⁴. Besides this, these suspicions of the Egyptian's untrustworthiness had already been expressed in connection with his mission to his native land by Dam. E 172-3 Z.= 113 O-P A. ὁ δὲ Παμφρέπιος κατὰ τὴν Αἴγυπτον παραγεγονῶς Ἰσιδώρῳ παρέσχεν ἐκ τῶν λόγων αἰσθησιν

⁴⁰ Cf. Joh. Ant. 214.2 M. = 306.7-9 R. = 237 p. 434. 13-4 M., Jos. Styl. 15, Proc. *De aed.* 3.1.25, and see McCormick 1977, esp. 215. On Persian weakness during the reign of Zeno, see Lippold, 199. Popes Simplicius and Felix always respected the authority of Zeno as the one and only emperor, and not even Odoacer dared to rebel against it.

⁴¹ Joh. Ant. 214.2 *cit.*

⁴² Mal. 15; Theoph. 5976.

⁴³ Jos. Styl. 17, Joh. Ant. fr. 214.3 M. = 306.33 R. = 237 p. 436 18-9 M., Mal. 15, p. 389, Joh. Nik. 88. 878, Theoph. 5976-7, *Patria Const.* 2. 227 Preger.

⁴⁴ Mal. 15, p. 389; Rhet. 221, 223, 224 (esp. 215) Περὶ τοῦ εἶναι αὐτὸν προδότην; Dam. E 291= fr. 306 Z. = 115 C A.; Jos. Styl. 11.

ὥς οὐχ ὑγιαῖνοι πρὸς Ἴλλουν, ἀλλ' ἤδη προδοσεῖοντι ἔοικε καὶ μέντοι καὶ περιορωμένῳ τὴν Ῥωμαίων βασιλείαν⁴⁵. At Papirios the more likely cause seems to have been a flare-up of anger among the besieged, demoralised by claustrophobia and wearied by the unfulfilled oracles and prophecies put out by Pamprepios, who was given to fanning vain hopes (even in 484 the Persian king Peroz was killed in warfare against the Ephtalites). The beheading and the ill-treatment of his corpse give us a glimpse (how superficial it is, we cannot tell) of a trial, set in motion by Illos⁴⁶, which anticipates the appalling fate which befell Illos himself and Leontios in 488⁴⁷. If he had survived, we would have gladly attributed to Pamprepios these words of a veteran (later converted) of the anti-Christian strife, *Zach. Vit. Sev.* p. 40 Kugener:

“Recall how many sacrifices we offered in Caria, when we were still pagans, to the pagan gods, when we besought those supposed gods (dissecting and scrutinising the livers in accordance with our magic art), to vouchsafe to us whether we, along with Leontios, Illos, Pamprepios, and all those who had rebelled with them, had defeated the emperor Zeno.

“Well, we received a vast number of oracles and at the same time assurances, like the one that the emperor could not possibly withstand the force of their onslaught, and that the time had come in which Christianity would break up and disappear, and in which pagan worship would be once more raised up. For all that, events showed that these oracles were deceitful, as had happened with the ones Apollo delivered to Croesus of Lydia or Pyrrhus of Epirus.”

Be that as it may, if the hostility of the pagan sources can be explained away by the damage caused to Egyptian Neoplatonism by Pamprepios' political machinations (e.g. the sharp verdict of *Dam. fr.* 282 = 115 B A.: νῦν δὲ καὶ τῷ μὴ πάνυ γελασεῖοντι γέλωτα παρῄξει ἡ τοῦ ἔργου ἔξοδος), while the aversion of Christian writers of every persuasion is more than justified by our subject's obstinate adherence to paganism, we should nevertheless hesitate to attribute to Pamprepios a soul as black as

⁴⁵ “Fortasse talibus verbis Heraiscus praedixerat Pamprepium proditorem fore” Zintzen 1967, *ad loc.*, p. 238; but see Asmus 1909, 468; Asmus 1913, 338ff. I do not think it is possible that Pamprepios could have conceived of a rapprochement with Zeno, and Feld 2002, 267-8 shares my doubts. However, for negotiations between Illos and the besieger John of Scythia see *Joh. Ant. fr.* 214 M. = 306. 61-5 R. = 237 p. 428. 23 M., and Lippold 1972, 190.

⁴⁶ See Schlange-Schöningen 1995, 153-4.

⁴⁷ For the details, see Lippold 1972, 190-91.

his skin⁴⁸. While we must resist the temptation to make him either into a kind of martyr of the dying pagan creed, alongside Asmus, or, on the contrary, an adventurer, a Byzantine Wallenstein, with Grégoire, we are neither convinced that the whole truth is represented by the recent “whitewashing” of Schlange-Schöningen, who sees him as fatally attached to Illos’ bandwagon⁴⁹. Due emphasis must be given to the energetic and unshakable consistency with which Pamprepios promoted right to the very end, with all the means at his disposal – including the utterly unprincipled – the undoubtedly desperate cause of a restoration of paganism, such as Julian had sought to bring about; and the fierce pride of the intellectual, both the man of letters and the philosopher, eclipses all the less positive aspects of his personality, and commands the respect of the historians of his own day. For even a prejudiced and unsympathetic source like Damaskios, though he brands him as ἀγύρτης τῷ ὄντι καὶ φιλομαντευτής, is forced to acknowledge the charm of his personality, if it is to him that fr. 93 a Z. = 113 A. refers to: ὁ δὲ διηγείτο μυρία δ’ ὅσα δ’ ὦν ἐκλήλει τοὺς ἀκούοντας οὐδὲν ἔλαττον, εἰ μὴ καὶ πλεον ἢ Ὀδυσσεὺς Ὀμήρου τοὺς Φαίακας. ὁ μὲν γε Ἀλκινόου ἀπόλογος τερατολογίας μεστός, ἐν μὲν ὑπονοίαις ἀληθευούσης, ἐν δὲ τῷ φανερῷ διαβεβλημένης εἰς τὸ ψευδέστερον. In addition to this, the perceptiveness and understanding of Damaskios’ verdict in fr. 291 Z. = 112 B A. outweighs any bias: ἀρχὴ ἐτέρων πραγμάτων διαδέχεται μεγίστων καὶ κακίστων, ἵνα μάθωμεν τὰς τῆς τύχης μεταβολῆς ἐλεγχούσας ἐκάστοτε τῶν τυχῶν τὰς παντοίας προαιρέσεις οὐδὲ μῖς ἦττον μέθης συμποτικῆς. This interpretation of Pamprepios as the tool of fickle Τύχη, albeit driven by an inexhaustible intoxication of the spirit, seems to us the nearest approach to historical reality and psychological plausibility. “To go away, and seek a place elsewhere in which to lay new foundations for politics and philosophy, as Plato had done centuries before”⁵⁰: ultimately, Isidore and Damaskios will put into practice this radical break with the tottering structures, cultural and political, of their own day, a break already anticipated by Pamprepios, the enemy they loathed.

⁴⁸ μέλας τὴν χροιάν, εἰδεχθὲς τὴν ὄψιν is the appalling portrait by Dam. fr. 178 Z. = 77 D A.

⁴⁹ See Schlange-Schöningen 1995, 151: “In der Verbindung des Grammatikers Pamprepios mit dem *magister militum* Illos hat das Heidentum zum letzten Mal eine für den christlichen Staat gefährlich politische Bedeutung erlangt”.

⁵⁰ The splendid expression is Di Branco’s 2006, 179.