

THE BYZANTINE CHRONICLES OF SYMEON MAGISTER AND LOGOTHETE (10TH CENT.) AND JOHN ZONARAS (12TH CENT.) IN THE LITERATURES OF THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN SLAVS*

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ABSTRACT. The article deals with two Byzantine chronicles that were translated into Old Church Slavic in the Middle Ages on the Balkan Peninsula and were subsequently adapted in Rus', where they served as the base and source of inspiration for indigenous East Slavic historical studies in universal history. It is about the works of Symeon Magister and Logothete, who probably wrote between the reign of Romanus I Lecapenus and the beginning of the reign of Basil II, and the *Epitome historiarum* of John Zonaras, covering history from the creation of the world to 1118, which is the most comprehensive Byzantine historical work and which, possibly, was completed ca. 1145. The aim of the article is to establish the chronology of the creation of the Old Church Slavic translations of both chronicles and the history of their dissemination in the *Slavia Orthodoxa* area (with a review of the state of research). The editions of the translations and unpublished manuscript material were examined (its excerpt is presented in the appendix). We were able to establish that the complete translation of the work of Symeon Magister and Logothete is preserved only in the Moldavian historiographical compilation of 1637, while the text of John Zonaras was translated by the Slavs several times and functioned in their literatures in many versions, none of which, however, is complete.

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The influence of Byzantine historiography on the historical writings of the Orthodox Slavs (Bulgarians, Serbs, inhabitants of Rus') in the Middle Ages and the early modern era is a phenomenon that is widely confirmed in the source material and, at the same time, relatively well researched. There is no doubt that just a few decades after the creation of the Old Church Slavic language, i.e. at the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries, under the auspices of the Bulgarian rulers, Symeon I the Great (893–927) and his son Peter (927–969), the chronicles of Constantinopolitan authors, or historians from other parts of the empire who wrote in Greek, began to be translated into this language. Over the following centuries, these translations became for Orthodox Slavs the basic source of knowledge about universal history. It was understood as a continuum of events since the creation of the world (dated in the *Slavia Orthodoxa* area, according to the Constantinopolitan tradition, as 5508 before the birth of Christ), through the events told in the Old Testament, up to the history of the Roman Empire and its Christian continuation with its capital on the Bosphorus, as well as the states and peoples neighboring it. For the South Slavs (especially for Bulgarians, described by the Byzantine authors), they were often the main point of reference in reflection on their own past. Their linguistic and cultural relatives from Kiev and Novgorod the Great were in a slightly different situation: unable to find sufficient information about the history of Rus' on the pages of the chronicles translated from Greek, they, quite quickly (11th–12th centuries),

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began to write down/compile their own historical texts in their „image and likeness” (chronographs and *letopisi*), taking over many of the genre features of the Byzantine historiography¹.

In the current research on the Church Slavic translations of Greek historians and their influence on the literature of the *Slavia Orthodoxa* area, a certain disproportion can be noticed: most scholars usually focus on the influence of two Constantinopolitan chronicles: John Malalas (6th century) and George Hamartolus – often referred to as George the Monk (9th century)². However, later texts are also important for understanding the development of historical literature of the Southern and Eastern Slavs in the following centuries, including: works of Symeon Magister and Logothete (10th century) and John Zonaras (12th century). In this article, we will try to summarize the current state of knowledge about them and indicate directions for further studies.

1. The *Chronicle* of Symeon Magister and Logothete

1.1. The Byzantine aspect

The work of Symeon Magister and Logothete has been present in the field of interest of scholars since the 19th century. What is significant is that, despite this interest, the first critical edition of his text was published only at the beginning of the 21st century³. What is more, it only covered the so-called *Version A* of his *Chronicle*. This is primarily a consequence of an unclear manuscript tradition and the existence of many variants of the text in Byzantine literature (it is worth remembering that in the 19th century, the work of Symeon was published several times, and erroneously attributed to, for example, Leo the Grammarian, Theodosius Melissenus or Pseudo-George, while Symeon himself was incorrectly credited with the authorship of the so-called *Chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon*). The starting point for contemporary research are the works published at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, authored by V.G. Vasilevskij, C. de Boor and S.P. Šestakov⁴. In the second half of the 20th century and in the first decades of the 21st century, the discussion focuses, on the one hand, on the author

¹ S. Franklin, *The Empire of the Rhomaioi as Viewed from Kievan Russia: Aspects of Byzantino-Russian Cultural Relations*, „Byzantion” 1983, vol. 53, p. 514–515; Т. Вілкул, *Літопис і хронограф. Студії з текстології домонгольського київського літописання*, Київ 2015; Z.A. Brzozowska, *Zapóżyczona czy własna wizja dziejów powszechnych? Wpływ autorów bizantyńskich na świadomość historyczną Słowian Południowych i Wschodnich (na przykładzie opowieści o Mahomecie i Historii paulicjan Piotra z Sycylii)* [in:] *Widmo Mahometa, cień Samuela. Cesarstwo Bizantyńskie w relacji z przedstawicielami innych religii i kultur (VII–XV w.)*, ed. Z.A. Brzozowska, M.J. Leszka, K. Marinow, T. Wolińska, Łódź 2020, p. 18–19; vol. 5, V. Guimon, *Historical Writing of Early Rus (c. 1000–c. 1400) in a Comparative Perspective*, Leiden–Boston 2021, p. 30–31, 44–52.

² See: О. В. Творогов, *Древнерусские хронографы*, Ленинград 1975, p. 111–135, 274–305; S. Franklin, *Malalas in Slavonic* [in:] *Studies in John Malalas*, ed. E. Jeffreys, B. Croke, R. Scott, Sydney 1990, p. 276–290; G. Podskalsky, *Chrześcijaństwo i literatura teologiczna na Rusi Kijowskiej (988–1237)*, transl. J. Zychowicz, Kraków 2000, p. 101, 288; П. П. Толочко, *Давньоруські літописи і літописці X–XIII ст.*, Київ 2005, p. 85; Е.Г. Водолазкин, *Всемирная история в литературе Древней Руси*, Санкт-Петербург 2008, p. 211–212; Т. Вілкул, *Юдейський и Софійський в історії давньоруської хронографії*, „Palaeoslavica” 2009, vol. 17.2, p. 65–86; S. Griffin, *The Liturgical Past in Byzantium and Early Rus*, Cambridge 2019, p. 151–152. Timofei V. Guimon, in his monumental study of Old Rus’ historical literature (11th–14th centuries), not discusses the issue of Church Slavic translations of the works of Symeon Magister and Logothete and John Zonaras, as well as their influence on the history of the Eastern Slavs. His review of Byzantine chroniclers known in this area, as is traditional, starts with George Hamartolus and John Malalas. T.V. Guimon, *Historical Writing*, p. 46–50.

³ *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, ed. S. Wahlgren, Berolini–Novi Eboraci 2006.

⁴ В.Г. Василевский, *Хроника Логофета на славянском и греческом*, „Византийский Временник” 1895, vol. 2, p. 78–151; C. de Boor, *Die Chronik des Logotheten*, „Byzantinische Zeitschrift” 1897, vol. 6, p. 233–284; idem, *Weiteres zur Chronik des Logotheten*, „Byzantinische Zeitschrift”, 1901, vol. 10, p. 70–90; and С.П. Шестаков, *О рукописях Симеона Логофета*, „Византийский Временник” 1898, vol. 5, p. 19–62.

himself, and on the other hand, on various variants of his work, the issues with the sources used by the historian, and the manner of their use. As for the first issue, there are still roughly two positions found in use today – some scholars identify the author of the *Chronicle* as Symeon the Metaphrast, a Byzantine hagiographer from the 10th century⁵, others doubt this and distinguish the historian and the hagiographer separately⁶. In the second line of considerations, important voices were expressed by, among others: A. Kazhdan, A. Markopoulos, W.T. Treadgold, A. Sotiroudis, J.M. Featherstone, S. Wahlgren, Juan Signes Codoñer⁷. Polish scientists also joined the discussion on the indicated issues, usually recapitulating the findings of foreign researchers, including: W. Swoboda, T. Wasilewski and A. Brzóstkowska⁸. The Greek original of the chronicle of Symeon Magister and Logothete has two complete translations into modern languages: into Russian by L.Ju. Vinogradov⁹ and English prepared by S. Wahlgren¹⁰.

Trying to summarize the current discussion about this author, it should be stated that our knowledge about him is very poor. He, naturally, had the title of a magister and a logothete. He was probably active from the reign of Romanus I Lecapenus (920–944) to the beginning of the reign of Basil II (976–1025). In addition to the *Chronicle*, he is credited with an epitaph for the deaths of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (959) and Stephen Lecapenus (963). Due to the titles he wears, as mentioned above, he is sometimes identified with the famous 10th century hagiographer, Symeon the Metaphrast (who died around 1000), author of the lives of saints and acts of martyrs. Some researchers suggest that the author of the *Chronicle* originated from clerical aristocracy. It is worth noting that he represented a trend of Byzantine historiography that was critical towards the Macedonian dynasty.

⁵ See: I. Ševčenko, *Poems on the deaths of Leo VI and Constantine VII*, „Dumbarton Oaks Papers” 1969/1970, vol. 23/24, p. 210–228; N. Oikonomidès, *Two Seals of Symeon Metaphrastes*, „Dumbarton Oaks Papers” 1973, vol. 27, p. 323–326; W.T. Treadgold, *The Chronological Accuracy of the Chronicle of Symeon the Logothete*, „Dumbarton Oaks Papers” 1979, vol. 33, p. 160, footnote 6).

⁶ See: S. Wahlgren – *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, p. 3*–8*; A. Kazhdan, *A History of Byzantine Literature*, vol. 2, Athens 2006, p. 162–170, 231–247; C. Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes: Rewriting and Canonization*, Copenhagen 2002, p. 61–88.

⁷ A. П. Каждан, *Хроника Симеона Логофета*, „Византийский Временник” 1959, vol. 15, p. 125–143; idem, *A History*; A. Markopoulos, *Le témoignage du Vaticanus gr. 163 pour la période entre 945–963*, „Symmeikta” 1979, vol. 3, p. 83–119; idem, *Sur les deux versions de la Chronographie de Symeon Logothete*, „Byzantinische Zeitschrift” 1983, vol. 76, p. 279–284; W.T. Treadgold, *The Chronological Accuracy*, p. 158–197; idem, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, New York 2013, p. 203–217; A. Sotiroudis, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des Georgius continuatus (A)*, Thessaloniki 1989; J. M. Featherstone, *The Logothete Chronicle in Vat Gr 163*, „Orientale Cristiane Periodica” 1998, vol. 64, p. 419–434; S. Wahlgren, *Symeon the Logothete*, „Byzantion” 2001, vol. 71, p. 251–262; idem, *Original und Archetypus: zu Zustandekommen und Transformation einer byzantinischen Weltchronik*, „Byzantinische Zeitschrift” 2003, vol. 96, p. 269–277; *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*; idem, *Symeon the Logothete and Theophanes continuatus*, „Jahrbuch Österreichischen Byzantinistik” 69, 2019, p. 323–333; *The Chronicle of the Logothete*, ed., transl. S. Wahlgren, Liverpool 2019, p. 1–14; J. Signes Codoñer, *A Note on the Dossier of Geographical Glosses Used by the Compilers of the So-called Version B of the Logothete Chronicle under the Macedonian Emperors*, „Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik” 2019, vol. 69, p. 303–321.

⁸ W. Swoboda (*Kontynuacja Georgiosa* [in:] *Słownik starożytności słowiańskich*, vol. 2, ed. W. Kowalenko, G. Labuda, T. Lehr-Spławiński, Wrocław 1965, p. 468; *Symeon Logotheta* [in:] *Słownik starożytności słowiańskich*, vol. 5, eds. W. Kowalenko, G. Labuda, T. Lehr-Spławiński, Wrocław 1975, p. 506–507, T. Wasilewski (*Macedońska historiografia dynastyczna X w. jako źródło do dziejów Bizancjum w latach 813–867*, „*Studia Źródłoznawcze*” 1971, vol. 16, p. 59–61; *Bizancjum i Słowianie w IX w. Studia z dziejów stosunków politycznych i kulturalnych*, Warszawa 1972, p. 84–87, 98–101, 114–116, 127–131, 138); A. Brzóstkowska, *Kroniki z kręgu Symeona Logotety* [in:] *Testimonia najdawniejszych dziejów Słowian. Seria grecka*, vol. 5 (*Pisarze z X w.*), ed. A. Brzóstkowska, Warszawa 2011, p. 64–67).

⁹ *Хроника Симеона Магистра и Логофета*, transl. Л. Ю. Виноградов, П. В. Кузенков, Москва 2014.

¹⁰ *The Chronicle of the Logothete*.

As for his *Chronicle*, it is known in two variants: redaction A, the older one, which presents a description of events from the creation of the world to the year 948, i.e. the death of Romanus I Lecapenus. It was written, for obvious reasons, after this year, perhaps after the death of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (959), which is mentioned in fragment 135.1 (taking into account that it is not an interpolation, as Wahlgren claims¹¹) or perhaps during the reign of Nicephorus II Phocas (963–969). The later, redaction B, contains a lecture on the history of Byzantium, expanded with additional details, up to the year 963. It was probably written during the reign of Nicephorus II Phocas (maybe in 968/969, according to W.T. Treadgold¹²). The older version of the *Chronicle* of Symeon Magister and Logothete is consistent with the *Georgius Monachus Continuatus* in its redaction A, and with the records of Leo the Grammarian and Pseudo-Theodosius Melissenus. The younger version of the *Chronicle* is consistent with the redaction B of the *Georgius Monachus Continuatus*. There are also connections between the 6th book of *Theophanes Continuatus* (the so-called *Text III*) and the work of Symeon Magister and Logothete. It is believed to be a combination of two texts, namely the so-called *Text IIIa* (886–948) and *Text IIIb* (944–963). *Text IIIa* is to be a fragment of the B redaction of Symeon Magister and Logothete's work. *Text IIIb* is to be based (although with some changes) on the A version. Separate textologically, although related in content, are the following works: the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon* and the *Chronicon Ambrosianum*.

The question remains open whether Symeon compiled fragments of various texts or if he continued one (there is an opinion that he could have used some unknown chronicle as a source, covering the times from the creation of the world up to 842). His work uses different sources, depending on the period¹³, e.g. for the early Byzantine era it was Theodore Lector's *Church History*. There are also visible traces of knowledge of the works of John Malalas. For the 7th–8th centuries, the base source was *Chronographia* by Theophanes. For this particular period, the dependence of the *Chronicle* of Symeon Magister and Logothete on the works of George the Monk (Hamartolus) is rejected nowadays¹⁴. In turn, for the times of Basil I (858–886) and Leo VI (886–912), according to the concept of A.P. Každan, the basis was a certain work entitled *Life of Basil I*, written in the circle of the patriarch Photius I (858–867, 877–886), supplemented with annalistic records regarding Leo VI¹⁵. The last part of the work was based on oral tradition and the author's personal observations.

For the Byzantine period, the content of his *Chronicle* was composed around the reign of individual emperors (one reign – one chapter), and – for the earlier –times – around the leader of the people, who is the main point of the narrative.

The work of Symeon Magister and Logothete was a popular one, as evidenced by numerous preserved copies (according to Wahlgren: there are 29 Greek manuscripts of version A, 8 Greek ones of version B, 2 – of the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon*, 11 – of the *Chronicon Ambrosianum*), versions and references, as well as translations into the Church Slavic language. The oldest manuscripts come from the 11th and 12th centuries: BNF, Gr. 1711; BSB, Gr. 218; BNF, Gr. 1712¹⁶.

1.2. The Slavic aspect

¹¹ *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, 135.1.

¹² W. Treadgold, *The Middle*, p. 206.

¹³ About Symeon's sources: *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, p. 118*–120*; cf. *Хроника Симеона Магистра и Логофета*, transl. Л. Ю. Виноградов, p. 20–22.

¹⁴ *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, p. 119*.

¹⁵ А. П. Каждан, *Хроника Симеона*, p. 138–139.

¹⁶ *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, p. 27*–117*; cf. *Хроника Симеона Магистра и Логофета*, tłum. Л. Ю. Виноградов, p. 10–17.

Research on the PHБ F.IV.307 manuscript, which is the only preserved complete Slavic variant of the *Chronicle* of Symeon Magister and Logothete (excluding the fragments of the *Georgius Monachus Continuatus* corresponding to it, existing within several Church Slavic redactions of the *Chronicle* of George the Monk), was initiated in Russia already at the end of the 19th century by V.G. Vasilevskij¹⁷. This scholar considered the manuscript in question to be a copy of a Bulgarian manuscript from the 14th century, containing a South Slavic translation of the Byzantine historian's work. At the same time, it was established that it is a copy of a Moldavian historiographic compilation initiated by the metropolitan Anastasie Crimca (1608–1629) and completed on the orders of hospodar Basil Lupu in 1637. An important achievement in the study of this work and its sources was the publication of V.I. Sreznevski¹⁸. He showed that the manuscript consists of two parts: the source base of the first one (fol. 1–254) would mainly be the Church Slavic translation of the *Chronicle* by Symeon Magister and Logothete, while the second one (fol. 254–325') would be, in his opinion, a compilation, most probably based on the work of John Zonaras and other sources. V.I. Sreznevski also prepared a complete edition of the Church Slavic text (1905)¹⁹. The research undertaken at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries was continued by M. Weingart, G. Ostrogorski and A.P. Každan²⁰, concluding that the Slavic variant of Symeon's work, preserved in the PHБ F.IV.307, textologically corresponds to the Greek manuscripts, containing a version of the work very close to the protograph. In 1971, a reissue was published in London by V.I. Sreznevski, with an introduction by I. Dujčev and a reprint of an article by G. Ostrogorski²¹. In the 1980s, the state of research on the Church Slavic translation of the text of Symeon Magister and Logothete was summarized by O.V. Tvorogov²². A Slavic translation was also included in the studies of W.K. Hannah²³ and S. Wahlgren²⁴. The latter researcher finally confirmed that the translation in question reflects the so-called version A of the Byzantine text. The Church Slavic variant was also included in the variants for translating the *Chronicle* of Symeon into Russian²⁵.

When recapitulating the current state of research, it should be stated that Orthodox Slavs (both in the Balkans and Eastern Europe) did not have access to the full text of the work of Symeon Magister and Logothete for several centuries. Contrary to what is commonly believed, no comprehensive Church Slavic translation of the discussed *Chronicle* was ever created at the turn of the 10th and 11th centuries in Bulgarian lands – only the fragment including a description of the events from 842–963, known in the literature as the *Georgius Monachus Continuatus* (version B). Moreover, for many centuries, it was also erroneously considered an inherent part of the *Chronicle* of George the Monk²⁶. The historical work of

¹⁷ В. Г. Василевский *Хроника Логофета*.

¹⁸ В. И. Срезневский, *Симеона Метифраста и Логофета описание мира от бытия и летописи собран от различных летописец. Славянский перевод Хроники Симеона Логофета с дополнениями*, Санкт-Петербург 1905 [=London 1971].

¹⁹ В. И. Срезневский, *Симеона Метифраста*.

²⁰ M. Weingart, *Byzantské kroniky v literatuře církevněslovanské*, Bratislava 1922, p. 63–83; Г.А. Острогорский, *Славянский перевод хроники Симеона Логофета*, „Seminarium Kondakovianum” 1932, vol. 5, p. 17–37; А. П. Каждан, *Хроника Симеона Логофета*.

²¹ В. И. Срезневский, *Симеона Метифраста*.

²² О. В. Творогов, *Хроника Симеона Логофета* [in:] *Словарь книжников и книжности Древней Руси (XI – первая половина XIV в.)*, ed. Д.С. Лихачев, Ленинград 1987, p. 474–475.

²³ W. K. Hannak, *Sources for the Old Slavonic Rendition of the Annal of Symeon Logothetes and Metaphrastes* [in:] *Zwischen Polis, Provinz und Peripherie. Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, eds. L.M. Hoffmann, A. Monchizadeh, Wiesbaden 2005, p. 579–604.

²⁴ S. Wahlgren, *The Old Slavonic Translations of the Chronicle of Symeon the Logothete*, „Acta Byzantina Fennica” 2005, vol. 2, p. 151–166; *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, p. 43*.

²⁵ *Хроника Симеона Магистра и Логофета*, transl. Л. Ю. Виноградов.

²⁶ W. Swoboda, *Kontynuacja Georgiosa*, p. 468; A. Brzóstkowska, *Kroniki*, p. 64–67.

Symeon Magister and Logothete, without abbreviations and omissions, was translated into the Church Slavic language in the Balkans only in the 14th century. This translation has survived to this day only in a Moldavian compilation from the beginning of the 17th century (PHB F.IV.307, fols. 1–254)²⁷. It can be assumed that this translation very faithfully reflects the Greek original of the Byzantine *Chronicle*²⁸.

2. Chronicle of John Zonaras

2.1. The Byzantine aspect

The inspiration for a scientific discussion on *Epitome historiarum* by John Zonaras was the publication of critical editions of this work²⁹. Researchers were especially interested in the issue of the sources used by the Byzantine author, and the way in which their message was adapted in his *Chronicle*. The starting point for these considerations were the works of W.A. Schmidt³⁰ and E. Patzig³¹. Interest in Zonaras was revived in the 1980s and 1990s. Researchers then studied the sources that John used in his narrative about particular centuries or periods of the reign of specific rulers. Important voices in this discussion included: M. DiMaio³², B. Bleckmann³³ and E. Trapp³⁴. D. A. Černoglazov commented on the issue of Zonaras' sources and the way they were used, at the beginning of the 21st century³⁵, followed more recently by Ch. Mallan³⁶. In the 1990s, the issue of the manuscript tradition of Zonaras's work was discussed by P.M.L. Leone³⁷. During this period, works on the language and style

²⁷ S. Wahlgren, *The Old Slavonic*, p. 151–166; A. Prohin, *The Sovereign's Dream as Historical Parable in the Byzantine World Chronicles from the Romanian Principalities (16th–17th century)* [in:] *Religious Rhetoric of Power in Byzantium and South-Eastern Europe*, eds. I. Biliarsky, M. Mitrea, A. Timotin, Brăila 2021, p. 172.

²⁸ Z.A. Brzozowska, M.J. Leszka, *Symeon Magister and Logothete, Chronicle* [in:] Z.A. Brzozowska, M.J. Leszka, T. Wolińska, *Muhammad and the Origin of Islam in the Byzantine-Slavic Literary Context: A Bibliographical History*, Łódź–Kraków 2020, p. 242.

²⁹ *Ioannis Zonarae Annales*, M. Pinder - review, Bonnae 1841–1844 (volumes I–XII); *Ioannis Zonarae Epitome historiarum libri XIII–XVIII*, ed. Th. Büttner-Wobst, Bonnae 1897; *Ioannis Zonarae epitome historiarum*, ed. L. Dindorf, vol. 1–6, Leipzig 1868–1875.

³⁰ W. A. Schmidt, *Über die Quellen des Zonaras*, „Zeitschrift für Altertumswissenschaft“ 1839, vol. 30/36, p. 238–285.

³¹ E. Patzig, *Über einige Quellen des Zonaras*, „Byzantinische Zeitschrift“ 1896, vol. 5, p. 24–53; idem, *Über einige Quellen des Zonaras II*, „Byzantinische Zeitschrift“ 1897, vol. 6, p. 322–356.

³² M. DiMaio, *The Antiochene Connection: Zonaras, Ammianus Marcellinus, and John of Antioch on the Reigns of the Emperors Constantius II and Julian*, „Byzantion“ 1980, vol. 50, p. 158–185; idem, *Infautis Ductoribus Praeviis: The Antiochene Connection, Part II*, „Byzantion“ 1981, vol. 51, p. 502–510; idem, *Smoke in the Wind: Zonaras' Use of Philostorgius, Zosimus, John of Antioch, and John of Rhodes in his Narrative on the Neo-Flavian Emperors*, „Byzantion“ 1988, vol. 58, p. 230–255.

³³ B. Bleckmann, *Die Reichskrise des III. Jahrhundert in der spätantiken und byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung. Untersuchungen zu den nachdionischen Quellen der Chronik des Johannes Zonaras*, Munich 1992; idem, *Chronik des Johannes Zonaras und eine pagane Quelle zur Geschichte Konstantins*, „Historia“ 1991, vol. 40, p. 343–365; idem, *Historia Augusta, Zonaras und Herodian* [in:] *Historiae Augustae Colloquium Turicense*, eds. S.C. Zinsli, G. Martin, Bari 2021, p. 17–28.

³⁴ E. Trapp, *Militärs und Höflinge im Ringen um das Kaisertum: Byzantinische Geschichte 969 bis 1118 nach der Chronik des Johannes Zonaras*, ed. E. Trapp, Graz–Wien–Köln 1986, p. 9–22.

³⁵ Д. А., Черноглазов: *О мировоззрении Иоанна Зонары и его современников* [in:] *Византийские очерки*, Санкт-Петербург 2006, p. 187–204; *Римская история устами византийского хрониста XII в. Ещё раз о методе Зонары-историографа*, „Византийский временник“ 2006, vol. 65, p. 191–203; *Хроника Иоанна Зонары и её источники (IX–XI вв.)*, „Византийский временник“ 2004, vol. 63, p. 137–154; *Хроника Иоанна Зонары и её источники: Методы работы Зонары-историографа*, Санкт-Петербург 2006 (not published).

³⁶ Ch. Mallan, *The Historian John Zonaras: Some Observations on His Sources and Methods* [in:] *Les historiens grecs et romains*, eds. O. Devillers, B. Sebastiani, Bordeaux 2018, p. 353–366.

³⁷ P. Leone, *La tradizione manoscritta dell'epitome historiarum di Giovanni Zonaras* [in:] *Syndesmos: studi in onore di Rosario Anastasi*, ed. A. Carile, et al., Catania 1991, p. 221–261.

of Zonaras were also created, as well as, among others, on his sense of humor³⁸. In the 21st century, the knowledge on John Zonaras and his *Epitome historiarum* was summarized by: Th.M. Banchich³⁹, W. Treadgold⁴⁰ and L. Neville⁴¹. In Poland, M. Plezia and O. Jurewicz wrote about the state of research on Zonaras's text⁴². It is worth noting that this work, apart from the 19th century Latin translation, and the Modern Greek translation by I. Gregoriadis⁴³, has not yet been fully translated into any other modern European language.

Synthesizing our knowledge about the life of John (which is most likely his monastic name) Zonaras, it should be stated that it is fairly modest. He may have been born during the reign of Michael VII (1071–1078) or Nicephorus III Botaniates (1078–1081). W. Treadgold believes that this historian was most likely born around 1074⁴⁴. He came from a family that acquired wealth thanks to commercial activities, and entered the circles of the official elite in Constantinople. John made a career at the imperial court and in the judiciary offices. He held the office of imperial secretary (*protoasekretis*) and was a commander of bodyguards (*droungarios tes vigles*). He started a family and had offspring. It is possible that around 1130 he lost his wife and child(ren), which shocked him deeply and made him abandon his secular life and join the monastery of St. Glyceria, on a small island of the same name, located just over 70 km from Constantinople, in the Archipelago of the Princes' Islands. Some scholars believe that the real reason why John joined the monastery was the loss of his position at the imperial court. There, after a few years, under pressure from his friends, he started working on his *Epitome historiarum*. The date of Zonaras's death is unknown.

Epitome historiarum (Ἐπιτομή ἱστοριῶν) covers the history beginning with the creation of the world and up to 1118. It is the largest Byzantine historical text in terms of size. It is possible that it was completed around 1145⁴⁵. At the end of the 17th century, Charles du Fresne, the modern publisher of Zonaras's work, divided it into eighteen books. The *Epitome* comprises two main parts. The first twelve books, completed by the time of Constantine the Great (306–337), were prepared based on biblical accounts and the works of, among others, Herodotus, Xenophon, Arrian and Plutarch, Cassius Dio, Flavius Josephus, Eusebius of Caesarea and Theodoret of Cyrus. The source base for the remaining books included, among others: works of Procopius of Caesarea, John Malalas, John of Antioch, Theophanes (*Chronographia* is the main source for the period of the 7th–early 8th centuries), Nicephorus, George the Monk (or Pseudo-Symeon or George Cedrenus), John Skylitzes, Michael Attalates and Michael Psellus⁴⁶. Beginning with 1079, the *Epitome* became a work independent of other historical records, developed on the basis of the author's personal knowledge, supplemented with information obtained from friends.

Zonaras wrote in an easy language, though *formal and atticizing*⁴⁷. He avoided introducing long speeches, descriptions and digressions (as requested by his friends). He tried to make his story attract the reader's attention. He discussed and shortened his sources rather than quoting them *in extenso*. He gave the events presented on their basis a new meaning,

³⁸ I. Grigoriadis, *Linguistic and literary studies in the Epitome Historion of John Zonaras*, Thessaloniki 1998.

³⁹ T. M. Banchich, *Introduction* [in:] *The History of Zonaras from Alexander Severus to the Death of Theodosius the Great*, transl. E.N. Lane, New York 2009, p. 1–19.

⁴⁰ W. Treadgold, *The Middle*, p. 388–399.

⁴¹ L. Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, Cambridge 2018, p. 191–199.

⁴² M. Plezia, *Jan Zonaras* [in:] *Słownik starożytności słowiańskich*, vol. 2, eds. W. Kowalenko, G. Labuda, T. Lehr-Spławiński, Wrocław 1965, p. 318–319; O. Jurewicz, *Historia literatury bizantyńskiej. Zarys*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk-Łódź 1984, p. 236–237.

⁴³ I. Ζωναράς, *Επιτομή Ιστοριῶν*, vol. 1–3, transl. I. Γρηγοριάδης, Αθήνα 1995–1999.

⁴⁴ W. T. Treadgold, *The Middle*, p. 392.

⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 392.

⁴⁶ Review of sources used by John Zonaras; ibidem, p. 393–397.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 392.

contemporary from his perspective, and did not shy away from comments. He sometimes contaminated source materials concerning specific issues, and sometimes left them in different versions. Sometimes, however, he tried to choose only one of them and then justify his choice⁴⁸.

Zonaras's work was very popular. It has been translated into Church Slavic several times. There is also an Aragonese version. It has been preserved in over 72 manuscripts to this day⁴⁹.

2.2. The Slavic aspect

Interest in the topic of the reception of John Zonaras's *Epitome historiarum* in the context of medieval writings of the Orthodox Slavs (both Southern and Eastern) dates back to the mid-19th century. We can find traces of it already in the correspondence of one of the forerunners of modern Paleoslav studies, Pavel Józef Šafárik (1795–1861), with O.M. Bodianski (1808–1877). The latter scholar introduced one of the Slavic shortened redactions of the Byzantine historian's work, the so-called *Paralipomenon*, into scientific circulation. In 1882, V. Kačanovskij published the text of the manuscript⁵⁰, which in 1918 was recognized by P.O. Potapov as one of the copies of the oldest Church Slavic translation of the chronicle of John Zonaras, created – as it was then believed – around 1170 in Bulgaria. In the following decades, further copies of this relic were discovered⁵¹. In 1970, Angelica Jacobs published a critical edition of the Church Slavic variant of John Zonaras's work, along with an extensive commentary⁵². At the same time, research was also carried out on the shortened version of the chronicle, the so-called *Paralipomenon*, created in Serbia at the beginning of the 15th century, and preserved in one Rus' manuscript. Their culmination was the publication of the text by O.V. Tvorogov⁵³. At the end of the 19th century, P. Lavrov discovered and published another, South Slavic variant from the 15th century⁵⁴. In Russian Slavic studies, the research on the reception of John Zonaras's work among the Slavs was conducted primarily in the context of his influence on medieval Rus' historiography⁵⁵. O.V. Tvorogov recapitulated the state of research on the issue in the late 1980s⁵⁶. An overview of the latest studies on the chronicle of John Zonaras and its translations into the Church Slavic language can also be found in the encyclopedia entry authored by A.G. Bondach⁵⁷.

In the course of research conducted since the mid-19th century, it was possible to demonstrate that the work of John Zonaras was quite widely adapted in the medieval writing

⁴⁸ More on Zonaras's working methods, see the works of D. A. Černoglazov cited in footnote 35.

⁴⁹ P. Leone, *La tradizione manoscritta*.

⁵⁰ V. Kačanovskij, *Iz srbsko-slovenskoga prijevoda bizantinskoga ljetopisa J. Zonare*, „Starine” 1882, vol. 14, p. 125–172.

⁵¹ С. Петковић, *Опис рукописа манастира Крушедола*, Сремски Карловци 1914; А. И. Яцимирский, *Описание южнославянских и русских рукописей заграничных библиотек*, Петроград 1921, p. 174–176; М. Weingart, *Byzantské*, p. 89–103; V. Mosin, *Izveštaj o naučnom putovanju u Srijemsku Mitrovicu-Beograd-Peč-Dečane-Cavtat-Dubrovnik 1953 godine*, „Ljetopis Jugoslavenske Akademije” 1955, vol. 60, p. 221; Д., Богдановић, *Каталог ћирилических рукописа манастира Хиландара*, Београд 1978, p. 166.

⁵² A. Jacobs, *Ῥωναρας-Зонара*.

⁵³ О. В. Творогов, *Паралипомен Зонары. Текст и комментарий* [in:] *Летописи и хроники. Новые исследования*. 2009–2010, ed. О. Л. Новикова, Москва–Санкт-Петербург 2010, p. 3–101.

⁵⁴ П. Лавров, *Югославянская переделка Зонары*, „Византийский Временник” 1897, vol. 4, p. 452–460.

⁵⁵ А. Попов, *Обзор хронографов русской редакции*, vol. 1–2, Москва 1866–1869; В.М. Истрин, *Александрия русских хронографов*, Москва 1893; А.А. Шахматов, *К вопросу о происхождении хронографа*, „Сборник отделения русского языка и словесности”, 1899, vol. 66, no. 8; С.П. Розанов, *Заметки по вопросу о русских хронографах*, „Журнал Министерства народного просвещения” 1904, vol. 2, p. 104–106; idem, *Хронограф Западнорусской редакции: К вопросу о его издании*, „Летопись занятий Археографической комиссии” 1913, vol. 25, p. 10–16; О. В. Творогов, *Древнерусские хронографы*.

⁵⁶ Idem, *Хроника Иоанна Зонары* [in:] *Словарь книжников и книжности Древней Руси (вторая половина XIV–XVI в.)*, ed. Д. С. Лихачев, vol. 2, Ленинград 1989, p. 492–494.

⁵⁷ А. Г. Бондач, *Иоанн Зонара* [in:] *Православная энциклопедия*, vol. 24, Москва 2010, p. 250–261.

of the Southern and Eastern Slavs. This is evidenced by the appearance of several (3–4) variants of this work in the area of *Slavia Orthodoxa*. Although it was translated into the Church Slavic language and reworked many times, it was never adopted in the Slavic circle in its entire form, probably due to the large size of the original Greek text. Currently, it is usually assumed that the first Church Slavic translation of the chronicle was written in Bulgaria or Serbia, around 1170, or in the 1330s/1340s. Precise dating is, unfortunately, made difficult by the ambiguity of the gloss, which appears in several Slavic manuscripts, and indirectly points to the year 1170, 1332 or 1344⁵⁸. The oldest copy of this translation, preserved only in the form of a single burnt page torn out from the codex, comes from the second half of the 14th century (PHB 182.94). The remaining copies are later, including: ÖNB Slav. 126 (15th–16th centuries); PBS 47 (15th–16th centuries); manuscript from the Hilandar Monastery on Mount Athos, MS 433 (1520–1530); БАН 24.04.34 (first half of the 16th century); РГБ 310.1191 (17th century)⁵⁹. According to A. Jacobs, they contain only fragments of the Byzantine chronicle, covering the description of events from the years 324–337, 379–457, 491–518, 582–602, 780–802, 813–820, 829–912, 976–1028⁶⁰. The researcher also believes that a variant of the Church Slavic translation discussed here is the South Slavic redaction of the *Chronicle* published by P. Lavrov, preserved on the pages of a Serbian manuscript from the mid-15th century (from the collections of the Zograf Monastery on Mount Athos)⁶¹.

Most experts on the subject are now inclined to claim that around 1408, in the Hilandar Monastery on Mount Athos, an abbreviation of the work of John Zonaras (the so-called *Paralipomenon*) was made for the Serbian despot, Stefan Lazarević (1402–1427). Most likely, this is the only variant of the Church Slavic translation of the Byzantine historian's text, which became widespread in the Eastern Slavic region. It has been preserved in one Rus' copy from the beginning of the 16th century: РГБ 113.230(655), fol. 1–122⁶². Fragments of the chronicle can also be found in the manuscript PHB F.IV.307 from the beginning of the 17th century, which contains – as we mentioned above – the Church Slavic translation of the historical work of Symeon Magister and Logothete (fol. 254–325')⁶³. It is also worth noting that A.G. Bondač is of the opinion that taking into account all existing copies and Church Slavic variants of John Zonaras's work, it is possible to reconstruct the full text of only the first six books of his *Chronicle*⁶⁴.

To sum up, the chronicles of Symeon Magister and Logothete (10th century) and John Zonaras (12th century) have been of interest to researchers for almost two hundred years. However, they have attracted the attention of Byzantine historians much more often than that of Paleoslavists. In-depth studies on the Church Slavic translations of these works and their impact on the historical literature of the *Slavia Orthodoxa* circle in the Middle Ages (both in its Southern and Eastern parts) would allow us to obtain a more complete picture of the historiography of the Orthodox Slavs in the 11th–16th centuries than before. After all, Symeon

⁵⁸ M. Petrova, *Hamartolos or Zonaras. Searching for the Author of a Chronicle in a Fourteenth-century Slavic Manuscript*. MS. Slav. 321 from the Library of RAS, „Scripta & e-Scripta” 2010, vol. 8-9, p. 411.

⁵⁹ A. Jacobs, *Зонарас-Зонара*, p. 94–101; M. Petrova, *Hamartolos*, p. 412.

⁶⁰ A. Jacobs, *Зонарас-Зонара*, p. 3–4.

⁶¹ П. Лавров., *Югославянская переделка*; A. Jacobs, *Зонарас-Зонара*, p. 100.

⁶² M. Petrova, *Hamartolos*, p. 413–414; A.A. Турилов, *Заметки о славянской рукописной традиции хроники Иоанна Зонары* [in:] *Летописи и хроники. Новые исследования. 2015–2016*, ed. О.Л. Новикова, Москва-Санкт-Петербург p. 3–11.

⁶³ V. I. Sreznevskij, *Simeona Metafrasta i Logoteta*, p. 144–186.

⁶⁴ A.G. Bondač, *Ioann Zonara*, p. 254; Z.A. Brzozowska, M.J. Leszka, *John Zonaras, Epitome historiarum* [in:] Z.A. Brzozowska, M.J. Leszka, T. Wolińska, *Muhammad*, p. 247–248.

and John were – next to the *Chronicle* of Constantine Manasses from the 12th century – for many centuries, the basic source of knowledge about the history of Byzantium and the neighboring Balkan peoples after 843 (where the text of George the Monk ends) for East Slavic historiographers, introducing them, for example, to the fate of the Bulgarian state and its rulers in the 10th century⁶⁵. John Zonaras *Paralipomenon* was also an important source for the creators of a number of Old Rus' chronographs⁶⁶. A separate, but no less important issue is the influence of the two chronicles discussed here on the historiography of Southeastern Europe in the early modern era, which can be evidenced not only by the above-mentioned Moldavian compilation of the metropolitan Anastasie Crimca and hospodar Basil Lupu from 1637, but also by a number of monuments of Ukrainian provenance, such as the *Hustyn Letopis* from around 1670⁶⁷.

⁶⁵ Z.A. Brzozowska, *The Image of Maria Lekapene, Peter and the Byzantine-Bulgarian Relations Between 927 and 969 in the Light of Old Russian Sources*, „Palaeobulgarica” 2017, vol. 41, no. 1, p. 40–55.

⁶⁶ А.А. Турилов, *Заметки*, p. 3–11.

⁶⁷ H. Suszko, *Latopis hustyński. Opracowanie, przekład i komentarze*, Wrocław 2003, p. 18, 244.

Annex
The Chronicle of John Zonaras in the Church Slavic translation
(fragment of book XVI)

Manuscript РНБ 182.94, kept as part of the collection of Alexander F. Hilferding (1831–1872), in the Manuscript Department of the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg, the only surviving fragment of which is presented below, is probably the oldest existing copy of the Church Slavic translation of the chronicle of John Zonaras. This codex dates back to the second half of the 14th century. Linguistically, it contains features of the Serbian redaction. Unfortunately, only one of its cards has survived to this day, burnt and with frayed edges. However, a significant part of it is readable and contains a fragment of book XVI (12.24–13.12) of the Byzantine historian's work (in the edition by Th. Büttner-Wobst: p. 443–447). The illegible parts of the text and distorted toponyms are reconstructed according to the manuscript БАН 24.04.34 from the mid-16th century (fol. 431–432), which is the basis for the edition of the Slavic version of the chronicle prepared by A. Jacobs (p. 240–242). The text segmentation repeats the arrangement in the editions of Th. Büttner-Wobst and A. Jacobs. The presented fragment contains a description of the reign of Emperor Leo VI the Wise (886–912), including his clashes with the Bulgarian ruler, Symeon I the Great (893–927).

[fol. 1] [...] Самъ же Симеонъ тѣчюю| [спасе се вѣжавъ] въ Родостолѣ⁶⁸. юже днь наричет се Дристра.| [елиц]ахъ же Българъ ѿведоше Оугри искоупи сихъ црь.| [Симе]онъ же посла паки на миръ къ цроу посланни[кы]. вѣровав же црь сихъ посла Хиросвакта съвершити миръ. нечѣстивы⁷⁰ онъ Симеонъ затвори и сего въ тѣмници. и на Оугры воинствова и побѣди сихъ и страну ихъ плѣни. и потомъ посла къ Львоу цроу рекъ. аще хоцеша имѣти съ мною миръ възврати ми българскыя плѣнники. и ѿпоустити сихъ црь Симеонъ же миръ не сътвори. хоте же црь сътворити мѣсть себѣ. събра восточныя и западныя воиски и посла на Българы. и ничеюже не оуспѣше. нъ паче Българе воиски оны сильныя побѣдише. и яже въ Българѣхъ сице приклоучише се.

Црь же Левонъ живѣше съ дѣщерию Зоуцевую. глѣною Зоя. вѣнѣ въ полѣхъ и въ виноградѣхъ. и тоу съвѣщаше се злосѣтници оубити сего. се же оувѣдѣвъ дѣщи Зоуцева ношю оубоди цра спеша. и вѣжавше въ полатоу спсоше се. оумьрши же Феофаня. сию хотиницѣ дѣщеръ Зоуцевъ постави цроу и вѣнчѣ се съ нею. мало же врѣменя и сия порадова се въ црѣвѣ тѣчюю лѣто юдино и .ii. мѣць.| [д]роугыи же злыи съвѣтъ оувѣдѣ въ себѣ црь. подвиженныи нѣкымъ Василиемъ. нѣтомъ Завце[вѣ]мъ. и испо[вѣда] злыи съвѣтъ онъ Самонѣ [вѣжа съ] Самона съ [рода ага]рѣнского. и оувѣдѣ злыи съвѣтъ съ. и аenie пришѣ побѣда цроу. иже [и повелѣ и свезаше сего] [fol. 1'] и дроугы юго. Самону же исповѣдавш[аго злы] съвѣтъ онъ. почьте црь прѣваго мѣченошо[у].

[Поеть] же паки црь дроугоую жену нарицаемоую Евдокия. красноу и благообразноу велии. ма[ло же] врѣме не прѣбы и она. и зачетъ въ чрѣвѣ. и въ[нѣ] глѣ хотѣше родити оумрѣтъ и она и ѿроче. црь же съ Левонъ желаше родити ѿроче. паче же въ пр[ѣ]моудростехъ и въ звѣзочѣтцехъ вѣрѣташе яко хоцетъ быти ѿцъ ѿрочетевы. и хоцетъ быти намѣстникъ црѣа его. и сего ради поеть и четвр[то]ую жену. нарицаемоую Зоя Карвонописина. нъ не вѣнчѣ се нъ сице бы съ нею дондеже роди ѿроче. сие же ѿроче крѣти патриархъ Николаю. по с[ъ]мрти во Янтония патриарха бы юмоу Николаю намѣстникъ. сие же ѿроче Константина нарече ѿцъ его. и по рождѣствѣ юго малоу врѣмену прѣшѣшоу.

⁶⁸ въ Родостолѣ

вѣнчѣ црѣ мѣрь юго црѣцоу грѣчкоую. и четвѣрѣтаго ради брака проклетѣ црѣ патриархъ. въ чѣсть же прѣвѣны жены свое Феофаны създа црѣквѣ свѣтлоу близъ стѣнѣхъ япѣль. и мощи юе тоу положи. и въ немѣ стѣго Лазара дроугоу црѣквѣ създа. и принесѣ мощи стѣго Лазара ѿ Кѣ[пра] и Марию Магдалины и постави въ црѣквѣ тоу [иде]же и до днѣ лежеть. и понеже корабли вѣси прѣста[ше] плавати. зане кормителии вѣси на зѣм[лѣ]хъ ра[ботаа]хоу. вѣрѣтоше ѿрад[оу] Грац[ини] [и погубише] Тавромению въ[соу] и Ли[мен]ь прѣ[ше]. и вѣлию тлю сътворише члѣкомъ соу[штимъ] там[о] [...]

12. Symeon saved himself only by fleeing to Dorostolon, which is now called Dristra. The Bulgarians, who were kidnapped by the Hungarians, were redeemed by the emperor. Symeon, however, sent messengers to the emperor again, for peace. The emperor, believing them, sent Choïrosphactes to make peace. And the wicked Symeon shut him up in prison, and went out against the Hungarians, and conquered them, and conquered their country. And then he sent messengers to the emperor Leo, saying: „If you wish to have peace with me, return the Bulgarian prisoners to me”. And the emperor released them, but Symeon made no peace. So the emperor wanted to take revenge for himself. He gathered eastern and western armies and sent them against the Bulgarians. And he gained nothing, and the Bulgarians defeated these troops nonetheless. And this is what happened with the Bulgarians.

And the emperor Leo lived with the daughter of Zaoutzes, whose name was Zoe, among the fields and vineyards. And there, the conspirators gathered to kill him. The daughter of Zaoutzes, hearing about this, woke the emperor from his sleep at night. And running to the palace, he saved himself. When Theophano died, he made this concubine, the daughter of Zaoutzes, empress, and married her. However, she enjoyed her reign for a short time: exactly one year and eight months. The emperor learned of another evil conspiracy against himself, initiated by a certain Basil, Zaoutzes' nephew. He revealed the plot to Samona, a fugitive of Samona, from the house of Hagarenes. And he learned of this evil plan, and immediately went to the emperor and told him [about it]. [Leon] ordered [Basil] and his friends to be captured. Samona, who revealed this evil plot to him, was honored by the emperor with the rank of first guard [protospatharius].

13. So the emperor again had another wife, called Eudokia, beautiful and extremely sedate. And she didn't spend much time [with him]. She conceived in her womb, and when she was about to give birth, both she and the boy died. The emperor Leo wanted her to give birth to a boy. Even in science and astrology he found [confirmation] that he should become the father of the boy and should have an heir to his imperial [throne]. For this reason he also took a fourth wife, whose name was Zoe Karbonopsina, but he did not crown her. And so he stayed with her until she gave birth to a boy. This boy was baptized by Patriarch Nicholas – because after the death of Patriarch Anthony, Nicholas became his successor. This boy was named Constantine by his father. And soon after his birth, the emperor crowned his mother as a Greek empress. And because of the fourth marriage, the patriarch cursed the emperor. In honor of his first wife, Theophano [Leon] built a bright church near the Holy Apostles. And he placed her remains there. And he also built another church dedicated to St. Lazarus. And he brought the remains of St. Lazarus of Cyprus, as well as those of Mary Magdalene, and placed [them] in this church, where they still lie to this day. And since all the ships had ceased to sail, and all the helmsmen were working on the constructions, the Saracens broke the truce and destroyed all Taormina, and took possession of Lemnos, and caused great destruction to the people who lived there.

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