

THE ALEXANDRIAN TYCHAION AND THE DATE OF PS.-NICOLAUS *PROGYMNASMATA**

The purpose of this article is twofold. First, I offer evidence to corroborate C.M. Bowra's theory that the Alexandrian Tychaion was converted into a tavern in c. 391 C.E. I take his theory one step further in suggesting that the temple's divine statues must have been removed or destroyed at the same time. I place the conversion of the Alexandrian Tychaion in the context of other contemporary threats to pagan temples in general and specifically to temples of Tyche, and I argue that its conversion was part of an imperial programme intended to decommission certain high-profile pagan temples in a conspicuous, morally degrading fashion. I also offer two new interpretations of the last two certain literary references to the Tychaion, in works describing events from the late fifth and early seventh centuries. Second, I aim to use the conversion of the Tychaion to redate the *progymnasmata* of Ps.-Nicolaus, which include an ecphrasis of the unaltered Tychaion, to the late fourth or early fifth centuries. I identify Ps.-Nicolaus as a likely student of Aphthonius (who was in turn a student of Libanius), which would explain both his adherence to Aphthonian theory and his dependence upon Libanius' model exercises.

I

One of the largest collections of *progymnasmata* from the Late Antique and Byzantine periods is attributed to the author now conventionally known as Ps.-Nicolaus,¹ to distinguish him from Nicolaus of Myra, the fifth-century author of a surviving *progymnasmata* treatise.² In addition to the 111 exercises edited by C. Walz (*Rh. Gr.*

* The following secondary sources are referenced by author and date only:

C.M. Bowra, 'Palladas and Christianity', *Proc. Brit. Acad.* 45 (1959), 255–67.

C.M. Bowra, 'Palladas on Tyche', *CQ* 10.1 (1960), 118–28.

J.-P. Callu, 'Julius Valère, le Pseudo-Libanius et le tombeau d'Alexandrie', *Ktêma* 19 (1994), 269–84.

A. Cameron, 'Palladas and the Nikai', *JHS* 84 (1964), 54–62.

A. Cameron, 'Notes on Palladas', *CQ* 15.2 (1965), 215–29 = Cameron 1965a.

A. Cameron, 'Palladas and Christian polemic', *JRS* 55 (1965), 17–30 = Cameron 1965b.

C. Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity: Topography and Social Conflict* (Baltimore, 1997).

B.D. Hebert, *Spätantike Beschreibung von Kunstwerken: Archäologischer Kommentar zu den Ekphraseis des Libanios und Nikolaos* (Diss., Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, 1983).

E. Kosmetatou, 'Constructing legitimacy: the Ptolemaic *Familiengruppe* as a means of self-definition in Posidippus' *Hippika*', in B. Acosta-Hughes, E. Kosmetatou and M. Baumbach (edd.), *Labored in Papyrus Leaves: Perspectives on an Epigram Collection Attributed to Posidippus* (*P.Mil.Vogl. VIII 309*) (Washington, D.C., 2004), 225–46.

W. Stegemann, 'Nikolaos (21)', *RE* 17.1 (1936), 424–57.

F.R. Trombley, *Hellenic Religion and Christianization c. 370–529* (2 vols.; Leiden, 1993).

E. Will, 'Dodékathéon et Panthéon', *BCH* 75 (1951), 233–46.

¹ On the *progymnasmata* of Ps.-Nicolaus, see R.F. Hock and E.N. O'Neil, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises* (Atlanta, 2002), 198–204; Stegemann (1936), 447–57; H. Hunger, *Die Hochsprachliche Profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (2 vols.; Munich, 1978), 1.92; and J. Felten (ed.), *Nicolai Progymnasmata* (Leipzig, 1913), xxvii.

² On Nicolaus, see Stegemann (1936), 424–57; text in Felten (n. 1); translated with introductions and notes in G.A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta, 2003), 129–72.

1.263–420), Ps.-Nicolaus also composed as many as thirteen additional exercises wrongly attributed to Libanius.³ Previous studies have shown that the unidentified author is very familiar with the model *progymnasmata* of Libanius and the *progymnasmata* treatise of Libanius' student Aphthonius.⁴ By analysing the collection's vocabulary, style and theoretical allegiances, W. Stegemann eliminated the possibility of Nicolaus of Myra as its author, which left him with a choice between Aphthonius and a later imitator of Aphthonius. After considering both options in detail, he ultimately decided in favour of Aphthonius, suggesting that Aphthonius worked up this collection of model exercises in order to supplement his own *progymnasmata* treatise and its limited number of examples.⁵ However, based on a comparative analysis of prose rhythm, W. Hörandner has argued that Aphthonius cannot be the author of Ps.-Nicolaus' *progymnasmata*.⁶ R.F. Hock and E.N. O'Neil follow Hörandner's conclusions, and observing that Aphthonius' manual did not become a standard textbook until the sixth century, they suggest that Ps.-Nicolaus should be placed between the sixth and thirteenth centuries, with the upper date being provided by the date of the earliest known MS of the collection.⁷ E. Amato has recently lowered Hock and O'Neil's upper boundary to the tenth century, noting that a mythological narrative from Ps.-Nicolaus' collection is quoted in the *Geoponica*, a tenth-century compilation of Late Antique agricultural treatises.⁸ It would be fair, then, to say that the current view is that Ps.-Nicolaus is a close follower of Aphthonian style and precepts who lived no later than the tenth century.

One text that may help fix his date more closely has not been fully considered. Among the ecphrases attributed to Ps.-Nicolaus⁹ is an eyewitness description (τεθέαμαι)¹⁰ of the interior of the Alexandrian Tychaion.¹¹ Located in the middle of

³ According to R. Foerster and K. Münscher, 'Libanios', *RE* 12 (1925), 2485–551, at 2518–22, these include the following: *Narration* 19, 22, 24, 31–2, 34, 36–9; *Encomium* 9; *Invective* 8; *Speech in Character* 26. Stegemann (1936), 448–9, attributes to him *Narrations* 19, 22, 24, 31, 37–9 (omitting Foerster and Münscher's examples 32, 34, and 36) and *Speech in Character* 26. *Speech in Character* 26 has more plausibly been attributed to Severus of Alexandria; see most recently E. Amato, 'L'autore dell' *εὐνοῦχος ἐρὼν* (Ps.-Lib., *ethop.* 26 Foerster) ed il più antico frammento in prosa di etopea d'autore', in id. (ed.), *Approches de la Troisième Sophistique: Hommages à Jacques Champ* (Brussels, 2006), 363–75.

⁴ Stegemann (1936), 450–1.

⁵ Stegemann (1936), 456–7.

⁶ W. Hörandner, *Der Prosarhythmus in der rhetorischen Literatur der Byzantiner* (Vienna, 1981), 59–60, 65–8.

⁷ Hock and O'Neil (n. 1), 203–4. Of course, if Ps.-Nicolaus was a student of Aphthonius, he would not have had to wait for Aphthonius' textbook to become standard.

⁸ E. Amato, 'Costantino Porfirogenito ha realmente contribuito alla redazione dei *Geoponica*?', *GFA* 9 (2006), 1–6, at 3 n. 17.

⁹ On which see in general R. Webb, 'The model *ekphraseis* of Nikolaos the Sophist as memory images', in M. Grünbart (ed.), *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter* (Berlin, 2007), 463–75. Webb does not discuss the ecphrasis of the Tychaion.

¹⁰ H. Maguire, 'Truth and convention in Byzantine descriptions of works of art', *DOP* 28 (1974), 111–40, at 115–27, suggests that we treat conventional claims of autopsy with some caution.

¹¹ [Lib.] *Ecphrasis* 25 (ed. R. Foerster, *Libanii Opera*, 8.529–31) = Ps.-Nicolaus *Ecphrasis* 8 (ed. Walz *Rh. Gr.* 1.408.11–409.29). [Lib.] *Ecphrasis* 25 is attributed to Ps.-Nicolaus by Foerster and Münscher (n. 3), 2521–2, and Hebert (1983), 8–9. On the Tychaion, see C.O. Müller, *Antiquitates Antiochenae: Commentationes Duae* (Göttingen, 1839), 40 n. 9; G. Lumbroso, 'Cenni sull'antica Alessandria tratti dal Pseudo-Callistene', *Annali dell'Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica* 47 (1875), 5–15, at 11; Lumbroso, *L'Egitto dei Greci e dei Romani* (Rome, 1895), 168; G. Botti, *Plan de la ville d'Alexandrie à l'époque ptolémaïque* (Alexandria, 1898), 37–8; E. Breccia, *Alexandria ad*

the city, this building (according to Ps.-Nicolaus) contained a central statue group consisting of Tyche, two Victories, Earth and Alexander the Great. Statues of exactly twelve gods (presumably the Olympian gods) and Charis also stood in the room. Other human figures represented included a second Alexander (usually thought to be a statue of Ptolemy I Soter),¹² two unnamed philosophers, and an unknown number of Ptolemies. There may have been another statue supporting a laurel wreath.¹³ Bronze pillars engraved with the laws of the city also stood in the room.¹⁴

Little is known about the history of this building; the earliest references to it date from the fourth century C.E., and not all these are certain references.¹⁵ But Bowra believed that he knew one important event in the Tychaion's history: that it was converted into a tavern in 391, when the Serapeion was partially destroyed.¹⁶ Most scholars accept this theory, but none seems to have taken the next logical step: if the Tychaion was turned into a tavern, its interior decor was likely also changed, and so Ps.-Nicolaus would have to have visited it before the change in order to have described it. Thus the conversion of the building, if verifiable, would provide (in decreasing order of certainty and precision) a *terminus ante quem* for the author's visit to the

Aegyptum: A Guide to the Ancient and Modern Town, and to its Graeco-Roman Museum (Bergamo, 1922), 95; A. Calderini, *Dizionario dei nomi geografici e topografici dell'Egitto Greco-Romano* (Cairo, 1935), 1.1.155; Will (1951), 239–40; A. Adriani, *Repertorio d'arte dell'Egitto Greco-Romano* (Palermo, 1966), 258–9; A. Bernand, *Alexandrie la Grande* (Paris, 1966), 137; P.M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (3 vols.; Oxford, 1972), 1.242 with 2.392–3 n. 417; Hebert, 10–25; W.A. Daszewski, 'La personification et la Tyché d'Alexandrie: Réinterprétation de certains monuments', in L. Kahil et al. (edd.), *Iconographie Classique et Identités Régionales, BCH Suppl. XIV* (Paris, 1986), 299–309, at 302; H. Lauter, *Die Architektur des Hellenismus* (Darmstadt, 1986), 179; A. Stewart, *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics* (Berkeley, 1993), 40, 243–6, 383–4; Callu (1994), 271–4, 284 n. 124; Haas (1997), 143, 167, 212, 287; G. Grimm, *Alexandria: Die Erste Königsstadt der Hellenistischen Welt* (Mainz, 1998), 70; Kosmetatou (2004), 243–6; C.A. Gibson, 'Alexander in the Tychaion: Ps.-Libanius on the Statues', *GRBS* 47 (2007), 431–54; J.S. McKenzie, *The Architecture of Alexandria and Egypt, 300 B.C.–A.D. 700* (London, 2007), 39, 187, 188, 196, 231, 244, 245–6, 315, 358; McKenzie, 'The place in late antique Alexandria "where the Alchemists and Scholars sit ... was like Stairs"', in T. Derda et al. (edd.), *Alexandria: Auditoria of Kom el-Dikka and Late Antique Education. Proceedings of an International Colloquium, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria, March 2005* (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology*, Suppl. 8) (Warsaw, 2007), 53–83, at 66–7, 71; McKenzie and A.T. Reyes, 'The Tychaion and the Temenos of the Muses in late antique Alexandria' in a forthcoming publication of the Late Antique Alexandria Workshop at the Central European University, Budapest, May 2005.

¹² The statue is identified as Alexander by Will (1951), 239 n. 3; Callu (1994), 273 n. 23; and Gibson (n. 11), with further discussion. The proper identification of the statue is not important to the present argument.

¹³ The text and meaning of this sentence are uncertain.

¹⁴ The placement of these various elements in the room is debated but is not important for the purposes of this paper; see the recent discussions of Gibson (n. 11) and McKenzie and Reyes (n. 11). I do not know on what evidence Bowra (1960), 123, believes that the laws of the city were inscribed on the doors of the Tychaion.

¹⁵ Ps.-Callisthenes *Alexander Romance* 1.31.4 (*recensio vetusta* [Kroll]) places the building near a canal. Athanasius describes its role in the riot that accompanied Gregory of Cappadocia's entrance into the city in 339 (*Epistula Encyclica* 4.2, in H.C. Brennecke et al. (edd.), *Athanasius Werke* [3 vols.; Berlin, 1996–], 2.8.173). The patriarch George of Cappadocia may have threatened to destroy it in 361 ('*Quam diu*', inquit, '*sepulchrum hoc stabit?*', Amm. Marc. 22.11.7), if the *Genii templum* mentioned by Ammianus is identified with the Tychaion: see Cameron (1964), 57, and Haas (1997), 287; this view is challenged by Callu (1994), 274, who identifies the *Genii templum* with the shrine of the Agathos Daimōn. On the history of the Tychaion, see also McKenzie and Reyes (n. 11).

¹⁶ See full discussion below.

building, a rough date for the composition of [Lib.] *Ecphrasis* 25, and a very rough idea of when the corpus attributed to Ps.-Nicolaus as a whole may have been published. Ps.-Nicolaus need not have composed the ecphrasis of the Tychaion immediately after he observed the building, and other exercises attributed to him could have been composed and published years later. But if the argument presented in this article is sound, Ps.-Nicolaus was active at the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth centuries. However, some caution is in order: the corpus of Ps.-Nicolaus' *progymnasmata* has not been subjected to a thorough linguistic analysis that would prove or disprove its unity. There are, however, four categories of evidence which strongly suggest that the author of [Lib.] *Ecphrasis* 25 is also the author of most of the other ecphrases falsely attributed to Libanius, namely [Lib.] *Ecphrases* 9–20, 22–3, and 25–8.

First, the location of the objects described. Three exercises attributed to Ps.-Nicolaus are ecphrases of objects in Alexandria, two of them from the same area of the city. *Ecphrases* 22.2–3 and 25.8 both describe objects located in the 'temenos of the Muses'. The equestrian statue of 'Alexander the Founder' (*Ecphrasis* 27) was also presumably located in Alexandria. The only other location given for an object places the author in Europe, perhaps in Constantinople: 'Time saw the sufferings of Troy on the opposite mainland' (ἐπὶ τῆς ἀντιπέρας ἡπείρου) (*Ecphrasis* 17.1).¹⁷ Linguistic similarities between *Ecphrasis* 17 and the Alexandrian ecphrases (22, 25, 27) point to the same author, despite the change of location. Many rhetoricians in Late Antiquity had itinerant careers.

Second, marked similarities among the many discussions of the sculptor's technique and intent. In *Ecphrasis* 25.6, Ps.-Nicolaus says that 'Victories stand on either side of Tyche, with the craftsman (δημιουργοῦ) admirably showing the power of Tyche, that Tyche knows how to be victorious over all'. This craftsman's moral and artistic aims are ever in mind for Ps.-Nicolaus. Sometimes, as in *Ecphrasis* 25.6, his statements about the craftsman (ὁ δημιουργός) are expressed as genitives absolute,¹⁸ though more often not.¹⁹ These statements, taken as a whole, are remarkably similar

¹⁷ Also noted by Webb (n. 9), 472 n. 34.

¹⁸ [Lib.] *Ecphrasis* 16.9 (ὥσπερ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ μεμαθηκός <ἐκ> τῆς 'Ομήρου ποιήσεως ὡς ἔλκεσίπελον τῶν γυναικῶν ὑπάρχει τὸ πρόσχημα), 18.2 (ὥσπερ οὐκ ἀνεχομένου τοῦ ταῦτα δημιουργήσαντος Νεοποτολέμου περιθεῖναι σκευὴν ἐπειγομένου πρὸς γυναιῶν σφαγὴν), 19.8 (ὥσπερ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ πᾶσι σημαίνοντος ὡς ἅπαν ὁ μετ' ἐκεῖνο δοκεῖ τῷ αὐτῷ προσανάλωται), 19.13 (ὥσπερ οὐκ ἀνεχομένου τοῦ ταῦτα δημιουργήσαντος Προμηθέα λυπεῖν ἐπὶ γῆς, ἣν διὰ τοῦ πυρὸς εὖ πεποίηκεν), 20.4 (τοῦ δημιουργοῦ γυναικα δέϊξαι σπουδάζοντος ἣν γυναῖκα δοκεῖν οὐκ ἀφῆκεν ἡ τόλμα), 27.11 (τοῦ δημιουργοῦ καλῶς ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἀπαρτήσαντος).

¹⁹ [Lib.] *Ecphrasis* 12.4 (εὖ δέ μοι δοκεῖ ὁ δημιουργὸς ἐλάφου θήραν ὑπὸ πάντων στήσαι τοῖς ὄμμασιν ὥσπερ ἐνδείξασθαι τοῖς πολλοῖς προαιρούμενος ὡς προελθοῦσι θηρὰν εἶσιν ἔλαφοι πρόχειροι), 14.2 (καί μοι δοκεῖ τὸν δημιουργὸν τοιοῦτον σχῆμα περιθεῖναι τῆς πάλης ὡς καθάπαξ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τὸν 'Ηρακλέα τοιοῦτον εἶναι συμπλάττοντος καὶ ὡς οὐκ ὄν 'Ηρακλεῖ προκαλύπτεσθαι πρὸς ἀγῶνα κινουμένων τοιόνδε), 14.5 (τὴν ὀργὴν ὁ δημιουργὸς οὐκ ἀφῆκε λαθεῖν), 14.9 (καί μοι τὸν Ἀνταῖον κομᾶν ὁ δημιουργὸς ὑποπλάσσει δοκεῖ καὶ τῆς τεκούσης σημαίνων τὴν φύσιν καὶ τὴν μέλλουσαν αἰνιττόμενος ἦτταν), 14.10 (τὸ δέ στόμα διήρται μὲν ὡς εἰς πάροδον βιαζομένου τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ στένειν παρέχει τὴν ἦτταν καὶ μόνον θρήνων ὁ δημιουργὸς ἀφῆκεν ἐλεύθερον), 15.2 (οἷον γοῦν ὁ δημιουργὸς εἰς περιφανὴ χώρον ἀνέστησεν), 15.5 (εὖ δέ μοι δοκεῖ ὁ δημιουργὸς διηρηκῆναι τοῦ ῥοπαλοῦ τὴν τάξιν), 17.5 (τὸν δ' αὖ λοιπὸν ὁ δημιουργὸς συνεκρύψατο, συγκρύψας δέ καὶ καλυψάμενος ὡς μὴ φαίνεσθαι κατέλιπε φαίνεσθαι καὶ παρέχεσθαι ἐξ ὄγκου μαθεῖν ὅπως ἡ γυνὴ περὶ ταῦτα διάκειται), 18.7 (εὖ δέ μοι καὶ τότε τοῦ δημιουργήσαντος ἔδοξεν, αἰδοὶ καὶ πῶθω τοὺς μαζοὺς διελεῖν καὶ τὸν μὲν συγκρύψαι τῇ κόρῃ πρὸς τὴν αἰδῶ, τὸν δὲ καταλιπεῖν πρὸς

in language, structure and tone, and they are collectively unlike anything found in ecphrases attributed to other authors.

Third, unusual vocabulary. Ps.-Nicolaus uses several unusual words and assigns unusual meanings to some common words. He uses the adjective *λοιπός* in the singular to mean ‘the other (of two)’ and in the plural to mean ‘the other two (of four)’. This usage is found in *Ecphrasis* 25.7, and also in *Ecphrases* 12.3, 13.6, 14.12, 16.9, 17.5, 19.10, 20.7, 27.7, 27.11 and 28.4. He uses the word *προκάλυμμα* to denote human clothing²⁰ or an animal’s hide. This usage is found in *Ecphrasis* 25.7, and also in *Ecphrases* 15.4; 16.3, 4, 6; 17.3, 4; 23.2, 8; 27.3 and 27.10.²¹

Fourth, marked similarities among the epilogues. In the epilogue to *Ecphrasis* 25, Ps.-Nicolaus says: ‘These things were a wonder to see, a benefit to learn of and a crime to hide away in silence’ (ταῦτα θαῦμα μὲν ὑπῆρχεν ἰδεῖν, κέρδος δὲ μαθεῖν, ἀδίκημα δὲ σιωπῇ κατακρύπτεσθαι, 25.9). Elements of this signature epilogue are found in seven other ecphrases attributed to Ps.-Nicolaus: [Lib.] *Ecphrasis* 9.6 (ταῦτα ἰδεῖν ὑπῆρχεν), 10.6 (ἀδίκημα ... σιγώμενον), 11.5 (ταῦτα ... ὑπῆρχεν ἰδεῖν, ἀδίκημα δὲ μὴ διελλθεῖν), 13.9 (ταῦτα καὶ θεωρεῖν ὑπῆρξεν), 23.11 (ταῦτα θαῦμα καὶ κατιδεῖν, ἀδίκημα δὲ σιωπῇ παρελθεῖν), 26.7 (ἡδίκουν <ἄν>) and 28.5 (ταῦτα θαῦμα μὲν ὑπῆρχεν ἰδεῖν, ἀδίκημα δὲ σιωπῇ κατακρύπτεσθαι).

I am of the opinion that most of the exercises currently attributed to Ps.-Nicolaus were in fact written by him. But since I cannot prove this at present, I use the name ‘Ps.-Nicolaus’ in the present article to signify only the author of [Lib.] *Ecphrases* 9–20, 22–3 and 25–8.

II

The logical connection between the Tychaion’s conversion and the date of [Lib.] *Ecphrasis* 25 has gone unnoticed or at least unremarked for several reasons. Scholars interested in the Tychaion seem not to have been overly concerned with the precise date or authorship of the ecphrasis, while most of those who have expressed views on the authorship question did so before Bowra published his theory that the building was turned into a tavern in c. 391. The main reason for the apparent oversight, however, is most likely the common belief that the Tychaion’s statues could still be seen as late as 602,²² based on a colourful account relayed by Theophylact Simocatta (8.13.7–15):

ἔλεγον ἔρωτος καὶ μήτε τὸν χιτῶνα διαρρήξαι πρὸς ἅπαν μήτε τοῦ χιτῶνος χωρὶς καταλεῖναι τὴν κόρην), 19.1 (καὶ μοι δοκεῖ τις δημιουργὸς εἰς εὐσέβειαν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους παιδοτριβῶν Προμηθεῖα πλάσαι τῷ χαλκῷ κολαζόμενον), 19.9 (καὶ μοι θαυμάσαι τοὺς τε ποιητὰς ὧν βουλευόνται καὶ τὸν δημιουργὸν ἐπῆλθε τῆς τέχνης ... καὶ τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν τῆς χάριτος ἐξ ἧς ἀνθρώπους εὖ ποιεῖν ἐβουλευέτο Προμηθεὺς ... λαβεῖν δὲ ταῦτα ὁ δημιουργήσας οὐκ ἔλιπε), 22.2 (καὶ δύο ταῦτα ὁ δημιουργὸς σύμβολα τῆς οὐσης ἐπιδείξασθαι τέχνης <βουλόμενος> Ἀθηναίαν προανέστησε), 22.3 (καὶ μοι δοκεῖ ὁ δημιουργὸς ἐπ’ ἀμφοῖν τοῖν καιροῖν Ἀθηναίαν ἀναστήσασθαι), 22.4 (αὐτόνομον ἀφῆκε τὸ πρόσωπον ὥσπερ ἀδικεῖν τὸν τεχνίτην δοκοῦν, εἰ δι’ οὗ λόγοι προέρχονται, τοῦτο συγκρύψει τοῦ πολέμου τὸ γινώρισμα), 27.6 (καὶ μοι δοκεῖ τὴν διάνοιαν ὁ δημιουργὸς παραστήσασθαι τὴν χλαμύδα προσθεῖς ἐπάνω τοῦ θώρακος).

²⁰ As noted by Stegemann (1936), 450.

²¹ For further discussion of the vocabulary and style of the corpus, Stegemann (1936), 449–50.

²² Lumbroso, *L'Egitto* (n. 11), 168; Botti (n. 11), 37; R.S. Poole, *BMC Greek Coins* (Alexandria), lxxxi, xc; Calderini (n. 11), 155; Will (1951), 239 n. 3; Adriani (n. 11), 258; Hebert (1983), 17–18; M. Whitby and M. Whitby, *The History of Theophylact Simocatta: An English Translation with Introduction and Notes* (Oxford, 1986), 231 n. 80; Callu (1994), 284 n. 124; Haas (1997), 167; and McKenzie, ‘The place’ (n. 11) and *Architecture* (n. 11), 245–6, 315; cf. also Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (n. 11), 2.392–3 n. 417, and Kosmetatou (2004), 243 n. 66.

(7) But we would not overlook the notable events of the miraculous narrative: for on the day of the slaughter of the emperor Maurice, there took place at Alexandria an act most worthy of record and particularly worthy of the tablets of history. (8) For it was fated that a certain man, one of those who write for adornment, whom the masses in composite utterance call a calligrapher, and who was even known to us, passed the night in revelry at someone's house until the fourth watch of the night. (9) For this particular merchant was holding an all-night celebration, for his wife was observing the seventh day after the birth of children, to spend the night in festivities of drinking. Then, after the dinner had become subject to satiety, the feasting was terminated, and the man who wrote for adornment left the merchant's house. (10) In the middle of the night then, as he was approaching the city's Tychaion, as it is called (this is a famous place in Alexandria), he saw that the more famous statues had stolen down from their pedestals (τοὺς ἐπισημοτέρους τῶν ἀνδριάντων ἐκ τῶν βωμῶν καθερπύσαντας); they emitted to him a very loud utterance, addressing the man by name, and in loud and vehement utterance describing the calamities which had attended the emperor Maurice on that day. (11) And so the man reached home, cowering in fear at this miraculous vision. At daybreak he came to the associates of the Augustalis, as he is called, and detailed these fearful narrations. (12) When the report reached the prefect of Egypt (at that time Peter was guiding the reins of the Egyptian authority, a man who was also connected to us by birth), the man who had heard the statues was summoned in private. (13) The governor, after investigating this man's words and marvelling at the exposition of the narration, adjured the man who wrote for adornment not to impart to anyone else these mysterious and secret descriptions. Then, having registered that day, the governor of Egypt awaited the outcome. (14) On the ninth day a messenger arrived at Alexandria, escorting, so to speak, the slaughter of the emperor Maurice. Then, after Peter had discerned the outcome of the events predicted by the statues, or to speak more appropriately demons, he publicly paraded the prophecy, brought to prominence the man who wrote for adornment, and pointed him out as the authority for the story. (15) Many other miraculous prophecies of the future occurred in the Roman state, but all eternity would fail us if we should try to record these in greater detail.²³

It is well known that average Christians in Late Antiquity and the Byzantine period tended to believe that pagan statues were possessed by demons.²⁴ In regard to Theophylact's account in particular, C. Mango explains that 'as every Byzantine knew, demons had the faculty of swift locomotion and were thus able to apprehend events that took place at a great distance. This faculty they often passed off as foreknowledge, a gift they did not possess'.²⁵ This passage is most useful for the

²³ Translated by Whitby and Whitby (n. 22), 231–2 (slightly adapted in sect. 10). The Greek text is from C. de Boor and P. Wirth (edd.), *Theophylacti Simocatae Historiae* (Stuttgart, 1972). Short versions of the event are found in Photius *Bibl.* 65 (33a36–9) and three Byzantine chronographers: Theophanes Confessor *Chronographia* (PG 108.616; also ed. C. de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia* [2 vols.; Leipzig, 1883–5], 1.291.17–26), Nicephorus Callistus *Ecclesiastica Historia* 18.41 (PG 147.412) and Georgius Monachus *Chronicon* (ed. C. de Boor, *Georgii Monachi Chronicon* [2 vols.; Leipzig, 1904], 2.663–4). According to M. Whitby, 'Theophanes' Chronicle source for the reigns of Justin II, Tiberius and Maurice (A.D. 565–602)', *Byzantion* 53 (1983) 312–45, at 337, 342, Theophanes probably copied his account of this event from Theophylact, though it also appeared in a lost hagiographical source on Maurice, while Georgius used only the hagiographical source. On the hagiographical source, see further Whitby, 343–4; its existence is challenged by J.D.C. Frendo, 'History and panegyric in the age of Heraclius: the literary background to the composition of the "histories" of Theophylact Simocatta', *DOP* 42 (1988), 143–56, at 156.

²⁴ According to C. Mango, 'Antique statuary and the Byzantine beholder', *DOP* 17 (1963), 53–75, at 56, 59, average Christians in the Byzantine period believed that statues of pagan gods were 'inhabited by maleficent demons'; those statues that were not destroyed gradually changed from being 'actively maleficent' to 'vaguely sinister', and so 'the best thing to do was to leave them alone'. See also H. Saradi-Mendelovici, 'Christian attitudes toward pagan monuments in late antiquity and their legacy in later Byzantine centuries', *DOP* 44 (1990), 47–61, at 55–8; Trombley (1993), 1.40–2.

²⁵ Mango (n. 24), 59.

present inquiry in that it confirms that the Alexandrian Tychaion was still standing in the early seventh century, something we would not otherwise know for certain.²⁶ However, although Theophylact is arguably a reliable guide to Alexandrian topography and contemporary religious belief, a closer reading of the passage shows that it does not confirm the continued existence of the Tychaion statues described by Ps.-Nicolaus.

We should begin by establishing the credibility of Theophylact as a source here. This story is an account of a miraculous event that Theophylact singles out as special, clearly setting it off from the surrounding narrative at the beginning and the end (8.13.7, 15). As an Egyptian native who was educated at Alexandria,²⁷ Theophylact is unlikely to be mistaken about the existence of statues in or near the Tychaion, and a purposeful fabrication easily detected by readers familiar with this major Alexandrian landmark would work against his rhetorical purposes. In addition, he verifies his account by mentioning his connections to its two most important players: the calligrapher was a personal acquaintance (8.13.8), and the prefect was a relative (8.13.12).²⁸ Now it is true that the account is written with a non-Alexandrian audience in mind – note that he glosses his reference to the Tychaion with the words ‘this is a famous place in Alexandria’ (8.13.10) – but the miraculous event was allegedly heralded throughout Egypt, at least some of whose people would have known whether this famous building had statues or not, and I do not think Theophylact would risk the possibility that a reader familiar with Alexandria would catch him in such an obvious fabrication in his salute to the saintly Maurice.²⁹ So I would conclude that whatever Theophylact is saying here about the presence of statues in or near the Tychaion, he is saying it truthfully to the best of his knowledge.

But Theophylact’s account does not prove that Ps.-Nicolaus’ statues still stood in the Tychaion in C.E. 602, for two reasons. First, Theophylact refers to the statues as ‘man statues’ (ἀνδριάντες) (8.13.10, 12, 14), not ‘divine statues’ (ἀγάλματα). The later Byzantine chronographers who describe this event make the same claim.³⁰ Elsewhere Theophylact is quite strict in making the distinction between ἀνδριάντες and ἀγάλματα, and so we should assume it applies here, as well. He calls the royal sculptures of the emperor Maurice ἀνδριάντες (3.2.8) and compares Roman soldiers in battle formation to immovable ἀνδριάντες (3.14.5). He also compares earlier written accounts of Hannibal and Scipio to divine ἀγάλματα (1.14.3), and summarizes the religious practices of the people of Taugast (China) as a devotion to ἀγάλματα (7.9.2). What the calligrapher saw, then, according to Theophylact, were

²⁶ See n. 42 below.

²⁷ M. Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and his Historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Persian and Balkan Warfare* (Oxford, 1988), 28–9.

²⁸ Modern views on his sources for this account differ: Whitby, ‘Theophanes’ chronicle source’ (n. 23), 318–9, 343–4 and *The Emperor Maurice* (n. 27), 30; T. Olajos, *Les sources de Théophylacte Simocatta Historien* (Leiden, 1988), 153, 163. According to Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice*, 39–40, Theophylact’s history was composed between 610 and 638, perhaps over the period of a few years in the late 620s; Frendo (n. 23), 156, believes that it was composed during the same range of years but over a much longer period.

²⁹ On Theophylact Simocatta 8.13.14, Whitby and Whitby (n. 22), 232 n. 82, note that ‘the miraculous announcement of a person’s death could be used as proof of his saintliness’. On Maurice’s saintliness: Whitby, ‘Theophanes’ chronicle source’ (n. 23), 318–9, 336–7, 340; Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice* (n. 27), 47–8 (cf. 20–4); and Frendo (n. 23), 155–6. On the overthrow and death of Maurice, Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice*, 24–7, and Frendo, 155–6.

³⁰ See n. 23 above. Photius wrongly substitutes the word ἀγάλματα in his summary of Theophylact (*Bibl.* 65 [33a36–9]).

honorific statues of humans. Of these, we know from Ps.-Nicolaus that the Tychaion contained two Alexanders (or one Alexander and one Ptolemy I Soter),³¹ two unnamed philosophers and possibly an unknown number of bronze Ptolemies, if these were statues and not relief sculptures.³² Two or more of these could plausibly be described by Theophylact as ‘the more famous of the man statues’ (τοὺς ἐπισημοτέρους τῶν ἀνδριάντων), but not a word is said here about divine statues (ἀγάλματα). Second, Theophylact does not say that the statues came out of the building, or that the calligrapher went inside. He says simply that the calligrapher saw this vision *γενόμενος κατὰ τὸ λεγόμενον τῆς πόλεως Τύχαιον*. If the man statues described by Ps.-Nicolaus stood outside the building, or if the part of the building that contained them was open to the outside, it would have been easy for the calligrapher to see them.³³ On the other hand, if the man statues slid down from pedestals outside the Tychaion, as Theophylact’s account could be taken to suggest, they could be statues of anyone. We have no information about what kinds of honorific man statues stood near the temple at any date. In short, there is nothing in Theophylact’s account of the calligrapher’s vision to prove that the sculptural programme of the Tychaion remained intact in 602, and nothing to conflict with the theory that the Tychaion was converted to a tavern in c. 391.

Theophylact’s silence about divine statues alone does not prove their absence in 602. However, it is an all but certain inference that the Tychaion had been emptied of its divine statues before Alexandrian Christians sacked the temple of Isis at Menouthis in 488 or 489.³⁴ Zacharias of Mytilene relates how and why the temple was sacked, with many of its idols being burned on the spot (*Life of Severus* 29). Shortly afterwards in his Easter homily, the patriarch Peter described the idols that had been found there, and the people ‘became inflamed and carted off all the idols of the pagan gods, whether found in the bath-houses or private homes. They put them in a heap and set them on fire’ (*Life of Severus* 32–3).³⁵ Another twenty camel loads of idols were brought back to Alexandria, along with the temple priest, to a public assembly in front of the Tychaion:

We led them to the central part of the city in accordance with the order of the great Peter. In front of the Tychaion he convoked an assembly of the Prefect of Egypt, the local garrison commanders, all office holders, the local senate, and the landed magnates of the city. When all had taken seats, he had the idol-priest brought forward and made him stand on a raised platform. After the idols had been exposed the patriarch began to interrogate him. The patriarch demanded to know the meaning of this idolatry practiced with soulless matter, demanded to

³¹ See n. 12 above.

³² Hebert (1983), 20, and Stewart (n. 11), 244, express uncertainty about this. Others regard them as statues: Callu (1994), 273 n. 29; Grimm (n. 11), 70; and Kosmetatou (2004), 245. McKenzie and Reyes (n. 11) suggest that the term ‘man statues’ may include the statues of personifications, as well (Tyche, the Victories, Earth and Charis).

³³ Will (1951) 239 n.3; Hebert (1983), 17–18; Callu (1994), 284 n. 124; Haas (1997), 191.

³⁴ On the attack on Menouthis and surrounding events, see A. Cameron, ‘Poets and pagans in Byzantine Egypt’, in R.S. Bagnall (ed.), *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700* (Cambridge, 2007), 21–46, at 23–8; McKenzie, ‘The place’, 66, 79; E. Watts, ‘Winning the intracommunal dialogues: Zacharias Scholasticus’ *Life of Severus*’, *J ECS* 13.4 (2005), 437–64, at 442–3, 456–9; D. Frankfurter, ‘“Things unbefitting Christians”: violence and Christianization in fifth-century Panopolis’, *J ECS* 8.2 (2000), 273–95, at 283–4; Haas (1997), 170, 187–8, 327–9; and Trombley (1993), 2.5–15, 220–5. For monastic involvement at Menouthis, D. Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, Mass., 2006), 223–5. For the date, Trombley (1993), 2.14–15.

³⁵ Translated by Trombley (1993), 2.12.

know the names of all the *daimones*, and required the pagan priest to explain the cause of each shape. At this moment the people were running forward to see. They heard what he said and then ridiculed the crimes of the pagan gods which the priest divulged. When the bronze altar was brought in along with the wooden dragon, the priest confessed to the sacrifices he had dared to perform and declared that the wooden dragon was the one that had deceived Eve. He claimed to have gotten this story from a tradition passed down from the first priests. He admitted that the Hellenes worshipped the dragon, which was thrown onto the pyre with the other idols. One could hear all the people crying out: 'Look at Dionysus the hermaphrodite god! Look at Kronos the infant hater! There's Zeus the adulterer and pederast! Here's Athena, the virgin who loved war! There's Artemis the huntress and hater of travelers! This *daimon* Ares made war, and that one, Apollo, caused many people to die! She's Aphrodite, who presides over prostitution! There is one among these who had charge of theft! As for Dionysus, he patronizes drunkenness! Among them are even dogs, monkeys, and families of cats, for these too were Egyptian gods!'

(Zacharias *Life of Severus* [p. 33 Kugener]).³⁶

All the idols were then burned, and the priest was handed over to the authorities for further questioning.

Zacharias presents here a fascinating account of pagan-Christian conflict in Late Antique Alexandria, an account that is particularly valuable for the insight it offers into the role of Christian university students in the religious life of the city. For the purposes of the present argument, however, what is most important is that the event took place in front of the Tychaion. I argue that the location and purpose of this assembly, in addition to considerations of the author, audience and purpose of the narrative, guarantees that Ps.-Nicolaus' divine statues no longer stood in the Tychaion in the late 480s.

As we did earlier with Theophylact, let us examine the credibility of this source. Zacharias was a participant in this event in 488 or 489. Not long afterwards he wrote about it in his account of the conversion of an Alexandrian student named Paralius, which was 'originally published separately to perform a specific, protreptic function for Christian students of the 490s'³⁷ and which he later 'copied into the *Life of Severus* wholesale' in the early 520s.³⁸ The Greek original of the *Life* is now lost, but the Syriac translation 'is likely quite close to Zacharias' final Greek text'.³⁹ So here we have an eyewitness account written soon after the event by an author who is unlikely to have been able to fabricate significant details of that event with impunity, originally published as an inspirational tract for Christian students residing in Alexandria.⁴⁰

The location of this event then becomes very significant. It seems unlikely in the extreme that this Christian mob, which had already burned idols collected from public and private buildings, and which was now convened in an assembly authorized by the presence of important political officials and the local aristocracy, would stand in front of the Tychaion and commit statues of the Olympian gods from Menouthis to the flames if the statues of the twelve gods described by Ps.-Nicolaus still stood inside (much less outside) the building. Presumably Ps.-Nicolaus' statues are the twelve

³⁶ Translated by Trombley (1993), 2.13. The Syriac text is edited by M.-A. Kugener, *Vie de Sévère*, in *PO* 2 (1907), 1–115. Pages 16–35 of Kugener's French translation are reprinted in A. Bernand, *Le Delta Égyptien d'après les textes grecs* (Cairo, 1970), 1.207–13; the passage cited above is on p. 213 of the reprint.

³⁷ Watts (n. 34), 437.

³⁸ Watts (n. 34), 461.

³⁹ Watts (n. 34), 437 n. 1.

⁴⁰ Cameron, 'Poets and pagans' (n. 34), 26–7, questions the author's reliability. He suggests that the statues may have been decorative mythological statues rather than cult statues and the temple a former temple that had been turned into a private residence.

Olympian gods, but it is clear from Zacharias' narrative that no statues of gods, Greek or Egyptian, would have been exempt from destruction.

Furthermore, the date and projected audience of Zacharias' first account of these events virtually guarantees that the assembly took place in front of the Tychaion. If he had fictionalized the location, he could have placed the assembly anywhere or nowhere, but he chose the Tychaion, and so even if it was not the actual location of the assembly, it must have been a plausible place for it. Moreover, it would hardly suit his rhetorical purposes to put the assembly in front of a functioning pagan religious building, since 'instead of attacking a particularly prominent leader of the pagan intellectual community, this particular account seeks to discredit a particular locus of intellectual pagan religious activity', that is, the shrine of Isis at Menouthis.⁴¹ In Zacharias' account, the literal and rhetorical dismantling of the temple of Isis is presented as if on a stage, with the necessarily defunct Tychaion as its backdrop. The Tychaion, therefore, can no longer have been an operational shrine of Tyche in the late 480s, but instead must already have been well on its way to becoming simply the 'famous place' that a little more than a century later would spook a superstitious Christian calligrapher with the prophecies uttered by its demon-possessed man statues.⁴²

III

To review briefly: We are working against two conventional views here. The first is that the Tychaion's sculptural programme as described by Ps.-Nicolaus was still intact in 602. I have argued that there is no evidence for the continued existence of the Tychaion's divine statues in 602, and that they must have been removed or destroyed before the sacking of the Isis shrine at Menouthis in the late 480s. The fate of its man statues is unknown: no Tychaion statues are mentioned in conjunction with the events of 488 at all, and the man statues seen in 602 may or may not have been those described by Ps.-Nicolaus. Fortunately, the fate of the man statues is irrelevant: once the divine statues were gone, there could be no ecphrasis, no matter what was left intact. The other conventional view against which I am arguing is that Ps.-Nicolaus was active between the sixth and tenth centuries. A rough *terminus post quem* for his

⁴¹ Watts (n. 34), 456.

⁴² Whether the building survived the Persian and Arab invasions of the seventh century is unknown. McKenzie, 'The place' (n. 11), 79, argues that the Tychaion 'is the previously unidentified Green Cupola (the Hadra dome) mentioned in the Arab sources, such as Ibn Rusta (A.D. 903)'; also McKenzie, *Architecture* (n. 11), 358; and McKenzie and Reyes (n. 11). Ibn Rusta says that 'in the cupola there are statues and ornaments mostly destroyed; however, some still exist' (trans. S. K. Hamarneh, 'The ancient monuments of Alexandria according to accounts by medieval Arab authors [IX–XV century]', *FO* 13 [1971], 77–110, at 91). However, Hamarneh, 91–2, interprets this structure as part of the Pharos lighthouse. Since Ibn Rusta reports that most of the statues in the building were destroyed, McKenzie's proposed identification of the Green Cupola with the Tychaion does not appear to affect the present argument. On the later history of Alexandria, A.J. Butler, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Last Thirty Years of the Roman Dominion*², ed. P.M. Fraser (Oxford, 1978); F. Winkelmann, 'Ägypten und Byzanz vor der arabischen Eroberung', *ByzSlav* 40 (1979), 161–82; H. Heinen, 'Alexandria in late antiquity', in A.S. Atiya (ed.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia* (8 vols.; New York, 1991), 1.95–103; Fraser, 'Alexandria, Christian and medieval', in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 1.88–92; Fraser, 'Arab conquest of Egypt', in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 1.183–9; R. Altheim-Stiehl, 'Persians in Egypt', in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 6.1938–41; M. Rodziewicz, 'Archeological evidence on Byzantine architecture in Alexandria', *Græco-Arabica* 4 (1991), 287–97; and Fraser, 'Byzantine Alexandria: decline and fall', *BSAA* 45 (1993), 91–106.

literary activity is provided by two facts about his *progymnasmata*. First, they adhere closely to the vocabulary, style and precepts of Aphthonius, who was active in the late fourth century. Second, they are heavily indebted to the model exercises of Aphthonius' teacher Libanius, which may not have been collected and published until after Libanius' death in 393.⁴³ These two facts would put Ps.-Nicolaus' literary activity no earlier than the late fourth century.

Taken together, the evidence considered so far points to a period between the late fourth century and 488 for Ps.-Nicolaus' observation of the Tychaion and the subsequent loss of its statues. But it is possible to narrow this period even further. We turn now to consider Bowra's theory that the Tychaion was converted into a tavern in c. 391. This theory derives from his interpretation of four poems of Palladas from the Greek anthology (*Anth. Pal.* 9.180–3),⁴⁴ which were published c. 400.⁴⁵

Palladas 9.180: 'Tyche, running all of human life like a tavern (καπηλεύουσα), | possessing an unmixed nature, | both stirring up and, in turn, pouring out again, | is herself now also a tavern-keeper (καυτή κάπηλός ἐστι νῦν τις),⁴⁶ not a goddess, | having obtained a trade worthy of her character'.

Palladas 9.181: 'Affairs, as I see, have been overturned | and we see Tyche now experiencing misfortune'.

Palladas 9.182: 'And you, mistress Tyche, whence did you get your unfortunate fortune? | How have you, the one providing fortunes, become unfortunate? | You, too, learn to bear your own caprices, and you be taught | (to bear) the unfortunate falls which you provide to others'.

Palladas 9.183: 'And you, Tyche, undergoing a change (μεταβαλλομένη), henceforward become subject to mockery, | having in the end spared not even your own fortune; | you who formerly had a temple are running a tavern in your old age (ἢ πρὶν νηὸν ἔχουσα καπηλεύεις μετὰ γῆρας), | now clearly manifested as one who brings hot water for people's baths (θερμοδότης).⁴⁷ | Now

⁴³ Foerster and Münscher (n. 3), 2518.

⁴⁴ Bowra (1959), 258, and Bowra (1960), 122–6. This interpretation of *Anth. Pal.* 9.180–3 has generally been accepted: Cameron (1964), 57; Cameron (1965b), 20; Whitby and Whitby (n. 22), 230 n. 80; Trombley (1993), 2.14 n. 66; Callu (1994), 273; Haas (1997), 167, 212; and Kosmetatou (2004), 243 n. 66. However, McKenzie, *Architecture* (n. 11), 245–6, suggests that 'it is more likely that these poems are metaphorical, indicating only that Tyche was no longer worshipped as a goddess'; also McKenzie, 'The place', 67 n. 71; and McKenzie and Reyes (n. 11). The alleged conversion would have to be dated to 392 or a little later if the Eutycheum mentioned in *Cod. Theod.* 14.27.1 (dated 5 February, A.D. 392) is identified with the Tychaion. The law was *p(ro)p(osita) Alexandriae Eutycheo* (ed. Mommsen and Meyer). For the identification of this building with the Tychaion, see Lumbroso, 'Pseudo-Callistene' (n. 11), 11, and *L'Egitto* (n. 11), 168; Botti (n. 11), 37; Calderini (n. 11), 155; Will (1951), 239 n. 3; Hebert (1983), 24; McKenzie, *Architecture* (n. 11), 244; and McKenzie and Reyes (n. 11).

⁴⁵ For the date of publication, A. Cameron, *The Greek Anthology from Meleager to Planudes* (Oxford, 1993), 16. On Palladas' dates, Bowra (1959), 266–7; Cameron (1965a), 219–25 and *Meleager to Planudes*, 69, 90, 322–4.

⁴⁶ In Hellenistic Egypt the word κάπηλος was no longer simply a generic term for someone engaging in retail trade (on which see R.J. Hopper, *Trade and Industry in Classical Greece* [London, 1979], 61–70), but specifically a 'dealer in certain foodstuffs and caterer, keeper of an inn, or a tavern, or of a wineshop' (M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* [3 vols.; Oxford, 1953], 3.1628 n. 196). On the κάπηλος as innkeeper or shopkeeper in the Roman and Byzantine periods in Egypt, see H.-J. Drexhage, 'Einige Bemerkungen zu den ἔμποροι und κάπηλοι im römischen Ägypten (1.–3. Jh.n.)', *MBAH* 10 (1991), 28–46, with his supplemental 'Einige Bemerkungen zu den κάπηλοι', *MBAH* 21 (2002), 64–8.

⁴⁷ On this bath attendant, see Bowra (1960), 125, and H.J. Magoulias, 'Bathhouse, inn, tavern, prostitution and the stage as seen in the lives of the saints of the sixth and seventh centuries', *EEBS* 38 (1971), 233–52, at 237–8. The word θερμοδότης ('giver of warm baths') in the Palladas passage is probably a pun on θεσμοδότης ('giver of divine laws').

you, too, reverently bewail your suffering, unstable divinity, | now changing your fortune, as (you changed those) of people’.

Bowra argues that these four poems show that the Tychaion was converted into a tavern following the Christian rioting of 391, which resulted in the partial destruction of the world-famous Serapeion.⁴⁸ There is no other known example of a temple being converted into a tavern,⁴⁹ but such a conversion is not inconceivable from a practical standpoint.⁵⁰ The space and equipment needs for a small tavern would be minimal,⁵¹ and the central location of the Tychaion might have made it a choice piece of secular real estate, even though the city already contained a very large number of taverns in the fourth century.⁵² In addition, although ancient sources and modern scholarship are far more interested in the conversion of pagan temples to specifically Christian uses,⁵³ we do know that some were converted to secular uses, as well.⁵⁴ Libanius

⁴⁸ See the detailed commentary in Bowra (1960), 123–4. Poems 9.175, 10.82, 10.90 and 10.91 are also connected with the events of 391, and Poem 10.89 was written a few years later in 394: C. Lacombrade, ‘Palladas d’Alexandrie ou les vicissitudes d’un professeur-poète à la fin du IV^eme siècle’, *Pallas* 1 (1953), 17–26, at 20–3; R. Keydell, ‘Palladas und das Christentum’, *ByzZ* 50 (1957), 1–3; Bowra (1959), 261–7; Cameron (1964), 57; (1965a), 219; and (1965b), 21–30.

⁴⁹ A parallel instance is alleged in Lydus *Mens.* 4.132: Bowra (1960), 123, and Cameron (1964), 57. However, it is not clear that this passage implies the conversion of a building. After describing the statue of Fortune (στήλην τῆς Τύχης), still standing in Lydus’ day, which was erected by Pompey in Byzantium to commemorate his victory over Mithridates and the Getae, Lydus says only that ‘the place later became a tavern’ (ὁ δὲ τόπος ὕστερον καπηλεῖον ἐγένετο) (ed. R. Wuensch, *Ioannis Laurentii Lydi Liber de Mensibus* [Leipzig, 1898]). No building is mentioned in the passage. This strengthens Cameron’s argument that the Alexandrian poet Palladas is referring to the conversion of the Alexandrian Tychaion rather than the one in Constantinople (Cameron [1964], 56–8, esp. 57; cf. [1965a], 225), because it is not clear that John Lydus is describing a temple conversion at all. For στήλη meaning ‘statue’ or ‘image’, G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), s.v. definition 2.

⁵⁰ On taverns in the Graeco-Roman world: W. Schmitz, ‘Kapelos’, *Der Neue Pauly* (1999), 6.256–7; J.N. Davidson, *Courtesans and Fishcakes: The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens* (New York, 1997), 53–60; R. Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society* (London, 1996), 75–87; J.-M. André and M.-F. Baslez, *Voyager dans l’Antiquité* (Lille, 1993), 449–66; Haas (1997), 67–9; A. Kazhdan, ‘Tavern’, *ODB* (1991), 3.2015 and ‘Wine Merchant’, *ODB* (1991), 3.2199–200; G. Hermansen, ‘The Roman inns and the law: the inns of Ostia’, in J.A.S. Evans (ed.), *Polis and Imperium: Studies in Honour of Edward Togo Salmon* (Toronto, 1974), 167–81; Magoulias (n. 47), 238–40; and T. Kleberg, *Hôtels, Restaurants et Cabarets dans l’Antiquité Romaine* (Uppsala, 1957).

⁵¹ Kleberg (n. 50), 114–15. Archaeologists identify the remains of taverns from ‘the special counter with the basin at the bottom’, ‘stepformed shelves for glasses’, ‘remnants of foundations of water heaters’, and ‘fragments of mortars’ used for mincing the pepper for the drink known as *conditum*. See Hermansen (n. 50), 175, 178; cf. Laurence (n. 50), 78–80, and Kleberg, 114–15.

⁵² A twelfth-century Syriac source based on a fourth-century Greek original calculates that there were 935 taverns in fourth-century Alexandria; the actual total of the figures given is 845. See P.M. Fraser, ‘A Syriac *Notitia Urbis Alexandrinae*’, *JEA* 37 (1951), 103–8. This source also includes figures for baths, temples, courts, houses and porticoes, categorized by quarters of the city.

⁵³ A. Frantz, ‘From paganism to Christianity in the temples of Athens’, *DOP* 19 (1965), 187–205; G. Fowden, ‘Bishops and temples in the eastern Roman empire, A.D. 320–435’, *JThS* 29 (1978), 53–78; R.P.C. Hanson, ‘The transformation of pagan temples into churches in the early Christian centuries’, in id. (ed.), *Studies in Christian Antiquity* (Edinburgh, 1985), 347–58; J.-P. Caillet, ‘La transformation en église d’édifices publics et de temples à la fin de l’antiquité’, in C. Lepelley (ed.), *La fin de la cité antique et le début de la cité médiévale de la fin du III^e siècle à l’avènement de Charlemagne* (Bari, 1996), 191–211; and J.S. McKenzie et al., ‘Reconstructing the Serapeum in Alexandria from the archaeological evidence’, *JRS* 94 (2004), 73–121, at 107–10. Cf. also B. Ward-Perkins, *From Classical Antiquity to the Middle Ages: Urban Public Building in Northern and Central Italy, A.D. 300–850* (Oxford, 1984), 85–91.

informs us that in Antioch the Museion (*Or.* 1.102) and the temple of Tyche (*Ep.* 88) had been used as schools, the temple of Dionysus had been used as a courtroom (*Or.* 45.26) and the temple of Athena had been used as a meeting place for lawyers (*Ep.* 847).⁵⁵ The Museion in Antioch also served as headquarters for the *comes orientis* for a period in the fourth century.⁵⁶ In 386 Libanius appeals to the emperor to convert temples threatened by destructive monks to storehouses for taxes in kind (*Or.* 30.42),⁵⁷ reminding the emperor that these famous old buildings were, after all, still imperial property (*Or.* 30.43). Among these threatened buildings was the Tychaion of Antioch, which Libanius says has so far escaped destruction only because no one has given the monks the authority to tear it down (*Or.* 30.51).⁵⁸ Two imperial edicts from 399 forbade the destruction of temples no longer used for religious purposes (*Cod. Theod.* 16.10.15, 18), even by those who appear to have documentation (16.10.15), and an edict of 408 directs that temples everywhere be turned to public use (16.10.19.2; cf. 16.10.20.1).⁵⁹ The theory that the Alexandrian Tychaion was converted to secular use in the 390s thus seems plausible.

But was this a simple case of a religious building being converted to secular use? John Malalas' discussion (13.38) of certain events of 379 would seem to suggest otherwise:

ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς Θεοδοσίος ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ χρόνῳ τοὺς τρεῖς ναοὺς τοὺς ὄντας ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει εἰς τὴν πρῶν λεγομένην Ἀκρόπολιν καταλύσας, ἐποίησε τὸν τοῦ Ἡλίου ναὸν αὐτὴν οἰκημάτων, καὶ ἐδωρήσατο αὐτὴν τῇ μεγάλῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως· ἥτις αὐτὴν ἐκέκληται ἕως τοῦ νῦν τοῦ Ἡλίου· τὸν δὲ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ναὸν ἐποίησε ταβλοπαρόχιον τοῖς κοπτιζούσιν· ὅστις τόπος ἐκέκληται ἕως τῆς νῦν ὁ ναός· ἡ δὲ πλησίον ῥύμη τὸ ἐλάφιν. τὸν δὲ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης ναὸν ἐποίησεν καρουχαρεῖον τοῦ ἐπάρχου τῶν πραιτωρίων, κτίσας περὶ ὅσπητια καὶ κελεύσας δωρεὰν μένειν ἐν αὐτοῖς τὰς πάνυ πενιχρὰς πόρνas.

The emperor Theodosius in that year pulled down the three temples in Constantinople on what was formerly known as the Acropolis. He made the temple of Helios into a courtyard surrounded by houses and donated it to the Great Church of Constantinople. This courtyard is called the 'Courtyard of Helios' to the present day. The temple of Artemis he made into a gaming room for dice players. This place is called 'The Temple' to the present day, and the street nearby is called 'The Fawn'. The temple of Aphrodite he made into a carriage-house for the praetorian prefect, and he built lodging-houses close by and gave orders that penniless prostitutes could stay there free of charge.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ There does not seem to be a modern study of this subject. According to Trombley (1993), 2.138, 'It is certain that Hellenes grudgingly approved the conversion of temples to civic uses rather than see them destroyed'.

⁵⁵ R. Cribiore, *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch* (Princeton, 2007), 37 n. 136; A.F. Norman, *Libanius: Selected Works* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), 2.146–7 note a.

⁵⁶ Malalas 13.4 notes this in his discussion of the events of 335; he does not say how long the Museion was used in this way. Cf. J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1972), 156–7.

⁵⁷ 'Libanius' statement is perhaps a bit ironic, as the right of taxation had been taken away from the cities in large measure' (Trombley [1993], 2.138 n. 27). For the date, P. Petit, 'Sur la date du "Pro Templis" de Libanius', *Byzantion* 21 (1951), 285–310.

⁵⁸ On this speech, see further Trombley (1993), 2.134–43.

⁵⁹ On the status of pagan cult in the Theodosian Code, Trombley (1993), 1.10–35; Saradi-Mendelovici (n. 24), 47–50.

⁶⁰ Text from J. Thurn (ed.), *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae XXXV)*; translated E. Jeffreys et al., *The Chronicle of John Malalas (Byzantina Australiensia 4)* (Melbourne, 1986). I am grateful to Ed Watts for pointing out this parallel.

At Constantinople in 379, the temple of Artemis was turned into a casino, and the temple of Aphrodite was turned into a parking garage with free adjacent apartments for hookers. A little more than a decade later (c. 391), the Alexandrian Tychaion was turned into a tavern, another typically low-class establishment. The similarities are not accidental. I would argue that the conversion of the Tychaion was one of at least three instances in which Theodosius I had a famous pagan temple decommissioned in a deliberately insulting manner. This passage from Malalas corroborates Bowra's interpretation of Palladas' poems on Tyche by providing a context for the alleged conversion. It also allays the concern that a temple-turned-tavern might not be an appropriately august location for the public destruction of statues from Menouthis.

So when the Serapeion was partially destroyed in 391,⁶¹ the Tychaion itself escaped destruction, but its divine statues almost certainly did not. Authors who describe the fate of the Serapeion claim that the contemporary destruction of Alexandrian temples and statues was widespread,⁶² though their almost exclusive focus on the Serapeion has left us with few details about other affected buildings.⁶³ However, in addition to the four poems already examined, Palladas wrote several other poems on pagan statues that were destroyed, removed or converted into Christian service at this time.⁶⁴ In one he addresses a toppled statue of Heracles (*Anth. Pal.* 9.441),⁶⁵ and in another he describes a statue of Eros that had been melted down to make a frying pan (*Anth. Pal.* 9.773).⁶⁶ Some other affected statues were of types also found in the Tychaion. There were bronze statues of Olympian gods (*Anth. Pal.* 9.528),⁶⁷ which, as Alan Cameron interprets the poem, were removed to 'adorn a Christian church or religious building of some sort instead of a pagan temple'⁶⁸ and which Palladas 'congratulates ... on not being melted down and turned into coins'.⁶⁹ Palladas also

⁶¹ McKenzie et al., 'Reconstructing the Serapeum' (n. 53), 73–121; J.-Y. Empereur, *Alexandria Rediscovered* (New York, 1998), 89–109; Haas (1997), 159–69; A. Baldini, 'Problemi della tradizione sulla "distruzione" del Serapeo di Alessandria', *RSA* 15 (1985), 97–152; and Trombley (1993), 1.129–45. For monastic involvement in the destruction of the Serapeum, Brakke (n. 34), 219–21.

⁶² Eunap. *VS* 472: '... the cult of the temples in Alexandria and at the shrine of Serapis was scattered to the winds, and not only the ceremonies of the cult but the buildings as well, and everything happened as in the myths of the poets when the Giants gained the upper hand' (trans. W.C. Wright, LCL). The cult statue of Sarapis was chopped up and publicly burned (Rufinus 11.23), and then, 'once the very pinnacle of idolatry had been thrown down [i.e. the cult statue of Sarapis], all of the idols, or one should rather say monsters, throughout Alexandria were pilloried by a like destruction and similar disgrace through the efforts of its most vigilant priest' (Rufinus 11.24, trans. P.R. Amidon, *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia, Books 10 and 11* [New York, 1997]). Socrates *Hist. eccl.* 5.16 reports that other temples, including a Mithreion, were destroyed at the same time as the Serapeion, and that statues of gods were melted down for use by the Church. Sozom. *Hist. eccl.* 7.15.2 relates that the temple of Dionysus was turned into a church and its wooden statues destroyed.

⁶³ Just as Mark the Deacon in his *Life of Porphyry* says nothing about the demolition of the seven other temples in Gaza, 'reserving the detailed narrative for the principal temple, the Marneion' (Trombley [1993], 1.212–3), so also perhaps has the focus of our ancient sources on the destruction of the Serapeion partially obscured the contemporary fate of other Alexandrian temples and their statues.

⁶⁴ For the evidence that Palladas is writing about Alexandria and not Constantinople, Cameron (1964), 56–8, esp. 57; (1965a), 225.

⁶⁵ Lacombrade (n. 48), 24; Bowra (1959), 259–61, 266; Bowra (1960), 125; Cameron (1964), 57, 61; (1965a), 225; (1965b), 17–18, 29.

⁶⁶ Bowra (1959), 256; (1960), 125; Cameron (1964), 57, 59; (1965a), 225.

⁶⁷ Bowra (1959), 266; (1960), 125; Cameron (1964), 56–7, 59; (1965a), 220, 223–5; (1965b), 21.

⁶⁸ Cameron (1965a), 223.

⁶⁹ Cameron (1965a), 224.

writes of some images of Victory (*Anth. Pal.* 16.282)⁷⁰ which, as Cameron again explains, though originally erected to honour Alexander or one of the Ptolemies, have now been turned into angels to serve Christ.⁷¹ The plundering of the Tychaion's divine statues, then, would be consistent with the destruction wreaked upon other Alexandrian temples and their statues at the time.

In addition, although Christian attitudes toward Tyche varied widely,⁷² the targeting of the Alexandrian Tychaion might be expected from the building's association with earlier pagan-Christian conflicts in 339 and possibly in 361.⁷³ Intolerance for this pagan temple and its divine statues would be in keeping with imperial edicts of the 390s and beyond.⁷⁴ Furthermore, removal of its divine statues and conversion to a tavern would arguably have been a milder fate than those being dealt out elsewhere to other temples dedicated to Tyche. The emperor Julian had made martyrs of Euppsychius and Damas for their destruction of a temple of Tyche in Caesarea of Cappadocia, and an annual festival was later instituted in their honour.⁷⁵ In 386, as mentioned above, Libanius believed that it was only a matter of time before the Tychaion at Antioch would be destroyed (*Or.* 30.51). The Tychaion at Gaza was closed in 398 and was presumably destroyed in 402.⁷⁶ There is, however, no known example of a Tychaion being converted into a church.⁷⁷

IV

We are now in a position to propose a date for Ps.-Nicolaus' literary activity that is consistent with the history of the Alexandrian Tychaion, with contemporary attitudes and policies toward other pagan temples (including those dedicated to Tyche) and with the author's own literary and intellectual debts. Ps.-Nicolaus cannot have described the Tychaion much earlier than the end of the fourth century, because of his

⁷⁰ Cameron (1964), and (1965a), 223–5.

⁷¹ Cameron (1964), 59, says that 'the Nikai seem, perhaps, to have suffered some slight defacement in connexion with their enforced change of allegiance ... some typically pagan characteristic had been christianised (such as the substitution of a halo for a laurel-wreath, or a crucifix for a palm-branch)'. Cameron (1965a), 223, suggests that they were turned into angels. He also briefly considers but then rejects identification of these Victories with the ones from the Tychaion (Cameron [1964], 57 n. 32).

⁷² G. Podskalsky, 'Tyche', *ODB* (1991), 3.2131, and Trombley (1993), 1.209.

⁷³ See n. 15 above.

⁷⁴ In the 390s, the laws of *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.10–13 forbid people from entering pagan holy places, performing sacrifices there, and paying cult honours to their statues, while 16.10.14 revokes the legal privileges formerly granted to pagan religious officials, 16.10.16 mandates the destruction of temples in the countryside, and 16.10.18 calls for continuing efforts to remove pagan idols from their temples. In 408 the emperor's exasperation is clear: 'If any images stand even now in the temples and shrines, and if they have received, or do now receive, the worship of the pagans anywhere, they shall be torn from their foundations, since We recognize that this regulation has been very often decreed by repeated sanctions' (16.10.19.1, trans. Pharr). In 435, under threat of death, 'all persons of criminal pagan mind' (trans. Pharr) are ordered to cease performing pagan religious rituals already proscribed by earlier edicts, and all remaining pagan religious buildings are to be destroyed and purified by the erection of a cross on the site (16.10.25).

⁷⁵ Basil *Ep.* 100, 142, 176, 252; Gregory Naz. *Ep.* 58 (to Basil); and Sozom. *Hist. eccl.* 5.11.

⁷⁶ Trombley (1993), 1.212–3.

⁷⁷ Z. Kiss, 'Alexandria in the fourth to seventh centuries', in Bagnall, ed. (n. 34), 187–206, at 193, states that Theodosius I 'seized the Tychaion and the temple of Dionysos to use as churches', citing Haas (1997), 159–68. The claim about the Tychaion is incorrect, as Prof. Kiss kindly acknowledged in a personal communication of 2 January, 2008.

debts to Aphthonius and Libanius. Bowra's interpretation of Palladas, now corroborated by Malalas' account of other temple conversions in 379, together with my reinterpretation of the last two certain references to the Alexandrian Tychaion, would allow us with considerable confidence to date the looting or destruction of the building's divine statues to 391 or a little later. I would argue, then, that Ps.-Nicolaus saw the Tychaion and its statues, along with the other Alexandrian statues that he describes,⁷⁸ no later than the early 390s. He need not have composed his ecphrasis of the building or published the collection as a whole immediately thereafter, but in any case he would have been active at the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth centuries. He is not, then, an exception to Mango's observation that 'between the reign of Justinian and the middle of the twelfth century there does not appear to be a single *ekphrasis* devoted to a work of ancient art'.⁷⁹ In addition, his similarity to Aphthonius in precept and style,⁸⁰ together with his access to the model *progymnasmata* of Aphthonius' teacher Libanius, strongly suggests that Ps.-Nicolaus – if he is himself not Aphthonius – studied with Aphthonius in the late fourth century and later published his own collection of *progymnasmata*.⁸¹ Whether the appearance of so many exercises now attributed to Ps.-Nicolaus in the MSS of the *progymnasmata* of Libanius also suggests that Ps.-Nicolaus personally had a hand in collecting and publishing Libanius' *progymnasmata* is an intriguing possibility.

Like his teacher Aphthonius, whose treatise includes a model ecphrasis of an operational Serapeion,⁸² Ps.-Nicolaus chose for his single ecphrasis of a building a structure that in his lifetime (to paraphrase Palladas) had suffered its own most unfortunate misfortune, perhaps as a way of commemorating a world and a way of life that to many elite pagans in Alexandria in the late fourth century seemed rapidly to be coming to an end.⁸³

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⁷⁸ The statue of Pallas Athena that he describes is located in the precinct of the Muses ([Lib.] *Ecphrasis* 22.2, 3); the Tychaion stands adjacent to this precinct (25.8). The equestrian statue of Alexander the Founder (27) was also probably located in Alexandria. Other statues and statue groups described by Ps.-Nicolaus include a lion seizing a deer ([Lib.] *Ecphrasis* 12), two of Heracles and Antaeus (13–14), Heracles with the lion skin (15), Hera (16), a Trojan woman (17), Polyxena being killed by Neoptolemus (18), Prometheus (19), Medea (20), Ajax (23), Heracles carrying the Erymanthian boar (26), and Eteocles and Polynices (28).

⁷⁹ Mango (n. 24), 67.

⁸⁰ Stegemann (1936), 451.

⁸¹ Webb (n. 9) discusses the classroom origin and functions of Ps.-Nicolaus' ecphrases.

⁸² The most recent assessment of Aphthonius' description praises it for its accuracy: McKenzie et al., 'Reconstructing the Serapeum' (n. 53), 104.

⁸³ Cf. Palladas *Anth. Pal.* 9.501, 10.82, 10.90, with discussion in Bowra (1959), 257–8, 261–2, 265, 267; (1960), 122–3; Cameron (1964), 57, 60–1; (1965a), 218–9; and (1965b), 20–30. Cameron (1965a), 219, interprets poem 10.82 as follows: 'Though pagans like Palladas have managed to survive the collapse of paganism in Alexandria with their lives, the life that is left to them is unreal like a dream'.

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