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**The Funeral Oration of Eustathios of Thessaloniki for Manuel I  
Komnenos: A Portrait of a Byzantine Emperor**

As has been previously noted, the Byzantine emperor Manuel I Komnenos is, at least in terms of the sheer volume of material which has been handed down to us, the most heavily eulogized of all the Byzantine emperors. Indeed, Paul Magdalino has counted some seventy or so separate encomia composed in his honour<sup>1</sup>. As Manuel would seem to have been a man with an imposing presence, we are supplied, in the different panegyrics, with an abundance of information on his physical and mental characteristics. Among these encomia is a particularly interesting piece from this point of view, the funeral oration for Manuel composed by Eustathios of Thessaloniki<sup>2</sup>. Not even Magdalino, whose study of imperial panegyric is a good overview of the genre<sup>3</sup>, or Kazhdan and Franklin before him<sup>4</sup>, have extracted all the information which can be found in this piece about the physical and psychological effect Manuel had upon those about him. The oration is interesting in that it is a highly individualized description of this emperor; it differs from other orations of the Comnenian period by being not merely a collection of the standard *topoi* which were used for him, as is to some extent the other surviving funeral oration for Manuel, that by Gregory Antiochos<sup>5</sup> (though it must be conceded that this oration is in itself also interesting by virtue of the ingenuity of some of its imagery). Since the detail has by and large re-

1. P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, Cambridge 1993, p. 414.

2. Ed. T. L. F. Tafel, *Eustathii metropolitae Thessalonicensis opuscula*, Frankfurt am Main 1832; repr. Amsterdam 1964, pp. 196-214.

3. Magdalino, *Empire*, pp. 413-470.

4. "Eustathios of Thessalonica, the Life and Opinions of a Twelfth-Century Byzantine Rhetor", in *Studies in Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Cambridge 1984, pp. 115-195.

5. Ed. W. Regel, *Fontes Rerum Byzantinorum*, St Petersburg 1892, pp. 191-228.



mained encrypted in very difficult Greek (the German translation of Tafel<sup>6</sup> is not in wide circulation and is itself, in its effort to retain some of the poetic quality of the Greek, composed in a very florid *Hochdeutsch*), the question of what Manuel Komnenos was really like to meet has largely been left to impressions gained from the historians of the reign, John Kinnamos and Niketas Choniates, who, unlike Eustathios, did not have the presentation of a comprehensive physical and psychological portrait of the emperor as their main purpose, even if both authors in their anecdotes disclose some of his more salient attributes. On the question of Manuel's physical appearance, Choniates provides us with one short statement:

Grace was conspicuous on the countenance of the young man, and added attractiveness to his smiling face; he was tall but slightly stooped. In complexion he was neither snow-white like those reared in the shade, nor excessively sooty, like those who have been greatly exposed to the sun, and in being far from white in appearance, but nearer to dark in colour, he had a comely appearance<sup>7</sup>.

Kinnamos does not supply us with any such physical portrait.

Eustathios, on the other hand, in his various panegyrics, as is to be expected of a court rhetor, eulogizes the emperor's physical appearance on several occasions, and at considerable length in the funeral oration. Furthermore, he is also interested in the effect of the emperor's keen intellect upon those who met him, and to a degree not seen so overtly in his other imperial orations, conforms the scheme for an imperial oration recommended by Menander Rhetor<sup>8</sup>, being concerned above all to demonstrate in him the cardinal virtue of Prudence, in addition to those martial attributes appropriate for an emperor of the Comnenian era (something which in some sense represents the triumph of the military aristocracy over the civilian bureaucrats).

Eustathios, as the opening paragraphs show, however, despite the

6. G. L. F. Tafel, *Komnenen und Normannen u.s.w.*, Vol. 2, Ulm 1852.

7. Niketas Choniates, ed. J.-L. Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, Berlin - New York 1975, p. 51.

8. Menander Rhetor, ed. D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilsor, Oxford 1981, pp. 76-94.



adoption of the form of an imperial oration, creates an oration somewhat different in spirit. The title uses the word “more austere”; this signals that this oration is somewhat more sedate and less florid than other funeral orations in its expressions of both eulogy (appropriate to the genre of funeral oration known as the *epitaphios*) and sorrow (appropriate to monody). Nevertheless, Menander’s scheme of consideration of the emperor’s birth, *genos*, provenance, *patris*, and the four cardinal virtues of temperance, prudence, justice and courage, forms the framework of the oration.

Indeed, one could consider this funeral oration as Eustathios’ solution to a problem, namely how to represent within this scheme of the four cardinal virtues, among them temperance and justice, the attributes of an emperor who would seem from the anecdotal evidence in the historians, Niketas in particular (who censures Manuel for the grandiosity of his plans of conquest<sup>9</sup>) to have been very much a person of extremes. We shall see that Eustathios plays down Manuel’s choleric tendencies by representing them as feigned in order to gain appropriate fear and/or respect.

A summary of the information contained in this most interesting oration will be made, together with additional supplementary details from certain other speeches of this rhetor, most notably his 1176 Epiphany Oration<sup>10</sup>, and it will be compared and contrasted with other orations for Manuel and funeral orations for other emperors or imperial personages. References to the text of the Eustathian funeral oration for Manuel will follow Tafel’s division into paragraphs and lines.

The first part of the speech (pars. 1-22) is concerned with matters other than the emperor’s physical presence. The first four paragraphs (196/38-197/53) form a *prooimion*. This, at first glance, is a circumlocutory discussion of the type of sentiment that is appropriate to the occasion, Eustathios purporting to be writing in a more restrained (and it is to be supposed, a less passionately sorrowful) manner than his fellow-rhetors. It must be admitted that he does abstain from some of the more florid

9. Choniates, pp. 159-160; cf. Magdalino, p. 8.

10. Regel, *Fontes*, pp. 24-57; P. Wirth, *Eustathii Thessalonicensis opera minora*, Berlin - New York 2000, pp. 202-228.



expressions of grief that one finds in the near-contemporary Antiochos oration (delivered on the 120th day since Manuel's death). Antiochos employs the *topoi* of tears, darkness, despair and bitterness appropriate for monody. We might say then that Eustathios employs features of the *epitaphios* on the occasion for a monody, and Antiochos employs devices and mood of the monody on the occasion for an *epitaphios*.

The *prooimion* of Eustathios' speech is particularly interesting in that he explains why he has chosen to deal with his subject in the way that he has: it would seem that a brief oration, that is, a typical monody, was expected from him. His oration therefore opens on an apologetic note; the oration is not, due to the Olympian proportions of his subject, such a monody, nor is it a typical *epitaphios* (the word employed in the title to describe the oration), which is, as we have seen, the type of funeral oration that is delivered some time after the burial and essentially panegyric (the Antiochos oration is interesting in that it combines elements of the monody with those of the third genre of funeral oratory, the consolation speech)<sup>11</sup>. All the same, Eustathios recognizes the need to have some time limit to his oration (and the internal evidence of the oration suggests time was measured out<sup>12</sup>) using the example of tragedy, which is more effective when brief. The mention at the end of the paragraph of the torches of the procession indicates to us the time of the oration, days after the emperor's death (24 September 1180).

The second paragraph (Tafel 197/10-22) would seem to be an apology for not dwelling on all the topics, that is the run of the standard *topoi*, that the rhetor could. So then, we have an oration which is Menandrian in scheme, but personalized, as we shall see, in content.

In the third paragraph (Tafel 197/23-30), continuing in this vein, Eustathios asserts it is appropriate to concentrate on the virtues of grace and charm in the case of the living and that of prudence in the case of the dead. This is all leading towards a general appraisal in the oration of the differing manifestations of this cardinal virtue. Presumably the passage is

11. For a general appraisal of the genres of funeral oratory, see H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, Munich 1978, Vol. I, pp. 132-144. One may care to compare this disclaimer to the introduction to Eustathios' funeral oration for Nicholas Hagiotheodorites, which is also fundamentally an apology for not staying within the limits of the genre in which such speeches are mostly composed: see Wirth, *opera*, p. 3.

12. Tafel 198/36-37.



Eustathios' justification for the treatment of the subject of the emperor which he employed in his earlier orations, and the different tack he purports to be taking in this one. Discussion of the cardinal virtue of prudence rather than grace and charm could also be, one supposes, a more "austere" treatment of the subject than concentration on the latter qualities. Despite this disclaimer, however, we shall see praise for these attributes in his imperial subject in due course all the same.

The fourth paragraph (Tafel 197/31-53) includes further justification of the rhetor's approach. The statement that "the customary thing must be chosen in encomia" would appear to be Eustathios' explanation for his adoption of a broadly Menandrian scheme. Menander prescribes discussion of homeland, *patris*, first<sup>13</sup>. Eustathios passes over this topic and begins the oration proper with a consideration of the emperor's *genos*, "family", pointing out that one speech alone cannot encompass the material supplied by the three generations of emperors past (i.e. the Komnenoi Alexios I, John II and Manuel I), for anyone who would essay this would not be able to keep within the time limit.

In paragraph five (Tafel 197/54-77) the rhetor, in a continuation of the subject so introduced, passes quickly over the subject of the founder of the dynasty (Alexios I Komnenos, ruling 1081-1118), whose rule was, as it were, a firmly-rooted plant of which the emperor's subjects enjoyed the shade<sup>14</sup>, and reflects on the subject of the dynasty's perpetuation in the latest to succeed. It is not clear whether the rhetor is referring to Manuel I or the new emperor Alexios II Porphyrogennetos here. In any case, we have in this paragraph an affirmation of the legitimacy of Manuel's rule due to the fact that he was a porphyrogenite prince, the son of an emperor, and it is noteworthy, especially if the rhetor intends us to understand Manuel as the latest to succeed, that the fact that the emperor's birth or *genos* was imperial, something which is also stressed by our earliest imperial oration for Manuel, an oration by Michael Italikos<sup>15</sup>. Michael also makes mention of Manuel's birth in the Porphyra

13. Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 3, 1856 (repr. 1966), p. 369/18-370/11; D. A. Russell - N. G. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor*, pp. 77-79.

14. A common metaphor of the age, used of Manuel himself in the Gregory Antiochos oration, Regel, *Fontes*, p. 197/14-19.

15. Michael Italikos, *Michel Italikos, lettres et discours*, ed. P. Gautier, Paris 1972, pp. 276-294.



in Constantinople, Queen of the Cities<sup>16</sup>, something passed over by Eustathios, perhaps, in the first place, due to a feeling of security that the Comnenian line enjoyed at the moment of Manuel's death, despite the misgivings of entrusting the succession to a minor; there had, after all, been no usurper in living memory (something which was to change in a couple of years at the accession of Andronikos I). It is an interesting exercise to contrast the mood of this oration with that of the Antiochos oration, as we shall do below. Secondly, the accession and rule of Manuel was in fact a *fait accompli*. Let us say here that the topic legitimacy of a reign due to an emperor's birth is in fact a *topos* which is not confined to funeral orations. Among funeral orations, though, we might care to compare to a speech as early Libanios' funeral oration for Julian the Apostate of the fourth century (his *epitaphios*; Libanios also composed a monody)<sup>17</sup>; like Manuel, Julian had an imperial grandfather, something that Libanios makes a point of mentioning; then, as another example, there is the mention of the fact that the *basileus* Andronikos Doukas (son of Constantine X Doukas) was son of a *basileus* in the monody for him by Michael Psellos<sup>18</sup>, and we see Theodore Prodromos mentioning quickly the purple birth of the *sebastokrator* Andronikos Komnenos<sup>19</sup>.

Paragraph six of the Eustathian oration for Manuel (Tafel 197/78-96) deals with the high standard of Manuel's upbringing, something which will keep the audience held fast with wonder if one were to dwell on it, including the way in which he progressed from his swaddling clothes through childhood to his current state, which in turn will serve as exemplar for those to come. One could note here other examples of the image of progressing from swaddling clothes, not least of all Eustathios' own treatment of Alexios II Porphyrogennetos<sup>20</sup>. We should observe how these *topoi* had gained currency in earlier reigns among earlier rhetors

16. Michael Italikos, p. 278/11-16.

17. Libanios, Oration XVIII, pars. 7-10.

18. P. Gautier, "Monodie inédite de Michel Psellos", *Révue des Études Byzantines* 24 (1966) 153-170; see p. 165/11-13.

19. A. Majuri, "Anecdota Prodromea del Vat. gr. 305", in *Rendiconti dell'Accademia dei Lincei, Classe Scienze morali storiche e filologiche* 17 (1908) 521-528 for the text of the oration; note in particular p. 521/23-24.

20. Regel, p. 89/3; Wirth, p. 257/49.



(such as Michael Psellos) and were recycled for each generation of imperial scions. Another example of this reuse of ideas for successors (or should we say, in this case the reverse phenomenon) follows in the following paragraph.

The seventh paragraph (Tafel 198/1-29) interestingly reworks an incident of anecdotal value concerning Manuel. Despite his tender age in 1139, he dared battle, for which his father, the emperor, inwardly esteemed him but externally chastised him. Tafel is surely right to see in this a reference to the episode in Manuel's early life, recorded by both Kinnamos and Choniates<sup>21</sup>, when he was still only *sebastokrator* and not yet eighteen, in which, along with his attendants, he charged a knot of the Turks who were investing Neokaisareia, an action enheartening the Byzantines present, but for which his father John punished him for his foolhardiness. Eustathios says that by this means the young shoot (see how the plant image of the fifth paragraph is developed), as it were, should not again be exposed to mighty winds, and the base would be discouraged from battle, but the doughty be encouraged to fight. Eustathios praises Manuel in his turn sparing his son from the rigours of war in an oration probably delivered in Lent 1180<sup>22</sup>. This passage, using the imagery of an eagle with a downy eaglet, even speaks of the emperor playing with his son, evoking an anecdote told by Plutarch in his *Life* of the Spartan king Agesilaos<sup>23</sup>. To return to our oration, there is reference to Manuel's participation in councils, something John Kinnamos draws attention to in his report of John's deathbed oration<sup>24</sup>. Magdalino demonstrates in his chapter on imperial panegyric elements such as this bravery and excellence in councils was attracting praise in eulogies of Manuel as *sebastokrator* even before it was clear that he would succeed his father<sup>25</sup>.

Paragraph eight (Tafel 198/30-38) is principally an apology for dwelling for so long on the family of the emperor.

The ninth paragraph (Tafel 198/39-50) seems, as Tafel was probably

21. Cf. Choniates, p. 35; John Kinnamos, Bonn ed. (CSHB), p. 22; Tafel, *Komnenen und Normannen*, u.s.w., Ulm 1852, vol. 2, pp. 7-8.

22. Regel, p. 10/24-11/15; Wirth, p. 190/83-190/5.

23. Plutarch, *Agesilaos*, par. 25.

24. Kinnamos, p. 28.

25. Magdalino, *Empire*, p. 434.



right in saying, to be alluding to portentous dreams reputed to be have been had by Manuel and his father, and to other prophecies foretelling Manuel's accession to the throne<sup>26</sup>. Michael Italikos, followed by Kinnamos, actually mentions the dream had by Manuel when he was twelve in which the Mother of God appeared to him and offered him the imperial purple buskins<sup>27</sup>. We may be able to discern here an attempt to legitimize Manuel's reign in the face of his disinheriting a surviving older brother, the *sebastokrator* Isaac. There is precedent for this use of supernatural signs, not only in Menander Rhetor's instructions for imperial oratory<sup>28</sup>, but in, for example, the emperor Leo VI's funeral oration for his father, Basil I. In this case the demonstration of legitimacy was particularly important since Basil was a usurper. Like the Italikos oration, in this instance also the reference was to a specified sign, a dream to Basil vouchsafed by St Diomedes<sup>29</sup>. The point to be made in the case of our oration, however, is that the tradition of these supernatural signs must have been so widely disseminated that Eustathios feels free to allude to them only, and as the comments we made on *patris* apply equally well here. The tenth paragraph of the Eustathian oration (Tafel 198/51-62) dwells further on the topic.

Paragraph eleven of the Eustathian funeral oration (Tafel 198/63-77) introduces a nautical image - the rhetors as ships, coursing over the sea of subject matter, in this case the wonderful characteristics and deeds of the emperor. No ship, not even the hundred-benched ship of Homer<sup>30</sup>, could cover the whole surface, but each one will cut its own course across it.

The twelfth paragraph (Tafel 198/78-92) extends the image; other rhetors, taking part in these things (the wonders), may sail over it in their enthusiasm as though on a fair wind. Eustathios, however, is confronted by the imperial virtues. He decides to dwell on the fact that the emperor receives the first prize for prudence, which was like salt preserving him through all his actions. The rhetor, however, adds a bold

26. Tafel, *Komnenen und Normannen*, vol. 2, pp. 8-9, directing us to Kinnamos, pp. 23 and 28, Choniates, p. 45.

27. Michael Italikos, *Michel Italikos*, p. 279/21-26. So Magdalino, *Empire*, p. 435.

28. Spengel, p. 371/4-7; Russell - Wilson, p. 81.

29. Leo VI the Wise, "Oraison funèbre de Basile I par son fils Léon le Sage", ed. A. Vogt and I. Hausherr, *Orientalia Christiana*, Rome 1932, pp. 38-79, in particular pp. 50-52.

30. *Iliad* 20.247.



qualification; all was well when this native prudence was allowed to govern, but this was not always the case. Perhaps we have a veiled allusion here to Manuel's widely perceived folly in changing the catechism for converts to Christianity from Islam (of which Eustathios was a vehement opponent)<sup>31</sup>. The emperor's propensity towards rash action in war, and the over-exertion of his last days<sup>32</sup>, might also have given Eustathios some scope for this gentle rebuke.

The thirteenth paragraph (Tafel 198/93-199/28) first asserts that the late emperor could not be surpassed, especially in debate. He was like the sun outshining the stars. The rhetor then goes on to describe the emperor's method: he would first present one idea, then another contrary to it, so that the observer would find it difficult to understand what was in his mind (the analogy of a balance bearing the argument and counter-argument in each scale and evenly-balanced is used). Above all, however, the emperor was persuasive, particularly with the argument which represented his true position. The paragraph concludes on an allusion to a recommendation of the lyric poet Timotheos to initiates to his mysteries.

The portrait is rounded out in the fourteenth paragraph (Tafel 199/29-43), with Eustathios passing quickly over such *topoi* as the imperial energy, dexterity, manliness, intelligence, and then, as he had previously heralded, prudence is singled out for special consideration, for, asserts our rhetor, the emperor not only had presence of mind, but had also been a deep thinker. We might point out here the inversion in the order of the scheme of the four cardinal virtues recommended by Menander Rhetor, for he recommends that courage, left until last in this oration, should be covered first. Perhaps this, in the first place, allows prudence to have pride of place as far as breadth of coverage is concerned, but it also allows the oration to work its way in a crescendo towards a late climax, thereby manipulating audience expectations, keeping it expectant for the greater part of the oration.

Paragraph fifteen (Tafel 199/44-56) deals with the peaceful intention that, we must suppose, the emperor inspired in the barbarians, with its

31. Choniates, pp. 213-219.

32. Regel, *Fontes* I, pp. 1-16; Wirth, *opera*, pp. 182-194, is a speech, probably delivered prior to Easter 1180, bidding the emperor to refrain from too much physical exertion and rest. This will be discussed further below.



allusion to Pythagorean philosophy and its espousal of (brotherly) love (a clear example of the pervasiveness of Hellenism, and the running of the risk of the "Hellenic error" in theology present in the twelfth century). Peacetime imagery of music is introduced, appropriate to the peace over the nations. That music was commonly associated with peace is also shown by Eustathios' 1176 Epiphany oration, where the rhetor mentions how the emperor's hands, once engaged in war, were now applied to psalteries<sup>33</sup>.

In the sixteenth paragraph (Tafel 199/57-72) the rhetor considers the way in which the imperial family has received foreigners in its midst. Here he has in mind the widowed empress (Maria of Antioch) and the crown princess (Agnes of France) in particular, the former of whom had appeared from the east like the sun, the latter like the evening star bathed in the ocean in the west.

Passing to the seventeenth paragraph (Tafel 199/73-200/3), we find an interesting passage in praise of the emperor's policy of dividing foreign nations through his expenditure, supporting as he did rival factions within them (the Turks, Sicilians and Danube nomads are singled out for mention)<sup>34</sup>. In the subsequent paragraph (Tafel 200/4-60) the policy pursued by Manuel of settling foreigners, be they prisoners-of-war (see below), or those who came of their own accord, in particular the Latins of whom he was so fond, is compared, because of the concomitant increase in the imperial inheritance, to the rewards received in the parable of the talents (Matthew 25.14-30; a similar parable is told in Luke)<sup>35</sup>. Some of these foreigners serve in the bureaucracy<sup>36</sup>, others as soldiers<sup>37</sup>. Continuing the comments on Manuel's foreign policy, the nineteenth paragraph (Tafel 200/61-85) compares the settling of prisoners of war in different parts of the empire to Pompey's treatment of pirates in his

33. Regel, p. 51/15-18; Wirth, p. 224/20-24.

34. I, following in the footsteps of P. Lamma, *Comemni e Staufer*, Vol. 2, p. 311, have briefly discussed this passage in a paper which is to appear in *JÖB* (2001).

35. Luke 19.12-27; cf. Regel, p. 35/7-8; Wirth, p. 210/69-70.

36. Cf. Choniates, pp. 204-205.

37. Cf. Choniates, pp. 208-209; cf. A. Stone, "Manuel I Komnenos, the Maiandros campaigns of 1177-1178 and Thessaloniki", *Balkan Studies* 38 (1997) 21-29, which analyzes Regel, p. 73/9-25 and p. 79/8 and concludes that Turkish prisoners of war were settled around Thessaloniki, something noticed earlier by Magdalino, *Empire*, p. 176.



time<sup>38</sup>, whereas the twentieth paragraph (Tafel 200/86-201/23) works its way towards the treatment of the physical aspects of the emperor by considering the different embassies which came to him and were desirous of the sight of him (this calls to mind a noteworthy passage in an earlier Eustathian oration, the 1174 Epiphany oration<sup>39</sup>, which described the foreigners who came on embassies as being like jewels adorning the emperor, and compared him to the star which led the Magi to Jesus<sup>40</sup>). Not even the wisdom of Solomon drew so many; they have come out of concerns arising from their past, present and future. “Accessibility” is a virtue to be extolled under the heading of “justice” in the ideal imperial encomium of Menander Rhetor<sup>41</sup>. Despite Manuel’s extensive legislative activity, the thing to note here is that nothing is made of this by Eustathios, when Menander says that one should praise an emperor for the justice of his laws<sup>42</sup>. We may then also note the selectivity of the rhetor in his material, justified, as we have seen, by the image of different ships cutting different courses across the ocean of imperial marvels in paragraph eleven.

Continuing in the vein of paragraph twenty, paragraph twenty-one (Tafel 201/24-45) digresses slightly to allude to the visits to the emperor of royal personages, who were filled with wonder and fear (one thinks of Kilidj Arslan II, Seljuk sultan of Konya (1161), and Amalric I, king of Jerusalem (1171), Conrad III of the Holy Roman empire, Louis VII of France (both 1147, Conrad again in 1148), as well as perhaps the princes Béla of Hungary (at court from 1163-1172) and Henry the Lion, duke of Bavaria and Saxony (1172)), before the twenty-second paragraph (Tafel 201/46-61) takes up the theme of reports of Manuel’s physical appearance being disseminated by sermons and heralds.

Then, from the twenty-third paragraph to the twenty-fifth paragraph, the rhetor treats his audience to a flattering physical description of the emperor. Stripped of its rhetorical complexities, the passage (Tafel 201/

38. Plutarch, *Pompey*, 28.

39. So dated by Magdalino, *Empire*, p. 457.

40. Regel, *Fontes*, pp. 94/3-97/23; Wirth, pp. 262/50-265/57. Cf. par. 2 of the 1180 pre-Easter oration. Brief mention is made of numerous embassies in Libanios’ funeral oration (XVIII) for Julian - in par. 174.

41. Spengel p. 375/10 = Russell and Wilson pp. 88-89.

42. Spengel, p. 365/24-26; Russell and Wilson, pp. 90-91.



62-202/7) gives us the following information: the emperor was a very tall man, almost a giant. His frame was straight and strong, but slim and muscular, since he was not burdened with an excess of flesh. He was a handsome man, with a complexion neither pale nor swarthy, and he avoided the temptation to dress his hair in an ornate manner. His expression was serious, but the warlike gaze of his eyes was tempered with cheerfulness. He is compared more than once with a lion, and his face to a pleasant meadow.

As can be seen, this description tallies well with that of Choniates, with its reference to the emperor's height and medium complexion, although Eustathios dwells not only on Manuel's stature but his physique; the emperor was evidently of a mesomorphic body type. The description of the emperor's gaze is an additional detail. The comparison of the emperor to a lion is no doubt to the modern mind a tired *topos*, but one which is to be expected in Comnenian imperial panegyric. The reference to the emperor's being a giant is likewise a *topos* of the period. Further, the comparison of the emperor's face to a meadow is another *topos* which had been used elsewhere, for example by Achilles Tatius<sup>43</sup>. We might compare this whole passage with a one from Eustathios' 1176 Epiphany oration<sup>44</sup> (Regel 51/9-18), in which the emperor is again likened to a lion; in this case his body is likened to an acropolis protecting the city, and his hands to those of David, which not only sent forth arrows but also played the harp.

We might also care to consider three further sources of information. The most important of these is Michael Italikos' oration for Manuel, which similarly dwells on the medium complexion of the emperor<sup>45</sup>. He adds an additional detail, the harmonious proportion of the emperor's limbs<sup>46</sup>. Secondly there is the physical description of Manuel preserved in one of the poems of the so-called "Manganeios Prodromos" (no. 4)<sup>47</sup>. Lines 554-560 deal with the captivating glance of his eyes, a theme

43. Achilles Tatius 1. 119.

44. Dated by Magdalino, *Empire*, p. 457.

45. Michael Italikos, *Michel Italikos*, p. 281/25-282/4.

46. Michael Italikos, *Michel Italikos*, p. 281/23-24.

47. Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys have supplied me with a Greek text and English translation of this poem; I follow the system they use to number these poems.



which is reworked and extended upon over lines 619-624<sup>48</sup>, and the subject of the emperor's hands is the preoccupation of lines 653-693; Prodnomos however is less concerned to dealing with their physical appearance than the use to which they are put, drawing bowstrings, wielding the spear, cutting with the sword (note especially line 674, which refers to the "Illyrian giant", a reference no doubt to the duel with the Serb champion Bagin<sup>49</sup>). There is a similar treatment of the subject of the emperor's feet in lines 694-722 (used in walking, hunting, running and so on). Apart from a brief mention of the cheerful and charming aspect of the emperor's face at lines 837-839<sup>50</sup>, and the lines on the emperor's eyes already referred to, it is clear that that, despite the possibilities afforded by the medium, this poem has relatively little to add to our physical portrait of Manuel.

The third, and in some sense the most important, artistic source consists of the four visual representations of Manuel which exist in manuscripts, namely *Vaticanus graecus* 1176, fol. IIr and *Vaticanus graecus* 1851, fols. 1r, 2r, 7r. The first manuscript is one of the Synodal *ekthesis* of 1166, whereas the latter contains a poem in praise of Agnes of France<sup>51</sup>. The *Vat. gr.* 1176 portrait is probably the most famous, showing a frontal Manuel together with his consort Maria of Antioch; the contrast in complexions, Manuel's swarthy one against Maria's pale rose, is noteworthy.

The description in the funeral oration of the emperor's gaze serves in its turn as a prelude to a description of the emperor's temperament, such as we find in paragraph twenty-six of that oration (202/8-23). The rhetor in this passage characterizes the emperor as inwardly unaffected

48. The Jeffreys translate, (554-560) "I am at a loss - the delight of your charming eyes!/ You fix your gaze and plunder the mind from our souls;/ you give a captivating glance and steal our hearts./ Your gaze becomes moist - it drips the nectar of desire,/ intoxicating the eyes which look back at you./ Eros himself reverences you and quenches his flame;/ he desires your charms and hides his torch... (619-624) I say nothing of the unceasing stillness of your eyelids,/ their unmoving intensity, their grace, their anxiety./ That, most honoured pupils of the imperial eyes,/ even if it is impossible to escape, even if I wish to escape.

49. Kinnamos, p. 112.

50. The Jeffreys translate: We desire one thing above all:/ your cheerful face, your happy countenance,/ your charming grace and your sweetness.

51. See I. Spatharakis, *The portrait in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts*, Leiden 1976, pp. 208-230 (esp. 209, 216-218, 228-230) for the details.



by anything which would normally “bite the heart”, but often under such circumstances putting on a show of rage or other strong emotion, “presenting a false portrait”, in order that he may command the respect due to his august office, particularly in the case of those whose folly demanded this. The rationale behind this passage is, no doubt, that Eustathios is obliged, due to the demands of the genre of imperial panegyric, to praise the emperor for the cardinal virtue of temperance; in other words he is making an apology for what would seem to have been in reality a passionate nature. However, there may be some substance to the claim that Manuel was slow to anger; Choniates and Kinnamos, in their anecdotes of him, also stress this aspect of his character. Choniates also draws attention to the *sebastokrator* Isaac’s irascibility, saying that this made him an unsuitable candidate for the throne<sup>52</sup>. We might note two things from this; the quality of *μακροθυμία* “long-temperedness”, was firstly held as a virtue by the Byzantines; secondly the attribution of the quality to Manuel first emerged as part of the platform on which he was presented as a better candidate for the throne than Isaac, and it continued to be deemed worthy of mention even as late as his death.

Eustathios goes on in the twenty-seventh paragraph of his oration to describe the effect the emperor had on one who was granted an audience with him (202/24-46). He was an ideal mixture of cheer and, one must suppose, severity. The latter was such that anyone admitted to his presence would at first fear him in his inscrutability, and “pray to die rather than let the divinely-possessed emperor be indignant at him”, and not even fear the wrath of God more, until, the emperor, discerning that the person posed no threat, would present his cheerful aspect; this approach is then justified in general terms as being an example of prudence.

Eustathios dwells on the way in which Manuel concealed his thoughts in other speeches, particularly in the 1176 Epiphany oration. In this oration, the emperor is praised for a homily he had delivered, and the rhetor emphasizes the way it has illuminated the emperor’s normally hidden thoughts<sup>53</sup>.

As for the smile of encouragement, Magdalino documents an unpublished recollection of Samuel Mavropous in which Manuel put him at his

52. Choniates, p. 52.

53. Regel, p. 54/1-3; Wirth, p. 226/78-80.



ease while he was pouring wine with such a smile<sup>54</sup>.

Paragraph twenty-eight of the funeral oration (202/46-55) is a brief general paragraph which considers a fundamental dichotomy of the emperor; although he was concerned with legislation and statecraft in a manner comparable to those who are remembered for such things before him (and therefore exhibited the virtue of justice), war was for him in another way his truly heartfelt concern. The emphasis on the emperor's accomplishment in war is in keeping with Menander's prescriptions for imperial panegyric. However, Menander believed it should be treated of first, before the emperor's peacetime accomplishments. Eustathios has inverted this scheme. The mention of war here is therefore a "teaser", a manipulation of audience expectations; the listeners must wait until the final third of the oration to hear what the rhetor has to say about the emperor's accomplishment in war.

The subsequent paragraph, twenty-nine (Tafel 202/56-76), makes mention of the emperor's ability to engage in clever talk. Lines 202/56-71 read:

There is a time to engage in clever conversation. For no one among men is difficult to deal with throughout the whole of life, if indeed even Timon made friends; and no friendship has forbidden clever talk, especially not political association. There was an occasion for this sometimes, and the emperor flowed with honey for those who encountered him. Then especially it was like manna raining from heaven ... And one man was simply pleased with what appeared before him, dipping it briefly into his sweet consciousness, while the learned man sank deep into inner knowledge, sucking out the very marrow of his thought. And indeed not one idle thing fell out from among his words.

The imagery of manna is yet again a *topos* used by Eustathios, who compares the emperor to an ark containing manna in his 1176 Epiphany oration<sup>55</sup>. The basic idea, that association with the emperor was sweet for each member of his audience on account of what he uttered, is,

54. *Escorialensis graecus* 265, fol. 512v; cit. Magdalino, *Empire*, p. 470, *non vidi*.

55. Regel, p. 47/21-23; Wirth, p. 220/16-18.



in the complete passage, amplified by the verbiage, the amplification, deemed to be appropriate to panegyric. The idea of everyone in the audience gaining some benefit from the emperor's words is found also in the Eustathian 1176 Epiphany oration<sup>56</sup> (we shall have occasion to refer to this passage again below) as well as in another oration delivered on the same occasion by Euthymios Malakes<sup>57</sup>. To return to the Eustathian funeral oration, the rhetor goes on in the subsequent paragraph to better characterize the nature of the emperor's utterances (202/80-94):

No speech could ever be delivered, in which the emperor did not pronounce something both new to the hearing, and a god-send to the mind.... This was the sort of thing that was most beloved by Attic men, for whom the love of new things was a characteristic... And it was possible to make the timely remark at that time, as the poet says, that indeed God crowns the form of the king with words, attaching this most beautiful addition to the imperial crown.

Once again, Eustathios employs topical imagery, this time presenting Manuel's words as an adornment on the imperial diadem, imagery recycled from the 1176 Epiphany oration, and doubtless other orations (in the 1176 speech it is the imperial homily which is the adornment; see esp. Regel 53/12-25 = Wirth 225/65-226/77). Here, however, the em-

56. Regel, p. 54/3-12; Wirth, p. 226/80-89; "Oh, fiery tongue divided by the spirit in many ways but adapting itself completely to each soul, whereby the strangeness of the matter was all the more apparent, and all the greater was the amazement, because of the peculiarity of the mixture; for it was not that that speech was approachable for those who were literate but excluded a simpler audience; nor was the simpler man attracted, while the one nourished on words went away from it without gaining anything; nor was one part of the speech a benefit for some men, but another part apportioned for others, but beauty shone from the whole speech with equal value and every listener partook of its entire beauty."

57. Euthymios Malakes, ed. K. G. Bonis, «Εὐθυμίου τοῦ Μαλάκη, μητροπολίτου Νέων Πατρῶν (Ῥπάτης), δύο ἐγκωμιαστικοὶ λόγοι, νῦν τὸ πρῶτον ἐκδιδόμενοι, εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Μανουὴλ Α΄ Κομνηνόν (1143-1180)», *Θεολογία* 19 (1948) 513-558, esp. pp. 556/34-557/22, "We, men of learning, learned the laws which were taught, who, being catechisers, were corrected by the particulars of catechism, whereas those being catechised by his persuasion; those men who ruled (were corrected) by humility, and those ruled by submissiveness; the judges learned lawfulness and love of justice, monks the true philosophy of God, the pell-mell and the multitude love of each other, those who surpass lack of boastfulness, the soldiers the ancient saying in the Gospels; each was taught by one speech the appropriate thing..."



peror is being characterized as being innovative. The emperor's utterances are seen, in paragraph thirty-one (Tafel 202/95-203/24) to betray his great intelligence; his thought is characterized as making association with him sweet, and it is revealed to be penetrating and seductive; the emperor was ready in counterstatements, keen in comprehension, as swift in thinking as an arrow or wings in flight, and the closeness of his attention, in a comparison which seems forced to us, was as dense as the snowflakes of the Homeric simile (*Iliad* 3.222)<sup>58</sup>. Manuel is known from other sources to have been an inveterate debater; for example, in a religious controversy over the identity of the recipients of the Eucharist, it was the emperor who personally countered the supposedly heretical opinions of Soterichos Panteugenos, one by one<sup>59</sup>. The histories of John Kinnamos and Niketas Choniates similarly make due record of Manuel's fondness for debating<sup>60</sup>. On the whole question of the emperor's eloquence, on the other hand, Gregory Antiochos is brief<sup>61</sup>.

The thirty-second paragraph opens with some general sentiments on the memorable nature of those qualities of the emperor mentioned in the previous paragraph, before making an interesting further comment on the emperor's talent for dissimulation (203/40-56), a passage which complements what has already been said about the emperor's calmness. It compares this talent for dissimulation to a "key of watchfulness" which kept the treasury of his mind closed, and prevented people from plotting against him.

The thirty-third paragraph (203/57-95) is also of interest in relation to the characterization of the late emperor, describing the method employed in the emperor's speeches, and the nature of his pronouncements on the books which he read. Niketas Choniates, in one of the passages in which the emperor is described, and John Kinnamos<sup>62</sup>, both make mention of the fact that the emperor delivered homilies in a capable manner, and Kinnamos adds that he himself had often discussed Aristotle with the emperor. We have, in this speech, then, praise for the emperor as a fel-

58. For comparison, the simile of words as dense as snowflakes is used also in Libanios' *Epitaphios* (Oration XVIII), par. 154.

59. The episode is recorded in *Patrologia Graeca* 140, ed. J.-P. Migne, cols. 177-201.

60. Kinnamos, pp. 290-291; Choniates, p. 201.

61. Regel, *Fontes*, p. 203/25.

62. See note 60 above.



low man of learning. Magdalino has already passed comment on the way the learned, his “guardians of orthodoxy”, found themselves having to praise the emperor for doing what they themselves were supposed to do best<sup>63</sup>. To summarize: the emperor is praised for his dexterity not only in speaking publicly, but in composing speeches; his speeches are compared to offspring (with a metaphor of labour, birth and separation), and his characteristic brevity is praised; also mentioned is his talent for reading and summarizing books, gleaning information from them which was old, and also that which was new.

The 1176 Epiphany oration, apart from comparing the effect of a homily which the emperor had recently delivered to the experience of the early faithful touched by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost<sup>64</sup>, also supplies us with an account of the quality of Manuel’s voice<sup>65</sup>. It had the quality of distinctness, without being shrill like the voice of a woman or a child or an old man; rather the listener would think he was hearing an angel from on high. Once again we have a description of the emperor which represents him as achieving the golden mean.

We also have an interesting cross-light on Manuel’s book-learning, from a third panegyric by Eustathios, a speech probably delivered just before Easter 1180 (April 20 of that year)<sup>66</sup>, which would suggest that Manuel had a particular interest in patristic literature. One passage<sup>67</sup> describes the hands which are sometimes occupied with weapons as now turning to the leaves of books, “divinely-wrought ones, and ones fit for holding together one’s correctness in dogma”, and furthermore the emperor’s capacity for priestliness is considered, in his “zeal in sacred and priestly matters”. As we have seen, Eustathios had used the imagery of the imperial hands being occupied at one time with war, and at other times with peacetime activities, in the thirtieth paragraph of the 1176 Epiphany oration<sup>68</sup>.

63. Magdalino, *Empire*, p. 467.

64. See note 56 above.

65. Regel, 54/26-55/24; Wirth, 226/9-227/33.

66. This date is based on allusions to fasting, communion and distribution of largesse contained within the oration. It also seems to be referring to the emperor’s terminal illness, hence the dating to the year of 1180, suggested by Wirth, p. 34.

67. Regel, p. 6/1-16; Wirth, p. 186/40-54.

68. Regel, p. 51/15-18; Wirth, p. 224/17-20.



The paragraph may also be compared to funeral orations for other emperors. The one particular *epitaphios* dwelling on book-learning which springs to mind is the Libanian oration for Julian the Apostate. Julian is praised for his understanding of his lessons, his mastering of the art of oratory and his pursuit of wisdom<sup>69</sup>. We also see praise for Andronikos Doukas' attention to his lessons in Michael Psellos' monody for him<sup>70</sup>. It is perhaps worth noting that no real attempt is made by Leo VI the Wise to attribute the virtue of the pursuit of Hermes rather than Ares to his father Basil I. Leo, in this respect, was showing intellectual honesty.

Turning back to our principal concern, the Eustathian funeral oration, we may pass quickly over paragraph thirty-four (Tafel 203/96-204/9), dealing with the emperor and his choice of literature (geography, history, tactics, natural sciences, logic, patristic literature), paragraph thirty-five (Tafel 204/10-48), dealing with the emperor as a convertor to the Christian faith (the Agarenes' souls, receiving the water of baptism, are now productive, like their once-barren land), and, interesting though they are, paragraphs thirty-six to thirty eight, which are more important to the student of doctrinal controversies in the Orthodox Church than the reader who is interested in what Eustathios has to say about the physical, emotional and mental characteristics of the emperor<sup>71</sup>. It is interesting, however, to compare them with Leo VI's funeral oration for Basil I, who is similarly praised for healing a breach in the Church<sup>72</sup>. Paragraphs thirty-nine and forty (Tafel 205/35-85) are similarly concerned with Manuel and the Church. The thirty-ninth paragraph summarizes the qualities Manuel displayed in the religious debate. He was a believer in divine order, and was able to recognize his own wisdom; had he not, he would have been little better than an automaton. He healed divisions in the Church. He was, in short, an able soldier for God.

69. Libanios, Oration XVIII, pars, 12, 15-16.

70. Gautier, "Monodie", p. 166/2-8.

71. I have written a paper on the subject; "A threefold controversy concerning the Trinity: An unregarded attempt at crosspollination between the Christian and Islamic faiths at Byzantium in 1180", in *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 43 (1998) 155-165; P. Lamma, *Comneni e Staufer ecc*, Vol. 2, 1957, pp. 315-316, does not recognize this controversy as a separate issue in its own right or any connection with the ongoing war of polemic against Islam.

72. Leo VI the Wise, "Oraison funèbre", esp. pp. 62/1-2 and 64/8-15.



We have an interesting cross-light on this passage from Niketas Choniates, in the section of Book VII of his history of the reign of Manuel dealing with the emperor's involvement in religious controversy. Choniates, no doubt also bearing in mind the example of Isaac II Angelos, says that it is a common fault of emperors to intervene in religious debate and even impose their own favoured interpretation of scripture on the Church<sup>73</sup>. What is even more interesting is that Eustathios was a vehement opponent of one of the emperor's Caesaropapist acts, the removal of the abjuration of Allah from the catechism for converts from Islam in 1180, something he regarded as folly<sup>74</sup>. Despite any personal misgivings he may have had about Manuel's bodily intervention in ecclesiastical affairs, Eustathios all the same must have felt constrained to attribute wise prudence for such actions rather than pass over them in silence, so deeply ingrained were the customs of funeral oratory.

Paragraph forty is transitional. The rhetor considers how even the heavenly Paul was mostly concerned with earthly things. He then goes on to introduce the theme of the mysteries of life with which physicians are concerned.

Paragraph forty-one (Tafel 205/86-206/2), digressing slightly, further fleshes out what the rhetor has had to say about the emperor's "forming a portrait" of those who met him; it dwells on the emperor's sound judgement of character, and the way in which he could see through both the superficial person and the dissimulator alike, for he "looked deeply into the hearts of men, so as to declare the nature from within and pronounce the features of each openly as they were".

Paragraph forty-two (Tafel 206/3-30) is concerned with discernment of another kind: facility for medical diagnosis. Apparently Manuel attended to Eustathios' "instructor in words" in his terminal illness, by whom he probably means the *maistor ton rhetoron* Nicholas Kataphloron, who may therefore have advanced to the chair of *hypatos ton philosophon* (the Greek text states explicitly that this terminal illness was experienced when this teacher "was president over the sophists"; the other possibility that occurs to mind, Michael Anchialos, was patriarch

73. Choniates, pp. 209-210.

74. Choniates, pp. 216-217.



in the period immediately preceding his death). The paragraph treats of the way in which the emperor discovered new drugs, like Prometheus of myth, and mixed old ones in combination with those newly discovered. He would even bring men from death's door back to life (Eustathios uses an echo of the Biblical story of Lazaros here). Gregory Antiochos passes over the subject of Manuel's medical expertise quickly<sup>75</sup>. Manuel's interest in medicine is well-attested in Kinnamos and Chomiates; he tended personally to several key personages, such as the German king Conrad III and King Baldwin III of Jerusalem<sup>76</sup> (this paragraph has an indirect allusion to this; see p. 206/19-21). From the other encomia, we have from the 1180 pre-Easter oration a passage likewise concerned with the emperor's skill in medicine (Regel 12/14-13/1 = Wirth 191/31-192/46); with typical exaggeration, it speaks of myriads coming to be cured.

Turning back to the Eustathian funeral oration, we see that he forty-third paragraph (Tafel 206/31-55) is ironical. It was illness that carried the emperor away, when he had been the one who restored others to health. He saved many (through baptism), yet died in his bath. He won many contests like a boxer against illness, and was crowned and received the appellation of victor. Paragraph forty-four (Tafel 206/56-87) deals with the emperor's attention, like Paul's, to even lowly matters, this being, it would seem, basically a justification for dealing with the more human characteristics of Manuel in the succeeding paragraphs. Others do not appreciate the true nature of God's divinity, in their quibbling and making divine things a subject of sophistry, without realizing that God saw fit to descend and be incarnate in a man. Christ, this god-man, saw even unto the roots of the earth.

Coming to the forty-fifth paragraph (Tafel 206/88-207/12), we find a description of the emperor as commingling with and communicating to more common folk, such as his soldiery. To give the first part of this passage, which is interesting enough to present in translation:

That divinely-possessed emperor, being inspired by this example, not only committed himself to the learned and mighty in words about his actions, but he shared his protection with

75. Regel *Fontes*, p. 203/16-18, "Who will hide from the followers of Hippokrates and Galen the tablets and devices from him?"

76. Kinnamos. pp. 86, 190.



those grounded in inferiority. He did not, however, descend in a lowly fashion, but rather came down among them in a manner that was divine ... he also made discourse man to man ... The heavenly city among us, as we might call it, has experienced this method every time, and all those dwelling around were treated by this method, and the whole Roman army in this manner, and the entire Christian race.

The passage once again employs the *topos* that each man gained something from the emperor's discourse (cf. Tafel 202/56-71 above).

Paragraph forty-six (Tafel 207/13-29) is mostly concerned with the emperor's virtue of self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*) and his position in society: he is in the top of at least three tiers. It briefly then considers qualities shown in his homilies, a good many of which were practical. Paragraph forty-seven (Tafel 207/30-40), on the other hand begins with an ostensible reluctance to use the sun metaphor, then gives further consideration to the emperor's role in instruction; a *synkrisis* with Paul is used here.

The forty-eighth paragraph (Tafel 207/41-57) provides a brief respite, in which the rhetor effectively claims that time constrictions do not permit him to treat of all the things which provide *pathos* that he could offer; the paragraph subsequently introduces the topic of those churches ravaged by the effects of time. This leads into a paragraph dealing with the damage caused by earthquakes and fire (the forty-ninth paragraph, Tafel 207/58-74). The passage is perhaps cross-illuminated by the 1168 or 1169 oration to the emperor on the occasion of a drought<sup>77</sup>; in this speech the emperor is praised for his expenditure on the city following an earthquake (possibly the 1161 earthquake witnessed by the visiting Seljuk sultan Kilidj II Arslan) and a fire (quite possibly the one responsible for the destruction of one of the churches of Hagia Eirene; see Choniates p.206). However, the funeral oration specifies more than one earthquake and more than one fire. Paragraph fifty (Tafel 207/75-208/7) is likewise concerned with the theme of the emperor's restoration of churches. It speaks of the fame of these things throughout the world, including the islands, which had the former beauty of their

77. Regel. pp. 125-131; Wirth, pp. 289-293.



churches restored; the emperor spent copiously on these monuments. Eustathios then considers Manuel's imitation in this respect of his forebears, the emperors Alexios I and John II. Eustathios attempts to defend the fact that the emperor did not found any new churches and monasteries in Constantinople, something which seems to have been a point of focus for other funeral orations, if Leo VI the Wise's oration for his father Basil I is any guide<sup>78</sup>.

The fifty-first paragraph (Tafel 208/8-36) returns to Manuel's reign and considers his patronage of monks, paying particular attention to a monastery which he founded, no doubt the one at Kataskepe at the northern end of the Bosphoros<sup>79</sup>. The ascetics patronized are likened, in a common metaphor of the day, to athletes, be it in racing or wrestling.

The thrust of the fifty-second paragraph (Tafel 208/37-68) would seem to be that the emperor provided a veritable "feast" of learning about divine things for his audience, comparing him to Solomon in this respect. The second half of the paragraph is one of the most intriguing passages of the speech; we have mention of construction work on a project not completed in Manuel's lifetime, a hostel for visitors on the one hand, and for the injured and sick on the other (although, no doubt there was overlap between the different categories); in short, it was to be partly a hospital. An intriguing question is that of the identity of the "Nazarenes" mentioned by Eustathios at Tafel 208/55-56. Seeing that at this time the Christian Frankish Kingdom of Jerusalem was still in possession of Nazareth, Eustathios may be referring to the crusaders visiting from Outremer. There was also, it would seem, provision for the physicians and surgeons who would tend to those who were sick, some of whom, no doubt were these visiting crusaders, if the hospital was not entirely intended for them. One imagines, however, that this was not the case.

The fifty-third paragraph (Tafel 208/69-87) is concerned with the emperor's fortification of strategic points in the east, and his city-building, comparing him in particular to the Roman emperor Tiberius, who was responsible for fortifications in the same area, and Eustathios puts

78. Leo VI the Wise, "Oraison funèbre", p. 76/27; what is remarkable here is how little is made of Basil's ambitious building programme.

79. Magdalino, pp. 119, 298; M. Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni 1081-1261*, Cambridge 1995, p. 287 and *passim*.



the number of these fortifications at over two hundred. As a point of reference, the *epitaphios* of Libanios for Julian the Apostate makes mention of that emperor's foundations in Gaul<sup>80</sup>. The subsequent paragraph (Tafel 208/88-209/17), like a speech delivered to the Grand Hetaireiarch John Doukas, probably during Lent 1179, describes the emperor as engaging personally in the construction of some of these, or at least Dorylaion and Soublaion (see esp. Regel 23/4-5 = Wirth 200/82-83; cf. a paper by Wirth on the rebuilding of Dorylaion<sup>81</sup>). The passage from the funeral oration considers how the emperor could endure all loads, be they the stones of construction or swords, maces and lances, of a weight which the enemy could not bear. This leads into the fifty-fifth paragraph (Tafel 209/18-35) which considers the emperor's endurance, both that of the body and that of the mind, and his tolerance of heat, cold, thirst and hunger when on campaign. All these, of course, are *topoi*, to be found in the general run of Byzantine imperial panegyric (we might note here that these *topoi* emerge only after Menander Rhetor's treatise on imperial panegyric, not being prescribed by him); one might care to compare them with the 1180 pre-Easter oration<sup>82</sup>. In fact, Manuel's endurance is

80. Libanios, Oration XVIII, pars. 180-181.

81. P. Wirth, "Kaiser Manuel I. Komnenos und die Ostgrenze. Rückeroberung und Wiederaufbau der Festung Dorylaion" in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 55 (1962) 21-29.

82. Regel, 4/2-14; Wirth, 184/78-89: "Many horses, one after another, were goaded by the emperor to gallop into battle, and not only all day long, but they were also spurred against the same men even at night, these untiring feet conquering both soldiers and nature, such as are not found among ordinary men without weariness taking hold of them; if sleep is absent, not only that which is deep enough to relax the limbs and is sweet to mention, but even a brief closing of the eyelids, how would this make the traveller abroad healthy? And as for this abstinence from food, to the degree that those living delicately in fasting, and for whom the battle against the stomach is their work, would carry away the second prize, what kind of body would not be utterly exhausted? These things are characteristic of you, O emperor, passing through sleepless hardship and not even knowing the heartening substance of food; you labour under these intolerable conditions, in order that in this way you may be a philosopher in the likeness of God." and Regel; 9/20-10/2; Wirth, 189/48-60: "The one who is always in motion in eager labour is ashamed to be still, but his nature knows fatigue also. Great is the one who endures the burning heat of the day, but why has he not had a cooling-spell during the night? The frost of night is not endurable, if ever it should be encountered, but the day has a more cheerful condition. If day also burns and nearly melts one with the fire of its burning heat, may night on the other hand succeed it; but if the clearness of night freezes by taking away all heat, and day were to succeed it closely imitating night, the one subjected to it would be made of iron. The evil associated with day is sufficient, when one exposes oneself to dangers. But you endure wars lasting all night for our sakes, O emperor, not giving



singled out for praise as early as at the beginning of his reign, in Michael Italikos' speech for him<sup>83</sup>. As noted, we see other emperors praised for their stamina; that John II was so praised need hardly be said to anyone acquainted with the literature of his reign; we see the *topos* applied earlier to Basil I<sup>84</sup>. Choniates finds two occasions in his history to praise Manuel for his physical endurance (pp. 198 and 206).

Finally we come to a series of five paragraphs, beginning with the fifty-sixth, which supply us with an interesting string of vignettes no doubt intended to illustrate the virtue of temperance in the emperor; they deal with his frugal attitude towards food, sleep and comfort. This is in keeping with Menander's prescriptions for imperial panegyric; he would have the rhetor mention the subject's practices or, as Russell and Wilson translate the word *ἐπιτηδεύματα*, "accomplishments"<sup>85</sup>. The fifty-sixth paragraph focuses on the emperors temperance, to the point of abstinence, in the intake of food (Tafel 209/36-41):

To be sure, he also withheld from the things that serve the stomach as much as a statue might, wanting input no more than the man who is overfull; for neither would the latter saddle himself with an overload, nor could he spread wide for food the organ which had been constricted by a principle of fasting, as gluttons can.

The fifty-seventh paragraph (Tafel 209/45-64) is concerned with the deleterious effects of excessive sleep, alluding to a well-known story (the Seduction of Zeus by Hera, related in Book XIV of the *Iliad*). The emperor however, like his contemporary Henry II of England, is too concerned with affairs of state to indulge himself in such a luxurious commodity:

Thus he kept a check on his desire, that most terrible flatterer  
... His mattress was the roughness of the ground, not spread

sleep to your eyes nor rest to your temples, but as a guardian of your masterly vineyard run through it and allow sleep for the army, that which is both sweet and restful, but send sleep that knows no waking upon your enemies."

83. Michael Italikos, *Michel Italikos*, p. 282/13-16.

84. Leo VI the Wise, "Oraison funèbre", p. 48/7; cf. p. 58/8-9 on his vigilance during the night and his energy during the day.

85. Spengel, p. 372/1-5; Russell and Wilson, pp. 82-83.



with soft bedclothes ... nor did he recline at full length, but he would sit up straight, and thus avoid nature's wise chamberlain, sleep. Treacherous sleep once flowed around Homeric Zeus, against his will, and the story clearly conveys the force of sleep, not only among those in other walks of life, "but also among those who rule far and wide. And even when called upon, sleep did not answer him ... after it had been spread over him it swiftly leaped away, measuring itself as the emperor commanded ... and somehow it shrank from being near him and creating the sort of death which results from an idleness of the senses, because he was so deserving of immortality, and also from cutting short the worker for cosmic union from achieving his eager deeds.

We have an echo of the sentence dealing with the emperor sleeping on the ground in Niketas Choniates, in his passage treating of the hardships the emperor endured in his advance on *Claudiopolis* late in his reign (pp. 197-198). But Choniates simply claimed that the emperor endeared himself more to his men when he shared their hardships than when he was decked with his imperial regalia.

Paragraph fifty-eight (Tafel 209/65-77) of the Eustathian funeral oration, on the other hand, deals with yet another form of abstinence to the point of ascetism; the emperor's abstinence from excessive drink:

Water was a dear drink for him, enticing him, when he needed to relax, with a certain prudent regard for pleasure, to which the sweet cane mixes in an additional contribution; but his choice of juice was in fact sharp; and there was a place for slightly bitter beer. But if there happened to be any additional need to make use of wine, that however was dry; and it was mixed in such a way that it was impossible to approach for the majority. And this was the distinguishing mark of the imperial mixing bowl, that the emperor did not enjoy the drink (for the roughness of the taste was not sweet), as, I think, he enjoyed planning against any excessive appetite. And I know precisely that ascetic men pour such a mixture of wine for themselves, that they also may be stronger than the enemy within.



We might note here that Libanios, in his *epitaphios* for the emperor Julian the Apostate (par. 174) also praised him for his sobriety and temperance in food intake.

Paragraphs fifty-nine (Tafel 209/78-90) and sixty (Tafel 209/91-210/5) of Eustathios' funeral oration for Manuel deal, successively, with the emperor and his posture (despite the stoop mentioned by Choniates, Manuel seems to have striven to stand upright) and the emperor's predilection for walking as opposed to riding, which he would generally only do in triumphs. This is what is said:

He would labour for a straight stance, as indeed has already been said, as though he were a straight column ... bending his knees in their turn to God in a word of prayer, and thus fittingly making holy his kneeling, and he was a rival besides to the archetype, that great just man, whose swollen knees spoke of the frequent falling upon them ...

His ability in walking was received from that source, and was also a source of strength for him. For he did not stop rejoicing in his glistening feet, nor did he continually trust the lightness of a horse to raise him swiftly aloft at speed. But as was necessary he overtook those expert at running on foot, not thinking it right that the infantry, like that ancient Persian haughty one, for which it was once pleasing to make it a law, should, except when it was at home, entrust the rest of its journeying to a horse; but when it was necessary, and when there were triumphs, he would choose conveyance by horse; for other occasions, however, he used his feet with endurance.

The act of kneeling (to pray) is associated with numerous personages from the Bible; I think it most likely that by the archetype or prototype whom he mentions, Eustathios intends us to understand the apostle Paul (cf. Ephesians 3.14).

The sixty-first paragraph (Tafel 210/6-19) dwells on how the emperor endured things which grieved him most, being slow to react in his defence against evil, and how he imitated Christ in this way and by doing things himself rather than through the agency of others; this paragraph leads, at last, into a series of seven paragraphs concerned with the emperor's martial virtues; in them he is concerned to stress the primary virtue



of courage. We see in these paragraphs the prominence that is accorded martial virtue in the orations of the Comnenian epoch; we might care to compare and contrast our Eustathian funeral oration with the funeral oration of Michael Italikos for the *sebastokrator* Andronikos, son of Alexios I, the two funeral orations for Andronikos Komnenos, son of John II, one by Michael Italikos, the other by Theodore Prodromos, and the earlier oration of Michael Psellos for Andronikos Doukas. Of the two Andronikos Komnenos the Younger orations, the martial virtue is more to the fore in the Italikos oration, Theodore Prodromos being considerably more cursory on the subject and doing little more than paying it lip-service.

Paragraph sixty-two (Tafel 210/20-40) is concerned with the way in which the emperor would expose himself to danger, and would take pride in his wounds even more than the adornments on his diadem<sup>86</sup>. He had alighted upon the throne unexpectedly, having older brothers, although he was the fairest, and in the event, would turn out to be the greatest. So, as we have commented above, we have come full circle in the orations for Manuel's reign, Michael Italikos' oration at the outset of the reign similarly being concerned to legitimize the reign. Paragraph sixty-three (Tafel 210/41-63) is concerned with those campaigns that the emperor directed from a distance, since there was a need for him at times to stay near the centre of the empire; should the Byzantines at any time not be successful in the field, it was due to the fact that the emperor was not himself present and other factors which were beyond his control. The fifth paragraph of the Italikos oration for Andronikos Komnenos the Elder throws further light on this claim. Here there is praise for the *sebastokrator* when present in battle for his skill in marshalling and deploying his army<sup>87</sup>; one may also adduce similar sentiments voiced by Psellos for Andronikos Doukas, an interesting foreshadowing of the militaristic ethic we find developed more fully in the Comnenian epoch<sup>88</sup>. Italikos would later praise Manuel for similar skills<sup>89</sup>. The sixty-fourth

86. Gregory Antiochos also talks of the emperor's wounds, the blood from which stains his tunic, Regel, *Fontes*, p. 215/4-5. As for the emperor exposing himself to danger, cf. Regel, *Fontes*, pp. 219/17-22.

87. Michael Italikos, *Michel Italikos*, p. 86/11-21.

88. P. Gautier, "Monodie", pp. 166/32-167/5.

89. Michael Italikos, *Michel Italikos*, p. 283/1-8.



paragraph of the Eustathian oration (Tafel 210/64-86) enumerates certain peoples whom the emperor fought in person (Cilicians, Armenians, "Assyrians", and those others in the east, i.e. the Turks and the Frankish Crusaders, as well as the Cumans and Hungarians in the west), before comparing the emperor's storming of Zeugminon to Alexander's storming of Aornos on the Indus, as in the 1174 Epiphany oration, a feat not even Herakles could achieve. For comparison, Italikos lists the theatres of war in which the *sebastokrator* Andronikos the Younger fought<sup>90</sup>. This therefore is a standard device of orations of the period, which has evolved out of Menanders' prescriptions for imperial panegyric: he would have the rhetor describe the locations of the imperial victories<sup>91</sup>. Another example of this is the oration for the *sebastos* John Doukas by Eustathios, which makes mention of the fact that he had visited all three known continents<sup>92</sup>. With the second part of the paragraph, we may compare the Eustathian eulogy for the feat of taking Zeugminon to Libanios' account of a parallel storming by Julian of a fortress in Assyria<sup>93</sup>. The Libanian account is less allusive and more graphic, but this is due to the entirely different nature of the Libanian speech, which reads like a biography of Julian rather than a personal characterization of the subject as in the case of the Eustathian oration.

Paragraph sixty-five of Eustathios' *epitaphios* (Tafel 210/87-211/18) is concerned with siege warfare and the overthrowing of some cities and the erection of others. There is another *synkrisis* with Alexander, this time considering how he overthrew five cities in two days; Manuel's success in taking Aornos is no less a feat. However there is also a contrast, for the rhetor highlights Manuel's clemency towards the noble Hungarians at Zeugminon; they were allowed to survive, this thing also being a rewardable increase as in the parable of the talents (note the second instance of the use of this parable in this one speech). Once again we see the use of rhetoric to gloss over an event which could conceivably show Manuel in a less flattering light; Kinnamos relates with morbid relish the slaughter ("like sheep") of the populace at that siege<sup>94</sup>. However, Cho-

90. Michael Italikos, *Michel Italikos*, pp. 132/19-133/18.

91. Spengel, p. 373/17-20; Russell and Wilson, pp. 86-87, and sqq.

92. Regel, *Fontes*, p. 19/11-12; Wirth, p. 197/77-78.

93. Libanios, *Oration XVIII*, par. 241.

94. Kinnamos, p. 245.



niates agrees with this oration in that those who surrendered were granted their lives<sup>95</sup>.

Paragraph sixty-six (Tafel 211/19-36) considers the martial poets Tyrtaios and Timotheos and their ability to rouse to war. Eustathios claims that he does not know why these things are not better known. It is clear, however, that Manuel was brave throughout the inhabited world and was the subject of books. The sixty-seventh paragraph (Tafel 211/37-50) considers the survival of the emperor in a mighty battle, which it is probably best to identify as Myriokephalon (1176 in Anatolia, a disastrous defeat for the Byzantines). We may care to compare this oration with the 1180 pre-Easter oration, where it is claimed that the Barbarians judged the whole outcome of the battle to be invested in the person of the emperor<sup>96</sup>. The best the Greeks could do, continues Eustathios in the funeral oration, was to compare him to Hermes, whereas the Barbarians, with greater subjects for comparison at their disposal, compared him to an angel, or even better. The sixty-eighth paragraph (Tafel 211/51-81) deals on another military exploit, the rescue of Claudiopolis from the Turks, which Magdalino would date to early 1179<sup>97</sup>. The emperor roused himself from his sick-bed, rescued the city, and his deeds, as it were, adorned it (if we choose not to interpret this passage as saying more literally that "the old woman was beautified" (Tafel 211/58); i.e. that the defences were refurbished).

Paragraphs sixty-nine to seventy-three are brief and of the nature of a monody for the emperor. As in a monody, the topic of the grief of those present and the imagery of tears, darkness and bitterness, are introduced. Paragraphs sixty-nine (Tafel 211/82-94) and seventy (Tafel 211/95-212/11) describe the effect that the emperor's death has upon the living. It is an occasion of sorrow for those present, and the rhetor spends a little time on the imperial heir (hoping that he will become as leonine as his father), also, in paragraph seventy, praising the empress dowager for her intelligence. Paragraph seventy-one (Tafel 212/12-21) continues in the same vein, praising the widowed empress as the moon to her sun-consort, the emperor, who has now set<sup>98</sup>. There is the hope

95. Choniates, p. 134.

96. Regel, p. 1/14-16; Wirth, 182/14-15.

97. *Empire*, p. 99, n. 299.

98. Cf. to the Gregory Antiochos oration, Regel, *Fontes*, p. 199/22-23 who similarly



that the new emperor-sun will rise to the same height. Paragraphs seventy-two (Tafel 212/22-32) and three (Tafel 212/33-44) address the tomb, hider of the imperial pancratiast, which is compared to a hive; one who hopes to harvest the honey that it contains, will to the contrary only be able to draw bitter bile. The stone at the core of the tomb, the emperor, though hidden from view, nevertheless causes one to tremble. The topic of the concealment of the deceased by the tomb is another common motif of the funeral oration. We might care to contrast this with Leo VI's oration for Basil I, which relates how the tomb cannot conceal his father's dazzling radiance<sup>99</sup>, a rather less restrained image.

Paragraph seventy-four (Tafel 212/45-72) serves as a recapitulation of the sixty-second to the sixty-eighth paragraphs, summarising the emperor's martial virtues. The paragraph begins with reference to the way in which the enemy saw the emperor running against them, and were turned to flight. Should they fall, it would be at the hand of the emperor, chopping them down as a woodman fells trees. The enemy have no occasion to rejoice over the outcome, since the emperor did not fall at their hands. Malignant joy and wonder are taken away for them, as is the archetype whom their leaders emulate. The emperor exposed himself to danger in different forms of warfare, and in many places.

In paragraph seventy-five (Tafel 212/73-82) it is said that it is not fitting that iron should have triumphed over the emperor, nor was it, fitting that his blood intermingle with that of barbarians. Rather he died a natural death. He had been celebrated in song throughout his life. The seventy-sixth paragraph (Tafel 212/83-213/3) celebrates the amazement at the emperor's death, one who drove all battles away from the frontiers and who cast down beasts like Herakles, illness failing to prevent this<sup>100</sup>. The seventy-seventh paragraph (Tafel 213/4-39) deals with the many administrative tasks with which the emperor had to deal: the embassies to and from the throne<sup>101</sup>, the concern of the emperor, like David, for theology, his completion of the (architectural) works which he had started, his attention to petitions, in particular those in response to

likens the empress to the moon, which was a common device of imperial rhetoric.

99. Leo VI the Wise, "Oraison funèbre", p. 68/7-9.

100. Gregory Antiochos also passes quickly over the subject of the emperor's fondness for hunting; see Regel, *Fontes*, p. 204/5-8.

101. See note 31.



which he would make provision for churches, and the firm foundation thus provided for the heir, who as soon as he was unwrapped from his swaddling cloths was placed under the diadem (this imagery, though striking, is not original; cf. Michael Psellos' oration for Andronikos Doukas<sup>102</sup>). It is interesting to contrast Eustathios' approach to that of Gregory Antiochos. Both rhetors are doubtless addressing fears arising from Alexios' minority. Eustathios contents himself with asserting the young emperor's promise for the future, claiming that proof of this promise is evident; Antiochos consoles the Empress Dowager and reminds us what certain Biblical paradigms were doing at Alexios' age; there were the examples of Daniel and Samuel, to say nothing of Jesus himself, who discussed the Scriptures with the teachers in the Temple at the age of twelve (Regel, *Fontes*, pp. 223-224).

Winding up, the rhetor observes, in the seventy-eighth paragraph (Tafel 213/40-74), that the emperor has cast away life and now partakes of lifelessness. This night which the emperor is experiencing has no succeeding day, the imperial regalia count for nothing (in the afterlife), and in his last days the emperor would decline the luxury of his bed, preferring to sleep on the ground. His soul has now been released from the body, going, as it were, on a journey abroad. In paragraph seventy-nine (Tafel 213/75-214/47) it is explained that the emperor has left his wife and child behind to be in the presence of God. With his death the inhabitants of the City have fallen along with her and have been plunged into gloom, their tears being the rain from such a dark cloud (as we have seen, such imagery being topical; Eustathios has, as is the claim in the title for the oration, shown on the whole considerable restraint in using such imagery, unlike the more florid Antiochos, who compares the flood of tears to the cataclysm which befell the earth in the days of Noah<sup>103</sup>). But God has made provision for the City and keeps vigil over her and her fellow-cities. The eightieth paragraph (Tafel 214/48-52) very briefly announces the end of the allotted time and hence of the speech.

102. P. Gautier, "Monodie", p. 165/13-15.

103. Regel, *Fontes*, pp. 191/18-192/7. Note also the violent emotion expressed in pp. 199/23-200/11, where the pain caused by the emperor's death is said to burn and there is the imagery of the cutting of locks of hair over the grave as one finds in tragedy. Contrast also with Leo VI the Wise, "Oraison funèbre", p. 74/5-6, where he claims the whole world is afflicted with pain at his father's death.



It is patent that the Eustathian funeral oration is a major source for the characterization of the deceased emperor, supplying us with a detailed physical and mental portrait of Manuel, keeping this information relatively free (by Byzantine standards) from the standard run of *topoi* with which other rhetors, and on previous occasions, this rhetor, had worked in the emperor's lifetime.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the oration is Eustathios' characterization of Manuel's temperament and intellect. The qualities of caution and dissimulation in audiences, inner calmness in the face of bad news, yet a certain recklessness in battle, emerge as salient characteristics of this most interesting Byzantine emperor. Above all, Eustathios is concerned with the manifestations of the primary virtue of prudence, and to a lesser extent towards the end of the oration, of courage. There is also, as we have seen, a section of the oration which deals with the emperor's temperance.

Much of what is said is in accord with other accounts. From Kinnamos we learn that Manuel was reckless in battle, having to be forcibly constrained from ascending the siege-ladder at Zeugminon<sup>104</sup> —there are other anecdotes of this kind to be found in our historians. Other panegyrics testify to the imperial dynamism, and Manuel's endurance of cold, heat, hunger, thirst and lack of sleep. The 1180 pre-Eastertide oration is particularly concerned with bidding the emperor to desist from constant activity, especially warfare, and seek rest, blaming this over-exertion for the illness that the emperor was currently experiencing.

As has become apparent from this survey of the funeral oration, as summarized and compared to other orations, be they funeral orations or panegyrics made in their subjects' lifetime, a considerable proportion of the material applied to the image of Manuel as painted by his imperial rhetors has been recycled from earlier orations, even, as Magdalino has shown<sup>105</sup>, from orations made when it was not yet apparent that Manuel would succeed to the throne. So it is that the Italikos oration for Manuel, like this oration, makes the emperor's prudence, and then his courage, its priorities when it comes to singling out the cardinal virtues which

104. Kinnamos, p. 241-242.

105. Magdalino, *Empire*, p. 43, referring us to Theodore Prodromos, *Historische Gedichte*, ed. W. Hörandner, Vienna 1974, poem no. XXIX.



Manuel displays. So too the legitimacy of his reign, his imperial birth and, to a lesser degree, the portents foretelling his rule, are underscored.

However, one is left with the impression that a large part of the image of Manuel in Eustathios' funeral oration for him is original and personalized. For example, Eustathios makes mention of the emperor's readiness in debate and his book-learning. One feels, from a reading of our oration, that these were characteristics of Manuel which were more to the fore in him than in other predominantly soldier emperors like Basil I, to whom accordingly Leo VI does not make such attributes; the medium of the *epitaphios* therefore required the rhetor to exercise to a certain extent an intellectual honesty and not attribute qualities to the deceased which were not present; in this sense perhaps every *epitaphios* was purported to be an individualized portrait of the deceased, analogous to the funeral orations that we hear delivered at funerals in our own western culture today. Perhaps however, the tailoring of the oration to the individual in the Eustathian oration is highlighted by comparison and contrast to the Gregory Antiochos oration, which is far more concerned with clever and moving imagery, a difference to be explained, perhaps, by a difference in occasion; the introduction to the Antiochos oration says specifically that it was delivered 120 days after Manuel's death.

Before concluding, it is also interesting to note in passing what individual characteristics of Manuel the funeral oration does not mention. Little is made of the emperor's proficiency in hunting and jousting (there is only a cursory mention of the emperor's ability in the former). Panegyric of the early part of Manuel's reign, such as the Italikos oration, represents him as a glamorous young bridegroom, something conspicuously absent from this oration. Although the 1176 Epiphany oration is interesting in that it condemns certain forms of warfare as ignoble<sup>106</sup>, nothing is made of the emperor's chivalry in this oration. And what is possibly more significant, in the light of the Italikos speech for Andronikos Komnenos the younger, which celebrates the *sebastokrator's* skill as an archer and horseman<sup>107</sup>, not as much is made of the emperor's martial prowess as the possibilities of the medium afforded; perhaps Eustathios was content simply to refer to the emperor's dexterity in

106. Regel, *Fontes*, p. 32/27-33/7; Wirth, p. 208/11-17.

107. Michael Italikos, *Michel Italikos*, p. 130/7-11.



wielding swords, maces and lances<sup>108</sup>. Allusions to Manuel's love of western ways is confined to brief mention of the way the imperial family has received foreigners in its midst, and, though this is hardly surprising, nothing at all is made of the emperor's amorous adventures. For this information we need to turn to Kinnamos, less critical in his praise for the emperor's prowess in hunting and jousting, and, for the less savoury aspects, Choniates, surely the main corrective to the favourable impression gained of Manuel from the Eustathian funeral oration. Finally, in common with other orations of the day, little is said of the emperor's attention to the exercise of justice; it would seem that, on the whole, legislation and justice were not high priorities for the "guardians of Orthodoxy" of Manuel's day, who preferred to focus on his ambitious foreign policy and the concomitant wars<sup>109</sup>. As with the phenomenon of panegyric in general, one should probably see this as an attempt to jockey the favour of the top tier of the Comnenian aristocracy by reflecting back at it idealized portraits cast using its own system of values. So it is that priorities change with the different regimes.

Despite the fact that in this way it is a product of institutionalized sycophancy, it cannot be denied that the funeral oration of Eustathios is probably the single most important adjunct to the histories of Kinnamos and Choniates in creating a physical and psychological portrait of Manuel I Komnenos. It is an intriguing document, as this essay, in paraphrasing large parts of it, has endeavoured to show. The kings of the twelfth century —Saladin, Roger II Guiscard of Sicily, Henry II Plantagenet, Frederick Barbarossa, and our own Manuel I Komnenos of Byzantium, have all been portrayed as larger than life. Manuel's fame echoed about all Christendom; fortunately for us, Eustathios of Thessaloniki in his funeral oration has, using the norms of a personalized *epitaphios* rather than imperial panegyric, recorded the most notable characteristics of this highly interesting individual for us to savour today.

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108. Tafel, pp. 208/92-209/4.

109. Contrast with Leo VI the Wise, "Oraison funèbre", p. 60/1-5 who compares his father to an Aiakos or Rhadymanthys dispensing justice, although he is envisaged as doing in heaven rather than in Hades.