

CHAPTER 10

Teaching Poetry in the Early Palaiologan School: Manuel Holobolos' and John Pediasimos' Commentaries on Theocritus' *Syrinx*

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The aim of this chapter is to show how, from the year 1265 on, the Palaiologan school would engage with the newly rediscovered Hellenistic pattern-poem *Syrinx*, traditionally attributed to Theocritus. Two scholar-teachers who made use of this text in their classes were Manuel/Maximos Holobolos (1243–1310/14) and John Pothos Pediasimos (ca. 1240–1310/14), both of whom produced commentaries on the poem. Their work on this text and their study of it in a scholastic context have so far received little notice. I hope, therefore, to shed light on the various ways in which these educators approached their commentaries on this highly unusual work in its cultural context, so as to understand how they used and adapted it to their didactic needs.

The *Syrinx*: A Hellenistic Pattern-Poem

The *Syrinx* is one of the six compositions that comprise the corpus of what have been designated *technopaegnia* or *carmina figurata*. The peculiar characteristic common to these poems is their form, as they are in effect visual poems that reproduce a silhouette of the object to which they are dedicated.

Neither their ancient nor their Byzantine commentators referred to these poems as *technopaegnia* (pattern-poems). This label, which means ‘game of ingenuity’, is found in Latin (*technopaegnon*) in the homonymous work by Ausonius (fourth century AD).¹ Ausonius’

* This article was funded by a contribution from the research project group ‘The Byzantine Author’ (MICINN, FFI2015-65118-C2-2-P) of the CCHS-CSIC (Spain) and research group HUM 312 of the University of Málaga. I thank I. Pérez Martín for her critical reading and the editors of this volume for their recommendations.

Abbreviated works:

Br. = Briquet, C. M. (1907) *Les filigranes. Dictionnaire historique des marques de papier dès leur apparition vers 1282 jusqu’è en 1600*. Geneva. 4 vols.

ODB = Kazhdan, A. P. et al. (1991) *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*. New York–Oxford. 3 vols.

PLP = Trapp, E. et al. (1976–95) *Prosopographisches Lexicon der Palaiologenzeit*. Vienna. 15 vols.

¹ Peiper (1886).

compositions, however, have few similarities to the Greek *technopaegnia*, as they do not create any particular silhouette. Nevertheless, in the seventeenth century, the Italian humanist Fortunio Liceti, who wrote commentaries to five of the *technopaegnia*,² would introduce the term in its modern philological sense by taking it from Ausonius.

We know very little about the history of these poems. Chronologically, except for the *Ionic Altar*, they date from the Hellenistic period. Simmias of Rhodes might have been the inventor of the genre,³ as he is the author of the three earliest pattern-poems (third century BC) *Egg*, *Axe* and *Wings*,⁴ according to the grammarian and poet Hephaestion.⁵ The *Syrinx* of Theocritus would have been contemporary to this series, if, that is, we accept the Theocritean paternity of the poem.⁶ The *Ionic Altar* is a work by Dosiadas and shows the influence of Lycophron's *Alexandra*, to which it must therefore be contemporary or slightly posterior.⁷ The latest of these compositions is thought to be the *Altar* of Besantinus (second century AD),⁸ as its acrostic 'Ὀλύμπιε, πολλοῖς ἔτεσι θύσειας' ('Olympian, may you sacrifice for many years') probably refers to the emperor Hadrian,⁹ who adopted the title of 'Olympian' among others. In a broad sense, this type of visual poetry has had a long tradition throughout history ranging from Ausonius and Optatianus Porfirius in the Latin context and the writers and scholars of

² Liceti (1630), (1635), (1637), (1640), (1655).

³ On Simmias of Rhodes and visual poetry in Greek and Latin contexts, see Kwapisz (2019). See also Kwapisz (2013¹) for an exhaustive study of the Greek *technopaegnia* with an edition and translation of and commentary on the poems.

⁴ Fränkel (1915: 10–11).

⁵ Fränkel (1915: 9–10).

⁶ Philologists still debate his authorship. Gow (1914: 128–38) did not believe that Theocritus was the author, as in the poet's time the syrinx did not have a triangular but rather a rectangular shape, with all of its reeds having the same length. See West (1992: 111) for the same opinion on the shape of the syrinx. The debate on the authorship of the poem has since remained open; among the sceptics, we may also cite Guichard (2006: 84, n. 6), who feels that the question was resolved with Gow's thesis, or Palumbo Stracca (2007: 120–6), for whom the poem, conceived in homage to Theocritus, cannot be attributed to him. Meanwhile, Gallavotti (1993³) does not doubt Theocritus' authorship, nor do Fantuzzi and Hunter (2002: 40–1) or Männlein-Robert (2007: 150, n. 144) view it as improbable.

⁷ The *terminus post quem* for the *Altar* of Dosiadas is considered to be Lycophron's *Alexandra*, while the *terminus ante quem* is Lucian, who quotes from the *Altar*: see Fantuzzi and Hunter (2002: 40, n. 161).

⁸ This Besantinus would be a corruption of the name of Lucius Julius Vestinus, a Roman sophist and official at Hadrian's court: see Haeberlin (1890: 283–4) and Bowie (2002: 185–9).

⁹ Haeberlin (1887: 65–6).

Byzantium¹⁰ to the experimental calligrammes of Apollinaire in the twentieth century. The peculiarity of the Greek pattern-poems (except for Simmias' *Axe*, *Egg* and *Wings*) lies also in their obscure and enigmatic content, rendered in an ornate style based on cryptic wordplays that challenge the erudition of even the most scholarly reader. This is especially true of the *Syrinx* and the *Doric Altar*.

The Greek pattern-poems had a double transmission: through the *Corpus Bucolicorum* (in miscellanies composed in the Palaiologan period) and the Palatine Anthology (now the codex Bibliothèque nationale de France, Suppl. gr. 384), to whose Book IV they were added around the year AD 900.¹¹ In any case, one only needs to read them to see that these compositions are not in fact bucolic in character. They fall, rather, within the genre of epigrams and this is precisely, with the exception of the *Ionic Altar*, what they appear to be.

The *Syrinx* was supposedly conceived as a dedicatory inscription engraved on a bucolic panpipe;¹² it is a hymn as well as a dedication. In the poem, Theocritus, the 'judge of gods' according to the etymology of his name (*theos* and *krites*), offers his pipe (*syrinx*) to the god Pan, so that the latter may play sweet melodies on them to one of his beloved nymphs, Echo. This dedication, however, only appears in verses 11–12,¹³ while the rest of the poem is an erudite and highly mannered hymn to the god himself, to his life, loves and achievements, which are never alluded to explicitly, but rather through continuous riddles or *griphoi*. Thus, by unravelling these enigmas, the reader is able to trace nearly the entire mythical and literary tradition of the god. What is more, to create the graphic effect of the instrument itself, the poet employs distichs that are gradually reduced in length (with each progressive distich losing a half-foot) to produce the visual image of a panpipe:

Οὐδενὸς εὐνάτειρα, Μακροπτολέμοιο δὲ μάτηρ,
μαίας ἀντιπέτροιο θοὸν τέκεν ἰθυνηῖρα,

¹⁰ On visual poetry in Byzantium, see Hörandner (1990: 1–42).

¹¹ *A.P.* 15.21, 22, 24–7 in this order respectively: *Syrinx*, *Axe*, *Wings*, *Ionic Altar*, *Doric Altar* and *Egg*. All of these poems were accompanied by *scholia* except for *Doric Altar*. On the manuscript transmission of the Greek figure poems, see Strodel (2002) and Kwapisz (2013¹: 50–6, with bibliography).

¹² According to Wilamowitz (1906: 243), these compositions were not intended to be published; Fränkel (1915: 56–62), more cautiously, does not believe they were ever inscribed on real objects.

¹³ ᾧ τὸδε τυφλοφόρων ἐρατόν / πᾶμα Πάρις θέτο Σιμιχίδας ('to him Paris son of Simichus dedicated the lovely possession of the carriers of blindness') where the Greek πᾶμα ('item', 'possession') is the possession of Theocritus: the *syrinx*.

In the eleventh century, Michael Psellos left us a testimony of his reading of the *Syrinx* in a fragment of a didactic poem he dedicated to his student, the future emperor Michael VII Doukas. In it, Psellos refers to the limitations of grammar in explaining some of the poem's intricate wordplay and in finding equivalents in the common language. In particular, he mentions the epithet which alludes indirectly to Zeus in the *Syrinx* (v. 2): ἀντίπετρον ('of the nurse who stood in for a stone'):

Οὐ πάντων ἡ γραμματικὴ πέφυκεν ἐμπειρία· τῶν πολιτευομένων γὰρ λέξεων ἐπιστήμη, οὐ τῶν ἐν παραβύστῳ δὲ τισὶ συμπεπλασμένων. τὰς γὰρ ἐν τῷ Λυκόφρονι 'εὐῶπας κόρας', κώπας, καὶ τὸν παρὰ τῇ Σύριγγι 'ἀντίπετρον' οὐκ οἶδεν.¹⁶

Grammar does not provide experience on every kind of topic, as it is the science of common words, but not those that might be invented in some elaborate text; in effect, grammar does not know that the 'beautiful maidens' (εὐῶπας κόρας) in Lycophron are oars (κώπας) nor 'of the nurse who stood in for a stone' (ἀντίπετρον) in the *Syrinx*.

In the twelfth century, we find mentions of the *Syrinx* in the works of John Tzetzes and the bishop Eustathios of Thessalonike. The former alludes occasionally to the poem in his commentary to Lycophron's *Alexandra*, citing words or verbal structures employed by the bucolic poet to elucidate the text.¹⁷ The latter, meanwhile, mentions it in his commentaries to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*,¹⁸ where he often references the Theocritean *Idylls* as his lexical and literary source. One such instance is particularly interesting, as it shows that the bishop not only read the *Syrinx*, but was also interested in its meaning. In a lexical scholion, he presents the various meanings of the word σύριγξ (*sic*), which occurred in *Iliad* 19.387:

Σύριγξ δὲ ὅπῃ τις ἐπιμήκης δοράτων φυλακτικὴ, ἢ καὶ δουροδόκη. Σημείωσαι δὲ τὴν ὁμωνυμίαν τῆς σύριγγος. οὐ μόνον γὰρ σύριγξ ποιμενικὴ, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ποδὸς ἔλκος, ὡς ὁ Θεόκριτος, καὶ ἐκ πόλεως κρυπτὸς ὑπόνομος κατάγων εἰς ὕδωρ, ἀλλ' ἰδοὺ καὶ αὕτη σύριγξ δουρατοδόχος. (Eustathios, *Commentary on the Iliad* 1189.45–7 = 4.346.15–18 ed. van der Valk)

'Syrinx' is a type of long sheath, with an opening, for carrying spears and thus it also means 'a

¹⁶ Westerink (1992: 6.168–71).

¹⁷ See, for example, schol. in Lyc. 558.7 regarding ἐγκορύπεται (charge, *Id.* 3.5).

¹⁸ *Iliad*: van der Valk (1971–87); *Odyssey*: Stallbaum (1825–6).

case for spears' (δουροδόκη). Note the homonymy of the word 'syrinx'. That 'syrinx' is not only [the instrument] used by shepherds, as well as an ulcer of the foot, to which Theocritus refers, and an urban underground canal through which water flows, but, mind you, this syrxinx is also a spearholder.

There is no doubt that the *Syrinx* and the *technopaegnia* were read and copied in the Macedonian and Komnenian periods, as shown by their transmission in manuscripts and their *scholia vetera*. Thirty-six extant manuscripts from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries contain at least one of these compositions. However, it was not until the Palaiologan period that a renewed interest in these peculiar works would arise. In the context of restoring teaching in Constantinople after the recapture of the city from Latin domination (1261), Greek poetry was studied again in the capital. Hellenistic bucolic poetry played an important role in the education of Byzantine intellectuals, as reflected by the numerous scholastic manuscripts which date from this period (for example, Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 32.16, thirteenth cent. ex., copied by Maximos Planoudes). In fact, the only Byzantine exegetical commentaries that exist on the *technopaegnia* are from this early Palaiologan period.¹⁹

We owe the renewed interest in the *technopaegnia* to two scholars who re-introduced the study of these works in school by penning exegetical commentaries on the poems. These authors were Manuel Holobolos, who devoted commentaries to at least four of the six *technopaegnia*, and his student, John Pediasimos, who commented solely on the *Syrinx*.

The *Syrinx* in the Palaiologan School: The Commentary of Manuel Holobolos

Manuel/Maximos Holobolos (mid-thirteenth century – ca. 1296/1310)²⁰ prepared a *recensio* and commentaries to, at least, the *Doric Altar*, the *Ionic Altar*, the *Syrinx* and the *Axe*. If the same is true of *Egg* and *Wings*, these writings have not been preserved, although Carl Wendel maintains that Holobolos edited those poems and even accompanied them with an illumination

¹⁹ On bucolic poetry in the Palaiologan period, see also Kubina in this volume.

²⁰ *PLP* 21047 and *ODB* 2, 940. On Holobolos, see e.g. Treu (1896: 538–54), Hannick (1981) and Hörandner (1970: 116–19). On his pedagogical and intellectual work, Constantinides (1982: 26–7; 50–65) and Mergiali (1996: 30–1).

that would have been exclusively Palaiologan in creation.²¹ More recently, Silvia Strodel has argued that there are indications of the existence of a commentary to *Wings* by Holobolos in the anonymous exegesis contained in fol. 110v of Moscow, Gosudarstvennyj Istoričeskij Musej, Sinod. gr. 501 (Vlad. 480), from the fifteenth/sixteenth centuries,²² which is edited for the first time²³ by Strodel, together with Holobolos' commentaries on the preserved pattern-poems.²⁴

Holobolos' philological and exegetical work on the *technopaegnia* happened in the context of reintroduction of education for future dignitaries and functionaries, which was implemented by Emperor Michael VIII in Constantinople (1261). In fact, Holobolos, in one of his propagandistic panegyrics dedicated to Michael VIII,²⁵ for whom he served as imperial secretary, speaks of the emperor's efforts to reinstitute in the capital subjects such as grammar, poetry, rhetoric, philosophy (Aristotelian and dialectical logic), arithmetic, geometry and harmony. His exegetical production reveals that Holobolos taught classes in some of these areas, specifically philosophy and poetry, for which subjects we have extant commentaries²⁶ and scholastic exercises of a grammatical nature.²⁷ His exegeses correspond to a basic and generalized teaching of the subjects of the *trivium*, but was strongly influenced by the political circumstances of the imperial and patriarchal policy of the Union of Catholic and Orthodox

²¹ Wendel (1907: 460–67; 1910: 331–7). It is true that we do not now have any of these poems with illumination from before the Palaiologan period, although this does not mean that they did not exist. On the other hand, it is difficult to know for certain whether the Holobolos edition contained drawings: Kwapisz (2019: 128) presents his doubts in this respect. Bernabò and Magnelli (2011: 219–21), however, does not completely reject the hypothesis that this edition could have included drawings. On the Byzantine and later iconography that accompanies the *technopaegnia* in Palaiologan manuscripts, see also Bernabò and Magnelli (2011: 189–232).

²² I here follow Strodel's dating, as I have not been able to consult the codex, which is not found in digitized or microfilmed format in the IRHT.

²³ Strodel (2002: 148–50). On the commentaries of Holobolos, see Strodel (2002: 131–56). Holobolos' commentary on the *Syrinx* was edited previously by Dübner (1849: 111–13).

²⁴ Strodel (2002: 131–56). Prior to this, Holobolos' commentary on the *Axe* of Simmias was edited by Sbordone (1951: 169–77), and his commentary on the *Doric Altar* of Dosiadas by Ferreri (2006: 317–54).

²⁵ Treu (1906: 95.34–97.7). For their chronology and role in imperial propaganda, see Angelov (2007: 68, n. 150).

²⁶ Apart from his commentaries on the Hellenistic *carmina figurata*, Holobolos is the author of some cursory exegetic notes on Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*, preserved in Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 1141 (first quarter of the fourteenth century) under the title *Toῦ Ὁλοβόλου (sic) εἰς τὰ τρία σχήματα (Holobolos on the three figures)*. These notes were identified by Treu (1896: 552–3). On the same notes, see also Pérez Martín (1997: 86–9) and Bydén (2004: 133–57).

²⁷ See his solutions to the enigmas attributed to Eustathios Makrembolites, edited by Treu (1893).

Churches, as can be observed in his Greek translation of Boethius.²⁸ It is likely that his scant exegetical production was due to the difficult circumstances of his life, which prevented him from working continuously and systematically in the capital, falling out of the emperor's favour on at least two occasions: first, for his support of the legitimate emperor, John IV Laskaris; and second, for his fierce opposition to the Union of Churches.²⁹

But why did he choose these poems for his classes? What is the contribution of his commentaries to the Palaiologan school? The reading and study of this type of composition is related to the Byzantine taste for erudite, mannered works, as they pose a challenge to the reader by presenting a complex and obscure literary puzzle to be decoded. From a scholastic perspective, the study of pattern-poems was striking and attractive for the instructor as much as for his students owing to their enigmatic content, non-Attic language and peculiar graphic form. They did not only introduce students to completely new and different compositional techniques, but also allowed a complete study of some of their aspects: metrics, lexicon (wordplay, synonymy, homonymy, metonymy etc.) and mythology. These poems offer a host of didactic possibilities from the perspective of both language and content, as well as an interesting visual experience based on an intricately crafted metrical structure. In the specific case of the *Syrinx*, the poem constitutes an enigmatic gloss on the god Pan, as it condenses into only a few verses a great part of the mythical and literary tradition of one of the more remarkable and extravagant divinities in the Greek pantheon.

Holobolos' exegetical work on the *technopaegnia* consisted of a *recensio* of these poems accompanied by brief, simple commentaries, sometimes paraphrastic, as in the case of *Axe*, whose principal, and we might say almost exclusive, source were the *scholia vetera*. As we will see, for the *Syrinx*, Holobolos wrote a commentary divided into two sections (on metrics and on content) that was shorter than this earlier material (it was in fact a synopsis, as he himself called it), in which he is especially concerned with lexicon and etymology, and disregards the mythological aspects present in the *scholia vetera*. Holobolos was also the author of two epigrams on the *Syrinx* which are found in the margins of the poem. However, in some Palaiologan manuscripts, these epigrams are frequently found with no mention of their

²⁸ On the historical/cultural context and the motives that might have led Holobolos to undertake his translation, see Bydén (2004: 143–6). On his Greek version of the *On Topical Differences* and *On Hypothetical Syllogisms* of Boethius, for which he wrote accompanying commentaries, see Fisher (2002/3: 77–104; 2012: 210–22).

²⁹ On the bloody persecution of anti-unionist intellectuals by the emperor, see Constantinides (1993: 86–93) and Pérez Martín (1995: 411–22).

authorship. This, and the fact that no pre-Palaiologan manuscripts of the bucolic corpus are preserved, does not permit us to know for certain whether this is completely original material.³⁰

The epigram reads as follows:

Τοῦ σοφωτάτου ῥήτορος Ὀλοβόλου ἐπίγραμμα εἰς τὴν Σύριγγα:
Ἦχημα Μουσῶν ἢ Θεοκρίτου Σύριγγξ.
Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ῥήτορος Ὀλοβόλου:
Σύριζε τὴν σύριγγα τήνδε συντόνως,
Εἴ τις λόγων πέφυκας ἔννουν τεκνίον,
Καὶ γάλα Μουσῶν ἐξαποθλίβειν θέλεις.³¹

Epigram to the *Syrinx* of the all-wise rhetor Holobolos: the *Syrinx* of Theocritus is a melody of the Muses. From the same rhetor Holobolos: play this syrx with vehemence / if you are somehow a sane boy of words, / and want to squeeze all the milk out of the Muses.

By means of this epigram, a literary amusement dedicated to Pan, Holobolos not only leaves his own authorial stamp as scholar, editor, transmitter and commentator of the text, but is probably seeking to emulate the enigmatic content of the poem itself. The epigram alludes to the tiny Pan, who, a goatherd, milks his goats. In the same way, as goatherd-musician, he will now be able to obtain the milk of the Muses by playing the sweetest melodies to them on the syrx. For Holobolos' students, these epigrams are an exhortation to read the *Syrinx*, a poetic form that they must master just as Pan masters the instrument.

The commentaries are noteworthy for providing a new generation of scholars with a *recensio* of these poems with their corresponding exegeses, which must have enjoyed a certain popularity, as they were widely transmitted. Indeed, more than twenty manuscripts from the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries that contain exegeses by Holobolos of one or other of the pattern-poems have been preserved. In the particular case of the *Syrinx*, there are four that transmit his commentary (fourteenth–sixteenth centuries). These are Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 2832 (second quarter of the fourteenth century)³² and its direct

³⁰ The manuscripts of the bucolic tradition contain an ancient epigram that Holobolos probably read (see p. # below) and that he seems to have confused with the poem: σῦριγγξ οὔνομ' ἔχεις, ἄδει δέ σε μέτρα σοφίης ('syrinx, you are notable, so he sings you metres of wisdom').

³¹ Strodel (2002: 144).

³² Watermark: 'Lion', sim. to Mošin 6119 (a. 1348) and 6122 (a. 1353) in the first codicological unit. For a description of this manuscript, see Omont (1904: 189–97, 1905: 155–8 and 1929: 60, pl. 130 a–b).

apographs for the text of the *Syrinx*,³³ which were produced in Italy in the fifteenth century: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, gr. B 75 sup. (fifteenth century);³⁴ Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Asburnham 1174 (second quarter of the fifteenth century);³⁵ and Uppsala, University Library gr. 21 (second quarter of the fifteenth century).³⁶ It was perhaps the uniqueness of these poems, together with their peculiar graphic form, that led to their presentation in an illustrated edition in the Palaiologan period.³⁷ The most detailed testimonies of this (Par. gr. 2832, Ambros. gr. B75 sup. and Laur. Ashb. 1174) show that the poem occupied the central part of a folio, within a syrx with orifices, to the sides of which are polychrome figures of Pan and Theocritus, while in its more modest version (Uppsala gr. 21) the space in which these figures appear is occupied by marginal commentary, with the poem itself situated within a silhouette barely recognizable as a syrx.

For the sake of brevity, I will not attempt to explain the transmission of the commentary and the manuscripts, but I would like to examine the oldest of these testimonies more closely, as it is the archetype of the tradition and the model of the first edition of the commentary. Par. gr. 2832 is a *recueil factice*, whose first codicological unit contains the Triclinian *recensio* of a selection of bucolic poems (fols. 1–45),³⁸ including the *Idylls*, and two elegant illustrated versions of the *technopaegnia* and their Palaiologan commentaries. These include the *Syrinx* of Theocritus with the two epigrams by Holobolos (fol. 46r); Holobolos' synopsis (fol. 46v); the commentary of Pediasimos (fols. 46v–47r); the *Altar* of Dosiadas, with figures of the poet and Apollo on either side of an altar with the two epigrams by Holobolos (fol. 47v); and, once again, the *Syrinx*, accompanied by Holobolos' two epigrams, figures of Theocritus and Pan on opposite sides of the poem and glosses from Holobolos' commentary between the lines (fol. 48v). [Plate 1]

This manuscript was the only one used by Dübner for the first edition of Holobolos' synopsis, to which he assigned the letter G.³⁹ However, just after this, Dübner would edit

³³ Sbordone (1951: 172), Gallavotti (1993³: 310–11).

³⁴ Not having access to this manuscript, I have followed here the dating given in the Martini–Bassi catalogue (1906: 116–17).

³⁵ Watermarks: 'Balance', sim. to *Br.* 2448 (Treviso, a. 1433) and 'Aigle', sim. to *Br.* 80 (Ferrara, a. 1434).

³⁶ Not having the opportunity to study the manuscript *in situ*, I have followed here the dating of the exhaustive description available online at: <https://www.manuscripta.se/ms/100021>.

³⁷ See n. #.

³⁸ Sbordone (1951: 172), Gallavotti (1993³: 310–11).

³⁹ Dübner (1849: 111–12).

another more detailed and orderly commentary on the *Syrinx*, this one anonymous and untitled, which is included in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 2781 (last quarter of the fifteenth century)⁴⁰ and which he gave the letter M. This has led some researchers to attribute this commentary unconsciously to Holobolos. This same exegesis, similarly anonymous, is found in other manuscripts contemporary to Holobolos: Vatican City, Vaticano gr. 915 (fol. 39r),⁴¹ gr. 1825 (fol. 160v)⁴² and gr. 42 (fol. 49v).⁴³ A careful reading of this detailed commentary reveals that it is, in fact, a selection of ancient exegetic material that was transmitted in complete form in the margins of the Palatine Anthology. This leads one to wonder whether Holobolos had access to this text, which seems very likely. On the one hand, the palaeographic evidence of codices contemporary to Holobolos which transmit this exegesis, such as Vat. gr. 915, dating from the third quarter of the thirteenth century and traceable to Constantinople, informs us that this text was circulating in the capital when Holobolos was teaching (from 1265 on). From a textual point of view, his commentary reveals a reading and re-working of this ancient material. These dates, therefore, indicate that he must have worked on the *Syrinx* in the third quarter of the thirteenth century; that is, after 1265, in the capacity of *rhetor ton rhetoron* (literally, ‘rhetor of rhetors’, a post appointed by the emperor in which he would train the future ecclesiastics of the capital), given that we find this position indicated in the manuscript transmission of his exegesis of the poem, and perhaps before 1283, when he was named *protosynkellos* (deputy of the patriarchy of Constantinople), a title which does not appear in any of the *inscriptions* of his exegesis of the *Syrinx*. Thus, Holobolos would have been working on this exegesis during the first phase of his teaching career in Constantinople (1265–73), before his second fall into disgrace.

Perhaps the key word for understanding Holobolos’ work on the *Syrinx* is to be found in the title of his commentary. Two titles are used in the manuscripts: one opens the first section of the commentary, on the metrics of the poem, while the second precedes the commentary dedicated to the content of the poem. Thus, the structure of the commentary follows that of the *scholia vetera*:

⁴⁰ Watermark ‘Main’, Harlfinger 21 (a. 1491).

⁴¹ Schreiner (1988: 126). The handwriting of the scholia to the *Syrinx* can be dated to the third quarter of the thirteenth century.

⁴² Canart (1970: 240). The codicological unit that contains this exegetic material dates from the first quarter of the fourteenth century: watermark *Br.* 5396 (Bologna, a. 1316).

⁴³ Mercati–Franchi de’ Cavalieri (1923: 37). Vat. gr. 42, on oriental paper, can be dated to the last quarter of the thirteenth century, according to palaeographic criteria.

1. Τοῦ σοφωτάτου ῥήτορος τῶν ῥητόρων κύρου Μαξίμου τοῦ Ὀλοβόλου εἰς τὴν Θεοκρίτου Σύριγγα σύνοψις τῶν μέτρων.

2. Τοῦ αὐτοῦ σύνοψις ἐννοίας καὶ σύνταξις καὶ ἀνάπτυξις τῶν λέξεων.⁴⁴

1. A summary of the metrics of the *Syrinx* of Theocritus by the all-wise rhetor of rhetors, the honourable Maximus Holobolos.

2. A summary of the meaning, syntax and an explanation of the words by the same author.

The term σύνοψις informs us that Holobolos' exegetic text is neither a commentary *stricto sensu* (exegesis) nor a series of exegetic notes (scholia), but rather a brief general exposition, an exegetic epitome of the most notable aspects of the poem, which deserve clarification. What is more, the term suggests that Holobolos has been working with broader exegetic material, the *scholia vetera*, which he has adapted to his didactic purposes.

How exactly did Holobolos use his exegetic synopsis? How did he read, interpret and adapt those sources to his didactic needs? His commentary on the *Syrinx* closely follows the ancient material. Strodel has carefully studied this aspect and has identified notable similarities between Holobolos' work and the ancient commentary.⁴⁵ Despite its brevity, his synopsis explores the poem's didactic possibilities (especially metrics and lexicon), with his own explanations of its metrical structure (first section) and its lexical and grammatical content (second section). In effect, as we will see, Holobolos focuses primarily on metrics and semantics, examining the latter in even more depth than do the *scholia vetera*. On the other hand, with respect to the mythical elements of the poem, Holobolos does not seem particularly interested in these even if his source is. His fundamental interest is in words, their meanings and etymology and the mechanisms by which the poem's obscure riddles are generated.

In the first section, the metrical synopsis, the commentator addresses his students and readers directly:

⁴⁴ Strodel (2002: 139). The modern edition of Holobolos' exegesis of the *Syrinx* by Strodel (2002: 139–44) considers the four manuscripts that transmit his commentary. This is the edition I have followed for the present study.

⁴⁵ Strodel (2002: 139–44).

Τὸ ἐπιγραμμάτιον ἢ σύριγξ τοῦ Θεοκρίτου, ἔστι μὲν ἐννεάφωνος ὡς ὀρθῶς· ὅπας γὰρ ἔχει ἐννέα·
συνέστηκεν δὲ ἐκ μέτρων μὲν ὄλων δακτυλικῶν ποσότητι δέκα· διαφερόντων δὲ ἀλλήλοις.⁴⁶

The epigram *Syrinx* of Theocritus, as you can see, is comprised of nine sounds, just as there are nine orifices. It is made up entirely of dactylic verses, ten in total, all different from each other.

This brief introduction to the metrics of the poem gives us an idea of how the poem was probably taught in class. First, the presence of the expression ‘as you can see’, followed by the physical description of the pipe of Pan, suggests that the instructor was showing his students an illustrated copy of the poem,⁴⁷ with a design similar to what we find in the most artistic of the manuscripts, in which a drawing of a panpipe with its orifices can be seen and the poem framed within it. The metrical synopsis goes on to analyse the meters that comprise each distich, with specific explanations by Holobolos himself of some metrical aspects:

ἦτοι τὸ μὲν πρῶτον, τρίστιχον ἐξάμετρον ἀκατάληκτον· ἦγουν δὲ μὴ δεόμενον καταλήξεως·
μετρούμενον ὡς ἠρωϊκόν.⁴⁸

Therefore, the first is an acatelectic hexametric tristich, that is to say, it lacks a syllable at the end; it is measured as a hexameter.

As the *scholia vetera* have this as δίστιχον (distich) rather than τρίστιχον (tristich), Holobolos seems to interpret this as meaning that the ancient epigram that accompanies the *Syrinx* in manuscripts of the bucolic tradition forms part of it, given that it has the same metrical structure as the poem’s first distich: σύριγξ οὔνομ’ ἔχεις, ἄδει δέ σε μέτρα σοφίης (‘syrinx, you are notable, so he sings you metres of wisdom’). This fact thus reveals that Holobolos was working from a manuscript of the bucolic tradition and not from the Palatine Anthology, and that Holobolos himself corrected δίστιχον to τρίστιχον.

In the second section of his commentary, on the poem’s content, his synopsis is even more synthetic than for the first section, if that is possible, as it does not include some of the

⁴⁶ Strodel 2002.139.1. Along with the reference to the edition of his synopsis, I provide in each instance the source of the *scholia vetera* employed by Holobolos, in this case, schol. vet. 336c.

⁴⁷ Regarding the expression ὡς ὀρθῶς, Wendel (1907: 461) suggests that the image of the instrument could have been created according to the commentary of Holobolos, while Bernabò and Magnelli (2011: 219–20) speculate that Holobolos might have introduced the expression *a posteriori* as he was working from an illustrated edition.

⁴⁸ Strodel 2002.139.2 [= schol. vet. 336c.17–18].

lemmata commented upon in the ancient exegetic tradition.⁴⁹ In this second section, his exegesis is dedicated essentially to the poem's lexicon. Holobolos reveals a special interest for popular etymologies, which, in many cases, are based on metonyms and homonyms (as he himself declares). These etymological explanations are an aspect that the *scholia vetera* do not explore, but which Holobolos does not hesitate to address. We see an example of this interest in v. 9:

v.9. ὃς ὁ Πάν ἔπαυσε **τὴν ἠνορέαν**⁵⁰ καὶ τὴν ἀνδρίαν· **τὴν ἰσαυδέα**· τὴν ὁμόνυμον τοῦ **παπποφόνου** ἦγουν τοῦ Περσέως· ἦγουν τῶν Περσῶν μετωνυμικῶς.⁵¹

He, Pan, extinguished their **might** and **homonymous** manhood: the homonym of **who murdered his grandfather**, that is, of Perseus, that is, a metonym for the Persians.

This verse refers to the might of the Persians, against whom Pan fought alongside the Greeks in the battle of Marathon. It plays on the phonetic similarity between 'Persian' and 'Perseus' (words which are nearly homonyms), the hero who would kill his grandfather Acrisius by accidentally striking him with a discus, thereby fulfilling the prophecy of an oracle. Holobolos highlights the etymological relationship between 'Persian' and 'Perseus', which is justified in the verse by means of a metonym.

V. 10, which refers to Pan's participation in the battle of Marathon, adds that the god saved 'the Tyrian woman', that is to say, Europe, in this case understood as the continent. Here, Holobolos paraphrases the verse without referring to the ancient material:

v.10: **παπποφόνου Τυρίας τ' ἐξήλασεν**· καὶ ἀφείλετο καὶ ἐξέβαλεν ἐκείνην τῆς εὐρώπης δηλονότι.⁵²

A man who murdered his grandfather, and drove it [the might] out of the Tyrian girl: and so kept at bay and expelled that [*scil.* might] from Europe.

Vv. 11–12 captures the essence of the poem: the item most appreciated by the shepherds is the syrinx, which Theocritus offers to the god Pan and upon whose reeds the poem is

⁴⁹ These are: ἀνεμώδεος (v. 6), ὃς Μοίσα λιγὺ πᾶξεν ἰοστεφάνῳ (v. 7) and νηλεύστῳ (v. 20).

⁵⁰ Lemmata in bold.

⁵¹ Strodel 2002.143.4 [= schol. vet. 339.9/10c].

⁵² Strodel 2002.143.4.

inscribed. The semantic complexity of this distich, loaded with lexical and phonetic enigmas, undoubtedly required an etymological exegesis. However, Holobolos does not enter into details about dialectal particularities, which are also not addressed in the ancient commentary:

vv.11–12. ὃ τὸδε ἤγουν τὴν σύρριγγα τὸ κτῆμα τῶν **τυφλοφόρων** καὶ σακκουλοφόρων· ἤγουν τῶν ποιμένων· πῆρα γὰρ τὸ σακκούλιον καὶ πηρὸς ὁ τυφλός, ἀνέθηκεν ὁ **Πάρις** ἤγουν ὁ Θεόκριτος· ὁ γὰρ Πάρις διὰ τὸ κρῖναι τὰς θεὰς ὠνόμασται Θεόκριτος.⁵³

To him, Paris, or rather Theocritus, dedicated the syrinx, belonging to **the carriers of blindness** and to the carriers of bags; that is, the shepherds, as ‘rucksack’ (σακκούλιον) is ‘bag’ (πήρα) and ‘lame’ (πηρός) is ‘blind’ (τυφλός). Paris is called Theocritus because he judged the goddesses.

Holobolos does not go deeper into the mythological and literary tradition of the god, which the *scholia vetera* address in somewhat more detail. His exegesis, being a synopsis, does not allow him to further explore these aspects, which perhaps are less relevant to his purpose, as he is concerned above all with semantics. The myth of Pan is only succinctly touched upon in his scholion to vv. 13–16, once again in reference to the intricate lexicon used to speak of the god:

vv. 13–16. ὃ **βροτοβάμων** καὶ πετροβάμων ἐκ πετρῶν γὰρ οἱ βροτοὶ ὡς ὁ μῦθος· **οἴστρε** καὶ ἔραστα **τῆς στήτας** καὶ τῆς γυναικὸς τῆς δέτας καὶ τῆς Λυδίας· ἤγουν τῆς νυμφάλης· **κλωποπάτωρ**· ἤγουν τοῦ κλεπτοῦ Ἑρμοῦ υἱέ· **ἀπάτωρ**· πολυπάτωρ ἦτοι τῶν μνηστήρων υἱέ.⁵⁴

Man-treading and clay-treading, as mortals are born from the clay, according to the myth. **Gadfly**, lover of the woman, of the passion and of the Lidian woman, that is, of the nymph [Omphale]. **Son of a thief**, that is, the son of the thief Hermes. **Son of no one**, of many fathers, as he is the son of the suitors.

The epithets of Pan ‘man-treading’ and ‘clay-treading’ are references to the myth of Deucalion, the Greek Noah, which Holobolos does not explain but which he had read in the ancient material.⁵⁵ In it, the god falls hopelessly in love with the Lydian queen Omphale, although the

⁵³ Strodel 2002.143.5 [= schol. vet. 339.11/12.18–21].

⁵⁴ Strodel 2002.143.6 [= schol. vet. 340.13–15a].

⁵⁵ Schol. vet. 340.13.

manuscript used by the Byzantine author must have read *υμφάλης*, or else Holobolos himself misread the term.⁵⁶ Pan, the son of Hermes, was given the epithet of ‘son of a thief’ and, as the son of Penelope, of ‘son of no one’; that is, his father is unknown as he is the son of Odysseus’ wife and all her suitors.

As we have seen, Holobolos draws upon the *scholia vetera* for his terse synopsis, selecting from it those semantic aspects which enable him to decipher the enigmatic meaning of the words that comprise the poem. Holobolos is not interested in the myth; he is interested in the words themselves, in their meaning and their etymology in the context of this obscure poem and in the linguistic mechanisms that generate the poem’s riddles. He remains ever faithful to the synoptic format of his exegesis. In his synopsis, there is no place for the digressions and reflections that we find in many commentaries, where the work commented upon is used as a pretext or departure point for discussing other aspects not directly related to the text under discussion.

The Commentary of John Pediasimos

The exegetic work of Manuel Holobolos on these poems had a clear influence on the following generation of scholars and, in particular, on the Thessalonian John Pediasimos (ca. 1250–1310/14).⁵⁷ Pediasimos is the author of a more extensive and detailed commentary on the *Syrinx* which also had greater repercussions, as it was transmitted in at least 15 manuscripts dateable to between the thirteenth and late seventeenth centuries. Along with writing his own commentary to the *Syrinx*, he also took on an exegesis of Hesiod’s *Shield of Heracles*, for which he composed a *technologìa*.⁵⁸ This interest in Heracles and mythology is reflected in a mythographical tract he wrote entitled *On the Labours of Heracles*, a paraphrase of the second book of the *Bibliotheca* of Pseudo-Apollodorus (2.72–126),⁵⁹ an author that he read, knew and

⁵⁶ Schol. vet. 340.14.

⁵⁷ *PLP* 22235 and *ODB* 3, 1615. Pediasimos’ biography and work have been reconstructed by Constantinides (1982: 117–25). For more details of his life and work, see the introductory chapters of recent editions by Levrie (2018) and Caballero Sánchez (2018) of his commentaries on the *On the Labours of Heracles* of Pseudo-Apollodorus and the *Caelestia* of Cleomedes, respectively. His handwriting has also been identified by Pérez Martín (2010: 109–19).

⁵⁸ Gaisford (1823: 609–54).

⁵⁹ Levrie (2018).

used as a source on various occasions. It is in fact probable that his study of and commentary on the *Syrinx* was motivated by his interest in Greek mythology and by mythography as a genre; his commentary on the *Syrinx*, more extensive, detailed and original than Holobolos', is lexical and mythological in nature, and draws regularly upon Pseudo-Apollodorus as a source.

When and in what context could Pediasimos have composed his commentary on the poem? It would be realistic to think that it was during his time as *hypatos ton philosophon* (consul of philosophers), which began in 1274. The Palaiologan testimonies mention only his position as *chartophylax* of Justiniana Prima and all of Bulgaria, which he held during his stay in the archbishopric of Ohrid (ca. 1280).⁶⁰ Pediasimos indeed taught classes in Bulgaria, as evidenced by a letter (ca. 1283) sent to him by George of Cyprus,⁶¹ which speaks of a young man, Doukopoulos, a student of Pediasimos in Ohrid, who had been transferred to the capital to continue his studies with the Cypriot. This letter is also important as it mentions the subjects that Pediasimos taught in Bulgaria: grammar, poetry, rhetoric, logic and geometry. Therefore, according to the *inscriptions* of the Palaiologan manuscripts and his activities in Bulgaria, it would be plausible to think that Pediasimos composed his commentary in Ohrid for his classes in poetry. Such a chronology would take us to the decade of the 1380s and would correspond perfectly with the circulation of both the corpus of ancient scholia and the synopsis of Holobolos, which, as we will see, the scholar used as sources for his commentary. Pediasimos, then, would have composed his exegesis in Ohrid and had access to a copy of the *scholia vetera* as well as the synopsis of Holobolos. However, as there is presently no critical edition of the text that considers all testimonies (only that of Dübner,⁶² based on Par. gr. 2831), I prefer to take a cautious stance on this hypothesis, which I will need to explore in greater depth in a study of the transmission of the text, based on a critical edition that has yet to be compiled.

In any case, the title of Pediasimos' commentary on the *Syrinx* provides us with some clues to interpreting the work:

Τοῦ σοφωτάτου χαρτοφύλακος τῆς πρώτης Ἰουστινιανῆς καὶ πάσης Βουλγαρίας, κύρου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Πεδιασίμου, ἐξήγησις εἰς τὴν τοῦ Θεοκρίτου Σύριγγα.⁶³

⁶⁰ For Pediasimos' stay in Ohrid, see Constantinides (1982: 117).

⁶¹ Treu 1899: 48.25.30. George of Cyprus: *PLP* 4590.

⁶² Dübner 1849: 110–11.

⁶³ Dübner 1849.110a.15–18.

Exegesis on the *Syrinx* of Theocritus by the all-wise *chartophylax* of Justiniana Prima and of all Bulgaria, the honourable John Pediasimos.

Unlike Holobolos, Pediasimos conceives his commentary as an exegesis *stricto sensu*, more extensive, didactic and detailed. Indeed, as in his other commentaries, he presents the lemmata at length, in this case verse by verse.

His commentary is structured in two parts. The first is an introduction to the nature of the poem, and it provides the guidelines to reading the poem. The second is the commentary proper, focused on the lexical aspects and content of the poem. Pediasimos seems uninterested in the metrical characteristics that are emphasized by Holobolos and the *scholia vetera*. His only metrical reference is to the poem's dactylic rhythm:

οὐ γὰρ ἐμπνευστὴ αὐτὴ ἢ σύριγξ, ἵνα καὶ ῥοδὰς ἔχη, ἀλλὰ μετρομένη τῷ καλλίστῳ τῶν μέτρων δακτυλικῷ.⁶⁴

This syrinx, then, is not a real wind instrument to make music with, but it is measured by that most beautiful of metres, the dactylic.

This exegesis refers precisely to the second part of the ancient epigram that accompanies the *Syrinx* in manuscripts of the bucolic tradition: *σῦριγξ οὖνομ' ἔχεις, ἄδει δέ σε μέτρα σοφίης* ('syrinx, you are notable, so he sings you metres of wisdom').⁶⁵ Like Holobolos, Pediasimos also views it as being part of the poem, functioning as a sort of title: *Ὁ πρῶτος στίχος ἀποκεκομμένην ἰδίως ἔχει τὴν ἔννοιαν. ἔστι γὰρ ἐπιγραφὴ τῆς Σύριγγος*,⁶⁶ 'the first verse contains, in a peculiar manner, the abbreviated meaning, as it is the title of the *Syrinx*'.

Before this, however, Pediasimos familiarizes his students with the poem by means of an introduction of his own creation, in which he describes it as an *ainigma* (enigma), a term not used by earlier commentators. In effect, Pediasimos is aware that the entire poem constitutes a kind of riddle behind which is hidden the complete mythological and literary tradition of the god Pan. This great poetic enigma also represents attractive content for his classes, by which his students could deepen their knowledge of Greek mythology as they reflected upon the lexicon and etymology of Pan's epithets. By using the word *ainigma*, Pediasimos probably

⁶⁴ Dübner 1849.110a.37–9.

⁶⁵ See p. # above.

⁶⁶ Dübner 1849.110a.30–32.

wanted not only to capture the attention of his students, but also to define the poem's literary essence: a guessing game or riddle. In his introduction, Pediasimos reflects on the characteristics of this poem-enigma. Despite its non-Attic language, the scholar does not hesitate to comment on it, although, like his predecessors, he does not analyse its dialectal particularities. The objective of his commentary is, rather, to decipher the meaning of the *griphoi* that are produced by means of a continuous metalepsis, a variant of metonymy which consists of expressing a term or idea with the name of another to which it is semantically related (semantic exegesis), and next, to present the poem's mythical content (exegesis of mythological content):

... διά τε τήν τῶν μεταλήψεων πύκνωσιν καί διὰ τὸ ἀκροθιγῶς τῶν μνημονευθεισῶν ἱστοριῶν ἔχεσθαι, καί τὸ ἐλλειπές τῆς συντάξεως, καί ταῦτα μὴ κατὰ τὴν Ἀττικὴν συνήθειαν, ἀλλὰ τινα ἔκφυλον, πολλὴν ἐμποιοῦσαν ἀσάφειαν.⁶⁷

... through the accumulation of metalepsis and with stories that are mentioned only superficially, and an inadequate syntax, and all of this contrary to Attic usage, but rather as something foreign which generates a great obscurity.

His semantic explanations, as in Holobolos' synopsis, are supported by explanations that illustrate the rhetorical mechanics of the *Syrinx*. Thus, along with the poem's use of homonymy⁶⁸ and metonymy,⁶⁹ Pediasimos focuses on metalepsis. Although this term was not found in the earlier exegeses, it is in fact a fundamental one, since, as Pediasimos well knows, it is the poem's principal rhetorical device. Alongside the introduction, it is used throughout the entire commentary.⁷⁰ We see it here in a specific example in reference to a lemma also commented on by Holobolos:

vv.11–12. Ὡς τὸδε τυφλοφόρων] Ὡς τινι Πανί τὸ πᾶμα καὶ κτήμα τόδε τῶν τυφλοφόρων, ἦγουν τῶν ποιμένων κατὰ μετάληψιν, τουτέστι πηροφόρων καὶ σακκοφόρων (πηροφόρος γὰρ καὶ ὁ τυφλοφόρος), τὸ ἐρατὸν καὶ ἐπιθυμητὸν κατὰ ψυχὴν ὁ Πάρις, ἦγουν ὁ Θεόκριτος κατὰ μετάληψιν, διὰ τὸ καὶ τὸν Πριαμίδην Πάριν κρίναι τὰς τρεῖς θεὰς περὶ τοῦ μήλου καὶ τῆς

⁶⁷ Dübner 1849.110a.23–8.

⁶⁸ Dübner 1849.110a; 111a.1; 111b.1.

⁶⁹ Dübner 1849.111b.9.

⁷⁰ Dübner 1849.111a.16; 111a.33; 111b.11; 111b.14 y 111b.26.

Ἐριδος, καὶ δύνασθαι καλεῖσθαι θεόκριτον, **θέτο** καὶ ἀνέθηκεν ὁ Σιμιχίδης, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Σιμιχίδου.⁷¹

To him, Paris son of Simichus dedicated the lovely possession of the carriers of blindness: proper to Pan are the ownership and belongings of a bag-carrier, or rather, the shepherds are referred to through a metalepsis, as they carry bags and rucksacks (‘carrier of leather bags’ means also ‘wearer of the blind man’s skin’). The **lovely** and desired is **Paris**, or rather, by metalepsis, Theocritus, as the son of Priam, Paris, judged the three goddesses in the trial of the apple; therefore, it is possible to call him ‘Theocritus’. The Simichides, that is, the son of Simichus, **dedicated** [θέτο] and devoted [ἀνέθηκεν] [it to him].

We can see here that Pediasimos has read the *scholia vetera*, but, unlike Holobolos, he gives a more detailed explanation of those lexical and grammatical aspects which do not conform to Attic Greek: thus, for the adjective ἐρατὸν he presents ἐπιθυμητὸν as a synonym, and for the verb θέτο (Homeric aorist of τίθημι) the corresponding and more adequate ἀνέθηκεν, with a preverb.

On other occasions, along with his minute explanations of the elements of a particularly enigmatic verse, Pediasimos also chooses to paraphrase:

v.9. **ὃς σβέσεν ἀνορέαν ἰσαυδέα**] ὃς, ἤγουν ὁ Πάν, ἔσβεσε τὴν Περσικὴν ἀγερωχίαν, ὅτε συνεστρατήγει τοῖς Ἕλλησι. ἦν καὶ ἰσαυδέα, ἤγουν ὁμώνυμόν φησι τοῦ **παπποφόνου**, τοῦ Περσέως δηλαδή. ἀπὸ γὰρ Περσέως, Πέρσης, ἐξ οὗ τὸ Περσῶν γένος. παπποφόνος δὲ ὁ Περσεύς, καθὼς ἱστορεῖ καὶ Λυκόφρων. τὸν γὰρ πάππον Ἀκρίσιον μετὰ τὸν κατὰ Γοργόνων ἄθλον ἀπέκτεινε. καὶ ἀφείλετο, ἀπὸ κοινοῦ, τὴν ἠνορέαν καὶ τὴν Περσικὴν ἀλαζονείαν, ἀπὸ τῆς **Τυρίας**, ἤγουν τῆς Εὐρώπης μετωνυμικῶς. ἐν γὰρ τῇ Τύρῳ τῇ Εὐρώπῃ ὁ Ζεὺς ἐμίγη.⁷²

Who extinguished the might that sounded like a man: who, or rather Pan, put an end to the arrogance of the Persians when he fought alongside the Greeks; which sounded like a man who murdered his grandfather or rather Perseus. From Perseus comes ‘Persian’ and from him the lineage of the Persians. Perseus was a man who murdered his grandfather, as told by Lycophron, as he killed his grandfather Acrisius in the games held in honour of the Gorgon. He drove jointly the Persian manliness and the vanity **from the woman of Tyre**, i.e. a metonym for Europe, as Zeus had relations with Europa in Tyre.

⁷¹ Dübner 1849.111b.9–17 [= Hol. in *Syr.* 143.5 and schol. vet. 339.11/12.20–21].

⁷² Dübner 1849. 111a.53–b.9 [= Hol. in *Syr.*143.4. 44–7 and schol. vet. 339.9/10c].

It should be noted that, unlike other commentators, Pediasimos cites the source of the myth of Acrisius (Lycophron). The principal mythographical source for this myth is Pseudo-Apollodorus 2.4.47–49,⁷³ whom Pediasimos had very probably read. The specific mention of Lycophron, however, may also suggest a reading of John Tzetzes' commentary on *Alexandra*, *schol. in Lyc.* 838.69–73 to be precise,⁷⁴ which in turn draws upon Pseudo-Apollodorus. However, Pediasimos quoted only a small part of it. It is, in any case, the commentator who explains the myth and not the Hellenistic author. As mentioned earlier, the primary mythographical source for Pediasimos' explanations of mythology is the *Bibliotheca*, and so we see him here expanding upon the ancient scholia with an allusion to Telegonus, the illegitimate son of Circe and Odysseus, of whom Pseudo-Apollodorus speaks in the epitome of his *Bibliotheca* (Ep. 7.17):

v.1 Οὐδενὸς εὐνάτειρα, Μακροπτολέμοιο δὲ μᾶτερ], ἤγουν τοῦ Τηλεμάχου. Τῆλε γὰρ τὸ μακράν, καὶ μάχη ὁ πόλεμος. ἐκ μὲν γὰρ Κίρκης Τηλέγονος, ἐκ δὲ Πηνελόπης τῷ Ὀδυσσεῖ γεννᾶται Τηλέμαχος.⁷⁵

The bedfellow of Nobody, and mother of Far-war: that is, of Telemachus, as τῆλε (tele) is 'far' and μάχη 'war'. And so, from the union of Odysseus and Circe was born Telegonus, and from Penelope and Odysseus, Telemachus.

In other cases, however, when Pseudo-Apollodorus does not offer clarification of some mythological element, Pediasimos turns to Hellenistic bucolic poetry and its scholia as a source. Thus, in v. 3, his source for the detailed ἱστορία on the shepherd Comatas is the ancient commentary on *Idyll* 7.78–88,⁷⁶ which mentions the story of Comatas (*schol. vet. in Theoc.* 99.79c),⁷⁷ while in v. 4, which speaks of Pan's passion for weapons (and, by metonymy, for war), it is the *Dionysiaka* of Nonnos of Panopolis. Pediasimos' *scholium* to v. 4 is interesting not only for showing his knowledge of the work of Nonnos (the principal source for the

⁷³ Scarpi-Ciani (2004).

⁷⁴ Scheer (1958).

⁷⁵ Dübner 1849.110b.7-9. [= *Hol. in Syr.*142.1 and *schol. vet.* 337.1/2a.16–18].

⁷⁶ Gow (1950).

⁷⁷ Wendel (1914).

scholia.⁸⁰ His contribution, however, goes further when he makes an interesting geographical and chronological observation, for which he does not hesitate to display his erudition to get his students' attention, using the dual τοῖν τόποιν καὶ χρόνοι. His observation is not entirely correct, however. The tradition presents Comatas as a shepherd of the Sicilian forests, which is undoubtedly prior to the Roman domination of the island. Indeed, we find it mentioned for the first time in the Theocritean *Idylls*. Pediasimos, however, not knowing Theocritus' chronology, seems to associate the island with a concept of the Romans as the inhabitants of the Italic territories in general, when, in fact, between the period when Comatas lived and the Roman presence on the island, there was a gap in time. Even so, his observation confirms his critical sense regarding the text, as well as his great interest in mythology.

Pediasimos, as educator and commentator, cannot resist using elements of the text as starting points for embarking on small *excursus*. Ultimately, as a teacher, although he does not specify this in his commentary, his aim is to use this content in class to stimulate his students and to digress from it. A good example of this is found in his scholion to parts of v. 5 and v. 6, where the poem speaks of Pan's overriding passion for the nymph Syrinx and, by metonymy, for his own pipe.

vv.5–6. ὃς τᾶς μέροπος πόθον / κούρας γηρυγόνας] εἰ γὰρ μονόφθογγος, εἴτουν μονόφωνος ἦν ἢ σύριγξ, ἦν ἂν ἀνάρμοστος, καὶ μηδὲ ψυχὴν ἀνθρωπίνην κηλεῖν οἷα τε. ἢ γὰρ ψυχὴ ἐξ ἀρμονιῶν συνέστηκε, καὶ ἐκ μόνων τῶν συγγενῶν ἀρμονιῶν κηλεῖσθαι πέφυκεν. ἀρμονία δὲ ἐστὶ πολυμιγέων καὶ δίχα φρονεόντων ἔνωσις.⁸¹

Who loved the voice-dividing girl, swift as the wind and with human speech: as, if it were uni-tonal, if the syrinx only emitted one note, it would be inadequate, and would not cause so much fascination in the human soul, as the soul is composed of various parts and it can be charmed only by compositions of the same kind. Harmony is the union of multiple elements and of two parts well balanced.

In this way, the syrinx served as a starting point to remind his students of the unique composition of the soul and the literal definition of the Pythagorean concept of harmony. These are concepts with which scholars such as Pediasimos were well familiarized and which they transmitted to their students.

⁸⁰ Schol. vet. 338.3.

⁸¹ Dübner 111a.20–4.

From v. 13 of the poem, Pediasimos' explanations follow the *scholia vetera* very closely, and there is no place for mythological explanations or digressions. He comments on each of the verses until the very last (v. 20). It is precisely in his scholion on this last verse (not commented upon by Holobolos), that we can observe an interesting etymology of his own, which differs from that of the ancient commentary:

v.20. **νηλεύστω**] τῆ ἀλιθοβολήτῳ, ἤγουν ἀθανάτῳ· ἀπὸ τοῦ νη στερητικοῦ, καὶ τοῦ λεύω τὸ λιθοβολῶ.⁸²

Unseen: that which was not stoned, that is, immortal; [it is derived] from νη indicating negation and from λεύω [to stone], i.e. to pelt with stones [λιθοβολῶ].

For the term νελεύστω, the ancient commentary had proposed the etymology νη + λεύσσειν ('not see').⁸³

The Influence of Holobolos on Pediasimos

As Constantinides has pointed out, there is good reason to believe that John Pediasimos studied under Manuel Holobolos in Constantinople.⁸⁴ Indeed, the fact that both wrote commentaries on the *Syrinx* constitutes an argument to this effect. What is more, research reveals similarities between the two commentaries that support the idea that Pediasimos had read Holobolos' exegesis.⁸⁵ The Thessalonian, moreover, was also the author of commentaries on Aristotle, specifically on *De interpretatione*⁸⁶ and the *Analytics* (a paraphrastic reworking of John Philoponus' exegesis),⁸⁷ and may have begun his study of Aristotle under the guidance of Holobolos in Constantinople. At the same time, there exist several epistolary testimonies from

⁸² Dübner 1849.111b.35–7.

⁸³ Schol. vet. 341.17–20.

⁸⁴ Constantinides (1982: 119).

⁸⁵ Constantinides (1982: 119, n. 33).

⁸⁶ Constantinides (1982: 122), although this work does not appear in the *Pinakes* database, nor is it mentioned by Bassi (1898: 1399–1417).

⁸⁷ De Falco (1926: 3–120 and 1928: 251–69). On Aristotelian commentators in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, see Trizio in this volume.

which one can infer a possible master-disciple relationship between Holobolos and Pediasimos. One such letter,⁸⁸ from George of Cyprus to Pediasimos, states that he and Pediasimos were both students of George Akropolites⁸⁹ and of another teacher whom Constantinides identifies as Holobolos.⁹⁰

From this, the question is therefore to what extent Holobolos' synopsis influenced Pediasimos' commentary and, especially, to what extent Pediasimos drew from his own reading of it. Constantinides' cursory study does not consider the fact that the second commentary edited by Dübner (112b), from manuscript G, cannot be attributed to Holobolos, as it does not present him as author. For this reason, our comparative study deals only with Holobolos' synopsis.

The comparative table that follows presents some of the examples already discussed, with the aim of determining the use that Pediasimos made of both the ancient scholia and Holobolos' synopsis:

<i>Scholia vetera</i>	Holobolos	Pediasimos
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⁸⁸ Treu 1899.49.4–6.

⁸⁹ *PLP* 518.

⁹⁰ Constantinides (1982: 118).

<p>νν.9–10: ἀντὶ τοῦ ὁμώνυμον τοῦ Περσέως, ὃς τὸν πάππον αὐτοῦ τὸν Ἀκρίσιον ἀπέκτεινεν· Ἀκρισίου δὲ Δανάη, ἀφ’ ἧς Περσεύς. τὴν δὲ Εὐρώπην Τυρίαν εἶπεν, ἐπειδὴ ἡ Εὐρώπη ὑπὸ Διὸς ἀρπασθεῖσα ἐκεῖθεν ἦν.⁹¹</p>	<p>ὃς ὁ Πάν ἔπαυσε τὴν ἠγορέαν καὶ τὴν ἀνδρίαν· τὴν ἰσαυδέα· τὴν ὁμώνυμον τοῦ παπποφόνου ἤγουν τοῦ Περσέως· ἤγουν τῶν Περσῶν μετωνυμικῶς· καὶ ἀφείλετο καὶ ἐξέβαλεν ἐκείνην τῆς εὐρώπης δηλονότι.⁹²</p>	<p>ὃς, ἤγουν ὁ Πάν, ἔσβεσε τὴν Περσικὴν ἀγερωχίαν, ὅτε συνεστρατήγει τοῖς Ἕλλησι. ἦν καὶ ἰσαυδέα, ἤγουν ὁμώνυμόν φησι τοῦ παπποφόνου, τοῦ Περσέως δηλαδὴ. ἀπὸ γὰρ Περσέως, Πέρσης, ἐξ οὗ τὸ Περσῶν γένος. παπποφόνος δὲ ὁ Περσεύς, καθὼς ἱστορεῖ καὶ Λυκόφρων. τὸν γὰρ πάππον Ἀκρίσιον μετὰ τὸν κατὰ Γοργόνων ἄθλον ἀπέκτεινε. καὶ ἀφείλετο, ἀπὸ κοινοῦ, τὴν ἠγορέαν καὶ τὴν Περσικὴν ἀλαζονείαν, ἀπὸ τῆς Τυρίας, ἤγουν τῆς Εὐρώπης μετωνυμικῶς. ἐν γὰρ τῇ Τύρῳ τῇ Εὐρώπῃ ὁ Ζεὺς ἐμίγη.⁹³</p>
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⁹¹ Schol. vet. 339.9/10c.

⁹² Strodel 2002.143.4.

⁹³ Dübner 1849.111a.53–b.9.

<p>v.11: Τυφλοφόρους δὲ εἶπε τοὺς ἀγροίκους, ἐπειδὴ πήρας φοροῦσι· πήρα δὲ καὶ τυφλὴ συνώνυμα. πᾶμα δὲ τὸ κτῆμα. Θεόκριτος δὲ Πάριν ἑαυτὸν εἶπεν, ἐπειδὴ ὁ Πάρις τὰς Θεὰς κρίνων ὑπὸ τινων Θεόκριτος ὠνομάσθη.⁹⁴</p>	<p>ὧ̃ τόδε ἤγουν τὴν σύρριγγα τὸ κτῆμα τῶν τυφλοφόρων καὶ σακκουλοφόρων· ἤγουν τῶν ποιμένων· πήρα γὰρ τὸ σακκούλιον καὶ πηρὸς ὁ τυφλός, ἀνέθηκεν ὁ Πάρις ἤγουν ὁ Θεόκριτος, ὁ γὰρ Πάρις διὰ τὸ κρῖναι τὰς θεὰς ὠνόμασται Θεόκριτος.⁹⁵</p>	<p>ῥῶτινι Πανὶ τὸ πᾶμα καὶ κτῆμα τόδε τῶν τυφλοφόρων, ἤγουν τῶν ποιμένων κατὰ μετάληψιν, τουτέστι πηροφόρων καὶ σακκοφόρων (πηροφόρος γὰρ καὶ ὁ τυφλοφόρος). τὸ ἐρατὸν καὶ ἐπιθυμητὸν κατὰ ψυχὴν ὁ Πάρις, ἤγουν ὁ Θεόκριτος κατὰ μετάληψιν, διὰ τὸ καὶ τὸν Πριαμίδην Πάριν κρῖναι τὰς τρεῖς θεὰς περὶ τοῦ μήλου καὶ τῆς Ἔριδος, καὶ δύνασθαι καλεῖσθαι θεόκριτον, θέτο καὶ ἀνέθηκεν ὁ Σμιχίδης, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Σμιχίδου.⁹⁶</p>
<p>v.13: βροτοβάμονα δὲ εἶρηκε τὸν Πᾶνα ὡς πετροβάτην, ἀπὸ τῶν λαῶν καὶ τοῦ κατὰ Δευκαλίωνα μύθου. Φασὶ γάρ, ὅτι μετὰ τὸν κατακλυσμὸν σπανιζόντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων λίθους λαβῶν ὁ Δευκαλίων ἀνθρώπους ἐποίει, ὅθεν αὐτοὺς καὶ λαοὺς κεκλήσθαι λέγουσιν.⁹⁷</p>	<p>ὧ̃ βροτοβάμων καὶ πετροβάμων ἐκ πετρῶν γὰρ οἱ βροτοὶ ὡς ὁ μῦθος.⁹⁸</p>	<p>ὧ̃ Πᾶν βροτοβᾶμον, ἤγουν πετροβᾶμον. ἐκ πετρῶν γὰρ οἱ βροτοὶ κατὰ τὸν παλαιὸν μῦθον.⁹⁹</p>
<p>v.16: λαρνακόγιον δὲ τὸν Πᾶνα, ἐπεὶ χηλόπυς ἐστί.</p>	<p>λαρνακόγιε, ὁ ἔχων χηλᾶς εἰς τὰ γυῖα·</p>	<p>λαρνακόγιε, ἤγουν χηλόπου κατὰ μετάληψιν. χηλός γὰρ τὸ</p>

⁹⁴ Schol. vet. 339.11/12.20–4.

⁹⁵ Strodel 2002.143.5.

⁹⁶ Dübner 1849.111b.9–17.

⁹⁷ Schol. vet. 340.13.5–9.

⁹⁸ Strodel 2002.143.6.

⁹⁹ Dübner 1849.111b.18–20.

λάρναξ δὲ ἢ χηλὸς καὶ ἢ κιβωτός· ταῦτόν δ' ἐστὶ. ¹⁰⁰	ὁμωνύμος καὶ τοῦτο· χηλή γὰρ ἢ λάρναξ καὶ τὸ κιβώτιον. ¹⁰¹	κιβώτιον, καὶ ἢ λάρναξ, καὶ χηλή ὁ ὄνυξ. ¹⁰²
ν.20: νήλευστον δὲ τὴν ἀόρατον· τὸ γὰρ νη στερητικόν, τὸ δὲ λεύσσειν ἐστὶν τὸ ὀρᾶν. ¹⁰³		νηλεύστω, τῆ ἀλιθοβολήτῳ, ἤγουν ἀθανάτῳ· ἀπὸ τοῦ νη στερητικοῦ, καὶ τοῦ λεύω τὸ λιθοβολᾶ. ¹⁰⁴

These passages exemplify the reworking of reference sources in the respective commentaries and the adaptation of these to the specific didactic needs of the respective authors. Holobolos follows the *scholia vetera* very closely, adapting them with an emphasis on the poem's semantic and etymological aspects. Pediasimos, for his part, employs several different sources: the ancient scholia, Holobolos' synopsis, and mythographical sources. I will here break down the various sources used by Pediasimos for the examples given in the previous table:

1. Schol. on vv. 9–10: use of ancient material + Holobolean material with reference to another exegetic source (Tzetzes' commentary on Lycophron) for the myth of Perseus and Acrisius;
2. Schol. v. 11: use of ancient material + Holobolean material;
3. Schol. v. 13: use of exclusively Holobolean material;
4. Schol. v. 16: use of exclusively ancient material;
5. Schol. v. 20 (not commented on by Holobolos): partial use of ancient material with commentator's own interpretation.

It seems, therefore, credible to posit a direct intellectual relationship between Holobolos and Pediasimos, as Constantinides has already pointed out.¹⁰⁵ In addition, the reading of Holobolean material by Pediasimos does not contradict the chronology of the respective commentaries. Holobolos' synopsis, which, as argued above, may have been written during the first period of his teaching in Constantinople (1265–73), would have been available in the

¹⁰⁰ Schol.vet. 340.16.

¹⁰¹ Strodel 2002.143.6.

¹⁰² Dübner 1849.111b.25–7.

¹⁰³ Schol. vet. 341.17–20.

¹⁰⁴ Dübner 1849.111b.35–8.

¹⁰⁵ Constantinides (1982: 117, n. 33).

1280s, when Pediasimos was teaching in Bulgaria, and where he may have written his own commentary.

The work of these two commentators on the *technopaegnia* left its mark on the scholars who came after Pediasimos. In the fourteenth century, the circle of Demetrios Triklinios in Thessalonike studied these poems using the exegeses of both Holobolos and Pediasimos. This is confirmed by Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 2832,¹⁰⁶ a manuscript linked to the Triklinian circle,¹⁰⁷ which is the oldest manuscript to contain Holobolos' synopsis of the *Syrinx*. It was also the first codex to transmit the exegeses of Holobolos (fol. 46v) and Pediasimos (fols. 46v–47) on the *Syrinx* in the same volume, and so it is plausible that the two commentaries were grouped together by the Triklinian circle itself. Thus, it is certain that both were well known and highly regarded, and became the exegeses of reference for the study of the *Syrinx* beyond Constantinople.

Conclusions

Several insights have emerged from the present study into the intellectual labours of Manuel Holobolos and John Pediasimos, the products of complex personal and historical contexts. Holobolos, educated during the years of the Nicaean Empire, demonstrated an interest and inclination toward the study of the Greek legacy and its transmission, which won him such prestige that he would be recommended for one of the most important positions of his time, that of *rhetor ton rhetoron*. However, the circumstances of his life, shaped by the precarious historical climate in which he lived and, without doubt, a scarcity of material means, perhaps did not allow him to carry out the type of exhaustive and orderly study that Pediasimos achieved in Ohrid and as *hypatos ton philosophon* in Constantinople after 1274.

Thanks to Holobolos, the study of the *technopaegnia* was revived during the Palaiologan period with his *recensio* and commentaries, which, by their reworking of the *scholia vetera*, focused on metrical and lexical aspects, while leaving aside other aspects such as the dialectal or mythological. For reasons of space, it has not been possible to address his work on the other pattern-poems. His work on the *Syrinx*, however, is more relevant for its influence on the generation of scholars who came immediately after him, particularly

¹⁰⁶ On this manuscript, see p. #–#.

¹⁰⁷ See p. #.

Pediasimos. My study has shown that his primary didactic interest was in lexical study and in the meaning of words in the context of this obscure poem.

While it is not possible to affirm categorically that Holobolos and Pediasimos were master and student, as there are no documents which attest to this directly, all indications seem to point in this direction. It is likely that Pediasimos, following in his master's footsteps, devoted himself to commenting on texts that he would have studied under him, but he did this in a way which bore his own personal stamp, a characteristic recognizable in the rest of his exegetic production as well. In fact, Pediasimos' style is remarkable for its profound didacticism, which is manifested in his detailed lexical and mythographical explanations, and his broad knowledge of the earlier exegetic and mythographical sources. Unusual for the Palaiologan period in which he lived, Pediasimos showed a unique interest in mythography. Above all, however, his exegesis on the *Syrinx* is marked by imagination and critical acumen. In this sense, he exemplifies the attributes of the experienced commentator.

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