

On the date of the first four books of the Continuator of Theophanes.

That the bulk of the first five books of the Continuator of Theophanes was composed under Constantine Porphyrogenetos, and that the first part of the 6th book dates from the reign of Nikephoros Phokas is generally admitted.¹⁾ On the strength of a passage in the first book however D^r Hirsch came to the conclusion that the first four books were not finally completed in their present shape until the time of the latter Emperor, and this opinion has up to the present time remained uncontroverted. Nevertheless it can easily be shown that the inference is founded upon a misunderstanding. In the passage cited (Theoph. Cont. p. 21), which occurs in the history of Leo V, the author has been narrating the later fortunes of the deposed Michael I and his sons. Of these sons he informs us that the youngest, the patriarch Ignatius, was buried in a monastery known as that of Satyros or Anatellon. There two names he goes on to explain, stating that the name Satyros was derived from a Greek temple of Satyros (the Satyrs?), and the name Anatellon from an incident which is said to have happened to the Emperor Nikephoros during a hunting expedition. This explanation is followed by these words: „*ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν οὐ τότε, χρόνου δὲ παρεληλυθότος πολλοῦ ἕστερον.*“ From this the inference is drawn that the Emperor meant must be Nikephoros Phokas, since the only earlier Emperor Nikephoros lived before, not after the time of Leo V. This however at once gives rise to a difficulty, since, if there had been two Emperors of the name before the author's time, he would naturally in accordance with the usual practice of Byzantine writers have explained which he meant, as in fact in the two passages from the 6th book cited by D^r Hirsch, where Nikephoros II is undoubtedly meant, he is described as ‘*Νικηφόρου τοῦ Νικητοῦ*’.²⁾ It is therefore worth while to examine the passage again in order to see whether it really means what it has been supposed to

1) See Hirsch, *Byzantinische Studien* p. 175 ff.

2) pp. 378, 428. In the latter passage ‘*τοῦ λεγομένου Φωκά*’ is also added.

mean; and a careful reading of the whole chapter will, I think, soon show that it does not. This chapter is a digression dealing with the family of Michael I; and the last sentence refers not to the hunting expedition of Nikephoros, but to the deaths of Michael and his sons, and in particular to that of Ignatius, which is in fact related above in very similar words (*πολλοῖς ὕστερον χρόνοις ἐν τῇ μονῇ καλουμένῃ Σατύρου, ἣν ἄρτι ἐκ βάρδων δειμάμενος ἔτυχεν, τὸ ἱερὸν αὐτοῦ σῶμα κατέθηκεν*). The Nikephoros in question is therefore Nikephoros I, and all reason for placing any part of the first four books of the Continuator later than the death of Constantine Porphyrogennetos disappears.

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