

PLUTARCH, *ALEXANDER* AND *CAESAR*: TWO NEW FRAGMENTS?*

NIEBUHR¹ saw that several paragraphs had been lost from the beginning of the *Caesar*; Ziegler² suggested that the lacuna extended to the end of the *Alexander*. Both hypotheses are confirmed, if the identification of two new fragments is admitted.

At 10. 11 p. 368, Zonaras is epitomizing the text of *Caes.*; he recounts the story of *Caes.* 60. 3 (οὐκ ἔφη βασιλεύς, ἀλλὰ Καῖσαρ καλεῖσθαι), and continues:

Ἐλέγετο δὲ Καῖσαρ, ὥς τινες οἴονται, οἷα δὴ τάχα τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ τίκτειν θανούσης, καὶ αὐτοῦ δι' ἀνατομῆς προαχθέντος εἰς φῶς. οὐκ ἀληθὲς δὲ τοῦτο ἐστὶ· τὴν γὰρ μητέρα αὐτοῦ ζῆν οἱ περὶ αὐτοῦ συγγεγραφότες ἱστορήσαν καὶ αὐτοῦ ἀνδρωθέντος. τὸ δ' ἐξ ἀνατομῆς εἰς τὸν βίον ἔλθειν οὐκ ἐπ' αὐτῷ γέγονεν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τινι τῶν αὐτοῦ προγόνων, καὶ ἐξ ἐκείνου τὴν κλήσιν ἔσχον οἱ ἐκείνου ἀπόγονοι.

Editors leave the provenance of the passage unspecified: 'addita sunt pauca de nomine Caesaris' (Wolf). The correction of the vulgar error might perhaps be an inference of Zonaras himself—though such an original contribution to historical polemic would be unique; but the erroneous version, at least, must come from somewhere. It is not found in any of Zonaras' sources for this period,³ nor in any surviving book which he certainly knew.⁴ Nor is it likely to be an addition from his own general knowledge. His personal contributions are very limited in scope.⁵ He is prepared to reflect on the fate of Persia or Macedonia or Rome;⁶ he will include historical glosses of a very general nature.⁷ He can introduce his own theological or moralistic reflections.⁸ He will write his own link-passages to connect disparate source-material;⁹ he will occasionally give a cross-reference.¹⁰ More relevantly, he includes a fair number of specific items (and especially etymologies)—but always in a *theological* context.¹¹ But such a specific secular item would be unique; the nearest parallel would be 1. 5 p. 23, discussing the etymology of Tarsus—but this too could clearly be drawn from Zonaras' theological lore.

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¹ *Vorträge über röm. Gesch.* iii (1848), 28 f. But Niebuhr was not the first to suspect this, as he thought; the translations of both 'Dryden' and Langhorne mention 'some authors' who thought the *Life* acephalous.

² *Rh. Mus.* lxxiv (1935), 387-90; accepted by Hamilton, 'Plutarch, Alexander; a Commentary' (1969), 217.

³ T. Büttner-Wobst (*Die Abhängigkeit des Geschichtsschreibers Zonaras von den erhaltenen Quellen, Commentationes Fleckeisenianae* [1890], 152) thought that it came from Cassius Dio, who is fragmentary until 69 B.C.; but is this the sort of material he would include? He was saving many similar items for 44. 37.

⁴ The mistake is made by Ovid, *Met.* 15. 840; Pliny, *N.H.* 7. 9. 47; Serv. *ad Aen.*

1. 286; Isid., *Orig.* 9. 3. 12. Cf. Nonius Marcellus, p. 556M, 26; Emporius, *R.L.M.* p. 568; S.H.A. *Ael. Ver.* 2. 3; Serv. *ad Aen.* 10. 316. Cf. also Georg. *Mon.* p. 212, 15M; Leo, *Gramm.* 54. 1; Cedren i. 299. 20; Suidas s.v. (Büttner-Wobst, loc. cit.). (Alternative etymologies flourished: cf. *Thes. Ling. Lat.* s.v. 'Caesar' col. 34, esp. S.H.A. loc. cit.).

⁵ They are analysed by Büttner-Wobst, op. cit., 123-70.

⁶ 3. 2-3 pp. 180-2; 3. 7 p. 194. 22-9; 3. 8 pp. 198-9; 6. 29 pp. 84-5.

⁷ 3. 9 pp. 205-6.

⁸ Theological: 1. 1 pp. 12-13. Moralistic: 7. 17 p. 138. 16-19; 10. 18 p. 423.

⁹ 3. 15 p. 224. 10-22; 3. 26 p. 261. 19-29. Cf. 3. 9 p. 206. 21-2; 6. 29 pp. 84-5.

¹⁰ 10. 5 p. 351. 9.

¹¹ Büttner-Wobst, pp. 129-34, 138: e.g. 5. 23 p. 391. 23-5; 11. 13 p. 41. 1-4; perhaps 12. 11 p. 109. 2-5.

Could not Zonaras have found the whole passage in the lost Plutarch preface? The correction of a common error would be very much in Plutarch's manner; and the argument of the extract is not found elsewhere. The topic would naturally be relevant, were Plutarch treating the *gens Iulia*: and it reflects one of his characteristic interests (cf. e.g. *Fab.* 1. 2–3, *Cic.* 1. 4–6, *Mar.* 1. 1–5). We should have to assume an extravagant transposition of material in Zonaras: but we have an exactly similar instance in *Alexander*, where the story of 3. 4 is worked into the narrative of c. 28.¹ It would be much harder to parallel the presumed alternative—Zonaras deserting his primary source for a few lines, immediately to return.

If Plutarch did provide this section, new light may fall on the mysterious 4. 14 p. 304. Zonaras has been epitomizing *Alexander*, and has reached the end of our text. He continues:

Λέγεται δὲ ὡς γνοὺς ἤδη ἐκλείπειν αὐτῷ τὸ βιώσιμον ἡβουλήθη ἐς τὸν Εὐφράτην καταποντῶσαι λαθρηδὸν ἑαυτόν, ἵνα γενόμενος ἀφανῆς παράσχη δόξαν ὡς εἰς θεοὺς μετελήλυθεν ἐξ ἐκείνων γενόμενος, ἣ δὲ Πρωξάνη τοῦτο γνοῦσα εἶργεν αὐτῷ τὸ ἐγχείρημα, ὃ δὲ μετ' οἰμωγῆς ἔφη ὡς Ἐφθόνησας ἄρα, γύναι, μοι δόξης τοῦ θεωθῆναι καὶ μὴ θανεῖν.

Again, a story missing from Zonaras' sources; might he have found it at the end of *Alexander*? There are two principal obstacles to this view.

(1) 'Fortasse ex Arriano 7. 27' (Wolf):² and there are striking verbal similarities. But, if the item does come from Arrian, Zonaras has allowed himself unusual freedom: *λαθρηδόν*, in particular, introduces a totally new notion. We are asked to believe that Zonaras exploited a new source for seven lines, then abandoned it: he shows no knowledge of Arrian elsewhere, and such a procedure would be unique. The verbal similarities require a different explanation. Plutarch, like Arrian, gave the story as a *λεγόμενον*: cf. *λέγεται* in Zonaras. In such cases, both authors may remain close to their original source:³ cf. P. 18. 4 = Arr. 2. 3. 7, P. 54. 4–6 = Arr. 4. 12. 3–5, P. 76. 6 = Arr. 7. 25. 6. In any case, the story would allow a narrator little scope for originality: cf. e.g. P. 29. 7–8, which is very close to Arr. 2. 25. 1–3.

(2) Could the story come *later* in Plutarch's narrative than 77. 8? We might expect it at 75. 5, 77. 1, or 77. 5—but not once Plutarch has begun the early history of the Successors. Yet *Caes.* 69. 1 is a suggestive parallel. The events of 67–8 are all later than Caesar's death; but Plutarch thinks it worth while to return, to give Caesar's age when he died, and to summarize his achievement. He will have done the same for Alexander: Arrian's procedure is exactly similar (Arr. 7. 28–30). In that case, this story might naturally be exploited.

It would indeed be a coincidence, if these passages did not come from Plutarch. We should have two remarkable departures from Zonaras' usual technique—both corresponding closely to passages where his main source is known to be lacunose. The provenance of both items is surely clear.⁴

Peterhouse, Cambridge

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¹ 4. 10 p. 291. At 10. 9 p. 362 he similarly includes a description of Cornelia from *Pomp.* 55, immediately before proceeding to the chronology of *Pomp.* 73–80.

² Cf. Schmidt (in Dindorf's ed., vol. vi) p. xviii; Büttner-Wobst, pp. 137–8.

³ Perhaps Aristobulus, the only author

certainly used by both P. and Arr.; but Arrian's disdain suggests that even Aristobulus gave it as a *λεγόμενον*.

⁴ I hope elsewhere to examine the implications of this for the textual tradition of the *Lives*.